

WRITINGS OF JEROME

by Jerome

Writings of Jerome (c. AD 420). Jerome was an early church father whose writings have been preserved for the edification of the church.

225 Chapters

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Writings of Jerome

Against Jovinianus - Book 1

Book I.

Book I.

Jovinianus, concerning whom we know little more than is to be found in the two following books, had published at Rome a Latin treatise containing all, or part of the opinions here controverted, viz. (1) "That a virgin is no better as such than a wife in the sight of God. (2) Abstinence is no better than a thankful partaking of food. (3) A person baptized with the Spirit as well as with water cannot sin. (4) All sins are equal. (5) There is but one grade of punishment and one of reward in the future state." In addition to this he held the birth of our Lord to have been by a "true parturition," and was thus at issue with the orthodoxy of the time, according to which the infant Jesus passed through the walls of the womb as His Resurrection body afterwards did out of the tomb or through the closed doors. Pammachius, Jerome's friend, brought Jovinian's book under the notice of Siricius, bishop of Rome, and it was shortly afterwards condemned in synods at that city and at Milan (about a.d. 390). He subsequently sent Jovinian's books to Jerome, who answered them in the present treatise in the year 393. Nothing more is known of Jovinian, but it has been conjectured from Jerome's remark in the treatise against Vigilantius, where Jovinian is said to have "amidst pheasants and pork rather belched out than breathed out his life," and by a kind of transmigration to have transmitted his opinions into Vigilantius, that he had died before 409, the date of that work. The first book is wholly on the first proposition of Jovinianus, that relating to marriage and virginity. The first three chapters are introductory. The rest may be divided into three parts:

1 (ch. 4-13). An exposition, in Jerome's sense, of St. Paul's teaching in I Cor. vii.

2 (ch. 14-39). A statement of the teaching which Jerome derives from the various books of both the Old and the New Testaments.

3. A denunciation of Jovinianus (c. 40), and the praises of virginity and of jingle marriages derived from examples in the heathen world. The treatise gives a remarkable specimen of Jerome's system of interpreting Scripture, and also of the methods by which asceticism was introduced into the Church, and marriage brought into disesteem.

1. Very few days have elapsed since the holy brethren of Rome sent to me the treatises of a certain Jovinian with the request that I would reply to the follies contained in them, and would crush with evangelical and apostolic vigour the¹ Epicurus of Christianity. I read but could not in the least comprehend them. I began therefore to give them closer attention, and to thoroughly sift not only words and sentences, but almost every single syllable; for I wished first to ascertain his meaning, and then to approve, or refute what he had said. But the style is so barbarous, and the language so vile and such a heap of blunders, that I could neither understand what he was talking about, nor by what arguments he was trying to prove his points. At one moment he is all bombast, at another he grovels: from time to time he lifts himself up, and then like a wounded snake finds his own effort too much for him. Not satisfied with the language of men, he attempts something loftier.

2 "The mountains labour; a poor mouse is born."

3 "That he's gone mad ev'n mad Orestes swears."

Moreover he involves everything in such inextricable confusion that the saying of⁴ Plautus might be applied to him:—"This is what none but a Sibyl will ever read." To understand him we must be prophets. We read Apollo's⁵ raving prophetesses. We remember, too, what⁶ Virgil says of senseless noise.⁷ Heraclitus, also, surnamed the Obscure, the philosophers find hard to understand even with their utmost toil. But what are they compared with our riddle-maker, whose books are much more difficult to comprehend than to refute? Although (we must confess) the task of refuting them is no easy one. For how can you overcome a man when you are quite in the dark as to his meaning? But, not to be tedious to my reader, the introduction to his second book, of which he has discharged himself like a sot after a night's debauch, will show the character of his eloquence, and through what bright flowers of rhetoric he takes his stately course.

2. "I respond to your invitation, not that I may go through life with a high reputation, but may live free from idle rumour. I beseech the ground, the young shoots of our plantations, the plants and trees of tenderness snatched from the whirlpool of vice, to grant me audience and the support of many listeners. We know that the Church through hope, faith, charity, is inaccessible and impregnable. In it no one is immature: all are apt to learn: none can force a way into it by violence, or deceive it by craft."

3. What, I ask, is the meaning of these portentous words and of this grotesque description? Would you not think he was in a feverish dream, or that he was seized with madness and ought to be put into the strait jacket which Hippocrates prescribed? However often I read him, even till my heart sinks within me, I am still in uncertainty of his meaning.⁸ Everything starts from, everything depends upon, something else. It is impossible to make out any connection; and, excepting the proofs from Scripture which he has not dared to exchange for his own lovely flowers of rhetoric, his words suit all matter equally well, because they suit no matter at all. This circumstance led me shrewdly to suspect that his object in proclaiming the excellence of marriage was only to disparage virginity. For when the less is put upon a level with the greater, the lower profits by comparison, but the higher suffers wrong. For ourselves, we do not follow the views of⁹ Marcion and Manichaeus, and disparage marriage; nor, deceived by the error of¹⁰ Tatian, the leader of the Encratites, do we think all intercourse impure; he condemns and rejects not only marriage but also food which God created for the use of man. We know that in a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earthenware. And that upon the foundation, Christ, which Paul the master-builder laid, some build gold, silver, precious stones: others, on the contrary, hay, wood, straw. We are not ignorant of the words,¹¹ "Marriage is honourable among all, and the bed undefiled." We have read God's first command,¹² "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"; but while we honour marriage we prefer virginity which is the offspring of marriage. Will silver cease to be silver, if gold is more precious than silver? Or is despoil done to tree and corn, if we prefer the fruit to root and foliage, or the grain to stalk and ear? Virginity is to marriage what fruit is to the tree, or grain to the straw. Although the hundred-fold, the sixty-fold, and the thirty-fold spring from one earth and from one sowing, yet there is a great difference in respect of number. The thirty-fold has reference to marriage. The very way the¹³ fingers are combined-see how they seem to embrace, tenderly kiss, and pledge their troth either to other-is a

picture of husband and wife. The sixty-fold applies to widows, because they are placed in a position of difficulty and distress. Hence the upper finger signifies their depression, and the greater the difficulty in resisting the allurements of pleasure once experienced, the greater the reward. Moreover (give good heed, my reader), to denote a hundred, the right hand is used instead of the left: a circle is made with the same fingers which on the left hand represented widowhood, and thus the crown of virginity is expressed. In saying this I have followed my own impatient spirit rather than the course of the argument. For I had scarcely left harbour, and had barely hoisted sail, when a swelling tide of words suddenly swept me into the depths of the discussion. I must stay my course, and take in canvas for a little while; nor will I indulge my sword, anxious as it is to strike a blow for virginity. The farther back the catapult is drawn, the greater the force of the missile. To linger is not to lose, if by lingering victory is better assured. I will briefly set forth our adversary's views, and will drag them out from his books like snakes from the holes where they hide, and will separate the venomous head from the writhing body. What is baneful shall be discovered, that, when we have the power, it may be crushed.

He says that "virgins, widows, and married women, who have been once passed through the layer of Christ, if they are on a par in other respects, are of equal merit."

He endeavours to show that "they who with full assurance of faith have been born again in baptism, cannot be overthrown by the devil." His third point is "that there is no difference between abstinence from food, and its reception with thanksgiving." The fourth and last is "that there is one reward in the kingdom of heaven for all who have kept their baptismal vow."

4. This is the hissing of the old serpent; by counsel such as this the dragon drove man from Paradise. For he promised that if they would prefer fulness to fasting they should be immortal, as though it were an impossibility for them to fall; and while he promises they shall be as Gods, he drives them from Paradise, with the result that they who, while naked and unhampered, and as virgins unspotted enjoyed the fellowship of the Lord were cast down into the vale of tears, and sewed skins together to clothe themselves withal. But, not to detain the reader any longer, I will keep to the division given above and taking his propositions one by one will rely chiefly on the evidence of Scripture to refute them, for fear he may chatter and complain that he was overcome by rhetorical skill rather than by force of truth. If I succeed in this and with the aid of a cloud of witnesses from both Testaments prove too strong for him, I will then accept his challenge, and adduce illustrations from secular literature. I will show that even among philosophers and distinguished statesmen, the virtuous are wont to be preferred by all to the voluptuous, that is to say men like¹⁴ Pythagoras,¹⁵ Plato and¹⁶ Aristides, to¹⁷ Aristippus,¹⁸ Epicurus and¹⁹ Alcibiades. I entreat virgins of both sexes and all such as are continent, the married also and the twice married, to assist my efforts with their prayers. Jovinian is the common enemy. For he who maintains all to be of equal merit, does no less injury to virginity in comparing it with marriage than he does to marriage, when he allows it to be lawful, but to the same extent as second and third marriages. But to digamists and trigamists also he does wrong, for he places on a level with them whoremongers and the most licentious persons as soon as they have repented; but perhaps those who have been married twice or thrice ought not to complain, for the same whoremonger if penitent is made equal in the kingdom of heaven even to virgins. I will therefore explain more clearly and in proper sequence the arguments he employs and the illustrations he adduces respecting marriage, and will treat them in the order in which he states them. And I beg the reader

not to be disturbed if he is compelled to read Jovinian's nauseating trash. He will all the more gladly drink Christ's antidote after the devil's poisonous concoction. Listen with patience, ye virgins; listen, I pray you, to the voice of the most voluptuous of preachers; nay rather close your ears, as you would to the Syren's fabled songs, and pass on. For a little while endure the wrongs you suffer: think you are crucified with Christ, and are listening to the blasphemies of the Pharisees.

5. First of all, he says, God declares that²⁰ "therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." And lest we should say that this is a quotation from the Old Testament, he asserts that it has been²¹ confirmed by the Lord in the Gospel-"What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder": and he immediately adds,²² "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." He next repeats the names of Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, and tells us that they all had wives and in accordance with the will of God begot sons, as though there could be any table of descent or any history of mankind without wives and children. "There," says he, "is Enoch, who walked with God and was carried up to heaven. There is Noah, the only person who, except his wife, and his sons and their wives, was saved at the deluge, although there must have been many persons not of marriageable age, and therefore presumably virgins. Again, after the deluge, when the human race started as it were anew, men and women were paired together and a fresh blessing was pronounced on procreation, ²³ "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Moreover, free permission was given to eat flesh,²⁴ "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all." He then flies off to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom the first had three wives, the second one, the third four, Leah, Rachel, Billah, and Zilpah, and he declares that Abraham by his faith merited the blessing which he received in begetting his son. Sarah, typifying the Church, when it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women, exchanged the curse of barrenness for the blessing of child-bearing. We are informed that Rebekah went like a prophet to inquire of the Lord, and was told,²⁵ "Two nations and two peoples are in thy womb." that Jacob served for his wife, and that when Rachel, thinking it was in the power of her husband to give her children, said,²⁶ "Give me children, or else I die," he replied,²⁷ "Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?" so well aware was he that the fruit of marriage cometh from the Lord and not from the husband. We next learn that Joseph, a holy man of spotless chastity, and all the patriarchs, had wives, and that God blessed them all alike through the lips of Moses. Judah also and Tamar are brought upon the scene, and he censures Onan, slain by the Lord, because he, grudging to raise up seed to his brother, marred the marriage rite. He refers to Moses and the leprosy of Miriam, who, because she chided her brother on account of his wife, was stricken by the avenging hand of God. He praises Samson, I may even say extravagantly panegyricizes the uxorious Nazarite. Deborah also and Barak are mentioned, because, although they had not the benefit of virginity, they were victorious over the iron chariots of Sisera and Jabin. He brings forward Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, and extols her for arming herself with the²⁸ stake. He says there was no difference between Jephthah and his virgin daughter, who was sacrificed to the Lord: nay, of the two, he prefers the faith of the father to that of the daughter who met death with grief and tears. He then comes to Samuel, another Nazarite of the Lord, who from infancy was brought up in the tabernacle and was clad in a linen ephod, or, as the words are rendered, in linen vestments: he, too, we are told, begot sons without a stain upon his priestly purity. He places Boaz and his wife Ruth side by side in his repository, and traces the

descent of Jesse and David from them. He then points out how David himself, for the price of two hundred foreskins and at the peril of his life, was bedded with the king's daughter. What shall I say of Solomon, whom he includes in the list of husbands, and represents as a type of the Saviour, maintaining that of him it was written,²⁹ "Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son"? And³⁰ "To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba, and men shall pray for him continually." Then all at once he makes a jump to Elijah and Elisha, and tells us as a great secret that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha. Why he mentioned this he does not say. It can hardly be that he thinks Elijah and Elisha, like the rest, were married men. The next step is to Hezekiah, upon whose praises he dwells, and yet (I wonder why) forgets to mention that he said,³¹ "Henceforth I will beget children." He relates that Josiah, a righteous man, in whose time the book of Deuteronomy was found in the temple, was instructed by Huldah, wife of Shallum. Daniel also and the three youths are classed by him with the married. Suddenly he betakes himself to the Gospel, and adduces Zachariah and Elizabeth, Peter and his father-in-law, and the rest of the Apostles. His inference is thus expressed: "If they idly urge in defence of themselves the plea that the world in its early stage needed to be replenished, let them listen to the words of Paul,³² 'I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children.' And³³ 'Marriage is honourable and the bed undefiled.' And³⁴ 'A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.' And³⁵ 'Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through the child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.' Surely we shall hear no more of the famous Apostolic utterance,³⁶ 'And they who have wives as though they had them not.' It can hardly be that you will say the reason why he wished them to be married was that some widows had already turned back after Satan: as though virgins never fell and their fall was not more ruinous. All this makes it clear that in forbidding to marry, and to eat food which God created for use, you have consciences seared as with a hot iron, and are followers of the Manichaeans." Then comes much more which it would be unprofitable to discuss. At last he dashes into rhetoric and apostrophizes virginity thus: "I do you no wrong, Virgin: you have chosen a life of chastity on account of the present distress: you determined on the course in order to be holy in body and spirit: be not proud: you and your married sisters are members of the same Church."

6. I have perhaps explained his position at too great a length, and become tedious to my reader; but I thought it best to draw up in full array against myself all his efforts, and to muster all the forces of the enemy with their squadrons and generals, lest after an early victory there should spring up a series of other engagements. I will not therefore do battle with single foes, nor will I be satisfied with skirmishes in which I meet small detachments of my opponents. The battle must be fought with the whole army of the enemy, and the disorderly rabble, fighting more like brigands than soldiers, must be repulsed by the skill and method of regular warfare. In the front rank I will set the Apostle Paul, and, since he is the bravest of generals, will arm him with his own weapons, that is to say, his own statements. For the Corinthians asked many questions about this matter, and the doctor of the Gentiles and master of the Church gave full replies. What he decreed we may regard as the law of Christ speaking in him. At the same time, when we begin to refute the several arguments, I trust the reader will give me his attention even before the Apostle speaks, and will not, in his eagerness to discuss the most weighty points, neglect the premises, and rush at once to the conclusion.

7. Among other things the Corinthians asked in their letter whether after embracing the faith of Christ they ought to be unmarried, and for the sake of continence put away their wives, and whether believing virgins were at liberty to marry. And again, supposing that one of two Gentiles believed on Christ, whether the one that believed should leave the one that believed not? And in case it were allowable to take wives, would the Apostle direct that only Christian wives, or Gentiles also, should be taken? Let us then consider Paul's replies to these inquiries.³⁷ "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. But, because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: And likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency. But this I say by way of permission not of commandment. Yet I would that all men were even as I myself. Howbeit each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that. But I say to the unmarried and to widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they have not continency, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." Let us turn back to the chief point of the evidence: "It is good," he says, "for a man not to touch a woman." If it is good not to touch a woman, it is bad to touch one: for there is no opposite to goodness but badness. But if it be bad and the evil is pardoned, the reason for the concession is to prevent worse evil. But surely a thing which is only allowed because there may be something worse has only a slight degree of goodness. He would never have added "let each man have his own wife," unless he had previously used the words "but, because of fornications." Do away with fornication, and he will not say "let each man have his own wife." Just as though one were to lay it down: "It is good to feed on wheaten bread, and to eat the finest wheat flour," and yet to prevent a person pressed by hunger from devouring cow-dung, I may allow, him to eat barley. Does it follow that the wheat will not have its peculiar purity, because such an one prefers barley to excrement? That is naturally good which does not admit of comparison with what is bad, and is not eclipsed because something else is preferred. At the same time we must notice the Apostle's prudence. He did not say, it is good not to have a wife: but, it is good not to touch a woman: as though there were danger even in the touch: as though he who touched her, would not escape from her who "hunteth for the precious life," who causeth the young man's understanding to fly away.³⁸ "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk upon hot coals, and his feet not be scorched?" As then he who touches fire is instantly burned, so by the mere touch the peculiar nature of man and woman is perceived, and the difference of sex is understood, Heathen fables relate how³⁹ Mithras and⁴⁰ Erichonius were begotten of the soil, in stone or earth, by raging lust. Hence it was that our Joseph, because the Egyptian woman wished to touch him, fled from her hands, and, as if he had been bitten by a mad dog and feared the spreading poison, threw away the cloak which she had touched. "But, because of fornications let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." He did not say, because of fornication let each man marry a wife: otherwise by this excuse he would have thrown the reins to lust, and whenever a man's wife died, he would have to marry another to prevent fornication, but "have his own wife." Let him he says have and use his own wife, whom he had before he became a believer, and whom it would have been good not to touch, and, when once he became a follower of Christ, to know only as a sister, not as a wife unless fornication should make

it excusable to touch her. "The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife." The whole question here concerns those who are married men. Is it lawful for them to do what our Lord forbade in the Gospel, and to put away their wives? Whence it is that the Apostle says, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." But inasmuch as he who is once married has no power to abstain except by mutual consent, and may not reject an unoffending partner, let the husband render unto the wife her due. He bound himself voluntarily that he might be under compulsion to render it. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer." What, I pray you, is the quality of that good thing which hinders prayer? which does not allow the body of Christ to be received? So long as I do the husband's part, I fail in continency. The same Apostle in another place commands us to pray always. If we are to pray always, it follows that we must never be in the bondage of wedlock, for as often as I render my wife her due, I cannot pray. The Apostle Peter had experience of the bonds of marriage. See how he fashions the Church, and what lesson he teaches Christians:⁴¹ "Ye husbands in like manner dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honour unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered." Observe that, as S. Paul before, because in both cases the spirit is the same, so S. Peter now, says that prayers are hindered by the performance of marriage duty. When he says "likewise," he challenges the husbands to imitate their wives, because he has already given them commandment:⁴² "beholding your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." You see what kind of wedlock he enjoins. Husbands and wives are to dwell together according to knowledge, so that they may know what God wishes and desires, and give honour to the weak vessel, woman. If we abstain from intercourse, we give honour to our wives: if we do not abstain, it is clear that insult is the opposite of honour. He also tells the wives to let their husbands "see their chaste behaviour, and the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit." Words truly worthy of an apostle, and of Christ's rock! He lays down the law for husbands and wives, condemns outward ornament, while he praises continence, which is the ornament of the inner man, as seen in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit. In effect he says this: Since your outer man is corrupt, and you have ceased to possess the blessing of incorruption characteristic of virgins, at least imitate the incorruption of the spirit by subsequent abstinence, and what you cannot show in the body exhibit in the mind. For these are the riches, and these the ornaments of your union, which Christ seeks.

8. The words which follow, "that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again," might lead one to suppose that the Apostle was expressing a wish and not making a concession because of the danger of a greater fall. He therefore at once adds, "lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency." It is a fine permission which is conveyed in the words "be together again." What it was that he blushed to call by its own name, and thought only better than a temptation of Satan and the effect of incontinence, we take trouble to discuss as if it were obscure, although he has explained his meaning by saying, "this I say by way of permission, not by way of command." And do we still hesitate to speak of marriage as a concession to weakness, not a thing commanded, as though second and third marriages were not allowed on the same ground, as though the doors of the Church were not opened by repentance even to fornicators, and what is more, to the

incestuous? Take the case of the man who outraged his step-mother. Does not the Apostle, after delivering him, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit might be saved, in the second Epistle take the offender back and strive to prevent a brother from being swallowed up by overmuch grief. The Apostle's wish is one thing, his pardon another. If a wish be expressed, it confers a right; if a thing is only called pardonable, we are wrong in using it. If you wish to know the Apostle's real mind, you must take in what follows: "but I would that all men were as I am." Happy is the man who is like Paul! Fortunate is he who attends to the Apostle's command, not to his concession. This, says he, I wish, this I desire that ye be imitators of me, as I also am of Christ, who was a Virgin born of a Virgin, uncorrupt of her who was uncorrupt. We, because we are men, cannot imitate our Lord's nativity; but we may at least imitate His life. The former was the blessed prerogative of divinity, the latter belongs to our human condition and is part of human effort. I would that all men were like me, that while they are like me, they may also become like Christ, to whom I am like. For⁴³ "he that believeth in Christ ought himself also to walk even as He walked."⁴⁴ "Howbeit each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that." What I wish, he says, is clear. But since in the Church there is a diversity of gifts, I acquiesce in marriage, lest I should seem to condemn nature. At the same time consider, that the gift of virginity is one, that of marriage, another. For were the reward the same for the married and for virgins, he would never after enjoining continence have said:⁴⁵ "Each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that." Where there is a distinction in one particular, there is a diversity also in other points. I grant that even marriage is a gift of God, but between gift and gift there is great diversity. In fact the Apostle himself speaking of the same person who had repented of his incestuous conduct, says:⁴⁶ "so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, and to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also." And that we might not think a man's gift contemptible, he added,⁴⁷ "for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes have I forgiven it, in the presence of Christ." There is diversity in the gifts of Christ. Hence it is that by way of type Joseph has a coat of many colours. And in the forty-fifth psalm we read,⁴⁸ "at thy right hand doth stand the queen in a vesture of gold wrought about with divers colours." And the Apostle Peter says,⁴⁹ "as heirs together of the manifold grace of God," where the more expressive Greek word *poiki/lhj*, i.e., varied, is used.

9. Then come the words⁵⁰ "But I say to the unmarried and to widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they have not continency, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." Having conceded to married persons the enjoyment of wedlock and pointed out his own wishes, he passes on to the unmarried and to widows, sets before them his own practice for imitation, and calls them happy if they so abide. "But if they have not continency, let them marry," just as he said before "But because of fornications," and "Lest Satan tempt you, because of your incontinency." And he gives a reason for saying "If they have not continency, let them marry," viz. "It is better to marry than to burn." The reason why it is better to marry is that it is worse to burn. Let burning lust be absent, and he will not say it is better to marry. The word better always implies a comparison with something worse, not a thing absolutely good and incapable of comparison. It is as though he said, it is better to have one eye than neither, it is better to stand on one foot and to support the rest of the body with a stick, than to crawl with broken legs. What do you say, Apostle? I do not believe you when you say "Though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge." As humility is the source of the sayings "For I am not worthy to be called an Apostle," and "To me who am the least of the Apostles," and "As to one born out of due time," so here also we have an

utterance of humility. You know the meaning of language, or you would not quote Epimenides,⁵¹ Menander, and⁵² Aratus. When you are discussing continence and virginity you say, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." And, "It is good for them if they abide even as I." And, "I think that this is good by reason of the present distress." And, "That it is good for a man so to be." When you come to marriage, you do not say it is good to marry, because you cannot then add "than to burn;" but you say, "It is better to marry than to burn." If marriage in itself be good, do not compare it with fire, but simply say "It is good to marry." I suspect the goodness of that thing which is forced into the position of being only the lesser of two evils. What I want is not a smaller evil, but a thing absolutely good.

10. So far the first section has been explained. Let us now come to those which follow.⁵³ "But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord. That the wife depart not from her husband (but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband): and that the husband leave not his wife. But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her," and so on to the words "As God hath called each, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all the churches." This passage has no bearing on our present controversy. For he ordains, according to the mind of the Lord, that excepting the cause of fornication, a wife must not be put away, and that a wife who has been put away, may not, so long as her husband lives, be married to another, or at all events that her duty is to be reconciled to her husband. But in the case of those who are already married at the time of conversion, that is to say, supposing one of the two were a believer, he enjoins that the believer shall not put away the unbeliever. And after stating his reason, viz., that the unbeliever who is unwilling to leave the believer becomes thereby a candidate for the faith, he commands, on the other hand, that if the unbeliever reject the faithful one on account of the faith of Christ, the believer ought to depart, lest husband or wife be preferred to Christ, in comparison with Whom we must hold even life itself cheap. Yet at the present day many women despising the Apostle's command, are joined to heathen husbands, and prostitute the temples of Christ to idols. They do not understand that they are part of His body though indeed they are His ribs. The Apostle is lenient to the union of unbelievers, who having (believing) husbands, afterwards come to believe in Christ. He does not extend his indulgence to those women who, although Christians, have been married to heathen husbands. To these he elsewhere says,⁵⁴ "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? For we are a temple of the living God." Although I know that crowds of matrons will be furious against me: although I know that just as they have shamelessly despised the Lord, so they will rave at me who am but a flea and the least of Christians: yet I will speak out what I think. I will say what the Apostle has taught me, that they are not on the side of righteousness, but of iniquity: not of light, but of darkness: that they do not belong to Christ, but to Belial: that they are not temples of the living God, but shrines and idols of the dead. And, if you wish to see more clearly how utterly unlawful it is for a Christian woman to marry a Gentile, consider what the same Apostle says,⁵⁵ "A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth: but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord," that is, to a Christian. He who allows second and third marriages in the Lord, forbids first marriages with a Gentile. Whence Abraham also makes his servant swear upon his thigh, that is, on Christ, Who was to spring from his seed, that he would not bring an alien-born as

a wife for his son Isaac. And Ezra checked an offence of this kind against God by making his countrymen put away their wives. And the prophet Malachi thus speaks,⁵⁶ "Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loveth, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this,⁵⁷ him that teacheth and him that learneth, out of the tents of Jacob, and him that offers an offering unto the Lord of hosts." I have said this that they who compare marriage with virginity, may at least know that such marriages as these are on a lower level than digamy and trigamy.

11. In the above discussion the Apostle has taught that the believer ought not to depart from the unbeliever, but remain in marriage as the faith found them, and that each man whether married or single should continue as he was when baptized into Christ; and then he suddenly introduces the metaphors of circumcision and uncircumcision, of bond and free, and under those metaphors treats of the married and unmarried.⁵⁸ "Was any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing: but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called. Wast thou called being a bondservant? Care not for it: but even if thou canst become free, use it rather. For he that was called in the Lord being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he that was called, being free, is Christ's bondservant. Ye were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men. Brethren, let each man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God." Some, I suppose, will find fault with the Apostle's way of reasoning. I would therefore ask first, What we are to infer from his suddenly passing in a discussion concerning husbands and wives to a comparison of Jew and Gentile, bond and free, and then returning, when this point is settled, to the question about virgins, and telling us "Concerning virgins I have no commandment from the Lord"; what has a comparison of Jew and Gentile, bond and free, to do with wedlock and virginity? In the next place, how are we to understand the words "Hath any been called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised"?⁵⁹ Can a man who has lost his foreskin restore it again at his pleasure? Then, in what sense are we to explain "For he that was called in the Lord, being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman: likewise he that was called, being free, is Christ's bondservant." Fourthly, how is it that he who commanded servants to obey their masters according to the flesh, now says, "Become not bondservants of men." Lastly, how are we to connect with slavery, or with circumcision, his saying "Brethren, let each man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God," which even contradicts his previous opinion. We heard him say "Become not bondservants of men." How can we then possibly abide in that vocation wherein we were called, when many at the time they became believers had masters according to the flesh, whose bondservants they are now forbidden to be? Moreover, what has the argument about our abiding in the vocation wherein we were called, to do with circumcision? for in another place the same Apostle cries aloud "Behold I Paul tell you that, if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing"? We must conclude, therefore, that a higher meaning should be given to circumcision and uncircumcision, bond and free, and that these words must be taken in close connection with what has gone before. "Was anyone called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised." If, he says, at the time you were called and became a believer in Christ, if I say, you were called being circumcised from a wife, that is, unmarried, do not marry a wife, that is, do not become uncircumcised, lest you lay upon the freedom of circumcision and chastity the burden of marriage. Again, if anyone was called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised. You had a wife, he says, when you believed: do not

think the faith of Christ a reason for disagreement, because God called us in peace.⁶⁰ "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God." For neither celibacy nor marriage availeth anything without works, since even faith, which is specially characteristic of Christians, if it have not works, is said to be dead, and vestal virgins and Juno's widows might upon these terms be numbered with the saints. "Let each man in the vocation wherein he was called, therein abide." Whether he had, or had not, a wife when he believed, let him remain in that condition in which he was when called. Accordingly he does not so strongly urge virgins to be married, as forbid divorce. And as he debars those who have wives from putting them away, so he cuts off from virgins the power of being married. "Thou wast called being a slave, heed it not; but even if thou canst become free, use it rather." Even if you have, he says, a wife, and are bound to her, and pay her due, and have not power over your own body; or if, to speak more clearly, you are the bondservant of your wife, be not sad upon that account, nor sigh for the loss of your virginity. But even if you can find some causes of discord, do not, for the sake of thoroughly enjoying the liberty of chastity, seek your own welfare by destroying another. Keep your wife awhile, and do not go too fast for her lagging footsteps: wait till she follows. If you are patient, your spouse will become a sister, "For he that was called in the Lord, being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman: likewise, he that was called being free, is Christ's bondservant." He gives his reasons for not wishing wives to be forsaken. He therefore says, I command that Gentiles who believe on Christ do not abandon the married state in which they were before embracing the faith: for he who had a wife when he became a believer, is not so strictly devoted to the service of God as virgins and unmarried persons. But, in a manner, he has more freedom, and the reins of his bondage are relaxed; and, while he is the bondservant of a wife, he is, so to speak, the freedman of the Lord. Moreover, he who when called by the Lord had not a wife and was free from the bondage of wedlock, he is truly Christ's bondservant. What happiness to be the bondservant, not of a wife but of Christ, to serve not the flesh, but the spirit!⁶¹ "For he who is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." There was some fear that by saying "Wast thou called being a bondservant? Care not for it: but, even if thou canst become free, use it rather," he might seem to have flouted continence, and to have given us up to the slavery of marriage. He therefore makes a remark which removes all cavil: "Ye were bought with a price, become not servants of men." We have been redeemed with the most precious blood of Christ: the Lamb was slain for us, and having been sprinkled with hyssop and the warm drops of His blood, we have rejected poisonous pleasure. Why do we at whose baptism Pharaoh died and all his host was drowned, again turn back in our hearts to Egypt, and after the manna, angels' food, sigh for the garlic and the onions and the cucumbers, and Pharaoh's meat?

12. Having discussed marriage and continency he at length comes to virginity and says⁶² "Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give my judgement, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I think therefore that this is good by reason of the present distress, namely, that it is good for a man to be as he is," Here our opponent goes utterly wild with exultation: this is his strongest battering-ram with which he shakes the wall of virginity. "See," says he, "the Apostle confesses that as regards virgins he has no commandment of the Lord, and he who had with authority laid down the law respecting husbands and wives, does not dare to command what the Lord has not enjoined. And rightly too. For what is enjoined is commanded, what is commanded must be done, and that which must be done implies punishment if it be not done. For it is useless to order a thing to be done and yet leave the individual free to do it or not do

it. If the Lord had commanded virginity He would have seemed to condemn marriage, and to do away with the seed-plot of mankind, of which virginity itself is a growth. If He had cut off the root, how was He to expect fruit? If the foundations were not first laid, how was He to build the edifice, and put on the roof to cover all! Excavators toil hard to remove mountains; the bowels of the earth are pierced in the search for gold. And, when the tiny particles, first by the blast of the furnace, then by the hand of the cunning workman have been fashioned into an ornament, men do not call him blessed who has separated the gold from the dross, but him who wears the beautiful gold. Do not marvel then if, placed as we are, amid temptations of the flesh and incentives to vice, the angelic life be not exacted of us, but merely recommended. If advice be given, a man is free to proffer obedience; if there be a command, he is a servant bound to compliance. "I have no commandment," he says, "of the Lord: but I give my judgement, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." If you have no commandment of the Lord, how dare you give judgement without orders? The Apostle will reply: Do you wish me to give orders where the Lord has offered a favour rather than laid down a law? The great Creator and Fashioner, knowing the weakness of the vessel which he made, left virginity open to those whom He addressed; and shall I, the teacher of the Gentiles, who have become all things to all men that I might gain all, shall I lay upon the necks of weak believers from the very first the burden of perpetual chastity? Let them⁶³ begin with short periods of release from the marriage bond, and give themselves unto prayer, that when they have tasted the sweets of chastity they may desire the perpetual possession of that wherewith they were temporarily delighted. The Lord, when tempted by the Pharisees, and asked whether according to the law of Moses it was permitted to put away a wife, forbade the practice altogether. After weighing His words the disciples said to Him:⁶⁴ "If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry. But He said unto them, all men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are eunuchs, which were made eunuchs by men: and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." The reason is plain why the Apostle said, "concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord." Surely; because the Lord had previously said "All men cannot receive the word, but they to whom it is given," and "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."⁶⁵ The Master of the Christian race offers the reward, invites candidates to the course, holds in His hand the prize of virginity, points to the fountain of purity, and cries aloud⁶⁶ "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." He does not say, you must drink, you must run, willing or unwilling: but whoever is willing and able to run and to drink, he shall conquer, he shall be satisfied. And therefore Christ loves virgins more than others, because they willingly give what was not commanded them. And it indicates greater grace to offer what you are not bound to give, than to render what is exacted of you. The apostles, contemplating the burden of a wife, exclaimed, "If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry." Our Lord thought well of their view. You rightly think, said He, that it is not expedient for a man who is hastening to the kingdom of heaven to take a wife: but it is a hard matter, and all men do not receive the saying, but they to whom it has been given. Some are eunuchs by nature, others by the violence of men. Those eunuchs please Me who are such not of necessity, but of free choice. Willingly do I take them into my bosom who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and in order to worship Me have renounced the condition of their birth. We must now explain the words, "Those who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." If they who have made

themselves eunuchs have the reward of the kingdom of heaven, it follows that they who have not made themselves such cannot be placed with those who have. He who is able, he says, to receive it, let him receive it. It is a mark of great faith and of great virtue, to be the pure temple of God, to offer oneself a whole burnt-offering, and, according to the same apostle, to be holy both in body and in spirit. These are the eunuchs, who thinking themselves dry trees because of their impotence, hear by the mouth of⁶⁷ Isaiah that they have a place prepared in heaven for sons and daughters. Their type is⁶⁸ Ebed-melech the eunuch in Jeremiah, and the eunuch of Queen Candace in the⁶⁹ Acts of the Apostles, who on account of the strength of his faith gained the name of a man. These are they to whom Clement, who was the successor of the Apostle Peter, and of whom the Apostle Paul makes mention, wrote letters, directing almost the whole of his discourse to the subject of virgin purity. After them there is a long series of apostolic men, martyrs, and men illustrious no less for holiness than for eloquence, with whom we may very easily become acquainted through their own writings.⁷⁰ "I think, therefore," he says, "that this is good for the present distress." What is this distress which, in contempt of the marriage tie, longs for the liberty of virginity?⁷¹ "Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days." We have not here a condemnation of harlots and brothels, of whose damnation there is no doubt, but of the swelling womb, and wailing infancy, the fruit as well as the work of marriage. "For it is good for a man so to be." If it is good for a man so to be, it is bad for a man not so to be.⁷² "Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife." Each one of us has his appointed bounds; let me have what is mine, and keep your own. If thou art bound to a wife, give her not a bill of divorce. If I am loosed from a wife, I will not seek a wife. As I do not dissolve marriages once contracted: so you should not bind what is loosed. And at the same time the meaning of the words must be taken into account. He who has a wife is regarded as a debtor, and is said to be uncircumcised, to be the servant of his wife, and like bad servants to be bound. But he who has no wife, in the first place owes no man anything, then is circumcised, thirdly is free, lastly, is loosed.

13. Let us run through the remaining points, for our author is so voluminous that we cannot linger over every detail. "But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned." It is one thing not to sin, another to do good. "And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned." Not that virgin who has once for all dedicated herself to the service of God: for, should one of these marry, she will have damnation, because she has made of no account her first faith. But, if our adversary objects that this saying relates to widows, we reply that it applies with still greater force to virgins, since marriage is forbidden even to widows whose previous marriage had been lawful. For virgins who marry after consecration are rather incestuous than adulterous. And, for fear he should by saying, "And if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned," again stimulate the unmarried to be married, he immediately checks himself, and by introducing another consideration, invalidates his previous concession. "Yet," says he, "such shall have tribulation in the flesh." Who are they who shall have tribulation in the flesh? They to whom he had before indulgently said "But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Yet such shall have tribulation in the flesh." We in our inexperience thought that marriage had at least the joys of the flesh. But if they who are married have tribulation even in the flesh, which is imagined to be the sole source of their pleasure, what else is there to marry for, when in the spirit, and in the mind, and in the flesh itself there is tribulation. "But I would spare you." Thus, he says, I allege tribulation as a motive, as though there were not greater obligations to refrain. "But this I say, brethren, the time is shortened, that henceforth both those

that have wives may be as though they had none." I am by no means now discussing virgins, of whose happiness no one entertains a doubt. I am coming to the married. The time is short, the Lord is at hand. Even though we lived nine hundred years, as did men of old, yet we ought to think that short which must one day have an end, and cease to be. But, as things are, and it is not so much the joy as the tribulation of marriage that is short, why do we take wives whom we shall soon be compelled to lose?⁷³ "And those that weep, and those that rejoice, and those that buy, and those that use the world, as though they wept not, as though they rejoiced not, as though they bought not, as though they did not use the world: for the fashion of this world passeth away." If the world, which comprehends all things, passes away, yea if the fashion and intercourse of the world vanishes like the clouds, amongst the other works of the world, marriage too will vanish away. For after the resurrection there will be no wedlock. But if death be the end of marriage, why do we not voluntarily embrace the inevitable? And why do we not, encouraged by the hope of the reward, offer to God that which must be wrung from us against our will. "He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and is⁷⁴ divided." Let us look at the difference between the cares of the virgin, and those of the married man. The virgin longs to please the Lord, the husband to please his wife, and that he may please her he is careful for the things of the world, which will of course pass away with the world. "And he is divided," that is to say, is distracted with manifold cares and miseries. This is not the place to describe the difficulties of marriage, and to revel in rhetorical commonplaces. I think I delivered myself fully as regards this point in my argument against⁷⁵ Helvidius, and in the book which I addressed to⁷⁶ Eustochium. At all events⁷⁷ Tertullian, while still a young man, gave himself full play with this subject. And my teacher,⁷⁸ Gregory of Nazianzus, discussed virginity and marriage in some Greek verses. I now briefly beg my reader to note that in the Latin manuscripts we have the reading "there is a difference also between the virgin and the wife." The words, it is true, have a meaning of their own, and have by me, as well as by others, been so explained as showing the bearing of the passage. Yet they lack apostolic authority, since the Apostle's words are as we have translated them-"He is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife,⁷⁹ and he is divided." Having laid down this, he passes to the virgins and the continent, and says "The woman that is unmarried and a virgin thinks of the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit." Not every unmarried woman is also a virgin. But every virgin is of course unmarried. It may be, that regard for elegance of expression led him to repeat the same idea by means of another word and speak of "a woman unmarried and a virgin"; or at least he may have wished to give to "unmarried" the definite meaning of "virgin," so that we might not suppose him to include harlots, united to no one by the fixed bonds of wedlock, among the "unmarried." Of what, then, does she that is unmarried and a virgin think? "The things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit." Supposing there were nothing else, and that no greater reward followed virginity, this would be motive enough for her choice, to think of the things of the Lord. But he immediately points out the contents of her thought-that she may be holy both in body and spirit. For there are virgins in the flesh, not in the spirit, whose body is intact, their soul corrupt. But that virgin is a sacrifice to Christ, whose mind has not been defiled by thought, nor her flesh by lust. On the other hand, she who is married thinks of the things of the world, how she may please her husband. Just as the man who has a wife is anxious for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, so the married woman thinks of the things of the world, how she may please her husband. But we are not of this

world, which lieth in wickedness, the fashion of which passeth away, and concerning which the Lord said to the Apostles,⁸⁰ "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own." And lest perchance someone might suppose that he was laying the heavy burden of chastity on unwilling shoulders, he at once adds his reasons for persuading to it, and says:⁸¹ "And this I say for your profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is seemly, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." The Latin words do not convey the meaning of the Greek. What words shall we use to render *Proij to\ eusxhmon kali eu0pro/sedron tw Kuri/wa0perispa/stwj*? The difficulty of translation accounts for the fact that the clause is completely wanting in Latin manuscripts. Let us, however, use the passage as we have translated it. The Apostle does not lay a snare upon us, nor does he compel us to be what we do not wish to be; but he gives his advice as to what is fair and seemly, he would have us attend upon the Lord and ever be anxious about that service, and await the Lord's will, so that like active and well-armed soldiers we may obey orders, and may do so without distraction, which, according to⁸² Ecclesiastes, is given to the men of this world that they may be exercised thereby. But if anyone considers that his virgin, that is, his flesh, is wanton and boiling with lust, and cannot be bridled, and he must do one of two things, either take a wife or fall, let him do what he will, he does not sin if he marry. Let him do, he says, what he will, not what he ought. He does not sin if he marry a wife; yet, he does not well if he marry:⁸³ "But he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power as touching his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin, shall do well. So then both he that giveth his own virgin in marriage doeth well; and he that giveth her not in marriage shall do better." With marked propriety he had previously said "He who marries a wife does not sin": here he tells us "He that keepeth his own virgin doeth well." But it is one thing not to sin, another to do well.⁸⁴ "Depart from evil," he says, "and do good." The former we forsake, the latter we follow. In this last lies perfection. But whereas he says "and he that giveth his virgin in marriage doeth well," it might be supposed that our remark does not hold good; he therefore forthwith detracts from this seeming good and puts it in the shade by comparing it with another, and saying, "and he that giveth her not in marriage shall do better." If he had not intended to draw the inference of doing better, he would never have previously referred to doing well. But where there is something good and something better, the reward is not in both cases the same, and where the reward is not one and the same, there of course the gifts are different. The difference, then, between marriage and virginity is as great as that between not sinning and doing well; nay rather, to speak less harshly, as great as between good and better.

14. He has ended his discussion of wedlock and virginity, and has carefully steered between the two precepts without turning to the right hand or to the left. He has followed the royal road and fulfilled the command⁸⁵ not to be righteous over much. Now again he compares monogamy with digamy, and as he had subordinated marriage to virginity, so he makes second marriages inferior to first, and says,⁸⁶ "A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. But she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgement: and I think that I also have the Spirit of God." He allows second marriages, but to such persons as wish for them and are not able to contain; lest,⁸⁷ having "waxed wanton against Christ," they desire to marry, "having condemnation, because they have rejected their first faith;" and he makes the concession because many had already turned aside after Satan.⁸⁸ "But," says he, "they will be happier if they abide as they are," and he immediately adds the weight of Apostolic authority, "after my judgement." And that an Apostle's authority might not,

like that of an ordinary man, be without weight, he added, "and I think that I also have the Spirit of God." When he incites to continence, it is not by the judgement or spirit of man, but by the judgement and Spirit of God; when, however, he grants the indulgence of marriage, he does not mention the Spirit of God, but weighs his judgement with wisdom, and adapts the severity of the strain to the weakness of the individual. In this sense we must take the whole of the following passage:⁸⁹ "For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man." And similarly the words to Timothy,⁹⁰ "I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give none occasion to the adversary for reviling: for already some are turned aside after Satan," and so on. For as on account of the danger of fornication he allows virgins to marry, and makes that excusable which in itself is not desirable, so to avoid this same fornication, he allows second marriages to widows. For it is better to know a single husband, though he be a second or third, than to have many paramours: that is, it is more tolerable for a woman to prostitute herself to one man than to many. At all events this is so if the Samaritan woman in John's Gospel who said she had her sixth husband was reproved by the Lord because he was not her husband. For where there are more husbands than one the proper idea of a husband, who is a single person, is destroyed. At the beginning one rib was turned into one wife. "And they two," he says, "shall be one flesh": not three, or four; otherwise, how can they be any longer two, if they are several. Lamech, a man of blood and a murderer, was the first who divided one flesh between two wives. Fratricide and digamy were abolished by the same punishment—that of the deluge. The one was avenged seven times, the other seventy times seven. The guilt is as widely different as are the numbers. What the holiness of second marriage is, appears from this—that a person twice married⁹¹ cannot be enrolled in the ranks of the clergy, and so the Apostle tells Timothy,⁹² "Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man." The whole command concerns those widows who are supported on the alms of the Church. The age is therefore limited, so that those only may receive the food of the poor who can no longer work. And at the same time, consider that she who has had two husbands, even though she be a widow, decrepit, and in want, is not a worthy recipient of the Church's funds. But if she be deprived of the bread of charity, how much more is she deprived of that bread which cometh down from heaven, and of which if a man eat unworthily, he shall be guilty of outrage offered to the body and the blood of Christ?

15. The passages, however, which I have adduced in support of my position and in which it is permitted to widows, if they so desire, to marry again, are interpreted by some concerning those widows who had lost their husbands and were found in that condition when they became Christians. For, supposing a person baptized and her husband dead, it would not be consistent if the Apostle were to bid her marry another, when he enjoins even those who have wives to be as though they had them not. And this is why the number of wives which a man may take is not defined, because when Christian baptism has been received, even though a third or a fourth wife has been taken, she is reckoned as the first. Otherwise, if, after baptism and after the death of a first husband, a second is taken why should not a sixth after the death of the second, third, fourth, and fifth, and so on? For it is possible, that through some strange misfortune, or by the judgement of God cutting short repeated marriages, a young woman may have several husbands, while an

old woman may be left a widow by her first husband in extreme age. The first Adam was married once: the second was unmarried. Let the supporters of second marriages shew us as their leader a third Adam who was twice married. But granted that Paul allowed second marriages: upon the same grounds it follows that he allows even third and fourth marriages, or a woman may marry as often as her husband dies. The Apostle was forced to choose many things which he did not like. He circumcised Timothy, and shaved his own head, practised going barefoot, let his hair grow long, and cut it at Cenchrea. And he had certainly chastised the Galatians, and blamed Peter because for the sake of Jewish observances he separated himself from the Gentiles. As then in other points connected with the discipline of the Church he was a Jew to Jews, a Gentile to Gentiles, and was made all things to all men, that he might gain all: so too he allowed second marriages to incontinent persons, and did not limit the number of marriages, in order that women, although they saw themselves permitted to take a second husband, in the same way as a third or a fourth was allowed, might blush to take a second, lest they should be compared to those who were three or four times married. If more than one husband be allowed, it makes no difference whether he be a second or a third, because there is no longer a question of single marriage.⁹³ "All things are lawful, but not all things are expedient." I do not condemn second, nor third, nor, pardon the expression, eighth marriages: I will go still further and say that I welcome even a penitent whoremonger. Things that are equally lawful must be weighed in an even balance.

16. But he takes us to the Old Testament, and beginning with Adam goes on to Zacharias and Elizabeth. He next confronts us with Peter and the rest of the Apostles. We are therefore bound to traverse the same course of argument and show that chastity was always preferred to the condition of marriage. And as regards Adam and Eve we must maintain that before the fall they were virgins in Paradise: but after they sinned, and were cast out of Paradise, they were immediately married. Then we have the passage,⁹⁴ "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the twain shall become one flesh," in explanation of which the Apostle straightway adds,⁹⁵ "This mystery is great, but I speak in regard of Christ, and of the Church." Christ in the flesh is a virgin, in the spirit he is once married. For he has one Church, concerning which the same Apostle says,⁹⁶ "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church." If Christ loves the Church holily, chastely, and without spot, let husbands also love their wives in chastity. And let everyone know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles who know not God:⁹⁷ "For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification: seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there cannot be male and female, Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Christ is all, and in all." The link of marriage is not found in the image of the Creator. When difference of sex is done away, and we are putting off the old man, and putting on the new, then we are being born again into Christ a virgin, who was both born of a virgin, and is born again through⁹⁸ virginity. And whereas he says "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," it was necessary first to plant the wood and to let it grow, so that there might be an after-growth for cutting down. And at the same time we must bear in mind the meaning of the phrase, "replenish the earth." Marriage replenishes the earth, virginity fills Paradise. This too we must observe, at least if we would faithfully follow the Hebrew, that while Scripture on the first, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth days relates that, having finished the works of each, "God saw that it was good," on the second day it omitted this altogether, leaving us

to understand that two is not a good number because it destroys unity, and prefigures the marriage compact. Hence it was that all the animals which Noah took into the ark by pairs were unclean. Odd numbers denote cleanness. And yet by the double number is represented another mystery: that not even in beasts and unclean birds is second marriage approved. For unclean animals went in two and two, and clean ones by sevens, so that Noah after the flood might be able to immediately offer to God sacrifices from the latter.

17. But if Enoch was translated, and Noah was preserved at the deluge, I do not think that Enoch was translated because he had a wife, but because he was⁹⁹ the first to call upon God and to believe in the Creator; and the Apostle Paul fully instructs us concerning him in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Noah, moreover, who was preserved as a kind of second root for the human race, must of course be preserved together with his wife and sons, although in this there is a Scripture mystery. The ark,¹⁰⁰ according to the Apostle Peter, was a type of the Church, in which eight souls were saved. When Noah entered into it, both he and his sons were separated from their wives; but when he landed from it, they united in pairs, and what had been separated in the ark, that is, in the Church, was joined together in the intercourse of the world. And at the same time if the ark had many compartments and little chambers, and was made with second and third stories, and was filled with different beasts, and was furnished with dwellings, great or small, according to the kind of animal, I think all this diversity in the compartments was a figure of the manifold character of the Church.

18. He raises the objection that when God gave his second blessing, permission was granted to eat flesh, which had not in the first benediction been allowed. He should know that just as divorce according to the Saviour's word was not permitted from the beginning, but on account of the hardness of our heart was a concession of Moses to the human race, so too the eating of flesh was unknown until the deluge. But after the deluge, like the quails given in the desert to the murmuring people, the poison of flesh-meat was offered to our teeth. The Apostle writing to the Ephesians¹⁰¹ teaches that God had purposed in the fulness of time to sum up and renew in Christ Jesus all things which are in heaven and in earth. Whence also the Saviour himself in the Revelation of John says,¹⁰² "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." At the beginning of the human race we neither ate flesh, nor gave bills of divorce, nor suffered circumcision for a sign. Thus we reached the deluge. But after the deluge, together with the giving of the law which no one could fulfil, flesh was given for food, and divorce was allowed to hard-hearted men, and the knife of circumcision was applied, as though the hand of God had fashioned us with something superfluous. But once Christ has come in the end of time, and Omega passed into Alpha and turned the end into the beginning, we are no longer allowed divorce, nor are we circumcised, nor do we eat flesh, for the Apostle says,¹⁰³ "It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine." For wine as well as flesh was consecrated after the deluge.

19. What shall I say of Abraham who had three wives, as Jovinianus says, and received circumcision as a sign of his faith? If we follow him in the number of his wives, let us also follow him in circumcision. We must not partly follow, partly reject him. Isaac, moreover, the husband of one wife, Rebecca, prefigures the Church of Christ, and reproves the wantonness of second marriage. And if Jacob had two pairs of wives and concubines, and our opponent will not admit that blear-eyed Leah, ugly and prolific, was a type of the synagogue, but that Rachel, beautiful and long barren, indicated the mystery of the Church, let me remind him that when Jacob did this thing

he was among the Assyrians, and in Mesopotamia in bondage to a hard master. But when he wished to enter the holy land, he raised on Mount Galeed¹⁰⁴ the heap of witness, in token that the lord of Mesopotamia had failed to find anything among his baggage, and there swore that he would never return to the place of his bondage; and when,¹⁰⁵ after wrestling with the angel at the brook Jabbok, he began to limp, because the great muscle of his thigh was withered, he at once gained the name of Israel.¹⁰⁶ Then the wife whom he once loved, and for whom he had served, was slain by the son of sorrow near Bethlehem which was destined to be the birthplace of our Lord, the herald of virginity: and the intimacies of Mesopotamia died in the land of the Gospel.

20. But I wonder why he set¹⁰⁷ Judah and Tamar before us for an example, unless perchance even harlots give him pleasure; or¹⁰⁸ Onan who was slain because he grudged his brother seed. Does he imagine that we approve of any sexual intercourse except for the procreation of children? As regards Moses, it is clear that he would have been in peril at the inn, if¹⁰⁹ Sephora which is by interpretation a bird, had not circumcised her son, and cut off the foreskin of marriage with the knife which prefigured the Gospel. This is that Moses who when he saw a great vision and heard an angel, or the Lord speaking in the bush,¹¹⁰ could not by any means approach to him without first loosing the latchet of his shoe, that is, putting off the bonds of marriage. And we need not be surprised at this in the case of one who was a prophet, lawgiver, and the friend of God, seeing that all the people when about to draw nigh to Mount Sinai, and to hear the voice speaking to them, were commanded to sanctify themselves in three days, and keep themselves from their wives. I am out of order in violating historical sequence, but I may point out that the same thing was said by¹¹¹ Ahimelech the priest to David when he fled to Nob: "If only the young men have kept themselves from women." And David answered, "of a truth about these three days." For the shew-bread, like the body of Christ, might not be eaten by those who rose from the marriage bed. And in passing we ought to consider the words "if only the young men have kept themselves from women." The truth is that, in view of the purity of the body of Christ, all sexual intercourse is unclean. In the law also it is enjoined that the¹¹² high priest must not marry any but a virgin, nor must he take to wife a widow. If a virgin and a widow are on the same level, how is it that one is taken, the other rejected?¹¹³ And the widow of a priest is bidden abide in the house of her father, and not to contract a second marriage.¹¹⁴ If the sister of a priest dies in virginity, just as the priest is commanded to go to the funeral of his father and mother, so must he go to hers. But if she be married, she is despised as though she belonged not to him. He who has¹¹⁵ married a wife, and he who has planted a vineyard, an image of the propagation of children, is forbidden to go to the battle. For he who is the slave of his wife cannot be the Lord's soldier. And the layer in the tabernacle was cast from the mirrors of the women who¹¹⁶ fasted, signifying the bodies of pure virgins: And within,¹¹⁷ in the sanctuary, both cherubim, and mercy-seat, and the ark of the covenant, and the table of shew-bread, and the candle-stick, and the censer, were made of the purest gold. For silver might not be brought into the holy of holies.

21. I must not linger over Moses when my purpose is at full speed to lightly touch on each topic and to sketch the outline of a proper knowledge of my subject. I will pass to Joshua the son of Nun, who was previously called Ause, or better, as in the Hebrew, Osee, that is, Saviour. For he,¹¹⁸ according to the epistle of Jude, saved the people of Israel and led them forth out of Egypt, and brought them into the land of promise. As soon as this Joshua¹¹⁹ reached the Jordan, the waters of marriage, which had ever flowed in the land, dried up and stood in one heap; and the

whole people, barefooted and on dry ground, crossed over, and came to Gilgal, and there was a second time circumcised. If we take this literally, it cannot possibly stand. For if we had two foreskins, or if another could grow after the first was cut off, there would be room for speaking of a second circumcision. But the meaning is that Joshua circumcised the people who had crossed the desert, with the Gospel knife, and he circumcised them with a stone knife, that what in the case of Moses' son was prefigured in a few might under Joshua be fulfilled in all. Moreover, the very foreskins were heaped together and buried, and covered with earth, and the fact that the reproach of Egypt was taken away, and the name of the place, Gilgal, which is by interpretation¹²⁰ revelation, show that while the people wandered in the desert uncircumcised their eyes were blinded. Let us see what follows. After this Gospel circumcision and the consecration of twelve stones at the place of revelation, the Passover was immediately celebrated, a lamb was slain for them, and they ate the food of the Holy Land. Joshua went forth, and was met by the Prince of the host, sword in hand, that is either to shew that he was ready to fight for the circumcised people, or to sever the tie of marriage. And in the same way that Moses was commanded, so was he:¹²¹ "loose thy shoe, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." For if the armed host of the Lord was represented by the trumpets of the priests, we may see in Jericho a type of the overthrow of the world by the preaching of the Gospel. And to pass over endless details (for it is not my purpose now to unfold all the mysteries of the Old Testament),¹²² five kings who previously reigned in the land of promise, and opposed the Gospel army, were overcome in battle with Joshua. I think it is clearly to be understood that before the Lord led his people from Egypt and circumcised them, sight, smell, taste, hearing, and touch had the dominion, and that to these, as to five princes, everything was subject. And when they¹²³ took refuge in the cave of the body and in a place of darkness, Jesus entered the body itself and slew them, that the source of their power might be the instrument of their death.

22. But it is now time for us to raise the standard of Joshua's chastity. It is written that Moses had a wife. Now Moses is interpreted both by our Lord and by the Apostle to mean the law:¹²⁴ "They have Moses and the prophets." And¹²⁵ "Death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression." And no one doubts that in both passages Moses signifies the law. We read that Moses, that is the law, had a wife: shew me then in the same way that Joshua the son of Nun had either wife or children, and if you can do so, I will confess that I am beaten. He certainly received the fairest spot in the division of the land of Judah, and died, not in the twenties, which are ever unlucky in Scripture-by them are reckoned the years of¹²⁶ Jacob's service,¹²⁷ the price of Joseph, and¹²⁸ sundry presents which Esau who was fond of them received-but in the¹²⁹ tens, whose praises we have often sung; and he was buried in¹³⁰ Thamnath Sare, that is, most perfect sovereignty, or among those of a new covering, to signify the crowds of virgins, covered by the Saviour's aid on Mount Ephraim, that is, the fruitful mountain; on the north of the Mountain of Gaash, which is, being interpreted, disturbance: for¹³¹ "Mount Sion is on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King," is ever exposed to hatred, and in every trial says¹³² "But my feet had well nigh slipped." The book which bears the name of Joshua ends with his burial. Again in the book of Judges we read of him as though he had risen and come to life again, and by way of summary his works are extolled. We read too¹³³ "So Joshua sent the people away, every man unto his inheritance, that they might possess the land." And "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua," and so on. There immediately follows: "And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old." Moses, moreover, only saw the

land of promise; he could not enter: and¹³⁴ "he died in the land of Moab, and the Lord buried him in the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." Let us compare the burial of the two: Moses died in the land of Moab, Joshua in the land of Judaea. The former was buried in a valley over against the house of Phogor, which is, being interpreted, reproach (for the Hebrew Phogor corresponds to Priapus¹³⁵); the latter in Mount Ephraim on the north of Mount Gaash. And in the simple expressions of the sacred Scriptures there is always a more subtle meaning. The Jews gloried in children and child-bearing; and the barren woman, who had not offspring in Israel, was accursed; but blessed was he whose seed was in Sion, and his family in Jerusalem; and part of the highest blessing was,¹³⁶ "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine, in the innermost parts of thy house, thy children like olive plants, round about thy table." Therefore his grave is described as placed in a valley over against the house of an idol which was in a special sense consecrated to lust. But we who fight under Joshua our leader, even to the present day know not where Moses was buried. For we despise Phogor, and all his shame, knowing that they who are in the flesh cannot please God. And the Lord before the flood had said¹³⁷ "My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for that he also is flesh." Wherefore, when Moses died, the people of Israel mourned for him; but Joshua like one on his way to victory was unmourned. For marriage ends at death; virginity thereafter begins to wear the crown.

23. Next he brings forward Samson, and does not consider that the Lord's Nazarite was once shaven bald by a woman. And although Samson continues to be a type of the Saviour because he loved a harlot from among the Gentiles, which harlot corresponds to the Church, and because he slew more enemies in his death than he did in his life, yet he does not set an example of conjugal chastity. And he surely reminds us¹³⁸ of Jacob's prophecy-he was shaken by his runaway steed, bitten by an adder and fell backwards. But why he enumerated Deborah, and Barak, and the wife of Heber the Kenite, I am at a loss to understand. For it is one thing to draw up a list of military commanders in historical sequence, another to indicate certain figures of marriage which cannot be found in them. And whereas he prefers the fidelity of the father Jephthah to the tears of the virgin daughter, that makes for us. For we are not commending virgins of the world so much as those who are virgins for Christ's sake, and most Hebrews blame the father for the rash vow he made,¹³⁹ "If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into mine hand, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, it shall be for the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." Supposing (they say) a dog or an ass had met him, what would he have done? Their meaning is that God so ordered events that he who had improvidently made a vow, should learn his error by the death of his daughter. And if Samuel who was brought up in the tabernacle married a wife, how does that prejudice virginity? As if at the present day also there were not many married priests, and as though the Apostle did not¹⁴⁰ describe a bishop as the husband of one wife, having children with all purity. At the same time we must not forget that Samuel was a Levite, not a priest or high-priest. Hence it was that his mother made for him a linen ephod, that is, a linen garment to go over the shoulders, which was the proper dress of the Levites and of the inferior order. And so he is not named in the Psalms among the priests, but among those who call upon the name of the Lord:¹⁴¹ "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among those who call upon his name." For¹⁴² Levi begat Kohath, Kohath begat Amminadab, Amminadab begat Korah, Korah begat Assir, Assir begat Elkanah, Elkanah begat Zuph, Zuph begat Tahath, Tahath begat Eliel, Eliel begat Jeroham, Jeroham begat Elkanah, Elkanah begat Samuel. And no one doubts that the priests sprang from

the stock of Aaron, Eleazar, and Phinees. And seeing that they had wives, they would be rightly brought against us, if, led away by the error of the Encratites, we were to maintain that marriage deserved censure, and our high priest were not after the order of Melchizedek, without father, without mother,¹⁴³ Agenealo/ghtoj, that is, unmarried. And much fruit truly did Samuel reap from his children! he himself pleased God, but¹⁴⁴ begat such children as displeased the Lord. But if in support of second marriage, he urges the instance of Boaz and Ruth, let him know that in the Gospel (S. Matt. i. 6) to typify the Church even Rahab the harlot is reckoned among our Lord's ancestors.

24. He boasts that David bought his wife for two hundred foreskins. But he should remember that David had numerous other wives, and afterwards received Michal, Saul's daughter, whom her father had delivered to another, and when he was old got heat from the embrace of the Shunammite maiden. And I do not say this because I am bold enough to disparage holy men, but because it is one thing to live under the law, another to live under the Gospel. David slew Uriah the Hittite and committed adultery with Bathsheba. And because he was a man of blood-the reference is not, as some think, to his wars, but to the¹⁴⁵ murder-he was not permitted to build a temple of the Lord. But as for us,¹⁴⁶ if we cause one of the least to stumble, and if we say to a brother¹⁴⁷ Raca, or¹⁴⁸ use our eyes improperly, it were good that a millstone were hanged about our neck, we shall be in danger of Gehenna, and a mere glance will be reckoned to us for adultery. He passes on to Solomon, through whom wisdom itself sang its own praises. Seeing that not content with dwelling upon his praises, he calls him uxorious, I am surprised that he did not add the words of the Canticles:¹⁴⁹ "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and maidens without number," and those of the First Book of Kings;¹⁵⁰ And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and others without number." These are they who turned away his heart from the Lord: and yet before he had many wives, and fell into sins of the flesh, at the beginning of his reign and in his early years he built a temple to the Lord. For every one is judged not for what he will be, but for what he is. But if Jovinianus approves the example of Solomon, he will no longer be in favour of second and third marriages only, but unless he has seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, he cannot be the king's antitype or attain to his merit. I earnestly again and again remind you, my reader, that I am compelled to speak as I do, and that I do not disparage our predecessors under the law, but am well aware that they served their generation according to their circumstances, and fulfilled the Lord's command to increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And what is more they were figures of those that were to come. But we to whom it is said,¹⁵¹ "The time is shortened, that henceforth those that have wives may be as though they had none," have a different command, and for us virginity is consecrated by the Virgin Saviour.

25. What folly it was to include Elijah and Elisha in a list of married men, is plain without a word from me. For, since John Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and John was a virgin, it is clear that he came not only in Elijah's spirit, but also in his bodily chastity. Then the passage relating to Hezekiah might be adduced (though Jovinianus with his wonted stupidity did not notice it), in which after his recovery and the addition of fifteen years to his life he said, "Now will I beget children." It must be remembered, however, that in the Hebrew texts the passage is not so, but runs thus:¹⁵² "The father to the children shall make known thy faithfulness." Nor need we wonder that Huldah, the prophetess, and wife of Shallum, was¹⁵³ consulted by Josiah, King of Judah,

when the captivity was approaching and the wrath of the Lord was falling upon Jerusalem: since it is the rule of Scripture when holy men fail, to praise women to the reproach of men. And it is superfluous to speak of Daniel, for the Hebrews to the present day affirm that the three youths were eunuchs, in accordance with the declaration of God which Isaiah utters to Hezekiah:¹⁵⁴ "And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away: and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon." And again in Daniel we read:¹⁵⁵ "And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring in certain of the children of Israel, even of the seed royal and of the nobles: youth in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science." The conclusion is that if Daniel and the three youths were chosen from the seed royal, and if Scripture foretold that there should be eunuchs of the seed royal, these men were those who were made eunuchs. If he meets us with the argument that in Ezekiel¹⁵⁶ it is said that Noah, Daniel and Job in a sinful land could not free their sons and daughters, we reply that the words are used hypothetically. Noah and Job were not in existence at that time: we know that they lived many ages before. And the meaning is this: if there were such and such men in a sinful land, they shall not be able to save their own sons and daughters: because the righteousness of the father shall not save the son, nor shall the sin of one be imputed to another.¹⁵⁷ "For the soul that sinneth, it shall die." This, too, must be said, that Daniel, as the history of his book shows, was taken captive with King Jehoiakim at the same time that Ezekiel was also led into captivity. How then could he have sons who was still a youth? And only three years had elapsed when he was brought in to wait upon the king. Let no one suppose that Ezekiel at this time remembers Daniel as a man, not as a youth; for "It came to pass," he says,¹⁵⁸ "in the sixth year," that is of King Jehoiakim, "in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month:" and, "as I sat in my house, and the elders of Judah sat before me." Yet on that same day it was said to him,¹⁵⁹ "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it." Daniel was therefore a youth, and known to the people, either on account of his interpretation of the king's dreams,¹⁶⁰ or on account of the release of Susannah, and the slaying of the elders. And it is clearly proved that at the time these things were spoken of Noah, Daniel, and Job, Daniel was still a youth and could not have had sons and daughters, whom he might save by his righteousness. So far concerning the Law.

26. Coming to the Gospel he sets before us Zacharias and Elizabeth, Peter and his mother-in-law, and, with a shamelessness to which we have now grown accustomed, fails to understand that they, too, ought to have been reckoned among those who served the Law. For the Gospel had no being before the crucifixion of Christ—it was consecrated by His passion and by His blood. In accordance with this rule Peter and the other Apostles (I must give Jovinianus something now and then out of my abundance) had indeed wives, but those which they had taken before they knew the Gospel. But once they were received into the Apostolate, they forsook the offices of marriage. For when Peter, representing the Apostles, says to the Lord:¹⁶¹ "Lo we have left all and followed thee," the Lord answered him,¹⁶² "Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the world to come eternal life." But if, in order to show that all the Apostles had wives, he meets us with the words¹⁶³ "Have we no right to lead about women or wives" (for *gunh* in Greek has both meanings) "even as the rest of the apostles, and Cephas, and the brethren of the Lord?" let him add what is found in the Greek copies, "Have we no right to lead about women that are sisters, or wives?" This makes it clear that the writer referred to other holy

women, who, in accordance with Jewish custom, ministered to their teachers of their substance, as we read was the practice with even our Lord himself. Where there is a previous reference to eating and drinking, and the outlay of money, and mention is afterwards made of women that are sisters, it is quite clear, as we have said, that we must understand, not wives, but those women who ministered of their substance. And we read the same account in the Old Testament of the Shunammite who was wont to welcome Elisha, and to put for him a table, and bread, and a candlestick, and the rest. At all events if we take *gunaikaj* to mean wives, not women, the addition of the word sisters destroys the effect of the word wives, and shews that they were related in spirit, not by wedlock. Nevertheless, with the exception of the Apostle Peter, it is not openly stated that the Apostles had wives; and since the statement is made of one while nothing is said about the rest, we must understand that those of whom Scripture gives no such description had no wives. Yet Jovinianus, who has arrayed against us Zacharias and Elizabeth, Peter and his wife's mother, should know, that John was the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, that is, a virgin was the offspring of marriage, the Gospel of the law, chastity of matrimony; so that by a virgin prophet the virgin Lord might be both announced and baptized. But we might say concerning Peter, that he had a mother-in-law when he believed, and no longer had a wife, although in the¹⁶⁴ "Sentences" we read of both his wife and daughter. But for the present our argument must be based wholly on Scripture. He has made his appeal to the Apostles, because he thinks that they, who hold the chief authority in our moral system and are the typical Christian teachers, were not virgins. If, then, we allow that they were not virgins (and, with the exception of Peter, the point cannot be proved), yet I must tell him that it is to the Apostles that the words of Isaiah relate:¹⁶⁵ "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, we should have been like unto Gomorrah." So, then, they who were by birth Jews could not under the Gospel recover the virginity which they had lost in Judaism. And yet John, one of the disciples, who is related to have been the youngest of the Apostles, and who was a virgin when he embraced Christianity, remained a virgin, and on that account was more beloved by our Lord, and lay upon the breast of Jesus. And what Peter, who had had a wife, did not dare ask,¹⁶⁶ he requested John to ask. And after the resurrection, when Mary Magdalene told them that the Lord had risen,¹⁶⁷ they both ran to the sepulchre, but John outran Peter. And when they were fishing in the ship on the lake of Gennesaret, Jesus stood upon the shore, and the Apostles knew not who it was they saw;¹⁶⁸ the virgin alone recognized a virgin, and said to Peter, "It is the Lord." Again, after hearing the prediction that he must be bound by another, and led whither he would not, and must suffer on the cross. Peter said, "Lord what shall this man do?" being unwilling to desert John, with whom he had always been united. Our Lord said to him, "What is that to thee if I wish him so to be?" Whence the saying went abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die. Here we have a proof that virginity does not die, and that the defilement of marriage is not washed away by the blood of martyrdom, but virginity abides with Christ, and its sleep is not death but a passing to another state. If, however, Jovinianus should obstinately contend that John was not a virgin, (whereas we have maintained that his virginity was the cause of the special love our Lord bore to him), let him explain, if he was not a virgin, why it was that he was loved more than the other Apostles. But you say,¹⁶⁹ the Church was rounded upon Peter: although¹⁷⁰ elsewhere the same is attributed to all the Apostles, and they all receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the strength of the Church depends upon them all alike, yet one among the twelve is chosen so that when a head has been appointed, there may be no occasion for schism. But why was not John chosen, who was a

virgin? Deference was paid to age, because Peter was the elder: one who was a youth, I may say almost a boy, could not be set over men of advanced age; and a good master who was bound to remove every occasion of strife among his disciples, and who had said to them,¹⁷¹ "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," and,¹⁷² "He that is the greater among you, let him be the least of all," would not be thought to afford cause of envy against the youth whom he had loved. We maybe sure that John was then a boy because ecclesiastical history most clearly proves that he lived to the reign of Trajan, that is, he fell asleep in the sixty-eighth year after our Lord's passion, as I have briefly noted in my treatise on Illustrious Men.¹⁷³ Peter is an Apostle, and John is an Apostle-the one a married man, the other a virgin; but Peter is an Apostle only, John is both an Apostle and an Evangelist, and a prophet. An Apostle, because he wrote to the Churches as a master; an Evangelist, because he composed a Gospel, a thing which no other of the Apostles, excepting Matthew, did; a prophet, for he saw in the island of Patmos, to which he had been banished by the Emperor Domitian as a martyr for the Lord, an Apocalypse containing the boundless mysteries of the future Tertullian, more over, relates that he was sent to Rome, and that having been plunged into a jar of boiling oil he came out fresher and more active than when he went in. But his very Gospel is widely different from the rest. Matthew as though he were writing of a man begins thus: "The book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham;" Luke begins with the priesthood of Zacharias; Mark with a prophecy of the prophets Malachi and Isaiah. The first has the face of a man, on account of the genealogical table; the second, the face of a calf, on account of the priesthood; the third, the face of a lion, on account of the voice of one crying in the desert,¹⁷⁴ "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." But John like an eagle soars aloft, and reaches the Father Himself, and says,¹⁷⁵ "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God," and so on. The virgin writer expounded mysteries which the married could not, and to briefly sum up all and show how great was the privilege of John, or rather of virginity in John, the Virgin Mother¹⁷⁶ was entrusted by the Virgin Lord to the Virgin disciple.

27. But we toil to no purpose. For our opponent urges against us the Apostolic sentence and says,¹⁷⁷ "Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through the child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety." Let us consider what led the Apostle to make this declaration:¹⁷⁸ "I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing." So in due course he lays down rules of life for the women and says "In like manner that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works. Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." And that the lot of a woman might not seem a hard one, reducing her to the condition of a slave to her husband, the Apostle recalls the ancient law and goes back to the first example: that Adam was first made, then the woman out of his rib; and that the Devil could not seduce Adam, but did seduce Eve; and that after displeasing God she was immediately subjected to the man, and began to turn to her husband; and he points out that she who was once tied with the bonds of marriage and was reduced to the condition of Eve, might blot out the¹⁷⁹ old transgression by the¹⁸⁰ procreation of children: provided, however, that she bring up the children themselves in the faith and love of Christ, and in sanctification and chastity; for we must not adopt the faulty reading of the

Latin texts, sobrietas, but castitas, that is,¹⁸¹ swfrosunh. You see how you are mastered by the witness of this passage also, and cannot but be driven to admit that what you thought was on the side of marriage tells in favour of virginity. For if the woman is saved in child-bearing, and the more the children the greater the safety of the mothers, why did he add "if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with chastity"? The woman will then be saved, if she bear not children who will remain virgins: if what she has herself lost, she attains in her children, and makes up for the loss and decay, of the root by the excellence of the flower and fruit.

28. Above, in passing, when our opponent adduced Solomon, who, although he had many wives, nevertheless built the temple, I briefly replied that it was my intention to run over the remaining points. Now that he may not cry out that both Solomon and others under the law, prophets and holy men, have been dishonoured by us, let us show what this very man with his many wives and concubines thought of marriage. For no one can know better than he who suffered through them, what a wife or woman is. Well then, he says in the Proverbs:¹⁸² "The foolish and bold woman comes to want bread." What bread? Surely that bread which cometh down from heaven: and he immediately adds¹⁸³ "The earth-born perish in her house, rush into the depths of hell." Who are the earth-born that perish in her house? They of course who follow the first Adam, who is of the earth, and not the second, who is from heaven. And again in another place: "Like a worm in wood, so a wicked woman destroyeth her husband." But if you assert that this was spoken of bad wives, I shall briefly answer: What necessity rests upon me to run the risk of the wife I marry proving good or bad?¹⁸⁴ "It is better," he says, "to dwell in a desert land, than with a contentious and passionate woman in a wide house." How seldom we find a wife without these faults, he knows who is married. Hence that sublime orator, Varius Geminus¹⁸⁵ says well "The man who does not quarrel is a bachelor."¹⁸⁶ "It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a contentious woman in a house in common." If a house common to husband and wife makes a wife proud and breeds contempt for the husband: how much more if the wife be the richer of the two, and the husband but a lodger in her house! She begins to be not a wife, but mistress of the house; and if she offend her husband, they must part.¹⁸⁷ "A continual dropping on a wintry day" turns a man out of doors, and so will a contentious woman drive a man from his own house. She floods his house with her constant nagging and daily chatter, and ousts him from his own home, that is the Church. Hence the same Solomon previously commands:¹⁸⁸ "My son flows forth beyond." And the Apostle, writing to the Hebrews, says "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things spoken, lest haply we flow forth beyond." But who can hide from himself what is thus enigmatically expressed?¹⁸⁹ "The horseleech had three I daughters, dearly loved, but they satisfied her not, and a fourth is not satisfied when you say Enough; the grave, and woman's love, and the earth that is not satisfied with water, and the fire that saith not, Enough." The horse-leech is the devil, the daughters of the devil are dearly loved, and they cannot be satisfied with the blood of the slain: the grave, and woman's love, and the earth dry and scorched with heat. It is not the harlot, or the adulteress who is spoken of; but woman's love in general is accused of ever being insatiable; put it out, it bursts into flame; give it plenty, it is again in need; it enervates a man's mind, and engrosses all thought except for the passion which it feeds. What we read in the parable which follows is to the same effect: "For three things the earth doth tremble, and for four which it cannot bear: for a servant when he is king: and a fool when he is filled with meat: for an odious woman when she is married to a good husband: and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress." See how a wife is classed with the greatest evils. But if you reply that it is an odious wife, I will give

you the same answer as before-the mere possibility of such danger is in itself no light matter. For he who marries a wife is uncertain whether he is marrying an odious woman or one worthy of his love. If she be odious, she is intolerable. If worthy of love, her love is compared to the grave, to the parched earth, and to fire.

29. Let us come to Ecclesiastes and adduce a few corroborative passages from him also.¹⁹⁰ "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted." We brought forth young under the law with Moses, let us die under the Gospel with Christ. We planted in marriage, let us by chastity pluck up that which was planted. "A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing: a time to love, and a time to hate: a time for war, and a time for peace." And at the same time he warns us not to prefer the law to the Gospel; nor to think that virgin purity is to be placed on a level with marriage:¹⁹¹ "Better," he says, "is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof." And he immediately adds: "Say not thou, what is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this." And he gives the reason why the latter days are better than the former:¹⁹² "For wisdom with an inheritance is good." Under the law carnal wisdom was followed by the sword of death; under the Gospel an eternal inheritance awaits spiritual wisdom. "Behold, this have I found,¹⁹³ saith the Preacher, one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found. Behold this only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." He says that he had found man upright. Consider the force of the words. The word man comprehends both male and female. "But a woman," he says, "among all these have I not found." Let us read the beginning of Genesis, and we shall find Adam, that is man, called both male and female. Having then been created by God good and upright, by our own fault we have fallen to a worse condition; and that which in Paradise had been upright, when we left Paradise was corrupt. If you object that before they sinned there was a distinction in sex between male and female, and that they could without sin have come together, it is uncertain what might have happened. For we cannot know the judgements of God, and anticipate his sentence as we choose. What really happened is plain enough,-that they who in Paradise remained in perpetual virginity, when they were expelled from Paradise were joined together. Or if Paradise admits of marriage, and there is no difference between marriage and virginity, what prevented their previous intercourse even in Paradise? They are driven out of Paradise; and what they did not there, they do on earth; so that from the very earliest days of humanity virginity was consecrated by Paradise, and marriage by earth.¹⁹⁴ "Let thy garments be always white." The eternal whiteness of our garments is the purity of virginity. In the morning we sowed our seed, and in the evening let us not cease. Let us who served marriage under the law, serve virginity under the Gospel.

30. I pass to the Song of Songs, and whereas our opponent thinks it makes altogether for marriage, I shall show that it contains the mysteries of virginity. Let us hear what the bride says before that the bridegroom comes to earth, suffers, descends to the lower world, and rises again.¹⁹⁵ "We will make for thee likenesses of gold with ornaments of silver while the king sits at his table." Before the Lord rose again, and the Gospel shone, the bride had not gold, but likenesses of gold. As for the silver, however, which she professes to have at the marriage, she not only had silver ornaments, but she had them in variety-in widows, in the continent, and in the married. Then the bridegroom makes answer to the bride, and teaches her that the shadow of the

old law has passed away, and the truth of the Gospel has come.¹⁹⁶ "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." This relates to the Old Testament. Once more he speaks of the Gospel and of virginity: "The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the pruning of vines has come." Does he not seem to you to say the very same thing that the Apostle says:¹⁹⁷ "The time is shortened that henceforth both those that have wives may be as though they had none"? And more plainly does he herald chastity:¹⁹⁸ "The voice," he says, "of the turtle is heard in our land." The turtle, the chastest of birds, always dwelling in lofty places, is a type of the Saviour. Let us read the works of naturalists and we shall find that it is the nature of the turtle-dove, if it lose its mate, not to take another; and we shall understand that second marriage is repudiated even by dumb birds. And immediately the turtle says to its fellow:¹⁹⁹ "The fig tree hath put forth its green figs," that is, the commandments of the old law have fallen, and the blossoming vines of the Gospel give forth their fragrance Whence the Apostle also says,²⁰⁰ "We are a sweet savour of Christ."²⁰¹ "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the steep place. Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."²⁰² Whilst thou coveredst thy countenance like Moses and the veil of the law remained, I neither saw thy face, nor did I condescend to hear thy voice. I said,²⁰³ "Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear." But now with unveiled face behold my glory, and shelter thyself in the cleft and steep places of the solid rock. On hearing this the bride disclosed the mysteries of chastity:²⁰⁴ "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth his flock among the lilies," that is among the pure virgin bands. Would you know what sort of a throne our true Solomon, the Prince of Peace, has, and what his attendants are like?²⁰⁵ "Behold," he says, "it is the litter of Solomon: threescore mighty men are about it, of the mighty men of Israel. They all handle the sword, and are expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh." They who are about Solomon have their sword upon their thigh, like Ehud, the left-handed judge, who slew the fattest of foes, a man devoted to the flesh, and cut short all his pleasures.²⁰⁶ "I will get me," he says, "to the mountain of myrrh;" to those, that is, who have mortified their bodies; "and to the hill of frankincense," to the crowds of pure virgins; "and I will say to my bride, thou art all fair, my love, and there is no spot in thee." Whence too the Apostle:²⁰⁷ "That he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."²⁰⁸ "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, with me from Lebanon. Thou shalt come²⁰⁹ and pass on from the beginning of faith, from the top of Sanir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards." Lebanon is, being interpreted, whiteness. Come then, fairest bride, concerning whom it is elsewhere said²¹⁰ "Who is she that cometh up, all in white?" and pass on by way of this world, from the beginning of faith, and from Sanir, which is by interpretation, God of light, as we read in the psalm:²¹¹ "Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and light unto my path;" and "from Hermon," that is, consecration: and "flee from the lions' dens, and the mountains of the leopards who cannot change their spots." Flee, he says, from the lions' dens, flee from the pride of devils, that when thou hast been consecrated to me, I may be able to say unto thee:²¹² "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride, thou hast ravished mine heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck." What he says is something like this-I do not reject marriage: you have a second eye, the left, which I have given to you on account of the weakness of those who cannot see the right. But I am pleased with the right eye of virginity, and if it be blinded the whole body is in darkness. And that we might not think he had in view carnal love and bodily marriage, he at once excludes this meaning by saying²¹³ "Thou hast ravished my

heart, my bride, my sister." The name sister excludes all suspicion of unhallowed love. "How fair are thy breasts with wine," those breasts concerning which he had said above, My beloved is mine, and I am his: "betwixt my breasts shall he lie," that is in the princely portion of the heart where the Word of God has its lodging. What wine is that which gives beauty to the breasts of the bride, and fills them with the milk of chastity? That, forsooth, of which the bridegroom goes on to speak:²¹⁴ "I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends: yea, drink and be drunken, my brethren." Hence the Apostles also were said to be filled with new wine; with new, he says, not with old wine; because²¹⁵ new wine is put into fresh wine-skins, and they²¹⁶ did not walk in oldness of the letter, but in newness of the Spirit. This is wine wherewith when youths and maidens are intoxicated, they at once thirst for virginity; they are filled with the spirit of chastity, and the prophecy of Zechariah comes to pass, at least if we follow the Hebrew literally, for he prophesied concerning virgins:²¹⁷ "And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. For what is his goodness, and what is his beauty, but the corn of the elect, and wine that giveth birth to virgins?" They are virgins of whom it is written in the forty-fifth psalm:²¹⁸ "The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be led: they shall enter into the King's palace." 31. Then follows:²¹⁹ "A garden shut up is my sister, my bride: a garden shut up, a fountain sealed." That which is shut up and sealed reminds us of the mother of our Lord who was a mother and a Virgin. Hence it was that no one before or after our Saviour was laid in his new tomb, hewn in the solid rock. And yet she that was ever a Virgin is the mother of many virgins. For next we read: "Thy shoots are an orchard of pomegranates with precious fruits." By pomegranates and fruits is signified the blending of all virtues in virginity.²²⁰ "My beloved is white and ruddy"; white in virginity, ruddy in martyrdom. And because He is white and ruddy, therefore it is immediately added²²¹ "His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely." The virgin bridegroom having been praised by the virgin bride, in turn praises the virgin bride, and says to her:²²² "How beautiful are thy feet in sandals,²²³ O daughter of Aminadab," which is, being interpreted, a people that offereth itself willingly. For virginity is voluntary, and therefore the steps of the Church in the beauty of chastity are praised. This is not the time for me like a commentator to explain all the mysteries of virginity from the Song of Songs I have no doubt that the fastidious reader will turn up his nose at what has already been said.

32. Isaiah tells of the mystery of our faith and hope:²²⁴ "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel." I know that the Jews are accustomed to meet us with the objection that in Hebrew the word *Almah* does not mean a virgin, but a young woman. And, to speak truth, a virgin is properly called *Bethulah*, but a young woman, or a girl, is not *Almah*, but *Naarah*!²²⁵ What then is the meaning of *Almah*? A hidden virgin, that is, not merely virgin, but a virgin and something more, because not every virgin is hidden, shut off from the occasional sight of men. Then again, Rebecca, on account of her extreme purity, and because she was a type of the Church which she represented in her own virginity, is described in Genesis as *Almah*, not *Bethulah*, as may clearly be proved from the words of Abraham's servant, spoken by him in Mesopotamia:²²⁶ "And he said, O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go: behold I stand by the fountain of water; and let it come to pass, that the maiden which cometh forth to draw, to whom I shall say, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of this pitcher to drink; and she shall say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my master's son." Where he speaks of the maiden coming forth to draw water, the Hebrew word is *Almah*, that is, a virgin secluded, and

guarded by her parents with extreme care. Or, if it be not so, let them at least show me where the word is applied to married women as well, and I will confess my ignorance. "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." If virginity be not preferred to marriage, why did not the Holy Spirit choose a married woman, or a widow? For at that time Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser, was alive, distinguished for purity, and always free to devote herself to prayers and fasting in the temple of God. If the life, and good works, and fasting without virginity can merit the advent of the Holy Spirit, she might well have been the mother of our Lord. Let us hasten to the rest:²²⁷ "The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn." To her whom he called daughter the prophet also gave the title virgin, for fear that if he spoke only of a daughter, it might be supposed that she was married. This is the virgin daughter whom elsewhere he thus addresses:²²⁸ "Sing, O barren, thou that dost not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord." This is she of whom God by the mouth of Jeremiah speaks, saying:²²⁹ "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire." Concerning her we read of a great miracle in the same prophecy²³⁰ -that a woman should compass a man, and that the Father of all things should be contained in a virgin's womb.

33. "Granted," says Jovinianus, "that there is a difference between marriage and virginity, what have you to say to this,-Suppose a virgin and a widow were baptized, and continued as they were, what difference will there be between them?" What we have already said concerning Peter and John, Anna and Mary, may be of service here. For if there is no difference between a virgin and a widow, both being baptized, because baptism makes a new man, upon the same principle harlots and prostitutes, if they are baptized, will be equal to virgins. If previous marriage is no prejudice to a baptized widow, and past pleasures and the exposure of their bodies to public lust are no detriment in the case of harlots, once they have approached the laver they will gain the rewards of virginity. It is one thing to unite with God a mind pure and free from any stain of memory, another to remember the foul and forced embraces of a man, and in recollection to act a part which you do not in person. Jeremiah, who was²³¹ sanctified in the womb, and was known in his mother's belly, enjoyed the high privilege Because he was predestined to the blessing of virginity. And when all were captured, and even the vessels of the temple were plundered by the King of Babylon, he alone was²³² liberated by the enemy, knew not the insults of captivity, and was supported by the conquerors; and Nebuchadnezzar, though he gave Nebuzaradan no charge concerning the Holy of Holies, did give him charge concerning Jeremiah. For that is the true temple of God, and that is the Holy of Holies, which is consecrated to the Lord by pure virginity. On the other hand, Ezekiel, who was kept captive in Babylon, who saw the²³³ storm approaching from the north, and the whirlwind sweeping all before it, says,²³⁴ "My wife died in the evening and I did in the morning as I was commanded." For the Lord had previously told him that in that day he should open his mouth, and speak, and no longer keep silence. Mark well, that while his wife was living he was not at liberty to admonish the people. His wife died, the bond of wedlock was broken, and without the least hesitation he constantly devoted himself to the prophetic office. For he who was called being free, is truly the Lord's bondservant. I do not deny the blessedness of widows who remain such after their baptism; nor do I disparage those wives who maintain their chastity in wedlock; but as they attain a greater reward with God than married women who pay the marriage due, let widows themselves be content to give the preference to virginity. For if a chastity which comes too late, when the glow of bodily pleasure is no longer felt, makes them feel superior to married women,

why should they not acknowledge themselves inferior to perpetual virginity.

34. All that goes for nothing, says Jovinianus, because even bishops, priests, and deacons, husbands of one wife, and having children, were appointed by the Apostle. Just as the Apostle²³⁵ says he has no commandment respecting virgins, and yet gives his advice, as one who had obtained mercy from the Lord, and is anxious throughout the whole discussion to give virginity the preference over marriage, and advises what he does not venture to command, lest he seem to lay a snare, and to put a heavier burden upon man's nature than it can bear; so also in establishing the constitution of the Church, inasmuch as the elements of the early Church were drawn from the Gentiles, he made the rules for fresh believers somewhat lighter that they might not in alarm shrink from keeping them. Then, again, the Apostles and elders wrote²³⁶ letters from Jerusalem that no heavier burden should be laid on Gentile believers than that they should keep themselves from idolatry, and from fornication, and from things strangled. As though they were providing for infant children, they gave them milk to drink, not solid food. Nor did they lay down rules for continence, nor hint at virginity, nor urge to fasting, nor repeat the directions²³⁷ given in the Gospel to the Apostles, not to have two tunics, nor scrip, nor money in their girdles, nor staff in their hand, nor shoes on their feet. And they certainly did not bid them,²³⁸ if they wished to be perfect, go and sell all that they had and give to the poor, and "come follow me." For if the young man who boasted of having done all that the law enjoins, when he heard this went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions, and the Pharisees derided an utterance such as this from our Lord's lips: how much more would the vast multitude of Gentiles, whose highest virtue consisted in not plundering another's goods, have repudiated the obligation of perpetual chastity and continence, when they were told in the letter to keep themselves from idols, and from fornication, seeing that fornication was heard of among them, and such fornication as was not "even among the Gentiles." But the very choice of a bishop makes for me. For he does not say: Let a bishop be chosen who marries one wife and begets children; but who marries one wife, and²³⁹ has his children in subjection and well disciplined. You surely admit that he is no bishop who during his episcopate begets children. The reverse is the case-if he be discovered, he will not be bound by the ordinary obligations of a husband, but will be condemned as an adulterer. Either permit²⁴⁰ priests to perform the work of marriage with the result that virginity and marriage are on a par: or if it is unlawful for priests to touch their wives, they are so far holy in that they imitate virgin chastity. But something more follows. A layman, or any believer, cannot pray unless he abstain from sexual intercourse. Now a priest must always offer sacrifices for the people: he must therefore always pray. And if he must always pray, he must always be released from the duties of marriage. For even under the old law they who used to offer sacrifices for the people not only remained in their houses, but purified themselves for the occasion by separating from their wives, nor would they drink wine or strong drink which are wont to stimulate lust. That married men are elected to the priesthood, I do not deny: the number of virgins is not so great as that of the priests required. Does it follow that because all the strongest men are chosen for the army, weaker men should not be taken as well? All cannot be strong. If an army were constituted of strength only, and numbers went for nothing, the feeble men might be rejected. As it is, men of second or third-rate strength are chosen, that the army may have its full numerical complement. How is it, then, you will say, that frequently at the ordination of priests a virgin is passed over, and a married man taken? Perhaps because he lacks other qualifications in keeping with virginity, or it may be that he is thought a virgin, and is not: or there may be a stigma on his virginity, or at all events virginity itself makes him proud, and

while he plumes himself on mere bodily chastity, he neglects other virtues; he does not cherish the poor: he is too fond of money. It sometimes happens that a man has a gloomy visage, a frowning brow, a walk as though he were in a solemn procession, and so offends the people, who, because they have no fault to find with his life, hate his mere dress and gait. Many are chosen not out of affection for themselves, but out of hatred for another. In most cases the election is won by mere simplicity, while the shrewdness and discretion of another candidate elicit opposition as though they were evils. Sometimes the judgement of the commoner people is at fault, and in testing the qualities of the priesthood, the individual inclines to his own character, with the result that he looks not so much for a good candidate as for one like himself. Not unfrequently it happens that married men, who form the larger portion of the people, in approving married candidates seem to approve themselves, and it does not occur to them that the mere fact that they prefer a married person to a virgin is evidence of their inferiority to virgins. What I am going to say will perhaps offend many. Yet I will say it, and good men will not be angry with me, because they will not feel the sting of conscience. Sometimes it is the fault of the bishops, who choose into the ranks of the clergy not the best, but the cleverest, men, and think the more simple as well as innocent ones incapable; or, as though they were distributing the offices of an earthly service, they give posts to their kindred and relations; or they listen to the dictates of wealth. And, worse than all, they give promotion to the clergy who besmear them with flattery. To take the other view, if the Apostle's meaning be that marriage is necessary in a bishop, the Apostle himself ought not to have been a bishop, for he said,²⁴¹ "Yet I would that all men were even as I myself." And John will be thought unworthy of this rank, and all the virgins, and the continent, the fairest gems that give grace and ornament to the Church. Bishop, priest, and deacon, are not honourable distinctions, but names of offices. And we do not read:²⁴² "If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good degree," but, "he desireth a good work," because by being placed in the higher order an opportunity is afforded him, if he choose to avail himself of it, for the practice of virtue.

35. "The bishop, then, must be without reproach, so that he is the slave of no vice: "the husband of one wife," that is, in the past, not in the present; "sober," or²⁴³ better, as it is in the Greek, "vigilant," that is *nhfaleon*; "chaste," for that is the²⁴⁴ meaning of *sw/fona*;²⁴⁵ "distinguished," both by chastity and conduct: "hospitable," so that he imitates Abraham, and with strangers, nay rather in strangers, entertains Christ; "apt to teach," for it profits nothing to enjoy the consciousness of virtue, unless a man be able to instruct the people intrusted to him, so that he can exhort in doctrine, and refute the gainsayers;²⁴⁶ "not a drunkard," for he who is constantly in the Holy of Holies and offers sacrifices, will not drink wine and strong drink, since wine is a luxury. If a bishop drink at all, let it be in such a way that no one will know whether he has drunk or not. "No striker," that is,²⁴⁷ a striker of men's consciences, for the Apostle is not pointing out what a boxer, but a pontiff ought not to do. He directly teaches what he ought to do: "but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all chastity." See what chastity is required in a bishop! If his child be unchaste, he himself cannot be a bishop, and he offends God in the same way as did²⁴⁸ Eli the priest, who had indeed rebuked his sons, but because he had not put away the offenders, fell backwards and died before the lamp of God went out.²⁴⁹ "Women in like manner must be chaste," and so on. In every grade, and in both sexes, chastity has the chief place. You see then that the blessedness of a bishop, priest, or deacon, does not lie in the fact that they are bishops, priests, or deacons, but in their having the virtues which their names and offices imply. Otherwise, if a deacon be holier than his bishop, his

lower grade will not give him a worse standing with Christ. If it were so, Stephen the deacon, the first to wear the martyr's crown, would be less in the kingdom of heaven than many bishops, and than Timothy and Titus, whom I venture to make neither inferior nor yet superior to him. Just as in the legions of the army there are generals, tribunes, centurions, javelin-men, and light-armed troops, common soldiers, and companies, but once the battle begins, all distinctions of rank are dropped, and the one thing looked for is valour: so too in this camp and in this battle, in which we contend against devils, not names but deeds are needed: and under the true commander, Christ, not the man who has the highest title has the greatest fame, but he who is the bravest warrior.

36. But you will say: "If everybody were a virgin, what would become of the human race"? Like shall here beget like. If everyone were a widow, or continent in marriage, how will mortal men be propagated? Upon this principle there will be nothing at all for fear that something else may cease to exist. To put a case: if all men were philosophers, there would be no husbandmen. Why speak of husbandmen? there would be no orators, no lawyers, no teachers of the other professions. If all men were leaders, what would become of the soldiers? If all were the head, whose head would they be called, when there were no other members? You are afraid that if the desire for virginity were general there would be no prostitutes, no adulteresses, no wailing infants in town or country. Every day the blood of adulterers²⁵⁰ is shed, adulterers are condemned, and lust is raging and rampant in the very presence of the laws and the symbols of authority and the courts of justice. Be not afraid that all will become virgins: virginity is a hard matter, and therefore rare, because it is hard: "Many are called, few chosen." Many begin, few persevere. And so the reward is great for those who have persevered. If all were able to be virgins, our Lord would never have said:²⁵¹ "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it:" and the Apostle would not have hesitated to give his advice,²⁵² "Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord." Why then, you will say, were the organs of generation created, and why were we so fashioned by the all-wise creator, that we burn for one another, and long for natural intercourse? To reply is to endanger our modesty: we are, as it were, between two rocks, the²⁵³ Symplegades of necessity and virtue, on either side; and must make shipwreck of either our sense of shame, or of the cause we defend: If we reply to your suggestions, shame covers our face. If shame secures silence, in a manner we seem to desert our post, and to leave the ground clear to the raging foe. Yet it is better, as the story goes, to shut our eyes and fight like the²⁵⁴ blindfold gladiators, than not to repel with the shield of truth the darts aimed at us. I can indeed say: "Our hinder parts which are banished from sight, and the lower portions of the abdomen, which perform the functions of nature, are the Creator's work." But inasmuch as the physical conformation of the organs of generation testifies to difference of sex, I shall briefly reply: Are we never then to forego lust, for fear that we may have members of this kind for nothing? Why then should a husband keep himself from his wife? Why should a widow persevere in chastity, if we were only born to live like beasts? Or what harm does it do me if another man lies with my wife? For as the teeth were made for chewing, and the food masticated passes into the stomach, and a man is not blamed for giving my wife bread: similarly if it was intended that the organs of generation should always be performing their office, when my vigour is spent let another take my place, and, if I may so speak, let my wife quench her burning lust where she can. But what does the Apostle mean by exhorting to continence, if continence be contrary to nature? What does our Lord mean when He instructs us in the various kinds of eunuchs.²⁵⁵ Surely²⁵⁶ the Apostle who bids us emulate his own chastity, must be asked, if we are to be consistent, Why are you like other men, Paul? Why are you distinguished from the female sex by a

beard, hair, and other peculiarities of person? How is it that you have not swelling bosoms, and are not broad at the hips, narrow at the chest? Your voice is rugged, your speech rough, your eyebrows more shaggy. To no purpose you have all these manly qualities, if you forego the embraces of women. I am compelled to say something and become a fool: but you have forced me to dare to speak. Our Lord and Saviour,²⁵⁷ Who though He was in the form of God, condescended to take the form of a servant, and became obedient to the Father even unto death, yea the death of the cross-what necessity was there for Him to be born with members which He was not going to use? He certainly was circumcised to manifest His sex. Why did he cause John the Apostle and John the Baptist to make themselves eunuchs through love of Him, after causing them to be born men? Let us then who believe in Christ follow His example. And if we knew Him after the flesh, let us no longer know Him according to the flesh. The substance of our resurrection bodies will certainly be the same as now, though of higher glory. For the Saviour after His descent into hell had so far the selfsame body in which He was crucified, that²⁵⁸ He showed the disciples the marks of the nails in His hands and the wound in His side. Moreover, if we deny the identity of His body because²⁵⁹ He entered though the doors were shut, and this is not a property of human bodies, we must deny also that Peter and the Lord had real bodies because they²⁶⁰ walked upon the water, which is contrary to nature.²⁶¹ "In the resurrection of the dead they will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but will be like the angels." What others will hereafter be in heaven, that virgins begin to be on earth. If likeness to the angels is promised us (and there is no difference of sex among the angels), we shall either be of no sex as are the angels, or at all events which is clearly proved, though we rise from the dead in our own sex, we shall not perform the functions of sex.

37. But why do we argue, and why are we eager to frame a clever and victorious reply to our opponent?²⁶² "Old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." I will run through the utterances of the Apostles, and as to the instances afforded by Solomon I added short expositions to facilitate their being understood, so now I will go over the passages bearing on Christian purity and continence, and will make of many proofs a connected series. By this method I shall succeed in omitting nothing relating to chastity, and shall avoid being tediously long. Amongst other passages, Paul the Apostle writes to the Romans:²⁶³ "What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life." I suppose too that the end of marriage is death. But the compensating fruit of sanctification, fruit belonging either to virginity or to continence, is eternal life. And afterwards:²⁶⁴ "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter." "When," he says, "we were in the flesh, and not in the newness of the Spirit but in the oldness of the letter," we did those things which pertained to the flesh, and bore fruit unto death. But now because we are dead to the law, through the body of Christ, let us bear fruit to God, that we may belong to Him who rose from the dead. And elsewhere, having previously said,²⁶⁵ "I know that the law is spiritual," and having discussed at some length the violence of the flesh which frequently drives us to do what we would not, he at last continues: "O wretched man

that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And again, "So then I myself with the mind serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." And,²⁶⁶ "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death." And more clearly in what follows he teaches that Christians do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit:²⁶⁷ "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace: because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: and they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you," and so on to where he says,²⁶⁸ "So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." If the²⁶⁹ wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God, and they who are in the flesh cannot please God, I think that they who perform the functions of marriage love the wisdom of the flesh, and therefore are in the flesh. The Apostle being desirous to withdraw us from the flesh and to join us to the Spirit, says afterwards:²⁷⁰ "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think according to chastity"²⁷¹ (not soberly as the Latin versions badly render), but "think," he says, "according to chastity," for the Greek words are *eōi* to *swfronein*. Let us consider what the Apostle says: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." What he says is something like this-God indeed permits marriage, He permits second marriages, and if necessary, prefers even third marriages to fornication and adultery. But we who ought to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service, should consider, not what God permits, but what He wishes: that we may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. It follows that what He merely permits is neither good, nor acceptable, nor perfect. And he gives his reasons for this advice:²⁷² "Knowing the season, that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand." And lastly: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." God's will is one thing, His indulgence another. Whence, writing to the Corinthians, he says,²⁷³ "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal." He who²⁷⁴ is in the merely animal state, and does not receive the things pertaining to the Spirit of God (for he is foolish, and cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned), he is not fed with the food of perfect chastity, but with the coarse milk of marriage. As through man came death, so also through man came the resurrection of the dead. As in Adam we all die, so in Christ we shall all be made alive. Under the law we served the old Adam, under the Gospel let us serve the new Adam. For the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.²⁷⁵ "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven. As is the

earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." This is so clear that no explanation can make it clearer: "Flesh and blood," he says, "cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." If corruption attaches to all intercourse, and incorruption is characteristic of chastity, the rewards of chastity cannot belong to marriage.²⁷⁶ "For we know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven. We are willing to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether in the body, or out of the body, to be well-pleasing unto God." And by way of more fully explaining what he did not wish them to be he says elsewhere:²⁷⁷ "I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ." But if you choose to apply the words to the whole Assembly of believers, and in this betrothal to Christ include both married women, and the twice-married, and widows, and virgins, that also makes for us. For whilst he invites all to chastity and to the reward of virginity, he shows that virginity is more excellent than all these conditions. And again writing to the Galatians he says:²⁷⁸ "Because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Among the works of the law is marriage, and accordingly under it they are cursed who have no children. And if under the Gospel it is permitted to have children, it is one thing to make a concession to weakness another to hold out rewards to virtue.

38. Something else I will say to my friends who marry and after long chastity and continence begin to burn and are as wanton as the brutes:²⁷⁹ "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh? Did ye suffer so many things in vain?" If the Apostle in the case of some persons loosens the cords of continence, and lets them have a slack rein, he does so on account of the infirmity of the flesh. This is the enemy he has in view when he once more says:²⁸⁰ "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." It is unnecessary now to speak of the works of the flesh: it would be tedious, and he who chooses can easily gather them from the letter of the Apostle. I will only speak of the Spirit and its fruits, love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness,²⁸¹ continence. All the virtues of the Spirit are supported and protected by continence, which is as it were their solid foundation and crowning point. Against such there is no law.²⁸² "And they that are of Christ have crucified their flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk." Why do we who with Christ have crucified our flesh and its passions and desires again desire to do the things of the flesh?²⁸³ "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." I think that he who has a wife, so long as he reverts to the practice in question, that Satan may not tempt him, is sowing to the flesh and not to the Spirit. And he who sows to the flesh (the words are not mine, but the Apostle's) reaps corruption. God the Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy and without spot before Him.²⁸⁴ We walked in the lusts of the flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were children of wrath, even as the rest. But now He has raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,²⁸⁵ that we may put away according to our former manner of life

the old man, which is corrupt according to the lusts of deceit, and that blessing may be applied to us which so finely concludes the mystical Epistle to the Ephesians:²⁸⁶ "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness."²⁸⁷ "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory."²⁸⁸ Whatsoever things then are true, whatsoever are chaste, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things pertain to purity, let us join ourselves to these, let us follow these.²⁸⁹ Christ hath reconciled us in his body to God the Father through his death, and has presented us holy and without spot, and without blame before himself: in whom we have been also circumcised, not with the circumcision made with hands, to the spoiling of the body of the flesh, but with the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, wherein also we rose with him. If then we have risen with Christ, let us seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; let us set our affections on things above, not upon the things that are upon the earth. For we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ our life shall appear, then we also shall appear with him in glory.²⁹⁰ No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier.²⁹¹ For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live purely and righteously and godly in this present world."

39. The day would not be long enough were I to attempt to relate all that the Apostle enjoins concerning purity. These things are those concerning which our Lord said to the Apostles:²⁹² "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." After the crucifixion of Christ, we find in the²⁹³ Acts of the Apostles that one house, that of Philip the Evangelist, produced four virgin daughters, to the end that Caesarea, where the Gentile Church had been consecrated in the person of Cornelius the centurion, might afford an illustration of virginity. And whereas our Lord said in the Gospel:²⁹⁴ "The law and the prophets were until John," they because they were virgins are related to have prophesied even after John. For they could not be bound by the law of the Old Testament, who had shone with the brightness of virginity. Let us pass on to James, who was called the brother of the Lord, a man of such sanctity and righteousness, and distinguished by so rigid and perpetual a virginity, that even²⁹⁵ Josephus, the Jewish historian, relates that the overthrow of Jerusalem was due to his death. He, the first bishop of the Church at Jerusalem, which was composed of Jewish believers, to whom Paul went, accompanied by Titus and Barnabas, says in his Epistle:²⁹⁶ "Be not deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect boon is from above, coming down from the Father of lights,²⁹⁷ with whom there is no difference, neither shadow that is cast by turning. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." Himself a virgin, he teaches virginity in a mystery. Every perfect gift cometh down from above, where marriage is unknown; and it cometh down, not from any one you please, but from the Father of lights, Who says to the apostles, "Ye are the light of the world;" with Whom there is no difference of Jew, or Gentile, nor does that shadow which was the companion of the law, trouble those who have believed from among the nations; but with His word He begat us, and with the word of truth, because some shadow, image, and likeness of truth went before in the law, that we might be the first-fruits of His creatures. And as He who was Himself the²⁹⁸ first begotten from the dead has raised all that have died in Him: so He who was a virgin, consecrated the first-fruits of His virgins in His own virgin self.

Let us also consider what Peter thinks of the calling of the Gentiles:²⁹⁹ "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Where we read of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, prepared in heaven and reserved for the last time, and of the hope of eternal life when they will neither marry, nor be given in marriage, there, in other words, the privileges of virginity are described. For he shows as much in what follows:³⁰⁰ "Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance; but like as he which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, ye shall be holy; for I am holy.³⁰¹ For we were not redeemed with contemptible things, with silver or gold; but with the precious blood of a lamb without spot, Jesus Christ,³⁰² that we might purify our souls in obedience to the truth, having been begotten again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God,³⁰³ who liveth and abideth. And as living stones let us be built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood offering up spiritual sacrifices through Christ our Lord.³⁰⁴ For we are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.³⁰⁵ Christ died for us in the flesh. Let us arm ourselves with the same conversation as did Christ; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that we should no longer live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past is sufficient for us when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, and other vices. Great and precious are the promises attaching to virginity which He has given us,³⁰⁶ that through it we may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world through lust.³⁰⁷ The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgement, but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement, and despise dominion, daring, self-willed. For they, as beasts of burden, without reason, think only of their belly and their lusts, railers who shall in their corruption be destroyed, and shall receive the reward of iniquity: men that count unrighteousness delight, spots and blemishes, thinking of nothing but their pleasures; having eyes full of adultery and insatiable lust, deceiving souls not yet strengthened by the love of Christ. For they utter swelling words and easily snare the unlearned with the seduction of the flesh; promising them liberty while they themselves are the slaves of vice, luxury, and corruption. For of what a man is overcome, of the same is he also brought into bondage. But if, after they had escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again overcome by that which they before overcame, the last state is become worse with them than the first. And it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back and forsake the holy commandment delivered unto them. And it has happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog hath turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire." I have hesitated, for fear of being tedious, to quote the whole passage of the second Epistle of Peter, and have merely shown that the Holy Spirit in prophecy foretold the teachers of this time and their heresy. Lastly, he more clearly denotes them, saying,³⁰⁸ "In the last days seducing mockers shall come, walking after their own lusts."

40. The Apostle has described Jovinianus speaking with swelling cheeks and nicely balancing his inflated utterances, promising heavenly liberty, when he himself is the slave of vice and self-indulgence, a dog returning to his vomit. For although he boasts of being a monk, he has exchanged his dirty tunic, bare feet, common bread, and drink of water, for a snowy dress, sleek skin, honey-wine and dainty dishes, for the sauces of³⁰⁹ Apicius and³¹⁰ Paxamus, for baths and rubbings, and for the cook-shops. Is it not clear that he prefers his belly to Christ, and thinks his ruddy complexion worth the kingdom of heaven? And yet that handsome monk so fat and sleek, and of bright appearance, who always walks with the air of a bridegroom, must either marry a wife if he is to show that virginity and marriage are equal: or if he does not marry one, it is useless for him to bandy words with us when his acts are on our side. And John agrees with this almost to the letter:³¹¹ "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of this life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world." And, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. A new commandment have I written unto you, which thing is true both in Christ and in you; because the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth." And again,³¹² "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. But we know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him: for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure."³¹³ Herein is our love made perfect, if we have boldness in the day of judgement: that as he is, even so may we be in this world." The Epistle of Jude also expresses nearly the same:³¹⁴ "Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." Let us read the Apocalypse of John, and we shall there find the Lamb upon Mount Sion,³¹⁵ and with Him "a hundred and forty-four thousand of them that were sealed, having His name and the name of His Father written in their foreheads, who sing a new song, and no one can sing that song save they who have been redeemed out of the earth. These are they who have not defiled themselves with women, for they continued virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth: for they were redeemed from among men, first-fruits to God and to the Lamb, and in their mouth was found no guile, and they are without spot."³¹⁶ Out of each tribe, the tribe of Dan excepted, the place of which is taken by the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand virgins who have been sealed are spoken of as future believers, who have not defiled themselves with women. And that we may not suppose the reference to be to those who know not harlots, he immediately added: "For they continued virgins." Whereby he shows that all who have not preserved their virginity, in comparison of pure and angelic chastity and of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, are defiled.³¹⁷ "These are they who sing a new song which no man can sing except him that is a virgin. These are first-fruits unto God and unto the Lamb, and are without blemish." If virgins are first-fruits, it follows that widows and the continent in marriage, come after the first-fruits, that is, are in the second and third rank: nor can a lost people be saved unless it offer such sacrifices of chastity to God, and with pure victims reconcile the spotless Lamb. It would be endless work to explain the Gospel mystery of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish. All I say now is, that as mere virginity without other works does not save, so all works without virginity, purity, continence, chastity, are imperfect. And we shall not be hindered in the least from taking this view by the objection of our opponent that our Lord was at Cana of Galilee, and joined in the marriage festivities when He turned water into wine. I shall very briefly reply, that He Who was circumcised on the eighth day, and for Whom a pair of turtle-doves and two young pigeons were offered on the day of purification, like others before He

suffered, shewed His approval of Jewish custom, that He might not seem to give His enemies just cause for putting Him to death on the pretext that He destroyed the law and condemned nature. And even this was done for our sakes. For by going once to a marriage, He taught that men should marry only once. Moreover, at that time it was possible to injure virginity if marriage were not placed next to it, and the purity of widowhood in the third rank. But now when heretics are condemning wedlock, and despise the ordinance of God, we gladly hear anything he³¹⁸ may say in praise of marriage. For the Church does not condemn marriage, but makes it subordinate; nor does she reject it, but regulates it; for she knows, as was said before, that³¹⁹ in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earthenware; and that some are to honour, some to dishonour; and that whoever cleanses himself will be a vessel of honour, necessary, prepared for every good work.

41. I have given enough and more than enough illustrations from the divine writings of Christian chastity and angelic virginity. But as I understand that our opponent in his commentaries summons us to the tribunal of worldly wisdom, and we are told that views of this kind are never accepted in the world, and that our religion has invented a dogma against nature, I will quickly run through Greek and Roman and Foreign History, and will show that virginity ever took the lead of chastity. Fable relates that Atalanta, the virgin of Calydonian fame, lived for the chase and dwelt always in the woods; in other words that she did not set her heart on marriage with its troubles of pregnancy and of sickness, but upon the nobler life of freedom and chastity.³²⁰ Harpalyce too, a Thracian virgin, is described by the famous poet; and so is³²¹ Camilia, queen of the Volsci, on whom, when she came to his assistance, Turnus had no higher praise which he could bestow than to call her a virgin. "O Virgin, Glory of Italy!" And that famous daughter of³²² Leos, the lady of the brazen house, ever a virgin, is related to have freed her country from pestilence by her voluntary death: and the blood of the virgin³²³ Iphigenia is said to have calmed the stormy winds. What need to tell of the Sibyls of Erythrae and Cumae, and the eight others? for Varro asserts there were ten whose ornament was virginity, and divination the reward of their virginity. But if in the Aeolian dialect "Sibyl" is represented by Qeobou/lh, we must understand that a knowledge of the Counsel of God is rightly attributed to virginity alone. We read, too, that Cassandra and Chryseis, prophetesses of Apollo and Juno, were virgins. And there were innumerable priestesses of the Taurian Diana, and of Vesta. One of these, Munitia, being suspected of unchastity was³²⁴ buried alive, which would be in my opinion an unjust punishment, unless the violation of virginity were considered a serious crime. At all events how highly the Romans always esteemed virgins is clear from the fact that consuls and generals even in their triumphal chariots and bringing home the spoils of conquered nations, were wont to make way for them to pass. And so did men of all ranks. When³²⁵ Claudia, a Vestal Virgin, was suspected of unchastity, and a vessel containing the image of Cybele was aground in the Tiber, it is related that she, to prove her chastity, with her girdle drew the ship which a thousand men could not move. Yet, as³²⁶ the uncle of Lucan the poet says, it would have been better if this circumstance had decorated a chastity tried and proved, and had not pleaded in defence of a chastity equivocal. No wonder that we read such things of human beings, when heathen error also invented the virgin goddesses Minerva and Diana, and placed the Virgin among the twelve signs of the Zodiac, by means of which, as they suppose, the world revolves. It is a proof of the little esteem in which they held marriage that they did not even among the scorpions, centaurs, crabs, fishes, and capricorn, thrust in a husband and wife. When the thirty tyrants of Athens had slain Phidon at the banquet, they commanded his virgin daughters to come to them,

naked like harlots, and there upon the ground, red with their father's blood, to act the wanton. For a little while they hid their grief, and then when they saw the revellers were intoxicated, going out on the plea of easing nature, they embraced one another and threw themselves into a well, that by death they might save their virginity. The virgin daughter of Demotion, chief of the Areopagites, having heard of the death of her betrothed,³²⁷ Leosthenes, who had originated the Lamian war, slew herself, for she declared that although in body she was a virgin, yet if she were compelled to accept another, she should regard him as her second husband, when she had given her heart to Leosthenes. So close a friendship long existed between Sparta and Messene that for the furtherance of certain religious rites they even exchanged virgins. Well, on one occasion when the men of Messene attempted to outrage fifty Lacedaemonian virgins, out of so many not one consented, but they all most gladly died in defence of their chastity. Whence there arose a long and grievous war, and in the long run³²⁸ Mamertina was destroyed. Aristoclides, tyrant of Orchomenos, fell in love with a virgin of Stymphalus, and when after the death of her father she took refuge in the temple of Diana, and embraced the image of the goddess and could not be dragged thence by force, she was slain on the spot. Her death caused such intense grief throughout Arcadia that the people took up arms and avenged the virgin's death.³²⁹ Aristomenes of Messene, a just man, at a time when the Lacedaemonians, whom he had conquered, were celebrating by night the festival called the³³⁰ Hyacinthia, carried off from the sportive bands fifteen virgins, and fleeing all night at full speed got away from the Spartan territory. His companions wished to outrage them, but he admonished them to the best of his power not to do so, and when certain refused to obey, he slew them, and restrained the rest by fear. The maidens were afterwards ransomed by their kinsmen, and on seeing Aristomenes condemned for murder would not return to their country until clasping the knees of the judges they beheld the protector of their chastity acquitted. How shall we sufficiently praise the daughters of Scedasus at Leuctra in Boeotia? It is related that in the absence of their father they hospitably entertained two youths who were passing by, and who having drunk to excess violated the virgins in the course of the night. Being unwilling to survive the loss of their virginity, the maidens inflicted deadly wounds on one another. Nor would it be right to omit mention of the Locrian virgins. They were sent to Ilium according to custom which had lasted for nearly a thousand years, and yet not one gave occasion to any idle tale or filthy rumour of virginity defiled. Could any one pass over in silence the seven virgins of Miletus who, when the Gauls spread desolation far and wide, that they might suffer no indignity at the hands of the enemy, escaped disgrace by death, and left to all virgins the lesson of their example—that noble minds care more for chastity than life? Nicanor having conquered and overthrown Thebes was himself overcome by a passion for one captive virgin, whose voluntary self-surrender he longed for. A captive maid, he thought, must be only too glad. But he found that virginity is dearer to the pure in heart than a kingdom, when with tears and grief he held her in his arms slain by her own hand. Greek writers tell also of another Theban virgin who had been deflowered by a Macedonian foe, and who, hiding her grief for a while, slew the violator of her virginity as he slept, and then killed herself with the sword, so that she would neither live when her chastity was lost, nor die before she had avenged herself.

42. To come to the Gymnosophists of India, the opinion is authoritatively handed down that Buddha, the founder of their religion, had his birth through the side of a virgin. And we need not wonder at this in the case of Barbarians when cultured Greece supposed that Minerva at her birth sprang from the head of Jove, and Father Bacchus from his thigh.³³¹ Speusippus also, Plato's nephew,

and³³² Clearchus in his eulogy of Plato, and³³³ Anaxelides in the second book of his philosophy, relates that Perictione, the mother of Plato, was violated by an apparition of Apollo, and they agree in thinking that the prince of wisdom was born of a virgin.³³⁴ Timus writes that the³³⁵ virgin daughter of³³⁶ Pythagoras was at the head of a band of virgins, and instructed them in chastity.³³⁷ Diodorus, the disciple of Socrates, is said to have had five daughters skilled in dialectics and distinguished for chastity, of whom a full account is given by Philo the master of³³⁸ Carneades. And mighty Rome cannot taunt us as though we had invented the story of the birth of our Lord and Saviour from a virgin; for the Romans believe that the founders of their city and race were the offspring of the virgin³³⁹ Ilia and of Mars.

43. Let these allusions to the virgins of the world, brief and hastily gathered from many histories, now suffice. I will proceed to married women who were reluctant to survive the decease or violent death of their husbands for fear they might be forced into a second marriage, and who entertained a marvellous affection for the only husbands they had. This may teach us that second marriage was repudiated among the heathen. Dido, the sister of Pygmalion, having collected a vast amount of gold and silver, sailed to Africa, and there built Carthage. And when her hand was sought in marriage by Iarbas, king of Libya, she deferred the marriage for a while until her country was settled. Not long after, having raised a³⁴⁰ funeral pyre to the memory of her former husband Sichus, she preferred to "burn rather than to marry." Carthage was built by a woman of chastity, and its end was a tribute to the excellence of the virtue. For the³⁴¹ wife of Hasdrubal, when the city was captured and set on fire, and she saw that she could not herself escape capture by the Romans, took her little children in either hand and leaped into the burning ruins of her house.

44. What need to tell of the wife of³⁴² Niceratus, who, not enduring to wrong her husband, inflicted death upon herself rather than subject herself to the lust of the thirty tyrants whom Lysander had set over conquered Athens?³⁴³ Artemisia, also, wife of Mausolus, is related to have been distinguished for chastity. Though she was queen of Caria, and is extolled by great poets and historians, no higher praise is bestowed upon her than that when her husband was dead she loved him as much as when he was alive, and built a tomb so great that even to the present day all costly sepulchres are called after his name, mausoleums.³⁴⁴ Teuta, queen of the Illyrians, owed her long sway over brave warriors, and her frequent victories over Rome, to her marvellous chastity. The Indians and almost all the Barbarians have a plurality of wives. It is a law with them that the favourite wife must be burned with her dead husband. The wives therefore vie with one another for the husband's love, and the highest ambition of the rivals, and the proof of chastity, is to be considered worthy of death. So then she that is victorious, having put on her former dress and ornaments, lies down beside the corpse, embracing and kissing it, and to the glory of chastity despises the flames which are burning beneath her. I suppose that she who dies thus, wants no second marriage. The famous Alcibiades, the friend of Socrates, when Athens was conquered, fled to Pharnabazus, who took a bribe from Lysander the Lacedaemonian leader and ordered him to be slain. He was strangled, and when his head had been cut off it was sent to Lysander as proof of the murder, but the rest of his body lay unburied. His concubine, therefore, all alone, in defiance of the command of the cruel enemy, in the midst of strangers, and in the face of peril, gave him due burial, for she was ready to die for the dead man whom she had loved when living. Let matrons, Christian matrons at all events, imitate the fidelity of concubines, and exhibit in their freedom what she in her captivity preserved.

45. Strato, ruler of Sidon, thought of dying by his own hand, that he might not be the sport of the Persians, who were close by and whose alliance he had discarded for the friendship of the king of Egypt. But he drew back in terror, and eyeing the sword which he had seized, awaited in alarm the approach of the enemy. His wife, knowing that he must be immediately taken, wrested the weapon from his hand, and pierced his side. When the body was properly laid out she lay down upon it in the agony of death, that she might not violate her virgin troth in the embraces of another.³⁴⁵ Xenophon, in describing the early years of the eider Cyrus, relates that when her husband Abradatas was slain, Panthea who had loved him intensely, placed herself beside the mangled body, then stabbed herself, and let her blood run into her husband's wounds. The³⁴⁶ queen whom the king her husband had shewn naked and without her knowledge to his friend, thought she had good cause for slaying the king. She judged that she was not beloved if it was possible for her to be exhibited to another. Rhodogune, daughter of Darius, after the death of her husband, put to death the nurse who was trying to persuade her to marry again.³⁴⁷ Alcestis is related in story to have voluntarily died for Admetus, and Penelope's chastity is the theme of Homer's song. Laodamia's praises are also sung by the poets, because, when³⁴⁸ Protesilaus was slain at Troy, she refused to survive him.

46. I may pass on to Roman women; and the first that I shall mention is³⁴⁹ Lucretia, who would not survive her violated chastity, but blotted out the stain upon her person with her own blood. Duilius, the first Roman who won a³⁵⁰ naval triumph, took to wife a virgin, Bilia, of such extraordinary chastity that she was an example even to an age which held unchastity to be not merely vicious but monstrous. When he was grown old and feeble he was once in the course of a quarrel taunted with having bad breath. In dudgeon he betook himself home, and on complaining to his wife that she had never told him of it so that he might remedy the fault, he received the reply that she would have done so, but she thought that all men had foul breath as he had. In either case this chaste and noble woman deserves praise, whether she was not aware there was anything wrong with her husband, or if she patiently endured, and her husband discovered his unfortunate condition not by the disgust of a wife, but by the abuse of an enemy. At all events the woman who marries a second time cannot say this. Marcia, Cato's younger daughter, on being asked after the loss of her husband why she did not marry again, replied that she could not find a man who wanted her more than her money. Her words teach us that men in choosing their wives look for riches rather than for chastity, and that many in marrying use not their eyes but their fingers. That must be an excellent thing which is won by avarice! When the same lady was mourning the loss of her husband, and the matrons asked what day would terminate her grief, she replied, "The same that terminates my life." I imagine that a woman who thus followed her husband in heart and mind had no thought of marrying again. Porcia, whom³⁵¹ Brutus took to wife, was a virgin; Cato's wife,³⁵² Marcia, was not a virgin; but Marcia went to and fro between Hortensius and Cato, and was quite content to live without Cato; while³⁵³ Porcia could not live without Brutus; for women attach themselves closely to particular men, and to keep to one is a strong link in the chain of affection. When a relative urged Annia to marry again (she was of full age and a goodly person), she answered, "I shall certainly not do so. For, if I find a good man, I have no wish to be in fear of losing him: if a bad one, why must I put up with a bad husband after having had a good one?"³⁵⁴ Porcia the younger, on hearing a certain lady of good character, who had a second husband, praised in her house, replied, "A chaste and happy matron never marries more than once." Marcella the elder, on being asked by her mother if she was glad she was

married, answered, "So much so that I want nothing more." 355 Valeria, sister of the Messalas, when she lost her husband Servius, would marry no one else. On being asked why not, she said that to her, her husband Servius was ever alive.

47. I feel that in giving this list of women I have said far more than is customary in illustrating a point, and that I might be justly censured by my learned reader. But what am I to do when the women of our time press me with apostolic authority, and before the first husband is buried, repeat from morning to night the precepts which allow a second marriage? Seeing they despise the fidelity which Christian purity dictates, let them at least learn chastity from the heathen. A book On Marriage, worth its weight in gold, passes under the name of 356 Theophrastus. In it the author asks whether a wise man marries. And after laying down the conditions—that the wife must be fair, of good character, and honest parentage, the husband in good health and of ample means, and after saying that under these circumstances a wise man sometimes enters the state of matrimony, he immediately proceeds thus: "But all these conditions are seldom satisfied in marriage. A wise man therefore must not take a wife. For in the first place his study of philosophy will be hindered, and it is impossible for anyone to attend to his books and his wife. Matrons want many things, costly dresses, gold, jewels, great outlay, maid-servants, all kinds of furniture, litters and gilded coaches. Then come curtain-lectures the livelong night: she complains that one lady goes out better dressed than she: that another is looked up to by all: 'I am a poor despised nobody at the ladies' assemblies.' 'Why did you ogle that creature next door?' 'Why were you talking to the maid?' 'What did you bring from the market?' 'I am not allowed to have a single friend, or companion.' She suspects that her husband's love goes the same way as her hate. There may be in some neighbouring city the wisest of teachers; but if we have a wife we can neither leave her behind, nor take the burden with us. To support a poor wife, is hard: to put up with a rich one, is torture. Notice, too, that in the case of a wife you cannot pick and choose: you must take her as you find her. If she has a bad temper, or is a fool, if she has a blemish, or is proud, or has bad breath, whatever her fault may be—all this we learn after marriage. Horses, asses, cattle, even slaves of the smallest worth, clothes, kettles, wooden seats, cups, and earthenware pitchers, are first tried and then bought: a wife is the only thing that is not shown before she is married, for fear she may not give satisfaction. Our gaze must always be directed to her face, and we must always praise her beauty: if you look at another woman, she thinks that she is out of favour. She must be called my lady, her birth-day must be kept, we must swear by her health and wish that she may survive us, respect must be paid to the nurse, to the nursemaid, to the father's slave, to the foster-child, to the handsome hanger-on, to the curled darling who manages her affairs, and to the eunuch who ministers to the safe indulgence of her lust: names which are only a cloak for adultery. Upon whomsoever she sets her heart, they must have her love though they want her not. If you give her the management of the whole house, you must yourself be her slave. If you reserve something for yourself, she will not think you are loyal to her; but she will turn to strife and hatred, and unless you quickly take care, she will have the poison ready. If you introduce old women, and soothsayers, and prophets, and vendors of jewels and silken clothing, you imperil her chastity; if you shut the door upon them, she is injured and fancies you suspect her. But what is the good of even a careful guardian, when an unchaste wife cannot be watched, and a chaste one ought not to be? For necessity is but a faithless keeper of chastity, and she alone really deserves to be called pure, who is free to sin if she chooses. if a woman be fair, she soon finds lovers; if she be ugly, it is easy to be wanton. It is difficult to guard what many long for. It is annoying to have what no one

thinks worth possessing. But the misery of having an ugly wife is less than that of watching a comely one. Nothing is safe, for which a whole people sighs and longs. One man entices with his figure, another with his brains, another with his wit, another with his open hand. Somehow, or sometime, the fortress is captured which is attacked on all sides. Men marry, indeed, so as to get a manager for the house, to solace weariness, to banish solitude; but a faithful slave is a far better manager, more submissive to the master, more observant of his ways, than a wife who thinks she proves herself mistress if she acts in opposition to her husband, that is, if she does what pleases her, not what she is commanded. But friends, and servants who are under the obligation of benefits received, are better able to wait upon us in sickness than a wife who makes us responsible for her tears (she will sell you enough to make a deluge for the hope of a legacy), boasts of her anxiety, but drives her sick husband to the distraction of despair. But if she herself is poorly, we must fall sick with her and never leave her bedside. Or if she be a good and agreeable wife (how rare a bird she is!), we have to share her groans in childbirth, and suffer torture when she is in danger. A wise man can never be alone. He has with him the good men of all time, and turns his mind freely wherever he chooses. What is inaccessible to him in person he can embrace in thought. And, if men are scarce, he converses with God.³⁵⁷ He is never less alone than when alone. Then again, to marry for the sake of children, so that our name may not perish, or that we may have support in old age, and leave our property without dispute, is the height of stupidity. For what is it to us when we are leaving the world if another bears our name, when even a son does not all at once take his father's title, and there are countless others who are called by the same name. Or what support in old age is he whom you bring up, and who may die before you, or turn out a reprobate? Or at all events when he reaches mature age, you may seem to him long in dying. Friends and relatives whom you can judiciously love are better and safer heirs than those whom you must make your heirs whether you like it or not. Indeed, the surest way of having a good heir is to ruin your fortune in a good cause while you live, not to leave the fruit of your labour to be used you know not how."

48. When Theophrastus thus discourses, are there any of us, Christians, whose conversation is in heaven and who daily say³⁵⁸ "I long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ," whom he does not put to the blush? Shall a joint-heir of Christ really long for human heirs? And shall he desire children and delight himself in a long line of descendants, who will perhaps fall into the clutches of Antichrist, when we read that³⁵⁹ Moses and³⁶⁰ Samuel preferred other men to their own sons, and did not count as their children those whom they saw to be displeasing to God? When Cicero after³⁶¹ divorcing Terentia was requested by³⁶² Hirtius to marry his sister, he³⁶³ set the matter altogether on one side, and said that he could not possibly devote himself to a wife and to philosophy. Meanwhile that excellent partner, who had herself drunk wisdom at Tully's fountains, married³⁶⁴ Sallust his enemy, and took for her third husband Messala Corvinus, and thus, as it were, passed through three degrees of eloquence. Socrates had two wives, Xantippe and Myron, grand-daughter of Aristides. They frequently quarrelled, and he was accustomed to banter them for disagreeing about him, he being the ugliest of men, with snub nose, bald forehead, rough-haired, and bandy-legged. At last they planned an attack upon him, and having punished him severely, and put him to flight, vexed him for a long time. On one occasion when he opposed Xantippe; who from above was heaping abuse upon him, the termagant soused him with dirty water, but he only wiped his head and said, "I knew that a shower must follow such thunder as that."³⁶⁵ Metella, consort of L. Sulla the³⁶⁶ Fortunate (except in the matter of his wife) was³⁶⁷

openly unchaste. It was the common talk of Athens, as I learnt in my youthful years when we soon pick up what is bad, and yet Sulla was in the dark, and first got to know the secrets of his household through the abuse of his enemies. Cn. Pompey had an impure wife³⁶⁸ Mucia, who was surrounded by eunuchs from Pontus and troops of the countrymen of Mithridates. Others thought that he knew all and submitted to it; but a comrade told him during the campaign, and the conqueror of the whole world was dismayed at the sad intelligence.³⁶⁹ M. Cato, the Censor, had a wife Actoria Paula, a woman of low origin, fond of drink, violent, and (who would believe it?) haughty to Cato. I say this for fear anyone may suppose that in marrying a poor woman he has secured peace. When³⁷⁰ Philip king of Macedon, against whom³⁷¹ Demosthenes thundered in his Philippics, was entering his bed-room as usual, his wife in a passion shut him out. Finding himself excluded he held his tongue, and consoled himself for the insult by reading a tragic poem.³⁷² Gorgias the Rhetorician recited his excellent treatise on Concord to the Greeks, then at variance among themselves, at Olympia. Whereupon³⁷³ Melanthius his enemy observed: "Here is a man who teaches us concord, and yet could not make concord between himself his wife, and maid-servant, three persons in one house." The truth was that his wife envied the beauty of the girl, and drove the purest of men wild with daily quarrels. Whole tragedies of Euripides are censures on women. Hence Hermione says,³⁷⁴ "The counsels of evil women have beguiled me." In the semi-barbarous and remote city³⁷⁵ Leptis it is the custom for a daughter-in-law on³⁷⁶ the second day to beg the loan of a jar from her mother-in-law. The latter at once denies the request, and we see how true was the remark of³⁷⁷ Terence, ambiguously expressed on purpose—"How is this? do all mothers-in-law hate their daughters-in-law?" We read of a certain Roman noble who, when his friends found fault with him for having divorced a wife, beautiful, chaste, and rich, put out his foot and said to them, "And the shoe before you looks new and elegant, yet no one but myself knows where it pinches." Herodotus³⁷⁸ tells us that a woman puts off her modesty with her clothes. And our own comic poet³⁷⁹ thinks the man fortunate who has never been married. Why should I refer to Pasiphaë,³⁸⁰ Clytemnestra, and Eriphyle, the first of whom, the wife of a king and swimming in pleasure, is said to have lusted for a bull, the second to have killed her: husband for the sake of an adulterer, the third to have betrayed Amphiaras, and to have preferred a gold necklace to the welfare of her husband. In all the bombast of tragedy and the overthrow of houses, cities, and kingdoms, it is the wives and concubines who stir up strife. Parents take up arms against their children: unspeakable banquets are served: and on account of the rape of one wretched woman Europe and Asia are involved in a ten years' war. We read of some who were divorced the day after they were married, and immediately married again. Both husbands are to blame, both he who was so soon dissatisfied, and he who was so soon pleased. Epicurus the patron of pleasure (though³⁸¹ Metrodorus his disciple married Leontia) says that a wise man can seldom marry, because marriage has many drawbacks. And as riches, honours, bodily health, and other things which we call indifferent, are neither good nor bad, but stand as it were midway, and become good and bad according to the use and issue, so wives stand on the border line of good and ill. It is, moreover, a serious matter for a wise man to be in doubt whether he is going to marry a good or a bad woman.³⁸² Chrysippus ridiculously maintains that a wise man should marry, that he may not outrage Jupiter³⁸³ Gamelius and Genethlius. For upon that principle the Latins would not marry at all, since they have no Jupiter who presides over marriage. But if, as he thinks, the life of men is determined by the names of gods, whoever chooses to sit will offend Jupiter³⁸⁴ Stator.

49. Aristotle and Plutarch and our Seneca have written treatises on matrimony, out of which we have already made some extracts and now add a few more. "The love of beauty is the forgetting of reason and the near neighbour of madness; a foul blot little in keeping with a sound mind. It confuses counsel, breaks high and generous spirits, draws away men from great thoughts to mean ones; it makes men querulous, ill-tempered, foolhardy, cruelly imperious, servile flatterers, good for nothing, at last not even for love itself. For although in the intensity of passion it burns like a raging fire, it wastes much time through suspicions, tears, and complaints: it begets hatred of itself, and at last hates itself." The course of love is laid bare in Plato's Phaedrus from beginning to end, and Lysias explains all its drawbacks-how it is led not by reason, but by frenzy, and in particular is a harsh gaoler over lovely wives. Seneca, too, relates that he knew an accomplished man who before going out used to tie his wife's garter upon his breast, and could not bear to be absent from her for a quarter of an hour; and this pair would never take a drink unless husband and wife alternately put their lips to the cup; and they did other things just as absurd in the extravagant outbursts of their warm but blind affection. Their love was of honourable birth, but it grew out of all proportion. And it makes no difference how honourable may be the cause of a man's insanity. Hence³⁸⁵ Xystus in his Sentences tells us that "He who too ardently loves his own wife is an adulterer." It is disgraceful to love another man's wife at all, or one's own too much. A wise man ought to love his wife with judgment, not with passion. Let a man govern his voluptuous impulses. and not rush headlong into intercourse. There is nothing blacker than to love a wife as if she were an adulteress. Men who say they have contracted marriage and are bringing up children, for the good of their country and of the race, should at least imitate the brutes, and not destroy their offspring in the womb; nor should they appear in the character of lovers, but of husbands. In some cases marriage has grown out of adultery: and, shameful to relate! men have tried to teach their wives chastity after having taken their chastity away. Marriages of that sort are quickly dissolved when lust is satiated. The first allurements gone, the charm is lost. What shall I say, says Seneca, of the poor men who in numbers are bribed to take the name of husband in order to evade the laws promulgated against bachelors? How can he who is married under such conditions be a guide to morality, teach chastity, and maintain the authority of a husband? It is the saying of a very learned man, that chastity must be preserved at all costs, and that when it is lost all virtue falls to the ground. This holds the primacy of all virtues in woman. This it is that makes up for a wife's poverty, enhances her riches, redeems her deformity, gives grace to her beauty; it makes her act in a way worthy of her forefathers whose blood it does not taint with bastard offspring; of her children, who through it have no need to blush for their mother, or to be in doubt about their father; and above all, of herself, since it defends her from external violation. There is no greater calamity connected with captivity than to be the victim of another's lust. The consulship sheds lustre upon men; eloquence gives eternal renown; military glory and a triumph immortalise an obscure family. Many are the spheres ennobled by splendid ability. The virtue of woman is, in a special sense, purity. It was this that made³⁸⁶ Lucretia the equal of Brutus, if it did not make her his superior, since Brutus learnt from a woman the impossibility of being a slave. It was this that made³⁸⁷ Cornelia a fit match for Gracchus, and³⁸⁸ Porcia for a second Brutus.³⁸⁹ Tanaquil is better known than her husband. His name, like the names of many other kings, is lost in the mists of antiquity. She, through a virtue rare among women, is too deeply rooted in the hearts of all ages for her memory ever to perish. Let my married sisters copy the examples of³⁹⁰ Theano,³⁹¹ Cleobuline, Gorgente,³⁹² Timoclia, the³⁹³ Claudias and Cornelias; and when they find the Apostle conceding

second marriage to depraved women, they will read that before the light of our religion shone upon the world wives of one husband ever held high rank among matrons, that by their hands the sacred rites of Fortuna³⁹⁴ Muliebris were performed, that a priest or³⁹⁵ Flamen twice³⁹⁶ married was unknown, that the high-priests of Athens to this day³⁹⁷ emasculate themselves by drinking hemlock, and once they have been drawn in to the pontificate, cease to be men.

1: From this expression and that quoted in the notice above, it would be supposed that Jerome knew Jovinianus and his mode of life. But there is no reason to think that he had this knowledge; and his imputations against his adversary must be taken as the inferences which he draws from his opinions.

2: Hor. Ars Poet. 139.

3: Pers. Sat. iii. 118.

4: Plautus, Pseudolus, i. 1. 23.

5: The allusion is probably to the Sybilline books.

6: Aen x. 640.

7: The philosopher of Ephesus. Flourished about b.c. 513.

8: Ibi est distinctio. Instead of clearness we have to make a choice between possible meanings.

9: Marcion lived about a.d. 150, and was co-temporary with Polycarp, who is said to have had a personal encounter with him at Rome. Unlike other Gnostics he professed to be purely Christian in his doctrines. He is specially noted for his violent treatment of Scripture: he rejected the whole of the Old Testament, while of the New he acknowledged only the Gospel of S. Luke and ten of S. Paul's Epistles, and from these he expunged whatever he did not approve of. His sect lasted until the sixth century.

10: By birth an Assyrian, and a pupil of Justin Martyr. His followers were called Encratites, or Temperates, from their great austerity. They also bore the names Water-drinkers and Renouncers.

11: Heb. xiii. The Revised Ver. translates "let marriage be, etc." There is no verb in the original, the sentence being probably designed to be a Christian proverb, and capable of serving either as an assertion or as a precept. The revised rendering is preferred by the chief modern commentators.

12: Gen. i. 28.

13: For much interesting information relating to counting on the fingers, and for authorities on the subject, see Mayor's note on Juvenal x. 249.

14: The philosopher of Crotona, in Italy, b.c. 580-510. See some of his sayings in Jerome's Apology, iii. 39-40.

15: The great teacher of the Academy at Athens; lived b.c. 428-389.

16: Surnamed the "Just." He was the opponent of Themistocles. He fought at Marathon (490), and although in exile did good service at Salamis (480). He was now recalled, and after commanding the Athenians at Plataea (479) died, probably in 468, so poor that he did not leave enough to pay

for his funeral.

17: Flourished about b.c. 370. A disciple of Socrates, and founder of the Cyrenaic School of Philosophy; he was luxurious in his life, and held pleasure to be the highest good.

18: Epicurus (b.c. 342-270), though a disciple of Aristippus, does not appear to have deserved the odium attached to his name by Jerome and many others. "Pleasure with him was not a mere momentary and transitory sensation, but something lasting and imperishable, consisting in pure and noble enjoyments. that is, in ataracia and aponia , or the freedom from pain and from all influences which disturb the peace of our mind, and thereby our happiness which is the result of it." See Zeller's Socrates and the Socratic Schools (Reichel's translation), second ed., p. 337 sq.

19: The famous Athenian, talented, reckless and unscrupulous; born about b.c. 450, assassinated 404.

20: Gen. ii. 24.

21: Matt. xix. 5.

22: Gen. i. 28; Gen. ix. 1.

23: Gen. ix. 1.

24: Gen. ix. 3.

25: Gen. xxv. 23.

26: Gen. xxx. 1.

27: Gen. xxx. 2.

28: Palo. Rev. Vers. tent-pin.

29: Ps. lxxii. 1.

30: Ps. lxxii. 15.

31: Is. xxxviii. 19. Sept.

32: 1 Tim. v. 14.

33: Hebr. xiii. 4. See note on sec. 3.

34: 1 Cor. vii. 39.

35: 1 Tim. ii. 14.

36: 1 Cor. vii. 29.

37: 1 Cor. vii. 1 sq.

38: Prov. vi. 27, Prov. vi. 28.

39: Mithras was the God of the Sun among the Persians. His worship was introduced at Rome under the Emperors, and thence spread over the empire.

40: Son of Vulcan, king of Athens, and the first to drive a four-in-hand, Virg. G. iii. 113: "First to the chariot, Erichonius dared four steeds to join, and o'er the rapid wheels victorious hang."

41: 1 Pet. iii. 7.

42: 1 Pet. iii. 2, 1 Pet. iii. 3.

43: 1 John ii. 6.

44: 1 Cor. vii. 7.

45: 2 Cor. ii. 7.

46: 2 Cor. ii. 10. Margin.

47: Ps. xlv. 9, Ps. xlv. 13, Ps. xlv. 14.

48: 1 Peter iii. 7, joined with 1 Peter iv. 10.

49: 1 Cor. vii. 8.

50: Tit. i. 12.

51: 1 Cor. xv. 33.

52: Acts xvii. 28.

53: 1 Cor. vii. 10 sq.

54: 2 Cor. vi. 14 sq.

55: 1 Cor. vii. 39.

56: Mal. ii. 11, Mal. ii. 12.

57: R. V. "To the man that doeth this, him that waketh and him that answereth."

58: 1 Cor. vii. 18 sq.

59: But S. Paul hints at a surgical operation. See Josephus, Antiq. Bk. xii. c. v. sec. 1, where certain apostates from Judaism are said "to have hid their circumcision that even when they were naked [in the gymnasium] they might appear to be Greeks." See also Celsus, Bk. vii. c. xxv.

60: Gal. v. 19.

61: 1 Cor. vi. 17.

62: 1 Cor. vii. 25, 1 Cor. vii. 26.

63: Ferias nuptiarum. The reference is to 1 Cor. vii. 5.

64: Matt. xix. 10 sq.

65: Jerome uses the Greek word agwnoqethj -President of the Games.

66: S. John vii. 37.

67: Is. lvi. 3.

68: Jer. xxxviii. 7.

69: Acts viii. 27.

70: 1 Cor. vii. 26.

71: Matt. xxiv. 19, &c.

72: 1 Cor. vii. 27.

73: 1 Cor. vii. 30 sqq.

74: See Rev. Ver. Margin.

75: See the treatise on the Perp. Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Rome, 384.

76: Ep. xxii. on the guarding of virginity. Rome, 384.

77: Jerome apparently, here, alludes to some early work of Tertullian not now extant.

78: Jerome often alludes to his relation to Gregory, in the year 381; he was present at the council of Constantinople, of which Gregory was then the bishop.

79: This rendering supposes kai memeristai 80: S. John xv. 19.

81: 1 Cor. vii. 35.

82: 1 Cor. iii. 10.

83: 1 Cor. vii. 37, 1 Cor. vii. 38.

84: Ps. xxxvi. 27.

85: Eccles. vii. 16.

86: 1 Cor. vii. 39, 1 Cor. vii. 40.

87: 1 Tim. v. 11, 1 Tim. v. 15.

88: 1 Cor. vii. 40.

89: Rom vii. 2, Rom. vii. 3.

90: 1 Tim. v. 14, 1 Tim. v. 15.

91: See 1 Tim. iii. 12. Most ancient writers interpreted S. Paul's words as referring to second marriages after loss of first wife, however happening. And certain Councils decided in the same sense, e.g. Neocaesarea (a.d. 314). Ellicott's Pastoral Ep., fifth ed., p. 41.

92: 1 Tim. v. 9. Other authorities, however, suppose the words to refer to an order of widows, and pertinently ask, would the Church thus limit her alms.

93: Cor. vi. 12.

- 94: Eph. v. 31: Gen. ii.
- 95: Eph. v. 32.
- 96: Eph. v. 25: Col. iii. 9-11.
- 97: 1 Thess. iv. 7.
- 98: Lit. through a virgin. The allusion is, probably, to his baptism by a virgin, i.e., John Baptist.
- 99: But see Gen. iv. 26.
- 100: 1 Pet. iii. 20.
- 101: Eph. i. 10.
- 102: Rev. i. 8; Rev. xxii. 13.
- 103: Rom. xiv. 21.
- 104: Gen. xxxi. 46-49, where the heap itself is called Galeed.
- 105: Gen. xxxii. 25, Gen. xxxii. 28, Gen. xxxii. 31.
- 106: Gen. xxxv. 16, Gen. xxxv. 20.
- 107: Gen. xxxviii.
- 108: Gen. xxxviii. 9.
- 109: Ex. iv. 24-26.
- 110: Ex. iii. 5.
- 111: 1 Sam. xxi. 4.
- 112: Levit. xxi. 13, Levit. xxi. 14.
- 113: The reference is, probably, to Levit. xxii. 13. But the second marriage is not there prohibited, and in the ideal polity of Ezekiel (xliv. 22) a priest might marry the widow of a priest.
- 114: Levit. xxi. 3.
- 115: Deut. xx. 6, Deut. xx. 7, where an indulgence, not a prohibition, is clearly indicated.
- 116: Ex. xxxviii. 8. Sept. Vulg. "who watched;" Onkelos' Targum "who assembled to pray," and so the Syriac Version. The Hebrew word signifies "to go forth to war," but is applied to the temple service, a sort of militia sacra (Gesenius). Hence Rev. Version, "the serving women which served at the door of the tent of meeting;" and Margin, "the women which assembled to minister." Comp. Numb. iv. 3, Numb. iv. 23, Numb. iv. 30, Numb. iv. 35, Numb. iv. 39; and 1 Sam. ii. 22.
- 117: Ex. xxxvii.
- 118: In Jude 5, instead of "the Lord," A. B. read Jesus, and this is accepted by many ancient authorities. Farrar observes ("Early Days of Christianity," pop. ed., p. 128) "Jesus" is the more difficult, and therefore more probable reading of A. B. It is explained by 1 Cor. x. 4, and the

identification of the Messiah with the "Angel of the Lord" (Ex. xiv. 19, Ex. xxiii. 20, &c.) and with the Pillar of Fire in Philo.

119: Josh. iii.

120: Jerome derives Gilgal from yly 121: Ex. iii. 5: Jos. v. 15.

122: Josh. x. 3.

123: Josh. x. 16.

124: S. Luke xvi. 29.

125: Rom. v. 14.

126: Gen. xxxi. 41.

127: Gen. xxxvii. 28.

128: Gen. xxxii. 14.

129: Joshua died at the age of 110 years. Josh. xxiv. 29.

130: Timnath-Serah was the original name of Joshua's inheritance (Josh. xix. 50), but in Judges ii. 9, we find the name changed to Timnath-Heres. Timnath-Serah and the tomb of its illustrious owner were shown in the time of Jerome (Letter cviii. 13). "Paula wondered greatly that he who assigned men their possessions had chosen for himself a rough and rocky spot." Jerome is looking at the inheritance with the eyes of an ardent controversialist when he describes it as "the fairest spot in the land of Judah."

131: Ps. xlviii. 2. The correct rendering of the Hebrew is much disputed.

132: Ps. lxxiii. 2.

133: Josh. xxiv. 28.

134: Deut. xxxiv. 6.

135: Worshipped more especially at Lampsacus on the Helles pont. He was regarded as the promoter of fertility in vegetables and animals.

136: Ps. cxxviii. 3.

137: Gen. vi. 3. R. V. Strive or rule in.

138: Gen. xlix. 17. Samson was of the tribe of Dan.

139: Judg. xi. 30, Judg. xi. 31.

140: 1 Tim. iii. 2.

141: Ps. xcix. 6.

142: See 1 Chron. vi. 34-38.

143: Heb. vii. 3. The Greek word in the text ("without genealogy") is unknown to secular writers. and occurs here only in the New Test. It cannot mean without descent (see verse 6). Unmarried appears to be a false inference from this supposed meaning. Ignatius also (Ep. ad. Philad.) reckoned Melchizedek among celibates. Rev. Version translates, "without genealogy," i.e., his ancestry was unrecorded. See Farrar's "Early Days of Christianity," pop. ed., p. 221.

144: 1 Sam. ii. 22.

145: See, however, 1 Chron. xxii. 8.

146: S. Matt. xviii. 6.

147: S. Matt. v. 22.

148: S. Matt. v. 27.

149: Cant. vi. 8.

150: 1 Kings xi. 3.

151: 1 Cor. vii. 29.

152: Is. xxxviii. 19.

153: 2 Kings xxii. 14.

154: 2 Kings xx. 18.

155: Dan. i. 3, Dan. i. 4.

156: Ezek. xiv. 14, Ezek. xiv. 20.

157: Ezek. xviii. 4.

158: Ezek. viii. 1.

159: Ezek. xiv. 14.

160: Apocryphal additions to Daniel.

161: Matt. xix. 27.

162: Luke xviii. 29, Luke xviii. 30.

163: 1 Cor. ix. 5. The text has been much tampered with by the advocates or opponents of celibacy. The reading first quoted by Jerome is that of F, a manuscript of the eighth or ninth century, and is found in Tertullian; the other chief readings introduce the Greek equivalent for sister, either in the sing. or plural. The Rev. Version renders, "have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer" (or sister). Augustine, Tertullian, Theodoret, &c., together with Cornelius-a-Lapide and Estius among the moderns, agree with Jerome in referring the passage to holy women who ministered to the Apostles as they did to the Lord Himself. The third canon of Nicaea is supposed to be directed against the practice encouraged by this interpretation of the Apostle's words.

164: Attributed to Clement by Jerome.

165: Isa. i. 9.

166: S. John xiii. 25.

167: S. John xx. 4.

168: S. John xxi. 7 sq.

169: S. Matt. xvi. 18.

170: S. Matt. xviii. 18; S. John xx. 22, John xx. 23.

171: S. John xiv. 27.

172: S. Matt. xx. 27; S. Luke xxii. 26.

173: See this book in Vol. III. of this series.

174: Is. xl. 3.

175: S. John i. 1.

176: S. John xix. 26, John xix. 27.

177: 1 Tim. ii. 13, 1 Tim. ii. 15.

178: 1 Tim. ii. 8 sqq.

179: Apparently, Eve's transgression imputed to her descendants.

180: The original admits of the rendering "by means of her child-bearing." But Ellicott and others interpret of the Incarnation.

181: Rev. Version, "sobriety." Sobermindedness or discretion are given by Ellicott (Notes on translation) as alternative renderings. The word cannot mean chastity, but rather "the well-balanced state of mind resulting from habitual self-restraint" in general.

182: Prov. vi. 26?

183: Prov. vii. 27; Prov. ix. 18.

184: Prov. xxi. 19.

185: Often mentioned by Seneca. A saying is reported of him: "Ho, traveller, stop. There is a miracle here: a man and his wife not at strife."

186: Prov. xxi. 9; Prov. xxv. 24.

187: Prov. xxvii. 15.

188: Supereffluas. Prov. iii. 21 Sept., Heb. ii. 1. The Greek word signifies to fall away like flowing water. See Schleusner on pararruomai. In Heb. ii. 1, Rev. V. translates "We drift away:" Vaughan, "We be found to have leaked, or ebbd away."

189: Prov. xxx. 15, Prov. xxx. 16.

190: Eccles. iii. 1, Eccles. iii. 2, sqq.

191: Eccles. vii. 10.

192: R.V. "Good as an inheritance."

193: Eccles. vii. 28, Eccles. vii. 29.

194: Eccles. ix. 8.

195: Cant. i. 10, Cant. i. 11. "laits of gold with studs of silver." R.V.

196: Cant. ii. 1, Cant. ii. 10-12.

197: 1 Cor. vii. 29.

198: Cant. ii. 12.

199: Verse 13.

200: 2 Cor. ii. 15.

201: Cant. ii. 13, Cant. ii. 14.

202: Ex. xxxiv. 33, Ex. xxxiv. 35; 2 Cor. iii. 7 sq.

203: Is. i. 15.

204: Cant. ii. 16.

205: Cant. iii. 7, Cant. iii. 8.

206: Cant. iv. 6.

207: Eph. v. 27.

208: Cant. iv. 8.

209: Sept. R.V. "Look from the top of Amana."

210: Cant. viii. 5.

211: Ps. cxix. 105.

212: Cant. iv. 9.

213: Cant. iv. 9, Cant. iv. 10.

214: Cant. v. 1.

215: S. Matt. ix. 17.

216: Rom. vii. 6.

217: Zech. viii. 5; Zech. ix. 17, R. V. "How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Corn shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the maids."

218: Ps. xlv. 16, Ps xlv. 17.

219: Cant. iv. 12, Cant. iv. 13.

220: Cant. v. 10.

221: Cant. v. 16.

222: Cant. vii. 1.

223: R. V. " O Prince's daughter! " Sept., also " daughter of Nadab. "

224: Is. vii. 14.

225: Delitzsch remarks, "The assertion of Jerome is untenable." See Cheyne, critical note on Is. vii. 14. The word probably denotes a female, married or unmarried, just attaining maturity. But in every other passage, the context shows that the word is used of an unmarried woman.

226: Gen. xxiv. 42 sq.

227: Is. xxxvii. 22.

228: Is. liv. 1.

229: Jerem. ii. 32.

230: Jer. xxxi. 22.

231: Jer. i. 5.

232: Jer. xxxix. 11; Jer. xl. i.

233: Ezek. i. 4.

234: Ezek. xxiv. 18.

235: 1 Cor. vii. 25.

236: Acts xv. 28, Acts xv. 29.

237: S. Matt. x. 10; S. Luke x. 5.

238: S. Matt. xix. 21.

239: 1 Tim. iii. 2, 1 Tim iii. 4; Tit. i. 6.

240: Sacerdotes: that is, bishops.

241: 1 Cor. vii. 7.

242: 1 Tim. iii. x.

243: V. supra, c. 27. R. V. "temperate." Ellicott observes, "under any circumstances the derivative translation Vigilant, Auth., though possibly defensible in the verb, is a needless and doubtful extension of the primary meaning."

244: R. V. "orderly." V. above, c. 27.

245: kosmion . R. V. "orderly."

246: Non vinolentum. R.V. "no brawler," i.e., as the Margin explains, "not quarrelsome over wine." The original is not thus a mere synonym for nhfalioj in v. 2.

247: So Chrysostom and Theodoret. The simple meaning appears to suit the context better.

248: 1 Sam. ii. and 1 Sam. iv.

249: 1 Tim. iii. 11.

250: The Code of Constantine, following the Mosaic law, imposed the penalty of death for adultery. See Gibbon, ch. xliv.

251: S. Matt. xix. 12.

252: 1 Cor. vii. 25.

253: "Two rocky islands in the Euxine, that, according to the fable, floated about, dashing against and rebounding from each other, until at length they became fixed on the passage of the Argo between them."

254: Andabatae.

255: Matt. xix. 12.

256: 1 Cor. vii. 7.

257: Phil. ii. 6-8.

258: S. John xx. 20.

259: S. John xx. 19.

260: S. Matt. xiv. 28.

261: S. Matt. xxii. 30.

262: 2 Cor. v. 17.

263: Rom. vi. 21, Rom. vi. 22.

264: Rom. vii. 4 sq.

265: Rom. vii. 14, Rom. vii. 24, Rom. vii. 25.

266: Rom. viii. 1, Rom. viii. 2.

267: Rom. viii. 5 sq.

268: Rom. viii. 11, Rom. viii. 14.

269: R. V. "mind."

270: Rom. xii. 1-3.

271: See ch. 27.

272: Rom. xiii. 11, Rom. xiii. 12, Rom. xiii. 14.

273: 1 Cor. iii. 1, 1 Cor. iii. 2, 1 Cor. iii. 3.

274: That is, under the dominion of the psyche, or principle of life common to man and the beasts, hence, natural. Opposed to the psyche is the pneuma, capable of being influenced by the Spirit of God. A man thus influenced is pneumatikos or spiritual. See also 1 Cor. xv. 44.

275: 1 Cor. xv. 47 sq.

276: 2 Cor. v. 1 sq.

277: 2 Cor. xi. 2.

278: Gal. ii. 16.

279: Gal. iii. 3, Gal. iii. 4.

280: Gal. v. 16, Gal. v. 17.

281: Properly, self-control in the wide sense.

282: Gal. v. 24, Gal. v. 25.

283: Gal. vi. 7, Gal. vi. 8.

284: Eph. ii. 3, Eph. ii. 4.

285: Eph. iv. 22.

286: Eph. vi. 24.

287: Phil. iii. 20, Phil. iii. 21.

288: Phil. iv. 8.

289: Coloss. ii. 11; Coloss. iii. 1 sq.

290: 2 Tim. ii. 4.

291: Titus ii. 11, Titus ii. 12.

292: S. John xvi. 12, John xvi. 13.

293: xxi. 9.

294: Matt. xi. 13.

295: The passage is not found in existing copies of Josephus.

296: S. James i. 16-18.

297: R. V. "can be no variation." The word "difference," as used by Jerome, is explained by the context.

298: Rev. i. 5.

299: 1 Pet. i. 3-5.

300: Pet. i. 13-16.

301: 1 Pet. i. 18, 1 Pet. i. 19.

302: 1 Pet. i. 22, 1 Pet. i. 23.

303: In Jerome's rendering `living and abiding, 0' are attributes of God. But in the original the participles may be taken as predicates of either word or God. The R. V. refers them to the former.

304: 1 Pet. ii. 9.

305: 1 Pet. iv. 1 sq.

306: 2 Pet. i. 4.

307: 2 Pet. ii. 9 sq.

308: 2 Pet. iii. 3.

309: The notorious epicure of the time of Augustus and Tiberius.

310: Paxamus wrote a treatise on cooking, which, Suidas states, was arranged in alphabetical order.

311: 1 John ii. 15 sq.

312: 1 John iii. 2, 1 John iii. 3.

313: 1 John iv. 7. R. V. "that we may have."

314: Jude, 23.

315: xiv. 1 sq.

316: Rev. vii. 5 sq.

317: Apoc. xiv. 3, Apoc. xiv. 4.

318: or they may say.

319: 2 Tim. ii. 20, 2 Tim. ii. 21.

320: Virg. Aen i. 317.

321: Virg. Aen. vii. 803: id. xi. 535.

322: Leos was the hero from whom the tribe Leontis derived its name. Once when Athens was suffering from famine or plague, the oracle at Delphi demanded that his daughters should be sacrificed. The father complied. The shrine called Leocorium was erected by the Athenians to their honour.

323: Jerome's memory appears to be at fault. When the Greek fleet was on its way to Troy, it was detained by a calm at Aulis. The seer Calchas advised that Iphigenia, daughter of Agamemnon should be sacrificed. See Dict. of Ant.

324: According to the law of Numa, the punishment of a Vestal Virgin for violating the vow of chastity was stoning to death. Tarquinius Priscus first enacted that the offender should be buried alive, after being stripped of her badges of office, scourged and attired like a corpse. "From the time of the triumvirs each [Vestal] was preceded by a lictor when she went abroad; consuls and praetors made way for them, and lowered their fasces; even the tribunes of the plebs respected their holy character, and if any one passed under their litter, he was put to death."

325: It is said, however, that Claudia (Quinta) was a Roman matron, not a Vestal Virgin. The soothsayers announced that only a chaste woman could move the vessel referred to. Claudia, who had been accused of incontinency, took hold of the rope, and the vessel forthwith followed her. b.c. 204.

326: Seneca.

327: In the year after the death of Alexander (b.c. 323), Leosthenes defeated Alexander's general Antipater, near Thermopylae. Antipater then threw himself into the town of Lamia (in Phthiotis in Thessaly) which thus gave its name to the war. Leosthenes pressed the siege with great vigour, but was killed by a blow from a stone.

328: Another name for Messana (or Messene, derived from the Mamertini, a people of Campania, is some of whom were mercenaries in the army of the tyrant Agathocles, and were quartered in the town. At his death (b.c. 282) they rose and gained possession of it.

329: The semi-legendary hero of the second war between Sparta and Messene. He lived about b.c. 270.

330: The spring festival held in honour of Hyacinthus, the beautiful youth accidentally slain by Apollo, and from whose blood was said to have sprung the flower of the same name.

331: He succeeded Plato as president of the Academy (b.c. 347-339). His works are all lost.

332: One of Aristotle's pupils, and author of a number of works, none of which are extant.

333: Diogenes Laërtius (so named from Laërte in Cilicia), who probably lived in the end century after Christ, in the Third Book of his "Lives of the Philosophers" refers to a treatise by Anaxelides on the same subject. It has therefore been conjectured that Jerome may have written *Philosophica Historia* for philosophiae.

334: Timaeus of Locri, in Italy, a Pythagorean philosopher, is said to have been a teacher of Plato. There is an extant work bearing his name; but its genuineness is considered doubtful, and it is in all probability only an abridgment of Plato's dialogue of Timaeus.

335: Damo. Pythagoras is said to have entrusted his writings to her, and to have forbidden her to give them to any one. She strictly observed the command, although she was in extreme poverty, and received many requests to sell them. According to some accounts Pythagoras had another daughter, Myia.

336: Flourished about b.c. 540-510.

337: Clement of Alexandria (died about a.d. 220) in his *Stromata* (i.e. literally, patchwork) or *Miscellanies*, Bk. iv., relates the same story and gives the names of the daughters. The Diodorus referred to in the text lived at Alexandria in the reign of Ptolemy Soter (b.c. 323-285), by whom he was said to have been surnamed Cronos or Saturn, on account of his inability to solve at once some dialectic problem when dining with the king, perhaps with a play upon the word *chronos* (time), or with a sarcastic allusion to Cronos as the introducer of the arts of civilized life. The philosopher is said to have taken the disgrace so much to heart, that he wrote a treatise on the problem, and then died in despair. Another account derives his name from his teacher Apollonius Cronus.

338: Born about b.c. 213, died b.c. 129. He was the determined opponent of the Stoics, and maintained that neither our senses nor our understanding gives us a safe criterion of truth.

339: The poetical name of Rhea Silvia, daughter of Numitor and mother of Romulus and Remus.

340: According to the legend she stabbed herself on the funeral pyre. Jerome ignores the modifications introduced into the legend by Virgil, who, in defiance of the common chronology, makes Dido a contemporary of Aeneas, and represents her as destroying herself when forsaken by the hero.

341: Hasdrubal and his family, with 900 deserters and desperadoes, retired into the temple of Aesculapius, as if to make a brave defence. But the commandant's heart failed him; and, slipping out alone, he threw himself at the feet of Scipio, and craved for pardon. His wife, standing on the base of the temple, was near enough to witness the sight, and reproaching her husband with cowardice, cast herself with her children into the flames which were now wrapping the Citadel round on all sides. b.c. 146.

342: Son of Nicias the celebrated Athenian general.

343: She succeeded Mausolus and reigned b.c. 352-350.

344: She was the wife of Agron, and assumed the sovereign power on the death of her husband, b.c. 231. War was declared against her by Rome in consequence of her having caused the assassination of an ambassador, and in 228 she obtained peace at the cost of the greater part of her dominions.

345: *Cyropaedia*, Book vii.

346: The wife of Candaules, also called Myrsilus. She was exhibited to Gyges, who, after the murder of her husband, married her. Herod. B. i.

347: The story, as is well known, formed the subject of the play by Euripides bearing the heroine's name, which was brought out about b.c. 438.

348: Protesilaus was the first of the Greeks to fall at Troy. According to some accounts he was slain by Hector. When her husband was slain Laodamia begged the gods to allow her to converse with him for only 3 hours. The request having been granted, Hermes led Protesilaus back to the upper world, and when he died a second time, Laodamia died with him.

349: The wife of L. Tarquinius Collatinus, whose rape by Sextus led to the dethronement of Tarquinius Superbus and the establishment of the republic.

350: Over the Carthaginian fleet near Mylae, 260 b.c.

351: One of the assassins of Julius Caesar. Jerome appears to be at fault here. Porcia, the daughter of Cato by his first wife Atilia, before marrying Brutus in 45 b.c., had been married to M. Bibulus and had borne him three children. He died in 48. After the death of Brutus in 42 she put an end to her own life, probably by the fumes of a charcoal fire.

352: Marcia is related to have been ceded by Cato to his friend Hortensius. She continued to live with the latter until his death, when she returned to Cato.

353: It has been conjectured that instead of "Marcia, Cato's younger daughter," a few lines above, we should read Porcia.

354: Probably the daughter of Cato by his second wife Marcia.

355: Jerome, apparently, makes a mistake here. Valeria, sister of the Messalas, married Sulla towards the end of his life. Valeria, the widow of Galerius, after the death of her husband in 311, rejected the proposals of Maximinus. Her consequent sufferings are related by Gibbon in his fourteenth chapter.

356: The Greek philosopher to whom Aristotle bequeathed his library and the originals of his own writings. He died b.c. 287, after being President of the Academy for 35 years. If he were the author of the book here referred to, it is not to be found among his extant writings.

357: Cicero at the beginning of the third book of the *De Officiis*, makes Cato quote this saying as one frequently in the mouth of Publius Scipio.

358: Phil. i. 23.

359: We hear very little of the two sons of Moses, Gershom and Eliezer. See Ex. iv. 20, Ex. xviii. 3, 1 Chron. xxiii. 14. Their promotion is nowhere recorded, and Moses appointed a person of another tribe to be his successor.

360: See 1 Sam. viii. 1-4 and ch. 1 Sam. ix.

361: b.c. 46. "What grounds for displeasure she had given him besides her alleged extravagance it is hard to say. His letters to her during the previous year had been short and rather cold." Watson, *Select Letters of Cicero*. third ed. p. 397.

362: Hirtius was the friend personal and political of Julius Caesar, and during Caesar's absence in Africa he lived principally at his Tusculan estate which adjoined Cicero's villa. Hirtius and Cicero though opposed to each other in politics were on good terms, and the former is said to have received lessons in oratory from the latter.

363: But not long after divorcing Terentia he married Publilia, a young girl of whose property he had the management, in order to relieve himself from pecuniary difficulties. She seems to have received little affection from her husband. Watson, p. 397.

364: This statement is without authority. See Long's Article on Sallust in Smith's Dict. of Classical Biography.

365: Caecilia Metella, the third of Sulla's five wives, had previously been married to M. Aemilius Scaurus, consul b.c. 115. She fell ill during the celebration of Sulla's triumph on account of his victory over Mithridates in 81; and as her recovery was hopeless, Sulla for religious reasons divorced her. She soon afterwards died, and Sulla honoured her memory with a splendid funeral.

366: The famous dictator claimed the name Felix for himself in a speech which he delivered to the people at the close of the celebration of his triumph, because he attributed his success in life to the favour of the gods.

367: But Sulla's youth and manhood were disgraced by the most sensual vices. He was indebted for a considerable portion of his wealth to a courtesan Nicopolis, and his death in b.c. 78 at the age of 60 was hastened by his dissolute mode of life.

368: Pompey, like Sulla, was married five times. Mucia, his third wife, daughter of Q. Mucius Scaevola, the augur, consul b.c. 95, was divorced by Pompey in 62, and afterwards married M. Aemilius Scaurus, son of the consul by Caecilia and thus stepson of Sulla.

369: Born b.c. 234. died b.c. 149. He was the great-grandfather of Cato of Utica.

370: b.c. 382-336.

371: b.c. 385-322.

372: Born about b.c. 480 at Leontini in Sicily. He is said to have lived 105, or even 109 years. He was held in high esteem at Athens, where he had numerous distinguished pupils and imitators.

373: An Athenian tragic poet, celebrated for his wit.

374: See the Andromache.

375: There were two cities of this name, Leptis Magna and Parva, in N. Africa.

376: Or "on another day," that is, than the marriage day implied in the context.

377: Terence Hecyra II. i. 4.

378: Bk I. ch 8. "Candaules addressed Gyges as follows: `Gyges, as I think you do not believe me when I speak of my wife's beauty (for the ears of men are naturally more incredulous than their eyes), you must contrive to see her naked. O' But he, exclaiming loudly, answered: `Sire, what a snocking proposal do you make, bidding me behold my queen naked! With her clothes a woman puts off her modesty, O'" etc.

379: Perhaps Terence, Phormio I, iii. 21.

380: For these legends, see Classical Dict.

381: The most distinguished disciple and the intimate friend of Epicurus. His philosophy appears to have been of a more sensual kind than that of his master. He made perfect happiness to consist in having a well-constituted body. He died b.c. 277 in the 53rd year of his age, 7 years before Epicurus.

382: Chrysippus (b.c. 280-207) the Stoic philosopher, born at Soli in Cilicia. He opposed the prevailing scepticism and maintained the possibility of attaining certain knowledge. It was said of him "that if Chrysippus had not existed the Porch (i.e., Stoicism) could not have been." He is reported to have seldom written less than 500 lines a-day, and to have left behind him 705 works.

383: That is Zeus, regarded as presiding over marriages and the tutelary god of races or families.

384: Literally, "Jupiter who causes to stand": hence Jerome's play upon the word. Jupiter Stator was the god regarded as supporting, preserving, etc. Cic., Cat. I. 13, 31-"quem (sc. Jovem) statorem hujus urbis atque imperil vere nominamus."

385: The greater number of manuscripts read Sextus, an alternative name for the same person. Jerome in his version of the Chronicon of Eusebius speaks of "Xystus a Pythagorean philosopher" who flourished at the time of Christ's birth; but there is great difficulty in establishing the identity of the author of the "Sentences." See also the Prolegomena to Rufinus who translated the Sentences of Xystus, in Vol. III. of this Series.

386: See note above, p. 382.

387: Daughter of P. Scipio Africanus, and wife of Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, censor b.c. 169. The people erected a statue to her with the inscription "Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi."

388: See note p. 376.

389: Wife of Tarquinius Priscus.

390: Theano was the most celebrated of the female philosophers of the Pythagorean school. According to some authorities she was the wife of Pythagoras.

391: Cleobuline, or Cleobule, was celebrated for her riddles in hexameter verse. One on the subject of the year runs thus-"A father has 12 children, and each of these 30 daughters, on one side white, and on the other side black, and though immortal they all die."

392: Timoclia was a woman of Thebes, whose house at the capture of the city in b.c. 335 was broken into and pillaged by the soldiery. She was herself violated by the commander, whom she afterwards contrived to push into a well.

393: A vestal virgin who proved her innocence of the unchastity imputed to her by setting free a stranded ship with her girdle.

394: The epithet is said to have been given to the goddess at the time when Coriolanus was prevented by the entreaties of the women from destroying Rome.

395: The name for any Korean priest devoted to the service of one particular god. He took his distinguishing title from the deity to whom he ministered, e.g. Flamen Martialis.

396: Comp. Tertullian De Monogamia, last chapter-"Fortunae, inquit, muliebri coronam non imponit, nisi univira ...Pontifex Maximus et Flaminica (the wife of a Flamen) nubunt semel."

397: See Origen, Contra Celsum, Bk. VII. The water hemlock, or cowbane, is the variety referred to.

Against Jovinianus - Book 2

Book II.

Book II.

Jerome answers the second, third, and fourth propositions of Jovinianus.

I. (c. 1-4). That those who have become regenerate cannot be overthrown by the devil, Jerome (c. 1) puts it that they cannot be tempted by the devil. He quotes 1 John i. 8-ii. 2, as shewing that faithful men can be tempted and sin and need an advocate. The expressions (3) in Heb. vi. as to those who crucify the Son of God afresh do not apply to ordinary sins after baptism, as supposed by Montanus and Novatus. The epistles to the Seven Churches show that the lapsed may return. The Angels, and even our Lord Himself, (4) could be tempted.

II. (c. 5-17). That there is no difference (morally) between one who fasts and one who takes food with thanksgiving. Jovinian has quoted (5) many texts of Scripture to show that God has made animals for men's food. But (6) there are many other uses of animals besides food. And there are many warnings like 1 Cor. vi. 13, as to the danger arising from food. There are among the heathen (7) many instances of abstinence. They recognize (8) the evil of sensual allurements, and often, like Crates the Theban, (9) have cast away what would tempt them; the senses, they teach. (10) should be subject to reason; and, that (11) except for athletes (Christians do not want to be like Milo of Crotona) bread and water suffice. Horace (12), Xenophon and other eminent Greeks (13), the Essenes and the Brahmins (14), as well as philosophers like Diogenes, testify to the value of abstinence. The Old Testament stories (15) of Esau's pottage, of the lusting of Israel for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and those in the New Testament of Anna, Cornelius, &c., commend abstinence. If some heretics inculcate fasting (16) in such a way as to despise the gifts of God, and weak Christians are not to be judged for their use of flesh, those who seek the higher life (17) will find a help in abstinence.

III. (c. 18-34). The fourth proposition of Jovinianus, that all who are saved will have equal reward, is refuted (19) by the various yields of thirty, sixty, and a hundred fold in the parable of the sower, by (20) the "stars differing in glory" of 1 Cor. xv. 41. It is strange (21) to find the advocate of self-indulgence now claiming equality to the saints. But (22) as there were differences in Ezekiel between cattle and cattle, so in St. Paul between those who built gold or stubble on the one foundation. The differences of gifts (23), of punishments (24), of guilt (25), as in Pilate and the Chief Priests, of the produce of the good seed (26), of the mansions promised in heaven (27-29), of the judgment upon sins both in the church and in Scripture (30-31), of those called at different times to the vineyard (32) are arguments for the diversity of rewards. The parable of the talents (33) holds out as rewards differences of station, and so does the church (34) in its different orders.

Jerome now recapitulates (35) and appeals (36) against the licentious views of Jovinianus, which have already induced many virgins to break their vows; and which, as the new Roman heresy (37), he calls upon the Imperial City (38) to reject.

1. The second proposition of Jovinianus is that the baptized cannot be tempted¹ by the devil. And to escape the imputation of folly in saying this, he adds: "But if any are tempted, it only shows that they were baptized with water, not with the Spirit, as we read was the case with Simon Magus." Hence it is that John says,² "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the Devil." And at the end of the Epistle,³ "Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but his being begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not."

2. This would be a real difficulty and one for ever incapable of solution were it not solved by the witness of John himself, who immediately goes on to say,⁴ "My little children, guard yourselves from idols." If everyone that is born of God sinneth not, and cannot be tempted by the devil, how is it that he bids them beware of temptation? Again in the same Epistle we read:⁵ "If we say that we have no sins, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." I suppose that John was baptized and was writing to the baptized: I imagine too that all sin is of the devil. Now John confesses himself a sinner, and hopes for forgiveness of sins after baptism. My friend Jovinianus says,⁶ "Touch me not, for I am clean." What then? Does the Apostle contradict himself? By no means. In the same passage he gives his reason for thus speaking:⁷ "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye may not sin. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. And hereby know we that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him: he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." My reason for telling you, little children, that everyone who is born of God sinneth not, is that you may not sin, and that you may know that so long as you sin not I you abide in the birth which God has given you. Yea, they who abide in that birth cannot sin.⁸ "For what communion hath light with darkness? Or Christ with Belial?" As day is distinct from night, so righteousness and unrighteousness, sin and good works, Christ and Antichrist cannot blend. If we give Christ a lodging-place in our hearts, we banish the devil from thence. If we sin and the devil enter through the gate of sin, Christ will immediately withdraw. Hence David after sinning says:⁹ "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation," that is, the joy which he had lost by sinning.¹⁰ "He who saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Christ is called the truth:¹¹ "I am the way, the truth, and the life." In vain do we make our boast in him whose commandments we keep not. To him that knoweth what is good, and doeth it not, it is sin.¹² "As the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead." And we must not think it a great matter to know the only God, when even devils believe and tremble. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." Our opponent may choose whichever of the two he likes; we give him his choice. Does he abide in Christ, or not? If he abide, let him then walk as Christ walked. But if there is¹³ rashness in professing to copy the virtues of our Lord, he does not abide in Christ, for he does not walk as did Christ.¹⁴ "He did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: when he was reviled, he reviled not again, and as a lamb is dumb before its shearer, so opened he not his mouth." To Him came the prince of this world, and found nothing in Him: although He had done no sin, God made Him sin for us. But we, according to the Epistle of James,¹⁵ "all stumble in many

things," and¹⁶ "no one is pure from sin, no not if his life be but a day long."¹⁷ For who will boast "that he has a clean heart? or who will be sure that he is pure from sin?" And we are held guilty after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Hence David says,¹⁸ "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And the blessed Job,¹⁹ "Though I be righteous my mouth will speak wickedness, and though I be perfect, I shall be found perverse. If I wash myself with snow water and make my hands never so clean, yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch and mine own clothes shall abhor me." But that we may not utterly despair and think that if we sin after baptism we cannot be saved, he immediately checks the tendency:²⁰ "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. And not for ours only, but also for the whole world." He addresses this to baptized believers, and he promises them the Lord as an advocate for their offences. He does not say: If you fall into sin, you have an advocate with the Father, Christ, and He is the propitiation for your sins: you might then say that he was addressing those whose baptism had been destitute of the true faith: but what he says is this, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, and he is the propitiation for our sins." And not only for the sins of John and his contemporaries, but for those of the whole world. Now in "the whole world" are included apostles and all the faithful, and a clear proof is established that sin after baptism is possible. It is useless for us to have an advocate Jesus Christ, if sin be impossible.

3. The apostle Peter, to whom it was said,²¹ "He that is bathed needeth not to wash again," and²² "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," through fear of a maid-servant denied Him. Our Lord himself says,²³ "Simon, Simon, behold Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat. But I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not." And in the same place, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." If you reply that this was said before the Passion, we certainly say after the Passion, in the Lord's prayer,²⁴ "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." If we do not sin after baptism, why do we ask that we may be forgiven our sins, which were already forgiven in baptism? Why do we pray that we may not enter into temptation, and that we may be delivered from the evil one, if the devil cannot tempt those who are baptized? The case is different if this prayer belongs to the Catechumens, and is not adapted to faithful Christians. Paul, the chosen vessel,²⁵ chastised his body, and brought it into subjection, lest after preaching to others he himself should be found a reprobate, and²⁶ he tells that there was given to him "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet" him. And to the Corinthians he writes:²⁷ "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is toward Christ." And elsewhere:²⁸ "But to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes have I forgiven it in the person of Christ: that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan: for we are not ignorant of his devices." And again:²⁹ "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as man can bear; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." And,³⁰ "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." And to the Galatians:³¹ "Ye were running well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" And elsewhere:³² "We would fain have come unto you, I Paul once and again; and Satan hindered us." And to the married he says:³³ "Be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency." And again:³⁴ "But I say, walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of

the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other: that ye may not do the things that ye would." We are a compound of the two, and must endure the strife of the two substances. And to the Ephesians:35 "Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Does any one think that we are safe, and that it is right to fall asleep when once we have been baptized? And so, too, in the epistle to the Hebrews:36 "For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Surely we cannot deny that they have been baptized who have been illuminated, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God. But if the baptized cannot sin, how is it now that the Apostle says, "And have fallen away"?37 Montanus and38 Novatus would smile at this, for they contend that it is impossible to renew again through repentance those who have crucified to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. He therefore corrects this mistake by saying:39 "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak; for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye shewed towards his name, in that ye ministered unto the Saints, and still do minister." And truly the unrighteousness of God would be great, if He merely punished sin, and did not welcome good works. I have so spoken, says the Apostle, to withdraw you from your sins, and to make you more careful through fear of despair. But, beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation. For it is not accordant with the righteousness of God to forget good works, and the fact that you have ministered and do minister to the Saints for His name's sake, and to remember sins only. The Apostle James also, knowing that the baptized can be tempted, and fall of their own free choice, says:40 "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love him." And that we may not think that we are tempted by God, as we read in Genesis Abraham was, he adds: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man. But each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death." God created us with free will, and we are not forced by necessity either to virtue or to vice. Otherwise, if there be necessity, there is no crown. As in good works it is God who brings them to perfection, for it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that pitieth and gives us help that we may be able to reach the goal: so in things wicked and sinful, the seeds within us give the impulse, and these are brought to maturity by the devil. When he sees that we are building upon the foundation of Christ, hay, wood, stubble, then he applies the match. Let us then build gold, silver, costly stones, and he will not venture to tempt us: although even thus there is not sure and safe possession. For the lion lurks in ambush to slay the innocent.41 "Potters' vessels are proved by the furnace, and just men by the trial of tribulation." And in another place it is written:42 "My son, when thou comest to serve the Lord, prepare thyself for temptation." Again, the same James says:43 "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. For if any one is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner

of man he was." It was useless to warn them to add works to faith, if they could not sin after baptism. He tells us that⁴⁴ "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all." Which of us is without sin?⁴⁵ "God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all." Peter also says:⁴⁶ "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation." And concerning false teachers:⁴⁷ "These are springs without water, and mists driven by a storm; for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved. For, uttering proud words of vanity, they entice in the lusts of the flesh, by lasciviousness, those who had just escaped, and have turned back to error." Does not the Apostle in these words seem to you to have depicted the new party of ignorance? For, as it were, they open the fountains of knowledge and yet have no water: they promise a shower of doctrine like prophetic clouds which have been visited by the truth of God, and are driven by the storms of devils and vices. They speak great things, and their talk is nothing but pride:⁴⁸ "But every one is unclean with God who is lifted up in his own heart." Like those who had just escaped from their sins, they return to their own error, and persuade men to luxury, and to the delights of eating and the gratification of the flesh. For who is not glad to hear them say: "Let us eat and drink, and reign for ever"? The wise and prudent they call corrupt, but pay more attention to the honey-tongued. John the apostle, or rather the Saviour in the person of John, writes thus to the angel of the Church of Ephesus:⁴⁹ "I know thy works and thy toil and patience, and that thou didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary. But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent." Similarly He urges the other churches, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, to repentance, and threatens them unless they return to the former works. And in Sardis He says He has a few who have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy. But they to whom He says: "Remember from whence thou art fallen "; and, "Behold the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried"; and, "I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is"; and, "Remember how thou hast received, and didst hear, and keep it, and repent," and so on, were of course believers, and baptized, who once stood, but fell through sin.

4. I delayed for a little while the production of proofs from the Old Testament, because, wherever the Old Testament is against them they are accustomed to cry out that⁵⁰ the Law and the Prophets were until John. But who does not know that under the other dispensation of God all the saints of past times were of equal merit with Christians at the present day? As Abraham in days gone by pleased God in wedlock, so virgins now please him in perpetual virginity. He served the Law and his own times; let us now serve the Gospel and our times,⁵¹ upon whom the ends of the ages have come. David the chosen one, the man after God's own heart, who had performed all His pleasure, and who in a certain psalm had said,⁵² "Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the Lord and shall not slide. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart," even he was afterwards tempted by the devil; and repenting of his sin said,⁵³ "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness." He would have a great sin blotted out by great loving-kindness. Solomon, beloved of the Lord, and to whom God had twice revealed Himself, because he loved women forsook the love of God. It is related in the⁵⁴ Book of Days that Manasses the wicked king was restored after the Babylonish captivity to his former rank. And Josiah, a holy man,⁵⁵ was slain by the king of Egypt on the plain of Megiddo.⁵⁶ Joshua also, the son of Josedeck and high-priest, although he was a type of our

Saviour Who bore our sins, and united to Himself a church of alien birth from among the Gentiles, is nevertheless, according to the letter of Scripture, represented in filthy garments after he attained to the priesthood, and with the devil standing at his right hand; and white raiment is afterwards restored to him. It is needless to tell how Moses and Aaron⁵⁷ offended God at the water of strife, and did not enter the land of promise. For the blessed Job relates that even the angels and every creature can sin.⁵⁸ "Shall mortal man," he says, "be just before God? Shall a man be spotless in his works? If he putteth no trust in his servants, and chargeth his angels with folly, how much more them that dwell in houses of clay," amongst whom are we, and made of the same clay too.⁵⁹ "The life of man is a warfare upon earth."⁶⁰ Lucifer fell who was sending to all nations, and he who was nurtured in a paradise of delight as one of the twelve precious stones, was wounded and went down to hell from the mount of God. Hence the Saviour says in the Gospel:⁶¹ "I beheld Satan falling as lightning from heaven." If he fell who stood on so sublime a height, who may not fall? If there are falls in heaven, how much more on earth! And yet though Lucifer be fallen (the old serpent after his fall),⁶² "his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the muscles of his belly. The great trees are overshadowed by him, and he sleepeth beside the reed, the rush, and the sedge."⁶³ He is king over all things that are in the waters—that is to say in the seat of pleasure and luxury, of propagation of children, and of the fertilisation of the marriage bed⁶⁴ "For who can strip off his outer garment? Who can open the doors of his face? Nations fatten upon him, and the tribes of Phenicia divide him." And lest haply the reader in his secret thought might imagine that those tribes of Phenicia and peoples of Ethiopia only are meant by those to whom the dragon was given for food, we immediately find a reference to those who are crossing the sea of this world, and are hastening to reach the haven of salvation:⁶⁵ "His head stands in the ships of the fishermen like an anvil that cannot be wearied:⁶⁶ he counteth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. And all the gold of the sea under him is as mire. He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he values the sea like a pot of ointment, and the blackness of the deep as a captive. He beholdeth everything that is high." And my friend Jovinianus thinks he can gain an easy mastery over him. Why speak of holy men and angels, who, being creatures of God, are of course capable of sin? He dared to tempt the Son of God, and though smitten through and through with our Lord's first and second answer, nevertheless raised his head, and when thrice wounded, withdrew only for a time, and deferred rather than removed the temptation. And we flatter ourselves on the ground of our baptism, which though it put away the sins of the past, cannot keep us for the time to come, unless the baptized keep their hearts with all diligence.

5. At length we have arrived at the question of food, and are confronted by our third difficulty. "All things were created to serve for the use of mortal men.' And as man, a rational animal, in a sense the owner and tenant of the world, is subject to God, and worships his Creator, so all things living were created either for the food of men, or for clothing, or for tilling the earth, or conveying the fruits thereof, or to be the companions of man, and hence, because they are man's⁶⁷ helpers, they have their name jumenta.⁶⁸ 'What is man,' says David, 'that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him but little lower than the angels, and crownest him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field: the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.' Granted, he says, that the ox was created for ploughing, the horse for riding, the dog for watching, goats for their milk, sheep for their fleeces. What is the use of swine if we may not eat their flesh?

of roes, stags, fallow-deer, boars, hares, and such like game? of geese, wild and tame? of wild ducks and⁶⁹ fig-peckers? of woodcocks? of coots? of thrushes? Why do hens run about our houses? If they are not eaten, all these creatures were created by God for nothing. But what need is there of argument when Scripture clearly teaches that every moving creature, like herbs and vegetables, were given to us for food, and the Apostle cries aloud⁷⁰ 'All things are clean to the clean, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving,' and⁷¹ tells us that men will come in the last days, forbidding to marry, and to eat meats, which God created for use? The Lord himself was called by the Pharisees a wine-bibber and a glutton, the friend of publicans and sinners, because he did not decline the invitation of Zacchaeus to dinner, and went to the marriage-feast. But it is a different matter if, as you may foolishly contend, he went to the dinner intending to fast, and after the manner of deceivers said, I eat this, not that; I do not drink the wine which I created out of water. He did not make water, but wine, the type of his blood. After the resurrection he ate a fish and part of a honey-comb, not sesame nuts and service-berries. The apostle, Peter, did not wait like a Jew for the stars to peep, but went upon the house-top to dine at the sixth hour. Paul in the ship broke bread, not dried figs. When Timothy's stomach was out of order, he advised him to drink wine, not perry. In abstaining from meats they please their own fancy: as though superstitious Gentiles did not observe the⁷² rites of abstinence connected with the Mother of the Gods and with Isis."

6. I will follow in detail the views now expounded, and before I come to Scripture and show by it that fasting is pleasing to God, and chastity accepted by him, I will meet philosophic argument with argument, and will prove that we are not followers of Empedocles and Pythagoras, who on account of their doctrine of the transmigration of souls think nothing which lives and moves should be eaten, and look upon him who fells a fir-tree or an oak as equally guilty with the parricide or the poisoner: but that we worship our Creator Who made all things for the use of man. And as the ox was created for ploughing, the horse for riding, dogs for watching, goats for milk, sheep for their wool: so it was with swine and stags, and roes and hares, and other animals: but the immediate purpose of their creation was not that they might serve for food, but for other uses of men. For if everything that moves and lives was made for food, and prepared for the stomach, let my opponents tell me why elephants, lions, leopards, and wolves were created; why vipers, scorpions, bugs, lice, and fleas; why the vulture, the eagle, the crow, the hawk; why whales, dolphins, seals, and small snails were created. Which of us ever eats the flesh of a lion, a viper, a vulture, a stork, a kite, or the worms that crawl upon our shores? As then these have their proper uses, so may we say that other beasts, fishes, birds, were created not for eating, but for medicine. In short, to how many uses the flesh of vipers, from which we make our antidotes against poison, may be applied, physicians know well. Ivory dust is an ingredient in many remedies. Hyena's gall restores brightness to the eyes, and its dung and that of dogs cures gangrenous wounds. And (it may seem strange to the reader) Galen asserts in his treatise on Simples, that human dung is of service in a multitude of cases. Naturalists say that snake-skin, boiled in oil, gives wonderful relief in ear-ache. What to the uninitiated seems so useless as a bug? Yet, suppose a leech to have fastened on the throat, as soon as the odour of a bug is inhaled the leech is vomited out, and difficulty in urinating is relieved by the same application. As for the fat of pigs, geese, fowls, and pheasants, how useful they are is told in all medical works, and if you read these books you will see there that the vulture has as many curative properties as it has limbs. Peacock's dung allays the inflammation of gout. Cranes, storks, eagle's gall, hawk's blood, the ostrich, frogs, chameleons, swallow's dung and

flesh-in what diseases these are suitable remedies, I could tell if it were my purpose to discuss bodily ailments and their cure. If you think proper you may read Aristotle and⁷³ Theophrastus in prose, or⁷⁴ Marcellus of Side, and our⁷⁵ Flavius, who discourse on these subjects in hexameter verse; the⁷⁶ second Pliny also, and⁷⁷ Dioscorides, and others, both naturalists and physicians, who assign to every herb, every stone, every animal whether reptile, bird, or fish, its own use in the art of which they treat. So then when you ask me why the pig was created, I immediately reply, as if two boys were disputing, by asking you why were vipers and scorpions? You must not judge that anything from the hand of God is superfluous, because there are many beasts and birds which your palate rejects. But this may perhaps look more like contentiousness and pugnacity than truth. Let me tell you therefore that pigs and wild-boars, and stags, and the rest of living creatures were created, that soldiers, athletes, sailors, rhetoricians, miners, and other slaves of hard toil, who need physical strength, might have food: and also those who carry arms and provisions, who wear themselves out with the work of hand or foot, who ply the oar, who need good lungs to shout and speak, who level mountains and sleep out rain or fair. But our religion does not train boxers, athletes, sailors, soldiers, or ditchers, but followers of wisdom, who devote themselves to the worship of God, and know why they were created and are in the world from which they are impatient to depart. Hence also the Apostle says:⁷⁸ "When I am weak, then am I strong." And.⁷⁹ "Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." And⁸⁰ "I have the desire to depart and be with Christ." And,⁸¹ "Make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." Are all commanded⁸² not to have two coats, nor food in their scrip, money in their purse, a staff in the hand, shoes on the feet? or to sell all they possess and give to the poor, and follow Jesus? Of course not: but the command is for those who wish to be perfect. On the contrary John the Baptist lays down one rule for the soldiers, another for the publicans. But the Lord says in the Gospel to him who had boasted of having kept the whole law:⁸³ "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow me." That He might not seem to lay a heavy burden on unwilling shoulders, He sent His hearer away with full power to please himself, saying "If thou wilt be perfect." And so I too say to you: If you wish to be perfect, it is good not to drink wine, and eat flesh. If you wish to be perfect, it is better to enrich the mind than to stuff the body. But if you are an infant and fond of the cooks and their preparations, no one will snatch the dainties out of your mouth. Eat and drink, and, if you like, with Israel rise up and play, and sing⁸⁴ "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die." Let him eat and drink, who looks for death when he has feasted, and who says with Epicurus, "There is nothing after death, and death itself is nothing." We believe Paul when he says in tones of thunder:⁸⁵ "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats. But God will destroy both them and it."

7. I have quoted these few passages of Scripture to show that we are at one with the philosophers. But who does not know that no universal law of nature regulates the food of all nations, and that each eats those things of which it has abundance? For instance, the Arabians and Saracens, and all the wild tribes of the desert live on camel's milk and flesh: for the camel, to suit the climate and barren soil of those regions, is easily bred and reared. They think it wicked to eat the flesh of swine. Why? Because pigs which fatten on acorns, chestnuts, roots of ferns, and barley, are seldom or never found among them: and if they were found, they would not afford the nourishment of which we spoke just now. The exact opposite is the case with the northern peoples. If you were to force them to eat the flesh of asses and camels, they would think it the same as though they were compelled to devour a wolf or a crow. In Pontus and Phrygia a paterfamilias pays a good

price for fat white worms with blackish heads, which breed in decayed wood. And as with us the woodcock and fig-pecker, the mullet and scar, are reputed delicacies, so with them it is a luxury to eat the⁸⁶ xylophagus. Again, because throughout the glowing wastes of the desert clouds of locusts are found, it is customary with the peoples of the East and of Libya to feed on locusts. John the Baptist proves the truth of this. Compel a Phrygian or a native of Pontus to eat a locust, and he will think it scandalous. Force a Syrian, an African, or Arabian to swallow worms, he will have the same contempt for them as for flies, millepedes, and lizards, although the Syrians are accustomed to eat land-crocodiles, and the Africans even green lizards. In Egypt and Palestine, owing to the scarcity of cattle no one eats beef, or makes the flesh of bulls or oxen, or calves, a portion of their food. Moreover, in my province⁸⁷ it is considered a crime to eat veal. Accordingly the Emperor Valens recently promulgated a law throughout the East, prohibiting the killing and eating of calves. He had in view the interests of agriculture, and wished to check the bad practice of the commoner sort of the people who imitated the Jews in devouring the flesh of calves, instead of fowls and sucking pigs. The Nomad tribes, and the⁸⁸ Troglodytes, and Scythians, and the barbarous⁸⁹ Huns with whom we have recently become acquainted, eat flesh half raw. Moreover the Ichthyophagi, a wandering race on the shores of the Red Sea, broil fish on the stones made hot by the sun, and subsist on this poor food. The⁹⁰ Sarmatians, the⁹¹ Chuadi, the⁹² Vandals, and countless other races, delight in the flesh of horses and wolves. Why should I speak of other nations when I myself, a youth on a visit to Gaul, heard that the Atticoti, a British tribe, eat human flesh, and that although they find herds of swine, and droves of large or small cattle in the woods, it is their custom to cut off the buttocks of the shepherds and the breasts of their women, and to regard them as the greatest delicacies? The Scots have no wives of their own; as though they read Plato's Republic and took Cato for their leader, no man among them has his own wife, but like beasts they indulge their lust to their hearts' content. The Persians, Medes, Indians, and Ethiopians, peoples on a par with Rome itself, have intercourse with mothers and grandmothers, with daughters and granddaughters. The⁹³ Massagetae and⁹⁴ Derbices think those persons most unhappy who die of sickness-and when parents, kindred, or friends reach old age, they are murdered and devoured. It is thought better that they should be eaten by the people themselves than by the worms. The⁹⁵ Tibareni crucify those whom they have loved before when they have grown old. The⁹⁶ Hyrcani throw them out half alive to the birds and dogs: the Caspians leave them dead for the same beasts. The Scythians bury alive with the remains of the dead those who were beloved of the deceased. The Bactrians throw their old men to dogs which they rear for the very purpose, and when Stasanor, Alexander's general, wished to correct the practice, he almost lost his province. Force an Egyptian to drink sheep's milk: drive, if you can, a Pelusiote to eat an onion. Almost every city in Egypt venerates its own beasts and monsters, and whatever be the object of worship, that they think inviolable and sacred. Hence it is that their towns also are named after animals Leonto, Cyno, Lyco, Busyris, Thmuis, which is, being interpreted, a he-goat. And to make us understand what sort of gods Egypt always welcomed, one of their cities was recently called⁹⁷ Antinous after Hadrian's favourite. You see clearly then that not only in eating, but also in burial, in wedlock, and in every department of life, each race follows its own practice and peculiar usages, and takes that for the law of nature which is most familiar to it. But suppose all nations alike ate flesh. and let that be everywhere lawful which the place produces. How does it concern us whose conversation is in heaven? who, as well as Pythagoras and Empedocles and all lovers of wisdom, are not bound to the circumstances of our birth, but of our new birth: who by

abstinence subjugate our refractory flesh, eager to follow the allurements of lust? The eating of flesh, and drinking of wine, and fulness of stomach, is the seed-plot of lust. And so the comic poet says,⁹⁸ "Venus shivers unless Ceres and Bacchus be with her."

8. Through the five senses, as through open windows, vice has access to the soul. The metropolis and citadel of the mind cannot be taken unless the enemy have previously entered by its doors. The soul is distressed by the disorder they produce, and is led captive by sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. If any one delights in the sports of the circus, or the struggles of athletes, the versatility of actors, the figure of women, in splendid jewels, dress, silver and gold, and other things of the kind, the liberty of the soul is lost through the windows of the eyes, and the prophet's words are fulfilled:⁹⁹ "Death is come up into our windows." Again, our sense of hearing is flattered by the tones of various instruments and the modulations of the voice; and whatever enters the ear by the songs of poets and comedians, by the pleasantries and verses of pantomimic actors, weakens the manly fibre of the mind. Then, again, no one but a profligate denies that the profligate and licentious find a delight in sweet odours, different sorts of incense, fragrant balsam,¹⁰⁰ kuphi,¹⁰¹ oenanthe, and musk, which is nothing but the skin of a foreign rat. And who does not know that gluttony is the mother of avarice, and, as it were, fetters the heart and keeps it pressed down upon the earth? For the sake of a temporary gratification of the appetite, land and sea are ransacked, and we toil and sweat our lives through, that we may send down our throats honey-wine and costly food. The desire to handle other men's persons, and the burning lust for women, is a passion bordering on insanity. To gratify this sense we languish, grow angry, throw ourselves about with joy, indulge envy, engage in rivalry, are filled with anxiety, and when we have terminated the pleasure with more or less repentance, we once more take fire, and want to do that which we again regret doing. Where, then, that which we may call the thin edge of disturbance, has entered the citadel of the mind through these doors, what will become of its liberty, its endurance, its thought of God, particularly since the sense of touch can picture to itself even bygone pleasures, and through the recollection of vice forces the soul to take part in them, and after a manner to practice what it does not actually commit?

9. At the call of reasoning such as this, many philosophers have forsaken the crowded cities, and their pleasure gardens in the suburbs with well-watered grounds, shady trees, twittering birds, crystal fountains, murmuring brooks, and many charms for eye and ear, lest through luxury and abundance of riches, the firmness of the mind should be enfeebled, and its purity debauched. For there is no good in frequently seeing objects which may one day lead to your captivity, or in making trial of things which you would find it hard to do without. Even the Pythagoreans shunned company of this kind and were wont to dwell in solitary places in the desert. The Platonists also and Stoics lived in the groves and porticos of, temples, that, admonished by the sanctity of their restricted abode, they might think of nothing but virtue. Plato, moreover, himself, when¹⁰² Diogenes trampled on his couches with muddy feet (he being a rich man), chose a house called¹⁰³ Academia at some distance from the city, in a spot not only lonely but unhealthy, so that he might have leisure for philosophy. His object was that by constant anxiety about sickness the assaults of lust might be defeated, and that his disciples might experience no pleasure but that afforded by the things they learned. We have read of some who took out their own eyes lest through sight they might lose the contemplation of philosophy. Hence it was that¹⁰⁴ Crates the famous Theban, after throwing into the sea a considerable weight of gold, exclaimed, "Go to the

bottom, ye evil lusts: I will drown you that you may not drown me." But if anyone thinks to enjoy keenly meat and drink in excess, and at the same time to devote himself to philosophy, that is to say, to live in luxury and yet not to be hampered by the vices attendant on luxury, he deceives himself. For if it be the case that even when far distant from them we are frequently caught in the snares of nature, and are compelled to desire those things of which we have a scant supply: what folly it is to think we are free when we are surrounded by the nets of pleasure! We think of what we see, hear, smell, taste, handle, and are led to desire the thing which affords us pleasure. That the mind sees and hears, and that we can neither hear nor see anything unless our senses are fixed upon the objects of sight and hearing, is an old saw. It is difficult, or rather impossible, when we are swimming in luxury and pleasure not to think of what we are doing: and it is an idle pretence which some men put forward¹⁰⁵ that they can take their fill of pleasure with their faith and purity and mental uprightness unimpaired. It is a violation of nature to revel in pleasure, and the Apostle gives a caution against this very thing when he says,¹⁰⁶ "She that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth."

10. The bodily senses are like horses madly racing, but the soul like a charioteer holds the reins. And as horses without a driver go at break-neck speed, so the body if it be not governed by the reasonable soul rushes to its own destruction. The philosophers make use of another illustration of the relations between soul and body;¹⁰⁷ they say the body is a boy, the soul his tutor. Hence the¹⁰⁸ historian tells us "that our soul directs, our body serves. The one we have in common with the gods, the other with the beasts." So then unless the vices of youth and boyhood are regulated by the wisdom of the tutor, every effort and every impulse sets strongly in the direction of wantonness. We might lose four of the senses and yet live,-that is we could do without sight, bearing, smell, and the pleasures of touch. But a human being cannot subsist without tasting food. It follows that reason must be present, that we may take food of such a kind and in such quantities as will not burden the body, or hinder the free movement of the soul: for it is the way with us that we eat, and walk, and sleep, and digest our food, and afterwards in the fulness of blood have to bear the spur of lust.¹⁰⁹ "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler." Whosoever has much to do with these is not wise. And we should not take such food as is difficult of digestion, or such as when eaten will give us reason to complain that we got it and lost it with much effort. The preparation of vegetables, fruit, and pulse is easy, and does not require the skill of expensive cooks: our bodies are nourished by them with little trouble on our part; and, if taken in moderation, such food is easier to digest, and at less cost, because it does not stimulate the appetite, and therefore is not devoured with avidity. No one has his stomach inflated or overloaded if he eats only one or two dishes, and those inexpensive ones: such a condition comes of pampering the taste with a variety of meats. The smells of the kitchen may induce us to eat, but when hunger is satisfied, they make us their slaves. Hence gorging gives rise to disease: and many persons find relief for the discomfort of gluttony in emetics,-what they disgraced themselves by putting in, they with still greater disgrace put out.

11.¹¹⁰ Hippocrates in his Aphorisms teaches that stout persons of a coarse habit of body, when once they have attained their full growth, unless the plethora be quickly relieved by blood-letting, develop tendencies to paralysis and the worst forms of disease: they must therefore be bled, that there may be room for fresh growth. For it is not the nature of our bodies to continue in one stay, but go on either to increase or decrease, and no animal can live which is incapable of growth.

Whence¹¹¹ Galen, a very learned man and the commentator on Hippocrates, says in his exhortation to the practice of medicine that athletes whose whole life and art consists in stuffing cannot live long, nor be healthy: and that their souls enveloped with superfluous blood and fat, and as it were covered with mud, have no refined or heavenly thoughts, but are always intent upon gluttonous and voracious feasting. Diogenes maintains that tyrants do not bring about revolutions in cities, and foment wars civil or foreign for the sake of a simple diet of vegetables and fruits, but for costly meats and the delicacies of the table. And, strange to say, Epicurus, the defender of pleasure, in all his books speaks of nothing but vegetables and fruits; and he says that we ought to live on cheap food because the preparation of sumptuous banquets of flesh involves great care and suffering, and greater pains attend the search for such delicacies than pleasures the consumption of them. Our bodies need only something to eat and drink. Where there is bread and water, and the like, nature is satisfied. Whatever more there may be does not go to meet the wants of life, but are ministers to vicious pleasure. Eating and drinking does not quench the longing for luxuries, but appeases hunger and thirst. Persons who feed on flesh want also gratifications not found in flesh. But they who adopt a simple diet do not look for flesh. Further, we cannot devote ourselves to wisdom if our thoughts are running on a well-laden table, the supply of which requires an excess of work and anxiety. The wants of nature are soon satisfied: cold and hunger can be banished with simple food and clothing. Hence the Apostle says: "Having food and clothing let us be therewith content." Delicacies and the various dishes of the feast are the nurses of avarice. The soul greatly exults when you are content with little: you have the world beneath your feet, and can exchange all its power, its feasts, and its lusts, the objects for which men rake money together, for common food, and make up for them all with a sack-cloth shirt. Take away the luxurious feasting and the gratification of lust, and no one will want riches to be used either in the belly, or beneath it. The invalid only regains his health by diminishing and carefully selecting his food, i.e., in medical phrase, by adopting a "slender diet." The same food that recovers health, can preserve it, for no one can imagine vegetables to be the cause of disease. And if vegetables do not give the strength of Milo of Crotona—a strength supplied and nourished by meat—what need has a wise man and a Christian philosopher of such strength as is required by athletes and soldiers, and which, if he had it, would only stimulate to vice? Let those persons deem meat accordant with health who wish to gratify their lust, and who, sunk in filthy pleasure, are always at heat. What a Christian wants is health, but not superfluous strength. And it ought not to disturb us if we find but few supporters; for the pure and temperate are as rare as good and faithful friends, and virtue is always scarce. Study the temperance of¹¹² Fabricius, or the poverty of¹¹³ Curius, and in a great city you will find few worthy of your imitation. You need not fear that if you do not eat flesh, fowlers and hunters will have learnt their craft in vain.

12. We have read that some who suffered with disease of the joints and with gouty humours recovered their health by proscribing delicacies, and coming down to a simple board and mean food. For they were then free from the worry of managing a house and from unlimited feasting. Horace¹¹⁴ makes fun of the longing for food which when eaten leaves nothing but regret.

"Scorn pleasure; she but hurts when bought with pain." And when, in the delightful retirement of the country, by way of satirizing voluptuous men, he described himself as plump and fat, his sportive verse ran thus:

"Pay me a visit if you want to laugh, You'll find me fat and sleek with well-dress'd hide, Like any pig from Epicurus' sty." But even if our food be the commonest, we must avoid repletion. For nothing is so destructive to the mind as a full belly, fermenting like a wine vat and giving forth its gases on all sides. What sort of fasting is it, or what refreshment is there after fasting, when we are blown out with yesterday's dinner, and our¹¹⁵ stomach is made a factory for the closet? We wish to get credit for protracted abstinence, and all the while we devour so much that a day and a night can scarcely digest it. The proper name to give it is not fasting, but rather debauch and rank indigestion.

13.¹¹⁶ Dicaerchus in his book of Antiquities, describing Greece, relates that under Saturn that is in the Golden Age, when the ground brought forth all things abundantly, no one ate flesh, but every one lived on field produce and fruits which the earth bore of itself. Xenophon in eight books narrates the life of Cyrus, King of the Persians, and asserts that they supported life on barley, cress, salt, and black bread. Both the aforesaid Xenophon, Theophrastus, and almost all the Greek writers testify to the frugal diet of the Spartans.¹¹⁷ Chaeremon the Stoic, a man of great eloquence, has a treatise on the life of the ancient priests of Egypt, who, he says, laid aside all worldly business and cares, and were ever in the temple, studying nature and the regulating causes of the heavenly bodies; they never had intercourse with women; they never from the time they began to devote themselves to the divine service set eyes on their kindred and relations, nor even saw their children; they always abstained from flesh and wine, on account of the light-headedness and dizziness which a small quantity of food caused, and especially to avoid the stimulation of the lustful appetite engendered by this meat and drink. They seldom ate bread, that they might not load the stomach. And whenever they ate it, they mixed pounded hyssop with all that they took, so that the action of its warmth might diminish the weight of the heavier food. They used no oil except with vegetables, and then only in small quantities, to mitigate the unpalatable taste. What need, he says, to speak of birds, when they avoided even eggs and milk as flesh. The one, they said, was liquid flesh, the other was blood with the colour changed? Their bed was made of palm-leaves, called by them *baiae* a sloping footstool laid upon the ground served for a pillow, and they could go without food for two or three days. The humours of the body which arise from sedentary habits were dried up by reducing their diet to an extreme point.`

14.¹¹⁸ Josephus in the second book of the history of the Jewish captivity, and in the eighteenth book of the Antiquities, and the two treatises against Apion, describes three sects of the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. On the last of these he bestows wondrous praise because they practised perpetual abstinence from wives, wine, and flesh, and made a second nature of their daily fast.¹¹⁹ Philo, too, a man of great learning, published a treatise of his own on their mode of life.¹²⁰ Neanthes of Cizycus, and¹²¹ Asclepiades of Cyprus, at the time when Pygmalion ruled over the East, relate that the eating of flesh was unknown. Eubulus, also, who wrote the history of¹²² Mithras in many volumes, relates that among the Persians there are three kinds of Magi, the first of whom, those of greatest learning and eloquence, take no food except meal and vegetables. At Eleusis it is customary to abstain from fowls and fish and certain fruits.¹²³ Bardesanes, a Babylonian, divides the Gymnosophists of India into two classes, the one called Brahmans, the other Samaneans, who are so rigidly self-restrained that they support themselves either with the fruit of trees which grow on the banks of the Ganges, or with common food of rice or flour, and when the king visits them, he is wont to adore them, and thinks the peace of his country

depends upon their prayers. Euripides relates that the prophets of Jupiter in Crete abstained not only from flesh, but also from cooked food.¹²⁴ Xenocrates the philosopher writes that at Athens out of all the laws of¹²⁵ Triptolemus only three precepts remain in the temple of Ceres: respect to parents, reverence for the gods, and abstinence from flesh.¹²⁶ Orpheus in his song utterly denounces the eating of flesh. I might speak of the frugality of Pythagoras, Socrates, and¹²⁷ Antisthenes to our confusion: but it would be tedious, and would require a work to itself. At all events this is the Antisthenes who, after teaching rhetoric with renown, on hearing Socrates, is related to have said to his disciples, "Go, and seek a master, for I have now found one." He immediately, sold what he had, divided the proceeds among the people, and kept nothing for himself but a small cloak. Of his poverty and toil Xenophon in the Symposium is a witness, and so are his countless treatises, some philosophical, some rhetorical. His most famous follower was the great Diogenes, who was mightier than King Alexander in that he conquered human nature. For Antisthenes would not take a single pupil, and when he could not get rid of the persistent Diogenes he threatened him with a stick if he did not depart. The latter is said to have laid down his head and said, "No stick will be hard enough to prevent me from following you."¹²⁸ Satyrus, the biographer of illustrious men, relates that Diogenes to guard himself against the cold, folded his cloak double: his scrip was his pantry: and when aged he carried a stick to support his feeble frame, and was commonly called "Old Hand-to-mouth," because to that very hour he begged and received food from any one. His home was the gateways and city arcades. And when he wriggled into his tub, he would joke about his movable house that adapted itself to the seasons. For when the weather was cold he used to turn the mouth of the tub towards the south: in summer towards the north; and whatever the direction of the sun might be, that way the palace of Diogenes was turned. He had a wooden dish for drinking; but on one occasion seeing a boy drinking with the hollow of his hand he is related to have dashed the cup to the ground, saying that he did not know nature provided a cup. His virtue and self-restraint were proved even by his death. It is said that, now an old man, he was on his way to the Olympic games, which used to be attended by a great concourse of people from all parts of Greece, when he was overtaken by fever and lay down upon the bank by the road-side. And when his friends wished to place him on a beast or in a conveyance, he did not assent, but crossing to the shade of a tree said, "Go your way, I pray you, and see the games: this night will prove me either conquered or conqueror. If I conquer the fever, I shall go to the games: if the fever conquers me, I shall enter the unseen world." There through the night he lay gasping for breath and did not, as we are told, so much die as banish the fever by death. I have cited the example of only one philosopher, so that our fine, erect, muscular athletes, who hardly make a shadow of a footmark in their swift passage, whose words are in their fists and their reasoning in their heels, who either know nothing of apostolic poverty and the hardness of the cross. or despise it, may at least imitate Gentile moderation.

15. So far I have dealt with the arguments and examples of philosophers. Now I will pass on to the beginning of the human race, that is, to the sphere which belongs to us. I will first point out that Adam received a command in paradise to abstain from one tree though he might eat the other fruit. The blessedness of paradise could not be consecrated without abstinence from food. So long as he fasted, he remained in paradise; he ate, and was east out; he was no sooner cast out than he married a wife. While he fasted in paradise he continued a virgin: when he filled himself with food in the earth, he bound himself with the tie of marriage. And yet though cast out he did not immediately receive permission to eat flesh; but only the fruits of trees and the produce of the

crops, and herbs and vegetables were given him for food, that even when an exile from paradise he might feed not upon flesh which was not to be found in paradise, but upon grain and fruit like that of paradise. But afterwards when¹²⁹ God saw that the heart of man from his youth was set on wickedness continually, and that His Spirit could not remain in them because they were flesh, He by the deluge passed sentence on the works of the flesh, and, taking note of the extreme greediness of men,¹³⁰ gave them liberty to eat flesh: so that while understanding that all things were lawful for them, they might not greatly desire that which was allowed, lest they should turn a commandment into a cause of transgression. And yet even then, fasting was in part commanded. For, seeing that some animals are called clean, some unclean, and the unclean animals were taken into Noah's ark by pairs, the clean in uneven numbers (and of course the eating of the unclean was forbidden, otherwise the term unclean would be unmeaning), fasting was in part consecrated: restraint in the use of all was taught by the prohibition of some. Why did Esau lose his birthright? Was it not on account of food? and he could not atone with tears for the impatience of his appetite. The people of Israel cast out from Egypt and on their way to the land of promise, the land flowing with milk and honey, longed for the flesh of Egypt, and the melons and garlic, saying:¹³¹ "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots." And again,¹³² "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt for nought; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: but now our soul is dried away: we have nought save this manna to look to."

They despised angels' food, and sighed for the flesh of Egypt. Moses for forty days and forty nights fasted on Mount Sinai, and showed even then that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word of God. He says to the Lord, "the people is full and maketh idols." Moses with empty stomach received the law written with the finger of God. The people that ate and drank and rose up to play fashioned a golden calf, and preferred an Egyptian ox to the majesty of the Lord. The toil of so many days perished through the fulness of a single hour. Moses boldly broke the tables: for he knew that drunkards cannot hear the word of God.¹³³ "The beloved grew thick, waxed fat, and became sleek: he kicked and forsook the Lord which made him, and departed from the God of his salvation." Hence also it is enjoined in the same Book of Deuteronomy:¹³⁴ "Beware, lest when thou hast eaten and drunk, and hast built goodly houses, and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and gold is multiplied, then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God." In short the people ate and their heart grew thick, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart: so the people well fed and fat-fleshed could not bear the countenance of Moses who fasted, for, to correctly render the Hebrew, it was¹³⁵ furnished with horns through his converse with God. And it was not, as some think, to show that there is no difference between virginity and marriage, but to assert his sympathy with severe fasting, that our Lord and Saviour when he was transfigured on the Mount revealed Moses and Elias with Himself in glory. Although Moses and Elias were properly types of the Law and the Prophets, as is clearly witnessed by the Gospel:¹³⁶ "They spake of his departure which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." For the passion of our Lord is declared not by virginity or marriage, but by the Law and the Prophets. If, however, any persons contentiously maintain that by Moses is signified marriage, by Elias virginity, let me tell them briefly that Moses died and was buried, but Elias was carried off in a chariot of fire and entered on immortality before he approached death. But the second writing of the tables could not be effected without fasting. What was lost by drunkenness was regained by abstinence, a proof that by fasting we can return to

paradise, whence, though fulness, we have been expelled. In¹³⁷ Exodus we read that the battle was fought against Amalek while Moses prayed, and the whole people fasted until the evening.¹³⁸ Joshua, the son of Nun, bade sun and moon stand still, and the victorious army prolonged its fast for more than a day.¹³⁹ Saul, as it is written in the first book of Kings, pronounced a curse on him who ate bread before the evening, and until he had avenged himself upon his enemies. So none of his people tasted any food. And all they of the land took food. And so binding was a solemn fast once it was proclaimed to the Lord, that Jonathan, to whom the victory was due, was taken by lot, and¹⁴⁰ could not escape the charge of sinning in ignorance, and his father's hand was raised against him, and the prayers of the people scarce availed to save him.¹⁴¹ Elijah after the preparation of a forty days fast saw God on Mount Horeb, and heard from Him the words, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" There is much more familiarity in this than in the "Where art thou, Adam?" of Genesis. The latter was intended to excite the fears of one who had fed and was lost; the former was affectionately addressed to a fasting servant.¹⁴² When the people were assembled in Mizpeh, Samuel proclaimed a fast, and so strengthened them, and thus made them prevail against the enemy.¹⁴³ The attack of the Assyrians was repulsed, and the might of Sennacherib utterly crushed, by the tears and sackcloth of King Hezekiah, and by his humbling himself with fasting. So also the city of Nineveh by fasting excited compassion and turned aside the threatening wrath of the Lord. And¹⁴⁴ Sodom and Gomorrah might have appeased it, had they been willing to repent, and through the aid of fasting gain for themselves tears of repentance.¹⁴⁵ Ahab, the most impious of kings, by fasting and wearing sackcloth, succeeded in escaping the sentence of God, and in deferring the overthrow of his house to the days of his posterity.¹⁴⁶ Hannah, the wife of Elkanah, by fasting won the gift of a son.¹⁴⁷ At Babylon the magicians came into peril, every interpreter of dreams, soothsayer, and diviner was slain. Daniel and the three youths gained a good report by fasting, and although they were fed on pulse, they were fairer and wiser than they who ate the flesh from the king's table. Then it is written that Daniel fasted for three weeks; he ate no pleasant bread; flesh and wine entered not his mouth; he was not anointed with oil; and the angel came to him saying,¹⁴⁸ "Daniel, thou art worthy of compassion." He who in the eyes of God was worthy of compassion, afterwards was an object of terror to the lions in their den. How fair a thing is that which propitiates God, tames lions, terrifies demons! Habakkuk (although we do not find this in the Hebrew Scriptures¹⁴⁹) was sent to him with the reaper's meal, for by a week's abstinence he had merited so distinguished a server. David, when his son was in danger after his adultery, made confession in ashes and with fasting.¹⁵⁰ He tells us that he ate ashes like bread, and mingled his drink with weeping.¹⁵¹ And that his knees became weak through fasting. Yet he had certainly heard from Nathan the words,¹⁵² "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." Samson and Samuel drank neither wine nor strong drink, for they were children of promise, and conceived in abstinence and fasting.¹⁵³ Aaron and the other priests when about to enter the temple, refrained from all intoxicating drink for fear they should die. Whence we learn that they die who minister in the Church without sobriety. And hence it is a reproach against Israel:¹⁵⁴ "Ye gave my Nazarites wine to drink." Jonadab, the son of Rechab, commanded his sons to drink no wine for ever. And when Jeremiah offered them wine to drink, and they of their own accord refused it, the Lord spake by the prophet, saying:¹⁵⁵ "Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." On the¹⁵⁶ threshold of the Gospel appears Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, the wife of one husband, and a woman who was always fasting.

Long-continued chastity and persistent fasting welcomed a Virgin Lord. His forerunner and herald, John, fed on locusts and wild honey, not on flesh; and the hermits of the desert and the monks in their cells, at first used the same sustenance. But the Lord Himself consecrated His baptism by a forty days' fast, and He taught us that the more violent devils¹⁵⁷ cannot be overcome, except by prayer and fasting.¹⁵⁸ Cornelius the centurion was found worthy through alms-giving and frequent fasts to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit before baptism.¹⁵⁹ The Apostle Paul, after speaking of hunger and thirst, and his other labours, perils from robbers, shipwrecks, loneliness, enumerates frequent fasts. And he¹⁶⁰ advises his disciple Timothy, who had a weak stomach, and was subject to many infirmities, to drink wine in moderation: "Drink no longer water," he says. The fact that he bids him no longer drink water shows that he had previously drunk water. The apostle would not have allowed this had not frequent infirmities and bodily pain demanded the concession.

16. The Apostle does indeed¹⁶¹ blame those who forbade marriage, and commanded to abstain from food, which God created for use with thanksgiving. But he has in view Marcion, and Tatian, and other heretics, who inculcate perpetual abstinence, to destroy, and express their hatred and contempt for, the works of the Creator. But we praise every creature of God, and yet prefer leanness to corpulence, abstinence to luxury, fasting to fulness.¹⁶² "He that laboreth laboreth for himself, and he is eager to his own destruction." And,¹⁶³ "From the days of John the Baptist (who fasted and was a virgin) until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force." For we are afraid lest at the coming of the eternal judge we be caught, as in the days of the flood, and at the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrha, eating and drinking, and marrying, and giving in marriage. For both the flood and the fire from heaven found fulness as well as marriage ready for destruction. Nor need we wonder if the Apostle commands that everything sold in the market be bought and eaten, since with idolaters, and with those who still ate in the temples of the idols meats offered to idols as such, it passed for the highest abstinence to abstain only from food eaten by the Gentiles. And if he says to the Romans:¹⁶⁴ "Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not: and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth," he does not make fasting and fulness of equal merit, but he is speaking against those believers in Christ who were still judaizing: and he warns Gentile believers, not to offend those by their food who were still too weak in faith. In brief this is clear enough in the sequel:¹⁶⁵ "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself: save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of: for the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking." And that no one may suppose he is referring to fasting and not to Jewish superstition, he immediately explains,¹⁶⁶ "One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs." And again,¹⁶⁷ "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." For they who were still weak in faith and thought some meats clean, some unclean: and supposed there was a difference between one day and another, for example, that the Sabbath, and the New Moons, and the Feast of Tabernacles were holier than other days, were commanded to eat herbs which are indifferently partaken of by all. But such as were of stronger faith believed all meats and all days to be alike.

17. My opponent has dared to maintain that our Lord was called by the Pharisees a wine-bibber and a glutton: and from the fact of His going to marriage feasts and from His not despising the banquets of sinners, I am to infer His wishes respecting ourselves. That Lord, so you suppose, is a glutton who fasted forty days to hallow Christian fasting;¹⁶⁸ who calls them blessed that hunger and thirst;¹⁶⁹ who says that He has food, not that which the disciples surmised, but such as would not perish for ever;¹⁷⁰ who forbids us to think of the morrow; who, though He is said to have hungered and thirsted, and to have gone frequently to various meals, except in celebrating the mystery whereby He represented His passion, or¹⁷¹ in proving the reality of His body is nowhere described as ministering to His appetite;¹⁷² who tells of purple-clad Dives in hell for his feasting, and says that poor Lazarus for his abstinence was in Abraham's bosom; who, when we fast,¹⁷³ bids us anoint our head and wash our face, that we fast not to gain glory from men, but praise from the Lord; who did indeed¹⁷⁴ after His resurrection eat part of a broiled fish and of a honey-comb, not to allay hunger and to gratify His palate, but to show the reality of a His own body. For whenever He raised anyone from the dead He¹⁷⁵ ordered that food should be given him to eat, lest the resurrection should be thought a delusion. And this is why Lazarus after his resurrection is¹⁷⁶ described as being at the feast with our Lord. We do not deny that fish and other kinds of flesh, if we choose, may be taken as food; but as we prefer virginity to marriage, so do we esteem fasting and spirituality above meats and full-bloodedness. And if Peter¹⁷⁷ before dinner went to the supper chamber at the sixth hour, a chance fit of hunger does not prejudice fasting. For, if this were so, because our Lord¹⁷⁸ at the sixth hour sat weary on the well of Samaria and wished to drink, all must of necessity, whether they so desire or not, drink at that time. Possibly it was the Sabbath, or the Lord's day, and he hungered at the sixth hour after two or three days' fasting; for I could never believe that the Apostle, if he had eaten a dinner only one day previous and had been blown out with a great meal, would have been hungry by noon next day. But if he did dine the day previous, and was hungry next day before luncheon, I do not think that a man who was so soon hungry ate until he was satisfied. Again, God by the mouth of Isaiah says what fast He did not choose:¹⁷⁹ "In the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and afflict the lowly: ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. it is not such a fast that I have chosen, saith the Lord." What kind He has chosen He thus teaches: "Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the houseless poor into thy house. When thou seest the naked cover him, and hide not thyself from thine own flesh." He did not therefore reject fasting, but showed what He would have it to be: for that bodily hunger is not pleasing to God which is made null and void by strife, and plunder, and lust. If God does not desire fasting, how is it that in¹⁸⁰ Leviticus He commands the whole people in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, to fast until the evening, and threatens that he who does not afflict his soul shall die and be cut off from his people? How is it that the¹⁸¹ graves of lust where the people fell in their devotion to flesh remain even to this day in the wilderness? Do we not read that the stupid people gorged themselves with quails until the wrath of God came upon them? Why was the man of God at whose prophecy the hand of King Jeroboam withered, and who ate contrary to the command of God,¹⁸² immediately smitten? Strange that the lion which left the ass safe and sound should not spare the prophet just risen from his meal! He who, while he was fasting, had wrought miracles, no sooner ate a meal than he paid the penalty for the gratification. Joel also cries aloud:¹⁸³ "Sanctify a fast, proclaim a time of healing," that it might appear that a fast is sanctified by other works, and that a holy fast avails for the cure of sin. Moreover, just as true virginity is not prejudiced by the counterfeit professions of the virgins of the

devil, so neither is true fasting by the periodic fast and perpetual abstinence from certain kinds of food on the part of the worshippers of Isis and Cybele, particularly when a fast from bread is made up for by feasting on flesh. And just as the signs of Moses were imitated by the signs of the Egyptians which were in reality no signs at all, for the rod of Moses swallowed up the rods of the magicians: so when the devil tries to be the rival of God this does not prove that our religion is superstitious, but that we are negligent, since we refuse to do what even men of the world see clearly to be good.

18. His fourth and last contention is that there are two classes, the sheep and the goats, the just and the unjust: that the just stand on the right hand, the other on the left: and that to the just the words are spoken:¹⁸⁴ "Come, ye blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But that sinners are thus addressed:¹⁸⁵ "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." That a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor an evil tree good fruit. Hence it is that the Saviour says to the Jews:¹⁸⁶ "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do." He quotes the parable of the ten virgins, the wise and the foolish, and shows that the five who had no oil remained outside, but that the other five who had gotten for themselves the light of good works went into the marriage with the bridegroom. He goes back to the flood, and tells us that they who were righteous like Noah were saved, but that the sinners perished all together. We are informed that among the men of Sodom and Gomorrha no difference is made except between the two classes of the good and the bad. The righteous are delivered, the sinners are consumed by the same fire. There is one salvation for those who are released, one destruction for those who stay behind. Lot's wife is a clear warning that we must not deviate a hair's breadth from right. If, however, he says, you object and ask me why the righteous toils in time of peace, or in the midst of persecution, if he is to gain nothing nor have a greater reward, I would assert that he does this, not that he may gain a further reward but that he may not lose what he has already received. In Egypt also the ten plagues fell with equal violence upon all that sinned, and the same darkness hung over master and slave, noble and ignoble, the king and the people. Again at the Red Sea the righteous all passed over, the sinners were all overwhelmed. Six hundred thousand men, besides those who were unfit for war through age or sex, all alike fell in the desert, and two who were alike in righteousness are alike delivered. For forty years all Israel toiled and died alike. As regards food, an homer of manna was the measure for all ages: the clothes of all alike did not wear out: the hair of all alike did not grow, nor the beard increase: the shoes of all lasted the same time. Their feet grew not hard: the food in the mouths of all had the same taste. They went on their way to one resting place with equal toil and equal reward. All Hebrews had the same Passover, the same Feast of Tabernacles, the same Sabbath, the same New Moons. In the seventh, the Sabbatical Year, all prisoners were released without distinction of persons, and in the year of Jubilee all debts were forgiven to all debtors, and he who had sold land returned to the inheritance of his fathers.

19. Then, again, as regards the parable of the sower? the Gospel, we read that the good ground brought forth fruit, some a hundred fold, some sixty fold, and some thirty fold; and, on the other hand, that the bad ground admitted of three degrees of sterility: but Jovinianus makes only two classes, the good soil and the bad.¹⁸⁷ And as in one Gospel our Lord promises the Apostles a hundred fold, in another seven fold, for leaving children and wives, and in the world to come life eternal; and the seven and the hundred mean the same thing: so, too, in the passage before us,

the numbers describing the fertility of the soil need not create any difficulty, particularly when the Evangelist Mark gives the inverse order, thirty, sixty, and a hundred. The Lord says,¹⁸⁸ "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him." As, then, there are not varying degrees of Christ's presence in us, so neither are there degrees of our abiding in Christ.¹⁸⁹ "Every one that loveth me will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." He that is righteous, loves Christ: and if a man thus loves, the Father and the Son come to him, and make their abode with him. Now I suppose that when the guest is such as this the host cannot possibly lack anything. And if our Lord says,¹⁹⁰ "In my Father's house are many mansions," His meaning is not that there are different mansions in the kingdom of heaven, but He indicates the number of Churches in the whole world, for though the Church be seven-fold she is but one "I go," He says, "to prepare a place for you," not places. If this promise is peculiar to the twelve apostles, then Paul is shut out from that place, and the chosen vessel will be thought superfluous and unworthy. John and James, because they asked more than the others, did not obtain it; and yet their dignity is not diminished, because they were equal to the rest of the apostles.¹⁹¹ "Know ye not that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Ghost?" A temple, He says, not temples, in order to show that God dwells in all alike.¹⁹² "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee, are one, so they may be all one in us. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them. I have loved them, as thou hast loved me. And as we are Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, so may they be one people in themselves, that is, like dear children, partakers of the divine nature." Call the Church what you will, bride, sister, mother, her assembly is but one and never lacks husband, brother, or son. Her faith is one, and she is not defiled by variety of doctrine, nor divided by heresies. She continues a virgin. Whithersoever the Lamb goeth, she follows Him: she alone knows the Song of Christ.

20. "If you tell me," says he, "that one star differeth from another star in glory, I reply, that one star does differ from another star; that is, spiritual persons differ from carnal. We love all the members alike, and do not prefer the eye to the finger, nor the finger to the ear: but the loss of any one is attended by the sorrow of all the rest. We all alike come into this world, and we all alike depart from it. There is one Adam of the earth, and another from heaven. The earthly Adam is on the left hand, and will perish: the heavenly Adam is on the right hand, and will be saved. He who says to his brother, 'thou fool,' and 'raca,' will be in danger of Gehenna. And the murderer and the adulterer will likewise be sent into Gehenna. In times of persecution some are burnt, some strangled, some beheaded, some flee, or die within the walls of a prison: the struggle varies in kind, but the victors' crown is one. No difference was made between the son who had never left his father, and his brother who was welcomed as a returning penitent. To the labourers of the first hour, the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the eleventh, the same reward of a penny was given, and what may perhaps seem still more strange to you, the first to receive the reward were they who had toiled least in the vineyard."

21. Who is there even of God's elect that would not be disturbed at these and similar passages of Holy Scripture which our crafty opponent, with a perverse ingenuity, twists to the support of his own views? The Apostle John says that many Antichrists had come, and to make no difference between John himself and the lowest penitent is the preaching of a real Antichrist. At the same time, I am amazed at the portentous forms which Jovinianus, as slippery as a snake and like

another Proteus, so rapidly assumes. In sexual intercourse and full feeding he is an Epicurean; in the distribution of rewards and punishments he all at once becomes a Stoic. He exchanges Jerusalem for¹⁹³ Cithium, Judaea for Cyprus, Christ for Zeno. If we may not depart a hair's breadth from virtue, and all sins are equal, and a man who in a fit of hunger steals a piece of bread is no less guilty than he who slays a man: you must, in your turn, be held guilty of the greatest crimes. The case is different if you say that you have no sin, not even the least, and if, although all apostles and prophets and all the saints (as I have maintained in dealing with¹⁹⁴ his second proposition) bewail their sinfulness, you alone boast of your righteousness. But a minute ago you were barefooted: now you not only wear shoes, but decorated ones. Just now you wore a rough coat and a dirty shirt, you were grimy, and haggard, and your hand was horny with toil: now you are clad in linen and silks, and strut like an exquisite in the fashions of the Atrebatians and the Laodiceans. Your cheeks are ruddy, your skin sleek, your hair smoothed down in front and behind, your belly protrudes, your shoulders are little mountains, your neck full and so loaded with fat that the half-smothered words can scarce make their escape. Surely in such extremes of dress and mode of life there must be sin on the one side or the other. I will not assert that the sin lies in the food or clothing, but that such fickleness and changing for the worse is almost censurable in itself. And what we censure, is far removed from virtue; and what is far from virtue becomes the property of vice; and what is proved to be vicious is one with sin. Now sin, according to you, is placed on the left hand, and corresponds to the goats. You must, therefore, return to your old habits if you are to be a sheep on the right hand; or, if you perversely repent of your former views and change them for others, whether you like it or not, and although you shave off your beard, you will be reckoned among the goats.

22. But what is the good of calling a¹⁹⁵ one-eyed man Old One-eye, and of showing the inconsistency of an assailant, when we have to refute a whole series of statements? That the sheep and the goats on the right hand and on the left are the two classes of the righteous and the wicked, I do not deny. That a good tree does not bring forth evil fruit, nor an evil one good fruit, no one doubts. The ten virgins also, wise and foolish, we divide into good and bad. We are not ignorant that at the deluge the righteous were delivered, and sinners overwhelmed with the waters. That at Sodom and Gomorrah the just man was rescued, while the sinners were consumed by fire, is clear to everyone. We are also aware that Egypt was stricken with the ten plagues, and that Israel was saved. Even little children in our schools sing how the righteous passed through the Red Sea, and Pharaoh with his host was drowned. That six hundred thousand fell in the desert because they were unbelieving, and that two only entered the land of promise, is taught by Scripture; and so is the rest of your description of the two classes, good and bad, down to the labourers in the vineyard. But what are we to think of your assertion, that because there is a division into good and bad, the good, or the bad it may be, are not distinguished one from another, and that it makes no difference whether one is a ram in the flock or a poor little sheep? whether the sheep have the first or the second fleece? whether the flock is diseased and covered with the scab, or full of life and vigour?¹⁹⁶ especially when by the authoritative utterances of His own prophet Ezekiel God clearly points out the difference between flock and flock of His rational sheep, saying, "Behold I judge between cattle and cattle, and between the rams and the he-goats, and between the fat cattle and the lean. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, until they were scattered abroad." And that we might know what the cattle were, He immediately added:¹⁹⁷ "Ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are

men." Will Paul and that penitent who had lain with his father's wife be on an equality, because the latter repented and was received into the Church: and shall the offender because he is with him on the right hand shine with the same glory as the Apostle? How is it then that tares and wheat grow side by side in the same field until the harvest, that is the end of the world? What is the significance of good and bad fish being contained in the Gospel net? Why, in Noah's ark, the type of the Church, are there different animals with different abodes according to their rank? Why standeth the queen upon the Lord's right hand, in raiment of wrought gold, in a vesture of gold? Why had Joseph, representing Christ, a coat of many colours? Why does the Apostle say to the Romans:¹⁹⁸ "According as God had dealt to each man a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence," and so on. And elsewhere:¹⁹⁹ "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." To the Corinthians he says:²⁰⁰ "I have planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increase. So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth: but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God, ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." And again elsewhere:²⁰¹ "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder I laid a foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man buildeth on the foundation, gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble: each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall reveal it, because it is revealed in fire: and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire." If the man whose work is burnt and is to suffer the loss of his labour, while he himself is saved, yet not without proof of fire: it follows that if a man's work remains which he has built upon the foundation, he will be saved without probation by fire, and consequently a difference is established between one degree of salvation and another. Again in another place he says:²⁰² "Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Would you be assured that between one steward and another there is a great difference (I am not speaking of bad and good, but of the good themselves who stand on the right hand)? then listen to the sequel:²⁰³ "Know ye not that they which minister about the sacrifices, eat of the sacrifices, and they which wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things: and I wrote not these things that it may be so done in my case: for it were good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this of mine own will, I have a reward: but if not of mine own will, I have a stewardship intrusted to me. What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel without charge, so as not to use to the full my right in the gospel.

For though I was free from all men, I brought myself under bondage to all, that [I might gain the more." You surely cannot say that men commit sin by living by the Gospel, and partaking of the sacrifices. Of course not. The Lord himself made the rule that they who preach the Gospel, should live by the Gospel. But an Apostle who does not abuse this freedom, but labours with his hands that he may not be a burden to anyone, and toils night and day and ministers to his companions of course does this, that for his greater toil he may receive a greater reward.

23. Let us hasten to what remains.²⁰⁴ "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but the same God who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal." And again:²⁰⁵ "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." But he precludes you from saying that the different members of the one body have the same rank; for he immediately describes the orders of the Church, and says:²⁰⁶ "And God hath set some in the Church, first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healings? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And a still more excellent way shew I unto you." And after discoursing more in detail of the graces of charity, he added:²⁰⁷ "Whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." And afterwards we read:²⁰⁸ "But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love. Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." And again:²⁰⁹ "I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy: and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues." And again:²¹⁰ "I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all." Where there are different gifts, and one man is greater, another less, and all are called spiritual, they are all certainly sheep, and they stand on the right hand; but there is a difference between one sheep and another. It is humility that leads the Apostle Paul to say:²¹¹ "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." But the very fact of his thus humbling himself shows the possibility of there being apostles of higher or lower rank, and God is not unjust that he will forget the work of him who is called the chosen vessel of election, and who laboured more abundantly than they all, or assign equal rewards to unequal deserts. Afterwards we read,²¹² "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be now alive. But each in his own order." If each is to rise in his own order, it follows that those who rise are of different degrees of merit.²¹³ "All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." Like a learned commentator, you have explained this passage by saying that the spiritual differ from the carnal. It follows that in heaven there will be both spiritual and carnal persons, and not only will the sheep climb thither, but your goats also. "One star," he says, "differeth from another star in glory": this is

not the distinction of sheep and goat, but of sheep and sheep, star and star. Lastly, he says, "there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon." But for this, you might maintain that the phrase one star from another star covers the whole human race; but he introduces the sun and moon, and you cannot possibly reckon them among the goats. "So," says he, "is also the resurrection of the dead"-the just will shine with the brightness of the sun, and those of the next rank will glow with the splendour of the moon, so that one will be a Lucifer, another an Arcturus, a third an Orion, another Mazzaroth, or some other of the stars whose names are hollowed in the book of Job.^{214 215} "For we all," he says, "must be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." And you cannot say that the mode of our manifestation before the judgment-seat of Christ is such that the good receive good things, the bad evil things; for he²¹⁶ teaches us in the same epistle that he who soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Surely he who sows more and he who sows less are both on the right side. And although they belong to the same class, that of the sower, yet they differ in respect of measure and number. The same Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says:²¹⁷ "to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God." You observe that it is a varied and manifold wisdom of God which is spoken of as existing in the different ranks of the church. And in the same epistle we read,²¹⁸ "Unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the grace of Christ": not that Christ's measure varies, but only that so much of His grace is poured out as we can receive.

24. In vain, therefore, do you multiply instances of sheep and goats, of the five wise and five foolish virgins, of Egyptians and Israelites, and so forth, because retribution is not in the present, but will be in the future. Hence we find that the day of judgment is promised at the end of all things, because the judgment is not now. For it would be absurd to call the last day the day of judgment, if God were judging at the present time. Now we sail the ship, wrestle, and fight, that at last we may reach the haven, be crowned, and triumph. But you, with no less adroitness than perversity, make the life of this world illustrate that of the world to come, although we know full well that here unrighteousness prevails, there, righteousness:²¹⁹ "until we go into the sanctuary of God, and understand the end of those men." The saint does not die one way, the sinner another. Those who sail the same sea have the same calm and storm. A violent death is not one thing to the robber, another to the martyr. Children are not born one way of adultery and prostitution, in another of pure marriage. Certainly our Lord and the robbers incurred the same penalty of crucifixion. If the judgment of this world and of that which is to come be the same, it follows that they who were here crucified side by side, will also be esteemed of equal rank hereafter. Paul and they who bound him, sailed together, endured the same storm, escaped together to the shore when the ship was broken with the waves. You cannot deny that the prisoner and the keepers were of unequal merit. And what were the circumstances of that same shipwreck of the Apostle and the soldiers? The Apostle Paul afterwards²²⁰ related a vision, and said that they who were with him in the ship had been given to him by the Lord. Are we to suppose that he to whom they were given, and they who were given to him, were of one degree of merit? Ten righteous men can save a sinful city. Lot together with his daughters was delivered from the fire: his sons-in-law would also have been saved, had they been willing to leave the city. Now there was surely a great difference between Lot and his sons-in-law. One city out of the five,²²¹ Zoar, was saved, and a place which lay under

the same sentence as Sodom, Gomorrha, Admah, and Zeboiim, was preserved by the prayers of a holy man. Lot and Zoar were of different merit, but both of them escaped the fire.²²² The robbers who in the absence of David had laid waste Ziklag, and made a prey of the wives and children of the inhabitants were slain on the third day in the plain, but forty men mounted on camels fled. Will you maintain that there was some difference between those who were slain and those who made good their escape? We read in the ²²³ Gospel that the tower of Siloam fell upon eighteen men who perished in the ruins. Certainly our Saviour did not regard them as the only sinners: but they were punished to terrify the rest: it was like scourging a pestilent fellow to teach fools wisdom. If all sinners are punished alike, it is unjust for one to be slain while another is admonished by his comrade's death.

25. You raise the objection that all Israelites had the same measure of manna, an homer, and were alike in respect of dress, and hair, and beard, and shoes; as though we did not all alike partake of the body of Christ. In the Christian mysteries there is one means of sanctification for the master and the servant, the noble and the low-born, for the king and his soldiers, and yet, that which is one varies according to the merits of those who receive it.²²⁴ "Whosoever shall eat or drink unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Does it follow that because Judas drank of the same cup as the rest of the apostles, that he and they are of equal merit? But suppose that we do not choose to receive the sacrament, at all events we all have the same life, breathe the same air, have the same blood in our veins, are fed on the same food. Moreover, if our viands are improved by culinary skill and are made more palatable for the consumer, food of this kind does not satisfy nature, but tickles the appetite. We are all alike subject to hunger, all alike suffer with cold: we alike are shrivelled with the frost, or melted with the broiling heat. The sun and the moon, and all the company of the stars, the showers, the whole world run their course for us all alike, and, as the Gospel tells us, the same refreshing rain falls upon all, good and bad, just and unjust. If the present is a picture of the future, then the Sun of Righteousness will rise upon sinners as well as upon the righteous, upon the wicked and the holy, upon the heathen as well as upon Jews and Christians, though the Scripture says,²²⁵ "Unto you that fear the Lord shall the Sun of Righteousness arise." If He will rise to those that fear, He will set to the despisers and the false prophets. The sheep which stand on the right hand will be brought into the kingdom of heaven, the goats will be thrust down to hell. The parable does not contrast the sheep one with another, or on the other hand the goats, but merely makes a difference between sheep and goats. The whole truth is not taught in a single passage: we must always bear in mind the exact point of an illustration. For instance, the ten virgins are not examples of the whole human race, but of the careful and the slothful: the former are ever anticipating the advent of our Lord, the latter abandon themselves to idle slumber without a thought of future judgment. And so at the end of the parable it is said,²²⁶ "Watch, for ye know not the day, nor the hour." If at the deluge Noah was delivered, and the whole world perished, all men were flesh, and therefore were destroyed. You must either say that the sons of Noah and Noah for whose sake they were delivered were of unequal merit, or you must place the accursed Ham in the same rank as his father because he was delivered with him from the flood. At the passion of Christ all wavered, all were unprofitable together: there was none that did good, no not one. Will you therefore dare to say that Peter and the rest of the Apostles who fled denied the Saviour in the same sense as Caiaphas and the Pharisees and the people who cried out,²²⁷ "Crucify him, crucify him"? And, to say no more about the Apostles, do you think Annas add Caiaphas, and Judas the traitor guilty of no greater crime than Pilate who

was compelled against his will to give sentence against our Lord? The guilt of Judas is proportioned to his former merit, and the greater the guilt, the greater the penalty too.²²⁸ "For the mighty shall mightily suffer torment." An evil tree does not bear good fruit, nor a good tree evil fruit. If this be so, tell me how it was that Paul though he was an evil tree and persecuted the Church of Christ, afterwards bore good fruit? And Judas, though he was a good tree and wrought miracles like the other Apostles, afterwards turned traitor and brought forth evil fruit? The truth is that a good tree does not bear evil fruit, nor an evil tree good fruit, so long as they continue in their goodness, or badness. And if we read that every Hebrew keeps the same Passover, and that in²²⁹ the seventh year every prisoner is set free, and that at Jubilee, that is the fiftieth year,²³⁰ every possession returns to its owner, all this refers not to the present, but to the future; for being in bondage during the six days of this world, on the seventh day, the true and eternal Sabbath, we shall be free, at any rate if we wish to be free while still in bondage in the world. If, however, we do not desire it, our ear will be bored in token of our disobedience, and together with our wives and children, whom we preferred to liberty, that is, with the flesh and its works, we shall be in perpetual slavery.

26. As for the parable of the sower which makes both good and bad ground bear a triple crop, and the passage from the apostle in which upon Christ as the foundation one man builds gold, silver, costly stones, another wood, hay, stubble, the meaning is perfectly clear. We know that in a great house there are different vessels, and to wish to contradict so plain a truth would be sheer impudence. Yet that Jovinianus may not triumph in a lie and quote the instance of the apostles by way of discrediting the hundred fold, sixty fold, and thirty fold, let me inform him that in²³¹ Matthew and Mark a hundred fold is promised to the apostles who had left all. And I would tell him further, that in the Gospel of Luke we find much more, that is *polu pleiona*, and that there is absolutely no instance in the Gospels of a hundred standing for seven; and that he is convicted either of forgery, or of ignorance; and that our cause is not prejudiced by the fact that in one Gospel the enumeration begins at a hundred, in another at thirty, since it is a rule with all Scripture, and especially with the older writings, to put the lowest number first and so ascend by degrees to the higher. For instance, suppose one to say that so-and-so lived five and seventy and a hundred years, it does not follow that five and seventy are more than a hundred because they were first mentioned. If you do not on the side of good admit the difference between a hundred, sixty, and thirty, neither will you do so on the side of evil, and the seed which fell by the wayside, upon the rock, and among thorns, will be equally faulty. But if the former three, or the latter three, on the side of good, or on the side of evil respectively, are one and the same, it was foolish instead of speaking of two things to enumerate six kinds, and all the more because according to the account of the parable in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Saviour always added: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Where there is no deep inner meaning, it is useless to draw our attention to the mystic sense.

27. You give it as your opinion that, since the Father and the Son make their abode with the faithful, and since Christ is their guest, nothing is lacking. I suppose, however, that Christ's abiding with the Corinthians was one thing, with the Ephesians another: it was one thing, I say, for Him to abide with those whom Paul blamed for many sins, another for Him to dwell with those to whom the apostle revealed mysteries hidden from the beginning of the world; one thing for Him to be in Titus and Timothy, another in Paul. Certainly amongst them that have been born of women, there

has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. But the term greater implies others who are less. And²³² "he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." You see then that in heaven one is greatest and another is least, and that among the angels and the invisible creation there is a manifold and infinite diversity. Why do the apostles say:²³³ "Lord, increase our faith," if there is one measure for all? And why did our Lord rebuke His disciple, saying:²³⁴ "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" In Jeremiah also we read concerning the future kingdom:²³⁵ "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers." And soon after:²³⁶ "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." The context of this passage clearly shows that the prophet is describing the future kingdom, and how can there possibly be in it a least or greatest, if all are to be equal? The secret is disclosed in the Gospel:²³⁷ "Whosoever shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall teach, and not do, shall be least."²³⁸ The Saviour taught us at a feast to take the lowest place, lest, when one greater than us came, we should be thrust with disgrace from the higher place. If we cannot fall, but only raise ourselves by penitence, what is the meaning of the ladder at Bethel, on which the angels come from heaven to earth and descend as well as ascend? Surely while on that ladder they are reckoned among the sheep and stand on the right hand. There are angels who descend from heaven; but Jovinianus is sure that they retain their inheritance.

28. But when Jovinianus supposes that the many mansions in our Father's house are churches scattered throughout the world, who can refrain from laughing; since Scripture plainly teaches in John's Gospel that our Lord was discoursing not of the number of the churches, but of the heavenly mansions, and the eternal tabernacles for which the prophet longed?²³⁹ "In my Father's house," He says, "are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." The place and the mansions which Christ says He would prepare for the apostles are of course in the Father's house, that is, in the kingdom of heaven, not on earth, where for the present He was leading the apostles. And at the same time regard must be had to the sense of Scripture: "I might tell you," He says, "that I go to prepare a place for you, if there were not many mansions in my Father's house, that is to say, if each individual did not prepare for himself a mansion through his own works rather than receive it through the bounty of God. The preparation is therefore not mine, but yours." This view is supported by the fact that it profited Judas nothing to have a place prepared, since he lost it by his own fault. And we must interpret in the same way what our Lord says to the sons of Zebedee, one of whom wished to sit on His left hand, the other on His right:²⁴⁰ "My cup indeed ye shall drink: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared of my Father." It is not the Son's to give; how then is it the Father's to prepare? There are, He says, prepared in heaven, many different mansions, destined for many different virtues, and they will be awarded not to persons, but to persons' works. In vain therefore do you ask of me what rests with yourselves, a reward which my Father has prepared for those whose virtues will entitle them to rise to such dignity. Again when He says:²⁴¹ "I will come again, and will receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also," He is speaking especially to the

apostles, concerning whom it is elsewhere written, "That as I and thou, Father, are one, so they also may be one in us," inasmuch as they have believed, have been perfected, and can say,²⁴² "the Lord is my portion." If, however, there are not many mansions, how is it taught in the Old Testament correspondingly with the New, that the chief priest has one rank, the priests another, the Levites another, the door-keepers another, the sacristans another? How is it that in the²⁴³ book of Ezekiel, where a description is given of the future Church and of the heavenly Jerusalem. the priests who have sinned are degraded to the rank of sacristans and doorkeepers, and although they are in the temple of God, that is on the right hand, they are not among the rams, but among the poorest of the sheep? How again is it that in the river which flows from the temple. and replenishes the salt sea, and gives new life to everything, we read there are many kinds of fish? Why do we read that in the kingdom of heaven there are Archangels, Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Powers, Cherubim and Seraphim, and every name which is named, not only in this present world, but also that which is to come? A difference of name is meaningless where there is not a difference of rank. An Archangel is of course an Archangel to other inferior angels, and Powers, and Dominions have other spheres over which they exercise authority. This is what we find in heaven and in the administration of God. You must not therefore smile and sneer at us, as is your wont, for making a graduated series of emperors, praefects and counts, tribunes and centurions, companies, and all the other steps in the service.

29. It is mere trifling to quote the passage:²⁴⁴ "Know ye not that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Ghost," for it is customary in Holy Scripture to speak of a single object as though it were many, and of many as though they were one. And Jovinianus himself should know that even in a temple there are many divisions-the outer and the inner courts, the vestibules, the holy place, and the Holy of Holies. There are also in a temple kitchens, pantries, oil-cellars, and cupboards for the vessels. And so in the temple of our body there are different degrees of merit. God does not dwell in all alike, nor does He impart Himself to all in the same degree. A portion of the spirit of Moses was taken and given to the seventy elders. I suppose there is a difference between the abundance of the river, and that of the rivulets.²⁴⁵ Elijah's spirit was given in double measure to Elisha, and thus double grace wrought greater miracles. Elijah while living restored a dead man to life; Elisha after death did the same. Elijah invoked famine on the people; Elisha in a single day put the enemy's forces in the power of the city which they besieged. No doubt the words, "Know ye not that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Ghost," refer to the whole assembly of the faithful, who, joined together, make up the one body of Christ. But the question now is, who in the body is worthy to be the feet of Christ, and who the head? who is His eye, and who His hand? -a distinction indicated by the²⁴⁶ two women in the Gospel, the penitent and the holy woman, one of whom held His feet, the other His head. Some authorities. however, think there was only one woman, and that she who began at His feet gradually advanced to His head. Jovinianus further urges against us our Lord's words,²⁴⁷ "I pray not for these only, but also for those who shall believe on me through their word: that as I, Father, in thee and thou in me are one, so they all may be one in us," and reminds us that the whole Christian people is one in God, and, as His well-beloved sons, are²⁴⁸ "partakers of the divine nature." We have already said, and the truth must now be inculcated more in detail, that we are not one in the Father and the Son according to nature, but according to grace. For the essence of the human soul and the essence of God are not the same, as the Manichaeans constantly assert. But, says our Lord:²⁴⁹ "Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." You see, then, that we are privileged to partake of His essence, not in the

realm of nature, but of grace, and the reason why we are beloved of the Father is that He has loved the Son; and the members are loved, those namely of the body.²⁵⁰ "For as many as received Christ, to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The Word was made flesh that we might pass from the flesh into the Word. The Word did not cease to be what He had been; nor did the human nature lose that which it was by birth. The glory was increased, the nature was not changed. Do you ask how we are made one body with Christ? Your creator shall be your instructor:²⁵¹ "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven." But the Evangelist John, who had drunk in wisdom from the breast of Christ, agrees herewith, and says:²⁵² "Hereby know we that we abide in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God." If you believe in Christ, as the apostles believed, you shall be made one body with them in Christ. But, if it is rash for you to claim for yourself a faith and works like theirs when you have not the same faith and works, you cannot have the same place.

30. You repeat the words bride, sister, mother, and affirm that all these are titles of the one Church and names applied to all believers. The fact goes against you. For if the Church admits but one rank, and has not many members in one body, what necessity is there for calling her bride, sister, mother? It must be that she is the bride of some, the sister of others, the mother of others. All indeed stand on the right hand, but one stands as a bridegroom, another as a brother, a third as a son.²⁵³ "My little children" says the Apostle, "of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you." Do you think that the children who are being born and the apostle who is in travail are of equal rank? And the folly of your contention that we love all the members alike, and do not prefer the eye to the finger, nor the hand to the ear, but that if one be lost all mourn, is proved by the lesson which the apostle teaches the Corinthians:²⁵⁴ "Some members are more honourable, others excite the sense of shame: and those parts to which shame attaches are clothed with more abundant honour; whereas our comely parts have no need of our care." Do you think that the mouth and the belly, the eyes and the outlets of the body are to be classed together as of equal merit?²⁵⁵ "The lamp of thy body," he says, "is thine eye. If thine eye be blinded, thy whole body is in darkness." If you cut off a finger, or the tip of the ear, there is indeed pain, but the loss is not so great, nor is the disfigurement attended by so much pain as it would be were you to take out the eyes, mutilate the nose, or saw through a bone. Some members we can dispense with and yet live: without others life is an impossibility. Some offences are light, some heavy. It is one thing to owe ten thousand talents, another to owe a farthing. We shall have to give account of the idle word no less than of adultery; but it is not the same thing to be put to the blush, and to be put upon the rack, to grow red in the face and to ensure lasting torment. Do you think I am merely expressing my own views? Hear what the Apostle John says:²⁵⁶ "He who knows that his brother sinneth a sin not unto death, let him ask, and he shall give him life, even to him that sinneth not unto death. But he that hath sinned unto death, who shall pray for him?" You observe that if we entreat for smaller offences, we obtain pardon: if for greater ones, it is difficult to obtain our request: and that there is a great difference between sins. And so with respect to the people of Israel who had sinned a sin unto death, it is said to Jeremiah:²⁵⁷ "Pray not thou for this people, neither entreat for them, and do not withstand me, for I will not hear thee." Moreover, if it be true that we all alike enter the world

and all alike leave it, and this is a precedent for the world to come, it follows that whether righteous or sinners we shall all be equally esteemed by God, because the conditions of our birth and death are now the same. And if you contend that there are two Adams, the one of the earth, the other from heaven; and that they who were in the earthly Adam stand on the left hand, those who were in the heavenly are on the right hand, before we go further, let me ask you a question concerning two brothers: Was Esau in the earthly Adam, or in the heavenly? No one doubts that you will reply, he was in the earthly. In which was Jacob? Without hesitation you will say, in the heavenly. How then was he in the heavenly when Christ had not yet come in the flesh—Christ who is called the second Adam from heaven? You must either reckon all before the incarnation of Christ in the old Adam, and even the just in the man from the earth, and then they will be on the left among your goats; or, if it be impious to give Isaac the same place as Ishmael, Jacob as Esau, the saints as sinners, the last Adam will date from the time when Christ was born of a Virgin, and your argument from the two Adams will not benefit your sheep and goats, because we have proved that in the first Adam there were both sheep and goats, and that of those who were in one and the same man, some stood on the right hand of God, others on the left:²⁵⁸ "For from Adam even until Moses death reigned over all, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression."

31. As regards your attempt to show that railing and murder, the use of the expression *raca* and adultery, the idle word and godlessness, are rewarded with the same punishment, I have already given you my reply, and will now briefly repeat it. You must either deny that you are a sinner if you are not to be in danger of Gehenna: or, if you are a sinner you will be sent to hell for even a light offence:²⁵⁹ "The mouth that lieth," says one, "kills the soul." I suspect that you, like other men, have occasionally told a lie:²⁶⁰ for all men are liars, that God alone may be true,²⁶¹ and that He may be justified in His words, and may prevail when He judges. It follows either that you will not be a man lest you be found a liar: or if you are a man and are consequently a liar, you will be punished with parricides and adulterers. For you admit no difference between sins, and the gratitude of those whom you raise from the mire and set on high will not equal the rage against you of those whom for the trifling offences of daily life you have thrust into utter darkness. And if it be so that in a persecution one is stifled, another beheaded, another flogged, or the fourth dies within the walls of a prison, and one crown of victory awaits various kinds of struggle, the fact tells in our favour. For in martyrdom it is the will, which gives occasion to the death, that is crowned. My duty is to resist the frenzy of the heathen, and not deny the Lord. It rests with them either to behead, or to burn, or to shut up in prison, or enforce various other penalties. But if I escape, and die in solitude, there will not at my death be the same crown for me as for them, because the confession of Christ will not have been to me as to them the cause of death. As for your remark that absolutely no difference was made between the brother who had always been with his father, and him who was afterwards welcomed as a penitent, I am willing to add, if you like, that the one drachma which was lost and was found was put with the others, and that the one sheep which the good shepherd, leaving the ninety and nine, sought and brought back, made up the full tale of a hundred. But it is one thing to be a penitent, and with tears sue for pardon, another to be always with the father. And so both the shepherd and the father say by the mouth of Ezekiel to the sheep that was carried back, and to the son that was lost,²⁶² "And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth ever more, because of thy shame, when I have forgiven thee all that thou

hast done." That penitents may have their due it is enough for them to feel shame instead of all other punishment. Hence in another place it is said to them,²⁶³ "Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and all the crimes wherewith ye were defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all the wickedness that ye have done; and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have done you good for my name's sake, and not according to your evil ways, nor according to your evil doings." The son, moreover, was reprov'd by his father for envying his brother's deliverance, and for being tormented by jealousy while the angels in heaven were rejoicing. The parallel, however, is not to be drawn between the merits of the two sons (one of whom was temperate, the other a prodigal) and those of the whole human race, but the characters depicted are either Jews and Christians, or saints and penitents. In the lifetime of Bishop Damasus I dedicated to him a small treatise upon this parable.²⁶⁴

32. And if a penny was given to all the labourers, those of the first, the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the eleventh hours, and they came first for the reward who were the last to work in the vineyard, even here the persons described do not belong to one time or one age, but from the beginning of the world to the end of it there are different calls and a special meaning attaches to each. Abel and Seth were called at the first hour: Enoch and Noah at the third: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the sixth: Moses and the prophets at the ninth: at the eleventh the Gentiles, to whom the recompense was first given because they believed on the crucified Lord, and inasmuch as it was hard for them to believe they earned a great reward. Many kings and prophets have desired to see the things that we see, and have not seen them. But the one penny does not represent one reward, but one life, and one deliverance from Gehenna. And as by the favour of the sovereign those guilty of various crimes are released from prison, and each one, according to his toil and exertions, is in this or that condition of life, so too the penny, as it were by the favour of our Sovereign, is the discharge from prison of us all by baptism. Now our work is, according to our different virtues, to prepare for ourselves a different future.

33. So far I have replied to the separate portions of his argument; I shall now address myself to the general question. Our Lord says to his disciples,²⁶⁵ "Whosoever would become great among you, let him be least of all." If we are all to be equal in heaven, in vain do we humble ourselves here that we may be greater there. Of the two debtors who owed, one five hundred pence, the other fifty, he to whom most was forgiven loved most. And so the Saviour says,²⁶⁶ "I say to you, her sins which are many are forgiven her, for she hath loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." He who loves little, and has little forgiven, he will of course be of inferior rank.²⁶⁷ The householder when he set out delivered to his servants his goods, to one five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Just as in another Gospel it is written that a nobleman setting out for a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and return, called the servants, and gave them each a sum of money, with which one gained ten pounds, another five, and they, each according to his ability and the gain he had made, received ten or five cities. But one who had received a talent, or a pound, buried it in the ground, or tied it up in a napkin, and kept it until his master's return. Our first thought is that if, according to the modern Zeno, the righteous do not toil in hope of reward, but to avoid the loss of what they already have. he who buried his pound or talent that he might not lose it, did no wrong, and the caution of him who kept his money is worthy of more praise than the fruitless toil of those who wore themselves out and yet received no reward for their labour. Then observe that the very talent which was taken from the

timid or negligent servant, was not given to him who had the smaller profit, but to him who had gained the most, that is, to him who had been placed over ten cities. If difference of rank is not constituted by the difference in number, why did our Lord say, "He gave to everyone according to his ability"? If the gain of five talents and ten talents is the same, why were not ten cities given to him who gained the least, and five to him who gained the most? But that our Lord is not satisfied with what we have, but always desires more, He himself shows by saying, "Wherefore didst thou not give my money to the money-changers, that so when I came I might have received it with usury?" The Apostle Paul understood this, and forgetting those things which were behind, reached forward to those things which were in front, that is, he made daily progress, and did not keep the grace given to him carefully wrapped up in a napkin, but his spirit, like the capital of a keen man of business, was renewed from day to day, and if he were not always growing larger, he thought himself growing less. Six cities of refuge are mentioned in the law, provided for fugitives who were involuntary homicides, and the cities themselves belonged to the priests. I should like to ask whether you would put those fugitives among your goats, or among our sheep. If they were goats, they would be slain like other homicides, and would not enter the cities of God's ministers. If you say they were sheep, they will not possibly be such sheep as can enjoy full liberty and feed without fear of wolves. And it will be plain to you that sheep indeed they are, but wandering sheep: that they are on the right hand, but do not stand there: they flee until the High Priest dies and descending into hell liberates their souls. The Gibeonites met the children of Israel, and although other nations were slaughtered, they were kept for hewers of wood and drawers of water. And of such value were they in God's eyes, that the family of Saul was destroyed for the wrong done to them. Where would you put them? Among the goats? But they were not slain, and they were avenged by the determination of God. Among the sheep? But Idly Scripture says they were not of the same merit as the Israelites. You see then that they do indeed stand on the right hand, but are of a far inferior grade. Jonathan came between David, the holy man, and Saul, the worst of kings, and we can neither place him among the kids because he was worthy of a prophet's love, nor amongst the rams test we make him equal to David, and particularly when we know that he was slain. He will, therefore, be among the sheep, but low down. And just as in the case of David and Jonathan, you will be bound to recognize differences between sheep and sheep.²⁷¹ "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more." Lo! more or less is committed to different servants, and according to the nature of the trust, as well as of the sin, is the number of stripes inflicted.

34. The whole account of the land of Judah and of the tribes is typical of the church in heaven. Let us read Joshua. the son of Nun, or the concluding portions of Ezekiel, and we shall see that the historical division of the land as related by the one finds a counterpart in the spiritual and heavenly promises of the other. What is the meaning of the seven and eight steps in the description of the temple? or again, what significance attaches to the fact that in the Psalter, after being taught the mystic alphabet by the²⁷² one hundred and eighteenth psalm we arrive by fifteen steps at the point where we can sing:²⁷³ "Behold, now bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord: ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God." Why did²⁷⁴ two tribes and a half dwell on the other side of Jordan, a district abounding in cattle, while the remaining nine tribes

and a half either drove out the old inhabitants from their possessions, or dwelt with them? Why did the tribe of Levi²⁷⁵ receive no portion in the land, but have the Lord for their portion? And how is it that of the priests and Levites, themselves, the²⁷⁶ high priest alone entered the Holy of Holies where were the cherubim and the mercy-seat? Why did the other priests wear²⁷⁷ linen raiment only, and not have their clothing of wrought gold, blue, scarlet, purple, and fine cloth? The priests and²⁷⁸ Levites of the lower order took care of the oxen and wains: those of the higher order carried the ark of the Lord on their shoulders. If you do away with the gradations of the tabernacle, the temple, the Church, if, to use a common military phrase, all upon the right hand are to be "up to the same standard," bishops are to no purpose, priests in vain, deacons useless. Why do virgins persevere? widows toil? Why do married women practise continence? Let us all sin, and when once we have repented, we shall be on the same footing as the apostles.

35. But now we have just sighted land: the foaming billows have been rolling mountain-high: our ship has been borne aloft, or has rushed headlong into the depths beneath: little by little the haven opens to the view of the weary and exhausted sailors. We have discussed the married, widows, and virgins. We have preferred virginity to widowhood, widow-hood to marriage. The passage of the apostle, in which he treats questions of this kind, has been expounded, and particular objections have been met. We also took a survey of secular literature, and inquired what was thought of virgins, and what of those who had one husband; and by way of contrast we pointed out the cares which sometimes attend wedlock. Then we passed to the second division, in which our opponent denies the possibility of sinning to those who have been baptized with complete faith. And we showed that God alone is faultless, and every creature is at fault, not because all have sinned, but because all may sin, and those who stand have cause to fear when they see the fall of men like themselves. In the third place we came to fasting, and inasmuch as our opponent's argument fell under two heads, and he appealed either to philosophy, or to Holy Scripture, we also furnished a several reply. In the fourth, that is the last section, the sheep and goats on the right hand and the left, the righteous and the wicked, were distributed into two classes, the intention being to show that there is no difference between one just man and another, or between one sinner and another. To prove the point Jovinianus had accumulated countless instances from Scripture which apparently favoured his view, and on this contention we rebutted both by arguments and illustrations from Scripture, and completely pulverized Zeno's old opinion no less with common sense than with the words of inspiration.

36. I must in conclusion say a few words to our modern Epicurus wantoning in his gardens with his favourites of both sexes. On your side are the fat and the sleek in their festal attire. If I may mock like Socrates, add if you please, all swine and dogs, and, since you like flesh so well, vultures too, eagles, hawks, and owls. We shall never be afraid of the host of²⁷⁹ Aristippus. If ever I see a fine fellow, or a man who is no stranger to the curling-irons, with his hair nicely done and his cheeks all aglow, he belongs to your herd, or rather grunts in concert with your pigs. To our flock belong the sad, the pale, the meanly clad, who, like strangers in this world, though their tongues are silent, yet speak by their dress and bearing.²⁸⁰ "Woe is me," say they, "that my so-journing is prolonged! that I dwell among the tents of Kedar!" that is to say, in the darkness of this world, for the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. Boast not of having many disciples. The Son of God taught in Judaea, and only twelve apostles followed Him.²⁸¹ "I have trodden the wine-press alone," He says, "and of the peoples there was no man with me." At the

passion He was left alone, and even Peter's fidelity to Him wavered: on the other hand all the people applauded the doctrine of the Pharisees, saying,²⁸² "Crucify him, crucify him. We have no king but Caesar," that is in effect, we follow vice, not virtue; Epicurns, not Christ; Jovinianus, not the Apostle Paul. If many assent to your views, that only indicates voluptuousness; for they do not so much approve your utterances, as favour their own vices. in our crowded thoroughfares a false prophet may be seen any day stick in hand belabouring the fools about him, and knocking out the teeth of those who offend him, and yet he never lacks constant followers. And do you regard it as a mark of great wisdom if you have a following of many pigs, whom you are feeding to make pork for hell? Since you published your views, and set the mark of your approval on baths in which the sexes bathe together, the impatience which once threw over burning lust the semblance of a robe of modesty has been laid bare and exposed. What was once hidden is now open to the gaze of all. You have revealed your disciples, such as they are, not made them. One result of your teaching is that sin is no longer even repented Of. Your virgins whom, with a depth of wisdom never found before in speech or writing, you have taught the apostle's maxim that it is better to marry than to burn, have turned secret adulterers into acknowledged husbands.²⁸³ It was not the apostle, the chosen vessel, who gave this advice; it was Virgil's widow:

284 "She calls it wedlock; thus she veils her fault."

37. About four hundred years have passed since the preaching of Christ flashed upon the world, and during that time in which His robe has been torn by countless heresies, almost the whole body of error has been derived from the Chaldaean, Syriac, and Greek languages. Basilides, the master of licentiousness and the grossest sensuality, after the lapse of so many years, and like a second²⁸⁵ Euphorbus, was changed by transmigration into Jovinian, so that the Latin tongue might have a heresy of its own. Was there no other province in the whole world to receive the gospel of pleasure, and into which the serpent might insinuate itself, except that which was founded by the teaching of Peter, upon the rock Christ? Idol temples had fallen before the standard of the Cross and the severity of the Gospel: now on the contrary lust and gluttony endeavour to overthrow the solid structure of the Cross. And so God says by Isaiah,²⁸⁶ "O my people, they which bless you cause you to err, and trouble the paths of your feet." Also by Jeremiah,²⁸⁷ "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and save every man his life, and believe not the false prophets which say, Peace, peace, and there is no peace;" who are always repeating,²⁸⁸ "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord." "Thy prophets have seen for thee false and foolish things; they have not laid bare thine iniquity that they might call thee to repentance: who devour God's people like bread: they have not called upon God." Jeremiah announced the captivity and was stoned by the people.²⁸⁹ Hananiah, the son of Azzur, broke the bars of wood for the present, but was preparing bars of iron for the future. False prophets always promise pleasant things, and please for a thee. Truth is bitter, and they who preach it are filled with bitterness. For with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth the Lord's passover is kept, and it is eaten with bitter herbs. Admirable are your utterances and worthy of the ears of the bride of Christ standing in the midst of her virgins, and widows, and celibates! (their very name is²⁹⁰ derived from the fact that they who abstain from intercourse are fit for heaven). This is what you say: "Fast seldom, marry often. You cannot do the work of marriage unless you take mead, and flesh, and solid food. For lust strength is required. Flesh is soon spent and enervated. You need not be afraid of fornication. He who has been once baptized into Christ cannot fall, for he has the consolation of

marriage to slake his lust. And if you do fall, repentance will restore you, and you who were hypocrites at baptism may have a firm faith in your repentance. Be not disturbed by the thought of a difference between the righteous and the penitent, and do not imagine that pardon even gives a lower place; rather believe that it takes away your crown. For there is one reward: he who stands on the right hand shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Through counsels such as these your swine-herds are richer than our shepherds, and the he-goats draw after them many of the other sex:²⁹¹ "They were as fed horses: they were mad after women": they no sooner see a woman than they neigh after her, and, shame to say! find scriptural authority for the consolation of their incontinence. But the very women, unhappy creatures! though they deserve no pity, who chant the words of their instructor (for what does God require of them but to become mothers?), have lost not only their chastity, but all sense of shame, and defend their licentious practices with an access of impudence. You have, moreover, in your army many subalterns, you have your guardsmen and your skirmishers at the outposts, the round-bellied, the well-dressed, the exquisites, and noisy orators, to defend you with tooth and nail. The noble make way for you, the wealthy print kisses on your face. For unless you had come, the drunkard and the glutton could not have entered paradise. All honor to your virtue, or rather to your vices! You have in your camp, even amazons with uncovered breasts, bare arms and knees, who challenge the men who come against them to a battle of lust. Your household is a large one, and so in your aviaries not only turtle-doves, but hoopoes are fed, which may wing their flight over the whole field of rank debauchery. Pull me to pieces and scatter me to the winds: tax me with what offences you please: accuse me of luxurious and delicate living: you would like me better if I were guilty, for I should belong to your herd.

38. But I will now address myself to you, great Rome, who with the confession of Christ have blotted out the blasphemy written on your forehead. Mighty city, mistress-city of the world, city of the Apostle's praises, shew the meaning of your name. Rome is either strength in Greek, or height in Hebrew. Lose not the excellence your name implies: let virtue lift you up on high, let not voluptuousness bring you low. By repentance. as the history of Nineveh proves, you may escape the curse wherewith the Saviour threatened you in the Apocalypse. Beware of the name of Jovinianus. It is derived from that of an idol.²⁹² The Capitol is in ruins: the temples of Jove with their ceremonies have perished. Why should his name and vices flourish now in the midst of you, when even in the time of Numa Pompilius, even under the sway of kings, your ancestors gave a heartier welcome to the self-restraint of Pythagoras than they did under the consuls to the debauchery of Epicurus?

1: This, according to i. 3, is "cannot be overthrown."

2: 1 John iii. 9, 1 John iii. 10.

3: 1 John v. 18.

4: 1 John v. 21.

5: 1 John i. 8 sq.

6: Is. lxxv. 5. Quoted from memory. The LXX and Vulg. have like A. V. and Rev., "Come not near me."

7: 1 John ii. 1.

8: 2 Cor. vi. 14, 2 Cor. vi. 15.

9: Ps. li. 12.

10: 1 John ii. 4.

11: 1 John xiv. 6.

12: James ii. 26.

13: Jerome is perhaps hinting at the opinions of Jovinianus, that there was no other distinction between men than the grand division into righteous and wicked, and drawing from this the inference that whoever had been truly baptized had nothing further to gain by progress in the Christian life.

14: 1 Peter ii. 22.

15: James iii. 2.

16: Job xiv. 4, Job xiv. 5, Sept.

17: Prov. xx. 9.

18: Ps. li. 5.

19: Job ix. 20, Job ix. 30. Sept.

20: 1 John ii. 1, 1 John ii. 2.

21: S. John xiii. 10.

22: S. Matt. xvi. 18.

23: S. Luke xxi. 31.

24: S. Matt. vi. 12.

25: 1 Cor. ix. 27.

26: 2 Cor. xii. 7.

27: 2 Cor. xi. 3.

28: 2 Cor. ii. 10, 2 Cor. ii. 11.

29: 1 Cor. x. 13.

30: 1 Cor. x. 12.

31: Gal. v. 7.

32: 1 Thess. ii. 18.

33: 1 Cor. vii. 5.

34: Gal. v. 16, Gal. v. 17.

35: Eph. vi. 12.

36: Heb. vi. 4 sq.

37: Various dates, ranging between a.d. 126 and a.d. 173, are assigned to the origin of Montanism. In addition to the tenet, that the church has no power to remit sin after baptism (though the power was claimed for the Montanistic prophets) and that some sins exclude for ever from the communion of the saints on earth, although the mercy of God may be extended to them hereafter, Montanus held second marriages to be no better than adultery, proscribed military service and secular life in general, denounced profane learning and amusements of every kind, advocated extreme simplicity of female dress, practised frequent and severe fasting, and inculcated the most rigorous asceticism. The sect produced a great effect on the church and lasted until the sixth century. As is well known, Tertullian in middle life lapsed into Montanism, and he was the most distinguished of its champions. Montanism has been described as an anticipation of the mediaeval system of Rome.

38: The founder of the schism which afterwards bore the name of Novatian was Novatus, a presbyter of Carthage who went to Rome (about a.d. 250) and there co-operated with Novatianus, one of the most distinguished of the clergy of that city. The Novatianists, whose doctrines were near akin in many respects to those of Montanists, assumed the name of Cathari, or Puritans.

39: Heb. vi. 9.

40: James i. 12 sq.

41: Ecclus. xxvii. 5.

42: Ecclus. ii. 1.

43: James i. 22 sq.

44: James ii. 10.

45: Rom. xi. 32.

46: 2 Pet. ii. 9.

47: 2 Pet. ii. 17, 2 Pet. ii. 18.

48: Prov. xvi. 5. Sept.

49: Apoc. ii. 2 sq.

50: Matt. xi. 13.

51: 1 Cor. x. ix.

52: Ps. xxvi. 1, Ps. xxvi. 2.

53: Ps. li. 1.

54: 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13.

55: 2 Kings xxiii. 29 sq. 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 sq.

56: Zech. iii. 1 sq.

57: Numb. xx. 13. Ps. cvi. 32.

58: Job v. 17.

59: Job vii. 1.

60: Jerome blends two passages, Is. xiv. 12 (in which the Sept. reading is "that sendest to;" R. V. "didst lay low") and Ezek. xxviii. 13 sq. In the passage from Isaiah the king of Babylon is compared to Lucifer, i.e. the shining one, the morning star, whose movements the Babylonians had been the first to record. See Sayce, *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments*, p. 178, and Cheyne's *Isaiah*. The subject of Ezekiel's prophecy is the Prince of Tyre.

61: Luke x. 18.

62: Job xl. 16, Job xl. 21. R. V. "He lieth under the lotus trees, in the covert of the reed and the fen."

63: Job xli. 34. Sept. R. V. "King over the sons of pride."

64: Job xli. 13 sq. R. V. for the latter part of the verse has "Round about his teeth is terror, his strong scales are his pride." Jerome's words are not found in the existing Septuagint.

65: The Septuagint omits much in this portion of the Book of Job.

66: xli. 27.

67: That is, deriving jumenta from juvo. The derivation, however, is from jungo.

68: Ps. viii. 5 sq.

69: The Italian beccafico.

70: 1 Rom. xiv. 20: 1 Tim. iv. 5.

71: 1 Tim. iv. 3.

72: Castum. Another reading is Cossum i.e. wood-worms, which were considered a delicacy in Pontus and Phrygia. The reading Castum is supported by Tert., *De Iejun.* cap. 16: *In nostris xerophagiis blasphemias ingerens. Casto Isidis et Cybeles eos adaequas.* Compare Arnob. Bk. V., and Jerome's Letter cvii. ad Laetam c. 10, and below c. 7.

73: See note on p. 383.

74: That is, of Side in Pamphylia. He lived in the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Plus, a.d. 117-161. Only two fragments remain of his Greek poem in forty-two books.

75: He appears to be Flavius the Grammarian to whom reference is made in the *Book on Illustrious Men*, chap. 80: *-Firmianus, quiet Lactantius, Arnobii discipulus, sub Diocletiano principe accitus cure Flavio grammatico, cujus de Medicinalibus versu compositi exstant libri, etc.*

76: Born a.d. 23. His *Historia Naturalis* embraces astronomy, meteorology, geography, mineralogy, zoölogy, and botany and comprises according to the author's own account 20,000

matters of importance drawn from 2,000 volumes.

77: A native of Cilicia, who probably lived in the second century of the Christian era. He was a Greek physician and wrote a treatise on *Materia Medica*, in 5 books, which is still extant.

78: 2 Cor. xii. 14.

79: 2 Cor. iv. 16.

80: Phil. i. 23.

81: Rom. xiii. 14.

82: Matt. x. 9, Matt. xix. 21: Mark vi. 8.

83: Matt. xix. 21.

84: Cor. xv. 85.

85: 1 Cor. vi. 13.

86: That is, the wood-worm just referred to.

87: Pannonia, of which Valens also was a native.

88: This name, which signifies dwellers in caves, was applied by Greek geographers to various peoples, but especially to the uncivilized inhabitants of the west coast of the Red Sea, along the shores of Upper Egypt and Aethiopia. The whole coast was called Troglodytice.

89: In 376 the Goths were driven out of their country by the Huns. They were allowed by Valens to cross the Danube, but war soon broke out and the emperor was defeated with great slaughter on Aug. 9, 378.

90: The Sarmatians dwelt on the N. E. of the Sea of Azov, E. of the river Don.

91: They were located in the S. E. of Germany.

92: The name given to the great confederacy of German peoples who in a.d. 409 traversed Germany and Gaul, and invaded Spain. In 429 they conquered all the Roman dominions in Africa, and in 455 they plundered Rome. Their kingdom was destroyed by Belisarius in 535.

93: A people of Central Asia. Cyrus the Great was slain in an expedition against them.

94: On the Oxus near its entrance into the Caspian Sea.

95: An agricultural people on the W. coast of Pontus.

96: Hyrcania was a province of the Persian Empire, on the S. and S. E. shores of the Caspian or Hyrcanian Sea. Jerome draws many of these details from the treatise of Porphyry *Peri apoxhj emyuxiwn*.

97: Antinous was drowned in the Nile. a.d. 122. The emperor's grief was so great that he enrolled his favourite amongst the gods, caused a temple to be erected to his honour at Mantines, and founded the city of Antinoopolis.

98: Ter. Eunuch. iv. 5, 6.

99: Jer. ix. 21.

100: An Egyptian perfuming powder.

101: Probably an ointment made from the grape of the wild vine.

102: The celebrated Cynic philosopher. He died at Corinth, at the age of nearly 90, b.c. 323.

103: Academia was a piece of land on the Cephissus about three-quarters of a mile from Athens, originally belonging to the hero Academus. Here was a Gymnasium with plane and olive plantations, etc. Plato had a piece of land in the neighbourhood; here he taught, and after him his followers, who were hence called Academici. Cicero called his villa Academia.

104: Flourished about b.c. 320. Though heir to a large fortune he renounced it all, and lived and died as a true Cynic. He was called the "door-opener," because it was his practice to visit every house at Athens and rebuke its inmates.

105: A common form of Gnostic error revived many centuries afterwards by the Anabaptists.

106: 1 Tim. v. 6.

107: See Cicero, Repub. Bk. III.

108: Sallust. In Cat. ch. 1.

109: Prov. xx. 1.

110: The most celebrated physician of antiquity. Born about b.c. 460, died about 357.

111: Born at Pergamum a.d. 130, died probably in the year 200. His writings are considered to have had a more extensive influence on medical science than even those of Hippocrates.

112: Fabricius was censor in b.c. 275, and devoted himself to repressing the prevalent taste for luxury. The story of his expelling from the Senate P. Cornelius Rufinus because he possessed ten pounds' weight of silver-plate is well-known.

113: Curius Dentatus, Consul b.c. 200 with P. Cornelius Rufinus to whom allusion has just been made, was no less distinguished for simplicity of life than was Fabricius. He was censor b.c. 272.

114: Ep. Lib. I. ep. 2.

115: Or, "an ante-room to the closet"- Meditatorium. Comp. Tertullian, Treatise on Fasting, ch. 6.

116: The Peripatetic philosopher, geographer, and historian, a disciple of Aristotle and the friend of Theophrastus.

117: Chaeremon was chief librarian of the Alexandrian library. He afterwards became one of Nero's tutors.

118: Wars, Book II., ch. viii. 2 sq.; Antiquities, Bk. xviii I. 2 sq. Josephus nowhere says that the Essenes abstained from flesh and wine, or fasted daily. Philo commends them for so doing. Jerome here, as above, borrows from Porphyry. The "Wars of the Jews or History of the

Destruction of Jerusalem," are here called the "History of the Jewish Captivity."

119: Philo the Jew. His exact date cannot be given; but he was advanced in years when he went to Rome (a.d. 40) on his famous embassy in behalf of his countrymen.

120: Neanthes lived about b.c. 241. He was a voluminous writer, chiefly on historical subjects.

121: There were many physicians of this name.

122: The sun-god of the Persians.

123: Supposed to be the same as the Bardesanes born at Edessa in Mesopotamia, who flourished in the latter half of the second century. Jerome again refers to him in the book on Illustrious Men, c. 33.

124: Xenocrates was born b.c. 396, died b.c. 314.

125: Triptolemus was the legendary inventor of the plough and of agriculture.

126: Poems ascribed to the mythical Orpheus are quoted by Plato. The extant poems which bear his name are forgeries of Christian grammarians and philosophers of the Alexandrine school; but some fragments of the old Orphic poetry are said to be remaining.

127: Antisthenes was the founder of the Cynic philosophy. He was a devoted disciple of Socrates and flourished about b.c. 366.

128: The distinguished Peripatetic philosopher and historian. He lived, probably, about the time of Ptolemy Philopator (b.c. 222-205).

129: Gen. vi. 3, Gen. vi. 5.

130: Gen. viii. 21: Gen. ix. 3.

131: Ex. xvi. 3.

132: Numb. xi. 4-6.

133: Deut. xxxii. 15. "Beloved" (dilectus). Correctly Jeshurun, that is, the Upright, a name of Israel.

134: Deut. viii. 12-14.

135: The curious custom of representing Moses with horns arose from a mistake in the Vulgate rendering. The Hebrew verb lwq@ 136: Luc. ix. 31.

137: Ex. xvii. 8.

138: Josh. x. 13.

139: 1 Sam. xiv. 24. Heb. "entered into the wood." The English version follows the Hebrew. The Sept. hrista (Jerome's prandebat) is perhaps only a repetition of the preceding thought. Another rendering inserts the negative, ouk hrista .

140: 1 Sam. xiv. 24.

141: 1 Kings xix. 8-11.

- 142: 1 Sam. vii. 7.
- 143: 2 Kings xviii.
- 144: Gen. xviii. 23 sq.
- 145: 1 Kings xxi. 27-29.
- 146: 1 Sam. i. 15, 1 Sam. i. 17.
- 147: Dan. i and Dan. ii.
- 148: Dan. ix. 23. Heb. A man of desires. A. V. greatly beloved.
- 149: The story is in the apocryphal part of the book of Daniel.
- 150: Ps. cii. 9.
- 151: Ps. cix. 24.
- 152: 2 Sam. xii. 13.
- 153: Lev. x. 9.
- 154: Amos ii. 12.
- 155: Jer. xxxv. 18.
- 156: S. Luke ii. 36.
- 157: S. Jerome is in accord with the Vulgate, Peshito, and certain manuscripts, but the R. V. omits S. Matt. xvii. 21 (Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting) and in S. Mark ix. 29 omits the words respecting fasting. S. Luke does not refer to our Lord's supposed remark.
- 158: Acts x. 4.
- 159: 2 Cor. xi. 27.
- 160: 1 Tim. v. 23.
- 161: 1 Tim. iv. 3.
- 162: Prov. xvi. 26. Sept.
- 163: S. Matt. xi. 12.
- 164: Rom. xiv. 3.
- 165: 1 Rom. xiv. 14 sq.
- 166: Rom. xiv. 2.
- 167: Rom. xiv. 5 sq.
- 168: S. Matt. v. 6.
- 169: S. John iv. 32.

170: S. Matt. v. 34. (Rather, not to be anxious about it.) 171: S. Luke xxiv. 42: S. John xxi. 13.

172: S. Luke xv. 19-31.

173: S. Matt. xvi. 17, Matt. xvi. 18.

174: See above.

175: S. Mark v. 43: S. Luke viii. 55. Our Lord is not related to have given the command in the case of the son of the widow of Nain, or in that of Lazarus.

176: S. John xii. 2.

177: Acts x. 10. In our version "the housetop."

178: S. John iv. 6.

179: Isa. lviii. 5 sq.

180: xvi. 29.

181: Numb. xi. 34. Tertullian also speaks of the graves remaining.

182: 1 Kings xiii. 24.

183: Joel i. 14: Joel ii. 15. Jerome agrees with the Sept. Qerapeia Qerapeia 184: S. Matt. xxv. 34.

185: S. Matt. xxv. 41.

186: S. John viii. 44.

187: S. Matt. xix. 29: S. Mark x. 29, Mark x. 30: S. Luke xviii. 29, Luke xviii. 30.

188: S. John vi. 56.

189: S. John xiv. 23.

190: S. John xiv. 2.

191: 1 Cor. iii. 16: 1 Cor. vi. 19.

192: S. John xvii. 20-23.

193: In Cyprus, where Zeno the founder of the Stoic school was born.

194: i.e., Jovinianus. Jerome for the moment addresses the reader.

195: Persius I. 128, Conington's translation.

196: Ezek. xxxiv. 17, Ezek. xxxiv. 20, Ezek. xxxiv. 21.

197: Ezek. xxxiv. 31.

198: Rom. xii. 3 sq.

199: Rom. xiv. 5.

200: 1 Cor. iii. 6 sq.
201: 1 Cor. iii. 10 sq.
202: 1 Cor. iv. 1, 1 Cor. iv. 2.
203: 1 Cor. ix. 13 sq.
204: 1 Cor. xii. 4.
205: 1 Cor. xii. 12.
206: 1 Cor. xii. 28 sq.
207: 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 1 Cor. xiii. 10.
208: 1 Cor. xiii. 18: 1 Cor. xiv. 1.
209: 1 Cor. xiv. 5.
210: 1 Cor. xiv. 18.
211: 1 Cor. xv. 9, 1 Cor. xv. 10.
212: 1 Cor. xv. 22.
213: 1 Cor. xv. 39.
214: Job ix. 9: Job xxxviii. 32.
215: 2 Cor. v. 10.
216: 2 Cor. ix. 6.
217: Eph. iii. 10.
218: Eph. iv. 7.
219: Ps. lxxiii. 17.
220: See Acts xxvii. 23 and the context.
221: Gen. xix. 18-21.
222: 1 Sam. xxx. 1 sq.
223: S. Luke xiii. 4.
224: 1 Cor. xi. 27.
225: Mal. iv. 2.
226: S. Matt. xxv. 13.
227: S. John xix. 6.
228: Wisd. vi. 7.

229: Ex. xxi. 2.

230: Lev. xxv. 13.

231: S. Matt. xix. 29: S. Mark x. 30: S. Luke xviii. 30. In S. Matthew some authorities agree with S. Luke in reading " manifold. "

232: Matt. xi. 11.

233: S. Luke xvii. 5.

234: Matt. xiv. 31.

235: Jer. xxxi. 31.

236: Jer. xxxi. 33, Jer. xxxi. 34.

237: S. Matt. v. 19.

238: S. Luke xiv. 9.

239: S. John xiv. 2, John xiv. 3.

240: S. Matt. xx. 23.

241: S. John xiv. 3.

242: Ps. lxxiii. 26.

243: Ez. xliv. 10.

244: 1 Cor. vi. 19.

245: Correctly, a portion of two, i.e., the portion of a first-born. Deut. xxi. 17.

246: S. Luke vii., S. Matt. xxvi., S. Mark xiv., S. John xii.

247: S. John xvii. 20, John xvii. 21.

248: 2 Pet. i. 4.

249: S. John xvii. 23.

250: S. John i. 12, John i. 13.

251: S. John vi. 57 sq.

252: 1 John iv. 13, 1 John iv. 15.

253: Gal. iv. 19.

254: 1 Cor. xii. 22-24.

255: S. Luke xi. 34.

256: 1 John v. 16.

257: Jer. vii. 16.

258: Rom. v. 14.

259: Wisd. i. 11.

260: Ps. cxvi. 11. Rom. iii. 4.

261: Ps. li. 4.

262: Ezek. xvi. 62, Ezek. xvi. 63.

263: Ezek. xxxvi. 31, Ezek. xxxvi. 32.

264: Letter XXI.

265: S. Matt. xx. 26.

266: S. Luke vii. 47.

267: S. Matt. xxv. 15 sq.

268: Phil. iii. 13.

269: Josh. ix. 27.

270: 2 Sam. xxi. 1.

271: S. Luke xii. 47, Luke xii. 48.

272: Ps. cxix. in our arrangement of the Psalter. The psalm is divided into twenty-two portions, which begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The following fifteen psalms are called in our Authorized Version, Songs of Degrees (Vulgate, graduum, steps). For the origin of the title, Wordsworth, or Neal and Littledale on Ps. cxx. may be consulted.

273: Ps. cxxxiv. 1.

274: Numb. xxxiv. 15; Josh. xiv. 3.

275: Numb. xviii. 20.

276: Lev. xvi. 2; Heb. ix. 7.

277: Ex. xxviii. etc.

278: Numb. vii. 5.

279: Aristippus though the disciple of Socrates, taught that pleasure was the highest good.

280: Ps. cxx. 5.

281: Is. lxiii. 3.

282: S. John xix. 6, John xix. 15.

283: Jovinianus's doctrine is said to have influenced some who had taken a vow of virginity, to marry.

284: Virgil Aen. iv. 172.

285: Pythagoras asserted that he had once been the Trojan Euphorbus.

286: Is. iii. 16.

287: Jer. li. 6; Jer. vi. 14.

288: Jer. vii. 4; Ps. xiv. 4, Ps. liii. 4.

289: Jer. xxviii. 13.

290: That is, coelebs from coelum.

291: Jer. v. 8.

292: That is, Jove.

Against Vigilantius

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Introduction.

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Full details respecting Vigilantius, against whom this treatise, the result of a single night's labour, is directed, may be found in a work on "Vigilantius and His Times," published in 1844 by Dr. Gilly, canon of Durham. It will perhaps, however, assist the reader if we briefly remark that he was born about 370, at Calagurris, near Convenae (Comminges), which was a station on the Roman road from Aquitaine to Spain. His father was probably the keeper of the inn, and Vigilantius appears to have been brought up to his father's business. He was of a studious character, and Sulpicius Severus, the ecclesiastical historian, who had estates in those parts, took him into his service, and, possibly, made him manager of his estates. Having been ordained he was introduced to Jerome (then living at Bethlehem, in 395) through Paulinus of Nola, who was the friend of Sulpicius Severus. After staying with Jerome for a considerable time he begged to be dismissed, and left in great haste without giving any reason. Returning to Gaul, he settled in his native country. Jerome hearing that he was spreading reports of him as favouring the views of Origen, and in other ways defaming him and his friends, wrote him a sharp letter of rebuke (Letter LXI.). The work of Vigilantius which drew from Jerome the following treatise was written in the year a.d. 406; not "hastily, under provocation such as he may have felt in leaving Bethlehem," but after the lapse of six or seven years. The points against which he argued as being superstitious are: (1) the reverence paid to the relics of holy men by carrying them round the church in costly vessels or silken wrappings to be kissed, and the prayers offered to the dead; (2) the late watchings at the basilicas of the martyrs, with their attendant scandals, the burning of numerous tapers, alleged miracles, etc.; (3) the sending of alms to Jerusalem, which, Vigilantius urged, had better be spent among the poor in each separate diocese, and the monkish vow of poverty; (4) the exaggerated estimate of virginity. The bishop of the diocese, Exsuperius of Toulouse, was strongly in favour of the views of Vigilantius, and they began to spread widely. Complaints having reached Jerome through the presbyter Riparius, he at once expressed his indignation, and offered to answer in detail if the work of Vigilantius were sent to him. In 406 he received it through Sisinnius, who was bearing alms to the East. It has been truly said that this treatise has less of reason and more of abuse than any other which Jerome wrote. But in spite of this the author was followed by the chief ecclesiastics of the day, and the practices impugned by Vigilantius prevailed almost unchecked till the sixteenth century.

1. The world has given birth to many monsters; in1 Isaiah we read of centaurs and sirens, screech-owls and pelicans. Job, in mystic language, describes Leviathan and Behemoth; Cerberus and the birds of Stympalus, the Erymanthian boar and the Nemean lion, the Chimaera

and the many-headed Hydra, are told of in poetic fables. Virgil describes Cacus. Spain has produced Geryon, with his three bodies. Gaul alone has had no monsters, but has ever been rich in men of courage and great eloquence. All at once Vigilantius, or, more correctly, Dormitantius, has arisen, animated by an unclean spirit, to fight against the Spirit of Christ. and to deny that religious reverence is to be paid to the tombs of the martyrs. Vigils, he says, are to be condemned; Alleluia must never be sung except at Easter; continence is a heresy; chastity a hot-bed of lust. And as Euphorbus is said to have been born again in the person of Pythagoras, so in this fellow the corrupt mind of Jovinianus has arisen; so that in him, no less than in his predecessor, we are bound to meet the snares of the devil. The words may be justly applied to him:² "Seed of evil-doers, prepare thy children for the slaughter because of the sins of thy father." Jovinianus, condemned by the authority of the Church of Rome, amidst pheasants and swine's flesh, breathed out, or rather belched out his spirit. And now this tavern-keeper of Calagurris, who, according to the name of his³ native village is a Quintilian, only dumb instead of eloquent, is⁴ mixing water with the wine. According to the trick which he knows of old, he is trying to blend his perfidious poison with the Catholic faith; he assails virginity and hates chastity; he revels with worldlings and declaims against the fasts of the saints; he plays the philosopher over his cups, and soothes himself with the sweet strains of psalmody, while he smacks his lips over his cheese-cakes; nor could he deign to listen to the songs of David and Jeduthun, and Asaph and the sons of Core, except at the banqueting table. This I have poured forth with more grief than amusement, for I cannot restrain myself and turn a deaf ear to the wrongs inflicted on apostles and martyrs.

2. Shameful to relate, there are bishops who are said to be associated with him in his wickedness-if at least they are to be called bishops-who ordain no deacons but such as have been previously married; who credit no celibate with chastity-nay, rather, who show clearly what measure of holiness of life they can claim by indulging in evil suspicions of all men, and, unless the candidates for ordination appear before them with pregnant wives, and infants wailing in the arms of their mothers, will not administer to them Christ's ordinance. What are the Churches of the East to do? What is to become of the Egyptian Churches and those belonging to the Apostolic Seat, which accept for the ministry only men who are virgins, or those who practice continency, or, if married, abandon their conjugal rights? Such is the teaching of Dormitantius, who throws the reins upon the neck of lust, and by his encouragement doubles the natural heat of the flesh, which in youth is mostly at boiling point, or rather slakes it by intercourse with women; so that there is nothing to separate us from swine, nothing wherein we differ from the brute creation, or from horses, respecting which it is written:⁵ "They were toward women like raging horses; everyone neighed after his neighbour's wife." This is that which the Holy Spirit says by the mouth of David:⁶ "Be ye not like horse and mule which have no understanding." And again respecting Dormitantius and his friends:⁷ "Bind the jaws of them who draw not near unto thee with bit and bridle."

3. But it is now thee for us to adduce his own words and answer him in detail. For, possibly, in his malice, he may choose once more to misrepresent me, and say that I have trumped up a case for the sake of showing off my rhetorical and declamatory powers in combating it, like the letter⁸ which I wrote to Gaul, relating to a mother and daughter who were at variance. This little treatise, which I now dictate, is due to the reverend presbyters Riparius and Desiderius, who write that their parishes have been defiled by being in his neighbourhood, and have sent me, by our brother Sisinnius, the books which he vomited forth in a drunken fit. They also declare that some persons

are found who, from their inclination to his vices, assent to his blasphemies. He is a barbarian both in speech and knowledge. His style is rude. He cannot defend even the truth; but, for the sake of laymen, and poor women, laden with sins, ever learning and never coming to a knowledge of the truth, I will spend upon his melancholy trifles a single night's labour, otherwise I shall seem to have treated with contempt the letters of the reverend persons who have entreated me to undertake the task.

4. He certainly well represents his race. Sprung from a set of brigands and persons collected together from all quarters (I mean those whom Cn. Pompey, after the conquest of Spain, when he was hastening to return for his triumph, brought down from the Pyrenees and gathered together into one town, whence the name of the city Convenae⁹), he has carried on their brigand practices by his attack upon the Church of God. Like his ancestors the Vectones, the Arrabaci, and the Celtiberians, he makes his raids upon the churches of Gaul, not carrying the standard of the cross, but, on the contrary, the ensign of the devil. Pompey did just the same in the East. After overcoming the Cilician and Isaurian pirates and brigands, he founded a city, bearing his own name, between Cilicia and Isauria. That city, however, to this day, observes the ordinances of its ancestors, and no Dormitanti¹⁰ has arisen in it; but Gaul supports a native foe, and sees seated in the Church a man who has lost his head and who ought to be put in the strait-jacket which Hippocrates recommended. Among other blasphemies, he may be heard to say, "What need is there for you not only to pay such honour, not to say adoration, to the thing, whatever it may be, which you carry about in a little vessel and worship?" And again, in the same book, "Why do you kiss and adore a bit of powder wrapped up in a cloth?" And again, in the same book, "Under the cloak of religion we see what is all but a heathen ceremony introduced into the churches: while the sun is still shining, heaps of tapers are lighted, and everywhere a paltry bit of powder, wrapped up in a costly cloth, is kissed and worshipped. Great honour do men of this sort pay to the blessed martyrs, who, they think, are to be made glorious by tumpety tapers, when the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne, with all the brightness of His majesty, gives them light?"

5. Madman, who in the world ever adored the martyrs? who ever thought man was God? Did not¹⁰ Paul and Barnabas, when the people of Lycaonia thought them to be Jupiter and Mercury, and would have offered sacrifices to them, rend their clothes and declare they were men? Not that they were not better than Jupiter and Mercury, who were but men long ago dead, but because, under the mistaken ideas of the Gentiles, the honour due to God was being paid to them. And we read the same respecting Peter, who, when Cornelius wished to adore him, raised him by the hand, and said,¹¹ "Stand up, for I also am a man." And have you the audacity to speak of "the mysterious something or other which you carry about in a little vessel and worship?" I want to know what it is that you call "something or other." Tell us more clearly (that there may be no restraint on your blasphemy) what you mean by the phrase "a bit of powder wrapped up in a costly cloth in a tiny vessel." It is nothing less than the relics of the martyrs which he is vexed to see covered with a costly veil, and not bound up with rags or hair-cloth, or thrown on the midden, so that Vigilanti¹² alone in his drunken slumber may be worshipped. Are we, therefore guilty of sacrilege when we enter the basilicas of the Apostles? Was the Emperor Constantius I. guilty of sacrilege when he transferred the sacred relics of Andrew, Luke, and Timothy to Constantinople? In their presence the demons cry out, and the devils who dwell in Vigilanti¹² confess that they feel the influence of the saints. And at the present day is the Emperor Arcadius guilty of sacrilege, who

after so long a time has conveyed the bones of the blessed Samuel from Judea to Thrace? Are all the bishops to be considered not only sacrilegious, but silly into the bargain, because they carried that most worthless thing, dust and ashes, wrapped in silk in golden vessel? Are the people of all the Churches fools, because they went to meet the sacred relics, and welcomed them with as much joy as if they beheld a living prophet in the midst of them, so that there was one great swarm of people from Palestine to Chalcedon with one voice re-echoing the praises of Christ? They were forsooth, adoring Samuel and not Christ, whose Levite and prophet Samuel was. You show mistrust because you think only of the dead body, and therefore blaspheme. Read the Gospel-12 "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob: He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." If then they are alive, they are not, to use your expression, kept in honourable confinement.

6. For you say that the souls of Apostles and martyrs have their abode either in the bosom of Abraham, or in the place of refreshment, or under the altar of God, and that they cannot leave their own tombs, and be present there they will. They are, it seems, of senatorial rank. and are not subjected to the worst kind of prison and the society of murderers, but are kept apart in liberal and honourable custody in the isles of the blessed and the Elysian fields. Will you lay down the law for God? Will you put the Apostles into chains? So that to the day of judgment they are to be kept in confinement, and are not with their Lord, although it is written concerning them,¹³ "They follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth." If the Lamb is present everywhere, the same must be believed respecting those who are with the Lamb. And while the devil and the demons wander through the whole world, and with only too great speed present themselves everywhere; are martyrs, after the shedding of their blood, to be kept out of sight shut up in a¹⁴ coffin, from whence they cannot escape? You say, in your pamphlet, that so long as we are alive we can pray for one another; but once we die, the prayer of no person for another can be heard, and all the more because the martyrs, though they¹⁵ cry for the avenging of their blood, have never been able to obtain their request. If Apostles and martyrs while still in the body can pray for others, when they ought still to be anxious for themselves, how much more must they do so when once they have won their crowns, overcome, and triumphed? A single man, Moses, oft¹⁶ wins pardon from God for six hundred thousand armed men; and¹⁷ Stephen, the follower of his Lord and the first Christian martyr, entreates pardon for his persecutors; and when once they have entered on their life with Christ, shall they have less power than before? The Apostle Paul¹⁸ says that two hundred and seventy-six souls were given to him in the ship; and when, after his dissolution, he has begun to be with Christ, must he shut his mouth, and be unable to say a word for those who throughout the whole world have believed in his Gospel? Shall Vigilantius the live dog be better than Paul the dead lion? I should be right in saying so after¹⁹ Ecclesiastes, if I admitted that Paul is dead in spirit. The truth is that the saints are not called dead, but are said to be asleep. Wherefore²⁰ Lazarus, who was about to rise again, is said to have slept. And the Apostle²¹ forbids the Thessalonians to be sorry for those who were asleep. As for you, when wide awake you are asleep, and asleep when you write, and you bring before me an apocryphal book which, under the name of Esdras, is read by you and those of your feather, and in this book it is²² written that after death no one dares pray for others. I have never read the book: for what need is there to take up what the Church does not receive? It can hardly be your intention to confront me with Balsamus, and Barbelus, and the Thesaurus of Manichaeus, and the ludicrous name of Leusiboras; though possibly because you live at the foot of the Pyrenees, and border on Iberia, you follow the

incredible marvels of the ancient heretic²³ Basilides and his so-called knowledge, which is mere ignorance, and set forth what is condemned by the authority of the whole world. I say this because in your short treatise you quote Solomon as if he were on your side, though Solomon never wrote the words in question at all; so that, as you have a second Esdras you may have a second Solomon. And, if you like, you may read the imaginary revelations of all the patriarchs and prophets, and, when you have learned them, you may sing them among the women in their weaving-shops, or rattler order them to be read in your taverns, the more easily by these melancholy ditties to stimulate the ignorant mob to replenish their cups.

7. As to the question of tapers, however, we do not, as you in vain misrepresent us, light them in the daytime, but by their solace we would cheer the darkness of the night, and watch for the dawn, lest we should be blind like you and sleep in darkness. And if some persons, being ignorant and simple minded laymen, or, at all events, religious women-of whom we can truly sa,²⁴ "I allow that they hive a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge"-adopt the practice in honour of the martyrs, what harm is thereby done to you? Once upon a thee even the Apostles²⁵ pleaded that the ointment was wasted, but they were rebuked by the voice of the Lord. Christ did not need the ointment, nor do martyrs need the light of tapers; and yet that woman poured out the ointment in honour of Christ, and her heart's devotion was accepted. All those who light these tapers have their reward according to their faith, as the Apostle says:²⁶ "Let every one abound in his own meaning." Do you call men of this sort idolaters? I do not deny, that all of us who believe in Christ have passed from the error of idolatry. For we are not born Christians, but become Christians by being born again. And because we formerly worshipped idols, does it follow that we ought not now to worship God lest we seem to pay like honour to Him and to idols? In the one case respect was paid to idols, and therefore the ceremony is to be abhorred; in the other the martyrs are venerated, and the same ceremony is therefore to be allowed. Throughout the whole Eastern Church, even when there are no relics of the martyrs, whenever the Gospel is to be read the candles are lighted, although the dawn may be reddening the sky, not of course to scatter the darkness, but by way of evidencing our joy.²⁷ And accordingly the virgins in the Gospel always have their lamps lighted. And the Apostles are²⁸ told to have their loins girded, and their lamps burning in their hands. And of John Baptist we read,²⁹ "He was the lamp that burneth and shineth"; so that, under the figure of corporeal light, that light is represented of which we read in the Psalter,³⁰ "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, O Lord, and a light unto my paths."

8. Does the bishop of Rome do wrong when he offers sacrifices to the Lord over the venerable bones of the dead men Peter and Paul, as we should say, but according to you, over a worthless bit of dust, and judges their tombs worthy to be Christ's altars? And not only is the bishop of one city in error, but the bishops of the whole world, who, despite the tavern-keeper Vigilantius, enter the basilicas of the dead, in which "a worthless bit of dust and ashes lies wrapped up in a cloth," defiled and defiling all else. Thus, according to you, the sacred buildings are like the sepulchres of the Pharisees, whitened without, while within they have filthy remains, and are full of foul smells and uncleanness. And then he dares to expectorate his filth upon the subject and to say: "Is it the case that the souls of the martyrs love their ashes, and hover round them, and are always present, lest haply if any one come to pray and they were absent, they could not hear?" Oh, monster, who ought to be banished to the ends of the earth! do you laugh at the relics of the martyrs, and in company with Eunomius, the father of this heresy, slander the Churches of Christ? Are you not

afraid of being in such company, and of speaking against us the same things which he utters against the Church? For all his followers refuse to enter the basilicas of Apostles and martyrs, so that, forsooth, they may worship the dead Eunomius, whose books they consider are of more authority than the Gospels; and they believe that the light of truth was in him just as other heretics maintain that the Paraclete came into Montanus, and say that Manichaeus himself was the Paraclete. You cannot find an occasion of boasting even in supposing that you are the inventor of a new kind of wickedness, for your heresy long ago broke out against the Church. It found, however, an opponent in Tertullian, a very learned man, who wrote a famous treatise which he called most correctly *Scorpiacum*,³¹ because, as the scorpion bends itself like a bow to inflict its wound. so what was formerly called the heresy of Cain pours poison into the body of the Church; it has slept or rather been buried for a long time, but has been now awakened by Dormitanti. I am surprised you do not tell us that there must upon no account be martyrdoms, inasmuch as God, who does not ask for the blood of goats and bulls, much less requires the blood of men. This is what you say, or rather, even if you do not say it, you are taken as meaning to assert it. For in maintaining that the relics of the martyrs are to be trodden under foot, you forbid the shedding of their blood as being worthy of no honour.

9. Respecting vigils and the frequent keeping of night-watches in the basilicas of the martyrs, I have given a brief reply in another letter³² which, about two years ago, I wrote to the reverend presbyter Riparius. You argue that they ought to be abjured, lest we seem to be often keeping Easter, and appear not to observe the customary yearly vigils. If so, then sacrifices should not be offered to Christ on the Lord's day lest we frequently keep the Easter of our Lord's Resurrection, and introduce the custom of having many Easters instead of one. We must not, however, impute to pious men the faults and errors of youths and worthless women such as are often detected at night. It is true that, even at the Easter vigils, something of the kind usually comes to light; but the faults of a few form no argument against religion in general, and such persons, without keeping vigil, can go wrong either in their own houses or in those of other people. The treachery of Judas did not annul the loyalty of the Apostles. And if others keep vigil badly, our vigils are not thereby to be stopped; nay, rather let those who sleep to gratify their lust be compelled to watch that they may preserve their chastity. For if a thing once done be good, it cannot be bad if often done; and if there is some fault to be avoided, the blame lies not in its being done often, but in its being done at all. And so we should not watch at Easter-tide for fear that adulterers may satisfy their long pent-up desires, or that the wife may find an opportunity for sinning without having the key turned against her by her husband. The occasions which seldom recur are those which are most eagerly longed for.

10. I cannot traverse all the topics embraced in the letters of the reverend presbyters; I will adduce a few points from the tracts of Vigilantius. He argues against the signs and miracles which are wrought in the basilicas of the martyrs, and says that they are of service to the unbelieving, not to believers, as though the question now were for whose advantage they occur, not by what power. Granted that signs belong to the faithless, who, because they would not obey the word and doctrine, are brought to believe by means of signs. Even our Lord wrought signs for the unbelieving, and yet our Lord's signs are not on that account to be impugned, because those people were faithless, but must be worthy of greater admiration because they were so powerful that they subdued even the hardest hearts, and compelled men to believe. And so I will not have

you tell me that signs are for the unbelieving; but answer my question-how is it that poor worthless dust and ashes are associated with this wondrous power of signs and miracles? I see, I see, most unfortunate of mortals, why you are so sad and what causes your fear. That unclean spirit who forces you to write these things has often been tortured by this worthless dust, aye, and is being tortured at this moment, and though in your case he conceals his wounds, in others he makes confession. You will hardly follow the heathen and impious Porphyry and Eunomius, and pretend that these are the tricks of the demons, and that they do not really cry out, but feign their torments. Let me give you my advice go to the basilicas of the martyrs, and some day you will be cleansed; you will find there many in like case with yourself, and will be set on fire, not by the martyrs' tapers which offend you, but by invisible flames; and you will then confess what you now deny, and will freely proclaim your name-that you who speak in the person of Vigilantius are really either Mercury, for greedy of gain was he; or Nocturnus, who, according to Plautus's "Amphitryon," slept while Jupiter, two nights together, had his adulterous connection with Alcmena, and thus begat the mighty Hercules; or at all events Father Bacchus, of drunken fame, with the tankard hanging from his shoulder, with his ever ruby face, foaming lips, and unbridled brawling.

11. Once, when a sudden earthquake in this province in the middle of the night awoke us all out of our sleep, you, the most prudent and the wisest of men, began to pray without putting your clothes on, and recalled to our minds the story of Adam and Eve in Paradise; they, indeed, when their eyes were opened were ashamed, for they saw that they were naked, and covered their shame with the leaves of trees; but you, who were stripped Mike of your shirt and of your faith, in the sudden terror which overwhelmed you, and with the fumes of your last night's booze still hanging about you, showed your wisdom by exposing your nakedness in only too evident a manner to the eyes of the brethren. Such are the adversaries of the Church; these are the leaders who fight against the blood of the martyrs; here is a specimen of the orators who thunder against the Apostles, or, rather, such are the mad dogs which bark at the disciples of Christ.

12. I confess my own fear, for possibly it may be thought to spring from superstition. When I have been angry, or have had evil thoughts in my mind, or some phantom of the night has beguiled me, I do not dare to enter the basilicas of the martyrs, I shudder all over in body and soul. You may smile, perhaps, and deride this as on a level with the wild fancies of weak women. If it be so, I am not ashamed of having a faith like that of those who were the first to see the risen Lord; who were sent to the Apostles; who, in the person of the mother of our Lord and Saviour, were commended to the holy Apostles. Belch out your shame, if you will, with men of the world, I will fast with women; yea, with religious men whose looks witness to their chastity, and who, with the cheek pale from prolonged abstinence, show forth the chastity of Christ.

13. Something, also, appears to be troubling you. You are afraid that, if continence, sobriety, and fasting strike root among the people of Gaul, your taverns will not pay, and you will be unable to keep up through the night your diabolical vigils and drunken revels. Moreover, I have learnt from those same letters that, in defiance of the authority of Paul, nay, rather of Peter, John, and James, who gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, and commanded them to remember the poor, you forbid any pecuniary relief to be sent to Jerusalem for the benefit of the saints. Now, if I reply to this, you will immediately give tongue and cry out that I am pleading my own cause. You, forsooth, were so generous to the whole community that if you had not come to Jerusalem, and lavished your own money or that of your patrons, we should all be on the verge of starvation. I

say what the blessed Apostle Paul says in nearly all his Epistles; and he makes it a rule for the Churches of the Gentiles that, on the first day of the week, that is, on the Lord's day, contributions should be made by every one which should be sent up to Jerusalem for the relief of the saints, and that either by his own disciples, or by those whom they should themselves approve; and if it were thought fit, he would himself either send, or take what was collected. Also in the Acts of the Apostles, when speaking to the governor Felix, he says,³³ "After many years I went up to Jerusalem to bring alms to my nation and offerings, and to perform my vows, amidst which they found me purified in the temple." Might he not have distributed in some other part of the world, and in the infant Churches which he was training in his own faith, the gifts he had received from others? But he longed to give to the poor of the holy places who, abandoning their own little possessions for the sake of Christ, turned with their whole heart to the service of the Lord. It would take too long now if I purposed to repeat all the passages from the whole range of his Epistles in which he advocates and urges with all his heart that money be sent to Jerusalem and to the holy places for the faithful; not to gratify avarice, but to give relief; not to accumulate wealth, but to support the weakness of the poor body, and to stave off cold and hunger. And this custom continues in Judea to the present day, not only among us, but also among the Hebrews, so that they who³⁴ meditate in the law of the Lord, day and night, and have³⁵ no father upon earth except the Lord alone, may be cherished by the aid of the synagogues and of the whole world; that there may be³⁶ equality-not that some may be refreshed while others are in distress, but that the abundance of some may support the need of others.

14. You will reply that every one can do this in his own country, and that there will never be wanting poor who ought to be supported with the resources of the Church. And we do not deny that doles should be distributed to all poor people, even to Jews and Samaritans, if the means will allow. But the Apostle teaches that alms should be given to all, indeed,³⁷ especially, however, to those who are of the household of faith. And respecting these the Saviour said in the Gospel,³⁸ "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, who may receive you into everlasting habitations." What! Can those poor creatures, with their rags and filth, lorded over, as they are, by raging lust, can they who own nothing, now or hereafter, have eternal habitations? No doubt it is not the poor simply, but the poor in spirit, who are called blessed; those of whom it is written,³⁹ "Blessed is he who gives his mind to the poor and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the evil day." But the fact is, in supporting the poor of the common people, what is needed is not mind, but money. In the case of the saintly poor the mind has blessed exercises, since you give to one who receives with a blush, and when he has received is grieved, that while sowing spiritual things he must reap your carnal things. As for his argument that they who keep what they have, and distribute among the poor, little by little, the increase of their property, act more wisely than they who sell their possessions, and once for all give all away, not I but the Lord shall make answer:⁴⁰ "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and come, follow Me." He speaks to him who wishes to be perfect, who, with the Apostles, leaves father, ship, and net. The man whom you approve stands in the second or third rank; yet we welcome him provided it be understood that the first is to be preferred to the second, and the second to the third.

15. Let me add that our monks are not to be deterred from their resolution by you with your viper's tongue and savage bite. Your argument respecting them runs thus: If all men were to seclude themselves and live in solitude, who is there to frequent the churches? Who will remain to win

those engaged in secular pursuits? Who will be able to urge sinners to virtuous conduct? Similarly, if all were as silly as you, who could be wise? And, to follow out your argument, virginity would not deserve our approbation. For if all were virgins, we should have no marriages; the race would perish; infants would not cry in their cradles; midwives would lose their pay and turn beggars; and Dormitanti^{us}, all alone and shrivelled up with cold, would lie awake in his bed. The truth is, virtue is a rare thing and not eagerly sought after by the many. Would that all were as the few of whom it is said:⁴¹ "Many are called, few are chosen." The prison would be empty. But, indeed, a monk's function is not to teach, but to lament; to mourn either for himself or for the world, and with terror to anticipate our Lord's advent. Knowing his own weakness and the frailty of the vessel which he carries, he is afraid of stumbling, lest he strike against something, and it fall and be broken. Hence he shuns the sight of women, and particularly of young women, and so far chastens himself as to dread even what is safe.

16. Why, you will say, go to the desert? The reason is plain: That I may not hear or see you; that I may not be disturbed by your madness; that I may not be engaged in conflict with you; that the eye of the harlot may not lead me captive: that beauty may not lead me to unlawful embraces. You will reply: "This is not to fight, but to run away. Stand in line of battle, put on your armour and resist your foes, so that, having overcome, you may wear the crown." I confess my weakness. I would not fight in the hope of victory, lest some thee or other I lose the victory. If I flee, I avoid the sword; if I stand, I must either overcome or fall. But what need is there for me to let go certainties and follow after uncertainties? Either with my shield or with my feet I must shun death. You who fight may either be overcome or may overcome. I who fly do not overcome, inasmuch as I fly; but I fly to make sure that I may not be overcome. There is no safety in sleep with a serpent beside you. Possibly he will not bite me, yet it is possible that after a thee he may bite me. We call women mothers who are no older than sisters and daughters,⁴² and we do not blush to cloak our vices with the names of piety. What business has a monk in the women's cells? What is the meaning of secret conversation and looks which shun the presence of witnesses? Holy love has no restless desire. Moreover, what we have said respecting lust we must apply to avarice, and to all vices which are avoided by solitude. We therefore keep clear of the crowded cities, that we may not be compelled to do what we are urged to do, not so much by nature as by choice.

17. At the request of the reverend presbyters, as I have said, I have devoted to the dictation of these remarks the labour of a single night, for my brother Sisinnius is hastening his departure for Egypt, where he has relief to give to the saints, and is impatient to be gone. If it were not so, however, the subject itself was so openly blasphemous as to call for the indignation of a writer rather than a multitude of proofs. But if Dormitanti^{us} wakes up that he may again abuse me, and if he thinks fit to disparage me with that same blasphemous mouth with which he pulls to pieces Apostles and martyrs, I will spend upon him something more than this short lucubration. I will keep vigil for a whole night in his behalf and in behalf of his companions, whether they be disciples or masters, who think no man to be worthy of Christ's ministry unless he is married and his wife is seen to be with child.

1: Is. xiii. 21, Is. xiii. 22, and Is. xxxiv. 14-16.

2: Is. xix. 21. Sept.

3: Quintilian, the rhetorician, was born at Calagurris, in Spain, but not the same as the birthplace of Vigilantius.

4: Combining the cheating tavern-keeper with the heretic.

5: Jerem. v. 8.

6: Ps. xxxii. 9.

7: Ibid.

8: Letter CXVII.

9: From *convenio*, to come together.

10: Acts xiv. 11.

11: Acts x. 26.

12: Matt. xxii. 32.

13: Apoc. xiv. 4.

14: Another reading is, "Shut up in the altar."

15: Apoc. vi. 10.

16: Ex. xxxii. 30 sqq.

17: Acts vii. 59, Acts vii. 60.

18: Acts xxvii. 37.

19: ix. 4.

20: John xi. 11.

21: 1 Thess. iv. 13.

22: vii. 35 sq. The passage occurs in the Ethiopic and Arabic versions, not in the Latin. It was probably rejected in later times for dogmatic reasons.

23: The chief of the Egyptian Gnostics.

24: Rom. x. 2.

25: Matt. xxvi. 8; Mark xiv. 4.

26: Rom. xiv. 5. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. R. V.

27: Matt. xxv. 1.

28: Luke xii. 35.

29: John v. 35.

30: Ps. cxix. 105.

31: i.e. antidote to the scorpion's bite.

32: Letter CIX.

33: Acts xxiv. 17, Acts xxiv. 18.

34: Ps. i. 2.

35: Deut. xviii. 2 sq.

36: 2 Cor. viii. 14.

37: Gal. vi. 10.

38: Luke xvi. 9.

39: Ps. xli. 9.

40: Matt. xix. 21.

41: Matt. xx. 16: Matt. xxii. 14.

42: He seems to mean that monks spoke of young ladies as Mothers of the Convents, so as to be able to frequent their society without reproach.

Against the Pelagians - Book 1

Book I.

Book I.

1. Atticus. I hear, Critobulus, that you have written that man can be without sin, if he chooses; and that the commandments of God are easy. Tell me, is it true?

Critobulus. It is true, Atticus; but our rivals do not take the words in the sense I attached to them.

A. Are they then so ambiguous as to give rise to a difference as to their meaning? I do not ask for an answer to two questions at once. You laid down two propositions; the one, that¹ man can be without sin, if he chooses: the other, that God's commandments are easy. Although, therefore, they were uttered together, let them be discussed separately, so that, while our faith appears to be one, no strife may arise through our misunderstanding each other.

C. I said, Atticus, that man can be without sin, if he chooses; not, as some maliciously make us say, without the grace of God (the very thought is impiety), but simply that he can, if he chooses; the aid of the grace of God being presupposed.

A. Is God, then, the author of your evil works?

C. By no means. But if there is any good in me, it is brought to perfection through His impulse and assistance.

A. My question does not refer to natural constitution, but to action. For who doubts that God is the Creator of all things? I wish you would tell me this: the good you do, is it your's or God's?

C. It is mine and God's: I work and He assists.

A. How is it then that everybody thinks you do away with the grace of God, and maintain that all our actions proceed from our own will?

C. I am surprised, Atticus, at your asking me for the why and wherefore of other people's mistakes, and wanting to know what I did not write, when what I did write is perfectly clear. I said that man can be without sin, if he chooses. Did I add, without the grace of God?

A. No; but the fact that you added nothing implies your denial of the need of grace.

C. Nay, rather, the fact that I have not denied grace should be regarded as tantamount to an assertion of it. It is unjust to suppose we deny whatever we do not assert.

A. You admit then that man can be sinless, if he chooses, but with the grace of God.

C. I not only admit it, but freely proclaim it.

A. So then he who does away with the grace of God is in error.

C. Just so. Or rather, he ought to be thought impious, seeing that all things are governed by the pleasure of God, and that we owe our existence and the faculty of individual choice and desire to the goodness of God, the Creator. For that we have free will, and according to our own choice incline to good or evil, is part of His grace who made us what we are, in His own image and likeness.

2. A. No one doubts, Critobulus, that all things depend on the judgment of Him Who is Creator of all, and that whatever we have ought to be attributed to His goodness. But I should like to know respecting this faculty, which you attribute to the grace of God, whether you reckon it as part of the gift bestowed in our creation, or suppose it energetic in our separate actions, so that we avail ourselves of its assistance continually; or is it the case that, having been once for all created and endowed with free will, we do what we choose by our own choice or strength? For I know that very many of your party refer all things to the grace of God in such a sense that they understand the power of the will to be a gift not of a particular, but of a general character, that is to say, one which is bestowed not at each separate moment, but once for all at creation.

C. It is not as you affirm; but I maintain both positions, that it is by the grace of God we were created such as we are, and also that in our several actions we are supported by His aid.

A. We are agreed, then, that in good works, besides our own power of choice, we lean on the help of God; in evil works we are prompted by the devil.

C. Quite so; there is no difference of opinion on that point.

A. They are wrong, then, who strip us of the help of God in our separate actions. The Psalmist sings:² "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain;" and there are similar passages. But these men endeavour by perverse, or rather ridiculous interpretations, to twist his words to a different meaning.

3. C. Am I bound to contradict others when you have my own answer?

A. Your answer to what effect? That they are right, or wrong?

C. What necessity compels me to set my opinion against other men's?

A. You are bound by the rules of discussion, and by respect for truth. Do you not know that every assertion either affirms, or denies, and that what is affirmed or denied ought to be reckoned among good or bad things? You must, therefore, admit, and no thanks to you, that the statement to which my question relates is either a good thing or a bad.

C. If in particular actions we must have the help of God, does it follow that we are unable to make a pen,³ or mend it when it is made? Can we not fashion the letters, be silent or speak, sit, stand, walk or run, eat or fast, weep or laugh, and so on, without God's assistance?

A. From my point of view it is clearly impossible.

C. How then have we free will, and how can we guard the grace of God towards us, if we cannot do even these things without God?

4. A. The bestowal of the grace of free will is not such as to do away with the support of God in particular actions.

C. The help of God is not made of no account; inasmuch as creatures are preserved through the grace of free will once for all given to them. For if without God, and except He assist me in every action, I can do nothing. He can neither with justice crown me for my good deeds, nor punish me for my evil ones, but in each case He will either receive His own or will condemn the assistants He gave.

A. Tell me, then, plainly, why you do away with the grace of God. For whatever you destroy in the parts you must of necessity deny in the whole.

C. I do not deny grace when I assert that I was so created by God, that by the grace of God it was put within the power of my choice either to do a thing or not to do it.

A. So God falls asleep over our good actions, when once the faculty of free will has been given; and we need not pray to Him to assist us in our separate actions, since it depends upon our own choice and will either to do a thing if we choose, or not to do it if we do not choose.

5. C. As in the case of other creatures, the conditions of elicited creation are observed; so, when once the power of free will was granted, everything was left to our own choice.

A. It follows, as I said, that I ought not to beg the assistance of God in the details of conduct, because I consider it was given once for all.

C. If He co-operates with me in everything the result is no longer mine, but His Who assists, or rather works in and with me; and all the more because I can do nothing without Him.

A. Have you not read, pray,⁴ "that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy!" From this we understand that to will and to run is ours, but the carrying into effect our willing and running pertains to the mercy of God, and is so effected that on the one hand in willing and running free will is preserved; and on the other, in consummating our willing and running, everything is left to the power of God. Of course, I ought now to adduce the frequent testimony of Scripture to show that in the details of conduct the saints intreat the help of God, and in their several actions desire to have Him for their helper and protector. Read through the Psalter, and all the utterances of the saints, and you will find their actions never unaccompanied by prayer to God. And this is a clear proof that you either deny the grace which you banish from the parts of life; or if you concede its presence in the parts, a concession plainly much against your will, you must have come over to the views of us who preserve free will for man, but so limit it that we do not deny the assistance of God in each action.

6. C. That is a sophistical conclusion and a mere display of logical skill. No one can strip me of the power of free will; otherwise, if God were really my helper in what I do, the reward would not be due to me, but to Him who wrought in me.

A. Make the most of your free will; arm your tongue against God, and therein prove yourself free, if you will, to blaspheme. But to go a step farther, there is no doubt as to your sentiments, and the delusions of your profession have become as clear as day. Now, let us turn back to the starting-point of our discussion. You said just now that, granted God's assistance, man may be

sinless if he chooses. Tell me, please, for how long? For ever, or only for a short time?

C. Your question is unnecessary. If I say for a short time, for ever will none the less be implied. For whatever you allow for a short time, you will admit may last for ever.

A. I do not quite understand your meaning.

C. Are you so senseless that you do not recognize plain facts?

7. A. I am not ashamed of my ignorance. And both sides ought to be well agreed on a definition of the subject of dispute.

C. I maintain this: he who can keep himself from sin one day, may do so another day: if he can on two, he may on three; if on three, on thirty: and so on for three hundred, or three thousand, or as long as ever he chooses to do so.

A. Say then at once that a man may be without sin for ever, if he chooses. Can we do anything we like?

C. Certainly not, for I cannot do all I should like; but all I say is this, that a man can be without sin, if he chooses.

A. Be so good as to tell me this: do you think I am a man or a beast?

C. If I had any doubt as to whether you were a man, or a beast, I should confess myself to be the latter.

A. If then, as you say, I am a man, how is it that when I wish and earnestly desire not to sin, I do transgress?

C. Because your choice is imperfect. If you really wished not to sin, you really would not.

A. Well then, you who accuse me of not having a real desire, are you free from sin because you have a real desire?

C. As though I were talking of myself whom I admit to be a sinner, and not of the few exceptional ones, if any, who have resolved not to sin.

8. A. Still, I who question, and you who answer, both consider ourselves sinners.

C. But we are capable of not being so, if we please.

A. I said I did not wish to sin, and no doubt your feeling is the same. How is it then that what we both wish we can neither do?

C. Because we do not wish perfectly.

A. Show me any of our ancestors who had a perfect will and the power in perfection.

C. That is not easy. And when I say that a man may be without sin if he chooses, I do not contend that there ever have been such; I only maintain the abstract possibility-if he chooses. For possibility of being is one thing, and is expressed in Greek by *th dunamei* (possibility); being is another, the equivalent for which is *th energeia* (actuality). I can be a physician; but meanwhile I

am not. I can be an artisan; but I have not yet learnt a trade. So, whatever I am able to be, though I am not that yet, I shall be if I choose.

9. A. Art is one thing, that which is⁵ above art is another. Medical skill, craftsmanship, and so on, are found in many persons; but to be always without sin is a characteristic of the Divine power only. Therefore, either give me an instance of those who were for ever without sin; or, if you cannot find one, confess your impotence, lay aside bombast, and do not mock the ears of fools with this being and possibility of being of yours. For who will grant that a man can do what no man was ever able to do? You have not learnt even the rudiments of logic. For if a man is able, he is no longer unable. Either grant that some one was able to do what you maintain was possible to be done; or if no one has had this power, you must, though against your will, be held to this position, that no one is able to effect what yet you profess to be possible. That was the point at issue between the powerful logicians,⁶ Diodorus and⁷ Chrysippus, in their discussion of possibility. Diodorus says that alone can possibly happen which is either true or will be true. And whatever will be, that, he says, must of necessity happen. But whatever will not be, that cannot possibly happen. Chrysippus, however, says that things which will not be might happen; for instance, this pearl might be broken, even though it never will. They, therefore, who say that a man can be without sin if he chooses, will not be able to prove the truth of the assertion, unless they show that it will come to pass. But whereas the whole future is uncertain, and especially such things as have never occurred, it is clear that they say something will be which will not be. And Ecclesiastes supports this decision: "All that shall be, has already been in former ages."

10. C. Pray answer this question: has God given possible or impossible commands?

A. I see your drift. But I must discuss it later on, that we may not, by confusing different questions, leave our audience in a fog. I admit that God has given possible commands, for otherwise He would Himself be the author of injustice, were He to demand the doing of what cannot possibly be done. Reserving this until later, finish your argument that a man can be without sin, if he chooses. You will either give instances of such ability, or, if no one has had the power, you will clearly confess that a man cannot avoid sin always.

C. Since you press me to give what I am not bound to give, consider what our Lord says,⁸ "That it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." And yet he said a thing might possibly happen, which never has happened. For no camel has ever gone through a needle's eye.

A. I am surprised at a prudent man submitting evidence which goes against himself. For the passage in question does not speak of a possibility, but one impossibility is compared with another. As a camel cannot go through a needle's eye, so neither will a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven. Or, if you should be able to show that a rich man does enter the kingdom of heaven, it follows, also, that a camel goes through a needle's eye. You must not instance Abraham and other rich men, about whom we read in the Old Testament, who, although they were rich, entered the kingdom of heaven; for, by spending their riches on good works, they ceased to be rich; nay, rather, inasmuch as they were rich, not for themselves, but for others, they ought to be called God's stewards rather than rich men. But we must seek evangelical perfection, according to which there is the command,⁹ "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me."

11. C. You are caught unawares in your own snare.

A. How so?

C. You quote our Lord's utterance to the effect that a man can be perfect. For when He says, "If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me," He shows that a man, if he chooses, and if he does what is commanded, can be perfect?

A. You have given me such a terrible blow that I am almost dazed. But yet the very words you quote, "If thou wilt be perfect," were spoken to one who could not, or rather would not, and, therefore, could not; show me now, as you promised, some one who would and could.

C. Why am I compelled to produce instances of perfection, when it is clear from what the Saviour said to one, and through one to all, "If thou wilt be perfect" that it is possible for men to be perfect?

A. That is a mere shuffle. You still stick fast in the mire. For, either, if a thing is possible, it has occurred at some time or other; or, if it never has happened, grant that it is impossible.

12. C. Why do I any longer delay? You must be vanquished by the authority of Scripture. To pass over other passages, you must be silenced by the two in which we read the praises of Job, and of Zacharias and Elizabeth. For, unless I am deceived, it is thus written in the book of Job:10 "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, a true worshipper of God, and one who kept himself from every evil thing." And again:11 "Who is he that reproveth one that is righteous and free from sin, and speaketh words without knowledge?" Also, in the Gospel according to Luke, we read:12 "There was in the days of Herod, king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." If a true worshipper of God is also without spot and without offence, and if those who walked in all the ordinances of the Lord are righteous before God, I suppose they are free from sin, and lack nothing that pertains to righteousness.

A. You have cited passages which have been detached not only from the rest of Scripture, but from the books in which they occur. For even Job, after he was stricken with the plague, is convicted of having spoken many things against the ruling of God, and to have summoned Him to the bar:13 "Would that a man stood with God in the judgment as a son of man stands with his fellow." And again:14 "Oh that I had one to hear me! that the Almighty might hear my desire, and that the judge would himself write a book!" And again:15 "Though I be righteous, mine own mouth shall condemn me: though I be perfect, it shall prove me perverse. If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my bands never so clean, Thou hast dyed me again and again with filth. Mine own clothes have abhorred me." And of Zacharias it is written, that when the angel promised the birth of a son, he said:16 "Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years." For which answer he was at once condemned to silence:17 "Thou shalt be silent, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season." From this it is clear that men are called righteous, and said to be without fault; but that, if negligence comes over them, they may fall; and that a man always occupies a middle place, so that he may slip from the height of virtue into vice, or may rise from vice to virtue; and that he is never safe, but must dread shipwreck even in fair weather; and, therefore, that a man cannot be without sin. Solomon says,18 "There is not a

righteous man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not"; and likewise in the book of Kings:19 "There is no man that sinneth not." So, also, the blessed David says:20 "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from hidden faults, and keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins." And again:21 "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." Holy Scripture is full of passages to the same effect.

13. C. But what answer will you give to the famous declaration of John the Evangelist:22 "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but the begetting of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one?"

A. I will requite like with like, and will show that, according to you, the little epistle of the Evangelist contradicts itself. For, if whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not because His seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God, how is it that the writer says in the same place:23 "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?" You cannot explain. You hesitate and are confused. Listen to the same Evangelist telling us that24 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We are then righteous when we confess that we are sinners, and our righteousness depends not upon our own merits, but on the mercy of God, as the Holy Scripture says,25 "The righteous man accuseth himself when he beginneth to speak," and elsewhere,26 "Tell thy sins that thou mayest be justified."27 "God hath shut up all under sin, that He may have mercy upon all." And the highest righteousness of man is this-whatever virtue he may be able to acquire, not to think it his own, but the gift of God. He then who is born of God does not sin, so long as the seed of God remains in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. But seeing that, while the householder slept, an enemy sowed tares, and that when we know not, a sower by night scatters in the Lord's field dandelion and wild oats among the good corn, this parable of the householder in the Gospel should excite our fears. He cleanses his floor, and gathers the wheat into his garner, but leaves the chaff to be scattered by the winds, or burned by the fire. And so we read in Jeremiah,28 "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." The chaff, moreover, is separated from the wheat at the end of the world, a proof that, while we are in the mortal body, chaff is mixed with the wheat. But if you object, and ask why did the Apostle say "and he cannot sin, because he is born of God," I reply by asking you what becomes of the reward of his choice? For if a man does not sin because he cannot sin, free will is destroyed, and goodness cannot possibly be due to his efforts, but must be part of a nature unreceptive of evil.

14. C. The task I set you just now was an easy one by way of practice for something more difficult. What have you to say to my next argument? Clever as you are, all your skill will not avail to overthrow it. I shall first quote from the Old Testament, then from the New. Moses is the chief figure in the Old Testament, our Lord and Saviour in the New. Moses says to the people,29 "Be perfect in the sight of the Lord your God." And the Saviour bids the Apostles30 "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Now it was either possible for the hearers to do what Moses and the Lord commanded, or, if it be impossible, the fault does not lie with them who cannot obey, but with Him who gave impossible commands.

A. This passage to the ignorant, and to those who are unaccustomed to meditate on Holy Scripture, and who neither know nor use it, does appear at first sight to favour your opinion. But

when you look into it, the difficulty soon disappears. And when you compare passages of Scripture with others, that the Holy Spirit may not seem to contradict Himself with changing place and time, according to what is written,³¹ "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water spouts," the truth will show itself, that is, that Christ did give a possible command when He said: "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," and yet that the Apostles were not perfect.

C. I am not talking of what the Apostles did, but of what Christ commanded. And the fault does not lie with the giver of the command, but with the hearers of it, because we cannot admit the justice of him who commands without conceding the possibility of doing what is commanded.

A. Good! Don't tell me then that a man can be without sin if he chooses, but that a man can be what the Apostles were not.

C. Do you think me fool enough to dare say such a thing?

A. Although you do not say it in so many words, however reluctant you may be to admit the fact, it follows by natural sequence from your proposition. For if a man can be without sin, and it is clear the Apostles were not without sin, a man can be higher than the Apostles: to say nothing of patriarchs and prophets whose righteousness under the law was not perfect, as the Apostle says,³² "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God: being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiator."

14a. C. This way of arguing is intricate and brings the simplicity which becomes the Church into the tangled thickets of philosophy. What has Paul to do with Aristotle? or Peter with Plato? For as the latter was the prince of philosophers, so was the former chief of the Apostles: on him the Lord's Church was firmly founded, and neither rushing flood nor storm can shake it.

A. Now you are rhetorical, and while you taunt me with philosophy, you yourself cross over to the camp of the orators. But listen to what your same favourite orator says:³³ "Let us have no more commonplaces: we get them at home."

C. There is no eloquence in this, no bombast like that of the orators, who might be defined as persons whose object is to persuade, and who frame their language accordingly. We are seeking unadulterated truth, and use unsophisticated language. Either the Lord did not give impossible commands, so that they are to blame who did not do what was possible; or, if what is commanded cannot be done, then not they who do not things impossible are convicted of unrighteousness, but He Who commanded things impossible, and that is an impious statement.

A. I see you are much more disturbed than is your wont; so I will not ply you with arguments. But let me briefly ask what you think of the well-known passage of the Apostle when he wrote to the Philippians:³⁴ "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have yet apprehended: but one thing I do; forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on towards the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you," and so on; no doubt you know the rest, which, in my desire to be brief, I omit. He says that he had not yet apprehended, and was by no means perfect; but, like an archer, aimed his arrows at the mark set

up (more expressively called ³⁵ skopoj in Greek), lest the shaft, turning to one side or the other, might show the unskilfulness of the archer. He further declares that he always forgot the past, and ever stretched forward to the things in front, thus teaching that no heed should be paid to the past, but the future earnestly desired; so that what to-day he thought perfect, while he was stretching forward to better things and things in front, to-morrow proves to have been imperfect. And thus at every step, never standing still, but always running, he shows that to be imperfect which we men thought perfect, and teaches that our only perfection and true righteousness is that which is measured by the excellence of God. "I press on towards the goal," he says, "unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Oh, blessed Apostle Paul, pardon me, a poor creature who confess my faults, if I venture to ask a question. You say that you had not yet obtained, nor yet apprehended, nor were yet perfect, and that you always forgot the things behind, and stretched forward to the things in front, if by any means you might have part in the resurrection of the dead, and win the prize of your high calling. How, then, is it that you immediately add, "As many therefore as are perfect are thus minded"? (or, let us be thus minded, for the copies vary). And what mind is it that we have, or are to have? that we are perfect? that we have apprehended that which we have not apprehended, received what we have not received, are perfect who are not yet perfect? What mind then have we, or rather what mind ought we to have who are not perfect? To confess that we are imperfect, and have not yet apprehended, nor yet obtained, this is true wisdom in man: know thyself to be imperfect; and, if I may so speak, the perfection of all who are righteous, so long as they are in the flesh, is imperfect. Hence we read in Proverbs:³⁶ "To understand true righteousness." For if there were not also a false righteousness, the righteousness of God would never be called true. The Apostle continues: "and if ye are otherwise minded, God will also reveal that to you." This sounds strange to my ears. He who but just now said, "Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfect "; the chosen vessel, who was so confident of Christ's dwelling in him that he dared to say "Do ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me? "and yet plainly confessed that he was not perfect; he now gives to the multitude what he denied to himself in particular, he unites himself with the rest and says, "As many of us as are perfect, let us be thus minded." But why he said this, he explains presently. Let us, he means, who wish to be perfect according to the poor measure of human frailty, think this, that we have not yet obtained, nor yet apprehended, nor are yet perfect, and inasmuch as we are not yet perfect, and, perhaps, think otherwise than true and perfect perfection requires, if we are minded otherwise than is dictated by the full knowledge of God, God will also reveal this to us, so that we may pray with David and say,³⁷ "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

15. All this makes it clear that in Holy Scripture there are two sorts of perfection, two of righteousness, and two of fear. The first is that perfection, and incomparable truth, and perfect righteousness³⁸ and fear, which is the beginning of wisdom, and which we must measure by the excellence of God; the second, which is within the range not only of men, but of every creature, and is not inconsistent with our frailty, as we read in the Psalms:³⁹ "In Thy sight shall no man living be justified," is that righteousness which is said to be perfect, not in comparison with God, but as recognized by God. Job, and Zacharias, and Elizabeth, were called righteous, in respect of that righteousness which might some day turn to unrighteousness, and not in respect of that which is incapable of change, concerning which it is said,⁴⁰ "I am God, and change not." And this is that which the Apostle elsewhere writes:⁴¹ "That which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasseth"; because, that is, the righteousness

of the law, in comparison of the grace of the Gospel, does not seem to be righteousness at all.⁴² "For if," he says, that which passeth away was with glory, much more that which remaineth is in glory.⁴³ And again, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." And,⁴⁴ "For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I have been known." And in the Psalms,⁴⁵ "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." And again,⁴⁶ "When I thought how I might know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God, and considered their latter end." And in the same place,⁴⁷ "I was as a beast before thee: nevertheless I am continually with thee." And Jeremiah says,⁴⁸ "Every man is become brutish and without knowledge." And to return to the Apostle Paul,⁴⁹ "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." And much besides, which I omit for brevity's sake.

16. C. My dear Atticus, your speech is really a clever feat of memory. But the labour you have spent in mustering this host of authorities is to my advantage. For I do not any more than you compare man with God. but with other men, in comparison with whom he who takes the trouble can be perfect. And so, when we say that man, if he chooses, can be without sin, the standard is the measure of man, not the majesty of God, in comparison with Whom no creature can be perfect.

A. Critobulus, I am obliged to you for reminding me of the fact. For it is just my own view that no creature can be perfect in respect of true and finished righteousness. But that one differs from another, and that one man's righteousness is not the same as another's, no one doubts; nor again that one may be greater or less than another, and yet that, relatively to their own status and capacity, men may be called righteous who are not righteous when compared with others. For instance, the Apostle Paul, the chosen vessel who laboured more than all the Apostles, was, I suppose, righteous when he wrote to Timothy,⁵⁰ "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that love His appearing." Timothy, his disciple and imitator, whom he taught the rules of action and the limits of virtue, was also righteous. Are we to think there was one and the same righteousness in them both, and that he had not more merit who laboured more than all? "In my Father's house are many mansions." I suppose there are also different degrees of merit. "One star differeth from another star in glory," and in the one body of the Church there are different members. The sun has its own splendour, the moon tempers the darkness of the night; and the five heavenly bodies which are called planets traverse the sky in different tracks and with different degrees of luminousness. There are countless other stars whose movements we trace in the firmament. Each has its own brightness, and though each in respect of its own is perfect, yet, in comparison with one of greater magnitude, it lacks perfection. In the body also with its different members, the eye has one function, the hand another, the foot another. Whence the Apostle says,⁵¹ "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But desire earnestly the greater gifts. But all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as He will." And here mark carefully that he does not say, as each member desires, but as the Spirit Himself will. For the vessel cannot say to him that makes it,⁵² "Why dost thou make me thus or thus? Hath not

the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" And so in close sequence he added, "Desire earnestly the greater gifts," so that, by the exercise of faith and diligence, we may win something in addition to other gifts, and may be superior to those who, compared with us, are in the second or third class. In a great house there are different vessels, some of gold, some of silver, brass, iron, wood. And yet while in its kind a vessel of brass is perfect, in comparison with one of silver it is called imperfect, and again one of silver, compared with one of gold, is inferior. And thus, when compared with one another, all things are imperfect and perfect. In a field of good soil, and from one sowing, there springs a crop thirty-fold, sixty-fold, or a hundred-fold. The very numbers show that there is disparity in the parts of the produce, and yet in its own kind each is perfect. Elizabeth and Zacharias, whom you adduce and with whom you cover yourself as with an impenetrable shield, may teach us how far they are beneath the holiness of blessed Mary, the Lord's Mother, who, conscious that God was dwelling in her, proclaims without reserve,⁵³ "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. And His mercy is unto generations and generations of them that fear Him: He hath showed strength with His arm." Where, observe, she says she is blessed not by her own merit and virtue, but by the mercy of God dwelling in her. And John himself, a greater than whom has not arisen among the sons of men, is better than his parents. For not only does our Lord compare him with men, but with angels also. And yet he, who was greater on earth than all other men, is said to be less than the least in the kingdom of heaven.

17. Need we be surprised that, when saints are compared, some are better, some worse, since the same holds good in the comparison of sins? To Jerusalem, pieced and wounded with many sins, it is said,⁵⁴ "Sodom is justified by thee." It is not because Sodom, which has sunk for ever into ashes, is just in herself, that it is said by Ezekiel,⁵⁵ "Sodom shall be restored to her former estate"; but that, in comparison with the more accursed Jerusalem, she appears just. For Jerusalem killed the Son of God; Sodom through fulness of bread and excessive luxury carried her lust beyond all bounds. The publican in the Gospel who smote upon his breast as though it were a magazine of the worst thoughts, and, conscious of his offences, dared not lift up his eyes, is justified rather than the proud Pharisee. And Tamar in the guise of a harlot deceived Judah, and in the estimation of this man himself who was deceived, was worthy of the words,⁵⁶ "Tamar is more righteous than I." All this goes to prove that not only in comparison with Divine majesty are men far from perfection, but also when compared with angels, and other men who have climbed the heights of virtue. You may be superior to some one whom you have shown to be imperfect, and yet be outstripped by another; and consequently may not have true perfection, which, if it be perfect, is absolute.

18. C. How is it then, Atticus, that the Divine Word urges us to perfection?

A. I have already explained that in proportion to our strength each one, with all his power, must stretch forward, if by any means he may attain to, and apprehend the reward of his high calling. In short Almighty God, to whom, as the Apostle teaches, the Son must in accordance with the dispensation of the Incarnation be subjected, that⁵⁷ "God may be all in all," clearly shows that all things are by no means subject to Himself. Hence the prophet anticipates his own final subjection, saying,⁵⁸ "Shall not my soul be subject to God alone? for of Him cometh my salvation." And because in the body of the Church Christ is the head, and some of the members still resist, the

body does not appear to be subject even to the head. For if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, and the whole body is tortured by the pain in one member. My meaning may be more clearly expressed thus. So long as we have the treasure in earthen vessels, and are clothed with frail flesh, or rather with mortal and corruptible flesh, we think ourselves fortunate if, in single virtues and separate portions of virtue, we are subject to God. But when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in the victory of Christ, then will God be all in all: and so there will not be merely wisdom in Solomon, sweetness in David, zeal in Elias and Phinees, faith in Abraham, perfect love in Peter, to whom it was said,⁵⁹ "Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?" zeal for preaching in the chosen vessel, and two or three virtues each in others, but God will be wholly in all, and the company of the saints will rejoice in the whole band of virtues, and God will be all in all.

19. C. Do I understand you to say that no saint, so long as he is in this poor body, can have all virtues?

A. Just so, because now we prophesy in part, and know in part. It is impossible for all things to be in all men, for no son of man is immortal.

C. How is it, then, that we read that he who has one virtue appears to have all?

A. By partaking of them, not possessing them, for individuals must excel in particular virtues. But I confess I don't know where to find what you say you have read.

C. Are you not aware that the philosophers take that view?

A. The philosophers may, but the Apostles do not. I heed not what Aristotle, but what Paul, teaches.

C. Pray does not James the Apostle⁶⁰ write that he who stumbles in one point is guilty of all?

A. The passage is its own interpreter. James did not say, as a starting-point for the discussion, he who prefers a rich man to a poor man in honour is guilty of adultery or murder. That is a delusion of the Stoics who maintain the equality of sins. But he proceeds thus: "He who said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, said also, Thou shalt not kill: but although thou dost not kill, yet, if thou commit adultery, thou art become a transgressor of the law." Light offences are compared with light ones, and heavy offences with heavy ones. A fault that deserves the rod must not be avenged with the sword; nor must a crime worthy of the sword, be checked with the rod.

C. Suppose it true that no saint has all the virtues: you will surely grant that within the range of his ability, if a man do what he can, he is perfect.

A. Do you not remember what I said before?

C. What was it?

A. That a man is perfect in respect of what he has done, imperfect in respect of what he could not do.

C. But as he is perfect in respect of what he has done, because he willed to do it, so in respect of that which constitutes him imperfect, because he has not done it, he might have been perfect, had

he willed to do it.

A. Who does not wish to do what is perfect? Or who does not long to grow vigorously. in all virtue? If you look for all virtues in each individual, you do away with the distinctions of things, and the difference of graces, and the variety of the work of the Creator, whose prophet cries aloud in the sacred song:⁶¹ "In wisdom hast thou made them all." Lucifer may be indignant because he has not the brightness of the moon. The moon may dispute over her eclipses and ceaseless toil, and ask why she must traverse every month the yearly orbit of the sun. The sun may complain and want to know what he has done that he travels more slowly than the moon. And we poor creatures may demand to know why it is that we were made men and not angels; although your teacher,⁶² the Ancient, the fountain from which these streams flow, asserts that all rational creatures were created equal and started fairly, like charioteers, either to succumb halfway, or to pass on rapidly and reach the wished-for goal. Elephants, with their huge bulk, and griffins, might discuss their ponderous frames and ask why they must go on four feet, while flies, midges, and other creatures like them have six feet under their tiny wings, and there are some creeping things which have such an abundance of feet that the keenest vision cannot follow their countless and simultaneous movements. Marcion and all the heretics who denied the Creator's works might speak thus. Your principle goes so far that while its adherents attack particular points, they are laying hands on God; they are asking why He only is God, why He envies the creatures, and why they are not all endowed with the same power and importance. You would not say so much (for you are not mad enough to openly fight against God), yet this is your meaning in other words, when you give man an attribute of God, and make him to be without sin like God Himself. Hence the Apostle, with his voice of thunder, says, concerning different graces:⁶³ "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; and differences of ministrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of workings, but the same God, Who worketh all things in all."

20. C. You push this one particular point too far in seeking to convince me that a man cannot have all excellences at the same time. As though God were guilty of envy, or unable to bestow upon His image and likeness a correspondence in all things to his Creator.

A. Is it I or you who go too far? You revive, questions already settled, and do not understand that likeness is one thing, equality another; that the former is a painting, the latter, reality. A real horse courses over the plains; the painted one with his chariot does not leave the wall. The Arians do not allow to the Son of God what you give to every man. Some do not dare to confess the perfect humanity of Christ, lest they should be compelled to accept the belief that He had the sins of a man as though the Creator were unequal to the act of creating, and the title Son of Man were co-extensive with the title Son of God. So either set me something else to answer, or lay aside pride and give glory to God.

C. You forget a former answer of yours, and have been so busy forging your chain of argument, and careering through the wide fields of Scripture, like a horse that has slipped its bridle, that you have not said a single word about the main point. Your forgetfulness is a pretext for escaping the necessity of a reply. It was foolish in me to concede to you for the nonce what you asked, and to suppose that you would voluntarily give up what you had received, and would not need a reminder to make you pay what you owed.

A. If I mistake not, it was the question of possible commands of which I deferred the answer. Pray proceed as you think best.

21. C. The commands which God has given are either possible or impossible. If possible, it is in our power to do them, if we choose. If impossible, we cannot be held guilty for omitting duties which it is not given us to fulfil. Hence it results that, whether God has given possible or impossible commands, a man can be without sin if he chooses.

A. I beg your patient attention, for what we seek is not victory over an opponent, but the triumph of truth over falsehood. God has put within the power of mankind all arts, for we see that a vast number of men have mastered them. To pass over those which the Greeks call *bananusoi*, as we may say, the manual arts, I will instance grammar, rhetoric, the three sorts of philosophy-physics, ethics, logic-geometry also, and astronomy, astrology, arithmetic, music, which are also parts of philosophy; medicine, too, in its threefold division-theory, investigation, practice; a knowledge of law in general and of particular enactments. Which of us, however clever he may be, will be able to understand them all, when the most eloquent of orators, discussing rhetoric and jurisprudence, said: "A few may excel in one, in both no one can." You see, then, that God has commanded what is possible, and yet, that no one can by nature attain to what is possible. Similarly he has given different rules and various virtues, all of which we cannot possess at the same time. Hence it happens that a virtue which in one person takes the chief place, or is found in perfection, in another is but partial; and yet, he is not to blame who has not all excellence, nor is he condemned for lacking that which he has not; but he is justified through what he does possess. The Apostle described the character of a bishop when he wrote to Timothy,⁶⁵ "The bishop, therefore, must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, modest, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach; no brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all modesty." And again, "Not a novice, lest, being puffed up, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have good testimony from them that are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Writing also to his disciple Titus, he briefly points out what sort of bishops he ought to ordain:⁶⁶ "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge; if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly. For the bishop must be blameless (or free from accusation, for so much is conveyed by the original) as God's steward; not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but given to hospitality, kind, modest, just, holy, temperate; holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers." I will not now say anything of the various rules relating to different persons, but will confine myself to the commands connected with the bishop.

22. God certainly wishes bishops or priests to be such as the chosen vessel teaches they should be. As to the first qualification it is seldom or never that one is found without reproach; for who is it that has not some fault, like a mole or a wart on a lovely body? If the Apostle himself says of Peter that he did not tread a straight path in the truth of the Gospel, and was so far to blame that even Barnabas was led away into the same dissimulation, who will be indignant if that is denied to him which the chief of the Apostles had not? Then, supposing you find one, "the husband of one wife, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality," the next attribute-*didaktikon*, apt to teach, not merely

as the Latin renders the word, apt to be taught-you will hardly find in company with the other virtues. A bishop or priest that is a brawler, or a striker, or a lover of money, the Apostle rejects, and in his stead would have one gentle, not contentious, free from avarice, one that rules well his own house, and what is very hard, one who has his children in subjection with all modesty, whether they be children of the flesh or children of the faith. "With all modesty," he says. It is not enough for him to have his own modesty unless it be enhanced by the modesty of his children, companions, and servants, as David says,⁶⁷ "He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall minister unto me." Let us consider, also, the emphasis laid on modesty by the addition of the words "having his children in subjection with all modesty." Not only in deed but in word and gesture must he hold aloof from immodesty, lest perchance the experience of Eli be his. Eli certainly rebuked his sons, saying,⁶⁸ "Nay, my sons, nay; it is not a good report which I hear of you." He chided them, and yet was punished, because he should not have chided, but cast them off. What will he do who rejoices at vice or lacks the courage to correct it? Who fears his own conscience, and therefore pretends to be ignorant of what is in everybody's mouth? The next point is that the bishop must be free from accusation, that he have a good report from them who are without, that no reproaches of opponents be levelled at him, and that they who dislike his doctrine may be pleased with his life. I suppose it would not be easy to find all this, and particularly one "able to resist the gain-sayers," to check and overcome erroneous opinions. He wishes no novice to be ordained bishop, and yet in our time we see the youthful novice sought after as though he represented the highest righteousness. If baptism immediately made a man righteous, and full of all righteousness, it was of course idle for the Apostle to repel a novice; but baptism annuls old sins, does not bestow new virtues; it looses from prison, and promises rewards to the released if he will work. Seldom or never, I say, is there a man who has all the virtues which a bishop should have. And yet if a bishop lacked one or two of the virtues in the list, it does not follow that he can no longer be called righteous, nor will he be condemned for his deficiencies, but will be crowned for what he has. For to have all and lack nothing is the virtue of Him⁶⁹ "Who did no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again;" Who, confident in the consciousness of virtue, said,⁷⁰ "Behold the prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me;"⁷¹ "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God gave Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth." If, then, in the person of a single bishop you will either not find at all, or with difficulty, even a few of the things commanded, how will you deal with the mass of men in general who are bound to fulfil all the commandments?

23. Let us reason from things bodily to things spiritual. One man is swift-fooled, but not strong-handed. That man's movements are slow, but he stands firm in battle. This man has a fine face, but a harsh voice: another is repulsive to look at, but sings sweetly and melodiously. There we see a man of great ability, but equally poor memory; here is another whose memory serves him, but whose wits are slow. In the very discussions with which when we were boys we amused ourselves, all the disputants are not on a level, either in introducing a subject, or in narrative, or in digressions, or wealth of illustration, and charm of peroration, but their various oratorical efforts exhibit different degrees of merit. Of churchmen I will say more. Many discourse well upon the Gospels, but in explaining an Apostle's meaning are unequal to themselves. Others, although

most acute in the New Testament are dumb in the Psalms and the Old Testament. I quite agree with Virgil-Non omnia possumus omnes; and seldom or never is the rich man found who in the abundance of his wealth has everything in equal proportions. That God has given possible commands, I admit no less than you. But it is not for each one of us to make all these possible virtues our own, not because our nature is weak, for that is a slander upon God, but because our hearts and minds grow weary and cannot keep all virtues simultaneously and perpetually. And if you blame the Creator for having made you subject to weariness and failure, I shall reply, your censure would be still more severe if you thought proper to accuse Him of not having made you God. But you will say, if I have not the power, no sin attaches to me. You have sinned because you have not done what another could do. And again, he in comparison with whom you are inferior will be a sinner in respect of some other virtue, relatively to you or to another person; and thus it happens that whoever is thought to be first, is inferior to him who is his superior in some other particular.

24. C. If it is impossible for man to be without sin, what does the Apostle Jude mean by writing,⁷² "Now unto Him that is able to keep you without sin, and to set you before the presence of His glory without blemish"? This is clear proof that it is possible to keep a man without sin and without blemish.

A. You do not understand the passage. We are not told that a man can be without sin, which is your view, but that God, if He chooses, can keep a man free from sin, and of His mercy guard him so that he may be without blemish. And I say that all things are possible with God; but that everything which a man desires is not possible to him, and especially, an attribute which belongs to no created thing you ever read of.

C. I do not say that a man is without sin, which, perhaps, appears to you to be possible; but that he may be, if he chooses. For actuality is one thing, possibility another. In the actual we look for an instance; possibility implies that our power to act is real.

A. You are trifling, and forget the proverb, "Don't do what is done." You keep turning in the same mire,⁷³ and only make more dirt. I shall, therefore, tell you, what is clear to all, that you are trying to establish a thing that is not, never was, and, perhaps, never will be. To employ your own words, and show the folly and inconsistency of your argument, I say that you are maintaining an impossible possibility. For your proposition, that a man can be without sin if he chooses, is either true or false. If it be true, show me who the man is; if it be false, whatever is false can never happen. But let us have no more of these notions. Hissed off the stage, and no longer daring to appear in public, they should stay on the book shelves, and not let themselves be heard.

25. Let us proceed to other matters. And here I must speak uninterruptedly, so far, at least, as is consistent with giving you an opportunity of refuting me, or asking any question you think fit.

C. I will listen patiently, though I cannot say gladly. The ability of your reasoning will strike me all the more, while I am amazed at its falsity.

A. Whether what I am going to say is true or false, you will be able to judge when you have heard it.

C. Follow your own method. I am resolved, if I am unable to answer, to hold my tongue rather than assent to a lie.

A. What difference does it make whether I defeat you speaking or silent, and, as it is in the⁷⁴ story of Proteus, catch you asleep or awake?

C. When you have said what you like, you shall hear what you will certainly not like. For though truth may be put to hard shifts it cannot be subdued.

A. I want to sift your opinions a little, that your followers may know what an inspired genius you are. You say, "It is impossible for any but those who have the knowledge of the law to be without sin"; and you, consequently, shut out from righteousness a large number of Christians, and, preacher of sinlessness though you are, declare nearly all to be sinners. For how many Christians have that knowledge of the law which you can find but seldom, or hardly at all, in many doctors of the Church? But your liberality is so great that, in order to stand well with your Amazons, you have elsewhere written, "Even women ought to have a knowledge of the law," although the Apostle preaches that women ought to keep silence in the churches, and if they want to know anything consult their husbands at home. And you are not content with having given your cohort a knowledge of Scripture, but you must delight yourself with their songs and canticles, for you have a heading to the effect that "Women also should sing unto God." Who does not know that women should sing in the privacy of their own rooms, away from the company of men and the crowded congregation? But you allow what is not lawful, and the consequence is, that, with the support of their master, they make an open show of that which should be done with modesty, and with no eye to witness.

26. You go on to say, "The servant of God should utter from his lips no bitterness, but ever that which is sweet and pleasant"; and as though a servant of God were one thing, a doctor and priest of the Church another, forgetting what was previously laid down, you say in another heading, "A priest or doctor ought to watch the actions of all, and confidently rebuke sinners, lest he be responsible for them and their blood be required at his hands." And, not satisfied with saying it once, you repeat it, and inculcate that, "A priest or doctor should flatter no one, but boldly rebuke all, lest he destroy both himself and those who hear him." Is there so little harmony in one and the same work that you do not know what you have previously said? For if the servant of God ought to utter no bitterness from his mouth, but always that which is sweet and pleasant, it follows either that a priest and doctor will not be servants of God who ought to confidently rebuke sinners, and flatter no one, but boldly reprove all: or, if a priest and a doctor are not only servants of God, but have the chief place among His servants, it is idle to reserve smooth and pleasant speeches for the servants of God, for these are characteristic of heretics and of them who wish to deceive; as the Apostle says,⁷⁵ "They that are such serve not our Lord Christ but their own belly, and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent." Flattery is always insidious, crafty, and smooth. And the flatterer is well described by the philosophers as "a pleasant enemy." Truth is bitter, of gloomy visage and wrinkled brow, and distasteful to those who are rebuked. Hence the Apostle says,⁷⁶ "Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" And the comic poet tells us that "Obsequiousness is the mother of friendship, truth of enmity." Wherefore we also eat the Passover with bitter herbs, and the chosen vessel teaches that the Passover should be kept with truth and sincerity. Let truth in our case be plain speaking, and bitterness will

instantly follow.

27. In another place you maintain that "All are governed by their own free choice." What Christian can bear to hear this? For if not one, nor a few, nor many, but all of us are governed by our own free choice, what becomes of the help of God? And how do you explain the text,⁷⁷ "A man's goings are ordered by the Lord"? And⁷⁸ "A man's way is not in himself"; and⁷⁹ "No one can receive anything, unless it be given him from above"; and elsewhere,⁸⁰ "What hast thou which thou didst not receive? But if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" Our Lord and Saviour says:⁸¹ "I am come down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of the Father who sent Me." And in another place,⁸² "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done." And in the Lord's prayer,⁸³ "Thy will be done as in heaven, so on earth." How is it that you are so rash as to do away with all God's help? Elsewhere, you make a vain attempt to append the words "not without the grace of God"; but in what sense you would have them understood is clear from this passage, for you do not admit His grace in separate actions, but connect it with our creation, the gift of the law, and the power of free will.

28. The argument of the next section is, "In the day of judgment, no mercy will be shown to the unjust and to sinners, but they must be consumed in eternal fire." Who can bear this, and suffer you to prohibit the mercy of God, and to sit in judgment on the sentence of the Judge before the day of judgment, so that, if He wished to show mercy to the unjust and the sinners, He must not, because you have given your veto? For you say it is written in the one hundred and fourth Psalm,⁸⁴ "Let sinners cease to be in the earth, and the wicked be no more." And in Isaiah,⁸⁵ "The wicked and sinners shall be burned up together, and they who forsake God shall be consumed." Do you not know that mercy is sometimes blended with the threatenings of God? He does not say that they must be burnt with eternal fires, but let them cease to be in the earth, and the wicked be no more. For it is one thing for them to desist from sin and wickedness, another for them to perish for ever and be burnt in eternal fire. And as for the passage which you quote from Isaiah, "Sinners and the wicked shall be burned up together," he does not add for ever. "And they who forsake God shall be consumed." This properly refers to heretics, who leave the straight path of the faith, and shall be consumed if they will not return to the Lord whom they have forsaken. And the same sentence is ready for you if you neglect to turn to better things. Again, is it not marvellous temerity to couple the wicked and sinners with the impious, for the distinction between them is great? Every impious person is wicked and a sinner; but we cannot conversely say every sinner and wicked person is also impious, for impiety properly belongs to those who have not the knowledge of God, or, if they have once had it, lose it by transgression. But the wounds of sin and wickedness, like faults in general, admit of healing. Hence, it is written,⁸⁶ "Many are the scourges of the sinner"; it is not said that he is eternally destroyed. And through all the scourging and torture the faults of Israel are corrected,⁸⁷ "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." It is one thing to smite with the affection of a teacher and a parent; another to be madly cruel towards adversaries. Wherefore, we sing in the first Psalm,⁸⁸ "The impious do not rise in the judgment," for they are already sentenced to destruction; "nor sinners in the counsel of the just." To lose the glory of the resurrection is a different thing from perishing for ever. "The hour cometh," he says,⁸⁹ "In which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill unto the

resurrection of judgment." And so the Apostle, in the same sense, because in the same Spirit, says to the Romans,⁹⁰ "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned under law, shall be judged by law." The man without law is the unbeliever who will perish for ever. Under the law is the sinner who believes in God, and who will be judged by the law, and will not perish. If the wicked and sinners are to be burned with everlasting fire, are you not afraid of the sentence you pass on yourself, seeing that you admit you are wicked and a sinner, while still you argue that a man is not without sin, but that he may be. It follows that the only person who can be saved is an individual who never existed, does not exist, and perhaps never will, and that all our predecessors of whom we read must perish. Take your own case. You are puffed up with all the pride of Cato, and have⁹¹ Milo's giant shoulders; but is it not amazing temerity for you, who are a sinner, to take the name of a teacher? If you are righteous, and, with a false humility, say you are a sinner, we may be surprised, but we shall rejoice at having so unique a treasure, and at reckoning amongst our friends a personage unknown to patriarch, prophet, and Apostle. And if Origen does maintain that no rational creatures ought to be lost, and allows repentance to the devil, what is that to us, who say that the devil and his attendants, and all impious persons and transgressors, perish eternally, and that⁹² Christians, if they be overtaken by sin, must be saved after they have been punished?

29.⁹³ Besides all this you add two chapters which contradict one another, and which, if true, would effectually close your mouth. "Except a man have learned, he cannot be acquainted with wisdom and understand the Scriptures." And again, "He that has not been taught, ought not to assume that he knows the law." You must, then, either produce the master from whom you learned, if you are lawfully to claim the knowledge of the law; or, if your master is a person who never learned from any one else, and taught you what he did not know himself, it follows that you are not acting rightly in claiming a knowledge of Scripture, when you have not been taught, and in starting as a master before you have been a disciple. And yet, perhaps, with your customary humility, you make your boast that the Lord Himself, Who teaches all knowledge, was your master, and that, like Moses in the cloud and darkness, face to face, you hear the words of God, and so, with the⁹⁴ halo round your head, take the lead of us. And even this is not enough, but all at once you turn Stoic, and thunder in our ears Zeno's proud maxims. "A Christian ought to be so patient that if any one wished to take his property he would let it go with joy." Is it not enough for us patiently to lose what we have, without returning thanks to him who ill-treats and plunders us, and sending after him all blessings? The Gospel teaches that to him who would go to law with us, and by strife and litigation take away our coat, we must give our cloak also. It does not enjoin the giving of thanks and joy at the loss of our property. What I say is this, not that there is any enormity in your view, but that everywhere you are prone to exaggeration, and indulge in ambitious flights. This is why you add that "The bravery of dress and ornament is an enemy of God." What enmity, I should like to know, is there towards God if my tunic is cleaner than usual, or if the bishop, priest, or deacon, or any other ecclesiastics, at the offering of the sacrifices walk in white? Beware, ye clergy; beware, ye monks; widows and virgins, you are? peril unless the people see you begrimed with dirt, and clad in rags. I say nothing of lay-men, who proclaim open war and enmity against God if they wear costly and elegant apparel.

30. Let us hear the rest. "We must love our enemies as we do our neighbours"; and immediately, falling into a deep slumber, you lay down this proposition: "We must never believe an enemy." Not

a word is needed from me to show the contradiction here. You will say that both propositions are found in Scripture, but you do not observe the particular connection in which the passages occur. I am told to love my enemies and pray for my persecutors. Am I bidden to love them as though they were my neighbours, kindred, and friends, and to make no difference between a rival and a relative? If I love my enemies as my neighbours, what more affection can I show to my friends? If you had maintained this position, you ought to have taken care not to contradict yourself by saying that we must never believe an enemy. But even the law teaches us how an enemy should be loved.⁹⁵ If an enemy's beast be fallen, we must raise it up. And the Apostle tells us,⁹⁶ "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. For by so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head," not by way of curse and condemnation, as most people think, but to chasten and bring him to repentance, so that, overcome by kindness, and melted by the warmth of love, he may no longer be an enemy.

31. Your next point is that "the kingdom of heaven is promised even in the Old Testament," and you adduce evidence from the Apocrypha, although it is clear that the kingdom of heaven was first preached under the Gospel by John the Baptist, and our Lord and Saviour, and the Apostles. Read the Gospels. John the Baptist cries in the desert,⁹⁷ "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and concerning the Saviour it is written,⁹⁸ "From that time He began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And again,⁹⁹ "Jesus went round about the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the kingdom of God." And He commanded His Apostles to¹⁰⁰ "go and preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." But you call us Manichaeans because we prefer the Gospel to the law, and say that in the latter we have the shadow, in the former, the substance, and you do not see that your foolishness goes hand in hand with impudence. It is one thing to condemn the law, as Manichaeus did; it is another to prefer the Gospel to the law, for this is in accordance with apostolic teaching. In the law the servants of the Lord speak, in the Gospel the Lord Himself; in the former are the promises, in the latter their fulfilment; there are the beginnings, here is perfection; in the law the foundations of works are laid; in the Gospel the edifice is crowned with the top-stone of faith and grace. I have mentioned this to show the character of the teaching given by our distinguished professor.

32. The hundredth heading runs thus: "A man can be without sin, and easily keep the commandments of God if he chooses," as to which enough has already been said. And although he professes to imitate, or rather complete the work of the blessed martyr Cyprian in the treatise which the latter wrote to¹⁰¹ Quirinus, he does not perceive that he has said just the opposite in the work under discussion. Cyprian, in the fifty-fourth heading of the third book, lays it down that no one is free from stain and without sin, and he immediately gives proofs, among them the passage in Job,¹⁰² "Who is cleansed from uncleanness? Not he who has lived but one day upon the earth."¹⁰³ And in the fifty-first Psalm, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And in the Epistle of John,¹⁰⁴ "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." You, on the other hand, maintain that "A man can be without sin," and that you may give your words the semblance of truth, you immediately add, "And easily keep the commandments of God, if he chooses," and yet they have been seldom or never kept by any one. Now, if they were easy, they ought to have been kept by all. But if, to concede you a point, at rare intervals some one may be found able to keep them, it is clear that what is rare is difficult. And by way of supplementing this and displaying the greatness of your own virtues (we

are to believe, forsooth, that you bring forth the sentiment out of the treasure of a good conscience), you have a heading to the effect that: "We ought not to commit even light offences." And for fear some one might think you had not explained in the work the meaning of light, you add that, "We must not even think an evil thought," forgetting the words,¹⁰⁵ "Who understands his offences? Clear thou me from hidden faults, and keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, O Lord." You should have known that the Church admits even failures through ignorance and sins of mere thought to be offences; so much so that she bids sacrifices be offered for errors, and the high priest who makes intercession for the whole people previously offers victims for himself. Now, if he were not himself righteous, he would never be commanded to offer for others. Nor, again, would he offer for himself if he were free from sins of ignorance. If I were to attempt to show that error and ignorance is sin, I must roam at large over the wide fields of Scripture.

33. C. Pray have you not read that¹⁰⁶ "He who looks upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart?" It seems that not only are the look and the allurements to vice reckoned as sin, but whatever it be to which we give assent. For either we can avoid an evil thought, and consequently may be free from sin; or, if we cannot avoid it, that is not reckoned as sin which cannot be avoided.

A. Your argument is ingenious, but you do not see that it goes against Holy Scripture, which declares that even ignorance is not without sin. Hence it was that Job offered sacrifices for his sons, lest, perchance, they had unwittingly sinned in thought. And if, when one is cutting wood, the axe-head flies from the handle and kills a man, the owner is¹⁰⁷ commanded to go to one of the cities of refuge and stay there until the high priest dies; that is to say, until he is redeemed by the Saviour's blood, either in the baptistery, or in penitence which is a copy of the grace of baptism, through the ineffable mercy of the Saviour, who¹⁰⁸ would not have any one perish, nor delights in the death of sinners, but would rather that they should be converted and live.

C. It is surely strange justice to hold me guilty of a sin of error of which my conscience does not accuse itself. I am not aware that I have sinned, and am I to pay the penalty for an offence of which I am ignorant? What more can I do, if I sin voluntarily?

A. Do you expect me to explain the purposes and plans of God? The Book of Wisdom gives an answer to your foolish question:¹⁰⁹ "Look not into things above thee, and search not things too mighty for thee." And elsewhere,¹¹⁰ "Make not thyself overwise, and argue not more than is fitting." And in the same place, "In wisdom and simplicity of heart seek God." You will perhaps deny the authority of this book; listen then to the Apostle blowing the Gospel trumpet:¹¹¹ "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" Your questions are such as he elsewhere describes:¹¹² "But foolish and ignorant questioning avoid, knowing that they gender strifes." And in Ecclesiastes (a book concerning which there can be no doubt) we read,¹¹³ "I said, I will be wise, but it was far from me. That which is exceeding deep, who can find it out?" You ask me to tell you why the potter makes one vessel to honour, another to dishonour, and will not be satisfied with Paul, who replies on behalf of his Lord,¹¹⁴ "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" The remainder of this book is occupied by a series of quotations from the Old Testament, designed to show that it is not only the outer and conscious act which is reckoned sinful, but the opposition to the Divine will, which is

often implicit and half-conscious. Occasionally, also, the speaker shows how the texts quoted enforce the argument which he has before used, that men may be spoken of as righteous in a general sense, yet by no means free from sins of thought or desire, if not of act. The passages quoted are: Gen. viii. 21. I will not curse the ground *131 for the mind of man is set on evil from his youth. xvii. 17, xviii. 12. Abraham and Sarah laughing at the promise. xxxvii. 35. Jacob's excessive grief. Exod. xxi. 12, 13. The guilt of one who slays another unawares. Lev. iv. 2, 27. Offerings for sins of ignorance. v. 3. Offerings for ceremonial uncleanness. ix. 1. Offerings for Aaron at his consecration. xii. 6. Offerings for women after childbirth. xiv. 1, 6, xvi. 6, xii. 7. Offerings for the leper. xv. 31, xvi. 2, xvi. 5. Offerings for the people on the day of atonement. xxii. 14. Eating the hallowed things ignorantly; compared with 1 Cor. xi. 27, 28, of careless participation in Sacrament. Numbers vi. 1. Offerings for the Nazarite. xiv. 7, vii. 28, 29. Offerings for imploring God's Mercy. xxviii. 15, 22, xxix. 5, v. 11, 17. Offerings at the feast.

Numbers xxxv. 13. The cities of refuge provided for manslaughterers. Deut. ix. 6, xviii. 13. Israel warned not to boast of righteousness. xviii. 9-12, v. 14, 15. Perfection used only of avoiding idolatry. xxii. 8. The housetop without a parapet makes a man guilty. xxiii. 2. Defilement from unconscious personal acts. Josh. vii. 12. The people made guilty by the sin of Achan. xi. 19, 20. The racial guilt of the Canaanites. 1 Sam. xiv. 27. Jonathan made guilty by tasting the honey. xvi. 6. The lord sees the heart, not the outward appearance. 2 Sam. iv. 11. Ishbosheth spoken of as righteous. vi. 7, 8. Uzzah smitten for carelessness.

2 Sam. xxiv. 10. David's numbering the people.

1 Kings viii. 46. Solomon's Prayer-There is none that sinneth not. xiv. 5. The prophet detecting the motive Jeroboam's wife.

2 Kings iv. 27. Elijah seeing the Shunamite's heart. 1 Chron. ii. 32. Sept. Half-prophets. Habakkuk iii. 1. Vulgate. A prayer "for sins of ignorance" ("upon Shigionoth"), supposed to be in recognition of over-boldness in i. 2-4. Ezek. xlvi. 20. The sacrifice of Ezekiel's restored temple. Jer. x. 23. The way of man not in himself. xvii. 9. The heart deceitful. Prov. xiv. 12. A way that seemeth right to a man. xix. 21. Many devices in a man's heart? xx. 9. Who can say, I have a clean heart?

17. Who will boast that he is clean?

Eccl. vii. 16. The heart of a man is full of wickedness.

1: See S. Aug. De Sp. et Lit., c. i.

2: Ps. cxxvii. 1.

3: Pumice terere.

4: Rom. ix. 16.

5: Reading quod super artes est.

6: That is, Diodorous, surnamed Cronus who lived at Alexandria in the reign of Ptolemy Soter (b.c. 323-285). He was the teacher of Philo. For his discussions On the Possible, Zeller's "Socrates and the Socratic Schools," Reiche's translation, pp. 272, 273, and authorities there cited, may be consulted.

7: Died b.c. 207, aged 73. He was the first to base the Stoic doctrine on something like systematic reasoning.

8: S. Matt. xix. 24.

9: S. Matt. xix. 21.

10: Job i. 1.

11: This appears to be an inaccurate quotation made from memory.

12: S. Luke i. 5 sqq.

13: Job xvi. 21. Vulg. R. V. Margin-"That one might plead for a man with God as a son of man pleadeth for his neighbour."

14: Job xxxi. 35.

15: Job ix. 20, Job ix. 30, Job ix. 31.

16: S. Luke i. 18.

17: Ib. 20.

18: Eccles. vii. 21.

19: 2 Chron vi. 36.

20: Ps. xix. 12, Ps. xix. 13.

21: Ps. cxliii. 2.

22: 1 John v. 18, 1 John v. 19.

23: 1 John i. 8.

24: 1 John i. 9.

25: Prov. xviii. 17, Vulg. nearly.

26: Is. xliii. 26, Sept.

27: Rom. xi. 32.

28: Jer. xxiii. 28.

29: Deut xviii. 13.

30: S. Matt. v. 48.

31: Ps. xli. 7.

32: Rom. iii. 23, Rom. iii. 24. So R. V. Margin-"To be propitiatory."

33: Cic. Lib. iv. Acad. Quaest.

34: Phil. iii. 12-16.

35: From szeptomai , to keep watch.

36: Prov. i. 3, Sept.* 37: Ps. cxix. 18.

38: The reading is much disputed.

39: Ps. cxliii. 2.

40: Malach. iii. 6.

41: 2 Cor. iii. 10.

42: Ib. 11.

43: 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 1 Cor. xiii. 10.

44: 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

45: cxxxix. 6.

46: Ps. lxxiii. 16, Ps. lxxiii. 17.

47: Ibid. 22, 23.

48: Jer. x. 14.

49: 1 Cor. i. 25.

50: 2 Tim. iv. 7, 2 Tim. iv. 8.

51: 1 Cor. xii. 21, 1 Cor. xii. 29, 1 Cor. xii. 11.

52: Rom. ix. 21.

53: S. Luke i. 48 sq.

54: Lam. iv. 6.

55: Ezek xvi. 55.

56: Gen. xxxviii. 26.

57: 1 Cor. xv. 28.

58: Ps. lxii. 2.

59: S. John xxi. 15-17.

60: James ii. 10.

61: Ps. civ. 24.

62: According to some, Plato: more probably, Origen, the word arxaioj being an allusion to the title of his chief work, Peri 'Arxwn .

63: 1 Cor. xii. 4, 1 Cor. xii. 5.

64: That is, mean.

65: 1 Tim. iii. 2 sq.

66: Titus i. 5 sq.

67: Ps. ci. 6.

68: 1 Sam. ii. 24.

69: 1 Pet. ii. 22.

70: S. John xiv. 30.

71: Phil. ii. 6 sq.

72: Verse 24.

73: Literally, wash a brick (that has not been burnt). Hence (1) labour in vain, or (2) make bad worse. The latter appears to be the meaning here.

74: Virg. Georg., iv.

75: Rom. xvi. 18.

76: Gal. iv. 16.

77: Prov. xx. 24.

78: Jer. x. 23.

79: S. John xx. 11.

80: 1 Cor. iv. 7.

81: S. John vi. 38.

82: S. Luke xxii. 42.

83: S. Matt. vi. 10.

84: Ps. civ. 35.

85: Is. i. 28.

86: Ps. xxxii. 10.

87: Heb. xii. 6.

88: Verse 5. Sept.

89: S. John v. 28, John v. 29.

90: Rom. ii. 12.

91: The reference is to the stature of Pelagius.

92: The sense of this passage is much disputed. St. Jerome was, possibly, speaking of persons who upon the whole are sincere and not merely covenanted Christians.

93: Jerome seems here to speak in his own person and to address Pelagius directly.

94: Cornuta fronte. Literally, "with horned brow." The allusion is to the rays of light which beamed from the face of Moses, the Hebrew word bearing both meanings, ray and horn. Hence the portraiture of him with horns.

95: Deut. xxii. 4.

96: Rom. xii. 20.

97: S. Matt. iii. 2.

98: iv. 17.

99: iv. 23.

100: x. 7.

101: A Christian of Carthage who, together with Cyprian, sent relief to the bishops and martyrs in the Mines of Sigus, in Numidia, and elsewhere (a.d. 257).

102: Job xiv. 4.

103: Ps. li. 5.

104: 1 John i. 8.

105: Ps. xix. 12, Ps. xix. 13.

106: S. Matt. v. 28.

107: Numb. xxxv. 6.

108: Ezek. xviii. 23.

109: iii. 21.

110: Eccles. vii. 16.

111: Rom. xi. 33, Rom. xi. 34.

112: 2 Tim. ii. 23.

113: Eccles. vii. 24, Eccles. vii. 25.

114: Rom. ix. 20.

Against the Pelagians - Book 2

Book II.

Book II. This book can hardly be said to form part of a dialogue. It is rather an argument from Scripture to prove the point of the Augustinian arguer, Atticus. From the fourth chapter onwards it consists, like the last five chapters of Book I., of a chain of Scripture texts, taken from the New Testament and the Prophets, to show the universality of sin, and thus to refute the Pelagian assertion that a man can be without sin if he wills. We shall, therefore, give, as in the previous case, a list of the texts and the first words of them, only giving Jerome's words where he introduces some original remark of his own, or some noteworthy comment. The Pelagian begins by reiterating the dilemma: If the commandments are given to be obeyed, then man can be without sin; if he is, by his creation, such that he must be a sinner, then God, not he, is the author of sin. To the argument that sacrifices are enjoined for sins of ignorance, he replies by appealing from the Old Testament to the New, which leads to a discussion (2, 3) on St. Paul's description of the conflict with sin, in Romans vii. Paul, it is argued, speaks not as a sinner, but as a man, and thus confesses the sinfulness of humanity. That men may be without ingrained vice is possible; that they can be without sin is not. This leads the Augustinian, Atticus, resuming his list of testimonies, to the fact that, though men are found who are righteous as avoiding wickedness (kaki/a), yet none is without sin (aOnama/rthtoj). In Psalm xxxii. 5. One who speaks of himself as "holy," yet confesses his transgression.

Prov. xxiv. 16. Explains this, "The righteous falls, but sins again." xviii. 17, LXX. and xviii. 17 Vulgate. A righteous man accuses himself when he begins to speak.

Ps. lviii. 3. Sinners are estranged from the womb; that is, either, as St. Paul says (Rom. v. 14), they sin "after the similitude of Adam"; or, "when Christ, as the firstborn, opened the virgin's womb" (Exod. xiii. 2). The heretics refused to acknowledge the mystery, which was prefigured by the Eastern door of the Temple (Ezek. xlv. 2), which closed again when once the High Priest had gone through it. 1 Job iv. 17-21. Shall mortal man be just with God? vii. 1. The life of man is temptation.

20, 21. If I have sinned, what can I do? ix. 15, ix. 16. If I were righteous, he would not hear me.

29-31. If I wash myself with snow water, etc. x. 15. If I be righteous, etc. xiv. 4, Job xiv. 5. Who will be free from uncleanness? Not one.

Prov. xvi. 26, LXX. Man toileth in sorrow.

Job xl. 4. Wha shall I answer thee?

Prov. xx. 9. "Who will boast that he has a clean heart?" which shows at least that the commandments are not easy, as Pelagius says they are.

1 John v. 3. "His commandments are not grievous," and Matt. xi. 30. "My yoke is easy," are true only in comparison with Judaism, and should be compared with Acts xv. 10. A yoke ...which

neither our fathers nor we are able to bear.

James iv. 11. "Thou judgest the law." that is, if you say that the condemnation of sins of ignorance is unreasonable. That we all sin in such ways is evident from James i. 20. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." But anger is constantly condemned as in Prov. xv. 1, LXX. "Wrath destroys even wise men."

Eph. iv. 26. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

Matt. v. 22. He who is angry ...shall be in danger of council.

Eccles. xi. 19. "I am the most foolish of all men." This is said by Christ in the person of humanity. So Ps. lxxix. 5. "God, Thou knowest my foolishness." But 1 Cor. i. 25. The foolishness of God is wiser than men.

Ecclus. i. 18. "In much wisdom is much grief," shows the wise man's sense of imperfection. So viii. 7. "I hated my life," and

14. "There be righteous men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked;" that is, God sees evil where we do not.

17. "However much a man may labor, yet he shall not find it;" and ix. 2, 3. There is one event to all. The heart ...is full of evil. x. 1. "Dead flies cause the ointment to stink;" That is, almost everyone is defiled by heresy or other faults.

1 Pet. ii. 17, 18. Judgement must begin at the house of God.

6. There are four emotions which agitate mankind, two relating to the present, two to the future; two to good, and two to evil. There is sorrow, called in Greek *lu/ph*, and joy, in Greek *xara/* or *h9donh/*, although many translate the latter word by voluptas, pleasure; the one of which is referred to evil, the other to good. And we go too far if we rejoice over such things as we ought not, as, for example, riches, power, distinctions, the bad fortune of enemies, or their death; or, on the other hand, if we are tortured with grief on account of present evils, adversity, exile, poverty, weakness, and the death of kindred, all of which is forbidden by the Apostle. And again, if we covet those things which we consider good, inheritance, distinctions, unvaried prosperity, bodily health, and the like, in the possession of which we rejoice and find enjoyment; or if we fear those things which we deem adverse. Now, according to the Stoics, Zeno that is to say and Chrysippus, it is possible for a perfect man to be free from these emotions; according to the Peripatetics, it is difficult and even impossible, an opinion which has the constant support of all Scripture. Hence Josephus, the historian of the Maccabees, said that the emotions can be subdued and governed, not extirpated, and Cicero's five books of "Tusculan Disputations" are full of these discussions.² Accord to the Apostle, the weakness of the body and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places fight against us. And the same writer³ tells us that the works of the flesh and the works of the spirit are manifest, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we do not the things that we would. If we do not what we would, but what we would not, how can you say that a man can be without sin if he chooses? You see that neither an Apostle, nor any believer can perform what he wishes.⁴ "Love covereth a multitude of sins," not so much sins of the past as sins of the present, that we may not sin any more while the love of God abideth in us. Wherefore it is said concerning the woman that was a sinner,⁵ "Her sins which are many are forgiven her, for she

loved much." And this shows us that the doing what we wish does not depend merely upon our own power, but upon the assistance which God in His mercy gives to our will.

7. The quotations from Scripture are now continued: In 1 John i. 5, John i. 7, John i. 8, Matt. v. 14, Christ and the Apostles are called the Light of the world. The world therefore is darkness.

1 Tim. vi. 16. God only hath immortality and is "only wise"; yet others, like the Prince of Tyre (Ezek. xxviii. 3), are wise derivatively. So we are pure, but only by grace. Thus 1 John i. 7. The blood of Christ cleanses us.

Job xxv. 5, Job xxv. 6. The stars are not pure in his sight.

Gal. ii. 16. "By the law no flesh shall be justified;" but Rom. iii. 1, 24, 28, 30. Being justified freely through His grace, etc. vi. 14. Not under the law, but under grace. ix. 16. Not of him that willeth, but of God which showeth mercy. ix. 30-32. The Gentiles ...attained to the righteousness by faith. x. 2. Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth.

8. The Apostle confesses his need of this grace for his work.

1 Cor. i. 1-3. Grace to you from God.

7, 8. That ye come behind in no gift-that no flesh may glory in His sight.

1 Cor. iii. 6-10. Paul planted ...but God gave the increase.

18, 19. If any man thinketh himself to be wise, let him become a fool. iv. 4. I know nothing against myself, yet I am not hereby justified.

7. What have ye that ye did not receive?

19. I will come to you, if the Lord will.

9. The Apostle shows also his need of grace himself.

1 Cor. xv. 9, 10. By the grace of God I am what I am, etc.

2 Cor. iii. 4-6. Our sufficiency is of God.

Gal. ii. 16. We have believed, that we might, be justified by faith. ii. 21. If righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead for nought. iii. 10, 13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law.

24. The law our teacher to bring us to Christ. v. 4. Ye are severed from Christ, ye that would be justified by the law.

10.

Phil. ii. 13. It is God that worketh in you.

2 Thess. iii. 3. The Lord is faithful, He shall establish you.

1 Tim. vi. 20, 21. O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee.

Tit. iii. 4-7. The kindness and mercy of God our Saviour saved us.

11. We now turn to the Gospels "and supplement the flickering flame of the Apostolic light with the brightness of the lamp of Christ."

Matt. v. 22. "Every man who is angry ...shall be in danger of the council." Which of us is not here condemned?

23, 24. "First be reconciled to thy brother." Who is there that finds this command easy?

37. "Let your speech be Yea, yea, Nay, nay." Who has ever kept this commandment? The Psalmist says Ps. cxvi. 11. All men are liars.

12.

Matt. vi. 34. "Be not anxious for to-morrow." Do you fulfil this? vii. 14. "Narrow is the gate which leadeth to life." How can you say that the commandments are easy?

Luke ix. 58. "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." This is interpreted by Is. xxviii. 12. "Receive him that is weary, and this is my rest;" and

Is. lxvi. 1, 2. "On whom shall I rest but on him that is humble?" Christ finds few on whom to rest. How then can His commands be said to be easy?

Matt. ix. 12, 13. "I came not to call the righteous." "They that are whole need not the physician." Had the world not been full of sin, Christ would not have come. So Ps. xii. 1. Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth. xiv. 1, 3. They are corrupt ...none doeth good.

Matt. x. 9. "Get you no gold ...nor shoes." Who has fulfilled this? Not even the Apostles, for Acts xii. 8. The angel bids Peter to bind on his sandals.

13.

Matt. x. 22-34. Describes the persecutions of Christ's followers, and gives the command to take up the cross. Are these easy? xiv. 31. Even Peter's faith fails, and he begins to sink. xv. 19, 20. Out of the heart came evil thoughts, etc. xvi. 25. Whosoever will lose his life will find it. xviii. 7. "Woe to the man through whom stumbling cometh." But James iii. 2. In many things we all stumble or err.

Phil. ii. 21. All seek their own.

Matt. xix. 21. The young lawyer had kept all the law, yet failed. xxiii. 26-28. The woes on the Pharisees fall in their measure upon all.

14.

Matt. xxvi. 39. "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Yet Critobulus says, by his own will he can do right.

Mark xiv. 37. "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" They could not. vi. 5. He could do no mighty works because of their unbelief. vii. 24. "He went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon." If Christ could not do as he wished, how can we? ix. 5. Peter's request at the Transfiguration shows his ignorance. xiii. 32. Even the Son knows not all things; how then can we? xiv. 35. If it be possible. How can you say it is possible every hour to avoid sin?

15.

Mark xvi. 14. Even the Apostles showed unbelief and hardness of heart.

1 John v. 19. The world lieth in the evil one.

Luke i. 20. Even Zacharias disbelieved God's message.

Matt. xvii. 15. The disciples could not relieve the lunatic, because of unbelief.

Mark iv. 34. The disciple's dispute about precedence.

Luke ix. 54. James and John show a vindictive spirit. xiv. 26, 27. The commands to forsake all and take up the cross are not easy. xvi. 15. That which is exalted among men is abomination in the sight of God. xvii. 1. It is impossible but that occasions of stumbling should come. xvii. 6. The Apostles' faith was not even like a grain of mustard seed.

James iii. 2.

Matt. xvii. 19.

16.

Luke xviii. 1. We are always to pray. This shows our weakness.

27. Who, then, can be saved? It is possible, but to God only. xxii. 24. The contest for precedence at the last supper.

31, 32. Peter's faith almost overcome by Satan.

Luke xxii. 43. Even Christ in his agony needs an angel to strengthen Him.

46. Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

17.

John v. 30. Even Christ says, "I cannot do anything by myself"; and vii. 10. Was irresolute about going up to the Feast of Tabernacles.

19. None of you doeth the law. viii. 3. None of the accusers of the woman taken in adultery were without sin. Christ wrote their names in the earth (Jerem. xvii. 13). x. 8. All who came (not who were sent; Jerem. xiv. 15) before Christ were robbers. xvii. 12. I kept them-they did not keep themselves.

Acts xv. 39. Paul and Barnabas quarrelled. xvi. 6, 7. They were forbidden to preach where they chose.

18. Even the Apostles, with their full light, show their dependence on grace.

Acts xvii. 30. The times before Christ were times of ignorance.

1 Cor. iv. 19. I will come if the Lord will.

James ii. 10. To stumble in one point is to be guilty of all. iii. 2. In many things we all stumble.

8. The tongue is a deadly poison.

19.

James iv. 1. Wars arise from our lust. David indeed said, Ps. xxvi. 2. "Examine me and prove me," etc. This self-confidence led to his fall. li. 1. Have mercy on me, O God. lxxx. 5. "Thou feedest us with the bread of tears." Similarly Ps. xxx. 6, 7. I said I shall never be moved ...Thou didst hide Thy face. xxxii. 5. I said I will confess my sin, xxxvii. 5, 6. He shall make thy righteousness as the light.

39. The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord. xxxviii. 7. There is no soundness in my flesh.

Rom. vii. 18. In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.

Ps. xxxviii. 8. Vulgate. My loins are filled with deceits. xxxix. 5. He hath made our days as handbreadths. lxi. 5. My sins are not hid from thee. lxxvii. 2. My soul refused to be comforted.

10. This is the changing of the right hand of the Most High. 6

20.

Ps. lxxxix. 2. Mercy shall be built up forever. xci. 6. From "the thing⁷ that walketh in darkness" who can be free? For xi. 2. "The wicked bend their bow"-an image of the heretics. xcii. 14. Those that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish. ciii. 8, 10. The Lord is full of compassion.

2 Sam. viii. 13, 14. David receives the promises with the humble confession of his weakness. "Is this the law of man, O God?" xvi. 10. He humbles himself under Abishai's violence and Shimei's curse. xvii. 14. And is delivered only by God's confounding the counsel of Ahithophel.

1 Kings xiv. 8. It was God who gave Jeroboam the kingdom.

21.

1 Kings xv. 11. Asa, though a good man, was faulty. xix. 4. Elijah fled from Jezebel.

Ps. cxviii. 6. The Lord is my keeper.

2 Chron. xvii. 3. Jehoshaphat prospers because the Lord is with him. Yet xix. 2. He is rebuked for joining with Ahab.

2 Chron. xxii. 9. Ahaziah received burial among kings because descended from righteous Jehoshaphat.

2 Kings xviii. 3, 4, 7. Hezekiah did great things, but only through the Lord's help.

14. He gave the consecrated gold to the king of Assyria.

22. Even the best kings of Judah were imperfect.

2 Kings xx. 1, 5. Hezekiah wept when death was at hand, and recovered through special mercy.

13, 17. But he sinned in receiving the Babylonian envoys.

2 Chron. xxxii. 26. He fell by the lifting up of his heart. xxxiv. 2. Josiah was a righteous man; yet 22, 23. He needed the aid of Huldah; and xxxv. 22. He was slain through not heeding God's warning; and 23. The prophets also are weak and sinful.

Lam. iv. 20. Jeremiah⁸ lamented his fall.

Numb. xx. 10, 12. Moses is punished for his sin at Meribah. This is the meaning of Ps. cxli. 6. Vulgate. Their judges were swallowed up, joined to the Rock, etc.

Hosea ii. 19. God in mercy forgives Israel's unfaithfulness. xi. 9. "I will not enter into the city." Only the Holy One is not joined to the mass of ungodliness.

Amos vi. 13. We turn righteousness into wormwood.

Jonah i. 14. The sailors confess that God is just in raising the storm.

Micah vii. 2. The godly man is perished from the earth, etc. vi. 8. The command of justice, mercy, and a humble walk with God is only possible to humble faith, for Ps. cxl. 6. "The wicked walk on every side," and James iv. 6. God giveth grace to the humble.

24.

Habakkuk iii. 16. Let rottenness enter into my bones, if only I may rest, etc.

Zech. iii. 1. Joshua is represented as clothed in filthy garments, and is freed through God's mercy. But Jovinian's heir says "I am quite free from sin, I have no filthy garments, I am governed by my own will, I am greater than an Apostle. The Apostle does what he would not, and what he would he does not; but I do what I will, and what I would not I do not: the kingdom of heaven has been prepared for me, or rather I have by my virtuous life prepared it for myself. Adam was subject to punishment, and so are others who think themselves guilty after the similitude of Adam's transgressions; I and my crew alone have nothing to fear. Other men shut up in their cells and who never see women, because, poor creatures! they do not listen to my words, are tormented with desire: crowds of women may surround me, I feel no stirring of concupiscence. For to me may be applied the⁹ words, 'Holy stones are rolled upon the ground,' and the reason why I am insensible to the attraction of sin is that in the power of free will I carry Christ's trophy about with me." But let us listen to God¹⁰ proclaiming by the mouth of Isaiah: "O my people, they which call thee happy cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths." Who is the greatest subverter of the people of God—he who, relying on the power of free choice, despises the help of the Creator, and is satisfied with following his own will, or he who dreads to be judged by the details of the Lord's commandments? To men of this sort, God¹¹ says, "Woe unto you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight." Isaiah, if we follow the Hebrew, laments¹² and says, "Woe is me because I have been silent, because I am a man of unclean lips: and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the Lord of Hosts." He for his meritorious and virtuous life enjoyed the sight of God, and conscious of his sins confessed that he had unclean lips. Not that he had said anything repugnant to the will of God, but because, either from fear, or from a deep sense of shame, he had been¹³ silent, and had not reproofed the errors of the people so freely as a prophet should. When do we sinners rebuke offenders, we who flatter wealth and accept the persons of sinners for the sake of filthy lucre? for we shall hardly say that we speak with perfect frankness to men of whose assistance we stand in need. Suppose that we do not such things as they, suppose we keep ourselves from every form of sin; to refrain from speaking the truth is certainly sin. In the Septuagint, however, we do not find the words "because I have been silent," but "because I was pricked," that is with the consciousness of sin; and thus the words of

the¹⁴ prophet are fulfilled. "My life was turned into misery while I was pierced by the thorn." He was pricked by the thorn of sin: you are decked with the flowers of virtue.¹⁵ "The moon shall be ashamed, and the sun confounded, when the Lord shall punish the host of heaven on high." This is explained by another passage.¹⁶ "Even the stars are unclean in His sight," and again,¹⁷ "He chargeth His angels with folly." The moon is ashamed, the sun is confounded, and the sky covered with sackcloth, and shall we fearlessly and joyously, as though we were free from all sin, face the majesty of the Judge, when the mountains shall melt away, that is, all who are lifted up by pride, and all the host of the heavens, whether they be stars, or angelic powers, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host shall fade away like leaves? The argument is now carried on mostly by the quotation of passages from the prophets:

25. Is xxxiv. 5. "My sword hath drunk its fill in the heavens. It will come down in Edom." How much more is there wrath against sin on earth! Edom means blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom (1 Cor. xv. 50). xlv. 9. Woe unto him who striveth with his Maker. liii. 6. We have all gone astray like sheep.

Ezek. xvi. 14. Jerusalem is perfect in beauty; yet Ezek. xvi. 60, 61. Her salvation is not of merit but of mercy.

Nahum i. 3. Though he cleanse,¹⁸ yet will he not make thee innocent.

1 Cor. xv. 9. I am not worthy-because I persecuted.

Ezek. xx. 43, 44. When pardoned, Jerusalem will still remember her sin.

Let us confess with shame that these are the utterances of men who have already won their reward; sinners upon earth, and still in our frail and mortal bodies let us adopt the language of the saints in heaven who have even been endowed with incorruption and immortality.¹⁹ "And ye say the way of the Lord is not equal, when your ways are not equal." It is Pharisaic pride to attribute to the injustice of the Creator sins which are due to our own will, and to slander His righteousness. The sons of Zadok, the priests of the spiritual temple, that is the Church,²⁰ go not out to the people in their ministerial robes, lest by human intercourse they may lose their holiness and be defiled. And do you suppose that you, in the thick of the throng, and an ordinary individual, are pure?

26. Let us hastily run through the prophet Jeremiah:

Jerem. v. 1, 2. Is there any that doeth justly, etc. vii. 21, 22. God rejects the sacrifices, because of the worshippers' evil lives. xiii. 23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin?

27.

Jerem. xvii. 14. "Heal me, O Lord," Otherwise Jeremiah could only say, as in the text next quoted, xx. 14, 17, 18. Cursed be the day wherein I was born, etc. xxiii. 23. Am I a God at hand, etc. So conscious is he of God's power. xxiv. 6, 7. God, not they themselves, will plant them, etc. xxvi. 21-24. Jeremiah needed the help of Ahikam. How much more do we need that of God.

28.

Jerem. xxxi. 34. The promise of the new covenant. xxxii. 30. The children of Israel have perpetually done evil. xxxvii. 18, 19. Yet Jeremiah himself trembled before Zedekiah.

Jerem. xxx. 10, 11. Fear not, O Jacob, for I am with thee.

29.

Amos vi. 14. "We have taken us horns by our own strength." These are the boasts of heretics. But Is. xvi. 6. His strength (Moab's) is by no means according to his arrogance.²¹

Jerem. i. 7, 20. Men's sin will only be abolished because God is gracious to them. If you will abandon your assertions of natural ability, I will concede that your whole contention stands good, but only by the gift of God.

Lam. iii. 26-42. It is good that a man should quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

30.

Dan. iv. 17. The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.

Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust.

Is. xl. 17. He doeth what He will in heaven and in earth. The words of 2 Maccabees v. 17, which say that Antiochus Epiphanes had power to overthrow the Temple, "because of the multitude of sins," are quoted in connection with the confessions of Daniel.

Dan. ix. 5. "We have sinned and dealt perversely," which is shown by 20. "While I was yet praying," etc., to be a personal, not only a national confession.

24. The prophecy of the seventy weeks shows that the prophet looked to God alone for the establishment of righteousness. So then, until that end shall come, and this corruptible and mortal shall put on incorruption and immortality, we must be liable to sin; not, as you falsely say, owing to the fault of our nature and creation, but through the frailty and fickleness of human will, which varies from moment to moment; because God alone changeth not. You ask in what respects Abel, Enoch, Joshua the son of Nun, or Elisha, and the rest of the saints have sinned. There is no need to look for a knot in a bulrush; I freely confess I do not know; and I only wish that, when sins are manifest, I might still be silent.²² "I know nothing against myself," says St. Paul, "yet am I not hereby justified."²³ "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Before Him no man is justified. And so Paul says confidently,²⁴ "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"; and²⁵ "God hath shut up all under sin that He may have mercy upon all"; and similarly in other passages which we have repeated again and again.

1: There was an early and widespread belief, afterwards confirmed by a decree of the Council of Ephesus, that the birth of Christ was by miracle, not by a true and proper parturition.

2: Eph. vi. 12.

3: Gal. v. 19 4: 1 Pet. iv. 8.

5: Luke vii. 47.

6: Vulgate, Rev. V. I will remember the years, etc. Marg.-The right hand of the Most High doth change.

7: LXX. A.V. Pestilence.

8: The words of the Lamentations refer to Zedekiah.

9: Zech. ix. 16, Sept. Correctly, they (God's people) shall be as the stones of a crown lifting themselves up (or glittering) upon His land.

10: Is. iii. 12.

11: v. 21.

12: vi. 5.

13: That is, according to Jerome's rendering of the Hebrew. R. V. has "I am undone." For the Sept. rendering see below.

14: Ps. xxxii. 4.

15: Is. xxiv. 21.

16: Job xxv. 5.

17: Job iv. 18.

18: Mundans: not in the Vulgate nor in A. V.

19: Ezek. xxxii. 17.

20: Ibid. xlv. 15, 16.

21: This is the sense of the Vulgate, but not the exact words.

22: 1 Cor. iv. 4.

23: 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

24: Rom. iii. 23.

25: Gal. iii. 22.

Against the Pelagians - Book 3

Book III.

Book III.

1. Critob. I am charmed with the exuberance of your eloquence, but at the same time I would remind you that,¹ "In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression." And how does it bear upon the question before us? You will surely admit that those who have received Christian baptism are without sin. And that being free from sin they are righteous. And that once they are righteous, they can, if they take care, preserve their righteousness, and so through life avoid all sin.

Attic. Do you not blush to follow the opinion of Jovinian, which has been exploded and condemned? For he relies upon just the same proofs and arguments as you do; nay, rather, you are all eagerness for his inventions, and desire to preach in the East what was formerly² condemned at Rome, and not long ago in³ Africa. Read then the reply which was given to him, and you will there find the answer to yourself. For in the discussion of doctrines and disputed points, we must have regard not to persons but to things. And yet let me tell you that baptism condones past offences, and does not preserve righteousness in the time to come; the keeping of that is dependent on toil and industry, as well as earnestness, and above all on the mercy of God. It is ours to ask, to Him it belongs to bestow what we ask; ours to begin, His it is to finish; ours to offer what we can, His to fulfil what we cannot perform.⁴ "For except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Wherefore the Apostle⁵ bids us so run that we may attain. All indeed run, but one receiveth the crown. And in the⁶ Psalm it is written, "O Lord, thou hast crowned us with thy favour as with a shield." For our victory is won and the crown of our victory is gained by His protection and through His shield; and here we run that hereafter we may attain; there he shall receive the crown who in this world has proved the conqueror. And when we have been baptized we are told,⁷ "Behold thou art made whole; sin no more lest a worse thing happen unto thee." And again,⁸ "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man profane the temple of God, him shall God destroy." And in another place,⁹ "The Lord is with you so long as ye are with Him: if ye forsake Him, He will also forsake you." Where is the man, do you suppose, in whom as in a shrine and sanctuary the purity of Christ is permanent, and in whose case the serenity of the temple is saddened by no cloud of sin? We cannot always have the same countenance, though the philosophers falsely boast that this was the experience of Socrates; how much less can our minds be always the same! As men have many expressions of countenance, so also do the feelings of their hearts vary. If it were possible for us to be always immersed in the waters of baptism, sins would fly over our heads and leave us untouched. The Holy Spirit would protect us. But the enemy assails us, and when conquered does not depart, but is ever lying in ambush, that he may secretly shoot the upright in heart.

2. In the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which is written in the Chaldee and Syrian language, but in Hebrew characters, and is used by the Nazarenes to this day (I mean the Gospel according to the Apostles, or, as is generally maintained, the Gospel according to Matthew, a copy of which is in the library at Caesarea), we find, "Behold, the mother of our Lord and His brethren said to Him, John Baptist baptizes for the remission of sins; let us go and be baptized by him. But He said to them, what sin have I committed that I should go and be baptized by him? Unless, haply, the very words which I have said are only ignorance." And in the same volume, "If thy brother sin against thee in word, and make amends to thee, receive him seven times in a day." Simon, His disciple, said to Him, "Seven times in a day?" The Lord answered and said to him, "I say unto thee until seventy times seven." Even the prophets, after they were anointed with the Holy Spirit, were guilty of sinful words. Ignatius, an apostolic man and a martyr, boldly writes,¹⁰ "The Lord chose Apostles who were sinners above all men." It is of their speedy conversion that the Psalmist sings,¹¹ "Their infirmities were multiplied; afterwards they made haste." If you do not allow the authority of this evidence, at least admit its antiquity, and see what has been the opinion of all good churchmen. Suppose a person who has been baptized to have been carried off by death either immediately, or on the very day of his baptism, and I will generously concede that he neither thought nor said anything whereby, through error and ignorance, he fell into sin. Does it follow that he will, therefore, be without sin, because he appears not to have overcome, but to have avoided sin? Is not the true reason rather that by the mercy of God he was released from the prison of sins and departed to the Lord? We also say this, that God can do what He wills; and that man of himself and by his own will cannot, as you maintain, be without sin. If he can, it is idle for you now to add the word grace, for, with such a power, he has no need of it. If, however, he cannot avoid sin without the grace of God, it is folly for you to attribute to him an ability which he does not possess. For whatever depends upon another's will, is not in the power of him whose ability you assert, but of him whose aid is clearly indispensable.

3. C. What do you mean by this perversity, or, rather, senseless contention? Will you not grant me even so much-that when a man leaves the waters of baptism he is free from sin?

A. Either I fail to express my meaning clearly, or you are slow of apprehension.

C. How so?

A. Remember both what you maintained and also what I say. You argued that a man can be free from sin if he chooses. I reply that it is an impossibility; not that we are to think that a man is not free from sin immediately after baptism, but that that time of sinlessness is by no means to be referred to human ability, but to the grace of God. Do not, therefore, claim the power for man, and I will admit the fact. For how can a man be able who is not able of himself? Or what is that sinlessness which is conditioned by the immediate death of the body? Should the man's life be prolonged, he will certainly be liable to sins and to ignorance.

C. Your logic stops my mouth. You do not speak with Christian simplicity, but entangle me in some fine distinctions between being and ability to be.

A. Is it I who play these tricks with words? The article came from your own workshop. For you say, not that a man is free from sin, but that he is able to be; I, on the other hand, will grant what you deny, that a man is free from sin by the grace of God, and yet will maintain that he is not able of

himself.

C. It is useless to give commandments if we cannot keep them.

A. No one doubts that God commanded things possible. But because men do not what they might, therefore the whole world is subject to the judgment of God, and needs His mercy. On the other hand, if you can produce a man who has fulfilled the whole law, you will certainly be able to show that there is a man who does not need the mercy of God. For everything which can happen must either take place in the past, the present, or the future. As to your assertion that a man can be without sin if he chooses, show that it has happened in the past, or at all events that it does happen at the present day; the future will reveal itself. If, however, you can point to no one who either is, or has been, altogether free from sin, it remains for us to confine our discussion to the future. Meanwhile, you are vanquished and a captive as regards two out of three periods of time, the past and the present. If anyone hereafter shall be greater than patriarchs, prophets, apostles, inasmuch as he is without sin, then you may perhaps be able to convince future generations as to their time.

4. C. Talk as you like, argue as you please, you will never wrest from me free will, which God bestowed once for all, nor will you be able to deprive me of what God has given, the ability if I have the will.

A. By way of example let us take one proof:¹² "I have found David, the Son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, who shall do all My will." There is no doubt that David was a holy man, and yet he who was chosen that he might do all God's will is blamed for certain actions. Of course it was possible for him who was chosen for the purpose to do all God's will. Nor is God to blame Who beforehand spoke of his doing all His will as commanded, but blame does attach to him who did not what was foretold. For God did not say that He had found a man who would unfailingly do His bidding and fulfil His will, but only one who would do all His will. And we, too, say that a man can avoid sinning, if he chooses, according to his local and temporal circumstances and physical weakness, so long as his mind is set upon righteousness and the string is well stretched upon the lyre. But if a man grow a little remiss it is with him as with the boatman pulling against the stream, who finds that, if he slackens but for a moment, the craft glides back and he is carried by the flowing waters whither he would not. Such is the state of man; if we are a little careless we learn our weakness, and find that our power is limited. Do you suppose that the Apostle Paul, when he wrote¹³ "the coat (or cloak) that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments," was thinking of heavenly mysteries, and not of those things which are required for daily life and to satisfy our bodily necessities? Find me a man who is never hungry, thirsty, or cold, who knows nothing of pain, or fever, or the torture of strangury, and I will grant you that a man can think of nothing but virtue. When the Apostle was¹⁴ struck by the servant, he delivered himself thus against the High Priest who commanded the blow to be given: "God shall strike thee, thou whited wall." We miss the patience of the Saviour Who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and opened not His mouth, but mercifully said to the smiter,¹⁵ "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?" We do not disparage the Apostle, but declare the glory of God Who suffered in the flesh and overcame the evil inflicted on the flesh and the weakness of the flesh-to say nothing of what the Apostle says elsewhere:¹⁶ "Alexander, the coppersmith, did me much evil; the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense

him in that day."

5. C. I have been longing to say something, but have checked the words as they were bursting from my lips. You compelmme to say it.

A. Who hinders you from saying what you think? Either what you are going to say is good-and you ought not to deprive us of what is good-or it is bad, and, therefore, it is not regard for us, but shame that keeps you silent.

C. I will say, I will say after all, what I think. Your whole argument tends to this: You accuse nature, and blame God for creating man such as he is.

A. Is this what you wished, and yet did not wish, to say? Pray speak out, so that all may have the benefit of your wisdom. Are you censuring God because he made man to be man? Let the angels also complain because they are angels. Let every creature discuss the question, Why it is as it was created? and not what the Creator could have made it. I must now amuse myself with the rhetorical exercises of childhood, and passing from the gnat and the ant to cherubim and seraphim, inquire why each was not created with a happier lot. And when I reach the exalted powers, I will argue the point: Why God alone is only God, and did not make all things gods? For, according to you, He will either be unable to do so, or will be guilty of envy. Censure Him, and demand why He allows the devil to be in this world, and carry off the crown when you have won the victory.

C. I am not so senseless as to complain of the existence of the devil, through whose malice death entered into the world; but what grieves me is this: that dignitaries of the Church, and those who usurp the title of master, destroy free will; and once that is destroyed, the way is open for the Manichaeans.

A. Am I the destroyer of free will because, throughout the discussion, my single aim has been to maintain the omnipotence of God as well as free will?

C. How can you have free will, and yet say that man can do nothing without God's assistance?

A. If he is to be blamed who couples free will and God's help, it follows that we ought to praise him who does away with God's help.

C. I am not making God's help unnecessary, for to His grace we owe all our ability; but I and those who think with me keep both within their own bounds. To God's grace we assign the gift of the power of free choice; to our own will, the doing, or the not doing, of a thing; and thus rewards and punishments for doing or not doing can be maintained.

6. A. You seem to me to be lost in forgetfulness, and to be going over the lines of argument already traversed as though not a word had been previously said. For, by this long discussion, it has been established float the Lord, by the same grace wherewith He bestowed upon us free choice, assists and supports us in our individual actions.

C. Why, then, does He crown and praise what He has Himself wrought in us?

A. That is to say, our will which offered all it could, the toil which strove in action, and the humility which ever looked to the help of God.

C. So, then, if we have not done what He commanded, either God was willing to assist us, or He was not. If He was willing and did assist us, and yet we have not done what we wished, then He, and not we, has been overcome. But if He would not help, the man is not to be blamed who wished to do His will, but God, who was able to help, but would not.

A. Do you not see that your dilemma has landed you in a deep abyss of blasphemy? Whichever way you take it, God is either weak or malevolent, and He is not so much praised because He is the author of good and gives His help, as abused for not restraining evil. Blame Him, then, because He allows the existence of the devil, and has suffered, and still suffers, evil to be done in the world. This is what Marcion asks, and the whole pack of heretics who mutilate the Old Testament, and have mostly spun an argument something like this: Either God knew that man, placed in Paradise, would transgress His command, or He did not know. If He knew, man is not to blame, who could not avoid God's foreknowledge, but He Who created him such that he could not escape the knowledge of God. If He did not know, in stripping Him of foreknowledge you also take away His divinity. Upon the same showing God will be deserving of blame for choosing Saul, who was to prove one of the worst of kings. And the Saviour must be convicted either of ignorance, or of unrighteousness, inasmuch as He said in the Gospel,¹⁷ "Did I not choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Ask Him why He chose Judas, a traitor? Why He entrusted to him the bag when He knew that he was a thief? Shall I tell you the reason? God judges the present, not the future. He does not make use of His foreknowledge to condemn a man though He knows that he will hereafter displease Him; but such is His goodness and unspeakable mercy that He chooses a man who, He perceives, will meanwhile be good, and who, He knows, will turn out badly, thus giving him the opportunity of being converted and of repenting. This is the Apostle's meaning when he says,¹⁸ "Dost thou not know that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to every man according to his works." For Adam did not sin because God knew that he would do so; but God inasmuch as He is God, foreknew what Adam would do of his own free choice. You may as well accuse God of falsehood because He said by the mouth of Jonah:¹⁹ "Yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." But God will reply by the mouth of Jeremiah,²⁰ "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy it; if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jonah, on a certain occasion, was indignant because, at God's command, he had spoken falsely; but his sorrow was proved to be ill founded, since he would rather speak truth and have a countless multitude perish, than speak falsely and have them saved. His position was thus illustrated:²¹ "Thou grieveest over the ivy (or gourd), for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow, which came up in a night, and perished in a night; and should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?" If there was so vast a number of children and simple folk, whom you will never be able to prove sinners, what shall we say of those inhabitants of both sexes who were at different periods of life? According to Philo, and the wisest of philosophers, Plato (so the "Timaeus" tells us), in passing from infancy to decrepit old age, we go through seven stages, which so gradually and so gently follow one another that we are quite

insensible of the change.

C. The drift of your whole argument is this-what the Greeks call autecousion, and we free will, you admit in terms, but in effect destroy. For you make God the author of sin, in asserting that man can of himself do nothing, but that he must have the help of God to Whom is imputed all we do. But we say that, whether a man does good or evil, it is imputed to him on account of the faculty of free choice, inasmuch as he did what he chose, and not to Him Who once for all gave him free choice.

A. Your shuffling is to no purpose; you are caught in the snares of truth. For upon this showing, even if He does not Himself assist, according to you He will be the author of evil, because He might have prevented it and did not. It is an old maxim that if a man can deliver another from death and does not, he is a homicide.

C. I withdraw and yield the point; you have won; provided, however, that victory is the subverting of the truth by specious words, that is to say, not by truth, but by falsehood. For I might make answer to you in the Apostle's words,²² "Though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge." When you speak, your rhetorical tricks are too much for me, and I seem to agree with you; but when you stop speaking, it all goes out of my head, and I see quite clearly that your argument does not flow from the fountains of truth and Christian simplicity, but rests on the laboured subtleties of the philosophers.

A. Do you wish me, then, once more to resort to the evidence of Scripture? If so, what becomes of the boast of your disciples that no one can answer your arguments or solve the questions you raise?

C. I not only wish, but am eager that you should do so. Show me any place in Holy Scripture where we find that, the power of free choice being lost, a man does what of himself he either would not, or could not do.

8. A. We must use the words of Scripture not as you propose, but as truth and reason demand. Jacob says in his prayer,²³ "If the Lord God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a token, shall be God's house; and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." He did not say, If thou preserve my free choice, and I gain by my toil food and raiment, and return to my father's house. He refers everything to the will of God, that he may be found worthy to receive that for which he prays. On Jacob's return from Mesopotamia²⁴ an army of angels met him, who are called God's camp. He afterwards contended with an angel in the form of a man, and was strengthened by God; whereupon, instead of Jacob, the supplanter, he received the name, the most upright of God. For he would not have dared to return to his cruel brother unless he had been strengthened and secured by the Lord's, help. In the sequel we read,²⁵ "The sun rose upon him after he passed over Phauliel," which is, being interpreted, the face of God. Hence²⁶ Moses also says, "I have seen the Lord face to face, and my life is preserved," not by any natural quality-but by the condescension of God, Who had mercy. So then the Sun of Righteousness rises upon us when God makes His face to shine upon us and gives us strength. Joseph in Egypt was shut up in prison, and we next hear that the keeper of the prison, believing in his fidelity, committed everything to his hand. And the reason is given:²⁷ "Because the Lord was with him: and

whatsoever he did, the Lord made it to prosper." Wherefore, also, dreams were suggested to Pharaoh's attendants, and Pharaoh had one which none could interpret, that so Joseph might be released, and his father and brethren fed, and Egypt saved in the time of famine. Moreover, God²⁸ said to Israel, in a vision of the night, "I am the God of thy fathers; fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will make of thee there a great nation, and I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." Where in this passage do we find the power of free choice? Is not the whole circumstance that he ventured to go to his son, and entrust himself to a nation that knew not the Lord, due to the help of the God of his fathers? The people was released from Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm; not the hand of Moses and Aaron, but of Him who set the people free by signs and wonders, and at last smote the firstborn of Egypt, so that they who at²⁹ first were persistent in keeping the people, eagerly urged them to depart. Solomon³⁰ says, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding: in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Understand what He says-that we must not trust in our wisdom, but in the Lord alone, by Whom the steps of a man are directed. Lastly, we are bidden to show Him our ways, and make them known, for they are not made straight by our own labour, but by His assistance and mercy. And so it is written,³¹ "Make my way right before Thy face," so that what is right to Thee may seem also right to me. Solomon says the same-³² "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." Our thoughts are then established when we commit all we do to the Lord our helper, resting it, as it were, upon the firm and solid rock, and attribute everything to Him.

9. The Apostle Paul, rapidly recounting the benefits of God, ended with the words,³³ "And who is sufficient for these things?" Wherefore, also, in another place he³⁴ says, "Such confidence have we through Christ to Godward; not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God; Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Do we still dare to pride ourselves on free will, and to abuse the benefits of God to the dishonour of the giver? Whereas the same chosen vessel openly³⁵ writes, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves." Therefore, also, in another place, checking the impudence of the heretics, he³⁶ says, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." And again,³⁷ "In nothing was I behind the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing." Peter, disturbed by the greatness of the miracles he witnessed, said to the Lord,³⁸ "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." And the Lord said to His disciples,³⁹ "I am the vine and ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for apart from Me ye can do nothing." Just as the vine branches and shoots immediately decay when they are severed from the parent stem, so all the strength of men fades and perishes, if it be bereft of the help of God. "No one,"⁴⁰ He says, "can come unto Me except the Father Who sent Me draw him." When He says, "No one can come unto Me," He shatters the pride of free will; because, even if a man will to go to Christ, except that be realized which follows-"unless My heavenly Father draw him"-desire is to no purpose, and effort is in vain. At the same time it is to be noted that he who is drawn does not run freely, but is led along either because he holds back and is sluggish, or because he is reluctant to go.

10. Now, how can a man who cannot by his own strength and labour come to Jesus, at the same time avoid all sins? and avoid them perpetually, and claim for himself a name which belongs to the might of God? For if He and I are both without sin, what difference is there between me and God? One more proof only I will adduce, that I may not weary you and my hearers.⁴¹ Sleep was removed from the eyes of Ahasuerus, whom the Seventy call Artaxerxes, that he might turn over the memoirs of his faithful ministers and come upon Mordecai, by whose evidence he was delivered from a conspiracy; and that thus Esther might be more acceptable, and the whole people of the Jews escape imminent death. There is no doubt that the mighty sovereign to whom belonged the whole East, from India to the North and to Ethiopia, after feasting sumptuously on delicacies gathered from every part of the world would have desired to sleep, and to take his rest, and to gratify his free choice of sleep, had not the Lord, the provider of all good things, hindered the course of nature, so that in defiance of nature the tyrant's cruelty might be overcome. If I were to attempt to produce all the instances in Holy Writ, I should be tedious. All that the saints say is a prayer to God; their whole prayer and supplication a strong wrestling for the pity of God, so that we, who by our own strength and zeal cannot be saved, may be preserved by His mercy. But when we are concerned with grace and mercy, free will is in part void; in part, I say, for so much as this depends upon it, that we wish and desire, and give assent to the course we choose. But it depends on God whether we have the power in His strength and with His help to perform what we desire, and to bring to effect our toil and effort.

11. C. I simply said that we find the help of God not in our several actions, but in the grace of creation and of the law, that free will might not be destroyed. But there are many of us who maintain that all we do is done with the help of God.

A. Whoever says that must leave your party. Either, then, say the same yourself and join our side, or, if you refuse, you will be just as much our enemy as those who do not hold our views.

C. I shall be on your side if you speak my sentiments, or rather you will be on mine if you do not contradict them. You admit health of body, and deny health of the soul, which is stronger than the body. For sin is to the soul what disease or a wound is to the body. If then you admit that a man may be healthy so far as he is flesh, why do you not say he may be healthy so far as he is spirit?

A. I will follow in the line you point out,

"and you to-day Shall ne'er escape; where'r you call, I come."

C. I am ready to listen.

A. And I to speak to deaf ears. I will therefore reply to your argument. Made up of soul and body, we have the nature of both substances. As the body is said to be healthy if it is troubled with no weakness, so the soul is free from fault if it is unshaken and undisturbed. And yet, although the body may be healthy, sound, and active, with all the faculties in their full vigour, yet it suffers much from infirmities at more or less frequent intervals, and, however strong it may be, is sometimes distressed by various humours; so the soul, bearing the onset of thoughts and agitations, even though it escape shipwreck, does not sail without danger, and remembering its weakness, is always anxious about death, according as it is written,⁴² "What man is he that shall live and not see death?"-death, which threatens all mortal men, not through the decay of nature, but through the death of sin, according to the prophet's words,⁴³ "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Besides,

we know that Enoch and Elias have not yet seen this death which is common to man and the brutes. Show me a body which is never sick, or which after sickness is ever safe and sound, and I will show you a soul which never sinned, and after acquiring virtues will never again sin. The thing is impossible, and all the more when we remember that vice borders on virtue, and that, if you deviate ever so little, you will either go astray or fall over a precipice. How small is the interval between obstinacy and perseverance, miserliness and frugality, liberality and extravagance, wisdom and craft, intrepidity and rashness, caution and timidity! some of which are classed as good, others as bad. And the same applies to bodies. If you take precautions against biliousness, the phlegm increases. If you dry up the humours too quickly, the blood becomes heated and vitiated with bile, and a sallow hue spreads over the countenance. Without question, however much we may exercise all the care of the physician, and regulate our diet, and be free from indigestion and whatever fosters disease, the causes of which are in some cases hidden from us and known to God alone, we shiver with cold, or burn with fever, or howl with colic, and implore the help of the true physician, our Saviour, and⁴⁴ say with the Apostles, "Master, save us, we perish"

12. C. Granted that no one could avoid all sin in boyhood, youth, and early manhood; can you deny that very many righteous and holy men, after falling into vice, have heartily devoted themselves to the acquisition of virtue and through these have escaped sin?

A. This is what I told you at the beginning-that it rests with ourselves either to sin or not to sin, and to put the hand either to good or evil; and thus free will is preserved, but according to circumstances, time, and the state of human frailty; we maintain, however, that perpetual freedom from sin is reserved for God only, and for Him Who being the Word was made flesh without incurring the defects and the sins of the flesh. And, because I am able to avoid sin for a short time, you cannot logically infer that I am able to do so continually. Can I fast, watch, walk, sing, sit, sleep perpetually?

C. Why then in Holy Scripture are we stimulated to aim at perfect righteousness? For example:⁴⁵ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," and⁴⁶ "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." And God says to Abraham,⁴⁷ "I am thy God, be thou pleasing in My sight, and be thou without spot, or blame, and I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." If that is impossible which Scripture testifies, it was useless to command it to be done.

A. You play upon Scripture until you wear a question threadbare, and remind me of the platform tricks of a conjurer who assumes a variety of characters, and is now Mars, next moment Venus; so that he who was at first all sternness and ferocity is dissolved into feminine softness. For the objection you now raise with an air of novelty-"Blessed are the pure in heart," "Blessed are the undefiled in the way," and "Be without spot," and so forth-is refuted when the Apostle replies,⁴⁸ "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," and, "Now we see through a mirror darkly, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." And therefore we have but the shadow and likeness of the pure heart, which hereafter is destined to see God, and, free from spot or stain, to live with Abraham. However great the patriarch, prophet, or Apostle may be, it is⁴⁹ said to them, in the words of our Lord and Saviour, "If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father Which is in heaven give good things to them which ask Him?" Then again even Abraham, to whom it was said,⁵⁰ "Be thou without spot and

blame," in the consciousness of his frailty fell upon his face to the earth. And when God had spoken to Him, saying, "Thy wife Sarai shall no longer be called Sarai, but Sara shall her name be, and I will give thee a son by her, and I will bless him and he shall become a great nation, and kings of nations shall spring from him," the narrative at once proceeds to say, "Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" And Abraham said unto God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!" And God said, "Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son, and thou shall call his name Isaac," and so on. He certainly had heard the words of God, "I am thy God, be thou pleasing in My sight, and without spot"; why then did he not believe what God promised, and why did he laugh in his heart, thinking that he escaped the notice of God, and not daring to laugh openly? Moreover he gives the reasons for his unbelief, and says, "How is it possible for a man that is an hundred years old to beget a son of a wife that is ninety years old?" "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee," he says. "Ishmael whom thou once gavest me. I do not ask a hard thing, I am content with the blessing I have received." God convinced him by a mysterious reply. He said, "Yea." The meaning is, that shall come to pass which you think shall not be. Your wife Sara shall bear you a son, and before she conceives, before he is born, I will give the boy a name. For, from your error in secretly laughing, your son shall be called Isaac, that is laughter. But if you think that God is seen by those who are pure in heart in this world, why did Moses, who had previously said, "I have seen the Lord face to face, and my life is preserved," afterwards entreat that he might see him distinctly? And because he said that he had seen God, the Lord told him,⁵¹ "Thou canst not see My face. For man shall not see My face, and live." Wherefore also the Apostle⁵² calls Him the only invisible God, Who dwells in light unapproachable, and Whom no man hath seen, nor can see. And the Evangelist John in holy accents testifies, saying,⁵³ "No man hath at any time seen God. The only begotten Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." He Who sees, also declares, not how great He is Who is seen, nor how much He knows Who declares; but as much as the capacity of mortals can receive.

13. And whereas you think he is blessed who is undefiled in the way, and walks in His law, you must interpret the former clause by the latter. From the many proofs I have adduced you have learnt that no one has been able to fulfil the law. And if the Apostle, in comparison with the grace of Christ, reckoned those things as filth which formerly, under the law, he counted gain, so that he might win Christ, how much more certain ought we to be that the reason why the grace of Christ and of the Gospel has been added is that, under the law, no one could be justified? Now if, under the law, no one is justified, how is he perfectly undefiled in the way who is still walking and hastening to reach the goal? Surely, he who is in the course, and who is advancing on the road, is inferior to him who has reached his journey's end. If, then, he is undefiled and perfect who is still walking in the way and advancing in the law, what more shall he have who has arrived at the end of life and of the law? Hence the Apostle, speaking of our Lord, says that, at the end of the world, when all virtues shall receive their consummation, He will present His holy Church to Himself without spot or wrinkle, and yet you think that Church perfect, while yet in the flesh, which is subject to death and decay. You deserve to be told, with the Corinthians,⁵⁴ "Ye are already perfect, ye are already made rich: ye reign without us, and I would that ye did reign, that we might also reign with you"-since true and stainless perfection belongs to the inhabitants of heaven, and is reserved for that day when the bridegroom shall say to the bride,⁵⁵ "Thou art all fair, my love;

and there is no spot in thee." And in this sense we must understand the words:⁵⁶ "That ye may be blameless and harmless, as children of God, without blemish"; for He did not say ye are, but may be. He is contemplating the future, not stating a case pertaining to the present; so that here is toil and effort, in that other world the rewards of labour and of virtue. Lastly, John writes:⁵⁷ "Beloved, we are sons of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him even as He is." Although, then, we are sons of God, yet likeness to God, and the true contemplation of God, is promised us then, when He shall appear in His majesty.

14. From this swelling pride springs the audacity in prayer which marks the directions in your letter to a⁵⁸ certain widow as to how the saints ought to pray. "He," you say,⁵⁹ "rightly lifts up his hands to God; he pours out supplications with a good conscience who can say, 'Thou knowest, Lord, how holy, how innocent, how pure from all deceit, wrong, and robbery are the hands which I spread out unto Thee; how righteous, how spotless, and free from all falsehood are the lips with which I pour forth my prayers unto Thee, that Thou mayest pity me.'" Is this the prayer of a Christian, or of a proud Pharisee like him who⁶⁰ says in the Gospel, "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, robbers, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." Yet he merely thanks God because, by His mercy, he is not as other men: he execrates sin, and does not claim his righteousness as his own. But you say, "Now Thou knowest how holy, how innocent, how pure from all deceit, wrong, and robbery are the hands which I spread out before Thee." He says that he fasts twice in the week, that he may afflict his vicious and wanton flesh, and he gives tithes of all his substance. For⁶¹ "the ransom of a man's life is his riches." You join the devil in boasting,⁶² "I will ascend above the stars, I will place my throne in heaven, and I will be like the Most High." David says,⁶³ "My loins are filled with illusions"; and⁶⁴ "My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness"; and⁶⁵ "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant"; and⁶⁶ "In Thy sight no man living shall be justified." You boast that you are holy, innocent, and pure, and spread out clean hands unto God. And you are not satisfied with glorying in all your works, unless you say that you are pure from all sins of speech; and you tell us how righteous, how spotless, how free from all falsehood your lips are. The Psalmist sings,⁶⁷ "Every man is a liar"; and this is supported by apostolical authority: "That God may be true," says St. Paul,⁶⁸ "and every man a liar"; and yet you have lips righteous, spotless, and free from all falsehood. Isaiah laments, saying,⁶⁹ "Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"; and afterwards one of the seraphim brings a hot coal, taken with the tongs, to purify the prophet's lips, for he was not, according to the tenor of your words, arrogant, but he confessed his own faults. Just as we read in the Psalms,⁷⁰ "What shall be due unto thee, and what shall be done more unto thee in respect of a deceitful tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals that make desolate." And after all this swelling with pride, and boastfulness in prayer, and confidence in your holiness, like one fool trying to persuade another, you finish with the words "These lips with which I pour out my supplication that Thou mayest have pity on me." If you are holy, if you are innocent, if you are cleansed from all defilement, if you have sinned neither in word nor deed-although James says,⁷¹ "He who offends not in word is a perfect man," and "No one can curb his tongue"-how is it that you sue for mercy? so that, forsooth, you bewail yourself, and pour out prayers because you are holy, pure, and innocent, a man of stainless lips, free from all falsehood, and endowed with a power like that of God. Christ prayed thus on the cross:⁷² "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Why art

Thou so far from helping Me?" And, again,⁷³ "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," and⁷⁴ "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And this is He, who, returning thanks for us, had said,⁷⁵ "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."

15. Our Lord so instructed His Apostles that, daily at the sacrifice of His body, believers make bold to say, "Our Father, Which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name"; they earnestly desire the name of God, which in itself is holy, to be hallowed in themselves; you say, "Thou knowest, Lord, how holy, how innocent, and how pure are my hands." Then they say: "Thy Kingdom come," anticipating the hope of the future kingdom, so that, when Christ reigns, sin may by no means reign in their mortal body, and to this they couple the words, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven"; so that human weakness may imitate the angels, and the will of our Lord may be fulfilled on earth; you say, "A man can, if he chooses, be free from all sin." The Apostles prayed for the daily bread, or the bread better than all food, which was to come, so that they might be worthy to receive the body of Christ; and you are led by your excess of holiness and well established righteousness to boldly claim the heavenly gifts. Next comes, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors." No sooner do they rise from the baptismal font, and by being born again and incorporated into our Lord and Saviour thus fulfil what is written of them,⁷⁶ "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered," than at the first communion of the body of Christ they say, "Forgive us our debts," though these debts had been forgiven them at their confession of Christ; but you in your arrogant pride boast of the cleanness of your holy hands and of the purity of your speech. However thorough the conversion of a man may be, and however perfect his possession of virtue after a time of sins and failings, can such persons be as free from fault as they who are just leaving the font of Christ? And yet these latter are commanded to say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors"; not in the spirit of a false humility, but because they are afraid of human frailty and dread their own conscience. They say, "Lead us not into temptation"; you and Jovinian unite in saying that those who with a full faith have been baptized cannot be further tempted or sin. Lastly, they add. "But deliver us from the evil one." Why do they beg from the Lord what they have already by the power of free will? Oh, man, now thou hast been made clean in the laver, and of thee it is said, "Who is this that cometh up all white, leaning upon her beloved?" The bride, therefore, is washed, yet she cannot keep her purity, unless she be supported by the Lord. How is it that you long to be set free by the mercy of God, you who but a little while ago were released from your sins? The only explanation is the principle by which we maintain that, when we have done all, we must confess we are unprofitable.

16. So then your prayer outdoes the pride of the Pharisee, and you are condemned when compared with the Publican. He, standing afar off, did not dare to lift up his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying,⁷⁷ "God be merciful unto me a sinner." And on this is based our Lord's declaration, "I say unto you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The Apostles are humbled that they may be exalted. Your disciples are lifted up that they may fall. In your flattery of the widow previously mentioned you are not ashamed to say that piety such as is found on earth, and truth which is everywhere a stranger, had made their home with her in preference to all others. You do not recollect the familiar words,⁷⁸ "O my people, they which call thee blessed cause thee to err, and destroy the paths of thy feet"; and you expressly praise her and say, "Happy beyond all thought are you! how blessed! if righteousness, which is believed to

be now nowhere but in Heaven, is found with you alone on earth." Is this teaching or slaying? Is it raising from earth, or casting down from heaven, to attribute that to a poor creature of a woman, which angels would not dare arrogate to themselves? If piety, truth, and righteousness are found on earth nowhere but in one woman, where shall we find your righteous followers, who, you boast, are sinless on earth? These two chapters on prayer and praise you and your disciples are wont to swear are none of yours, and yet your brilliant style is so clearly seen in them, and the elegance of your Ciceronian diction is so marked that, although you strut about with the slow pace of a tortoise, you have not the courage to acknowledge what you teach in private and expose for sale. Happy man! whose books no one writes out but your own disciples, so that whatever appears to be unacceptable, you may contend is not your own but some one else's work. And where is the man with ability enough to imitate the charm of your language?

17. C. I can put it off no longer; my patience is completely overcome by your iniquitous words. Tell me, pray, what sin have little infants committed. Neither the consciousness of wrong nor ignorance can be imputed to those who, according to the prophet Jonah, know not their right hand from their left. They cannot sin, and they can perish; their knees are too weak to walk, they utter inarticulate cries; we laugh at their attempts to speak; and, all the while, poor unfortunates! the torments of eternal misery are prepared for them.

A. Ah! now that your disciples have turned masters you begin to be fluent, not to say eloquent. Antony,⁷⁹ an excellent orator, whose praises Tully loudly proclaims, says that he had seen many fluent men, but so far never an eloquent speaker; so don't amuse me with flowers of oratory which have not grown in your own garden, and with which the ears of inexperience and of boyhood are wont to be tickled, but plainly tell me what you think.

C. What I say is this—you must at least allow that they have no sin who cannot sin.

A. I will allow it, if they have been baptized into Christ; and if you will not then immediately bind me to agree with your opinion that a man can be without sin if he chooses; for they neither have the power nor the will; but they are free from all sin through the grace of God, which they received in their baptism.

C. You force me to make an invidious remark and ask, Why, what sin have they committed? that you may immediately have me stoned in some popular tumult. You have not the power to kill me, but you certainly have the will.

A. He slays a heretic who allows him to be a heretic. But when we rebuke him we give him life; you may die to your heresy, and live to the Catholic faith.

C. If you know us to be heretics, why do you not accuse us?

A. Because the⁸⁰ Apostle teaches me to avoid a heretic after the first and second admonition, not to accuse him. The Apostle knew that such an one is perverse and self-condemned. Besides, it would be the height of folly to make my faith depend on another man's judgment. For supposing some one were to call you a Catholic, am I to immediately give assent? Whoever defends you, and says that you rightly hold your perverse opinions, does not succeed in rescuing you from infamy, but charges himself with perfidy. Your numerous supporters will never prove you to be a Catholic, but will show that you are a heretic. But I would have such opinions as these suppressed

by ecclesiastical authority; otherwise we shall be in the case of those who show some dreadful picture to a crying child. May the fear of God grant us this-to despise all other fears. Therefore, either defend your opinions, or abandon what you are unable to defend. Whoever may be called in to defend you must be enrolled as a partisan, not as a patron.

18. C. Tell me, pray, and rid me of all doubts, why little children are baptized.

A. That their sins may be forgiven them in baptism.

C. What sin are they guilty of? How can any one be set free who is not bound?

A. You ask me! The Gospel trumpet will reply, the teacher of the Gentiles, the golden vessel shining throughout the world:⁸¹ "Death reigned from Adam even unto Moses: even over those who did not sin after the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a figure of Him that was to come." And if you object that some are spoken of who did not sin, you must understand that they did not sin in the same way as Adam did by transgressing God's command in Paradise. But all men are held liable either on account of their ancient forefather Adam, or on their own account. He that is an infant is released in baptism from the chain which bound his father. He who is old enough to have discernment is set free from the chain of his own or another's sin by the blood of Christ. You must not think me a heretic because I take this view, for the blessed martyr Cyprian, whose rival you boast of being in the classification of Scripture proofs, in the⁸² epistle addressed to Bishop Fidus on the Baptism of Infants speaks thus: "Moreover, if even the worst offenders, and those who previous to baptism sin much against God, once they believe have the gift of remission of sins, and no one is kept from baptism and from grace, how much more ought not an infant to be kept from baptism seeing that, being only just born, he has committed no sin? He has only, being born according to the flesh among Adam's sons, incurred the taint of ancient death by his first birth. And he is the more easily admitted to remission of sins because of the very fact that not his own sins but those of another are remitted to him. And so, dearest brother, it was our decision in council that no one ought to be kept by us from baptism and from the grace of God, Who is merciful to all, and kind, and good And whereas this rule ought to be observed and kept with reference to all, bear in mind that it ought so much the more to be observed with regard to infants themselves and those just born, for they have the greater claims on our assistance in order to obtain Divine mercy, because their cries and tears from the very birth are one perpetual prayer."

19. That holy man and eloquent bishop Augustin not long ago wrote to⁸³ Marcellinus (the same that was afterwards, though innocent, put to death by heretics on the pretext of his taking part in the tyranny of Heraclian⁸⁴) two treatises on infant baptism, in opposition to your heresy which maintains that infants are baptized not for remission of sins, but for admission to the kingdom of heaven, according as it is written in the Gospel,⁸⁵ "Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." He addressed a⁸⁶ third, moreover, to the same Marcellinus, against those who say as do you, that a man can be free from sin, if he chooses, without the help of God. And, recently, a⁸⁷ fourth to Hilary against this doctrine of yours, which is full of perversity. And he is said to have others on the anvil with special regard to you, which have not yet come to hand. Wherefore, I think I must abandon my task, for fear Horace's words may be thrown at me,⁸⁸ "Don't carry firewood into a forest." For we must either say the same as he does, and that would be superfluous; or, if we wished to say something fresh, we should⁸⁹ find our best points anticipated by that splendid genius. One thing I will say and so end

my discourse, that you ought either to give us a new creed, so that, after baptizing children into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you may baptize them into the kingdom of heaven; or, if you have one baptism both for infants and for persons of mature age, it follows that infants also should be baptized for the remission of sins after the likeness of the transgression of Adam. But if you think the remission of another's sins implies injustice, and that he has no need of it who could not sin, cross over to Origen, your special favourite, who says that ancient offences⁹⁰ committed long before in the heavens are loosed in baptism. You will then be not only led by his authority in other matters, but will be following his error in this also.

1: Prov. x. 19.

2: By a Synod under Siricius in a.d. 390.

3: The allusion is to the African Synod, held a.d. 412, at which Celestius was condemned and excommunicated.

4: Ps. cxxvii. 1.

5: 1 Cor. ix. 24.

6: v. 12.

7: John v. 14.

8: 1 Cor. iii. 16, 1 Cor. iii. 17.

9: 2 Chron. xv. 2.

10: The words are those of S. Barnabas. Possibly in Jerome's copy the passage may have been attributed to Ignatius.

11: Ps. xvi. 4. Sept. and Ps. xvi. 4. Vulgate.

12: Acts xiii. 32; Ps. lxxxviii. 21.

13: 2 Tim. iv. 13.

14: Acts xxiii. 2 sq.

15: S. John xviii. 23.

16: 2 Tim. iv. 14.

17: S. John vi. 70.

18: Rom. ii. 4, Rom. ii. 5.

19: iii. 4.

20: Jerem. xviii. 7, Jerem. xviii. 8.

21: Jonah iv. 10, Jonah iv. 11.

22: 1 Cor. xi. 6.

23: Gen. xxviii. 20 sq.

24: Gen. xxxii. 2.

25: Gen. xxxii. 31. L. R. V. Penuei. Comp. Mt. xix. 4.

26: Ib. 30. The words are Jacob's, but they are attributed to Moses as author.

27: Gen. xxxix. 23.

28: Gen. xlvi. 3, Gen. xlvi. 4.

29: Ex. xi. and Ex. xii.

30: Prov. iii. 5, Prov. iii. 6.

31: Ps. v. 8.

32: Prov. xvi. 3.

33: 2 Cor. ii. 16.

34: 2 Cor. iii. 4-6.

35: 2 Cor. iv. 7.

36: 2 Cor. x. 17, 2 Cor. x. 18.

37: 2 Cor. xii. 11.

38: S. Luke v. 8.

39: S. John xv. 5.

40: S. John vi. 44.

41: Esther vi. i.

42: Ps. lxxxix. 48.

43: Ezek. xviii. 4.

44: S. Matt. viii. 25.

45: S. Matt. v. 8.

46: Ps. cxix. 1.

47: Gen. xvii. 1, Gen. xvii. 2.

48: 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 1 Cor. xiii. 10.

49: S. Matt. vii. 11.

50: Gen. xvii. 1 sq.

51: Ex. xxxiii. 20.

52: 1 Tim. i. 17, 1 Tim. vi. 16.

53: i. 18.

54: 1 Cor. iv. 8.

55: Cant. iv. 7.

56: Phil. ii. 15.

57: 1 John iii. 2.

58: See S. Aug. De Gest. Pelag. §16. The widow was Juliana, mother to Demetrias (to whom Jerome addressed his Letter CXXX. "On the keeping of Virginité"). Pelagius' letter to Demetrias is found in Jerome's works (Ed. Vall.), vol. xi. col. 15.

59: The whole passage, as quoted by Augustin, runs as follows: "May piety find with thee a place which it has never found elsewhere. May truth, which no one now knows, be thy household friend; and the law of God, which is despised by almost all men, be honoured by thee alone." "How happy, how blessed art thou, if that justice which we are to believe exists only in heaven is found with thee alone upon earth." Then follow the words quoted above.

60: S. Luke xviii. 11.

61: Prov. xiii. 8.

62: Is. xiv. 13, Is. xiv. 14. Spoken of the King of Babylon.

63: Ps. xxxviii. 7. Vulg.

64: Ibid. 5.

65: Ps. cxliii. 2.

66: Ibid. 4.

67: Ps. cxvi. 11.

68: Rom. iii. 4.

69: Is. vi. 5.

70: Ps. cxx. 3. Vulg.

71: James iii. 2.

72: Ps. xxii. 2; Sept. and Ps. xxii. 2 Vulgate. S. Matt xxvii. 46, R. V., "and from the words of my roaring."

73: S. Luke xxiii. 46.

74: S. Luke xxiii, 34.

75: S. Matt. xi. 25.

76: Ps. xxi. 1.

77: S. Luke xviii. 13.

78: Is. iii. 12.

79: The grandfather of the Triumvir, born b.c. 142, died in the civil conflict excited by Marius, b.c. 87.

80: Tit. iii. 10.

81: Rom. v 14.

82: Cyp. Ep. 64 (al. 59). S. Augustine preaching at Carthage on June 27, 413, quoted the same letter, which was a Synodical letter of a.d. 253. See Bright's Anti-Pelagian Treatises, Introduction, p. xxi.

83: Marcellinus was the lay imperial commissioner appointed to superintend the discussion between the Catholics and Donatists at the Council of Carthage, a.d. 411. In 413 Heraclian, governor of Africa, revolted against Honorius, the Emperor, and invaded Italy. The enterprise failed, and on his return to Africa the promoter of it was put to death. The Donatists, called by Jerome "heretics," are supposed to have accused Marcellinus of taking part in the rebellion. He was executed in 414.

84: "On the Deserts and Remission of Sins, and the Baptism of Infants," in three books, the earliest of S. Augustin's Anti-Pelagian treatises. It was composed in reply to a letter from his friend Marcellinus, who was harassed by Pelagianising disputants. See S. Aug. "De Gest. Pel." §25.

85: S. John iii. 3.

86: The "De Spiritu et Littera." Marcellinus found a difficulty in Augustin's view of the question of sinlessness. See Bright's Anti-Pelagian Treatises, Introduction, p. xix.

87: Whether he who was made Bishop of Arles, in 429, is disputed. The treatise was the "De Natura et Gratia," written early in 415.

88: Sat. i. 10.

89: Or, better positions have been occupied.

90: Origen held the pre-existence of souls, endowed with free will, and supposed their condition in this world to be the result of their conduct in their previous state of probation.

Against the Pelagians - Prologue

Against the Pelagians Dialogue Between Atticus, a Catholic, and Critobulus, a Heretic.

Prologue.

Against the Pelagians Dialogue Between Atticus, a Catholic, and Critobulus, a Heretic. The anti-Pelagian Dialogue is the last of Jerome's controversial works, having been written in the year 417, within three years of his death. It shows no lack of his old vigour, though perhaps something of the prolixity induced by old age. He looks at the subject more calmly than those of the previous treatises, mainly because it lay somewhat outside the track of his own thoughts. He was induced to interest himself in it by his increasing regard for Augustin, and by the coming of the young Spaniard, Orosius, in 414, from Augustin to sit at his feet. Pelagius also had come to Palestine, and, after an investigation of his tenets, at a small council at Jerusalem, in 415, presided over by Bishop John, and a second, at Diospolis in 416, had been admitted to communion. Jerome appears to have taken no part in these proceedings, and having been at peace with Bishop John for nearly twenty years, was no doubt unwilling to act against him. But he had come to look upon Pelagius as infected with the heretical "impiety," which he looked upon (i. 28) as far worse than moral evil; and connected him, as we see from his letter to Ctesiphon (CXXXIII.), with Origenism and Rufinus; and he brings his great knowledge of Scripture to bear upon the controversy. He quotes a work of Pelagius, though giving only the headings, and the numbers of the chapters, up to 100 (i. 26-32); and, though at times his conviction appears weak, and there are passages (i. 5, ii. 6-30, iii. 1) which give occasion to the observation that he really, if unconsciously, inclined to the views of Pelagius, and that he is a "Synergist," not, like Augustin, a thorough predestinarian, the Dialogue, as a whole, is clear and forms a substantial contribution to our knowledge. Although its tone is less violent than that of his ascetic treatises, it appears to have stirred up the strongest animosity against him. The adherents of Pelagius attacked and burned the monasteries of Bethlehem, and Jerome himself only escaped by taking refuge in a tower. His sufferings, and the interference of Pope Innocentius in his behalf, may be seen by referring to Letters CXXXV.-CXXXVII., with the introductory notes prefixed to them. The following is a summary of the argument: Atticus, the Augustinian, at once (c. 1) introduces the question: Do you affirm that, as Pelagius affirms, men can live without sin? Yes, says the Pelagian Critobulus, but I do not add, as is imputed to us, "without the grace of God." Indeed, the fact that we have a free will is from grace. Yes, replies Atticus, but what is this grace? Is it only our original nature, or is it needed in every act. In every act, is the reply (2); yet one would hardly say that we cannot mend a pen without grace (3), for, if so, where is our free will? But, says Atticus (5), the Scriptures speak of our need of God's aid in everything. In that case, says Critobulus, the promised reward must be given not to us but to God, Who works in us. Reverting then to the first point stated, Atticus asks, does the possibility of sinlessness extend to single acts, or to the whole life? Certainly to the whole as well as the part, is the answer. But we wish, or will to be sinless; why then are we not actually sinless? Because (8) we do not exert our will to the full. But (9) no one has ever lived without sin. Still, says the Pelagian, God commands us to be perfect, and he does not command impossibilities. Job,

Zacharias, and Elizabeth are represented as perfectly righteous. No, it is answered (12), faults are attributed to each of them. John says, "He that is born of God sinneth not" (13); yet, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves." The Apostles, though told to be perfect (14) were not perfect: and St. Paul says (14a), "I count not myself to have apprehended." Men are called just and perfect only in comparison of others (16), or because of general subjection to the will of God (18), or according to their special characteristics (19), as we may speak of a bishop as excellent in his office, though he may not fulfil the ideal of the pastoral epistles (22). The discussion now turns to the words of Pelagius' book. "All are ruled by their own will" (27). No; for Christ says, "I came not to do My own will." "The wicked shall not be spared in the judgment." But we must distinguish between the impious or heretics who will be destroyed (28) and Christian sinners who will be forgiven. Some of his sayings contradict each other or are trifling (29, 30). "The kingdom of heaven is promised in the Old Testament." Yes, but more fully in the New. Returning to the first thesis, "That a man can be without sin if he wills it," the Pelagian says, If things, like desires which arise spontaneously and have no issue, are reckoned blamable, we charge the sin on our Maker; to which it is only answered that, though we cannot understand God's ways, we must not arraign His justice. In the rest of the book, Atticus alone speaks, going through the Old Testament, and showing that each of the saints falls into some sin, which, though done in ignorance or half-consciousness, yet brings condemnation with it.

Prologue.

1. After writing the 1 letter to Ctesiphon, in which I replied to the questions propounded, I received frequent expostulations from the brethren, who wanted to know why I any longer delayed the promised work in which I undertook to answer all the subtleties of the preachers of Impassibility.² For every one knows what was the contention of the Stoics and Peripatetics, that is, the old Academy, some of them asserted that the *paqh*, which we may call emotions, such as sorrow, joy, hope, fear, can be thoroughly eradicated from the minds of men; others that their power can be broken, that they can be governed and restrained, as unmanageable horses are held in check by peculiar kinds of bits. Their views have been explained by Tully in the "Tusculan Disputations," and Origen in his "Stromata" endeavours to blend them with ecclesiastical truth. I pass over Manichaeus,³ Priscillianus,⁴ Evagrius of Iborra, Jovinianus, and the heretics found throughout almost the whole of Syria, who, by a perversion of the import of their name, are commonly called⁵ Massalians, in Greek, Euchites, all of whom hold that it is possible for human virtue and human knowledge to attain perfection, and arrive, I will not say merely at a likeness to, but an equality with God; and who go the length of asserting that, when once they have reached the height of perfection, even sins of thought and ignorance are impossible for them. And although in my former letter addressed to Ctesiphon and aimed at their errors, so far as time permitted, I touched upon a few points in the book which I am now endeavouring to hammer out, I shall adhere to the method of Socrates. What can be said on both sides shall be stated; and the truth will thus be clear when both sides express their opinions. Origen is peculiar in maintaining on the one hand that it is impossible for human nature to pass through life without sin, and on the other, that it is possible for a man, when he turns to better things, to become so strong that he sins no more.

2. I shall add a few words in answer to those who say that I am writing this work because I am inflamed with envy. I have never spared heretics, and I have done my best to make the enemies of the Church my own.⁶ Helvidius wrote against the perpetual virginity of Saint Mary. Was it envy that

led me to answer him, whom I had never seen in the flesh?⁷ Jovinianus, whose heresy is now being fanned into flame, and who disturbed the faith of Rome in my absence, was so devoid of gifts of utterance, and had such a pestilent style that he was a fitter object for pity than for envy. So far as I could, I answered him also.⁸ Rufinus did all in his power to circulate the blasphemies of Origen and the treatise "On First Principles" (Peri 'Arxwn), not in one city, but throughout the whole world. He even published the first book of⁹ Eusebius' "Apology for Origen" under the name of¹⁰ Pamphilus the martyr, and, as though Origen had not said enough,¹¹ vomited forth a fresh volume on his behalf. Am I to be accused of envy because I answered him? and was his eloquence such a rushing torrent as to deter me through fear from writing or dictating anything in reply?¹² Palladius, no better than a villainous slave, tried to impart energy to the same heresy, and to excite against me fresh prejudice on account of my translation of the Hebrew. Was I¹³ envious of such distinguished ability and nobility? Even now the¹⁴ mystery of iniquity worketh, and every one chatters about his views: yet I, it seems, am the only one who is filled with envy at the glory of all the rest; I am so poor a creature that I envy even those who do not deserve envy. And so, to prove to all that I do not hate the men but their errors, and that I do not wish to vilify any one, but rather lament the misfortune of men who are deceived by knowledge falsely so-called, I have made use of the names of Atticus and Critobulus in order to express our own views and those of our opponents. The truth is that all we who hold the Catholic faith, wish and long that, while the heresy is condemned, the men may be reformed. At all events, if they will continue in error, the blame does not attach to us who have written, but to them, since they have preferred a lie to the truth. And one short answer to our calumniators, whose curses fall upon their own heads, is this, that the Manichaeian doctrine condemns the nature of man, destroys free will, and does away with I the help of God. And again, that it is manifest madness for man to speak of himself as being what God alone is. Let us so walk along the royal road that we turn neither to the right hand nor to the left; and let us always believe that the eagerness of our wills is governed by the help of God. Should any one cry out that he is slandered and boast that he thinks with us; he will then show that he assents to the true faith, when he openly and sincerely condemns the opposite views. Otherwise his case will be that described by the prophet:¹⁵ "And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not returned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly." It is a smaller sin to follow evil which you think is good, than not to venture to defend what you know for certain is good. If we cannot endure threats, injustice, poverty, how shall we overcome the flames of Babylon? Let us not lose by hollow peace what we have preserved by war. I should be sorry to allow my fears to teach me faithlessness, when Christ has put the true faith in the power of my choice.

1: Letter CXXXIII.

2: Apa^qeia .

3: Priscillian was Spaniard, who began to propagate his views, which were a various heresies, about the year mixture of 370. See Robertson, p. 295 sq., and Note on Jerome, Letter CXXXIII.

4: Evagrius Iberita. The name is taken either from a town named Ibera or Ibora in Pontus, or from the province of Iberia. Jerome, in the letter to which he refers, styles Evagrius Hyperborita, but this is thought to be an error for Hyborita. It has been suggested that Jerome was playing on the word Iberita. He was born in 345. He wrote, amongst many other works, a treatise Peri apa^qei^aj (On Impassibility), and no doubt Jerome refers to this a few lines above. He was a zealous champion

of Origen. See also Jerome, Letter CXXXIII. and note.

5: The Massalians or Euchites derived their name from their habit of continual prayer. The words are etymological equivalents (Massalians, from)l@c 6: He was a Roman lawyer. His treatise was written about a.d. See Jerome's treatise against him in this volume.

7: See introduction to Jerome's treatise against Jovinianus in this volume.

8: See Rufinus' works, especially the Prolegomena, and Jerome's controversy with him in vol. iii. of this series.

9: That is, Eusebius of Caesarea (a.d. 267-338), who was called Pamphilus from his friendship with Pamphilus the martyr.

10: Suffered martyrdom a.d. 309. He erected a library at Caesarea of 30,000 volumes. See Rufinus' Preface to his Apology in this series, vol. iii., with introductory note.

11: See Rufinus on the adulteration of the works of Origen, in this series, vol. iii. p. 421.

12: Palladius, bishop of Hellenopolis, the biographer and trusted friend of Chrysostom, was born about 367. He visited Bethlehem about 387 and formed a very unfavourable opinion of Jerome. He highly commended Rufinus. According to Epiphanius, as well as Jerome, he was tainted with Origenism. Tillemont, however, thinks that another Palladius may be referred to in these passages. His accounts of Jerome and Rufinus are given in his "Historia Lausiaca," c. 78 and 118.

13: Jerome was accused of envy or ill-will by Palladius. "Tanta fuit ejus invidia ut ab ea obrueretur virtus doctrinae. Cum ergo multis diebus cum eo versatus esset sanctus Posidonius, dicit mihi in aurem, "Ingenua quidem Paula, quae ejus curam gerit, praemoriatur, liberata ab ejus invidia. Ut autem arbitror, propter hunc virum non habitabit vir sanctus in his locis, sed ejus pervadet invidia usque ad proprium fratrem."-Pallad. Hist. Laus., §78, cf. §82.

14: 2 Thess. ii. 7.

15: Jer. iii. 10.

Biblical Prefaces - Chronicles

Jerome, Prologue to Chronicles (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF SAINT JEROME TO THE BOOK OF PARALIPOMENON

If the version of the Seventy translators is pure and has remained as it was rendered by them into Greek, you have urged me on superfluously, my Cromatius, most holy and most learned of bishops, that I translated the Hebrew scrolls into Latin words. For what has formerly won the ears of men and strengthened the faith of those being born to the Church was indeed proper to be approved by our silence. Now, in fact, when different versions are held by a variety of regions, and this genuine and ancient translation is corrupted and violated, you have considered our opinion, either to judge which of the many is the true one, or to put together new work with old work, and shutting off to the Jews, as it is said, "a horn to pierce the eyes." The region of Alexandria and Egypt praises in their Seventy the authority of Hesychius; the region from Constantinople to Antioch approves the version of Lucian the Martyr; in the middle, between these provinces, the people of Palestine read the books which, having been labored over by Origen, Eusebius and Pamphilius published. And all the world contends among them with this threefold variety. And Origen certainly not only put together the texts of four editions, writing the words in a single row so that one regularly differing may be compared to others agreeing among themselves, but what is more audacious, into the edition of the Seventy he mixed the edition of Theodotion, marking with asterisks those things which were missing, and placing virgules by those things which are seen to be superfluous. If, therefore, it was allowed to others not to hold what they once accepted, and after the seventy chambers, which are considered without a single author, individual chambers were opened, and thus is read in the churches what the Seventy did not know, why do my (fellow) Latins not accept me, who thus put together the new with the

inviolable old edition so that I might make my work acceptable to the Hebrews and, what is greater than these, to the authors, the Apostles? I have recently written a book, "On the best kind of translating," showing these things in the Gospel, and others similar to these, to be found in the books of the Hebrews: "Out of Egypt I called my son," and "For he will be called a Nazarene," and "They will look on him whom they have pierced," and that of the Apostle, "Things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, and had not arisen in the heart of man, which God has prepared for those loving Him." The Apostles and Evangelists were certainly acquainted with (the version of) the Seventy interpreters, but from where (were) they (supposed) to say these things which are not in the Seventy? Christ our God, author of both Testaments, says in the Gospel according to John, "He who believes in me, as Scripture has said, Rivers of living water will flow from his belly." Certainly, whatever is witnessed by the Savior to be written, is written. Where is it written? The Seventy don't have it; the Church ignores the apocrypha; thus the turning back to the Hebrew (books), from which the Lord spoke and the disciples took forth texts. In peace I will say these things of the ancients, and I respond only to my detractors, who bite me with dogs' teeth, slandering me in public, speaking at corners, the same (being) both accusers and defenders, when approving for others what they reprove me for, as though virtue and error were not in conflict, but change with the author. I have recalled another edition of the Seventy translators corrected from the Greek to have been distributed by us, and me not to need to be considered their enemy, which things I always explain in the gatherings of the brothers. And what is now Dabreiamin, that is, Words of the Days, I have translated. I have therefore made the foreignness of the meanings clearer, and have separated lines into members, so that the inextricable spaces and forest of names, which are confused through the error of the scribes, are, as Hismenius says, "themselves singing to me and mine," even if the ears of others are deaf.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduced the text as follows: This prologue gives us an interesting view into the history of St Jerome's translation work, and some very important information about the Septuagint in the world of his day. It appears that in addition to Origen's Hexaplaric text, and the other well-known Septuagintal texts, he had done a corrected Latin version of the Septuagint, which unfortunately is entirely lost to us. One of the interesting things in this prologue is the mention of Jerome separating "lines into members" (per versuum cola). That is, he has separated the members, the individual words, with spaces, which was then rarely done, but so common now that we don't even notice it. The name "Paralipomenon" means, "things left over." The book was called this because it included things not mentioned in Kings. I can remember being fascinated as a child by the exotic mystery of that name, Paralipomenon, like incense, silk, and the Faith itself, being something from the ancient world, in contrast to the much more prosaic Chronicles, a boring, uninteresting name to be found at the top of the local paper, and more redolent of the supermarket and gas station. But enough about me! Enjoy the continuing saga of the feisty St Jerome!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Daniel

Jerome, Prologue to Daniel (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF JEROME TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL The churches of the Lord Savior do not read the Prophet Daniel according to the Seventy interpreters, using (instead) the edition of Theodotion, and I don't know why this happened. For whether because the language is Chaldean and differs in certain properties from our speech, (or) the Seventy interpreters were not willing to keep the same lines in the translation, or the book was edited under their name by some unknown other who did not sufficiently know the Chaldean language, or not knowing anything else which was the cause, I can affirm this one thing, that it often differs from the truth and with proper judgment is repudiated. Indeed, it is known most of Daniel and some of Ezra were written in Hebrew letters but the Chaldean language, and one pericope of Jeremiah, and also Job to have much in common with the Arabic language. When I was a very young man, after the reading and flowery rhetoric of Quintilian and Cicero, when I had opened myself to the drudgery of this language and with much effort and much time I with difficulty had begun to pronounce the breathy and buzzing words, as though walking in a crypt to see a little light from above, I finally dashed myself against Daniel, and I was affected by such weariness that, sunken in desperation, I wanted to despise all (my) old work. Indeed, a Hebrew was encouraging me, and he was often repeating to me by his language "Persistent work conquers all," as in me (?) I saw an amateur among them, I began again to be a student of Chaldean. And so I might confess the truth, to the present day I am better able to read and understand than to pronounce the Chaldean language.

Therefore, I have shown these things to you as a difficulty of Daniel, which among the Hebrews has neither the history of Susanna, nor the hymn of the three young men, nor the fables of Bel and the dragon, which we, because they are spread throughout the whole world, have appended by banishing and placing them after the spit (or "obelus"), so we will not be seen among the unlearned to have cut off a large part of the scroll. I heard a certain one of the teachers of the Jews, when he derided the history of Susanna and said it to have been forged by an unknown Greek, to propose that which Africanus also proposed to Origen, these etymologies to come down from the Greek language: "to split" from "mastich" and "to saw" from "oak" (απο του σχινου σχισαι και απο του πρινου πρισαι). On

which subject we are able to give this understanding to those of our own (language), as we might, for example say it to have said of the oak tree (ilice), "you will perish there (illico)" or of the mastic tree (lentisco), "May the angel crush you like a lentil bean (lentem)" or "You will not perish slowly (lente)" or "Pliant (lentus), that is, flexible, you are led to death" or anything which fits the name of the tree. Then he jested for there to have been so much leisure time for the three young men, that in the furnace of raging fires they played with (poetic) meter, and called in order all the elements to the praise of God. Or what miracle or Divine inspiration is it, either a dragon having been killed by a lump of tar or the tricks of the priests of Bel having been discovered, which things are better accomplished by the wisdom of a clever man rather than by the prophetic Spirit? When indeed he came to Habakkuk and had read (of him) having been carried off from Judea to Chaldea carrying a dish, he requested an example where we might have read in all the Old Testament any one of the saints to have flown with a heavy body and in a short time to have passed over so great a space of lands. To which, when one of us rather a little too quick to speaking had brought Ezekiel into the discussion (lit. "middle") and said him to have been moved from Chaldea to Judea, he derided the man and from the same scroll proved Ezekiel to have seen himself moved in the Spirit. Finally also our Apostle, namely as an erudite man and one who had learned the Law from the Hebrews, was also not daring to affirm himself taken away in the body, but was to have said "Whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know, God knows." By these and arguments of such kinds he exposed (or "accused") the apocryphal fables in the book of the Church.

Concerning which subject, leaving the judgment to the decision of the reader, I warn him Daniel is not to be found in the Prophets among the Hebrews, but among those which they titled the Hagiographa. Since indeed all of Scripture is divided by them into three parts, into the Law, into the Prophets, (and) into the Hagiographa, that is, into five and eight and eleven books, which is not

(necessary) to explain at this time. And to those things of this prophet, or rather against this book, which Porphyry accused, the witnesses are Methodius, Eusebius, (and) Apollinaris, who, responding to his madness with many thousands of verses, I do not know whether they are satisfying to the interested reader. For which reason I entreat you, O Paula and Eustochium, pour out prayers for me to the Lord, so that as long as I am in this little body, I might write something pleasing to you, useful to the Church, (and) worthy to posterity. I am indeed not greatly moved by the judgments of the present, which on either side are in error either by love or by hate.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows: This prologue by St Jerome is a little odd to translate, as it's dealing in part with some wordplay in both Greek and Latin. I've placed the original words in parentheses, as I've done in others of the prologue translations, but they're especially necessary here. I get the distinct impression that St Jerome is actually showing us a sense of humor, or is at the very least recalling some funny sayings from a past teacher. There is also the fascinating and rather bittersweet retrospective on his learning Chaldean, which we call Aramaic these days. Another interesting part is his mention of the Hebrew Scriptures being divided into three parts: the Law with five books, the Prophets with eight books, and the Hagiographa with eleven books, for a total of twenty-four books. And though he doesn't name the books included in those numbers here, the scheme is close enough to that which he presented in his "Helmeted Introduction" to Kings (22 books there, as opposed to 24 here), to determine these are the books for each category: Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve; Hagiographa: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Chronicles, Ezra/Nehemiah, Esther, and somewhere in there Ruth and Lamentations, which in the "Helmeted Introduction" are attached to Judges and Jeremiah respectively, presumably to make the total number of books fit the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet: twenty-two. So, we have at least that evidence of what was the canon of at least some Jews in Palestine in the late fourth and early fifth centuries A.D. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Esther

Jerome, Prologue to Esther (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE TO ESTHER The Book of Esther stands corrupted by various translators. Which (book) I, lifting up from the archives of the Hebrews, have translated more accurately word for word. The common edition drags the book by knotted ropes of words hither and yon, adding to it things which may have been said or heard at any time. This is as is usual with instruction by schools, when a subject has been taken up, to figure out from the words which someone could have used, which one either suffered injury, or which one caused injury (to the text). And you, O Paula and Eustochium, since you have both studied to enter the libraries of the Hebrews and also have approved of the battles of the interpreters, holding the Hebrew Book of Esther, look through each word of our translation, so you may be able to understand me also to augmented nothing by adding, but rather with faithful witness to have translated, just as it is found in the Hebrew, the Hebrew history into the Latin language. We are not affected by the praises of men, nor are we afraid of (their) slanders. For to be pleasing to God we do not inwardly fear those caring for the minas of men, "for God has scattered the bones of those desiring to be pleasing to men" (Ps 52.6), and according to the Apostle, those like this are "not able to be servants of Christ" (Gal 1.10).

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows: St

Jerome has little to say in this prologue about his actual work, except that the "common edition," presumably the or an Old Latin version, of the Book of Esther was a mess, and he resorted to the Hebrew text of his day. In this respect, his translation is a valuable version representing a literal translation of a Hebrew text found in Palestine in the late fourth century. He unfortunately doesn't describe in this letter the messy situation of the additions to Esther found in the Septuagint version, which he included en masse at the end of his version, with short notes indicating where they belonged in his translation. These additions can be found in various editions of the apocrypha, but they're best read in the version in the NRSV, which is a full translation of the Septuagint text, not just of the additions, and includes them all in their places, not in a bunch at the end. Anyhow, enjoy! UPDATE: Thanks once again to the very

much appreciated help of Michael Gilleland of Laudator

Temporis Acti, I've fixed a sentence (now the second one in the first paragraph) that gave me trouble.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Ezekiel

Jerome, Prologue to Ezekiel (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE TO THE PROPHET EZEKIEL The Prophet Ezekiel was led captive with Joachin king of Judah to Babylon, and he prophesied there to those who were captives with him, to those repenting that they had willingly handed over the prophecy of Jeremiah to enemies, and yet saw the city Jerusalem to stand, which he had predicted would fall. And in his thirtieth year of age, and in the fifth year of the captivity, he began to speak to his fellow captives. And at the same time, though later, this one in Chaldea and Jeremiah in Judea prophesied. His style is neither greatly eloquent nor excessively rustic, but properly proportioned between both. And he was a priest, as also was Jeremiah, the beginning and ending of the book being wrapped in great obscurities. But also the common edition of him does not differ much from the Hebrew one. Because of that I greatly wonder what was the cause, that when we have the same translators in all the books, in some they translated the same things, in others, different things. Therefore, read this also according to our translation because, by being written in words with spaces, it gives a clearer meaning to readers. And if my friends also mock this, say to them that no one restrains them from writing. But I do not respect him who follows them, which is more clearly said in Greek, as they are called insult-swallowers (φαγολοιδοροι).

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows:

There's not much to say about this prologue, as it's pretty straightforward.

Near the end, St Jerome sarcastically calls his detractors "friends." And

there's Greek in this one, too! Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Ezra v2

St. Jerome, The Prologue on the Book of Ezra: English translation [Translated by Mark DelCogliano] The Prologue of Eusebius Hieronymus on the Book of Ezra 1

Whether it is more difficult to do what you ask or to say no, I have still not decided.² For, on the one hand, it is impossible to refuse you when you are requesting something of significance. But, on the other hand, the weight of the burden imposed presses down upon my neck so hard that it would be necessary to lighten it before rushing into it thus encumbered. In addition to this, there is the hostility of my detractors. They think everything I write³ ought to be refuted and rip apart in public what they read in private, even though their conscience accuses them. They do this to such an extent that I am compelled to cry out and say, "Lord, free my soul from wicked lips and from the deceitful tongue!"⁴ For three years now you have been continually writing and rewriting to me, asking that I translate the book of Ezra for you from Hebrew, making your request as if you did not already have Greek and Latin editions, or as if everyone would not immediately spit upon whatever I translate.⁵ As someone said, "To strive in vain and not to seek anything in your weariness except hatred is the pinnacle of insanity."⁶ And so, I beseech you, my most dear Domnio and Rogatianus: do not make the book known to the public and be content to read it privately. Do not toss food to those who disdain it and thus avoid the snobbery of those who know only how to judge others but not how to do anything themselves. But if there are some of the brothers who are not displeased with my work, you may give them the master-copy. Advise them to copy the Hebrew names, of which there is a great abundance in this book, with distinct spaces between them. For it will be of no benefit to have corrected the book unless the corrections are diligently preserved by the copyists. No one ought to be bothered by the fact that my edition⁷ consists of only one book, nor ought anyone take delight in the dreams found in the apocryphal third and fourth books. For among the Hebrews the texts of Ezra and Nehemiah comprise a single book, and those texts which are not used by them and are not concerned with the twenty-four elders ought to be rejected outright.⁸ But if anyone should oppose you on the basis of the Septuagint translation (whose very variety of texts indicates that its copies are corrupt and damaged, nor can it by any means be claimed that what is diverse is true), have him take a look at the gospels.⁹ There are many passages in them which are said to be from the Old Testament but which are not found in the Septuagint translation. Examples include: "He shall be called a Nazarene,"¹⁰ "Out of Egypt I have called my son,"¹¹ "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced,"¹² and many others that I shall reserve¹³ for a more extensive work. And so, have him attempt to locate where these passages are written in the Septuagint. When he cannot locate them, you should read aloud from the editions I recently did,¹⁴ which are continually denigrated by the tongues of those who have nothing good to say.

Though I intend to

keep things brief, what I am about to say by way of introduction certainly

makes the most sense.¹⁵

In my version I translated whatever was not contained in the Greek version or was there in a variant form.¹⁶

What translator do they butcher with their criticism? Let them ask the Hebrews and judge the fidelity of my translation on the basis of their authority. It is quite a different matter, if with eyes shut (as the saying goes), they want to speak ill of me and not follow the example of the Greeks in their application to study and goodwill. When the Gospel of Christ was already shining brightly, after they had read the Septuagint translators, the Greeks attentively read the Jewish and Ebonite translators of the old Law, that is, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. Through the labors of Origen in his Hexapla, the Greeks caused these three to be used for ecclesiastical purposes. How much more ought speakers of Latin be grateful for having discovered that Greece in her exultation borrows something from herself!¹⁷

First of all, it is very expensive and infinitely difficult to procure possession of all the versions.¹⁸ Secondly, even those who own them but are ignorant of the Hebrew language will make all the more mistakes, being unable to determine which reading out of the many is more correct. In fact this is what happened recently among the Greeks to a certain one of their wisest men. The result was that in some instances he disregarded the sense of Scripture and followed the mistake of some translator. However, as I have¹⁹ at least a little bit of knowledge about the Hebrew language and am not at all without facility in Latin, I am better able²⁰ than others to make decisions²¹ and render things as I myself understand²² them in our language. And so, even though the serpent hisses "and victorious Sinon is scattering firebrands,"²³ with the help of Christ my voice shall never be silenced; even with a severed tongue I shall manage to stammer out something. Those who want to read my edition should do so; those who do not should put it aside. If they pick apart the writing, if they find fault with the letters, by your charity I shall be more provoked to apply myself to study than be discouraged by their detraction and hatred.

1

Translated by Mark DelCogliano from B. Fischer, et al., eds., *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 638-639. Jerome's preface to his translation of Ezra was written c. 394 to Domnio, a Roman presbyter (see Jerome, Eps. 47.3 and 50), and Rogatianus, of whom nothing is known.

2

Jerome generally speaks in the first person singular ("I, me"). He exceptionally uses the first person plural ("we, us"), which instances are nevertheless rendered in the first person singular for the sake of consistency.

These exceptions are, however, footnoted.

3

Lit. "we write."

4

Psalms 119:2.

5

Lit. "whatever is translated by us."

6

Sallust, Iug. 3.

7

Lit. "the book edited by us."

8

There were several different books which circulated in antiquity under the name of Ezra (or Esdras). The books which the RSV calls Ezra and Nehemiah were originally one book in Hebrew, called Ezra. The division of the original Ezra into two books was a later development. The Latin and Greek traditions, however, each have four Ezra books, called Esdras A-D (Greek) and I-IV Esdras (Latin). The RSV Ezra corresponds to Esdras B and I Esdras, while RSV Nehemiah to Esdras C and II Esdras. Jerome's Ezra contained both I and II Esdras in a single book, in imitation of the Hebrew. Esdras A and III Esdras corresponds to what the RSV calls 1 Esdras; it sequentially consists of (1) 2 Chronicles 35:1-36:23 (summarized), (2) Ezra 1:1-4:24, (3), additions, (4) Ezra 5:1-10:44, and (5) Nehemiah 7:38-9:12. The RSV's 2 Esdras, which is an apocryphal apocalypse from the Christian period, corresponds to Esdras D and IV Esdras. Jerome here explicitly denies canonicity to III and IV Esdras.

9

Jerome's project of translating the scriptures from the Hebrew was continually challenged by those who appealed to the authority of the Septuagint as the basis for deciding questions of canonicity. Jerome is here attempting to convince his readers to follow the Hebrew tradition by undercutting the reliability of the Septuagint text in two ways: (1) its variety, and (2) its lack of Old Testament passages quoted as such in the New Testament.

10

Mt 2:23; cf. Jg 13:5.

11

Mt 2:15; cf. Hosea 11:1.

12

Jn 19:37; cf. Zechariah 12:10.

13

Lit. "we shall reserve."

14

Lit. "the editions we recently did."

15

N.b. Jerome is about to defend his methodology.

16

I.e. whatever in the Greek text varied from the Hebrew text.

17

I.e. the Greeks were not content with the older Septuagint translation, but produced newer translations from the Hebrew original in the manner of the Septuagint translators. Latin speakers should be inspired by their scholarly example.

18

I.e. the Greek versions which differ from each other.

19

Lit. "as we have."

20

Lit. "we are better able."

21

I.e. about the correct reading from among the variants.

22

Lit. "as we ourselves understand."

23 Vergil, Aen. 2.329 This text was translated and placed in the public domain by Mark DelCogliano, 2004. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Ezra

Jerome, Prologue to Ezra (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF EUSEBIUS HIERONYMUS TO THE BOOK OF EZRA

Whether it may be more difficult to do or not to do what you have requested, I have not yet established. For it is also not my desire to refuse your commands, and the greatness of weight imposed thus press upon the neck, so that before a falling under the bundle, there might rather be a lightening (of the load). The efforts of the envious agree with this, who consider all that I write reproof, with conscience occasionally fighting against them, publicly tearing apart what they read secretly, to such a degree that I am compelled to cry out and to say: "O Lord, free my soul from crooked lips and a false tongue" (Ps 119.2). It is the third year that you always write and write again, that I might translate the book of Ezra for you from Hebrew, as though you do not have the Greek and Latin scrolls, or whatever it is which is translated by us might not be something immediately spat upon by all. As a certain person says, "For to strive without effort, and not to seek anything by wearying except hatred, is extreme insanity" (Sallust, Jugurtha 3). Therefore, I implore you, my dearest Domnius and Rogatian, that, keeping the reading private, you will not bring the book forth into the public, nor throw food to the fastidious, and you will avoid the pride of them who know only (how) to judge others, and themselves (know how) to do nothing. And if there are any of the brothers whom we do not displease, give the text to them, admonishing that they transcribe the Hebrew names, of which there is a great abundance in this book, separately and with intermediate spaces. For it will profit nothing to correct the book, without diligence being preserved in the correction of the copiers.

Neither should it disturb anyone that the book edited by us is one, nor should they be delighted by the dreams of the third and fourth books (which are) of the apocrypha, both because among the Hebrews the discourses of Ezra and Nehemiah are confined to one scroll, and those things which

are not found among them, nor are of the twenty-four elders, are for throwing away. And if anyone sets the (version of the) Seventy interpreters before you, the variety of the texts of which shows them torn and perverted, nor indeed can it be asserted truth is diverse, send him to the Gospels, in which are set down many things as though from the Old Testament, things which are not found among the Seventy interpreters, like this: "He will be called a Nazarene," and "From Egypt I have called my son," and "They will look on him whom they have pierced" and many other things which we are saving for a more extensive work, and ask of him where they might be written, and when he has not been able to reveal (where), you must read from these texts which recently were edited by us, daily pierced by the tongues of the slanderous. But so that I might come to a shortcut, certainly what I will introduce is the most reasonable. I have given, in what is translated by me, anything that is not found in the Greek or is found otherwise (than there). Which interpreter do they mangle? They may ask the Hebrews and their authors, whether they accept or reject the sense of my translation. Furthermore, it is another thing if, as is said, with eyes closed they want to slander me and not imitate the study and goodwill of the Greeks, who, after the Seventy translators, with the Gospel of Christ now shining, they both attentively read the Jewish and Ebionite interpreters of the Old Law, namely Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and have also dedicated (them) to the churches, through the labor of Origen in the Hexapla. How much more should Latins be grateful, having understood that the joy of Greece is to borrow anything from itself (?). For firstly, it is of great expense and of infinite difficulty to be able to have all of the texts; then also, those who have (them) and are ignorant of the Hebrew words will err more, not knowing which ones of the many will have said the truth. Which thing also happened recently to a certain very wise man among the Greeks, so that occasionally leaving the sense of the Scriptures, the error of some particular translator was followed. And we, who at least have a little knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, and our Latin does not lack style in any way, are both better able than others to judge, and to express those things of them which we understand in our language. Therefore, even if a serpent hisses, "and the victor Sinon throws burning torches," with Christ helping, my speech will never be silenced, for (even my) severed tongue will stutter (something). Those who will, may read; those who won't, may throw away. They may scatter (?) the writings; they may slander the letters. Much more by your love will I be provoked toward study, rather than be deterred by their detraction and hatred.

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Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Genesis

Jerome, Prologue to Genesis (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF SAINT JEROME THE PRESBYTER ON THE PENTATEUCH

I have received the desired letters of my Desiderius, who in a foretelling of things to happen has obtained with Daniel a certain name [see Vulgate Daniel 9.23: quia vir desideriorum es tu, "for you are a man of desires"], beseeching that I might hand over to our hearers a translation of the Pentateuch in the Latin tongue from the Hebrew words. Certainly a dangerous work, open to the barkings of detractors, who accuse me of insult to the Seventy to prepare a new interpretation from the old ones, thus approving ability (or "genius") like wine. As has very often been testified by me, I, for my part, am able to offer a portion in the Tabernacle of God, without the riches (or "abilities") of one being damaged by the poverties of others. But that I may have dared, the effort of Origen provoked me, who mixed the translation of Theodotion to the ancient edition, with asterisk and obelus, that is, star and spit, a work distinguishing everything, while he either makes to shine those things which were previously lacking, or he slays and pierces through everything superfluous. And especially by the authority of the Evangelists and the Apostles, in which we read many things from the Old Testament which are not found in our books, as it is (with): "Out of Egypt I have called My Son," and "For He shall be called a Nazarene," and "They will look on Him Whom they have pierced," and "Rivers of living waters shall flow from his belly," and "Things which no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has arisen in the heart of man, which God has prepared for those loving Him," and many others which are desiring a proper context (or "book" [Jerome uses a Greek word here: συνταγμα]).

Therefore let us ask them where these are written, and when they are unable to say, we may produce them from the Hebrew books. The first witness is in Hosea, the second in Isaiah, the third in Zechariah, the fourth in Proverbs, the fifth is also in Isaiah, of which many are ignorant, the follies of apocrypha being followed, preferring Iberian dirges to authentic books. The cause of the error is not for me to explain. The Jews say it was done wisely in deliberation, so Ptolemy, the worshipper of one god, might not yet discover a double divinity with the Hebrews; he made them (do so) chiefly for this reason, because he was seen to fall into the dogma of Plato. Accordingly, wherever anything sacred in Scripture is witnessed of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, they are either translated otherwise, or they have passed over all in silence, so they might both satisfy the king, and might not divulge the secret of the Faith. And I don't know who was the first author to construct with his lying the seventy cells in Alexandria, into which were divided those who wrote, with Aristeas the champion [another Greek word: υπερασπιστης] of the same Ptolemy, and many after the time of Josephus having reported no such thing, but rather (for them) to have gathered in groups, writing in one basilica, (and) not to have prophesied. For it is one thing to be a seer, another to be an interpreter. In that one the Spirit predicts things to come; in this one by his learning and abundance of words he translates those things he has understood. Unless Tullius (Cicero) is understood to have translated, by inspiration of the spirit of rhetoric, the Economics of Xenophon, the Protagoras of Plato, and the For Ctesiphon by Demosthenes. Or the Holy Spirit

wove together the witnesses of these books one way through the Seventy interpreters and another way through the Apostles, so that what they passed over in silence, what was written by these was invented [? - obscure].

Therefore, what? We condemn the ancients? By no means! But after those earlier in the House of God, we work at what we can. They are interpreted before the coming of Christ and what they didn't know, they translated in ambiguous (or "uncertain") sentences. We write after His Passion and Resurrection, not so much prophecy as history. For in the one are told what things were heard, in the other what were seen. What we understand better, we also translate better.

Hear, therefore, O rival; listen, O detractor! I do not condemn, I do not censure the Seventy, but I confidently prefer the Apostles to all of them.

Christ speaks to me through their mouth, who I read were placed before the prophets among the Spiritual gifts, among which interpreters hold almost the last place. Why are you tortured by spite? Why do you incite ignorant souls against me? If anywhere in the translation I have been seen by you to err, ask the Hebrews. Consult the teachers of the many different cities. What theirs have of Christ, yours do not have. It is another matter if they have afterward removed the testimonies used by the Apostles against them, and the Latin copies are more correct than the Greek, (and) the Greek than the Hebrew! Truth is against these enviers.

Now I pray you, dearest Desiderius, so that in such a great work which you have made me undertake and take up a beginning from Genesis, you might help in (your) prayers, how I might, by the same Spirit by Whom the books were written, be able to translate them into Latin words.

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Kevin introduced the text as follows: I've

decided to translate next all the prologues contained in the Vulgate, which were written by Jerome except for the Prologue to Paul's Letters, apparently. I

have previously translated Jerome's Prologue to the Gospels, which included a discussion of the Eusebian canon table system used in the Gospels, in the earliest of my web pages. This translation of the Prologue to the Pentateuch is just a first draft, of course. Once I've finished all the prologues, I'll probably have a better grasp on some of the peculiarities of Jerome's language and be able to fix some of these renderings which I wasn't so sure of here. So, this isn't written in stone, obviously, but I also beg the reader's indulgence, now and in the future, for any peculiarities, particularly if you're familiar with the Latin versions.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Gospels

Jerome, Letter to Pope Damasus: Preface to the Gospels PREFACE TO THE GOSPELS 1
BEGINNING OF THE PREFACE FOR THE GOSPELS OF SAINT JEROME THE PRESBYTER
To the blessed Pope Damasus, from Jerome,

You urge me to make a new work from the old, and that I might sit as a kind of judge over the versions of Scripture dispersed throughout the whole world, and that I might resolve which among such vary, and which of these they may be which truly agree with the Greek. Pious work, yet perilous presumption, to change the old and aging language of the world, to carry it back to infancy, for to judge others is to invite judging by all of them. Is there indeed any learned or unlearned man, who when he picks up the volume in his hand, and takes a single taste of it, and sees what he will have read to differ, might not instantly raise his voice, calling me a forger, proclaiming me now to be a sacrilegious man, that I might dare to add, to change, or to correct anything in the old books? Against such infamy I am consoled by two causes: that it is you, who are the highest priest, who so orders, and truth is not to be what might vary, as even now I am vindicated by the witness of slanderers. If indeed faith is administered by the Latin version, they might respond by which, for they are nearly as many as the books! If, however, truth is to be a seeking among many, why do we not now return to the Greek originals to correct those mistakes which either through faulty translators were set forth, or through confident but unskilled were wrongly revised, or through sleeping scribes either were added or were changed? Certainly, I do not discuss the Old Testament, which came from the Seventy Elders in the Greek language, changing in three steps until it arrived with us 2. Nor do I seek what Aquila, or what Symmachus may think, or why Theodotion may walk the middle of the road between old and new. This may be the true

translation which the Apostles have approved. I now speak of the New Testament, which is undoubtedly Greek, except the Apostle Matthew, who had first set forth the Gospel of Christ in Hebrew letters in Judea. This (Testament) certainly differs in our language, and is led in the way of different streams; it is necessary to seek the single fountainhead. I pass over those books which are called by the name of Lucian and Hesychius, for which a few men wrongly claim authority, who anyway were not allowed to revise either in the Old Instrument after the Seventy Translators, or to pour out revisions in the New; with the Scriptures previously translated into the languages of many nations, the additions may now be shown to be false.

Therefore, this present little preface promises only the four Gospels, the order of which is Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, revised in comparison with only old Greek books. They do not disagree with many familiar Latin readings, as we have kept our pen in control, but only those in which the sense will have been seen to have changed (from the Greek) are corrected; the rest remain as they have been.

We have also copied the lists which Eusebius the bishop of Caesarea, following Ammonius of Alexandria, set out in ten numbers, as they are had in the Greek, so that if any may then wish through diligence to make known what in the Gospels may be either the same, or similar, or singular, he may learn their differences. This is great, since indeed error has sunk into our books; while concerning the same thing, one Evangelist has said more, into another they have added because they thought it inferior; or while another has differently expressed the same sense, whichever one of the four he had read first, he will revise the other to the version he values most. Whence it happened how in our time that all have been mixed; in Mark are many things of Luke, and even of Matthew; turned backwards in Matthew are many things of John and of Mark, yet in the remaining others, they are found to be correct. When, therefore, you will have read the lists which are attached below,

the confusion of errors is removed, and you will know all the similar passages, and the singular ones, wherever you may turn to. In the first list, the four agree, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; in the second, three, Matthew, Mark, John; in the third, three, Matthew, Luke, John; in the fourth, three, Matthew, Mark, John; in the fifth, two, Matthew, Luke; in the sixth, two, Matthew, Mark; in the seventh, two, Matthew, John; in the eighth, two, Luke, Mark; in the ninth, two, Luke, John; in the tenth some peculiar ones are given which the others don't have. Separately in the Gospels are numbered sections of unequal length, beginning with one and increasing to the end of the books. This is written before the passage in black, and it has under it a red number, which shows to which of the ten (lists) to proceed, with the first number to be sought in the list. Therefore, when the book is open, for example, if you will wish to know of this or that chapter in which list they may be, you will immediately be shown by the lower number. Returning to the beginning (of the book) in which the different lists are brought together, and immediately finding the same lists by the title in front, by that same number which you had sought in the Evangelist, which you will find marked in the inscription, you may also view other similar passages, the numbers of which you may note there. And when you know them, you will return to the single volumes, and immediately finding the number which you will have noted before, you will learn the places in which either the same things or similar things were said.

I wish that in Christ you may be well, and that you will remember me, most blessed Pope.

END OF THE PREFACE FOR THE GOSPELS OF SAINT JEROME THE PRESBYTER

1. Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, 27 July 1999, Berkeley, California. As far as I am able to find, this is the first translation of the full letter into English, modern or otherwise.
2. Hebrew > Greek > Latin. This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 27th July 1999, and released by him into the public domain.

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Biblical Prefaces - Isaiah

Jerome, Prologue to Isaiah (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF JEROME TO THE PROPHET ISAIAH No one, when he will have seen the Prophets to be written in verses, would think them to be bound in meter among the Hebrews, and to have anything in common with the Psalms or the works of Solomon. But what is customary to be used in Demosthenes and Cicero, as they are written in words with divisions, who certainly wrote prose and not in verses, we also, providing ease of reading, have divided a new translation with a new kind of writing. And first, knowing of Isaiah what is presented in his speech, certainly as a man noble and of urbane elegance he does not have anything of rusticity mixed into (his) speech. For this reason it happens that in comparison with others the translation was not able to preserve the flower of his speech. And then adding this, that it is being spoken not only by a prophet, but by an evangelist. For thus all the mysteries of Christ and the Church are pursued to clarity, so that you would not think them to be prophesied of the future, but they covered the history of things past. For this reason I suppose the Seventy interpreters to have been unwilling at that that time to set forth clearly for the gentiles the sacraments of their faith, not throwing holy things to dogs or pearls to swine, which things, when you will have read this edition, you will note were hidden by them. Nor am I unaware of how much work it is to understand the Prophets, or for anyone not to be easily able to judge from the translation, unless he will have before understood those things which he will have read, and we to suffer from the bites of many, who, being goaded by jealousy, what they are not able to follow, they despise. Therefore, knowing and being wise, I place my hand in the fire, and nevertheless I pray this for the scornful readers: that just as the Greeks after the Seventy translators read Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion, either for study of their doctrines or so that they better understand the Seventy through their collation, that these are deemed worthy to have at least one translator after the earlier ones. Reading first and afterward despising, they are seen not to condemn by judgment, but rather by the ignorant presumption of hatred. And Isaiah prophesied in Jerusalem and Judea when the ten tribes had not yet been led into captivity, and the oracle covered both kingdoms, now together, now separately. And while he sometimes looks at present history, and indicated the return of the people to Judea after the Babylonian captivity, yet is all his concern for the calling of the nations and for the coming of Christ. Who, how much the more you love, O Paula and Eustochium, the more strive for him, so that for the present disparagement, by which the envious incessantly tear me into pieces, the same One may restore a reward to me in the future, Who knows me to have exerted myself in the learning of foreign languages: the Jews might not jump all day on the errors of the Scriptures in His Church.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows:

St Jerome's preface here to Isaiah is very interesting for its mention of the way in which he wrote it out: with spaces between the words. While this is natural for us, it was not the way writing was done in those days. The addition of the spaces was also mentioned in his prologue to Chronicles, where it was especially necessary to keep separate all the many Hebrew names in transliteration, which Latins and Greeks were always mixing up, not knowing Hebrew. His mention of the prophecies of Isaiah covering "all the mysteries of Christ and the Church" is entirely intriguing, and it would be nice to have had more on that subject, but here we are. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Jeremiah

Jerome, Prologue to Jeremiah (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF JEROME TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH The Prophet Jeremiah, for whom this prologue is written, was seen among the Hebrews to be certainly more rustic in style than Isaiah and Hosea and certain other prophets, but equal in meanings, which the same Spirit obviously prophesied. Furthermore, his simplicity of speech happened from the place in which he was born. For he was from Anathoth, which is up to today a village three miles distant from Jerusalem, a priest from priests and sanctified in his mother's womb, dedicating with her virginity a man of the Gospel to the Church of Christ. This boy began to prophesy the captivity of the city and Judea both not only by the Spirit, but also with eyes of flesh. The Assyrians had already transferred the ten tribes of Israel, and now colonies of gentiles had taken possession of their lands. For this reason he prophesied only in Judah and Benjamin, and he lamented the ruins of his city in a fourfold alphabet, which we have presented in the measure of the meter and in verses. Besides this, the order of visions, which is entirely confused among the Greeks and Latins, we have corrected to the original truth. And the Book of Baruch, his scribe, which is neither read nor found among the Hebrews, we have omitted, standing ready, because of these things, for all the curses from the jealous, to whom it is necessary for me to respond through a separate short work. And I suffer because you think this. Otherwise, for the benefit of the wicked, it was more proper to set a limit for their rage by my silence, rather than any new things written to provoke daily the insanity of the envious.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows: A couple of notes on this prologue by St Jerome to Jeremiah are in order. He mentions that Jeremiah "lamented the ruins of his city in fourfold alphabet," *civitatis suae ruinas quadruplici plaxit alfabeto*. This is a reference to the acrostic first four chapters of Lamentations, in which each verse begins with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet, thus "in a fourfold alphabet." Another perhaps puzzling reference just after that is to his presenting the book "in the measure of the meter and in verses." This refers to his breaking the verses into separate lines based upon metrical measurements, probably according to the Hebrew, and written with separation of verses and words. Basically think of the way that poetry is printed today, in short lines that take no notice of the width of the page, and that's what he's describing. If I find a picture of one of the early Vulgate manuscripts reflecting this, I'll post it. St Jerome also mentions a confusion of the order of the visions in Jeremiah as known among the Greeks and Latins. This refers to the very different (and probably original) arrangement of the prophecies as found in the Septuagint and is supported by a Dead Sea Scroll fragment, so we know that there were Hebrew manuscripts with this order, which Jerome did not. Anyhow, in the meantime, enjoy yet another prologue. There aren't many left now! Once I've done all of them, I'll go back through to edit them and then post them all on a single page, with notes and such.

Biblical Prefaces - Jerome's notes to the additions to Esther

Jerome, Notes on the Additions to Esther (2006) [by Kevin P. Edgecomb]

I mentioned the Additions to the Book of Esther in the post Jerome's Prologue to Esther, above (well, below, actually). These additions are usually found in translations of the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonicals, and are designated as follows, with citations for the the Hebrew text of Esther interspersed where it occurs in italics:

Addition A: Vulgate 11.2-12.6

Hebrew 1.1-2.18 Addition B: Vulgate 13.1-7 Hebrew 3.14-4.17 Addition C: Vulgate 13.8-18; 14.1-19

Addition D: Vulgate 15.4-19 (often renumbered in other versions as 15.1-16; Vulgate 15.1-3 is not generally translated in such collections)

Hebrew 5.3-8.12 Addition E: Vulgate 16.1-24 Hebrew 8.13-10.3 Addition F: Vulgate 10.4-13; 11.1 In the Septuagint, the text is essentially as described above, with the additions interspersed with the rest of the book (see the NRSV Apocrypha Esther for this in translation). But St Jerome, in his new Latin edition of Esther, moved all the additions to the end of the book. And since it was the Vulgate Bible which was the first one to have both chapter and verse numbers, we're stuck with the peculiar numbering due to that dislocation. One of the interesting things I noticed in looking at these is that there are a few notes that St Jerome had written in these Addition chapters. I'm translating them and posting them here just for fun. I use the Addition A-F convention noted above to show the placement of the notes.

Before Addition A: This was also the beginning in the common edition, which is found neither in the Hebrew nor among any other translations.

After Addition A: Up to here is the proem.

Before Addition B: These which follow are set in the place where it is written in the scroll "and they plundered their goods" or "their substance," which we find only in the common edition.

After Addition B: Up to here is the text of the letter.

Before C: These which follow I have found written after the place where it is read "and hurrying, Mordechai did everything which Esther had

commanded him," yet they are not found in the Hebrew and are not found inside any other translations.

Before 15.1: These also I found added to the common edition.

Before D: And also these too, which are below.

Before E: The text of the letter of King Artaxerxes, which he sent on behalf of the Jews to all the provinces of his kingdom, which also is not itself found in the Hebrew scroll.

Before F: Those things which are found in the Hebrew I have expressed with complete accuracy. And these things which follow I have found written in the common edition in which are contained the language and letters of the Greeks, and sometimes after the end of the book this chapter is found, which, according to our custom, we annotate with an obelus, that is, a spit.

Something that might not be immediately obvious is that the section "Before F" just above is actually a tripartite note. First, it comprises a conclusion to St Jerome's translation of the Hebrew Book of Esther: "Those things which are found in the Hebrew I have expressed with complete accuracy." Second is an introduction to all the additions, which by his arrangement follow just after this point: "And these things which follow I have found written in the common edition in which are contained the language and letters of the Greeks." And third comes the introduction to the immediately following chapter, which is the conclusion of the book in the Septuagint: "and sometimes after the end of the book this chapter is found, which, according to our custom, we annotate with an obelus, that is, a spit." This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Job

Jerome, Prologue to Job (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF SAINT JEROME TO THE BOOK OF JOB

I am forced, through each of the books of Divine Scripture, to respond to the slander of adversaries who accuse my translation of rebuking the Seventy translators, not as though among the Greeks Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion had also translated either word for word, or meaning for meaning, or by mixing both together, also a kind of translation of equal proportion, and also Origen had divided all the scrolls of the Old Instrument with obeli and asterisks which, either added by him or taken from Theodotion, he added to the ancient translation, proving what was added to have been lacking. Therefore my detractors should learn to accept in full what they have accepted in part, or to erase my translation along with their asterisks. For it should not be, that those who they accepted to have omitted many things may not be acknowledged to have certainly erred in some things, especially in Job, in which if you will have removed those things which are added under the asterisks, the greater part will be cut off. And this is only among the Greeks. Otherwise, among the Latins, before their translation which we recently edited under asterisks and obeli, almost seven hundred or eight hundred verses are (missing), so that the book, shortened and cut up and eaten away, shows its deformity publicly to readers. And this translation follows no translator of the ancients, but will rather convey from the speech itself (which is) Hebrew and Arabic and sometimes Syrian, now words, now meanings, now both together. For even among the Hebrews the whole book is considered oblique and slippery and what the Greek rhetors call figuratively arranged (εσχηματισμενος), and while one thing is said, it does another, as if you would hold tightly an eel or a little murena fish, when you press harder, then the sooner it escapes. I remember I paid not a little money toward understanding of this scroll, for an instructor from Lydda who among the Hebrews was thought to have first rank, with whose teaching I know not whether I accomplished anything; this one thing I know: for me not to have been able to translate anything that I didn't know before.

Therefore, from the beginning to the words of Job, among the Hebrews the speech is prose. Next, from the words of Job in which he says, "May the day perish in which I was born, and the night in which it was said: A man is conceived," to that place, where it is written before the end of the scroll: "Therefore I accuse myself and make repentance in dust and ashes," the verses are in hexameter, running in dactyl and spondee and, according to the idiom of the language, also accepting numerous other (poetic) feet not of the same (number of) syllables, but of the same intervals. Sometimes also, by breaking the law of (poetic metrical) numbers, the rhythm itself is found sweet and ringing, which is understood better by prosodists than by a simple reader. And from the verse mentioned above to the end of the book, the small section that remains continues with prose speech. If that seems unbelievable to anyone, namely that among the Hebrews there are meters, and either the Psalter or the Lamentation of Jeremiah or almost all the songs of the Scriptures are to be understood in the manner of our Flaccus and the Greek Pindar and Alkaios and Sappho, let him read Philo, Josephus, Origen, and Eusebius of Caesarea, and by their

testimony he will prove me to speak the truth. For which reason, let my dogs therefore hear me to have labored at this scroll, not as rebuking the ancient translation, but rather so those things in it which are either obscure or missing or certainly corrupted by the error of scribes may be made more clear by our translation, who have both learned Hebrew speech in part, and also in Latin, almost from our cradle we were worn out (?) among grammarians and rhetors and philosophers. But if among the Greeks, after the edition of the Seventy, with the Gospel of Christ shining, the Jew Aquila, and Symmachus and Theodotion, judaizing heretics, are accepted, who have hidden many mysteries of the Savior by sly translation, and yet are found in the Hexapla among the churches and are explained by men of the Church, how much more should I, a Christian of Christian parents and bearing the standard of the cross on my forehead, whose study was to recover the missing, to correct the corrupted, and to open the sacraments of the Church with pure and faithful speech, not be rejected by either disdainful or by malicious readers? Let whoever will to keep the old books, either written on purple skins with gold and silver, or in uncial letters, as they commonly say, loads of writing rather than books, while they leave to me and mine to have poor little leaves and not such beautiful books as correct ones. Each edition, the Seventy according to the Greeks and mine according to the Hebrews, was translated into Latin by my labor. May each one choose what he will, and prove himself studious rather than malevolent.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin adds: The third paragraph includes some information on metric poetry which is probably pretty obscure to most readers, as the language of metric poetry, indeed the composition of such poetry itself, is no longer so common. If anyone is puzzled by the language of "dactyl" and "spondee" and "feet," see the very helpful article on Dactylic Hexameter on Wikipedia.

Also, in the beginning of the last paragraph, St

Jerome refers to "my dogs." He is not describing pets, but referring rather insultingly to his detractors, who he elsewhere describes as "barking" and so on.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Joshua

Jerome, Prologue to Joshua (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PREFACE OF SAINT JEROME TO THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Having finally finished with the Pentateuch of Moses, as though freed for a great advantage, we set (our) hand to Jesus son of Nave, who the Hebrews call Joshua ben Nun, that is, Joshua son of Nun, and to the book of Judges, which they call Sopthim, to Ruth also and Esther, which they extol by the same names. And I admonish the reader, that he, being careful with Scripture, might preserve the forest of Hebrew names and (their) separations divided into parts, so that our work and his effort might not be wasted. And that in the first place, which I often testify, let him know me not to coin the new in rebuke of the old, as though my friends are accused, but rather to offer, for my part, to men of my language, those things of ours which still delight, like the copies of the Hexapla for the Greeks, which require great expense and work, so they might have our edition, and anywhere the readings of the ancient scrolls are doubtful, comparing this to them, they might find what they seek, especially when among the Latins there are as many versions as there are books, and everyone has, according to his own judgment, either added or subtracted whatever seemed right to him, and he indeed may not have been able to be certain what differed. From which may scorpion cease to rise against me with bow-like wound, and poisoned tongue desist from slandering a holy work, either accepting, if it has pleased, or condemning, if it has displeased, and remember these verses: "Your mouth has abounded in malice, and your tongue constructed deceits; sitting, you have spoken against your brother, and against the son of your mother imposed a scandal. These things you have done and I was quiet; you wrongly thought that I might be like you: I will accuse you and stand before your face" [Psalm 49.19-21]. For what advantage is it to the listener for us to sweat at work and

to work at criticizing others, for Jews to lament that the opportunity has been taken away from them for falsely accusing and insulting Christians, and for men of the Church to despise, indeed to tear apart, that from which enemies are tortured. If only what is old in the interpretation pleases them, which things are also not displeasing to me, and they think of receiving nothing further, why are they reading or not reading those things which are either added or cut out by the asterisks and obeli? For what reason have the churches accepted the translation of Daniel by Theodotion? Why are Origen and Eusebius Pamphilou admired for having treated entire editions similarly? Or what foolishness was it, after they had spoken true things, to set forth things which are false? And from where in the New Testament are they able to prove the received testimonies, which are not supported in the books of the Old (Testament)? Thus, we say, I may be seen to be not altogether quiet to accusers.

Otherwise, after the falling asleep of Paula, whose life is an example of virtue, and these books, which I was not able to deny to Eustochium the virgin of Christ, we have decided "while spirit yet rules these limbs" to incline to the explanation of the Prophets, and to resume, in a kind of return home, a work long unfinished, especially when the admirable and holy man Pammachius demands the same in letters, and we, hurrying on to the homeland, need to pass by the deadly songs of the sirens with deaf ear.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduced the text as follows: This one was tough because of some quite peculiar sentences, which I think I've pretty much figured out now. I don't think there's any English translation of this one around, certainly not one in my possession, so I didn't have one as a "cheat sheet" when I got stuck, which is good for my Latin, but not for my schedule....

Many thanks especially to Michael Gilleland (of Laudator Temporis Acti fame!) for puzzling over a certain ambiguous scriptura

with me! UPDATE: I've changed a couple of sentences with Michael Gilleland's input. Several formerly questionable renderings are now resolved. Huzzah!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Judith v2

St. Jerome, The Preface on the Book of Judith: English translation¹ [Translated by Andrew S. Jacobs] THE PREFACE OF JEROME ON THE BOOK OF JUDITH

Among the Jews, the book of Judith is considered ²

among the apocrypha; its warrant for affirming those [apocryphal texts] ³

which have come into dispute is deemed less than sufficient. Moreover, since it was written in the Chaldean

⁴ language, it is counted among the historical books. But since the Nicene Council is

considered to have counted this book among the number of sacred Scriptures, I have

acquiesced to your ⁵ request (or should I say demand!): and, my other work set

aside, from which I was forcibly restrained, I have given a single night's work ⁶, translating according to sense rather than verbatim.

I have hacked away at the excessively error-ridden panoply of the many codices; I conveyed in Latin only what I could find

expressed coherently in the Chaldean words. Receive the

widow Judith, example of chastity, and with triumphant praise acclaim her with eternal

public celebration. For not only for women, but even for men, she has been given as a

model by the one who rewards her chastity, who has ascribed to her such virtue that

she conquered the unconquered among humanity, and surmounted the insurmountable.

Footnotes

1. This was translated and released to the public

domain by Andrew S. Jacobs, University of California Riverside, to whom many

thanks. The text used was

the Patrologia Latina text which reads:

PRAEFATIO HIERONYMI IN LIBRUM JUDITH.

[Col. 0037D] Apud Hebraeos liber Judith inter apocrypha legitur: [Col. 0038D] cujus auctoritas ad roboranda illa quae in [Col. 0039A] contentionem veniunt, minus idonea judicatur. Chaldaeo tamen sermone conscriptus, inter historias computatur. Sed quia hunc librum Synodus Nicaena in numero sanctarum Scripturarum legitur computasse, acquievi postulationi vestrae, immo

exactioni: et sepositis occupationibus, quibus vehementer arctabar, huic unam lucubrationculam dedi, magis sensum e sensu, quam ex verbo verbum transferens. Multorum codicum varietatem vitiosissimam [Col. 0040A] amputavi: sola ea, quae intelligentia integra in verbis Chaldaeis invenire potui, Latinis expressi. Accipite Judith viduam, castitatis exemplum, et triumphali laude, perpetuis eam praeconiis declarate. Hanc enim non solum feminis, sed et viris imitabilem dedit, qui castitatis ejus remunerator, virtutem ei talem tribuit, ut invictum omnibus hominibus vinceret, et insuperabilem superaret. (PL 29:37-39) 2. legitur = counted/considered.

3. illa, i.e. the apocryphal texts.

4. By 'Chaldean' he means Old Aramaic.

5. Your-Plural, vestrae. According to Migne, the translation was probably requested by Jerome's friends and fellow ascetics Chromatius and Heliodorus: "From this it seems to us to correctly conclude that this preface was written to men, and not to women [the assumption being that most of the translations were done either for men abroad or for Paula and/or Eustochium, his companions in Bethlehem-ASJ], and this very translation of Judith was offered forth by Jerome. To be sure, although there is no mention of the persons to whom it was dedicated in the editions or book manuscripts, Tillemont (and others subsequently) deduced from this, as they say, suitability of the work to have been given to his beloved fellow-toilers [πηιλοπονωταταις, in Greek] Paula and her daughter Eustochium. It seems more fitting to us that he was compelled to this work as well by those brother bishops, Chromatius and Heliodorus, in whose names he had dedicated earlier the neighboring books of Tobit..." etc. [Footnote - g] [Col. 0040C] (The footnote is to the part where Jerome talks about how Judith provides an example "even for men") 6. "Night's work" = lucubrationcula. This text was translated and placed in the public domain by Andrew S. Jacobs, 2004. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Judith

Jerome, Prologue to Judith (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE TO JUDITH

Among the Hebrews the Book of Judith is found among the Hagiographa, the authority of which toward confirming those which have come into contention is judged less appropriate. Yet having been written in Chaldean words, it is counted among the histories. But because this book is found by the Nicene Council to have been counted among the number of the Sacred Scriptures, I have acquiesced to your request, indeed a demand, and works having been set aside from which I was forcibly curtailed, I have given to this (book) one short night's work translating more sense from sense than word from word. I have removed the extremely faulty variety of the many books; only those which I was able to find in the Chaldean words with understanding intact did I express in Latin ones.

Receive the widow Judith, an example of chastity, and declare triumphal honor with perpetual praises for her. For this one, imitable not only for women, but also for men, has the Rewarder of her chastity given, Who has granted such strength, that she conquered the one unconquered by all men, she surpassed the insurpassable.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows: In

this preface, too, St Jerome makes mention of the authority of the Church, in this case literally the famous First Ecumenical Council of Nicea, as declaring Judith among the books of Holy Scripture. In fact, he also mentions that "among the Hebrews" the book was considered as among the "Hagiographa," some would say a somewhat flexible term, which in the previous prologue (to

Tobias), he certainly seems to have equated with the Scriptures. If this is the case, then at one point in history, in the late 4th century, Judith was considered by at least some Jews in Palestine to have been Scripture. He does, however, in that very first sentence note that even though it is considered an "accepted" book, this is considered to have no bearing on the status of other books. Interesting. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Psalms (70)

Jerome, Prologue to Psalms (LXX) (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PREFACE OF EUSEBIUS HIERONYMUS TO THE BOOK OF PSALMS Not long ago while located in Rome, I emended the Psalter, and had corrected it, though cursorily, for the most part according to the (version of the) Seventy interpreters. Because you see it again, O Paula and Eustochium, corrupted by the error of the scribes, and the more ancient error to prevail rather than the new emendation, you urge that I work the land like some kind of field already ploughed, and uproot with sideways furrows the thorns being reborn, saying it is proper that what so frequently sprouts badly is just as frequently cut down. For this reason I remind by my usual preface, both you for whom this mighty work exerts itself, and those who would have copies of such, that those things to have been diligently emended might be transcribed with care and diligence. Each may himself note either a horizontal line or a radiant sign, that is, either an obelus or an asterisk, and wherever he sees a preceding virgule, from there to the two points which we have marked in, he knows more is to be found in the (version of the) Seventy interpreters; and where he has looked at the image of a star, he will have recognized an addition from the Hebrew scrolls, likewise up to the two points, only according to the edition of Theodotion who did not differ from the Seventy interpreters in simplicity of speech. I, knowing me to have done this for you and for each studious person, do not doubt there will be many who, either envious or arrogant, "prefer to be seen to condemn the brilliant rather than to learn," and to drink from a turbulent river much rather than from an entirely pure spring.

END OF THE PREFACE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows:

St Jerome did two separate translations of the

Psalms. One was simply a revision of the popular Old Latin psalms (which are still used in some older rites, most notably the Ambrosian, I recall), with reference to the Greek Psalms version in the Hexapla. This is the prologue to that edition of the Psalms. The other version, based directly on the Hebrew Psalms, will follow separately.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Psalms (Hebrew)

Jerome, Prologue to Psalms (Hebrew) (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF ANOTHER PREFACE OF THE SAME Eusebius Hieronymus to his Sophronius, health!

I know some to think the Psalter to be divided into five books, as though
wherever among the (version of the) Seventy interpreters is written

γενοιτο

γενοιτο, that is, "may it be, may it be," for

which in Hebrew is said "amen amen," is the end of the books. And we, the
authority of the Hebrews being followed, and especially of the Apostles, who
always in the New Testament name the Book of Psalms, have asserted one volume.

We also testify of all the authors who are set down in the titles of their
psalms, namely of David, and of Asaph, and of Jeduthun, of the Sons of Korah, of
Heman the Ezraite, of Moses, and of Solomon, and of the rest, which Ezra
compiled into one volume. For if amen, for which Aquila translated "trustworthy"
(πεπιστωμενος), is

only placed at the end of books and not sometimes wither at the beginning or at
the end of either words or sentences, then both the Savior never said in the
Gospel, "Amen, amen, I say to you," and the letters of Paul (never) contained it
in the middle work, also Moses, and Jeremiah, and others in this way had many
books, who in the middle of their books frequently interposed amen, as also the
number of twenty-two Hebrew books and the mystery of the same number will be
changed. For also its Hebrew title, Sephar Thallim, which is interpreted "Scroll
of Hymns," agreeing with the Apostolic authority, shows not many books, but one
volume.

Therefore, because recently, when disputing with a Hebrew, you produced certain testimonies
about the Lord Savior from the Psalms, and he, wishing to outmaneuver you, asserted throughout
nearly every one of the words that it is not found thus in Hebrew, so that you were opposed to the
(version of the) Seventy interpreters, you most zealously demanded that, after Aquila, Symmachus

and Theodotion, I translated a new edition in Latin speech. For you said yourself to be greatly confused by the variety of interpreters, so that you are inclined by love to be content with either my translation or my judgment. For this reason, having been compelled by you, to whom I am unable to deny even those things I cannot do, I again handed myself over to the barkings of detractors, and I preferred you to question my strengths rather than my willingness in friendship. Certainly I will speak confidently and I will cite many witnesses of this work, knowing me in this matter to have changed nothing of the truth of the Hebrew. Therefore, wherever my edition has differed from the old ones, ask any of the Hebrews, and you will clearly see me to be torn in pieces by those striving after error, who "prefer to be seen to condemn the brilliant rather than to learn," most perverse men. For when they always desire new delicacies, and their gullets, like the seas, do not suffice, why in only study of the Scriptures are they content with an old flavor? I do not say this so that I might bite my predecessors, nor have I considered slandering any translation of those which I very diligently corrected, (and) formerly gave to men of my language; but that it is one thing to read the Psalms in the churches of those believing in Christ, another thing to answer the Jews who accuse every word. But if, as you proffer, you will have translated by little work into Greek, Opposing the Ridiculers (αντιφιλονεικων τοις διασυρουσιν), and you will have made the most learned men witnesses to my ignorance, I will say to you that (saying) of Horace, "You do not carry wood into a forest." Except that I have this solace, if in the common work I know both praise and slander to be common to me and you.

I desire you to be well in the Lord Jesus, and to remember me.

END OF THE PREFACE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows: This is the preface St Jerome wrote to accompany his translation of the Psalms from the Hebrew. He apparently wasn't too entirely sure of his success in this, as seems to be implied at a couple of points in this letter, which shows St Jerome to have had both a humble and a humorous streak which hasn't been entirely evident in the other prefaces. I think it helps to put those into a better light, as well. Most interesting is what he says about this translation's origins, as specifically designed to reflect the Hebrew for the sake of apologetics, while other translations have their place in being read in the churches. Of course, it's the other version of the Psalms, based on the LXX, which were so popular and so ubiquitous before the modern craze of translating from Hebrew came along. St Jerome is explicit in that he wouldn't have had a problem with that. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - The "Helmeted" introduction to Kings

Jerome, "Helmeted" introduction to Kings (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF SAINT JEROME TO THE BOOK OF KINGS

There are twenty-two letters among the Hebrews, as is also witnessed by the language of the Syrians and Chaldeans, which is for the most part similar to the Hebrew; for these twenty-two elements also have the same sound, but different characters. The Samaritans still write the Pentateuch of Moses in the same number of letters, only they differ in shapes and points (or "endings" apicibus). And Ezra, the scribe and doctor of the Law, after the capture of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple under Zerubbabel, is certain to have found (or "invented" repperisse) other letters, which we now use, when up to that time the characters of the Samaritans and the Hebrews were the same. In the book of Numbers this same total is also mystically shown by the census of the Levites and the priests. And we find in certain Greek scrolls to this day the four-lettered Name of God written in the ancient letters. But also the thirty-sixth Psalm, and the one hundred tenth, and the one hundred eleventh, and the one hundred eighteenth, and the one hundred forty-fourth, although written in different meter, are nevertheless woven with an alphabet of the same number. And in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and his prayer, also at the end of the Proverbs of Solomon from that place in which he says "Who can find a strong woman?" are counted the same alphabet or sections. Furthermore, five of the letters among them are double: chaph, mem, nun, phe, sade. For they write with these one way at the beginning and in the middle of words, another at the end. From which also five are considered double books by most: Samuel, Malachim, Dabreiamin, Ezra, Jeremiah with Cinoth, that is, his Lamentation. Therefore, just as there are twenty-two elements, by which we write in Hebrew all that we say, and the human voice is understood by their beginnings (or "parts" initiis), thus twenty-two scrolls are counted, by which letters and writings a just man is instructed in the doctrine of God, as though in tender infancy and still nursing. The first book is called among them Bresith, which we call Genesis; the second, Hellesmoth, which is named Exodus; the third, Vaiecria, that is Leviticus; the fourth Vaiedabber, which we call Numbers; the fifth, Addebarim, which is designated Deuteronomy. These are the five books of Moses, which they appropriately call Thorat, that is, the Law. The second order is made of the Prophets, and begins with Jesus son of Nave, which is called among them Joshua benNum. Then they append Sopthim, that is the book of Judges; and they attach Ruth to the same, because the history narrated happened in the days of the Judges. Samuel follows third, which we call First and Second Kingdoms. Fourth is Malachim, that is Kings, which book contains Third and Fourth Kingdoms; and it is much better to say Malachim, that is Kings, rather than Malachoth, that is Kingdoms, for it does not describe the kingdoms of many nations, but only that of the Israelite people which contains twelve tribes. Fifth is Isaiah, sixth Jeremiah, seventh Ezekiel, eighth the book of the Twelve Prophets, which is called Thareasra among them. The third order holds the Hagiographa, and begins with Job, the first book, the second by David, which is also one book of Psalms comprising five sections. The third is Solomon, having three books: Proverbs, which they call Parables, that is Masaloth, and Ecclesiastes, that is Accoeleth, and The Song of

Songs, which they denote with the title Sirassirim. Sixth is Daniel, seventh Dabreiamin, that is Words of the Days, which we may call more clearly a chronicle (Gk here: χρονικον) of all of Divine history, which book is written among us as First and Second Paralipomenon; eighth is Ezra, which is also in the same manner among Greeks and Latins divided into two books; ninth is Esther. And thus there are likewise twenty-two books in the Old (Testament), that is five of Moses, eight of the Prophets, nine of the Hagiographa. Although some may write Ruth and Cinoth among the Hagiographa, and think of counting these books among their number, and then by this to have twenty-four books of the Old Law, which the Apocalypse of John introduces with the number of twenty-four elders worshipping the Lamb and offering their crowns, prostrated on their faces, and crying out with unwearying voice: "Holy, holy, holy Lord God almighty, Who was and Who is, and Who will be." This prologue to the Scriptures may be appropriate as a helmeted introduction to all the books which we turn from Hebrew into Latin, so we may be able to know whatever is outside of these is set aside among the apocrypha. Therefore, Wisdom, which is commonly ascribed to Solomon, and the book of Jesus son of Sirach, and Judith and Tobias, and The Shepherd are not in the canon. I have found the First Book of the Maccabees (is) Hebrew, the Second is Greek, which may also be proven by their styles.

While these things may be so, I implore you, reader, that you might not consider my work a rebuke of the ancients. Each one offers to the Tabernacle of God what he is able. Some offer gold and silver and precious stones; others, linen and purple, scarlet and blue. It will go well with us, if we offer the skins and hair of goats. For the Apostle still judges our more contemptible parts more necessary. From which both the whole of the beauty of the Tabernacle and each individual kind, a distinction of the present and future Church, is covered with skins and goat-hair coverings, and the heat of the sun and the harmful rain are kept off by those things which are of lesser value. Therefore, first read my Samuel and Kings; mine, I say, mine. For whatever we have learned and know by often translating and carefully correcting is ours. And when you come to understand what you did not know before, either consider me a translator, if you are grateful, or a paraphraser, if ungrateful, although I am truly not at all aware of anything of the Hebrew to have been changed by me. Certainly, if you are incredulous, read the Greek and Latin books and compare (them) with these little works, and wherever you will see among them to differ, ask any one of the Hebrews, in whom you might place better faith, and if he confirms us, I think that you will not consider him a diviner, as he has similarly divined in the very same place with me. But I also ask you, handmaidens of Christ, who have anointed the head of your reclining Lord with the most precious myrrh of faith, who have in no way sought the Savior in the tomb, for whom Christ has now ascended to the Father, that you might oppose the shields of your prayers against the barking dogs which rage against me with rabid mouth and go around the city, and in it they are considered educated if slandering others. I, knowing my humility, will always remember these sentences: "I will guard my ways, so I will not offend with my tongue; I have placed a guard on my mouth, while the sinner stands against me; I was mute, and humiliated, and silent because of good things."

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduced the text as follows: This is a translation of Jerome's well-known "helmeted introduction" (galeatum principium) to Kings (that is 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings) which is usually

considered the most useful of his Old Testament introductions. It's certainly the longest. Along with the usual defense against critics, Jerome includes an interesting arrangement of what he considers the canonical books of the Old Testament, which are 22 in number, just like the Hebrew alphabet. He mentions the tripartite arrangement of books in the Hebrew Bible as current among the Jews of his day, the earliest unambiguous description of this arrangement, including the actual names of the books in each category.

I'll revisit this one later and include some

notes on the Hebrew words mentioned here and how the pronunciation, preserved

perhaps imperfectly through the Latin manuscript tradition, differs from

today's typical Hebrew pronunciation. For now, though, I'm focusing on just

getting all the prefaces translated in at least a first draft.

Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - The books of Solomon

Jerome, Prologue to the Books of Solomon (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb]
BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF JEROME TO THE BOOKS OF SOLOMON Jerome to Bishops Cromatius and Heliodorus. May the letter join those joined in priesthood. Indeed, a sheet may not divide those who the love of Christ has connected. You request commentaries on Hosea, Amos, Zechariah, and Malachi. I wrote, even if it cost through ill-health. You have sent the solace of expenses, by our scribes and copyist having been sustained, so that our genius exerts itself most strongly for you. And behold, from every side a diverse crowd of those demanding, as though it is equal for me either to work for you with others hungering, or I might be subject to anyone besides you in matters of giving and receiving. And so, with a long sickness broken, I have not kept inwardly silent this year and been mute with you. I have dedicated to your names the work of three days, namely the translation of the three scrolls of Solomon: Masloth, which are Parables in Hebrew, called in the common edition Proverbs; Coeleth, which in Greek is Ecclesiastes, in Latin we could say Preacher; (and) Sirassirim, which is translated into our language Song of Songs.

Also included is the book of the model of virtue (παναρετος)

Jesus son of Sirach, and another falsely ascribed work (ψευδεπιγραφος)

which is titled Wisdom of Solomon. The former of these I have also found in

Hebrew, titled not Ecclesiasticus as among the Latins, but Parables, to which

were joined Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, as though it made of equal worth the

likeness not only of the number of the books of Solomon, but also the kind of

subjects. The second was never among the Hebrews, the very style of which reeks

of Greek eloquence. And some of the ancient scribes affirm this one is of Philo Judaeus.

Therefore, just as the Church also reads the books of Judith, Tobias,

and the Maccabees, but does not receive them among the canonical Scriptures,

so also one may read these two scrolls for the strengthening of the people,

(but) not for confirming the authority of ecclesiastical dogmas.

If anyone is truly more pleased by the edition of the Seventy interpreters,

he has it already corrected by us. For it is not as though we build the new so

that we destroy the old. And yes, when one will have read most carefully, he

will know our things to be more understood, which haven't soured by having

been poured into a third vessel, but have rather preserved their flavor by

having been entrusted to a new container immediately from the press.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows:

Here St Jerome gives us not only more information about his work habits (he translated Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs in three days), but also a bit more on his understanding of the apocrypha. He implicitly defines the canon of Scriptures as those books used "for confirming the authority of ecclesiastical dogmas," and excludes the apocrypha from that category. Granted, the majority of the apocrypha are not useful for this, but then neither, admittedly, are a number of canonical works. It's an argument or position against the apocrypha that we have yet to find the origins of. And although St Jerome here states that the apocrypha that he names are not "canonical Scriptures," we know that he recognized the authority of the Council of Nicea in advancing Judith as canonical. So, St Jerome's equivocation on the matter reveals a more subtle understanding, in which he considers the apocrypha good "for the strengthening of the people." Anyhow, perhaps St Jerome will have more to say on the subject in some of the upcoming prologues. We'll see. One fun thing he mentions in this prologue is the marginal tradition that Philo Judaeus of Alexandria was the author of Wisdom of Solomon, something also found in the Canon Muratorianus, and various other places, though not often. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Tobit

Jerome, Prologue to Tobit (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE TO TOBIAS Jerome to the Bishops in the Lord Cromatius and Heliodorus, health!

I do not cease to wonder at the constancy of your demanding. For you demand that I bring a book written in Chaldean words into Latin writing, indeed the book of Tobias, which the Hebrews exclude from the catalogue of Divine Scriptures, being mindful of those things which they have titled Hagiographa. I have done enough for your desire, yet not by my study. For the studies of the Hebrews rebuke us and find fault with us, to translate this for the ears of Latins contrary to their canon. But it is better to be judging the opinion of the Pharisees to displease and to be subject to the commands of bishops. I have persisted as I have been able, and because the language of the Chaldeans is close to Hebrew speech, finding a speaker very skilled in both languages, I took to the work of one day, and whatever he expressed to me in Hebrew words, this, with a summoned scribe, I have set forth in Latin words. I will be paid the price of this work by your prayers, when, by your grace, I will have learned what you request to have been completed by me was worthy.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows: This

is the first of St Jerome's Vulgate prologues for one of the apocrypha that I've done. It's very interesting, if one pays attention to his reasoning in this prologue, it being actually a letter which accompanied his translation of Tobias to the Bishops Cromatius and Heliodorus. St Jerome is often considered or claimed to be vehemently opposed to the apocrypha, especially in antapocryphal Protestant circles. But we find in this letter that this is only half of the picture. While the apocrypha were not included in the Hebrew Bible, and St

Jerome respects the Hebrew studies on this matter, he explicitly states here that the decisions of Christian bishops are more important. Something like this has been the response to critics of the "apocrypha," "deuterocanonicals," or whatever you want to call them, throughout the ages: they are included in the canon because that has been, is, and always will be the practice of the Church. It's good to see this from St Jerome, and we'll see a similar thing in his Prologue to Judith, coming up next. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Twelve minor prophets

Jerome, Prologue to the Twelve Prophets (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb] BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE OF THE TWELVE PROPHETS The order of the Twelve Prophets is not the same among the Hebrews as it is among us. For which reason, according to how it is read there, they are also arranged here. Hosea is composed of short clauses and speaking as though by aphorisms. Joel is clear in the beginning, more obscure at the end. And they each have their individual properties up to Malachi, who the Hebrews name Ezra the scribe and teacher of the Law. And because it is too long to speak of all these things now, I would only you were warned this, O Paula and Eustochium: the book of the Twelve Prophets to be one; and Hosea a contemporary (συνχρονος) of Isaiah; (and) Malachi in fact to have been of the times of Haggai and Zechariah. And those (books) in which the time is not set down in the title, under those kings which they were to have prophesied under, they also prophesied after those which have titles.

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows: This is St Jerome's prologue to the Twelve Prophets, or Twelve Minor Prophets as they're often called, because these books are shorter relative to the books of the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. It's a very short prologue, but there are two items of interest in it. One is that St Jerome mentions that "the Hebrews" of his day considered Malachi to be Ezra. I don't think I'd ever read that before, so it was a pleasant surprise. The other interesting thing is that St Jerome considered the Twelve Prophets to be chronologically arranged (which I do too, great, somewhat curmudgeonly minds thinking alike), and that the books which don't include dating indications can be dated after those who do. And now, I think my introduction to the prologue has now come to more words than are actually in it, so with no further ado, here it is. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Biblical Prefaces - Vulgate preface to Paul's letters

(Jerome), The Vulgate Preface to Paul's Letters (2006) [Translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb]
BEGINNING OF THE PROLOGUE TO THE LETTERS OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

First is asked, for what reason after the Gospels, which are a supplement of the Law and in which are collected for us examples and precepts of living abundantly, the Apostle wanted to send these letters to individual churches. And it was seen to have been for this reason, that, as is known, he strengthened the firstborn of the Church from new arising heresies, so that he cut off present and arising errors and also afterward excluded future questions by the example of the Prophets, who after the publishing of the Law of Moses, in which were collected all the commandments of God, nevertheless still by its revived teaching the people always restrained (their) sins, and because of the example in the books they indeed also left a memorial for us.

Then is asked, for what reason did he not write more than ten letters to churches. For there are ten with that one which is called "To the Hebrews," for the remaining four are sent particularly to disciples. So that he showed the New not to differ from the Old Testament, and himself not to do (anything) against the Law of Moses, he arranged his letters (according) to the number of the first Ten Words (decalogi) of the commandments, as many precepts as that one ordered those freed from Pharaoh, the same number this one taught those purchased from servitude of the devil and idolatry. And also the most learned men have handed down (the tradition of) the two stone tablets to have been a figure of the two Testaments.

Truly, some have contended the letter which is written to the Hebrews not to be of Paul because it is not titled with his name, and because of the distance of language and style, but rather either of Barnabas according to Tertullian, or of Luke according to some others, or in fact of Clement the disciple of the

Apostles and ordained Bishop of the Roman Church after the apostles. To which one should respond: if, accordingly, it cannot be of Paul because it does not have his name, therefore it cannot be of anyone because it is titled with no name. But if that is absurd, it is better to be believing it of him who shines with such eloquence of his teaching. But because among the churches of the Hebrews he was considered, with a false suspicion, as a destroyer of the Law, he was willing, with name unspoken, to render account of the figures of the Law and the truth of Christ, so hatred of (his) boldly displayed name would not exclude the usefulness of the reading. It is truly not a wonder, if he is seen more eloquent in his own (language), that is in Hebrew, rather than in a foreign one, that is in Greek, in which language the other letters are written.

It certainly disturbs some that for some reason the letter to the Romans is placed first, when reason reveals it not written first. For this is shown by him to have written travelling to Jerusalem, when he was exhorting the Corinthians and others before now by letters, as they collected the ministry which was carried with him. For which reason some want all the epistles to be understood arranged thus: that the first is set down which was sent later, (and) that through each letter by steps he came to the more perfect. For the majority of the Romans were so ignorant, that they did not understand themselves to be saved by the grace of God and not by their merits, and on account of this duo, the people struggled among themselves. Therefore, he asserted them to need to be strengthened, recalling the former vices of the gentiles (lit. "of gentileness"; gentilitatis). And now he says the gift of knowledge to be granted to the Corinthians, for he does not so much rebuke all, as he censures how they did not rebuke the sinners, as he says, "It is heard that there is fornication among you," and again, "You are gathered together with my spirit to deliver such a one to Satan." In the second (letter) they are truly praised and are admonished to advance more and more. Now the Galatians show no other crimes except they had most fervently believed in false apostles. The Ephesians are truly worthy of no

rebuke but much praise, because they kept the Apostolic Faith. And the Philippians are much more greatly praised, who were not willing even to hear false apostles. And the Colossians were of such a kind that, when they had not been bodily seen by the Apostle, they were considered worthy of this praise: "And if in the body I am absent, I am with you in the Spirit, rejoicing and seeing your order." The Thessalonians were yet honored with all praise, to the extent that not only did they keep the unshaken faith of the Truth, but were indeed found standing together in the persecution of members. Truly something must be said of the Hebrews, of whom the Thessalonians, who are so highly praised, are said to have been imitators, as he says: "And you, brothers, have become imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea, for you have also suffered the same from your own countrymen as they have from the Judeans." Among them he also recalls the same Hebrews, saying, "For you both had compassion for the prisoners and you also received with joy the plundering of your goods, knowing yourselves to have a greater and lasting substance."

END OF THE PROLOGUE This text was translated by Kevin P. Edgecomb, Berkeley, California, 2006, published here and released by him into the public domain. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely. Greek text is rendered using unicode.

Kevin introduces his translation as follows:

I have a few articles to look up regarding the authorship of this letter, so I'll end up posting more on that at a later date. Essentially, there are three contenders: St Jerome, the British heretic Pelagius, and some unknown author. Since patristic scholarship in the early part of the twentieth century had an unfortunate tendency to pin the names of heretics to many various works not otherwise demonstrably theirs or even heretical, I don't, at this point, consider Pelagius a likely candidate, but rather a faddish suggestion given rather too much attention. These days some idiot would likely suggest St Mary Magdalene. Also, having just worked through seventeen authentic prologues of St Jerome, it is definite that this prologue to Paul's letters are from someone else, judging by the style and even the

vocabulary. It's not as rambling as St Jerome's own letters, which are constructed in a much more oral manner (likely because he was actually simply dictating to a scribe most of the time), and certain words of the vocabulary require meanings that are later than the more classical, antiquarian usage of St Jerome. So I opt for an unknown author. Nevertheless, it is a very interesting preface, especially his description of why the letters of Paul are arranged as they are: they are addressed to progressively more accomplished Christians, and apparently in reverse chronological order. How interesting!

I hope everyone has enjoyed my translation of these Vulgate prefaces. I certainly enjoyed the discovery involved in learning what they say, having not read most of them before, and the definite education in Latin they provide. I hope they're found to be useful. This is the last preface included in Weber's *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Fourth Edition, which means this first stage of my translation of the Vulgate Prefaces is done with this. Now that I have them all finished in a first draft, I'll be editing them for consistency, style, etc, and post them all on a single web page. So if anyone wants to use them in a convenient form, with notes and such things, just wait about a week or so. In the meantime, I'll post links to the blog posts with all the prefaces, which I'm rather surprised to have finished in only three weeks, even with some breaks. Enjoy!

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Chronicle - Latin text of pages 188-332

Jerome, Chronicle (2005) pp.188-332

[188/189] Persarum Initium Consulum Romanorum Macedonum BC

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC

2 a Armodius et Aristogiton Hipparchum tyrannum interfecerunt, et Leaena meretrix amica eorum, cum tormentis cogeretur, ut socios proderet linguam suam mordicus amputavit. 28

34

520 LXVIII Olympias a XVII mare obtinuerunt Aeginetae, annis XX, usque ad transitum Xerxis.

3

29

35

519

14

46

508

1510

15

47

507

16 b Valerius Bruti consulis collega adeo pauper mortuus est, ut sumptu publico sepeliretur. *

48

506

4

30

36

518

17

49

505

1500

5

31

37

517

LXIX

Olympias

LXVI

Olympias

18 c Censu Romae agitato, inventa sunt hominum CXX millia.

50

504

6 b Templum Jerosolymis consummatur, prophetantibus apud Judaeos Aggaeo et Zacharia. 32

38

516 Macedonum X, ALEXANDER, annis XLIII

7

33

39

515 d Nono anno post exactos reges nova dignitas est creata, dictatura scilicet, et magister equitum, qui dictatori obsequeretur. Dictator primus Largius, magister equitum Spurius Cassius fuit. (*)

8

34

40

514

9

35

41

513

LXVII

Olympias

~~~~~

19

1

503

10 c Pulsis ab Urbe regibus, vix usque ad XV lapidem Roma tenebat imperium. Romanorum reges VII a Romulo usque ad Tarquinium Superbum imperaverunt annis CCXL, sive, ut quibusdam placet, CCXLIII. (\*)

42

512

20

2

502

21

3

501

11

43

511

LXX

Olympias

e Hellanicus historiographus, et Democritus philosophus, et Heraclitus cognomento Tenebrosus, et Anaxagoras physicus clari habentur.

22

4

500

23

5

499

24

6

498

12

44

510

1520

25 f Pythagoras philosophus moritur.

7

497

d Romae post exactos Reges primum consules duo a Bruto esse coeperunt; deinde tribuni plebis ac dictatores, et rursum consules rempublicam obtinuerunt per annos ferme CDLXIV usque ad Iulium Caesarem, qui primus singulare arripuit imperium olympiade CLXXXIII.

LXXI

Olympias

g Volsci Coriolos perdiderunt. \*

26 h Aeschylus tragoediarum scriptor agnoscitur.

8

496

13

45

509

27 i Latini contra Romanos rebellarunt.

9

495

28 l Romae populus a patribus facta seditione discessit.

10

494

[190/191]

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC

29 a Marcius, qui Coriolos ceperat, interventu matris Veturiae et uxoris Volumniae ab oppugnatione Urbis removit exercitum. \*

11

493

3 a Choerilus et Phrynicus illustres habentur.

21

483 b Diagoras agnoscitur, et sectatores ejus physici philosophi.

4

22

482

LXXII

Olympias

5 c Xerxes cum Athenas venisset, incendit urbem sub principe Callia.

23

481

30 b Bellum quod in Marathone gestum est, et ea quae de Miltiade scribuntur et Aristide, qui cognominabatur Justus.

12

492

31

13

491

LXXV

Olympias

32

14

490

6 d Bellum quod in Thermopylis gestum est. Apud Salaminam navale certamen.

24

480

33 c Panyasis poeta habetur illustris.

15

489 d Trecenti nobiles Fabiae familiae a Veientibus caesi. \*

7 e Athenienses Piraeum muro vallant.

25

479 e Cum in Algido monte Romani milites obsiderentur, a dictatore Quintio Cincinnato liberati sunt. \*

8 f Hieron Syracusis regnat.

26

478

1540

9 g Aeschylus tragoediarum scriptor agnoscitur.

27

477

LXXVI

Olympias

10 h Bellum quod in Plateis, et in Mycale.

28

476

LXXIII

Olympias

11 i Hieron post Gelonem Syracusis tyrannidem exercet.

29

475

34 f Aegyptus recessit a Dario.

16

488

12

30

474

1530

35 g Gelo obtinuit Syracusas.

17

487

13 k Pindarus [musicus] clarus habetur.

31

473

36 h Pindarus et Simonides lyrici poetae insignes habentur.

486

LXXVII

Olympias

14 l Themistocles in Persas fugit.

32 n Principium LXXI Jubilaei secundum Hebraeos. 472 i Romae virgo Vestalis Pompilia deprehensa in stupro, viva defossa est.

18

15 m Sophocles tragoediarum scriptor primum ingenii sui opera publicavit.

33 471 Persarum V, XERXES, filius Darii, annis XX.

1

19

485

16 o Romae virgo Vestalis Sunia deprehensa in stupro, viva defossa est.

34 470 LXXIV Olympias k Xerxes Aegyptum capit.

2 l Aristides cum ignominia ejicitur.

20

484

17 p Sophocles et Euripides clari habentur. 35

469

[192/193]

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC LXXVIII Olympias et ea deinceps consecuta, quae ab his gesta referuntur. a Herodotus historiarum scriptor agnoscitur.

3 a Sicilia a populo regebatur.

42

462

18 b Bacchylides et Diagoras Athenis plurimo sermone celebrantur.

36

468

4 b Cimon juxta Eurimedontem Persas navali pedestrique certamine superrat: et Medicum bellum conquiescit.

43

461

1550

19 c Zeuxis pictor agnoscitur, ex cujus alii imaginibus, quas plurimas invitatus fecerat, 'Lavacrum Byzantinorum' appellatum arbitrantur. \*

37

467 Of the Macedonum, Perdiccas, for 28 years. c Solis facta defectio.

LXXX Olympias d Themistocles, hausto tauri sanguine, moritur.

5 d Anaxagoras moritur.

1

460 e Heraclitus clarus habetur.

20 e Socrates nascitur.

38

466 f Evenus poeta clarus habetur. important. f Lapis in Aegon fluvium de coelo ruit. g Ezras sacerdos apud Hebraeos insignis agnoscitur, cujus aetate Pontifex Maximus habitus est Heliasib, filius Joachim, filii Jesu, filii Josedech. Fuit autem Ezras eruditissimus Legis divinae, et clarus omnium Judaeorum magister, qui de Captivitate regressi fuerant in Judaeam..

Persarum VI, ARTABANUS, menses VII, [qui menses in ordine annus reputantur]. Post quem ARTAXERXES VII, qui Longimanus cognominabatur, annis XL.

6

2

459

39

465

7

3

458

1560

8

4

457 LXXXI Olympias h Empedocles et Parmenides physici philosophi notissimi habentur.

LXXIX

Olympias



g Ea quae de Hester, et Mardochoaeo scripta sunt: quidam affirmant sub hoc rege gesta, quod ego non puto; numquam enim Ezras de Hester siluisset, qui scribit hoc tempore Ezram et Neemiam reversos ex Babylone,

9

5

456

1

40

464 i Zeno et Heraclitus Tenebrosus agnoscitur.

10 k Pherecydes secundus historiarum scriptor agnoscitur.

6

455

2

41

463

11 l Cratinus et Plato comoediarum scriptores 7

454

[194/195]

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC clari habentur.

1570

18 sibi domino suo, XX ejus anno de Babylone venit in Judaeam, et XXXII anno muros, urbemque restituit. Scribit Ezras opus fuisse completum sub pontifice Joade filio Joasib, cui successit Joannes filius suus, qui temporibus Alexandri Macedonis fuit, opus fuisse completum.

14

447 a Aristarchus tragoediographus agnoscitur. b Romae clarior Agon centenarius primus actus.

12 c CCCII anno ab Urbe condita Decemviri creati, et post annum ejecti sunt propter Appium Claudium, qui Virginii cujusdam filiam contra Latinos in Algido militantis voluit abducere. \*

8

453

19 a Huc usque Hebraeorum divinae Scripturae annales temporum continent: ea vero quae post haec apud eos gesta sunt, exhibemus de libro Machabaeorum, et Josephi, et Africani scriptis, qui deinceps universam historiam usque ad Romana tempora persecuti sunt.

15

446

LXXXII

Olympias

13 d Romani per legatos ab Atheniensibus jura petierunt, ex quibus duodecim tabulae conscriptae.

9

452

20 b Athenienses et Lacedaemonii foedus XXX annorum ineunt.

16

445

14 e Crates Comicus, et Telesilla ac Bacchylides Lyricus, clari habentur: Praxilla quoque et Cleobulina sunt celebres.

10

451 c Herodotus cum Athenis libros suos in concilio legisset, honoratus est.

LXXXIV

Olympias

15 f Templum Junonis, quod Argis fuerat, incensum.

11

450

21 d Melissus physicus agnoscitur.

17

444

22 e Euripides tragoediarum scriptor clarus habetur, et Protagoras sophista, cujus libros decreto publico Athenienses combusserunt.

18

443

16 g Abaris Hyperboreanus Ariolus agnoscitur.

12

449

23

19

442 LXXXIII Olympias h Tribuni plebis et Aediles Romae facti, Consulibus ejectis.

24

20

441

LXXXV

Olympias

17 i Neemias Hebraeus, minister vinarius Artaxerxis regis, concedente

13

448

25 f Romae rursus Consules creati.

21

440

26 g Phidias eburneam Minervam facit.

22

439

[196/197]

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC a Fidennates contra Romanos rebellant. \*

35 a Athenienses pestilentia laborant.

3

430

27 b Theaetetus mathematicus agnoscitur. Aristophanes clarus habetur, et Sophocles poeta tragicus.

23

438 bThucydides agnoscitur.

1580

28

24

437

36 c Pericles moritur.

4

429

LXXXVI Olympias LXXXVIII Olympias c Gens Campanorum in Italia constituta.

37 d Eupolis et Aristophanes scriptores comoediarum agnoscuntur.

5

428

29 d Democritus Abderites, et Empedocles, et Hippocrates medicus, Gorgias, Hippiasque, et Prodicus, et Zeno, et Parmenides philosophi insignes habentur.

25

436

30

26

435

1590

38

6

427

31

27

434

39 e Ex Aetna monte ignis erupit.

7

426

32

28

433 e Socrates, qui scholam congregavit, plurimo sermone celebratur. f Terraemotu apud Locros, scissa Atalante, civitas facta est insula. f Neemiam, qui muros Jerusalem construxit, consummasse opus XXXII anno Artaxerxis regis Persarum, Ezras memorat. Si quis ab hoc tempore LXX hebdomadas a Daniele scriptas numeret, quae faciunt annos CDXC, reperiet eas in regno Neronis expletas, sub quo obsideri Jerusalem coepta, secundo postea Vespasiani anno capitur.

40 g Plato nascitur.

8

425

LXXXIX

Olympias

Persarum VIII, secundus XERXES, menses II. Post quem IX SOGDIANUS, menses VII. Cui succedit X DARIUS, cognomento Nothus, annis XIX.

Macedonum XII, ARCHELAUS annis XXIV.

1 h Lacedaemonii et Athenienses foedus percutiunt.

9

424 LXXXVII Olympias

2 i Eudoxus Cnidius clarus habetur.

10

423

33 g Initium belli Peloponnesiaci.

1

432

3 k Lacedaemonii ver sacrum Heracleam destinantes urbem condunt. (\*)

11

422 h Bacchylides carminum scriptor agnoscitur.

4

12

421

34

2

431

XC

Olympias

[198/199]

Persarum

Consulum Macedonum Aegyptiorum BC

Persarum

Consulum Macedonum Aegyptiorum

BC

5

13

1

420

Darii et Parysatidis filius, annis XL.

a Sub hoc rege mihi videtur historia, quae in Hester libro continetur, expleta: ipse quippe est, qui ab Hebraeis Assuerus, et a LXX Interpretibus Artaxerxes vocatur.

6

14

419

7

15

418

1

1

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405

1600

8

16

417

XCIV

Olympias

XCI Olympias Aegyptus a Persis recessit, et regnavit AMARTHEUS, Saites annis VI.

9 a Clades quae Atheniensibus accidit in Sicilia. 17 416

2

2

4

404

10

18

415

3

3

5

403

11

19

414

4

4

6

402

12 b Alcibiades profugus abiit ad Tisaphernem. 20

1

413 b Dionysius Syracusis tyrannidem exercet.

Macedonum XIV, AMYNTAS, anno I.

Post quem ACHORIS, annis XII.

XCII

Olympias

13 c Euboea ab Atheniensium societate discedit. 21

2

412 c Athenienses sustinent tyrannidem.

14

22

3

411

15

23

4

410

5 d Isocrates rhetor agnoscitur. 1

1

401

16

24

5



409 Post quem PAUSANIAS, anno I.

XCIII Olympias Macedonum, ORESTES annis III. 2 e XXIX dynastia Aegypti Mendesiorum.

17 d Euripides apud Archelaum, et Sophocles Athenis moritur. 1

6

408 f Democritus moritur.

XXVIII Aegypti dynastia. NEPHERITES, annis VI. g Alcibiadem Pharnabazus interficit.

1610

18

2

1

407 h Cyri regis ascensus, de quo scribit Xenophon.

19

3

2

406

XCV Olympias Persarum XI, ARTAXERXES, qui cognominatus est Mnemon, e Dionysius in Sicilia tyrannidem exercet.

1Macedonum XIII, ARCHELAUS, annis IV.

6 i Tyranni Athenis oppressi. 1

2

400 k Athenienses XXIV litteris uti coeperunt, cum antea XVI tantum litteras haberent.

1. At this point, in mid-page in 'O', the column of Macedonian regnal years which is black up to this point suddenly turns red. This is

clear evidence that the scribe copied the colours from his exemplar, and did not amend them. It also shows that the exemplar did indeed have

26 lines, because the colour change occurs at the page-break (as here) in such an exemplar, rather than in mid-page, as in 'O'.

2. This entry should be red, but is in fact black in 'O'.

[200/201]

Persarum

Consulum Macedonum Aegyptiorum BC

Persarum

Consulum Macedonum Aegyptiorum

BC a Xenophon filius Grylli, et Ctesias clari habentur.

Post quem, AMYNTAS, annis VI.

NECTANEBUS, annis XVIII.

7 b Socrates venenum bibit.

1

3

399

1630

19 a Evagoras in furorem versus cum regnaret Cypri. 1 5

1

387

8 c Templum rursus Ephesi incensum. 2

4

398

20

6

2

386

1620

9 d Socratici clari habentur. 3

5

397

21

7

3

385

XCVI

Olympias

XCIX

Olympias

10 e Diogenes Cynicus agnoscitur. 4

6

396

22 b XXX dynastia Aegypti, Sebennytarum. 8

4

384

11 f Speusippus insignis habetur. 5

7

395

23

9

5

383

12

6

8

394

24

10

6

382 g Dionysius in tyrannide perseverat. Post quem, ARGEUS, annis II.

25

11

7

381

C

Olympias

13 h Carthaginensium bellum famosum. 1

9

393

26 c Magno terrae motu Helice et Bura Peloponnesi urbes absorptae sunt. 12

8

380

XCVII

Olympias

27

13

9

379

14 i Eudoxus astrologus agnoscitur. 2

10

392

28

14

10

378 Post quem rursum AMYNTAS, annis XVIII.

1                      11

1640

29 d Praenestini a Romanis victi apud flumen Alliam per Quinctium Cincinnatum. (\*) 15

11

377

15 k Galli Senones Romam invaserunt, excepto Capitolio. (\*)

391

16

2

12

390 Aegypti PSAMUTHES, anno I. e Athenienses principes Graeciae facti.

CI

Olympias

17

3

1

389

30 f Isocrates rhetor agnoscitur. 16

12

376 XCVIII Olympias I Plato philosophus agnoscitur.

Post quem NEPHERITES, menses IV.

31

17

13

375

32 g Plato et Xenophon, necnon et alii Socratici clari habentur. 18

14

374

18 m Tribuni militares pro consulibus esse coeperunt. \* 4

1

388 Macedonum ALEXANDER, anno I.

Post quem,

33

1

15

373 (1) Diodorus 14.110.5.

[202/203]

Persarum

Consulum Macedonum Aegyptiorum BC

Persarum

Consulum Macedonum Aegyptiorum regnum destructum est.

BC

CII Olympias Post quem PTOLEMAEUS ALORITES, annis IV.

Post quem Macedonum, PHILIPPUS, annis XXVII.

4

1

6

362

34

1

16

372

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2

7

361

35

2

17

371

CV

Olympias

36

3

18

370

6 a Demosthenes orator agnoscitur. 3

8

360 Aegypti THEO, annis II.

7 b Ochus Apodasmo Judaeorum capta, in Hyrcaniam accolas translato juxta mare Caspium collocavit. 4

9

359 a Theo rex Aegypti fugit in Arabiam.

8

5

10

358

37

4

1

369

1660

9

6

11

357

CIII Olympias Post quem PERDICCA, annis VI.

CVI

Olympias

10 c Dionysius Sicilia pellitur. 7

12

356

38 b Dionysius rex Siciliae 19 anno moritur, post quem junior Dionysius regnum invadit. 1

2

368

11 d Alexander Philippi et Olympiadis filius nascitur. 8

13

355 XXX dynastia Aegyptiorum, NECTANEBO, annis XVIII.

12 e Dion Syracusis interimitur. 9

14

354

13 f Hipparinus Dionysii filius Syracusis tyrannidem exercet. 10

15

353

CVII

Olympias

1650

39 c Aristoteles XVIII aetatis gerens annum, Platonis auditor est. 2

1

367

14 g Erinna poetria agnoscitur. 11

16

352

40

3

2

366

15 h Ochus Aegyptum tenuit, Nectanebo in Aethiopiam pulso, in quo Aegyptiorum regnum destructum est. 12

17

351 Persarum XII, ARTAXERXES, qui et OCHUS, annis XXVI

16

13

18



350

17

14

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349

1

4

3

365

CVIII Olympias CIV Olympias d Alexander Pheraeus agnoscitur.

18 i huc usque Manethos: Ochus Sidonem subvertit, et Aegyptum suo junxit imperio. 15

2

5

4

364

1670

19

16

3 e Camillus Gallos, qui bellum Romanis intulerant, superat. 6

5

363 k Demosthenes Orator

[204/205]

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC

Persarum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC omnium rumore [fama] celebratur.

Post quem DARIUS, XIV, Arsami filius, annis VI. a Manasses frater Jaddi pontificis Judaeorum templum in montem Garizin construit.

20 a Romani Gallos superant.

17

346

21 b Dionysius Corinthum sub foedere navigavit.

18

345

1 b Alexander adversus Illyricos et Thracas feliciter dimicans, subversis Thebis, in Persas arma corripuit, et apud Granicum flumen, regiis ducibus oppressis, urbem Sardeis capit.

2

335 c Plato moritur, post quem Academiam Speusippus tenuit.

2

3

334

3

4

333

CIX

Olympias

d Romani cum Samnites duobus proeliis cecidissent, universos confines, quia a sua societate discesserant, in ditionem propriam redigunt.

22

19

344

23

20

343 c Romanorum consul Manlius Torquatus filium suum, quod contra imperium in hostem pugnaverat, virgis caesum securi percussit. (\*)

24

21

342

25 e Dionysius Corintho expulsus.

22

341 CX Olympias f Descriptione Romae facta, inventa sunt civium CLX millia.

26

23

340

CXII Olympias Persarum XIII, ARSES , Ochi filius, annis IV. g Judaeorum pontifex maximus Jaddus clarus habetur.

4 d Alexander, capta Tyro, Judaeam invadit, a qua favorabiliter exceptus, Deo victimas immolat, et pontificem templi honoribus plurimis prosequitur, Andromacho locorum custode dimisso, quem postea Samaritani interficiunt: ob quae ab Aegypto reversus Alexander Magnus magnis eos suppliciis adfecit, et urbem eorum captam Macedonibus ad inhabitandum tradit. (\*)

5

332

1 h Speusippus moritur, cui successit Xenocrates.

24

339

2

25

338

1680

3

26

337

5

6

331

CXI Olympias Macedon. XXIV, ALEXANDER, Philippi filius, annis XII, menses VI.

6 e Alexandria in Aegypto condita, septimo anno regni Alexandri: quo tempore etiam Latini a Romanis perdomiti sunt.

7

330

4

1

336

[206/207] Regnum Persarum destructum est

Consulum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum

Macedonum

BC a Alexander obtinuit Babylonem, interfecto Dario, in quo Persarum regnum destructum est.

Aegypto primus regnavit PTOLEMAEUS, Lagi filius, annis XL.

Macedonibus regnavit PHILIPPUS, qui et Aridaeus, frater Alexandri, annis VII.

Alexander regnum Asiae anno regni sui VII occupat, et tenet omnia annis XII. a Appius Claudius Caecus Romae clarus habetur, qui aquam Claudiam induxit, et viam Appiam stravit. \* Of Alexander

1 b Lydiam, et Thraciam, et Hellespontum Lysimachus tenuit.

1

324

8 b Anaximenes, et Epicurus clari habentur.

329 c Macedonum duces in seditionem versi. c Alexander Hyrcanos et Mardos capit, revertensque in Ammone condidit Paraetonium.

2 d Agathocles Syracusis tyrannidem exercet.

2

323

CXIII Olympias e Lamiacum bellum motum.

9 d Alexander Aornim petram capit, et Indum amnem transgreditur.

328 f Perdicca adversus Aegyptios dimicat.

3 g Ptolemaeus Lagi filius Jerosolymis et Judaea in dicionem suam dolo redactis, plurimos captivorum in Aegyptum transtulit.

3

322

1690

10 e Bellum Alexandri in India adversum Porum, et Taxillen.

327

11 f Harpalus fugit in Atticam. h Judaeorum pontifex maximus Onias Jaddi filius clarus habetur.

12 g Romani Samnites subigunt, et colonias deducunt.

326

4 i Menander primam fabulam cognomento Οργην 1 docens, superat.

4

321

CXIV Olympias h Alexander XXXII aetatis suae anno moritur in Babylone, post quem translato in multos imperio. k Theophrastus philosophus agnoscitur, qui a divinitate loquendi, ut ait Cicero, nomen accepit. (\*) (1) ΟΡΓΗΝ = 'anger'.

[208/209]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae Macedonum Primus Asiae BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae Macedonum Asiae

BC

CXV

Olympias

16 a Theodorus Atheus agnoscitur.

4

9

10

309

5 a Demetrius Phalereus habetur illustris.

5

320

CXVIII

Olympias

17 b Demetrius Phalereus ad Ptolemaeum veniens impetravit, ut Atheniensibus democratia redderetur.

5

10

11

308 b Romani Samnites diutissime contra proeliantes, ad extremum in servitutem redigunt.

Asiae regnat ANTIGONUS, annis XVIII.

1710

18

6

11

12

307

6

6

319

19

7

12

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306

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7

1

318

20

8

13

14

305 Macedonum CASSANDER, annis XIX.

CXIX

Olympias

21 c Seleucus Antiochiam, Laodiciam, Seleucim, Apamiam, Edessam, Beroeam, et Pellam urbes condidit, quarum Antiochiam XII anno regni sui extruxit. .

9

14

15

304

1700

8

1

2

317

CXVI

Olympias

22

10

15

16

303

9 c Menedemus et Speusippus philosophi insignes habentur.

2

3

316

10

3

4

315

23

11

16

17

302

11

4

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314

24

12

17

18

301

12

5

6

313 d Seleucus Babyloniam obtinuit.

CXVII

Olympias

CXX Olympias Asiae DEMETRIUS, qui et Poliorcetes, annis XVII d Machabaeorum Hebraea historia hinc Graecorum supputat regnum. Verum hi libri inter divinas Scripturas non recipiuntur.

Syriae et Babyloniae, et superiorum locorum, regnavit SELEUCUS NICANOR, annis XXXII. e Judaeorum pontifex maximus Simon Oniae filius clarus habetur, cui cognomentum Justo fuit



propter sollicitam in Deum religionem, et in cives suos pronam clementiam.

25

13

18

1

302

26

14

19

2

303 Macedonum filii Cassandri, annis IV, ANTIGONUS et ALEXANDER.

13 e Romani Marsos, a Umbros, et Pelignos superant.

1

6

7

312

27

15

1

3

302 Ab hoc loco Edesseni sua tempora computant. 14 f Romani colonias deducunt.

2

7

8

311

1720

28

16

2

4

301 g Lysimachia in Thracia condita.

CXXI

Olympias

15 h Cyprum Ptolemaeus invasit.

3

8

9

310

29 f Demetrius rex Asiae,

17

3

5

300

[210/211]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae Macedonum Asiae BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae Macedonum Asiae

BC

30 cognomento Poliorcetes, Samaritanorum urbem vastat, quam Perdicca construxerat.

18

4

6

295 Syriae et Asiae pariter imperavit.

DEMETRIUS, annis VI.

39 a Serapis ingressus est Alexandriam.

27

2

15

286 a Censu Romae agitato, inventa sunt civium Romanorum CCLXX millia.

31

19

1

7

294

40 b Conditae a Romanis Ariminum et Beneventum. \*

28

3

16

285

CXXIV

Olympias

32 b Legati Alexandrini a Ptolemaeo primum Romam missi amicitias impetraverunt. \*

20

2

8

293 Aegypti II, PTOLEMAEUS Philadelphus, annis XXXVIII

1 c Sostratus Gnidius Pharum in Alexandria construxit.

29

4

17

284

CXXII

Olympias

Demetrius

semetipsum Seleuco tradidit.

33 c Menander comicus moritur. 21

3

9

292 d Antigonus cognomento Gonatas Lacedaemonem obtinuit. d TRomani Gallos, Tyrrhenosque superant: et Sabinorum terra sorte dividitur. e Romani Crotonem capiunt.

34

22

4

10

291

2 f Ptolemaeus Philadelphus Judaeos, qui in Aegypto erant, liberos esse permisit: et, vasa Eleazaro Pontifici Jerosolymarum votiva transmittens, divinas Scripturas in Graecam vocem ex Hebraea lingua per LXX Interpretes transferri curavit, quas in Alexandrina bibliotheca habuit, quam sibi ex omni genere litteraturae comparaverat.

30

5

283 e Seleucus in eas urbes, quas exstruxerat, Judaeos transfert, jus eis civium et municipalem ordinem cum Graecis aequali honore concedens.

Macedonum PTOLEMAEUS, cognomento ΚΕΡΑΥΝΟΣ.

1

35

23

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11

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31

1

282

36

24

6

12 MELEAGRUS, menses II. ANTIPATER, dies XLV. Post quem SOSTHENES annis II.

CXXIII Olympias Macedonum PYRRHUS, menses VII f Judaeorum pontifex Eleazarus frater Simonis suscepit templi ministerium, filio Simonis Onia parvo admodum derelicto.

37

25

13 Post quem, LYSIMACHUS, annis V. g Seleucus in Cilicia, capto Demetrio

1720

38

26

1

14 1. In 'O' this reads 'Ceraunos' in Roman letters.

[212/213]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Macedonum BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Macedonum

BC

4

22

1

281

1750

18 multaeque urbes in Sicilia eis junctae. 14

13

267 Syriae et Asiae post Seleucum regnavit ANTIOCHUS SOTER, annis XIX.

19 a Romae virgo Vestalis in stupro detecta, laqueo vitam explet. \* 15

14

266

CXXV

Olympias

20

16

15

265

5

1

2

280

CXXIX

Olympias

ANTIGONUS GONATAS, annis XXXVI.

21 b Zeno Stoicus moritur, post quem Cleanthes. 17

16

264

6

2

1

279

22 c Romani Syracusas capiunt. 18

17

263

7

3

2

278 d Nicomedes rex Bithyniae urbem ampliandam, Nicomediam nuncupavit.

1740

8

4

3

277

23

19

18

262

CXXVI Olympias Syriae ANTIOCHUS, qui vocabatur Theos, annis XV.

9 a Una virginum Romanarum in corruptione deprehensa percutitur. 5

4

276

24

1

19

261

10 b Milo Romanis Tarentum tradidit. 6

5

275

CXXX

Olympias

11 c Romani Calabriam, Messanamque tenuerunt. 7

6

274

25 e Romani Carthaginenses navali certamine superant, et centum Libyae urbes capiunt. 2

20

260

12

8

7

273

26

3

21

259

CXXVII

Olympias

27

4

22

258

13 d Aratus agnoscitur.

9

8

272

1760

28 f Erasistratus medicus agnoscitur. 5

23

257

14 e Argenteus nummus primum in Urbe figuratus. 10

9

271

CXXXI

Olympias

29 g Antigonus Atheniensibus reddit libertatem. 6

24

256

15 f Polemon philosophus moritur, post quem Arcesilas et Crates clari habentur. 11

10

270

16



12

11

269

30 h Judaeorum pontificatum post Eleazarum avunculus ejus Manasses accepit. 7

25

255

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253 CXXVIII Olympias g Epicurus moritur.

CXXXII

Olympias

17 h Romani colonias deduxerunt, 13

12

268s

33 i Carthaginenses XC Romanorum naves 10

28

252

[214/215]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syria and Asia Macedonum BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syria and Asia Macedonum

BC

34 in Sicilia capiunt, Metello consule in fugam verso. 11

29

251

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241

35

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250

CXXXV

Olympias

36

13

31

249

7 a Quintus Ennius poeta Tarenti nascitur, qui a Catone quaestore Romam translatus, habitavit in monte Aventino, parco admodum sumptu contentus, et unius ancillae ministerio. \* 7

4

240 CXXXIII Olympias

37 a Parthis a Macedonum imperio recedentibus, primus regnavit ARSACES, unde Arsacidae dicti. 14

32

248

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239

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238

1770

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247

1780

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237 Aegypti III, PTOLEMAEUS EVERGETES, annis XXVI Syriae SELEUCUS CALLINICUS, annis XX.

CXXXVI

Olympias

11 b Virgo Vestalis Romae a servo corrupta, propria manu se interemit. 11

8

236

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235

1 b Judaeorum pontifex Onias, Simonis Justi filius, clarus habetur, qui consueta regi Ptolemaeo tributa non reddens, ad iram eum compulit. Verum Josephus, vir inter suos nobilis, legatus a Judaeis ad Ptolemaeum missus, cum familiaritatem regis ob plurima in eum meruisset obsequia, dux Judaeae et regionum finitimarum constituitur. 1

34

246

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234 Macedonum ANTIGONUS, annis 15.

14

14

1

233 CXXXVII Olympias

15 c Judaeorum pontifex Simon, Oniae filius, clarus habetur, sub quo Jesus filius Sirach Sapientiae librum componens, quem vocant Panareton, etiam Simonis in eo fecit mentionem.

15

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232

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245

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231

CXXXIV

Olympias

17

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230

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244

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229 CXXXVIII Olympias

Macedonum DEMETRIUS, annis X.

19

19

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228

1790

20 d XL ferme millia Gallorum a Romanis caesa. 20

7

227 c Censu Romae agitato, inventa sunt hominum CCLX millia.

Syriae, SELEUCUS CERAUNUS, annis III.

4

4

1

243

5 d Romae templum Vestae incensum. 5

2

242

21

1

8

226

[216/217]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syria and Asia Macedonum BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syria and Asia Macedonum

BC

22

2

9

225 CXLII Olympias Syracusas capiunt.

CXXXIX

Olympias

9 a Romani subjugant Capuam et Siciliam. 12

7

212

23

3

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224

ANTIOCHUS MAGNUS, annis XXXVI

10 b Antiochus rex Syriae, victo Philopatore Ptolemaeo, Judaeam sibi sociat.

13

8

211

11

14

9

210

24 a Caria et Rhodos ita terraemotu concussae sunt, ut Colossus magnus rueret. 1

11

223

12 c Levinus cum rege Asiae Attalo amicitiam facit. \* 15

10

209

25

2

12

222

CXLIII

Olympias

26

3

13

221

13 d Judaeorum pontifex maximus Onias, filius Simonis, insignis habetur, ad quem Lacedaemoniorum rex Arrius legatos mittit. 16

11

208

CXL

Olympias

1810

14

17

12

207 Aegypti PTOLEMAEUS PHILOPATOR, annis XVII

15

18

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206

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205

CXLIV

Olympias

1 b Ea quae in tertio Machabaeorum libro scripta sunt, sub hoc Ptolemaeo gesta referuntur.

4

14

220

17 e Scipio Hiberiae multas urbes recipit. 20

15

204

2

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15

219 Aegypti V, PTOLEMAEUS EPIPHANES, annis XXIV Macedonum PHILIPPUS, annis XLII

3

6

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218

1 f Ptolemaeus Epiphanes, Scopa principe militiae destinato, Judaeam capit, et plurimas Syriae civitates. 21

16

203

1800

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217

CXLI

Olympias



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22

17

202

5 c Victi Judaei , et LX millia armatorum ex numero eorum caesa sunt. 8

3

216

3 g Naevius comicus Uticae moritur, pulsus Roma, factione nobilium, ac praecipue Metelli. \* 23

18

201 d Romae virgines Vestae ob stupri reatum terra obrutae.

6

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215

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214

CXLV

Olympias

h Plautus ex Umbria Sarsinas Romae moritur, qui propter annonae difficultatem ad molas manuarias pistori se locaverat;

8 e Eratosthenes philosophus agnoscitur. 11

6

213

4

24

19

200 f Romani, Marcello consule,

[218/219]

Alexandrinorum

Romans Syria and Asia Macedonum BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syria and Asia Macedonum

BC ibi quotiens ab opere vacaret, scribere fabulas, et solitus vendere. \* 'dotis' nomine Syriam, Phoenicen, Samariam, Judaeamque concedit.

15

35

30

189 CXLVIII Olympias

5 a Juxta Theram apparuit insula, quae vocatur Hiera. 25

20

199 a Eumenes, frater regis Attali, qui Eumeniam in Phrygia condidit, clarus habetur. \*

6

26

21

198

1820

7 b Antiochus, Scopa superato, Syriae urbes recepit, et Judaea ei voluntate conjungitur. 27

22

197

16 b Secundus liber Machabaeorum apud Judaeos hujus temporis gesta continet. 36

31

188 Syriae et Asiae, SELEUCUS qui et PHILOPATOR, annis XII

CXLVI

Olympias

8 c Romani Graecos liberos esse jusserunt: et universa Hiberia imperata fecit. 1 28

23

196 c Titus Livius tragoediarum scriptor clarus habetur, qui ob ingenii meritum a Livio Salinatore, cujus liberos erudiebat, libertate donatus est. 2 \*

1830

17

1

32

187

9 d Antiochus Judaeorum erga se cognita voluntate, magnis eos muneribus donat, et per epistolas crebris laudibus prosequitur. 29

24

195

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25

194 d Cum ab Antiocho per legatos Hannibal reposceretur, cui se a Scipione victus sociaverat, ad Prusiam regem Bithyniae transfugit; quem cum rursus per Flaminium etiam ab eo Senatus repeteret, et tradendus esset, venenum bibit, et apud Libyssan Bithyniae sepultus est. \*

11

31

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193

CXLVII

Olympias

18

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33

186 e Post proelium, quo in Thermopylis est victus Antiochus, hoc inter Romanos et eum convenit, ut mille talenta per annos singulos 'vectigalis' nomine solveret.

12

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192

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185

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191

XCLIX Olympias f Romani multas colonias deduxerunt.

20 e Simon praepositus templi Jerosolymorum, ad Apollonium Phoenicis ducem confugiens, multis ei muneribus repromissis, sacerdotium sibi vindicare coepit: 4

35

184 g Antiochus in amicitiam Ptolemaei regressus pacem cum eo fecit, et Cleopatra filia sua uxore ei tradita,

14

34

29

190 (1) Hiberia: Only the Roman province of Hispania, as the remainder was still not under Roman control until 29 BC.

(2) cf. The Concise Oxford Companion to Classical Literature entry

for "Livius Andronicus" who is here intended; the facts are disputed,

see the Loeb Remains of Old Latin II p.viii ff. Titus is the name of

Livius historicus not of the Lucius Livius Andronicus, writer of tragedy and epic here referred to.

[220/221]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Macedonum BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Macedonum

BC

21 quo Seleucus audito, Heliodorum mittit ad negotium providendum: qui cum Judaeam venisset, inique judicans, et multa perperam gerens, divinis adversus se signis deterretur, et ad Seleucum revertitur. Onias autem sacerdos curaverat, ut Simon profugus fieret. 5

36

183

CLI

Olympias

4 a Aristobulus, natione Judaeus, Peripateticus philosophus agnoscitur, qui ad Philometorem Ptolemaeum explanationum in Mosen Commentarios scribit.

12

1

176 Syriae et Asiae, ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES, annis XI.

22

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37

182

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175

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174

23 a Hyrcanus Josephi ducis Judaeae filius, cum ad Ptolemaeum perrexisset, honorifice ab eo susceptus est. Verum fratres ejus seditione contra eum mota, magnarum calamitatum Judaeae genti causa exstiterunt. 7

38

181

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173

CLII

Olympias

8 b Antiochus Epiphanes cum de regione Ptolemaeorum, quam subito invaserat, Senatus praecepto recessisset, [in] Judaeam venit, ibique Jesu, cui et Jason, fratri Oniae pontificatum tradidit; quo deinde expulso, Oniam cognomento Menelaum successorem ei dedit. Itaque ob sacerdotii dignitatem orta seditione inter principes, ingentium miseriarum semina pullulaverunt. 4

5

172

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171

CL

Olympias

24

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39

180

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170 Aegypti VI, PTOLEMAEUS PHILOMETOR, annis XXXV

11

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169

1 b Statius Caecilius comoediarum scriptor clarus habetur: natione Insuber Gallus et Ennii primum contubernalis: quidam Mediolanensem ferunt. Mortuus est anno post mortem Ennii, et juxta Janiculum sepultus. \* 9

40

179

CLIII

Olympias

2

10

41

178 c Antiochus Judaeorum legem impugnat, primum quidem omnem eorum provinciam ad idololatriam compellens, qui parere noluerunt, eneca.

1840

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42

177 Macedonum PERSES, annis X.

[222/223]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Macedonum BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judae-orum

BC postea vero Jerosolymam ascendens, templum et vasa Dei quae ministerio fuerant consecrata, vastat: in templo, Jovis Olympii simulacrum ponit, in Samaria super verticem montis Garizi Jovis Peregrini delubrum aedificat, ipsis Samaritanis ut id faceret precantibus. Verum hoc in tempore Matthathias quidam ex sacerdotibus, filius Asamonaei, vico Modeim, adversum Antiochi duces arma corripiens, fultus etiam auxilio filiorum, leges patrias vindicavit olympiade CLIII.

CLIV Olympias Syriae et Asiae, ANTIOCHUS EUPATOR, annis II. a Judaeorum dux Judas, qui et Machabaeus, filius Matthathiae, Antiochi duces de Judaea expellens, et templum ab idolorum imaginibus emundans, patrias leges post triennium suis civibus reddidit olympiade CLIV.

16

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164

17

2

163 DEMETRIUS SOTER, annis XII.

18

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162

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2

161

CLV Olympias Judaeorum dux, JUDAS [MACHABAEUS], annis III. b Menelao pontifice Judaeorum a juniore Antiocho occiso, qui prius Judaeam Epiphani Antiocho prodiderat, Alcimus alienus a genere sacerdotali, ambitione pontificatum invadit. Ob quod Onias filius pontificis Oniae Aegyptum transmigrans, in Heliopolitano pago civitatem nominis sui condidit, templo ad similitudinem templi patrii constructo. Alcimus vero adversus Judam Machabaeum inimicitias gerens, post non multum temporis, Dei ira percussus interiit; ac sic cum omnium Judaeorum favore, Judae Machabaeo sacerdotium decernitur, qui dignitate suscepta, legatos Romam dirigit; decrevitque senatus Judaeos amicos et auxilio Romanorum habendos.

12 a Ennius poeta septuagenario major articulari morbo perit, sepultusque est in Scipionis monumento via Appia intra primum ab Urbe milliarium. Quidam ossa ejus Rudiam ex Janiculo translata adfirmant. \* 8

9

168

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160

1850

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167



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166

15 b Romani, interfecto Perse, Macedonas, Illyricos, et Galatas liberos esse jusserunt. 11

12

165

21

4

2

159 Macedonum regnum defecit.

~~~~~

[224/225]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judae-orum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judae-orum

BC

CLVII

Olympias

28 a Pseudophilippus regnat in Macedonia anno l. 11

6

152

22 a Publius Terentius Carthaginensis comoediarum scriptor, ob ingenium et formam libertate donatus, in Arcadia moritur, qui primam Andriam, antequam aedilibus venderet, Caecilio multum se mirari legit. * 5

3

158

29 b Alexander Antiochi, qui Epiphanes cognominatus est, filius, Syriae et Asiae imperans, Jonathan corona et multis insignibus donis prosequitur. 12

7

151 Judaeorum dux, JONATHAS, annis XIX Syriae et Asiae, ALEXANDER, annis IX, menses X
1860

23 b Judas adversum Demetrii duces inito proelio occiditur, tribus annis pontificatu gesto. 6

1

157

30 c Romani, interfecto Pseudophilippo, Macedonas tributarios faciunt. 1

8

150

31

2

9

149

CLVI

Olympias

CLVIII

Olympias

24 c Aristarchus grammaticus agnoscitur. 7

2

156

32 d Samaritani et Judaei Alexandriae Ptolemaeo judicante contendunt de honoribus ex utraque parte templo suo deferendis, et superant Judaei. 3

10

148

25 d Dux Judaeorum Jonathas frater Judae, Bacchide duce Demetrii Judaea expulso, pontificatum suscepit. * 8

3

155 e Lucilius poeta nascitur. *

26 e Pacuvius Brundusinus tragoediarum scriptor clarus habetur, Ennii poetae ex filia nepos, vixitque Romae quoad picturam exercuit, ac fabulas venditavit: deinde Tarentum transgressus, prope nonagenarius diem obiit.1 9

4

154

1870

33 f Descriptione Romae facta, inventa sunt hominum CCCXXII millia. 4

11

147

34 g Oppius Gallos capit: et Carthago in ditionem Romanorum per Scipionem redigitur, habens a conditione sui annos DCLXVIII; ut vero alii affirmant, DCCXLVIII 5

12

146

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153

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145

(1) The "Remains of Old Latin," vol. II (Loeb Library, 1982), says that Pacuvius was

"[p. xvii] a son of the sister of the poet | [p. xviii] Ennius," with footnote e,

attached to the word "sister," saying "So Pliny, XXXV, 19; son of

Ennius's daughter, says Jerome wrongly" (p. xvii). Later, the text says:

"His year of fame is stated by Jerome to have been 154 B.C." with

footnote d, "Jerome, ad ann. 600 = 154" (p. xviii).

[226/227]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judae-orum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judaeorum

BC a quo fundus Accianus juxta Pisaurum dicitur: quia illuc inter Colonos fuerat ex Urbe deductus.
*

CLIX Olympias Aegypti VII, PTOLEMAEUS EUERGETES, annis XXIX.

7 a Trypho Syriae regnum conatus invadere, Antiocho filio Alexandri interfecto ad extremum et ipse super moritur. 3

1

138 Post quem ANTIOCHUS SIDETES, annis IX.

1 a Jonathas dux Judaeorum pariter et pontifex cum Romanis et Spartiatibus amicitias facit. 7

14

144

1880

8 b Post Demetrium regnavit universae Syriae frater ejus Antiochus, qui cognominatus est Sidetes. 1

2

137

2 b Alexandro filio Balae, regi Syriae, Ptolemaeus filiam suam tradidit uxorem. 8

15

143

3 c Scipio Numantinos subvertit. 9

16

142

CLXI Olympias d Brutus Hiberiam usque ad Oceanum subigit.

9 c Simoni, Judaeorum pontifici pariter et principi, Romani et Spartiatae --legatione ejus libenter excepta--, amicalia misere rescripta. 2

3

136

4 e Trypho Jonatham pontificem Judaeorum interficit, et in sacerdotium fratris Jonathae Simon assumitur. 10

17

141 Syriae et Asiae, DEMETRIUS, annis III.

10

3

4

135

CLX Olympias d Bellum Servile ortum in Sicilia.

5 f Trypho Antiochum occidit Alexandri filium. 1

18

140

11 e Simon Judaeorum pontifex interficitur , cui succedit filius suus Joannes. 4

5

134 g Ptolemaeus filiam suam Demetrio tradit uxorem cum regno quod abstulerat Alexandro.

12 f Primus liber Machabaeorum hujus temporis historiam continet. 5

6

133

CLXII

Olympias

g Antiochus Sidetes rex Syriae adversus Judaeam arma corripiens, et Jerosolymam vallo circumdans, cum ad conditiones pontificem Simonem compulisset, recedit CLXII olympiade.

6 hLucius Accius tragoediarum scriptor clarus habetur, natus Mancino et Serrano consulibus parentibus libertinis, et seni jam Pacuvio Tarenti sua scripta recitavit: 2

19

139

13

6

7

132 Judaeorum dux, SIMON, annis VIII.

14

7

8

131 Judaeorum, HYRCANUS, qui et Joannes, annis XXVI. h Attalus moriens regni sui

[228/229]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judae-orum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judae-orum

BC

15 populum Romanum instituit haeredem. 8

1

130

27 quam postea Herodes instaurans Sebasten in honorem Augusti appellari voluit. 7

13

118

16 a Ptolemaeus expulsus Aegypto. 9

2

129

CLXIII Olympias Post quem DEMETRIUS iterum, annis IV

1900

28

8

14

117 b Arsaces Parthus Antiochum interfecit.

CLXVI

Olympias

29 a Marcus Terentius Varro philosophus et poeta nascitur. * 9

15

116

17 c Servi, qui in Sicilia rebellabant, obsidionis necessitate compulsi, ad sua invicem cadavera devoranda conversi sunt. 1

3

128 Aegypti VIII, PTOLEMAEUS PHYSCON, qui et Soter, annis XVII.

1890

18

2

4

127 d Arverni nobilissima Galliarum urbs capta, et rex Vituitus. *

1

10

16

115

2

11

17

114

19 e Juxta Aeoliae insulas, igne ex flatu suscitato, apparuit insula, quae nunc Hiera vocatur. 3

5

126

3

12

18

113 Post quem ANTIOCHUS CYZICENUS, annis XVIII

20

4

6

125

CLXVII

Olympias

CLXIV Olympias Syriae et Asiae, ANTIOCHUS GRYPUS, annis XII b Antiochus Cyzicenus, Grypo ejecto, Syriam obtinuit: ac rursum Grypus, superato Cyziceno, eandem recepit. Ita ex successione regnabant adversum se in vicem dimicantes. f Joannes dux Judaeorum et pontifex adversus Hyrcanos bellum gerens, Hyrcani nomen accepit, et a Romanis jus amicitiae postulans, decreto senatus inter amicos relatus est.

4

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112

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111

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124

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110

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109

22

6

8

123 CLXVIII Olympias

23

7

9

122

8 c Jugurtha contra Romanos dimicans capitur. 5

23

108

24 g Narbonam coloniae deductae. 8

10

121

CLXV

Olympias

1910

9 d Rhodo terraemotu concussa, Colossus ruit. 6

24

107

25 h Hyrcanus pontifex Judaeorum Samariam, et nostro tempore Sebaste vocatur, obsidione captam solo coaequavit, 9

11

120

e Jonathas gloriose apud Judaeos principatum gerit.

26

10

12

119

[230/231]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judaeorum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum Syriae et Asiae Judaeorum

BC

10 a Cicero Arpini nascitur, matre Helvia, patre equestris ordinis ex regio Volscorum genere. * 7

25

106 CLXX Olympias et post de his cum Catulo triumphat. (*)

16 a Thraces a Romanis victi. 13

4

100 b Rursum in Sicilia bellum Servile consurgit.

11 b Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus oritur. * 8

26

105

17

14

5

99

CLXIX Olympias Judaeorum ARISTOBOLUS, anno I.

Aegypti IX, PTOLEMAEUS, qui et Alexander, annis X. c Aristobolus filius Jonathae rex pariter et pontifex, primus apud Judaeos diadematis sumpsit insigne, post CDLXXXIV annos Babylonicae captivitatis Post quem regnavit Jannaeus cognomento Alexander, qui pontificatum quoque administrans, crudelissime civibus praefuit.

12

9

1

104 Post quem JANNAEUS, qui et ALEXANDER, annis XXVII.

1 c Expulso de regno Ptolemaeo Physcone per matrem Cleopatram, et in Cyprum secedente.

15

6

98

1920

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16

7

97

CLXXI

Olympias

3 d Aquilius in Sicilia bellum Servile compescuit. 17

8

96 d Turpilius comicus, senex admodum, Sinuessae moritur. * e Ptolemaeus rex Cyrenaeorum moriens Romanos testamento reliquit haeredes.

13 e Gaius Lucilius satirarum scriptor Neapoli moritur, ac publico funere effertur, anno aetatis XLVI. * 10

1

103

4 f Seleucus ab Antiocho filio Cyziceni vivus exurit. 18

9

95 Syriae PHILIPPUS, annis II f Marcus Furius poeta, cognomento Bibaculus Cremonae nascitur.
*

5 g Titus Lucretius poeta nascitur, qui postea amatorio poculo in furorem versus, cum aliquot libros per intervalla insaniae conscripsisset, quos postea Cicero emendavit, propria se manu interfecit, anno aetatis XLIV. * 1

10

94

14 g CC millia Cimbrorum caesa, et LXXX millia capta per Marium cum duce Teutomodo. * 11

2

102

6

2

11

93 Syriae reges defecerunt.

~~~~~

15 h Gaius Marius quinquies consul, juxta Heridanum Cimbros superat, 12

3

101

[232/233]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum

Judaeo-rum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum

Judaeo-rum

BC

CLXXII Olympias a Antiochus in Parthos fugiens, Pompeio se deinceps tradidit, post quem Philippus captus est a Gabinio.

3 a Sallustius Crispus, scriptor historicus, in Sabinis Amiterni nascitur. \*

18

86

7

12

92 b Sylla Athenienses vastat.

4 c Descriptione Romae facta, inventa sunt hominum CDLXIII millia. \*

19

85

8 b Huc usque Syria possessa per reges, in Romanam ditionem cessit.

13

91

CLXXIV

Olympias

9 c Bellum adversum Romanos, Picentes, Marsi, Pelignique moverunt. \*

14

90

5 d Templum tertio apud Delphos a Thracibus incensum, et Romae Capitolium.

20

84

10

15

89 d Lucius Pomponius Bononiensis, Atellanarum scriptor, clarus habetur. \*

6 e Jannaeus plurimas civitates capit.

21

83 f XXVI anno aetatis suae Cicero Quintium defendit. \*

CLXIII

Olympias

7 g Publius Terentius Varro, vico Atace, in provincia Narbonensi nascitur, qui postea XXXV annum agens, Graecas litteras cum summo studio didicitl. \*

22

82 Aegypti X, PTOLEMAEUS, qui a matre fuerat ejectus, annis VIII e Regressus de fuga regnum obtinuit, quia Alexandrum, qui ante eum fuerat, ob interfectionem matris cives pepulerant.

1

16

88

8 h Vultacilius Plotus Latinus rhetor, Gnaei Pompeii libertus et doctor scholam Romae aperuit. \*

23

81 f Plotius Gallus primus Romae latinam rhetoricam docuit, de quo Cicero sic refert: "Memoria teneo, pueris nobis, primum Latine docere coepisse Plotium quemdam". \*

CLXXV Olympias Aegypti XI, PTOLEMAEUS DIONYSUS, annis XXX

1930 2 g Gaius Valerius Catullus, scriptor lyricus, Veronae nascitur.

17

87

1 i Sylla Romam obtinuit, et post biennium moritur.

24

80

[234/235]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum

Judaeorum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum

Judaeorum

BC

2 a Roscio contra Chrysogonum defenso, Cicero Athenas secedit, et inde post triennium Romam regreditur. \*

25

79 a Virgilius Maro in pago, qui 'Andes' dicitur, haud procul a Mantua nascitur, Pompeio et Crasso consulibus. \*

12

8

69

3 b Pompeius gloriosissime triumphavit. 26

78 c Jannaeus multas vastat civitates. b Marcus Porcius Cato stoicus philosophus agnoscitur. \* d Lepidus publicus hostis judicatus.

1940 4 e T. Quintius Atta, scriptor togatarum 1, Romae moritur, sepultusque via Praenestina ad miliarium II. \*

27

77 CLXXVIII Olympias Judaeorum regnavit ALEXANDRA, annis IX.

13 c Antiochia Syriae capta a Romanis.

9

68 d Creticum bellum ortum, unde Metellus Creticus. Judaei Romanorum vectigales per Pompeium facti, et pontificatum apud eos suscepit HYRCANUS, annis XXXIV.

CLXXVI

## Olympias

5 f Alexandra, quae et Salina 2, uxor Alexandri, Jerosolymis regnavit, ex cujus aetate Judaeos rerum confusio et variae clades oppresserunt.

1

76 e Lucus Daphnensium juxta Antiochiam a Pompeio Apollini consecratur. \*

1950 14 f Aristobulus et Hyrcanus filii Alexandrae, contra se de imperio dimicantes, occasionem praebuere Romanis, ut Judaeam invaderent. Itaque Pompeius Jerosolymam veniens, capta urbe, et templo reserato, usque ad sancta sanctorum accedit, Aristobulum vinctum secum adducit, pontificatum confirmat Hyrcano, deinde Antipatrum Herodis Ascalonitae filium procuratorem Palaestinae facit.

1

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7 g Bellum gladiatorium in Campania. 3 \*

3

74 h Lucius Lucullus primus imperator appellatus est, victa Armenia, Mesopotamia, et Nisibi cum fratre regis capta. (\*)

15

2

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8

4

73 CLXXVII Olympias

9 i Pompeius universam Hiberiam subjugavit. 4 \*

5

72

10 k M. Lucullus de Bessis triumphavit, capta Cabyle, et Tomis, et caeteris vicinis urbibus. \*

6

71

16 g Libya per testamentum Appionis regis Romanis relicta. \*

3

65

11 l Crassus triumphavit. \*

7

70 h Horatius Flaccus, (1) 'togatae' i.e the plot of the play was settled in a Roman environment instead of the usual Greek one.

(2) Salome.

(3) The Third Servile War (Gladiators' War), instigated in 73 B.C. by Spartacus, an escaped slave and gladiator; the war ended in 71 B.C.

(4) Not the peninsula as a whole, but the entire Roman province. This had been in revolt under Sertorius.

[236/237]

Alexandrinorum

Consulum

Judaeo-rum

BC

Alexandrinorum

Consulum

Judaeo-rum

BC satiricus et lyricus poeta, libertino patre Venusii 1 nascitur. \* Placentiae obiit. \*

25 a Caesar Rhenum transiens, Germanos vastat.

12

56

CLXXIX

Olympias

17 a Apollodorus Pergamenus, Graecus orator, praeceptor Callidii et Augusti, clarus habetur. \*

4

64 b Crassus consul cum filio suo apud Carras captus. \*



26 c Ventidius, primus Romanorum, Parthos superat. \*

13

55

18 b Pompeius, captis Jerosolymis, tributarios Judaeos facit.

5

63 d Curio promptus et popularis orator Romae habetur insignis; qui deinceps in Africa, pudore amissi exercitus, mori maluit quam evadere. \*

19 c Ea quae de Catilina, Cethego, Lentulo, et consule Cicerone, Sallustius scribit et Livius, hoc gesta sunt tempore. (\*)

6

62

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20 d Cicero in exilio annum facit, honorifice susceptus a Plancio. 2 \*

7

61 e Virgilius, sumpta toga, Mediolanum transgreditur, et post breve tempus Romam pergit. \* e Pompeius imperator appellatus.

CLXXX

Olympias

21 f Caesar Lusitaniam, et quasdam insulas in Oceano capit.

8

60 CLXXXII Olympias

29 f Simulacrum Olympiaci Jovis tactum fulmine.

16

52

22 g Messalla Corvinus orator nascitur, et Titus Livius Patavinus scriptor historicus. \*

9

59

30 g Caesar Germanos et Gallos capit.

17

51 Aegypti XII, CLEOPATRA, annis XXII h Virgilius Cremonae studiis eruditur. \*

23 i Catullus XXX aetatis suae anno Romae moritur. \*

10

58

1 h Principium belli civilis Caesaris et Pompeii.

18

50

1960 24 k M. Callidius orator clarus habetur, qui bello postea civili Caesareanas partes secutus, cum togatam Galliam regeret,

11

57

2 i Diodorus Siculus Graecae scriptor historiae, clarus habetur. \*?

19

49

CLXXXI Olympias CLXXXIII Olympias (1) Venusia was on the borders of Apulia and Lucania; the date was 8 December 65 B.C.

(2) 58BC, in Macedonia. Gnaeus Plancius was quaestor of Macedonia.

[238/239]

Romanorum 3 Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC

Romanorum Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC a Gaius Julius Caesar primus apud Romanos singulare obtinuit imperium, a quo 'Caesares' Romanorum principes appellati.

CLXXXIV

Olympias

a Antonius decernit Quintilem mensem, Julium debere dici: quia in eo fuisset natus Julius.

5 b Cassius, Judaea capta, templum spoliat. 7

23

44 First Romanorum primus, C. JULIUS CAESAR, annis IV, menses VII c Idibus Martiis, G. Julius Caesar in Curia occiditur, et fasces statim suscepit Publius Dolabella. 1 \* b Ab hoc loco Antiocheni sua tempora computant. 1 c Pompeius praelio victus, et fugiens, a spadonibus Alexandrini regis occiditur. 3

20

48

d Gaii Caesaris corpus in rostris, ob honorem, concrematum. \*

d Marcus Caelius praetor, et T. Annius Milo exsul, oppressi, res novas in Thuriano, Brutioque agro simul molientes. \*

e Servius Sulpitius juris consultus, et Publius Servilius Isauricus, publico funere elati. \*

f Romae tres simul exorti soles paulatim in eundem orbem coierunt. \*

1970 2 e Ptolemaei cadaver cum lorica aurea in Nilo inventum. \* 4

21

47

g Inter caetera portenta, quae toto orbe facta sunt, bos in suburbano Romae ad arantem locutus est: " frustra se urgeri: non enim frumenta, sed homines brevi defuturos."

2 \*

f Caesar in Aegypto regnum Cleopatrae confirmat ob stupri gratiam.

3 g Romae Basilica Julia dedicata. \* 5

22

46 h Decretum senatus, et Atheniensium ad Judaeos mittitur, qui per legationem amicitiam postularant.

Romanorum II, regnavit OCTAVIANUS CAESAR Augustus, annis LVI, menses VI (A quo 'Augusti' Romanorum reges appellati) i Cleopatra regio comitatu Urbem ingressa. \*

1 h Antonius adversum Caesarem Augustum bellum movet. \*? 9

25

43 k Prohibitae lecticis, margaritisque uti, quae nec viros, nec liberos haberent, et minores essent annis XLIV. \* i Laberius, mimorum scriptor, decimo mense post Caesaris interitum, Puteolis moritur.

4 l Nigidius Figulus pythagoricus et magus in exilio moritur. \*? 6

23

45 k Publius mimographus, natione Syrus, Romae scenam tenet. \* (1) Literally "received the fasces."

(2) Cf. Livy 28.11.4 (for 206 BC, not this 41 BC) "et bos in agro Romano locutus."

(3) Prior to this page in 'O' the heading always reads 'Consulum'. Thereafter it is 'Romans'.

[240/241]

Romanorum Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC

Romanorum Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC a Cicero in Formiano suo ab Herennio et Popilio occiditur, 64 aetatis suae anno. \* in amicitiam cum eo regreditur. a Cornificius poeta a militibus desertus interiit, quos saepe fugientes 'galeatos lepores' appellat. Hujus soror Cornificia, cujus insignia exstant epigrammata. \* c Cicero ut quibusdam placet interficitur in Caietis. b Ciceronis caput cum manu dextra pro Rostris positum, juxtaque coronata imago Popilii militis, qui eum occiderat. \* b Templum Rhodiorum depopulatus est Cassius. \* c Secunda secessio Augusti et Antonii. d Ovidius Naso nascitur in Pelignis. 1 \*

CLXXXV

Olympias

4 d Cornelius Nepos scriptor historicus clarus habetur. \* 11

28

40

2 e Caius Falcidius tribunus plebis legem tulit 2, ne quis plus testamento legaret, quam ut quarta pars haeredibus superesset, si quatuor, aut minus essent. \* 9

26

42 e Antigonus contra Judaeos dimicans, tandem occiditur, a quo usque in praesens tempus Jerosolymitarum regnum destructum est. Siquidem Herodes post eum a Romanis constitutus est princeps alienigena, et nihil omnino pertinens ad Judaeam

5

12

29

39 f Curtius Salassus in insula Arada, cum quatuor cohortibus vivus combustus est, quod tributa gravius exigeret. \*

6

13

30

38

3 g Vibium Maximum designatum quaestorem agnovit dominus suus, et abduxit. \* 10

27

41 f Fornii pater et filius clari oratores habentur, quorum filius consularis ante patrem moritur. \*

1980

7

14

31

37 h E taberna meritoria 3 trans Tiberim, oleum terra erupit, fluxitque toto die sine intermissione, significans Christi gratiam ex gentibus. \* CLXXXVI Olympias

8 g Sallustius diem obiit, quadriennio ante Actiacum bellum. \* 15

32

36

9 h Marcus Vavius poeta, quem Virgilius in Bucolicis notat, in Cappadocia moritur. 16

33

35 i Antonium superat Augustus, et interveniente senatu, (1) Literally "among the Peligni."

(2) The Falcidian Law, (Justinian, Digest of Roman Law, 35.2) by its first Article, conferred the power of disposing of an estate up to and including three-fourths of the same. English translation.

It is followed in some manuscripts by a long and confused gloss, which adds

the words "... if four or less." And then goes on, "Si autem plus quatuor, medietas eo tenore, ut sive liberis, sive propinquis idem exteris pater sua legaret, illa pars quam Falcidius constituit, nisi pater interdixerit, et legatis fruentibus, et eisdem carentibus aequanimiter partiretur."

(3) Cassius

Dio 48.43.4, giving the date as 38 BC. Here one day, in 38 BC, oil suddenly

started to gush out from the ground. This mysterious event was given the Latin

name fons olei ("oil source", or "oil fountain"). This is

the legend of S. Maria in Trastevere. A taberna meritoria was an upmarket tavern

and lodging house.

[242/243]

†

Romanorum Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC

Romanorum Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC

10 a Herodes Antipatri Ascalonitae, et matris Cypridis Arabicae filius, a Romanis Judaeorum suscepit principatum: cujus tempore, Christi nativitate vicina, regnum, et sacerdotium Judaeae, quod prius per successiones minorum tenebatur, destructum est, completa prophetia, quae ita per Mosen loquitur: 17

34

34

Quae LXIX hebdomades

1 faciunt annos CDLXXXIII, in quibus Christi, id est, sacerdotes per unctionem consecrati regnaverunt usque ad Hyrcanum. Quo extremo omnium a Parthis capto, Herodes Antipatri filius nihil ad se pertinentem Judaeam ab Augusto et senatu accepit. Filii quoque ejus post eum regnaverunt usque ad novissimam Jerosolymitarum captivitatem, nequaquam ex successione sacerdotalis generis pontificibus constitutis, perpetuitate vitae secundum legem Moysi servientibus Deo. Ignobiles vero quidam, et alio tempore alii, et nonnulli unius anni, sive modico amplius, a Romanis imperatoribus sacerdotium emebant. Quae omnia etiam Daniel Propheta vaticinatur, dicens:

Judaeis regnavit HERODES alienigena, Deficiente Pontificum principatu, annis XXXVII.

"Non deficiet princeps ex Juda, neque dux de femoribus ejus, donec veniat, cui repositum est. Et ipse erit exspectatio gentium." 2 In hoc etiam loco, Christus, quem Danielis scriptura praefatur, accepit finem. Nam usque ad Herodem, Christi, id est, sacerdotes erant reges Judaeorum, qui imperare coeperunt a LXV olympiade, et ab instauratione templi sub Dario usque ad Hyrcanum, et ad 186 olympiadem, annis CDXLIII in medio transactis: quos Daniel quoque significat, dicens:

" Et post hebdomadas VII et LXII interibit chrisma, et judicium non erit in eo, et templum et sanctum corrumpet populus duce veniente: et caedentur in cataclysmo belli. " Et in sequentibus: "Et super templum, inquit, abominatio desolationum: et usque ad consummationem temporis, consummatio dabitur super desolationem." a Herodes Ananelum quemdam de Babylone accitum, pontificem Judaeorum constituit, et post exiguum temporis Aristobulum fratrem uxoris suae, n

Et scies et intelliges ab initio sermonis respondendi, et aedificandi Jerusalem usque ad Christi principatum, hebdomades VII et hebdomades LXII.

1

(1) 'Hebdomades' is properly a 'group of seven' years rather than a week. The word 'weeks' is intended to be quaint or mystical, as note where it is initially explained by Leviticus 25:8 'numerabis quoque tibi septem ebdomades annorum id est septem septies quae simul faciunt quadraginta novem' -- 'And you shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall be to you forty-nine years.' Jerome's 'id est' is not in the Heb (or RSV) but the phrase SHBX SHBTT SHNYM 'seven sabbaths of years' is clearly meant to be pointed in some way, and not just a way of saying something numerical like 'group of seven'. Even the Gk word E(BDOMAS is somewhat obscure [cf. Chantraine s.v. e(pta at end]. Finally, it is already traditional language in Jerome's time and remains so: NJB, Lev. 25:8 'You will count seven weeks of years--seven...' [note their long dash = Jerome's id est] and then Daniel 9:24 'Seventy weeks are decreed...'.  
 (2) The quotation marks represent a line of vertical squiggles against this paragraph in the left-hand margin in 'O'.

[244/245]

Romanorum Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC

Romanorum Alexandrinorum Judaeorum

BC nepotem Hyrcani successorem ei dedit, quo post annum interfecto, rursum Ananelo reddidit sacerdotium. .

12 a Usque ad Cleopatram Ptolemaei, qui vocabantur Lagidae, in Aegypto regnaverunt annis CCXCV. 19

2

32 a Lunae, secundum Romanos, cursus inventus. \* b Artorius medicus Augusti, post Actiacam victoriam naufragio perit. \*

11 b Antonii et Augusti foedus. 18

1

23 c Colonias deduxere Romani.

13 c Quidam ab hoc loco primum annum Augusti monarchiae supputant. 20

3

31 d Augustus triumphavit pedestris certaminis triumpho. e Antonius Cleopatrae Arabiam tradidit. d Caesar Augustus appellatus, a quo Sextilis mensis Augusti nomen accepit. f Augusti et Antonii tertiae dissensionis exordium, quod repudiata sorore Caesaris, Cleopatram induxisset uxorem. (\*)

14 e Cum ingenti triumphorum pompa Augustus Romam ingressus, et Cleopatrae liberi, Sol et Luna ante currum ejus ducti. 1 21

4

30 g Nicetes, et Hibreas, et Theodorus, et Plution nobilissimi artis rhetoricae Graeci praeceptores habentur. \*

15 f Nicopolis juxta Actium condita et agon Actiacus constitutus. 22

5

29 Aegypti regnum, quod fuit in Alexandria, destructum est..

~~~~~ g Augustus Romanis plurimas leges statuit.

CLXXXVII Olympias h Cleopatra et Antonius semet interficiunt, et Aegyptus fit Romana provincia, quam primus tenuit Caius Cornelius Gallus, de quo Virgilius scribit in Bucolicis. (*) CLXXXVIII Olympias h Censu Romae agitato, inventa sunt civium Romanorum XLI centena et LXIV millia.

2

16 i Coloniae deductae.

23

2

6

3

28 k Anaxilaus Larisseus Pythagoricus (1) Dio Cassius 51.21.8. The reference is to Alexander Helios (the 'sun') and Cleopatra Selene (the 'moon').

(2) This number is missing in 'O'.

(3) This number is coloured red in 'O'.

[246/247]

Romanorum

Judaeo-rum

BC

Romanorum

Judaeo-rum

BC et Magus ab Augusto Urbe Italiaque pellitur. * renuit.

21 a Quintilius Cremonensis Virgilii et Horatii familiaris moritur. *

11

23 a M. Terentius Varro philosophus prope nonagenarius moritur. * b Augustus Cyzicenos libertate privavit.

1990 17 b Thebae Aegypti usque ad solum erutae.

7

27

22 c Pylades Cilix pantomimus, cum veteres ipsi canerent atque saltarent, primus Romae chorum et fistulam sibi praecinere fecit. *

12

22 c Cornelius Gallus Forojuliensis poeta, a quo primum Aegyptum rectam, supradiximus, XLIII aetatis suae anno propria se manu interfecit. *

23 d Tiberius ab Augusto missus occupavit Armeniam.

13

21 d Trallis terraemotu consederunt.

18 e Indi ab Augusto per legatum amicitiam postularunt. *

8

26 e Atratinus, qui septem decem natus annis Caelium accuraverat, clarus inter oratores habetur: ad extremum morborum taedio in balneo, voluntate exanimatus, haeredem reliquit Augustum. * f Messala Corvinus primus praefectus Urbis factus, sexto die magistratu se abdicavit, incivilem potestatem esse contestans. *

CXC

Olympias

19 g Augustus Calabriam et Gallos vectigales facit.

9

25

24 f Cantabri res novas molientes opprimuntur.

14

20 h Munatius Plancus, Ciceronis discipulus, orator habetur insignis, qui cum Galliam Comatam regeret, Lugdunum condidit. *

25 g Herodes apud Jerosolymam multas et magnas aedes construxit.

15

19

26 h Virgilius Brundusii moritur, Sentio Saturnino et Lucretio Cinna consulibus. Ossa ejus Neapolim translata in secundo ab urbe milliaro sepeliuntur, titulo istiusmodi supra scripto, quem moriens ipse dictaverat:

16

18 CLXXXIX Olympias

20 i Marcus Lollius Galatiam provinciam facit. k Augustus, cum ei monarchia deferretur

[248/249]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

BC

Romanorum

Judaeorum

BC "Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc Parthenope, cecini pascua, rura, duces." * a Bosphorum Agrippa capit.

31 b Cestius Smyrnaeus rhetor Latine Romae docuit. *

21

13 a Herodes Samariam olim jam in cineribus sedentem, a fundamentis suscitans, in honorem Augusti Augustam, id est, Sebastiam appellavit, et in Paneade id quod Panion vocatur, exstruxit.

CXCII Olympias c Augustus a senatu pontifex maximus appellatur.

32

22

12 d Herodes Caesaream in nomine Caesaris condidit, quae prius Turris Stratonis vocabatur.

2000 27 b Augustus Samiis libertatem dedit. 17

17 c In Cypro plurimae civitatum partes terraemotu conciderunt. e Herodes Anthidonam condidit, et Antipatridam: atque Herodionem in honorem patris Antipatri et suum exstruxit: innumerabilia quoque opera in singulis Syriarum urbibus, quas regebat, solertissime aedificavit.

33

23

11 d Germanos in arma versos Marcus Lollius superat. e Varius et Tucca, Virgilii et Horatii contubernales, poetae habentur illustres, qui Aeneidum libros postea emendaverunt sub lege ea,

ut nihil adderent. *

34 f Tiberius Caesar de captivis Pannoniis triumphat.

24

10

CXCI

Olympias

35 g Horatius LVII aetatis suae anno Romae moritur. *

25

9

28 f Augustus Gaium Agrippam adoptavit in filium.

18

16

36 h Passienus Pater, declamator insignis, diem obiit. *

26

8 g Aemilius Macer Veronensis poeta in Asia moritur. * i C. Julius Hyginus cognomento Polyhistor, grammaticus habetur illustris. *

29 h Tiberius Vindelicos, et eos qui Thraciarum confines erant, Romanas provincias facit.

19

15

193rd Olympias k Tiberius, vastata Germania, imperator appellatur.

30 i Coloniae Berytum et Patras deductae.

20

14

[250/251]

Romanorum

Judaeo-rum

BC

Romanorum

Judaeo-rum

BC/AD

36 a Herodes Hyrcanum, qui olim sacerdos Judaeorum fuerat, de captivitate Parthica regressum, et filium ejus, qui sacerdotio patris successerat, interfecit : sororem quoque ejus uxorem suam, cum duobus propriis filiis jam adolescentibus, et matrem uxoris occisae, socrum suam, crudelissime necat.

26

8 taedio duplicis quartanae semet interfecit.

41 a Herodes ad ea quae supra crudeliter gesserat, etiam hoc addidit: virum sororis suae Salomae interfecit, et cum eam alii tradidisset uxorem, etiam hunc necat: scribas quoque et interpretes divinae legis simili scelere occidit.

31

3 b Tertullianus in eo libro, quem contra Judaeos scripsit, affirmat Christum XLI anno Augusti natum, et XV Tiberii esse passum. *

2010

37

27

7

42

32

2

38 b Tiberius de Rhetis, Vindelicis, Armenis, ac Pannoniis triumphavit.

28

6 c JESUS CHRISTUS filius Dei in Bethелеem Judae nascitur

43

33

1 BC c Albutius Silo Novariensis clarus rhetor agnoscitur. * d Quirinus ex consilio senatus Judaeam missus, census hominum, possessionumque describit.

39 dIn insula Coe terraemotu plurima conciderunt.

29

5 e Colliguntur omnes anni ab Abraham usque ad nativitatem Christi, anni MMXV. e Augustus Juliam filiam suam in adulterio deprehensam damnat exsilio.

CXCV

Olympias

CXCIV Olympias f C. Caesar amicitiam cum Parthis fecit. f M. Tullius Tiro Ciceronis libertus, qui primus notas commentus est, in Puteolano praedio usque ad centesimum annum consenescit. *

44 g Sextus Pythagoricus philosophus agnoscitur.

34

1 AD h Augustus Tiberium et Agrippam in filios adoptat.

40

30

4 g Augustus gladiatorium ludum, et navale certamen exhibuit.

45 i Judas Galilaeus ad rebellandum Judaeos cohortatur.

35

2 h Melissus Spoletinus grammaticus agnoscitur. * k Herodes, cum Christi nativitatem, Magorum indicio, cognovisset, universos in Bethleem parvulos jussit interfici. i M. Porcius Latro, Latinus declamator,

[252/253]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

46 a Herodes morbo intercutis aquae, et scatentibus toto corpore vermibus, miserabiliter et digne moritur.

36

3 ita memoriam ac sensum amisit, ut vix pauca verba conjungeret, et ad extremum ulcere sibi circa sacram spinam nato, inedia se confecit, annos aetatis LXXII. *

2020 47 b Asinius Pollio orator et consularis, qui de Dalmatis triumpharat, LXX aetatis suae anno in villa Tusculana moritur. *

37

4 Judaeorum dux, ARCHELAUS, annis IX CXCVIII Olympias a Augustus cum Tiberio filio suo censem Romae agitans, invenit hominum nonagies tercentena et septuaginta millia.

CXCVI Olympias c In Herodis locum Archelaus, ab Augusto substituitur, et Tetrarchae fiunt quatuor fratres ejus, Herodes, Antipater, Lysias, et Philippus.

56 b Sotio philosophus Alexandrinus, praeceptor Senecae clarus habetur. (*)

9

13

48

1

5 c Archelaus nono anno regni sui, in Viennam urbem Galliae relegatur. Judaeorum principatum tenet HERODES Tetrarcha annis XXIV d Fames Romae ita ingens facta, ut quinque modii venderentur denariis XXVII semis. d Defectio solis facta , et Augustus LXXVI aetatis suae anno, Atellae in Campania moritur, sepeliturque Romae in campo Martio. (*)

49 e Philisthion mimographus, natione Magnesianus, Romae clarus habetur. *

2

6

50 f Tiberius Caesar Dalmatas, Sarmatasque in Romanam redigit potestatem.

3

7 Romanorum III, TIBERIUS regnavit annis XXIII

2030 1 e Gaius Asinius Gallus orator, Asinii Pollionis filius, cujus etiam Virgilius meminit, diris a Tiberio suppliciis enecatur. *

1

14

51 g Athenodorus Tarsensis Stoicus philosophus, et M. Verrius Flaccus grammaticus, insignes habentur. (*)

4

8

2

2

15

3

3

16

CXCVII

Olympias

CXCIX

Olympias

52 h Athenienses res novas contra Romanos molientes opprimuntur, auctoribus seditionis occisis.

5

9

4 f T. Livius historiographus Patavii moritur.

4

17

53

6

10 g Ovidius poeta in exilio diem obiit, et juxta oppidum Tomos sepelitur. *

54

7

11

55 i Messala Corvinus orator ante biennium quam moreretur,

8

12 h Germanicus Caesar de Parthis triumphat.

[254/255]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

5 a Tredecim urbes terraemotu corruerunt, Ephesus, Magnesia, Sardis, Mosthene, Aegae, Hierocaesarea, Philadelphia, Tmolus, Temnus, Cymae, Myrhina, Apollonia Dia, Hyrcania.

5

18 in qua plurimas aedes construxerat, Caesaream Philippi vocavit, et Juliadem aliam civitatem.

13 a Pontius Pilatus procurator Judaeae a Tiberio mittitur. *

13

26

6 b Fenestella, historiarum scriptor et carminum, septuagenarius moritur, sepeliturque Cumis. *

6

19

14 b Votienus Montanus Narbonensis orator in Balearibus insulis moritur, illuc a Tiberio relegatus.

14

27

7 c Tiberius multos reges ad se per blanditias evocatos numquam remisit: in quibus Archelaum Cappadocem, cujus regno in provinciam verso, Mazacam nobilissimam civitatem, Caesaream appellare jussit. *

7

20

15 c Herodes Tiberiadem condidit, et Libiadem.

15

28 d Joannes filius Zachariae in deserto juxta Jordanem fluvium praedicans, Christum filium Dei in medio eorum adesse testatur. Ipse quoque Dominus Jesus Christus hinc in populos salutarem viam annuntiat, signis atque virtutibus vera comprobans esse, quae diceret.

CC

Olympias

8 d Pompeii theatrum incensum.

8

21

9 e Tiberius Drusum consortem regni facit.

9

22 f Computantur in praesentem annum, id est XV Tiberii Caesaris, a secundo anno instaurationis Templi, quae facta est sub altero anno Darii regis Persarum, anni DXLVIII

10 f Drusus Caesar veneno periit.

10

23

2040 11 g Quintus Haterius, promptus et popularis orator, usque ad XC prope annum summo honore consenescit. *

11

24 h Servius Plautus corrupti filii reus semet in iudicio interficit. * fa Salomone autem et prima aedificatione templi, anni MLX

CCI Olympias a Moyse, et egressu Israhelis ex Aegypto, anni MDXXXIX

12 i Philippus tetrarcha Paneadem,

12

25

[256/258]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD ab Abraham et regno Nini et Semiramidis, anni MMXLIV

"Quarto autem anno CCII olympiadis, magna et excellens inter omnes, quae ante eam acciderant, defectio solis est facta; dies hora sexta in tenebrosam noctem versus, ut stellae in caelo visae sint, terraeque motus in Bithynia Nicaenae urbis multas aedes subvertit."

Haec supradictus vir.

Argumentum autem huius rei, quod Salvator isto anno passus sit, Evangelium praebet Johannis, in quo scribitur, post decimum quintum annum Tiberii Caesaris, tribus annis Dominum praedicasse. Josephus etiam vernaculus Judaeorum scriptor, circa haec tempora die Pentecostes sacerdotes primum commotionem locorum, et quosdam sonitus sensisse testatur. Deinde ex adyto Templi repentina subito erupisse vocem dicentium: "Transmigremus ex his sedibus." Scribit autem supra dictus vir, quod eodem anno Pilatus praeses secreto noctis imagines Caesaris in templo statuerit. Et haec prima seditionis et turbarum Judaeis causa exstiterit. a diluvio usque ad Abraham, anni CMXLII ab Adam usque ad diluvium, anni MMCCXLII

CCII Olympias a Principium LXXXI jubilai secundum Hebraeos 16 b Jesus Christus filius Dei salutarem cunctis praedicans viam, miracula quae in Evangeliiis scripta sunt, facit. 16

29

17 c Jesus Christus filius Dei, discipulos suos divinis imbuens sacramentis, ut universis gentibus conversionem ad Deum nuntient, imperat. 17

30

18 d Jesus Christus, secundum prophetias, quae de eo fuerant praelocutae, ad passionem venit anno Tiberii 18, quo tempore etiam in aliis ethnicorum commentariis haec ad verbum scripta reperimus: Solis facta defectio 1, Bithynia terraemotu concussa, et in urbe Nicaena aedes plurimae corruerunt: quae omnia his congruunt, quae in passione Salvatoris acciderunt. Scribit vero super his et Phlegon, qui olympiadarum egregius supputator est, in XIII libro ita dicens: 18

31

19

19

32 a Ecclesiae Jerosolymorum primus episcopus ab Apostolis ordinatur Jacobus frater Domini.

(1) November 24, 29 AD. Note that paras b,c and d are merged

in the Merton Ms.

[258/259]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD a Ex hoc loco considerandum, quanta deinceps calamitates Judaeorum gentem oppresserint. ut inter caetera sacra reciperetur. 4 Verum cum ex consulto patrum, Christianos eliminari Urbe placuisset, Tiberius per edictum accusatoribus Christianorum comminatus est mortem: scribit Tertullianus in Apologetico. 5

23

23

36 b Cassius Severus orator egregius, qui Quintianum illud Proverbium luserat, XXV exsilio sui anno summa inopia moritur, vix panno verenda contextus. 1 * a Multi senatorum et equitum Romanorum interfecti.

CCIII Olympias c Pilatus post supradictam seditionem, quae ob Caesaris imagines fuerat concitata, sacrum thesaurum, quem Corbonan Judaei vocant, in aquaeductum Jerosolymorum expendens, secundae seditionis praebuit semina. b Tiberius in Campania moritur. 6 (*)

CCIV

Olympias

20

20

33 Romanorum IV, GAIUS CALIGULA, regnavit annis III, menses X.

1 c Gaius Caesar cognomento Caligula, Agrippam vinculis liberatum, regem Judaeae facit.

24

37 Judaeorum princeps, AGRIPPA, annis VII

2050 21 d Sejanus praefectus Tiberii, qui apud eum plurimum poterat, instantissime cohortatur, ut gentem Judaeorum delectat: Philo meminit in libro Legationis II. 2

21

34 d Gaius semetipsum inter deos refert. e Flaccus Avilius praefectus Aegypti, multis Judaeos calamitatibus premit, consentiente Alexandriae populo, et crebris adversus eos clamoribus personante: synagogas quoque eorum imaginibus, statuis, aris et victimis polluit. Refert Philo in eo libro, qui Flaccus inscribitur, haec omnia se praesente gesta, ob quae etiam legationem ad Gaium ipse suscepit e Persius Flaccus Satiricus poeta Volaterris nascitur.

22 f Agrippa filius Aristobuli, filii Herodis regis, accusator Herodis tetrarchae, Romam profectus a Tiberio in vincula conjicitur. 3

22

35 g Pilato de Christianorum dogmate ad Tiberium referente, Tiberius retulit ad senatum,

(1) After this in the PL is

the following entry, where the Merton ms. has a blank: 'Stephanus lapidatur: Saulus ad Christum convertitur'.

(2) Another blank in the manuscript is filled in the PL with these two entries:

'Jacobus frater Joannis Apostoli, jubente Herode rege, capite truncatus occiditur.

-- Petrus Apostolus ab Herode in carcerem trusus, et vinctus catenis duabus, mirabiliter ab angelo liberatur'.

(3) In the PL, but not in the Ms. this entry continues: 'eo quod publice Deum precatus fuisset, ut, mortuo statim Tiberio, Caium cunctorum dominum videret'.

(4) 'Sacra' rendered as 'recognised religions'.

(5) In the PL, not in the Ms. there follows: 'Petrus Apostolus Antiochenam Ecclesiam fundavit, ibique cathedram adeptus, sedit annis XXV'.

(6) The PL adds: 'in Lucullana villa'.

[260/261]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD Romanorum V, CLAUDIUS, regnavit annis XIII, mensibus VIII, diebus XXVIII.

CCV Olympias a Passienus filius fraude haeredis suae necatus. 1 *

1 a Iste est Claudius patruus Drusi, qui apud Moguntiacum monumentum habet: Alibi legi, avunculus, quia frater matris Gaii fuit. *

4

41

3 b Gaius cognomento Caligula, Memmii Reguli duxit uxorem, impellens eum, ut uxoris suae patrem esse se scriberet.

2

39

2 b PETRUS Apostolus, natione Galilaeus, Christianorum Pontifex primus, cum primum Antiochenam Ecclesiam fundasset, Romam proficiscitur, ubi Evangelium praedicans XXV annis ejusdem urbis episcopus perseverat.

5

42 c Pontius Pilatus in multas incidens calamitates, propria se manu interfecit: scribunt Romanorum historici.

3 c Marcus Evangelista interpres Petri, Aegypto et Alexandriae Christum annuntiat.

6

43 d Gaius Petronio praefecto Syriae praecepit, ut Jerosolymis statuam suam sub nomine Jovis Optimi Maximi poneret: quod Judaei maxima negaverunt obstinatione.

2060 4 d Primus Antiochiae episcopus ordinatur Evodius.

7

44 e Agrippa rex Judaeorum annos VII imperans moritur. Post quem filius ejus Agrippa, a Claudio substituitur in regnum. e Toto orbe Romano, sicut Philo scribit, et Josephus, in Synagogis Judaeorum statuae, et imagines, et arae G. Caesaris consecratae.

Judaeorum rex, AGRIPPA, annis XXVI f Prophetia Agabi, quae in Actibus Apostolorum famem in toto orbe futuram dixerat sub Claudio expletur.

4 f Plurimi nobilium a Gaio interfecti.

3

40 g Gaius sorores suas, quibus stuprum intulerat, insulari exilio condemnavit. (*) g Claudius de Britannis triumphavit, et Orchadas insulas Romano adjecit imperio, In cujus gloriae memoriam filium suum Britannicum appellavit. (*) h Gaius omnes exsules jussit interfici. i Gaius a protectoribus suis occiditur in palatio, anno aetatis suae XXIX. h Domitius Afer Nemausensis clarus orator habetur,

(1) In the Merton manuscript there is a space following. In the Patrologia Latina, there follows this entry: 'Matthaeus in Judaea Evangelium primus scribit'.

[262/263]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD qui postea, Nerone regnante, ex cibi redundantia in coena moritur. *

CCVII

Olympias

9 a Fame facta in Graecia, modius sex drachmis venundatus est. 4

5

49

a Claudus Quirinalis Rhetor Arelatensis Romae insignissime docet. *

10 b Magna fames Romae. 5

6

50

c Claudius Felicem procuratorem Judaeae mittit, apud quem Paulus apostolus accusatus in defensionem sui perorat.

6

CCVI

Olympias

11

7

51

5 b Inter Theram et Therasiam exorta est insula habens stadia 30.

1

45

12

8

52

c Descriptione Romae facta sub Claudio inventa sunt civium Romanorum LXVIII centena et XLIV millia.

1

CCVIII

Olympias

d Sub Felice procuratore Judaeae exstiterunt multi, qui populum sua persuasione deciperent, in quibus et Aegyptius quidam pseudopropheta fuit, qui plurimos sibi associans, in ipso magnarum rerum conatu per exercitum Felicis opprimitur. Scribit Josephus consentanea apostolorum Actibus, in quibus Paulo dicitur a Tribuno: 'Nonne tu es Aegyptius, qui ante hos dies concitasti, et eduxisti in desertum quatuor millia virorum?'

7

6

2

46

d Thracia hucusque regnata, in Romanorum provinciam redigitur.

2

13

9

53

7 e Sub procuratore Judaeae Cumano in diebus azymorum 3 tanta est Jerosolymis orta seditio, ut in portarum exitu, populo corruente, 30 millia Judaeorum perierint.

3

47

8 f Palaemon Vicetinus insignis grammaticus Romae habetur, qui quondam interrogatus, quid inter stillam et guttam interesset: "Gutta, inquit, stat, et stilla cadit". *

4

48

2070 14 e Claudius moritur in Palatio, anno aetatis suae LXIV. (*)

10

54 g Marcus Antonius Liberalis Latinus rhetor gravissimas inimicitias cum Palaemone exercet. *
Romanorum VI, NERO regnavit annis XIII, mensibus VII, diebus XXVIII.

1 f Hujus avunculus fuit Gaius Caligula. *

11

55

(1) The Patrologia Latina text has two extra entries

at this point, which are not found in the 9th century Merton College manuscript

No. 315, although there seems to be a space in the text at this point:

-- Claudius circa haec tempora Fucinum lacum exsiccavit, XI annos triginta hominum millibus sine intermissione operantibus.

-- Portum Ostiae Claudius exstruxit, dextra laevaue duobus quasi brachiis objectis.

(2) Another entry from the PL, not in the Merton Ms. follows, where there is

a space in the page: 'Maria virgo Jesu Christi mater ad Filium in coelum assumitur, ut quidam fuisse sibi revelatum scribunt'.

(3) The passover.

(4) Another entry from the PL, not in the Merton Ms. follows, where there is

a space in the page: 'Tres simul soles apparuerunt, statimque simul in eundem orbem coierunt'.

(5) Another PL entry, but no space in the Ms.: Dionysius the Areopagite, once

a distinguished philosopher, is famous.

(6) Another PL entry follows, again with no space in the Ms.: 'Philippus apostolus Christi apud Hierapolim Asiae civitatem, dum Evangelium populo nuntiaret, cruci affixus, lapidibus opprimitur'.

(7) The reference is to Acts 21:38, and the citation is slightly altered from:

'Nonne tu es Aegyptius qui ante hos dies tumultum concitasti, et eduxisti in deseertum quattuor milia virorum sicariorum?'

[264/265]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD a Felice regente Judaeam, seditio in Caesarea Palaestinae orta magnam Judaeorum multitudinem perdidit. a Judaeis lapidibus opprimitur: in cuius thronum Simeon, qui et Simon secundus assumitur.

2 b Festus in gubernatione succedit Felici, apud quem, praesente Agrippa rege, Paulus apostolus religionis suae rationem exponens, vinctus Romam mittitur.

12

56

8 a Ante mensam Neronis fulmen cecidit. 18

62 b Post Marcum Evangelistam primus Alexandrinae ecclesiae ordinatur episcopus Annianus, qui praefuit annis XXII. c Probus Berytius eruditissimus grammaticorum, Romae agnoscitur. * c Persius 1 moritur anno aetatis suae XXIX. *

CCIX

Olympias

9 d Thermae a Nerone aedificatae, quas Neronianas appellavit.

19

63 d Statius Surculus Tholosanus in Gallia, celeberrime rhetoricam docuit. * e Nero Romae in citharistarum agone contendens omnes superat.

3 e Terraemotus Romae, et solis defectio.

13

57 f Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, Cordubensis poeta, in Pisoniana conjuratione deprehensus, brachium ad secandas venas medico praebuit. *

4 f Nero Agrippinam matrem suam et sororem patris interficit.

14

58

5 g Nero tantae luxuriae fuit, ut frigidis et calidis lavaretur unguentis, retibusque aureis piscaretur, quae purpureis funibus extrahebat. *

15

59 2080 10 g Nero, ut similitudinem ardentis Trojae inspiceret, plurimam partem Romanae urbis incendit. (*)

20

64

6

16

60 h In Asia tres urbes terraemotu conciderunt, Laodicia, Hierapolis, Colossae.

CCX Olympias h Nero Romae cithara contendens superat. i Albino procuratori Judaeae Cestius Florus succedit, sub quo Judaei contra Romanos rebellaverunt. i Festo in magistratu Judaeae succedit Albinus.

7 k Jacobus, frater Domini, quem omnes Justum appellabant,

17

61 k Junius Annaeus Gallio frater Senecae egregius declamator propria se manu interfecit. * (1)
Late manuscripts insert after the word Persius "Volaterranus, Satiricus poeta,".

[266/267]

Romanorum

Judaeo-rum

AD

Romanorum

Judaeo-rum

AD

14 a Musonius et Plutarchus philosophi insignes habentur.

24

68 a CCXI Olympias. Non est, Nerone in suam praesentiam differente. b L. Annaeus Mella, Senecae frater et Gallionis, bona Lucani poetae filii sui a Nerone promeretur. *

11 b Duae tantum provinciae sub Nerone factae, Pontus Polemoniacus, et Alpes Cottiae, Cottio rege defuncto. 1 *

21

65 c 1 Prima persecutio sub Nerone c Primus Nero super omnia scelera sua, etiam persecutionem in Christianos facit, in qua Petrus et Paulus gloriose Romae occubuerunt. c Multi nobilium Romae a Nerone interfecti. d Nero in olympiade coronatur, cerycas, citharistas, tragoedos, aurigas vario certamine superans. d Contra Judaeos, qui Cestii Flori avaritiam non ferentes, rebellabant, Vespasianus magister militiae a Nerone transmittitur.

12 e Lucius Annaeus Seneca Cordubensis, praeceptor Neronis, et patruus Lucani poetae, incisione venarum, et veneni haustu periit. *

22

66 e Vespasianus plurimas urbes Judaeae capit. f Flavius Josephus scriptor historicus, dux belli Judaeorum, cum a Romanis interficiendus esset, Vespasiano praenuntiat de morte Neronis, et ejus imperio: cujus rei causa vitam dono accepit. f Rursum Nero isthmia, pythia, actia celebrans, inter cerycas, tragoedos, et citharistas coronatur.

13 g Neroni in expensas centies centena millia decreto senatus annua subministrantur.

23

67 g Post Petrum primus Romanam Ecclesiam tenuit LINUS annis XI. h Nero cum caeteris viris insignibus et Octaviam uxorem suam interfecit, Cornutumque philosophum praeceptorem Persii in exsilium fugat. h Nero cum a Senatu quaereretur ad poenam, e palatio fugiens ad quartum Urbis miliarium, in suburbano liberti sui inter Salariam et Nomentanam viam semet interfecit, (1) Pontus Polemoniacus was added in 64 AD. M. Julius Cottius ruled the Cottian Alps as praefectus civitatum.

[268/269]

Romanorum

Judaeorum

AD

Romanorum Judaeorum regnum finitus est

AD anno aetatis suae XXXII, atque in eo omnis Augusti familia consummata est. (*)

2 a Titus, Judaea capta, et Jerosolymis subversis, sexcenta millia virorum interfecit. Josephus vero scribit, undecies centena millia fame et gladio periisse, et alia centum millia captivorum publice venundata. Ut autem tanta multitudo Jerosolymis reperiretur, causam azymorum fuisse refert, ob quam ex omni gente Judaeae ad Templum confluentes, urbe quasi carcere sunt reclusi: oportuit enim iisdem diebus Paschae eos interfici, in quibus Salvatorem crucifixerant. .

26

70 a Post Neronem GALBA in Hiberia, VITELLIUS in Germania, OTHO Romae imperium arripuerunt.

3

71 b Marcus Fabius Quintilianus Romam a Galba perducitur. *

CCXII

Olympias

4

72 c Galba septimo mense imperii sui, in medio Romanae urbis foro, capite truncatur. d Vespasianus duobus praeliis superatos Judaeos ad muros compulit. e Otho tertio regni sui mense, apud Bebriacum propria manu occubuit. (*) b Colligitur omne tempus in secundum annum Vespasiani, et novissimam eversionem Jerosolymarum: f Antiochiae secundus episcopus

ordinatur Ignatius. a quinto decimo Tiberii Caesaris anno, et ab exordio Evangelicae praedicationis, XII [Olympiades]. g Vitellius octavo imperii sui mense a Vespasiani ducibus occisus, in Tiberim projicitur. (*) Romanorum VII, VESPASIANUS regnavit annis IX, mensibus XI, diebus XXII. a captivitate autem, quam ab Antiocho perpassi sunt, anni CCXXXIX

1 h Vespasianus apud Judaeam imperator ab exercitu appellatus, et bellum Tito filio commendans, Romam per Alexandriam proficiscitur.

25

69 porro a Darii secundo anno, sub quo rursum Templum aedificatum est, anni, DXC a prima autem aedificatione Templi sub Salomone usque ad novissimam ejus ruinam, quae sub Vespasiano facta est, anni MCII . i Capitolium Romae incensum.

[270/271]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

CCXIII Olympias circa Sabinos, anno aetatis LXIX. (*)

5 a Vespasianus Capitolium aedificare orsus.

73 Romanorum VIII, TITUS, regnavit annis II, mensibus II. b In Alexandria facta seditio.

1 a Titus filius Vespasiani in utraque lingua disertissimus fuit, et tantae bonitatis, ut cum quadam die recordatus fuisset in coena, nihil se illo die cuiquam praestitisse, dixit: 'Amici, hodie diem perdidit.'

79

2090 6 c Achaia, Lycia, Rhodus, Byzantium, Samus, Thracia, Cilicia, Comagene, quae liberae antea et sub regibus amicis erant, in provincias redactae. *

74

7 d Colossus erectus habens altitudinis pedes CVII.

75 b Mons Vesuvius ruptus in vertice tantum ex se jecit incendii, ut regiones vicinas et urbes cum hominibus exureret. e Q. Asconius Pedianus scriptor historicus clarus habetur, qui LXXIII aetatis suae anno captus luminibus, XII postea annis in summo honore consenescit. * c Titus Musonium Rufum philosophum de exilio revocat. *

8

76 d Titus amphitheatrum Romae aedificat et in dedicatione ejus quinque millia ferarum occidit. * f Gabinianus celeberrimi nominis rhetor in Gallia docuit. *

2 e Romanae Ecclesiae II constituitur Episcopus, CLETUS, annis XII.

80

CCXIV

Olympias

9 g Tres civitates Cypri terraemotu corruerunt.

77 f Romae plurimae aedes incendio concremantur. h Lues ingens Romae facta, ita ut per multos dies in ephemeriden decem millia ferme mortuorum hominum referrentur. g Titus morbo periit in ea villa, qua pater. pridie Idus Septembres, anno aetatis XLII. 1 (*)

CCXV

Olympias

10 i Vespasianus Colonias deduxit, et mortuus est profluvio ventris in villa propria

78 Romanorum IX, DOMITIANUS, regnavit annis XV, mensibus V. h Domitianus Titi frater junior. *

(1) Titus died on September 13, 81 AD at Aquae Cutiliae, where his father Vespasian had died two years earlier.

The ides of September are the 12th.

[272/273]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD a Domitiani uxor Augusta appellatur.

9 a Multa opera Romae facta, in quibus Capitolium, Forum transitorium, divorum Porticus, Isium ac Serapium, Stadium, Horrea piperataria, Vespasiani templum, Minerva Chalcidica, Odeum, Forum Trajani, Thermae Trajanae et Titianae, Senatus, Ludus matutinus, Mica aurea, Meta sudans, et Pantheon. 1 *

89

2 b Decreto senatus Titus inter deos refertur. 82 c Domitianus eunuchos fieri prohibuit.

3 d Tres virgines Vestae ob stuprum damnatae.

83 e Plurimos senatorum Domitianus in exsilium mittit.

10

90

2100 4 f Secundus Alexandrinae Ecclesiae constituitur episcopus, Abilius, qui praefuit annis XIII.

84 b Domitianus de Dacis et Germanis triumphat.

CCXVI

Olympias

5 g Domitianus templum sine admixtione lignorum construit.

85

11 c Domitianus tantae superbiae fuit, ut aureas et argenteas statuas sibi in Capitolio poni iusserit: Haecque et caetera omnia suo tantum titulo, sine ulla prisci auctoris memoria, signaret. *

91

6 h Primus Domitianus dominum se et deum appellare iussit. *

86 d Maxima virginum Vestalium Cornelia convicta stupri, juxta legem viva defossa est. i Nasamones et Daci dimicantes contra Romanos victi.

7 k Duo menses aliter appellati, September Germanicus, et October Domitianus.

87

12 e Domitianus prohibuit vites in urbibus seri.

92

8 l Quinctilianus ex Hispania Calaguritanus, qui primus Romae publicam scholam et salarium e fisco accepit, claruit. *

88 f Romanae Ecclesiae episcopus III praefuit, CLEMENS, annis IX.

CCXVIII

Olympias

CCXVII

Olympias

13 g Flavius Josephus vicesimum librum Antiquitatum his temporibus scribit.

93 m Domitianus plurimos nobilium in exsilium mittit, et occidit. n Domitianus mathematicos et philosophos Romana urbe pellit. h Domitianus multos nobilium perdidit, quosdam vero in exsilium misit.

(1) The Ludus Matutinus was a school for the training of bestiarii, "beast fighters." The Meta Sudans was a fountain

built next to the Colosseum in the second half of the 1st century A.D.

"The Mica Aurea was a little palace which the Emperor Domitian had built on Monte Caelio's west side across from

his large imperial palace on the Palatin hill. It was located by the Via Triumphalis of ancient times, nowadays

Via di San Gregorio, between the ancient roads, the Clivus Pulveratus (which does not exist today), and the Clivus Scauri,

which today is called Clivio di Scauro. The latin name means "the little gold-beaming (house)",

as "mica" means "a crumb, or a piece" or "a little room" and "aurea" means "golden"

or "beaming like gold" and the little palace which was built as a private residence

as opposed to the large official palace did have a golden roof."

[274/275]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

2110

14 a Secundus post Neronem Domitianus Christianos persequitur, et sub eo apostolus Joannes in Patmon insulam relegatus, Apocalypsim vidit, quam Irenaeus interpretatur.

94 a Alexandrinae ecclesiae III episcopus praefuit Cerdo, annis XI. b Persecutio a Domitiano b Senatus decrevit, ut omnia quae Domitianus statuerat, in irritum deducerentur. Itaque multi, quos injuste ejecerat, de exilio reversi: nonnulli bona propria receperunt. Aiunt et apostolum Joannem hoc tempore exilio solutum, Ephesum secessisse, in qua urbe et hospitium, et amicos amantissimos sui habebat.

15 c Domitianus rursum philosophos et mathematicos Roma per edictum extrudit.

95

16 d Apollonius Tyaneus, et Euphrates insignes philosophi habentur.

96

1

97 e Domitianus eos, qui de genere David erant, interfici praecipit, ut nullus Judaeorum regni reliquus foret. Scribit Brutius, plurimos Christianorum sub Domitiano fecisse martyrium, inter quos et Flaviam Domitillam Flavii Clementis consulis ex sorore neptem in insulam Pontiam relegatam, quia se Christianam esse testata sit. c Justus a Tiberiade Judaeorum scriptor agnoscitur. d Nerva morbo periit in hortis Sallustianis anno aetatis LXXII cum jam Trajanum adoptasset in filium. (*) e Trajanus Agrippinae in Galliis imperator factus, natus Italicae in Hispania. * Romanorum XI, TRAJANUS, regnavit annis XIX, mensibus VI. f Multa signa atque portenta Romae et toto orbi facta.

1 f Decreto senatus Nerva inter deos relatus est. 98

2 g Romanae Ecclesiae episcopatum IV suscepit, EVARISTUS, annis IX.

99 g Domitianus occisus in Palatio, et per vespillones ignobiliter exportatus anno aetatis XLV. (*)

3 h JOANNEM APOSTOLUM usque ad Trajani tempora Irenaeus episcopus permansisse scribit: post quem auditores ejus insignes fuerunt

100

CCXIX Olympias Romanorum X, NERVA, regnavit anno uno, mensibus IV.

[276/277]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD Papias Hieropolitanus episcopus et Polycarpus Smyrnaeus, et Ignatius Antiochenus. post quem tertius episcopus constituitur Eron. (*) a Plinius Secundus, cum quamdam provinciam regeret, et in magistratu suo plurimos Christianorum interfecisset, multitudine eorum perterritus, quaesivit a Trajano, quid facto opus esset, nuntians ei, Praeter obstinationem non sacrificandi, et antelucanos coetus ad canendum cuidam Christo ut Deo, nihil apud eos reperiri. Praeterea ad confoederandam disciplinam, vetari ab his homicidia, furta, adulteria, latrocinia, et his similia. Ad quae commotus Trajanus rescribit: "Hoc genus quidem inquirendum non esse, oblatos vero puniri oportere." Tertullianus refert in Apologetico.

CCXX

Olympias

4 a Trajanus de Dacis et Scythis triumphat. 101

5 b Trajanus, victo rege Decebalo, Daciam fecit provinciam: Iberos, Sauromatas, Orsoenos, Arabes, Bosphoranos, Colchos in fidem accepit: Seleuciam, Ctesiphontem, Babylonem occupavit, et tenuit: in mari Rubro classem instituit, ut per eam Indiae fines vastaret. *

102

6

103

2120 7 c Romae aurea domus incendio conflagravit.

104

CCXXI

Olympias

8 d Terraemotu quatuor urbes Asiae subversae, Elaea, Myrrhina, Pytanae, Cymae: et Graeciae duae, Opuntiorum, et Oritorum.

105

9 e Alexandrinae ecclesiae IV episcopus ordinatur nomine Primus, annis XII.

106

CCXXII

Olympias

10 f Trajano adversus Christianos persecutionem movente, Simon filius Cleophae, qui Jerosolymis episcopatum tenebat, crucifigitur: cui succedit Justus.

107 b Romanae ecclesiae episcopatum V tenet, ALEXANDER, annis X. g Item persecutio a Trajano

12 c Plinius Secundus Novocomensis orator et historicus insignis habetur, cujus plurima ingenii opera exstant. *

109 g Ignatius quoque Antiochenae ecclesiae episcopus Romam perductus, bestiis traditur:

13 d Tres Galatiae civitates terraemotu erutae.

110

11

108 e Pantheon Romae fulmine concrematum.

[278/279]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

14 a Post Justum Ecclesiae Jerosolymitanae episcopatum IV suscepit Zachaeus, post quem V Tobias, cui succedit VI Benjamin, ac deinde VII Joannes, et VIII Matthias, in cujus locum IX constituitur Philippus.

111 a Trajanus morbo in Selinunte perit, sive, ut alibi scriptum reperimus, apud Seleuciam Isauriae profluvio ventris extinctus est, anno aetatis LXIII, mense IX, die IV. Ossa ejus in urnam auream collata, et in foro sub columna posita: solusque omnium intra Urbem sepultus est 1. (*)

15

112 CCXXIII Olympias

16 b Trajanus Armeniam, Assyriam, Mesopotamiam fecit provincias. *

113

CCXXIV Olympias Romanorum XII, HADRIANUS, regnavit annis XXI c Terraemotus Antiochiam pene totam subruit civitatem.

1 b Hadrianus Italicae in Hispania natus, consobrinae Trajani filius fuit. *

117

2130 17 d Judaei, qui in Libya erant, adversum cohabitatores suos alienigenas dimicant. Similiter in Aegypto, et in Alexandria, apud Cyrenem quoque, et Thebaidem magna seditione contendunt; verum gentilium pars superat in Alexandria.

114 c Hadrianus Alexandriam a Romanis subversam publicis instauravit expensis. d Hadrianus Trajani invidens gloriae, de Assyria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, quas ille provincias fecerat, revocavit exercitus. *

18 e Judaeis Mesopotamiae rebellantibus praecepit imperator Trajanus Lysiae Quieto, ut eos provincia exterminaret: adversus quos Quietus aciem instruens infinita millia eorum interfecit, et ob hoc procurator Judaeae ab imperatore decernitur.

115 e Hadrianus Judaeos capit secundo contra Romanos rebellantes.

2 f Senatus Trajanum in deos refert.

118 g Hadrianus eruditissimus fuit in utraque lingua, sed in puerorum amore parum continens fuit.
*

19 f Salaminam urbem Cypri, interfectis in ea gentilibus, subvertere Judaei. h Hadrianus reliqua tributorum urbibus relaxavit, chartis publice incensis: plurimos etiam ipsis tributis liberos praestitit.

(1) I.e. within the pomerium.

[280/281]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

3 aPlutarchus Cheronaeus, et Sextus 1 , et Agathobolus, et Oenomaus 2 philosophi insignes habentur.

119 ad eversionem, quam ab Hadriano perpressa est Jerusalem, ex circumcissione episcopi praefuerunt. b Romanae Ecclesiae episcopatum VI tenet SIXTUS, annis X.

CCXXVI

Olympias

9 a Hadrianus sacris Eleusinae initiatus, multa Atheniensibus dona largitus est.

125 c Alexandrinae Ecclesiae V constituitur episcopus Justus, annis XI. b Quadratus discipulus apostolorum, et Aristides Atheniensis noster philosophus, libros pro Christiana religione Hadriano dedere compositos. Et Serenus Granius legatus, vir apprime nobilis, litteras ad imperatorem mittit, iniquum esse dicens, clamoribus vulgi innocentium hominum sanguinem concedi, et ullo crimine,

nominis tantum et sectae reos fieri. Quibus commotus Hadrianus Minutio Fundano proconsuli Asiae scripsit, sine objectu criminum Christianos non condemnandos. Cujus epistolae usque ad nostram memoriam durat exemplum.

4 d Bellum contra Sauromatas gestum.

120 e Terraemotu facto Nicomedia ruit, et Nicaenae urbis plurima eversa sunt: ad quarum instaurationem Hadrianus de publico est largitus impensas.

10

126

CCXXV

Olympias

5 f Euphrates Stoicus philosophus moritur.

121 g Hadrianus in Libyam, quae a Judaeis vastata fuerat, Colonias deducit.

11

127

6 h Hadrianus Atheniensibus leges petentibus 3, ex Draconis et Solonis, reliquorumque libris jura composuit 4.

122

7 i Cephisus fluvijs Eleusinam inundavit, quem Hadrianus ponte conjungens, Athenis hiemem exegit.

123

12 c Imperator Hadrianus Pater Patriae appellatur, et uxor ejus Augusta.

128 k Jerosolymis X post Philippum constituitur episcopus Seneca, post quem XI Justius, cui successit XII Levi, post quem XIII Ephres, XIV Joses, XV Judas. Hi omnes usque d Romanae ecclesiae episcopatum VII suscepit TELESOPHORUS, annis XI.

2140

8

124 e Antiochiae constituitur IV episcopus, Cornelius.

(1) Sextus Empiricus.

(2) Oenomaus of Gadara.

(3) I.e. for a constitution.

(4) The other legislators.

[282/283]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD CCXXVII Olympias CCXXVIII Olympias a Nicopolis et Caesarea terraemotu conciderunt. a Basilides haeresiarches in Alexandria commoratur, a quo Gnostici.

13 b Antinous puer egregius eximiae pulchritudinis, in Aegypto moritur, quem Hadrianus diligenter sepeliens, --nam in deliciis habuerat-- in deos refert, ex cuius nomine etiam urbs appellata est.

129

17 b Barcochebas, dux factionis Iudaeorum, nolentes sibi Christianos adversum Romanum militem ferre subsidium, omnimodis cruciatibus necat.

133

2150 18 c Bellum Iudaicum, quod in Palaestina gerebatur, finem accepit, rebus Iudaeorum penitus oppressis. Ex quo tempore etiam introeundi eis Ierosolymam licentia ablata, primum Dei nutu, sicut prophetae vaticinati sunt, deinde Romanis interdictionibus.

134

14 c Alexandrinae ecclesiae VI episcopus praefuit Eumenes, annis XIII.

130

15 d Templum Veneris ab Hadriano Romae factum. *

131

19

135 e Salvius Julianus perpetuum composuit edictum. * f Hadrianus Athenis hiemem exigens, Eleusinam invisit. d Ierosolymis primus ex gentibus constituitur episcopus Marcus, cessantibus his, qui fuerant ex Iudaeis.

16 g Hadrianus, cum insignes et plurimas aedes Athenis fecisset, agonem edidit, bibliothecamque miri operis exstruxit.

132

20 e Aelia ab Aelio Hadriano condita, et in fronte ejus portae, qua Bethleem egredimur, Sus sculptus in marmore, significans Romanae potestati subjacere Iudaeos. Nonnulli a Tito Aelio filio Vespasiani exstructam arbitrantur.

136 h Iudaei in arma versi Palaestinam depopulati sunt, tenente provinciam Tynio Rufo, cui ad opprimendos rebelles Hadrianus misit exercitum.

CCXXIX Olympias i Favorinus et Polemon rhetores insignes habentur.

21 f Hadrianus morbo intercutis aquae apud Baias moritur major sexagenario. (*)

137

[284/285]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD Romanorum XIII, T. ANTONINUS, cognomento Pius, cum liberis suis Aurelio et Lucio regnavit, annis XXII, mensibus III.

10

147

11

148 CCXXXII Olympias

1 a Romanae ecclesiae episcopatum VIII, suscipit HYGINUS, annis IV.

138

12 a Arrianus Philosophus Nicomediensis agnoscitur, et Maximus Tyrius.

149

2 b Antoninus Pater Patriae appellatur.

139

13 b Apollonius Stoicus natione Chalcidicus, et Basilides Scythopolitanus philosophi illustres habentur: qui Verissimi quoque Caesaris praeceptores fuerunt.

150

3 c Sub Hygino Romanae urbis episcopo Valentinus haeresiarches, et Cerdo magister Marcionis, Romam venerunt.

140

14

151

15

152

CCXXX Olympias CCXXXIII Olympias

4 d Justinus philosophus librum pro nostra religione conscriptum Antonino tradidit.

141

16 c Alexandrinae ecclesiae VIII episcopus praefuit, Celadion, annis XIV.

153

2170 17 d Crescens Cynicus agnoscitur, qui Justino nostri dogmatis philosopho, quia se gulosum et praevaricatorem philosophiae coarguebat, persecutionem suscitavit, in qua ille gloriose pro Christo sanguinem fudit.

154

5 e Romae IX episcopus ordinatur PIUS, annis XV.

142

18

155 f Antiochiae V constituitur episcopus Heros.

19

156

6 g Alexandriae VII episcopatum suscipit Marcus, annis X.

143 CCXXXIV Olympias h Valentinus haereticus agnoscitur, et permanet usque ad Anicetum.

20 e Romanae ecclesiae episcopatum X tenet ANICETUS, annis X, sub quo Polycarpus Romam veniens multos ab haeretico errore correxit.

157

21

158

2160 7 i Mesomedes Cretensis citharoedorum carminum musicus poeta agnoscitur.

144

22

159

23

160

CCXXXI

Olympias

CCXXXV

Olympias

8 k Taurus Berytius Platonicae sectae philosophus clarus habetur. f Jerosolymae episcopatum post Marcum XVII suscepit Cassianus, post quem XVIII Publius,

9

[286/287]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD cui succedit XIX Maximus, XX Julianus, XXI Gaianus, XXII Symmachus, XXIII Caius, XXIV Julianus, XXV Capito. a Lucius Caesar de Parthis cum fratre 1 triumphavit.

6 b Alexandrinae ecclesiae IX episcopus praefuit Agrippinus, annis XII.

166 a Antoninus Pius apud Lorium villam suam, XII ab Urbe milliario, moritur anno vitae suae LXXVII. (*) d Perse-cutio c Persecutione orta in Asia, Polycarpus et Pionius fecere martyrium, quorum scriptae quoque passionες feruntur.

167

7 Romanorum XIV, MARCUS ANTONINUS, qui et VERUS, regnavit; et L. AURELIUS COMMODUS, annis XIX, mense uno.

e Plurimi in Gallia gloriose ob Christi nomen interfecti, quorum usque in praesentem diem condita libris certamina perseverant.

1 b Hi primum aequo jure imperium administraverunt, cum usque ad hoc tempus, singuli Augusti fuerint. *

161

2 c Lucio Caesari Athenis sacrificanti ignis in coelo ab oriente in occidentem referri visus.

162

8 f Lues multas provincias occupavit, Roma ex parte vexata. .

168 g Romani contra Germanos, Marcomannos, Quados, Sarmatas, et Dacos dimicant. .

3 d Vologaesus rex Parthorum, vicinas sibi Romanas provincias depopulatus est.

163 CCXXXVII Olympias

2180 4 e Fronto orator insignis habetur, qui Marcum Antoninum Verum Latinis litteris erudit. *

164 h Romanae ecclesiae episcopatum XI suscepit SOTER, annis VIII.

9 i Antiochiae VI episcopus ordinatur Theophilus, cujus plurima ingenii opera exstant.

169 f Seleucia Assyriae urbs cum CCC millibus hominum a Romanis capta. *

CCXXXVI Olympias k Lucius imperator anno regni sui IX, sive, ut quidam putant, XI inter Concordiam et Altinum apoplexi exstinctus est, sedens cum fratre in vehiculo. (*)

5 g Apud Pisas Peregrinus philosophus rogo, quem ex lignis composuerat, incenso, semet superjecit.

165 (1) His 'brother' is Marcus Aurelius.

[288/289]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

10 a Antonino imperatori Melito Asianus Sardensis episcopus Apologeticum pro Christianis tradidit.

2190 14 semel Pertinaci et exercitui, qui cum eo in Quadorum regione pugnabat, siti oppresso, pluvia divinitus missa est; cum econtrario Germanos et Sarmatas fulmina persequerentur, et plurimos eorum interficerent. Exstant litterae Marci Aurelii gravissimi imperatoris, quibus illam Germanicam sitim, Christianorum forte militum precationibus, impetrato imbre, discussam contestatur.

174 b Apollinaris Asianus Hierapolitanus episcopus insignis habetur.

15

175

11 c Dionysius episcopus Corinthiorum clarus habetur, et Pinytus Cretensis vir eloquentissimus. d Pseudoprophetia, quae Cataphrygas nominatur, accepit exordium, auctore Montano, Priscilla, Maximillaque insanis vatibus.

16

176 a Atticus Platonicae sectae philosophus agnoscitur.

12 e Tatianus haereticus agnoscitur, a quo Encratitae.

CCXXXIX

Olympias

17 b Romanae Ecclesiae XII episcopatum suscipit ELEUTHERIUS, annis XV.

177 f Bardesanes alterius haereseos princeps notus efficitur. c Antiochiae VII episcopus constituitur Maximinus. g Oppianus Cilix poeta cognoscitur, qui Halieutica miro splendore conscribit. d Antoninus Commodum filium suum consortem regni facit. h Tanta per totum orbem pestilentia fuit, ut pene usque ad internecionem Romanus exercitus deletus fuerit. * e Antoninus cum filio de hostibus triumphavit, quos, per triennium apud Carnuntum habens stativa castra,

vastaverat. (*) CCXXVIII Olympias

13 i Imperator Antoninus multis adversum se nascentibus bellis saepe ipse intererat, saepe duces nobilissimos destinabat, in quibus

18 f Imperatores multis multa largiti sunt, et pecuniam, quae fisco debebatur, provinciis concedentes, tabulas debitorum in medio Romanae urbis foro incendi praeceperunt,

178

[290/291]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD ac ne quid bonitati deesset, severiores quasque leges novis Constitutionibus temperaverunt.

Post quem XXVII Antoninus, XXVIII Valens, XXIX Dulichianus, XXX Narcissus, XXXI Dius, XXXII Germanio, XXXIII Gordius, XXXIV rursum Narcissus. Tantis apud Jerosolymam episcopis constitutis, non potuimus discernere tempora singulorum, eo quod usque in praesentem diem eorum episcopatum anni minime salvarentur.

7

186

19

179 a Antoninus post victoriam, adeo in editione munerum magnificus fuit, ut centum simul leones exhibuerit.

8

187 b Commodus a senatu Augustus appellatur. c Smyrna urbs Asiae terraemotu ruit, ad cujus instaurationem decennalis tributorum immunitas data est.

9 a In Capitolium fulmen ruit, et magna inflammatione facta, bibliotheca, et vicinae quoque aedes concrematae.

188 d Antoninus in Pannonia morbo periit. e Alexandrinae ecclesiae X episcopatum sortitur Julianus, annis X.

CCXLII

Olympias

10 b Alexandriae XI constituitur episcopus Demetrius, annis XLIII.

189 Romanorum XV, COMMODUS, regnavit annis XIII. c Commodus imperator colossi capite sublato, suae imagini caput imposuit.

1 f Commodus de Germanis triumphavit. 180

CCXL

Olympias

2 g Templum Serapidis Alexandriae incensum. 181

11 d Serapion, VIII Antiochiaepiscopus ordinatur.

190

3 h Irenaeus episcopus Lugdunensis insignis habetur.

182 e Commodus multos nobilium interficit, et spectacula populo Romano praebet insignia.

4 i Thermae Commodianae Romae factae. 183

2200 5 k Commodus Septembrem mensem nomine suo appellavit. *

184

12 f Incendio Romae facto palatium et aedes Vestae, plurimaeque urbis pars solo coaequatur.

191

CCXLI

Olympias

6 l Jerosolymis XXVI ordinatur episcopus Maximus,

185

[292/293]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

13 a Commodus strangulatur in domo Vestiliani.

192 a Clemens Alexandrinae ecclesiae presbyter, et Pantaenus Stoicus philosophus, in disputatione dogmatis nostri disertissimi habentur.

CCXLIII Olympias Romanorum XVI, AELIUS PERTINAX, regnavit mensibus VI.

3 b Narcissus Jerosolymitarum episcopus, et Theophilus Caesariensis, Polycrates quoque, et Bacchylus Asanae provinciae episcopi insignes habentur.

195

1 b Pertinax septuagenario major, cum praefecturam Urbis ageret, ex senatusconsulto imperare iussus est.

193 c Romae episcopatum suscipit XIII, VICTOR, annis X, cujus mediocria de religione exstant volumina.

4 c Quaestione orta in Asia inter episcopos, an secundum legem Mosi, 14 mensis Pascha observandum esset, Victor Romanae urbis episcopus, et Narcissus Jerosolymarum, Polycrates quoque, et Irenaeus, et Bacchylus, plurimique ecclesiarum pastores, quid eis probabile visum fuerat, litteris ediderunt, quarum memoria ad nos usque perdurat.

196 d Pertinax, obsecrante senatu, ut uxorem suam Augustam, et filium suum Caesarem appellaret, contradixit: sufficere testatus, quod ipse regnaret invitus. e Pertinax occiditur in palatio, Juliani jurisperiti scelere: quem postea Severus apud Milvium pontem interfecit. (*)

CCXLIV

Olympias

5 d Judaicum et Samariticum bellum motum.

197 Romanorum XVII, SEVERUS, regnavit annis XVIII.

6 e Severus Parthos, et Adiabenos superavit, Arabesque interiores ita cecidit, ut regionem eorum Romanam provinciam faceret, ob quae Parthicus, Arabicus, et Adiabenicus cognominatus est. (*)

198

2210 2 f Severus provincia Tripolitana oppido Lepti, solus ex Africa usque in praesentem diem, Romanis imperator fuit, et in honorem Pertinacis, quem Julianus occiderat, Pertinacem se cognominari jussit. *

194 g Eo quod superioris anni sex mensibus regnavit Severus.

7

199

8

200

[294/295]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD a Severo imperante, thermae Severianae apud Antiochiam, et Romae factae, et Septizonium exstructum. * CCXLVII Olympias

17 a Severus moritur Eboraci in Britannia.

209

18

210

CCXLV Olympias Romanorum XVIII, ANTONINUS cognomento CARACALLA, Severi filius, regnavit annis VII.

9 b Romae XIV ecclesiae episcopatum suscepit ZEPHYRINUS, annis XVII.

201

1 b Antiochiae IX episcopus constituitur Asclepiades.

211 10 d V Persecutio c Persecutione in Christianos facta, Leonides Origenis pater gloriosa martyrii morte transfertur.

202

2 c Alexander XXXV Jerosolymorum episcopus ordinatur, adhuc vivente Narcisso, et cum eo pariter Ecclesiam regit.

212

11

203

2220 12 e Alexander ob confessionem Dominici nominis insignis habetur.

204 h In hoc anno Jubeleum a majoribus invenimus observatum, id est XII anno Severi et CCLI Antiochiae urbis.

CCXLVIII Olympias f Clemens multa et varia conscribit.

3 d Antoninus Caracalla cognominatus propter genus vestis, quod Romae erogaverat, et e contrario Caracallae ex ejus nomine Antoninianae dictae. *

213 g Musanus nostrae philosophiae scriptor agnoscitur.

2230

4

214

CCXLVI

Olympias

13 i Clodio Albino, qui se in Gallia Caesarem fecerat, apud Lugdunum interfecto, Severus in Britannos bellum transfert: ubi ut receptas provincias ab incursione barbarica faceret securiores, vallum per CXXXII millia passuum a mari ad mare duxit. (*)

205

5 e Antoninus Romae thermas sui nominis aedificavit. *

215

6 f Antoninus tam impatiens libidinis fuit, ut novercam suam Juliam uxorem duxerit. *

216

14

206

CCXLIX

Olympias

7 g Antoninus interficitur inter Edessam et Carras anno aetatis XLIII. (*)

217

15

207

16 k Tertullianus Afer centurionis proconsularis filius omnium Ecclesiarum sermone celebratur. 1 *

208 Romanorum XIX, MACRINUS, regnavit anno uno.

1 h Macrinus praefecturam praetorio gerens, imperator factus. *

218 l Origenes Alexandriae studiis eruditur.

(1) A scholion in 'O' reads: "Tertullian was under the rule of Severus the African, 180 years after the Lord."

It is not in the same hand as the main text.

[296/297]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD a Antiochiae X episcopus constituitur Philetus.

Romanorum XXI, ALEXANDER, Mamaeae filius, regnavit annis XIII. b Circensibus Vulcanaliorum Romae amphitheatrum incensum.

1 a Alexander Xerxem regem Persarum gloriosissime vicit, et disciplinae militaris tam severus corrector fuit, ut quasdam tumultuantes legiones integras exauctoraverit. *

223 c Abgarus 1, vir sanctus, regnavit Edessae, ut vult Africanus. d Macrinus occiditur in Archelaide.

2240

2

224 Romanorum XX, MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS, regnavit annis IV.

CCLI

Olympias

3 b Romanae ecclesiae XVI ordinatur episcopus URBANUS, annis IX.

225

1 e Marcus Aurelius Antonini Caracallae, ut putabatur, filius, et sacerdos Eliogabali templi, adeo impudice in imperio suo vixit, ut nullum genus obscenitatis omiserit. *

219

4 c Ulpianus jurisconsultus, assessor Alexandri insignissimus habetur. *

226

5 d Thermae Alexandrinae Romae aedificatae. *

227

2 f Romanae Ecclesiae episcopatum suscepit XV, CALLISTUS, annis V.

220

6 e Geminus presbyter Antiochenus, et Hippolytus, et Beryllus episcopus Arabiae Bostrenus, clari scriptores habentur.

228 g Eliogabalum templum Romae aedificatum. *

CCL

Olympias

CCLII

Olympias

3 h In Palaestina Nicopolis, quae prius Emmaus vocabatur, urbs condita est, legationis industriam pro ea suscipiente Julio Africano scriptore Temporum.

221

7 f Antiochiae XI constituitur episcopus Zebennus.

229

8 g Origenes Alexandriae clarus habetur.

230

9 h Alexandrinae ecclesiae XII ordinatur episcopus Heraclas, annis XVI.

231

4 i Antoninus Romae occiditur tumultu militari, cum matre Symiasera. (*)

222

10 i Alexander in matrem Mamaeam unice pius fuit, et ob id omnibus amabilis. *

232

(1) Abgar VIII.

[298/299]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

CCLIII

Olympias

3 a Gordianus admodum adolescens, Parthorum natione superata, cum victor reverteretur ad patriam, fraude Philippi praefecti praetorio haud longe a Romano solo interfectus est. (*)

241

11 a Origenes de Alexandria ad Caesaream Palaestinae transit.

233

4

242

2250 12 b Romanae ecclesiae XVII episcopatum suscepit PONTIANUS, annis V.

234

5

243

13 c Alexander occiditur Moguntiacy tumultu militari.

235 2260 6 b Gordiano milites tumulum aedificant, qui Euphrati imminet, ossibus ejus Romam revectis. *

244 Romanorum XXII, MAXIMINUS, regnavit annis III.

Romanorum XXIV, PHILIPPUS, regnavit annis VII.

1 d Maximinus primus ex corpore militari, sine senatus auctoritate, ab exercitu imperator electus est. *

236

CCLVI

Olympias

1 c Philippus Philippum filium consortem regni facit, primusque omnium ex Romanis Imperatoribus Christianus fuit. (*)

245

CCLIV Olympias 2 f VI Persecutio. e Maximinus adversum Ecclesiarum sacerdotes persecutionem facit.

237

2 d Regnantibus Philippis millesimus annus Romanae urbis expletus est, ob quam solemnitatem innumerabiles bestiae in circo magno interfectae ludique in campo Martio theatrales, tribus diebus ac noctibus populo pervigilante, celebrati.

246

3 g Maximinus Aquileiae a Pupieno occiditur. (*)

238 Romanorum XXIII, GORDIANUS 1, regnavit annis 6.

1 h Romae XVIII episcopus ordinatur ANTHERUS mense uno, post quem XIX, FABIANUS, annis XIII.

239

3 e Theatrum Pompeii incensum, et Hecatonstylon.

247

2 i Gordiano Romam ingresso, Pupienus et Albinus, qui imperium arripuerant, in palatio occisi. *

240 f Athlamos natali Romanae urbis cucurrit, et agon mille annorum actus. 1

CCLV

Olympias

4 g Philippus urbem

248 (1) There were three Gordians, not one.

(2) The manuscripts contain either 'athlamos' or '600'. The

reason is clear: the Greek contained the numeral for 600, and Jerome initially

misread it as a proper name, 'Athlamos'. Later he realised the mistake, and

corrected it, but some manuscripts derive from uncorrected copies of the text

[300/301]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD nominis sui in Thracia construit. ipse martyrio coronatus est. Exstant ad eum Cypriani octo epistolae. (*)

CCLVII

Olympias

5 a Alexandrinam Ecclesiam XXIII episcopus tenuit Dionysius, annis XVII.

249 CCLVIII Olympias

6

250

1 a Pestilens morbus multas totius orbis provincias occupavit, maximeque Alexandriam et Aegyptum, ut scribit Dionysius, et Cypriani de Mortalitate testis est liber. (*)

253

7 b Philippus senior Veronae, Romae junior occiditur. (*)

251 Romanorum XXV, DECIUS, regnavit anno uno, mensibus III. c Decius e Pannonia inferiore Budaliae natus fuit. * b Novatus presbyter Cypriani, Romam veniens, Novatianum, et caeteros confessores sibi sociat, eo quod Cornelius paenitentes apostatas recepisset. (*)

1

d VII persecutio

d Decius cum Philippos, patrem et filium, interfecisset, ob odium eorum, in Christianos persecutionem movet.

232 c Antiochiae XIII constituitur episcopus Demetrianus. e Antonius monachus in Aegypto nascitur. f Romae amphitheatrum incensum.

2270 2 d Romanae Ecclesiae episcopatum tenet XXI LUCIUS, menses VIII. Post quem XXII STEPHANUS, annis III. Exstant ad utrumque Cypriani epistolae. (*)

254 g Alexandro Jerosolymorum episcopo apud Caesaream Palaestinae ob martyrium interfecto, et Antiochiae Babyla, Mazabanus, et Fabius episcopi constituuntur. e Jubileus juxta maiores nostros. f Gallus et Volusianus, cum adversum Aemilianum, qui in Moesia res novas moliebatur, ex Urbe profecti essent, in foro Flaminii, sive, ut alii putant, Interamnae interfecti sunt. (*) h Decius cum filio in Abritto occiditur.

Romanorum XXVI, GALLUS et VOLUSIANUS Galli filius, regnaverunt annis II, mensibus IV. i Romanae ecclesiae episcopatum, post Fabiani gloriosam mortem, XX suscepit CORNELIUS, annis II, qui et g Aemilianus tertio mense invasae tyrannidis exstinctus est. *

[302/303]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD Romanorum XXVII, VALERIANUS et GALLIENUS, regnaverunt annis XV.

Pannonias occupaverunt. *

2280 10 a Germanis Hispanias obtinentibus, Tarracon expugnata est. Parthi Mesopotamiam tenentes, Syriam incursaverunt. *

264

1 a Valerianus in Rhetia ab exercitu Augustus; Gallienus Romae a senatu Caesar appellatus est. *

255

2

256

CCLXI

Olympias

CCLIX

Olympias

11 b Alexandrinae ecclesiae XIV episcopus ordinatur Maximus, annis XVIII.

265 b Romanae ecclesiae episcopatum tenet XXIII, XYSTUS, annis VIII.

12 c Romae XXIV episcopus constituitur DIONYSIUS, annis XII.

266

3 c Cyprianus primum Rhetor, deinde presbyter, ad extremum Carthaginensis episcopus martyrio coronatur. (*)

257 d Odenatus decurio Palmyrenus collecta agrestium manu ita Persas cecidit, ut ad Ctesiphontem castra poneret. (*)

4 d Valerianus, in Christianos persecutione commota, statim a Sapore Persarum rege capitur, ibique servitute miserabili consenescit. (*)

258 eVIII persecutio

13 e Hierosolymarum episcopatum tenet Hymenaeus.

267

5 f Paulus Samosatenus a cunctorum praedicatione desciscens, Artemonis haeresim suscitavit: in
cujus locum Antiochenae Ecclesiae XVI ordinatur episcopus Domnus. f Sapor, rex Persarum,
Syriam, Ciliciam et Cappadociam depopulatur.

14

268

6 g Valeriano in Persas ducto, Gallienus pacem nostris reddidit.

259 g Galliae per Postumum, et Victorinum, et Tetricum receptae. *

CCLX

Olympias

7 h Antiochiae XV constituitur episcopus Paulus Samosatenus.

260

CCLXII

Olympias

15 h Gallienus Mediolani occiditur.

269

8 i Gallieno in omnem lasciviam dissoluto, Germani Ravennam usque venerunt. *

261 Romanorum XXVIII, CLAUDIUS, regnavit anno uno, mensibus IX.

9 k Alamanni vastatis Galliis, in Italiam transiere. * I Graecia, Macedonia, Pontus, Asia, depopulata
per Gothos. Quadi et Sarmatae

262 i In Alexandria Bruchium, quod per multos annos fuerat obsessum, tandem destruitur. k
Claudius Gothos, Illyricum et Macedoniam vastantes,

[304/305]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD superat, ob quae in Curia clipeus ei aureus, et in Capitolio statua aurea collocata est. postea
Lucaniae fuit, et Zenobia in Urbe summo honore consenuit, a qua hodieque Romae 'Zenobia
familia' nuncupatur.

2 a Claudius Sirmii moritur.

271

4 a Aurelianus templum Soli aedificat, et Romam firmioribus muris vallat.

275 b Quintilius Claudii frater a senatu Augustus appellatus, decimo septimo imperii sui die Aquileiae occiditur. * b Primus agón Solis ab Aureliano constitutus. d IX persecutio c Aurelianus cum adversum nos persecutionem movisset, fulmen juxta eum comitesque ejus ruit, ac non multo post, inter Constantinopolim et Heracleam, in Caeno Frurio viae veteris occiditur. (*) Romanorum XXIX, AURELIANUS, regnavit annis V, mensibus VI.

5

276

1 c Antiochenae ecclesiae XVII ordinatur episcopus Timaeus.

272 CCLXIII Olympias CCLXIV Olympias. Romanorum XXX, TACITUS, regnavit menses VI . d Aurelianus, Tetrico apud Catalaunos prodente exercitum suum, Gallias recepit. (*) eQuo apud Pontum occiso, obtinuit FLORIANUS imperium diebus LXXXVIII. Hoc quoque apud Tarsum interfecto.

2

273

1

277 e Zenobia apud Immas, haud longe ab Antiochia vincitur; quae, occiso Odenato marito, Orientis tenebat imperium. In qua pugna strenuissime adversum eam dimicavit Pompeianus dux cognomento Francus, cujus familia hodieque apud Antiochiam perseverat, et ex cujus Evagrius carissimus nobis stirpe descendit. (*) Romanorum XXXI, PROBUS, regnavit annis VI, menses IV.

1 f Romanae Ecclesiae episcopatum XXV suscepit FELIX, annis V.

278 g Probus Gallias a Barbaris occupatas, ingenti virtute restituit. * h Initium LXXXVI Jubelei secundum Hebreos 2 i Anatolius Laodiceus episcopus, philosophorum disciplinis eruditus, plurimo sermone celebratur.

279

2290 3 f Eusebius Laodiceus episcopus insignis habetur.

274 k Secundo anno Probi juxta Antiochenos CCCXXV annus fuit: juxta Tyrios CDII: juxta Laodiceos CCCXXIV: juxta Edessenos DLXXXVIII, juxta Ascalonitas CCCLXXX. g Aurelianus Romae triumphantem Tetricus et Zenobia currum praecesserunt; e quibus Tetricus Corrector

3 l Insana Manichaeorum haeresis in commune humani generis malum exorta.

280

[306/307]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD a Probus Gallos et Pannonios vineas habere permisit, Almamque et aureum montem militari manu consitos provincialibus colendos dedit. 1 * super Tigridem castra ponens, fulmine ictus interiit. (*)

2 a Numerianus cum ob oculorum dolorem lecticula veheretur, insidiis Apri soceri sui occisus est, vix fetore cadaveris, post aliquot dies scelere comperto. (*)

285

CCLXV

Olympias

4 b Antiochiae XVIII constituitur episcopus Cyrillus.

281 b Carinus praelio victus apud Margum occiditur. (*) Romanorum XXXIII, DIOCLETIANUS, regnavit annis XX. c Saturninus Magister exercitus novam civitatem Antiochiae orsus est condere: qui postea imperium molitus invadere Apamiae, occiditur.

1 c Diocletianus Dalmata, scribae filius, imperator electus statim Aprum in militum concione percussit, iurans sine suo scelere Numerianum interfectum.

286

5 d Romanae Ecclesiae episcopatum suscepit XXVI EUTYCHIANUS, mensibus VIII; post quem XXVII GAIUS, annis XV.

282

2 d Diocletianus in consortium regni Herculium Maximianum assumpsit, qui rusticorum multitudine oppressa, quae factioni suae Bacaudarum nomen indiderat, pacem Galliis reddit. (*)

287

6 e Probus tumultu militari apud Sirmium in turre, quae vocatur Ferrata, occiditur. (*)

283

3

288 f Alexandrinae Ecclesiae XV episcopus praefuit Theonas, annis XIX.

CCLXVII

Olympias

4 e Carausius, sumpta purpura, Britannias occupavit, Narsaeus Orienti bellum intulit. *

289 Romanorum XXXII, CARUS cum filiis CARINO et NUMERIANO, annis II. f Quinquegentiani 2 Africam infestaverunt. *

2300

1

284 g Aegyptum Achilleus obtinuit, ob quae Constantius et Galerius Maximianus Caesares adsumuntur in regnum: quorum Constantius Claudii ex filia nepos fuit, Galerius in Dacia haud longe a Serdica natus. Atque ut eos Diocletianus etiam affinitate conjungeret, Constantius

CCLXVI

Olympias

5

290 g Carus Narbonensis, cum omni Parthorum regione vastata Cochem et Ctesiphontem nobilissimas hostium urbes cepisset,

6

291

(1) Eutropii Breviarium Liber Nonus 17: Vineas Gallos et Pannonios

habere permisit, opere militari Almam montem apud Sirmium et Aureum apud Moesiam superiorem vineis conseruit et provincialibus colendos dedit.

(2) The Five Tribes.

[308/309]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD privignam Herculii Theodoram accepit, ex qua postea sex liberos Constantini fratres habuit; Galerius filiam Diocletiani Valeriam duxit, ambo uxores, quas habuerant, repudiare compulsi. (*) episcopus Zabdas.

7

292 a Post decem annos per Asclepiodotum praefectum praetorii Britanniae receptae. *

CCLXX Olympias CCLXVIII Olympias b Juxta Lingonas a Constantio Caesare LX millia Alamannorum caesa. *

8 a Busiris et Coptus contra Romanos rebellantes, ad solum usque subversae sunt.

293

2310

9

294

16 c Galerius Maximianus victus a Narseo ante carpentum Diocletiani purpuratus cucurrit. *

301

10 b Carporum et Basternarum gentes in Romanum solum translatae sunt. *

295 d Veturius magister militiae Christianos milites persequitur, paulatim ex illo jam tempore persecutione adversus nos incipiente.

11 c Primus Diocletianus adorari se ut deum jussit, et gemmas vestibus calceamentisque inseri, cum ante eum omnes imperatores in modum judicum salutarentur, et chlamydem tantum purpuream a privato habitu plus haberent. *

296 e X persecutio

17 fGalerius Maximianus, superato Narseo, et uxoribus, ac liberis, sororibusque ejus captis, a Diocletiano ingenti honore suscipitur. *

302 g Thermae Diocletianae Romae factae, et Maximianae Carthagini. *

CCLXIX

Olympias

12 d Romanae Ecclesiae XXVIII episcopatum suscepit MARCELIANUS, annis IX.

297

18 h Ecclesiae Jerosolymorum XXXVIII praefuit Hermon.

303

13 e Alexandria cum omni Aegypto per Achilleum ducem a Romana potestate desciscens, octavo obsidionis mense a Diocletiano capta est. Itaque plurimi per totam Aegyptum gravibus proscriptionibus exsiliisque vexati, interfectis his qui perduellionis causa exstiterant. 1 (*)

298 i Antiochiae XIX constituitur episcopus Tyrannus.

2320 19 k Alexandrinae Ecclesiae XXI post Theonam, ordinatur episcopus Petrus, qui postea IX persecutionis anno gloriose martyrium perpetravit.

304 l Jubileum secundum maiores

14

299 m Diocletianus et Maximianus Augusti, insigni pompa Romae triumpharunt, antecedentibus curram eorum

15 f Ecclesiae Jerosolymorum XXVII ordinatur

300

(1) This revolt is that of Domitius Domitianus. Several problems

arise regarding this event. First, it is Achilleus who alone receives mention

for the revolt; Contemporary papyrological evidence shows Achilleus with the

title of corrector. Some scholars have suggested two revolts in Egypt. Domitianus, however, had coinage struck in his name, a logical first step in any rebellion; Achilleus has no coin struck in his name. Connected with this first problem, another suggestion has been made that Domitianus and Achilleus are one and the same. More likely is that Achilleus was a sub-commander for Domitianus, though any certain answer is still unclear. A similar problem involves the dating of the revolt, though Jerome places it in 297 or after, a date supported by the papyrological and numismatic evidence. A third problem is the reason for the revolt. Renewed trouble between the eastern provinces and Sasanian Persia, may have put extra pressure on Egypt; quite possibly some of Diocletian's reforms did not sit well with the upper-class Egyptians.

[310/311]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD Narsei conjuge, sororibus, liberis, et omni praeda, qua Parthos spoliaverant. annis XXX, mensibus X. Persecutionis IV *

307 1 a Maxentius Herculii Maximiani filius a praetorianis militibus Romae Augustus appellatur. (*)

2330 a Terraemotu horribili apud Tyrum et Sidonem multa opera conciderunt, et populus innumerabilis oppressus est. b Severus Caesar a Galerio Maximiano contra Maxentium missus, Ravennae secundo imperii sui anno interficitur. b Decimo nono anno Diocletiani, mense Martio, in diebus Paschae, ecclesiae subversae sunt. IV autem persecutionis anno Constantinus regnare ortus.

2

c Licinius a Galerio Carnunti imperator factus.

5

308 d Herculius Maximianus a filia Fausta detectus, quod dolum Constantino viro suo pararet, Massiliae fugiens occiditur. c Secundum Antiochenos annus CCCLI. Persecutionis I e Quirinus episcopus Siscianus gloriose pro Christo interficitur: nam, manuali mola ad collum ligata, e ponte praecipitatus in flumen, diutissime supernatavit et cum spectantibus collocutus, ne sui terrentur exemplo, vix orans ut mergeretur, obtinuit.

271st Olympias 2 20 d Secundo anno persecutionis Diocletianus Nicomediae, Maximianus Mediolani purpuram deposuerunt. (*)

305 e Romae XXIX episcopus constituitur EUSEBIUS, mensibus VII; post quem XXX Ecclesiam tenet MILTIADES, annis IV.

272nd Olympias 3 f Galerius Maximianus moritur. 6

309

3 f Maximinus 1 et Severus a Galerio Maximiano Caesares facti.

306 4 g Romanae Ecclesiae XXXI ordinatur episcopus SILVESTER, annis XXII. 7

310 g Constantius XVI imperii anno 2 diem obiit in Britannia Eboraci, post quem filius ejus Constantinus ex concubina Helena procreatus, regnum invadit. (*) 5 h Maximinus, persecutione in Christianos facta, cum jam a Licinio puniendus esset, apud Tarsum moritur. (*) 8

311 i Alexandrinae ecclesiae XVII ordinatur episcopus Achillas.

6

k Maxentius juxta pontem Milvium a Constantino superatus occiditur.

9

312 Romanorum XXXIV, CONSTANTINUS, regnavit (1) Maximinus Daia.

(2) Constantius I Chlorus.

[312/313]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

273rd Olympias Homousii oppositione delevit.

7 a Bellum Cibalense adversum Licinium. 10

313

17 a Constantius filius Constantini Caesar factus. 323

2330 8 b Jerosolymarum XXXIX episcopus constituitur Macarius. c Pax nostris a Constantino reddita. 314 b Licinius Thessalonicae contra jus sacramenti, privatus occiditur. *

9

315

10 d Diocletianus haud procul a Salonis in villa sua Spalato moritur, et solus omnium inter deos privatus refertur. (*) 316 2340 18 c Nazarius rhetor insignis habetur. *

324

276th

Olympias

19 d Crispus filius Constantini, et Licinius junior Constantiae Constantini sororis et Licinii filius, crudelissime interficiuntur.

325

274th

Olympias

11 e Crispus et Constantinus, filii Constantini, et Licinius adolescens Licinii Augusti filius, Constantini ex sorore nepos, Caesares appellantur. Quorum Crispum Lactantius Latinis litteris erudit, vir omnium suo tempore eloquentissimus; sed adeo in hac vita pauper, ut plerumque etiam necessariis indiguerit.

317

20 e Vicennalia Constantini Nicomediae acta, et sequenti anno Romae edita.

326

12

318 f Huc usque historiam scribit Eusebius Pamphili martyris contubernalis, cui nos ista subiecimus. *

13

319

21 g Arnobius rhetor in Africa clarus habetur, qui cum Siccae ad declamandum iuvenes erudiret et adhuc ethnicus ad credulitatem somniis compelleretur, neque ab episcopo impetraret fidem quam semper inpugnaverat, elucubravit adversum pristinam religionem luculentissimos libros et tandem veluti quibusdam obsidibus pietatis foedus impetravit.

327

14

320

275th Olympias f Licinius Christianos de palatio suo pellit. g Basileus Amasiae Ponti episcopus sub Licinio martyrio coronatur.

15 h Alexandrinae ecclesiae XVIII ordinatur episcopus Alexander: a quo Arius presbyter de Ecclesia ejectus, multos suae impietati sociat; ad quorum perfidiam coarguendam synodus 318 episcoporum, in Nicaeam urbem Bithyniae congregata, omnes haereticorum machinas

321 h Drepanam Bithyniae civitatem in honorem martyris Luciani ibi conditi Constantinus instaurans ex vocabulo matris suae Helenopolim nuncupavit.

16

322 i In Antiochia dominicum quod

[314/315]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

vocatur aureum aedificari coeptum.

25 a Romae XXXII episcopus ecclesiam tenuit MARCUS, mensibus VIII; post quem XXXIII ordinatus est JULIUS, annis XVI, mensibus IV.

331

22 a Constantinus uxorem suam Faustam interficit.

328 b Donatus agnoscitur, a quo per Africam Donatiani. b Edicto Constantini gentilium templa subversa sunt.

277th

Olympias

26 c Romani Gothos in Sarmatarum regione vicerunt.

332 c Antiochiae post Tyrannum XX ordinatur episcopus Vitalis, post quem XXI Filogonius, cui successit XXII Paulinus, post quem XXIII Eustathius, quo in exilium ob fidem truso usque in praesentem diem Arianorum ecclesiam obtinuerunt, id est Eulalius Eusebius Euphronius Placillus Stefanus Leontius Eudoxius Meletius Euzoius Dorotheus rursum Meletius, quorum idcirco tempora non digessi quod eos hostes potius Christi quam episcopos iudicem.

278th

Olympias

27 d Constans filius Constantini provehitur ad regnum.

333 e Pestilentia et fame innumerabilis multitudo in Syria Ciliciaque perit.

2350 28 f Sarmatae Limigantes dominos suos qui nunc Argaragantes vocantur facta manu in Roraanum solum expulerunt.

334

23

329 g Calocerus in Cypro res novas molitus opprimitur.

29 h Constantinus cum liberis suis honorificas ad Antonium litteras mittit.

335 d Juvencus presbyter natione Hispanus evangelia heroicis versibus explicat. i Tricennalibus Constantini Dalmatius Caesar appellatur. e Porphyrius misso ad Constantinum insigni volumine exilio liberatur.

30 k Pater rhetor Romae gloriosissime docet.

336

24 f Alexandriae XIX ordinatur episcopus Athanasius.

330 l Nazarii rhetoris filia in eloquentia patri coaequatur. m Tiberianus vir disertus praefectus praetorio Gallias regit. g Dedicatur Constantinopolis omnium paene urbium nuditate. n Eustathius Constantinopolitanus presbyter agnoscitur, cuius industria in Hierosolymis h Metrodorus philosophus agnoscitur.

[316/317]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD martyrium constructum est. praesidio exiliis carceribus et variis adflictionum modis primum Athanasium deinde omnes non suae partis episcopos persecuta est.

279th

Olympias

31 a Constantinus extremo vitae suae tempore ab Eusebio Nicomedensi episcopo baptizatus in Arianum dogma declinat, a quo usque in praesens tempus ecclesiarum rapinae et totius orbis est secuta discordia.

337

3 a Constantinus bellum fratri inferens juxta Aquileiam Alsae occiditur.

340

280th Olympias b Constantinus, cum bellum pararet in Persas, in Acyrone villa publica iuxta Nicomediam moritur anno aetatis lxvi, post quem tres liberi eius ex Caesaribus Augusti appellantur.

4 b Vario eventu adversum Francos a Constante pugnatur.

341 c Multae orientis urbes terrae motu horribili consederunt. d Audeus in Syria Coele clarus habetur, a quo haeresis Audiana.

Romanorum XXXV regnavit CONSTANTINUS, CONSTANTIUS et CONSTANS, annis XXIV, mensibus V, diebus XIII.

5 e Franci a Constante perdomiti et pax cum eis facta.

342

1 c Ablabius praefectus praetorio et multi nobilium occisi.

338 f Hermogenes magister militiae Constantinopoli tractus a populo ob episcopum Paulum quem regis imperio et Arnanorum factione pellebat. d Sapor rex Persarum Mesopotamia vastata duobus ferme mensibus Nisibin obsedit. e Dalmatius Caesar, quem patruus Constantinus consortem regni filiis dereliquerat, factione Constantii patruelis et tumultu militari interimitur. g Antiochiae dominicum aureum dedicatur. h Macedonius artis plumariae in locum Pauli ab Arianis episcopus subrogatur, a quo nunc haeresis Macedoniana. f Jacobus Nisibenus episcopus agnoscitur, ad cuius preces saepe urbs discrimine liberata est. i Paulus crudelitate praefecti Philippi, nam fautor Macedonii partium erat, et Arianorum insidiis strangulatur.

2 g Ex hoc loco impictas Ariana Constantii regis fulta

339

[318/319]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

6 a Maximinus Treverorum episcopus clarus habetur, a quo Athanasius Alexandriae episcopus, cum a Constantio quaereretur ad poenam 1, honorifice susceptus est.

343 gravius bellum fuit, nam, ut alia omittam, Nisibis obsessa, Bizabde et Amida captae sunt. a XL Maximus post Macarium Hierosolymarum episcopus moritur, post quem ecclesiam Ariani invadunt. Id est Cyrillus, Eutychius, rursum Cyrillus, Hireneus, tertio Cyrillus, Hilarius, quarto Cyrillus. Quorum Cyrillus, cum a Maximo fuisset presbyter ordinatus et post mortem eius ita ei ab Acacio episcopo Caesariensi et ceteris Arianis episcopatus promitteretur si ordinationem Maximi repudiasset. Diaconus in ecclesia ministravit. Ob quam impietatem sacerdotii mercede pensatus Heraclium, quem moriens Maximus in suum locum substituerat, varia fraude sollicitans de episcopo in presbyterum regradavit.

2360

7

344 b Sapor Persarum rex Christianos persequitur. c Neocaesaria in Ponto subversa excepta ecclesia et episcopo ceterisque qui ibidem reperti sunt.

281th

Olympias

8 d Titianus vir eloquens praefecturam praetorio apud Gallias administrat.

345

9 e Athanasius ad Constantis litteras Alexandriam regreditur.

346 f Dyrrachium terrae motu corrui et tribus diebus ac noctibus Roma nutavit plurimaeque Campaniae urbes vexatae.

282nd Olympias g Magnis rei publicae expensis in Seleucia Syriae portus effectus.

12 b Romanae ecclesiae XXXIV ordinatur episcopus LIBERIUS, quo in exilium ob fidem truso omnes clerici iuraverunt ut nullum alium susciperent. Verum, cum Felix ab Arianis fuisset in sacerdotium substitutus, plurimi peieraverunt et post annum cum Felice eiecti sunt, quia Liberius taedio victus exilii et in haeretica pravitate subscribens Romam quasi victor intraverat.

349 h Rursum Sapor tribus mensibus obsidet Nisibin.

10 i Eusebius episcopus Emesenus Arianae signifer factionis multa et varia conscribit.

347 k Solis facta defectio. 2

11 l Bellum Persicum nocturnum apud Singaram in quo haut dubiam victoriam militum stoliditate perdidimus neque vero ullum Constantio ex novem gravissimis proeliis contra Persas

348

13 c Magnentio apud Augustodunum arripiente imperium Constans haud longe ab

350

(1) Athanasius.

(2) 346AD, Jun. 6th

[320/321]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD

Hispania in castro cui Helenae nomen est interficitur anno aetatis xxx, quam ob rem turbata re publica Vetrano Mursae Nepotianus Romae imperatores facti. frater eius, quem ad tuendas Gallias Caesarem miserat, apud Senonas laqueo vitam explet. a Gennadius forensis orator Romae insignis habetur. a Romae populus adversum Magnentiacos rebellans ab Heradida senatore proditur. b Minervius Burdigalensis rhetor Romae florentissime docet. b Nepotiani caput pilo per urbem circumlatum multaeque proscriptiones nobilium et caedes factae.

2370 17 c Gallus Caesar sollicitatus a Constantio patrueli, cui in suspicionem ob egregiam indolem venerat, Histriae occiditur.

354

14 c Vetraniioni apud Naisum a Constantio regium insigne detractum.

351 d Silvanus in Gallia res novas molitus XXVIII die extinctus est. d Magnentius Mursae victus in quo proelio Romanae vires conciderunt. e Victorinus rhetor et Donatus grammaticus praeceptor meus Romae insignes habentur, e quibus Victorinus etiam statuam in foro Traiani meruit. e Gallus Constantii patruelis Caesar factus.

15 f Gallus Iudaeos qui interfectis per noctem militibus arma ad rebellandum invaserant oppressit caesis multis hominum milibus usque ad innoxiam aetatem et civitates eorum Diocaesariam Tiberiadem et Diospolim plurimaque oppida igni tradidit.

352 f Paulinus et Rodanius Galliarum episcopi in exilium ob fidem trusi.

18 g Alchimus et Delfidius rhetores in Aquitania florentissime docent.

355 h Donatus a quo supra Donatianos in Africa dici memorauimus Carthagine pellitur: quidam sectatores eius etiam montenses uocant eo quod ecclesiam Romae primum in monte habere coeperint. g Non nulli nobilium Antiochiae a Gallo interfecti.

CCLXXXIII Olympias 16 i Jubileus secundum hebraeos h Magnentius Lugduni in palatio propria se manu interficit et Decentius

353 i Eusebius Vercellensis episcopus et Lucifer ac Dionysius Caralitanae et Mediolanensis ecclesiae episcopi, Pancratius

[322/323]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD quoque Romanus presbyter et Hilarus diaconus distantibus inter se ab Arianis et Constantio damnantur exiliis.

Andreae apostoli et Lucae evangelistae a Constantinopolitanis miro favore suscepta.

21 a Nicomedia terrae motu funditus eversa vicinis urbibus ex parte vexatis.

358 a Julianus frater Galli Mediolanii Caesar appellatur. b Paulinus Triverorum episcopus in Phrygia exulans moritur.

19 b Antonius monachus CV aetatis anno in heremo moritur. Solitus multis ad se venientibus de Paulo quodam Thebaeo mirae beatitudinis viro referre, cuius nos exitum brevi libello explicuimus.

356 c Evantius eruditissimus grammaticorum Constantinopolim diem obiit, in cuius locum ex Africa Chrestus adducitur.

22 d Synodus apud Ariminum et Seleuciam Isauriae facta, in qua antiqua patrum fides decem primum legatorum, dehinc omnium prodicione damnata est.

359

10 c Hilarius episcopus Pictavensis, factione Saturnini Arelatensis episcopi reliquorumque qui cum eo erant Arianorum ante triennium in Phrygiam pulsus, libros de nostra religione componit. e Honoratus ex praefecto praetorio Galliarum primus Constantinopoli praefectus urbi factus. d Reliquiae apostoli Timothei Constantinopolim invectae. f Gratianus qui nunc imperator est nascitur. e Sarmata, Amatas et Macarius discipuli Antonii insignes habentur. g Hilarius, cum apud Constantinopolim librum pro se Constantio porrexisset, ad Gallias redit. f Liberius episcopus Romanus in exilium mittitur. 1 g Magnae Alamannorum copiae apud Argentoratum oppidum Galliarum a Caesare Juliano oppressae. h Macedonius Constantinopoli pellitur. i Omnes paene toto orbe ecclesiae sub nomine pacis et regis Arianorum consortio polluuntur.

CCLXXXIV

Olympias

23 k Constantinopoli ecclesiarum maxima dedicatur.

20 h Saraceni in monasterium beati Antonii inruentes Sarmatam interficiunt.

357 l Meletius Sebastiae Armeniorum episcopus ab Acacio et Georgio episcopis Arianis Antiochiam transfertur et post i Constantio Romam ingresso ossa (1) Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus 15.7.6-10.

[324/325]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD non grande temporis interuallum, cum presbyteros qui ab Eudoxio antecessore suo depositi fuerant suscepisset, exilii justissimam causam subita fidei mutatione delusit. concederet ut Christianus doceret, scholam sponte deservit. a Aemilianus ob ararum subversionem Dorostori a vicario incenditur. b Ecclesia Antiochiae clausa et grauissima imminentis persecutionis procella Dei voluntate sopita est. Nam Iulianus in Persas profectus nostrum post victoriam dis sanguinem voverat, ubi a quodam simulato perfuga ad deserta perductus, cum fame et siti apostatam perdidisset exercitum et inconsultius a suorum erraret agminibus, ab obuiio forte hostium equite conto ilia perfossus interiit anno aetatis XXXII. Post quem sequenti die Jovianus ex primicerio domesticorum imperator factus est. a Gallia per Hilarium Ariminensis perfidiae dolos damnat.

CCLXXXV

Olympias

23 b Constantius Mopsocrenis inter Ciliciam Cappadociamque moritur anno aetatis XLV.

361 Romanorum XXXVI regnavit JULIANUS, annis I, mensibus VIII

1 c Juliano ad idolorum cultum converso blanda persecutio fuit iniciens magis quam impellens ad sacrificandum, in qua multi ex nostris voluntate propria corruerunt.

362 d Georgio per seditionem populi incenso, qui in locum Athanasii ab Arianis fuerat ordinatus, Athanasius Alexandriam revertitur.

Romanorum XXXVII regnavit Jovianus, mensibus VIII

2380 1 c Jovianus rerum necessitate compulsus Nisibin et magnam Mesopotamiae partem Saporis Persarum regi tradidit.

364 e Eusebius et Lucifer de exilio regrediuntur, e quibus Lucifer adscitis duobus aliis confessoribus Paulinum Eustathii episcopi presbyterura qui se numquam hereticorum communione polluerat, in parte catholica Antiochiae episcopum facit. d Synodus Antiochiae a Melitio et suis facta, in qua omousio anomoeoque reiecto medium inter haec omoeousion Macedonianum dogma vindicaverunt.

2 f Proheresius sophista Atheniensis lege data ne Christiani liberalium artium doctores essent, cum sibi specialiter Julianus 363 e Jovianus cruditate sive odore prunarum, quas nimias adoleri iusserat, Dadastanae moritur 1 (1) On the border between Bithynia and Galatia.

[326/327]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD anno aetatis xxxiii, post quem Valentinianus tribunus scutariorum e Pannonia Civalensis 1 apud Niceam Augustus appellatus fratrem Valentem Constantinopoli in communionem regni adsumit. quo Damasiana partis populo confluyente crudelissimae interfectiones diversi sexus perpetratae. a Valens ab Eudoxio Arianorum episcopo baptizatus nostros persequitur.

CCLXXXVI

Olympias

3 b Gratianus, Valentiniani filius Ambianis imperator factus.

367 Romanorum XXXVIII, regnavit VALENTINIANUS et VALENS, annis XIV, mensibus V c Tanta Constantinopoli est orta tempestas ut mirae magnitudinis decidens grando non nullos hominum interfecerit.

1 a Valentinianus egregius alias imperator et Aureliano moribus similis, nisi quod severitatem eius nimiam et parcitatem quidam crudelitatem et avaritiam interpretaebantur.

365 d Apud Atrabatas lana caelo pluviae mixta defluxit. e Hilarius episcopus Pictavis moritur. b Apollinaris Laodicensis episcopus multimoda nostrae religionis scripta coraponit.

4 f Nicea, quae saepe ante corruerat, terrae motu funditus eversa.

368

2 c Terrae motu per totum orbem facto mare litus egreditur et Siciliae multarumque insularum urbes innumerabiles populos oppressere.

366 g Libanius Antiochenus rhetor insignis habetur.

CCLXXXVII

Olympias

5 h Agon Constantinopoli a Valente redditus.

369 d Procopius, qui apud Constantinopolim tyrannidem invaserat, apud Phrygiam Salutarem extinctus et plurimi Procopianae partis caesi atque proscripti. i Haitanaricus rex Gothorum in Christianos persecutione commota plurimos interficit et de propriis sedibus in Romanum solum expellit. k Eusebius Vercellensis episcopus moritur. e Romanae ecclesiae XXXV, ordinatur episcopus DAMASUS, et post non multum temporis intervallum Ursinus a quibusdam episcopus constitutus Sicininum cum suis inuadit,

6 l Constantinopoli apostolorum martyrium dedicatur.

370 m Magna fames in Phrygia.

(1) Cibale.

[328/329]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD a Lucifer Caralitanus episcopus moritur, qui cum Gregorio episcopo Hispaniarum et Philone Libyae numquam se Arianae miscuit pravitati. a Burgundionum LXXX ferme milia, quod numquam antea, ad Renum descenderunt. b Clearchus praefectus urbi Constantinopoli agnoscitur, a quo necessaria et diu expectata votis aqua civitati inducitur.

7

b Maximinus praefectus annonae

1 maleficos ab imperatore inuestigare iussus plurimos Romae nobilium occidit.

371 c Alexandriae XX ordinatur episcopus Petrus, qui post Valentis interitum tam facilis in recipiendis haereticis fuit ut non nullis suspicionem acceptae pecuniae intulerit. c Valentinus in Britannia ante quam tyrannidem invaderet oppressus. d Presbyter Sirmi iniquissime decollatur quod Octavianum ex pro consule apud se latitantem prodere nolisset.

2390

10

d Melanius nobilissima mulierum Romanarum et Marcellini quondam consulis filia, unico praetore tunc urbano filio derelicto, Hierosolymam navigavit, ubi tanto virtutum praecipueque humilitatis miraculo fuit ut Theclae nomen acceperit.

2

374

8

e Didymus Alexandrinus multa de nostro dogmate per notarios commentatur, qui post quintum nativitatis suae annum luminibus orbatus elementorum quoque ignarus fuit.

372 e Post Auxenti seram mortem Mediolanii Ambrosio episcopo constituto omnis ad fidem rectam Italia convertitur. f Probus praefectus Illyrici iniquissimis tributorum exactionibus ante provincias quas regebat quam a barbaris vastarentur erasit. f Aquileienses clerici quasi chorus beatorum habentur.

11

g Quia superiori anno Sarmatae Pannonias vastaverant, idem consules permansere.

375 CCLXXXVIII Olympias 9 g Eunomius discipulus Aeti Constantinopoli agnoscitur, a quo haeresis Eunomiana.

373 h Valentinianus subita sanguinis eruptione quod Graece 'apoplexis' vocatur Brigitione moritur, post quem Gratianus adsumpto in imperium Valentiniano fratre cum patruo Valente regnat. h Saxones caesi Deusone in regione Francorum.

(1) The grain supply.

(2) Rufinus accused Jerome of deleting this entry from his own copy of the Chronicle after falling out with Melania (the Elder).

[330/331]

Romanorum

AD

Romanorum

AD a Multi monachorum Nitriae per tribunos et milites caesi. a Superatis in congressione Romanis Gothi funduntur in Thracia. b Valens lege data ut monachi militarent nolentes fustibus iussit interfici.

14

b Valens de Antiochia exire compulsus sera paenitentia nostros de exiliis revocat.

378

12 c Theodosius Theodosii postea imperatoris pater et plurimi nobilium occisi.

376

[15] c Lacrimabile bellum in Thracia, in quo deserente equitum praesidio Romanae legiones a Gothis cinctae usque ad internecionem caesae sunt: ipse imperator Valens, cum sagitta saucius fugeret et ob dolorem nimium saepe equo laberetur, ad cuiusdam villulae casam deportatus est,

quo persequentibus barbaris et incensa domo sepultura quoque caruit. d Ab urbe condita usque ad extremum huius operis annum fiunt anni MCXXXI. Hoc modo: sub regibus, anni CCXL sub consulibus, anni CDLXIV sub augustis cesaribus, anni CDXXVII [379] d Photinus in Galatia moritur, a quo Photinianorum dogma Judaicum. 1 e Basilius Caesariensis episcopus Cappadociae clarus habetur, qui multa continentiae et ingenii bona uno superbiae malo perdidit..

CCLXXXIX

Olympias

13 f Alamannorum XXX circiter milia apud Argentariam oppidum Galliarum ab exercitu Gratiani strata..

377 g Florentinus, Bonosus, et Rufinus insignes monachi habentur, e quibus Florentinus tam misericors in egentes fuit ut vulgo "pater pauperum" nominatus sit. h Gens Hunorum Gothos vastat, qui a Romanis sine armorum depositione suscepti per avaritiam Maximi ducis fame ad rebellandum coacti sunt. 2

(1) Jerome, like many heresiologists, always associates Photinus

with Sabellius, Paul of Samosata and Judaism. He wants to show, by this association,

that they're all heretics, but does not particularise each of them. Jerome usually

explains that the common heresy of Photinus and Judaism is to think that Jesus

was just a man who had been adopted by God as his son. Jerome knows that Photinus

is not exactly a Monarchianist, but an Adoptianist. Benoît Jeanjean shows

how Jerome presents Photinus, Paulus of Samosate and Sabellius in his book :

Benoît Jeanjean, "Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie",

Paris, Etudes Augustiniennes, 1999, p. 168-177.

(2) The original manuscript of 'O' ends at this point. A single leaf (f.145)

with a brief summary of events follows, in the same hand as the Tertullian scholion

noted earlier. After this, the manuscript contains the Chronicle of Marcellinus.

[332] Colliguntur omnes anni usque in consulatum Valentis VI et Valentiniani junioris iterum Augustorum: a XV Tiberii anno et praedicatione domini nostri Jesu Christi anni

CCCLI a secundo anno Darii regis Persarum quo tempore templum Hierosolymis instauratum est anni

DCCCXCIX ab olympiade prima qua aetate apud Hebraeos Isaias prophetabat anni

MCLV a Solomone et prima aedificatione templi anni

MCDXI a captivitate Troiae quo tempore Sampson apud Hebraeos erat anni

MDLXI a Moyse et Cecrope primo rege Atticae anni

MDCCCXC ab Abraham et regno Nini et Semiramidis anni

MMCCCXCV Continet omnis canon ab Abraham usque ad tempus supra scriptum annos

MMCCCXCV a diluvio autem usque ad Abraham supputantur anni

CMXLII et ab Adam usque ad diluvium anni

MMCCXLII Id est usque ad consulatum eius 6 et Valentiniani iterum omnes anni

V milia DLXXIX This text was transcribed by JMB. All material on this page is in the public domain
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Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Chronicle - Latin text of prefaces

Sancti Hieronymi Chronicon. Hieronymi Praefatio; Eusebii praefatio Eusebius Hieronymus Vincentio et Gallieno suis salutem.

Vetus iste disertorum mos fuit, ut exercendi ingenii causa Graecos libros Latino sermone absolverent, et, quod plus in se difficultatis habet, poemata illustrium virorum, addita metri necessitate, transferrent. unde et noster Tullius Platonis integros libros ad verbum interpretatus est: et cum Aratum jam Romanum hexametris versibus edidisset, in Xenophontis Oeconomico lusit. in quo opere ita saepe aureum illud flumen eloquentiae scabris quibusdam et turbulentis obicibus retardatur, ut qui interpretata nesciunt, a Cicerone dicta non credant. difficile est enim, alienas lineas insequentem non alicubi excidere; arduum, ut quae in alia lingua bene dicta sunt, eundem decorem in translatione conservent. Significatum est aliquid unius verbi proprietate: non habeo meum quod id efferam, et dum quaero implere sententiam, longo ambitu vix brevis viae spatia consumo. Accedunt hyperbatorum ¹ anfractus, dissimilitudines casuum, varietates figurarum; ipsum postremo suum, et, ut ita dicam, vernaculum linguae genus. Si ad verbum interpretor, absurde resonat; si ob necessitatem aliquid in ordine, [vel] in sermone mutavero, ab interpretis videbor officio recessisse.

Itaque, mi Vincenti charissime, et tu Galliene, pars animae meae, obsecro, ut quicquid hoc tumultuarii operis est, amicorum, non iudicum animo relegatis: praesertim cum et notario, ut scitis, volocissime dictaverim, et difficultatem rei etiam divinorum voluminum instrumenta ² testentur, quae a LXX Interpretibus edita, non eundem saporem in Graeco sermone custodiunt. Quam ob rem Aquila et Symmachus et Theodotion incitati, diversum paene opus in eodem opere prodiderunt: alio nitente verbum de verbo exprimere, alio sensum potius sequi, tertio non multum a veteribus discrepante. Quinta autem et sexta et septima editio³, licet quibus censeantur auctoribus, ignoretur: tamen ita probabilem sui diversitatem tenent, ut auctoritatem sine nominibus meruerint.

Inde adeo venit, ut sacrae litterae minus comptae, et dure sonantes videantur, quod diserti homines interpretatas eas de Hebraeo nescientes, dum superficiem, non medullam inspiciunt, ante quasi vestem orationis sordidam perhorrescant, quam pulchrum intrinsecus rerum corpus inveniant.

Denique quid Psalterio canorius, quod in morem nostri Flacci⁴, et Graeci Pindari, nunc iambo currit, nunc alcaico personat, nunc Sapphico tumet, nunc semipede ingreditur? Quid Deuteronomii et Isaiae Cantico pulchrius? quid Salomone gravius? quid perfectius Job? Quae omnia hexametris et pentametris versibus, ut Josephus et Origenes scribunt, apud suos composita decurrunt. Haec cum Graeca legimus, aliud quiddam sonant; cum Latine, penitus non [co]haerent.

Quod si cui non videtur linguae gratiam interpretatione mutari, Homerum ad verbum exponat Latinum, -- plus aliquid dicam -- eundem in sua lingua prosae verbis interpretetur, videbit ordinem

ridiculum et poetam eloquentissimum vix loquentem.

Quorsum ista? Videlicet ut non vobis mirum videatur, si alicubi offendimus, si tarda oratio aut consonantibus asperatur, aut vocalibus hiulca vel divisa sit, aut rerum ipsarum brevitate constringitur, cum eruditissimi homines in eodem opere sudaverint: et ad communem difficultatem, quam in omni interpretatione causati sumus, hoc nobis proprium accedat, quod historia multiplex est, habens barbara nomina, res incognitas Latinis, numeros inexplicabiles, virgulas rebus pariter ac numeris intertextas, ut paene difficilius sit legendi ordinem discere, quam ad lectionis notitiam pervenire.

[5 Ut autem manifesto cognoscatur indicio, ad quem numerum historia quaeque pertineat, has distinctiones positas lector advertat, ut, si ad primum numerum regni primitus enotati historia referenda est, primam litteram in explanatione historiae contempletur: et, si quidem eam ex minio viderit, illi tempori applicandam, vel anno sciat, quem suggesserit numerus similiter id est minio figuratus: si vero numerum non puro minio, sed mixto nigro notatum esse perviderit, secundae lineae numero debetur historia: si autem tertio numerorum ordini applicandum est, quod fuerit ascriptum, medium puro minio numerum, et partem reliquam ex solo nigro expressam conspicabitur. quarta numeri linea nihil habebit ex minio, sed indicio erit, quod ipsi historia debeatur, cum minio facta littera in principio enotatione historiae, quae etiam superioribus signis subdenda est, nihilominus apparebit, nullo superius memoratorum signorum in numeris respondere:.. sin vero non minio, sed mixtim nigro rubroque littera fuerit expressa, refulgens ex rubro numerus in quintam numerorum lineam poterit adverti; et ita sexta linea numeri et secunda, septima ut tertia designabitur, octava quoque ut quarta apparenti littera bicolori: cum vero nec in numeris, nec in explanatione historiae ullum illorum, quae praediximus, signorum fuerit, nona linea quod annotatum fuerit, vindicavit: non tamen omnes hi modi requirendi sunt necessaria, cum minor est numerus linearum]

Unde praemonendum puto ut, prout quaeque scripta sunt, etiam colorum diversitates servantur, ne quis irrationabili aestimet voluptate oculis tantum rem esse quaesitam et, dum scribendi taedium fugit, labyrinthum erroris intexat. Id enim elucubratum est, ut regnorum tramites, qui per vicinitatem nimiam paene mixti erant, distinctione minii separarentur, et eundem coloris locum quem prior membrana signaverat, etiam posterior servaret.

Nec ignoro multos fore, qui solita libidine omnibus detrahendi, huic volumini genuinum infigant, quod vitare non potest, nisi qui omnino nil scribit: calumniabuntur tempora, convertent ordinem, res arguent, syllabas eventilabunt, et, quod accidere plerumque solet, negligentiam librariorum ad auctores referent.

Quos cum possem meo jure repercutere, ut si displicet, non legant, malo breviter placatos dimittere, ut et Graecorum fidem, suo auctori assignent, et quae nova inseruimus, de aliis probatissimis viris libata cognoscant. Sciendum etenim est, me et interpretis et scriptoris ex parte officio usum, quia et Graeca fidelissime expressi, et nonnulla quae mihi intermissa videbantur, adjeci in Romana maxime historia, quam Eusebius, huius conditor libri, non tam ignorasse, ut erudit[issim]us, sed ut Graece scribens, parum suis necessariam perstrinxisse, mihi videtur.

Itaque a Nino et ab Abraham usque ad Troiae captivitatem pura Graeca translatio est: a Troia usque ad vicesimum Constantini annum nunc addita, nunc mixta sunt plurima, quae de

Tranquillo⁶, et caeteris illustribus historicis curiosissime excerpsi[mus]: a Constantini autem supra dicto anno usque ad consulatum Augustorum Valentis VI et Valentiniani iterum, totum meum est.

Quo fine contentus, reliquum tempus Gratiani et Theodosii latioris historiae stylo reservavi; non quo de viventibus timuerim libera et vere scribere -- timor enim Dei hominum timorem expellit -- sed quoniam, debacchantibus adhuc in terra nostra Barbaris, incerta sunt omnia.

Eusebii interpretata praefatio.⁷

Mosen gentis Hebraeae, qui primus omnium prophetarum ante adventum Domini Salvatoris divinas leges sacris litteris explicavit, Inachi fuisse temporibus, eruditissimi viri tradiderunt: ex nostris, Clemens, et Africanus, et Tatianus; ex Judaeis, Josephus, et Justus, veteris historiae monumenta replicantes. Porro Inachus quingentis annis Troianum bellum antecedit: ex ethnicis vero, impius ille Porphyrius in quarto operis sui libro, quod adversum nos casso labore contexit, post Mosen Semiramim fuisse affirmat, quae apud Assyrios CL ante Inachum regnavit annos. Itaque juxta eum DCCC paene et L annis Troiano bello Moses senior reperitur.

Cum haec ita se habeant, necessarium duxi veritatem diligentius persequi, et ob id in priori libello⁸ quasi quandam materiam futuro operi omnium mihi regum tempora praenotavi, Chaldaeorum, Assyriorum, Medorum, Persarum, Lydorum, Hebraeorum, Aegyptiorum, Atheniensium, Argivorum, Sicyoniorum, Lacedaemoniorum, Corinthiorum, Thessalorum, Macedonum, Latinorum, qui postea Romani nuncupati sunt. In praesenti autem, stylo eadem tempora contra se invicem ponens, et singularum gentium annos dinumerans, ut quid cuique coetaneum fuit, ita curioso ordine coaptavi. Neque me fugit, in Hebraeis codicibus dissonantes aetatum annos inveniri, plusque vel minus, prout interpretibus visum est, lectitari: sequendumque illud potius, quod exemplariorum multitudo in fidem traxit.

Verum utcumque quis volet, computet: reperiet Inachi temporibus, quem primum Argis regnasse aiunt, patriarcham Hebraeorum fuisse Israelem, a quo duodecim Judaeorum tribus Israelis vocabulum sortitae sunt. Semiramin autem et Abraham contemporales fuisse, manifestum est: nam Moses, licet junior supra dictis sit, omnibus tamen, quos Graeci antiquissimos putant, senior deprehenditur, Homero scilicet et Hesiodo, Troianoque bello, ac multo superius, Hercule, Musaeo, Lino, Chirone, Orpheo, Castore, Polluce, Aesculapio, Libero, Mercurio, Apolline, et caeteris diis gentium, sacrisque, vel vatibus, ipsius quoque Jovis gestis, quem Graecia in arce divinitatis collocavit. Hos, inquam, omnes quos enumeravimus, etiam post Cecropem Diphyem primum Atticae regem fuisse convincimus.

Cecropem autem praesens historia Mosi coetaneum ostendit, et antecedere Troianum bellum annis CCC [CCCLXXV]. Quod, ne cui dubium videatur, sequens ratio sic probabit: . quadragesimo secundo anno imperii Augusti CHRISTUS natus [est]; quintodecimo Tiberii anno praedicare orsus est. Si quis igitur, retrorsum annorum supputans numerum, alterum Darii regis Persarum quaerat annum, sub quo templum Jerosolymorum, quod a Babyloniis destructum fuerat, instauratum est, reperiet a Tiberio usque ad Darium annos DXLVIII.

Darii quippe secundus annus LXV olympiadis anno primo fuit, et Tiberii XV in CCI olympiadem incurrit. Fiunt ergo inter Darium et Tiberium olympiades CXXXVII, anni DXLVIII, quadriennio in una olympiade supputato.

Deinde secundo Darii anno LXX desolationis templi annus expletur, a quo usque ad primam olympiadem retrorsum numerantur olympiades LXIV, anni CCLVI; qui similiter supputantur a supradicto desolationis templi anno usque ad L annum Oziae regis Judaeorum, sub quo Isaias et Osee fuerunt.

Itaque prima olympias in Isaias, et reliquorum incurrit aetatem, qui cum eo prophetaverunt.

Rursum, si a prima olympiade ad superiora tempora et usque ad captivitatem Troiae proveharis, invenies annos CDVI quos et nos in priore opusculo digessimus, et curiosissima Graecorum historia conscribit. Item apud Hebraeos a supra dicto Oziae anno et temporibus Esaiae prophetae, usque ad Samson et tertium annum Labdon Judicis, supputabis annos CDVI. Samson autem est, quem in corporis robore Herculi similem ferunt posteri Judaeorum, et mihi videntur non multum inter se distare tempore, si quidem ambo circa Troiae captivitatem fuerunt.

Post haec iterum ad priora convertere, et, cum CCC tibi et XXIX annos pes retro actus impleverit, Graecorum Cecropem Diphyem et Mosem invenies Hebraeorum. Nam a XLV Cecropis anno usque ad captivitatem Troiae, et ab LXXX aetatis Mosi anno, in quo populum Israhel de Aegypto eduxit, usque ad Labdon, et Samson Judices, computantur anni CCCXXIX.

Itaque sine ulla ambiguitate Moses et Cecrops, qui primus Atheniensium rex fuit, iisdem fuere temporibus.

Porro iste est Cecrops Diphyes indigena, sub quo primum in arce Oliva orta est, et Atheniensium urbs ex Minervae appellatione sortita nomen. Hic primus omnium, Jovem appellavit, simulacra reperit, aram statuit, victimas immolavit, nequaquam istius modi rebus in Graecia umquam visis.

Caetera quoque, quae apud Graecos mira jactantur, posteriora Cecropis annis deprehenduntur; si autem Cecropis, consequenter et Mosi, qui cum Cecrope fuit.

Post hunc enim scribitur diluvium sub Deucalione, incendium sub Phaetonte, Erichthonius Vulcani et terrae filius, Dardanus qui Dardaniam condidit: de quo Homerus:

Quem primum genuit caelesti Jupiter arce; 9 Liberae quoque raptus et Europae, sacra Cereris atque Isidis, delubrum in Eleusina, frumenta Triptolemi, regnum Trois;

Cuius dii natum Ganymedem, ad sidera raptum, Vina Jovis magni voluerunt fundere mensis. 10

Quo tempore quoque Tantalus et Tityus fuerunt, et Apollo natus est. Nam Latona, Jovis conjux, per Titya fugit, Latonae autem et Jovis Apollo filius, post quos Cadmus Thebas venit, Qui Semelem genuit, de qua pulcherrima proles, Liber condignam partu tulit edita frugem. 11

Porro Liber et reliqui quos mox inferemus, post CC annum Cecropis fuerunt; Linus scilicet, et Zetus, et Amphion, Musaeus, Orpheus, Minos, Perseus, Aesculapius, gemini Castores, Hercules, cum quo Apollo servivit Admeto, post quos facta est Troianae urbis eversio: quam Homerus longo sequitur intervallol; Homerus autem Solone et Thalete Milesio, caeterisque, qui cum iis septem Sapientes appellati sunt, multo prior reperitur.

Deinde Pythagoras exstitit, qui se non sapientem, ut priores, sed philosophum, id est, amatorem sapientiae, dici voluit; quem secutus Socrates, Platonem erudit: a quo famosa in partes philosophia divisa est. horum singulos juxta ordinem sequentis historiae suis locis inseremus.

Igitur Moses cunctos quos supra memoravimus, antecedit: quia aetate Cecropis fuisse monstratus est.

Ab LXXX autem anno Mosi, et egressu Israhelis ex Aegypto, rursum ad superiora conversus, usque ad primum annum Abrahae, reperies annos DV, quos similiter a XLV anno Cecropis usque ad Ninum et Semiramin Assyriorum principes supputabis. Primus quippe omni Asiae, exceptis Indis, Ninus Beli filius regnavit. Itaque manifestum est, Abraham Nini aetate generatum, juxta eum tamen numerum, quem contractiorem editione Vulgata sermo praebet Hebraeus.

Verum incuriositate ne cesses: et cum divinam Scripturam diligenter evolveris, a nativitate Abrahae usque ad totius orbis diluvium, invenies retrorsum annos CMXLII,

item a diluvio usque ad Adam, MMCCXLII, in quibus nulla penitus Graeca, nec Barbara, et, ut loquar in commune, gentilis invenitur historia.

Quam ob rem praesens opusculum ab Abraham et Nino usque ad nostram aetatem inferiora tempora persequetur; et statim in principio sui Hebraeorum Abraham, Assyriorum Ninum et Semiramim proponet, quia neque Athenarum adhuc urbs, neque Argivorum regnum nomen acceperat, solis Sicyoniis in Graecia florentibus: apud quos temporibus Abrahae et Nini Europem secundum regnasse ferunt. quod cur etiam nos putemus, ex sequentibus demonstrabitur.

Si enim diligenter enumeres ab ultima aetate Nini, usque ad Troiae captivitatem, invenies annos DCCCXXXIV: item in Sicyone a XXII anno regis Europis, usque ad supradictum tempus, eosdem annos invenies DCCCXXXIV: item apud Aegyptios ab aetate Nini et Semiramidis, quo tempore sextadecima iam dynastia Thebaei Aegyptis imperabant, usque ad vicesimam dynastiam, et regem Aegypti Thuorin, qui ab Homero Polybus vocatur, sub quo etiam Troia capta est, colliguntur etiam supra dicti anni DCCCXXXIV: igitur consequenter uno eodemque tempore in libelli fronte ponimus Abraham, Ninum, Semiramin, Europem, Aegyptiorum Thebaeos: et haec quidem ita se habere, ut praefati sumus, posterior textus ostendet.

Nunc illud in cura est, ut etiam Hebraeorum annos in quatuor tempora dividamus;

- ab Abraham usque ad Mosen;
- a Mose usque ad primam aedificationem templi;
- a prima aedificatione templi usque ad secundam instaurationem eius;
- ab instauratione eius usque ad adventum Christi Domini. A nativitate quippe Abrahae usque ad Mosen et egressum Israhelis ex Aegypto, computantur anni DV: a Mose usque ad Solomonem et primam aedificationem templi, anni CDLXXIX, secundum minorem tamen numerum quem tertius Regnorum liber continet, -- nam juxta volumen Judicum, supputantur anni DC -- a Solomone vero usque ad instaurationem templi, quae sub Dario Persarum rege facta est, colliguntur anni DXII: porro a Dario usque ad praedicationem Domini nostri Jesu Christi, et usque ad quintum decimum annum Tiberii principis Romanorum, explentur anni DXLVIII.

Itaque simul fiunt ab Abraham usque ad XV Tiberii annum, anni MMXLIV:

- similiter a Nino et Semiramide usque ad Mosen et Cecropem, anni DV;

- a Cecrope usque ad captivitatem Troiae, anni CCCXXIX;
- a captivitate Troiae usque ad primam olympiadem, anni CDVI;
- a prima olympiade usque ad secundum Darii annum, et instaurationem templi, anni CCLVI;
- fa secundo Darii anno et instauratione templi usque ad XV annum Tiberii Caesaris, anni DXLVIII.

Fiunt simul a Nino a Semiramide usque ad XV Tiberii annum, anni MMXLIV, quos et ab Abraham usque ad Tiberium ostendimus supputatos: a Tiberii autem XV anno usque ad decimum quartum annum Valentinianus¹², quo interiit, numerantur anni CCCLI, itaque fiunt omnes anni istius historiae MMCCCXCV.

Et, ne forte longus ordo numerorum aliquid turbationis afferet, omnem annorum congeriem in decadas caecidimus, quas ex singularium gentium historiis congregantes sibi in vicem, fecimus esse contrarias, ut facilis praebeatur inventio, cuius Graeci aetate vel barbari, prophetae, et reges, et sacerdotes fuerint Hebraeorum, item qui diversarum gentium falso crediti dii, qui heroes, quae quando urbs condita, qui de illustribus viris philosophi, poetae, principes, scriptoresque variorum operum exstiterint, et si qua alia digna memoria putavit antiquitas. Quae universa in suis locis summa cum brevitate ponemus.

Footnotes 1. Word-order reversal, for emphasis.

2. instrumenta. Lewis & Short: "II. Trop. A. Of

writings... B. Ornament, embellishment: felices ornent haec instrumenta libellos.

Ov. Tr. 1,1,9."

3. Jerome is here referring to the parallel translations

from Hebrew into Greek in the columns of Origen's Hexapla. The separate columns circulated separately.

4. Horace.

5. This paragraph is a later interpolation. One

family of the manuscripts was reformatted by a later scribe, who wrote this paragraph as an explanation of the new format. His system placed all the columns of numbers on the left, and all the text at the right. Which column of numbers the text related to is controlled by colour coding. This paragraph describes the system, albeit obscurely. Manuscript L is of this family, and this translation is provisional, pending a visit to the British Library.

1. number=bright red; first letter of text=bright red 2. number=? (Probably black); first letter of text=mixed red/black 3. number=? (probably bright red); first letter of text=middle bright red, rest

black 4. number=black; first letter of text=bright red 5. number=red; first letter of text=mixed red/black

6. Like #2

7. Like #3 8. Like #4, two colour 9. number=black; first letter of text=black The 'probables' I get by alternating the colour of the numbers.

6. Suetonius.

7. Translated by St. Jerome from Greek into Latin.

The headings in this page are Jerome's.

8. Eusebius' Chronicle is found in Armenian translation

in two books. Book 1 is the Chronography and consists of lists of

kings and how long they reigned, for various kingdoms. Book 2 is the Chronological

Canons, which is the table of dates and events. Jerome only translated

book 2, and the two books seem to have circulated separately. Even in the

manuscripts of the Armenian version there is evidence of this, since the end of

book 1 and the start and end of book 2 are missing. This shows that the

2-book combination is copied from two books which circulated by themselves,

since the end of book 1 and start of book 2 should be very well protected in the

middle of a volume, if they are together. This preface by Eusebius to book

2 is otherwise lost, being in the missing portion in the Armenian.

9. Homer, Iliad 20.215 10. Homer, Iliad 20.231-235.

11. Homer, Odyssey 11.576-582.

12. Clearly Jerome has altered something here, since

Eusebius ended his text in the reign of Constantine. Probably this

sentence originally referred to the 20th year of Constantine, and Jerome updated

it to the end of his own version, the death of Valens.

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Fotheringham (1905). See introduction for details.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Chronicle - Pages 188-332

Jerome, Chronicle (2005) pp.188-332

[188/189] Persians Beginning of the Consuls of the Romans Macedonians BC

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

2 a Harmodius and Aristogiton killed the tyrant Hipparchus, and the courtesan Leaena their friend, when compelled with torments, lest she betray her companions, she amputated her tongue with her teeth. 28

34

520 68th Olympiad a The Aeginatans controlled the sea 17th for 20 years until the crossing of Xerxes.

3

29

35

519

14

46

508

1510

15

47

507

16 b Valerius, the colleague of the consul Brutus, died so poor that he was interred at public expense. *

48

506

4

30

36

518

17

49

505

1500

5

31

37

517

69th

Olympiad

66th

Olympiad

18 c At Rome, after a census had been taken, there were found to be 120,000 men.

50

504

6 b The temple of Jerusalem is completed, when Haggai and Zechariah are prophesying among the Jews. 32

38

516 Of the Macedonians, Alexander, for 43 years

7

33

39

515 d Nine years after the kings were expelled, a new rank was created, that is, the dictatorship, and the Master of the Horse, who would answer to the dictator. Largius was the first Dictator, and Spurius Cassius the Master of Horse. (*)

8

34

40

514

9

35

41

513

67th

Olympiad

~~~~~

19

1

503

10 c After the kings had been expelled from the City, Rome was holding power barely as far as the 15th milestone. The seven kings of the Romans from Romulus until Tarquinius Superbus reigned for 240 years, or as some prefer, 243. (\*)

42

512

20

2

502

21

3

501

11

43

511

70th

Olympiad

e Hellanicus the historian,

and Democritus the philosopher, and Heraclitus surnamed 'the Dark', and Anaxagoras the natural scientist are considered important.

22

4

500

23

5

499

24

6

498

12

44

510

1520

25 f Pythagoras the philosopher dies.

7

497

d After the kings had

been expelled, first two consuls began to exist at Rome, from Brutus; then tribunes of the plebs and dictators, and then consuls again controlled the Republic for close to 464 years, until Julius Caesar, who was the first to seize sole rule, in the 183rd Olympiad.

71st

Olympiad

g The Volsci destroyed

Corioli. \*

26 h Aeschylus the writer of tragedies is well known.

8

496

13

45

509

27 i The Latins rebelled against the Romans.

9

495

28 I After an uprising had happened, the people of Rome, seceded from the fathers.

10

494

[190/191]

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

29 a Marcius, who had captured Corioli, withdrew his army from its seige of the City (Rome) by the intervention of his mother Veturia and his wife Volumnia. \*

11

493

3 a Choerilus and Phrynicus are considered illustrious.

21

483 b Diagoras is well known, and the followers of his natural philosophy.

4

22

482



72nd

Olympiad

5 c Xerxes, when he had come to Athens, burned down the city, at the time of the leadership of Callias.

23

481

30 b The war that was waged in Marathon, and those things that are written about Miltiades and Aristides who was surnamed the Just.

12

492

31

13

491

75th

Olympiad

32

14

490

6 d The war that was waged in Thermopylae. and the naval battle off Salamis.

24

480

33 c Panyasis the poet is considered illustrious.

15

489 d 300 nobles of the Fabian family slaughtered by the people of Veii. \*

7 e The Athenians fortify Piraeus with a wall.

25

479 e When the Roman soldiers were besieged on mount Algidus, they were freed by the dictator Quintius Cincinnatus. \*

8 f Hieron reigns at Syracuse.

26

478

1540

9 g Aeschylus the tragedian is well known.

27

477

76th

Olympiad

10 h War in Plateia and Mycale.

28

476

73rd

Olympiad

11 i After Gelon, Hieron exercises tyranny at Syracuse.

29

475

34 f Egypt was severed from Darius.

16

488

12

30

474

1530

35 g Gelo occupied Syracuse.

17

487

13 k Pindar the musician is considered important.

31

473

36 h Pindar and Simonides the lyrical poets are considered notable.

486

77th

Olympiad

14 I Themistocles flees to the Persians.

32 n Start of the 71st jubilee accord- ing to the Heb- rews. 472 i At Rome, the Vestal Virgin Pompilia, discovered in unchastity, was buried alive.

18

15 m Sophocles, the tragedian, first published the works of his ingenuity.

33 471 5th of the Persians, Xerxes son of Darius, for 20 years.

1

19

485

16 o At Rome, the vestal virgin Sunia, discovered in unchastity, was buried alive.

34 470 74th Olympiad k Xerxes captures Egypt.

2 I Aristides is expelled with ignominy.

20

484

17 p Sophocles and Euripides are considered important. 35

469

[192/193]

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

78th Olympiad subsequent deeds which are reported to have been performed by them, would not have been silent about Esther. a Herodotus the historical writer is well known.

3 a Sicily was ruled by the people.

42

462

18 b Bacchylides and Diagoras are celebrated at Athens for their superlative eloquence.

36

468

4 b Cimon overcomes the Persians in naval and land battle near the Eurymedontis: and halts the Median war.

43

461

1550

19 c Zeuxis the painter is well-known; some people judge that the so-called 'the bath of the Byzantines' is one of his paintings, many of which he made on commission. \*

37

467 Of the Macedonians, Perdikkas, for 28 years. c An eclipse of the sun happened.

80th Olympiad d Themistocles dies from a draught of bull's blood.

5 d Anaxagoras dies.

1

460 e Heraclitus is considered important.

20 e Socrates is born.

38

466 f Evenus the poet is important. f A stone fell from the sky into the Aegon River. g Ezra the priest, notable among the Hebrews, is well-known, in whose time the high priesthood was held by Eliashib, son of Joakim, son of Jeshua, son of Jozadak. Moreover Ezra was most well-learned in the Divine Law, and an important teacher of all the Jews who had returned from captivity to Judaea.

6th of the Persians,

Artabanus, for 7 months, after whom, 7th, Artaxerxes, who was surnamed Long-Hand, for 40 years.

6

2

459

39

465

7

3

458

1560

8

4

457 81st Olympiad h Empedocles and Parmenides are considered most notable natural philosophers.

79th

Olympiad

g These

things were written about Esther and Mordecai: some affirm

that they took place under this king, which I do not think; for Ezra, who

writes that in this time Ezra and Nehemiah were returned from Babylon, and

the

9

5

456

1

40

464 i Zeno and Heraclitus the Dark are well known.

10 k Pherecydes the second writer of history is well known.

6

455

2

41

463

11 Cratinus and Plato the writers of comedies 7

454

[194/195]

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC are considered important.

1570

18 permission of his master, came to Judaea from Babylon in his 20th year, and in his 32nd year restored the walls and the city. Ezra writes that the task was completed under the high priest Joiada, Joasib, who was succeeded by his own son, Jonathan, who lived in the time of Alexander of Macedon.

14

447 a Aristarchus the tragedian is well known. b The very famous centennial games of Rome first held.

12 c 302 years from the founding of the City, the Decemvirs were created, and after one year they were ejected on account of Appius Claudius, who wished to abduct the daughter of a certain Virginius who was fighting against the Latins in Algidum. \*

8

453

19 a Up to this point, the divine Scriptures of the Hebrews contain annals of time: those things which happened among them after these things, we provide from the book of Maccabees, and Josephus, and from the writings of Africanus, which thereafter continued the universal history until the Roman period.

15

446

82nd

Olympiad

13 d The Romans through ambassadors sought out laws from the Athenians, from which the Twelve Tables were inscribed.

9

452

20 b The Athenians and Lacedaemonians initiate a treaty of 30 years.

16

445

14 e Crates the writer of comedies, and Telesilla and Bacchylides the lyric poets, are considered important: likewise, Praxilla and Cleobulina are renowned.

10

451 c Herodotus was honoured for reading his books in the assembly at Athens.

84th

Olympiad

15 f The temple of Juno that had been at Argos burned down.

11

450

21 d Melissus the natural philosopher is well known.

17

444

22 e Euripides the tragedian is considered important, and Protagoras the sophist, whose books the Athenians burned by a public decree.

18

443

16 g Abaris the Hyperborean Seer is well known.

12

449

23

19

442 83rd Olympiad h Tribunes of the plebs and aediles created at Rome, after the consuls had been ejected.

24

20

441

85th

Olympiad

17 i Nehemiah the Hebrew, the attendant of King Artaxerxes, with the

13

448

25 f At Rome consuls again created.

21

440

26 g Phidias makes an ivory Minerva.

22

439

[196/197]

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC a The Fidennates rebel against the Romans. \*

35 a The Athenians suffer in the plague.

3

430

27 b Theaetetus the mathematician is well known. Aristophanes is considered important, and Sophocles the tragic poet.



23

438 b Thucydides is well known.

1580

28

24

437

36 c Pericles dies.

4

429

86th

Olympiad

88th Olympiad c The Campanian gens established in Italy.

37 d Eupolis and Aristophanes, writers of comedies, are well-known.

5

428

29 d Democritus of Abdera, and Empedocles, and Hippocrates the doctor, Gorgias, and Hippias, and Prodicus and Zeno and Parmenides the philosophers are considered notable.

25

436

30

26

435

1590

38

6

427

31

27

434

39 e Fire erupted from Mount Etna.

7

426

32

28

433 e Socrates is celebrated for his superlative eloquence. f Among the Locrians, when Atlantis had been split off by an earthquake, the city became an island. f Ezra recalls that Nehemiah, who constructed the walls of Jerusalem, had finished the work in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes, king of the Persians. If someone should count from this point the 70 weeks (of years), written of by Daniel, which come to 490 years, he will find them fulfilled in the reign of Nero, in whose reign Jerusalem, after it had begun to be besieged, is seized in the second year of Vespasian.

40 g Plato is born.

8

425

89th

Olympiad

8th of the Persians,

Xerxes the second, for two months. After which the 9th, Sogdianus, for seven months. To whom succeeds 10th Darius, surnamed Nothus, for 19 years.

11th of the Macedonians,

Archelaus for 24 years.

1 h The Lacedaemonians and Athenians strike a treaty.

9

424

87th

Olympiad

2 i Eudoxus the Cnidian is considered important.

10

423

33 g Beginning of the Peloponnesian war.

1

432

3 k The Lacedaemonians found the city of Heraclea, fulfilling a sacred vow. (\*)

11

422 h Bacchylides the song writer is well known.

4

12

421

34

2

431

90th

Olympiad

[198/199]

Persians

Consuls Macedonians Egyptians BC

Persians

Consuls Macedonians Egyptians

BC

5

13

1

420 of Darius and Parysatis, for 40 years. a In the reign of this king, it seems to me, the story which is contained in the book of Esther came to pass: of course he is the one who is called 'Ahasuerus' by the Hebrews, and 'Artaxerxes' by the LXX translators.

6

14

419

7

15

418

1

1

3

405

1600

8

16

417

94th

Olympiad

91st Olympiad Egypt is severed from the Persians and Amyrtaeus the Saite reigned for 6 years.

9 a The calamity which happened to the Athenians in Sicily. 17 416

2

2

4

404

10

18

415

3

3

5

403

11

19

414

4

4

6

402

12 b Alcibiades fled as a fugitive to Tisaphernes. 20

1

413 b Dionysius exercises a tyranny at Syracuse.

14th of the Macedonians,

Amyntas, for 1 year.

After whom Achoris, for

12 years.

92nd

Olympiad

13 c Euboea secedes from the federation of the Athenians. 21

2

412 c The Athenians support tyranny.

14

22

3

411

15

23

4

410

5 d Isocrates the orator is well known. 1

1

401

16

24

5

409 After whom Pausanias, for 1 year.

93rd Olympiad Of the Macedonians, Orestes, for 3 years. 2 e 29th dynasty of Egypt, of the Mendesians.

17 d Euripides dies staying with Archelaus, and Sophocles at Athens. 1

6

408 f Democritus dies.

28th Dynasty of Egypt. Nephertites for 6 years. g Pharnabazus kills Alcibiades.

1610

18

2

1

407 h The Anabasis of King Cyrus, about which Xenophon writes.

19

3

2

406

95th Olympiad 11th of the Persians, Artaxerxes, who was surnamed Mnemon, son e Dionysius exercises tyranny in Sicily.

13th of the Macedonians, Archelaus, for 4

years.

6 i The tyrants overthrown at Athens. 1

2

400 k The Athenians began to use 24 letters, when previously they had only had 16 letters.

1. At this point, in mid-page in 'O', the column of Macedonian regnal years which is black up to this point suddenly turns red. This is

clear evidence that the scribe copied the colours from his exemplar, and did not amend them. It also shows that the exemplar did indeed have

26 lines, because the colour change occurs at the page-break (as here) in such an exemplar, rather than in mid-page, as in 'O'.

2. This entry should be red, but is in fact black in 'O'.

[200/201]

Persians

Consuls Macedonians Egyptians BC

Persians

Consuls Macedonians Egyptians

BC a Xenophon the son of Gryllus, and Ctesias are considered important.

After whom Amyntas for 6  
years.

Nectanebis for 18 years.

7 b Socrates drinks poison.

1

3

399

1630

19 a Evagoras driven mad when he was reigning in Cyprus. 1 5

1

387

8 c Temple at Ephesus burned down again. 2

4

398

20

6

2

386

1620

9 d The followers of Socrates are considered important. 3

5

397

21

7

3

385

96th

Olympiad

99th

Olympiad

10 e Diogenes the Cynic is well known. 4

6

396

22 b 30th dynasty of Egypt, of the people of Sebennythos. 8

4

384

11 f Speusippus is considered notable. 5

7

395

23

9

5

383

12

6

8

394

24

10

6

382 g Dionysius persists in tyranny. After whom Argaeus for 2 years.

25

11

7



381

100th

Olympiad

13 h The famous Carthaginian War. 1

9

393

26 c The Peloponnesian cities of Helica and Bura were swallowed up in a great earthquake. 12

8

380

97th

Olympiad

27

13

9

379

14 i Eudoxus the astrologer is well known. 2

10

392

28

14

10

378 After whom Amyntas again for 18 years.

1                      11

1640

29 d The Praenesti conquered by the Romans at the River Allia by Quinctius Cincinnatus. (\*) 15

11

377

15 k The Senones Gauls occupied Rome, except for the Capitol. (\*)

391

16

2

12

390 Of Egypt, Psammuthes, for 1 year. e The Athenians made leaders of Greece.

101st

Olympiad

17

3

1

389

30 f Isocrates the rhetor is well known. 16

12

376 98th Olympiad I Plato the philosopher is well known.

After whom Nepherites

for 4 months.

31

17

13

375

32 g Plato and Xenophon, and likewise other followers of Socrates are considered important. 18

14

374

18 m The military tribunes began to be in place of the consuls. \* 4

1

388 Of the Macedonians, Alexander, for 1 year.

After whom

33

1

15

373 (1) Diodorus 14.110.5.

[202/203]

Persians

Consuls Macedonians Egyptians BC

Persians

Consuls Macedonians The kingship of the Egyptians was destroyed.

BC

102nd Olympiad After whom Ptolemy Alorites, for 4 years. Of the Macedonians, Philp, for 26 years.

4

1

6

362

34

1

16

372

5

2

7

361

35

2

17

371

105th

Olympiad

36

3

18

370

6 a Demosthenes the orator is well known. 3

8

360 Of Egypt, Teo, for 2 years.

7 b Ochus, having captured Apodasmus of the Jews, settled her deported inhabitants in Hyrcania, by the Caspian sea. 4

9

359 a Teo the king of Egypt flees to Arabia.

8

5

10

358

37

4

1

369

1660

9

6

11

357

103rd Olympiad After whom Perdiccas, for 6 years.

106th

Olympiad

10 c Dionysius is driven from Sicily. 7

12

356

38 b Dionysius the king of Sicily dies in his 19th year, after whom Dionysius the younger takes possession of the kingdom. 1

2

368

11 d Alexander, son of Philip and Olympias, is born. 8

13

355 30th Dynasty of the Egyptians. Nectanebo, for 18 years.

12 e Dion of Syracuse is murdered. 9

14

354

13 f Hipparinus the son of Dionysus exercises tyranny over Syracuse. 10

15

353

107th

Olympiad

1650

39 c Aristotle, during the 18th year of his life, is a hearer of Plato. 2

1

367

14 g Erinna the poetess is well known. 11

16

352

40

3

2

366

15 h Ochus held Egypt, Nectanebo having been expelled into Ethiopia, in whom the kingship of the Egyptians was destroyed. Up to this point, (the narrative is according to) Manetho. 12

17

351 12th of the Persians, Artaxerxes, also called Ochus, for 26 years

16

13

18

350

17

14

@@@@@

349

1

4

3

365

108th Olympiad 104th Olympiad d Alexander of Pherae is well-known.

18 i Ochus overthrew Sidon, and annexed Egypt to his empire. 15

2

5

4

364

1670

19

16

3 e Camillus defeats the Gauls, who had made war on the Romans. 6

5

363 k Demosthenes the Orator

[204/205]

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC

Persians

Consuls

Macedonians

BC is celebrated in the opinion of all.

After whom Darius, 14th, son of Arsamus, for 6 years. a Manasseh, the brother of Jad the high priest of the Jews, constructs a temple on Mount Garizin.

20 a The Romans defeat the Gauls.

17

346

21 b Dionysius sailed to Corinth under a truce.

18

345

1 b Alexander, fighting successfully against the Illyrians and Thracians, having destroyed Thebes, took up arms against the Persians, and at the River Granicus, overpowering the royal generals, captures the city of Sardis.

2

335 c Plato dies, after whom Speusippus headed the Academy.

2

3

334

3

4

333

109th

Olympiad

d The Romans,

since they had defeated the Samnites in two battles, brought all the neighbouring regions back under their own rule because they had withdrawn from her alliance.

22

19

344

23

20

343 c The Roman consul Manlius Torquatus beat his son with rods and executed him with an axe, because he had disobeyed orders by fighting against the enemy. (\*)

24

21

342

25 e Dionysus driven away to Corinth.

22

341 110th Olympiad f At Rome, a survey having been carried out, there were found to be 160,000 citizens.

26

23

340

112th Olympiad 13th of the Persians, Arses, son of Ochus, 4 years. g Jad, high priest of the Jews, is considered important.

4 d After the capture of Tyre, Alexander takes possession of Judaea, and being received favourably there, sacrifices victims to God, compliments the high priest of the temple with many honors, and as guardian of the holy places sends forth Andromachus, whom the Samaritans later kill: on account of which things, after returning from Egypt, Alexander put them to death with great torment, and hands over their captured city to the Macedonians to dwell in. (\*)

5

332

1 h Speusippus dies, to whom Xenocrates succeeded.

24

339

2

25

338

1680

3

26



337

5

6

331

111th Olympiad Of the Macedonians, Alexander, son of Philip, for 12 years, 6 months.

6 e Alexandria founded in Egypt, in the seventh year of Alexander's reign: at which time also the Latins were subdued by the Romans.

7

330

4

1

336

[206/207] The kingship of the Persians was destroyed

Consuls

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls

Macedo-nians

BC a Alexander occupied Babylon after Darius had been killed, in whom the kingship of the Persians was destroyed. In Egypt Ptolemy son of Lagus was the first to reign, for 40 years.

Over the Macedonians,

Philip, also called Aridaeus, brother of Alexander, reigned for 7 years.

Alexander reigns in Asia in the 7th year of his reign and holds it all for 12 years. a At Rome Appius Claudius Caecus is considered important, who introduced the Claudian water and laid out the Appian Way. \* Of Alexander

1 b Lysimachus held Lydia, Thrace and the Hellespont.

1

324

8 b Anaximenes and Epicurus are considered important.

329 c The generals of the Macedonians turned to sedition. c Alexander captures the Hyrcanians and Mardians, and returning, he founded Paraetonium in Ammon.

2 d Agathocles exercises tyranny at Syracuse.

2

323

113th Olympiad e The war against Lamia set in motion.

9 d Alexander captures the Aorn rock and crosses the River Indus.

328 f Perdiccas fights against the Egyptians.

3 g Ptolemy the son of Lagus, after he had gained control of Jerusalem and Judaea by treachery, transferred very many captives into Egypt.

3

322

1690

10 e Alexander's war in India against Porus and Taxila.

327

11 f Harpalus flees to Attica. h Onias the high priest of the Jews, the son of Jad, is considered important.

12 g The Romans subjugate the Samnites, and plant colonies.

326

4 i Menander, showing his first play, named Orgen, 1 wins.

4

321

114th Olympiad h Alexander dies in the 32nd year of his life in Babylon. After him, power was transferred into many hands. k Theophrastus the philosopher is well-known, who, so Cicero says, received this name because of his god-like speech. (\*) (1) OPTHN = 'anger'.

[208/209]

Alexandrians

Consuls First in Syria Macedo-nians First inAsia BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria Macedo-nians Asia

BC

115th

Olympiad

16 a Theodorus the Atheist is well known.

4

9

10

309

5 a Demetrius of Phalerum is considered illustrious.

5

320

118th

Olympiad

17 b Demetrius of Phalerum went to Ptolemy, and persuaded him to restore democracy at Athens.

5

10

11

308 b The Romans battling against the Samnites for a long time, finally reduce them to servitude. In Asia, Antigonus reigns for 18 years.

1710

18

6

11

12

307

6

6

319

19

7

12

13

306

7

7

1

318

20

8

13

14

305 Of the Macedonians, Cassander, for 19 years.

119th

Olympiad

21 c Seleucus founded the cities of Antioch, Laodicia, Seleucia, Apamia, Edessa, Beroea, and Pella, of which he constructed Antioch in the 12th year of his kingship.

9

14

15

304

1700

8

1

2

317

116th

Olympiad

22

10

15

16

303

9 c The philosophers Menedemus and Speusippus are considered notable.

2

3

316

10

3

4

315

23

11

16

17

302

11

4

5

314

24

12

17

18

301

12

5

6

313 d Seleucus occupied Babylon.

117th

## Olympiad

120th Olympiad In Asia, Demetrius, also called Poliorcetes, for 17 years d The Hebrew history of the Maccabees reckons the kingship of the Greeks from this year. But these books are not accepted as part of divine Scripture. In Syria and Babylon and the upper regions reigned Seleucus Nicator, for 32 years. e The high priest of the Jews, Simon the son of Onias, is considered important, to whom 'the Just' was the sobriquet because of his religious reverence towards God and his clemency towards his fellow-citizens.

25

13

18

1

302

26

14

19

2

303 Of the Macedonians, the sons of Cassander, Antigonus and Alexander, for 4 years.

13 e The Romans defeat the Marsi, Umbri, and Peligni.

1

6

7

312

27

15

1

3

302 From this point the Edessenes calculate their dates. 14 f The Romans plant colonies.

2

7

8

311

1720

28

16

2

4

301 g Lysimachia founded in Thrace.

121st

Olympiad

15 h Ptolemy invaded Cyprus.

3

8

9

310

29 f Demetrius, king of Asia,

17

3

5

300

[210/211]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria Macedo-nians Asia BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria Macedo-nians Asia

BC

30 surnamed Poliorcetes, devastates the city of the Samaritans, which Perdiccas had constructed.

18

4

6

295 both in Syria and Asia.

Demetrius, for 6 years.

39 a Serapis was introduced at Alexandria.

27

2

15

286 a A census of Rome having been taken, there were found to be 270,000 Roman citizens were found.

31

19

1

7

294

40 b Ariminum and Beneventum founded by the Romans. \*

28

3

16

285

124th

Olympiad

32 b Ambassadors of the Alexandrians having been sent for the first time to Rome by Ptolemy, they procured friendship. \*

20

2

8

293 2nd of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, for 38 years

1 c Sostratus of Cnidius constructed the Pharos in Alexandria.

29

4

17

284



122nd

Olympiad

Demetrius

handed himself over to Seleucus.

33 c Menander the writer of comedies dies. 21

3

9

292 d Antigonus, surnamed Gonatas, occupied Lacadaemon. d The Romans defeat the Gauls and the Tyrrhenians: and the land of the Sabines is apportioned by lot. e The Romans capture Croton.

34

22

4

10

291

2 f Ptolemy Philadelphus permitted the Jews, who were in Egypt, to be free men: and, transmitting a votive vessel to Eleazar, high priest at Jerusalem, he arranged for the divine scriptures -- which he had in the Alexandrian library that he had collected for himself from every kind of literature -- to be translated into Greek speech from the Hebrew language by LXX translators.

30

5

283 e Seleucus transfers Jews into those cities that he had constructed, granting them the right of citizenship and municipal rank in honour equal to the Greeks. Of the Macedonians, Ptolemy, surnamed KEPAYNOΣ. 1

35

23

5

11

3

31

1

282

36

24

6

12 Meleager for 2 months, Antipater for 45 days, after whom Sosthenes for 2 years.

123rd Olympiad Of the Macedonians, Pyrrhus, for 7 months f Eleazar the brother of Simon took over the supervision of the temple as high priest of the Jews, because Onias the son of Simon was still a young boy.

37

25

13 After whom, Lysimachus, for 5 years. g After capturing Demetrius in Cilicia, Seleucus ruled

1720

38

26

1

14 1. In 'O' this reads 'Ceraunos' in Roman letters.

[212/213]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians

BC

4

22

1

281

1750

18 and many cities in Sicily were joined to them. 14

13

267 In Syria and Asia, after Seleucus reigned Antiochus Soter, for 19 years.

19 a At Rome a vestal virgin detected in unchastity ends her life with a noose. \* 15

14

266

125th

Olympiad

20

16

15

265

5

1

2

280

129th

Olympiad

Antigonus Gonatas, for

36 years.

21 b Zeno the Stoic dies, after whom (comes) Cleanthes. 17

16

264

6

2

1

279

22 c The Romans capture Syracuse. 18

17

263

7

3

2

278 d King Nicomedes, enlarging a city of Bithynia, named it Nicomedia.

1740

8

4

3

277

23

19

18

262

126th Olympiad In Syria, Antiochus, who was called Theos, for 15 years.

9 a One of the Roman virgins, caught in an (act of) corruption, is punished. 5

4

276

24

1

19

261

10 b Milo handed over Tarentum to the Romans. 6

5

275

130th

Olympiad

11 c The Romans held Calabria and Messana. 7

6

274

25 e The Romans defeat the Carthaginians in a naval battle, and capture 100 cities of Libya. 2

20

260

12

8

7

273

26

3

21

259

127th

Olympiad

27

4

22

258

13 d Aratus is well known.

9

8

272

1760

28 f Erasistratus the doctor is well known. 5

23

257

14 e The silver nummus minted at Rome for the first time. 10

9

271

131st

Olympiad

29 g Antigonos restores liberty to the Athenians. 6

24

256

15 f Polemon the philosopher dies, after whom Arcesilas and Crates are considered important. 11

10

270

16

12

11

269

30 h After Eleazar, his uncle Manasses accepted the pontificate of the Jews. 7

25

255

31

8

26

254

32

9

27

253 128th Olympiad g Epicurus died.

132nd

Olympiad

17 h The Romans planted colonies, 13

12

268s

33 i The Carthaginians capture 90 10

28

252

[214/215]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians

BC

34 Roman ships in Sicily, the consul Metellus having been put to flight. 11

29

251

6

6

3

241

35

12

30

250

135th

Olympiad

36

13

31

249

7 a The poet Quintus Ennius is born at Tarentum, who having been translated by Cato the quaestor to Rome, lived on the Aventine hill, content with a very meagre income and the help of one servant woman. \* 7

4

240

133rd

Olympiad

37 a When the Parthians had rebelled against Macedonian rule, Arsaces was the first to reign; hence they were called Arsacids. 14

32

248

8

8

5

239

9

9

6

238

1770

38

15

33

247

1780

10

10

7

237 3rd of Egypt, Ptolemy Euergetes, for 26 years In Syria, Seleucus Callinicus, for 20 years.

136th

Olympiad

11 b At Rome, a vestal virgin who had been corrupted by a slave, did away with herself by her own hand. 11

8

236

12

12

9



235

1 b Onias the high priest of the Jews, the son of Simon the Just, is considered important, who, failing to render the usual tribute to king Ptolemy, compelled him to anger. In fact, Josephus, a noble man among his own people, having been sent by the Jews as an ambassador to Ptolemy, when he had won the friendship of the king because of his many presents to him, is appointed governor of Judaea and the surrounding region. 1

34

246

13

13

10

234 Of Macedon, Antigonus, for 15 years.

14

14

1

233

137th

Olympiad

15 c The high priest of the Jews Simon, son of Onias, is considered important, in whose time, Jesus the son of Sirach composing the book of wisdom, which they call the Panareton, also made mention of Simon in it.

15

2

232

2

2

35

245

16

16

3

231

134th

Olympiad

17

17

4

230

3

3

36

244

18

18

5

229

138th

Olympiad

Of the Macedonians, Demetrius,

for 10 years.

19

19

6

228

1790

20 d Nearly 40,000 Gauls slaughtered by the Romans. 20

7

227 c At Rome a census having been conducted, there were found to be 260,000 men. In Syria, Seleucus Ceraunos, for 3 years.

4

4

1

243

5 d Temple of Vesta burned down at Rome. 5

2

242

21

1

8

226

[216/217]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians

BC

22

2

9

225 142nd Olympiad when Marcellus is consul.

139th

Olympiad

9 a The Romans subjugate Capua and Sicily. 12

7

212

23

3

10

224

Antiochus the Great, for 36 years

10 b Antiochus, King of Syria, having conquered Ptolemy Philopator, unites Judaea with himself.

13

8

211

11

14

9

210

24 a Caria and Rhodes were so struck by an earthquake, that the great colossus collapsed. 1

11

223

12 c Laevinus makes an alliance with Attalus, the king of Asia. \* 15

10

209

25

2

12

222

143rd

Olympiad

26

3

13

221

13 d The high priest of the Jews, Onias the son of Simon, is considered notable, to whom Arrius the king of the Lacedaemonians sends legates. 16

11

208

140th

Olympiad

1810

14

17

12

207 Of Egypt, Ptolemy Philopator, for 17 years

15

18

13

206

16

19

14

205

144th

Olympiad

1 b The events which were written in the third book of Maccabees take place in the time of this Ptolemy.

4

14

220

17 e Scipio recaptures many cities of Spain. 20

15

204

2

5

15

219 5th of Egypt, Ptolemy Epiphanes, for 24 years Of the Macedonians, Philip, for 42 years

3

6

1

218

1 f Ptolemy Epiphanes, having appointed Scopas general of his army, captures Judaea and many cities of Syria. 21

16

203

1800

4

7

2

217

141st

Olympiad

2

22

17

202

5 c The Jews were defeated, and 60,000 of their soldiers were slaughtered. 8

3

216

3 g Naevius the writer of comedies dies at Utica, driven from Rome by a party of nobles, but especially of Metellus. \* 23

18

201 d Vestal Virgins buried alive at Rome, on account of an accusation of unchastity.

6

9

4

215

7

10

5

214

145th

Olympiad

h Plautus, from Sarsina

in Umbria, dies at Rome; who, because of trouble over his income, had hired himself

8 e Eratosthenes is well known. 11

6

213

4

24

19

200 f The Romans capture Syracuse

[218/219]

Alexandrians

Romans Syria and Asia Macedonians BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians

BC out at a baker's handmill; there, as often as he had leisure from work, he was accustomed to write and sell plays. \* and conceded Syria, Phoenicia, Samaria, and Judaea under the name of a "dowry."

15

35

30

189

148th

Olympiad

5 a Near Thera, an island appeared which is called Hiera. 25

20

199 a Eumenes, who founded Eumenia in Phrygia, brother of King Attalus, is considered important. \*

6

26

21

198

1820

7 b Antiochus, after defeating Scopas, recovered the cities of Syria, and Judaea willingly surrenders to him. 27

22

197

16 b The second book of Maccabees contains things that happened among the Jews of this time. 36

31

188 In Syria and Asia, Seleucus, also called Philopator, for 12 years

146th

Olympiad

8 c The Romans commanded the Greeks to be free and all Spain 1 carried out orders. 28

23

196 c Titus Livius, the tragedian, is considered important; who, as a reward for his ingenuity, was granted his freedom by Livius Salinator, whose children he used to teach. 2 \*

1830

17

1

32

187

9 d Antiochus, knowing the goodwill of the Jews towards himself, presents them with great gifts, and through his letters honours them with constant praises. 29

24



195

10

30

25

194 d When Hannibal was demanded from Antiochus, with whom he had associated himself after he had been conquered by Scipio, by means of envoys, he fled to Prusias, the king of Bithyniae. But when through Flaminius the Senate again were demanding him (Hannibal) also from him (Prusias), and when he was going to have to be handed over, he drank poison, and was buried at Libyssa in Bithyniae. \*

11

31

26

193

147th

Olympiad

18

2

33

186 e Antiochus, after the battle at Thermopylae in which he was defeated, agreed this between himself and the Romans, that he would pay one thousand talents each year in the name of "compensation."

12

32

27

192

19

3

34

185

13

33

28

191

149th Olympiad f The Romans planted many colonies.

20 e Simon, a dignitary of the temple at Jerusalem, fleeing to Apollonius the governor of Phoenicia; many gifts having been promised to him, he began to claim the priesthood for himself.

4

35

184 g Antiochus, having returned to friendship with Ptolemy, made peace with him; and (Ptolemy) gave him his daughter Cleopatra as wife,

14

34

29

190 (1) Hiberia: Only the Roman province of Hispania, as the remainder was still not under Roman control until 29 BC.

(2) cf. The Concise Oxford Companion to Classical Literature entry

for "Livius Andronicus" who is here intended; the facts are disputed,

see the Loeb Remains of Old Latin II p.viii ff. Titus is the name of

Livius historicus not of the Lucius Livius Andronicus, writer of tragedy and

epic here referred to.

[220/221]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians

BC

21 When Seleucus heard about this, he sent Heliodorus to carry out the job, who, when he arrived in Judaea, judging unfairly and carrying out many crimes, is frightened away by divine omens against himself, and returns to Seleucus. However, the priest Onias had taken care that Simon should be made a fugitive. 5

36

183

151st

Olympiad

4 a Aristobolus, by nation a Jew, the peripatetic philosopher, is well known, who writes commentaries (consisting of) explanations on (the books of) Moses for Ptolemy Philometor.

12

1

176 In Syria and Asia, Antiochus Epiphanes, for 11 years.

22

6

37

182

5

1

2

175

6

2

3

174

23 a Hyrcanus, a son of Joseph the leader of Judaea, when he went abroad to visit Ptolemy, was received honorably by him. But his brothers, after a plot had been formed against him, were the cause of great tribulations for the nation of Judaea. 7

38

181

7

3

4

173

152nd

Olympiad

8 b Antiochus Epiphanes, when he had returned by order of the senate from the land of the Ptolemies, which he had unexpectedly invaded, came into Judaea, and there Jesus, who also was called Jason, handed over the pontificate to his brother Onias; later, having been expelled, he appointed Onias named Menelaus his successor to it. And so, strife having been started between the princes over the dignity of the priesthood, the seeds of immense miseries sprouted. 4

5

172

9

5

6

171

150th

Olympiad

24

8

39

180

10

6

7

170 6th of Egypt, Ptolemy Philometor, for 35 years

11

7

8

169

1 b Statius Caecilius, the writer of comedies, is considered important. By nation he was an Insubrian Gaul and at first he was an comrade of Ennius. Some say that he came from Milan. He died in the year after the death of Ennius, and was buried next to the Janiculum. \* 9

40

179

153rd

Olympiad

2

10

41

178 c Antiochus attacks the law of the Jews: in fact firstly compelling their whole province to idolatry, those who were unwilling to comply he tortured to death.

1840

3

11

42

177 Of the Macedonians, Perseus, for 10 years.

[222/223]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Macedonians BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC

Afterwards, actually going up

into Jerusalem, he devastates the temple and vessels of God which had been consecrated for ministry: he puts an image of Jupiter of Olympus in the temple, he builds a shrine of Jupiter the Foreigner in Samaria on the summit of mount Garizin, the Samaritans themselves having entreated that he should do this. In fact in this time a certain Matthatias from the priesthood, son of Hasmonaeus, in the hamlet of Modeim, taking up arms against the generals of Antiochus, also supported by the help of his sons, vindicated the laws of his country, in the 153rd olympiad.

154th Olympiad In Syria and Asia, Antiochus Eupator, for 2 years. a Judas, also called Maccabeus, son of Mattathias, the general of the Jews, expelling the generals of Antiochus from Judaea, and purifying the Temple from the statues of the Idols, returned the laws of his country to his countrymen after three years in the 154th olympiad.

16

1

164

17

2

163 Demetrius Soter , for 12 years.

18

1

162

19

2

161

155th Olympiad Of the Jews, general Judas, for 3 years b After Menelaus the high priest of the Jews had been slain by the younger Antiochus, who had earlier abandoned Judaea to Antiochus Epiphanes, Alcimus, an outsider to the sacerdotal tribe, through ambition takes possession of the pontificate. On account of this Onias, son of the high priest Onias, moving into Egypt, founded a community with his name in the Heliopolitan district, after a temple in the likeness of the temple of his country had been constructed. Alcimus, indeed, while carrying on hostilities against Judas Maccabaeus, after no great time died, struck down by the wrath of God; and, so, with the approval of all the Jews, it is decided that the priesthood should go to Judas Macabaeus, who, having received that dignity, sends legates to Rome: and the Senate decreed that the Jews

12 a Ennius the poet dies, older than 70, of a joint disease, and was buried in Scipio's Monument on the Appian Way within the first milestone of the City. Some claim that his bones were transferred to Rudiae from the Janiculum. \* 8

9

168

20

3

1

160

1850

13

9

10

167

14

10

11

166

15 b After Perseus had been killed, the Romans ordered the Macedonians, Illyrians and Galatians to be free. 11

12

165

21

4

2

159 The kingship of the Macedonians came to an end.

~~~~~

[224/225]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC were to be considered friends and supporters of the Romans.

157th

Olympiad

28 a The false Philip reigns in Macedonia for 1 year. 11

6

152

22 a Publius Terentius of Carthage, a writer of comedies, granted his freedom on account of his genius and his appearance, dies in Arcadia; before he delivered it to the aediles, he first reads the Andria to Caecilius, who was himself greatly admiring. * 5

3

158

29 b Alexander, son of the Antiochus who was named Epiphanes, ruling Syria and Asia, bestows on Jonathan a crown and many notable gifts. 12

7

151 Of the Jews, general Jonathan, for 19 years In Syria and Asia, Alexander, for 9 years and 10 months

1860

23 b The battle against the generals of Demetrius having begun, Judas is killed, having carried on the pontificate for 3 years. 6

1

157

30 c The Romans, after the false Philip had been killed, make the Macedonians tributaries. 1

8

150

31

2

9

149

156th

Olympiad

158th

Olympiad

24 c Aristarchus the grammarian is well known. 7

2

156

32 d At Alexandria, with Ptolemy judging, the Samaritans and Jews contend about the honours that are to be offered by each party to their temple, and the Jews win. 3

10

148

25 d Jonathan, general of the Jews, the brother of Judas, after Bacchides the general of Demetrius had been expelled from Judaea, received the pontificate. * 8

3

155 e The poet Lucilius is born. *

26 e Pacuvius of Brundisium the tragedian, the nephew of the poet Ennius by his daughter, is considered important; and he lived in Rome as long as he busied himself with painting and offered fables for sale; then, having moved to Tarentum, he died almost a nongenarian.¹ 9

4

154

1870

33 f At Rome, a survey having been carried out, there were found to be 322,000 men. 4

11

147

34 g Oppius imprisons the Galli: and Carthago is brought by Scipio under the power of the Romans, 668 years since her foundation; or, as 5

12

146

27

10

5

153

35

6

13

145

(1) The "Remains of Old Latin," vol. II (Loeb Library, 1982), says that Pacuvius was

"[p. xvii] a son of the sister of the poet | [p. xviii] Ennius," with footnote e,

attached to the word "sister," saying "So Pliny, XXXV, 19; son of

Ennius's daughter, says Jerome wrongly" (p. xvii). Later, the text says:

"His year of fame is stated by Jerome to have been 154 B.C." with

footnote d, "Jerome, ad ann. 600 = 154" (p. xviii).

[226/227]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC others affirm, 748. him the estate next to Pisaurum is called Accianus: since he had been brought there from the City among the colonists. *

159th Olympiad 7th of Egypt, Ptolemy Euergetes, for 29 years.

7 a After Antiochus the son of Alexander was at length murdered, Trypho tried to invade the kingdom of Syria but next dies himself. 3

1

138 After whom Antiochus Sidetes for 9 years.

1 a Jonathan, both general and high priest of the Jews, makes a friendship pact with the Romans and the Spartans. 7

14

144

1880

8 b After Demetrius, his brother Antiochus who was surnamed Sidetes reigned over all Syria. 1

2

137

2 b Ptolemy gave his daughter as wife to Alexander, the son of Balas, king of Syria. 8

15

143

3 c Scipio overthrows the Numantines. 9

16

142

161st Olympiad d Brutus subjugates Spain as far as the Ocean.

9 c To Simon, both high priest and leader of the Jews, the Romans and the Spartans -- after his emissaries had been received amicably -- sent friendly greetings in return. 2

3

136

4 e Trypho kills Jonathan, high priest of the Jews, and Simon is received into the priesthood of his brother Jonathan. 10

17

141 In Syria and Asia, Demetrius, for 3 years.

10

3

4

135

160th Olympiad d The Slave War started in Sicily.

5 f Trypho slays Antiochus son of Alexander. 1

18

140

11 e Simon the high priest of the Jews is slain, to whom succeeds his son John. 4

5

134 g Ptolemy marries off his daughter to Demetrius, along with the kingdom which he had taken away from Alexander.

12 f The first book of the Maccabees contains a history of this time. 5

6

133

162nd

Olympiad

g Antiochus Sidetes,

king of Syria, taking up arms against Judaea and surrounding Jerusalem with

a siege trench, when he had forced the high priest Simon to terms, withdraws,

in the 162nd Olympiad.

6 h L. Accius, a tragedian, is considered important. (He was) born to freed parents in the consulship of Mancinus and Serranus, and already recited his own writings to Pacuvius of Tarentus when he [Pacuvius) was an old man: from 2

19

139

13

6

7

132 Of the Jews, Duke Simon, for 8 years.

14

7

8

131 Of the Jews, King Hyrcanus, also called John, for 26 years. h Dying, Attalus made the Roman [228/229]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC

15 people the heirs of his kingdom. 8

1

130

27 siege. Later Herod, restoring it, wanted it to be called Sebaste in honor of Augustus. 7

13

118

16 a Ptolemy expelled from Egypt. 9

2

129

163rd Olympiad After whom Demetrius again for 4 years

1900

28

8

14

117 b Arsaces the Parthian killed Antiochus.

166th

Olympiad

29 a The philosopher and poet Marcus Terentius Varro is born. * 9

15

116

17 c The slaves, who were rebelling in Sicily, compelled by the necessity of the siege, were driven in turn to have to devour their comrades' corpses. 1

3

128 8th of the Egyptians, Ptolemy Physcon also called Soter, for 17 years.

1890

18

2

4

127 d The most renowned city of the Arvernian Gauls, and King Vituitus captured. *

1

10

16

115

2

11

17

114

19 e Close by the islands of Aeolia, cast up in the fire from an eruption, appeared the island that is now called Hiera. 3

5

126

3

12

18

113 After whom Antiochus Cyzicenus for 18 years

20

4

6

125

167th

Olympiad

164th Olympiad In Syria and Asia, Antiochus Grypus, for 12 years b Antiochus Cyzicenus, having cast out Grypus, seized Syria: and then Grypus, having defeated Cyzicenus, took it back again. Thus they were ruling in turn, fighting in turn against each other. f While John, the general and priest of the Jews, was waging war against the Hyrcanians, he received the name of Hyrcanus and, when he asked the Romans for the privilege of friendship, he was by decree of the Senate recorded on the list of friends.

4

1

19

112

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2

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111

21

1

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124

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3

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110

7

4

22

109

22

2

8

123

168th

Olympiad

23

3

9

122

8 c Fighting against the Romans, Jugurtha is captured. 5

23

108

24 g Colonies planted at Narbonne. 4

10

121

165th

Olympiad

1910

9 d Rhodes having been struck by an earthquake, the Colossus fell. 6

24

107

25 h The Jews' priest Hyrcanus razed Samaria, which in our day is called Sebaste, which had been captured by 5

11

120

e Among the Jews, Jonathas

holds the principate in a glorious way.

26

6

12

119

[230/231]

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls Syria and Asia Jews

BC

10 a Cicero is born at Arpinum, to a mother named Helvia and a father of knightly rank, from the royal stock of the Volsci. * 7

25

106 170th Olympiad celebrates a triumph with Catulus. (*)

16 a The Thracians conquered by the Romans. 13

4

100 b Once more a Slave War flares up in Sicily.

11 b Gn. Pompey the Great is born. * 8

26

105

17

14

5

99

169th Olympiad Of the Jews, Aristobolus, for 1 year.

9th of the Egyptians Ptolemy, also called Alexander, for 10 years. c Aristobolus, the son of Jonathan, both king and high priest, was the first amongst the Jews to wear the insignia of the diadem, 484 years after the Babylonian captivity.

After him reigned Jannaeus surnamed Alexander, who, also controlling the pontificate, presided over the people with great cruelty.

12

9

1

104 after whom Jannaeus, also called Alexander, for 27 years.

1 c Ptolemy Physcon was expelled from the kingdom by his mother Cleopatra, and withdraws to Cyprus.

15

6

98

1920

2

16

7

97

171st

Olympiad

3 d Aquilius suppressed the Slave war in Sicily. 17

8

96 d Turpilius the writer of comedies, exceedingly old, dies at Sinuessa. * e Dying, Ptolemy King of the Cyrenes made the Romans his heirs in his will.

13 e Gaius Lucilius the satirical writer dies at Naples, and is given a public funeral, in the forty sixth year of his life. * 10

1

103

4 f Seleucus is burned alive by Antiochus, the son of Cyzicenus 18

9

95 In Syria, Philip, for 2 years f The poet Marcus Furius, surnamed Bibaculus, is born at Cremona.
*

5 g The poet Titus Lucretius is born, who afterwards, driven mad by a love-potion, although during intervals of his insanity he had composed several books which Cicero later corrected, killed himself with his own hand in his forty-fourth year. * 1

10

94

14 g 200,000 Cimbrians slaughtered, and 80,000 captured along with their leader Teutomodus by Marius. * 11

2

102

6

2

11

93 The kingship of Syria and Asia ends.

~~~~~

15 h Gaius Marius being Consul for the fifth time, defeats the Cimbri by the Eridanus, and afterward for this 12

3

101

[232/233]

Alexandrians

Consuls

Jews

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls

Jews

BC

172nd Olympiad a Antiochus fleeing to the Parthians, he later surrendered himself to Pompey, after which Philip was captured by Gabinius.

3 a Sallustius Crispus, the historical writer, is born among the Sabines, at Amiternum. \*

18

86

7

12

92 b Sulla devastates the Athenians.

4 c At Rome, a survey having been carried out, there were found to be 463,000 men. \*

19

85

8 b Syria, having been possessed by kings until this point, fell under Roman control.

13

91

174th

Olympiad

9 c The Picentes, Marsians and Pelignians started a war against the Romans. \*

14

90

5 d The temple at Delphi burned down for the third time by the Thracians, and at Rome the Capitol.

20

84

10

15

89 d Lucius Pomponius of Bologna, writer of atellans, is considered important. \*

6 e Jannaeus captures many towns.

21

83 f In the 26th year of his life, Cicero defends Quintius. \*

173rd

Olympiad

7 g P. Terentius Varro, from the hamlet of the Atax, is born in the province of (Gallia) Narbonensis; after living for 35 years, he learned Greek letters with great zeal. \*

22

82 10th of Egypt, PTOLEMY, who was ejected by his mother, for 8 years e Returned from exile, he (Ptolemy) obtained the kingdom because the citizens had expelled Alexander, who had been king before him, on account of the murder of his mother.

1

16

88

8 h Vultacilius Plotus, a Latin rhetor, a teacher and freedman of Gnaeus Pompey, opened a school in Rome. \*

23

81 f Plotius Gallus first taught Latin rhetoric at Rome, about whom Cicero thus declares: "I retain the memory that, when we were boys, a certain Plotius first began to teach in Latin." \*

175th Olympiad 11th of Egypt, Ptolemy Dionysus, for 30 years

1930 2 g Gaius Valerius Catullus, the lyric writer, is born at Verona.

17

87

1 i Sulla occupied Rome, and dies after two years.

24

80

[234/235]

Alexandrians

Consuls

Jews

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls

Jews

BC

2 a Having defended Roscius against Chrysogonus, Cicero withdraws to Athens, and returns from that place to Rome after three years. \*

25

79 a Vergil Maro is born in the community that is called "Andes" not far from Mantua, when Pompey and Crassus were consuls. \*

12

8

69

3 b Pompey celebrated a triumph most gloriously. 26

78 c Jannaeus devastates many communities. b M. Porcius Cato the Stoic philosopher is well known. \* d Lepidus declared a public enemy.

1940 4 e T. Quintius Atta, a writer of national dramas , dies at Rome, and is buried at the second milestone of the Praenestine Way. \*

27

77

178th Olympiad Of the Jews, Alexandra reigned for 9 years.

13 c Antioch in Syria captured by the Romans.

9

68 d The Cretan war started, from which Metellus was called Creticus. The Jews made tributaries by Pompey, and Hyrcanus received the pontificate among them, for 34 years.

176th

Olympiad

5 f Alexandra, also called Salina 2, the wife of Alexander, reigned at Jerusalem, in whose time the breakdown of government and various military disasters oppressed the Jews.

1

76 e The grove of Daphne near Antioch is consecrated to Apollo by Pompey. \*

1950 14 f Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, sons of Alexandra, fighting against each other for power, exposed an opportunity to the Romans to take possession of Judaea. And so Pompey, coming to Jerusalem after the city had been captured and the Temple had been opened, approaches up to the holy of holies; he brings Aristobolus with him as a captive, and confirms the pontificate to Hyrcanus; then he makes Antipater, the son of Herod of Ascalon, procurator of Palestine.

1

67

6

2

75

7 g The Gladiators' War in Campania. 3 \*

3

74 h L. Lucullus was the first to be hailed 'imperator', having defeated Armenia, Mesopotamia, and captured Nisbis with the brother of the king. (\*)

15

2

66

8

4

73

177th

Olympiad

9 i Pompey subjugated all Spain. 4 \*

5

72

10 k M. Lucullus celebrated a triumph over the Bessi, having captured Cabilonnum, together with Tomis and the other nearby cities. \*

6

71

16 g Libya left by the will of king Appion to the Romans. \*

3

65

11 l Crassus celebrated a triumph. \*

7

70 h The satiric and lyric 5

(1) 'togatae'.

(2) Salome.

(3) The Third Servile War (Gladiators' War), instigated in 73 B.C. by Spartacus, an escaped slave and gladiator; the war ended in 71 B.C.

(4) Not the peninsula as a whole, but the entire Roman province. This had been in revolt under Sertorius.

(5) Venusia was on the borders of Apulia and Lucania; the date was 8 December 65 B.C.

[236/237]

Alexandrians

Consuls

Jews

BC

Alexandrians

Consuls

Jews

BC poet Horace Flaccus is born at Venusia to a freedman father. \* he died at Piacenza. \*

25 a Caesar, crossing the Rhine, devastates the Germans.

12

56

179th

Olympiad

17 a Apollodorus the Pergamene, a Greek orator, teacher of Callidius and Augustus, is considered important. \*

4

64 b The consul Crassus captured with his son at Carrae. \*

26 c Ventidius is the first of the Romans to defeat the Parthians. \*

13

55

18 b Pompey, after Jerusalem had been captured, makes the Jews tributary.

5

63 d The active Populares orator Curio is considered notable in Rome; who afterwards in Africa, from the shame of losing his Army, chose to die rather than escape. \*

19 c Those things which Sallust and Livy write about Catiline, Cethegus, and Lentulus, and the Consul Cicero, happened at this time. (\*)

6

62

27

14

54

28

15

53

20 d Cicero spends a year in exile, being received with honour by Plancius. 1 \*

7

61 e Virgil, having assumed the toga, goes to Milan, and after a short time goes on to Rome. \* e Pompey hailed 'imperator.'

180th

Olympiad

21 f Caesar captures Lusitania and some islands in the ocean.

8

60

182nd

Olympiad

29 f The statue of Jupiter Olympiacus struck by lightning.

16

52

22 g Messalla Corvinus the orator, and Titus Livius of Padua, the writer of history, are born. \*

9

59

30 g Caesar captures Germans and Gauls.



17

51 12th of Egypt, Cleopatra for 22 years h Virgil becomes learned by studies at Cremona. \*

23 i Catullus dies at Rome in the 30th year of his life. \*

10

58

1 h The beginning of the civil war of Caesar and Pompey.

18

50

1960 24 k M. Callidius the orator is considered important; later, having followed the Caesarean factions in the Civil War, when he was in charge of Gallia Togata,

11

57

2 i Diodorus Siculus, a writer of Greek history, is considered important. \*?

19

49

181st

Olympiad

183rd Olympiad (1) 58BC, in Macedonia. Gnaeus Plancius was quaestor of Macedonia.

[238/239]

Romans 3 Alexandrians Jews

BC

Romans Alexandrians Jews

BC a Gaius Julius Caesar was the first among the Romans to attain sole power, from whom Romans holding first rank are called 'Caesars'.

184th

Olympiad

a Antony decreed that

the month Quintilis should be called July: because Julius (Caesar) had been born in it.

5 b After Judaea had been captured, Cassius despoils the temple. 7

23

44 First of the Romans, C. JULIUS CAESAR, for 4 years and 7 months c On the Ides of March, Gaius Julius Caesar is slain in the Curia, and at once Publius Dolabella took office. 1 \* b From this point the Antioch-enes calcul-ate their dates. 1 c Pompey, conquered in battle, and fleeing, is killed by the eunuchs of the king of the Alexandrians. 3

20

48

d The body of C. Caesar

cremated on the Rostra, as an honour. \*

d M. Caelius the praetor

and T. Annius Milo the exile crushed while simultaneously promoting a revolt in the Thurian and Bruttian regions. \*

e Servius Sulpicius,

a lawyer, and Publius Servilius Isauricus given a state funeral. \*

f At Rome, three simultaneously

risen suns gradually coalesced into the same disk. \*

1970 2 e Ptolemy's carcass found in the Nile wearing a golden breastplate. \* 4

21

47

g Among other portents,

that occurred all around the world, an ox in the region of Rome at its plowing

spoke: "It is useless to goad me on. For soon there will be a shortage

not of crops but of men."

2 \*

f Caesar confirms the

reign of Cleopatra in Egypt on account of the influence of her unchastity.

3 g Julian basilica dedicated at Rome. \* 5

22

46 h A decree of the senate and the Athenians is sent to the Jews, who had proposed alliance through emissaries.

2nd of the Romans, Octavianus Caesar Augustus reigned for 56 years and 6 months; from whom the kings of the Romans are called 'Augusti' i Cleopatra entered the City with a royal escort. \*

1 h Antonius launches a war against Caesar Augustus. \*? 9

25

43 k Women who have neither husbands nor children prohibited from the use of litters or pearls, and remain minors for 44 years. \* i Laberius, writer of mimes, dies at Puteoli, in the 10th month after the murder of Caesar.

4 l Nigidius Figulus, a Pythagorean and a magician, dies in exile. \*? 6

23

45 k Publius the mime playwright, a Syrian by birth, debuts on the Roman stage. \* (1) Literally "received the fasces."

(2) Cf. Livy 28.11.4 (for 206 BC, not this 41 BC) "et bos in agro Romano

locutus."

(3) Prior to this page in 'O' the heading always reads 'Consuls'. Thereafter it is 'Romans'.

[240/241]

Romans Alexandrians Jews

BC

Romans Alexandrians Jews

BC a Cicero, in his 64th year, is slain by Herennius and Popilius in his villa at Formiae. \* to friendship with him. a The poet Cornificius died, deserted by the soldiers whom on account of their often fleeing, he calls 'helmeted hares'. His sister was Cornificia, whose notable epigrams survive. \* c According to some, Cicero is killed in his villa at Caieta. b The head of Cicero, with his right hand, placed in front of the Rostra, and next to it the crowned likeness of the soldier Popilius who had slain him. \* b Cassius looted the temple of the Rhodians. \* c Second split of Augustus and Antonius. d Ovid Naso is born in Abruzzi. 1 \*

185th

Olympiad

4 d Cornelius Nepos the historical writer is considered important. \* 11

28

40

2 e Caius Falcidius, a Tribune of the People, brought in a law 2 against anyone making a legacy in his will so great that it did not leave to the heirs a fourth part of the estate. \* 9

26

42 e Antigonus while fighting against the Jews is at length killed. From then on down to the present time the kingship of Jerusalem has been destroyed. Accordingly after him Herod, a foreign prince, and in no way relating to Judea, was installed by the Romans.

5

12

29

39 f Curtius Salassus was burned alive with four cohorts in the island of Arada, because he had exacted tributes quite oppressively. \*

6

13

30

38

3 g His owner recognized Vibius Maximus that had been designated quaestor, and carried him off.  
\* 10

27

41 f The Fornii, father and son, are considered important orators, of whom the consular son dies before the father. \*

1980

7

14

31

37 h Oil erupts out from the earth from a taberna meritoria 3 on the other side of the Tiber, and flowed all the day without interruption, signifying the Grace of Christ from the nations. \*

186th

Olympiad

8 g Sallust died in the quadrennium before the Battle of Actium. \* 15

32

36

9 h M. Bavius the poet, whom Vergil mentions in the Eclogues, dies in Cappadocia. 16

33

35 i Augustus defeats Antony, and by the senate intervening, returns (1) Literally "among the Peligni."

(2) The Falcidian Law,(Justinian, Digest of Roman Law, 35.2) by its first Article, conferred the power of disposing of an estate up to and including three-fourths of the same. English translation.

Some paraphrase has been necessary: literally "Caius Falcidius, a Tribune of the People, proposed a law against anyone making a legacy in his Will, greater than would [still] leave a quarter [of the whole estate] to the heirs."

It is followed in some manuscripts by a long and confused gloss, which adds the words "... if four or less." And then goes on, "If however there were more than four, the proportion was in this way: that part that Falcidius ordered (unless the father forbade it) and the other profitable legacies, and similar less-desirable items, were divided up equally in the same way as the same father bequeathed his property either to the children or to more distant relatives."

(3) Cassius

Dio 48.43.4, giving the date as 38 BC. Here one day, in 38 BC, oil suddenly started to gush out from the ground. This mysterious event was given the Latin name fons olei ("oil source", or "oil fountain"). This is the legend of S.Maria in Trastevere. A taberna meritoria was an upmarket tavern and lodging house.

[242/243]

†

Romans Alexandrians Jews

BC

Romans Alexandrians Jews

BC

10 a Herod, the son of Antipater from Ascalon and whose mother was Cypris from Arabia, received the principate of the Jews from the Romans: in whose time, around the time of Christ's birth, the kingship and the priesthood of Judaea, which previously had been held by a succession of lesser men, were destroyed, and the prophecy was fulfilled which speaks thus through Moses:

17

34

34

These 69 weeks

1 come to 483 years, in which the christs (=anointed ones), that

is, the high priests reigned through the anointing of oil until Hyrcanus.

The latter having been captured finally by the Parthians, Herod son of Antipater received Judaea, which did not belong to him, from Augustus and the Senate.

And his sons after him reigned until the most recent captivity of Jerusalem, never having been appointed high priests from the succession of the sacerdotal line, serving God according to the Law of Moses for all their lives. Indeed, certain lay persons, and others at another time, and not a few, used to buy the priestly office from Roman Emperors, for a single year or a bit more. All these things Daniel the prophet also foretells, saying:

Herod the foreigner reigned

over the Jews, the secular power of the pontificate having ended, for 37 years.

"There will not lack a prince from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, until he shall come in whom it is entrusted. And he himself will be the hope of the nations." 2 And in this very place, Christ, whom the Scripture of Daniel prophesies, received his end. For until Herod, christs (=anointed ones), i.e. the high priests, were the kings of the Jews, who began to rule from the 65th Olympiad and the restoration of the Temple under Darius, until Hyrcanus and the 186th Olympiad, around 433 years having passed: which is what Daniel also signifies, saying:

"And after 7 and 62 weeks the anointing will perish, and there will be no sound judgement there and the people will defile the temple and the sanctuary with the leader who is coming: and they will be struck down in the flood of war." And in what follows: "And upon the Temple, he says, an abomination of desolation: and until the fulfillment of the time, a fulfillment will be given upon the desolation." a Herod installed a certain Ananelus, invited from Babylon, as high priest of the Jews, and after a short while he appointed Aristobulus, the brother of his wife and nephew of Hyrcanus as And may you know and understand that from the beginning of the word of returning to and rebuilding Jerusalem, until the leadership of CHRIST (=the anointed one), 7 weeks 1 and 62 weeks 1.

(1) 'Hebdomades' is properly a 'group of seven' years rather

than a week. The word 'weeks' is intended to be quaint or mystical, as note

where it is initially explained by Leviticus 25:8 'numerabis quoque tibi septem

ebdomades annorum id est septem septies quae simul faciunt quadraginta novem'

-- 'And you shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that

the time of the seven weeks of years shall be to you forty-nine years.' Jerome's

'id est' is not in the Heb (or RSV) but the phrase SHBX SHBTT SHNYM 'seven sabbaths

of years' is clearly meant to be pointed in some way, and not just a way of

saying something numerical like 'group of seven'. Even the Gk word E(BDOMAS

is somewhat obscure [cf. Chantraine s.v. e(pta at

end]. Finally, it is already traditional language in Jerome's time and remains

so: NJB, Lev. 25:8 'You will count seven weeks of years--seven...' [note their

long dash = Jerome's id est] and then Daniel 9:24 'Seventy weeks are decreed...'.  
(2) The quotation marks represent a line of vertical squiggles against this

paragraph in the left-hand margin in 'O'.

[244/245]

Romans Alexandrians Jews

BC

Romans Alexandrians Jews

BC the successor to him; when he was murdered after a year, he reappointed Ananelus to the priesthood.

12 a Until Cleopatra, the Ptolemies, who were called Lagids, reigned in Egypt for 295 years. 19

2

32 a The movements of the moon, according to the Romans, discovered. \* b Artorius the doctor of Augustus perishes after the victory of Actium in a shipwreck. \*

11 b Treaty of Antony and Augustus. 18

1

23 c The Romans planted colonies.

13 c Some compute the first year of the monarchy of Augustus from this point. 20

3

31 d Augustus celebrated a triumph for his land-battle triumph. e Antony handed over Arabia to Cleopatra. d Caesar called Augustus, from whom the month Sextilis received the name of Augustus. f The beginning of the third disagreement of Augustus and Antony, because the sister of Caesar having been repudiated, he had married Cleopatra. (\*)

14 e With a huge pomp of triumphs, Augustus entered Rome, and led before his chariot the children of Cleopatra, the Sun and the Moon. 1 21

4

30 g Nicetes, Hybreas, Theodorus and Plution are considered the most noble Greek teachers of the rhetorical art. \*

15 f Nicopolis founded near Actium and the Actian games established. 22

5

29 The power of the Alexandrians ends.

~~~~~ g Augustus enacts many laws for the Romans.

187th Olympiad h Cleopatra and Antony kill themselves, and Egypt is made a Roman province, which Caius Cornelius Gallus first headed, about whom Virgil writes in the Eclogues. (*)

188th Olympiad h A census of Rome having been taken, there were found to be 4,164,000 Roman citizens.

2

16 i Colonies planted.

23

2

6

3

28 k Anaxilaus Larisseus, a Pythagorean (1) Dio Cassius 51.21.8. The reference is to Alexander Helios (the 'sun') and Cleopatra Selene (the 'moon').

(2) This number is missing in 'O'.

(3) This number is coloured red in 'O'.

[246/247]

Romans

Jews

BC

Romans

Jews

BC and a magician, is expelled from the City and from Italy by Augustus. * was offered to him, declined.

21 a Quintilius of Cremona, a friend of Vergil and Horace, dies. *

11

23 a M. Terentius Varro the philosopher dies when nearly a nonagenarian. * b Augustus deprived the Cyzicenes of their liberty.

1990 17 b Thebes of Egypt razed to the ground.

7

27

22 c Pylades, the Cilician writer of pantomime, although the ancients themselves had sung and danced, was the first in Rome to make a chorus and pipe make music. *

12

22 c Cornelius Gallus the Frejusian poet, by whom Egypt was first governed, as we said above, killed himself with his own hand in the 43rd year of his life. *

23 d Sent by Augustus, Tiberius took possession of Armenia.

13

21 d Trallis destroyed in an earthquake.

18 e The Indians through a deputation requested friendship with Augustus. *

8

26 e Atratinus, who had prosecuted Caelius at the age of seventeen, is considered important among orators. In the end, due to the weight of his illnesses, having died voluntarily in the bath, he left Augustus his heir. * f Messala Corvinus, when he was first made urban prefect, relinquished his magistracy on the sixth day, claiming that it was an unjust form of authority. *

190th

Olympiad

19 g Augustus makes the Calabri and the Gauls subject to taxation.

9

25

24 f The Cantabri, initiating an insurrection, are crushed.

14

20 h Munatius Plancus, a student of Cicero, is considered notable as an orator; who, when he was in charge of Gallia Comata, founded Lyons. *

25 g Herod in Jerusalem constructed many and great buildings.

15

19

26 h Vergil dies in Brundisium, when Sentius Saturninus and Lucretius Cinna were consuls. His bones, having been taken to Naples, are buried within the second mile-marker of that city, with this very epitaph written above it, which he himself had dictated as he lay dying:

16

18

189th

Olympiad

20 i Marcus Lollius makes Galatia a province. k Augustus, when the monarchy

[248/249]

Romans

Jews

BC

Romans

Jews

BC "Mantua gave birth to me;

Calabria carried me off;

Now Parthenope holds me.

I sang of pastures, the country and leaders." * a Agrippa captures Bosphorus.

31 b Cestius the Smyranean rhetor taught Latin in Rome. *

21

13 a Rebuilding Samaria from the ground up, which for a long time now had been sitting in ashes, Herod renamed it Augusta in honor of Augustus, that is, Sebaste, and constructed the town which is called Panion in Paneas.

192nd Olympiad c Augustus is hailed as pontifex maximus by the Senate.

32

22

12 d Herod founded Caesarea in the name of Caesar, which previously used to be called Strato's Tower.

2000 27 b Augustus granted freedom to the Samians. 17

17 c In Cyprus, many parts of the cities were ruined in an earthquake. e Herod founded Anthonis, and Antipatris: and he constructed Herodion in his own honour and that of his father Antipater: also he constructed most cleverly innumerable works in individual cities of Syria which he was ruling.

33

23

11 d Marcus Lollius defeats the Germans who had taken up arms. e The poets Varius and Tucca, companions of Vergil and Horace, are considered illustrious, who later corrected the books of the Aeneid under this condition: that they added nothing. *

34 f Tiberius Caesar celebrates a triumph over the captured Pannonians.

24

10

191st

Olympiad

35 g Horace dies at Rome in the fifty-seventh year of his life. *

25

9

28 f Augustus adopted Gaius Agrippa as his son.

18

16

36 h Passienus the Father, a notable speech-maker, died. *

26

8 g Aemilius Macer, a poet from Verona, dies in Asia. * i C. Julius Hyginus, surnamed Polyhistor, the grammarian, is considered illustrious. *

29 h Tiberius makes the Vindelici and those who were bordering Thrace, Roman provinces.

19

15

193rd Olympiad k After Germany had been devastated, Tiberius is hailed as emperor.

30 Colonies at Beirut and Patras planted.

20

14

[250/251]

Romans

Jews

BC

Romans

Jews

BC/AD

36 a Herod killed Hyrcanus, who previously had been high priest of the Jews, when he returned from his Parthian captivity, and killed his son, who had succeeded his father in the high priesthood: in addition, he most cruelly puts to death his (Hyrcanus's) sister, his very own wife, with his own two sons already in adolescence, and the mother of his murdered wife, his mother-in-law.

26

8 from the weariness of a double quartan fever.

41 a Herod added to these things, which he accomplished above cruelly, this also: he killed the husband of his sister Salome, and when he handed her over to another, he put him to death, too: moreover he slew the scribes and translators of the divine law in a similar crime.

31

3 b Tertullian, in that book which he wrote against the Jews, affirms that Christ was born in the 41st year of Augustus, and suffered in the 15th of Tiberius. *

2010

37

27

7

42

32

2

38 b Tiberius celebrated a triumph over the Rhetians, Vindelicians, Armenians, and the Pannonians.

28

6 c Jesus Christ, the son of GOD, is born in Bethlehem of Judah

43

33

1 BC c Albutius Silo of Novara, an important rhetor, is well known. * d Quirinius, sent to Judaea by a resolution of the senate, makes a survey of men and property.

39 d Many things were ruined in an earthquake on the island of Cos.

29

5 e All the years taken together from Abraham until the birth of Christ come to 2015 years. e Augustus condemns to exile his daughter Julia, caught in adultery.

195th

Olympiad

194th Olympiad f C. Caesar made a treaty with the Parthians. f M. Tullius Tiro, Cicero's freedman, who is credited with being the first to use shorthand, lives to his 100th year on his estate in Puteoli.
*

44 g Sextus the Pythagorean philosopher is well known.

34

1 AD h Augustus adopts Tiberius and Agrippa as his sons.

40

30

4 g Augustus exhibited gladiatorial games and a naval battle.

45 i Judas the Gallilean urges the Jews to rebel.

35

2 h Melissus of Spoleto, the grammarian, is well known. * k Herod, when he had learned of the nativity of CHRIST from the information of the Magi, ordered all the infants in Bethlehem to be killed. i M. Porcius Latro, the Latin declaimer, killed himself

[252/253]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD

46 a Herod, suffering from the dropsy and with his whole body infested with worms, dies miserably and deservedly.

36

3 lost his memory and intellect that he could scarcely string a few words together, and at the end, when a sore had developed around his lower spine, he ended his life by fasting at 72 years of age. *

2020 47 b Asinius Pollio, orator and consul, who had celebrated a triumph over the Dalmatians, dies at his Tuscan villa in the 70th years of his life. *

37

4 Of the Jews, Duke Archelaus, for 9 years

198th Olympiad a Augustus with his son Tiberius taking the census at Rome, he found 9,370,000 men.

196th Olympiad c Into Herod's place Archelaus is substituted by Augustus, and his four brothers are made Tetrarchs: Herod, Antipater, Lysias, and Philip.

56 b Sotio the Alexandrian philosopher, the tutor of Seneca is considered important. (*)

9

13

48

1

5 c Archelaus, in the 9th year of his reign, is banished to the Gallic city of Vienne. Of the Jews, Herod the Tetrarch holds the principate for 24 years d So great a famine happens at Rome, that five modii are sold for 27½ denarii. d An eclipse of the sun happened, and Augustus dies in his 76th year, in Atella in Campania, and is buried at Rome in the Campus Martius. (*)

49 e Philisthion the mime playwright, a Magnesian by birth, is considered important at Rome. *

2

6

50 f Tiberius Caesar drives back the Dalmatians and Sarmatians into Roman authority.

3

7 3rd of the Romans, Tiberius reigned for 23 years

2030 1 e The orator Gaius Asinius Gallus, son of Asinius Pollio, whom even Vergil mentions, is put to death with fearful tortures by Tiberius. *

1

14

51 g Athenodorus of Tarsus the Stoic philosopher, and M. Verrius Flaccus the grammarian, are considered notable. (*)

4

8

2

2

15

3

3

16

197th

Olympiad

199th

Olympiad

52 h The Athenians, revolting against the Romans, are crushed, the authors of the rebellion slain.

5

9

4 f T. Livius the historian dies in Patavi.

4

17

53

6

10 g Ovid the poet died in exile, and is interred near the town of Tomi. *

54

7

11

55 i Two years before Messala Corvinus the orator died, he had so

8

12 h Germanicus Caesar celebrates a triumph over the Parthians.

[254/255]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD

5 a Thirteen cities were levelled in an earthquake: Ephesus, Magnesia, Sardis, Mosthene, Aegae, Hierocaesarea, Philadelphia, Tmolus, Temnus, Cymae, Myrhina, Apollonia Dia, and Hyrcania.

5

18 Paneas, in which he had constructed many buildings, Caesarea Philippi, and another city Julias.

13 a Pilate is sent as procurator of Judaea by Tiberius. *

13

26

6 b Fenestella, a writer of histories and songs, dies a septuagenarian, and is buried in Cumae. *

6

19

14 b Votienus Montanus of Narbonne the orator dies in the Balearic islands, having been banished there by Tiberius.

14

27

7 c Tiberius, by blandishments, having summoned to himself many kings, never returned them: among these was Archelaus of Cappadocia; after his kingdom had been turned into a province, he (Tiberius) ordered its most noble city Mazaca to be called Caesarea. *

7

20

15 c Herod founded Tiberias, and Livias.

15

28 d John the son of Zechariah, preaching in the desert by the Jordan River, bears witness that Christ, the son of God, is present in their midst. Also the Lord Jesus Christ himself announces the way of salvation to all people, proving by signs and wonders that the things that he said were true.

200th

Olympiad

8 d The theatre of Pompey burned down.

8

21

9 e Tiberius makes Drusus his colleague in power.

9

22 f There are computed to the present year, that is the 15th of Tiberius Caesar, from the year following the restoration of the temple, which was completed under the second year of Darius, king of the Persians, 548 years

10 f Drusus Caesar perished by poison.

10

23

2040 11 g Quintus Haterius, the active Populares orator, lives until almost his 90th year with the highest honours. *

11

24 h Servius Plautus, guilty of corrupting his son, kills himself in punishment. * from Solomon however, and the building of the first temple, 1060 years

201st Olympiad from Moses, and the Exodus of Israel out of Egypt, 1539 years

12 i Philip the Tetrarch called

12

25

[256/258]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD from Abraham and the reign of Ninus and Semiramis, 2044 years

"However in the fourth year of the 202nd olympiad, an eclipse of the sun happened, greater and more excellent than any that had happened before it; at the sixth hour, day turned into dark night, so that the stars were seen in the sky, and an earthquake in Bithynia toppled many buildings of the city of Nicaea." These things the aforementioned man (says). The proof however of this matter, that in this year the Saviour suffered, the gospel of John presents, in which it is written that after the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar, the Lord preached for three years. Also Josephus, a native writer of the Jews, attests that around that time on the day of Pentecost, the priests first perceived an

earth tremor and certain (loud) sounds. Then, that an unexpected voice suddenly burst out from the innermost part of the Temple saying: "Let us flee from this abode." However the aforementioned man writes that in the same year Pilate the governor secretly in the night set up images of Caesar in the temple, and from this arose the first cause of the rebellion and turmoil of the Jews. from the flood until Abraham, 942 years from Adam until the flood, 2242 years

202nd Olympiad a Start of the 81st jubilee according to the Hebrews 16 b Jesus Christ the son of God, preaching the way of salvation to all, performs the miracles which were written in the Gospels. 16

29

17 c Jesus Christ the son of God, imparting the divine sacraments to his own disciples, commands that they announce (the opportunity and need for) conversion to God, to all peoples. 17

30

18 d Jesus Christ, according to the prophecies, which had been spoken about him beforehand, came to the Passion in the 18th year of Tiberius, at which time also we find these things written verbatim in other commentaries of the gentiles: an eclipse of the sun happened 1, Bithynia shaken by earthquake, and in the city of Nicaea many buildings collapsed: all of which agree with what occurred in the Passion of the Saviour. Indeed Phlegon, who is an excellent calculator of olympiads, also writes about this, in his 13th book writing thus: 18

31

19

19

32 a The first bishop of the Church of Jerusalem, James the brother of the Lord, is ordained by the Apostles.

(1) November 24, 29 AD. Note that paras b,c and d are merged

in the Merton Ms.

[258/259]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD a From this point it must be considered, what a great number of calamities will have then oppressed the nation of the Jews. other recognised religions. 4 Indeed, when by a decree of the fathers, it had pleased them that the Christians be evicted from the City, Tiberius by an edict threatened accusers of the Christians with death: thus writes Tertullian in his Apologeticum. 5

23

23

36 b Cassius Severus the outstanding orator, who had mocked the Quintian Proverb, dies of starvation in the 25th year of his exile, covered with hardly a rag over his privates. 1 * a Many Roman Senators and Knights killed.

203rd Olympiad c Pilate, after the aforementioned uprising which had been incited on account of Caesar's images, laid the seeds for a second uprising when he spent the sacred treasury, which the Jews call the korban, on an aqueduct for Jerusalem. b Tiberius dies in Campania. 6 (*)

204th

Olympiad

20

20

33 4th of the Romans, Gaius Caligula reigned for 3 years and 10 months.

1 c Gaius Caesar, called Caligula, makes Agrippa, who had been freed from his bonds, king of Judaea.

24

37 Prince of the Jews, Agrippa, for 7 years

2050 21 d Sejanus, the prefect of Tiberius, who used to possess the greatest influence over him, urges most insistently that the Jewish nation be destroyed: Philo recalls this in the second book of his Embassy. 2

21

34 d Gaius declares himself to be among the gods. e Flaccus Avilius, prefect of Egypt, oppresses the Jews with many injuries, with the people of Alexandria consenting and resounding with numerous cries against them: he also pollutes their synagogues with images, statues, and altars and sacrificial victims. Philo declares, in the book called Flaccus, that he was present at all e The satirical poet Persius Flaccus is born at Volaterrae.

2

1

38

22 f Agrippa the son of Aristobulus, the son of King Herod, the accuser of Herod the Tetrach, having set out for Rome, is thrown in chains by Tiberius. 3

22

35 g Pilate referring the matter of Christian doctrine to Tiberius, Tiberius referred it on to the Senate, so that it would be accepted among the

(1) After this in the PL is

the following entry, where the Merton ms. has a blank: Stephen is stoned: Saul is converted to Christ.

(2) Another blank in the manuscript is filled in the PL with these two entries:

James the brother of John the apostle, by the order of King Herod, is beheaded.

-- The apostle Peter thrown into prison by Herod, and having been bound with two chains, he is miraculously freed by an angel.

(3) In the PL, but not in the Ms. this entry continues: because he had publicly prayed to God, so that, right away upon the death of Tiberius, he would see Gaius the lord of all.

(4) 'Sacra' rendered as 'recognised religions'.

(5) In the PL, not in the Ms. there follows: Peter the Apostle founded the Church at Antioch, and there securing his (episcopal) throne, he sat (reigning as bishop) for 25 years.

(6) The PL adds: in the villa of Lucullus.

[260/261]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD these things, which is why he himself had even undertaken a delegation to Gaius.

5th

of the Romans, Claudius reigned 13 years, 8 months, 28 days.

205th Olympiad a Passienus the son killed by the treachery of his own heir. 1 *

1 a This is Claudius the paternal uncle of Drusus, who has a monument at Moguntiacum: elsewhere I have read that he was the maternal uncle, because he was the brother of the mother of Gaius. *

4

41

3 b Gaius took the wife of Memmius Regulus, forcing him to write that he (Memmius) was the father of his wife.

2

39

2 b Peter the Apostle, by nation a Galilean, first high priest of the Christians, after he had been the first to found a church at Antioch, proceeded to Rome, where as bishop of the same city he remains, preaching the gospel for 25 years.

5

42 c Pontius Pilate, falling into many calamities, killed himself by his own hand: so the historians of the Romans write.

3 c Mark the evangelist, Peter's interpreter, preaches Christ in Egypt and Alexandria.

6

43 d Gaius ordered Petronius, prefect of Syria, to place his statue in Jerusalem under the name of Jupiter Optimus Maximus: which the Jews refused to do with the utmost obstinacy.

2060 4 d Evodius is ordained the first bishop of Antioch.

7

44 e Agrippa, king of the Judeans, having ruled 7 years, dies. After him, his son Agrippa is placed in power by Claudius. e In the whole Roman world, as Philo and Josephus write, statues and images and altars of Gaius Caesar consecrated in the synagogues of the Jews. Of the Jews, Agrippa, for 26 years. f The prophecy of Agabus, who had said in the Acts of the Apostles that there would be a famine in the whole world, came true under Claudius.

4 f Many of the nobles killed by Gaius.

3

40 g Gaius condemned his sisters, whom he had brought into unchastity, to exile on islands. (*) g Claudius celebrated a triumph over the Britons and added the Orkney islands to the Roman empire. In celebration of this glory he named his son Britannicus. (*) h Gaius ordered all the exiles to be killed. i Gaius is slain by his bodyguards on the Palatine in the 29th year of his life. h Domitius Afer of Nimes is considered a

(1) In the Merton manuscript there is a space following. In the Patrologia Latina, there follows this entry: Matthew in Judaea is the first to write a gospel.

[262/263]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD brilliant orator; afterward, when Nero was emperor, he dies from overeating at a meal. *

207th

Olympiad

9 a A famine having occurred in Greece, a bushel of wheat was sold for six drachmas. 4

5

49

a Claudius Quirinalis,

a rhetor from Arles, teaches most notably at Rome. *

10 b Great famine at Rome. 5

6

50

c Claudius sends Felix

to Judea as procurator, before whom the apostle Paul, standing accused, delivers a speech in his own defense.

6

206th

Olympiad

11

7

51

5 b Between Thera and Therasia an island rose up that was 30 stades across.

1

45

12

8

52

c At Rome, a survey

having been carried out under Claudius, there were found to be 6,844,000

Roman citizens.

1

208th

Olympiad

d When Felix was procurator

of Judaea, there were many who were deceiving the people with their opinions.

Among them also was a certain false prophet from Egypt who gathered many

to himself but was crushed by the army of Felix in his very attempt to achieve

great things. Josephus writes, agreeing with the Acts of the Apostles, in

which the tribune says to Paul: 'Are you not the Egyptian who recently caused

a stir and led the four thousand men into the desert?'

7

6

2

46

d Hitherto having been

under kings, Thrace is reduced to a Roman province.

2

13

9

53

7 e When Cumanus was procurator of Judea, during the days of unleavened bread 3, the unrest in Jerusalem was so serious that 30,000 Jews perished as the people ran together attempting to exit through the gates.

3

47

8 f Palaemon Vicentinus is considered a notable grammarian at Rome, who once, when he was asked what was the difference between a drop and a spot, said, "A spot stays put and a drop falls." *

4

48

2070 14 e Claudius dies in the palace, in the 64th year of his life. (*)

10

54 g Marcus Antonius Liberalis the rhetor pursues a very bitter rivalry with Palaemon. * 6th of the Romans, Nero reigned for 13 years, 7 months and 28 days.

1 f His uncle was Gaius Caligula. *

11

55

(1) The Patrologia Latina text has two extra entries

at this point, which are not found in the 9th century Merton College manuscript

No. 315, although there seems to be a space in the text at this point:

-- Around this time, Claudius drained the Fucine lake, which took 30,000 men working for 11 years without intermission.

-- Claudius constructed the port of Ostia, with two branches, as it were, projecting on the left and the right sides.

(2) Another entry from the PL, not in the Merton Ms. follows, where there is a space in the page: The virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ, is taken up to her son in heaven, as some write had been revealed to her.

(3) The passover.

(4) Another entry from the PL, not in the Merton Ms. follows, where there is a space in the page: Three suns appeared at the same time and immediately united in the same circle.

(5) Another PL entry, but no space in the Ms.: Dionysius the Areopagite, once a distinguished philosopher, is famous.

(6) Another PL entry follows, again with no space in the Ms.: Philip, the apostle of Christ to the people in Hierapolis, a city of Asia, while preaching the Gospel, is nailed to a cross and stoned to death.

(7) The reference is to Acts 21:38, and the citation is slightly altered from:

'Are you not the Egyptian who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the assassins into the desert?'

[264/265]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD a While Felix was governing Judaea, a revolt broke out in Caesarea of Palestine which resulted in the deaths of a great multitude of Jews. stoned to death by the Jews. Simeon, also called Simon, is the second to be placed in his throne.

2 b Festus succeeds Felix in the government (of the province), before whom, in the presence of Agrippa the king, Paul the apostle explains the rationale of his religion, and is sent to Rome in chains.

12

56

8 a Lightning struck in front of Nero's table. 18

62 b The first bishop of the church of Alexandria ordained after Mark the Evangelist was Annianus, who presided for twenty two years. c Probus of Berytus, most erudite of grammarians, is well known at Rome. * c Persius dies at the age of 29. 1 *

209th

Olympiad

9 d Baths built by Nero, which he called the Neronian Baths.

19

63 d Statius Surculus Tholosanus celebratedly taught rhetoric in Gaul. * e In Rome, Nero takes part in a competition of cithara-players, and defeats everyone.

3 e Earthquake at Rome and eclipse of the sun.

13

57 f Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, the Cordovan poet, caught in the Pisonian conspiracy, presented the veins of his arms to a physician for cutting. *

4 f Nero kills his mother Agrippina and the sister of his father.

14

58

5 g Nero was given to such excessive luxury that he used to bathe with both hot and cold ointments, and fish with golden nets which he set using purple for the rigging. *

15

59 2080 10 g Nero set the greatest part of Rome on fire, so that he might get a look at something like the burning of Troy. (*)

20

64

6

16

60 h In Asia, three cities were ruined in an earthquake; Laodicea, Hierapolis and Colossae.

210th Olympiad h At Rome Nero competes with the cithara and wins. i Cestius Florus succeeds Albinus as procurator of Judaea, in whose time the Jews rebelled against the Romans. i Albinus succeeds Festus in the magistracy of Judaea.

7 k James, the brother of the Lord, whom everyone used to call the Just, is

17

61 k Junius Annaeus Gallio, the brother of Seneca the outstanding declaimer, killed himself with (1) Late manuscripts insert after the word Persius "Volaterranus, the satirical poet,".

[266/267]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews

AD his own hand. *

14 a The philosophers Musonius and Plutarch are considered distinguished.

24

68 a 211th Olympiad. It was not held, Nero deferring it until he could be present. b L. Annaeus Mella, brother of Seneca and Gallio, was awarded by Nero the property of the poet Lucan, his son. *

11 b Only two provinces added under Nero, Pontus Polemoniaca, and the Cottian Alps after king Cottius had died. 1 *

21

65 c 1 1st persecution, by Nero c Over all his other crimes, Nero also is the first to carry out a persecution against the Christians, in which Peter and Paul gloriously died at Rome. c Many nobles killed by Nero at Rome. d In the Olympics, Nero is crowned, defeating heralds, citharists, tragedians, and various charioteers in competition. d Vespasian is made Master of Soldiers by Nero against the Jews, who were rebelling because they could not bear the avarice of Cestius Florus.

12 e L. Annaeus Seneca of Corduba, teacher of Nero, and uncle of the poet Lucan, perished by an incision of the veins and by a draught of poison. *

22

66 e Vespasian captures many cities of Judaea. f Flavius Josephus the historical writer, a leader of the Jews in the war, when he was about to be killed by the Romans, he predicted the death of Nero to Vespasian, and his own (rise to) power; for which reason he received his life as a reward. f Celebrating the Isthmian, Pythian and Actian games, Nero is again crowned among the heralds, tragedians and citharists.

13 g By decree of the Senate a hundred times one hundred thousand (sesterces) are furnished to Nero as an annual allowance for expenses.

23

67 g After Peter, Linus first held the church of Rome for 11 years. h Nero killed his wife Octavia, along with other notable men, and he drove the philosopher Cornutus, teacher of Persius, into exile. h Nero, when he was being sought out for punishment by the Senate, fleeing from the palace as far as the fourth milestone of the city, kills himself in the garden of his freedman between Salaria and (1) Pontus Polemoniacus was added in 64 AD. M. Julius Cottius ruled the Cottian Alps as praefectus civitatum.

[268/269]

Romans

Jews

AD

Romans

Jews (Ends)

AD Nomentana, in the 32nd year of his life, and in him the whole family of Augustus ended. (*)

2 a After Judaea had been captured and Jerusalem demolished, Titus had six hundred thousand men put to death. But Josephus writes that one million one hundred thousand perished through hunger or by the sword, and that another one hundred thousand of the captives were publicly offered for sale. Now it was because of the feast of unleavened bread that such a great number was to be found in Jerusalem. When the Jews flocked to the temple from every nation on account

of this feast, they were shut up in the city as if in a prison. For it was fitting that they should be killed during the same days of Pascha on which they had crucified the Savior.

26

70 a After Nero, Galba seized power in Spain, Vitellius in Germany and Otho in Rome.

3

71 b Marcus Fabius Quintilianus is brought to Rome by Galba. *

212th

Olympiad

4

72 c In the seventh month of his reign, Galba is beheaded, in the middle of the forum of the city of the Romans. d Vespasian drove the Jews, who had been defeated in two battles, to the city walls. e In the third month of his reign, Otho lay dead at Bebriacum by his own hand. (*) b The entire length of time to the 2nd year of Vespasian and the most recent destruction of Jerusalem, is reckoned to be: f Ignatius is ordained as the second bishop of Antioch. from the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar and from the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel, 42 years; g Vitellius, slain in the eighth month of his reign by Vespasian's generals, is thrown into the Tiber. (*) 7th of the Romans, Vespasian reigned for 9 years, 11 months, 22 days. however from the captivity which was endured under Antiochus, 239 years;

1 h Vespasian, proclaimed emperor in Judaea by his army, and entrusting the war to his son Titus, sets out for Rome by means of Alexandria.

25

69 again from the 2nd year of Darius, in whose reign the temple was rebuilt, 590 years; however from the first building of the temple under Solomon until its final destruction, which happened under Vespasian, 1102 years. i The temple of Jupiter at Rome burned down.

[270/271]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

213th Olympiad Sabines, aged 69. (*)

5 a Vespasian began to build the Capitol.

73 8th of the Romans, Titus reigned 2 years and 2 months. b In Alexandria a revolt occurred.

1 a Titus, the son of Vespasian, was an expert in both languages and of such goodness that once when he recalled at a meal that he had been of no service to anyone on that day, he said:

'Friends, today I have wasted a day.'

79

2090 6 c Achaia, Lycia, Rhodes, Byzantium, Samos, Thrace, Cilicia, and Comagnene, which were free before and were ruled by friendly kings, turned into Roman provinces. *

74

7 d A colossal statue erected, having a height of 107 feet.

75 b Mount Vesuvius having erupted, it blasted upwards from itself such a great amount of fire that the neighbouring regions and cities were consumed in the fire, together with the people in them. e Q. Asconius Pedianus, the historical writer, is considered important, who having become known in the 73rd year of his life, comes to the end of his life 12 years later in the highest honour. * c Titus recalls Musonius Rufus the philosopher from exile. *

8

76 d Titus builds the amphitheatre in Rome, and at its dedication he sacrifices 5000 wild beasts. * f Gabinianus, a rhetorician of very celebrated name, taught in Gaul. *

2 e Cletus is appointed second bishop of the Roman church for 12 years.

80

214th

Olympiad

9 g Three cities in Cyprus were destroyed all together in an earthquake.

77 f In Rome many buildings are burned to the ground in a fire. h A massive plague happened at Rome, so that for many days about 10,000 men were listed in the daily register of the dead. g Titus died from an illness at the same country-house where his father died, on the day before the Ides of September, at the age of 42. 1 (*)

215th

Olympiad

10 i Vespasian planted colonies, and he died from an issue from his stomach in his own villa among the

78 9th of the Romans, Domitian reigned for 15 years and 5 months. h Domitian was the younger brother of Titus. *

(1) Titus died on September 13, 81 AD at Aquae Cutiliae, where his father Vespasian had died two years earlier.

The ides of September are the 12th.

[272/273]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD a The wife of Domitian is named as Augusta.

9 a Many building works carried out at Rome, among them the Capitol, the Forum transitorium, the Portico of the gods, the temple of Isis, the Serapeum, the Stadium, the pepper granaries, the temple of Vespasian, the temple of Minerva Chalcidica, the Odeum, Trajan's Forum, the Baths of Trajan and Titus, the Senate House, the Ludus Matutinus, the Mica Aurea, the Meta Sudans fountain and the Pantheon. 1 *

89

2 b By a decree of the senate Titus is enrolled among the gods. 82 c Domitian prohibited the making of eunuchs.

3 d 3 vestal virgins condemned for unchastity.

83 e Domitian sends many senators into exile.

10

90

2100 4 f Abilius is appointed the second bishop of the church of Alexandria, and he presided for thirteen years.

84 b Domitian celebrates a triumph over the Dacians and the Germans.

216th

Olympiad

5 g Domitian constructs a temple without any admixture of wood.

85

11 c Domitian had so much arrogance that he commanded golden and silver statues of himself to be placed on the Capitol. He marked those and all the others with his title, without any respect for the original builder. *

91

6 h Domitian was the first to order himself to be called lord and god. *

86 d After the chief of Vestal Virgins, Cornelia, had been convicted of unchastity, she was buried alive in accordance with the law. i The Nasamones and the Dacians who were fighting against Rome were conquered.

7 k Two months renamed, September Germanicus and October Domitian.

87

12 e Domitian prohibited vines to be cultivated in cities.

92

8 l Quintilianus of Calaguris from Spain, who was the first at Rome to (open) a public school and receive a salary from the exchequer, became famous. *

88 f Clement presided as the 3rd bishop of the Church of Rome for nine years.

218th

Olympiad

217th

Olympiad

13 g In these days Flavius Josephus writes the twenty books of the Antiquities.

93 m Domitian sends very many of the nobility into exile and slays them. n Domitian expels astrologers and philosophers from the city of Rome. h Domitian put many of the nobles to death, but some he sent into exile.

(1) The Ludus Matutinus was a school for the training of bestiarii, "beast fighters." The Meta Sudans was a fountain

built next to the Colosseum in the second half of the 1st century A.D.

"The Mica Aurea was a little palace which the Emperor Domitian had built on Monte Caelio's west side across from

his large imperial palace on the Palatin hill. It was located by the Via Triumphalis of ancient times, nowadays

Via di San Gregorio, between the ancient roads, the Clivus Pulveratus (which does not exist today), and the Clivus Scauri,

which today is called Clivio di Scauro. The latin name means "the little gold-beaming (house)",

as "mica" means "a crumb, or a piece" or "a little room" and "aurea" means "golden"

or "beaming like gold" and the little palace which was built as a private residence

as opposed to the large official palace did have a golden roof."

[274/275]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

2110

14 a Second to do so after Nero, Domitian persecutes the Christians, and under him the apostle John having been exiled to the island of Patmos, saw the Apocalypse, which Irenaeus explains.

94 a Cerdo presided as the 3rd bishop of the Church of Alexandria, for eleven years. b 2nd persecution, by Domitian b The senate decreed that all the things which Domitian had set up should be made void. And so many, whom he had unjustly ejected, returned from exile: some recovered their own goods. It is said also that when the apostle John was released at this time from exile, he withdrew to Ephesus, in which city he found both hospitality and very dear friends.

15 c Domitian again by edict thrusts out the philosophers and astrologers from Rome.

95

16 d Apollonius of Tyana and Euphrates are considered notable as philosophers.

96

1

97 e Domitian orders those who were of the race of David to be killed, so that no-one might remain of the kingship of the Jews. Brutius writes that there were made very many Christian martyrs under Domitian, among whom were Flavia Domitilla, granddaughter of the sister of Flavius Clemens the consul; she was exiled to the island of Pontia, because she bore witness that she was a Christian. c Justus from Tiberias, the writer of the Jews, is well known. d Nerva died from an illness in the gardens of Sallust at the age of 72, after he had already adopted Trajan as his son. (*) e Trajan, made emperor at Agrippina in Gaul, was born in Italica in Hispania. * 11th of the Romans, Trajan, reigned for 19 years and 6 months. f Many signs and portents happened at Rome and in the whole world.

1 f By a decree of the senate Nerva enrolled among the gods. 98

2 g Evaristus received the 4th episcopate of the Roman church.

99 g Domitian murdered in the palace aged 45, and ignobly buried by the pauper-undertakers 1. (*)

3 h Bishop Irenaeus writes that JOHN THE APOSTLE survived all the way to the time of Trajan: after whom his notable disciples were Papias, Bishop of

100

219th Olympiad 10th of the Romans, Nerva, reigned for 1 year and 4 months.

(1) Vespillo, pl. vespillones.

[276/277]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD Hieropolis, Polycarp of Smyrna, and Ignatius of Antioch. appointed as the third bishop. (*) a When Pliny the Younger was ruling a certain province and had put to death many Christians in his capacity as governor, he became frightened by their great numbers and sought from Trajan what he should do, reporting to him that, except for their stubborn refusal to sacrifice and their predawn gatherings to sing to a certain Christ as to a god, there was nothing (unusual) to be found among them. Furthermore, in order to be united in a common way of life, they forbid themselves to commit murder, theft, adultery, robbery, and the like. Disturbed by these things, Trajan wrote back: "This kind of people should not be sought out, but when they are brought before you, it is fitting for them to be punished." Tertullian refers to all this in his Apology.

220th

Olympiad

4 a Trajan celebrates a triumph over the Dacians and Scythians. 101

5 b Trajan defeated King Decebalus and made Dacia a province: he made a treaty with the Iberians, Sauromatians, Orsoenians, Arabs, Bosphorans and Colchians: he occupied and held Seleucia, Ctesiphon and Babylon: he instituted a fleet in the Red Sea so that he could lay waste the outskirts of India. *

102

6

103

2120 7 c At Rome, the Domus Aurea burned down in a fire.

104

221st

Olympiad

8 d Four cities of Asia overthrown in an earthquake: Elaea, Myrrhina, Pytanae, and Cymae: and two in Greece, Opuntis and Oritos.

105

9 e The fourth bishop of the church of Alexandria, by name Primus, is ordained, for twelve years.

106

222nd

Olympiad

10 f A persecution being initiated by Trajan against Christians, Simon, the son of Cleophas, who was holding the episcopate of Jerusalem, is crucified. Justus succeeds him.

107 b Alexander holds the fifth episcopate of the city of Rome for ten years. g 3rd persecution, by Trajan

12 c Pliny the Younger of New Como, of whom many works of ingenuity are extant, is considered a notable orator and historian. *

109 g Ignatius also, bishop of the church of Antioch, sent to Rome, is given to the beasts: after him Hero is

13 d Three cities of Galatia wiped out by an earthquake.

110

11

108 e The Pantheon in Rome burned down by lightning.

[278/279]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

14 a After Justus, Zachaeus received the 4th episcopate of the Church of Jerusalem. After him, 5th is Tobias, to whom succeeds 6th Benjamin, and then 7th John and 8th Matthias, into whose place Philip is appointed 9th.

111 a Trajan perishes in an illness at Selinus, or as I discover in someone else's text, he died at Isaurian Seleucia, the result of dysentery, in the sixty-third year, ninth month, and fourth day of his age. His bones were collected in a golden urn and placed in the Forum at the base of (his) column: and alone of all (the emperors) was he interred within the City 1. (*)

15

112

223rd

Olympiad

16 b Trajan made Armenia, Assyria and Mesopotamia into provinces. *

113

224th Olympiad 12th of the Romans, Hadrian ruled for 21 years c An earthquake at Antioch ruined almost the entire city.

1 b Hadrian, born at Italica in Spain, was the son of Trajan's female cousin. *

117

2130 17 d The Jews, who were in Libya, fight against their foreign-born neighbors. Likewise in Egypt, in Alexandria, and even Cyrene and the Thebaid, they struggle with great rebellion; but a portion of the gentiles defeat (them) in Alexandria.

114 c Hadrian restored Alexandria, which had been sacked by the Romans, from public funds. d Hadrian, envious of Trajan's glory, recalled the army from those provinces created by him, namely, Assyria, Mesopotamia, and Armenia. *

18 e The Emperor Trajan ordered Quietus of Lysia to banish the rebellious Jews of Mesopotamia from the province: Quietus, drawing up an army against them, killed countless thousands of them, and for this he is appointed procurator of Judea by the emperor.

115 e Hadrian makes captives of the Jews, who were rebelling against Rome for a second time.

2 f The senate declares Trajan to be among the gods.

118 g Hadrian was most erudite in both languages, but he was inadequately restrained in his lust for boys. *

19 f After the gentiles there had been killed, the Jews overthrew Salamis, a city of Cyprus. h Hadrian freed the rest of the cities from tribute, having burned the records in public: he also discharged many free-men from these same tributes.

(1) I.e. within the pomerium.

[280/281]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

3 a Plutarch of Chaeronea, Sextus 1 , Agathabulus, and Oenomaus 2 are considered notable philosophers.

119 bishops that presided down to the destruction of Jerusalem, that was carried through by Hadrian, were from the circumcision. b Xystus holds the 6th episcopate of the Roman church for 10 years.

226th

Olympiad

9 a Hadrian was initiated into the Elusinian rites, and generously gave many gifts to the Athenians.

125 c Justus is appointed as 5th bishop of the church of Alexandria for 11 years. b Quadratus the disciple of the apostles, and Aristides of Athens, our philosopher, composed books on behalf of the Christian religion to give to Hadrian. And the legate Serenus Granius, a man most noble, sends letters to the emperor, saying that it is unjust to allow the blood of innocent men guilty of no crime (to be shed) at the clamour of the mob, and to be made guilty of a crime only because of a name and a sect. Having been so moved, Hadrian wrote to Minucius Fundanus, proconsul of Asia, that the Christians should not be condemned without evidence of a crime. An exemplar of these letters has remained until our own time.

4 d War waged against the Sauromatians.

120 e After an earthquake had happened, Nicomedia lay in ruins, and many things were overturned in the city of Nicaea: for the reconstruction of which, Hadrian generously gave funds from the public treasury.

10

126

225th

Olympiad

5 f Euphrates the Stoic philosopher dies.

121 g Hadrian plants colonies in Libya, which had been devastated by the Jews.

11

127

6 h In response to the Athenians who had petitioned him for laws 3, Hadrian composed a legal code drawn from the books of Draco, Solon, and the rest 4.

122

7 i The river Cephissus flooded Eleusis, where Hadrian joined the two banks with a bridge and spent the winter in Athens.

123

12 c The emperor Hadrian is called Father of his Country and his wife Augusta.

128 k After Philip, Seneca is appointed as the 10th bishop of Jerusalem; after whom, Justus as the 11th, to whom succeeded Levi the 12th, after whom Ephres 13th, Joses 14th, Judas 15th. All these d Telesphorus received the seventh episcopate of the Roman church for 11 years.

2140

8

124 e Cornelius is appointed as the fourth bishop of Antioch.

(1) Sextus Empiricus.

(2) Oenomaus of Gadara.

(3) I.e. for a constitution.

(4) The other legislators.

[282/283]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

227th

Olympiad

228th Olympiad a Nicopolis and Caesarea were ruined in an earthquake. a Basilides the heresiarch lingers in Alexandria, from whom come the Gnostics.

13 b Antinous, a boy noted for his exceptional beauty, dies in Egypt. After Hadrian attentively carries out his funeral rites -- for the boy had been a favourite of his --, he declares him to be among the gods; a city was also named after him.

129

17 b Barcocheba, leader of a party of the Jews, because the Christians are not willing to help him against the Roman army, murders them with every sort of torture.

133

2150 18 c The Jewish War, which took place in Palestine, came to an end with the complete suppression of the Jews. From that time permission for them even to enter Jerusalem was revoked, first by the will of God, as the prophets had foretold, then by the prohibitions of the Romans.

134

14 c Eumenes presided as the sixth bishop of the church of Alexandria for 13 years.

130

15 d The temple of Rome and Venus built by Hadrian. *

131

19

135 e Salvius Julianus composed the Perpetual Edict. * f While Hadrian is spending the winter at Athens, he visits Eleusis. d Marcus is appointed as first gentile bishop at Jerusalem, after the ending of those, who were from the Jews.

16 g Hadrian, when he had constructed many notable buildings in Athens, held games and erected a library of wondrous construction.

132

20 e Aelia founded by Aelius Hadrian; on the front of that gate, by which we go out to Bethlehem, a sow was sculpted in marble, denoting that the Jews were subject to the Roman authority. Some think it was constructed by Titus Aelius, the son of Vespasian.

136 h The Jews turned to arms and laid waste Palestine, while Tynius Rufus was in control of the province. Hadrian sent an army to him for the purpose of putting down the rebels.

229th Olympiad i Favorinus and Polemon are considered notable rhetoricians.

21 f Hadrian, more than sixty years old, dies at Baiae because of dropsy. (*)

137

[284/285]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD 13th of the Romans, T. Antoninus, surnamed Pius, reigned with his children Aurelius and Lucius for 22 years, 3 months.

10

147

11

148

232nd

Olympiad

1 a Hyginus receives the 8th episcopate of the Roman church for four years.

138

12 a The philosopher Arrianus of Nicomedia is well known, as is Maximus of Tyre.

149

2 b Antoninus is named Father of his Country.

139

13 b The philosophers Apollonius the Stoic Chalcidian and Basilides the Scythopolitan are considered illustrious: who were also the truest preceptors of the Caesar.

150

3 c When Hyginus was bishop of Rome, Valentinus the arch-heretic and Cerdo, Marcion's teacher, came to Rome.

140

14

151

15

152

230th

Olympiad

233rd

Olympiad

4 d Justin the philosopher gave the book he had written on behalf of our religion to Antoninus.

141

16 c Celadion presided as 8th bishop of Alexandria, for 14 years.

153

2170 17 d Crescens the Cynic is well known, who promoted a prosecution against our Justin the Philosopher, learned in the (Christian) teachings, because he (Justin) was arguing him (Crescens) to be gluttonous and a corrupter of philosophy. By result of which he (Justin) gloriously poured out his blood for Christ.

154

5 e Pius is ordained as the ninth bishop of the Roman church, for 15 years.

142

18

155 f Eros is appointed as 5th bishop of Antioch.

19

156

6 g Marcus receives the 7th episcopate of Alexandria, for 10 years.

143

234th Olympiad h Valentinus the heretic is well known, and he remains down to Anicetus.

20 e Anicetus holds the 10th episcopate of the Roman church for 10 years, in whose time Polycarp coming to Rome corrected many from heretical error.

157

21

158

2160 7 i Mesomedes of Crete, the poet-musician of lyre-ode songs, is well known.

144

22

159

23

160

231st

Olympiad

235th

Olympiad

8 k Taurus Berytius, a distinguished philosopher of the Platonic sect, is considered important. f After Marcus, Cassianus received the 17th episcopate of Jerusalem, after him the 18th was Publius,

9

[286/287]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD whom Maximus, the 19th, succeeded, the 20th was Julianus, the 21st Gaianus, the 22nd Symmachus, the 23rd Caius, the 24th Julianus, and the 25th was Captio. a Lucius Caesar celebrated a triumph with his brother 1 over the Parthians.

6 b Agrippinus presided as the 9th bishop of Alexandria for 12 years.

166 a Antoninus Pius dies aged 77 at his villa at Lorium near the 12th milestone from the City. (*) d 4th pers-ecut-ion c A persecution began in Asia and Polycarp and Pionius suffered martyrdom, of whom also there are written accounts of their martyrdom.

167

7 14th of the Romans, Marcus Antonius, also called Verus, and Lucius Aurelius Commodus, reigned for 19 years and 1 month.

e Many people in Gaul

died gloriously for the name of Christ; their contests have survived until

the present day preserved in books.

1 b These men were the first to have run the empire jointly by law, since until this time, there had been individual Augusti. *

161

2 c It seems that fires were reported in the sky, from east to west, to Lucius Caesar who was sacrificing at Athens.

162

8 f The plague overtook numerous provinces, Rome having been troubled from there.

168 g The Romans fight against the Germans, Marcomannis, Quadis, Sarmatinis, and Dacians.

3 d Vologaesius, king of the Parthians, laid waste the Roman provinces near to him.

163

237th

Olympiad

2180 4 e The orator Fronto, who instructed Marcus Antoninus Verus in Latin studies, is considered notable. *

164 h Soter received the 11th episcopate of the Roman church for 8 years.

9 i Theophilus is ordained as the 6th bishop of Antioch, of whom many works of ingenuity are still extant.

169 f Seleucia in Assyria captured together with 300,000 men by the Romans. *

236th Olympiad k The emperor Lucius, while sitting with his brother in a carriage, died of apoplexy in the ninth, or, as some think, in the eleventh year of his reign between Concordia and Altinus. (*)

5 g At Pisa, the philosopher Peregrinus, after a funeral pyre that he had built from timber had been lit, threw himself on it.

165 (1) His 'brother' is Marcus Aurelius.

[288/289]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

10 a Melito, bishop of Sardis in Asia, handed over an Apology for the Christians to the emperor Antoninus.

2190 14 of the Divinity once was sent for Pertinax and his army while he was fighting with the emperor in the land of the Quadi and was oppressed with thirst; while on the other hand,

thunderbolts fell upon the Germans and Sarmatians, and slew most of them. There is extant a letter of Marcus Aurelius, a most serious emperor, in which it is witnessed that a drought of Germany was finished, perhaps by the prayers of the Christian soldiers, rain having been obtained.

174 b Apollinaris, bishop of Asian Hierapolis, is considered notable.

15

175

11 c Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, is considered important, and Pinytus of Crete, a most eloquent man. d The false prophecy, which is called the Cataphrygian, had its beginning, from its founder Montanus, with Priscilla and Maximilla the insane seers.

16

176 a Atticus, a philosopher of the Platonist school, is well known.

12 e Tatian the heretic is well known, from whom come the Encratites.

239th

Olympiad

17 b Eleutherius receives the 12th episcopate of the Roman Church for 15 years.

177 f Bardaisan, the leader of another heresy, becomes well-known. c Maximinus is appointed as 7th bishop of Antioch. g Oppianus Cilex the poet, who composed the Halieutica with wonderful splendour, is recognised. d Antoninus makes his son Commodus his colleague in power. h So great was the pestilence throughout the entire world, that that the Roman army was slaughtered almost to extinction. * e Antoninus with his son celebrated a triumph over the enemy, whom he had devastated by having a permanent camp at Carnuntum for three years. (*)

238th

Olympiad

13 i The emperor Antoninus sometimes personally participated in many of the wars that arose against him, sometimes he appointed very noble commanders. Among them, a rainstorm

18 f The emperors granted much to many, and when they had forgiven the provinces the money that was owed to the exchequer, they instructed that the titles of the debtors should

178

[290/291]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD be burned in the middle of the forum of Rome, and, lest anything of goodness should be lacking, they tempered some rather severe laws with new regulations. of Jerusalem. After him, the 27th is Antoninus, the 28th Valens, the 29th Dulchianus, the 30th Narcissus, the 31st Dius, the 32nd Germanio, the 33rd Gordius, and the 34th is Narcissus again. So many bishops having been appointed at Jerusalem, we could not discern the dates of each. Because of this these dates were not recorded much from this point until the present day.

7

186

19

179 a Antoninus, after a victory, was so splendid in the presentation of the games that a hundred lions were exhibited at the same time.

8

187 b Commodus is named 'Augustus' by the Senate. c Smyrna, a city of Asia, was destroyed by an earthquake; for the reconstruction of which, a ten-year moratorium on its tribute was granted.

9 a Lightning destroys the Capitol and a great fire having been caused, the library and also nearby buildings were consumed.

188 d Antoninus died in an illness in Pannonia. e Julian is chosen by lot as the tenth bishop of the Alexandrian church for ten years.

242nd

Olympiad

10 b Demetrius is appointed the 11th bishop of Alexandria for 43 years.

189 15th of the Romans, Commodus reigned for 13 years. c The emperor Commodus removed the head of the Colossus, and added a head in his own image.

1 f Commodus celebrated a triumph over the Germans. 180

240th

Olympiad

2 g The Temple of Serapis at Alexandria burned down. 181

11 d Serapion is ordained the eighth bishop of Antioch.

190

3 h Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyons, is considered notable.

182 e Commodus kills many of the nobles, and provides the Roman people with notable games.

4 i The baths of Commodus constructed in Rome. 183

2200 5 k Commodus named the month of September after himself. *

184

12 f After a fire had happened at Rome, the palace and temple of the Vestals, together with the larger part of the City, are levelled to the ground.

191

241st

Olympiad

6 I Maximus is ordained the 26th bishop

185

[292/293]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

13 a Commodus is strangled in the Vectilian House.

192 a Clement, a presbyter in the Church at Alexandria, and Pantaenus, a Stoic philosopher, are considered our most learned in disputes about doctrine.

243rd Olympiad 16th of the Romans, Aelius Pertinax reigned for 6 months.

3 b Narcissus, Bishop of Jerusalem and Theophilus of Caesarea, with Polycrates and Bacchylus, bishops of the Asian Province are considered notable.

195

1 b Though he was more than seventy years old, Pertinax, while he was holding the prefecture of the City, was ordered by a decree of the senate to govern the empire.

193 c Victor receives the 13th episcopate of Rome for 10 years, whose modest volumes On Religion are extant.

4 c A question having arisen among the bishops of Asia whether, according to the Law of Moses, Easter ought to be observed on the 14th of the month, Victor, bishop of the City of Rome and Narcissus of Jerusalem, together with Polycrates and many pastors of the churches, issued a letter stating what seemed likely to them, of which a record survives down to our time.

196 d Pertinax refused the pleas of the Senate to call his wife 'Augusta' and his son Caesar, which suffices to show that he himself reigned unwillingly. e Pertinax is slain in the palace, by the wickedness of Julian the jurist: whom Severus afterwards killed at the Milvian Bridge. (*)

244th

Olympiad

5 d The Jewish and Samaritan war happened.

197 17th of the Romans, Severus reigned for 18 years.

6 e Severus defeated the Parthians and the Adiabeni, and slaughtered the Inner Arabs to such an extent that he could make their land into a Roman province. On that account, he was given the surnames Parthicus, Arabicus, and Adiabenicus. (*)

198

2210 2 f Severus was from the town of Leptis in the Province of Tripolitana, and remains to this day the only Emperor the Romans had from Africa. In honor of Pertinax, whom Julianus had slain, he commanded that he be surnamed Pertinax. *

194 g Severus reigned for 6 months of the preceding year.

7

199

8

200

[294/295]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD a While Severus was reigning, Severian Baths were built at Antioch and Rome, and the Septizonium constructed. *

247th

Olympiad

17 a Severus dies at York in Britain.

209

18

210

245th Olympiad 18th of the Romans, Antoninus, surnamed Caracalla, son of Severus, reigned for 7 years.

9 b Zephyrinus received the 14th episcopate of the Roman Church, for 17 years.

201

1 b Asclepiades is appointed as the 9th Bishop of Antioch.

211

10

d 5th persecution

c While persecution

of the Christians was being carried on, Leonides the father of Origen passed on in the glorious death of martyrdom.

202

2 c While Narcissus is still living, Alexander is ordained 35th Bishop of Jerusalem and rules the Church with him on an equal basis.

212

11

203

2220 12 e Alexander is considered notable on account of his confession of the name of the Lord.

204 h In this year we find a jubilee observed by most, i.e. in the 12th year of Severus and 251st of the city of Antioch.

248th Olympiad f Clement composes many and various works.

3 d Antoninus was surnamed 'Caracalla' because of a type of clothing, which he had distributed at Rome; and in turn caracallae were called antoniniana from his name. *

213 g Musanus the writer, of our philosophy, is well known.

2230

4

214

246th

Olympiad

13 i After Clodius Albinus, who had made himself Caesar in Gaul, had been killed at Lyons, Severus carried the war over to the British provinces: where, so as to make the recovered provinces more secure from barbarian invasions, he drew an earthwork along a 132 mile stretch from sea to sea. (*)

205

5 e Antoninus built the bathhouses that bear his name at Rome. *

215

6 f Antoninus was so desperate with lust that he made his stepmother Julia his wife. *

216

14

206

249th

Olympiad

7 g Antoninus is killed between Edessa and Carrae in the 43rd year of his life. (*)

217

15

207

16 k Tertullian the African, son of the proconsular centurion, is celebrated among all the churches for his eloquence. 1 *

208 19th of the Romans, Macrinus reigned for 1 year.

1 h Macrinus, while holding the Praetorian Prefecture, made emperor. *

218 l Origen becomes learned by studies at Alexandria.

(1) A scholion in 'O' reads: "Tertullian was under the rule of Severus the African, 180 years after the Lord."

It is not in the same hand as the main text.

[296/297]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD a Philetus is appointed 10th bishop of Antioch.

21st of the Romans, Alexander, son of Mamaea, reigned for 13 years. b The amphitheatre at Rome burned down during the Vulcanalian Games.

1 a Alexander most gloriously defeated Xerxes, king of the Persians, and he was such a strict reformer of military discipline that he dismissed certain entire legions that were disorderly. *

223 c Abgar 1, a holy man, reigned at Edessa, as Africanus maintains. d Macrinus is slain in Khirbet-El-Arasah.

2240

2

224 20th of the Romans, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus reigned for 4 years.

251st

Olympiad

3 b Urbanus is ordained as 16th bishop of the Roman church, for nine years.

225

1 e Marcus Aurelius, thought to be the son of Antoninus Caracalla, and priest of the temple of Heliogabalus, during his reign lived shamelessly to such a degree, that he overlooked no kind of obscenity. *

219

4 c Ulpian the jurist and counselor of Alexander, is considered most notable. *

226

5 d Alexandrian baths built at Rome. *

227

2 f Callistus received the 15th episcopate of the Roman church for five years.

220

6 e Geminus, priest of Antioch, Hippolytus, and Beryllus, bishop of Arabian Bostra, are considered important writers.

228 g The temple of Heliogabalus built at Rome. *

250th

Olympiad

252nd

Olympiad

3 h In Palestine Nicopolis, which previously used to be called Emmaus, was founded as a city, the labour of the embassy on its behalf being undertaken by Julius Africanus, the writer of the Chronicle.

221

7 f Zebennus is appointed 11th bishop of Antioch.

229

8 g Origen of Alexandria is considered important.

230

9 h Heraclas is ordained as the 12th bishop of the Alexandrian church for 16 years.

231

4 i Antoninus is slain at Rome, along with his mother Symiasera, in a military uprising. (*)

222

10 i Alexander was uniquely pious towards his mother, and because of this was pleasant to everyone. *

232

(1) Abgar VIII.

[298/299]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

253rd

Olympiad

3 a Gordian, while very much a young man, having defeated the Parthian nation, when he was returning home a victor, he was killed by a stratagem of the praetorian prefect Philip not far from Roman soil. (*)

241

11 a Origen moves from Alexandria to Caesarea in Palestine.

233

4

242

2250 12 b Pontianus received the 17th episcopate of the Roman church for five years.

234

5

243

13 c Alexander is slain at Moguntiacum in a military uprising.

235 2260 6 b For Gordian the soldiers build a burial mound, which overlooks the Euphrates River, after his bones had been carried back to Rome. *

244 22nd of the Romans, Maximinus for 3 years.

24th

of the Romans, Philip ruled for seven years.

1 d Maximinus was the first emperor chosen by the army from the military, without the authorization of the Senate. *

236

256th

Olympiad

1 c Philip makes his son Philip his colleague in power; and he first of all the Roman emperors was a Christian. (*)

245

254th Olympiad 2 f 6th persecution. e Maximinus carries out a persecution against the priests of the churches.

237

2 d While the Philips were reigning, the millennium of the city of Rome was completed, because of which solemnity innumerable beasts were killed in the great circus and theatrical games celebrated in the Campus Martius, the people staying awake for three days and nights.

246

3 g Maximinus is slain at Aquileia by Pupienus. (*)

238 23rd of the Romans, Gordian 2 reigned for 6 years.

1 h Antherus is ordained as the 18th bishop of Rome, for one month, after whom the 19th, Fabianus for 13 years.

239

3 e The theatre of Pompey and the Hecatonstylon burned down.

247

2 i After Gordian had entered Rome, Pupienus and Albinus who had seized power were slain in the palace. *

240 f 'Athlamos' (600) ran in the contest for the birthday of the city of Rome, and this game has been held for a thousand years. 1

255th

Olympiad

4 g Philip constructs the city in

248

(1) The manuscripts contain either 'athalmos' or '600'. The reason is clear: the Greek contained the numeral for 600, and Jerome initially misread it as a proper name, 'Athalmos'. Later he realised the mistake, and corrected it, but some manuscripts derive from uncorrected copies of the text.

(2) There were three Gordians, not one.

[300/301]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD Thrace that bears his name. himself also crowned with martyrdom. Eight letters of Cyprian to him are extant. (*)

257th

Olympiad

5 a Dionysius held the 23rd episcopacy of the church of Alexandria for 17 years.

249

258th

Olympiad

6

250

1 a A pestilential sickness seized many provinces of the whole world, and especially at Alexandria and in Egypt, as Dionysius writes, and the book On Mortality by Cyprian is a witness. (*)

253

7 b The older Philip is slain at Verona, the younger at Rome. (*)

251 25th of the Romans, Decius reigned for 1 year, 3 months. c Decius, from Pannonia Inferior, was born at Budalia. * b Novatus a presbyter of Cyprian's, coming to Rome, unites Novatian and other confessors to himself, because Cornelius had received penitent apostates. (*)

1

d 7th persecution

d After Decius had killed

the Philips, father and son, from hatred of them he launches a persecution

against the Christians.

252 c Demetrianus is appointed as the 13th bishop of Antioch. e Anthony the monk is born in Egypt. f At Rome the amphitheatre burned down.

2270 2 d Lucius holds the 21st episcopacy of the Roman Church for 8 months. After which Stephen is the 22nd for 3 years. There are extant some letters of Cyprian to both of them. (*)

254 g After Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, had been killed as a martyr at Caesarea of Palestine and Babylas at Antioch, Mazabanus and Fabius are appointed bishops. e A jubilee, according to most of our people. f Gallus and Volusianus, when they set out from the City against Aemilianus, who was causing a revolt in Moesia, were killed in Forum Flaminii or, as some believe, at Interamna. (*) h Decius along with his son is murdered in Abritto.

26th of the Romans, Gallus and Volusianus son of Gallus reigned for two years, four months. i Cornelius received the 20th episcopate of the Roman church, after the glorious death of Fabianus, for 2 years and was g Aemilian died in the third month of his usurpation. *

[302/303]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD 27th of the Romans, Valerian and Gallienus reigned for 15 years.

Pannonian provinces. *

2280 10 a After Spanish provinces had been seized by the Germans, Tarracon was attacked. The Parthians were holding Mesopotamia, and invaded Syria. *

264

1 a In Rhetia Valerianus was hailed as Augustus by the army. At Rome Gallienus was named Caesar by the Senate. *

255

2

256

261st

Olympiad

259th

Olympiad

11 b Maximus is ordained as the 14th bishop of the church of Alexandria, for 18 years.

265 b Xystus held the episcopate of the Roman church 23rd for 8 years.

12 c Dionysius is appointed as the 24th bishop of Rome for 12 years.

266

3 c Cyprian, first a rhetorician, then a priest, and finally bishop of Carthage, is crowned with martyrdom. (*)

257 d Odenathus, a decurion of Palmyra, having collected a band of peasants, so slaughtered the Persians that he set up camp at Ctesiphon. (*)

4 d Valerian, after stirring up a persecution against the Christians, is immediately captured by Sapor, the king of the Persians, and there he grows old in miserable slavery. (*)

258 e 8th persecution, of Valerian

13 e Hymenaeus holds the episcopate of Jerusalem.

267

5 f Paul of Samosata deserted the preaching of everyone, and resuscitated the heresy of Artemon; Domnus is ordained 16th bishop of the Antiochene church in his place. f Sapor, king of the Persians, lays waste to Syria, Cilicia, and Cappadocia.

14

268

6 g After Valerian had been led captive into Persia, Gallienus restored peace to us.

259 g The Gallic provinces recovered by Postumus, Victorinus and Tetricus. *

260th

Olympiad

7 h Paul of Samosata is appointed as the 15th bishop of Antioch.

260

262nd

Olympiad

15 h Gallienus is murdered at Milan.

269

8 i While Gallienus was dissipated with every wantonness, the Germans came as far as Ravenna.
*

261 28th of the Romans, Claudius reigned for 1 year, 9 months.

9 k After the Gallic provinces had been devastated, the Alamanni crossed into Italy. * l Greece, Macedonia, Pontus, and Asia laid waste by the Goths. The Quadi and the Sarmatae seized

262 i In Alexandria, Bruchium, which had been blockaded for many years, is at last destroyed. k
Claudius defeats the Goths ravaging

[304/305]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

Illyricum and Macedonia; because of them, in the Curia a gold medallion, and in the Capitol a gold statue, were set up for him. was Corrector of Lucania, and Zenobia grew old in the city with great esteem, and from her today there is a family in Rome that is named 'of Zenobia'.

2 a Claudius dies at Sirmium.

271

4 a Aurelian builds a temple to the Sun and surrounds Rome with stronger walls.

275 b Quintilius the brother of Claudius named Augustus by the Senate; on the 17th day of his reign he is slain at Aquileia. * b The first games of the sun established by Aurelian. d 9th persecution c After Aurelian had initiated a persecution against us, a thunderbolt falls next to him and his companions; and not long after, he is slain at Caenophrurium on the old road between Constantinople and Heraclea. (*) 29th of the Romans, Aurelian reigned for 5 years, 6 months.

5

276

1 c Timaeus is ordained as the 17th bishop of the church of Antioch.

272

263rd Olympiad 264th Olympiad. 30th of the Romans, Tacitus reigned for 6 months. d Tetricus abandoning his army among the Catalauni, Aurelian recovered the Gallic provinces. (*) e After he had been slain at Pontus, Florian obtained power for 88 days. After he too had been killed at Tarsus,

2

273

1

277 e Zenobia is conquered at Immae, not far distant from Antioch. After her husband had been slain, she was holding the rule of the East. In this struggle, the general Pompeianus -- whose cognomen was 'the Frank' -- fought very vigorously against her. Even today his family persists at Antioch, and Evagrius, very dear to us, is descended from his line. (*) 31st of the Romans, Probus reigned for 6 years, 4 months.

1 f Felix received the 25th episcopate of the Roman church for 5 years.

278 g Probus with great energy restored the Gallic provinces occupied by the barbarians. * h Start of the 86th jubilee according to the Hebrews

2

i Anatolius, bishop

of Laodicea, learned in the teachings of the philosophers, is celebrated for his superlative eloquence.

279

2290 3 f Eusebius, bishop of Laodicaea, is considered notable.

274 k The second year of Probus was year 325 according to the people of Antioch; 402 according to the Tyrians; 324 according to the Laodiceans; 588 according to the Edessans; 380 according to the Ascalonians. g Tetricus and Zenobia preceded the chariot of Aurelian in a triumph at Rome; after which Tetricus

3 l The insane heresy of the Manichaeans appeared, to the general harm of the human race. 1

280 (1) Latin: *Insana Manichaeorum haeresis in commune humani generis malum exorta.*

[306/307]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD a Probus permitted the Gauls and Pannonians to have vines, and he gave the Alma and Aureus hills, planted by the army, to be harvested by the provincials. 1 * Tigris, died by a flash of lightning. (*)

2 a Numerian, as he was being carried along in a litter due to a pain in his eye, was slain by a plot of his father-in-law Aper. The wickedness was only discovered several days later due to the stench of the corpse. (*)

285

265th

Olympiad

4 b Cyrillus is appointed 18th bishop of Antioch.

281 b Carinus, defeated in battle at the Margus, is slain. (*) 33rd of the Romans, Diocletian reigned for 20 years. c Saturninus, the master of the army, began to refound a new city at Antioch: who afterwards is slain at Apamea attempting to take possession of the empire.

1 c Diocletian from Dalmatia, the son of a scribe, after being elected emperor immediately struck Aper in the assembly of the soldiers, swearing that Numerian had been killed without his being involved.

286

5 d Eutychianus received the 26th episcopate of the Church of Rome for 8 months, after which Gaius was 27th for 15 years.

282

2 d Diocletian adopted as co-ruler Maximianus Herculus who, after suppressing a multitude of peasants, to whose faction he gave the name of Bacaudae, restored peace to the Gallic provinces. (*)

287

6 e Probus is murdered in an uprising of the military in a tower, which is called Ferrata, near Sirmium. (*)

283

3

288 f Theonas presided as the 15th bishop of the Alexandrian church for 19 years.

267th

Olympiad

4 e After assuming the purple, Carausius occupied Britain. Narsaeus made war in the East. *

289 32nd of the Romans, Carus with his sons Carinus and Numerian, for two years. f The Quinquegentani 2 infested Africa. *

2300

1

284 g Achilleus seized Egypt. For these reasons Constantius and Galerius Maximianus were adopted into the royal power as Caesars. Constantius was the nephew of Claudius through his daughter, and Galerius was born in Dacia not far from Serdica. And so that Diocletian might be connected to them by marriage, Constantius

266th

Olympiad

5

290 g Carus, from Narbonne, when he had taken Cochis and Ctesiphon, the most important cities of the enemy, after all the region of the Parthians had been devastated, while setting up camp besides the

6

291

(1) Eutropii Breviarium Liber Nonus 17: Vineas Gallos et Pannonios

habere permisit, opere militari Almam montem apud Sirmium et Aureum apud Moesiam
superiorem vineis conseruit et provincialibus colendos dedit.

(2) The Five Tribes.

[308/309]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD married Theodora the stepdaughter of Herculus, from whom afterwards he had six children,
the brothers of Constantine; Galerius married Valeria the daughter of Diocletian, after both being
obliged to divorce the wives they had. (*) the church of Jerusalem.

7

292 a After ten years Britain recovered by Asclepiodotus, the praetorian prefect. *

270th

Olympiad

268th Olympiad b Near Langres, 60,000 Alamanni slaughtered by Constantius Caesar. *

8 a Busiris and Coptos rebelling against the Romans, they were razed down to the ground.

293

2310

9

294

16 c Galerius Maximian, defeated by Narses, ran before Diocletian's carriage wearing his purple
robes. *

301

10 b The nations of the Carpi and Basternae were resettled on Roman soil. *

295 d Veturius, Master of the Soldiers, persecutes the Christian soldiers, the persecution against
us beginning little by little from just that time.

11 c While all the emperors before him were hailed in the manner of a magistrate, and they had
nothing more than a purple mantle in addition to a normal dress, Diocletian was the first to order

that he should be hailed as a god, and gems to be sewn into his robes and shoes. *

296 e 10th persecution

17 f Galerius Maximian, after he had defeated Narses, and captured his wives, children and sisters, is received by Diocletian with great honour. *

302 g The Baths of Diocletian at Rome and the Baths of Maximian at Carthage made. *

269th

Olympiad

12 d Marcellianus received the 28th episcopate of the Roman church.

297

18 h Hermon presided as the 38th bishop of the church of Jerusalem.

303

13 e Alexandria, with the rest of Egypt, cut itself off from Roman authority through the leadership of Achilleus; after a siege of eight months, it was retaken by Diocletian. Therefore, many throughout the whole of Egypt were troubled with heavy proscriptions and exile after those who had emerged as the cause of the revolt had been killed. 1 (*)

298 i Tyrannus is appointed as the 19th bishop of Antioch.

2320 19 k After Theonus, Peter is ordained the 21st bishop of the Church of Alexandria, who later in the ninth year of the persecution accomplished a glorious martyrdom.

304 l A jubilee according to most

14

299 m Diocletian and Maximian Augusti celebrated a triumph at Rome with notable pomp. Before their chariot went the

15 f Zabdas is ordained 37th bishop of

300

(1) This revolt is that of Domitius Domitianus. Several problems

arise regarding this event. First, it is Achilleus who alone receives mention

for the revolt; Contemporary papyrological evidence shows Achilleus with the

title of corrector. Some scholars have suggested two revolts in Egypt. Domitianus,

however, had coinage struck in his name, a logical first step in any rebellion;

Achilleus has no coin struck in his name. Connected with this first problem,

another suggestion has been made that Domitianus and Achilleus are one and the

same. More likely is that Achilleus was a sub-commander for Domitianus, though any certain answer is still unclear. A similar problem involves the dating of the revolt, though Jerome places it in 297 or after, a date supported by the papyrological and numismatic evidence. A third problem is the reason for the revolt. Renewed trouble between the eastern provinces and Sasanian Persia, may have put extra pressure on Egypt; quite possibly some of Diocletian's reforms did not sit well with the upper-class Egyptians.

[310/311]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD wife, sisters and children of Narses, and all the booty, which they had looted from the Parthians. for 30 years, 10 months. Year of the persecution: 4 *

307 1 a Maxentius, the son of Maximianus Herculus, is named Augustus at Rome by the Praetorian Guard. (*)

2330 a In a horrible earthquake at Tyre and Sidon, many edifices were ruined and an immense number of people were crushed. b Severus Caesar, sent against Maxentius by Galerius Maximianus, is killed at Ravenna in the second year of his reign. b In the nineteenth year of Diocletian, during the month of March, in the days of Easter, the churches were destroyed. However in the 4th year of the persecution, Constantine began to reign.

2

c Licinius made emperor

at Carnuntum by Galerius.

5

308 d Maximianus Herculus, detected by his daughter Fausta, because he was preparing a swindle against his son-in-law Constantine, in flight is slain at Marseilles. c According to the Antiochenes, year 350. 1st year of the persecution e Quirinus, bishop of Siscia, is gloriously killed for Christ: for the top of a household quern fastened to his neck, and thrown headlong into a river, he floated for a very long time and while he was being remarked upon by the spectators, lest by his example they should be frightened, hardly praying that he should sink, he obtained it.

271st

Olympiad

2

20

d In the second year

of the persecution, Diocletian at Nicomedia, and Maximianus at Milan, laid down the purple. (*)

305 e Eusebius is appointed as the 29th bishop at Rome for a period of seven months, after him Miltiades as the 30th bishop holds the church for four years.

272nd Olympiad 3 f Galerius Maximianus dies. 6

309

3 f Maximinus 1 and Severus made Caesars by Galerius Maximian.

306 4 g Silvester is ordained as the 31st bishop of the Church of Rome for 22 years. 7

310 g In the 16th year of his reign Constantius 2 died in Britain at York; after him his son Constantine, born from the concubine Helena, takes possession of the empire. (*)

5

h Maximinus, after a

persecution had been carried out against the Christians, when now about to be punished by Licinius, dies at Tarsus. (*)

8

311 i Achillas is ordained as the 17th bishop of the Church of Alexandria.

6

k Maxentius, defeated

by Constantine near the Milvian Bridge, dies.

9

312 34th of the Romans, Constantine reigned (1) Maximinus Daia.

(2) Constantius I Chlorus.

[312/313]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

273rd Olympiad homousion.

7 a The war against Licinius at Cibalae. 10

313

17 a Constantius, the son of Constantine, appointed Caesar. 323

2330 8 b Macarius is appointed as the 39th bishop of Jerusalem. c Peace restored to us by Constantine. 314 b Licinius, contrary to a solemn pledge, is slain as a private citizen at Thessalonica. *

9

315

10 d Diocletian dies in his villa at Split, not far from Salonae, and, alone of all (the emperors), is declared to be among the gods as a private citizen. (*) 316 2340 18 c Nazarius the rhetor is considered notable. *

324

276th

Olympiad

19 d Crispus, the son of Constantine, and Licinius junior, the son of Constantia, the sister of Constantine, and of Licinius, are very cruelly killed.

325

274th

Olympiad

11 e Crispus and Constantine, sons of Constantine, and Licinius, the adolescent son of Licinius Augustus, the offspring of Constantine's sister, are appointed Caesars; of these, Lactantius, the most eloquent man of his time, educated Crispus in Latin literature; but he (Lactantius) was in fact a pauper in this life, as he generally lacked even the necessities.

317

20 e The Vicennalia of Constantine held in Nicomedia, and proclaimed at Rome in the following year.

326

12

318 f Until this point Eusebius Pamphili, companion to the martyrs, writes this history, to which we ourselves have appended these things following. *

13

319

21 g In Africa, Arnobius the rhetor is considered important, who when he was in Sicca teaching the youths to declaim, and, being still a pagan, was compelled by dreams to believe, although he had not obtained from the bishop by asking the faith that he had always attacked, he composed the most splendid books against the former religion, and finally, as if with these as offerings, he requested and obtained the covenant of faith.

327

14

320

275th Olympiad f Licinius expells the Christians from his palace. g Basileus bishop of Amasia of Pontus is crowned with martyrdom under Licinius.

15 h Alexander is ordained the 18th bishop of the Alexandrian church: it was he who excommunicated Arius the priest from the Church. Arius unites many people to his impiety; a synod of 318 bishops having gathered in the city of Nicaea to refute their perfidy, put and end to all the machinations of the heretics in opposition to the

321 h Constantine, restoring the city of Drepana in Bithynia in honor of the martyr Lucian, who was buried there, named it Helenopolis, from the name of his mother.

16

322 i In Antioch the construction of the Dominicum which

[314/315]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

is called Aureum begun.

25 a Marcus held the 32nd episcopacy of the Church of Rome for 8 months, after whom, Julius was ordained 33rd, for 16 years, 4 months.

331

22 a Constantine kills his wife Fausta.

328 b Donatus is well known, from whom come the Donatists throughout Africa. b By an edict of Constantine the temples of the gentiles were overthrown.

277th

Olympiad

26 c The Romans defeated the Goths in the land of the Sarmatians.

332 c At Antioch following Tyrannum, Vitalis is ordained as the 20th bishop, after whom as 21st Philogonius, to whom succeeded as 22nd Paulinus, after whom as 23rd Eustathius, from whom, when he was forced into exile for the Faith, the Arians got the church (and hold it) until the present day, that is, Eulalius, Eusebius, Euphronius, Placillus, Stephanus, Leontius, Eudoxius, Meletius, Euzoius, Dorotheus, and Meletius again. But I have not sorted out their dates, insofar as I would judge them enemies of Christ rather than bishops.

278th

Olympiad

27 d Constans, the son of Constantine, is promoted to the royal power.

333 e An innumerable multitude perish from pestilence and famine in Syria and Cilicia.

2350 28 f The Limigantes Sarmatians, having gathered a force, expelled their masters, who are now called the Argaragantes, onto Roman soil.

334

23

329 g Calocerus revolts in Cyprus and is suppressed.

29 h Constantine and his children sent an honorific letter to Antonius.

335 d Juvenius the presbyter, by nation Spanish, sets forth the Gospels in heroic verse. i On the Tricennalia of Constantine, Dalmatius is named a Caesar. e Porphyrius, having sent a notable book to Constantine is released from exile.

30 k The rhetor Pater teaches at Rome with great success.

336

24 f Athanasius is ordained as 19th bishop of Alexandria.

330 l The daughter of the rhetor Nazarius equals her father in eloquence. m The praetorian prefect Tiberian, an eloquent man, rules the Gallic provinces. g Constantinople is dedicated by denuding nearly every other city. n The presbyter Eustathius of Constantinople is well known; by whose industry in Jerusalem, a church h Metrodorus the philosopher is well known.

[316/317]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD dedicated to the martyrs was constructed. support of the ruler, Constantius, with exiles and imprisonments and various types of affliction first persecuted Athanasius and then all bishops not of their party.

279th

Olympiad

31 a Constantine, baptized by Eusebius of Nicomedia at the very end of his life, falls into the dogma of Arius, and from that time until now seizures of churches and discord of the whole world have followed.

337

3 a Constantine, waging war against his brother near Aquileia, is slain at Als.

340

280th Olympiad b While preparing for war against the Persians, Constantine dies at Ancyra in a public villa near Nicomedia at the age of 66; after him his three sons are hailed Augusti from being Ceasars.

4 b Constans fights against the Franks with mixed fortune.

341 c Many cities of the east collapsed in a horrible earthquake. d Audeus is considered important in Coele-Syria, from whom comes the Audian heresy.

35th

of the Romans, Constantine, Constantius, and Constans reigned for 24 years,

5 months, and 13 days.

5 e The Franks subdued by Constans and peace made with them.

342

1 c Ablabius the Praetorian Prefect and many of the nobles slaughtered.

338 f Hermogenes the master of soldiers lynched by the people of Constantinople on account of bishop Paul whom he was banishing by the power of the emperor and the faction of the Arians. d Sapor, king of Persia, after Mesopotamia had been devastated, besieged Nisibis for almost two months. e Dalmatius Caesar, whom his uncle Constantine had left as a colleague in the power of his sons, is murdered by a plot of his cousin Constantius and in a military disturbance. g The Dominicum Aureum is dedicated in Antioch. h Macedonius 'the featherer' in place of Paul is substituted as bishop of the Arians; from whom now is the Macedonian heresy. f James, bishop of Nisibis, is well known, by whose prayers his city was often saved from crisis. i Because of the cruelty of the prefect Philip, for he was a supporter of Macedonius' party, and due to the plotting of the Arians, Paul is strangled.

2 g From this point the Arian impiety, propped up by the

339

[318/319]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

6 a Maximinus, bishop of the Treveris, is considered important; by whom Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, was received honourably, when he 1 obtained punishment from Constantius.

343 instance, as I shall omit others, Nisibis was beseiged and Bizabde and Amida were captured. a Maximus the 40th bishop of Jerusalem after Macarius dies, after whom the Arians take possession of the church, that is Cyril, Eutychius, Cyril again, Irenaeus, Cyril a third time, Hilarius, Cyril a fourth time. Of these, Cyril had been ordained presbyter by Maximus and thus after his death the episcopate was promised to him by Acacius bishop of Caesarea and other Arians if he would repudiate the ordination of Maximus. He ministered as a deacon in the church. On account of this impiety of priesthood he was compensated by a bribe. He degraded Heraclius, whom the dying Maximus had appointed in his place, from bishop to presbyter, harassing him by various deceits.

2360

7

344 b Sapor, king of the Persians, persecutes the Christians. c Neocaesaria in Pontus destroyed, except for the church, the bishop and the other people that were found in that very place.

281th

Olympiad

8 d Titian, an eloquent man, administers the praetorian prefecture, in the Gallic provinces.

345

9 e Athanasius is returned to Alexandria by a letter of Constans.

346 f Dyrrachium collapsed in an earthquake, and for three days and nights Rome tottered and many cities of Campania were shaken.

282nd Olympiad g A sea-port constructed in Seleucia of Syria at great expense to the state.

12 b Liberius is ordained 34th bishop of the Roman church, to whom, when he had been driven into exile on account of the faith, all the clergy swore that they would receive no-one else. However when Felix was substituted by the Arians, most perjured themselves and after a year they were ejected with Felix because Liberius, having been conquered by the tedium of exile and subscribing to the heretical depravity, had entered Rome as if a conqueror.

349 h Sapor for three months again besieges Nisibis.

10 i The bishop Eusebius of Emesa, standard-bearer of the Arian faction, composes many and various works.

347 k An eclipse of the sun happened. 2

11 I Nocturnal Persian battle at Singara in which we lost a certain victory by the stupidity of the soldiers. Nor indeed was there any more serious battle out of nine most serious conflicts against the Persians, for

348

13 c After Magnentius had seized the emperorship at Augustodunum, Constans is killed in the thirtieth year of his life not far from

350

(1) Athanasius.

(2) 346AD, Jun. 6th

[320/321]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

Spain in a camp which is named Helena; on account of this, since the state was thrown into turmoil, Vetranio, at Mursa, and Nepotian, at Rome, became emperors. whom he had sent to look after the Gallic provinces, ends his life among the Senones with a noose. a Gennadius the forensic orator, is considered notable at Rome. a At Rome, the people rebelling against the followers of Magnentius are betrayed by Heraclides the senator. b The rhetor Minervius of Bordeaux teaches at Rome with great success. b The head of Nepotian paraded through the city on a pike, and many proscriptions and slaughters of noblemen carried out.

2370 17 c Gallus Caesar, deceived by his cousin Constantius, under whose suspicion he had come because of his outstanding inborn ability, is executed at Histria.

354

14 c The insignia of imperial power taken away from Vetranio by Constantius at Naissus.

351 d Silvanus, having revolted in Gaul, died on the twenty-eighth day. d Magnentius conquered at Mursa, in which battle the Roman forces were ruined. e The rhetor Victorinus and my teacher Donatus the grammarian are considered notable at Rome, of whom Victorinus even merited a statue in the forum of Trajan. e Gallus, cousin of Constantius, made Caesar.

15 f Gallus crushed the Jews, who after killing the soldiers by night had taken possession of arms in order to rebel, with the slaughter of many thousands of men, even up to those of innocent years, and turned over to fire their cities, Diocaesaria, Tiberias and Diospolis, and very many towns.

352 f Paulinus and Rodianus, bishops of the Gallic provinces, driven into exile on account of the faith.

18 g The rhetors Alcimus and Delphidius teach with great success in Aquitania.

355 h Donatus, from whom we have mentioned above that the Donatists took their name, is expelled from Carthage: certain followers of his they also call Montensians from those that first began to have a church at Rome on a hill. g Some of the nobles of Antioch killed by Gallus.

283rd

Olympiad

16

i Jubilee according

to the Hebrews

h Magnentius of Lugdunum

kills himself in the palace by his own hand; and his brother Decentius,

353 i Eusebius bishop of Vercellae, and Lucifer and Dionysius, bishops of the churches of Cagliari and Milan, also

[322/323]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD

Pancratius a Roman presbyter and Hilarius a deacon are condemned to exile with distance between them by the Arians and Constantius. apostle Andrew and evangelist Luke were received from the people of Constantinople with marvellous goodwill.

21 a Nicomedia utterly destroyed by an earthquake; the neighbouring cities partially damaged.

358 a Julian, brother of Gallus, is named Caesar at Milan. b Paulinus bishop of Treves dies in exile in Phrygia.

19 b Anthony the monk dies in his 150th year in the desert. He was accustomed to recount to many who came to him about a certain man Paul the Theban of wonderful blessings, whose death we have ourselves explained in a brief book.

356 c Evantius, most learned of grammarians, died at Constantinople, in whose place Chrestus is brought from Africa.

22 d Synods held at Ariminum and Seleucia in Isauria, in which the ancient faith of the fathers was condemned, first by the treachery of ten delegates, then by all.

359

10 c Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, by the plotting of Saturninus bishop of Arles and the rest who with him were Arians, having been expelled to Phrygia for three years, composes books about our

religion. e Honoratus, from being Pretorian Prefect of the Gallic provinces, made the first Prefect of the city of Constantinople. d The relics of the apostle Timothy brought to Constantinople. f Gratian, who is now emperor, is born. e Sarmata, Amatas and Macarius, disciples of Anthony, are considered notable. g Hilarius, when he had offered a book in his own defence to Constantius at Constantinople, returns to the Gallic provinces. f Liberius, the Roman bishop, is sent into exile. 1 g Large numbers of the forces of the Alamanni crushed by Julian Caesar at Argentoratum, a city of the Gallic provinces. h Macedonius is banished from Constantinople. i Almost every church in the whole world is polluted in the name of 'peace' and by the connivance of the ruler of the Arians.

284th

Olympiad

23 k The greatest of churches is dedicated in Constantinople.

20 h Saracens, rushing into the monastery of Blessed Anthony, kill Sarmata.

357 l Meletius of Sebastia, bishop of the Armenians, is transferred to Antioch by Acacius and George the Arian bishops, and after no i After Constantius had entered Rome, the bones of the (1) Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus 15.7.6-10.

[324/325]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD great interval of time, when he received the presbyters which had been unfrocked by his predecessor Eudoxius, a most just cause of exile having been endured, he played false by changing faith. conceded that he might teach despite being a Christian. a Aemilianus is burned by the vicarius because he had overturned the altars at Dorostorum. b The church of Antioch was shut and a most serious storm of imminent persecution was quieted by the will of God. For Julian had proceeded into Persia and vowed our blood after a victory to the gods. There he was led into the desert by a certain pretended deserter, when he had lost his apostate army by hunger and thirst and had unadvisedly strayed from the ranks of his own men, he was by chance stabbed in the groin with a lance by a hostile horseman of the enemy and perished in the 32nd year of his life. After which, the following day, Jovian the primicerius of the household troops was made emperor. a Because of Hilary, Gaul condemns the treacherous trickeries of Ariminum.

285th

Olympiad

23 b Constantius II dies at Mopsocrene, between Cilicia and Cappadocia, in the forty-fifth year of his life.

361 36th of the Romans, Julian reigned for 1 year and 8 months

1 c As Julian had been converted to the worship of idols, there was a mild persecution, more swaying than compelling people to have to sacrifice, in which many of our people fell by their own will.

362 d After George, who had been ordained bishop in place of Athanasius by the Arians, had been burned to death because of a revolt of the people, Athanasius is returned to Alexandria.

37th

of the Romans, Jovian reigned for 8 months

2380 1 c Jovian, compelled by necessity, handed over Nisibis and a great part of Mesopotamia to Sapor, king of the Persians.

364 e Eusebius and Lucifer are returned from exile, from where Lucifer, having adopted two other confessors, makes Paulinus, the presbyter of bishop Eustathius and who had never polluted himself in the communion of the heretics, bishop in the Catholic part of Antioch. d The synod of Antioch convened by Melitius and his group, at which, after the homoousian and anomoian theories were rejected, they proclaimed the Macedonian dogma of the homoiousion, midway between them.

2 f When the law had been given that Christians could not be teachers of the liberal arts, Proheresius the Athenian sophist spontaneously gave up his school, although Julian had specially
363 e From indigestion, or the smell of coals, of which he had ordered too many to be burned, Jovian dies at Dadastana 1 (1) On the border between Bithynia and Galatia.

[326/327]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD aged 33. After him Valentinian, tribune of the scutarii, from Pannonia Cibalensis 1, is hailed as Augustus at Nicaea, and takes his brother Valens as co-ruler at Constantinople. coming together with some people from the supporters of Damasus, very cruel slaughters were committed by both sexes. a Valens, baptised by Eudoxius, bishop of the Arians, persecutes us.

286th

Olympiad

3 b Gratian, the son of Valentinian, made emperor at Amiens.

367 38th of the Romans, Valentinian and Valens reigned for 14 years and 5 months c Such a great tempest arose at Constantinople that, hail of a wonderful size falling, it killed some men.

1 a Valentinian in another time would have been an exceptional emperor and was similar to Aurelian in his behaviour, except that his undue strictness and a certain frugality were interpreted as cruelty and greed.

365 d Among the Atrabates wool mixed with rain descended from the sky. e Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, dies. b Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea, composes manifold writings of our religion.

4 f Nicea, which had often before been shaken, was utterly destroyed by an earthquake.

368

2 c An earthquake having occurred throughout the whole world, the shore is invaded by the sea, and falling debris in innumerable cities of Sicily and of many islands, crushed the people.

366 g The rhetor Libanius of Antioch is considered notable.

287th

Olympiad

5 h The games restored at Constantinople by Valens.

369 d Procopius, who had usurped power at Constantinople, died nearby in Phrygia and most of the Procopian party was slaughtered and proscribed. i Athanaric, king of the Goths, after a persecution had been stirred up against the Christians, kills or expels very many from their own homes in to Roman soil. k Eusebius, bishop of Vercelli, dies. e Damasus is ordained 35th bishop of the Roman Church, and after a not very long interval Ursinus, is appointed bishop by some people, and with his partisans invaded (the church of) Sicinimum, in which,

6 l The Church of the Holy Apostles is dedicated in Constantinople.

370 m Great famine in Phrygia.

(1) Cibale.

[328/329]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD a Lucifer Bishop of Cagliari dies, who like Gregory, bishop of the Spanish provinces, and Philo of Libya never involved himself with the Arian depravity. a Almost eighty thousand Burgundians marched down to the Rhine, which had never occurred before. b Clearchus, prefect of the city of Constantinople, is well known, by whom the necessary water which was daily awaited with vows is brought to the community.

7

b Maximinus the prefect

of the Annona

1, having been ordered by the emperor to investigate wrongdoers, slew many of the nobles of Rome.

371 c Peter is ordained 20th bishop of Alexandria, who after the death of Valens was so easy receiving back the heretics that some people brought in the suspicion that he was accepting bribes. c Valentinus crushed in Britain, of which he had before taken possession as a usurper. d A presbyter of Sirmium is very unjustly beheaded because he refused to betray Octavianus that was hiding at his house from the proconsul.

2390

10

d Melania, noblest of

Roman women, and daughter of the sometime consul Marcellinus, at that time having left behind her only son, the urban praetor, sailed to Jerusalem, where she was such a miracle of virtue and especially of humility, that she received the name of Thecla.

2

374

8

e Didymus the Alexandrian

writes many commentaries about our dogma using secretaries. He had been deprived of his sight after the 5th year of his life and was actually ignorant of first principles of writing.

372 e After the tardy death of Auxentius, Ambrosius of Milan is appointed bishop, and everybody in Italy is converted to the right faith. f Probus, Prefect of the Illyrians, destroyed the provinces that he was ruling by the most iniquitous extractions of tributes, even before they were devastated by the barbarians. f The priests of Aquileia are considered almost as a chorus of the blessed.

11

g Because in the previous

year the Sarmatians had devastated the Pannonian provinces, the same Consuls remained in office.

375

288th Olympiad 9 g Eunomius the disciple of Aetius of Constantinople is well known, from whom comes the Eunomian heresy.

373 h Valentinian dies suddenly at Brigetio from an eruption of blood which is called an 'apoplexy' in Greek. After him Gratian is taken up into power with his brother Valentinian and reigns with his uncle Valens. h The Saxons slaughtered at Deuso in the land of the Franks.

(1) The grain supply.

(2) Rufinus accused Jerome of deleting this entry from his own copy of the Chronicle after falling out with Melania (the Elder).

[330/331]

Romans

AD

Romans

AD a Many of the monks at Nitria slaughtered by the tribunes and the soldiers. a After the Romans had been defeated in combat, the Goths are spread out in Thrace. b Valens made a law that monks must do military service, and ordered that any who did not want to should be beaten to death with their staves.

14

b Valens, forced to

leave Antioch, in tardy penitence recalls our people from exile.

378

12 c Theodosius, father of the Theodosius who was later Emperor, and many nobles slain.

376

[15] c Lamentable war in Thrace, in which the Roman legions, lacking the protection of horse, were surrounded by the Goths and slaughtered to extinction: the emperor Valens himself, when wounded by an arrow, fled and because of the severe pain often almost fell from his horse, was carried off to a certain farm cottage, and after being pursued there by the barbarians and the house set on fire, he did not even obtain burial. d From the founding of the City until the end of this work there are 1131 years, in this manner: under kings,

240 years under consuls,

464 years under Augusti and Caesars,

427 years [379] d Photinus dies in Galatia, from whom comes the Judaizing teaching of the Photinians. 1 e Basil of Caesarea, Bishop of Cappadocia, is considered important, who ruined many good qualities of continence and ingenuity by the one failing of pride.

289th

Olympiad

13 f About 30,000 Alamanni laid low by Gratian's army at Argentaria, a town of the Gauls.

377 g The monks Florentinus, Bonosus, and Rufinus are considered notable, of whom Florentinus was so merciful to the needy that he was called by the crowd "Father of the Poor". h The nation of

the Huns devastate the Goths, who, having been received by the Romans without surrender of arms, were driven by hunger to have to rebel because of the greed of general Maximus. 2

(1) Jerome, like many heresiologists, always associates Photinus

with Sabellius, Paul of Samosata and Judaism. He wants to show, by this association,

that they're all heretics, but does not particularise each of them. Jerome usually

explains that the common heresy of Photinus and Judaism is to think that Jesus

was just a man who had been adopted by God as his son. Jerome knows that Photinus

is not exactly a Monarchianist, but an Adoptianist. Benoît Jeanjean shows

how Jerome presents Photinus, Paulus of Samosate and Sabellius in his book :

Benoît Jeanjean, "Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie",

Paris, Etudes Augustiniennes, 1999, p. 168-177.

(2) The original manuscript of 'O' ends at this point. A single leaf (f.145)

with a brief summary of events follows, in the same hand as the Tertullian scholion

noted earlier. After this, the manuscript contains the Chronicle of Marcellinus.

[332]

All the years are added up until the 6th consulate of the Emperor Valens and the second of the Emperor Valentinian the younger: from the 15th year of Tiberius and the preaching of our Lord Jesus Christ:

351 years from the second year of Darius, King of the Persians, in which period the temple at Jerusalem was restored

899 years from the first Olympiad, in which time Isaiah was prophesying among the Hebrews

1,155 years from Solomon and the first building of the Temple

1,411 years from the capture of Troy, at which time Sampson was among the Hebrews

1,561 years from Moses and Cecrops, first King of Attica

1,890 years from Abraham and the reign of Ninus and Semiramis

2,395 years The whole list from Abraham until the time written above

2,395 years but from the flood until Abraham there are counted

942 years and from Adam until the flood

2,242 years

There

are altogether from Adam until the 14th year of Valens, that is, until his
6th consulate and the second of Valentinian

5,579 years This text was translated and edited by Roger Pearse and friends, 2005. All material on
this page is in the public domain - copy freely.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Chronicle - Preface to the online edition

Jerome, Chronicle (2005). Preface to the Online Edition The Chronicle of St. Jerome

Introduction The Chronicle of St. Jerome was composed around 380AD and became the primary available source of information on dates and events from the time of its composition until the end of the middle ages. Jerome's work itself was a translation into Latin of the Chronicle of Eusebius of Caesarea, brought up to date, but it was through Jerome that it came to be so influential.

It is the first text in which we see an attempt to accurately date all the events of times previous. Every event is assigned to a date, the kings and the dates are drawn up in columns, and brief notes made against each. The revolutionary tabular format forces the chronologist to be precise in whatever data is entered and highlights any errors involved in synchronising lists from different kingdoms of kings and the number of years they reigned. The Chronicle of Eusebius of Caesarea

Eusebius of Caesarea wrote his chronicle ca. 311 AD, and is responsible for

the revolutionary format which transformed the study of history.

Prior to Eusebius, a chronography would consist of lists of kings, and how long they reigned. An occasional note might be attached to the name of a king, stating that in the 3rd year of his reign such-and-such event occurred. Each kingdom would be treated separately, and its rulers or magistrates listed. Eusebius himself compiled a chronography of this kind, which is today known as book one of his Chronicle, and has the title The Chronography. But the problem for the reader was how to link information about rulers and events in one kingdom to events in other kingdoms. Eusebius wanted to write a history of the church, and needed to link together information from Jewish sources with the chronographical information that he obtained from numerous Greek predecessors, such as Porphyry, Castor, and Erastothenes, and also from Christian predecessors such as Julius Africanus. His own contribution was to draw up the existing mass of chronological information in a tabular format that enforced a perpetual synchronism between the various parallel strands of data. This innovation may rightly be described as a moment of genius. The second book of his Chronicle was drawn up in this way and entitled The Chronological Canons. This was the portion that Jerome translated and its format can be seen below. Jerome's translation is the most accurate version of this book that has reached us. To do this, Eusebius took the then new medium of the codex (the modern book format, as opposed to the roll) and exploited the concept of a page. He divided up the page using a tabular format.

He drew vertical columns on the page. The lefthandmost he headed as 'Kings of the Persians' (or whichever other empire was current at the time). The righthandmost he headed 'Kings of the Egyptians', so long as there were any. When new kingdoms came along, he added an extra column for them; when kingdoms disappeared, the column vanished with them. When a king came to the throne, he placed his name on a separate line by itself, for any events of that king which had no specified year. Beneath it he then enumerated the years of his reign on succeeding lines; 1, 2, 3, 4 and so on. Thus for each year there was a line on which information could be entered. Also,

by running along the line, it could be seen precisely who ruled where at any given time. The new format was an act of genius, which ensured that the problems of Greek chronography would not continue to bedevil history.

Eusebius also decided to start his Chronicle, not with the date of Creation, but with the earliest date that he felt he could reasonably calculate, which was the birth of Abraham. Since his new format placed each year on a separate line, he marked every ten years how many years it had been from the birth of Abraham. This universal dating foreshadowed the invention of the standard Anno Domini dating by Dionysius Exiguus. That a standard dating system would come into being was ensured by the popularity of Jerome's version of the Chronicle, and the obvious need for it once that work existed.

Eusebius did not collect the materials himself for his work, but relied on whatever works he could find which gave brief lists of events and rulers. Once he started work, the problems of Greek chronography must have become exceedingly evident. The problems of Greek chronography By the time of Eusebius, Greek chronography was a mess. There were a number of reasons for this.

There was no agreement in the ancient world on which date the year should begin. Each city would have its own calendar and reckoning. There were several different systems of months in use. There were also systems like 'Ab Urbe Condita' (AUC - from the founding of the City, Rome). But there were so many of these, and they enjoyed such limited use, that these did not advance things. The Romans, rather than using AUC, tended to date a year by the names of the annual consuls then in office. Greek cities often did likewise. The most common system of dating was by the regnal year of a reigning monarch, and inscriptions often record that they were erected in the nth year of king xyz. Lists of kings and the number of years they reigned circulated, and exist still, carved on the walls of Egyptian temples. But kings do not always come to the throne on the 1st of January, and some rule for less than a year, and some are obliterated from the lists for political reasons. In consequence any reckoning based upon regnal years was bound to be in error, sometimes substantially as errors in a dynasty accumulated.

Once the Olympic games had begun, with a group of four years between games known as an Olympiad, some of the Greeks began to refer to those four-year groups by the name of the victor in the games. Later yet, a number was assigned to the olympiad. Chronicles based on the four-year cycle began to come into existence, since this dating was more universal for Greek affairs than lists of annual officials in each city.

Anyone trying to write a history had to struggle with these obstacles.

Frequently the best that could be done was to say that a certain man flourished

in the reign of such a king. Yet even here problems occurred, since the Greek word used for 'flourished' was extremely similar to that for 'was born.' The result of such errors can be seen in the Chronicle in the dates assigned to Lycurgus, who appears 3 times over a period of more than a century. The first is in fact when he was born; the second his hey-day, and the third refers to someone of the same name! But each can be traced back to impeccable sources in the Greek tradition that Eusebius used.

Eusebius' approach to the chronological problems

Eusebius was powerless to solve most of these problems. His innovative format however forced him to deal with some of them. In many cases he simply recorded what he had, and left others to deal with the problem. In others he presumed an error and adjusted the count of years assigned to a given ruler in order to make the lines tally and 'correct' the 'error'.

Starting with a mess of loosely connected regnal years, he linked them together through synchronisms. These were points at which he had information that tied together events in two different kingdoms. For instance he was able to determine that Darius of Persia and Alexander the Great of Macedon lived at the same time, since the latter overthrew the former. This linked the Greek lists with the Persian ones. The Greek lists could be linked together through the Olympiads, which were often recorded for Greek events. He was able to link Jewish events with Persian ones because it was recorded that the second temple was built in the Second Year of Darius. This last date is one of his crucial synchronisms. The date of the Trojan War was present in many of his lists, and forms another such link.

Some events, particularly in Olympiad Chronicles, were not given a precise year, but merely dated to the period of the Olympiad, or of a given ruler. He handled this by placing each Olympiad and each ruler's name on a fresh line, separate from the normal list of years. This gave him space to record such information. The Chronicle is inevitably riddled with errors. Eusebius himself records at one point that all dates prior to then are conjectural and disputed. Responsibility for these errors must be assigned largely to his predecessors. Even then, it is difficult to condemn inaccurate dates assigned to times when no-one had any conception of such a thing as a numerical date. Rather the Chronicle draws a line under the period of confusion, and provides a framework in which errors can be identified and resolved.

Eusebius' own Chronicle is no longer extant in the original Greek. An Armenian translation exists in two manuscripts, although the end of book one and start and end of book two are lost in both. The entries in book two have also been augmented, and the format rearranged, but numerous errors crept in

during this process.

Jerome and Eusebius

St. Jerome as a young man spent time in the East and became familiar with a great deal of the scholarship of the school of Origen and Eusebius. He came across a copy of the Chronological Canons and recognised its importance. As with other works by Eusebius, such as the Onomasticon, he arranged to translate it. He had a skilled scribe draw up a volume with the numerals in Latin rather than Greek - no trivial task -, and then dictated a translation of the contents.

He also added his own comments where he felt that Roman history had been neglected. Finally he composed a continuation down to his own times, ending with the disastrous defeat and death of the emperor Valens at the hands of the Goths at Adrianople in 378 AD. This continuation was of the utmost importance for the future. The esteem in which Jerome was held was great in the succeeding decades and centuries, and the monastic scribes did not hesitate to follow his example and write further continuations to the text. This practice undoubtedly contributed to the preservation of the work and its centrality to all future historical work.

Jerome made revisions to the text as time went on. He made an error in transcribing 'Alcamenes' in one entry, mistaking the numeral theta that preceded it as part of the name. The text 'Thalcamenes' appears in numerous manuscripts, including 'O'; but is corrected in others. It shows clearly the manner in which the Greek practise of using letters as numerals facilitated corruption of both the numbers and the text.

Families of manuscripts

It was Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609) who first worked on the chronology of antiquity and so came up against the primary witness, Jerome's version of Eusebius. In his work *De emendatione temporum* (1583) he split the mss into two families.

- *Priores*. 10 mostly late manuscripts known to him shared a format with all the numbers on the left-hand side of the page, in columns, and at the right the text of any historical event. This could wrap around, thereby giving a long space for all the text. Scaliger

referred to this space for text as the *spatium historicum* and so it has been known since.

But Scaliger called it the *prioeres*

-- earliest -- since he thought they were.

- *Posteriores*. Three early manuscripts (B, F, P) Scaliger

designated *posteriores* -- later -- since they did not agree with each other in format, nor with the *prioeres* group.

Also present in the manuscripts of Jerome are a set of king-lists (the *Series Regum*) and an *Exordium*. In 1750 the Veronese scholar Girolamo Da Prato published a treatise, *De Chronicis libris duo ab Eusebio scriptis et editis*. In this he established the late date of these two items.

These are published in Schoene (below).

- O, B, F, P, A and S are all old and agree in format. B is not a child of S, unlike A and P. O and S are independent, so must go back to two exemplars written in Jerome's lifetime.

One MS of the 5th century survives almost complete; of another, enough fragments survive to identify two apographs which enable it to be reconstructed in its entirety. There are several MSS of the 7th and 8th centuries. These early witnesses attest securely not only the text of Jerome's version, but equally important, its arrangement of the columns of numbers and of the entries on each page of the original (T.D.Barnes, p.112). So old are the manuscripts, that we can see some of Jerome's working practises. S and its descendants reflect Jerome's final version. O was based on a somewhat earlier copy which had a few readings which Jerome corrected against his copy of Eusebius, but has the same format. However the copyist of O has chosen to save parchment by condensing the text into 30 lines per page, rather than the original 26. B also derives from a pre-revision copy. Schoene referred to the revised edition as the *Editio Romana* of the Chronicle, on the theory that Jerome made it to present to the Roman synod of 382. (RP: I have been unable to find any actual evidence in any of the works listed below for this).

There is no uniformity in the manuscripts in the division of lines and pages in the prefaces. All the older manuscripts have a single column format for the preface; some later ones have two columns.

Manuscripts

Siglum

Location Shelfmark & Notes

Date /

Century

O

Oxford, Bodleian Library

Codex Oxoniensis Bodleianus Lat. auct. T II 26. Uncial. 30 lines a page. It contains the Chronicle of Jerome

(to f. 144), followed by a chronological summary on 1 leaf, followed by the Chronicle of Marcellinus. A posteriores Ms. ([Online here](#))

Ff. 1-32 years, are in a late (s.XV?) hand in the priores (long-lines) format. The remainder (A. Abr. 555-2394) is in a fifth century hand, the last leaf is missing, and the one-leaf summary replacing it is either by the same or a contemporary hand. There are marginalia dating from around 1400. The manuscript was acquired from an unknown source by Jean de Tillet, Bishop of Meaux, who died in 1570. Du Tillet had obtained authority from Francis I to collect Mss from French libraries; there are reasons to suppose that the Ms. was in the South of France ca. 1400. Pontacus borrowed it from him and cites it by the name of the Meldensis (M). Sirmond, in his edition of Marcellinus (1619, 1696) refers to it as being in Tillet's library. It then passed to the Jesuit College of Clermont at Paris. This library was sold in 1764, when it was acquired by Meerman. On the sale of his library in 1824, it was bought by Gaisford for the Bodleian. There are full details in Fotheringham's facsimile.

MADAN,

Summary Catalogue..., IV (1897), p.441.

5

S Leiden, Paris & Vatican Codex Floriacensis fragm. Dismembered pages of this MS. Paris. Lat. 6400 B (14 pages: the 7th quaternion of the Ms plus the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th and 8th gatherings of the 8th quaternion); Leiden, Voss. Lat. Q. 110 A (6 pages at the end of P); Vatican Reginensis 1709 (2 pages). Uncial. The Paris fragment has a note in a 9th century hand "Codex beati Benedicti Floriac.", indicating it belonged to the abbey at Fleury at that date. This was sacked by the Huguenots in 1562. Written in Italy. 26 lines per page. The division of the pages is the same as in A,N,P. N and P must have been copied from S, so similar are they in form and text. A posteriores Ms. The Ms must have devoted one more leaf to the title and prefaces than M N and P and must have originally contained 167 leaves. A photographic facsimile was published as Supplement I in the Leiden series of Codices Graeci et Latini.

5

B

Berne, Stadtbibliothek.

Codex Bernensis 219 (once Bongarsianus, in Scaliger;

Aurelianensis or A in Pontacus). Written in uncial,

probably at the Abbey of St. Benedict at Fleury, to which it belonged according to a notice in the Ms. Later belonged to Peter Daniel Aurelianensis (d. 1603), then to Jacques

Bongars, when Scaliger mentions it by that name. A manuscript not related to S. A posteriores Ms.

Contains only the Chronicle of Jerome. From dates given in the Ms it would appear to have been written between 627 and 699 AD, as there is a large notice on fol. 1 referring to the 5th year of Childebert king of the Franks and given various dates of this (697 AD), and on the last page another notice referring to 17th year of Heraclius as the 627th Dionysian year of Christ (i.e. A.D., after Dionysius Exiguus who devised it). There are 76 leaves.

The pages are much larger than AOS and the number of lines per page varies from 34 to 40. This manuscript generally compresses the two-page spread into one, making a division down the middle of the page instead. It is a very careless piece of work and the scribe has not troubled to keep the columns in line. However the right years correspond at the start of each page, so it seems that the scribe retained the division of pages in his archetype. The constant misplacement of olympiads is a sign of the carelessness of the scribe. Unfortunately Schoene used this as the basis of his edition.

7 A Valenciennes, Bibliothèque de la Ville. Codex Valentianus 495 (once Amandinus). From St. Amand, now in the public library in Valenciennes. Uncial, 26 lines per page. Transcribed from S. Contains only the Chronicle of Jerome. The foliation suggests that the manuscript should contain 167 leaves; one is devoted to the title, while two leaves are missing after f.125, and one leaf has been accidentally omitted in the foliation after f. 105 (the error may be counteracted elsewhere). The pages are the same size as NOPS. It corresponds very nearly page for page and line for line with NPS and the first part of M, but devoted more space to the preface than MNP do. There are frequent blank lines, suggesting that some notices took up fewer lines in this Ms. than in the archetype, and that the scribe has resorted to this device to keep the layout the same. A posteriores Ms. 7

P

Leiden

Codex Leidensis Lat. Voss. Q 110 (once Petavianus). In the

9th century, according to a statement in the Ms itself, it was written in the Abbey of St. Mesmin in Orleans by a monk Elias

in the time of Abbot Peter (ca. 840 AD). Transcribed from S. Contains only Jerome's Chronicle.

Close correspondance with N, and

almost as close to S. 166 leaves, including 2 devoted to the title.

A posteriores

Ms.

ca. 840 AD.

N

Berlin, Staatsbibliothek

Codex Turonensis Berolin. Phillips. 1872. From the

collection of Sir Thomas Phillips at Middlehill. The manuscript came

originally from Tours. It contains only Jerome's Chronicle, on 166

leaves. Minuscules are used for all entries in black ink and uncials

for everything in red. There are 26 lines per page and the division

of pages corresponds to that in APS. It seems to be a copy of

S. It has interesting marginalia derived from the other families. A posteriores

Ms.

9 or 10

M Berlin Codex Middlehillensis Berolin. Phillips. 1829. Written at Trier in the time of Charlemagne. Minuscule all through. 26 lines per page. A descendant of either S or O. A posteriores Ms. This Ms. came originally from Treves (see Mommsen, *Chronica Minora* I, p.78). It contains the Chronicle of Jerome, the Liber Generationis and Hydatius. Jerome occupies ff.1-153 and the first line of f.154. In the first part of the chronicle the page division corresponds exactly to ANPST; in the latter part the division is different to any other Ms. The hand changes at the start of f.73a. A full collation appears in Schoene, but is not reliable.

8/9

F

Leiden, Bibliotheek der Universiteit

Codex Leidensis Scaliger 14 (once Freherianus in Scaliger

and Pontacus; although the latter sometimes confused this Ms (Fre.) with

the Codex Fabritianus (Fab.)). Written in red, green, black and purple ink, and belongs to the early part of the 9th century. It descends from the manuscript of Bonifatius. It is written on 190 leaves and contains Jerome, the Exordium, the Chronicon consulare of Prosper, and a dedicatory epistle and Carmen votivum of Bonifatius. Jerome occupies ff. 2a-176a; f58b and f59a are blank, however, so the total is 174 leaves. The pages contain 25 lines each, and do not exactly correspond to any other manuscript. A posteriores Ms.

9

L London, British Library Ms. Additional 16974. Related to T. Contains the title 'Liber monasterii sancti Trudonis', so belong to the monastery of St. Tron in Belgium. It contains Jerome's Commentary on Matthew, the Chronicon of Jerome, the Chronicon Imperiale of Prosper, and the Chronicle of Marius of Aventicum. Jerome's Chronicle is ff. 57a-190a. The pages are much larger than most mss, containing 42 (sometimes 40 or 41) lines. This is the oldest of the priores. The scribe was careless. A displacement of a portion of the preface shows that the archetype had around 31 lines per page. 9/10 Lucca, Chapter library Codex Lucensis bibl. capit. 490. Written in a small minuscule. AD 787 Lem. 1 Limoges Codex Lemovicensis bibl. publ. 1 12 D Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Française. Codex Parisinus Latinus 4860 (once Colbertinus). Written in Mainz. 10

T

Oxford, Merton College

Codex Oxon. Merton 315. Related to SAPN. Written in red, green and black ink. It is written on 156 leaves, and contains Jerome's Chronicle. However it inserts after the preface of Eusebius two short treatises, Interpretatio sancti Hieronymi de nominibus gentium and De mensuratio provinciarum. After the Chronicle come four chronological summaries. There are some German verses in a late, perhaps 14th century hand, on ff.9a, 156a/b, so the Ms perhaps was in Germany some time. The division of pages is almost identical with that in AMNPS for the first part (to A.Abr. 1496) but with occasional deviations. The latter portion is divided up differently to any other manuscript. There are 26 lines per page,

except in the prefaces and summaries at the end, where there are 28.

In the omission of headings in the Chronicle, the Ms. agrees with B.

9 C Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Française. Codex Parisinus Latinus 4859 (Colbertinus). Related to T. 9/10 L London, British Library Ms. Additional 16974. Related to T. A member of the long-lines family. 9/10 Q Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Française. Codex Parisinus Latinus 4858. Uncial and minuscule. 9

U

Udine, Biblioteca Arcivescovile

Biblioteca Arcivescovile ot° 14. These partially

supply the lost pages at the start of O. Images in Fotheringam, Bodleian.

W

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Française.

Codex Parisinus Latinus 4870. These partially supply

the lost pages at the start of O. Images in Fotheringam, Bodleian.

Contains the words common to other Mss descended from O: "A Valente

VI et Valentiniano iuniore usque in consulatum Eudoxii colliguntur LXVIII,

ac per hoc a XV Tiberi anno, quo dominus predicare incepit, in consulatum

Eudoxii et Dioscori fuint anni CCCCXI." (442 AD).

V

Oxford, Bodleian Library

Canonici script. eccl. 96.

R Montpellier, Bibliothèque Universitaire, Section de Médecine Codex Montepessulanus H. 32. This is not a complete list: there are said to be a hundred or so.

About this translation This translation is the first translation of the whole work into a modern language. The portion written by Jerome himself, from 326-378, has been translated before. Malcolm Drew Donaldson translated it into English with a commentary in 1996; Benoît Jeanjean published an excellent French translation and commentary in 2004, to which he added a translation of the two prefaces of Jerome and Eusebius. Most but not all of the preface of Jerome had been translated into English as part of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers series in the 19th century. The translation came about as a result of some experiments in online collaborative translation by Roger Pearse. Andrew Smith of attalus.org had translated portions of the text of the Chronicle covering the Hellenistic era, down to the death of Tiberius, and formatted them as text keyed on Olympiad, year, and text. This provided a model for placing the text of the Chronicle online so that it could be translated, without the need to worry about the king-lists and numbers

and the detailed format of the final product. This was the approach taken.

After a discussion with Steven Van Impe, in September 2004, a web page was placed online which contained on the left hand side some 160 text entries in Latin from Jerome's Chronicle, one after another, and on the right a box in which anyone might enter a translation. The text was broken down into very short sections of no more than a short sentence. The electronic Patrologia Latina Database text was used as a basis, and corrected against the edition of J. K. Fotheringham. The PL text contained a great many medieval additions which were mostly ignored, and the remainder placed in brackets. The text was made available in weekly 'chunks' of no more than 160 sections, each being edited, uploaded and announced on a Saturday. Each chunk took around a week. The website then allowed anyone visiting the site to enter a translation or comments there and then, without the need for registration. The emphasis was on each section being so short that anyone with any knowledge of Latin would be able to do something, and thereby people of all levels of Latin would be encouraged to participate. Quality was assured by keeping the length of the chunk short, so that when a chunk was done people could then review what had been done in the remainder of the week. The existence of each new chunk was publicised in a variety of online fora, including humanities.classics, soc.history.ancient and the LT-ANTIQ mailing list. The process took 14 weeks from September 2004 until Christmas 2004, starting with Gaius (Caligula) and proceeding to the end, then restarting with Abraham and continuing down to Tiberius; finally doing the praefationes in the same way.

After the bulk of the translation work was done, the translation had to be harmonised to try to ensure that the same words were translated the same way.

This was not straightforward. The text was too large to edit in Microsoft Word or Frontpage. In the end, each sentence was placed online in a separate text file, numbered 1-2574, and a PHP script written so that the sentences could be browsed by number range (1-10, etc) or by searching for words in the text file. Using the latter approach, it was easier to display only those sections which contained a specific word to be harmonised. This process took a month.

Then the result had to be laid out in the format of the original, which took some three months until April 2004 and was very arduous. The format is 26 line pages and follows Helm's edition (1956). This proved extraordinarily difficult, involving some unusual HTML. The layout was done from the rear of the volume, and only once around 70% of the text had been formatted was a template that would work for every page successfully evolved. This process took until the end of April 2005, and around 20% had to be done again once the *modus operandi* had been established. However many features of the Chronicle only become clear once you actually try to lay out a copy on a page, electronic or otherwise. The layout was done a page at a time in Dreamweaver 6. Attempts to edit larger files proved impractical. It quickly became clear that the HTML tables could not be allowed to resize as normally happens. Instead the tables were specified as fixed size and the properties of

each cell specified in CSS. This ensured compatibility across browsers, such as Internet Explorer 6, Netscape 6 and Firefox.

Finally a question arose about colours in the text. Jerome's original text had the columns of kings coloured alternately red and black, in order to avoid confusion. This has been followed in the online text. There are no indications in either Helm or Fotheringham of the colour system. The Merton College manuscript is online, but since this has additional colours it could not be used without reservation. A colour strip of 27 pictures of the Bodleian manuscript was bought and used as a guide, but this mainly contained items from the latter portion of the Chronicle. The Assistant Librarian of the Bodleian, Dr. Bruce Barker-Benfield, kindly agreed to allow access to this treasure. A visit during May 2005 allowed the production of a marked up print-out of the translation which indicated which portions of the text were in which colour. In the process he found that the facsimile really was an extraordinarily accurate reproduction of the look and feel of the codex, colour aside. However the first original page was page 69. The colour on the pages before this point is therefore a reconstruction. The last page of the codex was also lost in late antiquity; again a guess has been made on the correct colours. One problem that was encountered in the translation was a portion in Jerome's introduction. The original text was laid out in a specific tabular format by Eusebius, and following him, by Jerome. However at some time during the Dark Ages, a scribe chose to reformat the document by placing all of the columns of kings on the left, and all the text on the right. The first letter of the text was colour-coded to indicate to which column of numbers - up to nine - it related. To explain this, the scribe interpolated a short passage into Jerome's introduction. Unfortunately this passage is extremely terse and difficult to understand in the absence of a

manuscript formatted and coded in this way. A manuscript of this family does exist in the British Library. Permission to view this manuscript has been granted but the opportunity to view it has not yet arrived. Until this can be checked, the translation of the interpolated passage must be considered provisional.

Translators and helpers

Around 25 people participated at various points during the 14 weeks of the experiment, and I would like to thank everyone who did so. In no particular order, the main translators and problem-solvers were: Roger Pearse (RP), Andrew S. Jacobs (ASJ), José Miguel Blasco Ibáñez (JMB), Jacob Wainwright Love (JWL), and an anonymous contributor known as '...'; together with contributions large and small by Argyros George Argyrou (AGA), Steven Van Impe (SVI), Benôit Jeanjean (BJ: whose splendid French translation of the last portion of the Chronicle appeared as our project was drawing to a close), Frank Gay (FG), Frank Van Heden (FVH), Mark DeCagliano (MD), Andrew Smith (AS), Michael Kuettner (MK), James Hannam (JH), DSV, TV, GAC, MDM, M. Guy, Kevin O'Donnell, Ayse Tuzlak (AT), FM, RAK, JWS, tks, EL, SJJ, DH, KS, Pe, AC, RIP and others who chose to remain entirely anonymous. (If anyone for whom I only have initials would like to contact me, I'd be glad to add your names). Many, many thanks to you all!

All errors of translation, revision and layout are solely the responsibility of Roger Pearse, of course. The translation does not pretend to be what it is not, and doubtless contains errata and corrigenda. All such will be gratefully received. The object of the translation was to explore the possibilities and limitations of online translation of works never before translated by a mixture of professionals and people not professionally involved in such activity, and in the process to make this fascinating work available to the general public, and thereby to encourage

interest in ancient chronography. It is hoped that this will now occur.

Thanks are due to Dr. Bruce Barker-Benfield of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, who made it possible for the manuscript 'O' -- one of the treasures of that library -- to be consulted.

Key to codes used in the translation The double-page openings of Jerome's copy are represented on-screen by the white rectangles. Areas in yellow indicate material not part of Jerome's text. The spine of the book is represented by a yellow column down the middle. Page numbers (a later addition) are indicated in square brackets at the top -- [220/221] is pages 220 and 221. These page numbers appear in Helm and Fotheringham. A few things in the text may be obscure. These have been transcribed from the edition of Helm (1956). g An entry -- The italic letter is not present in Jerome's text, but is a code devised by Rudolf Helm. All the text entries can be referenced by page number and letter, e.g. 303a.

* -- When an entry is marked with an asterisk in Helm's edition, it is supposedly not present in the Armenian translation of the original work by Eusebius. This means that it must be an entry added by Jerome.

However Burgess states (p.24) that these are not very accurate. After some hesitation, I have transcribed them.

(*) -- Helm's code for an entry which is present in the Armenian, but in a somewhat shorter or different form.

*? -- Helm's code for another possible modification; I am unclear in what way. The first column of years, underlined, is the years from Abraham, shown every 10 years. The reckoning of years AD and BC is shown for guidance, but did not form part of the original text.

Note that the text has been formatted for display under Internet Explorer

6. I have been unable to discover why it behaves erratically under Firefox. The task of converting the Chronicle to HTML for the first time has not been a trivial one, and the only way to find out how to do it was to learn by doing. There are certain irregularities of page width in the second portion of the Chronicle. I hope I may be forgiven for not redoing this portion entirely, using the page size and format of the pages in the first part. Such an enterprise would be useful, but it would take months, for purely cosmetic gain. At the moment I do not have the resources to redo it.

If it causes deep pain, let me know.

It is possible to print off the tabular portion of the Chronicle, in landscape mode, resizing to paper width. An inkjet can give quite satisfactory results.

Latin text

After this was all done, there was very little energy left for anything else, and certainly not to create an online Latin text. The text used for the translation project consisted of the 'lemmas' of text only. But during the summer of 2005, JMB very heroically volunteered to incorporate this into the format of the translation, so that a Latin text would be available. This he did, and it now appears here with the English. The numerals have not been converted back to Roman numbers. If someone would care to volunteer for that task, it would be nice to complete the job.

Bibliography The materials available to the editor were limited to whatever could be bought or photocopied by someone living in a rural town. These were:

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R. HELM, *Eusebius Werke 7: Die Chronik des Hieronymus, Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller 47* (1956). (Photocopy of text only)

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2004), ISBN : 2753500185. (Purchased copy).

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aus dem Armenischen übersetzt. Die Griechischen Christlichen
Schriftsteeler der Ersten Jahrhunderte 20. (1911). (Photocopy of
portions).

Alden A. MOSSHAMMER, The Chronicle of Eusebius and

the Greek Chronographic Tradition, Lewisburg/London (1979), ISBN

0-8387-1939-2. (Photocopy)

Alfred SCHOENE, Eusebi Chronicorum Libri. 2 vols. Berlin: Weidmann (1875) (Purchased copy,
but not extensively used after reading Mosshammer's comments). The other item available to the
editor and translators, and used with wonder and delight for every chunk of translation, was the 9th
century Merton College Oxford manuscript 315, available online from the Bodleian Library website.

Roger PEARSE

2005. This text was written by Roger Pearse, 2005. All material on this page is in the public
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Greek text is rendered using the Scholars Press SPlonic font, free from here.

Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Chronicle - Prefaces of Jerome and Eusebius

St. Jerome, Chronicle (2004-5). Preface of Jerome; preface of Eusebius Eusebius Hieronymus to his friends Vincentius and Gallienus, greetings.

There was an old custom of the scholars, that they would reduce Greek books to Latin speech for the purpose of exercising their wits, and, what has even more difficulty in it, they would translate poems of illustrious men, with the added necessity of correctly rendering the metre. For the same reason our Cicero translated complete books of Plato word-for-word: and after he had published Aratus in Roman dress, in hexameter verses, he amused himself with Xenophon's Economics. In this work that golden stream of eloquence is so frequently obstructed by certain rough and turbulent obstacles, so that whoever does not know that they are translations does not believe they were said by Cicero. For it is difficult for someone who is following another's lines not to stray outside them from time to time; when things were said well in another language, it is hard to preserve the same elegance in translation. An idea was captured appropriately by a single word: I do not have my own word to convey it, and while I seek to complete the sentence, in a long detour I hardly advance a brief distance along the road. The twists of hyperbaton 1, the dissimilarities of cases, finally the varieties of figures of speech are added to the sense itself and, so to speak, the native idiom of the language. If I translate word for word, it sounds absurd; if perforce I alter something in sequence or style, I shall seem to have failed in the duty of a translator.

Therefore, my dearest Vincentius, and you, Gallienus, part of my soul, I beg
that you reread whatever in this work is hasty, not with the spirit of judges,
but as friends: especially since I dictated as quickly as possible to a
secretary, as you know; and also the style 2 of the
divine books testifies to the difficulty of the task, which, when published by
the LXX translators, did not retain the same flavour in the Greek
language. For this reason Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion were roused
up to produce almost different works from the same work: with the first
expressing it word-for-word, and the next preferring to follow the sense, and
the third not differing much from the ancients. However the fifth, sixth
and seventh versions 3, although it is unknown from
which authors they originate, yet they contain intrinsic variants that are so
probably correct, that they have earned authority without having names.
That's how it comes about that Sacred Literature seems unpolished and harsh

sounding, for while scholarly men -- not understanding that they were translated from Hebrew -- look at the outside but not into the kernel, they tend rather to be thoroughly horrified at the mean clothing, so to speak, before they find the fair body of the things within.

Indeed what is more melodious than the psalter, which like the works of our own Flaccus 4 or the Greek Pindar, now runs along in iambics, now rings out in alcaics, now swells in sapphics, and now walks in semifoot? What is more beautiful than the Song of Deuteronomy or Isaiah? What is more serious than Solomon? What is more perfect than Job? All of which compositions circulate among their own people in hexameter and pentameter verses, as Josephus and Origen write. When we read these in Greek, they sound like something else; when we read them in Latin, they are scarcely coherent. For if it seems to someone that the grace of a language does not change in translation, let him present Homer word-for-word in Latin, -- let me say something more -- let it be translated into his own language in words of prose; he will see that the word-order has become ridiculous and a most eloquent poet barely readable.

What is the point of all this? Obviously so that it does not seem amazing to you, if we offend occasionally, if sluggish speech is either raspy in consonants or divided and split in its sounds, or constrained by the brevity of these matters, since the most learned men have struggled in this same task: and to the general difficulty that we have pleaded in every translation, this in particular is added to us: that the history is multiplex, possessing barbarian names, matters unknown to the Latin-speaking peoples, inexplicable numbers, and columns equally interwoven with events and numbers, so that it is almost more difficult to discern the order in which things must be read, than to arrive at an understanding of the meaning.

[5 In order that, moreover, it may be understood, with a clear indication of which number any text pertains to, let the reader attend to these inserted distinctions, so that, if the text must be related to the first number of kingdom previously marked out, let him look at the first letter in the explanation of the text: and, if he should see it in bright red, let him know that it must apply to that period or in the year, which the number similarly drawn, that is in bright red, will have suggested: but if he shall perceive that the number (=initial letter?) is not in a pure bright red, but was written after black was mixed in, the text must be related to the number of the second column: if however it must be related to the third column of numbers that has been written down, the middle of the number (initial letter?) will be seen in a pure bright red and the remaining part given solely in black. The fourth column of numbers will have nothing in bright red, but there will be for an indication how the text is bound to it (the column of numbers), when the letter done in bright red at the start of the explanation of the text, that must also be supplied for the signs above, is displayed anyway, (and)

they corresponded in category to none of the signs mentioned above. If on the contrary, the (initial) letter was expressed, not actually in bright red but in mixed black and red, he will be able to turn to the number gleaming with red in the fifth column of numbers; and so the sixth column of numbers will be indicated like the second, the seventh like the third, and the eighth also like the fourth with a two-colour-appearing letter. But when there are none of those signs which we mentioned earlier either in the numbers or in the explanation of history, the ninth column which was annotated is referred to. However, not all of these requirements are needed when the number of columns is less.] From this I think that it is necessary to warn in advance that, exactly as they have been written, the variety of colours should also be preserved; lest someone suppose that so great an effort has been attempted for a meaningless pleasure of the eyes, and, when he flees from the tedium of writing, inserts a labyrinth of error. For this has been devised so that the strips of the kingdoms, which had almost been mixed together because of their excessive proximity on the page, might be separated by the distinct indication of bright red, and so that the same hue of colour which earlier parchment pages had used for a kingdom, would also be kept on later ones. And I am not unaware that there will be many people who from their customary desire to detract from all things, will sink their fangs into this volume, which cannot be avoided unless one writes nothing at all: they will misrepresent dates, change the order, dispute events, split syllables, and, because it is generally customary that this should happen, they will ascribe the negligence of copyists to authors.

Although I would be within my right to repel those that it displease, by saying let them not read, in short I prefer to send them away satisfied, so that they can both assign the fidelity of the Greek things to their own author, and what new matters we have inserted, they may recognize that they have been extracted from other very learned men. And indeed it should be known that I have filled the role of both translator and in part writer, because I have both most faithfully expressed the Greek, and I have added some things which seemed to me to have been omitted, in Roman history especially which Eusebius, the originator of this book, seems to me, not to have been thus ignorant, for he was most learned, but since he was writing in Greek, to have skipped over those things less necessary to his countrymen. And so from Ninus and from Abraham down to the captivity of Troy is a simple translation from the Greek: from Troy down to the 20th year of Constantine many things are added or modified, which we have carefully excerpted from Tranquillus 6, and the other illustrious historians: but from the aforementioned year of Constantine down to the 6th consulate of the Emperor Valens and second of the Emperor Valentinian, is totally my own.

Contented with this end-point, I have reserved the rest of the time of Gratian and Theodosius for the pen of a broader history; not that I have been afraid to write freely and truly about living persons -- for the fear of God drives out the fear of men -- but because while the barbarians are still raging here in our land, all things are uncertain. The Translated Preface of Eusebius.⁷ The most learned men -- Clement, and Africanus, and Tatian from among ourselves, and Josephus and Justus from among the Jews, all while compiling books of ancient history -- have related that Moses, of the Hebrew nation, who first of all the prophets before the advent of the Lord Saviour expounded the divine laws in the sacred texts, lived in the time of Inachus. Again, Inachus precedes the Trojan War by 500 years: indeed from among the pagans, that impious man Porphyry in the fourth book of his work which he with pointless labour concocted against us,

affirms that Semiramis, who reigned over the Assyrians 150 years before Inachus, lived after Moses. And so, according to him, Moses is discovered to be older than the Trojan War by almost 850 years. When these things are taken into consideration, I have considered that it is necessary to search after the truth more diligently, and on account of this in a prior book 8 I have noted in advance for myself, as a sort of source for a future work, all the dates of kings, of the Chaldaeans, Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Lydians, Hebrews, Egyptians, Athenians, Argives, Sicyonians, Lacedaemonians, Corinthians, Thessalians, Macedonians, and Latins who afterwards were called Romans. In the present book, however, putting each set of dates in turn in a column side by side, and counting the years of each of the nations, in order that this was contemporary with that, I have thus joined them together in careful order. Nor has it escaped me that differing numbers of years are to be found in the Hebrew books, either more or less, depending on how it seemed to the translators; and I would rather follow that which a great number of copies have guaranteed. But let anyone who wishes calculate it: he will find that, in the time of Inachus who they say first ruled at Argos, Israel was patriarch of the Hebrews, from whom the twelve tribes of the Jews drew the name of Israel. Moreover it is clear that Semiramis and Abraham were contemporaries: for Moses, although he might be younger than the aforementioned, nevertheless is understood to be older than all of those whom the Greeks consider most ancient: that is, Homer and Hesiod, and the Trojan War, and much older than Hercules, Musaeus, Linus, Chiron, Orpheus, Castor, Pollux, Aesculapius, Liber, Mercury, Apollo, and all the other gods of the nations, and sacred figures, and oracles, even the deeds of Jupiter, whom Greece placed at the summit of divinity. I say that all of these whom we have enumerated, we prove that they also lived after Cecrops Diphyes, the first king of Attica.

Moreover the present history shows that Cecrops is coeval with Moses and precedes the Trojan War by 350 years. Which, lest it should seem doubtful to someone, the following reasoning will thus prove.

Christ was born in the 42th year of the rule of Augustus. He started to preach in the 15th year of Tiberius. If someone therefore, counting backward through the number of years, seeks the second year of Darius, king of the Persians, in whose reign the Temple in Jerusalem which had been destroyed by the Babylonians was rebuilt, he will find 548 years from Tiberius back to Darius. Of course the second year of Darius was in the first year of the 45th Olympiad, and the 15th year of Tiberius occurred in the 201st Olympiad. Therefore there were 137 Olympiads between Darius and Tiberius, 548 years, counting four years in one Olympiad.

Then in the second year of Darius the 70th year from the destruction of the Temple is completed, from which 64 Olympiads, or 256 years, are counted backwards to the first Olympiad; the years are counted similarly backwards, from the aforementioned year of the destruction of the temple to the 50th year of Uzziah, King of the Jews, in whose reign Isaiah and Hosea lived. And so, the first olympiad occurred in the age of Isaiah and the rest who prophesied with him.

Again, if you proceed from the first Olympiad to earlier times and until the capture of Troy, you will discover 406 years, which we both set out in an earlier little work, and which the most careful history of the Greeks records.

Likewise according to the Hebrews from the aforementioned year of Uzziah and the times of Isaiah the prophet, back until Samson and the third year of the Judge Labdon, you will count 406 years. This however is the Samson, whom the descendants of the Jews report was similar to Hercules in bodily strength, and they seem to me to have not much time separating them, if indeed both lived around the time of the capture of Troy.

After these again go back to earlier things, and, when you have completed 329 years going back, you will find Cecrops Diphyes of the Greeks, and Moses of the Hebrews. For from the 45th year of Cecrops until the capture of Troy, and from the 80th year of the age of Moses, in which he led the people of Israel from Egypt, until Labdon and Samson, the judges, there are counted 329 years. And so, without any ambiguity, Moses, and Cecrops who was the first king of the Athenians, lived at the exact same time.

Again this is that Cecrops Diphyes the indigene, in whose reign the first olive tree grew on the summit, and the city of the Athenians drew its name from the name of Minerva. He first of all of them called upon Jupiter, and discovers idols, set up an altar, burned sacrificial victims; never before had such things been seen in this manner in Greece. And then other miraculous things, which are boasted about among the Greeks, are indicated much later than the years of Cecrops; however if they are later than Cecrops, they are consequently also later than Moses, who existed with Cecrops. For it was after him that it is written that there was the flood in the time of Deucalion, the fire in the time of Phaethon, Erichthonius the son of Hephaestus and Earth, Dardanus who founded Dardania: about whom Homer said: Whom Jupiter first fathered in the heavenly citadel; 9 also the abduction of Libera and Europa, the rites of Ceres and Isis, the sanctuary in Eleusis, the corn of Triptolemus, the kingdom of Tros; Of whom Ganymede was born, who, carried off to the stars, The gods wished to pour out the wines of great Jupiter at their meals. 10 At this time also Tantalus and Tityus lived, and Apollo was born. For Latona, consort of Jupiter, flees because of Tityus; however of Latona and Jupiter Apollo is the son; and after these events Cadmus comes to Thebes, Who fathered Semele, from whom the most beautiful progeny, Liber, emerged and brought a wholly deserving delight by his birth. 11

Again, Liber and the rest whom we will bring in next, lived 200 years after the year of Cecrops; Linus certainly, and Zetus, and Amphion, Musaeus, Orpheus, Minos, Perseus, Aesculapius, the twin Castors, Hercules, with whom Apollo served Admetus, after which the fall of the Trojan city happened: which Homer follows after a long interval; but Homer is found to have lived long before Solon or Thales of Miletus and the others who together with them have been called the Seven Sages.

Then Pythagoras appeared, who wished it to be said that he was not a Sage, as

those earlier, but a philosopher, that is, a lover of wisdom; Socrates followed him, who taught Plato; by whom philosophy was divided into its well-known parts. We shall put each of these in their place according to the order of the following history.

Therefore Moses preceded all those whom we have recorded above: for it has been shown that he lived in the age of Cecrops.

However, returning to earlier events, from the 80th year of Moses and the exodus of Israel from Egypt, until the first year of Abraham, you will find 505 years, which you will count similarly from the 45th year of Cecrops back to Ninus and Semiramis, leaders of the Assyrians. Of course Ninus, son of Belus, was the first to reign over all Asia, the Indies excepted. And so it is clear that Abraham was born in the age of Ninus, at least according to the figure the Hebrew account offers, which is shorter than the usual version.

Indeed, if you do not falter in carefulness and when you have diligently pored over the Divine Scripture, from the birth of Abraham back to the Flood of the whole earth, you will find 942 years, and from the flood back to Adam, 2242, in which no completely Greek, or barbarian or, to speak in general terms, gentile history is found. That is why the present little work traces the later years from Abraham and Ninus down to our time; and starts by displaying Abraham of the Jews, Ninus and Semiramis of the Assyrians, because at this time Athens was not a city, nor had the kingdom of the Argives received its name, as the Sicyonians alone were flourishing in Greece: they say that among them, in the days of Abraham and Ninus, Europs was the second to have reigned. Why we too believe this will be demonstrated in the following. For if you diligently count out from the distant age of Ninus until the capture of Troy, you will find 834 years: likewise in Sicyon from the 22nd year of King Europs, until the aforementioned period, you will find those same 834 years: among the Hebrews also from the nativity of Abraham until Labdon and Samson the Judges of the Hebrews, who led the people in the times of the Trojans, you will equally count 834 years: likewise among the Egyptians from the age of Ninus and Semiramis, in which time the 16th dynasty of Thebes was already ruling over the Egyptians, until the 20th dynasty, and King Thuorin of Egypt, who is called Polybus by Homer, in whose reign also Troy was captured, the aforementioned 834 years are also computed: therefore, consequently, we place at the head of our little book, at one and the same date, Abraham, Ninus, Europs, and the Theban Egyptians: and as we said earlier, the text following demonstrates that these things are so.

Now care must be taken to divide the years of the Hebrews into four periods of time;

- from Abraham until Moses;

- from Moses until the first building of the Temple;
- from the first building of the Temple until its second rebuilding;
- and from its rebuilding until the coming of Christ the Lord. Of course, from the nativity of Abraham until Moses and the exodus of Israel from Egypt, there are counted 505 years: from Moses down to Solomon and the first building of the temple, 479 years, according, however, to the smaller number which the third book of Kings contains, -- for according to the volume of Judges 600 years are computed -- from Solomon however down to the restoration of the temple, which happened under Darius, king of the Persians, 512 years are counted: further, from Darius down to the preaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, and down to the 15th year of Tiberius the first citizen of the Romans, 548 years are completed. And so likewise 2044 years happen from Abraham until the 15th year of Tiberius:
- similarly 505 years from Ninus and Semiramis until Moses and Cecrops;
- from Cecrops until the capture of Troy, 329 years;
- from the capture of Troy until the first olympiad, 406 years;
- from the first olympiad until the second year of Darius and the restoration of the temple, 256 years;
- from the second year of Darius and the restoration of the temple until the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar, 548 years.

Likewise there happen from Ninus and Semiramis until the 15th year of Tiberius 2044 years, which we have also shown counted from Abraham until Tiberius: from the 15th year of Tiberius, however, until the fourteenth year of Valens,¹² in which he died, there are numbered 351 years. And so there are in all 2395 years of this history.

And, in case the long series of numbers should perhaps cause some confusion, we have separated the whole mass of years into decades, which, gathering together out of the histories of the individual nations in turn, we have placed opposite each other, so as to provide a simple method of discovering in which era, Greek or barbarian, the prophets, kings, and priests of the Hebrews existed, likewise when falsely-believed gods of various nations existed, when demi-gods, when any city was founded, concerning illustrious men, when philosophers, poets, princes, and writers of various works appeared, and any

other ancient event, if it was thought deserving of recording. All of which we shall put in their proper places with the greatest brevity.

Footnotes 1. Word-order reversal, for emphasis.

2. instrumenta. Lewis & Short: "II.Trop. A. Of

writings... B.Ornament, embellishment: felices ornament haec instrumenta libellos.

Ov. Tr. 1,1,9."

3. Jerome is here referring to the parallel translations

from Hebrew into Greek in the columns of Origen's Hexapla. The separate columns circulated separately.

4. Horace.

5. This paragraph is a later interpolation. One

family of the manuscripts was reformatted by a later scribe, who wrote this paragraph as an explanation of the new format. His system placed all the columns of numbers on the left, and all the text at the right. Which

column of numbers the text related to is controlled by colour coding. This paragraph describes the system, albeit obscurely. Manuscript L is of this

family, and this translation is provisional, pending a visit to the British Library.

1. number=bright red; first letter of text=bright red 2. number=? (Probably black); first letter of text=mixed red/black 3. number=? (probably bright red); first letter of text=middle bright red , rest black 4. number=black; first letter of text=bright red 5. number=red; first letter of text=mixed red/black

6. Like #2

7. Like #3 8. Like #4, two colour 9. number=black; first letter of text=black The 'probables' I get by alternating the colour of the numbers.

6. Suetonius.

7. Translated by St. Jerome from Greek into Latin.

The headings in this page are Jerome's.

8. Eusebius' Chronicle is found in Armenian translation

in two books. Book 1 is the Chronography and consists of lists of

kings and how long they reigned, for various kingdoms. Book 2 is the Chronological Canons, which is the table of dates and events. Jerome only translated book 2, and the two books seem to have circulated separately. Even in the manuscripts of the Armenian version there is evidence of this, since the end of book 1 and the start and end of book 2 are missing. This shows that the 2-book combination is copied from two books which circulated by themselves, since the end of book 1 and start of book 2 should be very well protected in the middle of a volume, if they are together. This preface by Eusebius to book 2 is otherwise lost, being in the missing portion in the Armenian.

9. Homer, Iliad 20.215 10. Homer, Iliad 20.231-235.

11. Homer, Odyssey 11.576-582.

12. Clearly Jerome has altered something here, since Eusebius ended his text in the reign of Constantine. Probably this sentence originally referred to the 20th year of Constantine, and Jerome updated it to the end of his own version, the death of Valens.

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Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts

Commentary on Amos

Three Books of Commentaries on the Prophet Amos by Saint Jerome of Stridon, Priest

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

The prophet Amos, who follows Joel, is the third of the twelve prophets, but he is not the same person as the father of the prophet Isaiah whom we read about. The name Amos is written with the first and last letter of his name, Aleph and Sade, and it means strong and robust. However, the name Isaiah is written with Ain and Samech, and it means a people torn away: the middle letters Mem and Vau are common to both names. But for us, who do not have such a distinction between vowels and the letter s, which has three forms in Hebrew, these and other names seem to be common, which are distinguished among the Hebrews by the diversity of the elements and their properties. Therefore, the prophet whom we now have in our hands was from the town of Thecue, which is six miles to the south from the holy Bethlehem, which gave birth to the Savior of the world; and beyond that, there is no village, not even any rural huts resembling ovens, which the Africans call mapalia. Such is the vastness of the wilderness, which extends as far as the Red Sea and the borders of the Persians, Ethiopians, and Indians. And because nothing at all grows on the dry and sandy ground, the whole area is full of shepherds, in order to compensate for the sterility of the land with a multitude of livestock. From this number of shepherds Amos was a prophet, unskilled in speech but not in knowledge. For the same Spirit of the Holy Ghost spoke through all the prophets. Hence we translate from the Hebrew.

Book One

Book One

1:1 Chapter 1 - Verse 1. The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel. However, the Septuagint, wanting to add something, interpreted it as: The words of Amos, who was among the vine-dressers of Tekoa, which he saw for Jerusalem. And it should be known that this prophet saw not for Jerusalem, which is not found at all in the Hebrew text, but concerning Israel, that is, In the days of King Uzziah of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of the ten tribes called Israel, who were in Samaria, there were prophets. Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion also translated this. Therefore, the first prophet Hosea speaks to the ten tribes called Ephraim, Samaria, the house of Joseph, and Israel. The second prophet Joel, prophesies to Jerusalem and the two tribes called Judah and Jerusalem, with no mention at all of Israel. The third Amos, not at all in Jerusalem, which was ruled by the tribe of Judah, but in Israel in Samaria, preaches. This can be proven from the whole volume of his work, and especially from what is written: Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam the king of Israel, saying: Amos has rebelled against you in the midst of the house of Israel (Amos VII, 10). And shortly after, Amaziah said to Amos: You see, go, flee to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and there you shall prophesy, and in Bethel you shall not prophesy anymore, for it is the sanctity of the king and the house of the kingdom. To whom Amos responded: I was not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but a keeper of sycamore trees, gathering their fruit. And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and said to me: Go, be a prophet to my people Israel; not to Judah and Jerusalem, as is wrongly stated by the Greeks and Latins, but to Israel, that is, the ten tribes, which had retained their original name due to the multitude of the people. And in the place where the Seventy translated, in Accaron, Theodotion placed the Hebrew word itself: in Nokedim (), which Aquila rendered as ἐν ποιμνιοτρῆσιν, that is, in pastures: Symmachus and the fifth edition rendered it ἐν τοῖς ποιμῶσιν, that is, among shepherds. And I think because of the similarity of the letters Daleth and Res, they were also deceived here, for Nocedim, as if it were Nocerim: and from there they placed the word Accarim, although the letter Nun at the beginning of the name leaves no excuse for the error. However, I have not read that Accarim is Hebrew until now. And those who interpret sterilitatem, that is, στερωσιν, express more the city of Accaron, which belongs to the Philistines, than Accarim, which is not found at all. Therefore, the sermons of Amos, who was from the town of Thecue and among the number of shepherds, are contained in this volume, because both the region and the message are pastoral. He saw these sermons concerning Israel, not with physical eyes, but with the vision of the mind, since the prophets were called seers; otherwise, the sermons are not seen according to the letter, but heard. Hence, the people saw the voice of God, and Moses spoke silently to the Lord when he said to him: Why do you cry out to me (Exodus 14:15)? In the New Testament also we read: That which we have seen with our eyes, and have heard with our ears, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life (John 1:1). For the Word of God, which is in itself invisible, is seen and touched by the apostles with their own hands. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John 1:14). But Jehoiada's son, the king of Israel, saw these words two years before the earthquakes. When Sardanapalus reigned among the Assyrians and the cities of Cilicia, about whom the renowned orator said: More shameful in vices than in name. And among the Latins, Procas Silvius, to whom Amulius succeeded in the kingdom after expelling his brother Numitor. After killing him, Romulus, with the hand of shepherds and outlaws gathered, founded the city of his own name. But this is Ozias, king of Judah, surnamed Azariah, who, attempting to claim the priesthood which was not

due to him, was struck with leprosy on his forehead (2 Chronicles 26), when the wrath of the Lord not only punished him for his sacrilege but also manifested an earthquake, which the Hebrews then commemorate. But Jeroboam is not the son of Nabath, who made Israel sin (III Kings XII), but the son of Joas, the son of Joathan (also called Joachaz and Joachan), the grandson of the same Jehu, under whom Hosea, Joel, and Amos prophesied. Therefore, Ozias is interpreted as 'the power of the Lord,' that is, authority or strength of the Lord. Jeroboam is 'the judgment of the people,' that is, the judgment or cause of the people, although some, reading the Greek letter chi, suspect it means 'the division of the people.' Joas' time, that is, the delay of the Lord, or temporal existence. Therefore, the words of Amos, at the time when the people of Israel were separated from the Lord and served golden calves, or when they were separated from the kingdom of the Davidic line, they sang with a clear voice like the sound of a trumpet, which is interpreted as Thecue. And they sang over Israel, who once was most upright before God, that is, most righteous before God. In the days of King Uzziah of Judah, when, due to the temple and the Holy of Holies, the strength of the Lord remained and ruled over a people who confessed. The name Jeroboam, who arose for the division of the people, signifies that Israel remained in idolatrous error for a long time before the captivity completely shook them, which in two years showed the double distress of the ten tribes and the two, so that those who were willing to do penance would no longer feel the shaking of the earth.

These, most beloved Pammachus, I have gathered together in a long discourse as a brief reminder, interpreting the sayings of the prophet Amos, that you, through the interpretation of your name, demonstrate yourself to be a fighter in every art of battling against the devil and opposing powers. I have also promised an explanation of the prophets Hosea and Zechariah to myself and other holy men, but most of all to your holy and venerable mother, Paula, while she was alive. And I will not greatly err in my promise, if I deliver to my son what I have promised to his mother. But now it is time for me to explain in detail, using the words of the prophet himself, what I think.

1:2

(Verse 2.) And he said: The Lord from Zion shall roar, and from Jerusalem he shall give his voice. And the pastures of the shepherds have shone, and the top of Carmel has dried up. LXX: And he said: The Lord from Zion has spoken, and from Jerusalem he has given his voice, and the pastures of the shepherds have shone, and the top of Carmel has dried up. It is natural that all artisans of their craft speak with examples, and each one brings forth the likeness of the one in which he has spent his time: for example, the sailor and the navigator compare their sadness to a storm; they call damage, shipwreck; they call their enemies, adverse winds. Once again, it names prosperity and joy, the most gentle breeze and favorable winds; calm seas and waters, like peaceful fields. From the opposite direction, the soldier signifies whatever he says, shield, sword, armor, helmet, spear, bow, arrow, death, wound, and victory. In the mouths of philosophers, Socrates and Plato are always present, Xenophon and Theophrastus, Zeno and Aristotle, Stoics and Peripatetics. Orators praise Lysias and Hyperides, Pericles and Demosthenes, Gracchi, Catos, Ciceros, and Hortensius in heaven. If they are epic poets, they frequently mention Homer and Virgil; if they are lyric poets, they celebrate Pindar and Flaccus. Why were these things said? To show that even the prophet Amos, who was a shepherd of shepherds, not in cultivated places with planted trees and vineyards, or certainly among green forests and meadows, but in the vastness of the wilderness, where the fierceness of lions and the killing of livestock dwell, made

use of his skill in words, in order to mention the terrible and fearful voice of the Lord, the roaring of lions, and the growling of a lion. Comparing the destruction of the Israelite cities to the solitude of shepherds and the dryness of mountains: The Lord, he says, will roar from Zion, and from Jerusalem he will give his voice. In Hebrew, to roar is called Jesag: Beautifully he will roar from Zion, and from Jerusalem he will give his voice, where the temple and the religion of God were, in order to teach that God is not present in the cities of Israel, that is, in Bethel and Dan, where the golden calves were, nor in the capital city of Samaria and Jezreel, but rather in the true religion, which was practiced at that time in Zion and Jerusalem. With the roaring of Zion, and giving his voice from Jerusalem (for the law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem), all the shepherds and kings of Israel have mourned, and the peak of Carmel has dried up, which once abounded with joyful pastures. Carmel is called in Greek and Latin, but in Hebrew it is called Chermel: and there are two mountains, which are called by this name. One in which Nabal was, Carmelus, the husband of Abigail to the South. According to Ptolemy, the place formerly called Acho, which is close to the sea, where the prophet Elias obtained rain on bended knees (1 Kings 15). If therefore it refers to Chermel, where Nabal lived, it is more suitable for the flocks of shepherds, because it is close to the wilderness (3 Kings 18). But if it refers to that place which is near the coast, it pertains to the kings and the pride of the kings of Israel, whom he says are to be devastated like the desert mountains when captivity is imminent. Otherwise, when the Lord from Zion and Jerusalem, from the watchtower of the Church, which is situated on the mountain and cannot be hidden, and in which the vision of peace is, has given through the old and new Testament, and through the ecclesiastical teachers his voice, and has sounded as a clear trumpet, then all the beautiful things of the shepherds, that is, the doctrine of the heretics, which seemed composed in beautiful language, and the knowledge of circumcision (for this is interpreted as Chermel, through which they promise themselves the knowledge of the true circumcision), will mourn and wither, and thousands of peoples, who are called flocks because of their simplicity, will wither suddenly with drought.

1:3

(Version 3.) Thus says the Lord: Because of three transgressions of Damascus, and because of four, I will not revoke the punishment; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron. LXX: And the Lord said: Because of three transgressions of Damascus, and because of four, I will not turn away from them; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron. Regarding the tribes, which are called Arsoth in Hebrew (אֲרֹשֹׁתַּיִם), and have been translated by Theodotion as iron wheels, which we have interpreted as iron sledges, the Seventy have translated as threshing sledges of iron. But there is a type of wagon that is propelled by iron and toothed wheels, which, after the grain has been beaten out, crushes the straw in the threshing floor, and grinds the straw into food for animals due to the scarcity of hay. Furthermore, in the Hebrew language, where it is written Benadad (בְּנֵי אֲדָד), and it is one name, the Seventy translated it as the sons of Ader, Res and Daleth by the similarity of false elements. In that place also where we said, concerning the house of pleasure, which is called Mebbeth Eden (מִבֶּטֶת עֵדֶן) in Hebrew, and they all translated it similarly, the Seventy translated it as from the men of Haran, considering Daleth as the middle letter of the name Res, and according to their custom, placing the Greek letter Chi (Χ) before the first Hebrew letter Ain. They also translated Cyrene, which is called Cira in Hebrew (צִירָא), that is, called or named, because of the similarity of the word, because Chares

(Χα■ρης) can be called a calling, and they understood it as a proper name, an appellative. We have briefly mentioned the reasons for different translations: now let us move on to the meaning of what has been said. First, the word of God is directed against Damascus, where Azazel was reigning, who at that time when Amos was prophesying, was severely oppressing Israel, that is, the ten tribes: to such an extent that, after King Ahab of Israel was defeated in Ramoth-gilead, he would slaughter and crush all the region that was called Gilead, and had passed into the possession of the half tribe of Manasseh, like the wheat of tribulation in the threshing floors. What the prophet Elisha says more fully in the book of Kings, where we read: And he stood with him, and was troubled even to the reddening of his face, and the man of God wept. To whom Hazael said: Why does my lord weep? And he answered: Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel. You will burn their fortified cities with fire, and you will slay their young men with the sword, and you will dash their little ones against the stones, and you will rip up their pregnant women. And Azazel said, 'For what am I, your servant, but a dog, that I should do this great thing?' And Elisha said, 'The Lord has shown me that you will be king over Syria.' (2 Kings 8:11ff). And what follows in the prophet.

1:4

(Ver. 4.) And I will send fire into the house of Azael, and it shall devour the houses of Benadad. And I will break the bars of Damascus, and I will destroy the inhabitants from the plain of idols. LXX: And I will send fire into the house of Azael, and it shall devour the foundations of the son of Ader, and I will break the bars of Damascus, and I will destroy the inhabitants from the plain, being. Give understanding, that Azael, when Ozia and Jeroboam reigned, was already dead in Syria, and his son Benadad succeeded him in the kingdom, from whom all the later kings of Aram, that is, Syria and Damascus, took the name Benadad. He did not say beautifully, I will send fire into Azazel, but into the house of Azazel, that is, into his royal house, over which Ben-hadad, his son, was ruling at that time. And I will break down, he said, the bars of Damascus, and I will destroy the inhabitants of the idolatrous field. Namely, all the strength (or multitude) of the Syrians, which, like a kind of cart and bars, repelled the attacks of their enemies. Now the idolatrous field, which is called Aven in Hebrew, is interpreted by the Septuagint and Theodotion as meaning "iniquity"; Symmachus and the fifth edition translated it as "useless," in order to show the useless help of idols, since the people of Damascus will be captured when the Assyrians come. For we read that Theglathphalasar, king of Assyria, after killing King Rezin of Damascus, of whom Isaiah speaks, transferred all the people of Syria, who were called Aram, to Cyrene, and for this reason it is said now (2 Kings 16).

1:5

(Verse 5) Holding the scepter from the house of pleasure, and the people of Syria will be transferred to Cyrene, says the Lord. LXX: And I will cut off the tribe from men from Haran, and the captive people of Syria will be led, says the Lord. So that it is understood, I will crush and destroy, and the people of Syria will be transferred to the farthest borders of Egypt. And that which is said at the beginning: Concerning the three sins of Damascus, and concerning the four, shall I not (Alternate: shall I not indeed) turn away from him, and according to the Septuagint, shall I not (Alternate: shall I not indeed) reject him, that is, the people of Damascus, or Aram, that is, Syria, can have this meaning according to the history: If they had persecuted my people once, or even

twice, I would have forgiven them. But now, since they have become cruel for a third and fourth time, to the point of driving captive multitudes with iron chariots, should I not punish them with blows? Doesn't the mercy of my mother turn away from him? But according to tropology, we can say this: the first sin is to think of evil things. The second is to find rest in perverse thoughts. The third is to carry out what you have decided in your mind. The fourth is not to repent after the sin and to take pleasure in your own wrongdoing. All heretics do this, who not only think and do evil things, but deceive the innocent with their teachings, and, following the example of the Damascenes, who interpret that they drink blood, they also drink the blood of those they have deceived. The Lord says of such great sins: is it not fitting that I punish them with blows and turn my face away from them? For those who do not see the truth of my teachings, let them be overwhelmed with darkness by the turning away of my countenance. Indeed, they have contrived and dissected in iron chariots the pregnant women of Gilead. These are the pregnant ones of whom the Lord speaks in the Gospel: Woe to the pregnant and nursing women in those days (Luke 21:23). The souls of believers are pregnant, who at the beginning of faith can say: We have conceived and given birth from your fear, O Lord (Is. XXVI, 17, 18); and if they are not equipped with iron and toothed wagons (of which the Psalmist says: The teeth of men are their weapons and arrows (Ps. LVI, 5), cut and ironed, they can also say what follows: We have given birth, we will bring forth the spirit of your salvation upon the earth. At the same time, consider that they cannot cut down men of perfect age; but those who are still in the womb, or who are unable to take solid food and are still being nourished by milk, belong to infancy. Now, these pregnant women are from Gilead, which means translation or transmigration of the testimony. For they have migrated from the Church into heresy, and have transferred the testimonies of God, which they had previously received, to foreign boundaries. But the Lord will send fire into the house of Azel, which they themselves call Azel (), that is, the vision of God: a fire that will consume the wood and straw in them, and devour the foundation of the son of Ader. For we ought to say also according to the Septuagint, lest we seem to have proposed them in vain: Ader is translated as 'elegance', which we can also call 'beauty': because every heretic discourse is well-arranged and composed, and has the beauty of secular eloquence, it deceives the listeners more easily. However, the beams of Damascus, like very strong and firm bolts, are to be understood as those who are trained in the art of dialectic and the arguments of philosophers. For example, the door is called, which conceived and gave birth to false doctrine, like Arius in Alexandria: its bolts and strongest bars, Eutychius and Eunomius, try to strengthen with syllogisms and enthymemes, even with sophisms, and pseudo-reasonings and arguments, which they have poorly invented compared to others. And when the bolts of Damascus are broken and shattered, he will also destroy the inhabitants of the field, which is interpreted as labor or pain. For all heretics have made great effort and endured great pain in seeking some order and consistency in their heresy. And I will destroy the tribe of Charram, which in our language means 'holes.' For they do not have windows, through which the light of truth may enter; but rather they have certain holes and hidden passages, through which harmful and impure creatures may enter. And the captive Aram shall be led away, a proud and lofty people, who have exalted themselves and made promises of heavenly things to themselves, so that they may be captured in their own salvation. And they shall be transferred to Cyrene, according to the Hebrew, where the calling of God is.

1:6-8

(Verse 6 and following) Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not revoke its punishment; because they carried into exile a whole people to deliver them up to Edom. So I will send fire upon the wall of Gaza, fire which shall devour its strongholds. I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod, and him who holds the scepter from Ashkelon; I will turn my hand against Ekron; and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, says the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Lord: Because of the three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away from it, because they carried away captive the captivity of Solomon, to shut them up in Idumea, and I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza, and it shall devour the foundations thereof, and I will cut off the inhabitant from Azotus, and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ascalon, and I will turn my hand against Accaron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord. In the third and fourth generation, the Lord threatens to repay the sins of the fathers in the Law to the children: not in the equality of judgment, so that some may sin and others may be punished, but by the magnitude of His mercy, as He always waits for repentance: and what is committed in the first generation, He does not correct and amend until the third and fourth generation comes. The apostle Paul also speaks of this to the Romans: Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and unrepentant heart you are treasuring up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will repay each one according to his works (Romans 2:4-6). Therefore, what He says is this: I have waited a long time for them to repent, and for this reason I did not want to punish the sinners, so that they might eventually return to health. But because they keep doing the same things for the third and fourth time, I am forced to change my mind and correct the wrongdoers with punishments. Now let us see what the Philistines and their cities have sinned, whom the Seventy always translate as foreigners; for wherever in the Old Testament we have read **■λλοφ■λους**, that is, foreigners, it should not be taken as a general name for all foreign nations, but specifically as the Philistines, who are now called Palestinians. What did Gaza do to provoke the Lord to anger and vengeance? It transferred the complete captivity of the people of Judah and sold them to the Edomites, whom it had captured from the Jews. For the complete captivity, the Seventy interpreted the name of Solomon as the Hebrew word Salma (**■**), which means complete and perfect. Finally, Aquila translated it as **■πηρτισμ■νην** and **■ναπεπληρωμ■νην**; Symmachus and Theodotion as **τελε■αν**, which signifies not Solomon, but complete and perfect, so that no captive remains who has not been handed over to the Edomites. He threatens to send himself against the walls and buildings, or even the foundations of Gaza, in order to devour and swallow everything. And because we read in the book of Kings that there are five cities of the Philistines that were struck with plagues due to the disrespect of the Ark, after Gaza, he goes to Ashdod (1 Samuel 5), which is called Esdod in the Bible, and then to Ashkelon. With a terrifying voice, he threatens to destroy the inhabitants of Ashdod and the ruler of Ashkelon, along with the royal power or tribe of Ashkelon, so that no one remains there, not even the last generation of people who have trembling limbs supported by a ruling staff. And again he moves his hand to strike Accaron. And after enumerating four cities, he includes the remaining Philistine cities in one discourse. And the rest of the Philistines will perish: whom we must either accept as the city of Gath or all the villages that are subordinate to the aforementioned cities. According to tropology, it seems that this should be explained to us: Gaza, which is called Aza in Hebrew, signifies strength or power; Salomon, peace; Idumaeus, bloodshed and earthly; Azotus, that is, Esdod, a fire of abundance or of the

father; although some, reading "dod" instead of "dor," mistakenly understand it as a fire of generation; Ascalon signifies a murderous fire or one that is suspended and weighed down; Accaron, στεῖρωσις, that is, sterility, and κρηζωσις ((Al. κρησωσις)), which means eradication. Therefore, Gaza, which boasts of its strength of knowledge and authority, is accused of imprisoning captives from the family of Solomon in Idumea. I believe these are the Jewish teachers and all those who follow the letter, do not want to receive the life-giving spirit; but whatever they interpret and understand, they want to be earthly and do not listen when the Lord speaks in parables to his disciples, saying: 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear' (Matthew 11:15), especially since the Apostle understands the clear history in two testaments (Galatians 4). One over Mount Sinai, which is Agar, and she serves with her sons: the other over Jerusalem, which is our mother. Therefore, she asserts that she will send fire onto the walls of Gaza, and all its defenses, in order to surround and protect her lies. And when she will have sent fire onto the walls, the houses or foundations of it, whatever can have strength (if it can have any), and everything built by dialectic art, will be devoured. Also, from Ashdod, which itself is foreign, she will take away its inhabitant: whose breasts are full not of milk but of fire, because she follows the letter (literal interpretation), and everything that lies about having fire as its father, its whole generation must be attributed to fires. (Hosea 9:14) And they will take the scepter, or tribe, from Ascalon, where the destructive fire is. For just as the fire of the Lord will save those whose hearts it has penetrated, so this fire that descends from heaven, like lightning, which ignites the devil's arrows, will kill whoever it strikes. He will also stretch out his hand over Accaron, where there is barrenness and uprooting. For whoever does not receive spiritual understanding, will hear through Hosea: Give them, O Lord. What will you give them? Give them a barren womb and withered breasts. And to sum up everything in one word, he says that he will destroy all the remaining Philistines, whether in the city of Gath, where the devil's winepress is, or all the other Philistines, who are also called fallen by the cup. For when they are intoxicated, they will fall and roll in their own vomit.

1:9-10

(Verse 9, 10.) Thus says the Lord: Because of three crimes of Tyre, and because of four, I will not revoke my decision, because they delivered up a complete captivity to Edom, and did not remember the covenant of brotherhood, I will send fire upon the wall of Tyre, and it will consume its palaces. LXX: Thus says the Lord: Because of three acts of impiety of Tyre, and because of four, I will not turn away from it, because they delivered up the captivity of Solomon to Edom, and did not remember the covenant of brotherhood. And I will send fire upon the walls of Tyre, and it will devour its foundations. The same three or four acts of impiety or crimes that he had charged to Damascus, Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ashdod, and to the other cities of the Philistines, he also assigns to Tyre and reproaches it for having brought to completion and perfection the captivity in Edom, of which we have spoken above: And they have not (or were not) mindful of the covenant of their brothers. We seek to know how the Tyrian brothers are related to the Jews. These brothers call them friends and connected by a bond, because Hiram, the prince of Tyre, had friendships with David and Solomon, to the extent that Hiram sent cedar wood for the construction of the Temple and palace, all the way from Joppa. And these brothers would provide grain and oil to the Tyrians, and give twenty cities in Bashan as a gift, which he refused to accept because they were full of grass (1 Kings 5, 2 Chronicles 2). He says, therefore, that he will hurl fire onto its walls and devour

its buildings or foundations, which the Prophet Ezekiel mentions that King Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldeans did in a vision of Tyre, where he says: 'He will surround you with siege works and build a siege ramp against you' (Ezek. 29:6). And again: 'King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was shaved bald, and every shoulder rubbed bare, yet he and his army got no wages from Tyre for the labor he had spent against it' (ibid., 29:18), because his army built a siege ramp to capture Tyre, which was once an island. The history tells that Alexander the Great did the same thing to make a peninsula out of an island, which the Greeks call a chersonese. Tyrus interprets as tribulation or confinement: and all perverse doctrine tries to grasp the truth and conclude it in earthly senses, and does not remember the covenant of his brothers, which we should ascend from earthly things to heavenly ones: and the commandment is for us to inscribe the sacred Scripture in our heart in a threefold manner. But God will send fire into all the strongholds of Tyre, which will devour not only its walls, but also its foundations. We have already mentioned the captivity of Solomon, for whom it is recorded in Hebrew, as being completed and perfected.

1:11-13

(Ver. 11 and following) Thus says the Lord: For three crimes of Edom, and for four, I will not revoke my judgment; Because he pursued his brother with the sword, and violated all pity, and his anger tore at them constantly, and he kept his wrath to the end. I will send fire into Teman, and it will consume the fortresses of Bozrah. LXX: Thus says the Lord: For three crimes of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away from them, because he pursued his brother with the sword and violated the womb above the earth, and seized his horror as a testimony, and kept his fury forever. And I will send fire into Teman, and it will consume the foundations of its walls. Edom himself is the same as Esau, so named because of the cooking of red lentils, whose birthright he lost with this nourishment: he is also called Seir, hairy and rough. Hence the mountains of the Edomites are called the mountains of Seir, and in Greek language Edom is called Idumea. This one pursued his brother with a sword, namely the sons of Jacob, concerning whom it is written more fully in the blessings of Isaac, to whom Jacob was blessed first, and afterwards Esau: so that the hatred of the brothers might be preserved in their descendants, and the Idumean people would persecute their brothers to such an extent that they would not even grant passage through the holy land to those leaving Egypt; and not only did he persecute his brother with a sword, but he violated mercy, or rather according to Symmachus' interpretation, his own womb: so that he would forget his kinship, and harden the bowels of mercy, and would not know that he was his brother, and would despise the womb of Rebekah, who had given birth to twin infants in one childbirth. And what follows: And he held on to his fury, and kept his indignation until the end, he shows his ancient hatred, which was never reconciled with peace. Therefore, he threatens punishment for sins, and he said: I will send fire into Theman, which is the region of the Edomites, and it extends to the southern part, which is called Theman: this province is called not only Theman, but also Daron and Nageb, because it faces the east, south, and the African wind. And when he says, 'He shall devour the houses of Bozrah,' it does not mean, as some suppose, another city, but Edom, fortified and well-fortified, according to what we read in Isaiah: 'Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This one, beautiful in his robe, walking in the greatness of his strength' (Isaiah 63:2)? Whatever we have said about Esau and Jacob, let us apply it to the Jews and the Christian people. For they, who were earthly and bloodthirsty, persecuted the brother Jacob, who

supplanted them, and took away their firstborn, and persecuted with the sword, so that they seized the possessions and wealth of believers, which we read about in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:4): and they violated mercy and the laws of nature, forgetting their mother Rebecca, who is interpreted as patience, and at the same time they were born in Christ: holding onto their ancient fury and anger, to this day in their synagogues they blaspheme the Christian people under the name of Nazarenes: and as long as they kill us, they want to be burned with fire. But the Lord will send fire into Theman, into the dry and deserted parts of Judaea (that are not irrigated by the rains of the prophets), and it will consume all their fortifications, even the foundations of its walls, so that with the complete collapse of all literal sense, the Church of Christ the Lord may be built upon its foundations. For misericordia, they translated the Septuagint as vulva. And for furore, they used horrorem. And for indignatione, they chose impetum, led by the ambiguity of the words: because Rehem signifies both the womb and mercy; Aphpho signifies his rage and horror; and Ebrath is said to mean both indignation and impulse. Furthermore, Armanoth (), which we have interpreted as houses, Aquila and Symmachus βῆμαις, that is, homes; Theodotius transferred the inhabitants: only seventy and here and above, they called foundations.

1:14-15

(Verse 14, 15) Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of the Ammonites, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead, that they might enlarge their border. So I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour her strongholds, with shouting on the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind; and their king shall go into exile, he and his princes together, says the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of the Ammonites, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead, that they might enlarge their borders. So I will kindle a fire in the walls of Rabbah, and it shall devour its palaces, with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind. Their king shall go into captivity, he and his priests and his princes together, says the Lord. The divine message captures the sons of Ammon, who are descendants of Lot, and who dwell in Arabia, where Philadelphia now stands. They question why, during the reign of Saul, the king of Judah, Naash, the prince of the Ammonites, ravaged Jabesh-gilead and mutilated its pregnant women in order to expand his territory and subdue all of Gilead with his empire (1 Samuel 11). Therefore, God threatens to kindle a fire on the walls of Rabbah, the capital city of the Ammonites, so that its houses may be devoured amidst the clamor and wailing of the conquering army. This will happen on a day of turmoil and whirlwind, when its captives are led away as captives by Nebuchadnezzar. The idol of the Ammonites, called Molech or their king, will be carried off to Assyria, and its princes or priests will also be taken captive. Priests are not recognized in Hebrew, but rather princes. So the Seventy priests were added, so that if you want to know who those princes are, you will listen to the priests. However, there is a difference between the cruelty of Damascus and the sons of Ammon, because they shattered the pregnant women of Gilead in iron carts or in iron saws: but these (priests) dismembered the pregnant women of Gilead in order to expand their territory. In Damascus, those who drink blood are deemed heretics, who have not only plundered the people of God from the Church but have also shattered them and chewed them with iron teeth, about whom it is written: Why do they devour my people as if eating bread? (Ps. LII, 5). Among the sons of Ammon, which is interpreted as the people of mourning, or my people, we receive the schismatics, who indeed

separate the deceived multitude from the Church of God, and they break and divide the ignorant souls, who have recently conceived the word of Christ: yet they do not do this with cruelty, by which heretics slaughter any deceived individuals, but by remaining in the same rule of faith, they desire to expand their boundaries and send the name of glory to future generations. Therefore the Lord threatens that he will burn the walls of Rabbah, that is, of the multitude, in a day of wailing and of war, of commotion and of swirling, and will lead their king, the author of the schism, captive, and make the leaders of the Church submit their necks to the yoke.

2:1-3

(Chapter 2, Verse 1 and following) Thus says the Lord: Concerning the three sins of Moab, and concerning four, I will not revoke my punishment, because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to ashes. And I will send fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth, and Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. And I will cut off the judge from the midst of her, and will slay all her princes with him, says the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Lord: Concerning the three impious acts of Moab, and concerning four, I will not turn away from them, because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to ashes. And I will send fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the foundations of its cities, and Moab shall die with affliction, with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. And I will cut off the judge from her, and will slay all her princes with him, says the Lord. Not only the sons of Ammon, but also Moab, was descended from Lot, who was the son of Abraham's brother. And in order to demonstrate that He is the Lord of all and that all souls belong to Him, who is their creator, He avenges the injustice of the king of Edom, indeed the crime that was perpetrated against him by the Moabites, that they burned his bones to ashes, and their cruelty and rage did not end even in death. The Hebrews tell that the bones of the king of Edom, who had gone up with the king of Israel, Joram, and the king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, against Moab in revenge for a grievance, were later torn apart and burned by the Moabites (2 Kings 3). Therefore, they say, God declares that he will send fire upon Moab, or the capital city of the Moabites, from which the whole province is named, or the entire province, to devour the city of Carioth, which is the name of the city. Although the Seventy translated it as 'the cities of Moab', that is, Moab: and it will perish in the sound and wailing of the conquering army, of which one is called Saon in Hebrew, the other Therua; and in the blast of the trumpet or horn, for this is what Sophar means. And when Moab shall perish, the counsel of the princes and judges shall be in vain, with the cities and leaders being overthrown. However, it is necessary to transfer the perfect captivity, or Solomon's, and conclude it in Edom, so that it may make them humble and earthly from the high and heavenly, as Gaza and Tyre are said to have done. Thus, we should not burn the bones of the king of Edom and dissolve them into ash and dust. The Jews transfer spiritual understanding into Edomite flesh, and weaken and diminish the royal sense, which is found in scripture and is most solid and firm, with certain genealogies and unnecessary traditions, reducing it to dust. And it is not only they who do this, but all heretics who want to sit God on a high and elevated throne in a human likeness, and to place feet on the ground so that they do not hang; to have a nose to smell the fragrance of good scent, eyes to see, hands to work, feet to walk, ears to hear, a mouth to speak, teeth to chew food. He who reads that Judah went in to Tamar the harlot and from her begot two sons (Gen. XXXVIII): if he follows the disgraceful letter and does not ascend to the beauty of spiritual understanding, he will burn the bones of the king of Edom. He who thinks that Hosea took a harlot as a wife (Hosea I), and understands nothing more in the

statement than what is contained in simple words, he will burn the bones of the king of Edom. And therefore the Lord will send fire into Moab, which is interpreted 'from the father,' because although he was indeed born from God, yet he has forsaken him. And it shall devour cities, or towns, because it is interpreted as Carioth. Hence Cariathiarim is translated into our language as the village of the woods. And Moab shall not die in any other way except in a clamor, and a noise, and a wailing, and the blast of the trumpet, so that they may be overwhelmed in their high senses, which are compared in holy books to the blasts of the trumpet. Then the judges and princes, and all those who are in charge of earthly works, are destroyed by the divine word, and the Church commands to the teachers: \"Climb up to a high mountain, you who preach Zion, lift up your voice, you who proclaim Jerusalem\" (Isaiah XL, 9).

2:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) Thus says the Lord: On account of three crimes of Judah, and on account of four, I will not turn them aside, because they have rejected the law of the Lord and have not kept his commandments. They have been deceived by their idols, after which their fathers walked, and I will send fire into Judah, and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem. LXX: Thus says the Lord: On account of three impieties of the sons of Judah, and on account of four, I will not turn away from them, because they have rejected the law of the Lord and have not kept his precepts, and they have been deceived by their vanities, which their fathers followed, and I will send fire into Judah, and it will devour the foundations of Jerusalem. Regarding the other aforementioned cities and peoples, such as Damascus and Gaza, Ashkelon and Gaza, Ashkelon and Azotus, Tyre and Idumea, and the sons of Ammon and Moab, it does not reproach them for rejecting the law of God and despising His commandments; for they did not have the written law, but the natural law. Hence, it says that they violated their own bowels and the bowels of mercy, and crushed pregnant women in iron chariots, and carried away the captivity of Solomon, whether it was perfect or incomplete, and confined it in Idumea, and did not remember the covenant of their fathers, and pursued their brother with the sword. And they burst forth not only with cruelty, but with fury, to the extent that they burned the bones of the king of Idumea, and did not allow death to be the final evil for everyone. But Judas, at that time, in which these things were being said, had the religion of God and the temple and the ceremonies, who had received the law, and the precepts, and the judgments, and the testimonies, and the commandments (concerning the difference of which is more fully debated in the eighteenth psalm, and in the one hundred and eighteenth), is reproached by the Lord and convicted, and will receive worthy punishments, because he has rejected His law, and has not kept His commandments. Because he rejected and despised them, his idols deceived him in order and way. For he could not be deceived by idols before he rejected the law of the Lord and did not keep His commandments. These are the idols after which their fathers went in Egypt, fabricating the images of the Egyptian bull, and worshiping Beelphegor, and honoring Astaroth and Baalim. Therefore, the Lord threatens even Judah that he will send fire, which will devour the houses and foundations of Jerusalem: not the one in which the vision of peace dwells, but those that have risen under the name Jerusalem in different cities. Whatever we have said about Judah, it pertains to the Church, in which there is true confession, and the peace of the Lord, and the vision of truth. And therefore it is argued against him, that he has despised the law of God and has not kept his commandments, and each one, worshipping his own vices and sins, has begun to have God from whom he has been conquered, as the apostle Peter says: For by whom a person is

overcome, to him he is a slave (2 Peter 2:19). The covetous worships gold, the glutton worships his belly, the lustful worships his genitals and Beelphegor: the lascivious woman, although she may live in luxury, is dead, and she worships the pleasures of Venus. Where will the Lord send fire upon Judah, and it will devour the most wicked and sinful houses, which have lost the glory of Jerusalem; at the same time, we learn that the Creator of all things does not only care for the Jews and Israel, but also for all the nations, and according to the Apostle, those who sin without the law will perish without the law, and those who commit sins under the law will be judged by the law of the Lord (Rom. II).

2:6-8

(Vers. 6 seqq.) Thus says the Lord: For three crimes of Israel, and for four, I will not revoke my word: Because they sell the just man for silver, and the poor man for a pair of sandals. They trample the heads of the weak into the dust of the earth, and they force the lowly off the path. Son and father go to the same prostitute, profaning my holy name. Upon garments taken in pledge, they recline beside every altar; and the wine of those who have been fined, they drink in the house of their God. LXX: Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away from them: because they have sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes. They trample on the dust of the earth and crush the heads of the poor. They turn aside the way of the humble, and a man and his father go in to the same maiden to profane my holy name. They tie themselves to altars with cords and drink wine obtained through fraud in the house of their God. Therefore, he places the last of Israel, that is, the ten tribes, because we have foretold in writing nearly everything that follows in order to include the prophetic discourse of the book under one text. Therefore, first of all, their wickedness or impiety is in three or four crimes, namely, that they sold a man for money, and a just man, who is more admirable in this, that he was not overcome by poverty so as to do anything unjust: and indeed, if they had sold a poor just man compelled by the necessity of hunger for a price, there would be some excuse for the crime; but now they have sold the precious soul of a man for a most worthless thing, for shoes with which they trample on dust and dung. These people, according to the Septuagint, strike the head of the poor; according to the Hebrew, they crush the heads of the poor into the dust of the earth, and they are so filled with pride that they refuse to walk with other men. And so, not satisfied with this wicked deed, both the son and the father have violated together a young girl, in order to desecrate the holy name of God. Therefore, whatever is done shamefully is attributed to an injury against God, who says: Through you my name is blasphemed among the Gentiles (2 Peter 2:2). This is what the Apostle writes to the Corinthians: Indeed, fornication is heard among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, so that someone may have his father's wife. And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you (II Cor. V, 1, 2). It often happens that a father defiles his son's wife, the father-in-law defiles his daughter-in-law, which is prohibited in the Law: You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, and you shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law (Leviticus XVIII, 7). Therefore, the letter also has the greatest usefulness if it is preserved. And because every vice, if it exceeds the boundary of shame, punishes crimes with other crimes, and it always proceeds to worse things, even over the pledged garments, ten tribes slept next to every altar, which the Hebrews interpret as follows: On the garments of those who did not want to go to idols, and they reclined on what they had forcibly taken while feasting in the idol. According to the

Septuagint, there was such contempt for God that they would stretch out their garments in which they sleep or commit fornication, with ropes next to the altar, and they would make *παράπετασμα*, that is, veils, so that no one could see the fornicators in the Temple. And they would also serve drunkenness and lust, even buying the wine they drank not with their own labor, but with deceit. And they would do this in their god's temple, so that they would defile those whom they thought were gods with filth and debauchery. They speak these things and thus explain, those who follow a simple history. But we, who taught in Hosea, under the name of the Israelites, and Samaria, and Ephraim, and the sons of Joseph (from which tribe Jeroboam was, who separated the people from the kingdom of David and Jerusalem, and the temple of God), are understood to signify heretics: even now, after Judah and Jerusalem, which is interpreted as the Church, let us understand that the prophetic discourse is directed towards heretics, who sell a holy and righteous man, but poor, for money. A poor and just man, he is an ecclesiastic, who does not have knowledge of the Scriptures, but is content with simplicity, and does the commandments that are given, of whom it is written: The poor man does not endure threats (Prov. XIII, 8). And to the Galatians: Only that we should be mindful of the poor (Gal. II, 10). All heretics do these things for wealth, and for the shoes with which they trample on the dust of the earth: for they cannot stand with bare feet on the holy ground (on which Moses and Joshua the son of Nun stood, Exod. III; Josh. V): therefore the apostles are commanded to walk with bare feet (Luke X), so that they have no possessions or skins, which pertain to the flesh), thus they strike the poor on the head. And the Savior commanded his disciples that, if perchance, because they were still in the world, some mortal thing had clung to their actions, they should shake the dust off their feet (Matt. X, Mark V). But the heretics strike the heads of the poor, although this is not written in Hebrew (Let it be read in Greek), because they have turned away from the path of the humble. That path of the humble is the one that says: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John XIV, 6), which urges us to walk in it, and it says: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest (Matt. XI, 28). But all the leaders of the heretics swell with pride, concerning whom the Apostle also speaks: 'Lest being puffed up he fall into the judgment of the devil' (1 Timothy 3:6), who says: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north' (Isaiah 14). Therefore, God resists the proud heretics, but gives grace to the humble ecclesiastics (James 4). Moreover, the son and the father entered unto a maiden, to violate and defile the holy name of God. We often read that our father is the Jewish people, as Paul says: I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea (I Cor. X, 1, 2). And in another place: Ask your fathers, and they will tell you; your elders, and they will declare to you (Deut. XXXII, 7). And again: For your fathers, sons are born to you (Psal. XLIV, 17). And the Church of the Gentiles speaks: The sons of my mother fought against me (Song of Songs 1:5). Therefore we are sons, and the father is the Jewish people. We sin and commit a crime, when we enter into the observation of the Sabbath and circumcision, abolishing the ceremonies of the law with our parent, to whom the Apostle says: Behold, I Paul say to you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing (Galatians 5:2, 4). And again: Those who are justified by the law have fallen from grace. Whoever enters the Church in such a way that he keeps the law in the gospel, he enters with the father to the virgin and commits fornication, and violates the name of the Lord. Hence those who say that they do not harm the Jews after the advent of Christ, if they believe in the Lord in such a way that they also keep the precepts of the

Law, they contaminate the father and the son with one fornication. And they also tie their garments with ropes and make veils next to the altar, pretending the faith of Christ. For as many as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ (Galatians 3), and they oppose their garments, which have bound them with the cords of sins, to the eyes of those who see, so that their wicked deeds may not be seen: so that whoever looks at the altar may not suspect immorality. All heretics under the name of Christ do this, fornicating and obscuring the testimonies of the Scriptures with their errors and lies. Therefore, the apostles spread their garments on the colt of an ass, so that the Lord may sit more comfortably (Matthew 21), and he may trample the path adorned with the Law and the Prophets. On the contrary, heretics do not lay down their garments in the footsteps of the Savior; but they bind them next to the altar, and they pretend their sins, in order to drink the wine of deceit, or of the condemned, who, because they have departed from the Church, have been condemned. This wine is the wine of Sodom, the fury of dragons and adders, which whoever drinks it cannot be healed. But they drink the wine not in the house of God, where the temple is and Jerusalem; but in their own house of God, which they have fabricated for themselves with crafty speech.

2:9-11

(Verse 9 and following) But I destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of cedar trees, and he was strong like an oak tree. And I destroyed his fruit from above and his roots from below. I am the one who brought you up from the land of Egypt and led you into the wilderness for forty years, so that you could possess the land of the Amorite. And I raised up prophets from among your sons and Nazirites from among your young men. LXX: But I destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; and I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots beneath. I brought you out of the land of Egypt, and led you forty years in the wilderness, that you might possess the land of the Amorites. And I took your sons as prophets and your young men as consecrated ones. Is it not true that you have sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of sandals? You have struck the heads of the poor, crushing them to the ground, and you have turned aside from the way of the humble. So much so that both father and son go to the same girl, defiling my holy name. Your garments are stained with the blood of the innocent and your clothes are polluted with adultery. You have bound yourselves with the chains of sin, committing adultery even in the sanctuary and joining injustice with drunkenness. You drink wine bought with foreign money in the house of your God. But on the contrary, I bestowed good things upon you in return for the evils you inflicted on me, so that I might destroy, before your presence, Seon, the king of the Amorites, who was so lofty and strong like a cedar and an oak, and I broke his fruit from above and his roots from below. I led you out of Egypt (Deut. 29), and for forty years I made you go around in circles to reach the holy land, so that you might possess the land of the Amorites, of which we have spoken before: which Moses divided to the sons of Reuben and Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh (Num. 32); and after so many benefits, I also added this, that I would take prophets for myself from your sons, and from your young men or chosen ones, I would make Nazirites, who the Seventy have interpreted as sanctified. And indeed, when it comes to praising God, the order of history must be preserved; but it often happens that what happened first is told last, and what is most recent is related to what came first. The seventy-seventh and one hundred and fourth psalms, where the power of signs is described, not the order, will teach us this, as well as the titles of the psalms, of which we will give

just two examples: the third psalm and the fifty-first, where what happened first is narrated last, and what we read last is referred to in the beginning. For before we read in the book of Kings about Doeg the Edomite (1 Kings 21, 22), which is titled as the fifty-first psalm, how Absalom rose up against his father (2 Kings 15), which is mentioned in the title of the third psalm. And so the last Amorite was exterminated or erased, as is now first reported, and he made them go up from the land of Egypt and led them into the desert for forty years, we read about this in the beginning (2 Kings 21), which are called the last here with the order changed. Therefore, before God brought us out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, He exterminated before our face the Amorite, who is called bitter or insolent, that is, speaking, or notorious, and celebrated in frequent conversation. But this Amorite is also called Seon, an unfruitful and barren tree, not because it does not produce fruit, but because it produces bad fruit, of which it is said: Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire (Matth. 3:10; 7:19). And concerning false prophets, we read: They come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves, by their fruits you shall know them (Matthew VII, 15, 16): namely, by their evil fruits. Therefore, whether they do not bear fruit, or they bear fruit but not good fruit: they are called fruitless trees. This is similar to Seon, about whom it is written: Now the axe is laid to the root of the trees (Luke III, 9), because he was a fruitless tree, and when the Lord struck, he was cut down, whose height is compared to that of cedars, of which we read: I have seen the wicked exalted, and lifted up as the cedars of Lebanon: and I passed by, and behold, he was not; and I sought him, and his place was not found (Psalm XXXVI, 35, 36). And he says that he passes beautifully, because he who passes from the world can say: Passing, I will see this great vision (Exod. III, 3), the cedar is removed, and the place of pride cannot be found. His strength, like that of the hardest and strongest oak tree. From which word, Philo, the most eloquent of the Hebrews, thinks that Esau is called 'δρ■ivov', that is, oaken and strong: although Esau can also be understood as 'πο■ημα', that is, a work, referring to evil deeds. About this strong and robust, the Lord speaks in the Gospel: When a strong armed man guards his courtyard, all the things he possesses are in peace; but if a stronger man comes and defeats him, he will take away all his weapons in which he trusted, and distribute his spoils. And the Lord has granted us that he would crush and take away the fruits of this Amorite Sihon, whom we have interpreted as the fruitless tree, because they were evil, so that no one, thinking them good, would eat and perish. He also cut and crushed its roots, so that nothing would grow afterward from the evil tree. The Lord Himself made us leave the world, and for forty years, which is always a number of affliction and fasting, mourning and sorrow, through tribulations and distress, to come into the holy land, so that we would possess the land of the Amorites first, and that region would become our possession, and later He would raise up Prophets from our descendants, all holy men who received the prophetic spirit, about whom we read more fully in the first Epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor. XIV). And from our young men, or chosen ones, let him take the Nazarites and the sanctified ones, who offer their souls to God as a sacrifice, and who do not touch wine that can intoxicate and disturb the state of mind, so that they may have the hair of Samson, in whose head (for the head of a man is Christ) strength and victory resided (Judges 16).

2:12

(Verse 12.) Is it not so, sons of Israel, says the Lord, that you offered wine to the Nazarenes and sent commands to the prophets, saying: Do not prophesy. Likewise, the Septuagint. I granted you so many benefits, that I would kill your enemies and give their land to you, and I would choose

prophets and Nazarenes from your sons and young men, and I would consecrate them to my worship. Can you say that I have not done these things, and that I have denied my mercy towards you, by which you live? Why did you burst forth into such rage, that you would get my Nazarenes drunk with wine, whom the law commands not to drink anything that can intoxicate? (Num. VI): and you would command the prophets not to prophesy in my name. This is what the priest Amaziah of Bethel commanded the prophet Amos, whom we now have in our hands: and it was commanded by the king to Jeremiah, not to speak the words of the Lord to the people, to the extent that his words were even burned with fire. Tatianus, the leader of the Encratites, attempts to construct his heresy on this matter, stating that wine should not be drunk, since it is commanded by the law that Nazarenes should not drink wine, and now they are accused by a prophet who provides wine to the Nazarenes. If they follow the letter in all things and introduce Jewish fables into the churches of Christ, then they should also grow their hair long, abstain from eating dried and green grapes, and not approach their deceased mother and father. And if by chance they have done these things and have been overcome by human frailty or necessity, they should shave their heads, and all their days of dedication and work shall be void. But if they do not do these things, nor are they able to mix water with wine like the Jewish innkeepers, let them understand the shadows of truth, the grace of the Gospel, the necessity of the Law, and that drunkenness with which the vigor of the soul is intoxicated and overwhelmed by worldly cares, and let them command those prophets, saying: 'Do not prophesy, you who, overcome by envy, forbid learned men from speaking the word of doctrine.' And as the Lord says: 'Go and say to this people' (Is. VI, 9), they on the contrary command them not to speak in the name of the Lord, especially if the one teaching provides for the utility of the readers and listeners, not for shameful gain, fame, and boasting.

2:13-16

(Verse 13 onwards) Behold, I will roar underneath you, like a heavily loaded wagon roars with hay, and the fleet warrior shall perish, and the strong shall not retain his strength, and the mighty shall not save his soul, and the archer shall not stand, and the swift-footed one shall not be saved, and the rider of the horse shall not save his soul, and the strong of heart among the strong ones, shall flee naked on that day, says the Lord. LXX: Therefore, behold, I will roll under you like a wagon full of straw is rolled, and the swift one shall perish in flight, and the strong one shall not retain his strength, and the warrior shall not save his soul, and the archer shall not endure, and the swift-footed one shall not be able to be saved, and the horseman shall not save his soul, and his heart shall be found among the mighty, and the naked one shall flee on that day, says the Lord. With me granting benefits to you, and leading you out of the land of Egypt, and destroying the Amorite before your face, so that you could possess his land, and raising up prophets from your sons, and Nazarites from your young men, you made my Nazarites drink wine, and said to the prophets: Do not prophesy. Therefore, just as a cart is burdened with a load of straw or hay, and it screeches and makes a loud noise from afar, so I, unable to bear your sins any longer, and handing you over to the fire like straw, will cry out and say: The quick will perish in flight, whom the Hebrews understand to be Jeroboam the son of Nabath, who had previously fled to Egypt (1 Kings 11). But here we will not take the princes themselves, but their houses and offspring. And the strong will not retain his strength: strong is interpreted as Basan, who was very ready for war (3 Kings 15). And the mighty will not save his soul: they understand this as referring to Amri (or Omri)

here. And the one holding a bow will not stand or sustain: they think this refers to Jehu son of Namsi (or Nemsis), who struck King Joram of Israel with an arrow (4 Kings 9). And he who is swift on his feet will not be saved: Manahen they understand, who vainly hastening directed gifts to the king of the Assyrians (2 Kings 15): And the rider of the horse will not save his life: this Phacee, the son of Romelia, they interpret, who united with Aram, that is, Syria, devastated many things under the reign of Achaz, king of Judah. And with a strong heart, he will flee naked among the strong on that day, says the Lord (Ibid.). Only Osee, who was the last king of the ten tribes, and who attempted to bring back the errant people to the worship of God (2 Kings 18), will go out as if naked from the fire. Moreover, he calls them naked because under him the ten tribes were captured. This is what the Hebrews assert, and as it has been handed down to us, we have faithfully explained it to our people. But now let us return to our own matter. God threatens to roll a cart over them, burdened with hay or straw, so that because they do not have grain to store in granaries, their hay and straw will be consumed by fire. This is the hay of which the prophet says: Let it become like the hay of buildings, which withers before it is uprooted (Ps. 128:6). And: All flesh is grass (Isaiah 40:6). But that straw is what the prophet mourns lamentably for when it catches fire, saying: Woe is me! for I have become like one who gathers straw in the harvest, and like grape clusters in the vintage, when there is no bunch to eat the firstfruit. Woe is me! my soul (added in some versions), for the kind-hearted person has perished from the earth, and there is no one who does what is right among humanity: all are judged by blood (Micah 7:1), and so on. This is hay and straw, of which the Apostle speaks: Each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire. And the rolling cart, that is what we read about in Isaiah: Moab shall be trampled down as straw is trampled in the dung-pit. And in another place: I will make you like a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff. And after you have broken the mountains and hills, the swift flight shall cease, as Paul says: Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. And in another place: You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth (Gal. 5:7) ? And about himself, fearing, he said: Not that I have now received, or am already perfected; but I pursue, if I may apprehend, in which also I am apprehended by Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:12) . He did all these things, lest the flight from the swift be in vain: wherefore when he had now reached the end, and had received the reward of victory, he said securely: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; as to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just judge, will render to me in that day; and not only to me, but to them also that love his coming (2 Tim. 4:7, 8) . If we flee with quickness, sin will not be able to apprehend us; but if malice binds our feet, we will speak with the prophet to God: Where shall I go from your spirit, and where shall I flee from your face (Ps. 138:7)? The Apostle speaks about wicked runners: It is not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs, but of the one who has mercy of God (Rom. 9:16) . It follows: And the strong will not obtain his strength: not because he is strong, but because he boasts of being strong. Whether one trusts in their own strength and not in God's mercy, according to what is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart' (1 Corinthians 2:19): not that true wisdom can perish, and the understanding of truth be rejected; but that the wisdom of those who consider themselves wise and trust in their own erudition may perish. Likewise, the strong or warrior who does not save his own soul is the one who does not possess the full armor of the Apostle: having a shield, but not faith; girded with a

belt, but not in truth; clad in armor, but not in righteousness; wielding a sword, but not for salvation (Ephesians 6). A warrior of this sort does not sanctify battle, nor can he wage war in the name of the Lord, fighting against truth for the sake of lies. Such a warrior cannot say: Blessed be the Lord my God, who teaches my hands to fight and my fingers to war. My mercy and my refuge (Ps. CXLIII, 1). The heretics also have archers who, in vain, try to draw the bow, they cannot withstand the arrow of the Lord, as spoken by Isaiah: But I said, 'I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity' (Isa. XLIX, 2). These are the archers, of whom David also sings: Look, the sinners have bent their bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, to shoot at the upright in heart in the darkness (Ps. X, 2). And the swift (he says) will not be saved by his feet, who runs through the testimonies of the Scriptures because of the sharpness of his wit, and tries to oppress the truth with the eloquence of speakers or with the sophisms of the dialecticians, and is hindered in it and falls, because he trusts not in God but in his own feet. The horse also will not save his own soul, who disregards the saying through the prophet: The horse is a deceitful hope for salvation (Ps. 32:17). And he does not know that it is written: All who mounted horses have slumbered (Ps. 75:7). This one will not save his own soul; but perishing, he will hear: Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God. They are impeded and have fallen; but we have risen and have been raised up (Ps. 19:8-9). A strong man, even with a courageous heart, will flee when naked among the brave. This place can be interpreted in two ways: either he is able to escape because he has stripped himself of the old man and the garments of sins, and he is burdened by no weight, or on the contrary, he is naked and has lost the clothing of Christ, of which it is said in the Apostle: Put on Christ Jesus (Rom. XIII, 14) . And in another place: For if we are clothed, we shall not be found naked (II Cor. V, 3); his strength will be of no use to him; but on the day of battle and struggle, he will flee from those who pursue him, and not being able to resist the enemies without armor, he will show them his back.

3:1-2

(Chapter 3, verses 1-2) Listen to the word that the Lord spoke against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family that I brought out of the land of Egypt, saying: You alone have I known out of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. LXX: Listen to this word that the Lord spoke against you, O house of Israel, and against all the tribe that I brought out of the land of Egypt, saying: However, I have known you among all the tribes of the earth; therefore I will avenge all your evils upon you. He addresses the sons of Israel, and in the following verse, he shows who these sons of Israel are: Above all, he says, the kindred that I brought out of the land of Egypt, which we must not only consider in the ten tribes, but in all twelve, including Judah and Benjamin. For he brought all out of the land of Egypt, and he says: Only, or as Symmachus interpreted: Only you have I known of all the kindreds of the earth. And because I have known only you, who are the Creator of all, and I have considered you my peculiar people, for this reason I will restore all your sins only upon you: For the mighty will powerfully endure torments (Wis. VI); but he who is the least, is worthy of mercy. And in Ezekiel we read: Begin from my sanctified ones (Ezek. IX, 6). And the judgment of God is said to begin from his house (I Pet. IV). Let this be said for now according to the history. Moreover, because hearing is understood in the Holy Scriptures, not only in the sense of perceiving with the ears of the flesh, but also in the sense of understanding, as the Lord says: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke 8:8). Therefore, when the whole people saw the voice of God (Exodus 20), it was a direct message

from the Lord to those who perceived God with their senses, namely those whom He brought out of the land of Egypt and from the power of Pharaoh (so that they would no longer serve mud and straw by building Egyptian cities), and those whom He knew from all the tribes of the earth, as the Apostle says: But now, having come to know God, or rather, having been known by God (Galatians 4:9). And in another place: He who is ignorant, will be ignored (I Cor. XIV, 38). Therefore, not all know God, but those who are worthy of His knowledge, as it is said in the Gospel: Depart from me, workers of iniquity, I do not know you (Luc. XIII, 27). For in being workers of iniquity, they are ignorant of God: therefore He says: Because I knew only you, and I had mine, I will visit upon you all your iniquities. Whom the Lord loves, He chastises, and He corrects every son whom He receives (Hebr. XII). And he said beautifully: I will visit, and I will not strike; for the plague of God is a visitation, and a healing. And he said, I will visit all your iniquities or sins, so that nothing may remain unstruck, so that nothing may not receive healing.

3:3-8

(Verse 3 onwards) Will two walk together unless they have agreed? Does a lion roar in the forest unless it has prey? Does a lion's cub give a cry from its den without capturing something? Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground without a trapper? Does a trap spring up from the ground before catching something? If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, has not the Lord caused it? For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets. The lion roars, who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken, who will not prophesy? Amos: If two shall walk together, except they know each other? If the lion shall roar in his den, having no prey? If the lion's cub gives forth its voice from its lair, unless it has taken something? If a bird falls to the ground without a fowler? If a snare is laid upon the ground, unless it has caught something? If the trumpet sounds in the city, and the people do not fear? If there is wickedness in the city that the Lord did not make, because the Lord God will not do anything unless He reveals His teaching to His servant prophets. Will a lion roar, and who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken, and who will not prophesy? I read in the commentaries of someone who desired to convince of a difficult matter, about eight crimes, wickednesses, and sins: first, Damascus; second, Gaza, and the other cities of Palestine; third, Tyre; fourth, Edom; fifth, the sons of Ammon; sixth, Moab; seventh, Judah, that is, the two tribes; eighth, which is the last, Israel, that is, the ten tribes, with the same number of judgments, now given, and the first answering the first, that is, Damascus, the second answering the second, that is, Gaza, and the rest answering the rest. The one who wrote it knows whether it is true or not. However, another person thinks that the six examples given, of two people walking together on a road, and a lion roaring while leaping, and a lion cub making its voice when it catches something, and a bird caught by a bird catcher, and a snare set in the ground for catching prey, and a trumpet sounding in the city, and with these examples, a similar argument is given, that just as the previous things have a cause and do not happen unless those things have preceded them: likewise, no evil occurs in the city that has not been done by the Lord's command. There are those who consider the first example to contain doctrine, because two cannot walk together unless they have agreed to do so beforehand. He who made both one, and destroyed the middle wall of partition, and created of the two one new man (Ephesians 2): and made peace between them, and joined them together with the bond of charity, so that when they are together, the two may ask the Father and obtain whatever they have requested. These are the two sticks that are joined together in Ezekiel (Ezek.

VII), and the two peoples, the circumcision and the Gentiles, about whom the Lord speaks to Elijah: I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee before Baal (3 Kings XIX, 18). And in another place, God says: I was found by those who did not seek me; I appeared to those who did not ask for me (Isaiah LXV, 1). But when the two are brought together, they will cling to the Lord, and they will become one spirit: for he who clings to the Lord is one spirit (1 Cor. VI, 17). Therefore, these two who agree with each other and walk together in the way of Christ, cannot fear the attack of any adversaries. But if they are separated by discord, immediately the roaring lion will invade them, about which Peter the Apostle said: Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (1 Pet. 5:8). This roaring lion does not roam in cultivated fields, nor among vineyards, nor in olive groves, nor among fruit-bearing trees which praise God; but where there are forests and uncultivated ground, and where wild beasts dwell. And not only will they be exposed to the bites of the lion, but the lion cub will capture them and lead them to its den, fleeing from the light and going towards darkness. For everyone who sins loves darkness and hates the light (John 3), as we read in the psalm: You have set darkness, and it has become night: in it all the beasts of the forest will roam. The lion cubs roaring, to snatch and seek food from God (Psalm 104). For the lion cub seeks not the prey which it possesses and is under its power; but that it may snatch from the Church of Christ, of which it is written in Habakkuk: Its choice food (Hab. 1:16). The third punishment is for those whom discord has separated, that they lose their wings, on which they were previously carried aloft, and fall from heaven to earth, and are caught by the birdcatcher, who is better called the fowler, because he catches birds that are entangled in birdlime, which have descended willingly to earthly things. About which it is written in Proverbs: 'The nets are not unjustly spread for the birds' (Prov. I, 17, and XXIX, 5). For it is a just punishment for sinners, who, having the wings of doves, ought to fly through the air, that they are weighed down by the burden of sins and are brought down to earth, sticking to their vices. Concerning this, we read in the Apostle: 'He who joins himself to a harlot becomes one body with her' (1 Cor. VI, 16). The fourth punishment is for those who are in discord, so that they are caught in a snare not set in heaven, but on earth. Regarding this, the holy one rejoices and says: 'Our soul has been delivered as a sparrow from the snare of the hunters; the snare has been broken, and we have been set free' (Ps. CXXIII, 7). This is the broken snare, of which the Apostle speaks to believers: God will crush Satan beneath your feet quickly (Rom. XVI, 20). And again in David we read: They have set a stumbling block on my path (Ps. CXXXVI, 6). For they cannot deceive the simple ones of the believers unless they propose the name of Christ, so that while we think we find Christ, we may go on to the Antichrist. The fifth punishment is for those who have forsaken the peace, which surpasses all understanding (Philipp. IV), and which the Lord, going to the Father, left to the Apostles, saying: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John XIV, 27), so that as citizens of the Lord, they are terrified by the sound of the trumpet. For whatever is said in the Holy Scriptures, it is like a threatening trumpet, penetrating the ears of believers with a loud voice. If we are righteous, we are provoked to blessedness through the trumpet of Christ; if we are sinners, we hear what torments we will suffer. However, the evil that the Lord does in a city is not contrary to virtue, but it is affliction and torment, as we read: Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6:34), that is, tribulation and distress. And in the Prophet, we read: I am God who made light and darkness, who brings peace and creates evil (Isaiah XLV, 6, 7). Just as darkness is contrary to light and day, so war is contrary to peace, which in itself is not evil, but seems evil to those who suffer it. And so we know, from the holy Scriptures,

that sometimes wickedness is not opposed to virtue, but is rather affliction, punishment, and distress. Let us take one more example from Jonah: And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways, and he repented of the evil which he had said that he would do unto them (Jonah III, 10). Surely there is the evil overthrow of the Ninevites, which God had threatened through the prophet, and it is not contrary to virtue, which pertains to sin, for which He threatened torment to sinners. It follows: The Lord God will not do a word unless He has revealed His secret, or His correction, to His servant prophets: not that God reveals to the prophets all that He does in heaven, or has already done before; but what He is about to do on earth. Noah revealed to his servant that he would bring a flood. Abraham and Lot revealed to their servants that Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim would be destroyed. Joseph revealed the interpretation of a dream of seven years of famine in Egypt. And Jonah revealed the destruction of Nineveh, so that those who heard of the coming punishments would either repent and avoid torment, or those who ignored them would be justly punished. And now the Lord reveals through his servant and prophet Amos what he will do to the ten tribes, that if they are converted to better things and forsake their idols, they may be delivered from the impending danger. And note that the merciful and gracious God always foretells the future so that he is not compelled to inflict punishments. And as for the heretics who slander the Creator as if he were severe and harsh, cruel and only a judge, because there is no evil in the state that he does not do, we refer this to the greatness of his mercy, that he does not inflict punishments unless he has foretold them beforehand. But whoever predicts does not want to punish the sinners. The lion, he says, will roar, and who will not be afraid? The Lord God has spoken, who will not prophesy? Who in this place is not accepted as being for the rare, but not for the impossible. For he who disregards the Lord due to his own stubbornness will not be afraid and will not prophesy. And the meaning is according to the story: if everything trembles at the voice of the lion, and all the nature of animals is frightened, shall we, by God's command to speak and announce to the people the coming punishments, not prophesy? Shall we not speak? I know that someone has written in his Commentaries about a roaring lion to be understood as the devil, and roaring towards those who are about to perish: but God, who speaks through the Prophets, should be referred to the Lord Savior, just as those who hear the roaring of the lion in a bad way and are captured unto death, so the holy ones should hear the Lord commanding in a good way and be saved.

3:9-10

(Vers. 9, 10.) Make it heard in the houses of Azotus, and in the houses of the land of Egypt, and say: Gather yourselves together upon the mountains of Samaria, and behold the many follies in the midst thereof, them that suffer wrong, and that oppress in the innermost parts thereof, and they have not known to do the right thing, saith the Lord: treasuring up iniquity and spoils in their houses. LXX: Declare ye in the countries of the Assyrians, and make it known in the land of Egypt, and say: Gather yourselves together upon the mountain of Samaria, and behold the many wonderful things in the midst thereof, and the oppressions in it, and they have not known the things that are to come in it, saith the Lord, who treasureth up iniquity and misery in their countries. We have already mentioned that the prophet Amos specifically, indeed a large part of the volume, prophesies to the ten tribes called Israel and Ephraim, and Samaria. Therefore, he is also commanded to announce now to Ashdod and the land of Egypt that follows. For Ashdod, the Seventy Assyrians wanting something, since Ashdod is called Esdod in the language of the

Hebrews, and the Assyrians, Assur. For the buildings that are called Armanoth, they rendered regions, which are called Sadoth, and they have nothing in the word of similitude. He said, 'Tell them to gather all the nations that are nearby, and let them see the crimes of Israel, so that they do not think that God's judgment is unjust. Just as if he were to say, 'First see what they do, and then you can approve of my opinion.' And he introduced it beautifully: Over the mountains of Samaria, or the city that is now called Sebaste, then known as Samaria, or the whole province that is situated in the mountains: and see the many insanities in their midst, that they worship calves as gods and sacrifice their own children. Not content with this wickedness, they defame the poor in their own homes and do not know how to do what is right, storing up not gold and money, which are sometimes obtained through labor, but wickedness and plunder in their own houses: so that because they have deserted the worship of God and have worshipped idols, God may give them over to a reprobate mind, to do what is not fitting.' And since, according to the laws of tropology, Samaria is referred to as the heretics who falsely claim to be the keepers of God's commandments, the divine word commands that they preach among the Gentiles who do not have the knowledge of God, in whose doctrine there is a consuming fire, tribulation, and distress. So that they may consider the false Samaria and ascend to the mountains of its pride, and see the many insanities in the midst of the city, while each one imagines whatever he desires and worships his own creation - like Marcion who considers God to be good but inactive, like Valentinus who believes in thirty α■νς and an ultimate Christ, whom he calls an abortive, like Basilides who calls the omnipotent God by the wondrous name ■βρ■ξς and says that the annual course of the sun is contained within the circle, which the pagans call Με■θραν under the same number of other letters. And the follies of Iberians marvel at Balsamo Barbeloque. Are these not insanity and many insanities, with each person imagining whatever comes into their mind? They also endure slander in their innermost places, or the simple ones who believe are oppressed; while under the guise of truth they cultivate falsehood, and they do not know how to do what is right at all, because they have lost the path of truth, and they do not believe in the one who says: I am the truth (John 14:6): and they hoard for themselves the doctrines of wickedness, and they seize and enclose in their houses those whom they can deceive with false error. But if it pleases to read the Assyrians (which, however, is not found in Hebrew), let us say that they are those of whom it is written: I will bring upon you a great chief of the Assyrians, who said, With my strength I will act, and so on, so that the heretics may be captured by the Assyrian and held in the land of Egypt, from which they have already come to the Church and been released.

3:11

(Verse 11) Therefore thus says the Lord God: The land shall be troubled and surrounded, and your strength shall be taken away from you, and your houses shall be plundered. LXX: Therefore thus says the Lord God: Tyre and the surrounding land will be deserted by your strength, and your regions will be plundered. Regarding Tyre, which is written in Hebrew with two letters, Sade (ס) and Res (ר); and it is called Sor (סר): which both Aquila and the Seventy translated similarly: a Hebrew who instructed me in the Holy Scriptures interpreted it as tribulation, and we did not reject his opinion: for Symmachus, who is accustomed to follow not the wordplay, but the order of meaning, says, siege and encirclement of the land. For the siege, which is called πολιορκ■α by him, was placed by Theodotion who thought not Sar and Sor (which is called tribulation, or Tyre, but Sur should be read: which properly refers to a very hard rock, which is called ■κρ■τομος in Greek,

and which we can call flint in Latin. Let us therefore speak about each one. The LXX said: Tyre and the land surrounding it. And the sentence seemed to hang: they added therefore of their own, it will be deserted: nor is it an error of the interpreters, where because of the ambiguity of the word, both tribulation and Tyre can be said. And the meaning is: Over the mountains of Samaria my people have done many insanities: slandering and completely ignoring what is right, and hoarding for themselves injustice and plunder: therefore they will be afflicted, or crushed, and surrounded by the Assyrian army, and, she says, strength will be taken away from you, o Samaria, o ten tribes, o once my people: and they will be plundered in your houses, which you have gathered through the tears of the wretched by means of slander. The heretics also will be afflicted on the day of judgment, and all their strength will be weakened, and what they had gained through plunder will be taken away, so that the people whom they had deceived may be freed: or certainly they will be afflicted every day by ecclesiastical men, and they will be surrounded by testimonies of the Scriptures, and strength of syllogisms, and clever words by which they had confirmed their own doctrine will be taken away from them. And their houses will be plundered: so that those who were taken from the Church may return to the Church.

3:12-13

(Vers. 12, 13.) Thus says the Lord: Just as a shepherd rescues from the mouth of a lion two legs or the tip of an ear, so will the sons of Israel who dwell in Samaria be rescued, on the corner of a bed and in Damascus on the sheets. LXX: Thus says the Lord: Just as a shepherd tears away from the mouth of a lion two legs or the tip of an ear, so will the sons of Israel who dwell in Samaria be torn away, in front of the tribe and in Damascus. In the beginning of Amos, where we discussed those verses: The Lord will roar from Zion, and from Jerusalem He will give His voice; and the beautiful pastures will mourn, and the top of Carmel will wither, we said that He was using his art of speaking so that, since as a shepherd of sheep He knew nothing more terrifying than a lion, He would compare the anger of the Lord to lions. According to this meaning, he now also takes an example from what he had often seen, and thus describes that the small remaining remnants of the Assyrians must be extracted by hand: just as if a shepherd, with all the other parts devoured, were to snatch two legs or the outermost part of the ear from the jaws of a lion. And with the example of comparison set aside, he says that the sons of Israel, specifically the ten tribes who dwell in Samaria, will be extracted in the same way, from the edge of the bed and from the grab at Damascus. What seems to me to be explained in this way: we read in Isaiah that Rezin king of Aram, that is, the Syrians, who reigned in Damascus, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, with the intention of fighting against Judah, came (Isa. VII): concerning whom the Lord directs Achaz king of Judah and Jerusalem not to be afraid of the two half-burnt torches: because as a sign of complete liberation, the Virgin's conception and childbirth are shown to him. Therefore, the children of Samaria dwell in the region and district of the bed, resting in the help of the Syrians, and promising victory to themselves in the bed of Damascus: just as one who is tired is refreshed in bed: so they fortified their weakened forces with the help of the neighboring nation. And in the same Isaiah, it is said by way of a type of future events, that a child will be born who, before he knows how to call his father and mother, will receive the spoils of Samaria and the power of Damascus, which, of course, fought against Jerusalem with united forces (Ibid.). For the blow of the bed and of Damascus, the Seventy translated it against the tribe and in Damascus: so that, according to the symbolism, we may refer the tribe to Judah, and Damascus to the calling of the

Gentiles: from which one flock of the Lord was made, whose wild beasts often tear apart the sheep: from whose jaws scarcely two legs or the very tip of the ear are taken away. In the calf the path of teachings is shown, in the ear the sacraments of words. Therefore, even the apostles were commanded to walk without shoes and any skin of a dead animal on their bare feet (Matth. X). And it is said to the believers: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luc. VIII, 8). In the Apocalypse of John, we also read: He who has ears, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches (Apoc. II, 7). And more explicitly through the prophet: Set your words in the ears of your heart. Both heretics and their teachers rush to hinder this journey and to weave nets so that we may fall on the way that is Christ. But if a man from the church and a man of God come, and Samson, who is interpreted as 'sun', kills the lion: descending into the lake of the underworld, which cools the waters, he suffocates the lion in the time of snow, storm, and winter: so that we may be able to follow the Lord with sure foot and safe ears, and hear his words.

3:14-15

(Verse 14, 15.) Listen and testify in the house of Jacob, says the Lord God of hosts, because on the day when I begin to visit the transgressions of Israel upon him, I will also visit the altars of Bethel: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and shall fall to the ground: and I will strike the winter house with the summer house, and the houses of ivory shall perish: and many houses shall be destroyed, says the Lord. LXX: O priests, listen: testify in the house of Jacob, says the Lord God Almighty: because on the day when I will avenge the iniquities of Israel upon him, I will also avenge upon the altars of Bethel: and the horns of the altar shall be undermined, and shall fall upon the ground. I will confuse and strike the house with wings over the summer house, and the ivory houses will perish, and many other houses will be added, says the Lord. What is written at the beginning of the chapter according to the Septuagint is not found in Hebrew, but instead the word Ares () is read for this, which Aquila interpreted as bed; and I think the Septuagint used this Hebrew word, which some who did not understand read as ἐρεμς, that is, priests. But the prophetic word commands that they first listen, and then respond in the house of Jacob, that is, in the ten tribes that the Lord has spoken about. 'When I begin,' he says, 'to punish the transgressions or impieties of the house of Israel, and to give them what they deserve, and the time of captivity comes, then the altars of Bethel, where the golden calves were, will be destroyed, and the horns of the altar, which was also broken by Jeroboam's hand, will be cut off (3 Kings 13); and they will fall to the ground, shattered by the invading Assyrians.' And I will strike, he said, the winter house with the summer house, which we can simply understand literally: they had such great wealth that they had two houses, a winter house and a summer house, and some of them faced the North, while others faced the South, so that they could provide for the variations in weather, cold and heat, and the temperate climate. We can call the winter house the kingdom of Israel, where there was the cold of religion and worship of God, and the fierce storms of various winds; and the summer house, Judah and Jerusalem, where the temple was, and morning and evening burnt offerings were made, and the fervor of religion thrived. And they shall perish, he said, the ivory houses, which can also be supported by history. For we read that Ahab, king of Israel, indulged in such great delights that he made for himself an ivory house (3 Kings 22). Instead of ivory, we find the term 'tooth houses', that is, houses made of elephant tusks, in Hebrew. Concerning these, it is written in the forty-fourth psalm: From ivory houses: from which the daughters of kings have delighted you in your honor. When the Lord begins to visit the

transgressions of Israel, who previously beheld God with their mind, he will also visit the altars of Bethel: not just one altar, as the Church has, but many altars of heretics. For as many altars as there are schisms, so many will the altars be stripped of their horns, which they boast of having through pride. And their horns will fall, that is, their arrogance, upon the earth; and it will strike the wintry house, those heretics who engage in continence and fasting, in dry diets and camel's hair garments, among whom are Tatianus and Manichaeus. And it will strike the summer house, that is, the Nicolaitans and Eunomians, and the followers of the old heresy, who, because of the gluttony of their bellies, indulge in every pleasure. And the ivory houses, which are composed of the skillful tooth and the splendor of rhetorical brilliance, will perish. And many buildings, which are dispersed throughout the whole world, will be scattered. For when one truth arises, many lies will be destroyed. Regarding the winter house, they have translated it as 'peripteros', which we have interpreted as 'winged', because it has small doors through the windows, and as if wings to repel the severity of the cold.

Book Two

Book Two

I read in a certain controversy: Weakness of the body also drags down the strength of the mind. On the contrary, the Apostle Paul says: When I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians XII, 10); and: Power is made perfect in weakness (ibid., 9). For the spirit is against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit (Galatians V); these are opposed to each other, so that we may not do what we want. Hence, it is also said in the Gospel: The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak (Matthew XXVI, 41). Old age brings many things with it, both good and bad. The good, because it frees us from shameless desires, imposes limits on gluttony, weakens the force of lust, increases wisdom, and gives us more mature advice; and with the body growing colder, it sleeps with the perpetual virgin Sunamite: despising luxury with Berzellai, it entrusts it to the young son Chamaam (also called Maacha), and does not want to cross the Jordan, and to leave its own boundaries, that is, its own territories, and go into foreign lands (II Kings XIX). But the evils that are considered to be the burdens of old age are as follows: frequent weaknesses, the most troublesome phlegm, which some Greeks call κρυζα, others φλογμα, dim eyes, sour foods, trembling hands at times, teeth bare of gums, and falling between meals. In addition to these, it is often plagued with stomach cramps and needle-like pains, as well as the pains of gout and arthritis, to the extent that it is unable to even hold a pen or a stylus; so that it is unable to walk with its own feet and appears to have lost a large part of its life, and many of its limbs are almost dead. Since these things are so, I will tolerate diseases more bearably in comparison to the most severe mistress of lust, as long as I am free from one and very grave desire. Indeed, old age sometimes suffers the incentives of vices: and no one is safe for a long time next to the holy martyr Cyprian, as danger is always close. But it is one thing to be tickled, another to be overwhelmed by pleasures. There, young age speaks with the apostle, who knows the needs of a youthful body: 'For what I want, I do not do, but what I do not want, I do' (Rom. VII, 15); and: 'Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death?' (Ibid., 24) But here the rare sparkle of a shining light tries to revive among the ashes of the dead, yet it cannot ignite a fire. Therefore, Pammachus, listen to me, obtain for me from the Lord that I may deserve to have wisdom as my companion, of which it is written: Love her, and she will keep you; honor her, and she will embrace you (Prov. IV, 8): so that, with her help and partnership, I may complete the work begun in Amos, and the second book may take its

beginning from the cattle of Bashan: so that, just as I have discussed in full discourse about the cattle or calves of Bethaven in the prophet Hosea, now I may also discourse about the fattest cattle.

4:1-3

(Chapter 4, Verse 1 onwards) Hear this word, you fat cows of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, 'Bring us something to drink!' The Lord God has sworn by his holiness: behold, days are coming upon you when they will take you away with hooks, even the last of you with fishhooks. And you will go out through breaches, each one straight ahead, and you will be cast out into Harmon, declares the Lord. LXX: Hear this word, you cows of Bashan ((Or Bashanites)), who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, and crush the needy, who say to your lords: 'Give us something to drink.' The Lord has sworn by his holiness, behold, days are coming upon you when they will take you away with hooks, even those with you in pots, you pestilent merchants, and you will be thrown naked one against another, and cast upon the mountain of Remmon, says the Lord. For the fat cattle, the Seventy interpreted it as Basan's; Aquila and Theodotio interpreted the Hebrew word Basan itself (); we followed the interpretation of Symmachus, who says, 'the well-nourished cows,' that is, fatted cows, we have interpreted as fat cattle. However, he speaks to the leaders of Israel and the best men of the ten tribes, who were occupied with pleasures and rapine, that they may hear the word of God, and know that they are not plowmen's oxen, but fat cattle of the herd, or those nourished in the pastures of Basan, which are the most fertile places for herbs: and by this he signifies that they are prepared not for agriculture, but for sacrifice and eating. You fat cows of Samaria are on the mountain, and you humble ones are crushed. And you say to your lords, that is, to the shepherds through whom we understand the kings, 'Give us, and we will drink,' that is, command and we will destroy everything. But from what he said, 'Give us, and we will drink,' and he did not say, 'Give us, and we will eat,' he signifies their drunkenness in wine and luxury, which overthrow the state of the mind. Therefore, the Lord God swore in His sanctuary, either in Himself, or in the Son, or in the Temple, or in every one who is holy and called the Temple of God, that the day is coming not far off and after many ages, but now imminent, the day of captivity and distress, in which the cows will be led with hooks, and the remains of them in boiling pots, for which it is also written in Hebrew and by Aquila, 'in the bowls of the fisherman.' Furthermore, those shields that are called Sannoth in Hebrew, Aquila interpreted as clypeos; Symmachus and the LXX [interpret as] weapons; only Theodotion [interprets as] dorata, which we have followed and interpreted as contos or hastas. However, this signifies that they are captured in battle, and are carried and taken away by the right of victory; still preserving the metaphor of cows that he had begun, so that just as he had said the cows were fat, he states that their flesh should be carried in contis velscutis. And just as a boiling pot wraps up small fish, so the cows of Basan are to be oppressed with no order of captivity. And what follows: And through the openings you will go out one against another, can be explained thus: The way of captivity is open to you, and when your pots are burned up, you will go out one against another, according to the Hebrew idiom, which for that which we mutually or reciprocally, woman and woman, that is, one against another, call. And he said, 'You will be cast into the places of Armenia, which are called Armona.' Finally, Symmachus interpreted it as follows: 'And you will be cast into Armenia, in place of which the Septuagint has the mountain of Remma, Aquila [has] the mountain of Armona, Theodotion [has] the mountain of Mona; but the fifth edition has

translated it as the lofty mountain.' But the word of the Lord which commands the cows of Bashan to listen, according to the begun tropology, commands the heretics, who serve their belly and throat, and are rightly called very fat cows or disgraceful cows. For Basan, in fact, translates to 'shame,' which if we want to say means 'confusion,' we will interpret it more as Babylon than Basan. These fat cows, or rather dishonorable and dry ones, are located on the mountain of Samaria, which is also referred to in Hosea: Take away your calf, Samaria. And again in the same [book], Because your calf has led you astray, Samaria (Hos. VIII, 5, 6): and therefore on the mountain of Samaria, because they are always lifted up in pride and promise themselves lofty things. Samaria is also called a custodian, not because they guard the words of the Lord, but because they boast of being guardians of his precepts. They falsely accuse the needy and crush the poor. By the needy and poor, understand the ecclesiastical man who is content with the simplicity of truth and does not seek the wealth of heretical arguments or the brilliance of eloquence. These cows say to their masters: Bring us and let us drink. We can call their masters or leaders of perverse doctrines, Valentine, and Marcion, and Arius, and Eunomius, or those who support their wrongly invented teachings through multiple books. These Basanite cows say: Bring us, and let us drink. For if they do not give them, they do not have what they devour, indeed what they drink to become drunk. But in order that we may know that waters and cups signify doctrine, the Lord speaks to the Samaritan woman: Everyone who drinks from this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will not thirst forever (John 4:13). Therefore, those who drink from the waters of the Samaritan, that is, of heretics, will always be thirsty and will not be able to refresh the heat of their dry throats, as Isaiah proclaims: As one dreams of drinking when thirsty, and when he arises, he is still thirsty, and his soul has hoped in vain; so will all the nations that fight against Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:8). For truly, he who drinks from the waters of heretics, and fights against the Church of God in Jerusalem, drinks in his dreams and his soul is deceived by empty images. And when he considers himself satisfied, then he will have the beginning of thirst. Hence it is said to the religious man: Drink the waters from your vessels, and let your own waters flow from the fountains of wells, and let them be for you alone (Prov. 5:15). And the Lord your God swears in his sanctuary against the fattened cows and the feasts that serve them, whether he swears by his saints, that the days of judgment and punishment will come upon them, to carry them in their arms, and to cast those who are with them into stewpots, or to carry them as well. And let those cows themselves be pestilent merchants, or let those who come to carry them be thrown out naked, seeing each other: let them be cast upon Mount Remman, says the Lord God. For we must say, according to the Septuagint, so that we do not seem to have proposed them in vain. When the day of judgment and vengeance comes against the heretics, then they will be taken away in arms, that is, with their weapons with which they fought against the Church; or, having been conquered by the armor of God and overcome by His warriors, they will be thrown into boiling pots to be burned and cooked, who were previously pestilent merchants; for they engaged in this trade in order to deliver those whom they had deceived to death. These are the ones of whom it is said: the sons of Heli, the sons of pestilence (1 Samuel II), who sat in the chair of pestilence (alternatively, pestilences). And when they have been sifted and burned, they will go out naked, having nothing of what they had previously presumed. And they will see their shame, and they will be cast upon the mountain of Remman, which is translated as sublimity, so that they may be crushed in their pride. Some interpret Remman as the sight of someone, that is, the vision of someone. For they could not see everything; but they promised themselves

knowledge of a certain part, so that they might be projected into it, because they believed they knew it. We can, according to the letter, understand that when the days of captivity come upon the cows of Samaria, they will prevail over them in battle, and oppress them with their weapons, and in the encounter compel the defeated to go to fortified cities, which will be compared to boiling pots: just as Jerusalem, having its people shut in and besieged, is likened to a boiling pot full of meat; so the cities of Samaria will be compared to boiling pots, which will force the shut-in people to leave due to famine and plague, and to go into captivity seeing each other mutually, and be transferred to the mountains of Armenia, which are adjacent to Media and Persia.

4:4-6

(Verse 4 and following) Come to Bethel, and act wickedly: to Gilgal, and multiply transgression, and bring your morning sacrifices, your tithes for three days. And offer praise with leaven (Vulgate: with fermented dough), and call for voluntary offerings, and proclaim. For thus you have desired, O children of Israel, says the Lord God. Therefore, I have given you the stench of decay in all your cities and the lack of bread in all your places; and you have not returned to me, says the Lord. You entered Bethel and acted wickedly in Gilgal, multiplying your impious acts. And you brought your offerings in the morning, your tithes on the third day. And you read the law outside and made confessions. Proclaim that the children of Israel have loved these things, says the Lord God. And I will give you the astonishment of teeth in all your cities, and the lack of bread in all your places, and you have not returned to me, says the Lord. Let us lay the foundations of history first: O wretched Israel, captivity is now near to you, the Assyrian army is now advancing: do whatever you please, act impiously: freely fornicate with idols, so that the more shameless you are, the more just my sentence will appear above your torments. 'Come,' he says, 'to Bethel, where you have set up a golden calf, and act impiously towards God. Come to Gilgal, the place of idolatry, of which I spoke through Hosea: 'All their wickedness is in Gilgal' (Hosea 9:15).' And again in the same place: They were in vain in Gilgal, sacrificing to cows (Ibid., XII, 11). And when you come to Gilgal: multiply transgression. For whatever you do there is transgression against God, to whom you prefer idols. And bring your offerings in the morning, lest there be any delay in wickedness. On the third day, give your tithe: or, as Symmachus interpreted, give your tithe on the third day. The explanation of this place seems to us to be: in the Book of Leviticus it is commanded (Lev. VII) that certain offerings should not be reserved for another day, and that others should not remain until the third day: if they do, they shall be unclean. So the meaning is: Sacrifice unclean victims every day, and offer polluted sacrifices, and make a sacrifice of leaven as praise, which is not completely offered to God according to the precepts of Moses. For praise, Eucharist has been interpreted as thanksgiving, which in Hebrew is called Todah (). And he says to call them voluntary offerings, which the Hebrews call Nadaboth (), meaning spontaneous. But a voluntary sacrifice belongs to joy: which in Latin we can call a feast. And when you have done this, announce your impiety to everyone: so that you not only seem to have done it, but also to have taught others. But I command this, and I speak in an imperative manner, in order to satisfy your wishes, because you have acted and desired this way, O children of Israel, says the Lord God. Therefore, I have also given you a shock of teeth, which the Septuagint translated as 'astonishment', whom we have followed in this place because of the simplicity of the word: either the cleanliness of teeth, as Aquila and Symmachus interpreted it, in order to demonstrate the magnitude of hunger through clean teeth. And I made a scarcity of bread, not in one city, but in all your cities; neither in one

place, but in all your places. And when I did this, it was not to punish, but to give an opportunity for repentance; yet you did not turn back to Me, says the Lord. This is what we have said according to the Hebrew text: let us now turn to the Seventy Interpreters, and briefly discuss what seems to us, according to the anagogical interpretation, in each (verse); for the greatness of the books does not allow us to say both in each edition. You entered into Bethel, that is, the house of God, which is understood as the Church: and you acted impiously towards the Lord, trampling upon His commandments. But in Galgala, which means revelation or scroll, you have multiplied impieties, claiming knowledge of the holy Scriptures for yourselves: and while you are exalting yourselves in pride, you have fallen to the lowest filth. Moreover, you have brought your morning offerings, your tithes on the third day, transformed into an angel of light: and you have confined the triple understanding of the Scriptures (which we have been commanded to write in our hearts in three ways) into a single interpretation. For we must understand Holy Scripture, first according to the letter, doing whatever precepts are in ethics. Secondly, according to the allegory, that is, the spiritual understanding. Thirdly, according to the future blessedness. But you, despising the first and the second day, compose for yourselves certain spiritual figments without foundation, and place a roof upon them without walls. Nor are they heretics, concerning whom and to whom it is said, being content with the end of ungodliness: but they have read outside the Church the law of God, and have attempted to join together confessions and testimonies to their own perverted heart: or they have sacrificed of the leaven, concerning which it is said in the Gospel, 'Beware of the leaven,' that is, the doctrine of the Pharisees. And they did these things not by error, but by study: not by chance will, but by the fullest charity of their ancestors. Hence the Lord threatens vengeance upon them: I will give you the astonishment of teeth, which in Greek is called 'γομφιασμός'. For if anyone, according to Ezekiel (Ezek. 18), eats a sour grape, his teeth will be astonished: so that those who abuse the testimonies of the holy scriptures, consuming them immature and without their sweetness, may lose the strength of their teeth: so that they are unable to chew tough things, which are beneficial to the whole body, and pass into the stomach. I will give you this wonder of teeth and scarcity of food in all cities, and in all your places, so that you may suffer the hunger of the Word of God, and its bread which descended from heaven (John VI), and of which it is written in the Psalms: Man ate the bread of angels (Psalm LXXVII, 15). All these things I have done not out of cruelty and savagery, as heretics may calumniate, but out of severity and seriousness of judgment, so that you may convert to me, according to what is written: I have struck your children in vain, they did not receive discipline (Jeremiah II, 30).

4:7-8

(Verse 7 onwards) I have also withheld rain from you, when there were still three months until the harvest. I caused it to rain on one city and not on another. One part was rained upon, while the part on which it did not rain became dry. So two or three cities went to another city to drink water, but were not satisfied. Yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. LXX: And I have withheld rain from you three months before the harvest. I have caused it to rain on one city and not on another city. Part of it will be irrigated, and part of it, upon which it does not rain, will dry up. And two or three cities will gather in one city, so that they may drink water and not be satisfied; and you have not returned to me, says the Lord. Not only have I caused astonishment of teeth in all your cities, and a scarcity of bread in all your places, but I have also prevented rain from you when there were still three months remaining until the harvest, which is called the late rain, and is especially

necessary for the thirsty fields and Palestinian lands, so that when the grass swells in the harvest and the wheat bears fruit, it will wither due to excessive dryness. However, the significant time of spring at the end of the month of April, from which there are three months remaining until the harvest of wheat. May, June, July. For the harvest, seventy days, in their own way, were transferred to the vintage, which, if we accept it, is completely unusual and impossible next to all the regions of the East. For we have never seen rain at the end of June or in the month of July in these provinces, especially in Judea. Finally, in the Books of Kings, as a great sign and wonder, rain was brought about on the days of summer and harvest, when Samuel prayed (1 Samuel 12). And it was excessive to threaten now the dryness of the month of July, in which it had never given rain. It prevented rain, so that they would endure not only a shortage of bread, but also the heat of thirst and a scarcity of drinking. For in these places where we now live, besides small springs, all the water is in cisterns, and if divine wrath withholds rain, the danger of thirst is greater than that of hunger: which Scripture also mentions to have happened in the days of the prophet Elijah for three years and six months (3 Kings 17). And perhaps they might not think that this happened by the law of nature, and the course of the stars, and the variety of seasons, to rain on one city and its fields, and to suspend rain from another: so that two or three cities may go to another city and yet be not satisfied with the drinks of water. And when He has done these things, not for punishment but for healing, He rebukes those who persist in wickedness: and even so you have not returned to me, says the Lord. The Lord also forbids or restrains spiritual rains and all the riches of divine wisdom from the heretics; and He commands His clouds not to rain the showers of rain upon them before three months of harvest or vintage, so that they cannot come to the fruits of the mystery of the Trinity. And as this sun, which we see, completes its annual course until it returns to its original point, in twelve months, which consist of thirty days each; and the moon, which in Hebrew is called 'Jare', and in Greek 'μην', gave the name of months in both languages from its own name, and is illuminated by the sun's rays from that part which is near it, receiving more or less light according to the changing seasons: so also the Church, adorned by the splendor of the true Sun, completes the number of the twelve apostles. And so, the twelve tribes are called in Israel, and as a testimony of eternal memory, twelve stones are taken from the bed of the Jordan, to be placed in the location of the second circumcision (Joshua 4). But the Lord rains upon one city, the true Church of confession, and does not rain upon the other, which is in the assemblies of heretics. And while the former receives eternal rain, the latter is dried out by constant aridity: so that those who thirst, compelled by scarcity, may come to the city of the Lord, from which a most abundant fountain flows, irrigating the torrent of thorns. But this is the fountain which speaks through Jeremiah: They have abandoned me, the fountain of living water, and have dug for themselves broken cisterns that cannot hold water (Jeremiah 2:13). This fountain, flowing from one source, runs in threefold union: the fountains of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which the psalmist yearns for in the manner of a thirsty deer, saying: As the deer longs for the streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God (Psalm 42:1). And when two or three cities have journeyed to one city, in which there is an abundance of water, they will not be satisfied with hope, faith, and charity, because they have come not by choice, but by necessity, to seek divine grace.

4:9

(Verse 9) I struck you with scorching wind and with blight. The abundance of your gardens, vineyards, olive groves, and fig trees were eaten by the locusts, yet you did not return to me, says

the Lord. LXX: I struck you with burning heat and with blight. You multiplied your gardens, vineyards, fig trees, and olive groves, yet you did not even turn to me, says the Lord. It was not only the past that I did to correct you; but whatever remained of the drought, I struck with scorching wind and blight. For *vento urente*, *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodotion* are interpreted as 'Septuaginta πύρωσιν,' which we can translate as 'combustion.' All of them translated 'Auruginem' as 'πικτερον,' except *Theodotion*, who translated it as 'χρῆσιν,' which means 'pallor.' And when they multiplied against the anger of the Lord, they consumed all the gardens, vineyards, fig trees, and olive trees with 'eruca,' which is further explained in *Joel* (*Joel*. I). And not even by means of wounds did they want to come to God, burdened as they were by the weight of evils. With this saying, let the heretics be confounded, who interpret the discipline of the Creator, and, so to speak, medicine, as cruelty. But the Lord spiritually strikes the heretics with the burning fire, about which the Apostle Paul said: It is better to marry than to be burned (1 Corinthians 7:9). And the prince of the apostles: Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that comes upon you for your testing (1 Peter 4:12), and like rust that, with bile poured out, changes the redness of blood into paleness, and allows nothing healthy in the body, so much so that even the sweetest honey seems bitter. And those who recently heard in the Church: Taste and see that the Lord is sweet: and they said: How sweet are your words to my throat, more than honey to my mouth (*Ps*. CXVIII)! Let them be called bitter, and their waters and rains not drip sweetness: let them not be from the promised land, which we read flows with milk and honey: but let them be called Mara, that is, bitterness. These multiplied gardens for themselves, into which Naboth ((*Al*. Nabutha)) did not want his vineyard to be changed, and so he wanted to die (*III Kings* XXI). For the one who is weak, let him eat vegetables (*Rom*. XIV). And because heretics are always swollen with pride, and falling into the judgment of the devil, they promise great things to themselves and invent images of good things, so that they may mix poison with honey: they boast that they have vineyards, olive groves, and fig orchards; but their vineyard is the vineyard of Sodom; their olive groves are not from good olives, but from wild olive trees, which the Apostle commands to be grafted onto the roots of good olive trees (*Rom*. XI). Figs also have such things, which fill the basket of the worst figs, which *Jeremiah* testifies that he cannot eat because of bitterness (*Jerem*. XXIX). When the Lord comes to them, he curses them with eternal drought (*Mark*. XI), so that they never bear fruit, lest they deceive passers-by with the greenness of their leaves. And so that we understand that the gardens of heretics and vineyards and olive groves and fig groves are referred to in a negative way, he adds the word 'yours' to each of these phrases, to show that they belong not to God but to the heretics: your gardens, your vineyards, your olive groves, and your fig groves: all of which have been ravaged by caterpillars, the final punishment of all; they do not fly away like locusts, and scattering in all directions, but rather remain and consume everything slowly, with a lazy and sluggish bite, all that is doomed to destruction. And when they had suffered these things, they did not even want to return to the Lord in this way.

4:10

I sent death upon you on the way of Egypt, I killed your young men with the captivity of your horses. And I made the stench of your camps go up into your nostrils, and you did not return to me, says the Lord. LXX: I sent death upon you on the way of Egypt, and I killed your young men with the captivity of your horses. And I led your camps in fire in my anger, and yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. Through all the whips and tortures Israel is educated: and at that time

when they asked for help from the Egyptians, death was sent upon them, and their young men were struck down by the sword, and the captivity cruelly confined those horses which they had multiplied against God's commandment, so that the rottenness of the camps and the stench of the dying army would fill the nostrils of the living. And even after doing all this, to seize the wrongdoers and correct those who went astray, they did not return to Him, says the Lord. Not only at that time, but every day, he puts to death on the way of Egypt, so that one who treads the path of Egypt may hear, dying, the teaching of the Apostle: For the sin I am dead, I am dead; but in what I live, I live in God (Galatians II). And in another place: If we have died with Christ, we will also live with him (Romans VI, 8). And again: I always carry about in my body the dying of Jesus (II Corinthians IV, 10). And again: It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me (Galatians II, 20). The Lord wants to give us life through this death, so that, dying to sin, we may live for God. But we die to sin when we mortify our earthly members, that is, fornication, impurity, sensuality, idolatry and so on. We read in Isaiah, according to the Septuagint translators: otherwise in Hebrew it is expressed differently: 'I have sent death unto Jacob, and it has come upon Israel' (Isa. IX). Jacob is the name of the body that is being born; Israel is the name of blessing. For he wrestled all night and prevailed in the struggle (Gen. XXXII), and when the morning star arose, he could say with the Apostle: The night is far gone; the day is at hand (Rom. XIII, 12), therefore Israel, seeing God, received his name. Therefore death is sent first to Jacob, so that we may mortify our members upon the earth, and through the mortification of our bodily members, we may come to the death of Israel, so that all incentives of disturbances may die within us. God strikes whatever is strong in evil, and perversity rises up in youth, so that it does not reach old age, and He delivers horses to captivity, so that they do not slip into the abyss of hell; and He causes the stench of decay of their camps to rise up into their nostrils, so that they may recognize their own sins and feel the rottenness, and they may say with David: My wounds have putrefied and become corrupt because of my foolishness (Ps. XXXVII, 6). And when they have done all this according to the desire of the healer, they have not even turned back to Him, says the Lord.

4:11

(Verse 11) I will overthrow you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you will become like a bundle snatched from the fire, and yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. LXX: I will overthrow you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you will become like a bundle plucked from the fire, but even so you did not turn back to me, says the Lord. This is the ultimate remedy for the ten tribes, the heretics, and all sinners. After sending death along the way of Egypt and striking down their young men with the sword, and consuming their horses, and bringing the stench of their camps into their nostrils, and yet they did not return to Him, may He overthrow them as He overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. And when they are overthrown, for the likeness of the crimes of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the worst of their buildings is burned by divine fire, they themselves will be delivered like a bundle snatched from the fire. And how Lot, while Sodom was perishing, was saved, losing his possessions and part of his body, namely his wife, as we understand (Gen. XIX): so let all those who lose the riches of Sodom be found naked, according to what we read in the Apostle: If anyone's work which he has built endures, he will receive a reward: if anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss: but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire (I Cor. III, 14, 15). Therefore, whoever is saved by fire is snatched away like a torch from a fire. And concerning those people whom the Savior was rebuking in the Gospel, saying, 'If you were

children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham' (John 8:39), John the Baptist says, 'Progeny of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?' (Matthew 3:7, 8, 9) So produce worthy fruits of repentance, and do not say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Therefore, both Israel and all heretics, because they had the works of Sodom and Gomorrah, are overthrown like Sodom and Gomorrah: that they may be delivered, as it were, a brand plucked out of the fire. And this is what we read in the prophet: Sodom shall be restored to her former state (Ezek. 16:55): so that whoever is a Sodomite by his own fault, after the works of Sodom have burned in him, may be restored to his former condition.

4:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) Therefore, I will do these things to you, Israel: but after I have done these things to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel. For behold, he who forms the mountains and creates the wind, and declares to man what is his thought, who makes the morning darkness, and treads on the heights of the earth - the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name. LXX: Therefore, I will do these things to you, Israel: but because I will do these things to you, prepare to call upon your God, O Israel. For behold, He who strengthens the thunder, and creates the spirit, and proclaims His Christ among men, making morning, and mist, and ascending above the heights of the earth: The Lord God Almighty is His name. Because we have interpreted, after it is written in Hebrew 'Eceb', and Aquila interpreted it as 'afterwards', and Theodotion as 'finally', and the Septuagint yet 'in Hebrew it can be read as: Therefore I will do these things to you, Israel, afterwards, that is, much later, and in the last times, so that it may begin again from another beginning: And when I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel.' And again, in that place where the Septuagint translated, prepare to invoke your God, and we have set it according to Theodotion, prepare to encounter your God, Symmachus and the Fifth Edition have translated, prepare to oppose your God: which is said in Hebrew, Hechin Lacerath Eloica (). Also, for the mountains which are called Arim in Hebrew, the Seventy alone translated it as thunder. But the reason why they said 'spirit' and we said 'wind', which is called Rua in Hebrew, is clear, because both wind and spirit are referred to by this word. And what follows, proclaiming his message to humanity, which we translate as interpreters, only the Seventy translated it, proclaiming his Christ to humanity: deceived by the similarity and ambiguity of words. For if we read his Christ, which in Hebrew is called Messiah (■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■), it is written with the letters Mem, Sin, Yod, Het, and Vav, which the Seventy presumed. But if, as in Hebrew, it is according to Aquila 'his speech', according to Symmachus 'his voice', according to Theodotion 'his word', according to the fifth edition 'his eloquence', all of which can be interpreted as 'his speech', it will be written with these letters: Mem, He, which is called Ma (■ ■ ■ ■), which means 'what' or 'something'. Then Sin, Iod, Heth, which we read as Sia (Σ ■ ■ α), that is, eloquence. But O, which is written with the single letter Vau, α ■ τ ο ■, that is, his, signifies, and at the same time is read mixed with Masio (Μ α σ ■ ω), having the second letter from the word He with more. We have talked about the variety of interpretation, which will be troublesome for the negligent and pleasing for the studious: now let's move on to the meaning of what has been written. I gave astonishment to your teeth, and you did not return to me, says the Lord. I withheld rain from you, and it rained on one city and not on another; one field had rain, but another had none and withered. So two or three cities staggered to one city to drink water, but were not satisfied; yet you did not return to me, declares the Lord. I struck you with blight and

mildew; your many gardens and vineyards, your fig trees and olive trees the locust devoured; yet you did not return to me, declares the Lord. I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt; I killed your young men with the sword, and carried away your horses, and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils; yet you did not return to me, declares the Lord. I will overthrow you as the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you have become like a brand plucked from the fire, and yet you have not returned to me, says the Lord. Therefore, I will do this to you, O Israel; because you have despised the past, at least be corrected for what I am about to bring upon you. And when he says, 'I will do this to you,' he remains silent about what he will do, so that while Israel hangs in uncertainty about each specific type of punishment (which is all the more terrifying because they suspect everything), they may repent and so God does not inflict what he threatens. But after I have done what I promise you I will do, prepare to invoke the Lord your God. For everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Joel 2). Whether you prepare to meet your God, and eagerly receive the Lord coming to you with all your heart. It is he who strengthens the thunder, or confirms the mountains, at whose voice the pillars of heaven and the foundations of the earth tremble (Eccl 16). It is he who creates the spirit, not the Holy Spirit in this place, as heretics suspect; but we understand it as the wind, or the spirit of man: for no one knows what is in man except the spirit that is within him; and the same spirit intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings (Rom 8). Certainly, we must receive the spirit, the soul, according to what is written: 'You will take away their spirit, and they will perish and return to their dust' (Ps. 104:29). And: 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit,' and saying this, he breathed his last (Luke 23:46). And when he creates the spirit, he proclaims his word to mankind, or he proclaims the word of him who knows the secrets of thoughts, and understands what the hidden mind ponders in silent speech, according to what we read in Jeremiah according to the Hebrew: 'The heart of man (or of all and of every man) is small and unfathomable, who can know it?' I am the Lord, searching the heart and testing the reins (Jer. XVII, 9, 10). This is also testified in the one hundred and thirty-eighth psalm: Your eyes have seen my imperfect form. The meaning is: Before I was formed, before I was deformed in limbs, while I was still contained in the seed, your eyes saw me. And Jeremiah hears from the Lord: Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you came forth from the womb, I sanctified you, and I appointed you as a prophet to the nations (Jerem. I, 5). And the evangelist, seeing, said, 'The Lord knows their thoughts' (Luke 11:17). But if we read further, proclaiming man's speech according to what was said above, in which he says, 'The Lord God will not speak unless he has revealed his secret to his servants the prophets' (Isaiah 3:7). But the one who proclaims man's thoughts and speech, whether his own or another's, he is the one who makes the dawn and the sunrise, and covers everything with clouds, and walks above the heights of the earth; his name is the Lord God Almighty. For in the Septuagint it is read: Announcing in men his Christ: under which occasion heretics, want to create the Holy Spirit in order: creating the spirit, and announcing in men his Christ: so that he may be created, he may be announced in the peoples. To these things we will respond according to their meaning, and to the Vulgate edition: Who is the creator of all, and establishes the thunder, or forms the mountains, consequently brings forth the winds from his treasures, and as the founder of the universe, promises his Son Christ to men. But when Christ has been proclaimed, then the light of truth is opened to us, not perfectly; for now we see in part, and we know in part, and through a mirror and an image we contemplate those things that are to come (I Cor. XIII). Hence it follows: making morning and mist, and rising above the heights of the earth. For the Lord is high above the high

things, and does not dwell in the lowly, He who is high; but the creator of mountains ascends to the mountains, in those who have a share in heavenly things, and walking in the flesh they do not live according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. But if we read according to Symmachus and Aquila: these things I will do to you, O Israel, afterwards, and when I have done these things to you, prepare yourself to oppose your God, it is to be understood thus: I have done this to correct you, as the past speech described, and because you did not want to return to me, I will do to you what is contained in my secret. You have killed the servants whom I sent to you: finally I will send my Son: but you, according to your usual custom, by which you always oppose the will of the Lord, prepare yourself to contradict and oppose your God: according to what is written: Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many, and for a sign that will be contradicted (Luke 2:34). And he says this, not because he commands what should be done; but rather he foretells what he will do willingly, as if reproaching and accusing, so that at least when corrected he does not do what was foretold.

5:1-2

(Chapter 5, Verses 1-2) Hear this word, which I bring against you as a lamentation. The house of Israel has fallen, and it shall not rise again. The virgin of Israel is cast down upon her own land; there is no one to raise her up. LXX: Hear this word, which I will take up against you as a lamentation. The house of Israel has fallen, it shall not rise again. The virgin of Israel is cast down upon her own land, there is no one to raise her up. As for the order of the letters and the true beginning of the story, the ten tribes that are called Israel were led into captivity and have never returned to their own land. But the people of Israel are called the Virgin, not because they remained in the purity of virginity, but because they were once united with the Lord like a virgin. Therefore, the prophet is commanded to take up lamentation over them, so that they may not be restored to their former state. But as for spiritual understanding, the prophet takes up lamentation over all of Israel who once beheld God with their minds and then ceased to serve Him, according to what is commanded in Ezekiel (Ezek. 2), to devour the book in which lamentation, song, and woe were written both inside and outside. Understand within the following song of Solomon, which says: The king has brought me into his chamber (Song of Songs 1:4). And the forty-fourth psalm, in which it is written: All the glory of the daughter of the king is within. But whatever is read in the letter, and appears in the bark, and is not held in the marrow of the spirit, is outside. Therefore, both literally and figuratively, in all the books of the prophets, there is lamentation written over those who repent after sin: A song is worthy for those who are not stained by the filth of sins: Woe to those who do not repent; but according to the hardness of their heart, they store up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath. But if, as we have said, there is lamentation over those who repent; and repentance restores the health of the wounds: how is it said according to the Septuagint, The house of Israel has fallen, it will not rise again. The virgin of Israel has strayed in her own land, there is no one to raise her up? This can be explained as follows: After the house of Israel has fallen of its own will, it will by no means regain its former dignity; after the virgin of Israel has strayed in her own land, she will no longer be able to find anyone to raise her up. And consider the properties of words. He who is a house, and is counted among the crowd, is said to fall. But he who errs about the number of virgins, even for a light offense, cannot be raised up: not that he will not be raised up, but that the virgin of Israel will not be raised up, and the Lord of Israel will not rise. For the glory of the one who has always followed the Lord is not the same as the glory of the

one who has strayed from the flock and then was carried back on the shoulders of the good shepherd (Luke 15). And through another prophet the Lord says: I desire the repentance of the sinner rather than death (Ezek. XVIII, 32). Repentance is better compared to death and hell, not to the most pure sanctity of the Church of Christ (which has no wrinkle or blemish). We say this, not to do away with the hope of repentance according to Novatus, but to make those who are more timid and solicitous, who, while hoping for the future, lose the present through the open door of repentance, and who could have remained without injury, but receive a wound unawares, and afterwards suffer with pain. There are many mansions in my Father's house (John XIV), and star differs from star in brightness; so also is the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians XV): shining like the sun and moon, evening and morning star. But those who repent after sinning will be equal to other stars according to the diversity of their merits.

5:3

(Verse 3) Because thus says the Lord God: The city from which a thousand went out shall be left with a hundred, and the city from which a hundred went out shall be left with ten in the house of Israel. Similarly in the Septuagint. The divine word gives the reasons why the fallen house of Israel shall not rise again, and why the wandering or cast-down virgin of Israel shall not have a saviour. It says: The city, it says, from which a thousand went out shall be left with a hundred, and the city from which a hundred went out shall be left with ten in the house of Israel. So that where there was once a multitude, because of excessive desolation, scarcely a tenth part remains. And let us not leave the letters of the sacraments of numbers untouched: the number seven is proven to be holy, even the Sabbath, on which God rested from all his works (Gen. II). And it commands that no servile work be done on it, except only that which pertains to the soul: and that we not bear burdens on it (Num. XV). Hence, even in the wilderness, the one who gathered wood on the Sabbath, which is destined to burn, is condemned by the judgment of the Lord. And seven weeks complete the number of holy Pentecost: and the Jubilee year of remission and the sounding of trumpets is woven with this number. In the seventh month, the tabernacles are also set up, and the Hebrew, after serving for six years, will be set free in the seventh year. This is also known in secular philosophy and in the books of the physicians, of whom Galenus, very eloquent and learned, wrote three books on judgments and critical days, in which he shows the power of the number seven, saying that the most intense fevers are resolved on the seventh day: or if the magnitude of the harmful fluid and phlegm is so great that it is in no way consumed by the heat of the first week, the last day of the second week is awaited, that is, the fourteenth. But if this disease, as Hippocrates says, conquers, they pass to the twenty-first day, that is, to the end of the third week: so from the beginning of the world, the days being numbered, all labors and troubles rest on the seventh number. Finally, the captivity of the people of Israel, the destruction of the temple, was completed in the seventieth year of desolation, and seven planets are said to wander according to the number of days. Tullius gives a more detailed account of the mysteries of this number in Scipio's dream, and Plato's Timaeus is very obscure, which even Cicero's golden mouth does not make clearer. Therefore, just as the number seven has its sacrament, so it is sanctified and perfected, and, so to speak, is the true number, which is preserved by union, and is enclosed within the majesty of one God. Hence the Son says: I am in the Father, and the Father in me (John 14:11): desiring that all should be one with the Father, he speaks to him: Father, grant that just as I and you are one, so may they be one in us (ibid. 17:21). Therefore, the first beatitude is to be in

the first number, which is one and true; the second, in the second, that is, in the decade; the third, in the third, that is, in the hecatontade. For just as the decade is completed by the tenth union, so the hecatontade is built from ten decades. The fourth number, which is contained in a thousand, consists of ten hecatontades. Therefore, when someone repents, they rarely return from the thousand and fourth number to the hundredth and third number. Again, he who is in the hundredth, scarcely returns to the second number of the first decade, and so it happens that the house of Israel, which had fallen, cannot rise again, and the virgin of Israel, who had gone astray, does not have a restorer on the earth. For once someone has departed from union and has lost the glory of most pure virginity (of which the Apostle says: For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin, 2 Corinthians 11), they will not be able to regain their former state and the blessedness of union. And it will scarcely be granted to them to return from a thousand to a hundred, and from a hundred to ten. I have spoken these things briefly so that I may not appear to have completely avoided tropology in this chapter on account of the difficulty of numbers.

5:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) Because thus says the Lord to the house of Israel: seek me, and you will live, and do not seek Bethel, and do not enter Galgala, and do not pass through Bersabee, because Galgala will be taken captive, and Bethel will be useless. LXX: Because thus says the Lord to the house of Israel: seek me, and you will live, and do not seek Bethel, and do not enter Galgala, and do not pass over the well of the oath, because Galgala will be taken captive, and Bethel will be as if it does not exist. It is the custom (Al. the habit) of the Scriptures always to join joyful things after sad things and after God has threatened with punishment, He calls those whom He has terrified to repentance, according to what we read in Isaiah: Woe, sinful nation, people full of sins, wicked seed, wicked children (Isa. I, 4). And when He has said, your land is desolate, your cities are consumed by fire, foreigners will eat your regions before you (Al. in your sight), He speaks to them promising better things: Be washed, be clean: remove your evils from your minds. Learn to do good (or do good): seek justice, judge the orphan, defend the widow: and come, let us reason together, says the Lord (Isaiah 1:17). Therefore, just as in Isaiah, he sustains those whom he had terrified with his severe voice with gentle speech, so also in this prophet, he says to them: The house of Israel has fallen, it will not be added that it may rise again; the virgin Israel has wandered on the earth, there is no one to raise her up. He does not speak to them and say: The house of Israel, that is, the ten tribes, seek me and you shall live; for in not seeking me, you are dead. And when you seek, you will find; and when you find, you will live. And do not seek Bethel, where the golden calf was, and Galgalam, the place of idolatry, of which I have spoken before: All their wickedness is in Galgal (Hosea 9:15). And you shall not go to Bersabee. In Bersabee, he says, there is a well of oath, you shall not go there: where if ever the tribe of Judah erred, they used to worship idols. But Israel was so inflamed with the worship of idols that he was not satisfied with his own idols, but he went to foreign ones. Finally, he said that Galgata will be led captive, and Bethel will be useless, or completely non-existent, when those idols are overthrown. He completely overlooked Bersabee; because, after the ten tribes were defeated, the city called Bersabee, which was in the tribe of Judah at that time, was neither captured nor destroyed. It should also be noted that in this passage the Seventy Interpreters have translated the name Bersabee as 'well of an oath,' and in subsequent passages they used the same name: 'Your God lives, Dan,' and 'the way

to Bersabee lives.' But they put the road by Bersabee, because they were traveling from Israel to the farthest borders of Judah, which were in Geraris, and were connected to the desert of Egypt, in order to worship idols. And it is the place where Abraham lived: and because when he and Abimelech, having given seven sheep, swore an mutual covenant, it was called the well of the oath, or the well of the seventh, because of the number seven sheep (Genesis 25): for 'Sabe' signifies both. However, according to the allegorical interpretation of the laws, it is enjoined upon the house of Israel, that is, those who profess to have knowledge of God, not to seek Bethel, and not to enter into Galgal, and not to pass by or ascend to the well of the oath; but rather to seek God and live in him. However, they seek Bethel, which is interpreted as the house of God, those who say: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord; and they trust in the buildings, of which the Lord spoke to his disciples: The days will come, in which there will not be left a stone upon a stone that will not be destroyed (Luke 21:6). And they enter into Galilee, who after the coming of Christ desire to be circumcised again. For in Galilee the people were circumcised a second time. Hence the place itself received its name: because the Lord took away the reproach of Egypt from them (Jos. 5). And in Beersheba, he says, you shall not pass unto the well of the oath: lest you consider those the borders of Judaea, which according to the letter of Scripture were promised from Dan to Beersheba. And do not say with the prophet: God is known in Judaea, his great name in Israel (Ps. 75:1); but listen to the apostles: Their sound has gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (Ps. 18:4): for Galilee, that is, the circumcision of the flesh, will be led captive by the true circumcision of the heart; and Bethel, which you think is the house of God, will not remain, or, as I think better, will be useless, that is, Aven: so that it may by no means be called the house of God, but may be called the house of inutility, or of idols. Another way: Bethel seeks only the letter that sets in the west, and not the meaning, which is God, seeks in words: and it enters into Galgala, which aims for greater revelations, promising himself knowledge of the supernatural, and it passes, or ascends to the well, from which the Samaritan woman, desiring to draw water, which could not quench her thirst, did not know him, from whose belly spring forth rivers of living water into eternal life (John 4).

5:6

(Verse 6.) Seek the Lord, and live: lest the house of Joseph be burned with fire, and it devour, and there be none to quench it. LXX: Seek the Lord, and live: lest the house of Joseph be kindled with fire, and it consume it, and there be none to quench the house of Israel. Just as it is said from the person of God, 'Seek me, and you will live,' so the prophet speaks of the Lord, that they should seek him and live. For in seeking the Lord, they begin to live; but if they do not seek him, and therefore do not live, the house of Joseph will immediately be kindled like fire, which we must understand as referring to the ten tribes called Israel, who held the original name for the greater part of the people, because of Jeroboam, who was from the tribe of Ephraim and the house of Joseph. But there were two tribes which were ruled by the lineage of David, who was from the tribe of Judah, called Judah, and they possessed Jerusalem, in which the temple of God was. And when the house of Joseph is set on fire, it will devour and consume Bethel, of which I spoke earlier: Do not seek Bethel, and there will be no one to extinguish it, when it is set on fire by its kings. For in the Septuagint, instead of Bethel, the house of Israel is read, with those interpreting the meaning more than the word, so that, with the reign of Jeroboam and all the subsequent kings who succeeded him in power, the ten tribes, which are called Israel, may burn. This is the fire that

is kindled, or shines and inflames the house of Joseph, so that Bethel is consumed, of which it is said elsewhere: Walk in the light of your fire, and in the flame that you have kindled (Isaiah 50:11). And because we have frequently referred the house of Joseph (because of Jeroboam, who separated the people of God from the lineage of David and made golden calves in Dan and Bethel, and said, there is no part for us in David, neither inheritance in the son of Jesse (1 Samuel 22:36)), to the person of heretics, who, with composed speech, have fashioned beautiful and attractive, and, so to speak, golden images, and worship the works of their own hands, and promise themselves an image under the form of cows for agriculture, it is said to them: Seek the Lord and live, the one who says: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:16): so that after they have walked in him and found the truth, then those who were previously dead may begin to live. And if they do not do this, they will be burned by the fires of the devil, and no one will be able to be found from their leaders who have themselves been consumed by the heretical fire, who can extinguish the devouring flame of all, especially Bethel, which assumes for itself the false name of the house of God.

5:8-9

(Verse 8 onwards) You who turn judgment into wormwood and abandon righteousness on earth, who makes the Bear and Orion, who turns darkness into morning and darkens day into night. He who calls the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth: His name is the Lord. He who laughs at destruction, bringing devastation upon the strong. The One who brings judgment from on high and establishes justice on earth; the One who does all things, who transforms and turns the shadow of death into morning and darkens day into night. He who calls the water of the sea, and pours it out upon the face of the earth: The Lord is his name. He who brings destruction upon strongholds, and brings misery upon fortresses. In this place, the Hebrew truth diverges greatly from the Vulgate edition, as the discerning reader immediately understands without our prompting. Therefore, let us first explain according to the Hebrews, and then what seems to us in the translation of the Septuagint, if we are worthy of Christ revealing it to us. Let us say, the house of Joseph, that is, the house of Ephraim, and through this, the royal house, and Bethel, or as the Septuagint translated, the house of Israel, that is, both kings and peoples, worshippers and idols alike will be overthrown, who have provoked God to anger with their unjust judgment. And they turned the sweetness of judgment into the bitterness of wormwood, which is a type of very bitter herb, taking up wickedness, and abandoning justice. Now what is this justice, the following verse shows: The one who makes the Bear and Orion, and turns darkness into morning, and transforms day into night. Of whom it was said above: He who forms the mountains and creates the wind, and announces his word to man, making the morning mist, and walking on the highest points of the earth: The Lord God of hosts is his name, he is the Creator of the Bear, which in Hebrew is called Chima (כִּימָא), and in Symmachus and Theodotion it is translated as Pleiades. It is commonly known as Boötes: and what follows, Orion, which in Hebrew is called Chasil (חָסִיל), Symmachus interprets as absolute stars, Theodotion as the evening. However, the Hebrew, who has taught us in the holy Scriptures, thinks that Chasil should be interpreted as splendor, and generally signify shining stars. But when we hear about Arcturus and Orion, we should not follow the fables of poets, and the ridiculous and monstrous lies, with which they even try to defame the heavens and place the wages of prostitution among the stars, saying (Aeneid. book I and III):

Arcturus, the rainy Hyades, and the twin Bears: And Orion armed with gold looks upon them. But the Hebrew names, which are called differently among them, have been translated into the words of the mythological Gentiles into our language, which we cannot understand what is said, except through those words which we have learned and absorbed through usage and error. Hence, in the book of Kings, they have rendered the Hebrew word Raphaim into Greek as 'titans': which is a famous tale among the pagans, from which they write about the battle of the giants, and the Typhoean weapons, and the mountain of Etna placed on Enceladus, from whose movement Trinacria trembles. But this is the God, the creator of all things, who makes the Bear and Orion, who changes night into day and day into night, and nurtures the most bitter waters of the sea with ethereal heat, and distills them into the sweet taste of rain, like a medicinal gourd, which, by the heat of the higher circle, draws up moisture and blood aloft: from which we learn where the rains come from. And what follows: Who smiles upon vastness over strength, turns back to the present time, and there is order: Who is the creator of all things, also threatens captivity upon Samaria, and brings depopulation upon the mighty: for he turns judgment into wormwood, and leaves justice on the earth. Where we said, 'he who smiles,' Aquila interpreted as 'the one who smiles.' Properly, however, it is called 'a smirk,' which we can refer to as a smile when someone is angry, and with slightly parted lips pretends to smile in order to show the magnitude of their anger. Let us also say according to the Septuagint: 'God judges from on high when He judges the truth, and He renders to each one according to his deeds.' And everyone who desires to be an imitator and a son of His, and to be perfect just as His Father is perfect, who dwells in heaven (Matt. V), judges from on high and does not imitate that judge who did not fear God and did not respect man, and with a perverse judgment did not elevate his sentence to heaven but rather lowered it to the lowest levels (Luke XV). And what follows: and He has placed justice on earth, according to that which we must accept, that Christ has given us His righteousness, and has not rejected it: but has laid it on the earth, so that, with all iniquity overcome, He might make us heavenly from earthly. I think from this passage even a pagan poet has stolen, who, while expounding on the simplicity and blessedness of country folk, introduced.

Justice, surpassing the limits of the Earth, made its extreme footprints through them. And what they say, that He does everything and transforms everything, in one word they comprehend Arcturus and Orion, neglecting the proper names in Greek translation. But God transforms everything when He makes heavenly things from earthly ones, and bestows upon human beings the likeness of angels: when the moon shines with the brightness of the sun, and the sun has sevenfold light, when the animalistic, weak, and corruptible human is transformed into a spiritual, robust, and incorruptible being, changing glory but not nature: when the intelligent ones will shine like the splendor of the firmament, and what is written will be fulfilled: One glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, another glory of the stars. For star differs from star in brightness; so also is the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:41). For when every creature shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. This is the God who transforms all things, also changing the shadow of death into light (Luke 1); for when those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death saw a great light, and those who were the children of night and darkness became the children of light and the children of day. This is God who also turns day into darkness: their day who said: Crucify, crucify him (John XIX, 6), remove such a person from the earth: when from the sixth hour the day turned into the darkness of Jewish blindness. And not only literally, but also according to a higher understanding, the light that rose

for them in the Law and the prophets, turned into darkness, ignorant of what they read, what they heard, so that what was written about them may be fulfilled: Let their eyes be darkened so that they may not see: and their backs be constantly bent (Psalm LXVIII, 24). This God calls the water of the sea to Himself, and pours it out upon the surface of the earth, making the righteous out of sinners. To illustrate this, let us put forth just one example to emphasize brevity. The Apostle Paul, like a turbulent and fierce storm, pursued the raging waves of the sea and endeavored to oppress the Church of God. But when he was called by the Lord, he was poured out upon the entire surface of the earth to preach the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and to build not upon another foundation where it had already been preached (Rom. XV); but rather to extend as far as Spain, and to run from the Red Sea, or rather from one ocean to another, imitating his Lord and the sun of righteousness, of whom we read: His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it (Ps. XIX, 6), so that the earth would grow faint before him before his zeal for preaching. This God divides contrition over strength, so that he may make those who are strong in a bad way weak, and they may imitate the Apostle saying: When I am weak, then I am stronger (2 Cor. XII). For even the children of this world are wiser than the children of light in their generation (Luke XXVI). The strength of the body is weakness of the soul, and again the strength of the soul is weakness of the body. Therefore, the Lord, who dispenses all things by reason and truly does all things by judgment, divides contrition over the strong enemy, so that he may bring misery upon the fortification which he erected against the knowledge of God. Regarding this, we read in Proverbs: The wise man enters fortified cities and destroys the stronghold in which the wicked have put their trust (Prov. XXI, 22). This applies to all worldly strength, but it specifically applies to heretics who try to strengthen the falsehood of their doctrines with arguments, sophisms, and dialectical art. However, the wise man destroys it and with the help of God's aid, shows that all these fortifications are utterly vain, in order to bring misery upon them and, with their pride humbled, they can say with the Apostle: 'Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?' (Rom. VII, 24).

5:10

(Verse 10) They hated the one who reproves at the gate, and they abhor the one who speaks truthfully. LXX: They hated the one who reproves at the gates, and they abhorred the holy word. These are the ones whom God derides with devastation and brings upon them destruction. They hate the one who reproves at the gate, that is, in judgment: either me, or other prophets who were sent to them, speaking truthfully or the flawless word, as Symmachus interpreted, or the holy speech, as Theodotion and the LXX translated. But at the gate, according to the ancient Jewish custom, there were judgments of the people, as we often read and frequently interpret, so that neither a farmer coming to court would be terrified by the crowded city and the new appearance, nor a dweller of the city would hurry far from the city and seek transportation for his livestock. This we have said according to the literal meaning. However, it is a great sin to hate someone who corrects, especially if they correct out of love and not out of hatred, if it is done in private to private, if with the inclusion of another brother, if afterwards in the presence of the Church, so that it may not seem like the accusation is made to detract from you but to bring forth the accusation for your improvement (Matthew 18). We often read in the Scriptures about the two gates, of death and of life, of vices and virtues, as in the Psalms: 'You have lifted me up from the gates of death, that I may declare all your praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion' (Isaiah 9:16). There is no doubt

that it signifies the Church, the lofty mountain of Zion, and the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and the multitude of angels, and the early Church, who are enrolled in heaven. He who has been exalted in the gates of Zion will not be able to fear the gates of death, of which the Lord spoke to Peter: Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matt. XVI, 18). Clearly in another psalm we learn about the gates of virtue: Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them and give thanks unto the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter into it (Ps. XVII, 19). And finally, Wisdom, confident in the gates of the city, said: As long as the innocent possess justice, they shall not be confounded (Sap. VI, 11). I consider the gates of the city, that is, the souls of believers in Christ, to be virtues, through which Christ enters into believers. And because it is not written in which gates they hate the one who rebukes, whether in the wicked or in the good, we refer to both. The prophet accuses sinners standing at the gates of vices, and for this reason he is held in detestation by them. Or certainly the prophet himself stands at the gates and beginnings of virtues, and he is hated by those whom he rebukes, and it is not enough for sinners to hate the one who rebukes at the gates, unless they also abhor the holy word that is spoken from his mouth. For whoever does not receive the prophet does not receive the one who sent him (Matt. X). But if the holy word, or he who spoke perfectly, they abominated (moreover, the holy word is the Lord Jesus, of whom it is said: You will not allow your holy one to see corruption (Ps. XV, 10)), all the Jews saying anathema to Jesus, they abhor the word of God, which is both perfect and holy and immaculate. For the abomination of the sinner is piety. Whatever we have said about the Jews can be applied equally to the Gentiles and to heretics, all of whom abhor the holy Scriptures, in which the word of God is found. Some of them, while perversely interpreting what they read, place abomination in the House of God.

5:11-13

(Verse 11 and following) Therefore, because you plundered the poor and took the choice spoil from them, you will build houses of cut stone but not live in them. You will plant pleasant vineyards but not drink their wine, for I know your many crimes and powerful sins, you who oppress the righteous and take bribes, and push aside the needy in the gate. Therefore, the wise will be silent in that time, for it is an evil time. LXX: Therefore, because you struck the poor with fists, and took from them choice gifts, you built houses with hewn stones, but will not live in them. You planted desirable vineyards, but will not drink their wine; for I know your many wicked acts and your mighty sins: trampling the righteous, accepting bribes, and turning away the poor at the gates. Therefore, those who have understanding will keep silent at that time, for it is an evil time. Lest perhaps Israel might think that they were delivered to punishment by the enemies only for idolatry, he joins other things which he committed, having lost the religion of truth. 'You were ravaging,' he says, 'the poor so that you could take from him who scarcely had necessary food, and whatever precious and beautiful things you saw, you handed them over to your own uses. And from the price of those things which you were seizing and taking from the poor, you built houses with squared stone, so that by despoiling men, you could clothe walls with marble, which, because you built them from plunder, and not only a dwelling and a roof, which human weakness requires, but also beauty and delights, you prepared them suddenly for captivity or death, you will not dwell in them.' You have also planted very loving vineyards for future drinks, and you do not drink wine from them, because I know all your sins and crimes, and strong sins that provoke my wrath. You are enemies of justice, all of you who accept gifts and oppress the poor in judgment. Therefore, the poor and wise

person, when he sees the judge who redeems him, will be silent in that time, because it is an evil time. Certainly, it should be understood in this way: what profit is there now in enumerating your sins, since there is already no remedy, and the enemy army surrounds the walls of your cities? We can also say this about heretics, who plunder the poor or strike his head with a raised hand, for this is what κατεκονδύλιζον means in Greek, according to what we read above, striking the head of the poor. For heretics do not strike anyone except the poor, who cannot withstand the threat: not in other members, but in the main part, the heart, and in the truth of faith. I consider them poor who, relying on simple faith alone, are unable to respond to the malice of heretics. And whatever good works they have prepared for the gifts of God, they will lose in the time of battle and struggle unless they resist their adversaries. Those adversaries, on the other hand, build homes for themselves through the composition and structure of words, in order to remain safe and secure. But they will not dwell in them, for they will be destroyed and overthrown by men of the Church. And they not only build houses, but also plant most loving and desirable vineyards, so that they may imitate the mysteries of Christ; but they do not drink wine from them, except what is the unstoppable fury of dragons. For the Lord expected these vineyards to bear fruit, and they brought forth not grapes, but thorns and briars: not judgment, but outcry, with which they blaspheme against their God with insane mouths. Therefore, they will not dwell in their houses, and they will not drink the wine of the vineyards they have planted, because the Lord has known many of their wickednesses. Here, knowledge is to be understood not according to what we read elsewhere: The Lord knows those who are his (2 Tim. 2:19), but according to the fact that nothing is hidden from God, and he knows all the secrets of sinners. 'I have known', he says, 'many impious acts: which are not only many, but also strong and oppressive, trampling on justice itself, or on the one who is just. And you receive, he says, a payment: for which all likewise transferred propitiation: we have said gift; but according to the language of the Scriptures, price is called ἑλλάγμα', which we also read in the Gospel: But what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt. 16:26)? Even the poor have turned aside at the gates: or as Symmachus interpreted, they have oppressed, so that they could sell judgments contrary to the truth of the law by means of bribes, falling into that which is written: Gifts blind even the eyes of the wise (Deut. XVI, 19). This is what heretics accept, so that they can turn the severity of the Scriptures, which threaten torment to sinners, into blessings; and while they promise prosperity to the rich, they are only harsh and severe with the poor. Therefore, when a knowledgeable and wise ecclesiastical man recognizes many impieties in what is called the house of God, and not only many, but also strong ones that can suppress justice, and the madness of scholars has gone so far that they accept bribes in court and do everything for gifts, and they also avoid the poor at the gates and disdain to hear them, let him be silent at that time, lest he give the holy to dogs, and cast pearls before swine (Matt. 7), who, when converted, will trample them and imitate Jeremiah saying: I was alone, for I am filled with bitterness (Jer. 15:17). And that in the Psalms: I am alone until I pass by (Is. 140:10).

5:14-15

(Vers. 14, 15.) Seek good, and not evil, so that you may live, and the Lord God of hosts will be with you as you said: Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gates, perhaps the Lord God of hosts will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph. LXX: Seek good, and not evil, so that you may live, and the Lord God almighty will be with you, as you said: We have hated evil and loved good, and establish justice in the gates, so that the Lord God may have mercy on those who remain from

Joseph. You say that God is with you because you are children of Abraham; listen to what follows: If you are Abraham's children, do the works of your father. What are the works of your father Abraham? Love what is good, and not what is evil. It is a great sin, not only to do evil, but also to love it. Many sin, and when the heat of desire is fulfilled, their conscience bites them, and they regret their sin. But there are those who not only do not feel sorry for doing what is evil, but they also boast in their wickedness, fulfilling what is written: When a sinner comes into the depths of impiety, he despises it. Seek good, therefore, and not evil. For if you seek good, in seeking good, you immediately repel evil. However, you would never seek good unless you had first repelled evil, fulfilling the words of the Psalmist saying: Turn away from evil, and do good (Ps. XXXVI, 27). And when you seek good and avoid evil, then you will live in him who says: I am the life (John XIV, 6). He seeks good who believes in him who speaks in the Gospel: I am the good shepherd (Ibid., X, 11). He who flees from evil repels it, of whom it is written: The world is placed in wickedness (1 John 5:16). And in the Lord's Prayer he says: Deliver us from evil (Matthew 6:13). And when you seek good and not evil, and live, then the Lord God of hosts will be with you, as you have said, because you are descendants of Abraham. It is not enough to seek good and not seek evil, unless you have **■πε■κησιν** in both, so that you first hate evil, then love good. He hates evil, who is not overcome by pleasure alone, but he hates the works of pleasure: and he loves good, who does what is good not unwillingly, or out of necessity, or out of fear of the laws; but rather because it is good, so that he may have the reward of good work in his own conscience, and the love that he possesses for good. Therefore the Apostle says: 'God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9). For not every act of charity pleases God, unless it is offered with cheerfulness. And when you hate evil and love good, establish justice at the gates, of which it is said above, so that, with iniquity expelled, truth may return. And if you do this, perhaps the Lord God Almighty will have mercy on the remnants of Joseph from the tribe of Ephraim and the ten tribes, and they will be able to escape captivity. All these things can be applied to heretics, so that, leaving behind the error they have fabricated, they may return to the Church and hate their former doctrines, and love in the Church of the Lord the truth, and exercise true judgement at the gates of vices and virtues, leaving those behind and passing to these, and may hope for mercy those who have been able to escape from the jaws of the devil. By changing the order according to the LXX, the reading of this chapter can be made clearer: Just as you said, we have hated evil and loved good, so seek good and not evil, that you may live, and may the Lord God Almighty be with you, and bring justice in the gates, so that the Lord God Almighty may have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

5:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Therefore, thus says the Lord God of hosts, the ruler: In all the streets there will be lamentation, and in all the public squares people will say, 'Alas! Alas!' They will summon the farmer to mourning and those skilled in lamentation to lament. And in all the vineyards there will be lamentation, for I will pass through your midst, says the Lord. LXX: Therefore, thus says the Lord God Almighty: In all the streets there will be lamentation, and in all the roads people will say, 'Alas! Alas!' The farmer will be called to mourning, and those who know lamentation to lament, and in all the streets there will be lamentation: for I will pass through the midst of you, says the Lord. I have commanded you to seek good, and not evil, so that you may live, and the Lord God of hosts will be with you. And again I say (lest you say you were only warned once): Hate evil, and love good, and restore justice in the gates; those who hated the one who rebuked in the gate, let the Lord have

mercy on the rest of Joseph; and because you refused to do so, trampling on my commandments and turning against me, a turning away shoulder: therefore the Lord God Almighty, who is the Lord of hosts, says this: everywhere there is lamentation, everywhere there is mourning. The farmers will be called to mourn, and those who know the customs of the province will be called to incite tears, so that there will be mourning and lamentation not in all the streets, as was said above, but in the vineyards; where once there was material for joy, let it be the origin of tears. And all these things will happen, because I will pass through, says the Lord. The Hebrew word, 'I will pass through', which in their language is called *Evor* (עוור), whenever it is used in the Holy Scriptures in the person of God, is to be understood as punishment, so that it may not remain among them; but let it pass through and leave. And in other places according to the interpretation of Aquila, when God is angry, He calls His fury and wrath 'ἐνυπερθεσμός', which can all be applied to heretics, because they have refused to do both what is right and what is just, so there will be mourning in all their streets. For the wide and spacious road leads to destruction (Matthew 7); and each heretic and gentile has their own streets in their sand and fantasies, to which it is subsequently added: 'Woe, woe' will be said about everything that is outside. For those who are in the Church do not listen, which is the ultimate punishment; but if perhaps they have sinned, lamentation will be taken upon them. Therefore, however, it will be said outside or in all ways, woe, woe: because they do not have one way that leads to life, and which is the royal way, but crooked and perverse, and deviating to the right and to the left, while they do not hear the Lord saying: Do not be too righteous. And: The ways that are on the left are perverse. And they encounter a twofold woe, of the flesh and of the spirit, of the present age and of the future. When, on the other hand, ecclesiastics hear: Rejoice, I say again, rejoice (Philip. IV, 4). But even the farmer is called to mourning (for heretics indeed have their farmers, in whose fields thistles and thorns grow), and those who know how to lament are called to mourn, either for their own sins or for the sins of others; although we can take these things in a good sense, so that the man of the Church, powerful to provoke penance, may imitate his Lord saying: We have lamented, and you have not mourned (Luc. VII, 32), and let him mourn for the heretics, as King Saul of Israel once mourned for Samuel (I Reg. XV). And the Apostle says that he mourns over those who have not repented (II Cor. XII). And in all vineyards there will be lamentation, because the vineyards of Sodom are their vineyards. And for the wine of joy, which gladdens the heart of man, they have brought the wine of dragons and the incurable rage of asps. And all these things they will suffer; for the Lord will pass through their midst, so that he does not dwell among them, nor say: I will dwell in them, and walk among them. And behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the age. (Matthew 28:20)

5:18-20

(Verse 18-20.) Woe to those who long for the day of the Lord! Why do you long for it? That day will be darkness, not light. It will be as though a man fled from a lion only to meet a bear, as though he entered his house and rested his hand on the wall only to have a snake bite him. Will not the day of the Lord be darkness, not light— pitch-dark, without a ray of brightness? Woe to those who long for the day of the Lord! Why do you long for the day of the Lord? And this is darkness, and not light. As if a man should flee from the face of a lion, and a bear should meet him: or enter into the house, and lean with his hand upon the wall, and a serpent should bite him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? and obscurity, and no brightness in it? Lest the tribe of Juda

be thought to neglect men of his own stock, and to confer the speech of prophecy upon the ten tribes: Thou also shalt go to the king against Babylon, and shalt speak to him: There are gathered together all the kings of the earth against Jerusalem: how art thou fallen, thou virgin, daughter of Babylon, to be destroyed? Shall not day overtake thee suddenly, and thou perish with the sword? For there is not so much evil in the injury of captivity, as there is good in the things which the Lord promises after captivity: to which the prophet replied that it is in vain for them to wait for what will happen a long time after, in the coming of the Son of God after seventy years of captivity in Babylon, which will be followed by devastation, poverty, and countless miseries. For, he says, when those fleeing from the face of Nebuchadnezzar meet Assuerus, under whom the story of Esther is narrated, or when the empire of the Assyrians and Chaldeans is destroyed, the Medes and Persians will rise up. And when, during the reign of Cyrus, you returned, and at the command of Darius began to build the house of the Lord, and you placed all your trust in the temple, so that you may find rest in it and weary hands may rest upon its walls, then Alexander, the king of the Macedonians, also known as Antiochus Epiphanes, will come and dwell in the temple and will bite you like a snake, not outside in Babylon and Susa, but within the borders of the holy land (or yours). By these things it is proven that the day which you desire is not one of light and joy, but of darkness and sorrow. We have briefly stated these things according to history, so as not to completely leave the opinion of the Jews untouched. However, there is no doubt that all of our people understand the day of darkness, the day of judgment, about which Sophonias also writes: The great day of the Lord is near, it is also very swift: the voice of the day of the Lord is bitter and harsh (Sophon. I, 14). And Isaiah says: Behold, the day of the Lord comes, a day of incurable rage and wrath, to make the earth a desolation and to destroy sinners from it (Is. XIII, 9). At the same time, the confidence of the proud is shaken, who, in order to appear just in the eyes of men, usually wait for the day of judgment and say: Would that the Lord would come, that we may be allowed to be dissolved and be with Christ (Phil. I), imitating the Pharisee who spoke in the Gospel (Lk. XVIII, 11, 12): God, I give thanks to you, because I am not like other men, robbers, unjust, adulterers, and like this tax collector. They fast twice on the Sabbath: they give tithes of all that they possess. For from this very thing, because they long for the day of the Lord and do not fear it, they are judged worthy of punishment, because there is no one without sin among men, and the stars are unclean before him (Job 25). And he concluded all things under sin, so that he might have mercy on all (Galatians 3). Therefore, since no one can judge the judgment of God, and we will also have to give an account of every idle word (Matthew 12): and Job offered sacrifices daily for his children, lest perhaps they might think anything perverse against the Lord (Job 1), what audacity is it to hear among the Corinthians: You reign without us (I Corinthians 4, 8): and I wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you. Certainly, if their own conscience did not prick them, they ought to imitate Paul saying: 'Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire?' (2 Cor. 2:29) and to be concerned for all, so that, as lovers of themselves, they may not desire the torments of others, as if they themselves were the rulers, just as someone would want their homeland and city to be destroyed so that they alone may enjoy the friendship of the victors. We often say in times of distress and tribulation: 'Oh, if only it were allowed for me to depart from this body and be liberated from the miseries of this world', not knowing that as long as we are in this flesh, we have a place for repentance; but if we depart, we will hear that of the Prophet: 'But who will confess to you in hell?' (Ps. 6:6). This is the sadness of the world, which leads to death, as the Apostle does not want to perish the one who has fornicated with his father's wife (I Cor. V), as Judas perished

unfortunate, who connected betrayal and murder with even greater sadness (Matth. XXVII), and murder worse than all other murders: so that where he thought to find a remedy, and death to be an end to his troubles, there he would find a lion and a bear and a snake. By these names it seems to me that either different punishments are being signified, or the devil himself, who is rightly called lion and bear and snake. And when we think that Isaiah says: Go, my people, into your chambers; shut the door, hide yourself for a little while, until the wrath of the Lord passes (Isa. XXVI, 20), and be as if in our house, as if resting in hell: then the snake will bite us, which in this place is called Nahas, and in Job is called Leviathan. We learn more fully about its nature and terror in the very volume itself. However, in the darkness and shadows that are contrary to light and splendor, the diversity of torments is explained.

5:21-22

(Verses 21, 22.) I hated and rejected your feasts, and I will not take the smell of your heavens. But if you bring me burnt offerings and your gifts, I will not accept them, and I will not look at the fat of your animals. LXX: I have hated and rejected your feasts, and I will not be pleased with your assemblies. And if you bring me burnt offerings and sacrifices, I will not receive them, and I will not look upon the pleasantness of your presence: This is specifically said against the tribe of Judah, and those who had migrated from Israel for the ceremonies of God, and yet did not depart from the high places, and worshipped idols, and defiled the sacrifices of God with the magnitude of their sins. For I never said concerning the oblations of the calves, which they offered in Dan and Bethel: If you offer to me holocausts and your offerings, I will not accept them. But God hates and not only hates, but also has cast away their festivals, those who flee from the lion and fall into the bear, and enter the house and are bitten by the serpent, because they do not celebrate the festivals of God, but their own festivals, says the Lord: I hate and have cast away your festivals. And it does not receive the assembly of such men, nor does it have a fragrance of good scent, and it abhors all their gifts, and it does not regard the richest offerings. Indeed, this happens not only to the people of that time, but also to us, if we commit similar offenses, and think that we can offer to God the gains from robberies and perjuries and wicked deeds, and redeem our sins, when we have read that Zacchaeus restored fourfold whatever he had stolen and offered half of his well-acquired possessions (Luke 19). For one could not offer what was wrongfully acquired in the gifts of God, unless one first returned it to its rightful owners, and afterwards fulfilled what is written: Honor the Lord with your just labors (Prov. III, 9); and: The redemption of a man's soul is his own riches (Prov. XIII, 8): for God does not accept the vows of a prostitute's earnings (Deut. XXIII). On the contrary, the just one can say: Let my prayer be directed as incense in your sight (Psal. CXL, 2). The speech of Judas, the traitor, was turned into sin: for it did not have a good odor; but it spoke through actions: 'My wounds have become foul and corrupt, because of my foolishness' (Psalm 38:6). All of this can also be said about heretics, who while fleeing from a lion, run into a bear, and upon entering a house which they think is the Church of God, they lean on walls which they themselves made, and they are bitten by a serpent. Darkness and gloom take away their light and day, so that tangible darkness surrounds them, and their beginnings are destroyed. God hates their sacrifices, and distances himself from them, and whenever they are gathered in the name of the Lord, he detests their stench and closes his nostrils. To hate, to distance oneself, and to not smell, is spoken in the likeness of human language, so that we may understand the attitude of God through our words. And if they offer burnt offerings, or appear to fast, or give alms, or promise

chastity, which are true sacrifices, the Lord does not accept those, nor does he deem worthy to look at their fattest offerings. For God judges not the greatness of sacrifices, but the merits and reasons of those who offer them. Hence, the widow who in the Gospel (Luke 21) gave two small coins as an offering is preferred by the Savior over those who believed they were offering the fattest vows and the choicest sacrifices, when in reality they were giving very little, since she had given everything she had. These things are said more clearly and truly after the coming of the Lord to the Jewish people, who, with the temple and altar destroyed, believe they are offering sacrifices, which God abhors and rejects their festivals, and does not accept the aroma of their assembly when they gather and say, 'Crucify him, crucify him' (John 19:6) and 'His blood be on us and on our children' (Matthew 27:25). And if they offer holocausts in synagogues, and gifts in the councils of Satan, and the richest vows, the Lord does not regard them, just as He did not regard the gifts of Cain (Genesis IV). Those who worship the one true God and offer rightly, yet they are not regarded because they do not acknowledge the confession of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But our offerings, that is, the Church, which we offer from our first fruits, are regarded by God, just as He once regarded the sacrifices of Abel.

5:23

(Verse 23) Take away from me the tumult of your songs, and I will not listen to the music of your harp. LXX: Take away from me the sound of your songs, and I will not listen to the melody of your instruments. Beautiful songs of the Levites, with which they praised God, he calls tumult and confused sound, because there is no beautiful praise in the mouth of a sinner, and they were accustomed to offer these same things to idols as well (Eccles. 15). The prayer and psalms of the Jews, which they sing in the synagogues, is a composed praise of heretics to the Lord, and, if I may say so, the grunts of their own and the braying of donkeys, whose songs are more comparable to the works of the Israelites. But receive psalms and songs, lyre and organs, either literally understood among the people of Israel, which were once made in the image of things to come, or spiritually understood in us and in heretics, which are heard by the Lord if we direct them with good works; if with evil, He closes His ears and does not deign to hear the songs of the wicked.

5:24

(Verse 24) And judgment will be revealed like water, and justice like a strong torrent. LXX: And it will roll like water, and justice like an impassable torrent. Just as water, when it flows downhill, uncovers what it previously covered and exposes it to the eyes of all, so will the judgment and justice of God, which once judged His own people, be revealed to all, and it will be carried like the strongest torrent. Whatever it seizes, it drags along with it, and it does not allow anything to stand in its way. But the judgment of the wicked is tossed like water according to the Septuagint; for it does not stand in one opinion, but is carried about by every wind of doctrine, condemning what it had once approved, and considering what it had formerly praised as worthless. Their justifications are compared not to pure and clear springs and rivers, but to turbid and muddy torrents, which do not have their own waters, but collect them from rocks, cliffs, and brambles. Whoever wishes to cross them will immediately be seized and thrown headlong, and with his feet overthrown, will not be able to say: He established my feet upon a rock (Ps. 123:5). For he will walk upon the sands, which do not have a foundation, and when he will be in danger, he will speak according to the

Hebrews: A torrent has passed over my soul (Ps. 39:3). On the contrary, the judgments of the just are firm and unchanging, not flowing like water, and justice does not rush like an impassable torrent: The thoughts of the just are judgments (Prov. XII, 5).

5:25-27

(Verse 25 and following) Did you offer to Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel? You also took along the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of your god Rephan, the images which you made for yourselves. Therefore I will exile you beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts. LXX: Did you offer to Me sacrifices and victims in the desert for forty years, O house of Israel, and take up the tabernacle of Melchom and the star of your god Repham, the figures of them which you made for yourselves. And I will transfer you beyond Damascus, says the Lord: God almighty is his name. From this place we learn that all the sacrifices and offerings that Israel made in the desert were not offered to God, but to their king Moloch, whose tabernacles they carried and worshiped the image of their idols and statues. And in the following statement, it shows what this image or idol is: The star of your God, which is called Chocab in Hebrew, that is, Lucifer, whom the Saracens have been worshiping until now. For what reason did the Lord make them migrate across Damascus, that is, to the Assyrians and Chaldeans: his omnipotence is demonstrated by the fact that he is the Lord God of hosts. We ask why they did not offer sacrifices and offerings to God in the desert; but to their king, whom they call Lucifer? From the time they transformed gold into the head of a calf, saying: These are your gods, Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt (Exod. III, 24), it is shown that everything they did was not for God, but for idols. And what we read afterwards that they offered certain things to the Lord, they did not do so willingly but out of fear of punishment, and by the killing of those who fell because of idols. But the Lord does not look at what is offered, but at the will of the one offering. Finally, wherever the opportunity arose, they always turned back in their hearts to Egypt, desiring garlic and onions, and cucumbers and Egyptian meat, and despising the manna that was given from heaven (Numbers 11). To understand this, let us turn to the story told by the first martyr of the Gospel, Stephen, worthy of his name, in the Acts of the Apostles: 'And they made a calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands. But God turned and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: Did you offer victims and sacrifices to me for forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?' And you took up the tent of Moloch and the star of your god Rephan, the figures that you made to worship; and I will send you into exile beyond Babylon. It should not be thought that the first martyr erred, who, because it is written in the prophet: 'Beyond Damascus,' said 'beyond Babylon.' For he placed more emphasis on understanding than on the exact word, because they were led from Damascus to Babylon, or beyond Babylon. But in that place where Luke put Μολχ , and it is written in Hebrew as Melchechem (): Aquila and LXX translated Μολχμ : Symmachus and Theodotio, for your kings. Also, for what is read in the Septuagint as Rephan; Aquila and Symmachus translating the Hebrew itself, they put Chion (), Theodotio 'amau r sin', that is, darkness. Again, for Sochoth (), Aquila 'syskiasmoùs', that is, tabernacles: Symmachus and Septuagint, tabernacle: Theodotio translated it as vision. And this is to be observed in all holy Scriptures, that the apostles and apostolic men, in laying down testimonies from the Old Testament, do not consider the words but the meaning: nor do they follow the same paths of words, as long as they do not depart from the intended sense. But whatever is said literally against the Jewish people, all of this is to be referred

to those who worship idols under the name of Christ, and who fabricate corrupt doctrines for themselves, carrying the tabernacle of their king, the devil, and the image of their statues and idols. For they do not worship one idol; but for the variety of teaching, they worship different gods, and the star of their god (2 Corinthians XI). He, being the angel of Satan, transforms himself into an angel of light, and falls from heaven like lightning (Luke X), and Antichrist imitates Christ. And he beautifully introduced what you have made for yourselves. For they have not received these things from God, but have imagined them in their own minds. Therefore, the Lord will cause them to migrate across Damascus, so that they do not drink the blood of the Lord, but go to Babylon, and listen to the prophet: A golden cup Babylon, intoxicating all nations (Jeremiah LI, 7). For Damascus, as we have often said, signifies drinking blood, or the blood of Cilicia, so that through penance we may be moved to drink the blood of the Lord.

6:1

(Chapter 6, Verse 1) Woe to those who are rich in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the nations, who enter pompously into the house of Israel. The Septuagint version says: Woe to those who despise Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, they have gathered the first fruits of the nations for themselves. The prophet's words are directed primarily to those who are the nobles and rulers in both peoples, and who indulge in the luxuries as an example of the rich man dressed in purple, who delighted in feasting and was so filled with pride that he disdained to even look at Lazarus, covered with sores at his gate, and would not give him even the scraps from his table (Luke 16). These are the heads of the people who trust in riches, and are wealthy in Zion, and have confidence in the mountain of Samaria, and enter triumphantly into the house of Israel, to show the swelling of their hearts and appear to be like the pompous feasts. According to the laws of tropology and the Septuagint interpreters, Zion refers to the Church, of which we read: He who lifts me up from the gate of death, that I may declare all your praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion (Psalm 9:15). But Mount Samaria, because of the pride and arrogance of the custodians of God's commandments, is understood to be about heretics who despise the Church; for God chose the weak of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish to destroy the wisdom of the wise and the understanding of the prudent (1 Corinthians 1). These have harvested the first fruits of the nations, to introduce them under the Christian name into their winepresses, where grapes are not crushed, but lost; where must is not expressed, but venom is. And they entered for themselves. Beautifully, he said to himself: for they did not enter for God, but they entered for themselves. Otherwise, they would have left for God, as they depart from the Church. And what follows, the House of Israel, according to the Septuagint, should be read at the beginning of the next chapter; according to the Hebrews, at the end of this chapter, which we have explained.

Book Three

Book Three

We have begun and, with Christ's help, we will complete the work of the twelve prophets in a disorderly and confused order. For we have not discussed them in the order in which they are read from beginning to end, but as we were able and as we were asked. First, I addressed Nahum, Micah, Zephaniah, and Haggai to the ever-diligent Paula and her daughter Eustochium. Second, I have assigned the two books of Habakkuk to Bishop Chromatius of Aquileia. Third, after a long

period of silence, I explained Obadiah and Jonah to you, Pammachius, who commanded it. In the current year, which is named in the Fasti of the consulship of Arcadius Augustus and Anitius Probus, I have interpreted the prophet Malachi to Exsuperius, the bishop of the Church of Toulouse, and to the monks Minervius and Alexander of the same city, Zacharias. And immediately going back to the beginning of the volume, I could not deny you Hosea, Joel, and Amos. And after a very serious illness of the body, I showed my recklessness by the speed of dictation: that which others do not dare to write by frequently turning the stylus, I committed to chance, which always follows those dictating, and makes the danger of audacity from talent and learning: since, as I have often borne witness, I am not able to bear the labor of writing with my own hand, in expounding the Holy Scriptures, composite words and adorned with rhetorical flourishes, but the erudition and simplicity of truth are sought.

6:2-6 (Vers. 2 seqq.) Go through Chalane, and see: and from there go to great Emath, and descend to Geth of the Philistines: to the best of their kingdoms, if their boundary is wider than your boundary. You who are separated on the day of evil, and approach the throne of wickedness. You who sleep on ivory beds, and indulge in your own beds: you who eat lambs from the flock, and calves from the middle of the herd: you who sing to the sound of the harp. Just as David thought he had the vessels of a song, drinking wine in cups, and they were anointed with the finest oil, and they did not suffer from the sorrow of Joseph. LXX: House of Israel, all of you pass over and see in Chalane, and pass through there to Emath Rabba, and descend to the best of the foreign Geth in all these kingdoms, if their boundaries are greater than your boundaries, you who come on an evil day, who approach and touch the lies of the Sabbath. You who sleep on ivory beds, and overflow with delights in your couches, and eat young goats from the flocks, and suckle calves from the midst of the herds, who make noise at the sound of the organ: as if they considered themselves stable, and not fleeting; you who drink refined wine, and anoint yourselves with the finest ointments, and do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph. Pass over all of you to Chalane, which is now called Ctesiphon, and pass over all. Who are these people? Both of those mentioned above: the nobles, the leaders of the people, and those of you who are wealthy in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria. Therefore, go to the city of Persis, and pay close attention, and from there, go to the great city of Emath, which is now called Antioch. It is called great, to distinguish it from the smaller Emath, which is called Epiphania. And to this day, for those traveling to Mesopotamia, the first stop is called Emmas, although the name has been corrupted; but it retains traces of its original name, whose region is called Reblatha, in which, in the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Judah (or Judea), the sons were killed, and his eyes were blinded. And descend, he says, into Gath of the Philistines (2 Kings 25). You who dwell on Mount Zion and Mount Samaria, descend to the Philistines who dwell in the plains, and to the best of their kingdoms, which are subject to different cities: Gaza and Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath. And see if their territory is wider than yours, whether you or they possess the larger provinces. You, I say, you from the people of Israel, who are separated for the day of evil, namely the day of captivity, and approaching the throne of wickedness, going to the unjust judge, the king of Babylon. For those who are about to suffer these things, you now sleep on ivory beds and indulge in soft cushions, so that you may unite desire with sleep. For you do not eat to drive away hunger and sustain the human body, but for pleasure and luxury, so that whatever is tender and fat in herds and flocks may serve your gluttonous appetites. Your desires are not satisfied with the pleasures of sex, throat, and drink, but you must also soothe your ears with the songs of flutes,

harp, and lyre, imitating what David did in the worship of God (1 Chronicles 23-26), finding the variations of the Levitical orders and instruments, you indulge in pleasure and luxury. And you drink wine from goblets, not to quench your thirst, but to intoxicate your mind. And you anoint yourselves, not to soothe the fatigue of the body, with pure oil, but with precious ointments. And when you are filled with these things, if you see any of the people perishing, you have no mercy on their suffering, but you treat them like dumb animals, and you allow them to perish in their own blood. This same sentiment is also expressed by the prophet Ezekiel in the example of the shepherds: They consume the milk of the sheep and clothe themselves with their wool, and they devour whatever is best, and they do not heal the wounded, nor mend the broken, nor seek out those who are perishing. Let us transfer all the things we have said according to the history, according to the Septuagint interpreters, to the allegory of the clouds. O house of Israel, you who have departed from me, who trust in the mountain of Samaria, who have harvested the firstfruits of the nations, go beyond and see, and proceed to many walls. For this is the interpretation of Emath Rabba: and then descend gently into the presses of those who fall while drinking. For Geth and the Philistines resound with this. And consider all things, especially the best (or all) kingdoms, or the best cities among all kingdoms; and consider if their boundaries are more numerous than yours. For if we wish to ponder with our mind, and to explore the wisdom of all nations, we will find that the boundaries of the Egyptians, Indians, and Persians are narrower than the holy boundaries of the Scriptures: Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. To those whom he had previously said: House of Israel, all of you pass through and see, from what vices they are commanded to pass over to better things, the following discourse describes: Those who come into an evil day, preparing for themselves their evil day according to their own vice: not that any day is inherently evil; but rather, each person prepares for themselves their own evil, according to what we read in Ecclesiastes: Do not say, 'The former days were better for me than these,' for it is not in wisdom that you ask about this (Ecclesiastes 7:11); for it is foolish to compare times, when it is within our power to either make a good day for ourselves or an evil one. These are those who approach and touch the sabbaths of falsehood. For just as the circumcision of the flesh is called, and the circumcision of the heart, and they are manifestly Jews, and in secret, one of which is rejected, and the other is approved: thus the sabbaths of the Lord are holy, and supported by truth, and the others are not holy and are falsehoods, which follow the idleness of the western letters. That which follows: those who sleep on ivory beds, we can interpret it as follows: He who is an athlete of the Lord, and exercises for the struggle, and prepares himself against opposing powers, sleeps on bare earth imitating Jacob (Gen. XXVIII); and he places a stone at his head, which the builders rejected, and it became the head cornerstone (Ps. CXVII, and Act. IV). But those who indulge in pleasures and luxury, and do everything for the sake of their stomach, sleep on ivory beds made from dead animals and cling to unclean bones; and because vices appear beautiful and delight in their present splendor, they rest on their beds and are weighed down by deep sleep. They do not eat solid and nourishing food, which strengthens the powers of those who wrestle, but rather soft and delicate food, such as young goats from the flocks and fattened calves, and tender ones, in fact still nourished by milk. For this is what μοσχῶρια γαλαθῆν signifies. Moreover, they clap their hands to the sound of the organ and the noise, as if all their works expect pleasure: and they do nothing but provide for the belly and lust. Nor does the wise reader immediately oppose us with this, and how it is written: Let the rivers clap their hands (Ps. XCVII, 8). And: All you nations, clap your hands (Ps XLVI, 1). And: Rejoice in God

our helper (Ps. LXXX, 1). For there, they are not said to clap their hands to the sound of the organ; but to have one consent in praising God. He introduced the voice of the organs: they thought it was standing still, and not fleeing. For according to Epicurus, things of the world and all bodies flow and pass away in moments, and nothing remains in its own state, but everything either grows or diminishes, and they flow down like rushing waters. Hence we read also in secular literature (Virgil, Georgics III): But meanwhile it flies, irretrievable time flies. And in another place (Horace, Odes II, 14).

Alas, fleeting, Posthumus, Posthumus, the years slip away. For nothing is more fleeting than the century and the things of the century. While we hold onto them, we lose them, through infancy, childhood, youth, and the growing and maturing age, and the final years of old age, which Philo describes as the seven stages of human life, we are changed, and we run, and unknowingly we reach the boundaries of death. And what follows: Those who drink clarified wine can properly be referred to heretics, who approve some scriptures and reject others, desiring to drink clarified wines: since in the Holy Scriptures there is nothing turbid and muddy, but everything is most pure in the divine stream. Those who do not have the art of anointing, without any knowledge of the Scriptures, traditions, and teachings of the apostles, claim the dignity of priesthood and say that they are anointed by the Lord; and they contaminate the purest oil of their own understanding with the dregs. And when they do these things to the destruction of those whom they have deceived, they are not tormented by any pain; but they rejoice in the deaths of others and delight in the blood of the wretched. This beautiful sense in which it is said 'they thought as if things were standing, and not as if they were fleeing' is not found in Hebrew; but instead it is written: as David thought he had vessels of song. Therefore, it seems to me that the interpreters added it, who, in describing luxury, expressed a sentiment against vices and pleasures of this kind, so that they would not translate what was written, but would add or even change it, according to what seemed to them.

6:7-11

(Vers. 7 seqq.) Therefore now they will migrate to the head of the transmigrants, and the faction of the revelers will be removed. The Lord God has sworn by his own soul, says the Lord God of hosts: I detest the pride of Jacob, and I hate his houses, and I will deliver the city with its inhabitants: and if there are ten men left in one house, they shall die; and their close relative shall take them, and burn them, to carry out the bones from the house; and he who is in the innermost chambers of the house shall say: Is there still anyone with you? And he will answer: It is the end; and he will say to him: Be silent, and do not remember the name of the Lord. LXX: Therefore now the strong ones will be captives from the beginning, and the noise of horses will be taken away from Ephraim; because the Lord has sworn by himself, says the Lord God of hosts: because I will abhor all the reproach of Jacob, and I will hate his regions, and I will take away the city with all its inhabitants. And it shall come to pass, if ten men remain in one house, and they die; and the household members shall take them, and they shall make an effort to remove their bones from the house; and those who are in charge of the house shall say: Are there still any with you? And he shall say, by no means; and he shall say, Be silent, and do not mention the name of the Lord. Because of the higher causes that the prophetic discourse describes (of those who sleep on ivory beds, and revel on couches, and eat lambs from the flock, and calves from the midst of the herd, and sing to the sound of the harp and drink from bowls, and are anointed with the finest ointment, and yet suffer nothing in the destruction of their people, who are descended from Joseph), now the

Lord threatens, and says: Because they have done these things and these things, now they shall migrate at the head of the exiles. And the meaning is this: Punishment is never delayed for the future, nor is it prophesied for long centuries to come. What is now imminent, is now coming, my words predict, that they will go in the beginning of the transmigration, namely the rulers and the powerful, of whom he said above: Hear this word, you fat cows, who are in the mountain of Samaria (Above, IV, 1). And again: Woe to you who are wealthy in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria: you nobles, heads of the people, who enter pompously into the house of Israel. You who are the first in wealth, will be the first to endure the yoke of captivity, according to what is written in Ezekiel: 'Begin from my sanctuary' (Ezek. IX, 6). Not from the saints, as many think; but from the destruction of the temple, which was holy. For the powerful will endure torments powerfully (Wisdom VI), and to whom much is entrusted, much will be demanded from him (Luke XII). And as it is said, the faction of the indulgent will be taken away, those who had one consent in taking pleasure and engaging in feasts and revelry: they will be taken away together, so that for those whose unity was in luxury, their punishment will also be united. As for why the LXX translated it, the neighing of the horse of Ephraim shall be taken away: which is not found in the Hebrew, and will be discussed by us as unnecessary when we begin to weave the tropology. The Lord has sworn by himself, or as we read in Hebrew, by his soul, according to what is written in Isaiah: My soul hates your new moons and your Sabbaths and your feast days (Isa. I, 13): not that God has a soul, but in order to speak in human terms. It is not surprising if it is said to have a soul, since even the other parts, which are less valuable than the soul, such as the feet, hands, stomach, and other organs, attest to having themselves. But if those who deny that Christ had a human soul oppose us, saying that God was in the human body instead of a soul, let them hear that in Christ the substance of the soul is demonstrated: just as the members of his body had substance. In God the Father, however, the head, feet, and other things that are said to be, are not members, but the diversity of efficient acts is indicated by the words used to describe them: similarly, the soul is not substantial, but the seat of the inner mind and the place where thoughts reside, through which God reveals His will. Therefore the Lord, the God of hosts, that is, Sabaoth (which the Seventy translated as powers), swore that he detests the pride of Jacob and hates his dwellings. This is Jacob according to the previous chapter, where it is written: And they allowed nothing to prevail over the affliction of Joseph, or the ten tribes, or certainly the entire house of the twelve tribes. And he will deliver the city with its inhabitants; either Samaria, or certainly Jerusalem, or both in common. As for the time of the Lord Savior, after whose coming and passion God detested all the pride and injury of Jacob, because they cried out against him, the son of a carpenter and a Samaritan and possessed by a demon (Matthew 13; John 8): therefore Jerusalem was handed over to the Roman armies with its inhabitants. And to such an extent did the wrath of God rage against them, that even if ten men were to remain in one house, they would also die, and the neighbor or neighbor would burn the corpses of the dead to remove the bones from his house, because they are not able to remove the whole bodies due to the crowds of the dying. And when he has become tired from carrying [the body], let him ask the person who is in the innermost part of the house if there are any bodies left for him to hand over, and let that person respond: It is over, I no longer have anyone to give to you for burial; and before he swears that he does not have [any bodies], let that person, who asked the question and was outside, and did not know [that there were no bodies], order him and say: Be silent, and do not remember the name of the Lord. But he mentions this in order to show that even those who are not compelled by the weight and

necessity of evil do not want to confess the name of the Lord, and that the name of God has come into such great oblivion among the people of Israel that it does not even deign to be heard in a simple oath. We have drawn fine lines of history, now let us imprint the hand of allegory. The leaders of heretics, who devoured my people because of their pleasures, and allowed nothing to stand in the way of Joseph's torment, will be led first to punishment, and the neighing of the horse will be taken away from Ephraim: which is understood in holy scriptures in two ways, either in the pride and power of those who neigh, or in the magnitude of lust. In the pride and consent of evil people, as it is written: Some trust in chariots and some in horses (Psalm 20:7). And: A deceitful horse for salvation (Ps. XXXII, 17). And to the kings of Israel, it is commanded that they not multiply horses for themselves (Deut. XVII). And in the book of Job, the voice of the horse is compared to the sound of the trumpet (Job. XXXIX). In Zachariah also we read, which is confirmed by the testimony of the Gospel, and it is referred to the presence of the Savior: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: proclaim, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your King comes to you righteous and Savior: He is gentle, and riding on a donkey and the foal of a donkey: and he will destroy the chariots from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem (Zach. IX, 9). But the magnitude of lust and unrestrained desire for sexual intercourse, as Jeremiah, describing the luxurious adulterers, declared: Each one neighs over the wife of his neighbor (Jer. V, 8). The coming of Christ subdues such horses, as does the wrath of God. And the Lord swears by Himself (since He has no one greater to swear by) that He abhors all heretical blasphemies and hates all their regions (Heb. VI). For whatever they speak is injustice, and worthy of God's hatred. And He will take away their city and their assemblies with those who dwell in it, and the people indeed, and the leaders, even if there were ten men left (for if they had been in Sodom and Gomorrah, no fire would have come down upon them), they will all die the same death that leads to Tartarus, of which Ezekiel writes: The soul that sins, it shall die. Their relatives and domestics bury the bones of these people, of whom it is said: Let the dead bury their own dead (Luke 9:60). And the one who is outside and does not enter the house of the dead; but rather casts out the dead outside, the one who burns the dead gives orders, and reduces them to ashes, and breaks their bones, so that he may remain silent; and the most pure name of God not be defiled by the mouth of the dead. For to the sinner, God says: Why do you declare my righteousness, and take my covenant in your mouth? (Psalm 50). Wherefore, we also must provide, that we may not bury the dead dead, but rather, that as living, we may bring forth to life those who are dead. And if we do not do this, it is commanded to us and it is said: Be silent, for we are judged unworthy of the name of God.

6:12-14

(Verse 12 onwards) For behold, the Lord will command and strike down the great house with ruins, and the small house with breaches. Can horses run on rocks, or can it be plowed with oxen? For you have turned justice into bitterness, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood. You who rejoice in nothingness, who say: Have we not taken horns for ourselves in our strength? Behold, I will raise up against you, O house of Israel, declares the Lord God of hosts, a nation, and they will oppress you from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of the wilderness. LXX: Therefore, behold, the Lord will command and will strike the great house with ruins and the small house with breaches. Will horses run on rocks? Will men be silent at women? For you have turned justice into bitterness and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood. You who rejoice in nothing good, who say, 'Have we not relied on our own strength?' For behold, I will raise up against you, O house of

Israel, declares the Lord God of hosts, a nation, and they shall oppress you from Lebo-hamath to the brook of Egypt. Because you have sprung into such rage that, even in the time of death and impending evils, you were unwilling to utter the name of the Lord, therefore the Lord will command and strike the greater house with ruins, and the lesser house with divisions. If He commands, how does He strike? If He strikes, how does He command? But in that which He commands and orders to His ministers, He Himself seems to strike. Just as in commanding the Father and acting through the Son, He Himself who commanded does the work, the verse being fulfilled: He spoke, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created (Ps. 148:5). For all things were made through him, and without him was made nothing that was made (John 1). And in Egypt, where the firstborn who were killed by the destroyer are reported to be referred to, the Lord testifies that he himself killed them (Exodus 12). So also in the present place the Lord commands, and he himself strikes through his ministers the greater house with ruins, that is, the ten tribes, who were called Israel, and the lesser house with divisions, the two tribes, who were governed by the lineage of the house of David. And note the properties of each. Israel, because it had sinned more, is struck by ruins and is handed over to eternal captivity. But the house of Judah, in which the temple exists, and which had sinned in part, is held in captivity for seventy years and is not struck by ruins but by divisions. For a divided house can be repaired: ruins require not so much restoration as rebuilding. He compares the ruins and divisions of both houses to horses and oxen, of which the former cannot run on rocks, and the latter are so untamed that they do not accept the yoke on their necks, and since they are wild oxen, they are unwilling to plow the earth due to their fierceness. But you, though horses and buffalo cannot change their nature, have changed the nature of God, turning the sweet into the bitter and the fruit of his justice into wormwood, which is a very bitter herb. You who take delight in things that are nothing, like golden calves and idols, which are nothing, as Esther said to the Lord: Do not give your scepter to those who are not (Esther 14:11), or in nothing and falsehood. You who think you have taken horns and kingship and power by your own strength, with which you can scatter your enemies. Therefore, because you have done these things, behold, I will raise up against you, O great house and O lesser house, that will be struck by ruin and division, that is, O house of Israel and all twelve tribes, the most savage nation of Assyrians and Chaldeans, who will crush and overthrow you from beginning to end, from head to tail, from the borders of your land, which face the sun, to the desert river, or the West, as the LXX translated, that is, from Emath to Rhinocorura, between which the river Nile, or the stream coming from the desert, enters the sea. We have mentioned Emath above Epiphania, which got its name from Antiochus who was called Epiphanes. However, those who think that this refers to the house of Israel and the ten tribes, cannot explain how it is said in the threat against the ten tribes that they should be crushed from Epiphania to the borders of Egypt. These borders do not include only the ten tribes, but all twelve, including Judah and Benjamin. Some people, according to the allegory, believe that the large house and the smaller house symbolize the Jewish people and the Church gathered from the Gentiles. They are called 'great' because of their ancestors, the law, and the prophets. We are called 'lesser' because we were without the Testament and the commandments of God, of which we also read in the Song of Songs: 'My sister is little and has no breasts' (Song of Songs 8:8). If the great and small house, gathered into one family of God, does not have discipline and does not follow God's commandments, it will be struck by ruins and divisions. Whenever, therefore, the house of God, which is the Church, collapses and is torn apart, either in persecutions or in heresies and schisms, it shows the hand of God striking: which if we want to

avoid, let us listen to and follow the comparison and example. They are not able to pursue on the rocks of the horse. Christ is the rock (I Cor. X), who gave to his apostles that they also be called rock: You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church (Mat. XVI, 18). Those who are in these stones, called horses, about which we have spoken above, will not be able to pursue him, their courses hindered and falling down through each stone. Let us come to another comparison, according to our custom, discussing the edition of the Seventy Interpreters, lest if we adhere too much to the Hebrew, we seem to have deceived the reader's diligence, and by not mentioning the Vulgate edition, we appear to have proposed it in vain. But they will certainly be silent in women, he said, no doubt meaning horses, about which he had spoken above. If they pursue horses on rocks. These horses, that is, contrary strengths, who go mad for women when they see a masculine spirit, and having been strengthened by the power of God, are not bold enough to approach. But when they see a effeminate mind, weakened by ointments and pleasures, and turned towards feminine softness, they immediately go mad and cannot hold themselves back; and they long for lust. It follows: Because you have turned judgment into fury. Judgment turns into fury for the one who judges in anger, and the Lord says: You shall not show partiality in judgment (Deut. XVI, 19). And in another place: You shall not pity the poor in judgment; for it is God's judgment (Exod. XXIII, 3): with an angry mind he descends to judge, indeed, without knowing the cause, nor does he know the truth of the judgment, he prejudices what sentence he should pass: he also turns the fruit of justice, which is most sweet, into bitterness. What we have said about one virtue, let us understand about the others as well: prudence, courage, temperance. Whoever is angry cannot enjoy their fruits, and when they do, they will be bitter. Hence it is said in Isaiah: Woe to those who call sweet bitter, and bitter sweet (Is. 5:20). This is what those say who do not consider the causes in judging, but rather the individuals, and they turn the fruit of Christ's righteousness, which is most sweet, into bitterness. Therefore, whoever is guided in judgment by either blood ties or friendship, on the other hand, is led by hostile hatred or enmities, perverts the judgment of Christ, who is justice, and turns its fruit into bitterness. Those who do this rejoice in no good word, or, as Symmachus translated, irrationally, and proudly say: Have we not had horns in our strength? But let the righteous glory in the Lord and say: In you we will scatter our enemies with horns. And in another place (Al. in the same place): For I will not hope in my bow, and my sword will not save me (Ps. 43, 6, 7). Hence, in Exodus according to the Hebrew and the Aquila edition, we read: And Moses did not know that the appearance (Al. face) of his face was horned (Exod. 34, 29), which truly could be said: In you I blow away my enemies with a horn. We also read in another place: And he will exalt the horn of his people; And: He will exalt the horn of his Christ (Ps. 148, 14, and 1 Sam. 2, 10), and the horn of the altar, and clean horned animals, which are offered only to God, whose interpretation is not of this time. Because of these great sins and extreme pride, which speaks unrighteousness against God and exalts its mouth, the Almighty Lord God declares that he will raise up the most savage nation, which will crush and afflict them, indeed, even prevent them from entering into Emath, and as far as the Western torrent. Emath is interpreted as a wall or fortified town. Therefore, they will be forbidden from seeking refuge in the most savage nation, to whom punishments have been assigned, to flee to the fortified city, which is the celestial Jerusalem, lest they enter and be saved, similar to that chapter which we read in Genesis, where God placed Cherubim and a flaming sword (Gen. II), which turned to guard the way to the tree of life, so that the one who had been expelled from paradise would by no means enter there unworthy. And what follows: We will interpret the 67th Psalm, in which it is written: Sing

to the Lord, sing a psalm to his name: make a way for him who ascends upon the west: the Lord is his name (Psalm 67:5). For unless evil works have died in us, Christ will not ascend upon us. And when they have died, and we have Christ as our charioteer: then as we make progress and advance to better things, it will be commanded in the same psalm: Sing to God, sing psalms to the Lord who ascends upon the heaven of heavens towards the east (Psalm 67:33, 34). And in the mysteries, first we renounce him who is in the West, and who dies for our sins, and thus turned towards the East, we make a covenant with the sun of righteousness, and we promise to serve him. Regarding the stream of the West, Symmachus interpreted it as a valley plain: Theodotio, a stream in Arabia: Aquila, a stream that is in the plain. With these words, it is shown that those who are not excluded from the walled city cannot die to sin, nor can they reach the plain and level stream of the desert, which is called the stream of pleasure, according to what we read: You shall make them drink from the stream of your pleasure (Psalm 36:9).

7:1-3

(Chapter 7, verses 1-3) The Lord God showed me these things: And behold, a swarming locust at the beginning of the late crops, after the king's mowings. And it came to pass, when it had finished consuming the grass of the land, that I said: Lord God, please be merciful, I beseech You: who will raise up Jacob, for he is small? The Lord had pity on this: it shall not be, said the Lord. LXX: Thus the Lord showed me: And behold, a swarm of locusts was coming in the morning, and behold, one Gog, the king, was a bruchus. And it shall come to pass, when it is accomplished, that it shall consume the grass of the earth. And I said: Lord God, be merciful, who shall raise up Jacob, for he is little. Be sorry for us, O Lord, upon this: and upon this let it not be, saith the Lord. The prophetic word not only predicts things that will happen in the distant future, but also those that are near and will immediately follow the prophecy. For we humans often think more about ourselves than about future generations, as Ezechias says: Let there be peace in my days (2 Kings 20). So that those who have witnessed the fulfilled events that were previously announced, may turn to the worship of God, in whom the truth of prophecy resides. Therefore, the Lord revealed that Sennacherib, the king of the Assyrians, would come with an infinite army, like a swarm of locusts, to annihilate everything, just as a locust devours all when it begins to rain late in the season, when the people of Israel needed the extreme mercy of Almighty God. However, the one who commands and creates this swarm of locusts is the Lord. The locust comes at the beginning of the late rain, when everything is green and the whole field is giving birth, and the flowers of different trees burst into their own kind of fruit. And to summarize in one word what I want to convey, they promise abundance of all things, flowers of trees, and the crops of the fields. But these locusts, which fly in early spring, are followed by countless beetles, which come after the late rain, and are called the barber or the king's barber because they devastate everything and leave nothing of the green grass on the earth. This barber, or haircut, Isaiah calls a sharp razor (Isa. VII), which will shave all the hair and the beard of the body of the children of Israel. And when, he says, I doubted what this razor was, he immediately brought in the king of Assyria. Therefore, the razor and barber of the king is the army of the Chaldeans, which has devastated everything like a locust, not only crops, but also wood, hay, and straw. And it came to pass, when the locust had finished eating the grass of the earth, and the prophet understood what he saw, he turned to prayer and said: Lord God, be merciful, I beseech you. I do not want my words to be fulfilled in the subversion of my people. I do not want to be chosen from the number of shepherds to announce the ruin of the ten tribes. For

who can raise up Jacob, except for you alone? When everything collapses, there is no one who can restore it. Jacob is weak and is frequently destroyed by attacks from the enemy. But when he prays and sheds tears from his inner self, the Lord takes pity on him and responds: I will not destroy all of the people of Israel, there will be saved remnants. Certainly, it must be understood in this way: he saw two things that would happen at the same time. First, a locust, then a caterpillar. He prayed to the Lord for both, and only one was heard, so that the caterpillar would not devour everything to the point of annihilation. However, the flying locust would devour some things and leave others untouched. It seems to me that the 70 interpreters understood the Hebrew word Gozi (), which is interpreted as a barber or tonsure, as Gog, considering the letter Zai as Vau, and compared the countless multitude of caterpillars to the most savage Gog nation, which is described as devastating the land of Judea. But what Aquila wanted to say, I do not quite understand, unless perhaps he placed the word 'Gozi' instead of 'Gaza,' and gradually 'Gaza' was corrupted by error. Let us also say spiritually: those who have committed serious sins after the works of justice (as it is said in the prophet: 'Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers his righteousness on you' - Hosea 10, and Jeremiah 4), are brought forth with offspring or a generation of morning locusts when the darkness of night passes, and they begin to recognize their own sins, because they did not repent. And because they did not repent, the bruchus is brought forth, which is called King Gog. But 'Gog' is translated into our language as 'roof,' a certain proud and arrogant strength. And when the hay and stubble of our land are consumed, whoever have been holy for the people will pray for forgiveness and say: Lord God, be merciful. For who else can raise up Jacob (Isa. X)? Who can heal the woman with an issue of blood, except you alone, at whose touch her health is immediately restored (Luke VIII)? For Jacob is small, or of small number, because there remain no or few traces of virtues in them. May you feel remorse, Lord, regarding this, for which you have threatened to do to your people. However, we must understand God's repentance in the Scriptures as we do sleep and anger: not that God feels remorse or changes his mind, as he speaks through the prophet: I am God, and I do not change (Mal. III, 6). And to whom we say: But you are the same, and your years will not fail (Ps. CI, 28); but rather that, when we turn to better things, it is he himself who repents of his decision, so that he does not give rewards to the righteous that he promised, if they turn to wickedness, nor does he inflict punishment on the sinner that he has threatened, if he turns to salvation. He is said to those who are going to repent: Do not give sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids, so that you may be freed like a gazelle from the traps, and like a bird from the snare (Prov. VI, 4, 5). If he who despises the Lord's commandments first, and then, when he is in distress, begins to wake up, he awakens the Lord who is sleeping to him, and says: Arise, why do you sleep, Lord (Ps. XLIII, 23)? On the other hand, he who treasures up wrath for himself on the day of wrath, will feel God's anger (Rom. II). But if he repents, anger will turn into mercy, and the Lord will change with our troubles and virtues into both punishment and mercy.

7:4-6

(Vers. 4 seqq.) This the Lord God showed me, and behold, the Lord God called for judgment by fire, and it devoured the great deep and will consume it together with a portion. And I said: O Lord God, please cease; who will raise up Jacob since he is small? The Lord had mercy on this also, but even this shall not be, said the Lord God. LXX: Thus the Lord God showed me, and behold, He

called for judgment by fire, and it devoured the great deep and consumed a portion. And I said: O Lord God, stop, who will raise up Jacob, since he is small? Let it repent thee, O Lord, upon this: and let it not be, saith the Lord, God of hosts. First the Lord shewed the prophet the workman of the locust in the beginning of the germination of the late crop, and after the late crop, the cutting off of the king or kingdom, and to express the word from word, the cutting off of the king Sennacherib, by which he sheared and laid waste all the ten tribes. Now the same Lord sheweth Nebuchadnezzar, yea, he calleth and commandeth him to come against Judah and Jerusalem. However, he calls upon the fire to set ablaze the temple and Jerusalem, and to carry out judgment in the fire against those who were once his people. And when the fire came for judgment, to fulfill the command of the Lord, it consumed a great abyss, and it also consumed a part, all the cities of Judah, and a part of the Lord's which was called his temple. And when the prophet saw this, he said to the Lord, not as before, be propitious, I beseech you, but be still, or cease; so that he may obtain by his prayers the person whom he had already seen begin to cease: especially since there is no other who can raise up the lying down and little and humiliated Jacob, except the Lord who is able to bring back the captive and those transported into Chaldea into the land of Judah. Because once, according to the prophet Hosea and the Psalmist saying: The sons of Ephraim, bending and shooting with the bow, turned back in the day of battle (Psalm 77, 9), we have attributed the ten tribes to the person of the heretics, who were called Israel, and the two, over which Judas presided, to the Church and the sinners of the Church, who indeed confess the right faith, but are in need of purging themselves from the filth of vices with flames: for this reason now the Lord shows that he calls himself to the fire of judgment, so that the fire may prove the quality of each one's work (1 Corinthians 3), and that which is written may be fulfilled: Walk in the light of your fire, and in the flame you have kindled (Isaiah 50, 11). And it is said to Babylon: You have coals of fire, you shall sit upon them; they shall be to you for help (Isai. XLVII, 14, sec. LXX) . And in the psalm, The deceitful tongue, full of lies, is said to be purified by the fire of coals: What shall be given to you, or what shall be added to you, for a deceitful tongue? The sharp arrows of the mighty with coals of desolation (Ps. CXIX, 3, 4) . About these coals of the altar, the coal of the desolating coals of the two Testaments is taken with a pair of tongs, and the unclean lips of Isaiah are purified, so that he may be able to prophesy the word of the Lord (Isai. VI). But the fire, summoned for judgment, first devours the abyss, that is, all kinds of sins, wood, hay, straw, and then it consumes at the same time the part, that is, it reaches the saints, who are considered as the possession of the Lord and as part of him; for it is the time for judgment to begin from the house of the Lord. And in Ezekiel it is commanded to those who will suffer punishment: Begin from my own sanctified ones (Ezek. IX). And in the Apostle Paul we read: If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire (I Cor. III). And when we all have been in sin, and we have lied in the truth of judgment, our Lord will have mercy on us, and because we are children, He will raise us up at the time of resurrection, or He will raise us up through the virtues in which we lay in vices, with the Lord promising this and saying: But even this will not be. He said well, but He also said: because He had already said above: this will not be. For He will not be angry forever, nor will He threaten eternally (Ps. 102). He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

7:7-9

(Verse 7 and following) This is what was shown to me: And behold, the Lord stood (in the Latin Vulgate, 'standing') on a wall made of stones, and in his hand was a trowel of a mason. And the Lord said to me, 'What do you see, Amos?' And I said, 'A trowel of a mason.' And the Lord said, 'Behold, I will set a trowel in the midst of my people Israel. I will not add to pass over him anymore, and the high places of idols will be demolished, and the sanctuaries of Israel will be deserted, and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.' LXX: Thus the Lord showed me: And behold, a man standing on a adamantine wall, and in his hand a diamond. And the Lord said to me: What do you see, Amos? And I said: A diamond. And the Lord said to me: Behold, I will cast a diamond in the midst of my people Israel. I will no longer pass by him, and the altars of laughter will be scattered, and the sacrifices of Israel will be desolate, and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword. Before we discuss adamant, which Symmachus and the Septuagint translated as Enach in Hebrew, it should be briefly stated that this word was translated by Aquila as γινωσιν and by Theodotion as τηκεμενον: the former meaning tinning, the latter meaning rotting; like that frying pan (which we read about in Ezekiel 4) where the siege of the people is symbolized, is also referred to as fritura (or signetur), both in the ten tribes and in the kingdom of Jeroboam (who was the grandson of Jehu, under whom this prophecy is seen) in 2 Kings 1, by the term stannaturae. Therefore the Lord is seen standing on the top of a wall made of tin or lead, and in his hand is a trowel or a mason's tray, with which walls are usually covered, and not only to receive beauty, but also strength against the damage of rain and frequent storms. We read in Ezekiel (Chapter XIII) that the Lord threatens that when a storm and hail arise, it will by no means harm or cover the wall of Israel, but will let it be scattered by the rain. And now the one of whom it is written says: He will be called the Builder of the wall, the cornerstone, the builder of the house, who will place a measuring line in the midst of his people Israel, and will make them cease and be dormant, so that he will no longer bring upon them the burden and will clothe and protect them with his help. And when the Lord withdraws his protection, and, so to speak, removes the covering of the wall, then the high places of the idols, which are called Bamoth in Hebrew, will be demolished, and the holy places of the ten tribes will be desolated, so that Dan and Bethel will be destroyed, where the golden calves were worshiped. We have said that as much as we were able, we shall tell what has been handed down to us from the Hebrews according to history. Let us move on to the anagoge, from Xenocrates, who writes a few words about the nature of stones and precious gems: 'The diamond is a stone of its own name, which we can call indomitable in Latin: because it yields to no material, not even to iron. For if it is placed on an anvil and struck with a strong blow of a hammer, the anvil and hammer receive a wound before the diamond is crushed.' And when fire consumes everything and consumes all metals, it makes adamant harder, so that not even the excessive force can dull a small corner of it. I have seen a diamond in gold the size of a thousand millia: and while gold nearby is consumed by long use and excessive age, the diamond alone is not worn down, and no file can diminish it: on the contrary, it wears down the file, and whatever it touches, it leaves a mark. This stone is the hardest and most untameable, yet it is dissolved by the blood of goats alone, and when placed in warm blood, it loses its strength. But he is small and unseemly, having a rusty color and the brilliance of crystal. Four kinds of diamonds are described. The first is Indian; the second is Arabic; the third is Macedonian; the fourth is Cyprian, possessing varying degrees of hardness depending on the quality of the regions. It is also said to detect poisons and resist the evil arts, similar to amber. Such is our Lord and Savior: who, being in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied

himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in human form: he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2). Of whom Isaiah writes: He has no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. (Isaiah 53:2). This refers to Christ standing on the adamant wall, that is, on his holy apostles, whom he enabled to be called adamant and to say that they were not overcome by anyone, asking, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? And again: I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. VIII, 35 seqq.). And even Peter, who was the strongest diamond, the gates of hell did not prevail against him (Matt. XVI). Here is a man and Lord, who stands upon an adamant wall, holding in his hand an adamant, which unless held by the hand of God and aided by his help, loses all strength, as the Lord says in the Gospel: No one can snatch them out of my Father's hand (John 10:29). And he is so strong that it can be said to him: If you pass through fire, the flame will not burn you (Isaiah 43:2). And the more he is beaten by temptations, the stronger he becomes, and he delights in the name of the Savior amidst the lashes. And since it cannot be overcome by anyone, it is dissolved by the heat of deadly lust alone. For this is said to be the nature of the blood of goats and of the goat itself, that it is very hot for lust, and what fire cannot tame, only its blood dissolves. Therefore, the Lord places such a diamond in the midst of his people Israel, and it does not pass beyond it, nor does he allow the altars, which are worthy of ridicule and mockery, to be destroyed, and he may strike down with the sword all the mysteries of the heretics and the household of Jeroboam, who first separated the people of God, and overthrow them.

7:10-13

(Verses 10 onwards) And Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, 'Amos has rebelled against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos says: 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive from their own land.'" Then Amaziah said to Amos 'You seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah. There eat bread, and prophesy there. But never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the royal residence.'" LXX: And Amasias sent priests from Bethel to Jeroboam, the king of Israel, saying: Amos is gathering groups against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land cannot endure all his words. For Amos says: Jeroboam will die by the sword, and Israel will be led captive out of its own land. And Amasias said to Amos: You see, go forth and depart (or go) to the land of Judah, and there live and prophesy there; but do not continue to prophesy in Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary and the house of the kingdom. The proverb of Solomon, or rather the commandment, is: Do not argue with the bad, lest they hate you (Prov. IX, 8): And on the contrary, he has commanded about the good: Argue with the wise, and they will love you. In another place also: Whoever rebukes, he says, the ways of a person, will have more favor than the one who speaks what is pleasing (Prov. XXVIII, 23). Therefore, even Amos spoke to the people with the desire for correction, and he threatened terrible things from the words of God, so that those who repent would return to God and forsake idols. Then the priest of

Bethel, where the golden calf was, whom Jeroboam the son of Nebat had made (3 Kings 12), and others who had succeeded him in power, sent to Jeroboam the grandson of Jehu, to inform him, saying: Amos has rebelled against you, and he is making assemblies and gatherings in the midst of your kingdom, Israel, and he speaks so boldly that the land of your kingdom cannot bear his words. Yet he dares to send to the king of Israel as if he were a high priest, fearing that if the people turn to the worship of God, he will lose his priesthood glory. And when he has heard the two, the high places will be demolished with idols, whether it is the laughter of altars or the sanctifications, or the ceremonies of Israel will be desolated, and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword, because the idols are completely destroyed, over which Amaziah the priest presided, and may God rise up against Jeroboam with the sword, unless he repents: for he does not command harm from his own, but rather he seems to grieve only at the insult to the king. For, Amos says, these things are spoken. You are mistaken, slanderer. In all his words, he does not speak as if he were a prophet himself, but always prefaces them with: Thus says the Lord. Therefore, he recalls that Amos the prophet has spoken, in order to provoke the king to seek vengeance. What did Amos say? Jeroboam will die by the sword. And in this, you are lying: for he did not say, 'he will die'; for if he had said this, it seemed that he did not take repentance upon himself; rather, the Lord will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword: threatening punishment, not imposing it. He said not, In the sword shall Jeroboam die, but, I will arise in the sword over the house of Jeroboam. For Jeroboam indeed is not dead by the sword, but his house, that is, the son of Zacharias, was destroyed by God's striking. And Israel, he said, shall be carried away captive out of his own land: add also the rest, if he does not repent. Moreover, Jeroboam, despising the empty commands of Amos, did not want to respond to what he had commanded: hence he assumes for himself the authority of the priestly office, and speaks to Amos: Thou seest, go: flee into the land of Judah. The prophets, as we have often said, were formerly called seers, because they saw with the eyes of their heart the things that were going to happen. Let the wise reader ask why he calls the seer a prophet and forces him to come out of the land of Israel? To this, one must respond: either he says it in mockery, suggesting that he lies about everything; or because he saw that there were many people who gladly listened to him. This is why he reported to the king, 'Amos is conspiring against you.' He does not dare to openly commit an injustice, lest he appear to harm those who listen to him. Go, he said, to the land of Judah, where you were born, where the insane are gladly heard: and eat your bread there, or live there, or certainly practice your craft by which you can find food for yourself, and prophesy there, for you have many whom you are accustomed to deceive. But in Bethel, where I am the priest, you shall no longer add to prophesy, for it is the sanctification of the king and the house of the kingdom. And this false priest speaks as if flattering the royal authority, so as not to say: the sanctification is of our God and the house of the idol; but of the king and the house of the kingdom: all those who worship false gods have this custom, that they attribute their pride to kings, and what they themselves do, seems to have been done by the king. All that we have interpreted about Amasias, Jeroboam, Israel, and Amos must be referred to heretics in a rhetorical manner: of whom the priest Amasias sometimes sends to the heretical king Jeroboam, and accuses the heretical patron and holy men and preachers of faith before him, and orders the teachers not to preach in Israel or go against the will of the king; because Bethel, that is, the house of God, and the false Church, is the sanctification of the king and the house of the kingdom. For they are wont to say: 'The Emperor communicates to us, and if anyone resists them, they immediately accuse them: so are you acting

against the Emperor? Do you despise the commands of Augustus?' And yet, let us consider that many Christian kings, who persecuted the Church of God, and endeavored to establish Arian impiety throughout the whole world, surpass in wickedness Jeroboam, the king of Israel. For he despised the commands of the false priest and did not want to respond to his suggestion. But they, along with many of their fellow Amasian priests, killed the prophet Amos and the priests of the Lord with hunger and shortage, imprisonments and exiles.

7:14-17

(v. 14 onwards) And Amos answered and said to Amaziah, 'I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet, but I am a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. And the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me (the Vulgate adds 'the Lord'): Go, prophesy to my people Israel. Now hear the word of the Lord: You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of idolatry.' Therefore thus says the Lord: 'Your wife shall be a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be divided by a measuring line; and you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.' LXX: And Amos answered, and said to Amasiah: I was not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but I was a shepherd, and I gathered sycamore fruit ((or: a kind of wild fruit)), and the Lord took me from among the flock, and the Lord said to me: Go, and prophesy to my people Israel, and now hear the word of the Lord: you say, Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Jacob. Therefore, thus says the Lord: Your wife will commit adultery in the city, and your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, and your land will be divided by a measuring line, and you will die in an unclean land; but Israel will be led captive from their own land. The Scripture recounts this which the blessed apostles did when the Scribes and Pharisees forbade them to teach in the name of Jesus; and they responded, saying: It is necessary to obey God rather than men. (Acts 4:16) We also know that the prophet Amos did this, who, being forbidden by the high priest of idols, prophesied in Bethel; he not only prophesied, but also showed that he feared God more by sending him, than by prohibiting him; and boldly and freely he himself denounced the punishment that he had tried to forbid and hinder the word of God. Not only, he said, am I not a prophet, or was not (one of whom is of humility, the other of truth) nor the son of a prophet, nor descended from the prophetic lineage; but when I was a shepherd and was pasturing the herds in the meadows, the Lord took me following the flocks. For the term 'shepherd,' which is called 'Bocer' in Hebrew, Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion, and the fifth edition translated it as 'herdsman,' who pastures herds; not sheep. The Seventy alone have called him 'shepherd' (α■π■λον), who is properly the shepherd of goats, from the α■πολ■α (the high country), which of course means a flock that grazes in high places, showing that herds of goats always climb steep rocks and lofty heights. But since he continues: 'And the Lord hath brought me forth from the sheep' (■κ τ■ν προβ■των), he seems to suggest sheep more than goats, although in the beginning we read in Leviticus that sheep and goats are designated by the name of cattle. For thus the Lord speaks. If someone offers from the sheep, that is, from the flock, to the Lord a lamb or a kid, and a sheep or a goat (Leviticus 1:10). Furthermore, what he says, 'plucking mulberries', which Aquila interpreted as 'inspecting sycomores', and Symmachus, having sycomores, some have explained it in such a way that 'mulberries' are understood to be a type of tree that grows in the plains of Palestine, and they bring forth wild figs if they are not plucked, which become extremely bitter and are infected by mosquitoes. But for us, since the solitude in which Amos

stayed does not produce any such tree, it seems more fitting to say brambles, which cause delay and provide consolation for the hunger and scarcity of the shepherds. However the reader wishes to understand it, it must be said that the Lord took on a humble and rustic shepherd, and sent him to his people Israel, and commanded him to go out from his land and journey to Samaria, and there prophesy about what is to come. Therefore, as the Lord said, you tell me, Amos: Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not drop dew upon the house of idols. Listen to what the Lord threatens against you. Concerning the house of idols, it is written in Hebrew as Beth Isaac, that is, the house of laughter (for Isaac is interpreted as laughter), which the Septuagint translated as the house of Jacob, substituting one name for another and not understanding the meaning. Again, where it says, 'Do not drop dew,' Symmachus interpreted it as 'Do not rebuke.' But to drip prophets, the language of the Scriptures is: that they do not pour out all of God's wrath at once, but rather proclaim it in small drops. Therefore, because you have said to me, 'You will not prophesy; your wife will fornicate in the city,' which Symmachus has interpreted better as 'she will be prostituted,' not that she will commit fornication herself, but that she will endure prostitution inflicted by others in a passive manner. However, it is a great pain and an incredible disgrace when a husband, in the midst of the city and in the presence of everyone, cannot prevent harm to his wife. Your sons and your daughters, he says, will also fall by the sword. There is not as much pain in a raped daughter as there is in a polluted wife, nor is there as much pain in a wife who is killed as there is in slaughtered sons. For a husband would rather hear of his wife being killed than being defiled. And this is not enough for him to feel wronged, unless his land is also divided by enemies with a rope and receives new cultivators. Even Amaziah himself, who now boasts in the power of the priesthood, will not die in his own land, but will be led captive and die in a land polluted by idols, and he will not die until he sees the people he deceived serving and captive. According to allegory, Amasias the priest is interpreted as strong and rigid ((or cold)), because he forbids the rebellious and fierce ecclesiastical man and true prophet from speaking the words and teaching of God and correcting the erring people. His wife, the false Church, will openly engage in fornication with everyone. And his sons and daughters, whom he has generated badly in error, will be struck by the sword of the Lord. His land and all his possessions will also be a portion of demons, and he himself will die in a defiled land that does not have the indwelling of God, but is contaminated by the errors of a corrupt religion, and every people who assumes a false name for itself, Israel, will migrate as captives from their land, so that they do not serve God, but submit their necks to the yoke of heretics and demons.

8:1-3

(Chapter 8, verses 1 and following) This is what the Lord God showed me: Behold, a basket of summer fruit. And he said, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A basket of summer fruit.' Then the Lord said to me, 'The end has come upon my people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore. The songs of the temple shall become wailings in that day,' declares the Lord God. 'Many shall be the dead bodies, cast out in every place. Silence!' LXX: This is what the Lord God showed me: Behold, a basket of summer fruit. And he said, What do you see, Amos? And I said, A bird trap. And the Lord said to me: The end is coming upon my people Israel; I will no longer pass by them. The ceilings of the temple will wail on that day, says the Lord God. Many will fall; I will bring silence to every place. Just as Jeremiah sees with the staff of the watchmen, or the nut, because he watched over the sins of his people, so now Amos looks upon Judah and Israel together under the

guise of a hook, which in Hebrew is called Chelub and is translated as a bird trap by the Septuagint; since the bird catcher is properly called Moces, as we read earlier in this same prophet: If a bird falls to the ground without a bird catcher. And the sense is this: Just as the branches of trees are drawn towards the apples to be picked, so I have drawn near the time of captivity. And so that we may know that this is what we say, God himself interprets what the vision, which the prophets had shown, signifies. The end has come upon my people Israel. And what follows: I will not pass through him anymore, signifies that he will no longer pass through the iniquities of his people, nor neglect them, nor allow their crimes to go unpunished. And not only does it seem to be said about the ten tribes, it also says: The hinges of the temple will creak, or the rafters on that day, says the Lord. But this must be understood with great excess, because such a heavy burden of evils is looming: that even the hinges of the doors themselves and the lofty rafters will howl, and they will feel an incredible devastation: when many will die, and with the inhabitants captured or killed, silence will be thrown everywhere. But if we want to read the vase of the bird-catcher instead of the hook of the apples, it must be said that just as bird-catchers attract flying birds through the air with birdlime or nets, and when they are soaring higher they pull them down to the ground, so God through Sennacherib or Nebuchadnezzar, whom we now understand as bird-catchers, first captured, bound, transferred, and killed his own free people, whom he had previously elevated through obedience to the Law. For nets are not unjustly stretched out for birds. And this is not only to be referred to the time of the captivity of Babylon, but also to the coming of the Lord Savior, when they said: Take away such a one from the earth: crucify him, crucify him (John 19:15), and they destroyed the wings of the dove. And the end came upon them, and the final captivity, and the Lord did not spare them. And the hinges of the temple wailed, or the ceilings of the temple, falling upon the slain people. And in every place there was silence, with the Jews having Moses and the Prophets, and those without the Word of God: reading the letter, and losing the spirit, when their table became a snare, and a retribution, and a ruin, and their eyes were blinded so that they could not see, and their ears were stopped so that they could not hear; and their backs were bent so that they could not look up to heaven, but rather always lay on the ground like that woman in the Gospel who had a spirit of infirmity (Mark 7), and their ears were stopped so that they could not hear; and their backs were bent so that they could not look up to heaven, but rather always lay on the ground like that woman in the Gospel who had a spirit of infirmity. And the anger of God was poured out upon them, and the fury of his wrath caught hold of them, so that their habitation became deserted, and in their tents there was no inhabitant: for when the time was fulfilled, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, and I will send a famine upon the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord (Hosea, ch. 4, v. 11) : of which, if we shall have arrived at the end, more fully is to be explained. Therefore, seeing this, that God spared not the natural branches, let us fear that the same may happen to us, and let us avoid the snares of the fowler; and let us say to the Lord: Be not silent, neither be thou still, O God, and depart not from me; lest being like unto them that go down into the pit (Psalm 27:1). In the whole world there has fallen a stupor of the Jewish people: wherever they are, they are the mute and dumb images of what they used to be. Blaspheming against Christ, they invoke a malediction in their synagogues and in their prayers. That their interpretation of the Scriptures may find no entrance anywhere, what new thing is said by them that have no faith? For they bore witness to what they understood not; and like human beings, they rendered judgment as diviners.

8:4-6

(V. 4, seqq.) Listen to this, you who crush the poor and make the needy of the earth fail, saying: When the month passes, we will sell our goods, and on the Sabbath, we will open the granary to decrease the measure and increase the weight; we will use deceitful scales to possess the poor in silver and sell the refuse of wheat. LXX: Listen to this, you who crush the poor in the morning and oppress the needy from the land, saying: When the month passes, we will trade and on the Sabbath, we will open the granary to make the measure smaller and the weight greater; we will use dishonest scales to possess the poor in money and the needy for shoes, and we will engage in every sale. Let the hook of the apples not appear in vain, and let the vessel of the bird catcher be shown, and through these things, the impending captivity is briefly described as the cause of offense to God. Oh, you Juda, oh you Israel, hear the crimes you have committed, rising in the night, for prayer and hymns to God: you have the zeal to oppress or crush the poor, so that they, consumed by hunger and poverty, may be taken from the land. You who wait for the new moon to engage in business, and increase interest on loans, and open your storehouses on the Sabbath, and give more grain in return, and turn the sacred festivals of God into sordid profits for your own gain: you who make the measure smaller when selling goods, and use heavier weights when receiving, and use unfair scales in order to possess the money of the poor, and hold people in such low regard that you fulfill what was said above about you: Because you sold the just for silver, and the poor for shoes: you have leaped into such greed for profit that you sell to the poor not the grain which sustains human bodies, but the refuse and chaff of the grain, mixing dust and bran. Indeed, we sometimes see even perverse teachers and rulers, who dominate the clergy without the fear of God, of whom Jeremiah speaks: Their shepherds have not benefited them (Jer. XII, 13, LXX), making a profit out of piety. They sit in the temple like moneychangers, not in cages but in seats as if they were masters, selling the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They give a smaller and larger measure to the poor, either too little or nothing at all, but to the rich and those from whom they seek profit, they speak with lengthy sermons like preachers. And for the sake of money, they crush the heads of the poor and trample on them, not offering them the Lord's grain that strengthens the heart of man, but rather feeding them scraps and the cheapest dust with eager mouths. They even sell things that are worthless, despite the fact that the Lord commanded his apostles, 'Freely you have received, freely give' (Matt. X, 8).

8:7-8

(Verse 7, 8.) The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble concerning this, and every inhabitant mourn? And it shall rise up wholly like the River, and it shall be driven out and fall like the River of Egypt. Septuagint: The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Surely I will not forget all your works forever. And the land shall not be shaken because of this, and every inhabitant shall mourn, and it shall rise up like a consuming River, and it shall fall like the River of Egypt. The Scripture describes God swearing repeatedly. First in Genesis: the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven, saying: 'By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord: because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore' (Genesis 22:16-17). And in the 109th Psalm: The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek' (Psalm 110:4). Now, whoever it is that wrote the letter to the Hebrews, discussing it says: Since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself (Heb. 6:13). And in this

same prophet above we read: The Lord swore in his sanctuary, or by his sanctuary: because behold days shall come upon you and they will take you away in arms, or spears, and the rest. Therefore, he who had sworn previously in his sanctuary, or by his sanctuary, now swears against the pride of Jacob: so that if they do not believe the one threatening, they may believe the one swearing in human likeness: who assumes an oath at that time when trust is not placed in their simple words. It is not surprising, therefore, if God is said to swear, when he sleeps with those who sleep, and watches over those who are awake: and it is said that he is angry with those who have stored up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath (Rom. II) . He swears that he will not forget their works until the end; for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (Jacob. IV) ; but let them remember all the sins they have committed, and bring them to the end and the time of judgment. Hence, those who repent ((or endure patiently)) pray: Do not remember our old iniquities (Psal. LXXVIII, 8) , especially when the earth itself is moved and disturbed against the proud, not the tenant or stranger, but its inhabitant: and let the completion rise like a river, and let it descend like the river of Egypt: so that those who repent may ascend with the rising river: but those who persist in their sins may descend like the river of Egypt, and be swallowed up by the sea. And by this, it is shown that the pride of Jacob, against which the Lord swears, is to be devoured by eternal punishments.

8:9-10 (Verse 9, 10.) And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord (Vulgate adds God): The sun will be darkened at noon, and I will make the earth go dark in the midst of light. I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation. I will bring sackcloth upon every waist, and baldness upon every head. I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and the end of it like a bitter day. LXX: And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord God: the sun will be darkened at noon, and darkness will come over the earth in the midst of light. I will turn your festivals into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation. I will bring sackcloth upon every loins, and baldness upon every head. I will make it like the mourning for a beloved one, and those who are with him like a day of sorrow. That day, which is called the day of captivity, signifies the day when both peoples will be led into Assyria and Chaldea, where the sun will set at noon due to the magnitude of sadness, and clear light will fill everything, while darkness will envelop all. On that day, their festivities and all their songs will be turned into mourning and lamentation. And they will wear sackcloth on their backs or loins, and according to the custom of ancient mourners, they will have baldness on their heads, which we also read that Job did for the deaths of his children (Job 1). And so great will be the magnitude of mourning and sadness, that it will overcome the grief of a mother and a most beloved only son dying: and all things will be filled with lamentation and bitterness. We can understand this place also in the Passion of the Lord, when the sun withdrew its rays at the sixth hour, and the one not daring to look at his hanging Lord on the cross. (Luke 23): when darkness filled all things, and their festivities and songs, surpassing Vespasian and Titus, were transformed into mourning and sorrow: when all things were filled with tears, penitence, and sackcloth, and they had bald heads, who previously adorned their hair in the Nazarene style, nourished for the Lord. Then the firstborn Son of God, the people of Israel, who had extended their hand to the Only Begotten and true Son of God, was handed over to eternal mourning: and his last moments, along with those who were with him, were filled with bitterness. Now, those who rejected the sun of justice are left in darkness: we, who were sitting in the shadow of death, have seen a great light (Isaiah 9), and all their festivities have been transferred to the mysteries of the Church, so that, while they weep, we may sing praises to the Lord. They are

girded with ropes and cilices: for us it is said with the apostles: Let your loins be girded ((or girt)), and lamps burning in your hands (Luke 12:35). We are girded with the truth of Christ, fulfilling that which is written: Stand fast therefore in the truth, girding your loins with truth (Ephesians 6:14). But they, on the other hand, are surrounded by the lie of the devil for the sake of truth. Our head, of whom the Savior speaks: But the very hairs of your head are all numbered (Matthew 10:30), has perpetual hair, and in our head, which is Christ, we possess strength to slay the lion. But they slept in the concubine's synagogue, and their hair was cut off by the devil, losing the power of their heads, losing their eyes with their strength, about whom it is written in Ecclesiastes: The eyes of the wise are in their head; but the fool walks in darkness. Their companions are in mourning, our companions are clothed in garments of joy.

8:11-12

(Verse 11, 12) Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will send forth (Vulgate: send) a famine upon the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. In that day, the fair virgins and young men shall faint for thirst. Those who swear by the guilt of Samaria, and say, 'As your god, Dan, lives,' and, 'As the way of Beersheba lives,' they shall fall and never rise again. LXX: Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord God, when I will send a famine on the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And the waters shall be stirred up from the sea to the sea, and from the north to the east they shall go to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it. In that day, the fair virgins and young men shall faint with thirst, those who swear by the sin of Samaria and say: As your god lives, O Dan, and as your god lives, O Bersabee. And they shall fall, and not rise again. In Hebrew, there are no waters, and 'propitiation,' which we translate as forgiveness, and in Hebrew is called 'Asamath', signifies idol: which is the beginning of sins. The old story tells, both in Latin and Greek, and of all barbarian nations, nothing is harsher than hunger, which often compels the besieged to feed on human flesh, and to act according to their cruel nature: so that even parents do not spare their young children, and the marital affection tears apart the limbs of the beloved wife who was once loved. If hunger of bodies causes this, what should be said about the hunger of souls? which on the day of the resurrection of the Lord oppressed the people of the Jews, and joined with the most burning hunger, the thirst of those who do not have the bread that descends from heaven, and those waters that flowed from the belly of Jesus. The Law has been taken away from them, and the Prophets have fallen into eternal silence: they move from sea to sea, and from the British Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean, that is, from the West to the South, and from the North to the East, foreigners throughout the whole world, are unable to find the word of God. In what place shall we ask the Jews where they think that day signifies, in which they endure the hunger of hearing the word of God: especially when they read the Scriptures and follow the humility of the letters? To them we suggest that the predicted hunger is spiritual understanding, in which Christ is seen, the passion of the Lord is found and the resurrection is discovered. They go around the world and seek the word of the Lord, and do not find it: because they have denied the Word of the Lord, which was done in the hands of all the prophets, which was in the beginning with the Father, which was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John I). At that time, beautiful virgins and young men, both chosen and educated (for this is what 'Baurim' signifies), became scarce due to thirst. The beautiful virgins

represent the synagogues, and the chosen ones represent the teachers of the people. When they became scarce, they taught that the curses of Deuteronomy were fulfilled among the Jewish people (Deut. XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX). These chosen ones and teachers swore by the idol of Samaria, namely the golden calves, and said: 'May your God, Dan, live in the borders of the land of Judah, where Paneas is now, and at that time the golden calf was worshipped there. And may your way, Bersabee, live, for they rarely traveled there due to its long and difficult journey, both the just and unjust kings of Judah.' And because they have done this, therefore they shall fall down, and shall not rise again, that is, they shall not regain the state which they had before. But the Lord sends famine into the land over those who are earthly-minded: and it is not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord, when because of the sins of the people the teaching fails in the Churches. And from sea to sea, that is, from the salty and most bitter waves to the sea they reach: not encountering rivers, not sweetest and various springs, but again flowing toward bitter things. And from the North to the East, desiring to abandon the North (which is the most harsh wind and is called the right one by the ignorant) and to reach the East, which they will not be able to find, because they do not travel in a straight path, but wander on winding paths, and not holding to the royal road, they are led astray by crooked windings. At that time the souls of virgins would fail, whom the Apostle calls incorrupt: and he desires them to possess eternal chastity, writing to the Corinthians: For I have espoused you to one man, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest as the serpent seduced Eve by his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted, and fall from the simplicity that is in Christ (II Cor. X, 2, 3). And if all virgins were beautiful or good, he would never have said that good virgins would fail; but he placed good virgins in contrast to bad ones, who are holy in body and spirit. There are five foolish virgins who did not prepare oil for their lamps (Matthew 23). But those are good and beautiful virgins who had the light of virtues and entered the bridegroom's chamber. But the virgins will fail because they will not find the word of the Lord. From this we understand that when there is no teaching in the Churches, chastity will perish, purity will die, and all virtues will depart, because they have not eaten the word of the Lord. Whoever eats it will be satisfied, as Solomon says: The righteous person satisfies his soul, but the souls of the wicked will be hungry (Proverbs 13:2). And David, who reached old age, freely sang: I was young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging for bread (Psalm 37:25). How many martyrs perished of hunger in persecutions and lacked the sustenance of these bodies? Therefore, about the bread that comes down from heaven, it is said that whoever eats it will neither hunger nor thirst. With the virgins failing, the young men will also fail, those who had previously conquered the world. And they will fail because they swear by the idol of Samaria, which we always understand to be in the person of heretics, as the same prophet says: Woe to those who despise Zion and rely on the mountain of Samaria (Amos 6:1). For heretics despise the Church of God and rely on the falsehood of their teachings, raising themselves against the knowledge of God, dividing His people, and saying: We have no share in David, no inheritance in the son of Jesse (1 Kings 12:16). If anyone swears by the sin of Samaria and says, 'As the Lord lives, Dan, and as the way of Beersheba lives,' that person will fall and will not rise again. Dan could not find a possession in the last borders of Judah, as it is written in the book of Judges (Judges 18), and it is interpreted as judgement. And Beersheba, due to the variation of accents, is translated into our language as 'well of the oath' or 'well of satisfaction' or 'well of the seventh.' Therefore, heretics at the ends of the holy Scriptures thirst, despising the judgement of God and desiring the way of Beersheba, which

was in the tribe of Judah. And desiring to imitate many sacraments of the Church, they claim to be satisfied and filled. To them, the Apostle Paul reproaches: Already you are satisfied, already you have become rich (1 Corinthians 4:8), and they swear in the name of the Lord, who once fell because they regarded their idols as their god and will not rise again. But those who want to repent and do not say, 'As the Lord lives, Dan, and as the way of Beersheba lives,' will hear through Jeremiah: Can one who falls not rise again? Or one who turns away not return? (Jeremiah 8:4).

9:1

(Chapter 9, Verse 1) I saw the Lord standing upon the altar, and he said: Strike the hinge, and let the thresholds tremble: for greed is at the head of all, and with the sword I will kill their last one. There will be no escape for them: they will flee, and no one who flees will be saved. LXX: I saw the Lord standing upon the altar, and he said: Strike upon the mercy seat, and the vestibules will be shaken: and scatter upon the heads of all, and with the sword I will kill the rest of them. He shall not flee from those who flee; and he shall not be saved from those who are saved. He who, with Ezekiel and John the Baptist, has seen the heavens opened (Ezek. I; Mat. III), and the veil that was placed before the face of Moses (Exod. XXXIV), has been taken away from his eyes, so that what is written may be fulfilled: The commandment of God is a clear light illuminating the eyes (Ps. XVIII, 9); this person will see the Lord standing upon the altar, and commanding the prophet, or, as many believe, the angel who is bound to administer the punishments for sins, to strike the hinges of the temple, or the mercy seat, and cause its lintels or vestibules to tremble. And when, he says, the temple has been dissolved and destroyed because of the wickedness of men, and my wrath has begun from my sanctuary, let everyone recognize that they cannot escape, with greed possessing all things, and that their final end is death, and no defenses can help them escape the judgment of God: and what we read according to the Septuagint, that he dispersed it among the heads of all, their heads are beautifully divided, who by their own choice have separated themselves from him who is the head of all, and have said: We have no king except Caesar (John 19:15), who with impious voice cried out: Crucify, crucify such a one. And: His blood be upon us, and upon our children. All of these things we can refer to the heretics, whose altar is struck, and all initiations and sacraments are profaned, who have greed in their heads, with the partridge crying out through them, and gathering those whom she did not bring forth, and making riches without judgment (Jer. XVII). Therefore, the Lord will also destroy his final remains or relics, so that the begun chapter may be completed, and his end will be foolish. But when the Lord strikes the hinges and wields his sword against them, there will be no one who can escape or deflect the impending sword of the Lord. And at the same time, it should be noted that, while the Lord is standing on the altar, the propitiatory or hinges of the temple are struck first, then the vestibules are shaken, thirdly the heads of all are divided, and fourthly those who remain are killed with the sword. For unless the Lord tramples the arrogance of heretics with his foot and strikes their perverse and wicked doctrine with the spiritual sword, and divides their masters, who are accepted as leaders, among themselves, and strikes them in a good way, the disciples cannot be brought to life, according to what is written: I will kill and give life: I will strike and heal (Deut. XXXII, 39). The teachers are killed and beaten so that the students may live: the heads are divided so that the other members may be healed.

9:2-5

(Vers. 2 seqq.) If they descend to the depths, my hand will bring them up from there. And if they ascend to heaven, I will bring them down from there. And if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, I will search and take them from there. And if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, I will command the serpent to bite them. And if they go into captivity before their enemies, I will command the sword to kill them. I will set my eyes upon them for evil and not for good. And the Lord, the God of hosts, who touches the earth and it withers, and all who dwell in it mourn, and it rises like the Nile, and sinks again, like the river of Egypt. Seventy: If they are buried in Sheol, from there my hand will pluck them up; and if they ascend to heaven, from there I will bring them down. If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I will search them out and take them; and if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, from there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them; and if they go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them; and I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good. And the Lord God Almighty, who touches the earth and shakes it, and all its inhabitants will mourn, and their end will come like a flood, and their downfall like the river of Egypt. He who said before, there will be no escape for them, now cuts off their escape into separate parts, and hyperbolically testifies that even if they do this and that, they will not be able to escape. If they descend to the depths, he says, my hand will bring them out from there: not because anyone is able to be pulled back from the depths before the day of resurrection, but because even those in the depths are under His power. We learn that what was foretold about Dathan and Abiron has come to pass, whom the gaping earth swallowed up while they were still alive (Numbers 16). And if they were to ascend, it is said, even to the heavens, I will bring them down from there; for Enoch and Elijah, taken up with their bodies into heaven (Genesis 5; 2 Kings 4), are governed by the will of God. Consider the different realms: we descend to hell, we ascend to heaven; we are brought forth from hell, we are brought down from heaven. In the former, there is extreme despair; in the latter, there is the greatness of pride. If they should hide in the summit of Carmel, or near the borders of Phoenicia in the northern region, or towards the south due to the vastness of the desert, where Nabal the Carmelite used to live (1 Samuel 25), then, he says, I will search and take them away: and if they attempt to avoid the eyes of God in the depths of the sea (Jonah 1), or as I speak of the prophet, in Tarshish, there I will command the serpent, which here signifies Leviathan or a whale, to come against the enemies through the serpent and the whale. And he will bite them, that is, he will devour them with his jaws. And lest we feel any captivity from the enemies through the things he said above, Scripture opens up what he had previously said in riddles. And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it will kill them, so that they may not think of the end of their evils as servitude; but let the hostile sword also pierce the captured ones: and those who are able to survive and escape death, may not escape the gaze of God, but he shall set his eyes upon them for evil, and not for good, so that he may always visit them and compel them to penance through torments. And the almighty God declares that He will do these things, at whose touch and command the foundations of the earth are shaken or decay, and all its inhabitants are filled with weeping and mourning. He speaks these words to show the magnitude of His divine power, not that He actually desires to do what He threatens; for His powers do not fulfill His will. But if the earth decays or trembles, even insensible nature perceives its Creator; how much more so does man, a fragile creature whose spiritual treasure is enclosed in earthen and corporeal vessels? And just as the river of Egypt flows into the sea and is sucked up, so too the land of Israel, of which it was said above: Whoever touches the land and decays, shall

go into captivity and be devoured by enemies; in a metaphorical sense, what is possessed emerges from what is possessed, as indicated by divine speech. And we have interpreted these things in accordance with the order of the following history, as best we could, although our understanding may have failed in some instances. Furthermore, David explains the entire extent of this place, saying: Lord, you have tested me and you know me (Ps. 139:1). And immediately he adds: Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your face? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn and settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me; your right hand will hold me fast (cf. Psalms 139:7-10). In Deuteronomy, we read something similar: This commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' (cf. Deuteronomy 30:11-12). Nor is it placed beyond the sea, so that you may say: Who will go across the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it, but the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it (Deuteronomy XXX, 11, 12). For when the soul, released from the bodily bonds, has the freedom to fly wherever it wishes or is compelled to go, due to its subtle substance, will it be led to the underworld (of which it is written: Let sinners be turned into hell, all the nations that forget God (Psalm IX, 18)). And, in hell, who will confess to you? (Psalm 6:6) And, your glory descended into hell. (Psalm 48:18) Certainly, he will be lifted up to heavenly things, where spiritual wickedness is in the heavens, and if he desires to claim the knowledge of true circumcision, for this is interpreted as Carmelus, and with contempt for humility, he will dwell in the mountains, and there he will not be able to escape the searching hand of God. But if, in despair of salvation, he attempts to avoid the eyes of the Lord and reaches the furthest boundaries of false waves, even there the Lord will command the twisted and ancient serpent (Revelation 20), who is the enemy and avenger, and he will bite her. Also, she will be punished by the sword of the Lord for her vices and sins, and He will set His eyes upon her for evil, not for good, so that through torture and punishment she may return to the Lord. And when Almighty God touches their land and shakes it, and causes all earthly things to wither, understanding their crimes, they will turn to mourning, and the Lord Himself will ascend and descend twofold. He will ascend over the saints like a river of consummation, that is, of the earth, in order to consume their earthly works. He will descend upon sinners like the river of Egypt, so that they may be cast into the bitterness of torment by the force of the Lord.

9:6

(Verse 6.) He who builds his ascent in heaven and establishes his foundation on earth: he who calls the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the face of the earth: The Lord is his name. LXX: He who builds his ascent in heaven and establishes his promise on earth: he who calls the water of the sea and pours it out upon the face of the earth: The Lord Almighty is his name. The Lord God Almighty, who looks upon or touches the earth and moves it, is the one who daily builds his ascent in heaven and says in the Gospel: My Father is still working, and I am working as well (John 5:17). And not only did God build Eve from Adam's rib as a figure of the Church (Gen. II), but He daily builds believers and members of His body, and lifts them from the earth to heaven, so that He Himself may ascend in them. The Lord ascended into heaven with Enoch (Gen. V), ascended with Elijah (IV Kings II), ascended with Moses, whose burial place could not be found on earth because he had ascended to heaven (Deut. XXXIV). He ascended with Paul, who was a

chosen vessel, and was transformed from a persecutor into an apostle (2 Cor. 12). He was caught up to the heights, so that he ascended to the third heaven, and through the Holy Spirit and the Son, he reached the Father, and heard unspeakable words, the mysteries of the Trinity, which are not lawful for humans to hear. Therefore, he who ascends daily in the holy ones, has established his bundle on the earth, of which it is said in the Gospel: Fear not, little flock, for it has pleased my Father to dwell in you (Luke 12:32). This bundle is bound together by the one religion of the Lord. From this, the religion itself received its name from being bound and united in the bundle of the Lord. Moreover, according to the Seventy, it founded its promise upon the earth so that all the promises that the holy prophets sang with their mouths may not be empty sounds and the mere names of tropology, but be poured out upon the earth. And when they have the foundations of history, then they may receive the summit of spiritual understanding: that truly Christ was born of the Virgin, truly raised Lazarus from the dead, truly healed the woman with a flow of blood at his touch, truly the blind saw upon the coming of the Lord, the lame ran, the contracted hands were extended, the leprosy was cleansed; even though according to tropology the divine word is born every day from the virginal soul, every day those dead to sin and bound by the cords of vices may be ordered to come forth from the tomb of their crimes, every day the works of blood may be restrained, the blind may see in the faith of Christ, the lame may run in the way of the Lord, and the withered hands of greed may be stretched out for almsgiving, and the leprosy of Mary, which contaminates whatever it touches, may receive its former purity (Num. 12). But this Lord also calls the most bitter waters of the sea, and pours them out upon those who have turned their faces to the Lord. He calls them bitter waters so that he may make them sweet and brings forth winds from his treasuries and commands the heavy waters to be suspended in the height with its saltiness, straining and boiling them with ethereal heat, and dispenses them as rain, and sends them down upon the face of the earth, so that dry things may be moistened by rains, and where sin has abounded, grace may superabound.

9:7-8

Are you not like the children of Ethiopia to me, O sons of Israel, says the Lord? Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Cappadocia, and the Syrians from Cyrene? Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth: yet will I not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, says the Lord. LXX: Are you not like the children of Ethiopia to me, O sons of Israel, says the Lord? Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir? Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth. Yet I will not completely destroy the house of Jacob, says the Lord. As for Cyrene, Aquila and the fifth edition have put the Hebrew word itself, Cir (), and the Septuagint the pit, that is, βυθον, Theodotion the wall, Symmachus Cyrene: whom we also followed in this place. I will conclude the understanding of this whole passage that I have proposed, and of all that is contained in this chapter, with a brief discourse, up to the point where it is written: Those who say, 'Evil will not come to us, and the sword will not come upon us,' so that we may know what is said: I am the Lord God Almighty, who cannot be hidden, who touches the earth and it quakes; who builds my ascension in heaven; who calls forth the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the face of the earth; whose name is the Lord, who am the creator of all things: I fashioned all peoples from the same clay and generated them by an equal lot. Finally, I have brought together the Ethiopians, Palestinians, Syrians, and

Jews, who are distant in location and body, under the law of mortality. I also exchange and move my slaves here and there at my own discretion, and transfer them to all provinces. Do not become proud because I led you out of Egypt and did not allow you, as my chosen people, to serve Pharaoh: I have done the same with the Palestinians, whom the Seventy foreigners transported, who are called Caphthorim in Hebrew, in order to transfer them from Cappadocia and settle them in the regions of Palestine. I also transferred the Syrians, that is, the Aramaeans, from Cyrene. From this, those who have become equal in status will be punished by the judgment of my equal justice, and I will overthrow all impious kingdoms without discrimination of persons. But you, O sons of Israel, of whom I said: My firstborn son is Israel (Exod. IV, 22). And: Out of Egypt I called my son (Hosea XII, 1), I will strike with a rod, and I will visit your sins; but I will not destroy you forever, and I will not take away my mercy from you (Ps. LXXXVIII), and like those shaken and sifted in a sieve, I will cleanse and choose, so that whoever is a stone, and strengthened by repentance, will not fall from my sieve; but whoever falls like dust to the ground, let them be struck by the sword, so that they may die, the sinners of my people, not because they have sinned before, but because they have persevered in sins until death. But everyone in Israel, who sees God with their mind and is led out of Egypt, if they desire the vices of Egypt and the delights of the world, not only return to Egypt, but also to Ethiopia, in which, according to Jeremiah (Chap. 13), they cannot change their skin; they are saved by the coming of Christ, and what is written is fulfilled in him: Ethiopia will stretch out her hands to God (Psalm 68:31). And when they worship him, it will be said of them: The Ethiopians will fall before him (Psalm 72:9). Those who have fallen down and carried victims from Ethiopia across the rivers to the Lord, will be able to say: I am dark and beautiful, because the sun has made me pale (Song of Solomon 1:4). For bodies withering in shadows and idleness cannot endure the temptations and heat of the world; but those that are prepared for struggle and contests, having been dried by the sun, overcome the injustices of the world and obtain the blessing of the Holy Spirit, as it says to the just: The sun shall not scorch you by day, nor the moon by night (Psalm 121:6). Therefore, the Ethiopians are turned into the children of God, if they repent, and the children of God are turned into Ethiopians, if they have fallen into the depths of sins. For the Creator God Himself turns the Cappadocians into Palestinians, and those who were engaged in the coldness of faith, and were subjected to the harsh northerly wind, He made to fall, and having set aside their pride, they felt the judgment of the Lord. He also transferred the Syrians, that is, the lofty and sublime ones, who were called Aramaeans, from Cyrene to a weak wall, or that which threatened the most bitter sea, and was near the Syrtes, and was held in a pit next to seventy (others), into a good direction, so that He might make them lofty. For the eyes of the Lord are over all kingdoms of sin, which the devil shows to the Lord (Matthew 4), and about which the Apostle says: Sin does not reign in your mortal body, to obey its desires (Romans 6:12). However, when he visits sinners with his rod and crushes and strikes those who remain in sin, he does not allow those souls who are called the house of Jacob, who supplant sin and overcome in battle, and attack the heel of the bloody brother, to perish forever.

9:9-10

(Verses 9, 10.) Behold, I will give the command, and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations, as grain is shaken in a sieve, and not a pebble will fall to the ground. All the sinners of my people will die by the sword, those who say: 'No disaster will come near or overtake us.' LXX: For behold, I will command and sift the house of Israel among all the nations, as one sifts with a sieve,

and no fragment shall fall to the ground. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, who say: 'Evil shall not come near, nor shall any good come upon us.' God, who measures the waters with the palm of his hand, and the heavens with his span, and closes up the whole earth with his fist (Isaiah 40), he himself, by his greatness, will shake the edges of the earth to and fro like a sieve: so that the chaff and the filth of sinners falling to the ground, may leave behind pure wheat, which will be stored in the barns; or as the Septuagint translated, he will hold a fan in his hand and will cleanse his threshing floor and gather the wheat into his barns, but he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire; concerning which the Lord speaks through Jeremiah: 'What has straw to do with the wheat?' (Jeremiah 23:28). Of this same thing, under the figure of another parable, that fishing-net shows, which is cast into the sea of this world, and draws forth fishes of every kind; and when the bad have been cast away, only the good are kept (Matthew 13). In the same way, the Lord has dispersed the wretched house of Israel throughout the whole world, and has shaken it in a sieve and fanned it with a winnowing fork; and the stones and pebbles not falling to the ground, those who are called sinners on account of the filth and dust shall die by the sword. And they endure this because they do not believe the prophecies of the prophets, nor do they think that the things which the Lord threatens through them will come to pass. And when they promise themselves prosperity, they will suffer evil afterwards, opposite to the saints who fear and do not sin, and therefore do not die by the sword, because they said: Evils will come near us, and punishments will come upon us, which our sins have deserved, about which God speaks more fully in Jeremiah: I will take up and speak against that nation and kingdom, to pluck up and to break down; if that nation turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it (Jer. XVIII, 7, 8). Therefore God is not changed, who is always unchangeable; but we change him by our conversion. He rages, he gets angry, he threatens, and he says that he will inflict punishment: if we repent, he too will repent of his sentence. Again, next to the same Jeremiah (Chapter XVII), he promises prosperity: if we are dissolved in negligence, he will repent of his promise and change it. We can see an example of this in Nineveh and Jerusalem, some of whom were freed from impending punishments, while others lost what had been promised to their fathers.

9:11-13

(Vers. 11 seqq.) In that day I will raise up the fallen tent of David, and rebuild its broken walls, and restore what has collapsed, and rebuild it as it was in ancient times, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name, declares the Lord who is doing these things. LXX: In that day I will raise up the fallen tent of David, and rebuild its broken parts, and raise up what has been buried, and restore it as in the ancient days, that they may seek me, the remnant of humanity, and all the nations over whom my name has been called, declares the Lord who is doing all these things. Where the authority of the apostles prevails, especially that of Peter and James, whom the vessel of election calls the pillars of the Church (Galatians 2), there all suspicion of various explanations is to be removed, and what is expounded by such great men is to be followed. In the book of Acts, a question arose among the apostles as to why Paul and Barnabas had received men from the Gentiles without circumcision and observance of the Sabbath. Peter answered, as he should: and James, approving his opinion, spoke these words: Men, brothers, listen to me: Simon has related how God first visited the Gentiles to take from them a people for his name, and the words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written: After this, I

will return and rebuild the fallen tent of David. I will rebuild its ruins and set it up again, so that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who does these things, known from of old (Acts 15:13 and following). Therefore this tabernacle of David, which had fallen (had fallen, however, among those who say, it will not come near, and no evil will come upon us: those whom the Lord had shaken and tested with His sieve, and whose threshing floor of His majesty He had purged with His winnowing fan, and all sinners He had killed with the sword), now according to the custom of the Scriptures, after tortures, after punishments, promising prosperity and joy, declares that He will raise it up, and in the resurrection of the Lord restore all things, so that what had fallen in the synagogues may rise in the Churches, and believers may possess the remnants of Edom, and all nations, so that whatever remains of the bloody and earthly kingdom may be transformed into heavenly kingdoms, and all peoples who have forgotten the Lord may be converted and return to Him. But if we want to read according to the LXX, those who are left of mankind, and all the nations upon whom my name has been invoked, we should accept as those who have believed from the Jewish people, and as those who have not fallen like a small stone from the sieve, nor have been thrown out with the dust and chaff. For the remnants will be saved at the beginning of faith, and at the end of the world, so that when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, then all Israel will be saved (Romans 11). But the name of the Lord which is invoked above the rest and above all nations, that is what the Savior says: Father, I have revealed your name to men (John 17:6). And so that I do not delay the rule of covenants with a long discourse, and in this prophet, and in the other things whatsoever are preached about the building of Jerusalem (the walls of Jerusalem) and the temple, and the blessedness of all things, the Jews in the last time promise themselves in vain expectation, and they mention things to be fulfilled carnally. But we who do not follow the letter that kills, but the life-giving Spirit, now in the Church we are convinced of fulfillment, and every day it is fulfilled in individuals who, falling through sin, are rebuilt through repentance.

9:14-15

(Verse 14, 15.) Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them, says the Lord your God. LXX: Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them, says the Lord your God Almighty. The raising up of the tent of David, which had fallen, and the rebuilding of what had been destroyed and overturned, is described as the abundance of all things, how those who previously went, went and wept, carrying their seeds, and those who come will come with joy, carrying their bundles; so that the threshing of the bundles may yield a harvest, whether the plowman is reaping and the grape is being gathered, and bring forth color in the time of sowing; or, more truly, that the wine presser may grasp the seed of the grape, and so

all things may succeed one another, that no day may be without wheat, wine, and joy. At that time, grapes will be crushed in full winepresses, and must flowing with the blood of Christ and the martyrs will be poured out. And the one who crushes the grapes in this way will be the seedbed of the Word of God, so that their blood may cry out in the world more than the blood of Abel the just cried out. But whoever has rightfully ascended to the mountains of virtue will sweat with honey, indeed, will drip with the sweetness of the Word of God, of which it is written: 'Taste and see how good the Lord is' (Psalm 33:9), and 'How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth' (Psalm 119:103). And those who are below the mountains, or rather, second from the mountains, which the bridegroom leaps over in the Cantic of Canticles (Song of Songs), and calls hills, they will be planted and will imitate the paradise of God: so that all the fruit of doctrine may hang on them. Then if anyone is held captive by unbelief, and has not yet believed in the name of the Lord, and is from the remnants of his people, the former Israel, he will return to the faith of Christ, so that he may hold in the Gospel what he heard in the Prophets. But the mountains shall drop sweetness, and the hills shall be planted with vineyards: after the conversion of the Lord, they shall build cities which were desolate before, and shall dwell in them: and they shall plant vineyards, and shall drink the wine of them: they shall make gardens, and eat the fruits of them. And I will plant them upon their own land: and I will no more pluck them out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God. (Amos 9:14-15) And in the Psalms it is said: The impetus of the river gladdens the city of God (Ps. XLV, 4). They will also plant a vineyard of Noah (Gen. IX), and they will drink its wine, and they will become intoxicated, and they will hear from the Lord Savior: Drink, my friends, and become intoxicated (Cant. V, 1). But they will drink the wine, which he promised to drink anew with his apostles in the kingdom of the Father (Mark XIV). This is the vineyard of Sorec, whose wine we drink daily in the mysteries. Not content with the happiness of these things, they will make delightful gardens and water them, so that no kinds of virtues are lacking in them, and they will eat their fruits. For whoever plants and waters, he himself also will eat. And when all these things are done by mountains and hills, giving forth sweetness, and by building cities, and by dwelling in them, planting vineyards, and drinking their wine, making gardens, and eating their fruits, then the Lord will plant these planters upon his land, of which it is said: I believe that I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 26:13). And in the Gospel: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matt. 5:4). But after he has planted them and their roots have grown deep, they will no longer be uprooted from the earth he has given them. From this we understand that the Church, even though it is shaken by persecutions, can never be destroyed; it may be tested, but it will not be overcome. And this will happen because the Lord God Almighty, or the Lord God of the Church, has promised to make it so, and his promise is the law of nature.

Commentary on Daniel

St. Jerome, Commentary on Daniel Early Church Fathers - Additional Texts (1958). pp. 15-157 [Translated by Gleason L. Archer] This text was transcribed by Roger Pearse, 2004. All material on this page is in the public domain - copy freely.

Verse numbers have been edited in this repository to conform to the KJV Bible (with the exception of the Prayer of Azariah in Chapter 3, which is kept as it was in Jerome's Bible) Table of Contents

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Prologue Porphyry wrote his twelfth book against the prophecy of Daniel, denying that it was composed by the person to whom it is ascribed in its title, but rather by some individual living in Judaea at the time of the Antiochus who was surnamed Epiphanes. He furthermore alleged that "Daniel" did not foretell the future so much as he related the past, and lastly that whatever he spoke of up till the time of Antiochus contained authentic history, whereas anything he may have conjectured beyond that point was false, inasmuch as he would not have foreknown the future. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, made a most able reply to these allegations in three volumes, that is, the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth. Appollinarius did likewise, in a single large book, namely his twenty-sixth. Prior to these authors Methodius made a partial reply. But inasmuch as it is not our purpose to make answer to the false accusations of an adversary, a task requiring lengthy discussion, but rather to treat of the actual content of the prophet's message for the benefit of us who are Christians, I wish to stress in my preface this fact, that none of the prophets has so clearly spoken concerning Christ as has this prophet Daniel. For not only did he assert that He would come, a prediction common to the other prophets as well, but also he set forth the very time at which He would come. Moreover he went through the various kings in order, stated the actual

number of years involved, and announced beforehand the clearest signs of events to come. And because Porphyry saw that all these things had been fulfilled and could not deny that they had taken place, he overcame this evidence of historical accuracy by taking refuge in this evasion, contending that whatever is foretold concerning Antichrist at the end of the world was actually fulfilled in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, because of certain similarities to things which took place at his time. But this very attack testifies to Daniel's accuracy. For so striking was the reliability of what the prophet foretold, that he could not appear to unbelievers as a predictor of the future, but rather a narrator of things already past. And so wherever occasion arises in the course of explaining this volume, I shall attempt briefly to answer his malicious charge, and to controvert by simple explanation the philosophical skill, or rather the worldly malice, by which he strives to subvert the truth and by specious legerdemain to remove that which is so apparent to our eyes.

I would therefore beseech you, Pammachius, as a foremost lover of learning, and Marcella, as an outstanding exemplar of Roman virtue, men who are bound together by faith and blood, to lend aid to my efforts by your prayers, in order that our Lord and Savior might in His own cause and by His mind make answer through my mouth. For it is He who says to the prophet, "Open thy mouth and I will fill it" (Psalm 81:10). For if He admonishes us, when we have been hailed before judges and tribunals, not to ponder what answer we are to give to them (Luke 12:11-12), how much more is He able to carry on His own war against blaspheming adversaries and through His servants to vanquish them? For this reason a great number of the Psalms also contain that Hebrew expression, *lamanasse*, rendered by the Septuagint as "To the end," but which rather is to be understood as "For victory!" For Aquila construed it as *to nikopoio*, that is, "To Him who grants the victory." Symmachus renders it as *epinikion* which properly signifies "Triumph and the palm of victory." But among other things we should recognize that Porphyry makes this objection to us concerning the Book of Daniel, that it is clearly a forgery not to be considered as belonging to the Hebrew Scriptures but an invention composed in Greek. This he deduces from the fact that in the story of Susanna, where Daniel is speaking to the elders, we find the expressions, "To split from the mastic tree" (*apo tou skhinou skhisai*) and to saw from the evergreen oak (*kai apo tou prinou prisai*), a wordplay appropriate to Greek rather than to Hebrew. But both Eusebius and Apollinarius have answered him after the same tenor, that the stories of Susanna and of Bel and the Dragon are not contained in the Hebrew, but rather they constitute a part of the prophecy of Habakkuk, the son of Jesus of the tribe of Levi. Just as we find in the title of that same story of Bel, according to the Septuagint, "There was a certain priest named Daniel, the son of Abda, an intimate of the King of Babylon." And yet Holy Scripture testifies that Daniel and the three Hebrew children were of the tribe of Judah. For this same reason when I was translating Daniel many years ago, I noted these visions with a critical symbol, showing that they were not included in the Hebrew. And in this connection I am surprised to be told that certain fault-finders complain that I have on my own initiative truncated the book. After all, both Origen, Eusebius and Apollinarius, and other outstanding churchmen and teachers of Greece acknowledge that, as I have said, these visions are not found amongst the Hebrews, and that therefore they are not obliged to answer to Porphyry for these portions which exhibit no authority as Holy Scripture.

I also wish to emphasize to the reader the fact that it was not according to the Septuagint version but according to the version of Theodotion himself that the churches publicly read Daniel. And Theodotion, at any rate, was an unbeliever subsequent to the advent of Christ, although some

assert that he was an Ebionite, which is another variety of Jew. But even Origen in his Vulgate edition (of the Greek Old Testament) placed asterisks around the work of Theodotion, indicating that the material added was missing (in the Septuagint), whereas on the other hand he prefixed obeli (i.e., diacritical marks) to some of the verses, distinguishing thereby whatever was additional material (not contained in the Hebrew). And since all the churches of Christ, whether belonging to the Greek-speaking territory or the Latin, the Syrian or the Egyptian, publicly read this edition with its asterisks and obeli, let the hostile-minded not begrudge my labor, because I wanted our (Latin-speaking) people to have what the Greek-speaking peoples habitually read publicly in the regions of Aquila and Symmachus. And if the Greeks do not for all their wealth of learning despise the scholarly work of Jews, why should poverty-stricken Latins look down upon a man who is a Christian? And if my product seems unsatisfactory, at least my good intentions should be recognized. But now it is time for us to unfold the words of the prophet himself, not following our usual custom of setting everything forth in detail with an accompanying detailed discussion (the procedure followed in our commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets), but rather employing a certain brevity and inserting at intervals an explanation of only those things which are obscure. In this way we hope to avoid tiring the reader with an innumerable abundance of books. And yet to understand the final portions of Daniel a detailed investigation of Greek history is necessary, that is to say, such authorities as Sutorius, Callinicus, Diodorus, Hieronymus, Polybius, Posidonius, Claudius, Theon, and Andronycus surnamed Alipius, historians whom Porphyry claims to have followed, Josephus also and those whom he cites, and especially our own historian, Livy, and Pompeius Trogus, and Justinus. All these men narrate the history involved in Daniel's final vision, carrying it beyond the time of Alexander to the days of Caesar Augustus in their description of the Syrian and Egyptian wars, i.e., those of Seleucus, Antiochus, and the Ptolemies. And if we are compelled from time to time to make mention of profane literature and speak of matters therein contained which we have formerly failed to mention, it is not by personal preference but by stark necessity, so to speak, in order to prove that those things which were foretold by the holy prophets many centuries before are actually contained in the written records of both the Greeks and Romans and of other peoples as well.

CHAPTER ONE

Verse 1. "In the third year of the reign of Joacim (Jehoiakim) king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it." Jehoiakim, son of the Josiah in whose thirteenth regnal year Jeremiah began to prophesy, and under whom the woman Hulda prophesied, was the same man as was called by the other name of Eliakim, and reigned over the tribes of Judah and Jerusalem eleven years. His son Jehoiachin surnamed Jeconiah, followed him in the kingship, and on the tenth day of the third month of his reign he was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar's generals and brought to Babylon. In his place his paternal uncle Zedekiah, a son of Josiah, was appointed king, and in his eleventh year Jerusalem was captured and destroyed. Let no one therefore imagine that the Jehoiakim in the beginning of Daniel is the same person as the one who is spelled Jehoiachin in the commencement of Ezekiel. For the latter has "-chin" as its final syllable, whereas the former has "-kim." And it is for this reason that in the Gospel according to Matthew there seems to be a generation missing, because the second group of fourteen, extending to the time of Jehoiakim, ends with a son of Josiah, and the third group begins with Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim. Being ignorant of this factor, Porphyry formulated a slander against

the Church which only revealed his own ignorance, as he tried to prove the evangelist Matthew guilty of error.

Verse 2. "And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand." The fact that Jehoiachim is recorded to have been given over shows that it was not a victory for the might of his enemies but rather it was of the will of the Lord. "...and some of the vessels of the house of God, and he brought them to the land of Shinar to the house of his god, and he conveyed them into the treasure house of his god" (Gen. 11). The land of Shinar is a region of Babylon in which the plain of Dura was located, and also the tower which those who had migrated from the East attempted to build up to heaven. From this circumstance and from the confusion of tongues the region received the name Babylon, which, translated into our language, means "confusion." At the same time it ought to be noted, by way of spiritual interpretation, that the king of Babylon was not able to transport all of the vessels of God, and place them in the idol-house which he had built himself, but only a part of the vessels of God's house. By these vessels we are to understand the dogmas of truth. For if you go through all of the works of the philosophers, you will necessarily find in them some portion of the vessels of God. For example, you will find in Plato that God is the fashioner of the universe, in Zeno the chief of the Stoics, that there are inhabitants in the infernal regions and that souls are immortal, and that honor is the one (true) good. But because the philosophers combine truth with error and corrupt the good of nature with many evils, for that reason they are recorded to have captured only a portion of the vessels of God's house, and not all of them in their completeness and perfection.

Verse 3. "And the king said to Ashpenaz the overseer of his eunuchs, that he should out of the number of the children of Israel and, of the royal seed and (the seed of) the rulers bring in some young lads who were free from all blemish." Instead of Ashpenaz ("Asphanez") I found Abriesdri written in the Vulgate edition. For the word phorlhommin which Theodotion uses, the Septuagint and Aquila translated "the chosen ones," whereas Symmachus rendered "Parthians," understanding it as the name of a nation instead of a common noun. This is in disagreement with the Hebrew edition as it is accurately read; I have translated it as "rulers," especially because it is preceded by the words "of the seed royal." From this passage the Hebrews think that Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were eunuchs, thus fulfilling that prophecy which is spoken by Isaiah regarding Hezekiah: "And they shall take of thy seed and make eunuchs of them in the house of the king of Babylon" (Isaiah 39:7). If however they were of the seed royal, there is no doubt but what they were of the line of David. But perhaps the following words are opposed to this interpretation: "...lads, or youths, who were free from all blemish, in order that he might teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans." Philo supposes that Chaldee is the same thing as the Hebrew language, because Abraham came from the Chaldeans. But if we accept this we must ask how the Hebrew lads could now be bidden to be taught a language which they already knew; unless, perchance, we should say, as some believe, that Abraham was acquainted with two languages.

Verse 7. "And the overseer of the eunuchs imposed names upon them, calling Daniel Belteshazzar (Balthasar), and Hananiah Shadrach, and Mishael Meshach, and Azariah Abednego." It was not only the overseer or master of the eunuchs (as others have rendered it, the "chief-eunuch") who changed the names of saints, but also Pharaoh called Joseph in Egypt Somtonphanec (Genesis 41:45), for neither of them wished them to have Jewish names in the

land of captivity. Wherefore the prophet says in the Psalm: "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Psalm 137:4). Furthermore the Lord Himself changes names benignly, and on the basis of events imposes names of special significance, so as to call Abram Abraham (Genesis 17:5), and Sarai Sarah (Genesis 17:15). Also in the Gospel, the former Simon received the name of Peter (Mark 3:16), and the sons of Zebedee are called "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17) - which is not boanerges, as most people suppose, but is more correctly read benereem.

Verse 8. "Daniel, however, purposed in his heart that he would not be defiled by food from the king's table, nor by the wine which he drank, and he asked the chief of the eunuchs that he might not be polluted." He who would not eat or drink of the king's food or wine lest he be denied (especially if he should be aware that the wisdom and teaching of the Babylonians is mistaken), would never consent to utter what was wrong. On the contrary they speak it forth, not that they may follow it themselves, but in order to pass judgment upon it and refute it. Just as anyone would expose himself to ridicule if he being untrained in mathematics should desire to write in confutation of mathematicians, or, being ignorant of the teachings of philosophers should desire to write in opposition to philosophers. Hence they study the teaching of the Chaldeans with the same intention as Moses studied the wisdom of the Egyptians.

Verse 9. "God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the prince of eunuchs..." He who was taken into captivity on account of the sins of his forebears received an immediate recompense for the magnitude of his own virtues. For he had purposed in his heart that he would not be denied by food from the king's table, and preferred humble fare to royal delicacies; therefore by the bounteous bestowal of the Lord he received favor and compassion in the sight of the prince of the eunuchs. By this we may understand that if ever under pressing circumstances holy men are loved by unbelievers, it is a matter of the mercy of God, not of the goodness of perverted men.

Verse 12. "I beg thee, try us thy servants for ten days, and let pulse be given us to eat and water to drink." His faith was so incredibly great that he not only promised he would be in good flesh by eating the humbler food, but he even set a time-limit. Therefore it was not a matter of temerity but of faith, for the sake of which he despised the sumptuous fare of the king.

Verse 17. "But God gave these lads knowledge and learning in every book and branch of wisdom, and He gave to Daniel besides an understanding of all visions and dreams." Note that God is said to have given the holy lads knowledge and learning in secular literature, in every book and branch of wisdom. Symmachus rendered this by "grammatical art," implying that they understood everything they read, and by the Spirit of God could make a judgment concerning the lore of the Chaldeans. But Daniel had an outstanding gift over and above the three lads, in that he could astutely discern the significance of visions and dreams in which things to come are shown forth by means of certain symbols and mysteries. Therefore that which others saw only in a shadowy appearance he could perceive clearly with the eyes of his understanding.

Verse 18. "Therefore when the days had been completed at the end of which the king had bidden them to be presented to him, the chief of the eunuchs presented them in the presence of Nebuchadnezzar." By the "completed days" understand the period of three years which the king had appointed, so that after they had been nourished and trained for three years, they should then stand in the presence of the king.

Verse 20. "And every word of wisdom and understanding the king inquired of them, he found it in them ten times as great as all the soothsayers and magicians put together who were to be found in his entire realm." For "soothsayers" and "magicians" the Vulgate edition translated "sophists" and "philosophers" - terms to be understood not in the sense of the philosophy and sophistic erudition which Greek learning holds forth, but rather in the sense of the lore of a barbarian people, which the Chaldeans pursue as philosophy even to this day.

Verse 21. "Daniel therefore continued unto the first year of Cyrus the king." In the later discussion we shall explain how it was that Daniel who is here described as having continued till the first year of king Cyrus afterwards held office in the third year of that same Cyrus and is even recorded to have lived in the first year of Darius.

CHAPTER TWO

Verse 1. "In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar saw a dream and his spirit was terrified, and his dream fled from him." If the three lads had entered before him at the end of three years, as he himself had commanded, how is it that he is now said to have seen the dream in the second year of his reign? The Hebrews solve the difficulty in this way, that the second year refers here to his reign over all the barbarian nations, not only Judah and the Chaldeans, but also the Assyrians and Egyptians, and the Moabites and the rest of the nations which by the permission of God he had conquered. For this reason Josephus also writes in the tenth book of the Antiquities: After the second year from the devastation of Egypt Nebuchadnezzar beheld a marvelous dream, and "his spirit was terrified and his dream fled from him." The impious king beheld a dream concerning things to come, in order that he might give glory to God after the holy man had interpreted what he had seen, and that great consolation might be afforded the captive (Jews) and those who still served God in their captive state. We read this same thing in the case of Pharaoh, not because Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar deserved to behold visions, but in order that Joseph and Daniel might appear as deserving of preference over all other men because of their gift of interpretation.

Verse 2. "Wherefore the king commanded that the soothsayers, the magi, the charmers, and the Chaldeans show the king his dream. And when they came, they stood in the presence of the king." Those whom we have translated as "soothsayers" (harioli) others have rendered as epaoidoi, that is, "enchanters." Well then, it seems to me that enchanters are people who perform a thing by means of words; magi are those who pursue individual lines of philosophic enquiry; charmers are those who employ blood and animal sacrifices and often have contact with corpses. Furthermore the term "astrologers" among the Chaldeans signifies, I believe, what the common people call mathematicians. But common usage and ordinary conversation understands the term magi as wicked enchanters. Yet they were regarded differently among their own nation, inasmuch as they were the philosophers of the Chaldeans, and even the kings and princes of this same nation do all they can to acquire a knowledge of this science. Wherefore also it was they who first at the nativity of our Lord and Savior learned of his birth, and who came to holy Bethlehem and adored the child, under the guidance of the star which shone above them (Matthew 2:1-12).

Verse 3. "And the king said to them, 'I have seen a dream, and from the confusion of my mind I do not know what I have seen.'" There remained in the king's heart only a shadow, so to speak, or a mere echo or trace of the dream, with the result that if others should retell it to him, he would be

able to recall what he had seen, and they would certainly not be deceiving him with lies.

Verse 4. "The Chaldeans replied to the king in Syriac." Up to this point what we have read has been recounted in Hebrew. From this point on until the vision of the third year of King Balthasar which Daniel saw in Susa, the account is written in Hebrew characters, to be sure, but in the Chaldee language, which he here calls Syriac.

Verse 5. "If you do not show me the vision and its interpretation, ye shall perish and your homes shall be confiscated..." He threatened punishment and offered rewards, in order that if they should be able to tell him the dream, he might therefore believe also that which was uncertain, namely the meaning of the dream. But if they should be unable to tell the king what he in his mental confusion could not recall, they would also lose claim to trustworthiness in the interpretation they might give. At last there follows the statement:

Verses 9, 10. "Therefore tell me the dream, that I may be certain that ye are giving me its true interpretation. The Chaldeans therefore made this reply in the king's presence: 'There is no man on earth who would be able to fulfil what thou hast spoken, O king!'" The magi confess, along with the soothsayers - and all secular learning concurs - that foreknowledge of the future lies not in man's province but in God's. By this test it is proved that the prophets who proclaimed things to come spoke by the Spirit of God.

Verses 12, 13. "And when he had heard this, the king in a furious rage gave orders that all the wise men of Babylon should be slain. And when the decree went forth, the wise men were being slaughtered..." The Hebrews raise the question of why Daniel and the three lads did not enter before the king along with the other wise men, and why they were ordered to be slain with the rest when the decree was issued. They have explained the difficulty in this way, by saying that at that time, when the king was promising rewards and gifts and great honor, they did not care to go before him, lest they should appear to be shamelessly grasping after the wealth and honor of the Chaldeans. Or else it was undoubtedly true that the Chaldeans themselves, being envious of the Jews' reputation and learning, entered alone before the king, as if to obtain the rewards by themselves. Afterwards they were perfectly willing to have those whom they had denied any hope of glory to share in a common peril.

Verse 15. "And he inquired of him who had received authority from the king as to why so cruel a decree had gone forth from the presence of the king." Knowing that Daniel and the three youths possessed a knowledge and intelligence tenfold as great as that of all the soothsayers of Chaldea put together, the Chaldeans concealed from them the king's inquiry, lest they should receive preference over them in the matter of interpreting the dream. On this account Daniel inquired concerning the cruelty of the decree, being ignorant of the cause of his own peril.

Verses 16, 17. "Therefore when Arioch had explained the matter to Daniel, Daniel entered in and asked the king to grant him some time for the disclosure of the solution to the king. And he entered his home and disclosed the affair to his comrades, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah..." Daniel requested time, not that he might investigate secret things by the clever application of his intellect, but that he might beseech the Lord of Secrets. And for that reason he engaged Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah to join with him in supplication, to avoid the appearance of presuming upon his own merit alone, and to the end that those involved in a common danger might engage in

common prayer.

Verse 19. "And Daniel blessed the God of heaven, and spoke, saying..." In contrast to those who occupy themselves with this world and delude the earthly minded with demonic arts and illusions, Daniel blessed the God of heaven. For the gods who did not create heaven and earth will pass away.

Verse 21. "And it is He who changes times and seasons, who transfers kingdoms and establishes kingdoms." Let us not marvel, therefore, whenever we see kings and empires succeed one another, for it is by the will of God that they are governed, altered, and terminated. And the cases of individuals are well known to Him who founded all things. He often permits wicked kings to arise in order that they may in their wickedness punish the wicked. At the same time by indirect suggestion and general discussion he prepares the reader for the fact that the dream Nebuchadnezzar saw was concerned with the change and succession of empires. "He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who acquire learning." This accords with the scripture: "The wise man will hear and increase his wisdom" (Proverbs 1:5). "For he who has, to him it shall be given" (Matthew 25:29). A soul which cherishes an ardent love of wisdom is freely infilled by the Spirit of God. But wisdom will never penetrate a perverse soul (Wisdom 3:1-13).

Verse 22. "It is He who reveals deep and hidden things, and He knows what is placed in the darkness, and with Him is the light." A man to whom God makes profound revelations and who can say, "O the depth of the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of God!" (Romans 11:33), he it is who by the indwelling Spirit probes even into the deep things of God, and digs the deepest of wells in the depths of his soul. He is a man who has stirred up the whole earth, which is wont to conceal the deep waters, and he observes the command of God, saying: "Drink water from thy vessels and from the spring of thy wells" (Proverbs 5:15). As for the words which follow, "He knows what is placed in the darkness, and with Him is the light," the darkness signifies ignorance, and the light signifies knowledge and learning. Therefore as wrong cannot hide God away, so right encompasses and surrounds Him. Or else we should interpret the words to mean all the dark mysteries and deep things (concerning God), according to what we read in Proverbs: "He understands also the parable and the dark saying." (Proverbs 1:6, LXX) This in turn is equivalent to what we read in the Psalms: "Dark waters in the clouds of the sky" (Psalm 18:11). For one who ascends to the heights and forsakes the things of earth, and like the birds themselves seeks after the most rarified atmosphere and everything ethereal, he becomes like a cloud to which the truth of God penetrates and which habitually showers rain upon the saints. Replete with a plenitude of knowledge, he contains in his breast many dark waters enveloped with deep darkness, a darkness which only Moses can penetrate and speak with God face to face (Exodus 33:11), of Whom the Scripture says: "He hath made darkness His hiding-place" (Psalm 18:11).

Verse 23. "I confess Thee, O god of my fathers, and I praise Thee because Thou hast granted me wisdom and strength." Lest it should seem to be an achievement of his own deserving, Daniel assigns it to the righteousness of his forefathers and to the faithfulness of God, Who takes pity upon their posterity even in exile.

"And now Thou hast shown me that for which we petitioned Thee. ..." That which the four of them had asked for is disclosed to the one, for the twofold purpose that he might escape any temptation to pride, on the ground of having obtained the request by himself, and also that he might render

thanksgiving because he alone heard the secret of the dream.

Verse 24. "Destroy not the wise men of Babylon. Take me in before the king and I will set forth the explanation to the king. ..." He follows the example of the clemency of God, who intercedes in behalf of his persecutors, and is unwilling that those men should perish on whose account he himself had been threatened with death.

Verse 25. "I have found a man who belongs to the children of the captivity of Judah and who will set forth the explanation to the king." He credits his own diligence with what God's grace has bestowed, and he claims that he himself has done the finding, when actually Daniel had applied to him of his own volition that he might be presented to the king. This instance manifests the habitual reaction of messengers, for when they have good news to report, they wish it to appear their own doing. But the man who undertakes the explanation of the dream is certainly going to relate the dream beforehand. And note that Daniel is said to be of the children of Judah, rather than being a priest as the latter part of the story of Bel relates.

Verse 26. "Dost thou truly believe that thou canst show me the dream I have seen...." In framing his inquiry he adheres to logical sequence, so that he first asks for the dream, of which the magi had replied they were ignorant, and afterwards he asks for the interpretation of the dream. The implication is that after he has heard the dream, then he would believe also in the correctness of what was susceptible of varying interpretations.

Verse 27. "As for the secret for which the king is asking, neither the wise men nor the magi nor the soothsayers nor the diviners are able to declare it to the king." In place of diviners (*haruspices*), as we have rendered it, the Hebrew text has *Gazareni*, which only Symmachus has rendered as *sacrificers*, a class of people whom the Greeks usually call liver-diviners (*epatoskopoi*), and who inspect the inwards in order to make predictions from them concerning the future. By terming a mystery the category of a revealed dream, Daniel shows that whatever is hidden and unknown by men can still be called a "mystery." Moreover he obviates any evil suspicion on the king's part, lest he should imagine that human cleverness can discover something which is reserved to the knowledge of God alone.

Verse 28. "But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries." Therefore it is only in vain that thou inquirest (other MSS have: "that he inquire") of men as to something which is known only to God in heaven. Also, by indirectly drawing Nebuchadnezzar away from the worship of many gods, Daniel directs him to the knowledge of the one (true) God.

"Who hath shown thee, King Nebuchadnezzar, what is going to take place (the Vulg. reads: "the things which are going to take place") in the last times." Avoiding the blemish of adulation but cleaving to the truth, he courteously suggests that it is to the king, for it was to him that God had revealed secrets concerning what was to occur in the last times. Now either these "last days" are to be reckoned from the time when the dream was revealed to Daniel until the end of the world, or else at least this inference is to be drawn, that the over-all interpretation of the dream applies to that final end when the image and statue beheld is to be ground to powder.

"Thy dream and the visions of thy head upon thy bed were as follows." He does not say, "The visions of thine eyes," lest we should think it was something physical, but rather: "of thy head." "For the eyes of a wise man are in his head" (Ecclesiastes 2:14), that is to say in the princely

organ of the heart, just as we read in the Gospel: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they are ones who shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). Again: "What are ye meditating in your hearts?" (Matthew 9:4). To be sure, other authorities in treating of this chapter, conjecture that the authoritative part of the soul (to hegemonikon) lies not in the heart but, as Plato says, in the brain.

Verse 29. "Thou, O king, didst begin to meditate upon thy bed as to what should come to pass hereafter." Instead of the true reading the Septuagint alone inserts the translation "in the last days" after the "hereafter." But if it be read thus, we must inquire quite carefully as to where "last days" have been written; and we would refute those who think the world will never be destroyed. For never would any days be called "the last days" if the world were everlasting. And as for the statement, "Thou, O king, didst begin to meditate," this would indicate the motives behind the dream; for it was for this reason that God revealed to him the secrets of the future, because the king himself wished to know what was going to happen. Also, in order that Nebuchadnezzar might marvel at the gracious gift of divine inspiration, he sets forth not only what the king had beheld in the dream, but also what he had thought to himself (beforehand).

"...and He who reveals secrets has shown thee what is to come to pass." The statement which we read in the Gospel, "Who maketh His sun to rise upon the wicked and the good" (Matthew 5:45), we realize to have been fulfilled in the case of Nebuchadnezzar also. For so great was God's mercy that He even revealed to Nebuchadnezzar secrets as to His own mode of government whereby he rules the world. Let us ask those who assert that men's characters belong to one extreme or the other, which character do they understand Nebuchadnezzar to have possessed, the good or the evil? If the good, why is he called an impious man? If the evil (which was certainly the case), why did God show forth His holy secrets to one who was evil and earthly, that is to say, earthen?

Verse 30. "Moreover this holy secret has not been revealed to me in virtue of any wisdom which inheres in me more than in all living men, but rather that the interpretation might be manifested to the king, and that thou mayest know the thoughts of thine own mind." The king had imagined that cleverness of the human intellect could embrace a knowledge of the future, and for that reason he had ordered the wise men of Babylon to be slain. Daniel therefore makes excuse for those who were unable to speak, and himself avoids the envy of others, lest any should imagine that he had said any of the things he was going to say by virtue of his personal wisdom. But the cause of the prophetic revelation was the earnest desire of the king, who wished to know the future. Consequently he does honor to the king, because he states that it was for the sake of the king's knowledge that the secrets have been revealed by God. And this fact should be pondered, that dreams in which any coming events are signified and in which truth is shown forth, as it were, through a cloud, are not manifest to the conjectures or dominion of the human mind but to the knowledge of God alone.

Verse 31. "Thou sawest, O king, and behold there was, as it were, a large statue." Instead of "statue," that is a sculptured effigy, the only rendering used by Symmachus, others have translated it as "image," intending by this term to indicate a resemblance to future events. Let us go through the prophetic interpretation, and as we translate Daniel's words, let us explain at some length the matters which he briefly states.

Verse 38. "Now thou art the head of gold." "The head of gold," he says "is thou, O king." By this statement it is clear that the first empire, the Babylonian, is compared to the most precious metal, gold.

Verse 39. "And after thee there shall arise another empire inferior to thee, made of silver." (The Vulgate LXX does not include "made of silver.") That is to say, the empire of the Medes and Persians, which bears a resemblance to silver, being inferior to the preceding empire, and superior to that which is to follow.

"And a third empire of bronze (the Vulgate LXX has "made of copper"), which shall rule over the entire earth." This signifies the Alexandrian empire, and that of the Macedonians, and of Alexander's successors. Now this is properly termed brazen, for among all the metals bronze possesses an outstanding resonance and a clear ring, and the blast of a brazen trumpet is heard far and wide, so that it signifies not only the fame and power of the empire but also the eloquence of the Greek language.

Verse 40. "And there shall be a fourth empire like unto iron. Just as iron breaks to pieces and overcomes all else, so it shall break to pieces and shatter all these preceding empires . . ." Now the fourth empire, which clearly refers to the Romans, is the iron empire which breaks in pieces and overcomes all others. But its feet and toes are partly of iron and partly of earthenware, a fact most clearly demonstrated at the present time. For just as there was at the first nothing stronger or hardier than the Roman realm, so also in these last days there is nothing more feeble, since we require the assistance of barbarian tribes both in our civil wars and against foreign nations. However, at the final period of all these empires of gold and silver and bronze and iron, a rock (namely, the Lord and Savior) was cut off without hands, that is, without copulation or human seed and by birth from a virgin's womb; and after all the empires had been crushed, He became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. This last the Jews and the impious Porphyry apply to the people of Israel, who they insist will be the strongest power at the end of the ages, and will crush all realms and will rule forever.

Verse 45. "The great God has shown to the king the events which shall hereafter come to pass, and the dream is true and its interpretation is reliable." Daniel again asserts that the revelation of the dream is not a matter of personal merit, but has been granted for the purpose of making the interpretation manifest to the king and of teaching the king that God alone is to be worshipped.

Verse 47. "Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and worshipped Daniel, and ordered sacrifices and incense to be offered up to him. Therefore the king spoke and said to Daniel." Porphyry falsely impugns this passage on the ground that a very proud king would never worship a mere captive, as if, forsooth, the Lycaonians had not been willing to offer blood sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas on account of the mighty miracles they had wrought (Acts 14:8-18). And so there is no need to impute to the Scripture the error of the Gentiles who deem everything above themselves to be gods, for the Scripture simply is narrating everything as it actually happened. However we can make this further assertion, that the king himself set forth the reasons for his worship and offering of blood-sacrifices when he said to Daniel:

"Truly thy God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since thou hast been able to disclose this holy secret." And so it was not so much that he was worshipping

Daniel as that he was through Daniel worshipping the God who had revealed the holy secrets . This is the same thing that we read Alexander the Great, King of the Macedonians, did in the high priesthood of Joaida . Or, if this explanation seem unsatisfactory, we shall have to say that Nebuchadnezzar, overwhelmed by the amazing greatness of the miracles, did not realize what he was doing, but coming to know the true God and Lord of kings he both worshipped His servant and offered him incense.

Verse 48. "Then the king elevated Daniel to a high position, and gave him many great gifts and set him up as governor over all the provinces of Babylon..." In this matter also the slanderous critic of the Church has ventured to castigate the prophet because he did not reject the gifts and because he willingly accepted honor of the Babylonians. He fails to consider the fact that it was for this very purpose that the king had beheld the dream and that the secrets of its interpretation were revealed by a mere lad, that Daniel might increase in importance and that in the place of captivity he might become ruler over all the Chaldeans, to the end that the omnipotence of God might be made known. We read that this same thing happened in the case of Joseph at the court of Pharaoh and in Egypt (Genesis 41:38-43), and also in the case of Mordecai at the court of Ahasuerus (Esther 8:1-2). The purpose was that the Jews, as captives and sojourners in each of these nations, might receive encouragement as they beheld men of their own nation constituted as governors over the Egyptians or the Chaldeans, as the case might be.

Verse 49. "Moreover Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the public works of the province of Babylon. But Daniel himself was in the king's gate." Daniel does not forget those men with whom he had made intercession to the Lord, and who had shared his peril with him. And so he makes them judges over the province, while he himself does not leave (a variant reading is: "did not leave") the king's side.

CHAPTER THREE

Verse 1. "Nebuchadnezzar the king made a golden statue seventy cubits in height and six cubits in breadth." How soon he forgot the truth, when he had just been worshipping a servant of God as if he had been God Himself, but now commanded a statue to be made for himself in order that he personally might be worshipped in the statue! Now if this statue was of gold, and was of incalculable weight, it was intended to arouse amazement in the beholders and to be worshipped as God even though a mere inanimate object, whilst everyone would be consecrating his own avarice to it. On the other hand an opportunity of salvation was afforded to the barbarian nations through the opportune presence of the captive Jews (Col. iii), with the result that after they had first come to know the power of the one true God through Daniel's revelation of the dream, they might then learn from the brave example of the three youths to despise death, and to eschew the worship of idols.

"And he set it up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon." Instead of "Dura" Theodotion has "Deira," and Symmachus has "Durau," whereas the Septuagint renders it as the common noun peribolon, a word which we might render as "game-preserve" or "enclosure."

Verse 2. "Nebuchadnezzar sent therefore to the satraps, magistrates and judges, the dukes and potentates, and the prefects and all the princes of the various districts that they should gather themselves together." It is the higher ranks which stand in the greater peril, and those who occupy

the loftier position are the more sudden in their fall. The princes are assembled to worship the statue in order that through their princes the nations also might be attracted into error, For those who possess riches and power are all the more easily overthrown because of their apprehension of being bereft of them. But after the magistrates are led astray, the subject populace perish through the evil example of their superiors.

Verses 4, 5. "And a herald proclaimed with mighty voice: 'To us the order is given, both peoples and tribes and languages, at what hour ye hear the sound of the trumpet...'" Not that the entire population of all the nations could have gathered on the plain of Dura and adored the golden statue, but rather, in the person of their leaders, all the tribes and peoples were supposed to have performed the act of worship. Now as I mentally run through all the Holy Scripture, I nowhere find (unless my memory fails me) a passage stating that any of the saints worshipped God Himself by falling prostrate; but only someone worshipping idols or demons or forbidden objects is said to have worshipped by falling prostrate. So also in this present instance that kind of worship is performed not once but several times as well. Moreover in the Gospel the devil says to the Lord, "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou fallest down and worshipping me" (Matthew 4:9). But this comment should also be made, that all heretics who devise a false doctrine with the brilliance of worldly eloquence, fashion thereby a golden statue, and to the best of their ability constrain men by their persuasiveness to fall down and adore the idol of deceit.

Verse 7. "After these things the people, therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the trumpet and pipe..." We are to take this statement in the same sense as above, so that we understand that all the peoples were represented by their leaders. For of course it was impossible for all the nations to attend at one time.

Verse 8. "And straightway at that time there came certain Chaldeans and accused the Jews..." They were envious of these Jews because they had been in charge of the king's business in Babylon, and also they were offended by their foreign religion and aversion towards idols. They therefore find a pretext for accusing them to the king. The final consequence ensues.

Verse 12. "Now then, there are certain Jews whom thou hast appointed over the affairs of the district of Babylon, namely Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who have despised thy decree" (the Vulgate reads: "those men of thine have despised the decree, O king"). To a certain extent their statement amounts to this: "Those captives and slaves whom thou hast preferred before us and hast made to be governors have lifted themselves up in pride and despise thine orders, not serving thy gods, and not worshipping the golden statue thou hast set up." The assertion we made at the commencement of the commentary on the vision is more abundantly proved in this passage, namely that the gods of Nebuchadnezzar were not to be identified with the golden statue which he had ordered to be erected for the worship of himself, for in what follows the king himself says:

Verse 14. "Do ye not serve my gods, and do you not worship the golden statue which I have set up?..." Other authorities assert that it is the custom of Holy Scripture to speak of the one and same idol in the plural, just like the verse in Exodus concerning the calf: "These are thy gods, O Israel, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 32:4). Also in the Book of Kings, where Jeroboam is establishing the golden calf in Bethel, he is said to have fashioned idols (1 Kings 12:26-28). On the other hand a plurality of demons are addressed in the singular number, as in Isaiah: "He bows himself down and worships it, and as he makes his vow he says, 'Thou art my

God!" (Isaiah 44:17).

Verse 15. "Prostrate yourselves and worship the statue I have made." Although he had up to this point given the youths his orders in angry fashion, yet he gives them room for a change of heart, so that their previous guilt might be pardoned if only they should fall down and worship. But if they should not deign to offer worship, the punishment of the fiery furnace lay at hand.

"And what God is there who shall rescue you from my hand?..." Why naturally, that same God whose servant thou didst just recently worship and Whom thou didst assert to be truly God of gods and Lord of kings.

Verse 16. "King Nebuchadnezzar, we ought not to render thee answer concerning this matter." In the Hebrew original there is no vocative "King" as there is in the Septuagint, lest they should seem to address the ungodly man with servile flattery or to term him a king who was trying to force them to wickedness. But if it be contended that the reading, "O king!" should be included, then we may say that the youths were not impudently challenging the king to shed their blood but rendering him due honor so as to avoid injury to the true religion of God. But as for their statement. "We ought not to render thee answer concerning this matter," the meaning is: "Thou hast no need to hear words from men whose bravery and firmness thou wilt presently test by actual deeds."

Verse 17. "For behold, our God whom we serve is able to rescue us from the furnace of burning fire and to free us from thy hands, O king!" Where he had imagined he was frightening mere youths, he perceives in them a nature of manly courage. Nor do they speak of deliverance as delayed to the distant future, but rather they promise themselves immediate succor, asserting, "For behold, our God whom we serve is the One who is able to free us both from the fearsome flames thou threatenest and from thy hands."

Verse 18. "But if He does not will to do so" - phrasing which admirably avoids the idea, "If He is not able," which would be inconsistent with what they had just asserted, "He is able to deliver us" - but rather they say, "If He does not will to do so." Thereby they indicate that it will not be a matter of God's inability but rather of His sovereign will if they do perish.

"Be it known to thee, O king, that we do not serve thy gods and do not worship the golden statue which thou hast set up." Whether we wish to read "statue" as Symmachus does, or "golden image" as the other authorities have rendered it, those who reverence God are not to worship it. Therefore let judges and princes who worship the statues of emperors or idols realize that they are doing precisely the thing which the three youths refused to do and thereby pleased God. And we should observe the proper significance of the issue involved: they assert that worshipping the mere image is equivalent to serving the false gods themselves, neither of which things is befitting to the servants of God.

Verse 19. "Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage, and the aspect of his countenance was wholly altered." In certain Psalms the titles contain the notation; "On behalf of those who are to be wholly altered." And so the expression "wholly altered" is ambiguous, comprising both the idea of change for the worse or change for the better. Now of course the alteration of Nebuchadnezzar's visage cannot be reconciled with a favorable sense. And after all there are some authorities who refer even the Psalm-titles to a change for the worse, on the ground that those who by nature have known God have been changed by the vexation and fury of their mind to a position of hostility

towards Christ and His saints.

Verse 20. "And he gave orders that the furnace be fired to sevenfold intensity beyond its usual temperature, and he commanded the strongest men in his army to bind the legs of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and cast them into the furnace of flaming fire." Just as if the usual fire without multiplied intensity could not have consumed the youths' bodies! But a fury and rage which borders on madness can observe no bounds. Also he wished by the threat of intensified punishment to terrify those who seemed prepared for death.

Verse 21. "And straightway those men, bound up in their trousers and turbans and footgear and garments, were cast into the midst of the furnace of flaming fire..." Instead of sarbal, "trousers" interpreted by Symmachus as anaxy-rides ("trousers"), Aquila and Theodotion read simply saraballa rather than the corrupt reading sarabara. Now the shanks and shin-bones are called saraballa in the language of the Chaldeans, and by extension of the same word it is applied to those articles of clothing which cover the shanks and shins, as if they were to be called "shankies" and "shinnies" (crurales et tibiales). "Turban," however, is a Greek word, tiara which has by usage become a Latin word also, and Virgil says of it (Aeneid, VII): "Both scepter and sacred tiara." It was, however, a kind of skull-cap used by the Persian and Chaldean races.

Verse 22. "Then those same men who had cast Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were slain by the fiery flame." Of course this meant the same men of whom it was said above, "And he commanded the strongest men in his army to bind the legs of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and cast them into the burning furnace of fire (another reading: into the furnace of flaming fire)." And so they were not any chance servants of his whom Nebuchadnezzar destroyed, but men who of all his army were strong and most ready for war. Not only was it intended that the miracle should strike terror but also that his own army might experience injury.

Verse 23. "But these three men, (here the Vulgate inserts: "that is,") Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell fettered into the midst of the furnace of flaming fire. And they were walking about in the midst of the flames praising God and blessing the Lord. And Azariah stood and prayed after this fashion, opening his mouth in the midst of the fire and saying..." It was a great miracle for men to be cast into a furnace bound and to fall headlong into the midst of the fire, only to have the bonds burn up by which they were bound, the bodies of the fettered withal remaining untouched by the timid flames. The Hebrew text goes only up to this point and the intervening passage which now follows as far as the end of the Song of the Three Youths is not contained in the Hebrew. Lest we seem to pass over it altogether, we must make a few observations.

Verse 26. "Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, and Thy name is to be praised and glorified forever, for Thou art just in all that Thou hast done to us" (the Vulgate adds: "in our case"). Whenever we are oppressed by various anxieties, let us lovingly speak forth this sentiment with our whole heart, and whatever may have befallen us, let us confess that it is only right for us to endure it, that the scripture may be fulfilled in us: "The daughters of Judah have exulted and rejoiced in all Thy judgments, O Lord" (Psalm 97:8).

Verse 29. "For we have sinned and acted wickedly in departing from Thee, and we have forsaken Thee in all things." Now of course the three youths had not sinned, nor were they old enough when brought to Babylon to warrant being punished for their own faults. Consequently they were

speaking as representatives of their people, in the same manner as the Apostle had to state: "For what I wish to do, that I do not; but what I do not want, that I carry into effect" (Romans 7:19), and so on with the rest of that same passage.

Verse 37. "Forasmuch, O Lord, as we have been diminished more than all the other races and abased in all the world this day because of our sins, and have at the present time neither prince nor prophet nor leader..." These verses are to be used whenever the churches suffer want (because of the sins of the people) of holy men, and of magistrates who are most learned in the law of God, and also whenever in times of persecution no sacrifice or oblation is offered up. Some authorities relate this passage to the heavenly Jerusalem, on the ground that the souls have been plunged to the earthly plane and find themselves in a place of tears and utter distress, and bewail the sins of by-gone years and the other things included in the prophetic discourse. But the Church of God has not accepted this view.

Verse 39. "But in a contrite heart and humble spirit let us be accepted, like as in the burnt offerings of rams and bullocks..." On the basis of the passage before us and also on the basis of what follows: "Bless the Lord, ye spirits and souls of the righteous," and also in view of the passage in Psalms: "The sacrifice for God is an anguished spirit, a contrite and abased heart God does not despise," (Psalm 51:17) certain authorities would have it that there resides in man a spirit, distinct from the Holy Spirit and different from the soul itself. But they will have to work out the difficulty of how there can be said to be two substances and two inner selves in one and the same man, entirely apart from the body and from the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 46. "And the king's servants who had cast them in did not cease to make the furnace hot with naphtha and pitch." Sallust in his histories writes that naphtha is a kind of tinder in use among the Persians which furnishes the utmost encouragement to fires. Others are of the opinion that naphtha is the name applied to olive-pits which are thrown away when the dregs of the oil have dried up. In the same way, they assert, the Greek term pyrine is derived from its property of nourishing pyr, that is, "fire".

Verse 49. "But the angel of the Lord came down into the furnace with Azariah and his companions, and he smote the flame of the fire out of the furnace..." When the soul is oppressed with tribulation and taken up with various vexations, having lost hope of human aid and turned with its whole heart to God, an angel of the Lord descends to it. That is to say, the supernatural being descends to the aid of the servant and dashes aside the fierce heat of the violent flames, that the fiery shafts of the enemy utterly fail to pierce the inner citadel of our heart and we escape being shut up in his fiery furnace.

Verses 57, 58. "All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord; laud Him and highly exalt Him forever. Praise Him, ye angels of the Lord; laud Him and highly exalt Him..." Having prefaced with general terms of praise, to the effect that every creature ought to praise the Lord, he addresses his exhortation in what follows to the various individual orders of creation: to the angels, the heavens, the waters and nature-forces, the sun and the moon, the rain-cloud and the dew, the wind, the fire and the billow, the cold and the heat, and all the rest too lengthy to include, so that he summons springs also and the seas, the sea-monsters and the birds, the beasts and flocks, to the praise of the Lord. He summons also the sons of men, and after the human race in general he specifies the race of Israel in particular, and of the Israelites themselves the priests and servants of the Lord,

and the spirits and souls of the righteous, and those who are holy and of humble heart. And at the very last he specifies Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, who are summoned to praise the Lord for His present kindness. But all creation praises God not in word but in deed, inasmuch as the Creator is logically apprehended on the basis of His creatures, and in the various works and affections the grandeur of God is made manifest.

Verse 87. "Bless Him, ye saints and humble of heart..." We are taught to have humbleness of heart both by this present verse and also by the statement in the Gospel: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29). But this humbleness of heart is the same thing as is elsewhere called poverty in spirit, so that we are not to be lifted up in pride or seek after glory by a pretended humility, but rather that we abase ourselves with our whole heart. Up to this point we have mentioned but briefly a few things from Theodotion's edition, since the confession and the praises of the three youths are passages not contained in the Hebrew. But from this point on we shall follow the authentic Hebrew itself.

Verses 91, 92 (=24, 25). "Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and hastily arose and said to his nobles: 'Did we not cast three men in shackles into the midst of the fire?'" After the princes have been punished, the king is rebuked, in order that he may glorify God while still alive. But he questions his nobles, by whose accusation and plot he had cast the three youths into the fiery furnace, so that when they reply that they had cast three youths into the furnace, he might announce and show forth to them (what had happened).

"And they said to the king in reply, 'Truly, O king!' The king answered (the Vulgate omits "the king"): 'Behold, I see four men unbound and walking about in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the appearance of the fourth man is the likeness of a son of God.'" Let me say again, how wise was the fire and how indescribable the power of God! Their bodies had been bound with chains; those chains were burnt up, whereas the bodies themselves were not burnt. As for the appearance of the fourth man, which he asserts to be like that of a son of God, either we must take him to be an angel, as the Septuagint has rendered it, or indeed, as the majority think, the Lord our Savior. Yet I do not know how an ungodly king could have merited a vision of the Son of God. On that reasoning one should follow Symmachus, who has thus interpreted it: "But the appearance of the fourth is like unto the sons," not unto the sons of God but unto gods themselves. We are to think of angels here, who after all are very frequently called gods as well as sons of God. So much for the story itself. But as for its typical significance, this angel or son of God foreshadows our Lord Jesus Christ, who descended into the furnace of hell (Ephesians 4:9, 1 Peter 4:6), in which the souls of both sinners and of the righteous were imprisoned, in order that He might without suffering any scorching by fire or injury to His person deliver those who were held imprisoned by chains of death.

Verse 93 (=26). "Then Nebuchadnezzar approached unto the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and said: 'Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come forth and draw near!' And straightway Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth from the midst of the fire." Being terrified with fear, the king does not address his request to the youths through any messengers, but himself calls upon them by name, addressing them as servants of the Most High God, and begging these very men to come forth whom he himself had cast bound into the furnace.

Verse 95 (=28). "Blessed be God (the Vulgate has "their God, namely") of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Who hath sent His angel and rescued His servants who believed in Him..." The person whom he had previously called a son of God he here calls an angel, even though he had in the preceding passage described him as similar to a son of God rather than to God Himself. A second time, therefore, Nebuchadnezzar resumes a confession of faith in God, and as he condemns idols he praises the three youths who refused to serve or worship any god but their own God. Moreover he marvels that the fire was unable to affect the saints of God, for he says:

Verse 96 (=29). "I have therefore determined upon this decree (the Vulgate says: "have appointed this decree"): that any people, tribe or tongue which utters blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego shall utterly perish and his house shall be laid waste. For there is no other God who can save after such a fashion." Some authorities very wrongly apply this to the devil himself, asserting that in the consummation at the end of the world even the devil himself will receive a knowledge of God and will exhort all men to repent. These persons would have it that this is the king of Nineveh who finally descends from his proud throne and attains to the rewards of humility.

Verse 97 (=30). "Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to honor in the province of Babylon." Those commentators who say that the three youths were previously not judges set over the provinces but mere overseers of individual government agencies in Babylon, would have it that they were now appointed as judges over the provinces.

CHAPTER FOUR

Verses 1-3. "Nebuchadnezzar the king unto all the peoples, nations and languages who dwell upon the whole earth: peace be multiplied unto you. The Most High God hath performed signs and wonders towards me. Therefore I have thought it well to declare His signs, for they are great, and His marvels, for they are mighty, and His kingdom, because it is (the Vulgate omits "because it is") an eternal kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation." The epistle of Nebuchadnezzar was inserted in the volume of the prophet, in order that the book might not afterwards be thought to have been manufactured by some other author, as the accuser (Porphyry) falsely asserts, but the product of Daniel himself.

Verse 4. "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace." The narrative is clear indeed and requires but little interpretation. Because he displeased God, Nebuchadnezzar was turned into a madman and dwelt for seven years amongst the brute beasts and was fed upon the roots of herbs. Afterwards by the mercy of God he was restored to his throne, and praised and glorified the King of heaven, on the ground that all His works are truth and His ways are justice and He is able to abase those who walk in pride. But there are some who claim to understand by the figure of Nebuchadnezzar the hostile power which the Lord speaks of in the Gospel, saying: "I beheld Satan falling from heaven like lightning" (Luke 10:18). Likewise John in Revelation, in the passage where the dragon falls upon the earth drawing a third of the stars with him (Revelation 12:4). Likewise Isaiah: "How hath the morning star fallen, which used to rise early in the morning" (Isaiah 14:12). These authorities assert that it was absolutely impossible for a man who was reared in luxury to subsist on hay for seven years and to dwell among wild beasts for seven years without being at all mangled by them. Also they ask how the imperial authority could have been kept waiting for a mere madman, and how so mighty a kingdom could

have gone without a king for so long a period. If, on the other hand, anyone had succeeded him on the throne, how foolish he would have to be thought to surrender an imperial authority which he had possessed for so long. Such a thing would be especially incredible since the historical records of the Chaldeans contain no such record, and since they recorded matters of far less import, it is impossible that they should have left things of major importance unmentioned. And so they pose all of these questions and offer as their own reply the proposition that since the episode does not stand up as genuine history, the figure of Nebuchadnezzar represents the devil. To this position we make not the slightest concession; otherwise everything we read in Scripture may appear to be imperfect representations and mere fables. For once men have lost their reason, who would not perceive them to lead their existence like brutish animals in the open fields and forest regions? And to pass over all other considerations, since Greek and Roman history offer episodes far more incredible, such as Scylla and the Chimaera, the Hydra and the Centaurs, and the birds and wild beasts and flowers and trees, the stars and the stones into which men are related to have been transformed, what is so remarkable about the execution of such a divine judgment as this for the manifestation of God's power and the humbling of the pride of kings? Nebuchadnezzar says, "I was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace..." or as Theodotion renders it "upon my throne." Now those who follow the interpretation we are opposing understand by the devil's home this world of ours. Concerning the world Satan himself in the Gospel says to the Savior: "All these things have been given over to me" (Luke 4:6). Likewise the Apostle says: "The world lieth in the Wicked One" (1 John 5:19).

Verse 5. "I beheld a dream which terrified me, and my thoughts while upon my bed..." Let our opponents answer what kind of a dream the hostile power would have seen, unless perhaps everything he appears to possess in this world is a mere shadowy dream.

"And the visions of my head greatly disturbed me." Note how Nebuchadnezzar realized that his visions were not those of his eyes and heart, but rather of his head, because it was for the glory of God's future servants that these secrets were being revealed to him.

Verse 8. "Then at last my associate, Daniel, whose name according to the name of my god is Belteshazzar, entered before my presence." With the exception of the Septuagint translators (who for some reason or other have omitted this whole passage), the other three translators have translated the word as "associate" (collega). Consequently by the judgment of the teachers of the Church, the Septuagint edition has been rejected in the case of this book, and it is the translation of Theodotion which is commonly read, since it agrees with the Hebrew as well as with the other translators. Wherefore also Origen asserts in the ninth book of the Stromata that he is discussing the text from this point on in the prophecy of Daniel, not as it appears in the Septuagint, which greatly differs from the Hebrew original, but rather as it appears in Theodotion's edition.

"...(Daniel) who has within him the spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream unto him..." Corresponding to the rendering here given, "of the holy god," we read in Chaldee (in which Daniel was composed) the words elain cadisin ('l-h-y-n q-d-y-sh-y-n), which means "holy gods" and not "holy God," as Theodotion rendered it. Nor is it surprising if Nebuchadnezzar made such a mistake, and supposed that any force he perceived to be higher than himself were gods, rather than God. Lastly he states also in his following words: "Belteshazzar, thou chief of the soothsayers, whom I know to possess within thee the spirit of the holy gods." Belteshazzar was

chief of the soothsayers or enchanters, as others have rendered it. It is not surprising if he had been appointed chief over all the soothsayers since he had at the king's order been taught the wisdom of the Chaldeans, and had besides been found ten times wiser than all the rest. Let us ask of those who do not concede any historical basis for this vision, what Nebuchadnezzar it was who saw the dream, and who the Daniel was who declared his dream and foretold things to come. And how did it come to pass that this same Daniel (whose fortitude was, at least according to them, to be understood as divine in origin) was appointed chief of the soothsayers by Nebuchadnezzar, and called his companion?

Verse 10. "I saw, and behold there was a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was very great..." It was not only of Nebuchadnezzar, King of the Chaldeans, but also of all impious men that the prophet says: "I beheld the impious man highly exalted and lifted up like the cedars of Lebanon" (Psalm 37:35). Such men are lifted up, not by the greatness of their virtues, but by their own pride; and for that reason they are cut down and fall into ruin. Therefore it is good to follow the teaching of our Lord in the Gospel: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29). But as for the fact that, according to Theodotion, he mentions his kutos or height - or else his kureia, as he himself later renders it, that is to say, his dominion (a word we have translated as "his appearance") - those same detractors of the historicity of this passage slanderously assert that Nebuchadnezzar's dominion never possessed the entire world. He did not rule over the Greeks or barbarians, or over all of the nations in the north and west, but only over the provinces of the East; that is to say, over Asia, not over Europe or Libya. Consequently all these slanders require to be understood as attributable to the devil, for actually we ourselves should accept all this as spoken by way of hyperbole, having in view the arrogance of the impious king, who in Isaiah (chap. 14) makes as great a boast as this, claiming that he possesses the very heaven itself, and the whole earth besides, as if it were a nest full of birds' eggs.

Verses 13, 14. "And behold, a watchman and a holy one descended from heaven, and he cried out with a loud voice and spoke as follows: 'Cut down the tree and chop off its branches...'" Instead of "watchman" Theodotion uses the Chaldee word itself, hir, which is written with the three letters 'ayin, yodh, and resh. But it signifies the angels, because they ever keep watch and are prepared to carry out God's command. And so we too follow the example of the angels in their duties when we engage in frequent night-long vigils. Also it is said of the Lord: "He who keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4). Lastly, we read a little later:

Verse 17. "In the decision of the watchmen, i.e., the angels, lies the decree and the speech and the petition of the holy ones." Moreover it is both Greek and Latin usage to call the rainbow iris, because it is said to descend to earth in a multicolored arch.

Verse 19. "Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, began quietly to meditate by himself for about an hour, and his meditations greatly troubled him. And the king answered and said, 'Belteshazzar, let not the dream or its interpretation disturb you.' Belteshazzar answered and said..." Daniel silently understood that the dream was directed against the king, and the pallor of his countenance showed forth the fear in his heart, and he felt sorry for the man who had conferred upon him the greatest of honor. And to avoid all appearance of taunting the king or glorying over him as an enemy, he only told him what he understood of the matter after he had begged to be excused.

"My lord, may this dream apply to those who hate thee, and its interpretation to thy foes." And so Nebuchadnezzar, seeing that Daniel was afraid of appearing to speak something of ill omen and against the king's interest, urged him to speak out plainly and truly what he understood of the matter without any apprehension.

Verse 20. "The lofty and vigorous tree which thou sawest, the height of which reached the heavens..." He explains the truth without insulting the king, so as to avoid appearing to charge the king with sinful pride, but rather with overweening greatness.

Verse 23. "Let him be bound with iron and with brass in the grass out of doors, and let him be sprinkled with dew of heaven, and let his feeding be with the wild beasts, until seven times pass over him." It was also written to the same effect above. And so those who object to the historicity of the narrative ask us how Nebuchadnezzar would have been bound with chains of iron and brass, or who would have bound him or tied him up with fetters. Yet it is very clear that all maniacs are bound with chains to keep them from destroying themselves or attacking others with weapons.

Verses 24, 25. "This is the interpretation of the sentence of the Most High which has come upon my lord the king. They shall cast thee forth from among men and thy habitation shall be with cattle and wild beasts..." Daniel moderates the severity of the sentence by complimentary language, so that (variant: and) after he has first set forth the harsher aspects, he may moderate the king's alarm by assurances of the kindlier treatment to follow. He draws the final inference:

Verse 26. "Thy kingdom shall remain unto thee, after thou shalt have acknowledged that power belongs to Heaven." Those who contest the historicity of this incident and would have it that the devil's original position of honor will be restored to him, make capital of this passage, on the ground that after Nebuchadnezzar has during the seven-year cycle endured torments and bestialization, feeding upon grass and hay, he makes a confession of the Lord and becomes the person he was before. But they are bound to answer the question how it can be consistent for the angels who have never fallen to have someone rule over them once more who has only through repentance been restored to favor.

Verse 27. "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel meet with thy favor, and make up for thy sins by deeds of charity, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps God will forgive thy transgressions." Since he had previously pronounced the sentence of God, which of course cannot be altered, how could he exhort the king to deeds of charity and acts of mercy towards the poor? This difficulty is easily solved by reference to the example of King Hezekiah, who Isaiah had said was going to die (Isaiah 38:1); and again, to the example of the Ninevites, to whom it was said: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed" (Jonah 3:4). And yet the sentence of God was changed in response to the prayers of Hezekiah and the city of Nineveh, not by any means because of the ineffectualness of the judgment itself but because of the conversion of those who merited pardon. Moreover in Jeremiah God states that He threatens evil for the nation (Jeremiah 18:7-8), but if it does that which is good, He will alter His threats to bestow mercy. Again, He affirms that He directs His promises to the man who does good; and if the same man thereafter works evil, He says that He changes His decision, not with regard to the men themselves, but with regard to their works which have thus changed in character. For after all, God is not angered at men but at their sins; and when no sins inhere in a man, God by no means inflicts a punishment which has been commuted. In other words, let us say that Nebuchadnezzar performed deeds of

mercy toward the poor in accordance with Daniel's advice, and for that reason the sentence against him was delayed of execution for twelve months. But because he afterwards while walking about in his palace at Babylon said boastingly: "Is this not the great Babylon which I myself have built up as a home for the king by the might of my power and the glory of my name?" therefore he lost the virtue of his charitableness by reason of the wickedness of his pride.

"It may be that God will forgive thy sins." In view of the fact that the blessed Daniel, foreknowing the future as he did, had doubts concerning God's decision, it is very rash on the part of those who boldly promise pardon to sinners. And yet it should be recognized that indulgence was promised to Nebuchadnezzar in return, as long as he wrought good works. Much more, then, is it promised to other men who have committed less grievous sins than he. We read in Jeremiah also of God's direction to the people of the Jews, that they should pray for the Babylonians, inasmuch as the peace of the captives was bound up with the peace of the captors themselves (Jeremiah 29:7).

Verses 31, 32. "While the saying was yet in the king's mouth, a voice from heaven assailed him: 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, thy kingdom shall pass away (variant reading: is passing away) from thee and they shall cast thee forth from among mankind.'" His arrogant boasting is immediately punished by the Lord. For this reason the execution of the sentence is not delayed, lest mercy towards the poor seem to have profited him not at all. But as soon as he has spoken in pride, he straightway loses the kingdom which had been reserved for him on account of his works of charity.

"...until thou dost recognize that the Most High reigns in the kingdom of men." In misery it comes as a great consolation to know, when one is in a painful situation, that a more favorable future will ensue. Yet Nebuchadnezzar's fury and madness were so pronounced that in time of affliction he would not have remembered the blessings which God had promised him.

Verse 34. "'I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted mine eyes toward heaven, and my intelligence returned to me.'" Had he not raised his eyes towards heaven, he would not have regained his former intelligence. Moreover, when he says that his intelligence returned to him, he shows that he had lost not his outward appearance but only his mind.

"And His kingdom is from generation to generation." If we accept this expression in the Scriptures, "From generation to generation," as simply for what it is, then it unquestionably means "for all time to come." But if, on the other hand, "generation and generation" signifies (as we have often asserted) two generations, that of the Law and that of the Gospel, the question comes up as to how Nebuchadnezzar would have known of the unrevealed secrets ("sacraments") of God. But perhaps we might say this, that after he raised his eyes towards heaven and received back his former estate and exalted and blessed the ever-living God, he would not have failed to know this secret also.

Verse 35. "'For He does according to His will, just as among the powers of heaven, so also among the inhabitants of the earth...'" This too Nebuchadnezzar expresses like a worldling. For God does not simply do what He wishes, but rather God wishes only that which is good. Nebuchadnezzar, however, expressed himself in this way, in order that even while he declared God's power, he might appear to impugn God's justice, on the ground that he had suffered unmerited punishment.

Verse 36. "And my nobles and officers sought me out and I was restored to my kingdom, and all the greater magnificence accrued to me." Well then, according to those who argue against the historical character of this account, all the angelic powers are going to seek out the devil again, and he will increase to such a degree of might, that the very one who formerly exalted himself against God is going to be greater than he was before his sin.

Verse 37. "Now therefore I, Nebuchadnezzar, do praise, magnify and glorify the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways are judgment, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride." Nebuchadnezzar understood the reason why he had suffered in seven years' punishment, and for that reason he humbled himself, since he had exalted himself against God.

CHAPTER FIVE

Verse 1. "Belshazzar the king made a great feast for his one thousand nobles; and each one drank in the order of his age." It should be known that this man was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar, as readers commonly imagine; but according to Berosus, who wrote the history of the Chaldeans, and also Josephus, who follows Berosus, after Nebuchadnezzar's reign of forty-three years, a son named Evilmerodach succeeded to his throne. It was concerning this king that Jeremiah wrote that in the first year of his reign he raised the head of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, and took him out of his prison (Jeremiah 52:31). Josephus likewise reports that after the death of Evilmerodach, his son Neriglissar succeeded to his father's throne; after whom in turn came his son Labosordach. Upon the latter's death, his son, Belshazzar, obtained the kingdom, and it is of him that the Scripture now makes mention. After he had been killed by Darius, King of the Medes, who was the maternal uncle of Cyrus, King of the Persians, the empire of the Chaldeans was destroyed by Cyrus the Persian. It was these two kingdoms which Isaiah in chap. 21 (Isaiah 21:7) addresses as a charioteer of a vehicle drawn by a camel and an ass. Indeed Xenophon also writes the same thing in connection with the childhood of Cyrus the Great; likewise Pompeius Trogus and many others who have written up the history of the barbarians. Some authorities think that this Darius was the Astyages mentioned in the Greek writings, while others think it was Astyages' son, and that he was called by the other name among the barbarians. "And each one of the princes who had been invited drank in the order of his own age." Or else, as other translators have rendered it: "The king himself was drinking in the presence of all the princes whom he had invited."

Verse 2. "Being now drunken, he therefore gave order that the golden and silver vessels be brought in which his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken away from the temple which was in Jerusalem, in order that the king might drink from them..." The Hebrews hand down some such story as this: that up until the seventieth year, on which Jeremiah had said (Jeremiah 25:11) that the captivity of the Jewish people would be released (a matter of which Zechariah also speaks [Zechariah 1:12] in the first part of his book), Belshazzar had esteemed God's promise to be of none effect; therefore he turned the failure of the promise into an occasion of joy and arranged a great banquet, scoffing somewhat at the expectation of the Jews and at the vessels of the Temple of God. Punishment, however, immediately ensued. And as to the fact that the author calls Nebuchadnezzar the father of Belshazzar, he does not make any mistake in the eyes of those who are acquainted with the Holy Scripture's manner of speaking, for in the Scripture all progenitors and ancestors are called fathers. This factor also should be borne in mind, that he was not sober when he did these things, but rather when he was intoxicated and forgetful of the punishment

which had come upon his progenitor, Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 4. "They were drinking wine and praising their gods of gold, of silver, of bronze, of iron, of wood, and of stone." How great was their folly! As they drank from golden vessels, they were praising gods of wood and of stone. As long as the vessels had been in the idol-temple of Babylon, God was not moved to wrath, for they had evidently consecrated the property of God to divine worship, even though they did so in accordance with their own depraved views of religion. But after they defiled holy things for the use of men, their punishment followed upon the heels of their sacrilege. Moreover they were praising their own gods and scoffing at the God of the Jews, on the ground that they were drinking from His vessels because of the victory their own gods had bestowed upon them. Applying this figuratively, we should have to say that it applies to all the heretics or to any doctrine which is contrary to truth but which appropriates the words of the Biblical prophets and misuses the testimony of Scripture to suit its own inclination. It furnishes liquor to those whom it deceives and with whom it has committed fornication. It carries off the vessels of God's Temple and waxes drunken by quaffing them; and it does not give the praise to the God whose vessels they are, but to gods of gold and silver, of bronze, of iron, of wood, and of stone. I think that the golden ones are those which consist of earthly reason. The silver gods are those which possess the charm of eloquence and are fashioned by rhetoric. But those which bring in the fables of the poets and employ ancient traditions containing marked divergences from one another in respect to good taste or folly, such are described as bronze and iron. And those who set forth sheer absurdities are called wooden or stone. The Book of Deuteronomy divides these all into two classes, saying: "Cursed is the man who fashions a graven image and a molten image, the work of the hands of an artificer, and sets it up in a secret place" (Deuteronomy 27:15). For all heretics operate secretly and disguise their fallacious teachings, in order that they may from concealment shoot their arrows against those who are upright in heart.

Verse 5. "At that same hour some fingers appeared as if they were of a human hand, writing something over against the lampstand upon the surface of the wall of the king's palace. And the king watched the joints of the hand as it wrote." He puts it nicely when he says, "At that same hour," just as we earlier read concerning Nebuchadnezzar, "While the saying was yet in the king's mouth." This was in order that the offender might recognize that his punishment was not inflicted upon him for any other reason but his blasphemy. But as for the circumstance that the fingers seemed to be writing on the wall over against the lampstand, this was to avoid having the hand and the written matter appear at too great a distance from the light (to be clearly visible). And the fingers wrote upon the wall of the royal palace in order that the king might understand that the inscription concerned himself.

Verse 6. "Then the king's expression was altered..." Here too it is to be observed concerning those Psalms entitled: "For those who will suffer alterations (or vicissitudes)," that the alteration of fortune is not only the lot of the saint but also of the sinner. For we read in this connection: "King Belshazzar was considerably disturbed and his countenance was altered."

Verse 7. The king therefore cried out vehemently that the magicians should be brought in, and the Chaldeans and the soothsayers..." Forgetting about the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar, he was following after the ancient and ingrained error of his family, so that instead of summoning a prophet of God he summons the magicians and Chaldeans and soothsayers.

"...he shall be clothed in purple and he shall have a golden necklace about his neck." It is, of course, ridiculous of me to argue about matters of gender in a commentary on the prophets; but inasmuch as an ignorant but ostentatious critic has rebuked me for changing "necklace" (torquis) from feminine to masculine, I will make the brief observation that while Cicero and Vergil use "necklace" in the feminine, Livy uses it in the masculine.

"...and he shall be the third man in my kingdom..." That means either that he is to be third in rank after the king, or else one of the three princes of the realm - for we elsewhere read of the tristatani.

Verse 10. "Now the queen, by reason of what had happened to the king and his nobles, entered into the banquet-hall..." Josephus says she was Belshazzar's grandmother, whereas Origen says she was his mother. She therefore knew about previous events of which the king was ignorant. So much for Porphyry's far-fetched objection, who fancies that she was the king's wife, and makes fun of the fact that she knows more than her husband does.

Verse 11. "There is a man in thy kingdom who possesses within him the spirit of the holy gods." All the authorities except Symmachus, who adheres to the Chaldee original, render: "the spirit of God."

"...and in the days of thy father, wisdom, and knowledge were found in him..." She calls Nebuchadnezzar his father, according to the custom of the Scriptures, even though, as we remarked before, he was actually his great-grandfather. But Daniel's godly manner of life even amongst the barbarians is worthy of our imitation, for the very grandmother or mother of the king extolled him with such words of praise because of the greatness of his virtues.

Verse 17. "To this Daniel made answer before the king, saying: 'Thy gifts be unto thyself, and bestow the presents of thy house upon someone else..." We should follow the example of a man like Daniel, who despised the honor and gifts of a king, and who without any reward even in that early day followed the Gospel injunction: "Freely have ye received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8) And besides, when one is announcing sad tidings, it is unbecoming for him willingly to accept gifts.

Verse 19. "He slew whomever he would and smote to death whomever he wished to; those whom he wished he set on high, and brought low whomever he would." Thus he sets forth the example of the king's great-grandfather, in order to teach him the justice of God and make it clear that his great-grandson too was to suffer similar treatment because of his pride. Now if Nebuchadnezzar slew whomever he would and smote to death whomever he wished to; if he set on high those whom he would and brought low whomever he wished to, there is certainly no Divine providence or Scriptural injunction behind these honors and slayings, these acts of promotion and humiliation. But rather, such things ensue from the will of the men themselves who do the slaying and promoting to honor, and all the rest. If this be the case, the question arises as to how we are to understand the Scripture: "The heart of a king reposes in the hand of God; He will incline it in whatever direction He wishes" (Proverbs 21:1). Perhaps we might say that every saint is a king, for sin does not reign in his mortal body, and his heart therefore is kept safe, for he is in God's hand (Romans 6:1-23). And whatever has once come into the hand of God the Father, according to the Gospel, no man is able to take it away (John 10:28). And whoever is taken away, it is understood that he never was in God's hand at all.

Verses 22, 23. "'Thou too, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, even though thou knewest all these things, but hast lifted thyself up against the ruler of heaven..." Because thy great-grandfather, he says, lifted up his heart and hardened his spirit in pride, he therefore was put down from his royal throne and his glory was taken away, and so on (Jer. 4). Therefore in thy case also, because thou knewest these things about thy relative and didst understand that God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble, thou shouldest not have lifted up thy heart against the ruler of heaven and scoffed at His majesty and perpetrated the deeds which thou hast. Some authorities apply this passage to Antichrist, on the ground that he has imitated the pride of his father, the Devil, and has raised himself up against God. But they must deal with the question of whom Daniel represents, and who is to be understood as interpreting the inscription of God, and who these Medes and Persians are who put Antichrist to death and succeed to his royal power. For there is no doubt but what it is the saints who are to rule after the Antichrist.

Verses 25-28. "This is the inscription which has been set up: MANE, THECEL, PHARES. And this is the interpretation of the sentence: 'MANE' means that God has numbered thy kingdom and brought it to an end. 'THECEL' means it has been weighed in the scales and has been found deficient (Vulg.: thou hast been weighed and hast been found...). 'PHARES' means that thy kingdom has been removed and given to the Medes and Persians." The inscription of these three words on the wall simply meant: "Mane, Thecel, Phares"; the first of which sounds forth the idea of "number," and the second "a weighing out," and the third "removal." And so there was a need not only for reading the inscription but also for interpreting what had been read, in order that it might be understood what these words were announcing. That is to say, that God had numbered his kingdom and brought it to an end, and that He had seized hold upon him to weigh him in His judgment-scales, and the sword would slay him before he should meet a natural death; and that his empire would be divided among the Medes and Persians. For Cyrus, the king of the Persians, as we have already mentioned, overthrew the Chaldean Empire in alliance with Darius, his maternal uncle.

Verse 29. "Then at the king's order Daniel was clothed with purple and a golden chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed to have authority as third ruler in the kingdom." Or else, it might be construed as having authority over a third part of the kingdom. At any rate he received the royal insignia of necklace and purple, with the result that he appeared more notable to Darius, who was to be the successor in the royal power, and all the more honorable because of his notability. Nor was it strange that Belshazzar should have paid the promised reward upon hearing sad tidings. For either he supposed that his predictions would take place in the distant future, or else he hoped he would obtain mercy by honoring the prophet of God. And if he did not obtain this boon, it was because his sacrilege toward God outweighed the honor he accorded to man.

Verses 30, 31. "On that same night Belshazzar, King of the Chaldeans, was slain, and Darius the Mede succeeded to his kingdom at the age of sixty-two." Josephus writes in his tenth book of the Jewish Antiquities that when Babylon had been laid under siege by the Medes and Persians, that is, by Darius and Cyrus, Belshazzar, King of Babylon, fell into such forgetfulness of his own situation as to put on his celebrated banquet and drink from the vessels of the Temple, and even while he was besieged he found leisure for banqueting. From this circumstance the historical account could arise, that he was captured and slaughtered on the same night, while everyone was either terrified by fear of the vision and its interpretation, or else taken up with festivity and drunken

banqueting. As for the fact that while Cyrus, King of the Persians, was the victor, and Darius was only King of the Medes, it was Darius who was recorded to have succeeded to the throne of Babylon, this was an arrangement occasioned by factors of age, family relationship, and the territory ruled over. By this I mean that Darius was sixty-two years old, and that, according to what we read, the kingdom of the Medes was more sizable than that of the Persians, and being Cyrus's uncle, he naturally had a prior claim, and ought to have been accounted as successor to the rule of Babylon. Therefore also in a vision of Isaiah which was recited against Babylon, after many other matters too lengthy to mention, an account is given of these things which are to take place: "Behold I Myself will rouse up against them the Medes, a people who do not seek after silver nor desire gold, but who slay the very children with their arrows and have no compassion upon women who suckle their young" (Isaiah 13:17-18). And Jeremiah says: "Sanctify nations against her, even the kings of Media, and the governors thereof and all the magistrates thereof and all the land under the power thereof" (Jeremiah 51:28). Then follow the words: "The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor during the time of its treading; yet a little while, and the time of its harvesting will come" (Jeremiah 51:33). And in testimony of the fact that Babylon was captured during a banquet, Isaiah clearly exhorts her to battle when he writes: "Babylon, my beloved, has become a strange spectacle unto me: set thou the table and behold in the mirrors those who eat and drink; rise up, ye princes, and snatch up your shields!" (Isaiah 21:4-5).

CHAPTER SIX

Verse 1. "It pleased Darius to appoint over his kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, that they might be throughout his whole kingdom; and over them there were three princes, of which Daniel was one." Josephus, of whom we made mention above, in writing an account of this passage, put it this way: Now Darius, who destroyed the empire of the Babylonians in cooperation with his relative, Cyrus, - for they carried on the war as allies - was sixty-two years of age at the time he captured Babylon. He was the son of Astyages, and was known to the Greeks by another name. Moreover he took away the prophet Daniel with him and took him to Media, and made him one of the three princes who were in charge of his whole kingdom. Hence we see that when Babylon was overthrown, Darius returned to his own kingdom in Media, and brought Daniel along with him in the same honorable capacity to which he had been promoted by Belshazzar. There is no doubt but what Darius had heard of the sign and portent which had come to Belshazzar, and also of the interpretation which Daniel had set forth, and how he had foretold the rule of the Medes and the Persians. And so no one should be troubled by the fact that Daniel is said in one place to have lived in Darius's reign, and in another place in the reign of Cyrus. The Septuagint rendered Darius by the name Artaxerxes. But as for the fact that a non-chronological order is followed, so that some history is narrated in the reign of Darius before material is given for Belshazzar's reign, whereas we are subsequently to read that he was put to death by Darius, it seems to me that the anachronism results from the fact that the author has brought all the historical portions together in immediate sequence. Therefore it is at the close of the earlier vision that he had stated: "And Darius the Mede succeeded to the realm at the age of sixty-two." And so it was under this Darius who put Belshazzar to death that the events took place of which we are about to speak.

Verses 3, 4. "Moreover the king was planning to set Daniel over the whole realm. Consequently the princes and satraps sought an opportunity to find out something against Daniel as touching the king..." Instead of "princes" - the rendering used by Symmachus - Theodotion translated it as

taktikoi, and Aquila as synektikoi. And when I inquired as to who these tacticians or liaison princes might be, I read it more clearly specified in the Septuagint, which renders: "...and the two men whom the king had appointed with Daniel, and also the one hundred twenty satraps." And so it was the fact that the king was planning to appoint Daniel as chief ruler even over the two princes who had been associated with him in a triumvirate that gave rise to the envy and intrigue. They sought an opportunity to find out something against Daniel as touching the king. And in this passage the Jews have ventured some such deduction as this: the side of the king is tantamount to the queen or his concubines and other wives who slept at his side. And so they were seeking for a pretext in things of this sort, to see whether they could accuse Daniel of wrong in his speech or touch or movements of his head or any of his sensory organs. But, say the Jews, they could find no cause for suspicion whatsoever. Since he was a eunuch, they could not even accuse him on the score of lewdness. This interpretation was made by those, who make a practice of fabricating long tales on the pretext of a single word. I myself would simply interpret this as meaning that they were unable to discover any pretext of accusation against him in any matter in which he had injured the king, for the simple reason that he was a faithful man and no suspicion of blame was discoverable in him. Instead of "suspicion" Theodotion and Aquila have rendered "offense" (amblakema), which is essaitha in the Chaldee. And when I asked a Jew for the meaning of this word, he replied that the basic significance of it was "snare," and we may render it as a "lure" or sphalma, that is, a "mistake." Furthermore Euripides in his "Medea" equates the word amplakiai (spelling it with a p instead of a b) to hamartiai, that is to say, "sins."

Verse 5. "Therefore those men said: 'We will not find any pretext against Daniel, except perhaps in the law of his God.'" Blessed indeed is a life so led that even enemies can find no cause for accusation, except perhaps in matter pertaining to God's law.

Verse 6. "Then the princes and satraps privily withdrew to the king and thus spoke to him." It was well said that they privily withdrew for they did not come right out with what they were aiming at, but contrived their plot against a private enemy on the pretext of honoring the king.

Verse 8. "Now therefore, O king, confirm the measure and write the decree so that it may not be altered, according to the custom established by the Medes and Persians." It is perfectly evident, as we have remarked above, that there was only one kingdom of the Medes and Persians both, under the rule of Darius and Cyrus.

Verse 10. "Now when Daniel learned of it, that is, of the law which had been enacted, he entered his house, and with the windows in his upper room opened up in the direction of Jerusalem, he continued to bow his knees three times a day and worshipped, and made confession before his God just as he was previously accustomed to do." We must quickly draw from our memory and bring together from all of Holy Scripture all the passages where we have read of domata, which mean in Latin either "walled enclosures" (menia) or "beds" or "sun-terraces," and also the references to anogaia, that is, "upper rooms." For after all, our Lord celebrated the passover in an upper room (Mark 14:15, Luke 22:12), and in the Acts of the Apostles the Holy Spirit came upon the one hundred and twenty souls of believers while they were in an upper room (Acts 1:13). And so Daniel in this case, despising the king's commands and reposing his confidence in God, does not offer his prayers in some obscure spot, but in a lofty place, and opens up his windows towards Jerusalem, from whence he looked for the peace. He prays, moreover, according to God's

behest, and also according to what Solomon had said when he admonished the people that they should pray in the direction of the Temple. Furthermore, there are three times in the day when we should bow our knees unto God, and the tradition of the Church understands them to be the third hour, the sixth hour, and the ninth hour. Lastly, it was at the third hour that the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles (Acts 2:15) . It was at the sixth hour that Peter, purposing to eat, ascended to the upper room for prayer (Acts 10:9). It was at the ninth hour that Peter and John were on their way to the Temple (Acts 3:1).

Verse 11. "Those men, therefore, conducted an inquisitive search and discovered Daniel in prayer and making supplication unto his God." From this passage we learn that we are not to expose ourselves rashly to danger, but so far as it lies in our power, we are to avoid the plots of our enemies. And so in Daniel's case, he did not contravene the king's authority in a public square or out in the street, but rather in a private place, in order that he might not neglect the commands of the one true God Almighty.

Verse 12. "'Hast thou not ordained, O king, that any man who makes a request of any other person besides thee, whether god or man, shall be thrown into the lion-pit?' The king answered them, saying..." They do not mention Daniel's name, so that when the king has made a general answer as to the order he gave, he may then be bound by his own word, and not deal with Daniel in any other fashion than he has stated.

"What you have said is true, according to the decree of the Medes and Persians, which it is not lawful to violate." We repeatedly take note of every passage which speaks of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, so that we may dispose of the knotty problem of why Daniel speaks of the kingdom in one place as being under Darius, and in another as being under Cyrus.

Verse 13. "Then they answered before the king and said, 'Daniel, who is of the captivity of Judah, has paid no heed to thy law...' In order to magnify the dishonor involved in this contempt, they speak of the man who showed this contempt for the king's commands as a mere captive.

Verse 14. "And when the king heard this statement, he became quite grieved and applied himself on Daniel's behalf that he might deliver him." He realized that he had been tripped up by his own reply to their question, and also that envy was the motive of their plot. And so to avoid the appearance of acting against his own law, he wanted to deliver Daniel from danger by ingenuity and strategy rather than by exerting his royal authority. And so earnestly did he labor and strive that he would not accept any food, absolute monarch though he was, even until sunset. And as for the plotters, so firmly did they persist in their evil purpose that no consideration of the king's personal desire or of the damage he would sustain had any effect upon them.

Verse 15. "But those men, understanding the king's intent, said to him: 'Be it known to thee, O king, that no law of the Medes and Persians, nor any decree which the king has enacted, is capable of alteration.'" Just as the king understood that the princes were making their accusation out of motives of envy, so also they for their part understood what the king's purpose was, namely that he wished to rescue Daniel from imminent death. And so they allege that according to the law of the Medes and Persians, the commands of a king cannot be nullified.

Verse 16. "Then the king gave order, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the pit of lions. And the king said to Daniel: 'Thy God whom thou dost ever serve will Himself deliver thee.'" He

gives way to the crowd and dares not to withhold from his plotting adversaries the death of his friend, and he commits to the power of God the purpose which he himself was unable to attain. Nor does he use the language of doubt, so as to say, "If He be able to deliver thee"; but rather he speaks with boldness and confidence and says, "The God whom thou dost ever serve shall Himself deliver thee." He had heard, of course, that three youths who were of a lower rank than Daniel himself had triumphed over the flames of Babylon. He had heard that many secrets had been revealed to Daniel, and therefore regarded him highly, and held him, captive though he was, in the greatest honor.

Verse 17. "A single stone was brought and placed over the opening of the pit, and the king sealed it with his ring..." He sealed with his ring the rock by which the opening of the pit was shut up, so that the enemies of Daniel might not make any attempt to harm him. For he had entrusted him to the power of God, and although not worried about lions, he was fearful of men. He also sealed it with the ring of his nobles, in order to avoid all ground for suspicion so far as they were concerned.

Verse 18. "And the king departed to his own house, and went to bed without partaking of supper..." How sincere was the king's good will, when he would not touch food night or day or grant his eyelids sleep, but as long as the prophet was in danger he himself remained in a state of sympathetic suspense. But if a king who knew not God did such a thing for another man whose deliverance he desired, how much more ought we to implore God's mercy for our own sins with fastings and watchings.

Verse 19. "Then the king arose at the break of dawn and proceeded with haste to the pit of lions." The term "pit" (lacus) implies a really deep depression, or dry cistern, in which the lions were fed. And so he proceeded hastily to the pit at the break of dawn, believing that Daniel was alive. But in Latin the word lacus is applied to a body of fresh water, such as Lake Benacus and Lake Larius, and the rest of them. The Greeks call it limne, that is, "a body of standing water" (stagnum).

Verse 20. "And approaching the pit, he called out to Daniel with a tear-choked voice and addressed him." By his tears he showed his inner emotion, and forgetting his royal dignity, the conqueror ran to his captive, the master to his servant.

"O Daniel, servant of the living God..." He calls Him the living God in order to distinguish Him from the gods of the Gentiles, who are but effigies of the dead.

"Dost thou deem that thy God, whom thou ever servest, has been able to deliver thee from the lions?" It was not that he had any doubts about the power of the God of whom he had previously affirmed, "Thy God, whom thou ever servest, will Himself deliver thee." But he phrased the sentence doubtfully in order that when Daniel made his appearance unharmed, the king's anger at the princes might seem the more justified, in proportion to the incredibility of the event.

Verse 21. "O king, live forever!" Daniel honors the one who accords honor to him, and prays for him eternal life.

Verse 22. "My God sent His angel and shut up the lions' mouths, and they did me no harm..." The fierceness of the lions was not altered, but their gaping jaws were closed by the angel, and also their voracious hunger, and that too for the reason that the prophet's good works had gone before him. And so his deliverance was not so much a matter of grace as of reward for his unrightness.

And these words might be uttered by every saint, for he has been snatched from the mouths of lions unseen and from the infernal pit, because he has trusted in his God.

Verses 25-27. "Then king Darius wrote unto all the peoples, tribes and language-groups who dwelt in all the earth, saying: 'Your peace be multiplied! I have enacted a decree that in all my empire and kingdom men are to dread and tremble before the God of Daniel. For it is He who is the living God and the One who abides forever, and His rule shall not be overthrown, and His power shall eternally endure. It is He who is the Deliverer and Savior, who performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, and who has delivered Daniel from the pit of lions.'" Just as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar's writing unto the language-groups and nations one authority has interpreted them to signify hostile powers, so also this same man interprets the action of Darius, on the ground that he summons them all to repentance. And he poses the question as to whether this will take place in this world or in the other world, or even after other worlds have intervened. We deem these speculations to be absurd and account them as empty fables, and make this single observation: that the reason why signs are performed amid barbarian peoples through the agency of God's servants is that the worship and religion of the only God may be proclaimed.

Verse 28. "Thereafter Daniel lived on until the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian." And so the statement which we read above at the end of the first vision, "And Daniel lived until the first year of King Cyrus," is not to be understood as defining the span of his life. In view of the fact that we read in the last vision: "In the third year of Cyrus, King of the Persians, a word was revealed to Daniel, whose surname was Belteshazzar"; this is what is meant, that up to the first year of King Cyrus, who destroyed the empire of the Chaldeans, Daniel continued in power in Chaldea, but was afterwards transferred to Media by Darius.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Verse 1. "In the first year of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, Daniel beheld a dream. And a vision of his head upon his bed. And when he wrote the dream down, he comprehended it in a few words and gave a brief summary of it, saying..." This section which we now undertake to explain, and also the subsequent section which we are going to discuss, is historically prior to the two previous sections. For this present section and that which follows it are recorded to have taken place in the first and third years of the reign of King Belshazzar (Jeremiah 39) [Jerome's citation of Jeremiah 39 seems quite pointless in this connection]. But the section which we read previously to the one just preceding this, is recorded to have taken place in the last year, indeed on the final day, of Belshazzar's reign. And we meet this phenomenon not only in Daniel but also in Jeremiah [cf. Jeremiah 35 and Jeremiah 34] and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 17), as we shall be able to show, if life spares us that long. But in the earlier portion of the book, the historical order has been followed, namely the events which occurred in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar, and Darius or Cyrus. But in the passages now before us an account is given of various visions which were beheld on particular occasions and of which only the prophet himself was aware, and which therefore lacked any importance as signs or revelations so far as the barbarian nations were concerned. But they were written down only that a record of the things beheld might be preserved for posterity.

Verses 2, 3. "And during the night I saw in my vision, and behold, the four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea, and four great beasts were coming up out of the sea, differing from one another." The four winds of heaven I suppose to have been angelic powers to whom the

principalities have been committed, in accordance with what we read in Deuteronomy: "When the Most High divided the nations and when He separated the children of Adam, He established the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the angels. For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the line of His inheritance (Deuteronomy 32:8). But the sea signifies this world and the present age, overwhelmed with salty and bitter waves, in accordance with the Lord's own interpretation of the dragnet cast into the sea (Matthew 13:47-50). Hence also the sovereign of all creatures that inhabit the waters is described as a dragon, and his heads, according to David, are smitten in the sea (Psalm 74:13). And in Amos we read: "If he descends to the very depth of the sea, there will I give him over to the dragon and he shall bite him" (Amos 9:3). But as for the four beasts who came up out of the sea and were differentiated from one another, we may identify them from the angel's discourse. "These four great beasts," he says, "are four kingdoms which shall rise up from the earth." And as for the four winds which strove in the great sea, they are called winds of heaven because each one of the angels does for his realm the duty entrusted to him. This too should be noted, that the fierceness and cruelty of the kingdoms concerned are indicated by the term "beasts."

Verse 4. "The first beast was like a lioness and possessed the wings of an eagle. I beheld until her wings were torn away, and she was raised upright from the ground and stood on her feet like a human being, and she was given a human heart." The kingdom of the Babylonians was not called a lion but a lioness, on account of its brutality and cruelty, or else because of its luxurious, lust-serving manner of life. For writers upon the natural history of beasts assert that lionesses are fiercer than lions, especially if they are nursing their cubs, and constantly are passionate in their desire for sexual relations. And as for the fact that she possessed eagle's wings, this indicates the pride of the all-powerful kingdom, the ruler of which declares in Isaiah: "Above the stars of heaven will I place my throne, and I shall be like unto the Most High" (Isaiah 14:14). Therefore he is told: "Though thou be borne on high like an eagle, thence will I drag thee down" (Obadiah 1:4). Moreover, just as the lion occupies kingly rank among beasts, so also the eagle among the birds. But it should also be said that the eagle enjoys a long span of life, and that the kingdom of Assyrians had held sway for many generations. And as for the fact that the wings of the lioness or eagle were torn away, this signifies the other kingdoms over which it had ruled and soared about in the world. "And she was raised up," he says, "from the ground"; which means, of course, that the Chaldean empire was overthrown. And as for what follows, "And she stood upon her feet like a human being, and she was given a human heart," if we understand this as applying to Nebuchadnezzar, it is very evident that after he lost his kingdom and his power had been taken away from him, and after he was once more restored to his original state, he not only learned to be a man instead of a lioness but he also received back the heart which he had lost. But if on the other hand this is to be understood as applying in a general way to the kingdom of the Chaldeans, then it signifies that after Belshazzar was slain, and the Medes and Persians succeeded to imperial power, then the men of Babylon realized that theirs was a frail and lowly nature after all. Note the order followed here: the lioness is equivalent to the golden head of the image [in chap. 2].

Verse 5. "And behold another beast like a bear stood up on one side; and there were three rows in his mouth and in his teeth; and they said to him: 'Arise up and devour flesh in abundance.'" The second beast resembling a bear is the same as that of which we read in the vision of the statue (2:32): "His chest and arms were of silver." In the former case the comparison was based on the

hardness of the metal, in this case on the ferocity of the bear. For the Persian kingdom followed a rigorous and frugal manner of life after the manner of the Spartans, and that too to such an extent that they used to use salt and nasturtium-cress in their relish. Let us consult the record of the childhood of Cyrus the Great (i.e., "The Education or Training" of Cyrus). And as for the fact that the bear is said to have "stood up on one side," the Hebrews interpret it by saying that the Persians never perpetrated any cruelty against Israel. Hence they are described in the Prophecy of Zechariah also as white horses (Zechariah 1:7-11). But as for the three rows or ranks that were in his mouth and between his teeth, one authority has interpreted this to mean that allusion was made to the fact that the Persian kingdom was divided up among three princes, just as we read in the sections dealing with Belshazzar and with Darius that there were three princes who were in charge of the one hundred and twenty satraps. But other commentators affirm that these were three kings of the Persians who were subsequent to Cyrus, and yet they fail to mention them by name. But we know that after Cyrus's reign of thirty years his son Cambyses ruled among the Persians, and his brothers the magi, and then Darius, in the second year of whose reign the rebuilding of the Temple was commenced at Jerusalem. The fifth king was Xerxes, the son of Darius; the sixth was Artabanus; the seventh, Artaxerxes who was surnamed Makrokheir, that is Longimanus ("Long-handed"); the eighth, Xerxes; the ninth, Sogdianus; the tenth, Darius surnamed Nothos ("Bastard"); the eleventh, the Artaxerxes called Mnemon, that is, "The Rememberer"; the twelfth, the other Artaxerxes, who himself received the surname of Ochus; the thirteenth, Arses, the son of Ochus; and the fourteenth, Darius the son of Arsamus, who was conquered by Alexander, the king of the Macedonians. How then can we say that these were three kings of the Persians? Of course we could select some who were especially cruel, but we cannot ascertain them on the basis of the historical accounts. Therefore the three rows in the mouth of the Persian kingdom and between its teeth we must take to be the three kingdoms of the Babylonians, the Medes, and the Persians, all of which were reduced to a single realm. And as for the information, "And thus they spake to him: 'Devour flesh in abundance,'" this refers to the time when in the reign of the Ahasuerus whom the Septuagint calls Artaxerxes, the order was given, at the suggestion of Haman the Agagite, that all the Jews be slaughtered on a single day (Esther 3:13). And very properly, instead of saying, "He was devouring them" the account specifies, "Thus they spake unto him..." This shows that the matter was only attempted, and was by no means ever carried out.

Verse 6. "After this I beheld, and lo, there was another beast like unto a leopard, and it had four wings of a bird all its own, and there were four heads to the beast, and power was given to it." The third kingdom was that of the Macedonians, of which we read in connection with the image, "The belly and thighs were of bronze." It is compared to a leopard because it is very swift and hormetikos, and it charges headlong to shed blood, and with a single bound rushes to its death. "And it had four wings..." There was never, after all, any victory won more quickly than Alexander's, for he traversed all the way from Illyricum and the Adriatic Sea to the Indian Ocean and the Ganges River, not merely fighting battles but winning decisive victories; and in six years he subjugated to his rule a portion of Europe and all of Asia. And by the four heads reference is made to his generals who subsequently rose up as successors to his royal power, namely Ptolemy, Seleucus, Philip, and Antigonus. "And power was given to it" shows that the empire did not result from Alexander's bravery but from the will of God.

Verse 7. "After this, I beheld in the night-vision, and behold, there was a fourth beast, terrible and wonderful and exceedingly strong. He had large iron teeth, devouring and crushing, and everything that was left he stamped to pieces under his feet." The fourth empire is the Roman Empire, which now occupies the entire world, and concerning which it was said in connection with the image, "Its lower legs were of iron, and part of its feet were of iron, and part of clay." And yet from the iron portion itself Daniel calls to mind that its teeth were iron, and solemnly avers that they were large in size. I find it strange that although he had set forth a lioness, a bear and a leopard in the case of the three previous kingdoms, he did not compare the Roman realm to any sort of beast. Perhaps it was in order to render the beast fearsome indeed that he gave it no name, intending thereby that we should understand the Romans to partake of all the more ferocious characteristics we might think of in connection with beasts. The Hebrews believe that the beast which is here not named is the one spoken of in the Psalms: "A boar from the forest laid her waste, and a strange wild animal consumed her" (Psalm 80:13). Instead of this the Hebrew reads: "All the beasts of the field have torn her." While they are all included in the one Empire of the Romans, we recognize at the same time those kingdoms which were previously separate. And as for the next statement, "...devouring and crushing, and pounding all the rest to pieces under his feet," this signifies that all nations have either been slain by the Romans or else have been subjected to tribute and servitude.

"...But it did not resemble the other beasts which I had previously seen" (Vulgate: "...which I had seen before it"). In the earlier beasts he had seen various symbols of fright-fulness, but they were all concentrated in this one.

"...and it had ten horns." Porphyry assigned the last two beasts, that of the Macedonians and that of the Romans, to the one realm of the Macedonians and divided them up as follows. He claimed that the leopard was Alexander himself, and that the beast which was dissimilar to the others represented the four successors of Alexander, and then he enumerates ten kings up to the time of Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, and who were very cruel. And he did not assign the kings themselves to separate kingdoms, for example Macedon, Syria, Asia, or Egypt, but rather he made out the various kingdoms a single realm consisting of a series. This he did of course in order that the words which were written: "...a mouth uttering overweening boasts" might be considered as spoken about Antiochus instead of about Antichrist.

Verse 8. "I was looking at the horns, and behold, another small horn rose up out of the midst of them, and three of the earlier horns were torn away before it. And behold, there were in that horn eyes like unto human eyes, and a mouth uttering overweening boasts." Porphyry vainly surmises that the little horn which rose up after the ten horns is Antiochus Epiphanes, and that the three uprooted horns out of the ten are Ptolemy VI (surnamed Philometer), Ptolemy VII (Euergetes), and Artaxias, King of Armenia. The first two of these kings died long before Antiochus was born. Against Artaxias, to be sure, we know that Antiochus indeed waged war, but also we know that Artaxias remained in possession of his original kingly authority. We should therefore concur with the traditional interpretation of all the commentators of the Christian Church, that at the end of the world, when the Roman Empire is to be destroyed, there shall be ten kings who will partition the Roman world amongst themselves. Then an insignificant eleventh king will arise, who will overcome three of the ten kings, that is, the king of Egypt, the king of Africa, and the king of Ethiopia, as we shall show more clearly in our later discussion. Then after they have been slain,

the seven other kings also will bow their necks to the victor. "And behold," he continues, "there were eyes like unto human eyes in that horn." Let us not follow the opinion of some commentators and suppose him to be either the Devil or some demon, but rather, one of the human race, in whom Satan will wholly take up his residence in bodily form. "...and a mouth uttering overweening boasts..." For this is the man of sin, the son of perdition, and that too to such a degree that he dares to sit in the temple of God, making himself out to be like God (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

Verse 9. "I beheld until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of days took His seat. His garment was as white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was composed of fiery flames and its wheels were set on fire. From before His presence there issued forth a rushing, fiery stream." We read something similar in John's Apocalypse: "After these things I was immediately in the Spirit, and lo, a throne was set up in heaven, and one was seated upon the throne; and He who sat upon it had the likeness of jasper and sardine stone, and there was a rainbow round about the throne like the appearance of emerald. Around the throne there were twenty-four other thrones, and upon the twenty-four thrones there sat twenty-four elders, clothed in shining garments; upon their heads was a golden crown, and lightning flashes issued from the throne, and voices and thunder. And in front of the throne there were seven torches of burning fire, which were the seven spirits of God. And in front of the throne lay a glassy sea like unto crystal." (Revelation 4:2-6) And so the many thrones which Daniel saw seem to me to be what John called the twenty-four thrones. And the Ancient of days is the One who, according to John sits alone upon His throne. Likewise the Son of man, who came unto the Ancient of days, is the same as He who, according to John, is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, and the titles of that sort (Revelation 5:5). I imagine that these thrones are the ones of which the Apostle Paul says, "Whether thrones or dominions..." (Colossians 1:16). And in the Gospel we read, "Ye yourselves shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). And God is called the One who sits and who is the Ancient of days, in order that His character as eternal Judge might be indicated. His garment is shining white like the snow, and the hair of His head is like pure wool. The Savior also, when He was transfigured on the mount and assumed the glory of His divine majesty, appeared in shining white garments (Matthew 17:2). And as for the fact that His hair is compared to perfectly pure wool, the even-handedness and uprightness of His judgment is shown forth, a judgment which shows no partiality in its exercise. Moreover He is described as an elderly man, in order that the ripeness of His judgment may be established. His throne consists of fiery flames, in order that sinners may tremble before the severity of the torments, and also that the just may be saved, but so as by fire. The wheels of the throne are set aflame, or else it is the wheels of His chariot which are aflame. In Ezekiel also God is ushered on the scene seated in a four-horse chariot (Ezekiel 1:4-28), and everything pertaining to God is of a fiery consistency. In another place also a statement is made on this subject: "God is a consuming fire" (Deuteronomy 4:24), that we might know that wood, hay and stubble are going to burn up in the day of judgment. And in the Psalms we read: "Fire goeth before Him, and He shall set aflame all His enemies round about Him" (Psalm 97:3). A rushing, fiery stream proceeded from before Him in order that it might carry sinners to hell (Gehenna).

Verse 10. "There were millions ministering unto Him, and a billion stood by His side." This was not intended to be a specific number for the servants of God, but only indicates a multitude too great for human computation. These are the thousands and tens of thousands of which we read in the

Psalms: "The chariot of God is attended by ten thousands; thousands of them that rejoice. The Lord is among them" (Psalm 68:17). And in another place: "He who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire" (Psalm 104:4). Now the duty of angels is twofold: the duty of one group is to bestow rewards upon just men; the duty of the other is to have charge over individual calamities.

"...The court was in session, and the books were opened." The consciences of men, and the deeds of individuals which partake of either character, whether good or bad, are disclosed to all. One of the books is the good book of which we often read, namely the book of the living. The other is the evil book which is held in the hand of the accuser, who is the fiend and avenger of whom we read in Revelation: "The accuser of our brethren" (Revelation 12:10). This is the earthly book of which the prophet says: "Let them be written on earth" (Jeremiah 17:13).

Verse 11. "I looked on because of the sound of the lofty words which that horn was uttering." The judgment of God descends for the humbling of pride. Hence the Roman Empire also will be destroyed, because the horn was uttering the lofty words.

"...And I saw that the beast was slain and its body perished." In the one empire of the Romans, all the kingdoms at once are to be destroyed, because of the blasphemy of the Antichrist. And the empire shall not be an earthly empire at all, but it is simply the abode of the saints which is spoken of here, and the advent of the conquering Son of God.

Verses 13, 14. "And behold, there came One with the clouds of heaven like unto the Son of man." He who was described in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar as a rock cut without hands, which also grew to be a large mountain, and which smashed the earthenware, the iron, the bronze, the silver, and the gold is now introduced as the very person of the Son of man, so as to indicate in the case of the Son of God how He took upon Himself human flesh; according to the statement which we read in the Acts of the Apostles: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up towards heaven? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

"...And He arrived unto the Ancient of days, and they brought Him before His presence, and He gave unto Him authority and honor and royal power." All that is said here concerning His being brought before Almighty God and receiving authority and honor and royal power is to be understood in the light of the Apostle's statement: "Who, although He was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and was found in His condition to be as a man: He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:6-8). And if the sect of the Arians were willing to give heed to all this Scripture with a reverent mind, they would never direct against the Son of God the calumny that He is not on an equality with God.

"...And He is the one whom all the peoples, tribes, and language-groups shall serve. His authority is an eternal authority which shall not be removed, and His kingdom shall be one that shall never be destroyed..." Let Porphyry answer the query of whom out of all mankind this language might apply to, or who this person might be who was so powerful as to break and smash to pieces the little horn, whom he interprets to be Antiochus? If he replies that the princes of Antiochus were defeated by Judas Maccabaeus, then he must explain how Judas could be said to come with the

clouds of heaven like unto the Son of man, and to be brought unto the Ancient of days, and how it could be said that authority and royal power was bestowed upon him, and that all peoples and tribes and language-groups served him, and that his power is eternal and not terminated by any conclusion.

Verses 17, 18. "These four great beasts are the four kingdoms which shall arise from the earth. But the saints of the Most High God shall take the kingdom." The four kingdoms of which we have spoken above were earthly in character. "For everything which is of the earth shall return to earth" (Ecclesiastes 3:20). But the saints shall never possess an earthly kingdom, but only a heavenly. Away, then, with the fable about a millennium! (Revelation 20:4-6)

"...And they shall possess the kingdom unto eternity, even forever and ever..." If this be taken to refer to the Maccabees, the advocate of this position should explain how the kingdom of the Maccabees is of a perpetual character.

Verse 25. "And he shall utter (variant: "he utters") speeches against the Lofty One." Or else, as Symmachus has rendered it: "He utters speeches like God," so that one who assumes the authority of God will also arrogate to himself the words of divine majesty.

"...And he shall crush the saints of the Most High, and will suppose himself to be able to alter times and laws." The Antichrist will wage war against the saints and will overcome them; and he shall exalt himself to such a height of arrogance as to attempt changing the very laws of God and the sacred rites as well. He will also lift himself up against all that is called God, subjecting all religion to his own authority.

"...And they shall be delivered into his hand for a time, and times, and half a time." "Time" is equivalent to "year." The word "times," according to the idiom of the Hebrews (who also possess the dual number) represents "two years." The half a year signifies "six months." During this period the saints are to be given over to the power of the Antichrist, in order that those Jews might be condemned who did not believe the truth but supported a lie. The Savior also speaks of this period in the Gospel, saying: "Unless those days had been cut short, no flesh would be saved" (Matthew 24:22). In the final vision we shall assert the inappropriateness of this period to Antiochus.

Verse 26. "And the court will sit in judgment, that [Antichrist's] power may be taken away and be crushed in pieces and utterly perish even unto the end." This refers to Antichrist, that is, to the little horn which uttered the lofty words, for his kingdom is to be permanently destroyed.

Verse 27. "But kingdom and power and a vast realm comprising all that is under heaven shall be conferred upon the nation of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and whom all kings shall serve and obey." Here the reference is to Christ's empire, which is eternal.

Verse 28. "Thus far is the end of the word." That is, "the end of that word and discourse which the Lord revealed to me in this present vision."

"...I, Daniel, was much troubled with my thoughts, and my countenance was altered within me; but I preserved the word in my heart." Up to this point the Book of Daniel was written in the Chaldee and Syriac language. All the rest that follows up to the very end of the volume we read in Hebrew.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Verse 1. "In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, a vision appeared to me. I, Daniel, after what I had seen at the first..." This vision came two years after the previous revelation, for the latter was beheld in the first year of Belshazzar, whereas this was beheld in the third year. And so he informs us: "...after that which I had seen at the first."

Verse 2. "I saw in my vision while I was in the castle of Susa, which is in the region of Elam" (Vulgate: "city of Elam"). Or else we may render, as Symmachus has translated it, "...in the city of Elam," from which of course the region took its name, just as the Babylonians were named from Babylon. So also the Elamites were thus named from Elam, in consequence of which the Septuagint translates it: "the region of Elamais." And Susa is the chief city of the region of the Elamites, and there, according to Josephus' account, Daniel erected a lofty tower fashioned of square blocks of marble, and of such outstanding beauty that it seems newly built even up to the present day. There also the remains of the kings of the Persians and Medes lie buried, and the custodian or sacristan and priest of that locality is a Jew. "While I was in the castle at Susa..." Not that the city itself is a castle, for as we have stated, it is a chief city of great power; but rather that the city is so solidly built that it looks like a castle.

"And I saw in the vision that I was over the gate of Ulai." Instead of this Aquila translated: "...over the Ubal of Ulai"; Theodotion rendered: "above Ubal"; Symmachus: "above the swamp of Ulai"; the Septuagint: "above the gate of Ulai." But it should be understood that Ulai is the name of a place, or else of a gate, just as there was in Troy a gate called the Skaia, and among the Romans there is one called Carmentalis. In each case the name has originated from special circumstances.

Verse 3. "And I lifted up my eyes and saw." Yet of course one only sees in dreams things which appear as shadowy representations, naturally, and as mere likenesses, rather than our being able to behold the reality of the objects themselves.

"And behold, a ram stood in front of the swamp (or: in front of the gate - the word being UBAL in the Hebrew), having lofty horns, one of which was higher than the other and growing yet larger." He calls Darius, Cyrus's uncle, a ram. He reigned over the Medes after his father, Astyages. And the one horn which was higher than the other, and growing still larger, signified Cyrus himself, who succeeded his maternal grandfather, Astyages, and reigned over the Medes and Persians along with his uncle, Darius, whom the Greeks called Cyaxeres.

Verse 4. "After this I saw the ram pushing with its horns westward and northward and southward..." Not that he saw the ram itself, that is, the ram of Cyrus or Darius, but rather the ram of the same kingdom as theirs, that is, the second Darius, who was the last king of the Persian power, and who was overcome by the king of the Macedonians, Alexander the son of Philip. And as to the fact that Darius was a very powerful and wealthy king, both the Greek and the Latin and the barbarian historical accounts so relate.

Verse 5. "And I myself understood..." On the basis of the previous visions which had symbolized the second kingdom by the ram and the he-goat, Daniel now also understood that he was looking at the empire of the Medes and Persians.

"And behold, there was a he-goat which was coming from the West above the surface of the whole earth, and yet without touching the ground..." So that no one will think that I am attaching a private interpretation to this, let us simply repeat the words of Gabriel as he explained the prophet's vision. He said, "The ram whom thou sawest to possess two horns is the king of the Medes and Persians." This was, of course, Darius the son of Arsames, in whose reign the kingdom of the Medes and Persians was destroyed. "There was in addition a he-goat, who was coming from the west," and because of his extraordinary speed he appeared not to touch the ground. This was Alexander, the king of the Greeks, who after the overthrow of Thebes took up arms against the Persians. Commencing the conflict at the Granicus River, he conquered the generals of Darius and finally smashed against the ram himself and broke in pieces his two horns, the Medes and the Persians. Casting him beneath his feet, he subjected both horns to his own authority.

"And (he had) a large horn..." refers to the first king, Alexander himself. When he died in Babylon at the age of thirty-two, his four generals rose up in his place and divided his empire among themselves. For Ptolemy, the son of Lagos, seized Egypt; the Philip who was also called Aridaeus (var.: Arius), the (half-) brother of Alexander took over Macedonia; Seleucus Nicanor took over Syria, Babylonia, and all the kingdoms of the East; and Antigonus ruled over Asia Minor. "But (they shall not rise up) with his power" (chap. 8:22), since no one was able to equal the greatness of Alexander himself. "And a long time afterward" there shall arise "a king of Syria who shall be of shameless countenance and shall understand (evil) counsels," even Antiochus Epiphanes, the son of the Seleucus who was also called Philopator.

Verse 9. After he had been a hostage to Rome, and had without the knowledge of the Senate obtained rule by treachery, Antiochus fought with Ptolemy Philometor, that is, "against the South" and against Egypt; and then again "against the East," and against those who were fomenting revolution in Persia. At the last he fought against the Jews and captured Judea, entering into Jerusalem and setting up in the Temple of God the statue of Jupiter Olympius. "...and against the power of heaven," that is, against the children of Israel, who were protected by the assistance of angels. He pushed his arrogance to such an extreme that he subjected the majority of the saints to the worship of idols, as if he would tread the very stars beneath his feet. And thus it came to pass that he held the South and the East, that is, Egypt and Persia, under his sway.

Verses 11, 12. And as for the statement, "And he glorified himself even against the Prince of Power," this means that he lifted himself up against God and persecuted His saints. He even took away the endelekhismos or "continual offering" which was customarily sacrificed in the morning and at even, and he prevailed to the casting down of the "place of His sanctuary." And he did not do this by his own prowess, but only "on account of the sins of the people." And thus it came to pass that truth was prostrated upon the ground, and as the worship of idols flourished, the religion of God suffered an eclipse.

Verse 13. "And I heard one of the saints speaking, and one saint said to another saint (I do not know which one), who was conversing with him." Instead of "another one which one I do not know" - the rendering of Symmachus (tini pote) which I too have followed - Aquila and Theodotion, and the Septuagint as well, have simply put the Hebrew word (p-l-m-n-y) phelmoni itself. Without specifying the angel's name, I should say that the author indicated some one of the angels or other in a general way.

"How long shall be the vision concerning the continual sacrifice and the sin of the desolation that is made, and the sanctuary and the strength be trodden under foot?" One angel asks another angel for how long a period the Temple is by the judgment of God to be desolated under the rule of Antiochus, King of Syria, and how long the image of Jupiter is to stand in God's Temple (according to his additional statement: "...and the sanctuary and the strength be trodden under foot?").

Verse 14. And he answered him, "Until the evening and the morning, until two thousand three hundred days; and then the sanctuary shall be cleansed." If we read the Books of Maccabees and the history of Josephus, we shall find it there recorded that in the one hundred and forty-third year after the Seleucus who first reigned in Syria after the decease of Alexander, Antiochus entered Jerusalem, and after wreaking a general devastation he returned again in the third year and set up the statue of Jupiter in the Temple. Up until the time of Judas Macca-baeus, that is, up until the one hundred and eighth year, Jerusalem lay waste over a period of six years, and for three years the Temple lay defiled; making up a total of two thousand three hundred days plus three months. At the end of the period the Temple was purged. Some authorities read two hundred instead of two thousand three hundred, in order to avoid the apparent excess involved in six years and three months. Most of our commentators refer this passage to the Antichrist, and hold that that which occurred under Antiochus was only by way of a type which shall be fulfilled under Antichrist. And as for the statement, "The sanctuary shall be cleansed," this refers to the time of Judas Maccabaeus, who came from the village of Modin, and who being aided by the efforts of his brothers and relatives and many of the Jewish people the generals of Antiochus not far above Emmaus (which is now called Nicopolis). And hearing of this, Antiochus, who had risen up against the Prince of princes, that is, against the Lord of lords and King of kings, was earnestly desirous of despoiling the temple of Diana which was located in Elimais, in the Persian district, because it possessed valuable votive offerings. And when he there lost his army, he was destroyed without hands, that is to say, he died of grief. As for the mention of evening and morning, this signifies the succession of day and night.

Verse 15. "And it came to pass that when I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it." He beheld the vision by way of a picture or likeness, and he failed to understand it. Consequently, not everyone who sees comprehends what he has seen; it is just as if we read the Holy Scripture with our eyes and do not understand it with our heart,

"...And behold, one stood before me who resembled the appearance of a man." Angels, after all, are not actually men by nature, but they resemble men in appearance. For example, three persons appeared as men to Abraham at the oak of Mamre (Genesis 18:1-2), and yet they certainly were not men, for one of them was worshipped as the Lord. And so the Savior also stated in the Gospel: "Abraham beheld My day; he beheld it and rejoiced" (John 8:56).

Verses 16, 17. "And I heard the voice of a man in the midst of the Ulai, and he cried out and said: 'Gabriel, make this vision intelligible (Vulgate: make this man to understand the vision).' And he came and stood near to where I was standing." The Jews claim that this man who directed Gabriel to explain the vision to Daniel was Michael. Quite appropriately it was Gabriel, who has been put in charge of battles, to whom this duty was assigned, inasmuch as the vision had to do with battles and contests between kings and even between kingdoms themselves. For Gabriel is translated into our language as "the strength of, or the mighty one of, God." And so at that time also when the

Lord was about to be born and to declare war against the demons and to triumph over the world, Gabriel came to Zacharias (Luke 1:11-20) and to Mary (Luke 1:26-27). And then we read in the Psalms concerning the Lord in His triumph: "Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle; He is the King of glory" (Psalm 24:8). But whenever it is medicine or healing that is needed, it is Raphael who is sent, for his name is rendered as "the healing of," or "the medicine of God" - that is, if one cares to accept the authority of the Book of Tobias (Tobit 12:11-15). And then, when favorable promises are made to the people, and hilasmos, which we might render as "propitiation" or "expiation," is the thing required, then it is Michael who is directed to go, for his name means, "Who is like God?" Of course the significance of the name indicates the fact that the only true remedy is to be found in God.

"And he said to me: 'Son of man, understand that in the time of the end the vision shall be fulfilled.'" Inasmuch as Ezekiel and Daniel and Zechariah behold themselves to be often in the company of angels, they were reminded of their frailty, lest they should be lifted up in pride and imagine themselves to partake of the nature or dignity of angels. Therefore they are addressed as sons of men, in order that they might realize that they are but human beings.

Verses 18, 19. "And he touched me and stood me upon my feet, and said to me..." Overcome with terror, the prophet was lying on the ground face downward upon his hands and knees, but at the angel's touch he was raised up to a standing position in order that he might without perturbation attend to and understand what was spoken.

Verse 26. "Thou therefore seal up the vision, because it shall come to pass after many days." Having explained the vision which we have examined above to the best of our ability, the angel Gabriel adds at the end: "Thou therefore seal up the vision, because it shall come to pass after many days." By the mention of a seal, he showed that the things spoken were of a hidden character and not accessible to the ears of the multitude, or susceptible of comprehension prior to their actual fulfilment by the events themselves.

Verse 27. "And I, Daniel, languished and was sick for some days. And when I rose from my bed, I performed the king's tasks." This is the same thing as we read in Genesis about Abraham, for after he had heard the Lord speaking to him, he averred that he was but dust and ashes (Genesis 18:27). And so Daniel states that he languished as a reaction to the horror of the vision, and suffered illness. And after he had risen from his sick-bed, he says he performed the tasks assigned to him by the king, rendering to all men all that was due them and bearing in mind the gospel principle: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Luke 20:25).

"And I was amazed at the vision, and there was no one who could interpret it." If there was no one who could interpret it, how was it that the angel interpreted it in the previous passage? What he means is that he had heard mention of kings and did not know what their names were; he learned of things to come, but he was tossed about with uncertainty as to what time they would come to pass. And so he did the only thing he could do: he marveled at the vision, and resigned everything to God's omniscience.

CHAPTER NINE

Verse 1. "In the first year of the Darius who was the son of Ahasuerus of the race of the Medes and who reigned over the kingdom of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign..." This is the Darius who in cooperation with Cyrus conquered the Chaldeans and Babylonians. We are not to think of that other Darius in the second year of whose reign the Temple was built (as Porphyry supposes in making out a late date for Daniel); nor are we to think of the Darius who was vanquished by Alexander, the king of the Macedonians. He therefore adds the name of his father and also refers to his victory, inasmuch as he was the first of the race of the Medes to overthrow the kingdom of the Chaldeans. He does this to avoid any mistake in the reading which might arise from the similarity of the name.

Verse 2. "I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years concerning which the word of the Lord had come to the prophet Jeremiah, that seventy years would be accomplished for the desolation of Jerusalem." Jeremiah had predicted seventy years for the desolation of the Temple (Jeremiah 29:1-10), at the end of which the people would again return to Judaea and build the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. But this fact did not render Daniel careless, but rather encouraged him to pray that God might through his supplications fulfil that which He had graciously promised. Thus he avoided the danger that carelessness might result in pride, and pride cause offense to the Lord. Accordingly we read in Genesis that prior to the Deluge one hundred and twenty years were appointed for men to come to repentance (Genesis 6:3); and inasmuch as they refused to repent even within so long an interval of time as a hundred years, God did not wait for the remaining twenty years to be fulfilled, but brought on the punishment earlier which He had threatened for a later time. So also Jeremiah is told, on account of the hardness of the heart of the Jewish people: "Pray not for this people, for I will not hearken unto thee" (Jeremiah 7:16). Samuel also was told: "How long wilt thou mourn over Saul? I also have rejected him" (1 Samuel 16:1). And so it was with sackcloth and ashes that Daniel besought the Lord to fulfil what He had promised, not that Daniel lacked faith concerning the future, but rather he would avoid the danger that a feeling of security might produce carelessness, and carelessness produce an offense to God.

Verse 4. "'I beseech Thee, O Lord God, who art mighty and terrible..." That is, Thou art terrible towards those who despise Thine injunctions.

"...Who keepest covenant and mercy towards those who love Thee and keep Thy commandments." It is not therefore the case that what God promises will come to pass without further ado, but rather, He fulfils His promises towards those who keep His commandments.

Verse 5. "'We have sinned, we have behaved wickedly and impiously, and we have departed..." He reviews the sins of the people as if he were personally guilty, on the ground of his being one of the people, just as we read the Apostle does also in his Epistle to the Romans.

Verse 7. "'Justice belongeth unto Thee, O Lord, but for us there is only confusion of face..." It is of course just that we suffer what we deserve.

Verse 8. "'Unto Thee belongeth mercy, O Lord our God, and also propitiation..." Concerning the same God of Whom he had previously said, "To Thee, O Lord, belongeth justice," he now says (since the Lord is not only just but also merciful): "To Thee belongeth mercy." He says this in order that he might call upon the Judge to show mercy, after His sentence has been imposed.

Verse 11. "'And (the curse) has come upon us drop by drop.'" That is, Thou hast not poured out upon us all of Thy wrath, for we should not have been able to bear it, but Thou hast poured forth a mere droplet of Thy fury, in order that we might return unto Thee once we have been immeshed in Thy snare.

"The malediction and the curse which were written in the book of Moses, the servant of God..." In Deuteronomy we read the curses and blessings of the Lord (Deuteronomy 27:11-28:14), which were afterwards uttered in Mount Gerizim and Ebal upon the righteous and upon the sinners.

Verse 13. "'All this evil has come upon us, and we have not entreated Thy face, O Lord our God, that we might turn back from our iniquities and consider Thy truth.'" Their obduracy was so great that even in the midst of their toils they would not entreat God, and even if they had entreated Him, it would not have been a genuine entreaty, because they had not turned back from their iniquities. Yet to consider the truth of God is equivalent to turning back from iniquity.

Verse 14. "'And the Lord hath kept watch over the evil and hath brought it upon us..." Whenever we are rebuked because of our sins, God is keeping watch over us and visiting us with chastenment. But whenever we are left alone by God and we do not suffer judgment but are unworthy of the Lord's rebuke, then He is said to slumber. And so we read in the Psalms as well: "The Lord has risen up as one who was slumbering or as a man out of a drunken sleep" (Psalm 78:65). For our wickedness and iniquity inflames God with wine, and whenever it is rebuked in our case, God is said to be keeping careful watch and to be rising up out of His drunken sleep, in order that we who are drunken with sin may be made to pay careful heed unto righteousness.

Verse 15. "'And now, O Lord our God..." Daniel remembers God's ancient kindness in order that he may appeal to Him for a similar act of clemency.

Verse 17. "'And show Thy face upon Thy sanctuary, which lies desolate.'" By deed fulfil that which Thou hast promised in word, for the approximate period of desolation has elapsed.

Verse 18. "For Thine own sake, O my God, incline Thine ear and hear; open Thine eyes and behold our desolation..." This appeal is couched in anthropomorphic language (anthropopathos), with the implication that whenever our prayers are heard, God seems to incline His ear; and whenever God deigns to have regard to us, He appears to open His eyes; but whenever He turns His face away, we appear to be unworthy of attention either from His eyes or His ears.

Verse 20. "Now while I was yet speaking and praying and confessing my sins and the sins of my people, Israel, so as to present (Vulg.: and was presenting) my petitions in the presence of my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God..." And so, as we have pointed out above, he not only thought upon the sins of the people but also upon his own sins, as being one of the people. Or else it was by way of humility, although he had not personally committed sin; his purpose being to obtain pardon by reason of his humility. Observe what he said here: "I was confessing my sins." For there are many passages in Scripture where confession does not imply an expression of repentance so much as an expression of praise to God.

Verse 21. "While I was still speaking in my prayer, behold the man Gabriel, whom I had seen at the beginning of the vision." He calls the previous vision preceding this one the beginning. The effect of his prayer was considerable, and the promise of God was fulfilled which says, "While thou

art yet speaking, lo, I am at hand" (Isaiah 58:9). And Gabriel appears not as an angel or archangel, but as a man (vir), a term used to indicate the quality of virtue rather than specifying his sex.

"...he quickly flew to me and touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice." It is stated that he flew, because he had made his appearance as a man. It is said that it was at the time of the evening sacrifice, in order to show that the prophet's prayer had persisted from the morning sacrifice even unto the evening sacrifice, and that God for that reason directed His mercy towards him.

Verse 22. "And He instructed me and spoke to me, saying..." The vision was so obscure that the prophet needed the angel's teaching.

"...Now, O Daniel, I have come forth that I may instruct thee and that thou mayest understand." That is, I have been sent to thee and have come forth, not from the presence of God in the sense of departing from Him, but only in the sense of coming unto thee.

Verse 23. "From the very beginning of thy prayers the word went forth and I myself have come to show it to thee, because thou art a man of desires." That is, at the time when thou didst begin to ask God, thou didst straightway obtain His mercy, and His decision was put forth. I have therefore been sent to explain to thee the things of which thou art ignorant, inasmuch as thou art a man of desires, that is to say a lovable man, worthy of God's love - even as Solomon was called Idida (var: Jedida) or "man of desires." (Song of Solomon 5:16) I have been sent because thou art worthy, in recompense for thine affection for God, to be told the secret counsels of God and to have a knowledge of things to come.

"Thou therefore pay heed to the word and understand the vision." Thus Daniel is told, "Pay diligent heed, in order that thou mayest hear and understand what thou seest." We too should do this, for our eyes have been blinded by the shadows of ignorance and the darkness of sins.

Verses 24-27. "Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished, and everlasting justice may be brought to bear, and that the vision and prophecy may be fulfilled that the Holy One of the saints may be anointed. Know therefore and take note that from the going forth of the word to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, and the street shall be built again, and the walls, in distressing times. And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain, and (the people that shall deny Him) shall not be His. And a people, with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. And the end thereof shall be devastation, and after the end of the war there shall be the appointed desolation. And he shall confirm the covenant with many in one week; and in the middle of the week both victim and sacrifice shall fail. And there shall be in the Temple the abomination of desolation, and the desolation shall continue even unto the consummation and the end." Because the prophet had said, "Thou didst lead forth Thy people, and Thy name was pronounced upon Thy city and upon Thy people," Gabriel therefore, as the mouthpiece of God, says by implication: "By no means are they God's people, but only thy people; nor is Jerusalem the holy city of God, but it is only a holy city unto thee, as thou sayest." This is similar to what we read in Exodus also, when God says to Moses, "Descend, for thy people have committed sin" (Exodus 32:7). That is to say, they are not My people, for they have forsaken Me. And so, because thou dost supplicate for

Jerusalem and prayest for the people of the Jews, hearken unto that which shall befall thy people in seventy weeks of years, and those things which will happen to thy city.

I realize that this question has been argued over in various ways by men of greatest learning, and that each of them has expressed his views according to the capacity of his own genius. And so, because it is unsafe to pass judgment upon the opinions of the great teachers of the Church and to set one above another, I shall simply repeat the view of each, and leave it to the reader's judgment as to whose explanation ought to be followed. In the fifth volume of his *Tempora* ["Chronology"], Africanus has this to say concerning the seventy weeks (and I quote him verbatim): "The chapter which we read in Daniel concerning the seventy weeks contains many remarkable details, which require too lengthy a discussion at this point; and so we must discuss only what pertains to our present task, namely that which concerns chronology. There is no doubt but what it constitutes a prediction of Christ's advent, for He appeared to the world at the end of seventy weeks. After Him the crimes were consummated and sin reached its end and iniquity was destroyed. An eternal righteousness also was proclaimed which overcame the mere righteousness of the law; and the vision and the prophecy were fulfilled, inasmuch as the Law and the Prophets endured until the time of John the Baptist (Luke 16), and then the Saint of saints was anointed. And all these things were the objects of hope, prior to Christ's incarnation, rather than the objects of actual possession. Now the angel himself specified seventy weeks of years, that is to say, four hundred and ninety years from the issuing of the word that the petition be granted and that Jerusalem be rebuilt. The specified interval began in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, King of the Persians; for it was his cupbearer, Nehemiah (Neh. 1), who, as we read in the book of Ezra, petitioned the king and obtained his request that Jerusalem be rebuilt. And this was the word, or decree, which granted permission for the construction of the city and its encompassment with walls; for up until that time it had lain open to the incursions of the surrounding nations. But if one points to the command of King Cyrus, who granted to all who desired it permission to return to Jerusalem, the fact of the matter is that the high priest Jesus and Zerubbabel, and later on the priest Ezra, together with the others who had been willing to set forth from Babylon with them, only made an abortive attempt to construct the Temple and the city with its walls, but were prevented by the surrounding nations from completing the task, on the pretext that the king had not so ordered. And thus the work remained incomplete until Nehemiah's time and the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes. Hence the captivity lasted for seventy years prior to the Persian rule. At this period in the Persian Empire a hundred and fifteen years had elapsed since its inception, but it was the one hundred and eighty-fifth year from the captivity of Jerusalem when Artaxerxes first gave orders for the walls of Jerusalem to be built. Nehemiah was in charge of this undertaking, and the street was built and the surrounding walls were erected. Now if you compute seventy weeks of years from that date, you can come out to the time of Christ. But if we wish to take any other date as the starting point for these weeks, then the dates will show a discrepancy and we shall encounter many difficulties. For if the seventy weeks are computed from the time of Cyrus and his decree of indulgence which effectuated the release of the Jewish captives, then we shall encounter a deficit of a hundred years and more short of the stated number of seventy weeks. If we reckon from the day when the angel spoke to Daniel, the deficit would be much greater. An even greater number of years is added, if you wish to put the beginning of the weeks at the commencement of the captivity. For the kingdom of the Persians endured for two hundred and thirty years until the rise of the Macedonian kingdom; then the Macedonians themselves reigned

for three hundred years. From that date until the sixteenth (i.e., the fifteenth) year of Tiberius Caesar, when Christ suffered death, is an interval of sixty years. All of these years added together come to the number of five hundred and ninety, with the result that a hundred years remain to be accounted for. On the other hand, the interval from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes to the time of Christ completes the figure of seventy weeks, if we reckon according to the lunar computation of the Hebrews, who did not number their months according to the movement of the sun, but rather according to the moon. For the interval from the one hundred fiftieth year of the Persian Empire, when Artaxerxes, as king thereof, attained the twentieth year of his reign (and this was the fourth year of the eighty-third Olympiad), up until the two hundred and second Olympiad (for it was the second year of that Olympiad which was the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar) comes out to be the grand total of four hundred seventy-five years. This would result in four hundred ninety Hebrew years, reckoning according to the lunar months as we have suggested. For according to their computation, these years can be made up of months of twenty-nine (variant: twenty-eight) and a half days each. This means that the sun, during a period of four hundred ninety years, completes its revolution in three hundred sixty-five days and a quarter, and this amounts to twelve lunar months for each individual year, with eleven and a fourth days left over to spare. Consequently the Greeks and Jews over a period of eight years insert three intercalary months (embolimoi). For if you will multiply eleven and a quarter days by eight, you will come out to ninety days, which equal three months. Now if you divide the eight-year periods into four hundred seventy-five years, your quotient will be fifty-nine plus three months. These fifty-nine plus eight-year periods produce enough intercalary months to make up fifteen years, more or less; and if you will add these fifteen years to the four hundred seventy-five years, you will come out to seventy weeks of years, that is, a total of four hundred and ninety years."

Africanus has expressed his views in these very words which we have copied out. Let us pass on to Eusebius Pamphili, who in the eighth book of his *Euangelike Apodeixis* [the full title was *Euangelikes Apodeixeos Proparaskeue* or "Preparation for the Demonstration of the Gospel"; the Latin title is *Praeparatio Evangelica*] ventures some such conjecture as this: "It does not seem to me that the seventy weeks have been divided up without purpose, in that seven is mentioned first, and then sixty-two, and then a last week is added, which in turn is itself divided into two parts. For it is written: 'Thou shalt know and understand that from the issuing of the word (command) that the petition be granted and Jerusalem be built until Christ the Prince there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.' And after the rest which he relates in the intervening section, he states at the end: 'He shall confirm a testimony (covenant) with many during one week.' It is clear that the angel did not detail these things in his reply to no purpose or apart from the inspiration of God. This observation seems to require some cautious and careful reasoning, so that the reader may pay diligent attention and inquire into the cause for this division (variant: vision). But if we must express our own opinion, in conformity with the rest of the interpretation which concerns this present context, in the angel's statement: 'From the issuing of the word that the petition be granted and that Jerusalem be built, until the time of Christ the Prince,' we are only to think of other princes who had charge of the Jewish people subsequent to this prophecy and subsequent to the return from Babylon. That is to say, we are to think of the arkhierais and pontiffs to whom the Scripture attaches the title of christs, by reason of the fact that they have been anointed. The first of these was Jesus the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and then the rest who had that office up until the time of the advent of our Lord and Savior. And it is these who are intended by the prophet's

prediction when it states: 'From the issuing of the word that the petition be granted and Jerusalem be built even unto Christ the Prince there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks.' That is to say, the purpose is that seven weeks be counted off, and then afterward sixty-two weeks, which come to a total of four hundred and eighty-three years after the time of Cyrus. And lest we appear to be putting forth a mere conjecture too rashly and without testing the truth of our statements, let us reckon up those who bore office as christs over the people from the time of Jeshua, the son of Jehozadak, until the advent of the Lord; that is to say, those who were anointed for the high priesthood. First, then, as we have already stated, subsequent to Daniel's prophecy, which occurred in the reign of Cyrus, and subsequent to the return of the people from Babylon, Jeshua the son of Jehozadak was the high priest, and together with Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, they laid the foundations of the temple. And because the undertaking was hindered by the Samaritans and the other surrounding nations, seven weeks of years elapsed (that is to say, forty-nine years), during which the work on the temple remained unfinished. These weeks are separated by the prophecy from the remaining sixty-two weeks. And lastly, the Jews also followed this view when they said to the Lord in the Gospel-narrative: 'This temple was built over a period of forty-six years, and shalt thou raise it up in three days' (John 2:20). For this was the number of years which elapsed between the first year of Cyrus, who granted to those Jews who so desired the permission to return to their fatherland, and the sixth year of King Darius, in whose reign the entire work upon the temple was finished. Furthermore Josephus added on three more years, during which the periboloi (precincts) and certain other construction left undone were brought to completion; and when these are added to the forty-six years, they come out to forty-nine years, or seven weeks of years. And the remaining sixty-two weeks are computed from the seventh year of Darius. At that time Jeshua the son of Jehozadak, and Zerubbabel (who had already reached his majority) were in charge of the people, and it was in their time that Haggai and Zechariah prophesied. After them came Ezra and Nehemiah from Babylon and constructed the walls of the city during the high priesthood of Joiakim, son of Jeshua, who had the surname of Jehozadak. After him Eliashib succeeded to the priesthood, then Joiada and Johanan after him. Following him there was Jaddua, in whose lifetime Alexander, the king of the Macedonians, founded Alexandria, as Josephus relates in his books of the Antiquities, and actually came to Jerusalem and offered blood-sacrifices in the Temple. Now Alexander died in the one hundred and thirteenth Olympiad, in the two hundred thirty-sixth year of the Persian Empire, which in turn had begun in the first year of the fifty-fifth Olympiad. That was the date when Cyrus, King of the Persians, conquered the Babylonians and Chaldeans. After the death of the priest Jaddua, who had been in charge of the temple in Alexander's reign, Onias received the high priesthood. It was at this period that Seleucus, after the conquest of Babylon, placed upon his own head the crown of all Syria and Asia, in the twelfth year after Alexander's death. Up to that time the years which had elapsed since the rule of Cyrus, when computed together, were two hundred and forty-eight. From that date the Scripture of the Maccabees computes the kingdom of the Greeks. Following Onias, the high priest Eleazar became head of the Jews. That was the period when the Seventy translators (Septuaginta interpretes) are said to have translated the Holy Scriptures into Greek at Alexandria. After him came Onias II, who was followed by Simon, who ruled over the people when Jesus the son of Sirach wrote the book which bears the Greek title of Panaretos ("A Completely Virtuous Man"), and which is by most people falsely attributed to Solomon. Another Onias followed him in the high priesthood, and that was the period when Antiochus was trying to force the Jews to sacrifice to the

gods of the Gentiles. After the death of Onias, Judas Maccabaeus cleansed the Temple and smashed to bits the statues of the idols. His brother Jonathan followed him, and after Jonathan their brother Simon governed the people. By his death the two hundred and seventy-seventh year of the Syrian kingdom had elapsed, and the First Book of Maccabees contains a record of events up to that time. And so the total number of years from the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, until the end of the First Book of Maccabees and the death of the high priest Simon is four hundred twenty-five. After him John occupied the high priesthood for twenty-nine years, and upon his death Aristobulus became head of the people for a year and was the first man after the return from Babylon to associate with the dignity of high priesthood the authority of kingship. His successor was Alexander, who likewise was high priest and king, and who governed the people for twenty-seven years. Up to this point, the number of years from the first year of Cyrus and the return of the captives who desired to come back to Judaea is to be computed at four hundred and eighty-three. This total is made up of the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks, or sixty-nine weeks altogether. And during this whole period high priests ruled over the Jewish people, and I now believe that they are those referred to as christ-princes. And when the last of them, Alexander, had died, the Jewish nation was rent in this direction and that into various factions, and was harrassed by internal seditions in its leaderless condition; and that too to such an extent that Alexandra, who was also called Salina, and who was the wife of the same Alexander, seized power and kept the high priesthood for her son, Hyrcanus. But she passed on the royal power to her other son, Aristobulus, and he exercised it for ten years. But when the brothers fought with each other in civil war and the Jewish nation was drawn into various factions, then Gnaeus Pompey, the general of the Roman army, came upon the scene. Having captured Jerusalem, he penetrated even to the shrine in the temple which was called the Holy of holies. He sent Aristobulus back to Rome in chains, keeping him for his triumphal procession, and then he gave the high priesthood to his brother, Hyrcanus. Then for the first time the Jewish nation became tributary to the Romans. Succeeding him, Herod, the son of Antipater, received the royal authority over the Jews by senatorial decree, after Hyrcanus had been killed; and so he was the first foreigner to become governor of the Jews. Moreover when his parents had died, he handed over the high priesthood to his children, even though they were non-Jews, utterly contrary to the law of Moses. Nor did he entrust the office to them for long, except upon their granting him favors and bribes, for he despised the commands of God's law." The same Eusebius offered another explanation also, and if we wanted to translate it into Latin, we should greatly expand the size of this book. And so the sense of his interpretation is this, that the number of years from the sixth year of Darius, who reigned after Cyrus and his son, Cambyses, - and this was the date when the work on the temple was completed - until the time of Herod and Caesar Augustus is reckoned to be seven weeks plus sixty-two weeks, which make a total of four hundred eighty-three years. That was the date when the christ, that is to say, Hyrcanus, being the last high priest of the Maccabaeian line, was murdered by Herod, and the succession of high priests came to an end, so far as the law of God was concerned. It was then also that a Roman army under the leadership of a Roman general devastated both the city and the sanctuary itself. Or else it was Herod himself who committed the devastation, after he had through the Romans appropriated to himself a governmental authority to which he had no right. And as for the angel's statement, "For he shall establish a compact with many for one week (variant: "a compact for many weeks"), and in the midst of the week the sacrifice and offering shall cease," it is to be understood in this way, that

Christ was born while Herod was reigning in Judaea and Augustus in Rome, and He preached the Gospel for three years and six months, according to John the Evangelist. And he established the worship of the true God with many people, undoubtedly meaning the Apostles and believers generally. And then, after our Lord's passion, the sacrifice and offering ceased in the middle of the week. For whatever took place in the Temple after that date was not a valid sacrifice to God but a mere worship of the devil, while they all cried out together, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matthew 27:25); and again, "We have no king but Caesar." Any reader who is interested may look up this passage in the Chronicle of this same Eusebius, for I translated it into Latin many years ago. But as for his statement that the number of years to be reckoned from the completion of the temple to the tenth year of the Emperor Augustus, that is, when Hyrcanus was slain and Herod obtained Judaea, amounts to a total of seven plus sixty-two weeks, or four hundred eighty-three years, we may check it in the following fashion. The building of the temple was finished in the seventy-sixth Olympiad, which was the sixth year of Darius. In the third year of the one hundred and eighty-sixth Olympiad, that is, the tenth year of Augustus, Herod seized the rule over the Jews. This makes the interval four hundred and eighty-three years, reckoning up by the individual Olympiads and computing them at four years each. This same Eusebius reports another view as well, which I do not entirely reject, that most authorities extend the one week of years to the sum of seventy years, reckoning each year as a ten-year period. They also claim that thirty-five years intervened between the passion of the Lord and the reign of Nero, and that it was at this latter date when the weapons of Rome were first lifted up against the Jews, this being the half-way point of the week of seventy years. After that, indeed, from the time of Vespasian and Titus (and it was right after their accession to power that Jerusalem and the temple were burned) up to the reign of Trajan another thirty-five years elapsed. And this, they assert, was the week of which the angel said to Daniel: "And he shall establish a compact with many for one week." For the Gospel was preached by the Apostles all over the world, since they survived even unto that late date. According to the tradition of the church historians, John the Evangelist lived up to the time of Trajan. Yet I am at a loss to know how we can understand the earlier seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks to involve seven years each, and just this last one to involve ten years for each unit of the seven, or seventy years in all. So much for Eusebius. But Hippolytus has expressed the following opinion concerning these same weeks: he reckons the seven weeks as prior to the return of the people from Babylon, and the sixty-two weeks as subsequent to their return and extending to the birth of Christ. But the dates do not agree at all. If indeed the duration of the Persian Empire be reckoned at two hundred and thirty years, and the Macedonian Empire at three hundred, and the period thereafter up to the birth of the Lord be thirty years, then the total from the beginning of the reign of Cyrus, King of the Persians, until the advent of the Savior will be five hundred and sixty years. Moreover Hippolytus places the final week at the end of the world and divides it into the period of Elias and the period of Antichrist, so that during the three and a half years of the last week the knowledge of God is established. And as for the statement, "He shall establish a compact with many for a week" (Daniel 9:27), during the other three years under the Antichrist the sacrifice and offering shall cease. But when Christ shall come and shall slay the wicked one by the breath of His mouth, desolation shall hold sway till the end. On the other hand Apollinarius of Laodicea in his investigation of the problem breaks away from the stream of the past and directs his longing desires towards the future, very unsafely venturing an opinion concerning matters so obscure. And if by any chance those of future generations should not see these predictions of his

fulfilled at the time he set, then they will be forced to seek for some other solution and to convict the teacher himself of erroneous interpretation. And so, in order to avoid the appearance of slandering a man as having made a statement he never made, he makes the following assertion - and I translate him word for word: "To the period of four hundred and ninety years the wicked deeds are to be confined as well as all the crimes which shall ensue from those deeds. After these shall come the times of blessing, and the world is to be reconciled unto God at the advent of Christ, His Son. For from the coming forth of the Word, when Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, to the forty-ninth year, that is, the end of the seven weeks, waited for Israel to repent. Thereafter, indeed, from the eighth year of Claudius Caesar onward, the Romans took up arms against the Jews. For it was in His thirtieth year, according to the Evangelist Luke, that the Lord incarnate began His preaching of the Gospel (Luke 1). According to the Evangelist John (John 2 and 11), Christ completed two years over a period of three passovers. The years of Tiberius' reign from that point onward are to be reckoned at six; then there were the four years of the reign of Gaius Caesar, surnamed Caligula, and eight more years in the reign of Claudius. This makes a total of forty-nine years, or the equivalent of seven weeks of years. But when four hundred thirty-four years shall have elapsed after that date, that is to say, the sixty-two weeks, then Jerusalem and the Temple shall be rebuilt during three and a half years within the final week, beginning with the advent of Elias, who according to the dictum of our Lord and Savior (Luke 1) is going to come and turn back the hearts of the fathers towards their children. And then the Antichrist shall come, and according to the Apostle he is going to sit in the temple of God (II Thess. 2) and be slain by the breath of our Lord and Savior after he has waged war against the saints. And thus it shall come to pass that the middle of the week shall mark the confirmation of God's covenant with the saints, and the middle of the week in turn shall mark the issuing of the decree under the authority of Antichrist that no more sacrifices be offered. For the Antichrist shall set up the abomination of desolation, that is, an idol or statue of his own god, within the Temple. Then shall ensue the final devastation and the condemnation of the Jewish people, who after their rejection of Christ's truth shall embrace the lie of the Antichrist." Moreover this same Apollinarius asserts that he conceived this idea about the proper dating from the fact that Africanus, the author of the *Tempora*, whose explanation I have inserted above, affirms that the final week will occur at the end of the world. Yet, says Apollinarius, it is impossible that periods so linked together be wrenched apart, but rather the time-segments must all be joined together in conformity with Daniel's prophecy. The learned scholar Clement, presbyter of the church at Alexandria, regards the number of years as a matter of slight consequence, asserting that the seventy weeks of years were completed by the span of time from the reign of Cyrus, King of the Persians, to the reign of the Roman emperors, Vespasian and Titus; that is to say, the interval of four hundred and ninety years, with the addition in that same figure of the two thousand three hundred days of which we made earlier mention. He attempts to reckon in these seventy weeks the ages of the Persians, Macedonians, and Caesars, even though according to the most careful computation, the number of years from the first year of Cyrus, King of the Persians and Medes, when Darius also bore rule, up to the reign of Vespasian and the destruction of the Temple amounts to six hundred and thirty. When Origen came to deal with this chapter, he urged us to seek out what information we do not possess; and because he had no leeway for allegorical interpretation, in which one may argue without constraint, but rather was restricted to matters of historical fact, he made this brief observation in the tenth volume of the *Stromata*: "We must quite carefully ascertain the amount of time between the first year of Darius,

the son of Ahasuerus, and the advent of Christ, and discover how many years were involved, and what events are said to have occurred during them. Then we must see whether we can fit these data in with the time of the Lord's coming."

We may learn what Tertullian had to say on the subject by consulting the book which he wrote against the Jews (*Contra Judaeos*), and his remarks may be set forth in brief: "How, then, are we to show that Christ came within the sixty-two weeks? This calculation begins with the first year of Darius, since that was the time when the vision itself was revealed to Daniel. For he was told: 'Understand and conclude from the prophesying of the command for me to give thee this reply...' Hence we are to commence our computation with the first year of Darius, when Daniel beheld this vision. Let us see, then, how the years are fulfilled up to the advent of Christ. Darius reigned nineteen years; Artaxerxes forty years; the Ochus who was surnamed Cyrus twenty-four years; Argus, one year. Then Darius II, who was called Melas, twenty-one years. Alexander the Macedonian reigned twelve years. And then after Alexander (who had ruled over both the Medes and the Persians, after he had conquered them, and had established his rule in Alexandria, calling it after his own name), Soter reigned there in Alexandria for thirty-five years, and was succeeded by Philadelphus, who reigned for thirty-eight years. After him Euergetes reigned for twenty-five years, and then Philopator for seventeen years, followed by Epiphanes for twenty-four years. Furthermore the second Euergetes ruled for twenty and nine years, and Soter for thirty-eight years. Ptolemy for thirty-seven years, and Cleopatra for twenty years and five months. Furthermore Cleopatra shared the rule with Augustus for thirteen years. After Cleopatra Augustus reigned forty-three years more. For all of the years of the reign of Augustus were fifty-six in number. And let us see (variant: we see) that in the forty-first year of the reign of Augustus, who ruled after the death of Cleopatra, Christ was born. And this same Augustus lived on for fifteen years after the time when Christ was born. And so the resultant periods of years up to the day of Christ's birth and the forty-first year of Augustus, after the death of Cleopatra, come to the total figure of four hundred and thirty-seven years and five months. This means that sixty-two and a half weeks were used up, or the equivalent of four hundred and thirty-seven years and six months, by the day when Christ was born. Then eternal righteousness was revealed, and the Saint of saints was anointed, namely Christ, and the vision and prophecy were sealed, and those sins were remitted which are allowed through faith in Christ's name to all who believe in Him." But what is the meaning of the statement that the "vision and prophecy are confirmed by a seal"? It means that all the prophets made proclamation concerning Himself, saying that He was going to come and that He would have to suffer. Hence we read shortly thereafter in this Tertullian passage, "The years were fifty-six in number; furthermore, Cleopatra continued to reign jointly under Augustus..." It was because the prophecy was fulfilled by His advent that the vision was confirmed by a seal; and it was called a prophecy because Christ Himself is the seal of all the prophets, fulfilling as He did all that the prophets had previously declared concerning Him. Of course after His advent and His passion (variant: the passion of Christ), there is no longer any vision or prophecy (variant: or prophet) which declares that Christ will come. And then a little later Tertullian says, "Let us see what is the meaning of the seven and a half weeks, which in turn are divided up into a subsection of earlier weeks; by what transaction were they fulfilled? Well, after Augustus, who lived on after Christ's birth, fifteen years elapsed. He was succeeded by Tiberius Caesar, and he held sway for twenty-two years, seven months and twenty-eight days. In the fifteenth year of his reign Christ suffered, being about thirty-three when He suffered. Then there was Gaius Caesar, also named

Caligula, who reigned for three years, eight months and thirteen days. Nero reigned for nine years, nine months and thirteen days. Galba ruled for seven months and twenty-eight days; Otho for three months and five days; and Vitellius for eight months and twenty-eight days. Vespasian vanquished the Jews in the first year of his reign, bringing the number of years to a total of fifty-two, plus six months. For he ruled for eleven years, and so by the date of his storming Jerusalem, the Jews had completed the seventy weeks foretold by Daniel." As for the view which the Hebrews hold concerning this passage, I shall set it forth summarily and within a brief compass, leaving the credibility of their assertions to those who asserted them. And so let me put it in the form of a paraphrase (paraphrastikds) in order to bring out the sense more clearly. "O Daniel, know that from this day on which I now speak to thee (and that was the first year of the Darius who slew Belshazzar and transferred the Chaldean Empire to the Medes and Persians) unto the seventieth week of years (that is, four hundred and ninety years) the following events shall befall thy people in stages. First of all, God shall be appeased by thee in view of the earnest intercession thou hast just offered Him, and sin shall be canceled out and the transgression shall come to an end. For although the city at present lies deserted and the Temple lies destroyed to its very foundations, so that the nation is plunged into mourning, yet within a fairly short time it shall be restored. And not only shall it come to pass within these seventy weeks that the city shall be rebuilt and the Temple restored, but also the Christ, who is the eternal righteousness, shall be born. And so shall the vision and the prophecy be sealed, with the result that there shall be no more any prophet to be found in Israel, and the Saint of saints shall be anointed. We read concerning Him in the Psalter: 'Because God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows' (Psalm 45:7). And in another passage He says of Himself: 'Be ye holy, for I also am holy' (Lev. 19:2). Know therefore that from this day on which I speak to thee and make thee the promise by the word of the Lord that the nation shall return and Jerusalem shall be restored, there shall be sixty-two weeks numbered unto the time of Christ the Prince and of the perpetual desolation of the Temple; and that there shall also be seven weeks in which the two events shall take place which I have already mentioned, namely that the nation shall return and the street shall be rebuilt by Nehemiah and Ezra. And so at the end of the weeks the decree of God shall be accomplished in distressing times, when the Temple shall again be destroyed, and the city taken captive. For after the sixty-two weeks the Christ shall be slain, and the nation who shall reject Him shall go out of existence" - or, as the Jews themselves put it, the kingdom of Christ which they imagined they would retain shall not even be. And why do I speak of the slaying of Christ, and of the nation's utter forfeiture of God's help, since the Roman people were going to demolish the city and sanctuary under Vespasian, the leader who was to come? Upon his death the seven weeks or forty-nine years were complete, and after the city of Aelia was established upon the ruins of Jerusalem, Aelius Hadrian vanquished the revolting Jews in their conflict with the general, Timus Rufus. It was at that time that the sacrifice and offering (ceased and) will continue to cease even unto the completion of the age, and the desolation is going to endure until the very end. We are not, say the Jews, greatly impressed by the fact that the seven weeks are mentioned first, and afterwards the sixty-two, and again a single week divided into two parts. For it is simply the idiomatic usage of the Hebrew language, as well as of antique Latin, that in quoting a figure, the small number is given first and then the larger. For example, we do not, according to good usage say in our language, "Abraham lived a hundred and seventy-five years"; on the contrary the Hebrews say, "Abraham lived five and seventy and one hundred years". And so the fulfilment is

not to follow the literal order of the words, but it shall be accomplished in terms of the whole sum, taken together. I am also well aware that some of the Jews assert that as for the statement about the single week, "He shall establish a covenant with many for one week," the division is between the reigns of Vespasian and Hadrian. According to the history of Josephus, Vespasian and Titus concluded peace with the Jews for three years and six month. And the three years and six months are accounted for in Hadrian's reign, when Jerusalem was completely destroyed and the Jewish nation was massacred in large groups at a time, with the result that they were even expelled from the borders of Judaea. This is what the Hebrews have to say on the subject, paying little attention to the fact that from the first year of Darius, King of the Persians, until the final overthrow of Jerusalem, which befell them under Hadrian, the period involved is a hundred and seventy-four Olympiads or six hundred ninety-six years, which total up to ninety-nine Hebrew weeks plus three years - that being the time when Barcochebas, the leader of the Jews, was crushed and Jerusalem was demolished to the very ground.

CHAPTER TEN

Verse 1. "In the third year of Cyrus, King of the Persians, a word was revealed unto Daniel, who was surnamed Belteshazzar, and it was a true word and great strength. For there is need of understanding in a vision." And how is it that we read at the end of the first vision, "And Daniel lived until the first year of Cyrus the King"? Well then, we understand that he enjoyed his former high position among the Chaldeans and was clothed in purple and fine linen right up until the first year of King Cyrus, when Cyrus overthrew the Chaldeans, and afterwards Daniel commenced service under Darius, the son of Ahasuerus of the Median line, who reigned over the kingdom of the Chaldeans. Or else, indeed, that Darius had already died in whose first year Daniel had learned of the mystery of the seventy weeks, and he is now relating that he beheld these things in the third year of King Cyrus. "And it was a true word and great strength" refers either to the strength of the God who was going to perform these things or to the strength of the prophet who would comprehend them.

Verses 2, 3. "In those days I, Daniel, mourned for the days of three weeks; I ate no desirable bread, and neither flesh or wine entered into my mouth; neither was I anointed with ointment until the days of three weeks were accomplished." By this example we are taught to abstain from the pleasanter types of food (I think that the term "desirable bread" is that inclusive) during a period of fasting, and that we neither eat flesh nor drink wine, and especially that we desire no anointing with ointments. This custom is maintained among the Persians and Indians even to this day, that they use ointment as a substitute for baths. Also, Daniel afflicted his soul for three consecutive weeks, so that his intercession might not appear cursory or casual. By inference, indeed, we ought to make the observation that a person in mourning who bemoans the absence of one betrothed partakes of no desirable bread though it comes down from heaven itself; neither does he touch solid food, which is to be understood in the sense of meat, nor does he drink any wine, which gladdens the heart of man, or make his face cheerful with oil (as we read in the Psalms: "That he may make the face cheerful with oil" Psalm 104:15). By means of such a fast as this the betrothed girl sheds tears which will be convincing, when her fiance has been taken from her. Daniel also did well to supplicate the Lord with boldness, inasmuch as in the first year of Cyrus's reign the captivity of the Jews had already been somewhat relaxed in its severity.

Verse 4. "And in the twenty-fourth day of the first month, I was beside the great river which is the Tigris." Ezekiel also had seen a great vision beside a river, the Chebar (Ezekiel 1:1). And it was by the stream of the Jordan that the heavens were opened to the gaze of our Lord and Savior and also to John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-17). Therefore those critics should leave off their foolish objections who raise questions about the presence of shadows and symbols in a matter of historical truth and attempt to destroy the truth itself by imagining that they should employ allegorical methods to destroy the historicity of rivers and trees and of Paradise.

Verse 5. "And I lifted my eyes and saw." We must lift up our eyes if we are to be able to discern a mystical vision.

"And behold, a person clothed in linen." Instead of "linen," as Aquila rendered it, Theodotion simply puts baddim, whereas the Septuagint renders it as byssus, and Symmachus as exaireta (choice vestments), that is, "distinguished clothing" (praecipua). And instead of what we have rendered as, "Behold, a man," on the basis of the Hebrew text, Symmachus puts, "One like unto a man," inasmuch as he was not actually a man but only had the appearance of one.

"And his loins were girt about with pure gold." The Hebrew term for this is 'wpz or ophaz, a word which Aquila has rendered in this fashion: "And his loins were girt about with the color of ophax".

Verse 6. "And his body was like chrysolite." For "chrysolite," one of the twelve gems inserted in the oracular breastplate of the high priest, the Hebrew has trs'ys (tharsis) , a word which Theodotion and Symmachus simply left unchanged in transcription; but the Septuagint called it "the sea," according to the usage in the Psalms: "With a violent gale Thou dashest the ships of Tharsis in pieces," i.e., "the ships of the sea" (Psalm 48:7). Jonah, also, was desirous of fleeing, not to Tarsus, the Cilician city (as most people suppose, substituting one letter for another), nor to some region in India (as Josephus imagines), but simply out to the high seas in general (Jonah 1:3).

Verse 7. "And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me saw it not; but an exceeding great terror fell upon them, and they fled away and hid themselves." The Apostle Paul had a similar experience in the Book of Acts, in that while the others could see nothing, he alone beheld the vision (Acts 22:6-9).

Verse 10. "And behold, a hand touched me, and lifted me up upon my knees..." The angel appeared in the form of a man and laid his hand upon the human prophet as he lay upon the ground, in order that he might not be terrified, beholding a form like his own.

Verse 11. "And he said to me, 'Daniel, thou man of desires...'" It was fitting that he be addressed as a man of desires, for by dint of urgent prayer and affliction of body and the discipline of severe fasting he desired to learn of the future and to be informed of the secret counsels of God. Instead of "man of desires," Symmachus rendered it as "desirable man." The term is apt, for every saint possesses a beauty of soul and is beloved by the Lord.

Verse 12. "And he said to me: 'Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day when thou didst set thine heart to understand and to afflict thyself in the sight of thy God (variant: thy Lord), thy words have been heard and granted, and I have come forth in response to thy words" (Vulgate: on account of thy words). On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, that is, of Nisan, after three weeks or twenty-one days had elapsed, he beheld this vision, and he heard from the angel that on the very

first day he had begun to pray and to afflict himself before God, his words had been heard and granted. The question arises why, if he had been heard, was the angel not sent to him right away. Well, by reason of the delay an opportunity was afforded him of praying to the Lord at greater length, so that in proportion as his earnest desire was intensified, he might by his effort the more fully deserve to hear. And as for the angel's statement, "And I have come in response to thy words," his meaning is this: "After thou didst begin to invoke God's mercy by good works and tearful supplication and fasting, then I for my part embraced the opportunity of entering in before God and praying for thee."

Verse 13. "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days." In my opinion this was the angel to whose charge Persia was committed, in accordance with what we read in Deuteronomy: "When the Most High divided the nations and distributed the children of Adam abroad, then He established the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God" (Deuteronomy 32:8). These are the princes of whom Paul also says: "We speak forth among the perfect a wisdom which none of the princes of this world knew. For if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory" (1 Corinthians 2:6-8). And so the prince or angel of the Persians offered resistance, acting on behalf of the province entrusted to him, in order that the entire captive nation might not be released. And it may well be that although the prophet was graciously heard by God from the day when he set his heart to understand, the angel was nevertheless not sent to proclaim to him God's gracious decision, for the reason that the prince of Persia opposed him for twenty-one days, enumerating the sins of the Jewish people as a ground for their justly being kept in captivity and as proof that they ought not to be released.

"And behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to my assistance." That is, while the angel of the Persians was resisting thy petitions and my representations on thy behalf as I presented thy prayers to God, then there came to my assistance the angel Michael, who has oversight of the people of Israel. By chief princes we are of course to understand archangels.

"And I remained there close by the king of the Persians." He designates the angel or prince by the term "king of the Persians," and shows that he had tarried with Michael for a little as he spoke in opposition to the prince of the Persians.

Verse 14. "And I have come to teach thee what things shall befall thy people in the last days." The very petition which Daniel had requested is the thing which he deserves to hear from God, namely what is going to happen to the people of Israel, not in the near future, but in the last days, that is, at the end of the world.

Verse 16. "O my lord, at the sight of thee my joints are loosed..." Theodotion interprets it this way, in accordance with what we read in the One Hundred and Second Psalm: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name." (Psalm 103:1) For our inward nature must direct its gaze without, before we deserve to behold a vision of God; and when we actually have beheld a vision of God, then our inward nature is converted within us and we become wholly of the number of those concerning whom it is written in another Psalm: "All the glory of the daughter of kings is within, in golden borders" (Psalm 45:13).

Verse 19. "And as he spoke with me, I recovered strength and said, 'Speak, my Lord, for thou hast reassured me' And he said..." For unless the angel had reassured him by touching him like a son

of man, so that his heart was freed of terror, he would not have been able to hearken to God's secrets. For that reason he now says, "Speak, for thou hast reassured me; for thou hast enabled me both to hear and understand what thou sayest."

Verse 20. "'Dost thou know why I have come to thee? And now I will return to fight against the prince of the Persians.'" What he means is this: I have indeed come to teach thee of the things thou hast received in answer to prayer; but I am going to return once more to contend against the prince of the Persians in the sight of God, for he is unwilling that thy people be released from captivity.

"For (Vulgate: Therefore) as I was coming away, the prince of the Greeks appeared and entered in (Vulgate: and came up)." He means, "I myself was departing from God's presence in order to announce to thee the events which are to befall thy people in the last days; and yet I am still not secure, since the prince of the Persians stands to plead against the granting of thy petitions and the acceptance of my advocacy on thy behalf. And behold, the prince of the Greeks, or Macedonians, had just come, and he entered in before God's presence to lodge accusation against the prince of the Medes and Persians, in order that the kingdom of the Macedonians might succeed in their place." Truly marvelous are the secret counsels of God, for it indeed came to pass that after the Jewish people had been freed from captivity, Alexander, king of the Macedonians, slew Darius and overthrew the kingdom of the Persians and Medes, so that the prince of the Greeks did overcome the prince of the Persians.

Verse 21. "Nevertheless I will relate to thee what has been set down in the Scripture of truth." That is, this is the order which the words follow. The fulfilment is still in doubt. For even though thou dost beseech the Lord and I present thy prayers to Him, yet the prince of the Persians takes his stand on the opposite side, and is unwilling that thy people be freed from captivity. But because the prince of the Greeks has come, and in the meantime is contending against the prince of the Persians, and also because I have Michael there as my assistant, I shall, during their mutual conflict, report to thee the coming events which God has foretold to me and has bidden me relate to thee. And let no one be disturbed by the question as to why mention is made of the prince of the Greeks or Hellenes rather than of the Macedonians, for Alexander, king of the Macedonians, did not take up arms against the Persians until he had first overthrown Greece and subjected it to his power.

"And no one is my helper in all these things except Michael, your prince." He implies, "I am that angel who presents thy prayers to God, and I have no other helper in petitioning God on your behalf except the archangel Michael, to whose charge the Jewish nation has been entrusted. And meanwhile the prince of the Greeks is engaged in a common effort with me at this particular time, contending against the prince of the Persians. We should review our ancient history and consider whether by any chance that was the date of the conquest of the Persians by the Greeks. According to the Vulgate edition (of the Septuagint), this same vision is reckoned as extending to the end of the book, that is, the vision which appeared to Daniel in the third year of Cyrus, King of the Persians. On the other hand, according to the Hebrew original, the ensuing sections are separate from this, and recorded in an inverted order. The causes for this phenomenon we have already mentioned; that is, the matters here recorded are related as having occurred in the first year of the Darius who overthrew Belshazzar, not in the third year of Cyrus.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Verse 1. "And from the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up that he might be strengthened and confirmed." Daniel implies, "From the first year of the reign of Darius, who overthrew the Chaldeans and delivered me from the hand of my enemies to the extent of his ability (for even his sealing of the pit of lions with his signet ring was for my protection, lest my adversaries should slay me), I for my part stood before God, and I besought God's mercy upon him, in view of the man's love for me, in order that either he or his kingdom might be strengthened and confirmed. And since I persevered in my prayer, I was answered by God and given to understand the following information. After all, it is a customary thing with the prophets to bring in new speakers abruptly and without warning. So it is in Psalm Thirty-one: for when the prophet has petitioned God and said: "Thou art my refuge from my tribulation which compassed me about; O Thou, who art my rejoicing, deliver me from those who now encompass me," then God is abruptly brought in as the speaker, replying, "I will give thee understanding, and I will instruct thee in this way in which thou shalt go; I will fasten Mine eyes upon thee" (Psalm 32:7-8). So also here, as the prophet relates, "From the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up and interceded that he might be strengthened and that his rule might be confirmed," God suddenly responds:

Verse 2. "And now I shall proclaim the truth to thee." And the meaning is this: "Because thou desirest to know what shall befall the kings of Persia, hearken thou to the order of events and hear the answer to thy request."

"And behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be enriched exceedingly above them all, and when he shall have grown mighty through his wealth, he shall stir up all men against the kingdom of Greece." He states that four kings shall arise in Persia after Cyrus, namely Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, and the Magus named Smerdis, who married Pantaptes, the daughter of Cambyses. Then, when he was slain by seven Magi and Darius had succeeded to his throne, the same Pantaptes married Darius, and by him gave birth to Xerxes, who became a most powerful and wealthy king, and led an innumerable host against Greece and performed those deeds which are related by the Greek historians. For in the archonship of Callias he destroyed Athens by fire, and about that same time waged the war at Thermopylae and the naval battle at Salamis. It was in his time that Sophocles and Euripides became famous, and Themistocles fled in exile to Persia, where he died as a result of drinking the blood of a bull. And so that writer is in error who records as the fourth king that Darius who was defeated by Alexander, for he was not the fourth king, but the fourteenth king of the Persians after Cyrus. It was in the seventh year of his rule that Alexander defeated and slew him. Moreover it should be observed that after he has specified four kings of Persia after Cyrus, the author omits the nine others and passes right on to Alexander. For the Spirit of prophecy was not concerned about preserving historical detail but in summarizing only the most important matters.

Verses 3, 4. "But there shall rise up a strong king and shall rule with great power, and he shall do whatever he pleases. And when he shall have arisen, his kingdom shall be broken." He clearly refers to Alexander the Great, king of the Macedonians, and son of Philip. For after he had overcome the Illyrians and Thracians, and had conquered Greece and destroyed Thebes, he crossed over into Asia. And when he had routed Darius's generals and taken the city of Sardis, he afterwards captured India and founded the city of Alexandria. And then, when he had attained the

age of thirty-two and the twelfth year of his reign, he died of poison.

"And it shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven, but not unto his own posterity nor according to his power with which he had borne rule." After Alexander his kingdom was divided towards the four winds, namely to the east, the west, the south, and the north. In Egypt, that is in the south, Ptolemy the son of Lagos was the first to become king. In Macedonia, that is in the west, the Philip who was also called Aridaeus, a brother of Alexander, became king. The king of Syria and Babylon and the remoter regions, that is, the east, was Seleucus Nicanor. Antigonus was king of Asia Minor and Pontus and of the other provinces in that whole area, that is, in the north. So much for the various regions of the world as a whole; but from the standpoint of Judea itself, the north would be Syria and the south would be Egypt. And as for the statement, "But not unto his own posterity," the implication is that Alexander would have no children, but rather, his kingdom would be rent asunder and fall to others who were not of his family, except of course for Philip, who kept Macedonia. Nor would it be according to the power of him who had borne rule, for the kingdom became feebler by division into four parts, for they constantly fought among themselves and raged with internecine fury.

"For his kingdom shall be rent in pieces (variant: destroyed), and that too among strangers besides these." Besides the four kingdoms of Macedonia, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, the kingdom of the Macedonians was torn asunder among other rulers of less prominence and among petty kings. The reference here is to Perdiccas and Craterus and Lysimachus, for Cappadocia, Armenia, Bithynia, Heracleia, Bosphorus and various other provinces withdrew themselves from the Macedonian power and set up various kings for themselves.

Verse 5. "And the king of the South shall be strengthened." The reference is to Ptolemy, son of Lagos, who was the first to become king in Egypt, and was a very clever, mighty and wealthy man, and possessed such power that he was able to restore Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, to his kingdom after he had been driven out, and also to seize Cyprus and Phoenicia. And after he had conquered Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, he restored to Seleucus that portion of his kingdom which Antigonus had taken away from him. He also acquired Caria and many islands, cities, and districts unnecessary to detail at this time. But no further notice is taken of the other kingdoms, Macedonia and Asia Minor, because Judaea lay in a midway position and was held now by one group of kings and now by another. And it is not the purpose of Holy Scripture to cover external history apart from the Jews, but only that which is linked up with the nation of Israel.

"And one of his princes shall prevail over him, and he shall rule with great power, for his dominion shall be great." The person mentioned is Ptolemy Philadelphus, the second king of Egypt and the son of the former Ptolemy. It was in his reign that the Seventy (Septuaginta) translators are said to have translated the Holy Scripture into Greek. He also sent many treasures to Jerusalem for the high priest Eleazar, and votive vessels for the Temple. The curator of his library was Demetrius of Phalerum, a man of reputation among the Greeks as an orator and philosopher. Philadelphus is reported to have possessed such great power as to surpass his father Ptolemy. For history relates that he possessed two hundred thousand infantrymen, twenty thousand cavalry, and even two thousand chariots and four hundred elephants, which he was the first to import from Ethiopia. He also had a thousand five hundred war galleys of the type now known as Liburnian, and a thousand others for the transporting of military provisions. So great was his treasure of gold and silver that

he received a yearly revenue from Egypt amounting to fourteen thousand eight hundred talents of silver, as well as grain in the amount of five or ten hundred thousand artabae (a measure containing three and a half modii).

Verse 6. "And at the end of the years they shall be leagued together (or, as Theodotion renders: And after his years they shall be united). And the daughter of the king of the South shall come to the king of the North in order to make friendship, but she shall not obtain strength of arm nor shall her seed endure. And she herself shall be handed over, as well as her young men (Vulgate: youths) who brought her and who were strengthening her in (these) times." As we have already said, it was Seleucus, surnamed Nicanor, who first ruled over Syria. The second king was Antiochus, who was called Soter. The third was Antiochus himself, who was called Theos, that is the Divine. He was the one who waged numerous wars with Ptolemy Philadelphus, who was the second ruler in Egypt, and he also fought with all the Babylonians and the men of the East, And so after many years Ptolemy Philadelphus wished to have done with this vexatious struggle, and so he gave his daughter, named Berenice, in marriage to Antiochus, who had already had by a previous wife, named Laodice, two sons, namely Seleucus, surnamed Callinicus, and the other, Antiochus. And Philadelphus conducted her as far as Pelusium and bestowed countless thousands of gold and silver by way of a dowry, from which circumstance he acquired the nickname of phernophoros or Dowry-giver (dotalis). But as for Antiochus, even though he had said he would regard Berenice as his royal consort and keep Laodice in the status of a concubine, he was finally prevailed upon by his love for Laodice to restore her to the status of queen, along with her children. But she was fearful that her husband might in his fickleness restore Berenice to favor once more, and so she had him put to death by her servants with the use of poison. And she handed over Berenice and the son whom she had born by Antiochus to Icadio and Genneus, princes of Antiochus, and then set up her elder son, Seleucus Callinicus, as king in his father's place. And so this is the matter referred to in this passage, namely that after many years Ptolemy Philadelphus and Antiochus Theos would conclude a friendship, and the daughter of the king of the South, that is Ptolemy, would go to the king of the North, that is Antiochus, in order to cement friendly relations between her father and her husband. And the text says that she will not be able to gain her end, nor shall her posterity remain upon the throne of Syria, but instead both Berenice and the men who had escorted her thither shall be put to death. And also the king, Antiochus, who had strengthened her, that is, through whom she could have obtained the mastery, was killed by his wife's poison.

Verses 7-9. "And a plant of the bud of her roots shall arise, and he shall come with an army and shall invade the province of the king of the North. And he shall abuse them and shall prevail. And he shall also carry away captive into Egypt their gods and their sculptures and their precious vessels of gold and silver; he shall prevail against the king of the North. And the king of the South shall enter into the kingdom and shall return to his own land." After the murder of Berenice and the death of her father, Ptolemy Philadelphus, in Egypt, her brother, who was also named Ptolemy and surnamed Euergetes, succeeded to the throne as the third of his dynasty, being in fact an offshoot of the same plant and a bud of the same root as she was, inasmuch as he was her brother. He came up with a great army and advanced into the province of the king of the North, that is Seleucus Callinicus, who together with his mother Laodice was ruling in Syria, and abused them, and not only did he seize Syria but also took Cilicia and the remoter regions beyond the

Euphrates and nearly all of Asia as well. And then, when he heard that a rebellion was afoot in Egypt, he ravaged the kingdom of Seleucus and carried off as booty forty thousand talents of silver, and also precious vessels and images of the gods to the amount of two and a half thousand. Among them were the same images which Cambyses had brought to Persia at the time when he conquered Egypt. The Egyptian people were indeed devoted to idolatry, for when he had brought back their gods to them after so many years, they called him Euergetes (Benefactor). And he himself retained possession of Syria, but he handed over Cilicia to his friend, Antiochus, that he might govern it, and the provinces beyond the Euphrates he handed over to Xanthippus, another general.

Verse 10. "And his sons shall be provoked, and they shall assemble a multitude of great armies, and he shall come with haste like a flood. And he shall return and be stirred up, and he shall join battle with his army." After the flight and death of Seleucus Callinicus, his two sons, the Seleucus surnamed Ceraunus and the Antiochus who was called the Great, were provoked by a hope of victory and of avenging their father, and so they assembled an army against Ptolemy Philopator and took up arms. And when the elder brother, Seleucus, was slain in Phrygia in the third year of his reign through the treachery of Nicanor and Apaturius, the army which was in Syria summoned his brother, Antiochus the Great, from Babylon to assume the throne. And so this is the reason why the present passage states that the two sons were provoked and assembled a multitude of very sizable armies. But it implies that Antiochus the Great came by himself from Babylon to Syria, which at that time was held by Ptolemy Philopator, the son of Euergetes and the fourth king to rule in Egypt. And after he had successfully fought with his generals, or rather had by the betrayal of Theodotius obtained possession of Syria (which had already been held by a succession of Egyptian kings), he became so emboldened by his contempt for Philopator's luxurious manner of life and for the magical arts which he was said to employ, that he took the initiative in attempting an invasion of Egypt itself.

Verses 11, 12. "And the king of the South, being provoked, shall go forth and shall prepare an exceeding great multitude, and a multitude shall be given into his hand. And he shall take a multitude, and his heart shall be lifted up, because (Vulgate: and) he shall cast down many thousands. But he shall not prevail." The Ptolemy surnamed Philopator, having lost Syria through the betrayal of Theodotius, gathered together a very great multitude and launched an invasion against Antiochus the Great, who now bears the title of king of the North, at the region where Egypt borders upon the province of Judaea. For owing to the nature of the region, this locality lies partly to the south and partly to the north. If we speak of Judaea, it lies to the north of Egypt and to the south of Syria. And so when he had joined battle near the town of Raphia at the gateway of Egypt, Antiochus lost his entire army and was almost captured as he fled through the desert. And after he had conceded the loss of Syria, the conflict was finally brought to an end upon the basis of a treaty and certain conditions of peace. And this is what the Scripture means here by the statement that Ptolemy Philopator "shall cast down many thousands" and yet shall not prevail. For he was unable to capture his adversary. The sequel now follows.

Verses 13, 14. "And the king of the North shall return and shall prepare a much greater multitude than before, and in the end of times and years he shall come in haste with a large army and great resources. And in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South." This indicates that Antiochus the Great, who despised the worthlessness of Ptolemy Philopator (for he had fallen

desperately in love with a lute-player named Agathoclea and also her brother, retaining Agathocles himself as his concubine and afterwards appointing him as general of Egypt), assembled a huge army from the upper regions of Babylon. And since Ptolemy Philopator was now dead, Antiochus broke his treaty and set his army in motion against Philopator's four-year-old son, who was called Epiphanes. For so great was the dissoluteness and arrogance of Agathoclea, that those provinces which had previously been subjected to Egypt rose up in rebellion, and even Egypt itself was troubled with seditions. Moreover Philip, King of Macedon, and Antiochus the Great made peace with each other and engaged in a common struggle against Agathocles and Ptolemy Epiphanes, on the understanding that each of them should annex to his own dominion those cities of Ptolemy which lay nearest to them. And so this is what is referred to in this passage, which says that many shall rise up against the king of the South, that is, Ptolemy Epiphanes, who was then a mere child.

"Moreover the children of the transgressors of thy people shall lift themselves up, that they may fulfil the vision, and then fall to ruin (Vulgate: and they shall fall to ruin)." During the conflict between Antiochus the Great and the generals of Ptolemy, Judaea, which lay between them, was rent into contrary factions, the one group favoring Antiochus, and the other favoring Ptolemy. Finally the high priest, Onias, fled to Egypt, taking a large number of Jews along with him, and was given by Ptolemy an honorable reception. He then received the region known as Heliopolis, and by a grant of the king, he erected a temple in Egypt like the temple of the Jews, and it remained standing up until the reign of Vespasian, over a period of two hundred and fifty years. But then the city itself, which was known as the City of Onias, was destroyed to the very ground because of the war which the Jews had subsequently waged against the Romans. There is consequently no trace of either city or temple now remaining. But as we were saying, countless multitudes of Jews fled to Egypt on the occasion of Onias's pontificate, and the land was filled with a large number from Cyrene as well. For Onias affirmed that he was fulfilling the prophecy written by Isaiah: "There shall be an altar of the Lord in Egypt, and the name of the Lord shall be found in their territories" (Isaiah 19:19). And so this is the matter referred to in this passage: "The sons of the transgressors of thy people," who forsook the law of the Lord and wished to offer blood-sacrifices to God in another place than what He had commanded. They would be lifted up in pride and would boast that they were fulfilling the vision, that is, the thing which the Lord had enjoined. But they shall fall to ruin, for both temple and city shall be afterwards destroyed. And while Antiochus held Judaea, a leader of the Ptolemaic party called Scopas Aetholus was sent against Antiochus, and after a bold campaign he took Judaea and took the aristocrats of Ptolemy's party back to Egypt with him on his return.

Verses 15, 16. "And the king of the North shall come, and shall cast up a mound and capture the best fortified cities, and the arms of the South shall not withstand. And his chosen ones shall rise up to resist, and they shall have no strength. And he shall come upon him and do according to his own desire, and there shall be none to stand against his face. And he shall stand in the glorious land and it shall be consumed by his hand." Purposing to retake Judaea and the many cities of Syria, Antiochus joined battle with Scopas, Ptolemy's general, near the sources of the Jordan near where the city now called Paneas was founded, and he put him to flight and besieged him in Sidon together with ten thousand of his soldiers. In order to free him, Ptolemy dispatched the famous generals, Eropus, Menocles and Damoxenus (Vulgate: Damoxeus). Yet he was unable to lift the

siege, and finally Scopas, overcome by famine, had to surrender and was sent away with his associates, despoiled of all he had. And as for the statement, "He shall cast up a mound," this indicates that Antiochus is going to besiege the garrison of Scopas in the citadel of Jerusalem for a long time, while the Jews add their exertions as well. And he is going to capture other cities which had formerly been held by the Ptolemaic faction in Syria, Cilicia and Lycia (variant: Lydia). For at that time Aphrodisias, Soloe, Zephron, Mallos, Anemurium (variant: Anemurum), Selenus, Coracesium, Coricus, Andriace, Lymira, Patara (variant: Patra), Xanthus, and finally Ephesus were all captured. These things are related by both Greek and Roman historians. And as for the statement, "And he shall stand in the glorious land, and it shall be consumed (or, finished) by his hand," the term "glorious land," or, as the Septuagint interprets it, "the land of desire" (that is, in which God takes pleasure) signifies Judaea, and particularly Jerusalem, to which Antiochus pursued those men of Scopas's party who had been honorably received there. Instead of the phrase, "glorious land," as Aquila rendered it, Theodotion simply puts the Hebrew word itself, Sabin; instead of that Symmachus translated it "land of bravery."

Verses 17-19. "And he shall set his face to come and possess all his kingdom, and he shall make upright conditions with him. And he shall give him the daughter of women, that she may overthrow him" (Vulgate: it). That is to say, the intention is to overthrow him, that is, Ptolemy, or else to overthrow it, that is, his kingdom. Antiochus not only wished to take possession of Syria, Cilicia, and Lycia, and the other provinces which had belonged to Ptolemy's party, but also to extend his empire to Egypt. He therefore used the good offices of Eucles of Rhodes to betroth his daughter, Cleopatra, to young Ptolemy in the seventh year of his reign; and in his thirteenth year she was given to him in marriage, professedly endowed with all of Coele-syria and Judaea as her marriage-portion. By pleonasm she is called a daughter of women, just as the poet says:

...Thus she spake with her mouth... And with these ears did I drink in her voice.

"And she shall not stand, neither shall she be for him. And he shall turn his face to the islands and shall capture many; and she shall cause the prince of her reproach to cease, and his reproach shall be turned upon him. And he shall turn his face to the empire of his own land; and he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found." For he was unable to take possession of Egypt, because Ptolemy Epiphanes and his generals detected the strategem and followed a cautious policy. And besides, Cleopatra inclined more to her husband's side than to her father's. And so he turned his attention to Asia Minor, and by carrying on naval warfare against a large number of islands, he seized Rhodes, Samos, Colophon (variant: Colophonias and Bocla), Phocaea and many other islands. But he was opposed by Lucius Scipio Nasica and also his brother, Publius Scipio Africanus, who had vanquished Hannibal. For since the consul Nasica, the brother of Africanus, was of a somewhat sluggish disposition, the Roman senate was unwilling to entrust to him a war against so mighty a king as Antiochus. Africanus therefore offered to assume the post of deputy on a voluntary basis, in order to obviate any damage that his brother might cause. Consequently Antiochus was vanquished and commanded to confine his rule to the other side of the Taurus range. And so he took refuge in Apamia and Susa and advanced to the easternmost cities of his realm. And during a war against the Elymaeans he was destroyed together with his entire army. And so this is what the Scripture refers to in this passage, when it states that he would capture many islands, and yet because of the Roman conqueror he would lose the kingdom of Asia; and that the disgrace he had inflicted would come back upon his own head; and that in the end he

would flee from Asia Minor and return to the empire of his own land, and would then stumble and fall, so that his place would not be found.

Verse 20. "And there shall stand up in his place one most vile and unworthy of kingly honor, and in a few days he shall be destroyed, not in rage nor in a battle." The reference is to the Seleucus surnamed Philopator, the son of Antiochus the Great, who during his reign performed no deeds worthy of Syria or of his father, but perished ingloriously without fighting a single battle. Porphyry, however, claims that it was not this Seleucus who is referred to, but rather Ptolemy Epiphanes, who contrived a plot against Seleucus and prepared an army to fight against him, with the result that Seleucus was poisoned by his own generals. They did this because when someone asked Seleucus where he was going to get the financial resources for the great enterprises he was planning, he answered that his financial resources consisted in his friends. When this remark was publicly noised abroad, the generals became apprehensive that he would deprive them of their property and for that reason did him to death by nefarious means. Yet how could Ptolemy be said to rise up in the place of Antiochus the Great, since he did nothing of the sort? This is especially improbable since the Septuagint translated: "And there shall stand up a plant from his root," that is, "of his issue and seed," who should deal a severe blow to the prestige of the empire; "and within a few days he shall be destroyed without wrath or battle." The Hebrews claim that it is Trypho who was intended by the man who was most vile and unworthy of kingly honor, for as the boy-king's guardian he seized the throne for himself.

Verse 24. "And there shall stand up in his place one despised, and the kingly honor shall not be given him; and he shall come privately and shall obtain the kingdom by fraud. And the arms of the fighter shall be overcome before his face and shall be broken, and the prince of the covenant as well. And after friendly advances he shall deal deceitfully with him, and shall go up and shall overcome with a small people. And he shall enter into rich and prosperous cities, and shall do things which his fathers never did, nor his fathers' fathers. He shall scatter their spoil and their booty and their wealth, and shall undertake plots against the best fortified cities, and shall continue thus for a time." Up to this point the historical order has been followed, and there has been no point of controversy between Porphyry and those of our side (variant: and us). But the rest of the text from here on to the end of the book he interprets as applying to the person of the Antiochus who was surnamed Epiphanes, the brother of Seleucus and the son of Antiochus the Great. He reigned in Syria for eleven years after Seleucus, and he seized Judaea, and it is under his reign that the persecution of God's Law is related, and also the wars of the Maccabees. But those of our persuasion believe all these things are spoken prophetically of the Antichrist who is to arise in the end time. But this factor appears to them as a difficulty for our view, namely the question as to why the prophetic discourse should abruptly cease mention of these great kings and shift from Seleucus to the end of the world. The answer is that in the earlier historical account where mention was made of the Persian kings, only four kings of Persia were presented, following after Cyrus, and many who came in between were simply skipped over, so as to come quickly to Alexander, king of the Macedonians. We hold that it is the practice of Scripture not to relate all details completely, but only to set forth what seems of major importance. Those of our school insist also that since many of the details which we are subsequently to read and explain are appropriate to the person of Antiochus, he is to be regarded as a type of the Antichrist, and those things which happened to him in a preliminary way are to be completely fulfilled in the case of the Antichrist. We

hold that it is the habit of Holy Scripture to set forth by means of types the reality of things to come, in conformity with what is said of our Lord and Savior in the Seventy-first Psalm, a psalm which is noted at the beginning as being Solomon's, and yet not all the statements which are made concerning can be applied to Solomon. For certainly he neither endured "together with the sun and before the moon from generation to generation," (Psalm 72:5) nor did he hold sway from sea to sea, or from the River unto the ends of the earth; neither did all the nations serve him, nor did his name endure before the sun; neither were all the tribes of earth blessed in him, nor did all races magnify him. But in a partial way these things were set forth in advance, by shadows as it were, and by a mere symbol of the reality, in the person of Solomon, in order that they might be more perfectly fulfilled in our Lord and Savior. And so, just as the Savior had Solomon and the other saints as types of His advent, so also we should believe that the Antichrist very properly had as a type of himself the utterly wicked king, Antiochus, who persecuted the saints and defiled the Temple. Let us therefore follow along with the explanation point by point, and let us briefly observe in the case of each item what it signifies to those of the other school of thought and what it signifies to those of our school, in accordance with each of the two explanations. Our opponents say that the one who was to "stand up in the place of" Seleucus was his brother, Antiochus Epiphanes. The party in Syria who favored Ptolemy would not at first grant him the kingly honor, but he later secured the rule of Syria by a pretense of clemency. And as Ptolemy fought and laid everything waste, his arms were overcome and broken before the face of Antiochus. Now the word arms implies the idea of strength, and therefore also the host of any army is known as a hand. And not only does the text say that he conquered Ptolemy by fraud, but also the prince of the covenant he overcame by treachery, that is, Judas Maccabaeus. Or else this is what is referred to, that after he had secured peace with Ptolemy and he had become the prince of the covenant, he afterwards devised a plot against him. Now the Ptolemy meant here was not Epiphanes, who was the fifth Ptolemy to reign in Egypt, but Ptolemy Philometor, the son of Antiochus' sister, Cleopatra; and so Antiochus was his maternal uncle. And when after Cleopatra's death Egypt was ruled by Eulaius, the eunuch who was Philometor's tutor, and by Leneus, and they were attempting to regain Syria, which Antiochus had fraudulently seized, warfare broke out between the boy Ptolemy and his uncle. And when they joined battle between Pelusium and Mt. Casius, Ptolemy's generals were defeated. But then Antiochus showed leniency towards the boy, and making a pretense of friendship, he went up to Memphis and there received the crown after the Egyptian manner. Declaring that he was looking out for the lad's interests, he subjected all Egypt to himself with only a small force of men, and he entered into rich and prosperous cities. And so he did things which his father had never done, nor his fathers' fathers. For none of the kings of Syria had ever laid Egypt waste after this fashion and scattered all their wealth. Moreover he was so shrewd that he even overcame by his deceit the well-laid plans of those who were the boy-king's generals. This is the line of interpretation which Porphyry followed, pursuing the lead of Sutorius with much redundancy, discoursing of matters which we have summarized within a brief compass. But the scholars of our viewpoint have made a better and correcter interpretation, stating that the deeds are to be performed by the Antichrist at the end of the world. It is he who is destined to arise from a small nation, that is from the Jewish people, and shall be so lowly and despised that kingly honor will not be granted him. But by means of intrigue and deception he shall secure the government and by him shall the arms of the fighting nation of Rome be overcome and broken. He is to effect this result by pretending to be the prince of the covenant, that is, of the Law and Testament of

God. And he shall enter into the richest of cities and shall do what his fathers never did, nor his fathers' fathers. For none of the Jews except the Antichrist has ever ruled over the whole world. And he shall form a design against the firmest resolves of the saints and shall do everything for a time, for as long as God's will shall have permitted him to do these things.

Verses 25, 26. "And his strength and his heart shall be stirred up against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be aroused to war with many and very strong auxiliary forces; and they shall not stand, for they shall form designs against him. And they that eat bread with him shall destroy him, and his army shall be crushed, and many shall fall down slain." Porphyry interprets this as applying to Antiochus, who set forth with a great army on a campaign against his sister's son. But the king of the South, that is the generals of Ptolemy, were also roused to war with many and very powerful auxiliary forces, but they could not stand against the fraudulent schemes of Antiochus. For he pretended to be at peace with his sister's son and ate bread with him, and afterwards he took possession of Egypt. But those of our view with greater plausibility interpret all this as applying to the Antichrist, for he is to be born of the Jewish people and come from Babylon, and is first of all going to vanquish the king of Egypt, who is one of the three horns of which we have already spoken earlier.

Verses 27-30. "And the heart of the two kings shall be to do evil, and they speak falsehood at one table, and they shall not prosper, because as yet the end is unto another time. And he shall return into his land with much riches." There is no doubt but what Antiochus did conclude a peace with Ptolemy and ate at the same table with him and devised plots against him, and yet without attaining any success thereby, since he did not obtain his kingdom but was driven out by Ptolemy's soldiers. But it cannot be proved from this set of facts that the statement of this Scripture was ever fulfilled by past history, namely that there were two kings whose hearts were deceitful and who inflicted evil upon each other. Actually, Ptolemy was a mere child of tender years and was taken in by Antiochus' fraud; how then could he have plotted evil against him? And so our party insist that all these things refer to the Antichrist and to the king of Egypt whom he has for the first time overcome.

"And his heart shall be against the holy covenant, and he shall succeed and return into his own land. At the time appointed he shall return and shall come to the South; but the latter time shall not be like the former. And the galleys shall come upon him, and the Romans, and he shall be dealt a heavy blow." Or, as another has rendered it, "...and they shall threaten him with attack." Both the Greek and the Roman historians relate that after Antiochus had been expelled from Egypt and had gone back once more, he came to Judaea, that is, against the holy covenant, and that he despoiled the Temple and removed a huge amount of gold; and then, having stationed a garrison in the citadel, he returned to his own land. And then two years later he gathered an army against Ptolemy and came to the South. And while he was besieging his two nephews, the brothers of Ptolemy and sons of Cleopatra, at Alexandria, some Roman envoys arrived on the scene, one of whom was Marcus Popilius Laenas. And when he had found Antiochus standing on the shore and had conveyed the senatorial decree to him by which he was ordered to withdraw from those who were friends of the Roman people and to content himself with his own domain, then Antiochus delayed his reply in order to consult with his friends. But Laenas is said to have made a circle in the sand with the staff which he held in his hand, and to have drawn it around the king, saying, "The senate and people of Rome give order for you to make answer in this very spot as to what

your decision is." At these words Antiochus was greatly alarmed and said, "If this is the good pleasure of the senate and people of Rome, then I must withdraw." And so he immediately set his army in motion. But he is said to have been dealt a heavy blow, not that he was killed but that he lost all of his proud prestige. As for the Antichrist, there is no question but what he is going to fight against the holy covenant, and that when he first makes war against the king of Egypt, he shall straightway be frightened off by the assistance of the Romans. But these events were typically prefigured under Antiochus Epiphanes, so that this abominable king who persecuted God's people foreshadows the Antichrist, who is to persecute the people of Christ. And so there are many of our viewpoint who think that Domitius Nero was the Antichrist because of his outstanding savagery and depravity.

"And he shall return and shall be angry at the covenant of the sanctuary, and he shall succeed; and he shall return and take thought concerning (Vulgate: against) those who have abandoned the covenant of the sanctuary." We read of these matters at greater length in the exploits of the Maccabees (1 Maccabees 1:20-64), where we learn that after the Romans expelled him from Egypt, he came in anger against the covenant of the sanctuary and was welcomed by those who had forsaken the law of God and taken part in the religious rites of the Gentiles. But this is to be more amply fulfilled under the Antichrist, for he shall become angered at the covenant of God and devise plans against those whom he wishes to forsake the law of God. And so Aquila has rendered in a more significant way: "And he shall devise plans to have the compact of the sanctuary abandoned."

Verse 31. "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall defile (Vulgate: that (?) they may defile) the sanctuary of strength, and they shall take away the continual sacrifice, and shall place there the abomination unto desolation." Instead of "arms," another writer has rendered it as "seed," so as to imply descendants and progeny. But those of the other viewpoint claim that the persons mentioned are those who were sent by Antiochus two years after he had plundered the Temple in order to exact tribute from the Jews, and also to eliminate the worship of God, setting up an image of Jupiter Olympius in the Temple at Jerusalem, and also statues of Antiochus himself. These are described as the abomination of desolation, having been set up when the burnt offering and continual sacrifice were taken away. But we on our side contend that all these things took place in a preliminary way as a mere type of the Antichrist, who is destined to seat himself in the Temple of God, and make himself out to be as God. The Jews, however, would have us understand these things as referring, not to Antiochus Epiphanes or the Antichrist, but to the Romans, of whom it was earlier stated, "And war galleys shall come," whether Italian or Roman, "and he shall be humbled." Considerably later, says the text, a king, Vespasian, shall emerge from the Romans themselves, who had come to Ptolemy's assistance and threatened Antiochus. It is his arms or descendants who would rise up, namely his son Titus, who with his army would defile the sanctuary and remove the continual sacrifice and devote the temple to permanent desolation. By the terms *siim* (Siyyim) and *chethim* (Kittiyim), which we have rendered as "galleys" and "Romans," the Jews would have us understand "Italians" and "Romans."

Verse 32. "And ungodly men shall deceitfully dissemble against the covenant. But the people who know their God shall prevail and succeed." And in Maccabees we read that there were some who, to be sure, pretended that they were custodians of God's law, and later they came to terms with the Gentiles; yet the others adhered to their religion. But in my opinion this will take place in the

time of the Antichrist, when the love of many shall wax cold. It is concerning these people that our Lord says in the Gospel, "Dost thou think that the Son of man, when He comes, will find faith upon the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

Verse 33. "And they that are learned among the people shall teach many and they shall fall by the sword and by fire and by captivity and by spoil for many days." The books of Maccabees relate the great sufferings the Jews endured at the hands of Antiochus and they stand as a testimony of their triumph; for they endured fire and sword, slavery and rapine, and even the ultimate penalty of death itself for the sake of guarding the law of God. But let no one doubt that these things are going to happen under the Antichrist, when many shall resist his authority and flee away in various directions. The Jews, of course, interpret these things as taking place at the destruction of the Temple, which took place under Vespasian and Titus, and they claim that there were very many of their nation who knew their Lord and were slain for keeping His law.

Verses 34, 35. "And when they shall have fallen, they shall be relieved with a small help; and many shall be joined to them deceitfully. And some of the learned shall fall, that they may be refined as by fire and that they may be chosen and made white even to the time before appointed, because there shall yet be another time." Porphyry thinks that the "little help" was Mattathias of the village of (variant: mountain of) Modin, for he rebelled against the generals of Antiochus and attempted to preserve the worship of the true God (1 Maccabees 2:1-41). He says he is called a little help because Mattathias was slain in battle; and later on his son Judas, who was called Maccabaeus, also fell in the struggle; and the rest of his brothers were likewise taken in by the deceit of their adversaries. Consult the books of Maccabees for the details. And all these events took place, he asserts, for the purpose of testing and choosing out the saints, that they might be made white until the time before appointed, inasmuch as victory was deferred until another time. Our writers, however, would have it understood that the small help shall arise under the reign of the Antichrist, for the saints shall gather together to resist him, and afterwards a great number of the learned shall fall. And this shall take place in order that they may be refined as by fire in the furnace, and that they may be made white and may be chosen out, until the time before determined arrives - for the true victory shall be won at the coming of Christ. Some of the Jews understand these things as applying to the princes Severus and Antoninus, who esteemed the Jews very highly. But others understand the Emperor Julian as the one referred to; for after they had been oppressed by Gaius Caesar and had steadfastly endured such suffering in the afflictions of their captivity, Julian rose up as one who pretended love for the Jews, promising that he would even offer sacrifice in their temple. They were to enjoy a little help from him, and a great number of the Gentiles were to join themselves to their party, although falsely and insincerely. For it would only be for the sake of their own idolatrous religion that they would pretend friendship to the Jews. And they would do this in order that those who were approved might be made manifest. For the time of their true salvation and help will be the coming of the Christ; for the Jews mistakenly imagine that he (i.e., their Messiah) is yet to come, for they are going to receive the Antichrist (when he comes) (1 Corinthians 11).

Verse 36. "And the king shall do according to his will, and he shall be lifted up and shall magnify himself against every god; and he shall speak arrogant words against the God of gods, and shall manage successfully until the wrath be accomplished (Vulgate: indignation); for the determination is made." Or else, as another has translated it: "for in him shall be the consummation." The Jews

believe that this passage has reference to the Antichrist, alleging that after the small help of Julian a king is going to rise up who shall do according to his own will and shall lift himself up against all that is called god, and shall speak arrogant words against the God of gods. He shall act in such a way as to sit in the Temple of God and shall make himself out to be God, and his will shall be prospered until the wrath of God is fulfilled, for in him the consummation will take place. We too understand this to refer to the Antichrist. But Porphyry and the others who follow his lead suppose the reference to be to Antiochus Epiphanes, pointing out that he did raise himself up against the worship of God, and pushed his arrogance so far as to command his own statue to be set up in the Temple in Jerusalem. And as for the subsequent statement, "And he shall manage successfully until the wrath be accomplished, for the consummation shall be in him," they understand it to mean that his power will endure until such time as God becomes angry at him and orders him to be killed. For indeed Polybius and Diodorus, who composed the histories of the Bibliothecae (Libraries), relate that Antiochus not only took measures against the God of Judaea, but also was impelled by an all-consuming avarice to attempt the plunder of the temple of Diana in Elymais, because it was so wealthy. But he was so beset by the temple guard and the neighboring populace, and also by certain fearful apparitions, that he became demented and finally died of illness. And the historians record that this befell him because he had attempted to plunder the temple of Diana. But we for our part maintain that even though this thing befell him, it did so because he had perpetrated great cruelty upon the saints of God and had defiled His Temple. For we ought not to suppose that it was because of something he only attempted to do but from which he then desisted by an act of repentance, but rather because of something he actually did he was punished.

Verses 37-39. "And he shall make no account of the god of his fathers, and he shall be engrossed in lust for women; nor shall he have regard for any of the gods, for he shall rise up against everything. But he shall worship the god Maozim in his place, and a god which his fathers knew not shall he worship with gold and silver and precious stones and things of great price. And he shall take measures to fortify Maozim, together with a strange god whom he has acknowledged. And he shall increase glory and shall grant them power over many and shall divide the land as a free gift." Instead of our rendering, the Septuagint translates: "...and he will not be subject to the lusts of women." And again, instead of "the god Maozim (m'dym)," as the Hebrew has it, Aquila renders, "the God of mighty powers (fortitudinum)," whereas the Septuagint says, "the most mighty God." But because there is an ambiguity of position in the Hebrew original of the phrase we rendered by, "And he shall be engrossed in lust for women," Aquila renders it simply word for word (in Greek): "And he shall have no understanding with regard to the god of his fathers, and in regard to the desire of women and in regard to every god he shall have no understanding"; that is (in Latin): "And concerning the god of his fathers he shall not understand, and concerning the lust for women, and concerning every god he shall not understand." There are two interpretations current concerning these words, that he cherished lust for women, and that he cherished no lust for them. If we read it one way and understand it as an apo koinou: "And he shall have no knowledge concerning a lust for women," then it is more easily applied to the Antichrist; i.e., that he will assume a pretense of chastity in order to deceive many. But if we read it in this fashion: "And occupied with lust for women," understanding, "...he shall be," then it is more appropriate to the character of Antiochus. For he is said to have been an egregious voluptuary, and to have become such a disgrace to the dignity of kingship through his lewdness and seductions, that he

publicly had intercourse with actresses and harlots, and satisfied his sexual passions in the presence of the people. As for the god Maozim, Porphyry has offered an absurd explanation, asserting that Antiochus's generals set up a statue of Jupiter in the village of Modin, from which came Mattathias and his sons; moreover they compelled the Jews to offer blood-sacrifices to it, that is, to the god of Modin. The next statement, "...and he shall worship a god whom his fathers did not know" is more appropriate to the Antichrist than to Antiochus. For we read that Antiochus held to the religion of the idols of Greece and compelled the Jews and Samaritans to worship his own gods. Likewise in regard to the statement, "...and he shall take measures to fortify Maozim, together with a strange god whom he has acknowledged; and he shall increase glory and grant them power over many, and shall divide the land as a free gift," Theodotion has interpreted as follows: "And he shall conduct these affairs so as to fortify garrisons with a strange god, and with them he shall manifest and increase glory; and he shall cause them to bear rule over many and divide up the land as a free gift." Symmachus rendered it "refuges" instead of "garrisons." Porphyry explained this as meaning that the man is going to fortify the citadel in Jerusalem and will station garrisons in the rest of the cities, and will instruct the Jews to worship a strange god, which doubtless means Jupiter. And displaying the idol to them, he will persuade them that they should worship it. Then he will bestow upon the deluded both honor and very great glory, and he shall deal with the rest who have borne rule in Judaea, and apportion estates unto them in return for their falsehood, and shall distribute gifts. The Antichrist likewise is going to make lavish bestowal of many rewards upon those whom he has deceived, and will divide up the land to his soldiery. And those whom he will not be able to subject to himself by fear he will subject through their cupidity.

Verses 40, 41. "And at the predetermined time the king of the South shall war against him, and the king of the North shall come against him like a tempest with chariots, with horsemen and with a great navy; and he shall invade lands and destroy them and pass through. And he shall enter into the glorious land, and many shall fall." Theodotion rendered: "...and many shall be enfeebled." And according to Aquila, the many that fell are to be understood as cities or districts or provinces. This too is referred by Porphyry to Antiochus, on the ground that in the eleventh year of his reign he warred for a second time against his nephew, Ptolemy Philometor. For when the latter heard that Antiochus had come, he gathered many thousands of soldiery. But Antiochus invaded many lands like a mighty tempest, with his chariots and horsemen and large navy, and laid everything waste as he passed through. And he came to the glorious land, that is, Judaea, which Symmachus rendered as "land of strength." In place of this Theodotion used the Hebrew word itself, Sabai (variants: Sabam and Saba) (sby). And Antiochus used the ruins of the wall of the city to fortify the citadel, and thus he continued on his way to Egypt. But those of our viewpoint refer these details also to the Antichrist, asserting that he shall first fight against the king of the South, or Egypt, and shall afterwards conquer Libya and Ethiopia, for these constitute the three broken horns about which we read previously. And then he shall come to the land of Israel, and many cities or provinces shall be given into his hands.

"And only these cities shall be saved from his hands: Edom, Moab, and the principality of the children of Ammon." They say that in his haste to fight Ptolemy, the king of the South, Antiochus left untouched the Idumaeans, Moabites, and Ammonites, who dwelt to the side of Judaea, lest he should make Ptolemy the stronger by engaging in some other campaign. The Antichrist also is

going to leave Idumaea, Moab, and the children of Ammon (i.e., Arabia) untouched, for the saints are to flee thither to the deserts.

Verses 42, 43. "And he shall lay his hand upon the lands, and the land of Egypt shall not escape; and he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt. And likewise he shall pass through the Libyans (Vulgate: Libya and Ethiopia) and the Ethiopians." We read that Antiochus partially accomplished this. But as for the added detail, "He shall pass through the Libyans and Ethiopians," our school insists that this is more appropriate to the Antichrist. For Antiochus never held Libya, which most writers understand to be North Africa, nor Ethiopia; unless, of course, his capture of Egypt involved the harrassment of those provinces of Egypt which lay in the same general region as Ethiopia, and which lay as distant neighbors to it, on the other side of the deserts. Hence there is no assertion of his conquering them, but only the statement that he passed through the Libyans and the Ethiopians.

Verses 44, 45. "And tidings from the East and from the North shall trouble him. And he shall come thither with a great host to destroy and slay very many. And he shall pitch his tent in Apedno between the two seas, upon the famous and holy mountain; and he shall come even unto its summit, and none shall help him." Even for this passage Porphyry has some nebulous application to Antiochus, asserting that in his conflict with the Egyptians, Libyans, and Ethiopians, passing through them he was to hear of wars which had been stirred up against him in the North and the East. Thence he was to turn back and overcome the resistance of the Aradians, and lay waste the entire province along the coastline of Phoenicia. And then he was to proceed without delay against Artaxias, the king of Armenia, who was moving down from the regions of the East, and having slain a large number of his troops, he would pitch his tent in the place called Apedno which is located between the two broadest rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. But it is impossible to state upon what famous and holy mountain he took his seat, after he had proceeded to that point. After all, it cannot be shown that he took up his seat between two seas, and it would be foolish to interpret the two seas as being the two rivers of Mesopotamia. But Porphyry gets around this famous mountain by following the rendering of Theodotion, who said: "...upon the sacred Mount Saba between the two seas." And even though he supposes that Saba was the name of a mountain in Armenia or Mesopotamia, he cannot explain why it was holy. To be sure, if we assume the right of making things up, we can add the detail which Porphyry fails to mention, that the mountain, forsooth, was called holy, because it was consecrated to idols in conformity with the superstition of the Armenians. The account then says: "And he shall come even unto the summit of that same mountain," - supposedly in the province of Elam, which is the easternmost Persian area. And there when he purposed to plunder the temple of Diana, which contained countless sums of money, he was routed by the barbarians, for they honored that shrine with a remarkable veneration. And Antiochus, being overcome with grief, died in Tabes, a town in Persia. By use of a most artificial line of argument Porphyry has concocted these details as an affront to us; but even though he were able to prove that these statements applied to Antiochus instead of the Antichrist, what does that matter to us? For do we not on the basis of all the passages of Scripture prove the coming of Christ and the falsehood of the Antichrist? For assume that these things did refer to Antiochus, what injury does that inflict upon our religious faith? Is it not true that in the earlier vision also, which contained a prophecy fulfilled in Antiochus, there is some reference to the Antichrist? And so let Porphyry banish his doubts and stick to manifest facts. Let him explain the

meaning of that rock which was hewn from the mountain without hands, and which grew to be a great mountain and filled the earth, and which smashed to pieces the fourfold image. And let him say who that Son of man is who is going to come with clouds and stand before the Ancient of Days and have bestowed upon him a kingdom which shall never come to an end, and who is going to be served by all nations, tribes, and language-groups. Porphyry ignores these things which are so very clear and maintains that the prophecy refers to the Jews, although we are well aware that they are to this very day in a state of bondage. And he claims that the person who composed the book under the name of Daniel made it all up in order to revive the hopes of his countrymen. Not that he was able to foreknow all of future history, but rather he records events that had already taken place. Thus Porphyry confines himself to false claims in regard to the final vision, substituting rivers for the sea, and positing a famous and holy mountain, Apedno even though he is unable to furnish any historical source in which he has read about it. Those of our party, on the other hand, explain the final chapter of this vision as relating to the Antichrist, and stating that during his war against the Egyptians, Libyans, and Ethiopians, in which he shall smash three of the ten horns, he is going to hear that war has been stirred up against him in the regions of the North and East. Then he shall come with a great host to crush and slay many people, and shall pitch his tent in Apedno near Nicopolis, which was formerly called Emmaus, at the beginning of the mountainous region in the province of Judaea. Finally he shall make his way thence to go up to the Mount of Olives and ascend to the area of Jerusalem; and this is what the Scripture means here: "And when he has pitched his tent..." at the foothills of the mountainous province between two seas. These are, of course, that which is now called the Dead Sea on the east, and the Great Sea on the shore of which lie Caesarea, Joppa, Ashkelon, and Gazae. Then he shall come up to the summit thereof, that is of the mountainous province, or the apex of the Mount of Olives, which of course is called famous because our Lord and Savior ascended from it to the Father. And no one shall be able to assist the Antichrist as the Lord vents his fury upon him. Our school of thought insists that Antichrist is going to perish in that spot from which the Lord ascended to heaven. Apedno is a compound word, which upon analysis yields the meaning of "his throne" (the Greek *thronou autou*), or (in Latin) "thy throne". And the meaning is that he shall pitch his tent and his throne between the seas upon the famous, holy mountain. Symmachus translated this passage as follows (in Greek): "And he shall stretch out the tents of his stable between the seas in the holy mountain of power, and he shall come even unto its height"; which means in Latin: "And he shall stretch forth the pavilions of his cavalry between the seas, upon the holy mountain of power, and shall come even unto the apex of the mountain." Theodotion renders it: "And he shall pitch his tent in Aphedanum between the seas in the holy Mount Saba, and he shall come to the region thereof." Aquila says: "And he shall set up the tent of his headquarters in (Greek) Aphadanon between the seas, in the glorious, holy mountain, and he shall come even unto its border." Only the Septuagint frees itself from the problem about the name by translating: "And he shall establish his tent there between the seas and the holy mountain of desire and he shall come to the hour of his final end." Adhering to this rendering, Apollinarius omits all mention of the name Apedno. I have gone into this matter at some length not only for the purpose of exposing Porphyry's misrepresentation (for either he was ignorant of all these matters or else he pretended not to know them) but also to show the difficulty in Holy Scripture. And yet men who altogether lack experience lay special claim to understanding it apart from the grace of God and the scholarship of preceding generations. Now it should be observed that Hebrew has no letter P, but uses instead the letter phe, which has the

force of the Greek phi. It is simply that in this particular place the Hebrews write the letter phe, yet it is to be pronounced as p. But that the Antichrist is going to come to the summit of the holy, famous mountain and perish there is a fact upon which Isaiah expatiates more fully, saying: "The Lord shall in the holy mountain cast down the face of the ruler of the darkness which is over all races, and him who rules over all peoples, and the anointing which is applied against (variant: with which he was anointed against) all the nations."

CHAPTER TWELVE

Verses 1-3. "But at that time shall Michael rise up, the great prince, who stands for the children of thy people, and a time shall come such as never occurred from the time that nations began to exist even unto that time. And at that time shall thy people be saved, even everyone who shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach, that they may behold it always. But those who are instructed shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that instruct many as to righteousness, as the stars for all eternity." Up until this point Porphyry somehow managed to maintain his position and impose upon the credulity of the naive among our adherents as well as the poorly educated among his own. But what can he say of this chapter, in which is described the resurrection of the dead, with one group being revived for eternal life and the other group for eternal disgrace? He cannot even specify who the people were under Antiochus who shone like the brightness of the firmament, and those others who shone like the stars for all eternity. But what will pigheadedness not resort to? Like some bruised serpent, he lifts up his head as he is about to die, and pours forth his venom upon those who are themselves at the point of death. This too, he declares, was written with reference to Antiochus, for after he had invaded Persia, he left his army with Lysias, who was in charge of Antioch and Phoenicia, for the purpose of warring against the Jews and destroying their city of Jerusalem. All these details are related by Josephus, the author of the history of the Hebrews. Porphyry contends that the tribulation was such as had never previously occurred, and that a time came along such as had never been from the time that races began to exist even unto that time. But when victory was bestowed upon them, and the generals of Antiochus had been slain, and Antiochus himself had died in Persia, the people of Israel experienced salvation, even all who had been written down in the book of God, that is, those who defended the law with great bravery. Contrasted with them were those who proved to be transgressors of the Law and sided with the party of Antiochus. Then it was, he asserts, that these guardians of the Law, who had been, as it were, slumbering in the dust of the earth and were cumbered with a load of afflictions, and even hidden away, as it were, in the tombs of wretchedness, rose up once more from the dust of the earth to a victory un hoped for, and lifted up their heads, rising up to everlasting life, even as the transgressors rose up to everlasting disgrace. But those masters and teachers who possessed a knowledge of the Law shall shine like the heaven, and those who have exhorted the more backward peoples to observe the rites of God shall blaze forth after the fashion of the stars for all eternity. He also adduces the historical account concerning the Maccabees, in which it is said that many Jews under the leadership of Mattathias and Judas Maccabaeus fled to the desert and hid in caves and holes in the rocks, and came forth again after the victory (I Macc. 2.) These things, then, were foretold in metaphorical language as if it concerned a resurrection of the dead. But the more reasonable understanding of the matter is that in the time of the Antichrist there shall occur a tribulation such as there has never been since

nations began to exist. For assume that Lysias won the victory instead of being defeated, and that he completely crushed the Jews instead of their conquering; certainly such tribulation would not have been comparable to that of the time when Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians, the Temple was destroyed, and all the people were led off into captivity. And so after the Antichrist is crushed and destroyed by the breath of the Savior's mouth, the people written in God's book shall be saved; and in accordance with the merits of each, some shall rise up unto eternal life and others unto eternal shame. But the teachers shall resemble the very heavens, and those who have instructed others shall be compared to the brightness of the stars. For it is not enough to know wisdom unless one also instructs others; and the tongue of instruction which remains silent and edifies no one else can receive no reward for labor accomplished. This passage is expressed by Theodo-tion and the Vulgate edition in the following fashion: "And those who understand shall shine forth like the radiance of the firmament, and many of the righteous like the stars forever and ever." Many people often ask whether a learned saint and an ordinary saint shall both enjoy the same reward and one and the same dwelling-place in heaven. Well then, the statement is made here, according to Theodotion's rendering, that the learned will resemble the very heavens, whereas the righteous who are without learning are only compared to the brightness of the stars. And so the difference between learned godliness and mere godly rusticity shall be the difference between heaven and the stars.

Verse 4. "But Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time appointed. Many shall pass over, and knowledge shall be manifold." He who had revealed manifold truth to Daniel now signifies that the things he has said are matters of secrecy, and he orders him to roll up the scroll containing his words and set a seal upon the book, with the result that many shall read it and inquire as to its fulfilment in history, differing in their opinions because of its great obscurity. And as for the statement, "Many shall pass over" or "go through," this indicates that it will be read by many people. For it is a familiar expression to say: "I have gone through a book," or, "I have passed through an historical account." Indeed this is the idea which Isaiah also expressed in regard to the obscurity of his own book: "And the sayings of that book shall be like the words of a book that is sealed. And if they shall give it to an illiterate man, saying, 'Read it,' he will reply, 'I do not know how to read.' But if they give it to a man who does know how to read and say, 'Read the book,' he will reply, 'I cannot read it, because it is sealed up'" (Isaiah 29:11-12). Also in the Revelation of John, there is a book seen which is sealed with seven seals inside and outside. And when no one proves able to break its seals, John says, "I wept sore; and a voice came to me, saying, 'Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book and break its seals'" (Revelation 5:1-5). But that book can be opened by one who has learned the mysteries of Scripture and understands its hidden truths, and its words which seem dark because of the greatness of the secrets they contain. He it is who can interpret the parables and transmute the letter which killeth into the spirit which quickeneth.

Verses 5-6. "And I Daniel looked, and behold as it were two other persons were standing, one on this side upon the river-bank, and the other upon that side, on the other bank of the river. And I said to the man that was clothed in linen, that stood upon the waters of the river, 'How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?'" Daniel saw two angels standing on either side upon the bank of the river of Babylon. Although it is mentioned here without specifying its name, I suppose that in line with the preceding vision it would be the Tigris River, which is called Eddecel (H-d-q-l) in

Hebrew. Yet Daniel does not address his question to those who were standing upon either bank, but rather to the one whom he had seen at the beginning, who was clothed in vesture of linen or byssus, which is called baddim (b-d-y-m) in Hebrew. And this same angel was standing upon the waters of the river of Babylon, treading upon them with his feet. From this fact we understand that the former pair of angels whom he saw standing upon the bank and did not question or deem worthy of interrogation were the angels of the Greeks and Persians. But this first angel was the gracious one who had presented Daniel's prayers before God during the twenty-one days while the angel of the Persians was opposing him. And Daniel was asking him about these wonders spoken of in the present vision, as to the time when they should be accomplished. Porphyry, of course, assigns this time to the period of Antiochus, after his usual fashion, whereas we assign it to the time of Antichrist.

Verse 7. "And I heard the man that was clothed in linen, that stood upon the waters of the river: when he had lifted up his right hand and his left hand to heaven and had sworn by Him that liveth forever, that it should be unto a time and times and half a time." Porphyry interprets a time and times and half a time to mean three and a half years; and we for our part do not deny that this accords with the idiom of Sacred Scripture. For we read in an earlier section that seven times passed over Nebuchadnezzar, that is, the seven years of his existence as a wild beast. The expression was also used in the vision of the four beasts, the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the other beast whose name was not specified but which represented the kingdom of the Romans. Right afterwards the statement is made concerning the Antichrist that he will humble kings and utter speeches against the Exalted One and will crush the saints of the Most High; moreover he will imagine that he can alter times and laws. And the saints shall be turned over to his power unto a time and times and half a time. And the court will sit for judgment, in order that power may be removed and utterly broken and vanish away until the very end. And clearly the reference is to the coming of Christ and the saints when it is said: "But kingdom and power and the greatness of the kingdom which lies beneath the whole heaven shall be bestowed upon the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and all the kings shall serve and obey Him." If therefore the earlier references which were plainly written concerning the Antichrist are assigned by Porphyry to Antiochus and to the three and a half years during which he asserts the Temple was deserted (cf. Verse 1, above), then he is under obligation to prove that the next statement, "His kingdom is eternal, and all kings shall serve and obey him," likewise pertains to Antiochus, or else (as he himself conjectures) to the people of the Jews. But it is perfectly apparent that such an argument will never stand. We read in the books of Maccabees - and Josephus also concurs in the same opinion (Book 11, chap. 10) - that the Temple in Jerusalem lay defiled for three years, and under Antiochus Epiphanes an idol of Jupiter stood within it; that is to say, from Chislev, the ninth month, of the one hundred forty-fifth year of the Macedonian rule until the ninth month of the one hundred forty-eighth year, which amounts to three years. But under the Antichrist it is not stated that the desolation and overthrow of the holy Temple shall endure for three years, but for three years and a half, that is, one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

"And when the scattering of the band of the holy people shall be accomplished, all these things shall be fulfilled." When it is stated that the people of God shall have been scattered - either under the persecution of Antiochus, as Porphyry claims, or of Antichrist, which we deem to be closer to fact - at that time shall all these things be fulfilled.

Verses 8-10. "And I heard, and understood not. And I said, 'O my lord, what shall happen after these things?' And he said, 'Go, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be chosen and made white and shall be tried as fire; and the wicked shall deal wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but the learned shall understand.'" The prophet wished to comprehend what he had seen, or rather, what he had heard, and he desired to understand the reality of the things to come. For he had heard of the various wars of kings, and of battles between them, and a detailed narrative of events; but he had not heard the names of the individual persons involved. And if the prophet himself heard and did not understand, what will be the case with those men who presumptuously expound a book which has been sealed, and that too unto the time of the end, a book which is shrouded with many obscurities? But he comments that when the end comes, the ungodly will lack comprehension, whereas those who are learned in the teaching of God will be able to understand. "For wisdom will not enter the perverted soul, nor can it impart itself to a body which is subject to sins."

Verse 11. "And from the time that the continual sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination unto desolation shall be set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." Porphyry asserts that these one thousand two hundred and ninety days were fulfilled in the desolation of the Temple in the time of Antiochus, and yet both Josephus and the Book of Maccabees, as we have said before, record that it lasted for only three years. From this circumstance it is apparent that the three and a half years are spoken of in connection with the time of the Antichrist, for he is going to persecute the saints for three and a half years, or one thousand two hundred and ninety days, and then he shall meet his fall on the famous, holy mountain. And so from the time of the removal of the endelekhismos, which we have translated as "continual sacrifice," i.e., the time when the Antichrist shall obtain possession of the world (variant: the city) and forbid the worship of God, unto the day of his death the three and a half years, or one thousand two hundred and ninety days, shall be fulfilled.

Verse 12. "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh unto a thousand three hundred and thirty-five days." He means that he is blessed who waits for forty-five days beyond the predetermined number, for it is within that period that our Lord and Savior is to come in His glory. But the reason for the forty-five days of inaction after the slaying of the Antichrist is a matter which rests in the knowledge of God; unless, of course, we say that the rule of the saints is delayed in order that their patience may be tested. Porphyry explains this passage in the following way, that the forty-five days beyond the one thousand two hundred and ninety signify the interval of victory over the generals of Antiochus, or the period when Judas Maccabaeus fought with bravery and cleansed the Temple and broke the idol to pieces, offering blood-sacrifices in the Temple of God. He might have been correct in this statement if the Book of Maccabees had recorded that the Temple was polluted over a period of three and a half years instead of just three years (I Mac. 4).

Verse 13. "But thou, Daniel, go thy way until the time appointed, and take thy rest (Vulgate: thou shalt rest) and thou shalt stand in thy lot unto the end of the days." Instead of this Theodotion translated it: "But go thy way and take thy rest, and thou shalt rise up again in thy turn at the end of the days." From this remark it is demonstrated that the whole context of the prophecy has to do with the resurrection of all the dead, at the time when the prophet also is to rise. And it is vain for Porphyry to claim that all these things which were spoken concerning the Antichrist under the type of Antiochus actually refer to Antiochus alone. As we have already mentioned, these false claims

have been answered at greater length by Eusebius of Caesarea, Apollinarius of Laodicea, and partially also by that very able writer, the martyr Methodius; and anyone who knows of these things can look them up in their writings. Thus far we have been reading Daniel in the Hebrew edition; but the remaining matter to the end of the book has been translated from Theodotion's edition.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Verses 1, 2. "Now there was a man that dwelt in Babylon whose name was Joakim; and he took a wife whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Helcias, a very beautiful woman and one who feared the Lord" (Vulgate: God). Having expounded to the best of my ability the contents of the book of Daniel according to the Hebrew, I shall briefly set forth the comments of Origen concerning the stories of Susanna and of Bel contained in the Tenth Book of his *Stromata*. These remarks are from him and one may observe them in the appropriate sections (i.e., of Origen's work).

Verse 3. "And being righteous folk, her parents had educated their daughter in conformity with the law of Moses (Vulgate: because they were righteous, they had instructed...." This verse should be used as a testimony in order to urge parents to teach their daughters in accordance with God's law and holy Word, as well as their sons.

Verse 5. "And there were two of the elders of the people (the Vulgate omits: of the people) who were appointed judges that year." There was a Jew who used to allege that these men were Ahab and Zedekiah (variant: Alchias and Zedekiah), of whom Jeremiah wrote: "The Lord do to thee as Ahab and Zedekiah, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire because of the iniquity they had wrought in Israel and because they had committed adultery (variant: were committing adultery) with the wives of their citizens" (Jeremiah 29:22-23).

"It was concerning them that the Lord said that iniquity came forth from Babylon on the part of the ancient judges who appeared to govern the people. They used to frequent the house of Joakim..." Very appropriately it is not said of these sinful elders, "They governed the people," but rather, "They appeared to govern." For those who furnish good leadership to the people are the ones who govern them, but those who merely have the title of judge and lead the people unjustly only appear to govern the people rather than actually doing so.

Verse 8. "And they were inflamed with lust for her, and they perverted their own mind and turned their eyes away that they might not look toward heaven nor remember just judgments." What the Greeks call *pathos* we render more correctly by "emotion" than by "passion." And so it was this emotion, this lustful desire, which aroused or even smote the hearts of the elders. But in order that they might lay some basis for it in their hearts and might plan how to satisfy their desires, they perverted their own minds. And as their minds were subverted, they turned away their eyes that they might not regard heavenly things or remember righteous judgments, or God, or honor, or character, the factors for good which are inherent in all men. "And behold, Susanna was taking a walk according to her custom." It has been stated already that Susanna was actually in the habit of taking walks in the mornings. For the sake of pleasing those people who seek out Scriptural precedent for everything we do, it would not be inappropriate to seize upon this passage about taking walks, and say that it is a good thing for a person to take walks for the invigorating of his body. Origen says that he has taken this particular passage from the Septuagint; by this statement he shows that he has not discussed the rest of the chapter on the basis of the Septuagint

translation.

Verse 19. "Susanna sighed and said: 'I am straitened on every side.'" Anyone who has attained to the acme of perfect virtue never says that she is faced with a crisis of decision, when she is unable to escape the hands of adulterers who say, "Consent to us and have intercourse with us; for otherwise, if thou art unwilling, we will witness against thee that a young man was with thee and thou sentest away thy maidens from thee for this purpose." It is of course a characteristic of human frailty to fear a death which is inflicted upon one because of his uprightness. To be sure we might interpret her distress as arising not from the prospect of death but from the contumely and disgrace which would be heaped upon her by those accusers who would claim: "A young man was with her, and she sent away her maidens for that reason."

Verse 22. "'For if I do this, it is death to me; but if I do not..." She speaks of sin as death. For just as in the case of one who commits adultery, the adultery means death, so also every sin which results in death is to be equated with death. And we believe we die as often as we sin unto death. And therefore on the other hand we rise again and are made alive just as often as we perform deeds which are worthy of life.

Verse 23. "'But it is better for me to fall into your hands without doing the deed than to sin in the sight of the Lord.'" In the Greek the word is not *haireretoron*, or "better", but *haireton*, which we may render by "good". And so she chose her words well when she avoided saying, "It is better for me to fall into the hands of my enemies, the elders, than to sin in the sight of the Lord"; for thus she avoided calling something better in comparison with sin, which was not a good thing at all. But, she remarks, it is good for me not to do the wicked thing, and to fall into your clutches without sinning in God's sight. Therefore one should not use the comparative and say, "It is better for me to fall into your clutches than to sin in God's sight," but rather the positive, "It is good for me not to do the wicked thing and fall into your clutches, rather than to commit sin in God's sight."

Verse 24. "And Susanna cried out with a great voice..." Her voice was great, not because of the intense vibrations it sent through the air nor because of the outcry that came from her lips, but because of the greatness of the chastity with which she called out to the Lord. And so for this reason the Scripture did not attribute a great voice to the outcry of the elders, for the following statement is merely: "The elders also cried out against her."

Verse 42. "But Susanna cried out with a great voice..." Her voice was rendered the clearer because of the emotion of her heart, the honest sincerity of her avowal, and the uprightness of her conscience. And so, although men would not listen to it, her outcry to God was great.

Verse 45. "And as she was being led away to die, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young boy." By this language it is shown that the Holy Spirit did not then enter into Daniel, but rather that He was already within him, and only because of the tenderness of his years He had remained inactive. Nor could He show forth His works until an occasion arose and the Lord stirred him up on behalf of the holy woman.

Verse 46. "And he cried out with a great voice: 'I am innocent of the blood of this woman...'" Because the Holy Spirit was roused up within him and dictated to the boy what he should say, his voice was great. And if there is any place in Holy Scripture where the voice of a sinner is called great, it has (yet) to be noted.

Verses 54-59. "'Tell me under which tree thou sawest them conversing with each other.' And he answered, 'Under the mastic tree.' And Daniel said to him, 'Well hast thou lied against thine own head; for behold, the angel of God, having received His sentence from Him, shall cleave thee in twain.' And a little while later the other elder said, 'Under the holm tree.' And Daniel said to him, 'Well hast thou lied against thine own head; but the angel of the Lord waiteth with a sword to sever thee in twain.'" Since the Hebrews reject the story of Susanna, asserting that it is not contained in the Book of Daniel, we ought to investigate carefully the names of the trees, the skhinos and the prinos, which the Latins interpret as "holm-oak" and "mastic-tree," and see whether they exist among the Hebrews and what their derivation is - for example, as "cleavage" , and "cutting" or "sawing" is derived from "holm tree" in the language of the Greeks. But if no such derivation can be found, then we too are of necessity forced to agree with the verdict of those who claim that this chapter was originally composed in Greek, because it contains Greek etymology not found in Hebrew. But if anyone can show that the derivation of the ideas of cleaving and severing from the names of the two trees in question is valid in Hebrew, then we may accept this scripture also as canonical.

Verse 60. "And the whole congregation (Vulgate: assembly) cried out with a great voice and blessed God, who saveth those who trust in Him..." If the whole congregation put them to death, the view which we mentioned earlier is apparently refuted, namely that these were the elders Ahab and Zedekiah, in conformity with Jeremiah's statement (Jeremiah 29:22). The only other possibility is that instead of taking the statement, "They killed them," literally, we interpret it as meaning that they gave them over to the king of Babylon to be put to death. That would be just like when we say that the Jews put the Savior to death; not that they smote Him themselves, but they gave Him over to be slain and cried out, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" (John 19:15).

Verse 63. "But Helcias and his wife praised God for their daughter Susanna..." Like true saints they praise God after a worthy fashion, not simply on the ground of Susanna's deliverance from the clutches of the elders - for that would hardly be sufficient matter for praise or of any decisive importance, even if she had not been so delivered - but rather on the ground that no immorality was found in her.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Verse 18. "And as soon as he had opened the door, the king looked upon the table and cried out with a great voice: 'Great art thou, O Bel, and there is no deceit with thee.'" The statement of Scripture in this passage, "He cried out with a great voice," may seem, because of its reference to an idolator ignorant of God, to refute the observation put forth a little previously, that the expression "great voice" is found only in connection with saints. This objection is easily solved by asserting that this particular story is not contained in the Hebrew of the Book of Daniel. If, however, anyone should be able to prove that it belongs in the canon, then we should be obliged to seek out some answer to this objection.

Commentary on Ecclesiastes v2

Commentary on Ecclesiastes by Saint Jerome of Stridon, Presbyter, addressed to Paula and Eustochium.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Preface

I remember about five years ago when I was still in Rome, reading Ecclesiastes of the holy Blesilla, in order to provoke her to contempt for this world, and to consider everything she saw in the world as worthless. She asked me to explain the obscure parts, like a commentator, so that she could understand what she was reading without me. Therefore, since she was suddenly taken from us by death before our work was finished, and since we, O Paula and Eustochium, did not deserve to have such a partner in our lives, I was struck dumb with such a wound. Now, I am in Bethlehem, a more noble city, and I return that memory and gratitude to both her and to you. By way of introduction, I must point out that I have followed no one's authority, but have rather adhered to the custom of the Seventy Interpreters, while translating from the Hebrew. Only in those places where they differed little from the Hebrew text. Occasionally, I have also consulted

Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, so as not to discourage the reader with excessive novelty, or, on the other hand, to pursue the streams of opinions, contrary to my own conscience, by disregarding the source of truth.

(Chap. I.)

(Chapter 1.) The words of the Son of David, the King of Jerusalem. The Scriptures most clearly teach that he was called Solomon by three names: peaceful, that is, Solomon (); and Ididia (), that is, beloved of the Lord; and what is now called Coeleth (), that is, Ecclesiastes. However, Ecclesiastes is called in the Greek language, which means gathering, that is, gathering the Church, which we can now call the preacher, because he speaks to the people, and his speech is not directed specifically to one, but generally to all. Moreover, he was called peaceful and beloved of the Lord because there was peace in his kingdom and the Lord loved him. For both the forty-fourth and the seventy-first psalms are titled as beloved and peaceful. Although they pertain to the prophecy of Christ and the Church, surpassing the happiness and strength of Solomon; nevertheless, they were written according to the history of Solomon.

Therefore, he published three volumes according to the number of words: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. In Proverbs, he teaches about little things and instructs about duties through sentences. Therefore, his speech is frequently repeated to his son. In Ecclesiastes, he instructs a man of mature age, so that he does not consider anything in worldly matters to be perpetual, but rather temporary and short-lived, as we see everything. Finally, when the man is already consummated and has surpassed the age, he unites him with the bride in the embrace in the Song of Songs. For unless we first abandon vices and renounce the vanities of the world, preparing ourselves for the coming of Christ, we cannot say: "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth" (Cant. I, 1). Not far from this order, philosophers instruct their followers: first teaching ethics, then interpreting physics; and those whom they see to have made progress in these, they lead on to logic. And it should also be noted that the titles of the author's books are different. For in Proverbs it is noted: Proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel. But in Ecclesiastes: Words of the Teacher son of David, king of Jerusalem: for it is unnecessary here to mention Israel, which is found incorrectly in Greek and Latin manuscripts. And in Song of Songs neither son of David nor king of Israel or Jerusalem is prescribed, but only Song of Songs of Solomon. For just as the Proverbs and the simple instruction pertain to the twelve tribes and to all of Israel, and just as the contempt of the world only befits the metropolitans, that is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so the Song of Songs is specifically suitable to those who desire only heavenly things. It pertains to beginners, and to those making progress, and it is the authority that will rightfully claim the dignity of a father and the kingdom of its own. However, for the perfect ones, where the disciple is taught not by fear but by love, their own name is enough, and they are an equal teacher, and they do not know themselves to be king. These (things) for now according to the letter.

Furthermore, according to spiritual understanding: peaceful and beloved by God the Father, and our Churchman is Christ; who, demolishing the middle wall and abolishing enmities in the flesh, made both one, saying: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you (John 14:27). Concerning whom the Father said to the disciples: This is, he said (Matthew 3:17), my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear him, who is the head of the whole Church: Not to the synagogue of the Jews, but to the multitude of the Gentiles speaking, the king of the living stones of Jerusalem; not

of that Jerusalem, of which he himself says: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets (Matthew 23:37); and: Behold, your house will be left to you desolate (ibid., 38): but of that Jerusalem, by which he forbids swearing; because it is the city of the great king. Here is the son of David, to whom the blind men in the Gospel cried out: Have mercy on us, son of David (Matthew 9:27); and the whole crowd resounded with one voice: Hosanna to the son of David (Matthew 21:9). In short, the word of God does not come to him as it did to Jeremiah and the other Prophets, but because he is rich, and king, and mighty (he is indeed the Word and wisdom, and the other virtues), he speaks words to the men of the Church: he hints at words to the Apostles, of whom it is sung in the Psalm: Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world (Psalm 19:4). Therefore, some people believe that we are enticed by this book towards pleasure and indulgence. However, on the contrary, everything that we perceive in the world is declared to be empty. We should not eagerly pursue those things which, while possessed, will ultimately perish.

Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. If all that God has made is very good, how is everything vanity, and not only vanity, but also vanity of vanities? Just as in the Song of Songs, among all songs, an excellent song is shown; so in the vanity of vanities, the magnitude of vanity is shown. Something similar is written in the Psalm: Nevertheless, all is vanity, every living man (Psalm XXXVIII, 6). Man's life is vanity; therefore, in death, vanity of vanities. In Exodus, we read about the glorified face of Moses, which the children of Israel could not look upon. Paul the Apostle compares this glory to the glory of the Gospel and says it is not glory: 'For that which was glorified is not glorified in this part, by reason of the excellent glory' (2 Corinthians 3:10). Therefore, we can say that heaven, earth, seas, and all that is contained within this world may be considered good in themselves, but when compared to God, they are worthless. And how, if seeing the little flame of a lamp, I would be content with its light, and later, when the sun rises, I would not perceive what was shining, and I would also see the lights of the stars being covered by the sun's light: in this way, looking at the elements and the manifold variety of things, I indeed admire the magnitude of the works; but reflecting that all things pass away, and the world grows old with its end, and that God alone always is what He was, I am compelled to say not once, but twice: Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. In Hebrew, the phrase 'vanity of vanities' is written as 'Abal Abalim'. Except for the Septuagint translators, all have similarly rendered it as 'vapor of vapors' or 'vapors'. We can also refer to it as the vapor of smoke and thin air, which quickly dissipates. Therefore, from this word, transience and nothingness of the universe are shown. For the things that are seen are temporary, but the things that are not seen are eternal. Perhaps because creation is subject to vanity, it groans, struggles, and awaits the revealing of the sons of God. And now we know in part and prophesy in part. All things are in vain until what is perfect comes.

What remains for a man in all his toil, for which he toils under the sun? After the general sentence that all is vanity, it begins with humans: that they in vain sweat in the labor of this world; gathering riches, educating children, striving for honor, constructing buildings, and in the midst of their work being suddenly taken by death hear: Fool, this very night your soul will be demanded from you: and the things you have prepared, whose will they be? (Luke 12:20) Especially since they bring nothing with them from all their work, but return to the ground naked from where they were taken.

One generation goes, and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever. As one dies, another is born; and as you see those whom you have seen, you begin to see those whom you

have not seen. What is more vain than this vanity, that the earth remains, which was made for the sake of humans: and even the human, the master of the earth, suddenly dissolves into dust? Otherwise, the first generation of the Jews fades away, and a generation from the gathered nations takes its place: but the earth remains as long as, with the Synagogue receding, the whole Church enters in. For when the Gospel has been preached in the whole world, then the end will come. But with the coming of the consummation, heaven and earth will pass away. And notably, it does not say: the earth stands in ages, but in the age. Furthermore, we praise the Lord, not in one age, but in ages of ages. The sun rises, and the sun sets, and it leads to its place, and it rises again there. The sun itself, which was given to mortals for light, indicates its own destruction every day with its rising and setting. After it has dipped its burning wheel in the ocean, it returns to the place from which it came through unknown paths to us: having completed the circle of the night, it quickly breaks forth again from its chamber. For that reason, following the Vulgate edition, it leads to its place, while in Hebrew it is written as Soeph (סוּפֶה), which Aquila interprets as ἐσπνε, that is, breathes in. But Symmachus and Theodotion object, namely because the sun returns to its place and breathes from where it had previously departed. However, all of this is done in order to teach that, through the changes of time and the rising and setting of the stars, human life slips away and perishes while it remains ignorant. Otherwise, the Sun of justice, in whose wings there is healing, rises for those who fear God and cuts down the false prophets at noon. And when it has risen, it draws us towards its place. To the Father, namely. For He came for this purpose, to lift us up from earth to heaven and to say, 'And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' (John 12). It is not surprising, therefore, that those who believe are drawn to the Son, since even the Father Himself draws them to the Son; for no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them. (John 6:44). Therefore, this sun, which we have said sets for some and rises for others, once killed Jacob, the patriarch, when he was leaving (or returning) from the holy land, and again rose for him when he entered the land of promise from Syria. (Genesis 28). Then Lot also, since (Al. when) he had gone out of Sodom and came to the city, which, in order to hasten, had been commanded to him, went up to the mountain, and the sun went out over Segor.

He goes towards the south, and turns towards the north: the spirit goes by turning, and the spirit returns to its own circles. From this we can estimate that during the winter time the sun runs to the south, and during the summer it is close to the north, and does not have its beginning during the autumn equinox: but first, when the zephyr wind breathes, everything bursts forth in the time of spring. But as he says: the spirit goes by turning, and returns to its own circles, whether he called the sun itself the spirit, which animates, breathes, thrives, and completes its yearly orbits in its course, as the poet says (Aeneid. III):

Meanwhile, the great sun revolves around the year: and elsewhere (Georgics II). And the year rolls around in its own footsteps; either because of the shining globe of the moon and the stars of Titania. The spirit within nourishes: infused throughout the limbs, it moves and mingles with the great body; it speaks not of the annual course of the Sun, but of its daily paths. For it travels in an oblique and broken line from south to north, and thus returns to the east. In another way: when the Sun runs through the south, it is closer to the Earth; when it runs through the north, it is raised high. Therefore, perhaps for those who are constricted by the cold of winter and tribulations (for evil burns upon the Earth from the north) this Sun of justice is closer to them; but for those who

dwell in the northern part and are deprived of summer heat, it moves far away and returns through its own circles from whence it came. For when it draws all things to itself, and illuminates all with its rays, there is a restoration of the principal thing, and God is all in all. Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: It goes to the south and goes around to the north; the wind goes as it walks, and it returns through the things it went around.

All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place from which the rivers come, there they return again, in order to go away. Some people think that the fresh waters that flow into the sea are either consumed by the scorching sun from above or that they are the nourishment of the salty sea. Behold our Ecclesiastes, the creator of these waters, he says that they return to the heads of fountains through hidden veins, and from the abyssal womb they always boil up at their beginnings. But the Hebrews think that by a metaphor the names of torrents and seas are signified concerning men, because they return to the land from which they were taken; and they are called torrents, not rivers, because they quickly fall away, yet the land is not filled with the multitude of the dead. Moreover, if we ascend to higher things, rightly do the troubled waters return to the sea from which they had stood still. And, if I am not mistaken, nowhere is a torrent read without the addition in a good sense. For you will give them to drink from the stream of your delights, as it is said with the addition of delights (Psalm 35, 9). And on the other hand, the Savior is handed over to the stream of Cedron (John 18, 1). And during the time of persecution, Elijah hides by the stream of Chorath, which itself also dries up (1 Kings 17, 3). But the insatiable sea is not filled, just as in Proverbs the daughters of the leech (Proverbs 30, 15). Not every man is capable of speaking profound words. The eye is not satisfied by seeing, and the ear is not filled by hearing. It is difficult not only to know about physical things, but also about ethical things. Neither words can explain the causes and natures of things, nor can the eye, as the dignity of the thing demands, look at them, nor can the ear, with the teacher instructing, reach the highest knowledge. For if now we see in a mirror in enigma, and know in part and prophesy in part, consequently neither words can explain what it does not know; nor the eye, in which it is blind, see; nor the ear, about which it doubts, be filled. At the same time, it should be noted that all words are serious and must be learned with great effort, contrary to those who think that knowledge of the Scriptures comes to them easily and without effort.

What is that which has been? It is that which will be. And what is that which has been made? It is that which will be made. And not everything new is under the sun. It seems to me, from what he has previously mentioned, about the generation and generation, the mass of the earth, the rising and setting of the sun, the course of rivers, the size of the ocean, and all that we learn either through thought, sight, or hearing, to speak universally, that there is nothing in the nature of things that has not already existed. For from the beginning of the world both men and women are born and die, and the earth is balanced upon the waters, and the sun rises and sets. And to not go through more, and to fly for the birds, and to swim for the fishes, and to walk for the land creatures, and to crawl for the serpents, it is granted by God the craftsman. What similar saying to this the Comic poet says:

Nothing is said that has not been said before. (Terence, in the Prologue of Eunuchus). When my teacher Donatus was explaining this verse: 'Pereant, inquit, qui ante nos nostra dixerunt.' But if nothing new can be said in words, how much more in the administration of the world, which was so perfectly made from the beginning that God rested from His works on the seventh day! I read in a

certain book: If everything that has been made under the sun already existed in past ages before it was made, and man was already made after the sun was established: therefore, man existed before it was made under the sun. But it is excluded, that by this reasoning, both beasts and mosquitoes, and small and large animals, were said to have existed before the sky. Unless perhaps it responds to this, it is shown from the consequences that the speech is not about other animals, but about the human Ecclesiastae. For he says: Not everything new under the sun, that speaks and says: Behold, this is new. But animals do not speak, only humans do: if animals were to speak and say that something is new, and the sentence could be dissolved, then nothing new would be under the sun. Is there any word of which it is said, 'See, this is new': it has already been in the ages which were before us. Symmachus translated this more clearly: Do you think that there is anyone who can say, 'See, this is new', and it has already happened in the world that existed before us. But it agrees with what has gone before, that nothing new is made in the world: nor is there anyone who can exist and say, 'Look, this is new', for indeed everything that he thinks is new has already been in previous ages. Nor should we suppose that the signs, wonders, and many other things that happen by the will of God in the world have already happened in earlier centuries; and that Epicurus has found a place, who asserts that the same things happen and will happen through countless cycles, in the same places and through the same causes. Otherwise, both Judas would have often betrayed and Christ would have suffered many times for us, and other things that have happened and will happen would also repeat themselves in the same cycles. But it must be said that by the foreknowledge and predestination of God, those things have already happened which are future. For those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, they already existed in previous ages.

There is no memory of the first things, and indeed of the things that are to come. There will be no memory of them among those who are to come in the future. Just as the past is hidden from us in oblivion, so too those things that are happening now or that are to come, those who are yet to be born will not be able to know them, and everything will pass by in silence, and they will be hidden as if they had never existed. And that saying will be fulfilled: Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. For even the Seraphim cover their faces and feet, because the first and last things are veiled. But according to the Seventy Interpreters, who said: 'There will be no memory of the first, indeed, of the last who are to come, there will be no memory of them with those who are to come in the last' (Matthew 20:16): the meaning of this passage from the Gospel is that those who are first in this age will be the last of all. And because God, as a generous and merciful being, remembers even the least and all, he will not give as great glory to those who, due to their vice, deserved to be the last, as he will to those who, by humbling themselves, wanted to be the last in the world. Therefore, it is said in the following: There is no memory of the wise with the foolish forever.

I, Ecclesiastes, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. So far, in general, the preface addresses everyone who is disputing (Al. disputing): now it turns to itself, and teaches who he is, how he came to know everything by experience. The Hebrews say that this book is of Solomon, repenting that he, relying on wisdom and riches, offended God through women. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. The word 'Anian' Aquila, the Seventy, and Theodotion have alike translated περισπασμ■ν as 'distraction,' which the Latin Interpreter has rendered as 'distention,' because the human mind, distracted by various cares, is torn asunder.

But Symmachus translates it as 'occupation.' Therefore, since it is mentioned multiple times in this volume, whether it be occupation, or tension, or whatever else we may have said, let everything be referred to the higher meaning. Therefore, Ecclesiastes gave his mind first to seeking wisdom, and extending beyond what is allowed, he wanted to understand the causes and reasons: why the innocent are afflicted by demons, why both the just and the wicked are equally consumed by shipwrecks. Whether these things, and similar ones, happen by chance or by the judgment of God. And if by chance, where is providence? if by judgment, where is the justice of God? Desiring to know these things, I understood the unnecessary worry and anxiety that torments us by various means, given to us by God, so that we may desire to know what it is not lawful to know. But, as the preceding reason is well stated, this is a tension given by God. For, as it is written in the Epistle to the Romans: For this reason, God handed them over to shameful passions (Rom. I, 6). And again: For this reason God gave them up to a debased mind, to do what ought not to be done (Ibid., 28). And then: Therefore God gave them up to the lusts of their hearts to impurity (Ibid., 24). And to the Thessalonians: Therefore God sends them a strong delusion (II Thess. II, 10). And beforehand the reasons are shown why either they are delivered to the passions of dishonor, or to a debased mind, or to the lusts of their hearts, or whatever they did to receive the operation of error. And therefore, at present, God has given humans this bad situation, so that they are distressed in it, because they have done these or those things of their own free will and choice.

I have seen all the works that have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. We are compelled by necessity to discuss more frequently than we want about Hebrew words. For we cannot know the meaning unless we learn it through words. Rooth, Aquila, and Theodotion translated $\nu\omicron\mu$ as 'pasture', and Symmachus translated it as 'grazing'. But the Seventy Interpreters did not express the Hebrew language, but the Syrian, saying 'preference'. Therefore, whether it be farming or grazing, the term is derived from *pastio*, which connotes preference rather than presumption. It is said that each person does what they want and what seems right to them, and that people are led in different directions by their own free will, and all things are futile under the sun, while we ourselves are displeased with the boundaries of good and evil. A Hebrew teacher, who guided me in reading the holy Scriptures, told me that the word written above, Rooth, in this context signifies more affliction and wickedness than passion and preference: not from evil, which is contrary to good, but from that which is written in the Gospel: Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6:34). What the Greeks more significantly call $\kappa\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\chi\alpha\nu$, it means: I have considered everything that happens in the world, and I have found nothing else but vanity and wickedness, that is, the miseries of the spirit, by which the soul is afflicted with various thoughts. The wicked cannot be adorned, and lack cannot be counted. Whoever is wicked, unless they are corrected first, cannot be adorned. The righteous receive adornment, the crooked receive correction. One is not called wicked unless they are deviated from what is right. This is in contrast to heretics, who introduce certain natures that do not receive health. And because lack, that is, what is missing, cannot be counted: therefore only the firstborn of Israel were counted. But women, and slaves, and children, and the common people from Egypt, were not a fullness, but a diminution of the army, being passed over without number. There can also be this meaning here: Such wickedness is present in the capacity of this world, that the world can hardly return to its original state of goodness, nor can it easily receive its order and perfection, in which it was first created. Otherwise, if everyone is restored to wholeness through repentance, only the devil will remain in his error. For all things that have been done under the sun, have been

overturned by its judgment and the spirit of wickedness, while sins are multiplied by its prompting. Finally, the number of deceivers and those who have been snatched from the flock of the Lord by it is so great that it cannot be comprehended by calculation.

I spoke with my heart, saying: Behold, I have been magnified, and I have added wisdom above all who were before me in Jerusalem, and my heart has seen much wisdom and knowledge. Solomon was wiser, not Abraham, and Moses, and the other Saints, but those who were before him in Jerusalem. We also read in the books of Kings that Solomon had much wisdom, and he asked for this gift from God above all others. Therefore, the eye of the heart of the world beholds much wisdom and knowledge; for it does not say: I have spoken much wisdom and knowledge; but, My heart has seen much wisdom and knowledge. For we are not able to express everything that we feel. And I gave my heart, to know wisdom, and knowledge, and errors, and folly: I have learned that this also is a vexation of the spirit. Contraries are understood by contraries. And the first wisdom is to be without folly. But folly cannot be without wisdom, unless one understands it. Therefore, many harmful things are created in order that, while we avoid them, we may be instructed in wisdom. Therefore, Solomon's study was equal, to know wisdom and knowledge, and in the opposite, errors and folly, so that his true wisdom would be proven in desiring some things and avoiding others. But in this also, as in other things, he says that he has been driven by winds, and has not been able to fully grasp the truth. It is enough to have discussed about the presumption of the spirit, or the passion of the wind, which is often mentioned in this book.

Because in the multitude of wisdom, there is a multitude of madness; and he who increases knowledge, increases sorrow. The more one has attained wisdom, the more one is indignant to submit to vices and to be far from the virtues that it requires. But because the powerful endure torments powerfully, the more one is trusted, the more is demanded from him. Therefore, he who increases knowledge also increases sorrow, and he is grieved with sorrow according to God, and he mourns over his most grievous sins. And the Apostle also says: 'And who is there to make me glad but the one who is made sorry by me?' (II Cor. II, 2) ? Perhaps this should also be understood, that a wise man should feel pain at having his wisdom lie hidden in secret and profound depths, and should not reveal it to minds as light is to the eyes; but rather, through certain trials and unbearable exertions, it should arise through constant meditation and study.

(Chap. II.)

(Chapter II) I said in my heart: Come now, I will test you with pleasure, and see what is good. And behold, even this is vanity. After I searched through wisdom and knowledge and discovered that there is labor and sorrow, and that nothing else but empty and endless striving, I turned to pleasure, to indulge in luxury, gather wealth, and pursue fleeting pleasures before I die. But even in this I recognized my own vanity, as past pleasure does not bring joy in the present, and once exhausted, it does not satisfy. Not only bodily pleasure, but also spiritual temptation is experienced by the possessor, so that I may be kept humble by the goading sting and the angel of Satan may buff me, lest I become haughty (2 Corinthians 12:7). Hence, Solomon also says: Do not give me riches or poverty (Proverbs 30:8). And immediately adds: Lest I be satisfied and deny you; and say, Who sees me? (Ibid., 9). Indeed, the devil falls through the abundance of goods. And in the Apostle it is written: Lest being puffed up with pride, he fall into the judgment of the devil (I Tim. III, 6), that is, into the same judgment into which the devil fell. But we can also say this: the reason

why spiritual joy is now called vanity, like other things, is because we see it through a mirror and in an enigma. However, when it is revealed face to face, it will no longer be called vanity, but truth.

I said that laughter is madness and a source of joy, what are you doing? When we read madness in Hebrew, it is מולל (molal), which Aquila translates as πλάνησιν, meaning error; Symmachus translates it as θόρυβον, meaning tumult. However, the Septuagint and Theodotion, as in many other places, also agree on translating it as περιφορῶν, which we can express word for word as circumlation. So, just as those who are carried about by every wind of doctrine are unstable and tossed to and fro (Ephesians 4:14), those who laugh that laughter which the Lord says should be turned into weeping in the Gospel (Luke 6:25) are carried away by the error of the world and the whirlwind, not understanding the destruction of their sins or mourning over past vices. Instead, they believe that fleeting goods are eternal and rejoice in things that are more worthy of lamentation. This can also be applied to heretics, who, embracing false doctrines, promise themselves joy and prosperity.

I considered in my heart that I should indulge in wine and satisfy my desires, but my heart led me to wisdom. I wanted to pursue foolishness and see what good could come from it, what activities people could engage in during their lives. I desired to live a life of pleasure and free myself from all worries, to numb myself with indulgence like with wine. However, my thoughts and my natural reasoning, which God has also implanted in sinners, pulled me back and led me to seek wisdom and trample foolishness, so that I could understand what good people could accomplish in the course of their lives. However, he elegantly compared the pleasure to drunkenness. For drunkenness destroys the strength of the mind, which someone who is able can change with wisdom, and (as it is held in some books) obtain spiritual joy; they will be able to attain knowledge of what should be desired and what should be avoided in this life.

I have magnified my works: I have built houses for myself: I have planted vineyards for myself, and so on, up to the point where it is said: The eyes of the wise are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. Before discussing each individual thing, it seems useful to me to briefly summarize everything in one discourse, and to bring the meaning together as if into one body, so that what is said can be more easily understood. I had all the things that are considered good in the world, as if I were a king and powerful. I built for myself high palaces, and I cultivated vineyards, mountains, and hills. And so that nothing was lacking for luxury, I planted gardens and orchards for myself, establishing various trees that, when collected, irrigated the waters into pools from above, so that the greenness might be nourished with moisture extending far. I also had an innumerable multitude of servants, whether bought or native, and many flocks of quadrupeds, namely cattle and sheep, as much as no king before me had in Jerusalem. But countless treasures of silver and gold were also accumulated, which various kings and nations had bestowed upon me as gifts and tributes. Hence it happened that, with excessive wealth, I was enticed to greater pleasures, and choirs of musical arts sang for me with the flute, lyre, and voice, and both sexes served at banquets. But as these things increased, wisdom was lacking in proportion. For whichever pleasure desire drew me to, I was carried away recklessly and headlong, and I thought that this was the fruit of my labors, to consume myself in lust and luxury. Finally, turning back to myself, and as if waking from a deep sleep, I looked at my hands and saw my works full of vanity, full of filth, full of the spirit of error. For I was not able to find any good thing that was considered good in the world. Therefore, considering the goods of wisdom and the evils of folly, I burst forth in praise

of that man who, restraining himself after vices, can be a follower of virtues. For there is indeed a great distance between wisdom and foolishness, and as much as the difference between day and night, so are virtues separated from vices. Therefore, it seems to me that those who follow wisdom always raise their eyes to the sky, and have their mouths turned upwards, and contemplate those things that are above their own head. But those who are given to foolishness and vices, dwell in darkness, and roll in ignorance of things. I have magnified my works, etc. He magnifies his works, which are uplifted in the heavens according to the image of the Creator. And he builds houses, so that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit may come and dwell in them. And he plants vineyards, to which Jesus ties his donkey.

I made gardens and orchards for myself: I planted in them every fruitful tree. In the house of the rich, there are not only golden and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthen ones (2 Timothy 20). Therefore, gardens are also made for the weakest and the infirm. For the weak person eats vegetables (Romans 14:2). Trees are planted, not all of them fruitful, as we have in Latin codices: but all fruits, that is, of various grains and fruits, because there are various graces in the Church: and another is the eye, another the hand, another the foot, and, whatever parts are more modest, we honor them more (1 Corinthians 12). Amongst the fruit-bearing trees, I consider wood of life to hold the highest place, which is wisdom. For if it is not planted in the middle, the other woods will dry out.

I made for myself pools of water, to irrigate from them a budding tree. The trees of the pools, the trees of the forests, which are not fruitful, which do not bear fruit, are not nourished by heavenly rain, or from the waters above, but by those which are collected in the pools from streams. For Egypt, humble and lying down, like a garden of vegetables, is irrigated by earthly waters and those coming from Ethiopia. But the land of promise, which is mountainous and upright, awaits temporary and late rain from the sky.

I was a merchant, and I had slaves, and maidservants, and native slaves, and indeed I had a large possession of cattle and sheep. If we wish to refer Ecclesiastes to the person of Christ, as we have said above, we can call his slaves those who have the spirit of fear in servitude and desire spiritual things more than they possess. But we can call maidservants those souls that are still devoted to the body and the earth. And those who are indeed of the Church, and slaves, and maidservants, of whom we have spoken, come before the native slaves: nevertheless, they have not yet been given freedom or nobility by the Lord. But there are also others in the household of the Church, like cattle and sheep, because of their work and simplicity: who labor in the Church without reason and knowledge of the Scriptures, but have not yet reached the point where they deserve to be called human and return to the image of the Creator. It is worth noting that the term 'multitude' is not used for servants, maids, and slaves, but is used for cattle and sheep. I had many possessions of cattle and sheep. For indeed in the Church there are more flocks than men; more sheep than slaves, maidservants, and household servants. But that which is said at the end:

Above all, those who came before me in Jerusalem. It does not pertain to the great glory of Solomon that he, with his father as the only king, was richer, because under Saul, Jerusalem was not yet ruled, and it was held by the Jebusites, who themselves had settled in the city. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss more deeply what Jerusalem is and how the Preacher, before all the kings who came before him in Jerusalem, was richer.

I gathered silver, and gold, and the possessions of kings and provinces. I made for myself male and female singers, and the delights of sons of men, ministers of wine and female servants. Scripture always sets silver and gold above words and understanding. Hence, in the sixty-seventh psalm, the dove, which is interpreted in spirit, has more visible and exposed wings that are stripped of silver, but conceals a more hidden meaning within the pale gold. But the substance of kings, and of provinces or regions, he gathered into the Church of believers; of those kings, of whom the psalmist sings: The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together against the Lord and against his Christ (Ps. II, 2): and of those regions to which the Savior commanded his eyes to be lifted up: for they are already white unto harvest (John IV). The substance of kings and the teachings of philosophers can be called the dogmas and secular knowledge, which Ecclesiasticus, a diligent man, understandingly apprehends the wise in their craftiness, and destroys the wisdom of wise men, and reproaches the prudence of the prudent (I Cor. I). Singers, both men and women, are those who sing with their spirit and with their mind. The male singer, like a strong and spiritual man, sings of higher things. The female singer, on the other hand, is still concerned with matter, which the Greeks call 'hyle'; and she cannot raise her voice to lofty heights. Therefore, whenever a woman is mentioned in the Scriptures and the weaker sex is referred to, let us understand it in terms of matter. Hence, Pharaoh does not want males to be brought to life, but only females, who are close to matter (Exod. I). And on the other hand, it is rarely reported that any of the Saints have begotten women. Only Zaphnath, who died in sin, begot all daughters (Num. XXV). Jacob, among the twelve Patriarchs, is the father of one daughter, and for her sake he faces danger (Gen. XXX). The delights of human children are also to be understood as wisdom, which has various orchards like paradise and multiple pleasures. And it is commanded of it: Delight in the Lord, and He will grant you the desires of your heart (Psal. XXXVI, 4). And in another place: With the torrent of your delights you will give them to drink (Psalm 37:2). Now concerning the pourers of wine and the pourers of wine (for the sake of distinction, I have wished to decline in the masculine, feminine gender, which the Latin language does not accept), Aquila interprets it differently than what is readily apparent. For he did not name men, namely, men and women, but rather the types of vessels, calling them *κυλίκιον* and *κυλίκια*, which is said in Hebrew Sadda () and Saddoth (). Finally, Symmachus, although the word cannot express the word, is not far from this opinion, saying: the shapes of the vessels, and the arrangements. Therefore, whether it is believed that Solomon had pitchers, cups, or bowls, which were arranged in the ministries, adorned with gold and precious stones: and that from one large bowl, called a crater, wine would be ladled into smaller bowls, and the crowd would receive the wine from the hands of the attendants. Therefore, since we interpret the Ecclesiastes in Christ, and wisdom invites us to drink from the mixed cup in Proverbs, now we must receive the great cup of the Body of the Lord, in which the pure Divinity, as it was in heaven, has been tempered with humanity for our sake. And through the Apostles, wisdom has been poured out to the believers in the whole world, in smaller cups, little cups, and cups. And I was magnified and added wisdom above all who were before me in Jerusalem, and indeed my wisdom stood by me. Ecclesiastes appears to not be suitable for the Lord, unless perhaps we connect it with this: And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor (Luke 2:52). And: Therefore God has highly exalted him (Philippians 2:9). But when he says, those who were before me in Jerusalem, he speaks of those who governed the congregation of the Saints and the Church before his coming. If we understand the Scriptures spiritually, Christ is richer than all (as compared to men); if we understand them only carnally, the

Synagogue is better understood than the Church. Therefore, he has taken away the veil that was placed over the face of Moses (Exodus 34), and he has made us see his face with full light (2 Corinthians 3). Moreover, for him to stand for wisdom means that the wisdom remained in him even when he took on flesh. He who has made progress in wisdom, wisdom does not stand still for him; but he who does not receive progress does not increase even by moments, but always remains in fullness, he can say: And wisdom stood by me. And all that my eyes asked for, I did not withhold from them; I did not prevent my heart from any joy, because my heart found joy in all my work. And this was my portion from all my work. The eyes of the soul and the mind desire a spiritual contemplation, which the ignorant sinner prohibits his heart from true joy. Therefore, the Ecclesiastes gave himself entirely to this, and in this world, he compensated for light tribulations with eternal glory. For this is our portion, and an everlasting reward, if we labor here for virtues. And I looked back at all the works that my hands had made, and in the labor in which I had toiled. Whoever works diligently and carefully in all things can say this. And behold, all is vanity, and the will of the spirit. And there is no abundance under the sun. Just as he considered all things as worthless, which are under the sun, and diverse due to the variety of wills. And there is no abundance under the sun (Psalm 19:6). Christ has placed his tabernacle in the sun. Therefore, whoever has not yet reached the brightness, order, and constancy of the sun, in this Christ will neither be able to dwell nor to abound. And I looked back, in order to see wisdom, and errors and foolishness: for who among men can go after his king and creator? For in the things above, until that place where Scripture says: The eyes of the wise are in his head, I had comprehended everything with one speech, desiring to indicate the meaning briefly, and because of that, I had briefly touched upon some things in accordance with the **■ναγω■**, now I ought to explain it according to what I had started. For indeed, in this place the sense is very different from the Septuagint interpretation. But he says that after condemned delights and pleasures, he returned to the seeking of wisdom, in which he found more error and foolishness than true and certain prudence. For a man cannot know the wisdom of his creator and king as clearly and purely as he knows it, who is the author. Therefore, we think rather than understand what is true, and we estimate rather than know. And I saw that there is an abundance of wisdom compared to foolishness, just as there is an abundance of light compared to darkness. Although, he says, I have perceived that wisdom of men mixed with error, and that it cannot flow as purely into our minds as it does into our king and creator; nevertheless, I recognized that there is also a great difference between it and foolishness, as much as day can differ from night, light from darkness. The eyes of the wise are in their head, and the fool walks in darkness. And I know that the same fate happens to them all. The one who becomes a perfect man and deserves to have Christ as his head will always keep his eyes on Christ, and raising them up high, he will never think of earthly matters. When these things are so, and there is such a great distance between the wise and the fool, that one is compared to daylight and the other to darkness, the former raises his eyes to the heavens, while the latter lowers his to the ground. Suddenly, this thought came to me: why do the wise and the foolish share the same end, why do they suffer the same afflictions, the same fate, the same death, and the same sorrows oppress both of them. And I said in my heart, as the fool's fate, so it will also happen to me; why then have I been so wise? And I spoke in my heart, that this also is vanity. For there will be no remembrance of the wise or the fool forever, since in the days to come both will be forgotten. And how will the wise man die with the fool? I said, the wise and the fool, the righteous and the wicked, will all die the same way, and they will all experience the same

evil in this world. So what advantage is there for me in being wise and working harder than others? Again, thinking and carefully considering within myself, I realized that my opinion was in vain. For the wise and the foolish will not have a similar memory in the future, when the consummation of the universe comes: and they will not be held in equal outcome, for one will go to refreshments, and the other will proceed to punishment. More clearly in this place, the Septuagint translators rendered the Hebrew sense, although they did not follow the order of the words: And why have I become wise? Then I spoke abundantly in my heart, for the fool speaks from abundance: for this too is vanity, because the memory of the wise man does not remain with the fool forever, and so on. Manifestly proving that his previous foolish opinion was false, he testifies that he spoke foolishly and erred, because he had felt that way before. And I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun is evil to me, for all is vanity and a chasing after the wind. If the world is in the power of the evil one, and even in this mortal body the Apostle laments, saying: Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? (Rom. VII, 24). Therefore, rightly does he hate everything that is done under the sun. For compared to the bliss of paradise and that life in which we enjoyed the spiritual fruits and delights of virtues, we are now like prisoners in a dungeon and in a valley of tears, eating bread in the sweat of our face. And I hated all my toil in which I toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me. And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. It seems that wealth and possessions can be taken back, as in the case of a rich man who suddenly dies, leaving everything to an heir who may be wise or a fool, and who knows how they will use the fruits of our labor. What happened to Solomon also happened to Roboam: for he did not have a son worthy of his inheritance. From this we understand that even a father's son is not worthy of inheritance if he is foolish. But to me, who contemplates more deeply, it seems to speak of spiritual work, that a wise man labors in the Scriptures day and night, and writes books, so that he may leave a memorial of himself to his descendants, and yet they still fall into the hands of fools, who frequently, according to the perversity of their heart, seize the seeds of heresies from them, and calumniate the labors of others. For if the sermon now is about bodily riches, why was it necessary to speak about labor and wealth: And he shall rule over all my labor, in which I have labored, and in which I have become wise under the sun? What wisdom is there in gathering earthly riches? And I turned to consider all my labors that I had labored at under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a pursuit of the wind, and there is no profit under the sun. For who is there of all men, that labors with the wisdom, and knowledge, and skillful work under the sun, and yet his portion passes to a man who has not labored in it? This also is vanity and a great evil. For what happens to man in all his labor and in the striving of his heart, which he labors at under the sun? For all his days are sorrows, and his occupation is vexation, and at night his heart does not rest; this also is vanity. He speaks above about an uncertain heir, because it is unknown whether he will be a foolish or wise master of another's labors. Now indeed he repeats the same thing, but in it there is a different meaning, that even if he leaves his substance and labors to a son, a relative, or a friend, nevertheless the matter returns to the same circle, so that one may enjoy the labor of another, and the sweat of the dead may be the pleasure of the living. Let each person consider and they will see how much they compose books by labor, how...

Often let him turn his pen again, [to write] those things worthy of being read; (From Horace, Satires, Book I, Satire 10). and let him give his share to the man who has not labored. For what, as

I have already said, do wisdom, knowledge, and virtue pertain to the riches of the earth, in which he has testified to himself to have labored, when it belongs to wisdom, knowledge, and virtue, to trample on earthly things.

It is not good for a man, unless he eats, and drinks, and shows the good of his soul in his labor. And indeed I have seen this, because it is from the hand of God. For who will eat, and who will spare without Him? For God has given wisdom, and knowledge, and joy to the good man before His face, and He has given solicitude to the sinner, that he may increase and gather together what is given to the good man before the face of God. But even this is vanity and presumption of spirit. After I examined everything and realized that nothing is more unjust than one person enjoying the labor of another, it seemed to me that this is the most just thing in all matters and almost a gift from God, that each person should enjoy the fruits of their own labor, eating and drinking and, for a time, saving the wealth they have accumulated. For it is a gift from God to grant such a mind to a righteous man, that he may himself consume what he has sought through cares and sleepless nights. On the other hand, it is the wrath of God upon the sinner to gather wealth day and night and never make use of it, leaving it behind for those who are righteous in the sight of God. But even this, he says, carefully examining and seeing that all things end in death, I judged to be most vain. These things, meanwhile, according to the literal meaning, so that we do not seem to pass over the simple sense entirely, and while we pursue spiritual riches, to despise poverty in history. For what good is it, or what gift of God, to desire and snatch away pleasure with one's own resources, and to turn another's labor into one's own delights: and to think that this is a gift of God, if we enjoy the miseries and labors of others? Therefore, it is good to consume true food and true drink, which we find in the divine Scriptures from the flesh and blood of the Lamb. For who can eat or refrain when necessary without God? He who commanded that what is holy should not be thrown to dogs (Matthew 7:6), and teaches how provisions should be given to servants in due time (Matthew 24:45); and according to another interpretation, it is found that only as much honey should be eaten as is sufficient (Proverbs 25:16). But God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to a good man; unless he is good and corrects his own manners by his own free will, he does not deserve wisdom, knowledge, and joy, according to what is said elsewhere: Sow for yourselves in righteousness, reap in the fruit of life, enlighten yourselves with the light of knowledge (Hosea X,12, according to the LXX). For righteousness must be sown before, and the fruit of life must be harvested, and then the light of knowledge can appear. Therefore, as God gave wisdom in front of him, and so on, by forsaking the sinner to his own will, he caused the gathering of riches, and stitching together pillows with wicked doctrines from here and there. When the holy and pleasing to God man sees this, he understands that they are vain and composed of presumption. It is not surprising that he said: He gave anxiety to the sinner, and so on. For it is necessary to refer this to the sense I have often discussed: Therefore, it is given to him to have anxiety or affliction because he is a sinner, and the cause of the affliction is not in God, but in the one who sins willingly.

(Chap. III.)

(Chapter III.) It is the time of all things, and the time of every thing under the heavens. The uncertain and fluctuating state of human condition has been taught in the previous chapter: now it wants to show that all things in the world are contrary to it, and nothing stands perpetually, except for those things which are under the heavens and within time, because other spiritual substances are not contained by the heavens or time.

There is a time to give birth and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted. There is no doubt that both the birth and death of humans are known and predetermined by God, and it is the same to give birth as it is to plant: to die, and to uproot what is planted. But because we read in Isaiah: We conceived and gave birth, and we brought forth from Your fear, O Lord. It must be said that once this birth, which is born out of fear, begins to love God, it dies. Perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). The Hebrews understand all this, which is written about the opposition of times, until that place where it says: 'A time for war, and a time for peace' is understood about Israel. And because it is not necessary to explain and understand every verse, briefly touching on the broader discussion, leaving it to the reader's intelligence. There was a time for begetting and planting Israel, a time for dying, and a time for leading into captivity. A time for killing them in Egypt, and a time for delivering from Egypt. A time for destroying the temple under Nebuchadnezzar, and a time for building under Darius. A time for mourning the city's destruction, and a time for laughing and dancing under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. A time for scattering Israel, and a time for gathering together. A time for being encircled like a belt and girdle by God's people of Judah, and a time for leading them into the Babylonian captivity, and there rotting away across the Euphrates. Read περὶ ζώμας (lumbare) of Jeremiah (Jerem. XIII, 1 seqq.). A time to seek and save, and a time to lose, and a time to cast away. A time to tear apart Israel, and a time to mend again. A time to silence the Prophets, now in Roman captivity, and a time to speak to them, then when even in a hostile land they did not lack God's consolation and address. A time of love, when He loved them under their fathers, and a time of hate, for they laid hands on Christ. A time of war, when they will not repent, and a time of peace in the future, when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, all Israel will be saved. A time to kill, and a time to heal. And a time to kill is also a time to heal, as it is written: I will kill, and I will make alive (Deut. XXXII, 19). He heals while provoking to penance. He kills, according to that sense: In the morning I would slay all the sinners of the earth (Psal. C, 8). A time to destroy, and a time to build. We cannot build good things unless we first destroy bad things. Therefore, this word was given by God to Jeremiah, that he should uproot, and dig, and destroy; and afterwards, build and plant (Jeremiah 1). A time to weep, and a time to laugh. Now is the time to weep, and in the future to laugh: Blessed are they that weep, for they shall laugh (Luke 6:21).

There is a time for mourning, and a time for dancing. Therefore, in the Gospel, those are reproached to whom the Lord says: We have mourned for you, and you have not wept; we have sung, and you have not danced (Luke 7:32). It is necessary to mourn for the present, so that later we may be able to dance with that dance with which David danced before the ark of the Covenant; and displeasing to the daughter of Saul, he pleased God even more (2 Samuel 6).

There is a time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones. I wonder how the eloquent man said something ridiculous in this place: He says it is about the destruction and building of Solomon's houses, that men now destroy, now build: some gather stones for constructing buildings, others tear down those that have been built, according to that saying of Horace (Epist. lib. II, ep. 1):

He destroys, he builds, he changes squares into rounds. He boils, and goes against the order of life. Whether he said this correctly or incorrectly, I leave it to the judgment of the reader. Let us follow the order of the previous explanation: Saying that it is the time to scatter and gather stones, according to what is written in the Gospel: God is able to raise up children of Abraham from these stones (Matthew 3:9). The time for scattering the pagan people, and the time for gathering them

back into the Church. I read in a certain book (according to the Septuagint translators, who said: 'There is a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones') the severity of the ancient Law tempered by the grace of the Gospel. For the Law is rigid, unkind, sparing no one, killing the sinners. The grace of the Gospel has mercy and incites to repentance. And this is the time for casting away or gathering stones, that stones are cast in the Law and gathered in the Gospel. Whether this has truly been said or not, let it be attributed to its author.

There is a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing. According to simple understanding, the meaning is clear, as the Apostle says in the same words: Do not defraud one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer (1 Cor. 7:5), to give attention to children, and again to self-control. Or there was a time to embrace, when that sentiment prevailed: Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth (Gen. 1:28). And it is time to be far from the embrace, when it comes: Time is restricted. It remains, so that even those who have wives may be as if they do not have (1 Corinthians 7:29). But if we desire to ascend to higher things, we will see wisdom embracing its lovers: Honor her, for it is said, and she will embrace you (Proverbs 4:8), and she will hold you closer in her arms and embrace. Furthermore, since the human mind cannot always strive toward the sublime, and think about divine and higher things, nor constantly be in contemplation of heavenly matters, but sometimes indulge in the needs of the body; therefore, it is time to embrace wisdom, and hold it more tightly, and it is time to relax the mind from the contemplation and embrace of wisdom, so that we may attend to the cares of the body, and to those things that our life needs without sin.

Time to acquire and time to lose. Time to guard and time to discard. Under different discourses, the same meaning is now, as before and after, in that which it says: Time to destroy and time to build. And then: Time to tear and time to sew. For just as the synagogue is destroyed in order to build the church, and there is a division from the law in order for the Gospels to be sewn together, which each Gospel writer accomplished by consulting the testimonies of the law and the prophets regarding the coming of the Lord: so there was also a time to seek and guard Israel, a time to lose and discard it. Indeed, a time to seek the people from the nations, and a time to lose the people of the Jews. A time to keep the believers from the nations, and a time to cast away the unbelievers from Israel.

There is a time for silence, and a time for speech. I believe in the Pythagorean philosophy, which dictates silence for five years, and then allows the learned to speak. It is said that this practice originated from their decree. Let us also learn to refrain from speaking, so that later we may open our mouths to speak. Let us remain silent for a certain time, and hang on to the words of our teacher. Nothing appears to be right for us, unless we learn it, so that after much silence, we may become masters of our disciples. Now truly, due to the daily worsening of the world's faults, we are teaching in the Churches what we do not know. And if, by the arrangement of words or by the prompting of the devil, who is a supporter of errors, we have stirred up the applause of the people, we consider ourselves to know against our conscience, what we could persuade others of. We do not learn all skills without a teacher; only this one is so cheap and easy that it does not require an instructor.

There is a time for loving and a time for hating. A time for loving after God, children, wife, relatives, and a time for hating them in martyrdom, when relentless piety opposes them for the confession of

Christ. Or certainly a time for loving the Law, and the things that were commanded by the Law, circumcision, sacrifices, Sabbath, new moons, and a time for hating them, with the grace of the Gospel succeeding. Moreover, this can also be said, since now we see through a glass in an enigma (I Cor. XIII, 12), that the present time is for loving, and the future time will come, when, seeing face to face and making progress for the better, we will begin to hate and despise what we loved.

It is the time of war, and the time of peace. As long as we are in the present age, it is a time of war: but when we have migrated from this age, the time of peace will come. For in peace there is the place of God, and our city Jerusalem, which has received the name of peace (Ps. LXXV, 3) . Therefore, no one should now consider themselves safe: in the time of war, we must prepare and handle weapons, so that once victorious, we may find rest in peace. The abundance that exists is a result of people's work, in which they themselves toil. I have observed the occupation that God has given to the children of men, so that they may be occupied with it. God has made all things good in their time, and He has also put eternity in their hearts, so that man cannot discover the work that God has done from beginning to end. It is not unknown to me what has been said by many in this place, that God has granted occupation even to the teachers of perverse doctrines in this present age, so that the mind of man may not grow idle. And this is the good that God has done in His time, yet they are unable to comprehend the nature and knowledge of things. But I have been taught by a Hebrew, who is well-versed in the Scriptures, as follows: Since everything falls apart in its own time, and there is a time for destruction and building, weeping and laughing, being silent and speaking, and all the other things that are said about time, why do we foolishly strive and exert ourselves, thinking that the labors of a short life are perpetual? And we are not satisfied according to the Gospel, to be concerned with the evil of the day and not to think about tomorrow (Matthew). For what more can we have in this age by working, in which only this has been given to humans by God, that one person may have one thing and another another, in which they may be taught and exercise themselves? For indeed, everything that God has made is good, but good in its own time. It is good to be awake and to sleep; yet it is not always good to be awake or to sleep, for it is good for each thing in turn, as God has ordained. Moreover, God has given the world for humans to inhabit, that they may enjoy the changes of the seasons and not seek the reasons for the natural things, how all things came to be created. Therefore, He has made various things to grow, remain, and change from the beginning of the world to its end.

I know that it is not good, except to be joyful, and to do good in his life. And indeed every person who eats, and drinks, and shows goodness in all his work, is a gift from God. Therefore, man has been given as a cultivator and tenant of the world, so that he may enjoy the brief time of his life, and with the hope of a longer age cut off, he may look upon all that he possesses as if he were about to set off to other things, and may do as much good as he can in his life: nor is it in vain that he is tormented by thoughts of accumulating wealth. No one can believe that they can gain more from their own work than food and drink, and if they have spent anything from their possessions on good works, this alone is a gift from God. From these, not, as some think, for luxury and pleasure, and for despair, according to that of Isaiah: Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (Isaiah 22:13), we are provoked like animals; but according to the Apostle: Having food and clothing, we are content with these (1 Timothy 6:8), so that whatever we can have above this, we may consume in supporting the poor and giving to the needy. Furthermore, because the flesh of the

Lord is true food, and His blood is true drink, in accordance with the interpretation, this alone we have as a good in the present age, if we eat His flesh and drink His blood, not only in the mystery (Eucharist), but also in the reading of the Scriptures. For true food and drink, which is taken from the word of God, is the knowledge of the Scriptures. And let no one think that the prophecy of Balaam applies to this: There will be no sorrow or distress in Jacob (Num. 23:23). On the contrary, it is said to be the gift of God: If anyone eats and drinks and shows good in all his labor. For many are the tribulations of the righteous. And the Apostle complains about this, saying that he has labored and suffered in labor and pain (2 Cor. 2). But when the Lord delivers us from these in the future: There will be no labor in Jacob, nor pain in Israel. And how do we read that: Blessed are those who weep, for they themselves will laugh (Luke 6:21): and our laughter will follow the words of Job the prophet: The mouth of the truthful will be filled with joy (Job 8:21); so now we enjoy our labor in good works, through which we are constrained and pressed, so that later we may cease from laboring.

I have come to know that everything that God has made will exist forever; nothing can be added to it, nor can anything be taken away from it. God has made it so that people may fear Him. There is nothing new under the sun. The course of the sun, the cycles of the moon, the dryness of the earth, the greenness of the trees, all were born and created with the universe. And thus God has ordered all things by a certain reason and has commanded the elements to serve human needs, so that people, by seeing these things, may understand His providence (or prudence) and fear God, as they observe the equality, course, order, and constancy of creation. For the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, his eternal power also and divinity (Rom. I, 20). But if we wish to read with the preceding finite sense, as if from the beginning: And God made it so that they might fear from his face, this sense is: God made all things so that men might fear from him, that they might deviate once God has ordained, to another. He wisely tempered it, saying: That they might fear from his face (Ps. XXXIII, 17). For the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

What is, that which has been? It is the same as what is and what will be, for they have already been: and God will seek him who endures persecution. Whether past, present, or future, they themselves have been, are, and will be all things that we perceive. The sun that now rises, before we were in the world, it was, and after we have died, it will rise again. But we have named it the sun, so that from this we understand that the rest are the same as what has been. But if they seem to perish through the condition of death, they do not perish, because they grow again when revived, and nothing perishes forever, but is reborn and as it were revived with interest. For this is what he says: And God will seek him, who endures persecution; which is better expressed in Greek as καὶ ὅτι ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ διωκόμενου, that is, what has passed, what has been expelled, what has ceased to exist. But if this is said of all things in the world, there is no doubt that a dead person is reborn. But if anyone pleases to read from a different starting point: And God seeks him who suffers persecution, let him use this testimony in the persecution of the Gentiles, to console him who perseveres in martyrdom. And because all, according to the Apostle (II Tim. III), who desire to live piously in this world, suffer persecution, let them have consolation, because God seeks the one who patiently suffers persecution, just as He seeks the blood of the slain, and He comes to seek what is lost, and He carries the wandering sheep on His shoulders and brings it back to the flock (Luke XIX, XV). And still I have seen under the sun a place of judgment: there is

impiety; and a place of justice: there is iniquity. I said in my heart: God will judge the just and the wicked; because there is a time for every will and for every work there. The meaning is clear, but it is obscured by the cloud of interpretation. Under the sun, he says, I sought truth and judgment, and I also saw that even among the judges themselves, truth does not prevail, but bribes. Or else, I assumed that something of justice was taking place in the present age, and that the pious would be rewarded for their merit now, or the impious punished for their wickedness: and on the contrary, I found something different than what I expected. For I saw the just suffer many evils here, and the impious reign for their wickedness. But afterwards, conversing with my heart and considering, I understood that God does not judge now in parts and individuals, but reserves judgment for the future time so that all may be judged equally, and receive according to their will and deeds there. For this is what it says: 'There is a time for every desire and every deed; and there, that is, in judgment, when the Lord begins to judge, then truth is to come, now injustice reigns in the world.' We read a similar statement in the Book of Sirach, which is titled 'The Wisdom of Sirach': 'Do not say, 'What is this?' or 'What is that?' for everything will be sought in its own time.'

I said in my heart concerning the speech of the sons of men, that God separates them, and to show that they themselves are like beasts. For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of animals is the same. As one dies, so does the other; both have the same breath, and there is no advantage for man over animals, for all is vanity. All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all return to dust. And who knows if the spirit of the sons of men goes upward, and if the spirit of the animals goes downward to the earth? It is not surprising that in the present life there is no distinction between the righteous and the wicked, and that virtues have no power, since everything is subject to uncertain fate. Even between animals and humans, they seem to be no different in terms of the worthiness of their bodies, and they share the same condition of birth and the same fate of death. Likewise, let us proceed to the light and let us be dissolved into dust. But if this seems to be the case, that the spirit of man ascends to heaven, and the spirit of animals descends to the earth, by what certain authority do we know this? Who can know whether it is true or false what is hoped for? However, he says this, not because he thinks the soul perishes with the body, or that a place is prepared for both animals and humans, but because before the coming of Christ, all things were equally led to the underworld. Hence, Jacob also says that he will descend to the underworld (Gen. XXXVII, and XLIV). Both Job, pious and impious, complain about being detained in Hell (Job. VII and XVII). And the Gospel testifies to the great chaos that is interposed among the dead, and to Abraham with Lazarus, and the rich man in torment (Luke XVI). And truly, before Christ opened those fiery wheels, and the gates of paradise with the thief, the heavens were closed, and the lowliness of the spirit of both man and beast was confined. And although it seemed that one thing would be dissolved, another would be reserved; nevertheless, it mattered little to perish with the body or to be held in the darkness of hell.

Let us examine each item, and briefly discuss the different style of speech in their proper order ((or, let us dissolve)). I said in my heart, concerning the eloquence of the sons of man, that God chose them. This alone, he says, God willed to be between humans and animals, because we speak, they are mute, we express our will with words, they are sluggish in silence. And although we are so different from beasts in speech, it is still shown to us that, according to the fragility of the body, we are like livestock. Just as an animal dies, so does a human, and one breath is for all, and this air by which we are nourished. For it says this: And one spirit is for all, and there is nothing

more for a human than for an animal. Lest we think this is also said about the soul, he added: All things are made from the earth, and they will return to the earth. From the earth, however, nothing else is made except the body. And specifically about the body it is said: You are dust, and to dust you shall return (Gen. III, 11). But what seems to be blasphemous is this: Who knows whether the spirit of the sons of men goes upward, and whether the spirit of the animal goes downward to the earth? He does not contend that there is no difference at all between animals and humans in terms of the dignity of their souls, but by adding the word 'who' he wanted to demonstrate the difficulty of the matter. For the pronoun 'who' in the Holy Scriptures is always understood not as referring to the impossible, but to the difficult. So there: Who will declare his generation? (Isa. LIII, 8). And in the fourteenth psalm: Lord, who shall dwell in your tabernacle, and who shall rest in your holy mountain? (Psal. XIV, 1), and so on. And in Jeremiah, although it is different in Hebrew: He is a man, and who will know him? (Jerem. XVII, 9). Therefore, among humans and animals, the only difference is that the spirit of man ascends to heaven, and the spirit of the beast descends to the earth, and it is dissolved with the flesh: if, however, any man who is skilled in Ecclesiastical and heavenly disciplines, and a certain supporter of a doubtful matter. These are the words as they stand. But as for spiritual understanding: Because the Lord will save both men and animals (Psalm XXXV, 7); and in another place: I am like a beast before You, and I am always with You (Psalm LXXII, 23); and in all the prophets, men and animals are said to be saved in Jerusalem, and the land of promise is to be filled with flocks and herds; who knows whether the holy one, who is worthy of being called a man, ascends to heaven, and whether the sinner, who is called a beast, descends to earth? For it can happen in the uncertain state of this life, and in its slippery condition, that the just person falls, and the sinner rises, and sometimes it happens that the one who is more reasonable and educated in the Scriptures, that is, a man, does not live carefully according to his knowledge, and is led to the underworld, and each simpler and more rustic person, who is said to be comparable to a beast, lives better and is crowned with martyrdom and becomes a dweller of paradise. And I saw that there is nothing better for a person than to be happy in their work, for this is their lot. Who can bring them to see what will happen after them? As for us, we have set our minds to see what will happen after us. Symmachus, in his interpretation, has made it clearer, saying: to see the things that will happen after this. Therefore, there is nothing better in this life than for a person to be happy in their work, giving to the needy, and preparing treasures for themselves in the kingdom of heaven. This is the only portion that neither thief nor robber can possess, nor can a tyrant take it away, and it follows us after death. For when this life is dissolved, we cannot once again enjoy our labors or know what will happen in the future. Otherwise, influenced by my previous mistake and believing that there is no difference between humans and animals, I was led astray by this wrong opinion to say that nothing is good except for seizing present pleasure. For once we have been dissolved by death, we cannot enjoy these things from which we have departed ungrateful. Others have interpreted what he says about who will bring him to see those things which will happen after him for the sake of that understanding, so that they said it is better for man to enjoy his own labors; because this alone could take away from his substance. When death comes, he does not know with what heir he will die, whether he will enjoy his own wealth as a worthy or unworthy person.

(Chap. IV) (Chapter 4). And I turned and saw all the injustices that occur under the sun, and behold the tears of those who endure injustice, and there is no one to console them, and in the hands of their oppressors is their strength, and there is no comfort for them. After this reflection, I

turned my mind and my eyes to see the oppressors and those who endure injustice. And behold, those who are unjustly oppressed, crying tears that they are only allowed to have in times of calamity, reveal the injustice of their situation, but they cannot find a comforter. And by how much greater the misery is, and the inconsolable pain, the slanderers see themselves as stronger in their wickedness. And this is the reason why they are unable to be comforted. This place is more fully explained by David in Psalm 72, and Jeremiah elaborates on it in his book. And I praised the dead, who are already dead, more than the living, who are still alive. And better off than both of them is the one who has not yet been born, who has not yet seen the evil work that is done under the sun. In comparison to the miseries that oppress mortals in this world, I judged the dead to be happier than the living, according to the words of Job in his dispute with the dead. There they rest, weary of body, along with those who were once imprisoned, now at peace, not hearing the voice of the oppressor (Job 3:17-18). However, better off are these two, namely the living and the dead, than the one who has not yet been born. For one still suffers evils, another has escaped as if naked from a shipwreck. Furthermore, the one who has not yet been born is happier in that he has not yet experienced the evils of the world. Now this is said, not because the one who has not yet been born exists before being born and is happier in that he is not yet burdened by the body, but because it is better to not exist at all, to have no sense of substance, than to exist or live unhappily. And the Lord speaks about Judas, signifying his future torments: It would have been better for that man not to have been born (Matt. XXVI, 24): because it would have been better for him not to exist at all, than to suffer eternal torment. However, others understand this passage in the following way: Those who say that those who have died are better than those who are alive, even though they were sinners before. For those who are still alive are said to be in battle and to be kept as if imprisoned in the body; those who have truly died are already secure, and have ceased to sin. Just as John, who was greater than all men born of women, is lesser than he who is the smallest in the kingdom of heaven, and freed from the burden of the body, does not know how to say with the Apostle: Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death? (Rom. VII, 14) But it is better than these two to be the one who is not yet born, nor has seen the evils by which men are oppressed in the world. For our souls, before they descend into these bodies, are among the heavenly beings and are blessed as long as they are held in the celestial Jerusalem and the angelic choir. And I saw all the labor and at the same time all the virtue of the work: because the rivalry of a man is from his companion; and indeed, this is vanity and presumption of the spirit. I turned again to other things, and I saw all the strength and glory of those who labor, and I realized that the good of one is the evil of another, while the envious person is tormented by another's happiness, and the glorious one is exposed to traps. For what is more vain, what is more unstable, and thus more futile, than for men to weep not over their own miseries or mourn their own sins, but to envy those who are better? A foolish person folds their hands and eats their own flesh (Prov. XXIV). This is someone who is described as lazy in Proverbs, holding their chest with their hands. They quickly experience poverty, and hyperbolically speaking, they eat their own flesh because of excessive hunger. They think it is better to have a handful of grain and live idly and lazily, rather than working with both hands. However, the whole point of this is to show that both the person who works and has something to show for it, and the person who wants to live peacefully, are vulnerable to envy and poverty respectively. And both are miserable, as one risks everything for wealth while the other is consumed by poverty. Certainly, one who envies the happiness of others, and is as if carried away by a frenzy of the spirit, and receives envy into their

own bosom, and nourishes it in their heart: they consume their own soul and flesh. For the more happy they see the one whom they envy, the more they waste away and pine, and gradually drip with zeal and spite. In another sense: Hands are often received for works, as in this case: The word of the Lord that was made in the hand of Haggai (Haggai 1:1), whether his or this prophet's, did such works so as to be worthy, in whose work the word of the Lord was made. This also agrees with the words of David: 'Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for battle' (Psalm 144:1). Therefore, the foolish one has embraced his hands, that is, he has contracted them and did not want to extend them, thus not eating the labors of his hands that he does not have; but rather his own flesh, living according to the wisdom of the flesh, and nourishing himself with the works of the flesh. A handful with rest is better than the abundance of handiwork and the presumption of the spirit. It is better to have a little with righteousness than the many riches of sinners. And in Proverbs: Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice (Prov. XVI, 8). Righteousness elegantly has rest, while injustice has labor. And because the singular number is always accepted in good, but double in evil: therefore, a handful has rest, while two hands full of labor. And I turned myself, and saw vanity under the sun. There is one, and there is not a second, and indeed he has no son, nor brother, and there is no end to all his labor. And his eye is not satisfied with riches: and for whom do I labor, and deprive my soul of goodness. But even this is vanity, and it is a very evil affliction. I turned to others, and saw that they toil more than necessary, gathering wealth by fair means and foul, and not enjoying what they have gathered, possessing all things, yet being consumed by riches, saving for others, and not enjoying the fruits of their own labor, especially when they have neither son, nor brother, nor close relative who seems pious and deserving of their reserved labors. Therefore, nothing is found to be more empty than that man who accumulates wealth without knowing to whom he will leave it. Indeed, we can understand this according to the earlier interpretation both of those who write books and leave them to picky readers. Some interpret this passage from what it says: 'There is one, and there is not a second,' concerning the Savior, that he descended alone and without any companion to save the world. And although many are children of God, and are called his brothers by adoption, yet no one has been found worthy to be joined to him in this work. Whose labor has no end, bearing our faults and sins, and grieving for us; and his eye is not satisfied with riches, always desiring our salvation, and the more he sees someone sin, the more he urges them to repentance.

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken. After the toils and miseries in which he who seeks wealth without a sure heir tortures himself, now the conversation turns to friendship. And it is said, what good there is in the companionship of friends, and in common solace, because one is supported by the help of the other's downfall, and he who has a faithful friend may better bear the cares of home and find rest in the same night, than he who relies solely on his own resources. And even if a stronger enemy arises against one, the weakness of the other is sustained by the solace of a friend. And the more two differ in one respect, if they are united by love, the more the companionship of three is also valuable. For true love, unharmed by any envy, increases in strength and power as it grows in number. And let these words be said simply for now.

Moreover, because in the previous section we have placed the intelligence of certain individuals above Christ, the rest must also be discussed in the same order. It is better to have two together than one. For it is better to have Christ dwelling within oneself than to dwell alone and be exposed to the snares of the adversary. Indeed, the reward of partnership is immediately shown in the very benefit of companionship. For if one falls, Christ raises up his partner. Indeed, woe to him who, when he falls, does not have Christ raising him up. And if even one falls asleep, that is, if he has been dissolved by death, and he has Christ with him, he is warmed and quickly revived. And if the devil stands stronger in resisting man, man will stand, and Christ will stand for his man, for his comrade. Not because the power of Christ alone against the devil is weak, but because free will is left to man, and as we strive, he himself becomes stronger in the battle. But if the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit also come, this fellowship is not immediately broken. However, although it is not immediately broken, it will eventually be broken. And in the apostle Jude there was indeed a triple cord: but because Satan entered into him after the morsel, that cord was broken. Moreover, what he says above: 'And indeed if two persons sleep, there will still be warmth for them: how will one person be warmed?' Let us take the example of Elisha, who contracted himself with a boy, and slept, and warmed his body, and thus revived the one rising (2 Kings 4). Therefore, unless Christ has slept with us, and has rested in death, we are not able to receive the warmth of eternal life. A poor and wise child is better than an old and foolish king, who does not know how to provide for the future. For he comes from the house of the conquered into the kingdom, because he was also born poor in his kingdom. I have seen all living beings who walk under the sun with the second adolescent, who will rise for him. There is no end for every people, for all who came before them. And indeed, the latter will not rejoice in him: but even this is vanity and the presumption of the spirit. Symmachus translated this passage as follows: It is better for a poor man to have wisdom than for an old and foolish king who does not know how to anticipate change. One exits the prison to reign: the other, although born a king, is oppressed by poverty. I have seen all the living who walk under the sun with the second youth who rises in his place. All the people who existed before both of them are infinite: and their descendants will not rejoice in him. But both the breeze and the gust of wind exist. My Hebrew friend, whom I often mention, when he read Ecclesiastes with me, testified that Baracibas, whom they greatly admire, delivered these things about the current place. The inner man is better, who arises in us after the fourteenth year of puberty, than the outward man, who is born from his mother's womb, who does not know how to refrain from vice, and who went forth from the house of conquerors, namely the mother's womb, in order to reign in vices. He who also became poor in his own power, committing all evils. I saw those who lived in the first man, and after turned to the second man, that is, who was generated as the descendant of the first: I understood that all sinned in the first man, before the second was born and became two men. But because they turned to better things, and after the letter Y of the philosophers, abandoning the left path, they strove toward the right summit, and followed the second, that is, the last man, they will not rejoice in him, that is, in the first. These two men the Apostle attests, and Leviticus does not remain silent: 'If a man, if he wishes this or that' (Leviticus 17). The holy man Gregory, Bishop of Rome, pupil of Origen in the Commentary on Ecclesiastes, understood this passage as follows: 'I indeed prefer a poor and wise young man over an old and foolish king, who never comes to mind that it is possible for anyone of those he has bound to come out of prison and for himself to fall from his unjust power thereafter.' For it sometimes happens that those who were under a wise youth are without grief, yet in such a way that they were previously

under an old king. For those who were born later, because they did not experience past evils, cannot praise the youth who later arose, deceived by a perverse opinion and the attack of an opposing spirit.

Laodiceus the Interpreter, trying to express great matters in a brief speech, also spoke here in his usual manner: 'The sermon of the Ecclesiast, he says, is about the change of goods into evils, trying to portray the foolish person who, not considering the future, takes pleasure in the present and transient as if they were great and eternal. And after describing the various things that happen to people in their lives and change, he introduces a general judgment about death, that an innumerable multitude perish and gradually come to an end and pass away, each one leaving another in their place, and in turn that one leaving another as their successor dies.' »

Origen and Victorinus did not differ much in their opinions. After that general sentiment, which is clear to everyone: that it is better to be a poor and wise young man than an old and foolish king, and that it often happens that the wise man, even when he is released from the king's prison by his wisdom, rules as a wicked dictator, while the foolish king loses his power, which he held: they interpreted this passage about Christ and the devil, meaning that they believe Christ to be the poor and wise young man. Regarding the boy, it is written: 'Behold, it is a great thing for you to be called my son' (Isaiah 49:6). And regarding the poor, because he became poor even though he was rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). And regarding the wise, because he advanced in age and wisdom and grace before God and men (Luke 2:52). He was born in the reign of the old man. And therefore he says: 'If my kingdom were of this world, my ministers would certainly fight for me, so that I would not be handed over to the Jews. But now, my kingdom is not from this world' (John 18:36). In his foolish old man's kingdom, who showed him all the kingdoms of the world; and their glory, the best boy was born, and from the house of prisoners, of whom Jeremiah speaks in Lamentations, saying: That he might humble under his feet all the prisoners of the earth (Lam. III, 34), he went out to the kingdom, and went to a distant region, and against those who did not want him to reign over them, after some time the king returned. Therefore, foreseeing by the spirit, Ecclesiastes saw all the living who can be participants of the youth, saying: I am the life (John XIV, 6), and the foolish old king being dismissed, to follow Christ. And at the same time, two peoples from Israel are signified. The former, who existed before the advent of the Lord, and the latter, who will accept Antichrist instead of Christ: that the former is not completely rejected (for the first Church was gathered from the Jews and the Apostles) and in the end, the Jews, who will accept Antichrist instead of Christ, will not rejoice in Christ.

Guard your steps, when you go to the house of God, and draw near to listen. The sacrifice of fools is an abomination; for they do not know that they are doing evil. He gives precepts for life and does not want to offend us as we go to the church. It is not entering the house of God, but entering without offense that is praiseworthy. And if it were for everyone in the church of God to hear the sermon, He would never have added, 'Draw near to listen' (Exodus 24:2 and following). Finally, Moses alone approached to listen to God; the others were not able to approach. Those foolish ones who do not know the remedy for sin think they can satisfy God by offering gifts, and they are ignorant that this is also evil and sin, and they want to make amends not by obedience and good works, but by gifts and sacrifices that they have made. This is in agreement with what is said elsewhere: 'Obedience is better than sacrifice' (1 Samuel 15:21). And: I desire mercy, and not sacrifice (Hosea 6:6).

(Chap. V.) (Chapter 5) Do not hasten in your hour, and let your heart not hasten to speak a word in the presence of God, because God is in heaven, and you are on earth. For this reason, let your words be few, for a dream comes with a multitude of anxieties, and the voice of a fool with the multiplication of words. Many think that it is commanded in this place not to easily promise anything before God, and without considering our abilities, vow things that we cannot fulfill. For indeed God is present, and although He is in heaven, we seem to be on earth. However, we hear what we speak, and our foolishness is exposed by the multiplication of words. But others, understanding better, affirm this advice: let us not think or speak more about God than we are able, but let us acknowledge our weakness, that just as far as the heavens are from the earth, so our opinion is separated from His nature. Therefore, our words should be measured. For just as someone who has many thoughts frequently dreams about the things they think about, so too someone who desires to discuss more about divinity falls into foolishness. Indeed, it is like this: Our words should be few because even the things we believe we know, we see through a mirror and in an enigma, and we grasp them as if in a dream, which we consider ourselves to hold. And when we have spoken more (as it may seem to us), the end of our argument is foolishness. For from much talking we cannot escape sin. When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it, for there is no pleasure in fools. Whatever you vow, fulfill it. It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. Simple understanding does not require interpretation. It is better not to promise than to make promises and not keep them, for they displease God and are regarded as foolish by others who do not fulfill their vows. And when it is said, 'There is no pleasure in fools,' it can be understood as 'There is no pleasure in fools' before God,' according to the words of the Apostle (1 Corinthians 16:22): 'And certainly, it was not the will of God that I should come to you now.' But if we wish to speak more carefully, it is prescribed to the Christian that he should fulfill his faith by works and not be like the Jews, who, promising and saying, 'We will do all that the Lord has commanded' (Exod. 24:3), worshipped idols. And after beating their servants and oppressing them with stones, they finally even killed the son of the head of the household. Therefore, it is better to weigh a double-minded opinion for a long time than to be easy with words and difficult in action. But he who knows his master's will and does not do it, will be beaten with many stripes. (Luke 12:47). Do not give your bone, so that you may make your flesh sin. And do not say in the presence of an angel, for it is ignorance; lest God become angry at your voice, and destroy the works of your hands. The Hebrew understands it this way: Do not promise what you cannot do. For words spoken do not pass in vain, but they are immediately carried by the present angel, who is the accompanying companion to each person, to the Lord. And you, who think to ignore God, by what you have promised, provoke Him to anger, so that all your works may be scattered. But in that which He says, 'Make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof,' He understood not that food is not to be provided for the flesh that it may not sin, as though He had said, 'Do not take food, that you may not sin'; but we understand it otherwise, viz. thus; that those are reproved who complain of their infirmity of the flesh, and allege that they are in a way necessitated by the necessities of the flesh to do what they do not wish to do, according to that of the apostle (Rom. 7:15): 'For that which I do, I know not: For what I would, that do I not.' Finally, in that place where it says: 'Do not speak in the presence of an angel, for it is ignorance,' the eagle, interpreting the Hebrew word 'Segaga' for ignorance, translated it as '■κο■σιον', which means involuntary or not spontaneous. For if you say this, you provoke God as the author of evil and sin, so that if He is angry and sees any good in you, He may take it away from your hands. Or certainly, perceiving

such things, He may deliver you to a reprobate mind so that you may do things that are not fitting.

Because in the multitude of dreams and vanities, there are many words. But fear God. And this place is called in Hebrew. Do not do what has been said before, nor easily believe in dreams. For when you see different things during the night's rest, and your soul is disturbed by various terrors or incited by promises, disregard those things which are dreams. And fear only God. Whoever believes in dreams will surrender to vanities and follies. Otherwise: Because I have said and commanded: Do not give your mouth to cause your flesh to sin, and to seek various excuses: I now bring forward this, since in the dream of this life, and in the image of a shadow of a cloud, in which we live, we can find many things that seem plausible to us, and excuse our sins. Therefore, I warn you to only beware of this, not to think that God is absent, but to fear Him and to know that He is present in all your works: and that you, being created with free will, are not compelled, but willing to do what you do.

If you see the slander of the poor, and the robbery of justice, and injustices in the region, do not be surprised at the matter: for the Most High watches over the Most High, and he is higher than them, and the king has more power over all the land in the cultivated field. The tunic of Christ woven from above (John 19, Luke 8), could not be torn by those who crucified Him: and He who had cast out demons by whom the Savior had ordered to leave wearing the clothes of the Apostles. And so we strive, O men of the Church, not to tear our own garments, nor to sew together patches according to our own ideas, but to keep the one garment of the disputation intact, and to follow the same meaning and order. Above, it was said: Thou shalt not say in the sight of an angel, 'Ignorance is,' lest God be angry with thy voice and the rest; and he spoke against those who denied that human affairs are ruled by providence. Therefore, since a question was arising against this precept, why the just endure calumny and why judgments are unjust in the whole world, and why God does not punish, now he brings forward and answers what could be opposed, saying: If you see a poor man calumniated, who is blessed in the Gospel, and matters are carried on by force, not by justice, do not wonder, and let it seem something new to you. Indeed, the highest God looks down upon the highest ones, he who has placed his angels above judges and kings of the earth, who certainly can forbid injustice and have more power on earth than any human authorities. But since he preserves judgment in the end, and in the consummation of the world, when the harvest is ripe and the reapers come, he will command that the wheat be separated and the tares be given to the fire: therefore he now waits and delays his judgment, as long as this field of the world is cultivated. But as for the field being interpreted as the world, the Lord explained in the parable of the weeds and the wheat (Matt. XIII).

Whoever loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, and whoever loves wealth will not enjoy it. This too is vanity. For with the abundance of wealth comes the abundance of those who consume it, and what is the advantage to the owner except to see it with his own eyes? Wherever we place silver, according to the ambiguity of the Greek language, it can also refer to money: ■πρ■πιον indeed signifies both. Moreover, Tullius refers to those who have more money, i.e., possessions, as being called wealthy. For thus they used to call them in ancient times. But gradually, through misuse, the name has been applied to something else. Therefore, the avaricious person is described as someone who is never satisfied with wealth, and the more they have, the more they desire. Flaccus also agrees with this sentiment, saying (Horace, Book 1, Epistles, epistle 2, to Lelius): The greedy person always wants more. And it is a well-known fact that greed does not

decrease with poverty or abundance. Therefore, as Ecclesiastes says, wealth is of no use to the possessor unless it allows them to see what they have. For the greater their possessions, the more servants they will have to devour the accumulated wealth. However, the possessor should only see what they have, as they cannot consume more food than one person can.

If one has eaten a little or a lot, sweet sleep comes to the worker. But the richness of the wealthy person does not allow them to sleep. Furthermore, there is still conversation about the wealthy and the greedy, and it is compared to the worker, who can eat a little or a lot without worry, because they digest any food with the labor of their work and enjoy sweet sleep. However, the wealthy person, bloated with excess and torn in different directions by thoughts, cannot sleep, with their stomach burning in the confines of indigestion and with uncooked food. Moreover, because sleep and the common end of this life are called rest, the rest of those who work in the present and engage in good works according to their ability will be better than their wealth, of which it is written: Woe to you, the wealthy, because you have received your consolation (Luke 6:24).

There is a very terrible burden that I have seen under the sun: wealth being hoarded by its owner to his own harm. And those riches perish in an unfortunate turn of events. He fathers a son but has nothing in his hands. As he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return, to go as he came; he shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. This is also a very terrible burden: just as he came, so shall he go. And what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? And all his days he will eat in darkness, with much indignation, and with weakness, and with anger. Join with what follows: The Preacher describes a rich man who cannot even enjoy his own wealth and frequently comes into danger because of it, and he will not leave it to his heir, whom he has gathered; but he himself and his son, just as they came naked, so they will return to the earth, and nothing will accompany them of their labors. For is it not the worst of afflictions to be tormented by thoughts of wealth and toil in vain for perishable riches, which we cannot take with us when we die, only to acquire them in sadness, groaning, anger, and quarrels? And this is according to simple perception. But if we raise ourselves to a higher level, it seems to me that we can say the same about philosophers or heretics, who accumulate the riches of their doctrines to their own detriment, and are unable to obtain any lasting benefit for themselves or leave any lasting fruit for their followers. But both they themselves and their disciples return to the earth and lose the riches from him who said: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart (1 Corinthians 1:19). Truly, just as they have come out of their mother's womb, that is, from the corrupt Church and its opposite, of which it is written: And the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother (Galatians 4:26), so they will go naked into the wind, and labor in vain. Those who have fallen away seeking to scrutinize (Psalm 64:7), and are carried about by every wind of doctrine, neither have light, but in darkness they consume their sacraments. They are always in weakness, always in anger, storing up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath, without having a merciful God.

Behold what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink, and to find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart. In comparison to the one who feeds on his own resources in the darkness of his worries and endures with great weariness of life,

he says that the one who enjoys the present is better. For here there is even a small pleasure in enjoying: but there only the magnitude of anxiety. And he gives reasons why the gift of God can be enjoyed by riches. For, he will not remember much of the days of his life. For indeed God calls him in the joy of his heart: he will not be in sadness, he will not be troubled by thoughts, drawn away by joy and present pleasure. But it is better to understand, according to the Apostle (I Cor. X, 3), that spiritual food and spiritual drink are given by God, and to see goodness in all our labor, because through great labor and study we are able to contemplate true goods. And this is our part, to rejoice in our study and labor. Although it may be good, yet it is not fully good until Christ is manifested in our life. Therefore, God will not remember much of the days of our life. Also, note that here περισπασμός is understood in a better sense as being occupied with true spiritual joy.

(Chap. VI.)

(Chapter VI) There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it is widespread among mankind. A man to whom God has given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he lacks nothing for his soul of all that he desires, yet God does not give him the power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity and a grievous evil. If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. For indeed he comes in vanity, and departs in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover, he has not seen the sun, nor known it, more restful is he than the other. And if he were to live a thousand years twice over, and not see goodness, do not all things hasten to the same place? He describes the greedy rich man, and asserts that this evil is frequent among men, that nothing of those things which are considered goods in the world is lacking for him, and nevertheless he tortures himself with the most foolish stinginess, preserving things to be devoured by others. And he adds hyperbolically, that even if someone were to have a hundred children, and not, like Adam, nearly a thousand, but live for two thousand years, and his soul wastes away with desire and greed: the one who is aborted is of much worse condition, who as soon as he is born, perishes. For he neither sees evil, nor good: but this one, when he possesses good things, is always tormented by sadness and thoughtfulness; and the aborted one has more rest than that greedy long-lived one: and yet both are carried off by an equal end, while both here and the other are snatched away by a similar death. This can also be understood about Israel, to whom God has given the Law, and the Prophets, the Testament, and the promise, with the Savior saying: "For the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits" (Matthew 21:43). All these things have been translated to a foreign and alien people, and they see their blessings but do not enjoy them. And yet, we who were considered as illegitimate and new by those who boasted about their ancestors, saying "Our father is Abraham" (John 8:39), are also hastening to the same place as them, that is, to the judgment of God. But what he says in the middle: And indeed he had no burial; whether this signifies that that rich man did not think about his own death, and while he possesses everything, he is also greedy in the construction of a tomb; or whether it means that he is often killed by plots because of his wealth, and is cast out unburied; or, which I think is better, that he has done nothing good in his life, from which he can obtain a memory for himself among future generations, and not pass his life in silence, like animals, when he had the opportunity to appear that he had lived.

All of man's labor is in his mouth, and yet the soul is not satisfied. For what is wiser than a fool, what is poorer, except to know how to go against life? Everything that men labor for in this world is consumed by the mouth, and is handed over to the stomach to be digested. And when it has pleased the throat for a little while, it seems to give pleasure for as long as it is contained in the throat. But when it passes into the belly, the distinction among food ceases. And after all these things, the soul of the eater is not satisfied: whether it seeks what it has already desired, what it has eaten, and both the wise and the foolish cannot live without food, and the poor person seeks nothing else but how ((Al. what)) it can sustain the instrument of its body, and not perish from starvation: or whether the soul derives no benefit from the nourishment of the body, and food is common to both the wise and the foolish, and the poor person goes there where it has perceived wealth to be. But it is better understood about the Ecclesiastical man, who, being educated in the heavenly Scriptures, has all labor in his mouth, and his soul is not filled, while he always desires to learn. And in this the wise man has more than the fool: because when he feels himself to be poor (that poor man, however, who is called blessed in the Gospel), he hastens to grasp those things which are of life, and walks the narrow and narrow way which leads to life, and is poor in evil works, and knows where Christ, who is life, dwells. The appearance of the eyes is better than walking in the soul. But even this is vanity and presumption of the spirit. Symmachus clearly interprets this, saying: It is better to provide than to walk as one pleases; that is, it is better to do everything according to the sense, which is the eye of the soul, rather than follow the will of the heart. For this is to walk in the soul, as Ezekiel says: Those who walk in the will of their own heart. Certainly, it accuses him of arrogance and self-satisfaction, and claims that the one who foresees everything is better than the one who is pleased with nothing unless he himself has done it: than which nothing is worse, and more empty than every wind. Furthermore, here the presumption of the spirit is explained by Aquila and Theodotus as the passion of the wind, but Symmachus explains it as the affliction of the spirit. Moreover, it should be known that among the Hebrews, both spirit and wind are called by the same name, that is, Ruha.

What is to come is already named, and known, because he is a man and cannot be judged by a stronger one. It is openly preached about the coming of the Savior, that which is to come before he is seen in the body, is already named in the Scriptures and known to the prophets and saints of God, because he is a man and according to this, being a man, he cannot compare himself to the Father. And in the Gospel he says: The Father who sent me is greater than I (John 14:28). And in the following, it is commanded that we not seek beyond what is written about it for ourselves, lest a person want to know more than the Scripture has testified. For since we are ignorant of our state, and our life passes like a shadow, and the future is uncertain, it is not advantageous for us to inquire about things greater than we can. Some think that in this place it is signified that God already knows the name of all those who are going to be, and the human body surrounding them: and that a person cannot respond against their maker why they were made in such a way. For the more we inquire, the more we reveal our own vanity and superfluous words: and it is not that free will is taken away from us by God's foreknowledge, but rather that the causes precede why each thing is done in such a way. For there are many words multiplying vanity. What is more for a man? For who knows what is good for a man in life, in the number of days of his vain life? And he will make them like a shadow, because who will announce to a man what is after him under the sun? When, he says, a man is ignorant of his own state, and whatever he seems to know and perceive, the truth does not hold as it is, but he sees through a mirror, and shadow, and image, and does not

know the future, and in much speaking does not escape sin; he should keep silence in his mouth, and believe that he has come, who is written, how, and how great, and what manner he has come, without seeking.

(Chap. VII.)

(Chapter VII) Good is the name above good oil, and the day of death above the day of his birth. Consider, he says, O man, your short days, and that you will quickly cease to exist, your flesh dissolved: make for yourself a longer reputation, so that just as an ointment delights the nostrils with its fragrance, so future generations may be delighted by your name. This was clearly interpreted by Symmachus, saying: A good name is better than well-scented ointment. Indeed, it is customary for the Hebrews to call a good ointment 'oil'. But when he says, 'And the day of death over the day of his birth', or rather, he shows this, that it is better to exit the world, and be free from troubles and the uncertain state of life, than to enter the world and endure all these things. Or certainly, what sort we will be in death is known: but in the beginning of birth, what sort we will be in the future, is unknown. Or, what birth binds to the body, death releases.

It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every person, and the living should take it to heart. It is more profitable to go to a funeral than to go to a feast, for there we are reminded of our condition and human fragility by the presence of a corpse. In a feast, however, even if we appear to have some fear, we lose it in the joy. Symmachus explained the last verse more clearly, saying: And the living will consider it in their minds. From these things it is clear that in the fact that he above seemed to approve of food and drink, he preferred not the pleasure of all things, as most people wrongly assume, but compared to greed and excessive frugality, even if it is brief, it is more, if one enjoys his own wealth even for a moment. For never would he have preferred sadness to mourning, if he thought that drinking and eating were of any importance.

Anger is better than laughter, because a sad face will be healed. Laughter dissolves the one who laughs: anger seizes and corrects. Let us be angry with ourselves, if ever we sin, let us be angry with others. Through sadness, indeed, the soul will become better, as Symmachus has interpreted. And therefore: Woe to those who laugh now, for they themselves will mourn (Luke VI, 25). The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, and the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted (Matthew 5:5). Samuel also mourned for King Saul all the days of his life (2 Samuel 16). And Paul says of those who refused to repent after committing various sins that they should mourn (2 Corinthians 12). Therefore, let the heart of the wise go to the house of such a man who rebukes the sinner, in order to bring him to tears, who incites him to weep for his own sins, and not go to the house of mirth, where the teacher flatters and deceives, where he seeks not the conversion of the listeners, but applause and praise. Such a teacher is praised, rich in speech, rich in words, who, because he is satisfied, therefore receives his comfort. Finally, even the following verses agree with this exposition. For he says:

It is better to heed the rebuke of the wise, than to listen to the song of fools. For just as the sound of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool. But even this is vanity. For it is better to be corrected by a wise person, than to be deceived by flattering adulation. This is similar to that: Wounds from a friend are better than kisses from an enemy (Prov. XXVII, 6). For just as the sound

of burning thorns under a pot, produces an unpleasant noise, so do the words of a careless teacher fail to benefit their listeners, either in addressing the cares of the world, which are interpreted as thorns, encouraging them, or in preparing them for a future fire. Symmachus in response to what we have posited: Just as the sound of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools, interpreting this meaning that we have discussed above, says: For through the sound of the inexperienced, someone may be bound in chains, that is, a listener is more connected to the sound of such teachings, while each person is bound by the chains of their own sins. A calumny disturbs a wise man, and it destroys the heart of his fortitude (Prov. IX, 8). Now, take a wise man in progress, according to this: Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you. For a wise man, being perfect, does not need any rebuke, nor is he disturbed by any calumny. Let us use this verse, if ever we see a just and wise man enduring calumny, and being troubled by the injustice of judgment, and God does not immediately come to his aid. For, indeed, in the translations of the Septuagint, Aquila, and Theodotion, 'perdit cor ε■τον■αζ α■το■' is translated as 'loses the heart of his strength or vigor.' Symmachus says, 'perdit cor Matthana (),' which means 'loses the gift.' He combines both the Hebrew word and its interpretation, creating the sense that is written elsewhere: 'They blind the eyes even of the wise' (Deut. XVI, 19).

It is better to be at the end of a conversation than at the beginning. The conclusions are better in speech than the introduction. In these, the anxiety of the speaker ends, in the other, it begins. Or certainly like this: Whoever starts to listen to a conversation and goes to the teacher, is at the beginning; but whoever listens to the end is accomplished and perfected. But it can also be understood in this way: While we are in this world, whatever we know, is the beginning; but when what is perfect comes, we will be in the last and completed things. The Hebrew person explained this passage in the following verse: It is better to consider the end of the matter than the beginning, and to be patient rather than being carried away by the frenzy of impatience. We also learn from this little saying that there is no wisdom in people, since it is better to be silent than to speak; and because when the speech is finished, the hearer reflects within himself what was said: but when we begin to speak, we have not yet received any benefit.

Patience is better than a high spirit. Because it had previously given way to anger, saying: Anger is better than laughter, lest we think that anger, which is praised in passion, should now completely remove anger. For there, anger was set for the correction of sinners and the instruction of the lesser ones, but here it restrained impatience. However, patience is necessary not only in difficulties but also in happier times, so that we may not be elevated more than is proper. It seems to me that the one who is now called 'exalted in spirit' in the Gospel is opposed to the poor in spirit, who is also placed in the beatitude. Do not hasten in your spirit to become angry, because anger rests in the heart of fools. Not that it permits anger to be delayed, therefore now it says: Do not hasten in your spirit to become angry; but because when anger is raging and fresh, it is more easily appeased when delayed and can be taken away. And because anger is always joined with pride, desiring revenge, it said that patience is better than the one who is high-spirited, and now it gives a sign of foolishness: because even if someone is considered powerful and wise, if they are irritable, they are demonstrated to be foolish: for anger rests in the heart of fools. Do not say: what has happened: because the previous days were better than these; for you have not wisely asked about this. Do not prefer the old age to the present, because God is the creator of both. Virtues make good days for the living, vices make bad ones. Therefore, do not say that the days were

better under Moses and Christ than they are now. For even at that time there were many unbelievers, and their days became evil, and now many believers are found, of whom the Savior says: Blessed are those who have not seen, and have believed (John 20:29). Otherwise: Thus you should live, so that the present days are always better for you than the past, lest when you begin to decline little by little, it may be said to you: You were running well, who hindered you from obeying the truth (Gal. V, 7)? And again: Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh (Ibid. III, 3). Otherwise: Do not say that the times of Moses were better than the times of Christ, of the Law than of Grace. For if you wish to inquire into this, you act foolishly, not seeing how much the Gospel differs from the Old Testament.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance, and more for those who see the sun, because as the shadow of wisdom, so is the shadow of money: and what is more, the knowledge of wisdom will give life to its possessor. The wise man with riches has greater glory than the wise man alone. Some need wisdom, others need wealth, and he who is wise but not wealthy can indeed teach what is good, but sometimes cannot provide what is asked for. And therefore he says: Just as wisdom is a shadow, so is money a shadow, that is, just as wisdom protects, money also sometimes protects. And so as not to seem to have taken away from wisdom by subjecting it to a chance good (for it is not in our power to have wealth, which the unjust often possess more of), he demonstrates that wisdom is greater, saying: And moreover, the knowledge of wisdom will give life to the one who possesses it. In that, he says, wisdom is greater than wealth, because it sustains him who possesses it without any resources.

Some people interpret this passage as follows: He has placed inheritance in the place of good conversation, through which we are heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ. Therefore, the Preacher wants to teach how great is the difference between those who deserve to see the sun of righteousness and have wisdom with good conversation, and those who, without wisdom, have only borrowed the study of life and conversation. Indeed, Daniel also shows this, saying: Those who understand my words will shine like the stars of heaven (Dan. XII, 3). As Theodotius translated: Like the splendor of the firmament. But those who make my words, like the stars of heaven. But we should take the shadow of silver, or money, according to interpretation, from which talents and minas are gathered in the parables of the Gospel (Matthew 25, Luke 19), so that when we are under the shadow of wisdom, and under the shadow of such silver: The sun does not burn us during the day, nor the moon during the night (Psalm 120). But this can also be said, because our life on earth is like a shadow. And the spirit of our countenance is Christ the Lord, to whom we said: In his shadow we will live among the nations. (Lamentations 4:20). All our protection on this earth is like a shadow, whether it be wisdom or the aforementioned silver, until the day dawns and the shadows are removed. Symmachus, in his own way, has also interpreted this more clearly, saying: Just as wisdom protects, so does money protect. The following verse clearly encourages the pursuit of knowledge.

Look at the works of God, for who can adorn one whom God has overturned? And in this place Symmachus translated it as follows: Learn the works of God, for no one can correct what he diminishes, that is, it is enough for you to know and understand from the Holy Scriptures themselves, or from the contemplation of the elements, what has been done: but not to inquire into the causes and reasons why each thing has been done thus, or should have been done differently than it was. For example, if someone wants to ask why God spoke to Moses in such a way,

saying, 'Who made the mute and the deaf, the seeing and the blind? Is it not I, the Lord?' (Exod. IV, 12). And let them ask: Why were the blind and the deaf and the mute created in this way, and similar things? In this place, let us take a testimony from the sixteenth psalm, in which it is said to the Lord: 'With the holy you will be holy, and with the perverse you will be perverse.' And it must be said that the Lord is holy with those who are holy, and is perverse with those who by their own will have been perverse before. Moreover, as it is written in Leviticus: 'If they walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will bring my fury upon them and I will chastise them seven times for their sins.' (Lev. 26:27). This can also explain why the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh. Just as the same heat of the sun melts wax and hardens clay, and the wax melts and the clay hardens according to their nature, so the divine operation of the signs in Egypt softened the hearts of the believers and hardened the unbelievers, who, according to their hardness of heart and unrepentant disposition, stored up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath from these wonders, which they did not believe when they saw them happening. Be good in a day of goodness, and in a day of evil, be watchful. Indeed, God has made it fitting for him to speak, so that man may not find anything after him. I know that I have heard in the Church from him, who was thought to have knowledge of the Scriptures, these verses explained. 'While you are in the present age, and can do good works, labor so that later you yourself may be secure in the day of evil, that is, in the day of judgment, and see others tormented.' For just as God has made the present age, in which we can prepare the fruit of good works; so He has also made the future age, in which no opportunity for good works is given. It seems indeed that He was advising when He spoke to those who were listening: but to me it seems that there is another meaning, which Symmachus also translated, saying: Be good on a good day and consider a bad day. For God has made this similar to this, so that man would not find something to complain against Him. And, he says, endure both the good and the bad as they happen to you. And do not think that the nature of good or evil is impure, when this world consists of opposing elements: hot and cold, dry and wet, hard and soft, dark and light, bad and good. But God has done this so that wisdom may have a place in choosing the good and avoiding evil, and so that free will may be left to man, lest he should say that he was generated by God as insensitive and foolish. Rather, God made him diverse for this reason, so that man could not complain about his own condition. At the same time, this testimony will be connected to what was said before, in which he says: Who can restore what God has corrupted?

I have seen everything in the days of my vanity. The righteous perish in their righteousness, and the wicked live long in their wickedness. To this, the Savior says in the Gospel: 'Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it' (Matthew 10:39). The Maccabees were seen to perish for the sake of God's law and righteousness, and the martyrs shed their blood for Christ. Conversely, those who in that time ate pork and sacrificed to idols after the Lord's coming were seen to live in this world and persist in their wickedness for a long time. But God's patience is hidden, and now He afflicts the saints so that they may receive evil in their lives, and does not visit sinners for their wickedness, but rather reserves them as victims, so that He may restore eternal blessings to them and inflict perpetual evil upon them. The Hebrews suspect the just ones to perish in their righteousness, thinking that while they believe they are acting justly, they are offering foreign fire. And they curse the impious long-lived Manasseh for his wickedness, who, after being restored to the kingdom, lived a long time thereafter. Do not be overly righteous, and do not inquire too much, lest you become astonished. If you see someone strict and harsh towards all the faults of his brothers, that he does not forgive in a sinful

conversation, nor does he forgive due to natural occasional laziness, know that this person is more righteous than is just. For when the Savior commands, saying: Do not judge, so that you may not be judged (Luke 6:37); and let no one be without sin, even if his life were only a single day, it is inhumane justice to not pardon the fragility of human condition. Therefore, do not strive to be overly righteous, for it is a heavy burden and a small burden is displeasing to the Lord. Thus, even among philosophers, virtues are found in moderation, and anything that is excessive, whether it be upward or downward, is considered a vice. Furthermore, when he says, 'Do not seek more, lest you become troubled,' or, 'Do not be amazed,' he knows our mind cannot fully comprehend wisdom and teaches us to acknowledge the measure of our own frailty. Finally, Paul also asked him, who could know more than a man, saying: Why do you still complain? For who resists his will? He answered: O man, who are you to answer God (Rom. IX, 19), and so on. For if the one who is introduced as questioning had heard the reasons for the question from the Apostle, he might have been stunned and felt the grace to be useless. For it is also a gift, according to the same Apostle, which does not profit the one to whom it is given. The Hebrews interpret this commandment, that is: Do not be overly righteous, concerning Saul who showed mercy to Agag, whom the Lord had commanded to be killed (1 Samuel 15). But also that servant from the Gospel (Matthew 18), whom the Lord had forgiven, and he himself did not want to forgive his fellow servant, can be related to this verse, that he had been overly righteous. Do not act wickedly or be foolish; why will you die before your time? As the Lord says: I do not desire the death of the one who dies, but rather that he turn back and live (Ezek. XVIII, 32): Once is enough to sin; we must rise up after a fall. For if they know, those who dispute with physicians, that the swallow feeds its young from its beak, and the wounded wild goat seeks dittany, why do we ignore that the medicine of repentance has been proposed for sinners? But when he says, in regard to Moses and Aaron, 'Lest thou die in the time not thine own.' (Num. XVI); we know that Core and Dathan, and Abiron by reason of the sedition against Moses and Aaron, were suddenly devoured by the gaping earth, and for a warning to others were judged even in this life before the day of judgement. Therefore, what he says is this: Do not add sins to sins, lest you provoke God even here to inflict punishment on you.

It is good to hold on to that. And indeed, do not let go of your hand from this; for whoever fears God will go out to all things. It is good to do good to the righteous, but also to do good to sinners is not unjust. It is good to support the members of the faith, but also to give to everyone who asks, it is a commandment. For whoever fears God, and imitates his creator, who rains upon the just and the unjust, hastens to do good to all, without regard for persons. Otherwise: Because this wretched life is constantly varied by different events, both adversities and prosperity, a just mind should be prepared and should seek the mercy of the Lord, so that whatever happens, it may endure with a balanced mind. For whoever fears God is neither lifted up by prosperity nor oppressed by adversities.

Wisdom strengthens the wise person, surpassing the power of ten who are in the city: for there is no righteous man on earth who does good and does not sin. Therefore wisdom strengthens the just and the help of all the rulers of the city exceeds him, because although someone may be just, as long as he is in this flesh, he is subject to vices and sins, and needs greater protection. Alternatively, the ten who have power and reside in the city are angels, who have reached the perfect number of ten, and assist the human race. But if someone considers all help, the greatest

help is the wisdom, that is, of our Lord Jesus Christ. For after the angels said: We have healed Babylon, and it was not healed, let us abandon it, and everyone go to their own land (Jer. 51:8), then the master of physicians himself descended, and sprinkled us with his blood, and with the blood that was soaked with sins, which we had spent all our substance on physicians, he healed us with the touch of his hem (Luke 8). But He healed in the city, that is, in this world, and strengthened the wise, or, as the Seventy translated, helped. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance. However, because the man placed in sins was in need, and fixed in the deep mire, he needed greater assistance; therefore Wisdom itself came. Otherwise: Above, He had said that good must be done both to family and to strangers. Therefore, someone could answer: If I want to do good to everyone, I do not have from where I can do it. The righteous person cannot possess such great riches which usually abound more for sinners; therefore now he says: Assist those whom you cannot help with material things, with advice and comfort. For wisdom can provide more in times of distress than any great powers. And do this with prudence. Indeed, the balance of justice is great, and it is important to give to whom, and how much, and for how long, and in what way, either in a matter or in advice. And indeed, in all the conversations they will have, do not give your heart, for you will not hear your servant cursing you. For often your heart knows that you have cursed others. Do what is commanded, and with the help of wisdom, prepare your heart for good or evil, and do not care about what your enemies say about you, or what the opinion of strangers is. For it is not the behavior of a wise man to listen to a murmuring servant, or to lend an interested ear to what is being said about him in his absence. For if he does this, he will always be in trouble, and his anger will be stirred up by the muttering of a servant. So it is also the behavior of a wise man to follow the path of wisdom and not to consider vain rumors. But it teaches by another example that a just man should not care deeply about what people say, saying: How does your conscience know that you have spoken about many things and often detracted from others: thus you must also forgive those who detract from you. And at the same time it teaches that one should not judge easily, and that if you have a beam in your eye, you should not speak about the splinter in someone else's eye.

I have tried all these things in wisdom, and I said: I will become wise, but wisdom itself has become further from me, more than it was before, and its depth is so profound, who will find it? It is said that even the books of the Kingdoms testify (3 Kings 3 and 4) that all men have sought wisdom and have tried to reach its end, but the more they have sought, the less they have found, and they have been immersed in the midst of darkness, surrounded by the shadows of ignorance. Another way: A man who has been educated in the Scriptures, the more he begins to know, the more darkness arises for him in these things every day. Another way: The contemplation of wisdom in this life is seen in a mirror and in an image: therefore, when I reflect on revealing knowledge face to face with Him in the future, then I clearly recognize that I now widely differ from His knowledge.

I have traveled around and searched my heart, in order to understand, contemplate, and seek wisdom and reason, and to know the wickedness of fools and the error of the foolish. And I have found woman to be more bitter than death, she is a trap and her heart is like snares, her hands are like chains. The righteous will be delivered from her, but the sinner will be trapped by her. Because the Septuagint put it: I have traveled around and searched my heart, in order to understand, Symmachus interpreted it, saying: I have passed through all things with my senses, to know, learn,

and investigate. Therefore, since the Preacher had said above that he had tried everything in wisdom, and the more he sought it, the further it eluded him; now he also says that he sought something else in his wisdom, namely, that in human affairs evil precedes all evils, and that those things which hold dominion in impiety, folly, error, and madness. And he says that he found woman to be the head of all evils: for through her, death entered into the world, and she captures the precious souls of men. For all adulterers, indeed, adulterate, as if their hearts like an oven: which causes the hearts of young people to fly away. And when the thought of the wretched lover comes to mind, it draws him towards the precipice: and it does not allow him to look back at his own feet, but like a snare, it entangles the heart of the young man with its bond. For his hands are bound. Concerning this, the eagle interprets: His hands are bound, which is said in the Hebrew language as Assurim. For it can advise, but it cannot force violence: nor can it draw those who are unwilling to itself. The righteous and good person in the eyes of God will be saved from it; but the sinner, captured, will be led to death. Let us not lightly think that Solomon presented this judgment about women: he speaks from experience. Therefore, indeed, he offends God because he is captured by women. And this is according to the literal meaning. However, according to spiritual understanding, we understand by 'woman' any sin in general, and wickedness that sits under the appearance of a woman in Zechariah on the lead talent (Zech. 5:7): or we figuratively understand 'woman' to mean the devil, because of his effeminate power; or certainly idolatry, and to come closer, the Church of heretics, which calls the foolish in mind to itself, so that he may accept stolen bread and stolen water, that is, false sacrament and polluted baptism.

Behold, I have found this, says Ecclesiastes, one by one, to find the number that my soul has been searching for, and I have not found it. Among a thousand men I found one, but among all these I have not found a woman. Only this I have found: that God made man upright, and they have sought out many schemes. This, he says, I have found, diligently searching through everything, that by gradually sinning and adding one offense to another, we accumulate a great sum of sins. Indeed, they translated Essebon () with a unanimous voice, according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew language, we can say both the number, the sum, the ratio, and the thought. But this, he said, my soul has sought to find out if a righteous woman can be found. And when I could hardly find a few good men, such that only one could be found out of a thousand, I could not find a good woman at all. For all have been led not to virtue, but to luxury. And because the heart of man is set to evil from his youth (Gen. VIII, 21), and almost all have offended God: in this ruin of the human race, woman is more prone to falling. About whom even the pagan poet says:

...Varium et mutabile semper Femina...(Virg. IV, Aeneid. V. 35.) Et Apostolus: Semper, ait, discentes, et numquam ad scientiam veritatis pervenientes (II Tim. III, 7). Et ne videretur communem hominum damnare naturam, et Deum auctorem facere mali, dum talium conditor est, qui malum vitare non possint, argute praecavit, et ait, bonos nos a Deo creatos: sed quia libero sumus arbitrio derelicti, vitio nostro ad pejora labi, dum majora quaerimus, et ultra vires nostras varia cogitamus. Alternatively: Considering the reason for every thing with me daily, I have not been able to find a thought that is not disturbed by perverse thinking from outside. However, among a thousand men, I found one man who is formed according to the image of the creator: and among not just any thousand, but among a thousand men: a number that a woman cannot fulfill. And among a thousand who have not approached a woman, and therefore have remained very pure. But all these things are to be understood in a tropological sense. For in many studious

persons (or studies) who sweat through everyday meditation, a pure thought is scarcely found, and a man worthy of the name. We can take thoughts to be men, and works to be women, and say that a pure thought of someone can hardly be found. For, because they are administered through the body, they are always mixed with some kind of error. But as for what we have said interpreting the Hebrew word: One by one, in order to find a number, or a sum, or a ratio, or a thought: Symmachus has interpreted it more clearly, to find an order one by one. For what we usually refer to in an absolute and neutral way, that is what I sought, that is what I wanted to find, the Hebrews pronounce it in the feminine gender, as in the psalm: One thing have I asked of the Lord, this I will seek (Psalm 27:4), because it is one.

(Cap VIII)

(Chapter 8) Who, like a wise man, and who knows the solution of a word? The wisdom of a person will enlighten their face, and the strong will change their appearance. Above, it was taught that it is difficult to find a good person, and the coming challenge was answered: that good people are created by God, but have fallen into sin by their own choice. Now, God enumerates what good things He has given to a person, as if boasting, namely wisdom, reason, and providence, to know the hidden mysteries of God, to enter into the secrets of His heart with understanding. But he speaks indirectly about himself, that no one has been so wise as he himself, and no one has known the solutions to problems in the same way, and his wisdom has been praised by all the people, which has not only been hidden internally, but has also shone on the surface of his body and in the mirror of his face, and has painted the wisdom of his mind on his face for all men to see. They have translated 'seventy' for 'what we have set': Who knows the wise. And concerning that which we said: And the strong will change his face, they have added: And the shameless will be hated for his countenance. And truly, although there are many who promise wisdom, it is difficult to find someone who can discern the true wise person from those who only appear wise. And although there are many who claim to be able to solve the hidden meanings of the Scriptures, it is rare to find someone who discovers the true solution. But what follows: The wisdom of a person will illuminate his face, and the wicked will be hated for his countenance, we can explain it in this way, by quoting the words of Paul: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18): and of the Psalmist who sings: The light of your countenance has been signed upon us, Lord (Psalm 4:7). But this man speaks of no wisdom except the wisdom of God. And when it is the wisdom of God, according to the capacity of man, it begins to be his, who has deserved to have it. Every heretic and defender of false doctrine is shameless. Finally, Marcion and Valentinus claim to be of a better nature than the Creator. And this could be somewhat acceptable, if they claimed to have hope of attaining this, and not already possess it.

I guard the mouth of the king and the language of the oath of God. Do not rush to leave his presence, and do not stand in evil words, because he will do whatever he wants. As the king says, having power: and who will say to him, What are you doing? Indeed, it seems to be commanding according to the Apostle, obedience to kings and authorities (Titus, 3:1), especially the Seventy Interpreters saying in the imperative mode: Guard the mouth of the king; but I think it is now said about that king, about whom David says: Lord, the king will rejoice in your strength (Psalm 20:1). And in another place, so that it might signify the unity of the Father and the Son in one kingdom, Scripture recalls: 'Give your judgment to the king, O God, and your justice to the king's son' (Psalm 72:1). 'For the Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son' (John 5:22). The Son,

who is the King and Son of God the Father, is to be obeyed and His will is to be carried out. And this is what is written in the Book of Tobit: 'To conceal the mystery of the king is good' (Tobit 12:7). And especially he warns us not to question why God has commanded each thing, but rather to hasten to fulfill whatever mandate he sees fit, with a pious mind. And in the law of the Lord will be his will. However, the Septuagint translated it differently, saying: Do not hasten to walk away from his presence, whether in an oath or in a word of God: know that the oath of God is written in the divine volumes. Therefore, this oath, sacred and secret, from the word of God, we should not disclose to anyone, and bring it forth into the public, and quickly form an opinion about it. Not to be hasty like Moses to see the face of God, but to endure until He Himself passes by, and only then to behold His aftereffects. Also, let us understand the following: 'Do not stand in evil speech,' and the rest, as referring to one who is led astray by the error of heresy, or to one who, although having faith in the Church, is nonetheless overcome by sins, so as to be faithless. Do not persist in detraction, nor in vulgar language, luxury, greed, or lust. If you persist, the king of vices and sin, the devil, will work your destruction, and do whatever he pleases. The one who keeps the commandment will not recognize evil: and he knows the time and judgment of the wise heart. It should be noted that 'will not recognize evil' is used to mean that he will not tolerate or be involved in it. Indeed, it is written about the Savior: 'He who knew no sin, for us he made sin' (2 Corinthians 5: 21). Symmachus also interpreted the word in this way, saying: 'The one who keeps the commandment will not experience anything evil.' He ordered to preserve the king's command, and to know what, and why, and at what time he commands.

Since every business has its time and judgment. For the affliction of man is great upon him, because he does not know what will happen in the future; for who can declare it to him? Although different events may occur, and the righteous cannot know what will happen to him, nor understand the causes and reasons of individual things (for no one is conscious of the future), nevertheless he knows that all things are done by God for the benefit of men, and are not disposed without his will. For it is a great affliction for the human race, as the poet says (Aeneid. X, 501): The mind of men is ignorant of the fate and the future of chance, hoping for one thing and experiencing another: it waits for the enemy from one place and is wounded by the spear of another. But as for what the Seventy Interpreters and Theodotion have said: Because the knowledge of man has many things over him, in Hebrew it has malice, not knowledge: but because the Hebrew letters Res and Daleth, except for a small apex, are similar, instead of Raath (), they read Daath (), that is, instead of malice, knowledge. He will understand this better who has knowledge of the same language. Also, what is written at the end of these verses: Because he does not know what has happened; and what will happen after him, who will announce it to him? We have now translated word for word from the Hebrew language, so that we may know another meaning, namely that we can know neither what has passed, nor what will be future, as they are future. A man does not have power over the spirit, to prevent the spirit, and he does not have power over the day of death, and there is no escape in war, and wickedness will not save one who has it. Our soul is not in our power, so that it may not be taken away from us, and when the spirit departs to the kingdom of the Lord, it is of no avail to shut our mouths and try to retain our fleeing life. And when death, the enemy of our life, and the adversary comes, we cannot accept a truce. Nor do former kings, who once ravaged everything with their impiety, have power to face death: but we will be dissolved into ashes and earth. Therefore, there is no need to mourn if we cannot know the future, and we are often oppressed by unjust and powerful people, since all things end

with death, and the proud and powerful, who have plundered everything, cannot retain their own soul when it is seized. In another way: The spirit, who orders everything, cannot be prohibited by anyone and receive laws to breathe. About which it is said above: The spirit goes round by going round. In the day of death, we are not powerful; for in the day of life, the enemy is easily avoided. Similarly, whoever is in war and does not have the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will not have release, of which it is said to the bride: Your releases are a paradise with the fruit of apples (Song of Songs 4). And because impiety will not save someone who has it, piety will save them from being condemned. Impiety can be called the devil, and piety our Lord Jesus Christ.

I have seen all of these things, and I have devoted my heart to every work that has been done under the sun. And I have seen how one person dominates another, to oppress them. And then I have seen the wicked buried, and they came out of the holy place and were praised in the city, because they had done such things. But even this is vanity. Because there is no consequence for those who do evil, therefore the hearts of the children of men are filled with them, to do evil. I have given," says the writer, "my heart to observe everything that happens under the sun, and especially this, that one person has power over another to afflict and condemn whoever they wish. Therefore, when I directed my mind to contemplate these things, I saw the impious dead with such an opinion, and thus buried, as if they were considered holy on earth; who even when they were alive, were thought worthy of the Church and the temple of God. Moreover, walking in pride, they were praised in their evils, as it is written: 'The sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and he who does wicked things is blessed' (Ps. IX, 24). But this happens for the following reason: because no one dares to contradict the sinners, nor does God immediately avenge the wickedness, but He defers punishment while waiting for repentance. But sinners, because they are not immediately rebuked and corrected, thinking that judgment will never come, persist in wickedness. We can use this testimony against the bishops, who have received power in the Church, and scandalize those whom they should have taught and encouraged towards better things. Often, these individuals are praised in the Church after death and are publicly proclaimed blessed for actions they likely did not do, either by their successors or by the people. And this, therefore, is vain, for they do not hear as they have done, nor are they immediately corrected in their sin (for no one dares accuse the superior), thus, as if they are holy and blessed, and walking in the commandments of the Lord, they increase sin with sins. Accusing a bishop is difficult. For if he has sinned, he is not believed, and if he is convicted, he is not punished.

Because the sinner commits evil a hundred times, and it is prolonged for him. From this I understand that it will be good for those who fear God, who will fear His presence. For because the sinner sins excessively, as it were, a hundred times, God gives room for repentance and does not immediately punish him in his wickedness, but waits for him to turn away from his iniquity. I understand how kind and merciful God will be towards those who have fear of Him and tremble at His word. Symmachus translated this passage as follows: For the wicked sinner is dead, having been granted long-suffering. Moreover, I know that it shall be well with those who fear God, who have feared his presence. But there will be no good for the wicked, nor shall it endure for a long time, for they have not feared the presence of God. And because it is clear what this passage means, it must be said that the Hebrew word 'Maath' (), which the Septuagint translated as 'mortuus est' ('is dead'), we have used a hundred times, Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion

have interpreted it as 'mortuus est' ('is dead'), so that the meaning is, he who sinned and did evil, is dead: in that he sinned, he died immediately. But according to the Septuagint translators, if he is dead, as it is, we will read from then on, according to some, the sense here is: The sinner does not sin for the first time when it appears to commit a sin, but he has already sinned before: Sinners are alienated from birth, they have strayed from the womb (Ps. 58:4); and they seek to interpret what follows: They have spoken lies, but it does not seem to have a simple explanation: for it does not seem to have a logical consequence to say that children, sinners as soon as they are born, speak falsehood. And it is not good for the wicked, and may his days not be prolonged like a shadow, who does not fear God's face. He curses those who do not have the fear of God, and wishes that punishment is not delayed, but that they are immediately taken away by death and receive the torments they deserve. The Apostle speaks in a similar manner: I wish those who disturb you would be cut off (Galatians 5:12). And elsewhere: Alexander the coppersmith showed me many evil things; may the Lord repay him according to his deeds (2 Timothy 4:14). It is necessary to investigate how these things have been spoken kindly. This according to the truth of the Hebrew sense. But if anyone follows the Seventy Interpreters, who, as if beginning from another sense, said: 'And I also acknowledge that it will be good for those who fear God, that they fear him, and it will not be good for the impious, and their days will not be prolonged in the shadow, because they do not fear the face of God.' This he can say: 'Indeed, those things will happen, which I previously mentioned; however, I most clearly know that it will be good for those who fear the face of God. For the countenance of the Lord is upon those doing evil.' (Ps. 33:17). And the wicked will not prosper; for they do not fear the face of God, and their days will not be prolonged in shadow, that is, the days of their life, which are like shadows to the living. For it is not those who live a long time who prolong their days, but those who make them great through the magnitude of their good works. Therefore, Jacob, confessing himself as a sinner, says: 'My days are few and evil' (Gen. XLVII, 9). And in the psalm of confession, he says: 'My days have declined like a shadow' (Ps. CI, 12), and I have withered like grass. Not because he sought a long life in the present, in which everything we live is brief and shadow, and image: For in image man walks (Ps. XXXVIII, 7): but because he fears for the length of his life in the future, where true life is, to be shortened.

Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun? A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. The sun rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it rises. The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north; around and around goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns. All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again. All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has been already in the ages before us. There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after. The Gospel gives the example of the rich purple-clad man and the poor Lazarus (Luke 16). The 72nd psalm also speaks about this: why do bad things happen to the righteous and good things happen to the wicked? As for what we have set forth: Vanity of vanities, which is done on earth. Symmachus translated it absolutely, saying: It is difficult to understand what is done on earth. The Hebrews interpret the righteous who experience bad things and the wicked who receive the works of the righteous as the sons of Aaron and Manasseh, respectively,

indicating that those who were sacrificing perished, while this man, after so much adversity and captivity, was restored to power. And I praised joy; for it is not good for man under the sun, except to eat, and to drink, and to rejoice. And it will go with him from his labor in the days of his life, which God has given him under the sun. This we have interpreted more fully above, and now we say strictly: it is allowed to prefer, though briefly and quickly to be finished, the pleasure of eating and drinking to the hardships of the world, and to those things that seem unjust in the world: for this alone seems to man to have from his labor, if he enjoys even a little refreshment. But this interpretation approves as miserable those who are fasting, hungry, thirsty, and mourning, whom the Lord calls blessed in the Gospel (Matthew 5) if it is understood in the following way, as it is written. And so let us spiritually receive food and drink, and let us find joy in them, which we can scarcely find in the toil of our lives. That these things should be understood as we have said is demonstrated by the following verse, in which it says: I gave my heart to learn wisdom and occupation, that is, that people on earth may be occupied and may meditate on the Scriptures day and night, so that often sleep may flee from the eyes in the quest for truth.

Therefore, I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task that has been done on the earth. For even in the day and in the night, he does not see sleep with his eyes. And I saw all the works of God: because man will not be able to find the work that has been done under the sun, in which man has labored. So that he may seek it, but he will not find. Indeed, even if a wise man says he knows, he will not be able to find it. He who seeks the causes and reasons of things, why this or that has happened, and why the world is governed by various events: why one is blind and weak, another is born seeing and healthy; why this person has poverty, that person has wealth; why this person is noble, that person is dishonored; gains nothing but torment in his own questioning, and holds disputation as torture, yet still does not find what he seeks... And when he claims to have known these things, then he begins in ignorance and remains in profound error. However, it shows that there are reasons for all things and justice for why each thing happens in a certain way, but these reasons are hidden and cannot be comprehended by humans.

(Chap. IX.) (Chapter 9) I have given all this in my heart, that I may consider everything: because the just, and the wise, and their works are in the hand of the Lord. And indeed love, and indeed hatred: no man knows all things in their face. Even Symmachus interpreted this passage more clearly, saying: I have set all these things in my heart, that I may weigh everything: for the just and the wise, and their works are in the hand of God. And moreover, man does not know friendships or enmities: but all things are uncertain before them, because similar things happen to both the just and the unjust. Furthermore, here is the sense: Indeed, I have given my heart to this and I wanted to know whom God would love and whom He would hate. And I found that the works of the righteous are indeed in the hand of God, and yet whether they are loved by God or not, they cannot know now, and they fluctuate in doubt, whether they endure what they endure for proof or for punishment. Therefore, in the future, they will know, and in their countenance is everything, that is, the knowledge of this matter precedes them when they depart from this life, for then is judgment, and now is the struggle. And whoever endures hardships, whether they endure them through the love of God, like Job, or through hatred, like many sinners, is now uncertain. In all events, one, just and unjust, good and evil, clean and polluted, sacrificing and not sacrificing. Thus good as a sinner, thus swearing as fearing an oath. Those things which are by themselves neither good nor evil, but are called middle by the wise of the world (because they happen equally to the

just and the unjust) disturb even the simple, why they happen in this way, and therefore they do not consider it to be a judgment, since there is a future distinction in all things, and here all things are confused. But when he says that the outcome is the same for everyone, both the righteous and the wicked, whether it signifies hardships or death, therefore neither the knowledge of God's love nor hatred is in them. Also, sacrificing and not sacrificing, and the other things that are enumerated as opposites, are to be understood spiritually, according to the words: A contrite spirit is the sacrifice to God (Psalm 50:19). This is the worst thing under the sun: that there is one event for all. But also the hearts of the children of men are full of evil, and there are errors in their hearts throughout their lives, and afterwards to the dead. For who is there that communicates with all the living? And Symmachus has interpreted this more clearly, saying: But also the hearts of the children of men are filled with evil and insolence according to their hearts in their lives. But their ultimate end comes to the dead. For who can continue to live forever? Scripture repeats the same meaning that we discussed a little while ago, that when all things happen equally to everyone, and there is no distinction in enduring good or evil, or at least when we are taken from this world by equal death: nevertheless, we are still filled with errors, insolence, and wickedness, and after all these things we are suddenly snatched away by death, and we no longer can have fellowship with the living. Certainly, because common hardships oppress both the just and the unjust, therefore people are provoked to sin. And yet, after all their efforts, which are in vain unless they know, they descend into hell.

There is confidence, because a living dog is better than a dead lion: for the living know that they shall die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have already perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun. For he had previously said, the heart of the sons of men is filled with evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead. Yet further he observes, that while men live they may be righteous, but after death there is no opportunity for doing good. For a living sinner can become better than a dead righteous person, if they choose to adopt their virtues. Or certainly, someone who boasted in wickedness, power, and insolence, and has died, can become better than the poorest and most despised person. Why? Because the living, in fear of death, can perform good deeds; but the dead are unable to contribute anything to what they once carried with them in life, and everything is enveloped in oblivion, as it is written in the psalm: 'I have been forgotten, like the dead from the heart' (Ps. XXX, 13). But both their love and their hatred, and their envy, and all that they could have in the world, ends with the coming of death: nor can they do anything justly anymore, nor sin, nor add virtues, nor vices. Although some may contradict this explanation, asserting that even after death we can still grow and decline, and in that which he now says: And there will be no part for them still in the world, in everything that has been done under the sun, they understand it in such a way as to say that in this world, and under this sun that we perceive, they have no communion; but rather have it under another world, of which the Savior says: I am not of this world (John 8:23); and under the sun of justice; and not excluding the opinion, which contends that after we have departed from this world, we can still harm rational creatures, and deserve punishment. The Hebrew interprets this verse differently, in which it is said: For a living dog is better than a dead lion, so it is explained among his own people: It is more useful for even an ignorant person who is still alive and can teach, than a perfect teacher who is already dead. For example, to understand the dog as any one of many teachers: and the lion as Moses, or any other prophet. But

because we do not like this explanation, let us move on to something greater: and let us say that the Canaanite woman, to whom it was said: Your faith has saved you (Matthew 9:22), is the dog according to the Gospel; and the dead lion is the people of circumcision, as the prophet Balaam says: Behold, the people shall rise up as a young lion, and as a lion exulting (Numbers 23:24). Therefore, we are like living dogs among the nations: but the dead lion is the people of the Jews abandoned by the Lord. And this living dog is better with the Lord than that dead lion. For we, being alive, know the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; but the dead know nothing, nor do they expect any promise or reward; their memory is complete. They do not remember what they should have known, nor does the Lord remember them anymore. Moreover, the love by which they once loved God has perished, and the zeal with which they boldly spoke: 'Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?' (Psalm 139:21). And also their zeal, like that of Phinehas, and their trembling knees, like those of Mattathias. It is clear, however, that not all of them are part of this world. For they cannot say, 'My portion is the Lord' (Psalm 73:26).

Go and eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved your works. Let your garments be white at all times, and let not oil be lacking on your head (Ecclesiastes 9:7). Until that place where it says: Like fish caught in a cruel net, and like birds trapped in a snare, so are the sons of men trapped in an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them. Before we argue about each point, let us briefly summarize everything, so that it becomes clear in what sense all things are being said together. Because in the previous chapter it was stated that after people die, they are removed from the hearts of the living, and neither love nor hatred should be had towards them, according to the poet (Aeneid, II).

There is no struggle or escape for the defeated: and because they cannot do anything beyond the sun: now as if it were human error and habit, which urge each other to enjoy the goods of this world, it introduces, and it personifies (prosopopoeia) in the manner of rhetoricians and poets, saying: O man, because after death you are nothing, and death itself is nothing, listen to my advice, and while you live in this short life, enjoy pleasure, use feasts, suppress your worries with wine, and understand that they were given to you by God for your use. Wear white garments, anoint your head with ointments: enjoy the embrace of whatever women please you, and race through this vain and brief life with vain and brief pleasure. For beyond these things you will have nothing more to enjoy: whatever can delight you, seize it quickly, lest it perish. For you should not fear meaningless comments, for the account of each work, whether good or evil, must be rendered to you in the underworld. For there is no wisdom in death: no sensation remains after the dissolution of this life. And someone may say, as Epicurus and Aristippus and the Cyrenaics do, and the rest of the beasts called philosophers. But reflecting carefully within myself, I find that not, as some mistakenly believe, everything is done by chance, and that fortune plays a varied role in human affairs, but rather that everything is done by the judgment of God. For even if a swift runner were to think that he determines his own course with his feet, he does not. Nor let the strong trust in their own strength, nor let the wise esteem riches and wealth as being gathered by prudence; nor let the eloquent and learned think that they can find favor with the people through eloquence and learning; but let them consider that everything is done by God's disposition. And unless He governs all things according to His will, and builds the house, in vain do those labor who build it. Unless He keeps the city, in vain do those watch who keep it (Psalm 127:1). And so, it is not, as

they think, one event and the uncertain state of this life: because when they do not consider it, they will come to judgment when suddenly taken by death. And just as fish are caught by a hook and birds are trapped in nets, and free birds are bound by a snare while they are unaware: so too, humans will be led to eternal punishments according to their deserts, when suddenly death comes and judgment falls upon them, who believed that all things were tossed about in an uncertain state. These things, according to the interpretation that we wanted to summarize briefly, are now to be understood individually, as if they were spoken not from someone else's, but from one's own person: Go, eat your bread in joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has already approved your works. For you have learned that all things come to an end in death, and there is no repentance in the realm of the dead, nor any opportunity for turning to virtue, while you are in this world, hasten, strive to repent: while you have time, work. For willingly God receives the repentant. Otherwise: And simply understanding is profitable, according to this: Whether you eat or drink or do anything, do all in the name of the Lord (1 Corinthians 10:31). And in another place: Drink wine with counsel. For true joy and good heart does not belong to one who excessively uses creatures. But it is better to think thus: Whose works have pleased God, will never lack for true bread and wine, which is tread from the vineyard of Sorek. Therefore, given this precept which says: You have desired wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord will minister it to you (Sirach 1:33): let us keep the commandments, and we will be able to find spiritual bread and wine. But whoever does not keep the commandments and boasts in the abundance of bread and wine, it is said to him through Isaiah: Do not say, 'I know it'; neither have you known, nor do you know, nor have I opened your ears from the beginning. For I know that you reject it (Isaiah 48:8, LXX version). Furthermore, what is said in the Septuagint: Come, eat your bread with joy; this is the voice of Ecclesiastes, who speaks in the Gospel: Whoever is thirsty, let them come to me and drink (John 7:37). And in Proverbs: Come, eat my bread and drink the wine I have mixed (Proverbs 9:5). Let your garments always be white, and let oil not be lacking on your head. And he says, have a clean body and be merciful. And so: Let there be no time in which you do not have white garments; beware lest you put on polluted clothing. For the sinful people are described to have rejoiced in dark clothing. But you must put on light and not the curse that is written over Judah: Let him be clothed with a curse, as with a garment (Ps. 109:18). Put on the bowels of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience (Colossians 3). And when you have stripped off the old man with his deeds, put on the new man, who is renewed day by day. And as for what he says: And let not oil be lacking on your head: it must be understood that the nature of this oil is such that it nourishes both the light and dissolves the labour of the weary. It is a spiritual oil, oil of rejoicing, of which it is written: Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions (Ps. 45:7). Our face is to be refreshed with this oil. This is to be anointing the head of the fasting person, which sinners cannot have, to whom it is said: 'It is not right to apply salve, nor oil, nor bandages' (Isaiah 1:6). For they have a contrary oil, which the righteous man detests, saying: 'The oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head' (Psalm 104:5). This oil the heretics have, and with it they desire to pour over the heads of the deceived.

Look at the life with the woman whom you loved all the days of your vain life, which were given to you under the sun: for this is your portion in life and in the labor that you labor under the sun. Follow wisdom and the knowledge of the Scriptures, and bind yourself to it in marriage, as it is said in Proverbs: Love it, and it will keep you; embrace it, and it will surround you (Prov. IV, 8). But the days of vanity, the days of this wicked world, signify. About this the Apostle does not remain silent.

But what he says: See the life with the woman whom you have loved, is ambiguously spoken, whether see and contemplate life, and your wife herself with you (for you cannot see life alone without such a wife), or consider both, and see life, and the woman in the days of your vanity. And he rightly advises that in the days of our vanity we seek true life with a wise wife. For this is our part, and this is the fruit of our labor, if in this shadowy life we are able to find true life. Do everything that your hand finds to do, do it in your strength: for there is no work, thought, knowledge, or wisdom in the underworld where you are going. Do whatever you can now and labor, for when you descend to the underworld, there will be no opportunity for repentance. This is similar to what the Savior commands: Work while it is day, for the night is coming when no one can work (John 9:4). And when it says 'in the underworld where you are going', understand that Samuel truly believed to have been in the underworld, and before the coming of Christ, all the righteous were held by the law of the underworld. Furthermore, the Apostle testifies that the saints are not held in hell after the resurrection of the Lord, saying: It is better to be dissolved and to be with Christ (Philippians 1:23). But whoever is with Christ is certainly not held in hell.

I turned and saw under the sun that there is no swift course, nor strong battle, nor bread for the wise, nor wealth for the prudent, nor favor for the knowledgeable: because time and chance happen to them all. He who is bound with iron fetters and burdened with heavy chains of lead: For iniquity sits upon a talent of lead (Zech. 5:7): and in the Psalm it says: As a heavy burden they have been burdened upon me (Psalm 38:5): he is not fit for that course, of which it is said: I have finished the course, I have kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:7). But whoever is light and his soul is not burdened, nevertheless he himself cannot reach the end without the help of God. And even when there is a battle against contrary powers, about which it is written: Sanctify the war (Jer. VI, 4): although he may be strong, he will not be able to overcome them by his own strength. Likewise, even a perfect man among the children of men and wise cannot have living and heavenly bread, unless he is encouraged by wisdom, saying: Come, eat my breads. And because they are riches, of which the Apostle says: Be rich in good works (I Tim. VI, 18): And elsewhere: You have become rich in every word and in all knowledge (I Cor. I, 5): it must be known that a prudent man cannot gather these riches unless he receives them from the Lord, whose riches they are. About which it is also said elsewhere: The redemption of a man's soul is his own wealth (Prov. XV, 8). Moreover, grace, unless it is accompanied by knowledge and granted by God, even though a learned man will not be able to find it. This is also known by Paul: I have labored more than all of them, but not I, but the grace of God that is with me (I Cor. XV, 10). And again: His grace in me was not empty. And finally, it is not known by man when the time comes, in which various events and the end of all follow. This is according to **■ναγω■v**.

Moreover, to speak more simply, the Letter to the Romans is relevant to this place: Because it depends not on the one who wills or the one who runs, but on God who shows mercy (Rom. 9:16). And what he says: Bread is not for the wise, is proven daily by the example of many who, though they are very wise, still need the essentials. And, Grace is not for the knowledgeable. For you might see in the Church even the most ignorant people flourishing, who, because they have nourished the audacity of their forehead and the agility of their tongue, while they do not consider what they say, consider themselves to be wise and learned: especially if they have the favor of the crowd, which delights and is moved more by frivolous words. And on the other hand, a learned man hides in obscurity, suffering persecutions; and not only does he not have favor among the

people, but he wastes away in poverty and need. These things happen because everything is carried on in an uncertain state, and there is no retribution for merits in the present, but in the future. And indeed, man does not know his own time, like fish that are caught in a terrible trap, like birds that are trapped in a snare: in the same way, the sons of men will fall in a bad time, when it will suddenly come upon them. Now we have already said that while men do not know, such distress or destruction will come to them. Furthermore, according to the allegory, it must be understood that the kingdom of heaven is like a net cast into the sea (Matthew 13). And on the other hand, heretics have a net by which they catch fish for their destruction. Their net is affable speech, flattering language, feigned or forced abstinences, humble clothing, imitation of virtues. And if they begin to discuss higher things and raise their voices in the air and seek the heights of God, they set a snare in the high places. Therefore, just as fish and birds are quickly caught by such a net and by such a snare: so when iniquity has multiplied and the love of many has grown cold, and signs and wonders have been done so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect (Matthew 24): it must be understood that even Ecclesiastical men, who are called sons of men and are of little faith, can quickly fall. It should also be noted that throughout the entire book, wherever it says 'sons of men' in Latin, it has 'son of man' in Hebrew, that is, 'son of Adam'. And almost the entire Scripture is full of this expression, calling the entire human race 'sons of Adam'. But I have seen this wisdom under the sun, and it is great in me. A small city with few men in it, and a great king came to it and surrounded it and built a great siege engine against it. And he found in it a poor and wise man, and this man saved the city by his wisdom, but no one remembered that poor man. While others say that everything is uncertain and the just have no advantage over the unjust, I have also proven wisdom in this: that it often happens that a city is small and its inhabitants few, and it is surrounded by a countless army of enemies, and the people inside are killed by siege and famine. And suddenly, contrary to everyone's expectations, a humble and poor man is found, who, because he has greater wisdom than all the rich, great, powerful, and proud people in danger, and fearing siege, thinks and investigates, and finds how to deliver the city from evil. And, oh ingratitude of mankind! After they have been set free and their captivity has been lifted, and their freedom has been restored to their homeland, no one remembers that wise poor man, no one gives thanks for their salvation. Instead, they honor the wealthy, who were unable to help in any danger. The Hebrew interpretation of this passage is different: 'A small city is a man, who is also called the microcosm among philosophers. And there are few men in it, who are the limbs that make up the man himself.' But when the great king, the devil, comes against her, and seeks a place by which he can break in, he finds within her a humble and wise, and quiet thought of the inner man, and he saves the city which was being besieged by enemies. And when a man is rescued from danger or persecution, or distress, or any adverse event or sin: that outward man, who is the enemy of that poor and wise man, does not remember the inner man, nor submits to his counsels: but again enjoys his own freedom. Otherwise: The city is small, and there are few men in it compared to the whole world. It is the Church: against which the great king, the devil, often rises up (not because he is great, but because he boasts of being great) and surrounds it with siege, either of persecution or some other kind of distress. And he finds in it a poor and wise man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who became poor for us (2 Corinthians 8:9) and is himself wisdom: and that poor man frees the city by his wisdom. How often have we seen the cunning lion sitting in ambush with the wealthy, that is to say, with the senators and princes of this age, and plotting against the Church, while the wisdom of this poor man crumbles? And when this poor man conquers and the

city is restored to peace, hardly anyone remembers him, hardly anyone takes his commands into consideration. But yielding themselves entirely to luxury and pleasures, they seek riches, which do not free them in times of need. And I said, wisdom is better than strength, and the wisdom of the poor is despised, and his words are not heard. Although no one remembers the wisdom of that poor man, when all things are happy; but everyone admires power and wealth: yet I, according to all interpretations, honor contemptible wisdom and words that no one deigns to hear. The words of the wise are heard in silence, more than the shouting of a powerful person among fools. Whoever you see as a declaimer in the Church, and with a certain charm and elegance of words, excites applause, evokes laughter, and stirs the emotions of joy in the listeners: know that it is a sign of folly, both of the speaker and of those who hear. Indeed, the words of the wise are heard in silence and moderation: but the foolish, even if they are powerful, and have either the noise of their own voice or the acclamation of the people, will be counted among fools.

Wisdom is better than the weapons of war, and one who sins will lose much goodness. Now wisdom is also preferred over strength, and it is said to be more valuable in battles than the weapons of the fighters. But if one is foolish, even though small and insignificant, frequently through their foolishness, great wealth and riches are destroyed. And indeed, in Hebrew it can be read: And one who sins will lose much goodness, it must also be understood in this way: that because of one sin, many righteousnesses may be lost in retrospect, and virtues follow one another, and whoever possesses one, possesses them all. And whoever shall offend in one point, is become guilty of all.

(Chap. X.) (Chapter X.) Flies pollute the oil of composition: a little foolishness is precious above wisdom and glory. An example of the previous passage is given, in which it is said that by one fool many good things can be overturned, just as a bad person mixed with good things contaminates many, just as flies, if they die in ointment, destroy both its scent and color. And because wisdom is often mixed with cunning, and prudence has malice, it advises that we seek simple wisdom, and that it be mixed with the innocence of doves: that we be wise for good things, but simple for evil things. And the sense is: It is fitting for the just to have little of simplicity, and because of excessive patience, while reserving vengeance to God, to prefer to appear foolish rather than exercise malice immediately by avenging themselves under the veil of prudence. Otherwise: The flies which are mentioned near Isaiah (Chapter 7, 18) in the region of the river of Egypt, lose the sweetness of oil, leaving in each believer the odor and traces of their filth. From these flies, the prince of demons is also called Beelzebub (Matthew 12, 24), which is interpreted as either the idol of flies, or the man of flies, or the one who has flies. The heart of a wise person is in their right hand, and the heart of a foolish person is in their left. But on the way, when a fool walks, their heart diminishes: and they say, everyone is foolish. And in the Gospel, it is commanded that the left hand does not know what the right hand of the wise person does (Matthew VI, 3; V, 39). And when we are struck on the right cheek, we are not commanded to offer the left cheek to the one who strikes, but the other right one (Matthew V, 39). For the righteous person does not have the left hand in them, but everything in them is right. And when the Savior comes to judge, the lambs will stand on the right, but the goats will be on the left (Matt. 25:33). And in Proverbs it is written: The LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish (Prov. 4:27). Therefore, whoever is wise always thinks about the future age, which leads to the right. But whoever is foolish, thinks about the present, which is placed on the left. The same philosopher and poet followed this, saying

(Virgil, Aeneid VI): The right hand leads us beneath the walls of the great God (or great rich man) ((Alternative: stretches)). This path leads us to Elysium: but the left hand inflicts punishments on the wicked and sends them to impious Tartarus ((Alternative: leads)). Our own Firmianus also mentions the letter Y in his excellent work of his Institutes, and he extensively discusses about the right and left, that is, about virtues and vices. And we may not consider this little sentiment to be contrary to that in which it is said: Do not turn to the right hand, nor to the left (Prov. IV, 27). For here the right hand part is understood as good: but there, not so much the right hand, as the turning of the right hand, is being accused: let us not think ourselves wiser than necessary: because virtues are in the middle, and excessive behavior is always a vice. But in the following verse, where it says: But when a fool walks along the way, his heart lacks understanding, and he says: all foolishness is, or the fool, here is the meaning: The fool, as he himself sins, hopes that everyone sins in the same way, and judges everyone according to his own nature. Finally, Symmachus interpreted it thus: But when a fool walks along the way, he himself suspects everyone, because they are fools. But the Seventy translated it to another sense, saying: All that the fool thinks is most vain.

If the spirit with power ascends above you, do not abandon your place, for health causes great sins to rest. This Scripture now signifies the prince of this world and the ruler of these darknesses, and the one working in the children of diffidence, whom the Apostle also mentions (Ephesians 2:2 and 6:12). But if it ascends into our heart and the soul receives a wound of evil thought, we should not give it any further place, but fight against the very worst thought and free ourselves from the greatest sin, so that we do not fulfill the thought in deed. For it is one thing to sin in thought, another in deed. About which great sin is written in the psalm: If they have not dominated me, then I will be blameless, and I will be cleansed from the greatest offense (Psalm 18:4). Symmachus translated the Hebrew word 'Marphe', which all others translated as '■αμα', that is, health or healing, according to sense, and he said: If the spirit of the prince rushes upon you, do not leave your place: for modesty restrains great sins. That is, if the devil tempts your mind and incites you to lust, do not follow evil thoughts and enticing pleasure: but stand strong and firm, and extinguish the flame of pleasure with the coldness of chastity. The Hebrew in this place suspected something unknown. If you should receive any dignity in the world, and you are ordained greater among the people, do not leave your previous works, and do not begin to forget the virtues of old, and do not consider your previous labor as insignificant: because the remedy for sins is born from good conduct, and not from inflated and excessive dignity.

It is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as if ignorance were coming forth from the face of the powerful: to give foolishness in great heights, and for the rich to sit in lowly places. I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking like slaves on the earth. For what reason, we have set forth: As if ignorance coming forth from the face of the powerful, Aquila and Theodotio and the Seventy were interpreted: As if not voluntary, that is, as involuntary, from the face of the prince. To this Symmachus adds, saying: It is a foolish thing to be placed in great elevation: for the rich ought to sit low. And he recalls perceiving this injustice in the world, in that it seems unfair the judgment of God: and whether by ignorance, or without His will, that in the powers of the world or in the leadership of the Church, those who are rich in speech and wisdom, may also be rich in good works, yet the lowly sit, and that any ignorant person may hold authority in the Church. However, the Apostle does not remain silent about this happening from the devil, who in this world has

power, so that he may suppress even the powerful and learned men and not allow them to appear among the people. But those whom he knows to be imprudent in the churches, he makes them into elders, so that the blind may be led by the blind into the pit. This is also the meaning of what follows: I saw servants riding on horses, and princes walking like servants on the earth. Those who are slaves to vices and sins, whether so humble as to be counted as slaves by men, suddenly exalted by the devil, tread the public ways. And every noble and wise person, oppressed by poverty, walks in the path and performs the duties of a servant. The Hebrew exposed God as powerful and princely, from whose face ignorance seems to depart, because people think in this inequality of things, that he does not judge them justly and as is right. Furthermore, others think that they should be joined with the higher ones, that he himself may be powerful, of whom it is said before these verses: If the spirit of the one having power has ascended upon you, do not abandon your place. Therefore, let us not be sad if we seem humble in this world, knowing that we are being lifted up from the face of the devil and fools, and the rich are being thrown down; slaves are having the insignia of the masters, and princes of the slaves are entering into lowliness. However, it should also be noted that here the horse is taken in a good sense, as it says there: And your riding is salvation.

He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who destroys a fence, a snake will bite him. The understanding is both simple and mystical. Indeed, elsewhere Solomon himself says: He who sets a trap will be caught in it (Eccli. XXVII, 29). And in the seventh psalm: He opened a pit and dug it, and fell into the hole he made. The breaking of the fence and the wall are the teachings of the Church, and the institution founded by the Apostles and Prophets, which he who dissolves and wishes to pass by, in that very act of neglect, is struck by the serpent. Concerning which serpent it is written in Amos: If it descends into the underworld, I will command the serpent, and it will bite them.

Whoever removes stones will grieve over them, and whoever splits wood will be endangered by them (Zech. IX, 16). The holy stones roll in Zachariah upon the earth. For they do not remain steadfast in that place, but they pass by and always strive for higher things, hastening to depart from here. Of these living stones, the city of the Savior is built in the Apocalypse (Ch. XXI, 18 seqq.), and the Apostle does not remain silent about the building of the Church. If therefore someone, perverted by heretical art, takes away these stones from the building of the Church (wherefore also Aquila and Symmachus expressly said: he who takes away stones, will be pained in them), afterwards he will suffer torments. But because the Scripture absolutely says: he who takes away stones, or he who transfers stones, and does not add good or bad ones; therefore, on the contrary, it must be understood that the ecclesiastical man, namely the bishop and presbyter, if according to the commandment of Leviticus (Chapter 14, 45), he takes away a stone from a leprous house, it must be crushed into ashes and dust: he will be pained in himself, because he is compelled to remove a stone from the Church of Christ, saying according to the Apostle: Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn (Romans 12, 15); and, Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? Also, by splitting wood, one will be in danger in them. Heretics are useless wood, and a forest without the usefulness of fruits. Therefore, even though he may be a wise and learned man, if he cuts down these woods with the sword of his speech, he will be in danger in them unless he pays close attention, especially if what follows happens to him: If the iron is rejected and its face is troubled, that is, if his argumentation is

found to be weaker and lacking sharpness to separate opposing things: but the sharpness of his heart is dulled; it will pass over to the opposing side, and perverse strength will strengthen him. For this is what the Septuagint translators rendered: And by strength it shall be strengthened; and by excessive wisdom it shall begin to have strength, and wisdom, which is excessive, does not aid the possessor.

If iron is sharpened; and if it is not as before, but becomes dull, it will be strengthened by its virtues: and the remaining strength is wisdom. If, he says, someone realizes that they have lost knowledge of the Scriptures due to negligence, and the sharpness of their intelligence has become blunt: and if they do not remain disturbed, as they had already begun to be: it happens sometimes that when someone has a little knowledge, they become proud, cease to learn and read, and gradually, as nothing is added to them, it is taken away, and an empty heart remains devoid of teachings, and the iron that was sharp becomes dull: for idleness and laziness are like a kind of rust on wisdom. If, therefore, anyone has suffered this, let him not despair of a remedy for his health, but let him go to the doctor, and let him be instructed by him again, and after labor and industry, and excessive sweating, he will be able to regain the wisdom that he had lost. This is what is more significantly said in Hebrew: And he shall be strengthened by strengths, that is, by labor and sweating, and industry, and daily reading, he will attain wisdom, and his strength will have this end, to receive wisdom.

If a serpent bites in silence, it no longer has a tongue. The meaning here is simple: the serpent and the detractor are equal. Just as the serpent secretly inserts venom when it bites, so does the detractor, by secretly criticizing, pour out the poison of his own heart into his brother, and he has nothing more from the serpent. For when the tongue of a man is created to bless and build up his neighbor, he makes it equal to the serpent when he abuses its virtues for evil purposes. Otherwise: If someone, without anyone else knowing, is secretly bitten by the devil serpent and infected with the poison of sin; if the one who is struck keeps silent and does not repent, and does not want to confess his wound to his brother and master, the master and brother, who have the language to heal, will not be able to help him easily. For if the sick person is ashamed to confess his wound to the doctor, the medicine that the doctor does not know cannot heal it. The words of a wise mouth are pleasing, and the lips of a fool will bring him down. If foolishness were content with its own simplicity, it would have less evil. But now it wages war against wisdom, and whatever it sees of prudence in a learned man, driven by jealousy, it does not accept. For the wise man speaks words of knowledge and words of grace, which can provide benefit to the listeners, and the ears of a fool do not receive what is said as it is said; but on the contrary, they attempt to overthrow the prudent man and tear down one like themselves. And truly a wise man falls headlong when he speaks into the ear of the imprudent, and his words perish in the depths, so to speak. Therefore blessed is he who speaks into the ear of the listener. The beginning of his words is foolishness, and the end of his mouth is the worst error. And a fool multiplies words. A man does not know what has been done, and what will come after him, who will declare it to him? Still, there is a debate about the fool, whose lips bring down the wise, or according to another interpretation, make the fool himself fall. For the beginning of his speech is foolishness, and the end is the worst error; or as Symmachus translated, turmoil and a certain inconsistency of words; while he does not remain in the meaning, but thinks that he can escape sin in the multiplication of words. For when he does not remember the past, nor know the future, and is carried about in ignorance and

darkness, promising himself false knowledge; in this he believes himself to be learned, in this he believes himself to be wise, if he multiplies words. This can also be applied to heretics, who do not understand the sayings of prudent men; but, preparing themselves for contradictory disputes, they mingle the beginning and end of speech with frivolity, noise, and error: and when they know nothing, they speak more than they know. The toil of fools afflicts those who do not know how to go to the city. Also, join these previous verses: either generally about all fools who are ignorant of God, or specifically about heretics. Read Plato; examine the cleverness of Aristotle, look closely at Zeno and Carneades, and you will prove that what is said is true: The toil of fools afflicts them. Indeed, they searched for truth with all their efforts; but because they did not have a guide and a path, and they believed that they could comprehend wisdom with human senses, they did not reach the city at all, of which it is said in the psalm: O Lord, in your city you will disperse their image (Psalm 73:20). For the Lord will scatter all the shadows and various images and personas that they have taken on in their various doctrines. Concerning this, it is written elsewhere: The rushing of the river brings joy to the city of God (Psalm 46:5). And in the Gospel: A city set on a hill cannot be hidden (Matthew 5:14). And in Isaiah: I am a strong city, a city that is under attack (Isaiah 27:30, LXX). Indeed, all the wise of the world and the heretics strive to attack this city of truth and wisdom, even though it is strong and robust. And what we said about philosophers, the same must be thought about heretics, who labor and afflict themselves in the study of the Scriptures in vain, since they wander in the desert and are unable to find the city. About their error the psalmist also speaks, saying: 'They have wandered in the desert, in a place without water; they have not found the way to the city and its habitation.' (Psalm 106:4).

Woe to you, land, whose young king and leaders devour in the morning. Blessed is the land, whose king, your son, feasts with nobles in due season, in strength and not in confusion. It seems indeed to condemn the rule of the young and to condemn the extravagant judges, that in some the wisdom of age is weak, and in others even mature age is weakened by pleasures. And on the contrary, it approves a prince of good character and a liberal education, and it proclaims judges who by no means put pleasure before the affairs of the citizens, but after much toil and the administration of the state, they are compelled to take food as if by necessity. But what seems more sacred to me is hidden in the letter, that young people are called in Scripture, who depart from the ancient authority and despise the hoary precepts of their parents: who, neglecting God's commandment, desire to establish the traditions of men. Concerning whom, in Isaiah (Chapter VIII), the Lord of Israel threatens, because he did not want the water of Siloam, which flows gently, and he turned away the ancient pool, choosing for himself the streams of Samaria and the torrents of Damascus. And I will give, saith he, their princes in youth: and their wise men shall rule over them (Isaiah 3:4). Read Daniel, and you will find the God of ancient days (Daniel 7). Read the Apocalypse of John, and you will find the head of the Savior white as snow, and his hair white as wool (Revelation 1). Also, Jeremiah, because he was wise, and his grey hairs were considered as wisdom, is forbidden to say that he is young (Jeremiah 1). Woe to the land whose king is the devil, who is always eager for new things and even rebels against his parent in Abessalon: which has judges and rulers who love the pleasures of this world, who say before the day of death comes: Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die (Isaiah 22:13). Behold the blessed land of the Church, whose king is Christ the Son of the nobles: descending from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as the lineage of prophets and all the saints, to whom sin did not have dominion; and therefore they were truly free. From them was born the Virgin Mary, more free, having no root, no

offspring from her side: but all her fruit blossomed, speaking in the Song of Songs: I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys. The princes also include the Apostles and all the saints, who have the king as their son, born of free women, not of the slave Hagar, but of the freedom of Sarah. They do not eat in the morning, nor quickly. For they do not seek pleasure in the present age, but they will eat in their own time when the time of retribution comes, and they will eat in strength, and not in confusion. Every good of the present age is confusion, the future is perpetual strength. This is what is said in Isaiah: Behold, my servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry: and again, behold, my servants shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame. In laziness, the building will be humbled, and in the weakness of our hands, the house will drip. Our house, which was built with the stature of man, and the dwelling we have in the heavens, if we are lazy and slow to good works, will be humbled. And every building that should bear the summit aloft, falling to the ground, will oppress its inhabitant. And when the help of our hands and virtues is numb, all the storms from above rush down upon us like a whirlwind of rain. Furthermore, what we have interpreted in one man can be better applied to the Church: that through the negligence of its leaders, all of its greatness collapses, and there vices may be found where virtues were thought to exist. For they make bread and wine with laughter, so that the living may feast. And they obey silver in all things. I think that what follows depends on what has come before. For in laziness and in the negligence of the magisters, the Church is humiliated, and its highest point is brought down, and its beams are washed away, as we have explained above. Now, therefore, he speaks about these same magisters. And because it had been seen that he was accusing them, why they were silent and did not use the office of magisters, and the bishops and presbyters who were established in the Church did not labor in speech and teaching, as Titus is admonished to do (Titus 1:5), and Timothy is instructed not to neglect the grace which he had received by the laying on of hands: and also that they should value the presbyters and bishops in that they receive what is beneficial and seek double honor for those who labor in teaching and speech (1 Timothy 4:14); now, on the contrary, he accuses those who speak indeed in the Church and teach the people, but they teach those things which please the people to hear, that they may touch sinners in vice and stir up the noise of the listeners. Surely, when in the Church prayer (or speaker), and promises of blessedness, and the kingdoms of heaven to the multitude, it seems to you to make bread in laughter, and mix wine for the joy of the living? Whether it be that those who teach, acquire riches, and food, and wealth through pleasing promises: or that they make the bread of the Church, which is the bread of mourners and not of those who laugh (for blessed are those who mourn, for they themselves will laugh), in joy and rejoicing. But that which follows: everything obeys money or silver, is to be understood in two ways. Either that the doctors, once enriched by flattery, exercise dominion over the people: or certainly, because silver is always accepted in place of speech: For the words of the Lord are pure words: silver refined by fire, purified sevenfold. (Ps. II, 7): this confirms that the common people readily yield to eloquence and speech, which is composed of the foliage of words. Otherwise: Those who have a spouse with them, and therefore are prohibited from mourning and fasting, make bread with laughter. From this laughter, both Isaac received his name and they prepare the wine for those drinking in joy. Therefore, every holy man, who, as Christ commanded, is the teacher of the Church, makes bread with laughter and serves cups of wine in joy. Moreover, the money, to which all things obey, are the five talents from the Gospel, and the two, and one, which are given to the head of the household, and the ten minas, which are entrusted to the servants in business (Matt. XXV, 15. et seqq). In your mind, do not curse the king,

and in the secrecy of your bedroom, do not curse the rich, for the bird of the sky will carry the message, and with wings, it will proclaim the word. And a simple instruction builds those who listen: let us not be overcome by anger and fury, to burst into curses and slander against kings and princes, for sometimes it happens against all expectation that those to whom we have cursed are informed, and we incur the danger of immoderate speech. But when he says, 'The bird of the sky will take away the voice, and having wings will proclaim the word,' it is to be understood hyperbolically, just as we often say that even the walls, to which we speak knowingly, will not conceal what they have heard. But it is better to hear this precept in such a way that we know it is a commandment for us: not only should we speak nothing rashly against Christ, but even in the secret depths of our hearts, though we may be weighed down by various tribulations, we should think nothing blasphemous or impious. And because we show love to Christ, we also owe it to our neighbor: For you shall love the Lord your God, and your neighbor as yourself, we are also commanded, so that we may not easily detract from the saints after the king: and that we may not harm those whom we see to be enriched with wisdom, knowledge, and virtues with the sharpness of our tongues: for the angels who go around the earth and are the administrators of spirits, speak in Zechariah: We have gone around the earth, and behold all the earth is inhabited, and silent (Zechariah 1:11): like birds, let our words and thoughts be carried to heaven: and let what we secretly think not escape the knowledge of God.

(Chap. XI.)

(Chapter XI) Send your bread upon the face of the water: for in the multitude of days you will find it. He encourages almsgiving because it should be given to everyone who asks and done discreetly. For just as the one who sows Beside the waters expects the fruit of the seed to come, so the one who gives to the needy does not sow a grain of seed, but himself sows bread, expecting a certain interest to be multiplied. And when the day of judgment comes, he will receive much more than he had given (or found). Otherwise: in whomever you see that water, of which it is said: Rivers of living water will flow from his belly (John 7:38), do not hesitate to provide the bread of wisdom, the reasonable bread, the bread of discourse. For if you do this frequently, you will find that you have not sown the seed of teachings in vain. I think something similar is said in Isaiah: Blessed is he who sows upon the water, where the ox and the donkey tread (Isaiah 32:20). That teacher is considered worthy of blessedness who sows upon the receptive hearts of the listeners, gathered from both the Jewish and the Gentile people.

Give a part (Al. parts) of seven, and indeed eight: because you do not know what evil may come upon the earth. And in Ezekiel, seven and eight steps are read for the ascent to the temple (Ezek. 40:26, 31). And after that ethical psalm, that is, the one hundred and eighty-fifth, fifteen steps of the psalm are counted, by which we are first instructed in the law, and when the number seven is completed, then we ascend to the Gospel by the number eight. Therefore, it is commanded that we believe with equal veneration in both instruments, namely the old and the new. The Jews accepted seven parts, believing in the Sabbath; but they did not accept eight parts, denying the resurrection of the Lord's day. On the contrary, heretics such as Marcion and Manichaeus, and all who tear apart the old Law with rabid mouth, accept eight parts, embracing the Gospel; but they do not attribute the same number to the sevenfold, rejecting the old Law. Therefore, let us believe in both Testaments. For we cannot understand worthy torments and a worthy punishment with our minds now, which are set aside for those who dwell on the earth, both for the Jews and for the

heretics, one of whom denies one of the two. The Hebrews understand this place in the following way: Observe both the Sabbath and circumcision, lest if you should perhaps not do this, an unexpected evil come upon you.

If the clouds become full, they will pour rain upon the earth. And if a tree falls to the south or to the north: where it falls, there it will be. Keep the commandments that have been given to you above, so that the clouds may pour their rain upon you. For wherever you have prepared a place for yourself and a future dwelling, whether to the south or to the north: there, when you have died, you will remain. Otherwise: Therefore, we have said above: Send your bread upon the face of the water, and give to everyone who asks of you: for when the clouds are full, they bestow their riches upon mortals, and you, like a tree, even if you are long-lived, will not be forever, but suddenly, as the winds, so overturned by the storms of death, wherever you fall, there you will constantly remain, whether the final time finds you stern and fierce, or kind and merciful. Otherwise: It is said in the Psalms to God: Your truth reaches to the clouds (Psalm 36:6). And in Isaiah, God threatens the sinner of the vineyard: I will command the clouds, so that they do not rain on it (Isaiah 5:6). Therefore, the clouds are the Prophets, and every holy man, who, when he has gathered many disciplines in his heart, then he will be able to make the precepts of teachings rain and to say: Let my speech be awaited like rain, let it pour down on the earth (Deuteronomy 32:2): to which it is said: Let the earth hear the words of my mouth. But what follows: And if a tree falls to the south or to the north: in the place where the tree falls, there it will be: let us take the example of Habakkuk, in which it is written: God will come from Teman (Hab. III, 3), which other interpreters have stated as, God will come from the south. And as far as I can tell, the south is always understood in a positive sense. Hence, in the Song of Songs it is said: Arise, O north wind (Song of Solomon 4:16), that is, go away, and come, O south wind. Therefore, the wood that falls in this life and is cut by the condition of mortality either sinned before it stood and is placed in the northern part afterwards or if it brought forth worthy fruits from the south, it will lie in the southern region. There is no wood that is not either towards the north or towards the south. This same thing is also signified by that which is written in Isaiah: I will say to the north: Give up, and to the south: Do not withhold (Isaiah 43:6). For the south and east winds never drive ships to their destination, because it is necessary for them to be on other coasts, which are then led to the east and south. Therefore, the north wind brings its inhabitants to the south, and the southwest wind to the east. For they cannot make progress if they persist in their former abodes.

Whoever watches the wind will not sow, and whoever looks at the clouds will not reap. Whoever considers whom to benefit and does not grant himself to everyone who asks often passes by the one who deserves to receive (Luc. VI, 30). Otherwise: Whoever preaches the word of God only at the time when the people willingly listen and the second breath of rumor blows, is a neglectful and lazy sower. For in prosperity itself, while we are ignorant, adversity arises. But at the right time, or at the wrong time, in its own way, the word of God must be preached (2 Timothy 4:2): and the storm of adversities must not be taken into account at the time of faith. Concerning which it is said in Proverbs: Like a violent and useless rain: so those who abandon wisdom and praise wickedness (Proverbs 28:3-4). Therefore, without considering the clouds and fearing the winds, we must sow in the midst of storms. And we must not say: this time is convenient, this one is useless, since we do not know which way and which will is the spirit of the one who orders all things.

How do you not know the way of the spirit, and like the bones in the womb of a pregnant woman, you do not know the works of God, who creates all things? Just as you do not know the path of the spirit and the soul entering into the child, and you are ignorant of the varieties of bones and veins in the womb of a pregnant woman, how from a humble element the body of a man is transformed into various forms and limbs, and from the same seed, one part becomes soft in flesh, another hardens in bones, another throbs in veins, and another is bound in nerves: in the same way, you will not be able to know the works of God, who is the maker of all things. From this, it teaches that the opposite should not be feared, nor should judgment be made rashly about winds and clouds, which we have mentioned above: since the sower should proceed with his own course and path, and leave the outcome of the Lord's sentence. For it is not of the one who wills or the one who runs, but of God who shows mercy (Rom. IX, 16). In the morning, sow your seed, and in the evening, do not let your hand rest: for you do not know whether this, or that, will please, although both, as one good, is. And it is sweet to see the light, and good for the eyes to behold the sun: for if a man shall live many years, let him rejoice in all these, and remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. All that comes to pass is vanity. Do not choose to whom you may do good, but even when you have done good, never cease from doing good deeds. May morning find justice, and evening gather the rising mercy of the sun. It is uncertain which work is more pleasing to God, and from which the fruit of justice is prepared for you. However, it may happen that both please God, not just one. Otherwise: Let there be equal effort for you in youth and in old age. Do not say: while I was able, I worked; I must rest in old age. For you do not know whether you please God in your youth or in old age. Frugality in youth is not profitable if old age is spent in luxury. For on whatever day the righteous man may have erred, the ancients cannot free him from death. But if you have always acted well according to both interpretations, and have followed an equal course in every age, you will see God the Father, the most sweet light; you will see Christ, the sun of righteousness. Moreover, if you live for many years and have all good things, or perform good works, and know that you will always die and before your eyes the coming of darkness always turns about: you despise present things as if they were fleeting, fragile, and perishable. Symmachus interpreted the end of this sentence as follows: If a man lives for many years and rejoices in all these things, he must remember the days of darkness: for they will be many, and in all of them it will come to an end. Another: Scripture promises in another place, God saying: I will give you both the former and the later rain (Deut. XI, 14), that is, the old Testament and the new, and with both I will water you by rain. Hence we are now admonished to read the old Law in this way, so that we do not despise the Gospel; to seek spiritual understanding in the old Instrument, so that we do not believe that the only thing that is said in the Gospel, in the Evangelists and the Apostles. For indeed it is ignorance for us in what manner knowledge is attributed to us by God and grace, and for him to be happy, who has shared both in common, and has made them as one body. He who has achieved this will see the light, will see Christ, the sun of justice. And if he lives for many years, he will be in the highest joy and delight, having knowledge of the Scriptures, and will be more compelled to this labor by the remembrance of the future judgment: because a perpetual time of darkness will come, and eternal punishments will be prepared for those who have not sown in the morning and in the evening, and have in no way shared in both: neither have they seen the light, nor the sun, from which the same light proceeds.

(Chap. XII.) (Chapter 12) Rejoice, young man, in your youth, and let your heart be good in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes. And know this,

that God will bring you to judgment above all these things. And remove anger from your heart, and take away malice from your flesh, because youth and foolishness are vanity. And remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of evil come and the years approach in which you will say: I have no pleasure in them. In this chapter, there was an explanation of various things and almost as many opinions as there are people. Because it would be tedious to list all the opinions and explain the arguments by which they wanted to support their opinions, it is enough to indicate to the wise what they thought and, as it were, to paint a brief map of the lands, showing the vastness of the whole world and the extent of the ocean in a small space. The Hebrews consider it pertinent to the Israelite people's commandment, which instructs them to enjoy their wealth before the time of captivity arrives and to exchange their youth for old age: to indulge in whatever is pleasurable or delightful to the heart and eyes while it is available, but in such a way that they know they will be judged by everyone. They should also flee both evil thoughts and desires, aware that folly is associated with youth. They should always remember their Creator before the days of Babylonian and Roman captivity arrive, when they will not be able to have their own will. And all this place from what he says: Before the sun is darkened, and the moon, and the stars, up to that place where Scripture commemorates: And the dust will return to its earth as it was, and the spirit will return to the Lord who gave it: they explain about the state of their condition. These things, as we have said above, are disjointed and lengthy, so we will touch on them briefly and succinctly. Rejoice therefore in your youth, O Israel, and do those things which have already been mentioned before captivity comes and your honor and glory fade away, and your judges and holy ones (whom they wish to be understood as the sun, moon, and stars) are taken away. Before Nebuchadnezzar comes, or Titus, son of Vespasian, called by the prophets and their prophecies fulfilled. On the day when the angelic guardians of the temple depart, and the strongest warriors in your army are troubled, and the words of the teachers and prophets, who used to receive the light of their visions from the heavens, will grow dim: when the gates of the temple are closed, and Jerusalem is humbled, and the Chaldeans come, provoked by the voices of Jeremiah like the song of a bird (Jeremiah 9), and the daughters of song in the choir of psalmists are silenced in the temple. At that time, when they come to Jerusalem, the enemies of God themselves will fear the greatness, and on the way they will hesitate, they will fear the destruction of Sennacherib. For this is what is said: They will fear the high places and be afraid on the way (Isaiah XXXVII). In those days, the almond tree will flourish, the staff and rod that Jeremiah saw in the beginning of his prophecy, and the caper will bear fruit (Jeremiah I), the friendship of God with Israel. What the caper desires for itself, however, will be more fully explained when we begin to speak of individual things. But all of this will happen to Israel: because man is about to depart to his eternal home, and to return from God's protection to the heavenly places. As he departs to his tent, they will go about in the street weeping and lamenting, and being surrounded by the siege of enemies. Therefore, rejoice, Israel, in your youth, before the silver cord is broken, that is, before your glory departs from you, before the golden ribbon is unraveled, that is, before the ark of the covenant is taken away: before the water jar is shattered at the spring, and the wheel is rolled upon the pool, that is, before you transgress the holy commandments of the law and the grace of the Holy Spirit departs, and before you return to Babylon, from where you came out of Abraham's loins, and you begin to be oppressed in Mesopotamia, from where you once set out: and may all the grace of prophecy, with which you were once inspired, return to its giver. The Jews still argue about this today, and they apply their own understanding to the meaning of this chapter. But we, returning to the order of the

previous discussion, will strive to explain each point. Rejoice, young man, in your youth, and let your heart be cheerful in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes. And know this above all: God will bring you to judgment. It has been said that the light of this world is very sweet, and that man should rejoice in the days of his life and pursue pleasure with all his might. For the eternal night of death will soon come, when we will no longer be able to enjoy the things we have gathered and, like a shadow, everything we have experienced will pass away. Now therefore he encourages the man, and says: O young man, before old age and death approach you, rejoice in your youth, and take whatever seems good to your heart, and enjoy it as you please, with the things of the world. Again, lest it be thought that in saying this he is inciting man to luxury and falling into the doctrine of Epicurus, he removes this suspicion, adding: And know, that for all these things God will bring you to judgment. So, he said, abuse the things of the world, so that you know that you will be judged in the end. And remove anger from your heart, and take away malice from your body: because youth and foolishness are vanity. In anger, all disturbances of the mind are included. In the malice of the body, all the pleasures of the flesh are indicated. So therefore, he said, enjoy the goods of this world, so that you do not sin either by desire or by the flesh. Leave behind the old vices, with which you served vanity and foolishness in your youth: because youth is joined to foolishness. And remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them'— before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dark, and the clouds return after the rain; when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men stoop, when the grinders cease because they are few, and those looking through the windows grow dim; when the doors to the street are closed and the sound of grinding fades; when people rise up at the sound of birds, but all their songs grow faint; when people are afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets; when the almond tree blossoms and the grasshopper drags itself along, and desire no longer is stirred. Then people go to their eternal home and mourners go about the streets. Remember him—before the silver cord is severed, and the golden bowl is broken; before the pitcher is shattered at the spring, and the wheel broken at the well, and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. 'Meaningless! Meaningless!' says the Teacher. 'Everything is meaningless!'

Before the sun, and light, and moon, and stars grow dark, and the clouds return after the rain. If we understand this in the context of the general consummation of the world, this chapter is consistent with the words of the Lord, in which he says: 'There will be tribulation and distress, such as has not been from the beginning of the creation, but will never be. For the sun will grow dark, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken' (Matth. XXIV), referring to the guardians of the house, so that the house may be understood as this world, and strong men, deceived by error, and the opposing strengths will be destroyed. But if the perfection of each individual is referred to the end of this life: both the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the clouds, and the rain will cease for him who is dead. Otherwise: Rejoice, young man, O Christian people, and enjoy the good things that have been granted to you by God, and in all these things know that you will be judged by the Lord. And do not think that because the previous branches were broken off, and you have been grafted into the root of the good olive tree, that you are therefore secure: but remove from your heart and body pleasures and other vices, remembering your Creator, before the day of evil comes upon you, and the incurable, in which punishments are prepared for sinners: lest when you sin, the sun of justice

at midday kills you, and the light of knowledge perishes, and the brightness of the moon, that is, the Church, is taken away, and the stars fall, of which it is written: In which you shine as luminaries in the world having the rule of life (Philippians 2:15). And elsewhere: one star differs from another star in glory. Before the clouds return after the rain (III Cor. XV, 1), [so that] the Prophets, who water the hearts of believers with their words and their rains, may not return to their seat once they have perceived that you are unworthy of their rain: to Him, namely, from whom they were sent. On the day when the guardians of the house are moved, and the men of valor perish. The guardians of the house can be understood as either the sun and moon, and the rest of the chorus of stars, or as the Angels who preside over this world. But the men of valor, whether interpreted as the strong men who will perish according to Symmachus, or as the demons who will wander according to Aquila, are also felt, having derived the name of the strong ones themselves from the strong devil. The Lord overcomes and binds him, as the parable of the Gospel says, and lays waste to his house (Luke 11). Otherwise: The guardians of the house, who refer everything that is written back to the body of man, believe that the ribs are meant, because the intestines are enclosed by them, and the entirety of the soft stomach is preserved. But they consider strong men to be the legs: they connect the sun, the moon, and the stars to the eyes, ears, nostrils, and all the senses of the head. However, they do this because they are compelled by necessity to understand not about angels and demons, the sun, the moon, and the stars, but about the body parts of man that follow. And the grinding will cease: for they are diminished: and they that look out of the windows are darkened. And in the consummation of the world, when the charity of many shall grow cold, and the souls of the masters, who can provide celestial food to the believers, shall be diminished and translated into heaven, then those who have partially looked upon the light of knowledge in this world shall be enveloped in darkness. For if it is said to Moses, 'I will put thee in a hole of the rock, and I will cover thee with my hand until I pass.' (Exod. XXXIII, 22): how much more does each soul see the truth through a hole and some dark caves! Alternatively: There are two grinding mills, of which one will be taken and the other left, the Gospel does not remain silent (Matthew 24:41). When these are diminished and have stopped, it is necessary that all the light of knowledge be taken away from the eyes. Alternatively: They think that the saying about milling teeth refers to the mills stopping because they have been diminished. When extreme old age has arrived, teeth also either wear down or fall out: with these ground up, the food is sent into the stomach. But as they grow darker, they believe they see through holes: because in those worn by age the eye grows dim, and the sight is obscure. And they will close the gates in the street in the humility of the grinding voice: and the voice of the bird will rise; and all the daughters of song will be silenced. When the voice of the grinder is weakened, and the teaching of the masters ceases, consequently all things will cease: among which, the gates will be closed in the street, so that, like the foolish virgins of the Gospel (Matthew 25), each one may have their street doors closed, and they will not be able to buy oil. Certainly, foolish virgins wandering in the street close the chamber of the bridegroom when they enter with him. For if the way that leads to life is narrow and confined, and the way that leads to death is broad and spacious (Matthew VII), then rightly, with the cooled charity of many, the door of teachings is closed in the streets. In the following verse, in that which he says: 'And he will rise at the voice of the bird, or the sparrow, let us use in time, if and when we see a sinner rising at the voice of the bishop or the priest through penance.' Moreover, we can also understand this extraordinarily, although we do not follow the context of the chapter, and accept it concerning the final resurrection when the dead will rise at the voice of the archangel. It is not

surprising if we compare the trumpet of angels to a sparrow, since every voice compared to Christ is weak. And as far as I can recall, I have never known a sparrow to be read in a negative sense of the law. The righteous man speaks in the tenth psalm: In the Lord I trust; how do you say to my soul, 'Fly away to the mountain like a sparrow.' And elsewhere: I have watched, and have become as a solitary sparrow on the housetop (Psalm 101:8). Also, in another place: Even the sparrow has found a home for herself (Psalm 83:4). In another way: Closed doors in the streets want to receive the steps of the weak old man: that he may always sit and not be able to walk. Moreover, the humility of the grinding voice is interpreted from the jaws, because it cannot chew food and its voice is barely heard with constricted breath. Furthermore, he gets up at the sound of a bird, because, with the blood already freezing and the moisture drying up, which are the substances that nourish sleep, he awakens at the slightest noise, and in the middle of the night, when the rooster crows, he quickly gets up: unable to turn his limbs on the bed any more. He also becomes mute, or as it is better expressed in Hebrew, he becomes deaf to daughters of song, meaning that the hearing of the elderly becomes heavier, and they are unable to distinguish between voices, nor to take pleasure in songs. Indeed, this is what Berzellai says to David, not wanting to cross the Jordan. But even those from on high will fear and be afraid on the way. That is, they will not be able to enter the difficult path, and with weary knees and trembling step, even on a level road, they will fear stumbling. And the almond tree shall blossom, and the locust shall fatten, and the caper plant shall be dispersed: for man shall go to his everlasting home, and they shall go around the streets weeping. By metaphor, even now, the sermon is about the limbs of man. When old age comes, the hair turns gray, the feet swell, desire cools, and man is dissolved by death. Then he shall return to his own land and to the house of his everlasting tomb: with proper funeral rites, let a crowd of mourners precede the funeral procession. However, the flower of the almond, which we have placed for the dogs, is interpreted by some as a sacred thorn, because as the flesh of the nuts diminishes, the thorn grows and blossoms. Furthermore, when it says 'the locust will fatten up', it should be understood that in our codices it is written 'locust', which is an ambiguous word for them. It can be translated as either 'anklebone' or 'locust'. So how, in the beginning of Jeremiah, does the word 'Soced' mean both 'nut' and 'vigils' when the accent is changed? And it is said to him: Jeremiah, what do you see? And He answered: A nutcracker. And the Lord said to him: You have seen well: for I will watch over my word to perform it (Jerem. I, 11), or that one: and it has the etymology of a nut, that God will watch and repay the people what they deserve (Als. it is owed), and this is the occasion of the word. So now the ambiguity of the word through its etymology indicates swollen legs of the old and burdened with gout humors. Not that this happens to all old men, but that it often occurs, συνεκδοχικῶς on one side, may be called the whole. In that place where we have it, it is called capparis in Hebrew (צפאריס): which itself is also ambiguous, and is interpreted as love, desire, or longing, or capparis. And as we have said above, it signifies that the libido of old men diminishes and the organs of intercourse are weakened. This is because these words, when pronounced in their own terms, and almond, and locust, and capparis, have different meanings, and they are derived figuratively to refer to the senses that are fitting for an old man. It should also be known that where the Seventy Interpreters now placed the almond, the word itself is Soced, which is in the beginning of Jeremiah; but there it is turned into a hazelnut, here into an almond. Symmachus, sensing something different in this place, interpreted it much differently. For he says: 'Upon these things also they shall see from on high, and there shall be terror in the way, and the vigilant shall fall asleep, and the spirit of strength shall be dissolved. For a man shall go

into the house of his eternity, and they shall go around in the street mourning.' Following the interpretation of Laodicea, it is neither pleasing to the Jews nor to the Christians: as it is far from the Hebrews, and it rejects following the Septuagint translators.

Before the silver cord is snapped, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the breath returns to God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. He concludes the sentence begun with the grand parenthesis (which he had inserted after the words: And remember your Creator in the days of your youth: before the days of trouble come and the years draw near when you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them'), with a similar ending, saying: Before the silver cord is snapped, or this or that happens. But the silver cord, this white life, and the breath that is given to us from heaven, it shows. The returning of the golden thread also signifies the soul that returns to where it came from. Furthermore, the two remaining things that follow, the breaking of the water jar above the fountain, and the breaking of the wheel above the lake, are mysteries of death by metaphor. For just as a water jar that is broken ceases to draw water, and a wheel by which water is lifted from a lake and wells, if it is broken: or as the Seventy Interpreters ((Others)) wished, if it is rolled up in its cord, the use of water is interrupted: so also when the silver cord is interrupted, and the stream of the soul returns to the source, the human being will perish. And as it follows more clearly: Dust will return to its own earth from which it was taken: and the spirit will return to the Lord who gave it. From this it is clear how ridiculous it is to think that souls are produced together with bodies and not by God, but by the parents of the bodies. For when the flesh returns to the earth and the spirit returns to God, who gave it, it is evident that God is the parent of souls, not humans. After describing the mortality of human beings, beautifully repeating the opening of his book, he says: Vanity of vanities, says Ecclesiastes, all is vanity. For when all the labor of mortals, which has been discussed throughout the entire volume, comes to this point, that they return as dust to their own earth, and their soul returns to the place from which it was taken, it is of great vanity to toil in this world and acquire nothing profitable. And furthermore, because the wise Ecclesiastes became: he taught knowledge to the people, and caused them to hear: and searching, he composed proverbs. Ecclesiastes sought much, in order to find the words of the will, and to correctly write the words of truth. The wisdom which Solomon surpassed all the human race with, now also in the end of his small work he professes that he was not content with the institution of the old Law: but he plunged himself into deep questions, and composed proverbs and parables to teach the people, promising one thing in the core and another on the surface. Indeed, we learn in the Gospels (Matthew 13 and 15) that proverbs do not always mean what is written. The Lord spoke to the people in parables and proverbs, but he explained them privately to the Apostles. Therefore, it is evident that the Book of Proverbs contains not straightforward instructions as some may think, but rather hidden teachings that need to be diligently sought out, like gold in the earth, a kernel in a nut, or a hidden fruit in the prickly coverings of chestnuts. In them, the divine meaning must be searched deeply. Moreover, he added that he wanted to understand the causes and nature of things, as well as the arrangement and wisdom of God: why each thing was made, or how it was made. He desired to know this so that, after the dissolution of body and soul, he hoped to see the return to heaven, saying: I will see the heavens, the work of your fingers (Psalm 8:4). This is what Solomon endeavored to find in the present, to comprehend with the human mind, enclosed in the barrier of the body, the truth known only to God. The words of the wise, like goads, and as if nails driven

deep, are given by one shepherd to those who gather. Lest it seem that after the law of God a presumptuous teacher should suddenly burst forth and claim for himself the doctrine which Moses, not so much of his own accord as moved by the wrath of God, first undertook, and then was inspired by Him: he declares that his words are the words of the wise, which correct transgressors in the likeness of goads, and stir up the sluggish steps of mortals with the sharp sting. And so they are firm, as if nails driven deep into a solid surface, not to be presented by the authority of one, but by the counsel and consent of all the masters. And in order that human wisdom might not be despised, He said that it was bestowed by one Shepherd; that is, although many teach, yet the author of teaching is the Lord alone. This passage is directed against those who consider one God of the Old Testament and another of the Gospel, because one Shepherd has instructed the council of the wise. But both Prophets and Apostles are wise. It should also be noted that the words of the wise are said to sting, not to fondle, nor to touch lasciviously with a gentle hand, but to inflict pain and wounds upon those who are straying and, as we said above, are slow in repentance. Therefore, if someone's speech does not sting, but gives pleasure to the listeners, that is not the speech of a wise person. The words of the wise are like goads. Since they provoke the sinner to conversion, they are both strong and given by the counsel of the saints, and granted by one shepherd, and founded on a solid root. With this goad, not yet Paul, but still Saul, I believe he heard on the way the rebuke of error: 'It is hard for you to kick against the goad' (Acts 9:5).

And, my son, beware of being absorbed in these things. Making many books is not an end in itself, and much study is a weariness of the flesh. Besides these words which have been given by one shepherd and approved by the counsel and consensus of the wise, do nothing, claim nothing for yourself. Follow in the footsteps of the ancients and do not deviate from their authority. Otherwise, as you search through many things, an infinite number of books will confront you, pulling you into error and making you labor in vain. It certainly teaches that we should strive for brevity and focus more on the meaning rather than the words, against the philosophers and the learned men of this age, who try to assert the falsity of their doctrines through the vanity and multiplication of words. On the contrary, divine Scripture is contained within a concise circle, and the more it expands in meaning, the more it contracts in speech. For God has made the perfect and concise word on earth, and His word is near in our mouth and in our heart (Romans 10:8; Deuteronomy 30:14). Otherwise: Frequent reading and daily meditation tend to be more work for the soul than for the body. For just as whatever is done by hand and body is completed by the labor of the hand and body, so what pertains to reading is more the labor of the mind. From which it seems to me that things pertaining to the multitude of books should be understood differently than most people assume. It is customary with the Scriptures, even though there are many books, if they do not disagree among themselves and are written on the same subject, to call them one volume. Indeed, both the Gospel and the Law of the Lord, which converts souls (Psalm 18:8), are singularly called so, even though there are many Gospels and many commandments of the law. Thus, the volume sealed in the Book of Isaiah is all divine Scripture (Isaiah 29), and in one chapter of the books, Ezekiel and John partake (Ezekiel 8; Revelation 10). The Savior, also prophesied by the voices of all the saints who came before, says: In the book it is written about me (Psalm 39:9). Therefore, according to this understanding, I believe the command now is to not let more books be written. For whatever you say, if it is referred to Him who was in the beginning with God, and God the Word (Joan. I, 2), it is one volume: and countless books are called one Law, one Gospel. But if you argue about different and conflicting things, and with excessive curiosity you bring your mind here

and there, even in one book, there are many books. Where it is said: From much talking you will not escape sin (Prov. X, 19). Therefore, in such books there is no end. For every good thing, and truth, has a certain end; but malice and falsehood are without end. And the more they are sought, the greater their series becomes. Concerning this matter, it is the study and meditation that is the labor of the flesh. Of the flesh, I say, not of the spirit. For indeed, the spirit also has its labor, according to what the Apostle says: But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace in me hath not been void. But I have labored more abundantly than all they: yet not I, but the grace of God with me (I Cor. XV, 10). And the Savior: I have toiled, crying out (Psalm 68:4). The end of the discourse of the word is very easy to hear: Fear God and keep His commandments. This is the duty of every man, because God will bring every deed into judgment, whether it is good or evil. The Hebrews say that among the other writings of Solomon, which have become old and have not remained in memory, this book seemed to be worthy of being forgotten, because it asserts the vanity of God's creatures and considers everything to be nothing, and it prefers passing food, drink, and worldly pleasures to everything. From this one chapter, it earned authority to be included in the number of divine volumes, as he condensed his entire argument and catalog into this recapitulation, and declared that the end of his discourse is very easy to hear and does not contain anything difficult in itself, namely that we should fear God and keep His commandments. For indeed, man was created ad hoc so that, understanding his creator, he might worship him with fear, honor, and the work of his commandments. For when the time of judgment comes, whatever has been done by us will stand before the judge and await a long-awaited sentence, and each one will receive according to his own work, whether he has done something evil or good. But for what we have set forth: Symmachus and the Seventy translated it as 'concerning every hidden thing, whether it be good or evil,' or certainly 'concerning every despised thing,' or at least 'concerning every unknown thing,' which we will also give an account of on the day of judgment, even of idle words and actions not done out of volition but out of ignorance. On the other hand: Because the fear of slaves is, and perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18), and in divine Scripture both for beginners and for the perfect, fear is called twofold: I think now that fear is said of the one who is perfected in virtues, according to this: Those who fear him lack nothing (Psalm 34:10). Or certainly, because he is still a man and has not yet received the name of God, he has this reason for his existence, that being placed in a body, he may fear God. Because every deed, that is, all men, God will bring to judgment over all things, which were arranged and spoken by him differently, whether in this way or that. Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil (Isaiah 5:20).

Commentary on Ecclesiastes

Jerome Commentary on Ecclesiastes

Translated by Robin McGregor.

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PREFACE

I remember just five years ago when I was still at Rome¹

and studying virtuous Blesilla's book of Ecclesiastes that I taught her to think lightly of her generation and to esteem futile everything that she saw in the world. I remember too being asked by

her to examine individually all the difficult passages in a short treatise so that she might be able to understand what she was reading without me always being present. Accordingly, since she

was taken from us by her sudden death while I was still doing the preparation for my work, and since we, it seems, dear Paula and Eustochium, did not deserve to have such a companion in our lives, I then ceased from my work, silenced by the terrible grief of such a misfortune.

Now though, situated in Bethlehem, clearly a more holy city, I can fulfil that promise to the memory of Blesilla and to you, and remind you briefly that I have used no authority in this work, but have rather translated directly from the Hebrew itself and have adapted it to the traditional language of the Septuagint in those passages which do not differ greatly from the Hebrew. Occasionally I have taken

account of the Greek versions, those of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion so that I do not deter the reader's enthusiasm with too much novelty. I have also not pursued those streams of

conjecture, which lack a factual basis, for I do not believe this to be sensible.

CHAPTER 1

1:1. The words of Ecclesiastes, son of David, King in Jerusalem. The

Scriptures state very clearly that Solomon was known by three names: 'Peace-making', that is 'Solomon'; 'Yedidia',

that is 'beloved of Yahweh'; and the name used here 'Qoheleth', that is

Ecclesiastes. He is called Ecclesiastes

in Greek because he gathered together a crowd of people, a congregation, which we can call a demagogue because he spoke to

the people and his sermon was not addressed specifically to one man but more

usually to all men. Moreover he is

called 'peace-making' and 'beloved of Yahweh' because there was peace during

his reign and the Lord loved him. For

also Psalms 44, and 71, are known by titles connected with love and

peace-making. Although these psalms

pertain to Christ and the Church they exhibit Solomon's joy and strength, and

according to tradition were composed concerning Solomon.

He also produced an equal number of titles to the three volumes: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of

Songs. He teaches for children in Proverbs and gives instruction in the

form of maxims almost with a sense of duty, and his sermons here are repeated

continually to his son. In Ecclesiastes he teaches a man of mature

age that he should not think anything in the world to be perpetual, but that

all things that we perceive are in fact vain and fleeting. In Song

of Songs he embraces an elderly man in the covenant, who has already been

prepared in spurning his times. For

unless we first abandon our moral failings and renounce the pomposity of our

world, and prepare ourselves so we are ready for the arrival of Christ, we will

not be able to say: "let him kiss

me from the kiss of his mouth"². Philosophers educate their followers in a

manner similar to this type of instruction: first of all they teach ethics,

then explain physics, and then anyone whom they see to excel in these first two they then go on to teach theology.

Moreover even this should be examined more closely because Solomon is named differently in the three books. In

Proverbs for example he is thus

named: The Proverbs of Solomon, the son

of David, King of Israel.³ But in Ecclesiastes: The words of Ecclesiastes, son of David, King of Jerusalem. 'Israel'

in fact is unnecessary here because it is not found in the Greek or Latin

manuscripts. But in Song of Songs he is neither named 'son of David', not 'King of Israel' or 'King of Jerusalem', but only as The

Song of Songs of Solomon. This is

just as the Proverbs and the crude arrangement pertain to the twelve tribes and

to the whole of Israel. And although the

contempt of the world only comes to city-dwellers, these are the inhabitants of Jerusalem, therefore Solomon intends Song

of Songs particularly for those who desire spiritual enlightenment. To those readers just embarking on their

education paternal honour and the authority of the king are claimed in their

own merit, but to those who have completed their learning, and in the case

where the disciple has been enlightened not by fear, but by love, his own name suffices. Then, he is equal to his

teacher and he is unaware that he is a king.

This is the case here. But in a

more spiritual understanding Solomon was peace making and beloved of the Lord

God, and Ecclesiastes can be seen as our Christ too, who destroying the inner wall and expelling evil from his flesh, makes each of them one, saying -

"I give you my peace, I relinquish my peace to you"⁴,

about which the Lord says to his disciples "This is my chosen son whom I

love: listen to him" ⁵,

and that is he who is father of the Church.

Speaking by no means to the Synagogue of the Jews but to the crowd of people the King of Jerusalem (that which was built out of the living rocks, not that about which he says "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill prophets" 6,

and "Look, let your empty house be left for us" 7),

but that by which it is forbidden to swear because it is the city of a great king. This is the son of David, to whom

the blind cried out in the Gospel: "pity us, son of David"; and the

whole crowd sang out in unison: "Hosanna to the son of David". Then there is the fact that the word of God

does not come to him as is the case with Jeremiah and the other prophets, but

on account of his being rich, being a king, holding power, his wisdom and his

other virtues, he speaks to the men of the church himself, and he speaks words

to the apostles about which Psalm 18.5 tells us: "their sound went out to

the whole world and their words went to the ends of the earth". Some scholars think wrongly, therefore, that

we are tempted into desire and luxury by this book, when it teaches quite to

the contrary: everything we perceive in the world is vain; nor is it fitting

for us to seek those things eagerly which perish while we possess them.

1:2. Vanity of vanities said Ecclesiastes, Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. If all things that God made are truly good

then how can all things be considered vanity, and not only vanity, but even

vanity of vanities? Just as Song of

Songs means a song that stands out from amongst all songs, so we see that in

"vanity of vanities" the degree of vanity is shown. It is also written similarly in Psalm 38.6:

"Nevertheless every living man is vanity." If living man is vanity then a dead man must

be vanity of vanities. We read in Exodus

that Moses' face is glorified so much that the children of Israel are not able

to see him⁸. Paul the apostle said that his glory was not

really glory when compared to the glory of righteousness: "For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth." 9 We are therefore able to say that even we in this respect, heaven, earth, the seas and all things that are contained within its compass can be said to be good in themselves, but compared to God they are nothing. And if I look at the candle in a lamp and am content with its light, then afterwards when the sun has risen I cannot discern anymore what was once bright; I will also see the light of the stars by the light of the setting sun, so in looking at the world and the multitudinous varieties of nature I am amazed at the greatness of the world, but I also remember that all things will pass away and the world will grow old, and that only God is that which has always been. On account of this realisation I am compelled to say, not once but twice: Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Instead of "vanity of vanities" the Hebrew text reads 'abal abalim' which all manuscripts excepting that of the Septuagint translate similarly in Greek as *atmos atmidon* or *atmon* which we are able to translate as 'a breath' and 'a light wind which is quickly dispersed'. In this way it is shown to be vain and in no way universal by this phrase. For those things which seem to be temporal, in fact are; but those which do not are eternal. Or since that which will give rise to vanity has been exposed, he groans and is anxious and awaits the revelation of the sons of God, and "now we know in part, and we prophesy in part" 10. All things are and will be vain, until we find that which is complete and perfect.

1:3. What

profit is there for a man in exchange for all his toil, which he toils under the sun? After the general opinion that all things are vain Solomon begins to explain with regard to mankind: because men exert themselves in vain in the toil of the world, amassing wealth, teaching

children, working their way towards glory, constructing buildings, and then are taken away in the midst of their work by sudden death, they hear the words:

"Thou fool, this night your soul shall be required of you, then whose will be those things that you have amassed?" 11 Just as they make nothing for themselves in exchange for all this toil, so they return naked to the earth from whence they were taken.

1:4. A

generation goes, a generation comes, but the earth remains forever.

While some men die, others are born, and those you had seen, are not

seen anymore, and you then see those who have not been before. What is more vain than this vanity, than that

the earth remains, which was made on account of mankind? And that man himself, the master of the earth,

should be suddenly returned to the dust?

Another meaning of this is: the first generation of Jews dies and a

generation formed from all peoples takes its place; but the earth however will

remain for so long as the Synagogue's influence slips away, and the Church

becomes more powerful. For when it was

predicted that the Gospel would be known all around the world, then, it was

said, would be the end. When the end is

approaching, it is true, the sky and the earth will pass away. Solomon very precisely does not say the earth

remains through the ages¹²

but through that age¹³. More precisely we praise the Lord not in one

age, but throughout the ages.

1:5. The sun

rises and the sun sets, then it rushes to its place, where it rises again. The

sun itself, which is given as light for mankind, shows the orbit of the world

by its rising and it setting every day.

After the sun has soaked its burning orb in the ocean, it returns by

routes unknown to me to that place whence it had come; and when the period of night is over, it again bursts out quickly from its bed. In place of "rushes to its place" though, because we are following the Vulgate version, the Hebrew reads "soeph" which Aquila interpreted as eispnei in Greek, that is pants¹⁴;

Symmachus and Theodotion write 'returns'

because the sun clearly turns around to its original place and it aspires to return there, from whence it had come earlier.

But all of this is explained so that he can teach that with the passage of time and the rising and the setting of the stars man's age slips away and perishes, yet he does not know this for certain. Another meaning of this is: the sun of righteousness, in whose wings lies reason, rises from those who fear and sets midday in the false prophets. But when it has risen it takes us to its place.

Where is that? Evidently it means

to the Lord himself, for it happens that he raises us from the earth to heaven, saying, "when the son of man is lifted up, he will lift up all things to him".¹⁵ Nor is it surprising that the son lifts up men to himself, when even the Lord himself lifts up to his son: "for no one", he says "comes to me except the Father, who sent me, draw him".¹⁶ That sun therefore, which we have said sets

for some and rises for other, and once set for Jacob the patriarch as he was leaving the Holy Land, rose again for him when he entered the promised land from Syria. When Lot too left Sodom and came to the city, which he was commanded to hasten to, he climbed a mountain and the sun came out above Segor¹⁷.

1:6. It goes

to the South and rotates to the North; turning, revolving, the wind goes and returns upon its circuits. From this we are able to believe that the sun approaches the meridian quarter in the time of winter, and in the

summer is near to the Great Bear, and does not commence its movements in the equinox of autumn, but when the west wind is blowing in the time of spring, when all things give birth. But he actually says "turning, revolving, the wind goes and returns upon its circuits" as if he calls the sun itself a breath, like an animal that breathes and lives, completing its annual orbit in its course, just like the poet Vergil says: "Meanwhile the sun flies around the great year"¹⁸ and elsewhere¹⁹

"and the year flies through its own footsteps" or that bright sphere of the moon and Titan's star: "The breath nourishes within: and the intelligence stirs the whole mass infused through the limbs, and mingles itself with the mighty body"²⁰. He is not speaking about the annual course of the sun, but its daily path. For it

proceeds sidelong and towards the North, and thus turns to the East. Another meaning of this verse is: when the

sun moves to the South it is closer to the Earth; when it moves to the North it is raised to higher orbits. Perhaps

therefore it moves to those parts, which are compressed together by the cold of atmospheric disturbances, and of winter.

Severe heat indeed blazes out from the North above the Earth, and that sun is closer to righteousness than those men who in fact live in the Northern region, and who are deprived of summer's heat.

The sun then moves far away and turns by its circuits to the place whence it set out. For when it has

subdued all things to it and illuminated all things with its rays, let there be the first restoration and "God may be all in all".²¹ Symmachus interpreted this phrase saying, 'it goes to the meridian, and turns around to the North; turning the wind goes, and the wind returns by those routes by which it had come around'.

1:7. All torrents flow into the sea but the sea is not filled. To the place from which the torrents come,

there they return to go. Some men believe that the fresh waters that flow into the sea are either dried up by the burning sun above, or are feed for the salt-thirsty sea. Here our Ecclesiastes, the creator of the very waters, says that they return to the heads of the springs by means of hidden passages, and always boil out from their deep channels into their springs. The Hebrews believed that the rivers or sea had more significance in the metaphor of man, because they return to the earth, whence they originated. They are also called torrents not rivers because they flow that much more forcefully, yet the earth however is not filled with a great number of dead men.

More precisely if we go down to the deeper parts, the turbid waters return to the sea where they used to remain.

And unless I am mistaken, apart from the additions to the text, nowhere is the word 'torrent' found in a good context.

For "you will drink those with the torrent of your desire" 22, although "of desire" is written in an addition. On the contrary the Saviour was taken to the brook Cedron²³,

and Elisha at the time of persecution hid away in the brook of Chorat, which even dried up. But the sea is not filled up completely, in the same manner as the bloodthirsty daughters in Proverbs²⁴.

1:8. All

things are full of toil, man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing.

It is difficult

to know not just about physics but also about ethics. And discourse is not able to explain the natural causes of things, nor to see those things that are hidden, (as the scope of this work demands); nor, once you have begun to learn is it possible to arrive at the greatest understanding by listening alone. For if we now look in the mirror in mystery and in part know and in part prophesy, consequently discourse will not be able

to explain what it does not know; nor is the eye able to see where it is blind; nor are the ears filled by what they do not hear. At the same time this must be noted, that all words are wearying and are learnt with great difficulty, contrary to those who idly make prayers that an acquaintance with the Scriptures will come to them.

1:9. The

thing that has been, it is that which will be.

And that which is done is that which shall be done. And there is no new thing under the sun. It seems to me that he now speaks generally about those

things that he enumerated above: about generation after generation, the globe of the earth, the rising and setting of the sun, the course of rivers, the vastness of the ocean and all things which we learn either through thought or through sight or hearing, because there is nothing in nature that has not been before. For from the beginning of the world men have been born and have died, and the earth stood level above the waters and the sun lay in its origin.

And lest I should go on to list more things, it is left to God as creator to fly with the birds, to swim with the fish, and walk with the creatures of the earth and slide with snakes.

And the comic²⁵

said something similar to this: "Nothing has been said, which has not been said before", about which my teacher Donatus, when he was lecturing about this verse, said: "Let them die, who have said our words before us." ²⁶

Then if it is possible to say nothing new in discourse, how great the creation of the world must have been, which has been complete right from the start, that God was able to rest from his work on the seventh day! Read also in another book: "If everything that is done under the sun has already been done in past centuries, and man was already made when the sun was made: then man existed before he came under the sun."²⁷ But he is excluded, because by this reasoning even packhorses, gnats, and each insect and large animal is said to have been

made before the sky. Unless however he should reply that talking comes from the consequences of speaking not about other animals but about the man Ecclesiastes, for he says "there is nothing new under the sun about which one can say 'look this is new!' But he does not speak of animals but of man alone, because if he means animals to be new, then he refutes his own opinion that nothing is new under the sun.

1:10. Is

there anything whereof it may be said, see this is new? It has already been for ages, which were before us. Symmachus translated this more clearly: "Do you think there is a man who is able to say: look this is new, it has already been done before because it was before us." But he agrees with his predecessors that there is nothing new in the world, and that there is none that is able to live and say: 'look this is new', since everything that he thought he had shown to be new, already existed in former times.

But we ought not to think that the signs, prodigies and the many deeds which are done for the first time by God's judgement in the world today, have already been done before in former ages, or that it was Epicurus who found this, asserting that these same things were done in innumerable periods and in these places and by these same men.

Besides, both Judas betrayed repeatedly and Christ often suffered for us; and other things which have been done and will be done, are continually repeated in these times. But it could be said too, that those things, which will be done have already been done, decided out of foreknowledge and the predestination of God.

For those who have been chosen in Christ before the constitution of the world existed already in previous times.

1:11. There is

no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after. In the same way as the past is concealed for us in forgetfulness, thus it is with those things which are either done now, or will be done. And because of this those men who have yet to be born, will not be able to know these things, and will live life in silence, and will be obscured as if they never existed, and that verse will be fulfilled, which says, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity", for even the Seraphim, the first and last, cover up their feet on account of the appearance of God. The Septuagint is similar here: "There is no memory of former things, and even of things which are to come, there will be no memory for them with those who will come after." That is observed from the

Gospel because those who were first in time are first before all others.²⁸ And because God who is benevolent and

forgiving remembers all things no matter how insignificant, he will not give as much glory to those who deserve to be first on account of their faults, as he will give to those who humbly wanted to be first. And so it says consequently: "there is no memory of the wise more than of the fool for ever." ²⁹

1:12. I,

Ecclesiastes, was King over Israel in Jerusalem. Until now the preface has spoken only generally about

all arguments; but here he returns to the subject of himself, and reveals who

he was, and how he knew and experienced all things. The Hebrews say that Solomon, who was doing

repentance, wrote this book, and who, having put his trust in wisdom and riches, failed God because of his wives.

1:13. I

applied my mind to seek and probe by wisdom all that happens beneath the sky -

it is a sorry task that God has given to the sons of man with which to be

concerned. Aquila, the Septuagint, and Theodotion have

all translated the Hebrew word *anania* similarly as *peristasmon*, which the interpreter expressed as *occupied* in Latin³⁰, because the mind of man is torn asunder when occupied by several anxieties. But Symmachus uses the Greek word *ascholia*, which means *business*³¹. Since therefore in this book it is more often called either *occupationem*, or *distentionem*, or whatever else we have called it, they all refer to the higher senses. Ecclesiastes therefore set his mind first of all to the acquisition of wisdom, and pursuing this beyond what is allowed, wanted to know the causes and reasoning why children are easily snatched by the Devil; why the righteous and the wicked are equally punished in shipwrecks; and whether these events happen as a result of fate, or by the decree of God. And if by fate, where is providence? If by decree, where is God's justice? With such desire to know these things, he said, I understand the great care and torturing anxiety experienced in many things, which was given to man by God, in order that he might desire to know that which he is not allowed to know. But the cause is inborn first, and God then gives vexation. For it is written similarly in the epistles to the Romans: "On account of what did God give them up to the suffering of dishonour?"

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then again he says: "On account of what did He give them up to uncleanness, so that they did what was not allowed".³³ And then: "On account of which God gave them up to desire for their uncleanness".³⁴ And to the Thessalonians: "And for this cause God will send them strong delusion." ³⁵ But the causes why they succumb were revealed earlier: either by the suffering of dishonour, or by vile affections, or by the longing in their heart, or whatever it is they do to receive strong delusion. In this way and because of their effectiveness God gave this wicked 'occupation' to man, with which to be

concerned, because he did these things first voluntarily and entirely of his own will.

1:14. I have

seen all the deeds done underneath the sun, and behold all is futile and a vexation of the spirit. We are compelled here by necessity to examine the Hebrew words more closely than we wish.

It is also not possible to know the real meaning of the text, unless we learn it through studying the original Hebrew words. Aquila and Theodotion translate routh as the Greek nomen, Symmachus

has boskesin. The Septuagint does not

express the Hebrew meaning, but the Syriac, as shown in the Greek word proairesin. Therefore either nome, or boskesis, is the

noun coming from vexation. Proairesis

sounds more like 'will' than 'vexation'.

Every single man however is said to do what he wishes, and what seems right to him; and men are borne with different dispositions (i.e.

good and wicked) of their own free will.

And all things under the sun are vain, when we displease each other by

doing what is the greatest good and greatest evil. A Hebrew, who was instructing me as I read

the Holy Scriptures, said to me that above the word routh was written "it

means rather suffering and wickedness in this place than vexation and will",

and the meaning does not come from the evil which is contrary to good, but from

that which is written in the Gospel: "Sufficient

to the day is its wickedness." 36 The Greeks call this more significantly kakouchian, so the verse essentially

means: "I have considered all things, which are done in the world, and I

discovered nothing except vanity and wickedness, that is distress of the soul,

by which the spirit is afflicted in contrary thoughts.

1:15. A

twisted thing cannot be made straight, and what is not there cannot be

numbered. Whoever is wicked cannot be corrected,
unless he was corrected beforehand.

Anything that is already correct will receive embellishment; and that
which is deviated will receive correction.

A man is not called wrong unless he has been diverted from the correct
path. This is contrary to the heretics,

who entertained certain characteristics, which do not seem to be sane. And since what is missing
is lacking, it

cannot be numbered. Besides, only the
firstborn of Israel were counted. The

women, slaves, children and the people from Egypt, although of a great number,
were largely overlooked, being referred to as a reduction from the army,
without a number. The meaning of this

can also be: such wickedness is done in the sphere of the world that the world
is scarcely able to return to its completely good condition; nor is it able to

regain easily its order and complete state, in which it was first created. Another meaning of this is:
when all men have

been restored to goodness through repentance, only the devil will remain in his
wickedness. For all things which are

done under the sun are done by his will and in the spirit of malevolence, while
sins are piled on sins at his instigation.

Then it can also mean: so great is the number of deviants and of those
who have been taken away from God's flock by the devil that it is impossible to
count them.

1:16. I said

to myself: here I have acquired great wisdom, more than any of my predecessors
over Jerusalem, and my mind has had much experience with wisdom and
knowledge. Solomon was not greater than Abraham and

Moses, and other saints, but than those who were before him in Jerusalem. We read in the book of
Kings that Solomon was

very wise, and he claimed this wisdom to have been given by God before all

others.³⁷ It was then the eye of his heart that saw

great wisdom and knowledge in the world, since he does not say I spoke much wisdom and knowledge but my heart saw much wisdom and knowledge. For indeed we are not able to speak out all

those things which we feel.

1:17. I

applied my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this, too, is a vexation of

the spirit. Contrary abstract ideas are understood by

looking at contrary facts; and " wisdom is the first to be lacking in

foolishness" ³⁸,

but it is not possible to be lacking in foolishness, unless one has understood

it. Many dangerous things are also

created from foolishness, so that while we try to avoid them, we are actually

instructed in wisdom. Solomon wanted to

know wisdom and knowledge with equal enthusiasm, and equally madness and folly,

so that whilst seeking some things and shunning others, his true wisdom might

be proved. But in this too, as in other

things, he said he found great difficulties and was not able to grasp the exact

truth of matters. What I have said above

about vexation of the spirit or suffering of the soul, as it is more

often written in this book, should be sufficient to understand the rest of this

verse.

1:18. For

with much wisdom comes much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases

pain. The more a man seeks wisdom, the more he finds himself

in vice and far from those virtues, which he is seeking. For those who are powerful suffer torments

more gravely³⁹,

and more is demanded of the man, to whom more is entrusted. Because of this he increases his pain who

increases his knowledge, and is saddened by grief according to God, and suffers

beyond his offences. The apostle said

concerning this: "and who is there, who gladdens me, unless he is saddened

by me?" 40 Unless perchance, and this must be

understood, that a wise man would suffer so much for his wisdom, in secret and

deep in his flank, nor would he show himself to prosper in intelligence, as

light is to seeing; but rather through certain torments and intolerable toil,

and through perpetual meditation and enthusiasm.

CHAPTER 2

2:1. I said to myself: Come, I will experiment with joy and enjoy pleasure. That, too, turned out to be futile. After I detected that pain and labour were in the

essence of wisdom and the accumulation of knowledge, and nothing else except

vain and endless struggle, I felt joyful that I would overflow with excess,

accrue riches, amass great wealth, and take temporary pleasures before I

die. But even in this I saw my vanity,

for past pleasures do not help the present, and do not fill up what is

empty. It is not just the pleasures of

the flesh however, but also spiritual joys that are a temptation for one who

possesses them. Hence I desired greatly,

because I had been grabbed by this incentive and the angel of Satan too, who

had knocked me down with such force that I could not recover. Solomon says about this "Don't give me

riches and poverty" 41,

and immediately writes underneath "lest I be full and a liar"42,

and lest I should ask, "who is looking at me?"43,

for the devil strikes down in abundance righteous men. In the apostles it is also written,

"lest enraptured by his pride, he should fall into the judgement of the

devil "44,

that is 'into such a judgement, as the Devil himself falls ". But having said this, spiritual joy, just as the other kinds, is claimed to be vanity, because we see it through a mirror and in mystery. But when it has been seen for what it is, then it is called vanity for no reason, but rather truth.

2:2. I said

of laughter, It is madness! And of joy, What does it accomplish? Wherever we read madness the Hebrew text has molal, which Aquila took to be planesin, that is 'delusion'⁴⁵,

Symmachus has thorubon, 'commotions'⁴⁶. But the Septuagint and Theodotion as in many places, so too in this, also agree and translate it as periphoran, which we, expressing word for word, can call

'revolution'.⁴⁷ Those men therefore, who are carried around on the 'breeze' of all doctrines, are unstable and fluctuate between interpretations. Thus those who guffaw with that laugh, which the Lord says must be muted in holy weeping, are seized by the delusion of time and its whirlwind, not understanding the disaster that their sins will cause, nor bewailing their former faults, but thinking that brief joys are going to be perpetual.

Then they exult in these, which are more worthy of lamentation than joy. Heretics also believe this, who agree with

false doctrines and promise themselves happiness and prosperity.

2:3. I

thought to stimulate my body with wine while my heart is involved with wisdom, and to grasp folly, until I can discern which is best for mankind to do under the heavens during the brief span of their lives. I wanted to stimulate my life with enjoyment, and to lull my body, as if freed from all worries by wine, in the same way with desire; but my deep consideration and inborn reasoning, which God the creator mingled even into my sins, drew me away

from the idea and led me back to seek wisdom and to spurn foolishness, so that I was able to see what was good, that men can do in the span of their lives. But he has compared desire eloquently with intoxication. Since he intoxicates and destroys the vitality of his spirit, which he was able to change into wisdom and obtains spiritual happiness, (as it is written in certain manuscripts), he is able to discern which things ought to be sought out in this life, and which avoided.

2:4. I acted

in grand style: I built myself houses, I planted vineyards; and others such until the point where he says: The

wise man has his eyes in his head, whereas the fool walks in darkness. Before I discuss each of these in

turn it seems useful to me to encompass all of them in a short paragraph, and

to reduce their meanings to just one explanation, so that it is easier to

understand what is being said. I had all

things that have been considered good through the ages. I built myself a palace on high, and covered

the hills and mountains with vines. And

lest anything be lacking from my excess I planted gardens and orchards of

different kinds of trees, which were watered from above by water stored in

pools, so that the growth was fed for longer periods with continual

moisture. I also had an uncountable

number of slaves, buyers and natives, and many flocks of animals, cows of

course, and sheep- no king before me in Jerusalem had such a number. I also amassed a huge number of treasure

houses of gold and of silver, which I obtained as gifts from various kings and

as tributes from conquered races. And

because of this it happened that I was prompted by having too much wealth to

even more pleasures, and they called to me in choirs of music, flutes, lyres

and in songs, and each sex served in entertainment. Those temptations grew in such quantity as I was lacking in wisdom. For desire had dragged me to each and every pleasure and I was being carried along unbridled and headlong, and I thought that that was the fruit of my labours, if I myself was consumed with lust and luxury.

Having then at last returned to my senses, and as if waking from a deep sleep, I looked at my hands and saw that my work was full of vanity, full of squalor, and full of the character of my folly.

For I found nothing to be good that was considered good in the world. Considering therefore those things which were good for wisdom and which were bad for foolishness I rushed to praise any man, who then refrained from his sins and was able to pursue true virtues. Certainly there is a great diversity between wisdom and foolishness, and virtues are as much separated from vices as day differs from night. It seems to me then that he that follows that path of wisdom always lifts his eyes to heaven and raises his face aloft, and considers those things which are above his head; but he that gives in to foolishness and vices fumbles in the darkness and flounders in his ignorance of the world. I acted in grand style: I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards. He, who is raised up equal to the face of God in the heavens, makes his work great; and he builds houses so that the Father and the Son will come, and will live in them.

And he plants vineyards to which Jesus will tie up his ass.

2:5. I made

for myself gardens and orchards and planted in them every kind of fruit tree. In my treasure house are not only gold and silver

dishes but even some that are made from wood and pottery. And even the gardens therefore are made on

account of certain weaker and sick men, for anyone who is sick will eat

vegetables. Trees are planted, not all of them fruit-bearing as we have in the Latin manuscripts, but of all fruits, that is of varied fruits and fruit-trees, because the grace of the Church is also varied. Thus one type of tree is the eye, one the hand and another the foot, and on those things which are most prized we bestow our greatest glory. And amongst those fruit-trees I esteem the wood itself to be primal in life because it is wisdom, for unless that is planted in their midst the other trees will dry up.

2:6. I

constructed pools from which to irrigate a grove of young trees. The wood in glades and in forests, which is not fruit-bearing, are not nourished by rain from the sky, not by such rain waters but by water which is collected in pools from rivers. Even low-lying Egypt is situated low in the land like a vegetable patch, and is irrigated by waters, which come from Ethiopia. But the Promised Land which is mountainous and raised up waits for timely or late-coming rain from the sky.

2:7. I

bought slaves, male and female, and natives too; I also owned more possessions, both cattle and sheep, than all of my predecessors in Jerusalem. If we want Ecclesiastes, as we have said before, to refer to the person of Christ here too, then we are able to say his slaves who have the spirit of fear in servitude and desire more spiritual things in life than they already have. But we can also call the slave-girls hearts⁴⁸ that till now have been bestowed upon the body and upon the earth. They surpass also those natives, who are certain of the Church, both slaves and slave-girls, about whom I have spoken. And the Lord has not yet bestowed upon them freedom or noble-birth. But there are others in

the estate of Ecclesiastes like oxen and sheep, who are kept on account of work and their innocence, and who work even in the church without reason and knowledge of the Scriptures. But they have not yet attained such an understanding, that they deserve to be men and return to the appearance of their creator. If you look more diligently too, you will notice that the number is not added in the case of slaves, slave-girls and natives, but in the case of cows and sheep it is said: "I owned more possessions of cattle and sheep". There is more silver in fact in the Church than men: more sheep than slaves, slave-girls and natives. But that which is said at the end- "more than all those who were before me in Jerusalem" does not pertain to the glory of Solomon, or that he was richer than his father the King, since Saul did not rule in Jerusalem, and the city was held by the Jebusites who had themselves occupied the city at that time. Ecclesiastes however was richer at a younger age than were all men, who had preceded him as kings in Jerusalem.

2:8. I amassed even silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and the provinces; I provided myself with various singers and musical instruments, and with every human luxury- chests and chests of them. Divine scripture always places silver and gold above speech and meaning. The dove in the sixty-seventh Psalm represents this too, which is interpreted as a spirit, and is more noticeable because of its silver wings, so that it hides the underlying significance of the pallor of gold. But he gathers the treasures of kings and of the provinces or kingdoms into the Church of believers. He refers to those kings about whom the psalmist writes "the kings of the earth were there and the chiefs gathered together"⁴⁹. And he refers to those kingdoms to which the Saviour orders us to raise our eyes⁵⁰,

since now they burn with fear. The treasures of kings can be called both the doctrines of philosophers and also secular knowledge⁵¹, which Ecclesiastes understands well: he takes hold of the wise men in their wisdom, and squanders the wisdom of the wise, and reproves the discretion of the prudent. The choirboys and girls are those who sing with vitality and with intelligence. A male singer sings like a man who is both strong and spiritual about heavenly matters. But a girl flits about the matter, which the Greeks call hulen. Nor is she able to raise her voice loudly into the air. Therefore wherever a woman is mentioned in the Scriptures and the weaker sex, we are to translate it according to an understanding of the context. Pharaoh does not want the male children to be allowed to live for example, but only the females in this matter.⁵² And another point is that none of the saints is said to have had a daughter⁵³, and it is only Salphaat, who died for his sins, that had all girls. Jacob is the father of one daughter amongst the twelve patriarchs, but is endangered by her.⁵⁴ The pleasures also of mankind over wisdom must be understood, which have many fruits and desires like paradise. We are admonished against them, saying, "take delight in the Lord and he will give you the request of your heart"⁵⁵, and in another place, "you will drink them as the torrent of your desire".⁵⁶ (I had wanted to shun reference to the female sex, and even now use the distinction of the male, because the Latin language does not take readily to this.) Aquila explains about the wine-pourers, male and female, in a manner very different to the fashion written here. For Solomon is not naming the sexes of man, clearly either male or female, but types of dish,

and he calls them kulikion and kulikia, which is written in Hebrew as sadda and saddoth. Then Symmachus, who

was not able to express the idea word for word, translates this in a similar way: types of table and equipment. Therefore Solomon is believed to have had either pitchers, wine goblets, or bowls arranged in chests, and which were ornate with gold and with jewels. And he drank from a kulikio in one, (that is, a bowl) and from kilikiois in other places, which are clearly smaller dishes; and the crowd of drinkers received wine at the hands of his servants.

Because we explain Ecclesiastes as being Christ, therefore wisdom, having mingled her wine (as it says in Proverbs) calls out to those who wander to come to her. 57 Now we must see the body of the Lord as a very great bowl, in which is not pure divinity as there is in heaven, but there God is blended with humanity on account of us, and wisdom is then poured out by the apostles to smaller kulikia, small goblets and bowls held by believers throughout the world.

2:9. Thus I

grew and surpassed any of my predecessors in Jerusalem; still, my wisdom stayed with me. It seems to me that Ecclesiastes, acting grandly, agrees less with the Lord, unless by chance we adapt this to him:

"He [Jesus] increased in wisdom and age and grace"⁵⁸. And, "on account of which God took him on high"⁵⁹. He also says "those who were before me in Jerusalem" and is referring to those who, before he arrived, steered the congregation of holy men and the Church.

If we explain the text in a spiritual way then Christ is richer than all men; and he only perceives the Synagogue better in bodily form than the Church. Therefore he wears a veil, because it was placed over the face of Moses and he let us see his face in

daylight.⁶⁰ More precisely "wisdom has stayed with me", means even in respect to the temptations of the body wisdom stayed with him. For he who receives a profit from his wisdom will not keep wisdom long, but he who does not receive a gain, nor grows through change, but always has plenty- he is able to say, "and wisdom has stayed with me".

2:10. Whatever

my eyes desired I did not deny them; I did not deprive myself of any joy. Indeed my heart drew joy from all my

activities, and this was my reward for all my endeavours. The eyes of the heart and the sight of the mind desire

to gaze on spiritual matters, which the sinner does not see, so forbids his heart from true happiness. Therefore

Ecclesiastes gave himself completely over to this cause and balanced eternal glory lightly in an world of discord.

This is our lot, and our continual reward if we work for our virtues.

2:11. Then I

looked at all things that I had done and the energy I had expended in doing

them. He who does all things with diligence and wariness is

able to say this. It was clear that it was all

futile and a vexation of the spirit, [and there is no profit under the sun.] As if he considers that in comparison with

other things, all things are cheap which are under the sun, and are different according to the variety of desires. And

there is no profit under the sun.

Christ placed his tabernacle in the sun.

So Christ will not be able to live, nor be plentiful in whoever has not yet obtained the lucidity of the sun, its regularity and constancy.

2:12. Then I turned my attention to

appraising wisdom with madness and folly - for what can man who comes after the

king do? This seems to discuss heavenly matters until the place where he says, "the eyes of a wise man are in his head". I had summed up all things in one explanation, intending to show the meaning briefly, and because of that, again according to anagoge⁶¹, I had only touched lightly on some things, but now I ought to explain in a manner similar to that in which I began.

For the meaning is quite different here from the interpretation found in the Septuagint. But he says he had returned to seeking wisdom after pleasures and those desires he had condemned, in which he found more foolishness and stupidity than true and recognised knowledge. For man, he said, is not able to know so clearly and truly the wisdom of his creator and of his king, as his creator knows it himself. And so he says that those things that we know, we only think we have grasped and value more than know what is true.

2:13. And I

perceived that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness. I am allowed, he says, to see through that very wisdom of mankind, which is mixed with uncertainty.

Nor is it possible, he adds, for it to flow into our minds so clearly as it does into the king and our creator. I

know however that the difference between wisdom and folly is great even as much as one can differentiate between day and night, between light and dark.

2:14. The

wise man has his eyes in his head, whereas a fool walks in darkness. But I also realised that the same fate awaits

them all. Whoever attains complete wisdom and has

deserved Christ to be his aim always raises his eyes to the heavens and will

therefore never think about terrestrial matters. When these things are considered in this way

and there is such a distinction between a wise man and a fool, one being compared with day and the other with darkness, the former raises his eyes to heaven, the latter looks on the ground.

Suddenly this thought occurred to me, why both the wise man and the fool are constrained by a common mortality - why the same wounds, the same fate, the same death and equal troubles confine each one.

2:15-16. So I

said to myself: the fate of the fool will befall me also; to what advantage

then have I become wise? But I concluded

that this, too, was vanity. For there is

no comparison between the remembrance of the wise and of the fool at all, for

as the succeeding days roll by, is all forgotten? How can the wise man's death be like the

fool's? I have stated that the wise man and the fool, the

righteous and wicked are destined to die by the same fate and all wicked things

in this world will suffer a similar fate; what profit is there for me then,

that I have sought wisdom and worked more than others? On reconsidering the matter and applying

myself to it diligently I saw that my opinion was unfounded. For the wise and foolish will not have

similar remembrance in the future when the end of the world comes; and they

will be confined for no reason by equal death because the wise man will

continue to the joys of heaven and the fool to his punishment. The Septuagint translates the meaning of the

Hebrew here more clearly, for it doesn't necessarily follow the Hebrew word

order: "and to what purpose have I become wise?" Then I said to myself copiously, (for the

fool is he, who speaks too much), 'for this is also vanity, because there is no

remembrance of the wise with the fool for ever, and so on.' Since he tried to convince us that his prior

thoughts were foolish, he bore witness that he had spoken foolishly, and that

he had erred, and it was by doing this that he realised his folly.

2:17. So I

hated life, for I was depressed by all that goes on under the sun, because everything is vain and a vexation of the spirit. The world has been given over to unkindness⁶² and the apostle moans about the tabernacle saying "I am a wretched man, who will free me from the body of this death?"⁶³, and he hates quite rightly everything that is done under the sun. That is however only in comparison with paradise and the beatitude of that life, in which we would enjoy the fruits of wisdom and the pleasures of virtues. But now as if we are in a prison camp or cell, and with a wall of tears, we eat our bread in the sweat of our brow.

2:18-19. Thus I

hated all my achievements labouring under the sun, for I must leave it to the man who succeeds me. And who knows whether he will be wise or foolish? - And he will control all my possessions which I toiled and have shown myself wise under the sun. This, too, is vanity. He seems to be reconsidering wealth and riches, because according to the Gospel, being snatched by sudden death, we do not know with which kind of heir we die - whether he will be a fool or wise who will enjoy the fruits of our toil. This was also the case with Solomon: for he did not regard his son Roboam as similar to himself. We learn from this that a son is not worthy of his father's heredity if he is foolish.

But to me studying the work it seems that he is speaking more about spiritual labour, because a wise man will work on the Scriptures for days and nights, and will compose books and will hand down his memory to his descendants, and nonetheless all this will come into the hands of fools, who repeatedly find in them the seeds of heresy, according to the perversity of their own mind, and waste other men's efforts.

For if the text now refers to Ecclesiastes' personal wealth, it was necessary to say about toil and wealth: "and he will control all my

possessions which I toiled and have shown myself wise under the sun." For what is wise in the pursuit of earthly

riches?

2:20-23. So I

turned my heart to despair of all that I had achieved by toiling under the

sun. For there is a man who laboured

with wisdom, knowledge and skill, yet he must hand on his portion to one who

has not toiled for it. This too is

vanity and a great evil. For what has a

man in return for all his toil and his stress, which he toils beneath the

sun? For all his days are painful, and

his business is a vexation; even at night his mind has no rest. This, too, is vanity! Previously he has spoken about the uncertainty of an

heir and not knowing whether he will be foolish or wise, the master of the

works of another. But even now he seeks

the same things but this time the meaning is different, because he might leave

his wealth and labours perhaps to his son, to a neighbour, or someone he knows. Nevertheless it happens time and time again

that one man enjoys in the work of another, and sweet toil is to the dead while pleasures are for the living. He thinks of himself as every single one and

he will see with how much toil he composes his books, how "often he turns

his pen, again he will write those things which are worthy of law"⁶⁴,

and for the man who does not work he will give him his own share. For what good to the wealth of the earth, as

I have said clearly, are wisdom, knowledge and virtue, in which he said he had

laboured? For although he may be

virtuous, wise and knowledgeable he spurns worldly things.

2:24-26. Is it

not good for man that he eats and drinks and shows his soul satisfaction in his

labour? And even that, I perceived, is

from the hand of God. For who should eat

and who should make haste except me? To the man who pleases Him He has given wisdom, knowledge and joy; but to the sinner He has given the urge to gather and amass - that he may hand it on to one who is pleasing to God. That, too, is vanity and a vexation of the spirit. After I examined all things and saw that nothing was more unjust than one man enjoying the work of another, then this work seemed to me to be the most righteous, and like a gift of God, seeing that a man may enjoy his own labour, drinking and eating, and for a time refraining from amassed wealth. And sometimes it is a gift of God, that such a mind as is bestowed upon righteous men, that they squander those things, which they have sought with great attention and vigilance.

In fact on the other hand, it is the character of the anger of God, which is set against the sinner, so he amasses wealth day and night and uses it for no purpose, then he bequeaths it to those men who are righteous in the sight of God. But, he says, looking at this more closely and noticing that all things come to a common end with death, I have judged it to be the most vain of all.

These readings are very close to the text though, so that I do not seem to completely miss the plain meaning of the words, and while I follow spiritual riches, disdain the poverty of history.

For what is good then, or what kind of gift of God is it, either to covet his wealth and like a man in flight gather desire prematurely, or to turn someone else's work to one's own pleasures, and then to think that this is a gift of God, if we take pleasure in others' discomfort and toil? It is good though, to take our own food and

drink, which we have found by divine will, from the flesh and blood of a Lamb. For who is either able to eat or when there

is need to spare in the absence of God?

He warned that sacred food must not be given to the dogs⁶⁵,

and he teaches how rations ought on occasion to be given to slaves⁶⁶,

and similar to another meaning, that is we ought to eat only honey that has been found, and only as much as is needed.

But God gives wisdom and knowledge and happiness to the man who is good.⁶⁷ For unless he was good and corrected his ways

beforehand by his own judgement, he will not be worthy of that wisdom, knowledge and happiness, according to that which is said in another place:

"Plant for yourselves in justice, make a vintage of the fruit of life, enlighten for yourselves the light of knowledge."⁶⁸ In fact, righteousness ought to be planted first, and the fruit of life must be reaped, only then, afterwards the light of knowledge will be able to appear.

Therefore just as God gave the good man wisdom and other gifts, in the same way he has forsaken the sinner according to his own judgement, and made him amass riches and contrive false doctrines therefrom. When a saintly man who is pleasing to God

sees these things, he understands them, since they are vain and composed of the conceit of the spirit. Nor should we

admire what he has said: "he gave vexation to the sinner" and so

on. For this must be seen in concordance

with that meaning which I have often explained: that for this reason anxiety or vexation has been given to him, since he was a sinner, and the cause of vexation was not in God, but in himself, who had sinned previously by his own volition.

CHAPTER 3

3:1. Everything

has its season, and there is a time for everything under the heavens. He has taught in the previous verses the doubtful and

changeable state of humanity; now he wants to show that all things are opposed to each other in the world, and that nothing remains forever of those things, which are under the heavens and beyond time, since the other spiritual substances are contained neither in the heavens nor in time.

3:2. A time

to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to uproot that which has been planted. No one doubts that men are born and die, and God knows that what he has planted will grow full and well; for to pull out what has been planted is to die. But since we read in Isaiah⁶⁹

"we have conceived, laboured with and given birth out of a fear for You", this must be said, because when a man is ready, that man in particular, who was born from fear, will die as soon as he has begun to love God. Since indeed "perfect love sends fear outside"⁷⁰. The Hebrews understand all that he has written about the contradiction of times, (until it says "a time for war and a time for peace") as concerning Israel. Because it is not necessary to go through each verse in turn here, commenting on how they are to be interpreted and what they mean, I will list them briefly, leaving a more detailed study to the reader's discretion. There was a time for growing and planting in Israel, a time for dying and leading it into bondage. A time for killing them in Egypt, and a time for freeing them from Egypt. A time for destroying the Temple under Nebuchadnezer, and a time for rebuilding under Darius. A time for bewailing the plundering of the city and a time for laughing and dancing under Zorobabel, Esdra, and Nehemiah. A time for dissemination from Israel and a time for gathering them together again. A time like a belt or harness put around the Jews by God, and a time for leading them into bondage in Babylon and there for them to rot across the Euphrates. Read perizoma of Jeremiah⁷¹. A time for seeking them out and rescuing, a time for losing and a time for forsaking.

A time for schism in Israel and a time for reunification. A time for hushing the prophets, now when in

Roman bondage and a time for proclaiming them aloud, when even in enemy lands they weren't lacking in God's presence or comfort. A time for loving, in which He loved those

men before our fathers, a time for hating, since they threw their hands up against Christ. A time for war, only not for those who are doing repentance for themselves and a time for peace in the future, when all the tribes return, and all Israel will be safe.

3:3. A time

for killing and a time for healing. It is both the time for killing and the time for healing, he says: "I will kill, and I will revive"⁷². He cures, provoking one to repentance. 'I killed' has the same meaning as "in the morning I murdered all the sinners of the Earth."⁷³ A time for destroying and a time for building. We are not able to build anything good unless we have first destroyed what is bad. Just as the word of Jeremiah came from God so that he first rooted out, undermined and killed; then he built and planted.⁷⁴

3:4. A time

for weeping and a time for laughter. Now is the time for weeping and in the future it will be the time for laughter: for "the blessed weep, since they themselves will laugh."⁷⁵ A time for bewailing and a time for dancing. For this reason they are seized in the Gospel, those to whom God says "I have lamented for you and you have not moaned; I sang and you did not dance."⁷⁶ We must moan at present so that afterwards we can dance that dance, which David danced before the arc of the covenant⁷⁷, and displeasing to the daughter of Saul he was more pleasing to God.

3:5. A time

for dispersing stones and a time for collecting stones. I marvel how an learned man could have said this ridiculous note about this passage: "this passage speaks about the destruction and killing of Solomon's houses, because men first destroy, then build". Some amass stones to construct buildings, others destroy those buildings which have been erected,

according to Horace's lines "he demolished, he builds, exchanges squares with wheels, he fluctuates and disagrees with the whole order of life itself." 78 Whether he is correct in saying this or not I

leave up to the reader to decide.

Nonetheless we should follow the sequence of the prior explanation-they say it is a time for scattering and collecting stones, similar to what is written in the Gospel: "God is powerful enough to raise up the sons of Abraham from these stones".79 For there was a time for dispersing the nation and a time for gathering them again into the Church. I have read in a certain book, (like the Septuagint however, which says "there was a time for throwing stones and a time for collecting them") that the harshness of the ancient law of the Gospel was tempered by grace. In fact the stern law, unkind and unforgiving, murders the sinner, he pities with the grace of the Gospel and provokes men to repentance. And there is a time for throwing stones, or collecting them, because stones are thrown in law and are collected in the Gospel. Whether this is true fact or not is credited to the author. A time for embracing and a time for being far from embrace. The meaning of this is seemingly the simplest understanding- the apostle agrees with the same words: "do not cheat each other, unless by chance it is agreed for a time that you give yourselves to fasting and to prayer."80 Attention must be given to children, and again to self-control. Or perhaps it was the time for embrace when the opinion was flourishing that we ought to "grow and multiply, and fill up the Earth"81. And the time became far from one of embracing when it passed away: "the times are hard; it remains that both they that have wives be as though they had none".82 But if we wanted to climb to the higher parts, we would see wisdom embracing its lovers: for he says "honour it and it will embrace you"83, and hold them in its arms and lap in a tighter embrace. More precisely, it is not always possible to

stretch the human mind to heaven and think about the divine and higher things, or continually consider celestial matters, but meanwhile to indulge in the necessities of the flesh. On account of this there is a time for embracing wisdom, and holding it more tightly, and a time for relaxing the mind from the study and embrace of wisdom, just as of the care of the body, and we have those things that our life needs in the absence of sin.

3:6-7. A time

to acquire and a time to lose. A time to keep and a time to throw away. As is in many verses before the meaning is the same here too, which is apparent before and following this verse, in that he says: A time to destroy and a time to build.

And then A

time to rend and a time to mend. Just as the Synagogue is destroyed so that the Church can be built and schism is only brought about by the law so that the Gospels are unified, because each preacher has carried it out one by one, unifying from the law and the prophets the testimonies of the arrival of the Lord.

And thus there was a time for seeking and guarding Israel, a time for losing and discarding it. Or perhaps in fact a time for seeking a nation in the tribes and a time for losing the people of the Jews. A time for guarding the believers of the nations and a time for dismissing the faithless from Israel. A time for silence and a time for speaking. I think that the Pythagoreans, whose discipline is to remain silent for five years and afterwards to speak to learned men, took the origin of their decree from this. Let us learn therefore and so

remain silent first, so that afterwards we open our mouths only to speak. Let us be silent for a set period and depend

on the utterances of our teacher.

Nothing seems right to us unless we learn that after much silence we are

made into teachers by our pupils. Now

though instead of the world slipping day by day into a far worse situation, we

teach in churches what we do not know.

And if by composing words or at the bidding of the devil, who is the

patron of madness, we have aroused the applause of the common people, then we

think we understand, (contrary to our conscience), what it is we were able to

dissuade others from. We do not learn all the arts without a teacher, only

those which are so common and easy that they don't require a tutor.

3:8. A time

for loving and a time for hating. The time for loving God, children, wife, and

relatives is afterwards, and the time for hating those in martyrdom since

hostile piety attacks those steadfast men for the sake of the confession of

Christ. Or maybe there is a time for

loving the law, and those things that the law decrees- that is circumcision,

sacrifices, the Sabbath, Neumania⁸⁴,

and a time for hating them when the grace of the Gospel has been lost. But we cannot say this, since now we look

through the mirror in mystery, the time for loving is the present, and in the

future there will come a time when we will see face to face and then, more

accomplished, we will begin to hate and despise what we love.⁸⁵ A time for war and a time for peace. Although we are in the present world,

it is the time for war: when we have left this world the time for peace will

come. For the place of God is in peace

and so too is our city of Jerusalem, for it is called 'chosen in peace'. Therefore no one now thinks he is safe: you

must prepare yourselves in the time of war and put on the apostles arms, so

that we may rest in peace at last victorious.

3:9-11. What

gain, then, has the worker in exchange for all his toil? I have observed the task which God has given

the sons of man to be concerned with: He made everything beautiful in its time;

He has also put an enigma into their minds so that man cannot comprehend what

God has done from the beginning to end. The

opinion of many other scholars on this passage does not escape me, because in

this world God conceded to the teachers of perverse doctrines their true

occupation, lest man's idle mind should become slow and while thinking that

God's creations are good, yet nonetheless not be able to see them as the

natural knowledge of the world. But the

Hebrew who taught me the Scriptures explained it in this way: when all things

are placed in their own time and there is a time for destroying or building,

weeping and laughing, silence and speaking, and others things which are said

about time, why do we try to survive in vain and believe the labours of this

short life to be perpetual? And

according to the Gospel we are not even happy, and it is called wickedness

since we think nothing of tomorrow.⁸⁶ For what more are we able to have in this

world than continual striving in that toil, which God has given to man, so that

one man may gain more by following others, in a situation where he is able to

learn and exercise himself? For all that

God does is good, but good in his world.

It is good to wake and to sleep, but it is not good to be always awake

or asleep, since in turn each and every thing can be considered good, when

there is need, according to God's plan.

Moreover God also created the world to be inhabited by men, so that they

should enjoy the variation of time, and not seek the causes nature, how all

things are made, why He made this or that grow or change from the beginning of

the world until now.

3:12-13. Thus I

perceived that there is nothing good for each of them than to rejoice and do what is good in his life. Indeed every man who eats and drinks and finds satisfaction in all his labour- it is a gift from God. Therefore the settler and the foreigner of the world has been charged that he should enjoy the time of his short life, and when the hope of a longer life has been removed, he sees everything that he has as if he is about leave this life, and he sees also what he can do well in his life. And his thoughts are not in vain thus twisted, on account of his amassed wealth.

And he doesn't think that he is able to acquire more from his toil than his food and drink and if he expends anything from his wealth into good work, then only this is a gift of God. We are not provoked, as some scholars think, by such words into luxury, pleasures, and desperation as are animals, according to that phrase of Isaiah: "let us gorge ourselves and drink, for tomorrow we will die."⁸⁷ But according to the apostle: "having sustenance and clothing, we are content with these."⁸⁸ And whatever we have that is more than this,

we use in feeding the poor and our need for charity. More to the point, since the true food is the flesh of the Lord, and his blood is the true drink, according to anagoge⁸⁹, we only regard this as good in the present world, if we actually do feed from his flesh and drink from his blood, not only in secret but even in reading the Scriptures. For true food and drink,

which is taken from the word of God, is knowledge of the Scriptures. But no one believes the word of Balaam of the

prophets, who says "there will be no toil against Jacob, no suffering in Israel"⁹⁰. It is in fact contrary to this, because it is

said to be a gift of God: "If anyone eats and drinks and shows he is good in all of his work"⁹¹. In fact these are the many troubles of the

righteous. And the apostle complains about these, saying he has sweated in toil and suffering. But the Lord freed us for our future in toil and suffering also: "there will be no toil against Jacob, no suffering in Israel". And we read how "the blessed weep, since they will laugh"⁹², and our laughter follows the words of Job the prophet: for the "mouth will be filled with the joy of truths"⁹³. Thus now we enjoy our toil in good work, by which we restrict and restrain ourselves so that afterwards we may cease from working.

3:14. I

realised that whatever God does will endure forever: nothing can be added to it and nothing taken away, and God has acted so that man should fear Him. There is nothing in the world that is new. The course of the sun and moon in turn and the dryness and verdure of the earth and trees are born and take shape with the world itself. And therefore God governed all things by a defined plan and commanded the elements to be at the disposal of man, for his use, so that when men see these things they know that there is providence and fear the appearance of God; while from the equality of the world, the natural season, order, and constancy they understand their creator. "For his invisible work in the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal virtue and power"⁹⁴. If we want we can read this as if from the beginning, with the meaning of the first part already understood: "and God has acted so that man should fear Him" then this is the meaning: God made all these things, so that men fear him, and reject for another what God once created for man. But he governed perfectly, saying: "so that they should fear his appearance".⁹⁵ The image of the Lord, indeed, is powerful over those who are wicked.

3:15. What

has been, already exists, and what is still to be, has already been, and God seeks him that suffers persecution. All things we perceive in the past, present or future, they themselves have been, are, and will be. That same sun which now rises, existed before

we were in this world, and after we die, it will rise again. But we have mentioned the sun, so that we

understand other things to be the same as they have been before. Because if they are seen to die by what we

call death, they do not really die, but grow again given a second life, and

nothing dies forever but is reborn and relives as if with a certain new

seed. For this is what he says:

"and God seeks him that suffers persecution", which is said better in

Greek kai ho theos zetesei to diokomenon that

is what dies, what has perished, and has ceased to be. But if that speaks about all that are in the

world there is no doubt about man, that having died he will be reborn. But if anyone likes to choose a beginning as

if his own, "and God seeks him that suffers persecution", he uses

this evidence in the persecution of certain people: to comfort him, who had

persevered in martyrdom. And since all

in this world, who want to live religiously, follow the apostle, they suffer

persecution and take consolation in the fact that God seeks him that suffers

persecution, just as he seeks out the blood of a man who has been murdered, and

comes to seek what has perished, and carry the wandering sheep back to the

flock on his shoulders.⁹⁶

3:16-17. Furthermore,

I have observed beneath the sun: in the place of justice there is wickedness,

and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness. I mused: God will judge the righteous and the

wicked, for there is a time for everything and for every deed, there. The

meaning of this is clear but is cloaked by the cloud of interpretation. He says: I sought truth and righteousness

under the sun and I saw that even among the benches of judges truth is not valued, but gifts. Or differently: I

thought some kind of justice present in this world and either took the pious man on his own merit, or punished the impious for his crimes; and I found the opposite to that which I had been thinking.

For I saw a righteous man here suffer much injustice and an impious man made to rule instead of being punished for his crime. But thinking to myself afterwards and considering it carefully I understood that they judge not in respect of God and treating each case one by one, but rather reserve judgement for the future, so that all are judged equally and receive there according to their will and effort. For this is what he says:

"and there is a time for everything and for every deed, there", that is, in judgement when God will have begun to judge, then there will be truth, now injustice prevails in the world.

Such as when we read in Wisdom, Sirach wrote: "lest you say, what is this or what is that? For all things are sought in their own time"⁹⁷.

3:18-21. Then I

said to myself concerning men: God has chosen them out, but only to see that they themselves are as beasts. For the

fate of men and the fate of beast - they have one and the same fate: as one

dies so the other dies, and they all have the same spirit. Man has no superiority over beast, for all is

futile. All go to the same place; all

originate from dust and return to dust.

Who perceives that the spirit of man is the one that ascends on high

while the spirit of the beast is the one that descends down into the

earth? It is not surprising that there is no distinction in

this life between righteous and wicked, nor that none values virtues, but all

things occur with uncertain outcome, where nothing seems to differ according to the worthlessness of the body between sheep and men: there is the same birth, common end in death; we proceed similarly towards the light and are equally dissolved into the dust. But there seems to be this difference, that the spirit of man ascends to the heavens, and the spirit of animals goes down into the earth, but from where do we know this for certain? Who can know whether what is hoped is true or false? But he says this, not because he thinks the spirit dies with the body, or that there's one place set aside for beasts and for man, but because before the arrival of Christ all were led equally to the nether regions. Jacob said that he was about to go down to those regions.⁹⁸ And Job complains that the pious and impious are held back in the lower world.⁹⁹ And the Gospel says that with an abyss blocking the way even Abraham and Lazarus were rich in prayers in the underworld.¹⁰⁰ And in fact before Christ accompanied by a robber opened the wheel of flames, and the fiery ramparts¹⁰¹ and the gates of paradise, the heavens were closed and the equal unworthiness of the spirits of sheep and of men was abridged. One also seems to be dispersed and the other saved; but there is not much of a difference between dying with the body or being held in the darkness of the underworld.

Let us look over these things one by one in paragraphs, and discuss them briefly. I considered the eloquence of the sons of man, whom God chose. Only this eloquence, he says, God wanted to be between men and beasts, since we speak, they are mute; we possess the will for conversation, they are stupefied with silence. And though we only differ from beasts in language, though it is shown to us, how we are like the beasts - weak in body. Just as a beast dies, thus man dies, and one breath is for all, and that is the air that we breathe. For he says this: "and one spirit is for

both, and there is nothing more for man than for beast." Since lest we think the text refers to the soul he adds: "all are made from earth and return to the earth." But nothing else except the body is made from

earth, and quite relevant, regarding the body he continues: "you are earth and to the earth you will return."¹⁰² But this seems to be blasphemy: for who knows if the spirit of the sons of man ascends upwards, or if the spirit of beasts goes downwards into the earth? He does not contend that there is no difference between animals and men in reference to the dignity of the soul, but in adding "who?" he wants to show the difficulty of the matter. For the pronoun "who" is used in the Holy Scriptures not on account of impossibility, but a difficulty. So here it is said in that passage, "who will describe that man's generation?"¹⁰³, and in the psalm: "Lord, who ascends in your tabernacle, and onto your sacred mountain?"¹⁰⁴, and other examples that follow this pattern.

And in Jeremiah it can be said differently in Hebrew: "And he is a man, and who knows him?"¹⁰⁵. This then, is the only difference between beast and men, that the spirit of man ascends to the heaven, and the spirit of the beast descends into the earth and is dispersed with the flesh; but let any man, who is of the Church and learned in the religious disciplines, be the real champion of the matter, which is rather doubtful. Then he adds just how much it refers to a spiritual understanding: "since the Lord will keep both men and beasts safe"¹⁰⁶, and in another place he says, "beasts, I am among you"¹⁰⁷, and all the prophets say that both men and beasts will be saved in Jerusalem, and that the promised land will be filled with sheep and cattle. Who knows whether the saintly man, who is worthy of the name of man, will ascend to heaven, and whether the sinner, who is called beast, will go down into the earth?

For it is possible in light of the uncertain and dangerous condition of his life, that the righteous man falls and the sinner rises, and it sometimes happens that man, having more reason and learned in the Scriptures, does not look about himself, and although worthy of his knowledge lives out his life and is led down to the nether world; and the simpler and unlearned man, who is said to be compared to the beasts of men, lives better and is crowned in martyrdom, and he is then to live in paradise.

3:22. I

therefore observed that there is nothing better for man than to be happy in what he is doing, for that is his lot.

For who can enable him to see what will be after him? Instead of that which we have as "to see what will be after him", Symmachus interprets it more clearly saying, "so that he sees those things which will be after these ones".

Therefore nothing is good in life, unless a man is happy in his work, doing acts of sympathy, and obtaining his future reward in the realm of heaven. We have this one lot, which nor neither thief nor robber values, nor any tyrant has the power to take away, and which follows us after our death. And we will not be able to enjoy our toil again when this life will be over, or know what things will be afterwards in the world.

Another explanation of this is: I am disturbed by the wickedness of what I have said above, that I think there is no difference between men and beasts, and I have been led into this opinion by wrong conclusions, so that I said nothing else was good, except grasping ones present desire. Nor when death has destroyed us is it

possible to enjoy these things, which we, ungrateful, leave behind. Some have referred to that understanding

because it says, "for who leads him, so that he sees those things, which will be after him", so that they say, "it is better for a man to

enjoy his work" because it is only this that he is able to take away with him from his possessions. For when death comes he will not know what kind of heir he will die with, whether worthy or unworthy, who will enjoy his wealth.

CHAPTER 4

4:1. And I

returned and contemplated all the acts of oppression that are committed beneath the sun: Behold! Tears of the oppressed with none to comfort them, and their oppressors have the power - with none to comfort them. After considering this I turned my eyes and attention to this, so that I saw the slanderers and those sustaining chicanery. And look on those who, oppressed unjustly by more powerful men, are not able to find a comforter for their tears. For this is only permitted in disasters and in protest at the ill will of the matter.

And wherever there is more distress and inconsolable suffering they see the slanderers as stronger in their difficulties. And this is the cause: because they are not worthy of consolation. He describes this idea more fully in the seventy-second psalm of David, and Jeremiah in his own book.

4:2-3. So I

consider more fortunate the dead, who have already died, than the living, who are still alive. But better than either of them is he who has not yet been, and has never witnessed the evil that is committed under the sun. In comparison with the difficulties, which trouble mortal men in this world, I had judged the dead to be happier than the living according to that which Job says in his argument regarding the dead: "there they rested with tired bodies, with those who had been in chains, now without cares, not hearing the voice of the expeller."¹⁰⁸ But it is better for these two, for the

living it seems and for the deceased, who has not yet been born. For one man will suffer ill, another

unclothed will escape it as if from a shipwreck. Moreover he who has not yet been born is

happier in that, because he has not

yet experienced the ill of the world.

But he says this, not because he who has not yet been born, exists

before he has been born, and he is happier in this, since he has not yet been

weighed down by his body; but better to be sure is not existing, or not having

a sense of wealth, than either being unhappy or living unhappily. Just as the Lord speaks to Judas, referring

to his coming anguish: "it was better for that man never to have been

born"¹⁰⁹,

since it would have been better for sure for him not to have existed, than to

suffer eternal torture. Some people in

fact understand this passage in this way: they say they are better, who have

died, than those who are living, it is permitted to them before they were

sinners¹¹⁰. For until now the living were in battle and

were held back as if closed in by the prison of the body; but those who have

opposed death are already without cares and have stopped sinning. Just like John, in which he was not greater

in respect to the sons of women, he is less than him, who is the lowest in the

realm of heaven and is freed from the burden of the body. He does not know how to say like the apostle:

"I am a wretched man, who will free me from the body of this death?"¹¹¹. But he says he is better than those two, who

has not yet been born, nor does not see the wickedness, by which men are

oppressed in the world. For our souls mingle among the gods, before descending

to these bodies and are blessed so long as the heavenly ones are held in

Jerusalem and in the choir of angels.

4:4. And I

saw that all labour and skilful enterprise spring from man's rivalry with his

neighbour. This, too, is futility and a vexation of the spirit! I turned my attention once again to other things and I saw the strength and honour of those men who were toiling, and I discovered the good of one man to be the evil of another, while the envious one is tortured by another's happiness, and the boastful lies open to trickery. For what is more vain, what is for nothing like the spirit in this way, than for man to weep for misfortunes that are not his own, or to bemoan his own sins, or be envious of better men.

4:5. The fool

folds his hands and eats his own flesh. This is the man that is described as slow to comprehend in Proverbs 112, holding his chest in his hands. For poverty, although he is a fast runner, catches up with him and he eats his own flesh because of the extent of his hunger, but this is said in exaggeration. He is the sort of man who thinks that having one fist of corn and living idly and in a stupor is better than filling each hand by working. But he sows everything so that he can show that he that both works and acquires possessions leaves himself open in the world to envy. Conversely he that desires to live a simple life is oppressed by poverty and because of this both of these two is poor: while the one runs a risk on account of his wealth, the other is consumed by want because of his poverty. Or indeed perhaps it is to be understood in this way: he who envies the happiness of another man is seized as if by the fury of the spirit, and takes envy into his lap, and nourishes it in his heart: thus it is he eats his soul and his flesh. For as much as he sees that man whom he envies as happier, he himself more so wastes away and perishes, and little by little becomes more full of envy and jealousy. Another way of reading this is: his hands are

taken on many occasions to lead him to work, just as the passage which states, "the act of the Lord which is done in the hand of Haggai"¹¹³, or of Ecclesiastes, or of his prophet, because he has done such work, that he appears to be worthy, in whose work is the speech of the Lord. And the man, who corresponds to this man is

David, "who leads my hands in battle"¹¹⁴. Therefore the fool embraces his hands, that is he draws them together and doesn't want to open them, and so does not eat the toil of his hands, which he does not have, but his flesh, living by the wisdom of his flesh and eating the toil of his flesh.

4:6. Better

is one handful of pleasantness than two fistfuls of labour and vexation of the spirit. It is better to have modest power, than great riches of sins. And in Proverbs it says, "To receive a little through righteousness is better than gaining much by injustice."¹¹⁵ Justice rightly has rest, injustice toil. And since a single number is always seen in a good context and a dual seen as wickedness, therefore one fist has rest, and two hands are full of toil.

4:7-8. Then I

returned and contemplated futility beneath the sun: a lone and solitary man who has neither son nor brother, yet there is no end to his toil, nor is his eye ever sated with riches, nor does he ask himself, 'For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of goodness.' This too is futility, indeed, it is a sorry task. I turned to other people and I saw that they work more than is necessary and amass wealth by good and bad means and do not use it once accumulated; they have all things, brood over their riches, keep it for another, and do not enjoy their work. Then at the end of their life they have neither son nor brother, nor close friend so that the pious work seems reserved for necessities only. And so I

discovered nothing more vain than that man, who collects riches, or to whom an ignorant man bequeaths them. We are even able to understand this in a religious interpretation, and understand it as those, who write books and leave them to fastidious readers. Some say that this passage from where it says "there is one, but there is not a second" is about the Saviour, because he came down to save the world alone and without any companion. And although there are many sons of God, they are called his brothers by adoption, though not one remains worthy, who should be joined to him in this work. There is no end to this work, for those carrying our faults and sins and suffering for us; and his eye will not be filled by riches, but always with those desiring our safety, and the more you see his sins, the more he encourages him to repent.

4:9-12. Two are better than one, for they get a greater return for their labour. For should they fall, one can raise the other; but woe to him who is alone when he falls and there is no one to raise him! Also, if two sleep together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? Where one can be overpowered, two can resist attack; A three-ply cord is not easily severed! After the misfortunes of loneliness in which he has been seized, and he who torments himself in acquiring wealth without a definite heir, now the subject of companionship is treated. And it asks what good there is in a tent of friends and what comfort there is in company, since one man's distress or domestic strife is lifted by another's help, (any man who has a faithful friend will sleep better all that night, than he who sleeps only with his wealth which he has amassed. And if a stronger enemy rises up against one man, the weakness of one is sustained by the comfort of friends. And just as two differ from one if they are

joined in love, so the tent of three is stronger. For even true charity, which has been violated by no envy increases as much in number as it grows in strength. And this idea is conveyed in relatively few words. But since previously we have placed the discussion of the intelligence of certain men before Christ, those things which are still left must be discussed by the same order. It is better for two to be equal, than one. For it is better for a man who lives alone to have Christ, than alone to leave himself vulnerable to ill-intentioned plots. Since the reward of the tent is shown at once in the very usefulness of society. For if one man fell, Christ would raise up his partner. Woe indeed to him who collapses, he will not have Christ rising up in him. For if one sleeps, that is, if he had been dissolved by death and had Christ with him, he will revive more quickly having been made warm and given life once again. And if the devil, being stronger in his attack, should attack a man, the man will stand, and Christ will stand in place of this man, in place of his companion. Not because virtue is weak (the virtue of Christ alone) against the devil, but because the decision of man is left free and for us, who are dependent, but virtue itself will become stronger through fighting. And even if the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit should come, that friendship is not broken easily. But although it is not broken easily, it will be broken nonetheless at some point. And the cord from the apostle to Judas was threefold: but after the breaking of the bread Satan entered him and that cord was broken. More precisely what he says above is, "and even if two are sleeping, then they will be warm: and how will one keep warm on his own?" We can take an example from Elisha, because he is in a pact with a lad, and slept

with him and warmed his body, and in this way revived the recovering boy.¹¹⁶ Unless therefore Christ sleeps with us and rests

in death, we are not able to receive the heart of eternal life.

4:13-16. Better

is a poor but wise youth, than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to take care of himself; because from the prison-house he emerged to reign, while even in his reign he was born poor.

I saw all the living that wander beneath the sun throng to the succeeding youth that steps into his place.

There is no end to the entire nation, to all that was before them; similarly the ones that come later will not rejoice in him. For this too is futility and a vexation of the spirit. Symmachus translates this passage in this way: "better a poor man who has wisdom, than an old and foolish king who does not know to beware of change".

For the one leaves the body to reign in heaven, and the other indeed, although he had been born a king, is restricted by poverty. I saw all men living, who grow up under the sun in propitious adolescence, which increases in them. Each and every nation that was before is unending, and those that come after do not rejoice in the previous. But this too is empty and a vexation of the

spirit. My Hebrew tutor, whose teachings

I often refer to, bore witness while he was reading Ecclesiastes with me, that Bar Akiba wrote these things above the present passage, and he is greatly admired by other scholars: better is the inner part of man, which arises in us after the fourteenth year of puberty, than the outer, physical man, who is born from his mother's womb, and he does not know how to abstain from vice because it comes to this that he rules over his vices from the house of chains, that is from his mother's womb. For he is made

poor because of his power and by carrying out all wicked deeds. I saw those men, who lived as those former

men, and were changed afterwards into that second man, in him that has been born in place of the former. And I understood that all men sinned in that prior manhood, before the second is born, when they become two men. But once these men have changed for the better, and after the learning of philosophers, they leave the left path and hurry towards the right, and they follow the second man, that is the newest man, and do not rejoice in him that is the former. The apostle agrees with these two types of men¹¹⁷ and Leviticus also mentioned them: "Man, man"¹¹⁸ who desired this or that. That saintly man Gregorius Pontus the bishop, to whom Origen preached, understands the passage in the following way in his Metaphrasis of Ecclesiastes: "I however prefer a youth who is poor yet is growing wise, to an old king who is foolish, to whom it never occurs that it is possible for someone from those whom he has conquered, will leave the body to reign in heaven; and then he destroys himself from his unjust power. For it happens though that those who were growing wise at the time of youth are without sadness; but that they changed before the time of becoming an old king. For those that have been born afterwards, since they do not know the wickedness that has gone before, they are not able to praise youth, which arises afterwards, and are led astray by perverse ideas and by the force of the opposing arguments."¹¹⁹ Laodiceus has asserted that great matters are expressed in this short passage, and he wrote here in his accustomed fashion: "Ecclesiastes now speaks about the change of good men into wicked, expressing the foolish man as he who tries, and who not thinking of the future, enjoys the transient and failing things as if they are great and perpetual. And after the many things

which usually happen (or change) to men in their life, he asserts something of a general opinion of death, since the great number perishes and little by little is consumed and pass across, with each one leaving the other in his place, and another's successor dying."¹²⁰

Origines and Victorinus¹²¹

did not think very differently on this matter.

After the general statement that reveals to all that the poor yet wise youth is better than an old king who is foolish, and that it often happens that the lad leaves the prison of the king because of his wisdom, and commands in place of a cruel dictator, and as a foolish king loses all his power, which he had obtained. They saw this passage in relation to Christ and the devil, because they wished to view the poor and wise boy as Christ. The poor boy is the same as that one in "it is great for you to be called my boy"¹²², but the poor man, since he has been made poor¹²³, when once he was rich and wise, because "he was proficient in age and wisdom and thankful to God and men."¹²⁴ That man is born in the reign of an old man and therefore he says, "if this was my rule in the world, that my servants struggle on my behalf so that I am not handed over to the Jews. But now it is not my rule."¹²⁵ So in the reign of that foolish old man who displays all the rule of the whole world and his glory, the most excellent boy comes from the house of chains, about which Jeremiah speaks in Lamentations, saying, "so that he lowers to the feet of that man all those who have been conquered in the world."¹²⁶ And that boy goes on to rule and goes away to a far off region, and as king after some time is turned against those, who do not want to rule. So with some insight Ecclesiastes saw that all men who are alive and who are able to be part of youth, say, "I am life"¹²⁷, having left behind them that old foolish king, to follow Christ. At the same time the two nations of Israel

are to be understood here. The first, which was before the arrival of the Lord, and the next, which will support the Antichrist in place of Christ, for the first is not deep down despondent, since the first church was formed from Jews and the apostles; and in the end the Jews, who will support the Antichrist, will not rejoice in Christ.

4:17. Guard

your foot when you go to the House of God; better to draw near and hearken than to offer the sacrifices of fools, for they do not consider that they do evil. He gives some general precepts for life, and does not want to offend us, who go to church.

Since it is praiseworthy in his view, not just to enter the House of God, but to enter without offence. And

if it was intended for all who are in the church of God to hear this passage,

he would never have added, "and approach so that you might hear". But then it was only Moses who approached near

to God to hear¹²⁸,

the other men were not allowed. For the

foolish commit sins, not knowing that there is a remedy; they think that they

can satisfy God with the offering of gifts, and do not know that this is also

evil and a sin; for they want to make correction for what they have done, not

with obedience and good work, but with gifts and sacrifice. What others have said elsewhere agrees with

this too: "obedience above sacrifice"¹²⁹. And "I want pity and not

sacrifice".¹³⁰

CHAPTER 5

5:1-2. Be not

rash with your mouth, and let not your heart be hasty to utter a word before

God; for God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. For a dream comes from much concern, and

foolish talk from many words. Several men think that this teaches here

that we should not promise something too quickly in the presence of God, and without due consideration of our strengths we vow things, which we cannot then fulfil. God though is present in heaven, but we seem to be on earth, yet he hears what we say and accuses that our foolishness comes from our love of speech.

But some men understand this better, affirming that this teaches that, either speaking or thinking more about God than we are able, we hold to our opinions; but we know our stupidity, since, as much as the heavens differ from the earth, so our thoughts are separated from His character. And therefore our words ought to be checked. Just as he that is much in thought frequently dreams about those things about which he thinks during the day; thus he, who wanted to teach more from divinity, falls into foolishness. Or indeed it could mean this: our words ought to be few therefore, since even those things, which we think we know, we see through a mirror and in mystery, and as we understand a dream, which we think we can grasp.

Although we have done many things, as it appears to us, the end of our argument is foolishness. For we do not escape sin by too much speaking¹³¹.

5:3-4. When

you make a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for He has no liking for fools; what you vow, pay. Better that you not vow at all, than that you vow and not pay.

A simple man

does not need understanding by interpretation.

It is better not to promise than not to keep promises, since they

displease God and are numbered among fools, who do not fulfil their vows. But since he says, "There is no will in fools"

underneath we hear "of God", like the word of the apostle, who says,

"and just as there was no will, that I should now come to you"¹³². For even if we want to say something more

inquiring, it is taught to a Christian, that he should fulfil his faith by

work, and not be like the Jews, who pledge and say, "we will do all that

God commands"¹³³,

and yet worship idols. And afterwards

they beat those slaves and cast stones at them, and immediately killed the very

son of the father of their house. It is

better therefore to hold a doubtful opinion for a while, which is easy to say

in words, but difficult to put into practice.

For the slave, who knows the will of his God and will not do it will be

defeated by many.

5:5. Let not

your mouth bring guilt on your flesh, and do not tell the messenger that it was

an error. Why should God be angered by

your speech and destroy the work of your hands?

What the Hebrew

means is that if you are not able to do these things, do not promise to do

them. For the words do not transgress to

the spirit but are carried at once to the Lord by the angel present, who sticks

to one man only as a companion. You who

think to disregard God, since you have promised, you will anger Him, with the

result that all your work will be destroyed.

But in that place where he says: "to bring guilt upon your

flesh" and he understood this, though not caring diligently, as if he had

said "let not your mouth cause you not to sin." But there seems to me however another

meaning, which is argued by those, who complain about the strength of the flesh

and say they are compelled by the necessity of the body to do those things that

they don't want to do, according to the apostle: "for I do not do what I

want, but what I do not wish" and so on.¹³⁴ And so he says, 'don't seek vain excuses and give occasion to your flesh to sin'.

Then in that place where he says "and do not tell the angel that it was a madness" Aquila takes the Hebrew word *segaga* to mean ignorance, and translates it with the Greek word *akousion*, that is, not of ones will. For if you say this, he says, you provoke God, as if to say He is like the creator of evil and sin, and anger Him, so that if you seem to have anything good, He will take it from your possession. Or indeed he translates such things with the meaning of reproof, so that you do those things, which are not appropriate.

5:6. In

spite of all dreams, futility and idle chatter, rather: Fear God! The Hebrews explain this passage in great detail, and

in the following way: and you should not do the things detailed above, about

which he has already spoken, lest you believe too readily in dreams. For when you see different things, your mind

will be troubled by many fears throughout your night's rest, or aroused by

promises, you despise those things that are dream-like. You should only fear God. For he, who believes in dreams, gives himself

over to vanities and nonsense. Another

meaning of this passage is, since I have said and admonished, "you should

not let your mouth bring guilt on your flesh", and to seek this or that

excuse; I introduce this now, since in the dream of that life, and in the

appearance, shade, cloud in which we live, we are able to find many things,

which seem true to life to us and excuse our sins. Therefore I advise that you beware that

alone, lest you think God is absent, but fear Him, and know He is present in

all your toil, and do not force yourself to be hidden in free will, but want

whatever it is that you do.

5:7-8. If you

see oppression of the poor, and the suppression of justice and right of the State, do not be astonished at the fact, for there is One higher than the high Who watches and there are high ones above them.

The advantage of land is supreme; even a king is indebted to the soil. Christ's garment, woven on top, was not able to be torn by those who crucified him; and the Saviour threw him from that demon, and advised him to go away having put on the clothes of the apostles. So we believe that the clothes of our

Ecclesiastes are not to be torn, nor should we sew on here and there patches in place of our free-will of opinion, but use the one text itself in dispute, and follow the same meaning and arrangement all the way through. Above this he had said: "do not tell the

messenger that it was a madness, lest God become angry over your speech", and regarding the remaining things, he had spoken against those, who do not know that providence rules over human affairs.

Since therefore the question arises many times about the precept, why the righteous sustain disaster, and why the unjust become judges over all the world, but God is not vengeful: now he introduces and finishes this argument, saying, 'if you see the calamity of a pauper, who is said to be blessed in the Gospel, and the situation is assessed according to his strength and not in justice, do not be astonished or let anything seem new to you. God, who is highest above the high, sees

these things, He that placed His angels above the judges and kings of the earth, to prevent injustice and they are more important on earth, than any of man's potentates. But since he will be

the Saviour at the end of the judges, and in the end of the world when the cornfield will be ripe, and the harvesters will come, he will be ordered that the wheat be separated and the darnel thrown on the fire. Therefore he now awaits and differs in opinion, although the field of the world is cultivated carefully more fully. But since that field is

interpreted as the world, the Lord expounds about them in the parable of darnel and wheat.¹³⁵

5:9-10. A lover

of money will never be satisfied with money; a lover of abundance has no wheat. This too, is futility! As goods increase, so do those who consume them; what advantage, then, has the owner except what his eyes see? Wherever we read 'silver', according to the ambiguity

of the Greek term, it can be translated as 'money', since each has the meaning of the Greek argurion. More precisely Tullius is said to have called these men 'pecuniary', who have many small savings, that is wealth in cattle.¹³⁶ For they were called this in antiquity. But little by little the word devolved into the one used here through misuse.

Therefore he is described as greedy because he is never sated by wealth, and the more he has, the more he desires.

Horace also agrees with this sentiment, who says, "always the miser is wanting"¹³⁷,

and too the noble historian, since "avarice is diminished neither by possessions, nor by lack of them"¹³⁸. Nothing therefore, says Ecclesiastes can aid a man who possesses riches, unless only this: that he sees what he possesses. For the greater his wealth, the more he will have a larger number of servants, who use up his amassed wealth. But if he will only see what he has, he will be able to take more than the food of one man.

5:11. Sweet

is the sleep of the labourer, whether he eats little or much; the satiety of the rich does not let him sleep. So far the discourse has treated of riches and greed, and it is compared to a man who works and one who sleeps without worry, or eats little or a great deal.

Because he eats any food obtained from the toil of work and from his

sweat, he enjoys peaceful sleep. For a rich man indeed is busy with banquets and lacerated by many thoughts, is not able to sleep, and abounds in hangovers and uncooked food boils in the intestines of his stomach. More precisely, since it is called sleep, and is a common exit from life, that rest will be better for him, who is busy at present and reserves his strength for good work, than the riches of those men, about whom it is written: "woe to you, O rich, for you have received your consolation".¹³⁹

5:12-16. There

is a sickening evil that I have seen under the sun; riches hoarded by their owner to his misfortune, and he loses those riches in some bad venture. If he begets a son, he has nothing in

hand. As he had come from his mother's

womb, naked will he return, as he had come; he can salvage nothing from his

labour to take with him. This too, is a

sickening evil: Exactly as he came he must depart, and what did he gain in exchange for toiling for the wind? Indeed, all

his life he eats in darkness; he is greatly grieved, and has illness and

anger. Take what follows as linked to what is written above:

while Ecclesiastes describes wealth, even he is not able to enjoy his riches and

on many occasions endangers himself on account of them. Nor to his heir does he leave what he has

amassed; but even he and his son, just as they came nude, will return nude to

the earth and nothing of their toil will accompany them. Surely apathy is the worst, to be tortured by

thought on account of riches, and wealth will perish. And are we able to take it with us when we die, in sadness, in mourning, in indignation, in laws or to seek it in vain

toil? And all this is according to the

apparent simple meaning of the text. But

as we are lifted higher, it seems to me that it speaks about the philosophers,

or the heretics, who amass riches of doctrines into their wickedness, and nor are authors able to follow any usefulness, nor leave perpetual fruit for their followers. But even they and their disciples return to the earth and lose their riches, from him who said, "I will lose the wisdom of the wise men, and I will reprove the prudence of the careful."¹⁴⁰

Truly

in fact, just as they left their mother's womb, (apparently as from a heretical church), contrary to this about which it is written: "but Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of all."¹⁴¹

Thus

they go nude to become a spirit, and work for nothing. Those who examine, lack examination, and they

are carried on every wind of doctrine, nor do they have the light, but eat their sacraments in the darkness. They

are always ill, and are easily moved to anger, storing up anger for themselves for the day of anger, and they do not have the favour of God.

5:17-19. So what

I have seen to be good is that it is suitable to eat and drink and enjoy

pleasure with all one's labour that he toils beneath the sun during the brief

span of his life that God has given him, for that is his lot. Furthermore, every man to whom God has given

riches and possessions and has given him the power to enjoy them, possess his

share and be happy in his work: this is the gift of God. For he shall remember that the days of his life are not many, while God provides him with the joy of his heart. This is in comparison to him, who consumes his wealth

in the darkness of his worries, and carries those things which are about to die

throughout the great tedium of his life, and says that that man is better, who

enjoys what he has. For here there is

but a small desire of enjoyment, but there in the latter indeed there is a

great magnitude of worries. He also gives the reasons why the gift of God is to be able to enjoy riches. Since "he will not remember much of the days of his life". For God turns him to the happiness of his heart's desire: he will not be sad, he will not be worried by thought, since he is led away by happiness and desire for present things. But it is better understood as according to the apostle¹⁴², seen as spiritual food and spiritual drink which is given by God and I understood to see goodness in all of his toil, since we are only able to consider true good things with great toil and enthusiasm. For what is permitted to be good, though, until Christ appears in our life, is not yet openly considered good. And therefore God will not remember much of the days of our life. We should also note that here perispasmos is used in a better way, in the place of the occupation of the spirit and true happiness.

CHAPTER 6

6:1-6. There is an evil I have observed beneath the sun, and it is prevalent among mankind; a man to whom God has given riches, wealth and honour, and he lacks nothing that his heart could desire, yet God did not give him the power to enjoy it. This is futility and an evil disease. If a man begets an hundred children and lives many years - great being the days of his life - and his soul is not content with the good - and he even is deprived of burial; I say: the stillborn is better off than he. Though its coming is futile and it departs in darkness, though its very name is enveloped in darkness, though it never saw the sun nor knew; it has more satisfaction than he. Even if he should live a thousand years twice over, but find no contentment - do not all go to the same place? He describes the riches of misers and asserts that this

evil is often in men, since none of those things, which are thought to be good in the world, is lacking in him, and nonetheless he torments himself with the most inane sparing, saving those things to be devoured by others. Nor does he say this in exaggeration, for even if he produced an hundred books and lived longer than Adam, that is almost one thousand years, but lived two thousand years, he would rot his mind with desire and avarice. He is born prematurely in a worse state that dies, as soon as he seems born. For he did not see evil things or good things; but although he used to possess good things, he was tormented by thoughts and sadness, and having been born prematurely he has more rest, than a greedy man who is old. But both however are seized by the same fate, while both the first and the last are taken away by the same death. This could also refer to Israel, because God gave Israel the law, which speaks about the prophets, the testament, the Promised Land and the Saviour: "let the reign of God be removed from you and given to a nation that brings forth his fruit"¹⁴³. All these things have been given to a foreign and pilgrim people from peoples who see their good yet do not enjoy it. They say we are of much better condition, who are considered to be as new-born and premature by those, who praised themselves in antiquity, finding glory in their fathers, saying: "our father was Abraham"¹⁴⁴, but however both we and they hasten to one place, that is to the judgement of God. But what Ecclesiastes says in the middle is this: "but there was no tomb for him". This either means that that rich man does not think of his death, and while he possesses all, is greedy even in building a tomb; or that often he is killed on account of those riches, by plots against his life, and is left unburied, or, what I think is a better interpretation, he needs nothing of good deeds, from which he is able to obtain for himself memory

among those who come after him. And so
that he will not pass through life in silence, just as cattle, although he had
a means, by which he was able to show that he had lived.

6:7-8. All

man's toil is for his mouth, yet his wants are never satisfied. What advantage then has the wise
man over the

fool? What less has the pauper who knows
how to conduct himself among the living?

All that men

toil at in this world is consumed by the mouth and taken to be digested in the
stomach after it has been ground down by the teeth. And when a little bit has pleased the
palette, it seems to create a desire, so long as it is held in the mouth. But when it has passed down
to the stomach

the difference between foods is no longer distinguishable. And after all these things the spirit of a
man who eats is not filled up; or then he desires again what he has eaten, and
is as wise as the fool without food, who does not know how to live, and the
poor man asks for nothing else but for how he is to sustain the organs of his
meagre body, and not die through starvation.

Or because the spirit takes no gain from the food of the body, and food
is of equal use to a wise man and a fool, and the pauper wanders therefrom, to
where he has seen wealth to be. This is
better understood regarding a man of the church, who learned in the heavenly
Scriptures, holds all his toil in his mouth yet his spirit is not filled, for
he always desires to learn. And in that
respect the wise man has more than the fool, since when he feels himself to be
poor, he presses that pauper, who is called blessed in the Gospel, to
understand those things which are of life, and walks the restricted and narrow
path, which leads to life, and he is poor from wicked deeds and knows where
Christ, (who is life) is to be found.

6:9. Better

is what the eyes see than what is imagined.

That, too, is futility and a vexation of the spirit. Symmachus interpreted this clearly, he says: "it is better to make provision, than to walk about as it pleases you". That is, it is better to do all things according to what you know to be right in your mind, which is the eye of the soul, than to follow the desire of your heart.

For this is to wander in spirit, just as Ezekiel says: "he who walks by the desire of his heart"¹⁴⁵. For indeed he denounced that man is proud and only pleases himself and says he is better, who makes provision for all days, than he, whom nothing pleases, unless he has made it himself. Nothing is worse than him, and more vane than

any breath. And again here

"vexation of the spirit" has been interpreted by Theodotion and Aquila as 'suffering of the soul'.

Symmachus too has "affliction of the spirit". More precisely we must remember that in Hebrew 'spirit' and 'breath' are similar in usage - that is ruha.

6:10. What

has been was already named, and it is known that he is but a man. He cannot contend with one who is mightier

than him. Clearly this is predicting the arrival of

the Saviour, since he writes 'he will be'; before he was seen in body his name was already written in the Scriptures and was known by prophets and holy men of God, since he was a man; and similar to this, since he is a man, he is not able to walk with his Father. And in the

Gospel it says: "the Father, who sent me, is greater than me."¹⁴⁶ In the following passages it teaches not to

ask more than is written for us by Him, so that a man may not wish to know more than is attested in the Scriptures. For

although we are ignorant of our condition and our life passes us by like a shadow, and our future is undecided, it is not useful for us to strive for more than we are able to attain. Some think

that this passage means that God already knows the names of all the men, who will be in the future, and who will be enclosed within the body of mankind. Nor is a man able to reply to his creator, and ask why he has been made in this way or that. For however much more we seek, our vanity and our unnecessary words are exposed all the more. Our choice does not come free from the foreknowledge of God, but precedes the causes, why any one thing is done in a particular way.

CHAPTER 7

7:1. How does it benefit man? For who knows what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life, which he spends as a shadow? For who can tell a man what will be after him under the sun? When he says that man is ignorant of his condition, and does not actually know whatever he seems to know and discern, as if the truth of the matter is not seen, he does see however the shadow and image as if through a mirror, and he cannot know what will come, or escape his sin by talkativeness. He should silence his mouth and believe that He who is written has come, and not ask by what means, how much, or what kind of man he is that has come.

7:1-2. A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. Consider, he says, man, your short days since you will cease to be quickly when your body gives out; fast longer, so that however perfume delights your nostrils with its smell, in the same way posterity will delight in all things to your name.

Symmachus interpreted this very clearly, saying, "a good name is better than a perfume that smells pleasant". We must remember that it is the custom of the Hebrews to call good perfume 'oil'. He also says, "and the day of death than the day of one's birth", this shows that it is better to die, and

no longer be troubled, or be in an unsteady condition of life, than sustain all these things while being born into the world.

For in our death we know what we have been like, but when we are born we cannot know what we will be like or do in life.

Since birth is also linked to the freedom of the spirit in the body, it abolishes moral customs.

7:3. It is

better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for

that is the end of all men; and the living will take it to his heart. It is more useful to go to the rites of a funeral than

to the house where there is a party, since at the house of mourning we are warned of our creator and of our mortality on account of seeing the dead body. But in the happiness of a party, even if we seem to have any fear, we lose it.

Symmachus interpreted the last verse by saying, "and he who lives, will look back in his mind". There

is proof in these verses, in that God is seen to approve food and drink, but not seen to prefer desire to all these things, with the result that many men value them wrongly. But in comparison

with avarice and too much sparing, feasting is allowed in a small way, or

allowed to him, who enjoys his work completely every moment. For he had never preferred the sadness of

mourning to the enjoyment of a party, if he had thought at any moment to drink and eat.

7:4. Anger is better than laughter, for through a sad face the heart is

improved. Laughter weakens the mind, anger reproves

and corrects it. Both let us become

angry with ourselves when we sin, and let us get angry with others. Through the sadness of the face, even the

spirit becomes better, as Symmachus saw it.

And therefore "woe now to those who laugh, since they will mourn."¹⁴⁷

7:5. The

heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of enjoyment. "Blessed", says the Saviour,

"are the mourning, since they will be consoled".¹⁴⁸ And Samuel mourned King Saul all the days of his life¹⁴⁹

and Paul said he had mourned over those who did not want to repent their many sins¹⁵⁰. Therefore the heart of a wise man goes to the

house of such a man, who reproves himself when he is doing wrong, so that he brings forth tears and causes himself to weep for his own sins; and he does not go to the house of joy, where the learned man flatters and deceives, not changing the listeners so they are together as one, but asking for praise and applause from them. Such a teacher, who

is rich in speeches and words, is mourned, and being filled by his knowledge, receives his consolation. Then the

following verses agree with this explanation too, because he says:

7:6-7. It is

better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorns

under the pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this too is vanity. For it is better to be rebuked by a wise man, than to

be deceived by flattering praise.

Similar to this is the passage which says, "better are the wounds

of a friend, than the free kisses of an enemy"¹⁵¹. Just as the sound of sharp thorns under the pot gives out a harsh sound, so the words of a flattering teacher are not of

any use, or the worries of the world, which are interpreted as 'thorns', or the

sound of one who encourages his listeners, or of one who prepares them for the fire which is to come. Let us look at

what Symmachus has to say about the passage that we have as "since just as the sound...fool." Understanding the meaning which we have already explained above, he says, 'for a man is bound in chains by the voice of the ignorant'.

This means that one listener is tied up to the word of such teachers, while the chains of his sins restrain another.

7:8. Surely

oppression makes a wise man mad; and a gift destroys the heart. Now see the wise man as if regarding profit, according

to that passage which says, "accuse the wise and he will love you"¹⁵². Wise, or even having completed his training,

he knows no accusation, and is perturbed by no disaster. We should use this verse if we see disaster

befall a righteous and wise man, and he is perturbed by the unlawfulness of the

judgement, and in that case when God does not come to his mind readily. Instead of this though the Septuagint, and

Aquila and Theodotion interpret the phrase "destroys the heart" as *eutonia autou* that is 'his strength', or 'his vigour'. Symmachus says, "and *matthana* destroys his heart' (that is 'a

gift'), using the Hebrew word in his interpretation, and making the same

meaning as is written elsewhere: "gifts, too, blind the eyes of the wise".¹⁵³

7:9. Better

is the end of a thing than the beginning; Perorations are better in speaking, than just the introductory section. For worry comes to

and end in the former, and commences in the latter. Or it could even mean this: he who begins to hear a speech, and goes to the teacher, is in first place. For indeed he who listens until the last is consumed and complete in learning. But

this can also be understood in this way: while we are in this world, all that

we know is as a beginning; but when that age is completed, we will understand everything as newest and completed. My

Hebrew tutor explained this passage together with the following verse as

follows: it is better for you to ponder the end of your business, than the beginning, and be patient, rather than being seized by the frenzy of impatience. We learn too from this reading that there is no wisdom in men, although it is better to do than to only say that you will do. And since, when the talk had finished, the listener thinks over for himself what has been said, and though he begins to speak, he has not yet understood what he can learn from it. And the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. Since the heavenly one conceded to anger, saying, "anger is better than laughter", lest we think anger is to be praised in suffering, now he says that anger must be removed from deep down inside us. For there he assigns anger instead of correction in sinners, and learning in children. But here he checks impatience. But patience is not only necessary in difficult times, but also in happier times, in case we rejoice more than we should. It seems to me that he who is now called high in the spirit of the Gospel, is in contrast poor in spirit, and is even blessed.

7:10. Be not

hasty in your spirit to be angry: for anger rests in the lap of fools. He does not grant here that anger should be tempered,

therefore he now says, "Be not hasty in your spirit to be angry"; but that when anger is mad and new, it is more easily tempered because it is dispersed easily and can be removed. And

since anger is linked to pride, and the desire for vengeance, he says it is better and above suffering, than he who is exalted in his spirit, and now shows the sign of foolishness, since however powerful or wise someone is esteemed, if he is made angry he will seem foolish in his words: "for anger lies in the lap of fools".

7:11. Do not

ask, 'what is the cause that the former days were better than these?' For you do not enquire wisely about

this. Do not prefer the previous age to this one, since God

created both one and the other. Virtues

create good days for man, and vices make bad days. Do not say therefore that the days were

better in the time of Moses and Christ, than now they are. For even in that time there were more

disbelievers and their days were made wicked by this; now there are more believers,

about whom the Saviour said, "more blessed are they, who did not see or

believe"¹⁵⁴. Or differently: thus you ought to live so

that the days that you live in are always better than those passed, lest you

begin to decrease little by little, it should then be said to you, "you

did run well, who hindered you that you should not have obeyed the truth?"¹⁵⁵;

and again: "you who began in spirit are now consumed by flesh"¹⁵⁶. Or another meaning of this: do not say that

the times of old are better than now, those of Moses better than Christ, that

they were more lawful than full of grace.

For if you were to ask this, you would do it unwisely, not seeing how

much the Gospel differs from the Old Testament.

7:12-13. Wisdom

is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the

sun. For wisdom is a defence, and money

is a defence: but the advantage of knowledge is, that wisdom gives life to

those that have it. A wise man with riches has more glory than

just a wise man alone. For some men need

wisdom, some wealth, but he who is both wise and not rich is able to teach what

is good, but meanwhile he can't show what is to be sought. Therefore he says, since the protection of

wisdom is the protection of money, then just as wisdom protects, so too money

also protects. And lest he seem to

detract from wisdom, while he adds to it by good fortune, (for it is not in our power to obtain riches, which often the unrighteous own in greater quantity), he therefore shows wisdom to be greater, saying "but the advantage of knowledge is, that wisdom gives life to those that have it." In that respect, he says, wisdom is greater than riches, because without any wealth it preserves those who think themselves rich. Certain scholars see this passage in a different way: they say that he places heredity in place of good association, by which we are the heirs of God, and co-heirs of Christ. Therefore Ecclesiastes wants to teach how much of a difference there is between those who merit seeing the sun (of justice), and have wisdom by their good association, and those in contrast, who without wisdom have only enthusiasm for vice and association. Since even David shows this, saying "the intelligent shine out by their speech, as the shining bodies of the sky"¹⁵⁷, or as Theodotion interpreted this, "just as the brightness of the firmament. Indeed those who wrote my speeches are as the stars of the sky".

But we ought to take that protection of silver (or money) according to anagoge¹⁵⁸ from which talents and coins are collected in the parables of the Gospels¹⁵⁹, just as when we were under the protection of wisdom and under the protection of such money: "the sun does not burn us by day, nor the moon by night".¹⁶⁰ But this can even be said to be true since protection is our life on the earth: "the breath of our nostrils, the anointed Christ our Lord of whom we said: under His shadow we should live among the heathen".¹⁶¹ All of our protection in this life is like a shade, or like wisdom, or as is said about money, until the day moves on and the shadows move away. Symmachus interprets this more clearly in his usual manner, saying, "just as wisdom protects, so too money protects in a similar fashion". But the following verse openly encourages the

enthusiasm for knowledge.

7:14. Consider

the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he has made

crooked? Symmachus translates this passage in this

way: "learn the word of God, because no one can correct what He has

ruined". That is he supplies from

the Holy Scriptures, or from thinking of the elements, to know and understand

those things, which are done; but not to ask the causes and reasons why one

thing is done in this way, or why it ought to have been done differently from

the way in which it has been done. For

the sake of this passage, if anyone should ask why God spoke to Moses in this

way: "who makes the dumb and the deaf, the seeing and the blind, am I not

the Lord God?"¹⁶²,

and if he should say, why are the blind, the deaf, the mute created in this

way, and others similar to these? This

passage must be seen in reference to

Psalm 17, in which it is said to the Lord: "You will be Holy with

the holy man, and with the wicked You

will err"¹⁶³. And it must be added that the Holy Lord is

with him, who is holy; and the wicked are with him, who was previously wicked

by his own will. This is similar also to

that which is written in Leviticus: "if the wicked came to me I will go to

them, wicked in my madness".¹⁶⁴ Even this can explain why God hardened the

heart of Pharaoh. For just as one and

the same quality of the sun melts wax and dries clay, and on account of each

one's constitution, both wax melts and clay dries;¹⁶⁵

so too the one quality of the portents of God in Egypt softened the heart of

those who believed, and hardened that of the incredulous, who just as their

hardness and impatient heart, began to store up for themselves anger for the

day of anger from those portents, which they didn't believe, though yet they saw them happen.

7:15. In the

day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also has set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him. I have heard from a certain man in the Church, who was thought to have a knowledge of the Scriptures, that these verses are to be explained in this way: while you remain in the present world, and while you are able to do good work, work hard so that afterwards you may be without worry in the day of wickedness, that is the day of judgement, when you will see others to be tormented. For just as God made the present world, in which we can obtain for ourselves the benefits of good work; so too he made the future age, in which no opportunity will be given for us to do good work.

This man of the Church even seemed to convince those he was preaching to, but to me there seems a different meaning to this, which Symmachus has translated, saying, 'in the good day, be good; but be wary of the day of wickedness'. All the same, God made this world similar to the next, so that man should not be able to find that which he complains against Him. Suffer both the good things, he says, and the bad, as they happen to you in your life. And do not think that there is only the nature of good or bad alone in the world, especially when the world itself consists of opposites: hot and cold, dry and wet, hard and soft, dark and light, bad and good. 166 But God made this ambivalence so that wisdom might have a place, and it is found by choosing good and avoiding bad: man is given free will, lest he argue that he has been made unfeeling, and stupid by God. But God has made man so diverse that man is unable to complain of his manner of being. At the same time this argument is to be taken

with the previous verses, in which he says 'who is able to correct what God has done?'.
7:16. I have

seen all things in the days of my vanity: there is a just man, that dies in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that remains alive in his wickedness. Similar to this is what the Saviour says in the Gospel: "he who finds his soul will lose it, and he who loses it on account of me, will find it"¹⁶⁷. The Maccabees are seen to die on account of their justice by the law and justice of God, and martyrs too, who shed their blood for Christ. On the other hand, those who at that time ate the flesh of pigs and sacrificed to idols after the arrival of the Lord, they are seen to live in this world and to live long lives on account of their wickedness. But it is the endurance of God in secret which causes suffering in those who are not holy, so that they have wickedness in their life, and not to visit sinners for their crimes, and it is as if he saves for the sacrifice so that he can give to the former eternal goodness, and to the latter eternal wickedness. The Hebrews suspect the righteous, who die for their righteousness, the sons of Aaron, since while they think they live righteously, they worship a foreign fire. And they say Manasseh was impious and lived a long life on account of his wickedness, for he then lived a long time in a long reign after having been corrected in prison.

7:17. Do not be too righteous, do not make yourself too wise: why destroy yourself? If you should see a man who is harsh and wild to the extent of sinning against his brothers, so that he pardons neither the sinner in his speaking, or he who is slow on account of natural slowness, know that this man is more righteous than is good. For when the Saviour teaches, saying "Do

not judge, so that you are not judged"¹⁶⁸,
and let none be without sin, even if it was not his life at any given day, the
judgement of God is not ignorant of the weak state of man. Therefore do not be too righteous,
since
accursed conduct in the presence of God carries both a great and a minor
burden. Philosophers have placed virtues
therefore in the middle, and everything which is either too much either above
or below, is thought to be at fault.¹⁶⁹ But he also says, "and do not ask too
much, lest you become confused", or "lest you be amazed". For he knows that our mind cannot
understand
complete wisdom, (or that which is to be measured), and he says that we ought
to know the wisdom which must be measured in our mortality. Then even Paul asked of him that
was able to
know more than man, saying, "why does he yet complain? For who has
resisted his will?"¹⁷⁰ He replies, "O man, who are you that
reply to God?"¹⁷¹,
and so on. If he had heard the causes of
the complaint from the apostle, he who is introduced while he is questioning,
by chance he would have been stupefied by numbness and would have felt useful
gratitude. Since it is a gift according to
that same apostle, which is of no use to him that receives it. The command "do not be too
righteous"¹⁷²
is interpreted by the Hebrew as being about Saul, who felt pity for Agag, whom
the Lord had commanded to be killed. But
even that servant from the Gospel whom the Lord had pardoned¹⁷³,
the Lord himself didn't want to pardon the servant, yet he can be used in this
verse because he was too righteous.

7:18. Do not
be too wicked, and do not be foolish: why should you die before your time? When God says, "I do
not want the death of the

dying, only let him return and live"¹⁷⁴,
it suffices to have sinned only once. We
ought to raise ourselves up after a catastrophe. For just like those who argue about worldly
matters, the swallow knows how to protect its young from poppy seeds, and
wounded roes seek wild marjoram to cure themselves. Then why are we ignorant that the cure of
repentance is proposed for sinners? But
he says, "do not delay in a world that is not yours". We know that Chore, Dathan, and Habiron, on
account of their uprising against Moses and Aaron, were suddenly eaten up by a
gap in the earth, and in emendation of others, many were judged before the day
of judgement even in their lifetime.¹⁷⁵ Therefore he says, "do not add sins to
sins, lest you cause God to punish you"

7:19. It is good

that you should take hold of this, and do not withdraw your hand; for he that
fears God shall come forth of them all. It is good to do good to righteous men, but
also being kind to sinners is not wicked.

It is good to keep slaves faithful to you, but it is advised to do this
only with those who seek your employment.

Even he who fears God and copies his maker, who causes rain to fall over
both the righteous and the wicked, enjoys doing good to all without distinction. Another meaning of
this is, because this life

changes daily with many wretched occurrences, as fortunate as unfortunate, the
spirit should be prepared for righteousness and should ask for the pity of God,
so that whatever happens, he suffers with a free conscience. For he who fears God is neither
raised to
fortune, nor crushed by misfortune.

7:20-21. Wisdom

strengthens the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city. For there is not a just man on
the earth,
that does good and does not sin. Therefore wisdom strengthens the righteous,
and not even the aid of all the citizens of the city can help him, for although

someone may be righteous, yet while he is alive he is subject to vices and sins, and he therefore needs greater protection. Another reading of this is: the ten who hold power and are in the city are angels, who have arrived at the complete number of 'denarii' and are here to help mankind.

But if anyone should consider different types of help, the aid of wisdom is better, because that is the aid of our Lord Jesus Christ. For after the angels said, "we would have protected Babylon yet it is not now protected, so let us leave it, and let each one of us go out unto his own land"¹⁷⁶. Then the teacher of doctors himself came down and healed us with a touch of His finger, we who were spattered with blood, and wet with the blood of sinners, we who weigh out all our possessions against healing. But He healed in that city which is in that world, and 'strengthened in wisdom' or as the Septuagint says 'helped'. For it is given and added to everyone who possesses it. But the man who sins greatly is stuck in deep and needs more help: therefore Wisdom herself came to his aid. Another meaning of this verse is: above he had said that one should be kind to both the good and the wicked: therefore someone was able to reply: though I want to be kind to all men, I have not the power with which to do this. And a righteous man does not have such riches, which normally come more abundantly to sinners. Therefore he now says, those whom you can't help with money, help with advice and comfort them with solace. For one is more able to excel in these ways than any of the greatest of potentates. And you would be wise to do this, for the scale of justice is great, and must decide for whom, how much, how long, and of what sort, help is given, either with monetary support or with advice.

7:22-23. And do

not heed all words that are spoken, lest you hear your servant curse you. For often your own heart knows that you

likewise have cursed others. Make sure to do only those things which have been taught, and strengthened by the help of wisdom, prepare yourself for either good or bad outcomes, and don't worry about what your enemies might say about you, or what kind of reputation you have.

For just as a cautious man should not hear his servant complain about him, so he should not want to hear what is said about him in his absence, (for if he did this he would always be troubled and incensed to anger by the muttering of the servant). Therefore it is befitting for a wise man to walk with wisdom following him, and not to dwell upon unfounded rumours. But he teaches by another example that the righteous man ought not to worry what men say, saying, 'just as your conscience knows what you have said about others, and that you have often maligned others, so you ought to pardon others when they think badly of you.' At the same time he teaches that it is difficult to judge for one who has a rod in his eye, not to speak about the rod of another.

7:24-25. I have

proved all this by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me. That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out? Just as is attested in the Book of Kings¹⁷⁷

he says that he sought wisdom more than other men, and tried to reach the pinnacle, but the more he sought, the less he found, and in the midst of his confusion, he was surrounded by the darkness of ignorance. But at another time, regarding him who was

learned in the Scriptures- the more he wanted to know, the more a greater obscurity arose each day for him.

Another meaning of this is: he seems to mean that contemplation of wisdom in this life is like looking in a mirror or at a picture; therefore if I look at my face in the mirror in the future I'll think back to the way it used to be, and then in the liquid pool I'll recognise that I differ greatly from

the way I used to be.

7:26-27. I

applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason

of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and

madness. And I find that woman is more

bitter than death, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands are as bands:

whoever pleases God shall escape her; but the sinner shall be taken by her. The Septuagint here has: "I even applied my heart

that I should know". Symmachus has

interpreted this saying, 'I have looked into all things with my reasoning to

know, to distinguish and to find out.'

Since therefore Ecclesiastes had said above that he had tried to know

all wisdom and the more he sought it the more it eluded him, now he says even

that he sought out another thing in his wisdom, for wickedness precedes all

things in human affairs, and that affair is first and foremost in impiety,

stupidity, madness, and insanity. He

also says that he found woman to be the cause of all evil, since through her,

death came into the world and took the most prized spirits of men. And even for all adulterers, it is like there

is a coat of mail on their heart, the heart that makes the souls of adolescents

soar upwards. And when this happens to

the mind of a wretched lover, it pushes him into first position, and he is not

allowed to look back at his feet, but like a snare or noose it ensnares the

heart of a youth. 'For he has chains

around his wrists', which Aquila interpreted as being, 'for his hands are in

chains'. For he can convince, but he

doesn't have the strength and can't pull himself to those who are

unwilling. Those things destroy him, who

was righteous and good before God; but the sinner who has been captured will be

led down to his death. Let us not think

that Solomon held this opinion about women thoughtlessly, he speaks only those things that he has experienced. For this reason he fears God, since women have captured him. And these interpretations are very literal. But according to the spiritual understanding of this passage, either we should take every sin made in general, and call it 'woman' and 'wickedness', for example, she who sits behind the façade of woman in Zechariah above the talent of lead.¹⁷⁸ Or we can take woman to be the devil metaphorically on account of effeminate men; or indeed idolatry, and so that we might proceed more closely, the church or heretics, which calls the fool to itself by reasoning, so that he receives stolen bread, and stolen water, the false sacrament, and is led to be baptised in polluted water.

7:28-30. Behold,

I have found this, says the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account. Which still my soul seeks, but

I have not found it. I have found one man among a thousand, but one woman among all those I have not found. Only this have I found: that God has made man righteous, but he has sought out many inventions. He says, "I found this", teaching all things diligently, that by sinning little by little, and adding one crime on top of another, we amass a great number of sins for ourselves. 'esebon' even, which all translate as logismon in Greek, according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew language can be said by us to be 'number', 'sum', 'account', and 'consideration'. But, he says, my spirit sought even this question of whether woman is rightly found to be guilty. And although I found scarcely any men to be good, thus so that only one from a thousand can be found, I couldn't even find one woman to be completely good. For all of them have led me not to virtue but to self-indulgence. And because man's heart is predisposed towards wickedness from boyhood, and almost all of us offend God in some way,

in this failing of mankind, women are more prone to this fate. The famous poet says about this: "inconstant and always changeable is woman"¹⁷⁹. And the apostle says, "always learning yet never arriving at the knowledge of the truth"¹⁸⁰. But he does not condemn this nature as being common to all mankind, or say that God the creator does evil things, because he is the creator of these things, but he warns subtly those who are not able to avoid evil, and says that we are created good by God; but he also says that because we are left with our own free-will to deteriorate into a worse and worse state through our own vices, while we seek greater things and contemplate many things beyond our strength. Differently:

while I consider the reason behind each and every one of these verses, I have found no thought, which is not perturbed from outside by wicked thoughts. But in a thousand men I have found one man,

who is made in the image of his creator; and not in a thousand of any kind, but of one thousand men. There is not a like number of women corresponding to men. In the thousand,

those who have not been close to a woman have therefore remained the most pure. But all this must be taken as a metaphor. In many though, who enthuse and every day sweat in their thinking, scarcely can there be found one pure thought, that is worthy of the name of man.

We can take thoughts for men though, and women for work, and say that the thoughts of man can only be seen as pure with great difficulty. But since the body does work, it is always mixed up with some fault. But instead of that which we said above interpreting the Hebrew phrase, "one upon another, so that a great accumulation is made" we could either say 'account', or 'thought'; Symmachus interprets this more clearly, saying, "one upon another makes an amount". And we are accustomed to call this complete and neutral, which I sought and had wanted to find. The Hebrews name this in the

case of females, just as in the phrase "I sought one from God, this I ask"¹⁸¹,

in place of that which is one.¹⁸²

CHAPTER 8

8:1. Who is like the wise man? And who knows what things mean? A man's wisdom lights up his face, and the

boldness of his face is transformed. He had taught above that it is hard to find

a good man, and he had answered the question to the contrary, saying that men

are made good by God, but that they fall into sin because of their own free

will. Now he lists what qualities God

has given to a good man, to show his glory: wisdom obviously, and reason and

providence, and he knows that the secrets that are hidden by God enter his

heart. But he is also talking about

himself here indirectly, because no one was as wise as Solomon was, and none

answered the problems he set. And

because his wisdom was praised by all, wisdom which he not only carried on the

inside, but also wore on the surface of his skin, and which shone from his

face, he moreover imbued all men with the wisdom which shone forth from his

visage. Where we have, 'who is like the

wise man?' the Septuagint reads: "who knows wise men?" and where we

read, 'the boldness of his face is transformed', the Septuagint has, "and

the unwise is disliked by his face".

And although in fact there are many, who engage themselves in the

pursuit of wisdom, it is found with great difficulty, but he is able to tell a

wise man though from those, who only seem to be wise. Though too there are even many more, who say

that they are able to let themselves tell the secrets of the Scriptures, it is

not common however, that one will actually find the true answer. But what follows- "the wisdom of a man

will light up his face and the wicked is hated by his face" - can be

explained in the way that Paul explains it: "but we all see the glory of God with our face uncovered"¹⁸³. The writer of the Psalms also says, "the light of your face shines down upon us, O Lord"¹⁸⁴. But he says that the wisdom of man is not different from the wisdom of God.

Although it is the wisdom of God, it then begins to be also a part of the human faculty, but only when it is in him who merits wisdom. Every heretic, who defends his false

doctrines, shows his foolishness on his face.

Then Marcion and Valentinus say that they are of a better nature than the Creator himself! This can be seen in another way, if they contend to hope for this wisdom, but do not already possess it.

8:2-4. I

counsel you: Obey the king's command, and that in the manner of an oath of God. Do not hasten to leave his

presence, do not persist in an evil thing; for he can do whatever he pleases. Since a king's word is law, who

dare say to him, 'what are you doing?' Here he seems to teach the same as the apostle - that we should obey kings and rulers, which is set out in the

Septuagint as a command: "guard the command of the king"; but

personally I think he is now talking about that king about whom David says,

"Lord, the king will be happy in your virtue"¹⁸⁵. And in another passage, where it means the

one reign of the Father and of the Son, the text reads, "God, give your

judgement to the king, and your righteousness to the son of the king".¹⁸⁶ For the Father does not judge each one, but

gives each judgement to the Son.

Moreover, that king who is the Son of God, is the son of the Father who

is the King. Therefore His precepts

should be kept, His will done. And this

is exactly what is written in the book of Tobit: "it is good to hide the

secret of the king"¹⁸⁷. He warns in particular why we should not ask why God has taught every single thing, but see that teaching as a commandment, and this is what an impious man hastens to fulfil. Then let his will be the same as that of God's law. But because the Septuagint translates this differently, saying, "do not hasten to run away from God's presence", nor his judgement or his word, you must know that God's judgement is written in the divine will. Therefore we ought not to recount to anyone or make public this judgement, which is taken to be sacred and secret from the word of God, nor should we form rash opinions from it. We should not, too, hasten like Moses, to see the face of God, but rather wait a while until He Himself passes by and then we will only see Him passing. Nor too should we do what follows: do not persist in an evil thing, and so on, especially as we understand, like one who has already come into the madness of heresy, or as he, who although having faith in the Church, is still overcome by sins, so that he is unfaithful. Do not persevere in what is wrong, or in swearing, indulgence, greed, or lust. For if you do the king of vices and devil of sins will fashion in you your end, and he will be able to do whatever he wants with you.

8:5. He who

obeys the commandment will know no evil; and a wise man will know time and justice. Notice here in particular that 'he will know no evil' has been written instead of 'he will not suffer' or even 'evil will not be in him'. Likewise it has also been written about the Saviour, "for he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin."¹⁸⁸ Instead of 'evil' too Symmachus interprets this phrase as saying, "he who keeps the commandment will experience no wickedness". But he teaches that we should keep the command of a king, and know why and when he orders.

8:6-7. For

everything has its time and justice, for man's evil overwhelms him. Indeed he does not know what will happen, for

when it happens , who will tell him? Many good and bad things can befall a man,

but even a righteous man is not able to know what will befall him, or know the

causes and reasons for each thing, (for no one can know what will happen), but

he does know that all things are done by God to the advantage of man, and

nothing is done without His will. For

this is a great sufferance for mankind, since as the poet says: "the mind

of man knows not his lot and coming fate"¹⁸⁹. If he hopes for one thing, then another

happens; he expects the enemy to come from one direction and is wounded by a

spear from the opposite direction. But

here Theodotion and the Septuagint have said, "since the knowledge of man

overwhelms him", the Hebrew has 'wickedness' not 'knowledge'. But because the Hebrew letters 'Resh' and

'Daleth' are similar without the serif, instead of raath they have read daat, that

is instead of 'wickedness', 'knowledge'.

This is easier to understand if you have knowledge of the language. Note too, that which is written at the end of

the verse: 'since he doesn't know what has been, and what will be after him,

who will tell him?' I have translated

word for word here from the Hebrew text, so that we can see that there is a

different meaning, since we are clearly not able to know those things which

have already passed away, or those that will be, as they have yet to be done.

8:8. Man is

powerless over the spirit-to restrain the spirit; nor is there authority over

the day of death; nor discharge in war; and wickedness cannot save the

wrong-doer. Our mind does not have the power to prevent

the spirit from being taken from us, and when the spirit leaves to the realm of

God, it helps nothing to shut out mouth and hold in our fleeting life. And when we are dead, the enemy of our life

will come and we are not able to take any rest.

Note too the kings in one age, which destroying all our things

irreligiously led us by the hands to our death, but we were taken into the ashes and the earth. Therefore we must

not mourn if we cannot know the future and we are often oppressed by more powerful and wicked men, for all things end in death: for the proud and the powerful the same end; he who has devastated all things does not deserve to keep his life when it is taken away.

Another meaning could be that the spirit that is the source of life

cannot be prevented from leaving any man, this is the rule of mortality. Above too he also spoke of this: "turning,

turning goes the wind"¹⁹⁰. We have no power in the day of our death, but when we are alive our enemy is easily avoided.

Similarly he who is in time of war and does not have the peace of God,

which overpowers all feeling, he will not have any discharge therefrom, about

which it is said to a bride, "your discharge is paradise with the fruit of apples"¹⁹¹. And because piety will not save him who has

it, piety will save the opposite, and impiety can be called the Devil and piety our Lord Jesus Christ.

8:9-11. All

this have I seen; and I applied my mind to see every deed that is done under

the sun: there is a time when one man rules over another to his detriment. And then I saw the wicked buried and newly

come while those who had done right were gone from the Holy place and were forgotten in the city. This too is

vanity! Because the sentence for

wrong-doing is not executed quickly- that is why men are encouraged to do evil. I have dedicated my heart, he says, that I should see

all that is done under the sun, and this too, that man takes up arms against man, so that he afflicts and condemns those whom he wants. And so when I began to look upon those things

I saw that the impious were dead by such belief and buried, and were deemed holy in the earth, but those who were living were thought to be worthy of the Church, and the temple of God, the bombastic walking above were praised for their wickedness. "For the sinner is praised for the laxity of his soul, and he who is wicked is blessed"¹⁹². But this happens moreover because no one dares to confront sinners and God does not immediately give punishment for crimes, but rather postpones, so that we must await our repentance. But since those who sin are not immediately arrested and accused, they think with little regard that their judgement will be in the future, and continue in their crime.

We can see how this evidence pertains to certain bishops, who come to power in the Church, and speak ill of those, which had taught and had urged them to follow better pursuits. These men are very often praised after death in the Church, and blessed for those things, which they in all likelihood did not even do, or openly are warned by their successors or the congregation.

And even this is vanity, since while they live they do not heed advice and are not immediately visited for their sins, (since none dares accuse his superior), besides they act as if holy and blessed, and as if they are walking in the precepts of the Lord, and they increase their sins one on top of another. Such an accusation of a bishop is difficult. For you see, if he has sinned, it is not believed, and if he is accused, he is not punished.

8:12. Because

a sinner does what is wrong an hundred times and He is patient with him, yet nevertheless I am aware that it will be well with those who fear God that they may fear Him. Because a sinner has done many wicked deeds,

this is what is meant by, 'an hundred times': God gives a time for repentance, and does not punish him immediately for his crime, but he waits so that he is converted by his wickedness. I

understand how good-willing and forgiving God will be to those who fear Him and tremble at His word. Symmachus

translated this passage as, "For a sinner dies wicked, long-life is granted him". More precisely I know

that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear His face, but it will not be well for the wicked, and he will not live long, for he does not fear God. And because what Symmachus

translated is clear, we can say that the Hebrew word *maath* is what the Septuagint has translated as 'from then on',

which we have here as 'an hundred times'.

Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion have interpreted 'he has died' as "he has sinned and done evil, and is dead", because for that which he sinned, he immediately dies. But

according to the interpretation of the Septuagint, instead of 'he is dead' we read 'from then on', and according to that interpretation, the meaning is, 'a sinner does not sin at first when he seems to sin, but already even before he has sinned': "Sinners are estranged from the womb, they have erred since they were in the stomach"¹⁹³. And they ask this that follows- "they have spoken falsity", just as he explains for a simple understanding, there seems to be no reason that child sinners speak lies as soon as they come out of the womb.

8:13. And it

will not be well with the wicked, and he will not live long-like a shadow-because he does not fear God. He invokes wickedness upon those who do not fear God, and desires that they do not wait long for their punishment, but rather are crucified and immediately put to death, this punishment is for those

who merit such a death. This is similar

to what the apostle says: "I would that those who annoy us were put to death."¹⁹⁴ And in another place "Alexander the coppersmith

did me much evil, may the Lord reward him according to his works."¹⁹⁵ We must ask though how these things are said

so mildly. This is very true to the

Hebrew meaning of this verse. But we can

follow the Septuagint's interpretation, which seems to take another meaning,

and says, "and I know, since those who fear God will be well, that they

fear his face, and the wicked will not be well, and his day will not be long in

shadows, who does not fear God." He

could have said this: 'let there also be those things which I considered a

little earlier', but I know clearly that those fearing God will be well;

"for the face of God is above those who do wickedness"¹⁹⁶. And the wicked will not be well, for he does

not fear God and his days will not be longer in shadows. This is the day of his life, which is like a shadow for the living. Not by this do

those who live for a long time lengthen their days, but they make them great

with the number of their good deeds. As

if confessing himself to be a sinner, Jacob says about this: "few and

wicked are these days of mine"¹⁹⁷. And confessing in the Psalm he says, "my

days are inclined like shadows, and I am like the hay of the field"¹⁹⁸. Not because he has sought a long life in the

present world, in which all that we live is brief and looks like shadow:

"for man walks in His likeness"¹⁹⁹,

but because he fears the future, lest the length of his life, if it is indeed

life, should be short.

8:14. There

is a futility that takes place on earth: sometimes there are righteous men who

are treated as if they had done according to the deeds of the wicked; and there

are wicked men who are treated as if they had done the deeds of the righteous. I declared, this, too, is vanity. Amongst other vanities, which are borne in the world by good and bad events, even this I have found to be vain, since those things often happen to the righteous which ought to happen to the wicked, and the wicked live happily in the world that you would think that they were the more righteous! He gives the example in the Gospel of the rich courtier and poor Lazarus.²⁰⁰ The seventy-second Psalm also talks about the matter of why bad things happen to good men and vice-versa. But where we read, 'there is a futility that takes place on earth', Symmachus translates this fully, saying, "it is difficult to understand what is done on earth". The Hebrews interpret the righteous who suffer wickedness as the sons of Aaron, and Manasseh, because the former died while sacrificing, and the latter was restored to power after much wickedness and captivity.

8:15. So I praised enjoyment, for man has no other aim under the sun but to eat, drink, and be joyful; and this will accompany him in his toil during the days of his life which God has given him beneath the sun.

I have interpreted this more fully above, and now I shall just speak cursorily. He is allowed to prefer to eat and drink, which is the enjoyment (and must be short and end quickly) in the dire-straits of his life, and in light of those things, which are seen to happen unfairly in the world, (since man seems to have only this in return for his toil), he enjoys only modest recompense. But if the interpretation is read in the way it has been written, it reproves the wretched, the fasting and the hungry, the thirsty and the mourners, whom the Lord calls blessed in the Gospel²⁰¹. And we regard food and drink spiritually and above this happiness, which we are scarcely able to find in the toil of our

life. But because these things are expressed in this way, as I have said, the following verse shows this too, which says, "I dedicated my heart to seeing wisdom and work", since clearly men work on earth, and consider deeply the Scriptures day and night in this way so that sleep flees from their eyes, in return for their study.

8:16-17. When I

applied my heart to see wisdom and work which takes place on earth- for even day or night its eyes see no sleep. And

I perceived all the work of God. Indeed

man cannot fathom the events that occur under the sun, inasmuch as man tries strenuously to search, but cannot fathom it.

And even though a wise man should presume to know, he cannot know

it. He searches for the causes and understanding of the

world, why this or that is done, and for what reason the world is steered by

good or bad turns of events; why one is born blind and frail, another born

healthy and with sight; why one is poor, another rich; why one is of high

birth, another inglorious. Nothing else

is of use, unless he is tortured in his search, and has an argument instead of

anguish, but he does not find what he is looking for. And when he says that he knows, then he has

the beginning of ignorance in him, and starts to sink into deeper madness. But he shows later that justice is the cause

of all things, why things happen the way they do, but that those causes hide in

secret and are not able to be understood by men.

CHAPTER 9

9:1. For all

this I noted and I sought to ascertain all this: that the righteous and the

wise together with their actions are in the Hand of God; whether love or hate

man does not know; all preceded them. Symmachus also interprets this more clearly,

saying: I kept all these things in my heart so that I could expound all things,

since the righteous and the wise, along with their works are in the hand of God. And besides neither friendship, nor hatred is known to man; yet all things are not certain in their presence, because they happen similar to all, both to the righteous and to the wicked alike. More precisely the meaning is this: I dedicated my heart even to this and wanted to know whom it is that God loves, and whom He hates. And I found too that even the work of the righteous is in the hand of God, but though, whether they are loved by God or not, now they know it cannot be and they remain undecided as to whether they should keep on doing what they are doing until it is approved, or pray. In the future therefore they will know and all will be on their faces, that is 'will precede them' when they leave this life. Knowledge of that matter then will come to them, since then is the judgement, but now the struggle. And whosoever remains confused as to whether they should keep on through the love of God, as Job, or through hate, as several sinners, will not be able to know for certain.

9:2. All

things come alike to all; the same fate awaits the righteous and the wicked, the good and the clean and the unclean, the one who brings a sacrifice and the one who does not. As is the good man so is the sinner, as is the one who swears, so is the one who fears an oath. These things which in themselves are neither good nor bad but are called 'in-between' by the wise, (since equally things happen to both the righteous and the wicked), they perturb each single man, especially as to why they should happen thus, and therefore do not think they are being judged, while there will be a distinction between all things in the future when they have been done, yet now all things are confused. But he says: "there is one outcome for the just and the unjust", he means either the outcome of hardships or of

death, and therefore they do not know the kingdom of God nor His hate. Those who bring sacrifice and those who do

not, and others in contrast who are not listed here must be seen in a spiritual understanding, according to that verse which says, "sacrifice to God with a troubled spirit"²⁰².

9:3-4. This is

an evil about all things that are done under the sun: that the same fate awaits all Therefore the heart of man is full of evil; and madness is in their heart while they live; and after that, they go to the dead. Symmachus interprets this in his usual clearer way, saying, "but even the heart of mankind is filled with wickedness and impudence like their heart in life". But all of them succumb to death, for who is able to continually live forever? The Scripture has the same meaning regarding this.

I said a little earlier, that when both good and bad things happen equally to everyone, there is no difference between good and bad, for we are taken from this life by indiscriminate death.

Nonetheless we are filled with wrongdoings and impudence and wickedness, and after all these trials in life we are suddenly taken by death and afterwards we cannot consort with the living.

Or indeed it could mean this: since the same difficulties afflict both the just and the unjust, men are therefore provoked to commit sins. Then after he has tried all things, which are done in vain, while he is unknowing, he descends to the world of the dead. For he who is attached to all living has hope, a live dog is better than a dead lion.

9:5-6. For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing at all; there is no more reward for them, their memory is forgotten. Their love, their hate, their jealousy have already perished- nor will they ever again have a share in whatever is done beneath the sun. Since he has said above that the heart of

man is filled with wickedness and impudence, and after all things, his life comes to an end in death, then now he completes this by saying that he has discovered that while men live, they are able to become righteous, but after death are given no opportunity to do good work.

For the sinner who lives can be better than the dead and righteous man, if he wishes to convert to his virtues.

Or indeed as for him, who threw himself into wickedness, power, and impudence, then died: any poorest beggar is better than him. Why? Because the living can carry out good work in the fear of death, but the dead can do nothing to add to that which they took away from their life when they died. And all things are forgotten, just

as it is written in the Psalm: "I have been given to forget, though dead from my heart"²⁰³. But even their enjoyment, hatred and jealousy, and all that they were able to hold in their time, comes to an end with their death; nor can they do anything now in their righteousness or sin, or add to their virtues, or to their vices.

Certain men though can argue against this explanation, asserting that we can even grow after death, and equally decrease, and quoting that verse which says, "and they will not share yet in all that is done under the sun", and they understand it in this way, so that they say that they have no communion in this world, and under this sun that we can see. But they say that they do have it in another

world, about which the Saviour says,

"I am not of this world"²⁰⁴,

and under the sun of justice, but I have not excluded this theory, which contends that after we leave this earth, we are able to offend reasoning creatures, and deserve what we get. My

Hebrew tutor thought differently of the verse, which says, "a living dog is better than a dead lion". He explained

it in this way according to the beliefs of his people: an unlearned man is more useful, he who still lives and can teach, than a trained teacher who is now dead. Because of the text he understands it to mean any one dog is better than many teachers, and the lion is Moses, or any other prophet. But because I don't

like this explanation I prefer a better one; and Chananaea to whom it is said:

"your faith saves you"²⁰⁵,

we say he is a dog according to the Gospel.

But a dead lion, for the people of circumcision is just the same as for

Balaam, the prophet, who says, "behold the people shall rise up as a great

lion, and shall lift up himself as a young lion"²⁰⁶. Therefore we are a living dog amongst the

other nations; but the Jewish people which has been left by God, is a dead

lion. And that living dog is seen as

better in God's eyes than a dead lion.

For we who are living know the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The dead though can know nothing, or await

any recompense and profit, since their memory is complete. They don't remember what they ought to know,

and God does not remember them.

Enjoyment too, for which they often loved God, will die, and hatred as

well, about which they say boldly, "surely I hate those who hate You, O

Lord, and am I not grieved with those that rise up against You?"²⁰⁷. And there does not exist their jealousy,

similar to the Phinees, and the knees of Matathia trembled.²⁰⁸ But it is very clear that a part of them is

not in that world, for they are not able to say, "my part is the

Lord".²⁰⁹

9:7-8. Go, eat

your bread with joy and drink your wine with a glad heart, for God has already approved your deeds. Let your garments

always be white, and your head never lack oil.

Regarding the

passage until that verse where he says: 'like fish caught in a fatal net, like birds seized in a snare, so are men caught in the moment of disaster when it falls upon them suddenly'.²¹⁰ Before I discuss them individually, it will be useful to link them together, so that it can be seen how all pertain to the same meaning. Because in a preceding chapter he had said that after men have died they are cut off from the heart of the living, and no one loves or hates them, as according to the poet, who says, "there is no struggle from the dead, who lack breath"²¹¹. And because they can do no more under the

sun, now he introduces the idea of human madness and habit, whereby men of this world encourage themselves in turn to enjoy good things; and prosopopoiian, using this in the manner

of rhetoricians and poets, saying: "O man, since there is nothing for you after death, and death herself hears not my complaint, and while you live this brief life, take pleasure in enjoyment, hold feasts, suppress your worries with wine, and understand, since they are all given by God to be used by you. Wear white clothes, and let your head smell

of ointments, and whichever woman pleases you, enjoy her embrace, thus lead this empty and vain life in empty and vain pleasure. For you will not have anything more than this, which you enjoy. Whatever you like, grasp quickly, lest it disappears.

You shouldn't fear the vain things mentioned, for the reason for each individual work, either good or bad, will be given to you in the world of the dead. And there is no wisdom in death, no sense of this life after passing away.

He also says that Epicurus, Aristippus, and the philosophers of Cyrene²¹², and other of the philosophical flock hold this belief. But I prefer my own ideas, and I do not find, as some people think incorrectly, that everything happens by chance, and good

and bad fate plays on human lives. I

rather believe that everything happens by the order of God. For the fast runner should not think of his

running when he runs, nor a strong man have faith in his strength, or a wise

man think amassing great riches and wealth is prudent; the learned and

well-spoken should not be able to find himself amongst a flattering crowd

because of his eloquence and learning, but by attributing all things to be done

by God. And unless he has ruled all

things in his own judgement, and built his own home, then they worked in vain,

who built it. Except if he built a city,

those, who watch over it, will stay awake in vain. For it is not as they think it is, that there

is one outcome and uncertainty in this life, since they do not think so, who

are suddenly taken away by death and taken to their judgement. And just as fish are caught by a spear or in

nets, and birds are ensnared in a noose whilst they fly through the air

unknowing, in the same way men are led away to eternal prayer on account of

their merits, when sudden death comes and judges against them, who thought all

things in life happened by uncertainty.

This is similar to that meaning by which we wanted to understand all

things in brief. Now he speaks not as if

from another person's mouth, but for himself, each phrase must be looked at on

its own: "Go, eat your bread with joy and drink your wine with a glad

heart, for God has already approved your deeds". Since you learned that all things end with

death, and that repentance is not in the world of the dead, and that there is

no recourse to virtues, while you are in that situation, then hasten, struggle,

repent, while you still have the time.

For God acknowledges repentance freely.

Another meaning could be, that simply understanding is of use, according

to that verse, which says, "whether therefore you eat, or drink, or

whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."²¹³ And

in another place: drink wine with warning"214. For he who uses up more than his means does not have true happiness and a good heart.

But it is better to think this: the works of this man pleased God, nonetheless he had need of bread and wine, because he has been spurned from the vineyard of Sorek. Therefore this teaching has been given to us, as he says, "if you desire wisdom, then keep the commandments and the Lord shall give it to you"215. Let us then keep the commandments and we will be able to find bread and wine for the spirit.

But he who does not keep the commandments prides himself in the abundance of his bread and wine, and Isaiah says to him, "do not even say, I know it, you do not know, or recognise, and your ears have not heard from the beginning, for I knew that you would deal very treacherously"216. More precisely as it is said in the interpretation given in the Septuagint: Come, eat your bread in happiness, this is the word of Ecclesiastes, who even speaks in the Gospel: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."217

And in Proverbs: "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine. Let your clothes be white forever and may

your hair be oiled218. He therefore says, have a clean body and be merciful. Or in this way: 'let there not be a time in which you do not have white clothes, beware lest you by accident put on clothes that are not clean'. A

known sinner was once described to have enjoyed dirty clothes. But you should put on the light, not the

malediction, which was also written about Judah: "let a curse be worn like clothes"219. Wear by your skin mercy, kindness, humility, mildness and patience. And when you have been stripped, as an old man, of your work, take on new work, which is renewed each day. He also says, "and let your hair not lack oil", you must remember that this is the nature of ointment,

that it reflects light and reduces the work of tiredness. It is spiritual ointment, the ointment of exultation, about which is written: "therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your friends"²²⁰. This oil must gladden our face. This oil must be put on the head of a faster, for sinners cannot have it, about whom it is said, "they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment"²²¹. But they have a different ointment, which the righteous man abhors, saying, "the oil of a sinner will not stain my head"²²². Heretics have this oil and wish to pour it over the heads of their beguilers.

9:9. Enjoy

life with the wife you love through all the fleeting days of your life that He has granted you under the sun, all of your futile existence; for that is your compensation in life and in your toil which you exert under the sun. Follow wisdom and knowledge of the Scriptures, while you are joined in matrimony to your wife, as it is said in Proverbs: "love her and she will serve you: embrace her and she will embrace you too"²²³. But the day of vanity, the day of this world means nothing. The apostle mentions this too, and he says, "live life with the woman that you love", but this is said in ambiguity, either live or contemplate life both you yourself and your wife with you, for you will not be able to live life alone without such a wife, or consider each one and live life, and consider the woman in the days of your vanity. And he words this carefully, so that we seek the true life with our wife and wisdom in the days of our vanity. For this is our lot and the fruit of our toil, if we, retired, are able to find this true life.

9:10. Whatever

you are able to do with your strength, do it.

For there is neither doing, nor reckoning, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in

the grave where you are going. Do whatever you are presently able to do, and toil at it, because when you go down to the world of the dead there will be no place for repentance. Similar to this is what is taught by the Saviour: "work hard, while there is still day left; for night will come, when none is able to work"²²⁴, but he says this: "to the grave where you are going", remember too that you believe Samuel was also in the grave, and before the advent of Christ, all men were retained by the law of the dead, however holy they were. More precisely, the holy were retained after the resurrection of the Lord in vain in the grave, and the apostle notes this, remarking, "it is better to die and be with Christ"²²⁵. But he is with Christ, so that he might not be held back in the grave.

9:11. Once

more I saw under the sun that the race is not won by the swift; nor the battle by the strong, nor does bread come to the wise, riches to the intelligent, nor favour to the learned; but time and death will happen to them all. He who is bound by manacles and by heavy lead chains is oppressed: "for wickedness sits upon a talent of lead"²²⁶, and in the Psalm it says, "they weigh on me like a heavy burden"²²⁷. It is not talking about that race, about which is said, "I took up the race, and I kept my faith"²²⁸. But that man is swift and his spirit is not weighed down, nonetheless even he is not able to arrive at the goal without God helping him. But when there has been a war against adverse leaders, about whom it is written, "make war sacred"²²⁹, even a strong man will not be able to win with his own strength. This is also true of the sons of man and the wise who cannot have living bread for the spirit, except through encouraging wisdom: "Come, eat my bread"²³⁰. And since there are riches, about which the apostle says, "riches come through good deeds"²³¹, and in another place, "you have been made rich in every utterance and

knowledge"²³²;

it must be understood that a wise man cannot amass these riches, unless he receives them from God, who possesses them.

In another place these riches are mentioned too: "redemption of the spirit for man is his own riches"²³³. However learned a man is, he will not be able to find grace too, unless accompanied by wisdom and given by God. Paul also knows this: "I worked more

than all men," he says, "yet not I but the grace of God which was with me". Then again he says, "His grace in me was not in vain". And right to the end man

does not know when the time will come, when the unknown fate and end of all things will come. This reading is

according to anagoge. But in order to explain this more easily, I

should mention that the epistle to the Romans agrees with this

verse: "So then it is not of him that wants, nor of him that runs,

but of God that shows mercy."²³⁴ He also says this: "there is no bread

for the wise", this example is proved every day for many people, who

although they are very wise, still do not have the necessary sustenance for

life. And: "there is no grace for

the knowledgeable". For you may see

in the Church that the ignorant and unskilled prosper. And this is both because they have nourished

their boldness, and followed the fluency of their tongue, while they do not

think about what they say, they think that they are wise and learned, and as if

they have the greatest favour of the populous, which delights and is brought

together more by more polished words. On

the other hand a learned man lies in obscurity and suffers persecution; and not

only does he not have grace in the people's eyes, but also fades away through

poverty and hunger. But these things

happen because all things occur by uncertainty, and there is no retribution of

merit in this world, but in the future.

9:12. For man does not even know his

time, like fish caught in a fatal net, like birds seized in a snare, so are men

caught in the moment of disaster when it falls upon them suddenly. I have already said above, that while men are yet

unknowing, either disaster or death befalls them. More precisely we should look at this as

allegory, that the realm of the sky is similar to a net cast into the sea; and

on the other hand heretics have nets, in which they capture fish, leading to

their death. Their net though is affable

language, flattering speeches, feigned or forced fasting, poor clothes, and an

imitation of virtues. And if they begin

to argue about the divine and raise their face to the heavens to seek the

heights of God, then they cast a noose into the heavenly abodes. So just as fish and birds are seized of a

sudden by such a net, and by such a noose, so wickedness is increased many

times and the kindness of many fails; and the signs and portents are seen in

such a way as to entice even the chosen of God if possible. See too those men of the Church, who are

called the children of men, and are of modest faith, and who can be overcome

quickly. Note too, that the term sons of men is used throughout the whole

book, and the Hebrew has sons of man,

this is 'the sons of Adam'. And almost

all scripture is filled with this idiom that sees the sons of Adam as the sons

of all men.

9:13-15. This,

too, I have observed about wisdom under the sun, and it affected me profoundly:

there was a small town with only a few inhabitants; and a mighty king came upon

it and surrounded it, and built great siege works over it. Present in the city was a poor wise man who

by his wisdom saved the town. Yet no one

remembered that poor man. While some people say that all things are uncertain, and that the righteous have no more than the wicked, I see even the greatest wisdom in this verse, because it happens repeatedly that there is a small township with only a few inhabitants, and it is surrounded by an army of a very powerful enemy, and the people inside is killed by the siege and by hunger. And suddenly and unexpectedly a poor man is found, who has more wisdom than all the rich men, than all those powerful and pompous men who are in danger, and who fear the siege. And he thinks, seeks and finds an answer as to how the town might be saved from the oppressors. But O ungrateful oblivion of men, after they were freed from bondage and released from captivity, and the freedom was given back to the fatherland, no one remembers that wise old man, no one gives thanks for their salvation, but all show honour to the rich, who were able to do nothing to help when in time of danger.

My Hebrew tutor interpreted this passage differently: the small town, he says, is man, who even amongst learned men is called less clean. And the few men in the town, are the members

by which the man shields and covers himself.

But when a great king comes against it, that is the devil, and he searches for a place by which he might break through, and in the town is found a poor and wise man, that is the calm thought of that man on the inside, and that is what saves the town, which is surrounded and besieged by the enemy. And the man has been saved from danger, or persecution, or disaster, or any other kind of adverse sin. But that man on the outside, who is the enemy

of the wise and poor man on the inside, he does not remember the poor man, nor does he remember his promises, but yet enjoys his freedom. Differently: the small town and the few

inhabitants in it is the Church in comparison to the whole world. And the great king the devil often comes against

it, not because he is great, but because he thought to be great, and he surrounds

the Church with a siege or persecution, or with another kind of disaster. He finds in it a poor man who is wise, that

is our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made poor for us and is wisdom itself. And that poor man frees the town with his

wisdom. How many times do we see a

reclining lion in a trap with rich men, this is with the politicians and

leaders of our time, who come against the Church, but fail at the wisdom of

that poor man? And when this poor man

has won and the town is restored to peace, scarcely anyone remembers him,

scarcely any of his requests are heard, but giving in to all indulgence and

pleasure, the inhabitants seek riches that are not necessary.

9:16. So I

said: wisdom is better than might, although a poor man's wisdom is despised and

his words go unheeded. Although no one remembers a poor wise man,

and everyone is happy, and admires power and riches; I however admire this

despised wisdom according to all of the interpretations given above, and the

words which none thinks worthy to be heard.

9:17. The

gentle words of the wise are heard above the shouts of a king over fools. Whosoever you see in the Church declaiming and arousing

applause by whatever refinery or charm, he who shakes off his laughter and

incites the crowd to feigned happiness, know that this is a sign of

foolishness, equally of him who speaks, and of those who listen to him. For the words of the wise are heard in peace

and respectful silence. He who is

foolish and is powerful speaks to fools and cannot hear himself because of

either the noise of his own voice or that of the applauding crowd.

9:18. And

wisdom is better than weapons, but a single rogue can ruin a great deal of

good. Now he also takes wisdom

in preference to strength and says that it is worth more in battle than weapons. But if there is one fool, however small and worthless, he will repeatedly destroy riches and great wealth by his stupidity. But because the Hebrew can also be read as: 'and he who sins once, will lose much goodness', much righteousness will be lost in return and virtues will follow in turn, and he who has one, has all²³⁵; and he who sins at one time, leaves himself open to all vices²³⁶.

CHAPTER 10

10:1. Dead

flies putrefy the perfumer's oil; a little folly outweighs wisdom and honour. Here he gives an example to illustrate the idea expressed above, in which he says that many good things can be outweighed by one fool, since one evil mixed with good in this way will pollute the greater part of it, just as flies if they die in oil, make it lose its colour and smell. And since wisdom is often mixed with cleverness and prudence has wickedness, he teaches that we must search out wisdom alone, or that it be mixed with the innocence of doves. Let us then be prudent to the good, and simple in the face of the wicked. And this is the meaning: let the righteous man have little simplicity on account of his having too much suffering, and while he keeps his retribution for God, he seems foolish, and does wickedness at once in vindication under the guise of prudence. Another meaning could be those flies that according to Isaiah inhabit a part of the river of Egypt, and destroy the sweetness of oil and according to one source leave the smell of their uncleanness²³⁷. The chief of these flies is called Beelzebub of the demons, and is interpreted as either 'the idol of flies' or 'the man of the flies', or 'he who has flies'²³⁸.

10:2-3. A wise

man's mind tends to his right; while a fool's mind tends to his left. Even on the road as the fool walks, he lacks

sense, and proclaims to all that he is a fool.

And in the

Gospel it is taught that a wise man's left does not know what his right is

doing. And when we are hit on the right

side of the face, we do not show the left cheek to he who hit us, but the other

one. For a wise man does not have a left

side in him, but is in fact completely the right side. And when the Saviour comes to judge us, the

lambs will stand on the right, and the goats on the left. It is written in the prophets that "the

Lord knows the ways to the right, which are wrong, and actually lead to the

left."²³⁹ Therefore he who is wise always thinks about

the future, because it leads him to the right.

But he who is foolish always thinks of the present, because it is set in

the left. What follows has also been

said by the philosopher poet, who says, "the right leads to the walls of

the lower world, this is our path to Elysium, but the left is for the

wicked. That gives out punishments and

sends people down to the nether regions"²⁴⁰. Firmianus of our time in the famous work of

his Institute recalls the passage about left and right, and argues that this is

about virtues and about vices.²⁴¹ And we shouldn't think that this is contrary

to that passage, which says, "do not go to the right, nor to the

left"²⁴². In the first passage the right is taken to

mean good; but in the second it is not just right but also the decline to the

right. We should not know more than we

need to know, since virtues are in the middle and all excess in a vice. In the following verse though he says,

"but on the path that the fool walks, his heart is in need", and he

says: "all is foolishness" or "all are fools". This is the meaning: A fool hopes that all

others sin as he himself sins, and judges all others by his own standards. Then Symmachus has interpreted it in this

way: but when the fool walks along the road, he supposes that all are stupid as

he is. But the Septuagint has another

meaning, which says, 'all things which he thinks are foolish, are the most vain'.

10:4. If the

anger of a ruler flares up against you, do not leave your place, for defence

appeases great offences. Now the Scripture mentions the chief of that

world, the creator of the darkness and he who toils for the sons of despair,

whom the apostle also recalls.²⁴³ For if he rises in our heart and the spirit

of bad thoughts is wounded, we ought not to give way, but fight against the

worst thoughts and free ourselves from the greatest sins, so that we do not

fill our work with that thought, since it is one thing in thought, another in

the deed of sinning. Reference to this

great sin can also be found in the Psalm: "if they had not conquered me, I

would be clean and purified from the greatest crime"²⁴⁴. Symmachus translates the Hebrew word marphe as all the others do: iama, that is, 'cleanliness' or

'neatness'. He has interpreted the

meaning too, and he says, "if the spirit of a ruler defeats you, do not

move from your place; since virtue wins over the greatest sin". That is, if the devil entices your mind and

incites you to lust, do not follow the thought of sin and flattering desire,

but stand firm and fast and extinguish the flame of desire with the cold of

chastity. My Hebrew tutor suspected

certain things about this passage for a reason I do not know. If you take any high-up position in the

world, or are appointed a post higher than the other people, do not let go of

your former works and start to forget your former virtues, or cease from your

previous work, because the cure for sins is born out of doing good things, and

not from pompous and overflowing rank.

10:5-7. There

is an evil that I have observed in the world as if it were an error proceeding from the ruler: folly is placed on lofty heights, while rich men sit in low places. I have seen slaves on horses and nobles walking on foot like slaves. Where we read "as if it were an error proceeding from the ruler" Aquila, Theodotion and the Septuagint have interpreted this as "as if not of their own will", that is hos akousian, from the face of the ruler. Symmachus agrees with this, saying, "the fool is placed in great elevation, but humble riches remain fixed." And he remembers that he has seen this wickedness in this time, because the judgement of God seems to be unjust. And it happens either through not knowing, or without his will, that either in the rulers of the world, or in the leadership of the Church, often these men, who are rich in words and wisdom, rich too in good deeds, remain ignoble and foolish holding a position in the Church. But this happens in front of his face, he who has power in that time, while he oppresses the powerful and learned men, and he does not let them come out in public, but those whom he knows to be foolish in the Church he makes greater, so that the blind are led by the blind into pitfalls. The following verse also has this meaning: "I have seen slaves on horses and nobles walking on foot like slaves".

Because these men are slaves of vices and sins, or are so humble, that they are thought to be slaves by other men, they are suddenly inflated by the devil's pompousness, and they wear out the public roads with their ponies²⁴⁵. And each noble or wise man that is oppressed by poverty takes the road and occupation of slaves. The Hebrew seems to say that ignorance seems to leave the face of the powerful and rulers.

He explains this as God, because men think that in this inequality of

matter He is not acting justly, and judging as is correct. More precisely, some men believe as their predecessors do that there must be judgement so that He himself is powerful, a topic that is mentioned before these verses: if a ruler comes up against you, do not give way. Should we not be sad therefore if we seem to be humble in this world, and know from the face of the devil, that the foolish are raised and the rich thrown down? If we know that slaves have the ranks of their masters and rulers do the work of their slaves. Remember though that this horse is seen in a good context, just as in the verse, which says, "and riding will be your salvation".²⁴⁶

10:8. He who

digs a pit will fall into it, and he who breaks down a wall will be bitten by a snake. This is partly unambiguous and partly to be understood in a more complicated way. Since elsewhere

Solomon also says, "he that sets a trap will be caught in it"²⁴⁷. And in the seventh Psalm: "he laid out a

pond and dug it out, and then he fell into the hole he had made"²⁴⁸. But the wall and the fence as well are the

doctrines of the Church, and the institution set up by the apostles and prophets. And whoever knocks them down

or wants them to come to an end is bitten by a snake where he is not looking. Amos writes about this snake: "if he

goes down into the underworld, I will order a snake to kill him"²⁴⁹.

10:9. He who

moves about stones will be hurt by them; he who splits logs will be endangered by them. In Zechariah sacred stones are moved about

the earth.²⁵⁰ For they do not stay firm in their place, but

revolve, and always inclining to other places, they hasten to move away. The Saviour also teaches about these living

stones in the city of the Apocalypse²⁵¹,

and the apostle doesn't forget to mention the building of the Church. Therefore if anyone doing wrong by their

heresy, should take away those stones from the building of the Church, then he will suffer torture afterwards. Aquila

and Symmachus write about this man, and where we have 'he who moves about stones, will suffer from them', both write, "he who moves stones, will be wounded by them". But because the Scripture

says very clearly, "he who moves about stones", or 'moves stones', he does not add 'good' or 'bad'. Moreover

and to the contrary it must be understood, that the man of the Church seemingly a bishop and elder, (if we are taking this according to the mandate of Leviticus), took a stone away from the house of lepers, and was obliterated in dust and ashes.²⁵² And he will suffer for this himself, because

he was forced to take away a stone from the Church of Christ and saying, (according to the apostle), "to weep with the weeping, to mourn with the mourners"²⁵³,

and "who is weak, and I burn not?"²⁵⁴. Also cutting wood, he will be endangered by it. Heretics are non-fruit-bearing wood, and copse that do not bear fruit.

Pertaining to this too is that we must not plant a glade in the house of

God, and leafy openings, that is arbours of such sounding words are scorned. However learned and wise a man may be

therefore who chops this wood with the sword of speech, he will be endangered by it, unless he diligently pays attention.

This is similar to what follows, this will happen, "if iron is shaped" and its appearance is changed.

This means that if his argument is found to be weaker, or if he does not have a point, in which each argument is well balanced, then the argument of his heart is blunt. Then the strength of wickedness will come upon him and fortify him.

For this is what the Septuagint interprets this passage to mean: it says, "and he is fortified by strength, and he will begin to have more wisdom than strength; his wisdom will become strong, and superfluous, but it will not help him who possesses it.

10:10. If a

blade is blunt and one has not sharpened the edge, nevertheless it strengthens the warriors. Wisdom is a more powerful skill. If someone, he says, has seen himself lose knowledge of the Scriptures through negligence, and the shrewdness of his intelligence has been blunted, nonetheless he remains disturbed, and he would be just as he had been when he started. But it happens, meanwhile, that he that has a little knowledge is led into pride and stops learning and reading, and little by little takes away from that which now adds nothing to him. Thus the heart of the

pupil remains empty, and a blade that has been sharpened is made blunt. For rest and laziness are like a kind of rust

of wisdom. So then if anyone has

suffered this, let him not despair the remedy for his health, but let him go to his teacher and be instructed again by him, and then after much toil and hard work, and a great deal of much sweat, he will be able to regain that wisdom that he had lost. And this is what is

said in the Hebrew more to the point: he will be strengthened by might, that is, by toil, by sweat, by hard work, and daily reading, then wisdom will follow suit, and his toil will come to an end, so that he might be able to receive wisdom once more.

10:11. If the

snake bites because it has not been charmed, then there is no advantage to the charmer's art. The meaning of this is very apparent: the serpent and the disparager are of the same ilk.

For just as the hidden snake bites and injects its poison, so too the other disparages in private, and he pours out the poison of his heart against his brother, and there will be nothing between him and the serpent. For although the tongue of man was created for benediction and encouragement of others, the disparager makes it equal to that of the serpent, while he uses his virtues to bad purposes. Another meaning of this is, that if the serpent devil should bite anyone secretly, and he doesn't know it, he infects him with the poison of sin; and if he who has been struck keeps silent, and does not repent, and does not want to confess his wound to his teacher and brother, they who want to encourage him and see to it that he gets better, are not able to be of any use to him. For if an ill man is ashamed to confess his wound to a doctor, the doctor will not be able to cure what he does not know exists.

10:12. The

words of a wise man win favour, but a fool's lips devour him. Foolishness, if it is happy in its rusticity, will know

less evil. But now he wages war against

wisdom, and whatever prudence he sees in a learned man, he does not take to be incited by enthusiasm. For a wise man

speaks words of knowledge, words of thanks, which are of use to those that hear them, but the lips of a fool do not receive what is said, as it is said; on the

contrary they try to trip up a wise man and make him similar to a fool. And in fact a wise man is taught when a

foolish man speaks in his ear, and you could almost say that his words are lost in the deep swell. Therefore he is

blessed, who speaks in the ear of a wise man.

10:13-14. His

talk begins as foolishness and ends as evil madness. The fool prates on and on, but man does not know what will be; and who can tell him what will be after him? So far the discussion has been about the fool, whose

lips teach the wise man, or according to another interpretation, his lips make himself corrupt. The beginning and the end of his speech are foolishness and evil madness; or as Symmachus has translated it, confusion, or some kind of inconsistency of words. For while he doesn't keep to the one opinion, he thinks he can escape sin in the many arguments he speaks at the same time. But he does not remember all those who have gone before him, and does not know what will happen after him, and so is confused in ignorance and the darkness, promising himself false knowledge; by this he thinks that he is wise, and that he is learned, if he uses lots of words. This can be taken to refer to the heretics, who do not heed the words of wise men, but continue to argue different sides so they intertwine the beginning and end of their speech in vanity, confusion, and madness; and though they know nothing, they speak more than they know.

10:15. The

toil of fools exhausts them, as one who does not know the way to town. Join these lines with the verse above; either to those

verses that speak in general about fools, who know not God, or in particular to that one which argues about heretics.

Read in Plato for example: unravel the tricks of Aristotle, read Zeno and Carneas more diligently, and you will prove to be true what is written here: the toil of fools exhausts them.

For they seek the truth in fact with all their enthusiasm, but since they have no leader or anyone to lead the way on their journey, they are led by their human instincts to think that they can understand wisdom, and thus they do not arrive at the town; the Psalm speaks of this too: "Lord, you will scatter their image in your town"²⁵⁵. For the Lord will scatter in the town all shadows and strange appearances or characters, in which they clothe themselves in their many doctrines. In another

place the Psalm says of this: "the force of a river causes the city of God to rejoice"²⁵⁶. And in the Gospel: "a town built on a mountain cannot be hidden"²⁵⁷. And in Isaiah: "I am a strong city, a city which is attacked"²⁵⁸. And all the wise men and heretics of this world are trying to attack this city of truth and wisdom, although it is strong and fortified. And that which I have said about philosophers can also be said of heretics, that they toil in vain, and are exhausted in their enthusiasm for the Scriptures, when they wander in the desert and are not able to find the town.

The Psalmist also mentions their madness too, saying, "they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in."²⁵⁹

10:16-17. Woe to

you, O land, whose king acts as an adolescent, and whose ministers dine in the morning. Happy are you, O land, whose king is a man of dignity, and whose ministers dine at the proper time- in strength and not in drunkenness. He seems in fact here to reprove the young king and to condemn indulgent judges, which in another place has been called wisdom that is weakened by age, and even in other places mature age which is made frail by pleasure. On the other hand he seems to approve the king with good morals, who is appointed easily. He also seems to praise those judges who nonetheless prefer pleasure to the business of the town, but after much toil and the running of the township, are forced to eat as if by necessity. But I find more holy what seems to lie hidden in the text, because those who depart from old laws and despise the precepts of their ageing fathers, are called young men in the scripture; they who do not heed the commandments of God, and desire to change the laws of mankind. The Lord of Israel

threatens in Isaiah²⁶⁰,
because the people did not want the waters of Shiloah that flows in silence,
and averted the ancient stream, choosing for themselves the rivers of Samaria,
and the surges of Damascus. "And I
will give", he says, "children to be their princes, and babes shall
rule over them"²⁶¹. Read also Daniel and you will find the old
God of Days.²⁶² Or read the Apocalypse of John where the head
of the Saviour is said to be white and snowy, and you will find it to be like
white wool. Look at Jeremiah too because
he was wise and his hair was purported to be white because of his wisdom, and
he is forbidden to call himself a young man²⁶³. Woe to the land therefore whose king is the
devil, who always desirous of new things, and even rebels against its parent in
the case of Abessalon, who regards as judges and leaders those, who love the
pleasures of the world, and who say before the day of death comes, "let us
eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"²⁶⁴. For the other part is the blessed land of the
Church whose king, Christ, is the son of all peoples. He is descended from Abraham and Isaac,
and
Jacob, also from the stock of all the prophets and saints, for whom sin was not
conquered. On account of this they were
indeed children. Born of these was the
virgin, more freely Saint Mary, who had no offspring, no seed from her flank,
but all of her fruit burst out in flower, speaking in the Song of Songs:
"I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valley"²⁶⁵. His leaders too are apostles and all are
saintly, who see their king as the son of all men, the son of a free woman; not
of the slave woman Agar, but born of Sara in freedom. And they do not eat in the morning, or
quickly. For they do not seek enjoyment
in their time, but eat in their time, and when the time for retribution will
come, they will eat in strength, and not in disorder. Every good thing of this world is a disorder,
but an everlasting strength in the future.

Just this is said in Isaiah: "look at those who serve me, they will eat; but you will go hungry."²⁶⁶ And again, "look at those who serve me, they will be happy; but you will be shamed."²⁶⁷

10:18. Through

slothfulness the ceiling sags, and through idleness of the hands the house leaks. Our house, which is held up by the condition of mankind, even that abode that we have in heaven, sags if we are lazy and slow to do good work. And every ceiling, which is supposed to hold

the roof up high, falls to the ground and crushes its inhabitants. And when the help of hands and virtues has

eventually gone numb a great storm of all tempests and rain clouds will fall down upon us from above. More precisely,

although we have interpreted this with regard to one man, it can be better understood with bearing to the Church, because its stature is brought down by the neglect of its principate. There in the Church we find the attractions of sins, where the roof is said to be virtue.

10:19. A feast

is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life, but money answers everything. I think that what follows relates to the preceding verses. For with regard to the sloth and the indolence of teachers the Church is lowered, and its roof is made to fall, and its timbers leak, as we have shown above. Therefore here he is speaking of the self-same teachers. And he has been seen to accuse them, asking why they remain silent and do not make use of their duty as teacher, (that is both for bishops and elders in the Church), saying that they neither work on their speaking nor doctrine, the same that even Titus admonishes²⁶⁸,

and is taught by Timothy²⁶⁹,

so that one does not forget the grace of God, which is bestowed upon a great

man. But in this respect they see themselves as elders and bishops, so that they receive an allowance, and many teachers ask for a two-fold glory, which is owed in fact to those who work on their speaking and doctrines. But now he takes the other side and accuses those who even speak in the Church and teach the congregation, but they teach the people that which they like to hear, because he flatters the sinner in his crime and incites the listeners to applaud. For surely when such a teacher is giving a lascivious speech in the Church, does he not promise the blessing and realm of heaven to the crowd, as it will seem to you that his laughter makes bread, and he mixes wine with the happiness of those who drink? Or as those who teach and seek riches, food, and wealth through the promised delights. Or the bread of the Church, which is the bread of mourners, and not of those who laugh, because those who weep are blessed, for they will laugh, and will have joy in their happiness. He also goes on to say: money or silver answers everything, and this must be taken as two-fold: either that those learned men become rich after their praise, and take their place at the head of the people, or indeed, since money is always taken in return for a speech: for "the words of the LORD are pure words: as silver extracted in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."²⁷⁰ He asserts this because the ignoble crowd is always moved easily by eloquence and speeches, which are composed of a great foliage of words. Differently: those who have free-will and are forbidden to mourn and fast, make bread in their laughter. Isaac gets his name from this bread as well, and in the happiness of drinking they prepare wine. And so every holy man, who is teacher of the Church, as Christ commanded, makes bread in his laughter and happiness, and hands out cups of wine in his joy. Money also,

which answers everything, is given out as five, and two and one talent for the head of the family in the Gospel²⁷¹. And ten coins which are thought to be for slaves in business.

10:20. Even in

your thoughts do not curse a king, and in your bed-chamber do not curse the rich, for a bird of the skies may carry the sound, and some winged creature may betray the matter. This simple example teaches the listeners that we should not be overpowered by anger and fury, and curse and blame kings and leaders, since it seems to happen against one's wish, that what we curse is made known. And we run into danger by

the inability to hold our tongue. He

also says, "a bird of the skies may carry the sound, and some winged creature may betray the matter", this is to be understood as a exaggeration, just as we are accustomed to saying, 'walls have ears to hear those things, which we think are said in private'. But it is better to hear a teaching in this way, so that we know that we have a commandment to follow, not only that nothing should be spoken rashly against Christ, but also in the secret places of our heart, however we are troubled by our many problems, nothing should be blasphemed, nothing thought which is impious.

And since we owe love, that we have for Christ, the next part says,

"love the Lord your God," and even "your nearest" and

"yourself".²⁷² He even orders this, so that afterwards we do

not easily take the king away from the holy, and so that we do not slander by the wickedness of our tongue those who are rich in knowledge, wisdom and virtues, for they are the angels who fly around the earth and are administrators of the spirit. They say

in Zechariah, "we have traversed the earth and look all the world is inhabited and quiet"²⁷³. And just like birds, our words and thoughts are carried to heaven. And whatever we

think in secret, is not hidden from God's knowledge.

CHAPTER 11

11:1. Send

your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it. He encourages to mercy since it must be given to all that seek wisdom, and work well. For just as he sows over the well-watered fields and awaits the produce of his seed, so too he who is generous to the needy does not sow the grain of his seed, but bread itself. And he waits for it to grow into his future profit; and when the day of judgement comes much more will be found to have grown than was at first sown.

Differently: in each and every man you can see this water, about which is said, "rivers flow from his stomach, the waters of life"²⁷⁴, lest it should trouble you to display the bread of life, the bread of reasoning, and of speech. For if you do this many times you will find that you have not sown the seeds of doctrine in vain. I think that this is what is written in Isaiah too: "blessed is he who sows across the water, where the ox and ass trample"²⁷⁵. This is also because that teacher (about whom we have already spoken), is held to be worthy of blessing, because he sows across the well-watered hearts of his listeners, the hearts of the Jews, as those of the gentiles in the gathered congregation.

11:2. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight;

for you do not know what evil shall be upon the earth. And in Ezekiel there are found seven or eight steps

leading up to the temple.²⁷⁶ And after the 'ethical' Psalm, that is one hundred and eighteen, all the psalms are of fifteen steps by which we are first taught the law, and when the seventh is finished, we then climb to the Gospel through the 'eight steps'²⁷⁷. Therefore it is taught that we should believe

with equal respect in each, the same for the old as for the new. The Jews dedicated their seventh part,

believing in the Sabbath, but did not dedicate that eighth, denying the

resurrection on the day of the Lord. On

the other hand, heretics, Marcion and Manichaeus and all who rip up the ancient

law with their savage mouths, dedicate their eighth part, taking up the

Gospel. But they do not save as holy the

seventh, spurning the old law. For we

are not able to understand the worthy crucifixions, the worthy punishments

already in mind, which are reserved for those who are moved to wickedness on

earth, that is for the Jews and the heretics, and for those denying the other

of the two. The Hebrews understand this

passage in this way: keep both the Sabbath and the rite of circumcision, for if

you do not adhere to these wickedness will come over you unexpectedly.

11:3. If the clouds are full of rain, they empty

themselves upon the earth: and if the tree falls toward the south, or toward

the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it shall be. Keep the commandments that have been taught to you

above so that the clouds above you will break open in rain. For wherever you have made your home and seat

for the future, whether to the east or facing the north, when you die you will

remain there. Differently: as I have

said above 'send your bread over the water and divide it to all who ask'. Since when the clouds are full they pour

their riches down on mortals, and you are as a tree: however aged you may be,

you will not live forever, but one day suddenly struck by the storm of death

like a storm of winds, there where you fall you will lie forever. The time of your end will come whether you

may be stiff and savage, or mild and merciful.

Differently: God is addressed in the Psalms: "you are truth up to

the clouds"²⁷⁸,

and in Isaiah God warns the sinner of the vineyard, "I will command the clouds not to rain down"²⁷⁹. Therefore the clouds are as prophets or holy men, who have amassed many talents in their mind, so that he can rain his teachings of doctrine down on others and say, "their speech should be awaited just as rain, and they will pour out rain across the earth"²⁸⁰, to which is replied, "let the earth hear the words of my mouth"²⁸¹. But this follows: "and if a tree falls to the east, or to the north, in the place where it falls, there it will remain." We can take the example of the book of Hebrews, in which is written, "God will come to Teyma"²⁸², which some interpreters have taken to mean that God will come from the south, and when I come to think about it the south is always used in a good context. This can be seen in Song of Songs: "arise oh north" that is 'return' and 'go away'; "and come O south wind"²⁸³. Therefore a tree, if in this life it falls and is cut in its state of mortality, either must sin before while it stands and is then placed in the north afterwards, or if the south winds takes away all its worthy fruit, it will lie wounded in the south. The text does not mean any tree, but only if it lies to the north or south. This means the same as that which is written: "I will say to the north wind, come, and to the south wind, do not hold back"²⁸⁴. Nowhere teaches about the south wind and the east wind together, saying that they blow, since it is fitting for them to be among those regions, because they are blown afterwards to the south and east. Therefore it blows from the north to the south and the south wind blows its inhabitants to the east. And they are not able to blow out if they remain in their ancient palaces.

11:4. He that observes the wind shall not sow; and he that regards the clouds shall not reap.

He who considers

what is good for him and does not give out to all who ask him, often destroys

what he ought to receive.²⁸⁵ Differently: he who proclaims the word of God

at the time when the people listen freely and a second wind of rumour comes, he

is a negligent and lazy farmer. But

favourably or not in his career he must proclaim the word of God²⁸⁶;

and he must not think of the storm of adverse clouds in his time of faith. This is written in Proverbs:
"just as

the rains are heavy and unyielding, so are they who leave wisdom and praise

impiety"²⁸⁷. Therefore you must sow your seeds in the

middle of a storm without thinking of the clouds and without fearing the

winds. And you must not say, 'that time

was convenient, this of no use', when we do not know which way and which will

is the one spirit of giving.

11:5. As you do not know what is the way of the

spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even

so you know not the works of God who makes all.

Just as you do

not know the way of the spirit and of the soul entering a child, and are

unknowing of the types of bone and veins in the stomach of a pregnant

woman. It is hard to know how the human

body is formed from the simplest elements into the many varied forms and limbs,

and from the very same seed, one makes soft our hair, another makes our bones

hard; one connects the veins, another links the nerves together. Thus you cannot know the work of
God, who has

made all things. From this he teaches

that the variety of things in the world must not be feared, and you must not

fear the winds and the clouds, which as we have mentioned above must be

judged. But although the sower ought to

reap in the course of his career, he ought to save the outcome for the

judgement of the Lord.

11:6-8. In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening withhold not your hand: for you know not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good. Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:

But if a man lives many years, and rejoices in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that which comes is vanity. Do not choose which good deeds you do, but once you have started doing good, never stop. The evening will reveal the justice of the morning, and the sunrise will collect the mercy of the evening. For it is uncertain which work pleases God more, and by what means you will obtain the fruit of righteousness. But it can happen that not one but each one will please God. Another meaning could be that both in childhood and in old-age you will have equal work. Do not say therefore, "I worked while I was able, I ought to rest in old-age", for you do not know whether you please God more in youth or in age. And the thrift of youth too is of no use if old-age is taken up by indulgence. For the righteous has erred, not even his former virtues can free him from death.

And if you always do well according to each interpretation and work equal amounts in each age, you will see God the Father, the sweetest light; you will see Christ, the sun of righteousness.

More precisely if you live for many years and always have good things or do good deeds, you will still know that you are going to die, and the coming of darkness will continually surround you: you will despise the present things as if they were transient, frail and failing.

Symmachus has interpreted the end of this idea in this way: if a man lives for many years and if he has been happy in all this he ought to remember

the days of darkness, since they will be many, in which all will cease. Differently: in another place in the

Scripture God promises, saying, "I will give you timely rain and rain that

is late"²⁸⁸. I will irrigate you with rain: the Old and

the New Testament. He warns about this

here so that we may read about the ancient law, lest we hate the Gospel, and in

this way ask about the spiritual understanding in the old text; lest we think

that what we read in the Gospels and apostles is only to be taken at face

value. For we do not know when more

knowledge and grace is divested to us by God, and he who is happy, who joined

both together to make it like one. For

he who has followed this will see the light, will see Christ, the light of justice. And if he lives for several years and with

knowledge of the Scriptures he will know the greatest happiness and enjoyment,

and he is forced more to this toil by the memory of his future judgement. Since the time of eternal darkness will come,

and perpetual punishments will be in stone for those who have not sown in the

morning and in the evening, and joined both in vain; they have not seen the

light or the sun, whence the light itself comes.

11:9-10. Rejoice, O young man, in your youth; and let

your heart cheer you in the days of your youth, and walk in the ways of your

heart, and in the sight of your eyes: but know, that for all these things God

will bring you into judgement. Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, and put

away evil from your flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.

CHAPTER 12

12:1. Remember now your Creator in the days of

your youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when you

shall say, I have no pleasure in them; In this chapter there were many explanations

of all things and almost as many opinions as men themselves. It would take too long however to recount all

the opinions of everyone and their arguments in which they want to prove their opinions, the matter would require a volume to itself. But it is enough for wise men to have shown what they feel, and like in a small picture, to have depicted the thirst of the earth, the waste of the whole earth, and the belt of the ocean, and to have shown them in such a small collection.

The Hebrews believe the imperative here refers to Israel, to whom it is taught that she should enjoy her riches, and before the time of bondage comes should change youth to old-age. She should enjoy whatever is pleasant or fun, just as it seems to the heart so it seems to the eyes; at that time while she still has them to hand. She knows

however that she will be judged in all things that she has done. And just as from bad thoughts she flees from

desires, knowing that foolishness is joined to youth, and will remember always her Creator, and before the days of Babylonian and Roman captivity come, in which she will no longer be free. And

all of this passage from the point which says, "before the sun, moon, and stars become dark"²⁸⁹,

until the place where the Scripture reminds us, "and dust will be swirled on earth just as it used to be and the soul returned to God who gave it"²⁹⁰, they explain their condition. And since

as I have said above these things are tiresome and favourable, they should be touched by us but briefly and superficially.

Therefore enjoy your youth O Israel, and do this or that, that has already been mentioned before your time of bondage comes; and your glory will leave you and pride, and judges, and your holy men who want to be interpreted as the sun, moon, and stars, and are taken away. Before Nebuchadnezzar comes, or Titus, Vespasian's son, before the call of the prophets and their prophecies are fulfilled. In that day when the angels that protect the temple leave, and the strongest men in your army are thrown in

confusion, and the speeches of the judges will be slow to come, and the prophets, who are accustomed to receiving the light of their visions from heaven, they all will become dark. When the doors of the temple are closed Jerusalem will be made humble and the Chaldeans will come as if by the song of a bird, called thus in the words of Jeremiah, and the singing girls with the lute in the temple choir will become silent²⁹¹. At that time, when they will come to Jerusalem, the enemies too will fear the greatness of God, and in the way of doubt, they will fear the death of Sennacherib. For they also believe the saying, "and from up high they will fear and tremble in the road"²⁹². In those days "the almond tree will flourish", that stick and staff which Jeremiah saw in his prophecy in the beginning, "and the grasshopper will be a burden"²⁹³. Nebuchadnezzar with his army, "and desire shall fail ", the friendship between Israel and God. But what desire wants for itself, although we have begun to speak about them individually will be explained more fully. But all this will happen to Israel, because man will go out into the house of his eternity, and having returned from the protection of God to the heavens, going to his tabernacle, the weeping and crying will wander in the street and will be hemmed in by the enemy's siege. Be happy therefore Israel in your youth, before the silver cord is broken, (this is until your glory is with you), before the golden ribbon breaks off, (that is before the arc of the tabernacle is taken away); before the pitcher is worn away to the fountain, and the wheel is turned around over the pool. That is until you read the most sacred teachings, for the spirit of a holy man is grace, and before you return to Babylon, from whence you left the loins of Abraham, and you will begin to be worn away in Mesopotamia, which once breathed life into you, and all is returned to He who gave it. The Jews have always taught these things and

have understood this chapter to pertain to themselves. But I prefer to return to the previous argument,

and try to explain each thing individually: "rejoice O youth, in your adolescence, and let your heart be good in the days of your youth, and walk in the way of your heart and in the sight of your eyes; and know above all these things, since God will lead you into judgement". He has said that the light of this world is the sweetest and that man ought to rejoice in the days of his life, and grasp desire with all enthusiasm. For the eternal night of death will fall when it's not permitted to enjoy ones amassed wealth and like a shadow, all things that we possess, will die. Now therefore he encourages man and says,

"O youth, before old-age and death fall upon you, enjoy your youth, and whatever you feel is good, and seems joyful to see, take it and enjoy as it please you the things of this world."

Again so that he does not think these things say to provoke men to indulgence, and thus fall into the doctrines of Epicurus, he takes this suspicion, saying, "and know, since above all these God will lead you to judgement". Thus, he says, take advantage of the things of the world, so that you know you will be judged in the end. "And force anger from your heart and take wickedness from your flesh, since youth and foolishness are vanity". In anger he sees all the problems of the spirit. In the wickedness of the flesh he sees every desire of the body. In this way therefore, he says, enjoy the goodness of this world, lest you leave pleasure or flesh. Leave off your former vices, which you did in your youth of vanity and foolishness, since youth is joined to foolishness. "And remember in the day of your youth Him, who created you, before the days of wickedness come and

the years approach, in which you will say, 'I have no will'. Always remember your Creator and walk the

route of your youth, so that you remember your end is death, before your time

comes, in which sad things will happen.

12:2. While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or

the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain. If we take this from the creation of the world, this

chapter agrees with the words of the Lord, in which He says, "there will

be trouble and difficulty as there has not been since the beginning of

creation, but this will not happen. For

the sun will grow dark and the moon will not shed light, and the stars will

fall from the sky, and the virtues of heaven will be moved"²⁹⁴. Those things are the guardians of the house,

as we understand the 'house' to be this world, and the strong men, deceived by

wickedness and varied strengths must be dispersed. But if a particular consummation of any one

person is kept to the end of his life, then the sun, the moon, and stars,

clouds and rain will cease to be for him, who has died. Differently: enjoy youth, O Christian people,

and enjoy the goodness which has been given to you by God, and know that God

will judge you for all these. Do not

think that, since the earlier branches have been broken, you will be placed in

the root of a good olive tree, and therefore you will be without worry. But remove anger from your heart and desires

from your body, and when you have left all other vices remember your Creator

before the day of wickedness comes, the day of madness, in which punishments

have been made for sinners. This is so

that when you sin the sun of righteousness will set for you at midday, and the

light of knowledge will die, and the brightness of the moon, (that is of the

Church) will be taken away, and the stars will die, about which is written,

"in which you shine like the lights in the world having reason of

life"²⁹⁵. And elsewhere: "star differs from star

in glory. Before the clouds return after
the rain"²⁹⁶,

lest the prophets, who have watered the hearts of believers by the rain of
their speech, after they have seen you to be unworthy of their rain, return to
their seat, clearly to Him from whom they were sent.

12:3. In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the
strong men shall bow themselves; The keepers of the house can be interpreted as either
the sun and the moon, and the remaining choir of stars, or the angels who keep
watch over this world. The men of great
strength though, or the brave, as Symmachus has interpreted it, are those who
die, or as Aquila has translated it, those who err, and are felt to be demons,
for they are called those chosen by the powerful devil. The Lord overpowered him, and joining him,
according to the parable of the Gospel²⁹⁷,
destroys his house. Differently: the
keepers of the house, who relate all things, which are written to the body of
man, think that it means ribs, because the intestines are hemmed in by them,
and all of the fleshy parts of the stomach are protected in this way. They think that the strong men
are to be
interpreted as legs; the sun and moon and stars therefore pertain to the eyes,
nose and ears, and receive all the sensations of the head. But they do not interpret this to such an
extent, because they are forced deeper by necessity, not by demons, or the sun,
moon, or stars, but to understand what follows according to the limbs of man. And
the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows
be darkened. In the beginning of
the world when the charity of most was cold and the spirits of teachers were
few, who were able to offer the food of heaven to believers, and they were
carried to the heavens; then those who in part see the light of knowledge in
this world began to be darkened. For it
is said to Moses: "sit yourself in this hole in the rock, and you will see

me pass"298. Oh how much more one spirit saw the truth

through that opening and those dark caves!

Differently: there are two grinders, from whom one is taken, the other

is left, the Gospel is not silent in this matter299. And when they are few, and have ceased, it is

necessary that every light of knowledge is removed from our eyes. Differently: they think the grinders have

ceased because they are few, and that it is talking about teeth. And when at last old-age comes even teeth are

worn away, or they fall out, which usually grind down food to be sent to the

stomach. But seeing it grow dark in the

caves, they think it means eyes because sight darkens with old-age, and sight

is made difficult.

12:4. And the doors shall be shut in the streets,

when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the

bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low. When the voice of the grinder is weak and the teaching

of a tutor has stopped, then in turn all things will stop. Even the doors are closed in the streets, as according to the unwieldy virgins of the Gospel300,

and each one regards her doors as closed to her in the street, so that she can not buy oil. Or even, while the virgins

are wandering in the streets, husbands close each room when they have entered into it. For if the road is thin and

narrow, which leads to life and that which leads to death is wide and open, justly, the charity of most being cold, the door of teachings is closed in the

streets.301 But let us use the following verse, in which

he says, "and he rises to the sound of a bird", (or of a sparrow), if

we seem to be a sinner to the voice of the bishop or elder so to show that we are in repentance. But this could also

be different again, if we do not follow the context of this chapter, it can be

taken to mean the real resurrection, when the death will rise up to the voice

of the arch-angel. And it is not surprising, if we compare the trumpet of an angel to a sparrow, when all night is compared to Christ, if it is clement.

And also this is not too surprising, if my memory serves me right, when I have never read of a sparrow in a bad light.

In the tenth Psalm a righteous man says, "I trust in God, just as you say to my spirit: fly to the mountain like a sparrow."³⁰² And in another place: "I woke and I was made as a sparrow alone on a roof"³⁰³. Nor is it seen in a bad light in another place: "and even the sparrow found a home for himself"³⁰⁴. Differently: they want to see this as the closed doors in the street, as the weak steps of an old man, because he always sits and cannot walk. The weakness of the voice of the grinder is interpreted as in his jaws, because he cannot chew food, and scarcely reduced in spirit, his voice is heard only quietly. More precisely he shows him to rise to the sound of a bird, because now with cold blood and dry organs by which sleep is nourished, he wakes to a soft sound, and in the middle of the night, when the cock crows, he rises quickly; but he is not able to move his limbs from his bed. And he becomes silent too, or as it is better put in the Hebrew, the daughters of song become deaf, (meaning ears), because it is harder for old-men to hear noises and there is less distinction between voices, or enjoy songs. Also compare what Berzellai says to David, when he does not want to go to Jordan.³⁰⁵

12:5. Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way. That is, they will not be able to enter on difficult tasks and with tired knees and frightened footsteps, will not be able to go out in the open, and will fear the offence of steps.

And the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goes to his long home, and the

mourners go about the streets. The speech now explains the limbs of a man of the Church through a metaphor. And when old-age comes his hair will grow white, his feet will swell, his lust will grow cold and he will be destroyed by death. Then he will be returned to the earth, and then in the house of his eternity you will remember his tomb and his ashes with reverence, and a crowd will walk before the mourners at his funeral. But the flower of the almond-tree, which we have in place of grey hairs, some interpret as the sacred thorn, because, while the flesh of the buttocks decreases, the thorn grows and flowers. More precisely, in that verse which says, "the grasshopper will be a burden", you must note that where we have in our manuscripts 'grasshopper', the Hebrew has aagab, which is rather ambiguous for us. For it can be translated as 'heel' or as 'grasshopper'. Just as for example in the beginning of Jeremiah, the word soced if the accent is changed can mean 'a nut' or 'wakefulness'. And this is said to him: "what do you see, Jeremiah?" and he replies, "a nut".³⁰⁶ And the Lord says to him, "you have seen well, for I will wake over my work so that I might complete it."³⁰⁷ Or that explanation: it also has the etymology of the word 'nut', because God is about to keep awake. And what the people has deserved it will be given, is what the text seems to say.

Thus now he shows the ambiguity of the word through its etymology, showing that the legs of old men swell up and that gout weighs upon the organs. This does not happen to all men, but to most, and this is synecdoche where a part is called by the name of the whole.

Indeed where we read 'desire' the Hebrew has abiona. This in itself has many meanings, and is interpreted as 'love', 'lust', 'longing', or

'desire'. And it has the meaning, as I have said above, that the lust of an old man grows cold, and the organs of intercourse sag. But this is said because these words are ambiguous, for although they mean 'almond-tree', and 'grasshopper', and 'desire' in his language, they also mean other derived words in our language, and are derived from the forms which pertain to old-age. You must note too, that where the Septuagint has the word 'almond-tree' the word itself is soced, which is found in the beginning of Jeremiah. But there it is meant 'nut' but here it means 'almond-tree'. Symmachus has interpreted this passage in a greatly different way, (though I am unsure of what he means): for he says, 'and they will see even above these things from on high, and they will wander, and waking he will fall asleep, and the strength of his spirit will be dispersed.' For man will go to the house of his eternity, and the weeping will wander in the street. Laodiceus³⁰⁸ followed the interpretation of Symmachus, which the Hebrews do not like, nor the Christians; for while he is far from the Hebrews' view, he rejects too the interpretations of the Septuagint.

12:6-8. Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Vanity of vanities says Ecclesiastes; all is vanity. He returns to former matter and after a rather large exaggeration, -which he interposes in this place, in which he says, "and remember your Creator, in the day of your youth; before the days of wickedness come, and before the sun, moon grow dark" and so on, "in the day in which the keepers of the house are renewed". - now he finishes the point he had begun in a similar way, saying, "before the

silver cord is broken", and this or that happens. But he shows the silver cord to be this white band, and the space that divides us from heaven. It also means the gold band, which returns to the place whence it came down. more

precisely the two that follow, the wearing of the jug on the fountain, and the breaking of the wheel by the pond, are metaphorical images of death. For death is just like the jug, which is worn

down, stops to fill, and the wheel by which water is carried from a well or pond, if it has been broken. Thus the

interpretation of the Septuagint has it that the usage of water is twisted in this rope; thus when the silver cord is broken, and the river of the spirit flows back to the fountain, the man will die.

He goes on more clearly: "the dust will return to the earth, whence

it was taken, and the spirit is returned to God, who gave it". From which there is enough to smile at in

those who think that spirits are produced with bodies, not from God, but are made from the parent's body. For when

the flesh is returned to the earth, and the spirit goes back to God, who gave

it; it is obvious that God is the parent of all spirits, not man. Then after the description of man's death, he

goes back to the beginning of his book, saying, "vanity of vanities, says

Ecclesiastes, all is vanity"³⁰⁹. For all toil of mortal men, which is argued

all through the books, is pertinent here, so that dust returns to the earth,

and the spirit returns to the place, whence it was taken, it is a great vanity in this world to toil and obtain nothing for the future from it.

12:9-10. And moreover, because the preacher was wise,

he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The

preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was

upright, even words of truth. The wisdom in which Solomon judges all kinds

of men he now professes at the end, because he was not happy with the use of

the old law, but therefore immersed himself in trying to solve difficult problems of his own accord, and in teaching people; he composed parables and proverbs, which say one thing superficially and yet have a deeper meaning. For proverbs often have different meaning to that which is written, and this is the method used in teaching in the Gospels, since the Lord spoke to the people in parables and in proverbs³¹⁰, but He explained them to the apostles in secret. From this we clearly get the Book of Proverbs, and we shouldn't think that they are but simple stories with teachings, but rather as gold still in the earth, as a seed within a nut, or as a fruit is found inside the hairy covering of its peel. Thus we must search for another meaning in them which pertains to God. Before this though he mentions that he desired to know the workings of the world and the wisdom and mind of God. He wanted to know why one thing or another should happen, as David after the death of the body and spirit hoped he would see the path to heaven, saying, "I will see the heavens, the work of your fingers"³¹¹. But now Solomon strives to find this wisdom, so that he may know and understand with his human mind, though confined by the walls of the body, the truth only known by God.

12:11. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd. The teacher should not be seen to break from the law of God and afterwards to justify teaching by himself, more hastily than Moses not so much of his own will, as first by the anger of God, took teachings therefrom with enthusiasm. He says that his words are the words of the wise, which like a goad correct the wicked and they move the slow steps of mortals with a sharp sting, thus they are hard like nails which hold things up securely and high; and they are not offered with one man's authority, but with the advice and agreement of all teachers. Let not mankind's wisdom be despised, for he says it is given from one shepherd. That

is, many are allowed to teach, but there is only one originator of the teachings, who is God. He turns the passage against those who think there is one God of the Old Law, and one God of the Gospels, since one shepherd taught the advice of the wise. But the wise are just as much prophets as the apostles themselves. At the same time it should be remembered that the words of the wise are said to sting, not to flatter or encourage debauchery by a lack of discipline. But as I have said above it is to give the wound and slow pain of repentance to those who have come into wickedness. For if his speech does not sting but it like pleasure for the listeners then that is not the speech of a wise man. For the words of the wise are like the goad, since after all they cause the conversion of the wicked, are firm, given on the advice of saints, given by the one shepherd, and are founded on a strong root. I think I have heard it said in Paul that Saul was thrown into the way of wickedness by this goad: "it is hard for you to kick against the pricks."³¹²

12:12. And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh. If you remove the words which are given by the one shepherd, related by the advice and agreement of the wise, do nothing and nothing will be reproved you; follow in the footsteps of the multitude and do not diverge from their command. Then too for him who seeks to know many things there is a great number of books that will lead him to wickedness and make the reader toil in vain. But he also teaches that you must have enthusiasm and follow meanings more than the words themselves, the opposite that philosophers and teachers of this world teach, who try to assert the falsities of their doctrines with flamboyant and unnecessary language. On the other hand divine scripture is restricted by the small quantity of what is written, and however much it is

enlarged by people's opinions it is restricted by the text itself. This is because the Lord has made speech

concise and brief all over the world, and His word is the same when it is

spoken in our mouth and our heart.³¹³ Differently: read often, then consider what

you have read daily, there is usually more toil of the mind than that of the

body. For just as whatever you do with

your hand and body is filled with the toil of the hand and the body, so that

which pertains to reading is more the toil of the mind. It seems to me from this that the above points

from the several books must be considered differently to the way in which many

believe them to be. It is the custom of

the Scriptures that, no matter how many books there are, if they all follow the

same matter and have few differences, then we can say that they are one

book. In this way the Gospel and the

"immaculate law of the Lord, converting spirits"³¹⁴

are called one, although there are several books in the Gospel and there are

many laws. In this way too there is one

volume of Isaiah, and all of the divine Scripture has one title; Ezekiel³¹⁵

and John³¹⁶

are also many books in one book. The Saviour too prophesied in the holy words,

saying, "in the title of the Book is written about me"³¹⁷. According to this meaning therefore I think

it is a teaching that there should not be too many books. For whatever you say, if it is told to him

who was with God in the beginning, the word then is God³¹⁸,

as one volume, and the many books are the one law, which is called the

Gospel. But if you argue that they are

varied and differ too much to be in the same volume, and look at them with too

much curiosity, even within each book you will see that there are many

books. They say about this: "you

may not escape the sin of saying too much"³¹⁹. Therefore there is no end to such books, for

all is good and the ending locks in truth, but wickedness and lying have no

end. And the more they are sought, the more they come about. Study and consideration of this is toil of the body.

I say of the body here and not of the spirit. But the spirit even has toil according to what the apostle says: "the more I worked for all these, not I, but the grace of God which was with me"³²⁰, and the Saviour says, "I worked shouting"³²¹.

12:13-14. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. The Hebrews say that although it used to be among other writings of Solomon in the past, they have not persisted in memory; and this book seems as if it ought to have been omitted, because it asserts that all God's creations are vain and that he thinks everything is done for nothing, and he prefers food and drink and transient pleasures to all things; thus he takes his authority from this one title, so it is now included in the number of divine books, because he argues well and lists many things like anakephaiousei, and he said that his speeches are the easiest to hear, and to understand; let us therefore fear God and carry out his commandments. For man is born for this purpose and, understanding his Creator, he reveres Him in fear and respect, and in the work of his commandments. And when the time of judgement comes whatever we have done will stand before the judge and for a long time we will await our judgement which could go one way or the other, and we will receive our just rewards, whether they be good or bad. But where we read, "with every secret thing", Symmachus and the Septuagint have interpreted, "from all contempt", or even "from all unknown", which even brought by reluctant words, not by will, but by

ignorance, we will be returned to reason in the day of our judgement. Differently: since fear is more appropriate

to slaves, and perfect love involves no fear, and fear in the divine Scripture

is used to denote those embarking on and those completing education³²². Now I think he talks about the fear inherent

in virtues, according to the passage, which says, "nothing is lacking from

those who fear Him"³²³. Or even, since until now he is a man and has

not yet taken the name of God, he has this reason of his wealth, so that he

fears God while he is still alive. Since

every single deed is judged, that is, God leads all men into judgement about

all things, either good or bad, which are done and said differently than by

Him. For indeed, "woe to those who

say wicked is good, and good is wicked"³²⁴.

1:

i.e. 389 CE

2:

Cant. 1,1.

3:

Prov. 1,1.

4:

John 14, 27.

5:

Matt. 3, 17.

6:

Matth. 23, 37.

7:

Matth. 23, 38.

8:

Cfr Ex. 34, 30-35.

9:

II Cor. 3, 10.

10:

I Cor. 13, 9.

11:

Luc. 12, 20.

12:

Hier.. "in saeculis"

13:

Hier.. "in saeculo"

14:

Hier.. "aspirat"

15:

John 12, 32.

16:

John 6, 44.

17:

Cfr. Gen. 28, 11; 32, 31.

18: Aeneid 3.284 19: Vergil Georg. 2. 402.

20:

Vergil Aeneid, 6. 726-7.

21:

I Cor. 15, 28.

22:

Psalms 35, 9.

23:

John 18,1.

24:

Prov. 30, 15.

25:

Terence Eunuchus, prol. 41.

26:

Donatus Comm. in Terent. Eun.

27:

Origines peri Archon III 5, 3.

28:

Cfr Matth. 20, 16.

29:

Eccl. 2, 16.

30:

Hier.. "in distentionem".

31:

Hier.. "occupationem".

32:

Rom. 1, 6.

33:

Rom. 1, 28.

34:

Rom. 1, 24.

35:

II Thess. 2, 10.

36:

Matth. 6, 34.

37: Cfr III Reg. 3, 5 sqq 38: Horat. Epist.I, 1,41-42.

39:

Cfr Sap. 6, 7.

40:

II Cor. 2, 2.

41: II Cor. 12, 7 42: Prov. 30, 8.

43:

Prov. 30, 9.

44:

I Tim. 3, 6.

45:

Hier.. "error"

46:

Hier.. "tumultus".

47:

Hier.. "circumlationem".

48:

Hier.. "animas"

49:

Ps. 2, 2.

50:

Cfr John 4.

51:

Cfr I Cor. 1.

52:

Cfr Ex. 1, 16.

53:

Cfr Num. 26,32 ; 27, 3.

54:

Cfr Gen. 30, 21 ; 34.

55:

Ps. 36, 4.

56:

Ps. 35, 9.

57:

Cfr Prov. 9, 2.3.

58:

Luc. 2, 52.

59:

Phil. 2, 9.

60:

Cfr Ex. 34,33. ; II Cor. 3, 13.

61:

Allegorical interpretation bearing out a deeper sense of the
Scriptures.

62:

Cfr I John. 5, 19.

63:

Rom. 7, 24.

64:

Horat. Sat. I. 10, 72/73.

65:

Cfr Matth. 7, 6.

66:

Cfr Matth. 24, 45.

67:

Cfr Prov. 25, 16.

68:

Os. 10, 12. (as in LXX)

69:

Is. 26, 18.

70:

I. John. 4, 18.

71:

Cfr Ier.. 13, I-II.

72:

Deut. 32, 39.

73:

Ps. 100.8.

74:

Ier.. I, 10.

75:

Luc. 6, 21.

76:

Luc. 7, 32.

77:

Cfr II Reg. 6, 14.

78:

Horat. Epist. I. I. 100, 99.

79:

Matth. 3, 9.

80:

I Cor. 7, 5.

81:

Gen. 1, 28.

82:

I Cor. 7, 29.

83:

Prov. 4, 8.

84:

The Jewish feast of the New Moon.

85:

Cfr I Cor. 13, 12.

86:

Cfr Matth. 6, 34.

87:

Is. 22, 31.

88:

I Tim. 6, 8.

89:

See footnote 60.

90:

Num. 23, 23.

91:

Cfr Eccl. 3, 13.

92:

Luc. 6, 21.

93:

Cfr Iob. 8, 21.

94:

Rom. 1, 20.

95:

Ps. 33, 17.

96:

Cfr Luc. 19, 10 ; 15, 4-7.

97:

Eccli. ?

98:

cfr Gen. 37, 35 ; 42, 38 ; 44, 31.

99:

cfr Iob. 7, 9 ; 17, 13.16.

100:

cfr Luc. 16, 26.

101:

A long missile weapon of barbarian nations.

102:

Gen. 3.19.

103:

Is. 53, 8.

104:

Ps. 14, 1.

105:

Ier. 17, 9.

106:

Ps. 35, 17.

107:

Ps. 72, 23.

108:

Iob. 3, 17, 18.

109:

Matth. 26, 24.

110: Cfr. Origines peri Archon I. 5,5 ; Hier. Epist 124, 3. sqq 111: Rom. 7, 14.

112:

Cfr Prov. 19, 24.

113:

Hagg. 1, 1.

114:

Ps. 143, 1.

115:

Prov. 16, 8.

116:

Cfr IV Reg. 4, 32-36.

117:

Cfr Rom, 7, 15.

118:

Cfr Lev. 17, 13; 19, 20; 21, 17. etc.

119: Grego. Neocaesar. Metaphr. In Eccl. -PG 10, 1000 A 120: Apollinarius Laodic.

121: Origenes. Victorinus Poetouion 122: Is. 49, 6. According to LXX 123: cfr II Cor. 8, 9.

124:

Luc. 2, 52.

125:

Ioh. 18, 36.

126:

Thren. 3, 34.

127:

Ioh. 14, 6.

128:

Cfr Ex. 24, 2.

129:

I Reg. 15, 21.

130:

Os. 6, 6.

131:

Cfr Prov. 10, 19.

132:

I Cor. 16, 12.

133:

Ex. 24, 3.

134:

Rom. 7, 15.

135:

Cfr Matth. 13, 24-30.

136: (because the Latin for cattle is pecus) 137: Horat. Epist. I. 2, 56.

138:

Sallust Catil. 11, 3.

139:

Luc. 6, 24.

140:

I Cor. 1, 19.

141:

Gal. 4, 26.

142:

Cf I Cor. 10, 2-4.

143:

Matth. 21, 43.

144:

Ioh. 8, 39.

145:

Ezek. 11, 21.

146:

Ioh. 14, 28.

147:

Luc. 6, 25.

148:

Matth. 5, 5.

149:

Cfr I Reg. 16.

150:

Cfr II Cor. 12, 21.

151:

Prov. 27, 6.

152:

Prov. 9, 8.

153:

Deut. 16, 19.

154:

Ioh. 20, 29.

155:

Gal. 5. 7.

156:

Gal. 3. 3.

157:

Dan. 12. 3.

158:

See footnote 50.

159:

Cfr Matth. 25,

14-23; Luc. 19. 12-25.

160:

Ps. 120, 6.

161:

Thren. 4, 20.

162:

Ex. 4, 11.

163:

Ps. 17, 26-27.

164:

Lev. 26-27.

165:

Cfr. Lucr. De Rerum Natura VI 962/965; Verg. Ecl. VIII 80.; Hier. Epist. 120,10

-12. CSEL 55, p504,10.

166:

Cfr Ovid, Meta. I.19-20.

167:

Matth. 10. 39.

168:

Luc. 6, 37.

169:

Cfr. Apuleius. Plat. 2, 5.

170:

Rom. 9, 19.

171:

Ibid. 9, 20.

172:

Cfr I Reg. 15.

173:

Cfr. Matth. 18. 23-34.

174:

Ezek. 18, 32.

175:

Cfr. Num. 16.

176:

Ier. 51, 9.

177:

Cfr. III Reg. 3. 4.

178:

Cfr. Zech. 5, 7.

179:

Virg. Aen. 4. 569/70.

180:

II Tim. 3.7.

181:

Ps. 26, 4.

182: [lit. "pro eo quod est unum"] 183: II Cor. 3, 18.

184:

Ps. 4,7.

185:

Ps. 20, 1.

186:

Tob. 12,7.

187: Tob. 12,7 188: II Cor. 5, 21.

189:

Virg. Aen. 10, 501.

190:

Eccl. 1,6.

191:

Cant. 4, 13.

192:

Ps. 9,24.

193:

Ps. 57, 4.

194:

Gal. 5,12.

195:

II Tim. 4, 14.

196:

Ps. 33, 17.

197:

Gen. 47, 9.

198:

Ps. 101, 12.

199:

Ps. 38, 7.

200:

Cfr. Luc. 16, 19-31.

201:

Cfr. Matth. 5, 5.6.

202:

Ps. 50, 19.

203:

Ps. 30,13.

204:

Ioh. 8, 23.

205:

Matth. 9, 23.

206:

Num. 23,24.

207:

Ps. 138, 21.

208:

Cfr. I Mach. 2, 24-6.54.

209:

Ps. 72, 26.

210:

Eccl. 9, 12.

211: Verg. Aen. XI. 104 212: i.e.Eratosthenes 213: I Cor. 10, 31.

214: 'Quotation of uncertain origin.' 215: Eccli. 1, 33.

216:

Is. 48, 7.8.

217:

Ioh. 7, 37.

218:

Prov. 9, 5.

219:

Ps. 109, 18.

220:

Ps. 45, 7.

221:

Is. 1, 6.

222:

Ps. 140, 5.

223:

Prov. 4, 8.

224:

Ioh. 9, 4.

225:

Phil. 1, 23.

226:

Zach. 5, 7.

227:

Ps. 37, 5.

228:

II. Tim. 4, 7.

229:

Ier. 6, 4.

230:

Prov. 9, 5.

231:

I Tim. 6, 18.

232:

I Cor. 1, 5.

233:

Prov. 15, 8.

234:

Rom. 9, 16.

235:

Cfr. Cic de Offic. II, 35.

236:

Cfr. Iac. 2, 10.

237:

Cfr. Is. 7, 18.

238:

Cfr. Matth. 12, 24.

239:

Prov. 4, 27.

240:

Virg. Aen. 6, 541/543.

241:

Lactant. Divin. Instit. VI, 3,6-CSEL 19, p.486, 166sqq.

242:

Prov. 4, 27.

243:

Cfr. Eph. 2, 2; 6, 12.

244:

Ps. 18, 4.

245:

Cfr. Horat. Epod. IV, 14.

246:

Hab. 3, 8.

247:

Eccli. 27, 29.

248:

Ps. 7, 16.

249:

Am. 9, 3.

250:

Cfr. Zach. 9, 16.

251:

Cfr. Apoc. 21, 18-27.

252:

Cfr. Lev. 14, 45.

253:

Rom. 12, 15.

254:

II Cor. 11, 29.

255:

Ps. 72, 20.

256:

Ps. 45, 5.

257:

Matth. 5, 14.

258: Is. 27, 3. (According to the LXX.) 259: Ps. 107, 4.

260:

Cfr. Is. 8, 1-7.

261:

Is. 3, 4.

262:

Cfr. Dan. 7, 9 sqq.

263:

Cfr. Ier. 1, 7.

264:

Is. 22, 13.

265:

Cant. 2, 1.

266:

Is. 65, 13.

267:

Is. 65, 14.

268:

Cfr Tit. 1, 5.

269:

Cfr. I Tim. 4, 14.

270:

Ps. 12, 6.

271:

Cfr. Matth. 25, 15-30.

272:

Matth. 22, 37.40.

273:

Zach. 1, 11.

274:

Ioh. 7, 38.

275:

Is. 32, 20.

276:

Ez. 40, 26.31.

277:

Ier. 'ogdoadem'

278:

Ps. 35, 6.

279:

Is. 5, 6.

280:

Deut. 32, 2.

281:

Deut. 32, 1.

282:

Heb. 3,3.

283:

Cant. 4, 16.

284:

Is. 43, 6.

285:

Cfr. Luc 6, 30.

286:

Cfr II Tim. 4, 2.

287:

Prov. 28, 3.4.

288:

Deut. 11, 14.

289:

Eccl. 12, 2.

290:

Eccl. 12, 7.

291:

Cfr Ier. 9.

292:

Cfr Is. 37.

293:

Cfr Ier. 1, 11.

294:

Matth. 24, 21.19.

295:

Phil. 2, 15.

296:

I Cor. 15, 41.

297:

Luc. 11, 14-26.

298:

Ex. 33, 22.

299:

Cfr. Matth. 24, 41.

300:

Cfr. Matth. 25, 1-12.

301:

Cfr. Matth. 7, 13.

302:

Ps. 10, 1.

303:

Ps. 101, 8.

304:

Ps. 83, 4.

305:

Cfr. II reg. 19, 32-39.

306:

Ier. 1, 11.

307:

Ier. 1, 12.

308:

Apollinaris Laodic.

309:

Eccl. 1,2.

310:

Cfr. Matth, 13; 15.

311:

Ps. 8, 4.

312:

Acts. 9, 5.

313:

Cfr. Deut. 30, 14; Rom. 10, 8.

314:

Ps. 18, 8.

315:

Cfr. Ez. 3, 1-3.

316:

Cfr. Apoc. 10, 9.

317:

Ps. 39, 9.

318:

Cfr. Ioh. 1, 2.

319:

Prov. 10, 19.

320:

I Cor. 15, 10.

321:

Ps. 68, 4.

322:

Cfr. I. Ioh. 4, 18.

323:

Ps. 33, 10.

324:

Is. 5, 20.

Commentary on Ephesians

Three Books of Commentaries on the Epistle to the Ephesians by Saint Jerome of Stridon, Priest
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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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• 6:24 The First Book: Prologue If there is anything, Paula and Eustochium, which holds the wise man in this life, and persuades him to remain with an equal mind amid the pressures and whirlpools of the world, I consider it to be first and foremost, meditation and knowledge of the Scriptures. For whereas we differ from other animals chiefly in that we are rational and able to speak, all reason and speech is contained in the divine books, by which we learn both God and the reason for our creation. I am amazed that some have arisen who either, giving themselves over to idleness and sleep, do not wish to learn those things which are excellent, or who think that those who have this desire for knowledge should be censured. Although I could respond more severely to them and dismiss them briefly either as offended or as placated, I will say that it is much better to read the Scriptures than to strive after the increase and accumulation of wealth. I would assert, even before an unjust judge, that my leisure pleases me and that solitude seems more delightful than any social interaction. And just as I do not criticize or condemn what they do, so they ought to grant me my foolishness. I am not very eloquent, what do you say? Read someone more skilled. I do not translate Greek into Latin as I ought, but if you have knowledge of the same language, read the Greeks; or if you are only a Latinist, do not judge this free gift, and, as the common proverb has it: 'Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.' Do I drag you into court with a writ of summons because you do not write to me (perhaps you may have read)? Let the less learned read me: perhaps if you write what you say, Tullius will admire it. Did Tertullian stop the blessed martyr Cyprian, or did Cyprian deter Lactantius, or did Lactantius stop Hilary from writing? I am silent about other triflers who chatter with me in their books. Even if they are small, they cannot stand out if they are not preceded by the second and third. We do not climb to the top unless we step on the bottom. Therefore, I beg you, who are present now, as well as holy Marcella, the unique example of widowhood, not to easily hand over my work to slanderers and enviers: neither give what is holy to dogs, nor throw pearls before swine (Matthew 7). They envy what they cannot imitate well, and consider themselves learned and educated if they speak ill of others. I beg you to answer them, so that they themselves may fix their style, connect three words as they say, sweat a little, test themselves, and learn from their own labor to forgive those who labor. You yourselves know that you have forced me, unwilling and reluctant, to this work of explanations. Not that I have ever stopped reading or asking learned men what I did not know since my youth, and only considered myself a teacher like many others. Finally, I recently went to Alexandria for this very reason, to see Didymus and to inquire of him about all the Scriptures that I had doubts about. But while it is one thing to compose one's own books, for example, on greed, faith, virginity, widows, and to join secular eloquence with testimonies from the Scriptures sought here and there, and to display pompous language in common places, it is another thing to enter into the sense of the prophet and apostle, to understand why they wrote, how they established their own opinions, what is peculiar to the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, Philistines, Egyptians, and Assyrians in the Old Law, and what we have in our hands now in the New Testament to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Hebrews, Colossians, and the letter we now have to the Ephesians. For it is necessary that according to the diversities of places and times, and of the people to whom they were written, they should have different causes, arguments, and origins. And just as blessed John in his Apocalypse writes to the seven churches and in each one of them reproves specific vices or approves virtues, so too does the holy apostle Paul, through each church, heal the wounds inflicted, and does not, like an unskilled doctor, want to cure all eyes with one ointment. And because we have already expressed

our thoughts on the Galatians a few days ago, as you requested, now it is necessary to move on to the Ephesians, both in terms of order and meaning. And by "middle" I do not mean that it is greater than the first and last, but just as the heart is in the middle of the body, so you may understand how many difficulties and profound questions are involved in this. Paul was writing to the Ephesians, who worshipped not the huntress Diana who holds a bow and is dressed for the chase, but the many-breasted one whom the Greeks call "Polymastia", so that even from her image they lied and said that she was the nurse of all animals and living beings. But it was written to the metropolis city of Asia, in which idolatry and, as always follows idolatry, the tricks of magical arts flourished so much that Demetrius said, 'and the great temple of the goddess Diana will be regarded as nothing, and its magnificence will be destroyed, which all Asia and the whole world worships' (Acts 19:27). Finally, the Apostle stayed there for three years, preaching the Gospel of God day and night, so that with the destruction of the stronghold of idolatry, it would be easy to capture the temples of smaller cities. Scripture itself confirms this, as Paul speaks to the Ephesians, saying: "Therefore, watch, remembering that for three years I did not cease, night or day, to admonish each one of you with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:31-32). For they needed the Apostle's recommendation to God, whom the error of demons had held for so long, and they knew that there were some spiritual powers, and in entrails, and in auspices, and in divinations they recognized a certain likeness of divinity. Therefore, he speaks to them again: "Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all. For I have not failed to proclaim to you the whole will of God." And in another place: "How I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house" (Acts 20:20). He had read in Ezekiel (Ibid., 26, 27) that the watchman who did not announce the coming of the enemy to the people would have the blood of the citizens required from his hands. Therefore, he recalled having announced to them all the will of God and everything that would be useful to them, so that he would be free from their blood. And in order for you to know that those who had believed in Ephesus had been bound by the deceptive tricks of the demons and the arts of magic, it is repeated in the same Acts of the Apostles and it is said: "Moreover, many of those who had practiced magic collected their books and burned them in front of everyone. They calculated the value of them and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord continued to spread and prevail mightily" (Acts 19:19-20). We have repeated all this to show why the Apostle in this letter, or rather in this particular Epistle, has piled up obscure meanings and mysteries unknown to ages, and has taught about the power of holy and opposing virtues, about who the demons are, what they are capable of, what they were before, and how they were destroyed after the coming of Christ. Concerning whom he says: "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places" (Ephesians 6:12). And in another place: "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (1 Corinthians 16:8-9). He stayed at Ephesus until Pentecost, a time of joy and victory, where we do not bend our knees or bow to the ground, but rising up with the Lord we are lifted up to the heights of heaven. And he remained: because the door was open to him, and not a small door, but a great one, so that having bound the strong one and overcome him, he could invade his house, plunder it, overturn it, and lead captive captivity (Matth. 12): who, gathering together the ranks of his companions, fought against the Apostle with

all his might, and was defeated. And who the Ephesians were is proven especially by this, that just as John, about to relate the mystery of the ancient nativity of the Lord, reclined on His breast and drank from the purest fountain a stream of teachings (John 13 and 21), so these [Ephesians], falling upon Paul's neck as he was departing, indicated with their kisses and embraces that they possessed one treasury of knowledge with him, and bore witness to their longing for their teacher with tears. I also remind you in the preface that Origen wrote three volumes on this Epistle, whom we have followed in part. Apollinaris and Didymus also wrote some commentaries, from which we have gleaned a few things and added or subtracted some that seemed to us appropriate, so that the reader may immediately recognize at the beginning whether this work is ours or someone else's.

1:1

"Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God." If the preposition "by" indicates the ministry of the one through whom things are done, it seems to me that this meaning is in agreement with the statement: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them" (John 6:44). And so it will be that the statement in John's Gospel: "All things were made through him" (John 1:3) does not diminish our Lord Jesus Christ, as if he were inferior to the Father because he obeys the Father's will. Similarly, it does not diminish the Father that Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ is so by the will of God. Others, however, understand this passage to mean that Paul is an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God who is Christ, so that just as wisdom and the Word, and the power of God, and truth and resurrection, and the way are referred to as Christ, so too is the will. Some believe it makes no difference whether it is "by the will of God" or "according to the will of God" because the Apostle uses these prepositions interchangeably, and "by the will of God" means the same thing as "according to the will of God" would mean.

"To all the saints who are at Ephesus." Some, more curious than necessary, think that because it was said to Moses, "Say this to the children of Israel: 'I Am has sent me to you'" (Exod. 3:14), even those who are saints and faithful in Ephesus were called by the term of essence. Just as from the holy come the holy, from the just come the just, and from the wise come the wise, so from Him who is come those who are, and according to the same Apostle, God chose things that were not in order to destroy things that are. They also explained the Scripture that was brought up as testimony in this way: that we should understand the destruction of things that are from the consequents, "so that no flesh may boast in the presence of God" (1 Cor. 1:29). For if someone, they say, by progressing from what was not to what is, does not give grace to the giver but thinks that what exists is due to their own merit and virtue, then as soon as it exists, it is destroyed and begins to be what it was not. Others, however, simply believe that the writing refers not to those who exist but to those who are holy and faithful in Ephesus.

"And to the faithful in Christ Jesus." For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband (1 Corinthians 7:14). And there are also holy vessels, and dumb beasts that are sacrificed to God in the temple (Numbers 4 and 31): therefore, those whom he called holy, he also called faithful, because faith comes from our own mental choice, but sanctification is sometimes received by us as a gift from the one who sanctifies, without our will. And when he says "faithful in Christ Jesus," this is emphasized as a careful distinction. For there are many who are faithful, but not in Christ Jesus. If

someone returns a deposit, or does not deny something entrusted to them, they should show themselves to be a faithful friend: they should be ready to sacrifice their life rather than their faith, as we read of some philosophers (and not to give them too much credit, a prostitute in Athens also did so). This person is faithful, but not in Christ Jesus.

1:2

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Whether both grace and peace are meant for both, that is, both to God the Father and to our Lord Jesus Christ, or whether each one is to be referred to individually, so that grace is for God the Father and peace is for Christ. For immediately following this, it says: "To the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He has made us accepted in the Beloved," so that it is by the grace of the Father that He deigned to send His Son for our salvation, and by the peace of the Son that we have been reconciled to the Father through Him, and by breaking down the middle wall of partition in His flesh, making both one.

1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. According to his substance and nature, God, who is good, has made us good by sharing in his communion and speaks to Israel, saying, 'Be holy, for I am holy' (Leviticus 20:7); and so may he, who is blessed, make us blessed. For the lawgiver gives blessings, and the Lord's blessing is upon the head of the righteous (Proverbs 10), whose name 'Baruch' in our language means 'blessed'. And he has blessed us, not with a single blessing, but with all blessings. Not that we all attain all things, but that while we individually possess one or some or many of all things, we all possess all things through them individually. And not with earthly blessings, but with spiritual ones. For earthly blessings include having children, being wealthy, enjoying honor and health, which are earthly blessings that extend even to irrational beasts. For it is said of them: 'And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:22).' But spiritual blessings are in the heavenly realm, because the earthly realm cannot contain spiritual blessings. For example, the blessings that are promised to those who keep God's commandments in Leviticus 26, such as lending to foreign nations, having full storehouses of grain, being blessed in cities and in the fields, and other similar blessings, we will not see fulfilled in the prophets, as we see fulfilled in people who wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, in poverty, in distress, in desolate mountains, in caves and in rocky crevices, avoiding the attacks of persecutors (Hebrews 11). Therefore, all things must be understood spiritually, and spiritual blessings must be expected not in earthly places but in heavenly ones. However, it is questioned how He has blessed us with heavenly blessings while we are still on earth, as it is written, "who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 1:3) It seems that it has already been done in the past, not promised for the future, i.e., He has blessed, not He will bless. Either because our conversation is in heaven, and we are not of this world; but having put off the image of the earthly, we bear the image of the heavenly; and we do not live in the flesh but in the spirit, and we treasure up for ourselves in heaven where our heart is, we are now said to be blessed with heavenly blessings; or certainly because all spiritual blessings are counted as heavenly in Christ, even if they are on earth. He says, "He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." This refers to God's word, wisdom, truth, and other virtues. It can be read in two ways:

"Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," so that God, the creator of all things, is blessed and distinguished in this way, and then it follows: "who is also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," or it can be read as "God and Father," referring to our Lord in a common way. God is blessed, who took on human form, and His Father is blessed, who was the Word of God in the beginning. This is not to say that one man was assumed and another was the word that was assumed, but that one and the same person is proclaimed in different ways, sometimes exalted and sometimes humble, depending on the circumstances.

1:4

"As he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him." In Greek, it is written for the foundation of the world, *πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου*; not the same as *καταβολή*, which means "constitution". Therefore, because of the poverty of language and the novelty of the matter, and as some say that the Greek language is broader and more felicitous, we will try not so much to translate the word for word, which is impossible, as to explain the force of the word by a certain circumlocution. *Καταβολή* is properly said when someone is thrown down and put into a lower place from a high one, or when something takes its beginning. Hence those who first lay the foundations of future buildings are said to have *καταβεβληκέναι*, that is, to have laid the beginnings of the foundations downward. Therefore, Paul, wishing to show that God had devised everything out of nothing, referred to him not as "condition," "creature," or "work," but as *καταβολή*, that is, "the beginning of the foundation," so that nothing, as according to Manichaeus and other heresies (which posit a creator and matter), preceded creatures from which creatures were made, but all things existed from nothing. That we are chosen, to be holy and blameless before him, that is, before God, before the creation of the world, belongs to God's foreknowledge; for whom all things future have already been made, and all things are known before they are made. Just as Paul himself is predestined in his mother's womb, and Jeremiah is sanctified in the womb (Jeremiah 1), he is chosen, strengthened, and sent as a prophet to the Gentiles in the type of Christ. But another who tries to show that God is just, that he does not choose each one from his own preconceived knowledge but from the merit of the elect, says that there were once invisible creatures before visible creatures, heaven, earth, seas, and everything within them, in which even souls, which for some reasons known only to God, were cast down into this valley of tears, into a place of affliction and pilgrimage, in which the holy man prayed to be returned to his former abode, saying: "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged! I have dwelt with the inhabitants" (Ps. 120:5). And in another place: "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" And: "It is better to return and be with Christ." And elsewhere: "Before I was humbled I sinned" (Ps. 118:67), and so on. Therefore, before the souls, they say, were cast down into the world, and the world was made from the souls with their inhabitants, God chose Paul and others like him before him who were holy and blameless. But no one is chosen from among many: and where there are some who are of lower status, that is where the choice is made. However, just as in the captivity of Babylon, when the people were taken by Nebuchadnezzar to Chaldea, the prophets Ezekiel, Daniel, three boys, Haggai, and Zechariah were sent, not because they deserved captivity, but to be a consolation to the captives, so too in this world's downfall, those who were chosen by God before the world was made were sent to instruct and teach the souls of sinners, so that they would return to the place from which they had fallen. And this is what is said by Moses in the eighty-ninth Psalm: "Lord, you have been our

refuge from generation to generation: before the mountains were formed, before the earth and the world were made" (Psalm 89:1). That is, that before the world was made and the whole generation had its beginning, God was a refuge to his saints. And what he says, "that we might be holy and immaculate before him," between holy and immaculate there is this difference, that holy and immaculate can also be understood as immaculate but not immediately holy. "For young children are indeed immaculate, because they have not committed any sin with their whole body; and yet they are not holy, because holiness is compared to will and effort. And he who can be called immaculate is one who has not committed any sins, but he who is holy is one who is full of virtues, according to what is written in a certain psalm: 'He who walks without blemish and works justice' (Ps. 14:2). And in the Song of Songs: 'You are all beautiful, my love, and there is no blemish in you' (Song of Solomon 4:7). It is asked how someone can be holy and immaculate before God, when the prophet testifies, saying: 'All the living will not be justified in your sight' (Ps. 143:2). Either the saints and the immaculate are before God in Ephesus, and what is said, 'All the living will not be justified in your sight' is false, or if no one is justified in the sight of God, it is false that the saints and the immaculate are before God, to which there are two possible answers. For Paul does not say, 'He chose us before the constitution of the world, when we were holy and immaculate,' but he chose us so that we might be holy and immaculate, that is, we were not holy and immaculate before, but we would be afterwards." That can also be said of sinners who have turned to better things, and that statement will stand: 'In your sight, no living being will be justified,' that is, throughout their entire life, during all the time they have lived in this world. Indeed, it is understood in this way, and it is opposed to those who claim that before the world was made, souls were chosen for their holiness and had no sin. For, as we have already said, Paul and those like him were not chosen because they were holy and immaculate, but they were chosen and predestined to become holy and immaculate through their actions and virtues in subsequent life. Furthermore, it should be understood in this way because he did not say, 'No one living in your sight will be justified,' but rather, 'every living being,' that is, not all will be justified, but some will be justified.

1:5

"In love predestining us to the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ in himself." It can be read in two ways: either with love connected to the preceding or succeeding clauses. With the preceding it is read as follows: "that we might be holy and without blemish before him in love," and after that follows: "predestining us to the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ in himself." With the succeeding, however, it is read thus: "in love predestining us to the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ in himself." Latin does not explain the difference between the Greek terms προορ■σας and ρισθ■ντος. The former expression refers to those who did not exist before and upon whom thought was first cast and who thereafter existed. The latter expression refers to that which neither thought nor will preceded but which always was and which never had a beginning. Accordingly, the term "predestined" is correctly used in speaking of those who, though they were not, later existed. Concerning the Son, that is, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, it is written elsewhere "determined" because he always existed with the Father and because no parental will preceded him before he existed. From this it is deduced that the Father always was the Son and that in those in whom eternity is coeternal, there is the same nature. It must also be inferred that although God predestines or defines us to be his sons through Jesus Christ, we cannot become sons until we have received faith in and understanding of his son Jesus Christ. He is a Son by

nature; we, by adoption. He never was not a Son; we were predestined before we came into being and then received the spirit of adoption when we believed in the Son of God.

"According to the pleasure of his will." The word "euodokian," which is translated in Latin as "placitum," is composed of two parts in Greek, derived from "eu" meaning "well" and "dokein" meaning "to think" or "to please." Together, they form the term "beneplacitum" or "well-pleased." This term is used only when what has pleased is commendable. The Septuagint translators rendered the Hebrew term "Reson" in this passage into Greek, creating a new word. Some use this passage to suggest that before the creation of the world, souls were present in heavenly Jerusalem among the angels and other heavenly powers. This idea cannot be consistent with the well-pleased will of God, or with God's praise, glory, and grace, if some souls were born poor, barbaric, servile, or weak, while others were born wealthy, Roman, free, healthy, and of different social status. Thus, it must be understood that each soul is born with different merits. The same sense may be found in the passage from Romans, "Does not the potter have power over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?" (Romans 9:21). If we do not believe in God's future judgment, then our actions, whether they be good or bad, hard or easy, in this world, are done in vain. Likewise, the diversity of those born into this world should indicate God's righteousness, unless the souls' merits have come first. If we do not accept this, it will not be in line with God's well-pleased will, nor with God's praise, glory, and grace. God predestined some to be holy and blameless, and to receive adoption through Jesus Christ before the creation of the world, while others were destined for eternal punishment.

1:6

To the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He has made us acceptable in His beloved Son. This, they say, is the praise of the glory of God's grace—to make some people pleasing to Him in Christ, and to prepare others for eternal punishment: to love Jacob before he was even born, and to hate Esau before he had done anything worthy of hate, unless there were causes preceding that prove the justice of God? Therefore, all grace that we receive in glory, and His praise who has justified us ("Al." gratified) in His beloved, that is, in our Lord and Savior, is completed: because without wisdom, truth, justice, peace, redemption, and other virtues, no good can be understood. Nor is it to be believed that what is written in the Latin codices is "in His beloved Son," but simply "in the beloved"; and if anything had been added, such as "the beloved of God," or "the beloved of the Father", it would have been a simple understanding, and it is widely held that our Lord Jesus Christ was loved by the Father; but we would not grant anything great to the property of the Son if He were loved so much as the others. For it is said to God ("Al." Him): "For You love all things that are, and hate none of the things which You have made; for You did not appoint or make anything that, hating it, You would reject it" (Wisdom 11:24). Or if the opposite were said, "in which He made us acceptable in His beloved above all," all doubt would be removed, because we know that the patriarchs, prophets, and all of the holy men were beloved by God. But as He has spoken absolutely, saying "in the beloved," it seems to me to be understood by implication, "by all." For if Christ, as we have often said, is wisdom, justice, peace, joy, self-control, and the rest, these names of virtues are also loved by those who cannot follow them, and no one is so openly wicked that he does not say he loves wisdom and justice. Therefore, just as there is a consensus that the substance of God is divine and can hardly be understood by anyone's faculties, but each individual errs when they think it is such and such, so also with Christ, according to what he signifies by

different virtues, all people love him, although not everyone can prove with their deeds that they love him. This is the beloved whom I believe is also signified in Isaiah: "I will sing a song to my beloved concerning His vineyard" (Isaiah 5:1); and "the vineyard has been made the beloved;" and in Psalm 28: "The Lord will break the cedars of Lebanon, and will break them like a calf of Lebanon; and He beloved as the son of the unicorns" (Psalm 28:6).

1:7

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins." He who is captive is redeemed and, coming into enemy territory, has ceased to be under their power: so also some say that we are captives in this world and are held in the yoke of slavery by princes and powers, nor can we lift up our hands or eyes until the redeemer comes and frees us from our shackles. But who is this great and mighty person who can redeem the whole world with his own price? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, gave His own blood, and by freeing us from servitude, gave us liberty. And truly, if we believe the stories of the Gentiles, that Codrus, and Curtius, and Decii restrained the plagues of cities, famine, and war by their deaths, how much more possible is it to be judged in the Son of God that he cleansed the whole world with his blood and not just one city! But the blood of Christ is understood in two ways, either as spiritual and divine, about which He himself said: "My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" (John 6:56); and: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (Ibid., 54); or flesh and blood, which was crucified, and which was shed by the soldier's spear. According to this division, there is also diversity in the saints of his blood and flesh, so that there is one flesh that will see the salvation of God, and another flesh and blood that cannot possess the kingdom of God. Consequently, after the redemption of Christ's blood, we are said to have received the remission of sins because if we were not redeemed, our sins would be forgiven us in vain. Nor can we receive forgiveness of sins and cease to be slaves until the bloody conqueror has received the price for us.

1:8

"According to the riches of His grace which He has abundantly bestowed upon us." Whoever understands what is said: "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves" (Ephesians 2), and the debtor of fifty and five hundred pence in the Gospel (Luke 7) who loves more, the more he is forgiven, he can know that according to His riches the grace of God has abounded towards us: especially in the Church gathered from among the Gentiles, which was alienated from the covenant and the promises of Israel, for whose offense we have obtained salvation. Is not the greatness of grace remarkable in Paul, and in the other saints, of whom it is said: "Do ye not know that we shall judge angels" (1 Corinthians 5)? and in another place: "Into which things the angels desire to look" (1 Peter 1:12): and again: "Father, I pray, that they may be one in us, as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee" (John 17:21). He does not render these riches of grace void in himself, who, as far as human weakness will allow, strives, labors, and contends, and with the Apostle may say: "His grace in me has not been void" (1 Corinthians 15). But he who does not remember the magnitude of the benefit, slips into worse things; in him the grace of God is rich, and yet His munificence is contracted by poverty.

1:9

"Making known to us the mystery of his will in all wisdom and insight." The Stoics believed that wisdom and insight were different, stating that "wisdom is knowledge of divine and human things; insight is only of mortal things." According to this division, we can accept wisdom of the invisible and visible things, and insight only of visible things. We ask, therefore, how God made the mystery of his will known to us in all wisdom and insight. First, it should be simply understood that the mystery of his will is our redemption through the blood of his Son and the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace that abound in us. That is, that we, believing in the Lord's passion (which is foolishness to unbelievers), possess wisdom and insight. Secondly, that he has made known to us through his scriptures all the mysteries: how he first devised and created the heavens, the earth, and all that is in them, how he ordered and distinguished them, so that man, created as a divine being, was filled with the world up to the time of Christ's passion, and how visible things can be understood as invisible. Finally, that even those things that are on the earth need wisdom and insight, for how many of us know what it is that causes birds to hang in the air, fish to swim in the sea, and what incites the frenzy of beasts? But the diligent reader immediately opposes us: if Paul knows in part, and prophecies in part, and now sees through a mirror in an enigma (1 Cor. 13), how was the mystery of God revealed to him or to the Ephesians in all wisdom and insight? We are therefore compelled by this necessity to change the order of reading, and to say: "According to the purpose of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, with which he has favored us in his beloved Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, which abounds in us in all wisdom and insight," so that having made this distinction thus far, namely "in all wisdom and insight," they are joined to the preceding, and henceforth we infer: "making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose." However, in this continuing view, it can be said that they have been revealed to them in all wisdom and insight, not that they have learned the mystery in all wisdom and insight, but that God, in all his wisdom and insight, revealed the mystery to them according to what they could comprehend.

"According to his plan, which he proposed in him during the dispensation of the fullness of time." As previously stated, "according to the plan of his will"; now, "according to his own plan," with the will being subtracted. There, he placed a predestination, which is "the adoption of children through Jesus Christ": here, he places a proposition. Between predestination and proposition, those who are in the habit of discussing words assert that there is a difference, in that predestination foreshadows something long before in the mind of the one who plans what will happen, while a proposition, when the scheme is already close and the effect almost follows the thought. What he says, "proposed in him," refers to the mystery: for he had previously said, "to make known to us the mystery of his will," which mystery is the plan of the fullness of time, so that everything will be completed at the appointed time. Just as an heir, as long as he is a minor, even though the property belongs to him, is not yet entitled to the inheritance (Gal. 4): so also the mystery that was predestined by God for the adoption of his children could not be dispensed before the appropriate time arrived. On which, in the singular number, Paul says elsewhere: "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son" (Ibid., 4:4): who could not come before the mystery of the time was fulfilled.

1:10

"Recapitulate all things in Christ, both that are in heaven and that are on earth" (Al. adds "are"), in Him. In Latin manuscripts, "recapitulate" is written as "instaurate" (Al. "restore"). And I wonder why the translators used the Greek word since such licenses, dialectics, and philosophies as exist in Greek were adopted. For even orators, in epilogues or before ("Al." among) epilogues, at the end of cases, for the memory of judges and those who heard the cases, usually make a "recapitulation," that is, an **■νακεφαλα■ωσις**, so that what they had previously discussed at length, they could comprehend in a brief speech afterwards, and each person begins to remember what they heard. The sense of the current passage is this: Every dispensation, which began before the world and afterward in the world, of invisible as well as visible creatures, promised the coming of the Son of God. This is what Adam, who was ejected from paradise, was supposed to be recalled through the Savior (Gen. 3). This is what was signified in the building of the tower, where unity of languages was shattered (Gen. 11), and in the Acts of the Apostles, the gift of languages was anticipated (Acts. 2). This is what Isaac carried his own cross as an image of the Lord (Gen. 3). This is what Samson, nourishing his holy hair, embraced the poor of Delilah and confessed all the secrets of his heart (Judges 16), and signified the mystery of the Savior and the Church from the Gentiles, truly poor and needy (John 19). Therefore, in the Lord's cross, and in His passion, all things were recapitulated, that is, all were counted in this **■νακεφαλα■σει**. To make this clearer, let us take an example of daily customs. For instance: I spent twenty denarii, then five more, and thus another fifteen; and also thirty and three times ten, I gave at different times. If I want to add them all up, the sum of hundreds of numbers will accumulate for me, and I will have everything I described in one number. Thus, all the mysteries and dispensations of antiquity, not only those that have taken place on earth, but also those that have taken place in heaven, are fulfilled in Christ's passion. For since Christ has suffered, been buried, risen, and ascended to the Father as a victor once, I do not need an old number, for I hold everything in one. Carefully note that not only all the historical Scriptures that the Holy Spirit enumerates that have taken place on earth but also those hidden from us in the heavens are contained in Christ's recapitulated passion.

1:11

In which also we have been called by lot, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will. The word of inheritance and lot, by which we have come into the part of Christ, shows that we have migrated from one power to another, and according to that which is written in Deuteronomy: 'When the Most High divided the nations, when he separated the sons of Adam' (Deut. 32:8), that we have been transferred from the dominion of angels to the part of the Lord. And they indeed held what belonged to others, either committed or usurped. But this one received his own and, ascending on high, he led captivity captive (Ps. 68:19), that is, he himself brought those who had been captured before into life in order to return them to the highest, and in a certain manner captive captivity was seized while, through a second captivity, those who had previously been taken captive were freed. It should be noted that both predestination and purpose, that is, "predestinatio" and "propositum," are put together in a way so that God works everything according to the counsel of his own will. Not that everything that happens in the world is done by God's will and counsel; otherwise, evil could be attributed to God. But that everything he does is done by his counsel and will, in a way that is both fully rational and by the power of the one who does it. We humans often want to do things by our own counsel, but

the outcome does not always follow our will. But no one can resist Him, so that He may do everything that He wills. He wants all that is full of reason and counsel, that all may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (I Tim. 2). But since no one is saved without his own will (for we are free-willed), He wants us to want what is good, so that when we want it, he himself may fulfill his own counsel in us.

1:12

So that we may be to the praise of his glory, we who previously hoped in Christ. If he had only said 'in Christ' and not added 'previously hoped' which in Greek is προηλπικότες, the sense would be more obvious, that those who have hoped in Christ are called according to his plan and predestined, and that he works all things according to the counsel of his will. Now the addition of the preposition brings us to the understanding we have previously discussed, explaining what is written: 'He blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.' This means that just as he has already blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places and chose us before the foundation of the world, so also we are said to have hoped in Christ before, from the time we were chosen and predestined, and blessed in the heavenly places. However, those who do not support this doctrine, that we hoped in Christ before we lived in this body, will transfer this understanding, saying: In the coming of the Lord and Savior, when every knee shall bow in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil 3), with all things subject to him, some by choice and others by necessity, those who previously hoped in him will be for the praise of his glory, and will be called ὑποηλπικότες, but those who found themselves believing out of necessity, hoping at a time when even the devil and his angels cannot deny that he reigns, will not be to the praise of his glory. And we can see that this is partly fulfilled now because the reward is different for those who follow God voluntarily and those who do so out of necessity. Nevertheless, whether by opportunity or by truth, as long as Christ is announced, as long as it is understood, hoped for, and previously hoped for, it is known that different rewards are received according to the diversity of hope.

1:13

In which you also, having heard the word of truth of the gospel of your salvation, in which also believing, you were signed with the Holy Spirit of promise. In whom: undoubtedly in Christ. Among others who have heard, you also, Ephesians, have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in which believing, you were signed with the Holy Spirit of promise. But the sentence does not seem to stand according to the order of the reading, nor is there anything following what is given first: "In which you also, having heard the word of truth" "of the gospel of your salvation," because immediately it is put second, "in which." And because this is superfluous, it can be removed from the text for the sake of clarity of reading. However, Paul allowed this because of his excessive love for Christ, so that he always named him whom he loved, even unnecessarily and excessively. This can be found without difficulty by any attentive reader in all of his letters. Therefore, now it is seen that the position of "in which" has disturbed the order of the sentence and left the previous proposition hanging. Nor is it a small praise for the Ephesians to hear the word of truth, not preaching. For there is a great distance between preaching and the word of truth, and in another letter it is written: "And my word and my preaching were not in the persuasive words of

wisdom, but in the showing of the spirit and power" (1 Cor. 11:14). Let us therefore diligently seek where else it is written that someone has heard the word of truth, so that from the collection of these writings, Paul's meaning can be clearly revealed, and where the gospel has also been mentioned, either with an addition or absolutely. For example, with an addition, "my gospel" (Rom. 16:25) and "the gospel of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 2:11) and "the eternal gospel" (Apoc. 14, 6); or as it is now said to the Ephesians, "the gospel of your salvation". Absolutely, as when he speaks of Luke, "Whose praise in the gospel is through all the churches" (2 Cor. 8:18). And whoever hears the word of truth and believes in it is signed with the Holy Spirit of promise, for many have heard but have remained unbelievers and have not obtained the seal of the Holy Spirit. And to the prince of Tyre, it is said, "You are a seal of the likeness of God" (Ezec. 28:12). But the seal of God is this: as the first man was created in the image and likeness of God, so in the second regeneration, whoever has obtained the Holy Spirit will be signed by him and receive the likeness of the Creator. Furthermore, we must also inquire where else it is written, "the Holy Spirit of promise", or what it means. For I think that just as the Holy Spirit makes holy the one in whom it is infused, and the spirit of wisdom makes one wise, and the spirit of understanding makes one understanding, and the spirit of counsel makes one careful and prudent, and the spirit of fortitude makes one strong, and the spirit of knowledge makes one knowledgeable, and the spirit of piety makes one pious, and the spirit of fear makes one fearful and trembling in the fear of God; in the same way, the spirit of promise, or the spirit of God, makes the one in whom it resides a sponsor and a God. Conversely, an unclean spirit makes one unclean and a filthy inhabitant of a filthy house, and the spirit of fornication makes fornicators, of whom the prophet speaks: "They are seduced by the spirit of fornication" (Osee 4, 12), and an evil spirit makes people evil and perverse, and the possessed becomes a demon, and the quality of the liquid that is poured into a new vessel determines what flavor and odor it will hold for a long time.

1:14

Who is the pledge of our inheritance for the redemption of adoption, to the praise of His glory. The Latin interpreter has put 'arrhabone' for 'pledge.' However, 'arrhabo' does not mean the same thing as 'pledge.' For 'arrhabo' is a kind of testimony and obligation given for a future purchase. But 'pledge,' that is ■v■χρον, is put up as security for a loan, so that when the loan is paid back, the pledge is returned to the creditor. Similarly, where it says 'for the redemption of adoption,' there is no Greek word for 'adoption,' but there is 'possession,' which we can translate as 'acquisition' or 'possession,' although we have not expressed the full meaning of the word. For there are many words which cannot be translated from Greek into Latin, or from Hebrew to Greek, and vice versa. Whoever, therefore, receives not only the Holy Spirit but also the Spirit of promise, will also receive the pledge of the inheritance, which is eternal life. And just as the value and possession of a future purchase can be estimated from the amount of its down payment, for example, a villa worth a hundred solidi from a down payment of ten solidi, and possession worth a thousand solidi from a down payment of a hundred, so the size of the inheritance to come can be known from the variety of the pledge. Although someone may be holy and perfect and considered worthy of happiness by everyone's judgment, they have now received only the down payment of the future inheritance in the Spirit. But if the down payment is so great, how great will be the very possession itself? But just as the down payment that is given to us is not outside us but within us, so the inheritance itself, which is the kingdom of God within us, dwells within us internally. For what greater

inheritance can there be than to contemplate and see with our senses the beauty of Wisdom, and of the Word, and of Truth, and of Light, and to look at the ineffable and magnificent nature of God and of all things that are created in the image of God? This Holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance, is given to the saints now, so that they may be redeemed and united to God, to the praise of His glory. Not that God needs anyone's praise, but so that the praise of God may be of use to those who praise Him, and they may burst out with wonder and praise Him for His majesty and greatness in every work.

1:15-17

"Therefore, I also, upon hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and in all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being illuminated." Although a word-for-word translation may make the Apostle appear awkward to the reader, and full of faulty construction, yet in the original Greek the error lies more in the style than in the sense. Therefore we seek rather to vary the order of the words thus: "upon hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and in all His saints; seeing also the difference of your faith in the Lord and in His saints, I cease not to give thanks for you and to make mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling," etc. Again, the expression "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory," is meant to imply that as our Lord Jesus Christ is Himself the Word, the Wisdom, the Truth, the Life, the Righteousness, and the Power, so He is also the Glory of God; thus it is said in Scripture: "And the glory of the Lord appeared" (Lev. 9:23); and in almost every passage of the Old Testament it is written that the glory of God was seen over the ark of the testimony (Num. 9); and the Psalmist also says: "Awake, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp" (Ps. 57:8). And when the Glory, by the brightness of its shining, had enlightened the world, it built for itself a temple, fashioned out of the virgin's womb. And in this temple the Father of Glory is the God worshipped. And where Christ is the Glory, there the Father is spoken of only as He is in Christ; where Jesus is, God, His Father, is named without any addition. Therefore this God, the Father of our Lord, Who is full of glory, wisdom, truth, gives to those who believe in His Son the spirit of wisdom and revelation, that they may be wise and may contemplate the glory of the Lord which is revealed to them. And this wisdom and revelation, when it has made them wise, and has revealed to them the mysteries which were hidden from them, will immediately cause the eyes of their understanding to be enlightened. These words, taken literally, show that the interior members of man are referred to, as well as the exterior. For he has clearly spoken of the eyes of the heart, which we cannot see or understand without the mind. And the expression of the Psalmist, "Enlighten my eyes, that I may never sleep the sleep of death" (Ps. 13:3), is in harmony with this idea. And elsewhere it is said: "For in much wisdom is much grief" (Eccl. 1:18) and "the eyes of a wise man are in his head" (Eccl. 2:14). For if we take the expression, "the eyes of his head," to refer simply to the eyes of the

body, then surely the eyes of both the wise man and the fool are in his head. Therefore, the head is taken to mean the understanding, for by another name it is called the mind and the soul and the chief seat of the heart. And when the Apostle says, "in the knowledge of Him," some understand it to mean that there is a difference between γν■σις and ■π■γνωσις, that is, between "knowledge" and "full knowledge," the former being what we did not know before and the latter what we remember after having known it, and that we now believe in a former life in heavenly things, having been cast down into these bodies and having forgotten God the Father, but that now we know Him by revelation, in accordance with the following verse: "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord" (Ps. 22:27), and similar passages.

1:18-20

"So that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might which he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead." He who has once been given the spirit of wisdom and revelation, according to the prayer of Paul, so that he may perceive with his heart's eyes what things are reserved for the called, and what are the things that the saints of God hope for, and what is the abundance that he will give to those who endure his inheritance. The greatness of God's power is necessary to know this, in those who, according to the likeness of Paul, are called believers, through which God worked in Christ Jesus, whom he raised from the dead. However, the inheritance must be understood in two ways: either as the firstborn of every creature, the inheritance of the soul of our Lord Jesus Christ and of him who has assumed the body and soul of man, and we inherit God the Word with the inheritance of the soul; or as our inheritance in Christ, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one divinity, so that just as the inheritance of houses and estates is called that which is possessed by heirs, so God himself may be the inheritance of believers and saints. In the Old Testament, it is written: "But you shall not give an inheritance to the children of Levi among their brethren: for I am their portion." (Num. 18:20); and elsewhere: "The Lord is their inheritance" (Deut. 18:2); and the holy one who knows he has nothing outside of God speaks boldly: "My portion is the Lord" (Ps. 72:26); and: "You are my portion and my cup" (Psalm. 15:5). It is not of small importance, therefore, that we know the hope of his calling and the riches of the glory of God's inheritance among the saints. For we need the same power to know these things, which God also used in raising his Son from the dead, who he raised not once, but constantly, and made him free from the defilement of death. Christ rises from the dead daily, and is resurrected in those who repent. Not that he did not also have the power to lay down his soul and take it up again according to the flesh (for no one takes it except he who lays it down of himself), but according to the dispensation of the flesh and Son of God, he is said to have been raised as both man and Son by God the Father.

1:21

And seating him at his right hand in the heavens, above every principality, and power, and virtue, and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. He demonstrated the power of God through human likeness, not as if a throne were being placed and God the Father were sitting on it, with the Son sitting alongside him. Instead, it is so that we may understand and judge in a way that is different from ours. This is related to what is written in Psalm 109: 'The Lord said to my Lord: sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies thy

footstool.' (Psalms 109:1). For if the Son sits at the right hand of the Father in a manner of reign, it is necessary that he who sits on the left must be lower, according to the same similarity. So that we may know that it is to be understood differently than the letter sounds, the same Psalm teaches in the following verses, saying: 'Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek: the Lord at thy right hand.' For if the Son sits at the right hand of the Father, how then is the Father said to be at his right hand? Or how can earth be the footstool of Jesus and heaven his throne, when according to Isaiah, 'He measured the earth with his palm; he held the heavens in the hollow of his hand' (Isaiah 40:12)? For that which is contained in a thing cannot be within it at the same time; nor can one who is encircled by the Son who sits be enclosed in his hand. Therefore, to be near to God, or to be far away from him, is not to be understood according to spatial location but according to one's merits. The saints are near to God; sinners, about whom the prophet says: 'Lo, they that are far from thee shall perish' (Psalm 73:27), should be removed from his presence. Thus, to be at the right or left of God is to be understood in this way: the saints are at his right hand, and sinners at his left, as our Lord himself confirms in the Gospel, when he recounts that the sheep will be at his right hand and the goats at his left (Matthew 25). The very word 'to sit' signifies the power of the Kingdom by which God grants them a benefit over those whom he deems worthy of sitting; that is, he governs them, has them in his own chariot, and turns their restless and free necks according to his own will. After this, it is asked how what follows can be understood: 'above every principality, and power, and virtue, and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.' As for the right and left sides and the sitting, we have already explained. Now we must search for where the Apostle finds these four names, "principalities," I speak of, and "powers, virtues," and "dominations," are written, and from where he brought them forth. For it is not right to think that he who was instructed by divine reading spoke something not found in the holy books. Therefore I suppose that he brought to light either the secret traditions of the Hebrews or those things that, as if written near history, he understood, when he knew the law to be spiritual, more sublime, and that what is related about kings and princes, leaders also, judges and centurions in Numbers and in the Books of Kings, he learned to be a representation of other princes and kingdoms: that is to say, that in the heavenly realms there are principalities, powers, dominions, and virtues, and other titles of ministries; which neither we nor Paul, I think, being weighted down by a heavy burden, are able to enumerate. But if there are principalities and powers, virtues and dominions, it is necessary for them to have subjects, and those who fear them, and those who serve them, and those who are strengthened by their power. These divisions of duties will exist not only in the present, but also in the future age: so through each progress, honor, ascent, and even descent, one may increase or decrease, and become subject to different powers, virtues, principalities, and dominions. We little humans, soon to be turned to ashes and dust, if we are lifted up by the agreement of people to be kings, have as many differences and multitudes of ministers as we can more easily feel than say: for instance, that the Prefect has his own judges, provinces, and order in the civil realm; again, militarily, the army is divided into so many counts, leaders, and tribunes, and do we think that God, Lord of Lords and King of Kings, is content with such a simple ministry?

1:22-23

"And He subjected all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all the Church, which is His body: the fullness of Him who fills all things in all." This seems to be contradictory to what is

written elsewhere: "For we do not yet see all things subjected to Him." But also this: "For He must reign, until He has put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:25). For if all things are not yet subject to Him, and He must reign until all things are subject to Him, how is it that God has already subjected all things under His feet? Especially since in another place Paul himself testifies: "But when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subjected to Him who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). Therefore, either he mentions what is to come as if it were already done, according to the sense we explained above, where he says: "Blessed us in every spiritual blessing in heaven in Christ." Or certainly if it is to be understood as past, we must take it that even those things which are not subject to His will serve Him by the condition of their nature. For example, demons, Jews and Gentiles. For they do not serve Christ, nor are they subject to His feet, yet because they were created by Him, they are subject to His power against their will, even though they resist Him by their free will. In this sense, it also fits that which follows: "And gave Him to be head over all the Church, which is His body." For just as the head has many members subject to it, some of which are faulty and weak, so too our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Church, has all members of the Church subject to Him, both the saints by their will and the sinners by necessity. And so it happens that even enemies are subject to His feet. Therefore, when he says "all things," it seems to raise a question. For that which was said: "Sit at my right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool" (Ps. 109:1). And elsewhere: "For He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:25): it does not greatly concern the interpreter that those things which are enemies, when they have been overcome, are subjected to His feet, and pass into the power of the Victorious One. But why all things, that is, the angels, thrones, dominions, powers, and other virtues, which have never been against God, should be subjected to His feet, seems obscure. Therefore, it can be answered that without sin no one is clean, and even the stars are not clean before God, and every creature fears the coming of the Creator (Job 15). Hence it is said that the cross of the Savior purged not only those things that are on earth, but also those that are in heaven. Another, "all things," does not refer to the universality, but only to those things about which there was dispute, or in this way, all the city cried out, not that there was anyone silent in the city, but even the smaller things are called by the name of the greater. And Paul the Apostle himself says: "All seek their own, not those things that are of Christ" (Philippians 2:21): and "All have left me." Not that Timothy and the other disciples, who were with him at the time when the Epistles were written, abandoned him; but rather, because he was deserted by many, he complains of being deserted by all, that is, by the greatest part. Something similar to this is also found in the psalm: "All have turned away, all have become corrupt" (Ps. 13:3). For if everyone has turned away, then the speaker himself must have turned away. And elsewhere it is written: "I said in my haste, all men are liars" (Ps. 115:2). Either what he said is true or false. If all men are liars, then the one who speaks is also a liar. But if the one who speaks is a liar, then what he is saying is not true: not all men are liars. Furthermore, if the statement is true, it must be understood in the way we have already said, that the majority of men lie. The apostle also writes elsewhere: "Teaching every man" (Coloss. 3:16). And again, "admonishing every man": not that he has taught all men, for how many are there who have never heard the doctrine of the apostles, nor even their name to this day? But rather, he instructs and reminds all those who are in the Church and who desire to know the things of God. It continues: "And He Himself fills all things in all." This should be understood in the same way as this passage: "Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may

be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). For now God is present in each part of the creation, in one place as justice, in another as chastity, in another as temperance, in another as wisdom, in another as fortitude. And even in holy and perfect men it is difficult to find all these virtues together. But in the end, when all things have come to their completion and the world has ended, all things will be subject to Him, and all things will be filled with Him, so that, being full of all virtues, they will possess all things which, before, individuals possessed singly. Moreover, when it is said, "And He Himself is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He may have the pre-eminence," not only men are included, but also angels and all the powers and rational creatures. And again, this phrase "who fills all things in all" is not to be taken in the sense it seems to have, for it does not say "who fills all things," but rather "who fills all things in all." For the meaning of "to fill" is different from that of "to be filled"; the former is an action of the agent, the latter of the patient. Therefore, just as an emperor is said to be filled, when his army increases every day, and new provinces are added, and the people multiply; so our Lord Jesus Christ is said to be filled in all, because those who believe in Him are filled with all virtues, and according to the Gospel make progress in age, wisdom, and grace, not only before God, but also before men (Luke 2).

2:1-5

"And you, when you were dead in your sins and offenses, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now operates on the children of unbelief, among whom we all conversed in times past in the desires of our flesh, fulfilling the will of the flesh and of our thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his exceeding charity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ." Before we delve into the meaning of each word, it seems that the order of the passage should be as follows: "And you, when you were dead in your sins and offenses, he hath quickened you together in Christ, who is rich in mercy for his exceeding charity wherewith he loved us." And when we were dead in sins, in which we once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now operates on the children of unbelief, among whom we all conversed in times past in the desires of our flesh, fulfilling the will of the flesh and of our thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, he hath quickened us together in Christ. The conjunction "but" in the place where it says "But God who is rich in mercy" seems to have either been added by uneducated writers and gradually become a mistake, or been unnecessarily used by Paul himself who was inexperienced in speech rather than knowledge (2 Cor. 11). Clearly, the death of the soul is said to be sin, as it is written, "And you, when you were dead in your sins and offenses," as also in Ezekiel where it is written, "The soul that sins shall die" (Eze. 58:4). And because "sins" which are called *παράπτωμα* in Greek, properly translated as offenses (although *delicta* is a more accurate translation), are a word used in the Scriptures, we inquire as to what they signify and how they differ from sins, that is, what is the difference between *παράπτωμα* and *μαρτύριον*. For they say that *παράπτωμα*, as if the beginnings of sins, occur when silent thoughts sneak in and, partly holding us back ("Al." restraining us), still have not yet impelled us to downfall. Therefore, in the 18th Psalm (verse 13) it is written: "Delicta," that is *παράπτωμα*, "who can understand it?" because, of course, it is difficult to understand the roots and beginnings of sins. Indeed, it is a sin when something accomplished by action reaches its conclusion. We also ask what is meant by "in

which at some time you walked according to the course of this world," whether it is another world that does not belong to this world, but to other worlds, of which Clement also writes in his letter: "Ocean," "and the worlds that are beyond it"? Is it one world that from the beginning of the time when Adam was created until its end is rolled up and passed away, or is certainly the world called by another name, the prince of the air, who now operates in the children of disobedience? It is written to the Galatians: "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world" (Galatians 1:4). And in this same letter: "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Below, v. 16). And the days of Jacob are called few and wicked (Genesis 47), either because the time of this life by which we are closed in the world is heavy and laborious, or because Satan of this world, as we have said above, is called the course of the world. Immediately afterwards, he writes: "According to the prince," he says, "of the power of the air, of the spirit who now operates in the children of disobedience." For the prince of the air and the spirit of power, which is in this air, is understood as the devil, who now operates in the children of disobedience. For he cannot work in those who believe in the Lord. About this he also says later: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:12). Not that the devil and his satellites, who wander through this world, can exist in heaven, from which they fell because of their merits; but heaven is called this air that is above us, according to the words of the Savior: "Consider the birds of the air" (Matthew 6:26), and so on. For it is clear that birds do not fly through heaven, but through the air. It follows: "In which we all once conversed among the desires of our flesh, doing the wills of our flesh and of our thoughts." Which means, it refers to sins. For indeed, because he placed two things together: "And you, when you were dead in your trespasses and sins," and had referred to sins saying: "in which you once walked," but nothing analogous had seemed to follow for transgressions that could give meaning. Now he says: "in which transgressions we all too have lived," so that he would not seem to be exempting himself from sin through pride in what he had said earlier, "and in your sins in which you once walked." Whoever says that he has lived in it, confesses about past transgressions, not the present ones. "For we once lived," he says, "not in a single desire, but in multiple desires of our flesh. For the flesh desires against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh" (Gal. 5:17). Making not one desire of the flesh, but many; not only desires of the flesh, but also of the mind, for which it is known in the Latin codices, "thoughts." But I think that there is a difference between the sin of the flesh and that of the mind: the sin of the flesh is immodesty and lust and the things that serve it in lustful desires. But the transgression of the mind relates to dogmas contrary to truth and heretical wickedness, so that we might say that most heretics (even though this is rare) make the desires of the mind, and not those of the flesh; and many act in opposition to ecclesiastics, making the desires of the flesh, and not of the mind, and there are many who make the desires of both flesh and mind at the same time. But we said this not because heretics do not make desires of the flesh (indeed many vices of the body are present among them as well as among us), but so that with an example given, what we wanted to say can be understood more easily. "And we were," he says, "by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." Let the heretics who claim that there are different natures respond, in what way Paul, who is undoubtedly of a spiritual nature, was by nature a child of wrath, like the others who are still in error. But we say that all men are first by nature children of wrath, either because of the body of humiliation and the body of death, or because the minds of men are inclined toward evil from their youth (Gen. 8), from the time when we can have knowledge of God

and come to puberty, all of us either by deed, word, or thought, sin. Therefore, we were by nature children of wrath, like the others, and all the Saints who were redeemed by the blood of Christ. Behold Paul, who lived a blameless life in accordance with the righteousness that was in the Law, says that he was naturally a son of wrath. Why should we fear when even the ancient holy men testify that they were also sons of wrath? Concerning all of whom it is truly said: "But when the commandment came, sin became alive and they themselves died." The son of wrath is to be accepted as meaning the son of perdition, the son of iniquity, and the son of death. Not that any anger, death, iniquity or perdition subsists in its own nature, having sons; but that they are called its sons on account of its operations in individuals: just as those who are to be consumed by the fires of hell are called sons of gehenna. Some think that those called sons of wrath are also sons of the devil. For the devil is perdition, and anger, and death. "Powerful death has devoured" (Isaiah 52), and "the last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26), and of the devil himself: "You have been made perdition" (Ezekiel 28). He was made so by his own will, not thus created from the beginning. How then is death called so, because through the envy of the devil death entered into the world (Wisdom 2), and through him are those who were previously living dead, and perdition destroys whatever it deceives. So anger is also called thus because of the cruelty it shows towards man. Some believe that in the Books of Kings, when David numbered the people of Israel, provoking the anger of the Lord against himself, and the Scripture says, "And the anger of God was set on fire against Israel, and he stirred up David saying" (2 Samuel 24:1), that it signifies the devil's anger: for according to the propriety of the Greek language, it did not say "the anger of God saying," which is $\lambda\gammaουσα$ in the feminine gender, but "the anger of God saying," which is $\lambda\gammaων$ in the masculine gender; for indeed the Lord sends his anger and fury through most wicked angels. Therefore God, who is rich in mercy and rich because of his love for mankind, and not a simple love, but rather much love, when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive, and not only made us alive (for this was not enough for his goodness and greatness), but he made us alive with Christ Jesus, granting us to have the same life as Christ. Some, because of what we have just explained, have translated "And we were by nature children of wrath" to mean "truly by nature," or "altogether by nature," because the word $\phi\sigmaει$ is ambiguous. But even though it sounds like this, it should be explained according to the things we have said.

"You have been saved by grace. For the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Rom. 8). Therefore, we are saved more by grace than by works; for we are not able to repay the Lord for all that He has given us."

2:6

"And he raised us up and made us sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, as he had said before that God raised Christ from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, above all principality, and power, and virtue, and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And now he adds that God has also raised us up with him and made us sit in the heavenly places at his right hand. Therefore, the question is, how did God, who made us alive and raised us up, also make us sit with Christ? The straightforward answer is that according to the foreknowledge of God, what will happen in the future has already been said to be as good as done. And because this is the way of the Scriptures, that sometimes future events are spoken of as if they were past, for example, about the Lord's crucifixion: 'They have pierced my hands and feet' (Psalm 22:16), and elsewhere about his

passion: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so he opens not his mouth' (Isaiah 53:7), and still elsewhere about the wounds inflicted by the scourging: 'By his stripes we are healed' (Isaiah 53:5), and again: 'For the transgression of my people was he led to death' (Isaiah 53:8, according to the Septuagint). This is done so that because the future is always uncertain, people's hope might not be uncertain and waver, but what God knows about the future (about which there is nothing ambiguous) might be spoken of as if it were already done, so that those who hear may actually have experienced what is to come. Another answer is this: if someone understands the resurrection and Christ's kingdom in a spiritual sense, they might say that the saints are already sitting and reigning with Christ, for there is no saint who is not in the flesh, living and moving about in the world, while at the same time having their conversation in heaven. But when they lay aside the flesh and all becomes spirit, then they will sit with Christ in heaven. Wherefore it is said, 'The Kingdom of God is within you' (Luke 17:21) and 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also' (Matthew 6:21), and 'With Christ we sit in the heavenly places, in wisdom, in the Word, in justice, in truth.' However, it can also be said that just as we have received the down payment of the Holy Spirit, but have not yet attained its fullness, so too we are sitting with Christ and reigning, but have not yet obtained the perfect session in the heavenly places."

2:7

"That he might show in the coming ages the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. How great is the magnitude of the benefit, and how manifold the grace by which the Lord has made us sit and reign with Christ, having been delivered from the troubles of this world! This is especially proven by the fact that in future ages, he will display his glory and riches to all rational creatures above us. We who were once held captive by the law of sin and destined for punishment because of our vices and sins; we were destined for condemnation, bound by the flesh. Now we reign and sit with Christ. However, we do not sit in any lowly place, but above all principality, power, might, dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the future. For if Christ, who was raised from the dead, sits at the right hand of God in heaven above all principality, power, might, dominion, and every name that is named, and we sit and reign with him, it is necessary that we sit above those above whom he sits. However, the diligent reader will immediately ask, "What, then, is man greater than the angels and all the powers in heaven?" Since it is dangerous to answer this question, we refer all principality, power, might, dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the future (especially since all things are subject to Christ's feet) not to the good, but to the contrary: that he affirms that they are rebellious angels and the prince of this world, and Lucifer who once rose in the morning, over whom the saints will sit with Christ in the end, also giving them a benefit, who now wander and fall by their own free will. But since such people have seated themselves, they will begin to be governed according to the will of those who sit. The other part of this that says, "that he might show in the coming ages the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus," can be understood that we are saved not by our own merit, but by his grace, and that it is a greater sign of goodness for sinners than for the righteous to die. For 'who willingly dies for a good man?' and he will give us what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man (1 Corinthians 2). All of which he has already given us in part in Christ Jesus because nothing good can be said apart from Christ."

2:8-9

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." Therefore, he said, in showing in the ages to come the surpassing wealth of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. And even this faith is not of ourselves, but is the gift of God, so that no one may think that they are saved by their own works. It is not that free will is taken away from man, as the Apostle says in Romans, "it is not of him who wills or of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy" (Romans 9); rather, the very freedom of the will is given by God, and all things are referred to His benefits, even though He permits us to want what is good. And all of this is done so that no one may boast in themselves, but only in God as their Savior.

2:10

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good deeds, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." He has given reasons why we are saved by grace through faith, and that this is not of ourselves, but from the gift of God, saying: "For we are His workmanship," that is, what we live, breathe, understand, and believe is all His, because He is our Creator. And observe carefully that He did not say, "we are His figure and form," but "we are His workmanship." Form and figure originate from the earth's clay, but workmanship took its beginning after the likeness and image of God. This is also shown in the 118th Psalm, where it says: "Your hands made me and fashioned me" (Psalm 118:73). Workmanship comes before fashioning. And because the name of creation and condition is always associated with great works, for example, that city was founded, and the world was created from the beginning, and every saint through various doctrines and virtues is a whole world unto himself, we are now created in Christ and created for good works, which we have done, or will do, in other creatures to which our conversation is transferred, so that we may walk in them, which God has prepared and given us great hope. And since we have come to the name of creation, and Wisdom in the Proverbs of Solomon says she was created as the beginning of God's ways (Proverbs 8), and many fear being compelled to call Christ a creature, they deny the whole mystery of Christ and say that this wisdom signifies not Christ, but the wisdom of the world. We proclaim freely that there is no danger in calling Him a creature, whom we confess as worm, man, crucified, and cursed, and in whom all our hope rests, especially since the wisdom herself promises, in the two verses preceding, that she will speak of those things which are to come after numerous ages. And since Christ made the ages, and what follows is what he promised to speak after the ages, those things which follow should not be referred to the mystery of His incarnation, but to the nature of God, even though it may not be present in the Hebrew codices: "The Lord created me at the beginning of His ways" but "The Lord possessed Me." However, there is a great distance between possession and creation, because the one who is possessed surely exists and is one's own. The Creator, on the other hand, did not exist before he was created, or certainly was transferred into another, just as we are now known as created in Christ Jesus. Created indeed, not because we did not exist before, but created for good works. This is what David also prayed for in the fiftieth Psalm, saying: "Create in

me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 50:11). And certainly, the heart was clean before sin, when the Lord spoke about it: "I have found David son of Jesse to be a man after My own heart" (Acts 13:22). But just as in us and in Christ, with each work and progress, creation and condition can be understood, so in believers, Christ created, born and established the mountains, valleys, hills, and plains, according to each one's merits.

2:12

"Therefore, remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh, who were called uncircumcised by those who are called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands, that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. Calling the Ephesians Gentiles in the flesh, it is shown in the Spirit that they are not Gentiles. Conversely, the Jews are Gentiles in the Spirit, and Israelites in the flesh. Thus, the Jews are divided into four parts: some are circumcised in the flesh and in the Spirit, such as Moses and Aaron, the Apostles, and Nathanael, whose hidden Judaism the Lord saw and said, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit" (John 1:47). Others are uncircumcised in both the flesh and the Spirit, such as Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh, as well as the multitudes of Gentiles of today, who do not believe in God. The third group are those who are circumcised only in the flesh and have an uncircumcised spirit, to whom the prophet says, "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts" (Jeremiah 4:4). And elsewhere, "All the uncircumcised shall be uncircumcised in heart" (Jeremiah 9:25). The final group is referred to in the following words: "Therefore, remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh, who were called uncircumcised by those who are called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands," which represents the crowd of believers today, and the whole world is filled with Gentiles. To differentiate the spiritual Gentiles from the Jews, the Ephesians are called Gentiles in the flesh because they are Israelites in the Spirit. For in another place, the Scripture mentions Israel according to the flesh saying, "Behold Israel according to the flesh" (1 Corinthians 10), because Israel was not in the Spirit. The words "who were called uncircumcised" are also used in a proper way. He says, "You were called uncircumcised, and were not so, by that which is called circumcision in the flesh made by hands," not because circumcision itself is wrong, but because it gives itself this name and is truly circumcision made by hands, not by the Spirit. It should also be noted that we who were once alienated from Christ, and from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, and without hope and without God in the world, are now, since we have believed in Christ, said to have the conversation of Israel in accordance with his promises and covenants. How, indeed, the whole legal conversation is fulfilled in us, because the law is spiritual, and we are circumcised and keep the Sabbath in the Spirit, offering spiritual sacrifices, while their temple and altar are destroyed. We offer God a tenth of the fruit of our labors, and we offer an immaculate lamb and, bound with girdles, we celebrate the Passover. For just as circumcision is called in the flesh, made by hands, so another circumcision is understood, which is not made by hands, but by the Spirit. As for "having no hope and without God in the world," this doesn't mean that the Ephesians, before they came to Christ, didn't have more than one god and didn't worship them; rather, it means that anyone without the true God has no god at all. It is significant that it says "without God in the world." For they did have a God, whom God knew they would have before, and at that time, they were not without God in God's foreknowledge, they were in the world without God."

2:13-14

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ; for he himself is our peace." Is God not everywhere and whole, from which anyone can be separated when all things are in Him? And He Himself speaks through the prophet: "Am I only a God nearby, declares the Lord, and not a God far away?" (Jer. 23:23). And the Psalmist testifies: "If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there." (Ps. 139:8). Therefore, even though all things are in Him, it is said that He is far from the ungodly, as it is written: "The Lord is far from the wicked" (Prov. 15:29). He whom the wicked are far from is near to the saints. Finally, even though he was far away from the Ephesians, he became near to them through the blood of Jesus. And we should note carefully that without the blood of the Lord Jesus, no one can come near to God, for he himself is our peace, saying: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27). For just as wisdom makes the wise wise, and righteousness makes the righteous righteous, and sanctification makes the holy holy, and life makes the living alive, so also peace makes us peaceful, so that we may say: "I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war." (Ps. 120:7). Therefore, if Christ is the peace of believers, whoever is without peace does not have Christ.

2:14-18

"He made both one, and broke down the dividing wall of the enclosure, the enmity, in His flesh, nullifying the law of commandments in dogmas, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, making peace, and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, thereby killing the enmity in it, and coming, He preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have access in one spirit to the Father." He is the middle wall and the enclosure, which divided the two peoples from each other. Even in Genesis, at the birth of twin sons, the midwife speaks of it, saying: 'Why has the hedge been broken down because of you?' (Gen. 38:29). Therefore, when in His own flesh, the Savior destroyed the wisdom of the flesh, which is hostile to God (Romans 8), and changed the legal commandments into evangelical doctrines, in order to make one Christian people from Jews and Gentiles, and preached peace and harmony to us who were far off and to the remnants of the Jews who believed in Israel through the apostles, then we approached God through Him, and we came to know that we have one Father in spirit; and what the Lord said in the Gospel was fulfilled, when He said: 'And there shall be one shepherd, and one flock' (John 10:16); and again: 'And I have other sheep that are not of this fold,' indicating that we are to be gathered from the Gentiles. However, the enmity that was destroyed in the Savior's flesh was also killed by the cross. For it is written: 'To reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, killing the enmity in it.' Not as it is written in the Latin codices, 'in Himself,' because of the ambiguity of the Greek pronoun ἐν αὐτῷ, which can be understood as 'in Himself' or 'in it,' that is, in the cross, because the cross, that is, σταυρὸς, is masculine in Greek. The law of commandments was also overthrown in the doctrines, after circumcision and the Sabbath, which was left to the people of God, and Passover, and Pentecost, and not appearing empty in God's sight, were understood more deeply than they sounded, and departing from the dead letter, we began to follow the life-giving Spirit. And when he says, 'He came and preached peace to you who were far,' this means the Gentiles, 'and peace to those who were near,' that is, the Jews. It seems to me that he brought forward a testimony from Isaiah and

others in support of this. For it is written of Him, 'I saw his ways, and I healed him, and I brought him consolation, and I gave him true consolation: peace upon peace to those who were far off, and to those who were near' (Isaiah 57:18). And these things, according to the Vulgate interpretation, were said. However, when the Apostle reads that about Christ, 'making peace through the blood of his cross, to those who were on earth and those who were in Heaven,' and the other things that are said in the same passage, he will not think that we, who are called far off according to the spirit of Israel, were far off, or that the Jews, who are only called Israel according to the flesh, were near. And this whole knowledge will be directed to the angels and heavenly powers, and will restrain human souls: which Christ, in His blood, united earthly and heavenly things that had been previously in discord, and the good shepherd, carrying the sick sheep to the mountains, made it to be with the rest; and He joined the lost drachma with the ones that were saved. And He brought back the legal commandments to those dogmas whose type and image Moses saw to be fabricated in the tabernacle. So the Lord's cross helped not only the earth, but also the heavens; not only humans, but also angels; and every creature of His was purified by His blood. And when He says, "That He might make of the two one new man in Himself," and this is more meaningful for the previous disunity between Jews and Gentiles: in the same way, His intelligence adapted, so that He might say that man was made in the image and likeness of God; after reconciliation, he will take upon himself the same form as the angels have now, and he himself had lost. And He says that the new man is one that is daily renewed, and will dwell in the new world when there is a new heaven and new earth, and he will drink the new cup of Jesus in the kingdom of God, and he will sing a new song, and he will rejoice in the reading of the Old and New Testament. Moreover, that which is written elsewhere: "Behold, I do a new thing; now it shall spring forth" - he will feel it as if he considers the beginning of the innovation to be in the present world. However, he thinks that the perfect and complete newness cannot be fulfilled in this age. And as we see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face: so the full and perfect renewal of the new man will be accomplished when the heavenly and earthly things will be united, and in one spirit, and same sense and sentiment, we will approach the Father. I do not know if such a proposal is in another Epistle (if someone accepts it), but Paul suggests to the wise readers, saying: "These all receiving testimony of faith, did not achieve the promise, God providing something better for us, that they might not be made perfect without us." Therefore, the whole creation groans with us who groan in this tabernacle, and who suffer, and who wait for the revelation of the sons of God: that it may be freed from the vanity of its servitude, to which it is now subject, and that there may be one shepherd and one flock: and that the Lord's Prayer may be completed, saying: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10).

2:19-21 "So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through him the whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord; in him you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." To what he had said before, "foreigners and strangers with respect to the covenants and the promises," he now replies, "So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners." And to that which he had previously claimed, "separated from the company of Israel," he now retorts, "You are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God." This passage is particularly directed against those who try to introduce different kinds of nature. For how have strangers become fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the

household of God once upon a time being alienated with respect to the company of Israel if one cannot change nature for better or for worse? But what follows, "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," is more in keeping with the first than the second interpretation, in which we have stated previously that before the passion of Christ, Israel was near and the Gentiles were far off. This testimony is used against Marcion and other ancient heretics, who preach one God of the Law and another of the Gospel, as we can call to mind. For since they are no longer strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone, through whom the entire structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord, in whom also the Ephesians are built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit, there is one God, one temple and edifice built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. And if the entire building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, it is necessary to strive with all labor to become those stones of which it is written: "And the holy stones shall be rolling in the wide places" (Zechariah 9:16). And when we are living stones, polished on every side, smooth (or polished) and with no roughness, let us be built up into a temple, and become a dwelling place for God. And let there be established within us the ark of the covenant, the keeper of the Law of the Lord, and Cherubim, the "multitude of knowledge," and let the innermost parts of our hearts pass into a new name: let us be called Dabir (), which we can call "oracle" or "response," and to express the word more literally, let us say "speaker" in Greek, that is, "locutorium" in Latin: so that we may break out with the Apostle in voice: "Do you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me?" (1 Cor. 13:3). For every building built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, not only us, but also the heavenly virtues, may be made a dwelling of God in the spirit: for it is said that it is incongruous for an edification compacted and in harmony to increase in a holy temple in the Lord, and for the angelic and blessed virtues that serve God in heaven to be considered alien to this happiness. But the highest cornerstone, which contains both peoples (or according to the second interpretation, joins the heavenly and earthly), is Christ our Lord, the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, of whom even the Psalmist testifies, saying: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing" (Ps. 117:22). For he was rejected by the Pharisees, who seemed to have knowledge of the Law and to build the temple of God by legal commands: and taken up by God as a cornerstone, in order that he himself might hold together the two walls: and through him both peoples might have access to God. This cornerstone is a stumbling block to unbelievers, and a rock of offense: upon which whoever falls will be shattered; and upon whomsoever it falls, it shall crush him (Luke 20). The Second Book. According to your speeches, O Paula and Eustochium, we tackle the book of Ephesians: we are also going to send small gifts to the new Rome. Not because this gift is worthy of being read by learned senators, and to be written in old libraries, but because Saint Marcella herself demands it through letters. Whenever I remember her studies, talents, and hard work, I feel ashamed of my own laziness, as I cannot do what a noblewoman did to serve her busy household. For I stand in the solitude of the monastery, seeing the very manger where the shepherds hastened to adore the newborn baby (Luke 2), yet I cannot perform the valuable tasks accomplished by a noble lady. Therefore, I ask both her and you and anyone else who might read this, to know that I am not trying to give a fancy and long-winded speech, but rather to reveal the mysteries of the Scriptures, so that we can explain the writings of the Apostle Paul, whose Epistles we are attempting to analyze, by means of prayers nearly from the crossroads, and sometimes we even reach a

thousand verses in a single day, that this exposition, begun on the apostle, may be completed by our prayers.

3:1-4

"For the sake of this matter, I Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles - if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" - concerning the context and content of the discourse, in reference to what he said before: "For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles," searching diligently, we could not find anything that he had rendered to it. For he did not say, "For this reason, I, Paul, did this or that," but holding a suspended sentence, he moved on to other things. Unless perhaps, granting him what he himself confessed when he said, "And if I am unskilled in speech, yet not in knowledge" (1 Cor. 11:6), we seek more for the order of his ideas than of his words. It can be translated as: for the sake of this matter, I Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and a prisoner for you who are of the Gentiles, came to know the mystery so that I may impart it to you, as I have briefly written in this same letter. But you must hear of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you who are of the Gentiles, for whom I am also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. However, Paul being a prisoner of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles, can also be understood as referring to his martyrdom, when he was imprisoned in Rome and sent this Epistle at that time when we showed that he wrote to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Philippians from another place. Or certainly because it has been read in many places that the bond of the soul is called the prison of the body, as if it were held in a prison. Therefore, we say that Paul is being confined by the bonds of his body, unable to return and be with Christ, so that the preaching of the Gentiles may be completed through him. Although some may introduce another meaning to this, that Paul was predestined and sanctified from his mother's womb to preach to the Gentiles, and later received the bonds of the flesh. But I think that this interpretation is faulty. For what he should have said was: "For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles, came to know the mystery, as I have briefly written already, that by reading you may understand," instead he says, "For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner according to revelation, came to know the mystery," and so on. But if someone can teach, according to the context of speech and eloquence, that the Apostle was perfect and did not fall into the faults of grammar, he is the one who ought to be listened to. Whenever we have noted a solecism or something of the sort, we do not attack the Apostle, as malicious people claim, but rather we are supporters of the Apostle, since no Hebraic person could have brought the whole world to the faith of Christ without evangelizing it not in the wisdom of words, but in the power of God, without the rhetorical splendor of speech, the arrangement of words, or the charm of eloquence. For he himself says to the Corinthians: "And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with lofty speech or wisdom, announcing to you the testimony of God" (1 Cor. 2:1). And again: "My message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power, so that your faith might not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (Ibid., 4 and 5). Therefore, he who makes solecisms in his words, who cannot understand hyperbaton, and who cannot conclude a sentence, boldly claims wisdom for himself and says: "For according to revelation, I have known the mystery as I have briefly written" (Eph. 3:3). Truly, if someone looks at the previous part of this epistle, he will see revealed mysteries, of which he has painted a certain small aspect in his

speech, not expressing everything he knew, but showing from the small part what he should keep silent about. "As ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Ibid., 4). This is what we said in the preface: none of Paul's epistles contain such mysteries wrapped in such deeply hidden meanings that the Apostle himself boasts of knowing, and he briefly shows us these mysteries so that we may more attentively read what is written.

3:5-7

"And that which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, which is given to me according to the effectual working of his power." The mystery of Christ, which in part the Apostle has set forth above, seems to require fuller explanation. Whether or not Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, and the other prophets were ignorant of it, the Scripture records that the coming of Christ and the calling of the Gentiles were prophesied by them. For Abraham saw His day and was glad (John 8:56) and he was told, "In your seed all nations shall be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). And Jacob prophetically spoke of Him who would come from Judah, saying, "And to Him shall be the expectation of nations" (Genesis 49:10). Moses also considered the reproach of Christ to be greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. And Isaiah said, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son" (Isaiah 7:14). And elsewhere, "There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him" (Isaiah 11:1-2). And to avoid being too lengthy, it suffices to say a few things from the Psalms: "All the families of the nations shall worship before Him" (Psalm 22:27). And again, "All nations will serve Him" (Psalm 18:44). And more distinctly about Israel and the Lord the Savior: "Visit this vineyard and restore it, the vineyard which your right hand has planted. And upon the Son of Man you have strengthened for yourself" (Psalm 80:15-16). The dispensation of the body of Christ is also indicated in subsequent verses: "Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, upon the Son of man whom you have strengthened for yourself" (Psalm 80:17). Therefore, either, as Montanus says, the patriarchs and prophets spoke in ecstasy, and did not know what they said, or, if this is impious (for the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets), they certainly understood what they said. And if they understood, it must be asked how Paul can now say that what was not known to other generations was revealed to the apostles of Christ. Either it must be answered that Paul cautiously and pointedly testified that the mystery was not known to the sons of men, not to the sons of God, to whom he speaks: "I said, you are gods, and you are all sons of the Most High" (Psalm 81:6). That is, those who have received the spirit of adoption, whom the patriarchs and prophets knew, knew the sacrament of God. Or, if this is not accepted and seems too forced and strained, the conversation will go there, saying that Paul did not definitely and generally say that the sacrament of the Lord was completely unknown to other generations: but in the way it is now revealed to his saints and apostles, the ancient patriarchs and prophets did not know it. For it is one thing to know what will come in the Spirit, and another to see it accomplished by deeds. Therefore, John is called greater than all the prophets (Luke 7), because He saw the One whom the others prophesied, and pointed Him out with his finger, saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). According to which sense, that saying may also be explained: "Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see what you see, and have not

seen, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard" (Luke 10:24). They certainly desired to see and hear those things which they had foreknown would come to pass. And, if they did not know what was coming, how could they desire something they completely ignored? We read in the Books of the Kings, the Lord promising and saying to Solomon in a dream: "Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life nor riches, nor the lives of thy enemies, but hast asked for thyself wisdom and knowledge, that thou mightest know the judgment, behold I have done according to thy words, and have given thee a wise and understanding heart." (2 Kings 3:11-12) Nor should it be thought that the mystery revealed to the apostles of Christ was unknown to Solomon, since all the apostles were wiser than Solomon, and the divine voice was promised even to the patriarchs. He speaks confidently about himself: "God has taught me wisdom, and I have come to know the holy things" (Wisdom 7:21). Also, David boasts about possessing the knowledge of a hidden mystery, saying: "You have revealed to me the uncertain and hidden things of your wisdom" (Psalm 50:8). And to him who applauds himself for having wisdom, God speaks through the prophet: "Are you wiser than Daniel?" (Ezekiel 28:3). Therefore, the idea should not be held, as discussed before, that the patriarchs and prophets were ignorant of the mysteries of Christ that were revealed to the apostles, since it is one thing to hold something in one's hands and another to foresee it in spirit. Or, it should be said that just as faces are not similar to each other, not all hearts are similar to each other; and, according to the Apostle, there are diverse gifts, one having prophecy, another different kinds of tongues, another the gift of healing, another helping and governing, one being wise, another faithful, one possessing the knowledge of secrets, while another is content with simple faith only (1 Corinthians 12). For not all have spoken about the nature of animals, birds, and plants in the manner of Solomon; from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that issues from the wall. On the contrary, Solomon may not have seen it the way Moses saw all the species of animals and plants and the worship of God. Nor did the Lord speak to him face to face, nor did he have as much knowledge of or understanding of vessels and furnishings, whose type the Lord showed him on the mountain (1 Kings 4; Exodus 33, 25). And just as the patriarchs and prophets had some things which the apostles did not have, it must be believed that, conversely, for the opportunity of the time and for the preaching of the Gospel, the apostles had more knowledge of the mystery of Christ. Indeed, the holy men of ancient times also knew it, but not in the way that the apostles did, upon whom the necessity of preaching lay. But what is this mystery, which as it is now, was not revealed to other generations? Surely that which follows, "that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel," of which I am made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, which is given to me according to the effectual working of his power. I know that the apposition of the conjunction by which it is said, "fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers," makes the sentence inelegant in Latin speech. But as it is in Greek, and each word, syllable, accent, and punctuation in the divine Scriptures is full of meaning, we would rather risk the composition and structure of the words than the understanding of their sense. Therefore, the Gentiles are fellow heirs with Israel, or rather, they are fellow heirs with Christ, so that our inheritance may be God's, and we may be co-heirs with Christ, as it is also written elsewhere, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). Not that any possession is divided among us, but that the Lord Himself may be our inheritance and possession. "For the Lord Himself is my portion and inheritance" (Deuteronomy 18:2), and elsewhere, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup" (Psalm 16:5). And "of the same body" indicates that just as in one body

there are many members, such as the eyes, hands, ears, feet, belly, and knees, and though they have their differences, they rejoice and suffer for one another, so those who have believed in Christ, though they have various graces, are nevertheless united in the body of the Church. And in the two above-mentioned words, that is, in what he says, "fellow heirs and of the same body," there could be a suspicion of some difference in one body. But from what he added, "and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus," all difference is entirely removed. For where there is one participation, there is a universal communion. He also added beautifully, "by the gospel, of which I am made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God, which is given to me according to the effectual working of his power," to show that it was not his own merit, but the grace of God that he was presenting. For he knew that he had been a persecutor and had devastated the church of Christ, from which humility, the very crime of arrogance, is completely excluded. Some criticize him for saying that a mystery has been revealed to him that was unknown to the patriarchs and prophets. For he was never a disciple of humility who swelled with arrogant words, saying that the gospel in which he is a minister was not his own merit, but the grace of God. Those who believe that the prophets did not understand what they said, and that they spoke as if in ecstasy, draw even the passage found in many codices of Romans to confirm their own doctrine, reading, "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by the Scriptures of the prophets, and that He might make known the riches of His glory" and so on. However, we must briefly respond that the mystery of Christ was hidden in past times, not among those who promised its advent, but among all the nations to whom it was later revealed. And it should also be noted that the sacrament of our faith cannot be revealed except through the Scriptures of the prophets and the coming of Christ. Let those who do not understand the prophets, and do not wish to know, know that by asserting that they are satisfied only with the gospel, they do not know the mystery of Christ, which was unknown to all nations in past times.

3:8-9

"This grace has been given to me, the least of all the saints, to proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to shed light on the whole of the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages lay concealed in God, the Creator of all things. I do not believe that the Apostle Paul genuinely considered himself the least of all the saints. For example, among those who believed in Ephesus, in Corinth, in Thessalonica, or throughout the world. To say that one is the least among all the saints is a sign of humility. However, it is simply an act of falsehood to have something sealed in one's heart and to express something different with one's tongue. Therefore, it is necessary to find an argument that truly makes Paul the least of all the saints and yet does not diminish his apostolic dignity. The Lord spoke to His disciples in the Gospel: "Whoever desires to be great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first shall be your slave" (Matthew 20:26-27). This is exactly what Paul did when he said: "For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles to be last of all, as men sentenced to death" (1 Corinthians 4:9). Therefore, among all those who wished to become weak for Christ's sake, the Apostle Paul was the weakest, and for this reason, the greatest. "To all of them," he says, "I have labored more than anyone else; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10). Because of his humility, though he was the least among all the saints, this grace was given to him to proclaim among the Gentiles the

unsearchable riches of Christ, and to teach the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages lay concealed in God, the Creator of all things. If the riches of Christ are unsearchable, why are they proclaimed among the people? If the mystery has been hidden in God for ages, how is it being proclaimed to the Gentiles through Paul? But the word unsearchable can be understood in two senses. One is that the riches were unsearchable, but after the passion of the Lord they were revealed. Or those things which were naturally unsearchable for humans, have been revealed by God. It is one thing to come to a secret through one's own curiosity, which ceases to be unsearchable once it is discovered. It is quite another thing to know through the grace of God what one cannot comprehend by one's own diligence, and this, even though it has been shown to others, remains unsearchable as long as it was hidden from you before it was revealed. The infinite riches of Christ are declared in the psalms, where it says: "How great is the goodness you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, for those who take refuge in you" (Psalms 31:19). These riches of His goodness were hidden in God from all ages past, who is the Creator of all things. Where are Marcion and Valentinus, and all the other heretics, who assert that there are two worlds, one visible and the other invisible, and who proclaim the just one, some unknown being as the father of Christ? Behold, God, in whom the mystery of Christ has been concealed from all ages, is proclaimed as the Creator of all things. From this, it can be seen that the God of the new and old testaments is the same. However, the mystery that has been concealed for ages may be understood in another way, that is, all these ages, meaning all the spiritual and rational creatures that have existed in the ages, have been ignorant of it. The word "saeculum," or age, is often used in this way to describe that which exists in the present. As Paul says to the Galatians: "who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age" (Galatians 1:4). And in another place: "so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace" (Ephesians 2:7), meaning all those things that were to happen in the future ages.

3:10-11

"So that now might be made known to the principalities and powers in heaven through the church the manifold wisdom of God according to the eternal plan, which He established in Christ Jesus our Lord. In accordance with the gift of the grace of God given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But each one must be careful how he builds upon it, for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ. If the work that anyone has built upon the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy." (1 Corinthians 3:10-17) And in another place: "Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory" (Psalm 24:10). Therefore, we cannot believe in a simple faith in the Church, but wisdom should be manifold and varied, so that not only should it be diverse, but also distinguished by much variety. You look at the cradle of Christ: see also heaven. You gaze upon the infant crying in the manger: but listen also to the angels praising. Herod persecuted but the Magi adored (Matthew 2). The Pharisees were ignorant, but the star indicated the way. He was baptized by a servant, but the voice of God thundering from above was heard (Matthew 3). He was immersed in the water, but the dove descended, or rather the Spirit in the dove (Luke 3:22). He came to his

passion and feared to suffer, wished to pass the cup, and accused Peter because he feared the cup. What could be more foolishly wise, more distinctly varied or more obscurely wise than what God did in Jesus Christ our Lord? For although the Church can understand it as being made by most people according to the order and connection of words, and by the word $\pi\rho\theta\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$, which we have expressed in Latin as a neutral gender noun "propositum": wisdom can resonate more in Christ than in other things. "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men" (1 Corinthians 1:25). However, if in Christ according to mystical understanding, wisdom is said to have been made (Sirach 24), let the Arians understand that they are boasting in vain in that testimony in which Wisdom speaks of herself as created and begotten at the beginning of the ways of God and founded. And surely, according to them, she was created, she could not have been born. And if she was born, how can she be said to be founded and created?

3:12

"In Him we have confidence and access with confidence by His faith. Nothing can give us so much confidence and purity of conscience toward God, of which it is said, 'If our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God' (1 John 3:21), except for the word, truth, wisdom, and justice, which are all understood in Christ. Therefore, just as these things give us confidence toward God, they also give us access, so that our senses may approach Him, more diligently contemplate Him, and assume and claim something of His majesty, and as it were, borrow some heat and splendor of light from the rays of the sun and say 'The light of Your face has been engraved upon us, Lord' (Ps. 4:7). Therefore, it is great to not only have confidence but also to have it with confidence. And not only to have access, but that the access itself be firmer, and to have it with confidence, whose foundation and origin is faith in Christ. Therefore, whoever does all things in reason and order, believes in Christ as speech and reason. Whoever is able to comprehend wisdom, believes in Christ as wisdom. Whoever understands the truth, believes in Christ as the truth. Whoever lives justly, believes in Him as justice. And there is no need to say more, since the need has often arisen for me to speak similarly of Christ."

3:13

"For this reason I ask that you do not fail in my tribulations for you, which is your glory." What the Latin translator has now expressed as "ne deficiatis" can, according to the ambiguity of the Greek language, be read as "ne deficiam" [I do not fail]. So the meaning would be: "For this reason I ask that I do not fail in my tribulations for you," etc. This is, therefore, what the apostle asks for and earnestly prays for from the Lord, that he will not fail in his trials. For he saw himself preaching the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum, going to Rome, to Spain, either having gone or preparing to go (Rom. 15). The whole world was being lifted up by his teaching about the power of the prince: idols were being deserted, and the temples of worshippers were being filled with neglect and filth. For this reason, every army of demons, every band of hostile powers, fought against him in a tight formation, so that through trials and tribulations, he would stop preaching the Gospel of Christ and would rest himself eventually. This is why he says, "I ask that I do not fail in my tribulations for you." For everything that I suffer, that I am afflicted, that I am harassed is for the cause of your salvation, as I desire to preach the Gospel to you: my tribulations are your glory. Furthermore, he speaks as an ignorant person, adding the singular "glory" to the plural "tribulations," and said: "In my tribulations for you, which is your glory," because it is still the case that "these tribulations are

your glory." Unless one considers this to be a reference to something deeper and more extraordinary, either with reference to trust, or to approach, or to faith, and says that trust, approach, and faith are your glory. But the former interpretation is more accurate. According to what the Latin translation has expressed, one can also interpret it as what he asks for the Ephesians, that they not weaken or fail in the apostle's pressures. For what follows also suits this interpretation better: "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that according to the riches of his glory he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being." For they had necessary fortitude, so that they may not be conquered in tribulations. Let someone say: If the Ephesians were placed in difficulties, then Paul could rightly pray for them so that they may not faint or become weary. But now it is ridiculous, that Paul, being placed in tribulations, should ask that the Ephesians not fail in their own labor. And to resolve this question, this example will be taken: "You did not despise or reject your temptation in my flesh." For indeed, in this passage it is shown that in Paul's flesh, trial is born for others. Let us consider all the people of the world (and I speak in common of all, let us discuss those who are believed to believe in Christ), and we will see that they are troubled especially by this question: why do many adversities happen to holy men and those serving God, while the wicked, the impious and the parricides flourish, are powerful and rich? Speaking in his own person, he expressed the words of David: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." (Ps. 73:1-3), and so on. And he brings out of this: "But I said perhaps in vain: For I have justified my heart in vain, and washed my hands among the innocent, and have been scourged all the day long." Therefore, it is not surprising that, with Paul being afflicted by many trials in Ephesus and in Asia, the Ephesians were tested and needed his prayers so that they would not falter in his pressures. What Paul suffered in Ephesus and in Asia is indeed written in the Acts of the Apostles, but we learn more from Paul's own Epistles, where he says: "If, according to man, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me?" "If the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again." (1 Cor. 15:32). And in his second Epistle to the Corinthians: "For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above our strength, so that we despaired even of life; but we had in ourselves the answer of death, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead, who hath delivered and doth deliver us out of so great dangers; in whom we trust that He will yet also deliver us" (2 Cor. 1:8-10). How much weight do you think he bore from so many and such deaths, that he would say: "who has delivered us from such great and such deaths?" Therefore, he rightly asks that the faith of the Ephesians does not fail in their own pressures and difficulties, which he himself underwent because he was preaching the Gospel to the Ephesians. Indeed, these pressures are punishment for the unbelievers, but among the faithful, they mean glory and victory, because to have conquered is to not have ceased in tribulations.

3:14

"Therefore, I bend my knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named." Just as it was shown in what preceded that spiritual eyes are like the bodily eyes: so now it must be understood that there are exterior knees of the body, and interior knees of the soul. For what is said in Isaiah: "Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm

the feeble knees" (Isaiah 35:3), and the Apostle himself in another place: "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10), relate not to the knees of the body, but to the subjection of the mind and the inclination of the soul, and the submission of the heart, which is equal to the earth, as the Psalmist also says: "My soul cleaves to the dust" (Psalm 119:25). For the spiritual and incorporeal soul, how could it adhere to the material earth? For in the name of Jesus do earthly knees bend; but can we affirm that angels and other powers which persevere in the heavens, have a bodily form, in order that they should bend the knee in his name? Or are the souls liberated from the bonds of the body in the underworld, which do not have knees, to be considered to have bent them? Therefore, just as whoever is subject to the Savior is said to bow the knee, so whoever is a slave to sin and has the spirit of bondage again in fear is said to have bent the knee to sin. "But I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal" (1 Kings 19:18), to the idol and to sin. He who is a fornicator and runs after brothels and harlots bends his knee to lust. He who is furious, worships wrath with a bent knee. He who looks upon Mammon and his god is his belly bends his knees to avarice and luxury. And why must I go through them all? We bend our knees to the devil as many times as we sin. But interpreting these things spiritually, we do not immediately observe the customary manner of prayer according to the letter, by which we humbly worship God with our knee placed on the ground and our knee fixed on the ground, so that we obtain more of what we ask for from him. For we read that Paul also prayed in this way on the beach, and knee-bending was prescribed in prayer (Acts 27). But just as that builds up the simple, so we teach that true knee-bending is in the mind; for many who bend the knee bodily, never bend the knee of the soul. On the contrary, others, praying with an upright body to God, have bent their minds even more. Moreover, what follows, "to the Father from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named," not as added in Latin codices, "to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," but simply "to the Father," should be read so that the name of God the Father is attributed, not to our Lord Jesus Christ, but to all rational creatures. Therefore, it is necessary to ask how all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named from God the Father. And, before anything is retracted, it should be noted that it does not say, "from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is born" or "created," but rather, "from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named." For it is one thing to merit the appellation of fatherhood, and another to have a share in nature, which in Greek is called πατρική (paternity), and in Hebrew משפחה (family), as we read in Numbers: "Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, and by the houses of their fathers, according to the number of names, every male by their polls" (Num. 1:2) and shortly after (v. 16): "These are the princes of the tribes: the princes of them being called to the assembly, were seventy and two." Again, speaking of the tribe of Levi, the Lord said to Moses in the desert of Sinai: "Number the sons of Levi by the houses of their fathers, by their families, and by their fathers' houses, every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them" (Num. 3:15). These things are concerning the people of Israel and the priestly and Levitical tribe. But considering with myself where I have read the word "paternity" in relation to the Gentiles, I cannot recall any source other than the testimony of the twenty-first psalm, in which it is written: "All the ends of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord: And all the kindreds of the nations shall adore in his sight" (Ps. 21:28), and of the twenty-eighth psalm: "Bring to the Lord, O ye families of the nations: bring to the Lord glory and honor" (Ps. 28:1). Therefore, just as God with his goodness has granted that his name and substance be attributed to other elements as well, so

that they are also called God, not that they are so by nature (for there was a time when all things did not exist, and if he so wills, they will return to nothing), but so they may exist, He has also bestowed the name of fatherhood from Himself upon all. And in order to make this more manifest, I shall produce testimonies from the Scriptures: "He said: I am who am" (Ex. 3:14), and "Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: He who is hath sent me to you." Was God alone, and were the rest of the things not in existence? Surely angels, heaven, earth, and the seas existed, as did Moses himself, to whom the Lord was speaking, and Israel, and the Egyptians to whom the prince and adversary was sent and against whom he was contending. And how can God claim a common name for His substance that is proper to Himself? The reason is the one stated above: for all other things took being from God's beneficence. But God Himself, who always is and has no beginning elsewhere, and who is the cause of His own substance, cannot be understood as having His standing from elsewhere. For it is as absurd to think of fire without heat as of heat without fire. The other things that are heated by fire acquire the heat from it, and when gradually the fire dies down, the heat diminishes, they return to their natural state and are no longer called hot. According to this sense, in the Gospel it is said to him who regarded the Savior not as the Son of God but as a good teacher: "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone" (Luke 18:19). Certainly, we read of good soil (Luke 8), a good man (Matthew 12), and a good shepherd (John 10); but no one is by nature good except God alone. All other things are called good by virtue of His goodness. In the same way that He alone is good, He makes others good; He alone is immortal, and grants immortality; He alone is truth, and imparts the name of truth. Likewise, the Father alone, as the creator of all things and the cause of the substance of the universe, empowers others to be called fathers. Let us contemplate heavenly things from earthly things: Adam, whom God first formed and created, was his father, and certainly he knew that he owed his existence to God the Father. Likewise, those who were born of Adam recognize him as their father. Thus, in the Gospel according to Luke, when the generation was reckoned backwards from Christ to David and Abraham, at the end of the scripture it says, "The son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God" (Luke 3:38), so that it shows that the name of paternity on earth first originated from God. But the question arises as to why all paternity in heaven is called from Him. In the same way that we who are not of Abraham's race, if we have his faith, are called children of Abraham; likewise, we call our forefathers the patriarchs and prophets (if we are not separated from them by sin). So, I think the angels and other virtues in the heavens have the princes of their own order, whom they enjoy calling their fathers. The archangel, unless he can be called an angel, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, unless they have lower subjects, are not called such. Therefore, it can be said that just as God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a father according to substance, and the only begotten Son is not a son by adoption but by nature, so also the other creatures merit the name of paternity by adoption. Nevertheless, whatever we say about the Father and the Son, we know that it applies to the Holy Spirit as well. For our Savior also knows that He is the Father, saying: "Son, your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5); "Daughter, your faith has made you well" (Matthew 9:22); "Little children, I am with you only a little longer" (John 13:33); and through the Holy Spirit, the just are adopted as sons. Valentinus thinks that his teachings and marriages, from that locus or maxim above all others, should be confirmed as those of the generations of his time; he does not understand that, as we have said, both in heaven and on earth, paternity is not made but called according to the likeness of God the Father.

3:16-19

"So that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, being rooted and founded in love, so that you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God." For this reason, I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, being rooted and founded in love; for there is no strength apart from the Holy Spirit. And he may strengthen and confirm [you] in the inner person. For we seek not the strength of the body, but of the soul, nor do we desire strength for the outer person, but for the inner person to be strengthened, so that after Christ dwells within the inner person he may dwell in the principal one - that is, our hearts - not running through all of his members, but dwelling in the rational one and establishing his home and seat within it. All of this, however, is accomplished through faith if we believe in him. Therefore he says, 'Dwell Christ through faith in your hearts.' This dwelling, which is constructed through the beginning of faith, has its roots and foundation in charity, so that since we are God's own farming and God's own building (1 Corinthians 3), all things may grow and build up in charity. But when we are rooted and founded in love (Ephesians 3), we know how to dwell with Christ in the inner person with total confidence of the mind; then we begin to strive for those things even with other saints, so that we may comprehend with a wise mind what is the breadth and length, depth and height, and not only this, but also to know the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ, so that when all of these things have been completed in order and reason within us, then we should be filled with all the fullness of God. Let us learn about the breadth and length, depth and height of the physical world beforehand so that we may move forward from them to spiritual matters. For example: let the breadth be this heaven and this earth, that is, the whole world, from East to West; the length from South to North; the depth in the abyss and in hell; and the height, which is lifted up above the heavens. But since, according to Ecclesiastes (Chap. 1), the heavens are affirmed to be round and to revolve like a sphere, this roundness however does not have length, width or depth, but is equal in all its parts; we are forced to understand by necessity that the height contains angels and higher virtues, and the depth contains the underworld and what is below it, while the length and width consist of the middle parts between the higher and lower. And since it follows that something is either near to the higher or near to the lower, all things that begin to progress towards the better and to ascend towards heavenly things and high things are called length, but those that are close to the lower part and fall into vices have the name of width, for wide and spacious is the gate that leads to death (Matt. 7:13). All of these things can be understood in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He that ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, He descended first into the lower parts of the earth. And after height and depth, the preaching of the cross went forth into all the earth. And so it contains height and depth, length and width. It is not surprising if the cross of Christ possesses everything, since one who is crucified with Christ possesses the same power. For he who first knows width, beginning with the lower parts, and understanding smaller things, then knows length, hastening towards sublime and high things. After this, he knows depth, the adversaries and opposing virtues that fight against us in this world. And finally, he knows height, for once we have knowledge of them and have placed them under our feet, we shall deserve to ascend to high and lofty things. And it should not be thought that the end of our work is to be

rooted and grounded in love, so that we may comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, unless we also desire to know with all diligence the eminent knowledge of the charity of Christ, so that it may be known to us not as simple charity, but as supereminent. And this is not the limit of having knowledge of the supereminent charity of Christ, unless we add another thing, that we attain the supereminent charity of knowledge. Hence it should be observed that Christ has a great and immense knowledge of charity, that is, of those who desire to know, who meditate on his law day and night, who turn words into actions and meditate with the mind and act with the hands. But he who is such that he is worthy through his knowledge of having the supereminent charity of Christ, should think of nothing else but of knowledge. And thus he will be filled with the fullness of God, not only in this present age but also in the future, so that he who has already begun to be full in study by reading, will afterwards be perfectly filled with God, who is the fullness of all things, filling Himself.

3:20-21

"But to him who is able to do superabundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." In reference to what he had just said: "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man," and so on, he now adds: "But to him who is able to do superabundantly beyond all that we ask or think," showing that he had indeed asked according to human weakness what seemed beneficial to them, but as far as the truth of the matter is concerned, he attributes more power to God than is asked for and acknowledges that our hopes may be surpassed by His actions because we don't always know what is appropriate to ask for and often ask for things that we think are good for us that, in fact, are not. For what is better than for a fornicator to be sick and tormented than to make the Temple of Christ a member of a harlot? Therefore, God is powerful not only in granting what we ask for but also what we understand. Sometimes, we are unable to express in words what we feel or think, and with silent thoughts and indescribable groans, as the Apostle says, we pray for things we cannot put into words. Therefore, He will provide beyond what we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, so that just as He gives us something now that we did not dare to ask for nor did we think we deserved, so will He grant us other things beyond what we can think or express. Thus, to God alone be the glory, first in the Church, which is pure, having no blemish or wrinkle, and which therefore can receive the glory of God because it is the body of Christ. Secondly, in Christ Jesus, because in the body of the assumed man, all members of believers (are) to whom all divinity dwells corporally. And this glory is not only for the present time and the future generations, but it remains and grows with ineffable eternity in all generations and the world of the worlds.

4:1

Therefore I urge you, a prisoner for the Lord, to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called. It is possible for one to write this even in the chains of Christ, and in prison for martyrdom - it is better to say that we are prisoners of the Lord in the love of Christ. As Clement testifies in writing to the Corinthians, 'The bond of God's love, who can describe it?' (1 Corinthians 13) And in the first book of Kings we read, 'After these things, the soul of Jonathan was bound to

the soul of David' (1 Kings 18:1). And the prophet said of the apostles, 'After you, they will follow, carrying chains in their hands' (Psalm 106). For those who love Christ, they follow him bound by the bonds of love. There is also another explanation which may or may not be accepted, depending on the reader's interpretation: This bond is said to be the body of the soul, and because Paul accepted this ministry of the Gospel, he was consequently known as the prisoner of Christ. This body is said to be the bond, and those who are bound in the body are called the prisoners of the earth; Jeremiah attests to this in the second alphabet, saying, 'To humble under his feet all the prisoners of the earth' (Lamentations 3:34). And elsewhere we read this very same thing spoken by Christ: 'Go out to those who are imprisoned, and those who are in darkness, reveal yourselves' (Isaiah 49:9). Indeed, this bond may indicate the chains of sin, and the darkness of ignorance, which the prophet shows being broken by the coming and preaching of Christ. But the higher meaning also has its place: that the bond is the body, and the darkness is this earthly habitation, where there are rulers of darkness, and dark mountains, to whose feet we are forbidden to stumble. But when he says, 'to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,' he is to be believed who enters through him who says, 'I am the way' (John 14:6 and Isaiah 30), and does not turn aside to the right or to the left, but turns his foot from every evil way (Proverbs 4), and in him is completed: 'The steps of a man are established by the Lord' (Psalm 37:23).

4:2

With all humility and meekness, with patience, he who knows he is but earth and ashes, soon to be dissolved into dust, will never be lifted up by pride. And he who, having contemplated the eternity of God, has considered the short and almost infinitesimal span of human life, will always have in his mind the idea of death, and will be humble and meek. 'For the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation oppresses the mind that museth upon many things.' (Wisdom 9:15) Therefore, let us say with all humility: 'Lord, my heart is not exalted: nor are my eyes lifted up.' (Psalm 130:1) True humility consists not so much in speaking humble words as in having a humble mind, so that we may be conscious of our own lowliness, and never esteem ourselves greater than we are or presume to know or understand anything. Meekness is that virtue which is never disturbed by passion, and especially not by anger or fury. He who possesses it will achieve the happiness promised by the Lord, so that he may possess the earth, that is, have power over his own body and be its master, and this will be his first inheritance, to live in the flesh but not according to the flesh. Some, with wrinkled brows, lowered eyebrows, and pompous words, assume themselves to be the authorities of the learned and the judges. Not because they know themselves to be worthy of arrogance, but so that they may appear to be above those they see as simple among their brethren.

"Suffering with one another in charity." Anyone who understands what "suffering with one another in charity" means will not think that this commandment applies to holy men, but rather to those who are at the beginning of virtue. Indeed, the saints do not have (or have) anything to suffer with each other, but those who are still overcome by some passion, like ordinary humans. It is not surprising if the people of Ephesus hear these things, as there are some among the multitude of believers who still have to suffer with each other. It seems to me that this also means what is written to the Galatians: "Bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2). Therefore, we can interpret both testimonies differently: either to bear each other's burdens or to suffer with each other in

charity, and to say that those who are rich support the poverty of the poor. If someone helps a sick brother, he suffers him in charity. If someone living a blessed life in celibacy helps someone else who has a wife and children, and can barely support himself, and comforts him in any way he can, he will be praised for carrying a stranger's burden. If someone sees a sick mother or sister wasting away in poverty and cannot help, but someone reaches out a hand to help, he is sustained in charity. Whether we follow the higher sense or the lower sense: he who does not have charity and disregards the words of the Apostle, who reminds us that "we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves" (Romans 15:1), does not comfort a sinning brother or a poor one.

4:3, 4

"Anxious to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit, just as you were called to one hope of your calling." This is correctly said to those in Ephesus who had already attained the unity of the Holy Spirit: "Anxious to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." For those who have something, there must be concern to keep it. But those who do not have it must strive to obtain it. This passage is especially challenging for heretics who think they maintain the unity of the spirit when the bond of peace is destroyed and corrupted: for the unity of the Spirit is preserved through the bond of peace. When we do not all speak the same thing, and one says, "I am of Paul, and another, "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas" (1 Cor. 1:12), we divide the unity of the Spirit and tear it into parts and members. But someone may object: "How then are there different gifts and different graces, when the unity of the Spirit must be maintained?" There are certainly different gifts, but they are from the same Spirit, and different ministries, but the same Lord, and diverse operations, but the same God who performs all things in all (1 Cor. 12:4ff.). What is meant by "One body and one spirit" is either simply understood as the body of Christ, which is the Church, or at least what he deigned to assume from the Virgin, so that he would not appear forever incarnate, as he did in the Old Testament. And there is one Holy Spirit, the one who gives and sanctifies all. Or certainly, one body refers to practical life and works, which are called praxis, in Greek; and one spirit refers to knowledge and contemplation, which properly dwell in the heart and are called theoria by some. Thus, if someone is a member of the Church and not separated from its spirit, then he will consequently be in one hope of his calling. But it is asked how there can be only one hope of the calling when there are many mansions in the Father's house. To this we answer that we say the one hope of the calling to be the kingdom of heaven, like the one house of God the Father, and that in one house there are many mansions. "For the glory of the sun is one, and the glory of the moon another, and the glory of the stars another" (1 Cor. 15:41). Or certainly it is more subtly indicated that at the end and consummation of things, everything will be restored to its original state, when we all become one body and are reformed into a perfect man, and the prayer of our Savior for us will be fulfilled: "Father, grant that as I and you are one, so they may be one in us" (John 17:21). I understand that in what I have explained thus far, "anxious to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," the Spirit is understood by many to mean not the Holy Spirit, but the emotion of the mind and feeling, according to which the soul and heart of all believers were one (Acts 4). And to the virgin, the Apostle commands: "That she be holy in body and spirit" (1 Cor. 7:34), that is, in the work of the flesh and in the emotion of the mind. But a general explanation can be applied to a specific interpretation, that one preserves the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace by not being carried

away by every wind of doctrine, nor being foolish like the moon, sometimes serving the devil, sometimes serving God. Rather, one should have one body of good works and always present his flesh as a temple to God. And one spirit: always feeling the same thing, in one hope of his calling, so as not to be unsure of the promises and to have solid confidence in the resurrection and restoration of all things.

4:5, 6

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." Just as faith and baptism are different from God and Lord, so also baptism, Lord, and God are distinct from one another even though they are all named together. I mention this because of Sabellius, who thinks that the same God is both Father and Son and confuses the persons by recognizing the same divinity in each. But it is clear that one Lord, the Son and one God, the Father are called upon. This is also more fully expressed to the Corinthians: "Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (1 Cor. 8:6). Just as by the Father not taking away the Son, he is still Lord since only He alone is referred to as Lord, so also the Father does not remove from the Son that He is God, since only the Father is referred to as God. We also read elsewhere: "And know that the Lord Himself is God" (Ps. 99:2); and elsewhere: "The Lord your God, the God alone is" (Deut. 6:4). If, as the Arians believe, the Father alone is God, then by the same reasoning, Jesus Christ will be the only Lord, and neither the Father nor the Son will be God. But it should not be that dominion is not in deity or that deity is not in dominion. There is one Lord, and there is one God, since the dominion of the Father and the Son is one divinity. Therefore, the faith is called one because we believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the same way, and the baptism is one because we are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We are also immersed three times to show the oneness of the sacrament of the Trinity. We are not baptized in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit but in one name, which is understood to be God. It is surprising how Arius, Macedonius, and Eunomius, though holding different beliefs, suspect diversity of nature in one word, one work, and one sacrament, and holding the Son and the Holy Spirit to be a common source of creation, have led different streams of heresies. "One baptism" is also against Valentinus, who claims that there are two baptisms, and against all heretics, so that they know they do not have baptisms, but there is a vital font in the Church of Christ. One baptism can also be said to be threefold because even though we are baptized three times because of the mystery of the Trinity, we still consider it to be one baptism. Baptism is also in water, spirit, and fire, as the Lord spoke of it: "I have a baptism to be baptized with" (Luke 12:50) , and elsewhere: "You will be baptized with my baptism" (Mark 10:39). The difference in prepositions used in "One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" implies different meanings. God the Father is over all because He is the author of all. The Son is through all because He passes through and goes through all. The Holy Spirit is in all because nothing is without Him. It should not be thought that one God and Father of all is commonly shared to the point that even irrational animals can be named as a Father, but just as if we were to say of ten people, five sons and five servants, all of them have one Lord and one Father: we would not call them all fathers or lords, but in the same way, when it says "One God and Father of all," it must be understood that some have another Father, and some have another God. This is something that Zeno and his Stoics also suspect about creatures and also about God, whom Virgil

follows when he says in Aeneid. VI:

"Deum namque ire per omnes Terrasque tractusque maris, etc." translates to "For indeed God goes through all lands and the regions of the sea, etc." In the beginning, the heavens and the earth, and the liquid plains, and the shining orb of the moon, and the stars of Titania, are all nourished by a spirit within, and the mind, infused through all the limbs, agitates the entire mass and mingles with the great body. Some interpret this that is written: "above all, and through all, and in all" as referring to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that the Father is "above all" because he is the author of all things; the Son is "through all" because all things were created through the Son; the Holy Spirit is "in all" because he is given to believers and we are the temple of the Holy Spirit; both the Father and the Son dwell within us.

4:7

"To each one of us, however, grace has been given according to the measure of Christ's gift." Although God the Father is above all, and through all, and in all, nevertheless grace is given to those who believe according to the measure. It is not that God gives the Spirit and grace according to measure (for there is no limit to His magnificence), but that He pours out the liquid according to the measure of the vessels, giving as much of the gift as the receiver can take. For God does not give the Spirit according to measure, nor can that which is equally diffused everywhere have measure. To make this clearer, let us take an imperfect comparison: the sea is certainly immense, and its capacity is known only to God; hence, if one wishes to give it to many people according to what they can carry, it is necessary to give to each according to measure, and they receive a portion of it, whose solid quantity is immeasurable. Similarly, the Holy Spirit is immense and has no end, yet is given to each according to what is expedient. And at the same time, it must be noted that the same grace which is now attributed to us was given to us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

4:8

Therefore, he says: 'Ascending on high, he led captivity captive, he gave gifts to men.' For he had said above, 'To each one of us grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ,' so that he might confirm these very gifts, which he also enumerates a little later, saying: 'And he gave some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers,' and the rest. From the Savior, who gave them, he took testimony from the sixty-seventh Psalm, that we might know that the spoils that Christ the conqueror purchased are distributed to men. For ascending on high, he led captivity captive. We believers in Christ, gathered out of the Gentiles, when we were God's creatures, were captured by the devil and distributed among his followers. Then our Lord Jesus Christ came, bearing with him the vessels of captivity spoken of by Ezekiel (Ch. 9 and 12), and with his head veiled so as not to be recognized by his adversaries, he preached remission to the captives and release to them who were held in chains. And he freed us from the chains of the enemy and the fetters of the old captivity, and led us with himself into heaven. And to those whom he delivered from the hand of the enemy as the victor, he gave different gifts of grace. And elegantly, he placed here, 'he gave gifts to men,' whereas in the Psalter it is written, 'he received gifts from men' (Ps. 67:19). But there, because it had not yet happened, but was promised for the future, it is said, 'he received.' Here, however, since the Apostle writes that he had already given, and the Church was established throughout the

world, he does not write 'received,' but 'gave.' Some have explained this passage such that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended victoriously to heaven so that he might send from there angels and other powers to guard his churches. And while this place on earth is unworthy to have the presence of sublime powers, in a certain way they endured captivity. For he ascended on high, that he might captive captivity and give gifts to men. And the Apostle repeats this whole thing to teach that since he had already said, 'bearing with one another in love, eager to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' he might show that in the various gifts of the Church, there might be harmony, and that there might not be immediately given occasion for schisms and dissensions, because according to the measure of the gift of Christ, each one of us received gifts, not the same but in one body and in one spirit, all of us called, that is, so that just as there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God the Father, so also we might be one in charity, keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

4:9

But what is it that ascends except that which also descends into the lower parts of the earth? He who is said to have ascended, ascended because he had descended before. This means: 'But what is it that ascends except that which has also descended.' Therefore, we must look into that which is written elsewhere: 'No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man' (John 3:13), how did he ascend before descending? For when he spoke these words, he had already descended from heaven and was showing how he had once ascended to heaven. Similarly, we must consider how the descent and ascent are to be understood. Whether it was a physical descent and ascent or a spiritual one, or perhaps both. The lower parts of the earth refer to hell, into which our Lord and Savior descended in order to bring with him the souls of the saints who were held captive there, triumphantly leading them to heaven. This is why, after his resurrection, many bodies of the righteous were seen in the holy city (Matthew 27:52-53). That hell is located in the lower part of the earth is confirmed by the Psalmist who says: 'The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram' (Psalm 106:17). This is further explained in the Book of Numbers (Chapter 16). We also read elsewhere: 'Let death come deceitfully upon them; and let them go down alive into Hell' (Psalm 55:15).

4:10

"He who descended is himself also he who ascended above all the heavens, that he might fill all things." Did he bodily pass through all the heavens and the highest places and circles of the heavens, which philosophers call spheres, standing at the summit of the vault of heaven and, to use the word itself, the apse? Or rather, is he to be believed to have transcended and despised all bodily things and contemplated eternal things, standing above the heavens, that is, the invisible ones - which I prefer to think - for he descended into the lower parts of the earth and ascended above all the heavens, the Son of God, not only to fulfill the law and the prophets, but also certain other hidden dispensations which he alone knows with the Father. For we cannot know how the blood of Christ was profitable to the angels and to those who were in hell, but we cannot deny that it was profitable. He also descended into hell and ascended into heaven, to fill those who were in those regions according to what they could receive. From this it is to be understood that before Christ descended and ascended, all things were empty and needed his fullness. This passage is

especially relevant against the Ebionites and Photinians, or those who fabricate two sons with insane error: namely, the Son of God and the son of man. Behold, it is clearly said here that he himself is both ascending and descending. And yet, as we say these things, we do not give a place to another heresy which asserts a divided dispensation of Christ; rather, we confess one Son of God and man, lest we in part cut off the dispensation of the assumed man by believing it in part.

4:11-12

And he, (Christ), gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. And from this place it is most clearly proved, the unity of divinity of the Father and Son. For, what Christ is now said to have given, is narrated to have been given by God the Father in the first Epistle to the Corinthians: "And God indeed hath set some in the church; first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors; after that miracles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues [1 Cor. 12:28]." Which Sabellius not understanding, confounded the Father and the Son, while he believed that the same operation was not diverse. And at the same time, it should be noted that Christ is said to have given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, while the Father is remembered to have placed the same. Therefore, both the Father and the Son put or gave, first Apostles, secondly prophets, not those who prophesied the future as we read in the Old Testament, but those who rebuke and judge unbelievers and the unwise. Those are defined as new testament prophets in another epistle [2 Cor. 11]. Thirdly, evangelists, whose feet are beautiful in announcing peace [Rom. 10]. Nor should it be thought that just as in the first three, some were said to be apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, in the same way, different duties were assigned to pastors and teachers. For it does not say, "And some pastors, and some teachers," but, "And other some pastors and teachers" so that whoever is a pastor should also be a teacher, nor should he assume the name of a pastor in the Churches, although he may be holy, unless he can teach those whom he feeds. Or, certainly, that the same presiding officer of the Church be both a pastor and a teacher; a pastor of sheep, a teacher of men. For "Thou wilt save both men and beasts, O Lord" [Psalm 35:7]. I believe that even today in churches, just as there are prophets and evangelists, there can also be found pastors and teachers, in whom the signs and indications of apostleship are fulfilled. Conversely, there are many both among those outside and those within the Church, as well as those among heresies, who are pseudo-apostles, pseudo-prophets, pseudo-evangelists, pseudo-pastors, and pseudo-teachers. There is no doubt that amongst the heretics they completely possess all things according to false faith. But even in the churches, do not false pastors seem to you to exist, who do not feed the sheep with discipline, but like hirelings, do not think at all about the salvation of the flock, not converting that which has erred and not seeking that which has perished; but solely seeking milk and wool from the sheep, that is to say, capturing food and clothing? Nor indeed do we think that the Apostle suddenly broke forth without order into these matters, but because he had already asserted that God is above all and through all and in all, and that to each of the saints has been given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift, he now adds that there are other apostles, other prophets, other evangelists, other pastors and teachers, distributed in the church, who are necessary for the perfection and instruction of the saints in the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ. For

since the body of the Lord is the Church, and the Church is built from living stones, those whom we mentioned above, when placed in the Church, have this work: that, according to the dispensation and duties entrusted to them, they build up the Church of Christ, that is, His body. So, if anyone does not build up the Church of Christ and does not instruct the people subject to him (so that Christ's Church is built up from the subject people), such a one cannot be called an Apostle, a Prophet, an Evangelist, a Pastor, or a Teacher.

4:13-15

"Until we all come to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. So that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by cunning and craftiness of people who are deceitful, leading to the error. But, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, that is, Christ." It is asked, who are all those that are said to come together in the unity of faith? Are they all people, or all saints, or certainly those who are capable of reason? It seems to me that it refers to all people, because there are many winds of doctrine. People who are agitated by the blast of these winds are carried here and there, uncertainly, and being tossed about by the variances of error. Therefore, we must strive with every effort, first to come together in the unity of faith, then to have a knowledge of the Son of God in the same unity. When we have secure possession of these, we will cease to be like children and receive the measure of the inner man, which is the measure of the fullness of Christ, and we will attain the status of perfect men. But we should do this so that the whole multitude of believers, too, may reach the perfect age of the fullness of Christ and not be carried about the waves of teaching like children. They may be shipwrecked or threatened when the winds, namely, those of heretics or worldly wise men, blow here and there with differing and opposing arguments. Some preach false things without any intention to deceive while others, employing all the cunning of error, hurry to deceive and overcome us by setting traps. When, therefore, the saints meet and reach the measure of the aforesaid man, then, understanding the love of Christ, they will increase in all things which they have received, the seeds of truth, having the Lord Jesus as the head of the body of the Church. However, since he says, "So that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro," it appears that he himself is also one who is tossed about and little, and he may retract it, whether this was said humbly, or whether he knew partially and recognized partially how far he was from perfect knowledge and spoke in the true words of his conscience. Therefore, if anyone wants to use his example of humility, he will say, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Corinthians 13:11). Let someone else respond to this by comparing many things, that the Apostle reached the age of a perfect man, but is still referred to as a child in regards to what is reserved for the saints. For indeed, the prophet spoke of all the apostles who believe in Christ as being children, saying, "Behold, I and the children whom God has given me" (Isaiah 8:18). After this, it must be more carefully discussed, lest the Apostle may have said not only that he was a child out of humility, but also that he was wavering and being blown in every direction of doctrine, deluded by men's tricks and wickedness to fall into error. However, those who say that he pronounced these things from conscience rather than humility declare, "Paul the apostle was a man of sharp and keen intelligence, who foresaw with a penetrating mind all that was going to be argued by those who disputed with him from the beginning. Therefore, he often heard from both sides assertions of such

verisimilitude in regard to contradictory matters that they caused the hearer to waver. For this reason, though blown about by the winds of doctrine, yet he was not crushed upon the rocks nor was his ship filled with the waves. For he stood at the helm on the deck and broke the raging waves of heresies with the security of his faith. However, he was not fearless and secure nor tranquil and placid, but watched for the winds from every quarter, caught them with an anxious ear, and conquered the opposing storms, but not without effort. Therefore, since he saw that the arguments and reasonings of his adversaries by which they were striving to overturn the truth could not easily be overcome and were full of every kind of shrewdness, even of dialectic and, in fact, of diabolical artifice, he hoped for the help of God to drive away from his mind all deliberation and believe the truth with certainty and fixedly, without any trouble, and in the love of Christ, whom he knew to be both the head of himself and of the whole body of the Church. It should be noted that this passage is more evident in Greek, but when it is translated word for word into Latin, the sense, enveloped in language, makes obscure what is said.

4:16

From whom the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together through every joint of the supplies, according to the operation in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity. In the end of things, when we shall begin to see God face to face, and shall have come to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ (of whose fullness we have all received, John 1), so that Christ may not be partly in us, but may be wholly in us, and having left behind the elements of little children, we shall have grown unto the man in Him, of whom the prophet says, 'Behold, a man, the Orient is His name' (Zech. 6:12), and John the Baptist says (John 1:30), 'He that shall come after me, who is preferred before me' (or 'shall come'), then in the meeting of one faith and one knowledge of the Son of God, whom now, because of diversity of minds, we do not know by one and the same faith and knowledge, the whole body, which formerly was dispersed and torn into different pieces, will be brought together into its coherence and joint, so that one and the same supply and operation, and the consummated perfection of one age, may make the whole body grow equally, and all the members may receive an increase of age according to their own measure. And this whole edifice, by which the body of the Church is increased piecemeal, will be completed in mutual charity. Let us understand all reasonable creatures under the example of one reasonable animal, and let us know that whatever we say of its members and parts, it is to be referred to every reasonable creature. Let us suppose that this animal has been lacerated by its limbs, veins, and flesh, so that no bone sticks to another, and no nerve is connected to another: let the eyes be separated, the nostrils apart, the one hand in one location, and the other in another, let the feet be apart, and let the remaining members be dispersed and separated from each other in this manner. Imagine a doctor of such great knowledge, who, according to the stories of the ethnic people, can imitate Aesculapius and revive a new figure and a new name of plants. He must necessarily restore each member to its proper place, join together the joints, and with a certain glue, restore the parts and make one body. Until now, we have proceeded with only one likeness. Now, another example should be drawn to what we want to understand. The child should grow and, in secret age, grow into perfect adolescence. His hand will have its own growth, his feet will feel their own increase. While we don't know it, the stomach fills up, and while our eyes deceive us, the shoulders expand. And all the members grow in proportion to their own measure so that they do not seem to increase in themselves, but to the

body. Therefore, in the restoration of all things, when the true physician Christ Jesus comes to heal the entire body of the church, now dispersed and torn, each person according to the measure of faith and knowledge of the Son of God (whom he is said to recognize because he had known him before and then ceased to know him) will regain his place and start to be what he was. But in such a way that they are not in the same heresy, that all are placed at the same age, that is, all are transformed into angels, but each member is perfect according to its measure and function. For example, that the fallen angel will begin to revert to what he was created for, and that man, who was ejected from paradise, will be restored to the cultivation of paradise again. All these things will be done in such a way that they are joined together in love, and as each member rejoices with the other, and is happy with the progress of the other, the body of Christ, the early church, will dwell in heavenly Jerusalem, which elsewhere the apostle calls the mother of the saints (Gal. 4). Therefore (as we said before), these things are obscure among us because they are said metaphorically in Greek. And every metaphor, if transferred from one language to another, suffocates the sense and germs of speech with certain brambles.

4:17-24

"Therefore, I say this and I testify in the Lord that you should no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds, darkened in understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ! — assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." Therefore, I urge you, as one who is a prisoner because of the Lord, to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Do not walk in the way of the Gentiles, who are depraved and who abandon themselves to sensuality, in their lust for impurity, and in their greed for more. This is not the way of Christ, whom we have learned to follow. Let us not be like those who have given themselves over to their own passions, who have become hardened in their hearts, who no longer know the way of truth. They have become lost in their own desires, giving themselves over to every kind of impurity, until they are never satisfied. They have even gone beyond the bounds of nature, committing the most vile and disgusting acts with one another, and receiving the just reward of their error. The vanity of their minds and the darkness of their understanding are manifested in two ways: in their worldly pursuits, which are fleeting and of no value, and in their pursuit of worldly wisdom, which is ultimately useless. Do you not see that those who spend their days and nights in the pursuit of dialectical arguments, who gaze into the heavens and delve into the depths of the earth, who construct poems and compose works of literature, are in vain? And what of those who seek wealth through any means necessary, who flatter kings and princes, who seize the property of others and gather riches, not knowing who will inherit them? When he says, "those who have given themselves over to despair," that is, **■πηλγηκ■τες ■αυτο■ς**, it means something different in Greek than it does in Latin. "Despair" in Latin means to have lost hope, whereas in Greek, **■πηλγηκ■τες** refers to those who, having sinned, feel no pain or remorse. They do not sense their own downfall, but are like beasts who see the sword and run towards it. Consider two people who have fallen into sin: one who understands the gravity of his actions and mourns them, and one

who takes pleasure in his wickedness and not only does not mourn, but even boasts and believes he has achieved some kind of victory. Does it not seem to you that one of them feels pain, while the other does not? Let us use the word-for-word translation and say "■πηλγηκ■τες," which means "indolent" or "pain-free." For some of the philosophers have taught "indolence," that is, freedom from pain. Those who introduce different concepts of nature should know that because of ignorance and blindness, people are walking in vanity with obscured minds, since they have given themselves over to ignorance and blindness. For no one is called unlearned and blind unless he can neither know nor see. Nor do we say that a stone is blind or a stupid animal ignorant, because they are not asked to know or see, nor is it in their nature to do so. But if it was the nature of the nations to understand and see the life of God, this was not because of varied natures of spirits and of the spiritual, but of their will. As we said above about all uncleanness, it does not necessarily imply avarice in a simple sense, but lust and excess. We must confirm this sense with the testimony of another passage. In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, it is written: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness" (1 Thess. 4:3 and following). Pay attention, for when he is urging us to chastity and willing us to be content only with our wives, he says, "that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter," that is, not to abandon his own wife and seek to defile another man's wife. Where we have "transgress and wrong his brother in this matter," in Greek it reads, "and take advantage of his brother in the matter." πλεονεξ■α is called "avarice," which we can express in this context, taking the force of the word, as follows: "that no one transgress and cheat his brother in this matter." What is the consequent sense or reason that in this chapter we have now exemplified, or in this one that we are primarily trying to explain to the Ephesians, avarice is suddenly named among sexual immorality, impurity, chastity, and conjugal love? Do not let it bother you if we dwell on this obscure subject for a long time, for we took it up from the beginning, and among all of Paul's Epistles, it is especially involved in words and meanings.

4:20-24

"But you have not learned Christ that way; if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." Therefore, if all who appear to hear Christ, heard Him, this statement would never be made to the Ephesians, and certainly not to those to whom the Apostle revealed the sacraments of Christ: "if indeed you have heard Him." To learn Christ is to grasp His virtues, and to hear Him is no different than to hear wisdom, justice, fortitude and temperance, and other qualities by which Christ is called. Therefore, if anyone has heard and learned Christ, he will not walk in vanity of his own mind, nor be darkened in understanding, nor alienated from the life of God. He will also have knowledge, with ignorance removed and the darkness cast aside, all the blindness of his heart will be taken away. Having this, he will not give himself over to impurity, nor will he work every uncleanness in covetousness, passing the confines of marriage. But if, at any point, he is

overtaken by some passion, he will grieve over his wound and suffer the torments of his conscience, because he has lost his free face and the purity of an immaculate mind. Let us therefore learn Christ and hear Him; if anyone can say: "Do you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me?" (1 Cor. 13:3) Let us run to Him day and night, and hang upon His lips and His words. Christ speaks to us, the words He promises are of the Holy Spirit. For God established in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers. But neither is it despair, that perhaps Christ may speak in our minds and teach us through Himself, and not require the instrument of another's mouth, provided only that we are not subject to sin and that our body does not possess wickedness, and wisdom enters into it.

4:21

"As there is truth in Jesus." The word "Jesus" sometimes refers to the man who was assumed by the Word of God from the Virgin, according to the saying, "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Luke 1:31), and elsewhere, "Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey" (John 4:6) and so on. At other times, it refers to the Word of God himself. For we have one Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things are. Therefore, when Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth" (John 14:6), it means that he is the Son of God. But when Paul writes, "As there is truth in Jesus," he speaks of the temple of the body, in which the Word of God dwells. For the "Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Unless both are understood of the Word of God, how he dwells in him as life, and himself is life, "For as the Father has life in himself; so has he given the Son also to have life in himself" (John 5:26). So the truth is called the Son, and it is shown to dwell in him. However, we say this without separating Jesus from Christ, nor again saying that God the Word, whom he assumed, is another man. But according to the understanding of the effects or places, we believe that he whom we believe to be the Son of man and the Son of God is one and the same, before and after the Virgin, and at different times bearing different names. "As there is truth in Jesus" can also be understood differently. Truth was in none of the patriarchs, prophets, or apostles, except in Jesus alone. For others knew in part, prophesied in part, and saw as in a mirror dimly (1 Corinthians 13). In Jesus alone, the truth of God appeared, which speaks confidently, "I am the truth" (John 14:6), which grants liberty to those who believe in him according to the analogy of faith. For whoever knows the truth is given freedom by the truth. Therefore, the truth itself took on the form of a servant, and humbled itself, became obedient to the Father even unto death (Philippians 2), in order to make the servant free. For where the spirit of God is, there is liberty. If we want to see the form of freedom in Jesus and the face of truth, let us ascend with him to the mountain, let us see him transfigured, where even his garments, that is, the Scriptures that announce him, are changed, and Moses and Elijah, that is, the Law and the Prophets, appear in glory (Matthew 17). As long as the Lord does not change the form of the servant or ascend the mountain, the Law is in rags, the Prophets in emaciation. But when he has ascended to higher things and wants to change his garments and his understanding of the servant is clear and free, then Moses and Elijah and their faces and garments are changed.

4:22

"Put off the old man according to your former conversation, who is corrupted according to the desire of error." Because it seems to follow an order and the text is full of thought, it should be read as follows: "But you have not learned Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and

have been taught in Him, putting off your former way of life, the old man who is corrupted according to the desire of error, as truth is in Jesus, so that the meaning is: Just as truth is in Jesus, it will also be in you who have learned Christ, heard Him, and have been taught to put off your former way of life, the old man who is corrupted according to the desire of error. However, I believe that the old man commanded to be put off is called inveterate from evil. For he wanders always according to his former way of life and the desire for error, and lurking in the act of corruption, he is corrupted and violated. And since he constantly revolves in the desire of error and never ceases from vice, he is not said to be corrupted, but to be corrupting, which is corrupted, intercepted, violated at every day, hour, moment, and point. But the word of God, which kills in order to give life to the dead and makes the revived seek the Lord, whom they did not know before death, does not corrupt, but kills the old man. "For I kill," he says, "and I give life" (Deut. 32:39); and "When he killed them, then they sought him" (Ps. 77:34). And let us not think that what is said now, "Who is corrupted according to the desire of error" is contradictory to what is written elsewhere: "And though our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). For the corruption of the outward man is the renovation of the inward man and the corruption of the inward man is the restoration of the outward man. Someone may think that Paul is speaking simply: If anyone corrupts the temple of God, God will corrupt him, for you are the temple of God. But perhaps there is something hidden there that seems hidden to us. If we are the temple of God according to what is written, "For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are" (1 Cor. 3:17), then someone else corrupting the temple of God is different from what is being corrupted. It should be asked who corrupts the temple of God. If you find enemies of Jerusalem, corrupting and violating the temple built of stones, you will equally see anyone corrupting and violating the temple of God, whom God will corrupt and violate, avenging the corruption of His temple. However, even the temple that presents itself (although it is alive and sensible) will pay the penalty for its own corruption and violation, in that, corrupted and violated, it lost the spirit of incorruption.

4:23-24

But be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth. For we are not renewed in sense without the spirit, nor in spirit without sense, but we are renewed together in the spirit of our mind, so that just as we sing with the spirit, we also sing with understanding, pray with the spirit, and pray with understanding, therefore, in the spirit of our mind we are renewed, so that when our sense has been purified and cleansed from every stain of impure accumulation and has turned away from all that is unclean, then the spirit can be joined to it in such a way that they become one. It is no longer simply a spirit, but it is called a spirit of understanding. When we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, which is our spirit, then we put on the new man who is created according to God. This, in other words, is what is said in another place: 'Put on Christ Jesus' (Romans 13:14). He is the new man, whom all believers must put on and be clothed with. For what was not new in the man who was assumed by our Savior? From conception, birth, infancy, teaching, life, virtues, and finally his cross and passion, he stripped himself of his princely status and demonstrated oppositional strength. His resurrection also and ascension into heaven truly made him created in justice and holiness of truth, because he was the true God, and the Son of God, in whom all religion and justice are completed in truth. Therefore, whoever can imitate his way of life and express all the virtues within

himself, and be meek, as he was meek, and humble in heart, and lay down his life for his friends, as Christ laid down his life for his sheep, and when struck does not retaliate, and when cursed does not curse back, but overcomes pride with humility, he is clothed with the new man, and can say with the Apostle: 'Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me' (Galatians 2:20), and 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ' (1 Corinthians 11:1). He may also take on the words of John: 'He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked' (1 John 2:6). When it is said, 'who is created according to God,' it does not mean the same thing in Latin as in Greek. For in Latin, creation is called 'generation,' or 'nativity,' but in Greek, the word 'creation' is used to mean 'making' and 'condition.' And what is called 'condition' in Latin, means 'creation' in Greek. Therefore, when heretics attack the birth of Christ, they use the example of Solomon: 'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made any thing from the beginning' (Proverbs 8:22). Therefore, it must be understood that creation and condition are never mentioned except in great works. So, for example, the world was created, the city was founded, and although a house may be large, it is said to be built rather than created or founded. For in great works and creations, the word 'creation' is used. From this, it is evident that this new man, who is created in Christ according to God, is a great work of God and stands out above all other creatures, since he is so made that he was created in the world and at the beginning of God's ways, and in the beginning of all elements.

4:25

"Therefore, putting away lying, let each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another." The Apostle did not command simply or solely a moral duty of speaking truth with one's neighbor while abandoning lying. Otherwise, if we only speak truth with our neighbors, whoever is not a neighbor should hear lies. Indeed, this is also commanded in the Law: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:17). If "neighbor" were taken to mean only a nearby or friendly person, then it would be permitted to commit adultery with strangers. But "neighbor" includes every human who has been born of the same parent as us. This is also signified by the parable of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers: both the priest and the Levite passed by, but a Samaritan took care of him and brought him to an inn (Luke 10). The Lord then affirms that the one who showed mercy to the man is his neighbor, wishing to show that all people are neighbors to one another. In fact, what follows, "for we are members of one another," seems to me to refer more to the mystery and to speak of those who are close to us in faith and virtue. Indeed, we are only members of one another if we are faithful to the faithful, Christians to Christians, and the perfect to those who are of full and perfect virtue. This is why the perfect Paul himself speaks of wisdom among the perfect in another Epistle (1 Corinthians 2:6). Therefore, each one is commanded to speak about mystical and secret things, and those things which are full of God's truth, with his neighbor, and to day by day pour forth words like these, and night by night to declare his knowledge (Psalm 19), that is to say, to make clear and shining things known to those who deserve to hear. "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Likewise, he should inform the ambiguous and the unclear, and reveal to all those who are as if night, darkness, or obscurity, of whom it is said: "And darkness under his feet" (Psalm 18:9), and without doubt, this is about God. For Moses himself went into a cloud and darkness on Mount Sinai, where God was (Exodus 19), and it is written about God: "He made darkness his secret place" (Psalm 18:11). Therefore, let each one speak the truth and the mystery with his neighbor, and not give what is

holy to dogs, nor cast pearls before swine (Matthew 7), but let him lead those who have the oil of truth into the bridal chamber of the Bridegroom and the storehouse of the King. Furthermore, what is said, "Let each one speak truth with his neighbor," we should know is taken from the prophet Zechariah (Zechariah 8:16).

4:26

"Be angry, but do not sin." This is taken from the fourth psalm, without doubt, and it seems to contradict what is said elsewhere: "But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips" (Colossians 3:8). However, it is harmful to interpret it simply as an indication of unrestrained anger. In fact, there are two types of anger not only recognized among us but also among philosophers. We may become aroused by natural impulses when provoked by an insult, or we may have a judgment when the impulse has subsided and the anger has been extinguished, yet still desire revenge upon the one who is said to have injured us. Therefore, I believe that what has been said about the former type of anger is now to be applied to us, so that we may be moved to indignation at the sight of something unworthy and disturbance of the mind may arise like a gentle breeze, but we must not be driven by the impetus of the swelling waves of rage. Our Firmian wrote a book about the anger of God in both learned and eloquent language, and I think that whoever reads it will be sufficient and abundant enough to understand anger.

"Let not the sun go down on your anger." If we understand this simply to refer to the physical sun that we see with our eyes, we err, for when we become angry and the sun sets, our anger remains. But we do not sin if, for example, from the first hour until the eleventh hour, we do what our indignation, rage, and anger suggest. In this sense, nothing seems more absurd than to think that someone cannot indulge in such depravity from sunrise to sunset as can be atoned for in a lifetime of tears. Or should anger not have a place during the day, since the night is a time of rest from fury, and with sleep, even if we are angry, we can delay our anger until the next day. Since the true sun, like that which set on the false prophets, according to what is written, "The sun shall go down over the prophets" (Amos 8:9), so it sets also over all sinners, denying them the light of its rising. The Apostle now forbids us to allow our anger to lead us to such things as would cause the sun to set on us and the principal light of our hearts to be covered in darkness. Some think that this should be understood simply as with the fourth psalm, from which it seems to be borrowed: "Be ye angry, and sin not: the things you say in your hearts, be sorry for them upon your beds" (Psal. 4:5), that is, whatever sins we may commit during the day, whether in action, speech, or thought, may they be cleansed with repentance at night, and let anger be brief and not deferred until the next day.

4:27

"Neque locum detis diabolo" translates to "Do not give a place to the devil". The devil is a Greek word which in Latin is called "accuser": in the Hebrew language it is called "Satan", which means "adversary" or "opponent". In the Apostle's words, it is referred to as "Belial" (2 Cor. 6), which means "without a yoke", which rejected servitude to God from his neck: which Aquila translated as "apostate". And it should be noted that wherever "sons of perdition" are written in the old law, such as there: "But the sons of Heli were sons of perdition" (I Reg. 2), in the Hebrew volumes, instead of "perdition", they are called "Belial", which means "devil": although many corruptly read "Beliar" for

"Belial" in the Apostle's words. "Do not give a place to the devil," it says, who seeks a way to burst in like a roaring lion. Just as the Father and the Son stand before the door and knock to enter and dine with those who receive them (Rev. 3): so does the adversary always stand ready to burst in on us, and when we give him a place, he enters. Moreover, before he comes, he usually sends some spears and makes a thought that precedes his coming: if we have received and nurtured this in our hearts, and caused it to grow within us, when he sees his offspring growing within us, he himself will dare to enter. Finally, in the heart of Judas Iscariot, he fired the first arrow, to betray the Savior, which if the wretched man had not taken in, he would never have entered him after dipping his bread in the dish, Satan. And at the same time, pay close attention to this, that the devil did not find a place to enter Judas, whose chest he had already struck, except at the Savior's dinner party (John 13). Because it is then, or at the most, that we give him power when we are not overcome by his humanity, clemency, and gentleness, whom we hate unjustly. This what he now commanded, "do not give a place to the devil," is compared to what is in Ecclesiasticus: "If the spirit of the ruler rises up against you, do not give him a place" (Eccli. 10:4). He, being proud and reckless, wants to rise, wants to ascend: but even if he thinks he has oppressed you and raised himself up, do not give him a place. The power of the devil is in your will, not in his recklessness and boastfulness.

4:28

He who stole, should no longer steal. Rather, he should work with his own hands at what is good, so that he may have something to share with those in need. Those who are engaged in the affairs of this life must buy or sell for necessary sustenance and use, and they seek profit from their dealings. Even those who are free from other temptations, such as fornication, idolatry, adultery, and murder, may find it difficult to resist the temptation of theft. Therefore, the Ephesians are warned not to engage in theft for the sake of profit. Theft refers to any action that harms another person. Instead, each person should work with their own hands to earn a living and be able to give to those in need. The goal is not simply to avoid personal need and indebtedness, but to work toward having something to share with those who are in need. Those who work only to avoid personal need and withhold from others, though they may congratulate themselves, do not follow the Apostle's instructions. The statement "He who stole, should no longer steal" and the rest of the passage may also be understood in a deeper sense, as it is written about false prophets: "They steal each other's words" (Jeremiah 23:30), and in the Gospel of John: "All who came before me were thieves and robbers" (John 10:8), and in Romans: "You who preach against stealing, do you steal?" (Romans 2:21). This means that we should avoid spiritual theft as well. The phrase "Rather, he should work with his own hands at what is good" cannot be properly applied to the necessities of this life if "good" is understood to mean anything that is perishable and pertains to unjust wealth. Although hard work can bring wealth, wealth that is not gained honestly cannot be called good. Therefore, the one who avoids evil and does good, and works in the field of their soul to be filled with spiritual bread, is the one who does good. They can provide food to the hungry and sustain those in need, and give rations to their servants when necessary. But if there is someone who continues to steal, they live by the doctrine of theft and sew pillows for themselves, gathering scraps from the Scriptures so that they can make a patched garment that is torn below, but not above. The garment of the Church, that is, the body of Christ, is woven from above and is not sewn together in any way along its length or breadth, so that not even enemies can tear it apart.

4:29

Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but if there is any good talk for edification, only what is useful for building up, then you should speak, so that it may give grace to those who hear. Good talk is for the purpose of edification, giving grace to the hearers, teaching them to follow virtues and flee vices. Evil talk provokes to sin and leads more readily to ruin. Now, that which we have put, 'for edification,' that is what is said in Greek as τ^ος χρη^σι^μας, which the interpreter for the sake of euphony changed in Latin manuscripts and put 'for edification of faith.' Whenever our speech benefits someone and according to the opportunity of place, time, and person builds up the listeners, good talk has come forth from our mouth. But whenever we speak, not in the appropriate time, or in an improper place, or not in a way suitable for the listeners, as many times evil talk comes out of our mouth, leading to the destruction of those who hear. Let us therefore consider what we say, for we will be called to account for every idle word on the day of judgment (Matth. 12). And even if we do not harm, if we do not edify, the penalty for our evil speech will still be required.

4:30 "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." The grief of the Holy Spirit should be understood in the same way as the anger of God and sleep, and other passions that are likened to human emotions. It is not that the Spirit is distressed, nor does divinity experience any disturbance, but rather through our own words we learn of the emotions of God, that He grieves whenever we sin, and He mourns sinners. Even the Savior, when in a human form, wept for Jerusalem (Luke 19), and all of mankind is mourned by the prophet, who lamented: "O my soul, that the one who turns back has perished" (alternatively translated as "reverting" from the earth). And the one who corrects is not among men, for all are judged by blood (Micah 7). And in Ezekiel, when he enumerates the works of the old and holy city, he says: "In all of these things, you caused me grief." (Ezekiel 20). However, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, so that our spirit and soul may be imprinted with the seal of God and receive that image and likeness that was created in us in the beginning. This seal of the Holy Spirit is marked by God, according to the discourse of the Savior. "For he said, 'This seal, the Father God has placed on Him'" (John 6:27). Therefore, anyone who has been sealed by God because of their faith in Him is also sealed by the Holy Spirit, because God is true. They are marked so that they may retain the seal and reveal it on the day of redemption - pure, unadulterated, and unmutated - and therefore can be counted among those who are redeemed. The Third Book. Sufficiently and abundantly, O Paula and Eustochium, I have discussed concerning the subject of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians in the preface of the first book. And wherever the opportunity has presented itself, I have briefly shown that the blessed Apostle wrote to no church in a mystical way and revealed the secrets of the sacraments, which had been hidden for centuries. Now, therefore, relying on your prayers and the holy Marcella's assistance, it seems just to me to dictate a third, that is, the last, book on the same epistle, in which I explain the etymology of its name in accordance with the meaning I have already given. "Ephesus" in the Latin language means "will" or "my counsel in it," or certainly "my soul in it." The will and counsel and the soul of God are in Him who can say, "For He has given me knowledge of all things" (Eccl. I and I John 5), and when certain hidden things of the wisdom of God have been revealed to Him, the one who speaks will bear witness: "I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do" (Acts 13:22). The prophet Hosea also means such a man, saying: "Who is wise?

Let them realize these things. Who is discerning? Let them understand. The ways of the Lord are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them" (Hosea 14:9). Furthermore, so that you may know that there is a great difference between the glory that the righteous and the wise will attain in the resurrection of the dead, pay attention to this: "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:2-3). The righteous will shine like stars forever, he says, and those who are wise, that is, those who have knowledge of the Scriptures, like the brightness of the sky. Not that a learned man should not also be just, but that he who is just, if he is not educated, may be as far from a wise and just person as the splendor of stars is from the light of the firmament. But if anyone, instructed only by meditation on the law, neglects his life and does not dare to say: "I have understood your commandments, therefore I was directed to all your commandments" (Ps. 118:10), he is like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, and worthless salt to be trampled underfoot (1 Cor. 13, Mark 9, and Luke 14). However, if the choice is given to individuals (setting aside those who have wisdom and justice), I would rather have just simplicity than educated malice. Because in the former, though lesser, there is still glory in being equal to the stars in brightness; in the latter, there are greater punishments depending on the progress of knowledge. "Powerful people suffer torments" (Wis. 6:7); and: "The servant who knew the will of his lord and did not do it, will be beaten with many blows" (Luke 12:47). These things I have said to teach why the soul and plan and will of God are called the Ephesians: they, forsaking the tricks of magical arts, turned the zeal of error to the study of truth. For their salvation, Paul fought with so much sweat that he wrote to the Corinthians: "If, according to human standards, I fought with beasts at Ephesus: what advantage is it to me if the dead do not rise?" (1 Cor. 15:32). What are these beasts? Surely those whom the Psalmist prays about, saying: "Do not deliver the soul of those who confess to you to beasts" (Ps. 73:13). And in another place: "Rebuke the wild beasts of the reeds" (Ps. 67:31). For our adversary, the devil, goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). When he saw that the leader of the Asian city had been taken from him by the teaching of Paul, gathering all the troops of his attendants, he struggled to oppress him and arrogantly wanted to place his nest over him, like an eagle (Isaiah 14, Prov. 4). The Apostle, sensing this and guarding his heart with all diligence (for he knew his cunning), spoke after the victory, but not a bloodless victory: "For we want you to know, brothers, about the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself" (2 Cor. 1:8). This sending of the Epistle through Tychicus is very consistent with the mysteries of the same Epistle (1 Thess. 4). Concerning these, the title of the ninth Psalm is noted, "Concerning the mysteries of the Son. For Tychicus" for "silent" is interpreted as not casting pearls before swine, nor giving what is holy to dogs, and speaking freely to God. "I have hidden your word in my heart, so that I might not sin against you" (Ps. 118:11).

4:31

"Let all bitterness, and anger, and wrath, and clamor, and blasphemy be removed from you, along with all malice." Bitterness is the opposite of sweetness, hence people are commonly called "sweet". This is what Jeremiah refers to when he says: "And your bitterness has gone up over me" (Jer. 15:17). Anger begins with wrath, and indignation that boils in the mind. Anger is (which is a form of bitterness and wrath) that desires revenge once the fury has subsided, and wants to hurt

the one who is thought to have caused harm. Although these things are often attributed to God, as in: "Lord, do not reprove me in your anger, nor chasten me in your wrath" (Ps. 6:1), they are not emotional disturbances as they are with us; in Him all things are moderate and ordered, and the punishment by which sinners are corrected is called by our voices. Whereas if we become angry, we are disturbed and, carried away by fury, we stop being ourselves. Hence, all bitterness, anger, and wrath must be completely removed from us. In regard to the statement in the Gospel, "Whoever is angry with his brother without cause, shall be liable to judgment" (Matt. 5:12), it is superfluous to add, "without cause," because it is not even allowed for us to be angry with cause, as the Apostle clearly says: "Let all bitterness, and anger, and wrath be removed from you" (Eph. 4:31); and in the thirty-sixth psalm, he removes all agitation of the soul in general: "Restrain from anger and abandon wrath". If anger desires revenge, but every revenge seeks to repay the harm caused by the offender and Christians should not return evil for evil, but to overcome evil with good (I Peter III, and Rom. 12:19). And: "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay them in due time, says the Lord" (Deut. 32:35): everyone who is angry, sins: "For the anger of man does not work the justice of God" (James 1:20). After bitterness, rage and anger, it is also right that shouting and blasphemy are prohibited in us. For he who has once been overcome by rage must necessarily burst into shouting and, raging turbulently, be tossed back and forth like a leaf and say: Oh, the injustice of things! Oh, the unjust judgments of God! and other things that those who have lost their judgment of mind through the fury of indignation usually say. Furthermore, blasphemy is not only open and born of anger: but it is also uttered with a calm mind, if someone complains about the government of this world and says: That should not have been, but this should have been so: or if he is established in the Church, believing in God, and he falls in dogmas that it is not allowed to be ignorant of: otherwise, feeling differently about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit than the truth of the matter has; not believing in the resurrection of the dead as the Scriptures teach; or certainly envying the wisdom of others, he recalls him who is of the Catholic faith as feeling badly, and again claims him to be a heretic for the flattery by which he obeys him, saying that sweet is bitter and bitter sweet. Therefore, Scripture must be read by us with all diligence, and we must meditate on the law of the Lord day and night, so that as approved money changers we may know which coin is good and which is false. Furthermore, let us remove bitterness, rage, anger, shouting, and blasphemy from ourselves in such a way that they are taken away with all malice. "Malice" is to be understood as being contrary to virtue, which we call "vice" by another name, or "maliciousness," and "wickedness," which is felt in deceit and cunning.

5:1

But be kind to one another, merciful, forgiving one another, even as God has forgiven you in Christ. Above the bitterness we have spoken of the contrary sweetness, which the Apostle now called by another word, kindness or "gentleness" more than "benignity," commanding that in every bitterness, rage, anger, clamor, blasphemy, and troubled emotion, condemned with a certain sternness of the countenance, we should be gentle and pleasant, and we should invite men to our intimacy, so that no one should fear to approach us. This intimacy is most compared to mercy. Nor do we immediately cease to give to others what we ourselves have, for it follows: "Giving yourselves." Because what is done well for another is more credited to him who gave than to him who received. He who has pity on the poor will himself be satisfied, and he who gives to him lends to God. Or certainly, it is to be understood that in being sweet and merciful, and leaving behind the

disturbances that troubled us, we passed over to gentleness and self-control, and even these things were given and granted to ourselves, while we were being turned from evil to good, and we give ourselves these things that God the Father gave in Christ. For if, setting aside our vices, we follow virtues, and all virtues, wisdom, truth, justice, meekness, and other things are referred to Christ: when we have these virtues, we also acquire them by our own effort and make ourselves have those that God gave us in Christ. But someone else will simply accept this statement: "giving to yourselves," as it is said above: "But be kind to one another." Therefore, let us also say now, "giving to yourselves," in the sense that we are giving to each other, in the same way that God gave us forgiveness for our sins in Christ; let us also forgive those who have sinned against us. And to prove that in the Scriptures forgiving sins is called "giving," one can take the example written in Luke, where one debtor owed five hundred denarii and another owed fifty. Both were forgiven, and when Jesus asked the one who had been forgiven more, he replied that the one who had been forgiven more had received greater grace. It is also said in the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." But God gave us forgiveness in Christ, not in a distant way, but by dwelling in him: for the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father. It does not follow that the one who receives the gift is less than the one who gives it: for the Apostle also says: "If I have forgiven anything, I have done it in the person of Christ, for your sakes, in the sight of God."

Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children. Whoever understands how it is said: 'Be perfect, just as your Heavenly Father is perfect' (Matt. 5:48) , will understand how it is said now: 'Be imitators of God' (1 Cor. 4:16) . And in writing to the Corinthians, he said: 'Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ' (1 Cor. 11:1) . For they could not immediately become imitators of Christ, but it was great for them if they could be imitators of an imitator. But to the Ephesians, as those whom he had already taught great mysteries, he did not say, 'Be imitators of me,' nor 'be imitators of Christ,' but 'be imitators of God.' Not because it is less to imitate Christ than God (for Christ is God), but because it is one thing to imitate according to man and another thing to imitate according to God. For though we once knew Christ according to the flesh, now we no longer know Him that way. The Savior Himself speaks, showing the humility of His incarnation: 'Whatever the Father does, the Son also does.' (John 5:19) Not that the Father made one heaven and one earth, and Christ made other heavens and other earths and elements in likeness to them, but whatever the Father does, the Son also does the same. And in what way we can be like God, he testified above, saying: 'Be imitators of God as dearly beloved children' and 'Giving thanks always for all things to God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Eph. 5:1, 20). I do not think that in other things also, whatever God has done, man can imitate God; but, for example, just as He is merciful and sends rain upon the just and the unjust, let us also pour out our goodness upon all men. When we do this, we will be beloved children, whether of Paul himself or, as I believe, of God.

5:2

And walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a fragrant aroma. He who fights against sin up to the point of shedding blood for the salvation of others, so as to even give up his own life for them, walks in love, imitating Christ, who loved us so much that he endured the cross for the salvation of all. For just as he gave himself up for us, so also will this person, willingly laying down his life for others when he is able, imitate him

who gave himself up to the Father as an offering and sacrifice for a fragrant aroma, and will himself become an offering and sacrifice to God for a fragrant aroma.

5:3-4

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becomes the saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting: but rather giving of thanks. For there was never any philosopher of the Cynic sect who taught that all titillation of the flesh or emission of semen resulting from any kind of rubbing and touch is not to be avoided at all times, and some of the wise men of the world have consented to this shameful and embarrassing heresy. Therefore, the holy Apostle, when writing to the Ephesians, would never have coupled fornication with all uncleanness and conjoined covetousness with uncleanness, the covetousness which we desire to amass, but that which we have mentioned above: "Do not go beyond what is right and fair, so that one brother may not take advantage of another and defraud him." That is to say, the insatiable and unquenchable one who wanders recklessly through all kinds of impurities and lewdness. "As befits," he says, "saints." Therefore, whoever is found outside fornication in any kind of uncleanness and covetousness of pleasures that have pleased him, cannot be called a saint. But if anyone thinks that covetousness is not to be taken in the sense that we have mentioned, let him give reasons why he has exceptionally placed covetousness between fornication, uncleanness, filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting. Furthermore, I consider foolish talking to be not only that of those who speak of shameful things to raise laughter and simulate foolishness to please those they desire, but also that of those who are considered wise in the world, and when discussing physical things, say they have understood the amount of sand on the shore, the drops of the ocean, the expanse of the heavens, and the point of the earth in a liquid manner. There is also foolish talk in the Church. If anyone thinks that heaven is bent in the manner of a vault, as Isaiah teaches, but is deceived by his language, which he does not understand, believing that there is a throne situated in heaven and that God sits upon it, and that angels stand around it in the manner of emperors and judges, who obey his commands and are sent out to perform different tasks (Isa. 6). But because what follows is foolish talk and jesting, it is better to apply such foolishness to silly and pointless fables. The difference between foolish talk and jesting is that foolish talk has nothing wise or worthy of the human heart in it. Jestings, on the other hand, comes from a prudent mind and intentionally seeks to use certain words, whether they be urban, rustic, crude, or witty, which we can call humor in another word, so as to move those who hear it to laughter. However, even these things must be completely rejected by holy men, for crying and mourning more suits them, as we read in the Hebrew Gospel where the Lord is speaking to his disciples: "And do not ever be happy, except when you see your brother in love." It seems so far that nothing has been introduced that is extraneous to the purpose or the coherence of the text. But someone might ask why there is a thanksgiving celebration mentioned here in the end, after fornication, impurity, lust, shamefulness, foolish talk, and jesting have been prohibited. For if he was once allowed to mention any virtue, he could have said rather justice, truth, or love. But how inconsistent is that? Thus, they could have had inconsistency as well, and they would not have had any order with the same right. Perhaps, therefore, thanksgiving is not mentioned in this place according to which we give thanks to God, but according to which we are called gracious or pleasing, and false among men. For foolish talk and jesting are not becoming of Christians. However, his speech should be seasoned with salt so that it may have grace with those

who hear it. And because it is not customary except among the learned Greeks to say εὐχαριστῶν, distinguished from Eucharist, meaning grace and giving thanks, I believe that the Apostle, as a Hebrew from among the Hebrews, was using a common word and wanted to explain the sense of his own meaning with another meaning of the word, especially since in Hebrew, a gracious man and one who gives thanks are said with one word. Thus, I think it is written in Proverbs with this meaning: "A gracious woman enhances the glory of her husband" (Prov. 11:16), which means "gracious." It would seem that we are doing violence to the Scriptures and boldly accepting a woman who gives thanks for being gracious, except that our other editions agree with this opinion. For Aquila, Theodotio, and Symmachus put it this way, γυνὴ χαριτωμένη, that is, "a gracious woman," and not εὐχαριστοῦσα, which pertains to the action of giving thanks.

5:5

Know this, that every fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person, that serves idols, has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Note that although six vices above are prohibited—fornication, impurity, covetousness, lewdness, foolish talk, and coarse joking—only three are listed here: fornication, impurity, and covetousness. Whoever is guilty of them cannot have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. For if those who are foolish talkers and jesters are estranged from the kingdom of God, it would seem cruel to exclude only these three. Rather, we should not excuse the weakness of human fragility, and what we say in jest should also condemn us. "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man" (James 3:2). And yet, we do not give license to foolish talk and coarse joking, nor do we exclude them from the kingdom, but as there are different levels of glory in heaven (John 14, 1 Corinthians 15), so too will the resurrection of the dead vary. Although one may be free from fornication, impurity, and lust, if they are a foolish talker and joker, they will not hold the place they would have possessed if they did not have these vices. One might ask, why did the author not name lewdness along with the three vices? It must be said that lewdness here signifies hidden thoughts, when the senses are inflamed and the soul is ignited with bodily desires, yet still restrained by fear of God and judgment of the mind. Finally, furthermore, above all disgrace, he called three things by the same name, saying: "But let not fornication and every uncleanness or covetousness even be named among you:" and thereafter disgrace was numbered with foolish speech and silliness. And just as foolish speech and silliness do not destroy or permanently exclude one from the kingdom, likewise this disgrace does not either. Since in the previous passage we had read, "That no man overreach or deceive his brother in business:" (1 Thess. 4:6), we had said that covetousness was used in place of adultery. We ask what is now being said, "or covetous, which is serving idols," whether it agrees with that interpretation or with the commonly accepted one. We find in many places in the prophets that idolatry was called fornication. "They committed fornication," it says, "after their idols" (Hos. 4:12). And, "they were seduced by the spirit of fornication." Therefore fornication can be understood as being over idolatry. But if that covetous person is accepted who seeks money in any way, desires to have money by any means necessary, and delights in a full purse, he is an idolater in that he worships the image of that money, and venerates idols chiseled in it. Just as the stomach is the god of the voracious, so money can justly be called the god of the greedy: especially since in another place the apostle calls greed idolatry. In addition, we must see what he meant by saying, "In the kingdom of Christ and God" (1 Cor. 10): whether the kingdom of Christ is different from that of God, or whether it is

the same kingdom of the Father and the Son. And if he had said, "In the kingdom of the Son and the Father," we would come to the Father through the Son, and even though there were differences between persons, there would still be one majesty of those who reign. But when he says, "In the kingdom of Christ and God," we understand both God and Christ themselves, since even when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, the Father will not be everything to everyone, but God will be everything to everyone. And where God is, both Father and Son can be understood. Furthermore, whatever we say about the Father and the Son, let us also think the same about the Holy Spirit.

5:6

"Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the anger of God comes upon the children of disbelief." Words that deceive and undermine are empty and void. But those that edify the listeners are full, abundant, and compact. Therefore, there are many who say that there will be no future punishment for sins, nor external torments, but that the sin itself and the conscience of the offense will be the punishment, as long as the worm in the heart does not die and the fire is kindled in the soul, like a fever that torments not from outside but consumes the body itself, without the use of external tortures. These deceptive and fraudulent persuasions are called empty and vain words, which seem to have some flowery language and flatter sinners. But while they give confidence, they lead them more to eternal punishment. For there is nothing that makes God so angry as when a sinner is proud, unyielding, and does not bend in grief, nor ask for mercy for their offense. "For because of these things the anger of God comes upon the children of disbelief or stubbornness," which can be understood differently from "faith", for example, by the word **πισθη**, meaning more of "incitement" than "trust". Children of disbelief or stubbornness are so called as children of perdition, of fornication, of death, of Gehenna, and other similar terms that can be found in various places in the Scriptures.

5:7

Therefore, do not become sharers with them. A sharer or partner becomes a participant in the mistrust of sons who are found in fornication, uncleanness, and covetousness, for which the wrath of God comes upon the sons of mistrust. And indeed, he is a sharer of their actions, and has communion with their evil deeds; but he is called a partner, who is a sharer with others, and in being a partner is understood to also be a sharer. However, not everyone who participates is immediately considered a partner. Pay close attention to the words "participis" and "comparticipis". For I think that in the Scriptures, "participes" is always taken in a good sense, and "comparticipes" in a bad sense. For example, "Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Psalm 44:8); and in another place, "For we are made partakers of Christ: yet so, if we hold the beginning of his substance firm unto the end" (Hebrews 3:14). Moreover, I do not remember reading "comparticipem" anywhere else, except in this location, and yet it is evident here that it is used not in a good sense, but in the opposite.

5:8

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord." If it is possible for darkness to turn to light, it is not in accordance with the belief of certain heretics that nature is destroyed and incapable of receiving salvation. Let us then ask those who invent these beliefs whether all the

wicked are darkness or not. For some, because of their malice, were called darkness, but having converted to better ways, they are now called light in the Lord. Just as the righteous are the light of the world, so the wicked are consequently called darkness; and while the righteous, having become light, will see the light, the wicked, being darkness, are a people sitting in darkness and seeing nothing. We know the difference and distance between them by their fruits. For everyone who does evil hates the light and does not come to the light, but remains in darkness and is a son of the night and darkness. But whoever does the truth and comes to the light is light, and a son of light and day. The shining or dark, then, is known by the heart's light or darkness. Concerning this, you may ask whether those who are light but are not light in the Lord are considered righteous. "But now you are light in the Lord" is said of the righteous. It is fittingly written to the Ephesians, who had attained the highest level of knowledge, that they are light in the Lord. Neither darkness is turned into light nor light into darkness, but those who have earned the name of virtue or vice for themselves from what they are, if they have converted from one to the other, will be given today's either darkness or light, depending on the things they possess.

"Walk as children of light." If God is light, and darkness is not in Him, the children of God are the children of light. Likewise, if Christ is the true light, his children also, to whom he speaks, saying "little children, yet a little while I am with you" (John 13:33), are the children of true light. From which it is deduced that the same children are of God the Father who are the children of Christ Jesus.

5:9

"For the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true." Let us testify against Marcion (who separates a just God from a good one and thinks that the Creator is evil, believing that Christ, who came, had a son who is good and divine). The fruit of light is not only found in goodness, but also in justice and truth. So where there is goodness, there is also justice; where there is justice, there is consequently truth. Therefore, in Christ's good Father, as they themselves confess, there is truth and goodness. But where there is goodness and truth, there is justice with Him and not with anyone else, as now the Apostle teaches. Let Marcion also understand that Christ Himself is named goodness, truth, and justice. Goodness in that He gives grace to believers in Himself, not according to their works, but according to His mercy. Justice in that He rewards each person according to what they deserve. Furthermore, truth in that He alone knows the reasons for all creatures and things.

5:10

Proving what is pleasing to God. All things must be done with prudence, that we may be cautious and diligent, and do only those things which we know please God, in the manner of the most wise money-changer, who tests the stamped coin not only by sight, but by weight and sound. However, in this passage the context of the discourse seems to be confused and the whole statement to be lacking, therefore the sentence is to be translated according to order: Therefore, do not become partakers with them, proving what is pleasing to God. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light, producing the fruits of light in all that is good, and just, and true.

5:11 "And do not participate in fruitless works of darkness." And he gave the name 'fruit' to the Galatians, but he put it in the flesh, saying: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication" (Galatians 5:19), and so forth. "But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace" (Ibid., 22), and so on. But for the present, he called fruitless works of darkness. Those who do such works are associated with communion. But it is more effective to argue. Among other instructions, the ability to argue with those who sin is the greatest freedom. But this can be done only by those who do not deserve to hear: 'Hypocrite, first remove the beam out of your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye' (Luke 6:42). Therefore, even the prophets who are not polluted by the filth of sins, nor having a cauterized conscience, can accuse others of wrongdoing. From this, it should be noted that one can accuse others only if he himself is not accused.

5:12

For the things which are done secretly by them, it is shameful even to speak of them." It does not seem to me that the context of the discourse is clear, for that which is now said: "For the things which are done secretly by them," depends on what has been said before, and it can be understood to refer to whom it may concern most directly, unless perhaps the construction is more complex and is linked to the sons of distrust, so that it can be understood to mean, "For the things which are done secretly by the sons of distrust, such as fornication, uncleanness, and all covetousness, it is shameful even to speak of them.

5:13

But all things that are cleverly done are made manifest by the light; for everything that is made manifest is light. But undoubtedly all things that are done in secret are done by the sons of distrust; for these things are manifested by the clever light. And light shows what was previously in darkness and later became light in the Lord, so that, being reprov'd, they may be changed for the better and, being changed, may be made manifest in public, and may be made light, because everything that is made manifest is light.

5:14

"Therefore it says: Rise, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you" (or, "Christ will arise for you"). For the works of darkness are made manifest in the clear light, and what was once darkness is now transformed into light. And so it is said to those who are sleeping and dead, because they have done the works of darkness: "Rise, you who sleep, and arise from the dead." Someone may ask, who is the one saying, "Rise, you who sleep, and arise from the dead?" Or, whose testimony did the Apostle use? Indeed, the one who is satisfied with a simple response will say that the Apostle brought these words to light from the writings of the prophets and those things that are called apocrypha (as is clear in other places where he did the same), not because he approved of the apocrypha, but because he used the verses of Aratus, Epimenides, and Menander to prove what he wanted to in that moment. Nevertheless, the writings of Aratus, Epimenides, and Menander are not all holy just because something true that they said is acknowledged. On the other hand, the Apostle figuratively portrays as the personification of the Holy Spirit, and mentions these words in order to exhort to repentance. For my part, based on my own limited resources, and searching through all the ancient editions of scripture and even the

Hebrew volumes themselves, I have never found this writing. Unless we say this: just as the prophets of old used to speak in front of the people saying, "Thus says the Lord," and "For the Lord has spoken," in similar fashion the Apostle, filled with the Holy Spirit, suddenly burst forth with the words that Christ was speaking within him, saying, "Thus says the Lord." Also, it is to be discussed how the same phrase can be said to one who is almost alive, "Awake who sleep," and to one who is dead, "Rise from the dead." Therefore, since the spirit of man, which we always remember as having been written on the good side, and the soul whose infirmities and deaths of sin we read about, what is now said, "Wake up, you who sleep," refers to the spirit; and what follows, "Rise from the dead," refers to the soul. "For the soul that sins, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). However, we never read of the spirit dying. Therefore, true light will rise for him who has awakened from sleep and has been raised from the dead. I recall hearing someone discussing this passage in church, who presented to the people a spectacle never seen before, that it might please them. He said that this was a testimony: "Adam is said to be buried in the place of Calvary, where the Lord was crucified. Calvary is so called, because the head of the first man was buried there. Therefore, at the time when the Lord was crucified, a tomb was hanging over him, and this prophecy was fulfilled saying: 'Awake, Adam, who sleep and rise from the dead.'" And it is not "Christ will appear to you," but "Christ will touch you," because, of course, by the touch of His blood and hanging body, he would be revived and rise again. And then that type was also to be fulfilled in truth, when Elisha raised the dead man who was already dead (2 Kings 13). Whether these things are true or not, I leave it to the reader's judgment. Surely, then, these interpretations pleased the people and were received with applause and jubilation. One thing I know, I am speaking, that this interpretation of this passage does not fit with the context and meaning of the place.

5:15

Therefore take care how you walk carefully: not as fools, but as wise. It is rightly said to the Ephesians, that those who had exercised senses to discern between good and evil, and testing everything, they retain what they have made up their minds as good, walk carefully. But whoever sees how they walk, and how carefully they take each step, lest they trip their own feet on a stone, and says, "Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105), they are certainly wise. For I do not think that anyone, even if they want to walk carefully, cannot fulfill this commandment, since it has been commanded to the wise, not to the foolish. From this, we understand that moral precepts (which many assume to be obvious, from what is said in Psalm 18:9: "The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes") need prudence and careful exposition. Because that clear precept illuminates the eyes of those who have forsaken folly and become devoted to the study of wisdom.

5:16

"Redeem the time, for the days are evil." He who is wise, and therefore walks cautiously, redeems time. Time is redeemed, because the days are evil. When we spend time on good works, we buy it back, and make our own what had been sold by the malice of men. However, no one seeking the necessities of life, and the riches and anxieties, which the Gospels call thorns (Mark 4 and Luke 8), can think and purchase time for himself. But those who redeem time, which is in evil days, change it in a certain manner: we turn bad days into good, and we make them not of the present

time, but of the future. This place may also be explained otherwise: "O Ephesians, to whom the sun of justice Christ has risen, awake from the sleep of this age, walk cautiously and prudently: and, having cast off foolishness, hold onto wisdom, by which you may not be changed with the variety of times, but may make diversity of times one time for yourselves. And because there are many persecutions (indeed, at the beginning of faith the churches were almost daily vexed), hold onto one course, and know that it should be kept, so that you are not changed like foolish people, like the moon; but what you have begun, hold onto firmly, lest when you see the persecutor judge, you also are changed with the judge's will. Again, if another of your doctrine's supporters should come, confess yourselves Christians; but keep what you are at all times. Let us provide an example from the scriptures, so that what we say may become more evident. Joseph had one aim, to please God. This remained unchanged throughout all differences of time: neither his brothers' envy, nor his state of servitude, nor the attractions of youth, nor the promises of his mistress, nor the squalor of his prison, nor afterwards the arrogance of the Egyptian power caused him to waver in his purpose. But he remained always one and, as we have said, adapting himself to changing times he turned bad days into good. This same attitude should apply to Job, who, suffering through various trials, was not changed by wealth, loss, bereavement, injury, reproach of friends, loneliness, nor afterwards by the restoration of all his goods. For he had redeemed his time and made bad days good.

5:17

Therefore do not become foolish, but understand what the will of God is. Because the time is evil, and, as we have said before, must be redeemed, wisdom must be desired before all so that we can understand what the will of God is. For we cannot walk cautiously unless we first understand the will of God. Therefore, in every action, we must first consider what God wants, and having made a judgment, we must do what is proven to please Him.

5:18

"And do not be drunk with wine, in which there is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." As we cannot serve two masters, God and mammon (Matt. 6): similarly, we cannot be filled with the Spirit and with wine. For he who is filled with the Spirit has prudence, gentleness, modesty, and chastity; while he who is filled with wine has foolishness, rage, impudence, and lust. Indeed, I believe that one word sums up all this: luxury. If some understood this, they would never accuse me of rashness and heresy for saying that wine must be avoided by young men who wish to remain virgins, and that oil must not be poured on the fire to inflame the natural passions of the flesh. However, the wine in which there is excess might well be taken as the wine spoken of in the song of Moses: "Their wine is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps" (Deut. 32:33): this is the wine that all those who are intoxicated by the thoughts of this world drink, and they become insane, and vomit, and fall headlong. And according to the story of the Lapiths and Centaurs, they bring destruction upon each other. The opposite of this wine is the wine that the Lord promises to drink with us in his kingdom (Mark 14). We have frequently noted that the word 'spirit,' without any addition, is used in a positive sense; this seems to be worth noting even now.

5:19

Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord. Whoever abstains from the drunkenness of wine, in which there is luxury, and is filled with the spirit for this reason, can receive all things spiritually: psalms, hymns, and canticles. However, we learn fully in the Psalter what the difference is between a psalm, a hymn, and a canticle. Now, we must briefly speak of hymns, which proclaim the strength and majesty of God and always marvel at His benefits or deeds. All the Psalms contain this, to which "Alleluia" is either the prefix or the subject. However, the Psalms properly belong to the ethical realm, so that through the medium of the body, we know what we should do and what we should avoid. But whoever debates about higher things, and has explained the order and harmony of the world and all creatures with subtle reasoning, sings a spiritual canticle. Or indeed (so that we may speak more clearly for the simpler folk) the psalm refers to the body, while the canticle refers to the mind. Therefore, we ought to sing, make melody, and praise the Lord more with our hearts than with our voices. For this is what is said: "Singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." Let the young hear this, let those whose duty it is to sing in the church hear this, that they should sing to God not with their voice but with their heart. They should not grind their throat and mouth with sweet medicine, as they do in the theater, so that theatrical melodies and songs are heard in the church, but with fear, in work, and in knowledge of the Scriptures. Even if someone is, as they say, "discordant," if he has good works, he is a sweet singer before God. Thus let the servant of Christ sing, so that it is not the voice of the singer, but the words that are pleasing which are read, so that the evil spirit that was in Saul (1 Samuel 16) may be cast out of those who possess it similarly, and not be brought into those who have made a stage of the house of God for the people.

5:20

"Always giving thanks for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ God and Father." Similar to what is written in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians: "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thess. 5:16, 17). This commandment can only be kept by the one who, through the providence of God, even knows that five sparrows, sold for two pennies, are governed, and that not one of them falls to the ground without the Father's will (Luke 12). And when he says, "giving thanks always and for everything," we should understand it in two ways: that we give thanks to God not only for what we think is good, but also for what restricts us and goes against our will, and that in the proclamation of God, our joyful minds should burst forth, saying: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised" (Job 1:21). This act of giving thanks is observed by wise men, both generally and specifically. Generally, let us give thanks to God for the sun rising for us, for the day passing, for the night changing into rest, for the darkness being tempered by the brightness of the moon, and for the times being changed and returning by the rising and setting of the stars; for the rains serving us, for the earth giving birth, and for the elements being at our disposal; for the many varieties of animals given to us for transportation, work, food, clothing, for example and for miracles; and finally, for being born, for existing, for governing the administration of this world, like a kind of steward for the most powerful Father, and for understanding that everything in the world, is created for our sake. Specifically, when we rejoice in the benefits that come to us from God. But this is also what the Gentile, Jew, tax collector and the heathen do. The distinctive virtue of Christians is to give thanks to the Creator,

even in the midst of adversity. If a house collapses, if a loving wife and children are taken captive or intercepted, either by poison or by shipwreck, if we lose riches by proscription, if countless illnesses and the ever-awaited debilitation of gout afflict the miserable person's health. Those who appear holier than others tend to give thanks to God for having been saved from danger or misery. But according to the Apostle, this virtue is greatest when, even in the midst of danger and misery, we give thanks to God, and always say: Blessed is God, I know I can endure less than what I deserve, these things are small to me in view of my sins, nothing worthy is given to me. This is the spirit of Christians, lifting their crosses, following the Savior, whom neither blindness nor losses weaken. As Horace said in his lyrical poem:

If the world should break and fall, the ruins will strike him fearless. But he who, as we have said, gives thanks to God and the Father, let him do so through the mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus, because without Him we cannot approach the Father.

5:21

"Being subject to one another in the fear of Christ." Let the bishops hear this, let the presbyters hear it, let every order of teacher hear it: that they should be subject to their subjects and imitate the Apostle who said: "For whereas I was free to all, I made myself the servant of all, that I might gain the more" (1 Cor. 9:19). And in another place: "By charity of the spirit serve one another" (Galat. 5:13). Therefore, by this same charity, he also served all the Churches of the Gentiles. The Savior also took the form of a servant to serve his disciples, and washed their feet (John 13). There is a difference between the leaders of the Gentiles and of the Christians, for those dominate their subjects while we serve them, and we are greater in this if we are the least of all. But what is said "in the fear of Christ" must be taken to mean that this submission is not for the glory of man, but for the fear of Christ, as we fear offending Him. Others will interpret "being subject to one another in the fear of Christ" to mean that this general concept should be divided and shared in the rest of the words, "Wives, be subject to your husbands;" and "Children, obey your parents;" and "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not serving to the eye, as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart fearing God" (Col. III, 20-22), so that not only wives to husbands, children to parents, and servants to masters, but also husbands to wives, fathers to children (not provoking them to anger), and masters to servants (remitting threats and offering what is necessary) should be subject to one another and do so out of the fear of Christ. Thus as he subjected himself to his servants, they too who are considered greater should subject themselves to their inferiors by rendering the duties that are commanded of them. Here the fear can be interpreted as $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\beta\epsilon\alpha$, that is, "reverence," which is closer to charity. For it is not at all fitting for the Ephesians to act out of fear and not out of love for Christ.

5:22-23

Women should be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the Church. This addition, "should be subject," which is in the Latin copies, is not found in Greek manuscripts, since it refers to what was said earlier and is understood as: "Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ," so it is understood that "wives should be subject to their husbands as to the Lord." However, this is better understood in Greek than in Latin. Therefore, just as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wife be subject to her husband. For just as Christ has authority and submission, so the husband and wife are bound by

the same order. But we must see that just as there is a holy union in Christ and in the Church, so let there be a holy bond between man and woman. Now, just as not every congregation of heretics can be called the Church of Christ, nor is Christ their head, so not every marriage which is not joined to her husband according to the precepts of Christ can be rightly called marriage, but rather adultery. Otherwise, the wife is subject to her husband as to her lord, because her conversion is towards him, and he shall have dominion over her (Gen. 3). For even Sarah called Abraham lord (Gen. 18). This voluntary servitude, the more willingly it is taken on, the more it becomes co-equal. In fact, their obedience brings their ruler into greater servitude. Some interpret this passage according to anagoge, saying that the wife should be understood in the body and the husband in the soul. And just as the Church is subject to Christ, so the bodies should be subject to sense and be brought together into one spirit if they are united to the Lord. "For he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17).

He Himself is the Savior of the body. Since the nature of the Church is closer and more related to the substance of Christ, therefore, I consider it named the body of Christ: of which body Christ Jesus is the Savior, that is, the Word, wisdom, and other virtues in which the Son of God is understood. Search diligently in the divine volumes where you can find the term "flesh" used for the Church. For now, the Church is not called flesh but rather the body of Christ. It is evident that whatever is flesh, is consequently also a body, but not everything that is a body is necessarily flesh.

5:24

"But as the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject to their husbands in all things." The Church of Christ is glorious, having no spot or wrinkle or anything like that. Therefore, whoever is a sinner and stained with any kind of filth cannot be called a member of the Church of Christ, nor can they be said to be subject to Christ. However, it is possible that just as the Church, which once had a wrinkle and a spot, was later restored to its youthfulness and purity, so too a sinner can approach the physician (for it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick) and be healed of their wounds, and become a member of the Church which is the body of Christ. Speaking elegantly and cautiously to the Ephesians, it is said, "As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject to their husbands." For if a wife must submit to her husband as the Church submits to Christ, then there will be a sacred union between the husband and the wife, which will never serve the passions of the flesh. But if someone opposes this by citing what is written to the Corinthians, "The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband," let them realize that there is a great difference between the Corinthians and the Ephesians. What is written to the Corinthians is like writing to infants who had dissensions and schisms among them, and there was even sexual immorality among them that was not even practiced among the Gentiles. Therefore, they were allowed to return to their own spouses after prayer, so as not to be tempted by Satan, even though in the following verses, Paul says that he forgives them not according to their will, but by the grace of God. But the Ephesians, among whom he spent three years and opened up all the mysteries of Christ, were taught differently, and each one has the free will to follow either the Corinthians or the Ephesians, and to be saved either by Corinthian servitude or Ephesian liberty. "Woe to those who are pregnant and nursing babies in those days," says the Savior, referring specifically to the works of marriage and family on the day of judgment. Therefore, let us strive to imitate the Ephesians more than the Corinthians, and not

be caught up in buying and selling, marrying and being given in marriage, but let us keep our lamps lit with our loins girded.

5:25-27

"Men, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, to sanctify her by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind, but that she might be holy and without blemish." Although husband and wife are bound to one another by love (such as that wife of Hasdrubal is mentioned, who, with her husband captured, threw herself into the fire of her homeland, and others who refused to survive after their husbands died), yet a wise man will never compare that love to the love of Christ and the Church. Therefore, this love should be understood as holy, with which Isaac loved his wife "Rebecca" (Gen. 24), which means "patience," and brought her from the land of Mesopotamia, which is surrounded on all sides by waves of this world, to the land of promise, to console her for the death of her mother. For he tempered the decay of the Synagogue with the joining of the Church. Those who say these things give an occasion to heretics who believe that all marriages must be rejected, especially when they use this testimony. To such people we must briefly reply that the Apostle forbids passion, impurity, and lust between husband and wife, but not holy matrimony. Otherwise, if he prohibited marriage altogether, what need was there to say, "love your wives," when he could have said, "men, love women or wives?" For "yours" properly refers to marriage. And again, in the following passages: "and husbands must love their wives as their own bodies" and even more clearly: "He who loves his wife loves himself, for no one ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it," because according to the edict of the Old Law and the restoration of the Gospel, husband and wife become one flesh. Therefore, as we have said, the production of children is allowed in marriage. But the pleasures that are obtained from the embraces of harlots are condemned in a wife. Let every man who reads this, and let his wife understand, that after conception they must be devoted more to prayer than to marital relations. And what is naturally prescribed in animals and beasts, that pregnant ones should not mate until parturition, let them know has been left to their own discretion as a means of abstaining from pleasures. But since we spoke according to the figure of speech that men are souls, and wives are bodies, so may the soul love the body (or "flesh"), as Christ loves the Church, that He may offer it to Himself as a sacrifice for His salvation and sanctify it by the word of doctrine, that He may present it to Himself a church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing of age: especially since He knows that it will be saved in resurrection, and will see the salvation of God. Such a man shall have Christ, and when, for the sake of the salvation of his body, he humbles himself with his wife and becomes one flesh, he draws her to the spirit, and being united to the Lord, he ceases to be flesh. Moreover, he beautifully drew an example for the adornment of the Church with respect to women from the blemishes or wrinkles, because he was speaking of marriage. For just as in the bodies of women there are moles, wrinkles or freckles, so it is the effort of women to remove what appears to disfigure them and to present to their husbands the beauty of their bodies. Thus, the souls must be purified from all the filth of sins, so that the wrinkles of the old self may be stretched out by the youth of the new man from day to day.

5:28

"So, too, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies." And in Genesis, speaking through the person of Adam, it is written: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23). And this same sentiment is confirmed by the Lord in the Gospel, where he said: "But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Mark 10:6-8). Since husband and wife are one flesh, husbands should care for their wives as they do for their own bodies. For no one hates his own body or treats it contemptuously; instead, he nourishes and nurtures it, as one would care for the vessel of his soul, so that it does not break and spew its contents forth. Nor should we forget, in a literal sense, that while a woman is in childbirth, she is different from her husband, just as the body is different from the soul. But if she chooses to serve Christ more than the world, she will cease to be a woman and will be called a man, because we all desire to become the perfect man. Now, if we refer these things to the allegorical sense, we will love our own bodies and the sensations they provide, even though they are of a lower order than the soul. It is through these sensations that we may pass into the discipline of good arts and virtues of the mind.

5:29

Whoever loves his wife, loves himself: for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the Church. As far as simple understanding is concerned, we are now commanded to nourish and cherish our spouses with holy love, so that we may provide them with food, clothing, and everything necessary. But it may be objected to us that it is not a true statement of the Apostle's words that "no one ever hated his own flesh," as those suffering from royal disease, consumption, cancer, and other diseases, may prefer death to life and hate their own bodies. And so let us rather refer to a figurative understanding and say that the soul should love, nourish, and cherish that flesh that is going to witness the salvation of God, instructing and feeding it with discipline, nourishing it with heavenly bread, and irrigating it with the blood of Christ, so that when refreshed and shining, it may be able to follow the man freely, without any weakness or burden. Beautifully, in the likeness of Christ who nourishes and cherishes the Church, and says to Jerusalem, "How often I have desired to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing?" thus our souls also nourish our bodies, so that the corruptible may put on incorruption, and being suspended in the air with the lightness of wings, may be more easily lifted up. Let us therefore cherish both our wives and our own bodies, so that wives also may be cherished in their husbands, and bodies may be prepared for our souls. And let there be no difference between the sexes, but as there is neither male nor female among the angels, so too may we, who are destined to be like angels, begin to be what has been promised to us in heaven.

5:30

Since we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For we are members of the body of Christ, and Christ feeds and supports the Church. Therefore, we also nourish and support our own flesh, which no one has ever hated. But we are members of the body of Christ, not according to the nature of eternal divinity, but according to what he deigned to assume as a human being. Although the man himself who was assumed has the nature of our bodies, he does not have our origin. For we are formed from human seed, but he was born of the Holy Spirit. However, it can

also be said another way: Since the body of Christ is the Church, and the Church is gathered from all believers, Paul and the Ephesians are members of the body, that is, the Church of Christ.

5:31

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." We have frequently noted that the apostles and evangelists did not use the same words as contained in the examples of the Old Testament in their own writings. We prove this here as well: for this testimony was thus written in Genesis: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). Now, because of what is there, "for this reason," the apostle used instead, **■ντ■ το■του**, which cannot be expressed in Latin by other words: then, for "his father and his mother," he removed the pronouns and put only "father" and "mother." And what is said in the middle, "and shall cleave to his wife," he omitted entirely, and only joined the statement that followed it to the previous one, and put, "and they shall become one flesh." However, we have now observed all of this in order that even in other places, wherever testimonies are used by the apostles from the prophets and the Old Testament that are not contained in our manuscripts, we do not immediately run to the absurdities and delusions of the apocrypha, but rather know that these writings are indeed in the Old Testament, but not edited by the apostles in the same way and with a more applied sense: nor are they easily found unless studied, where they are written. Therefore, regarding the exhortation of mutual affection between husband and wife, Adam and Eve set the example. Just as the rib was taken from Adam and built into his spouse, so also the wife is again brought back into one flesh with her husband, for he who loves his wife, loves himself. In the same way, let us love our wives. However, this is interpreted allegorically in Christ and in the Church, so that Adam prefigured Christ and Eve prefigured the Church. Thus, the last Adam became a life-giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15). And just as the entire human race is born from Adam and his wife, so also is the whole multitude of believers generated from Christ and the Church. This makes one body of the Church, which is once again placed on the side of Christ, filling the place of the rib, and becoming one body of the man Himself, as the Lord requested in the Gospel: "Father, grant that they may be one, just as you and I are one" (John 17:21). Let us ask Marcion what conclusion can be drawn from this section of the old Testament, which according to him, does not pertain to Christ at all.

5:32

This is a great mystery, but I say it is about Christ and the Church." Not all of the history written about Adam and Eve in Genesis can easily be referred to Christ and the Church, as many believe, but only what is presented in this passage: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." For the first man and prophet, Adam, prophesied about Christ and the Church, that our Lord and Savior would leave His Father, God, and His heavenly mother, Jerusalem, and come down to earth for His body, the Church, and be formed from His own side for her, and that the Word would be made flesh for her. And because not all sacraments are equal, some being greater than others, he says, "This is a great mystery," and in saying, "I say it is about Christ and the Church," he shows his humility. Gregory of Nazianzus, a very eloquent man and highly learned in Scripture, used to say to me about this passage: "See how great this chapter's sacrament is, that when the Apostle interprets it in Christ and in the Church, he does not assert it as the dignity of the testimony demands, but in a manner of

speaking, says, 'I know that this place is full of ineffable sacraments and needs the divine heart of an interpreter.' For my own humble understanding, I think he means it is about Christ and the Church in the meantime, not that anything is greater than Christ and the Church, but that it is difficult to interpret all that is said about Adam and Eve in reference to Christ and the Church.

5:33

Nevertheless, each of you also should love his wife as he loves himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Some people might think that the love which the Apostle Paul orders to be observed between the husband and wife is the same as that which is commanded regarding one's neighbor, since it is written, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18), and now it is being said, "Each one of you should love his wife as he loves himself." Therefore, the same love will exist between neighbors and husbands and wives. But if, according to the interpretation of the Savior, every person is a neighbor to everyone else, then no difference in love will exist between a wife and any other person, which is a very absurd thing to say. For in the case of one's neighbor, the comparison is made so that one might love him as oneself, and desire his salvation. But in the case of a wife, the adverb "as" does not indicate similarity, but approval and confirmation, and bears a certain weight. Just as we say of a man, "He acted like a man," and it is written of the Savior, "We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father" (John 1:14). Not that the Savior had glory for comparison with that of another only son; for He Himself is the Only Son. And if He were also another's only son, He could not be called the Only Son. Hence, He did not need an example of another only son, but like an Only Son (that is, because it became Him), He possessed glory. The same sentiment is expressed in the beginning of the seventy-second Psalm, according to the Greeks, as follows: "How good is God to Israel, to those who are upright in heart," which has been translated by us as: "How good is God to Israel, to those who are pure in heart!" However, according to the Greeks, "■ς," that is "as," seems to signify a similitude rather than the firmness of the words, if you do not listen to it as confirmation, but as if it were an example. Also, it should be noted that a man is commanded to love his wife, but a woman to fear her husband. Love is fitting for a man, but fear for a woman, while a servant is joined not only in fear but also in trembling. Hence, in the following verses, it says: "Servants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling."

"But let the woman fear the man." If fear of punishment in God prevents one from being perfect, how much more imperfect will a woman be who fears not only God, but also her husband? It must therefore be asked whether the woman in question is to be understood purely in a physical sense, and whether her fear concerns her husband. Often, wives are much better than their husbands, and they give orders, manage the household, raise children, and maintain discipline in the family, whereas the husbands indulge in luxuries and visit prostitutes. Whether their husbands should reign over them or fear them, the reader may decide. If, as we said before, the wife is taken allegorically to represent the body and the husband, the soul, it is not incongruous to fear her as a handmaid to the husband, placed in a lower and inferior position. For, as Crispus says, we make more use of the control of the soul than the servitude of the body. Now whoever follows the simple interpretation of the woman and her husband will show that there are two meanings in the word fear. And one of them, about which John says, "He who fears has punishment and he who fears is not perfect" (1 John 4:18), tells us that even the servants have the spirit of servitude in fear, which is demanded by the Lord saying to them, "And if I am a father, where is my glory? And if I am a

lord, where is my fear?" (Malachi 1:6). The other, called εὐλαβεία by philosophers, and which can be called "reverence" by us, although it does not fully sound like it, is also known by the prophets as the fear of the perfect, in the thirty-third psalm, saying, "There is no lack for those who fear Him" (Psalm 33:9). Therefore, in this case, the woman should be commanded to have plain fear, that she may fear, that is, reverence her husband.

6:1

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth." It is ambiguous whether children should obey their parents in the Lord or whether children should obey their parents who are in the Lord. Both should be done so that we obey and do whatever is commanded by our parents who have begotten us in the Lord, such as Paul and the apostles, and also obey our parents who have given birth to us according to the flesh in the Lord, fulfilling whatever is not contrary to the will of God. And at the same time, we will constrain heretics who do not wish to accept the Old Testament as the good God's, whose son is Christ. The Apostle Christ, the son of the good God, uses the Scripture of the Creator and presumes the obedience of the sons of the Old Law. This testimony taken from Exodus is woven thus: "Honor your father and your mother, so that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth, which the Lord your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12): from which he has now removed the last words, which is the fifth commandment of the Decalogue. Hence, one must wonder why he now says, "which is the first commandment:" since the first commandment is "You shall not have other gods beside me". Therefore, some read it as, "which is the first commandment with a promise," as if the other four commandments before it had no promises, and this alone had a promise attached to it, "so that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth which the Lord your God is giving you." But it seems to me that they did not observe subtly, and in the second commandment, there is also a promise associated with it. For it says: "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments" (Exodus 4:5). For observe that these are the words of the promise: 'Doing mercy to thousands of those who love me, and keep my commandments'. Perhaps therefore, since the Decalogue was given to the people who were leaving Egypt, the first law given, each commandment of the Decalogue is to be called the first commandment in comparison with those precepts which were afterwards written in the law. But he who tries to hold the higher explanation, in that which he distinguished as 'which is the first commandment in the promise', will say that the commandment 'Honor your father and your mother' is to be considered separately; and later, the promise put in its place, 'that you may be long-lived upon the land which the Lord your God will give you.' But in this commandment, that is 'You shall not make to yourself an idol, nor any likeness', not separately, but under one text and speech, not so much a promise given as a sentence ending in the praises of God, who does mercy to thousands of those who love Him, and keep His commandments. Again, he who contends that the whole commandments of the Decalogue are the first commandment, he will show that the promise in which it is written, 'that you may be long-lived upon the land which the Lord your God will give you,' not only pertains to those

who obey their parents but also to countless other precepts; and he will be obliged to repeat all the commandments in which this reward and prize are promised, that they may be long-lived upon the land which the Lord their God has given them. From which, a different interpreter must demand, that he teaches that those things which were spoken by him before this commandment are written commandments. But if he cannot prove it, he will remember in vain and in other precepts that this promise is attached. After this, it must be retracted that, for the honor of father and mother, this promise is not Judaic and carnal, that the sons may be long-lived upon the land which the Lord their God has given them. For many are to be believed who have quickly died, obedient to their parents, as well as those who have come to extreme old age and yet have been impious towards their parents. For let the Jews and similar to the Jews answer, if the length of this life is in promises, and to remain long in the body is happiness, what does that mean in the Psalms: "Woe is me, because my sojourn is prolonged! I have dwelt with those who dwell in Cedar" (Ps. 119:7). And this of Solomon in Ecclesiastes: "I praised" "all the dead who have already died, over the living who continue to live to the present day:" "and better than these is someone who has not yet been born and has not seen all the evil work that has been done under the sun" (Eccles. 4:2-3); and a little later: "Even if" "a person lives a hundred years, and survives many, and experiences many days of life, and his soul is filled with good, but he has no burial: I said that an untimely birth is better than he, for he comes in vain and in darkness his name will be covered: and yet he did not see the sun " (Ibid., 6), and the rest. For if the dead are praised over the living (and according to some who believe that before they descend into these bodies, the souls live in heaven, it is better to be two who have not yet been born, and all this life is a trial; and secondly Job: "The death of a man is rest" (Al. "of a man is rest": Job 3:13): and according to the same and Jeremiah, Cursed be the day in which we were born (Jer. 20:14), how is it now promised to those who honor their father and mother that they should be long-lived on earth, which the Lord God will give them? Therefore, the land that the Lord promises and gives to those who have left spiritual Egypt, and with all patience, have passed through the great and terrible desert of this life and have overcome great kings, who were struck down by the Lord, must be sought. And they passed through Judaea, which flows with milk and honey, and, under the leadership of Jesus, when Jericho fell and Hai, which means "the abyss," was devastated, they came to Jerusalem, and a temple was built for them under King Solomon, the peaceful one (Joshua 6:8), and they possessed the land that was prepared for the meek: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:4), which is truly the land of the living, as the Psalmist also says: "I believe that I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps. 26:13). The length of this life and wisdom are in the right hand, holding riches and glory in the left.

6:4

"And fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in discipline and the instruction of the Lord." The sin of children is to not obey their parents, and because parents were capable of commanding something corrupt, he added "in the Lord." However, it is also a sin for parents to provoke their little and nursing children to anger, or at least to command what is heavy to those who are already adolescents and of more mature age. Therefore, just as obedience in children is shown as a reward for their submission, parents are commanded to exercise moderate authority in such a way that they do not think of themselves as masters, but rather as leaders of their children. And he is not content with just this commandment; he adds, "Bring them up in

discipline and instruction of the Lord." We read that disciplinary action is better expressed in the Greek word "νουθεσία", which means "admonition" and "instruction" rather than severity. Let bishops and priests who are educating their children in secular learning and making them read comedies and sing indecent songs, all perhaps at the expense of the Church, read this, and let them be reminded that what a virgin or widow offered as a sacrifice for sin, pouring out all her substance, any poor man could give to his children for New Year's gifts, Saturnalia, or the Minervalia, or spend on his own household expenses, or give to the church, or waste away in shameful love affairs. The priest Eli himself was holy, but because he did not educate his sons in all discipline and correction, he fell on his back and died. He could not extend himself to the previous things, but fell backwards, and fell into an incurable opisthotonus, looking back at Sodom with Lot's wife. And certainly he had rebuked his sons, saying: "Why do you do these things that I hear about you, wicked things from all the people? Do not, my sons: for the reputation that I hear about you is not good." Of such fathers, Isaiah says in a tearful voice, "And the sons of foreigners were born to them." If this was commanded to the lay people of Ephesus and to most people, as it usually is in the life of this business, to educate their children in all discipline and admonition of the Lord, what should be considered of the priests, of whose order he wrote to Timothy, saying, "having children subject to him with all dignity"? And he also emphasizes and repeats the same thing to Titus: "having faithful children, not accused of debauchery, or disobedient." And as if the sins of children were imputed to their parents, inserting the celestial conjunction, he says; "For a bishop must be without crime, as God's steward." Therefore, a bishop is not without sin whose son is not obedient and accused of debauchery.

6:5-8

"Servants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, and with simplicity of heart, as if serving Christ; not just to be seen, as if pleasing everyone, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve with sincerity, as serving the Lord, and not people; knowing that each one, whether slave or free, will receive good from the Lord based on what they have done." The prophet speaks to Jerusalem, "Are you not afraid of mortals, and of the Son of Man?" (Isaiah 51); and Peter, in his epistle, says, "Do not fear their threats, but sanctify the Lord Christ in your hearts" (1 Peter 3:14-15); and the Savior himself sings in agreement, "Do not fear those who can only kill the body, but fear him who can kill both body and soul in hell" (Matthew 10:28). Solomon also testifies to the same, "My son, honor the Lord and you will be strengthened; do not fear anyone else" (Proverbs 7). It seems that the apostle, in ordering servants to obey their earthly masters with fear and trembling, and instructing wives to fear their husbands, is prescribing different things. However, the simple response is that these instructions were not given to perfect servants or those who knew secrets of wisdom, but to those who had the beginnings of faith and needed more humble teachings. Another interpretation is that those who do not have a spirit of servitude should not be subject to this instruction to obey their earthly masters with fear and trembling, just as the same would be true for wives who are told to fear their husbands. Finally, a third interpretation is that fear is used here to mean reverence, as in the case of women, and is further emphasized by the addition of trembling to fear. For respect may be appropriate for a wife, so that, being respectful, she may fear her husband. But where there is trembling, fear will not produce respect, but fear. Therefore, it is necessary for servants to have fear of the Lord after fear, and, to distinguish from the spiritual Lord, the earthly master is now called. Therefore, if a servant

believes in God and has not yet come to the height of knowledge, it is not inappropriate for him to serve an earthly master with fear and trembling, in the simplicity of his heart and to serve him faithfully as Christ. Not serving to please people, as those who seek to please people do, but to turn necessity into will and to make a reward out of servitude: especially since the master of the flesh does not command different things from the Spirit of the Lord. For this is what he says: "Not serving to please people, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God." But even faithfulness should not be forced upon the servant, but should be voluntary and from the heart: thus, serving his master as he would serve Christ, from whom he will receive the faithful reward of his servitude, no less than if he had served him willingly. At the same time, note that he has added different obediences for sons and servants. For to the sons he says, "Obey your parents in the Lord," but to the servants, "Obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling." So just as there is a difference of fear between a servant and a wife, so too obedience differs between sons and servants. And commanding servants to obey their masters, he added, "as if to Christ," and again, "as servants of Christ, doing the will of God," so that the servant may not hear the earthly master if he wants to command something contrary to God's precepts. And just as he had written to the Corinthians at one time (1 Cor. 7) so that divorces would not occur between husbands and wives because of faith in Christ, if one of the two wanted to believe, he established moderate rules for conditions to the Ephesians and Colossians because at the beginning of their faith, many thought that they were to despise their masters. This is so that serving does not seem to provoke masters and to teach masters to disobey them under no circumstances, even if they command sinful and abominable practices.

6:9

"And masters, do the same to them, remitting threats, knowing that both their and your Lord is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him regarding persons." What are these things that the servants were ordered to say to their masters? I believe they are what he had previously said: "with sincerity of heart," "doing the will of God," "from the heart," and "with faithfulness" or kindness towards the servants, because $\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\epsilon$ can mean both. For each will receive from the Lord what he has done, whether he is a slave or free, as it has been said, whether he has been enslaved or has been a master, as is fitting: so that he will not be fearsome or prompt to beatings, knowing that he too has a Lord in heaven, with whom there is no partiality of persons, and who alone judges the wills and prefers the better to the worse according to actions, not people.

6:10

"From now on, be strengthened by the Lord and by the power of His might." In Greek, "virtue" is expressed by $\alpha\rho\epsilon\tau\eta$ and "strength" by $\ ισχυρος$, but in our Scriptures, the two terms are often used interchangeably as "virtus." This is likely because physical strength is often taken to be a sign of mental fortitude, which is also considered a kind of virtue. However, in philosophy, the idea of fortitude is more specifically linked to mental, rather than physical, strength. Therefore, when it is said "Be strengthened by the Lord, and by the power of His might," it is understood to refer to Christ and to all the virtues that can be attributed to Him, and those who believe in Him will be strengthened. This general instruction follows specific injunctions given to husbands and wives, fathers and sons, masters and servants, and is meant to prepare them all for the onslaught of the devil, about which he writes in the following text.

6:11 "Put on all the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the cunning schemes of the devil." From those things which we read below, and from those things that are said in all the Scriptures about the Lord and Savior, it is most clearly demonstrated that by all the armor of God which we are now commanded ("Al." it is commanded) to put on, the Savior is to be understood. So it is the same as saying, Put on all the armor of God; as if to say, Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. For if the girdle is truth, and the breastplate is righteousness: the Savior is also called truth and righteousness, there is no doubt that he is both the girdle and the breastplate. Therefore, according to these, he will be both the preparation of the gospel of peace, and the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and a living and effective and sharper than any two-edged sword. What other armor of God can we imagine, with which he who has to fight against the cunning of the devil must be clothed, except for the virtue that is Christ? For he who, according to all that is understood of him, is clothed with Christ, will be able to resist all the snares of the devil, and, according to what he is girded with truth, will not easily be led into the dogma of falsehood. Moreover, if he has put on the breastplate of righteousness, he will not be pierced by the arrows of iniquity. Nor, when he is shod with the beautiful shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, will he be a man of war or act tumultuously, but like one who has prepared his work for the end, and for this reason has become a man of peace, and he will not be condemned with those who are unprepared. Infidelity, which is an enemy of faith, will have no power where there is a shield of faith. The helmet of salvation, which is the head and principal of the heart and soul in which all senses are located, will not be shaken. Finally, like a courageous and strong warrior, it will overthrow, kill, and slay all sects opposed to the truth, wielding the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, in hand. Therefore, the apostle, wanting to show in various ways the devil's schemes by which he strives to deceive us, named those things by which we do not guard our hearts with all diligence, calling them his methods, which means inventions or cunning schemes. For if we abstain from bodily pleasures, we do not guard ourselves enough against covetousness. But if we also despise covetousness along with pleasure, he creeps in through lust and makes us worship the belly, even overcoming those things that appeared to be strong. And just as wise leaders of armies usually attack weakly fortified places, so that when they break through, they can easily capture the fortified places, the devil seeks to break in through what he sees is open or certainly not firmly closed, and reach the very fortress of the heart and soul. And why do I need to speak of more of his wiles when other species of his cunning can be recognized from these? But the devil, whose name is Greek and means "slanderer," can also be called "downflowing" according to the nature of the Hebrew language, because the tribe of Zabulon has a certain similarity to this word. Namely, that it has gradually flowed from virtue to vice and has fallen from heavenly things to earthly things. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. I do not think that when Paul was writing to the Corinthians he could have said, 'Your struggle is not against flesh and blood,' as he says, 'No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.' (1 Corinthians 10:13) For I believe that there are struggles against the flesh and blood, which are called human temptations when the flesh and blood desire against the spirit and provoke us to commit sin, such as fornication, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, etc. (Galatians 5) Moreover, it is not a human temptation or a struggle against flesh and blood when Satan himself is disguised as

an angel of light and tries to deceive us, or does something similar, in every power, sign, and lying wonder, in every wicked deception. For when the enemy deceives someone to receive him, and speaks through him saying, 'Thus says the Lord,' he is not deceived by the flesh and blood, or as a human temptation, but as a ruler of darkness and spiritual wickedness. (Ephesians 4) Therefore, let us not give a foothold to the devil, but even if the spirit of the one who has power ascends upon us, as it is written, we do not give him a place. Someone may say that this is what Ecclesiastes means: 'For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers and authorities.' (Ecclesiastes 10:4) and the rest that follow, so that we learn that even what we believe to be vices arising from the flesh and blood are not necessarily such, but are suggested by certain spiritual wickednesses. For there are some demons who serve in love and amorous songs, as the Prophet also recalls saying, 'They have been seduced by a spirit of prostitution.' (Hosea 4:22) For even some of those who are truly called malefactors by the people confess that there are certain barbaric names for them, and that they are invoked to stand by various metals or foods, and to take the souls of unhappy people. Others, indeed, commit irritations, and rages, and wage wars, while others lead in enmities and stir up hatred between people. Therefore, they say, the Apostle wants to teach us that these types of vices are not produced from the nature of the body, and from the material of flesh and blood, but by the instinct of demons; therefore, he says, "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers," and so on. Therefore, we have now brought forth examples of those who are said to serve in magical unlucky arts and do these things, so that we may refute the opinion of those who believe that all vices are of the flesh and blood, and that demons have no power to incite us to sin. We think that Jacob had such a struggle, namely that he did not contend against the flesh and blood (Gen. 31) when he remained alone, and wrestled with a man, helping and strengthening him against another, who was fighting with excessive sweat. And at the same time, be careful not to be laughable for those who believe in the rite of wrestlers, luted throughout the whole night like Jacob. For what is significant if, as they say, he fought and conquered or was defeated? But according to the reasonable and appropriate struggle of the patriarch, it must be believed that they had such a struggle who could say: "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood." It is not necessary to investigate now the sacrament of that place, since, if I live, I will talk about it more fully in its proper place. But we ask ("Consult Hebrew Questions in Genesis") where Paul read this in the Old Testament or by what authority, which are not written, he published them publicly. And we infer from those things which are written about battles and individual struggles, for example, David against Goliath, and the children of Israel against aliens, and other peoples in the Law, and Jesus, and the Book of Judges, and Kings, and Chronicles, that the Apostle understood it more deeply (1 Sam. 17); and he meant the spiritual war of the flesh, in which they were fighting and whether they were victorious or defeated, and that the satraps of each place were evidence of the supernatural powers ("Al." judgments); but the kings of the individual nations were their representations, images of those who are now called rulers of the world and of darkness, and the wicked men demonstrated spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. And it seems to us that Paul is saying these things to others in different words: "O Ephesians, what you read about battles of Israel against nations, these seem to sound of flesh and blood, for example, of Egyptians, Idumaeans, Ammonites, Moabites, and other nations. But if you want to know the truth, know that all these things happened in a figurative sense to them" (1 Cor. 10). But these things have been written for us, upon whom the ends of the ages have come, so that from them we might understand that we do not wrestle against flesh and

blood, but against certain spiritual and invisible powers, against the rulers of that darkness in this world, and against spiritual wickedness that resides in the heavenly realm; not that demons dwell in the heavens, but because air above us has received this name. Hence, the birds that fly through the air are called the "winged creatures of the heavens." In another place, the Apostle says about demons wandering in this air, "In which you once walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, who now operates in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2). The opinion of all scholars is that this air, which divides the heaven and earth, and is called "empty," is full of opposing fortitudes. After this, it must be recognized from whom these principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in heavenly places have received power to exist. Some say that the apostate devil has assigned various duties to his satellites and is not the author of these distributions. However, to this, the attentive reader may oppose the statement, "For there is no power except from God" (Romans 13:1). If this is said about men, with how much more reason it may be stated about those of a more subtle and superior nature? Nor is one who holds this view immediately liable to the charge of blasphemy, since each person has received different ministries according to his will. For just as in cities, we see those who have committed shameful acts either feeding animals, cutting marble, cleaning sewerage, managing gladiators, or being designated to pour wine and blood; so, demons have from their own free will chosen to be the governors of darkness through devising schemes, deceits, crimes, perjury, and other vices, since they chose not to be the princes of light. Therefore, rulers of the world and darkness, when they have struggled against someone and have uprooted him, causing him to fall, immediately join him to their own world and darkness, over which they hold sway. For this reason, we must strive harder since we have heard: "I have chosen you out of the world. You are not of the world, for if you were of the world, the world would love what is its own" (John 15:19). Let us not return to the world, nor submit to it, but let the world be crucified for us, and let Jesus, the ruler of light, bind us to His own world, and let Him make us subjects of the Father, having been freed from the power of spiritual wickedness and from the heaven of that which is passing away, which cannot be called the seat of God. Truly, it is impious that spiritual wickedness should be believed to hold a place in heaven, when God says: "Heaven is my throne" (Isaiah 66:1). Therefore, he who understands the great things that happen to us, both those in the present and those absent, in this world: while we cannot see them, either because of the body of our frail and earthly nature with which the soul is veiled, or because the subtler nature is not revealed to carnal eyes: here he will see what darkness is, which the Apostle now calls by name, namely that either this whole earthly life is called darkness, since "the light shines in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1:5), or the light and sense of the soul, the earthly body, that body of death, and of humiliation, which overcasts, covers, and blinds it. But we know that, except in this present passage, neither in the Old or New Testament have we ever read of "world rulers" (κοσμοκράτορας), nor has this name been used elsewhere. Paul the Apostle invented this name because he needed to adapt to new and invisible things by using new names while discussing the Ephesians. Moreover, because it may seem ambiguous that he says "in heavenly places," it must be said that this may be understood as being applicable to all things, so that the meaning is: our struggle is not against powers in heavenly places, nor against the rulers of these dark places in heavenly places, but against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places; and not only against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, especially if we understand (as has been explained above) how the heavenly things are named for the birds of heaven, and that it is

customary to say that rain comes from heaven, not because the rain comes down from heaven. For philosophers say that clouds, from which the rains are poured forth, are no more than two thousand paces from the earth, and, according to this sense, the cascades of heaven were also said to be opened in the deluge. Nevertheless, the worse someone is, the closer they will be to the earth and to richer substances. For both the earth and the air that surrounds us have their own richness. Some say that even souls that have been freed from their bodies, if they have been refined by discipline and virtues in this present life, will not dwell in richer places but will be closer to God, who is incorporeal. But if there are those of whom it can be said, 'O sons of men, how long will you be heavy of heart?' (Psalm 4:2) or 'have a fat heart,' they will be drawn down by their weight and weighed down by their plumpness. Furthermore, the question arises of whether there is a richer place on this earth and in this air which is known as Hell, where those called the 'infernals' reside. However, it is not within the scope of this present time to discuss who these people are, what kind of relation or difference they have, and who in the heavenly realm are referred to as spiritual evil. It remains for us to learn more fully from the Apostle in two passages about what the struggle of flesh and blood and the rulers of these dark powers and spiritual evil in the heavens are. For when he wishes to indicate human temptations, that is, the struggle of flesh and blood, he speaks of them with contempt, saying, 'Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?' As it is written (Psalm 43:22), 'For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' But in all these things we overcome, because of him who has loved us (Romans 8:35, 37). However, when he wishes to teach us about the opposing powers and rulers of the darkness and spiritual evil in the heavens, he begins with a different subject and says, 'For I am certain that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor powers, neither height nor depth, nor any other creature can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

6:13

Therefore take up all the weapons of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day: and having done all things, to stand. Either the present time shows the evil day, of which it was said above: 'Redeeming the time, because the days are evil,' due to the distress and labors of this life, because we do not reach the palm without sweat and struggle, or certainly the consummation and judgment, when the devil, the enemy and avenger, will desire to retain us in his own part, from which he who understands over the needy and poor will be set free: 'For in the evil day the Lord will deliver him' (Ps. 40:1). This is the day, about which it is written in another place: 'Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger' (Isa. 13:9); and in another: 'For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty' (Isa. 2:12); and again: 'Woe unto them that desire the day of the Lord: to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?' (Amos 5:18-20). For how is this not a day of evil, which is shrouded in darkness and gloom? Concerning this day, Joel the prophet also relates saying: 'Blow the trumpet in Zion, proclaim a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. [...] For the day of the Lord is coming; it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day

of clouds and blackness' (Joel 2:15-16, 2:1-2). And Zephaniah speaks of the same day, saying: 'The great day of the Lord is near, near and coming quickly' (Zeph. 1:14). The voice of the Lord's day is bitter, and harsh, and strong: a day of wrath, that day, a day of tribulation and distress "and of necessity" (Soph. I, 14 et seqq.), and the rest. After which it adds: "And I will afflict men, and they shall walk like blind men: because they have sinned against the Lord" (Apoc. 12). Therefore, in order to be able to resist the devil on that day, for he is the accuser of our brethren, let him take up all the arms of God (for this is what πανοπλία really means, not simply "arms" as it is translated into Latin), and, armed with all weapons and gear, as is explained in the following passages, let him then know that he can stand if he has accomplished everything, so that he may firmly plant his feet, full of all virtues, and not be moved from his position, and may be among those of whom the Lord says: "There are some standing here" (Matt. 16:28), and in another place: "Indeed you stand by faith" (2 Cor. 1:22), and the Psalmist says: "He set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps" (Ps. 39:5). A third interpretation is sometimes added by some, saying that not every battle against the devil ends with death, but when we leave this world, then the struggle will be even stronger and clearer, opposing the present with the future: and so they explain what we have just set forth, neither present nor future, but future, meaning that these struggles must be undertaken after this life is over. Also, this statement: "Therefore, having done everything, stand firm", is referring to the same meaning: as if no one can do everything in this present life, but only partially, as he may see a part and prophesy a part, and then he will be able to stand firmly when he has accomplished everything. Another simpler interpretation says that Paul the Apostle, in this epistle, is encouraging and advising the Ephesians to do everything they can to stand firm in the Gospel, and not to fall in persecution, for he foresaw by the prophetic spirit that future temptations and persecutions would come upon them. Furthermore, we believe that the "evil day" mentioned here is properly taken from the forty-eighth Psalm.

6:14 Be therefore ready, having your loins girt with truth." Concerning the members of the soul mentioned in scripture, which are all referred to as members of the body, there is no doubt. I believe that one such member is now mentioned, the loins, which we are commanded to gird with truth. It is also written in the Gospel of Luke: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning" (Luke 12:35). Therefore, the loins are always mentioned in regards to generation and seed, according to: "I will set fruit of your loins upon your throne" (Psalm 132:11). And elsewhere: "For he was still in the loins of his father Abraham, when Melchisedech met him" (Hebrews 7:10). It seems to us that those who do not render what is due to their wife or serve their lust, but instead imitate the innate God and do not participate in matters of generation, have girded their loins with truth. I believe that this is also signified in the case of John the Baptist, who had a leather girdle around his loins (Matthew 3), and was not one of the unclean who, for reasons of seminal flux, are banished outside the camp and cannot dwell with the ark of the Lord (Leviticus 13). Nor is he like those written about in Numbers: "Let his garments be torn" (Numbers 8). But whoever is girded with truth in Christ, raises these garments up high, and draws them upwards. He covers, tightens, and includes the filthiness of naked sides with the spiritual belt. He is prepared for battle, and has shining works, which are referred to as "burning lights. And having put on the breastplate of righteousness. Just as it is difficult to be injured in those places that hold life, where one, wearing armor made of tightly joined links and iron circles, is protected by the breastplate of virtue, so too one who is surrounded by a diverse garment of righteousness will not accept an arrow in his liver like a deer nor will he fall into desires and frenzies, but will have a pure heart, with God as the

maker of this breastplate, who crafts all the weapons for each of the saints and does not allow him to be struck by a flying dart or burned by flaming arrows.

6:15

"And having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Note carefully that he has called the soul's virtue "feet" by which we enter into Him who says, "I am the way" (John 14:6), and which we must shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. The same type of footwear preceded those in Exodus who were to partake of the Passover and were prepared for the journey. For it is written, "And thus shall you eat it: your loins girt, your shoes on your feet, and your staves in your hand, and you shall eat in haste; for it is the Phase (that is, the Passage) of the Lord" (Exodus 12:11). Truly, it is a sign of preparation to eat in haste with one's shoes on. Thus strengthened with Passover food, they could cross the vast and dreadful wilderness. Therefore, whoever still walks should put on shoes, but whoever has crossed the Jordan and entered the promised land should remove their shoes. For He says, "Put off the shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). If someone is not Joshua son of Nun or an apostle, they should put on shoes for the preparation of the gospel of peace. But if someone is an apostle, and can be numbered among the twelve, they should by no means take off their shoes on the way or cover their heels to avoid scorpions and snakes; but having already been completed and perfected, they should stand firm in the holy land, live in Christ, and follow the Lamb wherever He goes. It is asked whether he has mentioned the gospel of peace to distinguish it from another gospel. Or is it indeed characteristic of this gospel to be called the gospel of peace? Therefore, whoever has peace has shod themselves with the gospel of Christ, and once they have put on their shoes, are prepared. And being prepared, they should not consider themselves to be perfect, but rather prepare themselves to progress and, while they progress, come to the end.

6:16

Taking a shield of faith above all else, with which you may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. As if to say: In every work, carry the shield of faith so that you may be protected and fortified to receive the arrows that come your way and artfully deflect them in battle. This is the faith upon which Abraham, after many works and virtues, could barely merit, as Scripture says of him: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness" (Gen. 15:8). Clearly, the wicked throw arrows that they want to penetrate our hearts through wicked thoughts. Of these, one was thrown into the heart of Judas so that he would betray the Savior. So, the enemy cannot even begin to wound the soul if we hold the shield of faith, in which not only the incoming weapons are pierced but also the fire of the weapons themselves is extinguished, about which even the prophet laments saying: "All are adulterous, like an oven heated by the baker" (Hos. 7:4). Whoever firmly holds this shield of faith with a strong hand and trusts in the Lord, knowing that he is safe from the incoming arrows, will speak fearlessly: "I trust in the Lord. How do you say to my soul: Move to the mountain like a sparrow? For behold, sinners have bent their bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, to shoot the upright in heart in darkness" (Ps. 11: 1-2). Therefore, if I trust in the Lord, what counsel do you give me so that I may not stand against the attacks of the enemies, and the arrows that they have prepared in their quivers, wishing to strike not only me but also all those who are upright in heart? Behold, I stand on a rock and do not migrate to dark mountains: and all the enemy's weapons, repulsed, turn against their owners.

6:17

And receive the helmet of salvation. Because of this helmet of salvation, all the senses in our head remain intact, especially the eyes, of which Solomon says in Ecclesiastes: "The eyes of a wise man are in his head" (Eccles. 2:14). For he knew that it was the head of man, and where those eyes were located in the head of man. Therefore, if the head of man is Christ, and the eyes of the wise are in his head, it follows that all our senses, mind, thought, speech, and counsel (if indeed we have been wise) are in Christ. But in Christ, the Word, the Light, Righteousness, Truth, and all virtues.

6:18-19

"And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Through all prayer and supplication, praying at all times in the Spirit: and in the same watching with all instance and supplication for all saints, and for me." The word of God flows from the Holy Spirit, but the opposite comes from the earth and takes its beginning from there. "For whoever is of the earth, speaks of the earth. But he who comes from heaven is above all, and what he has seen and heard of this he bears witness" (John 3:31). Now the word of God, a sword of the spirit, of which Paul says: "The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" (Hebrews 4). For the living word of God is effective and sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow. It is the spirit that cuts and divides, greatly profiting through the prayer and supplication of those who pray to the Lord at all times in the Spirit, according to this: "I will pray in the spirit, I will pray with the mind also" (I Corinthians 14:15). And with this progress, the Apostle becomes enriched in God's word and doctrine through vigilance and persistent prayer. And let all this abundance contribute to the salvation of others so that those who pray for it may also benefit. At the same time, the Apostle's admirable humility in requesting the Ephesians to make supplications for him. For he says, "At all times and in every prayer and supplication, pray for all the saints and for me," making mention of the saints separately from himself.

6:20

That the word may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with confidence the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, so that I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. This is what he says now: "in the opening of my mouth", and elsewhere: "my mouth is open to you, O Corinthians" (2 Cor. 6:11); and: "Opening his mouth, he taught his disciples, saying" (Matt. 5:2); and: "I opened my mouth and panted" (Psal. 118:13); and: "I will open my mouth in parables" (Psal. 77:2), and similar passages, to be understood as if he had said: Let the treasures be opened and the hidden mysteries of the Gospel be revealed, so that the Holy Spirit may enter to offer what is hidden. The following words show that this is the interpretation: "To make known with confidence the mystery of the Gospel." Not in parables or proverbs, but just as the prophets and the Lord himself, who was still speaking in the body, said: "The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will announce to you boldly about the Father" (John 16:25). He alone who does not have a reproachful heart can obtain this confident speech: "For if our heart does not reproach us, we have confidence with God and whatever we ask, we receive from Him" (1 John 3). So it is rare for someone to make known the mystery of the Gospel with confidence because it is rare for someone to have confidence in God. "For who will boast that he has a pure heart or who will stand, saying he is free from sins" (Prov. 20:9). After this, what he

says: "For which I am an ambassador in chains", that I may make known the mystery of the Gospel, must be briefly explained. Surely, whoever understands simply will say that he sent these writings from Rome because of the testimony of Christ, who was in prison and in chains. Another, however, will maintain that because of the humility of the body and this chain that surrounds us, and as we do not yet know as we ought to know, we see in a mirror, he said these things. And then, when he is truly free from chains and has come out of prison, he can open the mysteries of the Gospel with confidence, unless he is also considered to be without chains in chains who has a conversation in heaven and about whom it can be said: "But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, indeed, if the Spirit of God abides in you" (Rom. 8:9).

6:21-22

In order that you also may know what is going on with me, what I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will make everything known to you. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know what is going on with us and that he may comfort your hearts. Take this in two ways: either Tychicus was sent to Ephesus to inform them that the chains of the apostle Paul were known in every praetorian guard, and his imprisonment was advancing the gospel, at the time he also wrote to the Colossians saying: "All that concerns me will be made known to you by Tychicus, the beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord whom I send to you for this very purpose, that you may know what is going on with us, and that he may comfort your hearts together with Onesimus, the beloved and faithful brother who is one of you, who will make known to you all that is happening here." For it was a great comfort to hear of Paul triumphing over his chains and imprisonments from Rome, the capital city, and in the stronghold of the Roman empire. Or certainly Tychicus was sent for the purpose of announcing to them the life and conduct of Paul, which they were unaware of, and as it were, giving an example of living to those who were learning about the actions and virtues of the Apostle and wishing to imitate him. And the consolation could not be small for those who desired to imitate what they had learned of the Apostle.

6:23

Peace to brothers, and charity with faith, from God the Father and Lord Jesus Christ. If there are any other gifts which are given by God the Father, and Lord Jesus Christ, among these peace occupies no small place, which surpasses every sense, and guards the hearts and intellects of the saints, a certain calmness and tranquility of the resting soul, and fleeing all turmoil and confusion. Similar to this is charity with faith, which God the Father and the Son also give, so that we may love God with all our heart, and our neighbors as ourselves, and pray for our enemies. This peace and charity, which the Apostle wishes for believers, are only possessed by those who are worthy to be called brothers. For "peace" is indeed "to brothers, and charity with faith and peace." Therefore, the Father provides both charity and faith as the Son does; and heresy is silenced, which does not want to acknowledge that the Son can do what the Father can do.

6:24

"Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption. Amen." Some have interpreted this to mean that those who love our Lord Jesus Christ are to abstain from all corrupt behavior, particularly sexual behavior. Thus, the custom and common speech refer to those who are pure

and virginal, and those who are ignorant of sexual behavior with women. Those who have tasted this pleasure are considered corrupt. They take as proof the passage: "If any man violates the temple of God, him shall God destroy" (1 Cor. 3:17). However, it is unclear whether they can explain what is written: "Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that" (Ibid. 7:7). Let us therefore see whether it is better to understand every sin as corruption of the soul, so that those who are free from sin are called incorruptible; they, then, who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption, are not bound by the chains of sin, and with them is the grace of God. I also think that there may be a distinction between those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, but are not currently in a state of incorruption, and those who love Him in incorruption. For those who love the Lord are willing to endure exile, torture, poverty, and all kinds of contumelious treatment, and yet are still subject to the passions of the flesh. However, the Apostle does not imprecate upon them the grace of the Lord, as it is with all who love Him in incorruption.

Commentary on Ezekiel

Commentary on the Prophet Ezekiel

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Having finished in eighteen volumes my Explanations on Isaiah, I desired to pass on to Ezekiel, as I often promised you, O Virgin of Christ, Eustochium, and to lay the finishing touch, so to speak, on the prophetical work. But suddenly news reached me of the death of Pammachius and Marcella, the siege of the city of Rome, and the death of many brothers and sisters. I was so stunned and bewildered that for days and nights I could think of nothing else but the salvation of all. I thought I was in captivity with the saints, and I could not unlock my lips until I had learned more definite news. Between hope and despair I am tossed on the billows, and the miseries of others torture me. But when truly the most brilliant light of all the earth was extinguished, indeed the head of the Roman Empire was severed: and, to tell the truth, the whole world perished in one City, I became

silent and humbled, and I was silent from the good, and my grief was renewed: my heart grew hot within me, and in my meditation a fire was kindled (Psalm. XXXVIII, 4): nor did I think that sentence should be neglected: Music in mourning is an intrusive narrative (Sirach. XXII, 6). But because you persistently demand it, and a scar gradually covers a great wound: and Scorpius is pressed between Enceladus and Porphyryon and crushed by the Trinacrian soil, and the Hydra with many heads has at last ceased to hiss against us: and a time has been given in which we ought not to respond to the snares of heretics, but rather devote ourselves to the exposition of the Scriptures, I will undertake the prophet Ezekiel, whose difficulty is confirmed by the tradition of the Hebrews. But unless someone among them has reached the age of thirty for the priestly ministry, that is, has completed the thirtieth year, they are not permitted to read the beginnings of Genesis, the Song of Songs, or the beginning and end of this book, in order to approach the perfect knowledge and mystical understanding that the full time of human nature requires. If, by the mercy of the Lord, I bring this work to a conclusion, I will move on to Jeremiah, who, in his Lamentations, laments the four parts of the world under the figure of Jerusalem, using a quadruple alphabet.

1:1

(Chapter 1, Verse 1) And it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month. The thirtieth year is not, as many think, the age of the prophet, nor the Year of Jubilee, which is the year of remission; but from the twelfth year of King Josiah of Judah, when the book of Deuteronomy was found in the temple of God, until the fifth year of the captivity of Joachin, also known as Jeconiah, when he was led with his mother to Babylon, along with Daniel and the three young men, and Ezekiel (who was among the first captives of the tribe of Judah) when the wrath of God was poured out on Jerusalem (2 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 34; 2 Kings 24). But according to the mystical interpretation, the Lord and Savior is prefigured, who came to baptism at the age of thirty (Luke 3), which is the age of perfection in man. Therefore, in the book of Numbers, according to the Hebrews and not as contained in the Septuagint, the priests begin to minister in the tabernacle at the age of thirty and not at the age of twenty-five (Numbers 4). In this sign, Joseph also preceded when he distributed grain to the hungry people in Egypt (Genesis 41), and John the Baptist came to the banks of the Jordan and preached the baptism of repentance (Luke 3). And what is written, in the fourth, the sentence is pending, it is understood in the month. For immediately it follows, in the fifth month. And to make it more clear, they added Seventy before.

1:2

(Verse 2) While I was among the captives by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God in the fifth month: it was the fifth year of the exile of King Joachin. As the captive people sat by the rivers of Babylon, David prophesied in the spirit: By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept (Psalm 137). Now, Chebar, either it is the name of the river, or certainly, according to its interpretation, which is translated as "grave," it signifies the Tigris and Euphrates, as well as all the great and weighty rivers that are said to be in the land of the Chaldeans. And understand that the heavens are open not by the division of the firmament, but by the faith of the believer, because the celestial mysteries are revealed to them. Hence, in the baptism of the Savior, when the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove, we read of the heavens being opened (Matthew 3), and through their opening, the visions of God are revealed. Not just one vision, but multiple visions, as the Lord says through the Prophet: 'I will

multiply visions and as a likeness, I have been made in the hands of the prophets' (Hosea 12:10). These are the visions that the entire prophecy of Ezekiel weaves together. According to the Hebrews and other interpreters, the migration is called Joachin and not captivity, as the LXX translated. For he was not captured when the city was conquered, but by his own will, he was taken to Babylon. Therefore, let the first migration be called Joachin, that is, Jechoniah: but let the second or final captivity be called Zedekiah.

1:3 (Verse 3) The word of the Lord came to Ezekiel, son of Buzi, the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans, by the river Chebar. And to Daniel and Ezekiel, who were in Babylon by the rivers, the mysteries of things to come are revealed upon the waters, indeed in the purest waters, so that the power of baptism may be shown. Otherwise, even the apostle Paul, when he was baptized by Ananias in the Lord, having his eyes covered with scales, was freed from blindness (Acts 9). And in Genesis, the first creatures that lived came forth from the waters. It should also be understood that in the thirtieth year of his age the Lord came to baptism: in the fourth month, which is called January among us, and is at the beginning of the year, except for the month of Nisan, the month of the new moon, in which the Passover is celebrated. Among Oriental peoples, after the gathering of crops and the pressing of grapes, when tithes were brought to the temple, October was the first month, and January the fourth. But he adds the fifth day of the month, to signify baptism, in which the heavens were opened to Christ, and the day of Epiphany is venerable until now, not as some suppose, the birthday in the flesh, for he was hidden at that time and did not appear. This is suitable for this time, when it was said: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17). Furthermore, Buzi is translated into our language, despised and rejected: Ezekiel, strengthened by God. What is thus joined to the Lord, that we may say the Creator of the world, who is the Father of the Savior, is despised and rejected by all heretics, who do not accept the old Testament. It is not surprising that the Lord is the strength of God, since He is the power and wisdom of God Himself. And the hand of the Lord came upon him there. LXX: And the hand of the Lord came upon me. In order to see the visions of God and understand them, we need the hand and strength of God upon us (1 Corinthians 1). With that hand and arm, the people of Israel were led out of Egypt; even the Magi understood a part of that power, saying: This is the finger of God (Exodus 8). And the Savior in the Gospel said: But if I cast out demons by the finger of God (Matthew 12:28). For it is written in another Gospel: If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God (Luke 11:20).

1:4

(Verse 4) And I saw, and behold, a whirlwind wind was coming from the north, and a great cloud, and a rolling fire, and brightness around it. And within it was something like the appearance of electric sparks, that is, from within the fire. LXX: And I saw, and behold, a spirit was coming from the north, carrying (or lifting) a great cloud within it, and a shining fire, and brightness around it. And within it was a vision like electric sparks within fire, and brightness within it. In the consolation of the migrating people, and in the revelation of God's sentence, the prophet sees the greatest vision. By its interpretation, all the synagogues of the Jews are rendered speechless, beyond those who say that it is beyond human, and they attempt something about this and about the building of the temple, which is written at the end of this prophecy. However, we, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things, according to the measure of our small intellect, can more suspect than explain. We will believe kind and faithful readers, seeking forgiveness, that they may

favor our audacity, or rather the measure of our faith, rather than be angry. First of all, it must be known that the term spiritus, which we have interpreted as 'wind' in accordance with Aquila, and as 'blast' and 'stormy wind' in accordance with Symmachus and Theodotion, can be understood by others as coming from a favorable direction and by others as coming from an unfavorable direction. The Hebrew word Rua, depending on the quality of the places, can be understood as 'spirit,' 'soul,' or 'wind.' 'Spirit' as in: 'Send forth your spirit and they shall be created' (Ps. 103, 30). Soul: His spirit will go forth and return to its own land (Ps. 144:4). Wind: You will break the ships of Tarshish with a violent wind (Ps. 47:8). And elsewhere: Fire and brimstone, and a spirit of storms, is the portion of their cup (Ps. 11:7). Those who study the wind and the breath of the storm understand this: the anger and fury of God coming from the north, that is, from Nebuchadnezzar, and that Jerusalem will be captured after six years of this vision. This is the vision of the fifth year of the reign of King Joachin, who was the fifth king of Jerusalem during the reign of Sedeciah. We read that after six years, in the eleventh year of his reign, when the city was captured, he was taken to Babylon. It is revealed to those who dwell near the river Chobar and who willingly submitted themselves to the king that they have done well to obey God's judgment. In a short time, both the province of Judaea and the city of Jerusalem are to be captured. And when a great cloud is described, let us understand that it brings rains of destruction upon Judea, and showers of collisions. And the wrapped fire shows the future punishments and the evils of captivity. And the splendor around it signifies the open judgments of God. But those who think in the opposite way, that is, the good, understand the spirit that takes away, or lifts up, the Holy Spirit, who takes away vices and sins from people, or raises the fallen to sublime things, and makes them retreat from the very cold North wind, from which evils blaze up over the whole earth (Ecclesiasticus 43); and in Jeremiah, that terrifying pot is kindled from the face of the North wind (Jeremiah 1). They also refer to the great cloud in relation to the person of Christ, who came to Egypt of this world upon a light cloud: and properly it is called great in comparison with the lesser clouds, namely, the prophets and apostles and all the saints, of whom it is written: And thy truth unto the clouds (Ps. XXXV, 6); and: I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon Israel (Isai. V, 6); and elsewhere: The cloud is the dust of his feet (Naum I, 3); and again: Clouds and darkness are round about him (Ps. XCVI, 2). And also the shining fire and the splendor around it, according to what is written: God is a consuming fire (Deut. IV, 24). The Savior says that he came to send fire upon the earth, and desires to burn in us and all who believe (Luke XI); although he brings terror and punishment to sinners, nevertheless he shines with splendor and is full of light and brightness. Therefore, he purifies us so that he may grant us greater joys in purity and purification.

1:5

(Verse 5.) And in the midst of it is the likeness of four living creatures, and this is their appearance: the likeness of a human in them. And what follows, And there is a brightness in it, should be noted with a mark. Unless the Scripture had added, saying: That is, from the midst of the fire, because of the ambiguity of the word, we might have erred and thought that the appearance or vision was of lightning in the midst of the wind or of a spirit. Therefore, it should be understood that in the midst of the fire and torments of God, there is a likeness of lightning, which is more precious than gold and silver. So after judgment and torments, which seem sad and hard to those who endure them, the more precious brightness of lightning appears, while the providence of God governs all things, and what is thought to be punishment is actually medicine.

1:6

(Verse 6) And in the midst of it is the likeness of four living creatures, and this is their appearance: the likeness of a man is among them. In the midst of it, it is understood, is indeed electricity: but it is better to understand it as fire, which is light for believers and punishment for unbelievers. Therefore, in the midst of this fire, there was the likeness of four living creatures, a likeness, not a nature; and the four living creatures that are later called quadriform, are one likeness of a man, so that all things in the world may be shown to be rational: 'Let us make man in our image and likeness' (Genesis 1). But the image and likeness of God is not the form of the body, but of the mind: described according to the true image of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God. These rational creatures exist in four places, either because of the four cardinal points of the world, by which the globe is enclosed, or because of the four places: celestial, terrestrial, infernal, and supercelestial, of which the apostle Paul also speaks: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth (Philippians 2, 10). Of the three, there is Paul's testimony. Let us see the fourth. Praise the Lord, ye heavens of heavens, and the water that is above the heavens, let the name of the Lord be praised (Psalm CXLVIII, 5). And again, by the Apostle, other heavenly things are said, and other things above heavenly (I Corinthians XV).

1:7

(Verse 7) The four faces to one, and the four wings to one, and their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot, and they sparkled like the appearance of burnished brass. And the hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides. LXX: And the four faces to one, and the four wings to one, and their legs were straight, and they had winged feet. And they sparkled like flashing bronze, and their wings were light, and the hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides. Of the four animals, whose appearance was a likeness of a human (only in such a way that each had four faces, and four wings, and straight legs, and the sole of their feet was like the hooves of a calf, or, as the eagle interpreted it, round, which the LXX completely omitted), of the shining sparks of bronze, and of their light feathers, which are not mentioned in Hebrew, of the hand of man also under their wings in four parts, and the rest which the prophetic speech describes, we will endeavor to explain what it seems to say to us, when we briefly summarize the opinions of each person. Some claim that the four Gospels, which we have also followed in the preface of the commentary on Matthew, are designated by the names of these animals: Matthew, because it describes Jesus as a man: The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. They attribute it to Mark the lion: The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah: The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight (Isaiah 40:3). Calves, to the Gospel of Luke, which begins with the priesthood of Zacharias. Eagles, to the beginning of John, who, soaring to the heights, began: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Regarding what we think about these, we have said in the aforementioned work, and more fully in the Apocalypse of John (Chapter IV), the appearance and names of these animals refer to the four Gospels (or, to the Evangelists). We will try to explain in their proper place how the description of all animals can be adapted. But others, who foolishly follow the wisdom of philosophers, think that there are two hemispheres in the two temples of the Cherubim, us and the Antipodes, as if humans were lying on their backs and falling.

Many, according to Plato, attribute the rational soul, the irascible soul, and the concupiscent soul, which he calls the logical, the spirited, and the appetitive, to man, lion, and calf: placing reason, knowledge, mind, and counsel, as well as the same virtue and wisdom, in the citadel of the brain; but attributing ferocity, anger, and violence to the lion, which resides in the gall. Moreover, they place desire, luxury, and the craving for all pleasures in the liver, that is, in the calf that clings to the works of the earth. And they consider as a fourth thing, which is beyond and outside these three, what the Greeks call συντμήσις, which is the spark of conscience that is not extinguished even in Cain's heart, after he was cast out of paradise. And it is by this spark that we, conquered by pleasures or by madness, and sometimes deceived even by the semblance of reason itself, feel that we sin. How properly they are appointed to eagles, not mixing themselves with the three, but correcting the three wandering ones; which in the Scriptures we sometimes read is called the spirit, who intercedes for us with unutterable groanings. For no one knows the things that belong to man, except the spirit that is in him. Whom Paul also, writing to the Thessalonians, prays that they may be preserved sound in soul and body. And yet this very conscience, according to what is written in Proverbs: The wicked man, when he comes into the depth of sins, contemns it (Prov. XVIII, 13): we see certain individuals being precipitated and losing their place, who do not even have shame and modesty in their transgressions, and deserve to hear: Your face has become like that of a harlot, you did not want (Al. you do not know) to be ashamed (Jerem. III, 3). Therefore, God guides this chariot like a charioteer, and restrains it running with uncontrolled steps, making it obedient, and forces it to obey His command. We will also discuss the nature of the soul, that is, the soul of man, which is called the microcosm by the same philosophers. Some believe that the four elements of the world, namely fire, air, water, and earth, are simply represented in four animals, according to the opinion of Hippocrates. How these elements mix with each other, and how they seem to be joined together and touch each other, and how they have four distinct species and forms in one animal, is not the purpose of this work. They also consider the four wheels rising from the earth to the heights, joined to each other by four-formed animals or the mixture of the same elements, or the cycle of the four seasons, which is completed by nine months, and the turning year, which has received its name from the fact that it always turns and returns to itself. Of these things, it has been beautifully said in one verse:

Spring, summer, autumn, winter, and months, and years. And it is said: There was a wheel in a wheel, they think to signify the year in the year. About which another poet (Virgil, II Georg.) says: And in its own footprints, the year rolls on. They also want this sky, which we observe, to be understood as a likeness of crystal: under which four living creatures roll and pass. And they think that the throne of sapphire-colored, and the man sitting above it in human likeness, described the omnipotence of God, who rules over all things and has everything under his feet. And, finally, it is said: This is the vision of the likeness of the glory of God, through which, as through a certain picture and image, providence is demonstrated. And just as the feet of animals are said to be straight, and the hoof of a calf, or round, to soar from earthly things to heavenly things, and with all angles cut off, to follow roundness, which is the most beautiful of all shapes. To show shining sparks, indicating all things full of light, and the hands of man under the wings of both man himself, and lion, and calf, and eagle: so that reason may support all things, and lift them up from earthly humility to heavenly things. These things can be referred to both the Gospels and everything we have mentioned above. I remember hearing about four passions, which Cicero discusses in detail in his Tusculan Disputations: joy, sadness, desire, and fear, of which two are present and two are

future, symbolized by four animals, about which Virgil also briefly speaks in Book VI of the Aeneid. From here they fear, desire, grieve, and rejoice: the things that should be subject to the rule and power of God; and which, on the contrary, the four virtues - Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance - are set against or imposed upon, in order to be governed by their authority. They completely neglect to mention how these virtues are adapted to the faces of man, lion, calf, and eagle. On these matters, the same philosopher and orator discuss in three books addressed to their son concerning duties. I have read a brief dispute by a certain Catinaeus, whom the Syrians call 'subtle,' that is, sharp and ingenious, which asserts that the arrangement of the twelve tribes of the camp can be described in the wilderness, towards the East and West, North and South, which are joined together by love and kinship, and this is the wheel within a wheel, which is guided by the spirit and protected by a cloud in the desert, and illuminated by a column of fire at night; they do not return to Egypt, but always hasten to go to the promised land. But the eagle in the midst represents the Holy of Holies, and the face of the man represents the whole of Israel; the lion represents the royal scepter of Judah; the calf represents the priestly and Levitical tribe. In addition, the face of the eagle symbolizes the divine vengeance and retribution from heaven, overseeing everything, and prepared to tear apart the sinner, as it is said in Hosea: 'As an eagle over the house of God' (Hos. 8:1), that is, the temple. And in the same prophet Hosea (17), the great eagle with large wings and claws, which has the ability to enter into Lebanon, is understood to represent Nebuchadnezzar, whom even now signifies as coming, and sitting upon such a four-wheeled chariot like a charioteer, governing and commanding what is to be done or not to be done. However, he says, it is said to the people who live in Babylon, that if they submit their necks to God and obey his restraints, they will earn his help again, and they will regain the land which they had lost.

1:8-9 (Vers. 8, 9.) And they had four wings, and their wings were joined one to another. They did not turn back when they walked, but each one moved forward before its face. The Gospels are joined to each other and cling together, and they fly to and fro throughout the whole world, running here and there, without end to their flight, never surpassing or receding, but always proceeding to further things. And both Paul and Virgil say: Forgetting the things that are past, and reaching forth towards those things that are still to come. We can say the same about the virtues of the soul, about the passage of time, and about the mingling of the elements, that, leaving behind the past, they always hurry back to the former things. And the fact that times slip away and flee is demonstrated in a short verse. But meanwhile it flees, time flees irreparably. And in a lyric poem (Horace, Odes, 14).

Alas, alas, fleeting years slip away, Posthumus, Posthumus!

1:10

(Verse 10.) The likeness of their faces, the face of a man and the face of a lion on their right side, and the face of an ox on their left side, and the face of an eagle above them. The faces represent the beginning of the Gospels, in which the human and lion symbolize the birth of Christ and the voice of the prophets thundering in the wilderness on the right side. The ox, which represents the sacrifices and the priesthood of the Jews, is on the left side, which was abolished and passed on to the spiritual priesthood, as it is written: You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4); so that all things may belong to him and be counted as one body. But the eagle,

which is both about the birth and the prophecy, which is fulfilled by the Lord's coming, and about the priesthood that has passed, and beyond all these things, referring to the spiritual birth, how the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father. Concerning which it is rightly said: Who shall declare his generation (Isaiah 53:8)? These are, according to the Apocalypse (Chapter 4), as we have already said, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind, of which one is like a lion, and the second like a calf, and the third has the face of a man, and the fourth is like a flying eagle. There they are said to have the form of Seraphim with six wings, two covering their face and two covering their feet, and two flying, and they do not rest day or night, saying: Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come (Rev. 4:8).

1:11

(Verse 11) And their faces and wings were stretched out from above, with two wings of each joined together and two covering their bodies. And above we have said that the Gospels and the seasons are joined together, and all rational creatures, and the four virtues, so that whoever lacks one lacks all. And that the two are stretched out and rise up high signifies heavenly preaching and all things tending towards the majesty of God. But two things hinder the knowledge of bodies: human knowledge is excluded, and perfect intuition is not provided, as the Apostle says: For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away with (1 Cor. 13:9).

1:12

(Verse 12) And each thing moved forward before its own face. Wherever the impulse of the spirit was, there they moved forward and did not turn back while they traveled. The one who holds the plowshare should not look back (Luke 9:62), nor should one imitate Lot's wife (Genesis 19), lest they fall into the punishment of Deuteronomy (Chapter 19) and perish like the incurable paralytic, whom Eli also fell because he had offended God with the fault of his sons (2 Kings 4). How much more should the four animals that were full of light and wings, which follow the preceding Holy Spirit, fly around the world and elevate themselves to the heights in order to protect their bodies with the feathers of history and not grant us a fuller vision? But what is also said secondly: They did not turn back when they went forward, signifies the sacrament of each of these four living creatures, and the Law and the Gospel hasten toward the future; and they never receive a backward movement.

1:13-14

(Vers. 13, 14.) And the likeness of the creatures, and their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of torches. This was the vision running among the creatures, a gleam of fire, and lightning coming forth from the fire. And the creatures went and returned like the flashing of lightning. LXX: And in the midst of the creatures a vision like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches running among the creatures; and a gleam of fire, and lightning came forth from the fire. And what follows: And the animals were running and returning as if they were species of beasts, it is added from the edition of Theodotion to the Septuagint: who, lest he seem to say something contrary to the two previous statements of the prophet, thought it best to omit what they thought to be contradictory, that is, and the animals were running and returning, so as not to cause scandal to the reader. It is better, however, to translate in divine books what has been

said, even if you do not understand why it has been said, rather than remove what you do not know. Otherwise, many other things that are ineffable and cannot be grasped by the human mind will be destroyed by this freedom. But we say this, as it is also written in the Proverbs in the same place: "Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also become like him" (Prov. XXVI, 4, 5); and in another place it is put that seems to be contrary to us: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he appear wise in his own eyes;" and both are in agreement with the diversity of times and persons, since the fool is despised because he does not receive wisdom; and foolish pride is brought down by other foolishness, as the Apostle says: "I have become foolish, you compelled me" (II Cor. XII, 11): so also in this place we should seek why it was said above for the second time: "The animals did not turn back when they walked;" and now, once, the animals ran and turned back. And if there were not a question following, it would be like a flashing lightning: which in Hebrew is called Bezec, and is interpreted by Symmachus, as if it were the appearance of a lightning bolt. Therefore, just as the ethereal fire flashes with frequent sparks, and the lightning bolts flash and return in the blink of an eye, without losing their source and, so to speak, the origin of fire and material; in the same way, these animals, when they continue with an unhindered foot, hasten towards their former state. But if they see something opposed to their attempts, they do not so much turn back as they contract themselves, to be extended again, and to give the light that they had hidden for a while, to give food to the slaves in their proper time, to not give what is holy to dogs, nor to throw pearls before swine (Matthew 7). Therefore, Paul also says: I have given you milk to drink, not food, for you were not yet able to receive it (1 Corinthians 3:2). And the choice of Judas and the anointing of Saul do not indicate that God is ignorant of future events, but they show that He is the judge of present things (Matthew 10). And it is commanded to the Apostles, that if they perceive an unworthy house by the salutation, they should first shake off the dust from their feet; and the peace which they have given to the house should return to them. But the burning coals and the lamps running among the animals are interpreted from that place of Isaiah: And the fire shall eat the flesh as the grass, and I will sanctify them in the burning fire (Isaiah 5:24) . And it is written elsewhere: Burning coals shall fall upon them (Psalm 140:11) . And against deceitful lips, it is said in another psalm: 'What shall be given to you, or what shall be added to you, to a deceitful tongue? Sharp arrows of the powerful, with coals of desolation.' (Psalm 119:3-4). And in another place: 'You have coals of fire, you shall sit upon them, they shall be to you for help.' (Isaiah 47:14). Whatever creature we behold, it reflects the knowledge of God, as the Creator is recognized through his creatures. And from the midst of living beings comes the splendor of fire and lightning. For if you study the Gospels, amidst the letters and humble history, you will discover the sacraments of the Holy Spirit.

1:15-18

(Verse 15 and following) And as I looked at the animals, a wheel appeared on the earth beside the animals, having four faces. And the appearance of the wheels and their work was like the vision of the sea, and the four of them had the same likeness, and their appearance and work was as a wheel within a wheel. They went in the four directions, and they did not turn as they walked. The wheels also had a height and a terrifying appearance, and the whole body was full of eyes all around the four of them. LXX: And I saw, and behold, a wheel was following animals four over the earth. And the appearance of the wheels and their construction was like the color of tarshish. And their appearance was in four: and their work was as it were a wheel within a wheel. They walked in

their four parts, and did not turn back when they walked. And their backs and their height were to them. And I saw them, and their backs were full of eyes all around the four. Up to this point, the picture describes the four living creatures that had four faces, following the spirits and the cloud that was in the midst of the spirit, now the individual wheels are mentioned for each animal, which were not attached to the animals but followed them. Or a wheel appeared upon the Earth, which, divided into four, had as many faces as the number of animals that followed. And such was the similarity of the four wheels to the four following animals, that one wheel was truly believed. And their work and creation was like the vision of tharsis, which we turn into the sea. The eagle placed the hyacinth; which stone resembles the sky. And their appearance was like one wheel in another, so that you would not believe it was one wheel, but rather one wheel joined to another. They were moving in four directions, and they were not being dragged or turned back. For how could they turn back when they were following animals that always move towards the front? The height and size of the wheels were also so great that it amazed those who saw it. The entire body and backs were filled with light all around, so that you could not see any part that did not have the light of eyes: like the stories of the poets describe Argus, who had a hundred or many eyes, which Juno turned into a peacock for his careless watch, so that what is a miracle of God the Creator would be a punishment for adultery without recompense. All things celestial and terrestrial, and whatever falls under human understanding, are turned by the wheels of the Sun. The Sun travels through its yearly circle, with the Moon coursing through each month. The Morning Star itself, known as Lucifer, as it twinkles from East to West, tempers the darkness of the night with a small light and completes its course in two years. The four other wandering stars, called planets, and everything that shines in the sky, as well as the varieties of crops, trees, and herbs, follow their courses in four seasons on their own respective wheels; and we behold nothing that has not existed before. The spirit moves by whirling and returns to its own circles. All rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full (Ecclesiastes 1:6-7). Why? Because they return to their sources from the deep abyss. But of the Gospels, that is, of the four living creatures that breathe, live, and understand, if anyone considers the wheel and its course, in a short time he will see the world to be complete with the Apostolic proclamation. The wheel is also within a wheel, or the joining of the two Testaments, which indicates the ladder of Jacob (Genesis 28) and the prophetic word of Isaiah (Isaiah 6) and the double-edged sword. Or it represents the harmonious Gospels whose course and stature tend towards heaven and touch the earth only briefly, always hastening towards the heights. About which it is said elsewhere: Holy stones roll upon the earth (Zech. IX, 16); from which the celestial Jerusalem is built. I believe this signifies the same thing as what is sung in the psalm: The voice of your thunder is in the wheel (Psalm LXXVI, 19). And elsewhere: Which sets the wheel of birth on fire (James III, 6). The meaning of these testimonies in their proper places is not of this time. But whoever sees that there is nothing in the Gospels that does not shine with its own light and illuminate the world with its splendor, will approve the whole body and the backs filled with eyes, so that even the things considered small and lowly may shine with the majesty of the Holy Spirit.

1:19-21

(Vers. 19 seqq.) When the animals walked, the wheels walked alongside them. And when the animals were lifted up from the ground, the wheels were also lifted up. Wherever the spirit went, the wheels went there too, for the spirit of life was in the wheels. As the animals went, the wheels went, and as they stood, the wheels stood. And when the animals were lifted up from the ground,

the wheels were lifted up as well, following them, for the spirit of life was in the wheels. Four animals followed the spirit, and the cloud that was in the spirit. And again, the wheels lifted themselves off the ground, not the animals, but the spirit followed, to show its own will: because the spirit of life was in the wheels. Three, however, are indicated both in the animals and in the wheels, when they stood, when they walked, when they were lifted up, which both the animals and the wheels did in common. For neither could animals that were standing walk on wheels, nor could animals walking on the ground lift themselves on wheels, but of those actions, one was rest, one was motion, and elevation. And secondly it is said, because the spirit of life was in the wheels: so that we should in no way consider the wheels as vessels, which we see in the carts of wagons and chariots, but as living beings, indeed above living beings. For the animal man does not perceive those things that are spirits. Therefore, these wheels, in which the spirit of life was, do all things in order and measure, and they have harmony with animals, following them, and through them, the Holy Spirit; indeed, having skipped the middle, they enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. All of which, according to the earlier understanding, a wise reader can fit into various interpretations.

1:22-26

(Verse 22 onwards) And the likeness above the heads of the living creatures was like the appearance of a crystal dreadful ice; extended above their heads was what appeared to be a firmament. Under the firmament their wings were straight, one toward another. Each of them had two wings that covered their bodies, and each one had two wings that covered one side. And I heard the sound of the wings, like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty God. When they walked, it was like the sound of a multitude, like the sound of a camp; and when they stood still, their wings were let down. For when the voice was being made above the firmament that was above their heads, they would stand and submit their wings. And above the firmament that was over their heads, there was a likeness of a throne, and above the likeness of the throne, there was a likeness as the appearance of a man from above. Wherever we would place ourselves, their wings were straight, and like the sound or voice of the exalted God, the seventy translated it. Their wings were extended and flying; and like a strong voice: which in Hebrew is called 'Almighty' (Saddai). Many things in this chapter and in other chapters have been omitted by them, which they have chosen to skip due to their length. But what we have interpreted more clearly, from one to another: each one covered their body with two wings, and the other likewise covered theirs, for which it is written in Hebrew, a man, on account of his sister, covered his body with two wings, and a man likewise covered his; therefore, after woman, man is put in the same person, so that we may not think of gender in heavenly things: since in one and the same way, according to the Hebrew usage, both man and woman are called the same. Moreover, there appears above four living creatures and as many wheels, the likeness of the firmament, which we call the sky, having the appearance of crystal, which is most pure, and is said to solidify from clean and shining waters by excessive coldness - as much as water is also constricted by frost and called κρυσταλλος in Greek. But it was fitting that in the higher things there be extraordinary purity, which protects all things, that is, rational and wise virtues, and the course of the four seasons, and the regions of the world, and the order of all things, and the preaching of the Gospel, which is understood in part and veiled in part. And the voice that is heard of flying wings, like the voice of many waters, which, according to the Apocalypse of John (Chapter XVII), signifies peoples, and gradually progresses as the voice of camps, and as the voice of the sublime God,

which in Hebrew is called Saddai, and according to the Septuagint, the voice of the word; so that we may believe that the voice of the Son of God is everything that is proclaimed in the world. But while the animals were standing, their wings were lowered. For they could not bear the resonating voice of Almighty God in the heavens, but they stood and marveled; and with their silence, they demonstrated the power of God, who sat upon the firmament. The firmament below had the likeness of crystal, but the firmament above appeared like a sapphire stone. The likeness of the sapphire stone was the throne of the one who sat in the likeness of a human. From this, we understand that the firmament, crystal, sapphire, and human are shown in resemblance, not in truth. However, many testimonies teach that the human should be understood as God the Father. Among these is the parable in the Gospel: A certain man planted a vineyard and leased it to farmers (Matthew 21:33). And shortly after: He sent his servants, and above all his son. Again: A certain man made a wedding feast for his son. Not that the son is excluded from the kingdom, of which Isaiah wrote: I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne. And John said: Isaiah said these things because he saw the glory of the Son of God; but he reigns in the Father and the Son. For all the Son of the Father are, who is the image of the invisible Father God (Colossians 1:15). For also in Daniel, God the Father is portrayed sitting (Daniel 7), and the Son of man is offered to him, that he may receive the kingdom. And in the Apocalypse of John, the same things are written about the Son (Revelation 3:7). And in the battle of the first martyr Stephen, he is seen standing at the right hand of the Father. Of whom it is sung in the psalm: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand. I will make your enemies the footstool of your feet (Psalm 110:1). Just as the most pure and shining things are shown in the heavenly bodies, which illuminate our seeing body, so in the sapphire, that is, in the throne of God, and above the firmament that we perceive as the sky, the hidden and secret and incomprehensible mysteries of God are revealed: He made darkness His hiding place (Psalm 18:11), and He is seen in the cloud and in the darkness. And in Exodus it is written: And under the feet of God there was as it were a work of sapphire stone, and as the appearance of the sky when it is most clear (Exodus 24:10). And the bride describes the beauty of the bridegroom in the Song of Songs: His belly is like a block of ivory, set on sapphire stone (Song of Songs 5:14). And in the Book of Revelation, the first foundation is jasper, the second sapphire (Revelation 21). And in the breastplate of the high priest, in the order and arrangement of each stone, the second order has carbuncle, sapphire, and jasper (Exodus 28). Concerning which we have spoken in part about the stones, in the Expositions of Isaiah.

1:27-28

(Verse 27, 28.) And I saw something like the appearance of electrum, like the appearance of fire within it all around. From the appearance of his loins and upward, I saw something like the appearance of glowing fire all around, like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day. This was the appearance of the splendor of the Lord's glory. When I saw it, I fell facedown and heard a voice speaking. The electrum had the appearance of fire both inside and outside. But from the loins downwards, there was a shining fire all around, to show that those things which are above the loins, where the senses and reason reside, do not need fire or flames, but rather the most precious and pure metal. However, those things that are below the loins, where sexual intercourse, procreation, and the incitement of vices take place, need the purifying flames, so that when they have been purified, they may have a resemblance to a rainbow, which is commonly called Iris, when it appears in a cloud on a rainy day. For indeed the rainbow, which is called Iris in

the Holy Scriptures, and in the Apocalypse of John is also called Iris (Apoc. IV), can only appear in rain and a watery cloud, of diverse and most beautiful colors, gradually transitioning into others. Hence the poet (Virgil, Aeneid IV).

Adversity brings a thousand different colors. But the same poet also follows the custom of the common people when he says: 'When he drinks, the rainbow.' From this he signifies that the rainbow never appears unless in the cloud and in the waters. This rainbow is a sign of God's mercy and covenant that he made with humans: that when it appears in the cloud, we, according to the example of antiquity, may know that we will never be destroyed by a flood (Genesis 9). From this it is shown that after punishment and punishment, and the purification of sins, there will be future mercy, only for those who deserve to see God reigning. Where it is said: Here was the appearance of splendor in a circle. In a circle of God, or of thrones, or of all things that are seen. And this is the vision of the glory of the likeness of God: not that he saw the glory of the Lord, but the likeness of his glory. And this whole vision is: a Spirit lifting up, and a great cloud, and four living creatures, and wheels following the same creatures, and the spirit, which deserve to be under the firmament of God. And after they were lifted up, and heard a voice like many waters, and like the sublime word of God, and the voice of camps and armies, they let down their wings, and showed astonishment in silence: and there appeared one sitting upon the likeness of a sapphire stone, as it were the likeness of a man that was from his loins upward, and the likeness of fire from his loins downward, and from his loins upward, as the appearance of amber. Afterwards, a sign of mercy is given to counteract this fear; just as the appearance of a rainbow when it is in the cloud on a rainy day. We have spoken at length about this vision because it is both obscure and interpreted in various ways by many. In the remaining parts, as much as possible without harming the senses, we will strive for brevity due to the large volume of the work.

2:1 (Chapter 2, Verse 1) And I saw, and fell on my face, and heard the voice of the one speaking. The greatness of the visions did not lift me up, but the awareness of human frailty caused me to fall on my face. Therefore, even the Apostle Paul, after the ascent to heaven and paradise, and the hearing of ineffable words, says that a messenger of Satan was given to him, who would buffet him so that he would not be exalted (1 Corinthians 12). And Abraham fell on his face after hearing the words of God. And yet, because he had fallen not through sin, but through humility, he is lifted up by the Lord, and he is commanded to hear His words (Gen. 17). It must also be known that to fall on one's face is one thing, and to fall backwards is another. Abraham, after he heard of the birth of Isaac, fell on his face and laughed (1 Sam. 4). But Eli, who had sinned, fell backwards. And it is written about Dan in Genesis: Let Dan be a serpent in the way, biting the horse's heel, and let the horseman fall backwards, waiting for the salvation of God (Gen. 49:17-18). For because he had fallen from the horse by the snake's bite, therefore he awaits the coming of the Savior. And in the Gospel according to John, those who had come to apprehend the Lord, after he answered: I am, fell backward to the ground (John XVIII, 6); his words, who had said to Moses: Go, tell the children of Israel: The One who is, has sent me to you (Exodus III, 14), they could not bear. And he said to me: Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you ((Vulg. with you)). He could not hear the word of God while lying down, but he hears with Moses: But you stand here with me (Exodus XXXIV, 2). Which Daniel also recounts happening to him (Daniel X).

2:2

(Vers. 2.) And the Spirit entered into me after He spoke to me and set me on my feet. And I heard Him speaking to me, saying: Son of man. LXX: And the Spirit came upon me, and took me up, and raised me, and set me on my feet: and I heard Him speaking to me, and He said to me: Son of man. The divine word had commanded the prophet and had said: Stand on your feet (Psalm XXXIX, 3); but he could not stand without the help of God and the coming of the Holy Spirit: therefore, the Spirit enters into him, or assumes and raises him up, so that he may stand firmly and be able to say: He set my feet on a rock (Ephesians VI, 14). We do not read of any sinner standing, but it is said to the saints: Therefore, gird your loins. However, the sinner deserves to hear what is written in Deuteronomy: The sole of your foot shall have no steadiness (Deut. XXVIII, 56) . It is frequently said to Ezekiel: Son of man (Matth. VIII, 20) , and rarely to Daniel: both referring to the one who said: The Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head, He consoles the captive people, and draws them towards repentance.

2:3

(Verse 3.) I send you to the children of Israel, to the apostate nations, who have turned away from me. They and their fathers have violated my covenant until this day. They are no longer called the people of God Israel, but rather the apostate nations, those who have turned away from the Lord, not only the fathers, but also the sons. It is not that the sons are guilty because of the sins of their fathers, but rather that the wickedness of both fathers and sons is equal. Furthermore, what the Septuagint translated as 'irritating me' or 'turning into bitterness' signifies that our kind and sweet God is changed into bitterness by our vices. For as it is said to the holy ones: Taste and see that the Lord is sweet (Psalm 33:9); so sinners perceive him as bitter. Therefore the Apostle refers to the goodness and severity of God towards the holy ones and sinners (Romans 21). And concerning the sinners who were lying down, it is written: The Lord raises up the fallen, the Lord loves the just, the Lord loosens the bound (Psalm 145:8). But to the holy ones who stand, he promises rewards.

2:4

(Verse 4.) And they are sons with a fierce face and an untamed heart, to whom I send you. This is not found in the Septuagint. It is of great mercy to send God to such people and not to despair of their salvation; and it is prophetic confidence that he is not afraid to go to such people as well. But we must understand that with an untamed heart and a fierce face, we should accept what is said to the sinner: Your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead is bronze (Isaiah 48:6). And those who are accused of having a heart of stone in their subsequent actions, God says that He will uproot them and restore them with a heart of flesh, so that they may receive God's commands through His gentleness.

2:5

(Verse 5.) And you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord God: If perhaps they will listen, and if perhaps they will be quiet, for the house is provoking, and they will know that there was a prophet among them. Something similar is written in Jeremiah: If perhaps they will listen and do penance. (Jer. XXVI, 3). And in the Gospel: Perhaps they will fear my son. (Matth. XXI, 37). However, God speaks these things with a doubtful emotion, to demonstrate the free will of man, so that the foreknowledge of future evil or good does not make immutable what God knows will happen. For

not because he knows what is about to happen, it is necessary for us to do what he predicted: but because we are going to do it of our own free will, he knows the future like God.

2:6 Verse 6: Therefore, son of man, do not fear them, nor be afraid of their words, because they are unbelievers and destroyers with you. LXX: And you, son of man, do not fear them, nor be afraid of their presence: because they are insane, and they will gather against you in a circle. Though they may have hard necks and stubborn hearts, my commandments are stronger. And do not think yourself deceived if you are sent to those who do not listen to you. Behold, I foretell to you that they will go mad, and gather together against you, and surround you, leaving you no escape. And they will do this because they are unbelievers and despise the commands of God. And you live with scorpions. Do not fear their words, and do not fear their faces, for their house is unsettling. They are capable of striking with a curved wound, and with a stinging sting, so that the same blow may open both skin and spread venom. Each one is called by their own behavior. And to the scribes, it is said: Generation of vipers (Matthew 23:33). And of Herod, who was a fox, it is said: Go and tell that fox (Luke 13:32). And false prophets are compared to foxes in this same Prophet. And now they are said to be scorpions with an untameable heart. Hence, we read in the Gospel: All who came before me were thieves and robbers, and the sheep did not hear them (John 10:8). And how did the lost sheep of the house of Israel hear their adversaries? From this it is shown that those who hear thieves and robbers have lost the name of sheep and have taken on other names, so that they have not perished like sheep, but like vipers, foxes, and scorpions.

2:7-8 (Vers. 7, 8.) And you shall speak my words to them: if perhaps they will hear, and be afraid, or be quiet, since they are provokers. But you, son of man, hear what I speak to you. Therefore, you must not cease, although they are wicked to whom we speak; indeed, according to the Apostle (II Tim. IV), we must preach the word of God opportune and importune, because it is possible that even a stubborn person may be corrected to gentleness, and someone who is obedient, with a change of will, may not hear. Do not be exasperating, as the house is exasperating. Once we said to put exasperation, or irritation, seventy bitterness. Therefore, what he says is this: You should not imitate those whom you are sent to correct, lest you deserve a similar sin and punishment.

Open your mouth and eat what I give you. Be worthy, he says, to my words, and receive spiritual food, so that as it is said in the Gospel: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke 8:8); and here it is said: He who has an open mouth to eat, let him eat. Hence the Lord speaks to the Psalmist: Open your mouth, and I will fill it (Psalm 81:10). And he responded: I opened my mouth and drew in the spirit (Psalm 119:131). And the Apostle Paul, who had in himself the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in whom the Lord Christ spoke, writes to the Corinthians: My mouth is open to you, O Corinthians (2 Cor. VI, 11). And Matthew reports about the Savior: Opening his mouth, he taught the disciples (Matt. V, 2). And I saw, and behold a hand was sent to me. For the hand that is sent, they translated it as extended in the Septuagint. It is sent and extended to those who receive blessings. But it is contracted by those to whom the prophet speaks: 'Has the hand of the Lord been shortened and contracted?' (Isaiah 50:2). And in the Psalm: 'Why do you withdraw your hand and your right hand from your bosom to the end?' (Psalm 73:11). Finally, he stretched out his wings in suffering, he received the disciples, and he carried them on his shoulders, and he spoke: 'All day long I have spread out my hands to a disobedient and opposing people' (Isaiah 65:2), to gather the children of Israel, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. And by the stretching

out of Moses' hands, Israel overcame Amalek (Exodus 17).

2:9

(Verse 9.) In which was a wrapped book, and he unfolded it before me, and it was written inside and outside: and there were written in it lamentations, and a song, and woe. And he said to me: Son of man, whatever you find, eat. Concerning the wrapped book, the seventy chapters of the book were translated. In the hand of the Lord sitting on the throne, which was sent and extended. Concerning which it is also said in the Psalms: In the chapter of the book it is written about me (Psalm 39:8). Chapter, let us understand the beginning. This book was wrapped and sealed, written inside and outside, or before and after, of such difficulty that no one was able to open and read it, neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor underneath the earth, except the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David and Jesse, whom John in the Apocalypse said devoured it (Rev. 5), not whole, but in a chapter, that is, in the beginning. For it is impossible for human nature to devour the entire treasure of this book. And He unfolded it before the prophet, and He made it available to be read and understood, who is said to be marked in Isaiah as belonging to the people who do not believe (Isa. XXIX). For even to this day the veil is placed upon the Jews in the old Testament. And it was written before and after; concerning things to come and concerning things past. Truly, outwardly in historical writing, but inwardly in spiritual understanding, of which the Psalmist says: The glory of the king's daughter is from within (Psal. XLIV, 14). And there were written in it both inward and outward lamentations, and song, and woe. Lamentations, concerning those who are called to penance, just as Samuel and the Apostle Paul mourned and lamented for Saul and the Corinthians, whom they desired to save (2 Chronicles 16; 2 Corinthians 12). Song about those who are worthy of God's testimony, and whom the Psalmist commands: Sing to the Lord a new song (Psalm 95 and 97, verse 1). Furthermore, woe to those who have completely despaired and, when they come into the depths of sin, they scorn (Prov. XVIII).

3:1

(Chapter III, Verse 1) Eat this scroll, and go to the sons of Israel. Unless we eat the open scroll beforehand, we cannot teach the sons of Israel. Finally, even David, after he obtained mercy, said: I will teach the wicked your ways, and the impious will turn to you (Psalm 50:15).

3:2

(Verse 2.) And I opened my mouth, and he fed me with that scroll. And he said to me: Son of man. I, he said, opened my mouth, because I was told: Open your mouth, and eat. And, with my mouth open, the Lord bestowed food; so that the beginnings of the will are in us, and we attain the perfection of blessedness from the Lord. For it is not of the one willing, nor of the one running, but of the merciful God (Rom. IX, 16). However, both to will and to run is of our own free will. For He opened, they translated it as 'opened,' so that God may be understood, because He Himself both opened the mouth of the prophet and fed him.

3:3 (Verse 3.) Your stomach will eat; and your bowels will be filled with that volume which I give to you. LXX: Your mouth will eat, and your stomach will be filled with that chapter given to you. The beginning of the reading, and of a simple story, is the essence of this volume. But when we have stored the book of the Lord in the treasure of our memory through constant meditation, our spiritual stomach is filled, and our bowels are satisfied, so that we may have, with the Apostle

Paul, the bowels of mercy (Colossians 3), and that stomach may be filled of which Jeremiah speaks: My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my very heart: my heart maketh a noise in me (Jeremiah 4). And I ate it, and it was in my mouth like sweet honey. David also speaks: How sweet are your words to my throat, sweeter than honey to my mouth (Psalm 118:103). And elsewhere: The judgments of the Lord are true, desirable more than gold and many precious stones; and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb (Psalm 19:10, 11). And Samson found honeycomb in the mouth of a lion (Judges 14); and after the resurrection, the Lord ate a piece of fish and honeycomb (Luke 24). And in Proverbs it is said about the bee, although there are no Hebrew examples of this: Go to the bee, and learn how diligent she is and how she makes her work clean: by whose labors kings and ignorant people abuse their health (Prov. 6:8, LXX version): just as Moses and the prophets, and the evangelists and the apostles did; so that whoever becomes a king, whose heart is in the hand of God, may enjoy sweet foods. But whoever is simple and without the cunning of the serpent has the innocence of doves, let them believe in simple faith and be saved: because there are snares everywhere, and often the Devil disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor. 2): and honey drips from the lips of a prostituted woman, promising sweetness but spreading poison (Prov. 5).

3:5

(V. 5) And he said to me: Son of man, go and enter (in Vulg. there is no 'and enter') the house of Israel, and speak my words to them. It is said to him: Go and enter the house of Israel, it is shown that he was not with the sinful people; although he seemed to dwell in the same place along the banks of the river Chebar. For it is written: And I was in the midst of the exile next to the river Chebar. Indeed, the prophet's conversation was separate, and he was offended by the sight of the wicked. Moses also did this (Exod. 33), setting up the tabernacle far away from the camp: and when he entered, the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the entrance of the tabernacle.

3:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) For you are not being sent to the people of deep and difficult (unknown in the Vulgate) language, to the house of Israel, nor to many people of unknown language, whose language you cannot understand. And if I were to send you to them, they would listen to you. Because they do not want to come to you, you go to them. For they do not have a need for a healthy doctor, but for ones who are sick (Luke 5:31). Nor can you say: I cannot speak to them, because they speak a different language, and we are barbarians to each other, and we cannot understand each other's speech. What shall I speak of one people? If I were to send you to different nations, nevertheless my authority and power would conquer all difficulty. And if only the time were approaching, when I am going to send my apostles to all nations, to give thanks for the languages, so that they may preach and bring the whole world under my yoke with one faith and that the diversity of languages may be subordinate to me; it would be easier for those who are deep and high in speech to hear, and they would have nothing of the levity of the Jews, but they enter with a slow and steady step, and although the languages are unknown, the faith is familiar. And it is followed by: And if I were to send you to them, they would listen to you. Finally, he sent and all believed at the same time. Hence Paul and Barnabas speak to the Jews: It was necessary for the word of God to be preached to you, but since you did not want to receive the message, behold, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). And concerning the centurion, it is said: I have not

found such great faith in Israel (Matthew 8:10).

3:7

(Verse 7.) But the house of Israel does not want to listen to you, because they do not want to listen to me. For the entire house of Israel is stubborn and hard-hearted. Do not be dismayed, he says, if they do not want to listen to you. For this reason, they will not listen to you: because they will despise listening to me: as the Savior also said: Whoever does not receive you, does not receive me (Ibid., X, 40) . In which it is clearly shown that there is free will. And two reasons are given why they do not listen: because they are perverse in their will, and stubborn-hearted, or, as the Septuagint translates, they are contentious: and it is understood that often, when called to salvation, they did not want to listen.

3:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) Behold, I have made your face stronger than their faces, and your forehead harder than their foreheads. I have made your face like diamond and flint. Do not fear them or be afraid of their presence, for they are a rebellious house." And He said to me, "The house of Israel has a stubborn and defiant forehead, and their heart is as hard as scorpions. Therefore, I have given you an extremely firm countenance and a forehead that cannot be ashamed. From this, we learn that sometimes it is a grace of God to resist impudence, and when circumstances demand it, to confront face-to-face. This, however, is attributed so that our modesty and human decency do not fear the snares of adversaries.

3:10

(Ver. 10.) Son of man, take all my words that I speak to you, and assume them in your heart, and listen with your ears. This is the food of the book, and these are the words by which it speaks to different listeners, either with lamentations, or with a song, or with a woe to mankind. And yet it should be noted that before the words of God are to be composed, heard, and understood in our hearts more diligently, and thus proclaimed to the people.

3:11

(Verse 11.) Go, enter into the exile (or captivity), to the sons of your people, and speak to them, and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: perhaps they will listen and be still. And our Lord came to the people of the Jews, sent by the Father, to proclaim remission to the captives, and to fulfill what is written: Ascending on high, he led captivity captive: he gave gifts to men (Psalm 67:19).

3:12

(Verse 12). And the spirit took me, and I heard behind me a voice of a great commotion: Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place. The God of whom it is written: The Lord lifts up the meek (Psalm 146:6), he Himself lifted up the prophet, who was not in the flesh but in the spirit, and walking in the spirit, he did not fulfill the works of the flesh; for the Spirit of God was in him. Therefore, despising earthly things, he is caught up by the spirit and hears behind him the voice of a great commotion, forgetting the past and extending himself into the future, leaving the snares of his enemies behind him. We read about this in Exodus (Exod. XXIV) when Pharaoh and all his army pursued Israel, and the angel in the pillar of cloud left the front of the camp; and he came

behind them, and stood all night between Israel and the Egyptians: so as to frighten the enemies, and the Israelites might hear: Blessed be the glory of the Lord who came from his place. But the place of the Lord is wherever he finds hospitality. Or rather, the Son is the place of the Father, just as the Father is the place of the Son, as the Lord and Savior says: I am in the Father, and the Father is in me (Joan. XIV, 11). This same thing also signifies Michael: Behold, the Lord shall come forth out of his place, and will come down upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be melted under him, and the valleys shall be as wax melting before the fire, and as waters that run down into a steep place (Mich. I, 3, 4). For when the Lord, the Savior, came down and set forth from the Father, the high places of the earth and the mountains were moved, and the lower parts of the valleys were melted. The place can be the glory of the Lord and the inaccessible light, of which the Apostle speaks: Who alone has immortality and inhabits unapproachable light (I Tim. VI, 16). When we recall the past judgments of the Lord, we hear the voice of a great upheaval from behind. When we ponder the future in our hearts, a voice is heard from what came before, and from what is to come.

3:13

(Verse 13.) And the sound of the wings of the living creatures striking against one another, and the sound of the wheels following the creatures, and the sound of a great commotion. Because it is understood, 'I heard behind me the sound of a great commotion, and I heard the sound of the wings of the living creatures, and the sound of the wheels,' the Septuagint added: 'And I saw the sound of the wings of the living creatures striking against one another,' and the rest according to what is written in Exodus: 'And all the people saw the voice of God' (Exodus 20:18): so that the prophet may have heard the voice that was coming from behind, and seen what was before him. But it is better and truer to have understood a heard voice rather than a seen one, as well as the striking of wings against each other and the sound of wheels, which we mentioned above, and the great commotion which showed that God's wrath was going to come upon the people of Israel.

3:14

Ver. 14. The Spirit also lifted me up, and took me away, and I went embittered in the indignation of my spirit. LXX: And the spirit lifted me up, and took me, and I went up in the impetuosity of my spirit. After being lifted up by the spirit, and taken by it, then he went in the indignation and bitterness of his spirit, understanding the indignation of God, and what the vision signified, pondering in his mind. Whether he was carried up on the heights by the impetuosity of his own spirit, desiring to go where the Lord commanded. But by 'his spirit' we understand not the Holy Spirit, but the spirit of man, of which it is said in many places, as in Isaiah: At night my spirit rises within me, O God (Isa. XXVI, 9). And the prophet is transported (not, as some think, in spirit, but) in his own body, as we read of Habakkuk according to Theodotion (Dan. XIV).

3:15

(Verse 15) For the hand of the Lord was with me, strengthening me. And I came to the exile at the heap of new fruits, to those who lived by the river Chebar. And I sat where they sat, and I stayed there for seven days mourning among them. LXX: And the hand of the Lord became strong upon me, and I entered into captivity exalted. And I went around the inhabitants of the river Chebar who were there, and I sat there for seven days dwelling among them. For the sense in which we

translate, the translators Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion used the Hebrew words Thel Abib (יָבֵב): which the Seventy translated as sublime and I went around; believing it better to say something than to impose something that would cause the reader to question. However, we have learned from the Hebrews that Thel abib means, when new grains or barley are gathered, and after hunger and scarcity, before they are ground in the barn, they promise some hope of food. So too is Israel small and humble, who dwelt on the banks of the river Chobar, like one revived and rising from the earth, promising the seed of the Jewish people. But the hand of the Lord is upon the prophet, strengthening him, so that he may receive the name of a watchman, and teach what he has learned. And for seven days he moves among them, seeing all that they do, so that afterwards he may know what he should reprove. Yet he mourns, or dwells among them, seeing their wickedness, and the just judgment of God for the iniquity of their sins. For because we have said, grieving, and it is written in Hebrew Masmim (מַסְמִים), Theodotion translated, marveling, in order to express the astonishment of the Prophets who saw their iniquities. But the second edition of Aquila, which the Hebrews call 'according to accuracy,' translated: being calm, that is, quiet, and being separate, to show that he was indeed among the captives, but separated from them in mind.

3:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) But after seven days, the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel, and you will hear a word from my mouth and will declare it to them from me. The watchman, who is to be the messenger of God's words to the people, must rest for a long time and be sorrowful for the things he sees. And he must have no personal guilt for the sins he will rebuke in others.

3:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) If I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn him from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked person shall die for his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die for his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul. There are two wicked or iniquitous persons, as the Septuagint has translated. One who hears nothing as a viewer, and dies in his impiety; whose blood is sought by the hands of the viewer. Another, to whom the viewer announces, and he, despising to hear, dies due to his own fault: in such a way that the viewer is innocent of the fault. From which we understand that the Lord threatens the impious one, and says: 'You will die by death', so that he may turn away from his impious way, and live. For the threat is not against humans, but against sins, and not against those who turn away from vices, but against those who persist in sin. And there is a great danger in keeping silent on the words of God for three reasons: either out of fear, or out of laziness, or out of flattery. Hence Isaiah says: Woe is me, for I have kept silent (Isaiah 6:5). And what follows, You have freed your soul, signifies the same as the saying of the Apostle: If anyone's work burns, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but as through fire (1 Corinthians 3:14), so as to prove whether an external observer was the cause of his death or whether he was guilty. For the work of the master is the well-being of the disciple.

3:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) But even if a righteous person turns away from their righteousness and commits iniquity, I will set a stumbling block before them. They shall die because you did not warn them; in their sin they shall die, and their righteous deeds shall not be remembered; but I will require their blood from your hand. However, if you warn the righteous person not to sin and they do not sin, they shall surely live because you warned them, and you have saved your own soul. Just as we read about two wicked or unjust individuals: One, who did not hear, and perished; the other, who heard and persisted in wickedness: so there are two righteous individuals, one who did not hear and perished; the other who heard and turned to repentance, saved his soul. It should be noted that a righteous person can fall; and if he has a teacher, he can be converted to better things. And therefore, good works require a constant teacher, so that a slip does not cause him to step back from the best path. And indeed the wicked, or the unjust if they have not converted, will die in their wickedness and injustice. But if the just commit impiety and sin, they do not immediately die; but a stumbling block or torment is set before them, as Theodotius said, an infirmity, so that they may be tormented and not find a straight path, and understand themselves to be weak, of whom the Apostle also says: Therefore many are weak and sleep among you (I Corinthians 11:30). For it is advantageous for the just to understand their own transgression and the torment of their conscience, and to say with the Psalmist: I am turned in my sorrow while the thorn is fastened on me (Psalm 31:4). And just as the wickedness of the impious is not obvious if they turn away from their wicked ways and live, so the ancient virtues do not benefit the just if they are oppressed by new crimes. But what has been brought upon oneself: He will die, because you did not announce to him, it is understood, that he could have lived if the watcher and teacher had instructed him.

3:22

(Verse 22.) And there, the hand of the Lord came upon me and He said to me: rise up, go out into the field, and there I will speak with you. This phrase, "there," which we have translated from the Hebrew and is not found in the Septuagint, is intentionally placed and undoubtedly signifies a specific location. For earlier we read: And I came to the captivity at Tel-abib, to those who dwelt near the river Chebar (Ezekiel 3:15). And rightly so, the one to whom he spoke, sat down, is commanded to rise up. And he who had entered into transmigration hears, 'Go forth, not into rugged valleys, not onto steep cliffs, but into the width of the fields that can contain the glory of the Lord.' Hence it is also said to the Corinthians: 'Be enlarged' (1 Corinthians 6:13). When he enters to capture the captives, of whom it is said that they are insane and persecute him, perhaps he needs a strong hand in order to resist and endure the fury of those who pursue him. But when he goes forth into the field, surely the hand of the Lord is upon him: for without his help he could not go forth, but strength is not added. For he goes out to see the glory of God, not to fight. And it should be noted that while sitting among the captives, the Prophet himself did not see the glory of the Lord.

3:23

(Verse 23.) And I arose ((Vulg. arose)) and went out into the field, and behold there the glory of the Lord was standing, as the glory that I saw by the river Chobar. At the Lord's command, it enters and at the Lord's command, it goes out, and it sits among those who sit; for those who stand could not hear him. And going out into the width of the field, he saw the standing glory of the Lord, which he had seen before walking and lifting itself up, and sometimes standing. Because next to the river

of this age, called Chobar, which can be interpreted as very serious, glory was seen: which signifies that all the glory of this world overflows and does not have a stable position. But the standing and enduring glory of the Lord, when seen with the standing Prophet in the field, could not stand nor be seen amidst the captives.

3:24

(Verse 24.) And I fell upon my face, and the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet: and he spoke to me, and said to me: Go in, and shut thyself up in the midst of thy house. Unable to bear the weight of the glory of the Lord standing, he fell on his face, so that he could be lifted up by the entering spirit. The spirit stood him upon his feet, and spoke to him, saying: Enter and shut thyself up in the midst of thy house. And this is the meaning: Because you have been strengthened by the vision of the Lord's majesty, you should not fear anyone or be afraid of anything; but rather return to your home or tend to the needs of the body, as some think, or as a sign of the future siege. And just as Isaiah, barefoot and naked (Isaiah 20), proclaimed the captivity of three years and the nakedness of the people, so you, confined to your home, by the action itself, foretell the imminent siege of the city of Jerusalem.

3:25-26

(Verse 25, 26.) And you, son of man: behold, chains have been placed upon you, and they will bind you with them, and you shall not go out from among them, and I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth (or throat), and you shall be mute, not speaking as a man who reproaches them: for the house is rebellious. What is enclosed in a house, what is bound with chains, what does not go out to those among whom it dwells, but suffers the solitude of a prison among a multitude of captives, is a sign of siege, as I have said before, that Jerusalem, closed and surrounded by the army of the Chaldeans, will not allow any of its inhabitants to go out. This is the pot about which Jeremiah speaks (Jeremiah 1), and he himself as the Prophet in the following words; in which the flesh of the people is consumed. That the language of the Prophet cleaves to the palate or throat and becomes mute is not the result of a reproachful authority, but has a clear cause: for he says, the house is provoking. And the meaning is: They are of such bitterness, and of such contention against God, that they do not deserve to hear the reproacher. From this it is clear that where there is a multitude of sins, sinners are unworthy to correct those who are corrected by the Lord.

3:27

(Verse 27.) But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Let him who hears, hear; and let him who remains quiet, remain quiet; for the house is rebellious. What we read in Ecclesiastes: A time to be silent, and a time to speak (Ecclesiastes 3), is also supported in prophetic speech: that it is wise to both be silent and speak in due time, and to give food to our fellow servants at the appointed time. Therefore, Isaiah also said to the unbelieving people: I kept silent, will I always be silent? says the Lord (Isaiah 65). Therefore, he who kept his mouth closed for a long time due to the multitude of sins, because he saw that some could be converted, about whom it was said: Let him who has ears to hear, hear; and let him who is at peace with evil, be at peace; and let him cease: therefore, speaking with an open mouth, not by his own will, but by the command of the Lord, he speaks to the people. However, this is what

4:1-2

4:3

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shall not be tired by any prayers, nor be inclined to mercy. For just as iron tames all metals and there is nothing harder than it, so the incredible crimes of Jerusalem, by their own fault, made the gentle nature of God to be the harshest. The frying pan is also said to be a wall placed in the middle between the people and God, so as to show that the whole multitude is to be broken in a short time and reduced to nothing. However, the sternness of the face towards the city is an indication of severity, according to what we read elsewhere: The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth (Psalm 34:16).

4:4-6

(Ver. 4 seqq.) And you shall lie on your left side, and you shall bear the iniquities of the house of Israel upon it, according to the number of days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when you have completed these, you shall lie again on your right side, and you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have given you one day for a year, I say, one day for a year. Let us consider the 390 years that are counted as the same number of days, during which the prophet lay bound and constrained on his left side; so that he did not turn to his other side, showing the captivity and miseries of the ten tribes, that is, the Israelites. And as for the other forty years, in which he lay on his right side for the sins of Judah, or as the holy Scripture narrates, slept, it must be said about Israel that under King Pekah, the son of Remaliah, who reigned in Israel for twenty years, Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria (2 Kings 15), came and captured Aijon, Abel, the house of Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali, and took them into Assyria. After whom, Osee, the son of Ela, reigned for nine years in Israel, and he was captured with all of Samaria by Salmanassar, king of the Assyrians, and he was transported to Elam and the rivers of Abor and Gozam in the cities of the Medes. But in the sixth year of the reign of Ezechias, as the holy history of the Kings relates, Osee was captured. From this, if we calculate in order, how many years Israel was in distress and oppressed by the yoke of captivity, we can find out. From the sixth year to the twenty-ninth year (for Hezekiah reigned for twenty-four years) a total of twenty-four years are counted: after him came Manasseh, and he reigned for fifty-five years. After him, Amon reigned for two years. After him, Josiah reigned for thirty-two years. After him, Joakim, also called Eliakim, reigned for eleven years. After him, Jeconiah, also known as Jehoiachin, who was immediately led into captivity, reigned for eleven years, and for him, Zedekiah reigned for eleven years, during whose reign Jerusalem was captured and the temple destroyed. Therefore, from the first captivity of Israel, which occurred under King Pekah until the eleventh year of Zedekiah, when the Temple was desolated, there were 164 (or 174 according to some) years. From the second captivity, when Hoshea was captured and all of Samaria was destroyed, there were 135 (or 80 according to some) years. And the years of the desolation of the Temple were 70, added to the first captivity, making a total of 234 years. For in the second year of the reign of Darius, king of the Persians, the temple was built by Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, and by Jesus, the son of Josedech, while Haggai and Zechariah were prophesying. Darius reigned for thirty-six years, and after his death, thirty-five years were added. After him, Xerxes, the son of Darius, reigned for twenty years. After him, Artabanus reigned for seven months. And Xerxes, who was also known as Macrobiachus, reigned for forty years. After him, Xerxes reigned for two months, and Sogdianus reigned for seven months (or four, according to some). After him, Darius,

nicknamed Νέθος, reigned for nineteen years. After him, Artaxerxes, nicknamed Μνέμων (also known as Memnon), son of Darius and Parisatis, reigned for forty years. He is called Assuerus by the Hebrews. During his reign, the story of Mordecai and Esther is told (Esther VIII), when the entire Jewish people were saved from the danger of death and regained their freedom. From the second year of Darius to the final year of Assuerus, there are a hundred and fifty-five years and four months. In the last 234 years that have been added to the previous ones, they make 389 years and 4 months. However, the death on the right side, that is, the 40 years, can be easily calculated. For after Eliakim, who was also called Joachim, his son Joachin, also known as Jechonias, reigned for three months. During his reign, the servants of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and it was surrounded by fortifications. Then King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city, while his servants were besieging it. And Joachin, the king of Judah, went out to the king of Babylon, along with his mother, his servants, his princes, his eunuchs. And the king of Babylon received him in the eighth year of his reign and brought out all the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the royal house. And after a little while, he carried away all of Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand into captivity, and every craftsman and smith. And nothing was left except for the poor of the land (Ibid.) . After capturing it with an infinite multitude of people, and with all the resources of Jerusalem, Zedekiah ruled for eleven years: under him the city was captured and the temple was destroyed. Its desolation lasted until the second year of Darius, seventy years in total. In the thirtieth year of the desolation of the temple, Cyrus ruled in Persia, after overthrowing King Astyages of the Medes. In accordance with the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah 45), he sent back almost fifty thousand men from the tribe of Judah to Jerusalem, along with the temple vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken away, and other things that are narrated in the history of Ezra (3 Ezra 1). So just as in Israel, that is, the ten tribes under King Phacee of Israel, under whom Salmanasar devastated the Israelite people greatly, we count three hundred and ninety years until the fortieth year of Assuerus, when the persecution of all the Jewish people was mitigated; so from the first year of Jechoniah, when a large part of Jerusalem was transferred to Babylon, until the first year of Cyrus, king of the Persians, which was the thirtieth year of the desolation of the temple, forty years are counted, under which the captivity of the Jews was loosened and freedom was restored to the people. Around 390 years after the Israelites and 40 years after the joining of the Jews, making a total of 430 years, they wish to be fulfilled by the baptism of the Savior until the end of the world. However, others, especially the Jews, want to be reckoned in tribulation, distress, and the yoke of captivity of the people from the second year of Vespasian when Jerusalem was captured by the Romans and the temple was destroyed, for a total of 430 years. And thus, the people will return to their former state, just as the children of Israel were in Egypt for 430 years. And it is written in Exodus: Now the time that the children of Israel dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And again: It came to pass after four hundred and thirty years, all the armies of the Lord went out by night. And I am quite amazed why the Vulgate manuscripts have ninety hundred years, and in some it is written one hundred and fifty, when clearly the Hebrew, Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotian versions hold three hundred and ninety years; and among them the Septuagint, which, however, is not corrupted by the fault of the scribes, has the same number. We believe that the most difficult question, and dare I say arrogantly, not explained by anyone, has been made known not so much by our knowledge but by the grace of the Lord, fulfilling what He Himself promised: Seek, and ye shall find; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you (Matthew

7:7). But whoever wishes to calculate from the first captivity, which took place under Manahen the son of Gaddi, king of Israel, who reigned in Samaria for ten years (2 Kings 15); when Phul, the king of the Assyrians, came into the land of Israel and took a thousand talents of silver; and after him, two years later, Phacce, who reigned in Israel, will find that three hundred and ninety years were completed in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of King Assuerus, when the history of Esther is said to have taken place, which is also more credible. For Israel, not after the reign of Assuerus had ended, but while he still reigned, cast off the yoke of a most grievous servitude.

4:7

(Verse 7.) And you shall turn your face towards the siege of Jerusalem, and your arm shall be extended, and you shall prophesy against it. LXX: And you shall set your face towards the siege of Jerusalem, and you shall strengthen your arm, and you shall prophesy over it. Preparation of countenance is necessary, as well as strength, and the confirmation of the extended and exposed arm, so that not only by voice, but also by gesture and appearance of a prophet, the siege of the city may be demonstrated.

4:8

(Verse 8.) Behold, I have surrounded you with chains, and you will not turn from one side to the other, until the days of your siege (or conclusion) are completed. The left side, because it was without a temple and knowledge of God, is assigned to the Israelites; the right side, to the Jews, in whom (or where) the worship and religion of God reside. And it should be noted that in one side there is punishment for sinners, and in the other, exercise of virtue. He does not turn from one side to the other, so that no respite from torment is indicated, until the perfect conclusion of the aforementioned days is reached. The day of the prophets is like a year for those who are patient (Gen. XXIX). And the years that Laban thought were few days for Jacob. Not only in punishments is there diversity according to the variety of merits, but also in the retribution of good things, the lambs are on the right, and the kids are on the left. Therefore, it is also written in another place: The heart of the wise is on the right, but the heart of the fool is on the left (Ecclus. X, 1). There are other bonds of the Lord by which we are bound for salvation; there are also the devil's bonds, by which he had bound the woman for eighteen years in the Gospel (Luke XIII). Wherefore each one is bound with the cords of his own sins (Prov. V, 22). Which the Lord looses through the raising of Lazarus, who lay bound with bandages and graveclothes in the tomb (John XI).

4:9-12

(Vrs. 9 ff.) And you will take for yourself wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentils, and millet, and spelt; and you will put them into one vessel, and you will make for yourself breads according to the number of days on which you will sleep on your side: three hundred and ninety days you will eat it. But your food that you will eat will be in the weight of twenty shekels a day: from time to time you will eat it. And you will drink water by measure, the sixth part of a hin; from time to time you will drink it. And you shall eat it as barely bread, and cover it with human excrement in their sight. What vice we have interpreted as, which in Hebrew is called Chasamim (): The Seventy and Theodotion placed ■ λυραν, which some interpret as oats, others as millet. But the first edition of Aquila and Symmachus interpreted it as ζ■ ας, or ζε■ ας: which we call either far or spelt in the native language of Italy and Pannonia. They also added pottery to the vase, but the prophet orders

a future famine and demonstrates the shortage of the people of Israel. Just as in a scarcity of all things, different types of food and delicacies are not sought after; but rather how the stomach can be filled: thus the prophet now puts wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and oats into one vessel, and makes three hundred and ninety loaves of bread, which will be eaten each day: these loaves weigh twenty sicles, that is, staters. However, a siclus, that is, a stater, has four drachmas. And eight drachmas make one Latin ounce: so that one loaf of bread is said to have ten ounces, by which the soul is more drawn than sustained. The sterility of food is increased by the sterility of water. For it is commanded to drink the sixth part of the Hebrew measure, which is called hin, each day. Furthermore, two chœnixes Attic make one hin: which we can call two Italian sextarii, so that the hin is the measure of the Jewish sextarius and our military, the sixth part of which makes a third part of the Italian sextarius. Food and drink, according to the famous Speaker, not only give strength but also prevent death. What he says, 'From time to time you will eat or drink,' means from evening to evening, although some may mistakenly understand it as from year to year. And these loaves are made like barley bread made with ashes. And it is said to him, that he cover them with human dung, not for those who will eat them (ignorance is accustomed to temper miseries) but for those who see, and in their eyes, to experience horror before enduring nausea. It is also to be noted that, according to the number of days of the left side, three hundred and ninety sub-cinereous loaves are to be made and eaten each day, and there is to be no mention at all of the forty loaves of the right side; so that the holy Scripture may secretly hint that the punishment of the people who have sinned is not the same if they have knowledge of God and of him who has completely departed from the true religion. Furthermore, we can also say, according to spiritual understanding, that the Jewish people, after offending God, still eat sub-cinereous loaves mixed with wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and oats; of which one is the food of men and the other is the food of animals. For in that which they appear to believe in one God, they have something of grain. But what they deny the Son, they are sustained by the barley of animals and beans, by which the stomach of those who eat is inflated, and the mind is said to be oppressed: so much so that even to Pythagoreans, the food is detestable. Because of lentils, Esau lost his birthright (Gen. 25). Millet is the food of peasants, and of wild animals, and of birds. Oats, or vetches and alsike clover, are the food of dumb animals. But what is written, according to the Septuagint, that Elijah fleeing from Jezebel found bread ■λυσ■την, made of ashes (3 Kings 19), is a sign of persecution and scarcity. Therefore, he is also fed by the ravens, so that because he did not find food in Israel, he would be nourished by unclean foods from the nations. The law itself, which they read but do not understand, is bread made of ashes and covered with human excrement. Therefore, the apostle Paul also says that he considered the gains of the Law and the observance of the former ceremonies as dung, in order to gain Christ (Philippians 3).

4:13-15

(Verse 13 and following) And the Lord said: Thus will the sons of Israel eat their polluted bread among the nations to which I will drive them out. And I said, ah, ah, ah, O Lord God: Behold, my soul is not polluted, and I have not eaten carrion or torn flesh from beasts from my youth until now, and all unclean flesh has not entered into my mouth. And he said to me: Behold, I have given you cow dung instead of human dung, and you shall make your bread with it. According to the book of Zachariah (Zech. III), prophets are seen as portentous men who foretell the future through their works and are spoken of by God. We frequently read throughout the Bible that prophets are

compared to God's hands (Hosea XII, 10). As we see in many instances, just as Ezekiel ate bread in dung, the children of Israel, or the entire population of Judah, or as some believe, the ten tribes, will eat polluted bread among the nations. This is not a threat to those who have already been expelled but to those who will be expelled from the promised land. When the Prophet learned this, he strongly condemned it according to Aquila, ah, ah, ah. But according to Symmachus and the Septuagint, he responded by saying 'μηδ' αὐτῷ', which means 'by no means' in Latin. For which Theodotion translated: 'O Lord God'. We should not think that he contradicts the command of the Lord, but rather that he gives reasons and even begs why he cannot do this. Finally, he obtained what he asked for, and the severity of the sentence was tempered by a milder command. It is asked why Ezekiel refused easier things: and why Hosea was immediately joined to a prostitute without objection or response, saying that he keeps his body chaste and should not be defiled by the touch of a harlot, as the Apostle says: 'Whoever is joined to a harlot becomes one body with her' (I Cor. VI, 16). From which it is shown that the figure of the Synagogue or Church was not truly accomplished according to the letter: which we have explained more fully in our exposition of the prophet. Morticinium is said to be the taking of life without the shedding of blood, and in which the soul dies, torn by beasts, which is called θηριωτόν in Greek. But as for the filth granted to human excrement, which is called dung, lighter evils are signified: for indeed they are commanded to eat bread cooked in ox dung; but it is far from uncleanness of human excrement: and even today among the Jewish people this opinion is preserved, that they do not eat their bread in human excrement. For they do not serve idols, nor do they worship the various wonders of demons; but they work for the flesh and stomach, and the goods of this earth, as it is said: 'He who does these things shall live by them' (Leviticus 18:5; Deuteronomy 4). But we disdain earthly things, and not only do we trample on the food of human waste, and consider earthly pleasures to be worthless, but we eat the bread that descends from heaven (John 6), and we enjoy that food of which the Psalmist sings: 'Man ate the bread of angels' (Psalm 78:25); living not on the flesh of the Egyptians, but on the thinness of manna.

4:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) And he said to me: Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and they shall drink water by measure and with dismay; so that when bread and water are lacking, each one shall stumble to his brother, and they shall waste away in their iniquities. The Hebrew word *Mate* (מַטֵּה) is interpreted as staff in the first edition of Aquila, and as firmament in the second edition and by Symmachus and Theodotion. But what he had shown through his work, he also demonstrates through his speech, and the silence of both the left and right sides, and the ash bread mixed with the six varieties of spices, signifying the evils of the world, he points to the fact that a famine of food and an incredible shortage of water will occur in Jerusalem, so that everyone will fall to their brother, hoping for help from another, which they do not foresee in themselves. For it is the nature of humans, when pressed by evils and the weight of distress, to have more confidence in what is close at hand than in themselves: and they waste away in their iniquities, while suffering everything because of their iniquities. And I fear lest this breaking of bread may also be found in our Jerusalem, in which the vision of peace is seen, which the Lord crushes when he is angry, and judges us unworthy of his bread. And if only we could at least merit to receive him with weight and solicitude, and wet the dry tongue with excessive dryness, like the last finger of Lazarus (Luke 16). But with the Church lacking in bread

and water, a man will fall against his brother, and everywhere there is discord, as our Christ's tunic is torn apart by those who even the soldiers in the Savior's passion dared not tear apart (John 19); and as we waste away in our iniquities, for we do not possess the justice of God. It is written in Jeremiah that the little ones, that is, the common people of the Church, sought bread, and there was no one to break it for them (Lamentations 4:4). But Paul, truly a man of the Church, knew that Christ had broken the legal bread and given it to the disciples to distribute. He confidently speaks: The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? (I Cor. X, 16.) And those who are weak and in need of the milk of infancy cannot eat the staff or the strength of bread, nor can they receive solid food. And nothing strengthens the mind of the one who eats like the bread of life, of which it is written: And the bread strengthens the heart of man (Psal. CLXXXIII, 15).

Book Two

Book Two

47. In the second book of the Explanations on the volume of Ezekiel, O virgin of Christ Eustochium, this is the beginning.

5:1-4

(Chapter 5, verses 1 onwards) And you, son of man, take for yourself a sharp sword, like a barber's razor, and pass it over your head and your beard; then take scales for weighing and divide them. One third you shall burn in the midst of the city when the days of the siege are completed, one third you shall strike with the sword all around it, and one third you shall scatter to the wind; and I will unsheathe a sword after them. And you shall take from there a small number, and bind them at the top of the cloak, and take them out again and throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them. From there a fire will come out into all the house of Israel. For three parts of hair and wool, one of which is burned in the midst of the city, another is cut with a sword around it, the third is scattered to and fro by the wind, of which a small part is taken and bound at the edge of the cloak, and again a little of the third part is thrown into the fire, from which a flame comes out into all the house of Israel. Seventy-four parts have been interpreted. And when they had said: Burn the fourth part with fire in the midst of the city, and cut the fourth part with a sword all around it, and scatter the fourth part to the wind, for there remained another fourth part to them, they added from their own: And take the fourth part and burn it in the midst of the city: as if it is not the same as the first, and something else was said in the first, something different in this one that was added. Finally, even in the following, the Lord Himself explained the riddle of the divided hairs into three parts through the Prophet, saying: The third part of you will die by pestilence, and be consumed by famine in your midst, signifying famine and pestilence as fire; and the third part of you will fall by the sword all around you, describing external killings and wars. But, he says, I will scatter your third part to every wind, showing those who are to be led into captivity. After them, he says he will lay bare or pour out his sword, so that captivity is not the last of their evils; and he will take from those dispersed and captive, and bind to the top of his cloak those who are to return from captivity to Jerusalem, and he will also take some part from them, and consume it with fire and flame, signifying the Macedonians under whom the inhabitants of Judaea, and especially Jerusalem, have suffered greatly. But what he says, from this, that is, the people of the Jews; or, according to the LXX, from her; so that it is understood, from the city of Jerusalem, fire will come forth into every house of Israel: The history of the Maccabees relates that a certain part of the

Jews surrendered to Antiochus Epiphanes, and incited him to persecute the people, and many other things that are written in the same history, and in the volumes of Josephus, especially the discord between Hyrcanus and Alexander, on account of which Cneus Pompeius, the consul, took Jerusalem and subjected it to Roman rule; and afterwards, under Titus and Vespasian, the city was captured and the temple destroyed. And after fifty years, under Aelius Hadrianus, the city was burned to the ground and destroyed, to the extent that it also lost its original name. However, in the case of emperors, both the hair on their head and their beard are an indication of beauty and manliness, as if they are shaved, an ugly nakedness is revealed, and the most distant and, so to speak, lifeless part of the body is in the hair and beard: in the same way, Jerusalem and its people are lifeless and separated from the living body of God, being handed over to famine, disease, killing, and the sword, and to captivity and dispersion. From this dispersal, under the form of hair, a part of it is tied at the top of the cloak, so that a small amount may be handed over to fire again, from which an infinite flame, almost completely devastating, emerges into every house of Israel.

5:5-7

(Version 5 and following) Thus says the Lord God: This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations, with the lands surrounding it; and it has despised my judgments, being more wicked than the nations, and my commandments more than the lands that surround it. For they have rejected my judgments and have not walked in my commandments. The Prophet also attests to Jerusalem being situated in the midst of the world, showing it to be the navel of the earth. And the Psalmist expressing the birth of the Lord: Truth, he says, has arisen from the earth (Ps. 48:12). And thereafter his passion: He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth (Ps. 74:12). For the plague called Asia is surrounded by the eastern parts. From the western parts, by that which is called Europe. From the south and the north, by Libya and Africa. From the north, by the Scythians, Armenia, Persia, and all the nations of the Pontus. Therefore, placed in the midst of nations, in order that the God who was known in Judea (Ps. 75) and his great name in Israel, all the nations surrounding her would follow her examples, she overcame even the nations themselves in her wickedness. Which Symmachus interpreted beautifully saying, 'These things, he says, Jerusalem, which I placed in the midst of nations, and the regions around her, changed my judgments for the impieties which she learned from the nations, and my statutes for the regions which are around her: for they rejected my laws, and did not walk in my judgments.' But what the Seventy have said, that my justifications are unjust from the nations, and my laws are not consistent with the regions around it, is clear even when I am silent.

5:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have surpassed the nations that are around you, and have not walked in my commandments, and have not kept my judgments, and have not acted according to the judgments of the nations that are around you, therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, and I myself will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. And I will do in you what I have not done, and the like of which I will not do again, because of all your abominations. Therefore, because we have understood: Because you have surpassed the nations that are around you, Symmachus translated: Because your multitude was from the nations that are around you. Aquila's second edition: Because you have been counted among the nations that are around you. Moreover, the Septuagint: Because your

occasion is from the nations that are around you. And the meaning is, either that Jerusalem, by its own crimes, surpassed all the nations around it, or that its multitude, not the people of Israel, but the crowd of other nations, should be called. Certainly, among the other nations that are around it, they had been converted, or had every opportunity to teach the nations that they should be inclined towards the good. 'Why,' He says, 'have you not followed my commandments and not observed my judgments, when you have even conquered all the nations around you with your wickedness, and have not done what they often did, which is written by natural law in their hearts?' Therefore, I will not do my judgments through Angels or through any other ministers, but I myself will do them in you, with everyone watching, things that I have not done before and will not do again. By speaking of judgments, he shows the truth of his sentences, so that anger does not appear to exceed the measure of punishments. And he did not do in any nation the things that he did in Jerusalem: Because the servant who knows the will of his master and does not do it will be beaten with many lashes (Luke 12:48). And the mighty endure mightily severe torments (Wis. 6:7). And he says, I will not do the same again. He spoke well, I will not do the same again. For much harsher things he will do after the killing of Christ. For it is one thing to have at times worshipped idols for which they were previously punished, and another to have killed the Son of God.

5:10

(Verse 10.) Therefore, fathers will eat their sons in your midst, and sons will eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments on you and scatter all your remnants to every wind. This is in accordance with what was said before: Because you have surpassed the nations that surround you, or because your behavior is like the nations that surround you, you have not walked in my commandments and have not kept my judgments. This is why it is repeated for the third time. First, thus: Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am coming to you, and I myself will bring judgments in your midst. Second: Therefore, fathers will eat their sons in your midst. Third: Therefore, as I live, says the Lord God; if you have violated my sanctuary in all your offenses, and the rest. However, it should be noted that where there are beautiful and honorable things, and according to the merit of those who uphold them, God professes to act for their sake. But where there are sad and unworthy things for God, he indeed says that they happen, but not by his own doing, as at present: Therefore, fathers will eat their sons in your midst, and sons will eat their fathers. For he did not say, 'I will make the fathers eat their sons in your midst, and the sons eat their fathers.' But what was proper and not unworthy of the majesty of God, he says he will do. For it follows: 'And I will execute judgments in you, and I will scatter all your remnant to every wind.' We can expect such a thing to come in curses in Deuteronomy, especially in that place: 'Those who glorify me I will glorify, but those who despise me will be brought to nothing.' (Deuteronomy XXVIII). For he who glorifies himself, glorifies himself. But those who despise him will not be despised by the Lord, or be reduced to nothingness (for it followed that he said), but absolutely, they will be reduced to nothingness: not by God, but by their own merits and sins. We read in the Book of Kings, driven by the necessity of hunger, a mother devoured her son (2 Kings 6). Josephus also recounts many such acts in the siege of Jerusalem. However, the story does not tell when fathers eat their sons or when sons eat their fathers, except perhaps in many desperate situations, it must be believed that these things have also happened. This can also be applied to our Jerusalem: when teachers are against their students, that is, fathers against sons, and students against teachers, that is, sons against fathers, they are stirred up by mutual rebellion, and

what is said by the Apostle is fulfilled: But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you are not consumed by one another (Gal. 5:15). And so the Prophet sang in mystical speech: When they drew near against me, who afflict me, to eat my flesh (Psalm 26:2). And Job speaks something similar: But if my handmaids have said: Who will give us of his flesh, that we may eat (Job 31). And concerning the leaders who seek profit from the disciples and have no concern for their salvation, it is said: Who devour my people as bread (Psalm 52:5). And concerning these, the Apostle says: 'And they devour the houses of widows' (Luke 20; Matthew 23). We can understand, fathers, that those who have eaten their children and children who have eaten their fathers, not only in Babylon, but also in the Roman siege. However, what is said, 'I will scatter all your remnants to every wind,' pertains more to the Roman captivity, when they were dispersed throughout the whole world. And this is the scattering to every wind of hair and beard.

5:11

(Verse 11.) Therefore, I am alive, says the Lord God: unless for the reason that you have violated my sanctuary in all your offenses, and in all your abominations: I also will shatter (or, according to the LXX, cast away) you, and my eye will not spare, and I will not have mercy. This is specifically said to Jerusalem, because you have violated my sanctuary by forsaking me, and you have worshipped idols in my temple. I also will shatter all your idols, and I will break and overthrow them, or cast you away, because you have cast me away first. And my eye will not spare when I see you hungry, with a sword, submitting your neck to servitude, nor will I have mercy; because you do not deserve my mercy. For it is written: Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy (Matthew 5:7). This same thing must be understood in the Church, that God can say daily to teachers and priests who have acted negligently: Because you have violated my holy things in all your offenses, and in all the abominations you have committed, I will also crush and break you, and I will repay through me what you have perpetrated against my people. About whom the same Prophet speaks more fully against the shepherds here (Infra, XXXIV), that they cover themselves with the wool of the sheep and feed on milk and cheese, and do not seek the broken and sick.

5:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) A third part of you will die by pestilence and be consumed by famine in your midst, and a third part will fall by the sword all around you. I will scatter your third part to every wind, and I will unsheathe the sword after them. And I will pour out my fury and make my anger rest upon them, and I will comfort myself. And they will know that I, the Lord, have spoken in my zeal, when I have accomplished my anger upon them. Because they had divided the Septuagint into four parts, they approved that only the prophetic discourse about the fire, sword, and dispersion were superfluous, so that the first part of the fire would be divided into two parts in this place as well, they also divided the same first part into two, saying: The fourth part of you will be crushed by death, and the fourth part of you will be consumed by famine in your midst, and the fourth part of you will fall around you, and I will scatter the fourth part of you to every wind; although what we have added: And the fourth part of you will fall by the sword, is added from Theodotion's edition under asterisks. It is clear, however, that the Hebrew truth contains three parts. Of the first of these, it is said: 'And a third part of you shall die of pestilence and be consumed by famine in your midst.' It would have been much better to translate what is written than to seek support for a poorly translated matter. And we do not say that this was done by those to whom antiquity gave authority,

but it was corrupted by the fault of many centuries of scribes and readers. Although both Aristeus and Josephus, and the entire school of the Jews, claim that only five books of Moses were translated by the Seventy. The chapter we mentioned above now seems to be omitted. I will only add this, which is necessary in what he says: And I will pour out my wrath and make my indignation rest upon them, and I will comfort them, and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have poured out my indignation upon them; how the wrath, indignation, and zeal of God are to be understood, we have often explained, that God speaks with human emotions: not because he is angry himself, but so that we may perceive God as angry through punishments and torments. But zeal is to be understood under the metaphor of a husband and wife, who as long as he loves his wife, is jealous; if he neglects her, he says what we are going to say in the following: My jealousy will depart from you, and I will no longer be angry with you (Below, LXI, 42). And it is joined: And they shall know that I the Lord have spoken in my jealousy, not to those who have perished by famine and pestilence, nor to those who have fallen by the sword around the city, but to those who will be scattered to every wind, they will feel the anger of God for the deaths of others and their own miseries, whom they did not want to perceive as merciful.

5:14

(Verse 14.) And I will make you a desert; and what follows: and a reproach to the nations that are around you, which is not found in the Septuagint: for which they added from their own, and your daughters in your vicinity. And again, according to both editions, in the sight of all passing by. However, it is beneficial for Jerusalem to be destroyed by all its vices, and to be brought to a desert, and to recognize its own sins, so that what should have been an example of virtues to other nations may be an example of miseries. But we can understand his daughters, the cities or villages, or the Churches dispersed throughout the whole world, so that whoever is a pilgrim of this world may say with the Psalmist: I am a stranger and a sojourner like all my fathers (Ps. 38:12); and regarding whom it is said: Those who pass by say not: The blessing of the Lord be upon you (Ps. 129:8), let him see his disgrace and mourn.

5:15 (Verse 15) And you will be a reproach and a blasphemy, an example and a wonder among the nations around you. For in the Septuagint it is written: And it will be στενάκτ■, which means mournful. And in Theodotion it is added, κα■ δηλα■στ■; the meaning of this word is unknown to us. For this reason, three other interpreters have translated it as blasphemy, which is called Geddupha in Hebrew (). It follows: When I pronounce judgment on you in my anger and wrath and in the fierce blows of my fury, in full view of your sinfulness, you groan and moan like the deserving city of Jerusalem, which experiences the wrath and indignation of God because it has offended him. This is also confirmed by the words of Paul, who says, 'We were by nature children of wrath, just like everyone else' (Ephesians 2:3). And again, 'While we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened' (2 Corinthians 5). We also say with Jerusalem, 'I will endure the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.' Some interpret 'Δηλα■στ■v' or 'δηλα■αν' as unfortunate and miserable, while others believe it to mean clear and exposed to miseries.

5:16

(Verse 16.) When I send the most destructive arrows of famine (the Vulgate adds 'against them'), which will be deadly, and I will send them to destroy you, and I will gather famine upon you, and I will break the staff (or rod) of bread. Famine and pestilence, and the most terrible beasts, and

whatever other evils we endure in this world, it is clear that they come because of our sins. Thus, that famine which is mentioned in the book of Ruth (Ruth 1) and in the book of Kings under Elijah (3 Kings 17), when the heavens were closed for three years and six months, and under Elisha (4 Kings 6), whose incredible scarcity was compensated by sudden abundance by God's judgment, was sent. Not only was this done in Jerusalem at that time, but it also happens in our Jerusalem, where, because of the magnitude of sins, hunger is first sent to hear the word of God. Then hunger is followed by death, so that those who have not heard may experience: Taste and see that the Lord is sweet (Psalm 33:9), and afterwards let us feel: The death of sinners is most bitter (Psalm 22). We have already spoken about the firmament and the staff of bread (above, IV).

5:17

(Verse 17) And I will send famine upon you, and the most evil beasts to annihilate you. And pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword upon you. I am the Lord who has spoken. The most evil beasts are brought upon the desolate land, which has been devastated by famine, the sword, and pestilence. These times also show when familiar animals, like dogs, are driven to madness and attack their masters' flesh, and the land is filled with bears, wolves, and all other kinds of beasts. The pestilence and blood passing through it signify disease and the sword. But even in our Jerusalem the worst beasts are sent, when we are handed over to ignominious sufferings, and to a reprobate sense and consciousness of our sins, which torture and tear apart our soul (Rom. I). Dissensions, heresies, schisms, rivalries, envy, sadness, detractions, evil desires, greed, which is the root of all evils (II Cor. XII), are the worst beasts. When they are within us, we deserve to hear: Your transgression shall rebuke you (Jeremiah). And we pray and say: Do not deliver the soul confessing to you to the beasts (Ps. LXXIII, 19).

6:1-3

(Chapter 6, Verses 1 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, turn your face towards the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them. And you shall say: Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God. Thus says the Lord God to the mountains and hills, to the cliffs and valleys. That which is often said in this Prophet as 'Adonai Dominus' seems to be briefly explained for the Greeks and Latins who do not have knowledge of the Hebrew language. Adonai is one name from the ten names of God, and it signifies Lord, which we often use in reference to God. Finally, when Sarah called Abraham her lord, she used this name (Gen. XVIII). And when it is said 'O Lord, my king', it is written Adonai (Exod. XXVIII). Therefore, when the two names, Lord and Lord, are joined together, the first name is common, the second properly belongs to God, which is called **יהוה** (ineffable), which was also written on the golden plate that was on the high priest's forehead. But the mountains of Israel, which were occupied by the idols of demons, hear and understand their Creator not with their ears, but with the command and power of the one who made them. Just as the sea saw and fled, the Jordan river turned back (Ps. CXIII): not, of course, with the eyes of flesh which it lacked. And it is said to the sea: Be silent, be calm (Mark IV, 39). And the winds are commanded by his breath; and the worm is commanded, which struck the shade of Jonah (Jonah IV). And from the same land it is written: Who looks at the earth and makes it tremble (Ps. CIII, 32). The Prophet speaks to those indicating that idols are to be destroyed and altars, and all the ceremonies they previously served to be crushed. We can understand the mountains of Israel and the leaders as those who excelled in power, wisdom,

knowledge, and wealth. And it should be noted that the face is indeed hardened, and it is set against the mountains: but it does not speak only to the mountains, but also to the hills, rocks, and valleys, where inferior dignity and degrees of prudence and knowledge are known. They seem to me to be tropologically mountains, those who have reached perfect knowledge; hills, who are slightly lower; rocks, who have no knowledge and only rely on conversation, presuming something about the interpretation of the Scriptures, having zeal for God according to the Apostle, but not according to knowledge (Rom. X; James III); valleys, on the other hand, are called the lowest in the Church, who are inferior in both life and knowledge, yet do not depart from the gathering of the Lord's family. Those who are commanded to hear the word of God, so that each one may understand according to their own measure and understanding what the Lord commands.

6:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) Behold, I will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. And I will overthrow your altars, and break your images, and cast down your slain before your idols. And I will give the dead bodies of the children of Israel before the face of their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars in all your dwellingplaces. It is said of the mountains of Israel that God will destroy their high places, where people worshiped false gods, and will break their altars and images, and cause their worshipers to be killed in front of their temples; so that the bodies of the dead may lie where the offerings used to lie; and the bones of those who were on the mountains, not the mountains themselves, will be scattered around the altars and in all the cities and villages of Israel. This literally. Otherwise, against those who are uplifted in pride, and of whom the Apostle speaks: Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up (I Cor. VIII, 1), the sword is brought forth, so that all their images, which they have fashioned in their own minds, may be crushed and lie dead, and they may feel themselves to be dead, realizing that their images and creations are of no benefit to them. And he says that the bones of the mountains shall be scattered around the altars, indicating that the strongest among them should be separated from one another. For it is beneficial for evil to be separated from evil by perverse knowledge. And as those who were building the tower with the worst consent were dispersed for their own utility, and their tongues were divided (Gen. XI), so will the bones of the mountains be scattered, that they may understand the vanity of their endeavors. This that we have set forth: 'And I will give the bodies of the children of Israel before the face of your idols,' is not found in the Septuagint.

6:6-7

(Verse 6, 7.) The cities shall be deserted, and the lofty places shall be demolished; and your altars shall be scattered and your idols shall cease, and your temples shall be broken down and your works shall be destroyed. And the slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I am the Lord. The clear cause why the cities of the mountains are to be deserted: namely, that the lofty places may be demolished, and the altars and idols may be destroyed, and the temples may perish, and all worship of the idols may cease; and the slain may fall in the midst of the mountains; and they may know that he himself is the Lord. For this reason, we are given the opportunity to follow the spiritual intelligence more, so that the cities of heretics, which are interpreted as Churches, and the high pride of their teachings, and the altars of their perverse doctrines, are shattered, and the idols perish, which they simulated in their own hearts, and the shrines are destroyed, not the temples, which rose up against the temple of the Lord, and are called 'temples'

in Greek, that is, shrines and all the works of mountains are crushed, which are not the works of God, but of false masters of knowledge. And when the slain shall fall in the midst of the mountains, either those whom the mountains themselves have slain, or the ecclesiastical men who have slain them wickedly to their own safety: then shall be the end of the proud mountains, that they may know that he is the Lord. But it may happen that from one people of the mountains of Israel, others being slain, others may know. For when a pestilent scourge is slain, the foolish will be wiser.

6:8

(Verse 8.) And I will leave among you those who have escaped the sword among the nations, when I scatter you among the lands. And they shall remember me, the ones who were delivered, among the nations where they were taken captive. That which the Lord speaks to Elijah: I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18); and the Apostle Paul writes: And now at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace that has been saved (Romans 11:5), which may be applicable to this chapter. For indeed the Apostles, who were of the seed of Israel and had fled the sword, are therefore reserved, so that they might be scattered into the lands and preach the Gospel among the nations, and be remembered among the nations of God, in which they were living during the time of captivity. And it can also be said that some were reserved from the captivity of Judah, so that they might be remembered among the nations and preach the power of His name. The peoples of the heretics who were able to escape the sword of their destruction, and the wicked faction that had been incited against God, will remember the name of God, repenting and rejoicing that they were captured by the men of the Church.

6:9-10

(Verse 9, 10) Because I have broken their heart by committing adultery and turning away from me, and their eyes are adulterous, looking after their idols. And they will displease each other with the evils they have done in all their abominations. And they will know that I, the Lord, have not spoken in vain, in order to bring harm upon them. Many things from this chapter have been omitted by the Septuagint, and that part has been changed. I have sworn to their adulterous heart: therefore we have put: I have broken their heart by committing adultery. But he swore and determined that he would do what he had shown through his actions; or he deceived by fornicating and turning away from God, concerning those about whom the Lord speaks through Hosea: They have been seduced by the spirit of prostitution (Hosea 4:12). And they fornicated their eyes after idols, through whose windows it is said that death entered. For this reason, in the book of Daniel, two elder men commanded that Susanna be revealed, so that they could enjoy the beauty of her naked body (Dan. 13). And the Lord spoke not in vain, when He brought evil or evils, when those who were subject to His sentence repent. But if the heart is hard and untamable, not even feeling the punishments of the correcting benefactor, it is said to them: I struck your children without cause: you have not received discipline. (Jeremiah 2:30). However, it is beneficial even to heretics, that their heart be broken, the worst treasure of perverse doctrines, because they have turned away from the Lord, and their eyes commit adultery after their own inventions. Those who remember the Lord will be displeased with all their abominations and those who understand the truth of the true faith will know that He is the Lord. Therefore, He often brings tribulation, which seems harmful and evil to the patient, so that they may be converted to repentance.

6:11

(Verse 11.) Thus says the Lord God: Strike your hand, and stamp your foot, and say: Alas! for all the abominations of the evil house of Israel. The prophet is commanded to show the magnitude of sins with his hands, feet, and words, so that he may display through the movement of his body and the indignation of his voice, the appearance of one amazed and astonished, weeping and lamenting. For just as when we see something new and marvelous, we tremble both in body and mind, so that we clap our hands and stamp our feet on the ground, and bow our voice to weeping; in the same way, now the prophet, seeing with the eyes of his soul the coming punishments, speaks of all the abominations of the evil house of Israel that follow. We strike spiritually with our hand, when we separate ourselves from evil works. We stomp our foot, when we do not proceed on the path of sin. We weep and cry, when we are displeased with what is happening. What is shown in words, alas. For which Aquila interpreted as ■ ■, Symmachus σχετλ■ασον, which means to lament or weep. LXX and Theodotion ε■γε, which is more of an insult than a lament.

Those who are going to perish by the sword, famine, and plague. This is indeed the cause of weeping, because the inhabitants of the mountains and the worshippers of altars and idols are going to perish by the sword, famine, and plague. Those who are led astray by various errors, and change their faith daily, are tossed about by every wind of doctrine: they are killed by the sword and divided into factions, abandoning the unity of the Catholic faith. But whoever does not have spiritual food dies of hunger, not knowing him who said: I am the life (John XIV, 6). Moreover, those who are devoted to either single or multiple vices cannot be separated from them, as if once they fell from an ancient pestilence, or rather a certain uterine pestilence.

6:12

(Verse 12.) Whoever is far away will die from the plague; whoever is near will fall by the sword, and whoever is left and surrounded by famine will die, and I will fulfill my wrath upon them. Whoever escapes the siege of the city and migrates to the desert will die from the plague; whoever is near will fall by the enemy's sword. And whoever is surrounded by the enemy's army will perish from famine and lack: in all of these, the wrath of God will be fulfilled, so that those who remain may know that He is the Lord. Whoever departs from the Church will immediately die of the plague. Whoever considers themselves free and diligent, unless they take caution, will be struck by the sword of their enemies. Whoever is content with simple faith, like dumb animals, indeed belongs to the Church, but does not make any progress in good works; nor is he an imitator of the ant, which prepares and gathers food in the harvest, he will die of hunger, and the anger of the Lord will be fulfilled in all these things.

6:13

(Verse 13.) And you shall know that I am the Lord, when your slain shall be in the midst of your idols, round about your altars, upon every high hill, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols. It is evident according to the literal sense, and needs no interpretation, that in the mountains of Israel, and in the high places, among the altars and groves, which are called thick trees, the army of Israel was slain, that they might be punished in the same places where they had sinned. According to allegory, let us follow the proposed order. When the masters of heretics, who are instructed in the knowledge of

Scriptures, have been crushed and overcome by the Ecclesiastical men, we see them lying among the idols they created, and those who elevated themselves against the knowledge of God lie scattered on the mountains and hills beneath every leafy tree; those who have pompous words and the shadow of leaves, but do not have the fruits of good works; those who are under every leafy oak tree, which does not bear the fruits of men, but of pigs: where they burn fragrant incense not to God, but to their idols. And they could not say what is written about Noah: 'The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma' (Gen. VIII, 21): and that which Paul speaks: 'For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing' (II Cor. II, 15). But just as a holy person delights God with their fragrance, so sin is committed from whose person that psalm is sung: 'My wounds stink and fester because of my foolishness' (Ps. XXXVII, 6), he kindles his foul incense for his idols. What we interpreted, on all the highest points of the mountains: and a little later: And under the whole leafy oak, they left seventy.

6:14

(Verse 14.) And I will stretch out my hand upon them and make the land desolate and forsaken, from the wilderness of Deblath to all their dwellings. And they shall know that I am the Lord. O mountains of Israel, when your slain ones have fallen among your idols and on every high hill and on all the mountaintops, when I have filled your forests with the corpses of the dead, those whom you once burned incense to, then I will stretch out my hand against you in vengeance, which has been restrained until now, and I will make the whole land of Israel a desolation, from the wilderness of Deblath in the land of Hamath, which is called Epiphania of Syria, to all their dwellings. So that all may know that there is nothing between the wilderness and the Great Sea that the sword of the enemy has not consumed. Many people think that the same place is meant, about which it is written in Jeremiah: 'And they took Zedekiah in the desert that is near Jericho, and all his company fled from him.' And when they had captured the king, they brought him to the king of Babylon in Riblah, which is in the land of Hamath (Jer. 39:5). It may also be called Deblatha or Reblatha due to the close similarity of the Hebrew letters Daleth and Res, which are distinguished by a small dot. But according to mystical understanding, the Lord extends His hand over all those who have been deceived by heretical error, in order to make their land, which is interpreted as the Church, desolate from the desert of Deblatha, which in our language means 'mass of figs', and of compacted thistles, so that after they have discovered bitterness in the simulated sweetness, which was not of cultivated land but of solitude, then they may know that He Himself is the Lord. Honey drips from the lips of a prostitute, who temporarily satiates the mouths of those who eat, but afterwards is found bitter as gall (Prov. 5:3,4). This also signifies the two baskets of figs that were placed in front of the Temple in Jeremiah (Jer. 24): one basket of good figs and one of rotten figs. One of these refers to the Church of Christ, the other to the congregation of the wicked.

7:1-2

(Chapter 7, Verses 1, 2.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: And you, son of man, thus says the Lord God of the land of Israel: The end has come, the end has come upon the four corners of the earth. These corners of the world we have interpreted as the East and the West, the South and the North. Concerning these corners, Isaiah also speaks: Lord, from the corners or ends of the earth, we have heard wonders (Isaiah 24:16), which were accomplished throughout

the whole world by the apostles. And it is written of the saints: 'If you sleep among the clergy of the silver dove's wings, and their backs are pale with gold' (Psalm 67:14). Therefore, when the Lord approached and saw Jerusalem, he wept and said, 'How often have I desired to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing?' (Matthew 23:37). This is the one who, in the song of Deuteronomy, spread his wings and received them, and carried them on his shoulders (Deuteronomy 32). Certain spiritual wings of the earth, by which we fly upward to the heavenly, He places into four types of believers: the house of Aaron, and the house of Levi, and the house of Israel, and those who fear the Lord. Concerning them, the Psalmist also sings: House of Israel, bless the Lord: house of Aaron, bless the Lord: house of Levi, bless the Lord; you who fear the Lord, bless the Lord (Psalm 134:19-21). In Aaron, the priesthood; in Levi, the priests and ministers; in Israel, the whole people; in those who fear the Lord, the understanding of proselytes. But we think that it needs to be simply explained, that after the commination of the mountains of Israel, the prophetic discourse is directed to all the land of Israel, whether ten or twelve tribes: and that the prophet does not predict future events, but sees the impending captivity. For in the fifth year of Sedecias, Ezechiel began to prophesy to the captives in Babylon; and in the ninth year, Nabuchodonosor came and besieged Jerusalem: and he captured it in the eleventh year of Sedecias. From which it is evident that the end has come and drawn near, not over mountains and hills and rocks and valleys, but over the four corners of the earth from every part of Israel: not all the earth: if he had said that, it could be believed of the whole world; but the earth simply, which signifies Israelites. For thus he had begun: Thus says the Lord God of the land of Israel: The end, the end has come upon the four corners of the earth.

7:3-4

(Verse 3, 4.) Now the end is upon you, and I will unleash my fury upon you, and I will judge you according to your ways, and I will bring all your abominations against you. And my eye will not spare you, and I will have no pity, but I will bring your ways upon you, and your abominations will be in your midst, and you will know that I am the Lord. In this chapter, according to the Septuagint Interpreters, the order has been changed and confused, so that the first become last, and the last become first or middle, and even the middle is now transferred to the extremes and vice versa. From this point, following the Hebrew and other interpreters, we have set forth the order of truth. Therefore, the speech is directed to the land of Israel, because the end and consummation will come upon it, and the Lord will send forth His anger upon it, not unjustly, but only coming from indignation; but it will be full of equity and reason, so that He may judge it according to His ways, and show it all its abominations. He will remember His works and understand what evil it has done. But as he says: My eye will not spare you, and I will not have pity, like a most merciful physician who wants to cut away putrid flesh and burn festering wounds with a cauterizing iron, he does not spare in order to spare; he does not have pity in order to have more pity; so that nothing putrid and corrupting remains in the body to infect the living flesh nearby. The Lord strikes those whom he loves, and he chastises every son whom he receives (Heb. 12:6). Of this understanding, it is said: I will strike and I will heal (Deut. 32:39). For every medicine has bitterness in the beginning, but afterwards the fruits of pain are revealed, and health is shown. This is what God speaks through Amos: 'Because I have known you from all the tribes of the earth, therefore I will avenge upon all your sins.' For the Lord knows those who belong to Him. And He says in Second Timothy: 'I will set forth his ways, and all the steps of his life, his abominations and stains, that the previous sins may

be placed before the eyes of the sinner who is punished for the sake of health.' And when the Lord has done this, those who were oppressed will know that He is the Lord. This itself signifies and that testimony: I will punish Jacob according to his ways, and repay him according to his deeds. (Hosea 12:2).

7:5-6

(Verse 5, 6) This is what the Lord God says: A single affliction, behold, is coming: the end is coming, the end is coming. He has awakened against you, behold, he is coming. Constriction is coming upon you, you who dwell in the land. These are not found in the Septuagint, but they have been added in their edition of Theodotion's translation under asterisks. However, we will follow the Hebrew. Instead of affliction, which according to Symmachus, who interpreted it as κ^κκωσιν, we have put for the sake of clarity: and in Hebrew and in Greek it is written κακ^α, or πονηρ^α: that is, wickedness. It is said (Al. Dicit) that the final time of the sins of the land of Israel has come: so that it may no longer escape the judgement of God, which it has deserved for a long time. And because it had not yet completed its sins, punishment was therefore delayed; according to what is written: For the sins of the Amorites are not yet complete (Genesis XV, 16). Therefore, the Lord also said to the Jews: And you, He says, fill up the measure of your fathers (Matthew XXIII, 32). Therefore, misery comes to you; affliction comes, and captivity comes. And lest you think that I threaten future things again, I show with my finger and demonstrate. Behold, it comes, the end comes, the end comes. He who seemed to you until now to be sleeping and resting, has suddenly awakened against you and risen up. Constriction comes, which is called Sefphira in Hebrew, and which Aquila interpreted as προσκ^{πη}σιν, that is, contemplation and foresight, which you always fear will come to you with trepidation; and which Theodotio interpreted as πλοκ^ν, that is, the order and intertwining of all evils. Furthermore, what is said about you who dwell on earth, according to the Book of Revelation of John, we must understand: Woe to all who dwell on the earth. (Rev. 8:13). For the holy person is not an inhabitant of the earth, but a stranger and a pilgrim; and he says: I am a stranger and a sojourner, like all my fathers. (Psalm 38:13). Therefore, even Abraham the Hebrew, that is, a wanderer and a stranger passing through, is remembered; hastening to pass from the present world to the future. We can interpret this passage spiritually against the Jewish people, upon whom came the end and completion from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom they killed between the temple and the altar (Matt. XXIII). For as long as they did not lay hands on the Son of God, the judgment of the Lord slept and was delayed. But when they killed the heir, so that the inheritance would perish, then He arose against them and all the order of miseries and confusion awakened. Because they did not seek the heavenly things, but desired to cling to earthly things.

7:7

(Ver. 7.) The time has come, the day of slaughter is near, and not the glory of the mountains. The Hebrew word Adarim, which we have divided into two words, first Ad, second Arim, according to Theodotion, we have translated as the glory of the mountains. Symmachus translates it as the restoration, and he said: And the time is near: the day of hastening, not of restoration. Moreover, the LXX translates it as: The time has come, the day is approaching, not with disturbance, nor with pains. Theodotio: The time has come, the day of hunger is near, and not the day of glory for the mountains. It is also a time of slaughter, and even now it is evident among the Jewish people, who

have no prophets or the word of God to nourish the souls of believers. But understand, O mountains, you who have knowledge of the Scriptures. As it is said elsewhere: 'You shine forth wondrously from the eternal mountains' (Psalm 75:5). Furthermore, the Seventy who said 'not with disturbance, and not with pains' signify that they have such great ignorance of God and blindness of soul, that they are not troubled by their sins, and are not tormented by the pains of repentance.

7:8

(Verse 8) Now I will pour out my anger upon you and vent my fury against you; I will judge you according to your ways and bring upon you all your abominations. If we calculate from the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin to the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah, when Nebuchadnezzar came and besieged Jerusalem, it will be three years in total. Therefore, it is rightly said: Now I will pour out my anger upon you. I will by no means foretell to you what is to come, nor will I threaten you with things that are far off in the future: now I will unleash my fury upon you. This fury and anger is by no means without judgment: but it is to return your ways upon your own head, and to make you feel all your abominations. Moreover, we can also speak of the ultimate captivity, that after the killing of Christ, when their end came and sin awoke against them, that was fulfilled which was written: Now the wrath of God has come upon them to the end (1 Thess. 1:16). When Titus and Vespasian surrounded Jerusalem, and its desolation arrived, and it was fulfilled: Behold, your house will be left abandoned to you (Matthew 23:38). Then they were judged according to their ways and the blasphemies with which they denied the Lord; and they felt the fury of God, and all His indignation was poured out upon them, and they received their crimes, so that the destruction of the temple might endure until the end.

7:9

(Verse 9.) And my eye shall not spare, neither will I have compassion: but I will lay (or give) upon you your ways, and your abominations shall be in your midst, and you shall know that I am the Lord who strikes. He subjects the causes of severity and sternness, or, as heretics think, the cruelty of God that his eye does not spare nor have compassion, saying: I will give you your ways, and your abominations shall be in your midst; so that you may feel what you have done, and seeing your abominations either before you or placed in the midst of all, you may correct your error with repentance, and turning away from your former works, when you hate what you have done, then you shall feel that he himself is the Lord (Heb. XII). He who strikes in order to correct and chastise every son whom he receives.

7:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) Behold the day, behold it comes, the contraction has gone forth: the rod has blossomed, pride has sprouted. Iniquity has risen in the rod of wickedness, not from them, and not from the people, nor from their noise: and there will be no rest for them. LXX: Behold the day brings forth, behold the end comes, the complex has gone forth, and the rod has blossomed, pride has sprouted, injury has been awakened, and it will crush the strength of the wicked, and not with disturbance nor with haste, and they are not from them, nor is there beauty in them. The day has been contracted, says [someone], and shortened. And approaching is a neighboring captivity. The rod that threatened you for a long time has blossomed, and from the flower of its bloom it has given birth to the fruit of punishments. Your pride has sprouted what you deserved, so that the

injustice, which is not from a pitiable people, nor from those who are led like dumb animals by their masters, nor from the shouting and noise with which they vociferated in vain, deceived by the priests and pharisees, may rise up with a united voice and say: 'Crucify, crucify such a one.' (John 19:6) Where there will be no rest for them, but eternal captivity. Furthermore, the Seventy interpreted it in the sense in which it is written: 'For you do not know what the coming day may bring' (Prov. 27:1), saying: 'Behold, the day brings forth what was conceived long before: and the end has come, and the fulfillment has gone forth, which embraces all your evils and holds them, or as Symmachus interpreted, inspection, so that God may see all that you have done and consider your works, and render to each one what he deserves.' And in that which they have likewise transferred, the rod flourished, as we can use that testimony: Do not take the rod away from your son (Prov. XIII, 13). And the Apostle: What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and the spirit of gentleness (I Cor. IV, 21)? But even God speaks through the mouth of the Psalmist: I will punish their iniquities with the rod, and their sins with scourges: but I will not take away my mercy from them (Psalm LXXXVIII, 33, 34). Therefore the Lord visits and strikes, so that every pride which was long hidden and enclosed may arise and be revealed; and injury is aroused against the arising and budding pride, and the strength of the wicked is crushed, not with disturbance or haste. For the end of a flourishing rod is health and correction, which comes not by merit to those who are reprov'd, nor by beauty which they do not possess in themselves, but by the mercy of the Lord. A difficult passage, and one that differs greatly between the Hebrew and the Septuagint, to which many additions have been made from Theodotion's edition, in order to make it seem to have some consistency.

7:12

(Verse 12.) The time has come, the day is approaching. It is not only said of Jerusalem that the time of its captivity has come and the day has approached when it will be besieged by the Babylonian army, but also to the one who was rejoicing in his built and expanded storehouses, the Lord speaks: Fool, tonight your soul will be taken from you; and the things which you have prepared, whose will they be (Luke 12:20)? From where the Apostle also says: The time, he says, has been shortened (1 Corinthians 7:29). And in another place: For the form of this world passes away (Ibid., 31). It is to be noted that he did not say it will be postponed to the future, but he spoke of the present, it passes away, and the form of the world slips away daily. For it never remains in the same state; but the form of things that are growing and decaying flies by and changes. Hence the Lord also said: Heaven and earth will pass away (Matth. XXIV, 35). But if these things, in which all things that are in the world are contained, pass and go through, what can be perpetual in human affairs?

7:13

(Verse 13). The one who buys should not rejoice, and the one who sells should not mourn. It is natural to rejoice in the purchase of possessions and mourn in their sale. However, when slavery and captivity are imminent, both joy and sorrow are in vain. Hence, the Apostle says: Time is shortened. Henceforth, those who have wives should live as if they did not have them, those who weep as if they did not weep, those who rejoice as if they did not rejoice, those who buy as if they did not possess, and those who use this world as if they did not make full use of it (I Cor. VII, 29 seqq.). For just as the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of

Man. (Matthew 24)

Because his anger is upon all his people. This is found in the Septuagint. For the word 'people' can also be understood as 'multitude' and 'crowd' according to the Hebrew, for it signifies 'Amona.' And the reason is clear: that the one who buys should not rejoice, and the one who sells should cease mourning, because the anger of God will soon come upon all the multitude of the land of Judah, or Jerusalem. For it is understood from the preceding text, in which it is written: Thus says the Lord God of the land of Israel, etc.

7:13 (Verse 13.) Because the one who sells will not return to that which he sold. He speaks according to the Hebrew custom. For every sale was returned to the seller in the fiftieth year of remission, which among them is called the Jubilee. Therefore, before the year of remission comes, when possessions return to their previous owners, captivity will come upon them, which will take away all the city's customs. Moreover, what the Seventy translated as: Because the buyer will not return to the seller, although it does not completely agree with the historical account, according to allegory, it can have this meaning: that we can say that the one who was deceived by a heretical error, when he understands the deceit of the teacher, will by no means return to the seller, that is, to the teacher; but will despise and reject him. And yet in the lives of those still living, because the vision will not return to the entire multitude. Just as possession does not return to the previous owner with the imminent destruction of a city, so the prophetic vision and warning, which is directed to the entire multitude of the city, will by no means return and will become invalid; but it will be fulfilled in the remaining days, to those to whom the prophetic message is directed. However, he says this in order to show the impending captivity, lest they should say according to custom: This vision will be for a long time, and will be fulfilled after many years. We can say this, that after the prophetic vision has departed from the Jews, the Law and the Prophets do not return to them, nor do they deserve to have prophets anymore after the killing of the Savior. And significantly, he says that the vision will not return to any multitude. Therefore, it will return to those who believed in the Lord, namely the apostles and the remnant of the Jewish people who have been saved from Israel. But these two verses are not found in the Septuagint edition. And a man in the wickedness of his life will not be strengthened. LXX: And a man in the eyes of his life will not obtain. And the meaning according to the Hebrew: His wickedness will not benefit a man, nor will it provide him with any strength. According to the Septuagint: And a man, who desired what he thought to be precious in the world, will not obtain it; but with freedom perishing, everything that is beautiful will be lost. However, the ambiguity of the Hebrew letters Yod and Vav, which are distinguished only by their size, caused some to interpret it as wickedness and others as eyes.

7:14 (Verse 14.) Blow the trumpet, let all be prepared. LXX: Blow the trumpet, and judge all things. We read in many places about the sound and noise of trumpets, as in Isaiah: 'Lift up your voice like a trumpet' (Isa. LVIII, 1); and elsewhere: 'Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the appointed time, on our solemn feast day' (Ps. LXXX, 3); and in the Apostle: 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God' (I Thess. IV, 5). And in the Gospel: Do not sound the trumpet before you (Matthew 6:2). And the story of the trumpets, both golden and silver, is told in the book of Numbers (Numbers 10 and 31), which is compared to prophetic discourse and Apostolic doctrine. And now it is commanded that everyone be prepared for battle at the sound of the trumpet and the blowing of the trumpet. Moreover, what the Seventy said, "Judge all things," there is no doubt that it agrees with the

authority of the apostles. After the trumpet of the angels has sounded, they will judge on twelve thrones the twelve tribes of Israel. Of whom Paul spoke: We will judge angels (I Cor. VI, 3); and elsewhere: The world will be judged in you (Ibid., 2). But according to the present sense, those who are entrusted with this office are commanded ironically to blow the trumpet, so that all may be prepared against the army of Babylon. And there is no one who goes to battle. For my anger is over his whole multitude. And these are not found in the Septuagint. God had commanded (Num. X) that the trumpet should sound to prepare the army, which could resist the strength of the Babylonians; but it was of no use to command, since there is no one in the people who dares to proceed to war. Therefore, the people are weak and lacking in fighting strength, because all of God's anger is over his whole multitude, understood as the city of Jerusalem or the land of Judea. But both in our land and in Jerusalem, when either public persecution or the many enticements of vices try to overcome us, the teachers sing in vain, and hurry to prepare us for battles, even though there is no strength in the people, which has been taken away because the sins deserve the present anger of God.

7:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) The sword is outside, and pestilence and famine are within. Those who are in the field will die by the sword; and those who are in the city will be consumed by pestilence and famine. And those who escape will be saved; they will be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, trembling. Each one in their own wickedness. The seventy, the doves of the valleys, or as Theodotus translated, the meditators, remained completely silent. And what we have interpreted, trembling: each one in their own wickedness, Theodotus translated it as: all muttering, each one in their own wickedness; so that under the metaphor of meditating doves, it signifies each person in the nation lamenting their own sin, and understanding and feeling why they are suffering these things. But we have already mentioned three classes of people who will die in the city: those who perish from plague and famine; those who are killed by the sword outside; and those who escape captivity. Of these, those who are saved will go to the mountains and, like murmuring doves, will anxiously bewail their sins. In a tropological sense, it should be understood that those in the fields and countryside, outside the borders of the Lord's city, which is called the Church, will be struck by the sword of their adversaries, but those who live negligently in the city and have not prepared food for themselves, of which it is written in Proverbs: 'He who works his land will have his fill of food,' (Prov. XII, 11,) will die from famine and plague. But few, who have avoided the sword of heretics or the hunger of their own sloth, and death, will be saved except in the mountains, and unless they have assumed the wings of a dove, and flown away, and found rest. For as long as doves are in the valleys, they tremble and fear everything: of whom we are commanded to imitate their innocence, and about whom it is written in the psalm: 'If you sleep among the midst of the flock, the wings of the dove that is silvered, and its back parts in the whiteness of gold' (Ps. 67:14): in whose form the Holy Spirit descended, and remained upon the Lord and Savior. Beautifully we will call the dove meditating according to Theodotus (Matthew 3), he who meditates day and night in the law of the Lord, and concerning whom it is written: The mouth of the just will meditate wisdom (Psalm 36:30).

7:17

(Verse 17.) All hands will be dissolved, and all knees will flow with water. And they will gird themselves with sackcloth, and terror will cover them. For knees flowing with water, Seventy have moved, thighs are polluted with moisture. But when all are trembling, and fleeing to the mountains, all hands will be dissolved, and no one will be able to resist the enemies, and with the magnitude of fear, urine will pollute the knees: and the bladder will not be able to contain the flowing waters. They will gird themselves with sackcloth, and trembling will possess all things. This happened among that people, not only under the Babylonians, but also under the Romans, when the wrath of God came upon them to the very end. Moreover, it happened in our own Judea, where the confession of the Lord is, when iniquities have multiplied and the love of many has grown cold, all the hands of good works will be dissolved, and all knees, or thighs, will flow with the waters of those who have sought unlawful unions, and who, in the law, are called eunuchs, that is, those sustaining a flow of semen and are called unclean by Scripture. Whereas those who are such, should gird themselves with the hairshirts of repentance, and fear the impending judgement. And whoever does this, will merit to hear Isaiah saying: Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees (Isaiah 35:3).

7:18

(Verse 18.) In every face there is confusion, and in every head there is baldness. The reddening of the face is a sign of shame, and the conscience of sins shines forth on the face. The hope of salvation is when shame follows sin. Therefore it was said to her who gloried in her sins with a hard heart: Your face has become like that of a prostitute, you do not know how to blush (Jer. 3:3). Baldness of the head is also a sign of sorrow, when we lose the beauty of our hair and the comeliness of our youth. And it is said about Jerusalem: For the adornment of your head, you will have baldness, because of your works (Isaiah 3:17). And another prophet says: All heads, he says, will be shaved in every place, and every beard will be cut off (Jeremiah 48:37). Also, Micah to the same Jerusalem: Shave, he says, and shear over the sons of your delights, spread your baldness like an eagle (Micah 1:16). And it is commanded to make baldness over the dead. But the holy ones, that is, the Nazarites, and those who deserved to obtain priesthood of the Lord, do not shave their heads (Num. VI). For they do not perform deeds of death, nor are they unclean, because they are Nazarites, that is, holy ones of the Lord. But if someone dies near them, all the previous days will not be considered as their sanctification. Samuel, the holy one of God, possessed the eternal ornament of the head: and he heard this from the Song of Songs: Your hair is black like a raven (Cant. V, 11). Furthermore, Samson, because he lost his hair, lost his strength (Judg. XVI): and as his hair gradually grew back, his former strength returned, so that he killed many more in his death than in his life. However, although Elisha had a bald head, because he was a servant of the Lord, he enjoyed the locks of his head. Hence, little children, because they were little and had not yet reached manhood, mocked his baldness and said, 'Go up, baldhead! Go up, baldhead!' (2 Kings II, 23), and they were torn by the bites of wild beasts, whose leaps and woods are their dwelling place.

7:19 (Verse 19.) Their silver will be thrown away in the streets, and their gold will be like garbage. Septuagint: Their silver will be thrown away in the streets, and their gold will be despised. In the midst of flight and captivity, they will throw away their riches and the weight of gold and silver on the streets, only seeking to save their own lives, so that they are not burdened by what was once luxury. Otherwise, according to the anagoge, all the silver of the captives and fugitives from

Jerusalem will be thrown away in the streets, on the wide and spacious road that leads to death, because they have abandoned the narrow path of salvation. But all gold will be considered worthless, even esteemed as dung and filth. For one cannot have purity who is outside the Church of the Lord. Their silver and gold will not be able to save them on the day of the wrath of the Lord. And this is not found in the Septuagint. Without a doubt, during times of siege and famine, it does not free those hungry for gold and silver, and their teeth are blunted like the hardest stone. Finally, it follows:

They will not satisfy their souls, and their bellies will not be filled. In the presence of evil, we have learned that many rich people, depleted by poverty, have had the end of beggars, among silk, gems, and weights of gold and silver. But the silver and gold of those who are outside the Church cannot free the souls of the possessors on the day of the Lord's wrath; instead, it shows that they will have eternal hunger and be tormented with an empty stomach. This testimony confirms it, saying: The redemption of a man's soul is his own wealth (Prov. XIII, 8). Our true riches are those which Christ's truth has taught us (Luke 16), who commanded us to make for ourselves friends with unrighteous wealth, who will receive us into eternal dwellings.

Because a scandal of iniquity has occurred among them. Therefore, he says, the possessors of gold and silver will not be satisfied, nor will their stomachs be filled, because this very gold and silver has become a scandal of their crimes. But it signifies idols, which are made of gold and silver, condemn their own creators. For this reason, the Seventy translated it: because the torments of their iniquities were such that they would be tormented in their own iniquity and understand that they have turned the gifts of God into blasphemy.

7:20

(Verse 20) And they put the ornament of their necklaces upon their pride, and they made images of their abominations and idols from it. LXX: The chosen ones of the world have put it upon their pride, and they have made images of their abominations and stumbling blocks from it. Which I, he says, had given as an ornament to those who possessed and to the wealthy, they have turned into pride, so that they could use them to free their own souls through alms and good works, and from them they had material for arrogance. Finally, they made idols out of gold and silver, and turned my gifts into images of demons. Moreover, what the Seventy said is applicable to their pride in bringing gold and silver: nothing is considered more precious in the world. And what follows, we know is found in Theodotion. The meaning is easily understood according to the allegory, that heretics have used gold and silver, the senses and the words of Scripture that have been chosen as the world's treasures, and which have been given to us as ornaments, as fuel and material for pride, and they have made images of various doctrines and abominations and stumbling blocks from them, so that by means of these they could worship and adore God, but instead they offend God.

7:21

(Verse 21) Therefore I gave them over to uncleanness: and I will give them into the hands of foreigners to plunder them, and to the wicked of the earth as prey, and they will defile it. LXX: Therefore I gave them over to uncleanness: and I will give them into the hands of foreigners to plunder them, and to the pestilential ones of the earth as prey, and they will pollute it. Because

they made for themselves images of their abominations and idols from the gold and silver and ornaments of their necklaces, which I had given them, therefore I gave them into uncleanness and into excrement. For which Symmachus interpreted, expressing disgust, wanting to cleanse the filth of the idols. And he said, 'I will deliver these into the hands of the enemy, so that they may plunder everything, and not only defile them, but also demonstrate that they, which previously seemed most sacred, are contaminated.' We too are delivered into the hands of our enemies and strangers to God when we make our ornaments into images of demons, and all our glory is possessed by the impious or the plagues of the earth, so that they may subject us to their power.

7:22

(Verse 22) And I will turn my face away from them: and they will violate my sanctuary: and emissaries will enter it (as the Septuagint rashly translated, or as Symmachus and Theodotio, bursting in, and pestilential), and they will defile it. For, he says, because of the previous abominations of the people, I will turn my face away from them and I will not judge them worthy in my eyes: then they will violate my sanctuary, which signifies the Holy of Holies, for which the Septuagint translated visitation (to demonstrate the presence of God in holy places) and the impious and pestilent ones of the earth will burst in: which, except for the priests and the high priest alone, no one else dared to enter. What we know, both from the Babylonians, and from King Antiochus and Gnaeus Pompeius, and finally from what happened under Vespasian and Titus, when the temple was captured and destroyed, and all the things that the following prophet's speech encompasses. God also turns His face away from our evil deeds: and because His face is turned away, the secret of God is violated, so that the pestilential may enter for the priests and saints of God, and contaminate everything: so that the place that should have been holy becomes a place of uncleanness, according to the Gospel saying: 'My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer: but you have made it a den of thieves' (Matthew 21:13).

7:23

(Verse 23.) Make a conclusion, for the land is full of bloodshed, and the city is full of wickedness. LXX: And I will bring disturbance, for the land is full of bloodshed, and the city is full of iniquities. The Hebrew word Arethich () is interpreted by Aquila as conclusion, and by Symmachus and Theodotio as καθ'ἡλωσιν, meaning crucifixion. For this reason, the Septuagint uses φῦρμα, which we translate as disturbance. Therefore, O prophet, conclude my wrath upon the land of Judah and upon the city of Jerusalem in a brief speech, so that just as the land is full of bloodshed, for all are judged in bloodshed, shedding innocent blood: which the Scripture also records that the Jews did in the person of Naboth: thus their own blood is shed, and the city full of wickedness is demonstrated. For the city of Jerusalem, from gate to gate, is filled with the blood of the prophets, even under Manasseh (1 Kings 21). And there will come for them a conclusion, and disturbance and affliction, so that none of those who are facing imminent miseries can escape.

7:24 (Verse 24) And I will bring the wicked from the nations, and they will possess their houses. And these are not found in the Septuagint. For the priests and prophets, I will bring the wicked Babylonians from all nations, that they may possess your houses and subject you to servitude. But even our houses, that is, our souls (for we are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells in us - 1 Corinthians VI), the wicked demons will possess, if our land is filled with bloodshed and our habitation is full of iniquity. And I will make the haughtiness of the mighty to cease, and their

sanctuaries shall be possessed. I will turn away their roaring, and their holy places shall be defiled. All pride offends God. Therefore, the worst of the nations shall possess the houses of the mighty and the proud, and they shall occupy their sanctuaries, for a profane place of holiness enters, and its uncleanness contaminates it. But significantly, because the sanctuaries of God were polluted and his secret violated, he did not say, 'They shall possess my sanctuaries,' but 'their sanctuaries,' for they have departed from me after their contamination.

Distress is imminent. LXX: Propitiation will come. According to the higher order, they have been correctly interpreted as Eagle and Theodotius, the distress is imminent; and Symmachus, mourning. But the seventy, in the midst of all sorrows, have set down the word of joy: so that the soul of the grieving may be sustained, and may hope for better things amidst adversity, and a propitious Lord; of whom it is written: The Lord raises up those who are crushed (Ps. 145:8). But we, according to the earlier opinion of Symmachus, have combined it with the later, that we may say:

7:25

(Verse 25.) With impending distress, they will seek peace, and it will not be. This cannot possibly be reconciled with the Septuagint. For if propitiation comes, how will they seek peace and not find it? But he who has heard from the apostles will seek peace and not find it, for he has not kept it in his mind, nor has he made it rest, but driven away by wicked deeds, he cannot find it. Indeed, peace is that which surpasses all understanding, and which the victorious Savior, ascending to the Father, left to the apostles.

7:26 (Verse 26.) Disturbance will come upon disturbance, and hearing upon hearing. LXX: Woe upon woe will be, and message upon message. Just as it is said to the saints: Rejoice, again I say rejoice (Philippians IV, 2); and concerning them it is written: They will go from strength to strength (Psalm LXXXIII, 8), so that present good things may abound with future good things: likewise, for those upon whom distress comes, and who sought peace but did not find it, disturbance will come upon disturbance, or woe upon woe, as it is also written in the Apocalypse: woe has gone away, and woe will come quickly (Apocalypse IX, 12). And news will come upon news, and message upon message; according to the blessed Job: While one was still speaking, another messenger came (Job 1:16), increasing evils with evils, and describing the noise and tumult of approaching Babylonians. And they will seek a vision from the Prophet: and the law will perish from the Priest, and counsel from the elders. Specifically, each individual seeks specific things. The prophet seeks the prophecy of the future. The interpretation of the law is the duty of the priest. The prudent counsel is sought by those of mature age; according to what is written: In the counsel of the saints (or the just) and the assembly, are the great works of the Lord (Ps. CX, 1, 2). However, these things were not only sought by the prophets, priests, and elders when the Babylonian army came against Jerusalem, but they are sought daily in the churches. But if they have lost sight, law, and counsel, in vain do they boast of having prophets, priests, and elders.

7:27 (Verse 27) The king will mourn, and the prince will be clothed in sorrow, or, according to the Septuagint, in death: those who desired something, what we have expressed in the Hebrew language, the king will mourn, they have completely remained silent about it. However, the Holy Scripture commemorates that Zedekiah mourned, and all the princes of the people of Judah were consumed with sorrow. But, although this may seem blasphemous at first glance, we can say that

the king mourning for our vices and sins is Christ, who speaks in the Psalms: What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to corruption? (Ps. 29:10) And when he approached Jerusalem, he wept over it saying: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing (Matthew 23:37)! Even the leaders can be apostles, whether they mourn sinners in a good way or, on the contrary, those to whom it is said: Hear the word of the Lord, leaders of Sodom (Isaiah 1:11). And he will be clothed, according to the Septuagint, in destruction, who does not have the armor of God, nor is he clothed in Christ. For all who have been baptized in Christ, have clothed themselves with Christ (Galatians 3:27). And the hands of the people of the earth will be troubled, or, according to the Septuagint, dissolved. When there is no vision in the prophet, and knowledge of the Law in the priest, and counsel in the elders. And the king will mourn, and the prince will be in grief, or in destruction, consequently the hands of the people will be troubled, losing their order, or dissolved, not having ancient strength. And it is said beautifully that the people of God is not mentioned, whose hands are troubled, and who does not have a place in heaven; but the people of the earth, about whom it is written: Those who turn away from you will be written upon the earth. (Jeremiah 17:13).

According to their way, I will deal with them, and according to their judgments, I will judge them, or as the Septuagint translated, I will avenge them. God repays sinners according to their ways, so that He may keep the truth of judgment. However, in the saints, the extent of mercy exceeds the limits. For the sufferings of this temporary time are not worthy of the future glory that will be revealed in us (Rom. VIII, 18). For the wages of sin is death (Ibid. VI, 23), which the sinner receives according to their ways and works. Moreover, the virtue of the righteous enjoys the generosity of the Lord, of which Paul speaks: The gift of God is eternal life. And he added: and according to their judgments I will judge them, that Gospel saying: with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged (Matthew 7:1). And the Apostle: For in the judgment you pronounce you condemn yourself as you do the same things (Romans 2:1). And they shall know that I am the Lord. This verse is often placed in this prophet, that it may be known that the knowledge of God is followed by sufferings and tortures, so that those who did not understand through blessings may understand through torments.

Book Three

Book Three

Nothing is long that has faith, and all the past series of times that have passed are not useful: unless perhaps it has prepared a provision of good deeds for itself, which always look to the future, indeed to eternal things, and are not limited by any boundaries. The true saying is: All things that arise perish, and all things that grow old decline. And elsewhere: There is nothing made by work and hand that old age does not complete and consume. Who would believe that Rome, built by victories from the whole world, would fall, and that it would become both the mother and tomb for its own people: that the shores of the whole East, Egypt, and Africa, once dominated by the victorious city, would be filled by the number of slaves and maidservants: that Bethlehem, once noble for both sexes and abundant in all riches, would receive beggars every day? Since we are unable to provide assistance to those in need, we sympathize and join tears with tears: occupied with the burden of holy work, while not allowing ourselves to see flowing together without groaning,

we have ignored explanations in Ezekiel, and we have almost abandoned all study, desiring to turn the words of the Scriptures into deeds, and not just speak of holy things, but do them. Therefore, once again reminded by you, virgin of Christ Eustochium, we resume our interrupted work and, undertaking the third volume, we desire to fulfill your desire: praying not for our strength, but for our intention, considering one of them to be human fragility, and the other to be holy will in the Lord.

8:1

Chapter 8, Verse 1. And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, I was sitting in my house, and the elders of Judah were sitting before me. In the fifth year of the exile of Jehoiachin, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, we read about a previous vision to the prophet. But now, in the sixth year of the same king, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, a new vision is mentioned. From this, it is clear that these events, which are written, occurred after a year and two months, and either the prophecy was interrupted for a year and two months, or it spanned the entire fourteen months that the previous discourse covers. But in the sixth year and the sixth month, and on the fifth day of the month, which are numbers that refer to the creation of the world, and ((Al. ad)) the carnal senses, which perceive earthly things and do not yet contemplate heavenly things, the prophecy will not astonish one who understands that the word is directed to the elders of Judah. Among them, seventy held censers, and twenty-five worshiped the sun in the temple, and the prophet sat in his house, fleeing the crowd. And the elders of Judah sat before him, either desiring to hear the prophet's words or plotting against him. And those who are called elders of Judah are said to refer not to Israel, that is, to the ten tribes that were previously captured, but to those who were taken into captivity from the tribe of Judah with Jeconiah, let us understand.

8:2

(Version 2.) And there fell upon me the hand of the Lord God there. And I saw, and behold, a likeness as the appearance of fire from the appearance of his loins, and downward fire: and from his loins and upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the sight of lightning. LXX: And the hand of Adonai the Lord came upon me: and I saw and behold, a likeness as the form of a man from his loins, and downward fire, and from his loins, and upward as the sight of the aura, like the sight of lightning. The Hebrew language does not include the word "man." However, we have added the mention of the vision of the divine presence, which is not found in the Septuagint, from Theodotion. And because of what we have said, the hand of the Lord fell upon me. Symmachus translated it as 'the hand of the Lord came upon me,' which in Hebrew is Tephphol (). However, the word manus signifies 'power' or 'works,' so that one may understand the mysteries of the vision. And it should be noted that he does not see the truths themselves, but a likeness of fire, for fire appeared from the loins downwards; and from the loins upwards, it appeared as a radiant appearance, like the vision of lightning. For the splendor, which in Hebrew is called Zor, transferred the aura to Theodotus, in order to reveal the refreshing presence of God in the heavens. Finally, in the book of Kings, the blessed Elijah does not contemplate the coming of the Lord in a storm and whirlwind, nor in the burning fires, but in the sight of a thin and gentle breeze, to attest to the gentleness of Almighty God. However, the works of the body, symbolized in the loins, are purified by fire from top to bottom. And the works of virtues, which rise from the loins to

the upper parts, have splendor and brightness, and yet neither fire is said to reach to the feet, nor the brightness of lightning to the head, but downwards and upwards, so that, according to the diversity of merits, one reaches to this and that member, another to those members. And just as those who hold the perfection of holiness reach to the summit, so those who are in the depths of sin are believed to hold the feet of the fiery ones.

8:3 (Verse 3) And a reaching out likeness of a hand seized me by the lock of my head. LXX: And the likeness of a hand extended and took hold of me by the fringe of my crown. And this likeness of a hand, the hand itself does not extend, for there is nothing corporeal in God. And the hand appears as a member of the human body and familiar, it does not frighten the one who is being assumed and grasped. For if it had touched the prophet in the likeness of a serpent or any other beast, the dissimilarity of the limbs would have frightened the one assumed. And a part of the hair is included, because the human nature cannot bear the apprehension of the whole head. For a headband, the Seventy translated κροτῆδον, which means fringe: one of which is usually taken in the hair, the other in the clothes. And the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the sky. At first, he is grasped by the hand in a likeness; then he is lifted up by the spirit, which does not immediately raise him to the sky, but between the earth and the sky, so that, leaving the earthly things for a while, he hurries to the sky. And we can also say this, that because of good works, the prophet is grasped by the hand of God in a likeness, and because of knowledge of spiritual things, he is lifted up by the spirit.

8:4

(Verse 4) And he brought me to Jerusalem in a vision of God, near the inner gate that faces north, where the idol of jealousy was set up to provoke jealousy. And behold, there the glory of the God of Israel was, as the vision that I had seen in the field. LXX: And he brought me to Jerusalem in a vision of God to the entrance of the gate that faces north, where the statue of the possessor was. And behold, the glory of the Lord God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the field. However, what is found in some codices. And in the statue is added the image of Zel, from Theodotion. The rest is similar. When he says 'he brought me to Jerusalem in a vision of God,' he shows that he was not transported in the body, but in the spirit. According to this vision, we can see both the heavens and the depths of the sea and the underworld, while we grasp the reasoning of each through contemplation. First, however, he comes to the vestibule that faces the North, so that he may see the statue of the idol Zel and provoke emulation; so that from that place he can penetrate the inner areas and see the rest, which are described afterwards. But the story tells of a statue of the idol Baal placed in the temple of God. It is beautifully called the idol of Zeal because it provokes emulation and zeal for the Lord, according to what is said in Deuteronomy: 'They have provoked me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will provoke them to jealousy with those which are not a people' (Deut. 32). Moreover, because zeal and possession, which are called 'Cena' in Hebrew, are also called by the same name, the Seventy interpreters translated the statue of Zeal as the statue of the Possessor. Finally, when Cain was born, his parent said that he possessed a man through God (Gen. IV, 1), referring to the possession of a human being, giving Cain his name. And there was the glory of the God of Israel, not because he delighted in such proximity, but in order to destroy the idol of Zeal and its temple with his presence. Hence, the destruction of the city and temple followed shortly after. And in Isaiah it is written that a narrow bed cannot accommodate two, and a short cloak

cannot cover both (Isa. XXVIII), with Scripture indicating what the Apostle said: What agreement is there between Christ and Belial? Temple of God and idol (2 Cor. 7:25)

8:5

(Verse 5) And he said to me: Son of man, lift up your eyes toward the north. So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and behold, north of the altar gate was the idol of jealousy in the entrance. Because we have set up the idol of jealousy north of the altar gate, the seventy translators have translated it as: From the north to the east gate, which is not found in Hebrew; leaving out the rest of what is written there. He said, he said to me, either the glory of God, which I had seen in the field, or the spirit that lifted me up between heaven and earth. And he spoke to me, after he had transported me to Jerusalem, and made me see either the city or the temple, and commanded me to lift up my eyes towards the way of the North. For there a statue of Baal was placed, which he calls the idol of Zeal, at the very entrance of the gate. But those who attribute the idol of Zeal, either to the possession or to the glory of God or the spirit, do impious things, by changing the persona of the idol, altering the majesty of God.

8:6

(Verse 6.) And he said to me, Son of man, do you see what they are doing? The great abominations that the house of Israel is committing here, to make me go far away from my sanctuary? Yet again, you will see even greater abominations. Do not think, he said, that I am unjustly abandoning the temple and leaving the city to be destroyed. Look at what they are doing in the temple. And when you see that, do not think that their wickedness will end, you will still see even greater things. Indeed, this can also be understood about our Jerusalem and our temple, when we commit the crimes of idols in the house of God, following the example of Ophni and Phinees (2 Kings 2); and we fornicate with those who have vowed themselves to the service and ministry of God; and we seize the choice offerings of His sacrifices, giving them to clients and servants for their own use, and we do everything for the sake of profit. But if these things that we see are so great, how much greater must be the things that escape human conscience?

8:7-9

(Verse 7 and following) And He brought me to the entrance of the courtyard, and I saw, and behold, there was a hole in the wall. And He said to me, Son of man, dig through the wall. So I dug through the wall, and there was a doorway. And He said to me, Go in and see the wicked abominations that they are committing here. This is what I have translated: And I saw, and behold, there was a hole in the wall. This is not found in the Septuagint. And because everything is shown as if in a picture, he says that he saw a hole in the wall and was commanded to dig through it and make it wider, so that he could enter and see what was outside that he could not see before. By which it is shown that, both in the Church and in each of us, greater sins are shown through small vices, and as if through certain holes, one can reach great abominations. For from the fruits the tree is known (Matthew 12:33, 34); and from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. Words bursting forth are a sign of the interior man: just as lustful language sometimes reveals cunningly hidden vices; and a hidden greed signifies a desire for small things on the inside. For greater things are revealed to the lesser, and conscience cannot be disguised by expression and eyes, while a luxurious and wanton mind shines forth in the face; and the secrets of the heart are

revealed by bodily movement and gestures.

8:10

(Verse 10) And I entered and saw: and behold, every likeness of creeping things and abomination of animals: and all the idols of the house of Israel were depicted on the wall all around. Not only did the idol of Zele stand at the entrance of the northern gate, but also all the walls of the Temple were painted with various images of idols: so that there was no animal that the painting on the wall did not show. This we see so far in the temples of idols and the shrines of the Gentiles, because foolish religion worships all kinds of beasts. And Virgil says:

Omnigenumque deum monstra, et latrator Anubis, Quasi non et illa sint monstra quae laudat

Against Neptune and Venus, and against Minerva. We are able to show idols depicted on the walls of our temples, when we are subject to all vices, and we depict in our hearts the conscience of sins, and various images. Concerning which it is said in the Psalm: Lord, in your city you will scatter their image (Psalm 72:20). And in another place: Nevertheless, in image man walks around (Psalm 38:7). That is to say, there is no man who does not have some image, either of sanctity or of sin. Therefore, it is said to the furious and the irascible: Fury is to them according to the likeness of a serpent: as of the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears, which will not hear the voice of the charmers (Psalm 57:5). And concerning wicked men: Generation of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come (Matthew 3:7)? And concerning the sly and deceitful: Go and say to that fox (Luke 13:32). And concerning lovers of women: The horses went insane for the women: each one neighed at his neighbor's wife (Jer. 5:8). Even about beasts and the foolish: Do not be like horses and mules, which have no understanding. And again: Put a bit and bridle on their mouths, those who do not come near you (Ps. 32:9). And many such things. However, what we have set down: And behold, every likeness of creeping things and animals is not found in the Septuagint.

8:11

(Verse 11.) And seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and Jezoniah the son of Saphan stood among them who were standing before the paintings, and each one had a censer in his hand, and the smoke of incense rose from the censers. When it says that seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel held censers in their hands, it shows that there were many other priests who did not do this, but perhaps were held back by other sins. And it mentions specifically that Jezoniah the son of Saphan stood among them, as if he were the chief of their wickedness and sacrilege, who, having abandoned the religion of God, worshipped idols, and in the temple, did not worship the God whose temple it was, but the paintings on the walls. And it is rightly said: Jezonias, son of Saphan, stood in the midst of the standing elders, as a symbol of his judgment and condemnation, because he, as well as those whom he was the leader of, stood firmly in their sins and did not waver in wickedness; rather, they persisted strongly. And the steam of incense, the fog of confusion, and the whirlwind that rose from the offering of sacrilege demonstrated this. This event happened at that time, according to the letter of the law. Furthermore, we must pray that the elders of the house of Israel, by multiplying the sacred number, which is seven, by seven decades, do not stand in their errors and worship the images of idols, and that the sacrilegious vapor does not rise up against God. When we see the worst people gathered, of whom it is written:

'I hate the assembly of evildoers' (Psalm 26:6); and worse than the people are their leaders, and the leader who is in charge of the people and the elders, let us say that Jezoniah stands before the images and each one holds a censer in their hands, worshiping not the majesty of God, but their own opinions, and not offering a pleasing fragrance to God, but a foul odor to idols.

8:12

(Verse 12) And he said to me: Surely you see, son of man, what the elders of the house of Israel do in darkness, each one in the secrecy of his room. For they say: The Lord does not see us; the Lord has forsaken the land. From this, he says, it is shown what each one does in his own room when they gather together in the temple. But according to the anagogy, it can be better understood that some leaders of the Churches do in darkness things that are even shameful to speak of. This is a hidden person of the heart, of whom it is said: Enter into your inner chamber (Mich. VI, 4). And again: He who sees in secret will repay you. Let each one examine his own conscience, and let him remember the works of darkness in the darkness, and let him know the scripture: Everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest he be accused by the light (John III, 20; I Thess. V). And in themselves they will understand it to be fulfilled: He who is drunk, is drunk at night (Prov. II, 25). For what cannot stand according to the letter. For how many are intoxicated with feasts and banquets of days? But because the drunkenness of the heart offends God, it belongs to darkness, and not to light, therefore whoever is intoxicated, is intoxicated at night. But when the elders of the house of Israel have done evil in the darkness and in the hiddenness of their chambers, and have thought that they can hide from God, then consequently they will say: The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the earth. There are many sinners who walk according to their own thoughts, who do not believe that God cares about mortal things or that our vices concern Him. Certainly, if we were to think that God sees and is present when we sin, we would never do what displeases Him. Furthermore, it follows that the Lord has abandoned the earth, as is the opinion of some philosophers who, from the movement and constancy of the stars, suspect that there is providence in the heavens and that earthly things are despised, since nothing good or in accordance with order takes place on earth.

8:13-14

(Verse 13, 14). And he said to me: You will still see greater abominations that they (or these) do. And he brought me through the entrance of the gate of the house of the Lord, which faced north; and behold, there were women sitting there, mourning for Adonis. Whom we interpret as Adonis, and in the Hebrew and Syriac languages is called Thamuz. Therefore, because according to the Gentile fable, in the month of June the lover of Venus and the most beautiful young man is killed, and it is narrated that he then revived, they also call the same month by the same name and celebrate an annual commemoration for him, in which he is mourned by women as if dead, and then praised and honored when he revives. And afterwards, when the leaders and elders of the house of Israel saw what had been done in the temple and in the dark chambers, even the vices of women are described, who lament in private the loss of their lovers and rejoice if they are able to obtain them. And because the same Gentile people subtly interpret such fables of poets, which have obscenity, as the killing and resurrection of Adonis, accompanied by lamentation and joy: the former of which he thinks is shown in the seeds that die in the earth, and the latter in the crops in which the dead seeds are reborn; we also call those women who are saddened or excited by the

good and evil of the world, with a soft and effeminate spirit: and we say that they lament for Thammuz, namely, those things which are considered the most beautiful in worldly matters.

8:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) And he said to me: Surely you have seen, son of man: yet you will see even greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the Lord, and behold, at the entrance of the temple of the Lord, between the vestibule and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs to the temple of the Lord and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun in the east. We interpreted this vestibule to be near Symmachus, who placed the $\pi\rho\sigma\tau\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\omicron\nu$, because the LXX and Theodotion translated the Hebrew word for it as Aelam (אֵלָם): Aquila's first edition, $\pi\rho\sigma\tau\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\omicron\nu$: second edition, was interpreted as the Aelam of the temple, which we can express as the portico of the temple: or the covered courtyard that was between the temple and the altar. And as we read above, after the idol of Zeal, which appeared at the Northern Gate: You will still see even greater abominations; and the pictures of all the beasts that the seventy priests and Jezonias, son of Saphan, were worshiping were shown on the wall, with the censers in their hands. It is said a second time: You will still see even greater abominations, which these people do, because the women were sitting and mourning for Adonis; and after the third sin, it is said: You will still see even greater abominations than these. But what is the greatest abomination of the three previous sins? Namely, the fourth that follows: Behold, at the entrance of the temple of the Lord, between the vestibule and the altar, there were about twenty-five men with their backs to the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east, and they worshipped the rising sun. They did this because they despised the Lord, that is, the Creator, and worshipped the sun, that is, the creature of the Lord, as the Lord Himself commanded through Moses (Deut. XII), that they should not worship God against the east in the manner of the Gentiles: but wherever they were in the world, whether to the east, or to the west, or to the south, or to the north, they should worship toward the temple, where it was believed the Lord dwelled in the Holy of Holies. Indeed, we read in Daniel (Dan. VI) that he did this in Babylon, who, with the windows of his upper room open, worshipped the Lord opposite the temple, which was in Jerusalem. That this was sacrilege according to the letter, no one doubts. According to allegory, he will be able to know that all heretics are worse than their predecessors, that is, the idol of Zeal and the painted figures of animals on the wall, and the lamentation for Adonis, through which idolatry and pleasures are demonstrated, he who understands the prophet saying: But you hate discipline, and you have cast my words behind you (Ps. XLIX, 17). And in another place: They turned against me the back and not the face (Jer. II, 27). Do we not know Marcion and the other heretics, who tear apart the old Testament, despising the Creator, that is, the just God, and worship and adore another false good God, whom they have invented from their own imagination? And all the heretics of our time, who preach that the Son of God is a creature, and yet adore him, confess with their own words that they adore a creature, having deserted the temple of divinity and turned their backs to it. But we worship the sun of righteousness in such a way that we worship God in the temple of the old Testament, where the Law and the Prophets, where the Cherubim and the mercy seat are. These twenty-five men we have translated, the seventy placed twenty, and in some copies, five from Theodotion were added.

8:17

91 (Ver. 17.) And he said to me: Surely you have seen, O son of man: Is it a light thing to the house of Judah, that they commit the abominations which they have committed here, because they have filled the land with wickedness and turned to provoke me? And behold, they put the branch to their nose. For we have said: And behold, they put the branch to their nose, the LXX translated: and behold, they are like mockers, to whom Theodotion added: They stretch out the branch; so that it is all together: And behold, they stretch out the branch as if mocking. About this, Symmachus interprets it as if they emit a sound like a song through their nostrils. However, it signifies twenty-five men who are positioned firmly in a square formation and, through their five senses, create a square shape. They not only have a temple behind them, but they also attach a branch to their nostrils, resembling idols. Undoubtedly, this signifies that they worship idols, which in Greek are called βαλάν. Finally, Job says among the other virtues that he has also had this, that he has never looked at the sky and the sun, and the moon, and the shining stars, and kissed his hand (Job. XXXI), that is, worshipped creatures. However, Symmachus' interpretation means a foul and hoarse sound coming from the nostrils in contempt of God. And all heretics, who have filled the earth with injustice, and turned to the knowledge of false names, in order to provoke the Lord to anger, are to be regarded: when they wanted to praise God, they would blaspheme with an ugly sound, or consider the God of the Old Testament of little importance, mock, and despise Him.

8:18

(Verse 18.) Therefore, I will also act in fury: My eye will not spare, nor will I have compassion. And when they cry out to my ears with a loud voice, I will not listen to them. Moreover, the following phrase, 'And when they cry out to my ears with a loud voice, I will not listen to them,' is not found in the Septuagint. For all the things they have done, I will act in fury and my eye will not spare, nor will I have compassion,' says the Lord. When the ancient heretics heard this, they falsely accused the Creator of being cruel and bloodthirsty; and they did not consider the Apostle Paul, who is certainly an apostle of the good God (as they claim), writing to the Corinthians, 'If I come again, I will not spare' (2 Corinthians 12:2), in order to discipline the wrongdoers with a rod and bring the wanderers back to salvation. For those who do not understand what is beneficial for themselves, and frequently pray for the opposite, it is expedient that they are not heard by the Lord. Hence, in the Lord's Prayer, we say: Thy will be done (Matt. VI, 10). Not our own will, which is accustomed to err: but Thy will, which knows the future. And sometimes it is of great happiness to not deserve mercy in the present. Therefore, the Lord will not spare those who are from the house of Judah and have departed from the confession of the Church. And when they cry out with a loud voice, about which the Lord has said: Their cry has come to me (Genesis XVIII): yet the Lord will not hear them, so that, being compelled by their evils, they may understand what they have done.

9:1 (Chapter IX—Verse 1) And he cried out in my ears with a loud voice, saying: The visitations of the city have drawn near. In place of visitations, the Seventy translated 'vengeance.' For I will exact vengeance, and I will repay, says the Lord (Deuteronomy 32:35). And every vengeance is like that of a sick person, like one who has wounds, like someone waiting for healing hands, according to what is written elsewhere: I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with lashes, but I will not take away my mercy from them (Psalm 88:33-34). And rightly (as we have said above), a visit or revenge is said to be approaching with imminent captivity. And each person has a vessel of destruction in their hand. He did not say, he had, as the Septuagint translated. For he does not narrate the past, but demonstrates the present and the future. Therefore, whoever

strikes evil people because they are evil and has vessels of destruction in order to kill the worst, is a servant of the Lord.

9:2-3

(Verses 2, 3) And behold, six men were coming from the way of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his weapon of destruction in his hand. And there was one man among them clothed in linen, with a scribe's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. And the glory of the God (Vulgate: Lord) of Israel went up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the scribe's inkhorn at his side. According to the lines, which we have interpreted alongside Symmachus, LXX, ποδ[■]ρη; Theodotius translated the Hebrew word Baddim (); Aquila, the chief, interpreted. Again, when we said, and the writer's inkwell at his kidneys, they put LXX: And a sapphire belt on his kidneys; Theodotius, the scribal pen in his hand; Aquila, μελανοδοχε[■]ον, that is, the writer's inkwell at his loins; Symmachus had writing tablets at his kidneys. And when we moved, the threshold of the house, the Seventy and Theodotion, the open area, that is, placed the entrance under the sky. As for the vase, which each man held in his hands, only the Seventy interpreted it as an axe. Therefore, in order to atone for the sins of man, who were made on the sixth day of the creation of the world, six men come and descend from the upper gate, or as the Seventy translated, the heights to the North. And each person had an ax in their hands, about which John speaks: For now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire (Matt. III, Luke III, 9). And in the middle of the six men there was one, that is, the seventh, dressed in the garments of a high priest, made of linen, and he had a scribe's inkwell at his kidneys, with which he would record the sins of all and separate the number of holy individuals from the sinners: or a sapphire belt of the color of a sapphire stone, which is in the ornaments of the high priest. Six men went out and stood next to the brazen altar. There were two altars: one for burning incense, golden inside; and the other in front of the temple, bronze for burnt offerings. They are said to stand ready by the altar to carry out the commands of the one who commands, so that if they see any sins not forgiven there, they may know the judgment of the Lord and subject themselves to his punishment. The glory of the God of Israel also ascended, or was taken up, from one Cherub and went to the threshold, or to the inner court of the house and vestibule, which is not covered but enjoys the freedom of the air. The glory of the Lord Himself called the man, who was in the attire of a high priest and had an inkwell in his loins, and said what the Scripture testifies. Some interpret the six men as six Angels who obey the will of God, and they understand the one who had the attire of a high priest as the Savior; in accordance with that, the Priest is both the Angel of great counsel and that which is said: You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4). However, what the Seventy translated as 'pod[■]r[■]' is one of the eight vestments of the high priest, which is called 'talaris' in Latin; and it receives this name because it reaches down to the feet. I know that I published a book about the vestments of the high priest many years ago, and I am sending the reader the explanation of it. For I cannot say everything in every place, and when I asked Aquila and Theodotion what the Hebrew word '■■■■■■■■■■' meant, they replied to me in Greek that it is called 'καλαμ[■]ριον', because it is adorned with reeds. We call ink 'atramentarium' because it contains ink. Many people call it a more significant name, 'thecas', because they are the cases of writing quills. Of the four Cherubim, one Cherub is sent from the glory of the Lord's majesty to speak to the one who was clothed in the

garments of the pontiff. And although many think that 'τὸ χερουβεὶμ' should be said in the neutral gender and plural number, we must know that 'Cherub' is singular in number, masculine in gender, and its plural is 'Cherubim' of the same gender: not because there is gender among the ministers of God, but because each thing is called by different genders according to the properties of their language. Angels are called by the plural number Malachim, and Cherubim, and Seraphim of the same kind and number. Furthermore, Sabaoth, which is interpreted as hosts or armies and virtues, are called by the feminine gender, plural number, and end in the final syllable Oth (). However, those who want the Savior to be understood under the figure of a pontiff use the example from the Book of Revelation of John, in which it is written: And I turned and saw a voice that spoke with me. And when I turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, and so on.

9:4-6

(Verse 4 and following) And the Lord said to him: Go through the middle of the city, in the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who groan and lament over all the abominations that are done in the midst of it. And to the others he said while I was listening: Go through the city after him and strike. Your eye shall not spare, nor shall you show pity. Old men, young men and maidens, little children and women, kill them all to total destruction. But on whomsoever you shall see Thau, ye shall not kill him: and begin ye at my sanctuary. So they began with the ancient men who were before the house. Or, as the Hebrews understand it, because the Law is called Torah among them, which is written with the letter at the beginning of its name; those who have fulfilled the precepts of the Law received this sign. And to come to our point, the ancient Hebrew letters, which the Samaritans still use today, have the shape of the letter Thau at the end, which bears resemblance to a cross, which is painted on the foreheads of Christians and is frequently marked in handwriting. There are those who think that, because in the Hebrew alphabet this is the last letter, it is demonstrated that the remains of the saints survive in a multitude of sinners. Therefore, those who groan and lament are saved; those who not only did not consent to evil deeds, but also mourned the sins of others, just as Samuel mourned over Saul (3 Kings 16), and the apostle Paul mourned over those who did not repent after sin. And he himself also said: We who are in this tabernacle groan (2 Cor. 5:2). And elsewhere: I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart (or in my mind) (Al. cordi meo). And it is commanded to the six men that they should kill everyone except those who can say: The light of your face, O Lord, is signed upon us (Psalm 4:7), that they should spare neither the old man, nor the young man, nor the virgin, nor the little child, nor the woman. According to a mystical understanding, the old men are those in the Church of whom it is said: The gray hairs of a man are his prudence (Wisdom 4:8); the young men are those who are most ready for the battles of faith; the virgins are those who preserve chastity with their whole mind; the little children are those who drink milk of infancy and have not yet perceived solid food; the women are those who, by the weakness of their sex, reveal the frailty of the soul. To all of these, no mercy is shown if they believe themselves to be something without the seal of Christ. And what follows: 'And begin from my sanctuary,' or as the Seventy have translated, 'begin from my saints,' which means the priests who served in the temple and worshipped idols; or those who were called holy due to their merit in the priesthood among the people, and who were the first to deserve punishment for the sins of the people. For it is time, as it is written in I Corinthians 7, that judgment begin from the house of God.

9:7 (Verse 7) They therefore began with the older men who were before the house. And he said to them: Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain. Fill the courts with the slain. For the courts, which are called the Asroth in Hebrew, the Seventy set up roads. However, the older men, of whom we read above that they had censers and offered incense to idols, are killed. There is no longer any religious worship in the temple, for, having offended the God of religion, all things are defiled, so that where there is sin, there is also judgment. The atriums are filled with corpses in the temple, and not the streets, which were certainly outside, unless we can perhaps understand the streets as the city squares. The angels could not dare to defile the temple with the blood of the dead, in which the glory of God previously dwelt, unless the Lord of departing glory commanded it. Everyone who is dead because of sin defiles the atriums of the temple and the streets of the Lord's city, in which he lives. But when he rises again with Christ, he ceases to be dead. And they went out and struck those who were in the city. Or, as others have translated: they struck the city, calling the city itself the ones who were in the city.

9:8

And when the slaughter was complete, I remained: and I fell upon my face, and crying out I said: Alas, Lord God, wilt thou then destroy all the remnant of Israel, pouring out thy fury upon Jerusalem? For when all those who did not have the seal were slain, the prophet fell down on his face, thinking that no one except himself had remained among the dead. And because this seemed to be contrary to the commandment that the Lord had given, that the men with sealed foreheads should not be slain, it was therefore removed from the Vulgate edition. But we, following the Hebrew truth, have established, I remained. And it should be noted that He did not say alone: as if He had said, it seemed to be contrary; but I remained, so that it is understood with the others who had marked foreheads. But in order to know distinctly what is said here, I remained, in the book of Kings, when Elijah speaks to God: Your altars have been demolished, and I alone have been left, and they seek to take my life (1 Kings 19:14); He said alone, because He did not know that others had remained. Some think that, from the person of the Lord in whose likeness Ezekiel preceded, this can be understood of the people of the Jews: when all turned aside, they became useless together (Psalm XIII). And the Prophet testifies: Save me, O Lord: for the holy one has failed (Psalm II, 1). For only the Lord has been found who did not sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth (1 Peter II). But what he inflicted, pouring out your fury upon Jerusalem, the word of outpouring shows the magnitude of the punishments, as we read elsewhere: Scorn has been poured out upon the princes (Psalm CVI, 40). And again: My steps have almost slipped (Psalm 73:2). And in a good way. The love of God has been poured out into our hearts (Romans 5:5). And: Grace has been poured upon your lips (Psalm 45:3). And on the contrary: Pour out your fury upon the nations that do not know you, and upon the kingdoms that do not invoke your name (Jeremiah 10; Psalm 79:6). And: Draw out your spear and stop those who pursue me (Psalm 35:3).

9:9-10

(Verse 9, 10.) And he said to me: The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. And the land is filled with blood, and the city is filled with perversity. For they said: The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see. Therefore, I will not show pity nor have mercy: I will repay their ways upon their heads. Seeing his prophet weep for the people, the Lord, in his

great anger, explains the reasons: not as he thought, unjust or excessive punishment, but a deserved and just sentence. Iniquity, he says, is great among the ten tribes of Israel and the two tribes of Judah, and not only great, but exceedingly great. And he not only said this once, but repeated it forcefully, so that the punishment is as great as the magnitude of the iniquity. From this we learn, contrary to what most people think, especially the Stoics, that sins are not equal; but rather, they are either great or small, and the judgement of the punisher varies according to the quality and quantity of the sinners. 'The land is filled,' he says, 'with blood,' or as the Septuagint translates, with peoples; and the city is filled with aversion, or as the Vulgate edition has it, with iniquity and uncleanness. Not a small amount of blood has been shed, but from one end of the city to the other; and the whole city has turned away from the worship of God, and as a result it is filled with uncleanness, clearly of idolatrous filth. But the cause of such great crimes is that they believed there is no providence over the earth, nor does God care about mortal things, according to what we read elsewhere (Virgil, Book IV, Aeneid).

Undoubtedly it is a task for the gods, this concern disturbs their tranquility. Because therefore they either thought that there is no providence, or that which was in other nations has now abandoned its own people: on account of this, the eye of God will not spare, nor will it have mercy: so that raging against vices, it may be appeased by virtues, and may repay their ways and sins upon their heads, either upon the principal (■γεμονικ■ν) of the heart, or upon the leaders of the people, according to the book of Numbers, in which the leaders of the people are said to be the heads of the people.

9:11

(Verse 11) And behold, a man who was clothed in linen, who had a writing utensil at his waist, answered saying, 'I have done as you commanded me.' LXX: And behold, a man who was clothed in a long robe and had a belt around his waist, answered and said, 'I have done as you commanded me.' He is the man who was commanded to pass through the midst of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it. He says that he has fulfilled the commandments of the Lord, and has marked the foreheads of the mourners with the seal of the letter Tau (or armed them). But the six men to whom the Lord commanded, saying: Go through the city following him, and strike; show no mercy to anyone until complete destruction, do not report such a thing. For they filled not the sentiment of joy, but of sorrow, which is proven not by words, but by actions. And in this place, instead of ποδ■ρη, which is translated by the Seventy as a long robe, Theodotion placed the Hebrew word Baddim (); Symmachus, a rope; Aquila, a main robe, or a stole. Symmachus also placed the tablets; Aquila, the inkwell; Theodotius, the helmet.

10:1-2

(Chapter 10, Verses 1, 2) And I saw, and behold, in the firmament that was above the heads of the cherubim was as a sapphire stone: and the likeness of a throne appeared upon it. And he spoke to the man clothed with linen, and said: Enter between the wheels that are under the cherubim, and fill your hands with burning coals, which are between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city. Let it suffice to have said of the firmament that was above the cherubim, and of the sapphire stone that had the likeness of a throne, and of the wheels that accompanied the living creatures. Now concerning what is commanded to the man clothed with linen, for whom the Septuagint in this

place have interpreted as a robe, to take the burning coals from among the cherubim and scatter or sprinkle them over the city, it seems to me that it signifies, after the slaughter and killing of many, and the corpses of the dead on the streets, the taking up of burning coals to punish or cleanse Jerusalem, according to what is written in Isaiah: He has made him holy in a burning fire, and it will consume like dry grass (Isa. 10:17). These are the coals which the Prophet, desiring to remedy the burning of his tongue, asks: What shall be given to you, and what shall be added for your deceitful tongue? Sharp arrows with desolating coals (Psalm 120:3, 4). And many similar passages we can find in the Holy Scriptures, of which we have often spoken. It is important to note only that in Isaiah, who had sinned so much in speech and claimed to have unclean lips, a coal is taken up with tongs for cleansing. But here, because the city was full of wickedness, and after punishments with the corpses of the dead, many coals of fire are taken up, and not with one hand, but with both, so that all of Jerusalem may be cleansed. Although it should also be understood that the taking up of burning coals is not for cleansing, but for punishment and torment, which are poured out over Jerusalem.

10:3-7

(Verses 3 and following) And he entered in my sight. But the cherubim stood at the right side of the house, when the man entered, and the cloud filled the inner courtyard. And the glory of the Lord was lifted up from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the courtyard was filled with the splendor of the glory of the Lord. And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard up to the outer courtyard, like the voice of God Almighty speaking. And when he commanded the man who was dressed in linen, saying: Take fire from the middle of the wheels, which are between the cherubim: he entered and stood beside the wheel. And the cherub stretched forth his hand from the midst of the cherubim to the fire that was between the cherubim, and took and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen: who took it and went out. And there appeared in the cherubim the likeness of a hand of a man under their wings. Then the prophet, seeing the vision, approached the man who was clothed in a long linen garment or tunic. And according to the Septuagint now they change the interpretation, the holy vestment, when among the Hebrews it is called Baddim, and the other interpreters persist in the translation they have begun. However, as it is said in the second part, he entered into the midst of the wheels, which are beneath the Cherubim, to fill his hands with burning coals. When he had entered, he stood only next to the wheel, either out of sadness for the punishment of Jerusalem, or out of astonishment at the greatness of glory, he himself did not put his hand into the fire, but one of the Cherubim, that is, the Cherub, put his hand into the fire and took the fire, which was in the midst of the Cherubim, and gave it into the hand of the one who was clothed in linen garments. The one receiving went out; and yet Scripture does not say what he did, so that it would leave the narration of the sad event to our understanding rather than subjecting it to our eyes. But when the man entered, who was dressed in linen garments, the Cherubim stood on the right side of the house, so that they seemed to hold the right part of the house of God, as holy and heavenly powers, and those who are sent for punishment, of whom it is written: 'He sent upon them the heat of his anger, fury and indignation and trouble, a sending of evil angels.' (Psalm 78:49), may be believed to possess the left parts. And when the glory of the Lord was lifted up from the cherub, who was about to deliver coals of fire to the man; and it passed over to the threshold of the house, immediately the cloud, darkness, and gloom fill the inner courtyard. For in

the presence of the majesty of the Lord, no punishments are carried out, and the glory of the Lord is seen in the courtyard, of which it is written: The sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer courtyard. For the Hebrew word for sound is used instead of the Latin word voice: and this sound had a resemblance to the voice of God Almighty speaking. Why they translated it as seventy: as the voice of God Saddai (); which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotio translated as suitable, which signifies strong and powerful. Note, reader, in which they agree, and in which they differ, so that from the comparison of both, without our admonition, you may understand the divine sacraments, and that which I mentioned before, that both in the firmament and on the throne, and in the hand of man, it is not called untruth but resemblance. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. (I Corinthians 13)

10:8-14

(Versed 8 and following) And I saw, and behold, there were four wheels beside the Cherubim. One wheel beside one Cherub, and another wheel beside another Cherub. The appearance of the wheels was like the gleam of a chrysolite stone, and they all had the same likeness, like a wheel within a wheel. When they moved, they went in the four directions without turning as they went. And the wheels went toward the place where the first wheel went, and they followed in its tracks and did not turn back. And all their bodies, and necks, and hands, and wings, and circles, were full of eyes all around the four wheels. And these wheels he called voluble, as I heard. But it had four faces. One face, the face of a Cherub; and the second face, the face of a man; and in the third, the face of a lion; and in the fourth, the face of an eagle. And the Cherubim were elevated. Notice what was before, or how many species of wheels, according to the Septuagint, like the appearance of a beryl: but now, according to the same, like the appearance of a carbuncle; so that the likeness of wings being moved by fire, which is attributed to the Cherub, may be shown: although in Hebrew, both above and here, it is written 'beryl,' which the Eagle translated as 'chrysolite' and Symmachus as 'hyacinth.' And again, when we turn to them: And the whole body of them, which is understood to be of the wheels, is written in Hebrew: And all their flesh, and necks, and hands, and feathers, and circles. Note that flesh is called in heavenly powers, as when we read: Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption possess incorruption (I Cor. XV), let us know that not the substance of the flesh, but the works, are condemned: For Basar () which is written in this place, signifies not the body, but rather flesh. But he called the circles of wheels, iron edges, by which the roundness of the wood is constrained and tightened. And these wheels not only have flesh, or bodies, or limbs: but also necks, and hands, and feathers, so that we perceive the effectiveness of things in each, not images of limbs. The wheels themselves are also called in the Hebrew tongue Gelgel, which Symmachus interpreted as revolving, and Aquila as a wheel. Furthermore, what follows: When I was listening, until the place where it is written: The Cherubim are lifted up, it is not found in the Septuagint; but it has been added from the Hebrew. In which it is to be noted that, as stated above, there are not, as it were, four faces on the right and four faces on the left: the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right, and the face of a calf on the left, and the face of an eagle; so that they are believed to be different on the left and on the right. But an equal order of all is described, with Scripture saying: Yet it had four faces: one face, the face of a Cherub, and the second face, the face of a man; and in the third, the face of a lion; and in the fourth, the face of an eagle; so that the first and second, and third, and fourth faces, are described

not by the difference of places on the right and the left, but by one order of degrees. He named the first face Cherub, which he had spoken about earlier as the face of a calf. From this, it is understood that the face of the Cherub is the face of a calf. The explanation of this vision includes the meaning of all these things.

10:15-17

(Vers. 15 seqq.) It is a creature that I saw beside the river Chobar. And when the Cherubim walked, the wheels also went beside them. And when the Cherubim lifted their wings to be lifted up from the ground, the wheels did not resist, but were also beside them. When they stood, they stood, and when they were lifted up, they were lifted up. For the spirit of life was in them. All things live to God and feel their Creator. For God is not the God of the dead but of the living (Matthew 22:32). And all the bodies of the wheels are full of eyes (Supra I) . And in the psalm it is said: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands. Day unto day speaks forth speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge (Ps. 19:1-2) . The sun also and the moon, the sea and the rivers, the mountains and hills praise God, and in their own cycle they revolve through the years, and we perceive the order of the heavens on earth, so that, by preserving the order of the ancient law, they may turn and run; and let us not see anything new upon the earth. But when it is said, 'It is an animal, which I saw by the river Chobar' (Ecclesiastes 1)', Scripture shows that we should understand the same thing in the interpretation of 'animal' as we understood above.

10:18-22

(v. 18 seqq.) And the glory of the Lord went forth from the threshold of the Temple and stood over the Cherubim. And the Cherubim lifted up their wings and were exalted from the ground before me. And as they went, the wheels also followed them. And it stood at the entrance of the gate of the house of the Lord, which faces east, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. It is the creature that I saw beneath the God of Israel, by the river Chebar, and I understood that they were Cherubim. Four, through four faces to one: and four wings to one, and the likeness of the hands of a man under their wings: and the likeness of their faces, the very faces which I had seen by the river Chobar, and their looks, and the way each one went forward to his own front. The glory of the Lord, or the majesty, which had stood in the entrance of the temple, stood over the cherubims. They lifting up their wings, and the prophet seeing, were raised up: and the wheels followed them: and the glory of the God of Israel was over them. First, he was in the temple, then he stood in the courtyard of the temple or at the threshold. As he was departing from the temple, clouds and darkness filled the inner sanctuary of the temple. And once again, the glory itself sat upon the cherubim, and as they immediately flew away and departed to the outside, the wheels followed. And the glory stood at the gate of the house of the Lord facing east, not at the entrance of the temple, but behind the courtyard and threshold at the entrance of the gate of the house of the Lord facing east. When the prophet saw this, he said, 'It is the creature that I saw beneath the God of Israel by the river Chobar, and I understood that they were cherubim.' For what new thing had he seen, which he understood to be Cherubim, which he had not understood before? Cherubim, in our language, is a multitude of knowledge: the knowledge of the sacraments of God, and his throne and rest. Therefore, it is said in the psalm: You who sit above the Cherubim, reveal yourself. (Ps. LXXIX, 2). For the glory of the Lord always resides in the multitude of knowledge;

and it is manifested when all things are shown by divine providence; nothing happens by chance, nor does anyone say anything without reason: The Lord has abandoned the earth, and the Lord does not see. (Supra IX, 9). Wherefore also, having beheld the cherubim and their desire, is to forget the things that are past, and to stretch forth unto those which are before (Philippians 3).

11:1

(Chapter XI — Verse 1) And the spirit lifted me up and brought me to the gate of the house of the Lord, which faces east and overlooks the rising sun. For the glory of the Lord had come out from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. And as the cherubim lifted their wings and rose from the ground, the glory of the Lord also stood at the entrance of the gate of the house of the Lord, facing east. And the prophet, unable to approach it himself, was lifted up by the spirit and taken to the same gate of the house of the Lord, which faces the sun of righteousness, as it is written: Behold the man whose name is the East (Zach. VI, 12), so that he would not remain in the temple, which was clouded by the veil of ignorance, but would stand at the gate of the house of the Lord facing east, where he could understand the sacred mysteries that follow.

11:2-12

(Verse 2 onwards) And behold, at the entrance of the gate were twenty-five men, and in their midst I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, the princes of the people. And he said to me, Son of man, these men devise iniquity and give wicked counsel in this city, saying, 'The houses have been recently built. This is the pot, but we are the meat.' Therefore, prophesy against them, prophesy, son of man. And the spirit of the Lord rushed upon me, and he said to me, speak: Thus says the Lord: So you have spoken, O house of Israel, and I know the thoughts of your heart. You have killed many in this city, and you have filled its streets with the slain. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of it, they are the meat, and this city is the pot, but you shall be brought out of the midst of it. You have feared the sword, and I will bring the sword upon you, declares the Lord God. And I will bring you out of the midst of it, and give you into the hands of foreigners, and execute judgments upon you. I will judge you with the sword of the Chaldeans; you shall know that I am the Lord. This will not be a pot for you, and you shall not be in the midst of it as flesh. I will judge you at the borders of Israel, and you shall know that I am the Lord. The following is not found in the Septuagint, but is added from the Hebrew: Because you have not walked in my commandments and have not kept my judgments, but have acted according to the judgments of the nations that surround you. The prophet is assumed according to what is written: The Lord raises the meek (Ps. 146:6); whether he is lifted up from the earth and brought into the eastern gate of the Lord's house, so that he may know the oaths of the twenty-five men who were at the entrance of the gate, and the sons of Jezaniah the son of Azur, and Paltheiah the son of Benaiah, the princes of the people. Therefore, those who were at the entrance of the eastern gate of the Lord's house, despairing of salvation and prepared for destruction by the consciousness of their crimes, and not desiring to correct their sins through repentance, say: Although recently houses have been rebuilt that had fallen, yet we know that this city is like a pot, and we are like the flesh in it, to be consumed and burned, according to what is written in Isaiah: If a tempest passes by, it will not harm us (Isa. 28:15). While they were saying these things, the spirit of the Lord rushed upon the prophet; and for a second time he commanded him to prophesy and say: Because you have spoken these things and the secrets of your hearts

are not hidden from me, I will interpret for you how the city will be transformed into a cauldron, and you yourselves will be considered as meat: not according to the sense in which you spoke, but according to another sense which you do not fear. Indeed, the city is like a cauldron, but it will not be filled with your flesh; rather with the flesh of those whom you have killed. But you, who consider yourselves to be dying in this city, I will bring out from the midst of the city and deliver into the hands of the enemy. I will execute judgments against you. And when you have fallen by the sword, you shall not be in the city, nor outside the boundaries of Israel, but rather in the borders of your own province, then you will know that I am the Lord. And it is furthermore said: In the borders of Israel I will judge you, and you will know that I am the Lord. But you will endure all these things because you have not walked in my commandments, and you have not observed my judgments, but have committed the abominations of the surrounding nations. And when it is clear according to the literal sense of what is said, omitting for a moment the names of Jezoniah, Azur, Phaltiah, and Benaiah, which we reserve for another time, it must be said that even to this day in the Church, which is the house of the Lord, and before the gate, and at the entrance, or at the way of the gate, which signifies the Savior, through whom we enter to the Father, there are twenty-five men who represent everything concerning the senses. And as far as my memory serves me, I have never been able to find this number in a positive sense; although in Leviticus twenty-five years are chosen for the priestly ministry; for in Hebrew it does not have this number, which is said in the Seventy, but thirty, which is contained in the beginning of this prophet and the age of the Lord, when He came to the banks of the Jordan and was baptized by John (Luke 3). But in the Gospel there are found five wise virgins and five foolish ones (Matthew 25), let us know that this number is placed in the middle and can be applied to either the good or the bad, depending on the users. Therefore, these men, who refer everything to the senses and have two principles, as we mentioned above, are contained in the dual number, which divides unity, and in the number of the second day, does not seem to be from the Lord, according to the Hebrew truth. And in Noah's Ark, two by two unclean animals are brought in (Genesis 6). But the Lord, restricting division into one, made both one, and broke down the middle wall, condemning enmities in His flesh (Ephesians 2). Therefore, He speaks more augustly and sublimely: I and the Father are one (John 10:30), so that He may bring us from the Judaic duality into the unity of the Christian faith. Finally, with the priesthood of the Jews being lost, the Lord suffered not under one ruler, but under two, Annas and Caiaphas, to show the dividedness of their religion (False). There are many at the entrance of this gate in front of the house of the Lord of the East, who are compared to their own nations in vices, and in the conscience of sins despair of salvation, and say: The city in which we live is a cauldron, and we are all flesh, and we will be consumed by the burning Babylon, whose fiery arrows are: unwilling to repent and despairing of salvation; therefore they hear that they themselves are not the flesh of the past and lost city, but those whom they have scandalized and killed. And so the sword is drawn against them, so that after they have been judged not among the nations, but among Christians in the land of Israel, they may then know that He Himself is the Lord, according to what is read in the Psalms: When He killed them, they sought Him (Psalm 77:34), so that by the torments they may come to know Him whom they did not recognize through His blessings.

11:13

(Verse 13) And it came to pass, while I was prophesying, that Phaltias son of Banajae died. And I fell on my face, crying out with a loud voice, and I said, Alas, alas, alas, Lord God, are you making

an end of the remnant of Israel? As the prophet prophesied, one of the two chief princes, Phaltias son of Banajae, dies. He is interpreted as falling ruin, and he is the son of a builder or mason, for ο■κοδ■μος cannot be translated into our language otherwise. Another prince is preserved unharmed, Jezonias son of Azur. Jezonias serves as his ears, that which is subaudible to the soul. Azur, on the other hand, serves as his support or help. Therefore, he who falls away from the Lord, and was in a state of very bad construction, falls rightly, as prophesied by him, whom God strengthened. But he who obeys the commands of God, and is sustained and supported by his help, rightly remains in the leadership of the people. We read in Exodus (Chapter II), after Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, died, the sons of Israel groaned from the works of mud, straw, and bricks, and cried out to the Lord, whom they could not cry out to while he was alive. Isaiah also (Chapter VI), after the death of King Uzziah, who was leprous, saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne, and the Seraphim standing around him; and understanding that his lips were unclean, and he dwelt among a people with unclean lips, he deserved to have a hot coal sent from the altar, and his lips were cleansed of impurity. In this situation, with the strength of God prophesying, the prince who had turned away from the service of the Lord falls in order to be elevated by Christ. For if the resurrection is of the Lord, then the downfall is of the devil. In this, it is sought how it is spoken of the Savior. Behold, here He is placed in ruin, and the resurrection of many in Israel (Luke II, 34). In the ruin of those who were standing wickedly, and in the resurrection of those who had fallen. When the prophet saw this, he fell on his face, not by the merit of sinning, but by the affection of lamenting; and with a loud voice, which came from great fervor of faith, he cried out three times, and said, Alas, alas, alas, O Lord God, are you bringing about the consummation of the remnant of Israel? And there is this understanding: Even the remnants themselves, which seemed to exist in the people, are destroyed when you are displeased.

11:14-16

(Verse 14 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, your brothers, your brothers: the men near you and all the house of Israel, all of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said: Depart far from the Lord: to us the land has been given as possession. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: because I have removed them far off among the nations, and because I have scattered them among the lands, I will be a small sanctification for them in the lands which they have come to. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, your brothers and the men of your captivity, and all the house of Israel is consumed; to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said: You are far off from the Lord; to us is given the land in possession. Therefore say: Thus saith the Lord God: Because I will remove them far off among the nations, and because I will disperse them in the countries, and will be to them a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. First, we must discuss the variety of interpretations. Because in the Hebrew it says, 'the men who are near to you' (for this is the meaning of 'Goolathach'), the LXX translated it as 'the men of your captivity'. Then it follows: 'all whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem told'; instead of 'all', they put 'those' due to the ambiguity of the letters and the word. 'Chullo', which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion translated as 'all', they rendered as 'consummated', which does not make any sense at all in terms of the meaning. Therefore, the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel, who had said: Alas, alas, alas, O Lord God, are you bringing to an end the remnant of Israel? Specifically, through the death of Phaltiel and those who were killed with him, because those were not the remnants that the prophet thought were in Jerusalem, but rather those who

appeared to be captive in Babylon. And the meaning is this: O son of man, your brothers, who were born of the same lineage as you, your brothers, I say, to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, you have turned away from the Lord because you are captives, and you have given yourselves to Jeconiah, but to us the land of Israel has been given as an eternal possession. So tell them that though I have sent them far away from the land of Israel and scattered them among the nations and commanded them to be in foreign lands, because they have obeyed my command, I will be with them even in foreign and hostile places for a small sanctification. As long as there are some among them who do not submit their necks to idolatry but remember God's commandments, like Daniel and the three young men, it is to be believed that there were others like them, in the likeness of such great rulers that Scripture now recalls (Dan. III). From all these things we learn that we should not insult those who have been handed over to punishment by the judgment of God, nor reproach a person who has turned away from their sins, nor should we ever say to those who repent and leave the Church: 'You have gone far away from the Lord; the land has been given to us as a possession.' For thus says the Lord: Although I have temporarily separated them from my Church and scattered them among the nations, I will still be for them a sanctification, as long as they remember their sins and hasten to return to their former dwelling places due to repentance.

11:17-21

(Verse 17 and following) Therefore, speak and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall go there and remove all offenses and all abominations from it. And I will give them one heart (or I will give them a new heart) and put a new spirit within them; I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, so that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and do them; then they shall be my people, and I will be their God.' But as for those whose heart follows their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their way upon their own heads," declares the Lord God. This is a divine message to those who were captive in the land of Babylon, to the brothers of the prophet Ezekiel, and to the near ones to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem (or Israel) said: 'You have gone far from the Lord, the land has been given to us as a possession.' But these are the words that follow: 'I will gather you from the peoples and give you the land of Israel.' And when you have entered, you shall remove all idols, because of which you have offended God, and I will give you a unified heart of fear and servitude to God, so that you may not serve diverse idols, or any other than what you had before. And I will give a new spirit in your midst, according to what is written: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me (Psalm 51:12). And I will remove from you a heart of stone, that is, a hard heart, according to what Stephen, the first martyr in Christ, spoke: Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart (Acts 7:51). And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the people of Israel go (Exod. VII). And I will give them a heart of flesh, a soft and tender heart, that they may receive the commandments of God, so that they may be written on the tablets of their carnal hearts. Therefore, a soft heart is given and a hard heart is taken away, so that they may walk in my precepts, keep my judgments, and be a people of God. And the Lord, who was previously an adversary, shall be their God. But those who do not correct their previous sins with repentance, but follow after their abominations, I will repay them according to what they deserve, so that their ways may be upon their heads. These things are believed by many to have happened

under Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, and under Jesus, the son of Josedec, the high priest, and under Ezra and Nehemiah, to the tribe of Judah, and to those who returned with them. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, who were taken captive under King Zedekiah of Judah, or who fled with Jeremiah to Egypt, are believed to have been dispersed into all lands and not to have returned to the city of Jerusalem. But the full conversion of those who were captive and the remnant of Israel is understood in Christ, when the remnant was saved, and three thousand believed in one day, and again five thousand (Acts 2); and others, of whom James speaks to the apostle Paul: Do you see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed? hi, all the imitators of the Law are. But even the proud daily inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem, whose hearts walk after their stumbling blocks and abominations, deserve the offense of God, but those who were outside, with their stony heart removed and a very soft heart accepted, return to the Church through repentance, and they walk in the precepts of the Lord and keep His judgments, and they become the people of the Lord, and the Lord, whom they formerly offended, becomes their God.

11:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) And the Cherubim lifted their wings, and the wheels with them, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. And the glory of the Lord ascended from the midst of the city: and stood upon the mountain, which is towards the east of the city. Gradually, the glory of the Lord departed from Jerusalem. First leaving the temple, it stood in the courtyard or at the threshold of the house, and afterwards at the entrance of the Eastern Gate; finally, with its wings and accompanying wheels lifted up, it stood upon the mountain, which is towards the east of the city, no doubt signifying the Mount of Olives, from where the Savior ascended to the Father. And the glory of the Lord stood and went from the city of Jerusalem over the Mount of Olives, as a sign of resurrection and light, so that from there it might behold Jerusalem about to perish and be consumed. And it says: 'The glory departs from the midst of the city' (John 14:31), in other words, the Lord speaks to his disciples: 'Rise, let us go from here' (Luke 13:35). And to the Jews: 'Your house will be left to you desolate' (Matthew 23). Josephus also reports the voice heard in the temple of angels and celestial powers that were previously in the city's defense: 'Let us go from these seats' (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews). And to this present day, in a wondrous manner, the glory of the Lord, which abandoned the temple, stands upon the Mount of Olives, shining forth in the sign of the cross, gazing upon the once-Jewish temple, dissolved into ashes and rubble.

11:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) And the spirit lifted me up and brought me to Chaldea for the transmigration in a vision in the spirit of God, and the vision that I had seen was taken away from me. And I spoke to the transmigration all the words of the Lord that he had shown me. Because we have translated from the Hebrew truth: And the vision that I had seen was taken away from me, the LXX translated: And I ascended from the vision that I had seen. Both of which signify not that the prophet was physically transported from Jerusalem to Babylon, but in spirit, the vision that had led him in spirit to Jerusalem was taken away, and he returned to himself and spoke to the transmigration all that had been shown to him, namely, about those of whom it is written above: I was sitting in my house, and the elders of Judah were sitting beside me, and there the hand of the Lord God fell upon me, and I saw (Above, VIII, 1). And in a marvelous manner, while these people who had come to visit were seated, the prophet saw mystical visions and was absent from those

who were sitting in front of him, present in body but without spirit. And everything happens so that those who were captive may receive consolation, because they will be brought back to the land of Israel and will walk in the commandments of the Lord, and they will be his people and he will be their God. But those who do not turn to repentance and continue to walk in their abominations will receive the consequences of their actions. But we often mention that words in the Holy Scriptures are often used for things.

12:1-2

(Chapter 12, Verses 1 et seq.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house: they have eyes to see, and do not see: and ears to hear, and do not hear: because they are a rebellious house. Because we translate it as: You dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, the LXX (Septuagint) has put: You dwell in the midst of their iniquities. But from what follows, Because they are a rebellious house, we understand that the preceding sentence also agrees with this verse. Furthermore, we learn from frequent teaching that in the midst of a house turning to bitterness, you, who by nature make God sweet and kind, make him bitter and cruel with the bitterness of your vices. Otherwise, we read about God: Taste and see that the Lord is sweet or pleasant (Psalm 33:9). But the prophet dwells in the midst of the people who provoke God to bitterness, who has eyes but does not see, ears but does not hear, not due to a defect of the senses, but due to the obstinacy of wickedness. And so the Lord said to the Jews: If you were blind, you would not have sin (John 9:41): accusing and condemning their voluntary blindness. Therefore, since they have eyes to see, but do not see; ears to hear, but do not hear; and they despise your words, teach them through images and pictures; and show them with visible examples, that they may recognize the impending captivity not only by hearing, but also by their eyes.

12:3

(Verse 3) Therefore, son of man, prepare for yourself the vessels of exile, and you shall go into exile during the day in their presence. You shall go from your place to another place in their sight, in case they might look upon it, for it is a rebellious house. LXX: And you, son of man, prepare for yourself the vessels of captivity, and you shall be held captive during the day in their presence. You shall be held captive from your place to another place in their sight, so that they may see that it is a rebellious house. There is no doubt that the entire extent of this place indicates the future captivity of King Zedekiah of the tribe of Judah, who was captured with Jerusalem. But since some desire to precede the captivity of Zedekiah, which is interpreted as the just Lord, as a type of the Savior who descends from the heavens to earth and assumes a human body, and these things are said to be vessels of captivity: therefore, I think it is necessary to warn the wise and cautious reader and to present these things, so that we may not seem to leave anything unmentioned, but not to prove them. For an impious king cannot surpass the example of piety shown by him who is the epitome of all piety. However, it is narrated in the history of Jeremiah the prophet and the Kings that Zedekiah was captured by the Babylonians and Chaldeans and was taken from place to place (Jeremiah 39 and 2 Kings 25), that is, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and other things that Ezekiel speaks of in the following passages. But those who refer to the Lord Jesus Christ believe that his captivity and migration from place to place signify his descent from heavenly to earthly realms.

12:4-6

(Ver. 4 seqq.) And you shall bring out your baggage like the baggage of an exile by day in their sight. And you shall go out in the evening before them, as one goes out into exile before their eyes. Dig through the wall for yourself, and you shall go out through it in their sight. You shall bear your baggage on your shoulders (Vulgate: you shall be carried): you shall escape in darkness (Vulgate: you shall be brought out). You shall cover your face, and you shall not see the ground: for I have made you a sign to the house of Israel. LXX: And you shall bring out your vessels of captivity by day in their sight. And you shall go out in the evening in their sight, as a captive goes out. Dig for yourself through the wall, and you shall pass through it in their sight. You shall be carried on your shoulders and go out in hiding. You shall cover your face, and you shall not see the ground, for I have made you a sign to the house of Israel. The prophet is commanded to act in a manner that Sedecias will do in truth. Gather, he says, your belongings (for these are the vessels of the one who is crossing over), while they are watching. And after they have seen what you are going to do, you will go out in the evening in the likeness of the one who is crossing over. We read that Zedekiah, with the wall secretly pierced, fled during the night to the deserts of the Jordan, and there he was captured by the Babylonians, and this signifies the wall being pierced. But when he says, 'you will carry on your shoulders,' your belongings are understood, and whatever they are accustomed to carry as a solace on the journey while fleeing. In the darkness you will escape ((or: you will lead out)); may you not be seen by anyone. You will cover your face, or by the blindness that befell him, the eyes will be plucked out by Nebuchadnezzar; or so that it is not recognized that he himself is the king, and the concern of the servants will be greater. And what follows: And you will not see the land, that signifies that he who is blind is led into Babylon, and will not see it. For I have given you as a portent to the house of Israel: for both the words and the deeds of the prophets have been spoken and fulfilled as a sign and a figure. And in Zechariah, extraordinary men are called, because they foreshadow the future (Zech. III). And in Hosea, God says: I have been compared to the hands of the prophets (Hosea XII, 10). But those who want to understand Christ in the person of Ezekiel, take the vessels of captivity to mean the human body, and the pierced wall through which he broke the bars of hell, and rising, he appeared to the believers alone; carried on their shoulders when he ascended as the victor to heaven with the angelic powers, and he came forth in concealment and veiled his face, so that the divine majesty might not be seen in mortal flesh, and he does not see the earth, lest the earth shine in his eyes, which does not deserve to see him. For the eyes of the Lord are upon the just (Ps. XXXIII, 16), and his face is turned away from the wicked. But they say that all these things were done in order to convert the hard hearts of the Israelite people to faith through the likeness of a man. And it is given as a sign to the house of Israel; according to what is written: Behold this child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many, and for a sign which shall be contradicted (Luke II, 24).

12:7-8

(Vers. 7, 8.) So I did as he commanded me: I brought out my belongings like the belongings of someone going into exile during the day, and in the evening I dug a hole in the wall with my own hands. In the darkness I went out, and on my shoulders I carried myself in their sight. LXX: And I did exactly as he commanded me: during the day I brought out my belongings like the belongings of a captive, and in the evening I dug a hole in the wall with my own hands, and I went out in hiding. I was carried on the shoulders in their sight. He testifies that he has completed the work

that was ordered above, and does not need interpretation according to both opinions, as has been explained above. However, it should be noted that at the same time, Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem, and Ezekiel in Babylon, and his prophecy was sent to the captives; and the prophecy of the former was sent to those who lived in Jerusalem; so that by the providence of God, the unity of the two could be proven in different regions, and those who heard it would understand that whatever happened to the people was not by the power of idols, but by the command of the Lord.

12:9

(Verse 9) And the word of the Lord came to me in the morning, saying: Son of man, did not the house of Israel, the house of rebellion, say to you, 'What are you doing?' Say to them: Thus says the Lord God. If the rebellious house, they say, asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' Or even if they do not ask, you go, so that they may know why you have done these things. Say to them: Thus says the Lord God.

12:10-16

(Verse 10 and following) This burden is upon the prince who is in Jerusalem, and upon all the house of Israel who are among them. Say: I am your omen: as I have done, so it shall be done to them. They shall go into exile and captivity. But the prince who is among them shall be carried on shoulders, he shall go out in darkness; they shall dig through the wall to bring him out; his face shall be covered, so that he may not see the land with his eyes. And I will spread my net over him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there. And all who are around him, his helpers and his troops, I will scatter to every wind, and I will unsheathe the sword after them. And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them among the countries. But I will let a few of them escape from the sword, from famine and pestilence, so that they may declare all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the Lord. First, let us explain the history. Say, he says, to them, O son of man, whether they ask or do not ask. What are you doing here? which is above the burden of that vision, which is in Jerusalem, signifying the leader Zedekiah. And say: I am your portent, or as the Septuagint translated, I am the one who makes portents; so that the future may be known from the present. As I have done, so it will be for them, the leader and all who are in the leader's entourage. Upon the transmigration to Babylon, the captives will be led, and the leader who is in their midst will be carried on their shoulders, either by beasts of burden or by those who fled with him. In darkness and in the shadows of the night, he will go forth: and his companions will dig through the wall to bring him out. His face will be covered, either by the fear of a fugitive or by the injury of blindness, so that the blind man may not see the land of Babylon. And I will spread my net over him, and he will be caught in my snare. Indeed, being seized by the Babylonians, he was captured as a result of God's permission. And he testifies that he himself caused these things to be done by the enemies. And being led into Babylon, he will not see the land of the Chaldeans, and there he will die as a captive. However, when he is captured, I will scatter all his allies, helpers, and companions in flight, here and there, and I will not allow them to depart in safety. But I will unsheathe my sword in the hands of the enemies, so that when they are dispersed among the nations, they may understand that I am the Lord, and all things are done according to my will. And I will leave behind, he says, a few from his companions who have fled with him, and those who

have been able to escape the sword, famine, and plague, so that when they have come to various regions through either flight or captivity, they may recount all their crimes either through speech or example; because of which they have deserved such great evils, and understand that I myself am the Lord. But those who attempt to explain the allegory and the beginning of the explanation concerning the Savior, the leader who is in the midst of Jerusalem, interpret him, who has preceded as a sign and wonder, that he and his companions may be captives of this world, and as the victorious one ascending from the infernal regions, may be carried on the shoulders of angels: having gone forth in darkness, unknown to the unbelievers, having destroyed the middle wall, he has made both into one: his face being covered, so that he does not regard the land of the Jews (Ephesians 2). It is not surprising that the Lord hid His face; even today, the veil is placed before the unbelieving people when they look upon the face of Moses. And the Lord spread His net over him, as the bride speaks of him in the Song of Songs: Behold, he is behind our wall, looking through the windows, appearing through the lattice (Song of Songs 2:9). And also Jeremiah: The breath of our nostrils, the Lord's anointed, was captured in our sins (Lamentations 4:20). And: When he had not committed sin, he was made sin for us (II Cor. V, 21). And he shall be brought, he says, into Babylon, the confusion of this world, into the land of the Chaldeans who are interpreted as demons, so that he may draw back to salvation those who were enslaved to demons, and lead captive the ancient captivity. And he says that he will not see the land of the Chaldeans, and there he will die; so that he may give us life through his death. But he scattered all his helpers and partners, the apostles and apostolic men, throughout the whole world. And he unsheathed the sword after them, so that they might be crowned with various martyrdoms, and then they themselves or those who believed in them would understand that he is the Lord, and therefore he scattered them among the nations, and dispersed them in the lands, so they could bear much fruit. And he left a few men from among them, like the Apostle John, and others, freed from the sword, hunger, and pestilence, avoiding the onslaughts of persecution, to narrate the crimes of the Jews and the injustices of all the nations they entered, so that, through repentance, they may know that he is the Lord. We have said these things, leaving judgment to the discretion of the reader. However, there is no doubt that it is dangerous to compare the captivity and death of an impious king to the sacrament of the Lord.

12:17-20

(Verse 17 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, eat your bread with agitation (Vulgate adds but); and drink your water with haste and sorrow. And say (Vulgate says you shall say) to the people of the land: Thus says the Lord God to those who dwell in Jerusalem, in the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with solicitude, and drink their water in desolation, so that the land may be desolate because of the multitude of its inhabitants, because of the wickedness of all who dwell in it. And the cities that are now inhabited shall be desolate, and the land shall be a desert: and you shall know that I am the Lord. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, you shall eat your bread with sorrow, and your water with torment and distress. And you shall say to the people of the land: Thus says the Lord God to the inhabitants of Jerusalem concerning the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with scarcity and drink their water with dismay, so that the land may be desolate and its fullness be destroyed. For in impiety all who dwell in it and their cities which are inhabited shall be desolated, and the land shall be scattered, and you shall know that I am the Lord. After the prophecy of the prince and his

companions, which was shown under a bodily image, came to the people: and whatever is said by the prophets is referred by the prophet to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that in the evil of the siege, they eat their bread in distress and poverty, and drink their water with torment and tribulation. But these things, says the prophet, are spoken to you, that you may speak to the people of your land and say: Thus says the Lord to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who are in the land of Israel: You will endure the evil of being besieged by Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans, famine and thirst; so that all the land with its abundance may be destroyed, indicating by it those who inhabit it. And lest they think that this happens to them without cause: Say to them that because of their crimes and impiety, all the cities of Judah will be reduced to solitude, and all cultivation of the land will perish, so that they may know the wrathful God, whom they did not want to recognize as merciful. Can we, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who believe in Christ, say, those who dwell in the Church. And if they have deserved by his sins the offense, let them eat bread with poverty, and drink water with mourning and distress: not food of bread, nor drink of water, but hunger, supporting the word and doctrine of God (Amos 8). For when, either by the fault of princes, who are to be captured and delivered to the Babylonians, or by our own hardness, we have lost the word of God, and have not deserved to have useful waters: then in sorrow and scarcity, we shall take our food, and the earth will lose the multitude of believers, and the cities, which are understood in the whole world as the Church, will be desolated, and the land will be deserted, so that all may know that the Lord has been offended. And indeed we can understand this even in times of persecution.

12:21-28

(Verse 21 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, what is this proverb that you have in the land of Israel, saying: The days are prolonged, and every vision fails? Therefore say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I will make this proverb to cease, and it shall be used no more in Israel. Speak to them, and say: The days are at hand, and every vision shall be fulfilled. For there shall no longer be any false vision, nor ambiguous divination in the midst of the children of Israel. Because I, the Lord, will speak, whatever word I have spoken will be done. It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak a word and I will do it, says the Lord God. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, behold the house of Israel, saying: The vision that this man sees is for many days and he prophesies for a long time. Therefore, say to them: Thus says the Lord God: My word will no longer be delayed: the word that I have spoken will be fulfilled, says the Lord God. What we have said, the proverb, according to Symmachus, all other interpreters have translated as a parable, which in Hebrew is called Masal. Again, where it has been said by us: 'There shall not be an ambiguous divination,' the Seventy have translated it as 'nor one divining according to favor.' For which reason all have interpreted it as slippery, whereas what we have said is ambiguous, so that we may understand the deceiving words of our prophets. Now the meaning of the entire chapter is this: He had previously prophesied against the ruler who was in Jerusalem, then he declared to the people that there would be famine and a burning thirst. So the unbelieving crowd takes up an old and well-known proverb: The threat of prophets is postponed to a distant time, and every vision will perish, while it is seen in vain; or, according to Symmachus, it will vanish into thin air and a gentle breeze. Therefore, say to them, my threat will by no means be postponed, nor will a false and ambiguous prediction be made to the people that has an uncertain end, so that it is said at one time and fulfilled at another; but now, while you who speak and those who hear are alive, let the word that I

have spoken be fulfilled. However, it signifies the imminent captivity of the city of Jerusalem and the capture of Zedekiah with the people of Judah. Not only at that time, but even today the unbelieving crowd and the hard hearts of mortals do not accept the prophecy of God: but they consider everything that the prophets threaten, everything that the Gospel preaches, to be postponed to another time. And here let us understand the parable that is presented by the Septuagint as being received as a proverb, in accordance with what we read in the psalm: 'And I became a proverb to them' (Psalm 68:12). And in the same prophet: What is this parable to you in the people of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the sons are set on edge? We clearly explain, so that we may remain in the more obscure.

Book Four

Book Four

I would like, if it were possible, Eustochium, to weave explanations into the book of Ezekiel through each individual book with its own prophecies, and to not separate what is connected by prophecy with exposition: so that the course of the one dictating and the one reading would be easier; and to separate the long and immense journey of interpretation into certain intervals, as if with titles and indices, and, to speak more properly, with arguments, to show what each individual book contained. But what should I do, when some prophecies are short, others are long: so often we are constrained by necessity to condense many into one book, and divide one into many? Hence now also against the prophets and prophecies, to the elders of the people of Israel and to the land over which they are being led, we want to include in the fourth book a catalogue of the four worst plagues, and of the vine tree, which when it has been cut off, is useless among all the trees of the forests, we want to include a catalogue of vices of Jerusalem. Because it does not fit within the narrowness of one volume, we reserve the other part of it for the fifth volume: forewarning the diligent reader's concern, so that they know what we are explaining here and what they should read.

13:1-2

(Chapter 13, Verses 1, 2) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to those who prophesy from their own heart: Hear the word of the Lord: Thus says the Lord God. This is what we have added: 'who prophesy,' and say to those who prophesy from their own heart, which the Septuagint omitted, and because it is not found in Hebrew, they added, 'and you shall prophesy' and say to them. This is a message against false prophets who deceived the people and, against God's commands, prophesied something else. And let it not bother anyone that they are called prophets, for Holy Scripture has this custom, that it names each one of its prophecies and speeches a prophet, just as the prophets are called Baal, and the prophets of idols, and the prophets of confusion. Hence the apostle Paul also calls a Greek poet a prophet: A certain one of their own prophets said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons (Titus 1). And in Hosea we read: Like a prophet driven mad, a man carrying the Spirit (Hosea 9:7). But whatever was said to the people of Israel at that time is now applied to the Church: so that the holy prophets may be the apostles and apostolic men. But the false and mad prophets are all heretics, whose leaders invent falsehoods from their own hearts; and those who are led astray by them believe in the lies of others.

13:3

(Verse 3.) Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and see nothing. LXX: Woe to those who prophesy from their own heart and do not see at all, forsaking what is proposed by us and following their own spirit. Although the name of prophets, according to the rule of the Scriptures, is common to both the good and the bad, they differ in that the good prophets are said to be wise, while the bad ones are foolish and ignorant. The former is associated with ecclesiastical men, and the latter with all heretics, who, forsaking the spirit of God, follow their own spirit and prophesy not by divine inspiration but by their own heart. Hence, they see nothing. But whoever is wise, follows not the thoughts of his own heart, but the Spirit of God, according to what is mentioned in the earlier texts, that even animals and wheels followed the Spirit of God. And the prophet says: You shall walk after the Lord your God. And in another place: Lead me in the right path. And again: Your good Spirit shall lead me into the land. And for the people of God, the pillar of fire and the clouds were a guide in the wilderness. And Jeremiah speaks: I have not labored following you (Jerem. XVII, 16). But whoever of the heretics follows his own spirit, will stumble in darkness, and the blind will lead the blind into a pit? Although they may seem to see more in their mysteries, or rather orgies, than the ecclesiastical doctors, they do not see anything at all: because they have lost the sun of righteousness, and in vain imitate those who were previously called Seers, and to whom it is said: Go, you who see; turn back to the land of Judah; and in Bethel you will not prophesy (Amos VII, 12, 13). Therefore, the vision of Isaiah and Obadiah are placed in the titles. And the Lord commanded the apostles: Lift up your eyes and see (John 4:35). And the prophet earnestly prays: Open my eyes, and I will behold wondrous things out of your law (Psalm 119:18).

13:4-7

(Versed 4 et sequentia) Your prophets, Israel, will be like foxes in the desert. You did not go up to face the enemy or build a wall for the house of Israel to stand firm in battle on the day of the Lord. They see false visions and speak deceptive divinations, saying, 'The Lord declares,' when the Lord has not sent them; yet they hope for the fulfillment of their words. Have you not seen a false vision and uttered a lying divination when you say, 'The Lord declares,' though I have not spoken?' LXX: Like foxes in the deserts are your prophets, O Israel ((Add. they were or will be)). They did not stand in the firmament, and they gathered flocks over the house of Israel. Those who say in the day of the Lord did not rise: seeing falsehoods, divining vanities, those who say, says the Lord, and the Lord did not send them: and they began to stir up discourse. Did you not see false visions, and speak vain divinations? And you said, says the Lord, and I did not speak. Let us first speak according to the Hebrew. The prophets of Israel are like foxes, committing thefts of domestic birds every day: those who live, according to Aquila and the Septuagint, in the deserts; according to Symmachus and Theodotion, in walls and ruins: who cannot advance opposite, nor oppose a wall for the house of Israel. We read that Aaron stood in the middle against the fire devouring the people of Israel, and opposed a wall for the salvation of the people (Num. XVI). It is also said of Jeremiah, 'Do not confront the Lord, nor stand against His wrath with persevering prayer' (Jer. 7). Just as a wall is set against an enemy and is usually met head-on by the adversary, so the will of God is weakened by the prayers of the saints. Therefore, Moses is also told, 'Let me alone, and I will destroy this people' (Exod. 32:10), which shows that he had the power to hold back. These people cannot stand in battle on the Day of the Lord, to fight for the people with prayers and resist

the judgments of God's pleas. Therefore, because they see in vain and falsely prophesy, and claim to be sent by the Lord when they are not sent by Him, and persist in their errors, and desire to affirm their own words; they are accused of preaching empty things, saying that their lies are the words of the Lord. Furthermore, according to the Septuagint, the sense here is: All heretics are like foxes because of their deceit and wickedness, about whom the Savior speaks: Foxes have dens, and birds of the air have nests (Matthew 8:20). And it is written about Herod: Say to this fox (Luke 13:32). And about those same foxes that deceive the innocent and plunder the vineyard of Christ, Solomon speaks: Catch for us the little foxes, who spoil the vineyards (Song of Solomon 2:15). And in the psalm about those who are deceived by their trickery, it is sung: They shall go into the depths of the earth, they shall be delivered into the hands of the sword, they shall become the portion of foxes (Psalm 63:10, 11). O prophets who are like foxes, they did not stand in the firmament; nor did they deserve to hear from Peter: You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church (Matthew 16:18). Nor are they like Moses, to whom it was said: You stand here with me (Deuteronomy 5:31). Nor like him who says: He has set my feet upon a rock; but they have swayed with every wind of doctrine. They have not stood in the firmament, of which we read in the eighteenth psalm: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands. These gathered together the irrational ones, and due to the excessive innocence of the livestock, they are similar to the house of God. Hence, it is now said: And they gathered flocks over the house of Israel: neither they themselves rose, nor were they able to raise others; but whatever they did and do, they are full of lies. And what follows: And they began to stir up discourse, signifies that they indeed desire to rise up and lift themselves to heights; but what they desire, they cannot fulfill: and it is said to them: Have you not seen a false vision and spoken idle divinations? And what follows, and you were saying, 'Thus says the Lord,' and I have not spoken, it is not found in the Septuagint.

13:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have spoken idle words and have seen falsehood, behold, I am against you, declares the Lord God. And my hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord God. LXX: Therefore say: Thus says the Lord God. Because your words are lies and your divinations are empty, therefore behold, I am against you, says the Lord God, and I will stretch out my hand against the prophets who see falsehood and speak empty words. They will not be in the discipline of my people, nor will they be written in the scroll of the house of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel. And they will know that I am the Lord. Under the guise of prophets, this speech is against heretics, who speak empty words and see falsehood, and they persist in establishing their own doctrine. May the Lord Himself come against them and rise up, and may He stretch out His hand against them to strike, and may He not hold back in sparing them. And He threatens that they will not be among the assembly of the people of the Lord in the future, nor in His Church, but in the synagogue of the devil, nor will they be written in the house of Israel. About which it is said in another place: They will be written above the earth (Jeremiah 17:13): not in the land of Israel which is the land of the living, about which it is now said, nor will they enter the land of Israel, but in the land of the dead and the shadow of death, so that after they have endured these things, separated from the assembly of the people of God,

they may understand that He is the Lord. Instead of 'for what we render, they will not be in the council of my people,' the Seventy translated, 'they will not be in the discipline or correction of my people.' For there is one kind of correction for enemies, another for sons. Hence Jeremiah says: Correct us, O Lord, but with judgment, not with anger, lest you make us few. Pour out your anger on the nations that have not known you, and on the kingdoms that have not invoked your name. (Ibid. X, 24, 25).

13:10-16

(Verse 10 and following) Because they have deceived my people, saying: peace, and there is no peace. And he was building a wall: but they were plastering it with mud without straw. Say to those who plaster without mortar, that it will fall. For there will be a overflowing rain: and I will give great stones falling from above, and a stormy wind blowing. Indeed, behold, the wall has fallen. Will it not be said to you, where is the whitewash that you plastered? Therefore, this is what the Lord God says: I will unleash the spirit of storms in my anger; and there will be a torrential rain in my fury, and great stones of wrath will be poured out, and I will destroy the wall that you have whitewashed without mortar, and I will level it to the ground; its foundation will be exposed, and it will fall and be consumed in its midst; and you will know that I am the Lord. And I will fulfill my anger against the wall and against those who whitewashed it without mortar; and I will say to you: The wall is no more, and there are no longer any who whitewash it. The prophets of Israel who prophesy to Jerusalem see a vision of peace, but there is no peace, says the Lord God. LXX: For they have deceived my people, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace. And this one builds a wall, and these ones plaster it with folly. Say to those who plaster with folly, it will fall. There will be a flooding rain, and I will give great stones for their joints and they will fall. And a wind will come and tear it apart. And behold, the wall has fallen, and they will not say to you, 'Where is the whitewash that you whitewashed with?' Therefore, thus says the Lord Adonai: I will break the spirit of fury that carries away, and rain will overflow in my anger, and I will bring great stones in fury to a consummation, and I will dig up the wall that you have plastered, and it will fall. And I will put it on the ground, and its foundations will be exposed, and it will fall. And you will be consumed with reproach, and you will know that I am the Lord. And I will complete my fury on the wall, and on those who plaster it, it will fall. And I said to you: There is no wall, nor those who plaster it, the prophets of Israel who prophesy concerning Jerusalem and see peace for her: there is no peace for them, says the Lord God. The prophets of Israel, who will not be in the assembly of the people of God, nor be written in the scriptures of the house of Israel, nor enter the promised land, therefore suffer these things because they have deceived my people, proclaiming peace and prosperity by the severity of repentance and the wrongfulness of conversion, according to what is said elsewhere: Peace, peace, where is peace? (Jeremiah 8:11) Therefore, God figuratively built a wall for them through the commands of the law and the words and warnings of the holy prophets. For this Hebrew word signifies 'His', that is, it would repel every incursion of wild beasts and hostile attack from them, while they turned to God, they would be surrounded by this like a very strong wall and fortress. But the false prophets, not once but often, promised them peace, for this repeated talk of peace signifies this. And they were building the very wall which is called 'Cir' in the following, the false prophets were coating it without any restraint, as Symmachus interpreted, that is, with pure mud, and that it did not have straw, so that it could not provide any strength. But indeed, both the Septuagint and Theodotion interpret it as folly: but the eagle has interpreted the

Hebrew word Thaphel as תָּפֵל, which means without salt, passing from one translation to another, just as food without salt has no flavor: so too clay, without straw to strengthen and bind it, can offer no strength to a wall. Say, he says, to those who make empty promises and pledge useless help, that this wall and this structure will fall, and I will send a very violent rain, namely the most fierce enemies. But it refers to the Babylonians and the Chaldeans; and it signifies the same hails stones falling from above, everything through a metaphor, by which a sudden whirlwind overturns and destroys an unstable wall; and afterwards it is said to them, that is, to the false prophets, Where is the plaster with which you plastered it, and where is the help that you promised? But whatever we have said about false prophets can also be applied to heretics, for all their God-inspired inventions will be dissolved by God's wrath; and the structure of false teachings, which the Holy Spirit does not support, shall fall and crumble down to its foundations and turn to dust, and become equal to the wall of the earth, and fall, and the prophets who made promises and the people to whom the promises were made shall be consumed in its midst; so that once He has completed His wrath and says to them: this is not a wall, that is, this is not your defense; and there are none who plaster it, but all are empty and amount to nothing: then you shall come to know by these actions that I am the Lord. But in order to know who these individuals are who daub the wall, it follows, the prophets of Israel, that is, the false prophets, who prophesy to Jerusalem and see for her a vision of peace, these are the cause of sin and ruin, and foolish security. For there will be no peace, says the Lord, because the Lord did not send them, nor did he speak to them. This which the Septuagint translated as 'and on their joints' is not found in the Hebrew. However, it signifies the joints of the stones in the wall, or the supports of wood, by which the walls are strengthened. And also that which we read above: he himself was building the wall; most people report that Israel, who promised himself either the empty help of the Egyptians or of peace, was referring to the people.

13:17-23

(Verse 17 and following) And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who prophesy out of their own heart, and prophesy against them, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: Woe to those who sew cushions for all armholes and make veils for the heads of people of every height, to hunt souls! Will you hunt the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive? And will you profane Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies.' Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against your cushions, with which you hunt the flying souls, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will release the souls whom you hunt, souls to fly. And I will tear off your necklaces, and I will free my people from your hand, and they shall no longer be in your hands for plunder. And you shall know that I am the Lord. Because you have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and you have encouraged the hands of the wicked, so that he does not turn away from his evil way and live, therefore you shall no longer see false visions nor practice divination. And I will deliver my people from your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord. LXX: And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own heart; prophesy against them, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the women who sew magic charms on their sleeves and make veils for the heads of people of every height, to hunt souls! Will you hunt down the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive? And will you profane Me among My people for handfuls

of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies?' Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against your cushions, on which you gather souls, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will release the souls that you have perverted, their souls into dispersion. And I will tear off your veils and deliver my people from your hands, and they shall no longer be in your hands for a gathering. And you shall know that I am the Lord. Because you have perverted the soul of the righteous unjustly, and I did not pervert him, and you strengthened the hand of the wicked, so that he would not turn from his evil way and live. Therefore, you will no longer see your lies, and you will not be able to divine any divinations from now on. And I will free my people from your hand, and you will know that I am the Lord. A divine word was directed above the prophets, who were lining the wall with clay, which had no straw, and could not give any strength to the wall or the mortar. Now, they are commanded to put their faces or direct them against the prophetesses of the people, and, as the Septuagint translated, to harden. But just as some false prophets were inspired by a diabolical spirit to subvert the commands of God, so too against prophetesses, such as Deborah (Judges 5) and Huldah (2 Kings 22), and in the Acts of the Apostles, the four daughters of Philip the evangelist prophesying were inspired by a demonic spirit (Acts 21), there were also others of the same sex, among whom were Prisca and Maximilla, who by their false prophecy subverted the faith of truth. However, the Hebrews are said to be skilled in the evil arts through necromancy and the Pythian spirit, such as the one who was seen to have raised the soul of Samuel (1 Samuel 28); and in the Acts of the Apostles, there was a fortune-telling woman who gained much wealth for her masters through divination, from whom an unclean spirit was cast out by the command of the apostle Paul (Acts 16). But we will say that other heretics preach power through the falsehood of their doctrines. Pythagoras and Zeno were among them, from whom the Stoics originated: the Indian Brachmans and the Ethiopian Gymnosophists, who, due to their self-control in food, are considered a marvel by their nations (or, unbelievers). And rightly they are said to whitewash the wall and promise some strength; but because they do not have the seasoning of Christ, their labor is in vain, and their building will perish. For unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain (Psalm 127:1). But other doctors of pleasures and desires, such as the Epicureans, the Pyrrhonians, Jovinianus, and Eunomius, say: Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. Therefore, the prophet is commanded to set or harden his face against the daughters of his people. First, it must be explained what it means for the face to be set or hardened. Indeed, it is that which is written about the Lord: 'The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth' (Psalm 34:16). For just as wax melts before fire, so sinners perish before God's presence. In the same sense, the prophet says: Son of man, set your face against Theman, Darom, and Nageb. And again: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face against the children of Jerusalem. And a little later: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face against the children of Ammon. And again: Firmly set your face against Pharaoh, king of Egypt (Infra, XXIX, 2). And again: Son of man, set your face against Gog and Magog. And in another place: I will set my face against that man, and I will make him a desolation and a byword, and I will remove him from the midst of my people, and you shall know that I am the Lord (Infra, XIV, 8). Woe, therefore, to these heresies and doctrines which, promising rest, deceive people of every age and sex, in order to capture the souls of the wretched and lead me away from my people, while I am believed to love pleasure. And this not because of their barley, or the barley of the

half-farsang, as we read in Hosea (Hosea V), but because of a handful of barley, by which animals are intoxicated, and a fragment of bread. Not whole bread or solid testimonies of the Scriptures, but those which have been broken, cut, and diminished by heretical depravity; so that they deceive and lead astray even the holy ones, and drag them to death; and they claim to give life to sinners with empty promises. Therefore, the merciful and compassionate God does not kill the prophetesses themselves, but he breaks their spindles, which like nets capture flying souls, so that once they are broken, they have the freedom to fly. And they would tear the veils or kerchiefs, in which the principal soul would recline, and with which the heads of the deceivers would be covered. Since the Apostle teaches that the heads of men should not be covered, but should have the glory of the Lord revealed (II Cor. III). For, he says, you were breaking the spirits of those who serve God with false terrors, and you were holding the impious captive with fraudulent promises, so that, while they were repenting, they would not regain the life they had lost. Therefore, you shall by no means see empty visions, nor shall I call your lies prophecies; but rather divinations, of which it is written: There is no omen in Jacob, nor divination in Israel (Num. XXIII, 23): so that I may deliver my people from your hands, and you may know that I am the Lord who has rescued the lost.

14:1-11

(Chapter 14, Verse 1 onwards) And the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I be consulted by them? Therefore speak to them and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Every man of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face and comes to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him with the multitude of his idols, that I may lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who have turned away from me through all their idols. Therefore say to the house of Israel: Thus says the Lord God: Turn away and withdraw from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations. For any man of the house of Israel, or of the aliens who immigrate to Israel, if he has estranged himself from me in Israel and has set up his idols in his heart, and has placed the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and has come to the prophet to inquire of me through him: I, the Lord, will answer him in person. And I will set my face against that man and make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people. Then you will know that I am the Lord. And if the prophet is deceived and speaks a word, I am the Lord who has deceived that prophet. I will stretch out my hand against him and destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. And they shall bear their punishment—the punishment of the inquirer shall be the same as the punishment of the prophet—so that the house of Israel may no longer go astray from me, nor defile themselves anymore with all their transgressions, but that they may be my people and I may be their God, declares the Lord of hosts. LXX: And the men of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, these men have set their thoughts in their hearts and have set the torment of their iniquities before their face: If I answer them when they ask? Therefore, speak to them and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Every man of the house of Israel who sets his thoughts in his heart and sets the torment of his iniquity before his face, and comes to the prophet to inquire of him concerning me: I, the Lord, will answer him with the matters that are on his mind, in order to turn the house of Israel away according to their hearts,

which have turned away from me in their thoughts. Therefore say to the house of Israel: Thus says the Lord God: Repent and turn away from your idols, and turn your faces towards me. For all the people of Israel, both those who belong to the nation and those who are foreigners in the land, are accountable to me. Those who have turned away from me and have set their hearts on evil will face punishment for their sins. If they come to a prophet to seek guidance from me, I, the Lord, will answer them according to their own wickedness and I will show my displeasure towards them. I will banish them into a desolate place and remove them from the midst of my people. Then you will know that I am the Lord. And if a prophet should wander astray and speak a word, I, the Lord, have caused that prophet to wander astray. And I will stretch out my hand against him and remove him from the midst of my people Israel. And they shall bear their iniquity according to the iniquity of the inquirer, and the guilt of the prophet shall be the same, so that the house of Israel shall not stray from me and they shall not yet be defiled by all their sins. And they shall be to me a people, and I will be to them a God, says the Lord God. After he spoke to the prophets who prophesied in their hearts, and they plastered the wall without tempering it; and to the prophetesses who used necklaces and placed their hands under every elbow, and made veils and covered the heads of all ages (through which the doctrine of perverse teachings is shown), they came to the prophet, not all of the elders, lest they all seem to be mistaken; but some of the elders of Israel, and they sat before the prophet: for what reason they had come, they were waiting in silence; and immediately the word of God came to the prophet, indicating why they were present. For it is not within the nature of man, no matter how holy, to know the secrets of the heart. Hence it is said of the Savior alone: 'And Jesus knowing their thoughts, said: Why do you think evil in your hearts?' (Matthew 9). The meaning is: Son of man, these men who sit before you have placed their impurities or thoughts in their hearts; and, according to Symmachus and Theodotion, idols and scandal, that is, the destruction and torment of their wickedness, they have set against their own face and thus they came to seek the word of the Lord. Should I respond to people of this kind, who come to me with their previous thoughts, not even abandoning their impiety in this time, but believing in idols and fraudulent divinations; holding on to the ruin of wickedness against their own face and torment, while despairing of better things and being prepared for punishment, and thus desiring to know my words through you? Therefore, since they have come to you with a corrupt heart, respond to them not in your own person, so that the authority of the one responding is not slight; but by my command, and say to them: Thus says the Lord God. But the summary of the whole passage, in a brief explanation, is this: Man is not like other nations, which may receive pardon for their errors, but the house of Israel, who, coming to the prophet to inquire about their former vices, mentioned above, I will answer them according to their heart, and their impurities, so that they may hear according to what they desire and believe. For he does not deserve correction, who asks not with the intention of learning, but of testing. For they have departed from me, and have followed idols. And this is a brief warning, that they may depart from idols and perverse thoughts, and turn to me, leaving behind their former sins. For he who deceitfully asks does not deserve to hear the truth, but he must be captured by his own heart, just as the scribes and Pharisees, questioning the Lord, or rather testing Him, hear: Why do you test me? And again: Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things (Matthew 21:27). But whoever is such a person, and thus asks, God sets His face upon him, or confirms; as by the severity of His countenance, the hardness of His forehead is softened, and becomes an example, and a proverb, or solitude, and destruction, so that by the destruction of him from the people of God, others may know that He is the Lord who

knows the secrets of the heart, and understands the perverseness of the mind; and He does not consider the words of those who speak, but their hearts. And what follows seems to raise the question: When a prophet errs and speaks a word, I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, we cannot say that he is a true prophet, but rather a false prophet, who is called a prophet in a derivative sense. And this can be understood from the Scripture passage when King Ahab of Israel goes to battle, he does not want to listen to the prophet Micaiah, but rather he complies with the advice of the false prophets (1 Kings 22). And Michael says that he saw the Lord sitting on a throne, and that the spirit of error offered itself willingly to deceive the king. The Devil is also said to go about the earth in the book of Job, and it is said that he can receive power from the Lord over Job's substance and then his body (Job. 1 and 2). And Balaam the diviner is sent by the Lord to deceive Balak son of Beor (Num. 22). But all of this is said so that the strength of false prophets is not regarded, that the people are deceived, and that they prefer to hear lies rather than accommodate their ears to the truth. But it is said that it is to the wrath of God, that the perverse and unbelieving people would rather listen to false prophets than true prophets. Finally, he extends his hand over him, understood, the prophet, and he is erased from the midst of his people, to bear his iniquity, so that there may be a similar error and a similar punishment: so that both the one who asks and the one who is asked may bear their iniquity, and not at all shall the house of Israel be deceived by the perverse prophecies of those who have wanted to hear the words of God; but may they be the people of God and may they deserve to have the Lord. In what he said: 'I, the Lord, have deceived him,' the words of Solomon agree, who, in speaking about God, says: 'He will mock the mockers' (Prov. III, 34), and this testimony: 'If the wicked walk contrary to me, I will also walk contrary to them in fury' (Lev. XXVI, 27, 28). And what is said secondly, 'a man of the sons of Israel and of the strangers who join themselves to them,' shows in us, according to the Apostle, a twofold man, outward and inward (I Cor. XV). For they have the outward appearance of a human being, but assume the images of various animals, which the prophet, wishing to disperse them, implores: Lord, in your city you will disperse their image (Psalm 73:20). Those of whom it is written: Though a person is in honor, they do not understand; they are compared to senseless animals and become like them (Psalm 49:21). They are not true human beings, but rather human beings are like animals. Again, those who hear in the Gospel, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?' (Matthew 23:33) are not humans, but humans snakes. And about whom it is written, 'Foxes have dens, and birds have nests in the sky.' (Matthew 8:20) and about Herod, 'Go and tell that fox.' (Luke 13:32) They are not humans, but humans foxes. But those who possess both terms of human, if they stray, are corrected through punishments, so that they understand that He Himself is the Lord. And also what we have set forth according to the Septuagint: It is fitting that the person who has been estranged from me, and has placed his thoughts in his heart, and the torment or punishment of his wickedness before his face, should receive witness that it is written in Isaiah: Walk in the light of your fire, and in the flame that you have kindled (Isaiah 50:11). For each person kindles the ardor of flames for himself, and prepares punishments, while he does not want to correct the errors of his mistaken heart with repentance, but remains in errors, deserving the burning of flames.

14:12-23

(Verse 12, 13 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, when a land sins against me by acting treacherously, I will stretch out my hand (some versions add 'upon

it') and break its staff of bread, and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast. And if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver their own souls by their righteousness, declares the Lord of hosts. If I also bring the most harmful beasts upon the land to devastate it, and it becomes impassable because of the beasts, and these three men are in it, as I live, says the Lord (Vulgate adds 'God'), they shall not deliver sons or daughters, but they alone shall be delivered; but the land shall be desolate. Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say to the sword, Pass through the land, and I cut off from it man and beast, and these three men are in the midst of it, as I live, says the Lord God, they shall not deliver sons or daughters, but they alone shall be delivered. But if I bring a deadly disease upon that land and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to remove from it man and beast, and even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, says the Lord God, they would save neither son nor daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness. For thus says the Lord God: Even if I bring four deadly judgments upon Jerusalem – sword, famine, evil beasts, and disease – to kill off its inhabitants and its livestock, yet there will be survivors who will bring out sons and daughters. Behold, they themselves will come out to you, and you will see their path and their inventions, and you will be comforted concerning the evil which I have brought upon Jerusalem with everything that I have brought upon it. And you will be comforted when you see their path and their inventions, and you will know that I have not done all that I have done in vain, says the Lord God. Four plagues are brought upon the earth, the transgressing and sinful earth, as the Seventy have translated it: famine, beast, sword, pestilence. If each one of these plagues were brought in separate parts to each region, and these three men, Noah and Daniel and Job, whose righteousness is proclaimed by the voices of the Scriptures, would pray for the sinful earth, they would not only be unable to save it, but not even their own sons and daughters, if they were to perpetrate the works of the sinful earth; but they would only be able to save themselves. The question is why mention only Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and the other righteous patriarchs and prophets. This is easily solved: Noah, because of the impending flood that would cleanse the earth, could not prevent or delay it as the whole earth had corrupted the ways of the Lord (Genesis 6:7). However, he had preserved his sons who might have possessed the same virtue, as a seed for the human race. Daniel also mitigated the imminent captivity of the people of Judah with no tears (Dan. 1). But Job, not because of sins, but because of testing, did not save neither his house nor his children (Job 1). Others, however, say that these three men alone witnessed both prosperity and adversity, and then prosperity again: therefore, they are named together; and this is secretly meant to signify that just as they saw both good and bad, and then joy again, so too the people of Israel, who first enjoyed good things and later endured the yoke of captivity, if they repent, will return to their former happiness. And if Noah and Daniel and Job were gathered together in one place, they would not be able to avert the wrath of God from the sinful earth, that is, those who dwell on the earth. What can be said then about those who believe that through the merits of their parents and their own virtues, they can free their sinful children from the fires of hell? Therefore, neither a sinful father can save his sinful son, nor can a righteous mother, from a chaste conversation, give rewards for chastity to her unchaste daughter. And on the other hand, the vices of parents will not harm their children; but the soul that sins, it shall die (Ezekiel, XVII, 4). Lot, dwelling in Sodom, not only in spirit but also in flesh, did not save his wife when she looked back, but only his daughters, who perhaps had not sinned (Genesis XIX). And the holy man Josiah, not only did he not save the sinful people with his virtues, but he himself died in their sins (2 Kings XIII). But if sometimes the Lord promises his mercy to their

descendants on account of Abraham and David, it must be noted that he does not spare those who persist in wickedness; but he helps the conduct of those who repent, so that the merits of the fathers may benefit the conversation of the sons. When, he says, these things are so, and prayer does not save the sinful land from the individual punishments of such great men: thus says the Lord God, because Jerusalem has committed abominable sins, I will bring four plagues upon her at once: the sword, by which she is slain by enemies; and famine, which she endures in siege; and wild beasts, by which she is devoured while fleeing in the deserts and mountains; and pestilence, which always follows hunger and scarcity. He transferred death over her, but this, he says, I will bring upon her, so that neither men remain in her, nor animals. And yet, by my mercy, I will leave some in her, who will raise their sons and daughters; and let the captives come here, that is, to Babylon, and to Chaldea, so that when you see them and observe their works, then you will understand that they were justly captured, and my judgment was just, and may your captivity have consolation; while you understand that I have freed them from the sword, famine, beasts, and pestilence, so that by their perversity you may learn the reason why Jerusalem was overthrown, the temple set on fire, and the people led into captivity, except for those whom the sword, famine, beasts, and pestilence have consumed. These words are spoken about that Jerusalem, to which the captivity was approaching while Ezekiel was prophesying among the Chaldeans. Moreover, it is also spoken about our land, which is called: You are dust, and to dust you shall return (Gen. III, 19); and it is spoken about our Jerusalem and each of the believers, that if they have despised God's commandments and have earned the title of transgressors, famine will be induced; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the word of God. And a sword shall be brought, of which we read: They shall be delivered into the hands of the sword: the parts of foxes were (or will be) (Psalm 62:11). And to Mary: And thy own soul a sword shall pierce (Luke 2:35). And beasts shall be brought, to whom the just man shall not be delivered, it is demanded: Do not deliver the soul of the one who confesses to you to beasts (Psalm 73:19). And pestilence shall be brought (for which 70 interpreted death), of which it is written: The worst death for sinners (Psalm 33:22). And: The soul that sins, it shall die. And, if bitter death separates thus (Infra XVIII, 4)? Concerning all these, neither the teaching of spiritual parents, whom we understand as masters (I Reg. XV), nor the rulers will be able to free them, unless there is agreement of the sons, and their petitions have aided their efforts. For the justice of the just person will be upon him, and the iniquity of the wicked person will dwell in him: Each person will die for their own sin, and their righteousness will save them (Deut. XXIV, 16). And the Jews say in vain: Abraham is our father (John 8), when they do not have the works of Abraham. But if there is any confidence, let us trust in the Lord alone. For cursed is every man who has hope in another man (Jeremiah 17), even if they are holy, even if they are prophets. We read: Do not trust in men (Psalm 146). And again: It is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in princes (Psalm 118). Not only in secular rulers, but also in the rulers of the churches, those who are just will only save their own souls. However, they will not be able to save their sons and daughters, whom they have borne in the church, if they are negligent. And yet the Apostle says: If someone's work is burned up, he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. (1 Corinthians 3:15) However, the hand is extended over the rebellious earth, so that the rod or the strength of the bread may be crushed. She extends and threatens with blows, unwillingly those who extend her and lifts up sinners to strike, but terrifies with extension and preserves the frightened.

15:1-8

(Chapter 15, verse 1 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, what will be done with the vine wood among all the trees of the forest which are among the trees of the woods? Will its wood be taken to make something, or will a peg be made from it to hang any vessel on? Behold, it is given to the fire for fuel: both ends of it have been consumed by the fire, and the middle part has turned into ashes. Will it be useful for any work? Even though it was intact, it was not suitable for work: how much more so when that fire devoured it and consumed it, will nothing come from it as a work? Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Just as the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for devouring, so I will give the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will set my face against them. They will come out of the fire, and the fire will consume them. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I set my face against them and make the land a waste and desolate, because they have been transgressors, says the Lord God. For this is what we have interpreted: both parts of it have been consumed by fire, and half of it has been reduced to ashes. The Seventy have translated it as: The annual purgation consumes it by fire, and sends it to an end. Again, when we said: When I set my face against them, they turned, when I hardened. They have interpreted it as a transgression and a sin. Moreover, through various similes, which the Greeks call parables, the destruction of the city of Jerusalem is foretold. And as above (Chapter IV), in the pan in which the meats of the people were fried, and on the side on which the fortifications and the mounds of battering rams and siege machines were painted, the siege of the same city and the famine are described, and afterwards we will read about it here in the same passage: in Jeremiah also it is written (Jeremiah I, 13), the pot which is kindled from the face of the north indicates the city of Jerusalem; and the forests of Negev, and Teman, and Darom being cut down, signify this very thing: so in the present place, the same Jerusalem is compared to fruitful vineyards and vines. Concerning which it is written elsewhere: I have planted you a fruitful vineyard, the whole truth: how have you turned into the bitterness of a strange vine? (Jeremiah II, 21.) And in Isaiah: I have planted, he says, a choicest vine (Isaiah V, 2), which sounds beautiful and chosen. And in the Psalms we read: You have transferred a vineyard from Egypt: you have cast out the nations, and have planted it: you were the leader of its journey in its sight (Psalm LXXIX, 9). And we learn more clearly, as the Scripture says: But the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel (Isaiah V, 7). As long as this vineyard produces fruit, there is nothing more valuable than it in all the trees of the forest; but if it ceases to bear grapes, it will be of no use at all, unless it is given over to fire with its roots and branches. Other trees of the forest (not to mention fruit-bearing trees, of which the Scripture makes no mention at present) when they do not bear fruit, provide much usefulness when cut down, both in agriculture and in the use of weapons: when they are made into shields, they are shaved into spears, they form gates, they enclose armories, fridges, and chests; and they provide all the furniture for a house. But if a vine once ceases to produce grapes, it is so useless that not even a peg can be made from it, on which something can hang. And when you cut off the little branches, fire first seizes both parts of them, then the flame consumes them: and it is so useless when reduced to ashes that even when it is whole, it provides no benefit without fruits. However, there is ambiguity in the Hebrew word Sene (סֵנֶה), which is written with three letters, Sin, Nun, and Yod; if it is read as Sene, it means two; if as Sane, it means years. And it came to pass, that for its two extremities, which we have interpreted as each part of it, the Seventy interpreted its annual purification: when Aquila said, its two last things; Symmachus Theodotion, its two extremities. And there is an order: As a fruitless vine is given to the fire, for no advantage: so also Jerusalem, nay its inhabitants, shall be given to burnings, so that they may

come forth from the fire, and the fire may consume them, that is, even if they have escaped from the city, they shall be consumed by the hostile sword outside; and those who remain, pressed down by the weight of their own miseries, shall recognize me as the Lord: when I have set my face against them, and given them over to eternal desolation. For sinners have not arisen like the rest of the nations, but rather transgressors. For it is one thing to neglect what you are ignorant of, and another to despise what you have cherished. We can understand the vineyard and Jerusalem according to spiritual intelligence, understanding the multitude of believers. But if it is negligent, and loses the cultivation of the former religion, and brings neither the fruits of virtues, nor makes the wine that gladdens the heart of man, it will be handed over to eternal flames, and considered as nothing. For the servant who knows his master's will and does not do it, he will be beaten with many blows (Luke XII, 47). Such a thing the Lord also speaks in the Gospel according to John: I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he will take it away. And everyone who bears fruit, he will prune it so that it may bear more fruit (John XV, 2, 2). Indeed, the Savior is the vine, and we are the branches, and God (also called) the Father is the vinedresser, as long as we keep God's commandments, we are constantly cultivated, and our cultivation is purification: For it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy (Romans IX, 16). But if we bear fruit, we are pruned by the Father, so that we may bear even more fruit. It is shown that all of our effort, with the help of God, leads to the end and produces the fruit of fullness. But those who do not produce fruit will be taken away by the Father. And when they are taken away, Scripture does not say what the Father will do with them, except that perhaps separation from the body of Christ is a perpetual punishment and destruction. What we have understood in the vineyard and the vine, the Savior teaches in the Gospel under a different figure: Salt is good, but if salt loses its flavor, it is no longer useful, except to be thrown out and trampled on by men (Mark 9:49). And the eye that illuminates the whole body, if it is blind, hears from the Lord: If the light that is in you is darkness: how great will the darkness be? For indeed, the punishment of the transgressor, and of the one who has denied God when choked, is lighter than that of those who have never had knowledge of God. But the trees of the meadows or forests, according to the variety of believers, have some usefulness in a great house; in which not only are there vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earthenware; some for honor, others for dishonor.

16:1-2

(Chapter 16, Verses 1, 2.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, make known the abominations of Jerusalem and say: Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, testify against Jerusalem for her iniquities, and say to her: Thus says the Lord God. In which the brief summary of each prophecy was, we have included the entire chapter, immediately following as it seemed to us. However, because this discourse is directed to Jerusalem, testifying and teaching about the sins it has committed; and it extends nearly to the number of two hundred verses, to that place where it is written: 'When I am appeased by you for all that you have done,' says the Lord God, we must divide every prophecy into parts; and we must adapt proper explanations to those things which we have proposed. Under the person of a prostitute woman who was first joined to the company of men, Jerusalem is intertwined with birth, and upbringing, and puberty, and marriage, and adultery, and divorce, and again reinstatement; so that the mercy and judgement of the husband, and the crimes of the adulteress

and prostitute may be known, while after all punishments, he raises for her an eternal covenant: that she may remember her iniquity, and be confounded, and may no longer have the courage to speak because of her shame, when he has been appeased by her for all that she has done. For it is very beneficial for sinners to know what they have done. Thus, the repentant one speaks: For I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me (Psalm 50:4). However, Jerusalem can be understood in four ways: Either as that which was burned with the fire of the Babylonians and Romans; or as the celestial city of the first ones; or as the Church, which is interpreted as the vision of peace; or as the souls of individuals who, through faith, see God. And that which many think should be interpreted as the celestial Jerusalem, the Church does not accept, lest we be compelled to include in it all the ruins and torments of the heavenly powers, as well as the restoration to their original state, that are woven into the present prophecy.

16:3

(Verse 3) Your ancestors and your lineage are from the land of Canaan (Vulgate: Canaan). Your father is Amorite, and your mother is Hittite. Great faith and immense boldness of the prophets, to accuse one man and the whole city of ignobility. Marvelous is Daniel, who dared to say to the delinquent elder, committing adultery and murder: The seed of Canaan, not Judah, has deceived you (Dan. 13:56). Great is also Isaiah, who cries out to the princes and the people of Judah: Hear the word of the Lord, you princes of Sodom, listen with your ears to the words of the Lord, people of Gomorrah (Isa. 1:10). But not less so Ezechiel, who speaks confidently to the whole city: Your root, and your generation from the land of Chanaan: Your father Amorrhite, and your mother Chethite, Although even Stephen, the first martyr of the Gospel, spoke to the insane people (Acts 7:51): You have always resisted the Holy Spirit with stubborn necks and uncircumcised hearts (Al. you resist). And although we may understand that Jerusalem is the root and its generation the land of Chanaan, according to what is said, that the people was called in Egypt and dwelled there for a long time (for Cham, father of Chanaan, was the head of the Egyptian nation), nevertheless, according to the similarity of their crimes, we will say that the root of Jerusalem is the land of Egypt: Hence its father is also called Amorrhite, which means 'being talked about,' that is, being much celebrated in speech. And your mother Chethaea, that is, one who is possessed; who either herself is insane, or who sends others into madness. For everyone who commits sin is born of the devil (John 8:54). Therefore, in the whole world, the famous name of this ancient father is, and he turns many into madness. And it is commanded to Jerusalem, either according to the letter or according to the spirit, to leave the ancient father; and it is said to her: Hear, daughter, and see, and incline your ear; and forget your people, and your father's house: and the king will desire your beauty (Psalm 45:11). And it is promised to him that if he desires to return to the true father after sin: I will restore you as you were when you were born. What great nobility, that the city of Jerusalem, which descended from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had God as its father? And yet because he sinned and abandoned the true parent, he deserves to hear: Your root and your generation are from the land of Canaan: Your father is Amorite, and your mother is Hittite. If she heard this: what will happen to us who were called from the filth of the nations, who have lost every stain in the baptism of the Savior, if we defile the garment of Christ and do not have the wedding garment at the banquet? Certainly, it is necessary that we are handed over with bound hands and feet to eternal flames, in which there is weeping of eyes and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 22).

(Verse 4, 5.) And when you were born, on the day of your birth your umbilical cord was not cut, and you were not washed in water for your own health, nor were you sprinkled with salt, nor wrapped in swaddling clothes. No eye had pity on you, to do any of these things out of compassion for you: but you were thrown out into the open field, in the abjection of your soul, on the day you were born. LXX: And on the day you were born, they did not bind your breasts, and your umbilical cord was not cut, and you were not washed in water for your own health, nor were you sprinkled with salt, and you were not wrapped in swaddling clothes; no eye had pity on you, to do any of these things for you, and allow anything to happen to you, and you were thrown out into the open field, in the corruption of your soul, on the day you were born. Let us discuss each point in the order of the reading. When Jerusalem was born from her father Amorite and her mother Hittite, and was poured out from the womb, her umbilicus was not cut, with which fetuses are nourished in the womb like trees and plants, which are nourished by the hidden moisture of the earth through their roots. And just as the seed of men is signified in the loins, so the genitalia of women are called umbilicus in honorable speech according to the custom of the Scriptures, as witnessed by Job, who speaks figuratively of the devil as a dragon: His strength is in his loins, and his power is in the navel of his belly (Job 40:11). For this ancient dragon serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, deceives the world; he has power over men in their loins, and over women in their navels. But this refers to Jerusalem: that it did not immediately receive the law, and that the beginnings of its shameful birth were not cut off; but it first lived a Gentile life; for this reason the Seventy translated: 'On the day you were born, they did not bind your breasts' (Ezek. 7:8), having this holy Scripture custom, that it might use the words heart, bosom, or breast, and breasts according to each appropriate context. Priests in whom there should be doctrine, and they seek the law from their mouth, receive a small breast. John reclines upon the Lord's breast, so that he may draw from the most abundant fountain the flows of wisdom (John 13). In the Song of Songs, the Virgin has two breasts, like two twin young goats that feed among lilies until the day breathes and the shadows flee away (Song of Songs 4). A loving mother, as soon as her little child is born, binds her breasts so that they may cease from tender swelling and preserve her virgin beauty. But when she reaches the age of puberty, it will be said of her: Will the bride forget her adornment, or the virgin her breastband? (Jeremiah II, 32) It follows: And you were not washed in water for salvation. The bodies of babies, as soon as they are born from the womb, are usually washed with water: so too does the spiritual generation require the saving washing. For no one is clean from filth, not even if his life were of only one day (Job XXVI, 14, 15). And in the Psalms we read: In iniquities I was conceived, and in sins my mother conceived me (Psalm 50:6). The second birth dissolves the first birth. For it is written: Unless one is born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). Many are the baptisms that the Pagans have in their mysteries, and the heretics promise: they all cleanse; but they do not cleanse for salvation. Therefore, it is added: and in which you have not been cleansed for salvation. This can be understood not only about heretics, but also about ecclesiastics who do not receive baptism with full faith. It must be said about them that they receive water, but they do not receive the spirit, just like Simon Magus who wanted to buy the grace of God with money. He was indeed baptized in water, but he was by no means baptized unto salvation (Acts 8). Thirdly, it is said: 'not seasoned with salt.' When the tender bodies of infants still hold the warmth of the womb, and they announce the beginnings of laborious life with their first cries, they are usually touched with salt by the

midwives to make them drier and more constricted. Furthermore, Jerusalem, which was born of wicked parents, has achieved nothing of taste, nothing of diligence. But those who are reborn in Christ are said to: 'You are the salt of the earth' (Matthew 5); and it is commanded to them by the Apostle: 'Let your speech always be seasoned with grace' (Colossians 4). Hence, both the wise are commonly called salty, and the foolish are called tasteless. And in the book of Leviticus it is established by law: 'All your sacrifices shall be seasoned with salt.' The salt of the Testament of the Lord will not cease from your sacrifices: you shall offer salt with all your offerings (Leviticus 2:13). He who is seasoned with this salt, and has dried up every harmful decay and moisture by its mixture, will no longer say: My wounds have festered and become rotten because of my foolishness (Psalm 37:6). I know that I have read in a certain volume about the Lord Savior, that he himself is the heavenly salt; and not only the earthly and infernal, but also the celestial things are seasoned by its flavor: so that what is written may be fulfilled: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will (Luke 2:14). The fourth thing is: not wrapped in swaddling clothes. And the Savior was wrapped in swaddling clothes as an infant, and everyone who is born needs God's protection through the swaddling clothes. It is natural, however, that where the diligence of parents is not lacking, the infants' umbilical cords are first cut after birth: then they are washed with water to cleanse the blood. Thirdly, the moisture of the infants' bodies is dried with the addition of salt. Fourthly, so that the tender bodies of infants are wrapped in swaddling clothes, for two reasons: so that the body is dried with salt, and so that it is kept and tightened with the clothes so that it does not flow away; and so that the most delicate limbs are not easily deformed. And even the bodies of the barbarians are more upright than Roman bodies. Until the second and third year, they are always wrapped in cloths. But not such is Jerusalem, whose navel is not cut off, nor are her breasts bound, nor is she washed with water for health, nor seasoned with salt, nor wrapped and bound with infancy cloths. But why she deserved none of these, the following Scripture testifies. The eye has not spared you: to do one of these things, being moved with compassion for you. For which reason, the Seventy determined: 'Your eye spared not over you: that it might make you one of all these.' And it is necessary, that a double edition have a double understanding. The prior signifies this: 'Your eye spared not over you, that it might make one of these things be merciful to you.' And the sense is: No one had mercy on you, having offended God; no one's bowels were moved for you, that out of the four higher Tensions at least one might be made for you; because you did not deserve to receive all things at once. In the second it is said: Your eye did not spare you, so that I may do this one thing for you out of pity for you. And this has the meaning: You have acted in this way, and thus you were born in sin and conceived in guilt by your mother, so that even she does not have pity on you. And when you acted in this way, so that you emerged as cruel against yourself through evil deeds: what could I have done for you, who did not even deserve to receive one thing from your superiors? Therefore, since none of the things that are commonly done for infants was done for you; and this not without cause or without judgement, but due to your fault and sin, for which even you have no pity on yourself: therefore you are cast down upon the face of the earth, or the wayside; and cast down because of the wickedness of your soul on the day you were born. Let us not be thrown down into the face of the field by the wickedness of the soul, in which there is a wide and spacious road that leads to death; in which the cavalry of the Chaldeans revels. It must also be considered that no one can commit any evil on the day of their birth, except at the time of the bath, when the wise generation of the faithful is assumed.

(Verse 6, 7.) But passing by you, I saw you trampled in your own blood. And I said to you when you were in your own blood, live: I said to you, indeed, in your own blood, live. I made you multiply like the growth of the field, and you entered and came to womanhood. Your breasts swelled, and your hair grew: and you were naked and full of confusion. LXX: And I passed by you, and saw you mixed in your own blood, and I said to you, multiply your life from your blood, as I gave you growth like the plants of the field, and you multiplied, and you were magnified, and you entered into cities of cities. Your breasts were erect, and your hair was grown; but you were naked and full of shame. After you were cast down on the face of the field, or on the face of the earth, because of the wickedness of your soul, I no longer deserved to help you. Nevertheless, passing by, I saw you trampled upon, or mixed in your own blood, that is, guilty of mortal crimes. And I provoked you, granting you repentance, and said to you: Though you are in blood, nevertheless live in conversion; and there was such an abundance of all things in you, that you had the likeness of the most fertile land, and the blessing of Jacob, with which his father blessed him, saying: Behold the smell of my son is like the smell of a full field, which the Lord has blessed (Gen. XXVII, 27); and you would enter the inner chambers of the Lord, and say with the bride: The king brought me into his chamber (Cant. I, 3); and you would go to the world of women, for which the Seventy translated: and you entered into the cities of cities; so that just as the Song of Songs is called the world of worlds; so let cities be called the cities of cities. Concerning which it is said in the Gospel: You have authority over ten, or over five cities (Luke 19:17, 18): so that you may be called not only a city, but a metropolis city, according to what is read in Isaiah: Faithful mother of cities, Zion (Isaiah 1:26, 27). Moreover, what Symmachus interpreted, and you have reached the adornment of women, or as Theodotio, and you have entered the adornment of adornments, for which we have stated the Hebrew sense: and you have reached the world of women, it shows the time of puberty, when young girls are called marriageable, and can be united with the embrace of husbands. Finally it follows: your breasts have swelled, and your hair has grown. The maturity of young women is indicated by the swelling or raising of the breasts, and the growth of hair. And when she was prepared for marriage, and had the beauty of the body, she did not have the coverings of clothing, nor was she protected by the help of God. If anyone does not have the clothing of Christ, they are naked. If anyone is not clothed with the bowels of mercy, goodness, humility, modesty, meekness, patience, they lie face down on the ground: and their beauty is marred by shame and nakedness.

16:8 (Verse 8.) And I passed through you, and I saw you: and behold, your time, the time of lovers. And I spread my garment over you, and covered your shame. Septuagint: And I passed through you, and I saw you, and behold, your time, the time of those who divert: and I spread my wings over you, and covered your shame. What mercy! It was not enough to see her trampled in blood once, and to provoke her to repentance: but again he visited the sinner, and because she was naked, and full of confusion, he came and visited her again, and behold, her time, the time of lovers; whether according to the Septuagint, those who divert, or according to the interpretation of Aquila, the second συναλλαγῆς, namely the betrothal and wedding time; according to the first edition of the same and Theodotion, μαστῶν, which means of breasts: for which Symmachus translates γαπῆς, which signifies love. Therefore, that was the time when women could join men and endure marital intercourse. However, merciful God spread His wings, and He took them in and

carried them on His shoulders, according to what is written in the Gospel: "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing" (Luke 12:34)? Or rather, He extended His garment as wings; for this is what the term "pterygium" means, with which Ruth covered her feet while sleeping at Boaz's feet (Ruth 3). And on the border, that is, on the hem of our garment, we are commanded to attach hyacinth fringes. This was done in order to cover the shame of Jerusalem, revealing the female genitalia under this name. Indeed, according to the Apostle: We surround the dishonorable parts of our body with greater honor (I Cor. XII, 13). Hence, the Psalmist sings: Blessed are those whose sins are forgiven, and whose sins are covered (Ps. XXXI, 1). This is why Ham, because he did not protect his father, is marked with eternal curse (Gen. IX). Let us turn our thoughts on what we said about Jerusalem to our own soul, which, as long as it remains in infancy, is free from sin. But when the time of its adulthood comes, there are many lovers of demons and heretics, and of perverse teachings, who desire to lead it astray. They are repelled by the protection of God, so that it may not receive the satellites of the devil, but rather the ministers of the Savior. For the diversion of lovers, and the abundance, it is expressed in Hebrew as Dodim (), according to the nature of their language, which means everything that has been turned upside down. The time of love, and the abundance of the lovers of God, can be understood in the cases of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: when the Lord promised to them liberation for their people after the slavery in Egypt. And I swore to you; and I made a covenant with you, says the Lord God. LXX: And I swore to you, and I entered into a covenant with you, says Adonai the Lord. For I spread my cloak, or my wings, over you: and I covered your shame: therefore I swore to you, and I entered into a covenant, or testament, with you: that you would be joined to me rather than others who wanted to turn away from you, according to that, The Lord swore and will not regret it: you are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 6). For the end of every controversy is an oath. And I live, says the Lord: unless the sinner repents of evil rather than death (Ezekiel XVIII). Therefore, at the time of the wedding, Israel receives the oath of God, in place of every dowry gift. And because David had said: Remember, O Lord, David, and all his meekness (Psalm CXXXI, 1): he who swears to the Lord, vows to God Jacob; and the Lord himself swears to him, as the Scripture says: The Lord has sworn truth to David, and he will not deceive him (Ibid., 11).

16:9

(V.9) And you became mine, and I washed you with water, and I cleansed your blood from you, and I anointed you with oil. For I spread my wings and covered your shame, and I swore to you, and I entered into a covenant with you; therefore you have become my possession: that which once belonged to another, when you appeared unclean, you began to belong to me, when I established my covenant with you by oath. Or, according to the custom of the prophets, 'You have become mine,' he said, 'insofar as you are united to me by marriage: and I washed you,' he says, 'with the water of saving baptism.' For unless someone is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, they cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). And elsewhere we read: He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Mark 1:8). Concerning this baptism, Isaiah also speaks, saying: The Lord will wash away the filth of the sons and daughters of Zion; and he will cleanse the blood from their midst with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning (Isaiah 4:4). But when he has washed and cleansed the blood, just as he healed the woman who was bleeding for twelve years by touching the edge of his cloak (Mark 5), it is not enough for him to wash with water and cleanse

with blood, unless he also anoints with oil. This is in accordance with what the Samaritan, who is interpreted as a guardian, did: he first soothed wounds with the infusion of oil, and then restrained them with the severity of wine (Luke 10). But our Lord was anointed with another oil, which did not mitigate the pain of wounds, but bestowed joy, as the Holy Spirit said to him: Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions (Ps. 44:8). And there are fake strengths that simulate the gentleness of oil, promising sweet things through heretics; which turn into bitterness, and which the prophet detests when he says: But the oil of the sinner will not anoint my head (Ps. 140:5). But if someone is anointed by unction, that is, Christ is called, see how much Jerusalem has advanced: so that she herself, anointed with spiritual oil, has received the name of Christ; according to which we also read in the Psalms about Abraham: Do not touch my Christs, and do not malign my prophets.

16:10 (Verse 10.) And you clothed yourself in various colors. LXX: And you adorned yourself with various garments: engaging in the rituals of the law, you abandoned idols. These are the various garments with which Joseph was clothed: and his brothers could not sell him unless they first stripped him of his varied tunic (Gen. XXXVII). And it is said of the bride in the forty-fourth psalm: The queen stood at your right hand in a robe adorned with gold, surrounded by variety (Ps. XLIV, 10). This is the clothing about which the Apostle speaks: Put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of the Creator (Ephesians 4:24). We want to know what are the various garments? Let the same Apostle teach us, writing to the believers: Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering (Colossians 3:12). What is more beautiful than this variety? About which Job also spoke: Who gives to women the wisdom of weaving, or the skill of variety (Job 38:36, Septuagint). And the high priest, once a year, when he offered incense for the people, entered into the Holy of Holies, using various garments (Exodus XXXIX; Hebrews IX). Certainly, if riches made the variety of garments and not holiness, and if diversity of virtues did not exist, then Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar would be recorded as having had these garments, and not Joseph, who, under a foreign and pastoral father, could not have colored or royal garments. And you put on purple shoes. LXX: And you put on hyacinth shoes ((Al. Hyacinthino)). Aquila and Symmachus, purple; Septuagint and Theodotion, hyacinth. For which it is written in Hebrew Thas (). And because the speech is beautifully directed towards Jerusalem, and under the persona of a woman, all her adornments are described, purple or hyacinth shoes are mentioned, which do not suit male persons. Finally, for those who will observe Passover it is commanded that they should be dressed in plain clothing, with no diversity of color, and have their loins girded and their feet shod. These are the shoes about which the Apostle writes: having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Philo, a very eloquent man among the Jews, compares the hyacinth in the high priest's garments to the air, through which he believes heavenly and celestial things are signified. Jerusalem is not adorned with hyacinth until it is washed with water. Hence, the feet of the Apostles, to whom the Lord had previously commanded to shake off the dust from their feet (Matthew X), are washed by the Savior. And the bride says in the Song of Songs: I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? (Song of Songs 5:3). And the divine word testifies about both Moses and Joshua (Exodus 3), that they should loosen the strap of their sandals, for the place on which they stand is holy. But once their feet have been washed and cleansed of all dirt, they are adorned with hyacinths or jacinths, which are of a golden and blue color, respectively: so that they may be swept up into the presence of the Lord in the air, and hasten to the heavenly kingdom. And

I have encircled you with fine linen. Jerusalem is adorned not only with various colors and wears hyacinth shoes, but also is girded with fine linen, from which the finest threads are woven into the priest's garment. And the wife in Proverbs, who weaves double garments for her husband, for both the present and future, is said to have made clothing for herself from linen and purple (Prov. XXXI). With this linen, the loins are girded whenever the thick incentives of lust are to be restrained and nothing of gross humor is left in them. And we fulfill the precept of the Apostle who says: Stand therefore, having your loins girded with truth (Ephes. VI, 14); as if he were saying in other words, with linen. And the Lord said to the Apostles: Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning in your hands (Luke 22:35). For unless we shall have bound up the flowing of the loins from rheumatism, we cannot have lamps in our hands. From this the Lord also speaks to Job: Gird up thy loins like a man (Job 38:3). And those who are about to eat the lamb, having their feet shod, holding a staff, standing in the truth of the Gospel, and being prepared for the blood of Christ, are said to have their loins girt (Exodus 12). Elias and John the Baptist also gird themselves with a mortifying girdle around the loins (2 Kings 1; Mark 1). Concerning them, the penitent sighs mournfully, saying: For my loins are filled with illusions (Psalm 37:8). And I clothed you in fine linen. LXX: And I surrounded you with triple-threaded fabric. For which Aquila used the Hebrew word 'Messe' (meaning 'flourishing' or 'palpable'): Symmachus, with clothing: Theodotio. And when I diligently inquired about the meaning of the word 'triple-threaded', which the LXX translated, and since I could not find its use or etymology in any Greek sources, I finally learned from the LXX that it is a compound (for new things, new names must be created) and that it was clothing of such great delicacy that it is believed to have the thinness of hair and thread. And I, wishing to express the thinness of the garment, translated it as 'subtilibus', because it was woven with a fine thread and a covering. And fittingly to those, about whom he had said, 'This people's heart has become fat, and Jacob ate and drank, and was satisfied and became fat, and kicked, and abandoned his God, their Maker' (Deut. XXXII, 15), now the thinness of clothing is pardoned. For also in the Book of Wisdom, which is inscribed by some as Solomon's, the spirit of wisdom, the only-begotten and manifold, is called 'tenuis' and 'mutabilis' (Sap. VII). And manna, of which it is written, 'Man ate the bread of angels' (Ps. LXXVII, 25), is said to have been as fine as hoarfrost and have resembled coriander seed (Exod. XVI). According to the interpretation of the second edition of Aquila, who translated it floridly, we can understand it as a metaphor for the abundance of the land of Judah or the beauty of divine worship.

16:11 (Verse 11.) And I adorned you with ornaments. Now he lists the ornaments in general, which he enumerates in the following sections: bracelets and necklaces, earrings and crown, and other ornaments which he gave to Jerusalem, and it is said in Isaiah that she lost everything due to her own fault. For it is written: Because they were lifted up, that is, the daughters of Jerusalem became proud and walked with a haughty neck (Isa. III, 16, 17), and the rest: instead of a belt, they were girded with ropes, and instead of a head ornament, they were disfigured with baldness, and instead of beautiful and soft garments, they were surrounded with the roughness of sackcloth. And I gave bracelets into your hands. LXX: And I surrounded your hands with bracelets. When God gives us good works, He surrounds our hands with bracelets. Hence it is said that it is likened to the hands of the prophets (Hosea 13), and we often read in the hand of Haggai or Jeremiah and the rest (Haggai 1). In Job, the lip of the dragon is pierced by a bracelet, and all his venomous hisses, which are understood in perverse doctrines, are pierced by the circle of good works (Job 40). And a chain around your neck. Regarding the chain, which we have interpreted according to

the second edition of Aquila and Symmachus, the Septuagint and Theodotion translated it as κ■θεμα, which is written not only here but also in Isaiah: The Lord will take away the glory of their garments, their hairnets, their bangles, their crescent ornaments, and their κ■θεμα (Isaiah 3:18). But I believe κ■θεμα is said by them to refer to various gems descending from the necklace on the chest of women, which is also a most beautiful adornment of women.

16:12 (Verse 12.) And I placed a jewel above the mouth or nostrils. The Hebrew word 'Nezem' (except for Symmachus, who interpreted it as '■π■■■■νιον') is translated by all as 'jewel'. Not that the jewels are placed in the nostrils that are called earrings because they hang from the ears, but so that the circles made in the likeness of earrings are called by the same name, and even today among other ornaments of women, golden circles are accustomed to hang from the front of the mouth and hang over the nostrils. We then understand them according to mystical understanding, when we can say with the Apostle: We are the good odor of Christ to those who are saved and to those who perish. To some, we are the odor of death leading to death; to others, we are the odor of life leading to life (II Cor. II, 15). When we live and it can be said of us, the dead shall not praise you, O Lord, but we who live (Psal. CXIII, 17), then God smells the fragrance of our good sacrifice, and we have a golden circle of senses and divine doctrines in our nostrils. When we are truly dead and are turned into mud and in the filth of vices, we have that ring in our nostrils, of which Solomon wrote: Like a gold ring in a pig's snout, so is the beauty of a woman who is ill-tempered. And circles in your ears. LXX: And wheels upon your ears. Who shuts his ears, so as not to hear the judgment of blood, and encloses them with thorns, so as not to become a partner to the envious and detractors, of whom it is written: Do not associate with detractors, for suddenly their destruction will come, and who knows the ruin of both (Prov. XXIV, 21, 22)? Both the one who detracts and the one who willingly listens to them have these circles and wheels in their ears, not the wheels that follow the Cherubim (for those are of angelic strength), but diminutive wheels that correspond to human frailty. Therefore it is said also to God: The voice of your thunder is in the wheel (Psalm 76:19). For in those who pass through earthly things and barely touch the earth with their small footsteps, of whom it is written: Holy stones are rolled upon the earth (Zachariah 9:16), the voice of the Lord's thunder resounds, and the sound of lofty teachings is heard. But those who are led astray by human errors and do not have solid footsteps, but are carried about by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 2), and are expelled from the paradise of stability, dwell in the region of Naid, which means fluctuation, and deserve to bear the judgment of the deceitful tongue, which inflames the wheel of our birth (Genesis 4). And a crown of beauty on your head. LXX: And a crown of glory upon your head. We have interpreted 'decor' as 'elegance' according to Symmachus for the sake of the senses. Otherwise, in Hebrew it is called 'Thopherth', and in other translations 'κα■χησις' or 'gloriation'. The other ornamentations belong to each individual member. The ornamentation of the head is the dignity of the whole body. But the crown is called a diadem for women, with which the hair is bound and ambition is adorned. We want to know what is the crown of beauty on the head of Jerusalem, let us turn to Exodus, in which it is written: And he made a golden plate, and wrote on it the letters deformed with the seal of the sanctification of the Lord, and put it on the head of Aaron (Exod. XXXIX, 29). The sign of the Lord's sanctification, the name of the almighty God, is written with four Hebrew letters (יהוה), and among them it is called ineffable, because his name cannot be spoken. Whose majesty even the pagans do not ignore, and the altar of the Athenians testifies to the unknown God. Hence the Apostle says: Him whom you worship as unknown, Him we proclaim to you (Acts 17:23). I believe this crown is the one of

which the psalmist speaks: You have put a shine on us in the light of your face, O Lord (Psalm 4:7). And the Apostle said: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on, there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the righteous judge will give to me (2 Timothy 4:7, 8). And in another place to the Believers: My joy and my crown (Phil. 4:1). For the glory of the fathers is the children. And in Solomon it is written: The crown of glory is old age (Prov. 12:6); namely, those who have destroyed those things that belong to children, and after reaching maturity, have come to old age and the names of the fathers, of whom John writes after the children (1 John 2), and the young men who can say: When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I understood like a child, I thought like a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things (1 Cor. 13:11).

16:13 (Verse 13.) And you are adorned with gold and silver. We have often said that gold pertains to the mind, and silver to eloquence. May the Lord grant us to receive divine understanding and wisdom, and to bring forth with eloquence what we conceive in our minds, and by no means to make an idol out of them as heretics do, of whom it is written: 'I gave them silver and gold, but they made a Baal out of silver and gold' (Hosea 2:8). And this, according to spiritual understanding, is more suited to the adornment of women. Otherwise, silver, a cheaper material, is suitable for the adornment of rustic and poor maidservants, which does not befit Jerusalem, which is said to have advanced to being a queen. And you are dressed in fine linen and embroidered cloth and many colors, 70: And your clothing is made of fine linen, embroidered with multicolored thread. The Hebrew word "Mesi" here, Theodotion has translated as "byssos" above, Aquila has translated it as "■νθιμον," Symmachus as "polymitum." But we have said above that "polymitum" is similar to Symmachus' translation, meaning fine linen. The LXX has translated it as "trichapta," preserving the previous interpretation, in order to show a similarity to fine hair in the clothing. But all the adornment of women is described, such as bathing, cleaning, anointing with oil, and dressing in colorful garments, wearing hyacinth on their feet, girding themselves with fine linen, wearing fine and delicate clothes, wearing bracelets and a golden necklace, hanging circles on their ears, and small wheels, wearing a diadem on their head, decorated with gold and silver. Even though silver is a cheaper material and is brought in last. You are dressed in fine linen and multicolored clothes; or, as the Septuagint translated, with a cloak and a mantle, for these things signify not only that she was adorned in her physical appearance and had all the jewelry of women, but also that she was attentive to her bed and couch with marital diligence, so that after fulfilling these things, she would come to the delights of food, and not allow anything to be lacking even in these things. We will adapt all these things according to the higher explanation of spiritual intelligence: so that they may be covered with a fine fabric and delicate, so as not to burden the delicate limbs of the spouse with a heavy load of garments, but also to provide both utility and beauty.

You have eaten both honey and oil, and you have become exceedingly beautiful. After clothing, she takes care of food, so that she may eat the honey and oil, or in parts, as many believe, or in a mixture of the three, sweeter bread, which is the bread that descended from heaven (John 6); and under three names, as some think, it indicates the sacrament of the Trinity: not that there is a different substance for each; but so that through the different names of honey, oil, and flour, the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit may be shown. And it should be noted that in many sacrifices, fine flour is offered, the purest part of the wheat, as it is written: And he fed them with the fat of wheat (Psalm 80:17): not barley or bran, which are only offered when the husband is

moved by a spirit of jealousy. In the Book of Judges we read about Deborah (Judges 4), who is interpreted as a bee, whose prophecies are the sweetest honey, and she is related to the Holy Spirit, who is called by the Hebrews in the feminine gender, Rua. In the Gospel of the Hebrews, which the Nazarenes read, the Savior is presented speaking: 'My mother, the Holy Spirit, has taken me just now.' Furthermore, the wheat that is made into dough is related to the Lord, who says about himself, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it yields much fruit' (John 12:24). And the oil, which sustains and refreshes the limbs of the weary, and is the nourishment of light, and with which the constant light of the lamp is kindled in the tabernacle of God, is said to symbolize the Father. All of these bestow grace on those who believe, as the Apostle says: There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all (1 Corinthians 12:4-5). Whoever eats this food, and that most sweet and delightful bread, and is nourished and fed by the splendor of the oil, will be transformed into beauty and become exceedingly beautiful, not once, but repeatedly, excessively, exceedingly. For indeed, the repeated adverb adds weight to the speech: so much so that nothing can be added beyond the greatness of beauty. And you have succeeded in the kingdom. This is not found in the Septuagint, which perhaps those in Alexandria who were translating the Scriptures from Hebrew to Greek out of fear of offending the king of Egypt did not include, while they were stating that Jerusalem was the rightful kingdom from God. Although learned men attest that they have translated only the five books of Moses (See above, chapter V). After an abundant display of ornaments, after a crown, after an abundance of gold and silver, after beautiful garments and robes, after incredible splendor, he advances to be queen, because she is the city of a great king, of whom it is written: Give your judgment to the king, and your justice to the king's son (Psalm 17:1). And in the Apocalypse of John, Jerusalem is described as a bride adorned and prepared for her husband (Rev. 21). In the Psalms also, it is said of the same: The queen stood at your right hand in a golden robe, adorned with various decorations (Ps. 44:10). But everything we say about Jerusalem, so as not to dwell on individual details and not to make the size of the books tedious for readers, let us refer to the Church. For if Jerusalem, according to the Apostle (Gal. 4), is our mother; and our mother is the Church: therefore, Jerusalem is the Church, the mother of the primitive ones who are described in heaven.

16:14

(Verse 14) And your name went out among the nations because of your beauty, for you were perfect in my splendor which I had placed upon you, says the Lord God. LXX: And your name went out among the nations in your beauty, for it was complete in the beauty which I had placed upon you, says the Lord God. Symmachus interpreted this passage more clearly: And your name went out among the nations, which was perfect because of my dignity, which I had placed upon you, says the Lord God. And this is the meaning: By my favors and my incredible generosity, you have obtained the title of queen, so that the speech of all nations would speak of you, and you would not be praised for your own merits and virtues, but for my perfect generosity. For unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain (Ps. CXXVI, 1, 2). For neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth (1 Cor. III). For it is not the one who wills or the one who runs, but the mercy of God that makes a difference (Rom. IX, 16): so that after we have done

everything we are commanded to do, we may say: We are worthless servants; we have only done what we ought to have done (Luke XVII, 10). Not that by the generosity of God, free will is taken away from man, but rather that freedom itself should have the Lord as its helper.

16:15

(Verse 15) And having confidence in your beauty: you have fornicated in your name, and you have exposed your fornication to everyone passing by, so that they might become like you. A great danger, not to trust in the mercy of God, but in one's own beauty. And the higher one is, the more they should fear lest they fall and fornicate in their own name. Indeed, the adversaries despise ordinary food and desire foreign nourishment. Thus it is said of the devil: His food is choice (Habakkuk I, 16). He does not want to deceive anyone. Saul, the king chosen by the Lord, hastens to supplant Judas the apostle. Therefore, let us not trust in our own beauty, nor consider God's generosity to be our own virtue; but rather let us hear: Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring (Prov. 27:1). And in another place: Brothers, if a man is overtaken in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness, keeping watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted (Gal. 6:1). Let us not expose or pour out our fornication to every passerby, so that we may not become not of God, in whom we believe, but of the one by whom we are polluted. He who welcomes all vices, and receives into his bosom the spirit of various sins as they pass by, and spreads his legs to every passerby, he pours out his fornication, and begins to endure the dominion of the one whose guest he has become.

16:16

(Verse 16.) And taking from your garments, you made for yourself lofty things sewn on here and there, and you fornicated upon them, as it has not been done, nor will it be in the future. LXX: And you took from your garments, and you made for yourself sewn idols, and you fornicated upon them, and you will not enter, nor will it happen. Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: And when you took from your garments, you made for yourself lofty multicolored things, and you fornicated in them, things that have not been done nor will be in the future. Pro consutis et versicoloribus et excelsis, sive idolis, Aquila et Theodotio μβολσματα transtulerunt, quod significat diversos pannos hinc inde consutos, et instar emplastri factum idolum, quasi πολσφον vestimentum. Vestivi, inquit, te versicoloribus, et induta es bysso, et polymito, et multarum varietate formarum. Tu autem vestimenta tua quibus mealargitate donata es, tulisti: et fecisti tibi idola, vel excelsa, quae Hebraice dicuntur Bamoth (), quod numquam ante factum est, neque fiet; ut quae acceperis ad ornatum, transtuleris ad injuriam donatoris. What can be understood literally about the above Jerusalem is that it has assigned all the precepts of the Law and the abundance of riches and all things to idols, which no other nation has done or will do. For all the nations that have served idols from the beginning are not guilty of such a great crime. But our Jerusalem, which is interpreted as the vision of peace, is divided by heretics when they, taking one and another testimony of the Scriptures from their own places, try to attach them to those things with which they cannot be joined. To whom and above we read in the same prophet: Woe to those who consume pillows under every elbow hand, and make coverings over the head of the whole age (cf. XIII, 18): the Lord, prohibiting this from happening, speaks in the Gospel: No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear becomes worse. Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins (cf. Matthew IX, 16,

17). There are Nazarenes who strive to adapt the observance of the old Law to the grace of the Gospel. And all heretics attempt to impose an interpretation that agrees with their own ideas, while the Dominican tunic, which is woven throughout, cannot be torn apart, but woven by the Holy Spirit it receives no division. What is said according to the LXX, 'You shall not enter, nor shall it exist,' signifies this: when you make idols of perverse doctrines, which you consider superior, and you commit fornication with them, believing in what you yourself have fabricated, you will not be able to enter the temple of God. And your idols shall not have substance, nor shall they endure forever, as the Apostle says: For we know that there is no idol in the world (I Cor. VIII, 4).

16:17

(Verse 17) And you took the vessels of your adornment from my gold and silver, which I gave to you; and you made for yourself male images, and you committed fornication with them. According to the letter of the Lord's Law, it was commanded that incense burners, vases, candlesticks, the Ark of the Covenant, and all things golden or gilded, and other things made of silver, were to be made. All of these were made in Jerusalem and turned into idols of Baal, Baalim, Chemosh, Ashtaroth, and Milcom. According to spiritual understanding, we make idols out of gold and silver from the Holy Scriptures when we corrupt the grace of perception and eloquence with heretical perversity, and we set our mouth in heaven, while our tongue reaches to the earth. The images in which every heresy commits fornication are called masculine, because each one thinks they are worshipping the most powerful and possessing what they have imagined, and that it cannot be subverted by any attack. These are the images that we have created in our hearts, and which are to be destroyed in the heavenly Jerusalem, of which the Prophet pronounces: Lord, in your city you will scatter their image (Ps. LXXII, 20). For whoever is a man and has lost the name of God, it is said of him: Nevertheless, man walks in an image, nevertheless he is troubled in vain (Ps. XXXVIII, 7). But we have one man, and we worship one image, which is the image of the invisible and omnipotent God.

16:18 (Verse 18) And you took your multicolored garments and covered them: masculine images are understood: so that every form that he had received for use, he would turn into blasphemy. But we do this whenever we surround heretical depravity with prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice, and all virtues, and under the guise of these, we deceive even the simple; so that seeing the sweet honey of virtues, they do not beware of the poison of vices. And you have set my oil and my incense before them. And you have set my bread (or as the Septuagint translated, my loaves) which I gave to you; fine flour, and oil, and honey, with which I nourished you, you have set them before them as a sweet-smelling aroma. The oil of which we have spoken above, and the incense, or the offering, of which the Psalmist proclaims: Let my prayer be directed as incense before you (Ps. 140:2); and the bread of the Presence, which we are commanded to offer to God: also the fine flour, the purest meaning of the Scriptures, and the honey, which Jonathan tasted, and his eyes were opened and he was strengthened (1 Sam. 14), miserable Jerusalem set before idols, or before male images, so that they might be for them a sweet-smelling aroma, which by their nature are sweetest and most pleasant: but while they are offered to idols and false doctrines, they are turned into bitterness.

Book Five Book Five So that the number of books may not be confused, and the order of volumes, divided among themselves over long periods of time, may not be corrupted, I have placed

prefaces before each book, so that the reader may immediately recognize from the title page how many books he has to read, and which prophecy is to be explained by us. Therefore, in the previous volume, that is, the fourth, I discussed a part of the prophecy against Jerusalem, of which this is the beginning: Your root and your generation are from the land of Canaan, up to the place where it is written: You have nourished yourself with flour and oil and honey, which you have placed in their presence as a sweet smell, as I have spoken in a brief discourse. Now the remaining part of the same prophecy, along with the other things that follow, is dedicated to the fifth volume and to your name, Eustochium. In it, you will find nothing of rhetorical art, nothing of composition, and elegance of words, but rather the care of simple and diligent effort, so that this alone may be my praise, if you understand the words spoken by the prophet through me.

16:20-22

(Vers. 20 seqq.) And it came to pass, says the Lord God, that you took your sons and your daughters, whom you bore to me, and you sacrificed them to be devoured. Is your fornication of little consequence, sacrificing my sons? And you gave them to consecrate them. And after all your abominations and fornications, you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and full of confusion, trampled in your own blood. LXX: And it came to pass after these things, says the Lord God, that you took your sons and your daughters, whom you have borne, and sacrificed them to be consumed, as though you have acted like a whore in doing so. And you killed your sons and offered them up to them, that is, above all your whorings and abominations, and you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and exposed; you lived in your own blood. That their sons and daughters of Jerusalem, of whom it is written, 'I have begotten and exalted sons,' they themselves have despised me (Isa. I, 2); the holy Scripture recounts that they have sacrificed their sons and daughters to idols (Ps. CV, 37). And again: 'They have shed innocent blood' (Ibid., 38), the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan (Exod. IV, 22). But he calls them according to the Hebrew. For he himself had said of them: My firstborn son Israel. Or according to the Seventy, your offspring which you conceived through fornication. But in that place where we have placed them, and you have given them by consecrating them, for which the Seventy have translated, and you have given them to appease, or to atone, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion have placed, you have translated and led them: because the pagans either cause their children to pass through fire, or compel them to cross over, whether they are infants or adults. When you do these things, she said, you do not remember your infancy, when I carried you covered in blood and washed you, and after many things that prophetic speech narrated, I united myself to you. Also, our Jerusalem, if it is supplanted by heretical deception, takes away her sons, who are stronger in faith, and daughters who do not have such great strength of faith. Or indeed sons, who know mystical things: daughters who follow a simple history; and delivers them to be devoured by demons, and when she kills them, she believes she is giving them life, and appeasing the idols, with whose slaughter they are satiated. And what is said according to the Septuagint, that is, over all your fornication and abominations, it signifies that the doctrine of demons is worse than all sins and fornications: indeed, it will kill the ones whom it had begotten for God either with much effort or had made them its own sons, whom it had generated in fornication.

16:23-26

(Verse 23 and following) And it came to pass after all your wickedness: woe, woe to you, says the Lord God. And you built yourself a brothel, and made for yourself a prostitute in all the streets. At every head of the road you built a sign of your prostitution, and you made your abominable beauty, and you spread your feet to everyone passing by, and multiplied your fornications. And you fornicated with the sons of Egypt, your neighbors with great flesh, and you multiplied your fornication to provoke me. LXX: And it came to pass after all your evils, woe, woe to you, says the Lord God. And you built for yourself a dwelling of prostitution, and you made for yourself prostitution in every street. And in the beginning of every way you built your prostitution: and you corrupted your beauty, and spread your legs to every passerby, and multiplied your prostitution: and you committed adultery with the sons of Egypt your neighbors, who are of great flesh, and you committed adultery in many ways, to provoke me to anger. What is said second, woe to you, the Vulgate edition does not have, but it has been added from the edition of Theodotion. And again, where we said: And you built for yourself a brothel, which the Seventy translated as: And you built for yourself a dwelling place of fornication, Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted as πορνεῖον; Aquila, wishing to express the etymology of the Hebrew word Gob (גֹּב), put βῆθονον, which we can say means pit: to indicate a foul and deep den where the lust of prostitutes dwells. And what follows: And you have made for yourself a brothel in every street, for which Seventy translated ἡθεμα, in Hebrew it is called Rama: and both Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotio have interpreted it as high or lofty. Finally, in the following passages, where it is written: To every head of the road you have erected a sign of your prostitution, as a sign and fornication, again in Hebrew it is called Rama (רָמָה), which we have interpreted as either brothel or sign, since among the Hebrews it is one word. However, this is stated because it is lofty; so that for those who desire to fornicate, the place of fornication may be far away and there is no need to search for it. What we have said once and again and again, let it suffice to have said it forever, that under the guise of a woman, after many benefits from her husband, describing the fornication of Jerusalem, how she has departed from God and joined with idols, and was not satisfied with hidden fornication; but rather built herself a brothel and placed a sign on every street for those passing by, so they would come to the prostitute and satisfy their lust, not only their own, but also the one who has spread her legs for every passerby, and has defiled the greatness of beauty with the greatness of fornication: and among other things, she has also been bowing down to the Egyptians, her neighbors, in a love of great flesh. And in order to demonstrate every kind of ugliness, it was deformed by various forms of filth. But there is no doubt that Palestine is near Egypt, as the Lord said to Abraham: I will give you all the land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates (Gen. XV, 18), so that on one side it includes the Egyptians, and on the other side it includes the Assyrians, with whom it is said to have committed fornication in later times. But the fornication of Jerusalem with the Egyptians is an imitation of their idolatry. But against our Jerusalem, whether the Church or the souls of the believers, if they are negligent and exposed to all vices, a double curse is pronounced, so that they may hear: Woe, woe to you, says the Lord God, according to what is written in the Apocalypse of John: Woe to all the inhabitants of the earth (Apoc. 8:13). For if the holy one says: I am a stranger and a sojourner like all my fathers (Psalm 38:13): why is it not said that the sinner is an inhabitant of the earth? However, he builds for himself a brothel, who sins with complete freedom of the forehead; according to what is written: When the sinner comes into the depths of wickedness, he despises (Prov. XVIII, 3). And he constructs the highest place in all the streets: For wide and spacious is the way that leads to death. And at every head of the street he builds; so that he

leaves behind no types of sins; but imitating the prostitute of Proverbs, he openly invites foolish young men into his embraces in the streets and in the corners of the streets, and pollutes the beauty of their souls, which they obtained as a benefit from God the creator (Prov. V and VII). And all his journeys are full of filthiness, and he opens his heart to all thoughts that supply the incentives of vices, and he spreads his legs and fornicates with his Egyptian neighbors, whose examples he follows, namely the pagans, who glory in their filthiness, and it is so wicked that it even surpasses them in filthiness. And he does all these things to provoke God to anger. Moreover, the Egyptians are said to have large genitals, either because of the magnitude of their filthiness or because of the deformity of their sins. Wherefore the saint says, 'The flesh of little children, which daily decreases in it, and is attenuated by virtues, so that it is not called flesh, but spirit, and speaks in the psalm: My soul has thirsted for you, O God, how many ways does my flesh long for you (Psalm 62:2): or (as some copies have) how my flesh has been consumed: in a desert and impassable and waterless land, I have appeared to you in the saint (1 Corinthians 5).' Therefore, the Corinthian fornicator is condemned to the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved. Concerning this flesh, it is written: All flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever (Isa. XL, 6, 7). The Apostle also spoke about this: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. XV, 50). And in Genesis, God speaks: My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh (Gen. VI, 3). And it is said to the believers: Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit (Romans VIII, 8, 9). But there is another flesh of the saints, of which it is written: All flesh shall see the salvation of God (Isaiah XL, 5).

16:27

(Verse 27.) Behold, I will stretch forth my hand over you and will take away your righteousness, and I will give you over to the souls of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who are ashamed of your wicked way. LXX: But if I stretch out my hand against you and take away your lawful possession and give you over to the souls of those who hate you, the daughters of foreigners who led you astray from your path. And what follows, '■σ■βησας,' that is, 'you acted impiously,' is connected with the following chapter according to the Septuagint, but according to the other translations, it is the end of the previous chapter. However, the Lord stretched out his hand over Jerusalem to correct the wrongdoer and take away its rightful possessions, which, as long as he observed God's commandments, were called the rightful possessions of the Lord. But when he worshiped idols and changed his religion into impiety, they are by no means called his rightful possessions. Which not only in the law and ceremonies, but also in the Sabbaths and feast days and new moons, must be observed. For in the law, it is said: My Sabbaths and my feast days. But when they turned away from God, it is said to them: I will not receive your new moons, and Sabbaths, and great day: my soul hates your fasting and rest, and your solemnities (Exodus 31; Deuteronomy 5; Isaiah 1:14). This is also written about the people (Deuteronomy 7). For when the people, who were previously called the people of God, turned away from the Lord, it is said of them concerning Moses: 'Your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, has sinned' (Exodus XXXII, 7). The stretching out of the hand is here called elsewhere as lifting up or visiting. For when God does not correct the sinner, He withdraws His hand. But if the sinner sins and begins to be sick in God's law, a visitation is sent to him; according to what is sung in the psalm: 'If his children forsake my law and do not walk in my judgements, I will visit their iniquities with the

rod' (Psalm LXXXIX, 31, 32). And in this the prophet has written: If the earth sins against me to commit a crime, I will stretch out my hand against it and break its bread supply, and so on. In this we are questioning what the difference is between the stretching out of the hand and its emission. However, the devil speaks to the Lord: Stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, unless he blesses you to your face (Job 2:5). And it seems to me that the hand is sent, for the testing of those to whom it is sent; but it is stretched out, for the punishment of those who deserve torment. Not only extension and outreach, but also the stretching out of God's hands is called expansion, as Isaiah proclaims from the perspective of the Lord: 'All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people' (Isa. 65:2). It is also narrated that the holy hands are lifted up, as Scripture says: 'Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice' (Ps. 141:2). But since the legitimate practices of God have been taken away from the people of the Jews, let us ask them what observance of the law they have. The victims, with the temple being destroyed and overturned, cannot be offered; nor can the stoning of adulterers and the execution of other crimes permitted by law be carried out, nor can the year of release of the land and other similar things. However, it is given to the souls of the haters of the daughters of Palestine, when they are delivered to the Palestinians, whom the Seventy indiscriminately call foreigners: which we can understand as the cities or towns of Palestine. Our Jerusalem too, if we neglect the ceremonies of God, and his hand is stretched out against us, and the observance of the entire law is taken away, will be delivered to the daughters of Palestine and not to the sons. For we are not first consigned to more severe punishments, but according to the quality of sins, to lesser ones, so that being corrected in the lesser, we may avoid the greater torments. The Philistines, that is, the Palestinians, with the first part of the word changed, interpret it as falling by drinking, or breaking ((perhaps breaking)). By which it is signified that we are to be handed over to adversarial powers, who have drunk from the cup of Babylon and have fallen, and whose works are perverse. And so great will be the correction and disgrace of wretched Jerusalem, that even the opposing powers themselves will be ashamed at the magnitude of our sins. This we have interpreted according to Symmachus, 'scelerata': Theodotion placed the Hebrew word itself 'Zemma ()'. But with the ceremonies of God removed from the people of the Jews, it has passed to us along with the priesthood and the legislation, with the Scripture saying, 'Establish, O Lord, a legislator over them' (Psalm 9:21). And in another place: Set a law for me, O Lord, in your way (Psalm 26:11).

16:28-29

(Verse 28, 29.) And you have committed fornication with the sons of Assyria: because you were not yet satisfied, and after you committed fornication, you were still not satisfied. And you multiplied your fornication in the land of Canaan with the Chaldeans, and even then you were not satisfied. LXX: You have acted impiously, and you have committed fornication with the sons of Assyria; and even then you were not satisfied: you have committed fornication, and you have not been filled; and you have multiplied your agreements with the land of Canaan, and with the Chaldeans; and you have not been satisfied with them either. The above is written, Jerusalem fornicated with the sons of Egypt, her neighbors, who are of great flesh: this signifies the other neighboring of the Assyrians. And for this reason, both are handed over to the nations, because they worshiped the idols of both, and entering into Chaldea, which is the land of Canaan, they imitated the errors of those whom they were subject to. According to allegory, we often pass from

one sin to another. And when we do not repent of our previous sins, we increase sins with sins, and we are satisfied with no error, but like calves tied with a long rope and an unceasing strap, we drag our sins, and we multiply our covenant, or fornication, in the land of Canaan, which is interpreted as fluctuation, and with the Chaldeans, who also sound like demons (Psalm 39:3). And we always have footprints in the salt, and we can never say: 'He has set my feet upon a rock'. And we are subjected to the malice of heretics, who have the likeness of demons: whether they are Demons themselves, of whom Paul writes: 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places' (Ephesians 6:12).

16:30-31

(Verse 30, 31.) In what shall I cleanse your heart, says the Lord God, when you do all these works of a promiscuous and shameless woman? For you have made your brothel at the head of every street, and your high place you have made in every square; and you have not acted like a prostitute, increasing your price. LXX: What shall I do to your heart, says the Lord God, when you do all these works of a prostitute and shameless woman? ÷ And you have committed adultery three times with your daughters ** when you built your brothel at the beginning of every street, and you made your platform in every square; and you have not been like a prostitute gathering wages. And what the Seventy said: 'And you have prostituted yourself thrice with your daughters, which is not found in the Hebrew, nor has any other Interpreter put it.' But God speaks all of this contentiously towards Jerusalem, that He may find a remedy by which He can heal the sick and the half-dead; according to that which Isaiah writes: 'What more could I have done for my vineyard, that I have not done for it?' (Isaiah 5:4). And Hosea said: What shall I do with you, Ephraim? what shall I do with you, Judah? Your mercy is like the morning clouds, and like the dew in the morning that passes away (Hosea 6:4). For your idolatry is not hidden, but committed with complete freedom, as you set up altars and high places at the beginning of every street and on every corner, and you make your bed in every square. And you have not imitated the cunning of prostitutes, who often increase the price of desire with difficulty, and from this incite lovers to madness. Or according to the Septuagint: You were not like a prostitute gathering wages, but you gave what you should have received, so that you would not be protected by the help of those with whom you fornicated and followed demons, but rather, oppressed by various captivities, you would feel your calamities. And this can indeed be applied to every Christian soul, which, having abandoned the worship of God, has given itself over to vices and luxury, and pursuing a worldly life, did not even thrive in it, but lost the riches of religion and did not receive the riches of the world. And there was no difficulty at all in prostituting yourself to it, but you yourself embraced your lovers. Moreover, there is another spiritual fornication, when we forsake the Church and join the heretics, and build our brothel at the head of every road, as the divine word commands: Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it (Jeremiah 6:16), namely in the books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the other prophets. In the beginnings of all roads, their brothel is constructed, which, to the perversion of doctrine, abuses the testimonies of the Scriptures and says: This is what Isaiah says, this is what Hosea says, this is what Moses said, this is what Daniel said. And he does not place his brothel in the middle of the streets or at the ends of the roads, but at the beginning. For if he comes to knowledge and the depths of divine books, he will not be able to err. He also makes his high place

or pedestal in every public square, allowing himself to be corrupted by the depravity and vices of the heathens, even among the heretics when he has been defiled by them, having no grace but exposing himself to contempt, because he easily lost the purity of faith that has passed. But this, which (as we have said above) is not found in Hebrew: Thou art fornicated threefold in thy daughters, or to Jerusalem, according to the letter, that in all kinds in its towns and villages it has fornicated; and there will be no corner or square left, where it has not set up the signs of idolatry: or to the Church and the deceived believers, who have not heard the words of the Apostle: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you in all things, that your whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. V, 23); but they have fornicated in every kind, with body, and soul, and spirit. We read in Proverbs: But you write them in three ways, so that you may answer with words of truth that are proposed to you (Prov. XXII, 20, 21). And it is commanded to us that we understand the words of truth, that is, the holy Scriptures, in three ways. First, according to the letter; second, in the middle through tropology; third, in a higher way, so that we may understand mystical things. According to the letter, it is this: Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and one and twenty thousand fell in one day (1 Cor. X, 8). And: Do not murmur, as some of them murmured and were destroyed by the destroyer (1 Corinthians 10:10). But according to the sense and tropology, when we depart from the literal meaning and ascend a little to higher things, as the Apostle says: It is written: You shall not muzzle the ox when it treads out the grain. And immediately follows: Is God concerned with oxen? Or is He speaking because of us? (1 Corinthians 9:9). But the highest and sublime spiritual understanding, according to the same Apostle: Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife. This is a great mystery. But I speak concerning Christ and the Church (Ephes. 5:31-32). The daughters of the Church are those who fornicate, first of the believers, and afterwards of the deceived in the heresy of the soul, whose fault is attributed to the mother.

16:32-34

(Verse 32 and following) But like an adulterous woman, who brings in strangers over her husband. All prostitutes receive payment: but you have given payment to all your lovers, and you would give them anything to come in to you from every direction to fornicate with you. And it happened in you contrary to the custom of women in your fornications, and there will be no fornication after you. For in that you have given payment, and have not received payment: it has become contrary to you. LXX: The adulterous woman – similar to you: receiving rewards from her husband: she gave rewards to all who fornicated with her, and you gave rewards to all your lovers, and you burdened them to come to you, going around in your fornication. And it happened in you that you turned against other women in your fornication, and they did not fornicate after you: because you gave rewards, and rewards were not given to you: and it happened in you that you turned against. What is written in the Septuagint is not found in Hebrew and disrupts the order of the reading, and it raises a significant question: which woman is being referred to when it is said that Jerusalem herself is an adulterous woman? So Jerusalem took all the abundance of things that had been given to her by the generosity of her husband, and she gave them to others, namely demons and idols, according to what is written in Hosea: 'And she did not know that I gave her grain, wine, oil, and multiplied her silver; but she made Baals, silver and gold' (Hosea 2:8). Therefore, in his anger, he immediately declares: 'Therefore, I will take back my grain in its time and my wine in its season;

and I will take away my wool and my linen, so as not to cover her disgrace anymore. And now I will uncover her immorality in the sight of her lovers, and no one will rescue her from my hand.' And while all women usually receive payment from their lovers, Jerusalem did the opposite, giving more than she received. And to show the extent of her generosity, she would burden them, saying, 'Come to me often,' so that there would be no neighbor who would not be mixed up in her dishonor. And indeed, Jerusalem surpassed other prostitutes in this as well, not only giving what she had earned through the shameful practice, but also giving marital gifts to her lovers and her adulterers. So great was the example of the adulteress in all its magnitude of shame, that it is preferred not only to those present, but also to future prostitutes. Hence, we have interpreted it according to Symmachus: 'And after you there shall be no more fornication.' For by comparing yourself, all subsequent fornication will be considered less serious. Whatever we have said about Jerusalem, it applies to the Church and the souls of the believers, who give their lovers the gifts of marriage, namely gold in a metaphorical sense, and silver in speech, and clothing, with which our filthiness and shame are concealed; or to contrary strengths, or to masters of perverse doctrines, when they assert that vice does no harm, and that passive lust, according to the genital parts of the body, demands sexual intercourse by natural law: all foods must be used indiscriminately, created for this purpose, to be consumed. Prudence in that only necessary, that it benefits oneself; and justice does not have a place, which if it prevails, one must beg, and other such things. Jerusalem, miserable when receiving these things, in which the vision of peace should be, perverts the sharpness of intellect and the charm of eloquence into ugliness. And for her lovers, she adorned herself against her husband with these ornaments, in which she was adorned by a man for the abuse of good. And what follows: And you gave them that they may enter to fornicate with you from all sides, signifies all types of sins, so that she is not satisfied with just one sin, but endures a hunger for sinning, and is defiled against the laws of nature with all shameful parts up to her head.

16:35-43

(Verse 35 and following) Therefore, prostitute, listen to the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God: Because your bronze has been poured out, and your disgrace has been revealed in your fornication (in your adulteries), with your lovers, and with the idols of your abominations, in the blood of your sons, whom you have given to them. Behold, I will gather all your lovers, with whom you have mingled, and all those whom you have loved with all those whom you have hated, and I will gather them against you from all sides, and I will uncover your disgrace before them, and they will see all your shame. And I will judge you with the judgments of adulteresses, and those who shed blood, and I will give you into the blood (Vulg. blood) of fury and zeal, and I will give you into their hands, and they will destroy your brothel, and they will demolish your prostitution house, and they will strip you of your clothes, and they will take away the vessels of your beauty, and they will leave you naked, full of shame. And they will bring a multitude upon you, and they will stone you with stones, and they will kill (Al. mutilate) you with their swords. And they will burn your houses with fire, and they will bring judgment upon you in the eyes of many women, and you will cease to fornicate and no longer give bribes. And my indignation will rest on you, and my jealousy will be taken away from you, and I will rest and not be angry anymore, because you have not remembered the days of your youth and you have provoked me in all these things. Therefore, I have given you your ways upon your head, says the Lord God, and I have not acted according to

your wickedness in all your abominations. LXX: Therefore, prostitute, hear the word of the Lord: Thus says the Lord God: Because you have poured out your wrath and your shame will be revealed in your prostitution to your lovers, and in all your wicked thoughts, and in the blood of your sons, whom you have given to them. Therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers, with whom you have mingled, and all those you loved with all those you hated, and I will gather them against you from all around, and I will reveal your evil deeds to them, and they will see all your shame. And I will avenge on you the vengeance of adulteries and the shedding of blood, and I will put you in the blood of fury and zeal, and I will deliver you into their hands: and they shall demolish your brothel, and destroy your foundation, and they shall strip you of your garments, and they shall take away the vessels of your glory, and they shall leave you naked and full of shame, and they shall bring a multitude upon you, and they shall stone you with stones, and they shall cut you with their swords. And they shall set fire to your houses, and they shall execute punishments on you in the presence of many women: and I will turn you away from fornication, and you shall no longer give rewards, and I will unleash my fury upon you, and my zeal shall depart from you, and I will rest and will be no longer concerned: because you have not remembered the days of your infancy, and you have grieved me in all these things. And behold, I will bring your ways upon your head, declares the Lord God, so that you have done wickednesses above all your other wickednesses. We lay the foundations of the story first. Because you have done these things and those things which the previous speech comprehends: therefore hear, O harlot, what you have done and what you will suffer. You poured out your brass which you received from me, and you gave payment to your lovers, which you should have received, and you killed your sons as you offered them to idols: so that you have become not only an adulteress, but also a murderer of your own children. Therefore, I will gather all your lovers with whom you have prostituted yourself, both those whom you have loved and those whom you have hated, and I will expose you as an adulteress and reveal your nakedness, so that all may see your shame and the genitals for which you were once consumed with passion. All these things are said metaphorically of an adulterous and murderous woman, who not only committed acts of adultery against her husband, but also killed her children. They are spoken concerning Jerusalem and the gathering of all the nations against her, of which she worshiped idols and turned all of God's gifts into their worship, and the temple of Baal must be destroyed and the altars of every city must be overturned by fire, so that nothing remains in her. And just as it is customary for all to throw stones at the adulteress and to slay the harlot, so that she may be killed by the wounds of each: so shall all women see the punishment of the fornicator. Thus, in the sight of others, in the surrounding cities and nations, Jerusalem shall be abandoned. And this shall be done, so that she may cease her whoring and no longer give wages to her lovers, and the anger of God may rest, and He may not be angered by her when she ceases to love. From this we understand that there is great offense, not taken care of by God, but allowed for man's crimes and sins. My zeal will be removed from you, I will rest, and no longer be angry, as if it were someone else, and what has departed from me, and which I have handed over to eternal nakedness. But if Jerusalem has endured this, because it fornicated with idols, what do we think it will endure, when it has killed God's Son? And you have done all these things, forgetting past kindnesses, and you have provoked me to anger, or saddened me, when you should have provoked me to joy with your good works. Therefore, I have also rendered your deeds upon your head. And when I destroy you, O adulteress, I will exercise less of my anger against you than you deserve, so that divine mercy may be shown, that sins may be greater than punishments.

According to tropology, every soul receives spiritual money from God, according to the Gospel (Mt. 25, Lk. 19) which is spoken in five and two parables, and of one talent, and ten servants receiving each a single mina, who, when they act negligently, become debtors of fifty (or ten) denarii and five hundred, and because of this, in the presence of lovers, whom we understand as demons and contrary virtues, the ignominy of Jerusalem is revealed, either on the day of judgment or at the time of repentance when they are reproached. And indeed only the omnipotent God sees hidden things, as the Gospel says: And the Father who sees in secret (Matthew 6:6). And in another place: God, who searches the heart and reins (Psalm 7:10). And in the book of Kings: You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men (2 Kings 8). But when it is fulfilled: There is nothing hidden that will not be made manifest, nor secret that will not be revealed (Luke 12:2). And in another place: Judge not before the time, until the Lord comes, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise from God (1 Corinthians 4:5); and when the time of correction comes, then shall be fulfilled what Hosea says: Now their own thoughts have surrounded them (Hosea 7:2). And in another place: Mutual accusations or defenses of thoughts, on the day when God will judge the hidden things of men (Rom. II, 15). And again: Behold the man, and his works before his face. And all who had fornicated with her before will see her disgrace, and God will give it to them in the blood of fury and zeal. For the fury of a man is full against an adulterous wife, and it cannot be redeemed at any price. And the blood of the children can be understood in this way, that we call the good thoughts of men implanted by God in them the children of Jerusalem; the adulteress kills them when she turns to evil deeds. It is also advantageous for Jerusalem, that its brothel be dug up, and the entire seedbed of fornication be destroyed. For when this has been done, it will no longer provide wages, and the wrath of God will rest, and he will not be jealous of its chastity: namely, according to those who understand in a positive sense what is said. Others, however, as we have said above, take the opposite view, that it is a great anger of God not to be angry, since he has once despised the fornicator, and has despaired of his salvation. But if heretics who do not accept the old Testament according to the Septuagint edition criticize this passage that was said: And you were grieved in all these; because God not only receives wrath but also submits to sorrow and sadness, let us ask them how they accept what is certainly a commandment of the good God: Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed on the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30). Whatever they may say in defense of that testimony, we will include it in the satisfaction of the present discourse.

16:44

(Verse 44.) Behold, everyone who speaks a commonly-known proverb, will apply it to you, saying: Like mother, like daughter. You are the daughter of your mother, who has cast away her husband and her sons, and the sister of your sisters, who have cast away their husbands and their sons. Seventy: These are all the things that they have spoken against you in a parable, saying: Like mother and daughter. You are the daughter of your mother, who has rejected her husband and her sons; and the sisters of your sisters, who have rejected their husbands and their sons. In the catalog of vices and corrections ((otherwise known as repentance)) in Jerusalem, by which one is drawn back to salvation, a well-known proverb in the common speech of the people is adapted, or as the Seventy translated it, a parable: Like mother, like daughter. The mother, however, is called Jerusalem, as is written above and in the following passages, and she is called Chethaea, which

means raging or turning to madness: through her, the provocations of this world are shown, which lead the captive soul to destruction and separate her from her husband (no doubt, this is said by the word of God and his teaching). And the sister of their sisters, as we have read a little later, is called Sodom, and Samaria: one of which signifies the Gentile life and luxury, the other the deceitful followers of heretics. Moreover, what is read in the Septuagint, 'the sisters of your sisters, who rejected their husbands and their sons,' has no meaning. For what other sisters did Sodom and Samaria have, who are sisters to Jerusalem? And it must be asked, which husbands did Sodom and Samaria send away, and which sons did they reject? Unless, perchance, we are able to say this: that the feet of those who always wander are tossed about and there are no solid footsteps which are contrary to the truth; but they run hither and thither, and are carried about by every wind of doctrine, until they pass from falsehood to another falsehood (Ephesians IV). And when they realize that they have labored in vain at first, they proceed to second and third things.

16:45-47

(Verse. 45 seqq.) Your mother Hethaea (also spelled Chethaea), and your father Amorrhæus, and your older sister Samaria: she and her daughters who live on your left. But your younger sister, who lives on your right, is Sodom and her daughters. But you did not walk in their ways, nor did you commit crimes like theirs, but rather, you committed even more wicked things in all your ways. LXX: Your mother Chethaea, and your father Amorrhæus, your older sister Samaria: she and her daughters who live on your left, and your younger sister, who lives on your right, is Sodom and her daughters: and even so, you did not walk in her ways, nor did you act according to her wickedness, but rather, you transgressed against them in all your ways. He had said above: your father is Amorrhæan, and your mother Chethæan; here with the order and number changed: Your mother is Chethæan, and your father is Amorrhæan. For when they have advanced in wickedness, they are divided into parts; and deserted unity, they make progress into a tumult and multitude, which is not able to ascend to the mountains with Jesus. But Jerusalem is the sister of Samaria, and Sodom, of which one is on the left, the other on the right, even according to the carnal understanding, if you look from the temple at Jerusalem towards the East, you will approve. Majorca is said to be Samaria, because it sinned first and was led into captivity by the Assyrians; and Minor and younger Sodom, which is related to a multitude of nations. Otherwise, at that time Sodom was not there, which we read about before in the Scriptures, with Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, it was destroyed by divine fire (Gen. 19). However, in between the two sisters, Jerusalem, which is also called Judah, was led into Babylon by the Chaldeans; and Jerusalem sinned much more wickedly than Samaria and Sodom, worshipping the idol of Baal in the temple, and later killing the Son of God. Furthermore, according to tropology, Samaria and Sodom, that is, heretics and the Gentiles, often commit less serious sins than those who are considered Jerusalem, that is, the Ecclesiastics. Therefore, it is said to the Corinthians, who indeed believed in Christ but were oppressed by evil works: Certainly there is heard among you fornication, and such fornication that not even among the Gentiles, so that one has his father's wife (I Cor. V, 1), and so on. The heretics, however, who still accept the old Testament, understand three natures from this place: spiritual, animal, and earthly. And they refer the spiritual to Jerusalem; the animal to Samaria; the earthly to Sodom. Let us briefly ask them how the three natures, spiritual, animal, and earthly, which are certainly distinct from each other, are said to have one mother and one father? This does not correspond to their fabrication. And how will the animal and earthly nature be

restored to their original state, that is, the spiritual state, according to this same prophet? This is contrary to their own reasoning. Moreover, the understanding that Samaria refers to heresies is confirmed in the prophet Hosea and many other places, especially by this testimony: Woe to those who despise Zion and trust in the mountain of Samaria, they have taken the firstfruits of the nations (Amos 6:1). For all heretics despise Zion, which is interpreted as a watchtower, and is referred to the Church; and they trust in themselves on the mountain of Samaria, namely in the pride of perverse doctrines, which they think are sublime, and through these fraudulent preachings, they plunder and pillage the beginnings of nations, so that, through the wonder of teachings, they may draw even the powerful ones of the Gentiles into heretical error.

16:48-49

(Verse 48, 49) I live, says the Lord, that Sodom, your sister herself and her daughters did not do as you and your daughters have done. Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: pride, fullness of bread, abundance, and idleness of herself and her daughters; and they did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abominations before me, and I took them away as you saw. And Samaria did not commit half of your sins; but you surpassed her in your wickedness, and you have justified your sisters in all your abominations that you have done. LXX: I live, says the Lord Adonai: this is what your sister Sodom did, and her daughters did the same as you and your daughters. However, the wickedness of your sister Sodom was pride, fullness of bread, and abundance. She and her daughters lived in luxury and had an abundance, but they did not support the poor and needy. They were proud and committed iniquities in my sight, so I took them away as you have seen. And Samaria has not sinned half as much as your sins, and you have multiplied your iniquities upon them; you have justified your sisters in all your iniquities which you have done. What the LXX has placed, she and her daughters also have, but it is not found in Hebrew. In the Old Testament, there is the oath of God: As I live, says the Lord (Num. XIV, 21). But in the New Testament: Truly, truly, I say to you (John XIII, 16). But if this is common with others: God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, He is not the God of the dead, but of the living (Mark XII, 16, 27). And in another place: I will please the Lord in the land of the living (Ps. CXIV, 9): we seek to understand how the common term properly belongs to God. But how is it said, a good tree, and a good man, and a good shepherd, and a good servant (Luke XVIII); for no one is absolutely good, except God alone: so when the angels and other virtues, as well as patriarchs and prophets, and even the apostles, are called living in comparison to almighty God, they are called dead. For what is the man who lives, and does not see death? (Psalm LXXXVIII, 49). Hence, the apostle Paul also said about God: He alone, he said, has immortality and dwells in inaccessible light (I Timothy VI, 16). And about the fountain of life: Our life, he says, is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians III, 3). Therefore, this person who swears and says: As I live, says the Lord, describing the crimes of Sodom and its daughters, established the first pride, the very own of the devil, and the first sin. Wherefore as the same Apostle says: 'Lest being inflated with pride, he fall into the judgment of the devil' (1 Timothy 3:6), on account of which he says: 'And his pride fell from heaven' (Isaiah 14:12). For he had said: 'I will do it in the strength of my hand, and by wisdom of my understanding I will take away the bounds of the people, and I will rob their strength, and I will make their cities desolate: and I will break them asunder, and they shall not be able to stand, nor shall they be able to resist my force' (Isaiah 10:13-14). And: 'God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble' (James 4:6). We

also read in another place: 'Why do you boast, O earth and ashes?' And the Gospel tells of the Pharisee's pride overcome by the humility of the tax collector (Luke 18): whose seedbed is the abundance of bread and all things, and leisure; or as the Septuagint translated, the luxury and opulence of delights. That rich man in the Gospel, dressed in purple (Luke 16), is reported to have had no other fault except that, being abundant in wealth and riches, he had burst forth with such pride that he did not reach out his hand to the needy and poor Lazarus: and thus he had forgotten his own condition, to the point that he did not even give this miserable man what was to be thrown away. For what reason and in another place it is written: Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted (Luke XIV, 11). Pride, gluttony, abundance of all things, leisure and indulgence, are sins of Sodom, and because of this, the forgetfulness of God follows, which considers present goods to be perpetual and never in need of necessities. Therefore, it is also commanded by the law: Take care lest, while eating and drinking and being satisfied, you build good houses and possess sheep and oxen, silver and gold, you forget the Lord your God (Deuteronomy VIII, 11). And in another place it is written about Israel: 'He ate and drank, and was satisfied, and grew fat, and kicked' (Deut. XXXII, 15). Knowing this, the wisest of all, Solomon, prays in Proverbs: 'Give me what is necessary and sufficient, so that I may not become full and deny you, saying: Who will see me? Or becoming poor, steal and profane the name of my God' (Prov. XXX, 8, 9). And what follows: 'And you justified your sisters in all your abominations, which you have done, not simply judging Sodom and Samaria to be wicked, but with a comparison to the worse: as the Publican, of whom we have spoken above, is not called absolutely righteous, but in comparison to the worse.' And yet even though Sodom and Samaria were such, they did not even sin half as much as Jerusalem. For the servant who knows his master's will and does not do it, shall be beaten with many stripes (Luke XII, 47). And: The mighty shall suffer torments mightily (Wisdom VI, 7). Furthermore, that which is contained in Hebrew for luxury (or wealth), should be understood to refer to this meaning: In desires is the entire soul idle; that is, that there should always be something to do: lest the field of our heart, with the hand resting, be occupied by the thorns of evil thoughts.

16:52 (Verse 52.) So you also bring your own confusion, having surpassed your sisters in your sins, acting more wickedly than them ((Other version: against them)): for they have been justified by you. Septuagint: And you will bear your torment because you have corrupted your sisters in your sins, in which you have acted unjustly against them, and you have justified them against yourself. The second tablet after the shipwreck is to be ashamed when you have sinned, and not to subject yourself to the reproach that is said against Jerusalem: You have become like a prostitute, you do not know how to blush (Jeremiah III, 3). But he carries his own torture, who is tormented by his own conscience, and in this world endures torment by his own will, lest he endure eternal torments (Genesis IV). And we corrupt our brothers and sisters through our sins, when they are provoked to greater crimes by our own sins. What I say will become clearer: Imagine someone in a priestly position not living well, and dishonoring their dignity with their actions. Surely by imitating his vices, the lay brother is corrupted? For even he who scandalizes one of the least of these, it would be better for him to have a millstone hung around his neck and be thrown into the depths (Matthew XVIII, 6). Likewise, the sisters of Jerusalem are justified like Sodom and Samaria, not because they are inherently righteous, but as we said, by comparison with the worse. So you will also be confounded; and your own shame, which you have justified, will become your gate. Seventy: So you will also be confounded, and you will bear your shame,

because you have justified your sisters. Confusion follows shame: shame correction: correction consolation: consolation salvation: according to that of the Apostle: Tribulation works patience: patience provenance: provenance hope: but hope does not confound (Rom. V, 3-5). There is no doubt that in the future: because in its present state it has wiped out its sins through confusion. Something like this and that of the Gospel is said: There is confusion that leads to death, and there is confusion that leads to life (Eccl. 4:25). The Holy Spirit also urges sinners in the Psalms: Let all my enemies be confused and ashamed: let them turn back and be confused very quickly (Psalm 39:15). It is written also in another place: Declare your sins first, so that you may be justified (Isa. 43:26, sec. LXX). And again: The just one is his own accuser in the beginning of the discourse (Prov. XVIII, 17). Therefore, it is not surprising if Jerusalem is called to confusion and disgrace; she has sinned so much that she had to justify her sisters, to whom it is then said: And you, and your daughters, return to your former state.

16:53-54

(Verse 53, 54.) And I will restore their fortunes, the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters. And I will restore your own fortune among them, so that you may bear your shame and be confounded in everything you have done, consoling them. LXX: And I will restore their fortunes like the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, I will restore the fortune of Samaria and her daughters, and I will restore your own fortune among them, so that you may bear your punishment and have shame for everything you have done, in order to provoke me to anger. Jerusalem made great progress, that after the confusion and ignominy that was brought upon it by the judgment of God, it willingly accepted and carried, saying: I will bear the wrath of the Lord, for I have sinned against Him, let restoration be promised to it in its former state. But yet, because by the comparison of its crimes, Sodom and Samaria were justified, of which one is on the right and the other on the left; first, the conversion or captivity of Sodom is restored, as Aquila interpreted; secondly, the captivity of Samaria, as Aquila and Symmachus also translated; and lastly, Jerusalem, which was oppressed by greater iniquity, will be restored, and it had shown that its sinful sisters were just in comparison to itself. For of whom is it doubted that among three sinners, rather sinners, a gentile, a heretic, and a churchman, he is more deserving of greater punishments, who is deserving of greater dignity? For the powerful, as we have said, endure torments powerfully (Wisdom 6:7). But he who is least deserving is deserving of mercy. And the servant who knows the will of his master, and does not do it, will be beaten with many (Luke 12:47). Therefore Peter also says: It is time for judgment to begin with God's house (1 Peter 4:17). And in this same place, the prophet commands those who have axes: 'From my saints begin' (Above, IX, 6) , that Jerusalem, having been converted and restored to its former state before its sisters, may bear its own shame, and be confounded, and blush over those things which it has sinned, and in all things may console its sisters, while it endures more weighty things (Jerem. VI) . Or certainly, it is confounded and blushes for this reason, because it has provoked God to anger. From this it is clear that the anger of God is not natural, but rather that the God who is most kind and gentle is provoked to anger by our vices, as the Apostle says: "Do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" (Rom. II, 4, 5). You, however, with your hard and impenitent heart, are storing up wrath for yourself, which is not according to the nature of God. And in another place it is written: You have sent forth your wrath, which consumed them like stubble (Exodus 15:7). For

what is joined and united in one body cannot be sent, but that which is outside the body. For example, a spear, weapon, arrow, sword. We also read in the Gospel (Matthew 10:15) that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for the one who does not receive the apostles.

16:55

(Verse 55) And your sister Sodom and her daughters will return to their former state. And Samaria and her daughters will return to their former state. And you and your daughters will return to your former state. LXX: And your sister Sodom and her daughters will be restored as they were at the beginning, and Samaria and her daughters will be restored as they were at the beginning. And you and your daughters will be restored as you were from the beginning. The Jews, among their many fables and endless genealogies and delusions that they invent, even dream of this: that in the coming of their Christ, whom we know to be the Antichrist, and in his thousand-year reign, Sodom will be restored to its ancient state, so that it may be like the paradise of God, and like the land of Egypt; and that ancient Samaria will regain its prosperity, so that the Assyrians may return to the land of Judah (2 Kings 17, 18). For we read that the ten tribes were captured by the kings of Assyria, namely Phul, and Salmanassar, and Teglatphalassar, and they have remained captive there until today. Also, at that time, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, along with all its daughters, that is, the cities, villages, and castles that will be under its future power, they will flourish as they once did, and Jerusalem itself must be built with gold, silver, and precious stones, as prophesied by Isaiah: I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning, and after this you will be called the city of righteousness, the faithful mother of cities, Zion (Isa. I, 26); and our Apocalypse speaks of this (Apoc. XXI): And David sings: Do good, O Lord, in your good will to Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be rebuilt (Ps. L, 20). And in another place: The cities of Judah shall be built, and they shall dwell there, and they shall remain there, and their offspring shall be established forever (Ps. LXVIII, 36). But we, leaving the perfect knowledge of these things to the judgment of God, or rather, confidently confessing, after the second coming of the Lord and Savior, that nothing humble, nothing earthly will be in the future; but the heavenly kingdoms which are first promised in the Gospel, we say that in the state of the Church, all things are complete and are being completed daily. Sodom returns to its ancient state, when it regains its original nature and the impious soul recognizes the Creator. Samaria regains its ancient blessedness, having rejected the error of heretics and joined to the teaching and faith of Christianity. And when they have returned, and Jerusalem, the vision of peace, which is interpreted as the Church, will return to its former state. Of which it is written: 'His place was made in peace' (Psalm 75:2); and: 'Jerusalem, which is built as a city, which is compact together' (Psalm 122:3); and in the Apostle: 'But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all' (Galatians 4:25); and in the same: 'You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels in festal gathering' (Hebrews 12:22). And he returns with his daughters, who are scattered throughout the whole world. We have discussed this more fully in Isaiah's explanations.

16:56-58

(Verse 56 and following) However, your sister Sodom was not heard in your mouth on the day of your pride before your wickedness was revealed, like it is now with the disgrace of the daughters

of Syria, and all the daughters of Philistia around you who surround you. You carried your own wickedness and disgrace, says the Lord God. LXX: If your sister Sodom had not been heard in your mouth on the days of your pride before your wickedness was revealed, like it is now with the daughters of Syria, and if this had not been so, what would have happened to you and all the foreign daughters around you who surround you? You carry your impieties and your iniquities. Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: Because your sister Sodom was not heard through your mouth on the day of your pride, before your disgrace was revealed, like the time of reproach of the daughters of Syria and all the daughters of Palestine around you, who surround you in a circle. You will bear your crime and your wickedness. Theodotus interpreted it as follows: And your sister Sodom was not heard through your mouth on the day of your pride, before your evil was revealed: like the time of reproach of the daughters of Syria and all the daughters of foreign nations around it, who abhor you in a circle. Your fornication and your contaminations, you have borne, says the Lord Adonai. Our translation agrees with the Aquila edition; all of which I have placed, so that from the comparison of all, we may find some trace of meaning, and in the meantime without prejudice from others, it seems to us that the order of the reading must be restored as follows: In the days of your pride, when you were sinning, you did not remember the overthrow of your sister Sodom, before your wickedness was revealed to such an extent that you became a reproach to all the cities of Syria and Palestine which are around you. Therefore, because you have overcome in the crime against your sister, and you were not terrified by her example, so as not to endure similar things, and you did not refrain from stepping forward: now, however, your disgrace has been revealed, listen to the sentence of God. Either you have carried, according to the Septuagint: or you have carried, according to Aquila and Theodotus: or you will carry, according to Symmachus, your crime and disgrace, so that after you have endured punishment for sacrilege, you may obtain forgiveness not by your own terms, but by my clemency. Syria is said to be called Aram in the Hebrew language, which means 'sublimity'. And according to the explanation of that passage of the prophet Isaiah, in which Aram and Ephraim conspire against Judah and Jerusalem, the clever wisdom of the nations and the claim of sublimity in knowledge, joined with the malice of heretics, attacks Judah, in which there is true confession and cannot be overcome. Here also the same arrogance of Syria, that is, of the philosophers with the daughters of foreigners, in which the manifold errors of various doctrines are shown among nations, mocks Jerusalem and reproaches her, though she is overcome by her own vices.

16:59-63

(Verse 59 and following) Thus says the Lord God: I will deal with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath and broken the covenant. But I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish with you an everlasting covenant. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, both the older and the younger. I will give them to you as daughters, but not on the basis of the covenant. I will establish my covenant with you, and you will know that I am the Lord, so that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I forgive you for all that you have done, says the Lord God. LXX: Thus says the Lord God: And I will do to you as you have done, as you have despised these things, in order to go against my covenant. And I will remember my covenant, which I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant, and you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your

older sisters with your younger ones, and I will give them to you as a test, not according to your covenant. And I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord, so that you may remember and be ashamed, and there shall be no more opening of your mouth from the face of your disgrace, when I have been propitious to you according to all that you have done, says the Lord God. Therefore I said to you: your crime and your disgrace you carry, whether you have carried or will carry; in order to receive what you deserve: because you have despised my oath, and nullified my covenant. But when it is fulfilled, I will kill, and I will give life: I will strike, and I will heal (Deut. XXXII, 39): then I will remember my covenant, which I once had with you. And I will raise up for you a covenant, not of the Law that has passed, but an eternal covenant of the Gospel: so that when you remember your ways, and receive your older and younger sisters, Samaria and Sodom and their companions, I will give them to you as daughters, or as a proof (for there must be factions (I Cor. XI, 19) and heresies, so that those who are approved may be made manifest), not based on your merit, but based on my mercy, and then you will know that I am the Lord; and you will remember my benefits, and be confounded, and say according to the Apostle: I am not worthy to be called an Apostle: because I have persecuted the Church of God (I Cor. XV, 9). And may your mouth no longer be closed because of your confusion. For it is the duty of the holy to open their mouth, as the Apostle says: My mouth is open to you, O Corinthians (2 Corinthians 6:11), and of the Lord Savior, who opened his mouth and taught them (Matthew 5), as it is also said in the psalm: I will open my mouth in parables (Psalm 78:2). But to the sinner it is said: You have sinned, be silent (Genesis 4). And: Why do you speak my covenant through your mouth? (Psalm 49:16). And: A sinner's praise is not beautiful on the lips (Sirach 15:9). And only a saint deserves to hear: Open your mouth, and I will fill it (Psalm 80:11). From this, we understand that even when we have regained our original glory through the mercy of God, indeed when we have received the eternal covenant of the Gospel, after the Lord has been appeased towards us in all that we have done, we should still have the memory of past sin and always keep our mouths shut, for we are saved not by our own works, but by the grace of God.

17:1-6

(Chapter 17, Verse 1 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, propose a riddle, tell a parable to the house of Israel, and say: Thus says the Lord God: A great eagle with large wings, long feathers, full of plumage and variety, came to Lebanon and took the topmost branch of a cedar. It plucked off the highest of its young twigs and carried it to the land of Canaan, and set it in a city of merchants. And he took of the seed of the land, and planted it in the ground for seed so that it would establish roots over many waters; he set it on the surface. And when it sprouted, it grew into a vine of wide spread with low stature: its branches turned toward it and its roots were under it. Thus the vineyard was made and it bore fruit in the form of tendrils and it sent out shoots. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, tell a story and speak a parable to the house of Israel, and say: This is what the Lord God says: A great eagle with great wings, full of long feathers, with long wings and full of talons, came and took from among the choice cedars. He uprooted the tops of its tender shoots and brought them to the land of Chanaan. He put it in a walled city and took it from the seed of the land and planted it in a field over many waters, so that it would be seen. He planted it and it grew into a weak and small vine, so that only its branches could be seen beneath it, and its roots were underneath it. And it became a great vine and produced branches and extended its branches. When it is said of the prophets: Present an

enigma, tell a parable, or as the Septuagint translated: tell a narration, it is shown that what is said is obscure. For there is no doubt that to present an enigma and a parable is to express something in words and hold something in meaning. And indeed the Savior spoke to the people in parables, which he explained in secret to the apostles. Therefore, we must understand enigma and parable in such a way that enigma and parable are Two enigmas and parables are presented in the prophecy of Ezekiel at present by Aquila. Now we must first speak: we will discuss the other in the following. And in the meantime, let us enjoy a simple story. The great eagle, with large wings, long feathers, and full of variety, or as the Septuagint translates it, full of claws, is King Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldeans, about whom Hosea also speaks: Like an eagle over the house of God (Hosea 8:1). He who reigns over many nations and is surrounded by an innumerable army comes over the house of God, undoubtedly referring to the temple, or as Scripture says now, over Lebanon, about which Zechariah speaks: Open, Lebanon, your gates, and let fire consume your cedars. Howl, O fir tree, for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: (Zach. XI, 12). And often the temple, which was famous and lofty, is called Lebanon in the holy Scriptures. And he took the pith of the cedar, and the top of its branches he plucked off, and brought it to the land of Chanaan, and placed it in the city of the merchants. For the merchants, or for the merchandise, the seventy translated it. Now it signifies Jehoiachin, the king of Juda, whom Nebuchadnezzar, with his mother and the princes of the people, took captive, and all the treasures of Jerusalem and the vessels of the temple; and he carried them into Babylon, which is in the land of Chanaan, and there he grew old. Afterwards, the Lord and our Savior was born through Salathiel and Zorobabel, as the Scripture of the Evangelist Matthew testifies (Matthew 1). He brought forth from the seed of the same land, that is, from the royal lineage, Matthan, uncle of Jechoniah, whose name he changed and called him Zedekiah, and he set him as king in Jerusalem, and he ruled over many peoples. And yet he set him on the surface and did not establish the power of his high empire with a deep root. But he set him there to be looked upon, and he was under the power of Babylon, or of low stature, with his branches looking towards it, so that he would indeed govern the people of Judah, but look to the command of the Babylonians. For this is what Scripture says: 'He will be lowly in stature, his branches will turn towards her, and he will be overshadowed by an eagle.' This is more clearly translated by the Septuagint, 'What had been planted grew up and became a weak and small vineyard, so that only its branches were visible, and it seemed to have a kingdom of its own, but its kingdom was lowly and weak, ruled by the authority of the Babylonian prince.' This is the interpretation of the present chapter, to which we will append the rest.

17:7-10

(Verse 7 and following) And another great eagle appeared, with large wings and many feathers. And behold, this vineyard sent out its roots toward it, extending its branches toward it, in order to be irrigated by the streams of its sap. It was planted in good soil, above abundant waters, in order to produce leaves and bear fruit, and to become a great vineyard. Say: Thus says the Lord God: Will it succeed? Will it not uproot its roots and squeeze its fruit, causing all its branches to wither and dry up, so that it will not be strong in a mighty arm or among many people, in order to uproot it completely? Behold, it is planted, so will it prosper? When the burning wind touches it, will it not wither and dry up, and its shoots wither in its own beds? LXX: And another great eagle was made, with many wings and many claws. And behold, this vineyard was entangled with it, and its roots were attached to it, and its branches extended to it, in order to irrigate it with the soil of its

plantation. In a good field, it was fattened over much water, so that it would produce shoots and bring forth fruit, and be a great vineyard. Therefore say: Thus says the Lord God: If it shall be exalted? Shall not its roots be tender, and its fruit wither, and all the things that have sprung from it wither, and it be pulled up even from its roots? And behold, it is fattened. Shall it be exalted? Shall it not, when the burning wind touches it, wither, and dry up with aridity? When the soil of its germination withers, the second eagle, that is, the other, also great, full of feathers, with many talons, because of its rapaciousness and the devastation of many nations, the king of Egypt is Pharaoh. And behold, this vineyard signifies King Zedekiah, who had been appointed by Nebuchadnezzar in Jerusalem, began, he says, to send his branches to it, that is, to send ambassadors to the king of the Egyptians, and to ask for help from him against the king to whom he was subject. For this is what the Scripture says now, that he may water it with the streams of his planting. Which had been planted in good soil by Nebuchadnezzar, in order to produce leaves and bear fruit, and to grow into a wider vineyard: therefore the prophet is commanded to speak to the vine, which had been planted by Nebuchadnezzar, and had sent its branches to the Egyptian eagle: will it prosper because she has tried to do this, and will not all her branches and shoots wither immediately? And did he not, he says, flee to a great army and not to a numerous people? For, while fleeing, Zedekiah was deserted by the help of the king of Egypt, and he was captured by the generals of Nebuchadnezzar in the deserts of Jericho. And all his allies were scattered here and there, as it is written in the books of Kings, Chronicles, and Jeremiah.

17:11-18

(Verse 11 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Say to the rebellious house: Do you not know what these things mean? Say: Behold, the king of Babylon is coming to Jerusalem. He will take the king and his princes and bring them to Babylon. And he will take one of the royal offspring, make a covenant with him, and take an oath from him. He will also take away the mighty of the land, so that the kingdom will be humble and not exalted, but will keep his covenant and obey it. When he departs from there, he sends messengers to Egypt, to give him horses and a great population. Will he prosper? Will he escape the one who does these things? Can anyone who breaks a covenant escape? As I live, declares the Lord God, surely in the place where the king who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant with him he broke, in Babylon he shall die. Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company will not help him in war, when mounds are cast up and siege walls built to cut off many lives. For he despised the oath to break the covenant. And behold, he stretched out his hand, and when he has done all these things, he shall not escape. This is the riddle, this is the parable, which the Scripture showed under the two eagles and the vine, the two kings of Babylon and Egypt; and King Zedekiah, who, against his oath, abandoned the friendship of Nebuchadnezzar and transferred himself to the king of Egypt. He shall strike a covenant with him, and he shall take an oath to him, to keep his pact and observe it. He who breaks a covenant, it is said, will not escape. From this we learn that even amongst enemies, faith must be kept, and it is not important to whom you swore, but through whom. For he who believed in you because of the name of God, and was deceived by you, who, taking advantage of the divine majesty, plotted against your enemy, or rather your friend, has proven to be much more faithful. For, as it is said, in the place of the king who made him king, whose oath he made void, and broke the covenant he had with him, he will die in the midst of Babylon. For we read that Sedecias was captured, brought to Reblatha, and there his sons were

killed and he was blinded like a wild animal enclosed in a cage, and then taken to Babylon (4 Kings 25). Therefore, Scripture, although it may seem contradictory to itself, is nonetheless very true in both instances. For it had been said to Sedecias: 'And thou shalt enter into Babylon, and thou shalt not see it' (Jeremiah 34:4). He entered indeed, for he was brought to Babylon, but he did not see it because he was blind. But what follows is understood in two ways: either the Egyptian king coming against King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon will not be able to fight or resist with a small army against such a great multitude, or King Zedekiah will be conquered by Pharaoh, from whom he hoped for help. Not that Pharaoh himself conquered him, or that Scripture testifies to this anywhere, but rather that the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar was opportune for the Egyptian king. And it was not the one who was besieging Jerusalem who appeared to conquer it, but the one in whom Zedekiah had vainly hoped. Behold, he said, he gave his hand to the king of Egypt and sold himself; and he committed perjury and sacrilege against God. Will it benefit him, he said? And when he has done all these things, he will not escape.

17:19-21

(Vers. 19 seq.) Therefore thus says the Lord God: As I live, surely I will bring upon his head the oath he has despised and the covenant he has broken. I will spread my net over him, and he will be caught in my snare. I will bring him to Babylon and there I will execute judgment on him for the unfaithfulness with which he has despised me. And all his fugitives, with all his troops, will fall by the sword, and the survivors will be scattered to every wind. Then you will know that I am the Lord, I have spoken. The sentence is secular.

Deception or virtue, who seeks in an enemy? They often oppose us, those who say that enemies are to be deceived by fraud. To whom should we agree, Sedecias did much worse: he did not deceive an enemy, but a friend, with whom he had been joined by the covenant of the Lord. Therefore, as long as you do not swear and do not enter into a pact in the name of the Lord, it is a matter of prudence and strength to deceive or overcome the adversary in whatever way you can. However, when you have bound yourself by an oath, the one who trusted you is not an adversary, but a friend: and under the pretext of the oath, that is, the invocation of God, he was deceived. Therefore the Scripture now says: I will set upon his head the oath that he despised and the covenant that he broke. And lest we should think that the oath and the covenant and the agreement belonged to the Babylonian king, or to Zedekiah who made it, it follows: In the transgression in which he despised Me. Therefore, the one who despises the oath, despises the one by whom he swore; and he does wrong to the one whose name he believed as an adversary. For this reason, I will spread My net over him, says the Lord, and he will be captured in My snare, and I will bring him to Babylon and will judge him there. Therefore, whatever Nabuchodonosor did against Sedecias, he did not do it by his own power, but by the wrath of God, in whose name he had sworn falsely. According to another interpretation, although it may seem violent, it should be known that just as all other animals are usually referred to in both a good and a bad sense, so it is with the eagle and the lion. In a good sense, it is said: 'The lion's whelp of Juda' (Genesis 49:9). In a contrary sense: 'Our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about' (1 Peter 5:8). And in the psalm it is said: He lieth in wait secretly, as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor (Ps. IX, 9). It is said in a positive sense of the eagle that the righteous, when he becomes wealthy, makes wings for himself like an eagle, so that he can return to the house of his predecessor. And it is written in Isaiah that the righteous bring forth wings like eagles (Isa. XL): they shall run and not

be weary; they shall walk and not faint. But rightly does he who said, By strength will I do it, and by wisdom will I remove the boundaries of the nations, and I will plunder their strength; and I will stir up the cities that are inhabited, and I will seize the whole world in my hand, as a nest: and as eggs that are laid (Ibid., X, 13, 14), now describe it in the persona of an eagle: because it does not want to lash out at the small and humble twigs, which are interpreted as whiteness and are related to incense, but at the tops of the cedars, and the princes, and the royal stock, according to that of Habakkuk: His prey shall be choice (Abac. I, 16). And he makes a covenant, that those whom he has captured should submit their necks to the Babylonian king, and fulfill that which the Apostle speaks of: Those whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. 1:20). And in another place: Those whom I have delivered, he says, to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved (I Cor. 5). Therefore, if perhaps we are expelled from the congregation of brothers and from the house of God because of some sin, we should not resist, but bear the sentence that has been passed on us with a calm mind, and say with the Prophet (Micah 7:9): I will endure the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, until He justifies my cause, and so on. And it often happens that we, subjects under one another, turn to another who promises us his assistance; and he does not make us remain in our former opinion. This must be avoided by all means, so that our branches do not wither and our shoots dry up: and so that we are not believed to act against God's covenant.

17:22-24

(Ver. 22 seq.) Thus says the Lord (God says in the Vulgate): And I will take from the top of the cedar's highest branch, and I will set it; I will break off a tender one from the crown of its branches, and I will plant it on a high and elevated mountain: upon the lofty mountain of Israel I will plant it. And it shall spring forth into a shoot, and it shall bear fruit, and it shall become a mighty cedar, and all the birds of the air shall dwell under it; every bird shall make its nest under the shade of its branches. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, and exalted the low tree; and have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to bud: I the Lord have spoken and have done it. LXX: For thus says the Lord God: I will take away from the top of the choice cedar tree and will give from the head of its branches, and from the heart of it I will take away, and I will plant it on a high mountain, in the lofty mountain of Israel, and I will set it, and it will bring forth branches, and it will bear fruit, and it will become a majestic cedar, and all birds of every kind will rest under it, and all flying creatures will rest in its shade. And its branches will sprout again, and all the trees of the field will know that I am the Lord who humbles the lofty tree and exalts the lowly tree, who dries up the green tree and causes the dry tree to flourish. I am the Lord who speaks and acts. This is what is read in the Septuagint: 'And I will take from the top of its branches,' which is added in Theodotion's edition. And what follows: 'And its branches will be restored,' should be noted with an obelus, because it is not found in the Hebrew. True Nebuchadnezzar therefore takes from the top of the lofty cedar, from the top of its branches, so that his kingdom may be humble and not exalted. But the Lord God Almighty, who spoke to Ezekiel, takes from the royal stock and from the house of David; and he plants on a high and lofty mountain, which speaks in the psalm: 'I, however, have been appointed king by him over his holy mountain Zion' (Psalm 2:6). For the prince of Judah had failed, and the leader of Israel, until he came who was to be laid up: and he shall be the expectation of the Gentiles. This one burst forth into a shoot, and produced fruit, and surpassed all the cedars with his greatness, so that all the

birds of the sky may dwell under him, and all his creatures may be protected by his shade. Of whom Habakkuk says: Horns are in his hands, there his strength is hidden; and he who desires to gather his chicks under his wings, like a hen (Matthew 23): so that all the trees of the region may know that he is the Lord. Speaking tropologically about the believers: This is he who once humbled the prideful Israel and exalted the humble people of the nations, who dried up the green wood of the Jews, flourishing and bearing fruit in the Law and the Prophets; and made the dry wood of the nations sprout: so that he might fulfill with his actions what he always spoke. The same thing is represented by the words of Simeon in the Gospel, saying: Behold, this child is set for the fall, and rising again of many (Luke 2:34). And the grain of mustard seed, though it is the smallest of all seeds, when it grows, it becomes a dwelling place for birds (Matthew 13:32). Some interpret it differently, as the exalted humbled and the humble exalted, referring to the passion of the Lord Savior. Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God: but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant (Philippians 2:6-7); and after the resurrection, the same tree was exalted, which was first green, dried up by death, and then revived, regaining its original greenness. Others explain both [adventus] in the context of Israel: that first he will come in humility and be rejected, and second he will be restored to his original state, after the fulfillment of what the Apostle Paul says: When the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved (Deuteronomy 5:9-10).

Book Six

Book Six

I thought that, with the serpent in the middle crushed, the new plants of the Hydra would not revive and, according to the fables of the poets, that the dead Scylla would in no way rage against me with the dogs of Scylla, who do not cease to bark. And with the heretics of God struck by hand, so that they may not be tempted, if possible, even the chosen of God (Matt. XXIV), heresy itself does not die, with the offspring of their hatred left behind against us, who pretending to be ours, do not abandon the poisons of the ancient mother and the deceitful Ulysses; they only smear their lips with honey. And according to the words of the Scriptures (Ps. LIV), they have softened their words over oil. But they themselves are javelins and fiery javelins, which must be repelled and extinguished with the shield of faith. I have said these things, my daughter Eustochium, so that you may support me in the work of prophecy and resist the heretics with your prayers. May the Lord explain the sixth book of the Explanations in Ezekiel, which I have written with my own words and understanding. And may the grace of the Holy Spirit, by which the things that we read in the Scriptures were revealed to the prophets, also be revealed to us as we discuss them, so that we may say: I opened my mouth and breathed in the spirit. (Psalm 118:131).

18:1-2

(Chapter XVIII. — Verses 1, 2.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: What is that you turn a parable among you into this proverb in the land of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge? LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: ÷ Son of man, what is this parable in the children of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge? What the Seventy have said, son of man, is not found in Hebrew. However, divine Scripture warns about what was said in Exodus: I am the Lord your God. I am a jealous God, who punishes the sins of the fathers upon

the children, to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, and shows mercy to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments (Exod. X, 5; Deut. V, 9, 10). And again: The Lord descended in a cloud and stood with Moses, and Moses called upon the name of the Lord, and the Lord passed before his face and called him, saying: O Lord, God, merciful and compassionate, patient, full of mercy and true, preserving justice and mercy to thousands, forgiving iniquities, injustices, and sins; and yet he will not cleanse the iniquities of fathers upon children and children's children, to the third and fourth generation (Exod. XXXIV, 5 seq.). Thus, it should be understood as a proverb and a parable, where the words may have one meaning but the sense another; as we mentioned in the parable of the two eagles. And the Lord also in the seventy-seventh psalm says: "I will open my mouth in parables: I will declare a proposition from the beginning" (Ps. LXXVI, 2[1]). And in the Gospel, the parable of the sower, and of the tares, and of the mustard seed, which, though it is the smallest of all seeds, rises up into a large tree (Matt. XIII, 31). He sets them forth in such a way that in the words one thing is presented, and another is held in the meaning. And even until the present day we thought that the two testimonies of Exodus, which we have placed above (Isa. XXIX, 13), were not a parable, but a simple explanation of the meaning. And although we dared not say anything, nor does a clay pot speak against a potter, why did you make me this way, either this way or that: nevertheless, we tolerated the hidden scandal, that the injustice of God seemed to make one person sin and another person suffer for sins. For if the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation, it seems unjust for one person to sin and another person to be punished. But from what follows: to those who hate me, the scandal of threat or command is resolved. For indeed they are not punished in the third and fourth generation because their fathers sinned, since it is their fathers who were sinners that should have been punished; but because they became imitators of their fathers and inherited their evil and impiety, even as the branches grow from the root. Heretics, who do not accept the Old Testament, often say in this place against the Creator: How good and just is the God of the Law and the Prophets, who, by remaining quiet and silent about the sins of the fathers, renders punishment to those who have not sinned; rather, what cruelty is in Him that He extends His anger even to the third and fourth generation! To whom shall we respond, and in this the clemency of God the Creator is demonstrated. For it is not of cruelty and severity to hold anger until the third and fourth generation, but a sign of mercy to defer the punishment of sin. For when it says, 'Lord God, merciful and compassionate, patient and full of mercy,' and adds, 'repaying the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children,' it indicates that its mercy is so great that it does not immediately punish, but defers the sentence of punishment. But if the punishment of sinners is delayed to the third and fourth generation, what more does it do for the righteous and holy ones? It follows: And keeping justice and mercy for many thousands, for those who keep his commandments and follow his precepts. It is written in Proverbs: Just as a sour grape is harmful to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is iniquity to those who use it (Prov. 10:26). From this it is clear that it is not the teeth of others that ache and become numb, but those who have eaten the sour grape. But the sense of this passage is as follows: just as if someone were to say, 'The fathers ate sour grapes, and the teeth of the children have become numb,' it is ridiculous and has no consequence; in the same way, it is unjust and perverse for the fathers to sin and for the sons and grandsons to be tortured. There are those who interpret what is written in Exodus, 'Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation,' in such a way that they refer it to the human soul, saying that the father is a light point of sense

and the incitement to vices within us; the son, if he conceives sinful thoughts; the grandson, if he carries out in action what you have thought and conceived; and the great-grandson, that is, the fourth generation, if not only do you do what is evil and wicked, but you take pride in your own wickedness, according to what is written, 'When the wicked man comes into the depth of evils, he despises it.' Therefore, God does not punish the first and second impulses of thoughts, which the Greeks call 'προπαθει■αζ' and without which no one can exist. But if someone decides to act on their thoughts or refuses to correct what they have done by repentance, then they will be punished. Hence it is written: No one is without sin, not even if their life is only a single day. But the years of their life are numerous (Prov. XX, 9). And in another place: Who can boast of having a pure heart? And again: Even the stars are not clean in his sight: and concerning his angels he found darkness. (Job 25:5) But if that exalted nature is not free from sin, what are we to say about human beings who are surrounded by fragile flesh, who should say with the Apostle: Wretched man that I am, who will rescue me from this body of death? (Romans 7:24) And that we should say when we have done all things: We are useless servants; we have done what we ought to have done. (Luke 17:10) And: Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain; unless the Lord guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain (Psalm 127:1, 2). But for the proof of this matter, that not the first impulse of thought, or rather a small instinct of the mind, is punished by God, but if you consume in action what you have conceived in your mind, that is to be brought forth from Genesis: Ham sinned, mocking the nakedness of his father; and the sentence was not passed on him who laughed, but on his son Canaan: Cursed be Canaan, he shall be a servant of servants to his brothers (Genesis 9). For what justice is there, that if a father sins, the judgment should be pronounced upon the son? Moreover, the Apostle states (1 Timothy 2) that a woman will be saved if her children remain in faith, holiness, and chastity. This seems to go against the concept of justice, that the parents should be saved if their children and grandchildren are good. For how many holy parents have wicked children, and on the other hand, how many sinful parents have righteous and holy children? Therefore, according to this meaning, all the sins of parents and ancestors must be punished in the branches, not in the root, as we have said above. It is enough to have said this about the proverb or parable: that the Law and the Prophets, that is, Exodus and Ezekiel, indeed God Himself, who spoke here and there, does not seem to disagree in their teachings, or to correct here what He said wrongly there. But if anyone can find a better or different meaning that removes the scandal of conflicting testimonies, it is better to agree with that person's opinion.

18:3-4

(Verse 3-4) As I live, says the Lord, there will not be for you any longer this parable as a proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine: the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine. The soul that sins, it shall die. (LXX: As I live, says the Lord Adonai, if it will continue to be said, this parable in Israel, because all souls are mine. Just as the soul of the father, so the soul of the son is mine. The soul that sins, it shall die.) What this means, 'I live,' says the Lord, and [it is] a parable or proverb, we have explained more fully above: which will never be said in Israel, but among those who do not have knowledge of God, nor can perceive the truth. 'All,' he says, 'are souls of mine;' according to [their] nature, not according to merit: as Moses was called a man of God, about whom it is written: 'The prayer of Moses, man of God' (Deut. XXXIII, 1). And Elijah, who spoke to the prince of fifty men: 'And if I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven upon you, and upon

fifty men' (IV Kings I, 12). But a man who is guilty of sin and a son of iniquity is not called a man of God, just as servants and slaves of God are called, of whom it cannot be said, 'Everyone who commits sin is a servant of sin' (John 8:34). And again, 'For by whom a person is overcome, of him also he is the servant' (2 Peter 2:19). Just as the sins of children do not harm their fathers, so the sins of fathers do not pass on to their children; but the soul that sins, it shall die: not by the abolition of its substance, but by its separation from Him who says, 'I am the life' (John 14:6). And elsewhere he says: Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die forever (John 11:26). And: Amen, amen I say to you: whoever keeps my word will not see death forever (John 8:51). For our life is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3); and that will be fulfilled which is written: Amen, amen I say to you: whoever hears my word and believes in him who sent me, has eternal life; and does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life (John 5:24). But, that which is said by Balaam, 'Let my soul die among the souls of the just' (Numbers 23:10), has this meaning: that he desires to die to the world and to sin, and to live with the souls of the just, whose life is Christ, and they can sing: 'I will please the Lord in the land of the living' (Psalm 114:9). For God is not the God of the dead, but of the living (Matthew 22:32). And if Balaam, as is likely, translated into our language, sounds empty to the people: it is clear that the empty people of the nations prior desire to have fellowship with the souls of the just, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who are called upright and just. And so the Book of Genesis took its name from their word.

18:5-9

(Verse 5, 6 and following) And if a man is just and does judgment and justice, does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not violate his neighbor's wife, does not approach a menstruating woman, does not oppress anyone, gives back a pledge to a debtor, does not commit robbery, gives his bread to the hungry, covers the naked with clothing, does not lend at interest or take any increase, turns his hand away from iniquity, does justice between man and man, walks in my statutes, and keeps my judgments, to do truth: this man is just, he shall surely live, says the Lord God. LXX; But the man who is righteous, who practices judgment and justice; who does not eat on the mountains, and does not lift up his eyes to the thoughts of the house of Israel; and does not defile his neighbor's wife, and does not approach a woman with menstrual impurity; and does not oppress a man; who returns a pledge to the debtor; and does not commit robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry; and covers the naked with clothing; and does not give his money at interest, and does not take more; who turns his hand away from injustice; who makes just judgments between a man and his neighbor; who walks in my statutes and keeps my ordinances, to perform them: he is righteous, he shall surely live, says the Lord God. He says, 'You wish to know what has been said: I shall render the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation (Deut. V, 9),' it does not mean what most people think; nor is it similar to this saying: 'The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the teeth of the children are set on edge (Jerem. XXXI, 29).' Listen to what I am going to say: if there is a just father, who does these things, and the son does not do them, and he has an evil son, who, forsaking his father's virtues, surrenders himself to vices; will not the just son still live because he is just; and the other will die because he has committed all the things that the father became just by avoiding?' Let's see the catalog of virtues of the father, which seem to me to be divided into seventeen parts. The first of these is to exercise judgement; the second, similar to this, is to unite justice with judgement; the third is to not eat on the mountains; the fourth is to not lift one's eyes to idols, or as the Septuagint

translates, to the thoughts of the house of Israel; the fifth is to not violate one's neighbor's wife. The sixth is to avoid the embrace of a menstruating wife. The seventh is to not distress a person, or as the Septuagint has it, to oppress by force; the eighth is to return a pledge to a debtor; the ninth is to not take anything by force, or according to the Septuagint, to not commit robbery; the tenth is to give bread to the hungry; the eleventh is to clothe the naked; the twelfth is to not give money at interest; the thirteenth is to not receive more than what one has given; the fourteenth is to turn away one's hand from iniquity; the fifteenth, which seems similar to the first but is different in part, is to exercise true judgement between man and man, or one's neighbor; the sixteenth is to walk in the commandments of the Lord; the seventeenth is to keep his judgements and his statutes. We will explain the meaning of each of these things in the following. If, he says, a man is just and renders judgment, it is written in Proverbs: The thoughts of the just are judgments (Prov. XII, 5). Whoever possesses this virtue, to do nothing without reason and judgment, can say that prophetic saying: The judgments of the Lord are true, justified in themselves (Ps. XVIII, 10), and when he judges all things rightly, so as not to show partiality to the poor in judgment, he will fulfill the commandment of the Lord: You shall judge the lesser as well as the greater (Prov. XVIII), boldly saying: My soul has desired to desire your judgments at all times (Ps. CXVIII, 10). And again: I have chosen the path of truth, I have not forgotten your judgments (V. 30). And in the same psalm: I know that your judgments are righteous (or just) (V. 75); and it will lead to such great blessedness that he will understand the judgments of the Lord, which are many and deep; and he will say with the Apostle: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out (Rom. II, 33). And in prayer let him say: For thy judgments are delightful (Psal. CXVIII, 39). After judgment follows justice, which whoever possesses will undoubtedly possess Christ, who according to the Apostle has become for us justice, and sanctification, and redemption (I Cor. I); so that he may perform true justice, and not show favoritism in judgment; but may know in the judgment of others that he himself must be judged by justice. The third is not to eat on mountains, which the Jews believe to be a sin related to idolatry. For we frequently read in the books of Kings and Chronicles: But nevertheless he did not depart from the high places. Still the people sacrificed in the high places, and burned incense in the high places (3 Kings 15:22; Paral. 20); this Scripture indicating that they sacrificed to idols in the mountains and groves, and burned incense. But we will say that he eats in the mountains, who says with the Pharisee: I give thee thanks, O God, that I am not like this publican: I fast twice on the Sabbath: I give tithes of all that I possess (Luke 18:12), etc. And on the contrary, the tax collector, upon hearing him who said, 'Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart' (Matthew 11:29), beat his chest with his hand, that is, the treasure of wicked thoughts, and did not dare to raise his eyes to heaven. But also what is said elsewhere, 'Do not seek what is too difficult for you, nor investigate what is beyond your power' (Sirach 3:22), convicts all heretics of devouring the mountains of pride, despising the simplicity of the Church, and not knowing the scripture about themselves: 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble' (James 4:6). In the fourth place, it is placed, and it has not lifted its eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, for which the Seventy translated their thoughts. But the idols, that is, the simulacra they have invented in their hearts, all heretics make, to which they lift the eyes of their hearts, those who have considered their falsehood and lies to be the truth. But the house of Israel is called idols, which are found in the Church; and through the occasion of a false name of knowledge, they deceive even the simple, in order to introduce the doctrines of philosophers into the house of Israel, namely those

who contemplate God with their mind. In the fifth place, it is stated: and he shall not violate or contaminate the wife of his neighbor, which explicitly prohibits adultery; but from what is added, the wife of his neighbor, unless every man is understood to be a neighbor, it seems to be a precept that we abstain from the wives of friends; but we may freely defile the spouses of enemies and strangers. Therefore, every man should be considered the neighbor of another man, according to the parable of the Gospel, which is presented by the Savior, of a certain man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, who was wounded by robbers: when a Pharisee asks who was his neighbor, teaching that the one who does good is his neighbor. According to a mystical understanding, the wife of a holy man can be understood as wisdom, as Solomon says: Love her, and she will embrace you; cherish her, and she will protect you (Prov. IV, 6). One who desires to defile her criticizes the blessings of others and, inflamed by the torches of envy, violates what is holy, corrupts what is chaste, and contaminates what is pure. The sixth point: He shall not approach a woman, whether a wife or menstruating. Every month, the heavy and sluggish bodies of women are relieved by the shedding of impure blood. At the time when a man has intercourse with a woman, it is said that the conceived fetus inherits the defect of the semen, so that lepers and elephantiasis sufferers are born from this conception, and both sexes have monstrous bodies, with small or enormous limbs, and corrupted pus. Therefore, men are advised to know the specific times for sexual intercourse, not only with other women but also with their own, with whom they are joined by law, as the Scripture says: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth' (Genesis 1:28), and to know when it is time to have intercourse and when to abstain from their wives. Indeed, both the Apostle and the Ecclesiastes say: There is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing (Eccles. III, 6). Therefore, let the wife beware that she does not, by the enticement of her desire for sexual intercourse, tempt her husband, and let the husband not force his wife, thinking that she ought at all times to be subject to the pleasure of the marriage bed. Hence, Paul also says: That each one of you know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor (I Thess. IV, 4). Beautifully, in the Pythagorean sayings of Xystus, it is said: He who desires ardently is an adulterer of his own wife. A certain person, translating this book into the Latin language, wanted to illustrate it with the name of martyr Xystus, without considering in the entire volume that he divided it in vain into two parts, omitting completely the name of Christ and the Apostles. It is not surprising that he transformed a pagan philosopher into a martyr and bishop of the city of Rome: just as he exchanged the name of the book of Origen with the name of the martyr Pamphilus, in order to conciliate the most impious books on the beginnings with Roman ears, with Eusebius also from Caesarea as the first supporter. In the seventh place, it is written: And he shall not grieve a man, or, as the LXX translated, he shall not oppress by power. I do not know to what fault and sin someone may be a stranger. And indeed, the Egyptians oppressed the Hebrews by power. Hence, Habakkuk complains, why does the wicked oppress the righteous (Habakkuk 1). And I wish that it would be said only of those who are outside, and not of those who are inside. For even the leaders of the Churches often oppress the people by pride. Of which it is written: They made you a prince, but not to be proud, and you should be among them as one of them (Ecclus. XXXII, 1). And the Savior commanded: Whoever wants to be first among you must be the servant of all (Mt. XX, 27). And what is said in Hebrew, and do not grieve the man, agrees with the testimony of the Apostle: Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, who dwells in you (Eph. IV, 30). And in the Gospel, which the Nazarenes, who read according to the Hebrews, are accustomed to read, among the greatest crimes is considered to be one who grieves the spirit of his brother. But if the

sadness of another kills the one who grieves, what should be said about wickedness and a tyrannical mind, to which this applies: Why does the earth and ashes boast (Sirach 10:9)? So that, having forgotten its own condition, it, being full of phlegm, gall, feces, and worms for a little while, would place its mouth in the sky, and its tongue would extend to the earth, and it would say with true Nebuchadnezzar: I will ascend into heaven, above the stars of heaven I will place my throne, and I will be like the Most High (Isaiah 14:12). The eighth law: The pledge should be returned to the debtor. Not to all debtors, otherwise there will be many opportunities to receive pledges, which will become a material of wealth: but to the debtor about whom it is written in the law, that he is poor, and he has put up his own clothing as a pledge, and he should receive covering before sunset (Deut. XXIV), so that he does not cry out to the Lord, who is the avenger of his injury, from the torment of cold. But if, according to the following things, we should give bread to the hungry, and cover the naked with clothing (Exod. II): how much more should we return what is his own, if indeed the poverty of the debtor is without doubt? We can also return a pledge to a debtor, when we, who are joined by love, and who owe mutual charity to each other, return their pledge, holding nothing of their debt against them. The ninth place is this: He has not seized anything by force, nor has he committed robbery according to the Septuagint. The Apostle speaks about robbers, saying that among other sinners one should not even partake of such food: and all robbery is mixed with violence (1 Corinthians 6). If violence has been used, plundering is not profitable. Moreover, there is also a holy violence and a desirable plundering, of which the Gospel also writes: From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force (Matthew 11:12). It is also spoken of by Judas, the brother of James: And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire (Jude 23). And on the contrary, the opposing powers hastily seek to plunder the prey of those whom they seize, for their own destruction. Which means that Jacob says: A wild beast has devoured him: a wild beast has taken Joseph away (Genesis XXXVII, 33). Therefore, the sheep of the Lord that follow him are not taken from his hands. And he himself says: The Father's gift is greater than all, and no one can take it from the hand ((Al. my addition)) of my Father (John X, 29). From this it is clear that there is one power, virtue, and substance of the Father and the Son. For if no one can take from the Son's hand what the Father has given, and these same things are in the Father's hand that are not taken from him, it is clearly proven that all things are common to the Father and the Son, and that the Son holds the Father in his hand, just as the things that belong to the Son are held in the Father's hand. The tenth is: He gives his bread to the hungry. From this we are taught that alms should not be given to the satiated, but to the hungry; and not to those who belch from fullness, but to those who suffer from emptiness. For in bread is contained all food. And it is significantly said, his: so that we do not turn bread acquired from rapine, usury, and ill-gotten gain into mercy; for the redemption of a man's soul (Prov. XIII, 7) is his own riches. What we see many people doing, both clients and the poor, and farmers; not to mention the violence of soldiers and judges, who oppress by power, or commit thefts, so that they may give little things to the poor, and boast in their own crimes. And let the public deacon in the Churches recite the names of those making offerings: so much is offered by this person, so much is promised by that person, and they please themselves with the applause of the people, while their conscience torments them. And let us give material to the miserable, so that they may rejoice in what they give, and not mourn over what they have taken away. It is more fitting, however, that we understand the just bread to be the one who says: I am the living bread, which came down from heaven (John VI, 51); and which we

pray to be given to us in prayer: Our substantive bread, or that which will come to us (Matthew VI, 11); so that we may deserve to receive what we will always receive afterwards, in the present world, every day. He gives this bread to the hungry, of whom it is written: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst (Matt. V, 6). For the righteous person makes the common bread of all his own, which had failed in Judea, as the prophet says: I will take away from them strength, or the staff of bread. What we are speaking of, if indeed we are of Christ, or rather, as the prophet commemorates, it is the bread of believers and the hungry. It is not to be given at all to those who have eaten and drunk and been satisfied, and have grown fat and kicked, of whom it is said: Woe to you who are full now, for you shall hunger (Luke VI, 25), lest they vomit it up, as Solomon says: For he will vomit and corrupt your good words (Prov. XXIII). What the Savior says in other words: Do not give what is holy to dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6). He holds the eleventh place: And covered the naked with clothing. This statement, according to the explanation of the previous verse, should be discussed in two ways: that we give clothing to the naked, as the Savior says: I was naked and you clothed me (Matthew 25), and that we give the clothing of Christ to the naked in faith and virtues, of whom it is written: For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Galatians 3:27). He was naked in this garment, not having a wedding garment, and was thrown out of the banquet. Concerning this nudity, the Lord speaks to Jerusalem: But you were naked and filled with confusion (or shame). The twelfth commandment holds: And he shall not lend at usury, or as the Septuagint translated, he shall not give his money for usury. In Hebrew, usury is prohibited for all kinds of species; in the Septuagint, only money. According to what is written in the fourteenth Psalm: 'He who does not give his money to interest' (Psalm XIV, 5). And how is it said: 'You shall not lend to your father at interest, but you shall lend to others at interest' (Deuteronomy XV, 6 and XXIII, 10). But see the progression: In the beginning of the Law, interest is only forbidden among brothers; in the prophets, usury is prohibited for everyone, as Ezekiel says: 'He who does not give his money to interest.' Furthermore, in the Gospel, there is an increase in virtue, with the Lord commanding: 'Lend to those from whom you do not expect to receive' (Luke VI, 35). It follows in the thirteenth place: And he shall not receive anything more. Some people think that usury is only in money. But divine Scripture, foreseeing this, takes away the excess of everything, so that you do not receive more than what you have given. Usury is commonly demanded in the fields for wheat and barley, wine and oil, and other kinds of produce, as the divine word calls it, abundance. For example, in the time of winter, we give ten bushels, and in the harvest, we receive fifteen, which is more than half. Whoever considers himself very just will receive a greater portion, a fourth plus, and they usually argue and say: I gave one bushel, which produced ten bushels. Is it not just that I should receive a half bushel more from my own, since he, by my generosity, has nine and a half from my own? Let us not be deceived, says the Apostle, God is not ridiculed (Galatians VI, 7). Therefore, let the merciful usurer respond to us briefly: has he given to the one who has, or to the one who has not? If he had, he certainly should not have given, but he gave as if he did not have. So why does he demand more as if from someone who has? Others are accustomed to receiving small gifts in exchange for borrowed money of various kinds, and they do not understand that this is called interest and excess, whatever that may be, if they receive more from what they have given. The fourteenth degree is: From wickedness, he says, he shall turn away his hand, so as to flee from all wickedness in every work. For wickedness is committed not only with the hand, but also with other members, as Solomon says: Remove wicked lips far from you (Prov. IV, 24). And in the Psalms:

They speak iniquity on high (Ps. 72:8). The foot also runs to iniquity, and the eye if it desires another man's wife, let him not be its imitator, of whom it is said: He has not done iniquity, and deceit has not been found in his mouth (Isa. 53:9). Therefore, we are commanded to make friends for ourselves with the wicked mammon, who may receive us into eternal dwellings. The fifteenth is: He shall make a true judgement between man and man, or his neighbor. What seems to signify the same as first, where it is written: If he shall be just, and shall do judgment; but with the addition of the truth of judgment: which makes a distinction between man and man, or his neighbor, it is observed to have the force of virtues. Hence also in the beginning of Proverbs, after many precepts, the correction of judgment is inferred. To know, he says, wisdom and discipline, and to understand the words of prudence, to receive the subtlety of speeches, and to know true justice, and after all to correct judgment (Prov. 1:2-3). Therefore the Apostle (I Cor. VI) rebukes those who are established in the Church, because they have disputes among themselves, and the least esteemed is chosen to judge between man and man, who destroys what is small and reaches up to the mature man; and yet he needs a higher judgment in order to attain to the truth of judgement. It follows in the sixteenth place: He shall walk in my precepts. And in the seventeenth: He shall keep my judgments and my precepts, to do them, and to keep them. Both of which have manifold understanding, if we are willing to replicate all the commandments of the law, in which the precepts of the Lord are, and in which the justifications are said to be. The one hundred and eighteenth psalm is full of commandments and justifications, and in part the eighteenth, in which it is written: The justices of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts, and the commandment of the Lord is lightsome, enlightening the eyes. In which it is asked how in this same prophet God said: I have given them non-good justifications in which they will not live in them (Isaiah 28). The easy and fuller answer is in the following, that the Jews who follow the letter die, and the Christians who understand the life-giving spirit live. It is a long task if we want to prove with testimonies where the precepts of the Lord are said to be, and where justifications are said to be, and in what particularities, or diversities, or obscurities they are involved. And it is said in the present place: Here is the righteous one, he will live his life, says the Lord God. Whoever does these things, and does not do those things, will not be punished for the sins of the father, but will live by their own virtues.

18:10-13

(Ver. 10 and following) But if he has fathered a son who is a robber, shedding blood, and he has committed one of these (or, as the Septuagint has translated, if he has committed sins: if he has not walked in the way of his righteous father), and he does all these things, not abstaining from them, but rather feasting on the mountains, defiling the wife of his neighbor, oppressing the needy and the poor, seizing plunder, not returning pledges, lifting his eyes to idols, committing abominations, engaging in usury, and taking more, will he live? When he has done all these detestable things, he will die: his blood will be upon himself. Regarding the thief, it is written in Hebrew Pharis, which in the second edition of Aquila means sinner; Symmachus translates it as transgressor, and the Septuagint and Theodotion as pestilent. Just as a plague creates diseases and usually devastates the regions where it has spread, so does a pestilent person ravage everything. And let us say first according to history, so that you may know that the iniquities of the fathers do not overflow onto the children. If a righteous man does the things that the previous discourse explained in order, he will live. But if he begets a son who departs from the service of

the Lord and exchanges his father's virtues for vices, doing what his father did not do and not doing what his father accomplished, can he live? Surely he will not live, but will be guilty of his own blood. Moreover, according to spiritual understanding, the righteous man in Ecclesiasticus, if he proclaims the Gospel faith and his son and disciple is deceived by heretical error, will be called a pestilence. Concerning this, it is written in the first psalm: 'And he did not sit in the seat of pestilence' (Psalm I, 1). And in Proverbs, he is described as confident, shameless, and arrogantly pestilent (Prov. XXXIII). He sheds the blood of the deceived and heaps sins upon himself; he feasts on the mountains of pride, polluting the Church of his neighbor, causing distress to the needy and poor in the knowledge of Scripture, oppressing and overthrowing them; seizing plunder from those who he has led astray from the Church: not returning the pledge he received from his teacher, in order to fulfill what is written: 'Freely you have received, freely give' (Matthew X, 8). And to idols and images, which he fashioned from his own heart, he lifts his eyes, and committing all abominations; and he gives money for usury, so that the error of the master may increase by the diligence of the disciples; and seeking repayment from those to whom he loaned, he demands more than he had given: surely he will not be able to live, but he will die in his own blood.

18:14-18

(Verse 14 and following) But if he has a son who sees all the sins his father has committed, fears them, and does not commit them himself (as Vulgate says, 'similar to them'): he does not eat on the mountains, he does not lift his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, he does not violate his neighbor's wife, he does not oppress anyone, he does not keep a pledge, he does not commit robbery, he gives his bread to the hungry, he covers the naked with clothing, he turns his hand away from the poor man's injury, he does not take interest or usury, he follows my ordinances, and he walks in my statutes: this son will not die because of the iniquity of his father, but he will surely live. His father, who accused falsely and used violence against his brother, and committed evil in the midst of his people: he died in his wickedness. So, do not be surprised, he says, if the son of a righteous man, inclined towards vice and sin, dies by death. On the contrary, if the son of a sinful and impure man sees the wickedness of his father's ways, and turns away from doing evil and does good, he shall not be held accountable for his father's crimes. And what can also be received in us, as it is said in the Psalms: Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear, and forget your people, and your father's house: and the king desires your beauty (Ps. 44, 11). And we who are born of the stock of the nations, to leave behind the crimes of our parents, and to do judgment and justice, and to live in it. Therefore, we repeat what we have explored above more fully. And so, briefly, we review everything, desiring to move on to those things that are more obscure and new.

18:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) And you say: Why did not the son bear the iniquity of the father? Clearly, because the son has practiced judgment and justice, has kept all my commandments and has done them: he shall live. The soul that sins, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father: and the father shall not bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. He answers the question that the listener could have proposed in the opposite way. He often says, they say, why did the righteous son not bear the iniquity of the father? To which he himself responds: Clearly, because the son has acted well, and has not committed the father's offenses. And it is right, just as a sinner dies in his own

wickedness; so the righteous live in their virtues: and let the soul that has sinned die; and let the one who has kept God's commandments live.

18:21-22

(Vers. 21, 22.) But if the wicked shall do penance for all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment, and justice: living he shall live, and shall not die. I will not remember all his iniquities that he hath done. In a way only, saith he, the sins of the fathers are not transmitted to the children, neither doth the wicked son any longer burden the righteous father; nor are others punished for the sins of others, so that he, who before was wicked and a sinner, if he afterwards do penance, and turn to better things, and blot out his former sins, be not judged by the old sins: but let him be received into my flock, by the renewal of virtue. At the same time, let us consider what sort of repentant person an impious and sinful person receives. If, he says, he turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all the commandments of the Lord, so that he truly abandons all wrongdoing and follows all virtues; if he does all good things and forsakes all evil; then I will forget all the injustices he has committed.

18:23 (Verse 23) In his righteousness, which he has worked, he will live. My righteousness will live not so much as mine, but as his. It is allowed for my righteousness to give good things to the good and bad things to the bad. Is it my will that the wicked should die, says the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live? (Ezekiel 18:23) Therefore it is the will of the Lord that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Wherever God seems to pronounce a severe and harsh judgment, He condemns not men, but their sins.

18:24

(Verse 24) But if the righteous turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity according to all the abominations that the wicked person usually does, will he live? None of the righteous deeds that he had done will be remembered. In the transgression that he has committed, and in the sin that he has sinned, he shall die. Just as the previous sins do not burden a righteous person who has sinned, so the previous righteousness does not benefit a sinner who was previously righteous. For each person will be judged according to what is found in them.

18:25

(Verse 25.) And you said: The way of the Lord is not fair. Hear, O house of Israel: Is not my way fair? Are not your ways unfair? Give reasons why the judgment of the Lord is just. Do you think, he says, that I am unfair, that I will render the sins of the fathers to the children (Deut. 24); and while others eat sour grapes, will the teeth of others be set on edge (Jerem. 31)? Behold, each person dies in their own sin, and is made alive in their own righteousness. In both cases, judgment is not based on the past, but on the present. Rather, your unjust opinion is that you think a parable is not a parable, but you understand it in such a way that the sins of others are punished in others as if it were the truth of a story.

18:26

(Verse 26.) For when the righteous turns away from his righteousness and does iniquity, he shall die in them. In the iniquity which he has done, he shall die. This can also be understood: The righteous first, the people of Israel, turned away from their righteousness, because they

abandoned the author of righteousness, and they committed iniquity by denying the Son of God. In the sin and wickedness which he has done, he shall die: not in many, but in one, killing the heir in order to destroy the inheritance.

18:27-28

(Verse 27, 28.) And when the wicked turns away from his wickedness that he has done and does judgment and righteousness, he shall keep himself alive. For he considers and turns away from all his transgressions that he has committed; he shall surely live, he shall not die. On the other hand, it says, the people of the nations who do not have knowledge of God and the wicked, if he turns away from his wickedness, which he previously practiced in idolatry, and does the things that are commanded by the law of Israel, he who was previously dead will give life to his soul. And seeing that he has perished in the injustices he has wrought, he will believe in him who says: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John, XIV, 6): he will live and not die.

18:29

(Verse 29.) And the children of Israel say: The way of the Lord is not fair. Are not my ways fair, O house of Israel, and are not your ways crooked? Even today Israel blasphemes God, for abandoning his people and taking in a multitude of nations. Whom the Lord reproves because their ways are crooked, he exercises his rightful judgment by sending other farmers to his vineyard after the previous ones were lost. Which, understanding in the parable of the Gospel, the Jews said: This will not be (Luke 20:16).

18:30

(Verse 30.) Therefore, I will judge each one according to their ways, O house of Israel, says the Lord God. Whether they are from the multitude of nations or from the people of Israel who are being judged: God does not show partiality (Colossians 3:25), but each one will be rewarded according to their faith, and will be condemned for their wickedness and unbelief.

18:31 (Verse 31.) Turn away and repent from all your iniquities, and iniquity will not be your downfall. Cast away all your transgressions, in which you have transgressed. This message is specifically directed towards the Israelites, urging them to repent and abandon their iniquities or transgressions against God. However, it can also be understood as applicable to both the Israelites and the crowd of Gentiles, encouraging them to forsake their vices and turn to the one who can heal their brokenness. And make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Leaving behind the old letter, live in the newness of the spirit. The new heart of the Israelites is to believe in Him whom they had previously denied. The new heart of the gentiles is to abandon idols and despise the worship of the dead, and to believe in Him who is the God of the living. And why will you die, house of Israel? It is better, as we have said above, to accept this exhortation in which it is written: Repent and do penance, regarding the person of the Jews whom He does not want to die, and to whom He now speaks: why will you die, house of Israel, who have the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom it is written: God of the living, not of the dead (Mark 12:27). Why will you die by your own fault, when you owe your life to the merit of the fathers and my mercy?

18:32

(Verse 32) Because I do not want the death of the one dying (or, the sinner), says the Lord God: return and live. I do not want, he says, for you to die, whom I have begotten for salvation. For I have begotten sons, and I have exalted them, but they have rejected me (Isaiah 1:2). Therefore, return and live. It is said to return, only to those who were previously with God and have later abandoned his company. And live through repentance, who are dead through sin. Therefore, Israel, because it does not return to its former state, is believed to be dead.

19:1-9

(Chapter 19, verses 1 onwards) And you, take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel, and say: Why did your mother, a lioness, lie down among lions? In the midst of young lions she raised her cubs. And one of her cubs grew up, he became a lion and learned to catch prey and devour men. The nations heard about him and captured him in their own traps, and they brought him with chains to the land of Egypt. When she saw that she had been frustrated and her hope was lost, she took one of her cubs and made him a lion. He who walked among lions, became a lion. He learned to capture prey and devour men. He learned to make widows and turn their cities into deserts, and the land was laid waste, and its fullness, by the roar of his voice. And nations from all provinces gathered against him and spread their nets over him; he was captured in their wounds. And they put him in a cage, they led him in chains to the king of Babylon, and they sent him to prison so that his voice would no longer be heard on the mountains of Israel. LXX: And you shall take up a lamentation for the prince of Israel, and you shall say: What was your mother's lioness? She has grown up among lions and has brought up her cubs among lions. And one of her cubs has come up: he has become a lion, and he has learned to catch the prey. He devours people, and the nations have heard of him. He has been trapped in their pits, and they have brought him with hooks to the land of Egypt. And when she saw that she was taken captive and her hope was lost, she took another of her cubs and made him a lion. And he went about among lions. He became a lion, and learned to seize prey. He devoured men, and fed on their audacity. He brought their cities to desolation, and laid waste to the land and its abundance with the sound of his roaring. Nations from all around set traps for him, and spread their nets over him. He was captured in their corruption, and they put him in a cage. He was brought to the king of Babylon in chains, and they brought him into prison, so that his voice would no longer be heard on the mountains of Israel. I know that in this place I have read a multitude of explanations, and hindered by such obscurities, that it has not so much revealed as enveloped the reading, while all the writings refer to opposing strengths, and in heavenly Jerusalem describes lions and battles: how one of them is captured, and another is placed in his stead, and he provides many testimonies: that the devil and his companions are often called lions, as in that passage about the apostle Peter: Our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8); and in the Psalms: Do not give the soul of your confession to wild beasts (Psalm 73:19). Certainly, when it comes to history, it is said that Johanan, the son of Carea, was taken to Egypt: how he was called a lion while fleeing with a few, I do not know; and the other lion, Zedekiah, who was also taken to Babylon. However, leaving such explanations to the judgment of the reader, let us say that the prophet predicts not so much the future as he narrates the past. For after the sixth year of Zedekiah (for immediately afterwards we read: And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day) a lamentation is made over the princes, or over the prince of Israel, and it is said: Why has your mother the lioness lain among the lions? Therefore, the lamentation is over

the princes, namely all those who are descended from the line of Josiah. The mother of the princes of Jerusalem is called a lioness, who gave birth to and nursed little lions: and she brought up one of her little lions, and made him a lion, signifying Joachaz the son of Josiah, whom Pharaoh Neco took to Egypt, and in his place made Joakim. After his death, Jechoniah his son was made king, and he was carried off to Babylon with his mother and the nobles of the city by Nebuchadnezzar: and from him is born Salathiel, the father of Zerubbabel, who received his name because he was born in Babylon (2 Kings 23). And it is clear that under the metaphor of the lioness, lion cubs, and lion, and again of another lion, those things which had already happened at that time when this prophet was speaking are described. For after he had taken Jerusalem from the royal lineage of Joachaz son of Josiah and made him king, he became so cruel in a short time that he is said to have metaphorically seized prey and devoured men. When an Egyptian came to him, he captured him not without wounds, either in a pit, as is specifically stated in Hebrew, in order to preserve the metaphorical capture of lions, which are always caught in pits. And he brought him in chains or shackles to the land of Egypt, and there he died. When his mother, who had borne him, who had raised him, who had established him as king, saw this, her hope was destroyed. She took one of the other kings, Jechoniah, son of Jehoiakim, and made him king. He, imitating the cruelty of his predecessor, is described as savage like a lion, as he devoured men, made many widows, led cities to ruin; and at the sound of his roar, the whole province was terrified, so that nations gathered around him, spread their nets over him, captured him in a pit, put him in a cage and in chains. Not that Jechoniah experienced this, for he himself surrendered to the king of Babylon and was carried off to Chaldea; but this translation is kept like that of a lion, who is caught in pits, bound in chains, and kept in cages. Furthermore, according to history: we read this about Zedekiah, who was appointed king of Jerusalem after Jehoiachin. And this is the reason why, because chains are mentioned, and a cage, and a prison is named, most people understand it to refer to Zedekiah rather than Jehoiachin. Therefore, he was saved in prison, not killed, and only removed from the kingdom. However, the history tells us that Zedekiah, being blind, was taken to Babylon, and there he was immediately killed.

19:10-14

(Verse 10 and following) Your mother is like a vine planted over the water, your blood. Its fruits and branches grew abundantly from many waters. And solid rods became scepters of rulers for it, and its stature was elevated in its branches. And it saw its height in the multitude of its palm trees. And in anger, it was uprooted and thrown to the ground, and a scorching wind dried up its fruit. Its strong rods withered and dried up, and fire consumed it. And now she has been transplanted into a desert in an impassable land and thirsty. And fire went out from the rod of its branches, which consumed its fruit, and there was no strong branch in it, the scepter of rulers. It lamented, and it will be mourned. Your mother is like a vineyard, like a flower in a pomegranate tree planted in water. Its fruit and offspring came from much water. And a branch of strength was made for it among the tribes of leaders: and it was exalted in its greatness among its branches. And he saw his greatness in the multitude of his palm trees, and it was broken in fury: it was thrown to the ground, and a burning wind dried up its chosen ones. They were avenged, and the rod of his strength was dried up. Fire consumed it, and now they have planted it in a desert, in a land without water, and fire has come out from the rod of its chosen ones, and devoured it, and there was no rod of strength in it. It is a lamentation in three parts, and it will be a mourning. In different

speeches, the same thing is said. And just as in previous readings we read that Jerusalem is compared to a beautiful woman, and again a lioness who nursed lions in her lair, now the vine or vineyard is compared to the most beautiful one, which was planted over the waters and therefore the branches, nourished by the moisture, have grown so much that one branch, which Scripture calls a very strong or mighty rod, has become the ruler's scepter. In order to translate the Septuagint into the language of the three leaders, so that kings would be made from it. But the vineyard itself was of such beauty that the splendor of its strength was equal to the flowers of the pomegranate, which in Hebrew is called a vineyard in your blood, compared to the redness of the flowers. Therefore, the lofty and upright vineyard was exalted. For God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). It was uprooted in the anger of the Lord and thrown down to the ground, so that the ruins of Jerusalem would preserve the elegant translation of the vine. However beautiful the vineyard may be, and however far its branches extend, if you take away the poles and stakes, joined to the earth, it withers from the heat, especially if the burning wind, which the Greeks call καυσωμα, dries up its fruit, so that it withers and is consumed as if by the heat of fire. As for the addition in the Septuagint: They have been avenged, instead of what is written in Hebrew, they have withered, I cannot determine what significance it may have. Therefore, how is that vineyard of such fertility and abundance, and of such beauty, now transplanted into a desert, into a rough and thirsty land? However, it signifies the land of Babylon to which they were transplanted, or Egypt to which they fled, or the land of Judah itself, in which a few poor remained, of whom Godolias (also called Gotholias) was appointed governor to gather and govern the remnants of the people (2 Kings 25). Against whom he rose up from the royal stock, and from the branch of the vineyard of Ishmael, who slew him in Maspha (also called Masepha), and ate up all the fruit of the vineyard, and from thence was no strong rod to be left, nor a sceptre of great power (Jeremiah 40 and 41). For no king remained that might govern the people, but they all fled with Johanan the son of Careah into Egypt. Therefore bewail we and lament that the royal race which in Judea hath ceased no more till he come that is to be laid upon it: and he shall be the desire of nations (Genesis 49:10). From this it is clear, both from the previous passage, in which it is said: Why did your mother, a lioness, lie down among lions? and from this passage, in which it is written: Your mother, like a vine planted by the water, belonged to Jerusalem, which lost its lions and its branches, and the rod that would rise among the tribes or the scepter of those in power did not remain in it. For it begins with mourning and ends in mourning. Assume mourning over the leaders of Israel. This is, in the beginning and now at the end, a lamentation; and with lamentation and mourning, the royal line is to be pursued like a parable. Furthermore, according to the allegory, which others refer to heavenly Jerusalem, they say that from it many have fallen into this valley of tears, and kings have ceased to be, and the once beautiful vine has been dried up by the burning wind, so that no green shoots remain in it, which later Jeremiah laments under the form of the city; we understand (Matthew 24) this concerning the Church, because in the last times, with multiplied iniquity, the love of many will grow cold, so that even the chosen ones of God may be tested, and its princes may be caught in the snares of the devil, who is not content with capturing only one king, but hastens to capture kings and princes daily, according to what is written: His chosen food (Habakkuk 1:16). The branches of the Church, which not long ago were equal to flowers and the redness of blood, are now withered by the wind. This interpretation also corresponds to the parable of the Gospel, in which, when the sun rises, what had sprouted withers and dries up suddenly (Mk 4). So that hardly any of the branches remain that can rise up as a rod

and become a worthy leader of the people. In other words, this is what Amos speaks of: 'I will send a famine upon the land: not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of God' (Amos 8:11). Where should we mourn and lament over the princes of Israel, through whose fault and pride Judaea was deserted and Jerusalem captured.

20:1

(Chapter 20, Verse 1) And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth, in the tenth month, men came from the elders of Israel to inquire of the Lord, and they sat before me. After eleven months and five days of the previous vision, again the word of the Lord came to the prophet, after men came from the elders of the house of Israel to inquire of the Lord and sat before him. However, many examples testify that it was the custom of the people of Israel to seek whatever they desired to know from the Lord through the prophets. Saul, looking for donkeys, goes to Samuel and receives advice from a young boy to offer a quarter shekel to the prophet. When Jeroboam's son is sick, he is sent to Shiloh to the prophet Achiam (also known as Abiam), bringing gifts of bread, cakes, grapes, and a jar of honey, to learn about the illness of his son. David also consults the prophet Nathan, asking whether he should build a temple for the Lord. And Ahab inquires whether he should go up to Ramoth Gilead or not (3 Kings 22). In Isaiah (Isa. 37) and in the book of Kings (4 Kings 19), it is announced what will happen with Sennacherib. It is not surprising that in the Old Testament the prophets announce everything that is going to happen, since we have read that Agabus prophesied to Paul what was going to happen (Acts 21). It is written in Deuteronomy: The nations that the Lord is going to destroy before you, they will listen to dreams and divinations, but the Lord your God has not given you this (Deut. 18:14). For it is the practice of the Gentiles to consult the Chaldeans, augurs, diviners, soothsayers, and oracles of demons, by which their error is mocked. Therefore, even now the elders of Israel approach a prophet to inquire of the Lord through him, and yet they are silent about their inquiry, with the one who was to be questioned knowing what they were asking, so that a miracle occurred in him, knowing why they had come and answering the unspoken thoughts in their minds.

20:2-3

(Verse 2, 3.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Have you come to inquire of me? As I live, I will not answer you, says the Lord God. To the righteous and worthy who ask, a promise is given. As you continue to speak, I will say: Here I am. But to the sinners, like the elders of Israel, whose crimes are described by the prophets that follow, there is no answer; only rebuke for their sins. And an oath is added: As I live, the sentence of denial is made stronger. But as for what the LXX said, if I were to respond to you, Symmachus translated it more clearly, I will not respond to you.

20:4

(Verse 4) If you judge them: if you judge, O son of man. LXX: if I avenge them with vengeance, O son of man: They have indeed come to interrogate me, desiring to know about those things about which they are in doubt, and the future; but you, O son of man, judge them, so that the prophet's response may not be, but rather the sentence of the judge for the injustices they have committed, and for following the crimes of their fathers. Or certainly, if I avenge them with vengeance, it can be understood in this sense: They are so covered in wickedness that they are not even worthy of

correction and reproof, according to what is said by the prophet: I will no longer visit your daughters, and your daughters-in-law, when they commit adultery (Hosea 4). Wherefore sinners, who have descended into the depths of sin, are forgiven to fulfill the desires of their hearts (Prov. XVIII).

Show them the abominations of their fathers, and you shall say to them: 'LXX: Rebuke them for the iniquities of their fathers, and you shall say to them: If the sins of the fathers do not flow over to their children, why are the abominations and iniquities of the fathers now placed upon the elders? Clearly it is for this reason, that similar actions may be shown to be done by their parents, and that they may drag the longest rope of inherited evils, so that they may fear the punishments of those whose vices they imitate.'

20:5-6

(Verses 5, 6.) Thus says the Lord God: In the day that I chose Israel, and raised my hand for the offspring of the house of Jacob, and appeared to them in the land of Egypt, and raised my hand for them, saying: I am the Lord your God. In that day I raised my hand for them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt into the land which I provided for them, flowing with milk and honey: which is excellent among all lands. LXX: Thus says the Lord God: From the day that I chose the house of Israel, and became known to the seed of the house of Jacob, and was recognized by them in the land of Egypt, and received them, saying: I am the Lord your God: in that day I took hold of them by my hand, saying: to bring them out of the land of Egypt into the land which I prepared for them, a land flowing with milk and honey: a Paradise beyond all lands. For what the Seventy said, 'honeycomb' is beyond all lands, for which we have interpreted it, 'excellent' is among all lands. The first edition of Aquila placed 'firmament'; the second, 'illustrious'; Symmachus, 'region'; Theodotion, 'strength'; that is to say, this is the foundation of all lands, that in it there is the religion of God, and temple, and ceremonies, and knowledge of God; and to such an extent did the people of Israel, established in Egypt, not know God, that when Moses was sent to them, he said, 'If they ask me, who sent you?' What should I say to them? Say, he said, to them: 'I AM has sent me' (Exodus 3:13, 14). He became known to the people in Egypt and to the offspring of the house of Jacob when he raised his hand against the Egyptians for them, and said, 'I am the Lord your God,' and he chose them to bring them out of the land of Egypt to a land flowing with milk and honey. For they were not yet able to eat solid food, but like infants and nursing babies, they were in need of milk and honey. Indeed, whoever considers the land of Judea, letter by letter, from Rhinocorura to Mount Taurus, and the entire land along the Euphrates River, will not be able to doubt that it is famous and more fertile than all other lands, and the power and beauty of the cities and the pleasantness of the regions - namely Palestine and Phoenicia, Arabia, Syria Coele, Cilicia, and the other regions which the Lord promised to the Israelites if they had kept God's commandments, but because they did not receive them, it was a fault of their disbelief. For even in Palestine and the province of Judea, many people remained who were not expelled. For the sponsor is not at fault if the one to whom the promise is made proves himself unworthy of the pledge, especially when the option of the promisor is presented: 'If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good things of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword.' Therefore, choices are made in the present; and the one who is chosen is not immediately capable of being tempted or destroyed, because both Saul, who was chosen as king, and Judas, who was chosen as an Apostle, later fell due to their own fault. The raising of the hand, or extension,

indicates the posture of a striker: to strike against the Egyptians, and to free the people of Israel from Egypt.

20:7

(Version 7) And I said to them: Let each one cast away the offenses of their eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. LXX: And I said to them: Let each one cast away the abominations of their eyes, and do not be polluted with the inventions of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. Regarding the offenses, which are called 'Secuse' in Hebrew, Symmachus interpreted them as nausea, the second edition of Aquila as excisions, to signify that they should be cast away like the blemishes that hinder vision and create a sense of vomiting for those who see them. The word 'gelule' is also a Hebrew term, which the LXX invented. The first edition of Aquila was defiled; the second edition of Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted as idols, whom we also follow at present. However, he commands those who are leaving Egypt to forget the idols they have served for a long time, and indeed to cast them away from their eyes so that they do not even regard them with their sight. And those who have been defiled for a long time should no longer consent to them. I, he says, am the Lord your God; not the Egyptian portents, not the figments of various monsters. But even to us, when we come out of Egypt, it is commanded that we cast off the offenses of our eyes: lest we be delighted by those things with which we were previously delighted in the world, lest we be polluted by the idols of Egypt, namely, the inventions of philosophers and heretics, which are rightly called idols. Let us also remove our eyes from the spectacles, or rather offenses, of Egypt: the arenas, the circuses, the theaters, and all things that contaminate the purity of the soul and enter through the senses into the mind; and let what is written be fulfilled: Death has entered through your windows (Jeremiah 9:21).

20:8 (Verse 8) And they have provoked me. LXX: And they have departed from me. Or as Symmachus interpreted: They have not found rest with me. And immediately when called, they depart from God, so that there is no space between the calling and the departure. And it should be noted that no one departs from God unless they were with Him before. Hence, the dragon in the book of Job is called an apostate, a transgressor, and a deserter (Job XXXIV). And they did not want to listen to me. Each one did not cast away the abominations of their eyes, nor did they leave the idols of Egypt. LXX: And they did not want to listen to me. They did not cast away the abominations of their eyes, and they did not leave the inventions of Egypt. Therefore, they have provoked me, says the Lord, and they have turned away from me, because they did not want to listen to me while the free will of man is preserved; and they have done all the things that I commanded them not to do according to the law. Immediately, despairing of salvation, they murmur against Moses and distrust the promises of God. Unde sequitur: And I said that I would pour out my indignation upon them, and execute my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt. So I led them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. I gave them my statutes and made known to them my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live. Because they had not yet gone out of Egypt. For it follows below: I have cast them out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the desert. From which it is shown that they had not yet gone out of Egypt, when he wanted to pour out his indignation, and fill his anger upon them, and strike them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

20:9

(Verse 9) And I did it for the sake of my name, so that it would not be violated in the presence of the nations among whom they were, and among whom I appeared to them to bring them out of the land of Egypt. What I planned to do, I did it for the sake of justice, not because of the greatness of my mercy, so that my name would not be defiled and it would seem that I could not fulfill what I had promised to Israel. Therefore, I spared my name, so that the nations among whom I became known to them in the land of Egypt would not have an opportunity to blaspheme. The prophet describes what He had promised to them when they were settled in the land of Egypt, and how they immediately offended, and what the Lord had planned against them, and yet did not do. The following things, He spoke after their departure from Egypt.

20:10-14

(Verse 10 and following) Therefore I expelled them from the land of Egypt, and brought them into the desert, and gave them my commandments, and showed them my judgments, which a man should do and live by them. Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them. But the house of Israel provoked me in the desert. They did not walk in my commandments and they cast away my judgments, which a man should do and live by them, and they greatly violated my Sabbaths. Therefore, I said that I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness and consume them, and I did so for the sake of my name, so that it would not be profaned in the sight of the nations, from whom I had brought them out. These things are said to those who were brought out of Egypt into the wilderness: that, having been freed from the vices of the Egyptians, they might more easily fulfill the commandments of God in the solitude and observe his judgments and keep the Sabbath. These things were given as a sign between the one who gave them and those to whom they were given, as the Scripture says: And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: And you, command the Israelites, saying: See, and keep my Sabbaths, which is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you, and keep the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Whosoever violates it shall be put to death. Everyone who works on it shall have that soul cut off from among his people (Exod. XXXI, 13, 14). Therefore, the Sabbath and circumcision are given as a sign of the true Sabbath and true circumcision: so that we may know that we must rest from the works of the world and circumcise not the flesh, but the heart. Thus, by working for six days, we rest on the seventh day, doing nothing else day and night except acknowledging that everything we live is owed to the Lord, and at the return of the week, we consecrate ourselves entirely to His name, so that through the sanctification of the day, we may remember the Lord who sanctifies us. The Lord gave these commandments and statutes and the observance of the Sabbath in the desert, so that those who did them would live by them and not go beyond them, as promised in the Gospel. They violated them, not once or a little, but greatly, so that the extent of the violation would be shown. Therefore, he said and decided in his mind to pour out his anger upon them in the desert and consume them, as he spoke to Moses: 'Leave me, and in my anger, I will destroy them.' (Exodus 32:10). But he did not want to do it, sparing the Egyptians and the other nations, so that they would not be scandalized, and waiting for the repentance of those he had mercy on. And it should be noted that when he spoke to the Israelites after the offense that he said, 'I did it for the sake of my name, so that it would not be violated in the presence of the nations from which I expelled them.' At that time, they were still in the midst of

those nations, as they had not yet left. But now, after they have left, it is said, 'From the nations from which I expelled them.'

20:15

(Verse 15) Therefore I lifted up my hand against them in the wilderness, to not bring them into the land that I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the most excellent of all lands, because they had rejected my judgments and had not walked in my commandments, and had violated my sabbaths. After idols their heart went, and my eye spared them so as not to kill them, nor did I consume them in the wilderness. LXX: And I lifted up my hand against them in the wilderness, so as to not bring them into the land that I had given them: a land flowing with milk and honey: a hive beyond all lands: because they rejected my justifications, and had not walked in my commandments, and had violated my sabbaths, and had walked after the thoughts of their own hearts. And my eye spared them, so that I would not destroy them, and I did not kill them in the wilderness. Indeed I resolved to pour out my fury on them and to destroy them, but I acted for the sake of my name, so that it would not be profaned among the nations, namely the Amalekites and the others who fought against them in the wilderness. I did not allow them to enter the land that I had promised to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey, which is the most excellent of all lands, like a honeycomb. The cause of this punishment and sentence is that they rejected my judgments, did not walk in my statutes, and violated my Sabbaths. The cause of this cause is that they did not do these things because their heart followed the idols of Egypt. However, my eye spared them, saying that I would not kill them and destroy them completely. But it is asked, how did I spare them when their corpses fell in the wilderness, and no one entered the promised land except Joshua and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. From which we understand that they are not kept for eternal punishments, nor erased from the book of the living, nor consumed in the presence of the Lord. For if it is believed that they perished because they were not admitted into the land of promise, then Moses also perished, who only saw the land of promise and did not enter it. This is mentioned in the book of the Lord Jesus: My servant Moses has died (Deut. XXXIV, 5). And in Malachi: Remember the Law of Moses my servant (Malachi 4:4). And in Jeremiah, as if speaking to a friend and familiar, God says: If Moses and Samuel stood before me (Jeremiah 15:1). Otherwise, it must be believed that the prayers of Moses were heard, when he interceded for the people, saying: If you forgive them their sin, forgive; but if not, blot me out of the book that you have written (Exodus 32:32, 33). But so that we may know that God's intention towards his sons and servants is for their improvement, not their destruction, let us listen to the testimonies of the Scriptures. My son, do not be saddened by the discipline of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him (Prov. III, 11). For whom the Lord loves, He corrects; and He chastises every son whom He receives (Heb. XII, 6). And in another place: When He killed them, then they sought Him (Ps. LXXVI, 34). And in the Song of Deuteronomy it says: I will kill, and I will give life (Deut. 32:39). We can also say this literally, that He did not destroy them, nor did He consume them with their offspring and descendants, but after killing the fathers, He spared the sons, whom He brought into the Promised Land.

20:18-20

(Verse 18 onwards) But I said to their children in the wilderness: Do not follow the commands (or laws) of your fathers, nor keep their judgments, nor be defiled by their idols (or thoughts). I am the

Lord your God. Walk in my commands, and keep my judgments, and do them, and sanctify my Sabbaths, that it may be a sign between me and you, and that it may be known (or that you may know) that I am the Lord your God. After the killing of the fathers who fell in the desert, he gives commands to his sons, in whose salvation he had mercy on the fathers. And he said, 'The eye of the Lord should not entirely destroy them and wipe them out, but should preserve the fathers in their sons.' And he testifies to the same things that he spoke to the fathers: that after they have walked in his commandments and kept his judgments and preserved the sanctification of the Sabbath, which is a sign given, then they shall know that he is their Lord God. However, the precepts and legitimate laws of the fathers, and their judgments, signify an unusual error: that they may not imitate the sins of those whose torments they witness.

20:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) And my children have provoked me, they have not walked in my commandments, and they have not kept my judgments, to do the things that if a man does, he shall live in them, and they have violated my sabbaths. And I threatened to pour out my fury upon them, and to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness. But I turned away my hand, and I did it for the sake of my name, so that it would not be violated in the sight of the nations, from whom I cast them out. But the sons, he says, followed the crimes of their parents and did everything that they had done: therefore, they deserved a similar punishment. However, the same mercy by which their fathers were spared because of the greatness of my compassion, and for the same reasons for which I had pity on their fathers: so that I, as the sole and same Creator of both, might temper my anger with similar patience. We have traversed the obvious and proceeded to more obscure matters.

20:23-24-26

(Ver. 23, 24 onwards) Again, I raised my hand against them in the wilderness, to scatter them among the nations and disperse them in the lands, because they had not performed my judgments, and had rejected my commandments, and had violated my Sabbaths, and their eyes had been after the idols (or thoughts) of their fathers. Therefore, I also gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments in which they would not live, and I defiled them in their offerings (or transgressions), as they offered (or led astray) everything that opens the womb because of their sins (for which the Septuagint translated, to destroy them and what they had overlooked): and they will know that I am the Lord. Where in the Old Testament, against their children, who fell in the wilderness, the Lord lifted up His hand to scatter them among the nations, Scripture does not say; but it is to be believed that this was done in accordance with what is reported here. Or he signifies by this, that after they entered the promised land, they were given over at various times, for many sins, to different nations and kings, and at that time the commandments of the Lord, which were good according to their nature, and the judgments by which believers could live, were made not good for them, since they were in no way able to keep the precepts of the law in captivity, and to do what the divine word commanded. He did not say, 'I gave them evil commandments,' but, 'not good commandments.' For it does not immediately follow that what is not good is evil, as the Apostle teaches, it is good for a man not to touch a woman; but because of incontinence, let each possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor (I Cor. VII). And if he does not do this, it is neither good nor evil. Therefore, God gave them, dispersed among the nations, not good

commandments, that is, he allowed them to follow their own thoughts and desires, to do what is not appropriate. And he defiled them in his gifts: just as a Priest separates lepers from the people, and shows that they are defiled; while they offer to idols what they should offer to God. And they pass everything that opens the womb through the fire of Baal, that is, the firstborn; so that after they have deserted God and been handed over to the worship of idols, then they may understand that He is the Lord whom they have provoked to anger by their own fault. Symmachus interpreted this passage more explicitly, treating the future as past. Therefore, I will also give them bad precepts and judgments for which they will not live, and I will defile them because of their gifts, as they consecrate and offer everything that opens the womb, so that I may destroy them, and they will know that I am the Lord. And the meaning is this: because I have seen the sons of the fathers equaling the wickedness of their ancestors and doing the same things for which they offended God, I wanted to divide them into nations and disperse them throughout the whole world, and give them bad precepts and judgments in which they would not live, so that I may defile them with their gifts, for they consecrated everything that opens the womb to idols, and I may destroy them forever, and they will know that I am the Lord. Through which he showed that he had not given them good commandments who dwelt in the wilderness, but to those whom he wanted to scatter among the nations, and to make foreigners in the whole world, he gave them a desire for things that he did not give: so that there they would do good commandments of God, not good because of their own fault, while they exhibited to idols what God had commanded to be exhibited. This can also be said, that before the offense, they received only the Ten Commandments; but after idolatry and blasphemy, they received multiple ceremonies of the law, so that they would offer victims to God rather than to demons, and by comparison with sacrilege, what was not good in itself became lighter, and by no means evil, because it was offered to God, and yet not good, because they offended the author of good.

20:27-29-29

(Verse 27, 29 onwards) Therefore speak to the house of Israel, son of man, and tell them: Thus says the Lord God: Moreover, your fathers have blasphemed against me and have treated me with contempt, even as they spurned me. And I brought them into the land that I had lifted my hand to give them ((Vulgate adds: that land)): they saw every high hill and every leafy tree, and there they offered their sacrifices and presented there the irritation of their offerings, and they placed there the fragrance of their sweetness, and they poured out their ((Vulgate is silent on this)) libations there. And I said to them, 'What is the high place to which you are going?' And its name was called the High Place until this day. Therefore speak to the house of Israel, son of man, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: As for your fathers, they have provoked Me to anger by their iniquities, by the fact that they have fallen away from Me. So I brought them into the land that I had lifted My hand in an oath to give them.' They saw every high hill and every leafy tree, and there they offered their sacrifices. They also presented there the provocation of their gifts, and they set there their pleasing aroma, and they poured out there their drink offerings. And I said to them: What is abbana, because you enter there? And they called its name abbana until this day. I wanted, he said, to scatter them in the wilderness, and to give them not good precepts, so that they would sacrifice to idols what they should have offered to me, and consecrate all their first-fruits to them by fire, so that I might kill them and destroy them. But when he says, I wanted, he shows that he did not do what he wanted. And that which follows: 'And they shall know that I am the Lord,' is not

found in the Septuagint. For it did not seem fitting to them to know after their destruction that he himself is the Lord. But you, son of man, speak again to them, that is, to the elders of the house of Israel, who have come to inquire of you: Your fathers, from whom you have descended, have also blasphemed against me and held me in contempt; after I brought them into the land which I had given them to possess, they turned against me to provoke me. For when they saw every high hill and leafy tree, they would sacrifice on the mountains and in the groves and thickets, and offer victims to the idols, and pour out libations. And when I saw this, I said to them: What is this, Bama? for it is called high: or why do you enter into such a place which you have chosen for yourselves in all the hills, so that even today these places are called Bamoth, and the ancient error retains its original name? Regarding Bama, which we translate as excelsum, there is an error in the Septuagint edition, where it is written as ■ββα■, which does not resonate in the Hebrew language. Bama can mean 'in which' if the two syllables are divided into two words, but in the present context, that sense does not fit. However, wherever it is written in the Books of Kings and Chronicles: 'The people still sacrificed and offered incense on the high places,' Bama in the singular and Bamoth in the plural mean 'high places.'

20:30-31

(Verse 30, 31.) Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Lord God says: You are defiling yourselves in the way of your fathers and indulging in their abominations; you are defiling yourselves with all your idols to this day. Shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live, declares the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you.' Imitate the vices of your fathers and walk in the same paths, so that similar sins may deserve a similar punishment, and you have advanced so far in wickedness that you offer your sons to demons by fire: and it is not enough for you to have done this once, but you continue to do the same up to the present. Not that the elders do these things in captivity, but that those who dwelt in Jerusalem and were threatened with captivity did not cease to do all these things. And when you are bound by such great sins, you seek my response? As I live, says the Lord God, I swear by myself that I will not answer you, and what follows:

20:32-33

(Verse 32, 33.) And the thought of your minds shall not be, of those saying: We shall be like the nations, and like the kindreds of the earth, to worship wood and stones. As I live, saith the Lord God: With a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will reign over you. This has this meaning: Do not think that your thoughts, with which you blaspheme against me, can be fulfilled. For I say: We do not want to be under the Lord, nor to be called His people. But as all nations are in the whole world, and each people lives according to its own will, to worship wood and stones, and to serve idols, even we shall be one people among many. To which God responds and swears by Himself, saying: I will not abandon you nor despise you, as negligent runaway servants often despise their masters, but I will draw you back to my reign, and with outstretched arm, striking and pouring out fury, I will restore you to your former slavery, and I will reign over you: whether you want it or not, you will have me as your king, and you will experience the wrath of a king, whose kindness you have neglected.

20:34

(Verse 34) And I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you were scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out I will reign over you. 'I will not let you be in the nations any longer, nor will I allow you to be held in everlasting captivity, but I will bring you out from the peoples, and gather you from the countries where hostile necessity has dispersed you to serve. However, I will do this not to destroy and obliterate you, but to be your king.' From which we also understand that what the heretics call the cruelty of the Creator, sounds like mercy: while he is angry and furious for this purpose, and pours out all his fury, in order to draw them back to his kingdom, who have chosen to serve the tyranny of demons.

20:35-36-38

(Verse 35, 36, and following) And I will bring you into a desert of peoples, and there I will judge you face to face. Just as I contended with your fathers in the desert of the land of Egypt, so I will judge you, says the Lord. And I will subject you to my scepter, and I will bring you into the bonds of the covenant, and I will choose from among you the transgressors and the wicked: from their place of residence I will bring them out, and they will not enter the land of Israel, and you will know that I am the Lord. Thus says the Lord: I will do for you who are in Babylon, and now serve idols, what I did for your ancestors in Egypt. I will lead you into the desert of the peoples, and there I will judge you face to face, just as I contended with them in judgment when they came out of Egypt. And after I have judged you, I will subject you to my scepter and rule, and I will make a covenant with you and bring you into your land with the bonds of love, so that bound by my love, you will never be able to depart from me. But I will choose from among you the transgressors and the wicked, who persist in the hardness of their hearts in evil deeds, not for possession, but for rejection. And I will indeed bring them out of the land of their dwelling, so that when they are brought out, they will not enter the land of Israel; but they will perish in various regions. And by the distinction between good and evil, you shall know that I am the Lord, who judges all things. The rest of the discourse hastens, and we briefly go through each point, in order to provide only the meaning to the readers.

20:39

(Verse 39.) And you, house of Israel, thus says the Lord God: each one of you after your idols walk, and serve them. But if you will not listen to me even in this, and you will further defile my holy name in your gifts and in your idols. LXX: And you, house of Israel, thus says the Lord God: Each one of you take away your inventions, and after this, if you will listen to me, and you will no longer defile my holy name in your gifts and in your pursuits. Symmachus has interpreted this passage more clearly: Each of you, going after your own idols, serve them, because you do not want to listen to me. But do not further pollute my holy name with your offerings and statues. On my holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel, says the Lord God, there the whole house of Israel will serve me. The translation by Symmachus has this meaning: Because you do not want to serve me, go and serve the idols, and trample the footsteps of your own statues. For you do not want to hear me, so that you do not sacrifice offerings to me, nor burn incense, nor call yourselves my people. For my worshippers do not serve me in the places of light, temples, and idols, like you do, but on my holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel. Moreover, the Septuagint explains the true meaning. Abandon your former thoughts and remove the sins of evil inventions; and if after this you listen to me and do not defile my name in your gifts and idols, then you shall offer sacrifices to me on my holy mountain and all the house of Israel shall serve me. But Aquila, on

Symmachus' side, agrees in part and disagrees in part: 'Go,' he says, 'after your idols, and serve them, because you are unworthy of my reign, and your worship does not please me. But if you do not even hear me on this matter, but defile my holy name, pretending to offer to me what you offer to idols, and you blaspheme my name alone, so that, as worshipers of idols, you call yourselves my own; know this, that on my holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel, there all the house of Israel will serve me, not you who serve idols, but all the house of Israel that will believe later.'

20:40-41

(Verse 40, 41.) But on my holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel, says the Lord God, there all the house of Israel shall serve me; all I say in the land in which they will please me, and there I will seek your firstfruits and the beginning of your tithes, in all your sanctifications, I will accept you with a sweet odor, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you from the lands where you were scattered; and I will sanctify myself in you in the eyes of the nations, and you shall know that I am the Lord. Concerning this mountain, on which the whole house of Israel is to serve God, Isaiah and Micah sang with equal voice: In the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be made manifest on the top of the mountains, and it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will flow to it, and many people will go and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house ((or mountain)) of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion the law will go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Is. 2 ff.; Mic. 4:1-2). And again Isaiah says: 'Ascend to a high mountain, you who announce Zion. Lift up your voice with strength, you who bring good news to Jerusalem.' (Isaiah 40:9). By the mountain Zion, or the Church, we understand the watchtower, which is elevated and established on the heights of holy teachings. Or we understand the Lord Himself, the Savior, in whom the first fruits, tithes, and all offerings turn into a pleasing aroma. So that all the nations seeing that the people of the Lord have been saved may glorify God and recognize those who have been saved, that He is the Lord.

20:42

(Verse 42) When I bring you into the land of Israel, the land that I raised my hand to give to your ancestors, then you will know that I am the Lord. I will bring you into the land of Israel, the land that I raised my hand to give to your ancestors, and which they lost due to their own fault. But you, you have received it not by your own merit, but by my mercy.

20:43-44

(Verse 43, 44.) And you shall remember ((Vulgate: interserit ibi)) your ways, and all your sins, with which you have defiled yourselves in them: and you shall be displeased with yourselves in your own sight for all the evils that you have done, and you shall know that I am the Lord, when I will have done good to you for the sake of my name: not according to your evil ways, and your wicked deeds, O house of Israel, says the Lord God. We cannot remember our sins and vices unless we have been brought into the land of Israel, and there we may say with the Apostle: "I am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God" (I Corinthians 15:9). And you will displease, he says, yourselves in your own sight in all your wickedness that you have done. Whether, as Symmachus interpreted, And you little ones will seem small to yourselves because of all the wickedness that you have done (James IV). So that, after they have been exalted, they may

believe themselves to be humble: because the Lord gives grace to the humble. And in another place it is written: Before contrition, the heart of a man is exalted, and before exaltation it is humbled (Prov. XVIII, 12). For pride, there is destruction, and from humility comes exaltation. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have done good to you. And we know the Lord our Savior more when He has done good to us, and has suffered for our sins, and has borne our iniquities, and has grieved for us; not for any merit of those who are saved, but for the sake of His name. Otherwise, our ways and our most wicked crimes have not earned mercy, but punishment. But whatever we have said about the people of Israel, who were freed from Egypt and committed many sins in the wilderness, and offended God, and later were led into the promised land, worshipped idols, wood and stones, and afterward were preserved by the mercy of God: let us recount to those who, by the hand of the Lord, were freed from Egypt of this age, brought into the wilderness of vice, and once again longed for Egypt, and did the things for which they deserved to be punished; yet nevertheless, through repentance, they were preserved not by their own merit, but by the mercy of the Lord.

Book Seven

Book Seven

Once upon a time, we boys read: Nothing is so easy that it does not become difficult when done unwillingly. I admit that I promised explanations on Ezekiel a long time ago and I cannot fulfill them due to the occupation of people coming from all over the world here: there is no hour, no moment in which we do not encounter crowds of brothers and exchange the solitude of the monastery for the company of guests, to the extent that either the door must be closed to us or the study of the Scriptures, through which the doors are to be opened, must be abandoned. And so, in lucrative, or rather, stolen hours of the night, which have become longer with the approach of winter, we attempt to dictate these things by the light of a small lamp, and to alleviate the weariness of a restless mind with interpretation. We do not boast, as some may suspect, of receiving financial compensation, but we simply acknowledge the reasons for our delay: especially since the flight of the West and the congestion of holy places are preferable to the nakedness and wounds of the needy, which the rage of the Barbarians brings. We cannot see without tears and groaning, that once great power and ignorance of wealth has fallen into such poverty that she lacks shelter, food, and clothing; and yet the hard and cruel hearts of some are not softened while they dismiss their rags and burdens, seeking gold in captivity. Another difficulty in dictating is added to this, that with dimming eyes in old age, and with some suffering, we are unable to read the Hebrew volumes of the Hebrews by the light of night, for they are also blinded to us by the smallness of the letters, even in the brightness of the sun and daylight. But even the commentaries of the Greeks, we know only by the voice of the brothers. There is no doubt that they make those who chew food with other people's teeth nauseous. Therefore, I beg you, daughter Eustochium, to begin with those things that we are carving with the stylus of notaries and to which we scarcely have time to make corrections, that is, begin with the seventh. And, as I have already said, if the brevity or length of the books are unequal to each other, attribute the brevity and length to the ideas, yes, even to the hypotheses, since we do not want to separate what is united and compress discordant things into one mass.

20:45-49

(Verse 45 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face toward the south, and drop your word toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field. And say to the forest of the south: Hear the word of the Lord: thus says the Lord God, Behold, I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour every green tree in you, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched. And I said, 'Ah, Lord GOD! They say of me, 'Does he not speak in parables?' LXX: And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 'Son of man, set thy face towards Teman, and prophesy against the forest of the south field; and say to the forest of the south field: 'Hear the word of the LORD, thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree.' The kindled flame will not be extinguished, and it will burn in it all faces from the south to the north: and all flesh will know that I, the Lord, have kindled it: it will not be extinguished. And I said: By no means, O Lord, O Lord: they say to me: Is not this a parable? What does it mean to put or harden your face, we have explained more fully above. For the hardening of the face is necessary, and the hardness of the forehead, so that the Prophets may speak fearlessly what is commanded, especially when sad things are announced to the whole multitude of the people. But our translation expresses what they have said, that Nageb should be understood in Hebrew as the leader of the southern land or region, not Sare, as the LXX thought, which signifies the word leader and prince, but it is written Sade, which properly signifies land and region, and because of the similarity of the letters Daleth and Res, the error prevailed. But divine speech speaks in the metaphor of a leap against Jerusalem, which is the dwelling place of beasts and fierce men: that is, it sets it on fire, and all its trees are burned up. It does not call these trees, which were in need of fruit, but rather prepares them as if for a fire. And first it burns the green wood in it, secondly, that which we read in this same Prophet: 'And begin with my holy ones'; and afterwards the dry wood, which could not have any life in itself: namely, the holy ones and sinners together, so that some escape the evils of captivity through death, and others be handed over to eternal torments. And it also signifies this: from the South to the North, from Jerusalem to Babylon, so that every journey of those proceeding into captivity, falling by sword, famine, and pestilence, is completed. For those who are in Babylon, Jerusalem is situated to the South; just as, on the contrary, the pot in Jeremiah which signifies Jerusalem is set on fire from the face of the North, that is, Babylon. And beautifully in the beginning: a drop, he says, to the South; so that not the whole wrath of God appears to be poured out, but a certain drop and part. But if a drop of such cruelty exists, what is to be valued in all the rains? So that all flesh, which is to see the salvation of God, may know through the burning and flame of the forests, which is extinguished by no one's help, that He Himself is the Lord. Understanding this, the Prophet responded, ah, ah, ah, O Lord God, or as the Seventy translated, by no means, O Lord, O Lord. And he adds: And they say to me: Does this man not speak in parables? And what is this parable called? And the meaning is: Speak more plainly, we do not understand what you are saying in the parable: reveal to us the meaning in clear language. The names Theman, Nageb, and Darom can be understood tropologically as Egypt: for we often read in Daniel that the South stands for Egypt (Dan. 11), and Egypt refers to the limitations of this world. Therefore, Ezekiel prophesies the future evils that will come to the world, which he calls a desert without fruit-bearing trees, but a dwelling place for wild animals. Of which it is said in the 28th psalm: The voice of the Lord perfecting the deer, and he will reveal the hidden places of the forests (Verse 9). These are the forests and woodlands that devoured more from the

army of Absalom in battle than the sword killed (2 Samuel 18). And the first green tree is set on fire in the woods, and then it becomes dry, those who live in evil and those who are dead to righteousness. And what is said: And every face will be burned from the South to the North, this means: From those who seemed to be fervent in spirit to those who, with the increase of iniquity and the cooling of charity of many, have lost their former zeal; so that all flesh may see the flame of the Lord not extinguished. And the prophet prays that what the Lord has threatened may not come to pass, that is, that the forest may not be set on fire and all the trees may not be destroyed, so that either they may still have a place for repentance or the necessity of announcing sad news may not be imposed on them, especially since the people do not understand those things and, because of the obscurity of the words, are more likely to be driven to madness.

21:1-5

(Chapter 21, Verse 1 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, and drop toward the sanctuaries, and prophesy against the land of Israel, and say to the land of Israel: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, and I will draw forth my sword out of its sheath, and will cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked. Seeing then that I will cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked: therefore shall my sword go forth out of its sheath against all flesh, from the south to the north. And all flesh shall know that I am the Lord, for I have drawn my sword out of its sheath, the sword that cannot be returned. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Therefore, son of man, prophesy and set your face against Jerusalem, and behold their sanctuaries, and prophesy against the land of Israel, and say to the land of Israel: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, and I will draw my sword out of its sheath and cut off from you the righteous and the wicked. Thus my sword will go forth from its sheath over all flesh from the South to the North, and all flesh will know that I, the Lord, have brought forth my sword from its sheath; it will not return again. For as it was said before: They say of me, is not this one speaking in parables? And the people demanded a clear judgment: therefore what the Lord spoke metaphorically or in parable, and as others interpret, as a proverb, he now speaks more clearly, that the desert of Nageb and Darom and Theman are Jerusalem, and its temple, the Holy of Holies, and all the land of Judah; and the flame which will consume the desert is to be understood as the devouring sword, which has been brought forth from its sheath, to strike down the righteous and the wicked. For this is a green wood and a dry wood. Hence the Lord says: If they do these things in the green wood, what will they do in the dry? (Luke 23:31) For this reason, I do not know what they were thinking, the Seventy interpreted it as unfair and unjust, as if both did not mean the same. And what he had said there: And all flesh shall see that I, the Lord, have kindled it, that is, the wood or the flame, and it shall not be extinguished, he speaks here in other words: That all flesh may know that I, the Lord, have drawn forth my sword from its sheath never to be returned. For truly, the fire against Jerusalem is not extinguished, nor is the burning sword recalled, because there is little time in between, and Jerusalem with its temple is burned by the fire of Babylon.

21:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) And you, son of man, groan in the breaking of your loins, and groan bitterly before them. And when they say to you, 'Why do you groan?' you shall say, 'Because of the news, for it is coming, and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be loosened, and every spirit shall faint,

and water shall flow from all knees. Behold, it is coming, and it shall be,' says the Lord (Vulgate adds 'God'). LXX: And you, son of man, groan in the breaking of your loins, and groan in pains before them. And it shall come to pass, if they shall say unto thee: Wherefore dost thou mourn? and thou shalt say: Because of the tidings, for it cometh, and every heart shall be taken and all hands shall be weakened, and every spirit shall faint, and all thighs shall be filled with moisture. Behold it cometh, and it shall be, saith the Lord God. First he had said: prophesy, or pour out upon the South, the African and the South wind, and upon the southern leap. And because it seemed obscure, and the people knew not the words of the prophet, it is set down more plainly the southern leap to be Jerusalem, and all unfruitful trees, by the roots of which the axe is laid (Matt. III, Luke III), are understood to be its inhabitants: and the sword is interpreted as fire. Thirdly, the prophet is commanded, while they are silent and not questioning, to do those things by which he may be interrogated, and to respond what the Lord has spoken. 'Groan,' he says, 'lament, not with a slight voice, nor with moderate pain, but with contrition of the loins, so that your groaning may come forth from the depths of your bowels and the bitterness of your soul. And you shall do this before them: that when they have asked you why you are broken by such groaning, and what evil has befallen you that you groan in this way, you may respond to them in my words: 'Therefore, I lament, and I am unable to hide the pain of my heart, because the prophecy that had always resounded in my ears is being fulfilled by deed and is coming to pass: namely, the impending army of the raging Babylonians.' When he comes and surrounds Jerusalem, then every heart will melt, and all hands will be dissolved, so that, with the fear of men overwhelming their minds, no one will dare to resist. For the spirit of all warriors will weaken, and such great trembling and fear will seize everyone, that limbs and organs will dissolve under the pressure of fear, and the bladder will not be able to hold urine: so that urine will soil the knees. For it is natural, when fear presses, for the bladder to relax, and for moisture to flow against the will of man. Indeed, this often happens in the severity of illnesses, that after the strength of the sick people has diminished, not only their knees, but also their beds are soiled. Look, he says, it is coming, which I have often predicted, and it is being accomplished and will happen, not by me, but the Lord has spoken. I know someone who, in the contrition of his loins and with flowing waters, has repeated many testimonies, so that the chastity of the prophets may be fulfilled, and the bitterness of his soul and the internal pain of his mind, which the waters of his seed pollute his knees. But this explanation does not pertain to the current place.

21:8-17

(Vers. 8 et seq.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, prophesy and say: Thus says the Lord God, speak: A sword, a sharp sword, has been sharpened and polished, to slaughter victims; it has been sharpened, and polished, to shine: you who move the scepter of my son, you have cut down every tree. And I have given him to be polished, to be held in hand: this sword has been sharpened, and this sword has been polished, to be in the hand of the one who kills. Cry out and wail, son of man, for this has happened in my people, it has happened to all the leaders of Israel. Those who fled were delivered over to the sword along with my people. Therefore, strike your thigh and clap your hands in applause, for he has been tested and when he overturns the scepter, it will not be. This is what the Lord God says. As for you, son of man, be a prophet and strike hand against hand, and let the sword be doubled and tripled for the slayers. This is the sword of great slaughter that makes them astonished, causes their hearts to melt, and

multiplies ruins. In all their gates I have given confusion of sharp and polished swords to flash: clothed for slaughter. Go to the right or to the left, wherever your desire leads your face. Indeed, I will applaud hand to hand, and I will fulfill my indignation, I, the Lord, have spoken. It is much if I present both editions, and the length of the books is extended, especially where there is either no distance or a small one. Therefore, I will present some things that differ. For this reason, what we said: 'Whoever moves the scepter of my son, cut down every tree,' they translated as: 'Kill, despise, reject every tree.' And again, where we said: 'Those who fled were handed over to the sword,' they translated as: 'My guests, or inhabitants.' And where we said: 'Applaud on the thigh,' they put: 'Strike with the hand.' And where we translated: 'And when he overturns this with the scepter, the edition belongs to them: Three are repelled.' However, he speaks to the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, that it may come against Jerusalem, to be sharpened and polished, for there are many to be slain; and he addresses Nebuchadnezzar himself. You are the one who moves and overturns the scepter of my son, the dominion of the people of Israel, and you cut down every tree, the entire multitude of the people. I have given, he says, this sword, that it may be held in the hand of Nebuchadnezzar; and let it be in the hand of a mighty man. Therefore, O prophet, cry out and wail, and with a voice filled with dire words, bear witness to the imminent calamity. This sword spared no one, nor left anyone untouched by the impending evils. It was made among the people, made among the leaders of Israel, made among my guests and priests who lived in my temple. Therefore, strike your thigh or your hand and put on the attire of one who mourns. For this sword has been tested by me, and it will overthrow my scepter and kingdom, which will no longer exist, and it will end with King Zedekiah. Again I command you, prophet, that you strike not only the thigh in astonishment and miracle, but also the hands, so that not only once, but a second and third time, the sword may come to kill. For first came Nebuchadnezzar, when he took Jehoiachin, and secondly, when Jehoiakim reigned, and thirdly, when Zedekiah. And this is the triple sword, when a great slaughter occurred and it multiplied ruins to such an extent that they were amazed in their minds and their hearts wasted away, and it caused disturbance in all their gates. Therefore it is ordered to him, that is, with a sharp and polished sword for flashing, and with a cloak and unburdened, and ready for slaughter, that he may go either to the right or to the left. Wherever, he says, it pleases your face, boldly enter, having me as your leader, me as your helper. I will applaud hand to hand, so that I may encourage you against my adversaries who rage against you, as if I were your supporter and instigator. Do not doubt, do not fear, and do not be afraid to suffer what Sennacherib has suffered: I am the Lord who has spoken, you are the minister of my will, fulfill my plan. We can, by way of anagoge, take up a sharp and ready sword for the slaughter of the devil, concerning whom the Apostle says: Deliver this kind of Satan unto the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved (I Cor. V, 5). And in another place: Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. I, 20). And it is written in the Psalms: He sent forth his wrath and indignation and distress, a mission by the agency of wicked angels (Ps. LXXVII, 49). Some think that this sword was in the hand of an angel when Jerusalem was struck under David (2 Kings 24). Others suspect that it is said of the same sword in the Gospel: I did not come to bring peace on earth, but a sword (Matthew 10:34); and to divide among themselves every affection of kinship, so that the wicked may fall and the holy may rise. But it is impious to believe this of the sword of the Savior, and rather this should be believed of the devil, who overturns the scepters of the Lord in the Church, who kills all in the people, and the leaders, and the guests of God; and then is approved by the Lord, when he overthrows Judas the

traitor and his like (John 13). After he had eaten the morsel, Satan entered into him. And the sword of those who were killed doubled and tripled, in order to forgive the sin of Jerusalem, because it had taken upon itself its own double sins from the hand of the Lord. But the Lord rejoices and exults, and encourages the raging sword to go either to the right or to the left, and wherever its desire takes it, so that the evil may be killed and the good may remain, and fulfill what is written: What are chaff to wheat? The Lord says (Jeremiah 23:32).

21:18-24

(Verse 18 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: And you, son of man, set before yourself two ways, and let the sword of the king of Babylon come. From one land they will both go out, and by hand he will take a decision: he will cast lots at the head of the city's road. You shall set a road, so that the sword may come to Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, and to Judah, and to Jerusalem, the fortified. For the king of Babylon stood at the crossroads, at the head of the two roads, seeking divination, mixing arrows. He questioned the idols, consulted the entrails. To his right, a divination was made concerning Jerusalem, to set up battering rams, to open the mouth in slaughter, to raise the voice in lamentation, to set up battering rams against the gates, to heap up a siege mound, to build fortifications. And it will be as if he is consulting in vain their oracle, imitating the rest of the sabbath, but he himself will remember the iniquity in order to capture it. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Because you have brought your iniquities to memory and have revealed your transgressions, and your sins have appeared in all your thoughts; because of this, I say, you will be taken captive by the hand. I know that in this place, according to the Septuagint interpreters, I have read the diverse exposition of a certain law, Rabbath of the sons of Ammon, referring to the Gentile people. But to Judah and Jerusalem, to those who gather under the name of Christ, and to those who give dignity to his name, the king of confusion, the devil, stands at the head of every road and lies in wait in secret. And he fulfills that verse: 'They have placed a stumbling block in my path' (Ps. 139). And he stands at the crossroads, desiring to hold onto those who are his, or to acquire new servitude for himself. And he always goes to the right, namely, to those who are situated on the right side, in order to conquer them, to exult in their destruction, to take miserable Jerusalem by force and by the gathering of earthly works. And first of all, so that it seems that he is doing nothing, and striving in vain. But by recalling their iniquities, those who dwell in the Church, indeed even bring to mind the opposing powers with their evil works, they bring to light all the sins of the people and their thoughts, and for this reason they are captured, because they have heaped up old crimes with new ones. Another person may have said this: the truth of the history begun by us must be pursued. When, he said, the divine word had spoken to me: Prophecy, son of man, and speak to the sword and say: Sword, sword, and the rest that the prophecy of the sword contains; a second time the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Do you want, son of man, to know who this sword is, and to learn more clearly the person of the raging sword? Listen to what I say: set up two roads, so that through them the sword of the king of Babylon may come, who will indeed go by one route of the Chaldeans, but when he comes through the desert and wilderness to the crossroads of the land of Arabia, which is called the sons of Ammon, one road leads to Jerusalem on the right side, but the left leads to Rabbath of the sons of Ammon, which is the capital city and is now called Philadelphia: remember, he says, the annihilation that happened to the Assyrian king when 185,000 were killed in one night, he will fear to turn to the right and go against the heavily fortified Jerusalem; but he will stand at that junction,

and according to the customs of his people, he will consult the oracle, to send his arrows into the quiver, and mix them, or label them with the names of each, to see whose arrow comes out, and which city he should besiege first. Now the Greeks call this kind of divination belomancy, or rhabdomancy. Therefore, he consulted the idols and examined the entrails. The divination pointed to his right, indicating that he should march against Jerusalem, besiege it, build ramparts, set up battering rams, construct fortifications, surround the city, open his mouth for slaughter, and stir up the roaring and howling of his exultant army. By doing this, he said, he would appear to the inhabitants of Jerusalem to consult an oracle in vain and, like someone spending his time on Sabbath leisure, to engage in play and accomplish nothing. But the king of Babylon, not relying on his own strength, but on the wickedness of the people, which he knows has offended God, and has added sins of the fathers to new offenses, and all their transgressions have been revealed; and for this reason he will not hesitate in victory, because he trusts in the wickedness of Jerusalem. These things, according to the Hebrew, from which the Septuagint diverge in many places not so much in meaning as in words.

21:25-27

(Verse 25 onwards) But you, profane and wicked ruler of Israel, whose day has come at the appointed time of iniquity. Thus says the Lord God: Remove the turban and take off the crown. Is this not the one who exalted the lowly and humiliated the proud? I will bring upon it injustice, injustice, injustice, and this will not cease until the one comes to whom judgment belongs, and I will give it to him. Septuagint: And you, profane and unjust ruler of Israel, whose day has come, at the end of the time of iniquity. Thus says the Lord God: You have removed the diadem and placed the crown. This will not be the same. You have humbled the high and exalted the lowly. I will bring upon her iniquity, iniquity will I bring upon her: and she will not be like this until the one to whom it is due comes: and I will give it to him. Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: But you, profane and unjust ruler of Israel, whose day comes at the appointed time of iniquity: Thus says the Lord God: She has removed the diadem and taken the crown: neither this nor that: she will raise up the lowly and humble the exalted. I will commit iniquity, iniquity, iniquity upon it. And this was not that one, whose judgment is, whom I am about to give. After the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the captivity of the people, the speech is directed to the leader of Israel, whom no one doubts is signified by Zedekiah, in whom the reign of the kings of Israel from the lineage of David ended. The day, says he, has come upon you, which has been predetermined for a long time in you, and because of you the priesthood and kingdom of the people of Judah have come to an end. For indeed the cidaris is the distinguishing mark of the pontiff: the crown, that is, the diadem, the sign of the king. Is this not the cidaris, and this crown that did nothing by judgment; but for the imitation of the Babylonian king, whom he wanted to exalt, and whom he wanted to humble? Therefore, not once, nor twice according to the Septuagint, but three times I will put iniquity before you forever, which was not immediately taken into account by you, but until Christ comes, whose judgment it is, and the Father gives him the kingdom and the priesthood, or the Church gathered from the Gentiles: For the Father judges no one; but he has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22). And in another place: God, he said, give your judgment to the king, and your justice to the son of the king (Ps. 72:1). This is the one to whom the power and eternal priesthood have been entrusted, of whom Jacob also spoke: The ruler will not fail from Judah, nor the leader from his thighs, until the one to whom it has been entrusted comes; and he will be the expectation

of the nations (Gen. 49:10). In the place where we have interpreted: Is not this, beautifully translated by Symmachus, neither this, nor that. For he had said: Take away the crown, remove the diadem, he added, neither this nor that, that is, the kingdom will cease, and the priesthood. Hence those who were kings and priests until the coming of Christ, among whom one high priest Hyrcanus placed a diadem on his head, wanted in vain to claim both this and that, since the kingdom was not owed to him after Zedekiah, but to the one to whom it was entrusted, and who was the expectation of the Gentiles, about whom Malachi speaks: You, priests, who defile my name (Mal. 1, 6). And a little while later: My will is not in you, and I will not accept sacrifices from your hands. For from the rising of the sun to its setting, my name is great among the nations, and in every place a clean offering is sacrificed and offered to my name. This clean offering, without the blood of goats, rams, and bulls (Ps. 49), is fulfilled in the coming of Christ, when he came as the desired one of the nations, and the sun of righteousness rose, in whose wings there is healing (Hagg. 2).

21:28-32

(Verse 28 and following) And you, son of man, prophesy and say: Thus says the Lord God to the sons of Ammon and to their disgrace. And you shall say: Sword, sword, draw yourself out for slaughter: hone yourself to kill and to shine. Although they seem vain to you and their divinations are lies, so that you may be given over to the necks of the wicked wounded, whose appointed day has come in the time of iniquity. Return to your sheath, in the place where you were created: in the land of your birth I will judge you. And I will pour out my indignation upon you; I will blow upon you the fire of my wrath, and I will deliver you into the hands of brutish men, skillful to destroy. You shall be fuel for the fire; your blood shall be in the midst of the land; you shall be forgotten, for I the Lord have spoken." The sword of the king of Babylon has been at the head of the two roads, in the fork of the two ways, to use divination. He has shaken the arrows; he has consulted the household gods; he has looked at the liver. When it is conquered and captured, it is predicted that both his kingdom and priesthood shall perish forever. The rest belonged to the sons of Ammon, and the order of division itself demanded what had happened on the left path. Therefore, the prophet is commanded to speak to the sons of Ammon, and to their reproach, that they themselves are to be captured, and he directs the same sword speech to them: Oh sword, sword, which is ready for slaughter, which is sharpened, so that you may shine and kill: although idols may have responded to you, and everything that is answered by demons is empty, so that you may threaten the necks of the wounded, and fulfill what the Lord had threatened long ago; nevertheless, after completing your work, which you have done against the sons of Ammon, return to your sheath, that is, to Babylon, to the place where you were made and created: so that in the land of your birth I may judge you, and I will pour out my indignation upon you, and you shall be captured by the power of the Medes and Persians. What is said more fully in the book of Isaiah, in a vision against Babylon: Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them. And a little later: And Babylon, that glorious one among kingdoms, renowned for its pride among the Chaldeans, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, it shall never be inhabited until the end (Isa. XIII, 17 et seqq.). And because once he was speaking in the person of the sword about the king, or rather the kingdom of Babylon, it retains the metaphor. In the fire, he says, of my wrath I will blow upon you; to make you be consumed by fire and delivered into the hands of ignorant and foolish men, who do not have the skill to forge swords and sharpen them; so that you may no longer be sharpened, polished, and

shine for killing; but be the food of fire, and let your blood, which you have shed before all who watch, overflow within you; and be consigned to eternal oblivion, and perish forever, for I the Lord have spoken, and what I have spoken, I have done.

22:1-16

(Chapter 22, Verses 1 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: And you, son of man, do you not judge the city of blood, and show her all her abominations? And say: Thus says the Lord God: The city that sheds blood within herself, so that her time may come, and that has made idols against herself to defile herself. In your blood that was shed, you have sinned, and you have defiled yourself with your idols that you have made. You have brought near your days, and have come to the years of your punishment; therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations and a mocking to all the countries. Those who are near, and those who are far from you, will triumph over you (or mock you), you sordid noble, great in your destruction. Behold the princes of Israel, each one in his own arm was in you to shed blood. They have dishonored father and mother in you (or cursed father and mother). They have slandered the stranger among you. They have oppressed the orphan and the widow (or oppressed). You have despised my sanctuaries (Vulg. you have despised and polluted), you have profaned my Sabbaths. There were detractors (or thieves) in you to shed blood, and they ate on the mountains in you. They committed a crime (or, as it is more significantly in Hebrew, a heinous act), in your midst. They uncovered the shame of their fathers in you, and they humiliated the impurity of menstruation in you. And each one committed an abomination with the wife of his neighbor, and the father-in-law defiled his daughter-in-law wickedly. He oppressed (or humiliated) his own sister, the daughter of his father, in you. They received gifts from you to shed blood. You took interest and excess, and greedily slandered your neighbors (or and I will complete the fulfillment of your evil in your oppression); you have forgotten me, says the Lord God. Behold, I will clap my hands over your greediness which you have done, and over the blood which was shed in your midst. Will your heart endure, or will your hands prevail in the days I will bring upon you? I, the Lord, have spoken and I will act. I will disperse you among the nations and scatter you through the countries, and I will remove your impurity from you. I will possess you in the sight of the nations. (or according to the first edition of Aquila and Theodotion: And I will defile you, or according to Symmachus: And I will wound you in the sight of the nations) And you will know that I am the Lord. And you, he said, son of man (I will use the familiar term for you), judge the city of blood, and show it all its abominations, so that it may know that it deserves its imminent captivity, and that it has brought on its own ruin through much bloodshed. First and foremost among its sins, you have worshiped idols instead of God; and you have also defiled with your own hands the time appointed for your years, which was long spoken of and delayed, in order to bring about repentance. But you, according to your hardened heart, treasure up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath (Romans II). Therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations and a mockery to all the lands around you, both near and far. They will triumph over you and mock you. Filthy, noble, great in destruction. Filthy because you have ceased to be clean. Noble in evil, for once you surpassed all cities in nobility. Great in destruction: the higher you were, the harder you fell. And meanwhile, without mentioning everything else, I will mention a few things that have happened to you. Your rulers, judging not with justice but with the strength and might of the arm, shed innocent blood in you. Others have treated their father and mother with disrespect, even cursing their parents, as Scripture says: 'Whoever curses his father

or mother shall be put to death' (Exodus 21:17). They have oppressed the stranger and the foreigner among you, as if their suffering and exile from their homeland were not enough for them. They have saddened and oppressed the orphan and the widow among you: so that those whose entire estate is in the justice of the law, would not only be saddened, but oppressed by you. You have despised my sanctuaries and holy things, and you have defiled my sabbaths: so that you would not distinguish between the holy and the polluted, between the decreed day of religion and the rest of the sabbath for the worship of God, and the other days on which it is allowed by law to work and serve the needs of the flesh. The detractors, whether according to Symmachus and Theodotion, were deceitful, because it is said in Hebrew: Rachil, and they were murderers in you, to blaspheme God, or to do all things with deceit or violence. And the wise men devoured on high mountains, and with pride elevated against God, they committed wickedness or incest in your midst, such things as rarely happen in corners and secret places, when they are avoided by evil-conscious men, you have done openly. The following discourse explains what incest is: They have exposed the more modest parts of their father in you, they have unlawfully joined with their stepmother, and have defiled the impurity of menstruation within you, showing no regard for nature, nor granting any truce to indecency, clinging instead to the wife of their nearest kinsman. And what is even more wicked, the father-in-law has burned with desire for his daughter-in-law, and the brother has disregarded the rights of his sister: he violated his sister, not one born of the same mother, but rather the one born of the same father. They accepted gifts in order to shed innocent blood. They turned the necessity of the poor into profit, in order to receive interest and abundance; and because of greed, they slandered friends. 'But you, O Jerusalem, have done this,' he says, 'because you have forgotten me. For the memory of God excludes all crimes.' Therefore, I have taken on the appearance of an angry Lord, and I have clapped my hands against your greed and against the blood that was shed among you, so that you may understand and comprehend whether I can endure my anger with either mind or hands. For I have spoken, and I will do it: and after thou shalt be taken, Jerusalem, I will scatter thee into nations, and I will fan thee in the air, and thou shalt be moved to and fro in every wind: and my wrath shall be accomplished in thee, and my indignation shall rest in thee. And I will do, so that I may signify: and I will cause my indignation to rest in thee, and my wrath shall depart from thee, and I will be pacified, and will be angry no more. And my wrath shall rest in thee: and my indignation shall depart from thee, and I will be pacified, and will cease to be angry. And they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it, and have done it, saith the Lord God. But if we follow the interpretation of Symmachus and Theodotion, of whom one says, 'And I will wound you, or kill you,' and the other, 'I will defile you before the nations,' all things must be interpreted in a negative sense. Although this is contrary to this meaning, which was stated above, 'And I will cause your filthiness to cease from you.' For the ceasing of filthiness is the restoration of purity. I have discussed both editions equally, in order to avoid the extent of the books.

22:17-22

(Vers. 17 seqq.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, the house of Israel has become like dross to me. All of them, copper, tin, iron, and lead, are in the midst of the furnace; they have become silver dross. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Because you have all become like dross, behold, I will gather you in the midst of Jerusalem as a gathering of silver, copper, iron, tin, and lead in the midst of the furnace, to kindle a fire in it for melting. Thus I will gather in my fury

and in my wrath and I will rest and melt you, and I will kindle you in the fire of my wrath, and you shall be melted in its midst, like silver melted in the midst of a furnace. So you shall be in its midst, and you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have poured out my indignation upon you. The Hebrew word *Sig* (סִיג), Symmachus translates as dross, Aquila's first edition as grape stone and γράπτον, which signifies both grape seed and grape stalk. But the second translation of it, and the Septuagint's rendering, means a blending. Furthermore, it signifies dross, filth, and the waste of metals; so that subsequently, with the nearby captivity, or rather the impending destruction of the city, fire is applied: so that during the process of blending, pure silver remains, which had been mixed with and defiled by copper, tin, iron, and lead: three of which, copper, tin, and lead, are fusible substances, and are dissolved by fire. But truly, iron between the anvil and the hammer becomes soft and thin, and takes on various forms, according to the will of the craftsman. Just as, therefore, silver, which the aforementioned metals have tarnished, is put into the furnace, so that, with the impurities and foreign materials removed, it may remain pure, thus, he says, I will gather you in the midst of Jerusalem, and I will surround Babylon with siege, in order to kindle in you a fire for refining. And just as there the immense heat of flames is present, here hunger and pestilence will do the same: so that after I have gathered you and set you on fire with the fire of fury, then I will rest, and with the punishment of your contempt, I will restrain the pain. And I will do all this, so that after I have poured out my indignation upon you, the end of your torment may be known to me; and you shall know that I am the Lord, the judge of all and the avenger. And as for what is said to be a refiner, we read in many places, but especially in Malachi and Isaiah, of whom one says: 'Behold, the Lord will come like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap, and he will sit refining and purifying like gold and silver, and he will refine the sons of Levi.' (Mal. III, 1, 3). Moreover, the Lord will wash away the filth of the sons and daughters of Zion and cleanse the blood from their midst, with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning (Isa. IV, 4). And I believe this to sound like what is said in the Psalms: Examine me, O Lord, and test me (Ps. XXV, 2). After which it is said: Burn my kidneys and my heart, so that all the harmful fluids of the loins may be dried up, along with their wicked deeds, and the coverings that have been placed (Ps. XXV, 2). What we understand about Jerusalem, let us understand also about the state of souls, which were created pure by God: they have received gold in sense and wisdom, and silver in speech and eloquence, so that they may express with words what they have conceived in their minds. We read of silver: The speech of the Lord is pure speech; silver tried in a furnace of earth, refined seven times. Similarly, the seventy-seventh psalm mentions gold and silver, where it is written: If you sleep among the nations wilees, and the wings of a silver dove, and its back parts are in greenness, or in the color of gold. For all the glory of the daughter of the king is within, which speaks in the Song of Songs: The king has brought me into his chamber. He who has slept and rested between two Testaments will immediately assume the silver wings of a dove, and with gold in the treasure of his heart, he will shine with radiant light. I believe this has the meaning that for sinners and those who have earned the offense of God, the sky is made of brass and the earth is made of iron, especially the land of Egypt, from which the Lord brought forth Israel, as if from a fiery furnace. In Zechariah, also, wickedness sits upon a talent of lead (Zech. V). And in the Song of Exodus it is said: They were submerged like lead in violent waters (Exod. XV, 10). For they were burdened with the weight of their sins, and they could say: Heavy burdens are weighing down on me (Ps. XXXVII, 6). However, just as the appearance of gold deceitfully imitates the likeness of adulterated copper, so does tin simulate the whiteness of silver, which the simple and

rustic cannot easily discern. And it often happens that gold and silver, mixed with heretical wickedness, are separated by the fire of the Holy Spirit and the judgment of the Lord, and pure gold and silver remain, of which the prophet says: I gave them silver and gold, but they made Baal out of them (Hosea II, 8). To whom is it similar: 'I led them out with silver and gold, and there was no feeble one among their tribes' (Psalm 104, 37). Let the end of all punishments be to know that the Lord himself is God. We read about a tin stone, or a tin mass, in Zechariah (Zechariah 4), which we have interpreted in its proper place.

22:23-31

(Verse 23 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, say to him: You are unclean land, not cleansed on the day of wrath. The conspiracy of the prophets within it, like a roaring lion seizing its prey: they have devoured souls, taken riches and precious things, multiplied widows within it. Its priests have despised my law and defiled my sanctuaries. They have not kept a distance between the holy and the profane, and they have not understood the difference between the unclean and the clean. They have turned their eyes away from my sabbaths, and I have been defiled among them. Her princes in the midst of her are like wolves tearing the prey to shed blood, and to destroy souls, and to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them without tempering the mortar, seeing vain things, and divining lies unto them, saying: Thus saith the Lord God: whereas the Lord hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have done violence to the needy and poor, and have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought among them a man who would interpose a wall, and stand opposite me for the land, so that I would not destroy it, and I did not find one. So I poured out my indignation upon them, I consumed them with the fire of my wrath. I repaid their deeds upon their heads,' says the Lord God. A diligent listener could inquire about the impurities that violate the purity of silver, and have been mixed with copper, lead, tin, and iron. Therefore, what is expressed there under the image of a city and a furnace, is proclaimed as under the likeness of land that is not irrigated and does not receive rain. We should understand those rains about which it is written: I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it (Isa. V, 6); we expect when a temporary and late rain is given to us, about which it is written: You will separate voluntary rain, O God, for your inheritance (Ps. LXVII, 10). But it is a day of fury, which each person procures for themselves with a multitude of sins. We desire to know what the scum of the city is, which is the hardness and foulness of the earth, full of thorns and briars. The conspiracy, he says, of the Prophets, or according to the LXX, the leaders in the midst of it having the likeness of a lion, about which Peter writes: Our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about (I Peter V, 8). This lion and all its companions do not seek to devour bodies, but souls, and they receive rewards and judge everything by money. That this indeed happened to the people of the Jews at that time is beyond doubt. For the Lord brought evil upon them because of the priests, and the rulers, and the prophets. But in our Jerusalem we often see this: those who, according to the Seventy, devour souls in power, and accept payment to make many widows who have lost the Lord as their spouse. However, this is the faction and conspiracy of these prophets, that they may be each other's supporters and do all things for the sake of filthy gain. The priests who should be the leaders of the temple, from whose mouth the knowledge of the Law is sought, violate the sanctuaries, and there is no distinction between the holy and the profane except for money. They turn their eyes away from the Sabbath, and they do not recognize the rest of God which is in the

knowledge of the Scriptures; neither do they say with the prophet: Open my eyes, and I will consider the wonders of your law (Psalm 118:18). Nor do they say what the Apostle says: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18). Among such prophets and priests, the Lord's mediator is defiled, of whom it is written: But there stands among you one whom you do not know (John 1:26). Therefore, prophets or leaders are compared to lions. But the princes whom we understand to be of a lower rank imitate the rapaciousness of wolves, so that they shed not the blood of bodies, but of souls, and they greedily pursue gains, not at all satisfied with that: 'They who serve the altar, live by the altar' (1 Corinthians 9:13); but after they have approached the ministry of God, they gather the riches of Croesus. Even those prophets who foretell future events anointed them without moderation, as we have already said, of the prophesying prophets, who anointed a wall without the mixture of plaster, which is dissolved by rain. They see such things as empty, and not so much prophecy as they divine falsehood, saying to the miserable land: 'Thus says the Lord, the Lord promises this', when the Lord has not spoken to them. But the people of the land are not of God, but rather imitators of earthly works, rulers and priests, who by deceit and power do all things: not oppressing the rich, but rather the poor, of whom it is written: 'But the poor cannot endure a threat.' And: The redemption of a man's soul, by his own wealth (Prov. XIII, 8). They also oppressed the stranger and foreigner, who had not yet become a citizen of the Church, but only a listener, and who had the beginnings of faith, with slander: so that after they had gone through the sea and the dry land, they would make him a proselyte and make him a child of hell. Among such a multitude of vices and crimes, I sought for a man who could resist my anger, and who could stand against my fire and my burning, like Moses, and Aaron, and Samuel; but I could not find one. And he spoke to Moses, saying: Let me alone, that my wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them (Exodus 32:10). And because I could not find anyone who resisted and held me back, I poured out my indignation upon them, and consumed them, not without measure and judgment, but to repay their ways upon their own heads, attributing their own sins to them as authors, or certainly to the heads of the people, the leaders, princes, and prophets, of whom none dared to resist the angry Lord, and for whose sake the land remained barren and desolate, not deserving to receive the rain of the Lord.

23:1-10

(Chapter 23, verses 1 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother. And they played the harlot in Egypt, in their youth they played the harlot. There their breasts were pressed and their virgin bosoms were broken (or, as it is in the Septuagint, There their breasts fell and there they were deflowered). Their names were Oholah the elder (or, the elder sister), and Oholibah her sister. And I took them (whether they were given to me) and they bore sons and daughters. And their names were Samaria Oolla and Jerusalem Ooliba. Therefore, Oolla prostituted herself with me and she went mad (or went away) to her lovers in Assyria, who approached her, dressed in purple, rulers and officials, all young men, choice horsemen. And she gave her fornications over them, all the elect sons of Assyria, and in all on whom she had been mad upon with her uncleanness (or inventions), she was defiled. Moreover, she did not leave her fornications which she had in Egypt. For they also had slept with her in her youth, and they broke the breasts of her puberty (or they also deflowered her): and they poured their fornication over her. Therefore, I handed her over to the hands of her lovers, to the hands of the sons of Assyria, on whose lust she had gone mad. They uncovered her shame; they

took away her sons and daughters, and killed her with the sword. And she became a byword among women; judgments were executed upon her. The Scripture testifies that the twelve tribes of Israel, which were united in Egypt, later divided into two and ten tribes, called Judah and Israel, as recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles. The tribe of Judah ruled from the line of David, with Rehoboam as the son of Solomon in Jerusalem, where there was a temple and priests, and a large part of the tribe of Levi. But in Samaria, Jeroboam the son of Nabat from the tribe of Ephraim and Joseph ruled over the ten tribes; of which Samaria is now called Oolla, which in our language means tabernacle: but Jerusalem is called Ooliba, which means my tabernacle in it. For indeed, even among the ten tribes, there was a tabernacle not of God, but of idols. For Jeroboam had set up golden calves in Dan and Bethel in order to turn the people away from the worship of God. Let us therefore speak about each. These two women, Samaria and Jerusalem, were daughters of the same mother from the lineage of Israel, and they committed adultery in Egypt during their youth. For they would not have received the Law when they were brought out of Egypt and gathered at Mount Sinai, which prohibited them from worshipping idols, unless they had worshiped Egyptian idols while in Egypt. However, the mother of both could be Chethaea, of whom we read above: Your father was Amorrhæus, and your mother was Chethaea (Above, XVI, 3). But when it is said: Let each one remove the abominations of Egypt from his sight, it signifies that in Egypt the Israelites worshipped idols and fell there, whether their breasts of virginity were broken or not. And Samaria is said to be greater and older, either because of the multitude of the ten tribes, or because after the death of Moses from the tribe of Ephraim, Joshua the son of Nun led the people: hence we read that Jeroboam, who split them, was from the house of David (3 Kings, XII). And God had them, whether they were made by him, when they groaned from the works of Egypt, serving clay and brick. And afterwards they bore sons and daughters, either in the wilderness or in the promised land. And first Oolla, that is, Samaria, fornicated against God, when she went mad for the Assyrians, who were dressed in her hyacinth garments, not just any people, but leaders and magistrates, not those worn out by age, but all young men, chosen horsemen, from whom she followed idols and from whom she demanded help against the command of God. Those who came and defiled her, did not leave anything that she had done in her youth in Egypt. For even the Egyptians had sexual relations with her in her youth, of whom she worshiped their idols; and there, her virginity was taken and her breasts were broken. And there was such an abundance of fornication, that it is said that they did not fornicate with her, but rather poured out their own fornication upon her. Therefore, she was delivered to her lovers, Phul, Theglathphalassar, and Salmanasar, in whose lust she went mad, and they uncovered her shame, metaphorically, like that of a harlot woman (2 Kings 17 and 18, 1 Chronicles 5). However, the revelation of the city is that it is captured, and they took captive its sons and daughters, and they slaughtered it with the sword, so that it is butchered as an example for all women, and it is celebrated in a negative way by everyone's speech. Those who carried out judgments and vengeance in it, so that they left nothing of salvation in it; but to this day, ten tribes are held captive in the mountains and cities of the Medes, to which they were transferred. We have discussed more fully the allegorical meaning of Joseph, Ephraim, Samaria, Jezreel, and Israel, and how they are contrary to the house of David and Jerusalem, which signifies the Church. The psalm, which is the seventy-seventh, speaks of this: The sons of Ephraim, being armed and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle (Psalm 77:9). And again: He rejected the tabernacle of Joseph and chose the tribe of Judah (Ibid., 67). For God has chosen the house of confession, which is the Church, and rejected the tabernacle of

Joseph, which signifies increase. They, neglecting the Law of God, added golden calves to their worship, and they are called Oolla, which means tabernacle, not of God, but of error and demons. And the elder and older sister, because of the multitude and captivity by the Assyrians, committed fornication against God, for she abandoned the truth of faith and went mad for the leaders of the heretics, who were clothed in hyacinth, promising her lofty and heavenly things; and the climbers, of whom it is said: These are in chariots, and on horses (Ps. XIX, 8), chosen sons of the Assyrians and leaders and magistrates, who promise themselves knowledge and eloquence. But he did this because he had the same fornications that he had in Egypt, that is, before he believed, and he still lived in the world, he also practiced them in heresy. And she was deflowered (or They were deflowered) by Assyrian men who persist in wickedness, whether as avengers. For our adversary, the devil himself, is an enemy and avenger (I Peter V). They shattered the breasts of Samaria; and they destroyed her virginity that she had in the Church. Therefore, they were delivered to their lovers, according to the Apostle who writes: I have delivered them to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. I, 20). And: I have delivered them to the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved (I Cor. V, 5). They uncovered the shame of miserable Samaria, and they displayed all its turpitude, leading captive the sons and daughters who were born to it, endowed with knowledge and deceived the simple and inexperienced, and killed it with a spiritual sword. They are celebrated in speech throughout the whole world in a negative light, and they become infamous among all the teachings of the world, so that the depravity of that woman may serve as an example for all.

23:11-21

(Vers. 11 seqq.) When her sister Oholibah saw this, she became more wicked than her, and her desire for sexual immorality surpassed that of her sister. Shamelessly, she displayed her prostitution to the sons of Assyria, to their captains and leaders who came to her. She was dressed in various (or costly) garments, riding on horses with riders, all of them handsome young men. And I saw that both of them had defiled the same path, and they multiplied their sexual immorality. And when she saw the painted figures on the wall, the images of the Chaldeans portrayed with colors, having their loins girded with belts, and their heads covered with painted turbans, in the likeness of the rulers (or of the most miserable) of the Babylonians and the land of the Chaldeans, where they were born, she was inflamed with lustful desire for them. And she sent messengers to them in Chaldea. And when the sons of Babylon came to her, to the bed of her prostitution, they defiled her with their harlotry, and she was defiled by them, and her soul turned away from them. And she uncovered her fornication and revealed her disgrace, and my soul withdrew from her as my soul withdrew from her sister. For she multiplied her fornication, remembering the days of her youth when she played the harlot in the land of Egypt. And she went crazy with desire for their lovers, whose flesh is like the flesh of donkeys and whose genitals are like the genitals of horses. And you visited the wickedness of your youth: when your breasts were conquered in Egypt, and the breasts of your puberty were broken. According to the letter, the interpretation is easy, that when Oholibah, that is, Jerusalem, in which was the tabernacle of God, saw the stripes of her sister, she was not warned by example to turn away her foot from error; but she increased her sister's prostitution. For she once made idols outside in Dan and Bethel: but she frequently worshiped the statue of Baal in the high places and in the temple of God, and fornicated with the Assyrians. But the idol of Baal, or Bel, and (to speak plainly) Belis, is the religion of the

Assyrians, consecrated by Nino the son of Belis in honor of his father. And he shamelessly offered his prostitution to the Assyrians, to leaders and magistrates, who were clothed in various and multicolored garments, and to horsemen and young men who were distinguished in appearance by all. So that the prostitution of both sisters became one. And in this way Jerusalem increased its own prostitution, for seeing the images of the Chaldeans on the walls, she became crazed with desire and, deceived by their appearance and clothing, sent messengers to them, seeking help: who came and defiled her. And because pleasure is not perpetual, but quickly brings satiety: she, defiled and saturated with them, departed from their company. Therefore, even I, seeing her turpitudes and fornications made public to all, withdrew from her, so that I, who had surpassed the crimes of my sister, would also surpass her in the magnitude of punishments. Her audacity was of such great extent that she committed all the errors of her youth in a more serious age: and she indulged in Egyptian vices, even following the lusts of the Chaldeans. For he once went mad in the company of Egyptians, whose flesh resembles that of donkeys, and with such a copious flow of semen, and genitals so large, that they surpass even the deformity of horses. Nor did his wickedness cease in his youth: on the contrary, after she became mine, she returned to surpass her former lust in the desert and in the land of promise, where she was deflowered, and her breasts were broken, and all the adornment of her virginity was destroyed. Furthermore, according to tropology, it is difficult to understand how the Church conquers heretical desire unless perhaps we can say this: the servant who knows his master's will and does not do it will be beaten with many stripes (Luke 12:47); and that heretics commit unspeakable acts outside the ark, and perish in shipwreck: but those who follow true faith, if they imitate the vices of Assyria and Chaldea and follow the discolored images of sins, are worthy of greater torments. Shall we not send messengers to the Chaldeans, who interpret as if they were demons, when we open to them and offer them our breasts to be broken in the inner chamber of the mind, and having been satiated with pleasures, we pass from one to another; and not so much do we desire fornication as we desire the number of prostitutes, and we have come to such madness that after much time in the service of the Lord's day, we return to Egypt and do the things that we did in the world before we received the name of faith?

23:22-27

(v. 22ff.) Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will stir up against you your lovers from whom you turned in disgust, and I will bring them against you from every side: the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, desirable young men, governors and commanders all of them, officers and men of renown, all of them riding on horses. And they shall come against you from the north with chariots and wagons and with a host of peoples. They shall set themselves against you on every side with buckler, shield, and helmet; and I will commit the judgment to them, and they shall judge you according to their judgments. And I will give them judgment, and they shall judge you with their judgments, and I will put my zeal in you, which they shall exercise against you in fury. They shall cut off your nose and your ears, and what remains, they shall cut off with the sword. They shall take your sons and your daughters, and your last will be devoured by fire, and they shall strip you of your garments, and they shall take away the vessels of your glory. And they shall make your wickedness cease from you, and your prostitution from the land of Egypt. You shall not lift up your eyes to them, nor shall you remember Egypt anymore. LXX: Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I

will stir up your lovers against you, from whom your soul has turned away, and I will bring them against you from every side, the sons of Babylon and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, desirable young men, governors and commanders all of them, officers and men of renown, mounted on horses. And they shall come against you from the north with chariots and wagons and a host of peoples. They shall set themselves against you on every side with buckler, shield, and helmet; and I will commit the judgement to them, and they shall judge you according to their judgements. And I will execute judgment in fury and anger upon them; then they shall know that I am the LORD, when I lay My vengeance upon them. Because you remembered the flesh of the Egyptians and imitated the filthiness of the unclean nation, which venerates the images of all beasts, therefore I will bring against you your lovers, with whom you were satisfied, and you departed from their covenant, so that as great as your love once was, you will be turned into such hatred. Sons, I say, of Babylon, and all the Chaldeans, nobles, tyrants, and princes; for whom in Hebrew it is written, Phacud (פָּחַד) and Sue (סוּעַ) and Cue (קוּעַ), which the diverse Orientals understand, since we do not find such names either in the Book of Kings, or in the Chronicles, nor indeed in Jeremiah, who describes the captivity of Jerusalem, or in any place of the Holy Scripture. It is not surprising that the Septuagint itself used Hebrew names, since Symmachus and Theodotion also agree on the same words. They all say that the Assyrians, the horsemen, and the young men, in their distinguished form, are the leaders and magistrates, or the tristates, whom we have interpreted as the princes of princes. We read about them also in Exodus (Exod. XV, 4). The chosen ones are translated as ascensores tristatas (τριστᾶτας), for which Latin simplicity translates as ternos statores. But the name is sad among the Greeks, the second rank after royal dignity. About whom it is written: However, it did not reach the first three, who were the leaders of the cavalry and infantry and the tribunes ((or tributes)) (I Chronicles XII, II Kings XXIII): whom we call the magistrates of both military forces, and the prefects of the title of the annual tax. They all, he says, armed with breastplates, helmets, and shields, besieged you all around in their chariots and on their horses, and I will give them judgment, so that you will be judged by those whom you have left behind, and whose covenant you have made void: and they will judge you with their judgments as an adulteress. And I will set my zeal against you, which they will exercise with you in fury. For my zeal is among the enemies, even faith not being preserved. 'I will cut off your nose and your ears,' he says, 'like an adulteress caught in adultery, so that you may cease to please when disfigured. For just as all the beauty of the face consists in the beauty of the nose, and in the ears, from which depend the unions and the pearls in women, so the dignity of the king and the judges, which is marked in the mouth and the ears, will be cut off by their sword.' They will take your sons and daughters. 'Your sons,' he says, 'and your daughters, not mine, because they were conceived in adultery, and they will devour the rest with fire. And they will strip you of the garments with which I adorned you, and the vessels of your glory, which I granted to you, gold and silver, for use in the ceremonies of the temple, of which it is written: 'I gave them gold and silver, and they made them into Baal' (Hosea II, 8). But I will do all these things, so that your lost beauty and bewitched face may finally be at peace, and your wickedness and fornication, which you learned and practiced in Egypt, may cease. After you have lost your nose and ears, you will no longer dare to raise your eyes to the Chaldeans, nor show your ugliness to your former lovers. And you will no longer remember the lust of the Egyptians, whose indulgence in flesh you delighted in. All the things that are said about the punishment of the adulteress, and how she is disgraced because of adultery: so that she may no longer boast in her

beauty, but be ashamed in her disgrace, which she has earned through the greatness of her pleasures. Whatever is said metaphorically about Jerusalem, and can be understood in reference to the soul, which, having been joined to the virtues and united to God, later adulterated them with vices and turned away from Him, and with all her crimes exposed, was uncovered, dishonored, and shown to all, so that she may desist from her wickedness to some extent: let her not boast in the dignity of her name, but rather be afraid because of her guilty conscience and remember Egypt, and dare not lift her eyes to heaven. And so his nose is cut off, and his ears are amputated, because he had turned the fragrance of good odor into a foul smell, and he had heard the judgment of blood, which we understand not only from smell and hearing, but also from sight, whereby, because they had made evil use of it, Samson and Zedekiah are deprived. Moreover, God made them deaf and dumb (Exod. IV, 11): lest their speech spread throughout the land, and every touch will be taken away from those who have completely lost their life. And let these things be done, so that everything may be purged by fire, and let the fornication of Egypt perish: nor can it any longer raise its eyes to evil.

23:28-35

(Verse 28 and following) For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will deliver you into the hands of those whom you hate, into the hands of those from whom your soul is sated. And they will deal with you in hatred, and they will take away all your labors, and they will leave you naked and full of shame, and the shame of your fornications will be revealed. Your wickedness and your fornications have done this to you, because you have prostituted yourself to the nations, among whom you have defiled yourself with their idols. You have walked in the way of your sister, and I will give her cup into your hand. Thus says the Lord God: You shall drink the deep and wide cup of your sister. You shall be a laughingstock and a mockery, a very large mock. You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of mourning and sadness, the cup of your sister Samaria. And you will drink it and gulp it down to the dregs, and you will devour its fragments, and you will tear your breasts (or as the Septuagint translated: I will take away her feasts and new moons); for I have spoken, says the Lord God (Vulgate adds God). Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Because you have forgotten me and cast me behind your back, you yourself also bear your wickedness and your adulteries. It is profitable for Jerusalem to have enmity against the Assyrians and the Chaldeans, and to not remember Egypt; but rather, to be delivered into their hands for punishment, those who hated her: to whom it is not given before, unless their souls are satisfied with them, so that after repenting of their old sins, then they may be cleansed with punishments, and may destroy all the works which she acquired by her harlotry: and may see her nakedness and shame; and may know that the Lord did not do all these things for her, but rather her adulteries, by which she committed adultery among the nations whom she enumerated above, so that she would worship their idols. In the streets, she says, you have walked with your sister Samaria: therefore you must drink the cup of her sins, which you have followed. However, there are many examples of the cup, which is often received for punishments and torments, among which is this: The cup in the hand of the Lord is full of mixed wine, and He poured from this into that: but its dregs were not emptied, all the sinners of the earth will drink from it (Psalm 75:8, 9). And in Isaiah it is called the cup of ruin and the goblet of fury (Isaiah 51:17). And God spoke to Jeremiah, saying: Take the cup of wine from my hand, and you shall drink to all the nations, to whom I will send you. And they shall drink, and vomit, and become mad (Jerem. XXV, 15). Just as

certain purgatives are given, so that the harmful humor that is in the body may be expelled: so the Lord also gives the most bitter cup of torments, so that he may take away from sinners whatever is of gall and bitterness, and restore them to their former health. And the cup itself will be deep and wide. Deep, in the magnitude of punishment; wide, in the length of captivity. But when, he says, you have become drunk and been seized by pain, and you drink the cup even to the dregs, and you have drunk so much that you devour even the fragments of the cup itself: then you will be disgusted by your former fornication, and you will tear the breasts that were broken in Egypt, and those that were subdued and bruised by your lovers: whether I take away all your feasts and new moons, so that instead of celebration and joy, you will have eternal lamentation and sorrow. Since you have done these things, and have forgotten about me, and have cast me behind your body, or backwards, because of the sins of the body, or behind the genitals, which indicate the filthiness of shame: Therefore, you are the gate of your own wickedness and impiety, namely the punishments that you have deserved because of your impiety and wickedness. This can be understood significantly in regard to Jerusalem, which drinks the cup of her sister Samaria to the last drop, and has drunk the dregs of her torments to the very bottom.

23:36-49

(Verse 36, 37 onwards) And the Lord said to me, saying: Son of man, do you judge Oholah and Oholibah and announce to them their crimes (or iniquities): for they are adulteresses (or have committed adultery), and there is blood on their hands, and they have committed adultery with their idols (or inventions): moreover, they have offered to devour (or have led) their sons whom they have borne to me through fire. But they have also done this to me, they have defiled my sanctuary on that day: and they have profaned my Sabbaths. And they sacrificed their sons to their idols, and entered my sanctuary on that day to defile it, and they did these things in the midst of my house. They sent messengers to men who were coming from afar, to whom they had sent a message. So behold, they have come, and you washed yourself (or, when they came, you immediately washed yourself): and you painted your eyes with antimony, and you adorned yourself with feminine beauty. You sat on a beautiful bed, and a table was set before you. You have placed my incense and my ointment upon her, and the voice of the multitude was rejoicing in her (or with a composed voice was she rejoicing); And indeed in her were brought together crowds of men, and they came from the wilderness (or drunk from the wilderness): they placed bracelets upon their hands, and most beautiful crowns upon their heads. And I said to her who was worn out with adultery: Now she will commit fornication in her own fornication even more. And they entered into it: as they would enter to a prostitute, so they entered to Oolla and Oolibah, wicked women (or to commit iniquity). Therefore, the righteous men (Vulgate inserts 'to them') shall judge them with the judgment of adulteresses, and with the judgment of those who shed blood, for they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands. For thus says the Lord God: Bring upon them a multitude and deliver them to tumult and to plunder, and let them be stoned with the stones of the people, and let them be pierced with their swords; they shall kill their sons and daughters, and burn their houses with fire, and I will remove wickedness (or impiety) from the land, and all women shall learn not to commit according to their wickedness (or impiety). And they shall bring your wickedness (or impiety) upon you, and you shall bear the sins of your idols, and you shall know that I am the Lord God. As I have often mentioned, I have connected the small discrepancies in the Septuagint edition with the Hebrew text, avoiding annoyance to the reader. Therefore, it

follows that one who separately described the adulteries of Samaria and Jerusalem should also announce their punishments. However, all things are said as if to adulteresses, and by way of recapitulation, their crimes are briefly presented so that the stoning of the people may justly follow according to the command of the Law towards adulteresses. (alternative reading: adulterers) Therefore, since they are adulterous, bring forth a just sentence. For they are committing adultery with idols, and there is blood on their hands, namely the blood of those they sacrificed to idols, so that they would consecrate the sons they had borne to me to demons. They did not do this outside or in the mountains and woods, as they often used to do; but in the end they defiled my temple, so that they would place a statue of Baal in it. And they profaned my Sabbaths, so that neither the place nor the time of worship would be observed among them. But they were not content with present adulteries alone, nor were they satisfied with sacrificing my sons to their idols or demons; but they also indulged in foreign pleasures, worshipping the images of the Assyrians and Chaldeans. And when they came, Oholibah, you filled the entire attire of an adulteress upon them, to wash your body, to line your eyes with antimony: to assume a feminine appearance, to sit on a bed prepared for lust, to set out feasts to restore the strength of your lovers broken by pleasure; my incense and the ointment which I had specially ordered to be made (Exodus 30), and to exterminate that soul from the people, which had wanted to do this for private use, you offered to idols; to gather a multitude of people, and to sing with every kind of music: so that you would please your lovers not only by sight, but also by hearing and smell, and all the senses, who came to you drunk: not having any urban elegance, but having the appearance of desert and solitude, resembling peasants and brigands. And you, wicked sisters, have fallen into such great madness of pleasures, that you would place your bracelets and necklaces on the hands and heads of your lovers, or even on yourselves, so that you may be defiled in full adornment. Therefore I say to you, either Jerusalem or Samaria, or both: You have burned your forehead, so that you may not be polluted in secret, and you avoid the gaze of your husbands or other men; but you are publicly prostituting yourselves like harlots, eagerly desiring to be polluted by those who enter to you like prostitutes. Therefore, I will deliver you to be punished by those to whom you have willingly submitted yourselves. For they are righteous men, who, at my command, torture adulterers and murderers. For thus says the Lord God: Gather, by the prompting of your voice, O prophet, a multitude of peoples against them, and first let all their possessions be plundered; then let them be stoned and pierced with swords, and let their sons and daughters be killed, and let their houses be burned. And all these things shall be done so that impiety may be eradicated from the earth, and all women and the entire province placed far away may learn to avoid similar punishments: so that after you have received what you deserve and have carried the crimes of your idols, then you may know that I am the Lord. However, all these things were said figuratively and under the guise of adulteresses against Samaria and Jerusalem, because they were handed over to the Assyrians and Chaldeans, led into captivity, and their cities were burned with fire: the people who worshipped the idols of demons instead of God were killed. These things can also be understood after the coming of Christ, because righteous men from the peoples of the nations themselves judge the Samaritans and the Jews by comparison with themselves, and hand them over to be devoured, to whom the Lord said (Matt. XXIII, 38): Your house shall be left to you desolate. And: When you see Jerusalem surrounded by an army, know that its desolation is near (Luke XXI, 22). For even until this day they are adulterated and are oppressed by stones from the whole world. Since they sent messengers to those who were far away, and could not say: I am a approaching

God, and not a God from afar, says the Lord (Jeremiah XXIII, 23): and they prepared themselves for their beloved demons: and they turned all the worship and adornment which they had received from God as natural good, into the worship of demons, and they offered their works and adornment, which we understand as bracelets and a crown, to adulterous lovers, whose punishment is a source of fear for the nations, indeed for those among the nations who have believed, lest they suffer similar consequences if they do the same things that Samaria and Jerusalem did. Then, when they have received their crimes, the wickedness will be taken away from those by whom the veil that was placed before the face of Moses (Exod. XXXIV) has been taken away from their eyes, so that they may recognize that Jesus Christ Himself is the Lord, whom they denied to be the Son of God (II Cor. III).

24:1-14

(Chapter 24, Verse 1 onwards) Then in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, write down the name of this day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day. And speak a parable to the rebellious house and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Set on the pot, set it on and also pour water into it; put in it the pieces of meat, all the good pieces, the thigh and the shoulder; fill it with choice bones. Take the choicest of the flock; pile the logs under it, boil it well; let the bones be cooked in it.' Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Woe to the city of blood, the pot whose rust is in it, and its rust has not gone out of it! Empty it part by part; pour out its blood upon the bare rock; no lot has fallen upon it. For her blood is in the midst of her; she put it upon the bare rock; she did not pour it out upon the ground, to cover it with dust. I have set her blood upon the bare rock, that it should not be covered. Because of this, says the Lord God: Woe to the city of blood, whose pyramid I will make great. Gather the bones that I will set on fire, the flesh will be consumed, and the entire composition will be cooked, and the bones will decay. Also place it on empty coals, so that its bronze heats up and melts, and its pollution is melted in its midst, and its rust is consumed. It has been labored greatly, and its excessive rust has not gone out, nor through fire. Your filthiness is detestable, for I desired to cleanse you, but you are not cleansed from your impurities; nor will you be cleansed until I have made my indignation rest upon you. I, the Lord, have spoken: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not pass by, nor spare, nor have mercy. According to your ways and your doings I have judged you, says the Lord. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, saying: Son of man, write down the name of this day, for on this day the king of Babylon has exerted his strength against Jerusalem from this very day, and speak a parable to the rebellious house, and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Set the pot, set it on, and also pour water into it; gather the pieces into it, every good piece, thigh and shoulder; fill it with choice bones. Take the choicest of the flock, and pile up the bones underneath it; let it boil well, and let the bones be cooked in the midst of it. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: O city of blood, the pot in which rust is, and rust has not come out of it: by its parts it has brought it forth; the lot has not fallen upon it, because its blood is in the midst of it. On a bare rock I have set it; I have not poured it out on the ground, that it may be covered with dust. That it may rise up in fury for vengeance, I have set its blood on the bare rock, that it may not be covered. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Woe to the city of bloodshed! I will also make the pile of wood great. I will kindle the fire, so that flesh may be consumed and bones may be burned. I will set the city on fire and burn it completely. Its copper will become hot to

melt, and its impurity will be consumed in its midst, and its rust will be eliminated. Its rust will be humbled and there will be no more great rust. Its impurity and contamination have brought you low, because you have not been cleansed from your impurity. And what will happen if you are not cleansed beyond until I fulfill my fury in you? I, the Lord, have spoken, and it will come to pass; I will not delay, nor will I have pity, nor will I relent. According to your ways and according to your deeds I will judge you, says the Lord God. Therefore I will judge you according to your blood and according to your thoughts; you are unclean and vile, and exceedingly provocative. ** Most of these additions are from Theodotion, and the Hebrew word Zemman, for which we have interpreted as abominable uncleanness. And that which has been added by them, which is not contained in Hebrew, and should be noted with an obelus: Therefore I will judge you according to your blood, and I will judge you according to your thoughts, unclean and infamous, and excessive to provoke. Let us then speak about each one. In the ninth year of the captivity of King Jehoiachin (for in the fifth year he began to prophesy) and in the tenth month of the same ninth year, on the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Ezekiel, who was in the region of Babylon, and He said to him: Son of man, write down this very day for yourself, and know that today the king of Babylon has begun to besiege Jerusalem in the region of Judah, and to fortify it with an army; and describe this siege by means of a parable and a proverb, which in this present place signifies a metaphor and a translation. He said, 'Put a bronze pot, that is, a cauldron, and fill it with water, and cut up the bodies of the fattest animals into pieces, both the thigh and the leg and the arm, and carefully separate the flesh from the bones, and after putting the meat in the cauldron, put the bones under or arrange them around the cauldron, and make layers, and piles of bones, so that the boiling of the cauldron may bubble up not once, but frequently, and the meat may be cooked thoroughly inside, and the bones may be solidified below by the fire.' But you, O prophet, wish to know who this pot is, or what kind of flesh or bone it may be? Speak these things, says the Lord God: Woe to the city of blood, that is Jerusalem, to the pot whose rust, that is excessive wickedness, is in it, and though fire is placed under it, its rust has not gone out from it. For they have persisted, even the captives and the crucified ones, in their former wickedness. Consume it in parts and individually, let no one remain safe. The fate did not fall upon her so that some would perish, and others would be saved, but a universal destruction came upon all. For her blood, that is, her murders, and the deaths of her sons, are in the midst of her. She poured out this blood upon the clearest rock, so that it would be evident to all, and the earth would not cover it with dust: for my indignation would not pass, but my vengeance would hasten upon the most exposed blood. For it is natural that if blood is poured onto the earth, the ground would absorb the moisture of the blood, or gradually be covered by the earth and dust. But when blood is spilled over a very clear rock with no cavity, it flows and occupies a wide seat. This indicates that it has committed not hidden, but public murders, according to what is said to Cain: The blood of your brother cries out to me (Gen. IV, 10): therefore say to the city, not of one blood, but of many bloods: Behold, I will make a great pyre in you, or I will raise a tower, which the common people call a bonfire, and I will burn not only soft and tender flesh in you, but also the hardest bones in such a way that nothing remains in you that is not consumed by fire. And when both the flesh and bones have been consumed and burned, place the empty cauldron on hot coals, so that the brass may also heat up and be consumed, and with the brass consumed, may its rust also perish, that is, may it be burned with the city's fire and may wickedness perish with the city. But what profit is there in having done what was commanded? Not even through fire could the rust and wickedness of the cauldron, and

of the city, be removed; but it remains in that impure and abominable state: for this is what the token signifies. And he directed his anger against the city itself, that is, against the city itself. I wanted to cleanse you, but you have not cleansed yourself from your filth, and you will not be able to be cleansed until I have fully vented my anger upon you. I am the Lord, and my judgment cannot be ignored. The siege of the city is now upon you, and I will do what I have threatened: I will not pass by your crimes as I have often done in the past. I will not spare you any longer, and I will not be appeased even if you multiply your prayers. Instead, I will repay you for your ways and your inventions. Indeed, I will judge you according to your deeds and your thoughts, so that in this also I may show my mercy, like a physician who does not spare rotten flesh in order to save healthy limbs. He does not spare in order to spare; he is cruel in order to show pity; he does not consider the patient's pain, but the health of the wound, according to the Gospel saying that he would rather one member be lost than the whole body perish (Matthew 5). It should also be noted how from the beginning of the prophecy until the present day, when Jerusalem began to be besieged, the captivity comes in order. First the sword is drawn; then two paths are set, one leading to Jerusalem, for which the lot falls to Nebuchadnezzar; silver is melted in the city, as well as bronze, tin, lead, and iron; the land is not watered, but occupied by thorns: afterwards, under the name of the two sisters Oolla and Oolibah, the sins of Samaria and Jerusalem are told, how the former was captured, and the latter to be captured. At the end of the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Ezekiel and those with him were put into captivity, having surrendered themselves with king Jechoniah. It is shown on what day the city began to be besieged, and a representation of a pot is set up; just as the flesh and bones piled up in the pot are burned by fire, so the whole city will perish with its inhabitants, and none of those who are besieged will remain, but they will be consumed by hunger, sword, and pestilence, and the remaining part will be led captive to Babylon. Could this same prophecy also pertain to the time of the Lord's passion, for which Jerusalem was surrounded by an army and its children were killed, and Tito, the son of Vespasian, laid siege to it, and no one escaped for safety, and the temple was destroyed; and after fifty years, under Hadrian, the city was consumed by eternal fire? But when Ezekiel beheld this present captivity in Babylon, and Jeremiah sets forth in the beginning of his volume, 'What do you see, Jeremiah?' And he answering, said, A boiling pot, and its face from the face of the north. (Jeremiah 1:13). There are those who, according to tropology, transfer the whole passage to the end of the world (or age), and the number nine, which signifies punishment and sufferings in holy scripture, and always follows justice, they temper with the mercy of the tenth month and the tenth day. For this reason, punishments are inflicted on the sick, so that health may follow pain. Therefore, the world which is situated in evil (1 John 5:19) will be set ablaze by the divine fire of judgment; and the city of blood will be placed upon the coals of fire, so that what is written in Isaiah may be fulfilled: 'You have coals of fire, sit upon them; they shall be a help to you' (Isaiah 47:14). And this is difficult to understand, how both the coals and the bones will be consumed, with which even the Pharisees are filled, about whom the Lord speaks in the Gospel: 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, who are like whitewashed sepulchers; which inside are full of uncleanness and dead men's bones' (Matthew 23:27), unless it be said that the rust and filth of the world will not be consumed, but evil will remain even after the severity of judgment. It is easily solved, if we understand the Apostle's statement: God has concluded all under sin, that he may have mercy upon all (Galatians 3:22). For the creature is subject to vanity (Romans 8:28). And the blood that was shed on the face of all creation is presented, that the crimes of all may be revealed.

But we can receive the purest rock, and the Lord Savior, who followed the people of Israel in the wilderness, of whom it is written: They drank of the spiritual rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4): that in him all things may be revealed; and that which is written may be fulfilled: There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. And he says that the Lord does not have mercy, nor overlook the sins of the world; nor spare the wicked, nor be appeased, so that the ways of the wicked may perish, according to what is placed at the end of the first psalm: And the way of the wicked will perish.

24:15-27

(Verse 15 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes with a plague, and you shall not mourn or weep, neither shall your tears flow. Sigh in silence, you shall not mourn for the dead. Your turban shall be on your head, and your sandals shall be on your feet; you shall not cover your lips nor eat the bread of mourners. Therefore, I spoke to the people in the morning, and my wife died in the evening. And I did in the morning as I was commanded. And the people said to me: Why don't you tell us what these things mean, which you are doing? And I said to them: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: Speak to the house of Israel: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will defile my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes, and the longing of your soul, and your sons and daughters whom you have left behind will fall by the sword. And you will do as I have done: you will not cover your heads with a veil, and you will not eat the food of mourners. You will have crowns on your heads and sandals on your feet. You will not weep or cry, but you will waste away in your iniquities, and each one will groan to his brother. And Ezekiel will be a sign to you; according to all that he has done, so you will do. And you will know that I am the Lord God. And you, son of man, behold, on the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, and the desire of their eyes, their sons and daughters. In that day, when the one fleeing comes to you to announce it to you, on that day, I say, your mouth will be opened together with the one fleeing, and you will speak and not be silent any longer, and you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the Lord. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, behold, I will take away from you the desire of your eyes with a stroke (or in preparation); you shall not mourn or weep, and tears shall not come to you, the groaning of blood, the mourning of the kidneys. Your hair will be bound up on you, and your shoes on your feet; you will not console yourself on their lips, and you will not eat the bread of men. I spoke to the people in the morning, as I was commanded, and in the evening my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded. And the people said to me: do you not tell us what these things are that you are doing? And I said to them, the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Say to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will defile my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes, and the souls of your beings whom you spare. Your sons and daughters whom you have left behind will fall by the sword, and you will do as I have done. You will not be comforted by their mouth, and you will not eat the bread of men, and your hair will be on your heads, and your shoes on your feet. You will not weep nor mourn, and you will be consumed by your iniquities, and each one will comfort his brother, and Jezechiel will be a sign to you. According to all that he has done, you will do. And when these things come, you will know that I am the Lord Adonai. And you, son of man, on the day when I take away their strength, the pride of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and their soul's delight, their sons and daughters. On that day the one who has been saved will come to you to

announce it in your ears. On that day your mouth will be opened to the one who has escaped, and you will speak and not be silent anymore, and you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the Lord. Above the pots and pans, the burning of the olive oil, had shown the siege of the city, now taken and destroyed, and the whole people either killed by the sword, or led into captivity, the prophetic speech testifies. And first, according to our custom, let us lay the foundations of the history. Son, he said, behold, I will take away from the sight of your eyes whatever is desirable to you, and I will take it away in a stroke, or, as the Septuagint renders it, in preparation: so that you may prepare yourself for not doing those things which are accustomed to be done in mourning. Do not cry, nor will you weep, nor will flowing tears reveal the pain of your heart: but if perhaps you are overcome by excessive sorrow, keep your groaning silent, nor let it burst forth into words. You will not make a lamentation for the dead, or, as LXX suggests, groaning is the shedding of blood, lamentation is the affliction of the kidneys. By which he indicates that his wife is about to die. For immediately after he says: And my wife died in the evening (Prov. XIX); which properly pertains to the conjunction of the kidneys. For nothing is more lovable to a man than a good wife, who is provided by God for him and joined to him by the Lord's law, and with her alone his body becomes one. And what follows, 'Let your crown be bound around you, and let your shoes be on your feet,' signifies this: You shall have hair that is cut in mourning, and shoes on your feet, which mourners are accustomed to cast off. Hence, even David, fleeing from Absalom his son and repenting of the death of Uriah, walks with bare feet (1 Samuel 12:15, 18). The Hebrews say that the Babylonian teachers, who observe the precepts of the Law, write the Ten Commandments on small parchments and bind them around their heads, and these are what they are commanded to keep before their eyes and hang on their foreheads, so that they always see the precepts. And because Ezekiel was a priest, he should not at all remove the crown of glory from his head, but have it bound. This is what they said. But we, according to the Septuagint, understand the crown of hair to be the hair: although even their interpretation did not accurately express the meaning of the Hebrew language. And she said, 'You shall neither cover your face with a veil, nor eat the foods of mourners, which are accustomed to be made in mourning, to cover the face, and which the Greeks call περιδαιπνα, let them receive from the comforters. I spoke,' she said, 'to the people in the morning, the things which the Lord had commanded me, and in the evening my wife, the desire of my eyes, and the mourning of my loins and blood, died. And immediately on the next day in the morning, I did all the things which had been commanded to me: and the people asked me why I had acted contrary to the custom of all.' To those who were inquiring about the causes of such great patience, I replied: The word of the Lord that was spoken to me, to speak to the people of Israel, commanded me to say these things: Behold, I, that is, will now defile my sanctuary, so that the temple may be burned and made open to all foreigners and profane people, and in which you had pride, that is, confidence and hope and desire for your salvation, and over which your souls were fearing siege; and I will also destroy with the sword the sons and daughters that famine and pestilence have made for you. Whatever I have done, you will do. When custom is observed in mourning, the pain is moderate; but when such a great necessity of evils comes upon us that the mourning is greater than all weeping, each person, troubled by their own need, does not groan over the miseries of others, however close they may be. 'You will do nothing,' he says, 'that used to be done in mourning: but with the city and temple set on fire, you will be astonished at the magnitude of the calamities. You will not be stunned, nor will you walk with bare feet, nor will you lament, nor will you cover your faces with garments, nor will you take food from those who would

console you: but you will waste away, and you will be consumed by your injustices, and you will hardly have the freedom to groan, lest you offend the pride of the conquerors, if you are seen to weep in public; so that the prophet Ezekiel may be a portent to you, and that you may not do all the things that he did not do at the death of his wife, in the destruction of the city and temple. And yet more clearly: 'Oh,' he says, 'son of man, at the time when I take away from them their strength, the confidence and joy of the temple, as we have said, and the desire in which their souls find rest, and moreover their sons and daughters, as is implied in the preceding words, when I take away all these things from them, at that time, when someone comes to you fleeing from Jerusalem or who has escaped, saying that the city is laid waste, then you, who were previously silent and had no freedom to sigh, and who showed such great patience that even in the murder of your wife and the pain in your loins, you did not shed a tear, you will open your mouth and speak, not to the one who has come but with him, so that whatever you had foretold about the future, he may now report as fulfilled, and you will no longer keep silent; but you will accuse them and say that all these things have happened justly to them: so that you may be a sign to them, according to what is written in Zechariah: 'They are signs of men who will be prophets' (Zech. 3:8). And the Lord speaks elsewhere: 'I have spoken through the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and by the hands of the prophets I have been likened.' (Hosea 12:10) Let these things be said by way of history. Let us come to the spiritual interpretation (if it has not been thought too violent for the cautious prudence of the reader). That the Son of Man is called the Lord and Savior, there is no doubt, who in the last hour, that is, at the evening of this world, lost his former wife, and did not weep for her, nor did he cover his face with a veil, nor did he receive any consolation from men. And in the morning he foretold these things that would come, which were fulfilled in the evening, and again in the morning, in his second coming, he proved to be true what he had foretold would come: that the sanctuary of the Jews, and what they had desired in their eyes, and on which their souls trembled, had been polluted, and also that their sons and daughters had been slain by the Roman sword. But when it is said, 'You will have a crown on your heads and sandals on your feet,' we will refer that to the fact that they should never mourn or take on signs of mourning, for they have received the truth instead of shadows and have become Nazarenes. And each one will console their brother, just as God the Father strengthened Ezekiel to be a sign for them, foretelling things to come. And after Jerusalem has been destroyed and the temple burned, and the whole world has heard of this and the dispersion of Israel, which inhabits the ends of the earth, then the words of the Lord, when the work is complete, will have freedom. And with his sanctuary defiled, the Law fulfilled or destroyed according to the western interpretation, the glory of the Gospel will be revealed, and Israel will recognize that he is the Lord and God, who foretold these things in the morning and saw them fulfilled in the evening and at the consummation of the world, proving his coming.

Book Eight

Book Eight

What benefits our dictation of the prophets is the judgment of God and the conscience of those who, setting aside declamations and applause and the artistry of words, desire to know what their speech either narrates of the past, accuses of the present, or predicts of the future. In the meantime, it benefits us: for while we are doing this and thinking of nothing else, we undertake explanations in a manner of theft, and we compensate for the miseries of days with the study of

nights. The mind is nourished and forgets the calamities of the world, which groans and labors in the extreme end and gives birth, until he who restrains is taken out of the way and the feet of the once iron statue are crushed by the fragility of clay fingers (2 Thessalonians 2). The world falls, and an upright neck does not bend. Wealth perishes, and greed never ceases. People hasten to gather, in order to occupy again what others have taken. Tears have dried up, all piety has been taken away. Many beg, few give. We are not ashamed, preferring poverty with a cheap cloak, to lie in the lap of Croesus's riches; and to guard with our treasures the famine and destruction of many, just as that rich man dressed in purple, who Scripture testifies did nothing else, for his plunder and injustices had no limit: He did not even order to give the scraps that are thrown to the dogs to Lazarus lying before his door and half-dead. Now, how many Lazarus's lie, and how many are protected by purple robes of different colors, which, when they are no longer for their own use, they preserve! This, virgin of Christ Eustochium, let it be spoken from the abundance of the heart, and let us say a little more freely than is fitting for our humility. But the eighth book in the book of Ezekiel, which contains the rebuke of the sons of Ammon and the other nations, and the prophecy of things to come, will have this beginning.

25:1-7

Chapter 25: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face against the sons of Ammon, and prophesy against them. And you shall say to the sons of Ammon: Hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God: Because you said, 'Aha!' over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the land of Israel when it was laid waste, and over the house of Judah when they went into exile, therefore behold, I am giving you to the people of the East for a possession, and they shall set their encampments in you and make their dwellings in you. They shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and the land of the Ammonites a fold for flocks. Then you will know that I am the Lord. Because the Lord God says these things: Because you clapped your hands, and stomped your feet, and rejoiced with all your heart (or insulted with all your soul) over the land of Israel; therefore (Vulgate adds behold) I will stretch out my hand against you, and deliver you to be plundered by the nations, and I will kill you from the peoples, and I will destroy you from the lands, and I will crush you, and you will know that I am the Lord. When Jerusalem was captured or besieged, after it came to Babylon, whoever could (or had the power to) escape, and he reported that the city was about to be captured very soon, or that the temple had been destroyed, according to the custom of all the prophets against the other surrounding nations, who insulted the ruins of Jerusalem, and the burning of the temple, the prophetic message turns, firstly against the sons of Ammon, who had a metropolis called Rabbath, which today is named Philadelphia by King Ptolemy of Egypt, also known as Philadelphus, who held both Arabia and Judah. Son, he says, of man, set your face against the sons of Ammon, who are descended from Lot, and say to them: Thus says the Lord God (for these are not the words of a prophet, but of the Lord. Concerning the hardening of the face, we have argued more fully in this same prophecy): Because you have said, 'Aha, Aha,' or have insulted and rejoiced because my temple and sanctuary have been defiled by the invasion of enemies, and over the land of Israel, which has been devastated, and especially over the house of Judah, that is, the two tribes that are now in captivity: therefore I will give you over to the sons of Edom, whom we interpret as the Easterners. There is no doubt, Madianites, that they border the entire wilderness of the land of Arabia, who have herds of camels, and multitudes of sheep and

goats, and they sustain themselves with these resources. This is also narrated in the book of Judges (Judg. VI) about what happened to the land of Israel when the Midianites came and devoured all their regions up to Gaza. Metaphorically, therefore, by the term Midianites, it signifies the Ishmaelites and Hagarites, who are now called Saracens, taking for themselves the false name of Sarah so that they may appear to be born of a noble and mistress lineage. Scripture also says about king Nebuchadnezzar and his entire army that they come and capture the city of Rabbath, which either has this name specifically or because of its greatness. For Rabbath is said to be the greatest. And so that we do not doubt that Nebuchadnezzar overthrew Arabia after Jerusalem was captured, Scripture testifies above: And thou, son of man, set thee two ways, Ammon and Jerusalem, and there shall come the sword of the king of Babylon. And again: At the head of the city's way he shall cast it, and thou shalt set up a way, that the sword may come to Rabbath of the children of Ammon, and to the fortified Jerusalem (Above, XXI, 19, 20). And again, thus says the Lord God to the sons of Ammon, and to their reproach (verse 28). Therefore, the sons of Kedem will come and set up their tents like shepherds, and they will pitch their tents. They will destroy your crops and drink the milk and abundance of the land, with herds of camels and all the peoples, so that the sons of Ammon will be in the dwelling place of cattle and understand the necessity of evil, that it is the Lord himself who foretold the future and commanded it to be. And this was not enough for the Ammonites, that they insulted and said, 'Hurrah, hurrah for the temple and sanctuary of the Lord, which was defiled by the entrance of various nations'; but such was the wickedness of their insults that the whole people clapped their hands and stamped their feet, and with all their heart cried out: because the land of Israel was desolate. Therefore, not by angels, nor by other ministries, but by the Lord himself, extending his hand to strike, will he hand it over to plunder, not to camels and sheep herds, but more clearly to the nations, so that it may be completely eradicated from the number of peoples, and perish, and be reduced to nothingness: and after it has been crushed, then it will understand that he himself is the Lord who judges all things, and has power over all lands. We can understand the sons of Ammon according to the tropology, who were born from Lot in the cave, both born in drunkenness and incest, all heretics, of whom the Scripture and the Apostle John say: They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would have remained with us (John 2:19). For they arose from inclination, for this is how Lot is translated into our language: For all have turned aside, together they have become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one (Psalm 14:3). Opposite to these, the prophetic face is set or hardened, in order to crush them with its severity, and it says to them: Because you have insulted my Church in the time of persecution, because my sanctuary was defiled by the fault of various people, either by those who served me, or by the cruelty of the enemies who persecuted me: and also the land of Israel, which saw the sense of God, is desolate of the choir of virtues; and how the children of the house of Judah, that is, those who confess God, in which true faith and right confession exist, were led into captivity and ceased serving the Lord: therefore, O all who insult, you will be handed over to the children of the East who have come from the true light, and you will be handed over as an inheritance, so that you too may learn to confess the Lord. And by way of translation it is said that the sons of the East will place their dwellings upon them, and pitch their tents, and drink milk, and eat fruit, and the city which was once full of pride will become a dwelling place for camels, so that they, having set aside the burden of sins, may enter through the eye of a needle (Matthew 19), and into the fold of the animals, which are guided by a good shepherd (John 10), so that when they have done this, mixed

and handed over to the shepherds of the East, they may understand that he himself is the Lord. And again he reproached them, for insulting with excessive affection of the heart the ruins of the people of God, and for thinking that the land of Israel was completely deserted. For this they deserve the hand of God's avenger, as they had exceeded the limit of rejoicing and joy over the destruction of the house of Judah. They should by no means be delivered to the sons of the East, but be for plundering by all nations, and be killed and perish, and be crushed, and by no means be considered descendants of Abraham, but be believed to be for all nations. And then they shall know the magnitude of their evils, and their own contrition, and the killing of the people, that He Himself is the Lord. What we have understood in general about the Church can be understood about each of the saints, whose ruin the people of the world and the powers of the enemy rejoice in if they have lost their chastity for a long time: while the wicked think that they find comfort in their sins if they have more partners in crime and punishment: and no one does this, unless they are a son of Ammon, that is, a son of the people, who is born in a decline.

25:8-11

(Verse 8 onwards) This is what the Lord God says: Because Moab and Seir have said, 'Look, just like all the other nations, the house of Judah is also ours,' therefore I will expose Moab's shoulder, including its cities, with the renowned land of Beth Jesimoth, Beelmeon, and Kariathaim. I will give it to the people of the East along with the Ammonites as their inheritance, so that the Ammonites will no longer be remembered among the nations. I will also execute judgments against Moab, and they will know that I am the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Lord God: Because Moab and Seir said, 'Behold, the house of Judah is like all the other nations.' Therefore, behold, I will open up the shoulder of Moab from the cities of its coastline, the choice land, the house of Beth Jasimuth, on the spring of the coastal city. I have given the sons of the East as an inheritance to the sons of Ammon, so that the sons of Ammon may not be remembered among the nations. And I will execute vengeance upon Moab, and they shall know that I am the Lord. What we have interpreted and added from the edition of Theodotion is not found in the Septuagint. But the Hebrews tell a ridiculous fable in this place. After the city was opened and the temple was unlocked, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Seir entered the temple and saw the Cherubim protecting the propitiatory, and they said: Just as all nations worship idols, so Judah also has idols of its own religion; and therefore, they say, the Lord is angry and has delivered them into captivity. But we shall say this, that they also insulted the house of Judah when it was captured by the Chaldeans, thinking that, as in the case of other nations, there was no divine help there, and therefore the kingdom of Judah and the city of Jerusalem, deprived of God's protection, fell under the power of Babylon. Therefore, not long afterwards, but at present, the Lord threatens that he will destroy or open his strong and fortified cities in Moab, so that even the victorious Babylonians might enter them, and the cities in Moab might cease to exist, and the famous cities in its borders and territories might be destroyed: among which he names Beth Jeshimoth, and Beelmeon, and Kiriathaim: for which, I don't know what reason, the Septuagint translators rendered them as the house of Beth Iasimuth, though this word signifies a deserted village; and Beelmeon is still today a very large town in Moab, which they translated as "over the spring," and Kiriathaim, a coastal city; and it is handed down, together with the sons of Ammon, the sons of the East, to the Babylonians, namely, according to that interpretation which we have presented against the sons of Ammon. And I will give, he says, Moab as an inheritance, that just as there is no more memory of the sons of Ammon

among the nations, so I will also execute vengeance and judgment on Moab, so that they will know that I am the Lord, who delivered Judah because of sin, and I will be an avenger against the sons of Ammon and Moab. However, Moab, which is interpreted as 'from the father,' and Seir, which is turned into hairy and rough, despises and scorns the house of Judah, in which true confession resides, and thinks that it can be easily overthrown, just as the fortifications of other cities are overthrown. And the Lord threatens to open himself up, or to dissolve all the strength of the Moabites, so that they may cease to have cities and may not at all trust in the art of dialectic. But all those boundaries, which they call headlands for the purpose of deceiving the waves, shall be destroyed; and the famous and chosen land of Beth Jesimoth, which means the house of solitude and desert, and Beelmeon, which also means having a spring, or above a spring, and Cariathaim, which the 70 translated as a maritime city, shall perish. For although they may have the strength of warriors, and may proceed to battle with the art of fighting, and may march surrounded and fortified on every side: nevertheless, their famous land is not a home of habitation, but a home of solitude. And what they think they have, a source of knowledge, and a maritime city, which can withstand all the storms of the world, promising patience and fortitude to themselves: yet they will be converted there, so that they may be handed over to the sons of the East, the true light in Christ; just as the sons of Ammon were handed over, who trusted themselves in a heretical multitude. And let us consider the progress and, in the very act of punishment, the mercy of God, so that the sons of Ammon, the sons of the East, may be delivered into inheritance. And let no heresy be named among the nations. But let them come to know, at the end of things, through the judgments and punishments for their arrogance, that the Lord is the one who governs all. Now, in order to prove that the current place of the Moabites is above the pride of the philosophers, about whom it is said: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart' (1 Corinthians 1:19), a few examples from the prophets need to be repeated. Amos speaks: Thus says the Lord: Against three crimes of Moab, and against four I will not revoke it, because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into ashes (Amos II, 1). Indeed, whatever is of perverse teachings in the world, whatever pertains to earthly knowledge, and is considered to be strong, is subverted by the art of dialectic and dissolved like fire into ashes and embers, in order to prove that which was thought to be the strongest is nothing. But Isaiah rebukes the pride of Moab, saying: We have heard the pride of Moab: he is exceedingly proud; his pride is taken away (Isa. XVI). Jeremiah also, prophesying against all the nations, speaks directly to Moab: Because you trusted in your fortifications (Jerem. XLVIII, 7). And shortly after: You will have confidence in your glory. And again: How do you say, We are mighty? And then: The day of Moab is near, and his malice is exceedingly swift (Ibid. 14, 10). And more plainly: Declare how the glorious staff is broken, the rod of majesty (Ibid., 20). And again: The horn of Moab is broken. But these things are said so that under the name of Moab, the foolishness of the world, exalting itself to heaven, may be shattered by pride.

25:12-14

(Vers. 12, 13, et seqq.) Thus says the Lord God: Because Edom has acted vengefully against the children of Judah and has incurred guilt by taking vengeance upon them, therefore thus says the Lord God: I will stretch out my hand against Edom and cut off from it man and beast. I will make it a desolation from Teman, and Dedan shall fall by the sword. I will execute my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and

according to my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance, declares the Lord God. LXX: Thus says the Lord God: Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and took vengeance upon them with utmost hatred, therefore thus says the Lord God, I will stretch out my hand against Edom, and cut off from it man and beast, and I will make it desolate; from Teman even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword. And I will execute vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance, says the Lord God. Above, the two proposed, for what they said about Moab and Seir, and later in silence about Seir, spoke only against Moab: now it refutes the problem that Seir, that is, Edom, has done. That Esau and Seir, and Edom, and Idumea, and Duma, are called one nation, no one should doubt who has knowledge of the Scriptures. And not to mention the other prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, who prophesied against Idumea, Duma, and Edom: Obadiah directed his entire prophecy against this nation, which we have discussed before as best we could. Therefore Seir is accused, who because he was hairy, received the name 'hairy', and Edom the bloodthirsty, who lost the birthright due to the cooking of a red lentil, and obtained the name from the dish. Also, Esau's actions are interpreted. And it should be known that in Hebrew, Idumaea is never written, but always Edom, which the Greek translation expressed as Idumaea. Therefore, it is not Idumaea (Edom), as Moab spoke, but he took revenge on the sons of Judah: he sinned, or retained the memory of the previous pain, in order to take revenge on them, from whom he was supplanted in the womb. Therefore not through angels, nor through any other: but the Lord himself, stretching out his hand over Idumea, took away from it man and beast, and reduced the cities thereof into a desert, that is, Themam, which we turn towards the south: and of the same city Dedan, there shall be no remains. And they shall know my vengeance and retribution, saith the Lord God: I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to my fury, and according to my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord God. Those who act in Edom, or Idumea, according to my anger and fury, to fulfill my indignation, and through the hands of my people Israel, let my wrath rage against the enemy nation, and let them understand that my just vengeance was against the unjust retribution of Idumea, says the Lord Adonai. According to the allegory, this is the meaning that I perceive. Earthly and fleshly Idumea is called, which rises against the spirit, so that we do not do those things which are of the spirit, and it hastens to draw back the soul placed in its midst; and it wants to exact revenge, to which it was previously subjected, on the sons of Judah, and it remembers the ancient pain, which was not of its own power, and therefore sought revenge on those who turned away from the flesh and followed the spirit. Therefore, the Lord Himself, being the avenger of the children of Judah, has stretched out His hand over Edom and has taken away from it both man and beast, whatever it seems to possess of reason or simple faith, in order to reduce it to a wilderness. And He has slain with the sword all of Themam, which means failing, and Dedan, which also signifies kinship, which He has placed in the hand of His people Israel, so that Edom may be overthrown and may feel the anger and fury of the Lord, and may understand that His vengeance has accomplished this, in order to serve the house of Judah. This is that which the Apostle disputes about, writing: Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated (Rom. IX, 13). But Jacob is loved, because he supplants and surpasses the carnal and earthly, and deserves to receive his blessings. For first we live according to the flesh, and afterwards according to the spirit. First vices, then virtues, by which vices are overturned, because the heart of man is inclined towards evil from childhood, and the age of maturity condemns the errors of youth (Genesis VIII). And David also

says: Remember not the sins of my youth, and my ignorances. (Ps. 24:7). And yet it should be known that Jacob received the first blessing, Esau the second. And what is said of him at the end, 'You shall be your brother's servant' (Gen. 27:40), signifies that after the flesh is subject to the spirit and united to it, it ceases to be flesh and passes from Edom to Judah.

25:15-16

(Vers. 15, 16.) Thus says the Lord God: Because the Philistines acted in vengeance, and took revenge with wholehearted malice, and filled ancient enmities; therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will stretch out my hand against the Philistines, and I will destroy the killers and annihilate the remnants of the coastal region. And I will inflict great vengeance upon them in furious rebukes, and they will know that I am the Lord when I execute my vengeance upon them. LXX: Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Because the aliens have committed vengeance and have provoked wrath, insultingly, from the heart, in order to destroy forever; therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will stretch out my hand against the aliens, and I will destroy or kill the Cretans, and I will destroy the remnants of the coastal region, and I will bring upon them great vengeance in the fury of wrath, and they shall know that I am the Lord God when I execute my vengeance upon them. After the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Seir, who themselves are also Edomites, and through Lot and Esau are linked to the people of Israel and the house of Judah by kinship, came to the Philistines, whom the Seventy Translators translated as **■λλοφ■λους**, that is, foreigners, not by the general name of all the nations that are not of the Jewish race, but by the specific name of their own race, which is now called Palestine, with the letter P changed to Pi (π) according to the Greek custom, just as we celebrate the Hebrew Phase () in Greek and Latin as Pascha. The Philistines are interpreted as those who fall by the cup, who themselves were intoxicated by the golden cup of Babylon, and they rage and insult with their whole heart, remembering the ancient enmities against old Israel, from whom they were separated from God's people. And when the Lord says, 'Vengeance is mine, and I will repay' (Deuteronomy 32:35), they themselves take revenge by killing and fulfilling the old hatred. On account of this, they will feel the outstretched hand of the Lord above them, which will kill the killers. For this reason, the Cretans, not knowing what they wanted, interpreted the Seventy (LXX), together with Aquila and Symmachus, and Theodotion, the Hebrew word Chorethim (), as either murderers or murder. This was not only said in the present place, but also in Zephaniah where it is said against the Philistines: Gaza will be plundered, and Ashkelon will be laid waste, and Ashdod and Ekron will be uprooted. Woe to the inhabitants of the coast, the inhabitants of Crete, the word of the Lord is against you, O Canaan, land of foreigners, and I will destroy you from your dwelling place, and Crete will become a pasture for shepherds, and a resting place for sheep (Zeph. II, 4 ff.). And here, when the Seventy translated to Crete, the other translators rendered **■λεθρον** (Al. **κ■■■ov**) as 'interfection' or 'perdition'. About this, in the aforementioned prophet, with God's help, we have said what seemed to us. Hence, the two legions of David, one of which was called Phelethi and the other Cerethi (2 Kings 15), received the name Cherethim (Al. Cherethim), because they would kill and slaughter, that is, the name of the slain. And the Lord will destroy all the remaining parts of the maritime region, which is beaten by the salty (false) waves, and he will not inflict small but great punishments in his anger, so that his anger may have an end to mercy, and after he has taken revenge, rebuking with fury, then the Palestinians will know that he himself is the Lord.

26:1-5

(Chapter 26) And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, because Tyre (or Sidon) has said of Jerusalem: Aha, the gate of the peoples is broken, it is turned to me, I shall be filled, it has become desolate; therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, Tyre (or Sidon), and I will bring many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. And they will break down the walls of Tyre, and destroy its towers, and I will sweep away its dust from it, and make it a shining rock. The drying up of the fishing nets will be in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken, says the Lord God, and it will be a plunder to the nations. Also, her daughters in the field will be killed by the sword, and they will know that I am the Lord. Accordingly, the order of prophecies is woven together. He spoke against the sons of Ammon and Moab and Seir, who are also Edomites, and against the Philistines who are on the coast, and who hold the same boundary on the shore of the sea. After the Philistines, the region of Phoenicia follows, whose metropolis is the city of Tyre, which is called Sor in Hebrew and Syriac. And because Jerusalem was captured, it also rejoiced and insulted, saying: The gates of the peoples are broken, I have the safest harbor, and when they are destroyed, all the multitude turns to me, which was ruled by its authority, and because it is deserted, therefore I will be filled, and whatever was full before will be turned into a wilderness. Therefore, because you have spoken these things and insulted the ruins of Jerusalem, which was destroyed by the judgement of God because of its sins, I will not come against you through messengers or through anyone else, but I myself will be against you, Tyre, and I will cause the Babylonians to rise up like the waves of the sea against you, along with many nations, with which the walls and towers of your city will be destroyed to the point where they will fall to the ground and its dust will be scraped off or blown in various directions, and it will be humiliated to the point where it will be compared to the shiniest rocks. And there will be such great desolation in the once most populous city that fishing nets will be spread out. For I, the Lord, have spoken, and my words cannot be made void, and I will deliver them to be plundered by the nations. Also her daughters, who are in the countryside or in the field, that is, on the coast of Phoenicia, cities and towns, villages and castles, will be killed by the sword: metaphorically, because he called them daughters, he puts the killing by the sword, so that they may know by the end of things that I am the Lord, who commanded these things to happen. According to the tropology, since the Hebrew word Sor is translated into distress, every soul that is occupied with disturbances can be called Sor, which, when she sees Jerusalem being overthrown by the judgment of God for her sins and vices, in which the temple and the vision of peace were, she exults and thinks that the once famous empire of the city is to be transferred to herself. And this is also accepted in conflicting doctrines and in worldly men, when they see a holy man fall through negligence and rejoice and exult, as if their own resurrection were the downfall of others. Therefore the Lord threatens that He Himself will fight against such men and cause many nations, like sea waves, to rise up against them, destroying in them everything that seems most fortified and strong, and thus overturning all their arguments, so that they are reduced to dust. He should also cause the nets and fishing equipment by which the multitude was previously deceived to cease, and to be spread out and dried in the deserted soil of the city, so that other fishermen may take their place, whom the Lord has sent to fish. Moreover, he should cause his daughters, who were previously kept as if in a bridal chamber and were not easily believed by anyone in mystical and more secret teachings, to go forth and be extended in public, and to be cut down with the sword of the Church, so that they may understand that He himself is the Lord, who both temporarily left Jerusalem on account of its

sins and destroyed the defenses of Tyre on account of its insolence and joy.

26:6-14

(Verse 6 onward.) For thus says the Lord: Behold, I will bring against Tyre (or against you, O Tyre) Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, from the north, the king of kings, with horses, and chariots, and horsemen, and a great gathering of people. He will kill your daughters in the field with the sword, and he will surround you with fortifications, and he will build up a siege mound against you, and he will lift up a shield against you, and he will temper vineyards, and rams (or spears), against your walls, and he will destroy your towers in his armor. The inundation of his horses will cover you with their dust; your walls will shake at the sound of the horsemen, chariots, and wheels. When he enters your gates, they will be broken down as if by the entrance of a ravaged city (or as if entering a city from the field). His horses will trample all your streets; he will kill your people with the sword, and your noble statues will fall to the ground (or the wealth of your strength will be brought down to the ground). They will plunder your wealth, destroy your businesses, and tear down your walls. They will overthrow your magnificent houses and throw your stones, wood, and dust into the midst of the waters. I will silence the multitude of your singers and the sound of your harps will no longer be heard. And I will make you a very clear (or shining) rock. You will be the drying up of the snares, and you will not be built up any longer, because I have spoken, says the Lord God. I have joined together the two editions according to custom, and I have joined together from the side those things in which they disagree, providing brevity of volumes. Therefore, what he had said, I will make many nations ascend to you as the fluctuating sea ascends, and Tyre will be a plunder for the nations, then it makes it more evident that the Lord will bring King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon from the North, the king of kings, with horses and chariots, and with an infinite multitude of armies, who will first overturn the cities and fortresses subject to Tyre on the seashore, and afterwards will cause Tyre to be besieged, and he will attack it with an army, and with a wall, and with fortifications, and with ropes, and with battering rams and destroy the walls, and his cavalry will be such a multitude that the foundations of the city will be moved by the dust of the cavalry and the sound of the howling army, and the noise of the wheels and the neighing of the horses, and thus he will enter the city with the walls scattered, as if he were entering safely from the field, and there will be such security for the conquering army that the hooves of the horses will trample the streets of Tyre and all the people in the middle of the city will fall down, and the once noble statues or all the substance will fall to the ground, and none of the former riches will be preserved in the captured city, but even the noble houses will be destroyed along with the walls, and the cruelty of the victors will be so great that the remaining wood and stones that were burned will be thrown into the middle of the sea, and either Nebuchadnezzar or the Lord himself will cause all the joy of the city to cease, which used to resound in songs and psalms, and even the ground will be dried up. And what follows: You shall not be built up any more, seems to raise the question of how it is that we see today the most noble and beautiful city of Phoenicia, Tyre, which was not built thereafter. But how can they maintain that Tyre will suffer these things in the final time, if afterwards it is not to be built? But how can they preserve the person of Nebuchadnezzar, especially since we read in the following passages that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre, and did not receive the reward of his labor, and therefore Egypt was delivered to him because he served the purposes of God in the siege of Tyre? They say that the Greeks and Phoenicians, especially Nicolaus of Damascus, and others among the Barbarians who contradict this history, have read histories and found nothing

about the siege of the city of Tyre by the Chaldeans, even though we can prove that many things are said in the Scriptures that are not found in Greek volumes; and we should not acquiesce to their authority, whose treachery and lies we detest. Therefore, what is said, 'you shall be no more,' can be understood to mean that the queen of nations will no longer exist, nor will she have her own sovereignty, as she had under Hiram and other kings; but she will be subject either to the Chaldeans, or the Macedonians, or the Ptolemies, and finally to the Roman kings. But there is no doubt that by anagoge, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon who came from the North, is understood to be the devil, who, although he is a very harsh and adverse wind, is called by the name of the right hand, presuming for himself the dignity of the name. He is the king of kings and of all kingdoms, which he shows to the Lord, and he said to him: All these things have been given to me, and I will give them to you if you fall down and worship me (Matthew 4:9). He has horses and chariots, of which it is written: The deceitful horse is for salvation (Psalm 32:17). And: All those who mounted the horses fell asleep (Ps. LXXV). And in another place: He threw the horse and rider into the sea (Exod. XV, 1). This man kills the daughters of Tyre, souls placed in distress and in a certain prison of sin, in the wide field and countryside, and surrounds Tyre with his fortifications, so as to hold her captive, and no one from the kingdom of Babylon can escape his rule. He will destroy the walls and topple the towers, and whatever he had by way of doctrines, he will shake in terror with the onslaught of his horses, the sound of the riders' horses and chariots, and he will enter her gates without any hindrance, and the streets of the city: For wide and spacious is the way that leads to destruction (Matth. VII, 13), his horses' hooves will trample, and all the substance or noble statues, with which they fashioned false images for themselves, about which it is written: O Lord, you will scatter their images in your city (Ps. LXXII, 20), he will cast down to the ground, and with the walls destroyed, even the noble houses that he prepared for himself will be overthrown, in which he rejoiced, and he will come to such great desolation, that its stones and the wood with which he built the walls, and the cement he made, will be cast into the depths, and his songs and music, on which he relied in the wisdom of this world, and every sound of the lyres will no longer be heard, and his fishing will cease, and he will be made low, like the drying of reeds, and will no longer be rebuilt, because according to the judgment of the Lord, Nabuchodonosor has been utterly destroyed, as the Apostle also says: I have handed them over to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. I, 20). The places are difficult, and the wise and diligent reader should forgive my effort. Or if he can find something better, I will adopt his opinion: provided he knows the leniency he will grant me, and that he will receive it from others.

26:15-18

(Verse 15 and following) Thus says the Lord God to Tyre: Shall not the rumble of your downfall, and the groaning of your slain, when they are killed in your midst, shake the islands? And all the princes of the sea will come down from their thrones, and they will take off their robes and cast aside their embroidered garments; they will put on sackcloth and sit on the ground, and they will tremble with horror at you. They will raise a lament over you and say to you: How you have perished, you renowned city, you were mighty in the sea with your inhabitants, who were feared by all. Now the ships will be astonished on the day of your terror, and the islands in the sea will be troubled, because no one will go out from you. LXX: For thus says the Lord God, Sister. Will not your wounded ones groan at the sound of your downfall, when the sword is drawn in your midst? The islands will shake, and all the princes of the sea will come down from their thrones, and they

will take off their crowns, and they will be stripped of their various garments. They will go insane with fury: they will sit on the ground, and they will fear their own destruction, and they will groan over you, and they will take up a lamentation for you, and they will say to you: How you have perished and been scattered in the sea, praised city, which was strong in the sea itself, and its inhabitants, who each gave their fear to all its inhabitants? And the islands will fear on the day of your downfall, and the islands will be troubled in the sea at your departure. First, let us unfold the words of the story itself, briefly opening the meaning of the statements. Thus says the Lord God to Tyre, which is called Sor in Hebrew: Will the islands not be moved on the day of your downfall, when Nebuchadnezzar attacks and you fall, and amid the groaning of the wounded or killed in your midst? And all the kings will descend from their seats or thrones, and the princes of the sea who govern various islands will take off their crowns from their heads, laying aside all the glory of ruling and their most precious garments shining with incredible variety, they will cast them away, and in the greatness of their astonishment they will turn into madness, and being humiliated, they will sit on the ground, and when they see you have fallen, they will fear the same fate for themselves; and they will consider nothing to be everlasting in the goods of the earth; but on the contrary, they will take up a mournful lament and sing a sorrowful song, saying: How you have perished, you who lived (or were praised) in the sea, illustrious city? For we read in the Greek, Latin, and Barbarian histories that Tyre was indeed an island, and that it had no entrance from the land. But later, according to some, it was thrown up with mounds by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Chaldeans, or as others affirm, by Alexander, the king of the Macedonians, and a place was prepared for its siege with machines and battering-rams, and the island became a peninsula. Therefore, oh Tyre, oh Sor, who once were the strongest of all islands, praised in the voices of all cities with your inhabitants, whom everyone feared, how suddenly have you fallen? Now the islands will be astonished, or will be afraid over you, and as it is better understood in Hebrew, the ships, on the day of your terror and ruin, and the islands will be troubled in the sea. From this it follows that it is advisable to read the lines above the ships, so that the islands are not placed in a second position; because no one will go out from you, or, as the Seventy translated, on the day of your departure: when you are led captive. These, in the meantime, may be considered as the foundations of a certain story: now let us strive to raise the spiritual pinnacle. Imagine someone, who for a long time preserved their modesty, flourished with many virtues, and then collapsed in some grave and mortal sin: will not all the islands be moved by the sound of their ruin and the destruction of their virtues? Indeed, those who are tossed by the salty and bitter waves of this world. And those who appeared as princes in the filth of this age will descend from their thrones of pride and, humbled, will remove the crowns from their heads, which seemed to possess good works, and they will cast off their various garments of virtue and be cloaked in astonishment or a kind of fear. They will sit on the ground and, astonished by their sudden fall, they will marvel. So much so that all will take up lamentation and mourning over the one who has fallen, and they will say: How have you perished, who were once saved? How you have fallen, you who once stood so tall, who were considered illustrious among all in the sea of this world, who were thought to be strong by everyone. And your inhabitants, that is, the most courageous thoughts, resisting all the fiery arrows of the devil, which were previously feared by all adversaries, have turned to astonishment. But even the ships, all the saints who cross the waves of this world, will be astonished when they see you fall. On the day of your terror and destruction, the islands will be troubled, lest they themselves suffer the same. For the ruins of others serve as examples for the

righteous, as we all abide in this weak and feeble state, constantly wavering in this world, and victory is never certain and secure for us: for those who once stood will depart from you; or at your departure; at your end and completion. For we are judged not by the past, but by the present. And care must be taken, and always feared, that it may overthrow ancient glory and solid stability, the storms of a single hour.

26:19-21

(Verse 19 onwards) Because this is what the Lord (the Vulgate adds God) says: When I make you a desolate city like cities that are uninhabited, and I bring an abyss upon you, and many waters cover you, and I bring you down with those who descend into the pit (or to those who descend into the grave) to the everlasting people, and I place you in the farthest land (or in the depths of the earth) like the ancient wildernesses, with those who are brought down into the pit (or descend into the grave), so that you will not be inhabited, and when I give glory in the land of the living (or so that you will not rise again in the land of the living), I will bring you to nothing (or I will give you destruction) and you will not be, and you will not be sought after (the Vulgate adds anymore) forever, says the Lord God. Join the things that were said with the ones before. When I will hand you over, O Tyre, a city forever desolate, just like other cities that are not inhabited at all, and if I bring upon you the abyss, and many waters cover you, or the infinite multitude of enemies, or certainly the one who speaks to the island and compares the frequency of adversaries in the city established on the island to the waves of the abyss: and if I drag you down with those who descend into the lake, or into the pit, to those who are in hell, of whom we also read in the Psalms: They will enter the lower parts of the earth: they will be delivered into the hands of the sword, the parts of foxes will be (Ps. LXII, 10, 11); to the everlasting people, where there is weeping of eyes, and gnashing of teeth, and I will place you in the last land, where the ancient dragon is established, and like the ancient desolations and deserted places, where there is no remembrance of good things, but eternal punishments, nor will I make you rise again in the land of the living, of which it is written: Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land (Matthew V, 4). And in another place: I will please the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 115:9): then you will be reduced to nothing, or you will perish forever, and you will be no more, according to what is written in another psalm: Leave me, that I may be refreshed before I depart, and I shall be no more (Psalm 39:14). Not that he who is in eternal punishment ceases to exist, but because it is said in the holy scriptures that he who does not live for God does not subsist. Therefore, even Esther speaks against idols, saying: Do not yield your scepter to those who are not (Esther 14). Certainly there were those who begged that it not be handed over; but they were not of God, who had ceased to have virtues and to be alive to God. And this should be noted, that Tyre is sought by the one who comes to seek and save what was lost, and he seeks one stray sheep out of ninety-nine left in the mountains (Luke 19). Also, the woman who had lost one drachma seeks, finds, and calls her neighbors to share in her joy (ibid., 15). But if Tyre is not found, it is not the fault of the one searching, but of the one who has escaped the hand of the good shepherd. And furthermore, it says, 'You will be no more forever;' whether it is written in Hebrew as 'Lolam' or in Greek as 'αἰών,' it signifies one age, according to what Isaiah says, who after seventy years declares that Tyre will be restored to its former state. They say, however, that one age, that is, the span of human life, is calculated as seventy years, as the Psalmist says: 'The days of our years, in them are seventy years.' But for those in power, eighty years, whatever is beyond that, is labor and

sorrow (Psalm 89:10). We have briefly spoken in a metaphorical sense about Tyre. This can also be understood as referring to those who, in the distress of this world, are led down to the underworld, covered by the abyss of punishment and the waves of torment, and dragged down to the depths of the earth. They are joined with those who are in the ancient desolation, and are led into the lake or eternal pit, so that they are no longer inhabited by the Holy Spirit. Concerning which it is written: When the ungodly falls into the depths of evil, he despises it (Prov. XVIII, 3). They will no longer exist on the land of the living, but will perish and be reduced to nothingness, ceasing to belong to God. These are the testimonies that those who claim the punishments of the wicked, not the sinners, are eternal abuse: those who have sought from God and have not been found, and have ceased to exist forever because they have lost Him who says: I am the life (John XIV, 6).

27:1-2

(Chapter 27.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Therefore, son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyre and say to Tyre, which dwells at the entrance of the sea, to the merchant of the peoples to many islands (or from many islands). Thus says the Lord God: If I were to summarize the entire prophecy against Tyre or concerning the lamentation of Tyre in one discourse, it would be lengthy and the meaning would be obscure for the reader; since it is not possible to retain everything in the mind at once, especially regarding the discrepancies between the Hebrew and the Septuagint edition in this place, that is, what they have added or subtracted. Therefore, we will be content with our own interpretation, and wherever there is disagreement, we will unite from the side, leaving the perfect knowledge of all things to God: and we will briefly explain what seems to us in each case. The one who mourns is still a concern to the one he mourns for. Therefore, Samuel wept and mourned for Saul (2 Samuel 15). And the apostle Paul lamented and mourned for those who committed fornication and did not repent (2 Corinthians 12). And Jeremiah writes the Lamentations concerning the destruction of Jerusalem with four alphabets. Therefore, Tyre, or Tyre in entrance-ways, dwells according to the letter: either because it was once an island, or because it receives ships coming from the deep in its safest harbor, and it is a trading place for many nations, or from many islands. Indeed, this continues until today, so that the commerce of nearly all nations is carried out there. But following the interpretation that has been started, let us apply whatever is said about Tyre to the 'constriction,' that is, the narrowness of this world, which is situated in evil and is constricted and beaten by various disturbances as if by waves. This kind of merchants is also described in mystic language in the Psalm: Those who go down to the sea in ships, doing business on the great waters, they have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep (Ps. 107:23-24).

27:3

(Verse 3.) O Tyre, you have said, 'I am of perfect beauty' (or you have said, 'I have surrounded myself with beauty') and situated in the heart of the sea. The first crime of Tyre is if it seems to have any good, to not attribute it to God, but to itself, and to value all the beauty that comes from diverse regions as its own accomplishment and virtue. For it has said, 'I am of perfect beauty' or 'I have surrounded myself with beauty,' although it is situated in the heart, that is, in the middle of the sea, and it moves like an island, and it is tossed and broken by the crashing waves. But as for the heart of the sea, it signifies the middle, and that prophetic speech demonstrates: Therefore we will

not fear, when the earth is troubled, and the mountains are carried into the heart of the sea. Their waters have roared and been troubled. But our Lord is also said to descend into the heart of the earth, that is, into the middle, and to the underworld. But true and perfect beauty is found in no one but the body of Christ, which is interpreted as the Church, and is gathered by the virtues of many saints. And he himself speaks to the bride: You are all beautiful, my love, and there is no blemish in you (Canticles 4:7).

27:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) Your neighbors who built you have filled your beauty. They built you with Sanir fir trees and all the planks of the sea. They brought cedar from Lebanon to make harm to you. For what reason, I do not know, they translated it thus in the Septuagint: The sons of Beelim surrounded your beauty; the cedar of Sanir was built for you; they brought thin cypress planks from Lebanon to make harm to you with fir. For the sermon of Beelim is not found at all in this place among the Hebrews, but it is written in Gebulaic, which means 'your boundaries'. Also, in what they said, your sons were deceived by the ambiguity of the word and the similarity in the scripture, as the same letters are read differently, 'of masons' and 'of sons', Bonaich and Benaich. Therefore, O Tyre, you who said out of arrogance, 'I am of perfect beauty' or 'I have adorned myself with beauty', since you are situated in the midst of the sea, hear how great things have been bestowed upon you by the generosity of God. Your neighbors and bordering people, who are not from distant regions but from neighboring ones, have filled your decoration, and do you think that what is alien is yours? And he speaks as if tropically to a ship, signifying the beauty of the city and the abundance of all things, so that after he has described all the furniture of the ship, the mast, the masts, the oars, the sails, the prow, the keel, the ropes, the covers, the skins, and other things that the use of the best-equipped ships needs: then he announces that a storm and a south wind, by which the largest waves will be stirred up, will come to it, and it will be subject to shipwreck. Through these things, the destruction of the city of Tyre is signified by King Nebuchadnezzar, or, as many believe, by Alexander, the king of Macedon, who is said to have besieged and captured the city itself for six months after defeating Darius in Lycia. According to mystical interpretations, the planks of the Tyrian ship are cut from the fir or cedar trees of Sanir, from which it is woven and constructed, and its mast is made of cedar or cypress from Lebanon: fir or cedar, because of their lightness and the softness of the joints between the planks that hold and bite each other; or cedar, because it is a wood that does not rot. But Sanir is said to mean 'way of the torch'; or as we think more accurately, the tooth of the watchmen, because all the prosperity and illumination of a ship comes from true light. But Sanir is also the mountain itself which is called Hermon, which others call Sanior. Read the history. Lebanon means whiteness or whitening, which also contributes to grace coming from elsewhere.

27:6

(Vers. 6.) They have fashioned oars for your ship from the oak trees of Bashan: they have made your benches out of Indian ivory, and your decks out of the islands of Italy. LXX: They have made your oars and your temples out of the oak trees of Bashan, and they have made for you wild houses out of ivory from the islands of the Kittim. What a beautiful ship it is, and its furnishings, that it has cedar oars, not just any, but from Bashan, and ivory benches, and precious goods are stored in the cellars or warehouses, from the islands of the Kittim, which we refer to as Italy: from

that region which is closer to Greece, understanding all the parts of the Western islands. Let us therefore say, according to the spiritual interpretation, that the oars of the Tyrian ship are made from Bazan, of which it is also written in the Psalms: 'The Lord said, I will turn Bazan from the depths of the sea' (Ps. 68:23). Bazan in our language is interpreted as ignominy. Therefore, God converts those who were in the depths of the sea, and the ignominy of sins, and converts them into oars, so that they may navigate with the Apostles and reach the land and the shores; and they become benches of ivory when they mortify their bodies, or when they use their teeth for the praises of God, and storerooms or cellars of the islands of Kittim, which, according to the etymology of the Hebrew language, is translated as 'struck,' so that it may not be so much killed by the blows of the devil as approved. We can speak about the ivory and wild houses of the islands of the Chetiiim, which the heretics try to build not in the house of God, but on a Tyrian ship. And they, having their own ivory of language, build temples of God that are contrary to the temple, and wild houses, dwellings of beasts, even though the Scripture says that groves, and woods, and forests should not be planted in the house of God (Deut. XII).

27:7

(Verse 7.) Fine linen woven from Egypt was made into a veil for you, to be placed in a chest. Hyacinth and purple from the isles of Elisha became your covering. LXX: Fine linen woven with variety from Egypt was made into a bedspread for you, to surround you with glory, and to cover you with hyacinth and purple. Your coverings were made from the isles of Elisha. Because Tyre had said, 'I am perfect in beauty,' she is accused of receiving things from various regions, according to the Scripture: 'What do you have that you did not receive?' But if you have received it, why do you boast as if you have not received it? Therefore, it is described what each province should send, according to that passage from Virgil's Georgics, book I.

India sends ivory: the soft Sabaeans their frankincense: hard iron from the Chalybes, and men from Pontus skilled in beaver-traps, etc. In Egypt, linen is produced in great abundance, from which the sail of the Tyrian ship is woven, which is hung from the mast, and its covering, which provides shade for sailors and passengers in the heat and calm of the sun, is made of hyacinth and purple; these are from the Elisa Islands, which are so called from the Ionian Sea. Furthermore, next to the Septuagint, they weave in layers of linen, and they cover the Tyrian ship with veils, so that it may be more glorious with these coverings, and it may have a more beautiful appearance being surrounded by a garment. But linen is made from the earth, because it originates from the earth, and the hyacinth from the air, the purple from the sea from which it is produced, with the addition of double-dyed scarlet, with which the vestments of the Pontiff are woven, we often remind that they signify the four elements: earth, fire, air, and water, from which all things consist, which Tyre assumes for itself, not using them with gratitude as creatures of God, but saying: I am the perfect beauty: or, I have surrounded myself with beauty.

27:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) The inhabitants of Sidon and Arad were your sailors. Your wise men, Tyre, became your captains. The elders of Biblos and their wise men provided sailors for the service of your various goods. All the ships of the sea and their sailors were in the service of your commerce. LXX: Your princes dwelled in Sidon and the men of Arad were your sailors. Your wise men, Sora, who were in you, they were your captains. The elders of Tyre and its wise men were in you: they

strengthened your counsel, and all the ships of the sea, and their sailors became your servants in the west of the west. It was said above: Your neighbors who built you, have filled your beauty: before those who live far away come to them, he describes the aid of neighboring provinces. Your inhabitants, he says, or the princes of Sidon and Arad, which is a nearby island, your sailors. Your wise men, O Tyre, have become your governors. For the governing properly belongs to the wise, as Scripture says: 'Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.' (Proverbs 11:14) The elders or senior men of the Bible, and its wise men, provided sailors for your service, strengthened the counsel of Tyre, and provided various merchandise. And all the ships of the sea, with their sailors, were part of the trading people of Tyre, or in the far west. This, meanwhile, according to the letter. But according to mystical understanding, because Sidonians are interpreted as hunters, and Aradians, who lay down: we will say that Tyre is a glorious and most proud city, which, with the wind blowing, is to be destroyed afterwards, has citizens, or rather hunter princes, about whom it is written: Our soul has been taken like a sparrow from the trap of the hunters. For where we read hunters, in Hebrew it is written, of the Sidonians. These people come to the unwary souls, who are placed in high positions, in order to lead them to earthly things, and they become the steersmen, leading them to shipwrecks. But the wise men of Tyre, who are received in a bad way, through which they are wiser than the sons of light, themselves guide Tyre prepared for shipwreck. The elders of the Bible and its wise men provided sailors to Tyre for service, or they strengthened its counsel. The holy history tells that there were many seniors rejected by the Lord, and the juniors chosen as the symbol of the Synagogue and the Church. Senior Cain is added, and junior Abel is chosen (Genesis IV): Ishmael, the son of Abraham, is estranged from his father, and junior Isaac receives the inheritance (Genesis XXI). Among the sons of Isaac, senior Esau is a hunter and wanders in the forests, while junior Jacob simply dwells at home (Genesis XXV). And it is written in Malachi: Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated (Mal. I, 2). And rightly, according to the Apostle (Rom. IX, 13), they had done neither good nor evil in their mother's womb, so that one would be chosen and the other rejected, except that in the type, as we have said, the elder is repelled, and the younger assumed. All, he says, the ships of the sea and their sailors were in the people of the trading of Tyre, or in the furthest west. How is the Song of Songs called, and the age of ages, and the work of works; so that the greater song is compared to other songs, and the longer age to other ages, and the more useful work to other works: thus the West of the West is called, to signify the magnitude of the Western parts. And beautifully do the ships of the sea, and their sailors, and the rowers who assist the ship of Tyre, not go towards the East, nor towards the rising of the light, where the sun of justice is born, but towards the West of the West, where the light sets, and where the beginning of darkness is.

27:10

(Verse 10) The Persians, Lydians (commonly known as Lydia), and Libyans were in your army, your mighty warriors. They hung their shields and helmets on you for your adornment (or they themselves hung up their shields and helmets, giving glory to you). The Persians were the bravest, of whom Cyrus, their king, as prophesied by Isaiah (Isa. XLV), conquered Babylon after overthrowing Astyages, the king of the Medes. This is narrated in both sacred and secular history. Moreover, at that time, they were considered among the strongest nations, of whom King Croesus was captured by Cyrus himself, as Xenophon writes in great detail. And we read in the book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 12) that Libya, along with the Troglodytes and Ethiopians, came against

Jerusalem: because they were flourishing in those times, they are remembered as famous warriors, defenders of the city of Tyre, and they hung shields and helmets on the defenses of the walls to terrify the enemies. But spiritual understanding signifies that the Persians, who are interpreted as 'those who try' or 'those who have been tried'; and the Lydians, whom we understand to be 'those who are born'; and the Libyans, who are called Phut in Hebrew, and are translated as 'from the mouth' (from speech, not from bone); in vain they strive to defend Tyre with temptation, and are overcome, and serve the generation and lust, and only multiply empty words, not having the helmet of salvation, nor the shield of faith (Ephesians 6); but they only pretend glory and noise of words to adorn it.

27:11

(Verse 11.) The sons of Aradius with their army (or their own) were on your walls all around. But also the Pygmies who were in your towers hung their quivers (or your quivers) on your walls in a circle, they completed your beauty. LXX: The sons of Aradius, and your strength on your walls, were guardians all around in your towers. They hung their quivers on your battlements in a circle. They have completed your adornment. --The Word Gamadim (), the first edition of the Eagle, the Pygmies: Symmachus, the Medes: the Septuagint, the Guardians: Theodotus Gamadim, the Hebrew itself, have translated. We still see the island of Aradus, which is entirely a city, and the opposite town of Antaradus, which is adjacent to Tyre, and stretches along the coast of Phoenicia on the mainland up to this day: these are the guards of the city of Tyre and the custodians of its towers, and they have placed their quivers around them and filled their beauty, so that they are taught to be archers, whether they are pygmies, that is, warriors, and very ready for war, ■π■ τ■ς πυγμ■ς, which is translated into Greek as a contest. But if, on the other hand, they are called the deceitful ones of Aradius, everyone who claims to have knowledge of false names and carries in the quiver of his heart the fiery darts of the devil, with which he wounds and inflames the hearts of those who are deceived, should be called Aradius. For he desires to cast down those who strive to ascend to heights, and he completes the beauty of Tyre, of which it is written in Proverbs: Let not the desire for beauty deceive you, nor be captivated by your eyes (Prov. VI, 25). And again: Just as earrings in a pig's snout, so is beauty to a woman who is ill-tempered. (Ibid. XI, 22).

27:12

(Verse 12.) Your Carthaginian merchants have filled your marketplace with a multitude of riches, silver, iron, tin, and lead. Not only in the present place, but also in Isaiah, where it is written: Wail, ships of Carthage (Isaiah 23:14), the other interpreters have translated the Hebrew word as Tharsis, which is undoubtedly a colony of the Tyrians. They themselves from the western parts filled the Tyrian marketplace with silver, iron, tin, and lead. Tarsis in our language sounds like exploration of joy. However, we should not understand the explorers here in a positive sense, like the ones Moses sent to explore the promised land (Numbers 13), but rather in a negative sense, like the ones the Apostle says to avoid: because of false brothers brought in, who came in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ (Galatians 2, 4): and of whom Joseph speaks: You are spies: you have come to see the nakedness of the land (Genesis 42, 9). And understanding that their crime was not small, they began to investigate the matter through treacherous methods, they replied: 'Your slaves are not spies.' Therefore, these individuals multiply the markets of Tyre not with gold or precious stones, but with silver, iron, tin, and lead, possessing the elegance of speech

and weapons for attack; and in tin, they counterfeit the appearance of silver; and in lead, they commit the most grave impiety, as described in the Book of Zechariah (Zech. 5), where a woman sits on a lead talent, and the Egyptians sink into the depths like lead. The discussion of each metal is long, but brevity must be studied.

27:13-14 (Vers. 13, 14.) Greece, Tubal, and Meshech themselves brought slaves and bronze vessels to your people. From the house of Togarmah they brought horses and horsemen, and mules to your market. Also, Greece and its surroundings, your merchants brought souls of men and bronze vessels to your market. From the house of Togarmah, they brought horses, horsemen, and mules to your trading post. Jones says that the Hebrews called Javan, and Tubal, that is, the Eastern Iberians, or those from the Western part of Hispania, who are called by this name from the river Iberus, and Meshech, whom we understand to be the Cappadocians, of which their metropolis, which later was named Caesarea by Augustus Caesar, is still called in their language Mazaca. They made valuable trade for Tyre, bringing slaves and bronze vessels from Corinth to Tyre, and horses, horsemen, and mules from the house of Togarmah, that is, from Phrygia, which once had a great abundance of those. The Hebrews say that Greece, that is, Javan, means both 'is' and 'is not', which properly refers to secular wisdom. If they find something right, they call it 'is'; if they find it to be in the opposite direction, they call it 'is not'. They discuss many things themselves about the blessings of nature and about duties, self-control, and the despising of riches, which the Stoics properly claim for themselves. And they seem to make the souls of the people whom they deceive profitable. They have bronze vessels, which they present to the people of Tyre, that they may supplant them with the opinion of false teaching. Also, from the house of Thogorma, which means stranger and foreigner, horses will be brought to the market and fair, and both horsemen and mules, of which it is written: A deceitful horse for safety (Ps. 32:17). And in another place: All who mount horses have slumbered (Ps. 76:7). And in the Psalms: Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding (Ps. 32:9). Therefore, Doeg the accuser and slayer of the priests was the chief of many (2 Sam. 22), and these are from the house of foreigners and strangers, who do not eat the flesh of lambs, of which it is written: A stranger and a hired servant shall not eat of it (Exod. 12:43); so that all the markets of Tyre may be filled with these goods. Your sons, O Dadan, are your merchants. For some, interpreting the Seventy, have translated the sons of the Rhodians as, perhaps, by a similarity of the first letters, instead of Dadan, they read Radan, which is itself the largest of the Cyclades, and once was a most powerful city in the Ionian Sea, glorious in naval warfare, and the safest harbor for all merchants. And because the Rhodians are turned into our language, it is now said tropologically of those who perceive the truth of judgment but do not do it, as the apostle said: Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are that judges. For in judging another, you condemn yourself. For you do the same things that you judge (Rom. II, 1). But it is better to give the name of Dadan to another place, as it is in Hebrew and among other interpreters.

27:15-16

(Vers. 15, 16.) Many islands have traded with your merchandise: they have exchanged ivory and ebony for your price. Your merchant, Syrus, because of the multitude of your works, has presented pearls, purple, embroidered garments, fine linen, silk, and scarlet in your market. LXX: They have multiplied your merchandise with islands: you were repaying your wages with elephant tusks and those who were being brought in. Your business has been purchased by many of your customers:

They traded in aphec, stacten, and polymita from Tharsis and Ramoth and Chodchod in your market. The Hebrew text differs greatly from the Septuagint edition in this particular passage; therefore, a few things must be said according to each. So that we don't get too caught up in Tyrian merchandise, let's move on to the remaining prophecies. The sons of Dadan, Tyrian merchants, have multiplied their business in many islands, so that they traded elephant tusks with those who came for their commerce, and they had men in the markets because of the multitude of trade. But they had in Aphech what is added in Theodotion's edition to the Seventy: for which Symmachus translates, 'polymita.' Also, Stacte, for which all others interpret 'purple,' which is called Argaman in Hebrew: and varieties from Tharsis, for which in Hebrew it is called Bus, which is translated by all as 'byssus.' However, Tharsis is not found anywhere in this place. And they gave 'ramoth' and 'chodchod' in your markets; which is found thus in Hebrew, except that instead of 'ramoth,' Aquila interprets it as 'silk,' or 'fine.' All the interpreters indeed have accurately translated it in the way it is placed in Hebrew (). Therefore, according to the Septuagint, the sons of the Rhodians, the merchants of Tyre, increased his trade from many islands: according to the Hebrew (text), after the sons of Dadan, his merchants also enlarged their trade with the islands of various nations, bringing ivory from India and precious black lignum vitae, and exchanged (them) with other Tyrian goods. Syrus was also a Tyrian trader: for which reason in Hebrew it is written Aram (), in place of which the Seventy interpreters have rendered it Adam, and Res and Daleth, as above, being deceived by the similarity. However, to this day the innate ardor for trading remains in the Syrians, who with a desire for profit travel throughout the world, and have such a madness for commerce that, now that the Roman world has been conquered, they seek riches among swords and the deaths of the unfortunate, and flee poverty with dangers. There are such types of men in Tyre who trade in multicolored fabrics, purple, and embroidered cloth. They also offer linen and silk, and present precious goods in their market. Regarding purple, which everyone has interpreted, the Septuagint translates it as 'stacten,' which means 'drop.' However, I have not been able to find the meaning of 'chodchod' up until now. The Hebrews say that all precious goods are signified by this name, or that it is a certain type of precious merchandise that the Roman language does not mention, or simply a common term used by sellers. But from many islands, to move on to the mystical sense, which are beaten by the salty and bitter waves of this world, merchants of Dedan bring ivory teeth, promising the whiteness of eloquence; about whom it is written: Out of ivory palaces, from which the daughters of kings have delighted you in your glory (Ps. LIV, 9). But they are not white, nor do they imitate the bride, of whom it is said: Who is this that comes up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved (Cant. VIII, 5)? But the Ethiopians of black color, who cannot change their blackness, as Jeremiah says: Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? (Jer. XIII, 21) . And also the Syrian, that is, Aram, which means high, and swells with pride, is a merchant of Tyre, and in the multitude of the works of the Tyrians carries the knowledge of false names, promising many varieties, and the sweet smell of the best ointment, and the purple of royal dignity, and the chequered work of dialectic art, and fine linen, for which the Septuagint have rendered Tharsis, being devoted to the works of the earth: and silk, for which in Hebrew it is written, Ramoth, which means vision of death. For all earthly works hasten towards destruction; and chodchod, whatever that is which is understood, proposing it in the markets of Tyre. But among these goods which are said to be brought by its merchants and islands, either the region of India should be understood, or that of the Idumaeans and vast solitude, as some estimate, and it signifies a connection, so that we may recognize the likeness of

divine teachings in heretics.

27:17

(Verse 17.) Judah and the land of Israel themselves, your merchants, offered to you in your markets, as the first fruits: balsam and honey, and oil, and resin. LXX: Judah and the sons of Israel, these are your merchants in the wheat trade and in ointments: they gave you first honey and oil, and resin in your markets. The Hebrew word 'Phanag' (פִּנְאָג) was translated by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in the way that it is written in Hebrew: for which the LXX translated 'ointment', we translate 'balsam'. It is said, however, that the land of Judaea, which is now called Palestine, abounds in provisions, such as grain, balsam, honey, oil, and resin, which are carried from Judaea and Israel to the market of Tyre. And when the literal meaning is clear, according to the spiritual sense, we say that the land of confession, and the understanding of God that pertains to the Church, should not carry to Tyre the first wheat, which, when it falls to the ground, multiplies and is taken as the word of God: For man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Deut. 8:3). Then the balsam that grows in the vineyards of En-gedi, or the ointment, of which it is written: 'Like the ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron.' (Psalm 133:2). And the honey about which Solomon speaks: 'Thou hast found honey, eat what is sufficient for thee; lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it.' (Proverbs 25:16), for excessive satisfaction turns honey into wormwood. Also the oil with which the lamp in the tabernacle of God is lit, lest that prophetic saying be applied to us: 'Thou didst sell the oil in Egypt.' (Hosea 12:1). But if it is in Egypt and in Tyre, it will turn to the opposite, and it will be said of it, 'The oil of the sinner will not anoint my head' (Ps. CXL, 5). But resin is also gentle, suitable for bodies, and is taken as medicine. Hence it is written in Jeremiah: Is there not resin in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the healing of the daughter of my people not gone up? (Jer. VIII, 22). Jacob also had this resin, which he sent to his son Joseph with honey, balm, nuts, and frankincense (Gen. XLIII). The Ishmaelites who bought Joseph from the land of Israel were carrying these things to Egypt: resin, balm, honey, and oil, as well as frankincense from Gilead (Genesis 37). To better understand what wheat, balsam, honey, and oil, as well as resin, were used for in the market of Tyre, let us listen to the words of the Lord, who said: Do not give what is holy to the dogs; do not cast your pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6). And to the Canaanite woman who was praying for her daughter, saying: My daughter is cruelly tormented by a demon, the Lord replied: It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs (Matthew 15:22, 26). But because it had gone out from the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and was approaching the land of Israel, that which she had requested was obtained.

27:18

(Verse 18.) Your Damascene merchant in the multitude of your works: in the abundance of different goods: in rich wine, in the finest wool. LXX: Your Damascene merchant in the multitude of your works, from the abundance of all your strength: wine from Helbon, and wool from Miletus. Regarding the rich wine, which Symmachus, Aquila, and Theodotion interpreted, and in the Hebrew text itself, it says, wine from Helbon. And again, when we settled ourselves in the best colored wool, both the Eagle and Theodotius transferred to the wool market of Soor. And it is significant that among the other trade of Tyre, the finest wine and the best wool were brought to its market from Damascus, which we still see today. But if Damascus is interpreted as drinking blood,

and the true tradition of the Hebrews is that the field where Abel was killed by the fratricide Cain (Gen. IV) was in Damascus, from which the place derives its notable name, then rightly Paul went to Damascus after the killing of Stephen, the first martyr in Christ, in order to lead the believers in Christ as prisoners to Jerusalem. And by the mercy of God, who made the blind see and the sighted blind, he lost the eyes of the flesh so that he could receive the eyes of the mind. And scales fell from his eyes, with which he had lost the light of truth, so that he could go to the street that is called Straight and find Ananias, which is interpreted in our language as obedient (Acts IX). Therefore, from this land, which is called 'Cursed is the ground that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood' (Gen. IV, 11), the Tyrians gather at the market, and there is rich wine and shining wool: either wine from Chelbon, which means milky. Seventy are for the best-colored wool, from Miletus, or Tyre, they say. Miletus is not found in Hebrew, but because the finest wool is brought from there, they have interpreted 'Soor' as Miletus. From this it is clear that Tyre feeds on the milk of infancy and does not have its own clothing, but rather obtains it from elsewhere and from various provinces. The interpretation of Damascus as 'the blood of Cilicia' and 'the blood of a kiss' does not fit the current context. Frequently, Hebrew names are interpreted in various ways due to the diversity of accents and the change of letters and vowels, especially those that have their own peculiarities among them.

27:19

(Verse 19.) Both Greece and Mozel (also known as Moscow) have put forward wrought iron during your markets. Stacte and calamus are in your business dealings. The Septuagint version adds the following about Dan, Javan, and Mozel in your markets. Wrought iron is made by skilled craftsmen, and the wheel is part of your trade. The name Dan was taken from the patriarch and the tribe, and it refers to the place where the tribe lived. Today, that place is called Paneas, which was once known as Caesarea Philippi. And so the Jordan River obtained its name, from Jor, which means 'river', and Dan, which flows from Lebanon. Javan, on the other hand, represents Greece, which as we have said, both is and is not. Symmachus also translates Mozel as carrying, so the meaning is: Dan and Greece have brought iron goods to your markets, and so on. Aquila, however, translates Mozel as Uzal. From these regions, it is believed that iron, stacte, and reed are exported to the Tyrian markets. Let us declare that Greece, that is, Javan, possesses expertly crafted iron and is very ready for war, boasting that it can express everything with judgment and reason through the art of dialectic. It promises a vocal sound that can be interpreted on paper and the pure scent of stacte, whether it be the crafted iron or the wheel that turns with the arrangement of words, and it possesses the flow of speech.

27:20

(Verse 20) The merchants of Dedan, dedicated to sitting on carpets. LXX: The merchants of Dadan, with chosen animals for chariots. The Hebrew and the Septuagint differ greatly in this place, except for the name of the region which is near Dedan and Dadan. There is indeed a great difference between sitting on carpets and riding in chariots with chosen animals, and there is no doubt that chariots and horses would be viewed negatively if they were earthly. Furthermore, both Elijah and Elisha are taken up to heaven in a chariot, and Elisha calls Elijah father, charioteer, and chariot of Israel (2 Kings 2:12). And Gehazi's eyes are opened to see the chariots on the mountain and the horses prepared for the Lord's session, without any riders (Ibid. 6). In the tapestries, the

beauty of words is shown; in them, the merchants of Dedan ride and rest, having assembled for the market of Tyre.

27:21

(Verse 21.) Arabia and all the princes of Kedar, they themselves the merchants of your hand, came to you with lambs and rams and goats. For the lambs, rams, and goats, they interpreted seventy camels and rams and lambs. But Arabia and the princes of Kedar (which today is the land of the Saracens, as is fully proven in the words of Jeremiah, who writes against Kedar) abound in these animals, namely lambs and rams and goats, and they increase the commerce of Tyre with this importation (Jeremiah 49). But also a very fertile region of the camels is due to the breadth of pastures, and the temperate air which this animal enjoys. Arabia is interpreted as 'evening', and Cedar as 'darkness'. Concerning which regions, it is said in the Psalms: 'I have dwelt with them that hate peace: when I spake unto them, they fought against me without a cause.' (Psalm 120:7). These regions supply the city of Tyre with camels, burdened with the weight of heavy sins, either lambs or rams or goats, which they sacrifice on their altars, which they have fashioned from a wicked and rebellious heart. But even in this same passage, we read in the vision of the shepherds that rams disturb the purest waters, and push the sheep with their sides, and fight with their horns (Ezekiel 34); also goats, which are accustomed to stand on the left, and lambs that pretend to be a lamb (Matthew 25); of whom it is written: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). But Isaiah writes favorably about camels (Isaiah 60), from Midian, which is interpreted as the judgement of the Lord, coming to Jerusalem, and Ephah, and rams from Nebaioth, and Sheba bringing gold and frankincense: the last two of which are also offered to the Lord by the Magi (Matthew 2). And so, camels with the burden of sins can enter the narrow and tight path that leads to life (Matthew VII and XIX).

27:22

(Verse 22.) Sellers of Sheba and Reama (or Rema), your own merchants with all the choicest spices, and precious stone, and gold which they have set forth in your market. In the Psalms where it is written, 'The kings of the Arabs and Sheba shall offer gifts to you' (Ps. 72:10), in Hebrew it has, 'The kings of Sheba and Sheba shall offer gifts to you,' of which one Sheba is written with the letter Sin, the other with Samech, which is similar to our letter S. Therefore, since Saba is interpreted as a conversion, it must be said that in this present passage it does not signify conversion, but rather aversion, from which the gifts of Tyre are brought with all kinds of aromas and the best odors, and with precious stone and gold, all of which are offered for sale in the markets of Tyre. For they themselves fabricate the best odor and precious stone with which they strive to build up their own perversity in the Churches, and they promise gold in the sense, and all these things are perverse. For nothing is received for free, nor is anything given for free, but all things are bought, as when the kings of the Arabs and Saba offer gifts to Christ for free. These are the ones who do everything for the sake of shameful gain: and they received these gifts from Him who says in the Gospel: 'All these things were given to me, and I will give them to you if you fall down and worship me' (Matthew 4:9). Reama, or according to the Septuagint Rhegma, I could not find in any other place in the Scriptures, nor could I find what region it is or what it signifies; except that it is clear, and from what is connected, that Saba is a neighboring region to this province.

27:23-24

(Verse 23, 24.) Aran, and Channe, and Eden, your traders were from Saba, Assur, Chelmad, your sellers: these traders of yours had various wrappings of hyacinth and precious gems, which were wrapped and tied with ropes. LXX: Charran, and Chana, and Edne, these were your traders: Sabba, Assur, and Chalman, your merchants, bringing merchandise + in Machalim, and in Galima ** hyacinth and + polymita ** precious treasures tied with ropes. And these are the names of the various places. The addition made by Theodotion to the Septuagint was interpreted by Symmachus as 'precious coverings' in Machalim and in Galima. We have also added Polymita, which Theodotion interpreted in various ways, by Aquila and Symmachus. These precious garments were carried by merchants in such valuable coverings that they were fastened with hyacinth ropes. Aran, or as the Septuagint says, Charran, means 'holes' in our language. Channe means 'preparation'. Eden means 'delights'. As for Edne, which is not found in the Hebrew, we do not know its meaning, and we should not seek the etymology of a fabricated name. Therefore, in the negotiation, the Tyrians rely on the fleshy senses that are indicated in the forums. The whole preparation of the people of the world is to believe that they are the only delights if they increase the commerce of the Tyrian city. We have mentioned about Sheba earlier. Assur, which means 'leading', is transferred to vineyards: undoubtedly, the Sodomites who come to the Tyrian market direct, even accuse with punishments, and correct what has been depraved, according to what is said in the Psalms: 'That you may destroy the enemy and the avenger' (Psalm 8:3). And they have a variety of household items, distinguished by an incredible variety, which are bound by hyacinth wrappings; whether their treasures are bound by ropes, which they have stored up for themselves on earth, according to what is written: Everyone is bound by the ropes of their own sins (Prov. 5:22). And they did not have free trade, but they bound everything to the chains of sin. Let us refer the hyacinth wrappings, because of their similarity in color, to the airy powers, which lavish their treasures in the markets of the world.

They also had cedar in your negotiations. The ships of the sea (or as it is contained in Hebrew, Tharsis), your princes in your negotiation. For cedar, the Seventy translated it as cypress. And because we have spoken above about both, it is superfluous to increase the reader's disgust.

27:25

(Verse 25) And you were filled, and greatly glorified (or burdened) in the heart of the sea. Nothing, he says, was lacking to you concerning the riches of the islands. However, this glorification was a burden for the possessor, for you cannot bear riches in moderation, even though poverty often serves as a temptation (Prov. 30). Thus, Solomon asks for only what is necessary; he equally detests wealth and poverty, so that pride does not creep in with the former and impatience and falsehood with the latter.

27:26 (Verse 26) Your rowers have brought you into many waters. Above the rowers, we read about the Tyrians of the city of Sidon, and the Aradians, of whom the former are interpreted as hunters and the latter as passers-by. Indeed, they hunt the souls of those whom, amidst the waves of this world, they lead according to their own judgment and do not raise up to lofty heights, but plunge them into the depths. They do not imitate those who, sailing until the morning watch, broke the raging waves of the sea and deserved to receive the Lord and Savior. And immediately, with such a guide and companion, they arrived at the harbor of rest. About which is more fully written in the Gospel. The south wind tossed you in the heart of the sea (Matthew 14). All the riches of Tyre,

scattered by the blowing south wind. They are significantly called Cadim, which is interpreted in Greek as καυσων; we can translate it as a burning wind. Concerning this wind, the holy David said: The sun shall not harm you by day, nor the moon by night (Psalm 121:6). Jacob was burned by this wind, yet not consumed, as he speaks: By day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night (Genesis 31:40). Those also who were hired from the first hour endured the heat and burning of the whole day, and yet they receive a denarius, because they were scorched and not defiled. Hence the bride says in the Song of Songs: I am black, but beautiful, because the sun has looked upon me (Cant. I, 4): or, as it is better expressed in Hebrew, the sun has made me pale. Your riches and treasures, and your abundant wealth. Many read it this way: In the heart of the sea are your riches and treasures, and your abundant wealth; so that all the riches and treasures of Tyre, and all its substance, are set in the heart of the sea, and are overwhelmed by the waves of time, and its inhabitants have nothing stable and lasting, with that Gospel fulfilled: 'Fool, tonight they will take your soul from you, and whose will be what you have prepared?' (Luke XII, 20). And to that apostle: Those who want to become rich, fall into temptation and many snares, and are dragged into the abyss (I Tim. VI, 9). The story is clear; therefore, we join together brief sentences with almost single verses. For the speech is already hastening towards the end of the book.

27:27

(Verse 27). Your sailors (or rowers), and your pilots, who held your goods and led your people: and your warriors who were in you, with all your multitude that is in your midst, will fall in the heart of the sea on the day of your ruin. We read about the sailors or rowers of the city of Tyre, the Sidonians, and the Aradians, about whom it has already been said; and according to the Septuagint edition, the counselors of Byblos, which is called Gebal in Hebrew: and also its warriors, Persians, Lydians, and Libyans, who will all fall and be shown to be nothing, when Tyre falls and all its glory comes to an end in ruins. However, the multitude which the Seventy translated as 'commixtionis', except for the leaders, signifies the common people; who without the name of positions, are crushed with similar judgement. And the prophecy is mixed between the city and the ship, so that from one you may understand the other: and yet both pertain to the end of the age, and to a shipwreck.

27:28-29

(Verse 28, 29) From the sound of the shouting of your helmsmen, the fleets will be thrown into confusion, and all who held the oar will come down from their ships. The sailors, and all the helmsmen of the sea, the shipmasters and the rowers, will stand on land, and they will wail loudly over you, and cry out bitterly. They will throw dust on their heads, and cover themselves with ashes (or spread ashes on themselves). And what follows: They will shave their heads because of you, and put on sackcloth; they will weep for you with bitter mourning, and take up a lamentation over you. In the Septuagint it is not found, but it is added in the Theodotian Edition. When Tyre falls, its governors will be troubled, and they will descend from their ships, and oarsmen and sailors and rowers, and all the governors of the sea, tossed by the waves, will finally stand on solid ground; and they will lament with a loud voice over it, which they previously enriched with their merchandise, and they will signify the bitterness of their minds with a clamor: and they will also throw dust or dirt on their heads, repenting of their earthly deeds. And they shall be sprinkled with ashes or calves, according to the Law (Num. XX), in order to be purified: or certainly they shall lay

ashes upon themselves, according to that which is said to Jerusalem: Scatter the earth upon thy head, and lay ash beneath thee, and make lamentation (Jerem. VI, 16). And in the Gospel it is written: If these signs had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have done penance long ago in sackcloth and ashes (Luc. X, 13). And the Psalmist says: I have eaten ashes like bread (Psal. CI, 10). And they shave their head over Tyre, and they make baldness, which usually happens in mourning, at that time when the magnitude of sorrow has excluded all joy. But the apostles' hair was numbered, because they had consecrated their hair like the Nazarenes to the Lord (Matthew 10; Luke 6). And as long as Samson had hair, he possessed strength, but when his hair was cut off, he was captured by the Philistines (Judges 16). But when it is said, and they shall gird themselves with sackcloth, the old lust of the loins is condemned, so that those who lived in pleasures may afterwards live in austerity and hardness, repenting. The people of Nineveh had sackcloth. And again, it is said to Jerusalem: 'Wail to me like a bride wearing sackcloth, grieving for her husband as a virgin.' And they will mourn for you, it says, with bitter weeping. For it is better to enter the house of mourning than the house of feasting, so that they may mourn for Tyre and sing a mournful song, as the following Scripture adds. But in order to know the progress of those who mourn the falling, and who dwelled before in the heart of the sea, let the prophets teach us by their example: they themselves are commanded to mourn for Tyre, so that, after the time of repentance is fulfilled, it may be restored to its former state, and, taking up the lyre, may sound forth for the Lord. Read Isaiah. Some, though ridiculous (but still worth reading), interpret governors as bishops of heretics, counselors as priests, helmsmen as archdeacons, rowers and sailors as deacons, and carriers refer to the whole people. If they had added the devil as the shipmaster, they would have completed the tragedy. All of them will wail together and cry bitterly, and they will repent after they sense the shipwreck of their own ship and stand on land, and they will lose all the splendor of the false name of knowledge. And instead of joy and happiness, they will mark repentance with bitterness in their hearts.

27:33-36

(Verse 33 and following) What is like Tyre, that has become silent (or has been silenced) in the middle of the sea? (Which is not found in the Septuagint.) Who, in the outcome of your dealings (or what reward you received) from the sea, enriched many peoples? In the abundance of your wealth, and with the multitude of your people, you made many kings wealthy. Now you are broken by the sea (or in the sea) in the depths of the waters, your wealth (or your trading) and all your multitude, which was in your midst, have fallen. All the inhabitants of the islands were astonished (or crushed) over you, and all their kings were struck (or turned mad) by the tempest, they changed their countenance (or wept). The merchants of the nations (or peoples) hissed at you, you were brought down to nothingness (or made into ruins), and you will no longer exist (Vulg. remains silent) forever (or for eternity). Captains, sailors, helmsmen, and passengers, in the mourning of Tyre, will remember these things, which so silenced other cities that they had no confidence to speak; and they heard that Gospel saying, Be silent, and be dumb (Mark 4:39). And concerning the Psalms: But to the sinner God said, Why do you declare my justices, and take my covenant in thy mouth? (Ps. XLVI, 16) How rich has Tyre become with so many goods! And why have you sought so much with such great labor, that you gather perishable things through days and nights of shipwreck? Indeed, you have filled many peoples and enriched kings with your wealth, of whom it is written: The kings of the earth stood, and the princes met together against the

Lord and against his Christ (Psalm II, 2). But now you are crushed in the sea, and in the depths of the waters, just as it is written about Pharaoh: The chariots of Pharaoh and his army he has cast into the sea (Exodus XV, 4). He was submerged in the deep like a stone, and he could say: I have come into the deep of the sea, and the tempest has submerged me (Psalm XIV, 4). All the islands, or the inhabitants of the islands, that are battered by the waves of this world, will be astonished at you, and their kings, struck by the storm, will sense their own demise. They will imitate the voice of the snake, hissing and saying: You have been reduced to nothing, or you have been made into destruction; so that you have not had the nature of destruction, but the will. And you will not be. But if he had said this until now, a great question would arise, how it was not, which we now see as built. But from what follows, 'Forever', it shows the time of one age, which is reckoned to be around 70 years in the circle of a man's life. Whether you will not be to God, as the Apostle says: 'He calls things that are not as though they were' (Rom. 4:17). And the prophet Isaiah: 'Behold, they shall be confounded and ashamed, all your adversaries.' (Isaiah 41:11). For they will be as if they were not (Isa. XLI, 11): And Esther according to the Seventy Interpreters: Do not give your scepter to those who are not (Esther XIV, 11). And in the psalm: Let me be refreshed before I go away, and I shall be no more (Ps. XXXV, 14). We have already mentioned in what sense these testimonies should be understood. However, all these things can be referred to the person of heretics, who, in the contrition of Tyre and the shipwreck, feel their error and, placed in the midst of the sea, desire to free their souls and mourn the ill-gotten riches, with which they have enriched many kings, namely their patriarchs, and the common people, whose wealth will be destroyed in the midst of the sea. The inhabitants of all the islands (if, however, we want to interpret what has been said in a positive way) will also be astonished at the destruction of Tyre, and the kings of all the islands, being as it were struck by a storm, will change their faces, or at least show the grief of their hearts with weeping and tears, and they will testify to the magnitude of their astonishment with wonder and hissing, declaring how she has become nothing and perished, she who promised salvation to many nations. And furthermore, it will not be, at any certain time, that we interpret αἰών as meaning 'age'; but forever, because the same word signifies both.

Book Nine

Book Nine

It followed, daughter Eustochium, that I would include the prophecy of Tyre and the prince of Tyre in one volume, combining both the places and the prophecies without separating them according to the order of the books. But because there are many things that are said and they exceed the limit of prolixity, therefore the explanation has been extended into the ninth book, which we believe will reach the end with your prayers and those of all the saints, so that we may also discuss what is written about Pharaoh and all of Egypt in the book of Ezekiel. The same things are also to be divided by us into ten books, so that the measurement of the volumes among themselves may be preserved, and the labor of the one dictating, writing, and reading may have rest in parts.

28:1-10

(Chapter 28, Verse 1 onwards) 'The word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre: Thus says the Lord God: Because your heart is lifted up, and you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the heart of the seas,' yet you are a man, and not a god, though you set your heart as the heart of a god. Behold, you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that

is hidden from you. By your wisdom and your understanding you have gained wealth for yourself and have acquired gold and silver in your treasuries.' In the abundance of your wisdom, and in your trading, you have multiplied strength for yourself, and your heart has been lifted up in your power. Therefore, thus says the Lord (God adds): because your heart has been lifted up as the heart of God, therefore, behold, I will bring upon you the most strong of the nations, and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and they shall defile your splendor. They shall kill you, and deliver you up, and you shall die the death of the slain in the heart of the sea. Are you saying, 'I am God,' in the presence of those who are about to kill you, even though you are a man and not God, and they will kill you with the hands of foreigners? You will die the death of the uncircumcised at the hands of strangers, for I have spoken, declares the Lord God. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: And you, son of man, say to the prince of Tyre: Thus says the Lord God: Because your heart is proud, and you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,' yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god— are you wiser than Daniel? The wise have not taught you their discipline: have you made for yourself strength and made gold and silver in your treasuries, or in your abundant knowledge have you multiplied your strength and your power? Your heart is lifted up in your strength, therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have given your heart as the heart of God, behold, I will bring upon you foreign pestilential people from the nations, and they will unsheath their swords against you because of the splendor of your knowledge, and they will humble your splendor in destruction. They will lead you away, and they will dispose of you, and you will die the death of the wounded in the heart of the sea. Will you say, 'I am God,' when you face those who kill you? You are a man, not God, in the midst of your attackers. You will die at the hands of foreigners, uncircumcised in heart, because I have spoken, declares the Lord God.' Wherever YHWH is placed in the Septuagint, the first name, YHWH, is the proper name of God and is unspeakable. The second name, Adonai, is the common name found frequently in humans. However, just as the city of Tyre is depicted as a ship, first in its wealth and then in its destruction and mourning, so too is a prophetic discourse addressed to the ruler of Tyre. It is stated that he became proud and did not make good use of the wealth he possessed, and as a result suffered sadness and lamentation, experiencing great misfortune. Therefore, the first things to be said must be explained. It is written in Isaiah (Isa. 14) concerning the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, that he equated himself with God's power and became so arrogant that he dared to say, 'I will ascend above the stars of heaven and I will be like the Most High.' And hurled from his throne, he deserved to hear: How did Lucifer fall, he who rose in the morning? And of Pharaoh in the same prophet: The rivers are mine, and I made them (Isaiah 29:9). And of the prince of Tyre, who in his pride arrogantly said: I am a god, and I sit on the throne of God, or I dwell in the habitation of God, even though he is a man and not God. Although these words may seem to exceed the powers of human frailty, and not to be the words of men but of raving demons, we must take them as hyperbole, in that they have swelled to such an extent and have not known their measure, that in the midst of the swelling of worldly happiness and the power of the kingdom, men have not known themselves and have claimed eternal dominion for themselves. Although under the guise of princes, kings, and individual cities, or provinces, opposing powers may be demonstrated, about which the Apostle Paul writes: For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12). And in another place: We speak a message of

wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing (1 Corinthians 2:6). And again, discussing wisdom, he says, which none of the rulers of this world knew. For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. II, 8). Also, in the prophecy of Daniel, it is clearly written that the Prince of the Israelite people is Michael, and the prince of Greece, and the prince of Persia (Dan. X). And Moses explicitly writes in the Song of Deuteronomy: When the Most High divided the nations, and scattered the sons of Adam, he established the boundaries of the nations, according to the number of the angels of God (Deut. XXXII, 8); or as it is better in Hebrew: according to the number of the sons of Israel. And so it happened that the people of the Lord, his portion, Jacob, became the inheritance of Israel. And we should not be surprised that on the opposite side the worst kings precede the best kings, David, Solomon, Josiah, and the patriarchs, and prophets, as a foreshadowing of the Lord and Savior. Therefore, according to both understandings, let us discuss the arrogant kings and apostate princes equally, which are written. He says, therefore (or, as said by Alexander, since you are a man, and being surrounded by the frailty of human flesh and swollen with pride, you think that you can dwell on the throne of God in the heavens, even though you are held in the narrowness of the middle of the sea and on the islands. And also, because you boast of your wisdom to such an extent that the men of your kingdom challenge Solomon with riddles: Are you wiser than Daniel, who by the grace of God conquered all the magicians and soothsayers, and is now the wisest in Babylon? Or, to put it another way: Even if you are wiser than Daniel, who is acknowledged to be the wisest of all, and even if you desire to compare yourself to God in the magnitude of wealth and power: you will still be captured by your enemies, and with the destruction of your city, you will be struck by many wounds. And you will no longer say, 'I am God,' but, having learned through your downfall, you will recognize that you are a human, not God. But if we wish to call the prince of Tyre the same power to whom the city itself, or the province, was given by God, let us accept that testimony. I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. But you will die like men, and fall like one of the princes' (Psalm 82:7). For power was given to them to govern the provinces, like judges appointed by the Emperor. However, they, forgetting their honor and being driven by a tyrannical mindset, rose up against their king and Lord. Dispersed throughout the whole world, they took on the names of idols and, filled with pride, fell into the judgment and snare of the devil. About this, Jesus spoke in the Gospel: I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18).

28:11-19

(Vers. 11 seqq.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him: Thus says the Lord God: You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: carnelian, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, onyx, and beryl, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald. Gold was the workmanship of your settings and your engravings; on the day that you were created they were prepared. You, Cherub, stretched out and protecting, I placed you on the holy mountain of God. You walked among the fiery stones; you were perfect in your ways from the day of your creation until iniquity was found in you. Your heart was filled with iniquity in the multitude of your trading, and you sinned. Therefore, I cast you out from the mountain of God and destroyed you, O Cherub protecting amidst the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. Therefore, I cast you down to

the ground. I set you before kings, that they might gaze at you. In the multitude of your iniquities and the injustice of your trading, you have defiled your sanctification. Therefore, I will bring forth fire from your midst that will consume you, and I will turn you into ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who see you. All who see you among the nations will be astonished at you. You have become nothing and will be no more forever. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, take up a lamentation over the prince of Tyre and say to him: Thus says the Lord God: You were the seal of likeness, full of wisdom and adorned with the crown of beauty; you were in the delights of the paradise of God. You are surrounded by every good gemstone: sardius and topaz, and emerald, and carbuncle, and sapphire, and jasper, and silver, and gold, and ligure, and agate, and amethyst, and chrysolite, and beryl, and onyx, and you have filled your treasuries with gold and your storehouses with silver. From the day you were created, you were prepared with the anointed Cherub from God, and dwelling in the tabernacle, I have given you on the holy mountain of God. You have become in the midst of fiery stones. You were blameless in your days, from the day you were created; until iniquities were found in you, you filled your storehouses with iniquity from the abundance of your trade, and you sinned and were wounded by the mountain of God, and the cherub who overshadowed you led you out of the midst of the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; your wisdom was corrupted by your splendor. Because of your many sins, I cast you to the ground; I made you a spectacle before kings, that you might be dishonored. Because of the multitude of your sins and the iniquities of your trade, you have defiled your holy places. And I will bring forth fire in your midst; it will devour you. And I will make you like ashes on the earth in the sight of all who see you, and all who know you among the nations will be dismayed over you. You have become a ruin, and you will never be again. For we have declared what the prince of Tyre is and how he has fallen because of his pride, let us know his lamentations over his former glory. First, let it be agreed what it was, so that he may regret having lost what he had. 'You,' he says, 'are the seal of likeness;' according to that, which John the Evangelist rightly says about the Savior: 'For this God has sealed, the Father' (John 6:27). And about men: 'He has sealed, because God is true' (John 3:33). And in the Psalms: 'The light of your face, O Lord, has been sealed upon us' (Psalm 4:7). And in another place: 'Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be.' We know that when he appears, we shall be like him. (1 John 3:2) That is why it is said to God: Who will be like you? (Psalm 35:10) For similarity is one thing, equality is another. Therefore, the most savage heresy is the one that confesses only the Father's similarity in Christ and takes away his nature. But we not only say similarity in the Son, but also equality. That is why the Jews persecuted him: because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also made himself equal to God. (John 5) But where there is equality, there is the same nature and one substance. This is what the Apostle speaks of regarding similarity: My little children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you (Galatians 4:19), so that you may receive, namely, his likeness, which you have lost through your own fault. And because in Latin codices the word for sign or seal is read as "resignaculum", expressing word for word the Greek word κακοζήλως, which is interpreted according to the Septuagint translation as πρὸς φρῆγμα, that is, seal or sign. Some people understand it in this way, that the seal of God and the image which was as if expressed in the softest wax, the king of Tyre erased and lost, so that he made a reseal, not having the image and likeness of God, according to which the first man was created, as God says: Let us make man in our image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). And it should be noted that the image was only made then, and the likeness is fulfilled in Christ's

baptism. And accordingly, to her to whom it has been said: You are a likeness of the seal, is joined, full of wisdom, perfect in beauty, or, a crown of glory. For where the likeness of God is, there is also the fullness of wisdom, and perfect beauty, or as a crown adorned with different flowers, and composed of virtues, which the diligent increases by his own efforts, while the industry nourishes the good of nature, and the negligent diminishes it, according to what is said in Proverbs under the figure of a beautiful and ill-mannered woman: As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion (Prov. XI, 22). It follows: In the delights of the paradise of God, you were: for which reason it is called Eden in Hebrew, which also the history of Genesis narrates. Eden, however, is translated into delights. And beautifully it is named paradise of God to distinguish it, so as to show that there is a contrary paradise not of God, among those who change the truth into lying (Rom. 1), and boast of having a paradise. By this speech he demonstrates, that the one of whom it is written is by no means a human being, but a contrary fortitude, which formerly dwelt in God's paradise: although the Jews estimate prophetically, by that metaphor which is called hyperbole, that it refers to King Hiram of Tyre. But to whom is it said: You were in the delights of the paradise of God, or you have become, it shows what he had, or what he lost. Moreover, what is joined to the habitation of paradise, every precious stone is your covering, or your binding, and encirclement, jasper, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, and onyx, and beryl, sapphire, and carbuncle, and emerald, or, as in the LXX, in a different order and with other names, twelve stones are contained, this must be observed, not every precious stone surrounded the king of Tyre, or covered, and as Symmachus translated, bound and confined: but every stone that the prince of Tyre had was precious. Moreover, there are many precious stones that Scripture does not mention in this place, such as chalcedony, sardonyx, chrysoprased, hyacinth, crystal, and the most precious pearl. Even Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion differ greatly from each other in this place, not only in order, but also in number and names. In the Book of Revelation, where the city of Jerusalem is described as built with living stones, there is a slight change in order towards the end, and the same stones are set in its foundations, so that its gates are inscribed with the light of crystal (Rev. 21). But also in the breastplate of the high priest, through the four rows in the Rational (Exod. 28), the same stones are described, and on his shoulders two onyx stones, on which are written the names of the twelve patriarchs, which the true high priest, of whom it is written: You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4), carries on his breast, carries on his shoulders, in order to represent the number of the twelve stones of the apostles; and in the two sacraments of both Testaments, one of which John the Evangelist leaned on his breast, in order to drink from the streams of wisdom, and could say: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God (John 1:1-2). These are living stones, from which the Church is built, and about which the Apostle Peter writes: If you have believed, because the Lord is sweet: approaching him, the living stone, indeed rejected by men, but chosen and honored by God, and you yourselves, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices pleasing to God through Jesus Christ. For the Scripture says (Isa. XXVIII, 16): Behold, I am laying in Zion a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (I Pet. II, 3 et seqq.). Moreover, the vessel of election is united by equal votes, saying: Upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, the corner stone being Christ Jesus Our Lord: in whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord (Eph. II, 10). These are the stones of which we read in another place: And the holy stones are rolled over the earth, like

wheels (Zach. IX, 16), touching but little the ground, and hastening with their rolling to the heavenly places. Of which the Scripture also speaks: Behold, I will prepare thy carbuncle stone, and thy foundations sapphire, and I will make thy bulwarks jasper, and thy gates crystal, and thy walls precious stones: and all thy children shall be taught of God, and in much peace thy children shall be, and thou shalt be built in justice (Isa. 54:11-13). Concerning which, we have explained in the interpretations of the same prophet. The twentieth Psalm sings of stones of this kind: The king shall rejoice in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation he shall greatly rejoice. Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden from him the will of his lips. For thou hast prevented him with blessings of sweetness: thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones (Psalm XX. 1 seq.). These are the pearls of the prophets and apostles, which, in comparison with Christ, are all sold in the Gospel (Matthew XIV), that the most precious pearl may be bought, and the stone of which Zacharias writes, which has seven eyes, that is, the seven graces of the Holy Spirit (Zach. III and IV). Read Isaiah. And it is placed by the apostle Paul as the foundation of the Church, upon which gold, silver, and precious stones are built (I Cor. III): the colors, natures, and efficacies of each of which are not to be discussed in this time; but they desire a separate volume: so that in Ezekiel, and in Exodus, and in Revelation, and in Isaiah, all the stones and orders of stones compared to each other make a great question for both the reader and the discussant. Super quibus et vir sanctus Epiphanius episcopus proprium volumen mihi praesens tradidit. Et XXXVII liber Plinii Secundi, Naturalis Historiae, post multiplicem omnium rerum scientiam, de gemmis et lapidibus disputat. Ad quorum notitiam diligens à nobis mittendus est lector. Porro Symmachi interpretatio, istum principem Tyri, quasi pretiosissimum monile lapidibus scribit esse distinctum. Denique auri tympanum vocat, in quo infixi sint lapides. And according to the Hebrew, it follows: Gold is the work of your adornment, and your holes are prepared on the day you were buried. For this reason, the Septuagint says: You filled your treasures and storehouses with gold, reflecting the understanding and intention that his thoughts have revealed in divine sacraments, and he has gathered for himself spiritual riches, about which the Lord commanded: Store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither rust nor moth destroys, nor thieves dig and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. This is the hidden treasure, of which he also speaks in the Gospel: The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. But the apothecae, or storehouses, are those of which it is written elsewhere: Blessed shall be thy barns and rich thy tables. After this, it is said, according to the Hebrew: 'You are the stretched out and protecting Cherub, with the ark of God and the propitiatory beneath it,' or, according to the Septuagint, that he himself, anointed and created, was with the Cherub. From this it is shown that this does not pertain to a human prince of the city of Tyre, but rather to the once holy and eminent strength that was placed as prince of the city of Tyre. And I have set you, he says, on the holy mountain of God; without a doubt, this signifies paradise, to which Paul the Apostle says he was caught up after the third heaven (1 Corinthians 12). But the cherub, of the male gender, is called in the singular number: and in the plural number they are called cherubim, which are interpreted as a multitude of knowledge. God rests and sits upon them, and uses this chariot, as the prophet says: You who sits upon the cherubim, manifest yourself (Ps. 79:2). And in another place: He ascended upon the cherubim, and flew; he flew upon the wings of the wind (Ps. 18:11). This cherub, or creature with cherub, extended and protecting the sacraments, is placed on the holy mountain of God, as we have often said. And the Apostle Paul speaks, if anyone receives the Epistle to the

Hebrews: You have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of angels (Heb. XII, 22). Or certainly the holy mountain of God, as we have said, is to be understood as a paradise. He also walked among fiery stones, of which it is written: He makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a burning fire (Ps. CIII, 4). And not only God, who is called consuming fire, consumes hay, wood, and straw (Deut. IV): but also the angels, who are called fiery stones, and fervent in spirit. Hence the Lord says: I came to cast fire upon the earth, and what do I desire but that it be kindled (Luke XII). And what follows: You are perfect in your ways from the day of your creation (in the Septuagint: You were blameless in your days, from the day you were created), until iniquity was found in you, shows that every creature, created good by God, had perfect virtue, and that even the prince of Tyre was blameless, so that sin is not a part of nature, but of will. Until iniquity was found in you. Iniquity invented by God, which was kept enclosed in the treasure chests of your heart through pride and the abuse of power that you had received. Also, the inner chambers, or storehouses, of his wickedness were filled with a multitude of his dealings. For while he sought after many things and was not satisfied with the knowledge he had gained, nor with the power he had been given, he filled the storehouses and inner chambers of his heart so that, being satiated and made fat, he kicked against his Creator. For Jacob ate, and was satisfied, and the beloved one rebelled, becoming fat and sleek, and enlarged, and forsaking the God who made him (Deut. XXXII, 15). And from the heart come evil thoughts (Matth. XV, 19): because of which God says: You have sinned, and I have cast you out from the mountain of God, or you have been wounded by the mountain of God, which we who read are compelled to fear. For if the Cherub extended and protecting, placed on the holy mountain of God, and in the midst of fiery stones, perfect and immaculate, filled his interior with iniquity because of the abundance of trade, and sinned, and was cast out from the mountain of God, that is, from the dwelling of paradise, or wounded by the mountain of God, which clearly refers to Christ, or certainly wounded by the mountain of God, established and dwelling in himself, he is pricked in conscience by evil, while he realizes himself unworthy of the habitation of the mountain: what, then, is to be said of us? Therefore he says to him: 'And I have destroyed you, Cherub, protecting you from the midst of burning stones, so that you would not remain among the burning stones, but perish. O Cherub himself, or Cherubim, who protected you, I have brought you out from the midst of burning stones, according to what is also written about Adam: He drove out Adam, and stationed him (or Cherubim) opposite the paradise of delights (Gen. III, 24). And he gives the reasons why he was brought out, or cast out, from the midst of burning stones.' For your heart has been lifted up in your beauty, thinking that what is God's is yours. Therefore, the apostle says that he received a thorn in the flesh and an angel of Satan to buffet him, so that he would not be exalted by the greatness of his revelations and fall into the judgment of the devil (2 Corinthians 12). And so, your doctrine is corrupted, he says, along with your beauty, or you have lost your wisdom in your beauty. While you desire to be more than what you were created to be and to know more than what you have received from God, you have even lost what you had, and deformity and foolishness have possessed you instead of beauty and knowledge. Therefore, you have been cast down to the earth, you who once dwelled on the mountain of God. About which Isaiah writes: How has Lucifer fallen, who used to rise in the morning (Isa. XIV, 12)? And the Savior in the Gospel says: I saw, he said, Satan falling like lightning from heaven (Luke X). This is also what Jeremiah speaks to Jerusalem. How has the Lord darkened the daughter of Zion in His anger: He has cast down from heaven to earth the glory of Israel (Lamentations II, 1)? But you have been cast down in the sight

of all kings, to terrify them by your example, either of good kings, whose heart is in the hand of God (Prov. XXI), or of evil ones, whose kingdoms the devil showed to the Savior (Matt. IV): who encountered the Babylonian king, saying: And you have been captured like us, and considered among us. Therefore, he defiled his sanctification which he had when he dwelt on the mountain and conversed among the burning stones. It follows: I will bring fire in the midst of you which shall devour you. This fire was kindled in the heart of the king of Tyre by him whose arrows are kindled, as it is written: All those who commit adultery are like an oven, their hearts (Hosea). About this fire, Isaiah also speaks: Walk in the light of your fire, and in the flame you have kindled (Isaiah 50), so that when you go out, it may devour the possessor, according to what is written in the same Isaiah: It consumed like the grass the fuel (Isaiah 5). On that day the mountains and hills and forests will be extinguished, and it will devour from soul to flesh. This fire, which is called alien, Nadab and Abihu offered to the altar of the Lord, and for this reason they were consumed by divine fire (Leviticus 10). Hence Moses says: This is the word that the Lord spoke: In those who approach me, I will sanctify myself. But the sanctification of God is the punishment of sinners. After this it is said: And I will turn you into ashes, so that all that you have built will be consumed by the fire of your guilty conscience. When you should have rested on the Sabbath, and should not have done any servile work, you gathered wood on the Sabbath so that you would have something to fuel the fire in your heart. He will also destroy all evil works, reducing them to ashes, so that the harmful fire may be completely extinguished, so that all may see and marvel at the destruction of the king of Tyre, and that it has become nothing, not for many centuries, but in one instant, or certainly forever, so that what is written may be fulfilled: I will not spare you, and I will not have pity. The Hebrews, among their other fables and genealogies and endless questions, are accustomed to understand these words against Hiram, king of Tyre, when they say that from Solomon to Ezekiel there are many years, which it is obvious that men did not live at that time: and thus they pronounce, as if the prophet spoke to him ironically: Are you the seal of the likeness of God, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty? You are adorned with all precious stones, you are a cherub, or created with a cherub: whereas in reality you have sinned, and you will be dissolved into ashes. And they add to their story a miracle, that contrary to Scripture, indeed without the authority of Scripture, they say that Hiram lived for a thousand years. But how violent this interpretation is, a prudent reader understands without our judgment.

28:20-26

(Verse 20 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face against Sidon and prophesy against it, and say: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, Sidon, and I will be glorified in you. And they shall know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments in her and am sanctified in her. And I will send pestilence upon her and blood in her streets, and the slain shall fall in her midst, by the sword all around, and they shall know that I am the Lord. And there will no longer be a stumbling block of bitterness and a thorn inflicting pain in every direction for the house of Israel (or those who have insulted them). And they will know that I am the Lord their God. Thus says the Lord God: When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples (or from the nations) among whom they are scattered, I will be sanctified in them before the nations. And they will dwell in their own land, which I gave to my servant Jacob, and they will dwell there securely (or in hope). And they will build houses and plant vineyards, and they will dwell confidently (or in hope) when I execute judgments on all who oppose them (or have insulted

them) on every side. And they will know that I am the Lord their God. And what follows, according to the Septuagint: And you, the God of their fathers, is not found in Hebrew. Furthermore, after Tyre, the speech turns to Sidon; for both cities are part of the same province. And in the Gospel, Tyre and Sidon are mentioned together: If the miracles which were done in you were done in Tyre and Sidon (Matthew 11:21). Therefore, even the Canaanite woman, whose daughter was possessed by a demon, because she came from the region of Tyre and Sidon, obtained what she had asked for (ibid., 15). But the divine word predicts that it will be taken captive by the Babylonians, and it will know the weight of its evils, that He Himself is the Lord: when He has judged it, and has been sanctified in it, and has consumed it with hunger and pestilence, and with the sword: so that it falls in its streets, and no longer becomes a stumbling block to the people of God, nor does it frequently attack them. But when this has been done, the people of Israel, whom He had dispersed into various nations, will return to their own land, and they will be sanctified in them, not for evil, as in Sidon, but for good, when He has shown mercy to them, and they will dwell in the land which He gave to their father Jacob, and they will dwell securely, and in the Lord they will trust, and they will build houses, and plant vineyards, when He has fulfilled His promises to them: and then they will know that He Himself is the Lord, whose promises are most firm. Many refer to the time of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, when the people of Israel returned and lived in the land of Judah. Others, however, hope for its fulfillment in the last time and in a thousand years. Moreover, according to spiritual understanding, this seems to have a symbolic meaning for us. Sidonians are interpreted as hunters, about whom it is also written in the Psalms: Our soul has been rescued like a bird from the snare of the hunters (Psalm 124:7). And in Proverbs: The eye of a harlot is the snare of a sinner (Prov. XXIII, 27). But there are also hunters on the good side, of whom Jeremiah writes: Behold, I will send fishermen and hunters, who will hunt you down from every hill and mountain (Jerem. XVI, 16): whom the Lord also sends to fish, and makes them fishers of men (Matth. IV). Hence the village of Peter and Andrew is called by this name: For Bethsaida in our language means 'the house of hunters'. Against these wretched hunters, the word of God is directed, and the prophet is commanded to set his face against Sidon and not waver in the wind of doctrine, but stand firm in the truth and destroy his hunters. So what is it that the Lord threatens against Sidon? Behold, I myself will come to you and be glorified in you when I destroy you, and all who live will know that I am the Lord when I repay you according to what you deserve. And I will send pestilence and blood into your streets. And rightly are they called streets of Sidon: for it is a wide and spacious road that leads to death (Matt. 7). And the slain will fall, those who stood evilly by the sword in a circle: by that sword which the Lord came to send upon the earth, so that He may separate what is improperly joined, and so that those who remain may know that He Himself is the Lord. And when they have ceased, there will no longer be any stumbling block of bitterness, nor a thorn that pierces and wounds the people of God. But all these things are said against the opposing powers, that they may be destroyed in the end time, and there may be eternal security when the Lord gathers the house of Israel, those who perceive God with understanding. And he will be sanctified in them, and that which is written will be fulfilled: Be holy, for I am holy (Leviticus 19:2). And they will dwell in their own land, as we read elsewhere: I believe in seeing the good things of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 16:13). What Jacob gave, who had supplanted his brother earlier, and earned the primacy for himself. And they will dwell in it securely, either in hope, and they will build houses, plant vineyards, and dwell confidently in hope, according to what is read in Isaiah: Those who have been weaned from milk,

those who have been taken away from the breast, expect tribulation upon tribulation, and hope upon hope (Isa. 60). But they will build houses, as also built in the Gospel, who established foundations not on sand, but on rock (Matt. 7). Of which it is written: Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it (Ps. 127:1). And in Exodus, according to the Septuagint: Because the midwives feared the Lord, they built houses for themselves (Exod. 1:21), and many such things. But when the Lord executes judgment against those who oppose or inflict insults on Israel, all creatures will know that He is the Lord, whose judgments are true and justified in themselves.

29:1-2

(Chap. XXIX.—Vers. 1, 2.) In the tenth year (or according to the LXX, the twelfth), in the tenth month (or, according to the Hebrew, the twelfth), on the first (or one) day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt, and say: Thus says the Lord God. After Sidon, which is also situated on the coast of Phoenicia, the word of the Lord came to the prophet in the tenth year of the captivity of King Jehoiachin, in the twelfth month, and on the first day of the month, that he should set his face and strengthen himself against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and speak concerning him, and concerning all Egypt, against all of Egypt province. And prophesy regarding what will happen to them. But if we must say something about the numbers, which place does one hold among ten days: hence, at the beginning of Genesis, it is not said: There was evening and morning, the first day, but one day (Gen.1), in order to teach that the same day is always repeated: the tenth number holds the same order among ten decades, which is a hundred, and this number is taken up by the sacrificial lamb, so that it is sacrificed on the fourteenth day, and in this way it continues through its decades, with the order of its numbers proceeding to a thousand and ten thousand, and one hundred thousand, and beyond. But after the tenth year, the twelfth month is placed, so that the perfect number of twelve apostles and prophets (who are contained in one volume) may be shown. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the tenth month, which is called Tebeth in Hebrew (), and in Egypt týbi, is called January by the Romans, because among them it is the door of the year: with all heat removed, it contains the beginning of winter cold. Let it suffice to have spoken about numbers. Moreover, that must be especially sought after, whether the Pharaoh referred to in Exodus, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and many other places, and in the Song of Songs is the same person or different individuals. And it seems to me that this word does not refer to a single person, but rather signifies the royal dignity among the Egyptians, like how the Romans called their emperors and kings from the first Caesar, Gaius Caesar, and the second, his adopted son Octavian, who was later named Augustus. And among the Syrians, there was Antiochus, among the Persians, there were the Arsacid kings, among the Philistines, Abimelech, and after Alexander, in Egypt, there were the Ptolemies until Cleopatra, who, when defeated at Actium, made Egypt a Roman province. Therefore, in the present time, the word of the Lord is directed against every king of Egypt, who is interpreted as the destroyer, the slayer and maimer, cutting and dividing all things with a sword. This is to be understood in a mystical sense referring to the power to which Egypt is subject. For no man would dare to say: 'The rivers are mine, and I have made them,' nor would the great dragon be called, sitting in the midst of its rivers; but Egypt is called Mizraim in Hebrew, and it is translated into our language as afflicting and troubling, narrowing down and oppressing those who are subject to it, and not lifting its eyes to

heaven but, according to the Gospel and the example of that woman whom the devil had bent double for eighteen years, always sinking down to earthly things (Luke 13).' Let us therefore see what is the threat against Pharaoh and all of Egypt.

29:3-7

(Verse 3 onwards) Behold, I am coming to you, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, the great dragon, who lies (or sits) in the midst of your rivers, and you say: The river is mine, and I have made it for myself (or them). And I will put a bit (or a snare) in your jaws, and I will stick the fish of your rivers to your scales (or feathers), and I will draw you out of the midst of your rivers; and all your fish will cling to your scales (or feathers). And I will cast (or put) you out swiftly (or into the desert), and all the fish of your river will fall upon the face of the land (or your field). You shall not be gathered together, nor shall you be assembled; I have given you to the beasts of the earth and the birds of the air to be devoured. And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord; because you have become (or were) a staff (or reed) of the house of Israel, when they took (or he took) you with their hand ((Vulgate is silent on his hand)), and you were broken, and you bruised their every shoulder, and those leaning on you were shattered, and you broke (or shattered) all their loins. We combine both editions of brevity, where they do not differ much from each other. Otherwise, when there is a great difference, we present both. However, it speaks against Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, and under his figure it speaks to great power, to which Egypt is given to govern, and nevertheless it boasts against its Creator, claiming dominion over the land for itself, and entrusting itself to be worshipped by the Egyptian nations. And it speaks according to the location of the province, as if to a king, relying on the flood of the Nile and not greatly desiring rains from the sky, and thinking itself to be the author of itself, or of the rivers, that is, the canals and streams of the Nile made by itself. No, he said, I will not send an Angel, but, O great dragon, who lie and dwell in the middle of your rivers, I myself will come to you for punishment. For you have dared to say: The Nile river is mine, and I am its creator: or, I have made the river by which all Egypt is watered. And when I come, I will put a bridle in your jaws: or I will bind your mouth with reins, with which you boasted so mightily, and I will make all your allies and leaders, whom you call fish, cling to your feathers or scales, so that you are dragged out of the river and thrown out or cast down. For you have exalted yourself excessively in the desert. And you shall fall on the face of the field, or of your land, because Egypt is a flat province. Your body will not be gathered, nor will you be gathered, that is, you will not be buried, but I will give you to be devoured by beasts and birds of the sky, so that when the inhabitants of Egypt see these judgments executed upon you, they may know that I am the Lord. But these things shall happen to you because you have deceived my people Israel with your false aid, so that they would not trust in their God and Creator, but in you. You were a reed staff to them, according to Isaiah (Isa. XXX), or an empty rod, and a very fragile reed, which, when they leaned on it, proved to be useless, so that when they leaned on it, it would break and tear their shoulder, and the hand with which they held on. And while they trusted in you, all the loins of those who fell to the ground would be broken, and those who received help from you would be wounded. But these things are said metaphorically as if to the king of Egypt, because even the province itself was not an adversary to Israel, but while it made great promises, it would separate them from God's help. But according to the anagoge, we often read about the opposing power of the dragon. Therefore, Pharaoh is called the scatterer, because he separates and disconnects from God, and Egypt, that is, Egypt (), is turned into a tribulation and affliction for

those whom it can subjugate. This dragon is a transgressor, of whom Job speaks very fully (Job 41). And in the Psalms it is written: You have broken the heads of the dragon, and have given him as food to the people of Ethiopia (Psalm 74:14). And the great dragon is said to be compared to the smaller dragons, of which it is sung in the psalm: You have broken the heads of the dragons in the waters (Ibid.). And in another place: This great and spacious sea with hands. There are reptiles there without number: small animals with large ones, there the ships will pass: This dragon which you have formed to mock him (Ibid., CIII, 25 seqq.). As it is said in another place: He is the king of all that are in the waters, and the beginning of the representation of the Lord, who was made to be mocked by his angels (Job. XLI, 24, sec. LXX). But he sits, or lies down, in the midst of his rivers, not of one river, but of many, which we receive in various heresies, through which he flowed into Egypt of this age, and watered the souls of the deceived, not with rain from heaven, but with turbid waters from the earth, which Jeremiah does not forbid to drink, saying: What to you and the ways of Egypt, that you drink the water of Geon (Jerem. XI, 18) ? For which it is written in Hebrew Sior (), which word is translated into turbid and muddy waters. But so that we may understand what the rivers of the Egyptian dragon are, we will be able to know from their opposites. The Lord speaks of his rivers: Whoever believes in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water (John 7:37). And to the Samaritan woman: Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:13-14). These are the rivers coming from heaven, of which David sings: The stream of the river makes the city of God glad (Psalm 46:4): undoubtedly it signifies the Church. Therefore, let us consider what is the punishment or penalty of the dragon. It follows: And I will put a bit or a noose in your jaws. This is similar to what Job says: You will draw out the dragon with a fishhook, and put a bridle around his nose. He trusts that the Jordan will enter into his mouth; he will receive it in his eye. However, a hook will pierce his nose, and a ring will be in his lips (Job 40:19). The Lord puts a bit in the jaws of this dragon, and pierces his lips and binds them with a ring. This happens when He silences him through Ecclesiastical men who are well-versed in the Holy Scriptures, and all the teachings of wickedness are dissolved. And the fish of its rivers agglutinate with its own wings, or scales, with which the heretics, through pride, hasten to high things, so that they themselves, bound together with the dragon, may become one body with it, and may be united to it either in the fellowship of error, or in the likeness of punishment: just as one who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit (I Cor. VI, 17). And indeed, the Egyptian dragon does not have one river, but many rivers, with which it waters humble and lowly Egypt, which has nothing in itself of mountains: nor the waters of Siloam, which flow silently, but turbid and muddy (Isa. VIII). And the Lord will remove him from the midst of his rivers, so that he does not incubate over them, nor sit upon them: and all the fish will adhere to his scales, according to the quality of his vices, throughout the body of the dragon, either to the head, or to the belly, or to the tail, and to the extremities sticking to it: so that when the dragon is removed, the fish also, which adhere to him, be likewise removed. And I will cast you, he says, into the desert, so that you will never find anyone to deceive. Surely, I will cast you down from the summit of your pride, and I will cast you down swiftly, according to the words of the Apostle: 'The God of peace will quickly crush Satan beneath your feet' (Rom. XVI, 20); so that the dragon, broken and cast down, the fish of that river may also be cast down, and the author of crimes may fall, who previously thought he could stand and run throughout the whole world. Let him fall upon the face of his own land, to which he was precipitated from heaven, so that he may no longer be gathered or congregated in

the heretical Churches, nor buried among those who believed in him when they have been freed from him, but let him be given over to be devoured by the beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky. Regarding the beasts, it is written: 'Do not give the soul confessing to you to the beasts' (Psalm 73:19). And the birds of the sky, which eat the seed along the path, are interpreted to be the devils by the Savior (Matthew 13). For not only the prince of evil, but also his disciples are called devils, according to what is said of Judas: 'Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?' (John 6:71). The birds of the sky are called birds because they promise themselves things that are lofty, so that after the dragon with its fish is cast down and handed over to be devoured by the beasts of the earth, which have no gentleness in themselves, and by those who are blown about by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4), then all the inhabitants of this world may understand that he himself is the Lord. But the whole reason for punishments is that Israel sought help in vain, and it was a rod or reed staff, empty and void, having nothing of fullness in itself, because it could not say: But we all received from his fullness (John 1:16); when the Scripture commands: You shall not appear before the Lord your God empty or void (Exodus 23:15). And that we should not seek help from Egypt, Scripture elsewhere testifies: Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help (Isaiah 31:1). He taunts King Hezekiah with a reed staff like this and Rabsaces in vain, saying: Behold, you trust in a reed staff and in this broken staff, over Egypt: on whom if anyone leans, it enters his hand. Thus is Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to all who trust in him. And indeed, he lied about the righteous king, mentioning these things, who is interpreted as 'multus poculo'. For he was intoxicated with the golden cup of Babylon, and therefore he fed his own people to the Lord who they confess. But here the pharaoh is reproached because he made the house of Israel to trust in a rod or reed, which promised them vain and fragile help, quickly to be broken. But that we may know what the reed rod is, on which the house of Israel ought not to trust, we may understand from the opposite rod and staff of the Lord, of which it is said to the Lord: Thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me (Psalm 23:4). Aaron also had this rod, which devoured the Egyptian serpents, and when he struck the banks of the Nile, mosquitoes were generated in the whole of Egypt (Exodus VII, VIII). Moses also, according to the Septuagint, extended this rod and raised it to the heavens, and the Lord brought a south wind upon the land all that day and all that night, and in the morning the wind lifted locusts and brought them upon all the land of Egypt. I think that this rod is also mentioned in the Book of Numbers, that it blossomed and bore nuts or almonds (Numbers XVII). The Apostle had this when he said: What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod? (I Cor. IV, 21). And those who celebrated the Passover held staffs in their hands, without which they could not support the weakness of the human body and eat the flesh of the lamb. This is the rod from the root of Jesse, upon which the seven spirits rested. But not like Pharaoh, nor like the staff of Egypt and the reed rod that deceives those who grasp it and tears their shoulders, that is, their strength. And whoever leans on it, his loins are loosened and he cannot stand; nor can he celebrate Passover, girded with his loins. This is fitting for those whose hearts and kidneys God examines.

29:8-16

(Verse 8 and following) Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will bring a sword upon you, and will cut off from you man and beast. And the land of Egypt shall become a desolation (or destruction) and a wilderness: and they shall know that I am the Lord: because he (or you) said, My river is mine, and I have made it (or My rivers are mine, and I have made them). Therefore

behold, I am against you and against your rivers: and I will make the land of Egypt desolate, cut off by the sword from Migdol to Syene (or from Migdol to Syene and beyond) to the border of Ethiopia. The foot of man shall not pass through it, nor shall the foot of beast tread upon it; it shall not be inhabited for forty years. And I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of desolated countries, and her cities shall be desolate for forty years. And I will scatter (or disperse) the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries. For thus says the Lord God: After the end of forty years, I will gather Egypt (or the Egyptians) from the peoples (or nations) among whom they were scattered. And I will bring back the captivity of Egypt, and I will place them in the land of Phatures, in the land of their birth (or in the land from which they were taken). And there they shall be in a humble kingdom (or principality), among the other kingdoms it shall be the most humble (or lowest). And they shall no longer be elevated above the nations, and I will diminish them so that they will not rule over the nations (or so that there are not many among the nations). And they shall no longer be a confidence (or hope) to the house of Israel, teaching iniquity in order to flee and follow them (or in order to remember the iniquity and follow them). And they shall know that I am the Lord God. You were a reed staff to the house of Israel, and not only were you broken in his hand, but according to Isaiah (Isa. XXXVI), you pierced his hand, and now you have torn his shoulder, and you yourself are broken, and you have loosened the loins of those who leaned on you. Therefore, I will bring the sword of the enemies upon you, and I will devastate both men and animals, and the land of Egypt will be reduced to desolation, and the Egyptians will know for the second time that I am the Lord. But I will not be content with this; but because he burst forth into such great blasphemy, that he said his own rivers were gods, and all the abundance of Egypt: therefore I will take away him who said he was the Creator, and the rivers which he had boasted were created by him, and I will reduce the land of Egypt to a long wilderness, and it will be destroyed by the sword, from the tower of Syene to the borders of Ethiopia. They called the tower, which in Hebrew is called Magdal (), 'the tower of the LXX,' so that they would write Μαγδαλ■v. However, the tower of Syene still stands today, a fortress subject to Roman rule, where the cataracts of the Nile are located, and up to which place our sea is navigable. Therefore, he says that the whole of Egypt must be depopulated until the borders of Ethiopia, where the outermost region of Egypt is joined, so that the chief priests may not cross into Egypt, nor may any animals be found there, and it may not be inhabited for forty years. For Egypt is spared, and because the Israelites were once guests there, the punishment is of shorter duration. Tyre celebrated its sabbaths for seventy years, and thus it was restored to its former state. The captivity of Judah and the destruction of the temple lasted for seventy years, until the reign of Cyrus, king of Persia. For the mighty will endure mighty torments (Wisdom 6:7). And when it says, 'I will make the land of Egypt a desolation, in the midst of desolated countries,' it refers to the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, and all the other regions against which the prophecy of the prophets was given. Then he will scatter or disperse the Egyptians into nations, and will scatter them into lands. Because the Lord is merciful and compassionate, patient and full of mercy, after forty years the restoration of Egypt will occur, and all the captivity will be brought back to the ancient land, and will be placed in the metropolis city, which is called Phaturos, where it originated and from where it set forth: but only in such a way that it loses its ancient pride for its own benefit, and becomes a humble kingdom, or rather the humblest of all nations: so that it does not elevate itself above other peoples, nor have dominion over them; but reduced to a small number, it will by no means deceive the house of Israel with its confidence, nor teach them wickedness; whether it

brings them to remembrance of their wickedness, that they sought the aid of Egypt by abandoning the help of God. And all these things will happen so that the Egyptians may know on the third day that He Himself is the Lord. We have briefly explained these matters, laying the foundations of history. Now the cloud of allegory must be discussed, and we will try to avoid both brevity and the lengthiness of this explanation. This is a discourse about the dragon, who said: 'The rivers are mine, and I made them.' (Above, same.) May the Lord Himself bring a sword upon him, as it is written in Isaiah: 'My sword is intoxicated in the sky; now it will descend to the earth to destroy humans and animals from it.' (Isaiah 34:5) Whatever the dragon seems to possess, whether of reason or simplicity, should be destroyed, not absolutely, but by the dragon itself, so that the dragons may perish and God may live, and the land of Egypt may become a wasteland, according to the higher understanding, whatever the dragon may perish by, and after its destruction, be reduced to solitude, ceasing to have the worst guest. And then shall men and beasts know, and the earth, being ruined, that He is the Lord, in that sense in which it is written in the seventy-seventh Psalm: When He slew them, then they sought Him (Ps. LXXVII, 34). For everyone who seeks, finds. It is indeed an act of God's mercy that the abundance of this world perishes, and the rivers of Egypt are dried up, and even their land becomes a desert, and the purpose of the Lord is scattered from the Tower of Syene, which means a circle, so that it may not have any righteousness in itself, even to the land of the Ethiopians, who are called the humble ones, so that every pride that had exalted itself against the knowledge of God may be destroyed and humbled for its own salvation. Neither the foot of man, that is, anything rational, passes through Egypt, nor does the foot of an animal walk in it: so that it does not hold even the simple ones, whom Pharaoh desired to keep in Egypt after dismissing the people, Moses objecting, and desiring that even the animals be liberated from the captivity of Egypt. And it shall not be inhabited for forty years, which number is always one of affliction and punishment. Hence Moses, and Elijah, and the Savior himself, fasted for forty days and nights, and the people were in the wilderness for forty years, so that afterwards they would be freed in Gilgal, having been circumcised, from the reproach and shame of Egypt (Exod. XXXIV; III Reg. IX; Matth. IV; Num. XIV). In the sacrament of this number, the prophet of the tribe of Judah also slept on the right side for forty days, and it was announced that the people would serve in Egypt for four hundred years (Gen. 7). They make forty decades, or four hundreds. The rains of the flood last for forty days and bring shipwreck to the world. For it was just that the one who offends God by loving and cherishing the four elements of the world, which are said to constitute everything, should be punished in that very number. And Israel, who sinned on the Sabbath, would endure the punishment of seventy years, which is the punishment of seven decades. And the barren land of Egypt is given, and its cities in the midst of the lands and of the subverted cities, which are not built of stones, but of mud and straw, so that Egypt, which was joined together poorly, may be dispersed and scattered into the lands, and so that the wheat may be separated from the straw, and when the completion of forty years is reached, there may be restitution of Egypt, and its captivity may be brought back, and it may be placed in the land of Phatures, which is interpreted as trampled bread; where that bread which said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven' (John 6:5), was trampled upon by heretical wickedness: so that when they come to the Church, they may dwell in trampled bread, and may not be lifted up in pride, but may be in a humble kingdom. And also, when they are restored to their previous state, they should humble themselves, because they lived in Egypt and built brick cities, and among many kingdoms they should be humble in the Church, and they should know whom

they have sinned against, and Egypt should no longer be exalted above the Churches throughout the divided world, but should be reduced to a few, and only a few should remain among the nations, according to what is written: Give them, O Lord. What will you give them? Give them a barren womb and dried-up breasts (Hosea 9:4), so that they may not rejoice and exalt themselves in the multitude of deceivers, but be reduced to a few: For many are called, but few are chosen (Matthew 20). And let them no longer deceive the house of Israel, that is, the Church; nor promise them vain hope and confidence, teaching iniquity, so that they may avoid the discipline of the Church and pursue Egyptian pleasures. But these things will happen so that the Egyptians may know for the third time that He Himself is the Lord. This, it seems to me, is said for this reason: that the first knowledge of the Egyptians is in the flesh, the second in the soul, the third in the spirit. First, upon the earth; second, after the completion of the conversation of this world; third, after the resurrection.

29:17-21

(Verse 17 onwards) And it came to pass in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyre; every head was made bald, and every shoulder was rubbed bare; yet he had no wages, nor his army, for Tyre, for the service that he had served against it. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will give Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon the land of Egypt; and he shall take its multitude, and take its spoil, and take its prey; and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor that he has performed for me, says the Lord God. On that day the horn of the house of Israel will sprout, and I will give you an open mouth in the midst of them, and they will know that I am the Lord. It is asked how after the tenth year of the previous discourse, immediately the twenty-seventh year is placed, and in the following years the twelfth and the thirteenth, and in the final description of the temple, the twenty-fifth. But the solution is easy. Because both the prophecy about Egypt and the previous one, and the one that is now being spoken, are covered, although they have been made at different times: yet they are joined together because they prophesy about one province. And we often read in Jeremiah, that times are described in a preposterous order. For the deeds of Zedekiah are reported first, and then those of Joachim who came before him. But in the Psalms, because it is a lyric poem, the order of the events is not sought. So let us speak first according to the letter. When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre, and because it was surrounded by the sea, he could not join the rams, machines, and vineyards to the walls, he ordered an infinite multitude of the army to carry rocks and mounds, and when the middle sea, or rather the narrow strait, was filled, he made the neighboring shore an uninterrupted island. When the Tyrians saw that the city was now completely finished and that the foundations of the walls were being shaken by the battering of the rams, they loaded onto ships whatever precious things they had in gold, silver, clothing, and various furnishings that the nobility possessed, and carried them to the islands, so that after capturing the city, Nebuchadnezzar found nothing worthy of his hard work. And because he had obeyed God's will in this matter, after a few years of captivity in Tyre, Egypt was given to him; and Tyrus was much more cruel to Egypt. For she was attacking Jerusalem; this one was promising empty assistance. Indeed, it is one thing to deceive weakness with hope: it is another thing to fight against the people of God. Therefore, this is what Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, says: in the siege of Tyre, he made his army serve me, so that I may fulfill my will. Every

head is shaved, and every shoulder is made hairless, carrying baskets of earth and stones with which shoulders are shaved, and the head is shaved; and yet neither he nor his army found anything worthy in Tyre. And when he served me in this way, and fulfilled my will against Tyre, therefore I will give him the land of Egypt. Some say that this was accomplished under Nebuchadnezzar; others say under Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, who devastated Egypt as far as Ethiopia, to the extent of killing the sacred bull Apis and destroying all their statues. For this reason, they believe that he was turned mad by the chance of a horse and killed himself with his own dagger. Herodotus recounts this history in great detail, describing all of Egypt through its villages, castles, and towns, and revealing the origin of the Nile and the people of that land, as well as the measurement of the land around to the desert of Ethiopia and the shores of the Great Sea, bordering Libya and Arabia. But the cause of the Lord's anger against Egypt is that it deceived His people by not allowing them to hope in God and by provoking Him to anger. On that day when Egypt is captured, the horn of the house of Israel will sprout: undoubtedly indicating a royal lineage. Some refer this to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, who was descended from the line of David through Jeconiah, while others refer it to the ultimate time, when they believe that Elijah will come. But we, by understanding the Lord's horn to be Christ, interpret the present history. And when, he says, this has been accomplished first, then your mouth will be opened, and your prophecy will not hang on uncertain promises, but it will be seen accomplished in action: so that all who hear may know that I am the Lord, of whom it has been said and done. These things, according to the letter, indeed according to the truth, have been spoken as prophecies. Furthermore, from the fact that Nebuchadnezzar received a reward for his good work, we also understand that even the Gentiles, if they do something good, are not overlooked by God's judgment without a reward. Therefore, through Jeremiah, Nebuchadnezzar is called the dove of God because he served the will of God against the sinful people. 'And I will bring my servant Nebuchadnezzar' (Jeremiah 25).' From this, it is clear that we are condemned in comparison to the Gentiles if they follow the natural law, which we also neglect even though it is written. Paul the Apostle discusses this matter at length in his letter to the Romans. And lest we seem to overlook anything according to spiritual understanding, we inquire where we find this number, that is, the twenty-seventh. In the book of Genesis, Scripture testifies (Gen. VII) that in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the waters of the flood came upon the earth, and after seven months of the same year, which is near the Sabbath, and on the twenty-seventh day of the seventh month, the waters of the flood ceased, and Noah's ark settled on the mountains of Ararat, which are interpreted as Armenia. From this we understand that the number is average and can be applied to both, when in this and the anger of God begins from the flood, and his mercy is shown in the seventh month on the same day. And because among the Hebrews the month, which with us is measured by the Kalends, Nones, and Ides, is calculated according to the course of the moon: whence also in the Greek language it has received the name μην, that is, moon, it is said that on the twenty-seventh day of the moon there remained little light, so that his anger may not be without mercy. But when the whole orb of the moon is filled up, then both Easter is celebrated and all the greatest solemnities. Which we have set down strictly, so that we may know that in this number, both good and evil are contained equally. Good for Nebuchadnezzar, to whom his labor is rewarded; evil for the Egyptians, whose destruction is announced.

30:1-19 (Chapter 30, Verses 1 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, prophesy and say: Thus saith the Lord God: Howl ye, woe, woe to the day: For the day is near, yea the day of the Lord is near, a day of cloud, the time of the nations shall be. And the sword shall come upon Egypt: and there shall be dread in Ethiopia, when the wounded shall fall in Egypt, and the multitude thereof shall be taken away, and the foundations thereof shall be destroyed. Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the rest of the people, and Chub, and the children of the land of the covenant, shall fall with them by the sword. Thus says the Lord God: The supports of Egypt shall fall, and the pride of her power shall come down; from Migdol to Syene they shall fall within her by the sword, says the Lord God. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the desolate countries, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are laid waste. And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and all her helpers are destroyed. In that day shall messengers go forth from me in ships to make the confident Ethiopians afraid, and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt: for, surely it is coming. Thus says the Lord God: I will make the multitude of Egypt cease by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He and his people with him, the most ruthless of nations, shall be brought to destroy the land. They shall draw their swords against Egypt and fill the land with the slain. I will make the rivers dry and sell the land into the hand of the wicked; I will make the land desolate and all that is in it, by the hand of foreigners. I, the Lord, have spoken. Thus says the Lord God: I will destroy the idols and put an end to the idols in Memphis. There will no longer be a ruler in the land of Egypt, and I will bring terror to the land of Egypt. I will destroy the land of Pathros and bring fire to Taphnis. I will bring judgment upon Alexandria and pour out my anger upon the stronghold of Egypt, Pelusium. I will kill the multitude of Alexandria and bring fire to Egypt. Pelusium will suffer like a woman in labor, and Alexandria will be laid waste, with daily distress in Memphis. The young men of Heliopolis and Bubastus (or Bugastus) will fall by the sword, and the captives themselves will be led away. And in Taphnis the day will darken, when I shatter the scepters of Egypt and the pride of its power fails in it. It will be covered by clouds, and its daughters will be led into captivity. And I will execute judgments on Egypt, and they will know that I am the Lord. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, prophesy and say: Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the day! For the day is near, the day of the Lord is near; it will be a day of clouds, the end of the nations. And the sword shall come upon the Egyptians, and there will be turmoil in Ethiopia. And those wounded shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away its multitude, and its foundations shall be destroyed. Persians, and Cretans, and Lydians, and Libyans, and all the mixed peoples, and from the sons of my covenant they shall fall by the sword. Thus says the Lord God. And the supports of Egypt shall be cut down, and the pride of its strength shall come down from Migdol to Syene. They shall fall by the sword in it, says the Lord God. And it shall be desolated in the midst of the desolated regions, and its cities shall be in the midst of deserted cities, and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I bring fire upon Egypt, and all who support it are destroyed. In that day, messengers shall go forth from my presence, hastening to destroy the hope of Ethiopia, and there shall be great turmoil among them on the day of Egypt, for behold, it is coming. Thus says the Lord God. And I will destroy the multitude of Egyptians by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon himself, and his people with him, sent from the nations to destroy the land. And they will unsheath all their swords against Egypt, and the land will be filled with the wounded. And I will make their rivers desolate, and I will deliver the land into the hands of the wicked, and I will destroy the land and its abundance in the hands of foreigners. I, the Lord,

have spoken. For thus says the Lord God: And I will destroy the abominations, and I will cause the officials of Memphis to fail, and the princes of the land of Egypt, and they will exist no longer. And I will bring terror to the land of Egypt, and I will destroy the land of Pathros, and I will bring fire upon Tahpanhes, and I will execute vengeance in Diospolis, and I will pour out my fury upon Sin, the stronghold of Egypt, and I will destroy the multitude of Memphis. And I will set fire to Egypt, and there will be a great commotion in Sais, and there will be a division in Diospolis, and the waters will be scattered. The young men of Heliopolis and Bubastis will fall by the sword, and the women will be taken captive, and in Taphnis the day will become dark when I break the scepters of Egypt there, and the strength of its power will be destroyed, and a cloud will cover it, and its daughters will be taken captive, and I will bring judgment on Egypt, and they will know that I am the Lord. After the twenty-seventh year of the captivity of King Joachim, we return to the present time when he began to prophesy against Egypt, that is, in the tenth year and the tenth month, on the eleventh day of the month. And the Lord commanded him to speak to all nations, and especially to Egypt. So what is it that he speaks? Howl, woe, woe to the day, for the day is near and the day of the Lord is approaching. It is not a bright shining sun, but a day covered with clouds, bringing a storm upon Babylon. And when the sword begins to devastate Egypt, there will be fear in Ethiopia, which is near Egypt, lest the Babylonian blade reach her even to herself. For the wounded will fall in Egypt, and its multitude will be taken away, and all its foundations will be destroyed, so that if someone from Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and from other various peoples is found in Egypt, and Chub, which Symmachus translates as Arabia, and from the sons of the covenant with the land, that is, from the people of the Jews, let them fall with that sword. For which nations, seventy were appointed: the Persians, and the Cretans, and the Lydians, and the Libyans, and all the mixed peoples, and the children of my covenant with the sword they will fall. And in order that we may know that all these nations were in aid of Egypt, the following speech demonstrates: And those supporting Egypt will collapse, that is, its allies, and all the pride of its empire, or the insult of its strength will be destroyed and deposed from the tower of Syene, which we said was located at the farthest borders of Egypt, or from Magdalo to Syene, as the seventy translated: all the cities of Egypt will be deserted, so that they may know the Lord, when the fire of the Chaldeans has devastated everything, and all his helpers have been worn down, and messengers have arrived near Aquila and Theodotion Siim, which Symmachus translated, hastening: we turn to the ships; for this is how we have received it from the Hebrews: so that all of Ethiopia's confidence may be crushed, and when the neighboring province has been laid waste, fear may grip the nearest. But in order that we may know who that sword is, which devastates Egypt and terrifies Ethiopia, it follows more clearly: And I will cause the multitude of Egypt to cease in the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who shall not only come, but shall come with many accompanying nations, so that all of Egypt shall be filled with the blood of the slain, and the wrath of the Lord shall be so great that the channels of the rivers, that is, the canals of the Nile, shall be dried up to the ground, and the land shall be deserted in the hand of the pestilence, or the multitude of the worst men of Egypt. For my words cannot be in vain, and there will be such indignation that the images of Egypt will be dispersed and the idols of Memphis, which is still the capital of Egyptian superstition, will cease to exist, whether it be the nobles and leaders of Memphis or the whole land of Egypt. But such terror will possess all of Egypt that the whole land of Phatures will perish and fire will devastate Taphnis, or as the Septuagint translates it, Tanin. And he said, 'I will establish law courts in Alexandria, which is called so today. But it had the former name 'No', which Aquila, Symmachus, and

Theodotion translated as it is in Hebrew. For this, I do not know why, the Seventy, wishing something, said 'Diospolis', which is a small city of Egypt. But we have placed 'No' for Alexandria, by anticipation, which is called 'prolepsis' in Greek, according to that Virgilian phrase (Aeneid, book IV): And I will pour out my indignation upon Sais, which we have turned into Pelusium, and it is called the strength of Egypt, because it has the safest harbor, and the sea trade is exercised there to the greatest extent. Hence the poet calls it 'lentil of Pelusium' (Virgil, Georgics I), not because this type of legume is produced there, or primarily there; but because it is brought from Thebes and all of Egypt through the Nile river to that place in large quantities. And he said, 'I will destroy the multitude of Alexandria, which is again situated in Hebrew No, not in Diospolis, but in Memphis, they transferred it to LXX. And to show that the city was populous at that time, he said, 'I will destroy the multitude of No (); and I will give fire, that is, the king of Babylon in Egypt, who will lay waste everything like fire. Sain, that is, Pelusium, will groan like a woman in labor: or it will be disturbed by turmoil; and in Alexandria, that is, in No, there will be a rupture, and the waters will be dispersed, for which they transferred it back to LXX Diospolis. However, it is the custom of the Egyptians, because of the flooding of the Nile, to build high embankments along the banks of the Nile. If these embankments are breached due to the negligence of the caretakers or the excessive magnitude of the water, the surrounding fields are not irrigated by water, but are instead overwhelmed and ravaged. This signifies that Egypt should be occupied by the Chaldean army in the same way that it is usually covered and corrupted by the overflowing waters of the Nile. Because of the flooding of the waters, and the breaking and breaching of the dikes, it is written in Hebrew: 'And there shall be daily distress in Memphis, where the Nile is divided, and where the temple of Apis is, and the oracles give their answers, there let daily distresses occur. The young men of Heliopolis, which in Hebrew is called On, and of Bubastis, another city, shall fall by the sword, so that the cities themselves, that is, their inhabitants or women, shall be taken into captivity, who are of the sex that is subject to harm.' But in Taphnis, which is the royal city, the scepters of Egypt, that is, the entire royal race, will be destroyed. And when its power, with the killing of the princes, is ended, then the day will darken, and all things will be filled with darkness and shadows, so that the city itself is covered in a cloud of sorrow and mourning, and its daughters, that is, the remaining towns, will be led into captivity. After I have executed judgments in Egypt and demonstrated that I am the judge of all, then the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord. We have described these elements as if for little children, so that they may be able to reach the reading of prose or poetry through letters, syllables, names, and the context of words. Now let us undertake anthropology and demonstrate, in a short like a painted picture, the very wide sea of discussion. The Word of the Lord, who was always in the Father, became a prophet, and He calls him not by his own name but the Son of Man. This is always understood in a good sense in the Holy Scriptures, specifically in the singular number, as in this same prophet, and in Daniel, and in the Gospel. Furthermore, the plural number is read in the opposite sense, as in this example: Sons of men, their teeth are weapons and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword (Psalm 56:5). And again: Sons of men, how long will you have heavy hearts? (Psalm 4:3). For the lion roars, and who will not be afraid? The Lord has spoken, and who will not prophesy? (Amos 3:8). Woe, woe to the day, says the Lord. For the day is near, and it approaches, says the Lord. It will be a day of clouds, a time or end of nations. Duplex consummatio est, aut generaliter omnium, quando finis advenerit, aut specialiter singulorum, quando tempus mortis institerit. Juxta autem dicitur, quia aeternitati comparatum, omne tempus breve est. Unde et Jacob centum et triginta annos quibus dixerat:

pauci, inquit, et pessimi sunt dies mei (Gen. XLVII, 9) . Et Psalmista de universi generis humani fragilitate disputans, ait: Dies nostri quasi umbra pertransierunt (Ps. CXLIII, 4) . Considering this, we will not be lifted up by power, nor will we be incubating with wealth, nor will we rejoice in happiness, knowing that all things must quickly be taken away. And the beautiful day of the Lord is said to be when the conversation of the entire world will be destroyed, and with error removed, the truth will appear as one, and the days of clouds and mist. For no one, fearless and uncertain, awaits the judge without fear of judgment. And the time or end of the nations will not only be of the Egyptian nation, but of all nations, so that it may be made clear that prophesy applies to all nations. Following, a flaming sword will come to Egypt, a versatile sword, divine word, that will divide the good from the evil and consume the wicked with its fire. But in Egypt of this age, there will be fear in Ethiopia, those who stray through Egypt in the night of error and dwell in darkness, and whose darkness does not easily or at all turn to light. And those who have stood in wickedness will fall wounded in Egypt. And the multitude of Egypt will be taken away. For wide and spacious is the path that leads to death (Matthew 7:13). And its foundations will be destroyed, so that nothing of Egypt's former firmness remains: but with the desolate and worse foundations, let the foundation of Christ be laid, on which the Church will be built. For every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted (Matthew 7). Hence Jeremiah is commanded to destroy what has been built, in order to build better things (Jeremiah 1). The Ethiopians, Libyans, and Lydians, or according to the Seventy, the Persians, Cretans, Lydians, Libyans, and Chub, that is, the Arabs, and all the remaining common people, whom the Seventy translated as hybrids and mixtures. All of these, due to the diversity of vices and the interpretation of names that we have placed in the vision of Tyre, we can understand as different nations. Hence, the Apostle says: You, he says, who are called Uncircumcision, Gentiles in the flesh (Ephesians 2:11). For never would He have said that the nations are flesh and that others are spirit, as in another place: 'Behold Israel according to the flesh.' Hence it must be provided with special care that we do not turn back in our hearts to Egypt, from which we once have come forth, and that we do not find ourselves among the other nations and perish by the sword. As it is said in what follows: 'The young men of Heliopolis and Bubastus shall fall by the sword.' This will happen especially when the sons of the earth of the covenant or Testament of Mine are struck with the sword, of whom it is written: 'Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who trust in horses and chariots.' (Isa. 31:1) But if the people of other nations are slaughtered in Egypt, how much more will the sons of the earth, the covenant and Testament of God, be contemptuous of the bread of Angels, the pumpkins, onions, garlic, and cucumbers of Egypt (Num. XI) . Then the supports and props of Egypt, which sustained it in wickedness, will fall, along with the clever arguments of dialecticians and the tricks of philosophers. Also, the contemptuous and proud empire will be destroyed, those who speak arrogantly and consider Ecclesiastical simplicity meaningless. For indeed, from the tower of Syene to those things which are at the furthest boundaries of Egypt, adjoining Ethiopia and the Blemmys: where the Nile is unnavigable and the clamor of cataracts, and everything is impassable and full of serpents and poisonous animals. But if, as we said above, 'Magdala' sounds forth magnificence and 'Syene' a circle, it is clear that the riches of Egypt and its insolent power and magnificence, that is, boasting and exaltation, perish by force even to the circle of Egypt, where nothing is stable; rather, it turns in an uncertain course and reaches ruin. Then the cities of Egypt will be scattered, and the land will be deserted, and no assembly will remain, having any firmness, so that at the end of things they may know that He Himself is the Lord, when He sends fire into Egypt, which the Lord

desires to burn, like hay, wood, and straw, which have been built upon the foundation of Christ, and all helpers of perverse doctrines will be crushed. From this it is to be understood that the knowledge of a false name, and those of whom it is written: Scatter the nations that desire war (Ps. LXVII, 32), are called partners and helpers of Egypt. On that day, they say, those messengers will go forth from the face of God, of whom it is written in the Gospel: Their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven (Matthew 18:20). And in the parable of the sower, the reapers are angels, that is, those who are messengers, are sent to gather all scandals and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Ibid. 13). And they will hasten to fulfill the command in order to deter or crush the confidence of Ethiopia, who have reached the highest peak of wickedness, so that Ethiopia may be crushed in the overthrow of Egypt, and may fear, because it is the day of the Lord's vengeance and vindication, when the darkness of sinners will flee and the light of virtues will remain. And he says, 'I will make the multitude of Egypt cease in the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, to whom they were delivered to be punished. For he is the enemy and avenger who also received a reward, because he served in the conquest of Tyre, the multitude of Egypt, so that many in Egypt may cease who have always been there. But if anyone opposes, how can it be said in Deuteronomy: Your fathers descended to Egypt with seventy souls, but now you have become as numerous as the stars of heaven (Deut. X, 22): it is easily solved.' For He did not establish an example of the earthly multitude, but of the heavenly, which shines with virtues and is full of light, above which the bravest of nations, bring brought by the Lord, are proclaimed, so that they may scatter the earth, on behalf of whom the Seventy interpreters of plagues were sent. Which I do not know how it is consistent with those who are brought by the Lord, unless perhaps according to that example, the sending in of the very worst angels (Psalm 77:19): who will unsheath their swords upon Egypt, and will fill the land with the slain or the wounded, so that they may feel themselves to have been killed and wounded, and to such an extent Egypt is destroyed and has fallen into nothingness, that all the rivers of eloquence by which the errors of the Egyptians were washed away, with reeds and a pen, should dry up and be handed over into the hands of the worst, who may torment them, and the fullness of the land of Egypt, which had grown in evil, may be blotted out in the hands of foreign gods. For neither good, but wicked angels are put in charge of torments. It is necessary for them to know that the Lord has spoken. This is frequently assumed so that those who hear may know that these are not the words of prophets, but of the Lord, whose commandments cannot be nullified. It follows: And I will destroy the idols, which are abominations. The Seventy translated it: And I will cause the idols or the chief men of Memphis to cease, and the leader or prince in the land of Egypt will no longer exist. For it is the very character of the most merciful Lord to overthrow what is falsely constructed, so that no likeness which feigns the image of truth may remain in Egypt. Let the nobles of Memphis also perish, which is interpreted from the mouth; concerning which all the idols have been set up, so that with their heads cut off and the masters of the idols destroyed, there may be no ruler in Egypt, and all Egypt may be filled with terror and destruction. Concerning its cities, it is said: And I will destroy the land of Pathros, and I will bring fire upon Taphnehes, or upon Tanis, and I will execute judgments in No, which the Seventy translated as Diospolis; and I will pour out my indignation upon Zoan, the stronghold of Egypt. Phatures is interpreted as the crushing of bread; Taphnis, a humble command; Diospolis, for which the name Noah is given in Hebrew, is rest. Sain, temptation: by these names, the various gatherings of heretics and all forms of lies are revealed: those who trample upon the bread of the Church and

despise it, and follow a humble commandment that does not lead to heavenly things, and indulge in pleasures, and are at rest; such as the rich purple-clad man we read about in the Gospel (Luke 16); and they serve the tempters: one of whom sought from the Lord the power to tempt Job. The Lord will destroy and burn all these things, and He will pour out His indignation over them, and He will scatter the strength of Egypt, so that they are reduced to nothing and no longer trouble the people of God, and make them rely on their own help; so that, having forsaken the truth, they may seek falsehood, and be wounded by their own support, just as one is injured by a reed staff. After this, it is said: 'And I will kill or destroy the multitude of Memphis, for which in Hebrew is called No, which the same Seventy translators have rendered as Diospolis, which means 'rest'.' For there are many who seek rest, and desire to lie on ivory beds, and to eat suckling lambs. Or, according to the Seventy, who are translated as Mempheos, there are many who talk in riddles: Take the splinter out of your eye, when they themselves have a beam in their own. And there is fire given in Egypt, which consumes verbosity and luxuries with its ardor. All temptation will grieve, and in Diospolis, which is again not put in Hebrew as No, there will be a tearing apart; so that waters may be poured out and every wicked assembly may be scattered, and may perish here and there. And according to the Hebrew in Memphis, there will be daily distress, as they will give an account for every idle word, so that they may understand that nothing of their Lord's judgment will pass by. The young men of Heliopolis and Bubastus will also fall by the sword. Heliopolis is called On in Hebrew, which means sorrow. But Bubastus, according to the Egyptian language, is an experience of the mouth. All of these who were unable to bear the pain of the world, but sought after the delights of Diospolis, and trusted in their flowery words and debated against other doctrines, will have the victories of their speech cut down by the sword of God's word; and those who are not young men, but are called women due to the weakness of their minds, will be led captive. Whether the cities themselves, with their boastful sorrows and jaws, will be led into captivity. And in Taphnis, he says, the day will turn black. Taphnae, according to interpretation, means yielding to the jaw, and it is understood to refer to the devil: those who yield to him will lose the light of truth, and they will transform day into night, and they will feel that the scepters of Egypt and all authority have been shattered in Taphnis, so that its contemptible strength or the pride of its power may fail, and the rays of the sun's justice may be blinded in a cloud, and not women, but daughters will be led into captivity; and the Lord will bring about not one judgment, but many judgments in Egypt. For just as there are many dwelling places for the righteous with the Father, so too there are different judgments for the punishments of Egypt, so that when all these things have been done, the Egyptians may recognize that He Himself is the Lord, whose true judgments are justified in themselves.

30:20-26

(Verse 20 and following) And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first month (Vulgate adds 'of the month'), in the seventh month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and behold it is not bound up, to be healed, that it may be tied with bandages, and clothed with strips (or to receive a healing plaster): and having taken hold of strength, he might hold the sword. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and I will break his strong arm, and shall cause the sword to fall out of his hand, and I will scatter (or scatter abroad) Egypt among the nations, and disperse them (or winnow them) into the lands (Vulgate: 'countries'). And I will strengthen the arms of the king of

Babylon, and I will place my sword in his hand, and he will break the arms of Pharaoh, and they will groan with the groans of the slain before him. (or as it is in the Septuagint: And he will bring a sword over Egypt, and he will plunder its spoils, and take its plunder. It follows:) And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh will fall, and they will know that I am the Lord, when I give my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he extends it over the land of Egypt, and I will scatter Egypt among the nations, and disperse them into the lands, and they will know that I am the Lord. He returns to the order of prophecy; for after the twenty-seventh year he now places the eleventh. This question is also addressed in the previous passages. For when the word of the Lord was spoken against Tyre in the eleventh year, which was mentioned earlier, in the subsequent passages He speaks to Pharaoh in the tenth year. And again, He places the twenty-seventh year, as we have said, and now the eleventh. Leaving aside the other things that are contained in the order of the Psalms: the question is, how is the third Psalm placed before these Psalms in which David changed his appearance before Abimelech, and about Doeg the Edomite, and when he was found in the cave, and the fiftieth of penitence, in whose title it is shown that he came to Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, although these previous Psalms come before the third, in which it is noted that he fled from the face of his son Absalom. But in the Psalms the response is simple, for it is a lyric poem, and in such a work the order of history is not sought; rather, it is the songs of individual events. But in history, it must be said that those things which have been said about one thing at different times should not be divided by speech, but concluded by the narrative of one place. For example, so that those things which have been said about Egypt at different times may be known in one order of reading. When we have said these things, nevertheless the question remains: Why in this same place was the word of the Lord to Pharaoh first spoken in the eleventh year, and later in the twenty-seventh, and then in the tenth year, when certainly according to the order, the eleventh year should have been first, the twenty-seventh second, and the tenth year third, and each prophecy should have been designated by year? To which we can respond: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable are his ways! (Romans 11:33). And in another place: Who can search out the depths of knowledge? (Sirach 1:2-3). However, we can say this, that the order of history is not observed in the prophets, at least not in all cases, for they do not narrate the past, but they foretell the future, according to the will of the Holy Spirit. But in history, the books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Esther, Samuel, Malachi, Chronicles, and Ezra, together with Nehemiah, do not contain a chronological account. Let it suffice to say this about the order of years. Now let us examine the prophecies against Pharaoh or concerning Pharaoh. It is said that God broke his arm and it was not bound up or healed, nor did he receive any ointment, according to what is written: 'There is no ointment to be applied, nor oil, nor bandages' (Isaiah 1, sec. 70). But if it had happened that, with courage regained, he could hold the sword and proceed to war. Therefore, God, who is merciful and compassionate, once again shattered his arm or arms, so that the sword may completely fall from his hand, and be scattered among the people of Egypt, and be dispersed among the nations. But in your arm, receive strength and courage, as the Scripture says: 'Break the arm of the sinner and the evildoer' (Psalm 9:15). This arm is broken in our adversaries, when they pursue us, but cannot overcome us. And for the salvation of the servants of God against Pharaoh, the king of Babylon often rises up to oppress the powerful oppressor, and the wicked are handed over to the more wicked, with God strengthening the arms of the worst, so that the one who is set free may know that He is the Lord.

Indeed, it is an achievement of virtue to know that He is the Lord. On the contrary, we can say: The sons of Eli, the sons of pestilence, not knowing God (1 Samuel 2:22). And concerning the good kings who did what was right in the sight of God, it is written that they may know the Lord. But that which is said in the Septuagint: 'I will break his strong and appointed arms', which in Greek is said 'τεταγμ■να', has been corrupted by the fault of copyists. For they interpreted it not as 'τεταγμ■να', but as 'τεταμ■να', which means not appointed, but stretched out. For this reason, according to their custom, other interpreters have put 'exalted' instead.

Book Ten

Book Ten

I wish, as I have already said, to explain the prophecies against a particular province or king in the same books, and not at all to divide the reader's understanding. But what should I do with its length, which, unless it is divided into parts, exceeds the size of a volume; and an infinite mass is both burdensome to the one dictating and to the one reading? Therefore, after the discourse against Egypt and its lamentation, and the king of Egypt, whose arm is neither wrapped nor restored to its former health, we have spoken in the last part of the ninth book, we pass on to the beginning of the tenth book against the same Pharaoh king of Egypt, who is compared to the king of Assyria, and after a very long prophecy, a lamentation is taken up concerning the same, and then against all Egypt. In these discourses, O virgin of Christ, Eustochium, raise your hands with Moses so that the fruit of our victory may be the result of your prayers. For it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy (Rom. IX, 16), who speaks to the prophet: Open your mouth and I will fill it (Ps. LXXX, 11); the prophet responds to the Lord: I have opened my mouth and have drawn in my breath (Ps. CXVIII, 331); where he wills, he breathes. But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (John, III, 8; II Cor. III, 17), the liberty with which the Lord has bestowed upon us. How in vain the Jews boasted, saying: We are the seed of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone (John 8:33), subject to many vices and sins, and ignorant of that saying: Whoever is overcome by someone, to him he is also a slave (2 Peter 2:19).

31:1-18

(Chapter 31.) And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his people: Whom are you like in your greatness? Behold, Assyria was like a cedar (or cypress) in Lebanon, beautiful in branches and dense with foliage, towering in height, and its top was among the thick foliage (or in the midst of clouds). The waters nourished him: the abyss lifted him up; his rivers flowed round about his roots, and he sent forth his channels to all the trees of the region. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the region, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches were elevated above many waters. And when he had stretched forth his shadow, all the fowls of the air made their nests in his branches: and under his branches all the beasts of the field brought forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all the multitude of nations. And it was most beautiful in its magnificence, and in the spreading (or multitude) of its shrubs (or branches): for its roots were near the waters. The cedars (or cypresses) were not taller than it in the paradise of God, and the firs (or pines) did not reach its summit, and the plane trees (or firs) were not equal (or similar) to its foliage (or branches). Every tree of the paradise of God (or in the paradise of God) was not like it and its beauty, because I made it beautiful (Vulg. made him

beautiful), and with many thick branches, and all the trees of delight (or pleasure) that were in the paradise (Vulg. adds of God) envied it. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because it has exalted itself to the height, and has set its top among the thick clouds, and its heart is proud of its height, I will give it into the hand of a mighty one of the nations. He shall surely deal with it as its wickedness deserves. I have cast it out for its wickedness. Foreigners, the most ruthless of nations, have cut it down and left it. On the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen, and its boughs have been broken in all the ravines of the land, and all the peoples of the earth have gone away from its shadow and left it. In its ruins all the birds of the sky made their homes or found rest, and all the beasts of the field dwelt among its branches. Therefore, all the watered trees will not be lifted up to their full height, nor will they set their lofty tops among the thickly leaved trees or in the clouds. Nor will all those irrigated by water stand tall, for they have all been delivered to death, to the farthest depths of the earth, in the midst of the sons of men, to those who descend to the pit. Thus says the Lord God: on the day when he descended to the underworld, I proclaimed mourning (or the abyss mourned for him): I covered him with the abyss, and I held back its rivers and restrained its many waters. Lebanon was shattered (or darkened) over him, and all the trees of the field withered (or failed). At the sound of his downfall, nations were shaken (or trembled), when I brought him (or her) down to the underworld with those who descend (or descend) into the pit; and on the weak earth the splendid and magnificent trees of delight (or luxury) in Lebanon were consoled: and all were watered by the waters. For they themselves, whether with her or with him, went down to the underworld to the slain or wounded with a sword, and the arm or seed of each dwelled beneath her shadow, perished in the midst of the nations or their own lives. To whom have you likened yourself, O illustrious one, and sublime among the trees of pleasure! Behold, you are brought down with the trees of pleasure to the lowest earth, you will sleep in the midst of the uncircumcised, with those who were slain by the sword. So Pharaoh and all his crowd, says the Lord God. I combined both editions in the usual way, however, where they disagreed the most, so as not to increase the size of the books with a double proposition. And first it must be understood that whatever is said about the future Assyrian king is mentioned in the Septuagint as if already fulfilled, and thus it speaks of the tree or the prince of the Assyrians, so that both the masculine and feminine genders are understood to refer to one person, while the tree is related to the Assyrian and the Assyrian is called the tree. And there is no mention in the present discourse of the Babylonian king, lest it seem to provoke the anger of the lords and rulers against the captive people placed in Chaldea, but it is said of the king of the Assyrians, who at that time had already been captured by the Chaldeans, and all the strength of the Assyrians was subject to the Babylonian yoke. Therefore, the ten tribes, that is, Israel, are captured by the Assyrians; but the Chaldeans overpower the two tribes, that is, Judah and Benjamin, and they overthrow the city of Jerusalem. Therefore, in order to speak against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and his people, God used the following divine words in the beginning: 'To whom have you become similar in your greatness? Behold, Assyria is like a cedar in Lebanon, and so on.' And the meaning is: Do not be surprised if you are to be defeated and destroyed by the Babylonians, and if your empire is to be destroyed, and if all the wealth of Egypt is to be destroyed, since Assyria, much stronger than you, was destroyed by the same Chaldeans who conquered you. And he described the power of the king of Assyria under the figure of a cedar tree, according to the Hebrew, the Septuagint, and the Cypress, which was planted on Mount Lebanon, which is beautiful with branches and dense with foliage, and it reaches up to the clouds, and it grew so

much because it was irrigated not by water, but by the abyss, that is, by very abundant waters. For the abyss is the multitude of the sound of waters: so that all birds have made their nests in its branches, and all the beasts of the field have given birth under its foliage. And so that we would not doubt what were the flying creatures of the sky, and what were the beasts of the woods, he explained more clearly: And under its shade dwelled a multitude of diverse peoples. Cedars, he said, and cypresses, firs or pines, and plane trees or cypresses were not equal to its branches. And so that he would not speak separately about all the trees, he said, all the trees of the paradise of God are not likened to it, and to its beauty. Through these things, some understand that it is not spoken about the Assyrian king, but about an opposing strength, which is said to be generated in the speech of Tyre among the Cherubim, and distinguished by precious stones, and afterwards to have fallen to earthly matters because of his own fault, who is also called Lucifer when he is falling in Isaiah (Isaiah XIV), and is signified in the Gospel by the Lord: I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven (Luke X, 12). But we should understand all these things as hyperbolic statements made in history, that Assyria had such great power, and it oppressed all nations so that it compared itself to the strength of angels. However, everything metaphorically is said to be under the highest cedar or cypress, referring to Assyria, and the killing of it is called its destruction. And what follows: I have given it into the hand of the mightiest nations, it calls the king of Babylon, so that what conquered Assyria, it understands was not its own strength, but of divine power. According to him, I expelled her because of her impiety, so that secretly she might warn Babylon that it should not be cruel or oppress the people of God, who have been handed over to her, lest she suffer the same fate as Assyria, which was cruel and impious. And strangers will cut her down, the most cruel of nations; or, according to the Septuagint, the pestilent: which he would never say (or rather, wanted to say) while he was in Chaldea, so as not to arouse them against his nation. She is also cast upon the mountains, and her branches fall swiftly in the valleys, and they are shattered against the rocks, and she is abandoned by all the peoples, that is, by the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field, and she will come to such destruction that all the trees that were considered tall in comparison to the tree of Assyria will be raised up by her example and lifted up on high; and they will no longer stand at their height, but they will be cut down along with her in fear. And what was said through the translation becomes clearer. All, he says, were handed over (understood: kings to death) to the deepest land (that is, to the underworld), in the midst of the sons of men (by no means among the trees) to those who descend into the lake. There is no doubt that it signifies the underworld. After the cutting down of the Assyrian tree, or on the day when the Assyrian descends to the underworld, and the Lord inflicted mourning (or commanded mourning), again through the translation he speaks about him being covered by the abyss, according to what is written: 'I went down to the depths of the sea, and the storm engulfed me' (Psalm 68:3); and all the rivers, that is, all the nations, ceased to flow beyond him, and he was grieved, or darkened over it, that is, the tree, or him, that is, the Assyrian, Lebanon. So that we may not think that the tree has speech, it follows: I moved the nations by the sound of its falling. For what great ruin of one tree can there be, that all nations are moved by its sound? 'When I brought it down to the underworld,' he says, 'according to the letter, a tree cannot be brought down to the underworld with others who were descending into the pit, that is, to the underworld.' And the lowest parts of the earth, namely the heart of the earth, were consoled, because all the trees of pleasure, or delights, which in Hebrew is called Eden, were there, signifying delightful and excellent groves and forests that were in Lebanon and were watered by streams. For even the trees themselves, along

with him, that is, the Assyrian, descend into the underworld, to the dead or wounded by the sword. The trees are not wounded by swords, but they are cut down, and they do not descend into the underworld. And the arm, he says, or the offspring (since in Hebrew the word 'Zara' means both), will rest in its shade among the nations, not of forests but of peoples. In the end, there is an apostrophe to the Assyrian himself, or to Pharaoh. To whom have you been compared, O illustrious and sublime among the trees of pleasure? None was your equal, they say, but you surpassed all kings in power. And yet, when you were led with the other kings, who were in your company to the farthest lands, that is, to the depths below, as Scripture says: They shall go to the ends of the earth, they shall be delivered into the hand of the sword, they shall be the portion of foxes. (Ps. LXII, 10, 11). In the midst, it is said, you will lie with the uncircumcised, with those who have been slain by the sword. He showed what were the trees, what cedar, or cypress, wounded by swords, and lying with the uncircumcised. And yet he would join the extremities to the preceding ones, because he had said above: To whom are you like in your greatness: behold the Assyrian as a cedar in Lebanon, fair in branches and leaves, and the rest, now it is brought forth: Thus is Pharaoh, and all his multitude, says the Lord. How, he says, is the Assyrian, the cedar and cypress, fallen by the Babylonian, thrown down: thus Pharaoh and his people, that is the very tree and its branches, will be thrown down by the Babylonian. In the meantime, let these things be said according to history, which most people understand will happen at the end of the world, and let the king of Pharaoh, that is, the power to which Egypt is subject, be compared to the most powerful king of the Assyrians, that is, the antichrist: if he falls, surely the other rulers of these darknesses and the princes of the world will fall more easily. Let us therefore briefly touch on each one, so that we do not so much discuss and explain obscure things, but rather seem to have given material to those who desire to explain. And first it must be discussed why, in the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel, saying: Son of man, speak to Pharaoh of Egypt and his multitude. When speaking to Pharaoh, in the eleventh year the word of the Lord was spoken, for it had not yet come to the twelfth year, which is the number of full and complete power. Hence, there are also twelve sons of Jacob (Genesis 35), from whom later the twelve names of the prophets are contained in one volume. And there are twelve Apostles (Luke 6), of whom one, Judas the traitor, is replaced by Matthias. And the daughter of the synagogue official, who is twelve years old, is raised by the Lord (Mark 5). The woman with the issue of blood is also healed in the twelfth year. But because Pharaoh is rebuked and mourned later, therefore the third month and the eleventh day of the twelfth year are linked together. Hence, in the subsequent twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord comes to Ezekiel, saying: Son of man, lament for Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him. For the one who mourns, mourns in order to understand how many goods he has lost; and yet, because Pharaoh was there, and his arm had not yet been bound, nor had he regained his former strength: therefore, in the twelfth year and month, there are still twenty-nine days remaining, in order to complete the number of twelve years. Therefore, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to the Prophet, and he was commanded to speak to the king of Egypt and his people. It is remarkable that the four interpreters did not say 'people' but 'multitude'. For many are called, but few are chosen (Matthew 22:14). And in the law it is written: 'You shall not be with the multitude in evil.' And it is said to the king of Egypt: 'To whom have you likened yourself in greatness or in height?' For he himself will be exalted and subject to this sentence: 'Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled' (Luke 14:11). But let him not be like him in height, who has been

like a cedar or a cypress in Lebanon, beautiful with branches and leafy; and raised his head in height, even to the clouds, to which, according to David, the truth of God reaches (Psalm 36), and to which they are commanded not to rain upon Israel. Beauty is also praised, which, when turned by wicked will into ugliness, so that it can be said of him: The Lord will break the cedars of Lebanon: and he himself, being exalted on the highest mountains of Lebanon, the higher he had been, would fall even more forcefully. The holy Scripture, desiring to demonstrate his majesty, calls him the great cedar, which was nourished by waters, not the waters of Siloam that flow silently, but the waters of Rasin and the waters of Egypt, of which it is written: Why do you want to drink the waters of Geon, or Sion? which is said to sound the turbid waters. The abyss also exalted him above which at the beginning of the world darkness was carried (Gen. I), and to which in the Gospel the demons beg not to be sent (Luke VIII). The rivers of the same abyss were around its roots, of which it is said: What do you have with the ways of the Assyrians, to drink the waters of the rivers (Jer. II, 18)? And in another place: Behold, the Lord will bring upon you strong and abundant river water, the king of the Assyrians and all his glory (Isa. VIII, 7). The abyss also sent forth its streams to all the trees of the region, in order to irrigate not only the prince of this world, but also his companions. Therefore, it was elevated and grew above all the tallest trees, and its bushes multiplied, and it possessed the empire of the whole world, saying: 'All these things have been handed over to me' (Matthew 4:9). And its branches were elevated, because they were watered by the abyss. It spread out and extended its shade, in order to subject everyone to its dominion. All the birds of the sky made their nests in its branches. For everyone who sins is born of the devil, and is counted among its branches. But those birds made their nests in its branches, which, according to the Gospel, devour the seed by the wayside. Either because all have sinned and are in need of God's mercy, as it is said: All have turned aside, they have become altogether useless. Therefore, they made their nests in its branches. It follows: And under its branches all the beasts of the forest, who have lost Christ's gentleness, were born, and under its shade dwelt a multitude of nations, so that there was no one who was not covered by its shade, except for him who said: Behold, the prince of this world is coming: and he will find nothing in me (John 14:30). For by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death (Romans 5:12); and thus death passed unto all men, in whom all have sinned, and in Adam all die, and we all have sinned, and we are in need of the glory of God (1 Corinthians 15). And yet, even within this dwelling, there is a diverse condition. Some dwell in its branches like birds, boasting knowledge of philosophy and the teachings of heretics. Others are like wild beasts, fierce and cruel. Others are like a multitude of many nations, symbolizing a mixture of different vices and sins. Now, Assur was most beautiful in its size and in the spreading of its foliage, for its roots were nourished by many waters. It was so tall in the garden of God that no cedar or cypress could surpass it, nor could fir trees and pine trees match its height, nor were plane trees equal in foliage to it. Therefore, no tree of the plants in paradise was equal to it, because every wood of the paradise of God is not similar to it and its beauty. For they were not raised up by pride, but they knew their humility, nor did they attempt to claim the likeness of God in their sacrilegious mind. And what follows: And all the trees of delight that were in paradise envied it, we shall explain as follows: The trees of paradise envied the abundance of its branches: For many are called, but few are chosen (Matt. XX, 16). And; The broad and spacious way that leads to death (Ibid. VII, 13) . For he desires to have as many for salvation as Assur had for destruction. Therefore, because Assur was exalted in height; and he gave his flourishing and dense height, even to the highest clouds, and his heart was lifted up to

say: I will be like the Most High (Isa. XIV, 14) , therefore he was delivered into the hand of the strongest of nations: which we understand as another detestable power, to which he is delivered for punishment: for he himself is an enemy and avenger; so that Assur may be understood as Antichrist, and the strongest of nations to which he is delivered, Satan, according to the saying of the Apostle: Whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. II, 20) : Who will perform for him whatever has been commanded to him by the Lord. But this cypress was expelled from the paradise of God because of its impiety; and strangers and cruel, or pestilent, people will cut it down among the nations, so that what is written may be fulfilled: The fool, when scourged, will become wiser (Proverbs 19:25). And again: The axe is already laid to the root of the trees (Matthew 3:10); those who cut it down on the mountains, so that it may fall in its pride. However, in all the valleys, its branches will fall, so that all those who were in its company are led down to Tartarus, and they will leave its shadow and abandon it, so that the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth, which were previously under it and protected by its shadow, will then share in its punishment. And when they see the other trees of the forest, or of Paradise, they will not be elevated in pride, nor consider themselves to be anything, nor will they regard the abundance of their own water as riches: because all the branches and birds of the sky, and the animals of the earth, which were under the dominion of Assyria, will be brought down in death to the lowest earth. Of which it is written: In his sight all who go down to the earth will fall (Psalm 21:30). And in another place: They shall go to the outermost parts of the earth (Ps. LXII, 10): and they shall in no wise be with the Angels, but with the sons of men, who descend into the lake, or into the eternal pit. But when he shall descend to the outermost parts of the earth, and a part of the foxes shall be from whom he will be torn: then there shall be mourning either of all his companions, or of the holy fortitudes, which will grieve for him having descended to the underworld. Hence the Lord says: I have covered him in the deep, whose waters he had been nourished by before; and I have stopped his rivers, that is, the depths, and I have restrained many waters, so that they would not irrigate him, but rather oppress him. Lebanon was grieved over him, in which he had been exalted, and all the trees of the field were shaken, fearing a similar destruction. From the sound of its downfall, nations were moved, so that no one would be ignorant of its ruin and descent to the underworld with its companions. And all the trees of pleasure, that is, of paradise, received consolation, while they saw evil punished with evils, and good restored to the good. But these trees of Lebanon are watered by the streams of the Lord, in which that fallen tree had also been watered. Whether all the trees that were once good and irrigated by waters, and dwelt in the height of Lebanon, will receive consolation when they see their prince endure similar torments. For they themselves will descend to hell, to the dead killed by the sword of the Lord, and all the might of the trees will dwell under its shadow, that is, in punishment, amidst all the nations that will be held captive in the prisons of hell. After this, the discourse turns to Pharaoh himself, to whom it was said in the beginning, to whom have you been likened in your greatness? And he said to him: To whom have you been compared, O renowned and lofty one, among the trees of pleasure? Surely to the Assyrian who fell. And you were renowned and lofty among the trees of Eden, which is to say, of delights and paradise. And behold, you have been brought down like the Assyrian, with all the trees that were once in delight, to the lowest earth and to the underworld, and you will not sleep in peace, but in torment amidst the uncircumcised, that is, the unclean, and with those who have fallen by the sword of the Lord. And so that we may know who is the one to whom he said: O illustrious and lofty among the trees of pleasure, he puts it more clearly: He is Pharaoh, and all his

multitude. Or according to the Septuagint, it is thus Pharaoh, and all his multitude, so that just as the Assyrian was cut down and fell, so may the Egyptian be overthrown.

32:1-16 (Chapter XXXII, verse 1 and following) And it was in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month (or tenth), on one day (the Vulgate is silent on the day) of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him: You are like a lion among the nations, and like a dragon in the sea; you stirred up your horns in your rivers, and troubled the waters with your feet, and trampled their (or your) rivers. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: I will spread my net over you in the multitude of many peoples, and I will draw you up in my dragnet (or I will draw you up with a hook). And I will throw you down on the ground; on the surface of the field I will cast you (or your fields will be filled). And I will make all the birds of the sky dwell upon you, and I will satiate all the beasts of the earth with you, and I will give your flesh over the mountains, and I will fill the hills (Vulgate adds yours) (or valleys) with your filth (or your blood) and I will irrigate the land (or the land will be irrigated) with the stench (Vulgate feces; alternative odor) of your blood (or your dung) over the mountains, and the valleys will be filled from you. And when you are extinguished, I will cover the sky and make its stars darken: I will hide the sun with a cloud, and the moon will not give its light. I will make all the luminaries of the heavens mourn over you: and I will bring darkness upon your land, says the Lord God. And I will provoke the hearts of many peoples when I bring your destruction upon the nations and lands that you do not know. And the people will be astonished, and their kings will be greatly terrified when my sword begins to fly against them, and they will be suddenly dismayed, each for his own life, on the day of your downfall. Because thus says the Lord God: The sword of the king of Babylon will come upon you. I will cast down your multitude (or your strength) with the swords of warriors (or giants): all these nations are invincible (or pestilent from all nations), and they will destroy (or lay waste) the pride (or injury) of Egypt, and his multitude (or all his strength) will be scattered (or crushed). And I will destroy all its livestock that were upon many waters (or from many waters): and the foot of man shall no longer disturb them, nor shall the hoof of beasts trouble (or trample) them. Then I will make their waters very pure (or so that their waters may finally rest), and I will bring their rivers like oil (or so that oil may flow), says the Lord God, when I make the land of Egypt desolate (or destroyed). But the land will be deserted from its abundance (or with abundance) when I strike (or scatter) all its inhabitants: and they will know that I am the Lord. The daughters of the nations will lament for him, and they will lament for him over Egypt and its multitude (or over all its strength), says the Lord God. We mix both editions, but only in those places where they differ. Otherwise, where there is only one meaning, we follow the Hebrew text. In many copies, according to the Septuagint, the twelfth year and tenth month are stated; according to other interpreters, the tenth year and twelfth month, either because Jerusalem has already been captured and Pharaoh's joy is taken away from him, due to the impending evils; or certainly it is to be captured and Israel should mourn more for its own miseries than rejoice in the captivity of others. And meanwhile, briefly laying down some foundational history, let us examine what the Hebrews understand in this place. Pharaoh is compared to a lion, not of one people, but of many peoples; or to a sea serpent, who possesses the land and the waters and was raised in pride by the irrigation of the rivers, which is called a horn, and by the multitude of his army, he could disturb all the waters as he passed through them: therefore, it is said that his net is spread out over his multitude, to catch him with its fishing net or hook, and to throw or extend him on the ground, who had been wrapped in many coils like a snake, so that he could be devoured by all the birds of the sky. And when not only the

birds but all the beasts of the earth have torn him apart, his remaining flesh will fill the mountains, valleys, and fields, so that everything teems with worms. This, however, is metaphorical, indicating that after the birds of the sky and the beasts have been satiated with his flesh, that is, his army, and the rest of the multitude is turned into worms and putrefaction. Then it says, the heavens will be enveloped in darkness: the sun, moon, and other celestial bodies will not give their light, but everything will turn black over you: nothing joyful will be for you, and for your destruction all the peoples and all their kings will be terrified in great horror, seeing my sword flying here and there and sparing no one, and in your ruin they will fear a similar ruin. But so that you may know who this sword is, listen more clearly: The sword of the king of Babylon will come to you: with the swords of the mighty, or the giants, I will cast down all your multitude. These giants are invincible nations, which were held by the army of the king of Babylon. They will devastate or destroy the pride of Egypt, and all its multitude: and nothing will remain in Egypt, but both men and brute animals will be taken away together. And there will be such a solitude in Egypt that neither the foot of a man, nor the hoof of a beast, nor the water of its rivers shall be disturbed, but all shall be calm; and the waters of its rivers shall flow like pure and shining oil, with no one passing through them, nor disturbing their flow. And this shall happen because of the solitude of Egypt, which shall be turned into a desert by its own multitude: when its inhabitants are struck by the Lord, so that those who remain may understand that he is the Lord. Therefore Pharaoh lamented, and the daughters of the nations lamented him in a circle. Not only over him, but also over his multitude, which, being devastated by the Lord, was destroyed. Let it suffice to have hastily said these things in a simple letter, let us come to spiritual understanding. And I do not believe that we need to labor greatly to know who Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, is, since we will explain more fully above, namely that power to which Egypt is entrusted; either one province, or Egypt of the whole world, which is not established like a lion, but is assimilated to the lion of the nations by its own fault. For when a man is in honor, he does not understand; he is compared to senseless beasts, and becomes like them. (Psalm 49:20) Concerning this, Peter also speaks of the lion: Our adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8) And in the ninth psalm, it is written: He lies in wait secretly like a lion in his den; he lies in wait to catch the poor. And in Jeremiah, the Holy Spirit says: A lion from the forest has struck them down. (Jeremiah 5:6). But the dragon is called the devil (for which the Eagle has interpreted as Leviathan, explaining the name of the dragon), as I have taught with many testimonies, who said: My are the rivers, and I made them. Therefore, this dragon, with his rivers, as if with horns, scattered many nations: which we can understand concerning Marcion, Valentinus, Arius, Eunomius, and the other leaders of heresies, who imitate the ecclesiastical men, saying to the Lord and Savior: In you we will scatter our enemies with a horn (Ps. 43:6); and they do not scatter for salvation, to be lifted from earth to heaven, but to be thrown down into the depths. Finally, it follows: And you were disturbing the waters with your feet; according to the words of the Apostle: But he who troubles you, will bear judgment (Gal. V, 10). For he does not want to drink the waters of Siloam, which flow silently (Isa. VIII), but the turbid and muddy waters of Egypt, which were pure and flowing in their own order before they were trampled by the feet of the dragon; but after they were disturbed by his feet, they lost their course. For heretics do not use the testimonies of the Scriptures that agree with themselves, but rather confuse everything. And because he is an enemy and avenger, not only does the Egyptian dragon disturb alien waters with his feet, but he tramples his own rivers so as not to spare those whom he has once brought under his power. The righteous, desiring to avoid

this, prays: Let not the foot of pride come upon me (Ps. 35:12). And in another place, being trampled, he asks not to be trampled again: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for man has trampled upon me (Ps. 55:1). But the enemy is a man who is a devil, about whom another psalm speaks, 'Let not man be magnified over the earth.' Therefore, thus says the Lord God: I will spread my net over you, in the multitude of many peoples (Ps. IX, 18). The net of the Lord, woven together by the reason of the old and new Testament, is sent upon the dragon, who dwells in the multitude of peoples, and always delights in the tumult and multitude of peoples, so that he may draw him in his snare or in his hook. This is the net that is cast into the sea of this world, and it draws in many other fish to be chosen, and others to be cast away (Matt. XIII). Or this is the hook, of which it is written in Job: Thou shalt take the dragon by the hook, and encircle his nostrils with a bridle (Job XL, 19); for which Aquila interpreted: Thou shalt draw out Leviathan with a hook, and bind his tongue with cords. Now the dragon, or Leviathan, is drawn out of the sea by the hook or net of the Lord, to be cast away, or extended upon the earth, and all its coils, in which it concealed its snares, shall be uncovered and brought forth in public, and cast down to the earth, and he who had placed his mouth in heaven shall lie down, and boast of being like the Most High. From this it follows: And I will make all the birds of the sky dwell or settle upon you, and I will satisfy all the beasts of the earth with you, according to what is written: You have given him as food to the peoples of Ethiopia (Ps. 73:14). Those that are called birds or beasts of the earth (Matt. 13; Luke 8). Birds, which, as we have said, snatch the seed along the path. Beasts of the earth, which can be referred to heretics and pagans, given to vice. But what follows: And I will give your flesh upon the mountains, and fill your hills with your gore; or, I will fill the valleys with your blood, has this meaning: that we understand the deceitful people, the cruelty of the pagans, both the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth, and that we return the mountains to the leaders of heresies, such as Valentinus and Marcion, and the hills to their successors who are filled with the gore of the dragon; or the valleys, which are filled with the blood of the dragon, to the lowest of the believers. But certainly there are opposing powers in the mountains that roam in the air, and valleys that penetrate the depths, and they are bound by eternal torments. Furthermore, what is said, 'And I will water the land with the stench of your blood over the mountains,' or, 'The land will be watered with your excrement over the mountains, and the valleys will be filled with you,' signifies that every pride and the arrogant swelling of heretical pride is filled not so much with vital and pure blood, but with putrid and foul-smelling blood, according to what is written: 'Make them like the dung of the earth' (Ps. LXXXII, 11). About whom the saint is freed from the Lord: He raises up the needy from the earth, and lifts up the poor from the dung heap. To seat him with princes, with the princes of his people. (Ps. CXII, 7, 8). However, the valleys in the depths, as we have said, signify either hell or the humble sense of the heretics due to pleasure and earthly wealth that make everything. But what is joined: And I will cover the heavens when you are extinguished, and I will make its stars black: I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon will not shed its light, all the luminaries of heaven will mourn, or I will make them dark over you, and I will give darkness over your land, says the Lord God, if we follow the letter, it cannot be fully understood. For when Pharaoh, or the serpent sun, and the moon, and the stars did not give their light, and the heavens were covered in darkness, according to that poetic (Virgil, Georgics I): And the impious have feared the eternal darkness. Therefore, this must be said, that with the extinguishing of Pharaoh, who transformed himself into an Angel of light, about whom it is written elsewhere: The light of the wicked will be extinguished (Job XVIII), the heavens or the highest heavens will be covered in darkness. Of

which even Paul speaks: For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the Principalities and Powers, against the rulers of this world of darkness (Ephesians VI, 12). And the Lord will cause his stars, or the dragon, or the heavens, to darken. On which also Jude the Apostle writes: Wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness is kept forever (Jude XIII). The sun is also covered by a cloud, the sun of iniquity, which is contrary to the sun of justice, but by a cloud, even by the Lord and Savior Himself, who descended into Egypt upon a light cloud (Isaiah 19), not weighed down by any burden of sins, or by the prophets and Apostles, of whom we read: 'I will command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it' (Isaiah 5:6). And in the Psalms: 'Your truth reaches unto the clouds' (Psalm 36:6). But when the sun of iniquity is obscured, the moon, which we understand to be the Church of heretics, and which was thought to receive its light from the sun of iniquity, will not give its light, nor will it deceive believers with the false knowledge of its name. Moreover, all the lights and everything that appears to be in heretics' doctrine will be extinguished, the dragon being destroyed, and dried up, they will mourn, the prince being lost, so that the Lord himself may cover the land of the heretics with darkness, namely ignorance of the truth, so that the blind may lead the blind into the pit, and the inhabitants of the earth may be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. After this it is said: And I will provoke the heart of many peoples, when I bring your contrition, or your captivity, among the nations upon the earth which you do not know, so that those who previously served Pharaoh may be angry against him, seeing his captivity brought to another land, which the dragon did not know to exist. Nor should we doubt that those lands are good, which Pharaoh does not know, namely when the captivity of Pharaoh is changed by another captivity, of which it is said to the Savior: Ascending on high, he led captivity captive: he received (or, according to the Apostle (Ephes. IV, 8), gave) gifts to men (Psal. LXVII, 19). And I will cause many peoples to marvel at you, he says, so that those who previously admired Pharaoh's power may afterwards marvel at his downfall from his own height. The kings of the nations will also fear him excessively, whose kingdoms the devil shows to the Lord and of whom it is said in the psalm: The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes gathered together in one (Ps. II, 2). This, however, will happen when the sword of the Lord begins to fly over their faces, understood as the kings or the peoples. The sword of the Lord, moreover, is to be understood as the living word of God, powerful and sharp on both sides, which flies and runs, and wounds the eyes of those who see it and terrifies their faces, so that, amazed by the downfall of Pharaoh, they see themselves thrown down in it. And indeed, the sword of the Lord, about which it is written: Behold, this one is set for the fall and rising again of many (Luke 2:34), raises up those who are lying down, and by humility, transforms those who are badly erected. But the sword of the king of Babylon will come upon the Egyptian dragon, so that, like the swords of the mighty or giants, the Lord may cast down the multitude of those who followed the king of Egypt. Inexorable, he says, or pestilent from the nations, all of these, so that they may be handed over to worse evils for punishment, about which it is written: He sent among them the anger of his wrath, fury, and affliction, by sending evil angels (Psalm 78:49). And the Apostle says: 'Whom I have delivered up to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme, but rather to be saved in the day of judgment by the destruction of the flesh' (I Tim. I, 20). But when through such ministers the pride of Egypt has been cast down and its multitude scattered, all the beasts that were upon many waters will perish, and the foot of man will no longer disturb them. For if blessed is he who sows upon the waters, where the ox and the ass tread (Isa. XXXII); on the other hand, unhappy is he who can retain only the simple things and is thus unable to reach his own error, so

that the foot of man does not tread upon them, as if they did not even seem to have the sign of wisdom and reason, the waters of Egypt within themselves. Moreover, the hoof of the cattle will not disturb them so as to make them muddy and turbid from being clear and bright. Then the waters, which had been disturbed by the dominion of the dragon, will be restored not by another, but by the Lord Himself: so that their rivers flow like oil, and they become the nourishment of true light. However, these things will happen when the Lord has made the land of Egypt desolate, and has destroyed its multitude, and all its inhabitants have been struck, so that they may know by this event that He Himself is the Lord. But what is joined: it is a lament, and the daughters of the nations shall lament over Egypt, and over its multitude they shall lament, says the Lord God; it is clear to the souls of all nations, which were previously oppressed, whether the nations that did not dwell in Egypt at all, but lived in the land of the living, to lament the slain dragon, and all its multitude: not in hope of salvation, but because he, through his own fault and pride, has been cast down into eternal punishment of such great power.

32:17-32

(Verse 17 onwards) 'And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth month, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying: Son of man, mourn for the multitude of Egypt, and bring her down, even her and the daughters of the mighty nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down into the pit. Wherein art thou fairer than any woman? go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised. Among them that are slain with the sword, they shall fall: the sword is given: draw her and all her multitudes.' The most powerful of the strong ones from the middle of the underworld will speak to him, who descended with his helpers (or his own) and slept with the uncircumcised and those killed by the sword. There Assur and all his multitude, around his tomb, all the slain and those who fell by the sword, whose tombs were given in the furthest depths, and his multitude became a circle around his tomb, all the slain and fallen by the sword who once caused fear in the land of the living. There Aela and all his multitude around his tomb: all these were killed and fell by the sword, who came down uncircumcised to the nethermost parts of the earth: who caused their terror in the land of the living, and bore their shame with those who descend into the pit. In the midst of the slayers his bed was set in all his people: his tomb is round about him. All these uncircumcised, slain by the sword. For they had (Vulgate: they had given) their terror on the land of the living, and they carried their disgrace with those who descend into the pit; they were placed in the midst of the slain. There are Mosoch and Thubal, and all his multitude, around his grave. All these are uncircumcised, and fallen by the sword, who had given their terror on the land of the living. And they shall not sleep with the mighty, and with the fallen, and with the uncircumcised, who have descended to the underworld with their weapons, and have placed their swords under their heads; and their iniquities shall be upon their bones, because they have become terror among the land of the living. And so you will be crushed among the uncircumcised, and you will sleep with the slain by the sword. There Edom and its kings, and all its princes who have been given with their armies, are laid with the slain by the sword, and they sleep with the uncircumcised, and with those who descend into the pit. There are all the princes of the north, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down with the slain; they are ashamed and confounded because of their strength; they sleep uncircumcised with the slain by the sword, and bear their shame with those who descend into the pit. Pharaoh saw them and consoled himself over his entire multitude, which was killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his army, says the Lord God. For I have given (or I

have caused) my terror in the land of the living, and he slept among the uncircumcised with those killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his multitude, says the Lord God.» This passage differs greatly in the Septuagint edition, both in order and translation, and some additions from Theodotion are included in it. Where it was necessary, we also included the text itself, not sparing in length and serving the diligence of the eager reader.

70. And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth month: the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, lament over the multitude of Egypt, and bring down her daughters to the nations of the dead in the depths of the earth, to those who descend into the pit (Moreover, under the asterisks it is added: + Descend from the most beautiful water; + and sleep with the uncircumcised ** Again it follows in order): In the midst of the slain by the sword they shall fall with him, and all his strength shall sleep, and the giants shall say to you, descend, you who are better, descend, and sleep with the uncircumcised in the midst of the slain by the sword. There Asshur, and all his congregation. (And that which follows: * There all the wounded were given, * and his grave in the depths of the pit, * and his congregation is not found in Hebrew, but was added by the Seventy. Again it is said): Around his tomb all the wounded who had fallen by the sword. (And again from Theodotion's Edition it is added under asterisks: + Those who gave his tombs on the sides of the lake; + and his congregation was made around his tomb. + All these wounded and falling by the sword. After these things the Seventy placed): Those who gave their fear in the land of the living. There Aelam, and all his strength, are around his tomb, all wounded, and falling by the sword: and those who descend uncircumcised into the depths of the earth, who brought their terror upon the land of the living, and received their torment with those who descended into the pit among the wounded. There Mosoch and Thubal were given, and all their strength around his tomb, all his wounded, all uncircumcised and wounded by the sword, who brought their terror upon the land of the living, and did not sleep with the giants who fell from eternity: who descended to hell with the weapons they used in battle, and placed their swords under their heads, and their iniquities became part of their bones, for they terrified the giants in their lifetime. And you will be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and you will lie with those who are slain by the sword. There Edom and its kings, and all the princes of Assyria, who gave strength to it, lie with the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword; they lie with those who go down to the pit. There are all the princes of the north, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down with the slain; in shame they lie uncircumcised with those who are slain by the sword, and bear their disgrace with those who go down to the pit. Pharaoh will see them and will find comfort in all their strength: Pharaoh wounded by the sword, and all his strength, says the Lord God. Because I have put his fear upon the land of the living, and he will sleep in the midst of the uncircumcised, with those who are wounded by the sword, Pharaoh and all his multitude, says the Lord God. I am not unaware that such a discrepancy between two editions will be displeasing to the delicate reader. But what can I do about my slanderers, who, if I subtract anything from the translation of the Septuagint interpreters, accuse me of sacrilege and shout without fear of the Lord, especially since they disagree with the truth of faith and follow the errors of the Manichaeans, stirring up the souls of the unlearned by pointing out anything that may have changed in ancient customs, desiring to err willingly rather than learn anything true from a rival. And meanwhile, according to the story, the meaning is clear. For in that same twelfth year, and in the same, as we think, month, but not on the same day as above, but on the fifteenth day, not against Pharaoh, but against the strength or multitude of Egypt, a lamentation is taken up, which is taken away from its pride with all

its daughters, or with the strong nations to the farthest land, that is, to the depths of hell, and it is said to the king of Egypt: How much better are you, that you deserve to escape death? For when Assur, and Elam, that is, the Persians, and Mosoch, who are called Cappadocians, and Thubal, whom some understand to be Iberians, others Italians: also the Edomites, and the rulers of the North, and the Sidonians with all their armies, who by their aid have struck horror into all nations, are dead, and have been slain by the sword, and have placed their swords under their heads, which expression must be understood emphatically, will you alone be able to endure the same? But rather, when you see such a great multitude of sleeping souls with you in the underworld, and your tomb surrounded by the memories of once mighty princes, you will find comfort, considering the lighter torments to be of less consequence in the company of many. For now, let it suffice to have expressed these things briefly according to the simple meaning. Now, let us, with the same brevity as the difficulty of explanation allows, delve into spiritual understanding and the highest wisdom. Above, on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to the Prophet. But in the first of these [months], that is, on the Kalends, the beginning of the month is: on the fifteenth, when the whole orb of the moon is filled, and if it is the first month, it is the first day of unleavened bread; but if it is the seventh, it is the day of setting up the booths (which are the greatest of the solemnities among the Hebrews). Indeed, there is mourning over the strength of Egypt, so that it ceases to be strong in evil: and it receives weakness, and when it is weaker, then it becomes stronger. For the fortitude of Egypt, in Hebrew it has multitude. For wide and spacious is the road that leads to death, and many enter through it (Matthew VII, 13): as it is said to Israel on the contrary: But you are few among all nations (Deuteronomy XXVIII): for virtue is always rare, and the path that leads to life is narrow and confined, and few are those who enter through it. But what is mourned for Egypt, and her dead daughters, according to the Septuagint, or strong nations are led to the farthest land in the lake, or in the deepest pit, the souls dwelling in Egypt of this age are signified, who have lost him who says: I am the life (John XIV, 6): and dead from sins, they are dragged down to the underworld by the weight of their sins, as the sinner says: For my iniquities have gone over my head, and like a heavy burden they have pressed heavily upon me (Psalm XXXVII, 5). These are the things about which it is written in another place: They will go down into the depths of the earth, they will be handed over into the hands of the sword, they will become the prey of foxes (Ps. LXII, 10). For he who digs a pit will fall into it (Eccli. XXVII, 29; Ps. VII, 16). And so we also read: He opened a pit and dug it, and fell into the hole he made. And what follows: How beautiful you are, descend and sleep with the uncircumcised, is properly addressed to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, or as it is added in the Septuagint from Theodotion, to Egypt itself: Descend from the most beautiful water, and sleep with the uncircumcised. What specifically pertains to him, who is reborn in the baptism of Christ, and hearing with the Church: Who is this that ascends, leaning upon her brother (Song of Solomon, 8:5)? Afterwards, either through fornication or other filthy sins, he is cast out of the Church, and it is said to him: Come down from the most beautiful water, and sleep with the uncircumcised, that is, with the unclean, according to that sense which the Apostle establishes: We are the circumcision (Philippians 3:3), who serve in the spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Hi all in the midst of the wounded, or slain, shall fall with Pharaoh, by that sword which the Lord is coming to send upon the earth. For as the sword of Christ separates the good from the evil, saying: I came not to send peace upon earth, but the sword (Matth. X, 34): so the sword of heretics cuts off ((Al. slaughters)) all peoples, and leads the wounded down to hell. These are very powerful and rebellious giants, who raise

their mouth high and the more they exalt themselves in pride, the more they are brought down to the depths of the pit and to the very last part of the inferno, all of whom have been killed by the sword. And so that Pharaoh or all the strength of Egypt might know, which was dragged down to the infernal, which allies he had in punishments, the following speech demonstrates: There Assyria, and all his multitude, or his assembly. For the prince of heretics is the devil, whose true assembly is a synagoga, of which it is said in the Apocalypse: But Synagogas of Satan (Apoc. II, 9). But I think the following verses, which are marked with an obelus, should be passed over, and it should be said what is contained in the Hebrew: In their circuit, their tombs, namely of those deceived by him. All who were wounded or killed by the sword, and therefore fell, their tombs are given in the depths of the lake. But that the lake is called Infernus is clearly shown by that Psalm in which the penitent speaks: I am likened to those who descend into the lake (Psalm 27:1). We should by no means understand it as the Latin word for lake, which in Greek is called λῆμνη, as in the Lake of Tiberias, Lake Como, and Lake Benacus, and many others, but those which we do not usually call cisterns. The Scripture testifies that sinners and all heretics dig up the lakes, because they cool the waters and take away all heat, and as far as my memory serves me, no saint has dug up a lake, that is, a cistern. But all sinners, including King Uzziah who had leprosy and fell by his own pride, about whom it is written that he was a man lying in the works of the earth, and built many towers of pride in the corners, and dug up lakes (2 Chronicles 26). On the contrary, it is said: Drink water from your own vessels, and from your own fountains (Prov. V, 15). And again: Let your fountain be your own. Therefore the Lord speaks: They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and dug up cisterns, which can hold no water (Jer. III, 13). It follows: And her multitude has become all around her grave. All these surround Assyria, and there is a great multitude of them, who are all wounded and slain, and falling by the sword. For none of them can withstand Moses, nor can they hear: You who stand in the house of the Lord (Psalm 134:2); but all were wounded and killed, and those who once struck fear into the hearts of the living, now fear those who were entrusted with the Churches, lest they make the people of the living into the people of the dead, and deceive even the innocent. Hence Paul also said: But I fear that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3). But here this fear is mitigated by the hope of the Lord, as Ecclesiasticus says: The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life, from whom shall I tremble? (Psalm 26:1-2). After this it is said: There is Aelam (or Assyria) and all its multitude around his tomb, undoubtedly the Assyrians. Aelam is translated into our language as their ascent. For all those who, despising the humility of Christ, have embraced the pride of the devil and consider themselves to be something in the knowledge of a false name, are to be called Aelamites, who surround the king's tomb of the Assyrians and are killed and wounded with the sword. And although they may set their mouth on high, yet they descended unclean and uncircumcised to the uttermost parts of the earth, so that the higher they were exalted, the more forcibly they fell. These have set their terror not once, but a second time in the land of the living. For who among the Church is secure from the terror of these Aelamites, and has not lost someone from his flock? And indeed the Church of Christ is aptly called the land of the living, so that the assemblies of heretics may be thought of as the land of the dead in contrast. And they carried, he says, the disgrace and torment with them into the lake, and into the depths of hell: their resting place is in the midst of the slain, namely those whom they have cut down with their sword, and they are surrounded by such peoples. These peoples are the peoples of the Assyrian king, and

although they boast of being circumcised: nevertheless they were uncircumcised and were killed by the sword, and for the third time they have given terror and fear to the land of the living. Where they brought their torment and punishment in their midst, those whom they deceived with their frauds. There also, that is, near Assyria, are Mosoch and Thubal, and all his multitude around his tomb: all uncircumcised and slain, falling by the sword, who had put their fear in the land of the living. For Mosoch and Thubal, Symmachus and Theodotius interpreted their abode, so as to show the dwelling places of heretics, rather eternal pits, to be the punishments of the Assyrian king. Masochism is interpreted as madness: Thubal, conversion, not from evil to good, but from good to evil; or it can be understood as a universal madness that causes all heretics to go insane and intentionally turn towards worse things. (Romans 12). It is not surprising that they are insane and prone to evil, as they are allies of the Egyptian king who rejoices in numbers. All of these have been killed by the sword, those who had instilled fear, not once, not twice, but three times among the living, as we have mentioned before. It follows: And they do not sleep with the strong, or with the fallen giants, and not with the uncircumcised, who descended to the underworld with their weapons; and they placed their swords under their heads; and their wickedness was in their bones; for the terror of the strong was made in the land of the living. These, he says, who had been the leaders of the heretics, have reached such a pinnacle of evil and torment that they do not deserve to suffer similar punishments even with the strong and giants, who fell from the beginning. Who, in no way repenting of their own error, descended into the underworld with their weapons, rebelling against God and His Church; carrying weapons with them, of which it is written: The teeth of the sons of men are their weapons and arrows (Psalms 56:5); and they placed, it is said, their swords under their heads, resting in their minds to destroy; and embracing the darts of their judgments as the highest victory; to the extent that their iniquities were in their bones, that is, possessing the strongest inventions and doctrines of their own error. Because the strong became terrified in their lives, both in the land of the living. This is said in the fourth (section), that the strongest, those who had knowledge of the Scriptures, and those who were from the region of the living, would be terrified by their wickedness, as they descend to hell with their weapons, and they place their swords under their heads, and their iniquities reach even to their bones. After this, it is written: And so you will crush (them) in the midst of the uncircumcised ones (Rom. XVI, 20), which is said either to Pharaoh, or to the strength, or to the multitude of Egypt, and that she herself may be crushed, according to what is written: But may God quickly crush Satan under your feet. And you shall sleep, he says, with those killed by the sword, in eternal sleep. There, with the Assyrian and with the Egyptian multitude, there will be Idumea and its kings, all who served earthly works or delighted in bloodshed. For indeed Idumea sounds earthy and bloody. All the kings and all the rulers of whom the Apostle often speaks (Phil. III), who were devoted to earthly works and daily shed the blood of those whom they deceived with their deceit, slept with the uncircumcised and unclean, and with those who descended into the pit, of whom we have spoken above. In that very county they will be, and the princes of the North, from whom evil is kindled upon the earth. And by whom, either in Jeremiah (Jer. 1) or in this same prophet (Above XXII), that pot full of flesh and bones is kindled. And not only the princes of the North, but all the rulers of Assyria, for which in Hebrew it is more accurately stated, all the Sidonians, whom we translate as hunters, according to what is written: Our soul is like a bird escaped from the snare of the hunters (Ps. 123:7), for which in Hebrew it is stated, the Sidonians. Those from Sidon, or hunters, who will be led trembling to the underworld, once relying on their own strength, will sleep impure, and will carry their own

confusion or torment, having the everlasting remorse of a guilty conscience, so that their fire may not be extinguished (Isaiah 66), and their worm may not die (Mark 9). When Pharaoh sees all of them, he will be comforted, either still possessing his former malice and seeing many partners in his punishment, or certainly he was comforted, seeing them also being confounded in their torments and terrors over his entire multitude that was killed by the sword, namely of Pharaoh, or of all his allies, especially the king of Assyria, and Meeshech and Tubal and the Edomites, and the princes of the north, and the Sidonians. For they had instilled their terror in the land of the living. And it is said in the fifth place, that we should beware and flee from all nations of this kind, which have deceived us in all senses and are known to be dreadful, and can only be avoided if we guard our hearts with all diligence. He slept, it is said, and Pharaoh himself along with his allies were slain by the sword. His allies, a multitude, went along a wide and spacious path to eternal punishments.

33:1-9

(Chapter XXXIII, Verse 1 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, speak to the children of your people and say to them: When I bring a sword upon a land and the people of the land take one man from among them and make him their watchman, and he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people, then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound (or voice) of the trumpet, and did not pay attention, his blood shall be upon himself: but if he takes heed, he shall save his soul. But if the watchman sees the sword coming, and does not blow the trumpet; and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand. And you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Therefore hear from my mouth the word, and proclaim it to them from me. If I say to the wicked, wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul. Once again, the word of the Lord came to the prophet, who had been silent for some time because neither the prophet nor human frailty can bear a constant and continuous prophecy. And he speaks the same things that are contained in the previous verses. Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel, and you will hear a word from my mouth, and you will warn them from me. If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you have not warned him, nor spoken to warn the wicked to turn from his wicked way and live, the wicked shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. And even if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness and his evil ways, he will die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul. If you carefully consider, you will understand that they are indeed similar, but not the same, as they disagree in many things. And in all Holy Scriptures we must observe this, where there seems to be a similarity in the sentiment, not all things are said in the same way: but many things are either subtracted or added, and there is a reason for the discrepancy between the words of individuals. And meanwhile, before we come to deeper matters, a brief statement must be explained. If a watchman is appointed among the people to announce the coming sword of the Lord's wrath, and if, when he announces it, the people refuse to listen, the watchman will be free, and the one who is oppressed by the sword will

bear the guilt of his own blood: but if he hears and saves himself. But if the watchman does not blow the trumpet, and the ignorant people do not observe the approaching sword, the people will indeed die in their iniquity, but I will require the blood of the dying from the hand of the watchman. And in order for the prophet Ezekiel to know that the general dispute concerned him in particular, He said to him, 'And you, son of man, have not been appointed as a watchman for the land and the people of the land, as I have already said, but you have been appointed as a watchman for the house of Israel. Therefore, if when I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' you do not speak to warn him, that he may turn from his wicked way to save his life, his blood shall be upon you. But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul.' But if you announce and command the wicked to turn away from their worst ways, and they refuse to do so: they will indeed die in their iniquity; but you will deliver your soul from the death brought on by negligence. From these words we learn that a person, no matter how wicked and impious, can be saved from their wickedness if they hear the words of the teacher and repent. The teacher also faces a danger if they refuse to teach, either out of fear or despair of the sinner's fate. The teacher is guilty of shedding the blood of the one who could have been saved and rescued from death if the teacher had not remained silent, and in both cases the free will of the person is preserved, as it is up to the teacher to choose whether to speak or remain silent, and up to the listener to choose whether to listen, act and be saved, or to ignore and perish through their own disdain. And immediately it does not follow that because the prophet predicts, what he predicted will come. For he does not predict so that it may come, but so that it may not come. And because God speaks, it is not necessary for what he threatens to happen, but he threatens so that the one to whom he threatens may be converted to repentance, and what is future does not happen if the words of the Lord are despised. However, we can discuss this passage in three ways: as the land that appoints a watchman for itself, either according to the literal sense, that is, the land of Judea, or according to the spiritual interpretation, the Church, which often chooses a watchman for the last things of its people, namely the one whom the Apostle, writing to the Corinthians, takes as a judge (1 Corinthians 15), or certainly the soul of the believer, which sets its mind and reason above the people and crowd of its thoughts, so that it does not accept all the incentives of thoughts, but judges and discerns what should be followed by itself and what should be avoided. A watchman of the land of Judea, either a king, or a prophet: a watchman of the Church, either a bishop, or a presbyter, because he is chosen by the people, and knowing the reading of the Scriptures, and foreseeing what is to come, he announces to the people and corrects the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is greatly to be feared that we approach this office unworthy and chosen by the people, giving ourselves to neglect and idleness: and what is worse, serving pleasures, the belly, and laziness, we think that we have received honor, not ministry. For indeed the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister (Matthew 20:28); and he washed the disciples' feet (John 13), to show that all filth and vices must be washed and purged from the masters in the disciples. Let us not immediately answer what profit is it to teach, if the hearer is unwilling to do what you have taught? For each one is judged according to his own mind and duty. If you have not spoken, he, if he has disregarded listening. Salomon speaks about negligent magistrates: Hidden wisdom and hidden treasure, what is the use for both? What does this signify in the Gospel (Mark 9) as well, that whoever scandalizes one of the least of the Church, it is expedient for him to be tied around his neck with a millstone of a donkey and be cast into the deep, rather than being placed on a high watchtower where he can harm

many.

33:10-20

(Versed 10ff.) Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel and say to them: 'Our transgressions and sins are upon us, and we waste away because of them. How then can we live?' Say to them: 'As surely as I live, declares the Lord God, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?' And you, son of man, say to your people: 'The righteousness of the righteous man will not save him when he disobeys, and the wickedness of the wicked man will not cause him to stumble when he turns from it. The righteous man cannot live by his righteousness when he sins.' Even if I say to the just, that he shall surely live; and relying on his justice he commits iniquity, all his justices shall be forgotten, and in his iniquity which he has wrought, he shall die. But if I shall say to the wicked: Thou shalt surely die; and he does penance for his sin, and does judgment and justice, and if he restore the pledge, and render what he had robbed, and walk in the commandments of life, and do no unjust thing, he shall surely live, and shall not die. All sins ((Vulg. adds of him)), which he has committed, shall not be imputed to him: for judgment and justice he has done, he shall live: And the children of your people have said: The way of the Lord is not equal, whereas their way is unjust. When the just turns himself away from his justice, and commits iniquity, he shall die therein: in the same manner, when the wicked turns himself away from his wickedness, and does judgment and justice, he shall live therein. And you say: The way of the Lord is not right. Each one I will judge according to his ways, o house of Israel. If we read negligently, the same prophecy seems to us which is said above, in which it is said: Do I desire the death of the wicked, saith the Lord God, and not that he should be converted from his ways, and live? (Ezek. XVIII, 23). And in the end of the same prophecy: Return ye, and turn yourselves from all your impieties, and there shall not be iniquity that may be your ruin (Ibid., 8). For there, indeed, a conversation is had with those who desire to do penance and to expiate their sins with justice, so that they may convert with confidence and perform penance with a full heart. But here, He speaks to those who, due to the magnitude of their sins, or rather their impieties, despair of salvation and say: Our iniquities and sins are upon us, and we waste away in them. How then can we live? And the meaning is: Since death has once been proposed to us and no medicine can restore health to our wounds, why must we labor and be consumed in vain, and not transact this present life in despair, so that at least we may enjoy it, since we have lost the future life? To whom God responds, that he does not want the death of the wicked, but that they should turn back and live. And he addresses an apostrophe to the despairing wicked: Turn away from your wicked ways. And so that we may know who the wicked are to whom he speaks, the following discourse demonstrates: Why should you die, O house of Israel? However, life and death in this context do not signify the common life or death shared with animals according to the natural law, but rather that which is written, I will please the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 114:9); and, The soul that sins shall die. And with a special warning, because he was speaking to the house of Israel, he proceeds to a general discussion: that even if the just do not save their past righteousness, if they are engaged in new sins, and even if sinners or wicked people do not lose their old sins, if they correct their previous mistakes with righteous actions, God does not judge in both cases based on the past, but on the present. If I say, he says, to the righteous, you shall live, and I promise him the rewards of righteousness, and he, relying on that, sins, all his previous

righteousness will be forgotten, and he will die in his present unrighteousness. My opinion has not changed, for I cannot give to the same sinner what I promised to the righteous. And if I, being a sinner and wicked, pronounce and say: Yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown; and he shall repent of his sins, and amend his old error with good works, so that he may do justice and righteousness, restore the pledge, and give back the plunder, and walk in the commandments of life, and not do anything unjust: should not the life, which is Christ, live and never die, since the punishment of the sinner should not punish the righteous? This is what the divine word speaks to Jeremiah when he goes down to the potter's house and hears either the promises or the threats of God, in order to either provoke people to salvation or deter them from sin (Jer. XVIII). Hence those who say that the way of the Lord is not just are argued against because their opinion is unjust, possessed of a very evil eye, and not at all new, but of those who have passed judgment in the past. To all of whom it is shown that the sinner should not despair of salvation if he repents; nor should the righteous person place confidence in his righteousness if he negligently loses what he had earnestly sought after. We pass over those things which are clearly stated, so that we may dwell on those which are more obscure, in which the present prophecy differs from the past, and in which it speaks similar things, the comparison of both can indicate. Moreover, what it means to pass judgment and to be just, to restore a pledge, to repay robbery, to walk in the commandments of life, and other things, we have spoken of in this same prophet above.

33:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the tenth month (the Vulgate is silent on the month), on the fifth day of the month of our transmigration (or captivity), that the one who had fled (or been saved) from Jerusalem came to me, saying, 'The city has been devastated (or captured).' But the hand of the Lord had been upon me in the evening before the one who had fled came; and He opened my mouth until the morning, and I no longer remained silent with my mouth open. In the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, in the fifth month, the city of Jerusalem was captured. This prophecy, however, in the twelfth year, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month of captivity or exile, when Jehoiachin was captured, shows that one year, four months, and twenty-five days after the capture of Jerusalem, a citizen of Jerusalem came to Babylon to announce the captured and devastated city. But one day before he came, who was to narrate this, in the evening the hand of the Lord came upon the prophet Ezekiel, who opened his mouth which had been closed for a long time, and whatever he was going to say, this happened before he could speak: nor did he remain silent any longer, seeing his prophecy fulfilled by action, and without doubt the people who were in Babylon, or those who were taken captive by prophetic prediction. For then the mouth of the prophet is opened, when what he had previously announced, he shows by action: and he proclaims with total freedom, things that are not yet to come, but either present or already past. This according to the literal sense. However, according to the anagoge, if Ezekiel is interpreted as the strength of God: but Christ is the power and wisdom of God (I Cor. I, 24), this must be understood that with the capture and overthrow of Jerusalem, whoever could escape the perfidy of the Jews, such as the apostles and the remnants that were saved, he himself declares to Christ that all the ceremonies of the Jews have been overthrown, which some people still think should be observed today, not hearing the Apostle's words: You have fallen from grace, you who are trying to be justified by the Law (Galat. V, 4). And therefore, the defenders of the synagogues in the churches of Christ, what do they proclaim? Therefore, after Jerusalem was captured and

destroyed, the mouth of the Lord was opened through the apostles and the apostolic men, who can say: My mouth is open to you, O Corinthians; and: A great and effective door has opened to me (2 Corinthians 6:11). And this: I opened my mouth and drew in the breath (Psalm CXVIII, 131), which will never be silent, nor be heard with Israel: Listen, Israel, and be silent: but it will resound throughout the whole world, and will reveal the Gospel of Christ to the Gentiles. Therefore, according to this meaning, the twelfth year is referred to the twelve tribes, and the tenth month to the time of the Jewish propitiation, which is called **■λασμ■ς** in Greek: and the fifth day of the month to the carnal senses, which all, captured by Jerusalem, and with the succession of the Gospel, have been shown to have been destroyed and passed away: and in the evening, that is, at the end of the world, the hand of the Lord was accomplished for the true Ezekiel, who had sung of the future ruins of the city through the prophets, and showed them to have been fulfilled in the morning.

33:23-33

(Verse 23 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, those who dwell in these ruined places in the land of Israel speak, saying: Abraham was one, and he possessed the land; but we are many, the land has been given to us as a possession. Therefore, you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord God: You who eat with blood and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood, shall you inherit the land? You have stood with your swords, you have committed abominations, and each of you has defiled his neighbor's wife, and you will possess the land by inheritance? This you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord God: As I live, surely those who dwell in the ruins shall fall by the sword, and the one who is in the open field I will give to the beasts to be devoured, and those who are in strongholds and caves shall die by pestilence. And I will make the land a desolation and a waste, and the pride of its strength shall cease, and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, so that no one will pass through. And they shall know that I am the Lord when I make their land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations that they have committed. And you, son of man, the children of your people speak of you beside the walls and in the doors of the houses, and they say to one another, each to his brother, 'Come, and hear what is the word that comes forth from the Lord.' And they come to you as the people usually come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear your words, but they do not do them, for they show my words of their mouth in song, and their heart follows their covetousness. Indeed, you are to them like a very lovely song that is sung with a beautiful and sweet sound, and they hear your words but do not do them. And when this comes to pass, behold, it comes; they shall know that a prophet has been among them. Firstly, it must be understood that approximately eight verses prior to the place which we have established: Those who partake in blood, and lift up your eyes to your impurities, until the place where it is written: These things you shall say to them, thus says the Lord God, are not found in the Septuagint, which, along with many others, have neglected these things, or as they have been interpreted by them, gradually removed from the writings due to error. And our Latin, or rather, envious Christians, or to say it more plainly, heirs of the Grunnian faction, bark against us, because we discourse according to the Hebrew: as if food were being imposed unwillingly, and not feasts being prepared for those who receive them with thanksgiving. Certainly, if they don't trust me, let them read other editions, Aquila's, Symmachus's, and Theodotion's; let them interrogate the Hebrews from different provinces, not just one place, so they don't boast that they have been bought by me; and when they see that all agree with my error or ignorance, then

let them understand that they are too wise and desire to sleep rather than to learn; and let them live in the seventy cells of the Alexandrian lighthouse, so they don't lose their sails from the ships and don't sigh for damages to the ropes. Now let us discuss what we have proposed. After Jerusalem was captured and the temple destroyed, the poor of the land, of whom Jeremiah writes, were left alone in Jerusalem to cultivate vineyards and fields and to dwell in the ruins of the burned city. And although they should have repented for the reasons for their captivity, they deceived themselves with empty hope, saying: Our father Abraham was one, and yet he possessed this land as an inheritance, not because he himself possessed it, but because his descendants received the land of promise. If, therefore, he alone was multiplied into so many peoples, we who are left behind in the land of Judea, and dwell in desolate and ruined cities, will certainly be multiplied much more, so that we may possess more than he possessed alone. To this the Lord responded: Abraham possessed the land of promise by faith. For Abraham believed in God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:8). However, these people, who are occupied with disbelief and wickedness, even if they are many, will not be able to possess. At the same time he lists the six kinds of sins that offend God, namely, those who eat in blood, and lift up your eyes to uncleanness, that is, to your idols, and pour out blood, that is, perpetrate murder: Could you, doing these things, be able to hold the land by inheritance? Nor are you content with this end of wickedness, but you stand daily in your swords, ready for killing, and imitating Esau, who stood, and lived in his sword, you do incredible abominations, namely, the shameful lusts of indecency, and each one defiles the wife of his neighbor; that you may be more wicked in that, that you have defiled the wife of your friend and neighbor. And when you do these things, do you think you will inherit the land? Therefore, answer them, O prophet, and reveal this sentence about them from my words. I swear by myself that those who dwell in ruins and walls will fall by the sword, and those who are in the fields or the plain will be devoured by beasts, and those who are in fortified places or caves cannot escape the wrath of God but will die of hunger and pestilence. And I will make the land of Judah into a desert, and its proud strength will fail, which once was its strength. But God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). Even the mountains and everything will be deserted, and it will become such a great solitude that no one will pass through them, and then those who remained will no longer trust in their multitude, but will realize the magnitude of the solitude and know that I am the Lord, who made the land a desert because of all the abominations they have done. Let these words be spoken against those who, after Jerusalem was captured and the entire region of the Jews devastated, dwelt in ruins and in deserted cities and villages. Now let us turn to tropology, and according to our custom, let us engage in a broad discussion rather than a mere dissertation. Every heretic dwells in walls and deserts, and believes himself to possess the land of Israel, and says: If Abraham, by his faith alone, came into such great blessedness that his descendants were multiplied like the sand of the sea and like the stars of heaven, how much more will we, who are many, possess the land of Israel, that is, those who see God, and the confession of the Lord's Day? To whom the Lord replied: He deservedly possessed the land of faith; but your infidelity, or rather blasphemy, will not be able to possess the land of Israel, that is, the Church. For first you eat in blood, shedding their blood whom you scandalize. Then you lift your eyes to your impurities or abominations, which you have fixed in your mind: when you ought to imitate the ecclesiastical man, and say: To you I lift up my eyes, you who dwell in heaven (Ps. CXXII, 1). Thirdly, you shed blood, not giving life to those whom you have deceived, but killing them. It is not enough for you to have done these three things, but you stand with your swords, that is, you

persevere in the wickedness of your opinions, and you are ready for murder, and you commit abominations, doing those things in your beds which are shameful to speak of, and you defile the wife of your neighbor, namely, the ecclesiastical conversation, eagerly snatching away those who are daily deceived from the embrace of Christ. And when you have done these things, do you think you will possess the land of Israel as an inheritance? To whom God speaks, that whoever dwells in the ruinous assemblies of heretics will fall by the sword of Ecclesiasticus, concerning which it is written: 'Double-edged swords are in their hands' (Ps. 149:6). And in the Gospel: 'I did not come to bring peace, but a sword' (Matthew 10). And the servant who indulges in luxury and idleness will be divided, that is, he will be struck with a sword, and his portion will be placed with the unbelievers' (Luke 12). And whoever is in the field or in the countryside, will be handed over to beasts for devouring, which the prophet, desiring to avoid them, prays: Do not hand over to beasts the soul confessing to you (Ps. LXXIII, 19). But whoever is in strongholds and fortified places, of which it is written: The righteous ascends strong cities, and destroys their fortifications, in which the wicked trusted (Prov. XXI, 22); and he resides in caves, of which it is said: It is written, My Father's house will be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves (Matt. XXI, 33): this person will die of the hunger of the word of the Lord, and of pestilence, and all the land of heretics will be turned into a desert, so that their pride is broken and the mountains are turned into a desert, which promised themselves the height of knowledge. Those mountains are called Israel, for under the name of Christ they deceive and overthrow everyone; no one will be able to pass through them, nor will anyone be able to say what Moses said: 'When I pass by, I will see this great vision' (Exodus 3:1). For the inhabitants of these perverse mountains are not strangers or visitors, but rather residents. And when they have suffered these things, then they will know that He is the Lord who has made their land a desert because of the abominations they have committed. It follows: On the same day and at the same time, that is, in the twelfth year, the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, when he who had fled from Jerusalem came and when the prophet spoke to those who were in the land of Judah, and they promised themselves the hope of eternal possession, and the prophet commands him to say to the people who reside in Babylon and live with him, and to accuse them of deceitful plots who desire to hear the words of the prophet, not for the salvation of their souls, but for the pleasure of their ears. These people were sitting near the walls and at the doorways of houses, not at all desiring to enter into the understanding of the prophets; but they encourage one another and say: Come, let us hear what word is coming forth from the Lord; and thus they come as a people who enter the Church of God, and sit before you, my people, who claim to be mine, and do not want to do what they have heard. They seem to me to be like those who are entertained by theatrical songs: they listen to either tragedies or comedies, and there they revel with delight: so that when they have gone out from you, they repeat and sing them, and deceive themselves with sweet sounds. And they will listen, he says, to your words and not do them. Such are many in the Churches today, who say: Come let us hear him and him, rolling his words with marvelous eloquence of his preaching: they stir up applause, and shout, and wave their hands, and those things which they had neglected in their actions, once they realize that he has come (for it is necessary that what the prophet of God pronounces in his word should come to pass), then they will begin to approve and know that all the things they had heard were not the words of a man, but of the Lord, who spoke through the prophet and the man of the church.

Book Eleven Book Eleven The eleventh book of explanations on the book of Ezekiel will contain a prophecy against Gog and Magog in the final part of itself, and it will come up to the beginning of the city located on the mountain and the temple situated in it. If, with the help of the Lord and His speaking of its mysteries, I am able to bring it to a conclusion, it will be a long time and I will have much doubt whether I should put my hands on the spiritual temple or openly confess my ignorance, especially since there is great silence both among the Jews and among us regarding its interpretation. Some think that it should be built in the future, while others, with good intentions but lacking knowledge, believe that the things spoken of are spiritual but do not know how they should be explained. And in the meantime, so that the concern of the present work may hold us, know, O virgin of Christ Eustochium, that you must pray for us. In a very difficult prophecy, I briefly remind you that our not-so-noble man, writing to the Emperor, said about this nation: That Gog is a Goth; it is not for me, but for those who think so, to discuss how all the things written about it can be reconciled.

34:1-31

(Chapter 34.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds (or to the shepherds) of Israel, prophesy, and say to the shepherds: Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves. (Or: O shepherds of Israel, do the shepherds not feed themselves?) Do not the flocks feed on the shepherds? (Or do the sheep not feed the shepherds?) You have eaten the curds, and you have clothed yourselves with the wool, and you have slaughtered the fat animals, but you have not fed my flock. You did not strengthen what was weak (or comforted); and you did not heal what was sick; you did not bind up what was broken, and you did not bring back what was cast away (or wandering); you did not seek what was lost; but with severity you commanded them, and with power (or what happened to be, you afflicted them with labor). And my sheep were scattered because there was no shepherd (or shepherds), and they became a prey to all the beasts of the field, and they were scattered. My flocks (or sheep) had wandered upon all the mountains, and upon every high hill, and were scattered upon the face of the whole earth; and there was none to seek them, there was no one, I say, to seek (or bring back) them. Therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: As I live, says the Lord God, forasmuch as my flocks (or sheep) have been made a prey, and my sheep have been devoured by every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd (or shepherds), for my shepherds sought not after my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and did not feed my flocks. Therefore, shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: thus says the Lord God: Behold, I myself will require my flock from their hand, and I will make them cease to shepherd my flock any longer; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves (or the sheep) any longer, and I will deliver my flock (or sheep) from their mouth, and they shall no longer be food for them. For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his dispersed sheep (or when there is darkness and clouds among his separated sheep), so will I seek out my sheep and will deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. And I will bring them (whether female or male) from the peoples (or from the nations), and I will gather them (whether female or male) from the lands (or from the regions), and I will bring them (whether female or male) into their own land, and I will feed them (whether female or male) on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the inhabited places of the land. In the most fertile pastures I will feed them (whether female or

male), and they will be grazing their (or their sheep's) pastures on the high mountains of Israel: there they will rest in green grass, and in rich pastures they will graze on the mountains of Israel. I will feed my sheep, and I will make them lie down (or rest), says the Lord God. I will seek what was lost, and I will bring back what was cast away (or wandered): and I will bind up what was broken, and I will strengthen (or comfort) what was weak: and I will watch over the fat and strong ones, and I will feed them with judgment (or justice). But you, my flock (or sheep), this says the Lord God: Behold, I judge between the sheep, and between rams and goats. Was it not enough for you to graze on good pastures? Moreover, you trampled the remnants of your pastures with your feet, and when you drank the purest water, you disturbed the rest with your feet. And my sheep, which were trampled by your feet, were fed, and those feet of yours that disturbed, they drank. Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: Behold, I myself will judge between the fat livestock and the lean (or between the strong and the weak livestock): because you pushed with your sides and shoulders, and with your horns you scattered all the weak animals until they were scattered outside. I will save my flock, and it will no longer be plundered, and I will judge between sheep and sheep (or between ram and ram). And I will raise up over them (here and elsewhere) (or over them) one shepherd who will feed them (or him), my servant David: he will feed them (or him): and he will be their shepherd. But I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I, the Lord, have spoken. And I will make a covenant (or testament) of peace with them, and I will cause the most harmful beasts to cease from the earth, and those who dwell in the wilderness will sleep safely in the woods. And I will place them around my hill as a blessing, and I will bring rain in its season, and the rains will be a blessing. And the trees of the field will yield their fruit, and the land will give its increase, and they will dwell in their land without fear (or in the hope of peace), and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I break the yoke and deliver them from the hand of those who have enslaved them. And they will no longer be plundered by the nations, nor will the beasts of the earth devour them, but they will dwell securely (or in hope) without any fear. And I will raise up for them a renowned offspring (or a peaceable plantation), and they will no longer be cut off (or destroyed) by famine in the land, nor bear the reproach of the nations anymore. And they will know that I am the Lord their God, for I am with them, and they are my people, the house of Israel, declares the Lord God. But you, my flock, are men, the flock of my pasture (or sheep), and I am the Lord your God, says the Lord God. I have often advised to mix both editions, in order to magnify the greatness of the books, in those parts only, which do not differ much from themselves in translation. After the capture of Jerusalem, after he announced in Babylon that he had fled, he spoke about those who dwelt in the ruined Jerusalem, and then about those who were placed in captivity but nevertheless persisted in evil, unwilling to hear the words of the prophets: now he directs his speech to the shepherds, that is, to the leaders, whose fault the sheep, that is, the people, were scattered. And this should be noted, that from the twelfth year, tenth month, fifth day of the month of transmigration, or captivity of Jechoniah, and those who were captured with him, until the twenty-fifth year, when the temple is built on the mountain of the city, and the incredible sacraments of the Church are revealed, there is no middle year, and no specific time is mentioned; but it is simply said: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, speak to those and to them, that we may understand everything that is read in thirteen years, at different times; and yet certain intervals of time are not specified among them. But the word is directed to the shepherds of Israel, whom we must understand as either kings, or princes, scribes and Pharisees, and teachers of the Jewish people. Or certainly in the Gospel people, the bishops,

presbyters, and deacons: or according to mystical understanding, the Angels of the individual Churches, to whom John wrote in his Apocalypse (Apoc. I), and whose Angels daily see the face of God (Matthew XV). And it is said first: Woe to the shepherds of Israel, who, although they should feed the Lord's flock and provide for its salvation, hasten to satisfy their own luxury. Therefore, great caution must be taken, and those precepts must be observed: Do not seek to become a judge, lest you may not be able to remove injustices (Eccli. VII, 6). And again: The greater you are, the more you should humble yourself, and in the sight of the Lord you will find favor (Ibid. III, 29). And again: They have made you a leader, do not be exalted, but be among them as one of them (Eccli. XXXII, 1). Thus the Apostle says that he is like a little child and a nursing infant among the disciples (I Cor. III). And that which follows: You were eating milk, and were clothed with wool, speaks metaphorically of the shepherds to the princes, of whom it is written elsewhere: Who devour my people like bread (Ps. LII, 5). Understand all food in milk: in wool, the various variety of garments. But when it is said: And you killed the fat, it speaks of the rich in the people, whom the wicked princes are said to slay in the churches, while they preach to them, and dare not rebuke their vices. Concerning whom the prophet also says: 'My people, who call you blessed, deceive you and undermine the path of your feet' (Isaiah 3:12). Concerning whom also James speaks (James 2:3), that when they enter, they are honored with precious clothing and a gold ring, and to the holy poor it is said: 'But you, sit on a stool, or on the ground, or stand.' They do not strengthen or consolidate what is weak. And Paul also speaks: Receive the weak (Rom. XIV, 1). And: receive the weak in faith. And: Many among you are weak and sick. To whom divine speech is sent, about which it is written in the Psalms: He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions (Ps. CV, 10). And he says that what is broken is not bound: not considering mortal wounds in the people, such as adultery, murder, sacrilege. And they do not bring back what has been rejected or what they have seen to be in error, allowing them to be deceived by heretics. And they do not seek what has been lost, not desiring to save those who are perishing, but rather to devour those who are in the Churches: but they command them with severity and with power, which properly belongs to the superciliousness of the bishops, namely, those who disgrace the dignity of their name by their actions and assume pride in humility, so that they consider themselves to have gained honor, not burden: and they strive to oppress anyone in the Church whom they see as powerful and as having the word of God. Where in the Septuagint it is written: And what was by chance, you afflicted with labor. And the people of God was dispersed, either by vices or by the error of heretics: because there was no good shepherd who would lay down his life for the sheep: but all were mercenaries, who only considered their own profit from the flocks, and when they saw a wolf, they fled. By their negligence, the flock of the Lord is devoured by the beasts of the field, of which it is written: You have set darkness, and it became night: in it all the beasts of the field shall pass, the lion's whelps roaring, that they may snatch and seek food from God (Ps. 103:20-21). And they are scattered and wander on all the mountains, which rise up against the knowledge of God, and on every lofty hill, which through heretical pride despise the simplicity of the Church. And they are scattered over the whole face of the earth, seeking earthly things, not heavenly. And there was no one who would seek or lead them back, because they are occupied with pleasures and do not care for the losses of the Lord's flock. Therefore, the word of the Lord is addressed to the wicked shepherds, because they have done these things that I have explained above, and which are enumerated a second time: Behold, I myself will come to the shepherds and seek my flock from their hand, for it is expedient that the

millstone of the donkey be tied around their neck (Matthew 18), rather than they cause the least scandal to my people. And this will be their punishment or rather the greatest punishment, that they shall no longer pasture my flock: lest under the excuse of feeding the sheep they feed on themselves, and gather riches: And I will deliver my people from their mouth. I will require, says the Lord, from their hand, and I will deliver from their mouth what is devoured by greedy jaws. But when He shall require the sheep, He will visit them as if they were sick and emaciated, and scattered by the negligence of the shepherds: and He will deliver from all places in the day of the cloud and darkness, of which also Joel speaks: The day of the Lord is near, and it is the day of darkness and gloom, and the day of clouds and mist (Joel. II, 1, 2). Then they shall be brought out from the lands, to be brought into their own land, which is the land of the living: and he himself shall feed them in the mountains of Israel, of which David speaks: I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence shall come my help (Ps. CXX, 1). And not only in the mountains, but in the rivers, and in all the seats of the earth, in fertile pastures, and on the high mountain, of which Isaiah and Micah prophesy more fully (Isa. II; Mic. IV, VII): or in the high mountains of Israel. There they will rest in green pastures, and they will say: The Lord feeds me, and nothing will be lacking to me; he has placed me there in the place of pasture. He has led me forth above the waters of refreshment (Ps. 22:1-2). And they will be fed in the richest pastures on the mountains of Israel. It is an endless promise and hope of blessedness, when the Lord himself promises, saying: I will feed my sheep, and I will never commit them to evil shepherds, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God, so that they may rest in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then what was lost among the peoples of the nations will be sought after, and what had wandered in the persuasion of heretics will be brought back, and what was broken will be bound up, and what was crushed and weak will be strengthened, so that what is written may be fulfilled: He heals their infirmities and binds up their wounds (Psalm 147:3). For a broken and humbled heart, God will not despise (Psalm 51:19). Therefore, even the holy one says: Heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled (Psalm 6:2). And in the thirty-seventh Psalm (Verse 4) the penitent says: There is no peace in my bones because of the face of my sins: and what is fat, he says, I will keep: lest it be devoured by beasts. And he will feed his sheep in judgment, knowing to which sheep what pastures are owed. For there are many mansions with the Father (John XIV). And: The Father does not judge anyone: but he has given all judgment to the Son (Ibid., V). But these things he spoke against the shepherds: now he speaks to the sheep, that is, to the people: and to the flock of both kinds of livestock, that is, the sheep and the goats: and not only to the sheep and goats, but also to the rams and the bucks, who are the leaders in the flocks, to whom he says: Was it not enough for you to feed on the good pastures of the Scriptures? But in addition, you were trampling on the remnants of your pastures with your feet. And while you were drinking the purest waters of God's teachings, you were disturbing the remaining waters with your feet, so that my people would eat and drink trampled pastures and tainted waters because of your fault, which in itself was good but became corrupted and violated. Indeed, this is what all heretics do, they pick apart the words of the Scriptures and, to the best of their ability, stain them. But even the ecclesiastical men who do not preserve the truth of the doctrines, but instead fabricate them from their own hearts, and hold their presumption as a teacher, are held captive by a similar error. When they persuade the people that the things they invent are true, and when they incite applause and cheers in a theatrical manner, they become forgetful of their own ignorance, and with raised eyebrows, weighing their words, and brandishing them, they assume the authority of teachers for themselves.

Let us therefore see what judgment there is between one flock and another: and by what judgment the good and true shepherd, who has received all judgment from the Father, may judge them. Behold, he says, I myself judge between the fat flock and the lean, or between the strong and the weak. For the strong push and butt the weak with their sides and shoulders, and they fan them with their horns, not knowing that the bull should be punished by the law of the horn (Exodus 21). But they keep pushing on the sides, and they fan with their horns until they scatter and drive the sheep outside. For the pride of the ancestors and the injustice of the leaders, they are frequently driven out of the Church, so that they may be scattered by the Lord, whom He Himself saved. But the Lord will not let them continue to plunder, and He will judge between sheep and sheep: not between the names of dignitaries, by which the leaders swell with pride; but between man and man, according to what each servant of the Lord is. Then He will raise up one shepherd, who says in the Gospel: I am the good shepherd (John 10:11); His servant David according to what form of a servant He deigned to assume (Philippians 2); who is interpreted as 'mighty by hand'. He Himself will pasture them, and the Lord will be their God, either the Son and the Father, or certainly the shepherd according to assumed flesh: But the Lord, and God, according to the Word which was in the beginning with God. That David, as the rational animal advances in the flock, will by no means be called a shepherd, but rather a prince among them, about whom it is written: But there is one among you whom you do not know (John 1:26). Then he will make a covenant of peace with them, not of war or discord, for his dwelling place is in peace (Psalm 75), but the peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4), who says: My peace I give to you: my peace I leave with you (John 14, 27). And he will cause the most harmful creatures to cease from the earth, vices, or disturbances, by which human souls are tormented: or opposing powers, by which they are attacked. And those who dwell in the wilderness shall sleep securely in the forests. For the Lord will reveal the hidden places of the woods, and in His temple all shall declare glory (Ps. 28:9). And with the beasts driven away and the land reduced to solitude, those who sleep securely shall say: The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear (Ps. 26:1)? And He will place them, who sleep securely, around His mountain or hill, and they shall receive blessings. Then he will give rain in its season, and there will be rain of blessings, which he promises in the blessings of Deuteronomy (Deut. XXVIII). And he will give, it is said, the tree of life, of which it is written in Genesis (Genes. II): and the tree of wisdom, of which it is said, It is a tree of life to all who take hold of it (Prov. III, 18). And he will give its fruit, when the earth also gives its fruit: whether it be the trees of the regions, a great multitude of the saints. And the earth will give its fruit: for truth has arisen from the earth (Ps. 84, 12). And they shall be in their land without fear, or in the hope of peace, in the land of the living, in the land of the meek, of whom it is written: Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land (Matt. 5, 4): so that they may know by the happiness of all things that He is the Lord: when He has broken the chains, or the iron circle of their yoke, with which they were oppressed as if by a most severe power, and has freed them from the hand of those who held them in power or afflicted them with servitude. For everyone is a slave of whoever conquers them. And they will no longer be a prey to demonic nations; nor will the beasts of the earth devour those of whom we have spoken: but they will dwell confidently without any fear, according to the above explanation. And I will raise up for them a named offspring, or a planting of peace, which is spoken of in the Gospel: I am the true vine (John 15:1). And they will no longer be diminished by hunger on the earth. Therefore, hunger is on earth: the hunger to hear the word of God, which, under a good shepherd and a named branch, and celebrated in the speech of all, and

the planting of peace, will never be on earth; nor will they be subjected any longer to the reproaches of the nations, saying: Where is their God (Psalm 113, 10)? And after all this, it is known that not only is He the Lord, as He Himself had said before, but with the addition that He is the Lord of all and truly their God, with those who says in the Gospel to the Apostles: Behold, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28, 20). But when He Himself shall be their Lord God, then they shall also be His people, not anyone, but those who have merited to be called the house of Israel. And so that we may not think that all that has been said pertains to shepherds and goats and rams, He solves the riddle, or rather the metaphor, and states more plainly: But you are My sheep, and you, men, are the sheep of My pasture. Therefore, every divine word is for human beings, to whom He says: I am the Lord your God, says the Lord God.

35:1-15

(Chapter 35) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it, and say to it, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and a waste. I will demolish your cities and make you a solitude, and you shall be deserted, and you shall know that I am the Lord; because you have been an everlasting enemy and have delivered the children of Israel into the hand of the sword (or deceitfully sat against the house of Israel in the hand of the sword) in the time of their affliction, in the time of extreme wickedness. Therefore, I live," says the Lord God, "because I will deliver you to bloodshed (or because you have sinned in blood) and blood will pursue you: and when you hate blood, blood will pursue you. And I will make Mount Seir a desolation and a wasteland, and I will remove from it going and returning (or men and animals). And I will fill its mountains with the slain (or the wounded): they will fall with the sword in your hills, and in your valleys, and in the torrents of the slain. I will deliver you to everlasting desolations, and your cities shall not be inhabited: and you shall know (or shall know) that I am the Lord (Vulgate adds God): because you have said: Two nations and two lands (or regions) shall be mine, and I will possess them by inheritance, when the Lord was there. Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God: because you have done according to your wrath (or enmity), and according to your zeal, which you have shown, having hatred towards them, and I will make myself known to you (Vulgate through them) when I judge you, and you shall know that I am the Lord. I have heard all your insults (or the voice of your blasphemies) that you have spoken (or because you have spoken) against the mountains of Israel, saying, 'They are deserted and given to us to devour,' and you have risen up (or have exalted yourself) against me with your mouth (or you have spoken magnificently against me with your mouth), and you have slandered me (or you have shouted against me) with your words; I have heard it. Thus says the Lord God: While all the earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation; just as you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so I will do to you. You shall be desolate, Mount Seir, and all of Edom shall know that I am the Lord. But that which is added in the LXX, 'and they shall be consumed,' is not found in the Hebrew. If the word of God always dwelt in the hearts of the prophets and had constant residence there, Ezekiel would not so frequently have said, 'And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.' But because of human frailty and the necessities of this life, it sometimes departed from them. Therefore, John the Baptist speaks: 'He who sent me to baptize, said to me, "Upon whomsoever you shall see the Spirit descending as a dove and abiding on him, he is the one."' (John 1:33). For it would never be proper in Christ what is added and

remains in Him, unless sometimes it would depart from others. Otherwise God speaks to Moses: I will take from the spirit which is in you (Num. XI, 17): which surely he would not have, unless it descended to him from the Lord. However, the prophecy of this entire chapter is against Mount Seir, namely the sons of Esau and Edom, who are called Idumeans in the Greek and our language, because in the time of necessity and distress, when Judah was being captured by the Babylonians, they insulted them and believed that the land was given to them to possess, and not only did they not accept their brothers, namely the sons of Jacob, but they persecuted them and attacked them with the sword. Where Symmachus interpreted more clearly, You have hated your blood, and blood will pursue you. But it is prophesied that he himself will be captured and reduced to eternal solitudes, and at the end of things he will recognize that God is the judge, because he has said: Two nations and two regions are mine; either the Edomites and the Jews, or certainly the Jews and Israel, namely two and ten tribes. And you have spoken of the mountains of Israel, saying: Deserts have been given to us to devour, not considering that this blasphemy would overflow against God. From which it follows: All the earth rejoices, I will lead you into solitude. And the meaning is: when all the land of Judaea will receive its former state, you will remain in eternal solitude. And what is added is: Just as you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was dispersed, I will do the same to you. In the Septuagint it is not found, but it was added under asterisks from the edition of Theodotion. But all the wrath of God advances there against Mount Seir, so that when it is dispersed, he himself and all of Idumea may know that he is the Lord. I have spoken these things hastily, according to historical context and meaning rather than literal words. I will now move on to the anagoge and briefly touch on a few points for the sake of brevity. 'Put,' he says, 'or turn your face towards Mount Seir.' And significantly, he says 'turn,' from one prophecy to another prophecy. However, he is not referring to the physical face, but rather the face of the soul, as the Apostle also says: 'But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord' (2 Corinthians 3:18). However, the mountain of Seir, which is interpreted as rough and hairy, represents the opposing strength that presided over the nation of the sons of Esau, and rose up against the people of Judah, that is, the confession and true faith. But if an astute reader objects, how can Seir, that is, rough and hairy, be understood in a negative sense, since even Elijah is called a hairy man (2 Kings 1)? I will respond briefly: it is written about Esau that he was red and like a hairy skin (Genesis 25), but about Elijah that he was only a hairy man. Esau, who is bloodthirsty and cruel, is compared to a rough animal skin, a symbol of human works and of death itself; while Elijah represents manliness. Therefore, both his dwelling in solitude and his austere way of life not only showed him to be a man, but also a very strong man. On the other hand, Jacob, who had supplanted Esau and taken his birthright (Genesis, 25), is called light and polished because he simply lived at home and was not a hunter like the giant, Nimrod. Let us see then what God commands to be said to the mountain, or against the mountain of Seir. Behold, I will come to you, Mount Seir, I will not send Angels, nor will I use other ministers, but I myself will come to you, and I will extend my hand over you, and I will assume the appearance of one who strikes, and I will make you desolate and deserted, as one who dwelt wickedly, and you had many partners in your impiety, so much so that you built cities and claimed them as your own dominion: now desolated together with your cities, which Jeremiah is commanded to destroy and dig up (Jer. 51), in that you will make progress by building good cities in their place, so that you may know that I am the Lord, whom you could not know before the desolation of your land. However, the root cause of sin is that you have been an eternal enemy.

Hence, the psalm says: Be angry, but do not sin (Psalm 4:5), so that we may quickly reconcile with our enemies and change hatred into love. However, not such is Mount Seir, which encompasses eternal enmities or besieges the children of Israel deceitfully with a sword in hand. From this we understand that whoever takes up the sword against the children of God, acts deceitfully, and besieges them, shall be handed over to the power of the sword, just as Mount Seir did in a time of extreme wickedness, when the days were evil and the world was filled with evil. And with the increase of wickedness, the love of many grows cold. But there is another sin of the mountain of Seir: that, because it hated the blood of the just, which it desired to spill in every persecution, it suffers persecution from the same blood. Therefore, the souls under the altar of the saints cry out and beg for vengeance from the Lord for their bloodshed. And they are taken away from the mountain of Seir, going and returning, that is, every inhabitant, whether humans or animals that are saved in the Church, of whom it is written: You will save humans and animals, Lord. (Psalm 35:5). That in the mountain of Seir both those who seem to have some reason, and those who are content with simple faith, should perish at God's command. And its mountains are filled with the wounded and slain. And not only the mountains, which have reached the summit of impiety, but also the hills, that is, the lesser disciples of the mountain of Seir, and the valleys that are in the depths, or the torrents, which have muddy waters, collected from here and there, coming from pride, or, according to the Septuagint, the fields, which are in the middle between the hills and the valleys. All the slain will fall by the sword of the Lord, and His outstretched hand and striking, so that they may be reduced to everlasting desolation; and if there were cities, that is, assemblies of evil dwelling, let them perish themselves and cease to have agreement in a bad way, and let their languages be divided (Genesis 11), so that they may not be able to build a tower of blasphemy against God; and being reduced to solitude and desert, let them know that He is the Lord. It is not enough that you have spoken so much about Mount Seir, as the previous discourse narrated; but you have also spoken this out of pride: 'There are two peoples and two lands or regions that belong to me, namely Idumea and Judaea, and I will possess the heretics and the Ecclesiastics alike.' And you said this when the Lord was there, who governed His people. Therefore the Lord swears and says: 'As I live,' says the Lord God, 'I will make myself known to you when I strike and judge you, in accordance with your anger with which you raged against the people of God, and with your zeal with which you persecuted the family of Christ, hating those whom you desired to possess. Then you will know that it was I who made known your reproaches and blasphemies, and not someone else, for I myself have heard what you have said against the mountains of Israel, saying: 'They have been given to us as a desolation to devour.' We must accept the mountains of Israel, Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, whom the heretics and the leader of the heretics, the devil, think they have been handed over to devour: when either rarely or not at all is found in the Church, who is able to fight for the mountains of the Lord, and defend their tearing apart with his voice. And you have risen up, he says, against me with your mouth, whether you have spoken magnificently, not as you think against the mountains, but through them against me, and you have either asked or shouted against me. For all your prayers, O Mount Seir, and companions of Mount Seir, of which it was said above (above, the same): I will fill his mountains and hills, and valleys, and fields, or torrents, they were against us: not prayers and supplications, as you think to God, but shouts, vociferations, and blasphemies. Therefore, the Lord threatens and says: Just as you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel, when it was scattered and torn by your persecutions and dispersed throughout the whole world: so I will do to you. For the whole earth of

the living rejoices, and the land of the saints, and all those converted to the service of God, you will be scattered, O rough mountain, O hairy mountain, and all Idumea, devoted indeed to earthly works and to bloodshed and slaughter, so that then you may know that I myself am the Lord, who have spoken elsewhere: I am the Lord your God.

36:1-15

(Chapter XXXVI. — Verses 1 and following) \"But you, son of man, prophesy over the mountains of Israel and say, 'Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord: Thus says the Lord God, because the enemy has said of you, 'Aha! The ancient heights have become our possession,' therefore prophesy, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: Because you have been desolate and crushed on all sides (or because you have been scattered from those around you), and have become a possession (or inheritance) for the rest of the nations, and you have risen up on the lips of the tongue, and have become a reproach to the people (or nations).'\" Therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God: Thus says the Lord God to the mountains and hills, to the rivers, valleys, and desolate walls (or scattered), and to the deserted and depopulated cities that have been mocked (or trampled) by (Al. and) the rest of the nations all around. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Because I have spoken in the fire of my zeal against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who (Vulg. who) have given my land to themselves as an inheritance with joy (Al. with the sword), and with the whole heart, and with all their soul, and have expelled it to ravage (or with hatred despising souls, to overthrow them in devastation). Therefore he says ((Vulg. he is silent, says)), prophesy over the land of Israel, and you shall say to the mountains and hills, the ridges and valleys, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I in my zeal, and in my fury, have spoken, because you have endured the confusion (or reproaches) of the nations. Therefore thus says the Lord God (or Adonai the Lord): I have raised (or will raise) my hand, that the nations which are around you, they themselves shall bear their confusion (or disgrace). But you, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to my people Israel, for they are about to come. For behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. And I will multiply people on you, the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities shall be inhabited and the waste places rebuilt. And I will fill you with people and animals, and they shall multiply and be fruitful. And I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and will do more good to you than ever before. Then you will know that I am the Lord. And I will bring forth (or generate) upon you, my people Israel, and they will possess you (or you), and you will be (or you will be) for an inheritance, and you will no longer be added, so that you may be without them (or and you will no longer add, so that they may make you childless). Thus says the Lord God: Because they have said of you (or to you), you are a devourer of men, and a choker of your nation: therefore you will no longer eat men, and you will no longer kill your nation, says the Lord God: nor will I cause the confusion (or shame) of nations to be heard in you (or in you) any longer, and you will not bear the reproach of peoples (or you will not bear), and you will no longer lose your nation (or your nation will no longer be without children), says the Lord God. Above is the description of the prophet's appearance, or rather his turning towards the mountain of Seir. Here the son of man speaks to the mountains, or rather to the mountains of Israel, who are commanded to hear the word of God. And to briefly delay the allegory, the overall meaning of the prophecies concerning the mountains of Israel is this: Because the enemy, that is, the mountain of Seir, has insulted you and believed that he would possess you forever, and the once high places of the Lord are now deserted and have

passed into his inheritance, and not only did he say this, but he also possessed you for a considerable time, to the extent that he spoke arrogantly against you, which brought reproach upon you from all nations. Therefore, thus says the Lord God, not only to the mountain of Seir, but also to its mountains and hills, streams, valleys, deserts, and ruins, and to the abandoned cities: because he has spoken with the fire of his zeal, not only against all the nations, but especially against Edom, which, he says, has held my land in possession along with the other nations, and has possessed it with the sword, and has possessed it with all their heart, in order to drive out its inhabitants and lay waste to the land. Therefore, speak, says the prophet, concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains, and hills, and hills (which the Seventy interpreted as 'valleys,' which we understand as wooded areas) and valleys. Thus says the Lord God: in my zeal and fury, I will be the avenger of your reproach, and I will raise my hand, so that the nations that are around you may bear their disgrace and confusion: but you, O mountains of Israel, will bear fruit according to your former state, and produce shoots and, according to the Seventy, bring forth grapes, with which my people Israel will be satisfied. That which you may not think will happen after a long time is near, imminent, and will come. And lest this seem difficult to you, I myself will come to you, and those who had departed from you will return to you, so that you may regain your former culture and all things may be fulfilled, so that there may be many people among you, and cities, which were previously destroyed, may be inhabited. And not only will I multiply people, but also animals will multiply and increase, and I will make you dwell as in the beginning, when Moses, leading the two and a half tribes across the Jordan (Numbers 32), and under Joshua, son of Nun, the other nine and a half tribes possessed the land of Judah (Joshua 1 and 13): and I will give you much greater possessions than you had in the beginning before you experienced various captivities. And when I have done this to you, then you will know that I am the Lord. And you, O land of Israel, will be full and abundant, a possession for my people, who will inherit you. You will no longer be without children. But when your inhabitants multiply, O mountains of Israel, then your enemies will no longer accuse you of devouring men and of being a land without children. Instead, you will multiply and your descendants will be numerous. You will neither hear, he said, any longer, nor will you endure the confusion of the nations, nor will you lose your people, so that you may eventually endure captivity, because the Lord has spoken. We will say these things loosely in the Jewish manner, which they expect in the thousand-year kingdom, when they assert that the city of Jerusalem is to be rebuilt, and the temple, which is described at the end of this volume, and the happiness of all things, some of which they believe were fulfilled under Zerubbabel. But how can this be fulfilled, what is said: 'And I will make you dwell as in the beginning, and I will give you greater blessings than you had in the beginning?' For under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, only a few of the people were brought back, and they themselves were obedient to the Medes and Persians, and subsequently served the Macedonians, Egyptians, and Romans, and even to this day they serve various kings of different nations, such as Titus and Vespasian. Therefore, this prophecy at the end cannot possibly be fulfilled: 'And you will no longer bear the reproach of the nations, and you will not lose your people anymore.' And because it is now lengthy against the Jewish doctrine, and the blessedness serving the stomach and throat of the Jews, who desire all earthly things, and say: Let us eat and drink, of which the Apostle also speaks: Food for the stomach and the stomach for food: but God will destroy both it and them (I Cor. VI, 13), let us now briefly explain: let us now pass on to spiritual understanding, according to which we have also interpreted the extreme parts of Isaiah. For we do not expect Jerusalem to be adorned and golden

from heaven, according to the Jewish fables which they call 'second books', nor will we suffer the injury of circumcision, nor will we offer sacrifices of bulls and rams, nor will we sleep in the idleness of the Sabbath. Many of our people, especially in Tertullian's book titled 'On the Hope of the Faithful', and in Lactantius' seventh volume of 'Institutions', and in the frequent explanations of Bishop Victorinus of Pettau, and recently in our own Severus' dialogue called 'The Rooster', have also said this. And that I may mention the Greeks, and unite the first and the last, Irenaeus and Apollinarius. Therefore, we will say that the mountains of Israel are the prophets and apostles, who hear the word of God, and to whom the enemy devil insulted, saying: 'Well done, once lofty mountains, about which it is written: The mountains are round about it, and the Lord is round about His people' (Ps. 124:2), have been given to me as a possession, when they were desolated by the narrowness of persecution, and trodden down round about, and have become an inheritance to the rest of the nations, and have been blasphemed by all. Therefore the Lord speaks, having trampled upon the mountains and desolated them, not only the mountains but also the lower parts and through every step on the land of Judea, that is, on the mountain of the Church which is written: A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden (Matthew 5:14); and on the hills and torrents, whose faith is increased in the winter of persecutions and in the storm of trials. Also on these valleys, which have been brought low by humility, and on the deserted Churches and walls, and on the whole world, on the gatherings of Churches that have been abandoned, such as the persecution that took place throughout the world under Diocletian and Maximian, by which Churches were proscribed and devastated: when all the nations of the Gentiles and the heretical nations mocked the Church, because it spoke in the fire of its zeal and especially against Edom, which wanted to carry the image of the earthly, having cast aside the image of the heavenly (1 Corinthians 15). For they indeed have taken the land of God as their inheritance, and with their whole heart and soul they have persecuted the Church of the Lord, and they have cast it out from its seats, and have laid it waste. But what has it profited the nations, what has it benefited the heretical peoples to insult the land of the Lord: when the Lord speaks to it, and to its hills, and mountains, and wooded places, which were flourishing with the beauty of paradise: and to the hills of which we have spoken above, he has spoken in his zeal and fury: and he lifts his hand against the adversaries, who have persecuted the Church, to bring about their confusion and disgrace? Then, with the persecutors killed and peace restored to the Church, the mountains of Israel, namely the Apostles and Apostolic men, will bring forth their trees and extend their branches, and they will produce grapes to be trodden in the winepress of the Lord, from which new wine is poured, which will intoxicate the peoples of the believers, and the wine that brings joy to the heart of man will be pressed out (Psalm 103): so that all the fruits of the mountains, from which the bread that comes down from heaven is made, may be eaten by the people of the God of Israel. And let us not despair in persecutions, it is added: The time is near for it to come. For he will come, coming indeed, and will not delay (Hab. 2:3). From there he promises his coming to the mountains, and to those who have endured in tribulations, and he promises that after the heat of persecution the earth, previously gleaned by the ploughshare of Christ, will be cultivated, and will receive every seed of virtue, from which men will be born and multiplied, and all the house of Israel. And when the cities, that is, the churches of the believers, were inhabited again by returning crowds, not only the men who were knowledgeable in the Scriptures will be there, but also the animals, and the simple believers will multiply and grow, and the churches will be inhabited as in the beginning, that is, before the persecution arose, and they will flourish with greater blessings than they had from

the beginning, crowned by the victories of the martyrs. And then they will know that He is the Lord, who restores His people to their former state, which possesses the Churches, and that the Churches themselves are the inheritance of the Churches, and no longer without children, whom He had lost in persecution. Hence the prophet is commanded to speak to the land of the gentle, the land of the living, or to the mountains of Israel, and to say: You shall no longer suffer the reproach of persecutors, nor will they insult your slaughtered people, like sheep for slaughter. With peace being restored, all reproaches will cease, and you will no longer endure confusion and disgrace among various wanderings, but you will have your nation and your people, for the truth of the promise, spoken by the Lord, has been confirmed.

36:16-38

(Verse 16 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, the house of Israel have dwelt (or dwells) in their own land, and they have defiled it with their ways and their idols: according to the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual impurity, their way has become before me. And I poured out my indignation (or fury) upon them, for the blood they have shed upon the land: they have defiled it with their idols, and I scattered them among the nations, and dispersed them in the lands (or regions) according to their ways, and judged them for their inventions (or sins), and they entered into the nations to which they came, and defiled my holy name, when it was said of them, This is the people of the Lord, and they have come out of his land. And I spared my holy name (that is, I spared them for the sake of my holy name) which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came. Therefore, say to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to whom you came. And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. Indeed, I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit in your midst (or give it to you), and I will make you walk in my precepts (or my justifications), and keep my judgments, and do (or make) them ((Vulg. is silent on them)). And you shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers, and you shall be to me a people, and I will be to you a God. And I will save you ((Al. I will save you)) from all your defilements (or impurities), and I will call forth grain, and multiply it, and I will not give (or give) you famine, and I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the produce of the field, so that you will no longer bear the reproach of famine among the nations. And you shall remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and your iniquities, and your abominations. And I will not do for your sake, saith the Lord God, let it be known unto you. Be ye confounded, and ashamed at your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God: In the day that I shall cleanse you from all your iniquities, and shall cause the cities to be inhabited, and shall repair the ruinous places, And the desolate land shall be tilled, which before was waste in the sight of all that passed by, They shall say: This land that was untilled (or desolate) is become as a garden of pleasure; and the cities that were uninhabitable, and deserted, and ruined, are now fenced, and inhabited. And the nations shall know that those who were left all

around you, who were scattered, I the Lord have rebuilt. I have replanted what was desolate. I the Lord have spoken and I will do it. Thus says the Lord God: In this I will be found by the house of Israel, and I will act for them. I will multiply them like a flock of people, like a holy flock, like the flock of Jerusalem in its appointed feasts. The cities shall be inhabited again, and the waste places rebuilt with flocks of people. Then they shall know that I am the Lord. The things that are said are clear, and the whole sense of the mountains of Israel, which were previously desert, and afterwards restored, is now more clearly revealed. And God explains why He handed over the people of Israel to captivity, and promises, due to His mercy, to bring them back to the land of Judah and to give them much greater things than He had taken away. Some Jews refer this to the times of Zerubbabel, when, with Cyrus, the king of the Persians releasing their captivity, many were brought back from the tribe of Judah and Benjamin to Judah. But others refer it to a kingdom of a thousand years, when under Christ, whom they suppose to be coming, the city of Jerusalem is to be built, and the temple to be constructed, concerning which temple we shall speak in the interpretation of the last part of the book. Meanwhile, let us pass briefly through the remaining portion of this chapter, and consider what seems to be said to us according to the understanding of the Church. The house of Israel, that is, the people of the Jews, once dwelt in their land, that is, in the land of Judah, when they were brought out of Egypt. But they defiled it with their ways and pursuits, or their idols, and they became so polluted that they were compared to the filth of a menstruating woman. Because of this, God poured out his indignation upon them, for the blood of the prophets and the righteous, which they had shed on the earth, as the Savior says in the Gospel: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you (Matthew 23:37). And again (Verse 35): Amen, amen I say to you: the blood of Abel, the just, shall be required of this generation from the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom you killed between the altar and the temple. Amen, I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation. Therefore, behold I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes, and some of them you will put to death and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just, even unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom you killed between the altar and the temple. Amen I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not? Behold, your house shall be left to you, desolate! For I say to you, you shall not see me henceforth till you say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! When I saw this, he said, not for their sake, but for the sake of my holy name (for I am the Creator of all), I spared them and sanctified them, and I restored them to their former glory, so that I might pour out clean water of saving Baptism upon those who believe and have turned away from error, and cleanse them from their abominations and from all the errors in which they were occupied, and give them a new heart to believe in the Son of God and a new spirit, of which David speaks: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me (Ps. 50:21). And it is to be considered that a new heart and a new spirit are given through the effusion and sprinkling of water. When, however, a new heart and a new spirit are given, then all hardness, which is compared to stone, will be removed from the Jewish heart, so that the heart may be a fleshy, soft, and tender one, which can receive the spirit of God within itself and be inscribed with saving words. Then they will walk in the precepts of the Lord and keep His

judgments, and they will dwell in the land of confession, which He had given to their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to all the holy ones and prophets, and they will become the people of God, and the Lord will be their God, as is proven in the present time. And when they are saved, the Lord will call the grain and multiply it. For unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone (John 12:24). And they will not endure hunger (Amos 8:11): not hunger for bread and thirst for water, but hunger for hearing the word of God, which he who came from the Father, having received all substance, scattered: when in the necessity of hunger, he fed on the pods of swine (Luke 15). Then the fruit of the tree, that is, wisdom, will be multiplied, of which it is written: The tree of life is to all who seek it (Prov. III, 18): and the produce of the field will be like Jacob, whose scent was like the scent of a full field, to whom the Lord blessed (Genes. XXVII, 27). They will no longer bear the reproach of famine among the nations, which the unbelief of the Jews suffers to this day: but after they have attained blessedness, they will imitate the Apostle who says: I am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God (I Cor. XV, 9). And they will remember their worst ways and their non-good pursuits, by which they offended God. And their iniquities and their crimes, by which they previously erred, will displease them. But the Lord will attribute all these things, not for the sake of those who perished by their own error, but for the sake of his holy name. Therefore, he provokes the house of Israel to be confused and ashamed about their past vices, and to understand their Creator. But after he will have cleansed the people of the believers from their iniquities, and he will have made the cities of the Church to be inhabited, and he will have restored the ruined things that had fallen in the synagogues, and the land of confession will have been cultivated with the ceremonies of God, which once seemed desolate to all the saints who pass by the works of earthly conversation: then all will say: How does the land of Judah, which once was uncultivated, now have the likeness of the paradise of God; and the cities of Judah, which were deserted and abandoned, and buried by their unbelief, now stand upright and fortified in confession, and in the name of the Lord and Savior? So that every creature may know, and the multitudes of Angels, which surround the land of Israel, that the Lord has built up the desolate cities and planted the barren regions, and that He has fulfilled what He had promised through the prophets. And this will not be the extent of His generosity towards the people He has saved, but He will provide even greater things. For indeed, He will be found by the house of Israel, who had been sought for a long time and was not found. And after he finds him, he will multiply them like sheep: not of brute animals, but of sheep of men, which are full of reason and confession, like holy sheep and flocks of Jerusalem, in which the worship of God proper and the vision of peace is, in its solemnities when we eat the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5), and we feed on the flesh of the Lamb and drink its blood, and in the seven weeks, and in the tabernacles of this present age we celebrate the Lord's Day festivals, so that the once desolate cities may become full of flocks of men, and by this means they may know that he himself is the Lord, who has provided all things. According to the truth of history, or rather according to the faith of prophecy, it suffices to say briefly how the people of Israel are restored to their original state, and how the remnant of the people of Judah, as the Apostle Paul teaches (Rom. IX, 11), are saved in the Apostle and in all those who initially believed from the Jews and continue to return to the Church even today. Now, the same sense must be opened in this brief tropology. Whoever is from the house of Israel and perceives the peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding, dwells in his own land, that is, the Church, or in the temporary dwelling of the flesh, which has been given to him by God. But if he pollutes both lands with his wicked ways, and

is compared to the impurity of a menstruating woman: God will pour out his indignation upon him, for the blood, either his own or those whom he has scandalized, and will pour it out upon the land, and with perverse thoughts he pollutes it. Then he will be scattered among the nations, to be leveled with the unbelievers, and will be tossed about on the earth like chaff, to be separated from the grain of the Church, and judged according to his ways. But if they have not perceived their sin in this way, but have defiled His holy name, then all those among whom they have lived will say: Behold the people of God, behold those who have come forth from their land, or rather have been cast out. But if they repent and I am sanctified in their midst, then all the multitude of the nations will know that I will remove them from the lands where they were dispersed and bring them back to the land of the Church, and I will pour out upon them not the waters of saving Baptism, but the waters of teaching and the word of God; and I will cleanse them from all their uncleannesses, and from all the idols and errors which they had secretly conceived in their hearts. And I will give them a new heart, which they had lost through sin, and I will renew a right spirit within their hearts. And I will remove the stony heart, that is, the unbelieving heart; and I will give them a fleshy heart, soft and tender; that they may receive the commandments of God; so that they may walk in my commandments, and observe my judgments; which they had previously neglected, and they shall dwell in the land which I had given to their fathers, namely, the masters and teachers; and once again, they shall be the people of God, and the Lord shall be turned to them as God, whom they had previously offended. Then they will be saved from all their sins, and their grain will multiply, from which heavenly bread is made; and they will no longer suffer from hunger for the word of God; and the tree of wisdom will multiply in them, and their hearts will be filled with offspring. They will no longer be a reproach among the nations; but after God has shown them mercy, they will remember their wicked ways and know where they have been, and they will be disgusted by their iniquities. What the Lord says is not for them, but for his own mercy. Therefore, he encourages those who are straying to be confounded and ashamed in their ways, and to be restored to the cities of the Church, which will be inhabited by them again and all that have fallen in them will be rebuilt. And they will return to the ancient ceremonies, and the once deserted land, which appeared desolate to its inhabitants and to passing strangers, will return to its former state; and all will marvel and say: This uncultivated land, this deserted land, in which all virtues once perished, has now become like a garden of pleasure and a paradise of God; and the once deserted cities, which did not have God as their guest, and were deprived of the Holy Spirit, and were buried in unbelief, will be fortified by the faith of Christ, so that all around may know that the Lord has built up scattered souls, and has planted and nurtured in them the trees of all virtues; and he himself has fulfilled the things he promised in his words. And again the prophetic word exhorts the repentant, that even when they have returned to the Church, they should always seek the Lord, and find Him: so that the flocks of the Lord may multiply with the multitude of those who return: not of horses and brute animals, but of flocks of men, who are full of faith and reason, the holy flocks, the flocks of the city of Jerusalem, on all the solemnities, which they have received through the mercy of God; so that when the multitude of such flocks has filled the cities of the Lord, then all may know that He is the Lord.

37:1-14

(Chapter 37, verses 1 onwards) The hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. And He led me

around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. And He said to me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' And I answered, 'O Lord God, you know.' Then He said to me, 'Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord.' And I prophesied as he had commanded me: and the noise came, and behold a commotion: and the bones came together, each one to its joint. And I saw, and behold there were sinews upon them, and flesh came up, and skin was stretched out over them, but there was no spirit in them. And he said to me: Prophecy to the spirit, prophecy, son of man, and say to the spirit: Thus saith the Lord God: Come, spirit, from the four winds, and blow upon these slain, and let them live again. And I prophesied as He commanded me, and the spirit entered into them and they came to life: a vast army. Then he said to me: Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say: Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off. Therefore, prophecy and say to them: This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them, my people; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I am the Lord; I have spoken and I will do it, declares the Lord God. LXX: And the hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the plain, and it was full of human bones, and he led me round about them, on every side: and behold there were very many upon the face of the plain, and they were very dry. And he said to me: Son of man, dost thou think these bones shall live? And I answered: O Lord God, thou knowest. And he said to me: Prophecy concerning these bones; and say to them: Ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will send spirit into you, and you shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to grow over you, and will cover you with skin: and I will give you spirit, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord. And I prophesied as he commanded me: and the voice came to pass, while I prophesied, that behold a commotion, and the bones came together, each one to its joint. And I saw, and behold sinews came upon them, and flesh grew and skin covered them above, but there was no spirit in them. And he said to me: Prophecy, son of man, prophecy upon the spirit, and say to the spirit: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O spirit, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. And I prophesied as I had been commanded, and the spirit entered into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a very great assembly. Then the Lord spoke to me, saying: Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say: Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are completely cut off. Therefore, prophecy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord God. The vision is famous and celebrated by the reading of all the Church of Christ: for this reason, I have included both editions in their entirety, lest any slander against us be made by the Hebrews, if at least in words there may be some discrepancy. For they are accustomed to laugh at us, raise their eyebrows, and belch forth their knowledge of the Scriptures,

if I may not say the disagreement of meanings (which, if it exists, is rightly condemned), if they can demonstrate any dissonance of words in our codices. Therefore, those who believe in the resurrection, which is believed by both Jews and Christians to be the word of God, often say the following: 'The hand of the Lord has come upon the prophet,' meaning the Lord, who is also the Savior, through whom the Father has done all things. For everything was made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made.' And he said, 'The spirit of the Lord took me, and the hand of the Lord was upon me.' And he was taken in the spirit, not in the body, but outside the body, and he was placed, or sent, in the midst of a field that was full of human bones. And he did not have rest there, but he caused all the bones, which were not covered by the earth but were lying on the field, to circle around. And there were not only many bones, but many bones excessively dry and parched due to the old age of time, and they did not have any moisture in them. And when the divine speaker asked him whether he thought these bones could live, he responded: Lord God, you know, who have full knowledge of the future. And the Lord said to him: Prophecy over the bones, whether over these bones, and you shall say to them: Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. It is remarkable how he spoke to dry bones, which before nerves, flesh, and skin, and the life-giving spirit of God, could hear his word. And first, the bones are bound together with the ligaments of the nerves, then they are filled with flesh, and the skin is stretched over them for beauty, which covers the ugliness of the exposed flesh; and then they receive breath, which makes them alive, and after they have lived, then they know that He is the Lord. So, as the prophet had commanded, there was immediately a commotion, and the bones were joined together in their proper framework, bound with nerves, filled with flesh, covered with skin: and there lay human bodies without breath. Therefore, the prophet prophesies to the spirit, and says: Thus says the Lord God: Come, O spirit, from the four winds; come, that is, from the four corners of the world, so that just as in the first creation of man God breathed into his face and he became a living soul (Genesis 2:7), so in the second creation, that is, the resurrection of the dead, being breathed upon by the spirit, they may be brought to life again; for when the spirit entered the human bodies, immediately they lived, and stood upon their feet. Therefore, the resurrection of the dead is also called a gathering, or the Church, many (Psalms CIII, 30), and as it is said in Hebrew, a great army; and it is fulfilled at a certain time: 'Send forth your spirit, and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.' But when it is said: 'And he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel,' it seems to raise a question, because it is not speaking of the general resurrection, but specifically of the resurrection of the house of Israel, which says: 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off from our own land,' or we have completely despaired. In response to those saying these things, Ezekiel is compelled to prophesy for the third time, and he says to the dry bones: 'Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves.' In which it is asked: If he opens the tombs, how did he say above: There were indeed very many on the face of the plain, and very dry. And I will bring you up from your tombs, my people, according to that which is written in the Gospel: The hour is coming; when those who are in the tombs will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have done good will come forth unto the resurrection of life (John 5:28-29). And again: Those who hear will live (ibid.). And if, as some think, the divine discourse speaks of the general resurrection, why was it necessary to say specifically: And I will bring you into the land of Israel, when the dead in every corner of the earth must rise from the places where they were buried? And when, he says, I shall bring you out of your graves and give you my spirit, and you shall live, then I will make you rest upon your own land, so

that after you have rested in the land of Israel, then you may know that I am the Lord, who has fulfilled my promises with deeds. Therefore, when they understand these things about the general resurrection, that which seems to raise the question: 'These bones are the whole house of Israel,' they refer to the resurrection of the saints, about which the Apostle John also speaks in the Apocalypse: 'Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over such the second death has no power' (Rev. 20:6): that is to say, there is a different resurrection for the saints and for the sinners. And in the first Psalm it says: The wicked will not rise in judgment, nor sinners in the council of the righteous. But the land of Israel, which the Lord promises to those who rise, they confirm to be the same, as it is written: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:4) And: I will please the Lord in the land of the living. (Psalm 116:9) These things are spoken by those who think that Ezekiel wrote about the general resurrection, as we have said. But those who interpret them in this way should not envy us, because by interpreting this passage differently, we seem to deny the resurrection. For we know that much stronger testimonies, in which there is no doubt, are found in the holy Scriptures, such as that of Job: 'You will raise up my flesh, which supports these things' (Job 19). And in Daniel: 'Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt' (Dan. 12:2). And in the Gospel: Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28). And the Apostle Paul: But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11), and many others. From which it is clear that we do not deny the resurrection, but we do not contend for these unwritten things about the resurrection. And through the parable of the resurrection, it is prophesied about the restoration of Israel, which was captive in Babylon at that time. We will not immediately give occasion to the heretics if we deny that these things are understood about the common resurrection. For the likeness of the resurrection would never be set forth to signify the restoration of the Israelite people unless the resurrection itself stood, and the future was believed: because no one confirms uncertain things about things that do not exist. And our whole assertion tends toward that, which seems incredulous, that a future resurrection is promised to dry bones and those worn down by much antiquity; and yet what is promised will indeed happen; in the same way, the restoration of the Israelite people, who were led into captivity and dispersed throughout the whole world, seems indeed incredible to those who do not know the power of God, but it is, however, future: for I, says the Lord, have spoken, and I will do as I have promised. And in the previous prophecy, in which the ancient state of the mountains of Israel is promised, the Lord says to them: And I will turn to you, and you shall be plowed and sown, and you shall receive seed, and I will multiply men in you, and all the house of Israel (above verse 9, 10); and again, that the house of Israel will dwell in their own land, which was once uncultivated, and will become like a garden of delight, and the deserted and destitute cities will be fortified; and the house of Israel will multiply in them, like a flock of sheep, and the other things that follow pertain to the same meaning, which is now expressed figuratively and metaphorically as dry bones, having no moisture of life, with the fulfillment of what is written in the Gospel: The things that are impossible with men, are possible with God (Matthew 19:26). But all these things confirm the Jews, either under Zerubbabel, as I said before, when a great commotion took place; and the kingdom of the Chaldeans was translated into the Medes and the Persians: or at the coming of their Christ, whom they suppose is to come. But we spiritually commemorate the completion after

the cross of the Lord and Savior; and this happens daily, especially to those who, like Lazarus, bound by the bands of their sins, are raised up at the voice of the Lord (John 11); and truly they are the house of Israel, once desolate and without hope of salvation: but as the spirit of grace enters into them and the Lord stretches out his hand, they are liberated from the depths of Hell: and those who previously said, 'Lord God, you know these things,' afterwards hear, being freed: 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?' (Matthew 14:31).

37:15-28 (Verse 15 and following) "And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: And you, son of man, take for yourself one piece of wood and write on it 'Judah' and the children of Israel, his companions, and take another piece of wood and write on it 'Joseph, the wood of Ephraim,' and all the house of Israel, his companions. And join them one to another for yourself into one piece of wood; and they will be in unity in your hand. But when the children of your people speak to you, saying: Will you not tell us what these things mean to you? You shall speak to them: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the wood of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his associates; and I will join them with the wood of Judah, and make them one wood, and they shall be one in my hand. And the wood on which you have written shall be visible to their eyes. And you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations to which they have gone, and I will gather them together from all sides, and bring them to their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land on the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king over them all, and they shall have no more princes; And there will no longer be two nations, nor will they be divided into two kingdoms anymore; nor will they defile themselves anymore with their idols, and with abominations, and with all their iniquities, and I will save them from all their dwelling places, in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them, and they will be my people, and I will be their God. And my servant David will be their king over them, and there will be one shepherd for all of them, they will walk in my judgments, and they will keep my commandments, and they will do them. And they shall dwell upon the land which I gave to my servant Jacob: wherein your fathers dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, they and their children, and their children's children, forever: and my servant David shall be their prince forever. And I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will establish them, and multiply them, and I will put my sanctuary in the midst of them forever. And my tabernacle will be among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the sanctifier of Israel, when my sanctification is in their midst forever. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: And you, son of man, take for yourself one staff, and write on it Judah, and the children of Israel who are associated with him, and take another staff for yourself, and write on it Joseph, the staff of Ephraim, and all the children of Israel who are associated with him, and join them together for yourself into one staff, that they may be joined together, and they will be in your hand. And it shall come to pass, when the children of Israel shall speak unto thee, saying, Shew us what thou meanest by these? That thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no

more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. And they shall no longer be divided into two nations or two kingdoms, so that they will not defile themselves with their idols, their abominations, and all their transgressions. And I will deliver them from all their iniquities, in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And my servant David shall be their prince in their midst, and there shall be one shepherd for all of them, because they shall walk in my commandments and keep my statutes and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to my servant Jacob, where their fathers dwelt. And they shall dwell in it, they and their children, and their children's children, forever. And my servant David shall be their prince forever. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, an everlasting covenant. And I will give them and multiply them, and I will set my sanctuary in their midst forever. And my tabernacle shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, who sanctify you, when my sanctuary is in their midst forever." The history of the Kings (3 Kings 12) tells that under Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the twelve tribes were divided, and two, namely Judah and Benjamin, followed Rehoboam, who reigned in Jerusalem, and his kingdom was called Judah. But the other ten tribes, who said, "We have no share in David, nor inheritance in the son of Jesse," submitted their necks and served Jeroboam, the son of Nebat from the tribe of Ephraim, who was the son of Joseph. They were mostly called by the ancient name Israel, and for a long time the kingdom of Judah and Israel had conflicts with each other, and obeyed their own kings (4 Kings 25). The first ten tribes were captured by the Assyrians, and after some time those called Judah were taken captive by the Chaldeans into Babylon, and the tribe of Judah was restored to the ancient land after seventy years. But the ten tribes called Israel still serve as captives in the mountains and cities of the Medes to this day (4 Kings 25). Therefore, the present prophecy from the mouth of the Lord promises that both kingdoms should be joined together, that is, the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel, and the Ephraim branch, which is descended from the line of Joseph, with the remaining tribes that are associated with it, should be removed, and joined to the branch of Judah, so that they are not called Judah and Israel, but are called Judah by one name: and under the figure of the prophet who precedes in the type of the Lord and Savior, they should hold not with two hands, but with one hand of Christ. For he says that he will assume the children of Israel from among the nations to which they were taken captive, and he will bring them back to the land and mountains of Israel, of which we read above. And one nation will be called, and it will be ruled by the authority of one king, so that they will no longer be polluted by idols and their abominations. But when they are freed from the seats of captivity, in which they have sinned, they must be cleansed of all vices and they will become the people of God, so that the Lord will be their God. And my servant David shall reign over them, says the Lord (Luke 1). And the Angel speaks about him in the Gospel, that he will reign over the house of Jacob, and his kingdom shall have no end. And his mercy shall be so great that he shall be called not only king, but also shepherd, because he softens the proud name of ruler with the name of shepherd. And after they have become one nation and have dwelt in the land of Israel and the mountains, they shall walk in all the judgments of the Lord and keep His commandments. And they shall dwell not in any other land, but in the land that He gave to His servant Jacob, where their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the saints, dwell. And not only they themselves shall dwell, but also their sons and grandsons, according to that saying of Virgil (Aeneid, Book IV). And those who are born of them, and those who will be born from them, may they dwell not for a short time, but forever. But you

want to know, he says, who this king and shepherd is? He is the one of whom I have spoken before, my servant David. Though he was in the form of God, he did not consider it robbery to be equal with God; but he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and became obedient to the Father even unto death, death on a cross (Philippians 2:6 seq.). And when they are under such a king, I will establish a covenant of peace with them. Not like in the Old Testament of battles and wars, but a covenant of peace that surpasses all understanding, of which the Savior speaks to the Apostles: 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you' (John 14:27). And the prophet says: 'His dwelling place shall be in peace' (Psalm 76:2). When He establishes and strengthens them in the Church, so that they can say: 'He set my feet upon a rock' (Psalm 40:3), then they will multiply either in number of believers or in the increase of virtues. And I will give, he says, my sanctification, or sanctuary among them forever, which the Jews interpret as the temple, which was built under Zerubbabel. But how can this be fulfilled, which is said forever, when that temple which was built by Zerubbabel and later restored, was burned by Roman fire? All of these things are to be referred to the Church and to the times of the Savior, when his tabernacle was placed in the Church: where our God was made, and we became his people. And the progress of all is, that they may know that He Himself is the Lord, and He Himself sanctifies Israel, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit: when His sanctification was made among the believers forever. And when the Lord rejected the tribe of Ephraim, and chose the tribe of Judah, and in the Psalms we read, in which it is written: And He rejected the tabernacle of Joseph, and He did not choose the tribe of Ephraim; but He chose the tribe of Judah (Psalm 78:67, 68), of which it is written: The prince shall not fail from Judah, nor the leader from his thighs, until He comes to whom it is reserved: and He shall be the expectation of the nations (Genesis 49:10). Truly, in the coming of the Lord and Savior, the two rods, as it is written in Hebrew, the two pieces of wood are joined together as a scepter, and in the baptism of Christ, they are separated and united: so that they may become one new man and one nation, no longer polluted by idols and abominations; but through the cleansing of the world, they may be the people of God, and Christ may reign over them, and they may dwell upon the gentle earth, the land of the living, which He had given to His servant Jacob, who supplanted the people of Israel in the womb of his mother. But if we wish, according to the prophecy of Hosea, which is directed almost entirely to the ten tribes, that is, to Joseph and Ephraim, and Samaria, and Israel, to understand the false knowledge of the name, and the various crowds of heretics, we will say this, that at the end of time when the fullness of the Gentiles has entered, and all Israel has been saved (Rom. XI), then even the adversaries of the people, who fought against the house of Judah and the confession of the Church, will surrender to the faith of the Church, and leaving behind all errors and the princes of this world who are destroyed, and their patriarchs who led them into the abyss of blasphemy, they will rise and abandon their idols and their abominations, which they themselves fabricated in their hearts, and they will pass from all their seats, in which they sinned, to the faith of the Church, and they will be cleansed, and they will be the people of Christ, and He will be their God: all of which I know more fully were said by the prophet Hosea. But if Judaizing Jews and Christians want to refer these things to a thousand years in the future, they are compelled by necessity to undertake all the things that those who are saved must do when they dwell in the land of Israel: to build Jerusalem, to construct the temple, to perform all the ceremonies of the Law, to observe the Sabbath, to accept circumcision, to eat and drink, and to consider an abundance of wealth as the highest bliss and ultimate value, even though the Apostle says: Food for the stomach and the stomach for food,

but God will destroy both this and them (I Cor. VI, 13). However, just as in the type of the resurrection the higher prophetic discourse demonstrated the resurrection of the Jewish people, not carnal but spiritual, so this prophecy pertains not at all to the flesh but to the happiness of the soul, and to the faith of Christ, by which we are cleansed in baptism, whose kingdom is forever, so that we do not expect things to come which have already passed, and which we know to be happening every day.

38:1-23

(Chapter XXXVIII.) "And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, set your face against Gog, the land of Magog, the prince of the head (or head of) Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. And you shall say to him: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of the head (or head of) Meshech and Tubal. And I will turn you around, and put hooks into your jaws, and bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all clothed in armor, a great multitude, with bucklers and shields, wielding swords (or bucklers and helmets, and swords): Persians, Ethiopians, and Libyans, all with shields and helmets; Gomer and all his hordes; the house of Togarmah from the far north, and all his troops, and many peoples with you.) Prepare and equip yourself, and your entire multitude which has gathered to you, and be a commandment to them (or you will be to me a custodian). After many days you will be visited: in the last years you will come to a land which has turned (or perverted) from the sword: and it has been gathered from many peoples to the mountain (or land) of Israel, who have been continuously deserted: this has been brought out from the peoples and they will confidently dwell (or have dwelt) in it. But when the storms come and the clouds cover the earth, you and all your armies, and many peoples (or nations) with you, will ascend. Thus says the Lord God: On that day, thoughts will arise in your heart, etc., and you will devise a wicked plan, and say: I will ascend to the land (or above the land) without a wall (or abject): I will go to those who dwell securely (or in peace): all ((Vulgate adds these)) dwell without a wall, bars and gates are not for them: to plunder spoils, and seize prey: to lay your hand upon those who were forsaken, and later restored, and upon the people who are gathered from the nations, who have begun to possess and inhabit the belly button of the earth. The people of Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish (or the Carthaginians and all the lion-like cities) will say to you: Have you come to gather spoils? Look, you have gathered your multitude to take silver and gold, and to take away possessions and spoil endless treasures. Therefore, prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog: Thus says the Lord God: Will you not know (or arise) on that day when my people Israel dwell confidently (or in peace)? And you will come from your place on the sides (or from the far north), you and many peoples with you, all mounted on horses, a great gathering and a mighty army. And you will come up over my people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. In the latter days you will come (or he will come) and I will bring you against my land, so that all the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in you in their sight, O Gog. Thus says the Lord God: So you are the one of whom I spoke in the days of old by the hand of my servants, the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days and years (or times), that I would bring you against them? And it shall come to pass in that day, in the day of the coming of Gog against the land of Israel, says the Lord God, that my fury will arise in my anger. And in my zeal, in the fire of my wrath, I have spoken, because on that day there will be a great commotion over the land of Israel, and the fish of the sea, and the birds of the sky, and the beasts of the field (or the countryside), and every creeping creature that moves on the earth will be

shaken. And all the men who are on the face of the earth will be overturned (or split) and the mountains will be overturned (or torn down), and the hedges (or valleys) will fall, and every wall on the land will collapse. And I will summon against him on all my mountains a sword (or every terror of the sword), says the Lord God. The sword of each (or every) man will be directed against his brother. And I will judge him with pestilence (or death), and blood, and severe rain and immense stones (or hailstones). I will rain fire and sulfur on him, and on his army (or on all those who are with him), and on many peoples who are with him. And I will be magnified, and sanctified, and I will be known in the sight (or eyes) of many nations, and they will know that I am the Lord.\" The foundations of the first history must be laid, and it must be known that this final discourse of the Lord is to the prophet Ezekiel. For after this we can find nothing similar, except that which is written in the twenty-fifth year of the transmigration of Jehoiachin: The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me there, that is, to the land of Israel, when the building of the temple is described, and the order of its ceremonies is narrated. Then it is to be noted that the face of the prophet is set or hardened against the land of Gog, or the land of Magog. For it requires firmness and much consideration of countenance, so that we may understand the things that are spoken, according to the saying of the Apostle: But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (1 Corinthians 3:18). Therefore, the Jews and those of us who follow Jewish customs believe that the Gentiles mentioned as Gog are the Scythians, who are savage and countless in number, stretching from beyond the Caucasus mountains and the Maeotis swamp to near the Caspian Sea and as far as India. And they believe that after a thousand years, these nations stirred up by the devil will come to the land of Israel to fight against the saints, gathering many other peoples with them. First, Mosoch, whom Josephus interprets as Cappadocians, then Tubal, whom the same interprets as Iberians, or Spaniards, Hebrews suspect to be Italians, having with them in their army Persians, Ethiopians, and Libyans: also Gomer and Thogorma, whom they interpret as Gauls and Phrygians: also the Sabaeans and Dedan, and the Carthaginians, or Tharsis, and this is what John also puts in his Apocalypse: 'And when the thousand years are finished, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city.' And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them: and the devil, that seduced them, was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, where both the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:9-10). They do not understand that the entire volume of John, which is titled Revelation, is mystical, and that we need revelation in order to be able to say with the prophet: Open my eyes, and I will behold wondrous things out of thy law (Ps. 119:18). But others, forsaking earthly sensibilities and harmful Judaic and elderly fables (1 Tim. IV), and content with themselves, delve into the depths, ascend too high, and invent much worse things, in order to describe wars of the devil and all his host in the heavenly Jerusalem, and they interpret spiritual wickedness in celestial matters under the guise of the topologies of individual nations. We, conceding all these things to the judgment of the reader, will strive not so much to condemn foreign ideas as to affirm the ecclesiastical explanation. In the Greek language, a gift is called δῶμα, and in Latin it is called tectum. Furthermore, Magog is interpreted as being uncovered. Therefore, all pride and false knowledge of name, which raises itself against the knowledge of truth, is demonstrated by these names. These are the roofs, about

which Isaiah speaks in a vision against the Valley of Zion: What has happened to you now, since you have all gone up to empty roofs? (Isa. XXII, 1) And we will interpret the roofs as the leaders of heretics: and we will call those who have received their teachings from the roofs. And beautifully after many mystical prophecies in this volume, the final prophecy is against Gog and Magog. For if it is the time of judgment, according to Peter, that it begins with the house of God, and according to this same Ezekiel, who says: 'And begin with My holy ones' (above IX, 6), and the last enemy will be destroyed, death (1 Peter IV): in Isaiah also the first discourse is against Judah, in which the confession of the Lord is, and the last against the quadrupeds that are in the desert (Isaiah II): rightly here too the final discourse is against Gog and Magog, who attack the city of God, which the flow of the river delights (Psalm XLV). And what Isaiah says: 'I am the first city which is attacked' (Isaiah XXVII, 10). And concerning which it is written in the Gospel: A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid (Matthew 5:14). And more fully in the Psalm: Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself (Psalm 122:3). The mountains are round about it; and the LORD is round about his people (Psalm 125:2). Furthermore, in the army of Gog, or Magog, who according to the Septuagint, Symmachus, and Theodotion, is chief of Ros, Mosoch, and Thubal: the first nation is interpreted by Aquila as the head, which we also follow, so that the sense is: The prince of the head of Mosoch and Thubal. And indeed, neither in Genesis, nor in any other place in Scripture, nor even in Josephus, who in his first book of Antiquities explains the names of all the Hebrew nations, could we find this nation. From this it is clear that 'ros' does not mean nation, but head. It should also be briefly noted that in Ezekiel, Gog is said to be the prince of the land of Magog. And in the Apocalypse, it is mentioned that Gog and Magog are nations that come forth from the four corners of the earth. And just as Jacob, who was later called Israel, received the name of all the Hebrew people, and Aram received the name of Syria, and Mesraim received the name of Egypt, whose names are written in Genesis: so too, all those who are subject to the prince Gog are called Magog. However, Mosoch is interpreted as madness, and Thubal as everything or all. Therefore, the prince and the head of arrogant madness and of all evils are called Gog and Magog, according to what is written: The world is set in the evil one (1 John 5:19). These hostile and opposing nations of the saints come forth from the corners of the earth, deviating from the straight line and the arrangement of God's camp, as is recounted in Numbers, and not realizing this testimony: Many will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and will recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God (Matthew 8:11). And in another place: I will say to the North, give up; and to the South, do not withhold. Bring my sons from far away, and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name (Isa. XLIII, 6). But not such the corners of the earth from which Gog and Magog come forth: next to these corners stands the harlot in Proverbs (Prov. XXIII), who, passing by, hastens to deceive foolish young men through the streets, that is, through the broad and spacious road that leads to death. The scribes and Pharisees also pray in the corners of the streets, so that they may be seen by men, who have received their reward (Matthew 6). So what is the curse against Gog? I will turn you around and put a bit in your jaws. First, I will make you waver from your opinion and be converted. And I will put a bit in your jaws, as it is written: 'With bit and bridle bind fast their jaws, who come not near Thee' (Psalm 32:9); so that the untamed and unruly horse, who falls down precipices, may be subject to the bridle of the Lord: to whom the prophet says: 'Ride upon thy horses, and thy riding shall be salvation' (Habakkuk 3:8). And it is said of Job, through a cloud and whirlwind: You have surrounded the horse with strength (Job. XXXIX, 19). Such were the horses

and horsemen; whose multitude John saw in heaven (Apoc. VI). Therefore, he says to Gog: I will lead out, or gather you, and all the army, or your strength. He who is led out and gathered from dispersion is brought back to salvation, according to what is promised in the law: If your dispersion shall be from the top of the sky to its summit, from there I will gather you (Deut. XXX, 3). They also have horses and cavalry clad in armor, who imitate the apostle's equipment and boast of having the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6): the multitude is excessive, and all seize the shield and sword against the Church, and they are the most savage and hostile nations, including the Persians, Ethiopians, and Libyans: their wars against the people of God are recounted in the Holy Scriptures. Also Gomer and the house of Thogorma, who come from the sides of the North, which is a very cold wind and is called the East wind, and the whole strength of Magog, and all the peoples who are subject to him, will come with him to battle. To whom it is said ironically: prepare yourself, make ready, and gather to yourself all your multitude that obeys your commands; and know that after many days you shall be visited, according to what is written: I will visit their iniquities with a rod and their sins with stripes (Psalm 88:33). In the last days, he says, you will come. Hence John also says: My little children, it is the last hour (1 John 2:18). And the people of the nations are hired at the eleventh hour to work in the vineyard (Matthew 20), to whose land, that is, the land of mildness, and the land of the saints, which brings forth one hundred, and sixty, and thirty fruits, Gog has come to conquer, which has turned away, or turned its back, from the sword. For it is written: Scatter, O Lord, the nations that desire war (Psalm 68:32). And it shall come to pass that, when the people and nations have been gathered together, and the error of the nations has been despised, it shall come to the mountains of Israel, namely the patriarchs and prophets, who once wandered in the desert without the law and commandments of God. To whom it is afterwards said: 'More are the children of the desolate, than of her that hath a husband.' (Isa. LIV, 1) These are the deserted and waterless places, in which the devil could not find a place, because they were called to salvation, and afterwards he, having taken seven other, more wicked spirits, returned to his house, namely to the people of Israel. (Matth. XI) These things, he says, are spoken of the people, understood as the earth; or, it is spoken of the nations, so that it may be understood as the people of believers who dwelt in peace and trusted in the Lord. But Gog, together with all his army, will come up like a storm and like a cloud, to cover the land of the believers. For what heretics, whose leader is the devil, do not come against the Church like a storm, and in a cloud of their words, they hasten to oppress and cover the simple believers? Therefore it is said to him: As much as it is within you, you will cover all things and all your armies, and many peoples with you. Gog, ascending proudly, does not have voluntary rain, nor temporary and late rain, which would rejoice the dry fields, but rather storm and darkness, so that it may confuse everything with darkness and error. Therefore, the Lord God speaks these words to him: At that time, that is, in the last days, evil thoughts will arise in your heart, and you will ponder a wicked plan, as the Scripture says: If the spirit of the one having power desires to rise against you, do not leave your place (Ecclesiastes 10:4). On the other hand, God ascends into the holy heart, about which it is written: He established his ascents in his heart (Ps. 83:6). And Gog says: I will ascend to the land without a wall, or a projecting one, that is, which is deprived of God's help, and not fortified by dialectical argumentation; I will come to those who are at rest and dwell securely, that is, in peace. For our King is peaceful, and his place is in peace (Psalm 75). All, he says, dwell without a wall, and there are no bars or gates for them. This prince of heretics speaks, having no defenses of the Church; nor secular wisdom, which is foolishness before God, in order to plunder

the spoils and invade the prey of the Church, and lay his hand upon those who were deserted when they did not have knowledge of God; and then, restored through Christ, come to the Father, to whom he speaks in the Gospel: Father, I have revealed your name to men (John 17:6). And so that we may know that the people who were deserted and then restored signify the Christian people, it follows: And over the people who are gathered from the nations (Psalm 74:12). The people who began to possess the inheritance of Christ and to be inhabitants of the navel of the earth, of which it is written: He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth. For truth has risen from the earth (Ibid. LXXXIV, 1); who says in the Gospel: I am the way and the life, and the truth (John XIV, 6). While he was thinking and saying this, and eagerly trying to snatch the possession of the Church, the nations that had been converted from their ancient error to salvation, Sabah and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, Carthage, or the sea, who seek merchandise in the waves of this world through good works, and all their cities, whether lions or lion cubs as it is contained in Hebrew, will speak to him what follows. But as for the cubs of lions, which are called Caphir in Hebrew (), both the Seventy and Theodotio translate as 'villas', it is a clear mistake. For if you write it with the letter chi, it is called a lion cub; but if you write it with ce, which is called Coph in Hebrew, it is called a field and a village. Hence, Capharnaum is said to be a beautiful field. Therefore, Saba and Dedan will say, and the merchants of Tharsis, and all the holy ones who are called lion cubs, or certainly the villages and dwellings of the believers: O Gog, do you come for this reason, to seize the spoils of the Church, and therefore have you gathered a multitude, so that the possession of Christ may become your inheritance? Or do you think that the silver and gold, which is understood in speech and meaning, will be possessed by the Church, so that you may take away all the furnishings and all the wealth, and plunder the countless spoils gathered by the victories of Christ? Therefore, O Prophet Ezekiel, who is called the son of man in the type of Christ, speak to Gog and say to him: Thus says the Lord God, when the error of the whole world is removed, my people Israel, who discern God with their minds, will dwell confidently in the Church, either in peace. Then you will know, whether you rise up or come from your place. However, the following discourse shows the place of heretical wickedness: From the sides of the North, which endeavors to cool down all the heat of believers. And many people will come with him, all riders on horses, of whom it is written: He threw horse and rider into the sea (Exodus 15:1): a great multitude and a powerful army, with whom he ascends, saying, 'Upon my people Israel, you shall come like a cloud and cover my land, as it is written: In the last days, you shall be, when the Gospel preaching: and I will bring you upon my land. For heresies must exist, so that those who are approved may be made manifest (1 Corinthians 11:19), and by God's will the devil, the fighter, and all perversions of doctrine have been abandoned: so that all nations may know and understand me, when I am sanctified in you in their eyes, o Gog, that is, when they understand me as their judge through your punishments. And he addresses Gog himself; Are you not the one of whom I spoke in ancient times, through the hands of my servants the prophets of Israel? Namely, Moses, who said in the book of Numbers, specifically in the Septuagint: A man will come forth from his seed, and he will rule over many nations, and his kingdom will be exalted, and his kingdom will grow (Num. 24:7). Moreover, according to the Hebrew text, I found it written as follows: Therefore, his king Agag (translated as Gog in the Latin Vulgate) will be removed, and his kingdom will be taken away, because the kingdom of Israel was destroyed by Agag, the king of Amalek, during the time of Saul. And in another place: He will cleanse the land of his people (Joel 3). Joel also describes the gathering of people in the valley of Josaphat, which is the judgement of God. And

Isaiah and all the prophets, in whose hands the word of the Lord is made manifest through good works. So when my wrath and fury come upon the land of Israel, my indignation will rise against you, and my zeal for my people. In the fire of my anger, I have spoken, to consume all the wickedness of your actions. At that time, he says, there will be a great upheaval upon the land of Israel. For with the Devil unleashed, frequent persecution against the Church will occur: and when it has been suppressed and overcome by God's help, then the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the animals of the field, and all reptiles that move upon the land, and all the men who are upon the face of the earth will be shaken. This is clearly demonstrated concerning the inhabitants of the Church: some are like fish of the sea, others like birds of the sky, others like animals of the field and all creeping things that move on the earth, others like those who retain human dignity and dwell upon the face of the earth. And as for the diversity of character, which is designated by various names, the Apostle writes to the Corinthians that there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies after the resurrection, and that one body is of a fish, another of a bird, another of animals, another of creeping things, and another of humans who have retained their original name. In the actions of the apostles, that linen cloth, which is shown to the third Apostle Peter with four principles (Acts X), also signifies the diversity of believers, which is also contained in the Ark of the flood. Then, indeed, the mountains will be overturned by the face of the Lord, and by the sight of His majesty, which were rising up against the knowledge of God; and the hedges or valleys, which were sunk to the lowest depths by the lowliness of their understanding, or certainly the fortifications, which promise something, in order to imitate the Church of God, of whose hedges it is said: 'He who breaks a hedge, a snake will bite him' (Sirach X, 8). And all the walls will fall to the ground. For when the strength of Ecclesiastical discourse appears, all the fortifications of the heretics will fall. And I will call, he says, him against them, that is, the leader of the heretics Gog, a sword in all his mountains, so that the leaders of his army may be defeated by the sword of the Lord. Then heresy will fight against heresy, their struggle is our victory. And I will judge him, saith the Lord, with death, or with plague, and blood, and severe rain, and immense stones, or hailstones. But Gog is judged with his own death, and with the blood which he shed, and with the severe rain, by the words of learned and perfect men, and with immense stones, which bury him with testimonies of the Scriptures, or with hailstones, which make his heat grow cold: For all who commit adultery, their hearts are like an oven. (Hosea 7:4). I will rain fire and sulfur upon him, whereby the punishment of eternal judgment is shown. And not only above him who was the author of wickedness, but even above his entire army and multitude, and above many nations who are with him. For heretics have many accomplices, indeed the devil himself, their prince, is surrounded by an infinite number. With every error removed, and with the leaders of the heretics punished and destroyed, the Lord is magnified and sanctified among the believers, and is known in the eyes of many nations who have believed in his faith; and both from the blessedness of his followers and from the punishment of his adversaries, it is understood and known that he is the Lord. We have interpreted these things as best as we could, obeying that precept: Neither shall you turn aside to the right hand, nor to the left, but shall walk in the royal way (Deut. XXVIII, 14). But if someone criticizes our work, let them either propose better things for us to follow, or if they have nothing to say, let them leave perfect knowledge of God behind; as long as they understand that we have no power, but the judgment of our mind.

39:1-16

(Chapter 39, Verse 1 onwards) 'But you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshek and Tubal. I will turn you around and drag you along. I will bring you from the far north and send you against the mountains of Israel. Then I will strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand. On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the nations with you.' I have given you as food to the wild animals, birds, and all flying creatures, and to the animals of the earth. You will fall on the face of the field (or the plain): for I have spoken, says the Lord God. And I will send fire on Magog, and on those who dwell securely on the islands (or the coastlands): and they will know that I am the Lord. And I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel, and I will not allow my holy name to be profaned (or polluted) anymore; and the nations will know that I am the holy Lord of Israel. Behold, it comes, and it will happen (or you will know that it will be), says the Lord (Vulgate adds God): this is the day of which I spoke. And the inhabitants of the cities (Vulgate: of the cities) of Israel will go out and burn weapons, shields, spears (or bucklers and thrusting spears), bows and arrows, staffs of the hands (Vulgate: of the hands), and spears (or lances): and they will set them on fire for seven years. And they will not gather (or take) wood from the fields (or the plains), nor cut down from the forests: for they will burn the weapons with fire, and those who had been their plunder will plunder them; and they will loot their looters, says the Lord God. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of the travelers east of the sea, which will cause those passing by to marvel. (Or the πολυ■νδριον of those who come to the sea, and they will build around the mouth of the valley; and there Gog and all his multitude will be buried; and the valley (or Ge) will be called the multitude of Gog. And the house of Israel will bury them there, to cleanse the land (or so that the land will be cleansed) for seven months. But the whole population of the earth will bury them (Vulg. they are silent) and there will be a day named for them, in which I have been glorified, says the Lord God. And they will continuously appoint men, traversing (or encircling) the earth, who will bury and seek out those who remain (Vulg. remained) upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it. But after seven months they will begin to search. And they will go around exploring the earth: and when they see the bone of a man, they will set up a marker next to it, until the embalmers in the Valley (or Ge) of the multitude of Gog bury it. The name of the city is Amona (or Polyandron): and the earth will be cleansed (or will be cleansed). And these are the heirs of the Jewish tradition and the disciples of endless fables, who contend that after a thousand years of reign, Gog, the prince of Ros, Mosoch, and Thubal will be killed in the borders of Israel; and they will be devoured by all the birds and beasts: and the inhabitants of the cities of Israel will not use wood for seven years, but instead will use the weapons of Gog, namely shields and spears, arrows and clubs or poles: but Gog himself will be buried in a valley called Ge in Hebrew, and his tomb will be called polyandron; where, indeed, a multitude of men will be buried. But he must be buried for seven months from the house of Israel, so that the land may be cleansed. And a glorious day will come when Gog is killed, and those who diligently search for and bury the bones must be appointed, so that nothing remains unburied on the land. After the months have passed, or rather after seven months have passed, a great expanse of land must be traversed; and wherever they see a human bone, they must mark it with a nearby sign, so that it can be buried later by those in charge of this task. And the city must be named Amona, which is called πολυ■νδριον in Greek, meaning a multitude of buried men; and thus the land will be cleansed. They said this to him. But we, starting the explanation, will discuss each thing that we proposed,

keeping the meaning. Gog himself has his own Trinity: Ros, Mosoch, and Thubal; head, namely, and insanity, and everything; so that there is no vice that does not consist in the possession of Gog. This [person] will be educated, whether revolving or being touched, and whether suckled or caressed: so that, hoping for victory, he may be led to battle to be killed. And he will ascend from the sides, or from the farthest parts of the North, from where evil is ignited upon all the earth (Jeremiah 1). And he shall be led by the same over the mountains of Israel, whom we must understand to be the apostles and apostolic men and ecclesiastics, so that after he has been led to the mountains of Israel, the bow in his left hand and the arrows held in his right hand may be struck. And he himself, in order to kill those whom he has deceived, imitates having weapons in both his left and right hands, through good and bad reputation. These are the arrows and javelins of which the Psalmist speaks: For behold sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in a quiver, to shoot in the dark at the upright of heart (Psalm 10:2). The fiery darts of the devil must be extinguished by the shield of faith (Ephesians 6). Moreover, Gog, who had ascended over the mountains of Israel, will fall and be cast down on those same mountains with all his army and all his troops. And he will be food for the wild beasts, birds, and all the flying creatures and beasts of the earth, namely the adversarial powers that devour the seed along the way and the bloodthirsty beasts. For just as it is written about the dragon, 'You have given him as food to the peoples of Ethiopia' (Psalm 73:14), so those deceived by heretics are food for demons. But Gog, whether in the breadth of the field or in the cultivated land, which is cared for by the farmers of God. For it cannot be that the words of the Lord are in vain. Then fire will be sent upon Magog, that is, upon those who have accepted the teachings of Gog, and upon those who are beaten by the waves of the world like the likeness of islands, and think that they should be secure. That fire of which the Lord speaks: I came to send fire upon the earth; and how I wish that it should burn! (Luke XII, 49); that all may know and understand that I am the Lord, and that the name of my holiness may be made known among my people, who are in no way deceived by the authority of Gog: nor is my name defiled in heretics by the occasion of false knowledge; and that the nations, which are around, may know that I am the Lord. But what follows is said about the judgment of Christ: Behold, he is coming, and it shall be done, the Lord says: He who is coming will come, and he will not delay (Hab. 2:3). And this is the day of punishment and vengeance, of which the Lord spoke through all the prophets. And the inhabitants of the cities of Israel will go out, the people who believe: but by the cities of Israel we understand the Churches of the right faith. And they will set on fire and burn the weapons, of which it is also written in another place: He will break the bow, and shatter the weapons, and burn the shields and spears with fire (Ps. 43:10), shields and spears, bows and arrows, staves of their hands, with which they celebrated the perverted Passover: lances or poles, with which they inflicted wide and incurable wounds of false doctrines: shields, bows and arrows, of which it has been said above. And what follows: And seven years later they will perish by fire, as is explained in Exodus and Leviticus (Exod. XXI; Levit. XXV), in which the Law prescribes that in the seventh year of release, when freedom is restored to the Hebrew slaves and all debts are paid, and the ancient possession is returned to the masters, and rest is given to the land, and all produce is forgiven to the poor, so that in the sacred and perfect number of seven years the armor of the heretics may disappear, and the men of the Church may not cut wood from the fields and regions, and the forests and woods of the nations, which they most desire to save rather than to destroy; but from the heretics whom they have conquered, with shields, spears, arrows, staves, and lances. For they also have various weapons to attack the

Church of Christ, which must be ignited by learned men with the fire of the Holy Spirit; namely, the ecclesiastical word, which whoever possesses can say: Was not our heart burning within us while He was opening the Scriptures to us? (Luke 24:32) We cannot have full peace and confidence of habitation unless we plunder all the belongings of our adversaries, so that all may perish and be turned to ashes; and let us plunder those who had previously plundered us, and let us devastate those who had previously devastated the Church. In Hebrew, in the clear light of preaching, he says, 'I will give Gog a named place, a tomb in Israel; according to the Hebrew, a valley of travelers to the east of the sea, which astonishes passers-by. The meaning of this statement is that the tomb of Gog will not be in the mountains, but in the low valleys and in rugged places, which are called Ge in Hebrew. The heretics, although they are in the West, claim that these places are in the East, in order to deceive travelers, namely those who pass through this world and are not residents but strangers, saying that prophetic verse: I am a stranger and a sojourner, like all my fathers (Ps. 38:12).' For who among those passing by, of whom it is written: 'And those who pass by did not say, the blessing of the Lord be upon you' (Ps. 128:8), does not marvel and stand amazed when he sees the valley of travelers, which appears as a valley to travelers but as a mountain to its inhabitants? This is according to the Hebrew. However, the Septuagint translated it as the polyandron of those who come to the sea; and they shall build around the entrance of the valley. For it is the labor of those who go out from the cities of Israel to close and enclose every entrance and exit of heretical corruption from those who come to the sea, and they delighted in its bitterness, and with the crashing waves and the cruelty of shipwreck, they shall close and enclose, and bury in the depths of the earth, so that they may no longer go out and deceive others with their deceit. Therefore, there they will bury Gog and his entire multitude, which always delights the heretics. And the name of that valley where Gog is buried will be called the Valley of the Multitude, or πολυανδριον, that is, the tomb of a very large multitude. And as we said above, the weapons of the adversaries will be burned for seven years: thus, for seven months, the land will be cleansed of the filth of the heretics. For from the first month, when we celebrate the Passover of the Lord and avoid the destroyer of Egypt, the lamb with the blood on our doorposts, until the end of the year, that is, until the seventh month when we pitch our tents and are protected among the other branches of palm trees, in order to demonstrate a complete victory against the enemies. We fulfill all the festivals among the people: not only the teachers, but also the entire population will do this eagerly, to bury Gog and cover the land, and by no means allow the free air to be shared. But after the killing and destruction, or the burial of Gog, Ecclesiastical men shall be chosen, who have this study, so that nothing of the former impurities remains in the land of Israel, nor anything of death. They shall search the land, and seek the dead, and bury them, so that the land of the Church may be cleansed. But if, after seven months, when everything should be cleansed, those who go through and surround the land find in any place the bone of a man, that is, the hardness of heretical corruption, or anything of the previous doctrine of death, they shall place it beside that, or they shall build a monument: so that once those who are of this kind have been marked, then they shall either be cleansed or buried with Gog, and cast into the tomb ((or crowd)) of his burial. The name of the city, where the victory of the Lord's servants is, and the adversaries lie down, and the whole multitude of its enemies is prostrated, will be called Amona, or Polyandron, so that it may be the end of all things, the restoration of purity. Finally, it follows: And they shall cleanse the earth; no doubt those of whom it is written above will begin to seek, and will go around the earth.

39:17-29

(Verse 17 and following) 'Therefore, son of man, thus says the Lord God: Speak to every winged creature, to all the birds, and to all the beasts of the field or the countryside: Come together and hasten, gather from all around to my sacrifice that I have offered to you, a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, so that you may eat flesh and drink blood. You shall eat the meat of the mighty or giants, and you shall drink the blood of the rulers of the land: of rams, lambs, goats, and of bulls, as well as of all the fatted ones.' And you shall eat the fat in abundance, and drink the blood to the full, of the offering that I have sacrificed for you. And you shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men and all kinds of warriors, says the Lord God. And I will display my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. And the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward. And all the nations shall know that the house of Israel were taken captive because of their iniquities, because they had forsaken me and I had hidden my face from them and given them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. According to their uncleanness and their transgressions, I dealt with them and hid my face from them. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Now I will bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel: and I will be zealous for my holy name. And they shall bear their confusion (or disgrace), and all their transgressions, whereby they have transgressed against me, when they dwelt confidently (or securely) in their own land, fearing no one. And I will bring them back from the peoples (or nations), and gather them out of the countries of their enemies (or from the regions of the nations), and I will be sanctified in them in the sight (or presence) of many nations. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, when I have caused them to be carried away among the nations (or when I have appeared to them in the Gentiles), and have gathered them together upon their own land, and have not left any one of them there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my spirit (or fury) upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.' This which we have translated according to the Hebrew, and I will gather them together upon their own land, and will not leave any one of them there, is not found in the LXX. And again, what is placed at the end according to the Hebrews for a blessing, because I have poured out my spirit, the Septuagint translated as fury, which pertains to anger, especially since in Hebrew it is written as Ruhi, which properly means my spirit, and by no means my fury. However, everything up to that point, where the construction of the temple follows, those whom we have mentioned above, the Jews, and our Judaizing brethren, refer to the ultimate time: that Gog and all his army may be fattened like the choicest sacrifices of birds and beasts, and that Israel may be restored to its former state, and no longer be conquered by the nations, but that God may pour out his spirit upon them, so that they may dwell in their land: not all nations, but specifically the house of Israel. But following the initiated tropology, we will say this, that the Lord summons all birds and all beasts to devour the leaders of heretics as the fattest victims. Birds and beasts, however, are called so either because of their swiftness in running everywhere or because of their fierceness and cruelty, to which adversaries are handed over to be destroyed in the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved and they may learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. I). However, they will eat a large and fattest victim; not elsewhere, but on the mountains of Israel, which we ought to understand as the prophets and apostles, and holy men. For in them the teachers of contrary doctrines fall, and they perish wounded by themselves, upon whom the Church is built: and to speak more truly, upon the mountain of mountains, about which Isaiah and Micah speak: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will show us his ways (Isa. II, 3; Mic. IV,

2). But those birds and those animals, swift and cruel, will eat flesh and drink blood, which cannot possess the kingdom of God: the flesh of the mighty, or giants, who rebelled against the knowledge of God, and the blood of princes, not of heaven, but of the earth, they will drink, who have savored all earthly things: the blood of rams, and lambs, and goats, or according to the Septuagint, the blood of rams, calves, and goats, to signify the three animals that are sacrificed in the offerings to God. For heretics imitate the gentleness of the Church, but their offering does not profit for the worship of God, but for the food of demons, which is their fattest host, and they are satisfied with fatness and drink the blood of deceivers to the point of drunkenness. But God sacrifices this victim through ecclesiastical men, so that the guests of the worst kind may be satisfied with the multitude of deceivers, and they may drink to the point of vomiting and drunkenness. When you see holy men, instructed in divine Scriptures, cut down the horses of heretics and charioteers, of whom it is written: He threw the horse and its rider into the sea (Exodus XV, 1), and cut down all rebels and giants with his sword, and shed the blood of all warriors of false-named knowledge, then know that the table of the Lord has been prepared, that he may put his glory in all nations that believe in his name, and that they may understand the judgment of the Church of his holy ones, which they have performed against their adversaries, and the strong hand with which they have struck them; and let the house of Israel know and understand that he is their Lord God, who spoke: I am your Lord God, from the day of the Lord's victory until eternity; and let them recall that the house of Israel was once captured by heretics and scattered throughout the entire world of perverse doctrines, because they had abandoned him who had hidden momentarily or turned his face away from them, and delivered them into the hands of heretics, and they fell, pierced by their swords, because of their impurities and iniquities; and this was the reason why he hid and turned his face away from them. But after presenting the arguments, according to what is written: There must be heresies so that those who are approved may become manifest (I Cor. XI, 19), the captivity of Israel, namely the Church, in which those who see God dwell: now it promises that it will restore the captivity of Jacob to the Church, who had supplanted the Jewish people, and was later supplanted by the tricks of the heretics: and it will have mercy on the whole house of Israel, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. And I will take up my zeal for my holy name, which was blasphemed among the nations because of heretics: so that once I have delivered them, they may be ashamed and confounded, for why have they forsaken the faith of the Church, and transgressed against me. But let them be confounded and ashamed very quickly, when they have dwelt in their land, the land of the meek, and the land of the saints, and have dwelt confidently, whether in peace, not fearing the snares of heretics. Then they will be brought back from the peoples, and will be gathered from the lands of their enemies into their own land. And the Lord will be sanctified in them in the sight of many nations, who themselves will also believe in the Lord. And the end of blessedness will be to know and recognize that he is their Lord God, because he has appeared to them among the nations, or has brought them over from the nations, and has gathered them onto his own land, the land of Judah, the land of confession, the land of gentleness, and the land of the living, and he will not even leave a trace of heretical wickedness. And he will no longer hide his face from them, nor turn away from them, because he has poured out the spirit of his grace, of which the prophet Joel also speaks: 'In the last days, I will pour out from my spirit upon all flesh' (Joel 2:28), and he will pour it out upon all the house of Israel. But if we read 'fury' according to the Septuagint, which is not found in the Hebrew, it should be understood that he will no longer hide his face from those on whom he

had previously poured out his fury. Up to this point in the prophet Ezekiel, with God aiding and opening our mouth, we have spoken: not destroying the opinion of others, if anyone has written, or in the future, if they are to write, but asserting whatever is ours. But in the construction of the temple, and the order of the priests, and the division of the holy land, and the river flowing out of the temple, and the trees on both banks always green, and the fruit brought forth every month, and all the rest that is contained in the prophetic volume until the end, we frankly confess our ignorance, deeming it better to say nothing than to say too little.

Book Twelve Book Twelve Your prayers, daughter Eustochium, and the Lord's promises have overcome my fear of explaining the temple of Ezekiel, or rather my determination to remain silent, as it says: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. And as we made excuses in the conclusion of the previous volume, it is better to say nothing than to say little; you have turned it around so that you consider it better to say little than to say nothing: because in the former, the will is eager, in the latter, there is despair of the entire work. And you recall that it is the nature of such people that they do not have as much gratitude for what you have given them as they have sorrow over what you have denied them. For we praise virtues with less zeal than we criticize vices: and even though bodies may be beautiful, they become more conspicuous due to the wickedness and deformity of one part. Therefore, I will comply with your will, and with the Holy Spirit blowing, I will hoist the sails, ignorant of the shores I will reach, and along with this same prophet I exclaim, 'Come, spirits, from the four winds'; and to the fastidious reader, or rather to the mind about to be engaged with our reading, I declare with complete freedom in the explanation of the temple that if he desires the truth, let him seek it from others. However, we simply confess and declare those things that we can suspect in the most difficult task, giving thanks to the Lord, if He will not have opened to us the doors of knowledge in all things, which is impossible, but in many things. For it is honorable, as that sublime orator says, to continue even in second or third place to the one who pursues.

40:1-4

(Chapter XL - Verses 1 onwards) 'In the twenty-fifth year of our exile (or captivity), at the beginning of the year (or in the first month), on the tenth day of the month, fourteen years after the city was struck down (or captured): on that very day, the hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me there. In visions (or in a vision) of God, He brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was like a city-building, facing southward (or from the south).' And he brought me there: and behold a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass (or shining brass); and a line of flax (or masons' line) was in his hand, and a measuring reed in his hand. And he stood in the gate: and he said to me, Son of man, see with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you (or set in your heart all that I shall show you): for you have been brought (or entered) here for this purpose, and declare (or show) to the house of Israel all that you see. If, in the fifth year of captivity or exile of King Joachin, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, the heavens were opened to the prophet Ezekiel by the river Chebar, and he saw visions of God; and now it is said that in the twenty-fifth year of the same captivity or exile of Jehoiachin, at the beginning of the year, in the tenth month, the hand of the Lord came upon him, and he was brought to the land of Israel and placed on a very high mountain, where he could see the city under construction, facing south; then there is no doubt that his entire prophecy was composed over a period of nineteen years, nine months, and five days of the

twentieth year. But if, according to Theodotion, who interpreted in that place where we have placed [it], at the beginning of the year, it is understood that on the new year, the tenth month (however, the new year is called the seventh month among the Hebrews, which has the name Tishri, that is, on the Kalends of the seventh month, there is the sound of trumpets, and on the tenth day of the same month, there is the day of fasting and atonement; but on the fifteenth day, when the whole circle of the moon is completed, there are the days of the booths), it is understood that on the tenth day of the Day of Atonement, the building of the city as shown to Ezekiel, the prophet. And just as he demonstrated the restoration of the people, or rather the revival in the bones of the valley under the image of the resurrection, so now the Lord promises the restoration of the city that was destroyed by the Babylonians fourteen years ago, under its description, just as the type of captivity and destruction that he had shown through the boiling pot from the face of the North, and the truth of the prophecy was confirmed by the work, so the truth of the future edification would be proven by the faith in past events and the prediction. Nor is this said of that time, as some ignorant Jews want, when under Zerubbabel and under Jesus, son of Josedech, the high priest, the temple was built, with the prophets Haggai and Zechariah prophesying. For this temple that is now described, and the order of the priesthood, and the division of the land and fertility, is much more magnificent than what Solomon built. But the temple that was built under Zerubbabel was so small, and compared to the previous one was nothing: those who had seen the previous temple, and then saw this one, would wail and testify their sorrow with tears, and the clamor of the mourners would be much louder than the sound of trumpets. Read the book of Ezra. Furthermore, what is added, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck (or captured), according to mystical understanding, it signifies fourteen generations: which completed from David to the birth of Christ, the restoration of the city is promised by him, about whom it is written: He will build my city and bring back the captivity of my people. And again: He came to proclaim release to the captives and sight to the blind, saying to those who were in chains, come out, and to those who were in darkness, be revealed. But the hand of the Lord came upon him, so that Israel in the flesh, who was situated in Babylon, would come to the land in spirit. And he would not be placed on a high mountain in a vision, but in the visions of God, on an exceedingly high mountain, about which Isaiah and Micah prophesied: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob (Isa. II, 3; Mic. IV, 2). For it is exceedingly high, in comparison to the other mountains, about which the prophet testifies, saying: I lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where will my help come? (Ps. CXX, 1). And in another place: Mountains are around it, and the Lord is around His people (Ps. CXXIV, 2). Concerning this it is also said by Isaiah: Ascend to a high mountain, you who bring good news to Zion (Isa. XL, 9). On this mountain, the city's building is shown, according to the Septuagint and Aquila, from the region, and opposite the north, from where the prophet came to the land of Israel; but according to Theodotion and Symmachus, it faces south, where there is full light, and the sun of righteousness is positioned at the highest point of the sky. And in the Song of Songs it says: Rise up, O north wind, and come, O south wind, blow upon my garden, that its spices may flow out. (Song of Solomon 4:16) For the harsh north wind is driven away by the breath of the Lord, lest the warmth of love grow cold and the flowers wither. But when it is said, 'Like the structure of a city, not truly a city, but a likeness of a city is shown,' it refers to the city about which it is written: Glorious things are said of you, O city of God. (Psalm 87:2) This is Jerusalem, built as a city, whose unity itself is in that very city, and in it the great Lord is greatly praised, in the city of our God, on his holy mountain. (Psalm 48). And in the towers of this

city, God is known when he will receive it. As it is said elsewhere: The streams of the river gladden the city of God (Ps. 46:4). And: A city set on a hill cannot be hidden (Matt. 5:14), as spoken in Isaiah: I am a solid city, a city under attack (Isa. 23). It did not say that it is conquered, but under attack: it is built on a rock and is not shaken by any storm. It follows: And he led me there, as it is understood, by the hand of God. There, however, that is, to the building of the city, so that he might show me all the things that were inside. And behold, he says, a man, whose appearance or vision was like a shining bronze, specifically the one of whom it is written: Behold a man, the Rising Sun is his name (Zach. VI, 12). But he did not have the appearance of amber, as is said at the beginning of this volume, nor was he girded with a golden belt, as is stated in the Book of Revelation (Apoc. I): but he had the appearance of bronze, according to the Hebrew. For this material is more resonant than all metals and resounds with a far-reaching sound. Hence, in the Book of Daniel, the kingdom of Alexander and the Greeks is symbolized by an image made of gold, silver, bronze, and iron (Daniel. II); in order to represent the eloquence of the Greek language: through which it is clear that they still need teaching, who have not yet fully understood the mysteries of spiritually building the temple. There was also a line made of twine in his hand, as it is written in Zechariah (Zech. II), that he had a measuring line to measure the width and length of the city. And the workers of masonry, either the angels who served under God's command, or Moses, and all the prophets and apostles who build the city of God, and are helpers or ministers of the Lord's will. Hence, the Apostle Paul also said: We are God's field, God's building (1 Cor. III, 9). And what follows: And the pen of measurement in his hand signifies prophetic grace, of which it is written in the forty-fourth psalm: My tongue is the pen of a swift scribe (Psalm 44:2). And concerning John the prophet and the baptist: What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind (Matthew 11:7). Those who desire to imitate this reed, are those who write iniquity, and to whom the prophet curses: Rebuke the beasts of the reed (Psalm 68:31). But he was standing at the gate; for through him we enter the Father, and without him we cannot enter the city of God, so that it may receive the worthy and cast out the unworthy. There is also judgment at the gate. Hence the prophet says: They hate those who correct at the gate (Isa. 29:21). And in another place: He will not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies at the gate (Ps. 127:5). This man spoke to the prophet, in whose hand was a cord, and whose appearance was like bronze, and he held a reed in his hand. He spoke to Ezekiel, a true architect, whom Paul the apostle imitated, saying: Like a wise architect, I have laid the foundation (I Cor. III, 10). But he calls the wise architect, to distinguish him from the foolish one, and he is called an unworthy shepherd in Zechariah; but he spoke the following: Son of man, see with your eyes, and hear with your ears (Zech. XI): not with the eyes of the flesh, but with the spirit; not with the ears of the body, but with the soul. Lift up, he says, your eyes, and see that the fields are already white for harvest (John 4:35). And: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke 8:8). The construction of the city is visible, and the order of the ceremonies and priests, and the description of the land can be heard. But it is not enough to command to see with the eyes and hear with the ears; but he added: And place your heart in all things; or, place in your heart all that I will show you. For nothing is of benefit to have seen and heard, unless you place those things that you have seen and heard in the treasure of memory. When, however, he says, 'all things that I will show you', he makes the listener attentive, and he prepares the eyes of the heart, so that he may hold in his memory those things that are to be shown to him, for you have been brought here so that all things may be shown to you. With this, he shows specifically that nothing is sweeter than theory and knowledge,

which the prophet desires, saying: 'One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.' In order to see the delight of the Lord, and to visit His temple (Psalm 26:4, 5). Hence he joins and speaks: Lord, I have loved the beauty of your house and the dwelling place of your glory. Proclaim, he says, all that you see to the house of Israel, so that those who cannot see for themselves may learn through you what is shown to you by the Lord. But to the house of Israel are those who contemplate God with their mind, such as Nathanael, who earnestly sought Christ, and deserved to hear: Behold, a true Israelite, in whom there is no deceit (John 1:47).

40:5-13

(Verse 5 and following) And behold, there was a wall surrounding the house on all sides, and in the hand of the man was a measuring reed of six cubits and a handbreadth, and he measured the width of the building with the reed, one reed wide, and the height with the reed, one reed high. And he came to the gate that faced the eastern road, and he went up its steps, and he measured the threshold of the gate with the reed, one reed wide, that is, one reed wide, and the vestibule one reed long, and one reed wide, and between the vestibules five cubits, and the threshold of the gate next to the entrance of the gate inside, one reed wide. And the vestibule of the gate was eight cubits, and the front of it two cubits: but the gate itself was inward. And the chambers of the gate towards the east, three on this side, and three on that side; they measured one against another: and the fronts of the gate on both sides were of one measure. And he measured the length of the porch of the gate, ten cubits: and the breadth of the gate, thirteen cubits. And there was also a space before the chambers, one cubit on this side, and one cubit on that side: and the chambers six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side. And he measured the gate from the roof of the chamber to its roof, a width of twenty-five cubits, door against door. Seventy: And behold, a wall on the outside of the house all around, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits and a handbreadth. So he measured the thickness of the wall, one reed; and the height, one reed. Then he went inside the gateway which faced toward the east, went up its stairs and measured the threshold of the gateway, which was one reed wide, and the other threshold was one reed wide. Each gate chamber was one reed long and one reed wide; between the gate chambers were five cubits. The threshold of the gateway by the vestibule of the inside gate was one reed. And three equal in width for the stem, and equal in length for the stem, and one gate next to the gate of eight cubits, and one of two cubits, and one gate on the inside, and three gates on each side, and one measurement: one measurement for the gate on both sides. The width of the entrance of the gate was ten cubits, and the width of the gate was thirteen cubits, and one cubit was equivalent to the sight of one finger, and the end of one cubit on both sides, and three cubits here, and three cubits there. And the gate was measured from wall to wall, a width of twenty-five cubits. This gate is opposite the gate.» When I was a boy in Rome, and was being educated in the liberal arts, I used to go with others of the same age and purpose, on Sundays, to visit the tombs of the apostles and martyrs; and I would often enter the crypts, which are dug deep in the earth, and on both sides of those who enter, the bodies of the buried are held in the walls, and everything is so dark that almost the prophetic saying is fulfilled: 'Let the living descend into hell' (Psalm 55:16): and rarely is light admitted from above to temper the horror of the darkness, so that you would think it is not a window, but a hole of light descending: and again, one approaches slowly, and in the blind night that Virgilian phrase is set forth (Aeneid, Book II):

Everywhere horror seizes the souls, and the very silence terrifies. Let this statement be for me, so that the wise reader may understand the sentiment I have concerning the explanation of the temple of God in Ezekiel, about which it is written: Clouds and darkness are under His feet (Ps. 96:2). And again: Darkness is His hiding place (Ps. 18:12): Hence Moses also entered into a cloud and darkness, so that he could contemplate the mysteries of the Lord, which the people, being far away and remaining below, could not see (Exod. 24 and 34). After forty days, the common people were unable to see the face of Moses because it was glorified, or as it is written in Hebrew, Moses had horns on his face. Similarly, while reading the description of the mystical temple (which the Jews believe should be built literally upon the coming of their own Christ, whom we believe to be the Antichrist, but we refer to the Church of Christ, which we see being built daily in his saints), whenever the eye of the heart opens, it happens to me that I think I see and possess the bridegroom and joyfully say: 'I have found him whom my soul loves; I will hold him, and not let him go.' (Song of Solomon 3:4). Then again, the divine word deserts me, the bridegroom flees from my hands, and my eyes are blinded by darkness, so that I am compelled to say: 'O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!' How inscrutable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! (Rom. 11:33) And what is written elsewhere: The judgments of the Lord are a great abyss. (Ps. 36:7) And: Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice. (Ps. 129:1) And that of Elisha, who followed with his eyes his master being taken up, saying: My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen! (2 Kings 2:12) Therefore, it must be simply confessed that the temple of the blessed Ezekiel, which all ages have been silent about, I do not wish to discuss rashly, but to demonstrate the conjecture of my mind to the readers with faith and fear of God; so that if I should offer in the tabernacle of God the skins of goats and hairs, by which the thorns and thistles of sins may be protected, and rains and storms may be kept out: let another, who is rich, according to the quality of his merits, offer iron, or bronze, or silver, and gold and precious stones, and not despise our offerings, because they are lesser, but rejoice in his own wealth. For if the lower parts are not present, the upper parts cannot exist. And in order for the greater things to be praised, they increase in comparison to the smaller things. Let us therefore see what Ezekiel, upon entering the building of the city facing south, first saw and then heard: 'And behold,' he says, 'there was a wall on the outside surrounding the house on all sides.' Regarding the wall, which Aquila and Theodotion interpreted as 'περὶ βολον', Symmachus and the Seventy translated it as 'περὶ βολος'. Therefore, the wall, or 'περὶ βολος', surrounded the house, that is, the temple of the Lord on all sides, and it had a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, who not only held a geometric string and a mason's trowel, but also held a measuring rod in his hand, the measurement of which is not explicitly stated, but is now given as six cubits and a palm, which is more accurately called 'παραχαιστ' in Greek and is the sixth part of a cubit. Moreover, the word 'spithamen' is used to mean 'palm,' as some use 'palm' to distinguish it. Furthermore, they are accustomed to call a wrestler a 'palm'. Therefore, with a measuring rod, he measured the width and height of the wall, and both, that is, the width and height, were six cubits and one palm. And since there were many gates, he did not want to enter through the other gates, but through the one that faced the eastern region. And because the place was not level, and the wall went around, and the house of God itself was built on higher ground, therefore he entered, or rather, ascended through steps. These are referred to as 'LXX seven' alone, when in Hebrew and in other translations we read only the word 'steps' without a number. Having entered the gate, he immediately measured the threshold of the gate, which the Greeks call LXX ἑβδόμη: for which it is

written in Hebrew Seph. And I think the diligent and studious reader should be reminded: if, however, he is led by the knowledge of the Scriptures and not by the empty declamations of orators, so that he knows nearly all the Hebrew words and names, which have been greatly corrupted by age in the Greek and Latin translations, distorted by the fault of the scribes, and while they are written about in their uncorrected form, made even more uncorrected, having turned into Sarmatian instead of Hebrew, nay of no nation at all, since they have ceased to be Hebrew and have not yet begun to be foreign. The LXX also translated the word aelam (α■λ■μ) as itself, which Symmachus interpreted as antelminare in the following passages. There were two bedchambers, or cubicles, and παρραστ■δας which were five cubits long, and another threshold of the gate next to the vestibule on the inside with a single reed. The third vestibule of the gate also had eight cubits, and in front of it, or on its borders, two cubits. In order to prevent anyone from confusing this vestibule with the previous one, he added: This vestibule is the inner vestibule of the gate, for which the LXX translated first, second, and third vestibule. But the chambers, that is, the bedrooms, which were built after the Eastern gate in the vestibules, faced the Eastern road. And so that we may know how many chambers there were, it is joined, three on this side and three on that: namely, facing North and South, and facing the Eastern road: and the measurements of the fronts were the same on both sides. Also, the measurement of the width of the gate threshold was taken, and it was found to be ten cubits, and in length thirteen cubits, and the ends of the chambers were narrowed down to one cubit, or as Symmachus translated, "παρραστ■δων", and each front had one cubit. But the chambers, or παρραστ■δες, and as the LXX have rendered it θεηλ■θ, had on each side six cubits. And he measured the door of the chamber, or παρραστ■δος, from the roof of the one chamber to the roof of the other, and it was twenty-five cubits wide. So there was only space from the door to the door, or from the gate to the gate. This we have briefly spoken to suggest more the divine presence than to explain, desiring to outline the picture according to the obscure and almost unseen letter. Furthermore, we will set down a few things that we can suspect narrowly and with doubts. The Apostle Paul, desiring the Ephesians to understand more sacred things, prays that they may be filled with the wisdom and love of the Lord, so that rooted and founded, they may be able to know and comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and the profound riches of Him. And he speaks to them: Therefore, you are by no means strangers but fellow citizens of the saints and domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself as the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure grows together to form a holy temple in the Lord. In Him, you also are built together to be a dwelling place of God in the Holy Spirit. Peter the Apostle also speaks in almost the same words, because of the same spirit, in his Epistle: For if you have believed that the Lord is good, approaching him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men but chosen, and honorable before God, and be yourselves built up as living stones into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2, 3-5). From this it is clear that the Lord and Savior, who is the true architect, tests the stones that can be placed in the foundations of the temple, both in the middle and in the higher places, and whether they are of a less solid strength in the wall and whether they can be placed outside the temple in the circuit of the enclosure. For it is not of little strength or of minimal firmness to support the stones placed on top. Hence the Apostle writes to the believers: Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2). And in another place it is written: we should not take on a burden that we cannot bear. But the reed of measurement, which had six cubits and one palm, signifies our conversation with God, which is

contained in the six days in which the world was made, and signifies the reason for each work, so that one thing belongs to the work, another to the mind. Hence, the width is equal to the height: the width refers to the works, as we said; the height refers to the soul, which hastens to lofty things. But let it suffice to have warned once: to know me by name, and to be called by a neutral gender, but for the sake of simplicity and ease of understanding, and the common usage, to use the masculine gender. For our concern is not to avoid grammatical errors, but to explain the obscurity of the Holy Scripture with whatever words. Therefore, a man enters, whose name is East, through the Eastern gate, to enlighten those whom he finds in the first part of the entrance hall, whether in the entrance itself: not through one, but through several steps, whose number is kept silent, so that the difficulty of ascent may be apparent, and for whatever number of steps you propose, you may know that it is less than the doubt that is left behind. I consider this to be the gate, of which it is sung in the Psalms: This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter through it (Ps. 118:20). And the threshold of the gate is measured, so that we may know that all the knowledge of God is open. This threshold is said to be one reed in width, and it is silent about height and length. For it is both the way and the entrance, and through it one must proceed to the inner parts (although in this place the Septuagint unnecessarily speaks of length, or, as is contained in most manuscripts, height); but the chambers, that is, the bedrooms and alcoves, have individual reeds in both length and width, but there are five cubits between each chamber, so that the inner chambers have the full measure of a reed, that is, six cubits and one palm, as the works and calculations agree. Those things which are external, that is, between chamber and chamber, are five cubits; for the secrets of Christ have not yet been penetrated, and they cannot say: The king has brought me into his chamber (Song of Songs 1:3). And elsewhere: All the glory of the king's daughter is within (Psalm 44:14). But while the disciples were staying at home with Christ, they could not hear his mysteries, and they desired to go outside to hear the word of God; and therefore a measurement of five cubits is placed in them, so that they may be taught to refer everything to the five senses. The threshold of the other gate, as it is contained in the Septuagint, of the second vestibule and third, is of the same size as one reed. After this vestibule, that is, the threshold of the gate, eight cubits are placed at the entrance, so that the inner parts of the vestibule do not hold a number of seven, but of eight, which pertain to the sacrament of the resurrection and the Lord's Day. And in front, he says, of the same vestibule, there were two cubits, which pertain either to both Testaments, or to the letter and the spirit, or to the mystery of the pair of tongs, which is included in Isaiah about the altar of coal, and is brought to cleanse the lips of the prophet. And so that we may know what this vestibule is, which is terminated by eight and two cubits, he explains it more clearly: The vestibule of the gate was inside, through which we came to the temple of God. There were also chambers and rooms which were on the way to the eastern gate, for which the Septuagint write 'Elau', there were three on one side and three on the other, each measuring one, that is, a reed which had six cubits and one palm, as mentioned above: And one reed for length, and one reed for width, and between the chambers five cubits. Therefore, we should not think that there are only two bedchambers, but rather six on each side, to indicate the number six, which is also shown in the water pots of the Gospel (John 2), in which water was turned into wine, and the Jewish water is daily turned into wine, which gladdens the heart of man, and becomes sweeter with the blood of Christ. He also measured the width of the threshold of the ten-cubit gate, which is a perfect number and is contained either in the Decalogue or in the sacraments of the four Gospels. Whoever begins with one, reaches four in such a way as to fill the number ten. Its length

was thirteen cubits: for which the width is again placed at seventy, which seems to me to have been corrupted by the carelessness of scribes. For the Scripture would not have said the width in one place and again the width of ten or thirteen cubits. However, it can be understood as the gate of the threshold, in which the number of the Old and New Testament is consecrated, or the Lord himself, who says: I am the gate (John 10:9); or certainly all the saints through whom we enter into the knowledge of God, to whom the Apostle Paul spoke: My mouth is open to you, Corinthians; and: Enlarge yourselves also (2 Corinthians 6:11). But thirteen cubits after the number eighteen, they contain the sacrament of the books of Moses, which are also shown in the five loaves (Matthew 14), and in the Samaritan woman of the Gospel (John 4), who is accused of having had five husbands, and the sixth one she thought she had, she did not have: and yet the number eight, and the number five, is completed by one cubit, that is, the fourteenth ((or thirteenth)): because in Christ all things are recapitulated. It is said: 'And one cubit at each end: for the old and new Testaments together make up one measurement of Christ, and one cubit contains the height of the ark of Noah, which is thirty cubits. However, the rooms, as the Septuagint has it, either as 'thau' or 'thee', changing and altering the names in each place as they wished, were six cubits on either side, which is called 'here and there', and they did not have a span or additional measure placed on top, which would have signified the present life leading to future blessedness, but only six cubits.' And it is measured from the roof of the chamber to the roof or wall of it, and it is found to be twenty-five cubits in width; which number, though multiplied four times, still relates to sense. For if you arrange five cubits against it five times, you will produce the number twenty-five, which is between the roof of the chambers and the roof; and yet both, when placed opposite each other, have a doorway facing the doorway. Let these things not seem frivolous to the reader, although they may displease even myself who speak, feeling like I am knocking on a closed door; but they are to be read with permission: otherwise, I could simply confess my ignorance and remove every desire of the students. For just as we are far from perfect knowledge, we consider a minor fault at least somewhat lighter than saying absolutely nothing.

40:14-16

(Verse 14 and following) He made fronts for sixty cubits, and the courtyard of the gate had a surrounding circuit. And before the face of the gate, which reached up to the face of the interior vestibule gate, there were fifty cubits, and oblique windows in the chambers, and in their fronts which were inside the gate all around. Similarly, there were windows in the vestibules all around inside: and before the fronts, there was a depiction of palms. LXX: And under the sky was the court of the gate sixty cubits, and the threshold of the court of the gate all round. And under the sky of the court outside was the gate of the inner court fifty cubits, and windows screened with palm trees, and also the threshold of the gate within the court round about. And similarly the gate chambers, and windows all around inside, and the thresholds of the gates were palm trees on both sides.'" Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: And he made circuits, which we can call surroundings: for which in Hebrew he has Elim (), which Aquila interpreted as κρῶμα, and we translate as frontiers. Again, where the Seventy placed the entrance of the atrium, in Hebrew it has El () in the singular number, which Symmachus translated as near the entrance, Aquila as κρῶμα, that is, the front of the atrium. Also, under the open sky, Aquila, before the face of the gate's posts; Symmachus, opposite the face of the gate's vestibule, translated. The hidden windows called Atemoth in Hebrew, Symmachus translated as τοξικῆς. And where the Seventy

said above the entrance and above the gate's post, Symmachus placed the posts and the surroundings; Aquila, the chambers, and their fronts: for which it is written in Hebrew Theim and Ele. Moreover, Elamoth, which Septuagint and Theodotion also translated similarly; Symmachus translated circumstantias [circumstances], Aquila translated frontes [fronts]. But Aelam, for which it is written El in Hebrew ((Mss. UI)), is called ostium [door] or porticus [porch]. Also, for palmis [palms], it is written in Hebrew as Thamarim [plural number]: because in the singular number, it calls palmam [palm], Thamar. I know that these things will be annoying to a fastidious reader: but I wanted to show briefly how much the ancient translation differs from the Hebrew truth due to the length of time, or rather the fault of the scribes, and, to speak more openly, our lack of knowledge of Hebrew: especially in Hebrew names, which we have translated from other editions into the Latin language, indicating not so much an explanation of the words as our simple suspicion. However, I think that around the wall of the temple on the outside, and the temple itself in the courtyard, that is, in the middle, there were certain things placed for decoration, which Symmachus interprets as surroundings, that is, certain standing structures, raised high from the ground, and these occupied a space of sixty cubits. And again, as one went out from the inner gate to the front of the vestibule, which faced the outer gate, there were fifty cubits of space, in which there were oblique windows, which Seventy called 'toxicas'. And in these windows were in the chambers, that is, in each room, and in the porticoes that extended before the rooms, measuring fifty cubits. These windows were slanted or arched, therefore they were called 'sagittae', which means 'arrows', because they allow a narrow light to enter the house, like arrows, and expand inward: and all around they were full of such windows. And in front of the facades of the porticoes, he says, there were paintings or carvings of palm trees, through which it is shown at the entrance of the gate, and immediately upon entering, a wall measuring sixty cubits with various ornaments meets, which refer to the condition of the world, so that the Creator may be understood through His creations: and everything in order and with reason, show the variety of the world, which among the Greeks is called 'kosmos', derived from adornment: and it was made in six days, so that each day, ten decades are reckoned, which we have mentioned above as the perfect number. After this, as we enter the inner atrium, we come across before us the vestibule of the inner gate of the bedroom, with oblique windows, occupying a space of fifty cubits, which itself is a sacred number. And after seven full weeks of festivity and joy, the first day of the Octave begins, which is the Day of Resurrection, and it brings us close to the temple. For when we have done all things, repenting for our previous errors, then we become neighbors and close to God, so that in the outer atrium, the order of creatures teaches us knowledge of the Creator with constancy, and in the inner [atrium] true jubilation, in which all our debts are forgiven, instructs us in the theology, and introduces us to the Holy of Holies. It is also worth noting that the inner courtyard has several windows, which are not direct and equal, but rather oblique and narrow on the outside, and widening inward, so that we can penetrate the interior through small openings and reach the fullness of the brightest light, which is present in the temple. Finally, after sixty and fifty cubits, and chambers, and porticoes, and the facades of the porticoes, and numerous windows all around, the carving or painting of palm trees is shown to us, so that as victors of the world, we may become worthy to see the palm trees of virtues.

40:17-19

(Verse 17 and onwards) 'And he led me to the outer court, and behold, treasuries, and a pavement laid with stone in the court all around: thirty treasuries around the pavement. And the pavement in front of the gateways, at the gateways, was lower. And he measured the width of the gateway from the front of the lower gate to the front of the inner court outside, one hundred cubits on the east side and on the north side. Seventy: And he brought me into the inner court, and behold, chambers, and the posts of the court all around, thirty chambers by the posts. And there was a porch in front of the gateways, and there were posts along the front of the gateways, below the columns.' And he measured the width of the atrium from the place that was under the outer gate to the inner gate: under the outer gate that faced the outside, one hundred cubits, and it turned towards the east. For the chambers, thirty, which were turned into seventy, or treasury rooms and cellars, as Aquila interpreted, Symmachus placed platforms. And for one hundred cubits of the outer space, which extended to the Eastern gate, the same number of cubits in Hebrew, and it is said to extend to the North: but in the Seventy, the name of the North has been removed. Therefore, that man who had in his hand a measuring line and a reed of measurement, and stood at the gate, among other things that the prophets showed to the sight, after the courtyard of sixty cubits, and another vestibule of the inner gate which measured fifty cubits, led the prophet to the outer courtyard, or as it is contained in the Septuagint, he brought him to the inner courtyard. And I marvel greatly, according to the literal and Septuagint text, how after the outer courts, which measure sixty and fifty cubits, there is an inner court which extends in width one hundred cubits: unless, of course, according to mystical understanding and the progress of those who enter, the inner things in teachings are broader. But upon entering the inner courtyard, or upon being led to the outer courtyard, as is stated in Hebrew, he immediately saw thirty chambers or treasuries, or as Symmachus interprets, exedras, which had been prepared for the dwelling of the Levites and priests, and a pavement adorned with living stones or intercolumnia, to show that the inner or outer courtyard had a row of columns in front of the entrance, and a pavement in front of the gates, or a portico behind the gates. In these colonnades, I believe that the columns were arranged in order, so that there were colonnades in front of the treasuries, and columns supporting the colonnades in front of the facades of the colonnades. The pavement, which was laid with stones, extended in front of the atrium's colonnades, lower in elevation than the colonnades, and had the same length as the building of the chambers. And the same man, in whose hand there was a measuring line and a reed, measured from the face of the lower gate, or as the Seventy translate it, the outer gate, to the front of the atrium or the inner gate, one hundred cubits towards the east, and, as it is said in Hebrew, towards the north. From which we understand that Evangelical saying which is narrated by the Savior (Matthew 13), sowing in the field of the mind good seeds, which multiplies fruits according to the variety of virtues in thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and hundredfold, agree with the prophecy of this place. And here the thirtieth, sixtieth, and hundredth number are mentioned, so that by these steps we may be able to reach perfect knowledge; but only in such a way that the fiftieth number leads us to the inner parts of the Church, which, after the completion of the seven weeks of the Sabbath, broke forth into the day of the resurrection. But they are called gazophylacia, which are full of spiritual riches, of which it is written: The redemption of a man's soul, his own riches (Prov. XIII, 8). About which also the Apostle Paul congratulates his disciples, that they are full of every word and all knowledge (Philippians I). However, in the Persian language, gaza is the term for riches. Or certainly, the thalami, which in Greek are called παστοφύρια, show the prepared chambers for the arrival of the bridegroom, which were thirty in

number, in order to demonstrate the perfect age of the inhabitants. And the pavement was laid with stone, so that the feet of the inhabitants, who were sinners, would not be polluted by mud, dirt, and the dust. But rather, the stones on which the temple of God is built, were walked upon. Whether the spaces between the columns were in front of the doors of the chambers, which supported the building placed on top. These are the columns, of which even the Apostle Paul writes: They gave me and Barnabas their right hands, Peter and John, who seemed to be columns (Gal. II, 9). And in another place: The pillar and foundation of truth (1 Timothy 3:15). And in the Book of Revelation we read: He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall never go out of it (Revelation 3:12). Therefore, the pavement that was in front of the gates, which we have already mentioned, or the covered walkway behind the gates, which protected the inhabitants of the chambers from rain, was lower. For always those things which are lower are placed in higher places, so that we may be able to arrive at mystical and secret things, and those full of spiritual riches, through ascent and steps. And the number is full and perfect in the number of ten decades, which also multiplies the seed of Isaac by a hundred grains (Gen. XXVI). But because he was in the land, and still he could say: I am a stranger, and a sojourner like all my fathers (Psal. XXXVIII, 13), it is recounted that he sowed barley, and harvested a hundredth of the grain. For the grain of wheat had not yet died in the earth, which would make many grains (Matth. XIII, Joan. XII), and to satisfy the hunger of the Jewish people hearing the word of God, He fed them with the bread that descended from heaven (Amos VIII, Joan. VI). However, how one hundred cubits were not only towards the Eastern gate, but also towards the Northern gate, the following testimony will demonstrate.

40:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) He also measured the gate of the outer court that faced north, both in length and width. It had three rooms on each side, and its front and vestibule were the same size as those of the gate that faced east. The gate was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide, and its windows, vestibule, and carvings were all the same size as those of the gate that faced east. There were seven steps in its ascent, and a vestibule before it. And there was a gate of the inner court opposite the gate to the north and east. And it was measured from gate to gate, one hundred cubits. Seventy: And he brought me to the north gate and behold, a gate facing the outer court. And it was measured, its length and its width, with its three sides here, and three there, and its threshing floor, and its rooms (which it did not have in Hebrew) and its palm tree. And it was made in the measurement of the gate facing east: its length was fifty cubits, and its width was twenty-five cubits. And its windows and palm trees were like the gate that faced east. And it had seven steps leading up to it, with palm trees on the inside. And the inner gate of the courtyard faced the gate of the north (which is not mentioned in Hebrew, like the gate that faces east). And the courtyard was measured from gate to gate, a hundred cubits. What the Hebrew words "thee," "elau," and "elamoth" mean, we have already explained in more detail. But our translation will teach you their meaning in the present context. However, there was a man whose cord was in his hand, and also the gate of the outer court of the north, or he brought the prophet through the gate of the north to the outer court. In which it is to be considered that it is first introduced through the gate of the north, secondly, through the gate of the south, thirdly, through the gate of the east. For from the north evil flames are kindled upon the inhabitants of the earth. And it is clear that the one who dwells on the earth, and is not a stranger or a foreigner, is exposed to the spears of him who

comes from the north, whose spears are on fire, which, according to the Apostle, are extinguished by the shield of faith. And towards the North, the outer courtyard is called; but towards the South, that is, towards the South, it is not outside, but inside. For the Scripture says: And he brought me to the inner court by the South gate, which is also found written in the Eastern courtyard. For the first one entered with power, trampling underfoot the North, and by the fiftieth and twenty-fifth number, reached the top of the hundredth; then he was brought in to the South side, and expelled the cold of the North: and then he reached perfect power, that is, the Eastern gate, where the sun of justice rises, and through which only the high priest enters. And this must be noted, that while there are four cardinal directions, the western gate is not mentioned, about which it is written in the beginning of the sixty-seventh psalm: Make a way for Him who ascends in the West, the Lord is His name (Psalm 7:5); so that after we prepare a way for the Lord and fulfill what John the Baptist proclaims in the wilderness: Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight His paths (Matthew 3:3), we may be able to hear what is said in the last part of the same psalm: Sing to God, sing praises to the Lord, who ascends above the highest heavens to the East (Psalm 68:33). But what is said about the three chambers in this passage, three on one side and three on the other, teaches us that both the letter and the spirit, as well as understanding in both literal and figurative sense, pertain to the sacraments of the Trinity. And what is said about the front and the vestibule according to the measurement of the previous gate signifies the Eastern gate, which is called 'first' not in order but in merit. And it had, it says, fifty cubits in length and twenty-five in width, so that eternal rest might be demonstrated after fifty weeks following seven weeks: extending during the day of resurrection to the kingdoms of heaven, in which true rest is found. But in twenty-five, of which number we spoke earlier, let the measurement of the five senses be preserved through the five orders of the square, of which one is adapted to length and another to width, so that in length there may be rest and delight of a more sacred knowledge; in width, a demonstration of present things that pertain to the senses. And it is inferred: And its windows, and vestibules, and sculptures, or as the Seventy added, palm trees, were according to the measurement of the gate that looked towards the East, this is subtly indicated, that whoever is positioned at the entrance of virtues, enters three and three chambers, recognizes the front and vestibule of the measurement of the previous gate, comes to them, and sees what has been most abundantly received in the Eastern gate. Furthermore, what follows: And there was a seven-step ascent, and a vestibule before it, or within it, this has the meaning that through the seven steps of the week, and the lamps that are lit from the face of the North, and the Jewish ceremonies to which God gave commandments that are not good, and the justifications in which they do not live, we ascend to higher things and to its vestibule, that is, to the gates, for which the Seventy Elamites translated. The vestibule before the gate is both interior and exterior. Not only is there one gate to the North, which is called the outer gate, but there is also another inner gate, which resembles the Eastern gate, as the Seventy have clearly stated. And the inner gate of the court faces the gate to the North, just as the gate that faced the East. And the distance from the outer gate to the inner gate of the same North is one hundred cubits, so that by means of these steps and measurements, we may be able to reach the inner gate by departing from the outer gate, as has been said in the explanation of the numbers.

40:24-27

(Verse 24 and following) 'And he led me to the south gate, and behold, there was a gate that faced south. And its frontispiece and vestibule were measured according to the upper measurements, and its windows and vestibules all around were like the other windows. It had a length of fifty cubits, and a width of twenty-five cubits, and it was ascended by seven steps, and there was a vestibule in front of its doors, and palm trees were carved on it, one on one side, and the other on the other side in front of it.' And the entrance of the inner court was on the south side, and it measured from entrance to entrance on the south side, one hundred cubits. And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate, and he measured the south gate according to the same measurements, its rooms, its doorway, and its vestibule, with the same measurements. And the vestibules all around the court were fifty cubits in length and twenty-five cubits in width. And a vestibule in a circular shape, with a length of twenty-five cubits and a width of five cubits. And its vestibule was towards the outer court, and its palm trees were on its front, and it had eight steps by which it was ascended. Seventy agree in the same words, except for thee, elau, elamoth, and elam, which in Hebrew is ulam. But thee is interpreted as threshold or front; elau, around it or supports; elamoth, entrance or vestibule; ulam is προπύλον, that is, before the doors. But what we have placed next to the Hebrew, that is, the vestibule or προπύλον, is not found in the Septuagint. But it should also be noted that in the southern gate it is not called a road according to the Septuagint, but simply 'and he led me to the south,' and behold, a gate that faced south. Therefore, through each entrance, Ezekiel, whose name means 'God strengthens,' is led. And from the northern gate, he goes to the southern gate, whose fronts, thresholds, τροπῳαῖα, or vestibules, and windows had similar measurements around, twenty-five cubits in length and five cubits in width. And it was ascended by seven steps, that is, to the southern gate and its vestibule, which is called elamoth, in front of its doors. Also, two carved palm trees, which we mentioned in the gate of the northern region. And let this be enough to remind you, that whatever is presented there, according to the more common understanding, that is, according to the literal sense, we understand at the south gate according to the spiritual sense. For in the same lines, both history and tropology run: but the former is lowly, the latter is sublime: the former clings to the earth, the latter soars to the heavens. And all things were filled with light around through the windows. For each problem has its own limits, and through them the light of faith enters the soul of the believer, especially if the length of his life has been extended to fifty years, that is, to the mystery of jubilee, and he is able to reach the breadth of a more divine understanding. In this latitude and on these streets, wisdom moves confidently, and with a lofty voice she exclaims: she climbs seven steps in order to reach the vestibule, and through the palms of her purpose and efforts, she holds eternal victory. And lest we think there is only one atrium to the south, it is said about the second atrium: And the entrance of the inner atrium is on the southern road: and it is measured from the entrance to the entrance on the southern road one hundred cubits; so that after a week and the sacraments of the old covenant, she may reach the good land and the grace of the Gospel. Not only is there a second atrium in the southern gate, but also a third, which is now called: 'And he brought me to the inner atrium at the southern gate, and he measured the gate according to the upper measurements, etc. For each atrium has its own measurements and arrangement, and in these measurements there is a different grace, as we know the same things differently at the beginning, in progress, and at the end. However, what is not found in the Septuagint, and the vestibule, or προπύλον, around twenty-five cubits long and five cubits wide, seems to raise a question, because it was not placed in the ancient interpretation, how twenty-five cubits and five are placed

after the progress of the third step.' But it removes the ambiguity that follows: And its vestibule is towards the outer courtyard, and its palms are at the front; so that this courtyard, which had a length of twenty-five cubits and a width of five, belongs not to the inner courtyard but to the outer courtyard, so that the width of the former courtyard, that is, twenty-five cubits, is possessed by the length of the outer courtyard, and it holds a width of five cubits. These measurements, that is, twenty-five and five, we refer to the same senses, namely sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch, which if we ascend to higher things, we double by fivefold and make them spiritual from carnal senses, as it is written: Lift up your eyes and see that the fields are already white for harvest (John 4:35), and: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke 8:8). And: Taste and see, for the Lord is sweet (Psalm 33:8). And: We are the good fragrance of Christ to God among those who believe (2 Corinthians 2:15). And in the Epistle of John it is said: That which we have heard and seen, and our hands have touched, concerning the Word of life (1 John 1:1). And finally, in no way are only seven degrees sufficient in the northern region: but after seven, the number eight is added, as we move from the Synagogue to the Church, from the old covenant to the new, from earthly things to heavenly things.

40:28-34 (Versed. 28 seqq.) And he led me into the inner courtyard by the eastern way: and he measured the gate according to the upper measurements; its chamber and its front and its vestibule as before, and its windows and its vestibules all around, with a length of fifty cubits and a width of twenty-five cubits. And its vestibule, that is, the outer courtyard (which the Septuagint and Symmachus have placed as the inner courtyard); and carved palm trees on its front, both here and there, and with eight steps leading up to it. » From the Northern region, into whose courtyard only seven steps were ascended, one passes to the Southern gate and courtyard of the same region, to which not only seven, as mentioned above, but eight steps are ascended: namely, so that we may pass from the Old to the New; and to speak more clearly, through the patriarchs and prophets, we come to the apostles: so that in one week there is an octet in the other. But now it comes to the last, or rather to the highest, and introduces the prophet through the way of the inner gate, or through the courtyard, to which one goes through the Eastern gate. In this place, according to the Septuagint, the way is only mentioned; in the Northern and Southern regions, it is completely silent, so that we can understand that in the Eastern region only is that way to be understood, which says: I am the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). For through Him we come to the Father, and it is written about Him: Blessed are the undefiled in the way (Psalm 119:1), who think nothing left of Christ, but their faith is pure and not in any way polluted by the stain of heretics. Likewise, the number of rooms, facades, entrances, windows, and the amount of light in them, as well as the same measurement of length and width: fifty by twenty-five cubits, preserving the sacredness, and the vestibule of its gate or inner courtyard, which is placed outside according to the Hebrew, so that everything is enclosed by the Eastern light, according to what is written: 'There is no one who can hide from its heat' (Psalm 19:7). But if we understand the atrium both externally and internally: thus it must be understood that God is both encompassing and indwelling, saying through the prophet: He who holds the heavens in the palm of his hand, and the earth in his fist (Isaiah XL, 12): so that everything may be seen as included in him. And again: Heaven is my throne, and the earth is the footstool of my feet (Isaiah LXVI, 1), so that he is believed to exist within all things: according to that verse from Virgil's Aeneid (Book VI). In the beginning, the sky and the earth, and the liquid fields, And the shining globe of the moon, and the Astra of Titania, A Spirit nourishes them within: and infused throughout their limbs, The Mind

moves the whole mass, and mingles itself with the great body. And when, through the weapons of justice, on the right and left, through glory and disgrace, through good and bad reputation, through praise and blame, we have obtained victory over this world (2 Cor. 6): then palms are given to us on both sides, which neither joys have changed, nor sorrow, nor prosperity, nor adversity have overcome: and not by seven (or eight) degrees, as in the region of the North, nor by seven and eight, as in the South, are we contained, but by only eight (or seven) degrees do we ascend to the highest: because the number eight is sufficient for us, that is, the sacrament of the Gospel; so that we may say with the Apostle: And though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him no more (2 Cor. 5:16), it is understood, according to the flesh.

40:35-43 (Verse 35 and following) 'And he brought me to the gate that faced the north, and he measured it according to the higher measurements: its chamber, its facade, its vestibule, and its windows all around: it was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. Its vestibule faced the outer court, and its palm tree engravings on its facade on both sides, and its staircase with eight steps.' And at each treasury there shall be a door in the gates (or fronts) of the doors: there they shall wash the holocaust. And at the entrance of the gate, there shall be two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, upon which the holocaust shall be immolated, and for sin, and for trespass. And on the outer side, which goes to the gate that leads to the north, there shall be two tables, and on the other side, before the vestibule of the gate, there shall be two tables. Four tables on this side, and four tables on that side: by the sides of the gate, there were eight tables, upon which they shall immolate (or used to immolate): but there were four tables for holocaust made of square stones, of one cubit and a half long, and of one cubit and a half wide, and of one cubit high, upon which the vessels were laid in which the holocaust and the victims are immolated. And their lips were a cubit long, turned inward all around; but on the tables were the flesh of the offering.» There is much disagreement in this testimony between the Hebrew Truth and the edition of the Seventy Interpreters. For what we have said: There they shall wash the burnt offering, and in the vestibule of the gate there are two tables on this side, and again: That the burnt offering and the sin offering be offered on them, is not found in the Seventy, but it is added in many copies from Theodotion. Again, when we said: And their lips turned inward by one palm's measure all around, Seventy translated it, and having the measurement of a span all around. Whether this word is Hebrew or Greek, we cannot know, except only that for 'gismus,' Symmachus and Theodotion translated it as 'lips,' Aquila's first edition translated it as '■πιστ■σεις' in the plural number; the second translated it as 'lips': for which in Hebrew it is written as 'Asephathaim'(). And when we say, above the tables however the meats of the offering, the Seventy put from their own, and they put coverings on the tables from above, so that they may be protected from rain and dryness. But that which they have given in Hebrew names, Thee, and Elau, and Elalamoth, and Aelam, what it signifies, and we have shown above, and our translation can show from the context: it is not necessary to often remind the reader about this, and to doubt their prudence and effort. Therefore, he is brought again to the gate that looked towards the North: but not as before to the outer courtyard, but to the inner one. For in what follows it is said: Its vestibule looked towards the outer courtyard, showing that this courtyard was inside. Through this, the progress of the one entering is shown; for in each place there are specific names and measures, and windows all around filled with the light of knowledge, showing all things, and through fifty and twenty-five cubits are the sacraments of divine sense and remission placed, as positioned in the vestibule of the inner courtyard, that we may see the exterior: contemplating knowledge of past and present, through which we may come to double

palms and victories, and understand the mysteries of the eight degrees, having entered the treasuries, in which the riches of the temple are contained, and our prayers are cleansed from all the filth of sin; and tables are placed on both sides, so that the burnt offering may be first offered. The diligent shepherd follows the custom of his father, and Gesaque, the barker of Sydon, etc., all of which the sacred fire consumes, first for sin, and finally for ignorance: whether we commit them knowingly or unknowingly. On the outer side, next to the Seventy, there was a man-made stream that carried away the ashes of the burnt offering and the harmfulness of the flesh externally: either there were two tables, and on the other side of the vestibule of the same gate there were two tables, that is, four on each side, four here and four there, and behind, or on the side of these there were eight other tables, so that they make a total of sixteen tables: by this number the mysteries of the prophets are shown, so that whatever we offer through the Gospel dispensation, we may affirm as foretold by their prophecies. And there are four tables made of square stones, and these themselves are for sacrifice and burnt offering (also called holocausts). These are living stones that are rolled upon the earth, and they have with them a corner stone, by which the walls of the old and new Covenant are held together. Now the number four signifies the Gospel sacraments, having in length and width one and a half cubits, that is, a square, which, when joined together, make three cubits, which three cubits have one cubit in height, so that the mysteries of the Trinity may preserve the measure of one cubit, that is, the divine majesty, as the Lord tells the disciples: Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). The name of God, as it were, is of one (or, one) cubit in height, which encompasses three properties, and always accepts the holocaust offerings of our oblations. Above these, however, are four tables of holocausts built with living stones, the length, width, and height of which have been described; vessels are placed in them in which the holocaust of the martyrs is offered, of whom it is said: Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints (Ps. 116:15); and their victims, who, through self-control and the holiness of their bodies, offer their souls as a sacrifice to the Lord. I believe that the meaning of these tables is contained in the books of Matthew, Luke, Mark, and John, which are about the apostles. Above these tables there was a curved crown on the inside, encircling the edges, to contain the sacrificial offerings and prevent them from flowing freely. It also held the meat of the offering, or as the Septuagint translated: 'And the tables themselves were covered on top, because of the violence of the rain and the excessive dryness of the summer sun, so that the meat placed on top could say with the prophet: "By day the sun will not harm us nor the moon by night."' (Psalm 121:6). One of which, with excessive rains and storms, dissolves the offerings of tribulations; the other, with violent heat, dries up whatever has been offered. Forgive me, reader, for the difficulty of the places; or if you can find something better, teach us: we gladly learn what we do not know.

40:44-49

(Vers. 44 seqq.) «And outside the front gate of the cantor's treasury in the inner courtyard, which was on the side of the gate facing the north, their faces were towards the south: one on the side of the eastern gate, which faced the way of the north. And he said to me: This is the treasury that faces the southern way of the priests, who keep watch in the temple's guardrooms. Furthermore, the treasury that faces the way of the north will be for the priests who serve at the altar: these are the sons of Zadok who come near from the sons of Levi to the Lord, to minister to Him. And he measured the porch of the temple by the length of one hundred cubits, and the width of one

hundred cubits, square: and the altar that was before the temple: and he brought me into the porch of the temple, and he measured the porch five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side. And the length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits, and there were steps to it: and pillars before the gates one on this side, and another on that side. Regarding the treasuries, the Seventy translated them as *exedrae*. And what we called *exedrae*, or the treasuries of the singers, was omitted by them. And again, after the measurement of the vestibule of five cubits on this side and five cubits on that side, they added from their own, and the width of the gate was fourteen cubits, whereas in the Hebrew it is only mentioned as a width of twelve cubits, and the width of the gate on this side was three cubits, and on that side was three cubits. I have reminded the reader not to be confused by the diversity of translations, but to be satisfied with the Hebrew truth in this particular place, especially when it comes to the measurements of the temple. Therefore, after the wall, which the Seventy translated as the *περιβολον*, which surrounded the whole temple in a square circuit, we read that the prophet was introduced into the inner courtyard, and then to the north, and to the south, and to the Eastern Gate, and again to the north: concerning which, as we were able, we have spoken, and in the diversity of which, either of names or of measurements, the past discourse showed what seemed to us: the meaning of which the testimony of the Savior briefly shows, saying: In my Father's house there are many mansions (John 14:2). After completing these things, he enters the temple, that is, the Holy of Holies, of which it is now said, and within the inner gate, the treasuries, or the singing halls. To them is given this command: Sing to the Lord a new song (Psalm 95:1). They cry out with the angels: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will (Luke 2:14). This inner courtyard was situated on the side of the gate that faced the North, the South, and the East, so that the singers of the Lord, and those who are engaged in the ministry of angels, may always remember by which steps they have reached the highest, and diligently understand the mysteries of each place. Finally, that man whose pen and cord were in his hand, having led the prophet into the inner courtyard which overlooked the southern road, spoke these words: 'This is the treasury or council chamber; and as Theodotius set it up, the chamber, which is separated for the dwelling of the priests, is for the observation of the temple guards. Furthermore, the treasury which overlooks the northern road will belong to the priests who stand guard at the service of the altar.' In which it should be noted that the priests to whom the custody of the temple has been entrusted dwell in the treasury, which faces the south, where the fullest light is. But those who stand guard at the ministry of the altar, where victims are offered for sin, should be in the treasury facing the north, for those who come from the north and offer victims for sins, desiring to receive and save them. Both of these, serving the Lord in their respective duties, are called the sons of Zadok, which means righteous or justifying. For God, the Almighty, whose name is written: The Lord is righteous and loves justice; His face has seen equity (Psalm 11: 8). But these are the sons of Sadoc of the sons of Levi, which is interpreted as 'assumed'. And they themselves are assumed by the Lord, so that they may approach Him, and never is it said of Moses alone: Moses approached the Lord; but also all who serve and minister to Him are said to draw near to the Lord. But this man who introduced Ezekiel into the inner courtyard, and so to speak, into the Holy of Holies, measured the courtyard itself, in which there were two chambers or treasuries assigned to the guards of the temple or the dwelling places of the altar, and he found it to be two hundred cubits in length and breadth: so that the priests of God who serve in the ministry, who had entered through a narrow and tight path, may

have wide walkways and dwell in a perfect and complete number of virtues. And in the very courtyard there was an altar in front of the face of the temple, so that the prayers of the saints never ceased before God. Moreover, the aforementioned man led Ezekiel into the vestibule, or $\pi\rho\sigma\pi\upsilon\lambda\omicron\nu$ of the temple, which measured five cubits on each side, for the one who was brought in had been trained in divine understanding and knew neither right nor left, but entered by the royal way. The width of the gate itself, which was the entrance to the vestibule of the temple, was three cubits on each side. In the elegant observance of the Holy Scriptures, it is not said from the right or the left, lest anything be named left in the Holy of Holies, but from this side and that side, that is, from both sides. And immediately the discerning reader understands that the number three relates to the mystery of the Trinity, which is the gate for those who approach God, for the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father, and the Holy Spirit is in both. This number three is the gate for those who, after baptism in the Trinity, come to salvation. But what follows, the length of the vestibule is twenty cubits, and the width is eleven cubits, seems to raise the question of how the dual number, which refers to two decades, and the eleventh, which seems to have one less, can be said to complete the sacred number twelve in the temple vestibule. Most people solve this problem in the following way: Although the priests are holy and placed in the service of the temple, and offer daily sacrifices to Christ, because they dwell in this mortal and fragile body, subject to sickness and vice, they have the number twenty and eleven. Where was it that the Apostle said, 'Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death' (Rom. VII, 24)? Not that we believe, according to the most savage heresy, that bodies are to be destroyed; but that it is our desire to be clothed upon, not stripped, and to receive immortality with this mortal, and to put on incorruption with this corruptible. However, what follows, 'And it was ascended by eight steps' (I Cor. XV), that is, to the inner gate, presents a great difficulty for those who know the Hebrew language. Finally, Symmachus, whom we have followed in this place, set out eight degrees: Seventy, ten; Theodotion and the second edition of Aquila, eleven; but the first edition set no number, but simply said, and the degrees by which it was ascended to it: so that either according to the custom of the previous gates, we understand eight degrees, as Symmachus understood, or certainly those which the inner gate had, whose number Scripture did not say (for which in Hebrew it is placed, $Urob$ (), that is, breadth, $Aste$ (), $Esre$ (). But if it is read in this way, eleven signifies; but if we read 'Esre,' which means ten, without the final 's,' it does not signify ten but a pronoun (which). To experts in the Hebrew language, these may seem like delusions; but now we are not writing about controversies or speeches in which the composition of words is commonly used, but about explanations and commentaries on Hebrew books. But let us return to our task. The number eight or ten, which is a perfect number, or eleven, about which we have already spoken, is ascended to the gate of the holy ones, on the front of which there were columns, one on this side and another on that side. He did not say 'two' so as not to incur the number dual, but 'one and one', which is a perfect number, and imitates the unity of God. These, however, were two columns, of which it is also said in the Apocalypse: 'He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more' (Rev. 3:12). And Peter and John are called the pillars of the Church (Gal. 2), through whom we enter into the Holy of Holies, and by whose teaching our entrance to Christ is made.

41:1-2

(Chapter 41, Verse 1 and following) 'And he brought me into the temple, and measured the fronts, six cubits in width here and six cubits in width there, the width of the tabernacle. And the width of the gate was ten cubits, and the sides (or shoulders) of the gate were five cubits here and five cubits there. And he measured its length, forty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits.' After many mysteries and various entrances, and the peculiarities of each place, at last finally a man comes, whose string of masons and measuring rod was in his hand, and he brings Ezekiel the prophet into the temple, and he measured the front of the temple: for which atelam, the Septuagint; and aelim Theodotius; and around Symmachus translated. And on both sides the width of the tabernacle was six cubits, containing the mystery of all creatures: for in six days the world was finished. Through the knowledge of these and the causes and conditions and the order of creation, we enter into the temple of God, and through the order and stability of created things we come to know the Creator. But the width of the gate of the temple was ten cubits, which is a sacred and perfect number, and in which, on the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, there is fasting and propitiation. But on the tenth day of the first month, which is called Nisan, the lamb is taken for sacrifice and preparation for the Passover. Therefore, in the seventh month, the tithes are offered in the storehouses of God, or, as the Scripture has accustomed to call them, the wine presses. Hence the Apostle says: Be ye enlarged also (2 Corinthians 6); so that after entering the temple through the ten cubit gates, on both sides of the gate itself, the sides, or as it is properly said in Hebrew, the shoulders are measured, which are always referred to as works. And Issachar desired good (Gen. XLIX), resting among the clergy, seeing the rest, because it is good, and the land, because it is fertile, he put his shoulder to work, and he became a man of agriculture. And in the vestment of the high priest, the ephod with the breastplate is fastened, so that the works of reason are joined, and the man can say: I have understood from your commandments (Ps. CXVIII, 104). The gatekeepers on both sides of the gate had five porches, so that through earthly and divine senses, about which we have often written their differences, we may enter the inner sanctuary of the temple, which was measured by that man, who was the prophet's guide, with a length of forty cubits, and a width of twenty cubits, or rather, the gate's length and width: because he had spoken only of the width and shoulders above. But that the number which is next to eight hundred forty makes is no doubt. Hence it is commanded in Ecclesiastes: Give portions to seven, and also to eight (Eccl. XI, 2). I am aware that there is frequent debate about the mystery of this number, whether it is because through tribulations and distresses of this world we enter into the sanctuary of the Lord: therefore the length of the gate had forty cubits, which number is always associated with labor. And so, Moses and Elijah did not eat bread or drink water for forty days (Deut. 9, 3 Kings 19, Deut. 29). And for forty years, the people of Israel are troubled and tested in the wilderness and enter the promised land through many struggles. And the Lord and Savior, according to the weakness of the assumed body, is tested for forty days in the wilderness, so that after the victory, angels approach and minister to him (Matt. 4). But when we can say in the midst of tribulations and distress, the words of the Apostle: In all things we are troubled, but not crushed (2 Cor. 4, 8), and the prophetic words: In tribulation, you have enlarged me (Psalm 4, 1), then the widest entrance is opened to us, which has a width of twenty cubits, so that having overcome the struggles and earthly things, which themselves represent duality, we may enter the inner sanctuary of the temple and hear the Lord commanding his disciples: Have confidence, I have overcome the world (John 16, 34).

41:3-4

(Vers. 3, 4.) \"And he entered inside (or into the inner court) and measured the front (or threshold) of the gate to be two cubits, and the gate to be six (or ten) cubits, and the width of the gate to be seven cubits (or, the width of the gate from one shoulder to the other being seven cubits on each side). And he measured its (or the doors') length to be twenty cubits and its width to be twenty cubits in front of the temple. And he said to me: This is the Holy of Holies.\" « Let us make progress, for greater progress always opens up for us. After entering the temple, we once again enter inside, or as the Septuagint translated, the inner courtyard, in whose front, or Ael, for which Symmachus, around the gate, Theodotus Aelam, Hebrew UI (), Aquila door, we interpret the front, there were two cubits. So, according to the higher meaning, we enter by the dual number to that place where the Holy of Holies is located. » And the gate itself was six cubits, through which we entered and obtained eternal rest, which is demonstrated in the number seven. For this reason, the Seventy translated it, and the width of the gate was seven cubits on this side and seven cubits on that side, in Hebrew and other editions only seven cubits were placed in the width of the gate. However, what follows: And its length was measured, or as the Seventy translated it, the doors were twenty cubits, for which in most codices forty are contained according to the Seventy, it also signifies a width of twenty cubits in front of the face of the temple, that which before the face of the temple and its entrance, the measure of past labor and struggle always comes to us. For just as the number two possesses a double relationship in individual numbers, so do the decades have the same relationship. And consider this: entering inward through the gateway of two cubits in width, and having six cubits in depth, and seven cubits in width on each side, and twenty cubits in length, and the same in the very doors of the temple, let it be taught by the prophet what that place is, or by what name it is called. For he said to me: This is the Holy of Holies. But if, as Scripture calls it, it is before the temple, or before the Holy of Holies, how great a blessedness must we think there is in the innermost parts of the temple! Concerning which the prophet speaks: This is labor in my sight, until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand their last things (Ps. 77:16-17). But this should also be noted, that in the description of the tabernacle it is said 'Holy of Holies' in the plural number; but here 'Holy of Holies' in the singular number, so that after the holy things we come to the holy: just as after many songs we come to the Song of Songs, which is the song of all songs, and in singing it, we are joined in the embrace of the Bridegroom.

41:5-7

(Vers. 5 seqq.) And the wall of the house was measured six cubits, and the width of each side was four cubits all around the house. The sides were side by side, thirty-three on each side, and there were projections that entered through the wall of the house on the sides all around, in order to contain them and not touch the wall of the temple. And there was an ascending courtyard: going up through a spiral staircase and leading to the upper room of the temple in a circular path. Therefore, the temple was broader in the higher parts, and thus one ascended from the lower parts to the higher in the middle, and from the middle to the narrow, and to Thrael. However, what is placed in the Septuagint, 'And from the middle to the narrow,' that is, to the three balconies, and to Thrael, is not found in Hebrew. For Thrael also (which I do not know what it signifies; since it is not found in Hebrew) is read by those of Urani (), which both we and others have translated, and I have seen, so that the order of the testimony may be followed.

41:8-22

(Versed. 8 seqq.) 'And I saw in the house a height all around, with foundations of reed measuring six cubits, and the width along the outer wall of the side chamber, five cubits. And the inner part of the house and the space between the storehouses, twenty cubits wide all around the house. And there were doors in the side chambers toward the outer court, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south. And the width of the place for worship, five cubits all around.' And the building, which was separate and facing the road towards the sea, was seventy cubits wide. The wall of the building was five cubits wide all around, and its length was ninety cubits. After he reached the Holy of Holies, of which we spoke earlier, that venerable man measured the wall of the Holy of Holies. It had a height of six cubits because of the structure of the world and all visible creation, which was created in six days, and a width of one side of four cubits, not on one side only, but all around. But the width of the house, measured around, was four cubits, to represent the four elements from which all things are composed, especially human bodies. Against these, the holy ones fight and subject themselves to the power of the soul, so that they may deserve to enter the inner regions and know the secrets of the Lord. The sides of the house, which were around it and were separated from the walls of the temple by a space of four cubits, were joined together. So that one side touched another side, and it had a length not of thirty-three cubits, but of sixty-six, that is, sixty-six. In the book of Leviticus, it is said that after one week in the birth of a male child, the mother and the child must wait for thirty-three days in order to undergo purification (Lev. XII). However, if the child is female, the waiting period is doubled to sixty-six days. And because, in order to enter the holy of holies, we need not only the first birth, but also the second, to be born in the flesh and be reborn in the spirit: therefore, the number is not sixty-six, but twice thirty and three, so that both births are owed to God the creator and his mercy, and the two sides of the house that support the structure of the temple are enclosed by a double wall. And what follows according to the Hebrew: 'And there were certain heights that would go out through the wall of the house on the sides all around, to contain, and not touch the wall of the temple,' signifies this: that holy men, amidst the multitude of believers, burst forth through the wall of the temple, through all the sides all around, and uphold the foundations of the Church, and yet do not touch the wall of the temple: content with having seen only, and from afar, worship the indescribable mysteries. Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. (1 Corinthians 13:12-13) But through the circular and spiral ascent we reach the upper room of the temple, which, among all shapes, is also approved by philosophers of this age as the most beautiful: for both the sky, the sun, the moon, and the other stars, and the earth, in human bodies as well, the eyes are like other stars, and the shape of the head, which is the receptacle of all the senses, and the rounded fingers, and women, and arms, exhibit this roundness. Moreover, I think that the upper room of the temple, which we ascend from the lower to the higher, is the same one that Elijah and Elisha had, as mentioned in the book of Kings, and also Tabitha had it in the Acts of the Apostles, which means 'the gazelle' in Greek, and our damsel who had reached the highest through good works (3 Kings 17; 4 Kings 4; Acts 9; Acts 10). But the Apostle Peter, on whom the Lord established the foundations of the Church, surpasses the upper room and comes to the roof, which is more significantly called 'dorma' in Greek, that is, the solarium of the roof, and he came to know the mysteries of the Church, previously unknown to the world. The Savior also made the Pasch in the upper room, and in a large and wide upper room, and after all impurity had been cleansed and the bed prepared, and the spiritual feast prepared,

where he delivered the mystery of his body and blood to his disciples, and left to us the eternal celebration of the immaculate Lamb. And he added: And from the middle to the saddest, that is, the third upper room and Thrael, it seems to me that it should be marked with a note. For why do we need to discuss doubtful and unwritten things when we should devote ourselves to the books held by the Hebrews? It follows: 'And I saw in the house a height encompassed by sides, measured by a reed, a space of six cubits; and a width by the outer wall of the side of five cubits; and between the treasuries' (which Symmachus calls 'exedrae') 'a width of twenty cubits around the house.' By these measurements it is shown that we are deserving of ascending not only into the Holy of Holies, but also into their upper room, and that we should always remember that through the six days of our earthly condition, and through the five senses, and through the twenty cubits of width, we ascend to the upper room of the temple, leaving behind earthly humility and the sense of the letter, and we pass over to the summit of the Church, and rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.' And the entrance, he says, of the side toward the north (Jer. 1:14), from which evil spreads over all the earth, and which the Lord promises to drive away from us, saying: 'And I will drive away from you him who is from the north' (Joel 2:20). And it is a beautiful place for prayer at the entrance opposite the north, so that, according to the Apostle, we may pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5), and say with Jeremiah: 'Let not the apple of my eye be silent' (Lam. 2:18), whether we desire to avoid present evils or give thanks for the past. For as long as we are in the tent of this body, we groan and say: Wretched me, who will set me free from this body of death? (Rom. VII, 24). But there was also a door to the South, which had a place of prayer nearby according to the Hebrew custom, and it extended five cubits around. For after the cold of the North, we pass through the heat of the South, and yet we still seek a place for prayer, in the door of the North, in order to escape dangers; in the South, to give thanks for the past and to have a secure possession of victory. But five cubits, and in this place they indicate divine senses, through which we ascend from earthly things to higher things. And the building, he says, which was separated and turned toward the road facing the sea, was seventy cubits wide: so that after labors and dangers, and the waves and shipwrecks of this world, and seventy years, of which Jeremiah, Daniel, and Zechariah write (Jer. 25 and 29; Dan. 9, Zech. 9); but also the legitimate sabbath of seven decades we may attain: so that we may have eternal rest, and through the width of five cubits we may come to a length of ninety cubits: in which age Sarah gave birth to a son according to the promise, who, at the age of ninety, that is, at the end of nine decades, was born to Abraham, who was one hundred years old (Gen. 21), that is, having the mystery of ten decades. The following Scripture will show what the number signifies.

(Verses 13 and following) And the house was measured in length a hundred cubits. And the separate building, and its walls, were also a hundred cubits in length. The width before the face of the house, and that which was separate against the East, was a hundred cubits. And the length of the building over against the face thereof, which was separated at the back, was also a hundred cubits. And there were chambers exceeding in height on either side a hundred cubits; and the inner temple, and the porches of the court. Doorways and slanted windows were set outward, in a perimeter on three sides against the threshold of each, and a wooden floor went all the way around. And the earth was up to the windows: and the windows were closed. Above the doors, and up to the inner house; and on the outside, through every wall on the inside; and on the outside, to the measurement. And cherubs and palm trees were carved: and a palm tree was between cherub and cherub: and each cherub had two faces: the face of a man next to the palm

tree on one side, and the face of a lion next to the palm tree on the other side; carved throughout the whole house on the inside. From the ground up to the upper gates, there were carved cherubim and palm trees on the wall of the temple. The threshold was square. The sanctuary faced the shape of the wooden altar, its height being three cubits. Its length was two cubits. Its corners, length, and walls were all made of wood. Seventy: It measured against the length of the house, one hundred cubits. And the remaining and separating walls, in the length of one hundred cubits. And the width against the face of the temple, and the remaining opposite one hundred cubits. And he measured the length of the separating wall facing the back of the house, and the remaining width of one hundred cubits. And the temple and the corners, and the outer Aelam covered with wood, and three windows made like a net, for light to shine through, that one could look through them. And the house and the adjacent structures, all covered with wood around. And the floor, and from the floor to the windows. And the windows were opened threefold, so that one could look through them: both into the inner and outer house, and through every wall around inside and outside the measurement, and carved cherubim, and palm trees between cherub and cherub. Two faces of cherub: the face of a man towards the palm tree on one side, and the face of a lion towards the palm tree on the other side: the entire wall was carved all around from the floor to the rafters with cherubim and carved palm trees. And the sanctuary and the temple were opened on four corners towards the face of the saints: a vision as if the appearance of a wooden altar: its height being three cubits, and its length two cubits: and its width two cubits: and it had horns, and its bases and walls were wooden.» The word 'contra', which the LXX translated at the beginning of the testimony, where it is written: 'And he measured against the house', is not found in Hebrew, and therefore it must be marked with an obelus, in order for it to be correct and true, and he measured the house with a length of one hundred cubits, and so on. The Holy of Holies and the inner sanctuary are described, which is said to have a perfect number of ten decades, after ninety cubits, with three sides having one hundred cubits each: so that we may serve the Lord with our mind, speech, and deeds, remembering that Apostolic example in which it is said: 'That we may know the breadth, and length, and depth, and height' (Ephesians 3:18). But what is said in Hebrew, the separate structure and its walls, the Septuagint translates as separating and not clinging to the walls of the temple, but having their own nearby walls. The temple itself, as well as its corners and the porch or entrance hall (propylon), were covered with wood, a symbol of wisdom, as the Scripture records the tree of life being located in paradise (Gen. II). The windows were made in the form of a net, similar to lattice screens, so that they were not covered with stone or glass, but with wooden lattices woven with twists and turns. In Hebrew, they have diagonal windows, which were only present in three parts of the temple: on the right, on the left, and at the back, that is, to the South, North, and West. The eastern part, however, did not have windows because the entrance itself let in bright light from within, and all the interior of the temple was filled with the light of the doors, so that someone could look inside through each window and opening. And not only were the exterior areas covered with wood, but there was such an abundance of wood all around that the floor and everything up to the windows were connected with wood. The windows were opened in three ways according to the Seventy, so that when they were opened, a triple understanding of God's temple would be revealed, according to what is said elsewhere: 'But you, write down these things in three ways' (Prov. 22:20). And through them, both the interior and the exterior are seen: so that we may know the invisible things that are within, and the visible things that are without; so that one thing may show the mind, another the flesh, another the

spiritual understanding, and another the simple historical account; and through all the surrounding walls, internally and externally, their measurements were consistent. For nothing is done in the temple of God without reason and measure, especially in the holy of holies made by God. The Cherubim were also carved, no doubt in wood, extending from the floor to the windows, and the carvings were so finely made that they appeared not sculpted, but applied. Cherubim are interpreted as a multitude of knowledge. Therefore, within the innermost part of the temple, after the multitude of knowledge, there are carvings and palm trees, in which the sign of victory is, as the Apostle says: But I press on to the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God, in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14). Which palms were between the Cherub and the Cherub, so that one Cherub was surrounded on both sides by two palms: which Cherub did not, as we read at the beginning of this prophet, have four faces, namely, of a man, a lion, a calf, and an eagle; but only two, that is, of a man and a lion, of which the first pertains to reason, and the second to fury, which is more significantly called θυμ■ς in Greek. By fury, however, we mean not that which is close to disturbance and vice, but that which consolidates the softness of the mind and makes the soul of the combatant stronger. For in the beginning, we are subject to concupiscence, which pertains to the earthly works; and some are carnal, others are spiritual, of which the ultimate is attributed to eagles. But when we enter the innermost sanctuary, and possess the inner parts of the temple, we have no need for anything else except reason and strength, of which one pertains to perception and prudence, the other to the perseverance of the soul. Therefore, every wall around the temple, from the floor to the ceiling, had Cherubim and palms skillfully carved: after which the sanctuary and the temple were opened from the four corners opposite the faces of the holy ones. First, we have a multitude of knowledge, through which we achieve victory over the enemy, and then a sanctuary and temple are opened to us, which has four angles, and a very strong position, and which is inclined in no direction. For it has the nature of a square measure, so that it may stand on a stable base, and it possesses, in a mystical number that is clear to the wise reader, four elements from which all things consist, solid and everlasting. And they looked at everything opposite the face of the sanctuary: before which was the sanctuary, or in which was the image of the wooden altar three cubits high, and two cubits long, and two cubits wide, which together make seven cubits. This altar had horns; and both its bases and its walls, that is, its sides, were made of wood, in which the holy Scriptures mysteries, human speech cannot explain: how the altar, in which the fire was to be kindled, namely the incense offering, should suffer nothing from the fire, but, so to speak, becomes more pure through the fire. For just as the works of the saints, of which the Apostle writes, 'The work of each will be made manifest; for the Day will disclose it' (1 Corinthians 3:13), do not perish, but are made even more pure through fire, so too the wood of the altar, which is from the trees of paradise, is not consumed by nearby fire, but is made even more pure. It is not surprising to believe this about the sanctuary and the inner parts of the temple and the altar of incense, since even linen, which is a type of flax, or something with a similar appearance to linen, is found to be cleaner the more it is burned. Forgive, reader, the difficulty, and grant pardon to the impoverished understanding. For through slanted and net-like windows, which are always closed, we can barely allow our eye to enter into the inner chamber of our heart, so that all that we see, we see in shadow and in image, and with the Apostle, we cry out: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways (Rom. XI, 13)! And: Who has known the mind of God (Isaiah XL, 13), except the one who is the angel of great counsel, and who has the power to reveal worthy

mysteries? And in Rome, they call the projections on the walls of dining rooms 'solaria,' or 'Meniana' from the one who first invented them, which some Greeks call 'ex■stras.'

41:23-26

(Vers. 23 seqq.) And he spoke to me: This is the table before the Lord, and there were two doors in the temple and in the sanctuary, and in the two doors on each side there were two little doors that folded into each other. For there were two doors on each side of the doors, and on the doors of the temple there were carved cherubim and palm tree sculptures, just as they were also engraved on the walls. Therefore, the wood in the front of the vestibule was thicker: on top of which there were slanting windows, and the appearance of palm trees on both sides of the shoulders of the vestibule, according to the width of the house and the thickness of the walls. In this place, the Septuagint edition differs greatly from the Hebrew truth. Therefore, I will only mention that they have translated 'σπουδα■α' as 'crassioribus lignis', which means necessary or worthy of attention, and 'absconditas' as 'oblique fenestras' or hidden windows. And at the end of the testimony, they have measured the 'laquearia superliminaris' or vestibule, as well as the 'conjuncta' or joined sides of the house, which they have called '■ζυγωμ■να', and for which we can translate as equal weight. Therefore, that man who had brought the prophet into the hidden part of the temple and had shown him, among other things, the wooden altar which had both corners and horns according to the Septuagint, and wooden walls, said to him: This altar that you see, it is the table in front of the Lord, which burns in the likeness of a ruby and is not consumed; of which the holy one speaks to God: You have prepared a table before me, against those who trouble me (Ps. 22:5). There were also two doors in the temple and in the sanctuary itself, through which the sacraments of both instruments are revealed, and in the two doors on each side there were two little doors, which folded into each other: so that in history you may have spiritual understanding, and in the tropology the truth of history, both of which need each other, and if one is lacking, knowledge is incomplete. But what follows, 'There were two doors on each side of the doors,' is clear according to the letter. For in the larger dining rooms, it is customary for two to adhere and join together: so that the larger entrance is not closed or opened by two large doors, but by four smaller ones. In these doorways of the temple, or the holy of holies, there were carved Cherubs, of which we have mentioned above, and sculptures of palm trees, so that after a multitude of knowledge, victory would be provided to those entering. These sculptures of palm trees were also on all the walls of the temple. And the reasons why the Cherubim were carved on the doors themselves and the images of palm trees were depicted. Also, why the wood on the outer gate vestibule was thicker: so that they would have strength and could receive the carved work. Furthermore, according to spiritual understanding, the doors are more firm and carved, so that they possess both strength and beauty, so that no one like Uzziah can break into the Holy of Holies and claim priesthood for himself (2 Chronicles 26). Moreover, the gates which were windows were oblique, or concealed, so that the very light which was provided from within did not have perfect knowledge, nor clear light and open to all: but for the most part it was concealed. For now we see in an enigma (I Cor. XIII, 12); and we do not yet know as we ought to know: but when that which is perfect has come, then that which was in part, will be destroyed. And there was a likeness of palms here and there. In the interior of the Temple and in the Holy of Holies, he did not place the right hand and the left, so that he would not seem to say anything negative about things that are great and mysterious; but rather on this side and on that side, according to what is written

in the Gospel: 'If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also' (Matthew 5:39). Could he not have said, 'and the left'? But when the right is struck, the other right is offered, because in a holy man, both the right and the left are perfect. And in the corners of the vestibule on the sides of the house, and the width of the walls: for which seventy were carried to the vaults of Aelus, that is, the porch, and the sides of the house, of equal weight or measure: through which it is covertly shown that the doorposts of the vestibule (for these seem to signify the corners) and the sides of the house, and the width of the walls, are all full of reason and measure, and that nothing is found in the temple of the Lord that is without order and wisdom.

Book Thirteen Book Thirteen. The thirteenth book of Explanations on Ezekiel is the second book of the exposition on the temple, which I, with the help of our Savior, desire to dictate until the end, hence singing that same number along with David in the fourteenth psalm: O Lord, who shall dwell in your tabernacle? Or who shall rest on your holy mountain? (Psalm 14:1) This we must understand as difficult and even impossible. Therefore, in another place, he earnestly implores as a man of desires and says: One thing I have asked from the Lord, this is what I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; that I may see the delight of the Lord, and visit his holy temple. (Psalm 26:4, 5). And again: How beloved are your tabernacles, O Lord of hosts: my soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord (Psalm 83:1). I anticipate the curses of rivals who consider not what they themselves are capable of, but what I am not capable of. And when they judge our actions, they do not offer their own actions to be judged: never fighting in the arena, but judging those who fight with a leisurely, even arrogant spirit. It is easy to dictate to the people and to criticize each blow individually, and to laugh at the blood of others, and to discuss like inexperienced trainers where a wound should be inflicted. In my explanation of Ezekiel's temple, and the other things that pertain to the end of that book, I confess that I am writing nothing worthy of the subject's magnitude, and in a few words, if I deserve to receive any, I give thanks to the Savior. For it is written: Unless you believe, you will not understand (Isaiah 6). And in another place: If you have faith like a mustard seed, and say to this mountain, move from here to there, it will be done (Matthew 17:19). And how does the Apostle mention that the grain of mustard seed is not a small portion of faith, but is the whole of faith, saying, 'And if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains' (1 Corinthians 13:2)? Therefore, this grain of mustard seed, even if it is small, grows into a great tree, and the birds of the air make their nests in its branches (Luke 13). Therefore, to you, daughter Eustochium, who willingly accept whatever our circumstances may be, I desire to make this known, and I briefly remind you of that of the rhetorician Victorinus, so that you may know that obscurity in volumes comes from three things: either from the greatness of the subject, or from the ignorance of the teacher, or from the hardness of the listener. I will readily confess the first and second in this work; the third, however, your keen intellect and desire for Scripture easily reject. You possess God as a constant guest, not only due to your virginity and self-discipline, but also I will say, without frequency but with constancy. Therefore, let us proceed to the thirteenth book in the Book of Ezekiel, whose beginning is this:

42:1-12

Chapter XLII, verses 1 and following: 'And he brought me to the outer court by the way leading to the north, and he brought me to the treasury which was opposite the separated building and opposite the temple facing the north. On the face of the length of one hundred cubits of the north gate, and the breadth of fifty cubits, opposite the twenty cubits of the inner court, and opposite the

pavement laid with stone of the outer court, where the porch was joined to the triple porch.' And before the treasury, there was a walkway ten cubits wide, looking inward, with the doors facing north, where the treasuries were lower on the upper levels because the porticoes that protruded from the lower and middle parts of the building supported them. These porticoes were narrow and did not have columns like the columns of the courtyards, so they protruded from the lower and middle parts of the building by fifty cubits. And there was an outer courtyard by the treasury, which was in the way of the outer court before the treasury: the length of it was fifty cubits. Because the length of the treasuries of the outer court was fifty cubits and the length before the face of the temple was one hundred cubits. And there was an entrance under these treasuries from the east for those who entered from the outer court: in the width of the courtyard of the eastern way before the separate building. And there were before the building treasuries, and a road in front of their face like the treasuries, which were on the northern side, according to their length, and thus their width. And every entrance of them, and their similarities, and their doors, according to the doors of the treasuries, which were on the road facing the South (Known), a door at the head of the road, which was in front of the separate vestibule through the Eastern road for those entering. LXX: And he brought me into the outer court towards the east, opposite the north gate; and he led me to the inner court, and behold, there were five chambers on the north side of the building, and a separate building adjoining the north side, one hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide, with the same measurements as the gates of the inner court, and like the pillars of the outer court, according to the arrangement of the gateways of the three-sided portico, and opposite the chambers was a walkway ten cubits wide, one hundred cubits long, along the inner way of one cubit, with its entrance facing north. And the walkways of the upper rooms were similar, as the columns of the upper rooms stood out from the lower columns, and the space was similar. And there were triple porticoes, and they did not have columns like the columns on the outer side; therefore, they stood out from those that were lower, and in the middle of the ground fifty cubits, and the outer light was like the outer courtyard porticoes, which faced the porticoes of the north, with a length of fifty cubits. The length of the porticos facing the outer courtyard was fifty cubits. And these are opposite their own facade, all one hundred cubits, and the entrance of these porticos is towards the Eastern entrance, so one may enter through them into the outer courtyard, according to the light that was at the beginning of the walkway to the South, opposite the Southern side of the building, and separate. And the porticos and walkway are opposite their own facade, according to the measurements of the porticos and the way to the North, and their length, and their width, and all their exits, and entrances, and lights, and the entrance to the porticos towards the South, and the entrance from the beginning of the walkway to the light, the space of the reed pen: and so one may go towards the East through them. That which is translated into the East in the LXX is not found in the Hebrew, and it is clear that it is superfluous. For how is it brought out to the outer gate toward the East, when it follows against the gate of the North? That which we have also put above, and in this place: He brought me into the treasury, which will be opposite the separate building, and opposite the temple facing the North, for which it is held in the LXX: And he brought me: and behold, there are five chambers from the remaining building and next to the separate building toward the North: for separate, which Aquila and Symmachus translated, the second edition of Aquila, and Theodotion placed this word itself, Gazera (), expressing it similarly in all places: and many other things which are placed in the present passage between the Hebrew and the LXX not only differ in order, but also in number, and in the interpretation of words, so that if we wished to

linger on each one, and seek and explain their reason for the diversity, we would depart greatly from the proposed subject. And I had wanted to pass over in silence my present testimony of final despair and greatness, but I thought it better to say anything than to say nothing at all, adopting that Socratic principle: I know that I do not know. For it is a part of knowledge to know that you do not know. Therefore, after the prophet had carefully observed the things that were inside, the man, whose rope and reed were in his hand, led him out to the outer courtyard, along the path leading to the North, which he had already seen from above before he entered the inner chambers. But we see things differently when it comes to perfect knowledge, compared to the beginning of discipline. And it is necessary for one who has looked into the inner workings, according to the same form and measures and hidden sacraments, to also see the external things. However, he was led into the treasury, or as the Septuagint translated it, the hall, or as Theodotion, the παστοφύριον, which is turned into a chamber: which was located opposite the separate building. But what the Seventy added for the treasury, five exedras, is not found in Hebrew. The treasury was a separate building, as we have already said. Gazera. And it was separate, receiving those who came from the North, and it was against the temple facing the North, that is, looking towards the parts of the North, but not located in the North, so that there would be an easier passage for those who were leaving the cold of the North, from which evils arise upon the earth (Jer. 1). We read in the book of Numbers that the tribes of Dan and Naphtali, and the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, the maidservants of Rachel and Leah, held their camps in the northern regions. Moreover, the width of the entrance to the north was one hundred cubits, and the length was fifty cubits: a square number and perfect from ten decades, and from seven weeks, which is the number of remission, and at the beginning of unity, that is, the octave, it bursts forth, so that the spaces of the priestly duties in the temple of God may be shown. And that which is joined next to the Hebrew, opposite the twenty cubits of the inner court, which the Seventy have translated, was described like the gates of the inner court, has this meaning: that the number of a hundred and fifty in the outer court should have the same force as the number of twenty in the inner court. For if you reckon four times five times, in the number twenty, you will find both Testaments: so that both the Law may be held in the Gospel and the Gospel may be born from the root of the Law. For the number seventy, the likeness of the inner court, may have been interpreted, perhaps fearing the number twenty, in which offerings of Esau are made, to place in the inner court. It follows: And against the pavement, the floor of the outer court, where there was a porch, joined to the triple porch; for which seventy were transferred: And as the columns of the outer court were placed in order, opposite the face of the triple porches. However, it signifies that the pavement of the outer court was laid with living stone, so that the feet of the priests are not defiled by the dust of summer or the mud of winter. And so, the Lord, about to ascend to the Father, washes the feet of the Apostles (John 13), so that with purified and cleansed feet they may ascend to the kingdoms of heaven; and he commands the apostles that in whichever city they enter and are not received, they should shake off the dust from their feet (Matthew 10; and Mark 6): so that nothing of earthly possessions may remain with them. And not only was the pavement covered with stones, but there was also a portico joined to a triple portico. A portico protecting priests from rain and heat, and joined to the triple portico, showing the mystery of the Trinity, which, while being divided in names among the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, is yet joined in one divinity to itself. There was also before the treasury, or the halls, or the chambers, a walkway of ten cubits in width, looking towards the interior of the road of one cubit. And what was added by the Seventy: It is extra to have a length of one hundred cubits: for in the

Hebrew it is not held, what they set forth, they took what is held in Hebrew, looking towards the interior of the road of one cubit, which we translated from the truth of Hebrew. But it signifies that before the doors of all the treasuries, or exedrae, and chambers, there was a walkway, having a width of ten cubits, which is a perfect number, either because of the Decalogue or because of the mystery of the Gospel. For if you come from one to four by twos and threes, the number ten is made, the number of the Gospels: in the width of which the priests walk, going before each treasury. But in such a way that they always look towards the interior of the path which leads to one cubit, that is, to the worship of one divinity, as the Son says to the Father: I have revealed thy name to men (John 17:6). For she is the way, looking inward, which is said in the Gospel: I am the way, and the truth, and the life (John XIV, 6): because no one comes to the knowledge of the Father, except through the Son. It follows: And their doors to the north, where the treasuries were in the lower and middle parts: because the porticoes which stood out from the lower and middle parts of the building supported them. For they were narrow, and did not have columns like the columns of the courts: therefore they stood out from the lower and middle parts by fifty cubits from the ground. What is joined: the doors of these, it is understood, (belong to) the exedrae or treasury rooms, about which there was discussion above. The treasuries were on the upper floors, that is, in the lower rooms. The upper rooms were ascended by Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 4); and the Lord, with the disciples, celebrated the Passover (Mark 14), and Tabitha, who was raised by the Apostle's faith and the merit of her virtues (Acts 9). These are the upper rooms, about which it is written in the psalm: He waters the mountains from his upper rooms (Psalm 104, 13). For unless a mountain is made, and rises to higher things, it will not be irrigated by the rains of the Lord, which for the diversity of merits are irrigated in the first, second, and third coenaculum. Even the storerooms themselves, that is, the treasuries of the Lord's treasures, are lower in the higher places. (Ephesians 3). However, the higher one is, the more one is humbled with the Apostle, saying: I am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. (1 Corinthians 1:9). However, the treasure rooms themselves were located in the lower rooms, because they supported the porticoes that projected from the lower and middle parts of the building. And the reason why the treasure rooms were placed in the lower rooms and were lower was this: because the porticoes, which enjoyed the freedom of the air, supported and projected from the lower and middle parts of the building. In this way, the second floor of the building would be higher than the first floor, and the third floor would be higher than the second, so that as one ascended to higher levels, they would use a higher treasure room, which increased in humility, as the Lord says: 'If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.' (Mark 9:35). For they were not carried by other columns, as we read in the columns of the atrium; but they protruded from the lower and middle parts of the ground by fifty cubits, as a sign of the remission of all debts. These, however, are the sad things of which it is commanded: Describe them in triple form, with counsel and knowledge, so that you may answer with words of truth those things that are proposed to you (Prov. 22:20-21). Therefore, the lower and outer parts need columns, but the higher and inner parts do not need the support of columns, that is, of external help. After this it is said: And the outer court was surrounded by a wall, with treasuries along the outside walls. The length of this outer court was fifty cubits, because the length of the treasuries of the outer court was fifty cubits, and the length before the front of the temple was one hundred cubits. The surrounding wall, called the peribolus, enclosed the treasuries along the outside walls of the outer court, and it was fifty cubits in length, as we have frequently mentioned. Moreover, the

length in front of the face of the temple was not fifty cubits, as it was before the treasury, but one hundred cubits: so that after the remission of all sins, we may await perfect rewards in the number one hundred (Lev. XII). Regarding the barrier, or wall, which in Hebrew is called Gader (), the Seventy have interpreted it as light, which comes from outside and illuminates the eyes of our hearts: our natural light, which operates in the senses, is not sufficient to have the perfect brightness of knowledge, unless it enters from outside through the grace of God. What first illuminates the eyes of our heart, and the outer atrium, which extends to a width of fifty cubits, makes it shine. Then, when we come before the face of the temple, we shall receive perfect rewards in the number of one hundred. And below, there was an entrance to the treasury from the East for those entering from the outer atrium. For it is necessary for us to possess the riches of God, and to find the entrance below the treasury from the outer atrium, under the treasury of the East, and to come through the width of the vestibule, which faces the way of the East, to the building that is separated for the holy ones, before which are the treasuries, and in that very way, a likeness to the treasuries that were in the way of the North. For although we may reach the entrance to the East, the resemblance of the ancestors is found in the smaller things, and we cannot reach the light of the East except by way of the North, that is, by progressing from the smaller and lower things to the greater and higher things. In the very entrance itself, the length was similar to the width, that is, the same measurement throughout: every entrance and likeness, and doors had the same measurement and likeness as the treasure chambers that were on the road facing the South. For indeed, by the East the cold of the North is resisted, we reach the South, in which the bridegroom reclines at midday, and moves in full light. At the head, however, of the same road, that is, the Eastern one, which is open to those who enter, there is a door, which unless it is opened by Him who says: I am the door (John 10:9) and who has the key of David, to the vestibule separated by holy virtues, and which receives those coming from the North, we cannot reach. It is unnecessary to discuss each individual word of this passage in detail: both what has been said does not lack clarity, and what we keep silent about is almost similar to what we have said.

42:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) And he said to me: The treasuries of the North and the treasuries of the South, which are before the separated building, these are the holy treasuries in which the priests who approach the Lord in the Most Holy Place eat. There they shall put the Most Holy Place, and the offering for sin and for guilt. For it is a holy place. But when the priests enter, they shall not go out from the holy place to the outer court, and there they shall put on their garments in which they minister, for they are holy. And they shall put on other garments and then go out to the people. That man, who was a leader and prophet, after he led him into the outer courtyard and showed him all that the previous conversation had mentioned, also the treasuries and the rooms in which he stayed for a long time, said to him: These are the treasuries, or rooms, and chambers to the north and south, which are in front of the separate building, and are called the holy treasuries, in which the priests who approach the Lord in the holy of holies partake. From these things we learn that there are many diversities in foods, which are allowed or not allowed for priests to eat, and of those very things that are allowed to be taken as food, they are not taken in all places, nor by all people, nor at all times. I think that the Gazophylacia Aquilonis Austri is, either those things that contain the simplicity of history, or the sacraments of spiritual understanding, so that through

Aquilon we may come to the South. For the letter should not be read in such a way, and the foundations of history should be laid, so that we may not come to the heights; and the roof of the most beautiful building should not be placed in such a way that the foundations are not solid. But the priests who live in the cellars, in which many riches are contained, are the ones who approach the Lord: Scripture testifies of them (Exodus 24) that Moses approached the Lord, and the others could not come near. In the building of the mystical temple, and in the sacrament of the Church, there are many priests and apostolic men who approach the Lord, and not in any place, but in the holy of holies. And as it is said in the Septuagint: Sons of Zadok, which means just, is not found in Hebrew. There, he says, the priests shall place the holy of holies, and the offering, that is, the burnt offering, and for sin, and for ignorance: so that they may not only offer a perpetual sacrifice, but also, due to the diversity of times and the quality of sin and ignorance, know how to appease the Lord, because the place itself is holy and the priestly dignity dwells in it, which can intercede for others. But when it is necessary to proceed to those who cannot penetrate the inner depths of the temple, nor understand the secrets of divine knowledge, let the priests go outside to them into the outer courtyard. Absolutely not clothed in the garments with which they were clothed internally, namely the viscera of mercy and the Lord Savior, of whom it is written: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. XIII, 14); nor should they use these words, about which God speaks: My mystery is for me and for my own; lest they fall into that which the Savior prohibits, saying: Do not give holy things to dogs, nor cast pearls before swine (Matth. VII, 6). But they shall lay aside their garments, with which they are clothed, when they minister in the inner part of the temple; for they are holy, and should not be brought out to those who do not have perfect holiness: and they shall put on other garments, and thus they shall come to the people. Thus, he says, they shall speak to the people, in a way that the people can hear. And so the Apostle spoke to the Corinthians, among whom fornication was heard, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles: I have given you milk to drink, not solid food: for you were not yet able to receive it. To them again he says: My little children, for whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you (Gal. IV, 19). For to little ones and babes solid food is not only useless, but kills those who are suited to perfect age. Moreover, that which is added in the Septuagint: Therefore the priests shall not go out of the outer court, that those who offer may always be holy, let us remark, is not found in Hebrew.

42:15-20

(Verse 15 onwards) When he had finished measuring the interior dimensions of the house, he led me along the way of the gate that faced east, and he measured it all around. (He measured the likeness of the house all around in order.) He measured the east side with the measuring rod; it was 500 rods long by the measuring rod all around. (He also measured the north side, south side, and west side.) And he measured against the north wind, five hundred cubits, measuring with a cubit in circumference. And he measured against the south wind, five hundred cubits, measuring with a cubit in circumference. And he measured against the west wind, five hundred cubits, measuring with a cubit. He measured on all four sides, the wall surrounding it, with a length of five hundred cubits and a width of five hundred cubits, dividing between the sanctuary and the common area. It should be known that after the East and North wind, the South and West wind has a reversed order among the Seventy. For they first set the West, that is the sea; and then the South, whereas among the Hebrews the South wind is first, and then the West. And what the Scripture now says: 'And when he had finished measuring the interior of the house, he led me

through the gate that faces toward the East, and showed me all that has been mentioned, both inside and out, and the inner parts of the temple, that is, the Most Holy Place, properly belong to the building of the temple and the inner temple.' Now it follows: He led me through the gate, which looked towards the Eastern road, and measured it all around, like the likeness of a house. By this it is shown that it is not the house itself, but the likeness of the house that is seen: for now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known (I Cor. XIII). Therefore, even Moses in the tabernacle, and Solomon in the building, made not the true tent of the temple, but the likeness and figure of it: that by these things which are lesser and earthly, we may understand those things which are heavenly, and in the spiritual building. But the man who had brought the prophet, went not into the outer courtyard, but through the gate which looked towards the eastern way, first measuring against the eastern wind, that is, the eastern quarter, five hundred reeds round about; second, towards the north; thirdly, towards the south; fourthly, towards the sea, that is, towards the west, on the four sides, a wall all around, as much in length as in breadth, that is, square, which wall had together with it two thousand reeds. But if the reed was six cubits long, and the wrestler one-sixth of a cubit, it is clear that the outer wall had a circumference of 2,000 reeds, which makes 12,333 cubits and a third of two thousand. Let the wise and diligent reader read the book of Joshua and he will find how this measure is preserved in the suburbs. Therefore, even the legion of demons chose this number in the suffocation of the pigs (Luke 8), so that he who was separated from the servants of God by the command of the Lord may be led to his own destruction, to the ruin of those who lead a life worthy of filth and squalor. But every exterior wall, which has a very spacious length and width in the form of a square, contains the number of the apostles, that is, twelve thousand: so that a thousand number is assigned to each apostle, and yet it does not reach the measure of the fullness of Christ and the perfect man, unless it is joined by the *παλαιστ*, which is three hundred and thirty-three cubits, and a third part of a cubit: through which the mystery of the holy and venerable Trinity is demonstrated, which encircles and protects everything, and provides the safest dwelling for the inhabitants of its temple. Where the ark of Noah has a length of three hundred cubits, and a height of thirty cubits, which is completed in one cubit (Gen. 5). But the fifty cubits that are added there in width signify the sacrament of remission (as we have often said). Hence the Lord came to baptism at the age of thirty, and this very prophet puts the thirtieth year at the beginning of his book: which is completed by adding three hundred and thirtieth, and the thirtieth number and a third part. However, in regard to the simplicity of the interpretation, while we pay little attention to the speed of dictation, both the Septuagint and our translation have its wall on all sides, with a length of five hundred cubits and a width of five hundred cubits. The Hebrew text, however, does not include the word 'wall', but simply the length of five hundred and the width of five hundred, with the understanding of 'reeds'. As mentioned earlier, towards the east wind, and towards the north, and towards the south, and towards the sea, the wall of each section was measured by the person holding the reed. But the number five hundred, which is close to fifty, concerning the remission of all sins, is indicated not only in the old Scripture (Lev. XXV), but also in the words of the Savior in the Gospel, saying: There were two debtors to a certain creditor: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty (Luke VII, 41). And the wall divides between the sanctuary and the place of the common people. From this we understand that all the description above the temple, the priests, who are the sons of Zadok, were delegated to ministries. But this wall, which stretches over such a large space and surrounds everything, separates the sanctuary from the common area.

(Chapter 43, verses 1 onwards) 'And he brought me to the gate that faced east. And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his majesty. And I saw a vision like the vision that I had seen when he came to destroy the city. And the vision that I saw was like the vision that I had seen by the river Chebar. And I fell on my face.' And the majesty of the Lord entered the temple through the gate facing east. And the spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I heard someone speaking to me from the house. And the man standing beside me said to me, 'Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel forever. And the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, they and their kings, by their whoring and by the dead bodies of their kings at their high places, by setting their threshold by my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them. They have defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed, so I have consumed them in my anger.' So now they shall put far from themselves their fornication and the ruins of their kings from me, and I will dwell in their midst forever. LXX: And he brought me to the gate, which looked toward the East, and he led me out; and behold the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the East, and the voice of the camp was like the voice of many waters, and the earth shone with the brightness of the glory on every side. And the vision that I saw was like the vision that I saw when I entered to anoint the city. And the vision of the chariot that I saw was like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar, and I fell on my face. And the glory of the Lord entered the house through the way of the gate that faced east. And the spirit took hold of me and brought me into the inner court, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I stood, and behold, a voice from the house speaking to me, and a man stood beside me and said to me: Have you seen, son of man, the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where my name shall dwell in the midst of the house of Israel forever. And they shall no longer defile the house of Israel with their idols and with their detestable things and with all their transgressions, but I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. » First, about the variety of translation, it must be said that what the Septuagint put: 'And he led me out' is not found in the Hebrew. For if he had been led to the gate facing East, why was it necessary for him to be led out, since he was brought in to see what was being done at the Eastern gate? Then, where it is said: 'The voice was to him,' no doubt it is a voice of God, like the sound of many waters, which John also confirms in his Apocalypse, the Septuagint put: 'And the voice of the camp, like the voice of many geminators' (Apoc. XIV). In the third place, it is written in Hebrew: I saw a vision according to the appearance that I had seen when he came to destroy the city. But that one came, who at the beginning of this prophet was clothed in linen, and had an ink horn at his waist, along with six others, to destroy the city, not to anoint, which the Seventy translated as: And the vision of the chariot that I had seen, which is not found in Hebrew. Let us speak separately about each one, to the extent that the difficulty of explanation allows: lest while we strive for brevity, the veil remain not only on Moses, but also on Ezekiel the prophet in us, who desire to contemplate the revealed truth of the Lord (Exod. 34; 2 Cor. 3). Therefore the glory of the God of Israel enters by the eastern way, by which it had also departed when the city of the Lord was struck by fury. It enters, or rather returns to it, because it had shown the temple of the Lord built on the mountain. And yet there is much more that is said in

what follows: The spirit lifted me up and brought me into the outer court, and behold the glory of the Lord filled the house. For here is where only the glory of the God of Israel enters; but there it is said that the fullness of the glory of the Lord was in the temple, as Isaiah also writes: I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne, and the house was full of his glory (Isaiah 6:1); when we contemplate the revealed face of the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the image of the Creator. There was also the voice of God, like the voice of many waters, that is, of all the peoples in the whole world, as John the Evangelist explains (Apoc. XIV): or like the voice of armies, and like the voice of many praising God, that the army of God might know the sacraments. Jacob, understanding this, called the name of that place Camp (Genes. XXXII). And elsewhere it is written: The chariots of God are multiplied by ten thousand, thousands of rejoicers (Ps. LXVII, 18). But one voice is said to be of the camp and the multitude, because of the unanimous praise of God. And the voice of those singing is doubled for the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts, the earth is full of his glory (Isa. VI, 3). It follows: And the earth shone with his majesty (Psalm XVIII). Which properly happened at the coming of Christ; when the sound of the apostles went out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world (Rom. XVIII): and it is fulfilled daily in believers, and will be fulfilled completely, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality (I Cor. XV). But the following is added: 'And I saw a vision in the likeness of the vision which I had seen when he came to destroy the city.' For which the Seventy have rendered: 'When I went in to anoint the city,' since it is clear contrary to the Hebrew; but according to the LXX it is very dark. How Ezekiel went in to anoint the city, and what was the purport of his prophecy, we have stated, unless we say, of course, that the prophet's representation means the anointing of the city, and that the anointing with oil of joy is sacerdotal and regal, and that they become anointed of the Lord who willingly receive and hear Him to whom it is written: 'Do not touch My Christs;' and to those who touch them: 'My prophets, do not harm.' (Ps. 104:15). But he can anoint the city according to the anagoge, of which it is written: Glorious things are said of you, O city of God (Psalm 86:2); he who saw the vision of the chariot and the mysteries of God, which Ezekiel witnessed by the river Chebar, which signifies the burden and weight. For what is heavier than the Babylonian rivers, over which David sat and wept when he remembered Zion? Of which it is written: For the form of this world is passing away (Psalm 136). And I think that there is nothing perpetual in the confusion of this world, but everything passes and flows (1 Corinthians 7:31). Whoever considers this will fall on their face, understanding how far they are from the majesty of God, and will bow their knees to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. And when, he says, I had fallen, the majesty of the Lord entered the temple through the gate facing east, and immediately the spirit lifted me up (for I could not go on lying down), and he led me into the court of annihilation, for I had fallen outside; and behold, I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east, and I saw the glory of the Lord filling his house, and I heard a voice speaking to me from inside the house. What this is spoken about, the Scripture does not narrate, unless perhaps that of the Apostle: And I heard unspeakable words, that it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Corinthians 12:4). But the man, he says, who stood beside the prophet, said to him: whom we clearly understand to be the Lord. For who else could it befit what follows: Son of man, the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever, except those who dwell in the Church in the midst of the children of Israel who behold God, and dwell forever, not according to the temple of Solomon for a time? And his place is the one about which it is written: And his place became

peaceful (Psalm 75:2), which surpasses all understanding. And the place of his footsteps, as the Apostles say: Let us worship in the place where his feet stood (Psalm 31:7). And beautifully it is said, they stood: for the feet of the Lord stand in the Church, they walk in the synagogue and pass by. But in order that we may know that this is said about the Church, it is joined: And they will no longer defile my holy name, the house of Israel: which properly belongs to those who dwell in holy conversation in the Church. However, those who have defiled the holy name of God are more clearly specified: both their kings and their people, as well as their priests, in their own acts of fornication, through which they have fornicated with God; and in the ruins of their kings, who in vain, through pride, assume the royal name. Finally, it follows: And in high places. For an arrogant mind offends God; a humble one incites mercy. These people, after pride, or rather through pride, have fashioned their threshold next to the threshold of God, and their doorposts next to His doorposts. Let these women burdened with sins, carried about by every wind of doctrine, always learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; having a form of godliness but denying its power, turn away from such people. For among them are those who creep into households and captivate weak-willed women weighed down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was. And the Apostle also says: But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup (I Cor. XI, 28). And to make what he said more serious, he follows it with the verse: And there was a wall between me and them; so that a very short wall would separate the priestly sacrifices and the places of the sacraments of the body and blood of Christ. And they have polluted, he says, my holy name, in the abominations which they have committed. What is the advantage of dwelling near, and a wall, the wall of the Lord's altar, between our cell and the altar of the Lord, when in those things which we do in secret, and which it is even shameful to speak of, the name of the Lord is defiled and polluted? I think this, that the name of the Lord is not polluted, except by the one who has seen his name and believed, and is considered in his name. And just as he who previously believed in Christ pollutes the name of God, so also the one who previously accepted his name in faith pollutes it. Otherwise, the Gentile and the Jew, although they are defiled and contaminated, indeed contamination itself and pollution, cannot pollute and defile the name of God: what they pollute is attributed to them, to whom it is said, 'My name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you' (Rom. 2:24). Therefore, because of these reasons, I consumed them in my anger, because they did the things we have mentioned. And yet the merciful Lord again commands the prophets to tell them to remove their former fornications from themselves and to abandon the ruins of their kings and rulers, and to not only reject them from themselves, but also from God. And he immediately promises rewards for good deeds, saying: "And I will dwell among them," as it is written in the Gospel: "There stands among you one whom you do not know" (John 1:26). And he will dwell not for a short time, like in the Synagogue, but forever, as is confirmed in the Church of Christ.

43:10-12

(Verse 10 and following) But you, son of man, show the house of Israel the temple: and let them be confounded by their iniquities, and let them measure the structure, and let them be ashamed of all that they have done. Show them the form of the house and its structure, its exits and entrances,

and all its descriptions and all its laws. Show them the entire order and all its laws, and write them in their sight, that they may keep all its arrangements and its laws, and do them. This is the law of the house on the top of the mountain: All its boundaries around, it will be most holy. This, therefore, is the law of the house. 70: And you, son of man, show the house of Israel the house, and they will cease from their sins, and its vision and its arrangement: and they themselves will bear their punishment for all the things they have done. And describe the house and its preparation, and its exits and entrances, and its substance and all its ordinances, and all its statutes you will show them, and describe them before them: and they will observe all my judgments and all my commandments, and they will do them, and the description of the house on the top of the mountain, all its boundaries around are most holy. This is the law of the house. It is not a small task to demonstrate to those who see with their eyes or with their minds, so that they themselves seem to have seen with you. Therefore, Josephus writes that those who were sent by Jesus son of Nave to describe the land were geometers and had the art which now belongs to philosophers, the art of Geometry. Thus, for the house of Israel, those who see God with their mind, the house is shown, that is, the temple which Ezekiel saw situated on the mountain, and not only on a mountain, but as it is now said, on the summit of the mountain: which we should not think is the one that is described as being built by Solomon in the books of Kings and Chronicles. For that [temple] belongs to another order and size, and in each [temple] it has great diversity: and it [the second temple] is so much inferior to the temple that Ezekiel now shows, that not only its worshipers and priests, but even its builder, Solomon, sinned and offended God, although he later repented, writing in the Proverbs, where he says: Finally, I repented and considered to choose discipline (Prov. XXIV, 2). But this, which is shown by Ezekiel and through Ezekiel to the house of Israel, is as follows: that whoever contemplates it with the mind, ceases from his iniquities, not some, but all of them: or as it is contained in Hebrew, is confused and endures punishment for all that he has done. But he endures the punishment of his iniquities, who ceases to commit past sins: and it greatly benefits him who has sinned before, to see the house of God, and to know the reason for all its structure; so that he may cease to sin, and having a longing for it, may say to the Lord: O Lord, I have loved the beauty of your house: and the place of the habitation of your glory (Ps. 25:8). And again: One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life (Psalm 27:4), when I begin to live and be with Christ, who is the life of believers. It follows: His going out and coming in, understood as the house. But the going out of those who go out to those who are outside, and the coming in of those who penetrate the interior through the discipline of their masters. And every, he says, description or substance of it, as the Septuagint has translated, which pertains not so much to the nature of the house, but to the furnishings and riches. And you shall show them all the commandments, the entire order, and all the laws of the temple, to those who have carried the burden of their iniquities and have ceased or been confused about the things they had done before. But show it to them so that they may keep all the commandments. For it is of no use to know the description of the house and all its distributions, about which it is written: In my Father's house there are many mansions (John 14:2). And again: He established the boundaries of the nations according to the number of the children of Israel, even the angels of God (Deut. XXXII), unless you do what is commanded. But the house and law of all the commandments of God, and the city which is situated on the top of the mountain, that is to be believed, as it is written: A city cannot be hidden when it is situated on a mountain (Matth. I, 14). And: The rushing of the river makes the city of God rejoice (Ps. XLV, 4): which

clearly refers to the Church, and is located on that mountain, which is at the top of all mountains, and from which the prince of Tyre was wounded: and all the borders and boundaries of this house are holy of holies. In that house, that is, in the tabernacle that was built by Moses, and in the temple that was constructed by Solomon, only the innermost parts, where the Cherubim, and the propitiatory, and the Ark of the Covenant, and the table of incense were located, were called the Holy of Holies. But in this house, which is shown by Ezekiel, and which is situated on the top of the mountain, all its boundaries are considered to be in the Holy of Holies. And what is inferred: This is the law of the house, either referring to the past, about which it has already been said, or to those things that will be said later.

43:13-17

(Vers. 13 seqq.) These are the measurements of the altar: in the true cubit, which is a cubit and a handbreadth (or $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\upsilon$) in his bosom, the cubit was in length, and its width was measured from its lip to the surrounding palm of one hand. This was also the trench of the altar. From the bosom of the earth to the outermost base, it was two cubits in height, and the width of one cubit. And from the smaller base to the larger base, it was four cubits, and the width of one cubit. But the altar itself was four cubits high, and from the altar up to the horns there were four horns. And the altar was twelve cubits long, twelve cubits wide, a square with equal sides. And there was a ledge fourteen cubits long, fourteen cubits wide on its four corners, and a crown around it half a cubit high, and a rim one cubit wide around it. Its steps were turned towards the East. LXX: And this is the measure of the altar in perfect cubits and $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\upsilon$, the height of which is a cubit all around and the width of a cubit, and the lip of it around the edge is one palm. And this is the height of the altar from the bottom of the base to its great propitiatory, which was beneath two cubits, and the width of a cubit. And from the smaller propitiatory to the larger propitiatory are four cubits: and the width of a cubit and the ariel are four cubits: and from the ariel to the upper horns are cubits. But the altar had twelve cubits in length, and twelve cubits in width, with four corners. And the mercy seat had fourteen cubits in width, with four parts. And its ledge went around it by the measure of a half cubit, and its circuit by a cubit. And its steps faced toward the east. It is written: Who can discover the depths and wisdom? (Ecclesiastes 1:2). And: O depth of wisdom and knowledge of God (Rom. XI, 33): 'Whose deep depth, and who shall find it?' It is much if we desire to compare the temple of Solomon to this temple, and all its parts and tabernacles. But because this is very difficult, for the time being let us compare the altar that was shown to Ezekiel, the altar that we read about in Exodus, in a small part (Exod. XXXVIII). There an altar is described, five cubits in length and five cubits in width, that is, square, and three cubits in height: but here, departing from the senses by five, it tends towards union, in which the perfect cubit, or truest, is placed, to which is joined a palm, that is, $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\upsilon$, the sixth, as we said above, having a part of a cubit. But in its bosom, that is, the altar, there was an elbow, which indeed received those things that were consumed by fire, and another elbow in its width: so that the interior, that is, the secrets, and the spaces of the altar that are shown in its width, would be terminated by one elbow. But what follows: And the measurement up to its edge, for which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion placed a boundary, the Seventy interpreted as a cubit again. Of which word, as I have already said, I cannot know the reason; nor can I confidently say in what language it is spoken, unless I remind the reader that I have now transferred the definition above the crown. And this is briefly demonstrated, that around the altar itself, that is, on the edge and in a circular manner, there was

a lip and, as it were, a crown resembling a lily, having in appearance great beauty. This definition, or rather invention, extended in circumference by the span of one palm, or in width by the *παλαιστῆς*. The bottom and depths of the Altar, or its profundity and height, for which it is called in Hebrew Gab, from the bosom of the earth to the highest foot, or to the maximum propitiatory, were two cubits, and its width was one cubit. For the lower and deep parts, cohesive with the earth, are contained in the dual number, which is also used for unclean animals (Genesis 7); but the upper parts, reaching to the foot or propitiatory, which Theodotus himself calls by the Hebrew name Azara, have a width of one cubit, so that the dual number passes into the solitary; and the good of marriage, which is lower, may attain to the blessedness of union. And what follows: And from the smaller threshold to the larger threshold, four cubits, and the width of one cubit, for which it is written in the Septuagint: And from the smaller mercy seat to the larger mercy seat; and Theodotus translated in both Azara, it is to be understood that the smaller mercy seat is a stone cut from the mountain without hands, and the larger mercy seat is the stone itself that grew into a great mountain and filled the whole earth (Dan. II). Or, in another sense, the propitiatory is less when he took on the form of a servant (Philippians 2) and the propitiatory is greater when he received the glory that he had with the Father before the world was made (John 17). For we first come to know the humbler aspects of Christ and thus reach the height of his divinity. And yet the propitiatory of both natures, that is, of the lower and the greater, belongs to the sacrament of one altar. But between the two propitiatory [covers], the smaller and the larger, there were four cubits, signifying the four elements of the world, which themselves also come to a height of one cubit. And this should be noted, that in the measurement of the altar, the first cubit in width is not joined to anything, but is perfect in its own unit: but the second cubit of the width, after two cubits, increases to the top, and the third cubit, after the smaller and larger propitiatory [covers], tends to the mystery of one cubit through the four elements; and one and another, and a third cubit in the altar of the Lord, are by no means first, second, and third; but let it be said to be one and one, and one. But Ariel was four cubits long, and from Ariel upwards there were four horns: or, as it is said in the Septuagint, from Ariel to the top of the horn there was one cubit. Ariel, as most people understand, is interpreted as 'my light is God.' Regarding this, in the prophet Isaiah, where it is written: 'Woe to you, Ariel, the city David besieged, or surrounded,' we have spoken more fully. But as I think, it means 'lion' or 'mighty one of God,' a name that properly refers to the altar, in which there is either the illumination of God or the lion and his strength, as Jacob said to Judah: 'Judah, you are like a lion's cub. You have climbed up to the prey, my son. You have crouched down and stretched out like a lion or a lioness. Who will dare to awaken you?' But there are four sides, and it has four horns; whether the upper parts of the four horns are finished with one cubit, so that the measure of the Gospels and the strength running throughout the whole world may be demonstrated under the illumination of God and the strength of the lion, and may reach the divine confession in one cubit. And so that gradually the darkness of the present place may become more manifest, it follows: And Ariel is twelve cubits in length, with twelve cubits in width, a quadrangle with equal sides. What no one doubts pertains to the twelve tribes, which are written in the Book of Revelation, and to the number of the Apostles, concerning whose sacrament I remember having spoken above (Rev. 7). Moreover, through the four sides of the world, the twelve cubits together make forty-eight cubits of the priestly cities, so that with these, as if foundations divided throughout the whole world, the strength of the Church may be solidified. Furthermore, the step, for which the Septuagint rendered it 'propitiatory' and Theodotus as 'azara' above; Symmachus 'peridromion', that is,

'circuit', fourteen cubits in length and fourteen in width, has at its four corners a crown half a cubit in circumference; for which, once again, the Septuagint rendered it 'gisum', and [meaning] 'bosom', or, according to Symmachus, its completion and perfection, one cubit in circumference, secretly suggests that our Lord, who is truly called the propitiatory not only for our sins, but for the whole world, came through fourteen generations from Abraham to David; and again, through another fourteen until the captivity of Jeconiah, and by the sacrament of the same number descended to earthly things: so that in the fourteenth triad and the sacrament of the divine gift, he would save the four corners of the world, of which it is written: 'Many will come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and will recline at table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 8:11). And what follows, the crown, or gisus around it, signifies the propitiatory, which had a half cubit, and the bosom of the propitiatory, or the completion and perfection, which Symmachus interpreted as περιδρόμ■v, had one cubit; this signifies that both sinners and the righteous are saved by the propitiation of the Lord, as the apostle Paul says: 'We have been reconciled to God through the blood of His Son' (Rom. 5:10). And it is said of sinners that they have a measure of half a cubit in circumference; yet they are saved by the mercy of the Creator, as it is written in the Psalm: You will save them as if they were nothing (Ps. 55:8). Regarding the righteous, it is said that they are saved in a singular and perfect number, and they imitate one divinity, as the same Apostle says: God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself (2 Cor. 5:19). And what is mentioned at the end of this testimony, and its steps turned towards the East, these steps should be understood as the twenty-four books of the Old Testament, which had harps in the Apocalypse of John (Rev. 5), and crowns on their heads: or the sacrament of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, in which true propitiation is given to us. And to speak more clearly, therefore the number of steps is left uncertain, so that no matter how diligently we may be able to ascend to higher things, we may consider ourselves placed in lower things, and think of that of the Psalmist: They go from strength to strength (Ps. LXXXIII, 8).

43:18-22

(Ver. 18 and following) And he said to me: Son of man, thus says the Lord God: These are the rituals of the altar when it is made, to offer a burnt offering and pour out blood. And you shall give to the priests, the Levites who are of the seed of Zadok, who approach me, says the Lord God: to offer to me a young bull from the herd as a sin offering. And you shall take some of its blood, and put it on the four horns and on the four corners of the ledge, and on the border all around; and you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it. And you shall take the calf that was offered for sin and burn it in a separate place outside the sanctuary. And on the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish for sin, and they shall make atonement for the altar as they made atonement for the calf. LXX: And he said to me, Son of man, thus says the Lord God: These are the statutes of the altar on the day it is made, upon which burnt offerings are offered and blood is poured out on it. And you shall give to the Levite priests who are of the seed of Sadduc, and who approach me, says the Lord God, to minister to me a calf from the cattle for a sin offering. And they shall take its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar, and on its base all around, and they shall cleanse and make atonement for it. And they shall take the calf for a sin offering and burn it in a designated place outside the sanctuary of the house. And on the second day they shall take two male goats without blemish from the goats for a sin offering, and they shall make atonement for the altar as they made atonement with the calf. After the prophet showed the altar, and its cubit,

which was two cubits, and again a cubit and four cubits, and a third cubit, as well as twelve cubits for the other twelve, and four horns of the altar: also twelve cubits for Ariel, by twelve cubits, and a ledge, that is, a mercy seat, of fourteen cubits, by fourteen cubits: also its crown, and a breast boundary of half a cubit and one cubit all around: and steps to the east, the number of which is uncertain, a man spoke, whose pen and cord were in his hand, and he instructed him how, with the work of the altar completed, the altar should be cleansed and consecrated. And first a victim is offered, and it is given to the priests of the tribe of Levi, who are from the descendants of Sadoc, whom the Seventy call Sadduc, which I cannot understand. But Sadoc means just. And according to the Seventy and Theodotion, a calf is offered; according to Symmachus, a bull, which is called Phar in Hebrew. But the calf that was sacrificed for us, and many passages of the Scriptures, and the notable Epistle of Barnabas, which is found among the apocryphal writings, mention it. And a male goat of the she-goats is offered on the second day. Hence, those who will celebrate Passover take a lamb and a kid from the flock, and those who could not celebrate the first Passover, celebrate it in the second month: one of which pertains to the righteous, the other to the penitents. But if we agree with the interpretation of the Seventy, who said: 'On the second day, they shall take two unblemished kids for the sin,' it is daring indeed what we are about to say, but the opinion of others must be simply presented, who say that two unblemished kids were offered after the Lord's passion on the altar of the Lord, Jacob and Stephen: one of whom was from the number of the apostles, the other was the chief among the seven chosen for the ministry of the Lord (Acts XXII). This is James, who saw the Transfigured Savior on the mountain (cf. Mark 9), who witnessed the raising of the daughter of the synagogue official with the Lord Peter and John (cf. Matthew 17), who is listed as the first among the apostles, with his name paired with his brother's (cf. Mark 9). He was killed by Herod (cf. Matthew 9), and like an unblemished lamb, he was sacrificed on the day after the Savior's passion (cf. Mark 3). The Jews also stoned Stephen, whose wisdom and teaching no one could resist (Acts 6:10), and he saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God, and said (Acts 7:59): Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And the Jews also stoned him. And just as the Apostle names certain first fruits of the believers in Achaia and Asia (1 Corinthians 16), so these were the first fruits of the martyrs, whom the confession of Christ afterwards crowned. And it should be noted that the whole calf is offered as a burnt offering, and the thickness of its body is consumed by the divine fire. For we used to know Christ according to the flesh, but now we no longer know Him according to the flesh (2 Corinthians 5:16). However, Jacob and Stephen, who were offered on the second day, or the goat, which is mentioned in the Hebrew narrative, is indeed offered as a sacrifice, but the burnt offering is reserved for the presence of the Lord. And as for the blood that Peter speaks of when he says, 'You were redeemed from your vain conversation by the precious blood of Christ' (1 Peter 1); and the Apostle Paul teaches, 'You were bought with a price' (1 Corinthians 7:23); and in another place, 'Making peace through the blood of His cross, whether on earth or in heaven' (Colossians 1:20), that signifies that by the blood of the Savior, the four horns of the altar are purified, that is, the four corners of the world are cleansed; and the mercy seat is sprinkled, or the bases are sprinkled all around, so that everything may be cleansed and the propitiation may be firm. Therefore, on the second day, either two young goats, of which we have spoken above, or a he-goat is taken; because the animal always hastens to higher places and sustains no danger on precipices, and there it finds a path where destruction is to other animals. Therefore, in Greek speech, the flock of goats and he-goats is called conversation of the sublime, that is, ἀ■π■λιον, as if ἀ■ποπ■λιον,

since ἀΐπος, high, and πῶλον (Mss. πολέον), signifies conversation. Furthermore, the altar of Christ is cleansed with blood, so that the prayers of the saints may reach God in purity. It should also be noted that, according to the Hebrew Ezekiel himself, he is commanded to take a calf as a priest and offer it as a burnt offering, and sprinkle its blood around the altar, as well as the corners and the crown or base. However, the Seventy Interpreters show other priests doing this, of whom it is said: You shall give to the Levite priests, who are of the seed of Zadok, who come near to me.

43:23-27

(v. 23 seqq.) 'When you have completed cleansing it, you shall offer an unblemished calf from the herd and an unblemished ram from the flock. You shall present them before the Lord, and the priests shall sprinkle salt on them and offer them as a burnt offering to the Lord. For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, and whatever touches the altar shall become holy.' On the eighth day and beyond, the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar, and I will be appeased with you, says the Lord God. LXX: And when you have completed the purgation, you shall offer a calf from the herd without blemish, and a ram from the flock without blemish, and you shall offer them before the Lord, and the priests shall sprinkle salt upon them; and they shall offer them as burnt offerings to the Lord. For seven days you shall make atonement with a goat for sin daily, and a calf from the herd, and a ram from the flock without blemish shall be offered for seven days. And they shall purify the altar, and cleanse it, and fill their hands, and accomplish the days. And from the eighth day and beyond, the priests shall offer your burnt offerings upon the altar, for your salvation. And I will receive you, says the Lord God. After the altar and its measurements were shown on the top of the mountain, and the purification and consecration of it were demonstrated to the prophets, through one unblemished calf and a male goat, or two young goats, the first of which we refer to the Lord and Savior, and the two that followed to the apostles and ministers, so that in the consecration of the spiritual altar and specifically pertaining to the Church, it may not seem that the law and the prophets were excluded. Therefore, after the altar had been consecrated, an unblemished calf and a ram are taken and offered in the sight of the Lord; and the sons of Zadok, that is, the righteous priests, sprinkle salt upon their heads, so that both the law and the prophets may be seasoned with the taste of the Gospel. And there is no sacrifice (according to the command of the law and the interpretation of the Apostle, who says (Col. IV, 6): Let your speech be seasoned with salt) that is lacking in salt. Both, however, are offered as a burnt offering to the Lord, like the fat of the letter, which is signified in the Law, and the prophecy, like a cloud of fire of the Lord, that is, the Holy Spirit, of whom Paul says, fervent in spirit (Rom. XII, 11), are transformed into a spiritual and thin substance. We want to know more clearly what the calf of the unblemished herd is, and the ram with the purest fleece from the sheep, let us understand Moses and Elijah (Num. XII, III Reg. XIX); the former of whom was the gentlest among all men who dwelt on the earth; the latter was similar to Moses in fervor of faith. Hence he dared to say: I am left alone. But what is written in Hebrew as 'You shall offer a calf', in the Septuagint it is written as 'the priests shall offer', there is no question about it. And indeed Ezekiel himself, to whom these things are said, is from the number of priests, full of age and perfect; and the grace of prophecy increased the priestly rank in him. And Moses and Elijah appear on the mountain with the Lord, that is, the law and the prophets, who announced to him what he would suffer in Jerusalem. But after the altar is cleansed, for seven days a goat or a young goat is offered for sin daily, and a bull

from the herd, and an unblemished ram from the flock, so that through these sacrifices the altar may be cleansed for seven days and made perfect. In seven days the Sabbath is observed, which according to the Apostle (Hebrews IV) is reserved for the people of God: in which we hope for eternal and true rest, and do no servile work of sin. However, in the goat, and the calf, and the ram, three general sins are demonstrated, to which all human beings are subject. For we sin either in thoughts, or in speech, or in action. Thoughts are referred to the ram, which is the first of all sins, and from which the other two sins arise. But the goat, or rather the male goat, is known for its eloquence or discourse, always engaging in higher-level discussions. However, it is specifically designated for agricultural work, being bound to the plow and toil and earthly labor. Therefore, we must offer these blameless things for the true Sabbath, which lasts for seven days, and cleanse the altar, so that our prayer may reach God in purity. The phrase that follows, 'And they shall cleanse it, and fill his hand,' as translated by both the Hebrew and other interpreters, signifies that the offerings for the expiation of the altar itself should also be fulfilled, just as offerings are made for the priests, the people, and the high priest, so that nothing may appear empty in the sight of the Lord. For what reason they set aside the Septuagint: both will clean it, and they will fill their hands, so that the priests may be heard, who when they are full of good works, for this reason their hands are full, after the Sabbath has passed, they may come to the eighth day of resurrection, and may say with the Apostle: We have risen with Christ (Rom. VI, Coloss. III); and beyond the eighth day, they may strive for heavenly things, and may offer burnt offerings for us, or those which are for the peace of our sins and our salvation: so that through the fire of the Holy Spirit, everything that we think, speak, and do, may be transformed into spiritual substance: and the Lord, pleased with such sacrifices, may be appeased towards us.

44:1-3

(Chapter 44, verses 1 onwards) And he brought me back to the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces eastward and was closed. And the Lord said to me: This gate shall be closed and shall not be opened, and no man shall enter through it, for the Lord God of Israel has entered (or will enter) by it; it shall be closed for the prince. The prince himself shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord. Through the vestibule (that is, the porch), he shall enter by the gate, and he shall go out by its way. For it is written in Hebrew: 'It shall be shut to the prince.' The Septuagint translated it as: 'It shall be shut, for the leader himself shall sit in it.' There are many gates described in the Scripture of the temple of Ezekiel, both inside and outside. The previous discourse also covers the representation, consecration, and sacrifices of the altar. After this, he comes to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east and is shut. And immediately, the man who was the guide of the prophet and showed him everything spoke to him: This gate that you are looking at will always be shut and will not be opened, and no man will pass through it. And it gives the reason why it is always closed: because the Lord God of Israel has entered, or will enter through it: and it will be closed according to the Hebrew, to the prince, whom the LXX translated as leader. The prince and leader, that is, the Nasi, will sit in it to eat bread before the Lord: and he will enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and he will go out through it. What is this gate that is always closed, and only the Lord God of Israel enters through it? Namely, the one about which the Savior speaks in the Gospel: Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! And woe to you, teachers of the law, who take away the key of knowledge! You yourselves do not enter, and you hinder those who are entering (Matthew 23:23). Isaiah also writes about this book under this

name: The words of this book shall be like the words of a sealed book: if you give it to a man who cannot read, saying, 'Read this,' he will say, 'I cannot read.' And they shall give the book to a man who knows letters, saying: Read; and he shall say: I cannot read, for it is sealed (Isa. XXIX, 11). But this is the book that no one can unseal or open the seals, neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, except for the one of whom it is said in the Apocalypse of John: Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root and offspring of David, has conquered, so that he may open the book and unseal its seals (Rev. V, 5). For before the Savior assumed a human body and humbled himself, taking on the form of a servant (Phil. II), the Law and the Prophets, and all the knowledge of the Scriptures, were closed, and paradise was closed. But after he hung on the cross, and spoke to the thief, 'Today you will be with me in paradise' (Luke XXIII, 43), immediately the veil of the temple was torn, and everything was opened; and with the veil removed, we say: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory (II Cor. III, 18). But if all things are revealed, for in Christ, according to the words of Paul, all things are revealed (Ibid., XIII), how will the gate be closed and not opened, and a man not pass through it? From these things we learn that even though we have come to the ultimate knowledge, compared to divine knowledge, we now know in part and understand in part; but when that which is perfect comes, then that which is in part will be done away with. Hence, in another place, the Apostle himself speaks of being imperfect and, again, perfect. But if it lacks interpretation, it seems to be the opposite. For he says: Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfect. Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it; but one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:12, 14). And when we thought that he, according to his profession, was not yet perfect, and that he was seeking rather than having found what is true, he not only says this about himself, but also about others: Therefore, let us all who are perfect have this same attitude. But the meaning of this place is as follows: Compared to other people who do not have care of the knowledge of the Scriptures or the mysteries of God, I confess that I am perfect; but as for the understanding of the divine majesty, I now see it in an enigma and through a cloud and darkness, and I say with the prophet: Your knowledge is amazing to me, it is confirmed, and I will not be able to attain it (Ps. 138:6). Therefore, this gate, which is closed to everyone (for a man will not pass through it and perish), will be closed to the prince or leader, and it will be opened by his arrival, who will sit in it to eat bread before the Lord, about whom he himself testifies in the Gospel, saying: My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work (John 4:34). He is the prince and the high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. He is the offering and the priest who, in the presence of the Father, eats heavenly bread with us and drinks wine, of which he speaks in the Gospel: I will not drink of the fruit of this vine until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom (Matthew 26:29): in that kingdom, of which he himself and elsewhere says: The kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:21). And the gate will be closed. No one can truly understand the passion of the Lord, his body and blood as the sacraments of the divine mystery. Such is the greatness of his goodness and the prince of his mercy, that even though he alone sits at the closed door and eats bread before the Lord, he desires to have more companions at his table and feast, and says: Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone opens to me, I will enter in and dine with him, and he with me (Rev. 3:20). But he alone eats bread in the presence of the Lord, because his substance and divine nature are separate from all the substances of creatures. He himself enters

and exits through the same gate of the vestibule: for he is both inside and outside, that is, infused and encompassing all; entering through the gate in order to bring with him those who cannot enter without his teaching and help; and exiting in order to bring in others again; and speak to those who do not understand difficult things. But inasmuch as the Eastern gate outside the boundaries of the world is always closed and never opens to human sight, the Gospel of John proves the words of the one who said: No one has ever seen God: the Only Begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has revealed Him (John 1:18). In other words, it will be closed to everyone except the ruler. The ruler alone will sit in it, to eat the bread of perfect and complete knowledge. For no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal (Matthew 11:27). Some understand beautifully that the closed gate through which only the Lord God of Israel enters, and the leader to whom the gate is closed, to be the Virgin Mary, who both before childbirth and after childbirth remained a virgin. Indeed, at the time when the angel spoke: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus (Luke 1:35), and when he was born, the virgin remained eternal; to confound those who claim that after the birth of the Savior, she had other sons by Joseph, based on the occasion of his brothers who are mentioned in the Gospel (Mark 3). I know that I wrote a small book in my youth, against Helvidius, the heretic of that time, in Rome.

44:4-8

(Verse 4 and following) And he brought me through the way of the north gate in the sight of the house, and I saw, and behold, the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord, and I fell on my face. And the Lord said to me, Son of man, set your heart and see with your eyes, and hear with your ears all that I speak to you concerning all the statutes of the house of the Lord, and concerning all its laws, and set your heart upon the entrance of the temple and on all the exits of the sanctuary. The man who is the leader of the prophet, and who knows everything in the temple by showing, after he showed the closed gate that must never be opened, and yet opened to him who had entered through closed doors. He leads the prophet to the way of the North gate, which is also in the sight of the house, undoubtedly signifying the temple. And when the prophet saw the fullness of the house of the Lord's glory, namely the same house that he saw from the opposite side in the North area, he immediately fell on his face, unable to bear the majesty of the Lord's glory. Because he had been brought low by his humility, the Lord says to him, not as a man but as the Lord: Son of man, set your heart, and so on. In the completion of the tabernacle and the building of the temple constructed by Solomon, the glory of the Lord appeared, which was later destroyed by comparison to the glory of the Gospel, as the Apostle says: For that which was glorified has not been glorified in this respect, because of the excellent glory. For if that which is destroyed is by glory, much more that which remains is in glory (2 Corinthians 3:10). And we must beware lest we think the destruction of the previous glory is an abolition; but we must think thus, that after what is perfect has come, that which was in part will be destroyed: just as if you compare the rays of the sun to a lamp, or the light of a lamp to a small lantern. Therefore, it is also said about John the Baptist: He was a shining lamp in the house (John 5:35). However, when the sun of justice came, the light of the lamp was hidden, as the prophet himself and John the Baptist said: He must increase, but I must decrease (John 3:30). The prophet fell on his face, lest, desiring to see more than human frailty can behold, he should lose even the light of his eyes. Hence the Lord

calls him more familiarly "son of man," and commands him to set his heart, and see with his eyes, and hear with his ears. For first the mind must be opened to understand what is said; secondly, the heart must understand with the eyes, concerning which it is said to Abraham: Lift up your eyes and see the stars of heaven (Gen. 15:5); thirdly, it must be heard with these ears, of which the Savior says: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke 8:8), so that he may understand all the ceremonies of the temple and its legal requirements, and finally set his heart on the ways of the temple; for there are different approaches to God. Whether through the paths of the temple, it signifies the order of ceremonies, and the exit of the sanctuary. Therefore, it is the prologue and preparation of the prophet, to understand what he will subsequently learn about the order of the temple. And it should be noted that in this world, the plague which is positioned in the evil and placed in the cold of the North, the celestial order of ceremonies is shown to us.

(V. 6 seqq.) And you shall say to the rebellious house of Israel: Thus says the Lord God: Sufficient for you are all your sins, O house of Israel, because you bring in foreign sons (or foreigners) uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary and to defile my temple, and you offer my bread, fat, and blood, and you have broken (or transgressed) my covenant in all your sins; and you have not kept the precepts of my sanctuary and you have set the ministers of my observances in my sanctuary for yourselves. When he says, let all your crimes and iniquities be sufficient for you, he exhorts you to repentance for your former sins, so that we do not increase sins by sins, and prepare material for future burning; but let us hear what Isaiah speaks: Woe to those who draw sins like a long rope, and iniquities like the yoke of a calf's leather strap (Isa. 5:18). And the first sin is that they bring in alien sons, or uncircumcised foreigners in heart and in flesh, so that they may be in the sanctuary of God and defile the house of God. For a little leaven corrupts the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6); and in some versions of Proverbs it is written: Do not bring the wicked into the dwelling of the righteous. The Jews and Ebionites press us on this matter, who receive the circumcision of the flesh: how can we explain this passage to those uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh? Indeed, after spiritual understanding, should we also undergo the circumcision of the flesh. But we who read what Paul says: Now I testify to every man who is circumcised that if you are circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you (Gal. V, 2). And that of Jeremiah: Behold, your ears are uncircumcised and you refuse to listen (Jer. VI, 10). And in Exodus, Moses spoke before the Lord, saying: Behold, the Israelites have not listened to me; how then will Pharaoh listen to me? But I am slow of speech (Exod. VI, 12), for which the Seventy translated: Am I not unreasoning? which is better rendered in Hebrew: But I have uncircumcised lips. Let us ask them, or rather compel them, to circumcise their ears and desecrate their lips, so that they may seem to fulfill the Scripture. But if they begin to interpret the circumcision of the ears, when we endure nothing shameful or dishonorable to hear, and the circumcision of the lips, when we speak nothing indecent: let us say to them, you must also keep the same interpretation in your heart and in your flesh. We circumcise the heart with the knife of God, and the foreskin is removed from our heart, when unclean thoughts never come out of our heart, and it is not said of us: 'This people's heart has grown fat, and with their ears they have heard heavily' (Acts 28:27). Therefore, the flesh is also circumcised in a similar manner, so that we do not engage in earthly works that we are compelled to do for the needs of the body, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, and wearing clothes. We circumcise these things not for pleasure, luxury, or laziness, but for the sake of the necessity of our nature and the sustenance of this body. The one who drinks wine in moderation due to their stomach and frequent illnesses, and hates drunkenness, circumcises their own flesh (I

Tim. 5). Whoever sleeps as much as nature allows, will hear from Solomon: If you sit, you will be without fear; if you sleep, you will sleep sweetly, and you will not fear the coming terror; nor the attacks of the wicked (Prov. III, 24). And whoever flees from fornication and returns to his wife, let Satan not tempt him (I Cor. VII), will hear with the people of Israel: On this day I have taken away the reproach of Egypt from you. He will also use clothing that repels the cold; not clothing that, by its thinness, reveals the body. With flesh weakened by fasting and bounded by self-control, he avoids the reproach of the Egyptians, who pride themselves on their ample flesh. He can say what is commonly read in the Septuagint: 'As my flesh languished, so in a dry and trackless land I appeared to you, in a place devoid of water.' If, therefore, at any time we should wish to introduce aliens into the temple of God, let us circumcise their ears, and their lips, and their heart, and all their flesh, and their eyes, and their taste, and their smell, so that we may do all things with the fear and reason of God. Let the bishops and priests and all the ecclesiastical order hear this, so that they do not bring in uncircumcised sons in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, so that they may not be in the sanctuary of God and pollute his house. For if they do this, what follows will be applicable to them: 'And you offer my breads, breads of course of the offering, in all Churches and in the whole world, sprouting from one bread, and not only breads, but also fatness, of which it is written: 'He has filled them with the fatness of wheat' (Ps. 80:17), and the blood which was shed in Christ's passion.' And the order of reading should be as follows: When you bring uncircumcised foreign children with your heart and body into my sanctuary, and defile my house, you dare to offer bread and fat and blood, mystical sacraments, and you do not understand that you have broken, and you have violated my covenant in all your crimes and impieties, and you have not kept the precepts of my sanctuary, nor have you appointed guardians of my ceremonies in my sanctuary. But every threat is against those who have not heeded the Apostle's warning: Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins (I Tim. V, 22). Or certainly it should be understood thus: You have broken my covenant with all your crimes, and have not kept the precepts of my sanctuary, and you dare to appoint unworthy and foreign custodians in the observation of my sanctuary for yourselves, let it be understood, not for me. And there is sense: That they may serve and minister unto you in carnal things and profane my sanctuary for your worldly comforts.

44:9-16

(Verse 9 and following) Thus says the Lord God: Every uncircumcised foreigner in heart and in flesh shall not enter my sanctuary, every foreign son who is among the sons of Israel. But the Levites who went far away from me in the error of the sons of Israel, and who went astray after their idols, shall bear their iniquity, those who were in my sanctuary, the ministers of the gates of the house, and the ministers of the house; they themselves slaughtered the burnt offerings and the sacrifices of the people, and there they stood before them to minister for them. Therefore, because they ministered to them in the presence of their idols, and the house of Israel became a stumbling block of iniquity, therefore I have lifted my hand against them, says the Lord God, and they shall bear their iniquity. And they shall not approach me to serve as priests, nor come near to any of my sanctuaries, according to the most holy things; but they shall bear their shame and the sins they have committed. And I will give them custodians of the house in all its ministry, and for all that is done in it. But the Levite priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the ceremonial duties of my sanctuary when the Israelites went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister to me;

and they shall stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, says the Lord God. They shall enter my sanctuary; and they shall come near to my table to minister to me, and they shall keep my ceremonies. LXX: Therefore thus says the Lord: Every uncircumcised foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall not enter my sanctuary, among all the foreign-born children of Israel. But the Levites who went far from me when Israel went astray, following their own imaginations and carrying their own sins, shall serve in my sanctuary, guarding the gates of the temple and ministering in the house. They shall offer burnt offerings and sacrifices to the people, and they shall stand before the people to minister to them. Because they ministered to them before their idols, and the house of Israel became a stumbling block of iniquity, therefore I have stretched out my hand over them, says the Lord God, and they shall bear their iniquity and shall not come near me to serve as priests to me, nor to offer to all the holy things of the children of Israel, nor to the most holy things of my sanctuary, but they shall bear their disgrace and the error in which they have wandered. And they shall set them to keep the guard of the house, and to do all the works thereof, and all that shall be done therein. And the priests the Levites, the sons of Sadoc, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister to me, and they shall stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God. They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and to keep my charge. I have placed the testimony next to each edition, so that from comparing them we may be able to know what the LXX thought, what the Hebrew holds. The Seventy signify this, that the uncircumcised foreigners in heart and flesh who dwell among the children of Israel should not enter the sanctuary of God. But the Levites, that is, the priestly order, who have strayed far from the Lord in the error of the children of Israel, and have gone after their idols, after they have received their iniquity, let them stand in the sanctuary of the Lord as builders and doorkeepers, and ministers of the house, and let them offer burnt offerings and sacrifices of the people; and let them be in their presence to minister to them what they have ministered to their idols, and let them become a torment of iniquity for the house of Israel; and therefore the Lord God says that He has lifted His hand against them, so that they may not approach Him and officiate in the priesthood, nor offer in the holy of holies, and let them bear their shame in the error in which they have erred; so that they may be put under the observation of the guardians of the house in all its works, and in everything that is done in the house. But if this is so, how can it be possible for the Levites, who have strayed far from God and gone astray after their own idols, to serve in the house and offer sacrifices and victims for the people, and to stand before them to serve them? For what more will the priests of the sons of Zadok, who have kept the ceremonies of the sanctuary of God, do? Of whom it is said: They will approach me to serve me, and they will stand before me to offer me fat and the rest? But Hebrew has this meaning: Every uncircumcised foreigner in heart and flesh shall not enter my sanctuary, though he may be seen as being with the people of Israel. But the Levites, that is, the priestly class, who have gone far astray from me in the error of the children of Israel, and have followed idols, shall bear their iniquity because they have served in my sanctuary as gatekeepers of the house, and as its ministers. For they offered burnt offerings and the people's sacrifices, and they stood before them to minister to them. So because they ministered for them in the presence of their idols, and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have stretched out my hand against them, says the Lord God, and they shall bear their iniquity and shall not come near me to serve as priests to me, nor to approach any of my sanctuary's holy things, but they shall bear their disgrace and the

crimes they have committed. For the priestly office which they were accustomed to, offering burnt offerings and sacrifices and all kinds of offerings, they shall be reduced to the lowest level and become the gatekeepers of the house, in eternal disgrace, so that they may be seen by the whole people entering and leaving, from what sublime dignity they have reached to this lowest level. But the priests, he says, that is, the Levites, who are the sons of Zadok, that is, the righteous or just of God, and who during the time of the error of all the Israelites, have kept the ceremonies of my sanctuary, they themselves will approach me to minister to me, and they will stand in my presence, and they will offer me fat, that is, the fattest victim and blood, namely, a living and pleasing victim to God, and they themselves will enter my sanctuary, and they will approach my table, to burn incense to me, and they will observe every rite of the sacrifice. But if it is so, that those who in the time of error and persecution followed idols, which they had fashioned in their own hearts, and not only declared with their voice, but also with the signing of their hands, that the Son of God was a creature, and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever, how do they assume for themselves the high office of priesthood and pontificate, and dare to offer sacrifices to God, once worshippers of idols? But, as the most ardent poet testifies,

Whatever is committed by many is left unpunished: The multitude of sinners has made the impious obtain even greater forgiveness, so that those who, having been reduced to laymen, should have bewailed the crimes of their sacrilege, now recline on the pontifical throne and belch forth the nauseating reflux of simulated faith, or rather the open shortcuts of covert treachery. Let them at least, then, listen late and observe the precepts of the almighty God. Every foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and in flesh, shall not enter my sanctuary. Although he may be a son, although he may be connected by kinship, although he may cling to us through ancient obligation: if he is uncircumcised in heart or flesh, he should not be admitted into the sanctuary of God: lest we make ministers of Christ, our ministers, and defile the altars of the Lord with carnal indulgences. For this reason, I will appoint them as the gatekeepers of the house, in charge of all the services performed in it: namely, the Levites who have strayed far from God in the error of the children of Israel, and have followed idols to which they have sacrificed. Taking into consideration the order of reading and the sense, Symmachus interpreted it more accurately, saying: For I had appointed them as custodians of the gates of the entire ministry and of all that is done in it, so that it would not pertain to those who are to come in the temple, but to those who have been.

44:17-21 (Verses 17 onwards) And when they enter the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments (or robes); they shall not wear anything made of wool (or they shall not wear garments made of wool) when they minister at the gates of the inner court and inside. Linen turbans shall be on their heads (or they shall have linen turbans on their heads) and linen undergarments shall be around their waists, and they shall not be bound in sweat (or forced). And when they go out to the outer courtyard to the people, they shall take off their garments (or stoles) in which they ministered, and they shall put them in the treasury (or colonnades) of the sanctuary (or the holy place), and they shall put on other garments (or stoles), and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments (or stoles). But they shall not shave their heads, nor let their hair grow long, but they shall trim their hair (or shave their heads) without shaving the hair too close: they shall cover their heads. And not every priest shall drink wine when he is about to enter the inner court. First, the words of the story must be interpreted. Among other things that the sermon of the Lord commands to the priests, he also orders that they should be clothed in linen garments at the

very gates of the inner court, that is, with linen stoles: and they should not use garments woven with gold either at the gates of the inner court or inside, that is, in the holy of holies; and linen turbans or headbands should be on their heads, and linen undergarments around their loins. And what follows according to the Septuagint: 'And they shall not gird themselves violently,' which Aquila and Symmachus translated as 'in sweat.' Theodotion, expressing the Hebrew word itself, rendered it as, 'in Jeze,' meaning that they should not be girded violently, tightly, like prisoners, so as not to become unfit for the priestly and Levitical duties, and be unable to hold and slaughter the victims, nor to draw and run around. And because he had previously commanded the priests what garments they should wear when they were inside the sanctuary, he now orders that when they go out into the treasuries or the holy places, they should take off their former garments and put on others. For if they had the holy garments, they would sanctify the people who were standing outside and had not yet been sanctified, nor had prepared themselves for the sanctification of the temple, so that they may be of Nazarene for the Lord. From this we learn that we should not enter into the holy of holies with everyday and any garments that are polluted for common use, but with a clean conscience and clean garments, keep the sacraments of the Lord. And what follows: 'But they shall not shave their heads, nor let their hair grow long, but they shall trim their heads,' clearly demonstrates that we should not be priests and worshippers of Isis and Serapis with shaved heads, but neither should we let our hair grow long, which is properly luxurious and belongs to barbarians and warriors; but that the honorable appearance of the priests be shown on their faces. For this reason, the LXX said, 'They shall not shave their heads, nor let their hair grow long, but they shall cover their heads,' from which we learn that we should not make baldness with a razor or cut our hair so close that we appear like shaven ones, but that our hair should be left long enough to cover the skin. Or certainly, the priests should always cover their heads, according to what Virgil said (Aeneid, Book III): To veil his hair with a purple covering. But this is a violent interpretation. However, not only will priests and Levites not drink wine in their ministry, but they will not even enter the Holy of Holies, so that their mind may not be overwhelmed, and their senses may not become duller. Hence the Apostle says: It is good, he says, not to drink wine and not to eat meat (Rom. XIV, 21). And in another place: And do not get drunk with wine, in which there is debauchery (Ephes. V, 18). For the people ate and drank, and then got up to play. And he clearly showed (as Alexander shows) why he granted Timothy to drink a little wine: for his stomach, he says, and frequent illnesses (1 Timothy 5). The Egyptian priests use linen garments not only internally but also externally. Furthermore, the divine religion has one dress for the ministry and another for common use in life. The undergarments are properly worn to preserve modesty and decorum: so that, when ascending the steps of the altar and moving about in the ministry, they do not reveal indecency. The superstition of the pagans has many heads. But as far as my knowledge is concerned, I do not believe that any of the pagans abstain from wine. These words will show what all things in accordance with sense indicate as spiritual. The Apostle also teaches that there are sacred and spiritual garments, saying: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. XIII, 14). And in another place: Put on the bowels of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience (Coloss. III, 12). And again: Stripped off the old man with his works, and put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge, according to the image of the Creator (1 Cor. 15:54); which I think also signifies this: For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, and so on. About the

priestly garments in Exodus, it is written more fully (Exodus 28); and we have previously published a book (Epistle 64, to Fabiola), to the interpretation of which a diligent reader must be sent. For we cannot comprehend a broad subject in a concise discourse. These clothes we make with our own labor, which are woven from above, such as the Lord had a tunic that could not be torn (John 18); in which we are clothed when we know the secret and hidden things of the Lord, and we have the spirit that searches even the high and deep things of God, which are not to be shown to the common people, nor to be spoken to the un-sanctified, nor to those not prepared for the sanctity of the Lord: so that if they hear greater things, they may not be able to bear the majesty of knowledge, and be choked like solid food, who are still nourished by the milk of infancy. But on the contrary, Scripture teaches that the worst clothing, as is sung in the Psalms about the traitor Judas, is to be clothed with curses (Ps. CVIII, 29). And a little later: Let it become for him like the clothing with which he is surrounded, and like the belt with which he is always girded. Therefore, the Lord, who suffered for us and carried our sins, is said to have dirty clothes in Zechariah, of which it is written: And Jesus was clothed in dirty clothes (Zach. III, 4): which he later takes off, as the Scripture says: Take away the dirty clothes from him and dress him in clean clothes, and so on. But what follows: "Vittae, sive cidares lineae erunt in capitibus eorum, puto coronam ostendere gratiarum, de qua scriptum est: Coronam enim gratiarum suscipiet tuus vertex (Prov. IV, 9). Nec illud nobis de operto et nudo capite faciet quaestionem, quod Apostolus loquitur: Mulier debet velamen habere super caput, propter angelos. Si enim non velatur mulier, attondeatur. Sin autem, turpe est mulieri tonderi aut radi, operiatur. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man (2 Cor. XI, 10). For if it is the custom for men not to cover the head, it seems to be the opposite, so why do priests now command them to cover their heads or cut their hair? But if we read diligently, the present matters will be resolved from the previous ones. For it is said above: When they serve at the doors of the inner court and within. For if we enter into the holy and stand in the presence of the Lord, we ought to cover our heads: Because not every living thing will be justified in the sight of the Lord (Ps. CXLII, 2). And: From infancy the heart of man is inclined to evil. Finally, we also use our female bodies inwardly so that no defilement of conscience and impurity of matrimonial work appears in the sight of God. The Savior wants his apostles to be girded with these female items, saying: Let your loins be girded, and your lamps burning in your hands (Luke 12:35). And the Apostle speaks to believers: Therefore, gird up your loins in truth (Ephesians 6:14). And the imitators of Christ hear that which is written about him: He shall be girded with justice and clothed with truth (Isaiah 11:5). And this very belt, which is holy and has ascended to the pinnacle of virtues, is not bound forcibly: lest he appear unwilling to observe the good of continence and to eat the bread of his face in sweat, but to do the commandment of the Lord willingly. Finally, when he goes out and mingles with the people, he puts off his priestly garments in the treasury, where the riches of the Lord are preserved; and the priests use other garments and another teaching for the common people, so that the people may not be sanctified in their garments. It is a burden for the multitude to undertake beyond their strength, as Solomon says: 'The snare of a man is to consecrate quickly what is his own; for when he has made a vow, repentance steals upon him.' (Prov. XX, 25, LXX) . Finally, the Nazarenes offer themselves willingly, and whoever vows something and does not fulfill it is guilty of the vow. Hence it is said about widows: 'When they have given themselves to wantonness, they want to marry in Christ, having condemnation because they have cast off the first faith.' (I Tim. V, 11, 12) . For it is better not to promise than to promise and not do. Anna offered Samuel, who remained in

eternal sanctity (1 Samuel 1). And Manoah offered Samson his son, but the lust of Delilah defiled the sanctification of his hair (Judges 13). Finally, the Lord withdrew from him and he was condemned to blindness, except that later, as his hair grew, he regained his former strength and in the image of Christ, he killed many more of the enemies of Israel in death than he did in life. But the Lord wants his priests to have perpetual holy hair and to cover their heads, not with any external veil, but with their own natural hair, not for adornment and luxury, but for decency. Therefore, the apostles' hair is counted, as the Savior says: But the very hairs of your head are all numbered (Matt. 10:30). That head, about which it is written in Ecclesiastes: The wise man's eyes are in his head (Eccl. 2:14). But the head of the man is Christ, whom the sinner tramples upon and despises, and, so to speak, shaves with a razor, and takes away his beauty. Which the sons of Ammon also did to those whom David had sent as ambassadors (2 Samuel 10). But, on the other hand, transgressing the law dishonors God, and therefore, whoever keeps the precepts of the law, honors him, so that what is written may be fulfilled: That all may honor the Son as they honor the Father (John 5:23). Furthermore, what follows is clear: That every priest, when about to enter the inner courtyard, should not drink wine, it is evident that the state of mind is overturned in drunkenness and debauchery, and we do not fully understand when the mind is occupied with the satisfaction of wine. But drunkenness is not only shown in the drinking of wine, but in all things, in which the mind is intoxicated and fluctuates with love and hatred, in contracts and business of the world, and cannot maintain its state. And because we are surrounded by fragile flesh, and we are compelled to do certain things that pertain to the body, such as providing for food and clothing and necessities, which we should not do, at least it is required of us that when we return to ourselves and understand why we were born, and enter the innermost sanctuary of the temple, we withdraw from the vices of the world and do not even commit the slightest sins. Through this, it is shown that we commit minor sins out of necessity of the flesh, and again, there is a time when, entering the inner courtyard, we must be free from all worldliness and external distractions.

44:22-24

(Vers. 22 seqq.) Widows and divorced (or expelled) women will not marry, but only a virgin from the seed of the house of Israel. But they will accept a widow who was married to a priest: and they will teach my people what is holy and what is defiled, and they will show them what is clean and what is unclean. And when there is a dispute (as added in the Septuagint, regarding blood), they will stand in my courts, and they will judge my laws, and they will keep my commandments in all my solemnities. This place contains the instructions of the priests, who, after many things that we have explained above, are commanded not to take widows, divorced women, or expelled women as wives. The widow and the divorced woman are the synagogue, that is, the congregation of the Jews, which did not receive the Lord. Therefore, it is rightly called the expelled woman, or the widow synagogue. The expelled woman also refers to the crowd of heretics who departed from us because they were not of us. But he says, 'I want to present you all as a holy virgin to Christ,' speaking also of the woman from the seed of the house of Israel who was nourished in the house of God, in the law and the prophets, about whom the Apostle also speaks (2 Corinthians 11:2). This is the virgin about whom the divine word speaks elsewhere: Love her, and she will keep you: surround her, and she will exalt you: honor her, so that she may embrace you (Prov. IV, 8). But whoever reads it will know what kind of virgin should be loved and how she should keep her lover: I loved her and sought her from my youth, and I sought to take her as my spouse, and I became a

lover of her beauty (Wisdom VIII, 2). And again: And the Lord loved her above all. Not only, however, should priests marry virgins, but also widows, who were, nevertheless, the wives of another priest; that is, the knowledge that another worshipper of God has found. For we must not only be satisfied with new doctrine, but also cultivate the old and join it to our company, if she has been educated in sacred worship. It is also the duty of the priest to teach the people what is holy and what is impure, what is clean and what is unclean; so that we may first refer to the doctrines, and then to the works that are accomplished through the flesh. For who understands the sins? And when there is a dispute about any matter, whether as the Seventy have translated it, blood, that is, a crime that pertains to death, the priests shall stand in my judgments, so that they may not judge according to favoritism, nor show partiality to the poor or the rich in judgment, but they shall judge according to the judgments of God, and they shall remember that psalm: God stands in the assembly of gods, but he judges the gods in the midst of them, calling gods those who have the power to judge over men: and whoever judges in that judgment, he shall be judged by them. He said, 'My laws and my precepts shall be observed on all my solemnities, so that they may know how Christ is immolated for us as the Paschal Lamb; how we ought to fulfill the seven weeks of joy and gladness, and to humble our souls in fasting; and to understand the sound of trumpets and the spiritual tabernacles, in which we say: 'I am a stranger and a sojourner as were all my fathers' (Ps. XXXVIII, 13). These are the true solemnities of God, which someone discussing the Pentateuch will interpret in a consistent manner.' The first virtue of a priest is not only to teach what he knows, but also to observe all the festivals of God, so that he can instruct others in what they should observe, which he himself has also observed. Moreover, the duty of the priests is to have knowledge of the law, and in Malachi we learn, who says: The lips of the priest will keep knowledge, and the law they shall seek at his mouth: because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts (Mal. II, 7).

44:25-28

(Verse 25 onwards) And they shall sanctify my Sabbaths, and they shall not go unto a dead person, lest they be defiled (for the Septuagint translated it as, and they shall not go upon the soul of a dead person, lest they be defiled): except for father and mother, he said, and son and daughter, brother and sister who has no husband, they shall be defiled. And after he has been cleansed, seven days shall be numbered for him, and on the day of his entrance into the sanctuary and into the inner courtyard, to minister unto me in the sanctuary, he shall offer a sin-offering unto the Lord God (or he shall offer an atonement). But they will not have an inheritance: I will be their inheritance, and you shall not give them any possession in Israel; I will be their possession. Furthermore, it is commanded to the priests: in which it is to be observed that it does not say absolutely: and they shall sanctify the sabbaths; or according to Isaiah: My soul hates your new moons and sabbaths (Isa. 1:13): but with distinction, my sabbaths. Hence, it is also written in the Gospel: The priests in the temple violate the Sabbath, and they are without guilt (Matt. 12:5): not the Sabbath of God, but the Sabbath of the law, the Sabbath of the Jews, which they rightly violate who are the chosen race, royal, priestly. Furthermore, let us understand the Sabbath, which is sanctified, as the Apostle teaches, to have been left to the people of God, about whom it is said: 'If they shall enter into my rest' (Ps. 94:11), which is called the Sabbath in Hebrew. But God sanctifies the Sabbath, who does not bear the burden of sin on the Sabbath, nor says: 'As the heavy burden, they have been heavily laden upon me' (Ps. 37:5). Whoever is such, does not

gather wood on the Sabbath; nor does he build upon the foundation of Jesus Christ with wood, hay, straw (1 Cor. 3); nor does he light a fire that consumes useless material, and he remains in one place on the day of Sabbath; nor does he go outside, but remains like a column placed in the temple of God, as John writes in the Apocalypse: 'He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more' (Rev. 3:12). And what follows: They shall not enter the place where the dead person is, lest they be polluted. It is the proper office of the priesthood not to touch anything connected with death, so that the one who prays for the sins of others may approach the altar in a state of purity. Our Savior also speaks of these dead in the Gospel: Let the dead bury their own dead (Matthew 8:22). They are polluted by their dead father when they abandon their Creator, and by their dead mother when they depart from the Church. Likewise, by their son and daughter, for there is a distinction between thoughts and actions, which is more expressively stated in Greek as τὰ νοητὰ καὶ αἰσθητὰ. Also, if a brother and sister, who have been born of the same spirit, mistakenly believe that one of them has died, they become contaminated by this belief. However, this only applies if the sister remains a virgin and has not been defiled by any man. From this, we understand the virgin privilege, which is taken away by the touch of any man, thereby removing perfect purity. Whether this is said correctly or incorrectly, we leave it to the judgment of the reader. Furthermore, this is supported by the natural affection in the order of charity, as it is written: 'Set me as a seal upon your heart' (Song of Solomon 2:4). After God, the parent of all things, let the father and mother of the flesh also be loved and respected, as well as the son and daughter, and the brother and sister. However, this only applies if they have not left the household nor come under the authority of another. But after the priest has been purified according to the order of purification that is prescribed in the Mosaic law, let seven days be numbered for him, either the perfect number of penance, or after the consummation of the world, when we pass over to the true ogdoad, so that he may enter the holy of holies (which is the inner courtyard) and minister in the sanctuary and always offer a victim for the sin of conscience: and let there be no time when he does not remember that he has been defiled by his father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister. For indeed we are compelled to do many things in the constraints of this world, either due to the condition of the flesh or the frailty of nature. But whoever is such that he ministers in the sanctuary, and enters the inner court, and offers a perpetual sacrifice to God, so that he may be a true priest, indeed an imitator of him about whom it is written: 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek' (Psalm 110:4), this person will have no inheritance, except God who is his inheritance; nor will he receive possession among the common people of Israel; but rather a priestly one, so that the Lord may say about him: 'I am their inheritance and possession.' When they find him, they will speak and say: I will hold him, and I will not let him go; and they will sing with the prophet: The Lord is my portion (Ps. 118, 26).

44:29-30

(Verse 29, 30) They themselves shall eat the victim for sin and for transgression (or for ignorance), and every vow (or separation) in Israel shall be theirs. And the firstborn of all the firstborns, and all the libations from all that are offered, shall be for the priests. And you shall give the firstfruits of your food to the priest, so that he may put a blessing on his house (or put blessings on your houses). For the victim and sacrifice, which in Hebrew is called Manaa (מנא), Aquila and Symmachus interpreted as a gift. Again, for the vow which the Seventy translated as φρίσμου, which means separation, Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted as a dedication, which in Hebrew

is called Herem (). And it is to be considered that all that which the Lord now speaks through the prophet, He had already spoken through Moses. And it is to be sought why the same things that were said are repeated: namely, that those things which are in the minds of men, deleted either by negligence in reading or contempt in hearing and forgetting, may be renewed orally, which are not written with pen and ink, but with the Spirit and word of God. And so the Savior left no written volume of his teaching, which in many cases the apocrypha fabricate delusional writings: but he speaks daily to the hearts of believers through the Father and his Spirit. And this will be the response against those who slander the prophets, asking why they repeat what is contained in the Pentateuch in their own writings. Therefore, let the priests eat the victim, both for sin and for transgression, or ignorance, about whom it is written: They will eat the sins of my people (Hosea IV, 8). We must not only rejoice at the offering of gifts, but also fear the condemnation of honor, if we unworthily misuse them. The first things according to the letter are of living beings, and of inanimate things that are first born, and of those that the earth first produces. The first fruits of our food are also offered to the priests, so that we may not taste of new crops unless the priest has tasted first. We do this so that the priest may repon our blessing and offering in his house, or so that the Lord may bless our houses according to his imprecation. The dignity of priests is great, but their downfall is also great if they sin. Let us rejoice in their ascent, but let us fear their descent. It is not as joyful to have reached lofty heights as it is sorrowful to fall from them. For we will not only give an account for our own sins, but also for the sins of all those whose gifts we have abused, and we are not at all concerned for their salvation.

44:31

(Verse 31) Every dead body and every animal caught by a beast, whether birds or livestock, the priests shall not eat. And according to the letter, this command applies to every chosen people, the royal and priestly, which properly applies to Christians who are anointed with spiritual oil, as it is written: 'God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions' (Psalm 45:7). These commandments are appropriate so that the priests do not eat any dead bodies, whether from birds or livestock, whose blood has not been properly drained, as mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as being strangled; and these things must necessarily be observed, as the Epistle of the Apostles from Jerusalem reminds us (Acts 15). And every animal caught by a beast, because it is likewise strangled, condemns those priests who do not refrain from consuming things like thrushes, figpeckers, dormice, and other such things out of the desire of gluttony. But we can say, according to the mystical interpretation, that the dead body represents the soul, and Nabal imitates the foolishness of Carmel, which means foolish. And hearing of David's anger, he trembled with fear, and his heart died within him (1 Samuel 25). But captured by beasts, so as not to be torn apart by their bites, the prophet sighs, saying: Do not deliver the soul of your confessor to beasts (Psalm 73:19). He should be called the one who is devoured by the bites of the lion and the leopard that does not change its spots, and by the she-bear that rages against its stolen cubs, and by the wolves of Arabia, and by the other beasts that we perceive in the diversity of demons. But we say that birds are those that place their mouth in the sky, and those animals that lean forward towards the ground serve only their belly and the things that are under the belly.

45:1-8

(Chapter 45, vers. 1 and following) When you begin to divide the land as an inheritance, set apart for the Lord a portion of the land, twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand cubits in width, which shall be consecrated in all its boundaries. This portion shall be holy and shall be laid out in a square, five hundred by five hundred cubits in size, with fifty cubits of additional land as its outskirts. And you shall measure this measure of length twenty-five thousand, and a width of ten thousand, and in it there shall be a temple (or consecration) and a holy of holies. The consecrated portion of the land shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, who approach to minister to the Lord, and there shall be a place for them in the houses, and in the sanctuary of holiness. Twenty-five thousand in length, and ten thousand in width. But the Levites who serve the house: they shall possess twenty storerooms (for which the Seventy translated: they shall hold the city to dwell in). And you shall give a possession of the city of five thousand in width, and twenty-five thousand in length, according to the separation of the sanctuary, to the whole house of Israel. Also, the prince shall have a portion on both sides of the separation of the sanctuary and of the possession of the city, extending from the side of the sea to the sea, and from the side of the east to the east. And the length shall be alongside each of the portions, from the west border to the east border of the land. It shall be a possession for them in Israel. And my people will no longer be oppressed by their leaders. They shall give the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes. After the ceremonies of the priests, their worship, and the food they should eat and avoid, he now describes the land of the holy place, and before dividing it among the tribes, he commands a place to be chosen from all the tribes, which should have a length of twenty-five thousand and a width of ten thousand. And because the cubits or feet or arms are not mentioned, it is understood to signify a reed that was in the man's hand, which measured six cubits and a sixth part of one cubit, that is, a παλαιστ^v. Let the diligent reader calculate how many paces a thousand reeds make, and how many thousands there were in length and in width. After this description, he again commands that from the consecrated land, which was chosen from all the tribes of Israel, that is, twenty-five thousand reeds in length and ten thousand in width, be chosen to build the sanctuary, that is, the temple of the Lord, with another piece of land inside of five hundred reeds in circumference, that is, two thousand. And so that other buildings would not be joined to the building of the temple by chance, he commanded that there be an empty space in the suburb of fifty cubits around it: or as Symmachus and Theodotius and the LXX translated, to a boundary, and separation and space. With this description finished, another measure of complete separation for consecration is commanded, that twenty-five thousand reed lengths in length, and ten thousand in width, be measured on the upper part of the land, in which there should be no temple, that is, a holy place, but a holy and most holy place, and in it the priests who approach the ministry of the Lord shall dwell. But they shall dwell at that time, when they are performing the priestly office, and the possession itself, as we have said, shall be twenty-five thousand cubits in length, and ten thousand in width. Moreover, the Levites who serve the priests and have their own ministries shall receive a place to build twenty treasuries; next to Aquila, exedras; next to Symmachus, chambers; next to Theodotus, gazebos, or as the seventy translated, a city. By which we understand that a certain separate place for the habitation of the Levites, is called by the name of a city, which place is five thousand cubits in breadth, and twenty-five thousand in length. But all these, that is, the sanctuary, and another sanctuary, the holy of holies, and the dwelling places of the priests, and the house of the Levites, who minister to the priests, are called separate and consecrated places for ministry and for the sanctification of the house of Israel. After the fourfold description of the

Holy Land, the fifth division is made. The leader or ruler of the people may take possession here and there, that is, on both sides of the sanctuary, and reside in the city. Their possession should face the separate temple area and the face of the city. It should extend from the side of the sea, that is, from the west, to the other side of the sea, having the width that the prophet describes in the subsequent description of each tribe. Finally, it follows: In terms of length, on each side, which each tribe takes, from the Western boundary, that is, the sea, to the Eastern boundary, where it ends, we will learn in the division of the tribes. And this will be the possession of the duke or prince in the land of Israel. Let these things be said for the sake of a simple historical account. But if we wish to compare spiritual things with spiritual, and according to certain interpreters to ascend to higher things, who assert that the figure of future things is present, and that everything that is said pertains to the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of all of us, and to the Church of the early Christians, it will not indeed be difficult to say what has been said by others, but we fear that the wise reader may in no way accept such an exposition. At the present time, everything must be directed towards the Church, which is now working in the world and hastening to go to heaven, so that others may be chosen from the entire world to possess God, those who possess the holy; others, who have made progress in greater things, may hold the holy of holies. Among the ministers, there is also a different order of priests and Levites, some of whom offer sacrifices to God daily through their prayers and virtues; others are in a second and lower rank, to serve them, and through them those who have reached the heights of virtue, and in the end there should be a leader or prince, who should be able to receive a possession against one tribe; and the merit of one should compensate for the merits of many, and first, while he is in the world, he should possess the breadth from sea to sea; then from the West or from the sea to the East, so that, leaving the present, he may hasten to the future and have his own certain possession, and the princes should never desire what belongs to others, and each tribe should hold its own portion: which can properly be referred to bishops and presbyters, to whom it is said, that they should not devastate and depopulate the people of God any further, nor possess the land of Israel as an inheritance, but each one should have his own possession that is appointed for his rank. Twenty-five thousand, however, are referred to the senses, which are four times placed. Furthermore, ten thousand are related to perfect knowledge, so that in the former only a simple history is maintained, while in the latter both theology and discussion of supernatural virtues are included, because ten is a perfect number. It must also be considered that priests, who are in a higher degree, possess twenty-five thousand in length and ten thousand in width. But the Levites, that is, the inferior order, have the same number in length, that is, twenty-five thousand: but their breadth is limited to a number fivefold. Therefore, only twenty receive the treasures: in which number the gifts of Esau are offered. However, the true leader among the people, who deserves to be called a leader, receives possession of the sanctuary from both sides: namely, from all those who are subject to his will and from the dwelling of the city, and he receives reward for the well-being of many. In the front temple, which is called the sanctuary, five hundred on each side of the reeds are described; and again, fifty cubits by which the entire possession of the priests is separated. But in the second sanctuary, where the holy of holies is, the width and space of the temple are not described, but the number is uncertain. Indeed, we find this also in the possession of the prince, who has possession in the people of Israel without any number, while the surplus of all flows back to the prince; and the salvation of the disciples is the reward of the teachers.

45:9 (Verse 9) Thus says the Lord God: Enough for you, princes of Israel: cease iniquity and robberies, and execute judgment and justice, and separate your borders from my people, says the Lord God. For because of robberies they have brought misery upon the seventy; for because of borders, oppression. And the meaning is this: Since you, O princes, have received your portion, as the Scripture says: To each prince from this side and that side shall be given a portion of the sanctuary's possession within the city; and your power is so great that one tribe's portion shall be given unto you as possession. Therefore, I command and advise you, that you have done enough in committing iniquity and robberies, while invading and plundering the property of others. And because it is written: Depart from evil, and do good; and contrarywise, judge ye and practice justice (Ps. XXXVI, 27), judging the orphan and vindicating the widow: separate your boundaries from my people, lest you transfer the landmarks. And because this very proximity harms the more humble, who cannot withstand the arrogance of the greater and more powerful, it is said through Isaiah: Woe to those who join house to house, and field to field, even to the boundaries of the place. Let this be said for the people of that time. Moreover, this commandment can also be applied to our leaders, who, like the Pharaoh and the Egyptians, oppress the children of Israel by force, and do not remember the scripture: They have set up a governor over you, do not be exalted, but be among them as one of them (Eccl. XXXII, 1). And also what the Lord speaks in the Gospel according to Luke: But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and put him with the unfaithful (Luke XII, 45, 46). He also instructs his disciples in the Gospel according to Matthew with these teachings: 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.' (Matthew 20:25) There are many things that, if one desires to delve into the Sacred Scriptures, the pride of the arrogant is restrained, and all are challenged by the Lord's words, saying: 'Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.' (Matthew 11:29) Book Fourteen Book Fourteen.

What I should have said at the beginning of Ezekiel's temple, I am now going to say out of order at the end, mindful of that little verse (Virgil, Book VI of the Aeneid).

Here is that laborious task, and the bewildering error.

About which the same poet sings in another place (Aeneid. V):

Once upon a time, there was a labyrinth in high Crete: a path woven with blind walls, and a thousand-fold deceit in its many ways, where the signs of following would deceive the unsuspecting, and the mistake was irretrievable. So I, too, have entered into the ocean of these Scriptures, and the mysteries of God, to speak thus, the labyrinth, of which it is written: He has set darkness as his hiding place; And: Clouds surround him (Ps. XVII, 12): I dare not claim to possess a perfect knowledge of the truth, but I have provided some indications of doctrine for those who desire to know, not by my own strength, but by the mercy of Christ, who himself unravels the tricks and ambiguities of the hidden, guiding us in the blind paths with the Holy Spirit; by following him, we may arrive at the port of the explanations of the prophet Ezekiel, where the last, that is, the

fourteenth book is. If, while you are praying, I, the virgin Eustochium of Christ, lead you all the way to the end, and the Lord grants me the span of this life, I will then move on to Jeremiah, who remains the only prophet for us; the interpretation of which, indeed, will be the work of myself and your prayers, but primarily of the mercy of Christ.

45:10-12

(Chapter 45, verses 10 and following) 'A fair balance and a fair ephah and a fair bath shall be for you. The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, so that the bath may contain a tenth part of a homer, and the ephah a tenth part of a homer: their measure shall be according to the homer. Now a shekel has twenty obols. Furthermore, twenty shekels, and twenty-five shekels, and fifteen shekels make a mina.' LXX: A just balance, a just measure, and a just dry measure shall you have: the dry measure shall be a choenix, and a choenix shall be the same as a homer. The tenth part of a homer shall be a choenix, and the tenth part of a homer shall be an ephah. A homer shall be equal to twenty obols in weight. Twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, and fifteen shekels shall be a mina for you.» This passage in the LXX does not cohere, and cannot be entirely understood, since not only have they changed the numbers of the measures, but also the names. For they have interpreted pro ephi as a measure, a general term for a specific one, and for bato choenica: for homer also Hebrew, which is called κμπος in Greek, they translated as gomor: and again for bato choenica. Let us therefore speak according to the Hebrew and the letter, and let us explain more clearly what seems to us, individually. The balance, which is called Mozene in Hebrew (זונה), is understood as those which are attached. The ephah, which is corruptly called εφ in the Greek language, pertains to the measure of various grains, for example, wheat, barley, legumes. Furthermore, a batus, which in Hebrew is called Bath, is the same measure as the ephi, and is used only for liquids, such as wine and oil, and the like. It holds thirty modios, both in the dry and liquid measure. The tenth part of a cor in those things which are measured by the modius is called epha, that is, three modii; and the tenth part of a cor in liquid measures is called Batus or Vadus, so that epha and batus are of the same measure. Furthermore, the coin called στανν in Greek has twenty obols. But the weight called mna has sixty siclos, which makes twelve hundred obols. However, it should not confuse the reader that there are twenty siclos, twenty-five siclos, and fifteen siclos in a mina. For the difficulty lies in the numbers, to focus the attention of the listener. Hence, many things are said in parables and riddles, so that those who have ears to hear may hear. And all prophecy contains truth in obscurity, so that the disciples may hear from within: the common and lowly people, positioned outside, may not know what is said. Therefore, divine Scripture commands that the weights be just, saying: You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, a large one and a small one: a true and just balance shall be yours, and a true and just measure shall be yours (Leviticus 19:36). And in Proverbs it is said: Both a large and a small weight are an abomination in the sight of God (Proverbs 11:1). Indeed, this should be observed not only in commerce and in the use of everyday life, but in all things justice must be preserved, as the Scripture says: 'You shall make a balance and weights for your words' (Eccl. 28:23), so that in both words and deeds and thoughts, we may do everything with proper measure and reason. However, we read in another place that 'to him who is faithful, the whole world of riches belongs', and for him who is unfaithful, not even an obolus remains (Prov. 17:6 LXX). In other words, he said: The unbeliever possesses nothing in the world: but even the smallest portion is needed. Regarding this, in other words, it is said in the Gospel: He shall not depart from there until he pays

the last farthing (Matt. 5:26), that is, even the last and least coin. We read of ten minas given to each servant to trade with (Luke 19); and in another parable, talents divided among servants; and a debtor of five hundred denarii, and fifty (Matt. 25); and the vineyard workers who each receive a denarius (Luke 7); and the widow who had lost a drachma and found it only by lighting a lamp (Matt. 20, Luke 15). To discuss all of these things and their meaning is not of this time.

45:13-14

And these are the firstfruits that you shall offer: one-sixth of an ephah of wheat, and one-sixth of an ephah of barley. The measure of oil: a bath of oil is one-tenth of a cor; and ten baths make one cor, for ten baths fill a cor. And these are the firstfruits that you shall separate: one-sixth of a measure of wheat, and one-sixth of an ephah of barley, and a prescribed measure of oil, a cotyle, which is a tenth of a cor; and ten cotyles make one measure, for ten cotyles are a cor. And here, in the 70th edition, all the names of the measurements were changed and confused, so that it is not possible to understand what is being said. For those who had previously called the measure "ephi" and the measure "bato," they now call them "choenica" and "gomor" for the measure "coro." And for the measure "siclo" they now call it "appendiculum," and here they put the measure "ephi" for the measure "coro," now called "gomor," and sometimes even "corum." And in the measurement of oil, instead of "bato," they use the term "κοτῖλιν," that is, "cyathum." Therefore, let us first say, according to the letter, that the "δεκά" (or "δεκάδα"), that is, the tenth part of all fruits, was to be given to the people of Leviticus according to the law. Again, from the tithes themselves, the Levites, that is, the lower order of ministers, gave tithes to the priests, and this is what is called the second tithe. There were also other tithes, which each person from the people of Israel set aside in their own barns to eat when they went to the temple in the city of Jerusalem, and in the vestibule of the temple, and the priests and Levites were invited to feasts. There were also other tithes, which were given to the poor, and these are called the poor tithe in Greek. But the first fruits that they offered from the crops were not defined by a specific number, but left to the discretion of the offerers. And we have received a tradition from the Hebrews, not commanded by law but established by the decision of the teachers: the one who had a lot gave a fortieth part to the priests, the one who had little gave a sixtieth part. Between the fortieth and the sixtieth part, they were allowed to offer whatever they wanted. Therefore, what was left doubtful in the Pentateuch is specifically defined here because of the greed of the priests, so that they do not demand more from the people in the offering of the first fruits, that is, that they offer a sixtieth part of what is produced from the land. For if a kor, which in Hebrew is called a homer, and is called a gomor by the Septuagint, holds thirty modii, both in dry and liquid commodities; and if an ephah and bath, as we have said before, is the tenth part of a kor, it is commanded that the sixth part of an ephah and bath be given to the priests in the offering of first-fruits, which is half a modius out of three, and it is clearly computed that the priests ought to receive the sixtieth part of the first-fruits. Let this be enough for now, to understand and hear the literal and Hebrew truth. Now let us turn to spiritual understanding, in which we must first seek to discern: Honor the Lord with your righteous labors, and give Him the fruits of your righteousness, so that your storehouses may be filled with grain, and your vats may overflow with wine (Prov. III, 9); so that after you have offered the firstfruits of your labors and virtues, and have said: Behold, I have brought you the firstfruits of the fruits of the land that you have given me, O Lord; may you deserve to hear: Blessed are you in the city, and blessed are you in the field; blessed are the fruit of your womb, and the produce of your land, and

the offspring of your livestock (Deut. XXVIII, 3), and the rest, and may you possess, according to the Apostle (Ephes. I), every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ: for whatever you have, do not consider it to be of your own virtue, but of His mercy, who gave the fruits. And if indeed we have such knowledge of the Scriptures, that we may unfold and teach mystical things, and instruct men, that is, rational animals, we offer the first fruits of our grain. But if after the anagoge, we follow only the pure history, which can nourish the simple, according to what is written: You will save men and animals, Lord (Ps. 35:7), we offer the first fruits of our barley, which Isaac sowed, but in a foreign land, and it brought him a hundredfold (Gen. 26). He who gives firstfruits of barley can say: The Lord feeds me, and nothing shall I lack, in a place of pasture He has placed me: He has led me up on the waters of refreshment (Ps. 23:1-2). But he who feeds rational beings turns the sentiment, and says: You have prepared in my sight a table against those who trouble me. And after he has offered firstfruits of oil and wine, he joins in and speaks: You have fattened my head with oil, and your chalice which inebriates, how brilliant it is, that oil which is most pure without sediment, is prepared for the lamp of the Lord. The one who prepares this, his face will be exhilarated with oil; with the oil of exultation, with which Christ is anointed before His companions; and he will be like a fruitful olive tree in the house of God (Psalm 51:10). And with that wine which flows abundantly from the true vine in the winepresses of the Savior, as the Lord says: I am the vine, and you are the branches, my Father is the vinedresser (John 15:5). Concerning these winepresses, we read three psalms, the eighth, the eightieth, and the eighty-third, which all refer to the sacraments of the Church. And indeed, in the old law, there were no measures and no fixed number: for God did not give the spirit in measure. However, in the second building of the temple that is contained in the prophecy of Ezekiel, there is a definite measure, that is, the number sixty, by which the world is completed, as it is said to us: 'With the measure you measure, it will be measured to you' (Matt. VII, 2).

45:15-17

(Verse 15 and following) And one ram from the flock of two hundred, from those that nourish Israel, for a sacrifice, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make atonement for them, says the Lord God. The whole population of the land shall be held accountable for these first fruits to the prince in Israel. And the prince shall have burnt offerings, and sacrifice, and drink offerings for the festivals, and for the new moons, and for the Sabbaths, and for all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel. He himself will make a sacrifice for sin, and a burnt offering, and peace offerings, to make atonement for the house of Israel. As mentioned above, a certain portion of those things that are offered, both dry and liquid measures, should be offered to the prince. Now he holds the same order of firstfruits in regard to animals: that one of the flock of two hundred rams should be commanded to be offered, which nourishes Israel, as a sacrifice and burnt offering, and peace offering, to make atonement for the people of Israel, says the Lord God. What we have interpreted, regarding what nourishes Israel, is written in Hebrew as Memmasce(), which Aquila and Symmachus interpret as 'from the waters', and the Septuagint and Theodotion interpret as 'from the reservoirs'. The former refers to irrigation, while the latter refers to canals or pools, indicating that the firstfruits of the prince should only be nourished in irrigation systems. And just as we read in previous passages that a sixtieth part should be offered to the prince from what is attached and subject to measurement, now a two-hundredth part of animals is commanded to be offered. And by such commands of the law, the entire people are subject to offering to the leader

or prince, so that through him, burnt offerings, sacrifices, and libations may be offered for the people and the house of God may be exonerated. From which it must be noted that just as the people owe the offering of first fruits to the ruler, so the ruler owes the offering of victims to the people, whom, according to the trope, we can understand to be none other than the Lord Savior. It is he who receives a ram for the two hundred animals, or as the Hebrew word more significantly indicates, the sustenance that can be referred not specifically to the ram but to all animals, and he receives the animal or ram that has been nourished in fertile places, namely the holy Scriptures, and he can say, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he has set me in a place of pasture, he has nourished me by the waters of refreshment' (Psalm 22:1-2). These were the irrigated, or rather, these were the canals, to which Jacob led his livestock, so that they could drink and conceive in them, and according to the color of the rods, they would produce offspring for the Lord (Gen. 30). As for sacrifice, that is $\thetaυσία$ in Greek, Aquila and Symmachus interpret it as gift: which in Hebrew is called Manaa (מָנָא), and properly does not pertain to the offering, but to those things which are offered in sacrifice, such as flour, porridge, and oil. But a Holocaust is what is entirely offered to God and is consumed by sacred fire. Pacifica, when we are reconciled to God; and the Apostle speaks for us: We beseech you in Christ, be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20). And in another place: God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself (ibid., 19). Now this ruler, to whom the first fruits are offered, is also a king: as is demonstrated on the title of the cross with Hebrew, Greek, and Latin letters. And when the Jews insisted that the triumphal title be removed, the crowd of the Gentiles responded to Pilate: What I have written, I have written (John 19:22). Under the prince, he says, they will be. The dignity of the priesthood should be bestowed beautifully, to which it is subject; so that it knows that it must offer sacrifices and libations that are offered from wine ((or smoke)) for the people in all solemnities: both on the kalends, that is, the first day of the month, and on the sabbaths: when darkness covers everything, the beginning of the lunar light is: and on the rest of the sabbaths: so that it may indeed make atonement for sin, to cleanse the house of Israel, which is the Church of the living God, a pillar and foundation of truth. For this is the house of the living God, and the house of Israel, which is in need of the expiation of its sins.

45:18-25

(Verse 18 and following) Thus says the Lord God: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you shall take a young bull without blemish, and you shall purify the sanctuary. The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the house, and on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the doorposts of the gate of the inner court. So you shall do on the seventh day of the month for everyone who has sinned inadvertently and been deceived by error, and you shall make atonement for the house. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, there shall be a solemn feast for you: for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. And on that day the prince shall make a sin offering for himself and for all the people of the land, a young bull. And during the seven-day feast he shall offer a burnt offering to the Lord: seven young bulls and seven spotless rams each day for seven days, and a male goat for a sin offering each day. And for each young bull he shall offer a hin of oil, and for each ram he shall offer a hin of oil, and for each male goat he shall offer a measurement of oil. In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, during the feast, he shall perform as mentioned above for seven days: both for sin and for burnt offering, and in sacrifice and in oil. I have included the entire passage so as not to

disturb the reader's mind by dividing it into individual parts. And first, we must speak of the variety of interpretations. Where we have interpreted, at the four corners of the altar's base. The Septuagint translated it as on the four corners of the temple and on the altar. And where we said 'for each and every one who is ignorant and deceived by error,' they put 'for the ignorant and for the little one.' In that same place where we said 'the offering of an ephah for a calf and an ephah for a ram,' and 'a hin of oil for each ephah,' their edition holds 'the offering and cooking of a calf and the cooking of a ram you shall give, and the cooking of oil.' And in the final verse where we said 'in the sacrifice and in the oil,' they said 'as in the manna, as in the oil.' In the first month and on the first day of the month (no doubt, Nisan signifies) you shall take a calf from the cattle: not one that is raised in the house, but one that is from the cattle, that is, from the flock and a larger number. On the seventh day of the same month: these two solemnities, that is, the first day of the first month, and the seventh of the same, are not found in the Mosaic law. But the fourteenth day of the month, on which the Passover is celebrated, and Moses commanded to be observed, when we eat unleavened bread for seven days. But the fourth solemnity, of which he says: On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, in the solemnity (Exod. XII), and the rest, seems to me to signify the scenopegia, which he has placed here without a name. So let us run through each [topic] and briefly discuss what seems to us [to be relevant]. There are spiritual celebrations, and the Apostle teaches: Therefore let no one pass judgement on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come (Colossians 2:16). And thus God speaks through Isaiah: I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates (Isaiah 1:13). It is clear that whoever despises the Jewish feasts loves his own, namely the Sabbath that was left to the people of God. Let us see what has been given to us by God, and let us speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom, but in the teaching of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things. In the present age, which is under the power of the evil one, we cannot see good days, but in the new age: of which days the Holy Spirit sings in the Mosaic song: Remember the days of old: understand the years of generations upon generations (Deut. XXXII, 7). Of which (things) even the Holy One spoke in the psalm: In the night my heart meditated (Ps. LXXVI, 7). And again: And I have kept eternal years in my mind, and have meditated (Ibid., 6). Whoever does not understand this, let him answer how he can explain what Isaiah prophesies about the future and the new age: There shall be a month from month to month, and a Sabbath from Sabbath, and all flesh shall come to worship the Lord (Isa. LXVI, 23): when true worshippers shall not worship on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem, but in spirit and truth (John. IV); when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, and all creation shall be freed from the bondage of corruption, unto the liberty of the sons of God, and the sun shall receive light seven times brighter, and the moon shall be compared to the sun (Rom. VIII, Isa. LXV). For we have come to Mount Zion, which is interpreted as the lookout, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the thousands of angels in festive gathering. Concerning this feast, another prophet speaks: What will you do on the days of the assembly and on the days of the Lord's solemnity? (Hosea 9:5). This is what is also said elsewhere: Celebrate, O Judah, your festivities; fulfill your vows (Numbers 1:15). Therefore, if we have learned spiritual solemnities, we will subsequently be taught spiritual sacrifices. A calf is taken from the herd, or a bull, as Symmachus interpreted, free and not burdened by any yoke, that is, the burden of sins, and spotless: who did not commit sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth, a young calf, carrying horns and hooves: so that in him the sanctuary may be cleansed and atoned.

And the priest will take, he says, from his blood which will be for the sin of all: who is called in other words the lamb in Exodus, and in the Gospel, John the Baptist saying: Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). But the blood itself is precious, in which we are redeemed in the passion of the Lord and Savior; in whose flesh we are nourished, and in whose blood we are made to drink; by which the four corners of the altar of the Temple, which Theodotius placed, the Hebrew word itself, Azara (), or the Temple, as the LXX translated it, are touched, so that the house and the altar may be sanctified. For all the elements of the world are sanctified by this blood, so that when someone has been purified and cleansed, they may enter the gate of the inner court and be able to know the secrets of the Lord and subsequently come to the seventh day of the first month, and attain rest, and offer a sacrifice to the Lord for both ignorance, of which David speaks: The sins of my youth and my ignorances do not remember (Ps. 24:7), and for the child who, when he reaches the measure of a perfect man, will destroy those things which are childish and speak with confidence: When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child (2 Cor. 13:11). Whether it is for the one who has been deceived by error, and not so much by will, as by the opinion of good, he has sinned. But when the two solemnities of the first month are completed, that is, the first day and its seventh, he comes to the fourteenth day of the month, in which the solemnity of Easter is: of which it is written: For Christ our Pasch is sacrificed (1 Cor. V, 7). Then we eat unleavened bread for seven days in rest and security of all things, when we eat the bread of sincerity and truth, destroying the leaven of malice and wickedness, our prince offering all these things for us, and first for himself. For he assumed the human body and, through sin, destroyed sin; he who suffers for us and bears our weaknesses. Then, for his own house, as is written in the Septuagint, but not in the Hebrew, that is, for the Church, and for all the people of the earth, that is, for the entire human race. For the Savior is the Savior of all men, especially of the faithful, and he is the one who offers forgiveness for our sins; and not only for ours but for the whole world. But a calf is offered for the whole people of the earth, and for the seven remaining days of the Lord's Passion, seven calves and seven unblemished rams are offered daily, so that they may be consumed as a burnt offering and in the Lord's fire. And there are seven calves and seven rams, which symbolize the Lord's Passion, so that they may imitate the true calf and the true ram, and the blood of the martyrs may purify the sins of the whole world for seven days. And a goat of the goats is also offered for sin daily, specifically for seven days. And it must be observed more diligently that in the sacrifice of the calf, and the ram, and the hin of oil, the offerings which are commanded by the Law are made. But in the offering of the goat, neither the hin nor the preparation (as the Septuagint has rendered it) is mentioned, which they have interpreted as referring to the hin, that is, to the preparation. But the hin of oil, which is a fixed measure, as we have already said, is used in the sacrifice of the calf and the ram, so that we may be able to receive the nourishment of eternal light, and the rest from labor, and the health from weariness, after the propitiation of sins. In the seventh month also, on the fifteenth day of the month, that is, the Feast of Tabernacles, the same order of offerings and sacrifices is to be observed, both for sin and burnt offerings, and in the sacrifice, and in the oil, so that we may obtain the Lord's festival, the darkness being banished and the light of the oil rising: and that we may have brighter solemnities, in which all sins are forgiven.

46:1-7

(Chapter 46—Verses 1 onwards). Thus says the Lord God: The gate of the inner court that faces east will be closed for six days, during which work is being done; but on the Sabbath day it will be opened, and also on the day of the new moon it will be opened. And the prince shall enter through the vestibule of the outer gate, and shall stand at the threshold of the gate. The priests shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate and then leave. But the gate shall not be closed until evening. And the people of the land shall worship at the entrance of that gate on the Sabbaths and on the new moons before the Lord. The prince shall offer on the Sabbaths, as a burnt offering to the Lord, six unblemished lambs and an unblemished ram, and a grain offering of an ephah for the ram. And for the lambs, whatever his hand gives as a sacrifice, and a hin of oil for each ephah. On the new moons, he shall offer an unblemished bull from the herd, and six lambs and rams shall be unblemished. And one ephah for a young bull, and one ephah for a ram shall he make a sacrifice: and with every ephah there shall be a hin of oil. Where we have translated ephah, which is a tenth part of an ephah, they have rendered it πμμ, which in our language means a measure of volume. And where we have said sacrifice, they have used the Hebrew word Manaa, which Aquila translated as gift or sacrifice, and Theodotion translated as sacrifice. And meanwhile, before we discuss what these things mean, the very words of Scripture must be explained paraphrastically. 'The gate,' it says, 'of the inner court shall be closed for six days, as it is written: Six days you shall work and do all your works (Exod. XXIII, 12); and it shall not be any gate, but the one facing the East, where the sun of justice rises. Moreover, on the Sabbath day, that is, on the seventh day, which is a day of rest, it shall be opened each week, and again, when thirty days are complete, which is the end of one month and the beginning of another, that is, on the day of the calends, it shall be opened, so that what the seventh day has as a privilege in the week, the beginning of the month may have as a privilege as well.' But why it is opened on the seventh day, and on the first day of the month, the inner gate of the atrium facing the East will be explained in the following discourse. And the prince will enter, he says, through the path of the outer gate of the atrium: and he will stand at the threshold of the inner gate of the atrium, which faces the East: and he will not enter the inner atrium, but while he is standing there, other priests will make a burnt offering for him, which offering Symmachus interpreted as a holocaust: and peace offerings, or those pertaining to salvation, so that after the offering of the prince has been consumed by the holy fire, and the leader has been reconciled with God, then he may be able to worship on the threshold of the inner gate of the atrium where he stood, and he may exit. What then? Will the gate be immediately closed after the departure of the prince? By no means, but it will be open until evening, so that after the prince, all the people of the land may worship in front of that gate; they shall worship on the Sabbaths and the first days of the month when the gate is opened. And because he had said before: 'The priests shall make his burnt offering and his peace offerings,' and he had not indicated the number of burnt offerings, now he adds: 'On the Sabbaths, the prince shall offer this burnt offering to the Lord.' However, it is offered not by itself, but by the priests, of whom it is written: 'And the priests shall offer its burnt offering and its peace offerings: six flawless male lambs, and one flawless ram; and the sacrifice of the ram shall be measured by an ephah, which in Hebrew is called an Ephah (). And the sacrifice that his hands who offer it are able to offer shall be six lambs; and for each ephah, the measure of oil shall be a hin, which is called in Hebrew a hin. But on the first day of the month, which is the day of the new moon, it shall have a greater privilege than the Sabbath, and a calf shall be offered from the herd, or a flawless bull.' The rest, that is, six spotless lambs and one spotless ram, and

their sacrifices, shall possess the ritual of the Sabbath: only in this way, that just as in the ram the same amount of flour and oil is offered as a sacrifice, so it should be offered in the calf. These things are stated for the sake of clarity: now, with the Lord's gift, let us unlock the spiritual meaning. But when we have come to the seventh day, that is, the Sabbath, on which eternal rest is, or to the day of the Kalends, when after a blind night and horrible darkness, the beginning of light is, the Eastern gate is opened to us: and if any of us, by the merits of virtues, shall have attained to the name and dignity of leader by the way of the porch of the outer gate, that is, by the labours of this world: and shall enter the gate of the Church, which is as yet placed in earthly boundaries: it shall enter not the inner court, for this is written in the present place; but it shall stand at the threshold of the inner gate, and abide in it. But if the prince does not enter the inner atrium in the present Scripture, but stands at its threshold, there is no doubt that now we see and know in part; and not yet revealed, we contemplate the glory of the Lord. Finally, with the prince standing at the threshold of the gate of the inner atrium, the other priests, to whom this duty is delegated (whom we can understand as angelic virtues), will make a burnt offering and peace offerings on behalf of him. For we are born of the mercy of God, and every creature is unclean in comparison to the Creator, and must be cleansed by divine fire, as the lips of the prophet Isaiah were cleansed, so that after receiving peace through sacrifice, he may then stand at the threshold and worship the almighty God, and acknowledge his unworthiness to enter the inner court, and immediately enter. After the first person has exited, the inner gate of the court will not be closed until evening of this age, but will remain open so that the people of the earth may come to the door and worship him. Not at all times, but when they have rested from sins and the darkness of faith has been dispelled, and they have received the light of knowledge. But this very burnt offering that the prince offers through the priests on the Sabbath day is concluded with six unblemished lambs; namely, for the six days in which we work in the world, and a flawless ram, which is the leader of the flock; so that through each ram it may be offered in sacrifice an ephah, that is, a tenth part of a measure. In the sacrifice of the six lambs, a certain measure is not specified: but whatever amount the hand of the one offering has given, that is, according to the quality and measure of the works (Matthew 25). But he shall offer a hin of oil for each ephah, that is, the oil which the five virgins prepared for themselves, so that he may anoint the flour or mix it, and every offering of God may be full of the light of truth and the face of the one offering the oil may be brightened. But on the day of the kalends, that is, the thirtieth day, when the firstborn and the Levites are numbered in the Law, apart from all of Israel, of whom we have spoken above, an unblemished calf from the herd is offered, about which we discussed more fully in the previous chapter, and six lambs, and unblemished rams, and whatever is offered on the Sabbaths, so that we may attain eternal rest and deserve to hear: 'Well done, good servant, because you have been faithful in a few things, I will set you over many, enter into the rest of your Lord' (Matthew 25:21; Luke 19:17); and not only arrive at the gate of the inner courtyard, but also be able to enter its innermost parts, and possess it by work: 'Planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God' (Psalm 92:14).

46:8-11

(Verse 8 and following) When the prince enters, he shall enter through the gateway vestibule and exit through the same way. And when the people of the land enter in the presence of the Lord on the appointed festivals, the one who enters through the north gate to worship shall exit through the

south gate, and the one who enters through the south gate shall exit through the north gate. They shall not return through the gate they entered, but rather shall exit opposite it. But the prince, in their midst, will enter when they enter, and will exit when they exit. And on market days and festivals there will be a sacrifice of one ephah of flour with a bull, and one ephah of flour with a ram. But the sacrifice of the lamb will be according to what his hand finds, and a hin of oil for each ephah. That prince, of whom it was said above, 'And the prince will enter through the way of the outer gate, and through the same gate he will enter and exit' (John 10), has free will and the power to lay down his life and take it up again. And when he comes to us or ascends to the heavens, he exercises the same authority of his majesty. Finally, he does not seek markets, nor solemnities, nor does he observe any difference in days: because every time is a celebration for him. But the people only enter and exit the markets and solemnities: and not through the same path, but through one and then another. For it is written: And when the people of the land enter before the Lord in solemnities: let the one who entered through the North gate to worship, exit through the way of the South gate, and let the one who entered through the South gate, exit through the way of the North gate: he shall not return through the gate by which he entered, but he shall exit opposite to it. This is not only commanded to those who depart from Sodom, and it is said to them: Do not look back (Gen. XIX, 17); nor to those who put their hand to the plow, so that they do not look at the things that are behind them: but even to those who are established in the house of the Lord, they are commanded not to look back and turn to the needy and weak elements, and being initiated in the spirit, to be consumed (or consumed) by the flesh ((Al. consumed)): but to proceed also from spiritual things to greater things, and to say with the Apostle: Forgetting the past, and extending myself towards the things that are before (Phil. III, 13): so that they may not know in part and prophesy in part, but may come to perfection according to the perfection that human nature can achieve, so that we understand that Gospel saying: So you also, when you have done everything you were commanded to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty' (Luke XVII, 10). And the Apostle in the same Epistle speaks of two perfections: for he writes as if he were imperfect: Not as though I have already attained, or were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:13). And immediately he speaks as if he were perfect: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us understand this: however many of us are perfect, let us know this. For how can the statement stand, that the one who said, 'Not because I have already received, or because I am already perfect,' dare to say, 'However many of us are perfect, let us know this?' From this it is clear that every person and the whole creation, although they have come to perfection, still need the mercy of God and possess full perfection through grace, not through merit. Therefore, it is commanded to the people of the land, that if someone enters through the gate of the North to worship, they should exit through the way of the gate of the South. Who is this people to whom this is commanded? It is surely the pagans; those who, leaving the gate of the North, from where evils flare up upon the earth, have entered the temple, should not exit except through the way of the gate of the South, to the gate of light, to the gate of heat, to the gate where the bridegroom lies at noon (Jer. I). Finally, it is said in the same Song of Songs: Arise, O north wind, and come, O south wind (Song of Solomon IV, 16). But whoever enters through the south gate should exit through the north gate. Who is this people? It is the Jews, who, abandoning

the gate of the way of light, go to the north gate, of whom it is said: The north wind, a very strong wind (Jeremiah 1). For even the pot of Jeremiah is lit from the face of the north. Let us also say this: Through the north gate enters the one who forgives sins, and through the south gate exits the one who follows virtues. And on the contrary, if the righteous person falls into sin, he enters indeed through the southern gate, but he exits through the way of the northern gate. And the Prince, he says, will be in their midst, namely, of those who enter and those who exit, according to what is written: He stands in the midst of you, whom you do not know (John 1:26). And the Apostle says: Do you not know that Christ is in you (2 Corinthians 13:5)? But if it is said to those who do not know that Christ stands in their midst, how much more to those who know! But while Christ stood among the knowledgeable, then the dead body will become because of sin, and the living spirit because of righteousness. Indeed, the prince enters with those who enter, and exits with those who exit, witnessing the power and sin of both. Therefore, at the fairs and solemnities, namely the Sabbaths, Kalends, and all the festivals we have spoken about before, both a calf and a ram will be offered as sacrifices, each measuring an ephah. But in the offerings, there will not be a fixed number, nor a diminished will; but with strength, each person will offer according to their ability and with a clear conscience: offering as much as they can, not as much as they want, and above all, a hin of oil for each ephah of flour, so that it may be used for anointing and a lamp may be lit in the presence of the Lord. And those who use it may say: But I am like a fruitful olive tree in the house of the Lord (Ps. 51:10).

46:12-15

(Verse 12 and following) When the prince offers a voluntary burnt offering or a voluntary peace offering to the Lord, the gate facing east shall be opened for him, and he shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offering as is customary on the Sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and after he has gone out, the gate shall be closed. He shall also offer a year-old lamb without blemish as a burnt offering to the Lord every day. He shall offer it in the morning and in the evening. And he shall offer as a grain offering a sixth of an ephah of grain and a third of a hin of olive oil, mixed with the grain offering. This is a perpetual ordinance to the Lord. You will make a lamb and a sacrifice, and oil every morning, a perpetual burnt offering. Where we read immaculate, in Hebrew it is written *Thamim* (), which the *Aquila perfectum*. And where *LXX Manaa* (): Theodotion, sacrifice; *Aquila* and *Symmachus*, they translate as gift. But for what we said, spontaneous, *LXX* translated as *μολογῶν*, that is, confession: and for prince, they translate as leader, for this *Nasi* () signifies. Moreover, there is still talk of a prince, about whom *Isaiah* speaks: Behold, I have given him as a witness to the nations, a prince and a teacher among the nations (*Isaiah* 55:4). And *Ezekiel* says: And I, the Lord, will be their God, and David will be their prince among them (*Ezekiel* 34:24). Therefore, when this prince acts willingly and says: May the voluntary and spontaneous offerings of my mouth be pleasing to you, Lord (*Psalms* 119:108): the voluntary burnt offering, which means offering oneself entirely to God, and the peaceful voluntary offerings, which are not mentioned earlier; for it is written: And the priests shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings: and concerning the voluntary and spontaneous offerings, which are now mentioned, it is completely silent, so that they are not done out of necessity, but out of free will: after the burnt offering, he shall offer the peaceful offerings and reconcile with God. Whereas virginity is greater than marriage (*I Cor.* VII), because it is not demanded, nor is it returned, but it is offered. The propitiatory offerings, which are called *Selamim* in Hebrew, are interpreted as salvific by the *LXX*:

so too the reconciliation of the peace offerings is the salvation of the one offering them. Therefore, when the prince has done this, the gate will be opened to him; or according to the Septuagint, the gate that faces the East will be opened for him; that is, that gate about which it is written: 'This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it' (Ps. CXVII, 20), and from where the sun of justice arises. And he will make his burnt offering, and his peace offerings: of which we have now spoken. He shall do it alone, because it is his spontaneous sacrifice, and the priests shall not offer these things for him, nor shall they mix the sacrifices with the people. And at any time the burnt offering or the peace offering, which is offered voluntarily, has the gate of the Lord reserved: neither shall he observe the sabbath, but all days shall be to him as a day of rest. Finally, after he has offered the burnt offering and the peace offerings, he shall immediately go out, and the door shall be closed after him, or the door shall be closed: so that his privilege as prince may be preserved, and his sacrifices may not be mixed with the people. And because he had said in general, a voluntary holocaust, or a peaceful voluntary offering to the Lord, and had not added a bull or a calf, and a ram or a sheep, and a male goat for sin, he teaches what the holocaust itself should be: saying, 'You shall make a yearling immaculate lamb a holocaust; and not on certain days, but daily, and not at any hour, but in the morning, morning he shall make it; particularly every morning, when the sun rises and the beginning of light appears.' About whom David speaks in the psalm: In the morning, you will hear my voice; in the morning, I will stand before you and see (Ps. 5:4). And in another place: Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning (Ps. 30:6). And again: O God, you are my God; early will I seek you (Ps. 63:1). But as for that spotless lamb, or perfect and year-old lamb, Isaiah explains more fully, saying: He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth (Isa. 53:7). And Jeremiah: But I was like an innocent lamb led to the slaughter; I did not know (Jer. XI, 19). And John the Baptist: Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world (John I, 29). This is the lamb that was sacrificed in Egypt, whose blood the doorposts of faith are marked with, and the destroyer is excluded (Exod. XII). And the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of retribution. And the reader should not be surprised if he is also called prince, and priest, and calf, and ram, and lamb, since in the Holy Scriptures we read of him as Lord, and God, and man, and prophet, and staff, and root, and flower, and prince, and judge, and king, righteous, and justice, apostle, and bishop, arm, servant, ointment, shepherd, son, and child, only-begotten, and first-born, door, way, angel, arrow, wisdom, and many others, all of which, if I were to want to recount the testimonies, would require their own book. Therefore, the high priest himself will perform the sacrifice of that immaculate and yearling lamb in the holocaust, which is offered every morning. This sacrifice is called the Manaa, and it consists of a sixth part of an ephah of fine flour. A sixth part of an ephah is half a modius. For if an ephah is a tenth part of a cor, which is three modii, then undoubtedly a sixth part of an ephah makes half a modius. Of oil, a third part of a hin is offered, in order to mix it with or sprinkle it upon the sacrifice of fine flour, which is a legitimate, perpetual offering to God that is never interrupted. It is offered at all times, from the rising of the sun, so that what is written at the end of this chapter may be fulfilled: 'He shall offer a lamb for a sacrifice and oil every morning, a perpetual holocaust.'

46:16-18

(Verse 16, 17 and following) Thus says the Lord God: If a prince (or leader) gives a gift to someone from his own sons, it shall be the inheritance of his sons; they shall possess it as an

inheritance. But if he gives a legacy from his own inheritance to one of his servants, it shall belong to him until the year of release (for which Theodotius put the Hebrew word 'Deror'), but it shall return to the prince; however, the inheritance shall belong to his son. And the prince shall not take the inheritance of the people by violence, and from their possession: but out of his own possession he shall give an inheritance to his sons: that my people may not be scattered each one from his possession. Thus far the discourse is concerning the prince, now precepts are given concerning his heirs: indeed concerning gifts, inheritance, and legacies, to whom he ought to give them, and whose possession is either for a time, or eternal. If, says he, he shall give a gift or inheritance to his sons, they shall possess it: because it is due to them by the right of succession, and possession cannot pass from one to another. But if he has given any of his servants as a legatee, he shall possess them as long as the remission year, which is called the Year of Release (), or the jubilee, which is the fiftieth year, comes: when all sales and gifts revert to the previous owners: so that the servant has the use for a time, and the ownership of the possession of the prince's sons. But what follows: And the prince shall not take from the inheritance of the people by violence (Lev. XXIII), or as the Septuagint has translated, to oppress them, or as Aquila and Symmachus, to afflict and distress them: but he shall give his inheritance to his sons from his own possession: this rebukes not only the priests and princes of that time, but also our own, who become richer by the dignity of the priesthood and, besides what is owed to them by the Lord's disposition, take away from the poor by violence: or under the name of honor, strip the wealthy, so that they also leave nothing to their own sons, to whom paternal inheritance is due, except what has been left to them by their parents. Therefore, whoever is a wealthier priest, when he comes to the priesthood, should not give whatever excess he has to his children, but to the poor, and to holy brothers, and to the faithful domestic servants, who surpass the merits of children, so that he may render to the Lord what belongs to the Lord, who speaks in the Gospel: Whatever you have done to the least of these, you have done to me (Matt. 25:40). For he is received as a guest in the poor; he is visited in prison; he is clothed in nakedness; he drinks when thirsty; he is satiated when hungry. So that my people, he says, may not be scattered from their possession. For if the ruler has the power, either to receive or to take by force, or to hold under the pretext of honor, that which does not belong to him, and to leave it to his children, the people who were gathered in the name of God will be scattered and torn apart: either according to the Law, so that the inheritance of one gradually passes to another, and the cord of division perishes, through which perhaps the inheritance comes to each individual. Therefore, he disperses the people of God and takes away from them the eternal possession of faith, who abandons the gifts or goods of others, either through theft, robbery, flattery, seduction, or under the pretext of religion, to his own children, brothers, and relatives.

46:19-24

(Verse 19 and following) And he led me through the entrance that was on the side (or behind) the gate into the treasuries of the sanctuary, to the priests (or into chambers and rooms) that faced north. And there was a place there that faced west (or the sea: and as the LXX translated, separated). And he said to me: This is the place where the priests boil for the offense and for the sin (or for ignorance and therefore) where they boil the sacrifice (or the manna and the offering) so that they do not carry it out into the outer court, and the people may be sanctified. And he led me into the outer courtyard, and he led me around the four corners of the courtyard. And behold, there

was a smaller courtyard in the corner of the courtyard, with a smaller courtyard in each corner of the courtyard. In the four corners of the courtyard, the smaller courtyards were arranged, forty cubits in length and thirty cubits in width. The measurements of each were the same: and a wall surrounded the four smaller courtyards in a circle. And kitchens were built underneath the colonnades around (or near) the dining areas, which Aquila interpreted as recesses, Symmachus as enclosures, and Theodotion put the Hebrew word Turoth itself. And he said, 'This is the house of the kitchens, where the ministers of the house cook the sacrifices of the people. For in Hebrew, Zeba means a man who holds a reed in his hand and a string of a mason, with which he measures the building. He led me, he says, through the entrance, which was on the side of the gate or behind the gate. He did not specify which gate, whether eastern, southern, or of another direction, but left it uncertain so that I would go to the place of the sanctuary, and to the treasury, or to the chambers of the priests, which faced north and the sea, namely, to the north and west. Holy Scripture has the custom of always calling the sea the west, according to the position of the land of Judaea. And it is to be noted that the place of the priests, where they cook sacrifices for transgressions, or ignorance, and for sins, so that they are not offered raw, is situated in the outer court facing north and west, from where the coldest wind arises and where the light of the sun sets. From this it is evident that whatever pertains to food is either for error or for sin. But if a sacrifice is offered also for ignorance, how much more for the consciousness of a transgression! Hence, Job offered a daily morning sacrifice for his sons, fearing that they had transgressed in ignorance. But what follows, 'So that they do not offer in the outer court, and the people who were not prepared for sanctification may be sanctified,' means that we should not lightly give holy things to those who are not sanctified, nor should we cast pearls before swine, nor give what is holy to dogs, as the Gospel says. Finally, Moses wished the people to be sanctified for three days from all impurity and from the embrace of their wives, so that they might approach Mount Sinai and receive the holy things when they were sanctified. But if they were commanded to be sanctified from their wives in order to approach and receive the words of God, it is clear that it is contained in the Law of the Apostles: 'Do not defraud one another, unless by consent for a time, so that you may give yourselves to prayer.' And with consent, we must abstain from our wives so that we may give ourselves to prayer. After this, it is written, 'And he led me into the outer court and led me around the four corners of the court. And behold, there was a small courtyard in the corner of the court, with small courtyards placed in each corner of the court, arranged in the four corners of the court.' That man, whom he often mentions, led him out from the place of the priests, which faced north or was separate, where the priests cook for transgressions, sins, or ignorance, and led him into the outer court. From this we understand that the court from which he went out was inside, and there were many courts in the Holy Scriptures, about which we read, 'You who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.' And in John, 'And I have other sheep that are not of this fold, and it is necessary that I bring them also, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one fold and one shepherd.' For this in Greek is called αἰλῆ, which the simple Latin translation rendered as a sheepfold. But when he says, 'of this fold,' he shows that there is another one, which is either demonstrated in the multitude of the nations for the distinction from Israel or in heaven for the separation of the earthly fold. And according to the quality of merits, each office is assigned to a particular court, about which we have spoken more fully earlier. But this court that is now being discussed had small courtyards at each of its four corners, which the Seventy call minor, and we have called them small courtyards for the sake of easier understanding. They were

forty cubits long and thirty cubits wide. Concerning these numbers, I remember that I have discussed in this same work that one refers to tribulations and narrowness, the other to perfect age. For forty days, Moses, Elijah, the Lord and Savior fasted in the wilderness, and they reach the priestly office not after the twenty-fifth year of age, but after the thirtieth. Therefore, the Lord was thirty years old when he came for baptism, and in this same work, the thirtieth year is mentioned at the beginning. Wherever there is food, there is also distress and temptation through which provisions are obtained. And when we reach the perfect age of man, everything must be trampled upon, and we must say, 'Having food and clothing, let us be content with these.' And, 'If the Lord gives me food to eat and clothes to cover me.' Or certainly, 'Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy both it and them.' For we will not eat or drink in the future, but we will be nourished by the bread that descends from heaven, about which it is sung in the Psalms, 'Man ate the bread of angels.' And, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me.' But concerning the measure of the small courtyards, which possessed the corners of the large court, it signifies the four regions of the world. For in the sweat of our faces we eat bread, and every laborally profiting conduces to the stomach. Those four small courtyards or one wall surrounded, and kitchens were built underneath the colonnades all around, or they had nearby alcoves, so that where there is food, there is also the preparation of measures. And lest the prophet might not know what these things that he saw were, he said to him, 'This is the house of the kitchens, where the ministers of the Lord cook the sacrifices of the people.' Indeed, the sacrifices of the people, which are offered for transgressions, sins, and ignorance, are the food and refreshment of the priests, so that they remember not to seek anything else when the meats are also prepared for their refreshment in the temple.

47:1-5

(Chapter 47, verses 1 and following) And he brought me back to the door of the house, and behold, water was coming out from under the threshold of the house eastward. For the face of the house was toward the east, and the water was flowing down from the right side of the temple, south of the altar. Then he led me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, water was trickling from the right side. When the man went out toward the east with a line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he led me through the water, water reaching the ankles (or passed through water of remission). And he measured again a thousand, and he led me through the water up to the knees (or he passed in the water unto the thighs). And he measured a thousand, and he led me through the water up to the loins (or he passed in the water unto the waist). And he measured a thousand of a deep, which I could not pass over, because the waters were risen, waters of a deep river, which could not be passed over. For which LXX have translated: And he measured a thousand, and could not pass over: because the water was bearing a stream like the rapid stream, which cannot be passed over. These waters which were flowing out from beneath the threshold of the house, that is, the temple, did not flow towards the North and the West, but also towards the East, and on the right side of the temple, that is, towards the South, and towards the very South not of any place, but of the altar. From this it becomes clear that the waters are sacred, and they signify the doctrine of our Savior, according to that which is written: 'For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem' (Isaiah 2:3). And in another place: The knowledge of the Lord fills everything, like water covering the sea (Isai. XI, 9). Concerning these waters, the Prophet

Zacharias also predicted, saying: In that day, living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half of it toward the eastern sea and half of it toward the western sea (Zach. XIV, 8). Concerning these waters, the Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman: If you knew who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water (John IV, 10). And again: Everyone who drinks from this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again (John 4:13). And in the temple he cried out and said: If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me (as the scripture says), out of his belly will flow rivers of living water. But this he said of the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive (John 7:37-38). These are the waters that the prophet spoke of in the psalm: He led me beside still waters (Psalm 23:3). And Ezekiel: I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses. (Ezek. XXXVI, 24, 25). For water fountains appeared. And in the ninety-second Psalm it is sung: The rivers have lifted up, O Lord, the rivers have lifted up their voices from the voices of many waters. Wonderful are the elevations of the sea. (Ps. XCII, 2, 3). These are the waters of Siloam, which flow with silence, of which Isaiah speaks: You shall draw waters with joy from the fountains of salvation. (Isaiah XII, 3). And the Psalmist says: Bless the Lord from the fountains of Israel (Ps. 67). Likewise, Isaiah speaks of the Lord as Savior: He, it is said, shall dwell in the high cave of the strongest rock. Bread shall be given to him, and his water shall be faithful (Isa. 33:16). For water burst forth in the desert, and a valley in a thirsty land. And it is said to the believers: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; you are mine, and if you pass through water, I am with you (Isa. 43:1, 2). And again: 'All you who are thirsty, come to the water' (Isaiah 55:1). And through Jeremiah, God speaks: 'My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water' (Jeremiah 2:13). Therefore, just as we read in a good sense the waters that flow from the threshold of the temple and are returned to the teaching of the Church, so are bitter waters and the worst waters to which the prophet Jeremiah forbids us to approach, saying: 'What have you to do with the way of Egypt, to drink from the waters of the Nile?' (ibid). The Hebrew term for 'turbid and muddy' is Sior. Regarding these, God speaks angrily about the heretics: Behold, I will feed them with bitterness and give them poisonous water to drink (Jeremiah 9:15), in which the Egyptian dragon reigns, saying: The rivers are mine, and I made them; he who sees all that is high, and he himself is the king of those who are in the waters. Therefore, the man from Sirach prays to the Lord and says: Save me, O Lord, for the waters have come up to my neck. I am stuck in the mud of the deep, and there is no substance, and the storm has engulfed me (Ps. 68:1-2). And again; Deliver me from those who hate me, and from the depths of the waters: let not the water storm overwhelm me, nor let the depths swallow me up, nor let the pit close its mouth over me (Ps. 15:16). And in another psalm: If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, let Israel now say: If it had not been the Lord who was on our side. When men rose up against us, then they might have swallowed us up alive. When their fury was raging against us, perhaps the water would have swallowed us up (Psalm 123:1-3). And the Bride in the Song of Songs: Many waters cannot quench love, nor can rivers drown it (Song of Songs 8:7). This is the water of which Hosea speaks: The city of Galaad has scorned me, a city that works in vanities, disturbing the water, and the strength of its men are pirates (Hosea 6:7-8). This water is called by another name, Mara, which means bitterness; into it the wood of the Cross is placed, and the bitter is turned into sweet. Consider the law of Moses, if understood according to the carnal sense of the Jews, how bitter it

is, 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' (Exodus XXI); see the fornication of Tamar (II Kings XIII), and the joining of the prostitute by Hosea (Hosea I, Jeremiah XIII), Moses' Ethiopian wife, and the killing of the Egyptian, and a thousand other things, which if understood according to the literal sense, and not according to the life-giving spirit, are bitter, and do not edify the reader as much as they destroy (Numbers XII, Exodus II). Therefore, those waters which flow out from the temple of the Lord, and proceed to the East, and descend to the right side of the Temple, to the South of the altar, where the bridegroom feeds his guests, and reclines. But what follows: And he led me by the way of the North gate, and turned to the way outside the outer gate, the way that looked towards the East, he covertly shows that we cannot immediately reach the Eastern gate, unless we go around it through the way of the North gate. For unless we conquer the most extreme cold by the heat of faith, and trample on its regions, that may be fulfilled in us what is in the Apostle: But the God of peace shall crush Satan under your feet speedily. (Rom. 16:20), we will not be able to enter the gate through which the waters flow out, which are on the right side. And note that those waters that enter through the gate of the East flee so much towards the left side, that they are described as going from the right side of the altar to the South. But the man, he said, who had a rope in his hand, when he had led me through the gate on the outer side to the road that looked towards the East, and he himself was also in the same place, measured the same water a thousand cubits; and he led me through the water up to the ankles, which Aquila and Symmachus, and Theodotio rendered as 'ankles', for which the LXX rendered: and he passed into the water, the water of forgiveness: which we can understand as signifying the first sins of men, which are forgiven for us when we enter the waters of the Lord, and they show the saving grace of baptism and are the beginnings of progress, yet they themselves are sublime. Finally, they reach the ankles, which are close to the heel and exposed to the bites of snakes, as the Lord says: You will watch out for its head, and it will watch out for your heel (Gen. III, 15, according to the Septuagint). And in the Psalms about Judas the betrayer, it is said: He who ate my bread has magnified treachery against me (Ps. XL, 10), or rather the heel, for the Greek word $\pi\tau\alpha\rho\upsilon\eta$ (or $\pi\tau\alpha\rho\nu\alpha$ in some manuscripts) means heel. But after one thousand cubits, which bring us to the ankle, he measures another thousand cubits in water and leads me up to the knees. After the forgiveness of sins, and during the journey of progress, when we attempt to ascend even a little from earthly things to higher ones, we bend our knees to the Lord, with the Apostle saying: So that every knee shall bow, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10). He measures another three thousand cubits, and leads me through the water up to my waist, he says. For we climb to lofty heights by degrees: but those very heights descend to the loins and kidneys, so that every base desire within us is cut off; and we possess the sanctification of the body, without which no one sees God. Hence in the same Prophet it is written: 'From His feet to His loins He is a fiery God' (Ezekiel 8:2). For the loins need fire and purgation, as the just man says, 'For my loins are filled with illusions' (Psalm 38:8), through which the enemy deludes us both in the day and in the night time. But from the loins to the head and neck, it shines with the glitter of precious electrum, so that it has nothing filthy in itself, nothing of cheapness. Hence it is now said in the fourth (book): And he measured a thousand, with the addition of cubits, of a torrent (which the Septuagint did not translate), which I could not go through: much better than the Seventy who said, and he could not go through. For the prophet and all human nature, after the loins of the torrent of thoughts, and the incentives of vices in the heart, cannot go through. But that man, who was clothed with Baddim

and was the leader of the prophets, passed through easily; who did not commit sin, nor was guile found in his mouth (Isaiah 56). And he gives the reasons why the prophet could not pass through a thousand cubits: because, he says, the deep waters of the torrent had swelled, which could not be crossed. And as it is written, with the prophet boasting: Our soul has passed through the torrent (Psalm 124, 5). But it is easily resolved if we know that this is written in Hebrew: A torrent passed through my soul. Concerning this torrent, Isaiah says: Behold, I will extend peace over them like a river, and the glory like a overflowing torrent (Isa. LXVI, 12). And in the thirty-fifth psalm, it is said about the saints: They will hope in the protection of your wings. They will be intoxicated with the abundance of your house, and you will give them to drink from the river of your delights; for with you is the fountain of life (Psal. XXXV, 8, 9). And on the hundred and twenty-fifth: Convert, O Lord, our captivity, like a stream in the South (Psalm 125:5). And about the Savior: He shall drink from the brook by the wayside (Psalm 110:7). For who among men can boast of having a pure heart? (Proverbs 20). Or whose mind, through the windows of the eyes, shall not be entered by the death of desire (Jeremiah 9), and, dare I say, the tickling of the soul? For the world is placed in the evil one (1 John 5:19), and from childhood the heart of man is inclined to evil, so that from the very beginning of his birth, not even for one day, is human condition without sin (Job 15). And David confesses in the psalm: Behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins my mother conceived me (Ps. 50:7). Not in the iniquities of my mother, or certainly mine, but in the iniquities of human condition. Hence the Apostle says: Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam's transgression (Rom. 5:14). We use the term cubits, in the masculine gender and not neutral, according to the rule of grammarians, as I have taught in previous passages. We do this not out of ignorance, but out of custom for the sake of the simple and uneducated, among whom the majority is in the congregation of the Church.

47:6-12

(Ver. 6 seqq.) And he said to me: You have certainly seen, son of man; and he brought me out, and turned me toward the bank of the river (or the stream). And when I turned (or had turned), behold, on the bank of the river (or the stream) there were very many trees (or very many trees) on both sides. And he said to me: These waters that go out to the hills of the East (or Oriental), and go down to the plains of the desert (or this water that goes out into Galilee, which turns to the East, and goes down to Arabia), shall enter the sea, and shall go out, and the waters shall be healed. And every living creature (or animal) that crawls (or of crawling creatures), wherever the torrent (or river) shall come, shall live; and there shall be very many fish, after these waters come there; and they shall be healed, and all things to which the torrent (or river) shall come shall live. And the fishermen shall stand upon its banks from Engaddi even to Engallim; it shall be a place to spread their nets. The fish of it shall be of very many kinds, like the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But the marshes that go out of the banks will not be healed, but will be given to the salt marshes. And over the torrent (or river) there shall spring up on its banks on both sides every fruit-bearing tree, its leaf shall not wither (or it shall not grow old): and its fruit shall not fail. Every month they shall bring forth first fruits (or all things shall be renewed); because its waters shall go forth from the sanctuary, and its fruit shall be for food, and its leaves for medicine (or its ascent for health). Although this whole chapter may be lengthy, I wanted to present it all at once so as not to interrupt the reader's understanding and to avoid disrupting the listener's comprehension. First, it should be noted that in Hebrew it is called Nehel (נְהֵל) and in Greek it is called χειμάρρου, which the

Septuagint translates as 'river'. Then, for Galilee, which is called Galila (גלילא) in Hebrew, Aquila translates it as θήλας, which means 'sand dunes'; Symmachus translates it as μέθριον, which we can translate as 'border'. Symmachus also transferred to Arabia, which is uninhabitable; Aquila, the low and flat areas; Theodotius, to Araba. Let us therefore say what seems to us in each. That man who was the leader of Ezekiel, advises the prophet to look more closely and see, and to attentively observe the hidden mysteries with the eyes of the mind. He calls the son of man, or in the likeness of the Lord and Savior; and indeed Ezekiel is interpreted as strength, or the kingdom of God: or certainly for the disturbance of human weakness; lest he forget his own condition, while great things are shown to him: and he leads and turns to the bank of the river, so that because he could not cross the middle depth, at least he may recognize those things which are on the banks. And when, he said, I turned, or he turned me, who was the guide and teacher; behold on the river bank, or the stream, many logs, or very many trees on both sides. This torrent, which is carried by the abundance of water like a torrent, and receives rain from the sky, as we mentioned in the previous lesson, is called a river by LXX, because it has perpetual waters: not from rains collected here and there, but from a living and perpetual source. Of which river we read many things in the holy Scriptures; but for the present few things are to be said, and first this: The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice, the floods have lifted up their waves. (Psalm 93:3) And in Isaiah: I will make a way in the desert and rivers in the wilderness (Isa. XLIII, 19). And in another place of the same book, more clearly: There will appear in Zion a river flowing glorious in a thirsty land (Isa. XLIV, 3). Above this river there were many trees on both sides of the bank; so that between two instruments, the old and the new, the enclosed river would flow. However, there were many wood or rather, very many trees, which I believe abound in various fruits as the Scripture mentions in paradise; and the leading guide and teacher, the prophet, teaches and says: These waters that come out, either into the Galilee of the Gentiles, according to the Septuagint, or (as it is more accurately contained in Hebrew) into the hills of the eastern sand, and they descend to the plains of the desert, or to Arabia, they will enter the sea, or to the ends of the sea, and the waters will be healed. We previously said that waters either signify the grace of baptism or the Evangelical doctrine. If these waters leave the threshold of the Lord's temple and hold fast to the Apostolic discipline, they make the previously barren and infertile hills fruitful and turn everything flat and deserted into a well-watered land, so that they embody the sacrament of the Jordan River. This river, which Elisha cured with Evangelical and Apostolic salt, transformed barrenness and death into abundance and life. Not only did they heal the deserts, but they entered the Dead Sea, a sea in which nothing living could exist, and the most bitter sea, which in Greek is called λίμνην σφάλτιν, that is, the lake of bitumen. And in a wonderful way, the dead waters are healed by the waters of the Gospel, which, because they have nothing living in them, are given the name of death. For they had not known Him who says: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). And truly, according to the letter, nothing that breathes and can walk can be found in this sea due to excessive bitterness: not even snails, small worms, eels, and other types of animals or serpents, whose bodies we can know more than their names. Finally, if the Jordan river, swollen by rain, carries fish to this place, they immediately die and float on the oily waters. Since these things have no usefulness, as simple speech testifies, even if they were done, which the foolish superstition of the Jews believes, they will have many fish according to the spiritual understanding of the Lord, when the river is healed, and all things will live to which this river has come; so that fishermen will stand on the shores from Engedi to En-galim: the former

means the source or spring of goats, and the latter means the source or spring of calves. For in the beginning, there is the sea of the Dead, where the Jordan enters. And there is En-gedi, where it ends and is consumed. But I believe that the Dead Sea is the one Zacharias speaks of: In that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half of it towards the eastern sea and half towards the western sea (Zach. XIV, 8). Daniel also agrees with these words: I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea (Dan. VII, 2). And David: The waves of the sea are marvelous (Psal. XCII, 4). And from the person of the Savior in the Psalm: Come into the deep sea and the tempest has overwhelmed me (Psalm 68, 2). The King of Egypt also is called the dragon according to the same Ezekiel (Ezekiel 32), who dwells in the sea, and stirs up the rivers as with his horns. And again, This great and spacious sea (Psalm 103, 25). As long as it has not taken in the waters of the river, or the torrent, it kills everything that is in it; but the Lord, of whom it is said, He will strike, and he will heal us after two days, and on the third day we shall rise, and we shall live in his sight (Hosea 6, 23), He speaks in the same Prophet Hosea: I have bound up Ephraim, I have taken him upon my arm, and they have not known, because I have healed them in the corruption of man (Hosea 11, 9); who was wounded for our sins, and weakened for our iniquities. By the discipline of our peace on him, and by his bruises we were healed (Isaiah 53:5). He himself healed this sea, which is very salty and dead with excessive bitterness, by his death. He who says through Isaiah: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted (Isaiah 61:1). Therefore, he also cries out through Jeremiah: Return, O backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings (Jeremiah 3:22). For the impatient people have said, unable to bear the pain of their wounds any longer: Summer has passed, the harvest is over, and we are not saved. Then the Lord answered them: Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the healing of the daughter of my people not come (Jeremiah 8:22)? And Jeremiah himself cries out and says: Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved (Jeremiah 17:14). Finally, the angels who were the protectors of the people of the Jews at that time when the foolish crowd cried out, saying, 'His blood be upon us and upon our children' (Matth. XXVII, 25); and, 'The veil of the temple was torn, and all the Hebrew sacraments were revealed,' they responded to the Lord who was commanding, and said, 'We have cared for Babylon, and she has not been healed: let us leave her' (Jerem. LI, 9), the city of confusion and vices. And Josephus also relates in his History that after the Lord was crucified and the veil of the temple was torn, or the doorpost of the temple collapsed, a voice was heard in the innermost part of the temple of celestial powers, saying, Let us depart from these dwellings. All of this is not said in vain, but necessarily, because the Dead Sea, when the river of the Lord flows into it, is said to be healed. Above this sea, from Engedi, the eye and fountain of the goat, which is always offered for sin at Engallim, the fountain of the calves that are sacrificed to the Lord, and they imitate the calf carrying its horns and hooves, which in the type of the Savior is sacrificed at the altar, there will be fishermen, to whom the Lord Jesus speaks: Come to me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matt. IV, 19): of whom also Jeremiah says: Behold, I will send fishermen (Jer. XVI, 16). And there will be very many species, indeed, genera of fish in the once-dead sea. These fish, at the command of the Lord, were drawn out by Peter to the right side, and they were one hundred fifty-three: so much so that because of their multitude the nets were torn (John 21). However, those who have written about the nature and properties of animals, both in Latin and Greek language, say that there are one hundred fifty-three fishing methods, which were all used by the

apostles, and nothing remained uncaught, while both noble and common, rich and poor, and every kind of human being from the sea of this world is drawn out for salvation. But what follows, In its shores and swamps, or in those that extend beyond the shores, the waters will not be healed, covertly shows that those who were not in Noah's ark will perish during the reign of the flood; and those whom the river did not touch will not receive health; but they will be thrown into salt pits, as it is written: When the pestilence rages, the fool becomes wiser (Prov. XIX, 25). For the examples of the wicked educate the good. Whether they are given in the salt ponds, according to what is written in the Gospel: Salt is good; but if the salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? (Matthew 5:13) so that they may forever lack fruits and vitality. This is also demonstrated by a city that, after its destruction, is sprinkled with salt. But above the torrent or river, on its banks, every fruitful tree, or as they all agree, βρυσμον (Al. βρυσμα) which gives food and nourishment and can be eaten, is called in the Hebrew language, Machal, and nothing will decay in it according to the Septuagint, but its fruits will be renewed daily, and its leaves will not wither, and its fruit will not fail; according to what is written in the first psalm. And he shall be like a tree, which is planted near the running waters, that shall bring forth its fruit in due season. And his leaf shall not fall off (Psalm 1:3). Each month, he says, it shall bring forth its firstfruits, or as it is written in the Septuagint: Its fruit shall be its firstfruits in its renewal; so that all the fruits of the believers may be firstfruits, and each month may be assigned to each apostle. And this shall happen, because its waters shall come forth from the sanctuary: Let us not think that the abundance of banks, trees, or months, is the cause and source of such great fruitfulness: because its waters shall come forth from the sanctuary. Therefore it is not of the one who wants or of the one who runs, but of God who shows mercy (Rom. 9:16). The principle of all these trees is the tree of life, which is understood as wisdom, of which it is written: The tree of life is to all who believe in it (Prov. 3). And that which is said: And its fruits shall be for food, and its leaves for medicine, demonstrates the sacraments of the divine books: of which one pertains to the letter, the other to the spirit: so that we may understand simple words in the leaves, and the hidden meaning in the fruits. For just as the knowledge of the Scriptures leads to the kingdom of heaven and provides us with the bread that says, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven' (John 6:41), so do its leaves contain moral doctrine and offer healing, so that they may heal the wounds of sinners. Concerning the leaves, which are called 'Ale' in Hebrew, they were translated by the Septuagint as 'ascension,' because it can also be understood in such a way that after partaking of the nourishment of the fruits, we ascend to heavenly things by the admonitions of the words.

47:13-14

(Verse 13, 14) Thus says the Lord God: This is the boundary in which you shall possess the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel, for Joseph has a double portion. Each of you shall possess it equally as his brother, to whom I raised my hand to give it to your fathers; and this land shall fall to you as a possession. Because we said that Joseph has a double portion, the Septuagint translated it as an increase of the portion. For indeed Joseph is interpreted as increase; understanding the matter instead of the name, and confusing the mind of the reader. For when the Levite tribe was subtracted and delegated to temple sacrifices, there remained eleven tribes, of which the tribe of Joseph was divided into two, Ephraim and Manasseh, who said to Joshua the son of Nun: Why have you given me the possession of one lot and one portion, since I am of such a great multitude, and the Lord has blessed me? To which Joshua responded: If you are a large

population, go up into the forest and clear for yourself the spaces in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaim, because the possession of the mountain of Ephraim is narrow for you (Joshua 17: 14, 15). And again, Joshua said to the house of Ephraim and Manasseh: You are a large and powerful people, you shall not have one portion, but you shall go to the mountain and clear for yourself spaces to dwell, and you will be able to advance further when you have driven out the Canaanite, who you say has iron chariots and is strongest (Ibid., 27). We say this for the following reason: because the Scriptures now mention Joseph, that is, Ephraim and Manasseh, as having a double portion. But each tribe, according to its own multitude, receives equal portions of land, not divided by the will of the divider, but by lot, which is in the power of the Lord. Finally, even Joshua himself, who was the divider of the land, did not separate for himself a particular piece of land, so as not to appear to have chosen the best; but he received from the leaders of all the tribes, Timnath-serah in the mount of Ephraim.

47:15-17

(Versed. 15 seqq.) This is the end of the land on the northern side, from the great sea, for those coming from Ethalon, Sadada, Emath, Berotha, Sabarim, which is between the middle of Damascus and the border of Emath: the courtyard of Thicon (Vulg. house of Atthicon), which is near the borders of Auran (or Auranitis). And the boundary will be from the sea to the courtyard of Enon (or Seraranan), the boundary of Damascus, and from the North to the North the boundary of Emath on the northern side (Vulg. and the boundary of Emath; on the northern side). Concerning the description of the land of the holy twelve tribes, commanded by Joshua the son of Nun, and which is now ruled by Ezekiel, it is worth noting that there the land is divided among the tribes by lot, as ordained by the Lord. In the Book of Numbers (Num. XXXIV), which divides the entire promised land into four regions in a brief discourse, the description of the northern region is as follows: Starting from the north, that is, the northern border, they will begin from the Great Sea, reaching up to the highest mountain, from which you will come to Hamath, to the borders of Zedad, they will go to Ziphrona and the town of Enam, also known as Aser Enon. And the Hebrews say that the northern region begins from the Great Sea, which extends along the coasts of Palestine, Phoenicia, the region called Coele Syria, and Cilicia, and stretches through Egypt to Libya. And when it says, 'The borders shall reach to the highest mountain' (Numbers 34:7), the same Hebrews interpret it to mean either Mount Amanus or Mount Taurus, which we think is more likely. From there, it is said, one will come to Emath, which is now called Epiphania, with the name changed by Antiochus, the most cruel of tyrants: for he had the surname Epiphanes. He says, 'They will go to the boundaries of Sadada, a place that is currently mentioned in the reading of Ezechiel, and they will reach the borders of Zephrona, which is today called Zephyrium, a town in Cilicia. And the next part, 'And the village of Enam,' is written in Hebrew as 'Aser Enon,' or 'Enan,' and the present location is included in this. And for now, it suffices to briefly summarize the historical context, and to connect the description in both Numbers and Ezechiel: so that a discerning reader understands in which places they mentioned the same, similar, or different things. Now that we have interpreted the names of each, let us follow the anagoge and discuss what seems to us in each, with the Lord providing. Ethalon is interpreted as the cradle of sorrow. Sadada, his side, understand not in terms of width but in terms of the side. Emath, fury, which is called in Greek, χῆλος. Berotha, of the well. Sabarim, circuit of mountains. Damascus, blood of the bag and the kiss, or cup. But the house, or atrium Thicon, Symmachus interprets as the middle

atrium, which extends to the borders of Auran. Therefore, Thicon, the middle one, resounds: Auran, which in Greek translates to Auranitidis, anger. Aser, however, Enon, which is the boundary of Damascus, is called the atrium of the fountain in our language. Therefore, the northern region begins from the great sea through the way of Ethalon, which means the cradle of sorrow, and through repentance it comes to Sadada, where there is a decline on the side. For we understand the impending Emath upon us, which is the wrath of God; or Emath, the truth being known, the wells of Berotha are opened for us, which were dug by the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: and after a long circuit we come to the mountains of Sabarim, which are located between Damascus, that is, the blood of the cilice, and the border of Emath, as we have said above, the truth. For just as we turn away from approaching evils through fear and avoid them on one side, so after the shedding of blood and the sackcloth of a bloody life, before we come to the borders of Emath, we circumscribe and arrive at the mountains, of which it is written: Mountains surround it, and the Lord surrounds his people (Psalm 124:2). This place is called the court of Thicon, that is, the middle court, as Symmachus has interpreted, near the borders of Auran, which means wrath, and let us say with the prophet: I will endure the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him (Micah 4:9). And from the sea as far as the borders of Damascus; in which also the Apostle Paul (Acts IX) saw the light in blindness from the Jewish fury and the shedding of Ecclesiastical blood, and having taken up the sackcloth of old persecution, he preached the Gospel in order to reach the courtyard of the eternal fountain, and being placed in the North, he grasped the boundary of truth.

47:18

(Verse 18) Furthermore, the eastern region stretches from the middle of Auran, and from the middle of Damascus, and from the middle of Gilead, and from the middle of the land of Israel. The Jordan River divides it, extending to the eastern sea. In the Book of Numbers, it is written as follows: From there, the boundaries extend opposite the eastern region, from the town of Enan, also known as Aser Enon, to Sephama. From Sephama, the boundaries go down to Rebla, opposite the spring. From there, they reach the eastern sea, which is the Sea of Chenereth, and continue all the way to the Jordan River, finally closing at the sea. He had said above: And the boundary shall be from the sea to Aser Enon, the boundary of Damascus (Num. XXXIV, 10, 11). Therefore, at the end of the northern region, that is, at the court of Enan, the boundaries extend according to the Book of Numbers to Sephama, which the Hebrews call Apamea: and from Apamea the boundaries descend to Rebla, which is now called Antioch in Syria. And so that you may know that this Rebla signifies the city, which is now the most noble in Coele-Syria, it follows: Against the spring, which is clearly meant to signify Daphne: from which spring the aforesaid city enjoys very abundant waters. But this place, established by Gnaeus Pompeius, who was the first to conquer Judea under Roman rule, was built with military force; and according to the fable of the poets, it was named Daphne because of the laurels and cypresses, which are very abundant trees in that place. From there, it says, the boundaries extend opposite the eastern region to the Sea of Chinnereth, all the way to the Sea of Tiberias. However, it is called a sea because it has fresh waters, according to the language of the Scriptures, in which collections of water are called seas. And the borders, he says, will stretch as far as the Jordan River, and in the end will be closed off by the sea, either the dead sea or, as others think, the Red Sea, on whose shore Ahila is located, where the legion and the Roman garrison are now stationed. This statement can be found in the

book of Numbers. But according to Ezekiel, it refers to the middle of Auran, which is the city of Damascus in the desert, and the middle of Galaad, where Mount Lebanon is connected to the hills and falls into the territory of Ruben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. It is situated behind Phoenicia and Arabia. This is the mountain that Jacob reached after leaving Charran, where he was captured by Laban (Gen. XXXI), and Jeremiah also speaks of it: Galaad, you are the beginning of Lebanon (Jerem. XXII). This region was taken by Galaad, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, from the Amorite region. The boundary of this region is the Jordan River and the Eastern Sea, which in this place is understood to be the dead sea, not the shore of the Red Sea. Let us speak according to tropology: After the borders of the North, through Ethalon, and Sadada, and Berotha, also Sabarim, Thicon, and Auran, and Damascus, and the atrium of Enon, it reaches as far as Emath in the eastern region: from the midst of anger, that is Auran, and from the midst of Damascus, that is the blood of penance, and from the midst of Gilead, which is interpreted as revelation, or the hill of testimony; in order to show hope of salvation after anger and penance: and from the midst of the land of Israel, which contains the vision of peace, it reaches to the sweetest flow of the Jordan river: which, far from the distant sea, obtains the light of the East, so that it is terminated by the river Jordan, which is interpreted as the stream of judgment, and the boundary of the East. But what is called φοινικένος in the Septuagint, which means palmeti in Latin, is not found in Hebrew: for which reason we have translated it as metiemini: And a clear error is evident, that due to the similarity of the letters, they read Thamorru instead of Thamoddu.

47:19

(Verse 19.) The southern region stretches from Thamar to the waters of contradiction (or Mariboth: this word signifies contradiction or disputes). It includes Cades and the river, reaching all the way to the Great Sea. This is the southern region. According to the Book of Numbers, it is written as follows: It begins from the wilderness of Sin, near Edom, and its borders extend towards the eastern sea (some manuscripts add 'the saltiest sea'), encircling the southern region up along the ascent of Scorpio, passing through Senna and reaching south to Cadesbarne. From there, the borders extend to a village named Addar, and continue to Asemona. The boundary line then goes from Asemona to the torrent of Egypt, and ends at the shore of the Great Sea (Num. 34:3-5). This briefly signifies (so that we do not appear to have passed over the very wide stretch of Numbers by occasion of Ezekiel's exposition) to go around the wilderness of Sin, which is near Edom, and the boundary of the Red Sea, and through the ascent of Scorpions, and through Senna and Kadesh-barnea, and the courtyard of Addar, and to come from Asemona as far as the river of Egypt, which flows into the sea near the city of Rhinocorura. But truly, this boundary of the southern region, that is, the southernmost part, begins from Tamar, which is a city in the wilderness, which Solomon also built with marvelous works and is now called Palmyra; and in the Hebrew language, it is called Thamar, which in our language means "palm," as far as the waters of Meribah Kadesh, which is undoubtedly in the desert, and the river entering the Great Sea, which stretches along the coast of Egypt and Palestine, and this is the southern region to the South. Afterward, we receive the Southern region when the light from above is poured upon us, just as Abraham joined in a feast and we are intoxicated with the wine that gladdens the heart, like Joseph and his brothers. This possession begins at Thamar and extends to the waters of contradiction, a place of victory over vices. For virtue is always contradicted. Therefore, Jews opposing Paul in the preaching of the Gospel assert that it is contradicted throughout the whole

world (Acts 15). And in the Gospel, we read Simeon saying: This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (Luke 2:34). However, every contradiction is of holiness, which is interpreted as Kadesh, as the Psalmist says: The Lord will shake Kadesh's desert (Psalm 29:8); which originally did not have the holiness of the Lord, but it was shaken and moved to receive the guest God, who says: Upon whom will my spirit rest, if not upon the humble and quiet one who trembles at my words? (Isaiah 66:2). Beyond the deserted region of Cades, all the way to the great sea in the south, the southern region is arid, as we mentioned before; it does not have rain from the land, but rather from the sky, collected in various forms of different powers.

47:20

(Verse 20) And the plague of the sea, the great sea from the border in a straight line, until you come to Emath, this is the plague of the sea. Of which the Book of Numbers writes more clearly and briefly. But the western plague will begin from the great sea and will conclude at the very end, that is, from sea to sea: to the torrent, namely the Rhinocorura, which flows into the sea, up to the place that is opposite the city of Emath in Syria, of which we have spoken above. But the setting sun, according to the laws of tropology, is always in the sea: always in the salt and waves, where shipwrecks occur daily, and the deaths of the wretched, and the loss of wealth and goods, and yet when we have endured all these with patience, we come straight to Emath, that is, to the truth of the Lord, who, having conquered persecutions, has promised us eternal rewards.

47:21-23

(Verse 21 onwards) And you shall divide this land among yourselves into the tribes of Israel, and you shall allocate it as an inheritance to yourselves and to the foreigners who have joined you and have children born among you. They shall be considered as natives among the children of Israel and shall share in the possession with you among the tribes of Israel. In whatever tribe a foreigner resides, you shall give them an inheritance there, says the Lord God. By this chapter, we learn (and it is a refutation of the Jewish objections) that there is no distinction between the people of Israel and the Gentiles. For if the foreigners and strangers come with those who are from the people of Israel, that is to say, with the indigenous people, the land is divided; there is no doubt that it is the same inheritance of the people of the Gentiles and the people of the Jews: however, if they have converted to the worship of the God of Israel, which is properly called Christian, having the Jews as possessors of the letter of the Law, and us of the spirit: they hold on to the membranes, and we to him who is written in the membranes. And with Moses the land is divided by lot; but here, as we have said, it is delegated by the judgment of the Lord: and there is one possession for the stranger and the Israelite, and an inheritance is given in each tribe, at the command of the Lord God.

48:1-7

(Chapter 48, verses 1 onwards) And these are the names of the tribes: starting from the northern borders, near the path of Ethalon that goes to Emath, Atrium, Enon, the boundary of Damascus to the north of Emath, and it will have the eastern boundary, the sea. Dan is one tribe. And from the boundary of Dan to the eastern boundary, Asher is one tribe. And beyond the boundary of Asher to the eastern boundary, Nephthali is one tribe. And beyond the boundary of Nephthali to the

eastern boundary, Manasseh is one tribe. And over the territory of Manasseh from the eastern border to the sea, Ephraim one. And over the territory of Ephraim from the eastern border to the sea, Reuben one. And over the territory of Reuben from the eastern border to the sea, Judah one. The description of the possession of the Holy Land is given, both according to the present prophecy of Ezekiel and according to the book of Numbers: now the possession of each tribe is described from the eastern border to the western border, that is, the sea. And first, the borders are taken from the north along the route of Ethalon to those going towards Emath, the courtyard or Aser-Enon bordering Damascus to the north near Emath, of which we have already spoken. And so it begins, the first portion goes to the tribe of Dan, the second to Aser, the third to Nephthali, the fourth to Manasseh, the fifth to Ephraim, the sixth to Ruben, the seventh to Judah, which is on the left side, completing the number seven. Then the firstfruits of the priests and the Levites, and the sanctuary of the Lord in the midst, and the holy of holies. The city itself is described on each side in a square, having four thousand and five hundred rods. The suburban areas of the priests and the Levites are also described in order, along with the possession of the prince. And again, on the right side, five tribes succeed from the region similarly to the East, all the way to the region of the West, of which the first is Benjamin; the second is Simeon, having its own possession specifically, and not mixed with Judah as before; the third is Issachar; the fourth is Zebulun; the fifth is Gad; and there are three gates of the city on each side; and the name of this city is contained on the golden plate on the forehead of the high priest. We will discuss all of these in their proper places. And it should be noted that the names of forty-eight cities which are given in the book of Numbers to the Levites for dwelling with their suburbs are omitted here, as well as the cities of refuge: of which three are on the other side of the Jordan, namely Bosor, and Ramoth, and Gaulon, which are given to two and a half tribes; and three are within the Jordan, namely Kadesh, and Sichem, and Kiriatharba. For there was no need in this mystical description and the dwelling of the saints and the perfect conversation to describe the supports of the fugitives, which Israel still needed while in the land and hastening to come to this city through many labors and dangers, and speaking in each of the saints: I am a stranger and a sojourner like all my fathers (Ps. XXXVIII, 13). And in a foreign land: I lived with the inhabitants of Cedar, my soul has traveled far.

48:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) And over the border of Judah from the east side to the west side shall be the portion which you shall offer, twenty-five thousand cubits in breadth and in length, like one of the portions from the east side to the west side; and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it. The portion which you shall offer to the Lord shall be twenty-five thousand cubits in length, and ten thousand in breadth. It is unnecessary to go into detail about what has already been discussed, and to labor again on the same points as if they had not been said. After the boundaries of the seven tribes, the firstfruits are described from east to west; the width of which is twenty-five thousand reeds: but the length, as each tribe holds from east to the sea, has an uncertain number. For the measurement of each tribe's description is not recorded. But if the width is twenty-five thousand reeds, it is given that the number of length is much greater, which is always greater than the width. But in the middle of the sanctuary is placed, next to the firstfruits that are separated for the Lord, a length of twenty-five thousand reeds and a width of ten thousand: reading which I can say nothing other than what the Apostle said: O the depth of the riches of wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments and how unsearchable His ways! (Rom. XI, 33)! And in another

place: That you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length, and height and depth: to know also the surpassing knowledge of the charity of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God (Eph. III, 18): But the number twenty-five refers to the senses, of which it is said: You shall possess divine sense, and ten thousand refers to perfect and complete virtue, which reaches from the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament to the sacrament of the Gospel, and we have explained this briefly earlier and will remind you of it in part here. For if you add one to the number, you will reach four, and you will fill the number with a ten; and thus it will happen, that both the old Testament may be contained in the new, and the new may be extended in the old.

48:10-12

(Verse 10 and following) These will be the firstfruits of the sanctuary for the priests: towards the north, a length of twenty-five thousand [cubits], and towards the sea, a width of ten thousand [cubits]; but also towards the east, a width of ten thousand [cubits], and towards the south, a length of twenty-five thousand [cubits]. And the sanctuary of the Lord will be in the midst of it. It will be a sanctuary for the priests from the descendants of Zadok, who have kept my statutes and have not strayed as the children of Israel strayed, as the Levites strayed. And there will be offerings from the first fruits of the land of the Holy of Holies, according to the boundary of the Levites. The four offerings of the sanctuary are described, which do not pertain to the common people or the lower class Levites, but specifically to the worship of the priests: namely the offerings of the North, West, East, and South. And the order of their arrangement is described in parts, as we leave behind the cold of the North and come to the West: so that our vices may perish and we may then move to the East, where the sun of justice rises for us, and finally come to the South, where the light is most bright and perfect. And both from the North to the sea and from the East to the South, let there be twenty-five thousand in length and ten thousand in width: so that the same measure of length and width is preserved everywhere. However, the sanctuary, that is, the Temple of the Lord, will be in the midst of the firstfruits of the priests, and it will be surrounded on all sides by an equal wall. And what he had said, 'These shall be the firstfruits of the sanctuary of the priests,' was to prevent all the priests from claiming the possession of this place and the special ceremonies to be observed by a common name, specifically stating: 'The sanctuary shall be for the priests of the sons of Zadok,' which means 'righteous.' This is said of him: 'The Lord is righteous, and he loves righteousness; his face beholds the upright' (Psalm 11:7). Regarding this, Sadoc, the Septuagint writes Sadduc. This Sadoc speaks in the Gospel: For the Father judgeth no man, but hath given all judgment unto the Son (John 5:22). And concerning this, under the name of Solomon, the Prophet sings mystically: Give thy judgment to the king, O God, and thy justice to the king's son (Psalm 71:1). But those priests of the Lord shall possess the sanctuary, and shall keep the ceremonies thereof: who have not erred when the children of Israel and the Levites erred, of whom it was discoursed in the foregoing. They do not offer victims, but being content with the privilege of their name and the humility of their error, they always speak from the heart: I acknowledge my wickedness, and my sin is always before me (Psalm 50:4). Let him hear this priestly order, and, overcome by the fury of the Arian persecution, and subsequently submitting his neck to the power of the true faith, so that he may not lack resources, if he is not expelled from the temple, let him hold a certain shadow and image of his former name, and let him not, lying on his back, belch out delights, as if he were immaculate and pure, let him not belch forth the nausea of

his ignorance and barbaric babbling from his lofty throne. They shall be, he says, the first fruits from the first fruits of the earth, that is, for the priests: and those who did not go astray, when the sons of Israel and the Levites went astray. But the first crop from the first crops, like the tenth of the tithes, and the holy of holies, according to the boundary of the Levites: for indeed the Levites have the precincts of the priests, but they cannot hold the center, that is, the middle of it, and the actual possession.

48:13-15

(Verse 13 and following) But the Levites shall have a portion like the priests, consisting of twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand cubits in width; the whole length shall be twenty-five thousand cubits and the width ten thousand cubits. They shall not sell any of it or exchange it, nor shall the firstfruits of the land be taken away from it, for they are holy to the Lord. The remaining five thousand cubits in width, along the twenty-five thousand, shall be for common use by the city for dwellings and common land, and the city shall be in the middle of it. What we translate as 'profane', Aquila translated as 'βιβηλον', Symmachus and Theodotion translated as 'λαικον'; the LXX used 'προτεχισμα' which can also be translated as 'antemurale'. 'Profane' and 'laicum' are both secular, that is, common, and can be used by all people everywhere. However, what the LXX said: 'It will not be measured, nor will it be taken away,' is clear that it does not have the same meaning as what we said: 'It will not be changed, nor will it be transferred.' The possession of the Levites is also described, which is indeed adjacent to the territories of the priests, and it has the same dimensions in length and breadth according to the number of Levites, which has the same number as the priests, but it uses its own boundaries and understands itself to be separate from the priestly rank: to remove the pride of the ministers, who, ignorant of the humility of their position, swell up beyond the priests, that is, the elders, and think of themselves as having dignity not by merit, but by wealth. Certainly, the one who is the first among ministers, because he preaches to the people individually and does not depart from the side of the Pontiff, considers it an injury if he is ordained a presbyter. And he does not remember that he is a minister of the altars and widows, entrusted not only to the service and ministry of the priests, but also to the widows and the poor. And they shall not sell, he says, nor exchange, so that the eternal possession of the Levitical distribution may remain, nor shall the worthiness of dignity be overcome by price, nor shall we transfer from one to another: for what has been sanctified to the Lord belongs not to those to whom it has been given, but to Him in whose name it is possessed. However, the remaining five thousand in width, by twenty-five thousand, is understood to be the length, will be profane of the city: so that it is lawful for all the Israelites and every member of the people to dwell there; not because they are unclean or because anything in the habitation of the holy land is contaminated, putrid, and filthy; but because, apart from the priests, it is permitted for everyone to dwell in them. By this we understand that all the things we refer to as sensations, that is, bodily pleasures that we perceive by sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste, are profane and do not have the sanctity of the temple, nor do they have the privilege of the priesthood, but rather they belong to the realm of the laity and commoners. However, the city will be in the middle, concerning which it is written: The stream of the river makes the city of God glad (Ps. 46:4). And: A city set on a hill cannot be hidden (Matthew 5:14): of which we will speak in the following. Προτεχισμα, which means a fortification, and διστημα, which means a space, which the LXX translated as suburbs, we do not know the meaning they have in this place.

(Verse 16) And the measurements of it, towards the North side, five hundred and four thousand: and towards the South side, five hundred and four thousand: and towards the East side, five hundred and four thousand: and towards the West side, five hundred and four thousand. What it says: And the measurements of it, it must be understood, of the city. For at the end of the previous chapter it is stated: And the city shall be in the midst of it, that is, the land. And first it begins from the North and extends towards the South. And again it matches like with like: so that it places the Western side opposite the Eastern side, that is, the sea: and each side of the city has four thousand and five hundred paces; which in total, approximately eleven thousand and eighty-five paces, so that the entire city, as it is written at the end of this volume, has a circumference of eighteen thousand paces, which is equivalent to forty-four thousand three hundred and forty. Also, the forty-fourth Psalm, which is titled 'For those who will be changed' and belongs to Idithun, that is, to the beloved of the Lord, or as Aquila has interpreted it, 'For the lilies,' and Symmachus, 'For the flowers,' contains the sacraments of the Church, which is the city of the Lord, about which it is written in the same psalm: At Your right hand stood the queen in a garment adorned with gold, surrounded with variety (Psalm 44:10). And again: All the glory of the daughter of the king is within (Ibid., 14): so that it may not be like the whitened sepulchres outside, but both inside and outside it may wash away all things with the perfume of myrrh (Matthew 23). And when we have moved away from the North, with a very cold wind, we pass to the South, and after the rising of the light of knowledge in us, we fear the setting of fortitudes, considering not the past but the future, neither possessing a certain possession of virtue, but daily saying in prayer: Lead us not into temptation, which we cannot endure (Matthew 26:13).

48:17 (Verse 17.) The suburbs of the city on the north side shall be two hundred and fifty cubits in length, on the south side two hundred and fifty cubits in length, on the east side two hundred and fifty cubits in length, and on the west side two hundred and fifty cubits in length. As for the suburbs, which are called "Magras" in Hebrew, they have again transferred the distance of seventy times seventy cubits, that is, a space. And what is said, two hundred and fifty on each side, is understood to refer to reeds, which are six cubits and one palm in length, and on each side they make six hundred and seventeen and a little less steps, and in total one thousand reeds, making two thousand four hundred and sixty-eight steps: these spaces surround the walls of the city in a circle, so as to divide the city from the rest. From this it is shown that none of these spaces have the right to engage in the work of the city and to gather its fruits, but rather to be free from the use and work of men, so that the areas around the city walls, with their naturally growing shrubs and herbs, and other things that the land produces, may have beauty. But the remaining length, according to the holy area, shall be ten thousand cubits toward the east and ten thousand toward the west: and it shall be over against the holy sanctuary. And the fruits thereof shall be for food, and the leaf thereof for medicine. And the workers of the city, that work therein, shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel. All the fruits thereof shall be for the service of the holy city, and the priests of the sanctuary, who shall go in and out of the house of the Lord, shall eat it. And it shall be a place for a habitation unto them. And the separated cities shall be in the midst of that which shall be for the possession of the prince: and the possession of the holy place shall be in the midst of the portion of the Levites. He wants to designate the remaining part of the firstfruits of the sanctuary, ten thousand baskets extending towards the East, and another ten thousand baskets extending

towards the West, to be allocated to those who work for the city for various purposes, whatever the city needs: so that the workers who build or restore the city walls, when necessary, may be nourished from the crops that grow on this land, and so that the city may have its adornment and the repaired roofs be restored. And this, not only in Israel or in the possession of the Holy Land, is contained spiritually in the mystery of the Church, but we also approve that it happens under Roman authority, so that certain villas belong to the rights of cities, either through royal generosity or through the inheritance and donation of many, so that buildings are not gradually ruined and public buildings, which are an ornament to the city, are not long neglected. But the workers, he said, or those who serve in the works of the city, will be from all the tribes of Israel: so that no one may consider themselves exempt from the work of the city, but all may eagerly build up the Church. This is also what we read was done in the tabernacle, that for the diversity of strengths, one offers gold and silver, scarlet, fine linen, and purple, and various and diverse coverings: others offer skins and the hair of goats: and although there were different gifts according to the quality of the substance, the reward of those who gave was one: indeed, greater than those who offered little, but more according to their abilities, as an example of the poor widow, who sent two small coins as gifts to the treasury; she was praised by the judgment of the Lord, saying: Truly I say to you, this widow, poor as she is, has put in more than all the others. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth to the offerings of God, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood. Therefore, as we have said about the works of the city, it must be briefly stated that all the first fruits of the sanctuary, and the possession of the city calculated together in a square, amount to two thousand four hundred and sixty-six, and a third part. For if twenty-five thousand reeds, which have six cubits and one palm, make ours, that is, Roman sixty, and one thousand, and six hundred and sixty-seven paces; there is no doubt that these, when multiplied by four, exceed the previous number. From which we understand that all things are to be understood spiritually, the possession of the Church is much broader than it was in Judea, who did not even receive a part of the holy land: but from each tribe they received forty-eight cities, not the full possession, but habitation and hospitality: so also the laity themselves, although they have not reached the priestly and Levitical degree, if they work in the city of the Lord, they may partake of the holy land, the land of meekness, and the land of believers, of whom one said: I believe to see the good things of the Lord, in the land of the living (Ps. 27:13).

48:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) But what remains will belong to the prince on all sides, either from here or from there ((The Vulgate is silent whether from here or from there)) as the firstfruits of the sanctuary and the possession of the city, bordering (or facing) twenty-five thousand firstfruits to the eastern boundary, and also from the sea ((The Vulgate says to the sea)) bordering (or facing) twenty-five thousand to the boundary of the sea. Similarly, in the areas belonging to the prince, there will be the firstfruits of the sanctuary and the sanctuary of the temple in its midst. There will also be possession of the Levites, and possession of the city in the middle of the prince's territory, between the boundary of Judah and the boundary of Benjamin, and it will belong to the prince. There has been much discussion about this prince above, and that he would receive only as much as one tribe. But now we learn something else, that whatever is left from all the tribes, only he shall receive it: so that there is no tribe that does not offer gifts to the prince: not from elsewhere, but from the firstfruits which serve the temple and the sanctuary and the delegated parts of the city.

For this is what he says: From the east boundary to the western boundary, and from the northern boundary to the southern boundary, the firstfruits will belong to the seven and a half tribes. Within these firstfruits will be the city and its surrounding suburbs, as well as the sanctuary of the temple in the middle of the city. As for the land assigned to the Levites and the rest of the city, it will be considered as belonging to the prince. The area next to the firstfruits and the city, in the tribe of Judah, will be the western portion of the seven tribes. The eastern portion, in the tribe of Benjamin, will also belong to the prince. Since the sacraments of Holy Scripture are wondrous and should be contemplated more than spoken (Dan. XXXII). In the former division of the land beyond the Jordan by Moses, the land was divided among the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh (Joshua, XIII). But beyond the Jordan, by Joshua the son of Nun and Eleazar the son of Aaron, Judah possessed the south (Joshua, XV); and Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh possessed the north (Joshua, XVIII). Afterwards, with the spies sent to each tribe and a description of the land brought to Joshua and Eleazar, Benjamin received possession next to Judah from the south, and next to Ephraim and half the tribe of Manasseh. The second tribe, Simeon, received an inheritance within the tribe of Judah, so that what is written about Levi and Simeon would be fulfilled: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel (Gen. XLIX, 7). The third tribe, Zebulun, received Galilee, which includes Mount Tabor. On the fourth day, Issachar, where Jezreel is located, to the Jordan. On the fifth day, Aser, up to Mount Carmel, which overlooks the Great Sea, and Tyre and Sidon. On the sixth day, Nephthali, in Galilee and up to the Jordan, where Tiberias, which was once called Chenereth, is located. On the seventh day, Dan up to Joppa, where the towers of Ailon, Selebi, and Emmaus are located, which is now called Nicopolis: although we will later read that they took the city of Lesem in the tribe of Dan, which is now called Paneas. When these things are so, and there is such a difference between the previous description of the tribes and the one now held, let us consider how both in the current description and in the past, the tribe of Judah and Benjamin, the city, and the Temple have been located. In the previous description, Judah was to the south, and Benjamin to the north: but now it is the opposite, with Judah to the north and Benjamin to the south: after them, the second is Simeon, the third is Issachar, and the fourth is Zebulun, the fifth is Gad: namely, five tribes, as it is said in the following verses; for it is written:

48:23-29

(Vers. 23 seqq.) And the rest of the tribes, from the eastern boundary to the western boundary, belong to Benjamin. And against the boundary of Benjamin, from the eastern boundary to the western boundary, belong to Simeon. And along the boundary of Simeon, from the eastern boundary to the western boundary, belong to Issachar. And along the boundary of Issachar, from the eastern boundary to the western boundary, belong to Zebulun. And along the boundary of Zebulun, from the eastern boundary to the sea, belong to Gad. And the border shall go to Gad towards the south side, and the end shall be at Thamar unto the waters of contradiction of Cades: the inheritance shall be against the great sea. This is the land which you shall divide by lot to the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, says the Lord God. The portion which is always placed at the end in the numbering of the five and seven tribes is understood either as a part, a possession, or an inheritance: although Aquila and Symmachus interpret it as a neutral gender τὸ
■πῖον, which means boundary. And it must be noted briefly that in the last five tribes, the tribe of Gad, which was mentioned earlier as being beyond the Jordan, is placed in the same area that

Judas previously held, namely the southern region, and its boundary stretches from Tamar to the waters of contradiction at Kadesh, opposite the Great Sea: Tamar itself, which we have already mentioned, is now called Palmyra, and was built long ago by Solomon; for 'palm' in Hebrew is called Tamar, and some believe that it received this name because there are many palm trees there. And what follows: Even to the waters of contradiction of Cades, the inheritance against the great sea; for which seventy transferred from Theman, and the water of Mariboth, ((also Marimoth)) Cades, the inheritance even to the great sea, it is to be observed in the Hebrew language that the same word, Nehela (), is ambiguous, signifying both inheritance and torrent, and here it should be understood more as a torrent than as an inheritance. For this is the torrent that enters the great sea of Rhinocorura, as we have already mentioned. The place called Kadesh, which is also called Kadesh-Barnea in the book of Joshua, is in the desert, extending to the city of Petra. However, Mariboth, which means contradiction, is not a place name as many think, but a name for the waters in which the people contradicted the Lord and Moses offended God, as the Psalm says: They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that Moses suffered for their sins (Psalm 106:32). The entire inheritance of the Holy Land is bordered to the south by the boundaries of Egypt, Rhinocorura, and the River of Egypt. And because Gad is interpreted as temptation, in his possession we pass from the palm groves to the waters of contradiction, even to Kadesh, which is interpreted as holy, so that we may understand that even after the victory of the world we must be solicitous, and always in fear, and remember that verse: The life of man upon earth is a temptation (Job 7:1); and to attain holiness, resisting adversaries, and thus achieve victory, so that we may contemplate the nearby stream full of rain showers.

48:30-35

(Verse 30 and following) And you shall measure five thousand four hundred cubits outside the city on the northern side. And the gates of the city shall be named after the tribes of Israel: three gates on the north side. The gate of Reuben, one; the gate of Judah, one; the gate of Levi, one. And on the eastern side, you shall measure five thousand four hundred cubits, and there shall be three gates. The gate of Joseph, one; the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one. And on the southern side, you shall measure five thousand four hundred cubits, and there shall be three gates. The Gate of Simeon, one; the Gate of Issachar, one; the Gate of Zebulun, one. And on the west side, five hundred and four thousand, and their gates three. The Gate of Gad, one; the Gate of Asher, one; the Gate of Naphtali, one; in all eighteen thousand cubits round about the city. And the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there. Now it is written that it was measured along each side, which is eleven thousand and eighty-five paces, that there were three gates, which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion call διέξοδοι (exit passages), and the LXX call διεκβολαι (projections): we interpret them as the entrances and exits of the city. And first, it must be briefly noted that the same three tribes camped around the tabernacle in such a way that Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, the sons of Leah, were to the east; and to the south, Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, the two sons of Leah, and the third son of Leah's handmaid, Zilpah. But towards the west Ephraim and Manasseh, and Benjamin namely, the two sons of Rachel; for Joseph, who was from the tribe of Levi, which was appointed for sacrifices, was divided into two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh. But towards the north, there are Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, of whom the first and third are the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, and the second is the son of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, who are of lowly birth and are positioned towards the north, being descendants of

maidservants who were in conflict with each other. According to the book of Numbers and the description of the tabernacle, which was dictated by God to Moses (Num. XXXIV). But our city, which is the city of the great king of which God is the artificer and the founder, of which the psalmist sings: Shall it be said of Sion: This man and that man is born in her? and the Highest himself hath founded her (Ps. LXXXVI, 5), has a different description of the tribes in the holy land, and the measurement of the city and the order of possessions, and the boundaries of each tribe. First, three gates or exits of the city are opposed to the blows of the North Wind, of which the firstborn is Reuben, and Judah the founder of the royal line, and Levi, over whose name nothing is said in the description of the tabernacle and the sacred things, so that as possessors of the firstborn, we may despise the cold of the North. Second, towards the East are Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan: both sons of Rachel, and one of her maidservant Bilhah. But towards the South, Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun, who are three sons of Leah. Furthermore, towards the West, Gad, Asher, and Naphtali: the first two of whom are sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, and the third son of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid. Who is wise and understands these things? Understanding, will he know them? For the ways of the Lord are straight, and the just shall walk in them, but transgressors shall stumble upon them (Hosea, 14:10). I think that these twelve gates, or exits, were assigned to each tribe under the names of the Apostles and Patriarchs, according to the quality of their merits and virtues: of which it is written more explicitly in the Apocalypse of John, and many sacraments of the divine Scriptures testify (Apoc. 21). And it is necessary for such a city to hold eighteen thousand revolutions of calamities: under which number, and in the twenty-second Psalm, the natural law is written, and the grace of the Gospel is described: for which the Church, that is, the city of the Savior, is built. The name of this city will by no means be as before Jerusalem, which means vision of peace, but Adonai Sama ((Al. Adonaisan et Adonaisamia)) () which is translated into the Latin language, the Lord is there, who will never depart from it, as He said to the disciples before departing from the previous people: Arise, let us go from here (John XIV, 31). And to the Jews: Let your house be left desolate to you (Matt. 23:38): but let it have eternal possession, and let it be its own possession, promising the same to his disciples: Behold, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:20).

Commentary on Galatians

Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

It has been only a few days since I finished interpreting Paul's letter to Philemon and moved on to the Galatians, skipping many in between. And suddenly, I received letters from Rome, informing me that the venerable old woman Albina has been reunited with the Lord's presence, and the holy Marcella has been left without her mother's companionship. Now more than ever, I, Paula and Eustochium, beseech your solace. And since that cannot be done for now, due to the vast distances of the sea and land, I wish to at least heal the wound by immersing myself in the Scriptures. Indeed, I know his ardor, I know the faith which he always has in his heart, surpassing his gender, forgetting his humanity, and crossing the red sea of this age with the thunderous timpani of divine writings. Certainly, when I was in Rome, he never saw me in such a hurry that he did not ask something about the Scriptures. Nor did he consider whatever answer I gave as correct in the Pythagorean manner; nor was my authority without a preconceived reason valued by him. But he examined everything and weighed all things with a discerning mind, so that I felt that I had not so much a disciple as a judge. Therefore, I think that what would be pleasing to them in their absence and beneficial to you who are present, I will undertake the unfinished task before our Latin writers and also a few Greeks, as the honor of the matter demanded. Not that I am unaware of Gaius Marius Victorinus, who taught rhetoric in Rome when I was a boy, having published Commentaries on the Apostle; but because he, being occupied with the learning of secular literature, completely ignored the holy Scriptures: and no one can, no matter how eloquent, speak well of him, if he is ignorant of that. So, why then, am I foolish or reckless, who promise what he could not accomplish? No, quite the opposite, in fact, I seem to be more cautious and timid, feeling the weakness of my own abilities, I have followed Origen's Commentaries. For that man wrote, specifically, five volumes on Paul's letter to the Galatians, and completed the tenth book of his Stromata with a commentary in verse on its explanation. He also composed various treatises and excerpts, which alone could be sufficient. I pass over Didymus, my own guide, and Laodicea (Apollinarius) who recently left the Church, and the ancient heretic Alexander, and also Eusebius of Emesa, and Theodore of Heraclea, who themselves left behind some commentaries on this matter. From these, if I were to select even a few things, something would be produced that would not be completely scorned. Therefore, to confess simply, I read all of these and, piling many things in my mind, I dictated them with a notary, either mine or someone else's, occasionally not preserving the order, the language, or even the memory of the ideas. The main point of this letter is to remind you that the same subject matter is found in Paul's letter to the Galatians and his letter to the Romans. However, the difference between them is that in the former he uses a deeper and more profound argument, while here, writing to those about whom he says, 'O foolish Galatians,' and 'You foolish people,' he chastises rather than instructs. He speaks in a way that even fools can understand, using common expressions to convey common ideas, and using his authority to call back those whom reason cannot persuade. Indeed, there is not a single discourse of the Apostles, whether in their Epistles or in person, in which they do not struggle to teach that the

burdens of the old Law have been set aside, and all those things which preceded in types and figures, that is, the rest of the Sabbath, the injury of circumcision, the recurrence of the Kalends and the three annual solemnities, the scrupulosity of foods, and the need to cleanse oneself again on a daily basis, by the sudden arrival of the grace of the Gospel, which is not fulfilled by the blood of victims, but by the faith of the believing soul. But elsewhere, on the other hand, and as another actor had presented this question to himself, it was discussed and almost examined closely. However, in these two, as I said, Letters, the cessation of the old law and the introduction of the new law are specifically contained. But this is peculiar to the Galatians, that he does not write to those who believed in Christ from the Jews and thought that paternal ceremonies should be observed, but to those who received the faith of the Gospel from the Gentiles and again fell back, some of whom were deterred by authority, asserting that Peter and James and all the churches of Judea had mixed the Gospel of Christ with the old law. Moreover, he would do one thing in Judea and another thing among the nations. And it would be in vain for them to believe in the Crucified if they thought that what the leaders of the Apostles observed should be neglected. Therefore, he proceeds cautiously between the two, so as not to betray the grace of the Gospel under the weight and authority of the elders, nor to do an injustice to his predecessors, while being an advocate of grace. But he also advances indirectly and, as it were, stealthily through hidden tunnels, in order to teach Peter that he should do what he was entrusted with concerning the circumcision, so that, by not suddenly departing from the ancient way of life, the Cross would not cause a scandal, and that having been entrusted with the preaching of the Gentiles, it would be fair for him to defend what he had formerly simulated for the sake of dispensation. Not understanding at all, the Bataneotes and that wicked Porphyrius, in the first book of his work against us, objected that Peter was criticized by Paul for not walking in a straight path for evangelizing: wanting to stain him with the mark of error, and to accuse him of impudence and of falsely inventing a common doctrine, while the leaders of the Churches disagree among themselves. We happen to come across these things lightly in what sense they were said, and we will explain them more fully in their proper places. But now it is time to set forth the words of the Apostle himself, let us unfold each individual thing.

Book One

Book One

1:1

(Chapter 1, Verse 1) Paul, an apostle not from men nor by man but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead. He does not propose himself as an apostle arrogantly, as some think, but necessarily, neither from men nor by man. Instead, he does so through Jesus Christ and God the Father, in order to confound those who were belittling Paul outside of the twelve apostles and claiming that he suddenly emerged from somewhere or was ordained by the elders, with this authority. However, it can also be understood indirectly as being said to Peter and the others, that the Gospel was not handed down to him by the apostles, but by Jesus Christ himself, who had chosen those apostles. But all of this is prepared so that no one who disputes the burdens of the Law for the sake of the Gospel may be able to object: 'but Peter said this,' 'but the apostles decreed this,' 'but your predecessors determined something else.' Indeed, he makes this clearer in the following, now seemingly in hidden speech, by citing that nothing contributed by those who seem to be something is relevant to him, and that he himself resisted Peter to his face,

saying that he was not compelled by any necessity to yield to the hypocrisy of the Jews. But if it seems rash to some that he spoke against the apostles, even though secretly, who had gone to Jerusalem in order to confer with them about the Gospel, lest perhaps he had run in vain or had run in vain, let us transfer that understanding there: Even to this day, the apostles are sent by the Jewish patriarchs, from whom I also believe that the Galatians, led astray, began to observe the Law, or certainly other Jews who believed in Christ had gone to Galatia, who asserted that Peter, too, was the leader of the apostles, and that James, the Lord's brother, observed the ceremonies of the Law. Therefore, in order to distinguish between those who are sent by men and those who are sent by Christ, he took the following beginning: Paul, an apostle, not from men, nor through man. But apostle, which properly is a Hebrew word, means one who is sent, which also signifies Silas (or Silai), to whom a name was given by being sent. The Hebrews say that among themselves there are certain prophets and holy men who are both prophets and apostles, and others who are only prophets. Finally, Moses, to whom it is said, 'And I will send you to Pharaoh' (Exod. III, 10, 11); and he responds, 'Provide someone else whom you will send.' And Isaiah, to whom God speaks, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?' (Isai. VI, 8) ? There were also apostles and prophets. Therefore, we can understand that John the Baptist is also to be called a prophet and apostle, since the Scripture says, 'There was a man sent from God, whose name was John' (John I, 6). And in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. III), Paul, according to his usual custom, did not put his own name or the title of Apostle before it, because he was going to speak about Christ: Therefore, having a high priest and an apostle of our confession, Jesus; it was not fitting that where Christ was to be called an apostle, Paul should also be called an apostle. There are, however, four kinds of apostles. One, which is neither from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father; another, which is indeed from God, but through man; a third, which is from man, not from God; and a fourth, which is neither from God, nor through man, nor from man, but from itself. The first category can include Isaiah, the other prophets, and the apostle Paul himself, who was sent not by humans or through a human, but by God the Father and Christ. In the second category is Jesus, the son of Nun, who was indeed appointed by God as an apostle, but through a human, Moses. The third category is when someone is ordained by the favor and zeal of the people. As we see now, many are being appointed to the priesthood not by the judgment of God, but by the favor of the redeemed crowd. The fourth [sign] is [the sign] of false prophets and false apostles, about whom the apostle [Paul] says: 'Such pseudo-apostles are workers of iniquity, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ, who say, "Thus says the Lord," and the Lord did not send them' (2 Corinthians 11:13). But not such [was] the apostle Paul, who was sent not by men nor through man, but by God the Father through Jesus Christ. From this it is approved that the heresies of Ebion and Photinus should also be refuted, [namely] that our Lord Jesus Christ is God, since the apostle, being sent by Christ to preach the Gospel, denies that he was sent by man. In this place, other heresies arise, which claim that Christ's flesh is pretended and assert that Christ is God, not man. There is also a new heresy that declares a divided dispensation of Christ. Thus, among the shipwrecks of so many false teachings, if one confesses Christ as a man, the Ebionites and Photinus creep in; if one contends that he is God, the Manicheans and Marcion, authors of a new doctrine, bubble up. In the community, they hear that Christ is both God and man. Not that there is another God and another man, but rather the one who was always God deemed it worthy to become man for our salvation. It should also be known that in the Apostle of Marcion it is not written that Christ is explained by God the Father, but rather

is raised up by himself, as it is written: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up (John II, 19). And elsewhere: No one takes my soul from me; but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again (Ibid., X, 18).

1:2

(Vers. 2.) And all the brothers who are with me, to the churches of Galatia. In other Epistles, Sosthenes and Silvanus, and sometimes even Timothy, are mentioned at the beginning. In this one, however, because the authority of many was necessary, the name of all the brothers is assumed. They themselves perhaps were also of the circumcision, and were not held in contempt by the Galatians. For it is of great importance to correct the people, to have the agreement and consensus of many in one matter. But when he says 'to the churches of Galatia,' it should be noted that here he writes not only to one church of one city, but to the churches of the whole province, and he calls them churches, which he later accuses of being corrupt by error. From this it is to be understood that the Church can be said in two ways: the one which has no spot or wrinkle and truly is the body of Christ, and the one which gathers in the name of Christ without full and perfect virtues (Ephesians 5). The wise are called in two ways, both those who are full of perfect virtue and those who are just beginning and are in progress. Concerning the perfect, it is said: 'I will send to you wise men' (Luke 11:49). Concerning the foolish: 'Reprove a wise man, and he will love thee' (Proverbs 8:9). For he who is full and complete in virtue does not need correction. This sense can be understood in regard to the other virtues as well, namely that the courageous and prudent, pious, chaste, just, and temperate are sometimes understood correctly, sometimes incorrectly.

1:3

(Verse 3) Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Not as in the other Epistles, he puts the grace of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, and peace, through which without merit of works, and sins were granted to us previously, and peace was granted after forgiveness: but wisely he now argues the cause against those who were prevented by the Law, and thought they could be justified by works, so that they would know that they should continue in grace, in what they had begun.

1:4

(Verse 4) He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Neither did the Son give himself for our sins without the will of the Father, nor did the Father deliver the Son without the Son's will; but this is the will of the Son, to fulfill the will of the Father, as he himself speaks in the psalm: 'I desired to do your will, O my God' (Psalm 40:8). But the Son gave Himself, in order to overthrow the injustice that was in us with justice itself. Wisdom offered itself in order to conquer ignorance. Holiness and strength presented themselves in order to eliminate impurity and weakness. And in this way, not only in the future age according to the promised hope in which we believe, but also here in the present age, He has freed us: while we have died together with Christ, we are transformed into a new way of thinking, and we are not of this world, from which we are rightly not loved. The question is how the present age is called evil. For heretics often take advantage of this, asserting that one is the creator of light and the future age, another of darkness

and the present. But we say, that it is not so much the age itself, which runs day and night, years and months, that is called evil, but rather the things that happen in the age: how it is said to be sufficient for its own evil (Matthew VI): and the days of Jacob are said to be few and evil (Genesis XLVII). Not that the period of time in which Jacob lived was bad, but that the things he endured through various trials tested him. Finally, during the time he served for his wives and struggled with many difficulties (Gen. XXIX), Esau was at rest, and so the same period of time was good for some and bad for others; and it would not be written in Ecclesiastes: Do not say that my former days (were better) than these (Eccles. VII, 11), unless in comparison to the bad. Where John says: The whole world is set in evil (1 John 5:19). Not that the world itself is evil, but that evil things happen in the world because of humans. Let us eat and drink, they say, for tomorrow we will die (Isaiah 22:17). And the Apostle himself says: Redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Ephesians 5:16). Even the fields and forests are defamed, when they are full of robberies, not because the earth and woods sin, but because they have also drawn infamy to the places of murder. We detest both the sword by which human blood is shed and the cup in which poison has been mixed, not the sword or the cup themselves, but those who have misused them. Thus, this world, which is a span of time, is not inherently good or evil, but is called such by those who are in it. Therefore, the delusions and fables of Valentinius, who invented thirty aeons based on the mention of ages in the Scriptures, are to be despised. He claimed that they are beings and that he produced as many aeons as the Aeneas's sow produced litters, using squares and octads, decades and duodecades. Also to be sought is what is the difference between saeculum and saeculum saeculi, or saecula saeculorum, and where it is placed for a brief span of time, where it is placed for eternity: because in Hebrew saeculum, that is, Olam (), where the letter Vav is added, signifies eternity, but when it is written without Vav it signifies the fiftieth year, which they call Jubilee. For this reason, that Hebrew who, because of his wife and children, loving his Lord, willingly subjects himself to perpetual servitude, is commanded to serve forever (Exod. XXI), that is, until the fiftieth year. Both the Moabites and the Ammonites (Deuteronomy XXIII) are not allowed to enter the Church of the Lord until the fifteenth generation and even forever: because every hard condition of the Jubilee was solved by His coming. Some say that the same sense exists in the ages of ages as in the holy of holies, in the heavens of heavens, in the works of works, in the Songs of Songs: and they have the same difference as the heavens have from those who belong to the heavens, and as the holy things which are holier than the comparison of the holy things, and as the works which are better than the comparison of the works, and as the Songs which excel among all the Songs: in the same way, they say, the ages have the same relationship to the comparison of ages. Therefore, they have determined that the present age should be counted from the time when the heavens and the earth were created, and it will continue until the end of the world, when Christ will judge all things. They also recall the past and advance to a higher level, debating about past and future ages, whether they have been good or bad, or will be in the future. They delve into such deep questions that they have even written books and countless volumes on this subject. But as for the conclusion of the prologue of Paul in the Hebrew language: Amen (), the Seventy translated it as γ■νοιτο, that is, let it be done. Aquila rendered it as πεπιστωμ■νος, truly or faithfully. This is also constantly embraced in the Gospel by the Savior, affirming his own words by Amen.

1:6

(Verse 6) I am amazed that you are so quickly shifting away from him who called you into the grace of Christ Jesus, to a different gospel which is not another. There are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. We read about the word 'translation' first in Genesis (Gen. 5), where Enoch was translated by God and was not found. And in the books of Kings afterwards (1 Kings 21), when Ahab turned his wife Jezebel from the worship of God to the worship of idols, to do all that the Amorites did, whom the Lord destroyed before the face of the children of Israel. But since there are two translations, one is from God, the other from the devil. Whoever is translated by God is not found by his enemies: nor can the deceiver ambush him. For I think that this signifies and is not found. But whoever is translated by the devil, in this he is translated because he appears to be, but is not. Moreover, the wise men of the world call those who are translated from one teaching to another, translated, like that Dionysius (whose opinion was that pain is not evil: after being overwhelmed by misfortunes and pain of torment, he began to affirm that pain is the greatest of all evils) was called Transposed by them, or Translated, because departing from his previous decree, he fell into the opposite. And so Paul marvels, first because they have been transferred from the freedom of the Gospel to the servitude of legal works. Secondly, because they have been transferred so quickly: for it is not easy to be transferred away from someone's guilt, and to be transferred quickly; just as in martyrdom, not the same punishment is inflicted on one who immediately jumps to denial without struggle and torture, and on one who, between stakes, ropes, and fires, distorted and compelled, denies what he believed. The preaching of the Gospel was still recent, not much time had passed since the Apostle had led the Galatians from idols to Christ. He wonders how quickly they have turned away from Him, to whom they had recently become Christians. And the place itself is remarkable, which can be read in its proper order: I wonder that you are so quickly transferring yourselves from Christ Jesus, who called you by his grace, saying: I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Mark 2:17). For by grace you have been saved, through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8) But, he says, you have been transferred to another Gospel, which is not another: because everything that is false does not stand, and what is contrary to the truth does not exist, like this: 'Do not give, O Lord, your scepter to those who are not.' (Esther 14:12) And the things that were not, God called into being, in order to make what is not. But if this is said about those who believed in the same God and had the same Scriptures, that they have been transferred to another Gospel, which is not the Gospel, what should we think about Marcion and other heretics, who reject the Creator and falsely pretend to be followers of another God, Christ? Those who do not adhere to the interpretation of the law and letter, or engage in the battle between flesh and spirit, fall and crumble, but they are in discord with the entire authority of the Church. But beautifully he says: Unless there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the Gospel of Christ. They want, he says, to change, pervert, and trouble the Gospel of Christ: but they are not able. For it is the nature of this Gospel that it cannot be anything other than true. Everyone who interprets the Gospel with a different spirit and mind than what is written, disturbs and perverts the Gospel of Christ, turning what is in front into what is behind, and what is behind into what is in front. If someone follows only the letter, they put the later things in the face. If someone relies on Jewish interpretations, they send behind those things which are established in their nature in the face. Moreover, it is appropriately said that the word 'translation' is adapted to the Galatians: for Galatia in our language means 'translation'.

(Verse 8) But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. This statement can also be understood hyperbolically, not that either an apostle or an angel could preach differently than they had once said: but even if it were possible for both apostles and angels to be changed, one must not deviate from what had once been accepted, especially since the apostle himself demonstrates the steadfastness of his faith elsewhere, saying: I know that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38). I speak the truth, I do not lie, with my conscience bearing witness (Rom. IX, 1). Indeed, these words are not those of one who can ever depart from the Christian faith and love. However, those who do not want this to be understood hypothetically, but truly: that is, that even apostles and angels can be turned to worse things, they oppose it with what even Paul himself knew, that he could stumble if he acted too lazily, saying: But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when preaching to others, I myself should become disqualified (I Cor. IX, 27). Angels also are mutable, who have not preserved their principality; but leaving their own habitation, are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day (Jude, VI). ||The nature of God alone is immutable, of whom it is written: But thou art always the selfsame (Psalm 101: 28). And of himself: For I am the Lord your God, and I change not (Malachi 3: 6). Lucifer has fallen, who once shone brightly; and the one who was once sent to all nations has been crushed on the earth. In this place, the very learned man Tertullian elegantly writes against Apelles and his virgin Philumena, whom a certain angel, possessed by a diabolical and perverse spirit, claimed to be. This angel, according to the prophecy of the Holy Spirit foretold by the Apostle, was cursed long before the birth of Apelles. Furthermore, **■v■θεμα**, a word proper to the Jews, is used both in the book of Joshua (Joshua 6:7) and in the book of Numbers (Numbers 21), when the Lord commanded that everything in Jericho and the detestable Midianites be devoted to destruction and to anathema. Let us question those who assert that Christ and the Apostle Paul, the beloved of God and hitherto unknown, are either the son or the servant who knows not how to curse and does not know how to condemn anyone: how does their Apostle now, in the language of the Jews, that is, of the Creator, use it, and wish to destroy either an angel or an apostle, when he himself is not accustomed to avenge? Moreover, what he added, as we have foretold, and now I say again, shows that he, being careful of this very thing from the beginning, had denounced anathema to those who would preach otherwise, and now that it has been preached, he enforces the anathema which he had foretold before. Therefore, they accused him of doing one thing in Judea and teaching another, and they pronounced a curse on the angel, whom it was even known to be greater than his predecessors, the apostles, so that the authority of Peter and John would not be considered great, since it was not allowed for him who had taught them before, nor for the angel to preach differently than they had learned once. Therefore, he mentioned himself and the angel by name, but the others without a name. If anyone, he said, were to proclaim the gospel to you without doing harm to your predecessors; and yet, he would secretly reveal their names.

1:10

(Verse 10.) For now I advise men or God: or do I seek to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ. Let us not think that we are taught by the Apostle to despise the judgments of men by his example, who in another place said: Knowing therefore, the fear of the Lord, we persuade men: but we are made manifest to God (2 Corinthians 5:11); and that: Be without offense to the Jews, and to the Gentiles, and to the Church of God: as I also please all in all things, not seeking what is profitable to myself, but what is profitable to many, that they may be saved (1 Corinthians 10). But if it is possible, that we may please both God and men at the same time, it is necessary to please men. But if we do not please men in any other way than if we displease God: we ought to please God rather than men. Otherwise, he himself brings forward the reason why he is pleasing to all through all things: Not seeking, he says, what is useful to me, but what is useful to many, so that they may be saved. But whoever, out of that charity which does not seek its own things, but those that are others', pleases everyone so that they may be saved: certainly he first pleases God, to whom the salvation of men is a care. However, it also has a word, which is specifically added here, either to please people temporarily or to displease them: so that he who does not please at the moment because of the truth of the Gospel, may have pleased formerly for the salvation of many. Paul had pleased the Jews at one time, when he was an emulator of paternal traditions, having lived blamelessly according to the law, and he had such enthusiasm and faith in the ceremonies of the ancestors that he even became involved in the killing of Stephen, and he went to Damascus to bind those who had deserted the law (Acts 9). But after he was transferred to the vessel of election from a persecutor, and began to preach the faith which he had once attacked, he began to displease the Jews, whom he had previously pleased. This is therefore what he says: Am I seeking to please the Jews, by displeasing whom I pleased God? For if I were still pleasing them, I would not be a servant of Christ. For I would affirm the law, and destroy the grace of the Gospel. But now, I am not even brought to the pretense of observing the law, because I cannot please both God and the Jews at the same time. For whoever endeavors to persuade others with a word taken from human usage, with what he himself possesses and has once imbibed, and in many passages of the Scriptures it is read, from which this is one: The persuasion is not from him who called you (Gal. 5:8). And also in the Acts of the Apostles: Therefore many Jews came to him in the inn, to whom he explained, testifying about the kingdom of God and persuading them about Jesus, from the Law of Moses and the Prophets until evening. And all of this happened because it had been spread (or slandered) about him that he secretly observed the Law and had mixed with those who were practicing Judaism in Jerusalem.

1:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) For I make known to you, brothers, the Gospel that was preached by me: that it is not according to man, nor did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ. From this passage, the teachings of Ebion and Photinus are refuted: that God is Christ, and not only man. For if the Gospel of Paul is not according to man, nor did he receive it from man, nor was he taught it, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ, who revealed the Gospel to Paul, is certainly not a mere man. But if he is not a man, therefore he is God. Not that we deny that he assumed humanity; but only that we refuse mere humanity. The question is whether the whole Church of God has received the Gospel, or just individual people: for how many of us have learned the revelation of Christ and known it not from a human preacher? To which we will respond, those who can say: Do you seek proof of Christ speaking in me (2 Cor.

13:3)? And: I no longer live, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20), teaching not so much themselves, but God who speaks to the saints: I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High' (Psalm 82:6); and immediately about sinners: But you will die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Therefore, when Paul and Peter, who do not die like men or fall like one of the princes, speak of them being gods, it is evident. But those who are gods, they transmit the Gospel of God, and not of man. Marcion and Basilides and other heretical pests do not have the Gospel of God; because they do not have the Holy Spirit, without whom the human Gospel is not possible to be taught. Nor can we consider the Gospel to be in the words of the Scriptures, but in the meaning: not in the surface, but in the core; not in the leaves of words, but in the root of reason. It is said in the prophet about God: His words are good with him (Micah 2:7). Then the Scriptures are useful to those who listen, since they are not spoken without Christ, nor proclaimed without the Father, nor are they revealed without the Spirit by the one who preaches. Otherwise, both the devil, who speaks about the Scriptures, and all heresies, according to Ezekiel (Chapter XIII), make for themselves pillows that they place under the elbow of all ages. Even I, who am speaking, if I have Christ in me, do not have the Gospel of man; but if I am a sinner, God says to me: O sinner, why do you declare my justice and assume my covenant on your lips? But you have hated discipline and cast my words behind you (Ps. XLIX, 16, 17), and so on that follows. There is great danger in speaking in the Church, lest by a perverse interpretation, the Gospel of Christ becomes the gospel of man, or worse, of the devil. However, there is a difference between receiving and learning, in that the one receives the Gospel to whom it is first taught and is led to faith, to believe what is written. But he learns who understands the things that are represented in it by enigmas and parables, when they are explained and expounded: and he understands them not through the revelation of man, but through Christ, who revealed them to Paul, or through Paul, in whom Christ speaks. The very word 'revelation' itself, that is, 'unveiling,' properly belongs to the Scriptures, and was not used by any of the wise men of the world among the Greeks. Therefore, they seem to me, just as in other words that the Seventy translators translated from Hebrew into Greek, to have made a great effort also in this one to express the peculiarity of a foreign language by inventing new words for new things: and the word 'to sound' means when something that is hidden and covered is shown and brought forth into the light, by removing the covering from above. To make this clearer, take the example of Moses. When he spoke with God, his face was revealed and uncovered (Exodus 33, 34), that is, without a veil. But when he spoke to the people, they could not look at his face, so he put a veil on (Numbers 4). Also, in front of the Ark of the Covenant, there was a veil. When this veil was pulled back, the things that had been hidden were revealed, or, to use the words itself, they were uncovered. So if those who are accustomed to reading the eloquent works of the present age start mocking us for the novelty and cheapness of our language, let us send them to Cicero's books, which are renowned for their philosophical inquiries; and let them see how compelled he was by necessity to produce such monstrous words that the ears of a Latin man have never heard: and this even when he was translating from Greek, a language that is close to ours. What do those who attempt to express the peculiarities of Hebrew difficulties endure? And yet there are much fewer things in such great volumes of Scriptures that sound new, than those that he has collected in a small work. But, as we said at the beginning when we were explaining: Paul the apostle did not receive his mission from men or through a man: in this place, it can be understood indirectly of Peter and his predecessors: that it may not be objected to on account of anyone's law or authority, who holds Christ alone as the teacher of the

Gospel. Moreover, it signifies that revelation, when on his journey to Damascus, he deserved to hear the voice of Christ: and with blinded eyes, he beheld the true light of the world.

1:13

(Verse 13.) For you have heard of my previous conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. This account is highly beneficial to the Galatians, as it shows how Paul, once a destroyer of the church and a fervent defender of Judaism, suddenly converted to the faith of Christ. And it was at this time, when the crucifixion was first announced in the world; when the new doctrine was being expelled from the boundaries of both the Gentiles and the Jews. For they could say: If he, who from a young age was instructed in the teachings of the Pharisees, and surpassed all his contemporaries in the Jewish tradition, now defends the Church which he once fiercely persecuted; and desires the grace and novelty of Christ more than the oldness of the Law, to the envy of all: what should we who have begun to be Christian from the Gentiles do? Moreover, he aptly added: I pursued the Church of God beyond measure, so that from here also admiration might arise, that not every person who lightly persecuted the Church, but he who overcame the others in persecution, turned to the faith. And wisely, while narrating something else, he interjects that he served not so much the Law of God, as the paternal, that is, the traditions of the Pharisees; who teach the doctrines and commandments of men (Matt. XV; Mark VII); and they reject the Law of God in order to establish their own traditions. However, what a beautiful observation and weight of words: 'You have heard,' he says, 'of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.' And he says, not the Church of Christ, as he then thought (or was thought): which he considered contemptible, which he persecuted: but as he now believes, the Church of God: either signifying that Christ himself is God, or that the Church is of the same God who was once the giver of the Law. And I made progress, he says, in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my race: being a more zealous follower of my ancestral traditions. Again, he calls it progress not of the Law of God, but of Judaism. Not above all, but above most, not above the elders, but above the contemporaries, so that he might apply his zeal to the Law and avoid boasting. However, by mentioning the traditions of the fathers instead of the commandments of the Lord, and by identifying himself as a Pharisee among the Pharisees, he showed that he had indeed a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. But until this day, those who understand the Scriptures in a Jewish sense persecute the Church of Christ and plunder it, corrupted not by the study of the Law of God but by human traditions.

1:15

(Verse 15) But when it pleased Him who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. (Now concerning the things which I write to you,

indeed, before God, I do not lie.) Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy." And they glorified God in me. But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. David sings against sinners: For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and my mother conceived me in sins (Ps. 50:7). And in another place: Sinners are estranged from the womb (Ps. 57:4). And even before the children were born, God loved Jacob but hated Esau (Malachi 1:1, 2). Heretics find a place where they claim there are different natures, namely spiritual, animal, and earthly, and that one is saved, another perishes, and another exists between the two, so that neither the righteous would be chosen before doing anything good, nor would the sinner be hated before committing a sin, unless there were different natures of those who perish and those who are saved. To which it can be simply answered: this happens from God's foreknowledge, that he loves whom he knows will be just before they are born from the womb, and hates whom he knows will be a sinner before they sin; not that in God there is injustice in love and hatred, but that he must not have them otherwise, knowing either that they will be sinners or that they will be just: we as humans can only judge based on the present, but He to whom the future is already made known can pass judgment on the end of things, not on their beginnings. And indeed, these things have been said in a simpler manner: and without a deeper discussion, they can please the reader in some way. Moreover, those who try to assert that God is unjust, after what we have previously stated, have strayed from the womb, and they also bring forth the other things that follow: They have gone astray from the womb, they have uttered falsehoods. And they say, how is it that sinners have immediately gone astray from the womb and have uttered falsehoods, when they could not even have speech or understanding? But what is this justice of the foreknowledge of God, to love and guard one before they are born, and to detest another? And the causes of this matter refer to a previous life, that each person is assigned to good or evil angels according to their merit, immediately from their first birth. And that whole passage about Jacob and Esau, which we mention now, is discussed in such a way in the letter to the Romans (Rom. IX), that it cannot be answered without sweat and Chrysippus' hellebore. However, it is not the same for him to reveal his Son in me, as if he were to say, to reveal his Son to me. For whoever something is revealed, to him it can be revealed, which was not in him before. But in whom it is revealed, that is revealed which was in him before, and later revealed. It is similar to what is said in the Gospel: Among you stands one whom you do not know (John 1:26). And elsewhere: He was the true light, which enlightens every person coming into the world (ibid., 9). From which it becomes clear that the knowledge of God is inherent in all of nature, and no one is born without Christ, and does not have the seeds of wisdom, justice, and other virtues within them. Hence, many without faith and the Gospel of Christ, either wisely do certain things, or piously, such as obeying their parents, extending help to the needy, not oppressing their neighbors, not plundering others, and therefore become more susceptible to the judgment of God because, having within them the principles of virtues and the seeds of God, they do not believe in Him without whom they cannot exist. It is possible to take it in another way in the letter of Paul, Sons of God revealed: that, when he preached, he was acknowledged by the Gentiles, whom they previously did not know.

(Verse 16) Immediately, I did not consult with flesh and blood. Or, as it is better in Greek: I did not confer with flesh and blood. I know that many consider this statement to be about the apostles. For even Porphyry objects that after the revelation of Christ, he did not deign to go to men and confer with them: lest, of course, he be instructed by flesh and blood after the teaching of God. But far be it from me to think that Peter, John, and James are flesh and blood; which cannot possess the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 1). If the spiritual apostles are flesh and blood, what do we think of the earthly ones? Paul did not associate himself with flesh and blood after the revelation of Christ, because he did not want to cast pearls before swine or give what is holy to dogs (Matthew 7). See what is written about sinners: My spirit will not remain in these people, for they are flesh (Genesis 6). With those who were flesh and blood, who did not reveal the Son of God to Peter either (Matthew 16), the Apostle did not share the Gospel that had been revealed to him, but gradually turned them from flesh and blood to spirit. And only then did he entrust them with the hidden sacraments of the Gospel. Let someone say: If immediately he did not communicate the Gospel with flesh and blood, nevertheless it is understood that later he will communicate with flesh and blood: and this understanding, by which the apostles are excused, cannot stand, lest flesh and blood be [involved], since nevertheless he who did not communicate with flesh and blood in the beginning, later, as I said, will communicate with flesh and blood. This preposition constrains us, that we may distinguish thus, lest immediately or continuously, we unite with flesh and blood; but that we may adhere to the previous statements, and it may be read: But when it pleased him who separated me from the womb of my mother. And then: That he might reveal his Son in me. And finally: That I might preach him among the Gentiles immediately: that I have not conferred with flesh and blood; but rather it should be understood in this sense: that he who is immediately sent to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles after the revelation of Christ, has not remained, nor has he extended the time by going to the apostles and comparing the Lord's revelation with men: but he has gone to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus, and after three years he preached the Gospel; and only then, coming to Jerusalem, did he see Peter, John, and James.

1:17 (Verse 17.) Nor did I go to Jerusalem to the apostles before me. If he had mentioned the apostles, I did not confer with flesh and blood. So why was it necessary to repeat the same thing by saying, Nor did I go to Jerusalem to the apostles before me? Therefore, we must maintain the meaning that we explained above. But I went into Arabia and then returned to Damascus. It does not seem to fit with the order of the story, as recounted by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts IX), that after Paul spoke boldly about the Gospel of Christ for many days in Damascus, plots were made against him and he was lowered in a basket through the wall at night, and he came to Jerusalem trying to join the disciples. But when they avoided him and were afraid to approach him, he was brought to the apostles by Barnabas and he told them how he had seen the Lord on the road and had acted confidently in the name of the Lord (some versions add Jesus) while in Damascus. He was, he said, with them, going in and out in Jerusalem, boldly acting in the name of the Lord. He also spoke and debated with the Greeks, but they sought to kill him. When the brothers learned of this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus. But he says that he first went to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus after three years, and went to Jerusalem, saw Peter, and stayed with him for fifteen days, and did not see anyone else except James, the brother of the Lord. In order for them to be believed as true (since doubtful things could appear questionable in the absence of witnesses), he confirms under oath, saying: "The things that I tell you are true, behold, I say them before God, for I do not lie." Therefore, we can conclude

that Paul, according to the account of Luke, went to Jerusalem not to learn something from the apostles who came before him, but to avoid the onslaught of persecution that had been incited against him in Damascus because of the Gospel of Christ. And so he came to Jerusalem as if he had come to any other city. Then, when he had immediately withdrawn on account of the ambush, he came to Arabia or Damascus; and then, after three years, he returned to see Peter in Jerusalem. Or certainly, this is how it happened: Immediately after he was baptized and strengthened by receiving food, he stayed with the disciples in Damascus for a few days; and while all the Jews in the synagogues were amazed, he preached continuously that Jesus was the Son of God. Then he went to Arabia, and returned from Arabia to Damascus, where he spent three years. These many days are attested by the Scripture, which says: When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him (Acts 9:23). However, there were plots made against Saul, and they were guarding the gates day and night in order to kill him. So, his disciples took him at night and lowered him down the wall in a basket. When he arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples. But Luke mentions that he passed through Arabia because perhaps he had not done anything deserving of apostleship in Arabia. And he chose to give a concise account of the things that seemed worthy of the Gospel of Christ. Nor should we attribute this to the laziness of the Apostle, if he stayed in Arabia in vain (or: remained): but rather that it was some dispensation and command of God that he should keep silent. For we also read that after this Paul went out with Silas, and the Holy Spirit prohibited him from speaking the word in Asia (Acts 16). In another passage: But I went to Arabia; and again, I returned to Damascus. What benefit is this account to me, if I read that Paul immediately went to Arabia after the revelation of Christ, and immediately returned from Arabia to Damascus, without knowing what he did there, or what usefulness his going and returning had? Give me the opportunity for a deeper understanding in this same letter the Apostle himself, while discussing Abraham, Hagar, and Sarah, says: These things, he says, are spoken in allegory. For these are the two covenants: one indeed from Mount Sinai, which brings forth into slavery, and that is Hagar. For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which is joined to the present Jerusalem (Gal. IV, 24, 25). And he teaches that the old Testament, that is, the son of the servant girl, was established in Arabia (which translates to humble and western). So immediately, as soon as Paul believed, he turned to the Law, the Prophets, and the sacraments of the old Testament which were already placed in the west, and he sought in them the Christ whom he had been instructed to preach to the Gentiles. And having found Him, he did not linger there any longer; but he returned to Damascus, that is, to the blood and passion of Christ. And from there, strengthened by prophetic reading, he went on to Jerusalem, the place of the vision and peace: not so much to learn something from the apostles as to compare the Gospel that he had taught with them.

1:18 (Verse 18.) Then, after three years, I came to Jerusalem to see Peter. Not to look at his eyes, cheeks, and face, to see if he was thin or fat, if he had a hooked or straight nose, and if he covered his forehead with hair or (as Clement reports in his Periods) had baldness on his head. And I don't think it was the gravity of the Apostolic office that wanted to see something human in Peter after such a long three-year preparation. But she looked at him with these eyes, with which she seems to see him even now in her Letters. With his own eyes, Paul saw Peter, whom now by the wise and learned, Paul himself is seen. And if someone does not see this, let them join these facts with their superior understanding: that the apostles did not confer anything upon themselves. For even though Paul was told to go to Jerusalem, it was for the purpose of seeing the apostle, not for the

purpose of learning, because he himself had the same author of preaching; but rather to show honor to the apostle who was before him. And I stayed with him for fifteen days. He did not lack for great instruction, as he had prepared himself so much time to see Peter. And although it may seem excessive to some, it is also fitting to observe the numbers that are in the Scriptures: nevertheless, I think it is not without reason that the fifteen days Paul spent with Peter signify complete knowledge and perfected doctrine. For there are fifteen songs in the Psalter, and fifteen steps by which the righteous ascend to sing to God, and stand in his courts. Moreover, Ezechias, having been granted fifteen years of life, deserves to receive a sign in the degrees (Isa. XXXVIII); and the solemnities of God begin on the fifteenth day (Exod. XII). Also, (because we follow a double understanding) therefore he adds fifteen days, to show that there was not a long time in which he could have learned anything from Peter; so that everything may be referred back to that meaning from which he began: that he was not taught by man, but by God.

1:19

(Verse 19) But I saw none of the other apostles, except James the Lord's brother. I remember that while I was in Rome, I published a book on the perpetual virginity of Saint Mary under the urging of the brothers. In this matter, I had to argue for a long time about those who are called the brothers of the Lord. Therefore, we should be satisfied with whatever we have written. Now let it suffice that, because of his outstanding character and incomparable faith and wisdom, he was called the Lord's brother, not in an ordinary sense. And he was the first to preside over the Church, which was the first to be gathered to Christ from among the Jews. Indeed, the other apostles are also called brothers of the Lord, as in the Gospel: 'Go, tell my brethren: I go to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God' (John 20:17). And in the psalm: 'I will declare Your name to my brethren; in the midst of the church will I praise You' (Psalm 22:22). But especially here this person is called brother, to whom the Lord had entrusted the sons of his mother as he went to the Father. And just as Job and the other patriarchs were indeed called servants of God, but Moses had something extraordinary, so that it was written about him: 'But not as Moses, my servant' (Hebrews 3:5), likewise the blessed James is specially called the brother of the Lord (as we said before). But why, except for the twelve, some are called apostles is this: all who had seen the Lord, and then preached about Him, were called apostles, as it is written to the Corinthians: 'He appeared to Cephas, then to the eleven.' After that, He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at once, many of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles (I Cor. XV, 5 seqq.). But gradually, as time went on, and elsewhere from those whom the Lord had chosen, the apostles were ordained; as he declares in his letter to the Philippians, saying: But I thought it necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your apostle and minister to my need (Philippians 2:25). And concerning such, it is written to the Corinthians: whether apostles of the churches, the glory of God (2 Corinthians 8:23). Silas and Judas were also named apostles by the apostles. Therefore, he greatly erred who believed that James, the brother of John, mentioned in the Gospel, was an apostle. It is well known that James, after Stephen, shed his blood for Christ according to the faith of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 12). However, this James was the first bishop of Jerusalem, also known as James the Just. He was a man of such great holiness and reputation among the people that they eagerly sought to touch the fringe of his garment. And he himself, after being cast down from the temple by the Jews, had Simon as his successor, whom

they also relate was crucified as the Lord. He denies that he met any of the other apostles, aside from those mentioned, so as not to give rise to hidden contradictions: even if you were not taught by Peter, you had other apostles as teachers. However, he did not see them, not because he regarded them with contempt, but because they had been scattered throughout the whole world for the preaching of the Gospel.

1:20

(Verse 20) But what I write to you: behold before God, because I do not lie. Whether to be taken simply, so it is: What I write to you is true, and I confirm it with God as a witness, that they are not tainted by any art of words or any falsehood. Or to be understood more deeply, so it is read: What I write to you is before God, that is, worthy of God's sight. But why worthy of God's sight? Because, of course, I do not lie. And just as the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous (Psalm 33), but he turns his face away from the sight of the wicked, so now the things which are written are before the Lord, with me not lying who writes; they would not be before the Lord if I were lying. However, not only can this be understood concerning the things which he is now writing to the Galatians, but also generally concerning all these Epistles: that the things he writes are not false and his heart and words are not in disagreement.

1:21

(Verse. 21.) Then I came to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. After the vision in Jerusalem, I went to Syria, which is called the exalted and lofty city. And from there I went to Cilicia, which I desired to embrace in the faith of Christ, preaching to it the call to repentance: for Cilicia in fact means assumption, or lamentable calling.

1:22-24

(Verses 22-24.) But I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea, which were in Christ Jesus. They only heard it said: He who once persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy. And they glorified God in me. The churches of Judea had only heard of me by reputation. And among them, they saw me more as a persecutor than as an apostle. But in Syria and Cilicia, Arabia and Damascus, they might have recognized me by sight as well: because I, as the Apostle to the Gentiles, preached the gospel of Christ not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles. But the whole point of what he does is this: to show that he could never have been glorious before those very people whom he had previously persecuted unless his preaching had also been proven by their judgment, even by those who had known him before as evil. And he returns secretly to his purpose, affirming that he spent such a short time in Judea that even those who believed were unaware of his appearance. From this he shows that he did not have Peter, James, or John as his teachers, but Christ, who revealed the Gospel to him. At the same time, it should be noted that while it was said above that the Church was under attack, here faith is: there men, here things; so that now (or then) it could be more opportune: He preaches the faith, which he once attacked. For they could not make a similar sound about the Church.

2:1-2

(Chapter 2 - Verses 1, 2) Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. I went up by revelation, and I discussed with them the gospel that I preach

to the Gentiles, but privately with those who seemed to be influential, so that I might not be running in vain or have run in vain. This matter arose because of false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery. And to speak more truthfully, the Greek word **μεθ' ἑμὴν** conveys something different than what is understood among us, namely that we compare what we know with a friend and place it in their lap and conscience, so that, with equal counsel, what we know may either be approved or disapproved. Therefore, after fourteen years, he went up to Jerusalem. And he who had previously gone only to see Peter and stayed with him for fifteen days, now says that he went there to confer with the apostles about the Gospel. And he took along Barnabas, who was circumcised, and Titus, who was uncircumcised among the Gentiles, so that every word may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses (Deut. 19:15). But it is one thing to compare, another to learn. Among those who compare, there is equality; between the teacher and the learner, the one who learns is lesser. At the beginning of faith, he saw the apostles during their journey. After seventeen years (as he himself says), he speaks fully with them and humbles himself: and lest he might be running or might have run in vain, he inquires. For a twofold reason, so that the humility of Paul, who, as a teacher, had already surpassed the apostles who came before him in the whole world of the Gentiles, might be shown: and so that the Galatians may not say that they rejected his Gospel, also condemning those who presided over the Churches in Judea. Moreover, it also teaches that for the sake of the faith of Christ and the liberty of the Gospel, he dared to lead Titus, an uncircumcised man, to those same individuals who knew more about him, who accused him of breaking the Law, destroying Moses, and completely doing away with circumcision. And in the midst of such a great multitude of Jews and his enemies, who desired to shed his blood out of zeal for the Law, neither he nor Titus gave way to fear, but stood firm in necessity. They were able to obtain forgiveness, either in terms of position or authority of the elders, or in terms of the number of churches that believed in Christ from the Jews, or in terms of time, so as not to endure such great envy at the same time. Some say that after fourteen years he went up to Jerusalem, when a dispute arose among the believers in Antioch regarding the observance or omission of the Law, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. It was decided to go to Jerusalem and wait for the judgment of the elders, when Paul and Barnabas themselves were sent. And this is what is written in the Latin codices: We yielded to subjection for a time, so that the truth of the Gospel would persist among you. That is why, clearly, Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem as if it were doubtful, in order to confirm by the judgment of the elders that the grace of the Gospel had also been given to the believers, and that there would be no further doubt about the omission of circumcision. For it had been commanded by the letters of the apostles that the yoke of the Law should be removed from those who believed in Christ from the Gentiles. However, it can be understood that when he says, 'I conferred with them the Gospel that I preach to the Gentiles,' he means separately to those who seemed important, so that I might not run or have run in vain, and thus it can be understood that he shared with the apostles in secret the grace of Gospel freedom and the abolishment of the old Law, because of the multitude of believing Jews who were not yet able to hear about the fulfillment and end of the Law, and who, in the absence of Paul, had falsely boasted in Jerusalem that he was going on a pointless or fruitless journey, thinking that the old Law should not be followed. Not because Paul feared that he had preached a false Gospel among the Gentiles for seventeen years; but to show his predecessors that he was not running or had run in vain, as they had thought in their ignorance.

(Vers. 3-5.) But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Gentile, was compelled to be circumcised. Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, although he was a Gentile. This matter arose because of false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery. But what is this truth of the Gospel, to give in to the hypocrisy of the Jews; and to consider as scybala what you once esteemed, and to despise as losses, and to observe and esteem as something, when they are nothing? But it strongly opposes the meaning of the Epistle itself, to call the Galatians back to circumcision. This is the main theme throughout his discourse, to teach that he is a Hebrew among the Hebrews, once observing all the works of the Law, circumcised on the eighth day according to the Law of the Pharisees: nevertheless, for the grace of Christ, to completely despise everything. For when he went to Jerusalem, and the false brethren, who believed in circumcision, wanted to compel him to circumcise Titus; neither Titus, nor did he give in to violence, so that they would safeguard the truth of the Gospel. But if he says that he was compelled by necessity to circumcise Titus: how does he recall the Galatians from circumcision, from which neither Titus, who was with him from the Gentiles, could excuse himself in Jerusalem? Therefore, according to the Greek manuscripts, it should be read, 'To whom we did not yield in subjection, not even for an hour,' so that it may be understood subsequently: so that the truth of the Gospel may remain with you. But if the testimony of the Latin exemplars is pleasing to anyone, we must understand it according to the higher sense: that the purpose was not for Titus to be circumcised, but to go to Jerusalem. For this reason, Paul and Barnabas submitted to going to Jerusalem, due to the sedition caused by the Law of Antioch. This was done so that the truth of the Gospel would be confirmed by the letter of the apostles and remain among the Galatians, which was not in the literal sense, but in the spiritual sense. It was not in the carnal understanding, but in spiritual intelligence, and not in overt Judaism, but in hidden understanding. It is worth knowing that the conjunction 'autem,' which is placed in this position, is superfluous if it is read without any purpose to respond to it and if it concludes the previous statement. However, it serves to maintain the order of reading and the sense of the passage. So, Titus, who was with me, being a Gentile, was not compelled to be circumcised. And immediately after, it explains the reason why he was being urged to undergo circumcision against his will. 'Because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery.' But when they were serving as ministers and wished to drag us into the servitude of the Law from the freedom of Christ, we did not even yield to them for a moment, so that we might not give any occasion to them to accuse us. And we did this primarily because of the ecclesiastical peace, so that we could excuse ourselves from necessity, and we did all of this so that you would not have any opportunity to depart from the grace of the Gospel. Therefore, if we, while in Jerusalem, among so many Jews who were falsely claiming to be brothers and those who were exerting influence over us to some extent, could not be compelled by force or reason to observe the circumcision that we knew was abolished, then you, coming from the Gentiles, you in Galatia, you to whom no violence can be done, voluntarily abandoning the grace, have transcended the antiquity of the already abolished Law.

2:6 (Verse 6) But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do. But when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? For God does not show favoritism. He doesn't play favorites. In fact, He has no favorites. It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do what He says, the door is open. The Message He sent to the children of Israel—that through Jesus Christ everything is being put together again—well, He's doing it everywhere, among everyone. And thus, cautiously and gradually, Peter walks a middle path between praise and rebuke, so that he may defer to his predecessor the apostle, and yet boldly oppose him to his face, compelled by truth. For those who seemed important, contributed nothing to me. He himself, however, conferred with them earlier and recounted many things to them that he had accomplished among the nations: they contributed nothing to him, but only confirmed what he had said, giving the right hand of fellowship, and they strengthened the gospel of me and of Paul. Again, it must be noted that the word 'conferred' itself is in Greek, which we discussed earlier.

2:7-8

(Vers. 7, 8.) But on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcised (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ■π■ρβατον est, et multis quae in medio sunt interjecta sublati, sic breviter legi potest: Mihi enim qui videbantur esse nihil contulerunt: sed econtra dexteris dederunt mihi et Barnabae, societatis. Aut certe ille absque jactatione sui, occultus est sensus: Mihi qui videbantur esse aliquid, nihil contulerunt; sed econtra a me eis collatum est, dum fiunt in Evangelii gratia firmiores. Totum autem quod dicit, hoc est: unus atque idem mihi Evangelium praeputii, et Petro circumcisionis credidit. He sent me to the Gentiles, and he appointed him in Judea. Neither could the Gentiles, who were no longer young and could not benefit from the pain of circumcision, abstain from the foods they had always been accustomed to and that God had created for them to use; nor could those who believed and were circumcised from the Jews, and who, by custom, thought they had more than the other Gentiles, easily despise the things in which they boasted. Therefore, by the providence of God, one apostle

was given to the circumcised, who seemed to acquiesce to the shadows of the Law, while another was given to those who were uncircumcised, who did not consider the grace of the Gospel to be slavery, but rather free faith. Lest any impediment to faith arise under any occasion: and because of circumcision or uncircumcision, one would not believe in Christ. And we do not say this because Peter, who himself also testified that no man is common in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 10), and is taught in that vessel, which he saw sent from heaven with four corners, that it makes no difference whether someone is a Jew or a Gentile, as if he had forgotten the things that came before, concerning the grace of the Gospel, he considered the Law to be observed. But rather, in order to also pretend to keep the Law himself, gradually leading the Jews away from their ancient way of life. For they could not suddenly and contemptuously cast aside so much labor of observance, and the most careful conduct of their former life, as if it were mere refuse and loss. Hence we may clearly understand why Paul and Barnabas, who were in society with Peter, James, and John, received the right hand of fellowship from them. It was not to prevent the gospel of Christ being thought different among those who hitherto observed various rites, or who held diverse opinions, but to establish a common bond both between those who were circumcised and those who were not. Paul wisely maintained this, when he said, 'For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles; and recognizing the favor conferred upon Peter, he thus explains it, that it might be understood how, in receiving circumcision, he did it in part, in order that he might profit those who had believed in him among the Jews, and keep them in the faith and gospel of Christ.' He also understands that if that person were to act without fault and observe the time when it is not allowed, so as not to lose those entrusted to him, he would have to do more for the truth of the Gospel, namely, what was entrusted to him in secret, so that the nations, discouraged by the burden and difficulty of the Law, would not turn away from the faith and belief in Christ. A hidden question arises here: So what? If Peter were to find [people] from the Gentiles, would he not lead them to the faith? But if Paul had found any from the circumcision, did he not invite them to the baptism of Christ? This is resolved in the following way: that we say that it was commanded for each group, the Jews and the Gentiles, that those who defended the Law would have someone to follow, and those who preferred grace over the Law would have a teacher and guide. But in general, their purpose was to gather the Church of Christ from all the nations. For we read that the Gentile Cornelius was baptized by the holy Peter, and that Paul often preached Christ in the synagogues of the Jews. Peter, John, and James, who seemed to be pillars (Acts X, XIII, XVII). Three times before we have read about the Apostles, but after them were the others who seemed to be something. They made no difference to me, those who seemed important. So I was anxious to know what this meant, those who seemed important, but now he has relieved me of all doubts by adding, who seemed to be pillars. Therefore, the pillars of the Church are the apostles, especially Peter, James, and John, among whom two of them deserve to ascend the mountain with the Lord, one of whom introduces the Savior speaking in the Apocalypse: 'To him who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God' (Rev. 3:12), teaching all believing ones who overcome the adversary that they can become pillars of the Church. Writing to Timothy, Paul says: 'So that you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth' (1 Tim. 3:15). And we are instructed by him and the other apostles, all the believers, and even the Church itself is also called the pillar in the Scriptures. And there is no difference whether it is said about the body or the members, since the body is divided into members and the members

are the body. Therefore, Peter, James, and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas; but Titus, who was with them, did not receive the right hand. For he had not yet reached such a measure, that the merchandises of Christ could be believed to him in equal measure with the elders, and hold the same place of negotiation that Barnabas held, and Paul.

2:10

(Verse 10.) So that we might be mindful of the poor, I was also concerned to do this very thing. The holy poor, to whom the care is especially entrusted by the apostles Paul and Barnabas, are those who, as Jewish believers, were bringing the prices of their possessions to be given to the needy at the feet of the apostles, either because they were renouncing the Law, their fellow Jews, and their kinsmen, or because they were being considered as traitors and sacrilegious for believing in the crucified man. Of this ministry, the holy apostle Paul worked with great effort, as his Epistles testify, writing to the Corinthians and the Thessalonians, and to all the churches of the Gentiles, to prepare this gift to be carried to Jerusalem by himself or by those who pleased him. Therefore, he confidently says now that he was also eager to do this very thing. However, the poor can also be received in another way, about whom it is said in the Gospel: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3). They truly deserve to be remembered, these apostles. And also those poor ones, about whom it is written in Solomon: The redemption of a man's soul, his own wealth (Prov. XIII, 8). But the poor cannot endure a threat. For he cannot hear the terror of future punishments, poor in faith, poor in grace, lacking spiritual riches, nor knowledge of the Scriptures, which are valued as gold and silver and precious stones. Therefore, since the healthy do not need a doctor, but those who are sick, it is fitting for the apostles, too, to gather in the sharing of hands, so that they would not reject the poor or despise sinners; but always remember them, just as Paul remembers that person in Corinth, whom he had saddened for a time in his previous letter, so that, as the body labors through penance, the spirit would be saved (1 Cor. 5); in the second letter, so that he would not be consumed by greater sadness, he called him back to the Church. And he asked everyone to confirm their love for him and to give to their brother as he had given to each of them, fulfilling the covenant he had made in Jerusalem to always remember the poor.

2:11-13

(Verse 11 onwards) But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. But when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. When I saw that they were not walking straight, according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of all, 'If you, who are a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?' We are Jews by nature, and not Gentile sinners, but we know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, when the apostle Paul saw that the grace of Christ was in danger, he employed a new battle tactic of the old warrior, to correct the dispensation of Peter, by which he desired the salvation of the Jews, with a new dispensation of contradiction, and to resist him to his face. Not arguing against his intention, but rather publicly contradicting him, so that by Paul's

argument and resistance, those who had believed from the Gentiles would be saved. Now if anyone thinks that Paul truly resisted the apostle Peter and boldly did wrong to his predecessor for the sake of the truth of the Gospel, that person's argument will not stand. For even Paul became a Jew to the Jews in order to gain the Jews, and he will be held guilty of the same hypocrisy when he shaved his head in Cenchreae and offered a sacrifice in Jerusalem (Acts 18), and when he circumcised Timothy (Ibid., 16), and practiced foot-washing, which are clearly ceremonial practices of the Jews. Therefore, if the one who was sent to preach to the Gentiles did not think it necessary to say: 'Be without offense to the Jews and to the Church of God' (1 Corinthians 10:32); how can I please everyone in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, so that they may be saved? And he did certain things that were contrary to the freedom of the Gospel, so as not to scandalize the Jews. With what authority, with what audacity does he dare to reprehend this in Peter, who was an apostle of the circumcision, when he himself, the apostle of the Gentiles, is accused of committing the same? But as we have already said, he yielded to the public opinion, to Peter and the rest, so that the hypocrisy of observing the Law, which was harming those who had believed from the Gentiles, would be corrected by the hypocrisy of correction, and both peoples would be saved, both those who praise circumcision follow Peter; and those who do not want to be circumcised, preach Paul's freedom. But what he said was blameworthy, therefore he moderated the fasting; so that we understand that he was not so blameworthy to Paul, as he separated himself from those brothers with whom he had eaten before. But a useful simulation, and one to be adopted in time, let us teach an example of King Jehu of Israel, who could not kill the priests of Baal unless he pretended to want to worship the idol, saying: 'Gather (or 'gather together') for me all the priests of Baal: for if Ahab served Baal in few things, I will serve him in many.' (4 Kings 10:18). And David, when he changed his appearance before Abimelech, and who dismissed him and went away. (1 Kings 21) And it is not surprising, even though righteous men, nevertheless, pretend for a time, for their own and others' salvation, when our Lord Himself, not having sin nor the flesh of sin, assumed the pretense of sinful flesh, so that, condemning sin in the flesh, He would make us the righteousness of God in Himself. Certainly, Paul had read in the Gospel the Lord commanding: But if your brother sins against you, go and correct him between you and him alone. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. (Luke 17:3) And in what way, when he even commanded this to be done to the least of the brothers, did he dare to rebuke the greatest of the apostles so boldly and steadfastly in public; unless it had pleased Peter to be rebuked in this way, and Paul had not done him any harm, about whom he had said before: I went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days: but I saw none of the other apostles. And again: For he who worked in Peter for the apostleship of the circumcision. And below: Peter and James and John, who seemed to be pillars, and the others whom he praises in his praises. Many times, when I was a young man in Rome, I would engage in debates on fictitious lawsuits and exercise myself in true competitions. I would run to the courts of the judges, and I would see the most eloquent orators contending with each other with such bitterness that they would often neglect their duties and turn to personal insults, biting each other with jokes. If they do this, so that they may not incur any suspicion of prevarication, and deceive the surrounding people, what do we think the great pillars of the Church, Peter and Paul, and the vessels of wisdom, ought to have done among the dissenting Jews and Gentiles? Unless it was for the purpose of making their pretended contention the peace of the believers, and the faith of the Church might be established by a holy dispute among them. There are some who think that

Cephas, whom Paul writes that he confronted to his face, is not the apostle Peter, but another one of the seventy disciples called by that name. They say that Peter could not have avoided the company of the Gentiles, as he had also baptized the centurion Cornelius. And when he went up to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision argued against him, saying: Why did you go to men uncircumcised and eat with them? After recounting the vision, he concluded his response with these words: Therefore, if God gave them the same gift as he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to hinder God? When they heard this, they fell silent and glorified God, saying, 'So then, even to the Gentiles God has granted repentance unto life.' Especially since the writer of the history, Luke, makes no mention of this disagreement; nor does he ever say that Peter was in Antioch with Paul, and that Porphyry was blaspheming; but if it is believed that Peter erred or that Paul insolently refuted the chief of the apostles, first it must be answered that we do not know the name of some other Cephas, unless it is the one who is called both Cephas and Peter in the Gospel, in Paul's other Epistles, and also in this very passage. Not that Peter signifies one thing and Cephas another, but that as we call the rock in Latin and Greek, so the Hebrews and Syrians, because of the similarity of their languages, name it Cephas. Moreover, the entire argument of the epistle, which is indirectly mentioned concerning Peter, James, and John, contradicts this interpretation. It is not surprising that Luke has remained silent on this matter, considering that he has omitted many other things that Paul claims to have endured, by the liberty of a historian, and it is not necessarily contradictory if one deemed worthy of recounting what another left out among other things for a different reason. Lastly, we have learned that Peter was the first bishop of the Church of Antioch, and then transferred to Rome, which Luke completely omitted. Finally, if we are to create another person called Cephas because of Porphyry's blasphemy, so that Peter is not thought to have erred, countless divine Scriptures will have to be erased, which he condemns because he does not understand. But also against Porphyry, we will fight in another way if Christ commands it: now let us continue with the rest.

2:14

(Verse 14.) But when I saw that they were not walking straight towards the truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in front of everyone. Just as those who pretend to limp with healthy steps do not have a fault in their feet, but there is some reason why they limp, so Peter, knowing that circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing, but the observance of God's commandments does, used to eat with the Gentiles, but for a time he withdrew from them, lest he should make the Jews lose faith in Christ. And so Paul, using the same tactic as Peter had pretended, confronted him to his face and spoke openly in front of everyone; not so much to accuse Peter, but rather to correct those for whose sake Peter had pretended, or even to remove pride from the Jews and despair from the Gentiles. But if someone does not like this interpretation, in which neither Peter is shown to have sinned nor Paul to have boldly accused him, they must explain in what way Paul criticizes this in the other case, which he himself committed.

If you, being a Jew, live as a Gentile and not as a Jew, how do you force the Gentiles to live as Jews? Peter is strongly convinced by an unbreakable argument, or rather, through Peter, those who were compelling him to engage in disputes: If, Peter, you being a Jew by nature, born a Jew and observing all the precepts of the Law, now know that these things have no inherent usefulness but are examples and images of things to come, and if you, eating with those who are from the Gentiles, do not live in a superstitious manner as you did before, but now live freely and

impartially; how then can you compel those who believed from the Gentiles to Judaize, now separating yourself from them and considering them unclean? For if those from whom you separate are unclean, and yet you do separate, it follows that you compel them to be circumcised and become Jews; while you yourself, being born a Jew, live like a Gentile. And he joyfully shows the reason why he disputed against him: namely, because he was compelling the Gentiles to judaize through his own hypocrisy, as they desired to imitate him.

2:15

(Verse 15) We are by nature Jews, and not sinners from the Gentiles. At this point, heretics sneak in, who, inventing ridiculous and foolish things, say that the spiritual nature cannot sin, nor can the earthly nature do anything just. Let us ask them why branches of the good olive tree were broken off and why branches from a wild olive tree were grafted onto the root of the good olive tree, if nothing can fall from good or rise from evil. Or how was Paul persecuting the Church before he became an Apostle if he was of a spiritual nature? Or how did he become an Apostle afterwards if he was generated from earthly sediment? But if they contend that He was not of earthly origin, let us set down His own words: 'We were by nature children of wrath, like the others' (Ephesians II, 3). The Jew by nature is one who is of the race of Abraham and was circumcised by his parents on the eighth day. Not the Jew by nature, who later became one from the Gentiles. But to sum up the whole argument in a few words, this is the sense that is being expressed: 'We', that is, 'I and you, Peter' (for He mixed in His own person, lest it might seem that He was doing injury to them), when we were, He says, Jews by nature, doing the things that were commanded by the Law, and not sinners from among the Gentiles, who either generally, because they serve idols, are sinners, or those whom we now consider unclean, knowing that we cannot be saved by the work of the Law, but by faith in Christ, we believed in Christ, so that what the Law did not give us, faith bestowed on us in Christ.' But if, departing from the Law in which we could not be saved, we turn to faith, in which circumcision of the flesh is not sought but rather devotion of a pure heart, and now by turning away from the Gentiles we do this, so that whoever is not circumcised may be unclean; therefore, faith in Christ, in which we thought we were saved before, is more a minister of sin than of justice, which removes circumcision, and whoever does not have it is unclean. But far be it from me to seek revenge, now that I know that what I once destroyed and considered as useless to me. Once I departed from the Law, I died to the Law in order to live in Christ, and I was crucified with Him, and I was reborn as a new man, relying more on faith than on flesh, and with Christ I departed from the world. What I once embraced, I hold fast. Christ did not die for me in vain: in Him I believed in vain, if I could be saved without faith in Him in the old Law.

2:16

(Verse 16). However, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law. Some say: if what Paul affirms is true, that no one is justified by the works of the Law, but by faith in Jesus Christ, then the patriarchs, prophets, and saints who lived before the coming of Christ were imperfect. Those whom we ought to admonish are those who have not attained to justice, who believe that they can be justified by works alone. But the saints, who have been justified by the faith of Christ since ancient times. For Abraham saw the day of Christ and rejoiced. And Moses esteemed the greater riches as a treasure of the Egyptians, as

an insult to Christ. For he looked to the reward. And Isaiah saw the glory of Christ, as John the Evangelist recounts, and Judas speaks generally of all: I want to remind you, knowing everything once: that Jesus, saving the people from the land of Egypt, destroyed them secondly, those who did not believe. Where the works of the Law are not so much condemned, as those who trust that they can be justified by works alone, the Savior also spoke to his disciples, Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:20). It is necessary to gather (or consider) at this place how many precepts there are in the Law, which no one is able to fulfill. And on the other hand, it must be said that some of the Law is also done by those who are ignorant of it. But this is why his workers are not justified, because they are done without the faith of Christ. For example, not sleeping with a woman as a man sleeps, not committing adultery, not stealing, but rather honoring father and mother, and doing the other things that are commanded. But if they bring us examples of holy men: that they, being versed in the Law, have committed the things that were of the Law, we will say: Because the just Law is not laid down for the law-abiding and the obedient, but for the unjust and the disobedient, the impious and the sinners, the polluted and the unclean (1 Timothy 1). But as for one who is taught by God, it is not necessary for him to be taught about charity, as Paul says: But as for charity, I have no need to write to you: for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another (IV Thess. IV, 9).

2:17-18

(Vers. 17, 18.) Therefore, by the works of the Law, all flesh will not be justified. But if we seek to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found to be sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if the things that I destroyed, I build again, I make myself a transgressor. That flesh, of which it is written, 'All flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of the field' (Isaiah 40:6), will not be justified by the works of the Law. But that flesh of Jesus Christ is justified by faith, of which it is said in the sacrament of the resurrection: All flesh shall see the salvation of God (Luke 3:6). But also according to a lower understanding, not all flesh was justified by the Law, but only those men who were in Palestine. Now, however, all flesh is justified by the faith of Jesus Christ, while his Church is founded throughout the whole world.

2:19

(Verse 19) For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. To die to the law, is to die to the law as a rule of justification. Who dies to the law, lives to God. Before his conversion, the apostle found experience answer to the word of the Lord. The commandment, which was ordained to life, he found to be unto death. The same enlightening Spirit gives a sight of the hateful nature of sin, and the deceitfulness of the heart. Therefore it is said in Hosea: 'From me is your fruit found' (Hosea 14:9). To whom the mystical interpretation is well applied: 'Who is a wise man and understands these things, and a prudent man and knows them?' Therefore, by the spiritual law, one dies to the law of the letter and lives to God, since he is not without the law of God, but is under the law of Christ. But whoever dies to the law because of sins, although he is dead, it cannot be said of him that he lives to God. But there is another spiritual law beyond the law of the letter, as the Apostle elsewhere teaches, saying: Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good (Rom. VII, 12). And Ezekiel speaks in the person of God: I brought them out, that is, the people of Judah, from the land of Egypt: and I led them into the desert: and I gave them

my commandments, and showed them my justifications: which if a man do, he shall live in them (Ezek. XX, 10). But about that law which works wrath, to which even the Apostle is dead, afterward he says: And I gave them commands that are not good, and justifications in which they will not live (Ibid., 25). The same is also signified in the Psalter: Because I did not know literature, I will enter into the strength of the Lord (Ps. LXX, 51).

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

2:20 (Verse 20.) But I no longer live; Christ lives in me. The person who once lived under the law no longer lives, for they persecuted the Church. But Christ lives in them, providing wisdom, strength, speech, peace, joy, and other virtues. The one who does not possess these virtues cannot say, 'Christ lives in me.' And all of this is said in opposition to Peter, directed at Peter. But as for now, I live in the flesh. To be in the flesh is one thing, and to live in the flesh is another. For those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. VIII, 8, 9). Therefore, it is said to those who live well: However, you are not in the flesh.

I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. He speaks about God to the Romans, that he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us. Now, about Christ, that he gave himself up: 'He loved me,' he says, 'and gave himself for me.' In the Gospel, where the apostles are listed, it is stated: 'And Judas Iscariot ((also Scariot)), who betrayed him' (Luke 6:16). Again, in the same Gospel: 'Look, the one who will betray me is approaching' (Matthew 26:46). But the Scriptures mention the high priests and elders of the people, who condemned Jesus to death and, binding him, led him and delivered him to Pilate the governor (ibid., XXVII, and Mark XV). And afterwards about Pilate: He released Barabbas to them, but Jesus, after being flogged, he handed over to them to crucify (John XIX). Therefore, the Father handed over the Son, and the Son himself handed over, and Judas and the priests handed him over to the rulers, and finally, having been handed over to him, Pilate himself delivered him. But the Father handed over, in order to save the lost world: Jesus himself handed himself over, in order to do the will of the Father and his own: However, Judas and the priests and the elders of the people, and Pilate, delivered him, ignorant of life unto death. And when she also handed herself over for our salvation, blessed and very happy is he who, with Christ living in him, can say through every thought and action: I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and delivered himself for me.

2:21

(Verse 21.) I do not reject the grace of God; for if justice is through the Law, then Christ died in vain. He rejects the grace of God, both the one who lives under the Law after the Gospel, and the one who becomes defiled by sins after baptism. But he who can say with the Apostle: His grace in me was not in vain (1 Cor. XV, 10), he also speaks confidently of this: I do not reject the grace of God. What follows, however, is very necessary against those who think that the precepts of the Law must be observed after the faith of Christ. For it must be said to them: If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing. Or certainly they should teach how Christ did not die for nothing if works justify. But even though they may be dull, they will not dare to say that Christ died without cause. Therefore, in regard to the participle of the syllogism that is proposed here, that is: If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing, we must accept what

is consequentially inferred and cannot be denied: but Christ did not die for nothing; and conclude: Therefore, righteousness does not come through the law. So far he has been against Peter, but now he is turning towards the Galatians.

3:1

(Chapter III - Verse 1) O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? This place can be understood in two ways. Either the foolish Galatians are called so because they have come from greater things to lesser things, having begun in the spirit and are now being consumed in the flesh. Or it is because each province has its own peculiarities. The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons, truly spoken of by the poet Epimenides, confirmed by the Apostle. The vain Moors and the fierce Dalmatians are struck by the Latin historian. Timid Phrygians, all poets tear apart. They say that more talented people are born in Athens, and philosophers boast about it. Cicero criticizes the Greeks, calling them either frivolous or cruel barbarians before Caesar. And for Flaccus, he says: 'Ingeniousness is innate, he says, and educated vanity.' The true Israel, with a heavy heart and a stiff neck, accuses all the Scriptures. Therefore, I think that the Apostle Paul also rebuked the Galatians for their regional customs. Although some, inserting profound questions as if under the guise of avoiding heresy, which introduces diverse natures, may say that even the Tyrians and Sidonians, Moabites and Ammonites, and Idumaeans, Babylonians and Egyptians, and all the Nations mentioned in the Scriptures, have certain languages for preceding reasons, and deservedly for their prior actions, so that the justice of God may not come into doubt: since it is asserted that every nation has either good or evil, which another does not have. We will pursue those declining heights: either accusing them of foolishness, saying that they cannot judge the spirit of the Law and the letter; or blaming the fault of the nation, that they are unteachable and foolish, and slower to wisdom. But what follows - 'Who bewitched you?' (1 Corinthians 11) - we should explain according to Paul (who, although unskilled in speech, is not lacking in knowledge): not that he knows that there is a bewitching power, which is commonly believed to be harmful; but he uses the word as a trite expression, and as in other things, so also in this place, he takes up the phrase of everyday conversation. We read in Proverbs: The gift of the envious tortures the eyes. The envious person among us is more significantly called a fascinator in Greek, and in the Wisdom of Solomon it is written: The fascination of wickedness obscures good things (Wis. 4:22). With these examples we are taught that the envious person is tormented by the happiness of others, or that someone in whom there is some good is harmed by another person who fascinates, that is, envies. It is said that the fascinus properly harms infants, young children, and those who have not yet firmly set foot. Where and some of the Gentiles:

I do not know who bewitches the tender eyes of my lambs. (Virgil. Eclog. 3.) Whether this is true or not, God knows: because it is possible that even demons may serve this sin; and they may turn away from the good works anyone has learned or achieved in the work of God. Now this is in question, because we consider this example to be taken from the opinion of the common people: just as it is said that a tender age can be harmed by a spell, so too it seems that the Galatians, who were recently born and raised in the faith of Christ, and nourished by milk and not solid food (1 Corinthians 3), have been harmed by some sort of spell, and the spirit of the Holy One has made them vomit the food of faith, causing a nausea in their spirit. But if someone contradicts, let him explain how the ideas of the Titans' valley in the Books of Kings (2 Kings 23), the sirens and centaurs in Isaiah (Chap. 34), Arcturus and Orion, and the Pleiades in Job (Chap. 9), and the like,

which are certainly terms borrowed from the myths of the Gentiles, have been taken from common opinion. Let us therefore ask Marcion, who rejects the prophets, how he interprets what follows.

Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was proclaimed, among you he was crucified. For Christ was rightly proclaimed to us, from whose gallows and suffering, slaps and whips, the chorus of all the prophets foretold: that his cross was not only from the Gospel, in which he is said to be crucified; but long before he deigned to descend to the earth and take on the form of a crucified man, we have known. And it is no small praise of the Galatians that they have believed in the Crucified One, as it was proclaimed to them before: namely, by reading the prophets and knowing all the sacraments of the old Law, they have come to believe in the way and order. It is read in some codices: Who bewitched you to not believe the truth? But because this is not found in the exemplars of Adamantius, we have omitted it.

3:2

(Version 2.) This is the only thing I want to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit by works of the Law or by hearing with faith? Indeed, are there many things that can force you to prefer the Gospel to the Law: but because you are foolish and cannot hear those things, I speak to you in simple terms, and I ask about what is obvious: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by works of the Law, by observing the Sabbath, circumcision, and the superstition of new moons, or by hearing with faith, through which you believed from the Gentiles? But if it cannot be denied, it is evident that the Holy Spirit and the virtues that followed the received Spirit at the beginning of faith were given not by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Christ. It is clear that you have begun from better things and fallen into worse. However, let us consider carefully, because he did not say, 'I want to learn from you whether you received the Spirit from works,' but he added, 'from the works of the Law.' For he knew that even Cornelius the centurion had received the Spirit from works (Acts 10), but not from the works of the Law, which he did not know. But if, on the contrary, it is said: therefore, the Spirit can be received without hearing faith. We will respond that indeed the Spirit is received, but through the hearing of faith and the natural law, which speaks in our hearts, the good things to be done and the evils to be avoided: through which we have already mentioned that even Abraham, Moses, and the other justified saints have received it, and the observation of works and the righteousness of the Law can furthermore increase it, not the carnal law, which has passed, but the spiritual law, for the Law is spiritual. Nor indeed do we destroy the works of the Law because we prefer faith (Rom. III), nor do we say, according to some, Let us do evil, so that good may come (whose condemnation is just), but we give preference to grace over slavery. And we say that what the Jews do out of fear, we do out of charity. They are slaves, we are children: they are compelled to do good, we willingly embrace it. Therefore, it is not from the faith of Christ that the license to sin arises; rather, the desire for good works is increased by the love of faith, as we do good not because we fear judgment but because we know that they please the one in whom we believe. Let someone inquire, if faith comes only from hearing, how can those who are born deaf become Christians? Indeed, one can understand God the Father from the magnitude and beauty of creation, and the Creator is consequently recognized from His works. But the birth, cross, death, and resurrection of Christ cannot be known except through hearing. Therefore, either deaf people are not Christians, or if they are Christians, it is false what is said elsewhere by the Apostle: 'So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.' To which, he who is content with a simple response, says, that he did not speak generally; faith comes from hearing;

but faith comes from hearing, which can be understood both in part and in whole: namely, the faith of those who hear, who believe. However, whoever attempts to satisfy this doubt, will first try to assert that even the deaf can learn the Gospel through nods, daily conversation, and, so to speak, gestures of the whole body; then also that the word of God, to whom nothing is deaf, speaks more to those ears, about whom he himself says in the Gospel: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke 8:8). And in the Apocalypse: He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches (Rev. II, 11). And Isaiah: The Lord has given me an ear (Isa. VI, 33 and 35). This is another man, to whom God speaks in secret, who cries out in the heart of the believer: Abba, Father (Rom. VIII, 15): and (as we have often explained) just as the body has all its members and senses, so the soul also has all its senses and members, including ears: whoever has them will not greatly need the ears of the body to know the Gospel of Christ. Moreover, also consider this, that here the Holy Spirit is understood without any addition, whom we obtain as a gift from God, and not from man: of which it is written elsewhere: The Spirit is incorruptible in all things (Wis. 12:1). And: The Spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit (Rom. 8:16). And in another place: No one knows the things that are in man, except the spirit of man that is in him (1 Cor. 2:11). And in Daniel: Bless the Lord, spirits and souls of the righteous (Dan. 3:86).

3:3

(Verse 3.) So foolish are you, that having begun in the Spirit, you are now being perfected in the flesh? If the Galatians received the Holy Spirit, how were they foolish? But it is immediately resolved, that although they did receive the Spirit, they were deprived of it when they were being perfected in the flesh. Hence they suffered so much in vain. In order to avoid this happening to themselves after sin, David prays, saying: Do not take your Holy Spirit from me (Ps. 50:13). Pay careful attention to the fact that those who follow the Scriptures literally are said to be perfected in the flesh. Therefore, what is written to the Corinthians, 'Living in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh' (2 Cor. X, 3), can be better understood as meaning that those who humbly adhere to the Old Testament are said to wage war in the flesh. However, those who follow the spiritual understanding, though they are in the flesh because they have the same letter as the Jews, do not wage war according to the flesh but transcend from the flesh to the spirit. When you see someone who was the first to believe among the Gentiles, and extends his hand to the plow of Christ, having been preceded by a wise teacher, in such a way as to proceed from the path of the Law to the Gospel, so that he may understand all those things that are written there, about the Sabbath, about unleavened bread, about circumcision, about sacrifices, in a worthy manner for God, and afterwards, after the reading of the Gospel, be persuaded by a Jewish person or a fellow Jew, so that he may abandon the shadows and cloudy allegories and interpret the Scriptures as they are written: can you say of this person: 'Are you so foolish, that after beginning with the Spirit, you are now being perfected by the flesh?'

3:4

(Verse 4) You have suffered so much without cause, if indeed without cause. Let us consider the unfortunate Jews, how they live among other nations in such superstition and the labor of observance, saying, do not touch, do not taste, do not handle, and we will prove that what is said is true: You have suffered so much without cause. But the judgment is not immediately applied to them, and there is doubt if indeed without cause, because this is said of those who can turn from

the Law to the Gospel. However, this can be understood better in the following way: that the Galatians, believing in the Crucified One, have endured many reproaches from both the Jews and the Gentiles, and have endured considerable persecutions. These persecutions are in vain criticized, if they depart from the grace of Christ, for which they have endured so much. At the same time, there is the hope that whoever labors for the faith of Christ and afterward falls into sin, just as it is said that he suffered the former without cause while sinning, likewise does not lose it if he returns to the original faith and the former zeal. Otherwise: If you think that circumcision should be followed after grace, then all that you have suffered while living without circumcision up until the present time has been in vain. But it seems to me that you have not endured these things without purpose, for I know that the Law is no longer valid after the Gospel. Or at least this way: It would not be a small loss if, by following circumcision, you had lost so much of the previous effort of faith. But now, in addition to this loss, there is also the punishment of transgression, so that you have suffered in the past without cause and will suffer in the future as well. Some people understand it more forcibly as follows: Consider the former freedom of grace and the present burdens of observation in the Law, and you will see how many things you have done in vain: although the fruit of this error is not completely to be despaired of, since you have been led to this by the zeal of God. For ignorance can be forgiven to those who, if they are converted to better things, teach that the knowledge in you has fluctuated, not the zeal.

3:5

(Verse 5.) So then, does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Not that the works of the Law should be despised, and without them a simple faith should be sought; but that the works themselves may be adorned by the faith of Christ. For that saying of the wise man is well known, 'The just shall live by faith, not by righteousness.' At the same time it is shown that the Galatians, after receiving the Holy Spirit by faith, had the gifts of virtues, that is, prophecy, kinds of tongues, healings, and other things that are enumerated in the spiritual gifts to the Corinthians (1 Cor. VII). And yet, after so many (because perhaps they did not have the grace of discerning spirits), they were ensnared by false teachers. It should also be noted that they claim to work miracles in those who do not hold the truth of the Gospel: just as in those who, not following the Lord, were performing miracles in His name, with John in particular complaining: Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in Your name, and we tried to stop him because he does not accompany us (Mark 9:37). Against heretics who believe that the proof of their faith consists in performing some miracle. Those who eat and drink in the name of the Lord (for they also have a sacrilegious altar) and boast of having performed many signs, calling upon the Savior, will deserve to hear on the day of judgment: 'I never knew you, depart from me, you workers of iniquity' (Matthew 7:23).

3:6

(Verse 6.) Just as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. From this place until where it is written: Those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, Marcion erased from his Apostle. But what profit was there in embracing this, when the other things he left behind, his insanities, are opposed to it? Yet Abraham believed God, going out from his country into a land he did not know (Gen. 12 ff.): trusting that Sarah, who was ninety years old and barren, would give birth; and hearing the promise of God that his offspring would be called through Isaac,

he offered Isaac as a sacrifice, and yet did not doubt the promise of the Lord. The faith is rightly considered to contribute to justice, the one who, having gone beyond the works of the Law, has deserved God not out of fear, but out of love.

3:7

(V.7) So you know, those who are of faith, these are the children of Abraham. He discusses more fully in the letter to the Romans that faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness, not in circumcision but in uncircumcision (Rom. 4). And carefully observing, he teaches that those who believed with this mindset are the children of Abraham, just as Abraham believed when he was uncircumcised, who rejoiced to see the day of the Lord, and saw it and was glad (John 8). And it is also said to the unbelieving Jews: If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham (Ibid. 39). But what other works was the Lord seeking from them at that time when these things were said, except faith in the Son of God, whom the Father had sent to speak: Whoever believes in me, does not believe in me, but in him who sent me (John XII, 44)? And in another place, when they were clapping and boasting about their ancient and noble lineage, the response is given: And do not say, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones (Matth. III, 9). By these stones, no one doubts that the hardened hearts of the Gentiles are signified, which were later softened and received the seal of faith. Enumerate the virtues of Abraham in which he pleased God before circumcision, diligent reader, and wherever you find them in a similar work, say that they are the children of Abraham, justified in the foreskin, who received circumcision not because of the merit of works, but as a sign of prior faith. For indeed Christ was to be born from his seed (in whom the blessing of all nations was promised, and from Abraham until Christ many centuries were to pass), God foreseen that the children of beloved Abraham might mix with other nations, and gradually his family would become uncertain, he marked the Israelite flock with a certain circumcision seal, so that they would be distinguished by this sign while living among the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Chaldeans. Finally, for forty years in the desert, no one was circumcised: for they alone lived without the mixture of another nation. As soon as the people crossed the banks of the Jordan and poured themselves into the land of Palestine, the circumcision, necessary for the future mix of nations, guarded against error. And that which is written a second time about the circumcised people (Joshua 5) signifies that the circumcision ceased in the desert, which was reasonably practiced in Egypt; and that believers are to be cleansed by the spiritual circumcision of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) But the Scripture, foreseeing that by faith God would justify the Gentiles, foretold to Abraham that all nations would be blessed in him. So then, those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Not that the Scripture itself, namely the ink and the parchment, which are insensible, can foreknow the future; but rather the Holy Spirit and the senses, hidden in the letter, have foretold things to come many centuries later. Moreover, the example taken from Genesis is contained in its own volume: 'And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed' (Gen. XXVI, 4). The apostle interpreted this concerning Christ, saying: 'It is not written of seeds, as if in many; but as in one, and in your seed, which is Christ.' However, we must observe in all the almost testimonies (as taken from the old books in the new Testament), which the evangelists or

apostles believed in memory; and having only explained the meaning, they often changed the order, and sometimes removed or added words. But there is no doubt that all nations were blessed in Isaac and Jacob, or in the twelve patriarchs, and others who descended from the lineage of Abraham; but in Christ Jesus, through whom all nations praise God, and a new name is blessed on the earth. However, the apostle can also be understood to have drawn an example of the seed from another passage in Genesis, where it is written: 'And (no doubt Abraham) God brought him outside and said to him: Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' And he said to him: Thus shall your seed be; and Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice (Gen. XV, 5, 6) . Therefore, whoever believes, shall be blessed with faithful Abraham, who is said to have believed in God first, for his remarkable faith in him. Just as Enos is said to have hoped in the Lord God, the principal hope in God, and above all the others, is written to have called upon the Lord God (Gen. IV, 26) . Not that Abel, about whom the Lord says: The voice of your brother's blood cries to me (Ibid. IV, 10) ; and the others afterwards, did not hope to call upon God; but each one may be called upon from the part that he has, to the greatest extent possible.

Book Two Book Two In the first book of the Commentaries on the Galatians, when I was discussing the customs of the Gentiles, I left unfinished the task of explaining who the Galatians are, from where and how they came. Whether they were natives who were defeated or newcomers who settled in the land they now inhabit. And whether they lost their language through intermarriage, or if they learned a new one without losing their own. Marcus Varro, a most diligent investigator of all antiquities, and others who have imitated him, have recorded many things concerning this people which are worthy of remembrance. But because it is our intention not to admit uncircumcised men into the temple of God (and to be frank, many years have passed since we stopped reading these things), we will quote the words of our Lactantius from the third volume to Probus about this people: "The Gauls," he says, "were anciently called Galatians because of the whiteness of their bodies; and the Sibyl also calls them this. The poet meant to signify this when he said: 'Then their milky necks are adorned with gold' (Virgil, book VIII, Aeneid.) He could have said 'white.' From here, of course, Galatia became a province, into which the Gauls once came and mixed with the Greeks. Hence why that region was first called Gallograecia, and later Galatia. It is not surprising that he said this about the Gauls, and that he mentioned how the western peoples settled in the eastern part of the world, with the easternmost being opposite Greece. The Phocaeans founded Massilia, whom Varro says are trilingual because they speak Greek, Latin, and Gaulish. The city of Rhodes, founded by Rhodian colonists, gave its name to the river Rhodanus. I omit the founders of Carthage, the Tyrians, and the city of Agenor; I pass over Thebes of Bacchus, which he founded in Africa: that city is now called Thebestis. I leave that part of Libya which is full of Greek cities. I cross over to Spain: did not the Greeks, who sailed from the island of Zacynthus, found Saguntum? And is not the city of Tartessus, now called Carteia, reported to have been founded by Greek colonists? The mountains of Hispania, Calpe, Idrus, Pyrenees: also the islands of Aphrodisia and Gymnesia, which are called the Balearic Islands, do they not demonstrate indications of the Greek language? Italy itself, once occupied by Greek peoples, was formerly called Magna Graecia. It is certain that Romans, descended from the Trojan hero Aeneas, cannot be denied. From this, it follows that both in the West, Greeks often exhibit sharp wit, and in the East, they smell of barbaric dullness. And we do not say this because things that are different from each other do not arise from neighboring places, but because in large part

even other things that are not similar are called by the same name. Therefore, it is not surprising that the stupid and slower to understand are called Galatians; since Hilary, a Gaul himself born in Pictavis on the Rhone, in his Hymn of the Hymns, calls the Galatians unteachable in Latin eloquence. And what is now abundant in orators, relates not so much to the carefulness of the region as to the clamor of the rhetoricians: especially since Aquitania boasts itself as of Greek origin, and the Galatians came not from that part of the world but from the more savage Gauls. Do you want to know, O Paula and Eustochium, how the Apostle has distinguished each province by its characteristics? To this day, the same traces of either virtues or errors are preserved. The faith of the Roman people is praised (Rom. 1). Where else is there such enthusiasm and frequency in flocking to churches and the tombs of martyrs? Where else does the Amen resound like the thunder of heaven, shaking empty temples of idols? Not that the Romans have a different faith from that of all the churches of Christ, but because their devotion is greater and their simplicity in believing. Again, they are accused of ease and pride. Ease, as stated there: I beg you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause dissensions and obstacles, contrary to the doctrine that you have learned; and avoid them: for such people do not serve Christ the Lord, but their own appetite; and seduce the hearts of the innocent with sweet words and blessings. For your obedience has been made known to all. I rejoice, therefore, in you; and I want you to be wise in good and innocent in evil (Rom. 16:17ff). But concerning pride: Do not be high-minded, but fear (Rom. 2:20, 25). And: I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of this mystery, so that you may not be wise in your own eyes. And in the following: For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, but to think soberly (Rom. 12:3). And more explicitly: Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Perceive the same things together. Not being wise in lofty things, but agreeing with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation (Ibid., XV, 16). He also notes to the Corinthians that their women should have their heads covered and men should grow their hair (I Cor. X): and they should eat indiscriminately in the temples ((Al. time)) (II Cor. X, 20); and being inflated with worldly wisdom, they deny the resurrection of the flesh. These things cannot be doubted, which if anyone has seen, it is clear (I Cor. IV). The Macedonians are praised for their charity, hospitality, and the welcoming of brethren. Therefore, it is written to them: But concerning brotherly love, you have no need for anyone to write to you. For you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another. Indeed, you do this toward all the brethren in all Macedonia (I Thess. IV, 9). However, they are criticized for going around from house to house idly: and for expecting others' food while desiring to please each one individually, and running here and there to report what is happening with each individual. For it follows: We ask you, brothers, to excel still more and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: to attend to your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, so that you may behave properly in the presence of outsiders, and not be dependent on anyone (1 Thessalonians, 4:11). And so that no one may think it is a teaching of a teacher rather than a warning to the people, he emphasizes and repeats the same in his second letter to them, saying: For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we have heard that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. (2 Thessalonians 3:10-17) He knows with me who saw Ancyra, the metropolis city of Galatia, how many times it has been torn apart by schisms, how many times it has been corrupted by variations of doctrines. I omit the Cataphrygians, Ophites, Borborites, and Manichaeans; for these are already known as the names of human calamity. Who has ever heard of the Passalorynchitae, and the Ascodrobi, and the Artotyrites, and other names that are more like monsters than deities in any part of the Roman world? The traces of ancient foolishness remain until today. One thing we infer and promise at the beginning is that the Galatians, apart from the Greek language, which the whole East speaks, have almost the same language as the Treviri, and it doesn't matter if they have corrupted it in some way, since even the Africans have changed the Phoenician language to some extent, and even Latin itself changes with regions and over time. But let us now return to the matter at hand. For whoever is of the works of the Law, is under a curse. For it is written: Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them. I have this custom, that whenever something is taken from the Old Testament by the Apostles, I resort to the original books, and diligently examine how they are written in their places. Therefore, I found in Deuteronomy this very thing in the Septuagint interpreters, as it is placed: Cursed is every man who does not continue in all the words of this Law, to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen. But in Aquila it is written this way: Cursed is the one who does not establish the words of this Law to do them, and all the people shall say, 'Indeed.' Symmachus wrote it this way: Cursed is the one who does not confirm the words of this Law to do them, and all the people shall say, 'Amen.' Theodotion translated it this way: Cursed is the one who does not raise up the words of this Law to do them, and all the people shall say, 'Amen.' From this we understand that, like in other cases, the Apostle placed more importance on the meaning of the testimony rather than the exact words. And it is uncertain whether the Seventy Interpreters added 'every man' and 'in all things,' or if it was so in the old Hebrew and was later deleted by the Jews. But this suspicion is stimulated in me by the fact that the word 'omnis' and 'in omnibus,' as if necessary to their own meaning, are used by the Apostle, a man of Hebrew expertise and most knowledgeable in the Law, to prove that all those who are under the works of the Law are under a curse. He would never have used these words unless they were found in the Hebrew volumes. For this reason, in examining the Hebrew volumes of the Samaritans, I found 'Chol,' which translates to 'omnis' or 'omnibus,' and it agrees with the Septuagint interpreters. Therefore, the Jews took that in vain, lest they be seen to be under a curse if they could not fully accomplish all that is written; since the letters of an earlier nation also testify to this being the case. But because no one can fulfill the Law and do all that is commanded, the Apostle also testifies elsewhere, saying: For what was impossible by the Law, in which it was weakened by the flesh, God, sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. VIII). But if this is true, they may object to us: Therefore Moses, and Isaiah, and the other prophets who were under the works of the Law, are under a curse? He will not fear to consent, who has read the Apostle saying: Because Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, made a curse for us; and to answer that in each one's time a curse was made for the people. By not immediately attributing this to the righteous men, it will seem to detract from the Saviour, as if he had nothing outstanding and excellent, being made a curse for us, when others have also been made a curse for others. For no

one, even if they themselves have become a curse, has freed anyone from the curse, except the Lord Jesus Christ alone, who, with his precious blood, redeemed both us all and them themselves, I mean Moses and Aaron, and all the prophets and patriarchs, from the curse of the Law. And do not think that this is said from my own understanding, Scripture is the witness: that Christ, by the grace of God, or as it is read in some copies, without God, died for all (II Cor. V). But if He paid the Ransom for all, for Moses, and for all the prophets, from whom none could cancel the ancient manuscript of debts that stood against us, and nailed it to the Cross (Col. 2). All have sinned and are in need of the glory (that is, grace) of God (Rom. 3:23). Ecclesiastes also affirms this sentiment: There is no righteous man on earth who always does good and never sins (Eccles. 7:21). Finally, even the later statement of the Apostles clearly teaches that neither Moses nor any illustrious man from ancient times could be justified before God by the Law. For it follows:

3:11-12

(Vers. 11, 12.) But since no one is justified before God by the law, it is clear that the righteous shall live by faith. The law is not of faith, but the one who does them shall live by them. An example that proves the righteous live by faith and not by works is taken from Habakkuk, as the Seventy interpreters have rendered it: But the righteous shall live by my faith (Hab. II, 4). Aquila and Theodotion: But the righteous shall live by his faith, that is, by God's faith. Therefore, it must be considered that when it is said that a man or a person lives by faith, it is not to give occasion for the despising of virtuous works, but rather, that the just person lives by faith. So, whoever is faithful and lives by faith can only come to faith or live in it if they have first become just and ascended to faith through the purity of life as if by certain steps. Therefore, it is possible for someone to be just and yet not live without the faith of Christ. If someone reading is troubled, let them take the words of Paul, in which he says about himself: According to the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless (Philippians 3:6). Therefore, Paul was at that time righteous in the Law, but he could not yet live, because he did not have Christ speaking in him: I am the life (John 11:25). Believing in Him, he began to live. Let us also do something similar to this which is said, the righteous lives by faith; and let us say: the chaste lives by faith, the wise lives by faith, the strong lives by faith, and let us bring forth a similar sentence against those who, not believing in Christ, consider themselves to be strong, wise, temperate, or righteous: so that they may know that no one can live without Christ, without whom all virtue is faulty. The present testimony can be read as follows: the just person lives by faith, as is inferred afterwards. But when he says, 'The law is not of faith, but he who does it shall live in it,' it is very clear that not just any life is being spoken of, but rather one that is referred to something. For the just person lives by faith, and it is not added 'in them' or 'in those.' But the one who lives in the law and does it, lives in them, that is, in those things that he has done, which he considered to be good. He receives the reward of his labor, only those works that he has done, whether it be the length of his life (as the Jews believe) or its decline, which is the punishment by which the transgressor of the law is killed. However, we cannot consider these words to be those of the Apostles, but of the prophet Ezekiel, who said: 'I led them into the wilderness and gave them my commandments and showed them my statutes, which if a man does, he shall live by them.' (Ezek. 20:10-11). And when he said that those who walked in the commandments and statutes would live, he added: 'I also gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not live' (ibid., 25). What a consideration in these words! Where he said: I gave them precepts and justifications in which they could live, he

did not add goods. But where he placed, in which they could not live, he added: And I gave them precepts that are not good, and justifications in which they will not live. But these things are explained more fully in Ezekiel: now let us return to the order of the Letter.

3:13

(Verse 13.) Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, becoming cursed for us. In this passage, Marcion sneaks in the power of the Creator, whom he slanders as bloody, cruel, and a punisher (or judge), asserting that we are redeemed through Christ, who is the Son of another good God. If he understood the difference between buying and redeeming (because one who buys buys someone else's, but one who redeems properly buys what was his own and ceased to be his), he would never twist the simple words of Scripture to the detriment of his own dogma. Therefore, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, which was established for sinners, whom He Himself reproaches through the prophet, saying: Behold, you are sold for your sins, and I have dismissed your mother for your iniquities (Isa. 50:1). And the apostle repeats this very thing, saying: But I am carnal, sold under sin (Rom. 7:14). The curses of the Law which are written in Leviticus and Deuteronomy are not fulfilled by the authority of God, but by the prophetic spirit, they are announced to those who were going to sin, the things that were going to happen to them. But if the apostles wanted to restrict us by their testimony, saying: Whoever of the works of the Law there are, they are under a curse, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who does not remain in all the things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them (Deut. XXVII, 26), and to assert that all those who were under the Law were cursed, let us ask him whether those who are under the Gospel of Christ and do not follow his commandments are cursed or not. If he speaks evil, he will have in the Gospel what we have in the Law. If he denies the cursed, therefore the precepts of the Gospel will be in vain, and those who fulfill them will be without reward. Both are solved in this way: just as Christ Jesus freed us from the curse of the Law, by becoming a curse for us, so he also delivers us from the curse of the Gospel which is imposed on those who do not fulfill its precepts, by becoming a curse for us himself, knowing not to withhold even the smallest portion of talent, and to demand the last quarter (Matthew 5 and Mark 12).

3:14

(Verse 14) Because it is written: Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree, so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith. Before we discuss the meaning and words of the Apostle, it seems fitting to briefly respond to the testimony of Deuteronomy, from which the Apostle drew these words (Deut. 21:22-23), and to compare it to other editions. Therefore, the Seventy interpreters translated this passage as follows: But if there is any sin and deserving of death, and he is put to death, you shall hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day; for cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree, and you shall not defile your land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. Aquila: And when there is a sin in a man deserving the judgment of death, and he is killed, and you hang him on a tree, his dead body shall not remain on the tree overnight, but you shall bury him on the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God; so you shall not defile your land, which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. Symmachus: But if a man commits a sin deserving the judgment of death, and he is killed, and you hang him on a tree, his dead body shall not remain on the tree overnight, but you

shall bury him on the same day, for he is hanged as a blasphemer against God; so you shall not defile your land, which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. Theodotio: And because there will be sin in a man, deserving of the judgment of death, and he will die, and you shall hang him on a tree, his dead body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God; so you shall not defile your land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. Furthermore, Adama, which means earth or soil, is called in the Hebrew language. In the place where Aquila and Theodotio likewise translated it, saying, "for a hanged man is cursed by God," it is written in Hebrew as Chi Calalath Eloim Thalui. These words were interpreted by Ebion, the half-Christian and half-Jewish heresiarch, as meaning 'because it is an insult to God to be hanged.' I remember finding in the debate between Jason and Papiscus, which was written in Greek, the phrase 'the blasphemy of God who is hanged.' A Hebrew who taught me Scripture to some extent told me that it can also be read as 'because contemptuously God was hanged.' We have collected these things for this reason, because it is a very famous question, and we are often accused by the Jews of infamy, that our Savior and Lord was cursed by God. First of all, it must be understood that not everyone who hangs on a tree is cursed by God, but only those who have sinned and have been sentenced to death for their crime and been lifted up on a cross. He is not cursed because he was crucified, but because he has fallen into such guilt that he deserved to be crucified. Then it should be added, that lower down, the cause of the crucifixion is more fully explained, as Scripture testifies, because he was crucified for the blasphemy and curse against God. This was translated more clearly by Symmachus, who said: because he was suspended for the blasphemy against God. Finally, let us ask them, if Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, who refused to worship the idol of Nebuchadnezzar, were suspended on a tree (Dan. III); and also Eleazar, a ninety-year-old man, and the glorious mother with her seven sons under the reign of Antiochus, should they be considered cursed (II Mach. VII) or most worthy of all blessings? Certainly, if Haman had prepared the cross for Mordecai (Esther VII), I think that Mordecai would have ascended it not as a cursed man, but as a holy man. These and similar things prove that he is cursed who commits a worthy crime on the gallows: not he who is crucified by the injustice of judges, the power of enemies, the outcry of the crowd, the envy of virtues, or the anger of the king. And Naboth, formerly known as Nabutham, was condemned to death by the whole city of Jezrael upon Jezebel's letters (3 Kings 21); but his blood is avenged in the figure of Christ, many centuries later, as the Lord declares to Osec: Call his name Jezrael, because in a little while I will avenge the blood of Jezrael upon the house of Jeu. (Hosea 1:4). These things are against the Jews. However, in order to return to our discussion, I do not know why the Apostle, in that which is written: Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree (Deuteronomy 21:2), would remove or add anything. For if he was following the authority of the Seventy Interpreters, he ought, as they had published, to have added the name of God. But if he thought fit to follow the Hebrew, written in Hebrew letters, only that which he read for most true, and which is not found in the Hebrew language from the sawn tree, he ought not to assume. Hence it appears to me that either the ancient books of the Hebrews were different from those which we have now: or the Apostle (as I have said before) retained the sense of the Scriptures, but not the words: or, what is most to be accounted of, after the Passion of Christ, some one added the name of God to the Hebrew and to our copies, to bring disgrace upon us, who believe that Christ was cursed of God. Therefore, I proceed with bold foot into this contest, that I may challenge the books, saying that nowhere is it written that anyone is cursed by God, and wherever a curse is placed, God's

name is never attached. 'Cursed are you among all beasts,' it is said to the serpent. And to Adam: 'Cursed is the earth in your works.' And to Cain: 'Cursed are you upon the earth.' And elsewhere: 'Cursed be Canaan, a servant he will be to his brethren.' And also in another place: Cursed be their fury, for it is bold, and their wrath, for it is hard (Gen. XLIX, 7). It is too long if I were to enumerate all the curses, which are written in Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua, and yet in none of them is the name of God added, to the extent that even Satan himself, when he promised concerning Job that if he were severely afflicted, he would blaspheme, indicated this from the better side, saying: Unless you bless him to his face (Job I, 11). And in the Books of Kings, Naboth (or Nabutham) is reported to have been stoned because he blessed God and the king (3 Kings 21). But nothing should move us that Christ was made a curse for us, because it was God himself who is said to have made him a curse, he who (as Christ did not know sin) made him sin for us, and the Savior, from the fullness of the Father, emptied himself, taking the form of a servant (Philippians 2): he died and the wisdom of God is called foolishness, so that what was foolish in the sight of God might become wiser to men (1 Corinthians 1). And in the sixty-eighth psalm, it says of Him: 'O God, you know my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from you.' (Psalm 68:7) Therefore, the Lord's injury is our glory. He died so that we may live. He descended into hell so that we may ascend to heaven. He became foolishness so that we may become wise. He emptied Himself of the fullness and form of God, taking on the form of a servant, so that the fullness of divinity may dwell in us and we may become servants of the Lord. He hung on the wood, so that the sin which we committed on the wood of the knowledge of good and evil might be erased, hung on the wood. His cross turned bitter waters into sweet taste, and the lost axe, immersed in the deep, lifted up when thrown into the waters of the Jordan (2 Kings 6). In the end, he became a curse, yes, a curse: so that the blessings that were promised to Abraham might be transferred to the nations, with him as the author and forerunner, and the promise of the Spirit might be fulfilled through faith in him: which we ought to receive in two ways, either in spiritual gifts of virtues, or in the spiritual understanding of the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 9).

3:15-18

(V. 15 seqq.) Brothers, I speak in human terms: yet no one rejects or adds to a man's covenant, which has been confirmed. The promises were made to Abraham and to his seed. It does not say, 'and to seeds,' referring to many, but referring to one, 'and to your seed,' who is Christ. Now I say this: the covenant, which was confirmed by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate the promise, so as to abolish it. For if the inheritance is based on the law, it is no longer based on a promise. But God gave to Abraham a promise. The Apostle, who became all things to all people in order to gain everyone, is a debtor to Greeks and Barbarians, to the wise and the foolish, even to the Galatians whom he had just called foolish. For he did not use the same arguments with them as he did with the Romans, but simpler ones; things that even fools could understand and almost from the street corner. And so that it would not seem that he did it out of ignorance and not skill, he appeases the wise reader beforehand, and he tempers what he is going to say with a preface: Brothers, I speak as a human being. For what I am about to say, I do not speak according to God: I do not speak according to hidden wisdom, and those who can eat solid food, but according to those who are nourished by the tender milk of the stomach, and are unable to bear great things. (1 Corinthians 5). Therefore, to the Corinthians, among whom fornication was heard, and such fornication that even among the Gentiles, he says: I

speak, and not the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:12). And to the same in the second [letter]: What I am saying, I do not speak according to the Lord, but as if in foolishness (II Cor. XI, 17). Some think that when he is about to discuss examples from the testament of a man and the death of the testator and other things of human similarity, he said: Brothers, I say according to man: although it seems to me, and for this reason indeed that they think, but especially because of what follows being stated (or promised), namely: He does not say 'and to seeds' as if in many, but as if in one, and to your seed, which is Christ. While traversing all the scriptures in meaning and memory, I have never found the seed of writing in the plural number, but whether in a positive or negative sense, it is always in the singular number. Furthermore, the following is inferred: But I say that this testament is confirmed by God, if anyone diligently compares the Hebrew volumes and other editions with the translation of the Septuagint interpreters, they will find where the testament is written, not to sound like testament, but a covenant, which is called 'Berith' in the Hebrew language. Therefore, it is clear that the Apostle did what he promised, and he did not use hidden meanings to the Galatians, but rather everyday and lowly things that could displease the prudent (I speak in human terms unless I add this). To calculate the years from the time when the Lord spoke to Abraham, saying, 'And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed' (Genesis 22:18), until the lawgiver Moses: whether they are four hundred and thirty, or how the Lord promises to Abraham in Genesis that his descendants shall come out of the land of bondage after four hundred years. For it is not a small matter, and sought after by many, I do not know if it was invented by someone else. Also, that which is read in the same book about Tamar and her two little ones (Genesis 38), that is, that the first one called Zara extended his hand, and the midwife tied a scarlet thread on it, and then, as he pulled his hand back inside, the hand of the one named Phares was extended in its place. It is fitting that this demonstrates how Israel, in the work of the Law, extended his hand and contracted it, polluted by the blood of the prophets and of the Savior himself. But afterwards, the people of the Gentiles burst forth, because of whom it is often said to have been destroyed, and the middle wall that had been between the Jews and the Gentiles was broken down, so that there would be one flock and one shepherd, and there would be glory, and honor, and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. However, the simple meaning that is hidden in this passage has this force, that the Apostle teaches that the promises that were made to Abraham cannot be destroyed by the Law, which was given afterwards, and that the later things cannot take priority over the earlier ones, since the promises were given to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before, so that all nations would be blessed in him. But the observation is, that whoever had done it, would live in it, after four hundred and thirty years Moses gave it on Mount Sinai. On the contrary, this could be said: Why then was it necessary to give the Law after so much time of promise, when even with the Law given, the suspicion of a broken promise could arise, and the Law given would not be profitable while the promise remained? The Apostle, foreseeing this question, poses and explains it to himself in the following, saying:

3:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) What then? The law was added because of transgressions until the seed should come to whom the promise was made; ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness

would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. For indeed the law was not given for the righteous but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners (I Tim. II, 9): and to go deeper, after the idolatry to which they were enslaved in Egypt, so that they forgot the God of their fathers, and subsequently said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt'; the ritual of worshipping God and the punishment of sinners was established by the hand of the mediator Christ Jesus, for all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made: not only the heavens, earth, sea, and all that we see, but also those things which were imposed on the stubborn people as the yoke of the Law through Moses (John I). And it is written to Timothy: For there is one God, and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus (I Tim. II, 5). After He deigned to be born for our salvation from the Virgin's womb, He is called mediator of God and men, being a separate person. But before He assumed a human body, and when He was with the Father in the beginning, He is called the Word of God made flesh, to all the holy ones to whom the word of God was made, namely Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and later Moses and all the Prophets, whom Scripture relates, without the addition of man whom He had not yet assumed, He is called only mediator. But when he says: The law was ordained by angels, this is to be understood, that in every Old Testament, where an angel is first seen and afterwards introduced as speaking as God: The angel indeed among the many ministers who may have been seen truly, but it is in this mediator that he speaks who says: I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Exodus 3:6). And it is not surprising if God speaks in angels, since He also speaks through angels who are in human beings, as Zechariah says. And the angel who was speaking with me said (Zech. II, 3); and afterwards adding: Thus saith the Lord almighty. For the angel who was said to be in the prophet did not dare to speak in his own person: Thus saith the Lord almighty. The hand of the mediator, we must understand, is the power and might of him. He, being one with the Father according to his Godhood, is understood to be distinct from him according to his office as mediator. But since the order of the reading is confused and disordered by a hyperbaton, it seems that it should be rendered to us thus: The Law was given through angels into the hand of the mediator, ordained by angels because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made. But there is no doubt that the seed signifies Christ, who is also proven to be the son of Abraham from the beginning of Matthew, as Scripture testifies: The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

3:21-23

(v21 onwards) So is the law against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. Therefore, it should not be understood that the promise is excluded because what followed seems to abolish what came before; but rather, it is clear that it is given for the preservation of the promise, not for its overthrow, because it was not able to give life or to bestow what the first promise had pledged. For if a law had been given that could give life and bring about what the promise had promised, then the promise would truly be regarded as excluded by the law. Now, however, on account of

the transgressions, as we have said above, it more strongly argues against those sinners to whom, after the promise had been made, custody, and, so to speak, imprisonment, had been given, so that because they had not wanted to await the promised ones while innocent through the freedom of the will, they were hindered by legal chains, and, reduced to the servitude of commandments, they might be guarded until the coming of the future faith in Christ, which would bring an end to the promise. Nor should it be thought that Scripture is the author of sin because it is said to have concluded all things under sin, since the commandment which is prescribed by law rather shows and condemns sin than is the cause of sin. In the same way, a judge is not the author of crime by condemning wicked men, but he concludes them and pronounces his sentence by the authority of his judgment, so that he may afterwards absolve the guilty if he wishes by the forgiveness of the penalty.

3:24-26

(Verse 24 onwards) Therefore the Law was our guardian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. The guardian is assigned to young children to restrain their unruly behavior and keep their hearts inclined towards vice, while their young minds are educated in studies and prepared, through fear of punishment, for the higher disciplines of philosophy and governing the republic. However, the pedagogue is not a teacher and father, nor does the one who is being educated by the pedagogue expect an inheritance and knowledge; but the pedagogue keeps the son's property, and will withdraw from him once he reaches the lawful age to take possession of the inheritance. Furthermore, the very name 'pedagogue' signifies this, and it is derived from the fact that he leads and guides the children. Therefore, even the Law of Moses, given to a disobedient people, was a type of a strict pedagogue, in order to watch over them and prepare them for the future faith, which came when we believed in Christ. Now we are no longer under a pedagogue; the guardians and trustees depart from us, and as we enter the proper age, we are called true sons of God, whom the abolished Law did not generate, but rather it is the mother, Faith, who is in Christ Jesus. But if someone, after the completion of the time of their age, when they are already called an heir and free and a son, wishes to be under a pedagogue, let them know that they cannot live by the laws of children. For where can that be fulfilled now: Three times a year all your males shall appear in the sight of the Lord your God (Exod. XXIII, 17), with Jerusalem overturned and the temple scattered to ashes? Where are the atoning sacrifices for sin? Where is the eternal fire of holocausts to the image of the heavenly stars, with the altar completely destroyed? But as for what punishment can be decreed for the wicked, Scripture says: Remove this evil from among you (Deut. XIII, 5), serving the Jews and the Roman rulers? And so it will be, that they will not live under a father or under a guardian: for the law cannot be fulfilled after the succession of faith, and while faith seeks the role of a guardian, it is not bound.

3:27-28

(Verse 27, 28.) For whoever has been baptized in Christ has clothed themselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. And how we are born as children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, he demonstrates by saying: For whoever has been baptized in Christ has clothed themselves with Christ. And that Christ is our clothing is proven not only in this passage, but also in another by the urging of Paul

himself: Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. XIII, 14). Therefore, if those who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ, it is clear that those who have not put on Christ have not been baptized in Christ. For it was said to those who were considered faithful and had received the baptism of Christ: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. If anyone takes only the physical and visible water as a cleansing, they have not put on the Lord Jesus Christ. For even Simon, from the Acts of the Apostles, had received the cleansing of water; but because he did not have the Holy Spirit, he was not clothed with Christ (Acts 8). And heretics or hypocrites, and those who live sordidly, indeed seem to receive baptism, but I do not know whether they have the garment of Christ. Therefore, let us consider lest someone be found among us who, because he does not have the garment of Christ, is accused of not being baptized in Christ. However, when someone has once put on Christ and has been sent into the fire, becoming white with the burning ardor of the Holy Spirit, it is not understood whether it is gold or silver. As long as heat possesses matter in this way, it has a single fiery color, and all diversity of race, condition, and bodies disappears under this covering. For he is not a Jew, nor a Greek. We must understand the Greek as being a Gentile, because '■λλην' means both Greek and Gentile. Neither is a Jew better because he is circumcised, nor is a Gentile worse because he has a foreskin; but he is better or worse based on the quality of his faith, whether he is a Jew or a Greek. Greetings also to the free, for they are not separated by status but by faith. For a slave can be better than a free person in faith, and a free person can be surpassed by a slave in the quality of faith. Likewise, male and female are separated by the strength and weakness of their bodies. However, faith is considered a devotion of the mind, and it often happens that a woman becomes the cause of salvation for a man, and a man precedes a woman in religion. But when things are like this, and all the diversity of gender, status, and bodies is taken away by the baptism of Christ and his garment, we are all one in Christ Jesus: just as the Father and the Son are one in themselves, so may we be one in them.

3:29

(Verse 29.) But if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise. For the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void. For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise. However, as often as we, who have believed in him after receiving the message of the Savior, receive the nobility of the lineage of Abraham, to whom the promise was made, then we must spiritually receive the seed of faith and preaching. Furthermore, it should also be considered that when it speaks of the Lord, it pluralizes the promises made to Abraham and his offspring, that is, Christ Jesus. But when it speaks of those who are the offspring of Abraham through Christ, it designates the promise in the singular, as in the present passage: Therefore, you are the offspring of Abraham, heirs according to the promise. For it was fitting that what was said in the plural in Christ should be attributed to many individuals in the singular. It follows:

4:1-2

(Chapter IV - 1, 2) However, I say that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, even though he is the Lord of all, but he is under guardians and managers until the appointed time

by the father. This little heir, who is no different from a slave even though he is the Lord of all, is under guardians and managers until the appointed time by the father, represents the whole human race until the coming of Christ, and, to say more, until the end of the world. For just as all die in the first Adam, not yet born, so also all those who were born before the coming of Christ are made alive in the second Adam. And so it happens that we too served the Law in the fathers, and they are saved by grace in their children. This understanding is in agreement with the Catholic Church, which affirms the one providence of the Old and New Testament and does not distinguish in time those whom it has joined together in condition. We are all built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone. In him, the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. Through him, we are also being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (Ephesians 2:20-22) Truly, in Christ, we are all one bread, and we have come together in unity on the earth. And just as we are founded upon the prophets, so too did the patriarchs stand upon the foundation of the apostles. Moreover, the prophets can also be understood as tutors and actors, whose words we were daily instructed by in anticipation of the coming of the Savior, just as the Law was expounded by the pedagogue Moses; and the angels of the little ones who daily behold the face of the Father and intercede for them. Concerning whom it is said: 'The angels of the Lord will encamp around those who fear Him, and will deliver them' (Ps. 34:7). Both priests and rulers can be understood, who were once seen as dominating the people, now providing a form. And rightly are they called under tutors and actors, who, having the spirit of fear, have not yet deserved the spirit of liberty and adoption. For the age of infancy fears sins, fears the tutor, does not trust that it is free, even though by nature it is a mistress. And according to both interpretations, whether we called tutors and actors or prophets or angels, this child is under actors and tutors until the appointed time of the perfect man is fulfilled. But the legitimate time, as in Roman law, is terminated by a period of twenty-five years, so it is considered the coming of Christ to the perfection of the human race. As soon as he comes, and we all grow into perfect men, the pedagogue and tutor depart from us. Then we will enjoy the authority of the Lord and the possession of the inheritance, in which before we were considered somewhat estranged.

4:3

(Verse 3.) And so we too, when we were little, were enslaved under the elements of this world. He called the elements of the world, the same ones he had mentioned before as tutors and guardians: because we were not yet able to receive the coming of the Son of God, we were being trained in the midst of them. Some think that these are angels who govern the four elements of the world: namely, earth, water, fire, and air: and it is necessary that before anyone believes in Christ, they be governed by these arbitrators. The elements of the world are the sky and the earth, and that which is within them is commonly called: the sun, the moon, the seas, the forests, and the mountains, which the wise men of Greece and the barbarian nations, as well as the Romans, worship as gods, the sink of all superstitions. When Christ comes, we are set free, understanding that these are creatures, not divine beings. Others interpret the elements of the world as the Law of Moses and the words of the prophets, through which we receive the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom. Finally, the Apostle writes in his letter to the Hebrews to those who should already be perfect but have neglected the truth and are still clinging to the principles of teachings: 'For when by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic

principles of the oracles of God' (Hebrews 5:12). On the contrary, it can be objected to us that the Apostle Paul, writing to the Colossians, called the principles of the world something different: 'See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ' (Colossians 2:8). But from what he added, according to the tradition of men and empty deceit, he shows that not the same elements are named for the Colossians as for the Galatians. For from these elements, once the fullness of time has come, we are redeemed and, advancing to greater things, receive the adoption of sons. But from those elements, nothing such is said to follow; but the elements are simply understood as letters. Therefore, as we said, the Law of Moses and the prophets can be understood as elements of letters, because they are joined by syllables and names for the benefit not so much of themselves as of something else, so that we are able to read a discourse composed, in which the meaning and order of words are considered more than the principles of letters. But as for the Law and the prophets, we have interpreted them as the elements of the world, which the world commonly accepts for those who are in the world, as Paul himself says: 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself.' And in the Gospel: 'And the world was made through Him, and the world did not receive Him.' Some also wander more freely in this matter: for example, they inquire whether the Law possesses the shadow of future goods in another world, about which the Savior says: 'I am not of this world,' so that we may first be like little children, and, being placed under the elements of the initiations, may gradually advance to the highest point, and receive the place of adoption which we once lost.

4:4

(Verse 4.) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. Pay close attention to the fact that it does not say 'made through a woman,' which the heresies of Marcion and others assert, pretending that Christ's flesh was imaginary. Rather, it says 'born of a woman,' so that he may be believed to have been born not just through her, but from her. And the fact that the holy and blessed Mother of the Lord is called a woman and not a Virgin is also written in the Gospel according to Matthew: when Joseph is called her husband (Luke 2), and when the Lord Himself rebukes her as a woman (John 2). For it was not necessary to always speak cautiously and timidly of the Virgin, when the word 'woman' signifies the sex more than the union with a man. And according to the understanding of Greek, both *γυνή* can be interpreted as both 'wife' and 'woman'. But to pass over all else: just as he was made under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so he wanted to be born of a woman for the sake of those who were born of a woman. For he also received baptism in the river Jordan, as though repenting, when he was free from sins, so that he could teach others that they should be cleansed through baptism and be born again as the new children of the Spirit. Not understanding at all, John the Baptist was prohibiting him from approaching the bath, saying: I owe to be baptized by you (Matt. III, 14). And immediately the sacrament is taught: Without hesitation: for thus it befits us to fulfill all righteousness, so that he who came for the salvation of men would not pass over anything concerning the conduct of men. Let someone ask and say: If he became under the Law for this reason, to redeem those who were under the Law, which indeed would have been impossible to redeem those who were under the Law unless he himself had become under the Law: or if he became without the Law, in order to redeem those who were not under the Law; or if he did not

become without the Law, he does not redeem those who were not under the Law. But if it was possible to redeem those who were without the Law, so that he himself would not be without the Law, then he was made superfluous under the Law, in order to redeem those who were under the Law. He will solve this question briefly, if anyone uses that example: and he was considered with those who were without the Law. For although it may have been poorly edited in the Latin codices due to the simplicity of the interpreters, 'And he was reckoned with the transgressors' (Luke 22:37) means something different among the Greeks, which is written here, and something different 'unjust', which is found in the Latin volumes. Anomos is called that person who is without law, and is bound by no right. Unjust is also referred to as iniquitous or unjust. Hence the Apostle himself says in another place: 'When I was not, he says, without the Law of God; but I was in the Law of Christ' (I Cor. IX): and certainly in this testimony, 'anomos' is written in Greek; and the one who interprets it here correctly could have interpreted the same word there in a similar way, if ambiguity had not deceived him. But someone will examine the word itself more sharply and will say that those who were first on God's side and then ceased to be are called redeemed; but those who were not under the Law are not so much redeemed as bought. Hence, in the letter to the Corinthians, where fornication was heard of, and such fornication that not even among the Gentiles (Ibid. V), it is written: You were bought at a price, not redeemed: for they had not been under the Law. Therefore, we receive the adoption of the children of God: and having been redeemed by Christ, we cease to be under the servitude of the elements of the world and the power of guardians. Just as we have shown the difference between redeeming and buying, let us also consider what the difference is between receiving and accepting the adoption of children.

4:6

(Verse 6.) But because you are sons of God, God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, Abba, Father. Clearly the Apostle Paul mentions three spirits, the Spirit of the Son of God, as in this present place, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts (Rom. VIII, 14). And the Spirit of God, as in that place: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. And the Holy Spirit, as in that place: Your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you (I Cor. VI, 19). That the Holy Spirit is distinct from the Son of God is clearly and convincingly confirmed in the Gospel: Whoever speaks a word against the Son of man will be forgiven. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, neither in this age nor in the age to come will be forgiven (Luke 12:10). This is because many, due to their lack of knowledge of the Scriptures (as Firmianus also states in the eighth letter to Demetrianus), assert that the Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Father and sometimes as the Son. And while we believe clearly in the Trinity, removing the third person, they do not want to be his substance, but his name. But in order not to take too long (for this is not a dialogue, but a commentary), I will briefly show the three spirits named in the fiftieth psalm, as the prophet says: Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your salvation, and strengthen me with your principal spirit. He calls the principal spirit Father, because the Son is from the Father, and not the Father from the Son. But the spirit of righteousness, truth, and justice signifies Christ the Lord: for the Father has given all judgment to the Son (John V, 22), as David says: O God, give your judgment to the king, and your power to the son of the king (Psalm LXXI, 1). Moreover, he calls the Holy Spirit by its explicit name. These things, although they differ in terms and persons, are associated by substance and nature: and the

same Spirit, due to the fellowship of nature, is now called the Father, now the Son. However, the argument by which he endeavors to assert that we are no longer under the Law, but under the grace of the Lord Jesus, concludes with such a purpose. He had said above that we should receive the adoption of sons: now he proves that we are children of God by the Spirit whom we have in us. For never, he says, would we dare to say: Our Father who art in heaven: Hallowed be thy name, unless from the consciousness of the Spirit dwelling within us, and with a great voice of senses and teachings crying out: Abba, Father (Rom. VIII, 15). Abba is a Hebrew word, signifying the same as Father. And Scripture preserves this custom in several places, putting the Hebrew word in its own interpretation. Aser, riches. Tabitha, Dorcas (Acts IX): and in Genesis, Mesech, a slave (Gen. XV), and so on and so forth. However, since Abba Father is said in both Hebrew and Syriac language, and our Lord in the Gospel commands that only God should be called Father (Matt. XXIII), I do not know by what license we either call others by this name in monasteries, or consent to be called by it. And certainly, he himself commanded this when he said there should be no swearing (Matt. V). If we do not swear, we should not even mention anyone's father. If we interpret the father differently, we will be forced to have different opinions about swearing. It should also be noted that in the Scriptures, a shout is not understood as a loud voice, but as an expression of knowledge and the magnitude of teachings. For in Exodus, the Lord responded to Moses: Why do you cry out to me (Exodus 14:15)? when Moses' voice did not go before him. However, Scripture called it a shout when his heart was deeply moved and he groaned for the people with tears. Therefore, just as one who has the Spirit of the Son of God is a son of God, so in reverse, one who does not have the Spirit of the Son of God cannot be called a son of God.

4:7

(Verse 7) So then, you are no longer a slave but a son. And if a son, then an heir through Christ. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession (Psalm 2:7-8). But what we say in this place, we should also observe in other cases, that in the whole human race, discussions should be conducted in the singular number. For all believers, we are one in Christ Jesus, and members of his body, and brought into a perfect man, who is our head, for the head of the man is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:2).

4:8-9

(Verse 8, 9) But at that time, not knowing God, you served those who by nature are not gods. But now, knowing God, or rather being known by God, how are you turning again to the weak and impoverished elemental forces, to which you desire to be enslaved again? He reproves the Galatians for having turned from the worship of idols to the true faith of God, and asks how they, after abandoning the idols which are not gods by nature, and knowing God, or rather being known by Him, and even receiving the Spirit of adoption, can return as it were to their earlier state of infancy, desiring to be under tutors and guardians, and enslaved again to weak and impoverished elemental forces, which were given to the weak and impoverished people in the desert because they could not bear greater things. However, the same elements that he now called weak and needy, he placed only above the elements of the world. And where the elements of the world are mentioned, there it is not added, weak and needy. Hence again, where they are called weak,

world, as we said above, is a silent name. Therefore, I think as long as someone is little and has not fulfilled the appointed time by the father, so that he may be called a son and heir, he is under the elements of the world, namely the Law of Moses. But when he returned to the Law, which he owed to his son after his freedom, desiring to be circumcised and to follow the whole letter of Jewish superstition, then those things which had previously been the elements of the world for him are also called weak and needy beginnings. For they are so useless to their worshippers that they are not even able to provide them with what they had previously bestowed, Jerusalem, with the temple and altar destroyed. Let someone respond and say: If the laws and commandments written in the Law are weak and needy elements, and those who have come to know God, or rather, have been known by Him, should not observe the Law (so that they do not begin to worship not so much the God by whom they have been known, but rather those who are not gods by nature), then did Moses and the prophets observe the Law, and yet did not come to know God, nor were they known by Him? Or if they did come to know God, they certainly did not fulfill the commands of the Law. To say that both are dangerous: either they did not do what the Law commands, and thus they have come to know God, or they do not know God while they keep the weak and poor elements of the Law. And this can be resolved by saying that they, like Paul, became a Jew to the Jews in order to win Jews over (1 Corinthians 9), and according to a vow he had taken, he shaved his head in Cenchrea (Acts 18), and in Jerusalem he practiced barefoot and baldness in the temple to appease the jealousy of those who had been taught about him, because he was accused of acting against the Law of Moses and God's prophets. In this way, holy men also did the things that the Law required, but they followed the spirit of the Law more than the letter. Those who, like Abraham, desired to see the day of Christ and rejoiced when the veil was lifted, were made weak to make the weak people strong, so that they could separate them from the idols to which they had become accustomed in Egypt, as if they themselves were under the Law. For it is absurd to think that Moses and the other speakers of God were in such a condition that we should not believe them, and that the appointed time came from the Father, and that they were redeemed from legal bondage, and obtained the adoption of sons, and inherited with Christ. For whatever wisdom God bestowed on the entire human race like a beloved Son, He has also generously bestowed the same wisdom to each of the saints in their own order and dispensation. Heretics find an opportunity to criticize the Creator by calling the Law of Moses weak and inadequate, because He created the world and established the Law. To them, we will respond with what we have already said, that those who return to those weak and inadequate elements after the grace of the Gospel are truly weak and inadequate themselves. But before the appointed time came from the Father, the elements were called not so much weak and needy as the world. Finally, before the Gospel of Christ spread throughout the whole world, they had their own brightness with the commands of the Law. But after the greater light of the grace of the Gospel shone forth, and the sun of justice revealed itself to the whole world, the light of the stars was hidden and their rays grew dim, so that the Apostle says elsewhere: For that which was glorified had no glory in this part, by reason of the excellent glory (2 Corinthians 3). What he is now saying in other words, in order to say that the Law of Moses, which was rich, wealthy, and glorious before the Gospel, became weak, poor, diminished, and destroyed after the advent of Christ, who was greater than Solomon, the temple, and Jonah. For what is written, 'He must increase, but I must decrease' (John 3:30): I believe this is said not so much by John as by the representative of the Law, because the lesser always yield to the greater, and the perfect is always preferred to the

beginnings. But indeed, we will confirm the weak and meager elements, the traditions of the Jews, and the letter of low intelligence, which are not good justifications and not good precepts. For truly, the strong and rich understanding of the Law is spiritual, so that it should not be called a mere element, or rather, it should be compared to the future age and the life in Christ Jesus, in which the angels and heavenly powers now live. But in comparison to the Jewish mind, it is called not so much the beginning as the fulfillment. And when he says, 'Now that you know God, or rather are known by Him,' he shows that after the worship of idols, the Galatians understood God, or rather were considered worthy of knowing Him. Not because God, the Creator of all things, is ignorant of anything; but because it is said that they alone know who have changed error for piety. The Lord knows those who are His (II Tim. II, 19). And the Savior in the Gospel: I am the good shepherd, and I know mine, and mine know me (John X, 14). On the other hand, to the wicked: I do not know you, depart from me, workers of iniquity (Luke XIII, 27). And to the foolish virgins: I do not know you, (Matth. XXV, 12).

4:10-11

(Verses 10, 11.) Observing days, and months, and seasons, and years, I fear for you, lest perhaps I have labored in vain among you. Whoever does not worship the Father in spirit and truth, does not know the Sabbath rest that is reserved for the holy ones, about which God speaks: 'If they shall enter into my rest' (Psalm 94:11); and does not remember those times, of which it is written: 'Remember the days of old' (Isaiah 46:9). And elsewhere: 'I remembered the days of old, and I had in mind the eternal years' (Psalm 76:6). He observes the Jewish days, and months, and seasons, and years. Days, such as the Sabbath, the new moon, and from the tenth day of the first month until the fourteenth, when the literal lamb of the sacrifice is reserved, and from the fourteenth until the twenty-first of the same month, when unleavened bread is eaten, not in sincerity and truth, but in the old leaven of malice and wickedness of the Pharisees. He also celebrates the seven weeks, which the Jewish custom calculates after the unleavened bread, the days of the Israelite Pentecost. And also the sound of trumpets on the seventh day of the first month. Similarly, on the tenth day of the same month, they observe a day of expiation and fasting, as well as the custom of setting up booths, in the Jewish manner. They also observe the months, those who observe the first and seventh month, not understanding the mystery of truth. They also honor the seasons, who come to Jerusalem three times a year, thinking they fulfill the Lord's command, saying: Three times in the year you shall hold a feast for me, the feast of unleavened bread and the feast of the first fruits of the harvest, and the feast of the ingathering at the end of the year (Exodus 23:14ff.). And elsewhere: In three times of the year your male shall appear in the sight of the Lord your God (Ibid. XVII). But what he says, 'and years,' I think is said concerning the seventh year of remission, and the fiftieth, which they call Jubilee. The Apostle explains this passage more fully in his letter to the Colossians, saying: Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come (Coloss. II, 16). He placed a part of the festival to be celebrated for the distinction of perpetual festivity, so that we have not a brief, and, as it were, a certain portion of the whole body, but the entire space of our life in perpetual celebration in Christ. And in order to connect the later with the earlier, he immediately adds and says: If you have died with Christ from the elements of this world, why do you still decree as if living in this world? You shall not touch, nor taste, nor handle, which are all things destined to perish with the using, according to the commandments and doctrines of

men. Let no one judge you in matters of observing days, months, seasons, and years. We also incur a similar crime by observing the fourth day of the Sabbath, and Preparation Day, and the Lord's Day, and the fasting of Lent, and the celebration of Easter, and the joy of Pentecost, and the different times established in honor of the martyrs according to the custom of each region. To which, one who responds simply will say: the Jewish observance days are not the same as ours. For we do not celebrate the Passover of unleavened bread, but of the resurrection and the cross. Nor do we count seven weeks in Pentecost according to the custom of Israel, but we honor the coming of the Holy Spirit. And so that the disorderly gathering of the people would not diminish faith in Christ, certain days were established so that we all would come together as one. Not so much that day on which we meet is more famous, but that on whichever day we should meet, mutual joy should arise out of sight (or even out of aspect). However, whoever attempts to answer the opposite question more sharply affirms that all days are equal, not only the Friday on which Christ was crucified and the Sunday on which He rose, but that every day is holy and every day we partake of the flesh of the Lord. However, fasts and gatherings among days have been established by wise men for those who are more occupied with the world than with God, and they cannot, no, they do not want to gather together in the Church during the whole time of their lives, and to offer the sacrifice of their prayers to God before human actions. For how many people are there who at least practice these few things that have been established, either the times of prayer or the times of fasting? Therefore, just as it is permissible for us to fast at all times, or to pray at all times, and to continuously celebrate the Lord's day with the reception of the Lord's body, so it is not permissible for the Jews to sacrifice a lamb at all times, to celebrate Pentecost, to set up tabernacles, and to fast daily. However, with caution and moderation, he balanced the authority of the Apostle and the gentleness of the holy man, saying: I fear lest I have labored in vain among you. For if he had wanted to condemn them abruptly, he would certainly have said: I fear you: for I have labored without cause in you. But now, seeing that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, he did not entirely despair of their salvation, who had been deceived by a godly error, nor did he leave them blameless, lest he give occasion both to them to persist in error, and to others to make a similar mistake. I fear you, he said, for what you are. I fear for you. The teacher labors without cause, when he himself challenges the students to greater things, and they, having fallen back, return to lesser and lower things.

4:12

(Verse 12) Be as I am, for I am also as you are. What he says is such, as I became weak to you who are weak, and I could not speak to you as spiritual, but as carnal and as little ones in Christ, and because you were not yet able to eat solid food, I fed you with only milk, not wanting you to remain in infancy forever, but gradually leading you to adolescence and youth, so that you could receive solid food. Thus, you should also be as I am, to have a more perfect understanding, leaving behind milk and moving on to stronger food, and to greater nourishment. But he speaks as if he were an imitator of the Savior, who did not consider equality with God as something to be seized, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant; he was found in appearance as a man, so that we might become gods from humans, and no longer die; but rising with Christ, we are called his friends and brothers, and to be his disciples as the master, and servants as the Lord. But it can also be understood this way: I beseech you, he says, brothers, that you imitate me, who, without complaint, lived by the Law, considering everything as rubbish and garbage, so that I may

gain Christ. For indeed I myself, like you now are, was held fast by the same strict observances and I persecuted and ravaged the Church of Christ because it did not follow these things.

4:13

(Verse 13) Brothers, I beseech you, you have not harmed me. But you know that because of the weakness of the flesh, I preached the Gospel to you long ago. Connect the following sentence to the previous one, so that it may be made clearer, this is the order we propose: I beseech you, brothers, be like me, because I am also like you. Similar to this is that: We beseech for Christ, be reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:20). And also elsewhere: I beseech, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made (I Tim. 2:1). Peter's words also say: I ask you, as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings (1 Peter 5:1). These words indeed provoke us to humility and shake off the arrogance of bishops, who, as if stationed on some lofty pedestal, barely deign to see mortals and speak to their own subordinates. Let them learn from the Apostle that the wandering and foolish Galatians are called brothers. Let them learn from the gentle words of the reprover saying: I beseech you (1 Corinthians 11). But what he begs is that they may become his imitators, just as he is of Christ; indeed, that he may follow the present place, there is nothing great that he demands: just as he himself became less for them, from greater: so may they ascend from lesser to greater. You have not harmed me, he says. A disciple harms his master if he squanders his teachings and efforts through his negligence. The Galatians had not harmed the Apostle, as they were still keeping his Gospel and commands up to the present time. But certainly, in this way: When I first announced the Gospel to you; and because of the weakness of your flesh, because you were not able to receive the greater sacraments, I preached to you like little children, and I pretended to be weak myself, so that I might gain you who are weak: did you not receive me as an angel, as Christ Jesus? Therefore, since you did not harm me at all during that time, and you thought of me, for your sake, as humble and lowly, similar to the Son of God: how am I now being harmed by you, who provoke me to do greater things, by losing my labor and that dispensation, in which I pretended to be little, with a useless work, are you mourning? But because of the weakness of the flesh, not their own, but of those who hear, Paul announces to the Galatians: those who were unable to subject the flesh to the word of God, but as fleshly beings, received nothing of spiritual understanding. So that it may be made more evident, let us provide an example. Through the weakness of the flesh, he teaches, who says: If they cannot contain themselves, let them marry. And: If a woman's husband dies, she is free to marry whomever she wishes, only in the Lord (I Cor. VII, 9, 39). Certainly, it does not teach through the weakness of the flesh when it says these things: You are released from your wife, do not seek a wife. And: It is time, that even those who have wives should be as if they do not have (Ibid. 27, 29). For certain precepts are given for the spiritual, others for the carnal. And there is something that is commanded according to authority, and something else that is commanded according to indulgence.

4:14

(Verse 14.) And you did not despise or reject your temptation, which was in my flesh, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. It is a perplexing passage and requires careful attention. Indeed, I have preached to you like little ones and infants through the weakness of your flesh, starting from the least and speaking almost stammeringly. This arrangement and the feigned

appearance of a weak proclamation were my doing, but your temptation was whether you would be pleased and consider great those things which, considering their nature, were smaller, and which I presented to you as humble. Indeed, you, who not taking them as small things but as great things, were so amazed that you received me, who was speaking them, as an angel and, if I may say more, as the Son of God. Therefore, your temptation, by which I was testing you in the announcement of my fleshly speech, was not despised or trivial; rather, it had more dignity than I estimated. And this place can be explained in this way: when I came to you, I did not come in the speech of wisdom, but as a humble and despised man, not bringing anything great, but the Crucified. Therefore, when you saw me in a body subject to weaknesses, promising heavenly kingdoms, you did not mock or consider me worthy of contempt. For you understood the lowliness of my flesh and the lowly state of my appearance, which was made for your temptation. Or perhaps you despised me, who was regarded as miserable by the unbelievers; but on the contrary, you received him who was humble, lowly, and despised, as if he were an angel, and more than an angel. Certainly, we can suspect that the Apostle, at the time when he first came to the Galatians, was sick; and though his body was weak, he did not cease, nor did he silence his voice, from preaching the Gospel that he had begun. For it is reported that he often suffered from a severe headache: and this was the angel of Satan, who was assigned to him, to strike him in the flesh, so that he would not be exalted. This weakness and illness of his body was a temptation among those to whom the Gospel was preached: whether they would despise him, who promised sublime things, when they saw him subject to bodily weaknesses. And also it can be said that, at the beginning of his coming to the Galatians, he endured insults, persecutions, and bodily afflictions from those who opposed the Gospel: and this was perhaps the greatest temptation for the Galatians, seeing the Apostle of Christ being beaten. But what he says, that you received me as an angel, as Christ Jesus: and by saying that Christ is greater than the angel, he shows that the one whom the Psalmist sang about as being a little lower than the angels according to the order of the flesh, is now revealed to be greater, and his words in the beginning were so powerful that they were thought to be those of angels and of Christ.

4:15-16

(Verse 15,16.) So where is your happiness then? I testify to you: if it were possible, you would gouge out your eyes and give them to me. So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth? Blessed is the one who walks on the path of virtues, but only if they have reached the virtues. It is not enough to have turned away from vices, unless you embrace the best. For the beginnings of good pursuits are not as commendable as the ends. For just as in a vineyard there are many stages of grapes until the winepress, and first it is necessary for the vine to bud on the vines, to promise hope in the blossoms; then, after the flower has fallen off, for the form of future clusters to be deformed, and gradually swelling, for the grape to give birth, so that it may sweat sweet musts when pressed in the winepresses. Similarly, in learning, there are individual stages of blessings, so that one may hear the word of God, conceive it, let it grow in the womb of their soul, and reach childbirth. So that when he has given birth to him, she may nourish him with milk, and throughout infancy, childhood, adolescence, and youth, she may lead him to perfect manhood. Therefore, since each, as we have said, has happiness according to their progress: if the end, and so to speak, the final touch is lacking to the work, the entire effort will be in vain; and it will be said: Where, then, is your happiness? Although, he says, at that time when you received the Gospel

according to the flesh, I would call you blessed because you were fervent in your beginnings: nevertheless, now that I do not see the pinnacle of the building placed, and almost no foundation even laid, I am compelled to say: Where, then, is your happiness, which I used to praise you as blessed for? Truly, I myself also confess it, that when I was preaching to you in lowly terms, and was assailed by persecutions, you loved me in the beginning: And you would have plucked out your own eyes, if it were possible (but hyperbole must be understood in what he says), and have given them to me: You wished indeed to be blind for my sake, through the inexpressible charity you bore me, that more light of the Gospel might arise in my heart, and my advantage might increase by your loss: And this during that time, when I was preaching to you as it were to babes and sucklings, either from the infirmity of your flesh, because I announced to you things lowly and humble, or from the wrongs offered to me in my flesh, I seemed unworthy of your faith. But now because I have begun to challenge you to greater studies from the elements and syllables and childish reading, so that you may hold books in your hands, so that you may learn the words of full erudition and understanding, you resist, you get angry, you find the perfection of learning to be burdensome; and to such an extent have your feelings turned towards others, that you, who had received me as if I were an angel and Christ, to whom you wanted to entrust your eyes, now consider me an enemy, because I announce to you the full truth. But he elegantly concluded his statement, saying: So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth? to show that at the beginning of his preaching, it was not so much the truth, but rather the shadow and image of truth. Similar to this is that famous saying of the Roman poet (Terence in *Andria* I, 1):

Obedience begets friends, but truth begets hatred. But see how much better this is than that; for the Apostle tempered and made special this sentiment when he directed it specifically to the Galatians. However, the person he denounced, claiming to have a general principle and to hold it against everyone, greatly erred. For obedience, without truth, is not so much obedience as flattery and assentation: which it is clear should be called secret enmities rather than friendships. However, at the same time, we must also consider that today, as long as they remain small and infants and in whose hearts Christ never grows, they do not progress in age, wisdom, and grace before God and men, as we explain according to the literal sense of Scripture, we are praised, suspected, admired. But when we begin to challenge them a little so that they may advance to greater things, our opponents become enemies of our preachers; and they would rather follow the Jews than the apostles, who, departing from the doctrine and traditions of the Pharisees, entered into Christ Himself, the propitiation and perfection of the Law: and they do not deign to receive the divine word, which commands the teachers of the Church to ascend to higher doctrines, and to elevate their voice with all their might, without fearing the noise of barking dogs, saying: 'Go up to a high mountain, you who evangelize Zion.' Exalt your voice in strength, you who bring good news to Jerusalem. Exalt, do not be afraid. (Isaiah XL, 9).

4:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) They imitate you, but not in a good way: rather, they want to exclude you so that you may imitate them. But always imitate the good in what is good, and not only when I am present with you. Those imitate well who, when they see that others have gratitude, gifts, virtues, desire to possess those themselves: and they strive to imitate their faith, life, and industry through which they have earned those things, so that they may also attain those things which are worthy of good emulation. Of these things, the Apostle also says: Envy spiritual gifts, but especially that you

may prophesy. And further: So also you, since you are eager for spiritual gifts, seek to excel for the edification of the church. And again: Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But those who envy do not do so well, for they do not desire to be better themselves in order to imitate those who are worthy of envy, but rather they want to make them worse and backwards with perverse envy. For example, let it be said: a Christian is someone who reads Moses and the prophets; he knows that everything in the shadow and the image preceded that people; but that the scriptures were written for us on whom the ends of the ages have come. He understands circumcision not so much of the foreskin, but of the ears and the heart. He has risen with Christ: he seeks the things that are above. He is freed from the burden and slavery of the Law, of not touching, not tasting, not handling, which commands: if someone wants to persuade him with the words of the Scriptures, that he should receive them not through a figure of speech, but as they are written in a literal sense, so that he may become a Jew openly, not secretly, he imitates him not well: but he quickly rushes to pull him back as he moves towards greater things; so that he may rather imitate him who goes backward: or indeed he does not advance him much further."

"\n" + "Liberated from the burden and slavery of the Law, of not touching, not tasting, not handling, which commanded, being able to read the scriptures in their literal sense, an individual who is a Christian demonstrates the true meaning of these commandments. They understand that the Old Testament accounts serve as types and foreshadows of Christ and that the observance of these commandments no longer holds the same significance as it did for the Jewish people. They are no longer bound by the strict regulations of the Law but are free to seek the things above and live according to the spirit of the New Covenant. Therefore he speaks to the Galatians who had been led astray by the advocates of the Law, urging them to imitate the advocates of the Law, when rather the Galatians should have imitated them. For it is natural for the greater to be made from the lesser, not the lesser from the greater, and he says: 'Imitate what is good in what is good,' that is, do not imitate the advocates of Jewish observance, but imitate those things which are good. For just as someone who imitates someone else in riches, power, or dignity, not only imitates good things, but also imitates things that should be avoided; so likewise, you in turn, imitate what is good in what is good: seeking spiritual things more than carnal things; so that you may not teach them to be Jews, but to be Christians. But do this always, so that you may be able to reach the end of a good work with a persevering step. For I emulated good in you when I was with you, but after I left, you lost everything that I had handed over to you, from a secure station and a trustworthy port, and you were carried away again in the high waves. And it is not surprising that, with the Apostle departing, the Galatians were changed from a chosen vessel and one in which Christ the Lord spoke: for even now we see the same thing happening in the churches. For whenever a doctor happens in the Church, adorned with eloquence of speech and with a virtuous life, who, like some sort of spur, incites those who hear him to virtues, we see all people hasten, fervor, and run about concerning almsgiving, fasting, chastity, receiving the poor, burials, and other similar things. But when he has departed, they gradually wither away, and with food removed, they grow thin, pale, weak, and death follows all those things which were previously flourishing. Therefore, because the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few (Matthew 9:37), let us pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to reap the ears of the Christian people, which are prepared for the future wheat in the Church, to gather and carry them into the barns so that they may not perish. This is about that zeal and perverse emulation, of which it is also said elsewhere: Do not emulate the wicked (Psalm 37:1), and here:

They emulate you, but not for good. But we find another kind of zeal, with which the sons of Jacob were zealous for their brother Joseph (Gen. XXXVII seqq.); and Mary and Aaron were zealous for their friend the Lord Moses (Num. XII). Neither Joseph nor Moses were incited to zeal in order to be better than others, but because they were grieved that they were better. This kind of zeal is akin to envy. It would be long if I wished to enumerate all the kinds of zeal, whether good or bad, found in the treasure of the Scriptures. We read of the righteous zeal of Phinehas (Num. XXV), Elijah (III Kings XIX), Matthias (I Macc. II), and the Apostle Judas (but not the traitor), who received the name Zealot for his outstanding virtue of zeal (Acts I). But we also read of the evil zeal, like that of Cain towards Abel (Gen. IV), and others towards one another. And there is the zeal of a man, of whom it is written: 'And if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him' (Num. V). Perhaps this is the middle kind of zeal, which cannot be taken on either the good or the bad side; rather, it is called zealotry between the two. Otherwise: Seeing that those who were from circumcision, the Galatians from the Gentiles, were abundantly filled with the virtues of the Holy Spirit, but indeed did not speak in tongues, did not have the gifts of healings; did not have the gift of prophecy, they eagerly desired to incite them with the stings of zeal, to transfer them to the burdens of the Law, so that they would begin to become like them.

4:19

(Verse 19.) My dear children, whom I am in labor pains until Christ is formed in you. Just as childbirth involves many difficulties and pain as the offspring are brought forth from the womb, the curse is declared first, saying: 'In pain you will bring forth children' (Gen. III, 16). Therefore, Paul wants to show the concern of teachers for their disciples, the emotions they suffer, so that their followers do not fall away from salvation. He says: 'My dear children, whom I am in labor pains for again.' For in another place, he had said as a father: 'Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers' (I Cor. IV, 15). Now, he speaks as a mother in Christ, so that they may recognize the anxiety and devotion of a parent in both of them. Moses said this to the people: Did I conceive all this people in my womb? Who among us is so concerned for the salvation of his disciples that he is tormented not for a few hours, or for a day or two, but throughout his entire life, until Christ is formed in them? The example of a pregnant woman who takes in and forms the seeds in herself should be carefully considered, so that we can understand what is being said. Nature is not to be blushed at, but to be revered. For just as in the womb of a woman the first formless semen is ejaculated, so that it may adhere to its furrows and bottom as if to a certain glue: of which the prophet, remembering the beginning of himself, says: Your eyes saw my unformed substance (Ps. 138:16): then, for nine months, with the blood restrained, the future human is coagulated, formed, nourished and distinguished; so that after it has throbbed in the womb, it is established in the light at the appointed time, and is born with such difficulties as to not perish afterwards, but to be nurtured: in the same way, the seed of the word of Christ, when it falls upon an attentive soul, grows through its stages, and, to pass over many things (for we can easily transfer a physical description to spiritual understanding), it remains uncertain until she who conceived gives birth. The end of learning is not immediately accomplished, but then it is the beginning of another work, just as diligent nourishment and studies lead an infantile infancy to the full age of Christ. And just as in marriage, often the semen of the husband is the cause that children are not conceived, sometimes the sterile wife does not retain the semen, and frequently neither is capable of procreation, and on the contrary both are fecund: so also in those who sow

the word of God, this fourfold division is observed, so that indeed it fulfills its duty as a teacher, but the hearer is sterile: either the hearer is of good nature, but through the ignorance of the teacher, the seed of the word perishes, or the one being taught is so crazy, as the one who commands; and it rarely happens that the master and disciple agree with each other, it is clear that the teacher teaches only as much as the student can absorb: or the student can only receive as much as the teacher can provide. But now we are all judges. We do not know which psalm it is, which part of prophecy, which chapter of the Law, and we interpret with boldness in speaking what we do not understand at all. It does not pertain to us for Christ to be formed in the people: that each person, returning to his own house, may have the seed of the word of God, which, when he conceives it, he may be able to say with the prophet: 'From your fear, O Lord, we have conceived and brought forth, we have made children of your salvation upon the earth' (Isaiah 26:17-18). Tales in apostolos transeunt, et a Salvatore merentur ((Al. merebantur)) audire: Quicumque fecerit voluntatem Patris mei, ipse est frater meus, et soror, et mater (Matt. XXII, 50) : diversitate profectuum, in diversis nominibus ostensa ((Al. ostendente)). Formatur quoque Christus in corde credentium, cum omnia illis sacramenta panduntur, et ea quae obscura videbantur, perspicua fiunt. Sed et illud est intuendum, quod qui per peccatum quodammodo homo esse desierat, per poenitentiam concipitur a magistro, et rursum in eo Christi formatio repromittitur. This is against the Novatians, who do not want those who have once committed sins to be reformed.

4:20

(Verse 20.) However, I wish to be with you soon and change my voice, for I am confused among you. The divine scripture builds and is read; but it is much more beneficial if it is translated from letters into voice, so that the one who taught through the letter may instruct those who are present. Indeed, the living voice has great power: a voice that resonates from its author's mouth, which is uttered and distinguished with the same pronunciation it was generated in the author's heart. Therefore, knowing that the Apostle has greater power in the spoken word that is done in the present, he desires to exchange the Epistolary voice, which is comprehended in letters, into presence: and because this was more expedient for those who had been corrupted in error, he wanted to bring them back to the truth while they were still alive with his speech. And the reason for this was because he was confused among them, which is more properly said in Greek. For I am perplexed, not so much by the confusion, which is called ἀσχηνία or σγχυσίς among them, as by the sense of need and poverty. Therefore, this is the meaning: I wish I could be present with you now and speak the voice of letters myself, because I am in need of you. For I do not have the fruits that teachers usually have from their students, and without cause the seed of teachings has been sown, I am compelled to suffer poverty among you, so that I may be able to burst forth with the voice of Jeremiah: I have not profited, nor has anyone profited me (Jerem. XXIII, 23). This passage can be interpreted in another way: Paul the apostle, who became a Jew to the Jews in order to gain Jews for himself (I Cor. IX), and to those who were under the Law, as if he himself were under the Law, and to the weak, as if he were weak, in order to gain the weak. According to the condition of those whom he desired to save, he changed his voice and transformed himself into the likeness of actors (indeed, he became a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men (I Cor. IV)), assuming different forms and voices. Not because it was what it pretended to be, but because it only appeared to be what it benefited others. He sees that the Galatians need different teaching, a different way of salvation, not the one by which they were first brought to the faith of

Christ from Gentile customs. And he is forced to say: I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am confused about you. No, he says, I don't see that I am of any benefit if I speak the same things that I spoke before, because I am ignorant of what I should do, and torn apart and confused, I am torn to pieces and destroyed. And in the same way that doctors, when they see that the force of their art is not sufficient for a cure, pass on to another remedy, and experiment with many things until they arrive at a cure, so I, because I am confused among you and distracted here and there by ignorance, would like to speak the voice of letters directly from my mouth, so that I myself might firmly rebuke you; since a letter cannot express the voice of one who rebukes; it is not able to echo the clamor of one who is angry, nor to explain the pain of the heart with the points of a pen. However, it can also be understood more simply: I have used gentle words with you, saying: Brothers, I beseech you. And: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you; but I am gentle and mild, who have spoken to you as a father, with that love by which I do not allow my children to perish and wander forever. I wish I could be present now if the bonds of my confession did not bind me, and change a gentle voice into words of rebuke. Nor is it insincerity, if now I flatter, now I become angry; love urges me on, pain urges me on, to speak with different emotions. For I do not know into which words I should first burst forth, and with what remedy I should heal you, because I am confused by you.

4:21

(Verse 21) Tell me, those of you who desire to be under the Law, have you not heard the Law? It should be noted that the Law mentioned here refers to the history of Genesis, not as people commonly think, what should be done or avoided, but rather the entire narrative of Abraham and his wives and children, referred to as the Law (John 15). We also read in another place that the prophets are also called the Law. Therefore, one who truly understands the Law is one who, according to Paul, examines not just its surface, but its essence. He who follows only the external appearance, like the Galatians, does not obey the Law.

4:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through the promise. It is of great difficulty to demonstrate that only Isaac, who was born of Sarah, was generated through the promise, and not also Ishmael, who was born of the Egyptian slave Hagar. For the Scripture refers that when Hagar, fleeing from Sarah, who was mistreating her, came to her in the desert, an angel appeared to her and instructed her to submit to her mistress's authority. This same angel also spoke these words: "I will surely multiply your offspring exceedingly, so that they will not be counted for multitude" (Genesis 16:10). And afterwards concerning Ishmael (of which surely no one doubted the words of the promise): He will be a rustic man, his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him, and he will dwell opposite the face of all his brothers. But it can be answered that the promise of an angel is of less authority than that of God himself. For just as a star, when the sun rises, does not shine: so the words of angels are obscured, and vanish, and are considered as nothing in comparison to the promise of God. Indeed, this response seems to have some importance; but it is immediately countered by the authority of the following Scripture. For it is written: And Abraham said to God: May Ismael live in your sight (Ibid., XVII, 18 seqq.); and God answered him as follows: Behold,

your wife Sara shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac, and I will establish my covenant with him, as an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. And regarding Ishmael: Behold, I have heard you, and behold, I have blessed him, and I will multiply him, and increase him greatly. Twelve nations will he beget, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year. From these statements of God it is evident that Ishmael was also born according to the promise. But this is how it is resolved: the promise is properly fulfilled in the giving of the covenant, and it is different to bless, increase, and multiply greatly, which is written concerning Ishmael. It is different to make someone an heir through the covenant, which is said regarding Isaac: I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. And in the following: But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you (Gen., XVII, 19). And how different are gifts from assets: different are bequests from inheritance (for we read that gifts were given to the sons of Abraham by his concubines, but the inheritance of all his assets was left to the son of Sarah); so, as we have said, blessings and bequests are different from a covenant. But this can also be said of Ishmael, after his conception, whether by an angel or by God speaking. But concerning Isaac, before he was conceived in Sarah's womb, God had promised. These things, however, let them be said as much as the modesty of our intelligence allows. But if anyone can find something greater, how is it that Ishmael, who was born of a slave woman, is not the son of the promise, but Isaac, who was born of a free woman: he should rather be heard. And if anything, says the Apostle, you think differently, and God has revealed this to you. Now, briefly, we must strive for higher things, so that we may say that each one of us is born first, not according to the promise, as long as he is instructed by the simple words of the Scriptures and still delights in Jewish explanations: but when he surpasses to higher things and understands the spiritual law, then he is generated from the promise: and, to speak more clearly, every day those who do the works of Abraham are born from Abraham. But those who have the spirit of slavery, again in fear, are born of the Egyptian servant girl; but those who have received the spirit of adoption, are free through Sarah: by this freedom we are given by Christ. The Lord speaks to the Jews who still preferred to be the sons of the servant girl: If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (John 8:31-32). So, those ignorant of the mystery that was being spoken, say: We are descendants of Abraham, and we have never been slaves to anyone: how can you say that we will be set free? Jesus answered them: Amen, amen I say to you, whoever commits sin is the slave of sin. But a slave does not remain in the house forever; but the son remains forever. If therefore we are the servants of sin, Agar has begotten us, the Egyptian: if sin reigns not in our mortal body, we are the sons of God indeed.

4:24

(Verse 24.) These things are spoken in allegory. Allegory properly belongs to the art of grammar, and we learn in elementary schools how it differs from metaphor or other figures of speech. One thing is presented in words, another thing is signified in meaning. The books of orators (Sup. in allegories) and poets are full of them. The divine scripture is also, to a considerable extent, woven together by this. Which understanding the Apostle Paul (who also had some contact with secular literature) used the very word "figure" in order to call it allegory, as it is said among his own people: in order to show, namely, the misuse of this Greek expression in a more meaningful way. But Paul, although not perfectly, knew secular literature, as his own words attest: "One of them, a prophet of

their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.'" (Titus 1:12). This is a heroic verse of the poet Epimenides, which both Plato and other ancient writers mention. Also, when he was speaking in the Areopagus in Athens, he added this: "For we are indeed his offspring" as certain of your poets have said. (Acts 17:28). This hemistich is attributed to Aratus, who wrote about the sky and the stars. Also this: Bad company corrupts good morals (1 Cor. XV, 33); it is written in trimeter iambic from Menander's comedy. From these and other examples, it is evident that Paul was not ignorant of secular literature, and what he called allegory here, he called spiritual understanding elsewhere. Like here: For we know that the Law is spiritual (Rom. VII, 14), meaning allegory, or allegorically expressed. And elsewhere: All ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink. They drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ (I Cor. X, 34). That the manna here, and the sudden gushing forth of the spring, and the rock itself that followed, must be understood allegorically, no one doubts. I know what objection can be made on the other side: Brothers, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness (Gal. 6, 1). And in another place: But the spiritual man judges all things; yet he himself is judged by no one (1 Corinthians 2:15); so that, what we said above may be clearly understood as a spiritual word. But we call him a spiritual man, who, understanding all the sacraments of the Scriptures, interprets them in a sublime manner, and seeing Christ in the divine books, admits nothing of the Jewish tradition in them.

4:25-26

(Verses 25, 26.) For this is Hagar arising from Mount Sinai, in servitude, which is Agar. For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which corresponds to the present Jerusalem, and is in servitude with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written: Rejoice, barren one who does not bear, break forth and shout, you who do not travail, for many are the children of the desolate, more numerous than those of the one who has a husband. She did not conceive for a long time, before Christ was born of the Virgin, and she was barren: not yet with the laughter of the world did Isaac, born of the chosen father, resound with the voice of sublime teachings. For Abraham, also interpreted in our language as the chosen father, is referred to with resounding sound. But Hagar, which is interpreted as sojourning, that is, inhabiting, or pilgrimage, or stay, gives birth to Ishmael, who only hears God's commandments and does not become a rustic, bloodthirsty man, roaming the desert. He is an enemy to all his brothers born of a free woman and resists them with a hostile face. It is not surprising that the old Testament, which was established and written on Mount Sinai, which is in Arabia and is adjacent to the now existing Jerusalem, is not eternal: since the inhabitation is different from perpetual possession, and the name of Mount Sinai signifies temptation, and Arabia signifies decline: and on the contrary, the Jerusalem that is above, which is the free and mother of all saints, demonstrates that the present Jerusalem is below, and immersed in lowliness and humility. There are those who understand the two Testaments and other things in different ways: some interpret the divine Scripture, both the old and the new, according to the diversity of their own sense and judgment, either as a slave or as a free woman, and those who still serve the letter and have the spirit of fear in servitude, wish to be born of Hagar the Egyptian; but those who ascend to higher things and wish to understand allegorically what is written, are the children of Sarah, which in our language is translated as 'princess', in the feminine gender. And they claim this because of that necessity (or, let Al. claim it): that it would be unfair to consider Moses and all the prophets as being born from a slave woman,

and indeed, any of the Gentiles as being born from a free woman. Hence, it is better that not only regarding those who are in the Church, according to the diversity of intellects as we said above, we consider some as slaves and others as free: but also regarding the same man, as long as he follows the story, we consider him the son of a slave woman; but when Jesus opens the Scriptures, his heart is set on fire and in the breaking of the bread, he sees Him whom he did not see before (Luke 24): then also Sara's son is called his. Marcion and Manichaeus did not want to remove this passage, in which the Apostle said, 'These things are allegorical,' and the rest that follow, from their own book, thinking that it would be left against us. This is because the Law should be understood differently than it is written, even though it is to be understood allegorically (which we also confess, and Paul teaches). It is not to be understood according to the will of the reader, but according to the authority of the one who wrote it. And by this very fact, they who seemed to want to preserve it against us, are destroyed. For Moses, the servant of the creator God, wrote spiritual things, as the Apostle also teaches, whom they themselves assert to be the preacher of another Christ and a better God.

4:27

(Verse 27.) For it is written: rejoice, O you barren one, who does not bear; break forth and cry out, you who are not in labor; for the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband. (Isaiah 54:1.) The Synagogue had a husband, the Law; and according to the prophecy of Anna, she who was once barren in children was fertile. (1 Samuel 1.) But the Church, barren without Christ, without any conversation with the bridegroom, lay for a long time in the desert. But after she received the book of divorce into her hands, and turned all the ornaments of the husband into the idol's adornment: then the husband, with the previous belt decaying, wove another belt for his loins from the Gentiles: as soon as she was joined to the husband, she conceived and bore a child. And the Lord cries out through the prophet: 'If a nation is born at once' (Isaiah XLIX, 54): when in one day in the Acts of the Apostles three thousand, and five thousand men believed (Acts III, etc.) I do not think it necessary to speak about the multitude of Christians and the paucity of Jews, when the banners of the cross shine throughout the whole world, and a Jew appears scarce and remarkable in cities.

4:28

(Verse 28.) But we, brethren, are children of promise according to Isaac. It is of no difficulty of understanding that the Apostle and those like him are said to be children of promise according to Isaac. But because Origen, explaining this passage, thus presents the example of the Apostle: But you, brethren, are children of promise according to Isaac, it is asked how he now calls the Galatians, whom he had called foolish and said had begun in the Spirit, to finish in the flesh, children of promise according to Isaac? Therefore, we say that the Apostle calls them children of the promise according to Isaac, because he does not completely despair of their salvation, and he believes that they will return to the spirit with which they had started, and become children of freedom. Even though they were born according to the flesh, they are children of the slave woman.

4:29-31

(Vers. 29-31.) But as then he that was born according to the flesh persecuted him that was born according to the spirit, even so it is now. But what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman

and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. In this liberty Christ hath made us free. I do not think it impossible to find where Ishmael persecuted Isaac; but only this, that when the son of the Egyptian, who was elder, played with Isaac, Sara was indignant, and said to Abraham: Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with my son Isaac. (Gen. XXI, 10). And certainly, a simple game among children is unworthy of expulsion and abandonment. But the Apostle, like a Hebrew among Hebrews, and instructed at the feet of the teacher Gamaliel, who once restrained the raging Pharisees against the Lord by council, understood from the words of Sarah saying: for the son of the maidservant will not inherit with my son Isaac, that that simple game was not. But because perhaps Ishmael, as the older one, and at that time already circumcised when he could understand and feel what he suffered, claimed for himself the right of the firstborn, the Scripture called the quarrel of the little ones a game. Unable to bear these words, Sarah, not enduring the custom of the firstborn claiming the rights of a slave woman's son from a young age, burst out in a voice: Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with my son Isaac. When this seemed harsh to Abraham (for greater things are always due to the firstborn), not only did Ishmael cease to be the firstborn, but he did not even receive an equal portion with his younger brother: God, who wanted the free woman to be inside and the slave woman to be expelled, confirms Sarah's words and speaks to Abraham: Let it not be harsh in your sight concerning the boy and the slave woman. Everything that Sara tells you, listen to her voice: for it is through Isaac that you will have descendants. Just as in the past, the older brother Ishmael persecuted the infant Isaac, claiming the privilege of circumcision and the rights of the firstborn; so now, according to the flesh, Israel (formerly Ishmael) rises up against the younger brother, the Christian people from the nations. Let us consider the foolishness of the Jews, who killed the Lord, persecuted the prophets and apostles, and opposed the will of God; and we will see much greater persecutions, as History also teaches us, stirred up by the Jews against the Christians than by the Gentiles. Do we marvel at the Jews? Even today, those who are born again in Christ and live spiritually are persecuted by those who still live in the flesh. And as they rise with Christ, they seek the things that are above, not the things that are below. Let them do what they want: let them persecute Isaac with Ishmael; let them cast out the bondwoman and her Egyptian mother. They will not inherit the promise, which only those who are born of the promise will obtain. And elegantly also, he who is born according to the flesh persecutes the spiritual. For the spiritual does not pursue the carnal; but forgives him as to a country brother: he knows that he can improve over time. And if at any time he sees the Egyptian son angry, he remembers the one father who created light, cattle, and mosquitoes: and in a great house, there are not only golden and silver vessels; but also wooden and earthen vessels. Therefore, let us say with the Apostle Paul: We are not slaves of the son, but free (2 Timothy 2); and being renewed in Christ, let us hear the words of the Lord speaking to the Jews: If you abide in my word, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (John 8:31, 32). The Apostle, liberated by this freedom, used to say: 'For although I am free from all, he who sins is a slave of sin' (I Cor. IX, 19). He, knowing himself free from all vices, from every desire and error, rightly rejoiced in the freedom of Christ saying: 'We are not slaves, but free: in this freedom Christ has set us free' (John VIII, 34).

5:1

(Chapter 5, Verse 1) Stand fast, and be not held again under the yoke of bondage. And from this it is shown that he who cleaves to the yoke of servitude does not stand. And because he who has been granted freedom by Christ has been under the yoke as long as he has had the spirit of servitude in fear, and has followed the beginnings of the Law. But when he says, stand, he exhorts firm and stable faith in Christ, so that the churches of Galatia may remain rooted in the Savior. About this, and in another place, the righteous one speaks: 'He has set my feet upon a rock' (Ps. 39:3), because it is upon Christ. So that the teachings may not be carried about by every wind and may be carried off in different directions (Eph. 4). Hence it is also said to those who are standing: 'And let anyone who stands take heed lest he fall' (1 Cor. 10:12). And in another place: 'Stand firm, act like men, be strong' (Ibid. 16:13), so that they may stand with Him whom Stephen, persevering in martyrdom, saw standing at the right hand of the Father (Acts 7), and also the one who spoke to Moses: 'But you, stand with me' (Exod. 34:2). But he calls the yoke of servitude a harsh, difficult, laborious law, which consumes its cultivators with heavy work day and night. Just as Peter says in the Acts of the Apostles: Why do you attempt to impose a heavy yoke upon the neck of the brothers, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear (Acts 15:10)? But what he has added, do not burden yourselves again, not that the Galatians were keeping the Law before; but so that the heavy yoke of idolatry, by which the Egyptian people were oppressed and plunged like lead into the Red Sea (Exodus 15), may not be repeated. According to the sense of which he had said above, How do you turn again to weak and needy elements, which you desire again to serve, observing days, and months, and times, and years? For the Galatians, who, after the preaching of Paul the Apostle, had forsaken the idols and at once ascended to the grace of the Gospel, did not return to the servitude of the Jewish Law, which they had never known before: but wishing to observe times, to be circumcised in the flesh, and to offer corporeal sacrifices, they were in a certain way returning to the same worship to which they had previously served in idolatry. For both the Egyptian priests and the Ishmaelites and the Midianites are said to not have a foreskin. However, if only we did not know that the nations observe days, months, and years, so that we may never have any mixed festivities with them.

5:2

(Verse 2.) Behold, I, Paul, say to you: if you are circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. In the Gospel, the Savior speaks to his disciples. Whoever listens to you, listens to me; whoever welcomes you, welcomes me (Luke 10:16). And the Apostle testifies, saying: I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20); and elsewhere: Do you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me? (2 Corinthians 13:3) From which it is clearly proven what he now says: Behold, I Paul say to you, not as if only Paul's words are to be received, but the Lord's. For when he had already stated in his first letter to the Corinthians: Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord (1 Cor. 7:10); and immediately added: But to the rest I, not the Lord, say (Ibid., 12), so that his authority would not be considered insignificant: I think, he says, that I also have the spirit of God, so that by speaking in the spirit and in Christ, he who imitates the prophets would not be considered contemptible, saying: Thus says the Lord Almighty. But something greater will be made of what was said: Behold, I Paul say to you: if you are circumcised, Christ profits you nothing, if joined with the law, in which it says: Paul, an apostle not from men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and the rest: so that hearing, they are moved not so much by the authority of the sender as by that of the one who sends. Someone may say: The opposite of what is written in this passage is what is

written to the Romans: Circumcision indeed profits, if you keep the law (Rom. II, 25); and below: What, then, is greater for the Jew, or what is the advantage of circumcision? By all means, it is first because the words of God were entrusted to them (Ibid., 1, 2). For if Christ is of no benefit to those who are circumcised, how does circumcision benefit those who keep the Law? This question is solved by this response, namely, that the Epistle written to the Romans is addressed to those who believed from both the Jews and the Gentiles, and Paul did this so that neither group would be offended, so that each people would possess their own privilege, and so that the Gentiles would not be circumcised and the circumcised would not have to be uncircumcised. But when he wrote to the Galatians, he used a different argument. For they were not of circumcision, but from the Gentiles who believed. And circumcision could not profit them who would return to the elements of the Law after the grace of the Gospel. And in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts XV) it narrates the story: when certain men arose from circumcision and asserted that those who believed from the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, the elders who were in Jerusalem and the apostles gathered together and determined by letters that no yoke of the Law should be imposed on them, nor should they observe any longer except to keep themselves from idols, and from blood, and from fornication, or as it is written in some manuscripts, and from what is strangled. And so that there be no doubt, that circumcision is of no use, but rather, on account of those who believed from the Jews, he tempered his judgment on circumcision to the Romans, gradually descending to the later letters of the Epistles, he showed that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision have any value, saying: Circumcision therefore is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the observation of God's commandments (I Cor. VII, 19). For circumcision is nothing to such an extent that it profited nothing even to the Israelite house boasting of circumcision, as the prophet says: All the uncircumcised nations in flesh, but the house of Israel in uncircumcision of the heart (Ezech. XLIV, 9), and Melchisedec, who was uncircumcised, blessed Abraham who was circumcised. For as it says: If you are circumcised (Gen. XLIV); it is such, as if he wanted to say, if you are circumcised in the flesh. Which in another place he does not call circumcision, but mutilation, saying: See mutilation. For we are the circumcision, who serve God in the spirit, and boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh (Philippians III, 2, 3). He does not have confidence in the flesh, who expects all benefit from Christ, and does not sow in the flesh, so as to reap corruption from the flesh; but in the spirit, from which eternal life is generated. A more subtle thought must be considered: If you are circumcised, Christ is of no benefit to you. Not only does circumcision itself not profit those who are circumcised, but even if they seem to have other virtues apart from circumcision in Christ, they will perish completely after having faith in Christ and being circumcised. So what then? Did circumcision profit Timothy nothing? By all means greatly. For he was not circumcised in order to consider that he could obtain any advantage from circumcision itself, but rather to benefit others. A Jew became a Jew in order to convert the Jews to the faith of Christ through their circumcision. However, circumcision is not profitable, since it is considered to bring something of its own usefulness.

5:3

(Verse 3.) However, I testify to every man who circumcises himself that he is obligated to keep the entire Law. God, who first commanded circumcision to Abraham and then through Moses in the Law, established not only circumcision but also many other observances: the celebration of feast days in Jerusalem, the offering of burnt sacrifices morning and evening, the sacrifice of the

Passover lamb in one designated place, the rest of the land during the seventh year, the fiftieth year of jubilee, and other things that can easily be extracted from the Scriptures by each individual reader. Therefore, we will refute Ebion and his followers, who believe that those who have believed in Christ after the Gospel must be circumcised, so that they may either undergo circumcision and perform the other things that are commanded in the Law; or if it is impossible to do all these things, then let circumcision, which is omitted along with the other ceremonial ordinances, cease. But if they respond that we are only obliged to do what is possible (for God does not require of us what we cannot do, but what we can fulfill), we will tell them that it is not the will of the same God to observe the Law and to abandon those who observe the Law. But how does He make guilty those who, even if they want to, cannot fulfill the whole Law because it has been interrupted? We on the other hand follow the spiritual law, which says: You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain (Deut. 25:4), and understand with the Apostle: Does God take care for oxen? (1 Tim. 10:18; 1 Cor. 9:9). But surely He says it for our sake, and to observe the delicate sabbaths (Isa. 58:13), not so that our ox and donkey and other lowly animals may rejoice on the sabbath; but rather for those humans and animals about whom it is written: In your hand is the welfare of humans and animals, O Lord (Ps. 36:7). Reasonable and spiritual men, but also animals, those who are of slower wit, are educated by the spiritual things to observe the Lord's sabbaths. And it is not contrary to what has been said above: If you are circumcised, Christ profits you nothing. And what follows: I testify to every man circumcising himself that he is a debtor to do the whole law, to this that is inferred by us. For the hearers of the law are not justified with God, but the doers of the law will be justified. Because he who is the author of the Law can say, 'We are not circumcision'; and, 'In secret, a Jew'; and we know that the Law is spiritual. But whoever follows the letter that cuts and kills is not a maker of the Law, but truly an enemy of the Law, especially after the Savior's coming, who removes the veil from the hearts of those who turn to him, so that we, beholding the unveiled face, may be transformed from the oldness of the letter into the newness of the spirit.

5:4

(Verse 4) You have fallen away from Christ: you who are justified by the Law have fallen from grace. Just as no one can serve two masters (Matt. 6), so it is difficult to fulfill both the shadow and the truth of the Law. The shadow is in the old Law, until the day dawns and the shadows are removed; the truth is in the Gospel of Christ. For grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). Therefore, anyone who thinks they can be justified by observing the Law loses the grace of Christ and loses the Gospel they held. And when they lose grace, they are deprived of faith in Christ and rely on their own works. For you have been severed from Christ (κατηργηθήτε), not as it has been falsely interpreted in Latin as 'Evacuati estis a Christo', but in Christ's words. By [not adhering to] Christ's work, it is understood more clearly that what he had commanded above all about circumcision, saying: if you are circumcised, Christ profits you nothing, now he comprehends generally about the whole Law, that those who believe themselves to be justified in any observance of the Law do not profit in Christ's work.

5:5

(Verse 5.) For we by the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness through faith. He places the Spirit, to distinguish it from the letter. But the hope of righteousness is to be understood as Christ,

because he is the truth, patience, hope, righteousness, and all virtues, whose coming we await according to the judgment of all, and not now with patience, but with righteousness he will come to give to each according to his works. The presence of this God the Apostle and those who are like him, anticipating, say: Thy kingdom come (Matt. 6:10), that when the Son shall have delivered up the kingdom to God and the Father, and shall have been made subject to him in all things, then the head shall be subjected to the body, and God will be all in all (1 Cor. 15). Because he who is now in part, through each individual, will then begin to be the whole through all.

5:6

(Ver. 6.) For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which works by charity. For those who wish to live in Christ Jesus, virtues are to be desired, vices are to be avoided. But the things that are in between virtues and vices, neither to be avoided nor desired, such as circumcision and uncircumcision, and other similar things. Certainly, circumcision is beneficial if you keep the Law. Therefore, it was useful for those who lived under the Law, not because they were circumcised, but because the words of God were entrusted to them, which, when they turned into actions, were not foreign to salvation. And let it not move us that Sephora, taking up a stone, circumcised her son, and the angel prevented her husband from suffocating him (Exodus IV), or as it is otherwise said in Hebrew, because now circumcision is not beneficial at all, as it has testified in Christ Jesus, since the time when the Gospel has spread throughout the whole world, the injury of circumcision is unnecessary. It was valid then, like the rest of the Law, when physical blessings were promised to those who observed the Law; namely, if they fulfilled it, they would be blessed in the city, blessed in the field, have full barns, and many other things contained in the promises (Deuteronomy XXVIII). But we, in Christ Jesus, want to be strong and strengthened, that is, in true circumcision, and not in Jewish circumcision. For neither is he a Jew who is openly a Jew, nor is circumcision openly in the flesh, but he is a Jew who is hidden, and circumcision of the heart in the spirit, not in the letter (Rom. II, 28, 29). Therefore, the circumcision of the flesh is of no avail in Christ, but the circumcision of the heart and of the ears, which removes that reproach of the Jews: Behold, your ears are uncircumcised, and you cannot hear (Exod. VI, 12). The circumcision of the lips is beneficial, as Moses himself testified in Scripture: 'But I myself have foreskin on my lips.' It provides many benefits, and in matters of sexual desire, circumcision is defiled by unchastity. Therefore, in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value, for they are placed in the middle, that is, between vices and virtues; but faith, which works through love, is what matters, just as the faith that was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness is confirmed, and every work of faith is placed in love, based on the whole Law and the Prophets, which depend on love. Indeed, in these two commandments: 'You shall love your God' and 'you shall love your neighbor,' the Savior asserted that the Law and the Prophets consist. And Paul in another place: 'For you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Rom. XIII, 9). Therefore, if every commandment is summed up in what has been said: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' and faith works through love, it is clear that the work of faith through love contains the fullness of all the commandments. However, according to the apostle James, faith without works is dead (James 2:26): likewise, without faith, even if good works are present, they are considered dead. Therefore, those who do not believe in Christ but have good morals, what else do they possess besides the works of virtues? Let that example of

faith which operates through charity be attributed to that prostitute from the Gospel, who, when she had washed the feet of the Lord while reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, with her tears, wiped them with her hair, anointed them with ointment, and when the Pharisee murmured, the Lord presented a parable of a debtor who owed fifty and five hundred denarii, and added: For this reason, I tell you: her many sins are forgiven, for she loved much (Luke 7:47, 50). And turning to the woman, he said: Your faith has saved you, go in peace. For it has been clearly demonstrated in this place that this woman had faith through charity, which was very powerful in Christ. For who can say that circumcision in Christ is of no value, when it was known to have been valuable at one time? Did anyone ever doubt whether circumcision was circumcision? But if we consider the many Christians, that is, those of us who have been grafted onto the root of the good olive tree (Rom. 11), rejoicing against the broken branches of the Jewish people, and saying that the uncircumcised is more valuable, in which Abraham pleased God, and faith was reckoned to him for righteousness, than circumcision, which was given as a sign of faith and did not benefit those who had it, we will also see this usurpation of some now carefully excluded.

Book Three

Book Three

We, Paula and Eustochium, publish this third volume addressed to the Galatians, not unaware of our own weakness and the small stream of our abilities, barely making a murmuring sound. For now even in the churches these things are sought after, and the simplicity and purity of the apostolic words have been abandoned, as if one were going to the Athenaeum and to lecture halls, in order to arouse the applause of those present, so that a deceitful rhetorical speech might proceed like a certain harlot into the public eye, seeking not so much to educate the people as to win the favor of the people and, by the manner of a sweetly singing psaltery and pipe, to soothe the senses of the listeners. So that truly may be fitted to our times that saying of the prophet Ezechiel, with the Lord speaking to him: 'And you will become for them as a voice of a sweetly singing harp and well-tuned: and they will hear your words and not do them.' (Ezek. 33:32). But what should I do? Should I remain silent? Yet it is written: You shall not appear before your Lord empty. And Isaiah (as it is found in Hebrew manuscripts) laments: Woe is me, wretched that I am, for I have kept silent. Should I speak? But the harshness of Hebrew pronunciation has marred all the elegance of speech and the beauty of Latin eloquence. For you yourselves know that more than fifteen years have passed since I last held in my hands any work by Tullius, any by Maro, any by any author of the pagan literature. And if by chance something from those works still echoes in our conversation, it is as if we recall an ancient dream through the fog of memory. But what progress I have made through tireless study of that language, I leave to the judgment of others: what I have lost in my own, I know. In addition to this, because of the weakness of my eyes and my whole body, I do not write with my own hand: nor can I compensate for the slowness of my speech with labor and diligence: which they also say of Virgil, that he portrayed his books by licking them like bear cubs: but with a scribe summoned, or immediately saying whatever comes to mind: or if I want to think a little bit, intending to produce something better, then that man reproaches me in silence, he clenches his hand, wrinkles his forehead, and with his whole body language he declares that he is useless to assist. However, although the speech is of good nature and cleverly arranged, and adorned with the flower of words; nevertheless, unless it has been refined and polished by the hand of its author, it is not shining, it does not have a mixed gravity

with the elegance; but it more betrays, rather than adorns, like the wealth of country bumpkins. What is the purpose of this? Clearly, so that both you and others (who may wish to read) may receive the answer that I am not writing a panegyric or controversy, but a commentary, that is, my intention is not to be praised for my words, but that what has been well said by someone else may be understood as it was said. It is the task of my office to discuss obscure matters, to illuminate what is clear, and to dwell in doubts. Hence the work of many commentators is called an explanation. If anyone seeks eloquence or takes pleasure in declamations, they have in both languages Demosthenes and Cicero, Polemon and Quintilian. The Church of Christ is not gathered from the Academy or the Lyceum, but from the common people. Hence the Apostle says: 'Consider your calling, brothers and sisters, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and God has chosen the ignoble things of the world, and the things which are despised, and the things which are nothing, to bring to nothing the things that are.' (I Corinthians 1:26-28). For since, by the order, variety, and constancy of creatures, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of preaching to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Therefore, the Apostle himself also spoke to the Corinthians: And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of the Lord. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified (I Cor. II, 1, 2). And lest it be thought that he who said these things was a foolish preacher, with a foreboding mind, which could be opposed, he overturned it. But he says, 'God's wisdom is spoken in mystery, which is hidden: which no ruler of this age has known. How many people now read Aristotle? How much do they know about Plato, either his books or his name? Only a few old men remember them in their idle moments in the corners. But the whole world speaks of our farmers and fishermen, the entire universe resounds. Therefore, in simple language, their simple words must be explained. I say words, not meanings. But if, while you pray, I am able to have the same spirit in explaining their letters as they had in dictating them, then you will see how great was the magnitude and breadth of true wisdom in them, as much as there was arrogance and vanity in the learned men of the world. In short, I reveal to you the secret of my mind: I do not want the one who will understand the Apostle through me to have difficulty understanding my writings or to seek another interpreter to understand. But now it is time to pursue the rest.

5:7

(Verse 7.) You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? The Latin translator, in his interpretation, put 'not obeying the truth', which is written in Greek as 'τὸ μὴ ὑπακούειν τῇ ἀλήθειᾳ'. He interpreted it in the previous place as 'not believing the truth', which we noted in its proper place because it is not found in ancient manuscripts, although the Greek copies have been confused by this error. The meaning of the passage is: You were worshiping the Father in spirit and truth, and you were receiving from the fullness of Christ, knowing that the law was given only to the people through Moses and not made as well. But grace and truth came through Jesus Christ, not only given but also accomplished. So, since you were running so well, serving the truth

rather than the images, why do you, hindered by a distorted teacher, follow the shadow of the Law and abandon the truth of the Gospel? It follows.

You have not reached a consensus with anyone. But since we have not found this written either in Greek books or in those who have commented on the Apostle, it seems that it should be disregarded.

5:8

(Verse 8) Your persuasion is not from the one who called you. In the Latin manuscripts, I found it written as follows: Your persuasion is from God, who called you. Indeed, I think that 'from the one' was originally written and gradually, due to similarity, 'from God' became more frequent, because it is 'from the one.' But even so, the meaning cannot stand, as he had just accused them of not obeying the truth, showing that it is within their power to obey or not to obey, now on the contrary he asserts that their persuasion and obedience come not so much from those who are called, as from the one who calls. Therefore it is better and truer to read as follows: Your persuasion is not from the one who called you. For one thing is the work of God, another is the work of men. The work of God is to call; the work of men is either to believe or not to believe. And wherever the free will of man is affirmed from the Scriptures, there is quoted the passage: If you will and hear me (Exod. XIX, 5). And again: And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you? (Deut. X, 12), which is especially confirmed from this place. But those who think themselves simpler and believe that they should defer to God, so that even our belief is in His power, have removed a part of the prayer and have rendered a sense contrary to the Apostle. So, whether for good or for ill, neither God nor the devil is the cause, because our belief is not from Him who called us, but from us, who either consent or do not consent to the calling. Otherwise: This belief which you now follow is not from God who called you in the beginning, but from those who have troubled you afterwards.

5:9

(Verse 9.) A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. It is incorrectly translated in our codices: A little yeast corrupts the whole lump, and the translator has conveyed the sense of the interpreter rather than the words of the Apostle. However, Paul himself uses this same statement to the Corinthians: where he commands that the one who had his father's wife be removed from their midst, and be handed over to destruction and affliction of the flesh through fasting and sickness, so that the spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus Christ (some manuscripts add: our Lord). He says indeed: Not good is your boasting. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? (I Cor. 5:5, 6, and following)? Or (as we have now corrected) leavens the whole mixture? And immediately he adds: Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new mixture, as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. But now, according to this same sentiment, He teaches that the spiritual bread of the Church, which came down from heaven, should not be violated by Jewish interpretation; and the Lord Himself commanded the same to His disciples, that they should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees (John VI). And the evangelist, making this more clear, added: But He had spoken to them concerning the doctrine of the Pharisees (Matthew XVI). Moreover, what is this other doctrine of the Pharisees, if not the observance of the Law according

to the flesh? Therefore, this is the meaning: Do not think lightly of men who come from Judea and teach another doctrine, for they despise danger. A spark is a small thing, and when it is barely seen, it is not noticed; but if it catches hold of tinder and finds any small bit of fuel, it consumes walls, cities, vast forests, and regions. Likewise, the yeast in this parable in the Gospel (Luke 13) seems small and insignificant; but when it is mixed with flour, it corrupts the whole mass with its power, affecting everything that is mixed in. Similarly, a perverse teaching, starting from one foolish person, finds only two or three listeners at first; but gradually, like cancer spreading in the body, it contaminates the entire flock, as the common saying goes, the scabies of one animal infects the whole herd. Therefore, as soon as a spark appears, it must be extinguished, and the leaven must be removed from the vicinity of the dough, the rotten flesh must be cut away, and the scabrous animal must be driven away from the sheepfold, so that the whole house, mass, body, and livestock do not burn, decay, rot, and perish. Arius was a spark in Alexandria; but because he was not immediately suppressed, the flame of his spread throughout the entire world.

5:9

(Verse 9.) I trust in you in the Lord, that you will understand nothing else. Not by conjecture, as some would have it, but by the prophetic spirit, Paul declares that the Galatians will return to the way of truth they had lost (I Cor. XII). For indeed, he who encouraged others to emulate the charisms, especially prophecy, himself spoke with the same abundant grace: For we know in part, and we prophesy in part (Ibid., XIII, 9). Therefore, foreseeing in spirit that they would believe nothing else except what they were taught through the Epistle, he said: I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will understand nothing else. For even the addition of the name of the Lord signifies the same thing. For if he had estimated this through conjecture, he could have said: I have confidence in you. But now, adding in the Lord, with a certain divine confidence in spirit, which he had known would come to pass, he prophesied.

5:10

(Verse 10) But whoever disturbs you will bear judgment, whoever he may be. Secretly, they say, he attacks Peter, to whom he himself writes that he resisted him to his face, because he did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel. But neither did Paul speak with such insolent cursing against the leader of the Church (Galatians 2), nor did Peter deserve to be accused as the disturber of the Church. Therefore, it must be concluded that someone else is being referred to, who either was with the Apostles, or came from Judea, or believed of the Pharisees, or is certainly highly esteemed among the Galatians, so that he bears judgment upon the disturbed Church, whoever he may be. But he was referring to judgment, that is, what he said in other words: Each person will bear their own burden. And I think in the Scriptures, burden can be understood in both a good and a bad sense, that is, both for those oppressed by grave sins, and for those who sustain the light burdens of virtues. Concerning sins, the penitent speaks in the psalm: My iniquities have risen above my head, like a heavy burden they weigh me down (Psalm 38:5). Concerning virtues and the doctrine of virtues, the Savior says: For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matthew XI, 30). And that doctrine is also understood as a burden, is clear in the Gospel. For the Pharisees impose heavy burdens, which cannot be carried, and they place them on the shoulders of others, but they themselves are unwilling to touch them with one finger (Ibid., XXIII). How grave it is to disturb someone's tranquility and to agitate calm hearts with certain disturbances, the words of the

Savior to the apostles testify, saying: Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid (John XIV). For it is expedient that he who disturbs and scandalizes someone in the Church should have a millstone hung around his neck and be thrown into the sea, rather than he should scandalize one of these little ones who are shown by the Savior (Luke 17). Therefore, the Galatians were troubled between the spirit and the letter, circumcision and incision, hidden and manifest Judaism, not knowing what to do. However, it can be understood more briefly as follows: Whoever is the one who leads you back to the doctrine of the Pharisees and desires to be circumcised in the flesh, though he may be eloquent and boast in the knowledge of the Law, I say nothing more except this (which you cannot deny) that he will be judged for this work and will receive reward for his labor.

5:11

(Verse 11.) But if I still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case, the offense of the cross has been abolished (or, as it is better expressed in Greek, ceased). We read in the Acts of the Apostles, and the apostle Paul himself frequently mentions in his Epistles, that he endured frequent persecutions from the Jews because he taught that those who believed in Christ from the Gentiles should not be circumcised. Therefore, concerning those mentioned above, he says: Whoever disturbs you will bear judgment, whoever he may be, in order to deceive the Galatians. They also added this: Not only Peter, James, John, and the other apostles in Judea observe circumcision and other precepts of the Law, but even Paul himself, who taught you differently than the truth of the matter, circumcised Timothy and often became a Jew among the Jews, compelled by the truth. Wanting now to remove the opinion about the minds of the Galatians, Paul says: But I, brothers, if I preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? In saying this, all the hatred of the Jews is against me, and the madness with which they rage against me is for no other reason than that I teach that the Gentiles should not be circumcised and that they should not keep the burdens of the law, which are now superfluous and abolished. However, if I am persecuted, it is evident that I am not preaching circumcision, which I destroy. For I suffer not so much persecution from the Jews because I preach the crucified, and say that Jesus is the Christ, whom the Law and the Prophets foretold, as because I teach that the Law is complete. But that the cross is a stumbling-block to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles, our Lord Himself shows, Who is called a stone of offense and a rock of scandal; for no other reason, I think, than because when the preaching has advanced with full sails to the hearers, as soon as it comes to the cross, it strikes against it and can by no means proceed further in an unimpeded course. But this Cross, which is a scandal to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles, is to us who believe, power and wisdom. For Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24), so that what was called foolishness by the world might become wiser than the wisdom of men in the sight of God. And what was considered weakness and a stumbling block, became stronger than the power of men in the sight of God. But even though, he says, the scandal of Christ's Cross remains, I will endure persecution, which I would not endure if the scandal did not remain. It is in vain, indeed, that some boast of preaching circumcision, which I endure persecution for opposing.

5:12

(Verse 12.) I wish that those who trouble you may be cut off. It is asked how Paul, his disciple, said: Bless those who curse you. And he himself speaking: Bless and do not curse (Rom. XII, 14).

And in another place: Neither shall the revilers possess the kingdom of God (I Cor. XV): now if he has cursed them, who trouble the Galatian churches, and with a wishful prayer he has cursed: I wish that those who trouble you may be cut off. For the passion of castration is so detestable that both the one who inflicts it against someone's will is punished by the public laws, and the one who castrates himself is considered infamous. For as they say, this is true: Christ lives in me (II Cor. XIII, 3); and this: Do you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me? Surely the voice of curse cannot be understood of him who says: Learn from me, for I am humble, and meek, and gentle in heart (Matth. XI, 29). And it is believed to be more of a Jewish fury, and a certain unrestrained madness that could not be restrained, than to have imitated him who, like a lamb before his shearer, did not open his mouth, and did not curse those who cursed him (Isaiah 53). However, he delivered himself to death as one condemned. But to those who will defend Paul, they will say this: the words he spoke were not so much words of fury against his adversaries, but of love for the Churches of God. For he saw indeed the whole province, which he himself had led through his own blood and dangers from idolatry to the faith of Christ, suddenly troubled by a sudden persuasion and apostolic grief, and as a grieving father, he could not hold himself: he changed his voice and grew angry with those whom he had charmed, so that he might at least retain them by reproach whom he could not retain by kindness. And no wonder if the Apostle, as a man and still enclosed in a frail vessel, seeing another law captivating him in his body and leading him in the law of sin, spoke this once, in which we frequently see holy men falling. But this can also be said (although it may seem superfluous to some) that Paul did not so much curse them as he prayed for them, that they may lose those parts of their body through which they were compelled to sin. And as it is said in the Gospel: it is better for someone to enter the kingdom of heaven without an eye, without a hand, without a foot, or any other part of the body, than to go into hell completely (Matthew XV): so now he wishes for them to lose one part of their body rather than be perpetually damned by the fire within the entire body. We have shown how this argument can be answered when it is made by the pagans. Now let's bring it forth against the heretics, namely Marcion, and Valentinus, and all those who attack the Old Testament. We must show how those who criticize the Creator as bloodthirsty, a stern warrior, and a mere judge can reconcile this with the Apostle of the good God. And certainly, I think there is no sentence in the Old Law as cruel, as bloody, as the one that says, 'May those who disturb you be cut off.' They cannot say that the Apostle prayed for the enemies of Christ, who were disturbing his Churches. Nor can it be called an expression of love, because it is evident from the weight of the words themselves that it is full of arrogance and indignation. Therefore, whatever excuses they may bring forward on behalf of the Apostle, we will not defend this according to the Old Law.

5:13

(V. 13.) For you were called to freedom, brothers: only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh (understood); because that is not found in Greek, the Latin translator added it. This passage is very obscure, so it was decided to transfer it word for word from the tenth book of the Stromata. Not that each part cannot be explained in its own place and meaning; but in order to separate it from the previous matter and make it one difficult body: and if they are understood in a way that is consistent, they seem to contradict each other and be full of abruptness. Therefore, these are the words of Origen: 'The place is difficult: and so it seems to us it must be discussed. The book is one that follows a higher meaning and the truth, and it despises the preceding types

and figures and the letter: therefore, one should not look down upon the minor matters and give an opportunity to those who cannot perceive things in a more sublime manner, to completely despair of themselves. For though they may be weak and be called carnal in comparison to the spirit, they are still of Christ's flesh.' For if you understand the mystery of charity serving the weaker ones, do something for the weak: lest your brother perish in his own knowledge, for whom Christ died. Therefore, pay careful attention to whether this sense is woven into the following. You, brothers, have been called to freedom: perhaps because not everyone was able to receive the call to freedom. For this reason, you now hear: Only do not use freedom as an opportunity for the flesh. For through love it is fitting to serve the lesser to the greater: because whoever wants to be greater, will be the servant of all (Matthew XX; Mark X). Therefore, let not the spiritual person wound the flesh of Christ, nor give them occasion to bite and devour each other. Therefore, the one who walks in the Spirit and follows the words of the Scriptures, should not fulfill the desires of their flesh. But if we understand simply what is said: Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh, as many believe, against the argument and hypothesis of the whole Epistle, Paul suddenly bursts forth into this: For if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. And since up until now some part of his discourse has cohered, if we once again follow a simple understanding, he suddenly transfers us to disorderly precepts, speaking about flesh and spirit, that is: The works of the flesh are obvious and those [works] too. And on the contrary: But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, and the rest. But neither should we despair of consistency in these [teachings]; for the history of divine books contains the works of the flesh, not very helpful to those who understand it in this way, as it is written. For who will not be taught to serve luxury, and to regard fornication as nothing: when he reads that Judah went to a prostitute (Gen. 28); and that the patriarchs had many wives together? How can he not be provoked to idolatry, who believes that the blood of bulls and the other Levitical sacrifices indicate no more than what is written? And that enmities, as Scripture openly declares, are taught, and from this passage it is proved: O daughter of Babylon, miserable, blessed is he who will repay you for what you have done to us. Blessed is he who holds and dashes your little ones against the rock (Ps. CXXXVI, 8, 9). And also: In the morning I would slay all the sinners of the earth (Ps. C, 8), and similar things to these: namely, about quarrels, envy, anger, fights, and dissensions. Indeed, historical examples more often provoke us rather than prevent us from such things (if we don't understand anything deeper). Many consider that heresies have arisen more from a carnal understanding of Scripture rather than from the work of our flesh. Moreover, we learn about envy and drunkenness through the letter of the Law. Noah becomes drunk after the flood, and the patriarchs feast with Joseph in Egypt (Gen. IX and XLIII). But even banquets are written about in the book of the Kings; David dances and plays the tambourines before the Ark of the Covenant of God (1 Kings VI), and similar things. It is asked how the simple divine discourse of Scripture, which is called flesh, incites us to witchcraft and dark arts, unless we transcend to the same spirit of Scripture. I think this means that Daniel, along with three boys, were found to be wiser than the magicians, enchanters, and astrologers of Babylon and the Chaldeans. Moses was also educated in all the wisdom and knowledge of the Egyptians. Therefore, it is the cause of many evils if someone remains in the flesh of Scripture. Those who do so will not inherit the kingdom of God. Let us therefore seek the spirit and fruits of Scripture, which are not said to be hidden. For indeed, with much labor and sweat, and with worthy devotion, the fruits of the spirit are found in the Scriptures. Where I think that Paul spoke carefully and cautiously about the senses of Scripture: But the works of the flesh

are manifest (Galatians 5:19). But he did not put the spiritual ones there as he did the carnal ones; the fruit of the spirit is clear: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, and the rest (ibid., 22). Therefore, if we set aside the types and move on to the truth of Scripture and the spirit, immediately the first love is revealed to us, and as we progress to joy, we reach peace, through which we obtain patience. But who is not educated in compassion and goodness, when even those things which are considered sad by some, such as punishments, battles, the destruction of nations, and threats to the people through the prophets, are understood to be more remedies than punishments? For the Lord will not be angry forever. (Isaiah 57) Therefore, when these things have been made clear to us, we will have a more reasonable faith, and temperance will accompany corrected morals, followed by self-control and chastity: and after all these things, the Law will begin to be for us. So far to Origins. To which we can add, that we may say that those called from legal servitude to the liberty of the Gospel (of whom it is said above: Stand, and do not again be burdened with the yoke of servitude) are also now warned, that while embracing the light yoke of Christ and the pleasant precepts of the Gospel, they by no means think it is allowed for them to use this very liberty of living as an opportunity for the flesh: that is, to live according to the flesh, to be circumcised according to the flesh; but rather to walk according to the Spirit, to be circumcised in spirit, and, aiming at higher things of the Spirit, to abandon the humbleness of the letter. But it can also be understood in another way. Someone may ask: If I have ceased to be under the Law, and have been called to freedom from slavery, then I ought to live in a manner that is fitting for freedom, not being bound by any commandments, but rather doing whatever pleases and is suggested by one's own will, following it. To this, the Apostle responded: indeed we have been called to freedom in the Spirit, but in such a way that this freedom does not serve the flesh. Let us not think that everything is allowed to us, everything is expedient for us: on the contrary, let us serve one another through love, now that we have become free, having ceased to be servants of the Law, so that the multifarious precepts of the Law may be summed up in one chapter of love.

5:14

(Verse 14) But serve one another through love; for the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' When he was free from all, he made himself a servant of all for the sake of love, so that he might gain more (I Cor. XIII). He rightly exhorts others to serve him through love, which does not seek its own, but that of the neighbor. For whoever wants to be first, shall be the servant of all (Mark, X, 44): just as the Savior, being in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of a human. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death on a cross (Philippians II): so likewise, whatever we appeared to do under the necessity of the Law, let us now know that it should be done more through love, for us who are free. But love is the only good, so that all the law is summed up in it. The Apostle also enumerates the goods of charity in another place, saying: Love is not jealous, does not act improperly (I Cor. XIII, 7, 8). After listing many other qualities, he concludes: Love hopes for all things, endures all things, love never fails. And the Savior in the Gospel, as a sign of his disciples, says that they should love their neighbors (Matthew XX). I think that this is not only suitable for humans but also for angels. In other words, the same thing is said: What you do not want to be done to you, do not do to others, and what you want others to do to you, do the same to them. (Ibid., VII, 12). I do not want my wife to be adulterated, I do not want my property to be plundered, I do not want to be

falsely oppressed by testimony, and to summarize everything in a brief statement, I do not deserve to have anything unjust done to me. If I do these same things through charity working in me, either for another or willingly, the whole law is fulfilled. And it is not difficult to teach how all the precepts, 'You shall not kill,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' and the like, are held together by the observance of charity. It is difficult, however, to show how the sacrifices also, which are commanded in Leviticus, and the distinction between clean and unclean foods, as well as the cycle of annual solemnities, are recapitulated in one precept of charity. Unless someone moved to that place, to assert that the Law is spiritual, and that we serve the heavenly things with images and examples, before the true Pontiff arrives: who, having once offered himself as a victim, redeemed us with his own blood, all of that variety and difficulty of the ancient Law is completed in his love for mankind. Indeed, the Father loved the world so much that he gave his beloved and only Son for us. But he who once lived by the Spirit, mortified the works of the flesh, and was chosen by the Savior, is no longer called a servant, but a friend. And he is no longer under the Law, which was established for the impious, the sinners, the rebellious, and the wicked. But now, when we do all things that are more difficult or even a little bit, we only do not do this, which is easier to do and without which everything we do is in vain. The body feels the injury of fasting, the flesh is weakened by abstinence, alms are sought through effort, and blood is shed in martyrdom, although the faith burns, it is not poured out without pain and fear. All these things are what people do: love alone without work is possible. And because only a pure heart makes the world, it is conquered in us by the devil, so that we do not see God with a pure mind. For when I am sitting and speaking against my brother, and I put a stumbling block in front of the son of my mother (Ps. XLIX, 20), when I am tormented by someone else's happiness, and I make another's good my own evil, is not this what follows fulfilled in me: If you bite and devour each other, watch out that you do not consume each other? Charity is a rare possession. Who wants to be cursed by Christ himself for his brothers, following the apostle? Who mourns with mourners, rejoices with those who rejoice, and is wounded by another's wound? Who is destroyed by his brother's death? We are all more lovers of ourselves than lovers of God. See how great the good of charity is. If we have done martyrdom in such a way that we desire our remains to be honored by men: if we, following the opinion of the crowd, have shed our blood fearlessly, and have given our substance all the way to our own poverty, to this work not so much a reward as a punishment is owed: and the torments of betrayal are more so than the crown of victory.

5:15

(Verse 15) But if you bite and devour one another, be careful that you are not consumed by one another. This can be understood simply as not tearing each other down, not seeking revenge with curses, not wanting to cause sorrow to the sorrowful, and being like animals, biting and being bitten, leading to destruction and consumption. However, it is better to understand this in the context of the entire letter and according to reason, rather than suddenly breaking into extraordinary commands. Let us refer everything to circumcision and observance of the Law. If others, he says, disturb you, but you are also disturbed. If you read the whole old Scripture, understand it in the way it is written: Eye for eye, tooth for tooth (Deut. XIX, 21), and anger desires revenge, but revenge imposes pain: which the Law not only does not prohibit, but even commands, restoring justice in talion, it follows that the stripped should strip, and the wounded

should wound again, and the consumed should bite back, and what seems to be justice should be consumption, not avenging one, but consuming both.

5:16

(Verse 16) But I say: Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. And this is to be understood in two ways according to what was said before: first, that those who have mortified the works of the flesh by the spirit, have sown in the spirit, so that they may reap eternal life from the spirit, whenever they feel the pleasures of the flesh tempting them, not to fulfill their desires (which, if fulfilled, seems pleasing for a time), but to restrain them by the spirit; and second, according to the opinion of the Historian (Sallust): to live more by the control of the mind and the service of the body. And moreover, the reason is that the Law is spiritual (Rom. VII), not for those who are Jews in a visible sense, but for those who are Jews in a hidden sense, and circumcision of the heart is in the spirit, not in the letter, and we say that they walk in the spirit and do not fulfill the desire of the flesh, those who spiritually leave Egypt and drink the spiritual food and drink from the spiritual rock, who are not judged in eating or drinking or in a part of a festive day, or of a new moon, or of the Sabbath, but walk in all things spiritually, not fulfilling the desires of the carnal law, or the desires of the letter, but reaping the fruits of spiritual intelligence. A third interpretation has also been given in this place by some, but it does not differ much from the second interpretation. They assert that the desire of the flesh is present in those who are young in Christ, while the journey of the spirit is for mature men, and it signifies the seriousness of the spirit, that is, walking on the way as perfect men, and not fulfilling the desires of the young.

5:17

(Verse 17.) For the flesh desires against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. These indeed are opposed to one another, so that you may not do the things that you wish. The flesh takes pleasure in present and short-lived things, while the spirit is concerned with eternal and future things. In the midst of this conflict, the soul stands, having in its power both good and evil, to will and not to will, but not having the very will and not will itself as perpetual: because it is possible that, when it has consented to the flesh and has done its works, it may, by repentance, unite itself to the spirit and perform its works. This is therefore what he says: These things oppose each other, that is, flesh and spirit, so that you do not do whatever you want. Not because we have our own judgment, by which we agree either with the flesh or with the spirit, but because what we do is not properly ours, but the work itself is attributed to either the flesh or the spirit. It is a great labor and dispute to find some middle ground, having shown the works of the flesh and the spirit, which seem to pertain to neither the flesh nor the spirit. We are called carnal when we give ourselves entirely to pleasure. We are called spiritual when we follow the Holy Spirit, that is, when we are instructed and taught by Him. I consider philosophers to be animalistic, as they believe that their own thoughts are wisdom, about which it is rightly said: But the natural man does not receive what belongs to the Spirit. For it is foolishness to him. To make this clearer, let us consider some examples: Flesh, earth, soul, gold, spirit, fire. As long as gold is in the earth, it loses its name, and is called by the earth with which it is mixed. But when separated from the soil, it takes on both the appearance and the name of gold, yet it is not yet proven. However, if it is heated by fire and purified, then it receives the splendor of gold and the dignity of its adornment. In the same way, the soul, existing between earth and fire, that is, between flesh and spirit, when it surrenders to the

flesh, is called flesh; when it belongs to the spirit, it is called spirit. But if he believes in his own thought and thinks that he can find truth without the grace of the Holy Spirit, he is marked as a base metal, by the animal nature of man. This place can be better explained as a single series and body, connecting and not disagreeing with itself. Brothers, you have been called from the servitude of the Law to the freedom of the Gospel. But I beg you, do not abuse your freedom as a license, and do not think that everything that is allowed is beneficial to you, and do not provide opportunity for the flesh and for indulgence. Rather, learn that this liberty is greater than servitude, so that what before the Law forced from the unwilling, now you may serve one another through charity. For indeed, all that burden of the Law and its many precepts have not been so much abolished by the grace of the Gospel as they have been condensed into one short command of charity, that we may love our neighbor as ourselves. For whoever loves their neighbor fulfills the whole law (Matthew 22), giving them good and not causing harm. But if love ceases, and there is no charity, through which the whole law is fulfilled, there will be a kind of public robbery among men, as they rage against each other, devouring and devouring themselves. But you, brothers, according to the spiritual law, must live, so that you do not fulfill the desires of the flesh. For the flesh fears cold, rejects hunger, weakens through sleeplessness, flames with lust, and desires soft and pleasant things. On the other hand, the spirit desires the things that are contrary to the flesh and that can weaken it. And so it happens that, not because you have ceased to be under the slavery of the Law, you think you are free: but know rather that you are retained by the law of nature, because even if the law does not command, and nature has ceased, your will, namely your actions, are not immediately followed, but you are often compelled to do them, the flesh resisting against the spirit, which you do not want to do. From which, brothers, I beseech you, not to give your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but rather to serve the Spirit, so that you may begin to do those things which you desire, and owe nothing to the law, that is, not to be under the flesh. For you will be able to truly have the freedom of the law abolished in the Gospel, when the flesh no longer compels you to do what you do not desire, but serving the Spirit, you have taught yourselves not to be under the Law. And because we have begun to explain this passage with a twofold understanding above, what we have omitted must be addressed. The flesh desires against the spirit, that is, a carnal understanding of the stories and scriptures, which resists allegory and spiritual teaching. But the spirit desires against the flesh, that is, it opposes higher things to lower things, the eternal to the fleeting, and truth to shadows. And the carnal understanding of scripture, which cannot be fulfilled (for we are not able to do everything that is written), shows us that we are not in control of fulfilling the law, even if we want to follow the letter, impossibility does not permit it.

5:18

(Ver. 18.) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. The spirit referred to here is not the one about which the Apostle speaks elsewhere: The Spirit itself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. VIII, 16), that is, it does not signify the spirit of man that is in him, but the Holy Spirit. By following Him, we become spiritual, and we cease to be under the Law. It should be noted that this spirit is not referred to with an article or any addition, as we read in other cases, the spirit of gentleness and the spirit of faith, but it is simply called the Spirit: this distinction seems to have some significance, which is more observed in Greek than in our language (since we don't have articles at all). It is asked in this place whether whoever is led by the Spirit is not under the Law, whether Moses and the prophets, being inspired by the Spirit, lived under the Law,

which the Apostle denies, or whether, having the Spirit, they were not under the Law, which the Apostle affirms here, or whether, while living under the Law, they did not have the Spirit, which it is wicked to believe about such men. To this we will respond briefly: It is not the same thing to be under the Law and to be as if under the Law, just as it is not the same in the likeness of sinful flesh and in being sinful flesh. And the true serpent does not sound the same. And the likeness of the brazen serpent, which Moses hung up in the desert (Num. XXI). Therefore, the holy prophets and Moses, walking in the Spirit and living in the Spirit, did not live under the Law, but as if under the Law, so that they seemed to be under the Law; but they profited those who were under the Law and provoked them from the humility of the letter to the height of the spirit. For even Paul, who became a Jew to the Jews and all things to all people, that he might gain all (I Cor. IX): he did not say he became under the Law, but became as if under the Law, to show that he kept not the truth of the Law, but the likeness. It seems to us that we have solved the proposed question. But what shall we do with that passage of Paul, which says: 'When the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order to redeem those who were under the Law' (Galatians 4:4-5)? For if Christ was under the Law, and not merely as under the Law, the whole preceding argument will be in vain. But this objection will be solved in its proper place. For the very reason why he was made under the Law, in order to redeem those who were under the Law, was surely that, while being free from the Law, he submitted to it willingly; and much freer was Paul, who testified that he was not under the Law, but as if under the Law. And in order to descend into the filth and abyss of death for us, who were praying and saying: Who will deliver me from this body of death? (Rom. VII, 14). In this way, He also willed to be born of a woman and to be under the Law, in order to save those who were born of a woman and under the Law. And surely He was not born of a woman, that is, of a married woman, but of a virgin. However, she was incorrectly called a virgin woman, because those who did not know her to be a virgin. And so, because of those who thought that the holy Mary had a husband, the woman is considered to be a virgin; thus, because of those who believed that Christ was under the Law, not knowing that he had become like those who were under the Law, he himself is said to have become under the Law.

5:19-21

(Verses 19-21.) The works of the flesh are evident, which are: fornication, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfish ambition, dissension, factions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Now when we explained about the flesh and the spirit earlier, we said there are three possible interpretations: that there are those who are carnal, who are like infants and unable to receive solid food in Christ and the nourishment of mature age; or that there are those who are carnal, who follow only the Jewish way and the literal interpretation of the history; or that, according to the simple sense, flesh and spirit coexist in the makeup of a person, and, according to the difference in substance, they are either the works of the flesh or of the spirit. Now therefore, the works of the flesh which are mentioned here, namely fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, and other things which follow, seem to me to pertain more to the simple understanding of the flesh and spirit than to the flesh of the Law, and to be referred to little ones in Christ, although it is expressed in that place where we translated the word from the tenth of Origen's Stromate word for word, what can also be thought about them. But what he says: But the works of the flesh are evident, or shows that they are known to everyone:

because they are inherently known to be evil and to be avoided, to the extent that even those who do them, desire to hide what they do. Certainly, these things are clear only to those who believe in Christ. For many of the pagans boast in their own shame and believe that if they have fulfilled their pleasure, they have achieved some kind of victory over vices. But it is also elegantly stated that He accomplished works in the flesh and fruits in the spirit: for vices end and perish within themselves, while virtues sprout and abound in abundance. And let us not think that the soul has no function if vices are attributed to the flesh and virtues to the spirit. Because the soul (as we have said above) is placed in a certain middle part and is joined to the flesh, and it is said about it: My spirit will not remain in these men, because they are flesh (Gen. VI, 3); or it is united to the spirit and passes into the name of spirit. For he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit (I Cor. VI, 17). Therefore, the first work of the flesh is fornication. He clearly stated this in the beginning, so that we do not have doubt about the middle parts. For whatever a man does, is outside the body; but he who commits fornication, sins in his own body. And we are not our own: for we are bought with a price, let us glorify and bear God in our body. In this is a fornicator of greater crime: because he takes away the members of Christ and makes them the members of a harlot. For there shall be two in one flesh. He who is not faithful, nor believes in Christ, makes his members the members of a harlot; he who believes and commits fornication, makes his members the members of a harlot. On the contrary, an unbeliever in fornication either does violence to himself or builds a temple to an idol, I do not know. For indeed, through vices or even the greatest demons are cultivated. This one thing I know: that whoever commits fornication after the faith of Christ violates the temple of God. According to the works of the flesh, it is called uncleanness, and it is followed by lust. For as in the old Law concerning unspeakable crimes that are done in secret, and it is most disgraceful to even mention them (lest both the mouth of the speaker and the ears of the hearers be defiled), the Scripture has generally included them, saying: 'Make the children of Israel be reverent and worthy of respect, free from all uncleanness' (Lev. XV, 31). So in this place, it has named the other extraordinary pleasures, as well as the very works of marriage, if they are not done reverently and with modesty, as if under the eyes of God, so that only to their own children will they serve, uncleanness and lust. Fourth, in the catalog of the works of the flesh, idolatry holds a place. For whoever once allows themselves to indulge in luxury and pleasure does not look towards the Creator. Moreover, all idolatry, revelry, gluttony, catering to the desires of the belly, and those things that lie beneath the belly, are enjoyed. And lest it should happen that sorcery and the practices of evil were not seen as prohibited in the new Testament, they are also mentioned among the works of the flesh. For often it happens that both loving and being loved occurs through the use of magical arts. Enmity, which arises after the infliction of harm, declares who is guilty, as a clear evidence of the crime. For as much as it lies within us, we ought to have no enemies, but rather be at peace with all. However, if by speaking the truth, we earn enemies, it is not so much that we are their enemies, as they are enemies of the truth. For what is said in Genesis to Abraham, 'I will be an enemy to your enemies and I will oppose those who oppose you', should be understood as not so much Abraham being their enemy, but rather they being enemies of Abraham's virtues and religion, through which he worshipped and revered God after trampling upon the idols and having come to know God. Moreover, what is commanded to the people of Israel, that they be enemies with Madian forever, and perpetuate the discord to future generations (Num. XXXI), it is said as if to those who were under the control of a tutor and deserved to be punished in another way: 'You shall have hatred for your enemy' (Matth. V, 43). Or certainly not so

much of persons as of manners, there has been a disagreement made: just as God wisely placed enmity between the serpent and the woman, so that their friendship would be useless to man, through which he was cast out of paradise, in the same way in the lives of the Israelites and the Madianites, there is more dissimilarity than that they are two condemned nations. In the seventh place among the works of the flesh, contention holds a certain quasi-sacred and prominent position among the number of vices. However, it is not fitting for the servant of the Lord to engage in quarrels, but rather to be gentle towards all, a teacher, patient, instructing with gentleness even those who argue against him (2 Timothy 2:24-25). After contention, the eighth place is filled by emulation, which is more significantly and notably referred to by the Greek word ζήλος. Indeed, I do not know who among us lacks that particular evil. For they were jealous, even Joseph's brothers: and Mary, Aaron the prophet of God and priest, were deceived by such a passion against Moses (Gen. XXXVII, Num. XII): to the extent that the one of whom the Scripture narrated, saying: But Miriam the prophetess took a timbrel (Exod. XV. 20), etc., afterwards having been cast out of the camp, she became defiled with the stain of leprosy, and marked out a longer repentance by a seven-day separation (Num. XII). Then anger follows, which does not accomplish the justice of God (James 1), and it is a kind of madness. Between irritability and anger, there is this difference: that the irritable person is always angry, while the angry person is only temporarily provoked. And I do not know who can possess the kingdom of God: for the one who is angry is separated from the kingdom (Matthew 5). Moreover, the quarrels, which the Greeks signify as something different, they call ῥιθεῖς (since rixa is called μῆχη) are prohibited from the kingdom of God. But contention is when someone is always ready to contradict, delights in the anger of others, and engages in quarrels like a woman, provoking the one who disagrees. This is called 'φιλονεικία' among the Greeks. There are also divisions of the flesh: when someone, with the same feeling and opinion, says 'I am of Paul,' 'and I of Apollos,' 'and I of Cephas,' 'and I of Christ' (1 Corinthians 1:12). And this same dissension is found within households: between husband and wife, father and son, brother and brother, master and servant, soldier and comrade, craftsman and fellow craftsman. Sometimes it happens that even in the explanations of Scriptures there arises dissension, from which heresies also, which are now put forth in the work of the flesh, bubble up. For if the wisdom of the flesh is hostile to God (Rom. VIII) (but all doctrines of falsehood that are contrary to God are hostile), consequently, heresies are also hostile to God and are attributed to the works of the flesh. Ἀρεσις, however, means choice in Greek: namely, each person chooses for themselves the discipline that they believe is better. Therefore, whoever understands Scripture in a way contrary to the meaning demanded by the Holy Spirit by whom it was written, even though they may not have departed from the Church, they can be called a heretic and they are focused on the works of the flesh, choosing what worsens. Envy follows heresies, which we cannot think is the same as zeal. Because zeal can be understood in a good sense, when someone strives to imitate those things that are better. Envy, however, is tormented by the happiness of others, and it is divided into two passions: either when someone sees himself as something in which he does not want another to be, or when he sees another as better and is upset that he is not like that person. A certain person, skillfully translating a Greek verse, composed an elegiac meter about envy, saying:

There is nothing more unjust than envy: it immediately gnaws at the author himself and torments his soul. Blessed Cyprian wrote a very excellent book on Zeal and Envy: whoever reads it will not hesitate to include envy among the works of the flesh. However, there is a difference between an

envious person and a person who is envied: the envious person envies someone who is more fortunate. The envied person, on the other hand, is the one who suffers envy from someone else. Intoxication holds the fourteenth place among the works of the flesh. Indeed, the drunken will not inherit the kingdom of God. And the Lord said to the disciples: Take heed, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life (Luke 21:34). Wine confuses a man's senses: his feet stumble, his mind wavers, his desire is kindled. Hence the Apostle cries out: And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery (Ephesians 5:18). Everyone has the power to decide for themselves. I follow the Apostle: in wine there is debauchery, in wine there is drunkenness. But drunkenness and excess are counted among the works of the flesh, and he cannot deny it who is overcome by these passions. And though some may criticize me in that book, which I wrote about the preservation of virginity, for saying that young women should avoid wine as if it were poison, I do not regret my opinion. For in that work, wine is more of a curse than a creation of God for us, and we allowed the virgin, who was fervent with the heat of her own youth, the indulgence of drinking a little more so that she would not drink too little and suffer harm. Moreover, we knew that wine is consecrated into the blood of Christ, and it was commanded to Timothy to drink wine. However, drunkenness can occur from both wine and other types of alcoholic beverages that are made in different ways; from which it is also said about the holy ones: He shall not drink wine or strong drink (Luke 1:15). Strong drink is interpreted as drunkenness. And so that no one, not drinking wine, would think that he should drink something else, the cause is excluded; since everything that can cause intoxication is equally removed with wine. The fifteenth, which is also the last, of the works of the flesh, is revelry. For the people ate and drank, and they rose up to play (Exod. XXXII, 6). Drunkenness is always accompanied by debauchery. Indeed, a certain noble and eloquent orator, when describing a person awakened from sleep while intoxicated, said: "Neither awakened could he sleep, nor intoxicated could he stay awake." With this sentiment, he expressed that in a way, the person was neither alive nor dead. It would be lengthy to repeat all the works of the flesh and to make a list of vices. Therefore, he concluded everything in his speech, saying these and similar things. Oh, if only we could avoid these things as easily as we understand them. I foretell to you, as I have foretold before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Where he had previously said: Sin shall not reign, he said, in your mortal body, to obey its desires (Rom. VI, 12). All these things have sin, in which we have perhaps lingered too much in distinguishing them. Therefore, in the soul in which sin reigns, the kingdom of God cannot reign. For what participation is there between righteousness and iniquity? What communication is there between light and darkness? What agreement is there between Christ and Belial (II Cor. VI, 14, 15)? And we think that we will attain the kingdom of God if we are free from fornication, idolatry, and sorceries. Behold, enmities, strife, anger, quarrels, dissensions, drunkenness, and other things that we consider small, they exclude us from the kingdom of God. It does not matter whether one person or many are excluded from happiness, since they are all similarly excluded. In Latin codices, adultery, impurity, and murder are also written in this catalogue of vices. But it should be known that no more than fifteen acts of the flesh are named, about which we have already discussed.

5:22

(Verse 22) But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law. And what other should hold the chief

place among the fruit of the Spirit, if not charity, without which the other virtues are not considered to be virtues, and from which all good things are born? Indeed, both in the Law and in the Gospel, it holds the first place: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37). How abundantly charity is filled with goods, and above we have briefly expressed, and now it may suffice to have said too little: that love seeks not what is its own, but what is another's. And although someone through their own fault may be an enemy to the one who loves them, and they may strive to stir up turmoil in their tranquility through waves of hatred, nevertheless that person is never disturbed: they never consider a creature of God worthy of hatred. For charity covers a multitude of sins. Moreover, what is said by Salvatore: A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit (Matt, VII, 18), I believe is pronounced not so much about men as about the fruits of the flesh and the spirit: because neither can the spirit ever produce those vices that are enumerated in the works of the flesh; nor can the flesh overflow with those fruits that arise from the spirit. However, it can happen through the negligence of the possessor that the spirit, which dwells in a person, does not have its fruits; and conversely, the flesh, with its works mortified, ceases to sin. However, they do not always proceed to the point where the neglected tree produces the works of the flesh, and the cultivated tree bears spiritual fruits. In the second place of spiritual fruits, joy is placed: which the Stoics also, who distinguish more subtly, consider to be something different from happiness. For they say that joy is the exultation of the soul over things that are worthy of rejoicing: But they say that happiness is the unrestrained exultation of the soul, which knows no moderation, and even rejoices in things that are mixed with vice. Others in this region place their delight in pleasure: not the kind that excites the body to lust, titillates the senses, or caresses with sweet affection; but another kind, which without moderation and any charm of joy, exalts its voice in laughter. If this is true, and the distinction between their words is not deceiving and deceived, let us consider whether perhaps it is said for this reason: 'The wicked do not rejoice,' says the Lord (Isaiah 57:21). However, it should also be noted that after love, joy follows. For someone who loves another, always rejoices in their happiness. And if they see them deceived by some error and fallen into the slippery slope of sin, they will indeed feel sorrow and hasten to rescue them, but they cannot change joy into sadness, knowing that no rational creature can perish eternally before God. The third fruit of the spirit is peace, from which Solomon himself, who preceded Christ as a type, received his name. And the Psalmist sings about the Church: His place has become peaceful (Psalm 75:2). And in the eight blessings of the Gospel it is written: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God (Matthew 5:9). It is also sung in the first psalm of degrees: With those who hate peace, I was peaceful (Psalm 120:6). And we should not seek peace only in that, as if we are not quarreling about anything else: but then the peace of Christ, that is, our inheritance, is with us, if our tranquil mind is not disturbed by any passions. After peace comes longanimity, or patience: for both can be interpreted as long-suffering. Opposed to this is pusillanimity, of which it is written: 'The pusillanimous is exceedingly foolish; but he who is patient and endures all things is a wise man' (Ecclus, VII). And when a man is called very wise, he is also called longanimous, as it is written in Proverbs: 'A long-animous man is much in prudence' (Prov. XIV, 29). Benignity or kindness, because in Greek it signifies both, is a gentle virtue, soft, tranquil, and fit for the companionship of all good things; it invites to familiarity, it charms by its discourse, it is regulated by good manners. Finally, the Stoics define it as follows: Kindness is a virtue that is inclined to do good voluntarily. Goodness is not

very different from kindness, because it also seems inclined to do good. But it differs in that goodness can be more serious and characterized by stern manners while still doing and providing what is required. However, it may not be pleasant to be around and attract everyone with its sweetness. The followers of Zeno also define it as follows: Goodness is a virtue that is beneficial, that is, a virtue from which utility arises, or a virtue for its own sake, or an emotion that is the source of utilities.

Among the fruits of the Spirit, faith holds the seventh and most sacred place, which is also placed elsewhere among the three: hope, faith, and charity. It is not surprising that hope is not mentioned in this list, since it is in faith that what is hoped for is found. Thus, the Apostle, writing to the Hebrews, defines it: Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). For what we hope for is coming but is not yet present, and through faith we possess it, hoping to hold onto what we believe. It is also asked how faith is placed in charity. The one who loves never considers themselves to be hurt: they suspect nothing except what they love and are loved by. But when love is far away, faith also departs. After faith, gentleness is counted, which is opposed to anger, quarrels, and disagreements. It is never provoked by its opposite, truly like a good tree of the Spirit, producing good fruits. Through this, the servant of God Moses deserved to receive the testimony of Scripture, which said: Moses was meek, more than all men on earth (Num. XII, 3). Above the earth, he said. Above those who saw God face to face, it could not be: for we are often compelled by the weakness of the flesh to do many things. Regarding David also, although many think that he prophesied about our Lord, which we also do not deny, the Holy Spirit sings in a figure of the coming one: Remember, O Lord, David, and all his meekness (Ps. 104:1). Whose meekness was most evident against Saul, Absalom, and Shimei (1 Samuel 24; 2 Samuel 15)? When one person wanted to kill him, another was plotting rebellion, and yet another was throwing stones at him and shouting: 'Leave, leave, wicked man!' (Ibid., XVI, 7). The highest level of self-control is found in the fruits of the spirit. This not only applies to chastity, but also to eating and drinking, and to anger and disturbances of the mind, and to the desire to gossip. The difference between moderation and self-control is that moderation is for those who have reached perfection and complete virtue, of whom the Savior says: 'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth' (Matthew 5:4). And about himself: Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart (Matth. XI, 29). Continence, however, is truly a virtue on the way, but has not yet reached the goal: because desires still arise in the mind of one who restrains himself, and they defile the mind's ruler, although they do not overcome him, nor drag the one who thinks into action. But not only in desires and desire is continence necessary, but also in the three remaining disturbances, namely, pain, joy, and fear. Against the fruits of such a spirit, there is no law. For the law is not laid down for the just, but for the unjust and disobedient, for the godless and sinful (1 Timothy 1:9). The law tells me: You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, you shall not swear falsely (Exodus 20:12 ff): if I do not do all these things, with the fruit of the Spirit reigning in me through charity, the precepts of the law are unnecessary for me. Finally, the wise men of the world have such an opinion about philosophy that what public laws compel people to do out of necessity, philosophy persuades them to do willingly.

5:24

(Ver. 24.) But those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its vices and desires. Origen, connecting this passage with the previous ones, reads it as follows: There is no law against those who have crucified the flesh of Christ with its vices and desires, so that it does not mean, as it sounds in Latin, that they who belong to Christ say that they have crucified their own flesh with vices and desires; but Christ's flesh crucified by them with vices and desires. And he asks how in those who have the fruits of the Spirit, and against whom the Law ceased to be, the crucifixion of the flesh of the Lord is put in praise, when it is stated in Hebrews with condemnation: Crucifying again in themselves the Son of God, and making a show (Heb. VI, 6). As for 'crucifying again,' a better compound word in Greek is ■νασταυρο■ντες, which we can interpret as 'recrucifying.' First, therefore, it must be noted that crucifying is one thing, and re-crucifying is another. Furthermore, re-crucifying the Son of God is not the same as crucifying the flesh of Christ with vices and desires. For the flesh of Christ is not primarily and properly the Son of God, but Jesus Christ, who, when he was in the beginning with the Father, the Word of God was made flesh and emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, in order to crucify the flesh and strip off principalities and powers, triumphing over them in the cross, so that the words of the Apostle might be fulfilled: What is dead to sin is dead once (Rom. VI, 10). Therefore, if our bodies are the members of Christ, then our flesh is also the flesh of Christ, which we crucify, mortifying through it on earth, fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and greed. And now it is spoken of us in praise, who have crucified the flesh of Christ Jesus with vices and lusts, and always carry about in our body the mortification of Jesus, so that His life may also be revealed in our flesh. However, it is no small amount of labor to live in the present age, so that the life of Jesus may now be manifested in our flesh. For in this way, our mortal bodies will be made alive through the Spirit dwelling in us. Where the Latin interpreter placed vices, in Greek they are read as ■παθη■ματα, that is, passions. And because passion can signify both pain and other needs of the body, the Apostle cautiously introduced desires: so that he would not appear to deny the nature of the body in spiritual men, but vices. And let it be understood in this way, if we follow the Vulgate edition, as we read: But those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its vices and desires; so that we may say, not that they have crucified the flesh of Christ, but their own. I have almost forgotten the second interpretation. For I have foretold that everything that follows is to be referred to the Law and circumcision. Therefore, the meaning is as follows: Those in whom there is the fruit of the Spirit, charity, joy, and the rest, have crucified the bodily understanding of Scripture, which is now called the flesh of Christ, with his passions and desires, which generate the nourishment of vices for infants and sucklings. He crucified the flesh of Christ, who does not wage war according to the flesh of history, but follows the spirit of allegory that precedes.

5:25

(Verse 25.) If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us use this testimony against those who do not want to understand the Scriptures spiritually. But who is the one who lives by the Spirit, if not our hidden self, who sometimes tends to live according to the flesh? But when he lives by the Spirit, he walks by the Spirit. When he desires to walk in the flesh, he is alive but dead. The perfect man in Christ always lives in the Spirit: he obeys the Spirit, he never lives in the flesh. And on the contrary: He who gives himself entirely to the flesh and devotes himself to passions never lives in the spirit. Among these there are those whom we cannot call spiritual or carnal; but those who fluctuate between virtues and vices, sometimes being drawn back to better things and being

spiritual, sometimes being tripped up by the slippery slope of the flesh and being carnal.

5:26

(Verse 26.) We will not become empty glory-seekers, provoking one another, envying one another. The Greek word κενδοξοι, translated by the Latin interpreter through a circuit of three words, expresses how many definitions and meanings glory has, as well as the countless books by philosophers and the two volumes written by Cicero on the subject. However, because we strive not to discuss the etymology of words but the sense of Scripture, we will therefore connect this passage with the previous ones: If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit, not by the Law, but by serving one another in love. We should not argue about the interpretation of Scripture and say, 'Circumcision is better,' no, but 'uncircumcision.' History should be disregarded, and allegory should be followed, rather allegory is empty and shadowy, and fixed on no truth roots. Thus it happens that envy is born among individuals. For they want to exclude you, saying that you should imitate them, not desiring to teach the truth of the Law, but to win. But so that we do not completely omit the word of glory untouched, leaving their foolishness to the philosophers, let us retract something from the Scriptures. The opinion of the crowd, and the praise sought by favor of men, sounds like the name of glory, where it is said: But all their works they do for to be seen of men (Matt. XXIII, 5). And elsewhere: How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another (John V, 44)? Furthermore, in a positive sense in the same place: and seek not the glory that comes from the only God. From which we understand that the same word sometimes signifies virtue, sometimes vice. If I seek glory from men, it is vice; if from God, it is virtue, who also encourages us to true glory, saying: But I receive not testimony from men (John V, 34), and They that honour me, I will honour (1 Sam. II, 30). The glory in divine Scriptures signifies something else, when it presents itself to the gaze of humans as more majestic and divine. The glory of the Lord was seen in the tabernacle and in the temple built by Solomon (1 Kings 8), and on the face of Moses when he did not realize that his face was glorified (Exodus 40). About this glory of the face, I think the Apostle also says: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18). And the Savior himself, called the brightness of glory and figure of the substance of God (Heb. I). Stephen also saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand (Acts VII). But in order that we may also presume the liberty of inventing names for ourselves, since new things require new names (as someone has said), it has been said here: Let us not become desirous of empty or vain glory; let us assert that those who desire the glory of God and the praise worthy of their virtue, and who display something more divine in their appearance, are eager for full glory. And in many places. Our people have transferred majesty for glory. Now for a long time, I desire to burst forth into words, but I am held back by the fear of speaking. Nevertheless, I will speak, and I will not remain silent about my passion, a passion almost common, not about wealth, not about power, not about beauty and the attractiveness of bodies; for these things are clearly called the works of the flesh. If almsgiving is done for praise, the glory is empty: a long speech, followed by paleness from fasting. The words are not mine, but belong to the Savior in the Gospel (Matthew 6). Chastity itself also often seeks human applause in marriage, widowhood, and virgins. And what I have long feared to say, but must be said, even martyrdom, if it is done for the sake of admiration and praise from brethren, is in vain. Let the Apostle speak, let the vessel of election speak: If I give my body to be burned, but have not charity, it profits me

nothing (1 Corinthians 13:3). He who said: I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I do not know; or whether out of the body, I do not know, God knows), was caught up to the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2). And after a little while: Caught up into paradise, he heard secret words, which it is not permitted for a man to speak: to him, I say, who exerted himself more than all, so that the greatness of the revelations would not exalt him, a thorn in the flesh was given to him, an angel of Satan, who slapped him, so that he would not be exalted. And indeed, three times he asked the Lord to depart from him; but it was said to him: My grace is sufficient for you: for power is made perfect in weakness. What work of God is so necessary as to read the Scriptures, to preach in the Church, to desire priesthood, to minister before the altar of the Lord? But even these, unless someone guards his heart with all diligence, arise from the desire for praise. You may see many (as even Cicero says) inscribe their books with titles about despising glory, and for the sake of glory, note the titles of their own names. We interpret the Scriptures: often we translate the style: what is worthy of reading, we write; and unless they are done for the cause of Christ, but for the memory of future generations and the reputation among people, all the labor will be in vain: and we will be like a resounding cymbal and a clanging cymbal (1 Corinthians 13). You may see many people arguing about the Scriptures: making the word of God a sports bench: they provoke each other, and if they are defeated, they envy: for they are eager for empty glory. I know from the Latin manuscripts in that testimony which we have set forth above: If I deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing; but because of the similarity of the word, which in Greek is θερμανθ[ε]σομαι and θαυμασθ[ε]σομαι, only a part of a letter distinguishes it, an error has crept in among our people. But even among the Greeks themselves there are different copies.

6:1

(Chapter VI - Verse 1) Brothers, even if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Knowing that Paul was a servant of God, who did not desire the death of a sinner but their repentance (Ezekiel 18:23, 33). And except for the Trinity, every creature, though it may not sin, is still capable of sinning. Therefore, he also encourages those who are spiritual to reach out a helping hand to one who is falling, being mindful of their own fear of sin. And beautifully preoccupied in the offense, he calls him a man who can die: showing the fragility of his condition from his very name; so that he may be worthy of forgiveness, who, like a man deceived by error and immersed in a whirlpool, is unable to lift himself up without help and assistance. However, a man is not added to the spiritual realm, but he is commanded as if by God, to instruct a man preoccupied in the offense: or (as is better expressed in Greek) to perfect in the spirit of gentleness. However, the one who is being perfected does not lack everything, but something. In fact, if he has not erred with many sins, but has been preoccupied with some fault, let him apply the spirit of gentleness and meekness in correcting the spiritual sinner, so that he does not desire to correct the wandering one in a rigid, angry, and sad manner; but let him provoke him, promising salvation and forgiveness. Let him bring forth the testimony of Christ: that he invites those burdened by the weight of the law and sins to his gentle and light yoke, so that they may learn that he is humble and meek, and find rest for their souls (Matthew 11). Let us use this testimony against heretics: who, inventing various nature myths, say that a spiritual tree is good and never produces bad fruits. Behold the Apostle, whose authority they themselves also follow, says that

those who are spiritual can sin if they are puffed up with the pride of their heart and fall. This we also confess; and that earthly beings can become spiritual if they turn to better things. Can what is written to the Corinthians be opposed to us: What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in charity, and the spirit of meekness (I Cor. IV, 21)? For if there, he says that he comes to sinners not in the spirit of meekness, but with a rod: how does he here not employ a rod, but the spirit of meekness, with those who have been prevented from sinning in any way? But there, it is said to those who, after sinning, not feeling their own error, were unwilling to be subject to their superiors and corrected by penance. But when the understanding sinner acknowledges his wound and gives himself to the physician to be healed, there the rod is not necessary, but the spirit of gentleness. And it may be questioned whether someone should instruct the sinner in the spirit of gentleness for this reason: that he should consider himself so as not to be tempted. Therefore, the righteous person, who is sure in his own mind and knows that he cannot stumble, should not instruct the sinner in the spirit of gentleness? To this, we will say that even if the righteous person has overcome, knowing how great a struggle he has won, he will offer more forgiveness to the one who sins. For even the Savior was tempted, in all things like us, without sin: so that he can sympathize and commiserate with our weaknesses, having experienced them himself, and to show how difficult it is to achieve victory in the flesh. If a virgin remains until old age, forgive those who were once deceived by the heat of youth, knowing the difficulties they have overcome. If someone, for the confession of Christ's name, witnessed another denying him in torment, let them sympathize with the wounds of the denier, and marvel not so much at their defeat, but at their own victory. Also, pay attention to the caution of the writer, for he did not say, 'Considering yourself, lest you fall,' but rather, 'lest you be tempted also.' To conquer or to be conquered is sometimes within our power; however, to be tempted is within the power of the one tempting. For if the Savior was tempted, who can be confident that they will pass through the storms of this life without being tempted? Those who believe that Paul spoke according to humility, and not truly, say this not out of ignorance of the language but rather of the knowledge of this matter. For he should have spoken in order, saying: You, who are spiritual, instruct such in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourselves, lest you also be tempted; and not to place the plural number into the singular. Therefore, the Hebrew among the Hebrews, and one who was very learned in the vernacular language, was unable to express profound meanings in a foreign language; nor did he greatly care about the words, since he had the meaning in safety. These things according to simple understanding. Furthermore, in order to continue the order of the second exposition, this passage about the end of the Epistle to the Romans must be explained. For there, when he was writing about the food and observances of the Jews, and those who despised the precepts of the Law according to the letter, he described the strong and perfect: but he also recounted the weak and little ones who were still being led by old customs, and saw that there was a dispute between the spiritual and the carnal. He warned the spiritual not to despise the carnal, and said: Receive the weak in faith, not for the purpose of argumentation of opinions. For another believes he may eat all things: but he that is weak, let him eat herbs. Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not: and he that eateth not, let him not judge him that eateth. For God hath taken him to him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own lord he standeth or falleth. And he shall stand: for God is able to make him stand. And another judgeth every day a day: let every man abound in his own sense. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord. And he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord: for he giveth thanks to God. And he that eateth not, eateth not unto

the Lord and giveth thanks to God. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord: or whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For unto this end Christ died and rose again: that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? Or thou, why dost thou despise thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God. Therefore, every one of us shall render account to God for himself. And again: But we must bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not please ourselves. Let each one of you please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. (Romans 15:1-2).

6:2

(Vers. 2.) Carry one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. For sin is a burden, and the Psalmist testifies, saying: My iniquities have risen above my head, like a heavy burden weighing me down (Psalm 38:5). And Zechariah, in a vision, saw a weighty lead covering of iniquity (Zechariah 5). The Savior took this burden upon Himself for us, teaching us by His example what we ought to do. For indeed he carries our iniquities, and he grieves for us, and he invites those who are burdened by the weight of sins and the Law to the light burden of virtue, saying: My yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Therefore, whoever does not despair of his brother's salvation, but extends a hand to the one who prays, and as much as he can, weeps with the one who weeps, is weak with the weak, and judges his own sins as those of others, such a person fulfills the law of Christ through charity. What is the law of Christ? This is my commandment, that you love one another (John 13:34). What is the law of the Son of God? Love one another, as I have loved you. How did the Son of God love us? Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends (John 15:13). Whoever does not have compassion, nor is clothed with the bowels of mercy and tears, although he may be spiritual, will not fulfill the law of Christ. But let us also connect this place with the previous ones. For we follow a twofold understanding. If someone is weak in faith and is still nourished with the milk of infancy, they cannot so quickly transition from legal observance to the spiritual sacraments: you who are stronger, bear their burdens, lest your knowledge cause your brother to stumble, for whom Christ died. Also bear the need of your brother, who aids the burdened poor with the weight of destitution, and makes friends for himself with unjust money (Luke 16), whom Christ addresses after his resurrection: Come to me, blessed of my Father: possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink (Matthew 25:34, 35). According to this meaning, Paul, teaching Timothy in another Epistle, added: Command those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life (1 Timothy 6:17-19). He who grasps true life, surely the one who speaks: I am the life (John 14:6), fulfills the law of Christ, which aims at life.

6:3

(Verse 3) For if anyone thinks that they are something when they are nothing, they deceive themselves. If anyone does not want to bear the burdens of others, and is merciless, satisfied only

with their own work and virtue, not seeking what is of others but what is their own, that is, a lover only of themselves and not of God, they deceive themselves. However, it can be read and distinguished in two ways: Either, if anyone thinks that they are something when they are nothing, or in this way: If anyone thinks that they are something, as we will explain later, when they are nothing, they deceive themselves. And this difference resonates more in Greek than in Latin. The first sense of this distinction is: Whoever considers themselves to be something, and is nothing, deceives themselves. The second sense is deeper, and is more pleasing to us: If someone considers themselves to be something, in that they think they are something, not out of kindness towards their neighbor, but out of their own work and effort, judging themselves only by their own virtue, this person, out of this very arrogance, becomes nothing, and deceives themselves: which is better expressed in Greek as φρεναπατ[...], which means, they deceive their own mind: for which the Latin interpreter has used the phrase, they deceive themselves. But he deceives his own mind, who thinks himself wise, and according to Isaiah, he is wise in himself and understands in his own sight (Isa. V). The understanding of this passage is connected to circumcision and the Law: Whoever is spiritual and does not have mercy on his neighbor, despising the humble because he himself is higher, deceives himself, not knowing that this is the law of the spirit, that we should love one another.

6:4

(Verse 4) But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. The meaning is this: You, who consider yourself spiritual and stronger in the weakness of others, should not focus on the weakness of the one who is falling but on your own strength. For it is not because someone else cannot perfectly transition from Judaism to Christianity that you are a perfect Christian; rather, if your own conscience does not bother you, you have reason to boast in yourself and not in someone else. An athlete is not strong because they have defeated the weak and overpowered the feeble limbs of their opponent, but if they are strong in their own strength, not in the weakness of others. It can be understood another way: one who has a conscience of good work and considers themselves should not boast about it to others, pour out their own praise to the world, share it with everyone, and seek glory from the favor of others. Rather, they should have glory within themselves and say: But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. He who seeks glory from another, is neither crucified with the world, nor is he himself crucified with Christ. He has indeed received his reward, that which he sought from men.

6:5

For each one will bear his own burden. It seems to contradict what was said before, where it says: Bear one another's burdens: for if each one bears his own burden, he will not be able to bear another's burdens. But it must be understood that there he commanded that we, as sinners in this life, bear one another's burdens and help each other in this present age. But here he is speaking about the judgment of the Lord upon us, which is not based on comparing one person's sin to another's, but rather according to our own work, whether we are judged as sinners or as saints, each one receiving according to his own work. Although we are being taught by this little saying, there is a new doctrine that is hidden: while we are in this present age, whether by prayers or by counsels, we are able to help one another. But when we come before the judgement seat of

Christ, neither Job, nor Daniel, nor Noah will be able to pray for anyone, but each person will carry their own work (Ezekiel 14).

6:6

(V. 6.) But let the one who is being catechized communicate the word to the one who catechizes in all good things. Marcion interpreted this passage in such a way that he thought believers and catechumens should pray together and the teacher should communicate with the disciples in prayer; he was especially delighted that it follows in all good things. Certainly, if the discussion had been about prayer, it should not have been instructed to the one who is being catechized, but to the one who catechizes, that is, not to the disciple, but to the teacher. Then, also, the other things that follow, do not agree with his explanation: Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. And: But let us not tire of doing good: for in due season we will reap, not slacking off. Therefore, this is the sense: Because previously he had instructed them in spiritual matters, to instruct those who were preoccupied with some offense in the spirit of gentleness, and to bear one another's burdens, fulfilling the law of Christ: now, on the contrary, he instructs those who are still weaker, and disciples, and carnal, that just as they themselves harvest spiritual things from their teachers, they should also provide carnal things to their teachers: those who devote themselves entirely to the study of divine knowledge should be supported by the necessities of this life; and let what is written about the manna come to pass: He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack (2 Corinthians 8:15). But in the present place, according to the custom of the common people, he called food and clothing, and other things that people count among goods, good. For we are content with having food and clothing (1 Timothy 6:8). And it is not surprising that Paul referred to those things that are necessary for the body as goods: since even our Savior said to those who had not yet reached the summit of virtue, but were still walking humbly and were asking for faith to be added to them: If therefore you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him (Matthew 7:11)! I think that Job, when he spoke to his wife, as if he were speaking to one of the foolish women, with regard to her, who thought in this way, spoke about material wealth: 'If we have received good things from the hand of the Lord (Job 2:10): and again about hardships and pressures, and temptations that bring victory: Why do we not endure evil? For surely, good and evil are not placed in wealth and pressures, but in virtues and vices, as the righteous man says in the psalm: 'Who is the man who desires life, who desires to see good days?' Restrain your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil and do good (Psalm 34:13-14 and 37:27). Properly, evil is said to be that which should be avoided, and good is said to be that which we should do. Also, in the Gospel, the rich man who did not have knowledge of good and evil rightly considered the abundance of his fields as good, saying: 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry' (Luke 12:19). And the one who was lying in purple and indulging in luxury heard in the underworld from Abraham: You received good things in your life (Luke 16:25). Also, we must pay attention to the fact that this could possibly be understood as the disciples being given the command to communicate the word to those who instruct them, to be obedient, docile, and accommodating. However, this applies only to those things that are good, spiritual, and not corrupted by heretical or Judaic perversity.

6:7

(Verse 7.) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked. Whatever a person sows, that will he also reap. By foreseeing with the Spirit, those who are being taught are able to provide for the needs and expenses of their teachers and to claim poverty, saying, 'My field has withered this year due to drought, my vineyard has been destroyed by hail, the taxes that could have been paid have been seized.' I do not have what is required to give. Therefore, do not be deceived, God is not mocked. He knows, he says, your hearts, he is not ignorant of your abilities. A plausible excuse can appease a person, but it cannot deceive God. And at the same time, he encourages them to do what is commanded, mentioning seed, so that they do not think it is lost, as they will receive it back with interest. He also teaches the Corinthians the principle of giving and receiving, using a similar example: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows in blessings will also reap blessings. Each person should give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (1 Corinthians 9:6-7).

6:8

(Verse 8) For he who sows in his flesh will reap corruption from the flesh. But he who sows in the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit. Everything we speak, do, and think is sown in two fields, the flesh and the Spirit. If the things that are spoken, done, and thought are good, sown in the Spirit, they will abound with the fruits of eternal life. But if they are evil, taken from the field of the flesh, they will produce for us a harvest of corruption. Another interpretation: Whoever understands the law carnally also expects carnal rewards, which are corrupted in the present age. But whoever is a spiritual listener, sows in the spirit, and will reap eternal life from the spirit. Let us also note the consistency of the discourse and connect it with the previous statements: the person who is called a seed sower in the spirit, when they begin to reap eternal life, they may cease to be a human. Cassianus, who introduces the supposed flesh of Christ, considers every sexual union between a male and a female to be unclean, and is the most fervent heresiarch of the Encratites. He uses the following argument against us under the pretext of the present testimony: 'If anyone sows in the flesh, they will reap corruption from the flesh; but they sow in the flesh who are joined to a woman; therefore, those who use a wife and sow in her flesh will reap corruption from the flesh.' He will be answered, first, that he did not say that Paul, who sows in the flesh, but in his own flesh. However, no one lies with himself, and sows in his own flesh. Then, in order to observe this which we have noted, in his own flesh, let it be granted to him additionally, that those who eat and drink, and sleep and do something for the refreshment of the body, sow in the flesh according to that, and reap corruption from it. But if he resorts to this, to say that those who, whether they drink, or eat, or sleep, in the name of the Lord nonetheless do everything with reason, do not sow in the flesh but in the spirit; and we will respond similarly to him, that those who also follow God's first commandment, doing things with reason: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth (Gen. 1, 22), sow not in the flesh but in the spirit. Therefore, this syllogism is futile and fallacious, first deceiving the listener with a sophism. However, upon careful examination, it is easily dissolved: For we cannot say that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other holy men who were born from the promise, as well as the precursor of the Lord himself, sprouted from the corrupt seed, because he was born in the flesh. It is also worth noting that the one who sows in the flesh is identified with his own flesh, but the one who sows in the spirit is called simply in the spirit. For whoever sows good things, does not sow something of his own, but sows in the spirit of God, from which eternal life will be reaped.

6:9

(Verse 9) But let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. He encourages those who expect the reward of good works in this life, not knowing that just as there is a different time for sowing and for harvesting in a seed, so in the present life, there is sowing of works (which are either in the spirit or in the flesh) but the harvest is the future judgment. And depending on the quality or diversity of the sowing, it will make different measures for us, a hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold, which no one can harvest lacking. For whoever perseveres until the end, will be saved (Matt. X, 22). As it is also commanded in another place: Do not fall away (Isai. V). But what is it, that while sinners increase daily in evil deeds, we grow weary in doing good?

6:10

(V. 10) Therefore, while we have time, let us do good to all, especially to those who belong to the family of faith. It is the time of sowing, as we have said, the present time, and the lifespan we are running. In this life, we are allowed to sow what we desire; when this life passes, the time for action is taken away. Thus, the Savior says: Work while it is day; night is coming when no one can work (John 9:4). The word of God has risen for us, the true sun, and the beasts have returned to their dens. Let us proceed as humans to our task, and let us labor until evening, as it is mystically sung in the psalm: You have set darkness, and it is night. The wild animals themselves will pass by, roaring lion cubs, to snatch and seek food from God. The sun rises, and they are gathered, and they sleep in their dens. Man goes out to his work, and to his labor until evening. (Ps. 103, 20-23). Whether we are sick or healthy, humble or powerful, poor or rich, unknown or honored, hungry or satisfied, let us do everything in the name of the Lord with patience and equanimity, and that which is written will be fulfilled in us: For those who love the Lord, all things work together for good. Anger itself and desire, and the harm that desires vengeance, if I restrain myself; if for the sake of God I hold my tongue; if, at every prick of disturbance and the incentives of vice, I recall the sight of God watching over me, they become opportunities for triumph. Let us not say in giving alms: 'This person is a friend, that person I do not know; this one deserves to receive, that one should be despised.' Let us imitate our Father, who makes His sun rise upon the good and the evil, and causes rain to fall upon the just and unjust (Matt. V). The fountain of goodness is open to all. The servant and the free, the commoner and the king, the rich and the poor all likewise drink from it. When a lamp is lit in a house, it shines equally for everyone. But if the reins of generosity are loosened for all indiscriminately, how much more so for members of the household of faith and for Christians, who have the same Father and are called by his name as their master! Moreover, it seems to me that this passage can be connected to the previous ones, in which he calls the members of the household of faith 'masters,' to whom he had ordered all good things to be ministered by their listeners. The course of this life is short. This very thing that I speak, that I say, that I write, that I correct, that I reread, from my time either grows or diminishes for me. Titus, son of Vespasian, who, after the revenge for the blood of Domitian, having overthrown Jerusalem, entered Rome as conqueror, is said to have been of such goodness, that one evening, late, while he was remembering, at dinner, that he had done nothing good that day, he said to his friends: Today, I have lost the day. We think that we do not lose for ourselves the hour, the day, the moments, the time, the ages, when we speak idle words, for which we will have to give an account on the day of judgment (Matt. XII)? But if he said and did this naturally without Law, without the Gospel, without the Savior, and the doctrine of the apostles: what should we do, in whose

condemnation Juno holds all, and Vesta holds the virgins, and other idols? Blessed John the evangelist, while he was staying in Ephesus until his extreme old age, and was barely brought to the church among the hands of the disciples, and could not join words into more sentences, he used to say nothing else in each collection but this: Little children, love one another. Finally, the disciples and brothers who were present, tired of hearing the same things always, said: Master, why do you always speak like this? He responded with a worthy sentence from John: Because it is the commandment of the Lord, and if it is done alone, it is enough. This is why the present commandment of the Apostles is: Let us do good to all, especially to the household of faith.

6:11

(Verse 11) See with what letters I have written to you with my own hand. Those who wanted the Galatians to be circumcised had spread the rumor that Paul was doing one thing and preaching something else, and by his own actions, he was destroying the message. They claimed that anyone who asserted that the Law was abolished would themselves be found to be within the Law. Paul was unable to personally refute this belief with everyone present because he was restrained by the chains he bore for the sake of Christ's martyrdom. Therefore, he represents himself through letters. And so that no suspicion of forged letters should arise, he himself wrote by his own hand from this place to the end, showing that the previous [letters] were written by someone else. And he also demonstrates that letters were sent in his name by false teachers, writing to the Thessalonians: But we ask you, brothers, through the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together with him, not to be quickly shaken from your senses, nor be alarmed, either by spirit, or by word, or by letter supposedly from us, as if the day of the Lord is imminent, so that no one deceives you in any way (2 Thessalonians 2, 1 seqq.). And in order to dispel any suspicion of falsehood about the entire letter that he was sending, he subscribed with his own hand at the end, saying: My greeting in the hand of Paul, which is the sign in every letter; this is how I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you (2 Thess. 3:17-18). He also marked with his own hand the letters he dictated to the Colossians, saying: My greeting in the hand of Paul; remember my chains. And wherever he knew that false teachers were present, who could spread new doctrines through the authority of the Apostles, he subscribed the letter with his own hand. Finally, writing to the Corinthians, among whom there were schisms and heresies, with each one saying, 'I am of Paul,' and 'I am of Apollos,' and 'I am of Cephas' (I Cor. 1:12), he signed his letter with this annotation: My greeting [is] in the hand of Paul: If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. Maranatha, and so on. Therefore, desiring to remove any occasion for false teachers who had corrupted the Galatians from the truth of the Gospel, he completed the end of the letter with the annotation of his hand, saying: See with what letters I have written to you; not that the letters were large (for this indeed signifies 'great' in Greek), but that his hand was known to them by distinct traces, so that while they recognize the tops of the letters, they might suppose that they were seeing the very person who had written [the letter]. In this place, a man most learned in our times, I wonder how he spoke such a ridiculous thing. Paul, he says, was a Hebrew and did not know Greek letters. And because necessity demanded it, that he himself would subscribe the letter by his own hand, contrary to the usual curving paths of the letters, he barely expressed with large points: also showing in this his signs of love towards the Galatians, that for their sake he would even attempt that which he could not. Paul, the great writer, wrote a letter, because there was great meaning in his words, and it was written with the Holy Spirit, not with ink

or pen. But what he added, with my hand, let us understand in his works. For this reason, it is often written in the prophets: The word of God that was made in the hand of Jeremiah, or Haggai, so that we also know through this similarity that the word of God was made in the hand of Paul. Paul writes great letters not only to the Galatians back then, but also to everyone today, and although the tips with which his letters are written are small, the letters themselves are great, because there is great meaning in them.

6:12 (Verse 12) Whoever wants to please in the flesh, these compel you to be circumcised, only so that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. He shows above where he has subscribed with his own hand: now he repeats what he has written. Gaius Caesar, and Octavian Augustus, and Tiberius, successor of Augustus, had promulgated laws that the Jews who were scattered throughout the entire Roman Empire should live according to their own customs and perform their ancestral ceremonies. Therefore, whoever was circumcised, even if they believed in Christ, was considered a Jew by the Gentiles. But those who claimed that they were not Jews because they were uncircumcised, were subject to persecution by both the Gentiles and the Jews. Now, those who had deceived the Galatians wanted to avoid these persecutions, so they were persuading the disciples to be circumcised for their own protection. The Apostle calls this confidence in the flesh, because they were proposing circumcision in persecution to both the Gentiles whom they feared and the Jews whom they wanted to please. Neither the Jews could persecute them, nor the Gentiles, whom they ((wanted)) to see and circumcise, and to keep the precepts of the Law themselves. For neither those who are circumcised keep the Law, but they wish to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. For the law cannot be fulfilled, he says, because of the weakness of the flesh. Therefore, the Jews keep the precepts and teachings of men more than the commandments of God, neither fulfilling the bodily Law, for it is indeed impossible, nor the spiritual Law, which they do not understand. Therefore, this is all that they strive for, that they do, that they exert themselves, so that they may boast among the Jews of the injury to your flesh, and boast of their Gentiles circumcised by their teaching. But they do all of this in order to please the Jews, and the envy of the conquered Law may subside.

6:14

(Verse 14.) But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. But that world is crucified to the just one, of whom the Savior says: I have conquered the world (John 16:33). And: Do not love the world. And: You have not received the spirit of the world. To whom the world is crucified, to him the world is also dead: and now the end of the world has come to him, and he is worthy of the new heaven and the new earth, and the new Testament, he sings a new song, and receives a new name written in a book, which no one knows except the one who receives it. It is asked how now Paul says: But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. (Galatians 6:14). And in another place concerning others: That in this boasting I may not be put to shame. (2 Corinthians 9:4). And again: But he said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee; for power is made perfect in weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:9). And in another place: But though I should have a mind to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I will say the truth. But I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me or any thing he heareth

from me. (2 Corinthians 12:6). And so on, such as are written in this manner. But it must be known that all that boasting related to the cross, let the glory be to the cross: and whatever worthy is accomplished in virtues, let it be done because of the Lord's passion.

6:15

(v. 15) For neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. As faithful and unfaithful, when there is one in substance, are divided into two according to the diversity of understanding, the Apostle saying: Stripping yourselves of the old man with his works, and putting on the new, who is renewed unto knowledge according to the image of the Creator (Colossians 3:9-10): in the same way, the world, although it is one in substance, is made different according to the understanding. Sinners, the old world is: holy, new. For when the world has been crucified with the holy, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is to it: not Jew, nor Gentile: but a new creature, into which the body of our humility is transformed, conformed to the body of the glory of Christ: For the old things have passed away, behold all things have become new (II Cor. V). And as the glory of the sun is different from the glory of the moon, and the glory of the stars: for star differs from star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead (I Cor. XV, 41, 42). About this, Daniel agrees with the same voice, saying: Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt (Dan. XII, 2); and: Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky. And concerning the righteous: Many shall be like the stars forever. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation without these parts of the body, which can be cut. So we also who love God, and the things that are prepared for us, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him (1 Corinthians 2), when we shall be transformed in the body of the humility of Christ, into the body of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, shall have that kind of body that neither a Jew can oppose nor a Gentile preserve with circumcision. Not that it is anything else in substance, but that it is different in glory. For it is necessary for this mortal to put on immortality, and for this corruptible body to be clothed with incorruption (I Cor. XV, 53). This is similar to what the blessed evangelist John said: Beloved, we are now children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. We know that when it is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (I John III, 2). Therefore, since that body of the glory of Jesus Christ, which had the marks of the nails after the resurrection and entered through closed doors, has not yet been revealed, let us who have already been raised up with Christ in baptism, as new-born men, not serve circumcision or uncircumcision, but believe that we are already what we shall be in the future.

6:16

(Verse 16.) And whoever follows this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. All things are directed according to the standard; and whether they be right or wrong, when the rule is applied, they are judged. So too the teaching of God is like a standard of speech, which judges between what is just and unjust: whoever follows it will have peace within themselves that surpasses all understanding; and after peace, mercy, which is foremost in the Israel of God. But the true Israel is called, in distinction from those who ceased to be God's Israel. For they say they are Jews, and they are not; but they lie, being of the synagogue of Satan. And do not be surprised, if, in imitation of spiritual Israel, carnal Israel neither has peace nor mercy, of whom it is also

written to the Corinthians: See Israel according to the flesh (I Cor. X, 18); since also in imitation of God and the Lord, there are many gods and many lords, whether in heaven or on earth. Beautifully, however, in one discourse, in order to conclude the letter according to the proposed argument, he called Israel the people of God; so that all the things that have been said above, not apart from the cause, but from the cause debated, may be taught.

6:17 (Verse 17.) From now on, let no one bother me. Not as if he has failed in teaching; but so that even a farmer will have this labor, if the little plants he has planted wither; and a shepherd will have worry, if the sheep he has gathered are torn apart. Therefore, it is better read in Greek, 'From now on, let no one present me with labor;' lest of course I have the need to work among you again. It is better for the teacher to excel in labor, who lives and feels differently than the teacher who has taught and done otherwise. He can also preempt their argument, if anyone should wish to contradict thereafter, by mentioning that he has addressed the issue of women covering their heads and men not covering theirs among the Corinthians, saying: But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Church of God (I Cor. XI, 16): that is, we have expressed what seemed fitting and just to us; but if anyone refuses to accept the truth, let them consider what answer to make and on what grounds to oppose, knowing that they are not worthy of a response, as they are more inclined to argue than to learn. But I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body. For whoever is circumcised after the coming of Christ does not bear the marks of the Lord Jesus; but he has glory in his shame. But those who endure wounds beyond measure, who are frequently beaten with rods in prisons, who once were stoned, and who have other things written in the catalog of boasting, they bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in their body. And perhaps he who afflicts his own body and subjects himself to servitude, lest while preaching to others he himself should become reprobate, bears the marks of the Lord Jesus in his body (1 Corinthians 9). The apostles rejoiced because they had been considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus (Acts 5).

6:18

(Verse 18) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen. There is no dissension, no bondage to the Law, no quarrel, no dispute, but rather may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Not at all with the flesh, not at all with the soul; whether because you have become spiritual, or because even those things that are lesser are included in the principal. For the soul and the flesh are subject to the spirit. Regarding this, both the Ecclesiastes and Paul speak: 'The spirit will return to the one who gave it' (Eccl. XII, 7). And Paul in another place: 'The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit' (Rom. VIII, 16). But this grace of the Lord Jesus is not with everyone, but with those who deserve to be called brothers by the apostle, faithful brothers, and true brothers, which the Hebrew word Amen signifies. For Amen, the Septuagint interpreters have translated as 'let it be'; Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotius have faithfully and truly interpreted it. And how God confirms his words in the Old Testament through a certain custom of swearing, saying, 'As I live,' says the Lord (Num. XIV, 28); he also swears by the saints: 'As your soul lives'; so too our Savior in the Gospel demonstrates by the word 'Amen' that what he speaks is true. And indeed, 'Amen' signifies the consent of the hearer and is a seal of truth, as the first letter to the Corinthians also teaches us, in which Paul says: 'But if you bless with the Spirit, who supplies the place of the untaught?' How can someone say 'Amen' to your blessing if they do not understand what you are saying? (I Cor. XIV, 16) This shows that an ignorant person

cannot respond truthfully to what is being said unless they understand what is being taught.

Commentary on Habakkuk

Commentaries on the Prophet Habakkuk in Two Books by S. Eusebius Hieronymus of Stridon, a Presbyter, for Chromatius.

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

First, Chromatius, most learned bishop, it is fitting for us to know that the name Ambacum, which is read corruptly among the Greeks and Latins, is called Habakkuk among the Hebrews, and it means embrace; or, if we were to translate it more significantly into Greek, it would be περιληψις, that is, embrace. Then, where the Seventy translators and Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted the word λήμμα as assumption, in Hebrew it is expressed as Massa, which Aquila translates as weight: about which we have discussed more fully in the prophet Nahum. However, mass is never mentioned in the title, unless it seems to be a serious and weighty matter. Therefore, it is necessary for the present prophecy to have some degree of severity, just as in the case of the prophecy against the city of Nineveh, the great burden that seemed to be against the Assyrians: so too in this case, we should consider what weight the prophet's revelation carries. There are four prophets in the volume of the Twelve Prophets, three of whom have a word, that is, a weight, in their title: Nahum, Habakkuk, and Malachi. Furthermore, Zacharias places two such titles in the middle and around the end, one of which is: The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be his rest (Zech. IX, 1): the other at the end, The burden of the word of the Lord on Israel (Ibid. XI, 1). Concerning Nahum, a book has already been published with your prayers: concerning Zacharias and Malachi, if life permits, they will be discussed. Now we have Habakkuk in our hands, who is called the embracement, either because of his love for the Lord or because he enters into a struggle and wrestling, and (so to speak) embraces God, thus he has obtained the name of the embracer, that is, the wrestler. For no one has dared with such audacious voice to provoke God to a discussion of justice and to say to Him: Why is there so much injustice in human affairs and in the governance of this world? Shall I cry out to you, being oppressed by violence, and you will not save? Why have you shown me iniquity and hardship to see? The law is torn, and judgment does not reach its end: because the wicked prevails against the just: therefore, a perverse judgment comes forth (Habakkuk 1:2). Do you see what a rash and somewhat blasphemous voice it is to provoke one's Creator to judgment; and to dispute why such and such a thing is done, against a fragile vessel to a potter (Isaiah 45, Jeremiah 18, and Romans 9)? Also, it should be observed that the assumption or weight, which we have already said is heavy, is the vision of a prophet, and it understands the perverse doctrine of Montanus that it sees: it does not speak like a madman, nor does it give a sound without reason like the babbling of

insane women. And so the apostle commands that if there is a revelation to someone else while someone is prophesying, those who were speaking first should remain silent (II Cor. XIV, 33). And immediately after, he says: For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. From this it is understood that when someone chooses to remain silent and gives the opportunity for someone else to speak, they are able to both speak and remain silent as they wish. However, someone who is in a state of ecstasy, that is, speaking unwillingly, does not have the power to remain silent or speak. Also learn this (since you insist forcefully, as if demanding certain steps and stairs to higher things, that I interpret a story for you): that it is a prophecy against Babylon and King Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldeans. Just as the earlier prophet Nahum, who comes after Habakkuk, had a prophecy against Nineveh and the Assyrians, who devastated the ten tribes called Israel, so Habakkuk has a prophecy against Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar, by whom Judah, Jerusalem, and the temple were destroyed. And so that you know, at that time Abacuc was, when already two tribes called Judas, were led into captivity, Daniel will be able to teach you, to whom Abacuc is sent with a meal into the lion's den (Dan. XVII): although among the Hebrews this very history is not read. Therefore, whether someone accepts that Scripture or does not accept it, both things are evident to us: either he accepts it, and the book of Abacuc is woven after the deed is done; or he does not accept it, and he writes as if a prophet, who knows the future.

Book One

Book One

1:1-2

(Chapter 1, Verses 1, 2.) How long, O Lord, will I cry out and you will not hear? I will shout to you with violence, but you will not save. Why have you shown me iniquity and pain, to see plunder and injustice against me? According to the Septuagint: How long, O Lord, will I cry out and you will not hear? I will shout to you with violence, but you will not save. Why have you shown me hardships and sorrows, to see misery and impiety? Meanwhile, the prophet raises a question against God, why Nebuchadnezzar devastates the temple and Judah, why the once city of the Lord, Jerusalem, is destroyed? Why does the people cry out, and yet not be heard? Why does he cry out to the Lord, oppressed by the Chaldeans, and yet not be saved? Why does even the prophet, or the people on whose behalf he now speaks, live through this and be brought here, to see the wickedness of the enemies and their own labor? Why does injustice prevail against them? And this is said out of the narrowness of mind, not knowing that gold is refined in fire, and three young men come out of the furnace purer than when they entered (Dan. III). Moreover, we can also generally understand that the prophet, seeing sinners abound and possess riches in this world, compares their sons to newly planted saplings in their youth, and their daughters to adorned temples, their storehouses bursting with plenty, their sheep fat and multiplying in their ways, and other things that are more fully written in a lamenting voice and full of sorrow in the 143rd psalm. Why do you look at the despisers and remain silent, while the impious trample upon the more just, and you make men like fish of the sea, and like reptiles without a leader? We read something similar in the seventy-second psalm: But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped (Psalm 73:2), and so on. And again in the same psalm: And if there is knowledge in the Most High. For behold, the sinners and those who abound in the world have obtained riches, and so on, until my hands. But these things they speak ignorantly, investigating the judgments of God (Rom. XI),

and the deep riches of his wisdom and knowledge, that God does not see as man sees. Man looks only at the present: God knows the future and the eternal (I Sam. XVIII). And how if a sick and burning with fever person asks for cold water, and says to the doctor: I suffer violence, I am tormented, I am burned, I am almost dead: how long, doctor, shall I cry out and you will not hear? And the wisest and most merciful doctor responds to him: I know when I should give you what you ask for: I do not just have pity, because pity is cruelty, and your will is against you. So our Lord God, knowing the weights and measures of His mercy, sometimes does not hear the one crying out, in order to test him and to provoke him to pray more, and to make him more just and pure as if he were refined by fire. Understanding this, the Apostle, having obtained mercy from the Lord, says: Let us not grow weary in tribulations (Ephesians 3:13); and he blesses God at all times (Psalm 33); and he knows that he who perseveres until the end will be saved (Matthew 10:22). And he glories in labor and pain. And as Jeremiah says: I will invoke tribulation and misery. Just as another person invokes God, so a holy man and invincible warrior, desiring to exercise and prove himself, wishes tribulation and misery to come.

1:3-4

(Ver. 3, 4.) And judgment and contradiction become more powerful: therefore the law is torn apart and judgment does not reach its end: because the wicked prevail against the just, therefore a perverse judgment proceeds. LXX: Judgment has been made against me, and the judge accepts it: therefore the law is torn apart and judgment does not reach its end: because the wicked prevail against the just, therefore a perverse judgment proceeds. Still, the prophet or the people speak to the Lord, because they were judged not by truth but by power, and they did not receive any support from the law and righteousness. Therefore, their judgment had no end. However, the purpose of judgment is to judge fairly. And why they dare to speak, they explain in the following, saying: Because the wicked Nebuchadnezzar prevailed against the just Judah (2 Kings 22), and this is the reason why they say judgment has not reached its end; because it is unjust and perverse for the righteous King Josiah to be killed by the Egyptian king (2 Kings 23); for Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah to serve (Daniel 3); and for the Babylonian emperor to command and for Belshazzar to drink from the vessels of God among his prostitutes and concubines (Daniel 5). This prophet is speaking about the condition of his time (we are following because you wanted an account of history as well). Moreover, according to the Septuagint, it is a common complaint of the saints to God that an unjust judgment is rendered against them and innocent blood is shed in persecutions. And sometimes, when they stand before the secular tribunal, the judge, after receiving bribes, condemns the innocent and sets the guilty free. This can be said not only of judges of the world, but sometimes also of the leaders of the Church, who, because of bribes, disregard the law and do not bring a trial to completion, allowing the wicked to prevail against the righteous. And in the judgment, the sin of the rich is more powerful than the truth of the poor. Where there is complaint, judgment becomes perverted: but we ought not to be disturbed by this inequality of things, seeing in the beginning of the world the impious Cain slew the just Abel (Gen. IV), and afterwards Jacob, being an exile, reigned in his father's house over Esau (Gen. XXVIII), and the Egyptians afflicted the children of Israel with mud and bricks, and the Lord against whom the complaint is now directed, is crucified by the Jews (John. XIX), and the robber Barabbas is chosen (John. XVIII). This day will fail me if I want to enumerate how in this age, with the wicked prevailing, the righteous are oppressed.

1:5

(Verse 5.) Look among the nations and see, be astonished and astounded; for a work is being done in your days that you would not believe if you were told. LXX: Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if someone tells you. Symmachus, in response to what we have said: “a work is being done in your days”, interpreted it as “a work will be done in your days”. The rest is similar. Again, at the beginning of the chapter, where it is written in Hebrew 'Rau Baggoim', and we have translated it, look among the nations, and the Septuagint has put 'contemptores', except for Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion, who agree with our interpretation, in another edition I found '■νων■μη■' you will see the slanderers, and in another similarly without the title of the author, you will see the decliners. Therefore, in response to the complaints of the prophet who causes and says: 'How long, O Lord, will I cry out, and you will not hear?' And the rest, up to the end of this introduction, the voice of the responding Lord is introduced, so that he may see this injustice, which he thinks is happening only in Israel, among the Gentiles: and that not only the Jews and Jerusalem, as he thought as a prophet, would be handed over to the Chaldeans, but all nations around, and that he would be so powerful and afterwards overthrown, that if someone were to predict what is going to happen, they would seem incredulous because of the magnitude of the matter. But even this, which the 70 and the other interpreters have put forth: See the despisers, whether you will see the slanderers and those who turn away, it agrees with the meaning of this place, and they are shown from the very discourse of their audacity and contempt towards the Lord: from the person of whom the prophet had cried out, why they have dared to despise the majesty of God and speak rashly, and as much as they can, to slander the providence of God, and to turn away from the Lord, thereby convicting themselves of wickedness. So you will see, you who scorn, and then you will admire, and you will consider all your complaining as nothing, when you perceive what I will do in your days; lest perhaps you say: What does the future have to do with us? The work that will be so great will overwhelm all your reasoning: so that if someone were to predict it now, you would not readily believe. But what this work is, is shown in what follows.

1:6-11

(Verse 6 onwards) For behold, I will raise up the Chaldeans, a bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth to take possession of dwelling places that are not theirs. They are feared and dreaded; their justice and dignity proceed from themselves. Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves; their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swift to devour. They all come for violence; their faces forward; they gather captives like sand. At kings they scoff, and at rulers they laugh. They laugh at every fortress, for they pile up earth and take it. Then they sweep by like the wind and go on, guilty men, whose own might is their god. LXX: For behold, I will raise up the bitter and swift Chaldeans, who walk over the breadth of the earth to possess dwelling places that are not theirs. They are dreadful and renowned; their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves. Their horses also are swifter than leopards, and more fierce than evening wolves. Their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from afar; they shall fly as the eagle that hastens to eat. They shall come all for violence; their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn to them; they shall deride every stronghold, for they shall heap up earth and take it. Then his

spirit shall change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god. What I have told you: Look among the nations, and see, and be amazed, and be astounded; for a work is being done in your days that you would not believe if you were told. This is what the following passage describes: Behold, I am stirring up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own. And this is his work, not to exercise the land by plowing; but to live by plunder and sword, and to possess cities that are not his own: before he strikes his hand, before he breaks out into war, he carries terror on his face. And when he says, 'Judgment and burden will come out from himself,' as Symmachus interpreted, it means that he will judge for himself, and will go forth according to his decree, or it should be understood that he will appoint princes from his own people, and his power and the sword of other nations will not have guards, or certainly as he did, it will be done to him, and he will be devastated just as he devastated. The horses as well as the cavalry, who will come from far away, will be so destructive in pursuing and plundering everything, that they will surpass leopards and evening wolves. Indeed, wolves are said to be more fierce at night, and throughout the day they are driven to madness by hunger. So the cavalry will not fly to fight, because no one will resist them; but they will run like an eagle, to whom all things are subject in the air, hastening to devour. And just as green things wither at the breath of scorching wind, so everything will be devastated at their sight, and the number of captives and spoils will be so great that, by exaggeration, it could even equal the sand. He himself, that is, Nebuchadnezzar, will also reign in the whole world, and triumphing over the kings in his chariot, he will hold them up to ridicule and consider them among his delights. He will have such power and pride that he will strive to overcome nature and capture the most fortified cities with the strength of his army. For he will come to Tyre and, by throwing a causeway into the sea, he will turn the island into a peninsula and provide a land entrance between the waves of the sea into the city. For this reason, he will laugh at and tear down every barrier, and he will capture it, that is, the fortification, or Tyre; which is clearly demonstrated in Ezekiel, where it is said: Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, subjugated his army with great effort against Tyre. Every head is bald, and every shoulder is shaved, and no payment is given to him and his army against Tyre, and the work in which he served against it. But when he will have attained to the pinnacle of power, and nothing will stand in his way, then his spirit will change into pride: and thinking himself to be God, he will set up a golden image in Babylon, which he will force all nations to worship. And when he has done this, he will transform into the form of a beast, and afterwards he will fall: for which reason Aquila and Symmachus translated καὶ πλημμελήσει, that is, and he will transgress: the Holy Scripture having this custom, that it puts Vasam (), that is, he will transgress, in place of what it is, and it will cease to be what it was. Similarly, we have such phrases in our language, saying: The army was beaten, meaning that it was killed and slaughtered. And, the vineyard and field sinned, meaning that they did not produce a harvest of grapes and crops. And what is said at the end of the chapter: This is the strength of his God, is to be understood ironically, so that the meaning is: This is the strength he received from his god Beldeus. All nations were compelled to worship him, even through scripture and the threat of death under his cruel rule. According to the Hebrew: Now let us turn to the Septuagint, so that, with each sentence set forth, we may join together an allegorical interpretation. Behold, I will raise up the Chaldeans, a bitter and swift nation, who march throughout the breadth of the earth to possess dwellings not their own. God threatens against those who despise and slander His providence, that He will raise up the Chaldeans, who are interpreted as demons or even as the worst angels,

serving His fury, wrath, and the tribulation which He inflicts upon sinners; or as the souls of the worst men, through whom they deserve torment. But the Chaldeans, a bitter and swift nation, do not spare and quickly fulfill what has been commanded to them. And they walk upon the breadth of the earth. For there is a wide and spacious road that leads to death ((Matt. VII, 13)): through which the rich man in the Gospel walked, who shone in purple (Luc. XVI), and those of whom it is said: Who sleep on ivory beds, and abound in delights on their couches. Who eat calves from the herds that are still suckling, and drink clarified wine, and anoint themselves with the best ointments (Amos. VI, 4): these, because they walk on the wide road, are called the breadth of the earth, which is pressed by the steps of the Chaldeans. For they did not want to walk on the narrow and tight road that leads to life, on which Paul was walking, glorifying God in tribulation and distress (I Cor. VI, 12). However, the Chaldeans walk over the breadth of the earth, in order to possess tents that are not their own. For every reasonable soul, although it has become a dwelling place of the Chaldeans through its vice and fault, is by nature a tent of God. And although in the Gospel the worst demon speaks: I will go to my house from where I came out (Matt. XII, 44), he should not be believed; for no rational creature was made for the purpose of being a dwelling place for a demon. It follows: He is terrible and illustrious: from him will come judgment, and his assumption will come forth from him. The Chaldean is terrible because of the many and varied punishments he inflicts on the contemptuous; illustrious, because he assumes for himself the glory of divinity. And through his own oracles and false responses, and the healings of the diseases which he himself had caused, he seems illustrious among the inexperienced and contemptuous of God. For the judgment and punishment of the contemptuous will come from him, that is, from himself or from the Chaldean. For they will be handed over to punishment, according to the Apostle, so that they may learn not to blaspheme (1 Timothy I): from whomsoever shall repent and turn to God, he shall depart, after he had been held by his hands, and there had been a Chaldean assumption. If when we see someone having served the devil for a long time, and afterwards having been converted to God, let us say about him: And his assumption went forth from him. For whoever shall have done penance, and left behind the demons, to which like horses they previously offered their backs to be sat upon; and they shall have thrown off and shaken off their riders, the horsemen themselves, like leopards and wolves, in the evening, and having come with empty and light backs to carry him, who, meek and poor, ascends upon the foal of an ass (John XII), these, hastening as if from afar, and not satisfied with running and rushing, shall assume flight, and shall come as if an eagle, to feed on the flesh of God's word, and to satisfy the hunger of such a long time. For in that which is said, καὶ οἱ ἑπταπενήκοντα οὗτοι περὶ αὐτοῦ, and the Seventy have translated: And his horsemen shall ride, according to the sense which we have stated above, Symmachus has interpreted: His horsemen shall be poured out, that is, they shall fall and be dashed to the ground. But the wolves of Arabia, that is, the enemies of the evening and of the West, are rightly so called, by whom the worst intercourse has been sought; and being set before in darkness, they abandon the whole path of the evening. When they have abandoned it, and have flown forth ready, that they may devour the fleshly produce of the Word of God, then shall come the consummation upon the ungodly, that is, upon the Chaldeans who withstood the turning of the penitent to their Lord. Therefore, the consummation will come upon the wicked, opposing their faces from the front. But when they have been consumed and captivity has been snatched from their hands, then the divine word will gather together, like the sand of the Chaldean captivity, and it will delight in the kings, and the jokes of tyrants will be its amusement, seeing the once powerful devil and his kingdoms

(which also, showing to the Savior, he says, 'All these things I will give you if you fall down and worship me') destroyed by his coming; for they are the delights of prudence and the pleasures of wisdom, when folly is destroyed, and the power of tyrants, once overcome and cast down, is turned into ridicule. For indeed the dragon was not formed alone for the purpose of being a plaything for the Lord, who is the beginning of its creation, but was made as a mockery to the angels. And God will not give him alone, as if to a little sparrow, but if anyone else is also cruel and of a tyrannical mind, he will be handed over to the word of God as a subject of ridicule. And He Himself says, He will mock at every stronghold. But what other stronghold is there except that of which the Apostle speaks: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but powerful with God for the destruction of fortresses, destroying imaginations and every exaltation that is raised up against the knowledge of God (2 Cor. 10:4-5). Therefore, whatever things there may be, whether in speeches that claim to have height and greatness contrary to the truth, or in all glory and riches and strength that is praised in the world, all will be destroyed, and the word of God will mock every stronghold. And He will send a rampart and will prevail over it, and earthly things that it produces, exposing its fragility in those things where it seemed to have some strength before. But when this shall have been accomplished, then the spirit will be converted, and it will not punish as it had previously punished, but passing through sinners it will intercede for them, and it will reconcile them with their former Lord: in all of which the strength is shown, which has accomplished such great things, of our God. You see how precarious these places are, and how contrary they are to the truth of history. And how those things which we have interpreted literally concerning the Chaldeans, now seem to sound, according to tropology, the clemency and freedom of those who have escaped from the hands of the Chaldeans. Strict history is, and does not have the faculty of wandering. Free tropology, and only restricted by these laws, so that it follows the piety of intelligence and the context of speech, and does not violently connect things that are very different from each other.

1:12

(Verse 12.) Surely you are from the beginning, O Lord my God, my holy one? And shall we not die? O Lord, you have appointed him for judgment; you have established him as a strong one to correct him. LXX: Are you not from the beginning, O Lord my God, my holy one? And shall we not die? O Lord, you have appointed him for judgment: and he has formed me, so that I may chastise in his discipline. Symmachus more clearly: Are you not from the beginning, O Lord my God, my holy one, so that I would not die? O Lord, you have appointed him for judgment, you have established him for reproof. To the prophet's complaint, saying: How long, O Lord, shall I cry out, and you will not hear? God had answered, saying: Look at the nations and see: and after the preface he had added: Behold, I will raise up the Chaldeans, a bitter and swift nation. With every detail complete, whether about Nebuchadnezzar or the devil in the end, it is stated: Then the spirit will change, and it will pass through, and it will fall, this is the might of his God. When the prophet heard and understood, therefore Nabuchodonosor, against Judam, or the devil against believers, can obtain power to rebuke them, and after the rebuke, he himself is also punished in the end, he responded to the Lord: So, are you, my Lord God, my holy one (he speaks these words with a tone of flattery and repentance), the one who created us from the beginning? Upon whose mercy do we still rely? For I did not know that our adversaries could have so much power, nor did I know that Nabuchodonosor or the devil of this world, and all the powers of the nations, had received power.

Therefore, no one of us can resist his might. But as for your mercy, it is all that we live, for we have not been killed by him, and have been led to the works of death. For you, Lord, have placed him to judge, so that he himself may be the enemy and avenger, and through him you may rebuke all who have sinned against you. But because we have once interpreted the Chaldeans about demons, and Nebuchadnezzar about their king the devil, we must briefly describe the devil and his power, so that the prophet may justly say: Lord, you have placed him to judge, and have founded him as a mighty one to rebuke. It is raised up against unbelievers and scorers of the nations of demons, bitter for punishment, and present everywhere. It also walks wherever the width of the earth is, in order to possess men, in whom Christ was supposed to dwell. It is horrible and terrifying, and can hardly be overcome by anyone, and is not broken before it comes to fruition with the magnitude of sins and the weight of its own wickedness. His horses and horsemen are always thirsty for blood, like leopards and wolves; they desire plunder, they pretend to be absent, and when they are not expected, they will quickly come from afar. They will fly like an eagle, which, raising its flight, wants to place its nest among the stars of the sky, and always hastens towards its prey. And in Ezekiel, it is described under the figure of Nebuchadnezzar and the king of Egypt, upon the devil. There is no demon who spares: all will come quickly for plunder: ahead of them is a burning wind: whatever they see, whatever is in their sight, they will desire to burn and destroy. But the most powerful king will be in the midst of captives, and he will take their number as the sand of the sea from his satellites on all sides, and he himself will triumph over kings, and his ridiculous tyrants will be. For by his deceit, he will deceive many saints, and those who seemed to be the most powerful to themselves, and exercise tyranny against demons, and cast them out of possessed bodies, he will subject to his servitude, and consider them a laughingstock. But he, the strongest, with a forced hand and a gathered army of the wicked, will laugh at every fortification and will strive to overthrow whatever may happen to be there. For he will bring together a mound, that is, he will surround with earthworks; and when the earth is heaped up, he will easily capture every fortification. However, after such a great victory, his spirit will change, and his mouth will reach up to the heavens, and he will make himself a god, beginning to blaspheme his Creator. And when he does this, he will fall, and the ruin will show how strong his divinity was, and the imitation of idols under whose images he enslaved people to his worship. Therefore, hearing these things, the prophet understands that such a great and powerful king of this world will gather captivity like the sand of the sea and triumph over kings; and that his tyrants will be ridiculous, and he will laugh at every fortification, and he will construct the first rampart and then capture it; and he will be so arrogant as to dare to resist his Creator and make himself like a god, who previously spoke boldly to the Lord; and he had declared himself, or his people, or those on whose behalf he was speaking, to be just: now he bursts forth in words of flattery and says, 'Are you then my Lord God, my Holy One, from the beginning?' And as we do not die, nor are captured by such a great enemy, it is by your mercy. For you, O Lord, have established him as if a torturer; and you have made him strong, so that no one or very few can resist his strength. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, what is said at the end 'And he formed me, that I may reprove in his discipline' can be referred to the person of prophet, so that the meaning is: I have also been inspired as a prophet, that I may reprove the evildoers and teach the discipline of the Lord. Some people think that the Lord, who was formed by the Father and took on a body, is called that in order to teach people about the doctrine of God the Father. But whether this is in harmony with the context of the previous statements and the consistency of the whole passage, it will be for the judgment of the reader

rather than me.

1:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) Your eyes are the world's eyes, so that you may not see evil, and you cannot look upon injustice. Why do you not look upon those who commit wickedness and remain silent as the wicked devour the righteous? And you make men like the fish of the sea, and like the reptile that has no ruler? LXX: The world's eye, so that it may not see evil, and it cannot look upon grief. Why do you look upon those who despise, will you be silent when the wicked devours the righteous? And he will make men like the fish of the sea, like creeping things that have no ruler. Such is what Jeremiah speaks to God: You are just, Lord, I confess; yet I will speak judgments to you: Why does the way of the wicked prosper; why do all who are treacherous thrive? You planted them, and they have taken root; they grow, they bring forth fruit; you are near in their mouths and far from their heart. (Jeremiah 12:1-2). Therefore, Abacuc is also in the same opinion: Lord, you are the eyes of the world, he says; and I know that you do not willingly look upon evil and injustice, nor can anyone doubt your justice. However, why do you allow the Babylonians to boast with such cruelty, and the just Israel to be oppressed by the impious Nebuchadnezzar: not because the one who is oppressed is perfectly just, but because he is more just than the one who oppresses him. And just as fish, who do not have a ruler, and irrational animals, and a multitude of reptiles without providence, submit to the stronger, and whoever is stronger in strength, dominates the other: so among men, the rational animal, created in Your likeness, reason and merit will not prevail; but the strength of the body and irrational strength will. But if we want to understand in a general way, regarding providence, when the prophet asks: Why does the devil have so much power in the world, and exercise tyranny while God rules? This will be the meaning, and with the previous explanations, this interpretation will be connected: I know, O Lord my God, my holy one, that because of your providence and defense, we do not die; and I know that you have allowed an adversary, so that, like an executioner himself, he may seize and not kill sinners. I wonder why it seems unjust to you that nothing pleases you, and your eyes are free from all wickedness, and you cannot see the sufferings of those who are subjected to injustice. However, I cannot find a reason why the righteous Abel is killed by the unjust Cain (Genesis IV), and you remain silent? Why does the raging whale devour not only smaller fish but also Jonah himself (Jonah II)? Why does the wicked prevail and the righteous suffer? I do not say this because I know anyone to be justified in your sight and to be without sin, and that I am unaware of human frailty; but just as Sodom and Gomorrah are compared with Jerusalem, so also the tax collector in the Gospel is made more righteous in comparison with the Pharisee (Luke 18): likewise, he who is oppressed by the devil is indeed a sinner, but he is more righteous when he submits to being oppressed. Therefore, why is there no standard or measure, so that if a just person is once oppressed and subjected, they do not submit to an impious person, but to someone more righteous? Is it possible for anything to be done without you, and you not willing, that is not impious? To think this is blasphemous. Therefore, since you are the ruler and Lord of the universe, it is necessary for you to do what cannot be done without you. And he says this not because he himself as a prophet believes it, as I have attested above, but because he expresses human impatience in his own person: just as we frequently see the apostle receiving various opinions from people, and now saying: 'But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin, which is in my members.' (Rom. VII, 23). And, as if he were beginning:

Brethren, I do not think that I have apprehended, but we know in part, and we prophesy in part (Philippians 3:13). And again, as if he were perfect: So, therefore, let us have this knowledge, that however perfect we may be, we may still say that we know in part and are not perfect (1 Corinthians 13:9). And lest you should perhaps think that this is not the custom of the Apostles, but rather an argument of our own, he himself speaks to the Corinthians: But these things, brethren, I have transfigured myself and Apollo for your sake, so that you may learn in us (1 Corinthians 4:6). Otherwise how can God have men like fish of the sea, and like reptiles that have no ruler: whereas the angels daily behold the face of the Father who is in heaven (Matthew 18); and the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them (Psalm 34). Therefore, just as in humans we can see the providence of God running through each individual, so in other animals we can understand a general arrangement, order, and course of things. For example, how a multitude of fish is born and lives in the waters, how reptiles and quadrupeds arise on land, and what food they are nourished by. Moreover, it is absurd to ascribe to the majesty of God the knowledge of how many mosquitoes are born and die in every moment, how many bugs and fleas and flies exist in the world, how many fish swim in the water, and which of the smaller creatures should yield to the prey of the larger ones. Let us not be such foolish flatterers of God that, while detracting from His power even to the lowest things, we become injurious to ourselves, saying that there is the same providence of rational and irrational things. From this, that apocryphal book of folly is to be condemned, in which it is written that a certain angel named Tyri presided over reptiles, and in the same way, angels assigned to fish, trees, and all beasts for their protection.

1:15-17

(Verses 15 and following) He lifted the whole thing on his hook, he pulled it into his net, and gathered it into his seine: over this he will rejoice and exult. Therefore he sacrifices to his seine, and offers to his net, for in them his portion has become fat, and his food is choice: because of this he spreads out his seine, and never stops killing nations. LXX: He lifted the completion onto his hook, and drew it into his net, and gathered it into his seines: because of this he will rejoice and be glad: therefore he sacrifices to his seine, and burns incense to his net, for in them he has fattened his portion, and his food is choice: therefore he spreads out his net, and never ceases to kill nations. Because above he had named fish, saying: And you will make men like fish of the sea, and like creeping things, which is more significant in Hebrew, Remes (), that is, moving, everything namely that which can be moved, therefore it preserves the metaphor of fish in the other things, just as a fisherman throws a hook, and a net, and a dragnet, so that what the hook could not catch may be surrounded by the wider nets that the escaping one will enclose: thus also the Babylonian king will lay waste to everything, and will make all people his prey (Dan. III). Furthermore, what he says: he will rejoice and be glad, and will sacrifice to his net and offer incense to his drag, signifies the idol that he made in the field of Dura (also known as Duram) and the statue of Bel, to which he sacrificed the fattest victims like a great drag, coercing all the nations he had conquered to worship it. For in them, that is, in his idols, he believed that he had become enriched, and his share, that is, he considered himself to possess all the riches, as if he had conquered even the great fish, princes and kings, under his own rule, whom he calls select delicacies. And because once he was satiated by the most abundant fishing, and he filled his net, that is, his army, therefore he does not cease to kill nations, that is, to always fight and slaughter. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the impious devil (who oppresses the just and has men like fishes of the sea, and devastates all

things as if they were reptiles without a leader) sent his hook opposite to that hook, by which the fish was first caught through the apostle Peter, in whose mouth a stater was found (Matthew 17). And his hook caught hold of Adam, and he drew him out of paradise with his net: and he covered him with his snares, various and manifold deceits. Therefore, he will rejoice, and he will consider his traps to be more than the command of the Lord. And he will offer sacrifices not with a hook (which is understood as perverse speech and still established in the beginning), but with his net, because it captures very fat sacrificial victims in it. And: Through one man sinners have become many (Rom. 5:19), and in Adam we all died (1 Cor. 15), and all the saints thereafter were cast out of paradise together with him. And where his chosen foods were, as the Psalmist says: 'He seeks from God his food' (Psalm 104:21), desiring to overthrow the prophets and apostles. And because he deceived the first man, he does not cease to destroy the entire human race every day. And it can also be understood as the perverse and manifold doctrine of heretics, that they themselves catch many fish with their hook, net, and snares, and catch many reptiles, and therefore they rejoice, and they use their speech to deceive and persuade, as if they were adoring and worshiping God, and robbing him: they themselves serve with all their skill, by which they know that so many victims have been killed by them, and that so many of the powerful and holy have been deceived, whom Scripture now names as the fat portion and chosen foods. Therefore, in a likeness of animals, which once they taste blood always thirst for it, they spread their net, and their whole endeavor is to kill not a few, as at the beginning, but many. There is no doubt about the slaughter of many peoples, who have seen such a multitude of heresies and perverse doctrines caught by the hook, the net, and the snares of the devil: and yet the end of their capture is destruction.

2:1

(Chapter 2, Verse 1) I will stand upon my watch, and set myself upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. LXX: I will stand upon my watch, and get upon the rock, and will watch to see what will be said unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. Symmachus more clearly pursued: Like a guard I will stand upon the lookout, and I will stand like one who is enclosed, and will watch to see what will be said unto me, and what I shall answer, and I will contradict the one who argues against me. For munition and stone, in whose place Symmachus interpreted as concluded, is called Masur in Hebrew, which Theodotion, Aquila, and the fifth edition translated as a compass. The Lord had responded to the first cause: Look among the nations and see, and be amazed, and be astounded. To this the prophet, acting as if repenting of the previous statement, moderated the question, saying: O Lord my God, my holy one, we shall not die (Habakkuk 1:12). But nevertheless, with reverence and praise for God himself had queried: Your eyes are blinded so that you do not see evil, and you do not look upon iniquity (ref. Habakkuk 1:13). Why do you not look upon those who do evil and remain silent while the wicked devours the righteous? And what is the devouring of the righteous, carried out in part: so that people become like fish of the sea, and like creeping creatures. And with a hook, and a net, and a dragnet, all are drawn toward destruction, and there is no end to their killing. Therefore, because he is a prophet, and therefore he seeks and doubts, it is right that what is answered to him should be answered to everyone: I will stand, he says, on my watchtower, that is, in the height of my prophecy, and I will see what happens after the captivity of the people, and the destruction of the city and the temple, and afterwards what will follow. Or indeed, like this: I will

guard my heart with all diligence, and I will stand upon the rock of Christ. And with this compass and circle, I will enclose myself like a wall, so that the roaring lion cannot break through to me, and I will see what God answers me after the second question: and after he has answered me and rebuked me for complaining, what should I also respond to him. On the other hand, he describes with an elegant and remarkable perception the impatience that we humans always have in debates: that before someone responds to us, and we know in what they have accused us, we prepare ourselves to respond. From which it is shown that the response is not of reason, but of contention. For if it were reason, the response should be awaited, and thus see whether it should respond or agree with a reasonable response. But this should also be noted from what he said, that in order to see what he speaks in me, the prophetic vision and speech of God do not happen externally to the prophets, but internally and in response to the inner person. Hence also Zacharias: And the angel, he said, who spoke in me (Zech. I, 9). And in the Psalms: I will hear what the Lord speaks in me (Psalm LXXXIV, 9).

2:2-4

(Vers. 2 seqq.) And the Lord answered me, and said: Write the vision, and explain it upon tables, that he that readeth it may run over it. For as yet the vision is far off, and it shall appear at the end, and shall not lie: if it make any delay, wait for it: for it shall surely come, and it shall not be slack. Behold, he that is unbelieving, his soul shall not be right in himself: but the just shall live in his faith. LXX: And the Lord answered me, and said: Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it: for as yet the vision is for an appointed time, and it shall appear at the end, and shall not lie. If he fails, sustain him, for he will come, and will not delay: if he withdraws himself, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But the just shall live by my faith. Regarding the tablets and the box, which in Hebrew is called Alluoth ((Al. Luth)), Symmachus interpreted the pages. And where the Septuagint placed: But the just shall live by my faith, all equally translated, he shall live by his own faith. Finally, Symmachus, with a more significant interpretation, said: But the just shall live by his own faith, which in Greek is said, **■ δ■καίος τ■ ■ αὐτο■ π■σσει ζ■σει**: Indeed, if Baemunatho had the letter Yod and not Vau at the end, as the Septuagint thought, and it was read as Baemunathi (), they would have translated it correctly, in my faith. However, the similarity of the letters Vau and Jod, which are only distinguished by their size, has been a cause of error. The following discussion explains why this is so. According to the promise made to the holy man in Isaiah, 'Before they call, I will answer; while they are yet speaking, I will hear' (Isa. 65:24), the Lord also responds to the prophet and commands him to write down the vision and make it plain upon tablets, that is, to write it more clearly. But I think those tablets, about which the apostle also speaks to the Corinthians: You are our letter, written in our hearts: which is known and read by all men: being made manifest, that you are a letter of Christ, ministered by us, and written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of fleshly hearts (2 Corinthians 3:23). But Solomon also signifies something similar in Proverbs, saying: Write it on the tablet of your heart (Proverbs 3:3). But he is ordered to write more clearly, so that the reader may be able to run through it without any hindrance to its speed, and may be held back by a desire to read. And this is commanded, because the vision is still far off, and at the appointed time. And when the end of things shall come, then also he will come, and the true prophecy will be proved by the completed work. And if perhaps, for your eagerness, O reader, and the ardour of seeing the vision, it may have seemed to you to make a

little delay in what has been promised, do not despair of his coming; but wait patiently: for you have me, who promise and say to you: He who is coming will come, and will not delay. But if anyone is unbelieving of this promise of mine, and, while I am saying 'coming, he will come, and he will not delay,' begins to doubt and silently waver within himself, thinking that what is being delayed for a time will not come; such a person will displease my soul, according to the saying: 'My soul hates your new moons and sabbaths' (Isaiah 1:13). And when God said 'his soul,' we should understand it as meaning 'his intellect and thoughts,' so that it would be 'my intellect will be displeased.' But just as it will displease the one who, with my promise, doubts that what I pledge will come to pass, so the righteous person who believes in my promise will live by their faith. These lines describe the picture of this chapter. And what he says is this, in this way, but only if we mix in the translation of the Septuagint. Write in your heart, and like little children who learn the first elements of the alphabet, they practice curved accents and a trembling hand on a boxwood tablet, and they become accustomed to write correctly through meditation. So you, who have spoken as the voice of a doubting people, write in the tablets of your heart and in the boxwood of your chest what I am saying. For it is a vision that is promised and commanded to be described and written more plainly, so that it is not wrapped in any cloud and not obscured by any enigmatic ambiguities: clear hope may have a clear promise. And this, O prophet, I command, not because you do not know (for you would not be a prophet if you were ignorant), but so that what you have written more clearly may be read and perused by the reader without hindrance and difficulty; which the Seventy translated as: ■πώς δι■κη■ ■■ναλν■σκων, that is, so that the one who reads may pursue; according to that sense which is written to Timothy: Pursue justice, and godliness, and faith, and charity, and patience, and meekness (I Tim. VI, 11). And to the Romans: Pursue hospitality (Rom. XII, 13). And to the Corinthians: Pursue charity (I Cor. XIV, 1). But the vision itself that I told you about: write down the vision and make it plain on a tablet, so that the one who reads it may run. It is still for an appointed time, but it speaks of the end and does not lie. Though it may delay, wait for it, for it will surely come and will not be late (Hab. II, 3). And it will come in the consummation of the world, and in the last hour of the day, of which John also speaks: Little children, it is the last hour now (I John II, 18). And he will not come in vain: for he will save many, and with the remnant of the Israelite people he will gather a multitude of nations. But if he shall withdraw for a little while, and the vision which you, reader, are commanded to read in the box and on the tablets which the prophet described, shall begin to come later, wait for it: because it will surely come, and it will not be delayed. But if your faith doubts, and you think that what I promise will not happen, you will have as a great punishment that you displease my soul. But the one who believes in my words and does not doubt what I promise, will receive the reward of eternal life. And you should not immediately accuse, whether in killing yourself or in giving life to another, that there is partiality in me, because he himself is the cause of his own life, who lives by his faith: just as you have displeased my soul by withdrawing and refusing to believe. But clearly in these words there is a prophecy about the coming of Christ. And so the proposed question is solved, that until he comes, iniquity will rule in the world, and judgment will not come to an end: and the true Nebuchadnezzar will capture men in his net and his dragnet like little fish, and the rational creature like a reptile, not having a prince. Moreover, what we have interpreted for the vision, because it is still far off: and if it delays, wait for it, that is, the vision: let no one think, deceived by error, that he could have put the vision, which is of the feminine gender, in the masculine gender, which is less common in Latin. Indeed, the word 'vision' in Hebrew, which is translated as 'Hazon' (), is of the

masculine gender and is declined in the same gender throughout, that is, as 'visus'. However, the Septuagint translators said, 'Write it as 'visionem'; and afterwards, if it fails, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay. If it withdraws, my soul will have no pleasure in it.' They first translated 'vision' in the feminine gender, which, as we have said, is masculine in Hebrew. Then according to the Hebrew gender, where it is declined masculine, sustain it, and it will not please my soul in it, they also declined in the masculine gender. Indeed, they should have translated the vision according to the first interpretation, also putting the feminine gender in the other parts of the vision, saying, wait for her: for she will come, and if she withdraws, it will not please my soul in her, that is, in the vision. This is why, so that we would not appear to be silent about what we knew. Moreover, I am not unaware that according to their interpretation it can be understood in this way: Write down the vision in which Christ is promised, and weave this message in your prophecy, whether in a box, or on tablets, or, as Symmachus translated, on pages, so that at the appointed time and in the end of the world, my Son may come, who will save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and also join other sheep with the ancient sheep, and making one flock, unite the two staffs, which Ezekiel, that is, the power of God, holds joined and closely connected in his prophetic hand (Ezek. 7). But if Christ, the prophet or you, my people (through whose person my prophet seems to have doubted), withdraws a little and seems to be delayed, wait for him, for he will come, and he will not delay; and the rest of what we have already explained. Furthermore, the reason why the Apostle used the testimony of the Septuagint more, writing to the Romans: 'The just shall live by faith' (Rom. 1:17), and not what is contained in the Hebrew, is evident. For he was writing to the Romans, who did not know the Hebrew Scriptures: and he did not care about the words, since the meaning was safe, and the discussion did not have any immediate disadvantage. Otherwise, wherever the meaning is different, and it is written differently in Hebrew and in the Septuagint, he noted it using the testimonies he had learned from Gamaliel, a teacher of the law.

2:5-8

(Verse 5 and following) And just as wine deceives a drinker, so too will the proud man be, and he will not be adorned, who has expanded his soul like Sheol and is like death, and he will not be satisfied. And he will gather all nations to himself, and he will heap all peoples to himself. Will not all these take up a proverb against him and a taunting riddle about him, and say: Woe to him who multiplies what is not his own! How long will he heap up thick clay against himself? Will not those who bite you suddenly rise up and those who harass you wake up, and you will become their prey? Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples will plunder you because of human bloodshed and the violence done to the land, the city, and all its inhabitants. Woe to him who is arrogant though! Man of pride, who accomplishes nothing. He who enlarges his appetite like Sheol, and like Death, he is never satisfied. And he will gather all nations to himself, and he will receive all peoples to himself: will not all these take up a parable against him, and a mockery of his narration, and say: Woe to him who multiplies things that are not his own: how long will he burden himself heavily with his own torment, because suddenly those who bite him will rise up, and your schemers will be watchful, and you will be a prey to them? For you have plundered many nations, all the remaining peoples will plunder you because of the blood of men and the wickedness of the land, city, and all its inhabitants. When these things have been promised concerning the coming of Christ, or, as some please, concerning the end of the vision, and the fulfillment of God's help: whoever believes that it will come, will live by his faith; but whoever is

unbelieving, will displease the Lord's souls; King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon will be deceived by his pride. And just as wine affects the drinker, and after he has risen, neither his foot, nor his mind fulfills its duty; and all joy and exhilaration of the mind turns into ruin: so a proud man will not be adorned, nor will he achieve his own will to the end, and according to Symmachus he will not prosper, that is, there will be a shortage in all things. Who, like death and hell, is not satisfied with the slain: and subduing all nations and peoples under his rule, he did not consider an end to his greed. Will not everyone speak out against him when he is intoxicated with the cup of the Lord and is asleep from the wine-filled chalice, a disgrace? Woe to him who, ravaging the entire world, is not satisfied with plunder and does not cease to strip the already naked, and to this extent he rages in order to devour, and under the burden of wickedness and spoils he weighs himself down like a heavy yoke. At the same time, consider how elegantly he called the dense multiplied riches clay. Will not the Medes and Persians suddenly rise up, destroying the empire of the Babylonians, biting him first and then tearing him apart? And let Nebuchadnezzar become a prey for them, and let the destroyer of the whole world be plundered by the remaining peoples who were able to escape his hand and cruelty. But this will happen to him because of the blood of man, that is, of the Jews, and because of the wickedness of the land, namely, Israel, and the city, undoubtedly meaning Jerusalem and all the inhabitants in it in general. Let us discuss and the Septuagint. Everything we have said about Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar can be related to this world and to the devil, who is truly arrogant and proud, and believes himself to be something, but will lead to nothing. Indeed, his efforts and all his labor will be in vain: he delights in the likeness of hell and death, not satisfied with the killings of countless people, and rejoices in deceiving all nations, and gathering people to himself. Those who see him sent into the Abyss and handed over to Tartarus will recall in harmonious voice the things they read in the prophets allegorically and enigmatically, seeing them fulfilled and interpreting them about him: Woe to the devil, who has multiplied what does not belong to him. Woe to the lost one, who has gathered what she did not bear. How long will this voice be of rebuke or demonstration of judgment? And he will make his torment even heavier with infinite weight. And it is fitting, because it is arrogant and proud (pride is properly shown in the extension of the neck and the raising of the head), that the punishment should be very severe, so that what was erect may be bent. And this will happen because suddenly those who will bite him will rise up, either angels, with whom the devil will be handed over for punishment, or those who had been tempted by him, later repenting and converted to the banners of Christ, they will bite him, according to what is said elsewhere: 'Your peaceful men have set traps for you' (Jeremiah 28). Finally, it follows: And your adversaries will awake, that is, those whom you put to sleep before, those whom you intoxicated, you will be subject to their snares, who lay waste to your kingdom, and those who were captured in Christ's troops. For you have plundered many nations, and you have despoiled the Jewish people of the ornamental and sacred garments that I gave them: therefore all the remaining peoples, who have not subjected their neck to your empire, will plunder you and make you naked. Because you have both killed many people and shed their blood. But also the wickedness of the land, that is, of Judea, and the city of Jerusalem, and all its inhabitants (who said against their Creator: Crucify, crucify him: his blood be upon us and upon our children (John 19:6)), shall return upon your head, and shall be the cause of your plundering. This can also be interpreted as referring to the Antichrist, who will be so arrogant and proud that he will sit in the temple of God, pretending to be God. And, like hell and death, it will kill so many and gather them to itself, so that, if possible, it may even deceive the elect of God. It will also

gather to itself all nations and lead all peoples into its error. But when they see him afterwards, whom Christ will destroy with the breath of his mouth, they will understand that what was predicted about him beforehand is true, and they will say all that follows with the same understanding with which we have explained about the devil. But what he says is, that all the remaining people will strip you because of the blood of men, and the impiety of the land, and the city, and all who dwell in it, let us understand the remaining holy people, who did not serve the Antichrist, from whom the wicked one will be stripped because of the impiety which he exercised over the whole earth, and the devastation of the city of the Church, and the persecution of all who dwelled in it. For such great devastation and such great impiety at the end of things, while the Antichrist rages, will prevail in the Churches, and with the multiplied iniquity of many, love will grow so cold (Mat. XXIV) that the Lord, who knows the secrets of the heart and what is to come, does not ignore, will say: Do you think, when the Son of Man comes, He will find faith on earth? (Luc. XVIII, 8) We can also, according to John the Apostle (who writes: As you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many Antichrists have come (1 John 2:18); by this we know that it is the last hour), condemn all heretics and the entire perverse doctrine of those who arrogantly despise the knowledge and simplicity of the Church, who do not lead to any good end but delight in the deaths of many, arrogantly and proudly speaking and twisting the entire content of scripture to fit their own understanding. They truly multiply for themselves not what is theirs, but rather the heaviest mud and a burdensome millstone by which they will be dragged to punishment, gathering for themselves spoils from many nations and shedding the blood of humans, exercising impiety in the Church and against all its inhabitants. But the remaining people, namely the men of the Church, who have not been deceived by their error, will suddenly rise up and awaken as from a deep sleep, and they will bite them and lay traps for them, and they will have them as prey. Some think that what is said, 'Woe to those who accumulate what is not theirs,' etc., can apply to the rich, who extend the boundaries of their possessions and gather for themselves things that do not belong to man, and from whom they will suddenly be left. But the Lord demonstrates that what is not of man, that is, a rational animal, is earthly possession, saying: If you were not faithful in another's, what is yours, who will give you? And they discussed the entire text of the chapter about this matter. But I do not know if they can maintain the order of prophetic questioning and solving.

2:9

(Verse 9.) Woe to him who gathers evil greed to his house, that his nest may be on high and he may escape from the power of evil. You have devised ruin to your house, you have destroyed many peoples, and your soul has sinned. For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork will answer. LXX: O you who multiply evil greed to your house, that you may set your nest on high and be delivered from the hand of evil. You have devised ruin to your house, you have consumed many peoples, and your soul has sinned; therefore the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork will speak these things. Still, this is the same speech that heaps evils upon itself, and does not understand the multitude of riches as the cause of its own ruin; at the same time, it is argued through metaphor as the pride that places its nest on high like a bird, and thinks it is safe from the hands of evil, that is, never to come into the power of enemies: this plan of pride and arrogant thought had an end in ignominy. You have killed many people, and in killing others, you have raged against your own soul, and in such cruelty you have reveled, that, if it can be said, the stones of the city and the wood of the walls that you have

overthrown cry out your ferocity. He said this to the Lord in the Gospel, against the Pharisees who were criticizing him, asking why he did not rebuke the children who were shouting to him: Hosanna in the highest to the son of David, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest. 'Have you not read,' he said, 'that it is written (Psalm 8:3): Out of the mouth of babes and infants you have brought forth praise? And if these were silent, the stones would shout out' (Matthew 21:9, 16). For although many may understand it thus: if the Jews were silent, the multitude of the Gentiles would confess me; nevertheless this is a more explicit and truer understanding: even if men were silent, and envious tongue did not speak of the multitude of my miracles, nevertheless the very stones, and the foundations of the walls, and the building of the walls itself, would be able to resound my greatness. To make it more significant, let's also take examples from secular literature. Crispus (Sallustius) speaks in his histories: 'The Saguntines, famous for their trustworthiness and hardships, were esteemed above mortals, with greater zeal than wealth, since among them even then the half-ruined walls, uncovered houses, and burnt temple walls displayed Punic hands.' Similarly, Tullius speaks to Caesar in defense of Marcellus: 'By god, the walls!' (As it seems to me) the members of this court strive to thank you, because in a short time that authority will be in the hands of their ancestors and their seats. Moreover, what we have interpreted is: And the wood that is between the joints of the buildings, it will answer: concerning which the Seventy translated: And the scarabaeus made of wood will speak these things, Symmachus translated it more clearly in his own way: and the wooden joint of the building will speak these things. Theodotius also, and the joining together of wood will speak this: and also a fifth edition, and the joining together of wood will speak this: and these interpretations themselves agree with the interpretation of Symmachus and our interpretation; for what is called in the Hebrew language Chaphis (כַּפִּיִּם), signifies wood, which is put in the middle of the structure to hold the walls together; and commonly among the Greeks it is called μυκτωσις. Therefore, according to the story, this is what the prophetic speech signifies: the stones of the walls that were destroyed by you, and their burnt wood will sound your cruelty. I found, except for five editions, that is, Aquila's, Symmachus's, the Septuagint, Theodotion's, and a fifth one, in the twelve prophets and two other editions, in one of which it is written: 'For a stone will cry out from the wall, and a worm speaking in the wood;' and in the other: 'For a stone from the wall will cry out, and a worm will speak from the wood.' But Aquila also put something different than what we said, 'and a lump,' that is, a mass of wood will reply. We will explain the interpretation of these things in the exposition of the translators of the Septuagint, in which instead of 'woe,' 'Ο' is used, and the speech is directed either to the devil or the Antichrist or to the heretics, who multiply their wicked avarice. Wickedness, however, is called avarice, to distinguish it from the good avarice of the doctor of Ecclesiasticus, who is never satisfied with the multitude of his followers, and the more disciples he has, the more he is aroused to the study of doctrine. Therefore, woe to the one who multiplies his worst avarice, so that he gathers perverse assemblies in his house and sets his nest high, so that he may be delivered from the hand of evil. For the devil, the Antichrist, and the heretics promise that those who accept their teaching will possess the heavenly kingdom and avoid the fires of hell. And when they have made these promises, their plan cannot come to fruition, but it will be a plan of confusion and dishonor for their house, after the falsehood of their promises is revealed, and when it is proven that their plan is a plan of confusion, not salvation. This teacher of perversity, as we said, has consumed many peoples, and the more he has had in his company, the more he has sinned against his own soul. Finally, the stones of his church and the beetle, that is, the scarab

beetle from the wood, will cry out against the prideful avarice because he has deceived all nations by his persuasion. The stones, we can understand, represent the foolish hearts of believers who follow the teachings of heretics, and the scarab beetle from the wood represents the corrupt teachers who, for the sake of shameful gain, take up the preaching of the cross and speak from their mouths. For their god is their belly, and they do everything for the sake of food, and they are reduced to dung (for the scarab beetle or the beetle is a worm of dung); and they only take up the cross in order to teach the avarice and pride of their master, the devil, with a viper's mouth. If you ever see some heretic speaking as if he were speaking hidden and secret mysteries against the Church, and prefer the devil's house to Christ's, say: "A stone cries out from the wall, and a beetle speaks from the wood." I read in a certain book that the beetle is understood to be superimposed on heretics because their teachings are like dung. Hence, the Apostle says that he considers the error of the old teaching as dung (Philippians 3). Not that the old Law, as the Manicheans think, should be compared to the Gospel as dung (which is impious to say, since both Testaments belong to the same God), but because the teachings of the Pharisees, the commandments of men, and the second scriptures (δεύτεραι) of the Jews are called dung by the Apostle. I know a brother who understood the stone crying out from the wall to be the Lord and the beetle speaking from the wood to be the thief who blasphemed against the Lord, which, although it can be understood piously, I cannot find how it can be fitted with the entire context of the prophecy. There are some who think that the beetle speaking from the wood can be referred to the person of the Savior, which appears impious from the very order of the discourse. For the beetle will speak from the wood, is not understood in a good, but in a bad sense, that is, it will speak of the worst avarice of the one who multiplies it against his own house and the confusion of the devil, and the other things that preceded his wickedness and crime. As for Aquila's saying, "and a lump of wood will reply," we refer the lump to the sense that the Lord placed in the Gospel: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees" (Matthew 16:11). And when the apostles doubted and could not know what it meant, the evangelist interpreted it, saying: "He had said to them concerning the teaching of the Pharisees." Therefore, rightly the teaching of heretics speaks from the wood, for they cannot persuade otherwise unless they prefer the glory of the wood to their own perversity. Also, that which we said, "For a stone will cry out from the wall, like a worm speaking in the wood," or "a stone from the wall will cry out, and a worm will speak from the wood," some of our people say that the worm speaking in the wood is that one who says in the psalm: "But I am a worm and not a man" (Psalm 22:6), and they refer the speaking bird to the same person who says: "I have become like a solitary sparrow on the roof" (Psalm 102:8), and other things similar to these.

2:12-14

(Verse 12 and following) Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed, and establishes a town with injustice: are these things not from the Lord of hosts? For the peoples shall labor in vain, and the nations shall exhaust themselves: for the earth shall be filled, that they may know the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. LXX: Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed, and establishes a town with wickedness: are these things not from the Almighty Lord? And many peoples have failed in fire, and many nations are crowded: for the earth will be filled to know the glory of the Lord, like water to work the seas. There is no doubt that the prophetic word still speaks against Nebuchadnezzar according to the letter; and he mourns because he built Babylon in blood, and he constructed the walls of that city in the ruins and deaths of many. Since he did this

to the city that he had built in blood, he afterwards listens to what will be brought upon him by the Lord. For it follows: Are not these from the Lord of hosts? that is, what is being said. The peoples will labor in much fire, and the nations in emptiness, that is, Babylon in flames, the peoples will labor in vain, and strive for nothing, and the peoples of the Chaldean nation will be exhausted. For the earth will be filled, so that it may know the glory of the Lord, that is, when Babylon has been overthrown, the power of God's might will be made clear to all, like waters covering the sea: thus the glory of the Lord will fill the whole earth, as waters cover the channel and the depths of the sea. These things, as we have said, literally. Moreover, it is clear that both the devil, and the Antichrist, and the perverse doctrine of heretics build the city in blood, that is, their Church in the destruction of those whom they have deceived, and prepare the city in wickedness, speaking against God iniquity, and exalting their mouth. And when they have done this, it is clearly shown that they build the city in blood and prepare it in wickedness of their own. For it follows: Are not these from the Lord Almighty? That is, such a building is not from the Lord of hosts, whom the LXX translators have now interpreted as Almighty. For many peoples will fail, and although countless nations are led astray by them, they will either grow weary, which more clearly means they have fainted, or they will certainly be confined and unable to be compared to the multitude of the Church. Indeed, when those people have failed in fire (which either means the fire of their devilish leader has been extinguished or certainly the fire of the Lord has been kindled, about which He says, 'I came to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled' (Luke 12:49)), and when they have retraced their previous course and have repented and have abandoned the journey they began, which means that they have fainted, the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord, when their sound goes out to the whole world through the preaching of the apostles, just as the waters cover the sea (Psalm 18), that is, so that all the saltiness and bitterness of the age, which the earth has drunk in as the devil pours it down, will be covered by the waters of the Lord and the place of the sea and the former bitterness will not appear. And in the psalm it is said, Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered (Psalm 32:1). However, it can also be understood (although it does not fit the order of the reading, nor does it relate to the present text of Scripture) as referring to the city of Jerusalem, full of the blood of the prophets, as the Scripture mentions (Matthew 23), that the blood of the saints has overflowed in it from gate to gate. And what is said in the Lord's passion: His blood be on us and on our children (Matthew 27:25). And to which God speaks in Isaiah: When you lift up your hands to me, I will not listen to you: for your hands are full of blood (Isa. 1, 15). This is built in iniquities: in which, according to the same prophet, justice slept. Nor is its foundation from the Lord of hosts. Hence, many peoples have perished in fire, and many nations have been exhausted at the time when Jerusalem was surrounded by the armies of Vespasian and Titus, and on the solemn day of Passover were held captive in the city like a prison: and they were depleted by hunger and scarcity, and the siege of Hadrian brought them to their ultimate ruins. But when the city of bloodshed and the city of iniquities and the people who had come to their aid were destroyed by fire, and the exhausted hands were released, the whole earth was filled with the glory of Christ, and just as with water, so the whole world was covered with his words and teachings.

2:15-17

(Verg. 15 seqq.) Woe to him who gives drink to his friend, sending forth his gall and intoxicating him, so that he may see his nakedness. He is filled with shame instead of glory. Drink also

yourself, and be drunk, for the cup of the Lord's right hand will surround you, and the vomit of shame will be upon your glory. For the wickedness of Lebanon will cover you, and the destruction of animals will frighten them away, from the blood of men and the iniquity of the land, the city, and all the inhabitants therein. Woe to those who give drink to their neighbor, mixing in their own venom, so that they may look into their hidden corners. Drink of the shame of glory, and be moved, for the cup of the Lord's right hand has surrounded you, and shame has gathered upon your glory. For the wickedness of Lebanon will cover you, and the misery of beasts will terrify you, because of the blood of men and the impieties of the land and the city, and of all who dwell in it. For the confused subversion, Symmachus interpreted it as, καὶ οὐκ ἐκρίνω τὴν θυμὸν αὐτοῦ, which means, and releasing without judgment his own fury. Theodotius interpreted it as πᾶς χυσεῖς σου, which means from your outpouring. The fifth edition ἡ προσδοκία τοῦ νάτροπός τῃς ῥῆγός σου, which signifies, from the unexpected overturning of your anger. Aquila, ἡ πῖπτος ὧς χύλου σου, which we can translate as, from the outburst of your rage. In another edition, I found οὐαὶ τῷ ποτίζοντι τὸν ταύρον αὐτοῦ ἡ λην πετομένην, which in our language means: Woe to the one who gives his companion a flying whirlwind. But I read it translated elsewhere: Woe to the one who gives drink to his neighbor's κστασιν χλομένην, that is, troubled madness. This is done in order to understand how much the Hebrew word Maspha () which the LXX translated as subversion, differs in all editions. Therefore, this is still an invective against Nebuchadnezzar, because forgetting his own condition, and as if unaware that he is a man, he offered happiness and bitterness to another man. However, we can understand it either as the king of Judea, or generally all men whom he has intoxicated with evils, so that he may see the nakedness of Sedecias and all the captives. This was interpreted by Symmachus and the fifth edition, that he may see their ignominies. However, these things are said in the metaphor of a drunken man, and of those made shameful by nakedness, because Nebuchadnezzar has intoxicated all with the cup of his fury, and has seen all stripped and captive, and those who were once glorious have been reduced to the utmost servitude: for this is what he says: He is filled with ignominy instead of glory, so that it may be understood that a friend, and close, or a partner of the kingdom, who drinks your cup, O Nebuchadnezzar. Because you have made many people drunk, you too shall drink from the cup of the Lord's wrath and become intoxicated. You will be surrounded by the punishments of the Lord's right hand, and all that you have consumed will be vomited forth in disgrace. You will be brought down from your lofty glory to the depths of misfortune. The iniquity of Lebanon will cover you, and your pride and the destruction of the temple will be your downfall. The plundering of the sanctuary will lay waste to you. And because the mountain of Lebanon was mentioned, under the same metaphor it compares victims, sacrifices, or certainly the multitude of peoples that were killed in Jerusalem, to animals or beasts, saying: And the devastation of animals will oppress you. But all this you will suffer, because you devastated Judah, you overturned the land of promise, and the city of Jerusalem and all its inhabitants. I met a certain Hebrew in Lydda, who was wise among them and was called a secretary, telling such a story: Zedekiah, he said, was blinded by King Nebuchadnezzar in Riblah, which is Antioch, and in various mocking ways, he was led to Babylon (2 Kings 25; Jeremiah 39). And when one day Nebuchadnezzar was celebrating a banquet, he commanded him to give him a drink, which, when drunk, would make the drinker's stomach flow freely: and suddenly, brought in before the mouths of the feasters, he was compelled to expel from his belly, polluted with filth, and this is what the Scripture here says: Woe to him who gives drink to his friend, sending his gall and

making him drunk, so that he may see his nakedness and disgrace for glory: namely, that he who was the most powerful king was brought to such a disgrace by him. And God threatens him that he himself will drink this kind of potion and suffer all that Zedekiah suffered. How ridiculous this is, you know, even without me speaking. For if they say, 'Drink yourself and pass out, and the cup of the Lord's right hand will surround you, and the vomit of shame will be upon your glory,' they do not understand it as referring to the cup, but to the evils that Nebuchadnezzar will drink. Therefore, the cup that was given to Zedekiah should be understood as referring to evils, not, as they want, a cleansing potion. But if they say truly, and if this kind of potion is moderate, as I recounted above: therefore this cup which Nebuchadnezzar is about to drink is to be considered full of purgative, so that the God of Sabaoth and the Almighty Lord may offer purgative for the great revenge of Nebuchadnezzar and may make him defiled with his own dung. This is against the Jewish tradition. But let us come to spiritual understanding. Woe to you, devil, or Antichrist, or perverse doctrine of heretics, who intoxicate ((alternatively: who intoxicate and overthrow and give)) the deceived people with your teachings and turbid potion, and overthrow their previous faith, giving them a potion not from Siloam, not from the Jordan, not from the fountains of Israel, but from the brook Cedron and from the river of Egypt, of which Jeremiah says: 'What to you and the way of Egypt for you to drink waters from Geon' (Jeremiah 2:18)? For which reason it is written in Hebrew 'Sior' (which means turbid and muddy); although the rivers of Egypt are believed to come out of the paradise of the Scriptures, yet because they are trampled on by the feet of Pharaoh, they have lost their splendor, and violated by Egyptian mire, they have turned into torrents, concerning which it is said with rejoicing: 'Our soul has passed through a torrent.' (Ps. 123:5) But if someone objects and brings up the torrent of Corath, from which Elijah drank (1 Kings 17), and another torrent, from which the Lord drank on the way (for it is thus written: 'He will drink from the brook on the way' (Ps. 109:7)), it must be said that whoever is in Egypt and on the way of this world, even if he is Moses and Aaron, even if he is Jeremiah and Elijah, he must necessarily drink from the temptations of Egypt and the wilderness. Therefore, the word of the Lord, who assumed flesh for this reason, to drink from the brook, considering his majesty, said: 'Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me.' (Matt. 26:39) Seeing again that he was in Egypt, and that the waters could not be cleansed unless he himself could, he said: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will. These things, therefore, because the devil intoxicates his neighbors with subversion and turbid drink and perverse teachings, that is, the rational animal, and makes those whom he deceives look to their own caves. For the teachings of the Church are free: they rejoice by day and by light. But those who are intoxicated, are intoxicated by night (1 Thess. 5:7): and those who intoxicate them, do not lead them into the courts of the Lord, which are not darkened by any roof, but into caves. For they made the house of the Father, which had been a house of prayer, into caves of robbers, promising certain initiations and mysteries, and hidden secrets known only to heretics, of which Isaiah speaks: And they shall hide themselves: and shed into caves, and into the clefts of rocks, and into the holes of the earth (Isa. II, 18, 19). Therefore, let us not enter into the caves of heretics, nor hide ourselves there, where the impious Saul used to expel the filth of his teachings (1 Sam. XXIV): but rather let us ascend to the lofty cave of Mount Sinai, where Elijah also saw the Lord (1 Sam. XIX), and Moses saw His back parts (Exod. XXXIII). And Isaiah cries out concerning the Lord: 'He will dwell in the high cave.' (Isai. XXXII, 16) But if anyone does not have a turbid cup and heretical teaching, and he is the master of the Church, and he does all things for the sake of dirty gain, and he sells doves in the temple, that is, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and on the priestly seat he sets free

birds. This person does not indeed make the house of prayer a den of thieves, but he makes the house of the Father a house of business. After this comes: Drink, for the glory, the fullness of shame, O devil, O twisted doctrine, O heretic, who thought yourself to be a golden chalice, by which all nations are intoxicated, in order to see your caves and secrets, to fill with the greatness of glory the fullness of shame, and to consider the works of the potter's hands as a vessel of clay: drink also from the chalice of the Lord, of which it is said in the psalm: 'The chalice in the hand of the Lord is filled with mixed wine,' and He inclined from this into that: nevertheless, its dregs are not emptied out. And to move the prior opinion, and do not think them to be firm and stable, in which you desired to stand first: because the cup of the right hand of the Lord has encompassed you. Moreover, because you have caused a turbulent overthrow to your neighbor, shame will be gathered upon you, and upon your glory, which you believed to have first: and you will suffer this, because the impiety of Lebanon will cover you, according to what is said: And let his prayer become sin (Psalm 109:7). For Mount Lebanon, next to the Greek word ■μ■νυμος, is the name of frankincense; but frankincense is the symbol of spiritual incense, which is the worship of God. Therefore, the perverse speech of heretics, not directed by the simplicity of the Gospel, will be turned into sin for them, and impiety will cover their worship of God. Hence it follows: 'And the misery of beasts shall frighten thee, because of the blood of men, and the impieties of the land, and the city, and all that dwell therein.' And this is the meaning: Those whom you deceived with your frauds and made into your beasts from the flock of Christ, when you see them in misery and endure punishment for their error, then you will be terrified, then you will fall. And do not think that when I mentioned Lebanon and its beasts, I was speaking of brute animals and not of men, I tell you more plainly: You will endure these things, because you have shed the blood of many men whom you have caused to perish for God. And you have exercised wickedness in the land of the living, in the land of the gentle, and your wickedness has also raged in the city of the Lord, that is, in His Church; and you have made many who dwell in it participants in your wickedness. Let this be said under the mask of heretics. But if we want to understand about the Antichrist, or about the devil who will work in the Antichrist, and he will intoxicate many with his cup, with which he desires to overthrow the discipline of Christ, so that they may enter his caves drunkenly: but after the end has come, for the glory with which he magnified himself, he will be filled with ignominy. However, he will be filled, because he will drink the cup of punishments, and he will be moved, not steadfast in his wickedness, but fearful and late in his repentance. For the cup of the Lord's right hand will surround him, who is the Lord and Savior, when he has killed him with the breath of his mouth, and has destroyed him by the brightness of his coming. Then all the disgrace that he gathered for himself with thoughts, actions, and words will come upon his glory: so that as much as he was considered illustrious before, so much afterwards he will be full of disgrace. For he blasphemed against God, and the impiety which he practiced in Lebanon will cover him, and the rage of many people who were ravaged against the Church of God will be imputed to him; nor will he be able to lift up his head, but he will be crushed to the ground in terror. For he has killed many people, and with his impiety he has devastated the whole world, that is, the Church of Christ and its inhabitants. Therefore, it should be understood that this chapter, which we have now presented, namely: Woe to him who gives his neighbor a turbid drink for his downfall; and the previous three in which it was said: Woe to him who multiplies for himself what does not belong to him, and: Woe to him who gathers evil avarice to his house, and: Woe to him who builds a city in blood, can be equally understood according to history, and according to the anagogical interpretation, or against

Nebuchadnezzar, or against the devil and the Antichrist and the heretics.

2:18

(Verse 18.) What profit is there in a carved image, because the maker thereof hath carved it, a molten and a false image? because the maker thereof hath trusted in his own workmanship, to make dumb idols. LXX: What profit is there in a carved image, because they have carved it, and fashioned it by the molten workman, a false image? because the artificer thereof hath trusted in his own workmanship, to make dumb idols. Furthermore, it is said in the preceding (or in the preceding matter), concerning Nebuchadnezzar, that he made a statue of the idol Bel, and set it in the field of Dura: or, as it is written in Hebrew, Dora, about which we read more fully in Daniel (Dan. 3). Therefore, the Scripture marvels at the madness and foolishness of the king, because he commanded a golden statue to be made, and the artist places confidence in the image that he created. And indeed, we can apply this, generally speaking, to all idol worshippers. We cannot consider that which is sculpted and that which is cast to be the same thing. For the sculpting, we can understand it to be in stones and marbles; but the casting is understood in those metals which can be melted and cast, for example, gold, silver, bronze, lead, and tin. Let this saying be, that according to tropology we may understand what is the difference between a sculpture and an idol. We read in Deuteronomy: Cursed be he who makes a sculpture and an idol, the work of the craftsman's hands, and sets it up in secret (Deut. XXVII, 15). I believe that sculptures and idols are perverse doctrines which are worshiped by those who made them. See how Arianus sculpted an idol for himself and worshiped what he had sculpted. Cerne Eunomium conflasse imaginem falsam, et conflationi suae curvare cervicem. Signanterque Scriptura: Et ponet, inquit, illud in abscondito. Habent enim et ipsi orgia sua, et quasi pro perfectis quibusque discipulis tradunt abscondita sacramenta, quae si ad lucem processerint, statim quod ficta sunt, arguuntur. Nihil igitur eis proderit sculptura et conflatio sua. Sculptura, quae refertur ad lapides, in his dogmatibus intelligitur, quae stultitiam prima fronte demonstrant. Conflatio is where there appears to be a semblance of secular wisdom, and as if with gold, the image is formed of the disciplines of philosophers and the splendor of eloquence. Therefore, the fabrication will be of no benefit to its maker. And the mute and deaf image will not be able to hear its worshipper. If ever you see someone refusing to believe the truth, and despite the falsity of their own doctrines being exposed, persevering in their chosen pursuit, you can rightly say: They hope in their fabrication and create mute or deaf images. For κωφ signifies both among the Greeks: although Symmachus, interpreting as ■λαλα, seems to have understood muta rather than surda. Nor does that expression of the Scriptures move anyone, of which we have often said: Who, do you think, is the faithful and wise steward (Luke XII, 42)? And in another place: Who is wise and understands these things (Psalm CVI, 43)? because who, or what, is taken for rarely: since we can also understand this very thing from another place as impossible: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ: tribulation, or distress (Romans VIII, 35)? And the rest. And in the present chapter: What does it profit the sculptor, because his own sculpted image? For in both cases, impossibility is demonstrated, that neither can tribulation and distress separate the love of the Apostles from Christ, nor is there any usefulness in idols.

2:19-20 (Verse 19, 20). Woe to him who says to wood, 'Wake up!' or to silent stone (or lying stone), 'Arise!' Can it give instruction? Look, it is covered with gold and silver, but there is no breath in its midst. The Lord, however, is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.

LXX: Woe to him who says to wood, 'Wake up!' and to the stone, 'Rise!' and it is the image, the production of gold and silver, but there is no spirit in it. But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him. This can also be applied to Nebuchadnezzar and all those who worship idols. And it describes the human error, that they consider silver, gold, gems, and silk, with which idols are adorned or covered, to be gods because of the brilliance of the material, even though an artist can give form, but cannot give life to the limbs. And on the contrary, the Lord is said to be in his holy temple (Psalm X): not in a temple made by hand, but either in heaven or in each of the saints, according to the apostle who says: Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you (I Corinthians III, 16)? And elsewhere: Your bodies are the temple of God (I Corinthians VI, 19); or in the Son, as He Himself says: The Father who dwells in me, He does the works (John XIV, 10). But certainly according to that, which created the heavens and the earth, the seas and the entire world (Virg. VI Aeneid.) The spirit nourishes within; infused throughout the limbs, the mind moves the mass, and mingles itself with the great body: the whole world, which consists of the sky, the earth, and the circles of the heavens, is said to be the house of God. Hence the Apostle confidently says: 'For in Him we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17:28). And if anyone opposes this, let him learn the custom of Holy Scripture, which never refers to a perverse spirit absolutely, but always qualifies it with some addition, as in the case of being led astray by the spirit of fornication (Hosea 4:12). And in the Gospel: But when an unclean spirit goes out of a man (Luke XI, 24), and similar things to these. However, the spirit wherever it is mentioned alone and absolutely without any addition, is always referred to the good part, that is, to the Holy Spirit, as the Apostle says: He who sows in the Spirit, will reap life eternal from the Spirit (Galatians VI, 8). And elsewhere: But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace (Galatians V, 22); and in another place: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh (ibid., 16). Nor do we say this because the Holy Spirit is not also referred to with an attribute. For he is called both the Holy Spirit and the principal spirit and the upright spirit and the spirit of God, and similar expressions. But what we do say is that the Holy Spirit is often referred to both with an attribute and alone, while the perverted spirit is never mentioned without an attribute. And it can even be said (if someone wants to interpret the perverted spirit contentiously in this passage), that it is something else; 'Every spirit is not in him' means something different from 'Every spirit is not around him', for it can sit by idols; but it cannot be within. And Aquila translates more accurately from Hebrew, saying: 'And his spirit is not in his entrails, or in his midst.' Therefore, it must be understood that in some Hebrew texts, the word 'omnis' (all) is not added, but the word 'spirit' is read in an absolute sense. And if someone, being overcome by reason, understands the word 'spirit' in a positive way, and asks why, when it is said about the Holy Spirit, it is read with the addition: 'And all spirit is not in Him?' Let it be known that every spirit, various graces are understood to be of the Holy Spirit: so that there may be understanding: Nothing in itself of grace, it will have nothing of power. Indeed, this is understood more according to tropology, that in all the idols of heretics and the inventions of the devil, there is no grace of the Holy Spirit; but they seem to prefer the image of divinity and the beauty of teachings, while in them there is nothing breathing and alive. Let us also say this, lest we appear to conceal from the reader what we know, that the spirit and the wind are called by the same word among the Hebrews, that is, Rua (), and it is usually understood either as the sense of a place or as the wind. Therefore in this place we can understand 'spirit' as referring to wind, because idols do not breathe; or as referring to soul, because the inanimate sculptures. But that 'spirit' is understood as soul is clearly indicated by the

prayer of the Savior: 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit' (Luke 23:46). For Jesus could not entrust to the Father a perverse spirit (which is also wrong to even consider), or the Holy Spirit, who is God himself, but rather his own soul, of which he had said, 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death' (Matthew 26:36, Mark 14). And: No one can take my life from me, but I lay it down voluntarily, and I take it up again of my own accord. (John 10:17, 18).

Book Two

Book Two

Another, my dear Cromatius, venerable Pope, we write in the book of Habakkuk, dedicating his own little song, and engaging with all our might in epic discourse and the psalmody, that is, composed in a lyrical manner. Let criticism sizzle, and let Sardanapalus insult, more shameful in vices than in name (according to Cicero): let us criticize the work we have begun; and through your prayers, who have overcome the flesh with virtue, let us discuss the most manifest prophecy about Christ in the eighth prophet, that is, in the number of the Lord's resurrection. The Prayer of Habakkuk the prophet for ignorances. LXX: The Prayer of Habakkuk the prophet with a hymn. Aquila and Symmachus and the fifth edition, like us, translated it for ignorances: only Theodotion for voluntary sins; that is, for those who sin willingly. This is why, except for the Seventy, no one translated the prayer with the hymn. For it also has in Hebrew 'Al Segionoth' which means 'for ignorances,' and we have translated it as 'for ignorances.' But there is understanding, because he rashly said above: How long, O Lord, shall I cry out, and you will not hear? I will shout to you of violence, and you will not save? And then in the second complaint: Why do you not look upon those who do wickedness, and remain silent, while the wicked devours the more righteous? In addition, he had heard: Write the vision, and explain it upon tablets. And after these things: Behold, the one who is unbelieving, his soul shall not be upright within himself; but the just shall live by his faith. And he had learned that either Nebuchadnezzar or the devil or the Antichrist will be placed at the judgment of sinners, and will be strong in reproaching the nations: now he repents and laments that he has spoken rashly: and he seeks forgiveness, so that he may obtain mercy, because he acted in ignorance. Hence David also says: Do not remember the sins of my youth and my ignorance (Psalm 25:7). There are those who think that the prayer is of the prophet, so that the error of men may be removed at the coming of Christ: hence the name of prophet is written in the title, because he prays with a prophetic spirit that darkness may be removed and light may be restored; that the image may be taken away and the truth may be given. But the whole text of the Canticles and especially this: You will be recognized in the midst of two animals. And: When the years draw near, you will be known. And concerning judgment: When my soul is troubled in anger, you will remember mercy. And again concerning the coming of Christ: God will come from Theman, and the holy one from the shady and dense mountain. Also in the future: The dwellings of the land of Midian will tremble, and you will ride on your horses, and you will stretch out your bow over the kingdoms. But if someone were to ask why he alone, Theodotius, has translated pro spontaneis as 'of his own accord,' we may say either that he sinned willingly, contrary to the judgment of God, or that the future faith of the Gentiles is being indicated in that they will abandon their former error voluntarily and believe in him who is promised in the Canticle. We read in the sixteenth psalm: A prayer of David. And in another place likewise: the Prayer of David. And in the eighty-ninth: the Prayer of Moses, the man of God. And in the hundred and first: the Prayer of the poor man when he is anxious, and pours forth his prayer before the Lord. And

wherever else the name of prayer is mentioned, nevertheless it is not read as a Canticum in any place. And I do not know whether it is fitting to pray with a Canticum, unless perhaps we say that according to the Seventy, the prophet prays for the coming of Christ, and in this very act of prayer, he prophetically declares with delight and psalms and Canticum, that both in the prayer, he may entreat the Father, and in the Canticum, may offer praise to the Father who sent the Son, and to the Son who came. This is about the title of the Song. Let us now see what is said in the Song.

3:1 (Chapter 3, Verse 1) Lord, I have heard your message, and I am afraid: Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years. LXX: Lord, I have heard your message, and I am afraid: Lord, I have considered your works, and I am amazed in the midst of two animals you are known. For that which we have translated as 'revive your work,' Symmachus has interpreted as 'revivify your work.' But what the Seventy have said, 'I have considered and I am amazed,' is not found in Hebrew, nor in any other Interpreter, so by removing those things which are not found in Hebrew, it can be read according to the Seventy: Lord, you are known for your works in the midst of two animals: because this seemed incomprehensible, the preceding words are connected. But we read in Hebrew Adonai, that is, Lord, Phalach, your work, Bacereb, in the midst, Sanim, of years, Heieu, make it alive. This is done so that we may clearly recognize the additions that have been made in the Septuagint. The Hebrews explain this passage according to the story: Lord, I have heard your message and I am afraid. I have heard, it says, the punishments that you have prepared for Nebuchadnezzar and the devil, in which you said to him: Woe to him who multiplies not his own (Above, II, 6). And secondly: Woe to him who gathers evil greed to his house (Verse 9). And thirdly: Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed, and establishes a town with iniquity (Verse 12). And fourthly: Woe to him who gives his friend drink, pouring out his gall and making him drunk. And fifthly: Woe to him who says to wood, Awake; to silent stone, Arise. And as I am filled with fear, that the great dragon must be wounded by so many blows, so I pray, Lord, that you fulfill what you have promised, and at the end of time, give us your Christ. For you have said, that it will still be seen from afar and will appear at the end, and it will not lie. Therefore, bring to life what you have promised, that is, fulfill your promise; let your word not die in vain, but let it be accomplished by action. Indeed, this can be understood in regard to the resurrection of the Savior: that he who died for us may rise from the dead and be given life. However, according to the Septuagint, the meaning is quite different, and we must also consider the explanation in the Vulgate edition. Lord, I have heard in the Scriptures your word, and with you giving me an ear, according to what Isaiah says: He has given me an ear to hear (Isaiah 50:5); I have heard in such a way that you desire to be heard. And contemplating your works more diligently (so that it would not be said to me: But the works of the Lord do not regard, and the works of his hands do not consider), from the creatures I understood the Creator, and through each thing that you have made, and what you daily accomplish in the whole world, I was completely astonished, and with the sense of humanity lost, I was converted into holy madness. Certainly, disturbed by wonder, I burst forth in praise, trembling, saying: In the midst of the two animals, you are recognized. Which many think refers to the Son and the Holy Spirit, because the Father is understood through the Son and the Spirit. This is also interpreted as the two Seraphim in Isaiah (Chapter VI), and the two Cherubim written about in Exodus (Chapter XXV), which face each other and have and veil each other, and have the oracle in their midst; and in Isaiah (Chapter VI), veiling the head and feet of the Lord, they desire only in the present age, and one cries out to the other the mystery of the Trinity: and let one of the Seraphim be sent, which is interpreted as burning, and let him come to earth and cleanse the lips

of the prophet, and say: I have come to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already burning (Luke XII, 49). Some people think this, and they use many testimonies from the Scriptures to support this interpretation. On the other hand, a simple interpretation and the opinion of the common people understand that the Savior was recognized and believed to be crucified between two thieves (Mark 15 and John 19). However, those who say better argue that in the early Church, which was made up of both Jews and Gentiles, the Savior was understood and believed by both groups. There are two kinds of animals, two Testaments that are understood, the new and the old, which truly are living and vital, which breathe, and in whose midst the Lord is known. In the middle of the years you will make it known. 70: When the years approach, you will be recognized. When the time comes, he says, and you have fulfilled the promised work, you will show that what you have promised is true. Whether when the consummation approaches, and at the last hour your son comes to destroy sins, you will be recognized more clearly. It follows: When the time comes, you will be revealed, when my soul is troubled. This, except for the Seventy, is found neither in Hebrew nor among any other interpreters. And the meaning is this: When the time comes, of which it is said: In an acceptable time I have heard you, the time of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 6:2): then, O God the Father, your name will be known, which was hidden from men before, of which the Lord says in the Gospel: Father, I have revealed your name to men (John 17:6). But as it is added: When my soul is troubled, it is connected with the edition of the Seventy Interpreters with the later ones, so that it can be read: When my soul is troubled in anger, and up to this point is the distinction: afterwards let it be added, you will remember your mercies; namely, that the disturbance alone suffices for punishment, and the soul of the prophet, troubled with anger towards God, does not incur punishment, but mercy excludes anger. But the wrath of God also has its measures: how much and for how long, and for what reasons, and in what ways it is poured out, according to what is written: You will feed us with the bread of tears, and you will make us drink tears in measure (Psalm 79:6). And if the prophet is troubled by the wrath of God, and the one who is troubled obtains mercy, what should we hope, or rather fear, whose every work is worthy of God's wrath? But what follows according to the Hebrew. When you have been angry, you will remember mercy. We must not think that God forgets us and after his anger remembers his mercy; but rather, because we think that he forgets us when we are placed in punishment, according to what is said: How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget me unto the end? (Ps. XII, 1). For even when we are overwhelmed by temptations, as if by raging waves, and a violent storm of demons rages against us, we speak as if to a sleeping person: Arise, why do you sleep, O Lord? At the same time, consider the mercy of God: he did not say, when you inflict punishment, you will remember mercy; but when you are angry. However, one who is angry sometimes does not strike, but only threatens. The apostle, sensing this, says: For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Rom. I, 18). But where it is revealed, it is not inflicted, it does not strike; but it is revealed to frighten, and to those who are frightened, it is not inflicted.

3:3

(Verse 3) God will come from the South, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. LXX: God will come from Teman, and the Holy One from the dark and thickly wooded mountain. Diapsalma. Aquila and Symmachus, and the fifth edition, set forth the Hebrew itself in Teman (): only Theodotion interpreted what Teman meant, saying, 'God will come from the South, and the holy

one from Mount Paran, to the end.' From this we understand that the reading of the Seventy is from the dark and thickly wooded mountain. But even this, which the Seventy translated as 'psalm', and we have retained, forever; Symmachus interpreted as 'eternity'; Theodotion, 'to the end'; the fifth edition has the Hebrew 'Sela'. Therefore, God will come from the South, that is, from the South, from the clear light, and from those who are called the sons of days. Hence, in the Song of Songs, the bridegroom drives away the north wind and calls the south wind, saying: Arise, o North wind, and come, o South wind, blow through my garden, and let my spices flow (Song of Songs IV, 16). God is always in the midday: Where, he says, do you graze? Where do you lie down? in the midday (Ibid., I, 6). And to Abraham when he was under the oak, God did not come except in the midday (Gen. XVIII and XLIII). And Joseph, who foreshadowed the Savior, makes a meal for his brothers at midday. Therefore, the recognition of God the Father comes to those who are worthy in full light. And the recognition of the Holy One, that is, the Son of God, comes from the shady and thick mountain. The shady and dense mountain, or rather the Father himself, is understood to be full of virtues and all wisdom, protecting all things with his majesty, and spreading his wings, and cherishing his children; or certainly a paradise and heaven full of angels, full of virtues, full of abundant trees. And I wish that it may also happen to me, that God may come to my voice and my exposition in clear light, and his Son, of whom it is written: 'Be holy, for I am holy' (Lev. 20:26), from the lofty and dense eloquence, and the intertwining testimonies of the Scriptures from here and there, and as the Father and the Son come together, may their listener be made their dwelling, and may the Scripture be fulfilled, saying: 'I and my Father will come to him, and we will make our dwelling with him' (John 14:23). But because it is written in Hebrew as the shady and dense mountain, it is interpreted as the mountain Pharan, and Pharan means the mouth of the seer: fittingly, according to our interpretation, the knowledge of the Son comes in the eloquent speech of a learned man, and not just any speech, but one that is full of light, full of eyes, so that it may be clearly and purely conveyed to the ears of the listeners. And by what he says about the mountain, understand sublime teachings. I have heard this Hebrew passage explain that Bethlehem is located to the South, where the Lord and Savior was born, and it is he about whom it is now said: The Lord will come from the South, that is, he will be born in Bethlehem and rise from there. And because he who was born in Bethlehem once gave the Law on Mount Sinai, he is the Holy One who came from Mount Paran: for Paran is adjacent to the mountain of Sinai. And what is inferred, diapsalma, that is, always, has meaning: he who was born in Bethlehem, and who in Sinai, that is, in Mount Paran, gave the Law, is always the author and giver of all past, present, and future benefits. In the Psalter, there is a more detailed discussion about the diapsalmate, which is called Sela in Hebrew. Also, according to the Septuagint, the diapsalmate is only found in the Psalter and in the present place. From this, we rightly understand that the song of prayer was marked by the Septuagint.

3:4

(Verse 4.) He covered the heavens with his glory, and the earth is full of his praise. His splendor is like light: horns are in his hands. There his strength is hidden. LXX: His power covered the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise, and his splendor shall be like light: horns are in his hands, and he set strong love of his strength. Because the Seventy have interpreted, and he set strong love of his strength: and we have said, there his strength is hidden: Aquila translated, and he set a hiding of his strength: Symmachus, and he set his hidden strength; only Theodotion

agrees with our translation, he says: and there is a hiding of his strength. For the word 'ibi' in this sentence, it is understood and placed there for the sake of the quality of the place. More accurately, it should be read as 'ibi' in the present location, rather than 'posuit,' in order to make sense and maintain the order of the sentence. 'Cornua in manibus ejus' should be understood as 'ibi,' meaning that his strength is hidden in the horns. It is clear, according to the Hebrew, that all things are filled with glory in the coming of Christ, as it is said in the Gospel: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men' (Luke 2:14). And elsewhere: He made peace in heaven and on earth through the blood of the cross, and he sits at the right hand of greatness: for his word runs swiftly. And elsewhere: O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is your name in all the earth (Ps. CXLVII, 1)! And again in the eighteenth Psalm: Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world (Ps. XVIII, 5). And his splendor, like the sun of righteousness, shone with clear light; and in his hands are horns, the banners and trophies of the cross, and in these horns is hidden his strength: For though he was in the form of God, he did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped; but he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant: he became obedient to the Father unto death, even death on a cross (Phil. II, 6 seqq). Therefore, for a little while, His strength was hidden on the cross, when He said to the Father: My soul is sorrowful even unto death (Matt. XXVI, 38, 39): And: Father, if it is possible, let this chalice pass from me (Luke XXIII, 13). And on the cross itself: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. Furthermore, according to the Septuagint, in that which is said: His power covered the heavens, we should understand that what is covered is less than the one covering: if, however, the whole is covered and not just a part, then what is covered. Therefore, when the power of God covers the heavens, His power is greater than the heavens themselves, which are covered by it. The heavens, moreover, are those who bear the image of the heavenly, and who proclaim the glory of God, as we often read. The apostle also proves the power of God the Lord Savior: Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:30). This power is like the mother of all special (or spiritual) virtues, for example, it is called virtue, wisdom, fortitude, justice, temperance, truth, holiness, redemption. But Christ has become for us from God wisdom, justice, sanctification, and redemption. Therefore, these special virtues, in which Christ is manifested (according to the progress of those who receive him either in wisdom, or in fortitude, or in justice, and other such attributes), are contained in the general virtue of God, that is, in the Lord Savior: and in this way we understand the earth, that those who were first called earth because of the image of the earthly, and it was said to them: You are earth, and to earth you shall return (Gen. 3:19), may be filled with the praise of the Lord in the coming of the Savior. But when the heavens, by the power of God, will have been covered (indeed protected and clothed on every side), and the whole earth will be filled with the praise of God, then His splendor will be like light. However, the apostle does not remain silent about the image of God and the splendor of His glory, which is the God Savior: After the splendor of the glory of God appeared to us, He returned to His original majesty (Hebrews 1). For although we knew Christ according to the flesh, now we no longer know Him according to the flesh, but rather according to the Spirit; because, In Him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:3, 4). And what is shown even more clearly in the Gospel of the Savior, he says: Father, glorify me with the glory that I had with you before the world was made (John 17:5); so that after his ascension to heaven, there may be a radiance that is light, that is, the Son begins to be what the Father is. And what follows, 'Horns in his hands,' is a customary expression in the Scriptures, that horns are always set for kingdoms. For even what Anna speaks

in the first book of Kings, 'He has exalted the horn of his Christ' (1 Samuel 2:10), signifies the magnificence of the Savior's kingdom. And in Daniel, ten horns symbolize ten kingdoms (Dan. VII). However, it is now said: Horns in his hands, as we also read elsewhere: The heart of the king is in the hand of God (Prov. XXI, 1): because it is the mind and the principal of the holy heart (which goes towards the kingdoms of heaven, but still located on earth, reigns over the body without sins) does not wander externally; but is situated under the protection of God. However, since in Hebrew and in other editions it does not have written: Horns in his hands, but in his hand, which is called Jado (), let us understand the strong and robust hand of God as His Son. And let us say that in this hand are all the kingdoms of heaven and those who strive to ascend to heaven: which Isaiah also signifies, saying: A vineyard is made for the beloved in a fertile place, for it is in the kingdom. For this reason, I think no horned animal is considered unclean in Leviticus, and it also signifies the unicorn in the Psalms (Psalm 49 and 91), or ■ινοκερ■τα; and that: In you we will scatter our enemies with a horn (Psalm 44, 7). But as we read in the Septuagint: and he placed the love of his strong power, this also must be understood of Christ, that God the Father therefore covered the heavens with his power, and filled the earth with praise, and made his splendor to be as light, and placed his kingdom in the hand of his Son, that he might make his beloved to be loved by men, and to be loved not lightly, but vehemently and strongly, so that those who loved him strongly, and remained in his love, no one would take them out of his hand. On the contrary, the devil makes us love the world, and, out of a love for virtue, to love vices, and not lightly, but strongly, so that it can be said of us: And the devil placed strong love in his vices.

3:5

(Verse 5.) Before his face, death will go, and the devil will go forth before his feet. LXX: Before his face, the word will go, and it will go forth into the field behind his feet. For because we have translated death, in Hebrew three letters are placed, Daleth, Beth, Res, without any vowel, which if they are read as Dabar (), they signify word; if Deber, pestilence, which in Greek is called λοιμ■ς. Finally, Aquila has interpreted it as Before his face, pestilence will go; Symmachus, Before his face, death will go ahead; the fifth edition, Before his face, death will walk; only the LXX and Theodotion have interpreted the word as death. And in the following verse, where we said, 'The devil will go out before his feet,' and the Seventy translated differently, according to whom we will discuss later: Aquila translated it as 'bird' instead of 'devil'; Symmachus and Theodotio, and the fifth edition, as 'bird,' which is called Reseph in Hebrew (). However, the Hebrews convey that, just as the prince of demons is called Beelzebub in the Gospel (Matthew 12): so Reseph is the name of a demon who holds authority among others, and because of his excessive speed and running in different directions, he is called a bird; and that he is the one who spoke to the woman in paradise in the form of a serpent, and received the name from the curse with which he was condemned by God: for Reseph, crawling on the belly, is interpreted. This is therefore what is said: immediately when the Lord came and was baptized in the Jordan, and the voice of the Father thundered at the descent of the dove: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matt. III, 17), as the devil goes out from the waters, death will meet him and the ancient serpent will stand before him, who tempted him for forty days in the wilderness. But if we read according to the Septuagint, the word will go before him and come out into the fields behind his feet, this signifies that the word of God, before his visitation, which is now called his face allegorically, should precede and prepare the hearts of the believers: so that crooked things may be made straight, and uneven things may be

made level, and the soul of the listener may be like a cultivated field, able to receive the spiritual seed.

3:6

(Verse 6.) He stood and measured the earth: he beheld, and scattered the nations, and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting. For there are also other mountains and hills, which the bridegroom leaps upon and transgresses in the Song of Songs (Chapter 2), about which it is also said in the second psalm of degrees: I lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence shall my help come (Psalm 120, 1). But the mountains of the world themselves are also the dark mountains; concerning them Jeremiah commanded that our feet should not stumble upon them (Jeremiah 31). These are the hills in which Saul reigned when he killed the priests of God (I Samuel 22): for indeed Gabaa is interpreted as a hill. And the hills of the world were elegantly curved, he said. Before the coming of the Savior, they walked with their heads held high, and no one could humble their pride. But they were crushed and bent by the paths of His eternity, that is, God's, because His eternity deemed it worthy to come to us, either because He always came to the saints from the beginning of the world until His incarnation and became the Word of God in the hands of each of them, and He triumphed over all and bent His eternal journey, breaking the hills and mountains. These things should be said through metaphor, according to the Hebrew. Furthermore, according to the Septuagint, after the word of God has preceded, and has gone out into the open, God the Father comes there, where a royal preparation is made for his word, and he comes after the footsteps of his word, and he stands; never going before, but always waiting, so that he may prepare a way for himself. But when he stands by the footsteps of his word, immediately the earth, namely the works of flesh and bodies, unable to withstand the presence of God, are moved. And when they have been stirred up, the power of speech and the presence of God look upon all the nations of souls, whose thoughts and manifold opinions we are able to understand, which there are dissolved and wasted away. If anything has also exalted itself against the knowledge of God on earth, and has taken hold of the mind of the listener, it will be broken and crushed by this preceding speech and the coming of God. But when the mountains have been broken and crushed at the sight of God, the hills will be consumed by liquification and reduced to nothingness. For the mountains of God are not, but the mountains of the world. For the eternal journey of God, looking back at those things which His word precedes, will consume and destroy them more strongly than the hills of the world. Moreover, the mountains can also be understood as demons, who dwell in heretics and rise up against the knowledge of God. The hills are also other fortresses of demons, which make people admire the beauty of bodies, dignities, riches, nobility of birth, and other goods of the world. It is allowed to see after the advent of the word of God, and the presence of God the Father, how human souls are moved, and everything that is earthly is dissolved, and former thoughts are reduced to nothing. Then demons are destroyed, then the heights of the world are brought to nothing, and all knowledge of heretics, which was once swollen, is humbled, crushed, and consumed by the advent of the word of God. And what previously seemed beautiful and great is cast aside and considered small. And this happens because of the coming of God and the hospitality of Christ, as it is written elsewhere: I will dwell in them, and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Lev. XXVI, 12).

3:7

(Verse 7.) I have seen the tents of Ethiopia because of iniquity, the skins of the land of Midian will be troubled. LXX: I have seen the dwellings of the Ethiopians because of their labors; they will be afraid, and the dwellings of the land of Midian. The dark Ethiopians (or rather the darkest) and lovers of darkness, not belonging to any light, who feed on the flesh of the dragon (of whom it is written: You have given him as food to the peoples, to the Ethiopians, Ps. 73:14), are understood to be demons, whose dwelling place is made by anyone in this world who labors for honors and riches: which is significantly shown by one word of iniquity, for indeed every rich person or unjust person, or heir of the unjust, is such. See how men cross the seas: they stand guard at the doors before the powerful: they endure all that the condition of slaves barely allows, in order to gather riches, in order to obtain some dignity. And once they have achieved this, they surrender themselves to luxury and pleasures and all kinds of wickedness, so that what greed has gathered, extravagance may consume. Therefore, these people, for their efforts, become the dwelling place of demons, and those who should be the temple of God become the dwelling place of Ethiopians. But also this which follows: The skins of the land of Midian will be troubled, or they will fear and the tabernacles of the land of Midian, understand the same tabernacles of the Ethiopians, and the tabernacles of the land of Midian. For after they have become enriched, and have risen to the highest degree through right and wrong, then the conscience of their sins will always fear death, always judgment, and they will sigh for eternal punishments like thieves in prison sigh for a slight fever. But the word 'Madian' in our language signifies 'judgment', that is, condemnation, and it is shown that they always live in fear of eternal judgment and punishment, and endure daily torment, knowing that they deserve the torments.

3:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) Are you angry, Lord, with the rivers? Or is your anger against the rivers, or your wrath against the sea? For you have ascended upon your horses, and your chariots are salvation. You will surely bring forth your bow, fulfilling the oaths you have spoken to the tribes. Selah. (Septuagint: Are you angry, Lord, with the rivers? Or is your wrath against the rivers, or your fury against the sea? You who ride upon your horses, and your horse is salvation: stretching out, extending your bow over the scepters, says the Lord.) Diapsalma. Where the Septuagint has diapsalma, and Aquila always, the others have translated similarly. And because the discourse hastens to a tropological interpretation, briefly encompassing the literal sense of the chapter, I will continue to the rest. Just as you dried up the Jordan and the Red Sea, fighting for us; for you are not angry with rivers and seas, nor could anything insensible of offense provoke you: so now, ascending your chariots and taking up your bow, you will give salvation to your people, and you will fulfill the oaths that you swore to our fathers and tribes forever. But when he says, 'Are you angry, O Lord, with the rivers, or is your wrath against the rivers, or is your fury against the sea?' he speaks ambiguously, and more in the manner of someone asking a question than someone affirming. For there are both good rivers and bad rivers. The sea is very bad, and yet it is also very good. An example of good rivers is this: 'The streams of the river make glad the city of God' (Psalm 46:4). And whoever drinks of the water of the Lord will have rivers of living water flowing from his belly into eternal life.' (John 4). That which Pharaoh speaks in Ezekiel, 'The rivers are mine, and I have made them' (Ezek. XXIX, 9), refers to the rivers in which the dragon dwells, and many similar things. The fact that the sea is interpreted in a positive way is attested by the twenty-third psalm, in which it is tropologically said about the Church under the term

'ο■κουμ■νη■', that is, the world: 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods', that is, upon the world. But what is founded by the Lord upon rivers, and prepared upon the sea, is surely taken in a good sense. Likewise, what is said about the vineyard that was transferred from Egypt: You have extended its branches up to the sea, and its tendrils up to the rivers (Psalm 79:12), I think can also be taken in a good sense. And we say that the divine words which are more manifest, and offer themselves as a drink to those who are thirsty, are called rivers: but those which are full of sacraments, and placed in the profound depths (about which the Apostle says: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33)). And the Prophet agrees: Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord (Psalm 129), the sea is called in the Scriptures. This can be understood in a better sense. But that it can also be understood in the opposite sense, there are many testimonies, of which this is one in the Psalms: This great and wide sea: therein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. This sea, which thou hast made to play therein (Psalm 104:25-26). And from the Gospel, when the Savior rebuked the winds and the sea and said to them, 'Be silent and be still' (Mark 4:39). For whatever is rebuked is evil, according to the saying of Zachariah: 'The Lord rebuke you, Satan' (Zechariah 3:2). And to Timothy: 'Reprove, rebuke, and exhort' (2 Timothy 4:2). Therefore, the prophet asks: 'Are you angry, O Lord, with the rivers, or is your fury in the rivers, or is your wrath in the sea?' Let us say whether the rivers of Egypt are red and bloody; the Lord is angry and strikes them, rushing with full force into their depths, rising up against the knowledge of God. When the sea saw it, it fled (Ps. CXIII), unable to bear the presence of God. And the Jordan turned back, yielding to the glory of the people passing by, divided by both Elijah and Elisha. To speak more clearly, understand the eloquence of heretics that flows against truth and the Church as rivers against which the Lord is angry. But the souls of those who are carried about by every wind of doctrine, and always fluctuate with malice, and are overwhelmed by salty waves, let the sea on which the impulse of the Lord is made recognize and feel His coming, and let it understand by what boundaries and obstacles it is enclosed, and let it hear: Your waves will be broken within you. And if the rivers and the sea are good, Jesus washes in them, and He places His Church on such a sea. After this follows: He who rides on your horses, and your chariot is salvation. I seek the horses on which the Lord ascends, and I believe there are no others except the souls of the saints, on which the divine Word ascends, in order to save them and others through them. Let us consider examples of horses. The bridegroom speaks in the Song of Songs: My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! He is standing behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice. (Song of Songs 2:9). Not that Christ compares the Church, or the Word of God compares the soul, which He calls His bride, to Pharaoh's chariots; but that every soul, although holy and perfect, compared to God, is like Pharaoh's chariot and beast of burden. And Moses speaks to the Lord: But I am irrational, that is, irrational (Exod. IV, 10). And David: I have become like a beast before you (Psal. LXXII, 23). Not that he was absolutely a beast; but that he is a beast before God. These horses are contrary to those that Pharaoh has, and it is said of them: He has thrown horse and rider into the sea (Exod. XV, 2): this kind of riding is not salvation, but destruction. Let us also seek other horses, on which the Lord ascends: In the book of Fourth Kingdoms, we read that the servant of Elisha rose early in the morning, and saw an army encircling the walls of the city, and horses and chariots (IV Reg. VI). And after the prophet's eyes were opened to prayers, he looked and behold, a mountain full of horses and fiery chariots around Elisha. Pay close attention to how the horses

and chariots appear, and yet in so many thousands of horses and chariots, there is no rider: the driver of these horses was Elijah and he was the guide about whom the Psalmist sings: You who sit upon the Cherubim, manifest yourself (Psalm LXXIX, 2). With such horses and such a chariot, Elijah was taken up to heaven (2 Kings II). But if anyone wants to learn about the red horses, and the black, and the spotted, and the white horses going out from the myrtle trees, and from the hills placed in the depths, or, as it is written in the Septuagint, of bronze, in the same prophet, if the Lord of life gives us time, we will attempt to explain (Zech. 1). And John saw white horses, and their riders (Rev. 6): from which I think the bodies of those who rise in glory are white horses; and the riders are the souls of the saints. But if someone is truly a sinner and is like me, he will sit upon a black horse, and it will be said of him: All those who rode horses have fallen asleep (Psalm 75:7). Concerning such horses, it is written: The deceitful horse is for salvation (Psalm 32:14), for the flesh desires against the spirit, and its wisdom is hostile to God. Let this be said of those who love the body and sit upon black horses. But let us prepare our souls on horses and chariots of the Lord, who ascends in Paul, ascends in Peter, and riding upon such chariots, has traveled throughout the whole world. He also aimed his bow and arrows, that is, he uprooted, destroyed, and annihilated the kingdoms which Jeremiah was sent against (Jerem. XVIII): and he made it so that sin would not reign in our mortal bodies. And the arrows, that is, the kingdoms of the devil, which he revealed to the Lord, understand as different sins: greed, lust, anger, slander, theft, perjury, against which the Word of God, seated on his horses and chariots, aims the curved arrows of his brightness, but does not yet release them, so that the one who is terrified by the drawn bow does not feel the release of the arrows. And this is what the eagle always does, as Aquila interpreted it, in place of singing. For he always sits in his holy places, always armed. And preparing sharp arrows on their tongues, he rides and runs to and fro in the world of salvation.

3:10

(Verse 10) You will split the rivers of the earth. LXX: The earth will be split by rivers. Because the Lord has stirred up his bow, in order to fulfill the oaths he spoke to the tribes, it is subsequently said, you will split the rivers of the earth, which means that the kings of the earth who fight against your people, you will divide and scatter. According to the Septuagint, which says, The earth will be split by rivers, let us first consider this example, so that we can proceed to higher things as if in steps. We read in those who have written volumes about wonders, and who have brought the Olympic Games of Greece down to our own memory, explaining what new things happened in each year in the world, namely that among other things rivers have burst forth from the movement of the earth, which were not there before, and on the other hand other rivers have been swallowed up and have disappeared: namely, that all the veins of the earth, just as blood does in the human body, contain hidden waters which are broken open by the shaking of the earth, and they remain as rivers. If we understand this, let us see that the human soul naturally contains waters and rivers, and our compassion, which are hidden and do not flow. But when it is shaken by the preaching of God's word and moved from its previous state, then what was hidden bursts forth and flows for the refreshment of those who drink. I believe that this is what is also signified in Genesis by the wells dug by Isaac's servants, which were buried in the land by the Philistines (Genesis 26). As long as Abraham is alive, his wells are not closed; but when he dies and the wells are closed, if the servants dig, the Philistines object, and there is a dispute. But if Isaac himself comes and digs a well and finds water, the Philistines cannot object. Look at Peter and Paul, and you will not doubt

about the wells and rivers of Christ. Observe all the apostles, and you will understand that not four rivers, but twelve rivers flow out of the paradise of the Scriptures. These rivers were hidden before the earth was moved, and when they were in the veins of the earth, they did not provide cups for the thirsty. But after the coming of Christ, the world and all the earth were shaken, they suddenly burst forth, and then it was fulfilled: He turned rivers into a desert, and the exits of water into thirst, fruitful land into salt marsh, because of the wickedness of those who dwell in it (Psalm 33). He turned a desert into pools of water, and a waterless land into fountains of water, and there he made the hungry to dwell, and they built a city to inhabit. For when the Lord came into the world, and that which he said in the Gospel was fulfilled: 'I came into this world for judgment, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind' (John 9:39): then the land of Israel, from which rivers used to flow forth and water the entire Jewish people, became dry and its springs were blocked up. But the entire world, which was once deserted and sterile and did not have the waters of the Lord's preaching, turned into marshes of water, and as many teachers as it sent forth, so many springs it had. It was not enough for them to irrigate the peoples of the world with fountains and rivers; but in each province, gathering together those who were hungry and suffering from the hunger for the word of God, they built the Church, which is called the city to dwell in, and which is made joyful by the rushing of the river.

3:11-13

(Verse 11 onwards) The mountains saw you and trembled; the raging waters passed by. The abyss gave forth its voice; the heights lifted their hands. The sun and moon stood still in their dwelling place; they will go in the light of your arrows, in the radiance of your glittering spear. In your fury, you trample the earth; in your wrath, you astonish the nations. You have come for the salvation of your people, for salvation with your Christ. You have struck the head from the house of the wicked; you have laid bare the foundation to the neck. Always. We have placed our edition alone, so that according to it, that is, according to the Hebrew, we may discuss the coherence of the passage, then we may discuss the same passage comically by chapters. The mountains saw you, God, and they grieved: namely, the high kingdoms and the lofty powers of this age, and the four chariots in Zechariah, which go forth from the bronze mountains (Zech. VI): these saw you and trembled. And the surge of waters passed over: this is, all their impetus and persecution, by which they vexed your people, passed over after they saw you. Then the abyss, that is, the underworld, praised you: then even the gods, that is, the angels, clapped their hands in applause, as if with a certain gesture and exultation of raised hands they showed you as the victor. Your sun and moon, and all the splendor with which you had previously shone upon your people, and afterwards had been covered by the weight of evil, were enveloped in the horror of darkness, received their light again, and regained their former brightness. Your arrows and your flashing spear, that is, your wounds, and your teaching, provided light to your people. Finally, in the light of your arrows, and in the splendor of your spear, which hast struck them to correct them, your people walked in your fury. So when will you avenge the injury of your people, you will tread upon earthly kingdoms, and cause all nations to marvel, for you have come forth for the salvation of your people, and you have come to them with your Christ: although it is written in Hebrew, 'You have come forth for the salvation of your people with your Jesus Christ: or with your Savior Christ: for Jesus indeed means Savior.' But when Jesus Christ, your Son, comes, you will strike the Antichrist from the house of the wicked, that is, in this world, which is placed in evil. Whether you strike the

devil himself, who is the head of wickedness, and uncover its foundation up to its neck, that is, you reveal its hidden things, not for a short time, but forever. For this is what Sela means, that is, always.

LXX: They shall see you and be sorrowful, whether the peoples are in labor; for it signifies both. Consequently, when the earth is broken and the rivers flow, the peoples who have drunk from the rivers of God shall see God and be in labor. For from the very fact that they see God, they immediately conceive and say with God's word: We have conceived and given birth in the womb from your fear, O Lord, and have brought forth and given birth; we shall make the spirit of your salvation upon the earth. Blessed, says He, are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8). These people, therefore, cleansed by the rivers, have not yet seen, but they will see God: and when they see, they will conceive, so that they may bear the fruits of teachings. But because they are called people, and it is not possible for the people to see the face of God, although the prayer may be extended to the future, they will see and bear: however, according to the allegory it is more Hebraic to follow, where it is said: They have seen You, and the mountains have given birth: for it is the mountains' task to see God and bear children, whom they conceived from the word of God.

LXX: Disperse the waters of the journey. There are different types of waters: some eternal, others temporary. Concerning the eternal waters, and those that flow from the fountains of Israel, it is said: The land will be split by rivers. Concerning the sudden and temporary ones: All streams flow into the sea. The end of such waters is destruction. Therefore, God will disperse all waters that have been trampled upon by perverse doctrines, when He has dissipated the plans of the rulers and the wisdom of this world. If ever you see that a heresy has briefly flourished and then, by the grace of God, has been dissipated, say that it is complete: you will scatter the waters of the journey. However, what is said, 'of the journey,' can be understood as 'of the devil,' so that the meaning is: The waters which the devil has trampled upon, and which have provided a pathway for many, that is, have made many errors possible, the Lord will divide and scatter. Hence, other interpreters, wanting to describe heretical madness, have translated it as: Mockery, or the onslaught of waters will pass. For they are said to rush headlong in the course of eloquence, and to drag along with them whoever they come across, light and easy.

LXX: The abyss gave voice to its depth of imagination. The abyss is often interpreted in a positive way: sometimes in a negative way, and sometimes indifferently. In a positive way: Your judgments are a vast abyss (Psalm 35:7). And: Deep calls to deep (Psalm 42:7), and so on. In a negative way: The waters saw you, O God (Psalm 77:17), and so on. But even demons plead not to be sent into the abyss (Luke 8), and in Genesis: The abyss over which darkness prevailed (Genesis 1:2), I do not know if it can be interpreted in a positive way. However, it is mentioned there in an indifferent way: The fountains of the deep were broken up, and the floodgates of heaven were opened (Genesis, 7:11). And in the one hundred and forty-eighth psalm: Sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and storms, unless perhaps because it is mentioned among sea monsters, fire and hail, it should be interpreted in a negative sense. I do not know if anyone could say this, unless they have seen it resonate with the others in praise of the Lord. Therefore, if we understand the abyss in a positive way, let us say that, with the waters of the worst journey dispersed, your wise ones saw you and borrowed the depth of knowledge they had from your presence. And whatever they previously thought about you, they proclaimed it in praise of their

words. And beautifully, the opinion of imagination is called depth, according to Jesus son of Sirach, who says: Who will investigate the abyss and wisdom (Eccl. 1, 2)? And from a small mountain (Psalms 41), that is, from the assumption of the human body, which Daniel calls the stone cut out without hands from the mountain, that is, without a wedding work (Daniel 2), Christ invokes the abyss, calling the Father the other abyss, in the voice of his waterfalls (Psalms 41), so that he may give the word with great power to those who proclaim the gospel. Or certainly, the abyss of the New Testament, as a testimony of the small mountain from which the Prince of Tyre was wounded, invokes the abyss of the Old Testament, so that through the waterfalls of Christ, that is, the apostles, the preaching may become more firm. But if anyone wishes to interpret this passage in a negative sense when it says, 'The deep gave forth its voice, the height of its imagination' (Isaiah 14), they will use the argument that after the waters of the journey were dispersed, which were certainly received in a negative sense, this should be rightly understood in the opposite way. At the same time, observe that it does not say 'its height,' but 'the height of its imagination,' that is, of shadows and images. For they seem to possess the height and knowledge of the Scriptures, but all their height, compared to the truth, is imagination, and they raise their voice in vain, because the waters of the journey have already been dispersed. Let us search in the Scriptures wherever we can find imagination in a good sense, and if it has been rarely or never found, we will interpret it as a darker abyss and its imagination in a bad sense.

LXX: The sun was lifted up, and the moon stood in its place. If we follow a simple interpretation, the progress of the sun and moon is shown by the words at hand: that, according to Isaiah, in the future age the sun will shine sevenfold in light, and the moon will shine with the brightness of the sun (Isaiah XXX, 26). For since the creature will be set free from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Romans VIII), which is now subjected to vanity, because of the one who subjected it in hope of freedom, when at the consummation of the world every creature will be set free, the sun and the moon will also be set free, and they will stand in their place. But if we desire to receive Christ, the sun of justice, in whose wings is health, and the moon, which is illuminated by the splendor of this sun, as the Church: it is not difficult to say that the true light, the light of men, and the splendor of the glory of God, and the splendor of eternal light, may illuminate it: which now in this age may increase and decrease according to prosperities and trials. But when the sun will be exalted, and, according to the Apostle, God will exalt it, and give it a name above every name (Philippians 2): then also the Church, which in the present age cannot maintain its order, will return to its rightful order, and will not be changed; but will stand firm in its position, and will hear with Moses: But you stand here with me (Exodus 34:2).

LXX: In light, your javelins shall go forth, in the splendor of the flashing of your armor. The javelins of God, that is, the arrows going and advancing, are not sent for the purpose of killing, but for the purpose of illuminating. In distinction to these arrows and javelins, Christ is called the chosen javelin by Isaiah proclaiming: He has made me as a chosen javelin and has hidden me in his quiver, and he said to me: This is great for you, to be called my servant (Isaiah 49:2-3). This arrow will have many arrows (as) it sends into the entire world. Hence even the wounded bride (spouse) says: Wounded by love, I. (Song of Songs 4:9). According to which we can also say: Wounded by chastity, I; wounded by wisdom, I. By this dart of wisdom wounded, the Queen of the South (or, the Queen of Sheba) was not herself, and, astonished, she found more in the true Solomon than the reports had narrated to her. (1 Kings 10). Therefore, these arrows which are sent into the light

also pass into the splendor of his armor, that is, of God. For whoever is armed, in order to stand against the cunning of the devil, and girded with the armor of the Apostle (Ephesians VI), the arrows of light come to him, so that it can be said to him: You are the light of the world (Matthew V, 14). But if anyone is a sinner and laments that he dwells in the tents of Kedar, sharp arrows with desolating coals are sent to him (Psalm CXIX), so that he may be first pierced by the words of God and say: I am surrounded by misery, when the thorn is thrust into me (Psalm XXXI). And after he has been struck with remorse, then a scorching coal should be sent to him through the Seraphim, that is, the burning word of God, which not only cleanses the unclean lips that Isaiah had (Isa. VI), but also burns all the parts of his body and leads him to the solitude of sinners.

LXX: In the threat, you will approach the earth, and in anger, you will drag away the nations. This can be understood as occurring at the end of the world, when, through frequent wars, a great multitude is killed, and few people are found, and those who did not want to be part of God's people, but remained as nations and foreigners, are led to Tartarus by the anger of the Lord. But it is better to interpret the threat to the earth as a diminution of earthly works, and those who are established in the Church, not waiting for sinners, are corrected by the anger of the Lord; but hearing in the Scriptures the punishments that await sinners, they repent, and gradually diminish their earthly desires, and advance towards heaven. If anyone of us fears the threatening of the Lord, to him the earth is diminished: but he who perseveres in the number of the nations, and does not want to be among those whose land decreases, nor of the people of God, of whom it is said: They shall see thee, and shall bear children, this one shall be taken away in punishment with the nations.

LXX: You went out for the salvation of your people, to save your anointed ones. First, let us see how many anointed ones there are, and then we will discuss how the Lord went out for the salvation of his anointed ones. The anointed ones in the Old Testament were called Christ and patriarchs, about whom it is written in the Psalms: He rebuked kings for their sake: 'Do not touch my anointed ones, and do not harm my prophets' (Psalm 105:14-15). And in the first book of Chronicles, all those who came out of Egypt are called anointed ones. The anointing oil in Exodus (Ch. XXX) is also used for the priestly consecration, which is later mentioned in Leviticus (Ch. VIII) when the anointed priests are referred to. There is another anointing oil used for anointing kings in the kingdom, which is divided into two. If it is David or Solomon, that is, one who is strong in hand and peaceful (I Sam. XVI), the horn is anointed. But if it is Jehu or Hazael, they are drenched with lentil (II Kings IX and XIX): and the vessel in which it is carried is called fictile, that is, φάκλις. But even Cyrus, the king of the Persians and the Medes, who released the people from captivity (although many may err and think that it refers to the Lord Savior), is mentioned in Isaiah: Thus says the Lord to my anointed Cyrus, whose right hand I have held to make the nations listen before him (Isaiah 45:1), etc. And at the end it is said: But you did not know me, which is blasphemous to understand about the Savior. It is the prophetic ointment, with which Elijah is commanded to anoint Elisha as a prophet (1 Kings 19). And above all kinds of ointments, there is a spiritual ointment called the oil of gladness, with which the Savior is anointed, and it is said to Him: Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions (Psalm 44:8). And I consider those to be His companions to whom John speaks: And you have an anointing from the Holy One (1 John 2:20). And a little later: These things I have written to you concerning those who deceive you: And the anointing which you have received from Him abides in

you, and you do not need anyone to teach you; but as the anointing teaches you about all things, and it is true, and it is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in Him (ibid., 26, 27). So that those who have lost the anointing of baptism may not despair of receiving the anointing, it is written in Leviticus: When a leper who has been cast out of the camp comes to the priest and his leprosy is cleansed, the priest shall take in his left hand some olive oil and with his right finger sprinkle it seven times before the Lord. The priest shall then touch with the same oil the ear of the one who was a leper, as well as his right hand, his right foot, and the remainder of the oil he shall pour on his head (Leviticus 14). And when he has properly completed all these things: then let him offer a burnt offering for himself, and let him be called the Christ of God. I want to say something; but I fear that I may give occasion for ruin to the negligent: that in the Holy Scriptures the same man is frequently found anointed. Finally, David was anointed a third time (2 Samuel 6 and 19): which we do not understand to be about someone who has sinned; and he is anointed again (for it is enough for a leper to be anointed a second time after the first anointing has been lost), but it is about someone who progresses day by day, and his anointing is always increased. And it goes from the oil of the leper to the oil of the people and the saints, and from the oil of the people it reaches the oil of the priests, and it surpasses the priests to the anointing oil of the high priest, and from the high priest it even goes to the king, from the king to the patriarchs, and from the patriarchs it goes to Christ, and he is anointed with the oil of joy (Psalm 44:8), by which whoever is anointed becomes one with God in spirit, and where the Father and the Son are, there he will also be. But this is rare, and there are the wishes of the believers. However, I do not know if the effect will follow. For it is said: God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions, that is, with that oil which those who are your companions will seldom or never be able to find. Therefore, God has gone out from his place for the salvation of these Christians, just as Micah says: And he will go forth from his place to save (Micah 1:3). For those who were in need of salvation did not want to enter to him, therefore he went out from his majesty and his place, so that he could lead those who were outside into the land of gentle ones and the region of the living, from which Adam had been expelled: from which Cain, when he went out, dwelled in the land of Nod (Gen. III and IV, according to the Septuagint). It should be known, however, as we have said above, that where the Septuagint placed the plural number, 'to save your Anointed Ones,' in Hebrew it is Joshua son of Nun and the Anointed One (Messiah), which Aquila translated, 'to salvation with your Anointed One (Messiah),' not that God went out to save the people and save his Anointed One (Messiah), but that he came to the salvation of the people with his Anointed One (Messiah), according to that passage of the Gospel: 'The Father is in me, and I am in the Father'; and the Father, remaining in me, he himself does his works (John XIV, 10). But even the fifth edition translated similarly: 'You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation with your Christ.' However, Theodotion, being truly like a poor Ebionite, and Symmachus of the same belief, following a poor interpretation, translated: 'You went out for the salvation of your people, in order to save your Christ.' And: 'You went out to save your people, to save your Christ.' I am going to say something unbelievable, but nevertheless true. These half-Christian Jews translated: and the Jew Aquila interpreted, as a Christian. The sixth edition, clearly revealing the sacrament, thus translated from Hebrew: 'You came forth to save your people by your Jesus Christ,' which in Greek is said: 'ἐξῆλθες τοῦ σώσαι τὸν λαόν σου διὰ τοῦ ἡσοῦν τὸν Χριστὸν σου.' This meaning can be applied to the fact that the Father came forth with the Son from the temple and the ceremonies of the Jews, saying: 'Your house will be left to you desolate' (Luke 13:35); and he came for the

salvation of the Gentiles, to save those who believe through Jesus Christ his Son.

LXX: You have sent death upon the heads of the wicked. We cannot consider this death to be the common one by which we all die, for even Abraham died and was laid to rest with his forefathers (Gen. XXV); and the prophets, and even Christ himself, died (John XIX), but death was sent upon the wicked (1 Sam. II, 6), so that those who had previously lived in wickedness, dead to sin, might live in righteousness (1 Pet. II). Anna also signifies this in her prayer: The Lord kills and gives life. For he kills sinners, sending death upon the heads of the wicked, so that he may give life to righteousness. I will say something bolder: Christ came into the world for this very purpose, to send death upon the heads of the unjust. And just as he himself died for sin once (1 Peter 3): so they also may die to iniquity; and those who have become partakers of this death may also become partakers of life. But according to the Hebrew, where it is written: You have struck the head from the house of the wicked, let us also take the head, as I said, the prince of this world, and his house, the world, and every soul of the sinner, in which the devil had a dwelling. Therefore, the head of the wicked is struck in the house, so that, with him struck and expelled, the house of God may be made, and justice may dwell there, and walk in it. And this is worthy to be understood of God, who went forth for the salvation of his people with his Christ, so that, with such a head struck, he may become in us the head, who is the head of every man and of his Church. If anyone, therefore, still feels the house of the wicked within himself, let him pray for the coming of the Son of God, so that the head of the wicked may be crushed within him.

LXX: You have lifted up the chains until the neck, to the end. The Lord has lifted up the chains of love, so that with the previous burden set aside, and the heavy yoke by which we were oppressed thrown off, we may take up the light yoke of Christ; and, placed in his chariot, we may carry the excellent charioteer. Theodotius also, taking this in a good sense, says: You have adorned the foundation until the neck. Fifth edition: You have stripped, or emptied, the foundation until the neck, *selah*, that is, always. For the foundation of Christ, which was in the soul of each individual, had been buried under the foreign earth, the accumulated soil is dug out, and the best foundation is uncovered and adorned, so that what was hidden may appear and receive its own clarity, and this is done eternally, which is called '*Sela*' in Hebrew. At the same time, consider that the LXX themselves, compelled by the necessity of things, who always interpreted '*sela*' as *diapsalma*, have now translated it as '*in finem*'.

3:14-16

(Verse 14 and following) You have cursed his scepters, the heads of his warriors, who come like a whirlwind to scatter me. Their rejoicing is like that of someone who devours the poor in secret. You have made a path in the sea for your horses, in the mud of many waters. I heard, and my stomach trembled; at the sound my lips quivered. Let decay enter my bones, and let it rage beneath me: so that I may rest on the day of my tribulation, so that I may rise up against our encircled people. And now we are discussing only the Hebrew (as Alexander has proposed), so let us discuss separately the edition of the Septuagint, for it differs greatly from all other translations: 'You have cursed the scepters,' that is, the kingdoms of the wicked; no doubt, the impious one of whom he had spoken above: 'You have struck the head from the house of the wicked; you have laid bare the foundation to the neck.' And by the wicked one, we understand either Nebuchadnezzar or any adversary of the people of God. And not only his scepter, but also the heads of the warriors whom you had

struck, they came like a whirlwind to scatter me, that is, to overthrow Israel and lead it captive in different directions. Thus they rejoiced, devouring the poor and subduing Israel, as if they were doing it in secret, and they would devour us, while you were unaware. Therefore, you came to battle for your people, and by releasing your chariots into the waters, that is, among many nations, you made a way for them in the mud of many waters, that is, to trample them down, as if they were the mud of your horses' hooves and the wheels of your chariots. But as it follows: I have heard, and my stomach is troubled: at the sound of (as it is understood, your) lips tremble, let corruption enter into my bones, and under me be filled with worms: that I may rest on the day of tribulation, that I may ascend to our girded people, here is the meaning: Now we willingly suffer hardships, and tremble with all our innards at your threat. Now my lips tremble, and the fear of a trembling mind is marked on my mouth, and not only this, but I also desire something willingly and desire it kindly: let corruption enter into my bones, and under me be filled with worms; that is, I willingly suffer what Job suffered, not only my flesh, but also the marrow of my bones I desire to waste away, and my bed to be filled with the corruption of my body and teeming with countless worms, so that after I have endured these things here for my sins, I may rest on the bitter day, on the day of tribulation, on the day of necessity and distress. And I will ascend to our girded people, indeed strong, a warrior and fighter. And beautifully, I will ascend: for it is always to the girded people that one ascends. And elegantly ours: for he who has been troubled, and willingly endured struggles, and compensated for present evils with future rewards, speaks boldly like our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and may he himself sleep in good old age, full of days, and be gathered to his ancestors. But if someone were to say, 'Look, in the exposition of history, while you are ignorant, you are enclosed by the nets of allegory, and you have mixed the tropology of history.' Let them hear that the metaphor of history does not always harmonize with allegory, because frequently history itself is woven metaphorically, and under the image of a woman, or of one man from the whole people, it is preached. And now therefore we can say from the perspective of the people: 'I willingly undergo captivity, I endure afflictions with an equal mind, and I am heavily burdened by the yoke of the Babylonians, and whatever there is of ultimate and harsh necessity, I suffer joyfully, only so that at that time I may rest when you curse the scepters of the impious, and your horses will trample the mud of many waters, so that afterwards I may return to the promised land with your saints Zerubbabel and Jesus the son of Josedech, and the priest Ezra, and Nehemiah.' Until now, in order not to seem to entirely overlook history, we have in a way directed our attention to the intellect and have brought forth inconsistent opinions into captivity. Now let us turn to the seventy translators and to the moral interpretation.

LXX: You have divided the heads of the mighty in astonishment. Just as Christ is the head of the Church and of all men (I Cor. XI), so Beelzebub, the prince of demons, is the head of all the demons who roam about in this world, and each of their groups has its own head and leaders. For example, the spirits of fornication have their own supervisor, the spirits of greed have their own ruler, the spirits of vain glory, the spirits of lies, and the spirits of unfaithfulness have their own leaders of wickedness. And so, God, most merciful, who sent death upon the heads of the wicked, who loosened the bonds even to the neck, divides the heads of the powerful in their astonishment, so that he may first separate the rulers from their subjects, and as if beheading the body from the head, and where the worst head was, there the best head may be placed. Let us give an example, so that what we say may be made clearer: whenever a tyrant is slain, his images and statues are also taken down, and with only the face changed and the head removed, the face of the victor is

placed over it, so that while the body remains, and the heads have been severed, a different head is substituted. I want to understand about the councils of heretics, which, with the heads of heresies separated from other nations, begin with Christ as their head. Also, consider the significance of the Holy Scriptures, that it does not say 'you have cut off' or 'you have cut down the heads of the mighty,' but 'you have divided.' For what is divided is not so much cut off and lost as it is separated into parts. Just as in the building of the tower (Genesis 11), the language which had been improperly united was separated, and the wicked pact was torn apart by a beneficial division: so also, these heads, which seemed to have agreement among their bodies, for there are many heads of heretics which have different eyes, yet bark in one common language of blasphemy against the Church, were divided into parts and separated from the deceived bodies, making room for the good head. We can use this verse whenever we see kings and their leaders shed Christian blood, and afterwards witness the vengeance of the Lord. We have seen this recently in the case of Julian, and before him in Maximian, Valerian, Decius, Domitian, and Nero; and we can say to the Lord with joy and prayer in the Song: You have struck the heads of the mighty in astonishment, that is, in the astonishment of the believers, or in the astonishment of all nations, which did not think they could fall so quickly. While I was still a boy, and was exercising in the game of grammar, and all the cities were being polluted with the blood of victims, and suddenly it was announced in the midst of the very heat of Julian's persecution that he had died, one of the pagans wittily said, 'How, he said, do the Christians say that their God is patient and without malice? Nothing is more irritable, nothing is more present with this fury: he could not even delay his indignation for a little bit.' He said this jokingly. Nevertheless, the Church of Christ sang with joy: You have divided in astonishment the heads of the mighty. I will also say something similar: Divide, Lord, in astonishment all of them, Ahab, and Jezebel (III Kings 21 and 18). I am not Elijah, but nevertheless, they Ahab and Jezebel killed Naboth and took his vineyard, and made their garden for indulgence (IV Kings 9 and 10). Let one of your servants, Obadiah, be found, who will feed your poor and beggar, let the blood of fornicators be given to the dogs; let the impious and greedy Ahab be killed by the spear of the Lord.

LXX: They will be moved in it (or in that), they will open their mouths like a poor person eating in hiding (or in a hidden place). When their heads are divided from their bodies, and divided only in a state of stupor, which in Greek is called **■v ■κστ■σεται**: hence according to that, it is declined and said, **■v α■τ■**, which means in it, they will also open their mouths, or of them (both can be understood), so that that authority by which they previously ruled over their subjected bodies, giving way to a better horseman, and a better charioteer. And let them do this as if they are eating in secret, not having freedom, nor an abundance of food, but rather small portions of food, with which they eat secretly, not wanting anyone to see what they are doing. It can also be interpreted differently: When their heads are divided in astonishment, as if separated from the rest of the body, they will open their mouths, which had been unrestrained like a muzzle of condemnation, and, resembling those who are eating, they will gnash their teeth against themselves, desiring to eat again but lacking the power to devour. Understand how after the coming of Christ the heads of demons from the nations, which had previously been subjugated to them, desire to exercise their ancient power again. But because they have been separated from their bodies, they do not have full freedom to feed: they eat like the poor, and not only are they poor, but they are poor in hiding. They are poor because they have lost their former riches: they eat in hiding, because they always lie in wait, intending to kill the innocent in secret. These headings have the same teeth as arrows.

And although he may have said before, I will ascend above the stars of heaven, I will place my nest on high, and I will hold the whole world like eggs in my hand, yet they will be taken down from the heights and will lose their former furnishings, and all the substance of their house, so that they will scarcely try to eat and bite like beggars. I know that the Hebrew text differs greatly from what has been said, but what can I do, to whom it has once been proposed to interpret both the Hebrew and the commonly known scriptures throughout the whole world?

70: And you led your horses into the sea, disturbing the many waters. After God sent death upon the heads of the unjust, and the heads of the mighty were brought down in astonishment, and you broke them in the sea (for it is written in the Psalms: You have broken the heads of the dragons (Psalm 73:4)), with the princes slain, or broken, and the strong one overcome, they came to his house and all his possessions were plundered (Mark 13). But the vase and the strong house and the prince's belongings, what else can be interpreted except the sea of this world, in which the dragon dwells? Therefore, God, the outstanding knight and chief charioteer, adds his horses, namely angels, and sublime powers above the sea of this world, to disturb the many waters, demons and contrary powers. But if we want to interpret it as the coming of Christ, according to what is written in the Apocalypse (Chapter 19), that the word of God sits on a white horse and the whole army follows him on white horses, we will see how Christ ascended among his apostles, saying to them: Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world; and: Go, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, and the rest (Matthew 28). And later he mounted a white horse, which I believe to be none other than the apostle Paul, upon which he rode and traveled around the whole world. Now, the word of God ascended upon his horses, so that many waters, that is, many people who were previously in the sea and held captive by the dragon, were troubled. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13), and they were troubled, abandoning their initial error: then they were disturbed and received the approaching rider. Certainly, the hordes of demons we have spoken of above should not rule over the sea in such a way; rather, they should be disturbed and retreat, fearing the wounds of a fighting knight. And I hope that the word of God will also rise in me and kill, through the spear of my mouth, the one who reigns in the waters, so that the waters that were subjected to them will be disturbed unto the destruction of the king, and offer their necks to my knight, and when brought together in one chariot, we may become the Cherubim of the Lord, which is interpreted as a multitude of knowledge. For never before has a charioteer been so well composed and so adorned, as in those who are connected by the multitude of knowledge and the reins of wisdom among themselves.

LXX: I kept watch, and my belly was afraid at the voice of my mouth's prayer: and trembling entered into my bones, and under me my strength was troubled. Or as it is found written elsewhere ■ ■ ξις μου, which we can say means my condition: for indeed various readings are found. But these things can also be said from the perspective of the prophet, consistent with what came before: Because you, O Lord, have sent death upon the heads of the wicked, and have raised up the chains even to the neck, and have divided in astonishment the heads of the mighty, and have brought in your horses into the sea, disturbing the many waters: therefore I have kept my heart in all vigilance, and my bowels trembled, and my whole strength or condition, is troubled, lest I should endure similar things. And he can also have, as it were, his own beginning, as the prophet narrates his fear and how he was afraid of sinning in any way, and when he was warned by the

voice of his lips in prayer, he feared God so much that trembling entered his bones. And being placed under the mighty hand of the Lord, he was troubled with all the strength or disposition of his soul. But what he says, 'Trembling entered my bones,' should be understood emphatically, so that we may see the magnitude of the fear of God penetrating the entirety of the soul, and moving the whole person so as not to do anything that would displease God. And since Scripture also mentions the members of the soul allegorically, let us understand the hungry belly as representing the power of the soul, which receives spiritual food; the lips as representing the mind's inner dialogue; and the strong and solid bones as representing the firm doctrines on which the whole soul is strengthened. These things have been briefly stated by me. But if anyone discovers something wiser and truer, give your agreement to that person's explanation.

LXX: I will rest in the day of my trouble, that I may ascend to the people of my pilgrimage. For with all watchfulness I have kept my heart, and my belly trembled at the voice of my prayer. And trembling came upon me, and darkness covered me: and my bones were affrighted. And under me death began to beget: and I was reproved by the multitude. And what do I long for? I will rest in the day of tribulation: that I may go up to the people of my pilgrimage, for there is my staff. But I will ascend downwards, and, like one striving from a valley to higher things, I will eagerly strive with all my might, so that in the time when others are in distress and anguish, my concern will be about the ascent, and how I will find rest in higher places with the people of my own journey. But I consider the day of tribulation to be the end of the world, about which Isaiah also says: The day of the Lord, incurable, full of fury and anger, to make the whole world a desert and to destroy sinners (Isaiah 14).

3:17

(Verse 17.) For the fig tree will not blossom, and there will be no fruit on the vines. The work of the olive tree will deceive, and the fields will not produce food. The flock will be cut off from the fold, and there will be no cattle in the stalls. According to the Septuagint: For the fig tree will not bear fruit, and there will be no blossoms on the vines. The work of the olive tree will deceive, and the fields will not produce food. They have vanished, because the sheep have been devoured, and there are no cattle in the stalls. According to the Hebrew text as we have mentioned before: Let rot enter my bones and let it spread beneath me, so that I may rest in the day of trouble. Let me ascend to our prepared people. What has gone before will be connected to what follows. Therefore, I have chosen to endure tribulation for now, and afterwards ascend to our strong people. For a day of trouble and necessity will come, and to those who are established in distress, I will rejoice in your majesty. For the fig tree will not blossom, and there will be no fruit on the vines. The work of the olive tree will deceive, and the fields will not produce food, and so on. Since these things do not differ much from the Septuagint, let us likewise discuss their interpretation. When the day of tribulation comes and I ascend to the people with whom I have once traveled as a pilgrim, or certainly when the day of the destruction of Judah comes and the former people and daughter of Zion are abandoned, like a tent in a vineyard, and like a hut in a cucumber field, and like a city that is besieged, I, who have been chosen from the perishing people (of whom it has been said, 'Unless the Lord had left us a seed, we would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah, similar to them'), will join myself to the disciples of Christ, whom he teaches on the mountain, leaving the crowds and the weak below, I will ascend to the mountains. For indeed the fig tree did not bear fruit, to which the Lord came in the Gospel hungry, and did not find any fruits on it, and he cursed

it, saying: You shall not bear fruit forever (Matthew 21:19). And consider carefully what he said: You shall not bear fruit forever, not until forever and ever, but when this age has passed, and the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then this fig tree will also bear its fruits, and all Israel will be saved. This is the fig tree to which the master of the house came for the third time, and wanting to uproot it because it was not producing fruit. For this reason, the farmer, to whom it was entrusted, pleads that he give it more time and says: Master, let it be for another year, until I dig around it and put manure, and if indeed it bears fruit: but if not, then you can cut it down (Luke 13). This farmer is either Gabriel or Michael, to whom the people of Judah have been entrusted, who pleads with the Lord during his suffering and says: Lord, give them time for repentance, and do not uproot them, and if indeed they bear fruit: but if not, then uproot them. If they produce fruit, he said, he did not say what they endured; nor did he say, if they produce fruit, they will remain as they were; but if they produce fruit, the sentence is suspended, so that it may be understood, you will transfer them into the Church of the Gentiles, and you will transplant them into another vineyard. The Lord came a third time, and did not find fruit in them. He gave the Law first through Moses: second, he spoke through the prophets: third, he himself descended. And after the Passion, with forty-four years given for repentance, because they did not produce fruit, they were overthrown on the fourth occasion. However, it is left to our understanding. For in the parable it is not written what the master of the house did afterwards, but only what the farmer prayed for. From this we understand that those who have made fruit from this fig tree have been transferred to the people of the nations, to whom the prophet also ascended, saying: I will rest on the day of tribulation, so that I may ascend to the people of my pilgrimage. However, those who did not bear fruit and remained in their hardness have been uprooted. This very thing signifies the voice of John in the Gospel: Behold, the axe is laid at the roots of the trees. Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. (Matt. III, 10; Luc. III, 9) We have spoken about the fig tree, showing that it represents the Jewish people: let us also speak about the vineyard, which will be easily understood by those who have read Isaiah: The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting. (Isai. V, 1). And afterwards: And I waited for it to bring forth fruit: but it made thorns, and not judgment, but outcry. And in Jeremiah: But I planted you as a fruitful vineyard, all of it true: how have you turned into the bitterness of a foreign vine (Jer. II, 21)? And more clearly in the Psalms: You brought a vine out of Egypt, you drove out the nations, and you planted it (Ps. LXXIX, 9). This therefore is the vineyard to which the master of the house often sent his servants (Matth. XXI), to receive from it the wine that gladdens the heart of man, but it has turned into bitterness, and finally it even dared to kill the son of the master of the house, not producing grapes, but thorns, and not judgment, but outcry: Crucify him, crucify him! And we have no king but Caesar (John 19:15). Therefore, the boar from the forest has destroyed it, and the savage beast in the field has devoured it (Psalm 79:14). Moreover, the olive tree will clearly represent the people of the synagogue, who, by breaking off the branches of the olive tree, will be grafted in as wild olives (Romans 11), and we, being grafted in from the wild olive tree, will understand that the multitude of the Jews has been cut off, but the election of the apostles has been preserved at its roots, and we will remain grafted in if we bear fruit, and it will be said of us: Your children are like olive saplings around your table (Psalm 128:3). Many people think that the fig tree, vine, and olive tree are symbols of the Holy Trinity. The fig tree represents the sweetness of the fruits, which is understood as the Holy Spirit. The vine is our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as he said in the Gospel: 'I am the vine' (John 15:1). The olive tree represents God the Almighty

Father, from whom all things are illumined, and from whom light proceeds. We can say to Him: 'O olive tree, in your light we shall see light' (Psalm 36:9), meaning that in the Son we shall see the Holy Spirit. In the book of Judges (Chapter 9), there are fruitful trees and a very fertile vineyard. However, unfruitful trees come and ask to reign over them. But never does the olive, fig, or vine, which are owed to the fire, reign over the trees of the forest. Rather, the bramble full of thorns commands them, and the hedgehog-like creature that dwells in Babylon and always moves about in the pits. This little tree not only has thorns, but also fire, injuring and burning whatever it touches. Finally, the fire went out and consumed the wood of the forest. But so that you may know, according to the higher understanding in which we have received from the synagogue, it is said: The fig tree will not bear fruit, and there will be no offspring in the vineyards. It is not about the fruits, but about good deeds. In the olive, the riddle is clearly revealed and it is said: The work of the olive will lie. For the fruits that should have been brought forth are shown in deeds. But the work of the olive, promising one thing and doing another, saying to Moses: We will do everything that the Lord has spoken (Exod. 24:7), they did not want to believe in him who was preached by Moses. The fields also will not produce fruit. Consider that Jerusalem, which once was situated on mountains, and the mountains surrounding it (Ps. 124:2), and its foundations were in holy mountains (Psalm 86:1), is now called lowly and flat, which not only does not feed humans, that is, rational animals, but not even animals such as sheep and cows, of which Solomon speaks in Proverbs: Take care of the regions that are in the field, and tend the grass, and gather hay so that you have food for the sheep to eat. Cattle also will not be in the mangers: because where the mangers are full, the strength of the ox is evident (Prov. XIV, 4). The ox is a worker: the ox of the Lord bearing the yoke: blessed is the one who follows in its footsteps. All these things will be taken away from the people, because they have acted unjustly towards their Creator God. But if you are willing (or unwilling) to accept the day of tribulation, the day of consummation, you will see that all those who claim to be of the Church but do not have the works of justice will be referred to them. Both the fig tree and the vine and the olive, namely the mystery of the Trinity, do not bring forth their fruit in them, and not only the grains and food of the rational ones; but neither do they have food even for their livestock in their fields and their stables are empty, and they are turned from lofty mountains to plains and low places.

3:18-19

(Verse 18, 19) But as for me, I will rejoice in the Lord, and exult in God my savior. God, the Lord, is my strength, and he will make my feet like the feet of deer. And he will lead me up to the high places triumphantly, singing in Psalms. According to the Septuagint: But as for me, I will exult in the Lord; I will rejoice over God my savior. The Lord God is my strength, and he will set my feet in the consummation: he will place me upon the high places, so that I may overcome in his song. Ficus tree, vine, and olive tree, as I explained, not producing their fruit, and the fields of the Jews not yielding food, and also the livestock and cattle being cut off from the sheepfold and the stalls, after they heard from the Lord: Your house shall be left desolate (Matthew 23:38), and the people also being handed over to captivity and dispersed throughout the whole world, the prophet from the people of Judah, who is called the embrace (because he loved the Lord and clung to him, and joined himself to him), speaks on behalf of the apostles and the people who believe in Christ: But I will rejoice in the Lord, and I will exult in the God of my Jesus. For they translated LXX as τὸ πᾶν μου, that is, my Savior. The same with Gabriel interpreting: And His name shall be called

Jesus, for He shall save His people (Matt. II, 21). God the Lord is my strength; for I shall have no other but in Christ, and I shall count all the righteousnesses of the law as garbage. And He shall make my feet like the feet of a deer, to tread upon the asp and the basilisk, and like a little child I shall put my hand in the hole and draw out the serpent (Alexandria. Judah) and play. For my brother is like a roe or a young stag (Song of Solomon II, 9). And because he himself is a stag, he also gave to me, that I may be a stag, with lofty horns, splitting hooves, chewing cud, and driving away serpents by my scent: of which it is said in the seventeenth Psalm: He made my feet like those of stags, and he will set me on high. And in the twenty-eighth: The voice of the Lord who accomplishes stags. Therefore, he will set my feet among his other stags, and he will lead me to the heavenly things, so that I may sing the glory of the Lord among the angels, and announce peace on earth to people of good will. Let us sing of his victory and triumph and the trophy of the cross. This, according to the Hebrew version and the fifth edition, we should refer to the time of the destruction of Judea and the coming of the Lord. But if we wish to understand the consummation of the world, it should be explained as follows: just as in Exodus (Chapter 9) when Egypt was struck, and God struck their vineyards and fig trees, and killed the firstborn of men and animals with hail, and destroyed the Egyptian crops with caterpillars and locusts. The fig trees in Egypt did not bear fruit, nor were there any buds on their vines; the olive tree, where it could still be found in Egypt, produced no oil, and their fields did not yield food; and their cattle were dying in the pasture and there were no oxen in the stalls. But the people of Israel rejoiced in the Lord, and delighted in God their Savior: so in the consummation of the world, when charity shall have grown cold through multiplied iniquity, and the fig-tree shall not bear fruit, and the vineyard shall not yield grapes, and the work of the olive shall be deceitful, and the fields shall not yield food, and other things that follow: then whoever shall be found just and worthy of God's election, shall speak in exultation. But I will rejoice in the Lord, I will exult in God my Savior. The Lord is my strength. And being placed by God above the end of the age, so that afterwards He might ascend to higher things, and being educated by God to the highest, He shall say: He will set my feet upon the end, He will place me upon the highest places, so that when with Jesus, the νικητής, who first triumphed in the struggle, the reward will be given to those singing hymns: I will conquer in His song, and my hands will play the lyre, and the harp, and every kind of instrument, and I will write a panegyric praising the triumphant one. And I, who spoke at the beginning, said: How long shall I cry out, and you will not hear? I will cry out to you of violence, and you will not save? And I have been accused of his justice and judgment: then I will praise his equity, and surpass the other singers with my song.

Commentary on Haggai

S. Eusebius Hieronymus, the Priest of Stridon, one book of Commentaries on the Prophet Haggai to Paula and Eustochium

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

In the second year of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, king of the Persians, the seventieth year of the desolation of the temple was completed (which Jeremiah prophesied in chapter 25). The prophet Zechariah also bears witness, who, when he had placed the title of his Vision in the second year of

the same king, on the eleventh month of the Sabbath, on the twenty-fourth day, added, saying: O Lord of hosts, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you are angry? This is the seventieth year (Zechariah 1:7,12). But even Ezra, after the altar had been built and the foundation of the temple had been laid, refers to the prohibited work in the letter of King Artaxerxes: Then the work of the house of God in Jerusalem was interrupted, and it was not carried out until the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia (Ezra 4:24). And immediately he added: The prophets Haggai and Zechariah, son of Addo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judea and Jerusalem, in the name of the Lord God of Israel. Then Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, son of Jozadak, arose and began to build the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the prophets of God were helping them (Ezra 5:1,2). At the time when Tarquinius Superbus was ruling as the seventh king of Rome after Romulus, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, he was expelled by Brutus. And then for four hundred and sixty-four years, consuls governed the republic until Julius Caesar. We have mentioned this, O Paula and Eustochium, so that you may immediately recognize the time during which the prophet Haggai spoke, even from the very title itself. It should be noted in the meantime, that both the great spirit and the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were present in literal terms: they were commanding the building of the temple in opposition to the edict of King Artaxerxes, which was hindering the construction of the temple by the Samaritans and all the surrounding nations. They were urging Zerubbabel and Joshua, the son of Josedech, and the people who were with them, to listen more to the prophets' command to build, rather than the prohibition of the king's command.

(Chap. I. Vers. 1.)

(Chapter 1, Verse 1) In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai to the people. For the people, who seemed to have returned from captivity, had not yet built the temple or fortified the walls of the city, nor did they have the glory of the former Jerusalem. Instead, they dwelled in hollow houses, or, as it is more significantly said in Greek, 'κοιλοσπιθμοις', meaning, houses built downwards and sunk in a valley. Therefore, the word of God did not come to them under the reign of Hezekiah, or Amon, or Josiah, who ruled over the people of God as long as Jerusalem stood, but under King Darius, the prince of Persia, as Daniel mystically relates in his book. But Darius in our language means 'generations made' or 'that have been made,' which in Greek is called γενεα γενμεναι. And the people who lived below and worshipped the flesh and kept the first sentence of the uneducated man who had been expelled from paradise did not deserve to have another king except the one who served the generations and loved the flesh. And because Darius was a lover of coitus and a companion of the dragon, whose entire power is in his loins, in the second year a vision is seen by the people in an impure number, and after the union of virginity and the nudity of paradise, pellicle tunics are meant. Finally, in Genesis, when it is said on the first day, and on the third, and on the fourth, and on the fifth, and on the sixth, after the completion of each work: And God saw that it was good: on the second day, according to the Hebrew, and the Aquila, and the Symmachus, and the Theodotion, it is not included. For the second day, which represents the number that divides from the unity, could not be, in God's opinion, confirmed as good. The sixth month is also attributed, which does not have the solemnities of God, like the seventh month; but it is close to the six days, in which the world was made (Ibid.). In which one labors, and in the sweat of the face bread is eaten: and the earth brings forth thorns and thistles for us, and when it

receives the seed of wheat, it is more fruitful with weeds and oats. But because the altar had already been built, and the enemies who were opposing had wanted to build a temple against it, but had not built it: on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came in the hand of the prophet Haggai, that the people, having abandoned it for the second year of King Darius, who divides from unity; and returning to unity, leaving behind the sixth month that had passed and which is assigned to labor, they should follow only unity and an odd number: which also a pagan poet knows to be the world, saying (Virgil, Eclogue VIII):

God delights in odd numbers. But the word of the Lord comes, seeking whom it may visit and instruct, into the hand of the prophet Haggai, who had good works and in whose deeds the word of God could find rest. However, where hands are full of blood and Jesus is killed, and the people dare to say: His blood be upon us, and upon our children (Matt. XXVII), there the word of God does not happen. Even today, having impure hands, the fleshly Israel stretches out its hands to the Lord; but because they are full of blood, the Lord speaks to them through the prophet: If you stretch out your hands, I will turn my eyes away from you: for your hands are full of blood (Isai. I, XV). The word of the Lord does not fit in their hands, because they are unclean; the word of God does not come to them, because they kill the word of God within themselves. And it should not be thought that the word of the Lord was made only in the hands of the prophet Haggai, but because Haggai is interpreted as 'festive', anyone who can celebrate the feasts can receive the word of God, not in the leaven of old malice and wickedness, but in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:8). Let us also have clean hands, and let us be called **ἑορταῖς**, that is, celebrating feasts, and the word of God will come to us. Let us propose our eyes, because it is a spiritual law, spiritual solemnities, of which it is written: You shall celebrate feasts with me three times a year. You shall keep the solemnity of unleavened bread: for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you at the time of the new moon: for it is on that day that you came out of Egypt. You shall not appear before me empty-handed; and the feast of the firstfruits of your labors, whatever you sow in the field: and the feast of the ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your labors from the field (Exod. 23: 14, etc., and Deut. 16). If we want to become the Word of God within us, let us be like Haggai, that is, let us celebrate the feasts and not appear before God empty-handed (2 Cor. 9): sowing in the Spirit, let us reap eternal life from the Spirit; so that we may celebrate the feast of the ingathering at the end of the year, that is, the gathering of our labors from the field, and the feast of the firstfruits of our labors, whatever we sow in the field that the Lord has blessed. Let us also, like the Aggaeans, celebrate feasts in our works throughout our entire life until the end of the year, that is, until the departure from this age, which have arisen for us in our field. There are many things, not of this time, that can be said about the celebration, by which a diligent reader of Scripture can attain spiritual understanding. To Zerubbabel, son of Salathiel, prince of Judah, and to Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest, saying: We read in the Book of Chronicles that Jeconiah, who was taken into Babylon, was the father of Salathiel, from whom Zerubbabel descended (1 Chronicles 3:17). And indeed, when Matthew recounts the genealogy of the Savior, he says: After the Babylonian exile, Jeconiah became the father of Salathiel, Salathiel became the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel became the father of Abiud (Matthew 1:12-13). Here Zerubbabel of the tribe of Judah, that is, descended from the line of David, is a type of the Savior: who truly rebuilt the temple that had been destroyed, that is, the Church; and brought the people out of captivity. And he built the Church, both from the stones of the old temple and from the new ones, which had previously been

unpolished; that is, he built it from the remnants of the Jewish people and from the multitude of the Gentiles, and he erected a tabernacle for God the Father. However, it is interpreted according to the various accents of Hebrew speech, or the adjacent flow, exposed or arising in Babylon, or the prince of Babylon. The first interpretation of that flow is contrary, which is signified by the word Jezebel, that is, a vain flow, or the flow of menstruation, which certainly clearly signifies impurity. But Zebulun also signifies the flow of night. Therefore, leaving behind the vain and filthy and dark flow of this world, let us follow the flow of Jesus, who is presented to us to drink, and offers himself from the abundant fountain, according to what is said in the Gospel: Jesus stood in the temple and cried out, saying: If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink (John 7:37). And to this very place, then we will be able to drink, when we have asked of God the Father, according to what we read: Ask, and it shall be given you (Matthew 7:6). For Salathiel, indeed, translates to "petition of God." And no one comes to Jesus, unless the Father brings him (John 6:45). Therefore, a stream will be born for us, brought forth by the prayer of God, and it will be from the tribe of Judah, namely royal, and confessing or praising God, because Judas signifies both. Furthermore, the birth in Babylon, according to history, is truly said to be about Zerubbabel, because he was born there. But according to a deeper understanding, it also signifies our Lord Jesus: because he too was born in the confusion of this world, and was near the great river Chebar, and saw that great vision which Ezekiel (Chapter I) sees at the beginning of his scroll. And when I said that Zerubbabel is interpreted as the prince of Babylon, not that he is truly interpreted as a prince, I said this: for among the Hebrews, his name is said to be composed of two parts: 'zo' meaning 'this'; 'rob' meaning 'master' or 'chief'; and 'babel' properly signifies Babylon; therefore the name Zerubbabel is made, meaning 'this master from Babylon'. But for the sake of brevity of understanding on the above mentioned details, I wanted to interpret about Babylon, whether literally or metaphorically. Just as Joshua son of Nun, who himself was a type of the Savior, led the people from the wilderness into the promised land, so too this person is said to have been born in Babylon in order to lead those who were in Babylon back to the promised land from which they had been taken captive, and to say to those who were in chains: Go out. And those who sat in darkness: Be enlightened (Isaiah 49). But the word of the Lord, which was made in the hand of Haggai, is not only directed to Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, of whom we have already spoken; but also to Jesus, the son of Josedec, the high priest. As for the history, Zerubbabel is from the royal tribe, and Jesus is from the priestly tribe. But as for the spiritual understanding, our Lord and Savior is one and the same, a king and a high priest, whose type, according to what he was as a king, was carried by Zerubbabel: and according to what he was as a high priest, it was carried by his namesake Jesus, whose interpretation is Jao salvation, that is, the salvation of the Lord, and he is the son of Josedec, which itself is translated as Jao righteous, that is, the righteousness of the Lord. For the Father is a just and holy God, and so is the Son, and there is no injustice in them. Against Marcion and other heretics who assert that the Lord Savior is the son of some other good and unknown God, not of the Creator, whom they call just. And indeed Jesus is truly the great high priest, to whom all the overseers of God are compared and are small and insignificant. For if he is called the great high priest, it is certainly to distinguish him from those who are lesser. But all who are younger than him and come after him are inferior, just as the firstborn is of all creation, and the firstborn from the dead: so that he may be the chief and the great among all the priests.

1:2

(Ver. 2.) Thus says the Lord of hosts, saying: This people says, 'The time has not yet come, the time for the house of the Lord to be built.' Pay careful attention to the fact that it is not Zerubbabel or Joshua who says, 'The time has not yet come, the time for the house of the Lord to be built,' but the people who are still under the rule of King Darius and have not yet thrown off the yoke of servitude. And those who are still in captivity and have come out of Jerusalem delay and hesitate to build the temple of God, saying, 'The time has not yet come, the time for the house of the Lord to be built.' And when you see someone who has been handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that their spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord, make the effort to think and plan in order to build up the temple through purity, which was previously destroyed through lust. And yet, day after day, you say to yourself: Truly, you are a captive of the people, and you say: The time has not yet come for the house of the Lord to be built. But to those who have once decided to rebuild the temple of God, every moment is suitable for building; neither the devil as king, nor the enemies all around, nor the pretended affection of parents, in-laws, or children can hinder. As soon as you turn and call on the name of the Lord, he will say: Here I am.

1:3

(Verse 3) And the word of the Lord came by the hand of the prophet Haggai, saying: Is it time for you to dwell in paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins? Or as the Septuagint interprets, 'in vaulted buildings,' that is, concave structures. On the same day as before, this vision appears again. As the prophets engage in their work, the gifts of prophecy also increase, and after a brief silence, in response to what the people had said - that it is not yet time to rebuild the house of the Lord - the Lord's answer, as if thought out, is presented to them, and it is said to them: So is it not time for you to dwell in houses while you are down below and situated in the valley, and for my house, which is on the mountain, to remain in ruins? Or, as it is stated in Hebrew: that you may dwell in houses, adorned and arranged not so much for practical use as for pleasure, and my dwelling place where the holy of holies, the cherubim, and the table of showbread were kept, will be soaked by rain, become desolate, and scorched by the sun? Moreover, according to the anagoge: Every time that the habitation of the valley is chosen, or we serve pleasures, is troublesome. Hence, even the Stoics, who are concerned with defining individual words, said that time is the measure of correction or efficacy: which is expressed more significantly in Greek as χρόνον ἐναι κατωρθώσεως. For every moment in which we serve not by virtues, but by vices, is lost, and is considered as though it never happened. Therefore, if anyone among us dwells in a valley, or builds their own house in worldly pleasure and luxury, they do not build a temple for God, nor does the Lord have a place to rest his head. And when they build a house with foxes, the dwelling place of God becomes deserted.

1:4

(Verse 4.) And now thus says the Lord of hosts: Set your hearts upon your ways. Let there not be a time for speaking one thing and doing another: turn my commandments immediately into action. For the Lord is all-powerful who commands, and truly the authority of the all-powerful God is not light. Until now, your hearts have been enslaved to vices, without order, without a teacher, pursuing your desires wherever they led. But now the Lord commands you to prioritize charity within yourselves and to set your hearts upon your ways, so that you do nothing without judgment and consideration. Let the lamp of the law always go before your feet, and say: Lamp to my feet is

Your law and light to my paths (Ps. 118:105). Indeed, it is thus: Because you say, it is not the time to build the house of the Lord, and you yourselves dwell in houses that are sinking into the depths, while my house is deserted: consider, at the command of the Lord, and bring to mind what you have done, and what you have suffered.

1:5-6

(Verse 5, 6) You have sown much and brought in little: you eat but are not satisfied: you drink but are not filled with drink: you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm: and he that earned wages, earned them to put into a bag with holes. All the labor that you have built up your houses and neglected the house of God, has not had a consequence. For you have sown much and gathered little: you cannot say it is a result of famine, because the farmer has ceased to work the land. You also ate (lest perhaps someone would say that fasting was voluntary for you), and you were not satisfied, because you had gathered small fruits into barns. You drank wine from vineyards, but not only to make your heart rejoice, and it could be said of you: And wine cheers the heart of man (Ps. 104, 15). You had a cloak, but it did not repel the cold, nor preserve warmth. Whoever among you has gathered wages, either through trade or hired labor, has wasted labor in vain without reward. For just as if someone were to pour money into a bag with holes, it would flow out. Likewise, those who have returned from Babylon and have not yet built the house of God, but who are engaged in its construction every day, say: The time has not yet come to build the Lord's house; neither are they captives nor have they been fully granted freedom; but rather, as if they were placed in a narrow space, they have sown much and brought in little; they have eaten, but have not been satisfied; they have drunk, but have not been intoxicated; they have covered themselves, but have not been warmed; they have earned wages, only to put them into a bag with holes and lose them. If ever you see someone doing some righteous deeds amidst many sinful works, God is not so unjust as to forget the few good deeds because of the many evils; but He will only reap what he has sown on good soil, and gather it into His barns. But the one who is a complete apostate will not eat at all, but will perish from hunger. Moreover, the one who sows much and reaps little, eats little and not to satisfaction, as the Lord threatens in the curses of Leviticus: 'You shall eat, but not be satisfied' (Lev. 26:26). But whoever is holy, will eat until satisfied, and will be filled with what is written: The righteous eats to satisfy their soul (Prov. 13:25). Similarly, whoever does not drink completely will perish from thirst, as stated in Judith (if anyone wants to receive the book of the woman): And the little ones perished from thirst (Judith 8). But whoever drinks too little, does indeed drink, but not to the point of intoxication. Furthermore, who can say to the Lord: How glorious is your intoxicating cup (Psalm 22:6)! And Noah got drunk (Gen. IX): and although he was placed in Egypt, yet he gets intoxicated with wine at the banquet with Joseph and his brothers (Ibid., XLIII): he, because of the greatness of his joy and daily happiness with the apostles, will be called full of new wine (Act. II). However, how this exposition is not contrary to that in which the sons of Jonadab, the sons of Rechab, do not drink wine, and are praised by the Lord, in Jeremiah (Chapter XXXV), could be more competently discussed. After this, it is said to those who neglected to build the temple of the Lord: You have labored, and have not been warmed. This is understood from the one hundred and third psalm, in which it is said about God: The deep as a garment is his robe. Although according to the Hebrew truth it refers to the lands that are surrounded by the ocean, nevertheless, according to the translators of the Septuagint who said: 'τὸ περιβόλαιον αὐτοῦ', in the masculine gender, and not 'αὐτοῦς', in the

feminine gender, we are compelled to understand that it refers to God, because his wisdom is unfathomable, and the Lord makes darkness his hiding place (Psalms 17), and his sacraments are not revealed to the unworthy. And so the righteous rejoices, and says: In my heart I have hidden your words, so that I may not sin against you (Psalm 128:11). This cloak, woven from the diverse meanings and words of wisdom, does not allow the fervent spirit to cool, nor the heat of love to grow cold when the North wind blows. However, the one in the middle, who indeed has the cloak, but does not fully cover himself with it: just as he brings in little into the barn, and eats and drinks, but not to satisfaction or excess, so he covers himself with the cloak of his senses and works, but does not warm up. But he who, because of extreme poverty of the soul, does not have a cloak: does not have it, because, with multiplied iniquity, charity has grown cold in him (Matthew 24). Hence, concerning such a person, who possesses a cloak from another, it is commanded in the law: You shall give him a garment before the setting of the sun, for he is poor and has hope in him (Deuteronomy 24:15). But this also happens to those who dwelt in the valleys or in covered houses, and they said: The time has not yet come to build the house of the Lord, that they may gather wages into a perforated bag (Isaiah 40:10 and 62:11). If anyone does good works from us, and worthy of reward (which the Lord is about to give back to us, about whom it is said: Behold the Lord, and his reward is in his hands, to render to each person according to his works (Matt. XVI, 27). And another of the Apostles: If anyone's work remains, which he has built upon, he will receive a reward (I Cor. III, 13), here he gathers the rewards to be preserved and endured, always joining virtues with virtues, he heaps up money in an unbroken bag. But those who sin after good works, not once or twice, but frequently, obscure and defile their past charity with subsequent vices, and they gather money into the bottomless purse. All of these things happened to those who said, 'The time has not yet come to build the house of the Lord,' and while they resided in the valleys, they allowed the house of the Lord to remain deserted.

1:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) Thus says the Lord of hosts: Set your hearts upon your ways, go up to the mountain, bring wood, and build the house: and it shall be acceptable to me, and I will be glorified, says the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Lord Almighty: Set your hearts upon your ways, go up to the mountain, and cut wood (the rest is the same). Again, I command you, as I had done before, to set your hearts upon your ways, and consider all that you do, and leaving behind the desire for your humble dwellings, go up to the mountain where there are no wood to burn, but wood that will be useful for the work of my house. And know that I will be pleased with what you do, if you do this attentively. The Hebrews say that only the necessary wood for roofing was left standing after the walls of the temple were burned down. This is what they say. But for us, it is commanded that we do not place our hearts outside of our paths; but the things we had placed before, we are to place again on our paths, and after we have done this, we are to ascend from the hollow houses onto the mountain, so that when we reach the height of the mountain, where the necessary wood for building the temple of God is, we may cut it from the whole mountain of the holy Scripture, where various woods of virtues and paradise are planted, and we may build the temple of the Lord with good works and teachings of truth: and when it is built, may it please the Lord, and may he be glorified in it. Therefore, because these commands have been given to us to set our hearts on our ways, let us climb the reasonable mountain and, concerning each problem, seek suitable evidence from the testimonies of the Scriptures, cut it off, and build the house of wisdom within us; for after

this has been constructed, the end of its building will be that the Lord may be glorified in us.

1:9

(Verse 9.) You looked for more, and behold, there was less: and you brought it into the house, and I blew it away: You looked for many things, and they became few: and you brought them into the house, and I blew them away. Cast aside delay, and set aside all ambiguity, that you may more diligently build my house, as well as whatever has happened to you who have delayed building my house, not as before: You sowed much, but because the earth did not yield a harvest, you brought little; but when the crops began to ripen and the time of harvest drew near, and you thought you would have the grain in your hands, you harvested empty stalks and gathered empty husks without the fruits of the spikes. The fields were full: hope in the eyes, sorrow in the hands. But even this very thing that had been selected from a plentiful harvest and countless heaps, you brought into the house, and by my power, it was scattered. For I blew it away, and reduced it to nothingness; because the dead grain and empty husks, which are useful for eating, did not have flour and fine meal. However, this can be said: you brought it into the house, and I blew it away, and I will receive the gifts that they offered on the altar, and God will blow them away. But because he said, 'You have brought it into the house,' if we understand those things which have been brought as gifts, we say that they have been offered in the temple. And it does not agree with us, because at that time the house of God had not yet been built: which indeed happens even today to many who live in humble buildings, and as far as they are concerned, they despise the deserted house of God and when they are able to build, they disregard it: and as if already seeing mature crops, they promise themselves the fruit of their works, and deceived by hope, they find hardly anything great in return. But even these small things, which they had stored in the house and in the granary, are blown away by the Word of God, as if unworthy of His custody and protection. How often have I seen so much hope in their teaching as well as in their conduct: and after it came time to reap, that is, the time to teach and to provide an example for the people, they were found wanting, and fell from their lofty positions, and were found to be less than what everyone expected. It happened that gradually, due to sudden negligence, they lost even the little they seemed to have. However, they endured this because they felt secure in their former homes, and did not ascend the mountain of Scriptures, cutting down the wood of the Lord's building, nor did they build a daily house for the Lord within themselves; but despising its desolation, they also lost what they believed they had. The aforementioned evils are explained by this cause.

1:10

(Verse 10) Therefore, says the Lord of hosts, because my house is deserted, and each of you hastens to his own house, for this reason the heavens are withheld from you so that they do not give rain, and the earth withholds its produce. Not only, he says, did the heavens not give rain, by which the watered soil produces crops; but not even the morning and evening dew, so that the dry fields, at least, are tempered with a little moisture. Moreover, it also devours the land, not returning the seed to the farmers, and it holds in its greedy lap what it usually produces spontaneously. I believe this to be the dew, of which it is said in the blessing to Jacob: May God give you the dew of heaven (Gen. 27:28), and the dew of Hermon that descends upon Mount Zion (Psalm 133), and it descends not from the air in which the number of varied eagles, hawks, and vultures fly and soar, but from heaven, so that if someone's soul is burning with disturbances, and wounded by the

devil's spear, it may be cooled by this dew and moderate its heat. With the ground held back, the earth does not yield its fruit. For without the dew of Christ, no soul can bring forth wheat.

1:11

(Verse 11.) And I called upon drought upon the earth, and upon the mountains, and upon the wheat, and upon the wine, and upon the oil, and upon whatever the earth brings forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon every labor of the hands. For drought, the Seventy translated as 'gladius', that is, sword: but I also found it written in Hebrew with three letters (), Heth, Res, Beth, which if we read as Hareb, it means sword; if Oreb, it means burning, which we have translated as drought, although it could be better translated as scorching wind. And truly, since the discourse is about the land, and about the sterility of the fields, it seems to me that the scorching wind should be understood in the present place, rather than a sword: although every plague that is inflicted on men because of their sins can also be understood as a sword. But drought, or a sword, has been called upon the land and the mountains, so that they do not produce wheat, and wine, and oil, and whatever the earth produces spontaneously. Moreover, preceding famine, death comes upon men, and upon beasts as a consequence. And the same sword or burning wind consumes everything that the hands of men have labored. It is called and introduced living speech of God, and effective, and sharp above every two-edged sword (Heb. IV), so that the neglectful soul (which is interpreted as a dry land, and desires to dwell more in hollows than to build the house of God) may be struck by its blade, and whatever fruits it thinks it has, may be scattered. The sword is also brought against the mountains that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, and against the wheat, and wine, and oil, with which they deceive the people who have been deceived by the assemblies of heretics, as if with food and drink and refreshment: One may rightly say that their bread is the bread of sorrow, and their wine is the fury of dragons, and the fury of unhealable asps. Also, the oil, the promise of heavenly things, with which they anoint their disciples, and promise rewards for their labors, which the prophet detests, saying: But the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head (Psal. CXL). But the sword of God strikes also other things which they find and fabricate without authority and testimonies of the Scriptures, by their own tradition of the apostles; but we shall understand men and beasts, or reasonings and perceptions, that is, their thoughts and senses. Certainly there are rational and irrational ones among them, that is, learned and unlearned alike, and all kinds of manual labor, and their fasts, and various observances, and sham rest, that is, sleeping on the ground. Those who fast three times a year for forty days, and afflict their souls with dry food, and especially those who grow from the root of Tatian, hear of such labors: You have suffered so much without cause. But all these things that I have said can be understood about the rulers of the Church, who, while building their earthly house and providing for their children and possessions, do not care to build the temple of God within themselves or the Church of the Lord, which is uncovered and in ruins: their often inconsistent life and speech scandalize many, and they are expelled from the Church and led to the solitude of the house of God. And by saying this, we do not accuse all people in general, but rather that in every duty and position there are some who build up and others who tear down the temple of God. And because of their vice, neither the dew of the heavens nor the fruit of the earth may be dried up, the soil may be parched, the mountains may be barren, wheat and oil and all that the earth produces may perish, and even the people themselves and the animals, and all the work of hands, may be destroyed by the sword or by drought or by burning wind.

1:13

(Verse 13) And Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel heard, and Joshua son of Jehozadak the high priest, and all the remnant of the people, the voice of their God (the Vulgate adds 'the Lord') and the words of the prophet Haggai, as the Lord their God had sent him to them. And the people feared before the Lord's presence. Pay close attention, because of the two understandings of the Savior in Zerubbabel as leader and Joshua as priest (for he is both king and priest), that it did not say Zerubbabel and Joshua feared, but when Zerubbabel and Joshua and the people heard the words of the prophet Haggai, which are the words of the Lord, only the people feared before the Lord's presence, that is, only the multitude, which had not yet come together into one complete man, nor deserved to be united to the Spirit what the Spirit is. But the people were afraid of the face of the Lord, knowing that the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off their memory from the earth (Psalm 34).

1:13

(Verse 13.) And the messenger of the Lord, Haggai, said to the people: I am with you, says the Lord. Some believe that both John the Baptist and Malachi, who is interpreted as the Angel of the Lord, and Haggai, whom we now have in our hands, were angels and that by the dispensation and command of God they assumed human bodies and lived among men. It is not surprising that this is believed about angels, since for our salvation even the Son of God assumed a human body. And for this reason, they also provide testimony from the apocrypha, where it is said: Jacob, who was later called Israel, was an angel and therefore he supplanted his brother in the womb of his mother (Gen. 25 and 32). And also John, at the voice of Mary the mother of the Lord, leaped for joy in the womb of Elizabeth (Luke 1); and that there is one nature of all rational beings; and for this reason, men who have pleased God become equal to angels. Let them feel this. However, let us receive simply what the announcer of the Lord, that is, the angel, who is called Malachi in Hebrew, has said as a prophet, because he has announced the will of God to the people, either because in many places our Lord and Savior is called the angel of God, as in this passage: The Angel of Great Counsel (Isaiah 9:6), we say has prefigured the Savior in Haggai. Furthermore, what he says, the messenger of the Lord, concerning the messages of the Lord, is like he was saying, a prophet about prophets. What he says, the messenger of the Lord speaking to the people, saying: 'I am with you,' says the Lord, does not speak to Zerubbabel and Joshua, with whom and in whom the Lord always was (for once we said that they should be understood according to various interpretations as the person of the Savior), but to the people who had feared the face of the Lord. For the people were not yet close to the love of God, which casts out fear. Therefore, the people receive reward for the fear of God, so that the Lord may be with them, and there is the understanding: I will be your helper, build my house, which is destroyed in you: I will place myself in your midst, no one will be able to hinder your construction.

1:14

(Verse 14) And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the rest of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius. For the governor of Judah, seventy were carried away from the tribe of Judah, and for the work, the workers; and the rest

likewise. Wherever we place ourselves, the Lord of hosts is interpreted differently as either the Almighty Lord, the Lord of hosts, or the Lord of powers. Therefore, the spirit of Zorobabel and the spirit of Jesus are awakened, according to the letter, to build the temple of God with kingdom and priesthood. The spirit of the people, who was sleeping within them, is also awakened, not the body, not the soul; but as we said, the spirit, which knows how to build the temple of God. And they entered, for they had been outside, and they were doing works that were worthy of the inner part of the house of the Lord: in the same year of King Darius as before, in the same month that was also at the beginning; but not on the same day. For there, one day of the month is placed: but here the twenty-fourth, so that between the first day, when the Lord speaks through Haggai, and the twenty-fourth, when they entered and were doing work in the house of the Lord, there were twenty-two middle days, as many as the letters are among the Hebrews. For it was necessary that they be taught what were the elements of the beginning of God's words, which would prevent them from saying, 'The time has not yet come to build the house of the Lord and to dwell in vaulted houses, and as I said before, to be submerged in the depths. But they were provoked to set their hearts on their own ways, and to remember how much they had suffered through negligence. And to ascend the mountain, and to cut wood, and to build the house of the Lord, and not to allow what they had suffered before. Finally, in these twenty-two days, the people feared the face of the Lord, and they entered on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month of the second year of King Darius, and they were doing the work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God. But it is commanded to us, that the spiritual house may be built into a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, that we may be able to provide such offerings, so that the Holy Spirit may be stirred up in us, and we may enter into the house of the Lord, and perform the works of the Lord. For now Zorobabel of the lineage of David, and Jesus the priest, has been raised up by the Father in power, according to the spirit of sanctification from the resurrection of the dead, so that he may preside over the work; but we, with him as our helper and guide, shall perform the works of God. However, we cannot do the works of God beforehand, unless we fear the face of the Lord, and believe, and enter the temple of God, and perform those things that are worthy of the house of God. But since we are still in the world, and the time of our building is under the reign of Darius, in which generation, marriages, and carnal servitude are observed; therefore, in the sixth number, when the world was made, and in the second year, which divides the union (for the matter in which the renewal of the world and the birth of offspring consist loves the double number), we enter the house of the Lord, and with both peoples gathered together, we build the temple of God. For the sum of the twenty-fourth number consists of two of the twelve numbers, because just as from circumcision and from the Gentiles, the first Church of Christ, which had been destroyed, was built. But we can also say this, because the eighth number, which is holy, and is taken in the type of true circumcision, triples the twenty-fourth number, figuratively teaching us to build the house of the Lord through the cutting off of the flesh and the circumcision of vices, and to believe in the true purity in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, another six times a fourth number is computed, and four refers to the elements of the world, from which we subsist; but six refers to the condition of the world, in which the elements themselves revolve. And it says: because we are still in matter, and are surrounded by a heavy body, and serve generations, indeed we are to build a temple and enter into the house of God, and as if awakened from a heavy sleep, our spirit; but still to do the same thing on the twenty-fourth day.

(Chapter 2, Verse 1 and following) In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying: Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: Who among you is left who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing? And now, be strong, Zerubbabel, declares the Lord, be strong, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, be strong, all you people of the land, declares the Lord Almighty, and work; for I am with you, declares the Lord Almighty. This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear. For thus says the Lord Almighty: In a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land, and I will shake all nations. And the desired one will come to all nations, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, says the Lord of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, says the Lord of hosts. In the same year, but in the seventh month, on the first and twenty-first day of the month, after three weeks and the perfect rest of the mystery of the Trinity, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai, who was constantly toiling to always have the word of God with him. Forgetting the past and reaching forward to the future (Phil. III), he worked daily as if he had nothing accomplished before. So it is said to him: Speak to Zerubbabel and to Joshua, and to the remnant of the people, who have seen the former house of God, and who are now part of its restoration. Is not this that is seen comparable to the previous one, as if it were not even there in a certain way? But do not despair and do not let your hands grow weary, but you, Zerubbabel, and you, Joshua, and all people, take courage and do the work in my house. For I am with you, and my word that I made with you when you came out of the land of Egypt. And my spirit will not leave you: do not be afraid, I am the one who commands, the Almighty Lord, whose word is done. When I first gave the testament, and on Mount Sinai I appeared, I shook the heavens and the earth, and the Red Sea, and the desert, so that I might establish the Testament with you; but now I promise you that once again I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land, so that when they are shaken, all nations may be shaken, and they may come according to the seventy chosen ones of the Lord from all nations; but according to the Hebrew, the desired one will come to all nations, our Lord and Savior. Then I will fill this house with a greater glory than the former, and I will always add to you, says the Lord Almighty. And lest you think the sponsor is weak: the gold is mine, and the silver is mine, and all the riches are mine. I will give gold and silver as ornaments for the temple, so that the glory of this house may be greater than that of the former. And because what I promise seems difficult, and human unfaithfulness always hesitates at greater promises, therefore I say again, I am the Lord Almighty who promises. Furthermore, because I know that for the construction of this renowned house, and for the fact that it is a supernatural house, nothing can be done so that there may be peace, therefore I promise this. For I will give peace in this place, says the Lord of hosts, so that the peace which surpasses all understanding may guard my house and be a place of peace. Meanwhile, I have drawn these explanatory lines in a paraphrastic manner, so that from them, even while we remain silent, a discerning reader may ascend to a higher understanding. So the word of God fit well with those who had begun to work in the house of the Almighty Lord, now at rest, that is, in the seventh month, and in the fullest sacrament of the Trinity, on the twenty-first day of the month, and to Haggai celebrating the feast

of God, who had once again prepared his hand to the word of the Lord, and he says to him: Speak to Zerubbabel from the tribe of Judah, and to Joshua the high priest, who deigned to become both man and Priest for us, and to the remnant of the people: for in comparison to the whole world, a small part was in the beginning of the believers. Therefore, let us listen to what he has spoken. Once there was a house of God in Israel, which is now so deserted that it is not believed to have ever existed. From being beloved, it has become unbeloved, and those who were not the people of God have begun to be the people of God. And that house, which was once glorious, now in the sight of Zerubbabel and Joshua and the remnant of the people, is as if it does not exist. But we should not only understand this to mean the temple buildings that we see have collapsed, but also everything that the Jews once held in high esteem. However, because the previous house was almost nonexistent, Zerubbabel the leader and Joshua the priest are called upon to establish the kingdom of Christ and priesthood and to enable the people, once the people of the land, to work in the house of the Lord and know that God is present with them. They should also fulfill the word that the Lord made with them when they departed from the land of Egypt. And I hope that we also depart from Egypt, so that we fulfill the word of the testament that we have received. The Lord God also promises his works to those who do them in his house, and fulfills his word to those who receive it, saying: 'And my spirit will be among you.' Behold the sacrament of the Trinity: I am with you, and my spirit, and the Word, in whom I made my covenant when you go forth from Egypt. But what he says 'among you' should be understood according to what is written in the Gospel: 'There stands among you, whom you do not know, one who comes after me' (John 1:26). Therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts to you who see the former house as it is now, 'It is as nothing in your eyes. For I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, when the voice of the Lord will be heard from heaven. I am going to shake the earth, when I gave the former people the covenant; and in my coming, darkness, storm, and darkness were seen. I moved the Red Sea, when I made a way for the people passing through. I moved the desert, or Egypt, through the plagues, emptying them of the worship of God, or through the wilderness where I led the people for forty years.' I will now move on to this. Which we see happen at the coming of the Lord and Savior. Indeed, at the time of his passion, with the sun setting, the sky was in motion and darkness occurred over the whole earth from the sixth hour until the ninth hour (Matt. XXVII and Luc. XXIII). The earth was moved, and rocks were split, and tombs were opened; the sea was stirred with the serpent that was in it being killed; the dry, once barren wilderness of the nations was also moved. But in this trembling of the whole world, all nations were also moved; for the sound of the apostles of the Lord went forth into all the earth, and their words reached to the ends of the world (Ps. 18). For this reason, all nations were moved, that from their movement a chosen multitude of nations might come forth, and those things which are illustrious wherever they may be. For example, chosen from Corinth, because there was a great multitude of God's people in it. Chosen from Macedonia, because the Church of God gathered in Thessalonica was great and did not need to be taught about charity (1 Thess. 14). Electa of Ephesus, so that they may know the mysteries of God and the sacraments never before revealed. What more? all the nations were stirred, to whom the Savior had sent the apostles, saying: Go, teach all the nations (Matt. XXVIII, 29), and from the many called, few chosen, built the Church of the first Christians. Therefore Peter the apostle also says: She who is in Babylon, elect, greets you, and so does my son Mark (1 Pet. V, 15), and John: The elder, he says, to the elect lady; and then he mentions the children of the elect. Therefore, with these nations in turmoil, from which we can indeed receive opposing strengths, not being able to endure

the splendor of the Lord, the chosen ones of all nations came, and the glory of the house of the Lord, which is the Church of the living God, was filled, the pillar and foundation of truth. This is according to the Septuagint. However, in Hebrew, it is held better and more significantly as we have mentioned before: And I will shake all nations, and the desired one will come to all nations. For truly, after he came, the glory of the house of the Lord was fulfilled. And as much as the Lord is distant from the servant, so much better is the house of the Lord, which the Lord presides over, than the previous house over which the servant presided. But when he says, 'The silver is mine, and the gold is mine,' the Lord of hosts says, I think no one believes that he is speaking of silver and gold, which are possessed by the rich and the kings. For in this manner, not only silver and gold are God's, as if of the Creator; but also the other metals, bronze, tin, lead, and the iron that tames all things. But I consider the silver with which the house of God is adorned to be the words of Scripture, of which it is said: The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried by fire, refined of earthly impurities seven times (Ps. 12:6); and the gold that is in the secret sense of the saints, and dwells in the hidden depths of the heart, and shines with the true light of God, which it is clear the Apostle understood when he speaks of those who build upon the foundation of Christ, as gold, silver, precious stones (1 Cor. 3); so that in gold there is hidden meaning, in silver there is appropriate speech, in precious stones there are works pleasing to God. The Church of the Savior becomes more illustrious with these metals, which once was a synagogue; with these living stones the house of Christ is built, and eternal peace is offered to it. Furthermore, what follows in the Septuagint: 'And peace of soul for the possession of every creature, that it may raise up this temple, as something superfluous and barely connected, since it is not reported by any Hebrew or any other interpreter, we have omitted.'

2:11-16

(Verse 11 and following). On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius ((Vulg. adds King)), the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts; ask the priests concerning the law, saying: If a man carries holy flesh in the fold of his garment, and touches bread, or stew, or wine, or oil, or any kind of food, shall it become holy? And the priests answered and said: No. And Haggai said: If someone who is polluted in soul touches any of these things, will it be contaminated? And the priests answered and said: It will be contaminated. And Haggai replied and said: So will this people and this nation be before me, says the Lord; and so will all the work of their hands and all that they offer there be contaminated. On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts; ask the priests concerning the law, saying: If a person takes holy flesh in the corner of his garment and touches with the corner of his garment bread, or cooked food, or wine, or oil, or any kind of food, shall it be sanctified? And the priests answered and said, No. And Haggai said, If one who is unclean by reason of a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean? The priests answered and said, It becomes unclean. Then Haggai answered and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, says the Lord, and so is every work of their hands; and whatever they offer there is unclean. Therefore, whoever comes near there becomes unclean, because of the morning offerings and the sacrifices that are offered there; they shall mourn because of their evil doings, and they shall be appalled at their own abominable practices. Therefore, we have included the edition of the Seventy Interpreters, because they seemed to differ in certain words. And this that is said: Because of their

morning gifts, they will lament from the face of their wickedness, and they will argue at the gates with the ones who bring sweet-smelling offerings; neither in Hebrew, nor among other interpreters is it found. It should be noted that in this place: On the twentieth and fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year, it is not said for the third time as above: The word of the Lord came into the hand of the prophet Haggai; but it is said to the prophet Haggai. For there, because it was still making progress and only the works were pure, but his heart had not yet received full wisdom; either because he was still living among those who said, 'The time has not yet come to build the house of the Lord,' only his works became the word of the Lord. But now, since the foundations of the temple have been laid and the people have entered with their leaders into the house of God, and he is doing work befitting the temple of God, and he has heard the mystery: 'I will shake all nations, and the Desired One of all nations will come, and he is full of prophecy;' therefore, the whole oracle of the Lord is directed to Haggai. On the twenty-fourth day and the second year, we have already said: the number nine, which is added here, is never read in a good way. The people sacrifice the Passover lamb and celebrate other festivities; the whole solemnity ends on the eighth day and does not reach the ninth. Those who prepare the Passover lamb begin preparing it after the ninth day has passed. The day of atonement and expiation of the seventh month is also celebrated after the ninth day. And in Jeremiah (Chap. XIX and LII), as it can be clear to those reading, Jerusalem is besieged by the Babylonians in the ninth year. Therefore, because the prophecy of the impending defilement of the people was to come true, in the second year of Darius the ninth month is joined. Again, because a place of repentance is given after the correction of defilement, on the twenty-fourth day the word of God comes to the prophet Haggai, so that, as if in the person of the Lord, a question is asked of the priests coming from the law, and it is said to him: Ask the priests the law, saying. At the same time, consider it to be the duty of priests to respond to inquiries about the law. If someone is a priest, they should know the law of the Lord; if they are ignorant of the law, they prove themselves not to be a priest of the Lord. For it is the role of a priest to know the law and to respond to inquiries about the law. Indeed, we read in Deuteronomy (Chapter 17) that whenever a dispute arises in the towns of Israel between blood and blood, between judgment and judgment, between leprosy and leprosy, between contradiction and contradiction, they should go to the priests and Levites, and to the priest who is appointed in those days, and inquire about the law of the Lord. And when they have received a response, they should do as they are commanded. But if they do not do so, they shall be exterminated from their people. And lest these precepts appear only in the old Instrument, the Apostle also speaks to Timothy, that a bishop must not only be irreproachable, but also the husband of one wife, wise, chaste, adorned, hospitable, and also a teacher (1 Tim. 3). And lest it seem by chance that he said this, the same caution is observed in regard to the ordination of presbyters (whom he also wants to be understood as bishops) in Titus (1:5-9). Because of this, I left you in Crete, so that you could correct the things that needed finishing and appoint elders in each city, just as I instructed you: If any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children who are not accused of wildness or unruly behavior. For a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God, not self-willed, not easily angered, not given to violence, not a striker, not greedy for filthy lucre; but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, holy, self-controlled, holding firmly to the faithful message as taught, so that he may be able to encourage others by sound teaching and to refute those who contradict it. For there are many who are not subject, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whom it is necessary to silence. I have explained these things

at length so that we may know that it is the duty of priests, both in the old and new Testament, to know the law of God and to respond to what they are asked. And simplicity and abstinence from foods are not enough in a teacher: unless he can also instruct others by what he does. Certainly, because I think they will answer: this is the task of those who from their youth prepare themselves for teaching, and who are often chosen as priests by the judgment of the Lord and the vote of the people. At least let them have this, that after they have been ordained as priests, they learn the law of God, so that they can teach what they have learned, and increase their knowledge more than their wealth, and not be ashamed to learn from laypeople, who know those things that pertain to the office of priests, and rather spend their nights and days in the study of the Scriptures than in reasoning and calculation. What is it that Haggai, speaking in the Lord's name, asks the priests? If a man carries holy flesh in the fold of his garment and touches bread, stew, wine, oil, or any food, will it become holy? Before we discuss the question, we must first understand, according to the written word, what holy flesh is and what defiles the soul. The sacrifices that were offered on the altar consisted of these holy meats, and among them there was a great diversity. For some priests were eating in the inner sanctuary of the temple, others at home, others who seemed to be blemished from among the priests, and others who were Israelites and had no impurity. The reason for this diversity is said to be found in the book of Leviticus. However, one who had touched the body of a dead person was called unclean in the soul. In this, it should be noted that as long as the soul is in the body, the human body is not unclean. But as soon as the animating spirit leaves the limbs, that which is earthly becomes unclean, as it is written in the same book of Leviticus: 'And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the priests the sons of Aaron, and you shall say to them: They shall not become unclean in their souls among their people; but they may become unclean among their relatives who are close to them: over their mother, and over their father, and over their sons and daughters, and over their brothers and sisters who are virgins and who are not given to a husband. They shall not become unclean over these, and they shall not defile themselves suddenly among their people in their defilement.' (Lev. 21:1-2) Consider this command for the priests not to enter any dead person, except for their relatives and close ones, as mentioned above. But the high priest, that is, the pontiff, had something more than the other priests: neither piety nor affection could persuade him to become unclean in the aforementioned cases. For Scripture says: And he shall not enter on any soul that is dead: not even on his father or mother, and he shall not defile himself. Therefore, knowing what sanctified flesh is, and what is unclean in the soul, let us see what the prophet seeks. If any man, not this man who is called the Pontiff, or the priest, or the Levite; but any man: where the person is not specified, it is allowed to everyone everywhere to touch the flesh. If he takes, he says, the sanctified flesh, and ties it to the top of his garment, and the top of the garment touches bread, or any other cooked food, or wine, or oil, or any food besides these that a man can eat, can the bread, or wine, or oil, or any food, be sanctified by touching the garment to which the holy flesh is bound? And the responding priests said: It is not possible, that is, nothing of what you ask will be sanctified; but everything will remain as it was. Again, another question is posed to the priests: namely, if they have answered well to the previous one, and a similar problem is presented, in which an ignorant person could easily slip up. For let us suppose that someone does not know the law, and as he answered that sanctified meat does not sanctify bread, or porridge, or wine, or oil, or any food, he will also respond in this case and say: The defiled in the soul does not defile those things which the holy flesh could not sanctify. Therefore, he asks: If someone who is polluted in their soul, meaning someone who has

become impure from contact with a dead body, touches any of these things, namely bread or porridge or wine or oil or other foods, will the things they touch be polluted as well? And the priests, whose leader was Jesus son of Josedec, who knew the law, answered and said that anything touched by someone who is impure will be polluted. And Haggai answered and said, keeping silent about the former things, that consecrated flesh cannot sanctify other foods; and he addressed the second question, saying: Thus says the Lord: This people and this nation, in my presence, are unclean in their souls, and if they touch anything that is dead, whatever they touch and whatever they offer to me will be unclean. And what he says according to the letter, is this: O people, who, after just building the altar and destroying my house, offer sacrifices to me on the altar, and think that you are sanctified by its victims and flesh: know that you are not sanctified by the sacrifices, which, with the temple destroyed, cannot benefit you; but rather, all your works and everything you do are contaminated because you neglect and are more concerned with building your own house than mine. Indeed, the offering on the altar is sacred; but you are not sanctified so much by the sacrifices as by dwelling in the valleys and being involved in dead works, you are polluted. This is according to history, although we have drawn spiritual lines of intelligence from it. Furthermore, according to the **■ναγωγ■**, just as Ecclesiasticus says, the man who offered an unblemished lamb and a yearling and was clothed with Christ, if he takes of its flesh and binds it on the top of his garment, and the top touches the bread of Scripture, which strengthens the hearts of believers, or the cooking, the apostolic Epistles, which cuts and cooks the flesh of the old Law and provides them for eating, or the wine that gladdens the heart of man, or the oil in which the face of the hearer is brightened, or any food: milk, with which the Corinthians are nourished (I Cor. 2), and vegetables on which the weak feed (Rom. XIV, 3), and other similar things: they do not immediately eat them as if they were sanctified, to whomever they may be given. For it is not from what is said, but from what is received, that the hearers are sanctified: because many are hearers of the law, but not doers. But also for this reason I believe that all these things which I have said, are not sanctified when carried from the touch of the garment to those who eat, because they only touch the surface of the cloak; and the inward parts, the moisture, the blood, the veins, and the nerves, are not known to be sanctified. Therefore, just as the surface of the Lord's garment and a light touch do not sanctify, unless the one who eats the flesh of the lamb and drinks his blood: so, on the contrary, uncleanness in the soul, and various perverse teachings, make whatever they touch unclean. For they have in their sacraments bread and wine and oil and all kinds of food; but their sacraments are like bread of mourning, all who touch them will be contaminated. They also read the Scriptures themselves and, as it were, sprinkle bread with testimonies from the Scriptures, and they cook it all night in a pan; but when it is given to be eaten, those who eat it are provoked to madness. They have porridge and cooking, attempting to weave mystical things from the Scriptures according to the sense of their own perversity, and as if to cook and season the flesh of the lamb, but that cooking is destruction. They have wine, but not from the vineyard of Sorek, which the Lord planted in Jeremiah, chosen and entirely true (Jer. II); but from the vineyard of Sodom. They also have oil, which they violently extract from the testimonies of the Old and New Scriptures, and promise it as a refreshment to deceived and weary minds; but the holy one detests it, and says: But the oil of the sinner will not anoint my head (Ps. CXL, 5). They also have various foods, namely, the multitude of various assumptions and various treatises, which, because they are written by the unclean, and have been uttered by an unclean mouth, whoever touches them will become unclean and be drawn into their error. Then Aggaeus replied, who knows the

differences of festivals, and for that reason he obtained the name: Thus, this people and this nation, namely the Jews, and the Gentiles, and all heretics, in my sight, says the Lord: Everything they have done, whether they have offered it to me as vows for salvation, or for peace, or for sin, or for offense, or as a burnt offering, or as alms, or as fasting, or as self-control in food, or as bodily chastity, will be defiled in my sight. Although they may appear holy in their outward appearance, those things that are offered by such individuals are tainted because they have been touched by someone whose soul is defiled. Everything becomes polluted.

2:17-18

(Verse 17 onwards) Now set your hearts from this day and above, before the stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the Lord. When you approached a heap of twenty measures, and it became ten, and you entered the winepress to press out fifty jars, and it became twenty. I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the work of your hands, yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. LXX: And now set your hearts from this day, and upward, before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord, when you were sent to the storehouse of barley twenty sata, and they became ten sata of barley. And I struck you with barrenness, and with mildew, and with hail, in all the works of your hands: and you returned not to me, saith the Lord. Although all the offerings that you presented to me on the altar were contaminated (since you did not build the temple, every gift is defiled); I now urge you, O people, to reflect on the past and consider what has been done, that is, everything from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of the second year of Darius. Embrace in your mind everything that has happened and why, and how much you have endured, so that when fortunate things happen to you in the future, you will know the reason why. Therefore, before you started building the temple and laying stone upon stone, when you approached the heap and thought you had twenty bushels, could you not have collected barely half? Or according to the Septuagint: When you poured twenty bushels of barley into a vessel called a cysele, and you thought that even though you were pouring barley, the food for the animals, you would still be secure with those twenty bushels, could you not later, having returned to the vessel, find barely ten bushels? When you approached the winepress, you saw grapes, and your eyes promised you fifty amphorae: I do not mean half, but you could hardly squeeze out twenty amphorae. And I did this by striking you with burning wind, and the corruption of the air, and the dying crops, and the empty husks of grain, and the clusters of vines, so that I might provoke you to come to my notice by the weight of evils: and still there was no one who would return to me. The Hebrew [prophet] includes in these words the entire content of this passage - from the statement: And now lay your hearts from this day and higher up, until the place where it is said: a vineyard and fig and pomegranate tree, and olive wood has not blossomed, from this day I will bless, thus he explains (or Alb.: he explains): Certainly now the foundations of the temple are laid; therefore, from this day on which you have laid the foundations (since in the past I punished you with sterility, and hunger, and hail, and drought, and there was no one among you who would turn to me through these plagues), lay your hearts in the future and henceforth, and see that all things flow to you in a prosperous course. But this will happen because you have begun to build my temple: not having confidence in the sole altar, you despise the building of my house. In short, we can say that it is in vain for some to offer gifts to God and think that God can be appeased by alms and offerings when they themselves have not built a temple for the Holy Spirit within themselves. For then alms and gifts offered on the altar are beneficial when someone has built the

temple of God within themselves and after the building of the temple, they present gifts on the altar. Furthermore, according to the moral interpretation, it is also said to us who now believe in Jesus Christ, if, however, we believe and demonstrate the truth by the work of faith, that we should return in mind to that time when we were Gentiles, serving daily in vices, and we had not built a temple for God within us. But just as an architect and most skillful mason joins one stone to another, and fastens the lower to the upper with lime and gypsum: so too the architect (whom the apostle himself claims to be: 'As a wise architect, I have laid the foundation' - 1 Corinthians 3:10), and whom the Lord threatens to destroy the temple of Jerusalem) knows how to join works to works, and gradually build the temple of God. But the foundation of this temple is laid by Jesus, on whom everyone sees what he builds: one builds with gold, silver, precious stones; another with wood, hay, straw. And three good things are opposed by three contrary evils. These are the stones from which the Lord promises to rebuild Jerusalem: Behold, I will set your carbuncle stone, and your foundations sapphire, and I will set your battlements with jasper. I won't think according to Jewish fables and foolish imaginings that God will build Jerusalem with gold and precious stones, but with living stones. Stones that now roll on the ground, being in accordance with the nature of stones, either fiery like a carbuncle, or completely heavenly and brought to the throne of God, like a sapphire, or shining with innocence and the simplicity of good works, like a crystal. Therefore, it is said to us that we should consider what we have achieved before we built the temple of God within us. When you approached, he said, a heap of twenty bushels became ten: or according to the Septuagint: When you put twenty bushels of barley into the sieve, they became ten bushels of barley. For whatever virtues and good works we seemed to have before Christ, it was not wheat, but barley: and that barley, it did not give us a hundredfold fruits as we read about Isaac, but we could hardly find even half of our labor's worth from it, and it was said to us: Have you suffered so much in vain? But even when we entered the winepress and calculated fifty wine amphorae (a number which, when completed after seven weeks, includes the unity of divinity), and thought we had wine, which gladdens the heart of man, the sacred number thirty would be taken away from us (in which the Lord is baptized, and Ezekiel sees the vision at the beginning of his prophecy, and according to the Hebrew, priests approached the service of God), and twenty were left. Esau, who loves numbers, knowing that Jacob takes pleasure in this number, sends certain animals as a gift, twenty and twenty. Also, notice that Jacob himself, though holy (but at that time he was not with his father Isaac, that is, with laughter; nor with his mother Rebecca, that is, with patience; but he had neighboring Assyrians, and he lived in Mesopotamia, surrounded by rivers), served Laban for a cruel and greedy twenty-year period (Gen. XXXII). And it does not move anyone if we say that some, before the faith of Christ and the destruction of His temple, can receive the reward of their labor in part, since among unbelievers there is no fruit of good works. For he does not deposit twenty and find twenty, but when he has deposited twenty, he finds ten, that is, the reward for half of his labor. The Jews, and the Gentiles, and the philosophers of this age, and the others who boast of wisdom, in the present time of their conversation and labor, enjoy the fruit and glory of all their hope, and the reward of the future age is taken away. But this is done so that they do not completely despair and dismiss repentance; but that sometimes, when converted, they may set stone upon stone and build the temple of God. But if they remain in unbelief, they will lose the very thing that they seemed to have. For it follows: I struck you with a burning wind, and with mildew, and with hail, all the works of your hands. Whatever is struck by mildew and hail and a burning wind is reduced to dust and ashes, and nothing is found in it that

pertains to usefulness and sustenance. All these things the Lord has done because no one has been found among them who would return to him. But if they return and build the temple of the Lord, from the day they start building, they will have what the prophecy foretold.

2:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) Set your hearts from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day on which the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, set it on your hearts. Is the seed still in the barn? And yet the fig tree, the vine, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded fruit. From this day on I will bless you. LXX: Set your hearts from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day on which the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, set it in your hearts: If more shall be known upon the earth, and if yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive trees do not bear fruit? So I will bless you from this day. I have told you what you have endured before you began to build my temple: now I will explain what prosperous things will come to you, because you have begun to build my temple. Therefore, on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, when the foundations of the temple were laid, consider the abundance of things that will come. The ninth month is what we call November or December. For the Hebrews, Nisan is the first month, which is called the month of new things: at the time when they celebrate Passover, that is, at the beginning of spring, which often falls in March and sometimes begins in April. Therefore, if we understand Nisan to mean April, the ninth month according to the Hebrews will be December. Therefore, the tenth month (also known as December) is the time when seeds lie hidden in the earth and their future fertility cannot be predicted. Is the seed already in the bud, as is better expressed in Hebrew as 'in the pod', to signify the husk of grain? Have the vine, fig tree, pomegranate, and olive tree given forth their blossoms? So it is not to be understood from the flowers and fruits. Indeed not; for in the month of December, as we have said, there are no signs of future crops. Therefore, do not say that I deduce this by prudent reasoning and speculate about the future fertility of trees, herbs, and crops from the flowers; behold, there are no signs; and yet I tell you that because you have started building my temple, for the blessing of all crops' fertility. This is what we have said according to the Hebrew. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, there is a very different meaning, which we must first explain literally, so that later the order of tropology can be discussed. Set your hearts from this day on, from the day on which the temple was founded, to the future, and you will see that there will be such great harvests in the future, and that so much grain will be carried from all the fields, that the threshing floor will not know its own produce, or that there are not individual threshing floors, but that one threshing floor is joined to another due to the multitude, and the separation of threshing floors is not known on the earth. Moreover, both the vine and the fig tree, and the pomegranate tree, and the olive tree, which previously did not bear fruit due to your vices, because you had not yet begun to build the temple, they will be bent down with such an abundance of grapes and fruits, that the evident fertility may indicate a manifest blessing. However, the ninth month is not to be taken in a good way, and the fourth book of the Kingdoms, and the story of Jeremiah, in which Jerusalem is said to be besieged (2 Kings 25, and Jer. 30 and 32). However, since the foundations of the temple are laid at the end of the ninth month, we can understand that the building of the Lord's temple is not begun unless evil works are finished. Therefore, on the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the foundation of the temple is laid, in which there are twelve dodekas and three octads, and four hexads, as discussed more fully

above. Therefore, anyone who dedicates themselves to the worship of God and despises the negligent patron (who, in the book of Ezra according to the Septuagint interpreters, prohibits the building of God's temple), does not know the measure of their crops and wages. Certainly, because of what is said: 'If anyone still sows in the spirit and reaps eternal life from the spirit' (Galatians VI), he will by no means treasure on earth, but all his works and the rewards of his works will be gathered in heaven. And the vineyard, that is, the word of God, of which the Father is the farmer in each one; and the fig tree, the sweetest gifts of the Holy Spirit; and the pomegranate, the teachings of the Church and the knowledge of the Scriptures, which are compared to the cheeks of the bride in the Song of Songs (Canticles VIII); and the olive trees will give refreshment and enlightenment to the heart of the one who begins to build the temple of God. But as for the vineyard, fig tree, and olive tree (I will delay discussing the pomegranate for now), they are related to the person of the Savior, and of God the Father, and of the Holy Spirit, as is more fully explained in the book of Judges (Chapter 9). There, the unfruitful trees go to appoint a king over themselves, and in order, they say to the vine, fig tree, and olive tree, that they should reign over them. But both the vine, fig tree, and olive tree refuse such a rule, and do not deem it worthy to reign over unfruitful trees. Then they come to the tree of their barrenness, that is, the thorny tree of brambles, and the bush woven with prickles and hooks, which holds onto whatever it touches and wounds what it holds on to, and delights in the blood of the wounded: moreover, it emits fire from itself and consumes the ruled trees. But we refer the bramble to the devil, and according to the nature of the branch, we shall interpret its nature. Furthermore, there will be a vineyard, a fig tree, and an olive tree, where the pomegranate tree will be, which tree, on account of the excessive multitude of its seeds, and a certain geometric composition of interwoven membranes, and indeed diverse dwellings, yet all enclosed in one bark, is always set forth in the Scriptures as a representation of the Church.

2:21-23

(Verse 21 onwards) And the word of the Lord came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying: Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying: I will shake the heavens and the earth. I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations. I will overthrow chariots and their riders. Horses and their riders shall also fall, each by the sword of his brother. On that day, declares the Lord of hosts, I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant, declares the Lord, and make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you, declares the Lord of hosts. In the LXX version, (the following words) were added: 'sea and dry land,' and it has 'less' (text): 'I will overthrow the strength of the kingdoms of the nations,' which is understood in a more complete sense from the reading of the LXX. Furthermore, it should be noted that on the same day, that is, on the twenty-fourth of the ninth month, without the month number being mentioned, because they were prophesying about the coming of Christ and his kingdom, the second discourse of our Lord is addressed not to Haggai as before, and not even to the prophet Haggai as in the fourth vision, but only to Haggai, that is, to the one celebrating the feasts of the Lord, because (Christ) is not said to be coming, but to be about to come and to be seen. And how did Abraham see the day of Christ, and rejoice (John 8); and John pointed out the Lamb of God with his finger (John 1): so also, seeing the kingdom of the Son of God, he would have in himself all the solemnities. In this place, there are different opinions among many: For some suspect that the first coming is spoken of; others, the second, when He is to

come in His majesty. We accept both, because He reigned when He came, and will reign afterwards. However, if we want to learn about the end of the world, we will say what the apostle speaks of to the Corinthians: 'To destroy all principality, and power, and virtue, that God may be all in all' (I Cor. XV). And because it is mystical and pertains to the end of things, the prophet is commanded to speak only to Zorobabel, whom we have shown to have come in the type of Christ because of the assumption of the body from the seed of David. Therefore, these things are said to happen in the end, that the figure of this world passes away, and a new heaven and a new earth are created, and the Lord shakes the heaven and the earth, and destroys every principality, power, and virtue, and scatters the kings of the kingdoms, as it is written in Hebrew, and annihilates every opposing strength, so that even those who reigned before and the nations under their rule will benefit from the destruction of their kingdom, and with every eagerness for battle abolished, peace will follow; for this is what is said: And I will overthrow the chariots, or chariots, and their riders, and the horses will go up and their riders will go down. And so that you may know concerning the overthrow of the chariots and the falling horsemen, this is what we mean: See how it is said about Christ in Zechariah that He comes as a gentle king, riding upon a foal of a donkey, and He will destroy the chariots from Ephraim (Zechariah 9), and the horse from Jerusalem, so that there may be one flock and one shepherd, and both the Gentiles and the Jews may be held under the peaceful shepherd. But in order for these things that are perverse to be destroyed, each person will rise up against his brother with a sword (which I believe to be the sharpest expression of doctrine, cutting off every perverse thing), cutting off everything that is contrary. But the end of all these things is the best. For after the destruction of the suns, and the strengths of the rulers, and the chariots, and the horses, and the horsemen, on that day, says the Lord Almighty: I will take you, Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, my servant. However, servant is called because of the human body, for then the Son himself will be subject to him who subjected all things to himself, and in all things subject, he himself will be seen. But when this is fulfilled, God will place him as a seal in his hand: For God the Father has sealed him (John VI, 27): and this is the image of the invisible God, and the form of his substance: so that whoever believes in God, will be sealed as it were with a ring.

I beg you, reader, to forgive the speaker's rapid discourse, and not to demand the elegance of speech which I have lost through many years of studying the Hebrew language: although Alecto always considers me to have been an infant and mute. To whom shall I say: The Lord will give the word to the one who evangelizes, with much power (Ps. LXVII, 12).

Commentary on Hosea

Three Books of Commentaries on the Prophet Hosea, addressed to Pammachius, by Saint Jerome of Stridon, Priest

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Book One: Prologue

"If, in the explanations of all the prophets, we need the coming of the Holy Spirit, so that, by His inspiration, those things written might be unfolded by the revelation of the same Spirit, and we read of a book marked with signs in the book of Isaiah and in the Apocalypse (Isaiah 29; Apocalypse 5), which the scribes and Pharisees, who pride themselves on their knowledge of the laws, cannot read because it is sealed, and no one could discover it except for the lion of the tribe of Judah, whom God the Father marked, and who alone could reveal its mysteries, how much more must the Lord be prayed for in the explanation of Hosea the prophet and with Peter we say: 'Explain this parable to us.'" (Matthew 13:16) Especially since the author himself attests to the

obscurity of the volume at the end: "Who is wise and will understand these things, prudent, and will know them?"(Hosea XIV, 10)? We ought to accept this not as impossible, but as difficult, according to that of the Gospel: "Who thinkest thou is a faithful servant and wise, whom his Lord hath appointed over his family?"(Matt. XXIV, 65)? For who would not be immediately scandalized at the beginning of the book, and say: Hosea, the first of all the prophets, is commanded to take a prostitute as a wife, and he does not contradict? He doesn't even pretend not to want it, so as not to seem to be doing something shameful against his will; but he carries out the command gladly, as if he had wished for it, as if he regretted having been idle for a long time in terms of chastity: when we read that holy men have refused more honorable things without sin, at the command of the Lord. Moses is sent to Pharaoh and is appointed leader of the Israelite people, and yet he responds not with weakness, but with humility: "Provide someone else whom you will send" (Exod. IV, 13). Jeremiah says he is a boy so that Jerusalem will not accuse him of sinning" (Jeremiah 1). "Ezekiel is commanded to make bread from a mixture of all kinds of grain and to bake it in human feces, but he says, 'No, Lord, because nothing unclean has ever entered my mouth'" (Ezekiel 4:14). "And when Hosea heard from the Lord, 'Take a harlot for a wife' (Hosea 1:2), he did not wrinkle his forehead, he did not give testimony of sorrow with pallor, he did not show modesty by changing the blush of his cheeks, but he went on to the brothel and led the prostitute to his bed. And she is not initiated in matronly modesty; but she approves herself as luxurious and a granddaughter. For he who adheres to a prostitute becomes one body with her. (1 Corinthians VI.) Therefore, hearing this, what can we respond but that prophetic saying: 'Who is wise and will understand these things, prudent and will know them?' (Hosea XIV, 10.) And so we must say with David: 'Reveal my eyes, and I will consider the wonders of your law' (Psalm CXVIII, 18); so that the king may lead us into his chamber (Song of Solomon I) and that the veil that was placed before the eyes of Moses in reading the old Testament (Exodus XXXIV) may be removed from us (2nd Corinthians III). For as soon as the Lord spoke: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit, and saying this he breathed out" (Luke 23:46), the veil of the temple was torn, and all secrets of the Jews were revealed. And the fountain that came forth from the house of David ((Alias Lord)) entered into the sea of solitude; and the true Elisha divided barren and deadly waters of his wisdom with salt, making them life-giving (4 Kings 4); and the bitter sea of the Law, interpreted as "bitterness," was sweetened with the wood of the gallows (Exodus 15). For we understand who Judah the patriarch, chosen to be king, is, nor do we marvel why a holy man entered unto Tamar as if to a prostitute (Gen. XXXVIII); why Samson, who is interpreted as "sun," loved Delilah, who is translated as "poor;" and because of her, he mocked and killed thousands of his adversaries (Judg. XVI); why Salmon, a just man, fathered [Boaz] with Rahab, the prostitute of Jericho, who covered herself with the wing of his cloak while lying at his feet, and the head of [the book of] the Gospel [came] away (Ruth. I, II, III). What is the reason that although David had so many wives, he made no other successor of his reign except him who was born of Bathsheba, so that not only harlots, but even adulterous women, may seem pleasing to God. Therefore, even in this prophetic passage, we read that Hosea is joined to a harlot at first and then to an adulteress, and the Lord says to him: "Go again, love a woman beloved of her friend and an adulteress", or a lover of evil, "who has become a harlot". This is the harlot and adulteress woman who washed the feet of the Lord in her tears, dried them with her hair, and honored her confession with perfumes; and while the disciples, and in particular the traitor, were indignant that it had not been sold and the price distributed to the poor, the Lord replied: "Why do you trouble the woman? She has wrought a good

work upon me. For the poor you have always with you, but me you have not always." (Matth. XXVI, 10, 11). And lest we think it insignificant, that which he had done, and that the spikenard, that is, the most faithful unguent, is to be given to something other than the church, it gives us an opportunity for understanding and great faith, and promises great rewards, saying: "Amen, amen, I say to you, wherever this Gospel shall have been preached in the whole world, what she has done shall also be told in memory of her." This is the harlot of whom the Lord speaks to the Jews: "Amen I say to you, that the prostitutes and the publicans shall go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matthew 21:31). For you refused to welcome the Son of the fatherly household and the Lord of the vineyard, who planted it. This harlot hid my two brave spies, one of whom I had sent for their circumcision, the other for the gentiles. She concealed them with great kindness, raised them to her roof, and covered them with flaxen straw (Joshua 2). But when the city was conquered and she was baptized, she changed her color and was turned from darkness to light. And it is not surprising that in the image of the Lord Savior, and of the Church gathered from sinners, we remember these things, since he himself says by the Prophet in the same matter: "I will speak to the prophets; it is I who multiplied visions, and I was likened to the prophets" (Hosea 12:10), so that whatever the prophets are commanded to do, may be referred back to my own likeness. Whose wife is Ethiopian, against whom Aaron and Miriam, serving the fleshly priesthood of the Jews and serving the prophecy of the letter, murmur and offend God (Num. 12): which says in Cantic of Canticles: "I am black" "and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem" (Cant. 1:4). Otherwise, if we strive to make all that is prescribed for reasons to be done in truth, as a similitude, therefore Jeremiah, girded with a loincloth, in a woman's garment, among countless nations and Assyrians and Chaldeans, the most hostile peoples of the Jews, went to the Euphrates to hide his loincloth there, and after many days returned and found it had rotted and was of no use to anyone. (Jeremiah 13). How could he have gone out and traveled so far, besieged by circuits of fortifications, ditches, ramparts, and castles around Jerusalem? One who wished to exit to his own village in Anathoth located at the third milestone from the city, when captured at the gate is brought back to the authorities, beaten like a traitor and sent to prison. If that was done by mistake, since it couldn't happen: therefore, this too is a mistake, because if it happens, it is most shameful. But you will answer, with God ordering it, nothing is shameful: and we say, God commands nothing except what is honest, and by commanding the dishonorable, He makes those things honorable which are dishonorable. But since we know that God wills nothing except what is honorable, he has commanded what is honorable. I have said this more extensively in the beginning so that I might first solve the very difficult issue and, progressing by the help of God from the obstacle at the end itself, run down to safety. Moreover, I am not unaware, very dear Pammachus, that it has been passed over by many ecclesiastics; and those who have attempted to explain it, I have found among the Greeks, Apollinaris of Laodicea, who, when he left short commentaries on this and on some other Prophets in his youth, touching on the meaning rather than explaining it, was afterwards requested to write more fully on Hosea; and this book has come into our hands; but even he cannot guide his reader to a perfect understanding by excessive brevity. Origen wrote a little book concerning why in Hosea he is called Ephraim, wanting to show that whatever is said against him refers to the person of heretics. And I also read a headless and incomplete volume, which lacks both a beginning and an end. Pierius also read a very long treatise which he delivered extemporaneously and in eloquent speech on the beginning of this prophet during the vigil of Christ's passion on Sunday. And Eusebius of Caesarea, in the

eighteenth book of the Ecclesiastical History, discusses certain things about the Prophet Hosea. Wherefore, about twenty-two years ago, when I was in Alexandria at the request of your holy and venerable mother-in-law, or rather mother, Paula (this is the name of the body, but it is a different matter in spirit – she who was always burning with love for the monasteries and for the Scriptures), I saw Didymus and heard him often. He was the most learned man of his time. I asked him to do what Origen had not done: write commentaries on Hosea. Upon my request, he dictated three books to me and also five on Zachariah. For even in his works Origen listed only two volumes on the same theme, barely discussing a third part from the beginning of the book until the vision of the quadriga. I mention this so that you may know whom I have had as precursors in this Prophet's field. But to speak simply and not arrogantly (as some of my friends always told me), I confess to your prudence that I have not followed them in all respects. I acted more like a judge of their work than a mere interpreter, and I said what I deemed right in each case, and what I learned from the Hebrew experts with difficulty. Among whom he is already a rare bird, while all are devoted to pleasures and money, and they carry more concern for the belly than the mind, and they consider themselves learned if in the physician's shops they detract from the labors of all. But now it is time that, setting forth the words of the prophets which have been written, we should discuss them.

Book Two: Prologue

He who often sails suffers a storm at some point; he who travels the road frequently either withstands the attack of robbers or at least fears it, and in every art both glory and detraction arise from both favourable and adverse winds, while either friends extol one more than deservedly or enemies detract from one more than justly: and you will rarely find one who is not swayed towards one side or the other by favour or hatred, but who is led by even-handed judgement. I see this happening to me as I toil in explaining the Scriptures. For some indeed, they consider small things as contemptible and despise anything that we say, contracted into a trivial notion; some, out of hatred of our name, consider not the things themselves, but the people; others approve of the silence of others more than our hard work. There are some who boldly assert that we are doing what we have undertaken, that no Latin before us has dared to attempt. Some believe they are eloquent and learned if they pull down another's work, and judge not what they are capable of themselves, but what they think we cannot do. But you, Pammachus, who have instructed us in this, it is necessary for you to be a supporter of your own rule ('empire') and of our Amafionios and Rabirios of our time, who make good things from the Greeks into bad things in Latin; and the most eloquent people themselves transfer idioms, so that with the Evangelical foot you may crush the Hydra and the Scorpion and cauterize them, you may wear out sandals, and by deaf ears you may pass the Scylla-dogs and the deadly songs of the Sirens: so that we may be equally able to hear and understand what the Prophet Hosea prophesies, concerning whose interpretation we are dictating the book. And though I am glad to have your support, and to be the first among the cities of the earth in nobility and religion, and to count myself your defender, yet I would rather attain to that which Titus Livius writes of Cato, that by praising he profited no one, and by vituperating he injured none, both of which things they did with the highest abilities. The persons intended are Marcus Cicero and Gaius Caesar, of whom the above-mentioned writer wrote the praises and censures. For while we live and are contained in a fragile vessel, the studies of friends appear to be of help, and the reproaches of rivals to be harmful. But after the earth, returned to its own earth, has hidden us who write and those who judge us in the pale death that will come, and another

generation has come, and the forest has grown green, with the first fallen leaves replenished, then genius is judged alone, without the dignity of names; and no one who reads knows whose it is, but what it is that he is reading, whether he be bishop or layman, emperor or lord, soldier or servant, whether it be purple and silk or the coarsest cloth: it will be judged not according to the distinction of the good but by the merit of its works.

Book Three: Prologue

I do not ignore, Pammachus, that the work of the twelve Prophets (or the little work), certainly interpreted into Latin, is very difficult to forge, and which can accuse our rashness more than reveal knowledge. But because we can't refuse you, rather command you to encourage you, and with the strength of those who offered, two poor women's brass surpassed the wealth of many in the treasury of God (Luke XXI): whatever we can do, we first pay God, then to you, who are of God; and we always remember his verse: "Pollio himself creates new songs." And as I am pleased to have you as an open advocate for the rights of friendship, I am afraid of your silent judgement of your learning; and I fear more for you to praise than for your adversaries to detract. For in their case, jealousy undermines credibility, and they should be called not so much judges as accusers. However, you, who promise judgment not based on persons but on things you love, though even love can be deceived, and that saying of Theophrastus is beautiful, which Cicero translated more according to sense than to word, that "love is blind about the beloved". Nevertheless, I ask that you lean more in that direction, not out of hatred, but out of love. We dictate the third book concerning the prophet Hosea, and we have arrived as far as the cows of Bethaven. As we unfold the sails of interpretation, you ought to say that prophetic phrase: "Come from the four winds, O Spirit of Heaven." Then with swift course we shall pass over the various reefs of those lying in wait, and bear the Lord's merchandise, saved from the storm on every hand, into the safest harbors.

1:1

"The word of the Lord that came to Hosea the son of Beeri." LXX similarly. The word of the Lord, which was in the beginning with God the Father, and the Word was God, came to Hosea the son of Beeri, so that he too might make God known as a prophet, with the Savior saying: "If those to whom the word of God came are called gods, and the Scripture cannot be broken: 'Whom the Father has sanctified' and sent into the world, you say I blaspheme because I said, 'I am the Son of God' " (John 10:35-36). Just as God makes gods and stands in the assembly of gods, yet judges among the gods (Psalm 81); and since he himself is the true light that illuminates every person coming into this world (John 1), he speaks to the apostles: "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14), so too the Savior himself makes his prophet a savior. "Hosea," in our language, means "savior": a name that was also given to Joshua, the son of Nun (Numbers 14), before God changed his name. For he is not called "Ause," as is read wrongly in Greek and Latin texts, as it is completely incomprehensible; but "Hosea," that is, "savior," to which is added the Lord's name, so that "savior of the Lord" might be said. Therefore, this savior is the son of "Beeri," which means "my well," which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had dug, and the foreigners had always tried to fill with rubbish. (Gen. 16, 21, 26, 46). Between a well and a lake, that is, a cistern, the difference is that a well has constantly flowing water, and it springs from a living source. The cistern, which cools, possesses its external and adventitious waters. From this, God speaks through the prophet Jeremiah: "They have deserted me, the fountain of living water, and dug cisterns for themselves,

which cannot contain water" (Jeremiah II, 13). Concerning this fountain, the psalmist proclaims to God: "With you is the fountain of life, and in your light, we will see light" (Psalm XXXV, 10). From this, some think that "Beer" means "my light"; but the correct translation is superior.

"In the days of Ozias, Joathan, Achaz, Ezechias, kings of Judah; and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joas, king of Israel." The Septuagint in the same way. Azarias, who is also called Uzziah, from the offspring of David, reigned over the two tribes which were called Judah in Jerusalem for fifty-two years, then his son Joatham succeeded him in the kingdom, who also reigned for sixteen years. After him, his son Achaz reigned for similarly sixteen years. After Achaz, his son Ezechias reigned for twenty-nine years, in whose sixth year the sixteen tribes which were called Israel were captured by Salmanasar, the king of the Chaldeans, and placed in the mountains of the Medes. Since it is clear, with Hosea, Isaiah, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, and Jonah and Micah prophesying, who were his contemporaries, that the kingdom of the ten tribes was limited, which from the first king Jeroboam to the last Hosea remained for two hundred and fifty years. But at that time, when Uzziah began to reign over Judah, Jeroboam, the great-grandson of Jehu, was reigning over Israel, to whom the Lord had promised that his offspring would reign up to the fourth generation, because he had struck down two wicked kings of Judah and Israel. We say this so that we may briefly show it to you, Hosea the prophet, both before the captivity of Israel and after its captivity, and that he foresaw the future and announced the coming of the light and reweave the past for the improvement of Judah; which we will try to approve in the very prophet according to history. Uzziah means "the strength of the Lord"; Jotham, "the completion and perfection of the Lord"; Ahaz, "virtue"; Hezekiah, "the Lord's empire." They ruled in the "Juda" people, whose name means "confession." Furthermore, in Israel, Jeroboam, who had made idols for himself and had been separated from God's people, reigned. Jeroboam means "chronology," that is, "temporality" or "delay." He loved the world and thought that by dwelling in it for a long time, he would have a life, delighted not in the future but the present, that was never going to be eternal.

1:2

The beginning of the speech of the Lord (in Greek "Domini" and in the Vulgate "Domino") is in Hosea. LXX: "The beginning of the word of the Lord to Hosea." As we said above, they are preferred to other prophets in the title, Ozias, Joatham, Achaz, and Ezechias, to whom they prophesied while ruling. Therefore, he now says that among all these, the Lord spoke first in Hosea, and later to the others. But to speak of the Lord in Hosea is one thing, and to speak to Hosea is another. In Hosea, Hosea himself does not speak, but through Hosea to others; but speaking to Hosea, it is meant to bring the discourse to him. Others do not want Hosea to have been the first of all the prophets, from the fact that it is said: "The beginning of the Lord's speaking in Hosea." But it is shown that these which follow, the Lord first spoke to Hosea.

"And the Lord said to Hosea: Go, take to thee a wife of fornications." LXX: "And the Lord said to Hosea: Go, take to thee a wife of fornication." The Hebrew word Zanunim does not mean "a harlot" or "fornication", as many believe, but rather means "many fornications". From which it is shown that the woman whom the prophet takes as wife has not committed fornication once, but many times, so that the more sordid she is, the more patient the prophet will be who has taken such a wife. And what is added is:

"And ((Vulg. "And make for yourself")) children of fornication: for the land which fornicated shall fornicate with the Lord." LXX: "And the children of fornication: for the land which fornicated shall fornicate with the Lord after." By common consent is understood: Take a wife of fornications for yourself, and take children of fornications for yourself. Both can be understood, that the former harlots receive as their sons those begotten of fornication, and he himself begets sons from a harlot, who are called sons of fornication, because they were begotten of a harlot. The prophet is not to be blamed, as we can see from the narrative, if he converts a harlot to chastity, but rather is to be praised for making good out of evil. For he who is good does not himself become defiled by joining with evil, but he who is evil is transformed into good if he follows the example of the good. From this we understand that the prophet did not lose his chastity by having sexual relations with a whore, but it was rather the harlot who gained chastity she did not have before. Especially since the blessed Hosea did not do this for the sake of lust or pleasure or by his own choice, but rather obeyed God's command, so that we may approve what we read in a carnal sense as having been done spiritually in God. He who received the Synagogue, that is, the people of the Jews serving fornication and lust. To which the Lord speaks through Ezekiel: 'And you, harlot, hear the word of the Lord: For her breasts were broken in Egypt' (Ezech. XXIII, 3); and she dallied in blood, and had been defiled even to the crown, so that there was no part of her body and limbs that did not have a stain of deformity. The Lord covered such a one with a mantle, and joined her to His embrace, giving her honey and oil and meal to eat, and clothed her in the most precious garments, put jewel ornaments on her neck, adorned her ears with gold and precious stones, also provided bracelets for her arms to use in good works. Nevertheless, despite the contempt for the generosity and kindness of the man, who forgot his previous wickedness, the lovers of Chaldeans, Assyrians, and Egyptians, who are of great flesh, followed him. We have spoken in the preface about the type of the Savior and the Church, that he took for himself a fornicating wife who had previously served idols. But if anyone, especially among the contentious gentiles, refuses to receive the figurative saying and mocks the prophet joined to a fornicator, let us oppose him with what Greece often praises and the schools of the philosophers sing. By what reasoning do they praise the highly educated man Xenocrates, who made the most luxurious young Polemon obey wisdom among female musicians and flute players and shameless women, and transformed the most disgraceful young man into the wisest of philosophers? Why should they raise Socrates to heaven, who led Phaedo, from whom Plato's book is named, from the brothel, serving the lust of many because of the cruelty and greed of his master, to the Academy? And whatever they may have replied concerning the teachers of philosophy, we refer to the defense of the Prophet. We have said these things against the pagans and those like them. However, let us briefly explain to our own, who still wish to accept the truth, from the fact that it is said: 'Because the land sinned, it will be fornicating with the Lord,' that not so much the prophet was joined to a harlot as the whole race of men turned away from the society of the Lord. It is also possible from that which is unadded, "all the earth," to now accept Judaea, or properly Samaria and Israel, that is, the ten tribes, which at the time when these things were said, had departed from the Lord.

1:3-4

"And he went and took Gomer the daughter of Debelaïm: and she conceived and bare him a son. And the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel."

LXX: "And he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. And the Lord said to him: Call his name Jezreel: for yet a little while and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Judah, and will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease." The prophets promised so many things about the coming of Christ and the calling of the Gentiles in the centuries that followed, that they may not neglect the present time, lest they seem to play with uncertain and future things and not to teach about those things which are pressing, even when the sermon is called for another purpose. Therefore, Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, who is taken as wife by Hosea, conceives by him and bears him a son named "Jezreel," which means "God sows," and Jehu, or, as the bad mistake has it, "Judah," overthrows the kingdom in vengeance for his blood. And referring to the calling of the nations, it should be attributed to the time under which he is remembered as having begotten a son. And lest I delay the reader's avidity with a long discourse, these two women, of whom one is called Homer and is a whore and bears three children, first Jezreel, the second a girl named Without Mercy, and the third a male who is also called "Not My People." And the other woman, who is hired for fifteen silver shekels, a homer of barley and half a homer of barley, and is called an adulteress, is referred to Israel and Judah, that is, to the ten tribes that were in Samaria under King Jeroboam, who was of Ephraim, and to Judah, who reigned in Jerusalem of the line of David. These are two women, who are said to have wings of a Zachariah hen, or a vulture, or a heron, and to go to the land of Sennaar, where Babylon was founded. These women are signified under the name of two sisters, Oola and Ooliba: they are represented by two rods, which Ezekiel joins into one rod. And because we write commentaries, not lengthy books, reserving proper explanations for each chapter in its proper place, let us now only discuss the present chapter. "Gomer" means "completed," that is, "consummated," and "perfect." Some believe it signifies "breastplates." There are those who suspect it means "measure," or "bitterness," who would say rightly, if it did not have the letter Gimel. "Debelaim" means "palaces," of which there is a great abundance in Palestine, and which the prophet Isaiah orders to be applied to the ulcer of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 20 and Isaiah 38). But it is a mass of fat figs, which are shaped like sides, so that they remain uninjured for a long time, trampled and squeezed. Therefore, Israel, consummated in fornication and perfected as a daughter of pleasure, seems sweet and pleasant to those who enjoy her, and is received as a type of the Lord and Saviour's wife by Hosea; and from her is born the first son of God, that is, "Jezreel"; but it is also the metropolis of ten tribes, in which Naboth was killed ("Al." Nabutha), for whose blood Jehu was raised up, who destroyed the house of Ahab and Jezebel. But Jehu himself, the avenger of the blood of the righteous, entered by the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nabath, who made Israel fornicate and set up golden calves in Dan and in Bethel (III Kings 12), and his kingdom was said to be overthrown; of which Jeroboam's great-grandson, Hosea, began to prophesy: and when he died, his son Zacharias succeeded to the throne; whom Shallum, generated from another family, killed in the sixth month of his reign (IV Kings 15). For what reason it is now said: "Still a little while, and I will visit the blood of Jezrael," that is, the slaughter of my people, on the royal house of Jehu, who at that time ruled over Israel. It is not surprising if the house of Jehu is overturned when even the kingdom of the house of Israel, that is, the ten tribes, will be completely destroyed not many years after. From Zachariah, the son of Jeroboam, whose ancestor was Jehu, to the ninth year of Hosea, under whom the ten tribes were taken captive, forty-nine years are reckoned. And with the killing of Zachariah, who was the last of the line of Jehu, the kings of Assyria immediately captured Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh,

which were beyond Jordan; and then many cities of Samaria, and then all of Naphtali, and finally all the remaining tribes. In the Vulgate Edition, "Jehu" is read as "Judah": but this seems to me not the fault of the seventy interpreters, but the ignorance of the scribes who, not knowing the more familiar term "Jehu:", wrote "Judah." However, the type of God's seed and the revenge of His blood is related to the Lord's passion, because of which both the house of Judah and the kingdom of all Israel are said to be overthrown.

1:5

"And in that day I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel." LXX likewise. When I avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and I will destroy the kingdom of Israel, with the Assyrians prevailing, then in that day, and at that time, I will break all the power of the army of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel. Above we have said that Jezreel, which is now near Maximianopolis, was the metropolis of the kingdom of Samaria, near which are the widest fields, and the valley of vast emptiness, which extends for more than ten thousand paces. In this conflict undertaken, Israel, that is, the ten tribes, which on account of Jeroboam of the tribe of Ephraim, who caused the first schism among the people, were called Ephraim, was slain by the Assyrians. Sometimes, on account of Joseph, the father of Ephraim, it is called Joseph; sometimes, Samaria, which itself also was the metropolis of the ten tribes, which later was called Augusta by Augustus Caesar, that is, Σεβαστή, in which the bones of John the Baptist were buried. After the division therefore of the two and ten tribes, the ancient name of Israel remained in the ten tribes, owing to the great part of the multitude which followed Jeroboam. And on account of the tribe of Judah, which reigned in Jerusalem, the others that were called tribes, Judas. And at the same time the types explain the truth. For just as on account of the blood of Naboth, which was shed in Jezreel, the house of Ahab was destroyed, that Elijah's prophecy might be fulfilled: so on account of the blood of the true Jezreel, that is, of the seed of God, the kingdom of the Jews was destroyed. In all the prophets, but especially in Hosea, the ten tribes are referred to as heretics, whose multitude is greatest. However, the two tribes called Judah possess the person of the Church, which was under the rule of the Davidic dynasty (who "are ruling"). Therefore, the bow of the heretics, of which it is written, "The sons of Ephraim, being armed and shooting with the bow, turned back in the day of battle" (Ps. 77:9), will be broken in the valley of the seed of God, which is humbled and sensed earthly things.

1:6-7

"And she conceived again, and bore a daughter. And he said to her: Call her name without mercy, for I will not add any more to show mercy to the house of Israel, but I will utterly forget them. And I will have mercy on the house of Juda, and I will save them in the Lord their God: and I will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battles, nor by horses, nor by horsemen." LXX: "And she conceived again, and bore a daughter. And he said to her: Call her name, Without mercy: for I will now no more have mercy upon the house of Israel, but I will utterly forget them. But I will have mercy on the house of Juda, and will save them by the Lord their God: and I will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, nor by horses, nor by horsemen." After the bow of Israel was broken and shattered in the valley of Jezreel, and the kingdom of the ten tribes was abandoned, so that they were led into captivity, no longer was Jezreel, that is, the seed of God, nor a son of the male sex born: but a daughter, that is, a fragile sex, subject to the contempt of the victors, and

called Without mercy. Therefore she was taken captive, because she had no mercy of God. And the indignation of the Lord must be considered. So that it will never be said to the house of Israel to have mercy on them anymore, but to erase them from his eternal memory; since they serve until today the kings of Persia, and their captivity has never been released. But the house of Judah promises mercy, saying that they will be saved in the Lord their God or in Himself speaking; or the Father will save in the Son according to what is written: "The Lord rained from the Lord" (Gen. XIX, 24) For He saved them ("alt." also) when Israel was handed over to Assyrians, from the hand of Sennacherib, not with bow and sword and war and a multitude of horses, but with His strength, when He sent the Angel and struck one hundred and eighty-five thousand from the Assyrian army in one night (IV Reg. XIX). According to the pattern, we say that those who are called the Seed of God, because of His blood, are without mercy, and have dared to say: "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25), have been serving the Romans until now. But the house of Judah, namely those from the Jews who have confessed the Lord, have been saved not in the strength of an army, but in the preaching of the Gospel. We interpret this in Israel and Judah both according to history and according to pattern, and we refer them to the councils of heretics and to the Church of the Lord and Saviour, which, having been abandoned by them without mercy and losing the kingdom, has overcome by the power of their God.

1:8-9

"And she that was without mercy hath taken him away and conceived and brought forth a son. And he said: Call his name, Not my people: for you are not my people, and I will not be yours. " (The Septuagint likewise) And he who was called the seed of God, turned into a woman and, on account of the weakness of his strength and the offence against God, was led captive, not mentioned as having been weaned, but as having been weaned: for he had already lost his strength as a man. He who is weaned departs from his mother and does not feed on a parent's milk, but is sustained by external nourishment. Thus Israel, having been cast out by the Lord, and surrounded by the narrowness of captivity, and sustained with impure foods in Babylon, is called not the people of God, and an eternal sentence of a foreign people is carried, so that it is said, "You are not my people," and will be cast off forever. Which we can rightly understand in all the people of the Jews who, on account of the offense of the seed of God, were handed over to captivity, lost the kingdom and the province, and are called not the people of God; and also in the person of heretics. But if any contentious interpreter will not receive these things which we have said, but will understand that Gomer, the daughter of Deblaim, first bore male and female children, then male again, desiring the Scripture to sound what is read, let him answer how in Ezekiel he explains that where the Lord commands to bear the iniquities of the house of Israel, that is, of the ten tribes, and to sleep forever for three hundred and ninety days on one side of the left, although in the LXX they are written as one hundred and ninety, and to sleep so as never to wake up or change sides unless, perhaps, he satisfies his hunger by opening his eyes a little to take the most sordid food of bread baked from wheat, barley, beans, lentils, and millet in human excrement. For the nature of things does not allow that anyone among men should always sleep hidden for three hundred and ninety days in one place. And he says again: 'You will bear the iniquities of the house of Judah, and you will sleep on your right side for forty days.' But these days are calculated ((or were calculated)) as years, during which Israel and Judah are held by a very long siege and captivity, so that, bound and immobilized, they cannot turn from one side to the other. If it cannot

approve of these things and others like them which we read in Holy Scripture, but argues that they signify something else, then this harlot and other adulterous women, who were either joined to prophets or were saved by a prophet, indicate not a shameful union of lust but the sacraments of the future.

1:10

"And the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, that cannot be measured, nor numbered: and it shall be in the place where it shall be said unto them, Ye are not my people: there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." We read of the rejection of the ten tribes, and of the unmeasurable Israel, no longer the people of God, subject to perpetual indignation. Now we learn how the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel are equally gathered together, and place themselves under one head or principality ("Al." beginning), and ascend from the earth, and in the place where previously it was said, "Not my people," they shall be called the sons of the living God, and this will happen because the day of Jezreel is great. To the doubting and wavering in various opinions, the statement of the Apostle Paul writing to the Romans occurs: "And if God, wishing to show his wrath and make his power known, endured with much patience the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory in the vessels of mercy he prepared for glory, whom he also called us, not only from among the Jews, but also from the Gentiles." As Hosea says, "I will call those not my people, my people, and those not beloved, beloved." And they will be called the sons of the living God in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people." But Isaiah cries out for Israel: "If the number of the sons of Israel were like the sand of the sea, the remainder will be saved." Because the word is ending and shortening in righteousness, "for the Lord will shorten the word upon the earth, as Isaiah foretold" (Cap. I, 9): "Unless the Lord Sabaoth had kept us a seed, we would have been as Sodom and Gomorrah. What then shall we say: That the Gentiles who did not follow righteousness have attained righteousness?" But righteousness which is of faith: but Israel, following the law of righteousness, did not come to the law of righteousness" (Rom. IX, 22 seqq.). Therefore, the blessed Apostle, taking testimony from the prophet Hosea and expounding upon the calling of the Gentiles, and the faith of those from the Jews who wished to believe, cut away all difficulty of interpretation for us, affirming that it was completed in the times of Christ, that is, that twelve tribes would be chosen in Israel, that is, all the people of the Jews, and in Judah those who confess Jesus as Lord from among the Gentiles. But if someone alien to the faith of Christ, and not receiving the authority of the New Testament, but responding from the number of circumcision, should say that the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel sound twelve tribes and ten, about which we have often spoken, and in this giving their hand, we will show nothing of our faith being harmed. "But after the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, dispersed throughout the whole world, and the multitude of the people shall have overcome every account, then shall Israel, who is even now captive and before was said to be without mercy and not my people, with the two tribes, that is, Juda and Benjamin, of which a great part believed in Christ, have permission to come to an agreement, so that faith may unite those who were separated in body, and they may have one head and prince, of whom Ezechiel wrote: 'And one prince shall be in the midst of them, my servant David, and they shall rise from the dead,' that is, Juda and Israel,

who were dead in unfaithfulness." (Ezekiel 34:24) And all these things will happen, because the day of the seed of God, which is called "Christ," is great. From this it is clear that the blood of Naboth ((or Nabutha)) preceded in Jezrael, so that the truth would be fulfilled in Christ. For in this, and not in that, the great day of Jezrael is, of which it is said: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad and rejoice therein." (Psalm 118:24) The third interpretation that we have undertaken, is to be explained as referring to heretics for Israel, and to men of the Church for Judah, and means that, after the Lord shall have come in His glory to reign, those who were once called not His people shall be called the sons of the living God, when they shall have been united with the Jews, that is, with the Church of God, and shall have one Head, Christ, and shall have ascended from the earth, that is, from earthly senses and the humility of the letter, and shall have received the great day of the seed of God. For not having mercy", that is, "without pity", is reported in some copies as "not beloved". But the more true copies have "without mercy", especially because God makes a distinction between Israel, whom he does not have mercy on, and says "But I will have mercy on the house of Judah.

2:1

"Tell your brothers and sisters, my people, that they have attained mercy." LXX: "Say to your brother, my people, and to your sister, having obtained mercy." Because the day of Jezrael is great, on which Judas and Israel will have one prince, and it will not be said of Israel, "you are not my people," but on the contrary they will be called the children of the living God. Therefore, O men of the tribe of Judah, do not despair of the ten tribes' salvation, but daily provoke them to repentance by speech, prayer, vow and letters because they are your brothers and sisters: brothers because they are called "my people," sisters because they are called "having obtained mercy." Otherwise: You who believe in Christ, being both from the Jews and from the Gentiles, say to those who have been cut off and to the former people, "You are my people," because they are your brothers, and "having obtained mercy" because they are your sisters. "For when the fullness of the Gentiles has entered, then all Israel shall be saved." (Romans 11:25). The same thing is prescribed to us, that we do not completely despair of heretics, but that we provoke them to penance: and we desire their salvation with the affection of brotherhood.

2:2-3 "Judge your mother, judge her, for she is not my wife and I am not her husband: let her remove her fornications from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts: lest perhaps I strip her naked, and make her as on the day of her birth." This is a message directed towards the Israelite people, that is, the ten tribes. Now begins the second chapter, and they are commanded to their sons, that is, the people, to judge against their mother, who bore them, who, becoming a harlot's wife, did not leave previous manners, and again committed fornication with her lovers. And observe the mercy of the husband. She has already been divorced, already rejected, already he has said to her: "This is not my wife, and I am not her husband:" yet he commands his sons, that they should not speak to the wife whom he dismissed, but to their mother who bore them. But let those who provoke to repentance speak, so as to remove fornication from their face, and their adultery from the midst of their breasts. She is a harlot, who lies with many. An adulteress is she who, deserting one man, joins herself to another. Both of these are a Synagogue, which if it remains in fornication and adultery, God will take away from her the clothes and ornaments He had given her. Of whom Ezekiel writes: "In the day when you were born, your navel was not cut, neither were you washed with water for your health; you did not rub yourself with salt, or wrap

yourself in swaddling clothes. And when I passed by thee, I saw thee wallowing in thy blood (Ezek. 16:4-5)." And after a little while: "I clothed thee with brodered work and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands and a chain on thy neck." These things were given to her by her exceedingly lavish husband when he found her in Egypt, lusting after idolatry and spreading her legs to all. And now he threatens, if she does not return to her husband, she will become without God and without a husband, just as she once was in Egypt. Let it suffice rarely to have warned us that what has been said agrees with both the Jews denying Christ, and the heretics abandoning the faith of the Lord: whose fornication is properly among the breasts, and is situated in the craft of idols and various doctrines in the heart, who will return on the day of their birth, so that if they do not do penance, they will be compared to the heathen. And I will make it like a wilderness, and set it up like a desert land, and slay it with thirst" (Jeremiah 50:12). The Septuagint translates it as: "And I will make it as a desert, and I will set it up as a land without water, and I will kill it with thirst." If they do not want to turn to better things, I will do to them what I did in the wilderness, so that those led into captivity may fall in a foreign land, patiently enduring thirst for all good things, and unable to return to their homeland. Or certainly, let them hear in the Gospel: "Your house will be left desolate to you" (Matt. XXIII). And the Lord will not send him a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water; but a hunger to hear the word of the Lord (Amos. VIII). About whom Isaiah also speaks: "They shall be like a garden without water" (Isaiah I, 30). Heretics who are rejected by the Lord, if they do not return to their former home, suffer such scarcity of all things that even what they seem to possess falsely will be reduced to nothing.

2:4-5

"And I will not have pity on her sons, for they are the sons of fornication, because their mother has committed fornication: she is confounded that conceived them, because she said: I will go after my lovers, that give me bread, and water, and clothes, and oil, and drink." LXX: "And I will not have mercy on her sons, because they are the children of fornication. For their mother has committed fornication. She that conceived them is covered with shame, for she said: I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread, and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink." I will do more for the one to whom I spoke, not my wife, and I am not your husband, and I will make her like a wilderness, and make her like a barren land. "For when I brought her out of Egypt, I killed their parents and their children entered into the land of promise. But now the children of a harlot mother will perish with their mother the prostitute, since they are sons of fornication and are born of evil. Of them it is said in the Gospel: 'You brood of vipers' (Matthew 3:7). They have come to such shamelessness that they are being compared to the "face of a harlot," and they are disgraced. " (Jeremiah 3:3) Is it not a stubborn and harlot's boldness that one should boast in their own wrongdoing and say, "I will follow my lovers"; I will go to the idols that have provided me with food and clothing. All that is described by the prophetic work, the Jews have received spiritually from the Lord. And since they denied the Son of God, choosing instead Barabbas, a robber and inciter of sedition, and crucifying the Son of God (John 18). Therefore, even today demons follow and refer God's blessings to those who have lost their souls to their own cults. The heretics have bread and water, whose bread is sadness, and their water is muddy, which suffocates and kills the baptized. They also have wool from diseased sheep, and flax that remains black, and oil, of which the prophet says: "The oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head" (Ps. CLX, 5), and the drink of the

waters of Egypt, of which Jeremiah cries out: "What to you is the way of Egypt, that you would drink the water of Geon" (Jeremiah II, 18)? And he said: "Why do you want to drink water from the rivers of the Assyrians? We briefly went through everything, so that we can move on to the rest."

2:6-7

Therefore behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and I will fence it with a wall, and she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, and shall not overtake them: and she shall seek them, and shall not find, and she shall say: I will go, and return to my first husband, because it was better with me then, than now. " The LXX: "Therefore behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and I will stop up her paths: and she shall not find her way. And she shall pursue her lovers, and shall not take them: and she shall seek them, and shall not find, and she shall say: I will go, and return to my first husband, because then it was better for me than it is now." The prostitute said: "I will follow after my lovers, who gave me abundance of all things. The Lord answered: "I will hedge thy way with thorns, or with stakes, that thou mayest not be able to go where thou desirest, and I will set a wall, or a rampart, and thou shalt not find the paths which thou hast trodden so often, that thou mayest apprehend those whom thou followedst with such great eagerness, so that, obliged by necessity of affairs thou mayest return to thy husband, and say that from the Gospel: 'How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I perish here with hunger. I will arise and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, I am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.'" From which we understand that the providence of God often happens to us as evils, so that we may not have those things which we desire, and oppressed with various calamities and miseries of this age, we may be compelled to return to the service of God. But let us understand that the lovers of Jerusalem and the Jewish people, according to the history of that time, include the Assyrians and Chaldeans and Egyptians and other nations, with whose idols they committed fornication, from whom in times of war, and from whom they vainly hoped for help in pressing evils. These lovers, according to spiritual understanding, follow heretics, from whom they are often deserted, and return to the bosom of Mother Church burdened with the weight of their misfortunes. For through all scourges and torments, Israel is taught.

2:8

And she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they have used in the service of Baal." LXX: "And she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver: but she turned these things which were made for her into silver and gold for Baal." She responded to her lovers, for she said: "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread, and my water, my wool, and my flax, my oil, and my drink, all of which she had received, and used in the service of idolatry. But it is bread and wine, which strengthens and makes the heart of man happy (Psalm 103), and oil that illuminates every person coming into this world (John 1), and silver of which we often say: "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Psalm 12: 6) . And gold of which we read: "Though ye have liad among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with the yellow gold." (Psalm 68: 13), is turned into idols, and made "Baal," which is interpreted as "higher and devouring:" while either thinking that they have more important doctrines than the Church, or are devoured in the knowledge of false opinion itself. But that which

according to the letter Jerusalem has in abundance - gold and silver and all wealth - will be for the idols Baal demon of the Sidonians, or, as the better opinion holds, of the Babylonians, since he is called "Bel," as Ezekiel expounds more fully in his book, and as the chorus of the prophets bear witness.

2:9

"Therefore, I will return and take my grain in its time, and my wine in its time, and I will free my wool, and my flax, which covered her disgrace." LXX: "Therefore I will return and take my wheat in its time, and my wine in its time, and I will take away my garments, and my coverings, not to cover her nakedness." A heavier punishment is when, in the time of harvest and the expected vintage, the crops are taken and the wine, and in a sense the tried ones are taken from the hands. But if in the time of harvest and of the harvest moon, when the earth is fruitful with new crops after the passing of the past barrenness, there is a shortage of all things, what should we think of the remaining season of the year, when the old crops are preserved? And wool and flax, that is, clothing and linens, are released, giving no more coverings to a harlot: so that, by the help of God, she might be stripped; and so that she might depart from the protection of all angels from Him. Therefore, the apostle also says that the creature is freed from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. (Romans 8) Many received gold and silver for wisdom and eloquence, from which they made a seven-branched candlestick of pure gold, and a golden table of the proposition, and a mercy seat, and Cherubim shining with golden radiance, and silver columns, and the wheat of the word of God, and the wine of the joy of the Holy Spirit: also the vestments and linens with which the believers were clothed in Christ: all of which they turned into the worship of idols, composing various doctrines of errors, and deceiving others as they were deceived. Which God will take away all things, so that those who had not perceived the giver in abundance may perceive him in scarcity.

2:10-12

"And now I will reveal her folly in the eyes of her lovers: and no man shall deliver her out of my hand: and I will cause all her mirth to cease, her solemnities, her new moons, her sabbaths, and all her festival times. And I will destroy her vines, and her fig-trees, of which she said: These are my rewards, which my lovers have given me: and I will make her a forest, and the beasts of the field shall devour her." LXX: "And now I will reveal her uncleanness in the sight of her lovers; and no one shall take her out of my hand. And I will turn away all her mirth, her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths, and all her solemnities. And I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees, of which she said: These are my rewards, which my lovers have given me. And I will make her a forest, and the beasts of the field shall devour her." What follows: "The birds of the sky and the reptiles of the earth," must be marked with an obelus. Also, concerning the place that is called Jar in Hebrew, and from which comes the name of the city Cariath Jarim, which means "the city of the forests," the LXX translated it "testimony." The similarity of the letters Res and Daleth are false. For if the Res is read as Daleth, it is said "testimony," given that Jod letter does not precede. Therefore, having been freed from clothing and underwear, lest they should no longer cover the shame of the whore, all the foulness of Jerusalem, or the foolishness through which the foulness had been performed, will be revealed in the sight of her lovers, so that they may scorn openly that which they covertly desired. And when she is handed over to her lovers, the Assyrians or demons, to

whom both she and the Assyrians serve, no one, he says, will be able to take her from my hand because of her proven demonic weakness, namely that they who had received all good things are not able to liberate those oppressed by evils. But being handed over to the servitude of Babylon, she will not be able to celebrate the three solemnities of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. She will not observe the new moons, that is, the kalends, nor the Sabbaths with joy, nor all the festivals which are comprehended in one name. The vineyard, fig, and abundance of all things will also be corrupted: understand joy in the vineyard, sweetness and pleasantness in the fig, which are taken away by the evils of the most difficult servitude: and they will be taken away for this reason, because they were not given to themselves by God as a spouse, but they were considered as a prostitute by their lovers for the payment of lust. Then it will by no means have fruiting trees, but all will turn into a wooded thicket. And because it had once taken a metaphor from the forests, it ends in the rest, calling enemies, from whom all things are being devoured, beasts. Unhappy Judea suffered this both in history and metaphor; all of its ugliness was revealed to the eyes of the gentiles, and no one was able to rescue it from the hands of God. All ceremonies ceased, festivity was turned to mourning: everything which it thought would be given to it by demons, it now recognizes was taken away on account of the offense to God. First, Assyrians and Chaldeans devoured it, then the Medes and Persians and Macedonians; at the end, the most savage beast, the Roman Empire, tore it to pieces, whose name is hushed in Daniel so that greater fear may be increased for those who are to be devoured. Refer what we have said about Judaea to the heretics, who promising doctrines and knowledge at first, are abandoned by God after leaving the Church, and all their shame is placed in front of those whom they had previously deceived, and given to beasts which the prophet avoids, saying: "Do not give the soul confessing to you to beasts" (Psalm 73, 19), and by their bites they are abandoned.

2:13

"And I will visit upon her the days of the Baals, wherein she burnt incense to them, and adorned herself with her earrings and her jewels, and went after her lovers: and she forgot me, saith the Lord." LXX: "And I will take vengeance upon her during the days of the Baals, when she sacrificed to them and adorned herself with her earrings and necklaces. She went after her lovers, forgetting me," says the Lord. "Keep in mind a prostitute who is adorned with gold and gems, so that she may please her lovers, and whatever beauty she does not have by nature, she acquires through art. She had earrings, with which her ears had been adorned by the doctrine of God, and these pearls that hung from her neck, so that the bridegroom said to her as husband: 'Your neck is like a chain of gold' (Song of Solomon 1:9), before the feet of pigs, and gave holy things to dogs (Matthew 7). And what we read in Proverbs was fulfilled: 'As golden earrings and a necklace of fine gold: so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.' (Proverbs 25:12). But all this she did, that she might follow her lovers, and leave her husband. And such was the desire of pleasure and lust, that she lost all memory of her marital obligations, and forgot that she had been a wife. Therefore, on those very days on which she burned incense to the demons, she shall be visited with plagues, and shall be seized with punishments. Baal, in the singular number, and Baalim, in the plural, are names of the same idols in the masculine gender. Wherever in the end of a Hebrew word we read the syllable "im," it is plural in number and masculine in gender; but when we have "oth," it is plural in number and feminine in gender. Therefore, we understand Seraphim and Cherubim as being plural in number and masculine in gender. Sabaoth, which means "of armies," "of hosts," or "of

powers," is plural in number and feminine in gender. Therefore, Baalim is also plural in number and masculine in gender, although some read the feminine gender, incorrectly, as "tai Baaleim" or "al Balim." But how the heretics deceive their lovers, and are composed in their eloquence and the structure of their words, so that they simulate lies as truth, abandon conjugal chastity, and inflame Baalim, that is, idols, which they have fashioned from their own hearts, we see every day. They do not care for rustic simplicity, which seeks not meretricious ornaments; but rather for the artful and elegant lie, so that they may please their lovers, the devils and demons.

2:14

"Therefore behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope." LXX: "Therefore, behold, I will seduce her, and bring her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart." Because we have said "to open hope," and the Septuagint translated "to open his understanding," Symmachus interpreted it "into the door of hope," that is, "into the gateway of hope," Theodotion "to renew her patience," that is, "to open her expectation." After the disgrace of Jerusalem, or the whore of Judaea, was revealed in the eyes of her lovers, and the entire solemnity had ceased, whether drought or hail had corrupted the vineyard and fig tree, and reduced it to forests and barren trees devoured by beasts, and the Lord had inflicted torture and torment on her; for she had ignited incense for the demons of the Baals, and did not believe that she could rise from the ashes and embers anymore, then, that is, in the coming of His Son Christ, he will open up the hope of salvation and provide room for repentance, and he will speak kindly to her: for this is what "I will give her milk" means; so that, after the magnitude of punishments, he may assuage her earlier pains with the promise of prosperity. "And I will lead her," he said, "into solitude," that is, I will bring her out of hardships, just as I had led [the people] out of Egyptian slavery previously: "and I will speak to her heart" gentle words, consoling words, so that I may temper sadness with joy, according to the idiom of the Scriptures, by which words Sichem spoke to Dinah's heart (Gen. 34), and Joseph in Egypt to his sad and fearful brothers (Gen. 40), so that mourning may be changed into joy. Quod sequitur.

2:15

"And I will give him its vineyards, from the same place." Because He had previously spoken of flattery and the loneliness of those who left from Egypt, providing it as a similar example. In this example Moses and Aaron had stood as leaders of the Jews, who came from the same people. Now, He promises that he will give him the vineyards from the same place. The vineyard refers to Israel, which is attested by Scripture in both the Old Testament and the New: "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel" (Isaiah 5:7) and "You brought a vine out of Egypt" (Psalm 80:8). And in the Gospel (Matt. XXI). The father of the family leased his vineyard and did not receive its fruits. And after his son was killed, he leased it to other vinedressers. Therefore, this prophetic saying promises that the leaders of this vineyard, going out from the nations and captives of the enemies or vices, themselves are of the race of Jews, that is, apostles: and the place of tumult and the valley of turmoil, for this is what "Achor" means, is changed into the gate of hope, or to open up hope and patience, which is why he endured punishments and torments, so that through them he could attain prosperity. But the valley called "Achor," in which Achan was killed for stealing those things which had been consecrated to God, is interpreted as "trouble" and

"tumult": and some think that it means διαστροφή, that is, "perversity," Jesus himself interpreting when he spoke to Achan: "Because you have troubled us, the Lord shall trouble you in this day" (Joshua VII, 23). Hence that place was called Emec Achor, that is, "the valley of trouble." At the same time, we understand in this that at the beginning of the Promised Land near Jericho, when the people came out of the wilderness because of the Jordan, the sorrow was changed into joy with the first victory of the Israelites. There hope was opened where there had been despair: so that, with these punished who have sinned in Christ and committed sacrilege, they may be saved of those who have detested blasphemous Jews and killed them as much as they could. This circumcision and our Judaizers refer to the kingdom of a thousand years, which we see in the beginning to have been completed by the apostles, preachers and many thousands of believers from Israel, and which is fulfilled daily in those who want to believe. And what we said: "I will cherish her," and 70 translated: "I will seduce her," they refer to the time of the Antichrist: so that those who have not received the truth of Christ may receive his lie, and later, with Christ's coming, be saved.

"And he will sing there beside the days of his youth, and beside the days of his ascension from the land of Egypt." LXX: "And he shall be humbled according to the days of his infancy, and according to the days of his ascension from the land of Egypt." In the place where we have put "he will sing," and the LXX translated, "he shall be humbled," it is written in Hebrew "Anatha," which Symmachus interpreted as "he shall be afflicted," Theodotion "he shall answer," Aquila "he shall obey," that is, πακοσει: we take more literally from the Hebrew, that is, "he shall sing;" so that because he had once placed the agitation and leading into the wilderness, and the vintners from the same place, and the valley of Achor, and the whole history of those leaving Egypt and going to the holy land in a brief sentence, now also he keeps the likeness of the story. Just as in that time, when they were leaving the land of Egypt and Pharaoh was submerged in the Red Sea, Mary grabbed a timbrel and, leading the others, rejoiced and said: "Let us sing to the Lord, for he is greatly glorified: horse and rider he has thrown into the sea" (Exodus 15:1): so now too, according to the days of her youth or adolescence, when she departed from the land of Egypt, let her sing and rejoice, and let her sing with the choirs of the Church about the kingdom of Christ and her salvation. And take notice that when we depart from Egypt, and pass over to better things, we are said to ascend: because Jerusalem is situated on hills, from which he who wished to descend to Jericho was wounded (Luke X). But to those who seek the aids of Egypt, that is, of this world, it is said: "Woe to them that go down into Egypt for help" (Isa. XXXI, 1). The translation of Aquila and Theodotion, one of whom put πακοσει, that is, "he will hear," the other ποκριθεται, that is, "he will answer," makes it so that while some sing others answer. "But" he shall be "humbled" and "afflicted," which the LXX and Symmachus translated, does not fit the time of joy, unless perhaps it imitates Paul, who after being called an apostle, laments his ancient sins, and says that he is unworthy of the call of an apostle, because he persecuted the Church of God (I Cor. XV): so that humiliation and affliction in the conscience of past wounds, are not accepted in the pain of present evils.

2:16-17

And it shall be in that day, saith the Lord, I will call my servant, and I will not call him any more Baalim: and I will take away the names of Baalim out of his mouth, and he shall no more remember their names." Similarly the LXX. Ninus, the son of Belus, is reported by all the Greek

and Barbarian historians to have been the first who reigned over all Asia, and to have founded the city of Nineveh, called by the Hebrews Ninus, after his own name: his wife was Semiramis, of whom many and wonderful things are related; she built the walls of Babylon, as the famous poet testifies (Ovid. Metam. IV, 58), saying:

It is said that Semiramis once encircled the city with sea-fished brick.

He fought a great battle against Zoroaster, the king of the Bactrians, and achieved such glory that he referred to his father Bel as God, who is called Bel in Hebrew and in many prophets, especially in Daniel according to Theodotion, under the name of the idol of Babylon. The Sidonians and Phoenicians call him Baal (): for between the consonant letters Beth and Lamed, the vocal letter Ain is placed, which, according to the peculiarity of their language, is read now as "Beel," now as "Baal". Therefore even Dido, a Sidonian of royal birth, when she had received Aeneas as a guest, poured wine in this cup to Jupiter, "whom Belus and all from Belus's stock." We have learned the origin of a demon, or rather of a man consecrated into a demon: for all idols grew from the error of the dead. Let us hear the remainder: In the Hebrew and Syrian language, Baal is interpreted by "having," that is, "having." If we want to say, "having me," let us say Baali: and among both nations, they call their husbands their "Baali," that is, "my husband," which is understood as, "having me:" and it is the meaning, he who has me in marriage. The same language of the Hebrews is called "vir is": wherefore also the wife, who is taken from the man, is called in Genesis "Issa" (Gen. II, 1), as though from "vir": a woman.

Therefore, what the Lord says is this: with each word, he should be called "my husband" or "my spouse" both with Issi and Baali, however I hate the names of idols so much that even what can be said well, I do not want to be said on account of the ambiguity of the word, but to be called Issi more than Baali: lest, while speaking of one, he should remember the other, and while mentioning a husband [virum nominans], think of an idol. Forgive the obscurity which arises in three ways: either from the difficulty of the subject, or from the incompleteness of the teacher, or from the young age of the learner. For I should not make sport of the Hebrew prophet while delivering oratorical declamations, nor should I sing in the Asian style in stories and conclusions, but with your prayerful aid and incredible dedication to learning, I will reveal what is hidden. Finally, Aquila says, a diligent and curious interpreter: "He will call me his man, and he will not call me anymore having me," that is, Baal.

2:18

And I will strike a deal with them in that day, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the sky and with the creeping things of the ground; and I will shatter from the land, the bow, the sword, and war. And I will cause them to sleep with security. (LXX) And I will make a covenant with them in that day, with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the sky, and with the creeping things of the earth; and I will break the bow, and the sword, and war out of the land, and I will cause them to dwell in hope. When all the words of the opposing religion have been taken away from the people confessing the Lord, and he calls me, "my husband," and not "Baal," that is, "my idol," then I will strike a deal and agreement with them with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky and with the creeping things on the ground. From this time on, Isaiah speaks: "The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat. The calf, the lion, and the sheep will live together, and a small child will lead them all. The calf and the bear will graze and their young will

rest together. The lion will eat straw like an ox." (Isaiah 11:6-7) He desires neither flesh nor blood, but feeds on clean and simple foods. When Peter was instructed to welcome Cornelius among the nations (Acts 10:15), it was revealed and commanded that he should eat all kinds of animals and recognize nothing as unclean, which he received with thanksgiving. Later, he was told: "What God has cleansed, you must not call common." (Ephesians 2:1). Therefore, at the coming of the Lord and Savior, after his triumphs in the resurrection, and his ascent to the Father, two walls were joined together by a corner stone, made one by him who made both ("Al." both): and he called her who was called, "Without mercy, mercy obtained": and those who were said, "Not my people," his people: and with all things pacified, the bow and sword shall be brought to nothing, and war shall cease. For there will no longer be a need for weapons of those who fight, when those who fight no more exist. Israel shall be joined to the Gentiles, and that of Deuteronomy shall be fulfilled: "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people" (Deut. 32:43). "God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel." And: "In peace his habitation shall be, and his dwelling in Sion" (Psalm 75), that is, in the Church, wherein he hath broken the powers of bows, shield, sword, and battle: which being broken and bruised, the faithful sleep securely, and rest under one shepherd, whether they hope, believing in those things which the eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, which God hath prepared for them that love him (1 Cor. 2).

2:19

"And I will espouse thee to me forever: and I will espouse thee to me in justice, and judgment, and in mercy, and in compassion. And I will espouse thee to me in faith: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." Similarly in the Septuagint. Oh, what great mercy of God! The prostitute who has fornicated with many lovers, and was handed over to the beasts because of her crime; after she returns to her husband, though she is not reconciled to him, she is betrothed. And see what is between the conjunction of God and men: when a man accepts a wife, he makes a woman from a virgin, that is, not a virgin; Moreover, God, united with harlots, changes them into virgins, according to what is said through Jeremiah regarding adulteresses: "Not as thou hast called me, acknowledging me for thy master, and truly, he that is the protector of thy virginity" (Jer. III, 4). So the apostle, after fornication and idol worship, speaks to the Corinthians who believe: "For I have espoused you to one man, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (II Cor. XI, 2). We ask why he repeated the name of betrothal for the third time. For he says first: "I will betroth you to me forever." Second: "I will betroth you to me in righteousness and judgment, and in mercy and compassion." And not content with this, he adds the third: "I will betroth you to me in faith, and you shall know that I am the Lord." He betrothed her first in Abraham, or in Egypt, in order to have an eternal wife. Second on Mount Sinai, giving her the justice and judgment of the Law as a dowry, and joined to the Law mercy if when she sins, she should be delivered into captivity, when she has repented, she shall be recalled unto her country and obtain mercy. Concerning these betrothals in various places the psalmist sings: "I will sing of mercy and judgment to you, O Lord" (Psalm 102:2). And: "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10). We read of these two cups in the seventy-fourth psalm: "The cup in the Lord's hand, full of mixed wine, he inclined from this to that" - of the cup of justice into the cup of mercy, and again of the cup of mercy into the cup of justice. "If you, O Lord, will mark iniquities, Lord, who shall endure it? For with you there is merciful forgiveness." Therefore, this harlot, who had been first united in eternal embrace by the vow of her spouse, so as never to depart from the

marital bond, because she departed and committed fornication in Egypt, is again received by the Law. And because he passed by this, after killing the prophets as if they were companions of her spouse (who had been sent to her), finally the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, came. With this crucified one, rising from the dead, she is betrothed not in the justice of the Law but in the faith and grace of the Gospel, so that when she knows the only-begotten, she may also know the Father. For he himself said to Philip: 'I am with you for so long a time, and you have not known me?' 'Philip, he who sees me, sees also my Father; how do you say, show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?' (John 14:10-11). He who is espoused in faith and believes in the Gospel, will immediately know that he himself is a God, believing in him whom he had previously denied.

2:20-23

"And it shall come to pass in that day: I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth. And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they shall hear Jezrael. And I will sow her unto me in the earth, and I will have mercy on her that was without mercy. And I will say to that which was not my people: Thou art my people: and they shall say: Thou art my God." LXX: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." On that day and at that time when I will espouse you to me in faith, and you will know that I am the Lord, I will hear the heavens, which declare the glory of God (Ps. 18), and the heavens will hear the earth, that it may be watered with heavenly rain, and the earth, from which truth arises (Ps. 84) , and into whose field the householder goes forth to sow his seeds (Matt. 13, 3), will yield wheat and wine and oil, of which we have spoken above, and all these things shall hear Jezrael, which is, the seed of God, that is, the abundance and fertility of all things may be attributed to the seed of God, who is Christ, that it is sown in the earth to bring forth manifold fruits, a hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold (Ibid, 8). And that prostitute, who had been joined to God, and had borne three children, two males and one female; the first named Jezrael, the second, Without mercy; the third, not my people, may she see that the words of things have been changed because of the seed of God, and in the faith of Christ have obtained mercy, which was without mercy, and being called the people of God, who before were not called the people. From this we see that all that has been said can be referred both to the ten tribes called Israel, and under the name of the prostitute, they have borne three children, and to every people of Jewish name. On the hearing of heaven and earth, and of wheat, wine, and oil, and Jezrael, this is what some people believe, that after Christ's coming, everything runs in its own order, and the whole creature serves the usefulness of men, as it was established from the beginning. All of which Jews and Judaizers among us wait for corporally after Antichrist at the end of the world.

3:1

And the Lord said to me: Go still, love the beloved woman to a friend and an adulteress, just as the Lord loves the children of Israel, and they respect (look at) foreign gods, and they love "wine presses of grapes." (Vulgate "they look at") LXX: "And the Lord said to me: Go still and love the woman loving evil and an adulteress, just as the Lord loves the children of Israel, and they look

(respect) to foreign gods, and they love baked goods with wine." The prophet was joined with the former woman as a symbol of the ten tribes, or the whole Jewish people, who committed adultery, and finally brought the abandoned and tortured children to salvation: here he is commanded to still love the adulterous woman. When it is said, 'still,' it shows that he has previously loved fornication: whether that adulteress loves those evils or is loved by a friend and neighbor: For the Hebrew word 'friend' or 'evil' is read. And lest we think that the love of the prophet is for the adulteress, it signifies something other than the love of God for the children of Israel, he brought it in: Just as the Lord loves the children of Israel. Therefore, because the prophet loves the adulteress, yet is not joined to her in marriage, nor is he linked in fornication, but only loves the transgressor, he is a type of God, who loves the most wicked children of Israel, who, though they are loved by the Lord, look to foreign gods and idols and love the grapes of the vineyards that have no wine, and have lost their original grace, just like demons who have fallen from their own dignity and possessing nothing of ancient grace, they are dry and withered by old dryness. From the 'vineyards,' which in Hebrew is called Asise. Aquila translated it as παλαια, that is, 'old.' Symmachus [translated it as] κερπυς, that is, 'sterile:' and they are not only vineyards, but also old vineyards, that ancient sins may be test. And it should be noted that this adulteress signifies the present time of the Jews, who without God and knowledge of the Scriptures and the grace of the Holy Spirit, are loved by the Lord, who awaits salvation for all, and opens the door to those who repent, and they nevertheless love useless things, loving human traditions and dreams of δευτερωσων and do not have grapes and wine and full presses with must, but old vineyards that are rejected. Regarding "pematibus" which the 70 translated, and are eaten with raisins or grapes, we can say in Latin "placentas" or "crustula," which are offered to idols and are called ππανα in Greek. But the children of Israel in this place are called twelve tribes; above the ten that were in Samaria and possessed the metropolis, Jezrael.

3:2

"And I dug it for myself for fifteen pieces of silver, and a cor of barley, and half a cor of barley, and I said to her." The LXX reads, "And I brought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and a gomor of barley, and a vessel of wine, and I said to her." Gomor in Hebrew is written Omer, which all interpreters, except the LXX, have translated as "cor". In Greek, especially in the dialect of Palestine, it represents thirty modii. And for nebel vini, in Hebrew it is written Lethech Seorim, which other interpreters have translated as "half a cor of barley," which constitutes fifteen modii. That which is joined in the Vulgate edition: "Neither will you be the husband of another: (you will be) the other" is not present in Hebrew, but simply, "You will not be the husband." For if "another" is inserted, it implies that she belongs to her own husband. However, when it is said absolutely, "You will not be the husband" we understand that she is not connected to anyone at all, and remains without marital union. We read the measurement of the heart in Ezekiel (Ezek. XLV) and in the Gospel (Luke XXVI). Therefore he, that is the adulterer, dug it himself, or hired it for fifteen pieces of silver. When he says 'dig,' he is showing the vineyard, which is planted by the Lord, and is put in many places in Scripture, signifying the Jewish people. But if we read 'I hired,' it is the price of an adulteress, not that he should sleep with a prophet, but that, content with her wages, she should stop committing adultery and not be joined with others indiscriminately. The heart of barley is also dug or hired, and with half a measure of barley, that is, forty-five bushels, accepted as payment, he heard from the Lord:

3:3

"You shall wait for many days for me: you shall not fornicate, and you shall not be a man's wife; but I will also wait for you." LXX: "You shall sit for many days with me, and you shall not fornicate, nor be with another man, and I to you." This means, you will not shamefully prostitute yourself to other lovers, nor will you join me, the man whom you are hired by, in legitimate marriage. And so that you do not think that an injustice has been done to you because I said "you will wait for me," I will repay in kind by saying "and I will wait for you." On the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, the firstborn of the Egyptians were struck, and the people of Israel were led out of Egypt and hired into the service of God (Exodus XII). Finally, for the firstborn of Israel who did not feel the common plague, receive five shekels of silver (Num. III), which are offered as a gift to the temple. Most of our people refer "fifteen" to the week of the Law, and "eight" to the Gospel, that is, the Sabbath and the day of resurrection, which exercises spiritual circumcision. But how can they explain the Testament if the adulterous woman, who feeds on barley and is another man's, receives both as a reward? On the forty-fifth day, the people reached Mount Sinai and immediately on the next day separated themselves from sexual relations for three days in order to prepare to receive God's law. After three days, on the fiftieth day, Moses ascended the mountain and received the Ten Commandments. The Jewish people, who were once brought for fifteen pieces of silver and forty-five bushels of barley, now await the coming of the Lord and his man. And that which he says: "Thou shalt not commit fornication, and thou shalt not be a man," shows that at the time being she does not serve idols, nor yet has God; but rather be stripped for both lovers and a man. And because she has no man, she does not eat human food, wheat and pulse, but barley of irrational animals, ruminating the vileness of the letter that kills, and not having the enlivening spirit. Whence, in the law, a woman who is accused of adultery by her husband, in the drink of accusation, that is, "conviction," when charged with sin, takes barley meal (Num. 5), for she is like the horses and mules, which have no understanding (Ps. 32), and are sustained with the food of horses and mules. For half a bushel of barley, the Septuagint translated 'a skin of wine,' which is not in the Hebrew at all. And we can say that in 'a skin of wine,' that is, a measure full and completely intoxicated adulteress, is afflicted with full punishments. Hence, Jeremiah offers the cup of wine to the peoples and Jerusalem as well (Jer. 15). A man also sits, or rather waits for the repentance of the adulteress, so that when the fullness of the Gentiles has entered and the last of Israel will believe, so that the head, which had been the tail, will be turned into a head and the tail into a head (Deut. 28), then there will be one flock and one shepherd.

3:4-5

"For many days the children of Israel shall sit without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. And after these things the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king: and they shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." LXX: "For many days the children of Israel shall sit without a king, without a prince, without sacrifice, without an altar, without priesthood, without manifestations" (which in Greek are called δεικνύειν). "And after this the children of Israel shall return, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king: and they shall be astonished at the Lord, and at his goodness in the latter days." For "ephod" and "teraphim" the Septuagint have translated "sacerdotium," meaning "priesthood," and "manifestations." However, it should be known, as we have frequently said, that "ephod" signifies a priestly garment, which is called in the LXX by the

word βαθυσπεταλον, meaning "superhumeral," and by Aquila it is called πινδυμα, meaning "outer garment." But "teraphim" properly denote μορφώματα, that is "figures" and "images," which we can, for the present place only, call "Cherubim" and "Seraphim," or any others which were commanded to be made for the decoration of the temple. But because the seventy have translated the clear things, for which Aquila translated (introduced) enlightenments. And these indeed are the (meanings) in the "Rational" account, that is, we understand that in the heart and mind of the bishop, truth and enlightenments, that is, "truth" ought to be, as well as "doctrine": so that he may not only know the correct faith but also be able to utter what he knows. Which Apostle Paul also writes to Titus, teaching what kind of bishop ought to be ordained: "For a bishop must be without crime as the dispenser of God, not proud, not irritable, not given to wine, not a striker, not greedy for filthy lucre: But hospitable, kind, sober, just, holy, continent, embracing him who is according to the "sound doctrine, faithful in speech, so he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine, and to contradict those who oppose it" (Titus 1: 7-9). We read of the ephod and theraphim in the book of Judges (Chapters 17 and 18), which the Levites made for themselves; later on, they departed with 600 armed men from the tribe of Dan. From the passion of the Savior until the present day, a little over 400 years have elapsed, and as for how much time remains until the day of judgment, neither the angels nor the Son know. He says that he doesn't know for this reason, because it is not beneficial for us to learn. These are indeed many days on which the unfortunate Synagogue and adulterous woman are fed with barley, and sits contracted, because she cannot stand with Christ. Without a king, of whom the Father said: "I have raised up a king with justice" (Isa. XLV, 13). And He himself says in the Psalm: "But I am appointed king by him over his holy mount Zion" (Psal. II, 6). Without a prince, either the Lord and Savior Himself, or certainly a pontiff, of whom it is written: "Thou shalt not revile the princes of thy people." (Exod. XXII). And without sacrifice, and without altar. For with the temple overthrown, and Jerusalem burned, neither sacrifice nor Judaic priesthood can exercise. And without ephod and without teraphim, that is, the instruments of the priestly habit. Concerning this king and Jacob in the blessing of Judah the patriarch speaks: "The leader shall not fail from Juda, nor the ruler from his thigh, till he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of nations." (Gen. XLIX, 10) Therefore, after the prince of Judah had fallen, and the leader from his thigh, and Herod, a foreigner and proselyte, had taken over the empire, we understand that someone has come to whom the kingdom was entrusted, and he himself was the expectation of the nations. This is the blindness that happened in part to Israel, so that the fullness of the Gentiles might enter, and then all Israel would be saved (Romans 11): and later they will return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, who was born from David's lineage and interprets "strong by hand." For he himself freed his captive people and gave remission to the prisoners. And when the children of Israel shall see him that was rejected by his own brethren reigning in the majesty of his Father and his own, they shall fear and marvel at the Lord and at his good things. For the good son is born of a good father, whether to the good things of the Lord spoken of by the saint: "I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps. 26:13): for the earth in which we dwell, sinners, is the land of the dead. The present chapter, among others of the Jews, is interpreted concerning the Babylonian captivity, when the temple was desolate for seventy years, and there was no altar, sacrifice, or priesthood, but afterwards they returned to their former seats under Zorobabel. Others, like us, delay for the future time ("they abandon" "Al.") and they cannot find any other cause of such a great offense that they have been abandoned for such a long time, especially since they do not worship idols, except for

the killing of the Savior.

4:1-2

"Hear the word of the Lord, sons of Israel; for judgment is for the Lord with the inhabitants of the earth: for there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. Cursed, and lying, and murder, and theft, and adultery have overflowed: and blood has touched blood." LXX: "Hear the word of the Lord, sons of Israel; for judgment is for the Lord with the inhabitants of the earth: for there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God over the earth. Curse, and lying, and murder, and theft, and adultery have been spilt over the earth, and they have mixed blood with blood." From the beginning of the prophet to this point, under the description of a prostitute and an adulteress, whose punishment is severe and long-lasting, a later restoration to their former or a better state is made for the ten tribes or two, and the sins of all are counted. Again now to Israel, that is, the speech turns to the ten tribes, explaining that God, angered, does not threaten and inflict such great punishments in vain: lest perhaps the sentence be not seen to have been passed justly, but by the power of God on those who have not sinned. Hear, said the prophet, the word of the Lord, O sons of Israel: for the Lord desires to judge with his people and to expose the reasons for his anger. There is no truth, and there is no mercy, and there is no knowledge of God in the land. For truth cannot be sustained without mercy, and mercy without truth makes the negligent; therefore, the one is mingled with the other, and whoever does not have either also does not have knowledge of God. But on the contrary, for truth there is falsehood, and for mercy there is cursing, murder, theft, adultery. He did not say, "there is"; but to demonstrate the abundance of sins, he uses the expression, "they have inundated" (Al. "they have overflowed"); and for the knowledge of God, which is not on earth, blood touched blood, or blood mingled with blood, so that they could increase sins with sins and add new ones to old. Indeed, those who are inhabitants of the earth and not sojourners are called to judgment: for from the face of the North evils blaze forth upon the inhabitants of the earth. And in the Apocalypse of John: Woe, woe, woe is said to the inhabitants of the earth. But he who is able to say with the prophet: "I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were" (Psa. 38:13), and passes through this world like a stranger and a sojourner, follows after truth and mercy and the knowledge of God, lest he be overwhelmed by an inundation of curses and falsehood, of murder, and theft, and adultery, and of blood.

4:3

Therefore the earth will mourn, and all who dwell in it will be weakened: in the beast of the field and in the bird of the sky, and even the fish of the sea will be gathered. " LXX: "Therefore the earth will mourn and be diminished with all who dwell in it, with the beasts of the field," "with the serpents of the earth, and with the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea will fail." For there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God on earth, but on the contrary, curse, lying, homicide, theft, and adultery have flooded in and blood has touched blood: therefore the earth will mourn with its inhabitants, and be weakened, so that it will not have beasts of the field, and birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea will fail. For when the captivity of the ten tribes shall have come, with the inhabitant being taken away, even the beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea shall fail; and even the mute elements shall feel the wrath of the Lord. Let whoever does not believe that this happened to the people of Israel look at Illyria, look at Thrace, at Macedonia and Pannonia, and the entire land that stretches from Propontis and the Bosphorus to the Julian

Alps, and they will prove that all creatures, which were previously fed by the Creator for human use, will fail along with men. But if we wish, as some think, to interpret savage men as beasts, and birds of the air as those who are lifted up in pride, and all things human as those which are contemptible, and fishes of the sea as those which are irrational, and so brutes that they have absolutely no sense, and do not see free air and sky: this is not so much the wrath as the mercy of the Lord, that the evils which are among men may be taken away from the earth.

4:4-5

"Nevertheless, let no one judge, and let no man be accused: for thy people are as they that contradict the priest, and thou shalt fall this day, and the prophet shall fall with thee." LXX: "That no one be judged, nor anyone be rebuked: but my people are like a priest who is contradicted, and shall be weakened" "during the day, and the prophet shall be weakened with thee." According to the Septuagint interpreters, what we have placed "that no one be judged or rebuked," should be combined with the previous chapter, but we follow the Hebrews. Summoned to the judgment of God, children of Israel, who dwelt in the land so that they might hear the reasons for the indignation of the Lord, and recognize past sins for which they would be delivered to their enemies, now because they persist in wickedness and contemptuously face God, they hear: It is not necessary for you to come to judgment, so that you may be accused of your shameful deeds; for you are of such impudence, that even when convicted, you have neither shame nor modesty; but you contradict me, as if a disciple contradicts his master, the priest of the people, who does not have the dignity of priesthood. And because you are such, therefore you fall today, that is, you are led into captivity, and the kingdom of Israel is lost. What he says, "today," means the present time, or not by fraud and deceit, but by clear light you are led into captivity, and such will be your weakness that even the prophets, who used to prophesy falsehood to you, will fall with you and feel the captivity. We must accept either prophets or false prophets, or certainly all prophetic grace. For as long as the ten tribes were not captured, they had both the prophet Elijah and Elisha, and the other sons of the prophets who prophesied in Samaria. Hence the prophet Amos, who was from the tribe of Judah and from the village of Tekoa, was forced to return to his homeland, lest he prophesy in a foreign kingdom and in Samaria.

4:6

"At night, I made your mother be silent, my people have become silent, because they have no knowledge: for you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you, and you will not serve as a priest to me; and you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your sons." LXX: "I have compared thy mother to the night, and my people to have no knowledge. Since thou hast refused knowledge, I will also refuse thee, that thou shalt not be a priest to me. Thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, and I will forget thy children." Not because there are other mothers and other sons, does she call herself mother and sons; but just as the Lord spoke to the Jewish people and said, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest those sent to thee, how often I have desired to gather thy children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and thou didst not want it." (Matthew 23, 5). Not as another Jerusalem, and another people thereof: for it did not speak without the people to the building of the city and the wood and the stones. Thus the mother is called the crowd of the people and every multitude of the Hebrew nation, to whom it speaks: but the sons, either single or dispersed through the towns and villages of the people.

Therefore in the night and darkness of captivity, mourning and pressing distress, Israel is surrendered and its people remain silent in eternal silence; because it did not have knowledge of the law, nor did it keep the commandments of God, and received what it had done. For she herself has rejected God's law, and thus she has lost the priesthood forever, and worships the golden calves in Dan and Bethel; and because she has forgotten God's law, and entirely enslaved herself to Egyptian idols, therefore the Lord will also forget her children, delivering them to eternal captivity: "For he who is ignorant, let him be ignorant." (I Cor. XIV), and in the Psalms we read: "They did not know, nor did they understand, they walked in darkness." (Ps. LXXXI, 5). We can refer everything that is said about the ten tribes to the heretics who have left the kingdom of David and Jerusalem, that is, Christ and the Church: and therefore they are covered with eternal night, they do not have the knowledge of God, and they are rejected by the Lord so that they may not perform the priesthood to him, and they never remember the children they have generated, because they have become aliens to him.

4:7-9

"According to their abundance, so they sinned against me: I will change their glory into shame, they will eat the sins of my people, and lift up their souls to their iniquity, and it shall be as the people, so the priest, and I will visit upon him his ways, and render to him his thoughts." LXX: "According to their abundance, so they sinned against me, I will turn their glory into shame": they will eat the sins of my people, and receive them in their iniquities"; "others their souls, and it will be as the people, so also the priest, and I will take vengeance on him for his ways, and render to him his thoughts." Israel had as many altars built for demons as they had men, in whose sacrifices they sinned against me. Therefore, I will exchange their glory, in which they boasted to themselves and preferred to God, into ignominy, so that both the priests and the people may be captured. For indeed, the priests eat the sins of my people, concerning whom it is written: "Those who devour my people, like bread" (Psalms 13:8). And therefore they eat the sins of my people, consenting to the crimes of wrongdoers since, when they witness them sinning, not only do they not rebuke them, but they praise and exalt them and call them blessed. About whom Isaiah speaks: "My people, who call you blessed, deceive you, and they "supplant" the paths of your feet" (Isa. III, 12). Concerning them, the Psalmist cries out: "For the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and the unjust is blessed" (Ps. IX, 24). Hence, both the people and the priest will equally endure the sentence of God's indignation; for not only will He visit the works that they call "ways," in which they walk, but also the thoughts which they have entertained to do such things. For not only the work, but also the contemplation of evil deeds will pay the penalty. It is easy to understand about heretics, that the more there are, the more they sin against God and glory in the people; and so they deceive the unfortunate, so that they may eat the sins of the people, and by sweet words devour the houses of widows (Luke XX). For when they see some sinning, they say: God seeks nothing else but the truth of faith, which if you keep, he does not care what you do. For by saying these things, they lift up their souls in their iniquities, so that they not only do not repent or humble themselves, but rejoice in their wicked deeds and walk with heads held high. Therefore both the people and the priest, the learned and the teachers of the law, will be equally punished.

4:10-12

"And they shall eat, and not be satisfied: and they have committed fornication, and have not ceased: because they have forsaken the Lord in not keeping him: fornication, and wine, and drunkenness take away the heart. My people hath consulted their stocks, and their staff hath declared unto them: for the spirit of fornication hath deceived them, and they have committed fornication against their God." "And they shall eat, and not be filled:" "they have committed fornication, and shall not be directed: because they have forsaken the Lord, to keep not his law: fornication, and wine, and drunkenness take away the heart of my people. They consulted their wood, and their staff answered them: for the spirit of fornication hath deceived them" "and they have committed fornication against their God." Insatiable pleasure is created, and the more one is captured by it, the more hunger it creates. On the contrary, blessed are the hungry and thirsty for justice, for they will be satisfied. As justice satisfies, so too does iniquity, having no substance, delude those who consume it deceitfully and leave the stomachs of the devourers empty. They have committed fornication and have not ceased. Their strength fails in fornication, and the desire to fornicate does not rest. They committed fornication with the idols of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and left their Lord God, not keeping what he had commanded, saying: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve" (Deuteronomy 6:13), but it should be read emphatically: Fornication and wine and drunkenness take away the heart. For just as wine and drunkenness make him who drinks thereof incapable of his own mind, so does fornication and pleasure pervert the senses and weaken the spirit; and it turns a rational man into a brute animal, so that he pursues brothels, dens of vice, and places of debauchery. And when his heart is stirred out of its place, he holds wood and stones as gods, and worships the works of his own hands. Hence the prophet, as if amazed and bewildered, speaks: "My people who were once called by my name have asked counsel of a wooden idol, and have sought intuition from rods, which the Greeks call divination by rods." Therefore in Ezekiel we read that Nebuchadnezzar mixed his rods against Ammon and Jerusalem, and a rod went forth against Jerusalem (Ezek. 25): and the cause of this madness of fornication is the spirit that deceived them, so that they might fornicate against their God. But he calls fornication idolatry, according to what we read in Jeremiah: "And they committed adultery with wood and stone, and I said, After they have committed adultery with all these things, return to me, but she did not return with all her heart, but with lies." And again: "You have left me and said, I will go on every high hill, and under every green tree I will spread myself in my fornication" (Jer. 3:5, 6). And in the Psalm it is said: 'You have destroyed all who commit fornication away from you' (Ps. 72:27). For the beginning of fornication is the invention of idols. Heretics are never satisfied with their own error, and do not cease from the disgracefulness of fornication. They do not keep the holy Law and Scriptures, abandon the Lord, become insane and inebriated, and, with the judgment of their mind destroyed, worship idols which they themselves have fashioned from their hearts and are possessed by the spirit of fornication.

4:13

"On the tops of the mountains, they sacrificed, and on the hills, they burned incense under an oak and a poplar and a terebinth because its shade was good." According to the Law, it is commanded that one should not offer sacrifice to the Lord anywhere other than the place that the Lord God chooses. Trees are not to be planted near the altar so that a passive and indulgent religion does not overthrow the austerity of the one true religion. On the contrary, Israel was sacrificing on the mountains and burning incense on the hills, loving the high places of the earth, for they had

forsaken the Most High God and sought shadows, having lost the truth. This is what we read about each king: "But the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places" (3 Kings 22:44), which in Hebrew is called Bama. Heretics promise themselves the sublimity of their doctrines and sacrifice under oak, poplar and terebinth, under barren trees, having neither fig nor vine, under which the Saint is said to rest. However, they sometimes assume a terebinth for themselves, which, according to Isaiah, has no leaves, so that they may seem to imitate the example of Abraham. (Isaiah VI)

4:14

"Therefore, your daughters will prostitute themselves, and your daughters-in-law will commit adultery. I will not punish your daughters when they fornicate or your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery, because they themselves consorted with prostitutes and offered sacrifices with effeminate men, and the people who do not understand will be punished." LXX: "Therefore your daughters will prostitute themselves, and your brides will commit adultery; I will not punish them for prostitution nor for adultery, because they went to prostitutes and arranged pagan temple rites with sacred prostitutes; a senseless people they are." The word Cadesoth, which was translated by Aquila ■νηλλαγμ■νων, by Symmachus ■ταιρ■δων, by the Seventy τετελεσμ■νων, by Theodotion κεχωρισμ■νων, we translate as "effeminate" in order to convey the meaning of the word to our ears. These are they who serve today in Rome, not the gods but the demons, who are called Gauls, because the Romans castrated men of this tribe for the honor of Atys (whom the goddess harlot had made a eunuch) and appointed them to be priests. Therefore, the men of the Gaulish race are effeminate, so that those who captured the city of Rome are struck by this ignominy. There was such idolatry in Israel, mostly by women, who worshiped Beelphegor for the obscenity of his magnitude, whom we can call Priapus. Therefore, Asa the king took away the lofty ones of the people and such priests and deposed his mother from her august throne, as is testified in the scripture, saying: "And Asa did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, as did David his father, and took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. And also Maacha his mother, he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Cedron. But the high places were not taken away: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect with the Lord all his days." (III Kings 15, 11 seqq.) It must be known however, that at present in Kadesh, "prostitutes," are called "sacerdotes" or "priests" of Priapus. In other places, we read of Ca'desim, men who, driven by lust have been castrated, of whom Isaiah says, "And the mockers shall rule over them," for which in Hebrew it is written, "And the eunuchs shall rule over them," which we translate to mean "effeminate" people. But Aquila, giving an interpretation, that is to say, "those who have been changed," wanted to show that their nature had changed, and that men had been made women. Symmachus properly called them "prostitutes." The Septuagint called them "consecrated and initiated" to show themselves as idol worshipers. Theodotion called them "separated from the people" who seemed to have something more than the common people. We have briefly discussed the words, now let us return to the meaning of the chapter. It is a great offense to not merit the anger of the Lord after you have sinned. Israel had fornicated with their God, and were seduced by a spirit of fornication: therefore their daughters and brides fornicate, and are left unpunished in their sin, so that they may feel what their sons and wives did to their true parents and husbands, and understand the pain of God from their own pain, who is so angry that he does

not strike these sinners. For the Apostle also testifies in mystical language, writing to the Romans: "For saying they were wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of serpents. Therefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves, who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." And in order that we may know that the visitation of God is inflicted upon us when we are wounded and weak, in order that by means of the cauterization of bitter potions we may be cured of sickness – let us listen to the Lord speaking through the prophet: "I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with stripes; but my mercy will I not take from him" (Ps. 88:33-34). Therefore, he who is loved is corrected; he who is neglected is left to his own sins. And so great was the number of fornicators in Israel that vengeance ceased, despairing of amendment. For what is more shameful than to be joined to the worship of harlots and to offer sacrifices of their lust with effeminate men? And what the phrase, "A people that doth not understand shall be beaten," which in the Septuagint is translated: "And a people not understanding adhered to the harlot," means is that such a people shall be scourged in captivity and shall be visited with various plagues in order that, by means of pain, it may receive discipline. The easy understanding about heretics is that their children will fornicate and their spouses, namely, the souls which they have begotten in error and married to their doctrines. Such persons are unworthy of correction by God, for their every form of worship is fornication and they mingle foul deeds with foul doctrines. Therefore, they shall be beaten so that they may finally understand what God they seek. When you see a sinner abound in riches, boast in power, rejoice in health, delight in his spouse, be surrounded by a garland of children, and fulfill that which is written: "They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men" (Ps. 73:5), say that the Prophet's threat has been accomplished in him: "I will not visit upon your daughters when they commit fornication, nor upon your spouses when they shall commit adultery."

4:15-16

"If you fornicate, Israel, let not at least Judah sin, and do not enter into Gilgal, and do not ascend into Bethaven, neither shall you swear, by the living Lord, for as an wanton heifer, Israel has sinned. Now the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place." LXX: "But you, Israel, do not ignore, and Judah, do not enter into Galgala, nor ascend into the house [■v] and do not swear, the Lord lives: for as a refuge-killed cow, Israel went insane. Now the Lord will feed them like a lamb in a spacious place." "For home" [■v] being read in some copies, and most particularly in Theodotion as "house of iniquity," which Aquila and Symmachus interpreted as ■νοφελο■ς ["house of the profitless,"] that is, "useless" which is of no benefit, and is designated by another word "idol". But Bethel was formerly called the "House of God," but after the calves were placed in it, it was called "Bethaven," that is, "useless house" and "house of idols," which we have expressed as we read it in Hebrew. But it seems to me that both the people of Israel and Jeroboam the son of Nebat made a golden calf to be worshipped in the wilderness, and fashioned golden calves as they had learned in Egypt, where the bulls are worshipped as gods in their superstition. Let us discuss the meaning of the chapter: Sisemel, O Israel, you have been deceived by error and have mixed with prostitutes, so that whoever fulfills the act of offering and giving gifts to the king or himself, would become a priest of the high places. At least you, Judah, who possess Jerusalem and have Levites

from the law and perform temple ceremonies, should not imitate the examples of your former sister Oolla in fornication and worship idols with her. Do not enter Galgala, about which we read in this same prophet: 'All their wickedness is in Galgala' (Hosea 9:15), where Saul was anointed king, where the people, coming out of the wilderness, camped for the first time, and were purified by a second circumcision. From that time on, in this notorious place, error of an opposing religion crept in. And do not go up to Bethaven, that is, what was once called Bethel, because after golden calves were placed there by Jeroboam son of Nabath, it is not called the House of God but the house of an idol. For which reason, I wonder why the Septuagint interpreted it as "unless I make a mistake, the middle Jod letter which is surrounded on both sides by Aleph and Nun letters was believed to be Vau based solely on its size." "You shall not make a false oath by my name," says the Lord. For I do not want my name to be mentioned on your lips, which is tainted by the memory of idols. For just as a cow that is wanton and throws off her yoke, so too Israel, that is, the ten tribes, turned away from the service of the Lord. For the wanton cow, the Seventy translated παροιστρῶσαν, which stung by desire and struck by the asylum, which they commonly call "tabanus". About which Virgil also reports in the third book of the Georgics.

...The name of the asylum is Roman: the Greeks called it "oestrus," a harsh and bitter name that drives all the herds to flee in terror from the woods. The sky roars and trembles with their cries, and the banks of the dry Tanagra shake. And so because Israel had become insane and, struck by the spirit of fornication, went mad with unbelievable fury, not much longer afterwards, but while the prophet's body was still possessed by the spirit, the Lord said: "I will feed them as a lamb in a spacious place." He kept the metaphor of a cow in heat, in the same way that he had used it before, calling the captivity in Assyria and the dispersion of Israel into the widest land of the Medes, the pasture of a wide field and of flocks of sheep and lambs. A predisposition is present against heretics, concerning whom or about whom it is said: If you fornicate once, heretic, at least, do not offend, church-goer, and do not enter into Galgala, the meetings of heretics, where the sins of everyone are exposed, and are rolled in the mud like pigs. Do not assume that you rise up to the proud and arrogant fictions of false teachings. For there is not the house of God, but the house of an idol. And do not swear by the name of Christ, whose majesty you have defiled by mingling it with idols. For just as a slaughtered cow falls in the asylum, so the heretics are struck by the burning arrows of the devil and abandon knowledge of the Law. Therefore, they will graze in the broad and spacious way that leads to death, and the patience of the Lord and the care of the good Shepherd will nourish them unto their own destruction.

4:17-19

"Partaker of their idols is Ephraim, leave him; he is separated from their congregation: they have committed fornication in their fornication; they loved to bring disgrace upon their protectors, his spirit is bound up in their wings, and they shall be confounded because of their sacrifices." LXX: "Ephraim, a participant in idols, has placed scandals for himself, he has provoked the Canaanites, they have committed fornication, they have loved disgrace from his roar; a whirlwind of spirit will whistle in his wings, and they will be confounded from their altars." Ephraim, of whose tribe Jeroboam son of Nabath, who first set up golden calves in Bethel and Dan, is king of ten tribes. Therefore, O Judah, whom I mentioned above, if Israel commits fornication, let at least Judah not sin. Listen to my advice, do not disregard the words of the prophets; for Ephraim once was a friend and partner with idols. Leave him, do not follow his impiety, for his worship and religion and food

are separated from your fellowship. They serve idols once, sacrificed to devils, fornicating every day, and loving their fornication. Indeed, its leaders and protectors, that is, the kings, took pleasure in bringing dishonor to the people, that is, in the vice of the princes. The unhappy people received the worship of idols, whose unclean spirits bound Israel in their wings and do not allow it to fly freely. Therefore they shall be confounded in their sacrifices, and they shall receive disgrace for their confusion. Symmachus, because we have interpreted it as "he bound his spirit on his wings," translates it into Greek in this way, as if one binds the wind in the wings of the wind, so that both the princes and the people, indeed both demons and Israel, may assert that they are vainly coupled with vanities. For wind and spirit are called "Rua" in one word in Hebrew. That which the Seventy translated ("Al." placed) as "provoked the Canaanites," is not found in Hebrew, but it can be thus interpreted, that we say only that Israel had such zeal for the worship of idols, that it did not imitate the Canaanites, that is, the heathen; but it provoked them to emulate its own error. This same thing can also be referred to heretics, and it is said to Judah, that is, to an ecclesiastical man, because Israel, who is interpreted as bearing fruit, promises himself a false richness of doctrine, and fruitful teachings, and once was a friend of demons, dismiss him and despise him: especially since their sacrifices are separated from your own sacrifices. For this is what is said: their gathering has been separated, they committed fornication once, and their leaders have deceived the unhappy people; and for the worship of God they have imbued them with the disgrace of idols, and devilish spirits have bound them on their wings, who are carried around by every wind of doctrine; and they cannot remain firm on the solid foundation of the Church. Those who truly are confounded in their sacrifices, because their bread is the bread of sorrow. And what is said, "He provoked the Canaanites," can be referred to heretics in the same sense, that most heretics have invented such abominations and filthy things, and have impure sacrifices, so that idolatry is inferior. Or certainly because "Cananaean" means "trader," or μεταβολος, that is, "translator," all those who make the Father's house a house of trade (John 2), and seek profits from the people, and transfer the truth of the Church into falsehood, are to be called Canaanites.

5:1-2

"Hear these things, O priests, and attend, O house of Israel, and O house of the king, give ear; for judgment is for you. For you have become a snare at Mizpah and a net spread upon Tabor, and victims on high have been turned aside into the depths." LXX: "Listen to these things, priests, and attend, House of Israel, and House of the King, perceive with your ears, for judgment belongs to you, since you have become a snare for speculation, and like a net spread out over Italy, those who capture it have established a hunt." The priests of the ten tribes are called to judgment, and the kings, not because the priests are from the tribe of Levi, but because the priests are called by the people. So even the priests of Baal, and four hundred and fifty prophets whom Elijah slew (1 Kings 18), and later Jehu the son of Namshi (2 Kings 9:10), in the presence of Jonadab the son of Rechab, were called priests. But even Israel, that is the people, is called to judgment, and none is excused, so that both priests and people and kings, who had led the people and appointed priests, hear together what they did and why they are handed over to enemies. I have appointed you as spies," he said, "and as leaders among the people, and have placed you on the high pinnacle of dignity, so that you might guide the wandering people. But you have become a trap, and are to be called not so much spies and leaders as hunters. For you have spread your net over Mount Tabor, which the Seventy translated as Itabyrium, having the custom of using Greek speech to decline

Hebrew names, just as Edom, that is, Esau, and Seir are always interpreted as Idumea. But Mount Tabor is in Galilee, located in a plain, round and lofty, and finished equally on every side. About this mountain, we also read in the Psalms: "Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name". (Psalm 88:13). This mountain was translated as "Itabyrium" by the Seventy translators [of the Septuagint], as in Jeremiah. Birds are often caught in traps set upon this mountain. "And ye have cast off my fear, and have not kept my covenant. I also will cast off you for ever." (Jeremiah 34:15-16). The kings and priests have prohibited the people from going to the Temple of Jerusalem; therefore, they are said to have turned down sacrifices into the depths. According to the trope, the people are accused not to consider themselves strangers to crime, if they are induced by kings and priests, whom we understand as leaders of heretics. The leaders themselves are also accused of having taken the people like a trap and, with spies placed in the Church, led them astray. And on the lofty and most beautiful mountain "Tabor", which is interpreted as "coming light", they set traps, so that they could draw every deceiving person into the abyss, and offer them as sacrifices to demons, and steer them into the pit, lest they ever come to their senses, or sigh for the house of God, the Church. Some think that Thabor means a lake, that is, a cistern, and is suitable for the immediate meaning, that the heretics dug a lake and fell into the pit which they made. (Ps. LVI).

5:3-4

"And I am skilled in all of them, and I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me: for now Ephraim has committed fornication, Israel is contaminated: they will not give their thoughts, to turn again to their God, for the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, and they have not known the Lord." LXX: "For I am your master: I have known Ephraim, and Israel has not departed from me; for now Ephraim has fornicated, Israel is defiled. They have not given their thoughts to turn back to the Lord their God, for the spirit of fornication is in them and they have not known the Lord." O priests and kings, who deceived my people; and you, the people, who have been deceived, have sinned so gravely that you have not only killed victims, but also sent them down to the depths of hell: do not think that the magnitude of your crimes has caused you to be completely separated from me. I am your teacher, indeed a scholar, who desires to improve, not punish; and to save, not destroy. "I know Ephraim," he says, "that is, Jeroboam, from whom the people were persuaded; and all the kings who followed him in both rank and wickedness, and Israel was not hidden from me, that is, the people of ten tribes, because Israel was contaminated by a fornicating king. At first the king began to fornicate from the worship of God, desiring to worship golden calves, and the people wanting to follow him, they fulfilled equal impiety with equal zeal." (III Kings 12) Finally, they shall not return to the Lord because they found what they wanted, and the spirit of fornication, which according to the apostle, works in the sons of diffidence, possesses their captive hearts, and therefore under that ruler, they did not know, no, they forgot their Creator. (Ephesians 2). Therefore, the leaders of perverse teachings and the people of the Lord do not ignore: not because they are worthy of His knowledge, but because nothing of what they do in secret is hidden from Him, of whom some were deceived and others fell. And they will not give their thoughts to repentance, who always advance in destruction. For the spirit of fornication, by which they have committed fornication in the Church and have departed from true marriage, is in their midst: therefore they have not known the Lord.

5:5

"And the pride of Israel shall answer in his face: and Israel and Ephraim shall fall in their iniquity: Juda shall also fall with them." LXX: "And the injury of Israel will be humbled before him: and Israel and Ephraim will be weakened in their iniquities, and Judah will also be weakened with them." The word "Gaon" is interpreted by Septuagint and Symmachus as "injury," by Aquila and Theodotion as "pride." Therefore, whatever Israel did, whether acting arrogantly against the Lord or worshipping idols to injure the Creator, will be answered in its face so that it may not go unpunished, but rather its humiliation will be humbled, and both people and kings will fall or weaken in their injustice, so that those who were strong in wickedness are forced to return to the Lord in weakness. And this will not only happen to Israel and Ephraim, that is, the ten tribes and their kings, so that they will be led into captivity; but Judah also, that is, the two tribes which ruled in Jerusalem, will follow the footsteps of the captives, that as they imitated the crime, they may imitate the punishment. Heretics have the mother of their iniquity in their pride, while they boast that they always know more, and rage against the Church. But their pride will weaken, and the people and teachers will equally fall: even Judah, who appears to be in the house of God, and in the Church, dwells not in mind but in body: and he has the same opinion in error with heretics; he is useless in promising the ecclesiastical name, because he also must be punished with the heretics. We rush towards what is clear, so that we may linger in the more obscure.

5:6-7

"In their flocks and herds they will go to seek the Lord, but they will not find Him; He has withdrawn Himself from them. They have transgressed against the Lord, for they have produced illegitimate children. Now the month and its parts will devour them." LXX: "When they go with sheep and calves seeking the Lord, but shall not find him, he hath withdrawn himself from them. Because they have forsaken the Lord, and have brought up strange children, their rust shall devour them and their portions." Not only Israel and Ephraim will go with flocks and herds to seek the Lord, but also Judah, of whom it is written above: "Judah will also fall with them," all having this struggle, that they may try to appease with sacrifices those whom they have offended with their transgressions; and they will not find whom they seek, because he also departed from those who were departing. Especially when elsewhere he says, "Will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?" And again, "I will not accept a bull from your house, nor goats from your flocks" (Ps. 49:13 and 9). And in Isaiah: "I do not want the sacrifices of rams or the fat of lambs or the blood of goats and bulls" (Isaiah 1:11). For they have transgressed against the Lord; because fornicating with idols, they did not beget children to God, but to demons. Some think that this signifies what is said in Ezra much later (1 Esdras 10) when they took foreign wives, creating children with them, and later were compelled to repudiate them. But it is better to accept foreign children who were generated in idolatrous error or whom they consecrated to idols by leading them through fire. Because, therefore, they did this, shortly afterwards, not after infinite periods of years, and as I used to predict before, far from the future; but now and in the present, the Assyrian and Chaldean will come and devour them with their parts, that is, with the possessions that they received in the division of the land according to the measure of the rope. Because we said "he will devour them," the Seventy translated "rust" for "them"; yet indeed rust, that is, ῥυσβη, in Hebrew is called Hasil, as they also said in the Prophet Joel: "The remnants of a worm will eat rust," which is to say, Hasil. But the month is called Hodes; finally Aquila translated "neomenias," that is, "Kalendas"; Symmachus and Theodotion translated "month"; and the sense is, the enemy will come each

month and devastate all things. We read the Books of Kings and Chronicles, and we find that under King Pekah, who reigned over ten tribes, Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria, came and took a great part of the people of Samaria to the Assyrians, at which time, according to the Greeks, it was the second year of the first Olympiad; and among the Latins (not yet founded Rome) Amulius was ruling in the twentieth year, whom later Romulus drove out of the kingdom. Heretics suspect that God is pleased with the multitude of sacrifices; and ecclesiastics, that by giving alms, they redeem sins, in which they remain: whereas every sacrifice except past sins, not present ones; thus, they do not find the Lord, Who removes Himself from such things, and retreats far away. These have truly (\$"Al." however\$) acted deceitfully against God, and have begotten children for the devil, not for Christ: therefore their works are cursed at all times, and all things that they do, the rusty color of blood lays waste, because they are closely related to blood and killing. But the rusty color is said in a proper sense to come down in the night dew, and to stain the lactating grains of wheat with the color of vermilion or red lead, and suitably in accordance with conversion, it devastates the clergy of heretics, of whom it is said, "Their clergy shall not " "profit them" (Jeremiah XII, 13, according to the LXX).

5:8-9

Blow the horn in Gabaa, trumpet in Rama: howl at Bethaven after your back, O Benjamin: Ephraim shall be in desolation in the day of rebuke, among the tribes of Israel have I made known the truth." LXX: "Blow the trumpet on the hills, sound on the high places," "proclaim it in the house." ■v: "Benjamin's mind has failed, Ephraim has become desolate in the days of reproof, in the tribes of Israel I have shown faithfulness." Ephraim and Israel and Judah shall each month, or the rust with its parts, devour. Therefore, I command you who listen that you do not sound a trumpet with a lofty voice, but a clear one: for there is a need for a clear hearing, so that all who are around may hear. "Blow the trumpet in Gabaa," which the Septuagint translated the etymology into "hills": and "sound the trumpet in Rama," which means "high": and these two are in the tribe of Benjamin, cities close to each other, that is, Gabaa, where Saul was born; and Rama, which is near Gabaa, situated on the seventh stone from Jerusalem; and which the king of Israel tried to occupy, to close the exit and entrance of the tribe of Judah. In Gabaa and in Rama, therefore, a clear trumpet and tuba resound, whose trumpet is pastoral, and the horn is made curved; whence it is properly called a Hebraic Sophar, and a κερὰτ■γνύμι in Greek. But the tuba is made of bronze or silver, with which they rattled in wars and ceremonies. Above Bethaven, which was once called Bethel, and is in the tribe of Ephraim, where there was a golden calf, there is a need for not a clangor and sound, but a wailing: because there is a nearby captivity. And he said beautifully that Bethaven is located behind Benjamin, for where the tribe of Benjamin finishes, not far in the tribe of Ephraim, this city was founded. Therefore, I say and command: Blow the trumpet in Gabaa, and the horn in Rama, and howl in Bethaven, because the regal house of Ephraim, or Ephraim himself, that is the empire of Israel, will now be in desolation; and the neighboring captivity approaches. On the day of correction and supplication of the ten tribes of Israel, I showed my faithful words that I threatened through the prophets, so that I might prove, by action, what I had announced by word. Certain people who were near Bethaven according to the Seventy who said the house was the "city of the sun," were interpreted as saying that Christ, the sun of righteousness, was the city, and they wanted his Church to be that city. But this displeases me, for the house of an idol, which Aquila interpreted as "useless house," cannot be referred to the Church by means of tropology. But let us

say this, that the heretics who promise themselves lofty knowledge in Gabaa and Rama, are ordered to howl ((or "jubilate")) in the house of an idol; and they should not be before the face of Benjamin, who is interpreted as "son of the right hand," but rather behind him, where he does not have eyes. For all the boasting of Ephraim, which means "abundance," he will soon be in desolation, and when the day of judgment and time of correction comes, I will show that my words are not in vain. Because we translated "Benjamin at your back," the Seventy translated it as "Benjamin's mind was moved," always adapting Benjamin, a man of the church, to excess of mind. Hence in the sixty-seventh psalm it is said: "There Benjamin, the youth, is in excess of mind." And in Jacob's blessings, in the person of Benjamin, from whom Paul the Apostle was descended, we read: "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and in the evening he shall divide the spoil." (Gen. XLIX, 27). For he who persecuted the Church in the beginning, later on throughout the whole world, bestowed nourishment upon those who believed in the Gospel. From this it happened that Saul, who was from the tribe of Benjamin, raving with madness, prophesied among the choir of prophets all day long until evening (1 Kings 10).

5:10

"The leaders of Judah have become like those who remove a boundary; upon them I will pour out my wrath like water." LXX: "The leaders of Judah have become like those who move boundary lines. I will pour out my rage on them like a flood, raging and swift." After the captivity of Ephraim and Israel, and their land became desolate, the leaders of Judah who should have wept and encouraged their people to turn away from idolatry, lest they suffer similarly, began to rejoice and be happy that their land was opened wide for them to possess. They became like those who remove boundary lines and expanded their kingdom and possession in the former places of Israel. Therefore, thus says the Lord: And upon those princes of Judah shall come the Babylonians; and they shall take them: their bowels will not be of force, but of my indignation. And he also speaks to the princes of Judah, that is, the Church, that they ought not to exult; and to estimate their own salvation through the perdition of heretics, but rather to mourn because they are lost. Wherefore even the Apostle Paul teaches the ecclesiastical men not to glory in the breaking off of the Jewish branches, but rather to fear lest they themselves be broken off (Rom. XI). And in another place: "Who," he says, "is scandalized, and I am not burned." (2 Corinthians 2:29)? Otherwise, against such leaders who glory in the miseries of others, and therefore think that they are standing if others fall, the Lord will pour out His anger like water. Seventy interpreted the word "impetus" as wrath, and some think that it should be understood as a blessing, according to what we read elsewhere: "The impetus of a river rejoices the city of God" (Ps. 45:4). But more correctly (as all except the Seventy have translated) anger should be received, especially since the name of effusion and anger is appropriate, as the prophet says to the Lord: "Pour out your anger upon them, and let the fury of your wrath take hold of them" (Ps. LXVIII, 25). The princes of Judah have moved the boundaries which their fathers had set, when they change truth with falsehood, and they preach something different from what they have received from the apostles.

5:11

"Ephraim endures slander, broken in judgement, because he started to follow after filth." LXX: "Ephraim oppressed his adversary, trampled justice, because he began to pursue vain things." If Ephraim is wicked, and because of his wickedness he will be destroyed, how can it now be said:

"Ephraim endures slander, broken in judgement?" For he who endures slander is also broken, his judgement oppressed unjustly, especially when a just cause is stated for which he was given up to captivity. For it follows: 'since he began to leave behind filth', that is, behind the idols which are compared to filth. Therefore, what he says is this: Ephraim is oppressed by the Assyrians, first by Pul, then by Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings 15), and afterwards by Salmanazar; not because they were righteous who oppressed him, and therefore he was handed over to them; but because those who were once my people, when I abandoned them, were handed over to punishment, and in this there seems to be slander, not towards God ("Al." from God), who inflicts just sentence: but towards those who endure torments, while they are handed over to more wicked adversaries. And the Lord brought upon them the cause of contempt in this part, and to be delivered unto the worst, and no judgment to be had toward them: for Ephraim began to go after idols, and to forsake God: for he himself had made golden calves. According to the interpretation of the Septuagint, Ephraim, that is, Jeroboam, oppressed his adversary Rehoboam, that is, the tribe of Judah, and in it he oppressed: because he followed the filthy idols of the Egyptians, and deserted Jerusalem and the temple. The meaning concerning heretics is clear: that with their false sophisms and dialectical art they often suppress churchmen; but when they have done this, they do not follow the purity of true faith, but the filth of lies; who are given over to the devil and his angels and seem to suffer slander and have the truth of judgment broken within them. Thus Israel is laid waste; and all its labors are devastated by the Assyrian conqueror; and the bishop lost God and therefore he is broken in judgment; because he followed idols.

5:12

"And I am like a moth to Ephraim, and like rottenness to the house of Judah." LXX: "And I am like a tribulation to Ephraim, and like a stimulus to the house of Judah." In the Hebrew language "moth" is called "Recob" for "rot and decay"; one of which consumes clothes and the other wood: for which the LXX translated as "turbulence", which is "disorder" or "turbulence", and "stimulus". And it should be noted that the moth pertains to Ephraim, and the rottenness to the house of Judah. Therefore, how does a clothes moth consume clothing, and decay or rot consume wood; which both take a long time: In the same way, God gave a place for repentance to the ten tribes, and later to the two tribes for a long time, calling them to salvation, storing up His wrath for the day of wrath, like a moth or decay, not because God is a moth or decay, disturbance or affliction, but because to those who suffer punishment all these things seem so. Therefore, first consumed was Ephraim and Israel, then followed was the house of Judah: not Judah himself, but his house; otherwise, it was reserved for the genealogy of Judah, among whom He had been placed: And He was the expectation of the nations. However, the heretics, who are understood to be Ephraim, and also Judas, namely, those who remain with the Church, and who are contained in the errors or vices of heretics, will be subject to the same judgment.

5:13

"And Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his band: and Ephraim went to the Assyrian, and sent to the avenging king: and he shall not be able to heal you, neither shall he be able to take off the band from you." LXX: "And Ephraim saw his weakness, and Judah his pain, and Ephraim went to the Assyrians, and sent ambassadors to king Jareb, and he will not be able to free you, nor will he make an end of your pain." Embassies are not held in Hebrew. And where the Septuagint place

"Jarib," we translate it as "avenger" according to Symmachus; for Aquila and Theodotion translated it as "judge." And this name "Jarib," signifying "avenger" and "judge," is shown by the name of Gideon who, when the worshippers of Baal sought him for punishment, because he had overthrown the grove of Baal and its altars, answered his father, "Let Baal therefore plead against him" or "avenge" himself, and he was afterward called "Jerubbaal," that is to say, "Let Baal plead against him." Therefore, understanding their own weakness, Ephraim sought not aid from Him who could loose them, but from the King of the Assyrians, to whom they were in sinfulness bound together with the ten tribes. We read that under King Manahen, who ruled over ten tribes (IV Kings XV), Israel sent gifts to the Assyrians; and Judah under King Ahaz, sought aid from Tiglath-pileser king of the Assyrians, who was unable to deliver them from those who opposed God, nor could he loosen the bonds of captivity. We can refer to those bonds, for which it is written in Hebrew as Mezur, and which Aquila interpreted as ■π■δεσιν or συνδεσμ■ν, that is, "binding" or "conspiracy," and to that time when Rezin and Pekah son of Remaliah devastated many thousands of men from the tribe of Judah (Ibid. XVI), and Judah pleaded in vain for help against not two, but the aid of the kings of Assyria. Some people, according to the trope of Ephraim and Judah, refer both to heretics and to men of the church, because both they and Judas, the sinners, are bound with the chains of sins, according to what is written: "With the cords of his sins every one is bound" (Prov. 5:22). They have sent to Assyria and to the avenging king, that is, to the devil, of whom we read: "That thou mayst destroy the enemy and the avenger" (Ps. 8:3). And because they did not beseech the true helper or judge; therefore He has made them abide in the pain of sickness and the chains of their own offenses. I have read in the commentaries of someone that the King "Jarib" is interpreted as Christ. And because it follows: "He will not be able to heal you," this argument is used, that Christ cannot heal heretics or sinning Christians at the time of judgment, where there is no mercy, according to what is written: "But in hell, who shall confess to thee?" (Ps. VI). And that he cannot heal or free, not because of his weakness, but because of their merit, who have sought help too late. How our Lord was said to have been unable to work miracles in his own country, and the reason why he was unable, he explains: 'Because,' he says, 'they did not believe in him.' He said these things: we will interpret the king unfavorably. Because we explained 'Jarib,' which means 'avenger:' others read Jarim with the letter Mem, which is transferred to 'woods:' hence Cariath Jarim, interpreted as 'the village of woods.'

5:14

"For I am like a lioness of Ephraim, and like a lion's cub to the house of Judah." LXX: "For I am like a panther to Ephraim, and like a lion in the house of Judah." When they go to Assyria and send to the avenging or the revenger king, who will not be able to heal them; nor to undo the bound chain, I will show that with me opposing, all human help is vain: for I will be like a lioness to Ephraim, and like a lion's whelp to the house of Judah. For the lioness, which in Hebrew is called Soheli, the Seventy [translators] interpreted it as 'panther,' which is similarly said in Greek and in Latin, and both the name of the beast and every beast can be taken [in this sense]: so that you may recognize whatever is savage in the beasts, as existing in God's indignation. There is nothing swifter than the panther, nothing stronger than the lion: in the panther the swiftness of the destruction of the kingdom of Samaria is significant among the Assyrians; and in the lion, the strongest [beast], is shown their kingdom against Jerusalem and Judah somewhat later in time of the Chaldeans. And because she had said that she was both a lioness or panther, she maintains

the metaphor and says:

5:15

"I will take and go, and I will take away and there is no one who can deliver: going I will return to my place until you fail and seek my face." LXX: "And I will snatch, and go and take away, and there will be no one who can deliver: I will go and return to my rightful place until they are destroyed and seek my face." It is asked, if God takes, and takes away, and holds, no one can take them from his hands, according to what is written: "No one can snatch them from the hand of my Father" (John X, 29) how was Judas snatched from the hand of God through betrayal? We will briefly answer this, that no one can snatch from the hand of God: however, he who is held, can by his own will fall away from the hand of God. And what follows: "Going, I shall return to my place," we ought to accept the place of God, his magnificence and majesty: so that he does not in any way descend to deal with men, become angry, show mercy, forget, become like a panther, turn into a lion, change into beasts: but may despise human things, and allow those whom he formerly protected to submit to their enemies, so that they may waste away, and fail, and die, and afterwards seek the face of the Lord and say: "Illuminate your face and we will be saved" (Ps. LXXIX, 4). "And: Show us, Lord, your mercy, and grant us your salvation" (Psalm 85:8). Even to heretics and the negligent Church, God turns into a panther and a lion; and He will reclaim the prey from those who had previously seized it from the Church, so that those who had been lost might be saved when they are captured. He will not dwell in the gathering of the wicked but will return to His place, as He said, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me" (John 14:1). He will reject and despise them until they are consumed by their impiousness and seek Him through penance, abandoned as they once were. Some think heaven is God's dwelling place; thus God, offended by those who dwell on earth, will return and make perish those who, through the enormity of their sins, have converted the most merciful Lord into a wild beast for themselves.

6:1-2

"In their affliction they will rise early to me: come and let us return to the Lord, for he has taken us, and he will heal us; he will wound us and he will cure us; he will bring us to life after two days, and on the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight: we shall know and we shall follow, that we may know the Lord." LXX: "In their affliction they will rise early to me, saying: let us go and return to the Lord our God: because he will strike and he will heal us: he will wound and he will cure us. He will heal us after two days: on the third day we shall rise again and live in his sight. We shall know, and we shall follow on, that we may know the Lord." Therefore God delivered Ephraim and Judah into captivity, and there is no one who can rescue them from his hand, and they will return to their place until they fail, and they will seek his face, so that they may seek the propitious and present one, whom they had not felt, but one who is angry and absent, and in their tribulation, with the light of penance rising for them, let them arise early to him, as we read in Isaiah: "In their tribulation they remembered the Lord" (Isaiah 26, LXX version). And in the first grade of the psalm: 'When I was in trouble, I cried out to the Lord,' 'and he heard me' (Ps. 119:1). And when they rise up in the morning to the Lord, what will they say? 'Come and let us return to the Lord.' They are not content with their own salvation, but they provoke one another to return to the Lord whom they left, whom they abandoned for their sins, from whom they were abandoned. 'For he has taken us, and he will heal us:' who had said earlier 'I will take myself' 'and I will go,' he will strike and heal us.

For what we have said, 'will cure,' all have similarly translated, but properly they are called 'lenteola' which are inserted or applied to wounds, so that they may eat away putrid flesh and extract pus: and the art of physicians is to heal large wounds in a long period of time and to restore health through pain. Therefore the Lord strikes and he heals us: for the Lord loves whom he corrects, and he chastises every son whom he receives (Heb. XII) ; and he not only heals, but he vivifies after two days and on the third day rising from the dead, he raises up with himself all human race. And when He shall have healed the stricken and given life to the healed, and raised up the living, then shall we live in His sight, we who lay dead in His absence. We shall live (being alive) in His sight, knowing Him, and with all zeal we shall strive to know the Lord, by whose rising again on the third day we also rose again. These words explain that which we have often warned, and both Israel and Judah, that is, the twelve tribes, shall then have one shepherd and king David, when they shall have believed in the risen Lord. And vainly the Jews of a thousand years promise themselves dreams of salvation, whereas the promised day of the resurrection of the Lord on the third day is the salvation of all. The Hebrews interpret the day secondly, in the coming of Christ, and the third day, in judgment, when they will be saved. Let us grant this, they reply, what is the first day, that is, the first coming of the Savior? And when they cannot respond, we infer that the first day is the same as they desire, in the humility of the Savior's coming, the second in glory, the third in the garb of the judge. And those who accept the second and third, testify that they have lost the first: because the second and third cannot be called without the first.

6:3

His going forth is prepared as the morning light, and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." LXX: "We shall find him ready as the morning, and he shall come to us as the early and the latter rain to the earth." Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. And let us know, let us follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. About which the title of the twenty-first psalm is: "For the morning assumption:" Although it is written in Hebrew: "For the morning deer:" because after death and the twisted ancient serpent he desires to climb towards the mountains, and he, with the darkness dissipated, rises to us the sun of justice, that he may illuminate our blindness. And it is beautifully said, "his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit even to the end of it." concerning which, according to the tropology, we read in the eighteenth psalm: "And he, as a bridegroom, coming out of his bride-chamber." (Ps. XVIII, 5). He who is not only called morning, dawn, and daybreak, but will come to us like a temporary and late rain to the earth. We receive Christ as a temporary (savior), when the foundations of faith have been cast in us, and we will welcome rain in the late season when we will gather eternal crops from the mature crops, and we will be stored in the Lord's granaries. Therefore, you Jews who do not receive temporary rain, and without rains cast seeds, will not receive the fruits of crops in the end times. This is the rain of which the Lord promises, saying: "I will give you rain in due season, and the latter rain" (Deut. 11:14). According to the allegory, rain is given in due season, when we partly know: the latter rain is given when what is perfect comes. And the Lord is always ready for those who rise in the morning, who can say, "I will arise at dawn" (Ps. 56:1). And: "O God, my God, I watch for you at break of day. My soul thirsts for you" (Ps. 62).

"What shall I do to you, Ephraim? What shall I do to you, Judah? Your mercy is like the morning clouds and like the dew that goes away early: therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments shall go forth as the light." LXX: "What shall I do to you, Ephraim? What shall I do to you, Judah? Your mercy is like a morning cloud, and like dew that passes away early: therefore I have hewed your prophets, I have killed them with the words of my mouth, and your judgment shall come forth like the light." When He says, 'What shall I do to thee, Ephraim? What shall I do to thee, Judah?', He shows the affection of a parent for his lost children, according to what we read in Isaiah: 'What is there that I ought to have done more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it?' (Isaiah 5:4) And in Micah: "My people, what have I done to you, or how have I caused trouble to you? Answer me; because I brought you out of the land of Egypt, I freed you from the house of slaves, and I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam before your face" (Micah 6:2, 4). Therefore, what shall I do to you, Ephraim, what shall I do to you, Judah? Your mercy, with which I have always shown mercy to you, has passed like the morning clouds, and like the morning dew that dries up when the sun rises. For now captivity is near, I already see you being led captive into the Assyrians and chained to the Babylonians. I grieved for you in the prophets and threatened you with terrible words; I brandished a scalpel, fire and branding irons, so that you who despised my clemency might fear my offence, and I might kill the careless with the words of my mouth, punishing sinners beforehand with the terror of words before captivity should approach. And I did all this so that the truth of the judgement by which I am about to judge you might be made manifest and that no one might doubt that you have suffered what you have deserved. For what it is, 'I have grieved for the prophets,' the Seventy translated, 'I have cut down your prophets,' understanding that they had killed false prophets themselves, to the Lord: so that those who were the cause of error, promising prosperity, would be killed and turned into an opportunity for salvation. And the sense is: Lest you should say, we believed in the prophets, even we killed them: so that every occasion of sin might be taken away from you. We read in the book of Kings that 450 prophets of Baal were killed under Elijah (3 Kings xviii), and another innumerable multitude under Jehu (4 Kings x), who overthrew the house of Ahab. We believe that the same things were said both to heretics and to the true man Judas, who was about to suffer similar things, so that the Lord may provoke them to mercy, and may desire to return to salvation. But those men who pursue the delights and refreshments of this world like a cloud and dew that quickly pass away, of whom it is said in the Gospel: "Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee: and whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12:20). And that richly adorned man, who despised Lazarus lying before his doors (Luke 16), knew that all that he had enjoyed had passed away like a cloud or a dewdrop. But God always destroys the prophets of the heretics, while He threatens them with eternal punishments, takes away true life from them, and abandons them to the death of their crimes. However, let us love that cloud which is eternal, and which protects us from the heat of this world, under which sitting the Lord came into Egypt, and broke all the idols of the Egyptians. Let us love that dew about which Moses speaks: "Let my doctrine drop as the rain" (Deut. XXXII, 2). And about which Isaiah says: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead" (Isai. XXVI, 19, sec. LXX). There are some who think that the prophets who were truly slain ("Al." holy men)) were given up to the enemies because of the sin of the people.

6:6-7

For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice: and the knowledge of God more than holocausts; but they themselves like Adam have transgressed the covenant: there they have prevaricated against me." LXX: "For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than holocausts: but they themselves are like a man passing by the covenant." What follows in the Septuagint: "There hath despised me the city of Galaad, the vain-doer," and the rest, is to be connected with the following chapter: we will discuss what we have proposed: I have grieved them in my prophets, I have slain them with the words of my mouth: I have struck them with hard punishments, so that I might have mercy on the repentant, that I might extend my hand to those who have fallen and risen. For I am not pleased with sacrifices and offerings, and the multitude of burnt offerings. My sacrifice and offerings, the salvation of believers, and the conversion of sinners is. But they imitated Adam, and disregarding my covenant and law, they did on earth what he had done in paradise. And there, that is, in paradise, all have transgressed against me, in the likeness of Adam's transgression. For it is not surprising that what preceded in the parent should also be condemned in their children. Every day God calls those who are outside the Church and those who sin while dwelling in the Church to repentance, and says to them: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God rather than holocausts." But they offer sacred bread and give alms, and seem to pursue humility: this I interpret as holocausts, if they are truly done. However, when they have abandoned knowledge of God, they boast in vain of having the rest of the members, with the head of faith cut off, for they have transgressed the covenant of God in the Church, just as Adam transgressed it in Paradise; and they show themselves to be imitators of that ancient parent, so that just as he was cast out of Paradise, so they may also be cast out of the Church.

6:8

Galaad a city of idolaters, supplanted by blood, and like the throats of robbers (or "the city of a robber") for both readings are possible. The Septuagint: "There Galad despised me, a city that is devoted to vanity, and disturbs the water, and your strength, O violent men." We read in Ramoth Galaad that Jehu was anointed in king (IV Kings IX), who mixed blood with blood, and overthrew the house of Achab, and before sunrise ordered heaps of his sons' heads to be placed; in this city across the Jordan in the possession of the tribe of Gad, an idol was consecrated, which was inhabited by priests, for it was a city of fugitives. Therefore, the more celebrated and authoritative it was, because it had been delegated to a part of the priests, the more it was the beginning of idolatry and all evil for Israel living across Jordan, so that those who had sinned first were the first to be captured by the Assyrians. And since the province itself is full of thefts, compares them to thieves, just as priests have laid ambushes for the simplicity of the people, so have those [the thieves] done to travelers. Furthermore, according to the tropology, "Gilead" means "migration of testimony"; and he despises God, while he twists the testimonies of the Scriptures into perverse doctrines, and all his works are in vain, and he disturbs the waters of the Church, and from the purest fountains makes muddy and dirty streams that stain the baptized rather than cleanse them. And all the strength of this city, like that of pirate men, while imitating the devil, who, in the sea of this age, in which ships cross over, lies in wait for those who strive to reach port. Finally Symmachus has more clearly interpreted, saying: "And your throat like that of a lying pirate." We read about such pirates in Job: "There is no delay for the pirates" (Job XXV, 3, sec. LXX).

Although they seem to boast of themselves in the present age, to stir up the waters, to act vainly, and to carry on piracy, yet there is no delay to the punishments that will quickly overtake them.

6:9

"The participation of the priests on the road of those going to kill from Shechem: for they have committed a crime." LXX: "The priests have hidden" "the way of the Lord and killed Shechem: for they have committed iniquity." Symmachus interpreted this passage as: "The association of priests were killing Shechem on the road:" Theodotion in this way, "The priests hid the way, they killed from behind:" Aquila, "The participation of the priests on the road were killing shoulders:" when we sought the understanding of these versions in accordance with the story from the Hebrew, it was presented to us as follows: The priests of Bethel, or rather the fanatics of Bethaven, during the times of Passover and Pentecost, as well as Scenopegiae, when it was necessary to go to Jerusalem through Sichem, which is now called Neapolis, placed robbers on the road who would lay in wait for those who were traveling, so that they would worship the golden calves in Dan and Bethaven more than in Jerusalem and in the temple of God. But what he says: "Participation and partnership of priests", signifies their conspiracy and agreement for an evil purpose. But if we read it, as we have interpreted it, "partaker of the priests", he says, it refers to Gilead, which works with an idol; it has also been saturated with blood, which followed the impiety of the priests, and is free of plundering and bloody deeds. If they have said this, we must say, let us cut off heretics so that we do not proceed from Shechem, that is, from good works, to Jerusalem, that is, to the Church. These are like the jaws of bandits, and they kill those who wish to proceed through the way of truth in this age. Sichem is interpreted as "shoulders," that is, shoulders: we understand the work on the shoulders, and all false priests hide the way, and kill men with evil deeds so that they do not reach Jerusalem. But what the shoulder work signifies is shown by: "Put your heart on your shoulder" (Gen. IV, 9, 15), that is, what you understand, turn into actions. And of Issachar we read, that he placed his shoulder to work, and was a farmer.

6:10-11

In the house of Israel, I saw dreadful things; there were the fornications of Ephraim, Israel is defiled; and, Judah, I will put a harvest for you, when I will return the captivity of my people. From this crime and terrible horror, Jeremiah also spoke: "The heavens were astounded at this and the earth became deeply afraid" (Jeremiah 2). For what is more terrible than ten tribes suddenly turning to the worship of idols? Where it is said to their metropolis, "Take away your calf, Samaria, in which Ephraim first fornicated," that is, Jeroboam of the tribe of Ephraim, and by his fornication, Israel was defiled, namely the people of Samaria, who obtained for the most part the common name of Israel. Hence the speech is also turned to Judah: "You too, Judah, set up your harvest," and the sense is, "Do not think yourself secure because Israel is led away captive; prepare your crops, so that they can be harvested; for not long after, you yourself will be led captive to Babylon, and the time of your harvest will come." And when the Chaldeans cut you down, I will bring back the captivity of my people and under Cyrus the king of Persia and Artaxerxes will I lead back my people. And observe how significantly the captivity and the return of Judah is prophesied; but of Israel, that is, of the ten tribes, it is now silent, although when something prosperous is said, the advent of Christ is deferred. And in the house of the heretics, we see horrible things every day: first the masters fornicate, and the people who are led by them are defiled. It is also commanded

to the Jews, that is, to the Church, that he himself should prepare, because of sins, his own harvest or vintage, when the time of judgment comes. But to him forgiveness is granted, and the Lord promises pardon, because he whom he loves he rebukes, and chastises every son whom he receives, to establish the proven and cleansed in his treasures. Some refer to what is said, "Juda, begin your harvest," or "put your harvest for yourself," in a good way, so that after Israel is punished, he may receive the fruit of his deeds according to what is written: "Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Psalm 126: 5). We prefer a higher level of perception.

7:1

When I wanted to heal Israel, the iniquity of Ephraim was revealed, and the malice of Samaria: for they have wrought falsehood, and a thief is come in to spoil, a robber without. The Septuagint likewise. Often has Israel received wounds of idolatry, and especially that one, when in the desert they fashioned a calf's head, and said: 'These are thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt' (Exod. XXXII, 4). Therefore I, who desire the sinner's repentance rather than his death (Ezech. XVIII, XXXIII), afterwards say in the Gospel: 'They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill' (Luke V, 31), and have attempted to heal the wounds of my people. And when I treated all these things with every art, that the miserable people might be cured, suddenly Jeroboam of the tribe of Ephraim appeared, who made golden calves, and the wickedness of Samaria was revealed, following the impious king: for both the king and the people operated in falsehood, that is, idolatry. For just as an image is contrary to God, so is falsehood to truth. But the king himself, like a thief, entered among the people of Israel, and like a robber despoiled the unhappy people of God with the help of his people. And the sense is this: When I wished to wipe away the sins of my people, because of their ancient idolatry, Ephraim and Samaria found new idols. But it can also be said that after the shedding of his own blood, the Lord and Savior sought to heal the sins of the people and lead them to repentance, both Jews and Gentiles gathered in his Church. Suddenly Ephraim, who promised the fertility of false dogmas, and the people of Samaria who proclaimed they followed God's commands, arose and performed the idolatry of false dogmas, and through them, the thief and robber, the devil, entered the Church, or the doctrine of heretics entered like a thief and robber, of whom the Savior said in the Gospel, "All who came before me were thieves and robbers" (John 10: 8). Thieves lie in wait, and deceive with hidden fraud: robbers boldly plunder the possessions of others. For those who steal, steal at night and in darkness. Hence, it is significantly said, that the thief enters secretly, and the robber plunders outside. For they cannot strip those of Christ's clothes whom they have taught, unless they have led them out of the Church, and made them walk in the perverse way of their doctrines. We must consider thieves and robbers who came before the Lord, not Moses, and the prophets who are always praised by the Savior's mouth, but false prophets, and afterwards heretics who were not sent by the Lord, but came of their own will.

7:2

"And lest perhaps they should say in their hearts: all their wickedness (all wickedness Vulg.) I have remembered, they have encompassed me in the inventions of their own thoughts, before my face they are made." LXX: "That they may sing as it were a new song in their hearts, all their wickedness I have remembered." "Now their own devices have encompassed them about, they have been executed in my sight." Lest perhaps, they say in their hearts: God hath restored to us,

our ancient sins, we have repaid the iniquities of our fathers: they have eaten a sour grape, and their teeth are set on edge. (Jeremiah 31); therefore, I will recount to them, what they have done both now and in the present, in my sight, and daily, and I will show them their own inventions, and the thoughts by which they have most studiously pursued mischief, and what they have done in my presence, not fearing my face. But what we read in the Septuagint, 'that they sing together as if singing in their hearts,' refers to the fact that if a thief has entered, or a robber stripped them of their possessions outside, they would not repel the thief's and robber's agreement by staying in their former riches and clothing; but when they have been stripped, they sing together with them, and become of one heart (Dist. 4, de Poenit., cap. Cum ita): therefore they will receive what they have done, and all their thoughts and deeds will not deserve my sight. Heretics also cannot be accused of old sins against God, since every day they add new impiety to their old deeds, and when they perish in destruction, they are abandoned by their own errors, and when they think they can hide from God, they cannot avoid his eyes.

7:3

"In their malice, they made the king rejoice, and in their lies, the princes." LXX: "In their wickedness, the kings rejoiced, and in their lies, the princes." It explains what they did before Him: In their wickedness, they made King Jeroboam rejoice, and in their lies, the princes who led the people under Jeroboam. Heretics also rejoiced the devil as their king in the wickedness of their deeds, and the princes of perverse doctrines in their lies, without a doubt, of this world, whose false wisdom God destroys. We can call a king among the heretics, who first discovered the heresy, and those princes who, claiming a false priesthood for themselves, are placed over the people of the heretics. And at the same time, it should be noted that in our sins, the opposite strengths rejoice, and the leaders and princes of these darknesses.

7:4

"All adulterers are like an oven heated by the baker: the city rested for a little while from the mixture of the ferment, until it had fermented all. " LXX: "All adulterers are like a burning oven for baking bread, heated by the fire of mixed bread, until it has fermented all." Those who rejoice in their wickedness, kings in their lies, are all adulterers, and like a burning oven, consumed by the fire of Jeroboam's idolatry, to bake bread of impiety which, when it sent an error into their souls, like an oven and kiln first set on fire, rested for a little while, so as not to overpower the people, but to let them follow their own will until all lies had fermented: for whatever is done out of necessity, is quickly dissolved: what is willingly taken up, endures. Therefore even here, because he had taken the translation from the shovel, which is used to bake bread, he preserves in the rest, so that in the mixing of the whole people, he shows their consent: namely, that both king and people are consumed by equal ardor in idolatry. No one doubts that the hearts of the heretics are set ablaze by the fire of the devil, so that the loaves of Antichrist can be baked in them: who therefore first remain silent in the Church, and speak secretly, and promise all peace, so that cancer gradually creeps into peoples, and their teaching leaven (which the Lord also understands when he says: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees" (Matth. XVI, 6) when it swells in the hearts of the deceived, then they break out into open madness, and what is said by John the Apostle is fulfilled in them: "They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us" (I John I, 19).

"The day of our king: the princes began to rage from wine: he stretched out his hand with the mockers: who placed his heart in the oven as he dined with them. He slept throughout the entire night cooking them, and in the morning he burned like a flame of fire: all of them were heated like a hot oven, and they devoured their judges: all their kings fell, there is none who cries out to me from them." LXX: "The days of your kings. The princes began to rave from wine: he stretched out his hand with pestilences, because their hearts were burning like an oven, when they were rushing down all night. Ephraim is filled with sleep: in the morning it happened: he is inflamed like the flame of fire. All are heated like an oven of burning fire, and fire devoured their judges. All their kings fell: there is none among them who calls upon me." A dark place and in need of the attentive reader's sense, so that we may first understand the history. Israel and the city of Samaria rested for a little while, with the passion of error received into itself, until the whole mass became like leaven, and grew and burst forth, and the swelling people cried out at the gates of King Jeroboam, and said: This is the day of our king Jeroboam, this is the festive day that our emperor has appointed for us; this we celebrate, this we sing, in this we exult and play, in this we worship the golden calves. The people are shouting, the leaders are not angry, as some may think; but they themselves began to rage from the wine, and lose the understanding of their minds, forget God, and push into the idols' woods. When the king saw this, he cried out to the people and said, "This day belongs to our king," and the leaders, like drunk and fanatical people, not knowing what they were saying, extended their hands to the jesters, deceiving those who flattered him with empty praises. Those deceivers, when their king was plotting against them, and was trying to draw them away from their God, gave their heart as a furnace to him, so that he might kindle them and cause them to burn with the flames of idolatry. Therefore, because all of them were turned in mind to error, the people agreed. And what follows: "He slept all night, baking them; in the morning he himself was kindled as a flame of fire," means this: after he had sent fire into their heart as a furnace and had seen them go mad and there being no one to resist his will, he slept all night, that is, he was secure; walking in darkness while they were being cooked and made into the bread of impiety. Therefore, in the morning he rose up, and showed openly the flame of his wickedness, so that they might not pass over into the ceremonies of idols by treachery, but shamelessly. What more? All were heated as if in a furnace, with the fire of idolatry, and devoured their judges, so that he who could have been good by nature and could have remembered the religion of the Lord, seeing both rulers and people subject to calves, and thinking that they were gods, also was devoured by wickedness. Finally, all the kings of Israel fell, and they walked in the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nabath, who caused Israel to sin, and no one was found who, having abandoned idols, returned to God. We have spoken boldly rather than knowingly according to the Hebrew tradition, leaving the authors of our words to faith. Now let us move on to spiritual understanding: unhappy peoples, who are seduced by the devil king and his princes, or who have taken other solemnities from the prince of heresy and his leaders, leaving the Church and trampling on the truth of faith, are wont to cry out and say: This is the day of our king: for example, Valentinus, Marcion, Arius, and Eunomius. Those who are put in charge of them, upon hearing this (advice) must not be glad with wine (lest) it be thought as a minor sin; but they act like mad men because of wine, of which Moses wrote in the Song of Deuteronomy: "The wine of their "dragons, and the fury of the " "unhealable asps" (Deut. 32:33): for they eat the food of wickedness and are intoxicated with the wine of evil. Concerning this, the Apostle says: "Be not drunk with

wine, wherein is luxury" (Ephesians 5:18). And in Proverbs, we read: "Princes should not drink wine: lest they forget wisdom, and not be able to judge what is right" (Prov. XXXI, 5). Hence, with deceived peoples and leaders, a prince stretches out his hand, be they deceivers or pests, such as the sons of Eli, about whom we read in the first Psalm: "He did not sit in the seat of pestilence" (Ps. I, 1); of whom it is said: "Cast out the pestilent one from your council, and contention will go out with him" (Prov. XXII, 10): with their hearts inflamed, so that they may collide with whom they have deceived. For according to the seventy this points to "cataracts," which do not lift upwards, but drag downwards. And when he says: "Ephraim is filled in sleep throughout the entire night," he shows that heretics who are sleeping cannot see the light of the sun of righteousness. For those who sleep, sleep at night: because their senses are oppressed. And of them we read in the Psalms: "They slept their sleep, and found nothing" (Ps. LXXV, 6). Their hearts are heated by various disturbances: anger, love, avarice; and they devour their judges, or if they can have anything in mind with virtues, or senses by which they can discern evils from goods. Whether this is to be said, that the leaders of the heretics are devoured by their own people, as they devour their homes for the sake of shameful gain, they themselves are devoured by their consent. All the leaders of the heretics have fallen: although he cries out to the Lord, there is no one who calls upon his name: "For everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans X). "Moses and Aaron were among his priests, and Samuel among those who called upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them" (Psalm XCVIII), he does not hear them who are kings and princes of the heretics, because there is none among them who calls upon the Lord.

7:8-10

"Ephraim mingled himself with the people. Ephraim is become as bread baked under the ashes, that is not turned. Foreigners have devoured his strength, and he knew it not. Yea, gray hairs also are spread upon him, and he is not aware of it. And the pride of Israel shall be humbled before his face: and they have not returned to the Lord their God, nor have they sought him in all these." LXX: "Ephraim was mingled with his own people: Ephraim is become as ashes, which is not returned: strangers have devoured his strength, and he knew it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not. And the pride of Israel shall be humbled before his face: and they have not returned to the Lord their God, nor have they sought him in all these." The kingdom of ten tribes has been made, like all nations, because they have departed from the Lord: and like ashes of bread, which does not return, that is, does not do penance, the Assyrians and the Chaldeans have eaten up its strength, and whatever it could have in terms of power, they have devoured. And the madness was such that he did not know that he had been devoured, or indeed did not know the reason for which he had been handed over to the devourers: in short, he remained in the mistaken belief until old age, that is, until the ultimate captivity. Therefore, the pride of Israel will be humbled not long after, but now and in the present, for this is what he says: "in his presence:" he will be humbled, because he had exalted himself and trusted in the multitude of armies, not in God. And because God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (James IV); for pride, that is, Gaon, according to their custom, translated ἕβρις, that is, "insult." And because he had said before: "Ephraim has become like a cake unturned," and it seemed ambiguous, or did not sound enough what he was saying, now he explains it more clearly: "They have not returned to their Lord their God, nor have they sought him in all these things." If they had returned to their Lord their God, they would surely have heard through Jeremiah, speaking from

God, "Return to me, and I will return to you." And although they have done so much, they have not sought him, whom they have lost by their own fault. But when Ephraim ought to teach the people so as to lead them to another way of thinking and draw them to himself as an example, he mixes with the people and becomes like them, according to what was said above: 'He will be like the people, so will the priest.' Whether Ephraim mixes with the people and nations, so that all heretics differ in nothing from the error of the Gentiles. And he who was once a leader in the Church becomes a worthless heap of ashes, completely filthy with ashes on every side and surrounded by the fire of sins, so that he does not return to the Lord, but remains in the beginning of error. The demons have eaten his strength: for they are indeed strangers and enemies of all Christians, and he did not know, thinking adversaries were friends, and considering his devourers as guests; but they also poured out like dogs upon him, indeed they flourished, that is, he erred for a long time; and nevertheless he ignored his old age and antiquity, about which it is written, "What grows old and aged, " "is near extinction" (Heb. VIII, 13). And if it is said of the just man and the ecclesiastic: 'The wisdom of his intellect is the dog of a man.' (Wisdom 4:8): Why should it not be said of the wicked and the heretic: 'The stupidity of his intellect is the dog of a man?' Concerning this old age Daniel spoke to the elder: 'Thou hast grown old in days of wickedness' (Dan. III, 52). Wherefore also in the book of the Pastor (if, however, one is pleased to receive it), the Church seems to be first seen as an old man, then as a youth, and finally as a maiden adorned with hair. And when the pride of the heretics is humbled, or the insult they daily offer to ecclesiastical men, they do not turn to the Lord. But in all these things, they never seek him; for they are heated like an oven and have not sought him: their judges have been devoured, and their kings have fallen together, and there is none among them who calls upon the Lord. All these things they have suffered so that they might seek the Lord, whom they refused to seek.

7:11-12

"And Ephraim became like a bird deceived, not having a heart. They called upon Egypt, they went to the Assyrians. But when they shall go, I will spread my net upon them: I will bring them down as the fowls of the air; I will strike them as their congregation hath heard." LXX: "And Ephraim was like a foolish dove, without understanding; they called to Egypt, they went to Assyria. I will spread my net over them; I will bring them down like birds of the heavens; I will discipline them according to the report made to their congregation." The Lord commanded in the Gospel (Matthew 10) that we should be simple like doves, and shrewd like serpents, so that imitating the simplicity of doves and the shrewdness of the serpent, we may neither harm others nor suffer from their snares; but let us exhibit a tempered humanity with simplicity and prudence, for prudence without goodness is malice, and simplicity without reason is called foolishness. Therefore Ephraim became like a deceived dove, which in Hebrew is called Photha, deceived by the eagle and Symmachus, or seduced, as it is said, or 'nursed', or 'deceived': and by the Septuagint 'foolish' or 'senseless': for both express the foolish. And she is rightly called a deceived dove, or foolish, because she is a dove and wise, which says in the Psalms: "Who will give me wings like doves, and I will fly and rest" (Ps. 54:7)? Whose feathers are silvered, and the rear of its back in a greenish gold. But Ephraim like an insipid dove, and not having a heart, is shown to be of such a brutish mind, that invoking Egypt, he has gone to the Assyrians. For he who has solicited the aid of the Egyptians is led away captive by the Assyrians. The Egyptian reed staff, on which he has relied, immediately crushes him, and his hand is broken, transformed into one of those who lie on it. And to show that

God rules everywhere, and that we cannot escape his watchful eye by changing our place, and that we are always subject to the power of God: 'When they have set out for the Assyrians,' he said, 'I will stretch out my net there too, and if they are exalted like birds, thence I will bring them down.' But I will not bring them down to destruction but rather that I may slay them as sons; and I will slay them not with great pains but in fear, so that hearing of the punishments to come, they may be corrected by the terrors alone. It is asked why Ephraim is compared not to other birds but to a dove. Other birds hasten to protect their chicks even at the risk of their own lives, and when they see a hawk, serpent, crow, or raven approach their nest, they fly here and there and throw themselves upon them with bites and claws, and with plaintive voice they testify [to their chicks] concerning their parent's teaching; alone, the dove does not grieve over her lost chicks, nor does she seek them out: and thus Ephraim is rightly compared to her, because though the people are laid waste in parts he does not feel it, but is careless [of his] safety. And what he says, "I will cut them down according to the hearing of their heavens," can signify this: just as by a joint council all the idols were made, in the same way, in my anger, all will be destroyed together. We can rightly call the teachers of opposing doctrines, who have abandoned Christ's wisdom and left the Church, foolish and insane doves, who, desiring earthly things, have been delivered to the Assyrians. And when they have departed from the Church, the Lord spreads his net over them, woven with the wisdom of Scripture and skillful words, so that, raising themselves up against the wisdom of God, and flying like birds to the heights, he brings them down to the depths and corrects them with threats and punishments, so that they may not perish forever.

7:13

"Woe to them, for they have departed from me; they will be destroyed because they have transgressed against me. I redeemed them, yet they spoke lies against me and did not cry out to me in their hearts, but instead howled in their beds." LXX: "Woe to them, for they have departed from me: they have acted wickedly against me: but I have redeemed them: but they spoke falsehood against me, and did not cry out to me with their hearts, but they howled in their beds." They got away from me who was spreading out my net to catch them as a bird of the sky, to get rid of pride, and I was falling in difficulty when they withdrew and jumped away from me, for **πεπλησσαν** means this, which the Septuagint translated: "And for this reason they will be laid waste, because they have transgressed against me." For that which we have said, 'they shall be laid waste,' is written also in Hebrew, Sod Laem, that is, 'a desolation to them:' Symmachus translates it 'destruction:' Theodotion, 'misery.' Moreover, in the Vulgate edition we read in two ways; for some codices have **δευλοισιν**, that is, "they are manifest:" others **δειλαοισιν**, that is, "they are timid," or "miserable." Therefore they will be devastated and will be miserable forever, always fearing and trembling, because they have transgressed against God, worshipping golden calves, and leaving Him who redeemed them from Egyptian slavery, and led them with a high arm. They spoke lies against the Lord, saying of idols: "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus XXXII), and did not cry out to the Lord in their hearts, but wallowed in idolatrous fornication. Either because lust and luxury follow the worship of demons, those who worshiped demons were consequently being turned around in the mire of lust in the manner of swine. And beautifully sounding songs of idolaters, not hymns to God, but a cry of wolves, they were barking. It is easy to interpret about heretics that they have woe forever, because they have departed from God, and they are miserable because they have left their

Creator who redeemed them with his blood: and they speak lies against him themselves, composing wicked dogmas of falsehood, and they do not shout in their hearts, but they always howl in the meetings, which are beautifully called bedrooms and beasts' lairs. They cannot say this kind of thing: "I will wash my bed every night, and with my tears I will water my couch" (Psalm 6:7); but they roll in the filth of lust, they are filled with indecency, and whatever they say and think they are praising God, is like the howling of wolves and the sound of mad revelers. Rarely does a heretic love chastity, and those who pretend to love purity, like Manichaeus, Marcion, Arius, Tatianus, and the restorers of the old heresy, promise honey with a poisoned mouth. Moreover, it is shameful to speak of things done in secret, according to the Apostle (Ephesians 5).

7:14-16

They muttered about wheat and wine: they separated themselves from me, and I taught them a lesson. I strengthened their arms, and they thought evil against me. They turned back, so as to be without a yoke: they became as a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword, by the rage of their tongue: this their derision in the land of Egypt." "Over wheat and wine they were being cut to pieces; they were instructed in me, and I strengthened their arms, and they thought evil against me: they were turned into nothing, they became like a tense bow, their rulers shall fall by the sword because of their lack of understanding; this is their derision in the land of Egypt." "On account of the abundance, they said, they have fallen because of their own foolishness. Which Ezekiel also mentions was done in Sodom and Gomorrah (Ezek. XIX), that they chewed on nothing other than food and lust: for which reason the Seventy translated, "they were sliced over grain and wine," as an example of the prophets of Baal, who, with Elijah present, prayed for rain by cutting off the members (III Kings. XVIII). And at the same time, to show that they were like animals, he did not say they ate, but ruminated: and therefore they wandered from the Lord who says, "I have taught them, I have provided strength, and they have raised their necks against me; not that they can do anything and harm their Creator, but what they could do, they thought evil against me." And as they were in the beginning, before I called them by Abraham, and afterwards by Moses and Aaron, and they were without the yoke of the law and without knowledge, and mingled with all nations: so now they have returned to their former state, so as to be carried down headlong without a yoke and reins, and changed into a deceitful bow, so that having aimed at whom God had directed them, they turned their weapons against their own Lord, and sent forth arrows of blasphemy against Him. Therefore, their princes shall fall by the sword because of the rage of their tongue: this is their derision in the land of promise. They have said: "Where is he that he may reign over us?" In undisciplined pride they have pushed you away from your people, saying: "Be gone from us, for we do not desire to know your ways." And: "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots" (Exodus 32:4), and the rest. Concerning wheat and wine, and false mysteries of the body and blood of Christ, who says in the Gospel: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone" (John 12:24): And in another place: "I am the true vine" (John 15:1): And: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:54). Therefore, heretics fall over this with wheat and wine and construct different tabernacles for themselves: whether they are prevented by the body of the Church, and simulate meditating and reflecting on the law of God. But those who do this depart from the Lord who taught them in the Church, and gave them the strength to fight their enemies. They, on the other hand, considered evil against the Lord, building the most impious heresies, and

returning to the state of the Gentiles so that they were without the knowledge and yoke of God: or they returned to nothingness, not that they ceased to be, but that in comparison to Him who speaks to Moses, "Go, tell the people of Israel: He who sent me" (Exodus 3:14), all who are against the Lord should not be said to be (they are called). According to what we read in Esther, specifically in the Septuagint: "Do not give your scepter to those who are not worthy" (Esther XIV, 11, sec. LXX), it is undoubtedly referring to idols. For if God is truth, whatever is contrary to truth is falsehood and cannot be named. This is what heretics agree on, who, having learned from the Holy Scriptures, translate the words of the Lord of the Law, Prophets, and Gospel against Him, and they are like a deceitful and perverse bow. A deceitful and wicked is the bow that strikes its director and wounds its master. Whether they have been made like a bow drawn taut, always ready for battle and disputes, for the overthrow of those who hear them. Therefore their leaders, that is, the heresiarchs, are struck with the sword of the Lord, because of the insanity of their tongue, with which they blasphemed the Lord: doing the same thing in the false name of the Church, which they did at the time when they lived in the ages of Egypt, that is, when they were gentiles. For all the questions of heretics and Gentiles are the same, because they follow not the authority of Scripture, but the sense of human reason.

8:1-4

Let the trumpet be in your throat, like an eagle over the house of the Lord: because they have transgressed my covenant, and violated my law. They will call upon me, (or "They called upon me") my God, we have known you, Israel. Israel has rejected the good, the enemy will pursue him. They themselves have reigned, and not by me; principalities have arisen, and I have not known them. They made for themselves idols of their silver and gold, so that they should be destroyed. In their bosom they are like the earth, like an eagle over the house of the Lord: because they have transgressed my covenant, and acted wickedly against my law. They called upon me (or "They will call upon me"), God, we have known you, because Israel has rejected the good; they persecuted the enemy, they themselves have reigned, and not by me; principalities have arisen, and have not declared it to me: they have made idols for themselves with their silver and gold, so that they may perish. This which we have interpreted as "let the trumpet be in your throat," is what is written in Hebrew. Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion have similarly translated it as Alechchac Sophar. Only the seventy said, "Like the earth in their bosom", and what this means is uncertain. For some people, bosom is understood in two ways: the lower part of the clothing from the genitals to the feet, or the gulf of the sea, that is, the bosom, for example, of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas and the Propontis, as well as the false teachers who followed the blasphemy of Egypt, keeping all things serving their lusts and earthly desires in their bosom; or indeed in the port and refuge of their navigation, nothing of precious merchandise, but acquiring earthly things. But we, following the Hebrew truth, weave the order of the begun explanation together. It is commanded to the prophet, and it is said to him: "Let the trumpet be in your throat," that is, so elevate your voice, as if it were like a trumpet: so that most may hear, because most have sinned. And when you have lifted up your voice, say this with a shout, like an eagle over the house of the Lord, and the meaning is: Nebuchadnezzar will come with his entire army so swiftly, so quickly, that it imitates the flight of an eagle, hastening to prey; and he will come not to another place, but to Jerusalem, where the temple of God is located, so that he may destroy and subvert it. Of this, the eagle and Ezekiel speaks more fully (Ezek. 17): the great wings, feathers, and talons, which have the direction of

entering into Lebanon, that is, into the temple of God. According to the prophet Zachariah, in which it is written: "Open, Lebanon, thy gates, and let fire devour thy cedars" (Zach. 11: 1). But this, O prophet, what I tell you and command: "Let there be a trumpet in your throat," so that you may shout and say, like an eagle upon the house of the Lord, the king is coming of the Chaldeans, I order for no other reason, except that they have violated my covenant, and have left my ceremonies. At the time of necessity and distress, when captivity will come, they will call upon me and say: 'My God, we know you, Israel;' we who are called Israel, we know and recognize you, and we keep the ancient name of Jacob, which pleased you, so that we may be called Israel." To which the Lord responds: "How can you be called Israel, when Israel has rejected the good, that is, the Lord God, whom Israel was named after? Therefore, because Israel has rejected the good, the enemy, that is, the Assyrian, will pursue him and capture him: they who, with me as their deserted ruler, have sought a king for themselves, as have the other nations, and they have acted against my ((or "his")) will. Finally, Samuel therefore exposes to them the harsh commands of the king, and says that their sons and daughters will serve the kings, so that they may be converted to the Lord, the most merciful king (1 Kings 18). But they became rulers without God's will. And this crime did not satisfy them, they doubled the sin with greater impiety, converting the silver and gold which they had received into idols for wealth and decoration. Therefore, Saul was made king not by God's will, but by the error of the people. And because he had no root of piety, as soon as he began to reign, he was filled with impiety. It may be that what he says, 'They reigned, and not by me; the princes existed, and I did not know them,' may also be accepted of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and of the other princes who succeeded him in the empire. And not immediately, because God was angry with Solomon, did Israel receive him as king. For according to the precepts of the law he ought to have asked the Lord whether he wished this to be done. For it is said of the Savior: Indeed, woe to him by whom the Son of Man is betrayed (Matt. XXVI). We frequently read that the devil, who desires to place his nest above the stars of heaven, is like an eagle: 'If you are exalted as an eagle, thence I will draw you down,' saith the Lord (Obadiah 1:4). Also, the eye which mocks father and despises the old age of the mother, shall be rooted out by the ravens of the valley, and shall be eaten by the younglings of eagles (Proverbs 30): through the devil and demons, losing the clear light of his vision. Therefore, it is commanded in the Law, that we do not eat the eagle (Leviticus 11). Therefore, this eagle comes upon the councils of heretics which formerly were the homes of the Lord. And thus, she comes because they have violated His covenant and abandoned the law of God. And they call upon him without cause and say: You are my God, and we have known you, we who are called Israel, seeing God and we are called by the name Christian. They do these things in vain, he says, since they themselves have appointed their own kings and have acted against my will; they have princes who are my adversaries, whom I do not know, for they do not deserve my knowledge. They also turned their silver, and gold, and whatever they were able to have naturally, into idols of speech and thought, which they fashioned out of their own hearts; And they turned, not that they might perish, but because they turned, therefore they perished. For they did not do this in order to perish, but because they did this, therefore they perished.

8:5-6

Your calf has been cast away, Samaria. My fury is against them: how long will they be incapable of purity? Because he is also from Israel: the craftsman made it, and it is not a god: for the calf of Samaria shall become spider's webs." LXX: "Cast away your calf, Samaria: my wrath is kindled

against them: how long will they be incapable of purity in Israel? And the craftsman made it, and it is not a god: because your calf, Samaria, was deceiving." In the place where we have put "spider's webs," in Hebrew script it is written Sababim, with the lod letter as penultimate: not as some wrongly think, Sababum, that is, with the Vau, which the Seventy and Theodotion have interpreted as "deceiving," and "fooled:" Aquila, "erring," or "converted:" Symmachus, "unstable," or "unstable," that is, καταστατν: Fifth edition, εμβεων, "vagrant" and "fluctuating." We learned from the Hebrew that Sababim are properly called "cobwebs" flying in the air, which when they appear disappear and dissolve into atoms and nothingness. And rightly your Samaria is compared to these golden calves, which at that time, because of their great value, the people worshipped. This is explained more clearly by what he said above: 'They have made for themselves idols of silver and gold, that they may perish'; 'Your calf has been thrown down, Samaria; my fury is kindled against them': either against the calves, because two were made; or against the inhabitants of Samaria, who worshipped them. Moreover, what we read in the Septuagint: 'Cast away your calf, Samaria,' exhorts the inhabitants thereof, not of one city, but of all ten tribes which are called Samaria (for the calves were not named in the city of Samaria, but in Dan and Bethel), to cast away the calves over which God is angry: or he will cast away, that is, 'brush away': so that he who had worshipped them for a long time would gradually brush them away from himself and purify himself. And with them not listening, he turns to others, and speaks as if in the third person: "How long will they not be cleansed?" What madness is this, he says, with me providing an opportunity for repentance, that they do not desire to turn to health? And because he had said, "Cast away your calf, Samaria," he explains what that calf is: Because he is from Israel himself, not acquired from others; you yourselves and your king Jeroboam did this in Israel, because of what you had learned in Egypt. (2 Kings 23) Or what kind of God is formed by the hand of an artisan? Finally, just as spider webs are dissolved into the wind, so the calf of Samaria will be reduced to nothing. The Lord rejects the calves of the heretics and Samaria, who say they keep the precepts of the law: calves that cling to the ground and work in the earth, not in spirit, nor do they lift their eyes to heaven; and therefore the fury of the Lord is upon them, and he wonders what such perversity is, that they are not willing to abandon the idols they have fabricated for themselves and love the heretical filth in place of the cleanliness of the Church. Israel did not receive these calves, who pretends to see the Lord among other nations: but from the Holy Scriptures he has created for himself a wicked intelligence, and he is the craftsman of his own God, who will quickly perish and imitate the webs of spiders which are easily broken by touch.

8:7

For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: standing stalk, there is no grain in it, it shall not make flour: and if it should make any, strangers would devour it. " LXX: "Because they have sown corruption, they shall reap a fall: a handful of corn hath not the beauty of ear; they shall yield no flour; and if it should yield, strangers shall devour it. " She compares the calf of Samaria with a spider's web: therefore she keeps the metaphor in the remaining parts, that what she called spider's webs, she compares with the wind, and the whirlwind, and standing stalks: and if they stand, having no grain; and if they make any flour, she says, it shall be devoured by others. And because the common sense is the same, both in regard to heretics and to those who have made idols in Samaria, it must be jointly discussed. They sow the wind, or seeds corrupted by the wind, which have no kernel, which the Greeks call "enterion," and so they, sowing in emptiness,

receive emptiness and vanity. Rather, sowing in the flesh, they reap corruption from the flesh, and are carried away by every wind of doctrine. And when they sow the wind, they will reap hurricanes and storms, and first of all, the stalk, that is, the straw, will not be from these seeds, nor will they be able to have any appearance of a fruitful harvest. But if it happens rarely that the Ecclesiastics seem to have something similar to dogma: the seed itself and the ear of corn do not make flour. In the flour of which, the Gospel woman puts enough yeast (Matthew XIII): so that both the spirit by which we feel, and the soul by which we live, and the body by which we move are reduced to one holy Spirit, according to the Apostle: "In him we live, move, and have our being" (Acts XVII, 18). But if it happens rarely to heretics that they also make flour from their seed, the flour will make a sub-ashen bread, which will not come back, and which aliens will eat. And now he says: "Even if he makes flour, others will eat it." But we must accept those strangers of whom it is written: "Foreign sons have lied to me" (Ps. XVII, 46). And in the eighteenth psalm: "Cleanse me from my hidden sins, O Lord, and spare your servant from strangers." If they have not ruled over a just man, then he will be blameless and shall be cleansed from the greatest sin.

8:8

"Israel has been devoured, now he has become like an unclean vessel among the nations." The Septuagint translated "unclean" as "useless," the rest likewise. The Hebrews call the unclean vessel, or useless, a chamber pot, which we usually use to receive and discard feces. This uncleanness is compared to idolaters and heretics who mix with the Gentiles, while not guarding the truth of God, and have become vessels of honor, turned into vessels of (("Al." vas)) insult. For what is more unclean than a demonic spirit and the teachings of the heretics who have mixed them with those of the pagans? Such was Jechonias, enslaved to idols, of whom God speaks through Jeremiah: "Jechonias was dishonoured like a vessel of no use" (Jer. XXII, 18) . Conversely, Paul, who could say: "Do you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me?" (II Cor. XIII)? is called a vessel of election, made of gold and silver, because he had the wisdom and the eloquence to preach the Gospel of Christ. But when he says, "devoured," or "absorbed," this means that he lost his own name of Israelite and Christian, being mixed with idols and nations.

8:9-10

"For they are gone up to Assyria, a wild ass alone by himself: Ephraim hath given gifts to his lovers, yea, though they have hired among the nations, now will I gather them together, and they shall rest a little from the burden of the king and the princes." LXX: "Because they went up to the Assyrians, Ephraim has flourished within himself: they have loved gifts, therefore they shall be given to the Gentiles: now will I gather them together, and they shall rest a little from the labour of the king and the princes." Israel is devoured," he says, "and has become like a useless vessel, or unclean, from which no shard remains, in which water can be drawn, or a little bit of fire. And because he became an unclean vessel, therefore they went up to the Assyrians, imitating a wild ass alone: they were not fed like lambs by the Lord, but rather abusing their freedom and being led into captivity, of whom the prophet mourns and says, 'Ephraim gave gifts to the Assyrians, and hired lovers with a reward,' of which Ezekiel writes: 'All harlots receive rewards; but thou hast given rewards to thy lovers' (Ezek. 16: 33), and it has become the opposite in you. And when he has given gifts to peoples and nations have been hired to help him, they will gather for battle and will be taken captive together. And because they love to offer gifts to their adversaries, for a short

time they will receive benefit, so that they will not pay tribute to the king and princes until they reach the Assyrians, where they will not give either tribute or stipend as free men; but they will be brought into the ultimate bondage. We do not doubt concerning the heretics, that they, according to the error of their minds, going to the Assyrians, will think that they are ascending and not descending. Therefore it is said to them through Isaiah: "What is happening to you now, that you have all gone up on vain roofs?" (Isa. XXII, 1), whose Assyrian prince is a great sense. Therefore, Ephraim grew up in presumption within himself. Whether he became a solitary wild ass, as he penetrated not sown by the Church but by the devil's deserted places. He loved gifts for his own error, promising rewards to himself, or doing all things out of the motive of shameful profit. Or certainly he gave gifts and rewards to his lover demons, and when he did this, he will be handed over to the nations. For just as nations venerate physical images: so do they think that they are idols of gods, which they have invented from their own hearts, and therefore they will be considered among the number of nations. But if, he says, now, and in the present age they have repented, and I have accepted them, they will cease to establish a little king and his princes over themselves. So that we understand the small king as the devil, as distinguished from the great king who cannot have fellowship with Belial; but as soon as he is received, he drives out the small king and his princes from the hearts of believers. But according to the Hebrew, those who were previously dispersed will gather in the Church of God and will have hired nations for themselves, and they will rest from the burden of the king, whom the Apostle reproaches for being torn apart from the Church, saying: "You reign without us, and would that you did reign" (I Cor. IV, 8), and from the princes whom they have established in the synagogues of the devil.

8:11

Because Ephraim has multiplied altars to sin, altars have been made for him to sin on. He said, led into captivity, they'll cease for a short while from the burden of the king and prince. And this they suffer, because Ephraim their prince has multiplied altars, not in which to sacrifice to the Lord, but in which to join sins and sins: these altars, that is, will turn into a sin for them, so that the more there are, the more their crimes will multiply. Then as he had said before: "What shall I do to you, Ephraim? What shall I do to you, Judah?" as if doubting and seeking, with what remedy he might heal the sick, and with what counsels he might draw the sinner back to salvation.

8:12

I will write to him many of my laws, which are regarded as alien: they will offer sacrifices, they will slaughter meats and eat, and the Lord will not receive them." LXX: "I will write to them a multitude: their rightful altars have been regarded as foreign. Because if they sacrifice and eat meat, the Lord will not accept them:" which I had previously given through Moses. But what profit is there in writing further, since he has despised those which he previously received? Is it not contempt of God when, at my command that there be one altar in Jerusalem, idols were made on all the mountains and hills to provoke the Lord? They also made altars for the same reason, not to please me, but so they could eat the meat of the many sacrifices offered, according to what the Lord says in the gospel, "Amen, amen I say unto you, you seek me, not because you saw miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled." (John VI, 26). For every pursuit of sacrifices, they have it, to devour the offerings, not to please God through them; and the Lord will not receive those which they have immolated not to Him, but to their own stomachs and throats. But the

apostle teaches that there is one altar in the Church, and one faith, and one baptism (Ephesians 4), which heretics, deserting them, have fabricated many altars for themselves, not to placate God, but to multiply transgressions. Therefore they do not deserve to receive God's laws, since they have previously despised the ones they received. And if they say anything about the Scriptures, it must be understood, not as divine words, but as expressing the ideas of the heathen. These men offer many sacrifices and eat the meat of these animals, abandoning the one sacrifice of Christ; and they do not partake of his flesh, the flesh which is the food of believers. Whatever they do, pretending to follow the order and rites of sacrifices, whether they give alms, make promises of chastity, or feign humility, and deceive the simple with false flattery, God will accept nothing of such sacrifices.

8:13-14

"Now their iniquities will be remembered, and their sins will be punished: they themselves will be turned into Egypt, and Israel, their maker, has forgotten them, and has built shrines, and Judah has multiplied fortified cities, and I will send a fire into its cities, and it will devour their houses." LXX: "Now their iniquities will be remembered, and their injustices will be avenged. They themselves turned into Egypt, and forgot him who made them, and they built shrines, and Judah multiplied fortified cities, and I will send fire into their cities, and it will devour their foundations." Between lawlessness, which means "iniquity and sin," this is the difference: iniquity is before the law, sin is after the law, and those who persist in their sins will be remembered for their iniquities committed before the law by the Lord. However, their sins will not be remembered, but vengeance will be taken. Therefore, he will remember the iniquity of the ancients, and will visit the former sins: because they returned to Egypt, either asking for help, or worshipping the same gods in which they had previously erred, ■πιν and μνε■ιν. For Israel has forgotten his Maker, and built shrines on high hills, and under shady trees, consecrating to Baal and Astarte, and to other idols as well. Judah also, understanding that Israel had turned away from the love of God, and that their sins had been visited upon them, did not turn back to the Lord, but instead relied on fortified cities, which the Lord said He would destroy, devouring them down to their foundations. "His," no doubt, means Judah ("Al." Judah): though some read the foundations of "those," that is, cities, instead of "his." According to the spiritual sense, however, iniquities, that is, ■νομ■αι and ■δικ■αι, are called those which we committed before baptism, and which were forgiven us in baptism; but sins that we committed after baptism, concerning which it is written in the psalm, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (Ps. XXXI). All of which shall be imputed to the heretics, so that both their ancient iniquities and their new sins may be accounted for. For those who had left Egypt by confessing Christ, they returned to perfidy in Egypt. Israel has forgotten its maker, and rejecting its Creator, has devised another master for itself. Judas also, that is, the Ecclesiastical man, in evil deeds, or in perverse interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, built fortified cities for himself, not by the help of God, but by an artisan's lie: which the Lord says he will enflame with the fire of his spirit, and devour their burdens, that is, the great houses built up like towers, and he will upset the ill-laid foundations, so that they may not be able to build sacrilegious shrines against God. Certain cities fortified by the Jews are received in good faith, and they try to temper that which seemed contrary to this view: "I will send fire upon its cities, and it shall devour the houses thereof," so that when what is perfect has come, that which is partly destroyed. What we read according to the LXX interpretation, "they have eaten unclean things

among the Assyrians," is not found in the Hebrew, and therefore must be marked with an obelus. We may say, however, that the Israelites, desiring Egypt, were captured by the Assyrians and ate unclean food there, according to Ezekiel, who describes them as eating food sacrificed to idols in Chaldea (Ezek. IV): and polluted to such an extent with the filth of idols, that they are compared to human excrement. The heretics also, whose leaders are Assyrians (of whom we have spoken frequently), eat unclean things among them, while they themselves are polluted by their filth.

9:1-2

"Do not rejoice, Israel: do not exult as the peoples: for you have committed fornication with your God: you have loved the reward above all the wheat fields. The floor and the winepress shall not feed them, and the wine shall deceive them." LXX: "Do not rejoice, Israel, and do not be glad like the other peoples: for you have committed fornication against your God; you have loved the wages of fornication above every wheat floor. The threshing floor and winepress shall not feed them, and the wine will deceive them." "Those who have departed from God, when they have come into the depth of sinners and have despaired of their salvation, will despise everything." (Proverbs 18) Finally, Israel departing from the law of God and worshiping idols, says that it is one people from many nations: rejoicing and congratulating that it has departed from knowledge of God and is a mixed people with others, and therefore now it corrects them, saying, "Do not rejoice, do not be glad, and do not think that you are like other nations. For one who does not know God is punished differently than one who departs from God, because a servant who knows the will of his master but does not do it will be beaten severely (Luke 12)." Your reward for prostitution, you thought many threshing floors and wine presses, so that you might enjoy abundance of all things; therefore, the threshing floor and wine press will not make wheat and wine, and the wine press will lie to them, or it will deny its wine, which they thought would make them drunk. We read that there was a severe famine in Samaria during the reign of Ahab, king of Israel, and the prophet Elijah, so much so that mothers ate their own children's corpses (3 Kings 6). At that time, according to the letter, the threshing floor and wine press did not feed them, and the wine was a lie to them, and they languished in want. It is said to the heretics, 'Do not exult and rejoice, and think yourselves similar to the other nations. For those did not believe in God; but these worship idols under the name of God, and fornicate against their God: and they multiply for themselves countless fields and winepresses, and they eat wheat from which mourning bread is made, and they drink the wine of Sodom, which is trodden down with adder's gall. And because they have prepared for themselves many winepresses and fields: therefore they will not feed on the true and one field, and on the wine-press which our Lord Jesus has trodden, nor will they drink; but whatever they have thought to have, it will be corrupted by falsehood.'

9:3-4

"They shall not dwell in the land of the Lord. Ephraim returned to Egypt, and in Assyria he ate polluted food. They shall not offer wine to the Lord, nor shall their sacrifices please him; like the bread of mourners, all who eat it shall be defiled, because their bread does not enter the house of the Lord, which is their soul." LXX: "They did not dwell in the land of the Lord; Ephraim lived in Egypt and ate unclean things among the Assyrians. They did not pour out wine to the Lord, nor did their sacrifices please Him; their bread was like mourning; all who eat of it will be defiled; for their bread of their souls will not enter the house of the Lord." Not only has the threshing floor and the

winepress not fed them, and the wine has lied in the land of Israel, when everything had perished for three years and six months, but also the inhabitants themselves will depart from the land of the Lord, and will be led into a foreign land, so that they may not dwell in the holy land which they have defiled with their fornication. "He returned," he said, "to Egypt, and in Assyria he ate defiled things." Of this place, some have added above: "and in Assyria he ate defiled things," which is not in Hebrew, as we have already said. But since they were in Chaldea without a temple and without an altar, they will not pour out wine to the Lord, but to demons, and they will not please those who pour out to alien gods, and those who are held captive and eat idols in Assyria are like mourning bread. For it is not lawful to eat of the food of mourners, and whoever shall eat of it shall be defiled, even what is lawfully offered. The Greeks call the suppers of mourners νεκρῶν δειπνα, and we may call them "parentalia," from the fact that they are offered to the dead. And not only he that offers, but also he that partakes of such food, shall be unclean; for their bread, that is, the food which they offer, shall not enter into the house of the Lord, which is destroyed, and burnt up with the fire of the Babylonians; let their souls be put to silence. And there is a sense, to its own gluttony, and it provides enjoyment for itself; but I do not like what is polluted. Those who have left the Church and returned to Egypt, and of the Assyrians, that is, they eat sacrifices of demons, will not dwell in the land of the Lord: nor do they drink wine offered to the Lord, in their drunkenness, and neither they nor those who offer it please Him. The sacrifice of heretics is bread of mourning and tears: for all that they do shall be turned into weeping. They will not be able to hear: 'Blessed are the mourning, for they shall be comforted' (Matt. 5:5); but on the contrary, they will hear: 'Woe to the laughing, because they will weep' (Luke 6:25). Whatever they offer, they offer not to God, but to the dead: namely those who have concocted wicked heresies; and whoever eats of their victims, will be contaminated. They will be led by the blind into the pit. Whatever they do, they do for the sake of pleasures, to deceive the people and to devour the houses of widows. We can say that grief is bread, deadly words with which they speak iniquity against the Lord: for he who does not enter the house of God is bread: for the assemblies of heretics are called not the house of God, but the dens of robbers.

9:5-6

"What will you do on the solemn day, on the day of the Lord's festival? For behold, they have gone forth from desolation: Egypt shall gather them, Memphis shall bury them: the desirable silver of them, the nettle shall inherit, the burdock shall be in their tabernacles." LXX: "What will you do on the day of the assembly and on the day of the solemnity of the Lord? Therefore, behold they shall go from the misery of Egypt, and Memphis shall receive them, and Machmas shall bury them; their silver shall possess destruction, thorns shall be in their tabernacles." When the day of captivity will come, he says, and the most cruel enemy will attack, what is my solemnity? How pleasing a sacrifice do I have? For it avenges me against my enemies and puts a limit on their wrongdoing, and it flogs the impious sons. What then will you do on the day of the Lord's festival? Respond. With them being silent, he responds to himself, indeed he figures out with divine eyes what they will do: Behold, I say, in misery and ruin, they fled to Egypt, where those who want to capture the Assyrians and Chaldeans are bound. There Memphis will bury those, which at that time was the metropolis of Egypt, before Alexandria, which was formerly called No, received both the greatness of the city and its name. But what is said in the Septuagint, "Machmas will bury them," is not found in Hebrew; but Mamad, which means "beloved." From which it is clear that they are false, because

of the similarity of the letters Daleth and Chaph; and instead of "Mamad," which everyone translated as "beloved," they thought "Machmas" to be an Egyptian city. We can consider that which is said: "For, behold, they are gone because of destruction, Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them," and take from the tribe of Judah: when, after the murder of Gedaliah by Ishmael, whom Nebuchadnezzar had appointed over the land, the remnant of the people with the prophet Jeremiah fled to Egypt, and there later were either captured or buried by the Chaldeans who pursued them. However, their desirable silver that nettles possess, we will understand to be the villages and all the ornaments of the villages, which are bought with the price of silver. "And what follows, 'a burr in their tabernacles,' signifies a long desolation; so that where once their houses were, there burrs and nettles and thorns may grow. And is said also to heretics: When the solemn day shall come, what will ye do? Aquila interprets 'solemn day' as 'time.' From this it is manifest that it does not mean a festive day, but a time of retribution; for immediately it follows: 'The days of vengeance are come, the days of thy visitation.' Behold, ye are devastated by many enemies: the Assyrians and the Chaldeans have slaughtered you, ye have fled into the world, and ye are likened to other nations: there ye shall be buried in 'Memphis,' which means 'from the mouth,' and the sense is: According to your blasphemies ye shall receive, and what ye have spoken ye shall feel in punishments; your desirable things, that is, the doctrines which ye have artificially composed with language, which is interpreted silver, shall be possessed by the nettle, which shall consume you with eternal fire: and there shall be the burr or thorn in your tabernacles; for thorns shall grow on the hands of those who have been made drunk with the Babylonish cup." (Jer. 51) And in the Gospel we read that shameful thoughts and worries of this world, and clinging vices, are called thorns, which rising up in the herbs choke the grain. (Matthew 15).

9:7

"The days of visitation have come, the days of retribution have come: know, O Israel, a foolish prophet, a spiritual madman because of the multitude of your iniquity, and the multitude of your madness." LXX: "The days of vengeance have come, the days of your retribution have come, and Israel shall be afflicted as a raving prophet, a man who had the Spirit, because" "the multitude of your iniquities, your madness has multiplied." And in this place there is a usual error: for where we have translated, "know, O Israel," that is, Israelites, and in Hebrew it is read Jadau, the Septuagint has translated "and will be afflicted:" thinking Jod is the vowel and Res the consonant instead of it, and reading it for Daleth: the former of which means knowledge, the latter affliction or malice. Therefore came the days of visitation, of which it was said above (Verse 5): "What will you do in the solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the Lord? The days of retribution have come." O Israel, now know your words, who called the prophet speaking true things to you, and prophesying by the Holy Spirit, a fool and insane, according to what the princes spoke to Jehu in Ramoth Galaad: "What is this madman coming to you?" (4 Kings 9:11). Therefore, because of the multitude of your injustices, in which you have revelled in wickedness for a long time, recognize that you are not my prophet, but rather insane, who labours to trample on my words. For "insanity," Aquila translates ὀργή, which we can also say in Latin as "anger" or "memory of pain". Some interpret the day of vengeance and retribution as the day of judgment, when Israel, who now boasts of seeing God, will be afflicted, not guided by the Holy Spirit but swept into various parts by demons, not knowing what they are saying: calling the Son of God a creature, denying the Holy Spirit God. And again another good God, asserting another creator of the world: their madness is

manifold, because there were many iniquities. We said that he was a foolish prophet, and they interpreted him as a seventy pseudoprophet. And lest, by often repeating the same things, we seem to distrust the prudence of the reader, we briefly admonish that whatever is said about Israel and Ephraim in this prophet must be referred to heretics, who truly speak lies against God, being insane.

9:8-9

"Ephraim the spy with my God: the prophet is a snare of ruin" "above all his ways: insanity in the house of his God, deeply they have sinned: as in the days of Gabaa, their iniquities will be remembered, and their sins will be visited." LXX: "Ephraim the spy with God the prophet: a twisted snare over all his ways, insanity" "they have fabricated in the house of God: they have been corrupted according to the days of the hill: " "their iniquities will be remembered, and they will be avenged for their sins." Therefore, God gave the leaders to rebuke the delinquent people and to guide them back to the right path: hence, he speaks to Ezekiel: "I have made you a spy for the house of Israel" (Ezek. V, 17). Therefore Jeroboam was given as a spy among people, and as a prophet with my God, that is, with God who speaks these things by Hosea. But he is called the trap, according to that which is written above: "You have become a spectacle of snare, and a net spread out over Tabor, and you have turned victims into the abyss", and even now the people of Israel are referred to as the trap, because all fall into its snare, especially since he has put insanity in the house of God, or schemed it, that is, he made a golden calf in "Bethel", for this is interpreted as the house of God: and he has also deeply sinned in wickedness, and so he is submerged in the abyss of impiety, so that he surpasses the sin that was once committed in Gibeah, when they killed the wife of the Levite returning from Bethlehem in an illicit way (Judges 19). We can accept the days of Gibeah and that time, when for God they chose for themselves a king from the city of Gibeah, that is, Saul. And now they are said to have sinned much more, by choosing Jeroboam and worshipping idols, than at that time when they chose Saul: for here schism even was coupled with idolatry: but there the worship of God remained in the people. Therefore their injustices, which now by patience are considered forgotten, will be remembered, and their sins and the wounds that have been festering for a long time will be visited. Scrutinizing the ancient histories, I am unable to find that the Church was split, and that the people seduced the house of the Lord, except for those who were the priests appointed by God and the prophets, that is, the watchers. Therefore, these people are turned into a twisted snare, placing scandal in all places, so that whoever enters by their path may fall and not be able to stand in Christ, and be led astray by various errors and taken down paths to ruin. These are the Ephraim's spies, who have brought madness into the house of the Lord, that is, in the Church, or in the holy scriptures, interpreting them perversely, or certainly in the case of each of the believers who is most rightly called the house of God. Therefore they are corrupt and have perished according to the days of the hill, when they spoke iniquity against the highest ones and ascended into empty roofs. God will remember their iniquity by which they acted unjustly towards their neighbor, bringing him out of the Church, and will visit their sins with which they sinned against their souls. This is what we read in the psalm: 'They have laid a stumbling block for me beside the way' (Ps. 140:6). For unless someone has seen the way of God, that is, heard the name of Christ, they will not enter through it. Therefore, even heretics set traps beside the way in the name of Christ, so that anyone who believes they are walking in Christ—of whom we read that he is the way—may instead tread upon their snares, which they have woven in the

house of God.

9:10-11

"As I found grapes in the desert, I saw Israel, as the first figs of the fig tree in the top thereof: but they went in to Beelphegor, and alienated themselves to that confusion, and became abominable, as those things were which they loved." LXX: "As I found Israel in the desert like a grape, and as I saw their fathers like a fig tree's temporary figs, but they entered Baal Peor and became alienated in confusion and became abominable like their love." For in other examples, we read: "and they became beloved, as if abominable," which is more consistent with the truth. When the whole world was deserted and did not have knowledge of God, I found, he says, the people of Israel like a grape in the wilderness, and how he found them, he says: "As the first fruits of the fig tree, in the top of it I saw their fathers. Therefore, the people were found in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And note the property, the parents are seen, the people are found, and in both there is a vineyard and fig tree, under which those who trust in the Lord are said to rest. But they, having been led out of Egypt, fornicated with the Midianite women, and went into Beelphegor, the idol of the Moabites, which we can call Priapus. Finally, "Beelphegor" is interpreted as an idol of tentacles, having "skin" on its top, i.e., on its summit, to show the obscenity of the male member. And because they entered into Beelphegor, they thus alienated themselves from God, to their own confusion, that is, they worshipped idols. As it is written, "For by whom a man is overcome, for him he is become also the slave" (2 Peter 2:19), and as those who serve their appetites, calling their belly their god (Philippians 3), so those who serve their lust have Beelphegor as their god. "And they became," he says, "abominable, like those whom they loved," according to what is written in the Psalms: "Let those who make them become like them, and all who trust in them" (Ps. 134:18) so that not only are idolaters, but also the idols named. But the Lord said in his passion: "I trod the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me" (Isaiah 63:3). And in the Psalm: "Save me, O Lord, for the godly one is gone; for the faithful have vanished from among the children of man" (Psalm 12:1). When the whole world was held in sin, and the nations knew not God, and Israel had cast away Him whom they had formerly known, first in the apostles, and the men of the apostles, did the Lord find the Christian people of Israel, and seeing with understanding God was satisfied with their sweet fruits of grapes and figs which, if found in the desert and before their proper season, would be of greater grace. They, however, that is, Israel, who assume the Christian name for themselves (for it is not to be understood of the parents), entered into the idol Beelphegor, which has the skin in its mouth. For whatever a heretic speaks, it is deadly, and is separated from the living Word of God. Whether they have entered into lust: for it is difficult to find a heretic who loves chastity, not because they do not cease to prefer it on their lips, but because they do not keep it in their conscience, speaking one thing and doing another; hence, they are alienated from God and have glory in their confusion, and have become abominable, who previously were loved among the fathers. But if we wish to read "they became abominable as those whom they loved," which still is not in the Hebrew, we shall say that the Gentiles have become abominable even as the heretics who formerly were beloved in the fathers, that is to say, so that both the former and the latter are alike vicious.

9:12

"Ephraim has flown away like a bird: their glory from birth and from the womb and from conception. Even if they bring up their children, I will make them childless in men. But woe to them when I depart from them. Ephraim, as I saw, was founded in Tyre in beauty, and Ephraim will bring their sons to the slayer." LXX: "Ephraim has flown away like a bird: their glory is in giving birth and in births and conception: because even if they bring up their children, they will be without children among men: because woe to them, for my flesh is from them. Ephraim, as I saw, offered his children into captivity, and Ephraim, to bring his children to slaughter." There is much disagreement among interpreters on this passage. In that place where we said, "woe to them when I depart from them," the Septuagint and Theodotion translated it as "woe to them, my flesh from them." Seeking the reason for such a variation, I seem to have found this: "My flesh" is said in Hebrew "Basari;" again, if we say "my departure" or "my declination," it is said "Basori." Therefore, the Septuagint and Theodotion translated "my departure" and "my declination" as "my flesh," whereas for "Ephraim, as I saw, Tyre was," the Septuagint interpreted "θῆρυξ," which means "hunting" or "capture," Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted as "a very hard rock," that is, a flint, which in Hebrew is called "Sur;" but if we read "Sor," it means "Tyre." "But the Seventy interpreters, thinking from the similarity of the letters of Res and Daleth that it was not Res but Daleth, have read Sud, that is, "hunting" or "capture," from which Bethsaida is also called "the house of hunters." We have stated the diversity of interpreters; let us return to the sense. Ephraim, that is, the ten tribes, flew away like a bird into captivity and departed from their own place. And he called them birds to demonstrate their swift passage into Babylon." But if we read, "as though the glory of them had flown away like a bird," we say that their aid has departed and flown away from God. And that which follows, "from birth, and from the womb, and from conception," can be understood in two ways, so that the glory which has flown away from Ephraim also departs from their birth, from the womb, and from their conception. That is, their children shall be deserted and their posterity forsaken. Or indeed, we say that all the glory of Israel was in its multitude, and that Judah, his brother, esteemed himself greater because he ruled over ten tribes, whereas the other over two. Where the Lord speaks that even if they raise their children and gather a multitude of offspring, they will be handed over to death. And now the true burden lies with them when God departs from them. He then explains how once Ephraim was so forsaken, though he was beautiful, and so supported by God's help, that he seemed as if he were Tyre, which is surrounded by the sea, or certainly like a hardest rock, fixed on the ground, which disdains all storms and cares nothing for tornadoes and winds. But he, that is, Ephraim or Tyre, which was founded in the beauty ("Al." fullness) of the sea, will bring his sons into captivity. Many refer this chapter to the times of Azahel, who besieged Samaria and afflicted it with hunger for a long time, so that those besieged by the sword might be thought to perish more lightly than from hunger (2 Kings 6, 7, and 8). But let us say, according to the tropology, that Ephraim, that is, the heretics, as if they had gone away from the Church like a bird, and that they have all their glory in childbirth, in the womb, and in conception, if they have born many sons whom the Lord threatens, even if they have been raised and punished, not by anyone else, but by the Lord himself, because they have generated children of fornication, and woe to them when God departs from them. And he repeats that which was Ephraim: when, he says, he was in the Church, in such a way was he pounded by the waves of this world like Tyre, but yet he could withstand nothing adverse, because he had the foundation of Christ, upon which the house was built, cannot be overturned (Matt. VII). But now he brings up his sons for slaughter: that is, for the devil. And well said he brings up, that is, he makes them go

outside the Church. We are able to speak evil of the sons of Ephraim, and contrary dogmas to truth, which the Lord destroys with the breath of his mouth; he does not allow them to have such children, and leaves them to eternal destruction. As for what we read in the Septuagint, 'From these, my flesh: Ephraim, how I have seen, has provided for his sons a livelihood of prey,' we understand it thus: If Christ is the head of the body, that is, the Church, all of us are members of Christ and the Church. Therefore, whoever departs from the Church tears apart the body of Christ: therefore, Ephraim was also flesh and a member of the Lord Savior. But he provided his children for hunting, and for the hunting of those about whom it is written: "Our soul has been rescued like a bird from the fowler's snare" (Psalm 123, 7). And he led his children out of the Church, for slaying or for wounding: so that they may be wounded by those who send burning arrows, so that they may be struck and burned together.

9:14

"Give them, Lord: what will you give them? Give them a womb without children" (Vulg. "sons"), and dry breasts" LXX similarly. If we abuse those things which God gave us for a blessing and they are turned to the opposite of why they were given, it is better for them to be taken away from us. Finally, the tongue was given to praise the Lord God and to speak good things: If anyone misuses it in blasphemy, the Psalmist prays to the Lord against him: "Let deceitful lips be made dumb, that speak against the just with pride and abuse" (Ps. XXX, 19). And in another place: "May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips, and the tongue that speaks high things" (Psalm XI, 4). Therefore, since Ephraim boasted in the womb, and in conception, and in birth, and in the multitude of peoples, the Prophet prays to the Lord and says: "Give them, O Lord." And he himself answers: "What will you give them?" and immediately adds: "Give them a barren womb, and dry breasts," so that they would have no reason for pride and may be confounded in that which they used to glory. It is clear that even teachers with contrary doctrines can be understood, who boast in the multitude of people and in those children whom they have raised to destruction, that they might lead them out of the Church and into the midst of the slayer. For as many children as heretics have produced in error, the devil has killed. Of such a soul it is said: "Blessed is the chaste woman, who has not known the bed of sin." (Wisdom 3:12) For the Ecclesiastic man is blessed, who in comparison with a heretic, does not beget children in error. And in another place we read, 'It is better to not have children with virtue. For from an unlawful union, offspring will perish' (Wisdom 4 and 3, sec. 70): and when they have been long gone, they will be considered as nothing and ignoble in their final old age. For the fecund multitude of the impious is unto nothing; for we should not consider it, that he has prayed bodily for a sterile womb and drying breasts.

9:15

"All their wickedness is at Gilgal: for there I hated them." LXX similarly. In Gilgal, Saul was anointed as king, with Samuel announcing God's anger to the people. (1 Kings 10) "There," he said, "I had them skinned, and they asked for a human king, and withdrew from my authority. Whether it was because Galgala is a place of idolatry, where they committed all kinds of sin. But because Galgala means "revelation," or "rolling," that is, "rolling away," all the wickedness of the heretics will be revealed at that time, when God gives them a barren womb and withered breasts, and they see their shame. And those who boasted through pride that they had ascended to lofty places, will be cast down to the ground or dragged down to hell. Truly, heretics are worthy of God's

hatred, those who speak lies against the Lord, of whom he speaks in the following lines

Because of the malice of their inventions, I will cast them out of my house. I will not continue to love them: all their rulers have departed," that is, "disobedient." The same is true of the Seventy. And indeed, there is no doubt that the heretics were cast out of God's house, and he will not love them as long as they remain in error, and all their rulers have turned away from God, that is, disobedient, such as Valentinus, Marcion, and others. We can say that the leaders of the heretics are demons who have truly turned away from God and are called princes, just as the Lord speaks in the Gospel: "The prince of this world will come and find nothing in me" (John 14:30). And the Apostle tells us to fight against the powers, principalities, and rulers of these darknesses (Ephesians 6). However, according to history, how did he cast them out of his house, that is, the ten tribes, when they were not in the house of God? But we shall call the house of God, or the Holy Land into which they were conducted, or the false name 'Israelites,' or the fact that the prophets were sent to them as though they were the people of God. But what is clear is that he does not add that he loves them, and that all the kings of Israel have departed from God, for until today they remain in captivity. Others believe that what is written, "I will eject them from my house," refers to the kingdom of Judah, which will also be led into captivity. But how can it be adapted to them, "I will not add that I love them," since they were later led back to Jerusalem: and "all their leaders are departing," since we have read that David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah were righteous kings? Hence we must pass on to the time of Christ, who, at His coming, was cast out of the house of God, and was not saved as Israel, but as the Christian people. Hence the Lord made a scourge for Himself out of cords, and cast them out of the temple: because they had made the house of His Father a house of business (John, ii).

9:16-17

"Ephraim is struck: their root has dried up, they will bear no fruit. Even if they do, I will kill the beloved offspring of their womb. My God will reject them because they did not listen to him, and they will wander among the nations." LXX: "Ephraim grieves over his roots: they are withered, and bear no fruit, and even if they give birth, I will kill the cherished offspring of their wombs. God will reject them because they have not listened to him, and they will wander among the nations." It takes a metaphor from a tree, which if its roots are dried up, it will not be able to bear fruit, and if it does even a little, it will soon wither in its own flower. But he speaks of Ephraim, whose root is withered, because he destroyed the God in whom he was founded, or did not deserve to have his fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in whom he had sent his roots: and therefore he does not bear the fruit of righteousness; and if he does, "I will slay," he said, "the dearest of his womb," according to what he had said above: "If they bring up their children, I will make them childless among men:" hence God rejected them and made them go into captivity. "And they shall wander among the nations." We can say this about all the Jews whose leaders have departed from God, stirring up the people to demand his death; therefore, he cast them out of his house and will not love them anymore. He struck their root and dried it up, and they will never bear fruit again, even if they study the Holy Scripture and the Law, and produce something of knowledge and doctrine from their heart as if they were beloved children; the Lord will oppose them and they will be cut off. For God has rejected them, all the prophets, because they did not listen to Him; and they will wander among the nations, not having an altar, not having a seat, not having a proper city. Therefore, David also speaks in the psalm: "Do not kill them, lest my people forget: scatter them by your

power" (Psalm 59:12). And in another place: "Expel them according to the multitude of their impieties, for they have provoked You, Lord" (Psalm 5:12). We read about this tree also in the Gospel: 'Now the ax is laid at the root of the trees, and every tree therefore that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into fire' (Matthew 3:10). Let no one doubt that heretics are incapable of producing the fruits of virtues, because they have lost the Lord, on whom, according to the Apostle, they ought to have been rooted and founded (Ephesians 3). And even if they should produce some fruit and generate some offspring by the fertility of their own womb, they will die with the Lord being against them. Whether because their fruits are all those things which they imagine and generate from their own heart, they will wither and perish: and it will be clear to all that a dry root cannot produce fruits. These will be cast away, indeed they are cast away by God, because they did not listen to him saying: "Do not move the boundaries which your fathers have established" (Deut. XIX, 14). And for this reason they will wander among nations, passing from these opinions to those, since it does not please them to keep what they have once found, but always changing old things for new, and imitating the errors of the pagans.

10:1

"Lush vine of Israel; its fruit satisfies it; according to the abundance of its fruit, it has multiplied its altars; it has enriched itself with its idols, in proportion to the fertility of its land." LXX: "A leafy vine in Israel: abundant fruit in it: according to the multitude of its fruit it has multiplied altars: they will build titles beside the good of their land." On behalf of a leafy life," the eagle explained, "■νυδρον," which we can say means "watery" or "diluted" because it loses the taste of wine; Symmachus called it "■λομανο■σαν," which has grown entirely in the leaves. Vines, which were not of value to the vintner, grow into whips and leaves, and destroy the moisture which they should have turned into wine, by the vain ambition of foliage and leaves: such a vine is harmful to farmers. Such was Israel, growing in the multitude of peoples, and not returning the fruits owed to the Farmer God. Let us say it differently: A leafy vine, or according to the Septuagint, a fruitful vine, brought forth many bunches, and the productivity of grapes equaled the magnitude of the branches: but this, which was such before it offended God, later turned the abundance of fruit into a multitude of offenses: so that the more people it had, the more altars it would build, and it would surpass the abundance of the land with the number of idols. For statues, the Septuagint translates "columns," which we call "statues" or "titles," which properly belong to demons or dead men. And so heretics, while they were being planted in the Church and growing in the house of God, were called the Sorec vineyard and brought forth the most bountiful fruits: but afterwards, as they became more numerous, they multiplied altars for themselves, so that for every one true altar there were built many altars of their error, and according to the abundance of their land they overflowed with idols. The land of heretics is fruitful, those who sensing the acumen and talent from God, in order to consecrate the good of nature to God, made idols for themselves. For no one can build up heresy unless they are of a passionate mind and have the gifts of nature; which were created by God the creator. Such was Valentinus, such was Marcion, whom we read to be very learned. Such was Bardesanes, whose talent even philosophers admire. Therefore, they turned the good of their land into titles for the dead, because all their teaching is not referred to the living, but to the dead, to both those whom they worship and those whom they deceive.

10:2

Their heart is divided; now they shall perish: he shall break down their idols, he shall lay waste their altars." LXX: "They have divided their hearts: now shall they perish: he shall break down their altars, he shall distress their statues." The Hebrews hand down a similar story, confirming their suspicion with the authority of Scripture: captivity did not come until both kings and peoples alike adored golden calves and were united in impiety. The last king of the ten tribes was Hoshea, about whom it is written (4 Kings 17) that indeed he did evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him, in whose ninth year Salmanazar, king of the Assyrians, captured the people of Israel, and led them into the Assyrians, and made them dwell near the river Gozan in the cities of the Medes. Therefore, it is asked why they were not captured under the worst kings, but under him who had begun to turn in some way to better things? To which they add these things: at first the people excused themselves, saying, "We obey the commands of the kings, nor can we resist their tyranny; we worship calves which we are compelled to adore." But in the days of Hosea the same king commanded that the calves should not be worshiped with such zeal, but that whoever wished should go to Jerusalem and offer sacrifice there to God; to this, they say, the people objected. And this is what he says now: "their heart is divided," that is, the heart of the king and the people, and with no excuse remaining, now they will perish and be delivered to eternal captivity; for as soon as the people dissented from the king, destruction came. And what follows: "He himself will break their images," speaks about God: "And he shall destroy their altars," not because God himself did this with his own hand, but because his will was fulfilled through his enemies. The hearts of heretics are divided among themselves and they resist each other's opinions, which they do not deny, while they feel different. Hence they will be dispersed, and the Lord will break or dig out their images, or altars, which they invented in their own hearts, and will destroy the titles by which each is called by their own names, and they called their names over their lands, so they may not be said to belong to Christ's Church, but to those of this or that.

10:3-4

Because now they will say, 'There is no king for us, for we did not fear the Lord, and what will the king do to us?' Speaking words of useless vision, and you will strike a covenant, and judgment will germinate like bitterness over the furrows of the field. "LXX: "Therefore now they will say, there is no king for us, because we did not fear the Lord, but what will the king do to us? Speaking words, false excuses: he will arrange a testament, and judgment will arise like grass over the desert of the field. "After God breaks the idols of Israel, and depopulates their altars, or statues, and their extreme captivity comes, they will say, "There is no king for us." And lest they think that the sentence is prolonged for a long time, he added: "Now they will say," when they are devastated, when they will feel that Hosea is the last king taken from them: now the king is taken away from us, because we did not fear the Lord the true king: for what could a man do as king to benefit us? Say what you wish, lament old mistakes, promise yourselves success, which will turn into the opposite, you will strike a treaty, not with God by any means, but with deception. And after the "treaty," which the Seventy have interpreted as "testament," bitterness will sprout for you, not a productive harvest of wheat, nor even food for livestock, barley, nor various legumes, nor vines which sweat forth their fruit in must, nor will trees bear fruit which changes the moisture of the earth into various flavors; but bitterness will arise for you, indeed a judgment of bitterness, or wild oats, which in Latin we translate as "grass." For there is a kind of herb like a reed, which sends its stem upwards and its root downwards through each joint, and again the very shoots and shrubs of

another herb are nursery plants of it, and so in a short time, if it is not dug up by its lowest roots, it makes whole fields like brambles. Moreover, even if any dry part of it, provided it has a joint, falls on tilled ground, it fills it all with grass. We have said this according to the translators of the LXX, but in the Hebrew it is written as "Ros", which is turned into bitterness, that is, a judgment of bitterness, concerning which the Lord also speaks in the Gospel: "For judgment I am come into this world" (John IX, 39) : and of others it is written, "they shall receive greater damnation" (Mark XII). The students of opposing doctrines, when their lies are exposed and their altars and temples are destroyed, will say late: "We have no kings who had previously commanded us, under whose deceit we did not fear the Lord; for what gain is it for us to follow those, from whom we did not feel any help in necessity?" They will speak such words seeking some excuse, so that they may not seem to have erred through their own fault but through the worst teachings. Wherefore their seventy words they translated false excuses, which the prophet avoids by saying: "Let not my heart decline to words of malice," to excuse "excuses in sins" (Ps. 140: 4). We willingly applaud our faults, and having overcome pleasures, we shield ourselves behind the frailty of the flesh or the harsh demands of our ancestors: from whence the words and useless visions of heretics will be in vain. And they will strike a pact, not with God, but with bitterness, which when the day of judgment comes, will sprout over the furrows of their field, so that those who have sown in joy, will reap in tears: those who have laughed, will weep: those who had consolation, will mourn.

10:5-6

"The inhabitants of Samaria have worshipped the cows of Bethaven, because its people have mourned over it; and its priests have rejoiced over it, for its glory has departed from it. Moreover, it has been carried away to Assyria, as a gift to the avenging king. Ephraim will be put to shame by the confusion he caused; Israel will be ashamed of his own will." LXX: "At the calf of the house of ■n, those who dwell in Samaria will reside: because his people mourned over him. And just as they angered him, they will rejoice over his glory: because it was taken away from him, and they themselves, binding him to the Assyrians, brought gifts to King Jarib in his house. Ephraim will receive shame: Israel will be confounded in their counsel." What Bethaven is, for which the LXX translated as 'house' of ■n, and who King Jarib is, which means 'avenger,' we have discussed more fully above. So in Bethaven, that is, Bethel, the inhabitants of Samaria worshipped calf idols, which the male sex did not mock as bulls, but as cows, that is, as females: so that Israel would worship not only calf gods, but also cow goddesses. And to show cows in Bethaven, the people did not bring in one calf in Bethel to feel, they mourned over them, but over it, that is, the golden calf. But if the people mourned, why did its priests exult over it? The Hebrews report that golden calves were stolen by the priests, and in their place bronze ones covered in gold were placed. Therefore, when the people were mourning in a time of necessity and distress, even among other gifts which were sent among the Assyrian kings, especially to King Sennacherib by the king of Israel, the golden calves were there and the priests rejoiced because their wrongdoing could not be accused or discovered. And this is what is said, "its priest," that is, of the calf, they rejoiced in its (the calf's) glory representing the glory of the people; because it had migrated from it, that is, from the people, and was transferred to the Assyrians. And they say, so that we might know, the following verse clearly indicates that this is what is being referred to: "For he himself was brought into Assyria, a gift to the avenging king." And immediately follows: "Ephraim shall be taken away with confusion, and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel," or "in his own plan." For the

deceit of the golden calves, made by the people of Israel, is indicated to the king of Israel in the letters, and from where they thought they would please, there they are most of all confounded and offend those to whom they have sent gifts, supposing not just the thievery of the priests, but that this had been carried out by the deceit of the kings and their counsel. We read in the book of Kings that the king of Israel, Manahen, sent a thousand talents of silver to the king of the Assyrians, Phul, so that he would be on his side, that is, so that he would provide him with help, among which some claim that even golden calves were sent. In the current location, Symmachus interpreted Jarib as ■περμ■χοντι, that is, "bishop" and "defender." According to our spiritual understanding, we must work how we can bring everything to the model of the heretics. The heretics cultivated cows in Bethaven, or the house of On, which is interpreted as "labor," and boasted that they lived in the custody of God's commandments, that is, in Samaria, and on the day of judgment when bitterness will sprout like judgment on the furrows of the field, the people will mourn over it, that is, over the calf, and over the perverse doctrine which they thought was of God. And the keepers of the temple did not say, "they will rejoice," but "they rejoiced," referring to their past glory, which they had once gloriously fixed, because the people had migrated from God, or because the glory of God itself had migrated from the people, from whom it had been forsaken. Whatever the heretics say, and however beautifully they speak, they send gifts to their king the devil, referring everything to him, from whom confusion will take them in eternity, and they will be confounded in their own desires. Someone also left written above and in the present place in his commentaries, that king Jarib, that is, the avenger, is to be understood as Christ. Which displeases us entirely. For it is impious to understand as historical events, which are tropologically related to Christ, to be about the king of Assyria.

10:7-8

"He made his king pass like foam over the face of the water of Samaria, and the high places of idols shall be destroyed, the sin of Israel." LXX: "He has cast out his king from Samaria as a brand on the face of the water, and the altars will be removed." For "foam," which the LXX and Theodotion translated as φρ■γανον, that is, "brand," Symmachus has placed ■π■ζεμα, wanting to show the upper waters of boiling water, and the foam and bubbles rising, which the Greeks call πομφ■λυγας. Therefore, just as spume over the water dissolves quickly, so the kingdom of the ten tribes will quickly end, and the lofty places, that is, Bamoth, will perish, of which it is written: "Nevertheless, the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places" (3 Kings 22:44). But these lofty places are idols, or Aven, that is, idols, which are interpreted as "useless," which is a useless idol and a sin for Israel. But when the idol and its lofty places are dispersed.

10:9

Thistles and tribulations will ascend upon their altars, and they will say to the mountains, 'Cover us,' and to the hills, 'Fall upon us.' LXX: 'Thorns and tribulations will ascend upon their altars, and they will say to the mountains, 'Cover us,' and to the hills, 'Fall upon us.' It is a sign of ultimate loneliness, that not even walls or the last remnants of buildings will be left. At that time, 'they will say to the mountains, 'Cover us,' and to the hills, 'Fall upon us.' This is what the Lord says will be fulfilled in the last days of the captivity of Judah. Therefore, whatever is said now against the ten tribes or against all of Israel, let us know that it can also be transferred typologically to the entire people, so that when the Romans capture Jerusalem and overthrow the temple, or when the day

of judgment comes, as some suspect, they will say with great horror, fearing, "Cover us, mountains," and "Fall on us, hills," preferring to die rather than see what brings death. But the spiritual wickedness of Samaria, which had separated itself from the people of God, caused its king to pass quickly, namely, the speech of heretics and doctrine like foam or cream on the surface of the water, some of which, while it appears, suddenly dissolves, while others are easy to remove from the summits of the waters and cast into the fire. Such are the heretics, swelling with foaming words, and mixing the teachings and words of Christ with the baptism and their own sermons. All of these things will pass away, and the great words in which they labored, which is interpreted as "being", will be immediately scattered, in which Israel sinned: and there will be such a great solitude of wicked doctrine that thorns and thistles will ascend upon their altars. It is well known that thorns and thistles grow where there is no cultivation of the fields. These are the thorns, which choke the seed and do not let what grows in the hand of a drunkard to flourish, which Israel made instead of grapes. For the Lord waited for grapes to come forth and there came forth instead thorns, having the appearance of grapes and twisting the mouths of those who eat into a bitter taste. Therefore, when the time of judgment comes and all things are reversed, they will say to the mountains, which they had once thought high, and to their former masters, 'Cover us;' and to the hills, 'fall upon us.' But because in the mountains he has put 'cover us' and in the hills 'fall upon us,' something more sacred is to be explained. Mountains, that is, those which have a true and not a false height, shall say: "Cover us. For blessed are they whose iniquities are covered" (Psalm 31). And hills that do not have a natural height, which once they thought to have some summit, will say: "Fall upon us." For the mountains shall cover them, and the hills shall fall. But these things shall be done out of fear and incredible dread, by which both mountains and hills shall be humbled.

10:9-10

"Israel sinned from the days of Gabaa: there they stood. They will not be caught at Gabaa in battle against the sons of iniquity. According to my desire, I will rebuke them: when the peoples are gathered together against them and will be corrected over their two iniquities." LXX: "Since Israel sinned on the hills, there they stood; they were not captured in battle on the hills against the sons of lawlessness. He came to rebuke them, and the peoples will be gathered against them when they are rebuked for their two iniquities." From the day when Benjamin in the city of Gabaa shamefully and cruelly killed the wife of the Levite, all Israel sinned against me (Judges 19): not because he avenged the injury and crime with blood, but because of his marital grief he rushed into battle, and did not want to avenge the sacrilege against his God, because in Micah's house they neglected the ephod and teraphim which were worshiped as idols. Therefore, Israel stood here, where he restrained his step, lest he should walk any longer in the paths of the Lord: for this reason he will not overtake them on account of the battle of Gabaa, or of captivity, as they themselves suppose; for it was well done by them to pursue the sons of iniquity there; but I will rebuke them, saith the Lord, and will instruct them with the whole desire of my heart, and will gather together against them the multitude of peoples, because they have done two iniquities: they have avenged man, and neglected the injury done to their God. Either two iniquities: firstly, they sinned in Micah's idols, secondly, in Jeroboam's calves. Or certainly two calves of Samaria in Dan and Bethel, we can call two iniquities, about which also Jeremiah speaks: "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns

for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:13). These two iniquities went against two precepts of the Decalogue, in which it is said: "I am the Lord your God: you shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:2-3). The Septuagint interpreted "Gabaah, hills" as: In the days of the hills, Israel sinned, when it deserted the mountains of the Church and went down to the hills or cliffs of the heretics, thinking itself more learned than the Church and having discovered something more sublime. "There they stood," that is, they persevered in error. Some interpret what follows, "He will not apprehend them in the hill battle," in this way: because they begot children of iniquity and, departing from the Church, began to be on the hills, when persecution comes, the battle will not apprehend them, since the devil does not want to attack his own. Some say: Since Israel has sinned on the hills, and he stood there and was not able to walk anymore, should he not be caught in the hills from battle? Should not ecclesiastical men fight against him, to destroy them over the sons of iniquity? If they are caught and defeated, they will no longer be able to reproduce. At the same time, the Lord promises that he will rebuke them and that, when they are defeated as masters, their disciples will gather against them, whom they had previously deceived, and see correction for two injustices: because they left the Church, the source of the Lord, and dug broken cisterns for themselves, namely the caves of heretics, which cannot hold water, that is, the doctrine of the Savior and the sacrament of baptism.

10:11

"Ephraim likes to tread his grain, as a trained cow; and I passed over his beauty in the hill and climbed over Ephraim: Judah will plow; Jacob will break up the land for himself." LXX: "Ephraim is a cow" (or "heifer:" for what is called Eglah in Hebrew means both a calf and heifer), so "Ephraim is a trained cow that loves to thresh; but I will come over his beautiful hill; I will set upon Ephraim, and Judah will be silent. Jacob will again be strengthened." This passage, indeed, all that follows in this chapter, is involved in great obscurity. Therefore, both we who strive to explain, and the wise reader who pays attention, so that we may be able to investigate not the truth, which is very difficult, but at least the suspicion of what is probable. Divine language has this custom of expressing truth through allegory and metaphor in history. Therefore, Ephraim is like a cow or a young cow that learned from its youth to tread the area, and to pull iron wheels over heaps of crops, so that chaff could be separated from the grain; and not only did he learn, but began to love excessively what he was taught. And I," he said, "passed over the beauty of its hill. The Hebrew word *Abarthi*, that is, "I passed over," especially when said by God, always signifies wounds and adversity. Finally even the destroyer in Egypt is said to have passed over. Therefore, because Ephraim loves to graze in the area like a cow or calf, "I," he said, "passed over the beauty of its hill," and tamed the swelling necks with a yoke imposed. Why should I mention the yoke of the Law? I myself ascended upon it, and while I was working, Judah, that is, two tribes began to cleave the fields with a plow and recline the earth into furrows. However, carrying the yoke of Ephraim, and tilling, he broke the furrows for Jacob. Here we understand by the distinction of Israel and Judah that there were twelve tribes: they began to break the clods with plows ("Al." harrows), and to break apart the earth so that, softened, it may receive seeds and that, after a short time, fertile crops may sprout. For 'threshing floor' or 'area of contention,' the Septuagint translated, and the sense is: Because Ephraim does not want to receive the yoke of the Law, I will cross over and ascend on the beauty of his hill; for the contentious cow and the lustful labor which she does not want to do. But Judah will plow his own land willingly, because he has the temple

and remains in the Law, so that all twelve tribes will eagerly prepare fields for planting. And what follows alongside the same Septuagint; 'I will place Ephraim on top and Judah will be silenced, Jacob will be strengthened for himself,' the sense here may be: I will impose captivity on Ephraim, who is contentious and does not want to bear the burden of the Law. But I shall momentarily leave Judah and say nothing more about him: whoever keeps my commands as well in Ephraim as in Judah, he shall be strengthened, and shall be called Jacob. According to interpretation, it can be said that Ephraim, who was learned in the law of God, to plough the field of Scripture, and to meditate in it day and night, began to love contention and to cast off the yoke of the Law, and to contend against the ecclesiastics in the subversion of those who hear. Therefore the Lord shall press upon him who raises his head and promises himself great things, either by the yoke or by passing by and treading underfoot, and shall ascend over him, so that he may know that he has the Lord. But Judas, that is, the Ecclesiasticus, will plow, persevering in the work begun. Whether he says, "I will retain Judas," for it is not those who are healthy who require a physician, but those who are ill. (Luke 5) But Jacob, who is interpreted as "supplanter," and daily supplants vices and sins, and receives his brother's birthright, and is heir to his father's possession, and sleeps in Bethel, which is interpreted as "house of God," will break up furrows and clods, so that the soft soil may receive the thrown seed, and make one hundred measures of barley, or, as it is held in Hebrew, a hundredfold. For it is unbelievable that the patriarch Isaac strove for barley and not wheat. Even today, the holy man Jacob breaks the clods of history and the hardness of letters into parts and divides them spiritually so that they may produce spiritual fruits. Indeed, we read that the Lord Himself did this, that he broke the five loaves of bread from the Law into fragments, which the people could not eat whole, in order to give them to the believers to eat by the hands of the apostles (Luke 9). But he says according to the Septuagint, "Jacob shall be strengthened to himself," showing that he who labors labors for himself, that he may obtain eternal fruits.

10:12

"Sow for yourselves according to righteousness, reap according to the merciful act. Cultivate for yourselves a new crop, but require the time of seeking the Lord when He comes to teach you righteousness. Sow for yourselves according to righteousness, reap the fruit of life. Illuminate yourselves with the light of knowledge, for it is time to seek the Lord until the fruits of righteousness come to you." The translation once begun by the farmers is preserved. Ephraim said that he loved the trained heifer for threshing and had gone up to the mountains to plow Judah and break up Jacob's clods or furrows. Now he advises that they plant for themselves through repentance, and sow in justice, that is, in the Law, and they reap in mercy, that is, in the grace of the Gospel. For there we read, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" (Exod. XXI); but here we read, "But I say to you not to resist evil: but if one strike you on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other" (Matt. V, 39). And when you have sown in justice, and reaped in mercy, then renew for yourself joyful gardens. And give reasons for why they sow, why they reap, and why they renew the joyful gardens. "Time," said Christ, our savior, "to seek the Lord, when he comes, who will teach you righteousness," which you now hope for in the law: "For the end of the law is Christ, to righteousness to everyone who does good" (Rom. X). For what we have said, "measure in the mouth of mercy," the Seventy translated, "reap the fruit of life:" and the Messiah is more fitting for the seed, than the vintage: but the fruit of life itself is the tree of life. And because we have put forth "innovate vobis novale," they have turned it into "illuminate vobis lumen scientiae," so that we

may deserve to have knowledge of the Law from its works and commands, according to what we read in a certain book: "You have desired wisdom: keep the commandments, and the Lord will give it to you" (Ecclus. 1:33). For he who turns commandments into works, sows in justice, and will reap from it the fruits of life. Hence, we read elsewhere: "The commandment of the Lord is a shining light, enlightening the eyes" (Ps. 18:9). And Isaiah said to the Lord: "Your command is a lamp upon my feet." And in another place: "From your precepts I gained understanding" (Psal. 119). Those also, who have separated themselves from the Church, and have falsely taken on the name of Christians, are commanded to repent and receive both the Old and New Testaments: in the Old they sow justice, in the New they reap mercy: and let them illuminate themselves with the light of knowledge, or renew themselves by seeking the Lord, who can teach them true justice, and destroy false teachers from whom they do not learn justice, but iniquity.

10:13

"You harvested impiety and iniquity; you consumed the fruit of lies." LXX: "Why are you silent about his impieties and injustices? You harvested the fruit of deceit." Against my will, I often find myself debating the nuances of the Hebrew language. For we do not merely repeat sentiments in the manner of rhetoricians, we construct words and rouse the admiration of our listeners or readers by means of our declamatory style. Instead, we strive to explain what is obscure, especially to those who are unfamiliar with the language of others. Above the place where we have interpreted, "Judas will till," in Hebrew is read "Jeros" with the first letter being Yod, which the Septuagint, thinking it was the letter Vau, translated as "and I will be silent." Now it is also written as "Arasthem" in Hebrew which we translate as "you plowed;" for this the Septuagint translated, "why are you silent," interpreting similarly to the mistake above, interpreting "silence" instead of "plowing." The meaning of these words is: Over the neck of the calf of the contentions Ephraim, which I love, I have passed the harrow. And I have ascended in order to plow the land of Judah and to break its furrows. Jacob will harrow its land and bring the warmth of the sun. And I warned them to sow in justice, and to reap in mercy, and to make for themselves new fields; and to know that the time for seeking the Lord is when he comes to teach us justice. While I ordered them to receive the fruits of justice and mercy from happy new fields, they plowed impiety, through which they acted impiously against the Lord, abandoning the Creator and worshiping idols, and they harvested iniquity, receiving bad fruit from bad seed, from which they not only made bread of ash, but also deceitful and false, which would deceive the eater with vain hope. "These are heretics who plow with composed speech, and protect or remain silent about impiety: so that impiety might not appear, but piety be believed. Therefore, because they said in their heart, 'there is no God' (Psalm 13), they have become corrupt and abominable, and they have reaped or harvested iniquities. For just as the love of money is the root of all evils (1 Timothy 6): so impiety is the root of all sins and wickedness, which whoever plows or sows will reap iniquities." Therefore, those who plowed iniquity, and reaped sorrow, have eaten the fruit of lies: preaching all the false things to deceive the people, so that they do not seek the true bread, which comes down from heaven: but the bread of lies, which suffocates and kills those who devour it.

10:14-15

"Because you trusted in your ways: tumult shall arise among your people because of the multitude of your strong ones, and all your fortifications shall be laid waste. Just as Salman was devastated

in his own house, he who was judging Baal on the day of the battle, when a mother was dashed upon her children, so has Bethel done to you because of the malice of your wickedness." LXX: "Because you trusted in your chariots, in the multitude of your strength, destruction shall arise in your people, and all your fortified walls shall go away; just as the princes of Salman from the house of Jerobaal on the days of battle, who dashed a mother upon her children, so I will do to you, the house of Israel, because of your malice." Therefore, you have eaten the fruit of lies, and in all your plans, your false hope deceived you. Because you trusted, O Ephraim, in your ways of idolatry: for these are your ways, and in the multitude of your strong ones, you do not have hope in God, but in the strength of armies. Therefore there shall arise a tumult among thy people, which in Hebrew is called Saon, that is, the "sound" and "roaring" of an howling army; whereby, with their cry, all thy fortifications shall be laid waste, and those things which thou didst esteem as defenced and secure, shall be opened to thy enemies, and so shall be wasted, as Salmana, prince of the Midianites, was wasted and broken, who was slain by the house of Jerobaal (Judges 8). Doubtless it signifies Gideon, who, for that he destroyed the temple of Baal, and cut down the grove, could not be revenged, received the surname of Jerobaal, that is, "let Baal revenge himself." As Salmana slew the children before their mothers' faces, so there shall they slay thy sons, O Ephraim, yea, and thou thyself shalt be compelled to be slain. We search where it is written that Salmana killed her mother over her children: we read in the book of Judges, Gideon speaking to the chief of Midian: 'As your sword has made many mothers childless, so will your mother be childless among women.' (Judges 8) Therefore Salmana was devastated by Jerobaal, whom some think was the son of Nabath Jeroboam, who led ten tribes, and was devastated, as is contained in Hebrew, by Arbel, which also means "Jerobaal," but in a shorter and more expressive language: thus has Bethel done to you, O Israel, from the face of your malice, in which you placed a golden calf and worshipped Egyptian gods. For 'Bethel,' which is interpreted as 'house of God,' the LXX translated 'house of Israel,' which is not at all in Hebrew. We have somehow escaped from the shattered places: now, sailing towards the open sea of metaphor, let us cross over. 'Because thou hast trusted,' O Ephraim, 'in thy ways,' or 'in thy chariots,' of which it is written: 'Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God' (Ps. XIX, 8): and thou hast trusted in the multitude of thy heroes, whom thou hast strengthened with false knowledge: therefore there shall arise tumult and noise among thy people. For whatever the heretics speak, they do not have a voice explaining opinions, but rather turmoil, shouting, and noise. "And all your fortifications," whether walled or not, "will be destroyed" (for they are fortified and built not by the testimonies of the Scriptures, but by dialectical art and arguments of philosophers) "as Salmana was devastated" by Gideon, with the mother killed above her sons. The eighty-second psalm mentions the story, where among other leaders, it recalls that Salmana was also among the Midianites, saying, "Do to them, Lord," without a doubt, he means those who entered into a pact or covenant against the Lord, "as to Midian and Sisara" (Ps. 82: 12-13). And furthermore: 'Put their leaders like Oreb and Zeb, and Sebee, and Salmana, all their leaders who said, 'We possess the sanctuary of God as our inheritance.' And in this very psalm, the leaders of the heretics are described, who tried to claim the altar of God for themselves. And what follows: 'Just as he did for you, Bethel, because of the malice of your wickedness,' is properly adapted to the leaders of the heretics, because he did that to them which he did to Bethel, which they call Bethel, that is, 'House of God,' and a false Church; so that it must be understood thus: Thus shall your Church, which you call the House of God, be done to you. It must be otherwise called

Bethaven by you, that is, 'House of idol,' because of the multitude of your malice.

11:1-2

"Just as the morning passes, the king of Israel passes away: for Israel is a boy, and I have loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt: they called them: so they went from their presence: they sacrificed to Baalim, and offered sacrifices to idols." LXX: "They have cast off the morning, the king of Israel has been cast off, because Israel is a little one, and I have loved him, and have called his sons out of Egypt. As I called them, so they went away from my face: they immolated to Baalim, and burnt incense to idols." He explains the same idea in different ways. As he previously said: "He made his king pass over Samaria like foam on the surface of the water", because foam and bubbles that float on the surface of water rapidly dissolve; now he puts the same thing in another comparison. Just as the dawn and the beginning of the day, which is called morning, quickly passes between the night and the vicinity of the sun; so that the night is finished and daybreak comes: so the king of Israel, that is, of the ten tribes, will pass quickly. And He explains the benefits that God had conferred upon himself. He says: "While I was still a young boy and a captive in Egypt, I loved him so much that I sent my servant Moses to call my Son out of Egypt, of whom I spoke in another place, 'My firstborn Son, Israel' (Exodus IV). And because Israel is singularly spoken of, but understood in a plural sense, like both the people and Ephraim and Judah: since there are many in number who are included in this number, an old history recalls that He had called them through Moses and Aaron, who had called them to leave Egypt: but those who were called by them left them, turning their backs on them and indicating by bodily gesture the stubbornness of their minds. Nor was it enough for them to despise those who called upon them unless they sacrificed to Baal and their idols, or offered incense to their images. We read that Baal was first worshipped under Achab, king of Israel, who took as his wife the daughter of the king of Sidon, and transferred the idol of Babylon and the Phoenicians to Samaria. Thus, he combines sins separated by time into one discourse: how they were first called from Egypt and named sons, then withdrew from God in the wilderness, worshipping Beelphegor more than God, and afterwards served Baalim and Astaroth, and other idols in the holy land. And we understand heretics passing by like the dawn, and their king as the devil or heresiarch, whom in infancy (when they believed in the Church, and were little ones, and were considered in Christ's name) God loved, and called them out of the tribulation and darkness of Egypt. He called through the apostles and teachers of the Church. But when they were called by my leaders, they turned away from them, and worshiped Beelphegor, that is, they served their vices and lust, and afterwards sacrificed to Baalim and idols, which they had fashioned for themselves. For each heretic has his own gods, and they worship whatever they have made as if it were an idol or a statue. As for what we have said, "Out of Egypt I have called my Son" (Matth. II), the Septuagint translated it to "Out of Egypt I have called his sons," which is not in the Hebrew; there is no doubt that Matthew took this testimony according to the Hebrew truth. Therefore, those who disparage our translation should provide Scripture from which the Evangelist took this testimony, and it should be interpreted in the Lord and Savior, when he was brought back from Egypt to the land of Israel. And when they cannot find (it), they cease to ask respectfully, arch their eyebrow, curl their nostrils, and snap their fingers. Julian Augustus vomited (slanders) against us Christians in this place, in the seventh volume, and says: that which is written of Israel, Matthew the evangelist translated to Christ, in order to mock the simplicity of those who believed from the nations. We will respond to

this briefly: Firstly, that Matthew published the Gospel in Hebrew letters, which the Hebrews alone could read. Therefore, he did not do it to mock the Gentiles. But if he wanted to mock the Hebrews, he was either foolish or ignorant: foolish, if he concocted an obvious falsehood; ignorant, if he did not understand what he was saying. The work itself excuses any foolishness, since it is prudently and carefully arranged; we cannot call him ignorant, since we know from other testimony of the Scriptures that he had knowledge of the Law. It remains for us to say that those things that precede in others typologically are related to Christ according to truth and fulfillment: which we know the Apostle did in the two mountains, Sinai and Zion, and in Sarah and Hagar. For neither is Sinai now, nor is it Zion: neither was it Sara, nor was it Agar; because the Apostle Paul said these things with respect to the two Testaments (Gal. IV). Therefore, what is written: "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a perfect nation: I the Lord will suddenly do this thing in its time," is indeed said of the people of Israel, who are called forth from Egypt, who are loved, who at that time, after the error of idolatrous worship, are called like infants and little ones: but it is also perfectly referred to Christ. For Isaac also was a figure of Christ in that he carried the wood for his own sacrifice (Gen 22); and Jacob, because he had a wife whom he did not love (Leah) and one whom he did (Rachel) (Gen 29). In Leah, the elder sister, we may understand the blindness of the Synagogue; in Rachel's beauty, the glory of the Church. Yet those who in some degree are figures of the Lord's Saviourship, are not in every detail to be believed to have done the same things in a figure. For a type indicates a part: but if the whole precedes in the type, it is no longer a type, but should be called the truth of history. We said this briefly in the Commentaries; now let us return to the rest.

11:3-4

"And I, as a foster father to Ephraim, carried them in my arms, and they did not know that I healed them. I drew them with cords of Adam, with the bonds of love. And I will be to them like one who lifts the yoke from their cheeks, and I inclined to him so he could eat." LXX: "And I gathered" ((or "placed")) Ephraim, I took him up on my arm; and they did not know that I healed them in the corruption of humans. I drew them with the cords of my love. And I will be to them like one who gives slaps on his cheeks, and I will look at him being strong." The Hebrew and the edition of the interpreters differ much from one another. Therefore, let us try to recount the history according to the Hebrews; to write a comprehensive account according to the Septuagint. The one who said above: "I loved the son of Israel, and called him out of Egypt," and later brought to light the crime he had committed, "they were sacrificing to the Baals and to the idols," now tells how Israel was beloved through as per Deuteronomy: "The Lord your God has carried you, as a man carries his little son, in all the ways that you have gone," "until you came to this place" (Deut. I, 31). And in another place: "He spread his wings and took him, and carried him on his shoulders" (Ibid. XXXII, 11). I, he said, who was a father, became a nurse, and I carried my little one in my arms, so that he would not be harmed in the wilderness, and so that he would not be frightened by either heat or darkness. In the day I was a cloud, in the night a pillar of fire (Exod. XIII): so that those who I had protected, I might enlighten and heal them with my light. And when they had sinned and had made themselves a calf's head, I gave them a place for repentance, and they did not know that I cured them, and for the space of forty years, I covered the wound of idolatry and restored them to their former health. But I cared for them because of the cords and bands of charity, with which I bound them as if with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Indeed, Aquilae, Symmachus, Septuagint, and

Theodotio translated "Adam" as "men": so they would say, "I will draw them in the cords of men, in the bands of charity." And what follows: "I will be to them as one lifting up the yoke," for which Symmachus interpreted: "and they thought that I would put a yoke on their jaw," is understood in two ways: either I took away from them the yoke of all the nations round about, or they thought that my Law was like the heaviest weight of a yoke. And I gave them manna to eat in the desert (Exodus 16), that they might eat, for this is what he says, "I have turned to him to be fed:" for which Symmachus interpreted, "and I have turned to him with food." Not that God turned to him, but that he made the food of manna turn to him. Otherwise: I loved them so much and was such a merciful shepherd, that I myself carried the sick sheep on my shoulders (Luke 15): but they themselves did not know that I cared for them with my passion; and as I am a lover of all people, I drew them to believe in the bonds of love, according to what is written in the Gospel: "No one comes to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44). And they thought my yoke light, to be very heavy: and I turned to them forsaking the kingdom of heaven, to eat with them, assuming the form of a man, or gave them food of my body: both the food and the guest. Let us go to spiritual understanding, according to the Septuagint only interpreters: lest if we want to explain both according to history and according to interpretation, we tend to the size of the book. When they sacrifice Baalim, things they have made from their own hearts, and when they flee from my face at my call (for thus it is contained in the Septuagint), I, the most merciful Lord, bound the feet of Ephraim so that they would not flee further from me: this is what συνέπεδισα means. But I bound (them) by the testimonies of the Scriptures, and by the discussion of the teachers of the Church, so that by patience it would hold bound with its arms those who did not understand that God's patience was an opportunity for their salvation. Hence, in the corruption of men, namely, of teachers, who had deceived them bound by the coldness of their treachery, I extended the warmth of faith and, as it were, binding those who resisted, I bound them with the bonds of my love. And because they did not run according to their own will, but were dragged by ropes, I slightly struck their cheeks with slaps, not punishing them, but correcting and improving. "The judge tears flesh, twists with ropes, and tortures with whips and fire. But a father, he who is, strikes the wanton son with the palm of his hand. And he did not say beautifully, 'I will beat them with slaps,' but striking the cheeks with his hand like a man. But God strikes errant sons with the threat of punishments, with the reading of the Gospel, and with the testimony of the prophets. And when he strikes thus on the cheek, that he may drive out from the foul mouth of heretics their bread and doctrine: then he looks at him, his son having been beaten, saying to him, 'Look at me, and have mercy on me.'" (Psalm LXXXV,16) And again: "Look upon me and hear me, O Lord my God" (Psalm XII, 4). And when he has looked upon him, he shall prevail, or be helpful to them, that is, he shall overcome his adversaries, and shall make slaves flee. And he shall give them true and sweet food, who before devoured the lies and most bitter food of heretics.

11:5-7

"It won't return to the land of Egypt, and Assur himself" (The Vulgate adds "is") "its king, because they refused to convert. The sword has begun in its cities, and will consume its chosen ones: it will eat their heads, and my people will hang in my return. But a yoke will be imposed on them together, which will not be removed." LXX: "Ephraim will dwell in Egypt, and Assur himself will be its king: because he did not want to convert. And the sword grew weak in its cities, and rested in his hands, and they will eat of his thoughts: and his people is suspended from their sojourn, and

God is angry with its treasures, and will not exalt him." When it says: "it won't return to the land of Egypt," it shows that it wants to return, but can't go. But Israel wanted to go back seeking help from the Egyptians; but he was captured by Assyria, who took him, and ruled him with the right of the victor, and he suffered this because he did not want to turn back, nor to repent. Or let us certainly say that he returned to the land of Egypt, when he worshiped the gods of Egypt in the holy land, or it is to be understood in that sense, as has been said above: "They called upon Egypt, they went to the Assyrians." Therefore, the sword began in its cities, whether "it will fall," as Aquila interpreted, or "it will wound," as Symmachus translated. And see how great a weight of miseries it is, so that not only fields or possessions and countryside are devastated; but the enemy enters the very heart of the cities and consumes their chosen ones, or "his arms," as Symmachus interpreted, which in Hebrew is called Baddau. And when the sword has consumed the chosen and the leaders, or the strength of the army, and has devoured either their heads or their counsels, so that they cannot find any aid, then the miserable people who did not want to return to me will wait for my return to them. And he who sows will repent, with enemies laying waste to everything. Therefore, because great sins are to be punished by great punishments, they will impose on those who have been abandoned by their people (with their king and Assyrian princes cut down by the sword) the heaviest yoke of slavery, and they will also impose what will not be taken away according to the letter, unless it is taken away spiritually in Christ. According to the Seventy, Ephraim will dwell in Egypt, saying that he has the holy land and the Church of the Lord Savior; but he has always stayed in Egypt because of vices, sins, and faithlessness. Therefore, as he dwelt in Egypt, his understanding will be great as an Assyrian king: for he will not return to the Church, and having lost his strength, that is, Christ, who is the power and wisdom of God, he was always in weakness, and was subject to all demons and disturbances: for this reason the sword, that is, spiritual knowledge, or the word of the Ecclesiastic man, will always be present in his cities, which he impiously built against the Lord, and the sword will rest in his hands, so that being slain by another, he cannot kill another, nor raise his hand against his adversary. Finally, they receive and consume according to their own plans. But the unhappy people and the uneducated crowd will long for their ancient homeland, and they will realize that they have been captured, and whether they hang in their own dwelling, not knowing what to do and where to turn. But God, above their valuable possessions, namely the gold and silver they received from Him, of which we have often spoken, will be angry, and will by no means free him who fell due to his own fault. This is according to the Septuagint; however, we will adapt the same meaning to the Hebrew.

11:8-9

"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city." LXX: "What shall I do unto thee, Ephraim? shall I protect thee, Israel? what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goes away. Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goes forth. For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." In the place where we and the seventy were interpreters, is it written in Hebrew "Shall I protect you, Israel?" which Aquila rendered into Greek as, "I will surround you with

a shield." When we thought that this might be understood in a favorable sense and might indicate protection, the opposite meaning is suggested by the edition of Symmachus, which has, "I will surrender you." The translation of Theodotion is also unfavorable, but unfavorable in a different way: "I will strip you," he says, "and take away your weapon," that is, "the shield" with which I had previously protected you; and this meaning is more in keeping with the Lord's threatening. Therefore what he says is this: because they did not want to repent, and Assur became their king, the sword will devour cities, princes, and the people, and a yoke will be imposed upon them which will not be taken from them. And because the sentence seemed harsh, leaving them no place for repentance, God, as a concerned parent, now speaks to Israel: "What shall I do for thee, Ephraim?" How shall I strip thee by my help? What shall I do for thee? By what means shall I correct thee? By what remedy can I heal you? Like Admah and Zeboiim I will make you, which are two of the five cities, just as we read in Genesis: 'Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim and Bela, which is called Segor,' and in the Syrian language 'Zoar.' Therefore, I will make you and turn you into a desert, and I will wipe you out until you become ashes and dust, just as I wiped out Admah and Zeboiim. And when a harsh, indeed cruel, sentence had been pronounced, the father is again overcome by his affection for his child, and with his kindness he moderates the severity of his judgement. For he says, "My heart is turned within me; all my sorrow is stirred up." As soon as I spoke, there was something in my heart that moved me to mercy; I will not execute the fierceness of my wrath; I will not destroy Ephraim again: for I am God, and not man; and I will not consume them in my indignation: but I will instruct them, by opening their eyes to their iniquity. My cruelty is the opportunity for penance and piety: "I am God, not a man." Man punishes in order to destroy, God corrects in order to improve. "I am holy in your midst and will not enter the city," meaning, I am not one of those who dwell in cities, who live by human laws, who consider cruelty to be justice, for whom the highest law is the greatest malice; but my law, and my justice, is to save those who are corrected. We can also say: because first Cain, a parricide, built a city in the name of his son Enoch, the Lord does not enter such a city, which is made of wickedness, blood, and parricide. However, if we want to read, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel?", it should be understood: What shall I do with you? Are you worthy of protection, for you have done so much? Note also that when it is said against Judah, that is, the people of God, it is not Admah and Zeboiim that are mentioned but Sodom and Gomorrah. For we read in Isaiah: "Hear the law of God, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the word of the Lord, you people of Gomorrah" (Isai. I, 10). Likewise, in the Gospel, the city that did not receive the apostles, when they shook the dust from their feet, is said to be worse off on the day of judgment than the land of Sodom and Gomorrah (Matt. X). And the prophetic word is also directed at Jerusalem: "Sodom has been justified by your example" (Ezek. XVI). Therefore, suspicion is given to us that Sodom and Gomorrah were leaders in sin, and Adama and Seboim followed their examples, that the powerful suffer powerful torments: and that servant who knows the will of his Lord, and does not do it, shall be beaten with many [stripes]. Hence even the learned men of Ecclesiasticus, if they are involved in the same crimes as heretics, will be subject not to the punishments of Adama and Seboim, which are inferior but to those of Sodom and Gomorrah, which are said to be greater crimes. To heretics also and those deceived by them, the Lord speaks to the people, that unless they repent, they will be put like Adama and Seboim, so that they have no hope of salvation. Again, as a most merciful father, he says he will change his own decision and repent of having spoken such things, so that he may also provoke them to conversion and penance. 'I will not

make,' he said, 'in my fury, I will not destroy Ephraim. As much as it is in me, as much as I desire, if he corrects error with truth, if he loves me more than the leaders of heresy, for 'I am God and not man,' I will extend my hand to the fallen, and call the wandering towards salvation. And because I am holy, I will not enter a city, that is, the assemblies and cities of heretics. I willingly receive those who leave their cities, but I will not enter their cities. What he said, "I will not enter the city," and, according to the LXX, is followed by, "I will walk after the Lord," some have interpreted as meaning that the people responded to the Lord, and that the sense is: Because your heart has turned to you, and you have not made us according to our sins; but you imitate your clemency, and do not punish our sins, and you promise to be holy and merciful and to dwell among us; therefore, I will not enter the city of evil men: nor will I be among the number of sinners; but I will walk after the Lord my God. But the Hebrews, from the person of God, have thus spoken: I will not abandon you, I will not go to another people, nor enter another city.

11:10-11

"After the Lord they shall walk: He shall roar like a lion: for He shall roar, and the children of the sea shall fear, and shall fly away like a bird out of Egypt, and like a dove out of the land of the Assyrians: and I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord." LXX: "After the Lord I will walk; he will roar like a lion, because he will roar, and the sons of water will be afraid and fly like birds from Egypt, and like a dove from the land of the Assyrians, and I will place them in their houses, says the Lord." With the Lord promising success, the people will turn to Him: and they shall walk after the Lord, for the Lord shall roar like a lion. Of which also the prophet Amos recalls: 'The Lord will roar from Zion, and from Jerusalem He shall give His voice' (Amos 1:2). And He will roar when He says: 'I will make you like Sodom.' And when He roars, then the sons of the sea, or of the waters, will tremble, as the LXX translated. For the word Maim, which is written with three letters Mem, Yod, Mem: if it is read Maim, it means 'waters'; if Mejam, it is understood as 'from the sea.' The Hebrews refer these things to the coming of Christ, whom they hope will come. "We have now become convinced that from Egypt and Assyria, that is, from the East and the West, and from the North and the South, those who recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have come, and come daily (Matthew 8). However, we can call the sons of the sea or the waters those who have been caught in the Lord's dragnet and taken from the sea of this world (Matthew 13:47). And when they have been taken from death to life, they will be placed in their own houses, which the Gospel calls granaries, in which selected and separated wheat is stored." (Matthew 13) It is said that it is the nature of lions that when they roar and roar, all animals tremble, and they cannot move with fixed steps: such is the terror and so great the fear. And so, when the Lord roars like a lion, and thunders, and gives his voice, all the birds and all flying things will tremble: and they will go to their nests, that is, to their homes where the Lord will dwell with them. Let us also say this differently: When a true lion roars, the false lion, who is our adversary according to the Apostle Peter, will immediately be silent, and he will not be able to open his perverse mouth to any doctrine: and those who were previously captured by him, loosened by the roar of the lion and terrible threats, will follow their Lord God. Then the sons of the sea or waters will fear, who were born in bitterness and salty waters of heretics; and having taken wings, they will fly like birds from Egypt and like doves from Assyrian land, and will say: "Who will give me wings like doves, and I will fly and rest"(Ps. LIV, 7)? So those who had labored among the heretics may rest in the Church and dwell in their homes from which they were seduced by error. Egypt, that is, we know as "trouble" and

"distress"; likewise, concerning Assyrians, we recognize as "leaders" or, as we think better, "accusers." Therefore, heretics will be freed from them when they start living in their own homes and say to their wicked parents, "Your house will be left empty to you" (Matt. 23).

11:12

"Ephraim surrounded me with his falsehood, and the house of Israel and Judah with his deceitfulness. But now God has perceived them, and they will be called people of God's sanctuary." The Hebrews tell a story of this kind: In the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, when on one side there was a mountain, on the other the Red Sea, and Pharaoh's army surrounded them, and the trapped people were held, the other tribes despairing of salvation and either wishing to return to Egypt or wanting to fight, only Judah faithfully entered the sea. Hence, he deserved to receive the kingdom and this is what is now called "Juda testis sermonum Dei," and an approver and defender he descended with God into the sea, and among the saints he was the most faithful, that he might believe the words of God's command. They say this to him. Let us follow the order of the explanation undertaken, which surrounded Ephraim, the royal tribe, and the house of Israel, the people who served the royal tribes, and surrounded him in denial or falsehood, while they denied the Lord and confessed idols. But Judah, that is, the two tribes which had the Temple, the Law, the Prophets, and kept the legal precepts, were witnesses, and walked faithfully with God and with the holy ones. We can say the saints or the angels, the patriarchs and prophets, and others who served God's command. For in comparison to that time when these things were being said, Ephraim had completely gone astray and Israel had been deceived into the worship of idols; only Judah remained, who was engaged in the worship of God and his testimonies, and was able to go down with him, or be strong with strength: for "root" signifies both descent and strength, for which reason Aquila translated the term as "dominion." Heretics surround the Lord with falsehood, even with denial, according to their deduction. Whatever they say, it is a denial, rather a lie: and they surround Him in deceit or in the impiety of the house of Israel; while all things they pretend, they compose with an artful speech and speak impiety against the Lord. But Judas, that is, the ecclesiastical man, does not boast, he is not inflated with heretical pride, but he humbles himself with God, and with the faithful and strong choir of the saints he builds his house upon a rock which is shaken by no storm. (Matt.) They translated the Septuagint much differently: Ephraim and the house of Israel and Judah had surrounded God with lies and impiety, and God's mercy is so great that he does not cut off hope of salvation from them. But he recognizes them and is prepared to call the holy people and the people of God, who are now corrupted by impiety. Similarly, God desires heretics to be saved, and sinners in the church, and that all may be called by his name. "But he who is truly holy, does not surround God with a lie, but with truth, as the psalmist says: 'You are powerful, Lord, and your truth surrounds you'" (Psalm 88:9).

12:1

"Ephraim feeds on the wind and follows after the east wind: all day long he multiplies lies and desolation. And he made a covenant with the Assyrians and brought oil into Egypt." LXX: "But Ephraim is a spirit of wickedness, following the heat: all the day long he hath multiplied lies and vanities, and he hath made a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil he carried into Egypt." The sacred story tells that Manahen, king of Israel, after making peace with the Assyrians, sought aid from the Egyptians (2 Kings 15), and this is what is now said, that Ephraim feeds the winds, that is,

deceives himself with vain hope, follows the oppressive heat, that is, "summer," and goes to the South, and does nothing else all day but deceive himself. And while he runs here and there, he prepares destruction and devastation for his cities. Is it not destruction and deceit to make a covenant with the Assyrians and to carry oil into Egypt? By connivance, indeed, the whole thing was arranged, to send gifts to the Egyptians. Although some believe that oil is not produced in Egypt at all; but it was sent as a precious gift from Ephraim, whose land of Samaria is very fruitful in oil. Moreover, according to tropology, all heretics are held by the worst spirit of demons, about which it is written in the Apostle: "Against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephes. VI, 10). "And when an unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first." (Luke 11:24-26) Therefore, the worst spirit is followed by a desert wind, that is, a "scorching wind" or "burning wind," which destroys everything that is flowering and germinating. It pursues emptiness and vanity throughout the entire day, is not content with its own error but multiplies many disciples, indeed companions of its own emptiness and error. He also makes a covenant with Assyrians, whose prince is great sense, that whatever he may have devised, he might appear to have devised it wisely, that wisdom which was destroyed by God, which even the Apostle commands to be avoided, saying: "Beware lest any man shall cheat you by philosophy and vain seduction, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world" (Col. II, 8). But he also brings oil to Egypt, or he trades in the wisdom of Egypt, desiring to mix with ecclesiastical dogmas the oil of anointing with which prophets and priests were anointed, with which even kings were anointed. They have this oil too, who are called saints, of whom it is said: "Your sons are like new olive trees around your table" (Ps. 127: 4). And the good olive tree in which our olive branch is inserted. Although heretics try to mix lies with the truth, oil cannot be coupled with waters and other moist and liquid substances. The truth is always above, and the lie is below. All other forms, that is, heresies, which do not have, as we have said, the oil of truth, can be mixed with themselves, and numerous ones can be made into one body. But the oil that is brought into Egypt, and descends from the holy land to Pharaoh's realms, is detested by the prophet, saying: "The oil of the sinner will not anoint my head" (Ps. 140:5).

12:2-6

The judgment therefore of the Lord with Judah: and a visitation upon Jacob. He will render to him according to his ways, and according to his inventions he will recompense him. In the womb he supplanted his brother: and in his strength he had success with the angel, and he prevailed over the angel, and was strengthened: he wept and made supplication to him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spoke with us. And the Lord God of hosts, the Lord is his memorial, therefore turn to thy God, keep mercy and judgment, and hope in thy God always. And the judgment of the Lord with Judah, that he may revenge Jacob, and his ways according to his inventions will render unto him. In the womb he supplanted his brother, and by his strength he had success with God, and he had power with the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication to him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spoke with him. And the Lord of hosts will be his memorial, and thou Israel shalt be turned to thy God, keep mercy and judgment, and approach thy God always. Ephraim feedeth on the wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily multiplieth lies and desolation: and

they have made a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt. Now all their wickedness is in Gilgal, for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their practices I will cast them forth out of my house: I will love them no more, all their princes are revolvers. However, he calls visitation scourges and punishments, so that he who has restored Ephraim, what he deserved, may also restore Judah, who is also of the seed of Jacob, according to its ways and inventions, who has not only been deceived by chance error, and fell by human frailty; but he sought and found in what he should sin and fall. However, he tells how much good Judah, that is, Jacob, has received, and the son is named in the father, and the ancient history is remembered, so that the mercy of God towards Jacob and his hardness against the Lord may also be known. While he was still in Rebecca's womb, he supplanted his brother Esau (Gen. 25), not by his own strength, which he could not feel, but by the mercy of God, who knows and loves those whom he has predestined. And he did not only supplant his brother in the womb; but he also wrestled with an angel in his strength, when he fought against the angel all night by the stream (Gen. 32). And because he wrestled with the angel, he received the name Isar, which in Hebrew means "directed" or "straightest". And he prevailed," he said, "against the angel; and by his blessing, whom he had conquered, he was strengthened. He also wept, and asked him, that is, the angel, saying: "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." And when he fled to Mesopotamia by the counsel of his father and mother, the same angel found him in Bethel, who spoke to him, spoke with us, that is, spoke in the father and with the sons, and loved Jacob and Judas: from that time until the present, his name, which was given to him by the angel and by God, endures in memory. When things are this way, and you, O Judas, imitate your parent, mourn and plead with the Lord of hosts, and turn to Him. Keep both mercy and judgment, and when you have done this, always hope in your God, making progress by good deeds. On account of what is in Hebrew, "he wept and begged him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spoke with us," we read in the Vulgate edition: "they wept and begged me, being in" a "house they found me, and there it was" said "to them;" "a" is interpreted as "pain." So, if anyone weeps, and does penance, and implores the Lord, they will find him in the pain of their heart, and when they call upon him, they will hear him respond to them. We can understand the Ecclesiastical (Jewish) man who is rebuked by the Lord because he does not remember his previous benefits but rather sins daily, and he reveals what those benefits are: "When you were born in the faith, the Church gave birth to you and you supplanted your Jewish or Gentile brother and received his birthright, and in your strength you were directed with the angel, either conquering opposing strengths or strengthened by the blessings of the angel who is God, and you prevailed in the image against an angel so that you could prevail against men, and you were strengthened". And when you had achieved victory, you wept, and you begged the angel of the Lord, and remembering the sins of old, you found him in Bethel, that is, in the house of God, which is the Church, or in his own house, of pain and tears and penitence. And we know who this Judas was, there, he said, he spoke with us, that is, with us Christians, and from that time until the present day, we are known by the name of Christ and are corrected by him. So, Ecclesiastical man, who is called Judas, and confesses, turn daily through penance to your Lord, and if by chance you have sinned, imitate the prophet saying: "I have labored in my groaning, every night I will wash my bed; I will water my couch with my tears" (Ps. 6:7). Let it be enough to have said this, but keep the commandments of God, show mercy to others, so that you may also obtain mercy. Judge with true judgment, so that in whatever you judge, you may be judged. And always hope in your God, whether you draw near to your God constantly, so that at every time, making progress

in virtue, you draw near to your God.

12:7-8

"Canaan in his hand deceitful balance, he loved calumny, and Ephraim said: Nevertheless, I have become rich, I have found myself an idol, all my labors will not find me the iniquity which I have sinned." LXX: "Canaan in his hand is the weight of iniquity, he loved to oppress through power, and Ephraim said: But I have become rich, I have found rest for myself, all his labors will not find him, for the iniquities in which he sinned." Judah had been warned to turn to the Lord his God, to keep mercy and judgment, and to hope in the Lord always, whether he approached him constantly. Now the discourse is turned to Ephraim, that is, to the ten tribes, which he calls Canaan, according to what Daniel speaks to the elder who was certainly of the seed of Judah: 'The seed of Canaan and not of Judah has deceived thee.' And in Ezekiel we read that it is said to Jerusalem: 'Thy father was an Amorite and thy mother a Hethite.' And in Isaiah it is said to the tribe of Judah: 'Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.' In the last verse of Zechariah we read: "And there shall be no more Canaanite in the house of the Lord" ((or "in the city")) (Zech. XIV, 21). But the Scripture says that Canaan, that is Ephraim, holds a deceitful or unjust balance in his hand, commanding, "Thou shalt have Just balances" (Leviticus XIX); not only does he have an unjust and deceitful balance, but he loves calumny and oppresses men by his power. And in case we might think Canaan referred to someone else, the Scripture more clearly shows who this Canaan is. Ephraim said: "Nevertheless, I have become rich;" and the meaning is: It does not matter where I possess, as long as I possess. Many suffer from this disease, about which it is written: "Wealth gathered unjustly will be vomited up again" (Job 20:15) "For the ransom of a life is costly, no payment is ever enough" (Proverbs 13:8). Hence we are commanded to make friends for ourselves with wicked mammon, who can receive us into eternal dwellings (Luke 16:9). But Ephraim, who boasts and says, "Nevertheless, I have become rich, I have found myself an idol," or, "useless," that is, Aven, which will not profit the possessor, has sweated in vain labor. But just as the gluttonous and luxurious belly is a god, so the greedy person worships the idol of gold, and says in his heart: 'I have found what I was looking for' but he will hear: 'You fool, this night your soul will be required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' (Luke 12:20). And when his eyes have once been blinded - not to speak of a brightness, but a blindness - by the wealth, he says: 'All my work will not find my iniquity, in which I have sinned.' And the sense is: whatever I may have sinned, if I have had wealth from those who need my help, it cannot be imputed to me, according to what is written: 'And he who behaves badly is blessed' (Ps. IX): For there are many friends of the rich. Therefore, this also refers to heretics themselves. "Canaan" can in fact be interpreted as "those who move." And note that he said, "as if moving" ((Al. "moving")), not "moving." They are moving, those whom they have deceived, as if moving, those whom they have tempted. But because they are founded on the rock (Matth. VII), they cannot be shaken by any storm, nor can they change the course of their feet. In the hand of this kind of Canaan, that is, in his works, the deceitful and unjust balance is; for whatever the heretic speaks, he does not have the justice of God, and is full of deceit and fraud; therefore, they love slander when they depress the innocent or oppress them by force. The poor cleric is overwhelmed by verbosity and clever arguments of heretics, who having deceived some people, often say: 'We have become rich, we have a large following; a crowd of disciples follows us; we have found an idol or a source of refreshment for ourselves.' For this reason,

especially, heresies are formed, to consume the homes of widows who are always learning, but never coming to the knowledge of truth (2 Timothy 3). And fittingly, he says, 'I have found an idol for myself.' For all the inventions of heretics are nothing but idols and images of the heathen: and they differ little in impiety, though seeming to differ in name. And they are accustomed to say that whatever I do, whatever I accomplish, cannot be imputed to me: for I have my riches, the teachings of the philosophers; I have the multitude of the people, who whoever looks upon me will not consider me to be at fault.

12:9-10

"And I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt; I will make you dwell in tabernacles as in the days of the feast. And I spoke to the prophets, and I multiplied visions, and by the hand of the prophets I was likened." LXX: "But I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt; I will still make you dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of solemnity, and I will speak to the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and by the hands of the prophets I am likened." You have indeed sinned so greatly, that you rejoiced in wickedness, and thought a multitude of sins to be riches, and said: I have become rich, I have found an idol for myself: all my labors will not be able to find my sins. But I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt (Exod. V), when thou didst serve Pharaoh and was making cities of clay and palaces, yet I give you a place of penitence and by the greatness of my promises I urge you to return to me, and yet I will cause you to dwell in tabernacles as in the days of the festival. The day of the festival is called 'Scenopegia,' the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when the children of Israel came out of Egypt. As, he said, at that time I freed you from Egypt and you lived in tabernacles on your way to the holy land and hastened to go to the place of the temple, so also now I will lead you out of tribulation and distress and impending captivity, if you do what I have commanded. For I am the one who, through all the prophets and various forms of visions, has been likened to human beings, and I have challenged you to repent. Is it not of a human likeness when Moses, lifting his hands on high, prays for Jesus to vanquish Amalec (Exod. XVII), and the sacraments of the cross are shown in him? Isn't God likened to the hands of the prophets, since Jonah is in the depths for three days and nights to signify the Lord's resurrection from the underworld on the third day? However, we read multiplied visions in all the prophets, when Ezekiel sees the Lord sitting as a charioteer above the Cherubim (Ezek. 17). And Isaiah says, "I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne and elevated, and two Seraphim around him crying out to each other holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Sabaoth" (Isai. 6:1,2). And Habakkuk stood upon his watch-tower (or "cell"), and behold he beheld Christ's horns in his hands, wherein his strength lay hidden (Hab 3). Hence the Psalmist cries out: "I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me" (Psalms 84:9). But in order that we may know that every prophecy in Holy Writ is called a vision, "And all the people saw the voice of the Lord" (Ex 20:18): wherefore also the prophets were called seers. To those also who have been led astray by heretics, it is said that they should return to the Lord, who prefers the repentance of a sinner to their death (Ezekiel 18); for it is he who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that is, out of the darkness and error of the Gentiles. And that they may not be slow to return, mindful of their sins: "I will still cause you to dwell in tabernacles," he says, "as in the days of the festival"; that what baptism effects, penance may effect also, and they may dwell in the tabernacles of the Saviour, that is, in the churches, of which it is said: "Planted in the house of the Lord, they shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God" (Ps. xcii. 14). And lest the heresiarchs and leaders of error

should be able to say that God did not speak through them, he said: 'I am the one who spoke to the prophets, not to your teachers, and I have multiplied visions and have been portrayed by my prophets who are established in the Church.'

12:11

"If Galahad was an idol, then they were sacrificing their cattle in vain at Galgal; for even their altars were like heaps on the furrows of the field." LXX: "If it is not Galahad, then the princes sacrificing at Galgala were false, and their altars were like tortoises on the desert of the field." Because we have translated "bobus," which is called Surim in Hebrew, the LXX translated it as "princes," which are called Sarim, being deceived by the similarity and ambiguity of the word. Again when we placed ourselves, 'acervos,' which in Hebrew are called Gallim and properly signify 'θ■vας,' that is, tumps gathered from sand, which are mostly increased or decreased in the desert and on the shores where the wind blows, the 70 translators translated to "testudines" (turtles): for which Symmachus interpreted "piles of stones": Theodotio "hills." And truly if you look at θ■vας, they have a similarity to the great tortoises in a desert field, or on the banks and shores slightly prominent from the ground. Therefore, what He says, "if in Gilead," about which it is written, "Gilead is a city of idolaters, overturned with blood," false gods and perverse religion, and it is across the Jordan where two tribes live, Reuben and Gad, and half a tribe of Manasseh, therefore even Galgal of which we read in this same prophet: "All their malice is in Galgal, which is behind Bethaven;" whoever worships idols does not sacrifice to gods but offers sacrifices to cattle, imitating the error of Samaria. For at the time when these things were prophesied, Galaad was in the kingdom of the ten tribes; and Galgal, under the rule of the two tribes which were called Juda. Therefore, both the ten tribes and the two, deceived by equal idolatrous error, and their altars gathered from stones, or from sands, like heaps and hills. And when both of them have been brought into captivity, the former altars of theirs will have the similarity of tortoise shells or hills without cultivators. Because truly "Galaad" is interpreted as "a translation of testimony," and "Galgal, of rolling things," we can say this, that the leaders of the heretics transfer the testimonies of truth into lies, and whatever they worship is an idol, and their sacrifices are similar to heaps of stones or turtles. For just as θ■vας and heaps are gathered from stones and sand here and there, so too heretics compose idols from worldly wisdom and the cleverness of men, with fraud and lies. And when they have done this, they move slowly in one place and cannot occupy the whole world. The slow and burdened tortoise, crushed by its own weight, not so much walks as it moves, signifying the most serious sins of heretics who sacrifice themselves in the mire and mud of their errors, worshipping the works of their hands and working hard for earthly fruits like oxen.

12:12-13

Jacob fled into the region of Syria and served for Israel in his wife, and he kept watch over his wife. In the prophet, the Lord led Israel out of Egypt, and in the prophet, he was saved. The seventy interpreters [translators] say: And Jacob went into the plain of Syria and served for Israel in his wife, and he kept watch over his wife, and in the prophet, the Lord led Israel out of Egypt, and in the prophet, he was saved. It seems that arbitrarily and without order or reason the narrative of Genesis concerning Jacob was inserted here after the idol of Gilead and Galgal and the altars similar to heaps of stones, but this is immediately solved by the one who remembers having read about Jacob previously: "He supplanted his brother in the womb, and he was upright with his angel

in his strength, and was able with the angel he struggled with and was strengthened, he wept and implored him, he found him in Bethel and spoke with us." This Jacob, therefore, was comforted by an angel not in vain, but because he wrestled all night and conquered his adversary, so he learned not to fear his brother, from whom he fled to Syria to his uncle Laban (Genesis 27), and he served for Rachel his wife seven years, and preserved his father-in-law Laban's sheep for the same amount of years. And since once Jacob named Israel, he has united father and his sons, and remembers the following history, when the Lord led Israel out of Egypt through the prophet Moses, and the twelve tribes which have come from Israel were saved. He will not be mistaken who says that the supplanter of Jacob and Israel, who sees God, prefigures the Lord, and that Rachel, at first barren and whom Jacob loved very much, signifies the Church; Leah, however, with bleary eyes and fruitful, shows the mysteries of the Synagogue, and that he himself has led the people of believers out of the darkness of this age, and that he has come to the sweetest waters of the Jordan, that is, the streams of baptism.

12:14

"Ephraim has provoked me to anger with his bitter words; his blood will be on him, and his Lord will repay him for his contempt." Likewise Septuagint. Therefore when I had so helped Ephraim that I had led the naked, the exiled and the lonely to a rich and a masterful Lord, and had made him the parent of many sons, Ephraim deserted me, indeed provoked me to anger: and with his bitterness made bitter what was sweet. Whence his blood will come upon him, that is, he will be the cause of his own death, according to what David says to him who reported to him the death of Saul, and remembered that he had killed the king of Israel: "Your blood be upon your own head" (2 Kings 1:16). Not my opinion, but the blood of Saul (i.e. "A" for Saul) will be spilled because of your blood. And what follows: "And the Lord will restore his reproach to him," is consistent with the meaning spoken by Nathan to David: "Because you have blasphemed the enemies of the Lord's name, because of this" (1 Kings 12), that is, because of this sin in which you killed Uriah, the blasphemy and reproach itself, by which the Lord was blasphemed, will be turned on your head. Always heretics provoke the merciful Lord to anger, and they who prefer the repentance of the sinner to death, force to punish the hardness of their own hearts, and their blood, with which they have shed both their own and that of many, will come upon their heads, and the reproaches with which they blasphemed the Lord, their Lord will restore to them, not because He is their Lord, but because He was once their Lord.

13:1-2

"While Ephraim was speaking, horror invaded Israel, and he sinned in Baal and died, and now they have added more sins. They made an idol for themselves from their silver, resembling the idols made by craftsmen. They say of them, "Let them sacrifice humans and adore calves." LXX: "According to the word, Ephraim received justification in Israel, and placed it by Baal, and he died, and now he has appointed himself to sin, and they have made for themselves a molten image of gold and silver, according to the likeness of idols, the work of craftsmen complete; they say to them, 'Offer men, for the calves have failed.'" Because the seventy [translators] interpreted "Slay ye men, for the calves are failing," and we render [it], "Slay ye men that worship calves"; and Symmachus has interpreted [it], "Slay ye, men, [those] who worship calves"; so that the sense is, "Slay, that is, sacrifice to the idols, and thus let the distinction follow: rational animals, [namely]

men, worship calves; mute animals [worship calves]." Therefore, when Ephraim spoke, that is, Jeroboam son of Nabat from the tribe of Ephraim, horror invaded Israel, that is, the ten tribes. For "horror," which is said in Hebrew Rathath, which Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted as "tremor"; while wishing for something, they translated δικαι■ματα, that is, "justifications," in the LXX. And so great a horror invaded Israel, that he sinned and offended God in Baal and died, losing him who said, "I am the life" (John XIV, 6). For every soul that sins shall die (Ezekiel 18). And the Apostle said: "But she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, let her trust in God, and continue in supplications and prayers night and day. For she that liveth in pleasures is dead while she is living" (I Timothy 5:5-6). And not only was he dead in Baal, but he also added sins to sins, so that from the silver which the Lord had given, idols were made, the work of men's hands. To which they themselves say, that is, the priests and princes who ought to have taught the people good things: "Slay men, worshipping calves"; which is also said in the Psalms: "They sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils" (Psalm 106:37). Because we translate it according to Symmachus and Theodotion, as "adoring;" but Aquila interpreted it as καταφιλο■ντες, that is, "kissing." For those who adore, they are accustomed to kiss their own hand; which Job denies having done, saying: "If I have kissed my hand with my mouth and my right hand the envious man hath deserved it" (Job 31:27-28). But, as some believe, if demons speak to the people saying, "Sacrifice men, for the calves have failed," then their appetite is revealed of those who are nourished by the blood of the victims and the smoke of the holocausts because as the victims run short, they desire to have men sacrificed to them, not only with their death but also with their blood. But, as the heretics spoke, rather the leaders of the heretics, that is, Ephraim, horror and trembling invaded the unhappy people; and they fell into idols, which they fashioned from their own hearts, and died with the people they seduced. And it is not enough to have fallen, but they also turn the tongue that they received to sing to God into images of idols, and compose dogma with eloquent words similar to truth, which is nothing else but an invention of human wickedness. And they command their disciples, that they themselves also sacrifice men, that is, are furious against the Church of God, and lead them to heretics, and kill those whom they have deceived; And what follows, "The calves have failed," has this meaning: Do not seek those whom you have deceived from the Gentiles, who are called brute animals; but seize them, sacrifice them, who are established in the Church, are considered in the name of Christ, and are called men.

13:3

Therefore they will be like morning clouds, and like morning dew that passes away, like dust swept up by a whirlwind, and like smoke from a chimney." (Vulgate "passing by"). And similarly in the Septuagint: "changing only the final image, 'and like the vapor from locusts' or 'from tears,' since we find it rendered as either 'locusts' or 'tears' in most manuscripts. For, he says, they sacrificed to calves as though slaughtering men; therefore they will be like morning clouds, and like the morning dew that passes, like dust swept up by a whirlwind, and like smoke from a chimney." "All things seem to exist for a time and then quickly pass away, in keeping with the saying, 'He caused his king of Samaria to pass like foam on the surface of water,' and again, 'The king of Israel passes away like a morning shadow.' Everyone knows that clouds, dew, dust from the ground, and smoke from the hearth, all quickly vanish, in accordance with the scripture that says, 'As smoke is driven away, so let them be driven away.'" (Psalm 68:2) However, why have the LXX rendered "fumario" as "locustas," which Theodotion translates as καπνοδ■χην (the editions read καπνοδ■χον)?

Among the Hebrews, locust and fumarium are written with the same letters, Aleph, Res, Beth, He. If it is read as Arbe, it means "locust"; if Orobba ((Al. "arobba")), it means "fumarium": for which Aquila interprets καταρκτην and Symmachus interprets "foramen." Cataractam, however, properly signifies the hole made in the wall through which smoke comes out. But if anyone is contentious and unwilling to receive the truth of Hebrew (Scripture), let him seek after the sense of locusts; let him hear Ephraim compared to "vapour" or "air" and "wind," which is so fine and thin that it cannot be perceived coming forth from the mouth of the locust. And if he objects to this, then why did Ephraim liken himself to anything that is even smaller, such as a flea, which has all of its members, a head, eyes, feet, belly, and all the rest, which, although we do not see with our eyes, we still understand through our senses; for we feel the bites of its mouth, even though we do not see its mouth and teeth. It must be answered that the glory of the dying is compared to the vapor of the locust or the thinnest air because the locust is harmful and so hostile to humans that it causes famine and devastates cultivated crops, to the extent that it even strips trees and vines of their bark, which we read more fully in the Prophet Joel (Joel I and II). And this locust is compared to the morning cloud, dew, and heretic dust, about which it is also said in the Catholic Epistle: "These are clouds without water" (Judae XII). For they have the appearance of prophets, and of apostolic clouds, to which the truth of God has come: but they do not have water, that is, the grace of the Holy Spirit, with the Lord saying in the Gospel: "He who believes in me, (as the Scripture says) rivers of living water will flow out of his belly. But this," he said, "refers to the spirit which "those who believe in him would receive" (John 7:38-39). But as for tears, which have some resemblance in the Greek language to locusts, δακρυων κατακρδων, it is a clear mistake, with some thinking they mean "tears" in place of "locusts".

13:4

"But I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." For this, in the Septuagint it is written: "I am the Lord your God: who made firm the heaven, and created the earth: whose hands created all the hosts of heaven, and I did not show them to you, that you may walk after them ... And I brought you out of the land of Egypt." Since these words are not found in the Hebrew, and are not translated by any interpreter, they are marked with an obelus in the ancient version of the Septuagint: especially since their meaning is clear. So let us move on to the rest, joining the following to the previous chapter.

13:5-6

"But I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt: and thou shalt know no God but me, and there is no saviour beside me. I knew thee in the desert, in the land of drought. According to their pastures they were filled, and were made full: and they lifted up their heart, and have forgotten me." LXX: "But I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt: thou shalt not know any god but me, and there is no savior beside me. I fed thee in the wilderness, in a land of drought. According to their pasture, they were filled, and were made full, and their heart was exalted: and therefore they have forgotten me." He who above had said, "Jacob fled into the land of Syria, and served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep. And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet he was preserved. Now what hath God rendered to them? I am thy Lord God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, which commanded thee through Moses. Take heed lest thou eat and be satisfied, and forget thy God, which brought

thee out of the land of Egypt; for there is no God but me, and none other can save." I am the founder of all things, I knew that whether you were fed in the desert and in uninhabitable land, where there was a shortage of everything, where there were no waters: I gave you manna from Heaven and produced fountains of water from the hardest rock. As it is also written elsewhere: "He waxed fat, and kicked, and forgot the God which he had made him" (Deut. XXXII, 15): now they also have eaten and are filled, and their heart has been lifted up, and they have forgotten Him, who they should have been mindful of His benefits. For through so great a waste of desert, where not only does no corn or trees or vines grow, but not even grass, and no waters mitigate the burning heat of the sun, the people of Israel could not have reached the land of the Jordan in forty years, unless the Lord had provided all things. The Lord also brought forth heretics from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and from the iron furnace, who had previously served the king Pharaoh and his leaders: and He commanded them in the Church not to know any other God except Him who is the creator of all things, and who knows how to save those who He created. He himself knew them and was afraid in a land of solitude; so that they may say: "The Lord feeds me and nothing will be lacking to me: he has placed me in a place of pasture: he has led me over the water of refreshment" (Ps. 22, 1-2). And he gave them the bread of angels, manna from heaven, which they had never eaten in Egypt, and water from a rock that followed them. And that rock, according to the Apostle, was Christ (1 Cor. 10): those who ate and were satisfied, and did not endure the food of the Lord. The same Apostle speaks to them: "Now ye are full, now ye are become rich: ye reign without us, and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you" (I Corinthians 4:8). For they ate the bread that descended from heaven in Holy Scripture, and as David said: "You have revealed to me the uncertain and secret things of your wisdom" (Psalm 50:8). They were filled and satiated and lifted up their heart against the Creator, and fashioned themselves another god, attributing to their own merits whatever they drank or ate, and not to the mercy of God. Therefore they have forgotten God, who commanded them to bind the words of the Law on their eyes, and in their hands, and in the fringes of their garments, lest they would ever forget their God.

13:7-8

"And I will be to them like a lioness, like a leopard on the road to Assyria; I will confront them like a bear that has lost its cubs, and I will tear open their chests; there I will devour them like a lion - the wild animals will tear them apart." They were filled and satisfied; they lifted up their hearts and forgot me. But I, he said, will be to them like a lioness, or a panther, of which we have spoken more fully above: and like a leopard on the way of the Assyrians, when they are led captive by the Assyrians: and I will meet them like a bear robbed of its cubs, or an animal in need of food: and I will tear apart all their vital organs. Those who have written about the nature of wild beasts say that among all animals there is nothing more savage than a bear when it has lost its cubs or needs food; and he not only threatens the ferocity of panthers, leopards, bears, lions, and all wild beasts that are born in the forests, but he says that he will direct all of this towards them when they go to the Assyrians: lest they attribute their miseries not to the power and indignation of the Lord, but to the strength of their enemies, when they have suffered hard things there. And at the same time, let us consider what he who speakes in the Gospel to those who believe: "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you; for my yoke is sweet and my burden light" (Matt. XI, 28, 29), now through the prophet he becomes a panther, pardus, bear and lion to the unbelievers

and those who refuse to do penance: not only to the Israelites, because they were set up for idolatry in the cities or mountains of the Medes; but also to heretics because, due to the pride of their minds and the vanity of their false teachings, they have forgotten their God, have fashioned idols and have followed strange gods.

13:9-11

"Your destruction, Israel, only your help is with me. Where is your king? May he save you now in all your cities; and your judges, of whom you said: Give me a king and princes: I will give you a king in my fury, and take away in my indignation." LXX: "Who will help you in your corruption, O Israel? Where is your king? May he save you in all your cities and judge you as you said: 'Give me a king and prince.' I gave you a king and prince in my anger and took away in my fury." Because the seventy interpreted it as "I have had," everyone translated "I took away." Unhappy is Israel and worthy of eternal curse, who has descended into such profound impiety that he can be saved only by the mercy of God. Yet this may be read in Hebrew and understood in this sense: "May you perish, Israel, because there is nothing left for you except that you be preserved by my mercy alone." But the meaning in the LXX is different: "To your corruption, Israel, who will give assistance?" that is, who will be able to provide help for your captivity and ultimate servitude, those whom you esteemed as your princes? Where is your king, whom you said to Samuel: 'Establish a king over us, to judge us, just as the other nations have'? (2 Kings 8:5). And when he objected, you replied: 'No, but we will have a king, and we will be like all the other nations, and our king will judge us, and he will go out before us and fight for us.' Therefore, where is the promise you made that he would wage your wars, that now he may come to your aid in this time of need, and liberate all your cities from servitude? Where are your judges? Where are your kings? For you have said: "Give me a king and princes"; therefore I gave you Saul as king in my anger, so much so that in the days of the harvest I brought rain contrary to the nature of the province of Judah. "I have removed," he says, "the king in my indignation," that is to say, Zedekiah, "whom I gave in anger, and whom I took away in indignation." Others believe that Jeroboam the son of Nabat was given as king in anger, and the last king of the ten tribes, Hoshea, was taken away in indignation. What we have explained, I gave you a king and took away a king in my indignation, the Hebrews report for future times. At that time, when you said, "Give me a king and princes," I would respond to you through Samuel that I would give it to you in my fury and take it away in my indignation. Every heretic is lost and handed over to corruption; for he who corrupts the temple of God, the Lord will corrupt him: he has no aid in any other way except in the mercy of God, which he attains through penitence. This king and judges are the devil and demons, or all the princes of perverse dogmas, who could not free them in times of necessity and distress, who were given in fury, and taken away in indignation: not that the Lord wanted to have such kings: otherwise he would not take away those whom he had given willingly, but because he left them to their own wills: so that they, eating and fattening up their flesh, would become nauseous, and vomit through their noses, and begin to hate those whom they had so eagerly followed.

13:12-13

"The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his hidden sin is enfolded. Pangs of childbirth come for him, but he is an unwise son, for now he does not present himself at the opening of the womb." LXX: "The congregation of iniquity of Ephraim; his sin is concealed. Labor pains shall come upon him as

of a woman giving birth. This is your wise son, for he will not now be able to stand the test of the sons' contrition." Just as something that is bound in the world is preserved and does not perish for the one to whom it is bound, so every iniquity by which Ephraim sinned against God is bound to him and hidden as if reserved in a pouch. Finally, when the day of vengeance arrives, and the ultimate captivity, pains like those of a woman in labor will come to him, whether they seize him. A woman in labor, long before giving birth, from the time she conceives, knows that she is going to give birth, and she expects daily that extreme torments and pains will come. So also Ephraim, the foolish son of whom we have said above, "Ephraim is a foolish dove without a heart in contrition" of "his children and his people," when the day of delivery and captivity arrives, will not be able to stand or suffer. For the 'Foolish Son,' it is read ironically in the LXX: 'This is the wise son,' that is, whom you thought wise, so that on the contrary, he may be understood as foolish. But for all heretics, iniquity is gathered, which they spoke on high; and their sin is hidden when they think they are hiding the poison of their hearts and having secrets, which, when the day of delivery comes, will be exposed by pain and effort. This foolish son is Ephraim, because he abandoned the wisdom of God, of whom it is written in Jeremiah: 'His last shall be foolish,' and he will not be able to withstand the wrath of God, in the overthrow of his sons whom he has slain and killed.

13:14

I will free them from the hand of death; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be your death; O underworld, I will be your sting. Comfort is hidden from my eyes because He will Himself divide among brothers. According to both the understanding of Ephraim, that is, the ten tribes, and the heretics, who will not be able to bear the pain of their sons' contrition, when pains come upon them like those of a woman in labor, the Lord promises to liberate them from the hand of death and to redeem them from death. However, the hand of death refers to the works by which it kills, according to that which is written: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. XVIII, 21). But the Lord freed all, and redeemed in the passion of the cross and the shedding of His blood: when His soul descended into hell, and His flesh did not see corruption, and even to death and hell He spoke: "I will be thy death, O death." Therefore, I died, so that by my death thou might die. "I will be thy biting, O hell," who devourest everyone in thy jaws. And seeing the harsh necessity of death, and that there is no man who lives and does not see death (Psalm LXXXVIII), the most merciful Father remembers the ancient sentence: that in Adam we all die (1 Corinthians XV). Having understood his own weakness and the frailty of human flesh, the prophet said: 'Consolation,' he said, 'is hidden from my eyes,' with the meaning: I cannot console myself, whatever I conceive in my mind, my pain cannot be mitigated, seeing ('Al.' seeing) the dearest names separated by death: For hell ('Al.' he said) itself divides brothers. Therefore, whatever separates brothers should be called hell: especially the harlot woman, who calls the foolish man to her, saying in the wealth of her wisdom: Touch willingly hidden breads and drink the sweetness of stolen waters; and the foolish man does not know that those who are of the earth die with her, and fall into the depths of hell. For whatever is not allowed, is desired more, and what is sweet through rarity, turns bitter through frequent indulgence. And honey drips from the lips of a harlot who, for a time, fattens up the throat of the fool; but in the end, it is found more bitter than gall, and sharper than a double-edged sword. Whoever is an earthborn and does not come from heaven, falls into their embraces; they are bound with the chains of their couches, and their feet walk towards foolishness, leading those who use them to death and to hell. Between death and the underworld,

there is this difference: death is when the soul is separated from the body; the underworld is the place where the souls are either held in cold storage or punished, depending on the quality of their merits. We have said this to show that death does what a harlot does. For death divides brothers, just as a woman does. In the case of brothers, understand that any brotherly love is divided: a mother is divided from her daughter, and a father from his son, and a brother from his brother. But what is death, and what is hell, the psalmist shows, saying: "There is no one in death who remembers you: in hell, who will confess you" (Ps. VI, 6)? And in another place: "Let death come upon them, and let them go down alive into hell" (Ps. LIV, 16). Because we have translated: "I will be your death, O death: I will be your bite, O hell," the LXX (Septuagint) translated: "Where is your cause, O death? Where is your stimulus, O hell?" For which reason the Apostle placed: "Death has been swallowed up in" "contention; where is your contentio, death? Where is your sting, O death" (1 Co. XV, 54 et seqq)? And explaining the power of the testimony, he said: "But the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who has given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore, what he interpreted as the resurrection of the Lord, we cannot nor dare interpret differently. Death, hell, and the devil may be understood, who was killed by the death of Christ, about whom Isaiah also speaks: "Death has been swallowed up by victory" (Isaiah 25:8, LXX translation). And afterwards it follows: "The Lord hath taken away every tear from every face." Now, however, some understand that the two brothers who were separated by death, according to the history of that time, are Israel and Judah, so that what was then prefigured partly may now be felt in its entirety, and that with every human race Israel and Judah must be liberated and redeemed. In the place where the LXX have translated, "Where is thy cause?" and we have said, "Thy death shall be," Symmachus has interpreted, "Thy plague will be," the fifth edition and Aquila: "Where are thy words?" which is written in Hebrew Dabarach: reading Dabar, which means "word," for Deber, which is interpreted as "death;" according to what we read in Isaiah: "The Lord hath sent death upon Jacob, and it is come into Israel" (Isaiah 9), that is, "deber," for which we have interpreted: "The Lord sent the Word into Jacob, and it came into Israel," that is, "dabar." Also for the sting which we translated as "bite," Symmachus translated ἐπ' ἐντευχῶν, that is, "encounter:" Theodotion and the fifth edition have interpreted as "plague, and conclusion."

13:15

"The Lord shall bring upon him a burning wind, and shall wither all his veins: and shall make his sources desolate, and he shall pull down all his fences: because he hath done wickedly." LXX: "The Lord will bring a scorching wind from the desert upon them, and he will dry up their springs. Their fountains shall be desolate, the land will be parched, and all that is in it will be ruined." I have read in the comments of someone that the whirlwind which the Lord brings from the desert, is the same one who struck Job's house at its four corners and made it collapse on the feasting sons (Job 1), and that it is one of those winds which we read of in the Gospel to blow and come as a storm with heavy rain and floods, to overthrow the house built on a rock or on sands (Matthew 7). Which seems not at all to me: for it is not written in Job that the Lord brought a wind from the desert; but the name of the Lord is silent, so that the wind from the desert, which had come against the holy man by its own will, might be taken as a contrary strength, and the winds that overthrow the foundations of houses cannot be referred to the good side. It remains that we understand the burning wind that the Lord will bring from the desert, as we also read about in Habakkuk: "God will come from the South, and the Holy One from Mount Paran" (Habakkuk 3:3): which, of course, is

located in the desert and at midday. And in the Song we read: "Where do you feed, where do you rest at midday" (Song of Solomon 1:6)? The Lord will bring this scorching wind, which dries up the veins of death and dries up its springs, from the ascending desert: from the desert, however, of the human race, in which even the devil seeking rest could not find. Whether we understand the desert to be the virgin womb of Saint Mary, which gave birth to this flower without the seed of man, which shot up through its pure and fecund union as a simple rod and produced that flower that says in the Song of Songs: "I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys" (Song of Songs 2:2). And beautifully, as much in Isaiah as in the present place, the ascending flower is said to be the ascending wind: because it ascends from the humility of the flesh to the heights, and he led us with him to the Father, saying in the Gospel: "And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself" (John 12:32). He himself, as though a root, will ascend from the uninhabitable earth, and death will by no means have power over him, but he will come upon death, for death will find no way of power in him, and this is what is said in the Proverbs: "It is impossible to find the footsteps of a serpent upon a rock" (Proverb 30). And he himself speaks in the Gospel: "Behold, the prince of this world shall come, and find in me nothing" (John XIV, 30). He shall dry up the veins of death, and lay waste its sources. The veins of death and its sources and its sting are designated by the Apostle as sins: when these have been dried up, even death itself shall be dried up. And what follows: "He himself will plunder the treasure," "which is in every vessel desirable," is taken in a twofold sense either because they are desirable to those who dwell in death, or because we understand by the desirable vessels, saints who were perhaps bound, whom the Lord delivered and carried off from the underworld, and, as it were, valuable vessels, brought them along with him into paradise. For 'treasure' they have transferred 'earth': without doubt, 'earth' signifies death. And in Psalms we read: 'I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the livings' (Psal. XXVI, 13). And according to the Gospel: 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land' (Matthew V). On the contrary, we must accept that the land of hell is not the land of the living, but rather of the dead, which is ravaged and devastated, when the souls bound at the time of Christ's death in hell are freed. According to the tropology in the same Commentaries (of which we have spoken above), we read that the scorching wind is understood as the devil and every heresiarch. We dislike this, because the devil cannot dry up the veins of death and the fountains of error, since he himself is the source and beginning of the dead. Therefore, the word of the Ecclesiasticus, 'burning wind' is to be understood as the wind that withers all the dogmas of heretics and leads them to nothingness, and tears them apart and scatters them who were gathered in death by the doctrine of heretics.

14:1

"Let Samaria be destroyed, for she has provoked her God to bitterness. Let them perish by the sword. May their infants be dashed to pieces, and their pregnant women be ripped open." LXX: "Samaria will be destroyed because she has resisted her God; they will fall by the sword, and their suckling infants will be dashed to the rock, and their women with child will be ripped open." We have often said that the ten tribes are called Samaria, whose capital is now called Augusta, that is, Sebaste, from the name of Augustus. But why Samaria was called a city, we read in the Book of Kings. Therefore the prophet commands, and, to speak more truly, speaks wishfully, that Samaria may perish. And when God had prepared so many good things for her, she is against God, and follows more the idols of demons. But Symmachus did not say "perish," but μεταμελῆσαι that is

"will repent," and she will repent of her mistake, which has turned the sweetest God into bitterness, so that her warriors perish by the sword, little ones and infants are dashed to the ground, and her pregnant and expectant mothers are torn in death. It is to be believed that all of this happened to them during their captivity and distress, when they lost their homeland and were subdued into perpetual slavery. The understanding of heretics is easy, that they are called Samaritans, since they boast of obeying God's commands, not because they are keepers of His law; but that they say they are, in the likeness of the schism of Novatians, who also call themselves καθαρός, that is, "pure," although they are the filthiest of all, denying repentance, by which sins are cleansed, according to what is written: "Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow" (Ps. X). And in Isaiah: "Wash yourselves, be clean" (Isaiah 1:16). However, it is not called a baptism, but rather all penance that washes away the filth of sins. Let Samaria therefore perish, because whatever she speaks, opposes her God, and turns his mercy into cruelty, so much so that even the men who have attained the perfect age of malice ("Al." warfare)) are cut down by the spiritual sword. But the little ones and infants are dashed against the rock. About which we also read in the Psalm: "Blessed is he who seizes and dashes your little ones against the rock." (Ps. 136:9). Also, its pregnant animals that have conceived from evil seed, will be destroyed so as not to produce worthless offspring. Something similar is mentioned in the Gospel: "Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days" (Luke 21:23): in the days of affliction and distress. The warriors of Samaria are killed by the sword, and nursing infants are thrown down and pregnant women are ripped open, so that when the evil seed has perished and its weeds have been burnt, only the wheat remains, which is stored in the Lord's barns.

14:2-4

"Turn back, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take with you words and return to the Lord; say to him, 'Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously, that we may offer the fruit of our lips. Assyria shall not save us; we will not ride on horses; and we will say no more, 'Our God,' to the work of our hands. In you the orphan finds mercy.'" LXX: "Convert, O Israel, to the Lord your God, because you have been weakened by your iniquities: Take with you words, and return to the Lord, say to him, 'Take away all iniquity, and receive what is good, and we will render the calves of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more: you are our gods; for the fatherless finds mercy in you.'" As Samaria was perishing. "And men, women, and children having been killed, slaughtered, and torn apart, Israel as a whole is provoked to repentance so that he who is sick or has fallen in his iniquities may return to the doctor and receive health, or he who has fallen may begin to stand up again; and it is taught how one should do penance. 'Take with you words,' that is to say, prayers and confession of sins, and turn to the Lord both in words and in works; and say to Him: 'Take away all iniquity,' leave nothing of our weakness and former ruin, lest again the evil seed bring forth live plants. And He says, 'Accept the good': For if You do not take away our evils, we cannot have anything good to offer You, according to what is written elsewhere: 'Turn away from evil and do good, and we will offer You the calves of our lips.'" (Psalm 36:27) For the calves which in Hebrew are called Pharim, the Septuagint translated "fruit" as Pheri, by a similarity of false speech. But the calves of our lips are praises to God and thanksgiving: "For a contrite spirit is a sacrifice to God" (Ps. L, 19). Therefore, with carnal victims now rejected, a pure confession is a placable sacrifice to God. Those who say they will offer calves of their lips and sing God's praises

with their voice, also promise that they will not have hope in Assyria or trust in Egyptian horses, because the deceitful horse does not bring salvation (Psal. XXXII), and that they will not worship the golden calves that they made in Dan and Bethel with their own hands and, therefore, they say: "We will not say the work of our hands are our gods, for you will have mercy upon him who is your pupil (or people)," that is, the people of Israel, of whom you said: "My firstborn son is Israel" (Exod. IV, 22). "And: "I have brought up and exalted sons, but they despised me". And in another place: "Alien children have lied to me". But he is called an orphan because he has lost his father to God. However, some exposed the orphan who had left the evil father, the devil, and therefore was helped by the mercy of God. Also, the prophet speaks on a daily basis to all perverse dogma and provokes his followers to repentance, saying: Turn to your Lord God, who have fallen, or lost, the health of the Lord. Take with you words and confess the true faith: "For" ((or rather which)) with the heart it is believed unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. X). Calves and sacrifices, or the fruits of lips, are to believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and in the passion and resurrection of the Lord; whoever offers it to Him will by no means hope in the king of Assyria, of whom we have often spoken. Nor will he ascend the horse which the Lord forbids to be multiplied (Deut. XVII), as did Pharaoh who was submerged with his cavalry (Exod. XIV). For every heretic mounts horses in pride, which he himself has generated in his error. And they shall no more say: Our gods, the works of our hands, which beareth the eloquence of the craftsman is our god. The belly is the god of the glutton: and the glory of mammon is the god of the covetous, and the dogma of the heretic, which he hath forged. He that shall forsake all these, namely, Assur and the horse, and shall flee to the Lord, shall be taken care of, and shall have mercy on him.

14:5-9

"I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them. I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon. They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow; they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine; their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon. O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like an evergreen cypress; from me comes your fruit." LXX: "I will heal their inhabitants; I will love them openly, for my anger has turned away from them. I will be like dew for Israel; he shall blossom like the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be like the olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. They shall return, and sit under his shade; they shall drink and be filled with the grain, and they shall flourish like the vine; the memory of Ephraim shall be as wine. What will he have more to do with idols? I have humbled him, and I will strengthen him; I am as a cypress tree, your fruit has come forth from me." Turning to repentance, and like an orphan recognizing the father whom they had abandoned, God responded: "I will heal their contrition," or "their dwelling places" in which they had been wounded, or broken, or in which they had lived so poorly: "I will love them freely;" which the LXX translated as "confessing" or "clearly" and "openly," or "without any doubt." But the Lord loves those who love him, of whom he also says in another place: "I love those who love me" (Prov. 8:17). For I used to be angry with them because of the sins they had committed, but now I will have mercy on them because of my clemency. And I will be to them as dew, so as to extinguish the Babylonian furnace and the furnace of burning heat with my moisture, which I spoke

through the patriarch Isaac to my servant Jacob: 'Your dwelling place will be from the dew of heaven.' For just as the Lord becomes for believers light, way, truth, bread, vine, fire, shepherd, lamb, gate, worm, etc. Thus, to those in need of His mercy, and inflamed with the fever of sin, He is turned to us as dew, whom Isaiah says: "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness." (Isai. XXVI, 9) And in the Song of Deuteronomy, Moses speaks: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass" (Deut. XXXII, 2). But when the Lord has sprinkled us with His dew, and moistened the dryness of our hearts with His rain, we will flourish, and indeed flower into usefulness, imitating the Lord and Savior, who says in the Song of Songs: "I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valley" (Cant. II, 1), and speaks to His bride, who has no wrinkle or blemish: "As a lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." And when we grow in the Lord, we will send down our roots like the trees of Lebanon, which rise as high as the heavens, so sink as low in the earth, that they may not be shaken by any storm, but remain steadfast. The branches of these trees are stretched out here and there, so that the birds of the sky may come and dwell in them. And lest we might think because it was said, his root shall break forth, or his roots shall be like Lebanon, that he speaks of cedar and unfruitful trees, he likens the holy man, converted to the Lord, to fruitful olive trees, who says in another place: "But I am like a fruitful olive tree in the house of God" (Psalm LI, 1). Five wise virgins have prepared their fruit, from which the swelling of wounds is mitigated, the limbs of the languishing rest, light is kindled in the darkness, those who fight in agony are anointed. This olive will have a fragrance like that of Lebanon or frankincense, which is a kind of incense. It is called the same thing among Greeks and Hebrews, both the mountain and the incense, or certainly the mountain of Lebanon. It is very fertile and green, protected by the thickest hair of trees, so that the olive may say: "We are the good odor of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:16). But whoever turns to the Lord will receive the reward of his conversion, to sit in His shadow and say: "I rested and sat down under His shadow, and His fruit is sweet to my mouth" (Song of Solomon 2:3). And when they sit in its shade, they who were once dead will live again, and they will drink and be drunken with wheat, that is, with the abundance of all things. And that this drunkenness here does not mean a disturbance of the mind, but the abundance of all things, that verse declares, saying, 'You have visited the earth and made it drunk' (Ps. 64:10). And Joseph's banquet, in which it is said that he made his brothers drunk (Gen. 43). And the Lord speaking to the apostles: "Eat, my friends, and drink, and be drunk, brethren" (Cant. V,1). Whether because our Lord himself is the grain and vine, whoever believes in him is said to be intoxicated. Finally it follows: "And his memorial shall flourish as the vine, as wine of Libanus." But we can call wine Libanus mixed and seasoned with thyme, so that it has the sweetest smell, or wine Libanus which is offered to the Lord in the temple, about which we read under the name of Libanus in Zacharias: "Open," "your gates, O Libanus" (Zach. XI,1). When the abundance of things is about to come to an end, O Ephraim, you who repent and have begun to be mine, cast away your idols and despise your images; for I am the one who humbled you, and I will exalt you, and whether I hear and direct you, I will make you like a green fir tree, so that it shall be said of you according to the Hebrews in the Psalm: "The fir tree is the house of the Lord." (Psalm 104:18). Or certainly I will be as a fir tree that is dense, so that one may rest in my shade. About the juniper, which is "■ρκε■θοις" in Greek according to the Septuagint, it is recorded that Solomon made the doors of the temple, because Christ, through whom we approach the Father, has this nature, that it always flourishes, always brings forth new fruit, and never loses its vigor.

This juniper, while those resting under its shade may not be struck by the fever of this world and, like those who once hit Jonah (Ch. IV), it provides food and not only rest to those who sleep and sit; but also satiety to those who eat. Whatever we have interpreted according to allegory, in the coming of the Lord and Savior and the conversion of true Israel, can refer to heretics and Jews as well as to misguided nations and all perverse teachings: so that they attain pardon when they repent. If, therefore, the fullness of the promise has been fulfilled in the coming of the Savior and is daily fulfilled in the Church, it is to be believed that it will be more fully completed when perfection arrives, which is now in part, will be destroyed. Note that we have often said, the safety of Israel and the return to the Lord, and the redemption from captivity, is not to be accepted carnally, as the Jews think, but spiritually, as is most truly proved.

14:10

"Who is wise and will understand these things? Who is prudent and will know them? Because the ways of the Lord are straight, and the just shall walk in them; But the transgressors shall fall therein." LXX: "Who is wise and will understand these things, or prudent and will know them? For the ways of the Lord are straight and the just shall walk in them: but the wicked shall fall therein." When he says, "Who is wise and will understand these things? Who is prudent and will know them?" he indicates the obscurity of the volume and the difficulty of the explanation. But if he who wrote either acknowledges it to be difficult or impossible, what can we do, whose eyes are dimmed with blindness and filth of sins, so that we cannot perceive the brightest rays of the sun, except to say what is written: "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable are His ways!" (Rom. II, 33)! For who can, without Christ teaching, know what Jezrael means: what its sister, not having obtained mercy means; what the third brother, not being my people means; who the adulteress is, who will sit for a long time without the law of God; what the covenant with the beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky means; who David is to whom the people will return, whose third day will be the resurrection, and whose coming forth will be compared to the dawn: what the first and last rain means; who is the one the prophet says will come to show us righteousness, or in whose type Israel was brought up out of Egypt, and was carried in arms, and led by the ropes of love: who it is that will slay Death, and dry up his veins and springs, and will make desolate the vessels that were kept in the treasury, and other things too long to relate? Therefore, whoever is holy and just will know the right ways of the Lord. We recognize the ways of the Lord by reading the Old and New Testaments, understanding the Scriptures. In these ways, whoever walks, unless he is converted to the Lord and the veil, which was before the eyes of Moses, has been taken away from him, he will not be able to find the right path. But if he says with David: "Reveal my eyes, and I will consider the wonders of your law" (Ps. CXVIII, 18), he will walk in them, and he will find Christ: and he will feel offended, weakened, and fallen by the Jews and heretics, whom the Scripture now calls prevaricators or impious, according to what is written: "Behold, this one is placed for the ruin and resurrection of many in Israel" (Luke II, 34).

Commentary on Isaiah

The Commentaries of St. Eusebius Hieronymus of Stridon, Presbyter, on the Book of Isaiah, consisting of eighteen books.

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• 66:24

Prologue Having completed, after a long time, twenty books of explanations on the twelve Prophets, and commentaries on Daniel, you compel me, the virgin of Christ, Eustochium, to move on to Isaiah. And what I promised to your holy mother, Paula, while she was alive, I remember promising to you. Indeed, I recall promising this to your learned brother, Pammachius; and since you hold a special place in my affection, your presence overpowers me. Therefore, I fulfill my duty to you and to him through you, in obedience to the commandments of Christ, who says: Search the Scriptures (John 5:39); and Seek and you shall find (Matthew 7:7). I will not listen to this from the Jews: You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God (Matthew 22:29). For if, according to the Apostle Paul, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24), and whoever does not know the Scriptures, does not know the power of God and His wisdom; ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ. Therefore, relying on the aid of your prayers, which you meditate on day and night in the law of God, and being a temple of the Holy Spirit, I will imitate the father of the household, who brings forth both new and old treasures from his storehouse; and I will say, like the bride in the Song of Songs: My brother, I have kept new and old for you (Song of Songs 7:13); and thus I will explain Isaiah, teaching him not only as a Prophet, but also as an evangelist and Apostle. For he himself, speaking of himself and the other evangelists, says: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news, who bring peace (Isaiah 52:7). And God speaks to him, as if to an Apostle: Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people? And he responded: Here I am, send me (Isaiah 6:8). And let no one think that I desire to comprehend the subject matter of this volume in a brief discourse, since the present Scripture contains all the sacraments of the Lord; and that the birth of Emmanuel from the Virgin, as well as the accomplishment of illustrious works and signs; his death and burial, and his resurrection from the dead, and that the Savior of all nations is preached. What shall I say of physics, ethics, and logic? Whatever is of the holy Scriptures, whatever can be conveyed by human language, and received by the senses of mortals, is contained in this volume. He himself who wrote attests to the mysteries of Him: 'And there shall be for you the vision of all, like the words of the sealed book, which, when given to one who knows letters, they shall say: Read this. And he shall answer: I cannot, for it is sealed.' And a book shall be given to one who does not know letters, and it shall be said to him: Read this. And he shall answer, 'I do not know letters' (Isaiah 24:11-12). Therefore, whether you give this book to the people of the nations who do not know letters, they shall answer: I cannot read, for I have not learned the letters of the Scriptures; or whether you give it to the writers and Pharisees, who boast of knowing the letters of the King, they shall answer: We cannot read, for the book is sealed. Why was he marked for them? Because they did not receive the one whom the Father marked (John 6:27): who has the key of David; who opens, and no one will shut; who shuts, and no one will open (Revelation 3:7). And indeed, just as Montanus dreams with insane women, the Prophets spoke in ecstasy, not knowing what they were saying, and while instructing others, they themselves were ignorant of what they were saying. Concerning them, the Apostle says: 'Not knowing what they speak, nor concerning what they affirm' (1 Timothy 1:7); but according to Solomon who speaks in Proverbs: 'The wise understands what he speaks, and knowledge will be carried on his lips' (Proverbs 16:23), they themselves also knew what they were saying. For if the prophets were wise, which we cannot deny; and Moses spoke to the Lord with all

wisdom, and the Lord answered him; and it is said of Daniel to the prince of Tyre: Are you wiser than Daniel? (Ezek. 28:3) ? And David was wise, who boasted in the Psalm: You have revealed to me the uncertainties and hidden things of your wisdom. (Ps. 50:8) , how is it that the wise prophets did not know what to say, like dumb animals? We also read in another place of the Apostle: The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets (1 Cor. XIV, 32): so that they have it in their power, when they are silent, when they speak. But if anyone thinks it is weak, let him hear this from the same Apostle: Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge: but if anything is revealed to someone sitting, let the first be silent (Ibid., 29). By what means can they remain silent, when the spirit who speaks through the prophets is in their control, to either be silent or to speak? Therefore, if they understood what they were saying, all things are full of wisdom and reason. And the air, when struck by the voice, did not reach their ears; but God spoke in the minds of the prophets, according to what another prophet says: 'The angel who spoke in me' (Zech. 1:9), and 'Crying out in our hearts, Abba, Father' (Gal. 4:6), and 'Let me hear what the Lord God says within me' (Ps. 84:9).

After the truth of history, everything should be understood spiritually: thus Judaea and Jerusalem, Babylon and the Philistines, Moab and Damascus, Egypt and the desert sea, Idumaea and Arabia, and the valley of Vision, and finally Tyre, and the Vision of the four living creatures should be understood; so that we may seek all things in their meaning, and in all these things, like a wise architect, the apostle Paul may lay the foundation, which is nothing else but Christ Jesus. And it is a great and arduous task to want to explain the entire book of Isaiah, in which the talents of our ancestors have toiled: I mean the Greeks. However, among the Latins, there is great silence, except for the renowned martyr Victorinus, who could say with the Apostle: 'Though I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not in knowledge' (2 Corinthians 11:6). For Origen wrote thirty volumes on this Prophet, according to the four editions, up to the Vision of the four living creatures in the desert, but the twenty-sixth book is not found. Others are also said to have written under his name the Vision of the Quadrupeds, two books addressed to Grata, which are considered pseudographical; and twenty-five Homilies, and Notes, which we can call Excerpts. Eusebius Pamphili also published fifteen volumes, in accordance with a historical explanation; and Didymus, with whom we recently had friendly relations, published eighteen volumes from the place where it is written: Comfort, comfort my people, says the priest: speak to the heart of Jerusalem (Isaiah XL, 1), until the end of the volume. However, Apollinaris explains everything in his own way, so that he traverses all things and passes over large spaces of the road with certain points and intervals, as if he were flying over the shortcuts: so that we believe we are reading not so much commentaries as indexes of chapters. From this you realize how difficult it is for our Latins, whose ears are fastidious and who feel nauseated at understanding the Holy Scriptures, and who are delighted only by the applause of eloquence, to pardon me if I have spoken too long; since Isaiah, according to the number of verses, is equal to or greater than the twelve Prophets. However, if I have omitted 70 points of discussion regarding Hebrew, it is because most of them are either the same or similar to the others, and I did not want to extend the books of explanation, which already exceed the limits of brevity even in their simple explanations. But now let us carry out the proposed plan.

Book One

Book One

1:1 (Chapter 1, Verse 1) The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amos, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. For Judah, in which two tribes are signified, the Seventy and Theodotion have translated 'Judah,' which signifies the entire land of the twelve tribes. And because we translate from Hebrew, 'concerning Judah and Jerusalem,' they have interpreted it as 'against Judah and Jerusalem.' Symmachus, in his own way, more clearly, 'concerning Judah and Jerusalem,' so that he does not want to indicate either prosperity or adversity by the title, but what the prophetic discourse has foretold about Judah and Jerusalem in both respects. Therefore, Isaiah primarily speaks about two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, excluding the ten tribes that were in Samaria and were called Ephraim and Israel; and those that under the reign of King Uzziah of Judah, and Jerusalem, the king of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser, had already begun to devastate. Finally, in the fifty-second year of his reign, when Pekah, the son of Remaliah, was reigning in Samaria, Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, came and captured Aijon and Abel, the house of Maacah, and Janoah and Kedesh and Hazor and Gilead and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and he resettled them in Assyria (2 Kings 15:18-19). From this it is shown that all these things are narrated as a warning by the neighboring destruction of Samaria to the two tribes. But Ozias himself is the same person who is also called Azarias with a double name. And indeed, at the same time we know that Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, and Amos prophesied, from the kings who are mentioned in the title. But the beginning of the word of the Lord was with Hosea, son of Beeri. However, Amos is the father of Isaiah, not as most people think, he is the third of the twelve Prophets, but another; they are written in different letters among the Hebrews. This one has the first and last letters Aleph and Sade (); that one has Ainet Samech (): and this one is interpreted by some as strength or robust; that one as a hard or heavy people: about which we have spoken more fully in Amos. Not only this prophet, but also others with the title 'Vision seen by Isaiah or Obadiah' do not reveal what they saw. For example: 'I saw the Lord of hosts sitting on a high and lofty throne, and the two seraphim were around Him.' But what was said, they tell, that is, 'Hear, heaven, and listen, earth' (Isa. 6:1-2). And: 'This is what the Lord God says to Edom. I have heard an announcement from the Lord, and a messenger has been sent to the nations' (Obad. 1:1). For the prophets were previously called seers, who were able to say: Our eyes are always towards the Lord (Psalm 14:15). And: To you, I lift up my eyes, you who are enthroned in heaven (Psalm 123:1). Therefore, the Savior commanded the Apostles: Lift up your eyes and see the fields, for they are already white for harvest (John 4:35). The bride in the Song of Songs also had these eyes of the heart, to whom the bridegroom says: You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride, with one glance of your eyes (Song of Songs 4:9). And in the Gospel we read: The light of your body is your eye (Matt. VI, 22). It is also said in the old Scriptures that the people saw the voice of God (Exod. XX, 18). From this, the delusions of the Montanists are silenced, who in their ecstasy thought that the prophets spoke of future events from a deranged mind, for they could not see what they were ignorant of. I know that some interpret Judah and Jerusalem to mean heavenly things, and Isaiah to represent the Lord Savior: that it foreshadows the captivity of that province in our land, and later the return and ascent to the holy mountain in the last days. We despise everything that is contrary to the Christian faith, judging it, and following the truth of history, we interpret it spiritually so that whatever they dream about the heavenly Jerusalem, we refer it to the Church of Christ, and to those who either leave it because of sin or return to the original seat because of repentance, and also because we consider that this is said in the same Prophet: 'Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon

you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall be acceptable on my altar, and I will glorify my glorious house.' And it is stated in the title that he prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. This is not to be understood in a confused manner like in other prophets, so that we do not know what was said under which specific king. Rather, it is referred to the end of the book to indicate what was separately revealed to him by the Lord under Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Let us also know that Hezekiah began to reign in Jerusalem in the 12th year of Romulus, who founded a city in Italy bearing his name, so that it is clear how much older our histories are than those of other nations. Isaiah is interpreted as the Savior of the Lord; Judah, the confession; Jerusalem, the vision of peace; Uzziah, the strength of the Lord; Jotham, the perfection of the Lord; Ahaz, the one who holds or is strong; Hezekiah, the rule of the Lord. Therefore, whoever is saved with the Lord presiding is the son of Amos, that is, strong and mighty; he spiritually perceives the vision of confession while lamenting the ancient sins, and the peace while moving from repentance to light, and he rests in eternal peace. And all his times pass under the strength, perfection, and power of the Lord. And when he has done all things, he will say that evangelical saying: We are useless servants: for what we ought to have done, we have done (Luke 17:10).

1:2

(Version 2.) Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth: for the Lord has spoken. Above, it is shown by the title, who the prophet is, whose son, what is against Judah and Jerusalem, or concerning Judah and Jerusalem, and at what time he saw. Now he calls to hear the heavens and the earth. In heaven, representing the heavenly and angelic powers; on earth, the mortal race, metaphorically signifying both those which contain and those which are contained. Whether it be because, through Moses, the Lord had summoned the witnesses of heaven and earth, giving his law to the people of Israel, and had said: 'Listen, heaven, and I will speak; let the earth hear the words of my mouth' (Deuteronomy 31:1): after the transgression of the people, he summons them again as witnesses, so that all the elements may know that God, justly provoked to anger by the violation of his commandments, punishes. In Hebrew, 'heaven' is called 'Samaim', in the plural form. Especially when it says 'listen', that is, 'Semu', which is pronounced in the plural form, not the singular. But some want to be called heavens in the plural, but understood in the singular, according to that which we call individual cities, Thebes and Athens. And there is the Hebrew language, in which all words ending in Im are masculine and plural, like Cherubim and Seraphim. And words ending in Oth are feminine and plural, like Sabaoth. And it should be noted that heavens is used, hear, earth, perceive with your ears; for those things that are exalted have a greater understanding, while those that are more humble are wrapped in earthly senses. And the Savior in the Gospel says: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Matt. XI, 15). Therefore, if

anyone is heavenly and has citizenship in the heavens, let him hear mystically what is being said. If anyone is earthly, let him follow the simple history. Also, it should be noted that he did not say: Hear, heaven, and perceive with your ears, earth, what the Lord has spoken to you; but what he has spoken to me, so that I may recount to you what I have heard in the spirit, since you do not deserve to hear him speaking. Some (Origenists) think that the heavens and the earth are, as it were, animated beings capable of hearing, according to what is said elsewhere about the earth: Who looks on the earth, and makes it tremble (Ps. CIII, 32): whereas this is the power of God, not of earthly intelligence.

I have begotten and exalted sons: but they have despised me. For which Symmachus and Theodotion rendered it thus: I have nourished and exalted sons (Exod. IV, 22). From this place the Prophet relates what the Lord has spoken, that he has turned the people of Israel, whom he had established as servants by a common law, into sons, and has said: My firstborn son is Israel. Finally, the Lord in the Gospel promises the Apostles that if they do his will, he will no longer call them servants, but friends (John XV, 15). But if Israel becomes proud, let him understand that he is called the firstborn, because it signifies that he is followed by second sons from the nations. For he is not called the only begotten who excludes other brothers, but the firstborn, to show that others will follow: and yet according to the mysteries of the Scriptures, it is not the firstborn who receive the inheritance, but the second. Cain was the firstborn, but Abel's offerings pleased God. The firstborn was Ishmael, but Isaac received the inheritance. The firstborn was Esau, but he was cheated out of the father's blessing by Jacob the supplanter. The firstborn was Reuben, but nevertheless the blessing of the seed of Christ was transferred to Judah. Therefore, according to the order of their calling, they were the first, and were called the head: we who were second were called the tail, but now we have been turned into the head, and are called the sons of God. For as many as received him, he gave them power to become the sons of God (John 1:12). We have not received the spirit of bondage in fear, but the spirit of adoption, in which we cry out: Abba, Father (Rom. VIII, 15): because perfect love casts out fear (I John IV, 18). But it is better to read according to the Hebrew, 'I have nourished sons', than 'I have begotten', lest it seem contrary to that saying which we read in the Epistle of John: Whoever is born of God does not sin (I John III, 9). Therefore, if these are born from God, how could they have sinned: since everyone who is born from God cannot sin?

1:3

(Verse 3.) The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib. But Israel does not know; my people do not understand. Woe to the sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged. Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and raw wounds; they are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil. Your country lies desolate; your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence foreigners devour your land; it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners. And the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a lodge in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah. Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah! What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord;

I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts? Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations— I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause. Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. And he did not compare them to dogs, which are the most keen-witted species of animals, and they protect their owners' homes for little food: but rather to dumber animals like oxen and donkeys, one of which pulls carts and turns over the toughest clumps of earth with a plow, and the other carries heavy loads and moderates the labor of men while walking: hence they are called 'beasts of burden' from it, because they aid men. This place can be understood to refer to God the Father: but it is more often related to the Son, because the people of Israel did not know him, nor did they receive him: whose day Abraham saw and rejoiced, and for whose coming the hopes of all the prophets depended. And in the Gospel, he speaks to Jerusalem: How often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing (Matt. XXIII, 37)! We ask, where shall we read about the ox and the donkey together? In Deuteronomy it is written: You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together (Deut. XXII, 10). And in the same Isaiah: Blessed is he who sows beside all waters, where the ox and the donkey tread (Isai. XXXII, 20). Ebion, who plows with the ox and the donkey together, is worthy of humble understanding, poverty in his name; he receives the Gospel in such a way that he does not abandon the ceremonies of Jewish superstitions, which preceded in shadow and image. Blessed is he who sows in the words of Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament: and he treads upon the waters of the letters of the setting sun, in order to reap the fruit of the life-giving Spirit. The ox is metaphorically related to Israel, who carried the yoke of the Law, and is a clean animal. The donkey burdened with the weight of sinners represents the people of the Gentiles, to whom the Lord spoke: Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you (Matt. 11:28). Therefore, the Pharisees and Scribes, who did not believe, but had the key and knowledge of the Law, and were truly called Israel, that is, a people seeing God, a part of the Jewish people believed, so that on one day three thousand would believe together, and on another day five thousand. Even the wise of the world, who did not accept the cross of Christ, were received by the unlearned crowd of the nations. Hence the Apostle said: Consider your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many powerful, not many noble, but what is foolish in the world, God has chosen, to confound the wise; and what is weak in the world, God has chosen, to confound the strong (1 Corinthians 1:26-27). But this is forced, the previous interpretation is true.

1:4 (Verse 4) Woe to the sinful nation, a people burdened with iniquity, a wicked offspring, wicked children: they have forsaken the Lord, they have blasphemed the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backwards. The phrase I placed last, 'they have turned away backwards,' is not found

in the Septuagint and instead of 'they have blasphemed,' it is written in them, 'they have provoked to anger.' And instead of 'wicked offspring,' it is translated in the Hebrew as 'wicked ones,' so that the vice of the offspring is not so much a defect of their nature (lest good and evil be thought to have different natures) as it is a result of their wickedness, those who have forsaken the Lord by their own will. In the beginning of the book, the title mentions the characters, the cause, and the time: in the second part, it captivates the listeners; in the third part, it narrates what the Lord said; in the fourth part, it reproaches the sinful nation, and a people full of or weighed down by injustice. Not that there is another nation and another people, as some think, but it is Israel itself, which is called both nation and people, and is referred to as wicked or unjust sons: those who were first called sons of the Lord through his kindness, but afterwards were called sons of iniquity because of their own fault; or as others have said in agreement, corrupting sons, that is, those who have lost the good of their nature through their own fault. And the text continues: 'They blasphemed the holy Israel, it is said specifically of the Jews, shouting: We have no king but Caesar' (John 19:15); and: 'Is this not the son of the carpenter?' (Matthew 13:55); and, 'He has a demon, and is a Samaritan' (John 8:48). Therefore, because they abandoned Christ and blasphemed the Holy Israel, they were estranged backwards, so that those who were called part and children of God would later be called: 'Alien children have lied to me' (Psalm 18:46). The Savior commanded that, with the plow seized, we do not look back (Luke 9:62), so as not to imitate Lot's wife. Hence the Apostle, stretching out towards the things before, forgets the things that are behind (Philippians 3:13). And what he said according to the Septuagint, to a people full of sins (Zechariah 5:7), shows that there was no kind of sins that the people of Israel did not have. But if we read it as in Hebrew, to a people heavy with iniquity, let us remember the testimony of that, that iniquity sits upon a talent of lead, and it is said from the person of a sinner in the thirty-seventh psalm: My iniquities have been lifted up above my head: As a heavy burden, they have been burdened upon me (Psalm 37:5). We pass through things that are manifest, so that we may linger in those that are more obscure and require explanation.

1:5

(Verse 5). In which way shall I strike you any longer, adding transgression? By this testimony we learn that the Lord strikes sinners in order to correct them, and that the punishment is not so much for retribution as for correction. The meaning is this: I cannot find any medicine that I can apply to your wounds; all your limbs are full of sores; I find no part of your body that has not been struck before. Or certainly in this way: I find no wounds by which I can break your stubbornness. For the greater the tortures are, the more impiety and injustice grows, or as Theodotion translated, the deviation, so that you may depart and deviate from the Lord. Such is that of Jeremiah: I have struck your children without cause: you have not received discipline (Jeremiah II, 30). Hence, he speaks angrily through Hosea: I will not visit your daughters when they commit fornication; and your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery (Hosea IV, 14). And in Ezekiel: My jealousy will depart from you, and I will no longer be angry with you (Ezek. 16:42). Of whom we also read in the Psalms: There is no firmament in their hands, and they are not laboring with men, nor will they be scourged with men (Ps. 73:4, 5).

Every head is weary, and every heart mournful. The joy of the soul sometimes alleviates the pain of the body: but if mental distress accompanies physical illness, the weakness is doubled. Among the senses themselves, and all the members of the body, the head occupies the chief place, in

which there is sight and smell, hearing and taste. Therefore, when the head aches, all the members are weak. And by metaphor, it teaches that from the leaders to the lowest of the people, from the learned to the ignorant masses, there is no health in anyone: but all unanimously consent in impiety with equal ardor. From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, there is no soundness in it: wounds, bruises, and oozing sores. The translation has been maintained: from the feet to the head, that is, from the lowest to the highest, from the outermost to the innermost, they are pierced through the whole body. 'Wounds,' he says, 'and bruises, and oozing sores': for either bodies turn blue from beatings, or swell from blows, or gape with wounds. We ask, to what time should these things be adapted? After the Babylonian captivity, under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, Israel returned to Judaea and restored its ancient state. Under various rulers and kings, the temple was rebuilt to be more magnificent, to the extent that even foreign nations, such as the Spartans, Athenians, and Romans, formed alliances. Therefore, when it says, 'There is no soundness in it,' it refers to the ultimate captivity, since from Titus and Vespasian to the final destruction of Jerusalem, under Aelius Hadrianus and up to the present time, there is no remedy. And what is written is fulfilled: 'All have turned away; they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one' (Rom. 3:12). And what is also inferred: there is no health in it, either in the people, or in the body, or in the head.

1:6

(Verse 6) It is not wrapped, nor treated with medicine, nor anointed with oil. For which the LXX translated: It is not to apply a plaster, nor oil, nor bandages. Even today, the wound and swelling of the people of Israel are not wrapped with strips, nor treated with medicine. Which Aquila interpreted as μ■τωσιν, namely, the little linen cloths that are applied to wounds to dry up pus and extract impurities. Nor was oil applied, so that the hardness of their wounds might be softened by tears of repentance. For the boils, with which the wounds of the Israelites were not at all bound up, the 70 doses were transferred. Therefore, Israel lies wounded and slaughtered because they killed the doctor who had come to heal the house of Israel. Hence, in Jeremiah, the Angels speak tropically under the person of Babylon: We have healed Babylon, and she is not healed (Jeremiah 51:9), namely the city of confusion and vices. And in the Gospel (Luke 10) we read that a man, who was descending from Jerusalem to Jericho, was attacked by robbers and was cared for by a Samaritan. And after the severity of the wine, the softness of the oil poured on his wounds. Therefore, from that place where it was said above: In which I will strike you, and: every weak head, until it is brought to the suffering: There is no healing remedy or soothing oil, the likeness of the translation is preserved, and the description of incurable wounds expresses the eternal captivity of the Jews.

1:7

(Verse 7) Your land is deserted; your cities are burned with fire. Foreigners devour your land before your eyes, and it is desolate like a hostile wasteland. These things were partially fulfilled under the Babylonians, with the temple being burned and Jerusalem being destroyed, when the Samaritans possessed the region of the ten tribes, and the promised land was so desolate that it was ravaged by lions. But a more complete and perfect description of what would happen under Roman captivity is given: when the Roman army devastated all of Judea, and the cities were burned, and their land is currently being devoured by foreigners, and the desolation of the Jews

will continue until the end of the world. However, we can interpret these things tropologically about sinners who have fallen from their former holiness, after they have been handed over to contrary powers: that all their goods come to a desert: and God does not remember the former righteousness: and they are consumed by the fire of the devil; and they become food for beasts, of whom it is also written in another place: Do not give the soul confessing to you to beasts (Ps. 73, 19).

1:8

(Verse 8) The daughter of Zion will be abandoned like a shelter in a vineyard, like a hut in a cucumber field. The vineyard, which is called the whole of Israel, is testified to by the Prophet in the following, saying: 'The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel; and the man of Judah, a new plant and beloved' (below chapter 5, verse 7); and in the Psalm: 'You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it' (Psalm 80:9). This vine, as long as it brought forth abundant fruits, had God as its guardian, of whom it is written: 'He does not slumber or sleep, who keeps Israel' (Psalm 121:4). But after they had harvested it, everyone passing by the road trampled it down, and a wild boar from the forest ravaged it. The Lord abandoned his temple and, rising up in anger, said, 'Arise, let us leave this place; and let your house be left desolate to you.' (Matt. XXIII, 38). And through Jeremiah: 'I have forsaken my house; I have abandoned my inheritance. My inheritance has become to me like a lion in the forest; it has roared against me, therefore I hate it.' (Jerem. XII, 7). However, the likeness of the devastation of the Temple and Jerusalem is taken from the farmers, who, as long as the vineyard is full of grapes, place guards in the shade. In the Cucumber House, which they call the guardian of seventy fruits, small huts are built to shield against the heat of the sun and to deflect its rays; and from there, they drive away either the men or the little animals that are accustomed to lurking in the newly grown crops. But when these types of produce have been harvested, only the withered coverings of the bushes and the huts remain, as the guard withdraws because he no longer has anything to protect. So the almighty God abandoned the Temple and made the city deserted: which does not need to be proven by words, especially to us, who see Zion deserted and Jerusalem destroyed, and the Temple completely demolished to the ground. But what he calls the daughter of Zion shows the affection of a most merciful parent. It is not surprising if Zion is called daughter, since even Babylon is often called daughter. For we are all by nature children of God, but by our own fault we become estranged. According to the anagoge, our soul can be called the vineyard of God and the paradise of apples: if our mind, that is, νοῦς, is in charge, it has God as the guardian of the mind; but if our vices have preyed upon us like certain beasts, we are abandoned by the guardian God, and all our things are reduced to solitude.

If the Lord of hosts had not left us seed, we would have been as Sodom, and we would have been like Gomorrah. This place Paul the Apostle explains more fully to the Romans, writing: I say therefore, has God rejected his people? By no means: For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew (Romans 11:1-2). And a little later: Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace (Romans 11:5). From this it is shown that the earlier prophetic discourse against Jerusalem and Judah is not referring to the time of the Babylonian captivity, but to the final period of the Romans, when the remnants of the Jewish people were saved in the Apostles; and on one day three thousand believed, and on another five thousand, and the Gospel was spread

throughout the whole world. In the Lord of hosts, which we, following Aquila, translate into Latin, it is read in Hebrew as Lord Sabaoth, which the Septuagint interpreters, depending on the context, translate in two ways: either Lord of hosts, or Lord Almighty. And let it be sought whether it is said of the Father or of the Son. There is no doubt that what is read in the twenty-third (or fourth) psalm: Lift up your gates, O princes, and be lifted up, eternal gates, and the king of glory will enter. Who is this king of glory? The Lord of hosts (Psalm 23:7-8), that is, the Lord of powers, he is the king of glory, to be referred to Christ, who after the triumph of his passion ascended to the heavens as the victor. And in another place it is said about the Lord, that he is the king of glory: For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory (I Cor. II, 8). Therefore, not only according to the Apocalypse of John and the Apostle Paul, but also in the Old Testament, the Lord of hosts, that is, the Almighty, is called Christ. For if all things are the Father's, and as he himself says in the Gospel: All power is given to me in heaven and on earth (Matth. XXVIII, 18); and: All mine are yours, and I am glorified in them; why should not the name of the Almighty also be referred to Christ: so that as God of God, and Lord of Lords, so may the Almighty Son be?

1:10

(Verse 10) Hear the word of the Lord, rulers of Sodom: listen with your ears to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah. After preserving the remnants of the people of Israel through the Apostles, the Scribes and Pharisees, and the people who cried out: Crucify, crucify him (John 19, 6), the prophetic word turns; and it calls them rulers of Sodom and people of Gomorrah, according to what we read in the following: They have declared and shown their iniquity like Sodom. Woe to their souls: for they have devised an evil counsel against themselves, saying: Let us bind the just, because he is unprofitable to us (Isaiah 3). Therefore, the rulers are called of Sodom, and the people of Gomorrah, because they have devised an evil counsel, and have bound the just, and have said: We have no king but Caesar (John 19:15). And again: We know that God spoke to Moses: but as for this man, we know not from whence he is (John 9:29). At the same time boasting in the Gospel: We are the seed of Abraham and have never served anyone (John 8:53); they hear from the Lord and Savior: If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham; and again: You were born of the devil as your father, and you want to do the works of your father (ibid., 39). Such a thing Ezekiel also speaks to Jerusalem: Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite (Ezekiel 16:45). The Hebrews say that Isaiah was killed for two reasons: because he called the princes of Sodom and the people of Gomorrah, and because while the Lord was saying to Moses, You cannot see my face (Exodus 33:20), he dared to say, I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne (Isaiah 6:1); without considering that the seraphim cover the face and feet of God, or their own, because it is ambiguously read in Hebrew, and Isaiah writes that he only saw the middle part of Him. Therefore, a human being cannot see the face of God. However, angels in the Church always see the face of God, even the faces of the least. And now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. When we progress from being human to being angels, we will be able to say with the Apostle: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. Although no creature can see the face of God according to its own nature, it is seen in the mind when it is believed to be invisible.

1:11

(Verse 11) What use to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord. I am full. I do not desire burnt sacrifices of rams, or the fat of fattened cattle, or the blood of bulls, or lambs, or goats. Because they exist, I did not desire them. The Septuagint translates 'I do not desire' as 'I will not desire', using the present tense instead of the past tense. Furthermore, according to the Hebrew, it demonstrates that God never desired the sacrifices of the Jews, as we read in the forty-ninth psalm: I will not accept a bull from your house, or goats from your flocks. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I have known all the flying creatures of the sky, and the beauty of the field is with me. If I were hungry, I would not say to you: for the world is mine and all its fullness. Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? (Psalm 49, seq.) And when he rejected the ceremonies of the old Law, he passed on to the purity of the Gospel and showed what he desires for these things: Sacrifice to God the sacrifice of praise, and pay your vows to the Most High. Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you, and you will honor me. Therefore, the content of this chapter, up to the point where it says: Judge the orphan, defend the widow, and come, let us reason together: it rejects sacrifices of victims and teaches that obedience to the Gospel is a superior sacrifice. And what he brings is to be understood in this sense: I am full, I need nothing: the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof (Psalm 24:1). Therefore, we have all received from his fullness. This can also be understood about those who, not obeying God's precepts, believe they can redeem themselves with gifts and offerings to God: or those who offer stolen goods and ill-gotten gains on the altar and to the poor.

1:12

(Verse 12.) For who indeed sought these things from your hands? Let the Ebionites hear, who after the passion of Christ think that the Law has been abolished and should be observed. Let the associates of the Ebionites hear, who decree that these things should be observed only by Jews and those of Israelite descent. Therefore, the offering and sacrifice of victims were not primarily sought by God, but so that they would not be made to idols; and so that we might pass from carnal victims, as it were by a type and image, to spiritual sacrifices. But by saying that he did not desire sacrifices, he showed that the law is spiritual: and that all the things that the Jews do in a carnal way are fulfilled spiritually by us.

1:13

(Ver. 13.) You will not trample on my courtyard. Note that after the devastation of Babylon, the Temple was built again by Zerubbabel: and for many years sacrifices have been offered in the Temple (1 Esdras, 5). Therefore, it indicates the final destruction of the Temple under Vespasian and Titus, which will persist until the end of the world.

1:14

(Verse 14.) I will not bear your new moons, and sabbaths, and other feasts: your assemblies are wicked. Every gathering that does not offer spiritual sacrifices, and does not listen to what is sung in the fiftieth psalm: A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit: a broken and humbled heart God does not despise, is abominable to God. And therefore it connects and says: Your new moons and solemnities. So that it does not call them their own feasts: but those who misuse them. And as the Seventy translated, fasting and idleness: we can say that fasting is accepted by God, because it does not have the idleness of good works. My soul hates it. Anthropomorphically, not that God has

a soul; but it speaks with our affection.

1:15 (Verse 15) You have become wearisome to me; I will by no means forgive your sins. Regarding this, Aquila interpreted, 'I labored and endured.' Symmachus, feeling sorry, said, 'I have failed in seeking mercy,' in order to show that he will no longer have compassion, because it is one thing for a servant sent to him to be killed, and another for a Son. We read this same meaning in the prophet Hosea: 'Your destruction, Israel; only in me is your help' (Hosea 13:9). This is understood thus: Perish, Israel, not by your merit, but only by my help are you saved. Your hands are full of blood. The reason is clear why God turns His eyes away from you and does not listen to your multiplied prayer: because you have shed the blood of the righteous, and the wicked farmers have killed the heir sent to them. Therefore, the Savior speaks to them: And you, fill up the measure of your fathers (Matth. XXIII, 31). For they have killed the messengers sent to them: you kill the Son of the Master of the house. This testimony should be used against those who, while having their hands full of blood with their daily works, join in prayer day and night.

1:16

(Verse 16.) Wash yourselves, be clean. For the previous sacrifices, and burnt offerings, and the fat of the rich, and the blood of bulls and goats: and for the incense and new moons, sabbaths, feast days and fasts, calends and other solemnities, the religion of the Gospel is pleasing to me: that you may be baptized in my blood through the washing of regeneration, which alone can forgive sins. For unless one is born again of water and the Spirit, they will not enter the kingdom of heaven (John 3:5). The Lord himself, ascending to the Father, said: Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

Remove the evil of your thoughts from my sight. As John the Baptist said: 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit worthy of repentance.' (Matt. III, 7; Luke III, 7) So, whoever has received Christ's baptism, let them remove evil from their heart and cease to do evil, and afterwards learn to do good, according to what is commanded elsewhere: 'Turn away from evil and do good.' (Ps. XXXVI, 27)

Learn to do good. Therefore virtue must be learned, and the good of nature alone is not sufficient for justice, unless someone is educated in appropriate disciplines (I Pet. II, 11). Jesus also son of Sirach speaks as follows: You have desired wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord will give it to you. And in the following, the same Isaiah mentions: Everyone who has not learned justice on earth will not do truth (Ch. XXVI, 10, sec. LXX). Therefore, justice must be learned, and the thresholds of wise teachers must be worn away.

1:18

(Verse 18) Seek justice, come to the aid of the oppressed, judge the orphan, defend the widow; and come, argue with me," says the Lord. The sacrificial laws of the Jews are replaced by the commands of the Gospel, and therefore provision is made for orphans and widows, so that the spouses and children can proceed to war without concern for their protection. But when you do these things, argue with me if I do not give the rewards that I have promised. However, when he says, "Seek justice," he shows that not everyone judges correctly, but only those who are prudent. Finally, Solomon, in a vision through a dream, asked this of the Lord: that having received wisdom, he would justly judge the people.

If your sins are scarlet, they shall be made white as snow; and if they are red like crimson, they shall be white as wool. The primary order is this: for it is not enough to say 'be washed', unless it is joined with 'be made clean': so that after the washing of the heart they may have the purity of life. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8). And when they have the purity of heart, they must remove evil from their minds, not in the sight of men, but in the sight of God, who can conceal nothing. And that joins: Rest from acting perversely, that Evangelical saying sounds: Behold, you have been made whole: now do not sin, lest something worse happen to you (John 5, 14). Therefore, departing from vices, let him learn what is good, seek judgment, assist the oppressed, support the orphan and the widow: and if he does this, then the sins, which were previously as scarlet, will be forgiven: and the works of blood and flesh will be changed by the garment of the Lord, which is made from the fleece of the Lamb, whom they follow in the Apocalypse (Chapter 5), those who shine with the whiteness of virginity.

1:19-26

(Verse 19, 26.) If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. Free will is preserved, so that on either side, not by the prejudice of God, but by the merits of each individual, there may be either punishment or reward. By the good of the land, I believe those things are meant that we read of in the psalm: I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 27:13); and: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:3). Certainly, because he spoke to the Jews, who were not yet able to understand spiritual things, he promises them the goods of the present age, so that they may at least be enticed by the present things and do what is commanded. And because they did not want to listen, but on the contrary provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, therefore the sword devoured them, that is, the Roman army destroyed them. And he says that all these things will happen because the mouth of the Lord has spoken. His judgment, with the sins of men remaining, cannot be changed.

1:21

(Verse 21) How has the faithful city become a harlot, full of judgment: justice dwelled in it but now murderers. The Hebrew word Jalin (), which the LXX translated, means slept; and it rested, and it will rest, that is, it signifies the past and future tense. Hence, both Aquila and Theodotio say it as if in the future. But the Prophet marvels in a prophetic spirit that the city which was once faithful, or a refuge for the faithful, has suddenly become a harlot. Which indeed can be understood even in the time of Isaiah: but it is more fully referred to the passion of Christ, when all turned away, together became useless (Ps. XIII, 3). And although in Hebrew there is no Zion: yet the Seventy, in order to make the meaning more evident, added it. But Zion is a mountain on which the city of Jerusalem was founded: which, after being captured by David, was called the city of David. Nor do I doubt that there were holy men in it when it had the tabernacle of God, and afterwards the Temple was built: when Nathan and Gad prophesied: and over the choirs (which are more fully described in the book of Chronicles) Asaph, and Idithun, and Eman, and the sons of Kore were appointed, so that religion might gradually transition from the sacrifices of victims to the praises of the Lord (I Chr. XXV). Therefore, the city of the faithful, which was once full of judgment and justice, now is full of murderers: those who killed the prophets and the Lord Himself, the Savior. But Jerusalem's fornication, how she spread her legs to everyone passing by, is depicted by the name Oolibah in

the book of Ezekiel, which means 'my tent is in her,' which is now expressed in different words as 'justice has rested in her.' For 'justice' in Hebrew is written as Sedec (), which sounds more like 'just' than 'justice,' so that we may understand that the Lord dwelled in her first, as it is said elsewhere: 'But what has the just one done?' The Lord is in his holy temple: the Lord's throne is in heaven. (Psalm 11:4) We can interpret all these things allegorically in reference to the soul of a once holy man, in which God's righteousness resided before he sinned, and in which demonic murderers dwelled as guests of God.

1:22 (Verse 22.) Your silver has turned into dross. The city of Zion speaks, in which righteousness once rested: that silver, namely the doctrine of the Scriptures, about which we read in the Psalms: The words of the Lord are pure words: silver tried by fire, purified seven times (Psalm 12:6), has turned into dross, which in Hebrew is called Sigim: namely, the rust of metals, or impurities and dirt, which are refined by fire, so that it may keep the metaphor because he mentioned silver. However, it can also be said that the righteous and holy men who previously lived in the city later fell into the filth of sins. Your innkeepers mix wine with water. For Symmachus translated, Your wine is mixed with water. And the meaning is: The law of God, pure and sincere, and (so to speak) supported by pure truth (Matth. XV), was violated by the traditions of the Pharisees: which the Lord more fully teaches in the Gospel, that they have neglected the law of God and followed the commandments of men. And every teacher who, as much as he can, corrects those who listen to the severity of the Scriptures, turns them towards grace: and he speaks in such a way that he does not correct but pleases his listeners; he violates the wine of the holy Scriptures and corrupts it with his own interpretation. Heretics also corrupt the evangelical truth with wicked intelligence, and they are the worst merchants, making water out of wine, when on the contrary our Lord turned water into wine (John 2), and such wine that the master of the feast marveled at; just as the queen of Sheba marveled at the attendants and wine stewards at the banquet of Solomon, praising them with her voice (2 Chronicles 9). But even Ecclesiastes describes the ministries of wine and his own banquet in mystical language (Ecclesiastes 2). Aquila, συμπ■σιον, that is, convivium, is interpreted as a drinking party, which among the Greeks is rightly called ■π■ το■ π■του, but among us it is more accurately referred to as a feast.

1:23

(Verse 23.) Your leaders were disobedient, partners of thieves. Aquila, departing from the disobedient, interpreted for Symmachus, who turned aside. But the leaders called the scribes and the Pharisees, who departed from the Lord, indeed, abandoning the path of truth, they walked in a crooked way, and became accomplices of the traitor and the thieves of Judah. Indeed, we must be careful not to be called thieves ourselves, but rather partners of thieves, by accepting gifts from the people of the world who accumulate riches through the tears of the poor and through robberies. And it is said to us, You saw a thief, and you ran with him, and with adulterers you set your portion (Ps. 49:18).

Everyone loves gifts, they pursue rewards. Even those who love gifts are counted among the vices. It is not said about those who receive: for this often happens out of necessity; but about those who do not consider friends unless they have received gifts from them: they do not consider their friends' faces, but their hands; and they judge as holy those whose purse they empty; about whom Ecclesiastes also speaks: Whoever loves money will not be satisfied with money (Eccles. V,

9). Such are the following retaliations, that they praise those from whom they have received something, or certainly they give nothing unless they think they will receive it from whom. As for retaliations, Symmachus interpreted them as vicissitudes or vengeance, so that those who repay evil for evil and tooth for tooth, eye for eye (Exod. XXI) are also at fault; and they do not imitate that of David: If I have repaid those who repay me with evil (Psal. VII, 5); and of Jeremiah saying of the just man: He will give his cheek to the striker, he will be filled with reproaches (Lam. III, 30): to fulfill the Evangelical man, about whom it is said: If someone strikes you on the cheek, offer him the other cheek also (Matth. V, 39).

1:24

(Verse 24) For this reason, says the Lord of hosts, the strong one of Israel: For the strong one of Israel, because they all similarly changed, only the seventy, desiring something unknown, set down: Woe to the strong ones of Israel; which we can explain in this way, saying, even the princes and the robust ones will be rebuked, of whom it is written: The powerful ones will bear torments powerfully (Wisdom 6:7); and: To whom much is given, much will be required from him (Luke 12:48). We will use this testimony, if ever there is a need to oppose the leaders of the Church, who undermine their own dignity with their actions.

Alas, I will find comfort in my enemies, and I will avenge my adversaries. Furthermore, in this, which is not found in Hebrew, they place the Seventy, 'For my wrath has not ceased against my enemies.' However, the Scribe and the Pharisees are rebuked, of whom also it speaks in the Gospel: Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! (Matthew 23:13ff). And in another place: An adulterous and perverse generation seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet (Matthew 12:39). But the most merciful Father laments over the guilty princes and calls them his enemies, and he calls his enemies, because they perish, because they do not want to repent, because they did not receive him when he came. As he approached Jerusalem, he wept and said: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the Prophets and stones those who were sent to you, how often I wanted to gather your children, as a hen gathers her chicks, and you did not want to! Therefore, the consolation of God towards his enemies and adversaries is that those who have not perceived his kindness may be corrected by punishments.

1:25

(Verse 25) And I will turn my hand against you; and I will thoroughly purge away your dross and take away all your alloy. Regarding the dross, which Symmachus interpreted as 'στμφολα' (clusters of grapes), Aquila as 'γγαρτδς' (bunch of grapes), and Theodotion as 'acinum uvae' (grape kernel), the Septuagint alone, translating more the sense than the words, understood it as 'unbelievers' or 'disobedient ones'. For after he had said, 'Your silver has become dross,' he now uses a metaphor, that he may stretch out his hand over it, that is, extend his hand for punishment and cleansing, and purge away all the filth and vices of sins, so that, the alloy being separated, pure silver may remain, which cannot be made without fire, through which he signifies that they will suffer torments. We also read in Malachi about the Lord: He will come forth like a flame of a smelting furnace, and like the herb of the fullers, and He will sit refining and purifying like silver and gold; and He will purify the sons of Levi (Malachi 3:2-3), so that after they have been cleansed, it may be said of them: And they shall be the Lord's offering in righteousness. Ezekiel also says that the whole house of Israel is mixed with brass, iron, lead, and tin, and needs to be purified; so that

after it has been purified, it may recognize that He is the Lord (Ezekiel 22:18). But also in the Gospel under another metaphor the same meaning is shown: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. (Matthew 3:12).

1:26

(Verse 26.) And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and her penitents with righteousness. But rebels and sinners shall be broken together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed. For they shall be ashamed of the oaks that you desired, and you shall blush for the gardens that you have chosen. For you shall be like an oak whose leaf withers, and like a garden without water. And the strong shall become tinder, and his work a spark, and both of them shall burn together, with none to quench them. Your chosen trees shall become fuel for the fire, and the people shall labor in vain, and the nations shall weary themselves for nothing. The Lord's hand shall be raised against Mount Zion, and he will lay it waste; its fields shall become a desolation, and its cities a ruin. Then will the Lord cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst and storm and hailstones. The Assyrians will be terror-stricken at the voice of the Lord, when he strikes with his rod. And every stroke of the appointed staff that the Lord lays on them will be to the sound of tambourines and lyres. Battling with brandished arm, he will fight with them. For a burning place has long been prepared; indeed, for the king it is made ready, its pyre made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it. Therefore, it will restore the likeness of the Judges: either after the Babylonian captivity, as the Jews desire, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the other leaders who governed the people until Hircanus, whom Herod succeeded in the kingdom; or certainly, more truly and rightly, the Apostles, and those who believed through the Apostles, and were established as leaders of the Church, as we have said at the beginning of this vision, that both the warning and the promise pertain to the time of the Lord's passion, and to the faith which he founded the Church after his passion.

After this you shall be called the city of the just, the faithful city. These things clearly pertain to the Church, which will believe in the Lord, both concerning the Jews and the Gentiles, as the prophetic word includes. However, the city of the just, that is, of the Lord Savior, shall also be called just, of which it is said: A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden (Matt. 5:14). Calling it faithful, he also indicates that it should be called a metropolis according to the Septuagint, by those who will believe in the Lord.

1:27-29

(Verse 27-29.) Zion will be redeemed by justice, and they will bring her back to righteousness. And it will crush the wicked and sinners together; and those who have forsaken the Lord will be consumed. For they will be confounded by the idols to which they sacrificed, and you will be ashamed of the gardens you have chosen. Not all will be redeemed, nor will all be saved, but only the remnant, as mentioned before. However, they will be brought back to righteousness once the wicked and sinners have been crushed, and those who have forsaken the Lord will be consumed. And when they are saved, they will be ashamed of those who previously sacrificed to idols, and

they will blush in the gardens they had chosen. However, it signifies places of luxury, groves and forests.

1:30

(Verse 30) For they will be like a terebinth tree with falling leaves; and like a garden, or a paradise, without water. Until today, the Jews reading the holy Scriptures are like terebinth trees or oaks, as Symmachus interpreted. And according to the Gospel (Matthew 21), the withered fig tree, from which the Lord sought fruits and did not find any, he cursed with eternal dryness. But even the leaves and fruits of words have now ceased to be among them: the well-watered garden, that is, the knowledge of the Scriptures, or the paradise of various trees, which is without spiritual grace, does not even produce vegetables, about which the Apostle speaks: Let him that is weak eat vegetables (Romans 14:2). And with dried roots, all the freshness has turned into dryness and decay.

1:31 (Verse 31.) And your strength will be like the ash of the broom. For ash, **■ποτ■ναγμα** is interpreted by Symmachus: when the broom is beaten, and whatever dirt it has is thrown away. So all the strength and pride of the sinners and evildoers of Israel, who have forsaken the Lord, and therefore have been consumed: and they have sacrificed to idols, and are ashamed in the gardens, which they have chosen; they will be reduced to the refuse of the broom, which is consumed by a light fire. For it follows: And her work, that is, your strength, or idolatry, in which you have erred, will be consumed by a small spark. And both will be kindled together: and there will be no one to extinguish it. And surely the knowledge of the Jews, and all the works they do, whether it be idolatry or Jerusalem, in which idolatry was found: and when the Lord kindles it, no one will be able to extinguish it. All these things we can understand about conflicting teachings: that both teachers and disciples will perish together, and all their works will be fuel for the fire.

2:1

(Chapter 2, Verse 1) The word that Isaiah, the son of Amos, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And in the previous Vision, which we have already explained, where the Septuagint translates it, it is written in Hebrew as 'Al Juda UJerusalem' (); and in this second one, it is likewise contained in Hebrew. And I wonder why the Septuagint interpreters said 'concerning Judah and Jerusalem' in that one, and 'about Judah and Jerusalem' in this one; unless perhaps because there it is called a sinful nation, a people full of sins, an evil seed, sons of iniquity, and princes of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, and a harlot city, and other such things, they translated more for the sense rather than the word: and here, because prosperity is immediately promised: In the last days, the mountain of the Lord shall be revealed, and the house of God on the top of the mountains, not against Judah and Jerusalem, but about Judah and Jerusalem they understood the prophecy: since we also read in that one, after the threat of prosperity: I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as in the beginning: after this you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city; and in this one, after prosperity, there shall be a fierce threat. Behold, the Lord, the ruler of hosts, will take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the mighty and strong, all the strength of bread and all the strength of water, and the rest. Therefore, according to the Hebrew and in that vision, and in that discourse which Isaiah, the son of Amos, saw, it is to be understood about Judah and Jerusalem: not against Judah and Jerusalem, or for Judah and Jerusalem, as Symmachus translated: but absolutely, about Judah and Jerusalem, in which both

joyful and sad things can be contained. And this should be considered, that there he may see a vision; here the Word, which was in the beginning with God: and in that place threatening the Jews, he may come for the salvation of the Gentiles; in this place, starting from the salvation of the Gentiles, punishing Israel, he may gather those who believe in Christ's Church from both callings.

2:2 (Verse 2) And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains. In the Book of Genesis, we read about the last days, where Jacob called his sons and said to them: Come, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days (Gen. XLIX, 1): later to Judah, from whose lineage Christ was born, he said: The prince shall not fail from Judah, nor the ruler from his thigh, until he comes to whom it is laid up: and he shall be the expectation of the nations. In his last days there will be the final hour, of which the Apostle John speaks: Little children, it is the last hour (2 John 1:18); in which a stone cut without hands grew into a great mountain and filled the whole earth: from which the prince of Tyre is said to be wounded in Ezekiel (Ezekiel 8:16, according to the Septuagint). This mountain is in the house of the Lord, which the Prophet longs for, saying: One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I will seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life (Psalm 27:4); and of which Paul writes to Timothy: But if I delay, I write so that you may know how it is necessary to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth (1 Timothy 3:15). This house has been built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, who themselves are also the mountains, as imitators of Christ (Ephesians 2). Of this house, the Psalmist proclaims: Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which will not be moved forever, those who dwell in Jerusalem. Mountains surround it, and the Lord surrounds his people (Psalm 125:1). Therefore, Christ builds the Church upon one of the mountains and says to him: You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). What does it matter to one who longs for his own soul, and eagerly desires to see the house of God, that the saint speaks: Why are you downcast, my soul, and why are you troubled? (Psalm 41:6) And again: I remembered this and poured out my soul within me, for I shall pass over to the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the house of God: in the voice of rejoicing and confession, the sound of those feasting. (Ibid., 5). They have moved, O Lord, your manifest mountain, and the house of God above the heads of the mountains. (Psalm 67:26). Which testimony Micah the prophet also gave in the same words, which I have explained in its place (Micah 1). And he shall be lifted up upon the hills. He who is shown and prepared on the heads of the mountains, he shall be lifted up upon the hills. Concerning those mountains and hills, in the Song of Songs the bride speaks: The voice of my brother: behold, he comes leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills: my brother is like a roe or a young hart on the mountains of Bethel (Song of Songs 2:8-9). And all nations shall flow unto him: all peoples shall come. For all nations shall serve him, to whom it was said: Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thy inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession (Psalm 2:8); that they may serve him under one yoke, as the same prophet testifies: From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, the children of my dispersed, shall bring me an offering (Zephaniah 3:10). And in the seventy-first psalm we read: In his sight the Ethiopians shall fall down (Psalm 71:9). In the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.

2:3 (Verse 3.) And they shall say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths. The nations and

peoples, not content with their own salvation, will encourage one another and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob. Concerning these, as we have said before, it is the mountain of the Lord that is prepared and the house of the Lord that is established upon the top of the mountains. But the house of the Lord is called the house of the God of Jacob, so that we may receive the Old Testament and not, like the Manicheans, seek another house outside the house of the God of Jacob. But when we are in the house of the God of Jacob, then he will teach us his ways, by which we will walk towards him, and we will walk in his paths, which others have also walked. Finally, Jesus, ascending the mountain, taught his disciples the eight beatitudes, and other things which are included in the Gospel discourse (Luke VI). First, the ways of the Lord must be descended; and afterwards, we must walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Many nations and peoples will come together and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and so on. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, not from Sinai, or from the wilderness, or from Mount Horeb, but from Mount Zion, where Jerusalem is built, and from Jerusalem, where the Temple and the worship of God are. We read that often the Lord taught in the Temple (Matthew 13), and that it was not fitting for a prophet to die outside of Jerusalem, and that both the word and the law are named together. The rulers are commanded to hear the word, and the people to perceive the law with their ears. Whoever makes the law first, later comes to the word of God. But also in Jerusalem, the first Church founded scattered the churches of the whole world. And it is to be said that whoever is in the watchtower and in the vision of peace, in this is the law and the word of the Lord established. And beautifully he said: in Zion and in Jerusalem there will be, and the word and law of the Lord will remain; but it will go forth, so that from that fountain all nations may be signified to be irrigated by the teaching of God. And he shall judge the people, and shall reprove many nations. Therefore, judging must also take place among the nations: not all unbelievers are to be condemned with the same judgment, but they will suffer different things according to the diversity of their merits. But after the nations have been judged, then he shall reprove many peoples, or as the Septuagint translated it, a multitude of people. And note the order: the nations shall be judged, because they will believe. For he who does not believe has already been judged (John 3:18). But the multitude, which is understood as Israel, will by no means be judged, but will be reprovved, because it did not receive the Son of God sent to them.

2:4

(Verse 4.) And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. All the eagerness for war will be turned to peace, and instead of discord there will be harmony throughout the world. Swords will be transformed into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks, so that, having set aside the frenzy of warfare, they may serve agriculture, and with fruitful sickles they may reap abundant harvests. This can also be understood spiritually, when every hardness of our hearts is broken by the plowshare of Christ, and the thorns of vices are uprooted, so that the seed of God's word may grow into fruits: and afterwards we shall enjoy the fruits of our labors, when those who sow in tears shall come in joy, carrying their sheaves (Psalm 126:6).

34 The nations will not lift sword against nation, nor will they learn war anymore. Let us revisit the ancient histories, and we will find that until the twenty-eighth year of the reign of Caesar Augustus (in whose forty-first year Christ was born in Judaea), there was discord throughout the whole world, and each nation rose up against its neighboring peoples with a desire for battle, so that they

would strike and be struck. But when the Lord and Savior arose, at the time when a census was first taken of the whole world under the governorship of Syria by Quirinius, and peace was prepared for the Evangelical doctrine by the Roman Empire, all wars ceased, and they were no longer exercised in battles through towns and villages, but were instead devoted to the cultivation of the land, with the duty of fighting against barbarian nations being entrusted solely to Roman soldiers and legions. This was when that song of the angels was fulfilled: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will (Luke 2:14); and in his days justice and a multitude of peace arose.

2:5-6

(Vers. 5, 6.) Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the Lord: for you have cast off your people, the house of Jacob. After the calling of the Gentiles, and the manifestation of the mountain of the Lord upon the top of the mountains, to His people, that is, the people of Judah, who is called the house of Jacob, the Prophet turns and exhorts them, so that those who are in the darkness of error may receive the light of truth and walk in the light of the Lord. And he sings in a certain way the words of David: Come to Him and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be confounded (Ps. 33:6). For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, so that their works may not be exposed. But you, O house of Jacob, the people of my nation, come with me, and let us walk together in the light of the Lord. Let us receive the Gospel of Christ, and let us be enlightened by him who says: 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12). And when he had spoken this to the people of the Jews, seeing their unrepentant hearts and their souls hardened by disbelief, he makes an address to the Lord and says: Therefore, I urge them to come to you and partake of your light with me, because they have forsaken your people, the house of Jacob, due to the deservedness of their sins.

2:7 (Verse 7) Because they were once filled, and they had augurs, like the Philistines. For the Philistines always interpreted seventy foreign guests as their own, a common name for a particular people, which is today the nation of the Palestinians, as if they were Philistines, because the Hebrew language does not have the letter P; but instead uses the Greek letter Phi. Therefore, what is said in the Psalms, with the enumeration of other nations: "Foreigners have submitted to me" (Psalm 59:10), does not mean all foreign nations, but specifically the Palestinians. And the reasons why God expelled his people, the house of Jacob, from the land are as follows: because, as he says, they were full, just as they were in the beginning, of soothsayers, and omens, and all the filth of idolatry. We know, from Moses' writing, that we should not pay attention to omens or auguries, which the nations that the Lord expelled from the presence of Israel, the Canaanites, the Amorites, and the Hittites, practiced. The interpreters of the Church have interpreted this passage differently, one from another. What does this want to signify? That, after the population of the Jews was expelled, the Roman army entered the land once promised; and after the Jews were driven out, foreign peoples inhabited Judea, who were immigrants from different nations all over the world, brought by Titus, Vespasian, Hadrian, and other leaders. However, others think that this does not pertain to Roman times, but to earlier times, before they were devastated by the Babylonians, as they are said to have been under impious kings and were abandoned by the Lord. And they befriended foreign boys. For which reason, seventy were transferred: And many children of foreigners were born to them. Symmachus: And they applauded with foreign children. For which reason, it is written in Hebrew, 'they adhaeserunt', which the Hebrews interpret as ■σφην■θησαν,

and we translate as 'they befriended', in order to display the shamefulness of vices in the Jewish nation. In fact, the Greeks and Romans were once afflicted by this vice, so much so that even the most renowned philosophers of Greece openly had lovers: and Adrian, skilled in the arts of philosophy, consecrated Antinous as a god, and established a temple for him, along with sacrifices and priests, and from him the city and region of Egypt received its name. Also, among the prostitutes in the brothels, boys stood exposed to public lust: until under the emperor Constantine, the shining Gospel of Christ, and the infidelity of all nations, and this wickedness was abolished. Moreover, the fact that their wives were violated by the Jews is indicated by the number seventy, which signifies the production of alien children. Symmachus, in a certain oration, with an honorable discourse, demonstrated the same abomination with boys.

2:8 (Verse 8) And the land was filled with silver and gold, and there was no end to its treasure. Among the other vices of the earth, the house of Jacob is also counted for its abundance of gold and silver. Among all the omens and divinations, the horses and chariots that God prohibited the kings of Israel from multiplying are condemned. Among the idols, which are the works of human hands, greed is condemned. Therefore, the Lord commanded in the Gospel not to store up treasures for ourselves on earth, and not to make treasures that can be stolen by thieves, ultimately stating: You cannot serve both God and money (Matthew 6:24). However, that little phrase is beautiful: The miser always lacks, as the Prophet indicates with these words: 'And there is no end to his treasures.' Not that treasures do not have an end, but that the mind of the possessor is not satisfied. Both the Jewish and Roman nations are stung by these words of greed. Indeed, both Greek and Latin histories recount that there is nothing more greedy than the Jewish and Roman peoples. The law on recovering misappropriated funds was established, and we see every day that Apostolic saying being fulfilled: You who forbid stealing, do you steal? (Rom. II, 21). The judge hears the thief and condemns the more thieving judge, while passing judgment on someone else. And his land is filled with horses and his innumerable chariots. For it is not worthy to be numbered what is possessed against the command of God. Hence it says in the Psalms: A deceitful horse for salvation (Psalm 32:17). And in Exodus: He threw the horse and the charioteer into the sea (Exodus 15:1). And in another psalm: Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will invoke the name of the Lord our God (Psalm 20:8). However, both can be understood, that the people of Judah multiplied horses and chariots against God's command, and that the land of Judah is filled with the horses and chariots of the victors.

2:9

(Verse 9) And his land was filled with idols: they worshipped the work of their own hands, what their fingers have made. And man bowed down, and the man was humbled. Where once stood the Temple and the religion of God, there stood the statue of Hadrian and the idol of Jupiter. Many interpret this as a testimony, which we read in the Gospel: But when you see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place (Mark 13:14). And they inclined the works of their hands: and man, a rational animal, adored copper and stone. However, there are those who interpret these things about the Jews, that before they were taken captive by the Babylonians, they did all these things, and therefore they were abandoned by God. Therefore, at the end of the chapter it is stated: Therefore, do not let them go. In accordance with the anagoge, we can also say this, that every doctrine contrary to truth adores the works of its own hands, and establishes idols in its own land, and man is bowed down, and the man is humbled, and he cannot raise himself up: because

he is bound by the devil, unless the Lord raises him up, like that woman whom Satan had bound for eighteen years, so that she could never look up to heaven, but constantly looked at the earth (Luke 13).

Therefore, do not let them go. For this is how the Seventy translated it: And I will not let them go. If God is speaking, it is to be understood thus: Because they have done so much, I will not spare them, nor will I forgive such countless sins. If it is the Prophet speaking, it is to be understood thus: Therefore, do not let them go, those who have committed such wickedness. But if we understand it of the Romans, the truer interpretation is: those who have overthrown the temple of God did not worship Him who granted victory, but instead worshipped idols made by their own hands. But if we speak about the Jewish people, the Prophets' words are harsh, as if they seem to pray against their own people, to whom he had said before: House of Jacob, come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

2:10

(Verse 10) Enter into the rock: Hide in the pit, covered by the ground, from the face of the fear of the Lord and from the glory of His majesty. Indeed, I have exhorted the people, saying: House of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord. But because the Lord has cast away the people of Jacob; for He has cast away, either because He has done it, or He has allowed it, as we have explained above; therefore, I foretell to you the evils that are to come, and I exhort you to enter the rocks and hide in the caves from the face of the Babylonian or Roman army, when all things will be devastated, according to what we read in the Gospel: Then they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the rocks, "Hide us" (Luke 23:30). According to the anagoge, it is commanded to us from the face of the Lord's majesty that we assume the strength of the rock, of which it is said: The rock is a refuge for the hares (Ps. 103:18). And, On the rock you have exalted me (Ps. 26:6). Moses is also placed in the hole of the rock, to see the later things of God (Exod. 33). And, The people drank from the spiritual rock that followed them (1 Cor. 10:4). And he who enters his chamber is hidden in the rock, and with the door closed he worships the Father, so that in his earthly body he does not feel the passing storms of the world.

2:11

(Verse 11) The lofty eyes of man will be humbled, and the pride of men will be brought low; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. When the enemies come and the Babylonian or Roman sword devastates every province, and the armies of warriors surround Jerusalem, then neither wealth, nor noble birth, nor the power of dignitaries will be able to defend anyone; but there will be one captivity for all, and only God will be exalted, and no one will be able to escape his wrath. Many understand this about the day of judgment, that every creature is humbled and bowed down in comparison to the divine glory, and feels that it is nothing.

2:12

(Verse 12) For the day of the Lord of hosts shall come upon all that is proud and lofty, and upon all that is arrogant; and they shall be brought low. These things are connected to the preceding ones. On that day, he says, the Lord alone shall be exalted, that is, on the day of the Lord's vengeance, the lofty and arrogant, and the high and mighty, shall be subjected to captivity and the sword. However, metaphorically speaking, the discourse pertains to the great and the princes: the more

they exalt themselves, the more they shall be humbled. For the Lord resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble (1 Pet. 5). Those who understand the day of judgment believe that the proud and lofty and exalted and arrogant are called the devil. Whoever speaks in pride says: I will set my throne above the stars of heaven; I will sit on the high mountain, above all the lofty mountains to the north; I will ascend above the clouds, I will be like the Highest (Isa. 14:13-14): when praise is perfected from the mouths of infants and nursing babies, so that the enemy and avenger may be destroyed (Ps. 8:3).

2:13

(Verse 13) And above all the tall and erect cedars of Lebanon, and above all the oaks of Bashan. And in the twenty-eighth psalm it is sung: The voice of the Lord breaking the cedars; the Lord will break the cedars of Lebanon and crush them like the calf of Lebanon (Psalm 28:5). And in the thirty-sixth psalm: I saw the wicked exalted and raised up like the cedars of Lebanon, and I passed by, and he was no more, and I searched for him, and his place was not found (Psalm 6:34). Basan also signifies the oak trees, which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotus have interpreted as δρῦς, as well as the acorns. We know that they bear fruit, but they are food for pigs, not for humans. Basan is a region in Arabia, over which Og ruled, who is called the king of Basan, and it is interpreted as αἰσχυνή, that is, ignominy. If we wanted to translate it into confusion, it would mean σιγγυσιν, that is, Babylon, more than Basan. Therefore, the vengeance of the Lord will rise against all those who rise up in arrogance, engage in ignominious acts, and revel in the filth of lust. But if a discerning reader should ask why cedar wood is placed in the temple of the Lord, and why we read in Psalm 103 according to the Hebrew truth, 'The trees of the Lord shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which thou hast planted: there the sparrows shall make their nests' (Psalm 103:18); and among the other trees even the cedars are called to praise the Lord; and in the coming of the Savior, when all the trees and the trees of the field shall clap their hands with their branches, it is written, 'I will set in the dry land a cedar and box tree, and a cypress, and a pine' (Isaiah 41:19, LXX): and now does the prophetic word threaten the day of the Lord upon the cedars of Lebanon? This must be said, that from the same kind of men, some are exalted to the kingdom, others are brought down to punishment, and the cedars of Lebanon, which are crushed because of their pride, are chosen when they have a good fragrance, and when they have said with the Apostle: We are the sweet odor of Christ (I Cor. II, 15).

2:14

(Verse 14.) And above all high mountains, and above all elevated hills. Just as for the variety of virtues, mountains and hills are called good things: so among the impious for the diversity of vices, and especially pride, some are mountains, some are hills, over which the day of the Lord will come, of which it is written in Ezekiel: Thus says the Lord God to the mountains and hills: behold, I will bring a sword upon you, and your high places shall be destroyed, and your altars shall be broken down, and the rest (Ezech. VI, 3).

2:15

(Verse 15) And over every high tower, and over every fortified wall. Those who refer these times to Vespasian and Adrian, say that the things written have been fulfilled in bodily form, that neither a high tower, nor a strongest wall, nor any multitude of ships and the industry of commerce, were

able to prevail against the power of the Roman army; but such fear had come upon the inhabitants of Judea, that they themselves, along with their wives and children, thinking that gold and silver would be of help to them, were submerged in the pits of the earth, and sought the deepest caves. For if the belly of the voracious and luxurious is God, why should gold and silver not be called God? Others refer these things to the times of Babylon. Therefore, according to the laws of tropology, let us go through each individual thing. A tower is built either for the defense of the city or for a lookout, so that the approaching enemy can be seen from afar. Therefore, each one of us must build a tower, after calculating the expenses, lest, according to the Gospel parable (Luke 14), when he cannot complete the work, he be laughed at. This well-constructed tower will persist. But if it is built in pride and does not have a strong foundation, it will fall on the one from whom it was built, just like that tower in Siloam, which killed eighteen men. Therefore, the Lord speaks to those who hear: 'And unless you repent, you will all likewise perish' (Luke 13:3). We will also read in the following that the Lord built a tower in his vineyard and made a winepress, and surrounded it with a wall, but all of these were destroyed and laid waste because they swelled with the empty pride of their arrogance (Isaiah 5). They also build high walls so that the city is not quickly destroyed, so that it is not open to enemies who surround it, fortified by men of great wisdom and by every means, so that no false doctrine prevails over the truth. God speaks about these walls to Jerusalem: 'Behold, I have depicted your walls on my hands, and they are always before me.' (Jeremiah XLV, 16, trans. LXX). But if those who had previously attacked the Church, upon discovering the truth, turn to faith and fight for it, which they had previously attacked, then this will be fulfilled: 'You will quickly be rebuilt by those by whom you were destroyed.' (Ibid., 17). In Leviticus, we also read that a house, which is in walled cities, if it has not been redeemed within a year, shall be confirmed to the buyer as a permanent possession, but if it is in villages and towns that do not have walls, it can always be redeemed, and the price of the buyer may fluctuate (Lev. XXV).

2:16

(Verse 16.) And over all the ships of Tarshish, and over everything that is beautiful to see. Regarding Tarshish, which all similarly transferred, only seventy interpreted the sea. The Hebrews believe that the sea of Tarshish is properly called () in their language, but when it is said Iam (), it is not called in the Hebrew language, but in the Syriac language. Josaphat also had ships that he would send to Tarshish (3 Kings 22:49), but they were broken in Asiongaber. Solomon also had ships that went to Tharsis (III Kings X, 22), and they would return after three years, bringing the king silver and gold, ivory and apes. But because both kings had sinned, one being devoted to pleasure and loving foreign women, and the other forming alliances with the king of Samaria, both of these actions are referred to the Gentiles and heretics, in whom there is nothing more than the appearance of eloquence, a sense constructed by the diabolical art, and a dead language that is interpreted in the teeth, and a likeness of human reason that is perceived in the apes. Therefore, in the Psalms, we read, "With a violent spirit, you will shatter the ships of Tharsis" (Psalm XLVII, 8). And concerning these ships, Isaiah also speaks; Woe to the wings of the ships, which are beyond Ethiopia (Below, chapter XVIII, 1, section LXX). But on the other hand, there are also good ships, of which it is said in the same psalms: Those who go down to the sea in ships, and do business in many waters. They have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep (Ps. CVI, 23). For those who are not idle in the waves of this world, but work and carry the Lord's

goods, and hasten to come to the harbor of rest, they see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep, when they have reached profound knowledge, and have searched out everything, that is, when they have also beheld the deep things of God and his wonders. Josephus believes that Tharsis is the city of Tarsus in Cilicia, while others think it is a region of India, and they also say that the gemstone called Chrysolithus, which we call Chrysolite, is named after this region because of its similar color to the sea. However, it is better to understand Tharsis as either the sea or the ocean. For Jonah, sailing from Joppa, could not reach India, which cannot be reached by the sea he sailed on; but he simply went out to sea and traveled to any islands. And what follows: And above all that is beautiful to see: or as the LXX translated, And above every aspect of the beauty of ships, to be understood in the same sense, that whatever is beautiful in words and constructed by human reason may be destroyed from the day of the Lord if it rises up against the knowledge of God.

2:18

(Verse 18) And the pride of men shall be humbled, and the lofty heights of men shall be brought low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and all idols shall be utterly crushed. Human discourse seems to have reason as long as it is not compared to divine knowledge. But when falsehood approaches truth like straw to fire, it is quickly consumed and perishes, and all the doctrines of falsity, which are now called idols, because they are feigned and fabricated, shall be utterly crushed.

2:19

(Verse 19) On that day, a man will cast away his silver idols and his gold images that he made for himself to worship moles and bats. He will enter the clefts of the rocks and the crevices of the cliffs, from the terror of the Lord and the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to shake the earth. We have often spoken of silver and gold in a figurative sense, expressing their capacity to speak or feel God, and praise their Creator, since they were given by God to humans for this purpose. However, they misuse this gift by using it to simulate idols, as it is written: I gave them silver and gold, but they used it to make Baal idols (Hosea 2:8). Therefore, when someone, terrified by the fear of the Lord, first places idols in the cave of their heart and hides them in the depths of the earth, not daring to bring forth what they have wrongly conceived, they make progress by throwing away what has been carved and refusing to allow it to exist within themselves. Concerning the moles, which we have interpreted as seventy, the Aquila put stones, Symmachus put unfruitful things, and Theodotion put the Hebrew word Phartharoth(). Now, the animal is blind, always digging into the earth, excavating the soil, and feeding on roots, harmful to crops: the Greeks call it aspalax. The bat, however, is a nocturnal bird, which received its fitting name νυκτερ■ζ because it flies at night. It is a small animal, similar to a mouse, not resonating so much with voice and song, as with a shrill sound. Since it appears to be flying, it shuns the light and does not tolerate seeing the sun. Idols have been compared to creatures of this kind, which dwell in blind and dark worship: and all doctrines contrary to truth. When they have been abandoned on the day of the Lord, those who have rejected them will enter into the cracks of rocks and caverns of stones, so that they may not engage in the dust of the earth and cheap mud, but be involved in sound reasoning, and find various openings of virtues through which they may be able to reach the truth. I have briefly described in this anagoge, as best I could, the times and

destruction of Jerusalem that the Hebrews refer to in Babylon, when the Lord rose to strike the land of the Jews.

2:20

(Verse 20.) Therefore cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for he is considered high. This was omitted by the LXX, and in the Greek copies it was added under asterisks by Origen from the edition of Aquila, which reads in Hebrew: Hedalu LachemMen Aadam Aser Nasama Baaphpho Chi Bama Nesab Hu. Where we said, he is considered high: Aquila interpreted it as, in whom he is considered high. The Hebrew word Bama (בָּמָה), or ψωμα in Greek, means 'high place' or 'exalted', which we read in both the Books of Kings and in Ezekiel. It is also written with the same letters as the Hebrew word Beth, Mem, He, and depending on the context, it can be read as Bamma, meaning 'high place', or Bama, meaning 'exalted'. Therefore, the Jews, understanding that it was a prophecy about Christ, interpreted the ambiguous word in a negative way, so that they would not appear to be praising Christ, but rather disregarding Him. For what is the consequence of words, and what is the order of reason and meaning, so that we may say: Since these things are so, and the day of the Lord is coming, when the whole Judaeen state will be destroyed, and everything will be demolished: I warn and command you to refrain from a man who breathes and lives like this, for he is considered nothing. Let no one praise any man in such a way as to say: Beware lest he offend him, who is indeed nothing at all. Therefore, on the contrary, understand it in this way: Since all these things are about to happen to you and are being proclaimed by the prophetic spirit, I warn and command you to abstain from him who, according to the flesh, is indeed a man, and has a soul, and breathes in this way, and draws breath through his nostrils, just as we humans breathe and live. But according to the divine majesty, he is both exalted, esteemed, and believed. Considering silently in my mind, I cannot find a reason why they did not want to translate such a clear prophecy about Christ into Greek. For the others, indeed, who translated [the text], brought forth an ambiguous meaning towards impiety, it is not surprising why they were interpreted badly, nor did they want to say something glorious about Christ, in whom they did not believe: namely, the Jews or Semijews, that is, the Ebionites. But that Christ is exalted and highest, who is called in another language among the Hebrews, Elion (אֵלִיּוֹן), we read in the 86th Psalm: Shall Zion say, 'This man was born in it', and the Highest himself hath founded it (Psalm 86:5)? And in the Gospel: And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High (Luke 1:76). And so that I don't go on a long rope (for in the interpretation of sacred Scriptures we should follow the truth, not contention), in this place 'Bama' among the Hebrews is not said to be lofty, but high, that is, the very height and sublimity: as if we were to say of someone, they are not divine, but divination: they are not a stream, but a fountain: they are not a man, but humanity itself. Origen interpreted this passage as follows: Because it is said singularly of one man, it can also be referred to the Lord Savior: as the Prophet commands, that they may rest from him who is esteemed in something great; although for the time being he appears as a man, and has the breath in his nostrils, just as other human beings breathe.

Book Two

Book Two

I have finished the first volume of Isaiah, which I dictated in quick speech, not as I wanted, but as I could: seeking the meaning of the Scriptures rather than the words of eloquent composition. Now I

will move on to the second volume, and with all the strength I have and a willing heart for the Lord, I will offer what the Prophet spoke through me: 'I have multiplied visions and have been likened to the hands of the Prophets' (Hosea 12:10). Therefore, I beg you, virgin of Christ Eustochium, that while we strive in the explanation of the Scriptures, you raise your hands to the Lord with Moses, so that we, who have crossed the Red Sea when leaving Egypt, may defeat Amalek, which signifies devouring and destroying. And with you, we may say: 'Blessed be the Lord, my God, who teaches my hands to fight and my fingers to battle' (Psalm 144:1).

3:1

(Chapter 3, Verse 1) For behold, the Lord God of hosts will take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the mighty and strong: all the strength of bread and all the strength of water. Thus far, they think it speaks of judgment. What follows speaks of the coming captivity; some interpret it as referring to the Babylonians, others to the Romans. But it is better, as we have said before, to refer all things to the Lord's passion. For after his death, all grace and gifts were taken away from the Jews, according to what is written in the Gospel: The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist (Matthew 11:13). And there is an order: Because you refused to stop from the man, whose spirit is in his nostrils, who is considered high: but on the contrary, you shed the blood of the righteous, and you devised the worst plan, saying: Let us bind the just, for he is useless to us (Wisdom II, 12); therefore you shall eat the fruit of your inventions. There is nothing strong among the Jews after the Passion of the Lord, nothing powerful: but everything is weak and feeble. And no one can say among them: I can do all things in him who strengthens me (Philippians IV, 13), Christ Jesus our Lord. And because we read 'strong' and 'strong woman' according to the Septuagint; we can apply it to the strong man: Until we all meet the perfect man, in the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). Furthermore, strong women: I want, he says, all of you to present yourself as a chaste virgin to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2). But strength is also found in bread, and strength in water, as food and drink are received. We read that Moses was on Mount Sinai for forty days, and did not eat bread or drink water (Exodus 34). Also to be heard is what is said to Adam: In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground from which you were taken (Gen. III, 19). Likewise, what is said by the Savior: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matth. IV, 4). Therefore, the strength of bread will be taken away from them: he who says: I am the living bread, which came down from heaven (John VI, 51). And the power of water, of which the same Lord spoke: Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again. But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never thirst again. But the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life (John 4:13). We read about such bread in Proverbs: Open your eyes and be filled with bread (Proverbs 20:13). The Jews have bread, but without strength; they have water, but without power. For they read the Scriptures, but do not understand. They hold on to the pages, and they have lost Christ, who is written in the pages (1 Corinthians 3). They are nourished with milk, like infants, and not with solid food. And because they have lost strength and are weak, they eat vegetables. But the solid food of athletes sustains human life and provides strength to the living (Romans 14). Concerning this bread and water, which are taken away from the Jews, another Prophet also testifies, saying: 'Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will send a famine on the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord' (Amos 8:11).

3:2

(Verse 2.) A strong and warrior man, judge and Prophet, and sorcerer, and elder. For the strong, which is only in Hebrew, both the Seventy translated as giant and strong, wanting the same person to be both giant and strong. About the strong it has been said above. But about the giant in a good sense, that is, about the Lord Savior, we read in the eighteenth psalm: He rejoiced as a giant to run his way: his going out is from the highest heaven, and his circuit reaches to the highest of it (Psalm XVIII, 8). But if we read, (Gen. X), we understand that Nimrod, who was a hunter before the Lord, was a giant and the giants (Gen. VI), for whom the flood came upon the earth, are to be understood in the opposite sense. Likewise, we understand the warrior man in the following story, that they were captured and continue to serve until this day, and have not thrown off the yoke of servitude. But they do not even have their own judges, and are subject to Roman judges, so much so that Roman princes judge their own princes who seem to be among the people. But we must also say this, that there is no warrior among them in the law, having the knowledge of judging: but all things are vain and fleeting, and full of foolishness. But concerning the Prophet, that he has ceased to exist among them, there is no doubt. We seek according to the Hebrew, how we should interpret the soothsayer, whom all have interpreted as divine: except for the seventy, who translated it as conjecture. And it must be said that often even through soothsayers future events are predicted, as we read in Balaam's divine oracle, and in the oracles of the five cities of Palestine, Gaza and Ascalon, Gath, and Ekron, and Ashdod, who give advice on how the ark of the Lord should be returned (1 Sam. 6). And the sense is: Both the true and the false will be taken away by the Jews. The elder, also known as the Seventy, understands that he was taken away by the Jews, who knew that elders are chosen based on merit and wisdom, not age, in the holy scriptures. For among the Jews, the elderly have not ceased to exist, as we often see them reaching advanced old age. And according to Theodotion, we read about two elderly presbyters in the beginning of Daniel (Dan. XIII), who endured the hardships of many days. For even Moses is commanded to choose elders whom he knows to be elders (Exod. XVIII). And the apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy, fully explains what kind of elder should be chosen (I Tim. V). Hence it is said in Proverbs: The glory of elders is their gray hair (Prov. XX, 29). What is this gray hair? Without a doubt, it is wisdom, of which it is written: The gray hair of men is their understanding (Sap. IV, 8). And while we read that men lived for nine hundred years and even more, from Adam to Abraham (Genes. XXIV), no one else is called an elder, that is, an old man, before Abraham, who is shown to have lived for far fewer years. And John also writes to children and young men, and even to the elderly, saying, I have written to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning (1 John 2:13). And Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, lost his kingdom because he did not want to listen to the elders (1 Kings 12).

3:3 (Verse 3.) The leader is in charge of fifty. Συνεκδοχικῶς means 'comparatively-speaking' or 'in relation to the whole'. Just as centurions are called who are in charge of a hundred soldiers, and chiliarchs who are in charge of a thousand, whom we call tribunes because they preside over a tribe, so in the Israelite army there were quinquagenarii who were in charge of fifty soldiers. Hence we also call them decanos, who are in charge of ten men. It is not surprising if all the dignity of soldiers is lost among the Jews, since they do not have the power to fight with a sword and carry weapons. But because the number fifty always refers to penance: and the prince of penance, and the head of those who are saved by penance, is Christ: let us briefly explain the mysteries of this

number. In Genesis we read, when Abraham spoke to the Lord, that if fifty righteous people are found in a city, the city will be saved. And in Numbers, there are seven weeks, that is, the most famous feast of Pentecost. The Jubilee, which is the year of remission, is woven in cycles of seven weeks, which is forty-nine years, during which trumpets sound and all ancient possessions are restored. This contains the sacrament. Therefore, David writes the fiftieth Psalm about repentance. We also read in the same book of Numbers that when it comes to the spoils and plunder, the fiftieth (or perhaps five hundredth) chapter states that both priests and Levites receive a portion of the spoils, both from the people and from the animals, and the fiftieth chapter states that the Levites, who guard the doors of the tabernacle, also receive a portion. The parable of the two debtors, one who owed five hundred denarii and the other fifty, is also related to this. And so the Apostle, among the Ephesians to whom he had explained all the mysteries, desires to remain until Pentecost, until they are completely converted to the Lord, saying: For there is a great and effective door opened to me, and there are many adversaries. However, the devil also imitates the Israelite army, of which Jethro gave his advice to Moses, to appoint leaders and officers over the people (Exodus 18). Hence, the wicked king (2 Kings 1) sent two officers with very obedient soldiers to capture Elijah, who were consumed by divine fire. But the third officer was saved, who, having turned to prayer, had come to know the sacraments of repentance. And the Jews, unwilling for Him to be the perfect Lord and the fifty-year-old prince, said to Him: You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham? (John 8:57) And He, knowing that He is not only the Prince of the repentant, but also of the righteous, answered: Before Abraham was, I am. (Ibid., 58). And that the Lord is the Fifty-Year-Old Prince, we can understand from one feast, about which He says: The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. (Matthew 12:8). But if it is the Sabbath, and the Kalends. If the Kalends, and the Pascha, that is, the unleavened bread. If the Pascha, and the Jubilee. If the Jubilee, and the Tabernacles. If the Tabernacles, and the Pentecost, which is related to the fiftieth number. And with an honorable appearance, both as an advisor. They chose one admirable advisor for two reasons, that is, an honorable appearance and an advisor. Among other things, the Lord will also remove this from Judea, so that they have no advisor: but they do everything without advice. And the Greek poets have that praiseworthy and admirable saying: 'First, it is blessed to be able to reason for oneself; second, it is blessed to listen to the wise.' But whoever lacks both, he is useless, both to himself and to all. Hence we also read this in our books: Let there be many friends for you, but let there be only one counselor among a thousand (Eccl. VI, 6). And again: Do everything with counsel (Prov. XIII, 10): and it will give you admirable prudence, a counselor. Also, the decrees of the Senate are called, and the former Roman leaders were called consuls, either from advising the citizens or from governing everything with counsel. And we have in the Church our senate, the assembly of the elders. So if, among other things, Judaea has also lost its elders, how can it have the council, which belongs specifically to the elders? And a wise architect. For whom the Eagle transferred the most wise of craftsmen, to show that they had many craftsmen once: such as that one was Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Hur from the tribe of Judah, whom God filled with the spirit of wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, so that he would be the most perfect craftsman in every work, not only in gold and silver, but also in bronze and other things that Moses enumerates, who built the Tabernacle of God (Exod. 31). Therefore, with those architects perishing, all desire for building was transferred to the Church. Hence the apostle Paul says: Like a wise architect, I laid the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:10). And Jeremiah was also an architect, who not only uprooted, dug out, and destroyed, but also built (Jeremiah 18). Therefore, the same

apostle speaks: We are God's farming, God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9). Our Lord is also called the builder of walls (Ephesians 2). And in the Gospel the son of a carpenter is mentioned, who created all things (Matthew 13). In the book of Kings, we also read that King Solomon sent and brought Hiram of Tyre, the son of a widow, who was from the tribe of Naphtali and had a Tyrian father, a craftsman in bronze. And he went to the king and performed all the works for King Solomon: in which is a type of building the Church, which is not only generated from the tribe of Judah, but also from Naphtali, and has a Tyrian father, who had a widowed mother; because she had lost her previous husband (1 Kings 7). And many more are the sons of the desolate one, more than she who has a husband (Isaiah 54). But also in the book of Chronicles we read about the valley of craftsmen: Saraïas begot Joab, the father of the valley of craftsmen; for there were craftsmen there (1 Chronicles 4:14). They are said to dwell in the valley because knowledge did not puff them up, but they followed Jesus in humility and meekness, being able to say with the Apostle: For I am the least of the Apostles, who am not worthy to be called an Apostle (1 Corinthians 15:9). And elsewhere: In part we know, and in part we prophesy, and now we see through a glass darkly (1 Cor. XIII, 9). And the wise speaker of mystical speech. For which the Seventy have interpreted as a wise listener; Theodotion, a wise enchanter; Aquila, a wise whisperer; Symmachus, the wise speaker of mystical speech, whom we also followed in this place. It must be said first according to the Seventy; that among other spiritual gifts, a wise listener is also necessary in the Church. For to others is given prophecy: to others discernment of spirits (1 Cor. XII, 10). And so, there were established among the people of the Jews certain priestly ranks to discern between prophets and false prophets: that is, to understand who spoke by the spirit of God and who spoke by the contrary spirit. Let us read Jeremiah. But this man, skilled in mystical language (Jeremiah 14), or as Theodotion preferred, an enchanter, seems to me to be learned and well-versed both in the Law and the Prophets, as well as in the Gospel and the Apostles, who can heal each disturbance of the soul with his teaching and restore it to a state of peace: so that the fornicator may receive chastity, the glutton may receive frugality, and the once greedy may give alms. He condemned all the synagogues of the Jews, and he will not be able to find a teacher who teaches sacredness, and who, having despised wealth, teaches that poverty must be followed. Concerning such sorcerers against serpents and asps, that is, against sinners who have forsaken the justice of God, David spoke in the Psalm: Sinners have been estranged from the womb: they have erred from their birth, they have spoken false things. Their fury is according to the likeness of a serpent: like the adder that stops her ears. Which will not hear the voice of the charmers; nor of the enchanter charming wisely (Psalm 67:4-5). Every word of the Apostle against serpents and asps is an incantation, which sinners and heretics do not hear, because they close their ears, so that they may not hear the truth.

3:4 (Verse 4.) And I will give their children as princes. If this is said in the person of the Prophet: Behold, for the Lord God of hosts will take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the strong and the mighty: all the strength of bread, and all the strength of water, and the rest: how does the same prophet now speak: I will give their children as princes, and the effeminate shall rule over them? Therefore, according to the prophetic custom, while the Prophet is speaking, suddenly God speaks through the Prophet in his own person, and says: I will give their children as princes: for by taking away those things which I had given before, and by taking away as it were good things in my anger, now on the contrary I will give evil things. He was a soldier, both admirable and wise, a skilled architect and a discerning listener, etc. For these reasons, I will give birth to princes. Those

who have lost a priest, whom the previous sermon revealed, just like Abraham who was first called a priest, rightly receive young princes (Genesis VII). Concerning these, we also read in Ecclesiastes: Woe to you, city, whose king is young, and whose princes eat in the morning. Blessed is the land whose king is the son of ingenuous ones (Eccles. X, 16). Such was the young king Rehoboam, son of Solomon, who followed the advice of the young men (3 Kings XII). Not because he was young in age, but in wisdom. Otherwise, it is said that he received a kingdom of forty years or more. On the other hand, Solomon was twelve years old when he assumed power, and because he had wisdom, he was called young. For there was in him a breadth of heart, and a vastness of wisdom as great as the sand on the shores of the sea. Hence the Apostle writes to Timothy, Let no one despise your youth (I Tim. IV, 12). For whoever is young in age, is old in maturity. And Daniel, according to Theodotion, before he became a judge, was called a boy (Dan. XIII). But after God stirred his spirit and he judged the elders, he received the dignity of the presbytery. Jeremiah, who had said to the Lord, 'You are my master, O Lord,' the Lord replied, 'Do not say, "I am only a youth"; for to all whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.' (Jeremiah 1:6-8) For this reason, I believe that young widows should marry, bear children, and manage their households, so as to give the opponent no occasion for slander. (1 Timothy 5) And when they have become self-indulgent in Christ, they want to marry, thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their first faith. And a widow is not supported by the Church's provisions unless she is sixty years old and has both the maturity of character and age. Someone may think that what the Apostle prohibits (1 Timothy 3), that a bishop should not be a neophyte, pertains to this, because he is a little one in faith, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the judgment of the devil. But the judgment of the devil is nothing else but pride, because of which he fell from heavenly things. Hence the Savior speaks, 'I saw Satan, like lightning falling from heaven' (Luke 10:18). And they will be ruled by effeminate men. Concerning this, it is written in Hebrew, 'Thalulim' (which the Septuagint and Theodotion interpret as mockers), Aquila translates as those who change and practice sexual immorality. Such as we read in the Book of Judges about the Levite's concubine in Gibeah (Judges 19). Let us consider the Patriarchs of the Jews, and we will see that the prophecy is fulfilled with young men or boys who are effeminate and indulge in luxuries. We can call them deceivers and teachers of the people of Israel, who devour the people of God like bread, and interpret the holy Scriptures perversely, and they mock the foolishness of the disciples.

3:5

(Verse 5.) And the people will fall, man against man, each one against his neighbor: the young will rise up against the old, and the lowly against the noble. When the young become leaders and mockers of the Lord, as the prophetic word describes, then no order of dignity, age, or knowledge will be preserved; but the young will rebel against the elderly, and the lowly against the noble, and they will fall together. And that Apostolic saying will be fulfilled: biting each other, you have been consumed by each other (Galatians 5:15). Josephus writes in Book 5 of The Jewish War that these events happened to the people of Judaea under Titus, son of Vespasian: that when they were being besieged by the Romans, there was a division of the city into three parts due to the rebellion. Some held the citadel and the Temple, others held the lower part of the city, and others held the upper part.

3:6

(Verse 6) For a man shall seize his brother, the kinsman of his father. The garment is yours, be our prince; but this ruin is under your control. Regarding ruin, Symmachus and Theodotio transferred infirmity, 70 food items. But it signifies a scarcity of people, and the most serious shortage of all, so that whoever has food and clothing is considered powerful, wealthy, and famous. And when he says according to the Hebrew: But this ruin is under your control, it has this meaning: Our misery and calamity will be sustained and protected by your assistance. And it must be considered that individuals should choose their own leaders, and there may be conflict in the election of leaders, as some consider others worthy of leadership. And they do not say to them, your possessions, and wealth, and income will sustain us, but this weakness, or my food, will be healed by your support and will depend on your decision.

3:7

(Verse 7) And he shall answer in that day, saying, I am not a physician, and in my house there is no bread nor clothing; do not make me the ruler of the people. For physician, Symmachus and the Septuagint translated principem as Theodotio, ■πιδεσμε■οντα, who binds wounds and provides for health. He shall answer, in Hebrew it is not found, but it is added from the Septuagint. In Hebrew, for it is joined with the things that are written above: In that day he shall say, I am not a physician, and so on. But he will say, who has been elected as leader. And just as the people who understand him, whom they consider wealthier than themselves, desire to have him as their ruler, so the one who is chosen, considering his poverty and weakness, declares himself unworthy of the bestowed honor, and unable to remedy the flaws, that is, to care for the sick, to provide food for the hungry, to clothe the naked, when he himself can barely sustain himself. Therefore, let us not immediately acquiesce to the judgement of the multitude, but let us know our own measure when elected to leadership, and let us humble ourselves under the powerful hand of God: because God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5). Those who have no bread and clothing, when they themselves are hungry and naked, and have no spiritual food, nor have preserved the complete tunic of Christ, promise others both food and clothing, and boast of being physicians when they are full of wounds; nor do they observe that commandment of Moses: Provide another whom you may send: and that other commandment: Seek not to be a judge, lest perhaps you may not be able to take away iniquities (Eccl. VII, 6). Only Jesus heals all weaknesses and infirmities, of whom it is written: Who heals the broken of heart, and binds up their bruises (Ps. CXLVI. 3).

3:8-9

(Verses 8, 9.) For Jerusalem has fallen, and Judah has collapsed: because their tongue and their inventions are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His majesty. The recognition of their faces testifies against them, and they declare their sin like Sodom, and do not hide it. The Prophet speaks of this, not as many suppose, that he who was the chosen leader spoke. And he says that for this reason no one wants to rule over a sinful people, because both Judah and Jerusalem, and the city, and the province of Judaea, or the tribe of Judah have fallen together. And they gave reasons for their impiety, because they blasphemed against the Lord and said: 'Take him away, take him away, crucify him, for we have no king but Caesar' (John 19:15, 16): and with the fury of their tongue, they provoked the most merciful Lord to bitterness. The recognition of their faces will

answer to them: that is, they have received their sins, or as the Septuagint translated: the confusion of their faces opposed them: that is, they always had their own sins before their eyes. And just as the Sodomites, sinning with all freedom and not having any shame in their wickedness, said to Lot: 'Bring out the men so that we may have relations with them' (Gen. XIX, 5); so too these, proclaiming openly, have preached their own sin and have had no shame in blaspheming. For the second plank after shipwreck is consolation in miseries, to hide their own impiety. Hence they are called the rulers of the Sodomites, because they had Sodomite sins.

3:10-11

(Verses 10, 11.) Woe to their souls, for evil has been repaid to them. Speak to the righteous, for they are well, for they have eaten the fruit of their inventions. Woe to the wicked for evil, for the retribution of his hands will be upon him. According to the Hebrew and other interpreters, this is the meaning: Woe to them because they have received their own wickedness. Therefore, you who hear or read the book of the Prophet, praise the righteousness of God, for he has done good, for the wicked have consumed the labors of their hands. And woe to the impious people for evil has befallen them: for they have received what they deserve. And he who delivered his ruler to Roman authority, he himself is subject to Roman servitude. According to the Septuagint interpreters who said: Woe to their soul: for they have devised a wicked plan against themselves, saying: Let us bind the just, for he is useless to us: therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own works, clearly refers to the passion of Christ, that they have devised a wicked plan, not so much against the just, as against themselves and their own soul: and now they shall eat the fruit of their own works. For whatever a man sows, that he will also reap (Gal. VI, 5-8), and each one will bear his own burden.

3:12

(Verse 12.) My people have been plundered by their own exactors, and women have been dominated by them. Concerning the women, whom Symmachus alone has interpreted, they are called Nasim () in Hebrew: Aquila and the LXX translated it as ■παίτο■ντας, which means exactors; Theodotion translated it as δανειστ■ς, which means moneylenders. The prophetic discourse is speaking against the Scribes and Pharisees, who, for the sake of shameful gain, denied the Son of God in order to receive tithes and firstfruits. And he does not call them teachers, scribes, and doctors, but tax collectors (Luke 20), who think that making a profit is piety: and they devour, not only the houses of widows, contrary to the Apostle, but the entire population; and accusing their extravagance and shameful conduct, he calls them not only tax collectors, as if they were demanding money from the unwilling; but also women: because they do everything for the sake of pleasure, and are devoted to indulgence. Therefore, let us be careful that we do not become extortioners among the people; that our senate does not resemble the impious Porphyry ruling over matrons and women in the churches, and that favoritism towards women does not judge the priestly order.

3:13

(Verse 13) My people, who call you blessed, themselves deceive you, and they scatter or disturb the path of your steps. He had called the scribes and Pharisees tax collectors, not teachers; and above them, the mockers, who, because of gifts that blind even the wise, not only did not correct sinners in the people, but praised them for their wealth and gain: calling them blessed, and pillars

of the house of God, and other things that flatterers usually say. He is therefore the Ecclesiastical doctor who provokes tears, not laughter, who rebukes sinners, who says that no one is blessed, no one is happy: nor does he preempt the judgment of his own sentence, as the Holy Scripture says (Eccl. II, 30): Do not call any man blessed before his death. But also in another place we read (Prov. XXVII, 14): He who blesses his friend loudly in the morning is no different from a slanderer. Therefore, despising the judgments of men, let us not boast in their praises, nor be saddened by their criticisms: but let us enter the right way, and the well-trodden paths of the holy prophets: let us hear Jeremiah the prophet saying: Stand in the ways, and see: and ask for the eternal paths of the Lord, which is the good way: and walk in it (Jer. VI, 16). But if at any time we have wandered and, like perverse men, have proceeded along a wrong path, let us await the promises of the Lord through Ezekiel, saying: I will give them another way, and a different heart (Ezek. 36). However, the corruptors and disturbers have perverted the way of the Lord, so that, having the key of knowledge, neither did they enter themselves, nor did they allow the people to enter; but they caused them to lose the way of truth, which speaks in the Gospel: I am the way, and the life, and the truth (John XIV, 6).

3:13-14 (Ver. 13, 14.) The Lord stands to judge: and he stands to judge the people. The Lord will come to judgment with the elders of his people, and with his princes. The people, who were deceived because of their simplicity and lack of knowledge, are still called the people of God: and therefore they are judged, that they may be saved. The Lord does not sit in the attire of a judge, as we read in Daniel: Thrones were set up, and books were opened (Dan. VII, 9): but he stands to judge, and he stands to judge the people, desiring them to stand, whose way had been scattered. But against the leaders and elders of his own people he comes to judgment, not to judge, but to be judged equally, granting them a place of defense if they are able to have a response, according to what is said in the fiftieth psalm: That you may be justified in your words and prevail when you are judged (Verse 6). In the prophet Micah also, we read something similar (Chapter 6), which we have interpreted in its proper place. Therefore, this passage is understood to be directed against the Pharisees and the Second Law scholars. But I think that this existed among the old people between the elders and the leaders, which now exists between the priests and the bishops. For you have devoured my vineyard; the plunder of the poor is in your houses. Why do you crush my people, and grind the faces of the poor? Thus did the LXX interpret, confuse. He keeps the prophetic custom, to suddenly change faces. For the Lord himself had said: My people, those who bless you deceive you. And later the Prophet added: The Lord stands to judge; the Lord will come to judge. Therefore, after the prophet, the Lord himself, who had come for judgment with the elders of his people and its princes, speaks to them and rebukes the wrongdoers: Why are you grazing my vineyard? about which it is written: You have transplanted a vineyard from Egypt (Ps. LXXIX, 9). And in this same prophet: The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel (Isai. V, 7). The Lord also placed this vineyard in the Gospel in the hands of wicked farmers who killed the son of the householder that was sent to them (Matthew XXVIII). He says: Robbery of the poor in your houses. Receive the poor or the needy simply, who is in need of alms; or certainly the poor in spirit, of whom it is written: Blessed is he who understands the poor and the needy (Ps. 40:1). And the Apostle Paul: Only, he says, that we should be mindful of the poor (Gal. 2:10). And what follows: Why do you trample on my people and crush the faces of the poor, or confuse them, it is clearly said to the leaders of the Jews. But it can also be referred to our leaders, if they crush the subjected plebs, and publicly accuse and embarrass the poor delinquents, but do not dare to even

touch the wealthier sinners. And the plunder of the poor is in their own homes, when they fill their treasuries, and they misuse the resources of the Church for their pleasure, and they either keep for themselves or distribute to their relatives the public funds that were given for the support of the poor, thus making the poverty of others their own wealth.

3:15

(Verse 15.) And the Lord said: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks, glancing wantonly with their eyes, mincing along as they go, tinkling with their feet, the Lord will strike with a scab the heads of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will lay bare their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents; the pendants, the bracelets, and the scarves; the headdresses, the armlets, the sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets; the signet rings and nose rings; the festal robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the handbags; the mirrors, the linen garments, the turbans, and the veils. Instead of perfume there will be rottenness; and instead of a belt, a rope; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a rich robe, a skirt of sackcloth; and branding instead of beauty. Some believe that the daughters of Zion are truly Jewish women, while others think they are metaphorically referring to the cities of Judea, namely the smaller cities, towns, and villages. This is why in the book of Joshua, the names of the cities are listed according to each tribe, and later on, the villages and castles are described and called daughters. According to another interpretation, women are believed to represent souls. If these souls walk with outstretched necks and conduct themselves in a proud manner, abandoning the strong and masculine virtues and instead adopting the weaknesses of women, they are criticized and lose all the virtues they possessed, which are described as moon-shaped pendants, necklaces, rings, bracelets, headdresses, and other similar adornments. This testimony must be used against the women of the Church who walk with their neck extended, and speak with the gestures of their eyes, and applaud with both hands and feet, and walk with a composed gait, not following the guidance of nature, but buying their teachers from actors.

3:16

(Verse 16) The Lord will make bare the top of the daughters of Zion, and will uncover their hair, and shame will be their adornment. This will also happen to us whose sins are hidden, when that which is written is fulfilled: Nothing hidden that will not be revealed (Luke 8:17). For as long as we are protected by hair and the garment of ignorance, people think of us as whitewashed tombs (Matthew 23), but inside we are full of dead bones, and we appear to have some cleanliness. But when what is hidden is revealed, all the hair will be removed, and ugly baldness will be seen by all.

3:17

(Verse 17) On that day the Lord will take away the ornament of the shoes. On which day? The Jews believe it to be the captivity of Babylon. We are more convinced that it is when they were captured by the Romans and lost all their clothing, gems, gold, jewelry, and various furnishings. Or, by the metaphor of women, it is said that all the adornment of cities was destroyed. Understand the ornaments of cities in the streets and porticoes, in the marketplace and gymnasiums, and in public walls. But if we consider this in relation to the state of souls, let us remember that when he is going to eat the flesh of the lamb and celebrate the Passover, his feet

are shod, and as we pass through the wilderness, neither clothes nor shoes are consumed. What are these shoes? Those of which the Apostle writes to the Ephesians: Shod your feet in preparation for the Gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). These are the shoes of souls that are destined to be lost when they walk with their necks extended and drag their clothes with their feet, and instead of the cleanliness of a matron, they sweep the filth of the earth.

3:18-21

(Verse 18-21.) And necklaces, and torcs, and pendants, and bracelets, and headbands, and diadems, and girdles, and brooches, and perfume vials, and earrings, and rings and gems hanging from the forehead. It describes the necklaces of women, and through these the insignia of cities: or, according to the anagoge, the various ornaments of virtues. Women have tiny bulla-shaped pendants that resemble the moon, which we transfer to the ornaments of the Church, which is illuminated by the sun of justice. Also, the necklaces that hang down to the chest signify understanding and the principal (ruling) faculty of the mind in the heart. And the necklaces indicate all ornaments in one word: and the good works of the bracelets, which Rebecca received in her marriage (Gen. XXIV): and the miters, the ornaments of the head, to distinguish judgment of each person: and the foot-straps, with which our step is adorned, so that we may hear: Your foot shall not stumble (Ps. XC); and: He shall keep my feet from sliding (Ps. LV); and the little walls, which are woven of gold and silver threads, signify sense and the words of the Scriptures: and the sweet-smelling ointments, so that we may be a good odor of Christ (II Cor. II, 15); and the earrings, so that we may not hear the judgment of blood, but the words of the Lord saying: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke VIII, 18); and the rings, with which we are signed for the Lord's army, which God the Father has signed. Where it is said to the prince of Tyre, 'You are the seal of likeness' (Ezek. 28:12). Also, the prodigal son received a ring, a robe, and jewels hanging on his forehead, which decorate our faces (Luke 15). And concerning the ornament of his head, we also read in the psalm: 'Like precious oil upon the head, which runs down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron' (Ps. 133:1). Although the Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion interpret all of these things in different ways, we have woven together what we could from the Hebrew and their translations, and we do not wish to dwell any longer on each one, lest the explanation be trivial and cause annoyance to the discerning reader.

3:22

(Verse 22.) And changes, and cloaks, and coverings. As for 'coverings', the Septuagint translated it as 'clear ethereal garments', signifying the very thin garments with which the bodies of the Spartans, who were very ready for war and had a strict way of life, were covered. Although 'ethereal garments' does not have a Hebrew or any other interpreter. However, 'changes' and 'cloaks', which Symmachus translated more significantly as 'anabolaia', are ornaments of women's clothing that cover the shoulders and chest. The changes according to that anagoge are those of which it is said: They will go from strength to strength (Ps. LXXXIII, 8): and the veils, that we may enjoy the delights of the Lord, as it is written in the Psalms: You will make them drink from the torrent of your pleasure (Ps. XXXV, 9). But all these things have been lost by the daughters of Zion, because they walked with outstretched necks, and with their eyes they flaunted their pride: thinking that what they had was of their own power, and not of the grace of the Lord.

3:23

(Verse 23.) And needles, and mirrors, and linen cloths, and ribbons, and shawls. Women have needles, with which the arrangement of their hair is secured so that it does not flow too freely and become scattered. They also have mirrors, with which they contemplate their appearance and add to their adornment if anything is lacking. They have linen cloths, which are called coverings, and ribbons, with which their hair is tied, which are called ταινία. They also have shawls, which we can call pallia: with which Rebecca herself was covered. And today also the women of Arabia and Mesopotamia cover themselves: they are called Ardishim in Hebrew, and in Greek θρίστρα: because in summer and heat they protect the bodies of women. Therefore the daughters of Zion have lost the needles, with which the rule of all precepts was strung. They have lost the mirrors, which they offered in Exodus while standing at the doors of the tabernacle to make the laver of the Lord (Exod. XXXVIII): about whom the apostle Paul also spoke: But we see now through a mirror in an enigma (I Cor. XIII, 12). They abandoned their cloaks and headbands, with which they covered their shoulders, and they restrained their wandering mind, which flowed here and there: and they sought refuge in a safe shade, with a protective canopy. We mention these things so that we do not seem to completely ignore the allegory of this place. However, it is a great labor to dwell on individual details and seek a broad explanation.

3:24 (Verse 24.) And it will be for a sweet smell, a stench; and for a belt, a cord. The one repenting of sins speaks of the stench: My scars have putrefied and become corrupted from the face of my foolishness (Psalm 38:6). The Apostle commanded to gird the loins with a belt, saying: Stand with your loins girded in truth (Ephesians 6:14). And we read about the sinner: Each one is bound by the cords of their own sins (Proverbs 5:22). Therefore, for the good smell of virtues, the daughters of Zion will have the putrefaction of sins; and for the belt of truth, they will be bound by the cords of lies, which they had on their heads when they prayed for life from the king of Syria with rags and filth. And as for the pectoral band, they translated the cilicium. Concerning the pectoral band, which Symmachus interpreted as a tunic of fine purple, that is, adorned with clavi, they translated it as a girdle of exultation, which Aquila expressed. Theodotion himself used the Hebrew word Phthigil (פְּתִיגִיל), which is a type of feminine ornament. The pectoral band covers the chest and occupies the same place in women as the Rationale in the Pontiffs. Regarding this pectoral band, Jeremiah said in a mystical discourse: If the bride can forget her attire, or the virgin her pectoral band, then I will forget you, says the Lord (Jer. II, 32). The Virgin, whom the Apostle wants us to present to Christ (2 Cor. 2), as long as she is not corrupted in Egypt, and her breasts, which are bound with a breastband, are not broken, is joined to her spouse; and even though she daily gives birth to sons of virtue, she never ceases to be a virgin. But if she sometimes spreads her legs to all who pass by, and follows her lovers, and according to the prophecy of Hosea, the Lord will hedge her paths and block her ways, she will return to her former husband, and she will hear: 'Put off the garments of mourning and put on the garments of your glory' (Hosea 2).

3:25

(Verse 25.) Your most beautiful men will fall by the sword, and your strong men in battle. For the most beautiful men, they are interpreted as seventy, and your most beautiful son, whom you love, will fall by the sword. But if we understand about the state of the soul, which after virtues has sinned, let us accept the good works, which have fallen by the enemy sword, as the most beautiful son of his. And strong men also perish in battle, because the righteousness of the righteous will not deliver him on any day he wanders (Ezekiel 33:12). But if we follow the story, we will be taught

from these words that the discourse is not about the prophetesses, whose husbands fell in battle, but about the cities of Judah, which he called the daughters of Zion, and whose warriors perished in combat. Finally, the following verse speaks about the same Zion.

3:26

(Verse 26.) And her gates will mourn and lament, and the city itself, desolate, will sit upon the earth. Which we see with our own eyes until this day. The interpretation according to tropology is easy, that whoever gives a place to the devil and does not keep their heart guarded with all vigilance, let their gates mourn: and in the absence of the bridegroom, let them always be in mourning, and falling from the heights, let them sit in the dust of the earth.

4:1

(Chapter IV, Verse 1) And in that day, seven women will take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothing, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach. When the most beautiful of the city of Jerusalem fall by the sword and the strong ones perish in battle, and its gates mourn and lament; and it becomes desolate due to the scarcity of people, with the warriors being killed, seven women will take hold of one man, desiring to have offspring in Zion and descendants in Jerusalem. They say that they have food and clothing, only so that they will not appear without a husband and be subject to the curse that is written: Cursed is the barren woman, who does not bear children in Israel (Deuteronomy 7). Zacharias also agrees with this interpretation: In those days, ten men from all the languages of the nations will seize the hem of a Jewish man, saying: We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you (Zech. VIII, 23). The number seven and ten are familiar to the Jews due to the Sabbath and the Ten Commandments of the law, and therefore they often use them; although according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew language, which interprets the word Saba () as both seven and several or an oath, it may not mean seven in this passage, but rather several. This according to the letter. However, in the coming of the Lord and Savior, the seven women, that is, the seven graces of the Holy Spirit, of whom the same Prophet will speak in the following words: A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:1-2) They will lay hold of Jesus, whom they have long desired, for they could find no other in whom they could find eternal rest. And John the Baptist confirms in the Gospel: And he who sent me said to me: Upon whom you see the Holy Spirit descending and remaining upon him, he is the one (John 1:33). In Zachariah, we also read about a stone with seven eyes, and in a golden candlestick, seven lamps and seven tubes, and two olive trees on either side of the lampstand, firmly rooted (Zechariah 3). However, the grace of the Holy Spirit, possessing all things, does not need explanation. But because he always suffered reproach among men, while no one living was seeking the gifts of the Holy Spirit, therefore they desire to invoke the name of Jesus, so that what was imperfect in the Law may be fulfilled in the Gospel.

4:2-3

(Verse 2, 3) On that day, the Lord's shoot will be in splendor and glory, and the fruit of the earth will be exalted, and those who have been saved from Israel will rejoice. And it will be, everyone who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who is recorded in life in

Jerusalem. When the daughters of Zion have lost all their pride and all their adornment, and her gates have mourned and she herself is desolate, and all her warriors have perished in battle, to the point that many women can hardly find one man: then the shoot of the Christian name will arise, and the land will yield its fruit. And there will be rejoicing for those who have been saved from Israel, of whom it has been said before: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have been like Sodom, and similar to Gomorrah (Isa. 1:9). And note that not all Israel will be saved, but the remnant of the people of Zion and the remainder in Jerusalem; all who are enrolled in life in Jerusalem, to whom the Lord also spoke: Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20). It signifies the Apostles and those who believed through the Apostles.

4:4

(Verse 4.) When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the blood of Jerusalem from its midst with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, then the remnant of Israel shall be saved when their sins are forgiven in the baptism of the Savior and that blood is cleansed, the blood that the wandering people invoked upon themselves saying: His blood be upon us and upon our children (Matthew 27:25). Hence, we read above: When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood (Isaiah 1:15-16). And afterwards, provoking them to repentance, he brings forth this: Be washed, be made clean. And take note that the filth of the daughters of Zion will be washed away by the spirit of judgment, but the blood of Jerusalem will be washed away by the spirit of burning. For what is light is washed away, but what is heavier is burned up. Concerning this spirit of judgment and spirit of burning, John the Baptist spoke in the Gospel: I baptize you with water, but he who comes after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11). From this we learn that while man gives only water, God gives the Holy Spirit, by which both filth is washed away and the sins of blood are cleansed.

4:5

(Verse 5) And the Lord will create (or created) over every place of Mount Zion, and where he is invoked, a cloud by day, and smoke and the brightness of a flaming fire at night. For in Christ there is a new creation, of which we read elsewhere: The old things have passed away: behold, all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17). Regarding this, the Septuagint translated: And he will come, and there will be every place of Mount Zion, and all the things that are around it, a cloud will cover during the day, and the light of a flaming fire at night. But who will come except him, of whom it is written: He will come from Zion to free them (Isaiah 59:20, according to the Septuagint). And of whom another prophet mentions: Yet a little while, and he who is to come will come, and will not delay (Habakkuk 2:3). When he comes, the people will be restored to their former happiness, which they once had in the desert; the Lord will lead them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and during the night with a pillar of fire (Exodus 13): so that they may not be disturbed either in prosperity or in adversity. And in the psalm it is said: By day the sun shall not scorch you, nor the moon by night (Ps. CXX, 6). But in this place smoke signifies not error and ignorance, but glory, according to what we shall read in the same prophet, according to the opinion of some: And the house was filled with smoke (Isaiah 6). And in Joel, concerning the grace of the Holy Spirit which descends upon the apostles, it is said: I will pour out my spirit, and they shall prophesy (Joel II). And I will show wonders in the sky above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and

clouds of smoke (Acts 2:17). I think this signifies that which is said in the Psalms: He touches the mountains, and they smoke (Psalm 104:32).

4:6

(Verse 6) But protection is above all glory. And it will be a tabernacle for shade from the heat during the day, and for security and hiding from the whirlwind and rain. The Jews interpret this place as referring to Antichrist, whom they believe will be defended by the Lord from a mighty adversary represented by the whirlwind and storm. However, we refer everything to the first coming of Christ, of whom we also read in the Psalms: He protected me in the hiding place of His tabernacle; on a rock He exalted me (Psalm 27:9-10). On this rock, the Church is founded and is not shaken by any storm or overturned by any wind. The majority of the Jews understand both these things and all the things which are associated with them, concerning the captivity in Babylon and the return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

5:1 (Chapter 5, Verse 1.) I will sing now to my beloved the song of my cousin, of his vineyard. The prophet sings a lamentable song to the people of Israel, which he composed, about whom it is written in the Gospel: But when he saw it (no doubt Jerusalem), he wept over it, and said: If you also knew what is for your peace, for the days shall come upon you, and your enemies shall cast a trench about you, and compass you round, and straiten you, and cast you down to the ground, and your children with you (Luke 19:41 et seq.). And again: How often I have wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling? Behold, your house will be left to you desolate (Matthew 23:37, 38): to whom this which is now said in this song is similar: I will leave my vineyard. And that Christ is called beloved and most dear, which Aquila has interpreted as πατρὶς δελφον, paternal uncle, or paternal cousin, the inscription of the forty-fourth psalm teaches us: A Song for the Beloved. And the voice of God the Father in the Gospel: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17). And in the sixty-seventh psalm we read: The Lord will give the word to those who preach with great power. The king of hosts, the beloved (Psalm 67:12, 13). Therefore, this beloved one composed a mournful song for his vineyard, which I will sing to my beloved and pitiable people. Or certainly it should be understood thus: I will sing to the Almighty God the Father a song of Christ, who is my cousin, that is, born from the same people as me. But when the vineyard of God is called the people of Israel, and at the end of this canticle we read: The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the man of Judah is his pleasant plant. And in the seventy-ninth psalm (ver. 9): Thou hast brought a vineyard out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the Gentiles, and planted it. In the Gospel also, almost in the same words in which the Prophet now speaks, the Lord related a parable: There was a certain householder who planted a vineyard, and surrounded it with a hedge, and digged in it a press, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, etc. (Matth. XXI, 33) . And in Jeremiah we read: I have planted you a fruitful vineyard, all true: how then have you turned into bitterness, a foreign vineyard (Jerem. II, 21)? Therefore Jerusalem, as we have said, laments: and in the prophetic speech, its ruin is sung. Moreover, a different song has been composed for the Church and the once-gentile people, of which we read in the Psalms: Sing to the Lord, all the earth, proclaim day after day his salvation. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. He has shown his salvation, and revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things. A vineyard has been made for my beloved in the horn of the son of oil. This is translated by Theodotion and Aquila

according to the Hebrew: but Symmachus, in his own way, more explicitly: A vineyard has been made for my beloved in the horn, in the midst of the olive trees. Moreover, the Seventy interpreted the meaning more than the word: A vineyard has been made for my beloved in the horn, in a fertile or rich place, for $\pi\omega\nu$ signifies both. And truly, there is nothing more fertile than the Promised Land, if you consider all its width, from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates, against the east: and towards the northern region up to Mount Taurus and the Zephyrium of Cilicia, which overlooks the sea. But we often read that horn signifies kingdom and power, as it is written in the Gospel: He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David (Luke 1:69). And, In you we will scatter our enemies like chaff with a horn (Psalm 44:6). And in Zechariah, four horns represent four powerful kingdoms (Zechariah 1:18). The Hebrews explain this passage as follows: The vineyard planted in the horn is Christ, that is, in a strong and lofty place, which is called the son of oil, either because it needs God's mercy and is sustained by his help, or because it has shed the light of God's knowledge to all nations.

5:2 (Verse 2.) And he fenced it, and picked stones from it, and planted the vineyard of Sorec, and built a tower in its midst, and constructed a winepress in it. In metaphor, as we said before, the vineyard represents the Jewish people, whom God protected with the help of angels. And he picked stones from it, meaning idols or anything that could hinder the worship of God. And he planted the vineyard of Sorec, which Symmachus alone interpreted as chosen, not expressing the word for word, as it seems to me, but the meaning that is held in the word. For the Hebrews say that the Sorek vine is of the best kind, because it produces abundant and perpetual fruit. Indeed, Sorek is interpreted by some as 'beautifully fruitful', a phrase that we can translate as 'the most beautiful fruits'. He also built a tower in the middle of it, namely a temple in the center of the city, and he constructed a winepress in it, which some people think signifies an altar. Just as all grapes are gathered and trampled in the winepress to extract the wine from them, so the altar receives all the fruits of the people and devours the sacrificed victims, according to what we read about Benjamin, in whose tribe the temple and altar were: Benjamin is a ravenous wolf, in the morning he devours the prey, and in the evening he distributes food (Gen. XLIX, 27). All that is said about the vineyard can also be referred to the state of the human soul, which, though planted by God for good, has not produced grapes but wild grapes; and afterwards is handed over to be trampled by beasts, and has not received the divine rain of teachings, because it has despised past gifts. And I expected, that he would make grapes, and he made labruscas. Concerning labruscas, which we translate, in Hebrew it is written Busim (): which Aquila interpreted as $\sigma\alpha\pi\rho\alpha\varsigma$, that is, the worst fruit: Symmachus as $\tau\epsilon\lambda$, that is, imperfect: LXX and Theodotion as thorns: with which the Jews crowned the Lord. For while he was waiting for them to bring grapes to the winepress at the time of the vintage, for which the 83rd Psalm has titles, they, sinking into the cares and vices of the world, which in the Gospel (Mark 4) are interpreted as thorns, presented the stings of blasphemies. I think, however, that it is better for the grapes to be understood as Busim labruscas rather than thorns, so that the similarity of translation may be preserved. Therefore, the Savior says in the Gospel: Do they gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles (Matthew VII, 16).

5:3-4

(Verse 3, 4.) Now therefore, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more could have been done to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? I have done

everything I could for it; I planted it in the best soil, built a protective wall around it, carefully selected stones, and raised its branches with sturdy poles and supports. The vine itself was not just any vine, but a chosen and fruitful one. I built a very strong tower, in which I could store grain, and from which I could observe the wild animals that lurk around the grain. I also constructed a wine press, so that grapes could be pressed and wine could be poured in the same place. Therefore, I ask the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah to respond to me: indeed, let them judge between me and my vineyard, what I should have done and have not done? And with them remaining silent, he responds to himself: unless, of course, I made a mistake in waiting for grapes to be produced from my work, and not wild grapes, which the uncultivated and deserted vineyard is accustomed to produce. This is what the Prophet Nathan sent to David, as recorded in II Samuel 12, and he questions him through a parable, so that while he judges about someone else, he reveals his own judgment. Therefore, even here, the people are questioned as if about a vineyard, so that they themselves answer against themselves. This passage is further fulfilled by the Savior in the Gospel of Matthew 21, and what is skipped here, he questions the scribes and Pharisees. For in Isaiah, nothing is said about the farmers, nor is it indicated what they will suffer; but it is only about the vineyard: but there, as if there were another vineyard and other farmers, he speaks about the people and the teachers, so that he may destroy the wicked ones and place the vineyard with other farmers; signifying the apostles and those who will succeed the apostles. And indeed, it is not a tautology, as many believe, in what he says: *An quod exspectavi, ut faceret uvas, et fecit labruscas?* For above, he speaks silently within himself, but here he asks others what he had thought.

5:5-6 (V. 5, 6.) And now I will show you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be for destruction; I will break down its wall, and it will be for trampling. I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and briers and thorns shall grow up; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry! And because, according to the parable of the Gospel, you do not want to answer what I ask, I will answer for myself on your behalf, indicating what I will do: Since I have done everything I should for my vineyard, and it has produced wild grapes instead of good grapes, I will take away everything that I have given. I will remove the assistance of the angels, about whom it is written in the psalms: The Angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he will deliver them (Psalm 34:7); and it will be plundered by adversaries. I will destroy the walls, and it will be subject to enemy nations, and it will be deserted and not considered forever, nor will it be dug, so that it may be turned into thorns: and thorns will rise in it. But these things are said under the metaphor of a vineyard, concerning the solitude of Jerusalem and Judaea, which many Jews believe happened under the Babylonians: and we cannot deny that it happened to some extent. But because it follows: And I will command the clouds, that they rain not upon it, this cannot be understood in that captivity. For indeed both Jeremiah prophesied after the city was captured among the people, and Ezekiel, Daniel as well as the three youths, are reported to have either prophesied or performed marvelous signs even in captivity. And afterwards Haggai and Zechariah spoke of future things for the consolation of the servile people. However, the assistance of God is taken away from those who are unworthy, so that since they did not sense God through blessings, they may sense through punishments. Or, for this reason, certain fierceness and harshness are threatened, so that the converted may avoid impending torments

through repentance. The Hebrew word 'Saith' (סַיִת) is translated as 'thorns' in all three versions with a similar voice. Therefore, if they translate 'Saith' as 'thorns' in this context, they should explain why in the previous place they translated 'Busim' not as 'wild grapes' but as 'thorns' according to Aquila, Theodotion, and the Septuagint. And I will command the clouds not to rain upon it. These are the clouds which the Lord brings forth from the ends of the earth, of which we also read in the psalm: Your truth reaches to the clouds (Ps. 36:6). These clouds, because under Elijah all idolaters were, did not rain upon the land of Israel for three years and six months (3 Kings 18). This indeed we can understand not only of the prophets, but also of the apostles, that after the Passion of the Lord, the Jews did not have prophets or apostles, lest they bring forth grapes for thorns, but pray for their own barrenness and dryness to Him who can provide the rain of virtues. And in Leviticus, he says to them: I will make the sky above you like iron, and the earth beneath you like bronze (Lev. XXVI, 19). And in Deuteronomy: The sky above your head will be bronze, and the earth beneath you will be iron (Deut. XXVIII, 23, 24). And again, the Lord will give rain to your land. And, Ashes will descend from the sky upon you, until it uproots you and destroys you; for a land that frequently receives rain upon itself and does not produce crops, but only thorns and thistles, is rejected and is closest to curse, and its end is burning.

5:7 (Verse 7.) But the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel: and the men of Judah, his pleasant plant. That is, of God: or as the LXX translated, the beloved new plantation. Israel and Judah differ in this, that the whole people were first called Israel, and afterwards, when David reigned over the tribe of Judah, and Rehoboam the son of Solomon over the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, those who were in Samaria, that is, the ten tribes, were called Israel; and those who reigned from the lineage of David were called Judah. And since the Israelites worshipped calves in Dan and Bethel, Samaria was first captured by the Assyrians; and much later, Judah was taken into Babylon by the Chaldeans, because they had sinned less. Therefore, in Ezekiel, for the purification of the sins of both peoples, Israel is placed on the left side, according to the Seventy, for one hundred and ninety days, or as is more accurately stated in Hebrew, three hundred and ninety days; but Judah (according to the LXX and the Hebrew text) for forty days (Ezek. IV). I say this so that by comparing it to Israel, that is, the ten tribes, I may show the beloved and chosen Judah, in which there were priests and Levites, and the religion of God was practiced at that time when the prophet Isaiah spoke to the people. And beautifully Israel, that is, the whole people, is the house: but Judah, which afterwards sprouted from the separated tribes, is called a delightful new growth. But it should also be noted that according to the prophetic custom, which was first spoken in metaphor or parable, it is later explained more clearly: that the vineyard and new plantation are Israel and Judah. And I waited for judgment, and behold there was iniquity: and for justice, and behold there was a cry, as the LXX translated, I waited for judgment, and he did iniquity, and not justice, but a cry. We want to reveal to Latin ears what we learned from the Hebrews: Judgment, among them, is called Mesphat (מִסְפָּת): iniquity, or dissipation, as Aquila interpreted, is called Mesphaa (מִסְפָּהָא). Again, justice is called Sadaca (צְדָקָה): but a cry is called Saaca (צָעָק). Therefore, either by adding or changing a single letter, he tempered the similarity of the words, so that instead of Mesphat, he wrote Mesphaa: and instead of Sadaca, he put Saaca, and he rendered the elegant structure and sound of the words according to the Hebrew language. However, God expected the people of Judea to produce judgment, that is, grapes: but they produced iniquity, that is, wild grapes: and he expected righteousness, that they would receive the generous sender of such great gifts from the Father, but instead they shouted, crying out against

the Lord, and they shouted, saying: "Take him away, take him away, crucify him" (John 19:15). And so the Apostle Paul writes: Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice (Ephesians 4:31). Or certainly, because they had shed innocent blood, the blood of the Lord's Passion cried out to the Lord: therefore they made a cry for justice, according to what we read in Genesis, The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me (Genesis 4:10).

5:8

(Verse 8) Woe to those who join house to house and connect field to field, until there is no more room and you are left to dwell alone in the land. In our opinion, they have transferred this phrase, 'until there is no more room,' to 'until you take away your neighbor's property.' Symmachus and Theodotion have done this, until the land fails or there is no place left; so that when the land fails, greed will not be satisfied. I believe that this applies generally to all those who are never satisfied, and specifically to the vineyard of the Lord, which produces wild grapes instead of good grapes, meaning injustice instead of justice, and outcry instead of righteousness. For what madness is it, when houses and fields should be had for driving away the rains and for sowing crops, to desire to have those things in which you cannot dwell and which you are not sufficient to cultivate, and to make your own pleasure the necessity of another? Some consider this saying according to the trope, against the heretics: when they move their feet from the East, they come into the plain of Shinar, which is interpreted as the scattering of teeth; and they build a city of confusion and a tower of pride, and they hear under other words: 'Hear this, rulers of the house of Jacob, and you remnant of the house of Israel, who loathe justice and pervert all that is right, who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity' (Micah 3:9-10). They join houses to houses, that is, doctrines to doctrines; about which it is said by Michael, 'Do not build in a scornful house' (Micah 3), nor above the foundation of Christ, which the apostle Paul placed (1 Cor. 3), and in which they should have built gold, silver, precious stones; on the contrary, let them build wood, hay, straw, the end of which is fire. The Savior speaks about these kinds of houses in the Gospel: 'Everyone who hears my words and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.' Rain descended, rivers came, winds blew and beat on that house, and it fell; and great was its fall. (Matthew 7:26, 27). For so long heretics seek to join new things with old, and to change the same things for more recent ones, until human perception and speech fail.

5:9

(Ver. 9.) In my ears are these things of the Lord of hosts: Unless many houses are deserted, great and beautiful without an inhabitant. Because we translate according to the Hebrew, 'In my ears are these things of the Lord of hosts,' that is, the words that the Lord spoke still resonate in my ears: The LXX translated, 'These things have been heard in the ears of the Lord of hosts.' Not that the Prophet heard the words of the Lord, but that the things the Prophet is about to say have been heard in the ears of the Lord: it is more consistent to understand that the Prophet heard, what the Lord spoke. But the Lord spoke, saying that after the captivity, the great and beautiful house will be desolate, having no inhabitant.

5:10

(Verse 10.) For they will make one small jar from ten acres of vineyards, and they will make three bushels from thirty bushels of seed. For the small jar, which only the seventy translated, all others have interpreted as a bat, which is said in Hebrew Beth (). And for the thirty bushels, which we have called a cor, which in Hebrew is called Omer (), the seventy translated as six artabas: which is an Egyptian measure and makes twenty bushels. Therefore, in the extreme barrenness that follows the captivity, ten acres of vineyards will make a bat, that is, three amphoras: and thirty bushels of seed, that is, a cor, will make an ephah, which the seventy have interpreted as three measures, that is, three bushels. But batus is said to refer to liquid measures, and ephi, or epha of the same measurement, to dry measures. As we read in Ezekiel according to the Hebrew: A just ephi and a just batus shall be for you. Ephi and batus shall be equal and of the same measurement, so that a batus may hold a tenth part of a cor, and an ephi may hold a tenth part of a cor; their balance shall be according to the measurement of a cor (Ezek. 45:10-11). According to anagoge, we ask how the houses of heretics, which are large and beautiful, will have no inhabitant when the time of judgement comes. For every parade and elaborate arrangement of words, and every dialectical argument, are reduced to nothing. And since according to the Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 3) we are not just the building of God, but also the cultivation, which the heretics imitating are dug up and eradicated by Jeremiah: therefore where ten acres of vineyards, or where ten pairs of oxen work, they will make one bath, and thirty measures of seed they will make an ephah (Jeremiah 18), to signify the mystical and perfect number of ten in the holy scriptures: and the thirty, in which Ezekiel prophesied (Ezekiel 1), and the Lord was baptized (Luke 3), are reduced to the ephah, which is connected by comparison with a multiple number through unity. But when it comes to spiritual understanding, building and agriculture, the Apostle Paul also teaches in another place (Ephesians 4) that believers are rooted and grounded in love. Furthermore, Ecclesiastes (Ecclesiastes 2) not only built houses for himself, but also planted vineyards, made gardens and orchards, and established all kinds of fruit trees. He also constructed pools to irrigate the forest. On the other hand, heretics, having only the image and shadow of virtues and not the truth itself, promise empty words without the fruit of works. Regarding their trees, the Lord says: Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted (Matt. 15:13). For the vineyard of the Sodomites is their vineyard, and their offspring is from Gomorrah. Their grapes are grapes of gall, and their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the venom of serpents and the deadly poison of cobras (Deut. 32:32, following).

5:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) Woe to those who rise early in the morning to pursue drunkenness, and continue drinking until evening, so that they are inflamed with wine. They have the lyre, the harp, the tambourine, and the flute at their feasts, but they do not regard the work of the Lord or consider the operation of His hands. Regarding drunkenness, which Aquila and Symmachus have interpreted as the Hebrew word Siceram, the LXX have rendered it as any drink that can intoxicate and overthrow one's mental state. But it accuses, according to the sequence of the begun explanation, the farmers of the vineyard, who, with impending sterility and a nearby fire, in which brambles and thorns are to be burned, have surrendered themselves to luxury and pleasures: not only in eating and drinking, but also in the delight of the ears, and in various types of musical art. When they do these things, they do not consider the work of the Lord, nor do they consider what is to come. We will use this testimony against the princes of the Church, who rise in the morning to drink and drink

until evening: concerning whom it is said elsewhere: Woe to you, O city, whose king is young, and whose princes feast in the morning (Eccl. X, 16). Those who are occupied with pleasures do not understand the Creator from His creatures, nor do they consider the works of His hands, of which we read: 'By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their power by the breath of His mouth' (Psalm 32:6). According to a higher understanding, every disturbance of the soul can be called drunkenness, which is conceived from the wine of the madness of dragons, and from the incurable poison of asps, which some drink from youth to old age, that is, from morning until evening (Deuteronomy 32). But others are awakened from the banquet at the third, sixth, or ninth hour, and it is said to them: Wake up, you who are drunk with wine. On account of this wine, and on account of such grapes and vineyards, the Lord rains down sulfur and fire from the Lord; and whoever drinks from them is burned and tormented. He seeks the lyre and the harp, the inventor of which is Jubal, generated from the lineage of Cain (Gen. 4), and does not hear the Lord saying to Aaron: You and your sons shall not drink wine or strong drink, when you enter into the tabernacle of the testimony, or when you approach the altar (Lev. 10:8). The king of Babylon had lyres, and harps, and a drum, and flutes, with which, when they sounded together, the peoples of all nations would fall down and worship the golden statue (Dan. III). But as for the first time of human wisdom, when we leave childhood and come to the age of reason, it is understood in the Scriptures to be the morning, many testimonies can teach us about it, of which a few examples are to be given: In the morning I sent the prophets; and: In the morning you will hear my prayer. In the morning I will stand before you, and I will see (Ps. 5:4-5); and: From night until morning my spirit will rise (Ps. 62:1); and: O God, my God, I watch for you from dawn (Ps. 100:8); and: In the morning I would slay all sinners of the earth, that I might destroy from the city of the Lord all who work wickedness (Ps. 29:7); and in another place: We delay weeping until evening, and joy comes in the morning, and similar things. But we rise in the morning when we leave our vices in childhood, and we can say: Remember not the sins of my youth and ignorance (Ps. 24:7). And with the rising of the sun of justice, darkness is banished, and immediately we destroy all thoughts that provoke us to sin, and we scatter those sinners from the city of our mind, of whom the Savior speaks: Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies (Matt. XV, 19), and the rest. However, most unfortunate are those who, from morning until evening, occupied with drunkenness, gluttony, and various pleasures, do not understand in themselves the works of the Lord, nor consider why they were created.

5:13

(Verse 13.) Therefore, my people have been taken captive because they lack knowledge, and their nobles have perished of hunger, and their multitude has dried up with thirst. This happened literally to the people of Judah under the Roman princes Vespasian and Titus, as both Greek and Latin history relate. And even today, they suffer from this spiritually, enduring not the hunger for bread or the thirst for water, but the hunger to hear the word of God. For they have not regarded the works of the Lord, nor considered the deeds of His hands, nor have they obtained His knowledge who has spoken through the prophets (Amos 8). And in the Psalms it is said of them: They shall convert in the evening, and suffer hunger like dogs, and shall go around the city (Ps. 59:16). But the Gospel teaches that every word of doctrine is called bread and water: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God (Luke 4:4); And, Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst (John 4:13). And in the Psalm it

is said: He has led me by the waters of refreshment (Ps. 23:2). And the Lord does not want to send away the hungry in the wilderness, so that they do not faint and fall and be killed by hunger (Matt. XV). And of the just man it is said: I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread (Ps. XXXVI, 25). Some interpret this that is said: My people have been taken away, because they have no knowledge; and the nobles have perished with hunger, and the multitude thereof is dried up with thirst, generally as referring to Hell and Gehenna, where everyone who does not have the knowledge of God will be punished.

5:14-15

(Verse 14, 15.) Therefore, hell enlarged its soul and opened its mouth without any limit, and its strong ones, and its people, and its high and glorious ones descended to it. And man will be humbled, and the man will be brought low, and the eyes of the proud will be cast down. Those who rose early to pursue wine, and remained in drunkenness until evening, and were occupied with pleasure and indulgence, did not want to consider the work of the Lord, nor did they contemplate the works of His hands. Therefore they were brought into captivity because they did not have knowledge of the Son of God, as He himself said to them, 'You neither know me nor the one who sent me' (John 8:19), and in that very captivity they died of famine and wasted away from thirst. Where Hell and death extended their souls, and opened their mouths, and devoured without number and satiety those to be punished forever: so that the princes and people, and the sublimity and glory of the land of Judah would descend to him, and all pride would be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty would be lowered, understanding themselves to be mortals; and all things were fulfilled, which the Lord had foretold through the prophets. However, Hell is said to have a soul, not that it is a living creature, according to the error of some; but that by the words of human custom, we express the impassivity of things that do not sense, that it is insatiable, and is never filled by the multitude of the dead. And in the hand of the tongue, death is spoken (Prov. XVIII), and the almighty God hates the Sabbaths, and speaks of the Jews despising their own soul (Isai. I). Whatever we have said about the Jewish people can be metaphorically applied to those who are occupied with the pleasures of the world, not looking to the works of God, they are led captive into sin, and have no knowledge of God: and therefore, they perish from hunger and thirst for good works and virtues, and are dragged into hell, where they are assigned to eternal torments, and they witness the power and pride of misery being transformed by humility.

5:16

(Verse 16) And the Lord of hosts will be exalted in judgment: and the holy God will be sanctified in righteousness. When the people are led captive, because they have no knowledge, and die of hunger, and with thirst shrivel up, and the grave enlarges its appetite: and the mighty and noble and glorious descend into the depths, and man is humbled, and the vir is abased, and all receive according to their merits: then the Lord will be exalted in judgment, whose judgment previously seemed unjust, and the holy God will be sanctified in righteousness by all, so that what is said in the Gospel may be fulfilled: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name (Matthew 6:9); and: Righteous Father, the world has not known thee (John 17:25). Where should we be careful not to anticipate the judgment of God, whose judgments are great and unsearchable, and about whom the Apostle speaks: His judgments are unsearchable and his ways are unfathomable (Rom. XI, 33), until he enlightens the hidden things of darkness and reveals the thoughts of the hearts (I

Cor. IV, 5), who says in the Gospel: Do not judge, so that you may not be judged (Matth. VII, 1). To which statement the Apostle Paul concurs, commanding: Who are you to judge someone else's servant? He stands or falls to his own master. And he shall stand, for God is able to make him stand. (Romans 14:4)

5:17

(Verse 17) And the lambs will be fed in their order: and the deserted places will be turned into abundance, and strangers will feast upon them. Instead of the lambs being fed in their order, which is understood in a positive sense, I do not know what the LXX, desiring something else, translated as 'they will be fed as plundered bulls'; understanding lambs as bulls, and again interpreting strangers as lambs. But when the Lord is exalted in judgment, and sanctified in His righteousness, so that the evil farmers may be destroyed, and the lofty cedar may be cut down by the axe of the Lord; then those who are among the number of lambs, not of goats, will be fed in the meadows of the Church, and will say: 'The Lord feeds me, and I lack nothing' (Psalm 23:1); and the people of the nations will eat the deserted things of the Jews, turned into abundance. This is according to the tropology. Moreover, to complete the order of the narrative, the same thing is said in other words, which we have read above: Your land is devoured by strangers in your presence, and it is deserted and destroyed by foreign peoples (Isaiah 1:7). For the multitude of nations gathered from the whole world dwell in Judea, and the previous peoples being expelled, therefore blindness has happened to the house of Israel, so that the fullness of the Gentiles may enter (Romans 11). Beautifully, according to the LXX, they were plundered and devastated and led into captivity like bulls, of whom the Lord had said: Fat bulls have surrounded me, so that the lambs may occupy the places of the bulls.

5:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as if with a cart rope. Those who say: let his work speed up and come quickly, so that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel approach and come, so that we may know it. As for the cart rope, the Septuagint translated it as a strap of the yoke of a heifer or a cow. And it is more commonly read that the ropes are called sins. Among them is this: Each one is bound by the cords of their own sins (Proverbs 5:22). And the Lord, rebuking the delinquent people who had joined sins with sins, made a scourge out of cords, showing them how they had made the house of God a den of thieves (John 2), and turned the house of prayer into a house of trade (Matthew 21). Also, the guest of the Lord's supper, not wearing a wedding garment, was bound hand and foot and thrown into the outer darkness (Matthew 22). And the Lord came to say to those who were in chains: Go forth (Isaiah 49:9); and to those who dwelt in darkness: Be revealed (Psalm 146:8). For he loosens the bound, and enlightens the blind, whom Jeremiah calls bound to the earth. He does not lament those who have begun to sin and immediately stop, for there is no one on earth who does good and does not sin at times (Eccl. 7:2); but those who extend their sins with a long cord. And so we read in Numbers (Chapter 19), the red heifer, whose ashes are the purification of the people, must not be sacrificed and offered on the altar of the Lord unless it has not done earthly works, and has not worn the yoke, nor has been bound by the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar. And in this same prophecy, the daughters of Zion are also girded with the cord of truth. Achitophel and Judas (one of whom betrayed David, the other the Lord) were both hung by very long ropes, dragging their

own sins, thinking that the evil of conscience would end with their immediate death, and that there would be nothing after death. But what is called cords of vanity according to the Hebrew and all other interpreters signifies that sin is easily covered up for those who commit it, and it is so empty and easy that it is woven like spider webs. But when we want to leave, we are bound by the strongest chains. But those who remember what is written in Zacharia understand more easily a wagon full and burdened with sins, that wickedness sits upon a talent of lead (Zach. V): and the Egyptians who were burdened with a heavy load of sins, as lead were immersed in the Red Sea (Exod. XV). And in another place a sinner speaks: My iniquities have gone over my head: like a heavy burden they have been loaded upon me (Ps. XXXVII). But these things are said to the leaders of the Jews, who are known for their greed and luxury: that, being provoked by the Lord to repentance, and afterwards by His Apostles, they continue until today in blasphemies, and three times each day in all synagogues they curse the name of Christian under the name of Nazarenes. And the meaning is: Woe to you who think that the day of judgment will not come, or that the captivity which the prophetic word predicts will not come: you who say to the Prophet: How long will you threaten us with the wrath of God? We want her to know, let her come now. However, they speak this ironically, because they do not think she will come, but rather pretend to be a Prophet.

5:20

(Verse 20) Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil: who put darkness for light, and light for darkness: who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. It is of the same crime to call good, light, and sweet by the opposite names, as to call evil, darkness, and bitter by the names of virtues. This is what the Jews do, who consider good evil, and light darkness, and sweet bitter, welcoming Barabbas, the author of robbery and sedition, and crucifying Jesus, who had come only for the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to save what was lost. Let us understand Barabbas as the devil, who, although he is darkness and night, is transformed into an angel of light (Matthew XXVII). Therefore, the Apostle also speaks: What sharing of righteousness with iniquity? What fellowship does light have with darkness? What agreement is there between Christ and Belial (2 Corinthians VI, 14, 15)? For a lamp is not to be taken away and put under a bushel, or under a bed, but to be placed on a lampstand, so that it may give light to everyone. Nor is a tree that bears evil fruit to be called a good tree (Matthew V). And in the mystical language of Genesis, it is narrated that God separated light from darkness, which were hovering over the abyss in the beginning (Gen. I). And He Himself, being called the Good Shepherd, speaks in the Gospel: The Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (John X, 11). He also says that He is the light: I am the light of the world (John VIII, 12), and we, who are nourished by the heavenly bread every day, say: Taste and see how sweet the Lord is (Ps. XXIII, 9). On the contrary, when we say: Deliver us from evil (Matthew 6:13); and: The world is set in wickedness (1 John 5:19), we desire to be freed from the snares of the devil. Moreover, we frequently read that he himself is signified by names of darkness and bitterness. But we can also say that all contrary doctrines are bitter to the truth, and only the sweet truth. Therefore, we must be careful not to follow falsehood in place of truth, nor darkness in place of light. For there are many paths that appear straight to men, and their last ends lead into the depths of Hell. Also, the just man perishes in his justice, of whom it is said: Do not be excessively righteous (Eccl. VII, 17). For these reasons, Israel promises to walk in the royal way, not deviating to the left or to the right (Deut. V). And to speak what I feel: it is difficult to escape this curse, since we often flatter the wicked because of their power, and despise the good because of their poverty.

Aquila interprets this saying as follows: Woe to those who say that good is evil and evil is good (Prov. XVII, 13). This meaning is also in accordance with what Solomon says in Proverbs: He who judges the just as unjust and the unjust as just, both are abominable before God. The scribes and Pharisees, who do not accept the words of the Savior but instead follow human traditions and old wives' tales, have made good into evil and evil into good.

5:21

(Verse 21.) Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight. For it is said, you yourselves appear to be wise, who follow human wisdom, not God's: and since you do not receive the power of God and the wisdom of God, you think you are wise (1 Corinthians 1). The Stoics claim that there is a difference between wisdom and prudence, in that wisdom is the knowledge of divine and human things, while prudence pertains only to mortal affairs. Furthermore, these things are said against the scribes and Pharisees, who, having the key of knowledge, neither enter themselves nor allow others to enter to Christ (Luke 11).

5:22

(Verse 22.) Woe to those who are mighty in drinking wine, and men of strength in mixing strong drink, that is, drunkenness. To those mentioned above who rise early in the morning to pursue drunkenness, and drink until evening, so that you burn with wine, he now also speaks of those who are mighty in drinking wine, and men of strength in mixing strong drink (Deuteronomy 32). Those who were intoxicated with the wine of dragons, and with the deadly venom of asps, they slandered with the power of the Lord. And they themselves, drunk, intoxicated the people, so that, like frenzied bacchantes, they shouted against the Lord. According to the tropology, we have already said: priests entering the Tabernacle of God should not drink wine and strong drink (Leviticus 10). We now add, that it is also commanded to the Nazarenes, who dedicate themselves to the Lord, that they should not drink wine or strong drink, or anything made from grapes, nor even eat dried grapes or vinegar made from wine (Numbers 6). But in Proverbs it is also commanded: Powerful men who are prone to anger; do not drink wine, lest when they drink, they forget wisdom. I think that there is an analogy between wine and drunkenness, in that wine is one disturbance out of many, for example, of lust, greed, gluttony, and envy. Drunkenness, on the other hand, contains within itself all the passions of vices, which we can more accurately call disturbances in the Latin language, because they overturn the state of the mind and make the drunkards unaware of what they are doing. Therefore, those who are in charge ought to be free from vices, especially anger, which is closest to madness, so that they may not harm their subjects even more as they gain more power. For someone who is full of drunkenness, he pretends to possess certain virtues by deceiving others and creating illusions.

5:23

(Verse 23.) You justify the wicked for bribes, and take away the justice of the righteous from them. And this is a part of the vices of the vineyard, which has produced sour grapes instead of grapes, and while the Lord waits to bring judgment, it commits iniquity by justifying the wicked for bribes and not considering the causes but the gifts, which even blind the eyes of the wise. Therefore, we must be cautious not to be intoxicated with wine, in which there is excess (Deuteronomy 16:19; Ephesians 5), and not expose the shame of our thighs (Genesis 9), and not flatter the wicked for

bribes and despise the justice of the righteous because of poverty. And as it is commanded in the Epistle of James: not to honor the wicked rich and despise the holy poor, let us not become judges of iniquity.

5:24

(Verse 24) Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours straw, and the heat of flames consumes it, so their root will be like embers, and their blossom will rise like dust. For they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts and have blasphemed the word of the Holy One of Israel. Because of the higher causes of pride, drunkenness, and greed, they have brought forth thorns, hay, wood, straw, and will burn the brambles. Therefore, the root of their wickedness will be reduced to ashes, and all the beauty and splendor of wealth and the body will be compared to dust (I Cor. III). For they not only did these things, but by these steps they arrived at blasphemy, so that they would not receive the law of the Lord, and they blasphemed the word of the Holy One of Israel; concerning which we read above: From Zion the law will go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3). The root can be understood as evil thoughts, but the fruit and the shoot as evil deeds and words, so that what lies hidden in the root may be revealed in the shoot: both of which will be consumed by the fire of the Lord. And so the Apostle (Heb. XII, 15), refers to the root of bitterness springing up, speaking of evil.

5:25

(Verse 25.) Therefore the wrath of the Lord's fury is upon His people, and He stretches out His hand against them and strikes them, and the mountains tremble, and their dead bodies become like refuse in the middle of the streets. In all of this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is still outstretched. For they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts, which the Lord had promised to give through Jeremiah, saying: 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt' (Jeremiah 31:31-32). And the people of Holy Israel blasphemed His speech, saying: He has a devil, and He is a Samaritan (John 8:48); and: Is not this the carpenter's son (Matthew 13:55)? Therefore, the fury of the Lord was kindled against His people, who were previously angry with the rulers and the powerful, who were wise in their own eyes, and justified the wicked for bribes, and their tongue devoured them like fire, and the heat of the flame consumed them, so that the mighty would suffer mighty torments. And He stretched out His hand against the people whom He calls His own; because they are His portion and the inheritance of His possession (Deut. XXXII). But He stretched out His hand to strike, and His fury was kindled, as we read in another place: O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy fury, neither chasten me in Thy wrath (Ps. VI, 1). And Jeremiah says: Correct us, O Lord, but with judgment; not in Thine anger (Jerem. X, 24). However, the Lord is said to be angry, not because He is subject to human disturbances, but because we who sin do not fear the Lord unless we hear Him expressing His anger. Therefore, the Apostle writes (Rom. II) that the goodness and patience of God provoke us to repentance: but we, according to the hardness and impenitence of our heart, treasure up wrath to ourselves against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. And concerning the hand that is stretched forth or lifted up against the sinful people, Job speaks more explicitly: For the hand of the Lord has touched me (Job. XIX, 21). And the devil, knowing the mighty hand of the Lord, and the arm that is

revealed to all nations, says to the Lord: send forth your hand, and touch all that he has, unless he blesses you to your face (Job 2:5). But what is said as if it were past, which is future, follows a prophetic custom, in which the things that are said to be future are so certain, that they are thought to be past. This is also sung in the Psalms: They gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink (Psalm 69:22). And again: They have divided my garments among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots (Ps. XXI, 19). And what follows: And he struck him, that is, his people, and the mountains were troubled: some mountains are thought to be opposing strengths; or they are the spirits who are in the ministry of God, and to whom sinners are handed over for punishment. But we think that it is said hyperbolically, that the mountains are also moved because of the magnitude of the impending evils, and that all the streets of cities are filled with the corpses of the dead. No one doubts that this happened to the Jews after the passion of the Lord under Vespasian and Adrian. And when these things were done, it is not against their fury: but still his hand stretched out, or elevated, which shows the appearance of one being angry and striking. And it is to be noted in all these things, that it does not reproach them for idolatry, nor for any other sins for which they have offended God, but because they have rejected the law of the Gospel, and blasphemed the word of the Lord.

5:26-30

(Verse 26 and following) And he will raise a signal among the nations far away, and he will whistle for them from the ends of the earth, and behold, they will come quickly and swiftly. And he will not be weary or faint. He will not slumber or sleep, nor will his waist belt be loosened or his sandal strap be broken. His arrows are sharp, and all his bows are drawn tight. The hooves of his horses are like flint, and his chariot wheels are like a whirlwind. His roar is like that of a lion, he will roar like a lion's cubs. He will growl, and seize his prey, and embrace it, and no one will rescue it. And it will sound over him in that day like the roaring of the sea: we will look to the land, and behold, darkness of distress, and the light is obscured by its shadow. The Hebrews understand this passage to prophesy about the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar, that by the will of God he was led into Judah and Jerusalem, and he destroyed the temple. But we, following the order, and connecting the following things with those that came before, therefore, we say that the sign, elevated far away among the nations, signifies the Lord, or that he has hissed at them like a serpent, or has dragged them with the boundary of the land; because they have cast aside the law of the Gospel, and have blasphemed the holy word. For if there had been discourse regarding the Babylonians, according to the prophetic custom, it would have said: I will call him who is from the North, because the Assyrians and Chaldeans are situated near Judea in the northern region. He certainly described the Babylonians and Assyrians more clearly. But now, saying, 'He will raise a signal among the nations far away, and will whistle for them from the ends of the earth,' he signifies distant nations and those who dwell at the ends of the earth, undoubtedly including the Romans and all the peoples of Italy, Gaul, and Spain, who were subjected to the Roman Empire under Vespasian and Hadrian. Hence why Italy was called Hesperia, because the evening star sets there. And with this, he was struck down, and all the hills of Judea were troubled, as Theodotion and Symmachus interpreted, or disturbed, as Aquila put it, or embittered, as the LXX translated, so that the streets were filled with the bodies of the dead, as if by the assault of enemies. The divine word describes the speed of the approaching army, which came not by its own will, but by the will of the Lord; indeed, it was drawn in and provoked by its hiss, which did not

fail or tire from such a journey, and did not allow sleep to its eyes, and whose sandals were not worn out. The multitude of archers, the troops of horsemen, the fervor of chariots and quadrigas, is compared to the roar of a lion, which came not so much to fight as to plunder and devour, and the shouting of the victorious army is likened to the waves of the sea. From which it should be noted whenever the sound of the sea is referred to in the Scriptures, what it signifies. Therefore, when the Roman army arrives, takes plunder, and there is no one to rescue, the Prophet joins the people with sympathetic affection and says: We will look upon the earth and behold the darkness of affliction. For we dare not look upon the sky, whose inhabitant we offend, and our light, which we always had in God, is obscured by the darkness of afflictions. I read in the commentary of someone that this which is said: He will raise a signal among the nations afar off, and will whistle to him from the ends of the earth, is to be understood from the calling of the Gentiles, that when the sign of the Cross is raised and the burdens of sins are laid aside, they will come quickly and believe. But I do not know how the following things can agree with this interpretation.

Book Three Book Three The size of the volumes is enough for me, which is covered in the explanation of the prophet Isaiah, where omitting something is a loss of understanding. Therefore, in each book, which only indicates the number and order, I have included short prefaces. And, virgin Eustochium, I pray that you assist me in the exposition of the most difficult vision: in which Almighty God is seen in His majesty; and two Seraphim standing around Him and crying out: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory; and the threshold of the temple shaken and the house of Judah filled with the darkness of error. And in comparison to the glory of God, the Prophet said that he had unclean lips and dwelt among a blaspheming people who cried out with the impious voice of rebellion: Crucify, crucify such a person; and, We have no king but Caesar (John 19:6 and 15). And one of the Seraphim was sent to Isaiah, who took a pair of tongs from the altar that had a burning coal, and purified the Prophet's lips, while the people remained unclean. Therefore, the third book of Isaiah begins with these words.

6:1 (Chapter 6, Verse 1) In the year when King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne. Isaiah prophesied under the reign of four kings over Judah and Jerusalem, as indicated in the introduction to the first vision: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. After Uzziah died, under whom all the things we have mentioned above were spoken, his son Jotham succeeded him. Jotham reigned for sixteen years and did what was right in the sight of the Lord. He also built a high gate for the temple. When he saw this, Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne, to show the appearance of a ruler. And those things which were under him, filled the Temple, whether as Theodotius and Symmachus carried it over: And those things which were under his feet, filled the Temple. For which reason the Seventy interpreted. And the house was full of his glory. About thirty years ago, when I was in Constantinople, with the most eloquent man Gregory Nazianzen, then bishop of the same city, I recall having dictated a brief and sudden treatise on this vision, in order to test my little talent and to obey my friends' advice. Therefore, I send this little book to the reader, and pray that he may be satisfied with a brief explanation of this time. It tells the sacred story of Aziah, who claimed for himself an illicit priesthood and was struck with leprosy; and when he died, the Lord appeared in the Temple that he had defiled (2 Chronicles 26). From this, we understand that while we have a leprous king ruling within us, we cannot see the Lord reigning in His majesty, nor understand the mysteries of the Holy Trinity. And in Exodus, after Pharaoh, who oppressed Israel with mud and bricks, and later with straw, died, the people

cried out to the Lord, who they could not cry out to while he was still alive. And when Phaltia son of Bananiah, a wicked ruler, died, Ezekiel fell on his face and with a loud voice cried out to the Lord. And it is beautifully said in the Hebrew: the Lord does not fill the Temple, whose heaven is his throne and the earth is his footstool; and as we read elsewhere: The Lord is in his holy Temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven (Psalm 11:5); but the things under his feet filled the Temple (Isaiah 66). But who is this Lord that is seen, as we learn more fully in the Gospel of John and in the Acts of the Apostles. Of whom John says: These things said Isaiah when he saw his glory and spoke of him (John 12:41), undoubtedly referring to Christ. Again, Paul in the Acts of the Apostles, where he speaks to the Jews in Rome, says: Well said the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying: Go to this people, and say: Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the heart of this people has grown dull, their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their heart and turn, so that I should heal them (Acts 28:26-27). However, the Son appeared in the form of one who reigns, and the Holy Spirit spoke because of the sharing of majesty and the unity of substance. Someone may ask, how can the Prophet say that he saw the Lord now, and not just the Lord, but the Lord of hosts, as he himself testifies in the following text; since the evangelist John said: No one has ever seen God (John 1:20). And God speaks to Moses: You cannot see my face, for no one can see me and live (Exodus 33:20). To this we will respond, not only regarding the divinity of the Father, but also of the Son and the Holy Spirit, because there is one nature in the Trinity, that is able to see with the eyes of the flesh; but with the eyes of the mind, as the Savior himself says: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8). We read that Abraham saw the Lord in the form of a man, and that Jacob wrestled with him as a man, who was God. Therefore, that place itself was called Peniel, which means 'face of God': For I have seen the Lord face to face, and my soul has been saved (Genesis 32). Ezechiel also saw the Lord in the form of a man sitting upon Cherubim, from his loins downwards he was like fire, and the upper parts had the appearance of electricity. Therefore, the nature of God is not seen, but appears to humans as he chooses.

6:2

(Ver. 2.) The seraphim stood above him, six wings to one, and six wings to the other: with two they covered his face, and with two they covered his feet, and with two they flew. And they cried to one another, saying: Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. This that we, following other interpreters and the Hebrew truth, in which it is written Memmallo, that is, **■π■νω α■το■**, which in Latin is said super illud, translate: the Seventy translated around him, so that the seraphim are not said to stand above the temple, but to be described around the Lord. Again, where we have said that one of the Seraphim covered his face and feet, by which is understood the face and feet of God: in Hebrew it is written Phanaui and Reglau, which can be interpreted as both his own and its: so that, according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew language, the face and feet of God and his own face and feet are said to be covered. In the seventy-ninth psalm we read: You who sit enthroned upon the Cherubim, manifest (Psalm 79:3); which in our language is interpreted as a multitude of knowledge. And thus the Lord is openly shown to sit upon the cherubim in the manner of a charioteer. However, I do not know elsewhere in the Canonical Scriptures where the seraphim, who are called to stand above the Temple or in the surrounding of the Lord, are read. Therefore, those who are accustomed to say in prayers 'You who sit upon the

cherubim and seraphim' are mistaken, as Scripture has not taught this. The seraphim, however, are interpreted as 'burning ones', which we can say are kindling or setting on fire, according to what we read elsewhere: 'Who makes his angels spirits and his ministers a burning fire' (Psalm 104:4). And so Paul the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which the Latin custom does not receive: 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?' (Heb. 1:14). Daniel also, when he described the Lord in the guise of a ruler, added: 'Thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him' (Dan. 7:10). Therefore, the Lord is shown in the Cherubim, in part revealed, and in part concealed in the Seraphim. For they cover their face and feet, because we cannot know what happened before the world and what will happen after the world; but we only contemplate the things that were made in the six days. It is not surprising to believe this about the Seraphim, since the apostles reveal the Savior to those who believe and hide Him from unbelievers; and a veil was also before the Ark of the Covenant (Exod. 40). They are also said to have wings, because of their speed and their ability to travel everywhere: either because they always dwell in higher places. For that which is said about the winds, 'He walks upon the wings of the winds' (Psalm 104:4), does not truly testify that the winds have wings, according to the license of the fables of poets and painters, but rather it signifies their swift movement in all directions. And each has six wings, because we only know about the creation of the world and the present age. And what they cry out, one to another, or according to the Hebrews, this one to that one, that is, one to one, they encourage each other in the praises of the Lord and say: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, in order to demonstrate the mystery of the Trinity in one Divinity; and they testify that the glory of God fills not just the Temple of the Jews, as before, but the entire earth, which He deigned to assume a human body for our salvation and descend to the earth. Finally, when Moses prayed to the Lord on behalf of the people, asking Him to spare the sinful people, the Lord responded: 'I will be merciful to them.' However, as surely as I live and as surely as my name lives, my glory will fill the whole earth (Num. 14: 20, 21). The seventy-first psalm also declares: 'His glory will fill the whole earth' (Psalm 71:19). That is why the angels proclaimed to the shepherds: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will' (Luke 2:14). Therefore, some impiously understand the two Seraphim to refer to the Son and the Holy Spirit: as we teach according to the evangelist John and the Apostle Paul, that the Son of God was seen in the majesty of his reign, and the Holy Spirit spoke. Some Latin scholars understand the two Seraphim to refer to the Old and New Testaments, which speak only of the present age. Hence, they are said to have six wings and to veil the face and feet of God, and eagerly bear witness to the truth, and show forth all the sacraments of the Trinity that they proclaim. And they marvel at each other because the Lord of hosts, in the form of the Father, took on the form of a servant and humbled Himself even unto death, death on a cross (Philippians II), so that not only heavenly beings, but also earthly beings may know Him.

6:4

(Verse 4) And the doorposts of the cardinal's palace were shaken by the voice of the one who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. The seraphim cried out, and throughout the whole earth they proclaimed the mystery of the Trinity, when the entire earth learned of the passion of the Lord and Savior. Immediately, the threshold of the Temple was either raised or lifted up, and all its hinges fell down, fulfilling the Savior's threat, saying: Your house will be left to you desolate

(Matthew 23:38). And what a beautiful arrangement of words. After the earth is filled with the glory of the Lord of hosts, the Temple of the Jews is filled with the darkness of ignorance, and with darkness, and with smoke, which is harmful to the eyes. Or certainly through the smoke of the Temple the fire is revealed. For first the Gospel of the Savior was preached throughout the whole world, and after forty-two years from the Lord's passion, Jerusalem was captured, and the Temple was set on fire. The Jews believe that the Temple was filled with smoke, which signifies incense, and through this the coming of the divine majesty.

6:5

(Verse 5.) And I said: Woe to me because I have kept silent, for I am a man with unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people with unclean lips, and I have seen the king, the Lord of hosts, with my own eyes. And after Abraham saw the Lord and heard His voice, he declared himself to be mere dust and ashes (Gen. 18). And Isaiah, according to the Septuagint, testifies that he was stricken, not for any other sins, but because he had unclean lips. Blessed is the conscience that has only sinned in speech, not by its own fault, but because of association with a people with unclean lips, with whom he was often compelled to speak. From this it is shown to be harmful to live with sinners: For he who touches pitch, will be defiled by it (Ecclesiasticus 13:1). But because we read in Hebrew: Woe is me, for I have kept silence, the Prophet laments, because he was not worthy to praise the Lord of Hosts with the Seraphim, whom we understand to be Angelic virtues. But he dared not praise the Lord, because he had unclean lips. And therefore he had unclean lips, because he associated with the sinful people. Certainly, it must be understood in this way: Because I remained silent and did not boldly rebuke the wicked king Ozias, therefore my lips are unclean, and I dare not sing praises to the Lord with the angels, lest it be said of me: Why do you declare my justices and take my covenant in your mouth? (Ps. 49:16) For there is no beautiful praise on the lips of a sinner. (Eccl. 15:9) However, we say this, not that we teach that Isaiah was such; but that he himself, out of humility and with only unclean lips, confesses himself worthy of God's praise.

6:6

(Verse 6) And one of the Seraphim flew to me, and in his hand was a live coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar, and he touched my mouth, and said: Behold, this has touched your lips, and your iniquity shall be taken away, and your sin be cleansed. He flew, or rather, one of the Seraphim was sent, the name of which means burning, in order to cleanse the impure lips of the Prophet with a fiery coal which he had taken from the altar. However, many believe that there are two Seraphim, because one was calling to the other, even though each individual could call out to the others; and the Septuagint edition suggests that there were actually many, who were interpreted as Seraphim, standing around him. And if it were spoken about two things, they would not have spoken in a circle, but they would have spoken from both sides. And this applies to the multitude of angels, which is prepared for the ministry of God. But the Seraphim are called in the plural number, and in the singular, Seraph; just as the Cherubim are called Cherub. But as for the altar under which the souls of the martyrs are seen in heaven, John speaks of it in the Apocalypse (Rev. 6); and this stone, which is interpreted as 'LXX coals of fire,' that is, a carbuncle, may not signify coal or charcoal, as many think, but a carbuncular stone, which is called fiery because of its flame-like color. From this we understand that the altar of God is filled with carbuncles, that is, fiery

stones and embers, which cleanse sins. Hence we read in the Scriptures about God: Coals were kindled by Him (Psalm 18:9). And it is said of the Lord Himself that He is a consuming fire. And the Savior in the Gospel says: I have come to cast fire upon the earth (Luke 12:49), to baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire. For the fire will test the quality of each one's work (1 Corinthians 3). And he who is to be saved will be saved as if he passed through fire. And it should be noted that to Jeremiah, to whom it was said: Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born, I sanctified you (Jeremiah 1:5), because he did not have unclean lips, but had only said: I do not know how to speak, because I am young, the Lord himself stretched out his hand, and touched his mouth, and said: Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. Moreover, to Isaiah who said, 'I am a man with unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people with unclean lips,' the hand of God is not extended, but a Seraphim is sent by God, or flies of its own accord, because it is entrusted with this task. And in its hand it holds a coal, which according to the Septuagint and Theodotion, is grasped with tongs; according to Aquila and Symmachus, who have followed the Hebrew, with forceps it grasps, that is, 'he cleanses his iniquities,' so that it may touch his mouth and purify his ancient sins. However, it is the hand that is sent from God and the Seraphim, so that the Prophet, seeing a member of his own body, is not frightened by external touch. Some of our people consider the forceps, with which a stone is grasped, to be the two Testaments, which are united by the union of the Holy Spirit. But because the Lord is introduced as sitting, and sitting in the Temple, and the house is filled with smoke, as the Jews think, of incense; consequently, forceps are also mentioned, which we read about in the priestly ministry (Exodus 37).

6:8

(Verse 8.) And I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And I said: Here am I, send me. Because both us and all the other interpreters have translated it, the Hebrew phrase Lanu (), which means 'for us,' is put by the LXX to this people, which is not at all found in the Hebrew. But when it is said in the person of God, 'for us' is to be understood in that sense in which it is read in Genesis: Let us make man in our image, and likeness (Gen. 1:26), to indicate the sacrament of the Trinity. For just as we read in the Gospel, when the Lord says, 'I and the Father are one' (John 10:30), and we refer this to the unity of nature, namely, that we are one in essence, but to the diversity of persons, the Trinity governs as commanded by the Lord. However, the Lord does not specify whom to go forth, but presents the listeners with an option, so that the will may obtain the reward. And the Prophet does not promise to go forth by presumption and the arrogance of his own conscience, but by confidence: because his lips have been cleansed, and iniquity has been removed, and sin has been purified. Therefore Moses also, to whom the Lord said: Come, I will send thee to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt (Exod. III, 10), and he said: I beseech thee, Lord, I am not eloquent, send whom thou wilt (Exod. IV, 13), answered not with contempt, but with humility, because he had not heard anything from his purified lips, who had been educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. And Isaiah, not by his own merit, but by the grace of the Lord, by which he was purified, offered himself to the service. But others think that Isaiah offered himself because he thought that he had good news to announce to the people. But because he heard, 'Go, tell this people: You shall indeed hear but not understand, you shall indeed see but not perceive' (Isaiah 6:9), therefore, in the following passages, when the voice of the Lord said to him, 'Cry out,' he does not immediately cry out, but he asks, 'What shall I cry?' The prophet Jeremiah, to whom it had been said, 'Take this cup of the wine of wrath from my hand and

drink to all the nations to which I send you' (Jeremiah 25:15), willingly receiving the cup of sufferings, so that he might offer it to the opposing nations, for them to drink, and vomit, and fall down; after he heard, 'Go and first offer it to Jerusalem,' he replied, 'You have deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived' (Jeremiah 20:7). This is the observance of the Hebrews. However, we say that it is not a matter of rashness, but of obedience, to offer oneself to be sent by the Lord.

6:9-10

(Verse 9 and following) And he said: Go, and say to this people: Hearing, you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, you shall see, and shall not perceive. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. The Septuagint translates this passage as follows, as the evangelist Luke placed it in the Acts of the Apostles: And when they did not agree with one another, it is certain that the Jews departed, as Paul said one word: Because the Holy Spirit has spoken well through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying: Go to this people, and say: Hearing, you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, you shall see, and shall not perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat, and they have heavily heard with their ears, and have shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I heal them (Acts 28:25 and following). But as for the time when this prophecy was fulfilled, the Apostle Paul himself speaks in the following words: Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen. (Acts 28:28) Hence, in the same Acts of the Apostles, we read that Paul and Barnabas, when the Jews refused to believe, said: It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. But since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:46, 47) For thus the Lord commanded us: I have set you as a light for the Gentiles, that you may be for salvation to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 49:6). Therefore, according to the easy interpretation of the Septuagint, Isaiah the prophet declares what the people will do by the command of the Lord. In Hebrew, there is a difficulty in how God Himself commands the people to hear but not understand, to see but not perceive, and then the prophet comes and prays to the Lord and says: Blind the heart of this people, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and be healed (Isaiah 6:10). First of all, the question that can be posed to us must be answered: why did the apostle Paul, when disputing with the Hebrews, speak not according to the Hebrew that he knew to be correct, but according to the Septuagint? The ancient commentators of the Church claim that the evangelist Luke was extremely knowledgeable in the medical arts and had a greater understanding of Greek letters than Hebrew. Hence, his language in both the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles is more polished and reminiscent of secular eloquence, and he makes greater use of Greek testimonies than Hebrew ones. But Matthew and John, of whom one wrote the Gospel in Hebrew and the other in Greek, cite testimonies from the Hebrew, such as: 'Out of Egypt I have called my Son' (Hosea II, 1). And: 'He shall be called a Nazarene' (Matthew II, 23). And: 'Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water' (John VII, 38). And: 'They shall look upon him whom they have pierced' (Zechariah XII, 10; John XIX, 37), and others similar to these. Moreover, it can be objected that the Epistle to the Hebrews is not Paul's because in writing to the Hebrews, he uses testimonies that are not found in Hebrew volumes. But if someone were to say that the Hebrew books were later falsified by the Jews, let

them hear what Origen responds to this question in the eighth volume of his Explanations of Isaiah, namely that the Lord and the Apostles, who accuse the scribes and Pharisees of other crimes, would not have remained silent about this greatest crime. But if they were to say that the Hebrew books were falsified after the coming of the Lord Savior and the preaching of the Apostles, I cannot help but laugh, because the Savior, the Evangelists, and the Apostles presented their testimonies in such a way that the Jews would later falsify them. However, in the present place, it must be said that it is in vain for us to resort to the Septuagint translation, lest it seem blasphemous that what is said in Hebrew, Hear and you shall not understand, and see the vision, and you shall not know, we also find such testimonies in the Seventy Interpreters, as is the case in Exodus where it is said to Pharaoh: For this very reason have I raised you up, that I may show my power in you. But if he Himself raised up and hardened the heart of Pharaoh, that he should not believe: and of others it is said: God hath given them the spirit of insensibility, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear (Rom. XI, 8); and in the Psalms: Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them: let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and their back bend thou down always (Ps. LXVIII, 23, 24): they are not to be blamed who do not see, but He who gave eyes that they should not see. Therefore, even without this testimony that we are now trying to explain, the same question remains in the churches, and either with these things being resolved along with the others, or with the others being resolved and this one remaining unsolvable. The blessed apostle Paul explains this matter more fully in his letter to the Romans, and what he has almost entirely discussed throughout the letter, we make unnecessary if we wish to summarize it in a short speech. For he says after many things: God has concluded all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all (Rom. 11:32). And admiring the sacraments of the Lord, he exclaimed: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! And again, speaking about the incredulity of the Jews, he says: Have they then stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but by their offense salvation is come to the Gentiles, that they may be provoked to emulation. And after a little while: For if the loss of them be the reconciliation of the world, what shall the receiving of them be? Is not life from the dead? And again: I don't want you to be unaware, brothers, of this mystery, so that you may not be wise in your own sight, for a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. And then all Israel will be saved. And in a little while (Rom. XI, 25): According to the Gospel, they are enemies for your sake, but according to election, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers: for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For just as you, he says, at one time did not believe in God but now have attained mercy due to their disbelief, so too these individuals now have not believed in your mercy, in order that they may also attain mercy. For God has concluded all under sin, so that he may have mercy on all. Therefore, it is not cruelty on God's part, but mercy, for one nation to perish so that all may be saved: that the part of the Jews may not be seen, so that the whole world may be seen. And the Lord Himself in the Gospel turns the miracle of the blind man from birth, who had received his sight, into a Tropology, and He says: 'For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.' (John 9:39). And in another place, Simeon speaks: 'Behold, this child is set for the fall and the rising of many.' (Luke 2:34). Therefore, while they do not see, we see; while they fall, we rise. The Prophet, understanding in a certain way, says in other words: O Lord, you command me to speak to the people of Judah, so that they may hear and not understand the Savior, and see him, and not

recognize him. If you want your command to be fulfilled, and the whole world to be saved, which I also desire, blind the heart of this people and make their ears heavy, and close their eyes, so that they may not understand, hear, or see. For if they see, and are converted, and understand, and are healed, the whole world will not receive healing. From this, we understand that although sin is grave, if someone converts, they can be healed. And at the same time, it must be understood that for the magnitude of the crime, they are deemed unworthy of repentance. As the Lord Himself said to Jerusalem: How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing (Matthew 23:37).

6:11-13

(Verse 11-13.) And I said, how long, Lord? And he answered, until the cities are desolate and without inhabitant, and the houses are without people, and the land is left empty. And the Lord will remove men far away, and what was abandoned in the midst of the land will be multiplied. And even in it there will be a tenth, and it will be turned again to destruction, like a terebinth tree, and like an oak tree that sheds its leaves, the holy seed will be the stump that remains in it. The Lord said: Go, and tell this people, Hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them (Deut. XXXII). The prophet responds, anxiously questioning about his people: How long, Lord, will this message endure, that they hear but do not understand; and see but do not perceive? To whom the Lord responded, for so long will not hear, and will not see, and will have a blind heart, until the cities of Judea are completely destroyed by Vespasian and Titus fighting, to the extent that not even the original name remains, and if there are any houses left; they will be without inhabitants, and the land will be reduced to a wilderness; and either by fleeing or by captivity, the Jewish people will be dispersed throughout the entire world: and the Jewish people will multiply not in Judea, as before, but in all the nations. But when I say that it will multiply, the misery of the remaining people will be so great that compared to the previous multitude, hardly a tenth part will remain. And even in the land itself there will be desolation (for this place can be understood in two ways: that hardly a tenth part will remain in the whole world, and that hardly a small part of the people will be reserved in Judea). Again, the remaining people will be for plundering, when after nearly fifty years Adrian will come and completely plunder the land of Judea, to such an extent that it will be compared to a terebinth and an oak tree that has lost its acorns. Finally, after the ultimate devastation, even the laws of the state were suspended, and the Jews were prohibited from entering the land from which they had been expelled. But if anyone believes in Christ, and the fulfillment of what we have read above: 'Unless the Lord of hosts had left us offspring, we would have become like Sodom and become like Gomorrah' (Isaiah 1:9); as the Apostle also says (Romans 9), the remnant will be saved; this holy offspring will be, and from the seed of the apostles all the churches will sprout forth. What we have said, the holy seed will be that which remains in her, or next to the eagle, the holy seed will be its offspring; it is not found in the Seventy Interpreters, but added by Origen from the Hebrew and Theodotion's edition; in the copies of the Church, it is stated that after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved; and this word of the Lord will also be fulfilled, saying: 'I will kill, and I will make alive; I will wound, and I will heal' (Deuteronomy 32:39).

7:1-2

(Chapter VII, Verses 1, 2) And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah: Rezin King of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but they could not conquer it. And they reported to the house of David, saying: Syria has joined forces with Ephraim, and his heart is troubled, as the trees of the forest are moved by the wind. Uzziah, also known as Azariah, reigned as king of Judah in Jerusalem for fifty-two years (2 Kings 15). At the end of his time, Isaiah saw what he had already prophesied. When he died, and Jotham his son reigned in his place, a just king, the prophet immediately saw the Lord Savior reigning in his majesty, and announcing the blindness of the Jewish people, and the destruction of Jerusalem, and the other cities under Vespasian and Adrian. He also saw how the remnants would be saved through the Apostles. The third king, son of Jotham, succeeded him - Ahaz, the most impious king - who closed the doors of the temple, worshipped Baalim in the valley of Benbannom, and consecrated his son to idols. So he took away the bronze altar that Solomon had made and put it in the temple of the gods of Damascus, which he had taken from Damascus. Thus he was abandoned by the Lord, and Rasin, king of Syria, that is, Aram, and Phacee, son of Romelias, king of Israel in Samaria, rose up against him and came to Jerusalem to attack it (Same source). We read in the Book of Chronicles that after defeating Achaz, Rasin, king of Damascus, brought many people from Judah to Damascus, and Phacee, son of Romelias, king of the ten tribes called Israel, struck down in one day one hundred twenty thousand warriors from Judah and took captive two hundred thousand women, children, and girls along with a great amount of plunder to Samaria. About this battle, the prophet is now silent, but according to the account, a battle took place when they, having the test of their strength and victory, and invited by the magnitude of the spoils, came again to Judea, and desired to wage war against Jerusalem, but they could not, because the Lord helped him, so that under the occasion of mercy, by which he freed the besieged people, he announced that his son would be born of a Virgin. When the house of David, that is, the royal house, heard this, Syria and Ephraim, namely Rasin and Phacee, came together with their army, and they were terrified and feared, and both the king and the people trembled so much that you would think the leaves of the trees were being blown by the blasts of the wind. According to the anagoge, the easy interpretation is this: during the reign of the wicked King Ahaz, the king of Aram, who is interpreted as lofty and sublime, signifies the arrogance of worldly wisdom. And Pekah, son of Remaliah, who also, according to the prophet Hosea, was from the tribe of Ephraim, from which Jeroboam son of Nebat had set up golden calves in Bethel and Dan (3 Kings 32), and had separated the people of God from David, is referred to the heretics who are agreeing with him to attack the Church. And when the house of David hears this, the good shepherd whom we read about in Ezekiel (Ezek. XXXIV) being raised up, and his people believing simply in the Lord, they will tremble. And they will tremble because they are compared not to fruitful trees, but to a barren cliff. However, there is no doubt that heretics and pagans fight against the house of David with the swords of arguments and the art of dialectic, so that those who disagree among themselves may unite in attacking the Church, just as Herod and Pilate, who were at odds with each other, joined together in the passion of the Lord.

7:3-9

(Verse 3, 4 and following) And the Lord said to Isaiah: Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-Jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field. And

say to him: Take heed, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying: Let us go up against Judah and trouble it, and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves, and set a king over it, the son of Tabeel. Thus says the Lord God, this will not stand, and this will not be, but the head of Syria is Damascus and the head of Damascus is Rezin, and yet sixty-five years, and Ephraim will cease to be a people. And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of Romelia. If you do not believe, you will not endure. Jasub, the son of Isaiah, who is interpreted as the remnant and turning back, in the likeness of the people of Judah, who was to be saved from the hands of the two kings, is commanded to go out with his parent and meet Ahaz, the king of Judah, by the upper pool of the aqueduct, on the road of the fuller's field, where later we will read, in the time of King Hezekiah, Rabshakeh stood to blaspheme the people of God by order of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria. The place they went out to was the one where the leaders of the city, sent by Hezekiah, were mentioned in the book of Kings. And it is commanded to Ahaz (2 Kings 18), even though he is a wicked king, by the mercy of the Lord, to be silent and not be terrified or afraid in his heart, thinking that he will suffer similar things that he had suffered before. However, he calls the two tails of burning wood, that is, the smoke towers, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Samaria, because the kingdom of Syria, that is, Damascus, and the kingdom of Samaria, that is, the ten tribes, which were called Ephraim by another name, end in them. For it is written (2 Kings 16) that Theglathphalassar, king of the Assyrians, ascended to Damascus under King Ahaz and laid it waste, and carried away its inhabitants to Cyrene, and killed Rasin, and that he plotted against Pekah son of Remaliah, and killed him, and reigned in Israel for nine years in his place, and that Salmanasar, king of Assyria, came and besieged Samaria, which is now called Sebaste, for three years, and in the ninth year of the reign of Hoshea he captured it, and he imprisoned Hoshea and carried Israel away to the Assyrians, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the River Gozan and in the cities of Media, or as the Septuagint translated, in the mountains of Media (2 Kings 17). For although the wicked kings have devised a plan today to ascend to Judah, whose region is situated in the mountains, and to rouse him from his rest, and in a way, to subdue him to their authority; and to set over him the son of Tabeel, who is interpreted as 'good God', in order to show either a man with this name, or an idol. Nevertheless, thus says the Lord God: This plan shall not stand, but for the time being the head of Syria's cities shall be Damascus, and in that very metropolis, Rasin shall reign. Furthermore, in Ephraim because of Jeroboam the son of Nabath, who was the first ruler of Ephraim, there will be the head of Samaria, that is, the royal house in the city of Samaria, and the head of Samaria will be the son of Romelia, that is, Phacee: however, the kingdom of the ten tribes, that is, the people of Ephraim, will cease to exist after sixty-five years. If we do not pay closer attention, it will not be able to stand. For in the twelfth year of Achaz the son of Joatham in the tribe of Judah, Hoshia ruled over Samaria, and in the ninth year, he was captured by the Assyrian empire (2 Kings 17). However, Achaz reigned over Judah for sixteen years (2 Kings 16), after whose death in the seventh year of his reign, Hoshea was captured and Samaria was destroyed, and the entire people were transported to Media. Thus, if we were to add sixteen years for Achaz and seven for Hoshea, there would be a total of twenty-three years, or at most, twenty-four. So where are the sixty-five years in which the kingdom of Israel is said to be ended? Therefore, the Hebrews explained this passage as follows: Amos, who began prophesying during

the reign of Uzziah, also known as Azariah, and Isaiah, who began his prophecy, was the first to prophesy against Israel, saying: But Israel shall be taken captive out of his own land (Amos 7:11, 17). The title of his prophecy against Samaria is: And he began to prophesy in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, two years before the earthquake, which is said to have occurred at the time when Uzziah entered the temple of God and usurped the priesthood for himself, and the earth shook, and the ashes of the altar were poured out, and the king himself was struck with leprosy (II Chronicles 26). But Ozias wanted there to be twenty-five years when these things happened, of which there remain twenty-seven more years. For Ozias reigned for fifty-two years (2 Kings 15), after him his son Joatham reigned for sixteen years, and his son Achaz for another sixteen years. After him reigned Ezechias, and in the sixth year of his reign, Samaria was captured, making a total of sixty-five years (2 Kings 16). This, the Lord predicting through the prophet, Achaz and the people did not believe the future. Hence it is added: If you do not believe, you will not remain, as Symmachus translated, that is, you will not remain in your kingdom, but you will be led into captivity, enduring the punishment of those whose faithlessness you imitated. Or certainly according to the Septuagint, you will not understand. And the meaning is: because you do not believe what the Lord says will happen, you will not have understanding. These things we have spoken according to history. However, according to the intended symbolism, it should be considered that the prophet Isaiah is commanded to meet the impious king, going out from his place, not at the beginning of the aqueduct, but at the farthest ends of the upper pool, which was in the field of the clothiers, where impurities and stains were cleansed. Although Ahaz reigned over Judah, because he was impious, he dwelled at the farthest ends of the upper pool. Therefore, God does not have such pity on a king whom he regarded as unworthy of salvation as he has for his own people. However, the two tails of smoking torches, as we have previously mentioned, are called secular wisdom and heretical discourse, the end of which is destruction. Those who foolishly devised a plan to rise up against Judah, in order to capture him as if he were careless and asleep, and to associate him with their own errors, and to place the son of Tabeel, that is, a false god, on him. For both adversaries consider the truth to be with themselves, and they estimate that their own doctrine is the best. In the end, the heretic Marcion believes that Christ is the son of the good God, that is, of another, and not of the just one whose prophets he is. He calls him bloody, cruel, and a judge. While they are saying these things, the Lord threatens that their plan will not stand, but for the time being, as long as this world stands, and as long as the things of this world rule in their boundaries and cities. But when the time of the consummation comes, that is, sixty-five years, and both the things of the world that were made in six days, and all that pertains to the five senses, come to an end, then everything will be dissolved, which the gentiles and heretics do not believe will happen, and because of their disbelief, they do not understand what is being said.

7:10-11

(Verse 10, 11.) And the Lord added, speaking to Achaz, saying: Ask for yourself a sign from the Lord your God in the depths of hell, or in the highest above. He had previously spoken to Achaz through the prophet, saying: Behold, be silent, do not fear, and so on. Since Achaz did not believe, and therefore did not understand, the Lord himself speaks to Achaz, so that at least, frightened by the authority of the Lord, he may accept what is said. For, he says to him, it seems difficult to you that the most powerful kingdoms are to be ended in a short time, and that you will be delivered

from great danger along with your people; ask for yourself a sign, not from idols, by whose error you are held captive, but from the Lord your God who promises you help, and that sign is the basis of your request, whether from the depths or from on high. But while only the Seventy interpreted it as 'from the depth of hell,' the others translated it more significantly according to the Hebrew, 'from the depth of the underworld.' Therefore, just as 'the depths of hell' signifies a profound abyss, so we should understand 'the heights above the heavens' as an exalted state. So when you hear a sign about either the underworld or the exalted, believe in the future things that I have mentioned. Do you want, he says, the earth to be split open and the great chasms of the underworld to be revealed, which are said to exist in the heart of the earth, or for the heavens to be opened? Both pertain to the mystery of the death and ascension of the Lord: For he who descended is the one who also ascended (Ephesians 4:10). And in the Apostle we read: 'Don't say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?"' (that is, to bring Christ down)' or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)' (Romans 10:6-7). And in another place, speaking about Christ, it says: 'That you may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge' (Ephesians 3:18). As far as mystical understanding is concerned, Moses also received signs from the earth, which we read about in the Psalms: He sent signs and wonders among you, O Egypt (Ps. CXXXIV, 9), such as frogs, locusts, gnats, and flies; from heaven, he sent hail, fire, and three days of darkness. We also have the example of Hezekiah, when the sun went back ten lines, receiving a sign from heaven (IV Kings XX); and Joshua, the son of Nun, in Gibeon and Aijalon, when the sun and moon stood still (Joshua X). Most people think that Saul received a sign from the earth and the depths of hell when he saw Samuel raised through enchantments and magic arts (1 Samuel 28). But even the prophet Jonah, who was liberated from the abyss, the depths, and the jaws of death, gave and received a sign of the underworld (Jonah 2). I have read in a certain Commentary that this passage is interpreted allegorically, understanding the deep and high as perceptible and intelligible things, which we can call sensible and intelligible, with the former referring to the senses and the latter to the mind and reason. Also, the virgin is interpreted as the soul, which is not corrupted by any consciousness of sin, and can give birth to Emmanuel, God with us, that is, the present word of God. But we do not eat the flesh of the lamb, but roast it, and we must dry up all the humors of pleasures in us, so that we do not neglect the sacrament of our faith, while we understand more than it is necessary to understand.

7:12

(Verse 12.) And Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. This is not humility, but pride, that he does not want to ask for a sign from the Lord. Although it is written in Deuteronomy: You shall not test the Lord your God (Deut. 6:16), and the Savior used this against the devil as a testimony (Matt. 4): nevertheless, being commanded to ask, he should have fulfilled the command in obedience, especially since both Gideon and Manoah asked for and received a sign (Judges 6 and 13). However, according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew language, in which it is written 'Ulo Enasse Adonai' (), and all similarly translated it, I will not attempt the Lord, that it may be read, I will not exalt the Lord. For the impious king knew that if he sought a sign, he would receive it, and the Lord would be glorified. Therefore, like a worshipper of idols, who had set up altars in every corner of the streets and on the mountains and in shady groves, and considered fanatics to be Levites, he does not want to seek a sign as commanded.

7:13

(Verse 13.) And he said, hear therefore, house of David: Is it not enough for you to be troublesome to men, that you are also troublesome to my God? Who is this that said, hear therefore, house of David? Not God who had said above to Ahaz: Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; but a Prophet, as is proven from what follows: For you are troublesome to my God. And the meaning is: because you not only persecute the prophets and despise their words; but you also contradict the present and commanding judgment of God; so that you bring upon yourself the labor, as he says in another place: I have labored, enduring (Isaiah 1:14), therefore the Lord will do what follows. Regarding the labor and trouble that Aquila and Symmachus have translated, LXX and Theodotius have interpreted it as a struggle and contest, because the contentious ones do not submit their necks to the Lord's service, but with Him willing to heal their wounds, they reject healing. And it should be noted that when the impious King Ahaz did not want to seek a sign, the prophetic message should be directed to the house of David, that is, to the royal tribe mentioned above: And they reported these things to the house of David, saying: Syria and Ephraim have joined forces.

7:14

(Verse 14) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Emmanuel. In no way does God speak in various ways according to the Apostle Paul (Hebrews 1), nor according to any other prophet (Hosea 12), nor is He likened to the hands of prophets, but He who formerly spoke through others will say Himself, 'I am present' (Isaiah 58). This is the One whom the Bride was asking for in the Song of Solomon: 'Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth' (Song of Solomon 1:2). For the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory (Ps. 23:10): He himself shall descend into the virgin's womb, and shall enter and depart from the Eastern gate, which is always closed (Ezek. 44); of which Gabriel says to the Virgin: The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you: therefore the holy one who shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). And in Proverbs: Wisdom has built herself a house (Prov. 9:1). But when it is said, 'The Lord himself will give you a sign,' it must be new and marvelous. But if a young woman, as the Jews want, and not a virgin, were to give birth, what sign could it be called, since this name refers to age, not integrity? And indeed, so that we may compare our understanding with that of the Jews and not offer them the mockery of our ignorance, the Hebrew word for 'virgin' is 'Bethula' (בְּתוּלָה), which is not written here in the present passage: instead, the word used is 'Alma' (אִלְמָה), which all except the Septuagint translated as 'young woman.' Furthermore, the word 'alma' is ambiguous among them: for it is said both 'adolescentula' (young girl) and 'abscondita' (hidden), that is, '■π■κρυφος' (secret).... Hence, in the title of the ninth psalm, where it is written in Hebrew as 'Alamoth' (אֲלֻמֹּת), other translators have rendered it as 'adolescence', which the LXX interpreted as 'absconditis' (hidden things). And in Genesis we read: when Rebecca is said to be 'alma' (Gen. XXIV), Aquila did not translate it as 'adolescentula' or 'puella', but as 'abscondita' (hidden). Moreover, the Shunammite woman, having lost her son, fell at the feet of Elisha, and Jezi forbade her, but she heard from the Prophet: Let her go, for she is in pain, and the Lord hides from me (2 Kings 4:27). Because in Latin it is said 'hides from me', in Hebrew it is written 'Eelim Memmenni'. Therefore, a chaste woman, not only a girl or a virgin, but with great care is said to be hidden and secret, which has never been exposed to the gaze of men; but she has been guarded with great diligence by her parents. The

Punic language, which is said to originate (or derive) from Hebrew sources, is properly called alma virgo. And to make the Jews laugh, alma is also called sancta in our language. And the Hebrews use the words of almost all languages: as in the Song of Songs (Song of Solomon 3:9) where the Greek word φορελλον, meaning litter, is used and it is also found in Hebrew. The Hebrews also use the words nugas (trifles) and mensuram (measure) in the same way and with the same meanings. And as far as my memory serves me, I never think I have read of a married woman having nourished men. but of a woman who is a virgin: not only a virgin, but a virgin of youthful age, and in the years of adolescence. For it is possible that an old woman may be a virgin, but this woman was a virgin in her girlhood. Or certainly a virgin, not a little girl, and one who could not yet know a man: but already marriageable. Finally, in Deuteronomy (Deut. XXII, 25 et seqq.) a virgin is understood under the name of a girl and a young girl. If, he said, a man finds a betrothed girl in the field and forces her, and lies with her, you shall kill only the man who lay with her, and the girl shall not be put to death. For just as when someone rises up against his neighbor in ambush and kills him, so this matter happened. In the field he found her: the betrothed girl cried out, and there was no one to save her. And in the volume of Kings (3 Kings 1), we read that they sought a virgin girl named Abishag, and they brought her to the king, who slept with her, and she cared for him, and the girl was very beautiful, and she served him, and the king did not know her. And what follows: And you shall call his name Emmanuel, and the seventy and three likewise translated it, for which it is written in Matthew, they shall call: which is not found in Hebrew. Therefore, this child who will be born of a Virgin, O house of David, shall now be called Emmanuel, which means, God with us, because you will prove to have God present by the very fact that you are freed from two enemy kings: and he who will be called Jesus afterwards, which means, Savior, because he will save the entire human race, shall now be called by you the name of Emmanuel. The Word of God, which all the interpreters have translated, you can understand and name: which is namely that the Virgin herself who will conceive and give birth, shall be called by this name, Christ. In many testimonies that the Evangelists or Apostles took from the ancient books, it should be carefully observed that they did not follow the order of the words, but the meaning. Hence, in the present passage, Matthew used 'in utero habebit' instead of 'concipiet in utero' (Matthew 1:13) and 'vocabunt' instead of 'vocabis'. The Hebrews believe that this is prophesied about the son of Hezekiah, Ahaz's son, that Samaria will be captured during his reign, which cannot be proven at all. Indeed, Ahaz, the son of Jotham, reigned over Judah and Jerusalem for sixteen years (2 Kings 16): and his son Hezekiah succeeded him as king, being twenty-five years old, and reigned over Judah and Jerusalem for twenty-nine years. So, how is it that in the first year of Ahaz, this prophecy about Hezekiah's conception and birth is said to have been given to him, when at that time when Ahaz began to reign, Hezekiah was already nine years old, unless perhaps they say that his infancy, not his age, is being referred to in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign, when Samaria was captured? That it is forced and violent is evident even to fools. Some of us argue that the prophet Isaiah had two sons, Jasub and Emmanuel, and that Emmanuel was generated from his prophetess wife, as a symbol of the Lord Savior, so that the first son Jasub, which means abandoned or converted, signifies the Jewish people who were abandoned and will later return. And the second son, that is, Emmanuel, meaning God with us, signifies the calling of the Gentiles after the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

7:15

(Verse 15) He shall eat butter and honey, so that he may know how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before he knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings. The Lord will bring the king of Assyria upon you and your people and your father's house—days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes. I will say something even more amazing, so that you do not think that he is born in a fantasy, he will use foods of infancy, he will eat butter and milk. And although many centuries later the Evangelist testifies about him: But the child grew in wisdom and age and grace before God and men (Luke 2:52): and this is said to confirm the truth of the human body: yet still wrapped in swaddling clothes, and fed with butter and honey, he will have the ability to judge between good and evil, so that he may reject evil and choose good. Not because he did or disapproved or chose this, but because he knew how to disapprove and choose, so that through these words we may know that the infancy of the human body did not hinder divine wisdom. Lastly, the Angels announce to the shepherds the laying in the manger: The Magi adore coming from the East, whom it is to be believed were certainly chosen. And on the other hand, Herod, the scribes, and the Pharisees are disapproved, (Matthew 2), because they killed many thousands of infants for the sake of one child.

7:16

(Verse 16) For before the boy knows how to reject evil and choose good, the land that you detest will be abandoned by the face of its two kings. In the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah, Samaria was captured by the Assyrians (2 Kings 18), that is, in his thirty-first year of age. Therefore, this one who is to be born, either from a Virgin, as we believe, or from a young woman, as the Jews claim, will eat butter and honey, and will be so young that he cannot discern between evil and good, and before he leaves infancy, the land of Syria and Samaria will be laid waste by the Assyrians. Let the Hebrews answer how Hezekiah is proclaimed an infant at the age of thirty-one, and of such a young age that he, eating honey and butter, like the children of Nineveh, does not know left from right, that is, does not know evil from good. But in regard to Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us,' he will have an easy understanding. As for the mystery and invocation of his name, let the land of Syria and Samaria be laid waste, even by the Assyrians who prevail, and let the house of David be freed from the two kings whom he fears, namely, Rezin and Pekah.

7:17

(Verse 17.) The Lord will bring upon you, and upon your people, and upon your father's house, days that have not come since the days of the separation of Ephraim from Judah, with the king of Assyria. This place should be read with hyperbaton. Finally, we too, following the Hebrew truth, have interpreted it as follows: O house of David, listen to what I say, that the land of Syria and Samaria may be abandoned by the face of the two kings whom you fear most greatly. The Lord will bring days upon you, and upon the house of your father David, which you have never had since the time when the ten tribes were separated from the two tribes, and they began to have a kingdom in Samaria. These days, that is, times with the king of the Assyrians, will come upon them, so that once they are overcome and defeated, you may be liberated by the presence of

Emmanuel. The Septuagint translates this passage as follows: 'The Lord will bring upon you, and upon your people, and upon the house of your father, days that have not yet come, from the day he took away Ephraim from Judah, the king of the Assyrians. We cannot know the exact meaning of this, unless perhaps it should be said that, by the magnitude of their sins, Ephraim, that is, Samaria, first caused the invasion of the Assyrians to turn away from them.' Another way: Meanwhile, now two kings, Rasin and Phacee, who besiege you, hasten to lay waste, will be overthrown in a short time: but the time of your devastation will come when, what you never hoped for, indeed never feared, the Assyrian has come. By which he teaches that the house of David, not Syria and Samaria, but the Assyrians are to be feared. Therefore, he frees from the present fear and threatens about the future time.

7:18-19

(Verse 18, 19) And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes. In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard. Therefore, you are in vain afraid of present but half-burnt towers, which have no fire within. For you must know that by its hiss the Lord signifies the flies of Egypt and its rivers, with no doubt seven channels of the Nile, which are about to be called forth. And he signifies the bee, which is in the land of Assyria. But he calls the flies of Egypt on account of the filth of idolatry and the weak people. And he calls the bee Assyrians, whose kingdom was most powerful at that time, and were very ready for war. Either because all the region of the Assyrians and Persians used bows, or because they had access to them all the time. Therefore, all will come and occupy your land in the torrents of the valleys, and in the caves of rocks, and in all the fruits, and in the holes, and in the wooded groves. However, these things are said by metaphor, so that because he had mentioned flies and bees once, he would maintain consistency in the translation of the rest. Let us read the books of Kings and Chronicles, and we will find that the holy king Josiah was killed by the Egyptians, and the people of Israel were subjugated to the power of Egypt (2 Kings 23; 2 Chronicles 35): so that he would appoint a king for them. And after not much time, Nebuchadnezzar came with an innumerable multitude of warriors, captured Jerusalem, and destroyed the other cities of Judaea. He burned down the Temple and placed Assyrian inhabitants in Judaea.

7:20

(Verse 20) On that day the Lord will shave with a hired razor, with those beyond the River, with the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet, and it will sweep away the beard, too. Some people think that this is a prophecy about the Assyrians, who, thirteen hundred years before they destroyed Jerusalem, ruled over the kingdom of Asia, Egypt, and Libya, and that they will be defeated by the Medes and Persians, and their empire will be destroyed. Others, however, believe that it refers to the Egyptians who were killed beyond the Euphrates River. But we believe that the hired razor, which is called the Assyrian in Jeremiah (Jer. 25), is indeed the instrument of the Assyrian king, whom in punishment of the sinful people, he also calls his own dove. Moreover, in the vision of Tyre (Ezek. 28), because he had worked very hard in building fortifications and

carrying earth for the mound, and had been deprived of his wages when they fled, Egypt was given to him as payment and reward for his labor. Therefore, with this very sharp razor, and concerning those who live beyond the Euphrates River, namely the Assyrian king, the Lord will shave off all the hair and fur of the entire body from head to foot, as well as the beauty of the beard, which is an indication of manliness, from Judea, so that perhaps nothing, nothing beautiful remains in it, but that they may be compared to effeminate men, or rather, to dishonorable women.

7:21-25

(Verse 21 onwards) And it shall come to pass on that day, a man shall nurture a cow of oxen, and two sheep, and because of the abundance of milk, he shall eat butter; for everyone who is left in the midst of the land shall eat butter and honey. And it shall come to pass on that day, every place where a thousand vines were worth a thousand silver shekels, there shall be thorns and briers. With arrows and bows they shall come there, for thorns and briers shall cover the whole land. And all the hills that were once cultivated with a hoe shall no longer be afraid of thistles and thorns; and they shall become pastures for cattle and a trampling ground for livestock. After the subversion of Jerusalem, the captivity of the people, and the burning of the Temple, Nabuzardan, the prince of the army whom the Seventy called the chief cook, left a few of the people, and those poor, in the land to till the vineyards and fields. Finally, Godolias, who had been appointed over them from the royal line, encourages them and says: Do not be afraid of the Chaldeans; dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will be well with you (2 Kings 25:24). Therefore, at that time when all the wealth of the Jews had been transferred to Chaldea, there will be such a great desolation in the land of Judaea and such incredible devastation that they will by no means have herds of cattle or flocks of sheep as they used to have before: but scarcely a rare inhabitant will be able to support one cow and two sheep; not for plowing, but for food and clothing of milk and wool. Indeed, because of the scarcity of wheat and everything that the land produces for eating, they will subsist on milk, butter, and wild honey. And what he says: He will eat butter from the abundance of milk, signifies that the land will be more fertile due to the scarcity of farmers and more suitable for grazing. In that time, due to the scarcity of people, there will be such a shortage of wine from deserted vineyards, which will not be considered a concern for hostile fear, that each vine will barely be bought with silver sickles. For all the land will be reduced to brambles and thorns: and there will be such fear, with swords raging everywhere, that no one will dare to visit their own field without a bow and arrows, and abandoning the open fields, they will seek refuge in the mountains, and there, fortified by the difficulty of the location, they will barely dig rough mountains by hand: because they will not have oxen, plows, and plowshares. Therefore, if a rare inhabitant were found in the mountains, they would sustain a miserable life from there. The rest, however, will be open to pasture, and without any guardian, they will be trampled by wild animals. These things are accustomed to happen after captivity, would that we did not know! But now a large part of the Roman world is similar to once Judea: which we do not think was done without the anger of God, who avenges not at all the contempt of himself through the Assyrians and the Chaldeans; but through savage nations, and once unknown to us, whose faces and speech are terrifying, and they have feminine and cut faces (he means the Goths who shaved their beards), they pierce the fleeing backs of men, well-bearded. I have read in these places an extensive and intricate topography: that everything, which we have discussed according to history, happened spiritually to the Jews, who barely had one cow and two sheep, namely clean animals: so that they might be

nourished not with solid food, but with milk, like infants, and consume the honey of words, which drip from the lips of a prostitute; and they do not have wine, which gladdens the heart of man: but all their works are turned into thorns, so that they may be wounded by adversaries, who strike at the upright of heart (Psalm 10). But if at any time they desire to know something more deeply, and, exerting excessive effort, they seek to discover something mystical from the Holy Scriptures, nevertheless, they bring forth no fruits of doctrine, but rather their minds are filled with thorns and thistles, which arise in the hands of the drunk. And their land and doctrine are in no way cultivated by rational beings, but by cattle, of which God has no care, and are trampled upon by brute animals.

8:1-4

Chapter 8 — Verses 1-4. And the Lord said to me: Take for yourself a large book, and write in it with the pen of a man, quickly seize the spoils, swiftly plunder. And I appointed faithful witnesses for myself, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Barachiah, and I approached the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. And the Lord said to me: Call his name, hasten, seize the spoils, hurry to plunder; for before the child knows how to call his father and his mother, the strength of Damascus will be taken away, and the spoils of Samaria will be carried off before the king of Assyria. Seventy interpreters were employed for the large book, they translated it into a new and large book. And because it is found in Hebrew, I called upon faithful witnesses who said: 'It is present indeed, and let faithful men be my witnesses.' And concerning Uriah the Priest, only Uriah, the rest likewise. The first prophet was sent to Ahaz (Isaiah 7), to foretell to him what the Scripture mentions: but since he was unwilling to listen, the Lord himself speaks to Ahaz and commands him to ask for a sign either in the depth or in the height. In response to this, I will not ask, and I will not test the Lord. After the wicked king is dismissed, the words of God are turned to the house of David, and a Virgin is promised to give birth to a son, whose name shall be Emmanuel, which means, God is with us. If he is frequently invoked, Samaria shall be overthrown and Syria: and shall be overthrown by the king of Assyria, who shall later capture Judah itself; so that all the land of Judah shall be turned into a wilderness. Again, therefore, under another figure, a virgin birth is described. And the Lord said to the Prophet, that he should not reveal the secret of the new birth to the people, but write it in this great volume that we now read. And to make it more wondrous, let it be written in human words and in the style that men are accustomed to write, so that it may contain the sacraments of God. But what is this that is written in human style? That a child born swiftly may take away spoils and quickly plunder, that is, that he may no longer suffer the devil to reign. And let him not send Angels or Prophets, but he himself descend to save his creatures. Therefore, the Prophet does what he was commanded and summons two faithful witnesses for himself, Uriah the priest, who is a teacher of the law, as Malachi says: The lips of the priest shall guard knowledge, and they shall seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts (Malachi 2:7); and Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom there is no doubt was a prophet. We read that during the reign of Ahaz, Uriah was a priest of the Temple of the Lord (2 Kings 4), to whom Ahaz commanded to make an altar like the altar in Damascus. And the book of Days (2 Chronicles 29) narrates that Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, sought the Lord in the days of Zechariah, who was learned in the fear of God. Isaiah presented himself as worthy of the prophetic spirit and offered the prophetess, that is, the Holy Spirit, who is called Rua in the Hebrew language. According to what is written: Come to the Lord and be illumined (Psalm 33:6).

Therefore, the Lord was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And although human speech cannot explain the mysteries of his nativity, nevertheless Gabriel speaks to the Virgin who conceived him: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God (Luke 1:35). Some interpret the holy prophetess Mary, whom there is no doubt was a prophetess, for she herself speaks in the Gospel: For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me (Luke 1:48-49), and the rest. And it is commanded by Isaiah, that the very child who was formerly called Emmanuel, should now be called, hasten, strip away the spoils, hasten to plunder. For ascending on high, he led captivity captive; he received gifts for men (Ps. 67; Eph. 4:8) . And before assuming a human body, and calling God his father in his infancy, and calling Mary his mother, the strength of Damascus will be taken away, and the spoils of Samaria by the king of Assyrians: so that even before he is born, he will save his people, the house of David, by his mere invocation. Uriah means the light of the Lord; Zacharias, the memory of the Lord; and Barachias, the blessing of the Lord: by these witnesses, the birth of Christ is confirmed. For he, in the Gospel of Luke, explained to two men going to Emmaus that Moses and the Prophets had prophesied about him. According to typology, in the virgin soul, untouched by any stain, conceived by the Holy Spirit, he quickly takes spoils from opposing powers and makes all things serve him. And now, as he sees in part and prophesies in part (1 Corinthians 13), before he can be made perfect and rightfully call God his heavenly Father and Mother, he, still in infancy and in progress, will conquer the strength of Damascus, namely the doctrine of secular wisdom. And he will take the spoils of Samaria that the heretics have taken from the Church, saying, 'We have no share in David, nor inheritance in the son of Jesse' (1 Kings 12:16), with the very king of the Assyrians present, the devil, who will not be able to come to their aid. But these holy women do not only bear sons to the prophets, Maria the eternal Virgin, but also to the patriarchs. Sara, which is interpreted as 'ruler' or 'prince', that is, chief: and Rebecca, which in our language means 'patience'.

8:5-8

(Verse 5, et seq.) And the Lord added, speaking to me again, saying: Because this people has rejected the waters of Siloam that flow gently, and has preferred Rezin and the son of Remaliah, therefore behold, the Lord will bring upon them the mighty and abundant waters of the river, the king of Assyria and all his glory. And it will rise above all its channels, and overflow over all its banks. And it will pass through Judah, flooding and reaching up to the neck. And the spreading of its wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Emmanuel. He had said before that the strength of Damascus should be taken away, and the spoils of Samaria should be seen by the king of the Assyrians, and that two kings should be captured while the Assyrian was fighting: now God speaks to the Prophet in the usual style of the Scriptures, through the translation of the Siloam spring in Jerusalem, and the very violent river of the Assyrians, that the whole land of Israel will be flooded by its waters, and it will overflow its riverbanks with such force that after it has occupied the land of the ten tribes, it will reach Judah and, passing through, it will reach the neck: by which it signifies the nearby captivity. For Judas was not captured at that time, but after all the cities of the two tribes were conquered, only Jerusalem remained, which was liberated by the incredible mercy of God. Therefore, the power of the Assyrians and their countless army, which he had described as being under the flood of the river, now shows through another translation, namely, that he has covered the land of Emmanuel, that is, the land defended by God, with his other wings, that is, his

leaders, and an infinite multitude. However, he did not possess it, although Emmanuel is connected in the following chapter to the seventy, not by his own name as he is called among the Hebrews, but by an interpretation, that is, "God with us. But we cannot doubt that Silo is a fountain at the foot of Mount Zion, which does not flow continuously, but only at certain times and days, and comes through the underground caves and dens of the hardest rock with a great noise. Especially we who dwell in this province. The meaning is that the people of the ten tribes preferred to be subject to Rezin and the son of Romelia, that is, the kings of Damascus and Samaria, rather than to the lineage of David, who began to reign by my judgment. I will make him not serve these kings whom he took, but serve the Assyrian king, whose power is compared to the flooding of the river that covers the land of Samaria. And an apostrophe is made to Emmanuel, that is, to the present God, that the Assyrian has exalted himself to such an extent that he has even tried to possess his own land, Judah. According to the spiritual sense, every heretic who joins his secular wisdom and desires to attack Jerusalem, that is, the Church, abandoning the waters of the Siloam fountain (John 9), which is interpreted as 'sent', and who ascends to eternal life, will be handed over to the prince of Assyria (which sense we will read later), and by the power of the one to whom he is handed over, he will come into the depth of sins. Such is the arrogance, that he dared to show to the Savior all the kingdoms of the earth and say: 'All these have been given to me' (Matthew and Luke IV). He will also try to enter into Judah, that is, the house of confession, and he will often come up to the neck through those who are negligent in the Church, wishing to suffocate those who believe in Christ, and he will spread his wings, filling the whole region of Emmanuel; but he will not be able to prevail, because Judas has the presence of God. We read in the Gospel according to John (John 9) that a blind man from birth, whose eyes the Lord had anointed with clay made from his own saliva, was sent to the pool of Siloam, and when the blind man washed the clay away, his blindness was removed and he received clear vision. This miracle signifies that the blindness of the Jews and all unbelievers can only be healed by the teachings of Christ's waters, which flow gently without noise or clamor, dispelling the darkness of previous error. What is read in the Septuagint: And he shall walk over all your walls, and he shall take away from Judah the man who can lift up his head, or perhaps do anything: in Hebrew it is not found, and in the Greek manuscripts ÷ it is cut off by the true killer.

8:9-10

(Verse 9, 10.) Gather together, O people, and be conquered, and listen, all far away lands: be strengthened and be conquered. Gird yourselves, and be conquered: take counsel, and it shall be dissipated: speak a word, and it shall not be, because God is with us. Regarding the phrase 'gather together, or be weakened, and be broken,' as others have interpreted, the Septuagint translated it as 'know.' For the Hebrew word, Rou (ר), because of the resemblance of the letter Res (ר) and Daleth (ד), they understood it as Dou (ד). Therefore, know that the people of Samaria and Syria are weak and feeble, and in the presence of Emmanuel, they are unable to do anything against the city of God, Jerusalem. And not only you, who are neighbors, but the whole distant land should know this. For even if you gather an army and prepare for battle, and the number of those besieging is greater than the number of those being besieged, I say to you again, you will be defeated. And whatever plan you make against Jerusalem will be destroyed. And although you have said above (Isaiah 7:6): Let us go up to Judah and harass it, and make a breach in it, and set a king over it, the son of Tabeel; you speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us, that is,

Emmanuel. We can use this testimony against the nations in the time of persecution, that although they may seem strong and overcome us in those who have fallen, they will be defeated in those who have shed their blood for Christ, and that after the wars, peace will be restored to the Churches, and all their plans against Emmanuel will be scattered, for God is with us. They also listen beneficially to contradict the truth, so that they may ultimately be overcome by reason, and never desire to prevail in falsehood, because whatever they say, wickedness can never overcome what is right.

8:11-15

(Verse 11 onwards) For thus says the Lord to me: As He has taught me with His mighty hand, so that I do not walk in the way of this people, saying: Do not say, 'conspiracy'; everything this people says is a conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear or be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself, let Him be your fear and let Him be your dread. And He will be a sanctuary for you, but for the two houses of Israel, He will be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. And many among them will stumble, fall, be broken, snared, and taken captive. The Septuagint translates this passage as follows: Thus says the Lord: they have departed from the path of this people speaking with strong hand lest they say, It is difficult. For everything that this people speaks is harsh; but do not fear their fear, nor be troubled. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and he will be your fear; and if you trust in him, he will be your sanctification, and you will not encounter him as a stumbling block, nor as a falling rock. But the house of Jacob will be in a snare and in a valley to those sitting in Jerusalem: therefore many will be weak in them, and they will fall and be broken, and they will come near, and they will be captured. And what follows, men in defense, it must be noted that it differs greatly between the Hebrew and the Vulgate Edition: therefore we have included both. And first, we must discuss the Hebrew. The Lord spoke this to me. Because of good works and the grace which I have obtained through good works, whether he instructed me and taught me with his mighty hand, so that I would not walk in the way of this people, and be held captive by the same error: or certainly he made me depart from the most wicked way of this people, and said to me: do not fear the conspiracy of the two kings; but consider this more, that every word which this people speaks against me is a conspiracy; and according to Symmachus, who interpreted it, it will become a rebellion against me. But you, the Prophet, and those who are with you, do not fear the plots of the people, but fear the Lord, and let Him be your fear. For the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7; Ps. 110:9). He will be a sanctuary to those who believe, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to the unbelieving, namely the houses of Judah and Israel. Especially to those who dwell in Jerusalem, it will be a snare and a trap, where many will stumble, fall and be broken, and those ensnared by their own sins will be led into captivity. There are two houses, which the Nazarenes (who receive Christ in such a way that they do not omit the observances of the Old Law) interpret as two families, Sammai and Hillel, from whom the Scribes and Pharisees are descended, whose school Akibas embraced, whom the proselytes consider a master, and after him Meir, who was succeeded by the son of Zachai, and after him Eliezer, and in order Telphon, and again Joseph of Galilee, and up to the captivity of Jerusalem Josue. Therefore, Sammai and Hillel were born in Judaea, not long before the Lord's birth. Sammai is interpreted as a dissipater, while Hillel is considered profane because he dissipated and defiled the precepts of the Law through his traditions and additions. And it is said that these two houses did not receive the Savior, and he became a cause of their ruin and downfall. According to the Septuagint, the

people of God resisted with a strong hand (or will resist) and said that all the commandments of the Lord are harsh, as we read in the Gospel: 'This is a hard saying; who can hear it?' (John 6:61). Where it is commanded to them to listen to the Lord and fear Him alone. For if they have trusted in Him, they will have Him for sanctification, and they will not stumble like a stone of scandal, and like a rock of ruin. Of this passage, the Apostle takes testimony, that Christ has become a stumbling block to the Jews: but to the Gentiles foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:23). And again: Israel, by following the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness (Romans 9:31). Why? Because they stumbled not in faith, but as if stumbling in the works of the law. As it is written: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense: and he that believes on Him shall not be confounded' (Ibid., 33). Therefore, those who did not receive Emmanuel, but became to them a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, shall be crushed and led captive. And what he says: 'But the house of Jacob shall be a snare and a trap' to those who sit in Jerusalem signifies that they shall not dwell in high places nor engage in lofty discussions of the Scriptures; but that they should always understand the humble, joining sins to sins, and being bound by the cords of transgressions.

8:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Join the testimonies, establish the law among my disciples, and I will wait for the Lord, who hides his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. The voice of the Lord speaking to the Prophet: because, he said, the Lord has become a stumbling stone and a rock of offense to the two houses of Israel, and they did not want to receive Emmanuel sent to them. Join the testimonies of the old Testament, and give them to my disciples, who have received the Gospel, namely the Apostles or the apostolic men. Certainly, the law and the prophets are bound up until John among them (Matthew 11), and it is closed and sealed so that they do not understand what they read. For, according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew language, we can interpret doctrines for the disciples. Therefore, the Prophet responded: because with the succession of the Gospel, the Law was closed and sealed among the Jews, and you command that it should be assigned not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles. Therefore, I will wait for Emmanuel, whom you have promised to come, about whom you said above that he himself will be our fear and our terror, and for us he will be for sanctification; and I will wait for the Lord who hides his face from the house of Jacob, that is, from the Jews, because they did not want to receive him. The Seventy translated this passage as follows: Then those who are marked will be revealed, so that they may not learn the law. This has the meaning that when many have fallen and have been crushed, and have stumbled against the stone of offense and the rock of scandal, then those who are marked in the people will be revealed, so that they may by no means learn the law of Moses; but rather obey the precepts of the gospel.

8:18

(Verse 18.) Behold, I and my children, whom the Lord has given me, are for signs and wonders in Israel, from the Lord of hosts, who dwells in Mount Zion. The Lord commanded me, saying, 'Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.' For He has hidden His face from the house of Jacob; therefore, I will wait for Him, and I will hope in my Lord, and not only I, but also the children whom the Lord has given me, namely, other prophets and the sons of prophets, who are not born of the will of the flesh and blood, but of God (John 1:13). About whom the Apostle also spoke: My

little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you (Gal. IV, 19). But these children, that is, the prophets, were given as signs and wonders to the people of Israel, according to what we read in Ezekiel: And Ezekiel will be a sign to you (Ezek. XXIV, 24). Also, in Zechariah, the holy men and disciples of the prophets are called observers of wonders, that is, of signs and wonders, because the prophets always preceded the signs of future events (Zech. III, 16). Meanwhile, according to the letter. However, the blessed Apostle in the Epistle, which is written to the Hebrews, teaches (although the Latin custom does not include it among the Canonical Scriptures) that this testimony should be understood as coming from the person of the Lord Savior. Therefore, he does not hesitate to call them brothers, saying: 'I will declare your name to my brothers, in the midst of the church I will praise you' (Hebrews 2:12); And again: 'I will put my trust in him' (Ibid., 13); and again: 'Here am I and the children God has given me.' Therefore, because the boys have shared in flesh and blood, and he himself has likewise become a partaker in the same sufferings (Isaiah 8:18). But how these boys have become a sign and wonder of the wisdom of the world and the pride of the Jews, the same Apostle teaches: who says that the Lord Savior has chosen foolish things and weak things of the world to confound the wise and the strong (1 Corinthians 1). Therefore, the Savior said to the Apostles: Unless you are converted and become like one of these boys, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:3). But the boy becomes a preacher of the new Gospel, he puts aside the old man, who is corrupted in the desires of seduction, and he puts on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of the Creator. However, the Apostle writes that the Lord of hosts dwells on Mount Zion: 'You have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem' (Hebrews XII, 22). So I wonder that some of our people understand these two boys of Isaiah, whom he generated from the conception of the prophetess woman, namely Jasub and Emmanuel: the former of whom, in the abjection of the former people, the latter, in the assumption of the nations, has preceded. Whoever receives this, will consequently confirm that the prophet Hosea truly had a prostitute as his wife.

8:19-22

(Verse 19 and following) And when they say to you, seek from the Pythons and the diviners, who make their enchantments, whether not the people seeks from their God for the living from the dead? To the law more and to the testimony. If they do not speak according to this word, it will not be morning light for them. And they will pass through it: they will fall down and be hungry: and when they are hungry, they will become angry and curse their king and their God. And they will look upwards and gaze downwards, and behold, trouble and darkness, dissolution, distress, and pursuing darkness: and they will not be able to escape from their distress. If the voice of the prophet Isaiah is, as the Jews believe: Behold, me and my children, whom the Lord has given to me as a sign and a portent to Israel; and the things that follow, he himself is to be believed to say to his disciples. When the nations and peoples spoken of above say to you: Weak are the people, and defeated; what do you prophets want to hear, why are you deceived by the words of Isaiah, and do you think that he knows what will come? Seek more from the Pythonians, and from the gods, who hiss in their incantations. Concerning them, it is interpreted in the LXX: Those who speak from the earth, who cry out from the belly. For everyone who is from the earth speaks from the earth (John 3:31). And the one whose god is their belly, and their glory is in their shame (Philippians 3:19), is to be believed as crying out from the belly. You answer them, and say: Does

not the people seek from their God for the living from the dead? If you consult those gods whom you believe in for the sake of the variety of your idols (for you have not just one, but many gods), and if you seek advice from the images of the dead or of deceased human beings, how much more should we listen to our God through the prophets? He teaches his disciples and brings them to the law and to the testimony. If you have any doubts about someone, know this: It is written, 'The nations that the Lord your God will drive out before you listen to fortune-tellers and diviners, but the Lord your God has not allowed you to do so. The Lord your God will raise up a prophet for you from among your brothers, like me; you must listen to him' (Deut. XVIII, 15). If you wish to know doubtful things, you should rather read and deliver them with testimonies of the Scriptures. But if your congregation refuses to seek the word of the Lord, it will not have the light of truth, but will wander in error and darkness. The light will pass over it, that is, your congregation or land, and you will fall, and hunger, and when you hunger, you will be angry, as it is written: 'And when they were not satisfied, they murmured' (Ps. 58:16). And you will blaspheme your God and king, and in times of need you will look up to heaven and down to earth, and behold there will be tribulation and darkness, collapse of knees, anguish of mind, darkness of eyes, and you will not be able to escape the distress. This is according to the Hebrews. Moreover, as we have said above, if the person of Christ is speaking, saying: Behold, I and the children whom God has given me, he himself also speaks to the Apostles and to the believers from the Gentiles, who have received his Gospel. If they say, he says, to your fathers whom you have left behind: seek ventriloquists, whom we understand as pythonesses (such as we read about in the Acts of the Apostles with the slave girl, who was a source of income to her masters) and who speak from the earth, promising to perform magic tricks in the evocation of souls, and other kinds of wicked arts; you must know this, that each nation consults its own gods, and inquires about the living from the dead. But God has given you help in the law, so that you can say: divination is not like that of the Gentiles, who often deceive their worshippers, but ours, which is freely given without any reward, from the law. Hence it is interpreted in the Septuagint: not like this word, for which there is no need to give gifts. For you have received freely, he says, freely give (Matthew X, 8). But a most severe famine will come upon the unbelievers, not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the word of God (Amos VIII). And when you are hungry, you will be sad, and you will curse your ruler and your ancestral traditions, which is the devil, and the old errors. But this is said to those who have suffered from hunger for the truth, and who look up to heaven and down to earth, and they will be in distress, in darkness, and in tribulation, so that they may not see until the time when they themselves turn to the Lord. These passages require a broad explanation, but we spare the size of the books in order to avoid boredom in reading. We have briefly addressed this passage according to the LXX translation, which in many places differs from the Hebrew. However, the Nazarenes (also called Nazareni) explain this place as follows: When the scribes and Pharisees tell you to listen to those who do everything for the sake of the belly, and in the manner of the magi, charm their way into your hearts in order to deceive you, you should respond to them: It is not surprising that you follow your own traditions, since every nation consults their own idols. Therefore, we should not seek advice from you who are dead to the living: God has given us His law and the testimonies of the Scriptures. If you do not choose to follow them, you will not have light. Instead, darkness will always oppress you, which will pass through your land and doctrine. Then, when they realize they have been deceived by you and cannot satisfy their hunger for truth, they will be saddened, angered, and curse you, whom they considered to be their gods and kings. And they

are in vain to look towards heaven and earth, since they are always in darkness and cannot escape your snares.

9:1-1

(Chapter 9, verses 1 and following) In the first time, the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali were relieved, and in the last time the way of the sea beyond the Jordan of the Galilee of the Gentiles was made heavy. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shone. LXX: Drink this first, quickly make it for the region of Zebulun, the land of Naphtali, and the rest of you who are near the sea beyond the Jordan of the Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. We have made two editions, because the testimony has been spread and used by the evangelist Matthew, so that either the diversity of interpretation or the similarity may be known. First, it should be noted that the evangelist Matthew placed this testimony not according to the Septuagint, but according to the Hebrews. For the Gospel narration says: When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: 'Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, upon them a light has dawned.' From that time Jesus began to preach and say: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matt. 4:13 et seqq.). And John the Evangelist reports that Jesus, with his disciples, was invited to a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and there he performed his first sign by turning water into wine. This Jesus did, the beginning of his signs in Cana of Galilee, and he manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him (John 2:11). And in the Septuagint it is said: Drink this first, do it quickly, for the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali will see the first miracles of Christ, so that they may be the first to drink the potion of faith, which they first saw the Lord performing signs. And, according to the Hebrew, it is said to have been relieved of the burden of sins in the first time: because in the regions of the two tribes, the Savior first preached the Gospel. Therefore, in the sixty-seventh Psalm it is said: Bless the Lord from the fountains of Israel. There Benjamin, the youngest (Psalm 67:27-28; Acts 9); Paul the Apostle, in the excess of his mind, who also elsewhere speaks: or when we are out of our minds, we are out of our minds for God (2 Corinthians 5:13): the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali, their leaders; because in these tribes there were villages, from which our Apostles believed their leaders. And they believed quickly according to Symmachus when they heard: Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matthew 4:19), and immediately they left their father and the boat behind. But in the most recent times their faith was worsened by many Jews who remained in error. This sea is called the Sea of Galilee, which is formed by the flow of the Jordan River; on its shores are located Capernaum, Tiberias, Bethsaida, and Chorazin: in this particular region the Lord stayed the most, so that the people who were sitting or walking in darkness could see a great light, not small like the other prophets, but great like the one who speaks in the Gospel: I am the light of the world (John 8:12). And those who dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, a light has arisen for them. Between death and the shadow of death, I believe this refers to the death of those who have descended to the underworld with dead works: For the soul that sins shall die (Ezek. XVIII, 20); but the shadow of death belongs to those who sin, yet have not yet departed from this life: for they

can, if they wish, repent. For Galilee of the Gentiles, Aquila understands the borders of the Gentiles, Symmachus interprets as the borders of the Gentiles; we understand "tumulos arenarum" to mean the hills of sand, which are either on the shores or on the banks. The Hebrews who believed in Christ explained this passage as follows. In the first place, during the time of Elia, two tribes, Zabulon and Nephthali, were captured by the Assyrians and taken to a hostile land; and Galilee became desolate (2 Kings 15), which the prophet now says has been restored, because it bore the sins of the people. But afterwards, not only two tribes, but also the remaining tribes, which lived beyond the Jordan and in Samaria, were taken into captivity (2 Kings 17 and 18). And this, they say, Scripture now declares, that the region whose people were first led into captivity and began to serve the Babylonians, and which previously was in the darkness of error, saw for the first time the light of Christ proclaiming, and from there the Gospel was sown into all nations. The Nazarenes, whose opinion I have presented above, attempt to explain this passage in the following way: When Christ came and his preaching shone forth, the first land to be freed from the errors of the Scribes and Pharisees was the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and it shook off the heaviest yoke of Jewish traditions from its neck. Afterwards, through the Gospel of the Apostle Paul, who was the last of all the Apostles, the preaching became heavier, that is, multiplied: and the Gospel of Christ shone forth unto the ends of the earth and the way of the whole sea. Finally, the whole world, which had previously walked or sat in darkness and was held bound by idolatry and the chains of death, beheld the clear light of the Gospel.

9:2-4

(Version 2-4.) You have multiplied the nation, you have not magnified the joy: they shall rejoice before you, as they rejoice in the harvest, as conquerors exulting for the spoils, when they divide the spoils. For the yoke of their burden, and the rod of their shoulder, and the scepter of their exactor you have overcome, as in the day of Midian. For every violent plunder with tumult: and the garment mingled with blood shall be for burning, and food for the fire. LXX: You have brought down a large portion of the people in your joy, and they shall rejoice in your presence, as they are accustomed to rejoice in the harvest, and as those who divide the spoils: for the yoke that was upon them, and the rod from their neck, has been taken away. For the rod of the oppressors shall be broken, as in the day of Midian. For every garment rolled in blood is for burning, fuel for the fire. We put both editions in dark places so that the diligent reader may recognize how much the Vulgate translation differs from the Hebrew truth and others. To the very light that appeared to the people in darkness, that is, to the Lord the Savior, an apostrophe is made. And it is said to him: You have multiplied the nation, that is, you have filled all nations with the knowledge of you; but you have not magnified the joy. According to which the Apostle says that he has perpetual sorrow for his brothers who are Israelites (Rom. X). And Jonah is grieved that the Ninevites have been saved in such a way that the gourd, or Ciceion, withered (Jonah IV). And the Lord himself speaks in the Gospel: I have come only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. XV, 24). And in his suffering he said, 'Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me (Mat. XXVI, 39).' This passage means: If it is possible for the multitude of the Gentiles to believe without the destruction of the Jews, I reject suffering. But if they are to be blinded, let all the nations see, let your will be done, Father. So when Christ comes and the people of Christians are gathered from all nations, then the Apostles will rejoice, like harvesters rejoice in the harvest, of whom the Lord spoke: The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few (Matth. IX, 37). And as conquerors rejoice, who divide the

captured booty. For when a strong one has been captured and bound, his whole house is plundered, and the spoils are divided (Matthew 12). But you, O Lord and Savior, have removed the burden of his yoke, that is the devil, who once rejoiced in the world, who ruled over all nations, who pressed down the necks of all with the heavy yoke of bondage; and you have taken the rod with which he used to strike everyone, and compelled him to pay tribute for his sins, and you have lifted it from their shoulders: and you have made them serve you in freedom without any army and without shedding blood with your hidden hand: just as you once granted victory to the people of Israel over the Midianites under Gideon (Judges 7). For just as a garment, which is stained with human blood, cannot be washed, but when stained with blood, it is burned with fire so that the stains of foul blood may be destroyed along with the garment, in the same way the violent plunder, turmoil, and crowds of the devil, by whom he had subjected the human race to himself, are assigned to the fires of hell. Not all, but only a certain part of the people, are said to have believed, as it is significant; although you have led in joy because of what they said, others have interpreted differently and praised. And when, in the remaining [senses], they hold the same meaning, they gather a stole by deceit, and change garments, adding that he is about to give back, that is, the devil: namely, that he will give back all the souls that he had stripped with the help of God, with their former adornments: not only himself, but also his attendant demons: to whom, if the choice is given, they would rather choose to perish in flames than to lose the spoils.

9:6

(Verse 6.) For a child is born to us, a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. For a child is born to us, a son is given to us, upon whose shoulder dominion is laid: and his name is called, Wonderful, Counselor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish these things. Therefore the devil, and all his violent plundering, by which he oppressed the human race and mixed blood with blood, will be consumed by fire and the eternal fire will be their food. For a child is born to us, a son is given to us, of whom it has been said: Before the child knows how to reject evil and choose good (Isaiah 7:16); and later in the generation of the Prophetess: Before the child knows how to call his father and mother (Isaiah 8:4). Therefore this boy, who was born of a virgin, is called Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us'; and he is also called 'from the Prophetess', that is, conceived by the Holy Spirit. Hasten, strip off, hurry to plunder: he is now called by many names. And although he has shown that he is God by being called Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us', now he says that his government has been established upon his shoulder, or that he himself has carried his cross, or by showing the strength of his arm through his shoulder, as Isaiah also said: The Lord God has revealed his holy arm to all the nations (Isaiah 52:10). And again: Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? (Isaiah 53:1) Therefore, He will be called by two names, and by six other names: Wonderful, Counselor, God, Mighty, Father of the future age, Prince of peace. For, as many think, the two names should

not be joined together, as we read, Wonderful Counselor, and again, Mighty God; but Wonderful should be read separately, which in Hebrew is called Phele (פֶּלֶא), and Counselor separately, which is called Ides (יָדָע) in their language; and God separately, which is called El (אֱלֹהִים) in Hebrew. Finally, in the following passages where we read: You are indeed God, and we did not know: And again: I am God, and there is no other besides me (Isaiah XLV, 5), and many similar to these: because in Latin it is said Deus, in Hebrew it is written El. And what follows, Fortis, in Hebrew is called Gibbor (גִּבּוֹר). Therefore, in the place where the same prophet mentions: They shall trust in the holy God of Israel in truth: and what remains of Jacob shall trust in the mighty God (Isaiah VIII), for mighty God in Hebrew it has El Gibbor. But the Father of the future age and of the resurrection, which is fulfilled in our calling; and the prince of peace, who spoke to the Apostles: My peace I give you, my peace I leave you (John 14:27): he who has read our peace according to Paul the Apostle will not doubt the Savior. With the majesty of the names, I think that the Seventy did not dare to say of the child what is clearly to be called God, etc.: but instead they used six names, which are not found in Hebrew, the Angel of great counsel, and I will bring peace upon the leaders, and his health. What seems to me to have this meaning: The Angel of Great Counsel, announced to us that Israel is to be cast aside for a time, and that the Gentiles are to be saved. And he bestowed peace upon his princes, the Apostles and apostolic men, and left the preservation of his teachings to those who believed. As for what follows: His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end to peace; for this reason the Septuagint translated it as: His great principality. We must know that the Hebrew word Mesra, here and above, was interpreted as principality by the Septuagint. For this reason, we turn above the principate, this authority. However, the eagle, deceived by the ambiguity of the word μέτρον, that is, interpreted as measure, which is called the same name in both Hebrew and Latin. And he will not doubt about the multiple authority of the Savior and his peace, which has no end, whoever reads in the Psalms: Ask of me, and I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the very ends of the earth for thy possession (Ps. II, 8). And again: And the multitude of peace, until the moon be taken away (Ps. LXXI, 7), that is, until the end of the age. But his principality and empire will be over the throne and kingdom of David, which had been dispersed after the Babylonian captivity, in order to confirm and strengthen it, and to show that it will be perpetual (so that the promise of God would not seem in vain) from the time of the Incarnation to eternity. Therefore, the zeal, that is, the jealousy of the Lord of hosts, did this, because they themselves provoked him to jealousy with those who were not gods, and he provoked them to jealousy with a nation that was not a nation (Deut. 32). Let us now move on to the rest.

Book Four

Book Four

We consider the books unequal, for due to the diversity of visions and senses, one is contracted and another is extended. Therefore, after finishing the third volume, we move on to the fourth, which has fewer verses than the previous one, especially since the fifth, which we included in this book, serves as a historical explanation and almost doubles the number. For while we do not want to separate what is connected and pass over what has already been interpreted, as if we were directing our little ship between the two whirlpools of the Pontic Sea, we set sail, guided by the Holy Spirit and our Lord and Savior, and it glides into the abyss, as you, the virgin of Christ Eustochium, say: 'Come, spirit, from the four winds of heaven, and bring life to these dead bones.'

(Ezekiel 37:9) So that those who were lying in the dust of the earth may be raised up by the breathing of the Lord.

9:8-13

Chapter IX - (Verses 8 onwards) The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel. And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart, The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars. Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together; The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. In all these things his anger is not turned away, but his hand is still stretched out, and the people have not turned back to the one who struck them, and they have not sought the Lord of hosts. We read above (2 Kings 16) that in the days of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin king of Syria went up, and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came to Jerusalem to attack it. And (Isaiah 7) it is said that Isaiah the prophet was sent to meet Ahaz with his son Shear-Jashub, to tell him not to fear, and not to let his heart be faint because of the two smoldering stumps of firebrands, for the rule of Syria and Israel would soon come to an end. When he did not believe because of the magnitude of the matter and the immediate danger, he is ordered to ask for a sign for himself. And because he was an idolater, he did not want to do this either: therefore the Lord did not give a sign to the king himself, but to the house of David he gives a sign of his son who will be born of a Virgin, through whose invocation they will be delivered from imminent danger, and other things that we have interpreted up to this point. Therefore, with many mysteries being placed in the midst, now he returns to what he had begun, and prophesies the overthrow of Rezin and Ephraim, that is, of Syria and Samaria: The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it has fallen upon Israel. Among the Hebrews, Dabar (), which is written with three consonant letters Daleth, Beth, and Res, depending on the quality of the places, if read as Dabar, it signifies 'word,' if Deber, 'death' and 'pestilence.' For this reason, many, being deceived by the ambiguity of the language, do not say that the word was sent, but death. Therefore, the Lord sent his word to Jacob, and it fell upon Israel. He wanted Judah to reign, as prophesied by Jacob in Genesis (Ch. XLIX): and Israel, that is, the ten tribes, claimed authority for themselves, of whom it was said: 'They have reigned, but not by me' (Hosea VIII, 4). Therefore, the dignity of the kingdom, which had passed from the rejected Saul to David through the anointing of Samuel, was transferred to Jacob, that is, to the twelve tribes, which were formerly called Jacob, in Israel: not as the LXX translated, 'came,' but fell among the wicked: which had been established for the righteous. Therefore, let the people of Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, who are lifted up in pride because of their multitude, know that the kingdom of Judah is small and most insignificant compared to ours. Therefore, as their walls collapse, let us build ourselves a house with square stones. While their sycamore trees, which are cheap wood, are cut down in enemy attacks, let us construct our empire with cedars, which are indestructible, to signify an everlasting kingdom. Therefore, let all the people of Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria know that the Syrian who is now their ally will become their enemy. Or indeed, let sudden wars rise up against the Syrian himself, and let all things be turned into chaos, so that Syria may be moved against Israel from the east, and the Philistines, that is, the Palestinians, may be moved against them from the west, and together devour Israel. And when they have done these things, my hand is still stretched out, whether it is high above Israel, and it does not cease to strike them.

And those who are cut off from God will not return to the one who strikes them, nor will they seek the Lord of hosts, worshipping golden calves instead of God. According to the anagoge, our scholars have explained this passage as follows: God sent his Son to Jacob, that is, to the Jews, and he came to Israel, that is, to the people of the nations, whom the Apostle also refers to as Israel (Rom. 9). But others say this: The Lord sent His word to the Church, which supplanted the former people, and fell in Israel, that is, in the heretics who boast of seeing God. Therefore, let their leaders and all who dwell in Samaria, that is, those who claim to keep God's law and to have an abundance of virtues and bring forth the fruits of righteousness (for this is what Ephraim signifies), know that they despise the Church in the pride of their hearts and consider its simplicity as ignorance. They say, 'Instead of its stones, we will build our own churches with square stones and the strongest ones, and instead of fruitless trees that quickly perish, we will construct the tallest cedars, which the Lord will destroy, and the righteous, speaking in the person of the wicked, will say, 'I have seen them but they have no place' (Psalm 36).' Therefore, the Lord says that Rasin, which is interpreted as secular wisdom, whom Ephraim relied on for help, will turn against him and all his enemies will fight against him, and he will be conquered from the East and the West, and they will devour Israel with their whole mouth. For these things, the LXX interpreted: Let us build a tower for ourselves, and God will crush those who rise against Mount Zion, and He will scatter its enemies. For they desire to build themselves a temple in Samaria, in imitation of the Temple of God; but although they have moved their feet from the East and have said, 'Come, let us build a tower and make a name for ourselves before we are scattered' (Gen. XI, 4): The Lord opposing them, their unity will be dissolved and their agreement will be scattered, and their tongues will be divided against each other, so that they do not become more evil by agreeing with each other, but rather destroy each other. And when they are thus struck and devoured by their enemies, they will not return to the Lord; but his hand is still ready to strike, according to what we read in Jeremiah: 'I struck your children in vain; you did not receive discipline' (Jerem. II, 30).

9:14-21

(Vers. 14 seqq.) And the Lord will scatter from Israel the head and the tail, the bend and the corrupt in one day. The venerable and honorable, he is the head; and the Prophet teaching falsehood, he is the tail. And there will be those who call this people blessed, deceiving, and those who are called blessed, being cast down. Therefore, the Lord will not rejoice over his young men, and will not have mercy on his orphans and widows, for every hypocrite is wicked, and every mouth has spoken foolishness. In all these things his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. For wickedness is kindled as a fire: it shall devour the brier and the thorn, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke. Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother. And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm. Manasses Ephraim, and Ephraim Manassen, together they are against Judah. In all these things, his fury is not turned away, but his hand is still stretched out. Not only will the Lord raise up adversaries against him, and turn his enemies into turmoil, Syria from the East and the Philistines from the West, to devour Israel with their whole mouth, but because he has not turned back to the one striking him, nor has he sought the Lord of hosts, he will extend his hand to strike, to destroy the head and the tail, the one perverting what is right (Jeremiah 2). He himself, the

long-lived and honorable one, has interpreted who is the head. And he says that the tail is the Prophet who teaches falsehood, that is, the false prophet. He spoke about the rulers and now he joins together the nobles and the common people, so that both the teachers and the disciples, the learned and the ignorant masses, should equally obey. For those who called the people blessed are deceivers; and those who were called blessed, not because of their virtue, but because of their gifts, will be thrown into death. And above, we read: My people, who call you blessed, deceive you and overthrow the paths of your feet (Isa. III, 12). In such a people, God will have no mercy on anyone: not the orphans, not the widows, because every hypocrite is one who pretends one thing and does another: promising chastity and living luxuriously, preferring poverty and filling their pockets. From where he connects and says: And the whole mouth has spoken foolishness. Because of all these things, the Lord does not cease to be angry, but still raises His hand to strike. And because they have done these things, impiety will be kindled like fire, so that it devours not the cultivated field, but thorns and thistles; not fruitful trees, but a barren wilderness, in which beasts dwell, and the consuming flame snatches away. Therefore, it is said that the density of the wilderness, with fire placed underneath, is twisted by the smoke of pride and height. For everything that is exalted and rises high can be called proud. For unknowingly desiring something, the seventy translated: and it will devour all things around the hills. From hence, the earth trembled at the anger of the Lord, and the people became fuel for the fire, because there was such cruelty in them, that they spared not even the dearest name of brotherhood, but forsaking and despising the right hand, they were satiated with the things that were on the left: while enduring hunger for pleasures and evils, and always desiring to join worse things with bad ones. Moreover, Manasseh and Ephraim, who were born of the same mother and from the same parent, erupted into such rage that they clashed with each other in hostile hatred. Let us read the volumes of Kings and Chronicles, and we will find civil wars among the people of Samaria, as they fought for different kings, and how, with their own kings killed, they surrendered to the conquest of Judah. According to the allegory, the Lord will remove both the head and the tail, the greater and the lesser. Calling them tails, not humans, but beasts, reveals that heretics use this member to protect their excrement and to repel small animals. And it joins together and distorts the head and the tail, which subvert the precepts of the law and pervert the straight way. It will also destroy the long-lived one, because it is the head, and the false prophet who is placed in the tail, and both teachers and disciples; some who praise sinners for their gifts: others who do not feel their own evils praised, nor do they repent. Because of this, the Lord will not rejoice in their youths. Woe to the city whose king is a youth! And those who have lost the true God the Father or Lord will not obtain mercy. For every heretic is a hypocrite, doing one thing and pretending another, and whatever he speaks, although it may seem to be wisdom, is foolishness. Because of these things, He stretches out His hand to punish, and like a voracious flame, He will consume all their impieties, like thorns. And words without virtues, which are compared to a fruitless jump, will be enveloped in the smoke of pride. For their punishment, the whole earth will quake, and the deceived peoples will be handed over to eternal fires, because for the sake of shameful gain, they do not spare even their own, but eagerly seize plunder from the deceived peoples, leaving behind their possessions and dwelling in the worst things. And although they always find the left path, they are never satisfied with their own errors, devouring the flesh of their own arm and fighting against the Church with equal zeal. Because of luxury and pleasures and the pursuit of wealth, people among themselves have discord, so that from one heresy two are made, and again they

themselves are divided into factions, to lead away their own flocks and devour the homes of widows and sinful women, always learning but never coming to the knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 3). In all these things, the wrath of the Lord does not turn away, consuming vices and overturning; but as much as they excel in sinning, so much more does He extend His hand for punishment.

10:1-4

(Chapter X—1 onwards) — Woe to those who establish unjust laws and write injustice, in order to oppress the poor in judgment and to do violence to the cause of the humble people of my nation, so that widows may be their prey and they may plunder the orphans. What will you do on the day of visitation and the calamity that comes from afar? To whom will you flee for help? And where will you leave your glory? Do not be bent down under a chain and fall among the slain. His rage is not turned away, but his hand is still stretched out. Most people still believe that these things are said against the ten tribes who lived in Samaria, because they too joined in the previous crimes. But to us it seems that the prophetic word is crying out against the judges of the tribe of Judah and Jerusalem, namely the Scribes and the Pharisees, because they have written unjust laws against God's law and have undermined the truth of justice with their traditions. For God says: Honor your father and mother (Exodus XX, 12); but they, on the contrary, advised children to say to their parents: Whatever gift you might have received from me, it will be helpful to you, so that they would not honor (Al. honor) their father and mother (Matthew XV, 5, 6; Mark VII, 11), and similar things. Therefore, they wrote wicked laws in order to oppress the poor and lowly people, to plunder widows, and to prey upon orphans. Those who are asked what they will do, when the day of either captivity or judgment comes, and the calamity from afar, which was foretold long before. To whom, he says, will you flee for help, when you offend God, who is the true helper, and where will you leave your glory? For riches will not profit on the day of wrath, lest the Assyrian lead the bound into a hostile land, lest you fall in battle (Proverbs 11:4). And finally, just as he had often said against Samaria in the previous episodes: In all these things his anger is not turned away, but still his hand is stretched out, even against Judah, because there is no end to their evil (or malice); even in the enemy territory of the Lord, the sword pursues them. According to the allegory, every heretic writes injustice in order to deceive the poor and humble people, and to plunder widows and orphans. For indeed, the wealthy person, of whom we read: 'The redemption of the soul of a man is his own wealth' (Prov. XIII, 8), does not endure threat, nor is he easily captured by them. But the poor person, who is humble and small among the people, is easily scandalized by them. Likewise, the widow who has lost her husband and the orphan who has lost his Creator, of whom it is written: 'You have forsaken God who begot you, and have forgotten the God who brought you up' (Deut. XXXII, 18), are easily overthrown. So what will they do on the day of judgment, when they have deceived so many and the calamity from afar is coming? Just as it is said to the righteous man, 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (Rom. X, 8); and in another place: 'The kingdom of God is within you' (Luke XVII, 2); so the calamity of the heretics will come from afar, prepared for them in due time. To whom will they flee, when they have a false god? To whom will they give their glory, when everything is feigned? And they will not be able to escape the bond by which they have bound many. Therefore, even in the vision of the valley of Zion, which has been deserted by the height of God and deceived by heretical humility, it is said of the false masters of the name of knowledge: All your leaders have fled, and those who have been captured

are tightly bound (Isaiah 22:3). And although they may fall with each one being killed, and perish in the death of others, and suffer greatly, and the day of visitation will come, there will be no end to their destruction, but they will always tremble at the hand of the Lord that is impending upon them. Until now, there has been a threat from God against ten and a half tribes, that is, against Samaria and Jerusalem, which began during the reign of Achaz. Two and a half tribes were captured under his rule, and the remaining tribes were captured under Hezekiah, who succeeded Achaz as king (2 Kings 16:17). The following prophecy is written against the Assyrians.

10:5-11

(Verse 5 and following) Woe to Assyria, the rod of my anger, and the staff in their hands is my fury. I will send him against a deceitful nation, and I will command him against the people of my wrath, to take the spoil and seize the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. But he does not understand this, and his heart does not take it to heart, but his purpose is to destroy and cut off nations. For my princes are not also kings? Is not Charcamis like Chalanno, and Arphad like Emath? Is not Damascus like Samaria? Just as my hand found the kingdoms of idols, so too their images from Jerusalem and Samaria. Shall I not do to Jerusalem and its idols what I did to Samaria and its idols? Let us put here the translation of the Septuagint, which differs in many ways from the Hebrew. LXX: Woe to the Assyrians: the rod of my anger is in their hands, I will send my wrath against a wicked nation, and I will command my people to plunder and loot, and to trample down cities and reduce them to dust. But he did not think so, and did not intend it that way; rather, his purpose is to destroy, and to annihilate many nations. And if they say to him: You alone are the ruler, he will reply: I did not conquer the region above Babylon, and Chalane, where the tower was built. But I came to Arabia, and Damascus, and Samaria: just as I brought these, so I will take all the kingdoms. Howl, statues in Jerusalem and Samaria; for just as I did to Samaria and its idols, so I will do to Jerusalem and its images. First, it must be known that in Hebrew there is no 'Chalane,' but 'Chalanno' (). For the last letter of this name is not 'Iod,' as they believed, but 'Vau,' which letters differ in size only. However, the tower was built in the plain of Shinar, where there were Erech, Akkad, and Calneh, and Babylon, which received its name from the confusion of languages (Genesis 11). However, in Hebrew, Arabia is not mentioned, but rather Hamath, which the Syrians still call Epiphania. They also added idols in Jerusalem of their own accord. And that which is written above: If they say to him, 'You alone are the prince,' he will answer, 'I did not take that region, and that one, but I took Arabia, and Damascus, and Samaria.' This suggests the meaning: When, he says, the Assyrians who were captured say, 'You are the prince of all,' he, still feeling weak, will answer, 'How do you call me prince, when I have only taken Arabia, and Damascus, and Samaria, and the distant nations beyond Babylon have not yet submitted to my rule?' But just as I captured Arabia, Damascus, and Samaria, I will subdue all kingdoms to me. Let us now turn to Hebrew and write down briefly what we think. Woe to the Assyrians, that is, Sennacherib, for he is the rod and staff of my fury. In his hand is my indignation, and through him I will strike down the deceitful nation that has always cowered between me and idols, that has lied about obeying my commands. I will command him against my furious people, to plunder and loot them, and to reduce them to dust and trample them like mud in the streets. That is, to strike them but not kill them, to wound them but not take their lives. But he extended the scope of my anger and not only raged against Israel, against whom it had been directed, but he also ravaged many nations, so that he wore out all the kingdoms around, and his sword raged even against the

destruction of many nations. For he rose up in pride, and dared to say: My commanders are the kings of other nations, and they are subject to me, they will rule over all nations. Just as I took (conquered) Carcamis, so I also took (conquered) Chalanne; just as I obtained Arphad, so I also obtained Emath; just as I took (conquered) Damascus, so I also subjugated Samaria. Just as I have conquered the other kingdoms that worshiped idols, I will also bring Jerusalem and Samaria, where the same idols are worshiped, under my control. Just as I have taken Samaria with its idols, I will also capture Jerusalem, because they worship the same gods. Additionally, we have added 70 cities from the region beyond Babylon, including Chalane where the tower was built, completely abandoning Arphad. According to their translation and tropology, as long as it is pious, we can infer freedom from the fact that he says, 'And I will command my people to take the spoils and the plunder, and to trample on cities and reduce them to dust.' We can also interpret this to mean that every day the Lord commands his people to reduce to dust the cities of the adversaries that rise up against the knowledge of God and have been built by the excessive labor of heretics, and to demonstrate that they are nothing. One who understands the weakness of the human heart, and that being encompassed by mortal flesh, cannot have perfect victory over virtues, nor can all nations accept it, even though others may admire and say: You alone are the leader, will respond to them: There are many things which I must destroy, and yet I have not been able to destroy them: I know that I do not know. And although I have overcome many arguments of adversaries, there are still many that must be overcome. At the same time, with hope for the future, he promises himself victory from the things he has overcome and also from the others. The idols of Jerusalem and Samaria are ordered to howl, not the ones that are fake, but those who made them, metaphorically those who made them, through the things that were made, so that not only those who fabricated idols in heresies, but also those who defend falsehood in the Church out of ignorance, may testify that they have erred with howling and repentance.

10:12-14

(Verses 12-14.) And it shall come to pass, when the Lord has completed all his works on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, that I will visit the fruit of the noble heart of the king of Assyria, and upon the glory of the height of his eyes. For he said, 'By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom I have understood it. I have removed the boundaries of the peoples, and have plundered their princes. I have brought down the inhabitants as if they were mighty. My hand has found the wealth of the peoples, as one gathers eggs that are abandoned. I have gathered the whole earth, and there was no one who moved a wing or opened his mouth to chirp.' They have interpreted the LXX for profit, meaning, or great understanding. After the captivity of Samaria and the victory of the Assyrians, and the threat against Jerusalem, because they imitated the idols of Samaria, they should be punished with a similar sentence; now against Assyria itself, which has become proud and thought its own strength was what led to victory, the Prophet speaks. For the Assyrian, boasting with swelling pride, said that with the strength of his hands he has conquered all nations and has possessed the borders with incredible wisdom. And according to the LXX, he was of such great power, that he completely destroyed cities of warlike men, and seized the entire world as if it were a nest, and he turned the abandoned eggs from their mothers into his prey. And since he had once taken the metaphor from birds, nests, and eggs, he kept it in the rest, saying: There was no one who would move a feather, and open their mouth, and squawk. Such was the terror of my strength and victory, that even the conquered could not freely reveal their weeping

and groaning. There are those who generally believe that these things are said against the kingdom of the Assyrians because after the Lord completes all his works on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, that is, after Jerusalem has been overthrown, the empire of the Assyrians will be destroyed. However, from what follows, the threat seems to be specifically against King Sennacherib of Assyria. When it says, 'After the Lord completes all his works on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,' it does not signify the destruction of the city, but rather the siege, when the commander Rabshakes came with Sennacherib, and did those things which the same Prophet recounts later on (Isai. XXXVII, 17). According to tropology, when Samaria and Jerusalem endure the anger of the Lord and realize that they have erred in the making of idols, then great understanding will be destroyed, the Assyrian, who is swollen with such pride against the Lord, thinking that all things will yield to his wisdom, and that every lofty doctrine and fortified dialectical art must be shaken and utterly destroyed; to such an extent that they are unable to rise up high like the fledglings of birds, and are not yet animate, but rather inanimate and sluggish, as the example of eggs demonstrates, not even able to chirp or move their tongues against the reason and strength of their speech.

10:15

(Verse 15.) Will the axe boast against the one who hews with it, or the saw exalt itself against the one who draws it? As if a rod should raise itself against the one who lifts it, or a staff should exalt itself, which is only wood. In response to Sennacherib, or as many believe, Nebuchadnezzar, boasting and saying: 'By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I have understanding,' the holy Prophet replied: 'O most foolish of mortals, do you think God's wrath is your wisdom, and His command is your strength?' How can an axe boast against the one who wields it, or a saw against the one who draws it? And let them say, all the works done by the axe and the saw are perfected by their own skill. And if someone lifts a staff and raises a stick to strike whoever they desire, and that staff and stick boast, saying that they themselves have struck the one who was struck: in the same way, when you are an instrument of God's will, you elevate yourself in pride and glory in everything that is done as your own virtue. But whatever is said to be Assyrian can also be referred to the pride of heretics and to the devil, who is called an axe, a saw, and a rod in the Scriptures, because through him unfruitful trees are cut down and divided, and the hardness of unbelievers is sawn, and those who do not receive discipline are struck with a rod. The heretics, whose mouth is set against heaven and whose tongue stretches to the ground, twist the meaning they have received from God in a good way and use it for the opposite and perverse, so that they speak against the one by whom they were created, and they turn the ministry of tongues, by which the Lord is to be praised, into blasphemy (Psalm 72).

10:16-19

(Verse 16 and following) Therefore, the Lord of hosts will send wasting sickness among his fat ones, and under his glory a burning will be kindled like the burning of fire. And the light of Israel will become a fire, and his Holy One a flame, and it will burn and devour his thorns and briars in one day. The glory of his forest and of his fruitful land the Lord will destroy, both soul and body, and it will be as when a sick man wastes away. And the remaining trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down. Because you have done these things and have spoken what I have told you above, therefore the Lord will send His Angel, and in one night one hundred eighty-five

thousand of your army will die, so that the most powerful ones, whom He calls fat, will be reduced to thinness and nothingness. And as the Hebrews relate, the bodies of the Assyrians, with their untouched clothing, will be consumed by hidden fire. Then the light of Israel and the holy one, that is, the angel, will be in fire and flame, and all the thorns and brambles of the Assyrians, that is, their wickedness, will be consumed, not over a long time, but in one day and moment. And just as the forest-covered mountain of Carmel, which is located in Galilee, quickly burns when fire is placed underneath it, so too will all the glory of the Assyrians be consumed, from humans to animals. Then the plundered army will flee, as the Prophet testifies in what follows, and from such an innumerable multitude that was compared to Carmel and the forest, it will come to such a small number that even a little child will be able to count and describe them. For the Hebrews report that only ten of his army remained; some of ours say that this king is a type of hostile strength. And just as in the book of Daniel (Chapter X) we read about the rulers of the Persian kingdom, and the kingdom of the Medes, and the kingdom of the Greeks, so there is also a ruler of the Assyrians, who is called the great prince because of the pride of his understanding, and on the day of judgment he will be delivered to the fires of Gehenna, which are prepared for the devil and his angels. And the light of Israel, which is the Lord himself, will set fire to the thorns and thistles of Assyria, and will reduce all its power and countless people to nothingness. Then, terrified by this, they will want to avoid the imminent punishment like a twisted and fleeing snake. However, those who can escape from his leap and confusion, and from the burning wood, are considered worthy to be numbered and described by the boy whose authority is on his shoulders. This itself can also be referred to the heretics: that after the Church's teaching has shone forth, and all their disciples have been exposed, then they come to such great solitude, that only a few remain who follow their error, from the jump and unfruitful trees and their countless multitude, which they deceived by heretical fraud. Because what we translate, the Lord will send thinness in her fatness, LXX translated, the Lord will send dishonor in your honor. And because we have said: and his saints in the flame, they have turned: and he will sanctify him in fire: by which some understand that punishments and torments are applied to sinners, in order to be purged by the divine fire. And what we have said: And the glory of his forest, and of his Carmel: they have interpreted: The mountains, and hills, and forests shall be extinguished, by which all the glory, pride, and multitude of the Assyrians shall be humbled and extinguished.

10:20-23

(Verse 20 onwards) And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel shall no more stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts will make a consummation and an abbreviation in the midst of all the land. As it is said in Greek: The remnant of Jacob will return to the mighty God, for the mighty God, in Hebrew it is written El Gibbor (), two names out of the six names by which we read the little child and son, who is given to us, is called. And because it is written: The remnant will return, in Hebrew it is said in the singular number, that which is left will return, that is, τὸ πλεῖμμα πιστῶν, in Hebrew it is written Sar Jasub (). And from this occasion of conversation, they believe that the son of Isaiah, named Jasub, preceded as a sign of salvation for the people of Israel. Therefore, when the light of Israel, and the holy forest of Carmel,

and the thorn bush are consumed, and the Assyrian king flees with a few, then the remaining people of Israel, who were besieged in Jerusalem with King Hezekiah as their leader, will by no means rely on the Assyrian king, as they now do under King Ahaz, who sent messengers to the king of Assyria saying, 'I am your servant, go up and free me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who have risen against me' (2 Kings 16:7). When he brought gold and silver, which were found in the treasuries of the house of the Lord and in the royal palace, and sent gifts to the king of Assyria, he listened to him and went to Damascus, captured it, and deported Rasin. But having been freed from the Assyrian oppressor, who had previously been a friend and later an enemy, let them rely and have confidence in the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, not falsely as they did under previous kings, but in truth. What we read about under Hezekiah: that, having abandoned idols, they turned to the worship of God. And because he had said that the remnants must be saved, he moves on to later times and says that full salvation will come under Christ. This is also what the apostle Paul, understanding this, writes to the Romans: But Isaiah cries out for Israel: If the number of the children of Israel is like the sand of the sea, the remnants will be saved. For the word is consuming and shortening in righteousness, because the Lord will make a short word upon the earth (Rom. IX, 27). And as Isaiah said: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we would have been made like Sodom, and we would have been like Gomorrah (Isaiah 1:9). Therefore, when such great authority precedes, let all other interpretation cease. And truly, if we read Josephus (Book X, Chapter 2), and consider how great was the multitude of people in Jerusalem and in Judea when the Lord suffered, we understand that only a few among the Apostles and Apostolic men were saved from the Jews. But the Gospel is an abbreviated and perfected discourse, which, instead of all the burdensome ceremonies of the Law, gave a very brief precept of love and faith, that we should not do to others what we would not want done to us. Hence, the Lord in the Gospel said: 'On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets' (Matthew 22:40). Some refer this chapter to the time when a certain part of the people returned to Judah under Zerubbabel son of Salatiel, and Joshua son of Josedech, and Ezra, and Nehemiah. We will respond to those by not preserving the order of history, especially since what follows is not against the Babylonians, whose king was Nebuchadnezzar, but against Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians.

10:24-27

(v. 24 seqq.) Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: Do not fear, my people who dwell in Zion, from Assyria, who shall strike you with a rod and lift up his staff against you, as the Egyptians did. For yet a little while and my indignation will be fulfilled and my anger will be directed towards their wickedness. And the Lord of hosts will raise a whip against them, as he did against Midian at the rock of Oreb, and his staff against the sea, and he will lift it up in the manner of the Egyptians. And it shall come to pass in that day: his burden shall be taken away from your shoulder, and his yoke from your neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing oil. Regarding the stone, which in Hebrew is interpreted as Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion put the Hebrew word Sur Oreb. Regarding this, the LXX interpreted as the place of tribulation, about which we will say in its proper place. It seems difficult to you, O inhabitant of Zion, that while all the surrounding nations are subjugated by the Assyrians, you alone would be liberated from their hands. Listen to what I say: do not be afraid, my people, because you will be captured by Assyria when it conquers. For in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign (2 Kings 18), Sennacherib, the Assyrian king, will

come to attack all the fortified cities of Judah and capture them. He will send his commander-in-chief, Rabshakeh, to terrify the besieged people of Jerusalem. However, you should know that he will not strike you with a sword, but with a rod. He will march against King Tirhakah of Ethiopia, the Egyptians, and the Red Sea by way of Egypt. He will only raise his staff against you, and he will not be able to strike you. For a little while longer, I will return from Egypt with an infinite multitude of army and wishing to besiege you, I will immediately strike with my indignation, and I will raise that whip, which once I used against the Midianites under Gideon (Judges 7), who was also called Jerubbaal. When Oreb and Zebah, the leaders of the Midianites, were killed on a very hard rock, that is, flint, which is called Sur in Hebrew, so that from the rock and from the king who was killed on it, the place received the name Rock of Oreb. So he shall lift up his rod over the Red Sea, going against the Ethiopians, and he shall lift it up again on his return to you by the way of Egypt; but as soon as he comes from Egypt, the burden shall be taken away from your shoulders and the yoke of his rule shall be removed, and you shall cease to serve. This yoke, that is, the power of the Assyrians, will decay in the presence of oil, that is, the mercy of God. We can also understand what he said: 'He shall strike you with a rod and shall lift up his staff over you on the way to Egypt.' And again: 'He shall lift up his rod over the sea and he shall lift it up on the way to Egypt.' This can also be understood as why he struck many from the tribe of Judah and captured cities around the kingdom of Jerusalem, because they had put their trust not in God, but in the Egyptians. Then Rabsaces taunts them, saying: Behold thou trustest upon the reed upon Egypt; upon which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it. (IV Kings 18:21) So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him. The history also of the Midianites is written in the book of Judges (Judges 7), which we read also in the psalm: Make their princes like Oreb, and Zeb, and Zebbee, and Salmana (Psalm 82:11-12). Therefore those who believe that it signifies the time when in the book of Numbers (Chap. 25) the Midianites killed by Israel are referred to from the desert of Sur to the mountain of God, Horeb, with which time they were not on Mount Horeb, but in the desert of Shittim. According to the anagoge, it is commanded to the people dwelling in the Church not to fear their adversaries, who are always ready for battle, and have overturned many souls with their disputes. For this reason, they can receive only a little power against the people of God, and not strike with a sword, but with a rod, that is, not to kill, but to threaten, because they have walked in the way of Egypt and have not trusted in the Lord. But when they have returned to God and have left the path of Egypt, then the scourge of God is to be raised up by judgment against the adversaries. For Midian is interpreted as meaning 'by judgment,' so that with the breath of his mouth and the oil of mercy the yoke of the enemies may decay.

10:28-34

(Verse 28 and following) He will come to Aiath, he will pass through Migron: at Machmas he will deposit his baggage. They went with haste to Geba, our city (or as we find elsewhere written: they stayed at the lodging place); Ramah was astonished, Gibeah of Saul fled. Cry out with your voice, daughter of Gallim; listen, Laishah, poor Anathoth: Medemena has taken flight; the inhabitants of Gebim, gather yourselves together. There is still a day, to stand at Nob: he will shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. LXX: For He will come into the city of Aggai, and will pass through Mageddo: and in Machmas He will set His vessels: and He will pass through the valley, and will come into Aggai. Fear shall seize Rama, the city of Saul: the daughter of Gallim shall flee: listen, O Laisa: there shall be heard in Anathot: Medemena will be

astonished, and the inhabitants of Gebim. Comfort yourselves today along the way, that He may remain: comfort the mountain of the daughter of Zion, and the hill of Jerusalem. In this place, the LXX differs greatly from the Hebrew: for this reason, we have included both editions, so that, with the inspiration of Christ, we may express what seems to us in each. He is describing the prophetic speech of the Assyrian about his journey and return from Egypt to Jerusalem, and how he will come with great noise and speed to attack the city. And first, he says, he will come to Aiath, where, due to excessive haste, he will not want to stay and will pass through to Magron, and he will have such confidence in capturing the city that he will leave his luggage at Machmas, as if he will quickly return after the city is destroyed. After leaving his luggage, he will pass through quickly and will have a resting place in Geba, where he will stay for a short time to revive his tired army, and the nearby city of Ramah will be terrified, and the city of Gibeah, once the city of Saul, will flee. Then both Gallim's daughter, who is called Beth Gallim in Hebrew, will wail so loudly that you would think it is the neighing of horses. Therefore, oh Laisa, whether you are poor or obedient, or humble Anathoth (for it can be interpreted in three ways), pay close attention and declare the approaching onslaught, if you can; for the city of Medemena has already migrated from its dwelling places. But you who dwell in the hills, which are interpreted as Gebim, be reassured by the safety of your elevated location, that is, take up arms. So far, only the end of the day remained, as he stood in the small town of Nob, overlooking the city of Jerusalem. He waved his hand and shook it over Mount Zion, either looking down on it with disdain and contempt, or insulting and threatening it, and marveling that such a small city would dare to resist his power, with the entire East under his control. These things, according to the Hebrews, as they have been handed down to us, we have briefly described. Now let us present what the Ecclesiastical men of the Seventy have to say about this passage. When the yoke of Assyria, or as some wrongly believe, the Babylonians, is removed from your shoulders and corrupted, the Assyrian Sennacherib, fleeing with a few remnants, will come to Aggai, which is not found in Hebrew. And there will be such trembling of the fugitive that he will not dare to stay there, but will pass through to Mageddo, which is not mentioned in Scripture itself. And because he will not be able to flee more quickly burdened with his baggage, he will deposit his vessels in Machmas and swiftly pass through the valley, which the Hebrew language does not even mention; and he will come again to Aggai, which is mentioned twice in this place and is not found in Hebrew. At the sound of his flight, Rama, the city of Saul, will tremble, which is clearly false. For the city of Saul is called Gaba, as is stated in Hebrew. Then he will come to Gallim; Laisa will hear, Anathoth will hear, Medemena will tremble. But the inhabitants of Gebim and the hills, which are in Jerusalem, that is, the lofty and mighty men, will be stirred up to console Jerusalem: not long afterwards, but at present, and on the same day while the Assyrian is on the way; so they may remain in their places, and, disturbed by fear, in no way flee. This word for word. However, some in this place, when they cannot find false names according to the etymology of the Septuagint, nor can they find themselves in the book of Hebrew Names, send us to uncertainty, so that they say that in the end of the world and in the consummation of this age, with impending punishments, the great meaning, the prince of the Assyrians, will flee; and desiring to escape from the anger of God, they will travel through different places and various destinations. And when he flees, let the inhabitants of Gebim, that is, the lofty virtues, be urged by prophetic speech to console the one fleeing and to teach them not to flee but to stay on the path and await the mercy of God; and not only to console the one fleeing or to recall the daughter of Zion from mourning and to provoke her to the salvation of repentance, but also to be these hills in Jerusalem

of which we read in the later part of this prophet: Comfort, comfort my people, says the priests; speak to the heart of Jerusalem (Isa. XL, 1). He said this because he was bound by the truth of the matter and had nothing else to say.

Behold the Lord of hosts will break the jar in terror, and the lofty stature will be cut down, and the exalted will be brought low, and the dense forests will be destroyed by the sword, and Lebanon with its heights will fall. Some people think that this passage is still speaking of the Assyrians, and that when they are crushed, all the nations around them that were subject to their rule will be cut down and humbled, and the dense forests will be destroyed. They understand this metaphorically as referring to the people and rulers. Moreover, even Lebanon with its lofty cedars can fall, so that no power of Assyria remains at all. But others want this place to be about Christ, especially since what follows, and we ourselves, and the Circumcision Scriptures, testify about him. Above, it was mentioned that the name of the child to be born of a Virgin would be called Emmanuel; and later the prophetess in her conception in the womb would proclaim, 'Hurry, plunder, hasten to prey' (Isa. 8:3), and he himself would be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to the two houses of Israel; his dominion would be on his shoulder, and he would be called by six names: Wonderful, Counselor, God, Strong, Father of the future age, and Prince of peace; and his empire would multiply, and there would be no end to peace. Now in the prologue of his coming, before it is said that he will be born of the descendants of Jesse and David, the passion of him is demonstrated through the symbol of the broken vessel: that, by the will of God, his flesh was handed over to death so that the pride of the Jews may be destroyed and those who were once lofty may fall to the ground; and Lebanon with its cedars may be cut down, of which we read in Zachariah: Open your gates, O Lebanon, and let fire devour your cedars; wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, because the noble have been devastated (Zach. XI, 1, 2). But that he is said to be contrite and struck by the Father, and that is indicated by this: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered (Zech. XIII, 7). And another testimony: For they have persecuted him whom you have struck (Ps. LXVIII, 2). The Hebrew word פְּחַד (Phura), which Aquila has interpreted as κερήμενον, and Theodotion and Symmachus translated as ληνον, that is, winepress, which also signifies the Lord's Passion according to the inscription of three psalms, with the Lord himself saying in Isaiah: I have trodden the winepress alone, and no man of the nations was with me (Isa. LXIII, 3). However, they interpreted LXX as meaning 'for the wine press,' introducing a new sense.

11:1-2

Chapter XI - Verses 1, 2. And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. Up to the beginning of the Vision or the weight of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amos saw, all this prophecy is about Christ, which we wish to explain in parts so as not to confuse the reader's memory by presenting and discussing it all at once. The rod and the flower from the root of Jesse are interpreted as the Lord Himself of the Jews: so that in the rod, the power of the reigning one may be shown, and in the flower, the beauty. But we understand the rod from the root of Jesse to be the holy Virgin Mary, who had no fruit cohering to herself; of whom we also read above: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son (Isa. VII, 14). And the flower is the Lord and Savior, who says in the Song of Solomon: I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys (Cant. II, 1). Concerning the root which alone the

LXX translators turned into Hebrew script, it has (in Geza) which Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotio interpreted as κορυμβ, that is, trunk. And concerning the flower which is called (in Hebrew) Naser, they translated it as germ to show that much later after the Babylonian captivity, with no one from the line of David possessing the glory of the ancient kingdom, Christ arose as if from the trunk of Mary, and from Mary Christ was born. That which in the Gospel of Matthew everyone seeks the words of the Ecclesiastics, and does not find where it is written, 'He shall be called a Nazarene' (Matt. 2:23), the learned Hebrews think is taken from this place. But it should be known that here 'Nazarene' is written with the letter 'Sade', which the Latin language does not express the sound and property of between 'z' and 's'. It is, in fact, a strident sound and is barely pronounced with the tongue against the teeth: from which the city of Zion is also written. Moreover, the Nazarenes, whom the Seventy sanctified, whom Symmachus separated, transferred, pronounce 'Zain' (the letter element is always written). Therefore, upon this flower, who will suddenly rise from the trunk and root of Jesse through the Virgin Mary, the spirit of the Lord will rest, because in him it pleased all the fullness of divinity to dwell bodily: not by parts, as with the other saints; but according to the Gospel that the Nazarenes read, which was written in the Hebrew language: 'Upon him descends every source of the Holy Spirit.' Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (2 Corinthians 3:17). In the same volume of Matthew, we read that which is written in the following: Behold, my servant whom I have chosen: my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him: he shall show judgment to the Gentiles (Matt. XII, 18). This is understood to refer to the understanding of the Savior, in whom the Spirit of the Lord rested, that is, he remained in eternal habitation: not so as to fly away and descend to him again; but according to the testimony of John the Baptist, he would continually remain, who said: I saw the Spirit descending as a dove from heaven, and remaining upon him, and I did not know him: but he who sent me to baptize in water, said to me: He upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes in the Holy Spirit (John. XXXII, 33). Furthermore, in the Gospel, of which we have mentioned above, we find these writings: And it came to pass, when the Lord was ascended out of the water, the whole fountain of the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon him, and said to him: My son, in all the prophets I have expected thee, that thou shouldst come, and that I might rest in thee. For thou art my rest, thou art my first begotten Son, who reignest in eternity. Who is called the Spirit of the Lord and the Spirit of wisdom; for all things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made (John 1:3). And in the Psalms it is sung: How great are your works, O Lord! You have made all things in wisdom (Ps. XCI, 24). And the Apostle writes: Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (I Cor. I). And in Proverbs it is read: By his wisdom, God founded the earth, and by his prudence, he prepared the heavens (Prov. III, 19). And just as the Word of God is called light, and life, and resurrection, so the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord is named: not because it is different according to the differences of names, but because it is the one and same source and beginning of all virtues. Therefore, without Christ, no one can be wise, intelligent, wise counsel, strong, learned, pious, or full of the fear of God. And it should be noted that the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and fortitude, knowledge and piety, and the fear of the Lord, that is, the number seven, which is said to be the seven eyes on one stone in Zechariah (Chapter 3), may rest upon the rod and flower, who rose from the root of Jesse, and therefore from the line of David. But the Spirit of the fear of the Lord has filled him because of those who lack the fear of the Lord: for they are little ones, whom

perfect love casts out. For whoever fears, has punishment, and is not perfect (1 John 4:18). Therefore, the Apostle speaks to the believers: For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear: but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father (Romans 8:15). And in Malachi we read: If I am a father, where is my glory? And if I am the Lord, where is my fear? (Malachi 1:6). Concerning this fear, it is sung in the Psalm: Come, children, listen to me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord (Psalm 34:11).

11:3-5

(Verse 3 and following) He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears. But he will judge the poor with justice, and decide with fairness for the humble of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and kill the wicked with the breath of his lips. Righteousness will be his belt, and faithfulness the sash around his waist. These words refer to the first coming of the Savior; the Jews argue about the future at the end of the world. Moreover, they translated: He will not judge according to glory, nor argue according to speech: but he will judge with humble judgment, and argue the humble of the earth. For he shows no partiality in judgment: but he speaks to the scribes, Pharisees and rulers: Woe to you, hypocrites: And, the kingdom of God will be taken from you, and given to the nation producing its fruits (Matthew 23:13, and 21:43). And he does not rebuke according to words and the hearing of the ears. For when they said to Him, 'Master, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth, and do not care about anyone's opinion, for You do not regard the appearance of men' (Matthew 22:16), knowing their malice, He answered, 'Why do you test me, you hypocrites?' and so on with similar things. He judged in righteousness the poor in spirit, to whom belongs the kingdom of God, and he rebuked in fairness the meek and humble of the earth, saying to the Apostles, 'Are you still foolish?' And again: Do you not yet understand or comprehend? And to Peter specifically: O you of little faith, why did you doubt? (Mark 8:17). Or certainly for the humble and meek he argued for others who sought to oppress them (Matthew 14:31). He also struck down all earthly works with a rod, or as the Septuagint translated, with the word of his mouth, speaking in the Gospel: Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. And with the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked (Mat. X, 34, and Luc. XII, 51): of whom we read in the ninth psalm: Thou hast rebuked the Gentiles, and the wicked one hath perished: thou hast put out their name for ever and ever (Ps. IX, 6). And the Apostle Paul writes: Whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth (II Thess. II, 8; Ephes. VI). But when the wicked man is struck, the Lord is girded with justice and truth and faith. For he has made Himself to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1), who also speaks in the Gospel: I am the light, and the life, and the truth (John 8:6 and 14). And it is said in the Psalms: Truth has risen from the earth: and justice has looked down from heaven (Psalm 84:2). Therefore, the Apostle also exhorts the Ephesians: Stand therefore, having your loins girded with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:14). But if faith is read for truth, it must be said that the belt of the Lord, with which Jeremiah was girded (Jeremiah 13), is the faith of believers.

11:6-16 (Verse 6 and following) The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat; the calf, the lion, and the sheep will all stay together, and a small child will lead them. The calf and the bear will graze together; their young ones will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like an ox. The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put

his hand into the viper's nest. They will not cause harm or destroy on my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. This also the Jews and our Jewish followers contend will happen literally, that in the glory of Christ, whom they believe will come at the end of the world, all beasts will be tamed, and the former ferocity, the wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the other things with the others, which we now see as contrary to each other. We should ask those who accept everything in the present text as it is written, and do not relate to spiritual understanding, according to the saying of the Apostle, who says: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:3), therefore, the root, and the branch, and the flower should not be understood literally: and when it is said that the earth was struck by the word of God, and the wicked were killed by the breath of his lips, they should be understood as written: and they should be compelled to teach how the Lord's loins are surrounded by incorporeal things with righteousness and truth. But let us also ask them what is worthy of the majesty of the Lord, that the wolf and the lamb may feed together, and the leopard may lie down with the young goat, and the lion may eat straw like the ox, and a small child may put his hand into the hole of the venomous snake? Unless, perhaps, according to the fables of the poets, they will restore to us the golden age of Saturn, in which wolves and lambs will feed together, and rivers will flow with sweet wine, and the sweetest honey will drip from the leaves of trees, and everything will be filled with milk from the fountains. But if they respond that for the happiness of the times these things are to come, so that without anyone's harm, men may enjoy all good things, let them hear from us that nothing is good except virtue, and nothing is evil except vice, as the Psalmist says: Who is the man that desires life, and loves to see good days? Restrain your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil, and do good. (Psalm 34:14; 31:27). But riches, and bodily health, and abundance of all things, and their contraries, poverty, weakness, and lack, even among the philosophers of the world, are neither reckoned among good things nor among bad things, but are called indifferent. And the Stoics also, who agree in most respects with our doctrine, consider nothing to be good except honesty and virtue alone, and nothing to be evil except shamefulness. We have briefly stated these things in order to convincingly refute those who Judaize while in a deep sleep. However, through the life-giving spirit, understanding is easy. For Paul, formerly a persecutor and destroyer of the Church, is like a wolf, of whom it is said: Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; he dwelt with the lamb, or like Ananias, by whom he was baptized (Gen. XLIX, 27; Acts VIII), or like the Apostle Peter, to whom it was said: Feed my lambs (John XXI). And the leopard, who previously did not change its spots, lies down in the fountain of the Lord with the kid, not the one on the left, but the one sacrificed on the Lord's Passover. And this must be noted, that neither the lamb nor the kid dwell and lie down with the wolf and the leopard, but the wolf and the leopard imitate the innocence of the lamb and the kid. The lion also will dwell together with the most ferocious, and the sheep, and the calf. This we see daily in the Church, the rich and the poor, the powerful and the humble, kings and commoners dwelling together, and being ruled in the Church by little children, whom we understand to be the Apostles, and by Apostolic men, unskilled in language, but not in knowledge. When those who are bound together in the discipline of the Lord are united among themselves, so that their families are also joined, then this will be fulfilled: their young ones will rest together. The lion will also not eat meat, but straw, so that it may feed on simple food. And here it must be observed that it is not the ox that eats meat, but the lion that eats straw. I think that in Holy Scriptures, straw is understood as simple

words. However, wheat and the inner marrow represent the meaning that is found in the letter: and it often happens that people of the world, who are ignorant of the mysteries, feed on simple reading of the Scriptures. The infant, who is small in wickedness, also puts his hand into the snake's hole and drives away the demons from the bodies of those possessed. But the child who is weaned is no longer nourished by milk but now eats solid food. He puts his hand into the cave of the ruler, that is, into the dwelling place of Satan himself, and from there he pulls him out. Hence, the power was given to the Apostles to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy (Luke 10). However, poisonous animals will never be able to harm or kill those who dwell in the holy mountain of God, which is interpreted as the Church, as it is said in the Gospel: A city set on a hill cannot be hidden (Matt. 5:14). But lest we think that this is said about Mount Zion according to the error of the Hebrews, the following verse of the Gospel preaching shows the sacraments: For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (Isaiah 11:9). This is what was said above more obscurely: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid (Isaiah 11:6). And according to their custom, the words of the prophets are revealed at the end: As the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14). Just as the depths of the sea are covered by the waters of the sea, that is, the land covered by the waves, so the knowledge of the Lord will fill the whole earth. The blessed Apostle Peter also testifies to the diverse conjunction of previous manners in the linen cloth (Acts 10), which was sent down from heaven, having four elements, which we understand as representing the four regions of the world, so that we may know the earth filled with the knowledge of God: in this vessel there were quadrupeds, and serpents, and wild beasts, and birds of the sky, so that just as the Ark did in the Flood, the Church may provide in the world. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious. LXX: On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall seek him out, and his dwelling shall be honored. For his resting place has been chosen in Hebrew, Mnuatho (), which all have likewise translated. And for his honor, in Hebrew it is read as Chabod (), which clearly signifies glory. And the meaning is: his death will be glorious, so that what the Savior prays for in the Gospel may be fulfilled: Father, glorify me with the glory which I had before the world was with you (John 17:5). It has been said about his birth, it has been said about the others in the midst of the Sacraments: he came to death, which is not called by the usual name of mortals, but because eternal life was in Christ, it is called rest. But we, in order to make the meaning clear to the reader, translate it as dormition and rest, with another word but the same meaning, we turn it into a tomb. Therefore, in that time, when the Gospel of Christ will shine forth throughout the whole world, and the knowledge of the Lord will fill all the earth like the waters cover the sea, the root of Jesse will be and the one who will rise from his lineage as a sign for all peoples, so that the nations may see the sign of the Son of Man in heaven (Matt. 24). He will have horns in his hands, in which his strength will be hidden, so that when exalted, he may draw all things to himself (Hab. 3). As the Septuagint translated, he will rise from the dead to be the prince of all nations, and all peoples will hope in him. This is also testified by Jacob in a mystical message about the tribe of Judah: The prince will not fail from Judah, nor the leader from his loins, until he comes to whom it belongs, and he will be the expectation of the nations. And in that day, the Lord will stretch out his hand a second time to possess the remnant of his people, which will be left behind by the Assyrians, and by Egypt, and by Phut, and by Ethiopia, and by Elam, and by Shinar, and by Hamath, and by the islands of the sea. And He will lift up a signal for the nations, and will gather the outcasts of Israel, and assemble the scattered ones of

Judah from the four corners of the earth. The jealousy of Ephraim will depart, and the enemies of Judah will be destroyed. Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, and Judah will not fight against Ephraim. They will swoop down on the Philistines' shoulder through the sea, together they will plunder the sons of the East. And Edom and Moab will be under their control, and the sons of Ammon will obey them. In that day, which is the time mentioned before, when the Root of Jesse rises as a signal for the peoples, in order to rule over the nations, the Lord will stretch out His hand a second time, so that not according to our Jewish understanding at the end of the world, when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved (Rom. XI); but let us understand all these things in relation to His first coming. For we cannot, when the same day is said both now and above, refer it to the first coming, and the one below to the second: lest by these things which follow, and those which precede, Christ whom the Jews contend has not yet come but is to come, should be referred to him. After the calling of the Gentiles, therefore, which were formerly reckoned in the tail, Israel shall be reckoned in the tail, in order that the Lord may again put forth his hand a second time, and possess the remnant of his people, of whom we have read above, not all Israel, but the remnants are to be saved, which shall be left by the Assyrians and by Egypt, and by the various nations around. For first the Twelve Apostles, and seventy, and one hundred twenty souls, and five hundred, who were gathered together, the Lord appeared to them, then three thousand, and five thousand Jews believed in the Lord. James also speaks to the apostle Paul, who himself was among the others: See, brother, how many thousands there are of believing Jews? all of these are zealous for the law (Acts 21:20). And in the same volume we read: Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven, who were amazed and said: Are not all these Galileans, and how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism; Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues! (Acts 2:9-11) From all these nations, people from Israel, through the apostles, will be saved. The Ecclesiastical Histories report that the apostles preached the Gospel in the whole world, in such a way that some reached Persia and India, and Ethiopia extended its hands to God, and gifts for Christ were brought from across the rivers of Ethiopia. So that it may not seem to signify only the eastern peoples, it also includes the rest: And from the islands of the sea. However, the islands of the sea signify the western region, which is enclosed by the circuit of the ocean. Therefore, the sign of the Cross will be raised among all nations, and first it will gather the people of Israel from the synagogues, in order to fulfill the command of the Savior given to the Apostles, who said: Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:6). Finally, Paul also speaks to the unbelievers among the Jews, saying: It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken to you first; but since you have rejected it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles, as the Lord has commanded us (Acts 13:46-47). But the four cardinal directions, east and west, south and north, signify, as by these the calling of the world is demonstrated. In that time, Isaiah says, Ephraim and Judah, who now, as prophesied by me, dissent with hostile hatred between themselves, will not be enemies, but according to the prophecy of Ezekiel, two rods will be joined into one rod, and they will be joined in the Church of Christ, who were previously separated (Ezek. VII), so that they may work together in the nations and willingly bear the burden of the Philistines on their shoulders across the sea, that is, they may first preach to the coastal Palestinians and swiftly proceed by sea to the

other nations. Or according to the Seventy Interpreters: they will fly in the ships of foreigners, they will plunder the sea together; from which let us understand the example of the apostle Paul, who was carried by ships of foreigners through Pamphylia, and Asia, and Macedonia, and Achaia, and various islands and provinces, even to Italy (Acts 28), and as he himself writes, to Spain also (Romans 15). Therefore, Ephraim and Judah, that is, those who believed in Christ from the twelve tribes of the Jews, will plunder the East together, and extend their hands in Idumea and Moab, according to what Christ speaks mystically in the person of David: I will stretch out my shoe to Idumea: to me foreigners will serve (Psalm 59:10). For at that time when Isaiah prophesied, these nations were adversaries to the people of Judah, and therefore he now says that after the root of Jesse rises, to reign over the nations, and the banner of the Cross for the salvation of the whole world is raised up, then even Idumea, Moab, and the sons of Ammon, in fact, the entire extent of Arabia, will give their hands to the Apostles, and in the places of idolatry the Church of Christ will be raised up. And the Lord will dry up the tongue of the sea of Egypt, and he will lift his hand over the river with the strength of his spirit, and he will strike it in the seven streams, so that people can cross it in sandals. And there will be a highway for the remnant of my people who are left from Assyria, just as there was for Israel on the day when they came up from the land of Egypt. Just as Edom and Moab, and the sons of Ammon will submit their hands to the Apostles, so that they may obey the preaching of the Gospel, in the same way the Lord himself, who fulfilled those things in his Apostles, will dry up not the sea according to the Septuagint, but according to the Hebrews, the tongue of the sea of Egypt, which previously blasphemed against the Lord and presided over the Egyptian superstition. And in the Psalms we read: This great and spacious sea, wherein are reptiles without number (Psalm 10:25-26). It is said of them: This dragon, whom you have made to mock at him. Therefore, he shall desolate, that is, put under a curse, as Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus translated it, the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and he shall lift up his hand over the rivers of Egypt in the strength of his spirit, or his most violent spirit, which we understand to be the kingdom of the Romans. For when Caesar Augustus was reigning (Luke 2), when the flower of Jesse's root ascended, and the first census was made in the Roman world, the most powerful kingdom of the Egyptians, which lasted for many generations, was destroyed by the death of Cleopatra, and the Egyptian river was struck into seven streams, or into seven valleys. For the Nile, which previously flowed in one channel and was impassable, was divided and cut into seven very humble valleys and streams, so that it could be crossed on foot. However, this symbolically signifies that the nation of the Egyptians, given over to such great idolatry and worthless superstition, consecrated hawks, owls, dogs, goats, and donkeys with divine names, in order to distribute the infinite power of the kingdom through individual judges of the Roman empire, so that Thebes has one judge, Libya has another, Pentapolis has another, Egypt has another, Alexandria has another, and various regions, which the Egyptians call 'laws'. Therefore, under the metaphor, the Nile is divided into parts and cut into streams, so that the Evangelical word can flow freely and reach the farthest people of Egypt without any hindrance. And just as in the time of Moses the Red Sea was dried up so that the people could flee from Egypt, in contrast, the rivers of Egypt will dry up so that the remaining people of God, who will be saved from the Assyrians and various nations, can pass into Egypt, not fleeing from it, but entering and treading on it with their own feet. A wise and Christian reader should have this rule of the promises of the prophets, that we may teach spiritually things which the Jews, and not only our, rather not our Judaizers, contend carnally will happen in the future, lest we be compelled to judaize by the occasion of such fables and

inextricable questions, according to the Apostle (II Tim. II).

12:1-2

And you shall say on that day: I will praise you, O Lord, for you were angry with me, but your anger has turned away, and you have comforted me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation. You who were the first to speak in the wilderness, when you came out of the land of Egypt, and when the Red Sea was dried up before you: Let us sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea (Exodus 15:1), and the rest of the verse. Now with the tongue of the Egyptian sea struck, and its river dried up and cut off, and humiliated, glorify the Lord, and say: I will praise you, O Lord, for I have obtained mercy after deserving your wrath and fury; for you are my Savior, that is, Jesus, and I have no confidence in idols, nor will I fear what is not to be feared; but you are my strength and my praise, who have become my salvation. Let the most wicked heresy be heard, that the Lord was made by those who are saved, and that he was not previously Lord, so that we may understand in the holy scriptures both creation and making, not always the condition of those things that were not, but sometimes the grace that is bestowed on those who have deserved to become God.

12:3

(Verse 3.) You shall draw water with joy from the springs of the Savior. He whom above all others Emmanuel acknowledges as Savior, hastens, despoiling the enemy, to plunder, and is called by other names, lest there appear to be another besides Him whom Gabriel announced to the Virgin, saying, 'And you shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people' (Matthew 1:21): now He is called Savior, and proclaims the waters to be drawn from His springs, not from the waters of the Egyptian river, which were struck, nor from the waters of the river of Rasin, but from the springs of Jesus; for in the Hebrew language, Savior is expressed by this name. And He Himself also cried out in the Gospel, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said: 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this, the evangelist says, He spoke about the Holy Spirit, whom those who believe in Him were to receive. And in another place in the Gospel He Himself speaks, 'Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give Him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.' (John 7:38; 4:13,14). Let us understand the Evangelical teaching of the Sources of Salvation, which we read about in the sixty-seventh psalm: 'In the churches, bless God the Lord from the fountains of Israel' (Psalm 67:27).

12:4-5

(Verses 4, 5.) And you shall say on that day, confess the Lord and invoke His name: make His inventions known among the peoples: remember, for His name is exalted. Sing to the Lord, for He has done great things: announce this in all the earth. These things are commanded by the Apostles and the rest of Israel to those who believed from the Gentiles: that they alone confess the Lord, and forsaking idols, invoke His name: and proclaim all His works to the unbelievers; that they may know that He alone is exalted: to whom it is to be sung for His great deeds, and in all the earth His mercy is to be proclaimed.

12:6

(Verse 6) Rejoice and praise, O dwelling place of Zion, for the Holy One of Israel is great among you. First, it must be said according to the letter: O dwelling place of Zion, rejoice and praise your God, for He who was once considered your God and was enclosed within the narrow bounds of the land of Judaea, now fills the whole earth with His knowledge. Rising from the dead, He reigns over the nations, and the nations shall beseech Him and worship Him. However, He will add secondly His hand to possess what remains of His people, and to gather together the dispersed of Israel and the scattered of Judah from the four corners of the earth. For the seedbed of the Gospel spread forth from the fountains of Israel through the Apostles, who were from the Jews. But it is better, as the Church is interpreted as the high tower, that we interpret Zion, from which the fiftieth psalm sings: Deal gently, O Lord, in thy good will with Zion; that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up. That in her may be made acceptable to God the sacrifice of justice, oblations, and holocausts, and the calf, which the most merciful father offered to the repenting son.

Book Five

Book Five

It has been several years since I was asked by the late revered man, Bishop Amabilis, to write down the Visions of Isaiah in ten sections, due to the limited time available to me, I briefly summarized what I saw in each section: providing only the information he requested, explaining the history. Now, dear Eustochium, I am compelled to write Commentaries on the entire prophet, and in the meantime, I have arrived in Babylon through your prayers, which is the first of the ten visions that I mentioned earlier. However, it seemed superfluous to me either to repeat the same things again or to express different opinions in one work. Therefore, the fifth book on Isaiah will be here, which was once published alone, and we will take the introduction of the sixth volume according to the tropology to the end, and with you praying to the Lord for the same, we will pursue the heights of spiritual understanding. So far, Pope Amabilis, pillar of charity and name, and to me most loving of all those who have been born on earth, you have been urging me through letters to explain to you ten visions which are very obscure in Isaiah, through a historical exposition, and to unfold the Hebrew truth for you, omitting our Commentaries, which have followed various opinions and have produced many volumes. And you have frequently urged me, while I am retracting and condemning the very troublesome kind of explanation at a different time. But in this year you sent our son Heraclius the deacon, who, by joining hands with me, called upon the law and demanded the promised rewards. So what should I do? Should I undertake a task in which the most learned men have labored, I mean Origen and Eusebius of Pamphilus, one of whom wanders freely through the realms of allegory with his children, interpreting the names of each and expressing the genius of the Church's sacraments, while the other, promising a historical exposition in his title, sometimes forgets his purpose and yields to Origen's teachings? Should I keep silent, and openly confess that I do not know the explanation of this kind? And when will I be able to persuade you that I could not do it more than I did not want to: one of which is weakness, the other pride? Forced by these reasons, I preferred that my intelligence should be sought from you rather than my will: and I will briefly note what I have learned, laying the foundation of the Scriptures. But if either you wish, or there is enough time, and Christ approves of our will, a spiritual building must be built up above, so that with the summit placed, we may show the completed ornaments of the Church. You have proposed about the vision of Babylon, and the Philistines, Moab, and Damascus, and Egypt, and the desert of the sea, and Edom, and Arabia, and the Valley of vision, and Tyre. If I were to

attempt to explain these in more detail, it would require many books, and my journey as an investigator would be delayed until next year. Therefore, as you wish, I will compose brief sentences for each testimony, so that I will not so much explain what I think, but rather convey to you in a few words what must be understood. We dictate these things, we do not write them: the speech flows from the hand of the scribes as they write. We do not desire to be praised for our own words, but for the words of the prophets to be understood. We do not boast of eloquence, but seek knowledge of the Scriptures. Let us therefore begin with Babylon.

13:1

(Chapter XIII—Verse 1) The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah, son of Amos, saw. The Hebrew word 'Messa' can be understood as burden, load, or weight. And wherever it is mentioned, it signifies a heavy message. Hence, I wonder why the Septuagint translators wanted to use the word 'vision' in this sad context; but that is a topic for another time. Now let us proceed with what we have started: Babylon was the capital of the Chaldeans, whose king Nebuchadnezzar conquered all nations as far as Ethiopia. Among others, he devastated Judah and besieged Jerusalem for a long time until he captured it in the eleventh year of King Zedekiah's reign. He also captured Zedekiah himself and brought him to Antioch, which was then called Riblah. There, with Zedekiah's father and sons killed before him, he had Zedekiah's eyes put out, had him bound in chains, and sent him to Babylon, fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah which he had spoken: 'You will go to Babylon, but you will not see it.' (Jeremiah XXXIV, XXXIX, LII). Therefore, for the consolation of the people of Judah, the ruin of Babylon is foretold, just as Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrians, who had captured the ten tribes, Phul, and Theglathphalasar, and Salmanasar, and Sennacherib, was devastated by the Chaldeans, so too may this city, which has rebelled against God, be overthrown by the attack of the Medes and Persians.

13:2

(Verse 2.) On the dark mountain, raise a sign, lift up your voice, raise your hand. The dark mountain, also called the mountain of darkness, which in Hebrew is called Nesphe, represents Babylon because of its pride. These are the dark mountains, which bring forth sadness and darkness, about which Jeremiah says: Give glory to the Lord your God before your feet stumble on the dark mountains (Jeremiah 13:16). And it is commanded either to the angels or to any ministers, that by the command of God and with their uplifted hands, the coming captivity to Babylon is preached.

13:3-4

(Vers. 3, 4.) And the leaders shall enter the gates: I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness. The princes, and the giants, according to the LXX Translators, Eusebius interprets as angelic powers, and the most wicked demons, who were sent for the overthrow of Babylon. But following the order of the story, we say they were the Medes. Of whom Scripture testifies more explicitly in what follows, saying: Behold, I will raise up against them the Medes, who shall not regard silver, and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. It is not surprising that he calls the Medes sanctified for the destruction of Babylon, since through Jeremiah he himself, Nebuchadnezzar, while destroying Jerusalem, a rebellious city, called them his servant and his dove. Furthermore, when he says, 'My mighty men

and those who rejoice in my glory,' he shows that they did not overthrow the power of such a lofty kingdom by their own strength, but rather by the wrath of God.

13:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) The voice of the multitude on the mountains, like the voice of many people: the sound of the gathered kings of nations. The Lord of hosts has commanded the forces of war to come from afar, from the top of the heavens. The Lord and His vessels of fury, to destroy all the earth. The attack of the Medes and Persians is described: with many auxiliary forces gathered, their army led by their Lord, they come to lay waste to Babylon, to destroy all the earth: not that they have devastated the whole world, but all the land of Babylon and the Chaldeans. For language is indeed the Scripture's, so as to signify all the provinces of that land, concerning which the discourse is had: which some not understanding, draw down to the subversion of all lands.

13:6

(Verse 6) Howl, for the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Lord. An apostrophe is made to the Chaldean people, that they may resound with weeping for the coming calamities; and let them not doubt the downfall of the city when the Lord the devastator comes.

13:7-8

(Verse 7, 8.) Therefore, all hands will be loosened, and every man's heart will waste away and be crushed. There will be twisting and pain: they will be in agony like a woman in labor. Each person will be astonished at their neighbor; their faces will be burned with the expression of fear. This explanation is not necessary, but it is briefly indicated that such a great weight of evils will come upon them, that the hands of the fighters of Babylon will be loosened, and their hearts will grow weak with fear, and the agony of childbirth will twist their insides, and each person will seek help from another, their pale faces showing dread. For it is natural that in the face of impending disasters, we consider others to be more wise.

13:9

(Verse 9.) Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel and full of indignation, wrath and fury, to make the earth a desolation, and to destroy its sinners. He calls it a cruel day, not because of its own merit, but because of the people. For he is not cruel who kills the cruel, but because he appears cruel to those who suffer. For even the thief hanging on the gallows considers the judge cruel. At the same time, the solitude and desolation of the land of Babylon are announced, and the cause of the desolation is explained, because all these things happen because of its inhabitants.

13:10

(Verse 10) For the stars of the heavens and their splendor will not extend their light; the sun will be darkened at its rising, and the moon will not shine with its light. The Hebrew word Chisile (כִּסִּיל) was translated as ■p■ωνα in the Septuagint. The Hebrews, with whom I studied, translated it as Arcturus. However, following Symmachus, we generally referred to it as a constellation. The meaning is that when the day of the Lord's cruelty comes and his fury devastates everything, due to the magnitude of fear, all things will become dark for mortals, and even the sun, moon, and shining stars will seem to deny their brightness. And so the sky is clad in darkness, which covers

everything, and under the weight of evil, humans feel nothing but what their mind forces them to see.

13:11

(Verse 11.) And I will visit the evils upon the world, and against the wickedness of the ungodly I will execute justice: and I will cause the pride of the infidels to cease, and the arrogance of the mighty I will bring down. From this place and from the one above, where it is written, that the sun will be darkened in its rising, and the moon will be covered with darkness, and the stars will lose their brightness, and the iniquity of the whole world will be visited, some think that it is not about the fall of Babylon, but about the end of the world that is being prophesied; when surely according to the earlier and universal (which is called in Hebrew, Thebel, and in Greek, οἰκουμένη), Babylon must be understood. Indeed, the word 'oikoumenē' in our language signifies the inhabited world; and 'Babylon' is called so because of the huge multitude of people: for where previously there was an innumerable throng of peoples, there is now desolation and the dwelling place of beasts.

13:12

(Verse 12) The man will be more precious than gold, and the human being will shine like the world. The obvious reason why God visits the earth, that is, the evils of Babylon: so that the inhabited land will be turned into a desert. However, everything that is rare is called precious; just as above, according to the story, we read about seven women taking hold of one man due to the scarcity of men, saying: We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name and take away our reproach (Isaiah 4:1). And in the book of Samuel it is written: The word of the Lord was precious in those days (1 Samuel 3:1), that is, rare. Note that in Hebrew, instead of general gold, it is written Phaz (), and instead of fine gold, it is written Ophir ().

13:13

(Verse 13.) On account of this, I will disturb the heavens, and the earth will be moved from its place: because of the indignation of the Lord of hosts, and because of the day of His furious wrath. Take it in the sense that we explained above concerning the stars, the sun, the moon, and the world: or in an exaggerated sense, that both the sad heaven and the earth are moved by the indignation of God, and all the elements also recognize the anger of the Creator.

13:14

(Verse 14) And it will be like a frightened doe, and like a sheep, and there will be no one to gather. It signifies the people of Babylon and the Chaldeans, who flee in fear from the invasion of the Medes and Persians, like a doe and a sheep fleeing from the roar of a lion and the howl of a wolf: they have no defender or ruler whose authority they can follow.

Each person will turn to their own people, and each will flee to their own land. After Babylon has been captured and the enemy army has entered through its gates, all the reinforcements and groups of different nations, by which the city was previously defended, will return to their own provinces.

13:15

(Verse 15.) Everyone who is found will be killed, and everyone who comes will fall by the sword. Those who do not flee will be struck with a sword, and anyone who tries to resist or return will not be of any help to the captured city, to the extent that they will shed their own blood as well.

13:16

(Verse 16.) Their infants will be shattered before their eyes: their houses will be plundered, and their wives violated. This is what David prophesied in the Spirit: O daughter of Babylon, miserable one, blessed is he who will repay you according to what you have done to us. Blessed is he who will seize and shatter your little ones against the rock (Psalm 139:8). There will be such devastation of the city and savagery of the conquerors that not even innocent age will be spared, that the wealth of all homes will be plundered, and marital chastity violated in the presence of their husbands.

13:17

(Verse 17) Behold, I will raise up the Medes against them, who do not seek silver and do not desire gold. What was hidden is now revealed: that the mighty and giant ones are not angels or demons, but rather the people of the Medes, whose leader Darius, the first king of the Babylonians, destroyed the empire after killing Balthasar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, who was the son of Evilmerodach. (Daniel 5) However, it is written about the cruelty of the Medes and Persians that they despise gold and silver in their burning desire to shed blood, considering wealth offered to them as worthless dirt.

13:18

(Verse 18.) But they will kill the small ones with their arrows, and they will have no pity on the infants of the womb, and their eyes will not spare the children. The small ones will be killed, and their wounds will be no smaller than their bodies, and the bellies of the pregnant women will be cut open, and the infants will be cast aside, and the cruel victor will kill the children pressed to their mothers' breasts.

13:19

(Verse 19.) And Babylon will be glorious in kingdoms, renowned in the pride of the Chaldeans: just as the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah: it will not be inhabited until the end, and it will not be established until generation after generation. We have heard of the Medes, we have heard of Babylon, we have heard of the renowned in the pride of the Chaldeans: we do not want to understand what was, and we seek to hear what was not. And we say these things, not because we condemn a figurative interpretation, but because the spiritual interpretation should follow the order of history: that most ignorant people wander in the error of a deluded interpretation in the Scriptures. So, until the present day, the prophecy of Babylon is fulfilled: and just as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, so too will this be overthrown and not inhabited forever. For it was these cities, Seleucia and Ctesiphon, that made the famous cities of the Persians.

13:20-22

(Verses 20-22.) Neither the Arabs will pitch their tents there, nor will shepherds rest there; instead, there will be beasts, their houses will be filled with dragons, and ostriches will dwell there, and

hairy creatures will leap about. And owls will answer in her buildings, and sirens in the temples of pleasure. Babylon will be so devastated and deserted that it won't even be useful for pastures of cattle and flocks. For the Arabs and Saracens will not pitch their tents there, nor will shepherds rest after the footsteps of their weary flocks; but among the walls and narrow spaces of the old ruins, the Siim will dwell, which only the seventy translators have rendered as such; others, by the same word, which is written in Hebrew, want to be understood as types of demons or phantoms. And the houses will be filled, as we have said, with dragons: as the Eagle has transferred, with typhons, as Symmachus Ohim (), expressing the Hebrew word itself: but the LXX and Theodotion have interpreted them as shouts or sounds. And that which follows: The shaggy ones will dance there, or incubi, or satyrs, or certain wild men, whom some call Foolish Fruiterers, or understand them as types of demons. And for owls, all the LXX have transferred the Hebrew word itself lim (), only Theodotion have rendered it as centaurs. The Thennim are called Sirens, which we interpret as either demons, or certain monsters, or certainly great dragons, which have crests and can fly. Through all these things, signs of desolation and wilderness are shown: that the destruction of a once powerful city is so great, that due to the multitude of demons and beasts, no shepherd, that is, a seeker of the deserted, dares to enter it. We learned from a certain Elamite brother, who, leaving those territories, now lives the life of a monk in Jerusalem, that the royal hunts in Babylon are, and all types of beasts are restrained only by the circumference of its walls.

14:1 (Chapter XIV - Verse 1) The time is near for it to come, and its days will not be prolonged. It says that the time is pressing and that it must be captured from the enemies. After the captivity of Jerusalem, not much time passed, and it was devastated by the Medes and Persians. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will still choose Israel and cause them to rest on their own land. This is more fully explained by Zephaniah: Rejoice, O daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O Israel; be glad and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem; for the Lord has taken away your judgments; he has turned away your enemies (Zephaniah 3:14-15). This signifies the time when King Cyrus of Persia allowed the captive people of Jerusalem to return. Read the book of Ezra (Ezra 1), Haggai (Haggai 1) and Zechariah (Zechariah 1), when under Zerubbabel, the high priest Joshua, Ezra, and Nehemiah, the altar, the Temple, and the walls of the city were rebuilt.

14:2

(Vers. 2.) A stranger will be joined to them, and will cleave to the house of Jacob, and the peoples will hold them, and will bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as servants and handmaids; and those who had taken them captive will be taken captive, and their oppressors will be subject to them. We infer that many from various nations have come to Jerusalem with the people of Judah, believing in the God of Israel and forsaking the idols of error. There is no doubt that they have been restored to the letters of the king and have received gifts and expenses for the Temple. In this alone intelligence seems to be confined, how Israel once possessed the land of the Lord as conquerors, and subjected their oppressors, and had them as slaves and maidservants. Unless, perhaps, we understand the whole synecdochically from a part: that they were of such great prosperity afterwards, that they even acquired families of slaves and maidservants from different nations around. This can also be understood in the times of Ahasuerus (Esther 9; Judith 13), when the hostile army was cut off from Israel with the slaying of Holofernes. Because I stick to letters, and in the manner of a serpent, I devour the earth, it is your will, since you wanted to hear only the historical interpretation.

14:3

(Verse 3) And it shall be in that day, when the Lord has given you rest from your labor, and from your turmoil, and from your hard service which you had to bear, that you shall recite this proverb against the king of Babylon and say, The speech is addressed to Israel, that after Jerusalem has been restored and the yoke of servitude has been cast off, they should remember the former power of Nebuchadnezzar and the height of Babylon, and lament him with a pitiful voice, because he has come to such great calamity that he seems worthy of even his own enemies' pity.

14:4-7

(Verse 4-7) How the oppressor has ceased: the tribute has ceased! The Lord has broken the rod of the wicked, the staff of rulers, that struck the people in anger with a continual stroke, that ruled the nations in wrath with a relentless persecution. The whole earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing. This is the lamentation with which the people of Israel bewail themselves, 'How the Lord has become weak and powerless, the conqueror of the nations who once plundered everything!' That man, I say, who was the staff of the wicked, who fiercely struck down all with his scepter and royal rod, whose blow could not be withstood, who even cruelly pursued those fleeing: how he has rested and been humbled, and all the land has conspired for his downfall, only making the voice of rejoicing heard.

14:8

(Verse 8.) The firs and the cedars of Lebanon also rejoiced over you: since you have fallen asleep, no one has come up to cut us down. By firs and cedars of Lebanon, understand the leaders of the nations, who were cut down by Nebuchadnezzar, and who themselves, bursting forth into a voice of joy, say: Since you have been brought down to the underworld, no one else could be found to cut down the great and powerful.

14:9

(Verse 9.) The underworld beneath you is stirred up, it raises the giants to meet your arrival: all the rulers of the earth have risen from their thrones: all the rulers of the nations will respond and say to you. These things are to be read emphatically and in a dramatic manner; not that they have actually happened, but that they could have happened: unless, of course, we believe that the souls of the kings whom you have killed have appeared, taunting the Babylonian king. For it is a comfort in misfortune, when enemies see them endure the same things.

14:10-11

(Verses 10, 11.) And you have been wounded as we, you have become like us: your pride has been brought down to the grave: your body has fallen, tinea will spread beneath you, and worms will cover you. The speech of the powerful and the princes of the earth, whom he called higher than cedars and fir trees, is directed to the king of Babylon who is established in the depths. Now we do not grieve to have been cut down, since you also fall by the same axe. All your power, and the pride raised to the heavens, has been brought down to earth. Therefore, shall I support your corpse in my hand, and cover it with a multitude of swarming worms? You will feel through the death of a man the worthlessness, who preferred the power of God in you.

14:12-14

(Verses 12-14.) How you have fallen from heaven, O Morning Star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit. However, it is signified by other words, Lucifer; and it is said to him that he should weep and mourn, who once was so glorious, that he was compared to the brightness of Lucifer. As, it says, Lucifer dispelling the darkness, burning and ruddy he shines forth; so also your advancement among the people and the public seemed similar to a bright star; but you have fallen to the earth, O wounded conqueror of nations, who spoke through pride: I have achieved such great power, that heaven remains for me and the stars should be subjected beneath my feet. Although the Jews want to understand the sky and the stars of God, from what follows: I will sit on the mount of the testament, that is, in the Temple, where God's laws are established, and on the sides of the North, that is, in Jerusalem. For it is written: The mountains of Zion are the sides of the North (Ps. 47:3). And his pride was not enough to desire heavenly things, unless he had burst forth into such madness as to claim the likeness of God for himself.

14:15

(Verse 15.) However, you are dragged down to the depths of hell. He who had said through pride, 'I will ascend to heaven, I will be like the Most High,' is dragged not only to the depths of hell, but to the deepest depths of hell. In the Gospel, we read about these outer darknesses, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Luke 13:28).

14:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Those who see you will bow down to you and look to you (saying in their hearts): Is this the man who troubled the earth, who shook kingdoms, who made the world a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who did not open the prison for his captives? This voice of those insulting and marveling expresses how the one who laid waste to everything himself has been laid waste. But when it says: He did not open the prison for his captives, the greatness of his cruelty and impiety is expressed, as he even held the prisoners in captivity, and the chains would not be enough for the wretched unless the horror of darkness also enclosed them.

14:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) All the kings of the nations, all slept in glory, each man in his own house. But you have been cast out of your tomb like a useless branch, defiled and wrapped with those who were slain by the sword, and have gone down to the foundations of the abyss; you will not have the company of a decaying corpse, nor be buried with them. The Hebrews tell the following story: Evilmerodach, who during his father Nebuchadnezzar's lifetime spent seven years among the beasts, had reigned before he was restored to the kingdom. After his father's death, he was imprisoned with Joachim, the king of Judah, until he succeeded to the throne again. But when he returned to the kingdom, the princes did not accept him, fearing that the one who was believed to be extinct was still alive. To demonstrate the death of his father, he opened the tomb and dragged out the corpse with hooks and ropes. And the meaning is: With all those who were killed having

been buried, you alone will lie unburied. Others, however, interpret this place in the following way: All souls in the underworld will receive some rest, but you alone will be bound in complete darkness. For you will be covered in the blood of all, and the blood of all will press upon you like a shroud of the filth of the dead. Symmachus translated this passage as follows: Even with those who are killed in war, you do not deserve to have a share in burial. But concerning what we have said, as though a useless shoot, it is read in Hebrew: Chaneser Nethab, which Aquila interprets as a polluted sore. Naser, on the other hand, properly means a twig, which grows at the roots of trees and is cut off by farmers as though useless; we can understand this as the same thing as a sore and decay. At the same time, we learn that hell is beneath the earth, as Scripture says: To the foundations of the lake.

14:20

(Verse 20) For you have destroyed your land, you have killed your people. According to the Septuagint interpreters who said, 'Because you have destroyed my land and killed my people,' there is no doubt about what they mean. Indeed, Nebuchadnezzar killed and destroyed the land of Judah and its people. According to the Hebrew text, it is difficult to understand how he lost his own land and killed his own people, unless perhaps it should be understood in this sense: you completely destroyed those whom God had given you to correct. Or else: the ancient kingdom of the Assyrians, with you proudly and defiantly raising your neck against God, was completely destroyed. For if you had behaved humbly, and understood your limits, the Assyrians and Babylonians would still be reigning. It was in this manner: you were so cruel to foreigners that you even oppressed subjugated peoples in your frenzy.

14:21

(Verse 21.) The seed of evildoers will not be called forever. Prepare his children for slaughter because of the iniquity of their fathers: they will not rise, nor will they inherit the land, nor will they fill the faces of the cities. All histories agree that after the killing of Balthasar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, and the succession of Darius to the kingdom of the Chaldeans, no one from the offspring of Nebuchadnezzar ruled thereafter. Therefore, Scripture predicts that such devastation will come upon Babylon that no royal seed will remain, but because of the wickedness of the father, all offspring will be destroyed. But because we have moved to the final part of the sentence, the faces of the cities will not be filled up, it is written in Hebrew for cities, Arim (), which we can translate as adversaries; so the meaning is: no one from your seed will desire to restore the kingdom, an adversary will be raised up. According to the Seventy Interpreters, who said: Wicked seed, prepare your sons for destruction because of the sins of your father, I cannot understand the meaning.

14:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) And I will rise up against them, says the Lord of hosts: and I will destroy the name of Babylon, and the remnants, and the seed, and the offspring, says the Lord. And I will make it a possession for the hedgehog, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, says the Lord of hosts. Babylon was the most powerful, and situated on a plain, with walls stretching from one corner to another, covering sixteen thousand stadia, which is equivalent to sixty-four times around, according to Herodotus and many others who wrote Greek histories. But

the citadel, that is, the Capitol of that city, is a tower which is said to have been built after the flood, and is reported to be four thousand paces high, gradually narrowing from the sides to the top, so that the weight pressing upon it may be more easily supported by the broader base. There they describe marble temples, golden statues, streets gleaming with stones and gold, and many other things which almost seem incredible. We have narrated all this to show that all human power is as dust and ashes compared to the anger of God. If it were permitted to enter barbarian nations and see the remains of such a great city, we would see the possession of heretics, and swamps of water, and truly fulfill what is now sung by the voices of Isaiah: I will sweep it with a broom, wearing it out; for except for the baked brick walls, which are being restored after many years in order to enclose wild animals, the entire middle space is a desolation.

14:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) The Lord of hosts swore, saying: If it shall not be as I thought, so it shall be, and as I devised it in my mind, so shall it come to pass, that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: and his yoke shall be taken away from them, and his burden shall be taken off their shoulder. He returns to the present, that is, to Sennacherib, the king of the Assyrians, who devastated Samaria and Judah, and except Jerusalem, destroyed everything all around; and he associates events in the distant future, so that the impending fear may be removed: for those who hear could say: We endure the present siege, but he promises something that will come many centuries later. Therefore, there is a prophecy, although after many years Babylon will be destroyed and the entire seedbed of the Assyrians and Chaldeans will be scattered: nevertheless, so that you do not fear the imminent captivity, the Lord swears (to whom even the one who does not swear must be believed) that his estimation will not deceive and that what he has conceived in his mind will not be in vain. However, he speaks this with human affection, namely, that the one who cannot be deceived will not be deceived: I will crush, he says, the Assyrian in my land, and I will trample him on my mountains. For in one night, 185,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army were destroyed by the Angel. And the yoke that oppressed those who were besieging Jerusalem, and the heavy burden that weighed upon them, will be removed from them and instead pushed back onto themselves. For when the Assyrian king fled to his own land, King Hezekiah went out with the rest of the people, free from oppression.

14:26-27

(Verse 26, 27.) This is the plan that I have devised for the whole earth, and this is the hand stretched out over all nations. For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who can annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back? Some interpret this passage as a general prophecy against the entire world, and that the desolation of the cities of Babylon and Assyria are a type of the end of the world. We do not disagree with them, as long as we understand that in this passage the whole earth properly signifies the land of the Assyrians and all the nations allied with the Assyrian king. But whatever is decreed by the Lord, is not prevented by the power of anyone. And no one can restrain his outstretched hand, ready to strike.

14:28

(Verse 28.) In the year that King Ahaz died, this burden came. We read in the Book of the Prophets that four kings of Judah held the title of Prophet: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah,

each succeeding the other in order and lineage. We have read earlier about the death of Uzziah, as recorded by Isaiah: In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne. From this, we understand both the vision of the Lord sitting and the things that are commanded to the Prophets, up to the point where it is written (Chapter VI): "As a terebinth and as an oak that spreads its branches, so shall be the holy seed, it shall be the germ under King Jotham prophesied" (Ibid., VII). Achaz, the son of Joatham, the son of Ozias, succeeded as the third king of Judah. During his reign, Rasin, the king of Syria, and Phacee, the son of Romelia, the king of Israel, came to Jerusalem to fight against it, as the Scripture recounts. Therefore, from Achaz up to the present point, which we now endeavor to explain, we know all the things that are placed in the middle, prophesied: after his death, Ezechias, the fourth and final king, succeeded, under whom the entire book is woven together until the end.

14:29

(Verse 29.) Do not rejoice, O Philistia, all of you, because the rod of your striker is broken; for from the root of the serpent a little king will come forth, and his offspring will consume the flying creature. It is natural that we say: when the king of the enemy nations dies, the enemies always rejoice, waiting for civil wars, seditions, and the incompetence of ruling from new things. Therefore, with the sinner Ahaz dead, who had walked in the ways of the kings of Israel and had been joined to them by kinship, we understand that the Philistines were pleased to be nearby and insulted the Israelites because with the mature king lost, they would be subject to the young Hezekiah. But, as we said above, Philisthaeos signifies the Palestinians, whom the Vulgate edition of the Bible refers to as foreigners: even though this is not the name of one particular nation, but of all foreign nations. Do not, he says, rejoice, O Philisthaea, do not insult my people because the rod of your smiter Achaz is broken; because the staff that used to strike you appears to be shattered; because the snake is killed. For this reason, a more harmful ruler will be born, whom the Greeks call the basilisk, who will put you to death with his gaze and the breath of his mouth. For no bird of prey can pass through unharmed: however far away it may be, it is sucked up by its mouth. So too, you will perish from the sight of King Hezekiah. And he preserved the metaphor well: for he had mentioned both a snake and a bird of prey, and he says that birds are devoured by its mouth and breath. As for no king of Judah having struck the Philistines like Hezekiah devastated them, listen to the Book of Kings: He struck the Philistines as far as Gaza, and as far as its borders: from the tower of the keepers to the fortified cities (2 Kings 18:8). But because we have translated it as absorbing the winged creature, and it is written in Hebrew as Saraph Mopheth (), which can be interpreted as a flying serpent: so the sense is: from the root of the serpent a king will be born, and its fruit, that is, the king's flying serpent, so that you may understand a flying dragon.

14:30 (Ver. 30.) And the firstborn of the poor will be fed, and the poor will rest confidently. When the ruler strikes you, and the flying dragon devastates your boundaries, you will not plot against Judah, and you will not frighten my humble people with your deceit; but crushed by your own troubles, you will weep for your calamity. But the humble and poor, who did not trust in wealth and power, but in my name, will rest in secure peace and will not fear the attack of any enemy. And I will make your root perish in famine, and I will destroy your remnants. He is speaking entirely in figures. The meaning is that, while the people of God are confidently resting, the root of the Philistines will dry up, and all the remnants will be consumed.

14:31

(Verse 31.) Howl, O gate! Cry out, O city! Philisthaea is laid waste, all of it. For from the north comes smoke, and there is no escaping its horde. He calls the gate for those who are at the gate, and the city for the inhabitants of the city. He also directs his speech to the cities of the Philistines, saying that they should wail and mourn when Senacherib comes, and when the torrent ravages everything. For the Assyrian came under the reign of Hezekiah, and among other nations he devastated the Philistines. To whom Jeremiah speaks: Behold, waters rise up from the north, and they shall be like a overflowing torrent, and they shall cover the land and its fullness, the city and its inhabitants (Jer. 47:2). For from the north comes the Assyrian, and from its heat, they go forth, subjugating Nineveh and other nations. At that time when these things were being sung, smoke rose up on high, that is, a rumor spread among the peoples in the order of all nations, that the Phoenicians and the Philistines were also to be devastated.

14:32

(v. 32.) What will the response be to the messages of the nation? Because the Lord has founded Zion, and in it the poor of his people will hope. Because it was said, there is no one who can escape his army, it seemed in the general sentiment that even Judah was included. Yes; he says, if the angels of the Assyrian nation inquire why only Judah escaped, answer them, because the Lord has founded Zion, and he has protected his humble people with his power. For the Angels () the kings () translated in the Septuagint, deceived by the error of a single letter Aleph.

15:1

(Chapter 15, Verse 1) Burden of Moab: because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, it is silent; because in the night the wall of Moab is laid waste, it is silent. It is enough to have said once about the burden and weight. I only briefly remind you that burdens always bring about sadness. However, visions are either immediately joyful or joyful after sadness. Moab is a province of the Arabs, where Balak son of Beor was (Numbers 22); he hired the diviner Balaam from Mesopotamia to curse Israel, where the people were initiated into the worship of Baal (ibid., 25). The city of this metropolis is called Ar (), which is now composed of Hebrew and Greek language and is called Areopolis; not as most people think, that it is the city of Mars, which is interpreted as Ar and ἀντὶδικός, meaning adversary. However, Jeremiah testifies to the extent of its power (Jeremiah 48:2, 7 ff.), saying: There is no longer rejoicing in Moab. And again: You have trusted in your fortresses and in your treasures. And again: Moab was fertile from his youth, and he rested in his own filth, neither was he poured out from vessel to vessel, neither did he go into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent was not changed. And in another place (Ibid., 25): How is the strong staff broken, the beautiful rod? And a little later: We have heard of the pride of Moab, he is very proud: his haughtiness, and his arrogance, and his pride, and the loftiness of his heart, I know it, saith the Lord, and his boastfulness. Just as the Prophet prophesied against Babylon and the Philistines, that they would oppress the people of Judah; so now the devastation of the Moabites, that is, the Arabs, is predicted by the Assyrians and Babylonians. For they were devastated by both nations, at the time when Sennacherib took Israel captive, and when Nebuchadnezzar overthrew Jerusalem (2 Kings 17 and 25). For Ephraim and Judah had insulted both enemies, as Jeremiah said: Moab will be like vomit in their own mouths, and will be ridiculed as well. For he has made a mockery of you, O Israel, as if you had found him among thieves

(Jeremiah 68:26, 27). Because of your words, which you spoke against him, you will be led captive. And as for what he says: 'Ar is destroyed, Moab is silent, the beginning of the invader's splendor, in darkness they shall be destroyed; he who was conceived in incest by his father at night.' Unless we take night to mean the magnitude of terror: and it should be believed, that he trusted in his walls, but she was overcome by ambush and tunnels. I heard that a certain Areapolites, but also the whole city is a witness, experienced a great earthquake in my childhood, when the seas crossed the entire shore of the world, and on the same night the walls of this city collapsed.

15:2 (Vers. 2.) The house ascends, and Dibon ascends to the heights in lamentation over Nabo, and over Medaba Moab will howl. Do not be troubled that I am proceeding along the path of history, for you yourself desired that I do so. It is understood, however, that the royal house and the city of Dibon ascend to the idols that are placed on the heights: over Nabo and over Medaba, distinguished cities, the entire province will wail. For in Nabo there was consecrated the idol Chamos, which is called by another name Beelphegor. In all its chapters, there is baldness; every beard will be shaved off. Among the ancients, the shaving of the beard and head was a sign of mourning. By these things, therefore, the magnitude of sorrow is shown, with Jeremiah proclaiming against Moab: Every head is bald, and every beard is shaved off, and there is binding of the hands on every side, and sackcloth on every back (Jeremiah 48:37).

15:3

(Version 3.) In the crossroads of it, they are girded with sacks; over its roofs, and in its streets, all wailing will descend into weeping. Private tears will not exist, public mourning will echo with public laments; neither married women, nor young maidens, nor the small age of children, nor the faltering steps of the elderly will be held back in their houses, extreme captivity will not know shame and weakness.

15:4 (Verse 4.) Esbon and Eleale will cry out. These are the names of cities in the province of Moab, of which Esbon was once the city of the Amorite king. Concerning this city, Jeremiah also said, 'Fire has come out of Esbon, and a flame from the midst of Seon.' The name Esbon means 'thought' and therefore, Jeremiah, alluding to the name, says against Esbon, 'they have devised evil.' (Jeremiah XLV.) The voice of them was heard even to Jaza. The city of Jaza (also known as Jasa) lies close to the Dead Sea, where the border of the Moabite province is. This indicates that the wailing of the province will resound to the very ends of the land. Hence, Jeremiah also says: From the outcry of Heshbon, even to Eleale and Jaza, they have raised their voice (Jeremiah 48:34).

Therefore the Moabites will wail, every one will wail for himself; for the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth you shall mourn, utterly stricken. But if, as Aquila wanted, they are understood to be exerting their shoulders, that suggests to us the feeling that everyone has bared their chests to mourn.

15:5

(Verse 5) My heart will cry out to Moab. The prophet speaks with a lamenting affection, either because even the enemies are creatures of God, on whom so many evils come upon, or because they are to be overwhelmed with such calamities that even their enemies will become pitiable. Jeremiah also says the same: Therefore my heart will resound like a flute to Moab.

They extend their borders from Segor to a calf in labor. And Jeremiah: From Segor, he says, to Oronaim, a calf in labor. We have spoken about this in the books of Hebrew Questions, and now we briefly note that it is the fifth city after Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which were preserved for the sake of Lot's prayers. It is called Bala, that is, swallowed up, according to the Hebrews, because it was overthrown by the third earthquake. It is called Zoora (also Zora) in the Syriac language and Segor in Hebrew, both meaning 'little'. We can consider her to be a perfect age calf. Just as the thirtieth year is the strongest in humans, so is the third year in cattle and horses. The boundaries are also indicated by stakes, and by strength we mean that Segor is situated in the borders of the Moabites, separating their land from the Philistines. For Luith will ascend weeping by way of ascent. And Jeremiah: Luith will ascend weeping by way of ascent, into mourning. However, we understand the ascent to be the path that leads to the Assyrians, and by this, captivity is signified. And on the way to Oronaim, they will relieve the cry of contrition. Again Jeremiah: The voice of the cry of Oronaim, devastation, and great contrition. It would be long if I wanted to speak about each one, since it is clear that there are either the names of cities in Moab or the names of places that the transmigrants have abandoned.

15:6

(Verse 6) For the waters of Nemrim will be deserted. This town is on the Dead Sea, with salty waters, and even this itself is barren. Whether it alludes to the name, or whether it happened after the devastation, that even the waters turned bitter.

Because the grass has withered, the bud has failed, all the greenness has perished. Not as some think, truly because the waters of Nemrim were barren, all the grass has dried up, but Scripture speaks metaphorically. And the meaning is, in all of Moab the waters of Nemrim will be salty and bitter; just as no grass sprouts there, so the whole province will suffer from drought, that is, from Segor to Oronaim, from borders to borders. The same thing is said by Jeremiah: The waters of Nemrim will be very bad (Jerem. XLVIII, 34).

15:7

(Verse 7.) According to the magnitude of the work and the visitation of them: lead them to the river of willows. Concerning the willows, we read in Hebrew Arabim (), which can be understood both as Arabs and as Orvim (), that is, a village situated on their borders, of which it is said by many inhabitants that it provided sustenance to the prophet Elijah on Mount Horeb: this name is transferred due to ambiguity to both crows and the West, and to open places. The meaning, however, is: the visitation will correspond to the magnitude of the illness. Receive this visitation not for healing, but for punishment. I will visit, He says, with a rod their iniquities, and with stripes their sins (Ps. 88:33). Receive the rivers of Babylon, like a torrent of willows, concerning which David said, In the midst thereof we have hung up our organs on the willows (Ps. 136:2); or the valley of Arabia, through which one must pass to the Assyrians.

15:8

(Verse 8) Because the cry has gone around the territory of Moab, even to Eglaim its wailing, and even to Beer Elim its outcry. The same things are described by Jeremiah. And there are cities and places of the Moabites, where the cry and lamentation of the captive people are described.

15:9 (Verse 9) Because the waters of Dibon are filled with blood. Where there was once luxury due to fertile fields and constantly flowing springs, there the streams of blood will flow due to the multitude of those killed. For I will set upon Dibon additional things for those who have fled from Moab, a lion, and the remnants of the land. Lest anyone think it is a mistake of the scribe, and wishes to correct the error, let it be known that the name is written with both the letter M and the letter B: E of which Dimon is interpreted as silence; Dibon, flowing. With both names given because of the quietly flowing waters, to this day this small town is called both Dimon and Dibon interchangeably. As for the statement: I will set upon Dibon additional things, and seemed to ask a question about what it was, he explained in the following verse, saying: For those who have fled from Moab, a lion, and the remnants of the land: so that even those who have escaped in flight may be consumed by beasts. Although we can also understand the lion, the king of the enemies, through a metaphor, so that no one can escape his power, as if it were a roar.

16:1

(Chapter 16, Verse 1) Send forth the Lamb, the ruler of the earth, from the desert rock to the mountain of the daughter of Zion. This, we interpret, is not history, but prophecy. However, every prophecy is wrapped in riddles and, with interrupted sentences, while speaking of one thing, goes on to another: lest if it preserves the order of Scripture, it be not a prophecy, but a narrative. And the meaning is: O Moab, over whom the lion will rage, and from whom not even remnants will be able to be saved, take solace in this: The Immaculate Lamb will come forth from you, who will take away the sins of the world, who will rule over the whole earth. From the rock of the desert, that is, from Ruth, who, widowed by the death of her husband, bore Obed and from Obed, Jesse, and from Jesse, David, and from David, Christ. But by the mountain of the daughters of Zion, we shall interpret either the city itself, Jerusalem, or according to the sacred understanding, the Church, which is established on the summit of virtues.

16:2

(Verse 2) And it shall be, like a flying bird, and like young birds flying from the nest, so shall the daughters of Moab be in the crossing of the Arnon. They will return to the order they had taken: When I have set, it says, those who fled from Moab, and the remnants of the land, against the fiercest lion, who will break their limbs and bones, then the fearful shall fly away, and all the daughters, that is, the towns and cities of the province of Moab, shall migrate in the crossing of the Arnon, which is the boundary of the Amorites and the Moabites. However, *transcensum et hic ponens, captivitatem significat*.

16:3-4

(Verse 3,4) This is a plan, gather a council: place your shadow as if it were night in the middle of the day, hide those who are fleeing, and do not disclose the wanderers. My outcasts will dwell with you: Moab, be their hiding place from the face of the destroyer, for the dust is at an end, the wretched one is consumed, the one who trampled on the earth has ceased. Instead of 'wretched' in Hebrew, 'Sod' is read, which can also be understood as 'destroyer'. It speaks to Moab, so that it may find a plan for salvation, and to the gathered elders, so that it may gather a council of salvation. He said, 'Will I see, and be saved, and earn God's mercy? In the bright light, and the open flight of my people, you should be like night and shadow, accept those fleeing, and do not

betray the wanderers.' And immediately he explains why he said this: 'My refugees will dwell with you. For Jerusalem has been devastated, and all of Judaea that borders on Moab, my people will migrate to you. Therefore, be their refuge, and do not fear the attack of the destroyer, for he will pass quickly like dust: and the one who trampled the entire land and subjected it under his feet will be wiped away by a blowing breeze.' Some interpret this place wrongly about the Antichrist, thinking that the Saints at that time will pass to the Arabs because of the proximity of the city of Jerusalem, and now they are being warned not to betray those who are fleeing to them.

16:5

(Verse 5) And a throne shall be prepared in mercy, and he shall sit upon it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking judgment, and quickly rendering what is just. The Hebrews interpret this place as follows: After the Assyrian is driven away, the just man Ezechias shall reign over Judah, and he shall retain the throne of David, ruling over the people of God in truth. Others understand it as referring to Christ. After the dust and destroyer of the Antichrist are removed, who trampled upon the whole earth, Christ the king shall come, who shall sit in the tabernacle of David, and on the day of judgment he shall render to all according to their works. And there is no doubt that this chapter predicts about Christ. But we can understand the same thing in his first coming, and show in the Church's tabernacle, that in all the land of Moab the trophies of the Churches rising up testify to the kingdom of Christ.

16:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) We have heard of the pride of Moab, he is exceeding proud: his pride, and his arrogancy, and his indignation, is more than his strength. Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kirhareth shall ye mourn; surely they are stricken. For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come even unto Jazer, they wandered through the wilderness: her branches are stretched out, they are gone over the sea. Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen. And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses; I have made their vintage shouting to cease. Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kirhareth. But through these [events] it shows both the power of former happiness and the blows of sudden overthrow.

16:8 (Verse 8.) Since the suburbs of Heshbon are deserted: a vineyard of Sibmah. Between Heshbon and Sibmah, there are barely five hundred steps, and by way of metaphor, the vineyard signifies the desolation of the entire province. The scourges of the Lord against the nations have fallen. He keeps the translation that he had begun, showing the kings of the nations who had devastated Moab, all the villages and castles laid waste.

They came as far as Jazer: they wandered in the desert: its branches were left behind: they crossed the sea. Understand the scourge and branches of its people, the fugitives: and the crossing of the sea, the captivity in Babylon, of which we will read later, the burden of the desert sea.

16:9

(Verse 9) Over this I will weep, in lamentation for Jazer, the vineyard of Sabama: my tears will make you drunk, O Esebon and Eleale. The voice of the weeping Prophet, and the greatness of the desolation, testifying with the greatness of tears, weeping for the vineyard of Jazer, and Sabama, and Esebon, and Eleale, once powerful cities, which the Assyrian believed to be cut down.

Since the voice of those treading on your vintage and your harvest has come rushing upon you. Understand, you gatherers of grapes and the joy of the harvest, the army of enemies, and that the time of captivity will come in the very time of joy.

16:10 (Verse 10) And joy and gladness shall be taken away from Carmel. It is the language of the Scriptures that always compares Mount Carmel, which overlooks Ptolemais and contains abundant forests, where Elijah prayed, to fertility and abundance, and thus signifies that all joy and fertility shall be taken away from once prosperous cities. And in the vineyards there will be no rejoicing or jubilation. It is understood that the previous grape harvester, that is, the colonist of the Moabite province, will not be there. Finally, he immediately added:

Wine will not be pressed in the winepress by the one who was accustomed to tread it: I have taken away the voice of the treaders. The joyful grape harvester will by no means sing a song of celebration in the vineyard, but everywhere there will be the devastation of the enemy, and the cry of the victorious will arise.

16:11

(Verse 11) On this account, my belly will sound like a lyre for Moab, and my inward parts like a wall of cooked bricks. It is not to be understood as a chant of joy for the prophet, through which he rejoices that the enemies of the people of Israel have been made captive, but rather, he says, with affection and deep sorrow of heart, that he mourns the formerly mighty city that has been destroyed.

16:12

(Verse 12) And it will be, when it appears that Moab has labored in vain for his heights, he will enter his holy places to seek guidance, but he will not prevail. It is the ultimate misery, to not have support from those whom he has always revered. 'Deserted,' he says, 'are your strengths, and with all defenders slain, you will turn to idols, you will worship shrines, but you will not find help in them, as the devastation that is common with you arrives.'

16:13

(Verse 13.) This is the word that the Lord spoke to Moab from that time. From when do you think? Obviously from the time that Moab was created. And the Lord says: The Moabites and Ammonites shall not enter into the Church of God (Deut. XXIII, 3). Whether we understand it from that time as referring to ancient times, which long ago this divine sentence was decreed, not that the foreknowledge of God brought about the cause of the devastation; but that the future devastation was foreknown to the majesty of God.

16:14

(Verse 14.) And now the Lord has spoken, saying: In three years, like the years of a hired worker, the glory of Moab will be taken away from all the multitude of people, and only a few will be left, small and insignificant. This prophecy, as we have said before, is directed against the Moabites after the death of Ahaz, during the reign of Hezekiah, when the ten tribes were taken into captivity by Sennacherib, the king of Assyria. Therefore, just as a hired worker eagerly awaits the end of the day and night to receive his predetermined wage, so after three years, when the Assyrians come, Moab will be destroyed and only a few will be left in the land to rebuild the ruined cities and cultivate the deserted fields. It is also possible to predict about the Babylonian captivity, that after the capture of Jerusalem and the passage of three years, Moab will be devastated by the Chaldeans, either because no rest will be given to them within a period of three years.

17:1

(Chapter 17, Verse 1) The burden of Damascus: Behold, Damascus will cease to be a city, and it will become a heap of ruins. The cities of Aroer will be deserted for the flocks, and they will have rest with none to make them afraid. The help from Ephraim will cease, and the kingdom from Damascus; and the remnant of Syria will be like the glory of the children of Israel, declares the Lord of hosts. After Babylon and the Philistines and Moab, the attention turns to Damascus, which was once a royal city and held dominion over all of Syria. Antioch, Laodicea, and Apamea had not yet flourished, cities that we know were expanded after the reign of Alexander and the Macedonians. Therefore, since he always provided assistance to the ten tribes against Judah, as the history of the Kings and Chronicles narrates: it also signifies that destruction was approaching from the Assyrians themselves, as the king of the Assyrians said: I have taken Arabia, and Damascus, and Samaria. For just as I have taken those, I will also take you and all the kingdoms. And in the book of Kings we read: The king of the Assyrians went up to Damascus, and captured it, and transferred it to Cyrene (2 Kings 16:9). He also killed Rezin, who was the king of Damascus. All these things were suffered by Jerusalem while Hezekiah was reigning. Look, he said, Damascus will cease to be a city; captivity is now near: the Assyrian has already moved his army. And it shall be like a heap of stones in ruin, only the traces of walls and former power will be shown in the magnitude of the ruins. The deserted cities of Aroer will become pastures. Aroer, which means myrtle, is a tree that grows specifically in solitude and salty soil, and through this the desolation is demonstrated. Let the flocks rest there, and there will be no one to frighten them. Such will be the solitude that even the feared ambushers will not exist. And help will cease from Ephraim; the ten tribes will not have assistance against Judah. And the kingdom from Damascus, from the common or popular edition, is understood to cease. Moreover, when it says that the kingdom ceases and rests, it does not mean perpetual desolation, but it takes away power in the present, through which it used to reign over all of Syria. And the remnant of Syria shall be like the glory of the children of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts: as when they struck the ten tribes of the Assyrians, and all their glory was brought into captivity: so shall a few that shall remain of the house of Jacob, be changed, because the Lord hath spoken it, who hath made his word of no effect. Some people think that this prophecy is the same as the one we read in Jeremiah: Damascus is ruined, it has turned to flight, trembling has seized it, anguish and sorrows have taken hold of it like a woman in labor (Jeremiah 49:24, 27). And again: I will set fire to the wall of Damascus, and it will devour the fortresses of Ben-Hadad. But it should be known that the captivity

of Babylon describes the city of Damascus by Jeremiah, that is, the few whom the king of Assyria had left in it. But Isaiah announces the nearby captivity of the Assyrians. Others estimate that the Roman captivity is being predicted, because the people of Judah were also captured; and Damascus, which was ruled by Aretas, endured a similar servitude: so that everything that was written about her may be transferred to the time of Christ and the mysteries of the Apostles.

17:4

(Verse 4.) And it shall come to pass in that day, the glory of Jacob shall be diminished, and his fatness shall wither away. When, he says, Damascus is captured, and the city ceases to exist, and such glory crowns it, as crowns Israel, that is, the ten tribes: then all defense, and the fattest flesh, and refuge shall wither away from Jacob: for he will not have anything with which to devastate Jerusalem. We read above that Rezin, the king of Syria, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to fight against it: and it was announced to the house of David: Syria has rested upon Ephraim, of whom the Prophet speaks to Ahaz: Do not fear, and let not your heart be afraid of these two smoldering stumps, of these smoky tails, in the furious wrath of Rezin, the king of Syria, and the son of Remaliah, because he has plotted evil against you, both Syria, the worst enemy, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah.

17:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) And it shall be like one gathering in the harvest what remains, and his arm shall gather the ears: and it shall be like one seeking the ears in the Valley of Raphaim. And there shall be left in it like a cluster of grapes, and like the beating of olives of two or three olive trees at the top of the branch, or four or five on its fruitful heights, says the Lord God of Israel. Those who understand the present devastation of Damascus under the Roman kingdom, contend that these things are signified about the Apostles, that just as few ears of wheat and olives usually remain in the field or on the trees, so the remnant of Israel shall be saved; especially because it follows: On that day, man shall turn to his maker, and his eyes shall look to the Holy One of Israel, that is, to Christ. Two olives, and three, and four, and five, are interpreted as the fourteen Apostles, that is, the twelve who were chosen, and the thirteenth James, who is called the brother of the Lord; Paul also, the Apostle, the vessel of election (Acts 7). However, those who think that what was said is accomplished during the time of the Assyrians, want this to be understood, that under the Assyrian captivity Damascus was not completely destroyed, but some were transferred to Cyrene, and the other part of the worshipers of the land was left behind, which was also destroyed later by the Babylonian ravages: until it was restored again under the Macedonians and the Ptolemies, and in the coming of Christ it was indeed a city, but not of such power as it had been before. And there will be so few senses left in Damascus as there usually remain few ears of grain in the broad and mighty valley of Raphaim that the poor gather, or few olives left in the olive tree that have escaped the scrutiny of the harvester.

17:7-8

(Verse 7, 8) On that day, a man will turn towards his Maker, and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel. He will not turn towards the altars that his hands have made, nor towards the works of his fingers. He will not look to the groves and shrines. Some interpret this as fulfilled during the time of Christ, when the kingdom of Damascus was destroyed and the eternal kingdom of the Savior

succeeded, and the error of idolatry was diminished. It is indeed a pious interpretation, but it does not follow the order of history. But we say that after Damascus was subdued and the ten tribes were led into Assyria, the remnant of the tribes of Israel, converted by the letters of Hezekiah, came to the worship of God and to the temple in Jerusalem, as the Chronicles history narrates (2 Chronicles 3). Therefore, with Damascus destroyed, the people will turn to their Maker, that is, to the one who created them, and their eyes will no longer look at the idols they made in Bethel and Dan, but they will look to God, despising the shrines and altars that their own fingers made.

17:9

(Verse 9) On that day, her fortified cities will be abandoned like plowed fields and empty after the harvest. They will become a wasteland, just like the cities of the Israelites that were abandoned before them. This prophecy is not against Damascus, but against the ten tribes known as Israel. Just as when the people of God arrived from Egypt, all the nations living in the promised land were suddenly filled with fear and dropped their plows and left their crops and unfinished tasks, fleeing for safety on foot, so too shall the land of Israel remain deserted for a long time. I am amazed that Aquila interpreted 'pro aratris et acervis frugum' as 'testam et Emir'; Symmachus, 'silvam et Amir'; LXX, 'Amorrhaeos et Evaeos'. Only Theodotio put the Hebrew word, 'Ars Et Emir', which is more correctly read as 'Hores () Et Amir ()', that is, plows and heaps of grain.

17:10

(Verse 10.) Because you have forgotten your God and have not remembered your powerful helper. These things, he says, you will endure, O Israel, because you have forsaken your God, who has freed you from Egypt, who has subjected enemy nations to you; and you have not remembered your helper.

Therefore you will plant a faithful plantation, and you will sow a foreign seed. This should be read more closely and ironically. For, he says, you have forgotten your God and Savior, and you have not remembered your strong helper: should you therefore plant a faithful plantation, and not rather sow a foreign seed, which the enemy will snatch away? Or certainly like this: you have founded my sons, who are born from the stock of my people, in the land, in order to make them foreign and wicked.

17:11

(Verse 11.) In the day of your planting, the vineyard shall flourish, and in the morning your seed shall blossom. The harvest shall be taken away on the day of inheritance, and you shall grieve deeply. These will be the fruits of your labors: your vine Sorec shall degenerate into wild grapes, and your seed shall bring forth hope in the bud; but when maturity comes, it shall be harvested by another. And then you shall grieve deeply, when what you hoped for and almost touched is lost.

17:12-14

(Verses 12-14.) Woe to the multitude of many peoples, as the sound of the roaring sea: and the tumult of nations, like the sound of many waters. The peoples will make noise, like the sound of overflowing waters: and they will rebuke him, and he will flee far away: and he will be carried away like the dust of mountains before the wind, and like a whirlwind before a storm. At evening time: and behold, there will be trouble in the morning, and it will not continue. This is their portion, who

have plundered us, and their lot, who have taken us away. Those who consider the captivity of Damascus inflicted by the Romans, and this which is written: Man shall bow down to his Maker, and his eyes shall look to the Holy One of Israel, refer to the times of Christ and the Apostles. They also understand the following: You will plant a faithful plantation, and you will sow a foreign branch: on the day of your plantation the wild vine, etc., they perceive the unfaithfulness of the Jews. And this chapter that we have now presented is interpreted by the Gentiles who persecute the Church. Moreover, what follows is understood to be about the devil, with a tropological interpretation illustrating the devastation caused by persecutors and demons. But we follow the sequential order and protect the historical foundations with historical insight. Woe, he says, to all the nations that have fought against my people, whose force was so great that it could be compared to the waves of the sea. But when they come raging and flood my land, then their leader Sennacherib will flee, reproached by him, and be scattered like dust carried by the wind, and whirled up into the sky like a storm. Indeed, he will approach Jerusalem, besieging it, but he will be struck down by an angel; he will come in the morning, and he will see his army destroyed, the power of his might gone. And this will be the portion of those who devastated us. The Prophet speaks either on behalf of the people or joins himself to his own nation (IV Kings XIX, 35, 36). Afterwards we read: The Angel of the Lord went out and struck down in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and they arose early in the morning, and behold, all the dead bodies. So Sennacherib king of the Assyrians departed and returned and lived in Nineveh.

18:1

(Chapter XVIII, Verse 1.) Woe to the land with the sound of wings beyond the rivers of Ethiopia. The Hebrew word Selsel (), which Symmachus interpreted as noise, Theodotion as birds, and we translate as cymbal. Aquila translated bis umbram. But it should be known that umbra Sel () is said, but here the syllable itself is doubled. From which we can understand the saying: Woe to the land that promises help in the shadow of its wings. And as the Scripture says: Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm XC, 1), for which it is written in Hebrew, He will dwell in the shadow of the Omnipotent: boasting to have the likeness of God herself, and in danger promises to aid others. But it signifies either No, the city of Egypt, which is now called Alexandria, or Egypt itself, in which Jerusalem has always relied on like a bruised reed, which, when broken, pierces the hand of the one leaning on it. And here is the most beautiful order: just as in the previous Vision the prophetic word threatened Damascus, that the ten tribes would have help in it, begging for the mercy of God; so now also the desolation of Egypt is proclaimed, for which the invocation of God has been neglected. For it is the land itself that is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, that is, beyond the streams of the Nile river, which no one doubts flows from Ethiopia into Egypt. Egypt can be called the granary of the world because of the abundance of crops; indeed, the swift and rapid flight of birds produces the sound of a cymbal. Some interpret this as referring to the Roman Empire, which sends ambassadors to the sea and on papyrus vessels over the waters, and they relate all history to the times of Vespasian and Titus, during which Jerusalem was destroyed. But this does not befit our faith, that the Lord should threaten the Roman Kingdom, wherefore He has overthrown the impious nation, and again say that gifts are to be brought to Mount Zion, unless perhaps we understand these things spiritually in the Church.

18:2

(Verse 2.) He who sends envoys to the sea, and in papyrus vessels on the waters. Go, swift angels, to a nation torn and ravaged, to a fearsome people after whom there is no other, to a nation waiting and trampled, whose rivers they have plundered. Among the Hebrews and Egyptians and the Egyptians themselves and the Egyptians, they are called by one name, Mesraim. This saying is have, so that no one may get stuck on the word, when they find a masculine word for a feminine gender, that is, for land a man, because even now it is said: He who sends envoys to the sea, that is, Mesraim itself, the Egyptian himself, because from Alexandria, which was then, as I said, called No, envoys were sent to Jerusalem and in papyrus vessels, that is, in letters, or ships, promising their help to them, saying: Go swiftly to the torn people of the Jews, and torn by the assault of the Assyrians; to the people once fearsome, who wielded the command of God, to whose power no one else can be compared: to a nation that always awaited the help of God, and yet is trampled by men: whose land rivers, that is, different kings, have ravaged. Others, however, think that the apostrophe is directed to the Lord, and the meaning is: O God, who sends prophets into the sea of this world, and like sailors through letters, warns the people, commanding them with your messages: go quickly to my torn and convulsed people, to the strongest people, who once terrified all nations around, who always waited for God's help, and because of the greatness of their sins, which they hope for, they do not deserve to receive it: whose land was ravaged by the kings of various nations, and so on. Eusebius of Caesarea, promising a historical interpretation in the title, wanders off into various meanings, so that when I read his books, I found something entirely different from what the index promised. Wherever he runs out of history, he moves on to allegory, and in this way he combines things that are separate, so that I marvel at his skill in joining together new elements of language into one unity of stone and iron. I mention this briefly, so that no one thinks that we have borrowed what we say from his sources; for even in the present chapter, he says that prophecy is directed against the Jews and Jerusalem, because at the beginning of the Christian faith they sent letters to all the nations, urging them not to accept the passion of Christ; and they sent letters even to Ethiopia and the Western regions, and with the dissemination of this blasphemy they have filled the whole world.

18:3

(Verse 3.) All the inhabitants of the world who dwell on the earth, when the signal is raised on the mountains, you will see and hear the sound of the trumpet. All the nations, he says, around, when you hear my command, like a signal raised on the mountains, and my authority, like the sound of a triumphantly resounding trumpet, then you will see what I have ordered.

18:4

(Verse 4) Because this is what the Lord said to me: I will rest, and I will consider in my place. What is it that the Lord said to the Prophet? This is what follows: until what I have commanded comes, I will rest in my seat: as the Jews believe, in the Temple; as we believe, in heaven. And I will consider, he says, the coming of the end of things.

Just as the midday light is bright, and just as the morning mist is in the day of harvest. Just as in the whole day nothing is brighter than midday, when the sun shines from the middle of the sky, and equally illuminates the whole world, and just as in the heat and hot air, when the naked harvester is scorched, and the magnitude of the labor tests his breath, the temperate dew is most pleasing, if the morning moisture makes the dry stalks cuttable: in the same way, my speech,

which I will consider in my place, will come gratefully to all who believe in me.

18:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) For before the harvest it had flowered entirely, and immature perfection had sprouted, and its small branches will be cut with sickles, and whatever has been left behind will be cut off and shaken off. And they will be left with the birds of the mountains and the animals of the earth, and they will have perpetual summer over them, and all the animals of the earth will winter upon it. Because he had said of the south wind, and had sent a cloud of dew before summer and harvest, and had taken produce from the field, he will preserve it in the remains, describing the pride of Egypt and the devastation of its people, and the corpses throughout the province, which will be devoured by the birds. For just as the crops that spring up before maturity quickly perish, and the sprouts that germinate are useless before the proper time of growth comes; so, he says, the Egyptian people are cut down like useless branches with the sickle, and all their offspring will be stripped bare. And lest you think that he is speaking of the vineyard and not of men, he turns the metaphor into historical truth: And they shall be abandoned together to the birds of the mountains and to the beasts of the earth. For birds and beasts do not eat the severed branches of trees, but rather devour corpses. Let us read more fully Ezekiel, where he prophesies against Pharaoh and against Egypt: and all these things we will find written very clearly (Ezek. XXIX). And he says: In perpetual summer, birds shall be above him, and all beasts shall winter upon him; either this signifies a multitude of those who will be slain, or by the same interpretation it shows that he will be laid waste by all nations.

18:7

(Verse 7) In that time the gift of the Lord of hosts will be brought by the scattered and torn people, by the terrifying people, after whom there was no other: by the waiting people, waiting and trampled, whose rivers they have plundered, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mountain of Zion. After the devastation of Egypt and the destruction of its empire, Israel will no longer trust in the vanity of its shadow, but will return to the Lord and bring its gifts to the mountain of Zion, that is, to His temple, and only pray to Him whose true and eternal protection it is. But this was done under Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and Ezra, and Nehemiah. LXX, because we have said: expecting, expecting, and in Hebrew it is written, hoping, hoping, on the contrary they are interpreted as ■■λπιστον, that is, not hoping. And for this reason Eusebius gave occasion for understanding this more about the Gentiles, who have neither hope, nor the Testament of God, nor the Prophets, than about the Jews: because gifts are to be sent afterwards by the Church itself, which is established on the watchtower, and spiritual offerings are to be made.

19:1

(Chapter 19, Verse 1) The Burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord will ascend upon a light cloud, and will enter into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst thereof. It is the custom of the Scriptures to connect the clear with the obscure, and to openly declare with a clear voice what was previously expressed in enigmas. Therefore, in the present passage, because He had pronounced woes against Egypt before, saying, 'Woe to the land overshadowed with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,' and other things which the prophetic discourse has woven together, He now makes the understanding

more clear, and threatening Egypt itself, He speaks, not that the Angels, but the Lord Himself, shall come upon a light cloud, that is, a swift one, and shall enter into Egypt, and make the idols of Egypt tremble, and cause the heart of the mighty to melt, and fulfill the prophecy of Ezekiel (or Jeremiah): 'I will destroy the idols, and I will cause the idols of Memphis to cease' (Ezekiel 30:13). Some refer this whole prophecy to the time of the Savior, when he entered upon a light cloud, that is, a human body, which he had assumed from the Virgin, not burdened with any mingling of human seed: or because he was carried on a light cloud, that is, a Virginal body, and at his entrance all the demons trembled, and then the first downfall of idols occurred, unable to bear the presence of the Lord.

19:2

(Version 2.) And I will make the Egyptians fight against the Egyptians, and one man will fight against his brother, and one man against his friend, city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. When the Lord enters Egypt and destroys the most powerful nation with his presence, the first victory will be for the Egyptians to turn against each other and fight in rebellion against themselves: which happened during the times of the Assyrians and King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, with some sitting while others resisted. But what he predicts about the Babylonian captivity, Jeremiah is a witness, saying: The elegant and beautiful heifer Egypt, the stimulator from the North will come to her. And again: The daughter of Egypt is confused and handed over to the hand of the people of the North (Jeremiah 46:20, 24). Ezekiel also, by the authority of the same prophecy, agrees: And I will make the multitude of Egypt cease in the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. And again: I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and I will put my sword in his hand, and I will break the arms of Pharaoh. And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt, and I will scatter Egypt among the nations (Ezek. XXX, 10, 24, et seq.). But if we refer to the times of the Savior, let us take that example from the Gospel: Think not that I am come to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law, and the enemies of a man shall be they of his own household (Matt. X, 34, et seq.). And again in another place: There will be divided two into three, and three into two: father against son, and mother against daughter, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law (Luke XII, 52, 58).

19:3

(Verse 3) And the spirit of Egypt shall be destroyed in its bowels, and I will overthrow its counsel: and they shall inquire of their idols and their diviners, and their pythons and soothsayers. When a rebellion arises in Egypt, whether those desiring to serve Babylon, or those unwilling to submit their necks to its yoke, or others believing in Christ while others resist, the spirit of Egypt shall be destroyed and divided, not the same for all who desire it, and all their counsel shall be reduced to nothing. Then they will go to their statues; and they will question the divine beings, the soothsayers, the prophets, and those skilled in magical arts, why these things have happened.

19:4

(Version 4) And I will deliver Egypt into the hand of cruel masters, and a strong king shall rule over them, says the Lord God of hosts. We follow a twofold interpretation: either of the Chaldean times, when Egypt was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar; or of the Roman empire, when Antony and Cleopatra were defeated, and Augustus Caesar subdued Egypt. It is testified by the whole Scripture that the Babylonians were cruel, who spared not even the little ones, but wounded them with their arrows, and showed no mercy to the pregnant women. But the Roman kingdom, as the Scripture of Daniel testifies (Chapter VII), describes the fourth beast with iron teeth and claws.

19:5-7

(Verses 5-7) And the water of the sea shall dry up, and the river shall be desolate and dry, and the streams shall diminish and dry up the water-courses. The reed and the rush shall wither, the channel of the river shall be laid bare and all the irrigated seed shall dry up, wither, and not exist. It is natural that when captivity comes through the anger of God, his wrath shall be followed by pestilence, and all the elements shall rage against those who offend God. Where it is written in another Prophet (Jer. XII), 'And the birds in the air fail, and the fishes in the waters, so that all things are taken away from human use.' We say this if we want to take the dryness of the Nile river and its streams simply. But if we take it as a metaphor: in the river, we understand the kingdom, and in its streams, the leaders; and in the greenness, and the reed, and the papyrus, all the abundance of Egypt, so that through these things, the wealth of Egypt is described, of which Egypt is most fertile. Let us read Ezekiel, where the king Pharaoh is described as a great dragon dwelling in the rivers, and says: The river is mine, and I have made myself. And it is heard: I will put a bit in your jaws, and I will stick the fish of your rivers to your scales, and I will draw you out from the midst of your rivers, and all your fish will cling to your scales, and I will cast you into the desert (Ezek. XXIX, 3, 4). However, in the coming of Christ, all these things are to be understood figuratively, according to what we read above: The Lord will make the sea of Egypt a desert. And again: the Lord will stretch out His hand over the violent river of Egypt, and He will strike it in seven valleys, so that it can be crossed by foot with shoes on. This means that all the errors of the Egyptian waters and the sorceries with which they deceived the subject peoples will be dried up by the coming of Christ. And when it says that the water from the sea will dry up, we can understand it in a historical sense, not that the great sea is meant, but rather the lake of Mareotis, because Scripture calls all gatherings of water seas. Exaggerated statements can also be understood. And what follows: The channel of the river will be exposed from its source, showing that the river and the spring dry up together.

19:8-10

(v. 8-10) And the fishermen shall mourn, and all those who cast the hook into the river shall lament, and those who spread the net over the face of the water shall wither away. And those who work with flax, twisting and weaving fine fabrics, shall be put to shame; and its pools shall be dried up, and all those who make fishing-gear for catching fish shall mourn. And consider this in two ways: that when Egypt is devastated and the entire province is dried up by drought, the fishermen shall mourn, and those who cast the hook into the river and those who work with nets and traps and weave various types of baskets made from reeds, that is, princes and those of royal blood, and rulers. And also, when Christ comes, all the wicked fishermen of different kinds, who against Apostolic discipline capture men for destruction and weave nets and traps with foolish wisdom to

ensnare the condemned, shall be confused, and in the land of Egypt there shall be no such fisherman, or if there is, they shall be rare. In this work we see fulfilled what the triumphs of the Churches rise, and idols have fallen in all of Egypt.

19:11-13

(Vers. 11-13.) The foolish princes of Tanis, the wise counselors of Pharaoh, gave foolish counsel: How can you say to Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where are your wise men now? Let them tell you and make known what the Lord of hosts has purposed against Egypt. The foolish princes of Tanis have become fools; the princes of Memphis are deceived; they have caused Egypt to stagger, the cornerstone of its peoples. Tanis was the capital of Egypt, as the Psalmist declares, where Moses performed many signs that are described in Exodus: He set his signs in Egypt and his wonders in the field of Tanis (Ps. 78:11). Memphis, also dedicated to magical arts, still shows traces of error from ancient times to the present. And this is briefly indicated, that with the coming of the Babylonian devastation, all the plans of the Magi, and of those who promised knowledge of the future, are proven foolishness, and with the advent of Christ everything is reduced to nothingness, not finding the advice of the Egyptian seers on how to suppress the Christian doctrine. However, the language of the Scriptures is that they place the angle for the kingdom, since it contains the peoples, and is the strongest in the whole house. And Christ, containing the walls of two peoples, is called the cornerstone (Ephesians II). And what he brings in: How will you say to Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of the ancient kings, signifies that the Egyptians imitate their heroes and gods, namely Horus, Isis, Osiris, and Typhon.

19:14-15

(Verse. 14, 15.) The Lord mixed in its midst the spirit of dizziness: and he caused Egypt to wander in all its work, like a drunkard and a vomiter: and Egypt will have no work that it does, bending and restraining head and tail. First let us speak about the interpretation, and afterwards we will discuss what is written. The spirit of dizziness can also be interpreted as the spirit of error. In addition, in what we have translated as bending and restraining, we can say bending and lascivious, so that we understand old man and child. However, when we swiftly translated the Hebrew word Agmon (), we were deceived by ambiguity, and we said restraining, which Aquila translated more significantly as στρεβλο■ντα, that is, one who does nothing rightly, but everything crooked, in order to signify a child. Therefore, the sense is: The princes of Taneos have become foolish, and the wise counselors have given foolish advice to Pharaoh, and the princes of Mempheos have become bewildered, and they have deceived Egypt, the corner of nations, because the Lord has mixed into them a spirit of error and confusion, causing them to not know what they are speaking and to make Egypt go astray. And just as a drunkard, when he vomits what he has eaten and does not know where it is, but lies in a state of alien mind, so Egypt will have no work or counsel that has a head, or an end, or is suitable for the elders or the children, some of whom are foolish and delirious due to extreme age, while others are ignorant of their own insolence and infancy. But whether you want to receive this in relation to the devastation in Babylon, or in relation to the coming of Christ, and both literally and spiritually, it will have significance.

19:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) On that day Egypt will be like women, and they will be astonished and afraid because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he will bring against them. And the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt; everyone who mentions it will fear because of the purpose of the Lord of hosts, which he has planned against it. I think it is better to correct one's own mistakes than to persist in error while being embarrassed to admit one's ignorance. In what I have translated, And the land of Judah shall be for Egypt a joy, for a joy is read in Hebrew Hagga (), which can be interpreted as both a festival (hence Haggai is translated as festival) and fear, which is more significantly translated by Aquila as 'shaking', when someone is fearful and trembling and turns their eyes around, and fears the approaching enemy. Therefore, if we want to take it in a positive sense, that the remembrance of Judah being for Egypt is a joy, it is rightly called a festival. But if, as I think, it turns into fear for the festival, let us understand fear or dread, that when Nebuchadnezzar comes, and all the hands of strong men will be loosened like those of women, even the word Judah is a terror to Egypt, because while they wanted to offer help, they have suffered so many evils. No one doubts in our times that, in comparison to Christians, all the pagans are like women, having weak opinions, and whatever they say is turned into foolishness, while they are astonished at such a great conversion of the people, and they marvel and understand the hand of the Lord, and whoever, of those who bear the name of Christians among the Gentiles, remembers the weakness of idolatry, confesses it out of fear.

19:18

(Verse 18.) On that day there shall be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and swear by the Lord of hosts. One of these cities shall be called the city of the sun. Concerning the city of the sun, the LXX translated 'asedec,' not knowing exactly what it meant. Some of our people interpret it as the city of justice, and due to a mistake, they think that it is written in Hebrew as 'Ares,' which means 'land' in other letters. Symmachus translated it better as 'the city of the sun shall be called one,' for 'Ares' is an ambiguous word and is used for both 'clay pot' and 'sun,' because both dry and heat. Not understanding this place, Onias built a temple in Egypt in the city of Heliopolis. Read Josephus' Histories (Joseph. lib. XII, cap. 9). Others want Ares, that is, a shell, that is, a testa, to be understood as the city of Ostracine, and other cities near Rhinocorura and Casium, which until today it is evident that they speak in Egypt in the Canaanite language, that is, Syrian. And they think that the Syrians and Arabs came from neighboring places to that land under Nabuchodonosor's rule. Moreover, those who speak of the coming of Christ and the Roman empire prophecy, understand either the five cities or the law of the Lord, which was first interpreted in Alexandria, or the five orders of the Church, bishops, presbyters, deacons, believers, catechumens: or certainly the spiritual understanding of the law, of which the Apostle also says: I want to speak five words in the Churches in my understanding, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue (1 Cor. XIV): and that the one city of the five cities is called the city of the sun, namely justice, in whose wings there is healing.

19:19-21

(Verses 19-21.) In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar near its border to the Lord. And it will be for a sign and for a testimony to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. For they will cry to the Lord because of the oppressor, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion who will deliver them. And the Lord will make Himself known to Egypt, and

the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day. They will worship with sacrifices and offerings, and they will make vows to the Lord and fulfill them. From this place to the end of Egypt, both the Jews and we understand it as a vision or prophecy of Christ's coming; but they have different expectations for the future, while we consider it as already fulfilled. However, consider the day for the time being: although Josephus claims that these things happened during the time of Onias, who fled to Egypt and built a temple, an altar, and attempted to fulfill the prophecy of Christ in vain. But it is called one altar, just as there is one faith, one baptism, and one Church. And the title, next to its boundary, undoubtedly signifies the Gospel and the writings of the Apostles. For just as the land of Judea is understood above, according to the tropological understanding, as fearsome, or solemn, or the old Testament: so the title in the boundaries of Egypt is shown to be the history of the Gospels. Finally, it joins: And it shall be a sign and a testimony, namely of the Lord's passion. Then those who have believed, while the Egyptians are coming together against the Egyptians, and a man is fighting against his own brother, and city is fighting against city: when the time of persecution comes, they will implore the mercy of the Lord, and immediately the Savior will come, that is, Jesus, for this is what it means in our language. And the Lord will be known by the Egyptians, and they will recognize Him, whether the persecutors who have been overcome, or the believers who have been freed by His present help. And they shall worship him with sacrifices and gifts, and shall vow vows to the Lord and shall pay them. Let the Jews respond: It is prescribed by law that an altar should not be made except in the one place which the Lord God chooses, and only the sacrifices of the Levite priests should be offered. (Deut. XXVI). Behold, Isaiah clearly teaches that the Egyptians should recognize the Lord, and worship him, and offer sacrifices and gifts, and make vows and fulfill them. If the Egyptians have a priesthood, then the testimony of Paul is also fulfilled in them, which says: If the priesthood is transferred, it is necessary for there to be a transfer of the law. (Heb. VII, 12).

19:22

(Verse 22.) And the Lord will strike Egypt with a plague, and He will heal it. And they will turn to the Lord, and He will be appeased by them, and He will heal them. For whom the Lord loves, He chastises, and He punishes every son whom He receives. Persecution does not pertain to the denial of believers, but to their testing and reward.

19:23

(Verse 23) On that day there will be a road from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will enter Egypt, and Egypt will enter Assyria; and the Egyptians will serve Assyria. Before the coming of Christ, each nation had its own king, and no one could go from one nation to another; but in the Roman empire, all became one. Let the learned reader review the ancient histories, and from the Euphrates to the Tigris, let them know that the whole region in between was inhabited by the Assyrians. Therefore, what the ancient Assyrians, whom we now call Syrians, called the whole from a part. Now, when it is said that the Egyptians serve the Syrians, it should be understood either that the Roman legions, equipped with Syrian soldiers, guard Egypt, or that there is trade between the two nations, and the cities of Syria benefit from the abundance of Egypt, just as, conversely, Egypt is irrigated by the goods of Palestine and Phoenicia. Some of our people mistakenly refer this to a thousand years and pronounce that it will happen in the manner of the Jews at the end of the world, when the Antichrist, coming from Assyria, will possess Egypt and Ethiopia.

19:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) On that day, Israel will be a third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.' In no way will Israel be a mediator between Egypt and Assyria, now that Antiochus and Demetrius are drawing the kingdom to themselves, now that the Ptolemies are claiming its possession for themselves. But even under Roman rule, and therefore under the rule of Christ, it will be of the same condition as Egypt and Assyria, and it will be blessed in all the earth. Because the law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Then it will be said by the Lord: Blessed is my people of Egypt: when by no means Moses, but Christ the Lord leading the way, the countless thousands of men have filled the wilderness, and with Pharaoh submerged, they have said in the desert: Let us sing to the Lord, for He has been gloriously magnified: He has cast horse and rider into the sea (Exodus 15:1). Then the work of the Lord will also reign in Assyria; for these are the largest nations of monks, Egypt and Mesopotamia, and they contend with each other in equal piety. But the inheritance of Christ is the Israel, that is, the places of his birth, and the cross, and the resurrection, and his ascension, to which people from all over the world gather.

20:1

(Chapter 20, Verse 1) In the year that Tharhaka came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and fought against Ashdod and took it. At that time the Lord spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from your waist and take off your sandals from your feet. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. Then the Lord said, As my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Cush. Thus the king of Assyria will threaten the captivity of Egypt, and the exile of Ethiopia, the young and old stripped and barefoot, with naked buttocks, the disgrace of Egypt. And they will be afraid and ashamed because of their hope in Ethiopia, and because of their glory in Egypt. And the inhabitants of this island will say on that day: Behold, this was our hope, to whom we fled for help, that he might deliver us from the face of the king of Assyria, and how will we be able to escape? We have set the whole content of this chapter, so that we may discuss each part separately. Azotus, which is called Ashdod in Hebrew, was a very powerful city in Palestine among the five cities. It was captured and held by Sargon, the king of the Assyrians, who is also known by seven names, by sending his general named Tartan. At the time when the neighboring city was captured, Isaiah is commanded to walk naked and barefoot, after taking off his sackcloth garment (for this was the prophetic attire of a people grieving for their sins) and his sandals, which the Greek translation calls caligas, thus symbolizing the captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia, who were allies of the Egyptians. In this way, just as Isaiah walked naked and showed his bare buttocks as a sign of disgrace to those who saw, all of Egypt and Ethiopia would become naked and bare, with nothing remaining on the land, as the Assyrians ravaged the region. Nor let anyone think that this is contrary to the previous happiness promised to the Egyptians, because there they are taught about future bliss after the evils. Here, however, the present captivity is narrated, through which Israel, Damascus, and the Philistines were devastated, and the right way to Egypt was taken, and both the Ethiopians and the Egyptians were conquered. And so that it does not seem ambiguous to anyone, let us consider the testimony of Isaiah himself: But when Sennacherib returned, he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that he had departed from

Lachish; and he heard about Tirhakah, the king of Ethiopia, saying, 'He has come out to fight against you.' (2 Kings 19:8-9). At the same time, we learn obedience from the prophets, because a noble man (for the Hebrews report that Isaiah was the father-in-law of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah) did not hesitate to walk naked; but considering nothing more honorable than God's commands, he removed the sackcloth in which he had been clothed, and being stripped naked, he first had a tunic, and that itself made of haircloth. And when it is said: It shall be a sign and a wonder for three years upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia, it signifies that Egypt and Ethiopia shall be devastated by the Assyrians for three years. Then, he said, the inhabitant of this island, that is Jerusalem, which is battered by the waves of neighboring nations, will say: Is this our hope? And did we flee to them for help, who could not rescue themselves from the evil of captivity? Therefore, this is the order of God's providence, disposing of all human kind with ineffable judgment. In contrast, Israel hoped in Damascus against the wrath of God: let the city be destroyed, which offers assistance to the wicked against His will. Judas hoped in the Egyptians: and let Egypt be destroyed. The Egyptians put their trust in the Ethiopians: let the Ethiopians also be conquered by the Assyrians. The Assyrians became proud, considering victory to be not of God, but of their own strength: and let them be conquered by the Babylonians. Babylon raised its head against God: and let it be overcome by the Medes and Persians. The Persians and Medes persecuted the people of God to some extent, and a fierce ram scattered all peoples to the East and West; let Alexander the goat come and crush him under his feet. And he who is beyond measure upright, let him perish by poison, and let his kingdom be divided into parts; and when over a long period of time they have clashed against each other, with the Roman conquering, let it be plundered. The Roman himself, with teeth and claws of iron, tore the flesh of the saints, and with a bloody mouth, he mutilated: let the stone be cut out from the mountain without hands, and let it crush the first kingdom, most powerful and iron, then fragile and weak, like a potter's vessel (Daniel 2).

21:1

(Chapter 21, Verse 1) The burden of the desert of the sea. Unless I were to read the following in the subsequent part of this chapter: Babylon has become a beloved wonder to me. And again: Babylon has fallen, has fallen, and all the carved images of her gods are shattered on the ground. And above: Go up, O Elam, lay siege, O Media: I would doubt that this weight, which is imposed on the deserted sea, is what is meant. Therefore, it is clear that the deserted sea is called Babylon, as Jeremiah says on behalf of God: I will make her sea a desert, and I will dry up her land, and Babylon will become heaps of sand (Jeremiah 51:36, 37). But the sea is called such because of the multitude of creatures living in it. Therefore, above, the multitude of Egypt is compared to the sea. The Lord will make the sea of Egypt a desert. And as for the Medes and Persians warring against Babylon, and overthrowing it, we read in the aforementioned Jeremiah: Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers. The Lord will raise up the spirit of the kings of the Medes against Babylon, and his thoughts will be against her, to destroy her, for it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his Temple. Raise a banner on the walls of Babylon, increase the guard, elevate the watchmen, prepare ambushes; for the Lord has planned and done what he spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon. And again: Raise a signal on the earth, blow the trumpet among the nations, consecrate the nations against her, announce to the kings of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz; summon against her the kings of Media, bring up horses like bristling locusts.

Sanctify against her the nations, the kings of Media, their leaders and all their officials, and the whole land under their dominion. The earth will quake and tremble, for the Lord has a plan against Babylon to make it a desolation, a place where no one lives (Jeremiah 51:11, following).

21:1-2

(Verse 1, Line 2) Just as whirlwinds come from the South, it comes from the desert, from a dreadful land. A harsh vision has been announced to me. The voice of the Babylonian people is introduced, fearing that it, or rather Babylon itself, may hear that the Medes and the Elamites are preparing an army against them and are coming from the wilderness, and it sets forth an example of comparison. Just as, he says, a violent storm usually comes from the South wind: so to me comes desolation from the wilderness, from a dreadful land, of which I cannot even hear the name without fear. A harsh vision has been announced to me: for what is harder than present captivity?

Whoever is unbelieving, acts unfaithfully; and whoever is a destroyer, devastates. It can be read in Hebrew as follows: If you kill, kill; and if you devastate, devastate, so that the prophecy of Elamite and Median, encouraging him to fulfill what he has begun, may be directed to him, daring to ascend without fear, to besiege the most powerful city. But if it is read as we have translated, as if it is said from a third person perspective, "Whoever is unbelieving, acts unfaithfully; and whoever is a destroyer, devastates," it must be connected with the previous statements, in which Babylon declares a harsh vision revealed to her.

Rise up, O Elam, besiege the Medes: I have caused all their groaning to cease. Do not be afraid, says the Persian and the Mede, of the multitude of Babylon, nor be in awe of its former power: I have caused all their groaning and the weight with which it used to press you to cease: either because no one now laments and grieves under the power of Babylon, or because Babylon itself is so oppressed by such great evils that it does not even have free groaning.

21:3-4

(Verse 3, 4.) Therefore my loins are filled with pain: anguish has taken hold of me, like the anguish of a woman in labor: I am bowed down when I hear it, I am troubled when I see it. My heart is faint, darkness has overwhelmed me. Babylon, my beloved, has become a wonder to me. The prophets are therefore obscured, because many individuals are changed in them. Therefore now the voice of Isaiah is introduced mourning for Babylon in a prophetic spirit, because such great evils are about to come upon her, that the one who narrates, overcome by fear, is unable to burst forth into words, seeing the bloodshed of such a multitude: and moved by the affection of mercy (for indeed he speaks of humans), he grieves no less than a woman wailing in childbirth; but he is troubled and fearful, and falling to the ground, with dim eyes he knows not what he is saying. But for the name that we translate as Babylon, in Hebrew it is read Neseph Esci (); and it is the very word that we placed at the beginning of the Babylonian Oneris, on the dark mountain: for it is written Neseph for dark or gloomy. And this city is specifically called thus, because of its height and the erect summit of pride reaching up to heaven.

21:5

(Verse 5.) Set the table, observe those who are eating and drinking: arise, leaders, take up the shield. This place is understood in two ways: o Medes and Elamites, of whom I spoke above:

ascend, O Elam, besiege the Medes, take food, prepare yourselves for the coming battle, lest weariness hold you back once the time of conflict has arrived. And when you have eaten and drunk, arise, seize your weapons, wage war against Babylon. And what he says, observe those who are eating and drinking, is read in this sense: look carefully at what is to come. It can also be understood like this: O Babylon, prepare a feast for your son Belshazzar, the grandson of your son Evil-Merodach and the descendant of your grandson Nebuchadnezzar. See what happens after the meal, in which you will drink from the vessels of the Lord with prostitutes and concubines. O princes, who sit with the king, but signify the Medes and Persians, rise up and seize weapons to kill the king. We learn more about this in the book of Daniel (Chapter 5).

21:6-10

(Verse 6 and following) For the Lord spoke these words to me: Go and set a watchman, and whatever he sees, let him announce. And he saw a chariot with two horsemen, a rider on a donkey, and a rider on a camel. And he looked closely with much attention, and the lion cried out: I am standing continually on the watchtower of the Lord, both day and night. Behold, here comes a rider of a chariot with horsemen, and he answered and said: Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and all the carved images of its gods are shattered on the ground. Crush my people, O threshing floor of mine, which I heard from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I have declared to you. The reasons for the previous fear are given, why distress has taken hold of him like a woman in labor, and he has fallen down, hearing and trembling, and being surrounded by dark horror. This, the Lord said to me: go and set a watchman, so that he may foretell to you the future with a prophetic spirit; when I placed him on the watchtower, he saw a chariot coming with two horses, and a charioteer high above, and an ass and a camel drawing the chariot. But it signifies Cyrus, the king of the Persians and Medes, coming with little and great authority. For the Persians were formerly unknown before Cyrus and held no place among the nations; the Medes, however, were always very powerful. Therefore, this one, supported by the army of two nations, came against Babylon. And that lookout who was positioned to see what was coming cried out like a lion, or rather, he is called a lion himself as a prophet. And because there was doubt about the identity of the lookout who had seen Cyrus ascending, he explains more explicitly and says: 'I am standing on the lookout of the Lord constantly throughout the day, declaring himself to be the lookout of the Lord, who is always stationed in the prophetic office, and who, in the days and nights of the Lord's command, speaks whatever He orders.' Therefore, what did the lion call out? Behold, that man comes, the ascender of the chariot of the horsemen; no doubt, Cyrus is indicated. And he answered and said, the lion himself who had called out before: Babylon has fallen, fallen, and all the sculptures of its gods are shattered on the ground. For with the devastating ascender of the chariot, Babylon is destroyed forever, and the temple of Bel and all the idols are laid to the ground. And what follows, 'My threshing, and the son of my floor,' it makes an apostrophe to Jerusalem, and to the Temple which is situated in the area of Orna, and it says to it: 'O Jerusalem, and people, sons of my Temple, do not think it unbelievable what I have said; for they are not my words, but the words of the Lord, and through my mouth, his words resounded.' Some people mistakenly think that this is not said about Jerusalem, but about Babylon, from which my beloved above Babylon is placed for me as a miracle; and the meaning is: what you have broken, you will also be broken, not in my words, but in the power of the Lord, which foretells these things to you. However, what the LXX translators meant in this place, to translate 'lion', which is called in Hebrew

'Aria' (), as 'uriah', I do not quite understand, especially since the aforementioned priest Uriah, who is called as a witness, is written in other letters.

21:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) Oracle concerning Dumah. One calls to me from Seir: 'Watchman, what time of the night? Watchman, what time of the night?' The watchman says: 'Morning comes, and also the night. Seek if you will, inquire if you will, come.' For Dumah they set seventy idols, not over the entire Idumean province, but in a certain region that extends towards the south and is twenty miles distant from the city of Palestine, which is now called Eleutheropolis. Near it are the mountains of Seir, taking their name from Seir, the hairy and shaggy one, that is, Esau. In Abdia the prophet, it was disputed more fully about this people by us: in which it was necessary to go over the old history and to bring forth the same Visions of Ezekiel and Jeremiah as a testimony, and especially the prophecy against Mount Seir (Ezek. 25 and 35, Jer. 49). And that from the Psalms: I will stretch out my shoe upon Edom. And elsewhere: The tabernacles of the Edomites and Ishmaelites, Moab, and the Agarenians, Gebal and Ammon, and Amalek (Ps. 59, 10; Ps. 82, 7, 8). Amos also said: On account of three crimes of Edom, and on account of four I will not turn away from him, because he pursued his brother with the sword and violated his compassion (Amos 1:11), or, as Symmachus translated, his bowels, because he dared to fight against his kindred peoples and to dissent with hostile hate. The region ((Al. regia)) of Esau was in the region of Edom, that is, in the mountains of Seir. We believe that this city, as the capital according to the order of the previous Visions, was captured by the Assyrians, or by Nebuchadnezzar, and, remembering their ancient lineage, which was descended from Abraham and Isaac, they implored the help of God and, by necessity compelling them, begged for his mercy. Therefore, the Lord now narrates: he who is besieged in Seir and surrounded by enemies, calls upon my help and says: O guardian of Israel, who protect your people with eternal vigilance, and like a watchman in the night, you keep watch so that the enemy does not break in; why do you not protect us who are of his lineage with a similar mercy? To whom, as a guardian and watchman, I respond, as it is written: He who keeps Israel does not slumber or sleep (Ps. 121:4). He came in the morning to my people, and at night to the people of Edom; I will give them light, and leave you in darkness. Or rather this is the case: light comes after the night has passed; if you invoke my help and you are from the line of my servant Abraham, do not seek only me in times of need, but turn your whole heart to me. Come, and I will receive those who repent. This is said according to history: moreover, because the letters Res and Daleth are similar and differ only slightly, some Hebrews read 'Rome' instead of 'Duma,' wanting to direct the prophecy against the Roman kingdom, with a frivolous persuasion by which they always think that the Romans are indicated by the name 'Idumea': but 'Duma' means 'silence.'

21:13-17

(Verse 13 onwards) Burden in Arabia. In the evening you will sleep in the thicket, in the paths of Dodanim. Bring water to the thirsty ones you encounter: you who live in the land of the South, offer bread to the ones fleeing. Because they have fled from the swords, from the menacing sword, from the drawn bow, from the severity of battle. For this is what the Lord says to me: In yet one year, like the years of a hired worker, all the glory of Kedar will come to an end, and the remaining number of archers, the mighty men of the sons of Kedar, will be few. For the Lord, the God of

Israel, has spoken. To me, who was searching and pondering for a long time about what Arabia was, to which the prophetic speech is directed, whether it should be understood as the Moabites, or the Ammonites, and the Edomites, and all the other regions which are now called Arabia, an opportunity is given in this Vision that follows: All the glory of Cedar will be taken away, and the remaining number of mighty archers from the sons of Cedar will be diminished (Isaiah 21:16, 17), to be understood as the Ishmaelites. The book of Genesis teaches that Ishmael, Cedar, and the Hagarites, who are called Saracens by a perverse name, were born. They inhabit the whole wilderness, about whom I think even the poet says: 'And the wandering Barcaeans far and wide' (Virg. Aeneid. IV); and the aforementioned volume, 'He shall dwell against the face of all his brothers' (Gen. XVI, 12): because the very wide desert stretches from India to Mauritania, and the Atlantic Ocean, which I believe sounds the title of Jeremiah: 'Against Cedar and against the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon struck' (Jer. XLIX, 28); and immediately follows: 'Thus says the Lord, Arise, and ascend to Cedar, and devastate the sons of the East: their tents, and their flocks shall they take, their skins and all their vessels, and they shall take camels for themselves' (Ibid., 29); and again: 'For Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has thought a thought against you, and has deliberated against you.' Arise and go up to a quiet and confidently dwelling nation, says the Lord: there are no gates, no bars for them: they dwell alone. And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil. And I will scatter them to every wind, them that are clipped on the sides: and I will bring destruction upon them from all their borders, says the Lord: and Achor shall be a habitation of dragons, desolate for ever: there shall no man abide there, nor son of man inhabit it. I have placed the entire prophecy and testimony of Jeremiah so that you may understand clearly what Cedar is. And consider how he specifically describes the people of the Ishmaelites, that they dwell in tents: they occupy the dwellings that night brings, they possess herds and flocks of camels: they do not have doors or bolts: for they do not live in cities, but dwell in the wilderness. And so, they were destroyed by the Babylonians, because they completely destroyed the city of Hazor, which was the metropolis of their people, even down to the ground: and yet, their herds of camels and flocks of sheep were captured, and their skins and tents were divided by lot: not all of their people were annihilated, for dromedary camels, numbering over a hundred thousand, are accustomed to flee through the vast wilderness in a single day. The glory of Cedar will be taken away, it says, and with the number of archers diminished, as they excel greatly in the art of war: the rest who have fled will remain. Because we have understood what Cedar is, and what Arabia is, and what Asor is, let us see what the prophet Isaiah says: 'You will sleep in the forest, at evening, on the paths of Dodanim.' The word Arab (), as we have often said, is used for evening, and Arabia, and raven, and plain, and the West. And because we translated it according to the LXX, 'you will sleep,' it can be interpreted as 'you will stay' or 'you will dwell,' which is called ἀλιθσεσθε in Greek, and in Hebrew it is said 'Thalinu'. Moreover, he also turns to his close relatives and kinsmen. Thus, it is prophesied that now to the Jews, who were able to escape the siege of Babylon, they will cross over to the neighboring wilderness and settle in the solitude of Arabia on the journey that leads to their brothers. And again the conversation turns to the Ishmaelites, and he exhorts them to mercy: run, and bring water to your tired and endangered brothers, for they are thirsty with great fervor of the sun, and unless you help them, they will perish in the wilderness. And not only water, but also bring bread to the fugitives, so that your kindness may relieve those whom the siege has exhausted. At the same time, he explains the reason why he is giving these orders, saying: the Babylonians have fled, the

bows of the Elamites have fled, a fierce battle has fled. Do not despise the unfortunate: your captivity will come quickly. For just as the year of a hired worker is swift and considers all labor to be short until he receives the desired wage, so all the glory of the sons of Cedar will be taken from you, and your arrows will be worn out, and only a small number of warriors will remain. Some people want to be taken from what is said, that even in one year, and every glory of Cedar will be taken away, not Babylonian captivity being proclaimed, about which Jeremiah also speaks, but of the Assyrians, who after one year of the devastation of Judah, have widely persecuted the Saracens. Moreover, that place which we have transferred: You who inhabit the land of the South, meet the fugitive with bread: and as if we read in the imperative mode on behalf of the Lord, they affirm that in Hebrew it can be read like this: You who inhabit the land of the South, met the fugitive with bread; just as when God said to them, when they met the thirsty, bring water, they would take away the bread with a hostile mind without water, in order to increase their thirst with food.

22:1

(Chapter 22—Verse 1) The burden of the Valley of Vision. Although it is not found in Hebrew, they translated it more clearly as the word "Valley of Zion". For this city is the seedbed of prophets, in which the Temple is built, and the visions of the Lord are multiplied. Therefore, because it is compared to other nations and considered one among many, it is not called a mountain, according to the prophecy: Its foundations are on the holy mountains. The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob (Psalm 87:1); but it is called a valley, because it is humbled. In other words, Jeremiah himself says this: when he received a cup full of wine, he gave it to all the nations, and finally he offered it to Jerusalem to drink, vomit, fall, and go crazy, signifying the destruction of Babylon (Jeremiah 25). The history of the kings and Jeremiah explains this more fully. From this, we understand that the creator of all is equally God, and that he judges and dispenses everything according to his will, as he himself says through Amos: Are you not as the children of the Ethiopians to me, O children of Israel? The Lord says: Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? Behold, the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful kingdom (Amos 9:7). So the Jews should not think that they have a privilege because they were brought out of Egypt, for God also says that other nations were transferred to other lands by his authority.

What is also your concern, since you have ascended and fully entered the roofs, the city full of clamor, a crowded city, an exulting state? The Hebrew explained to me that the present Vision does not pertain to that time when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and led Zedekiah bound and blinded to Babylon, but to the times of Sennacherib when the high priest Sobna betrayed a great part of the city, and only Zion, that is, the citadel and the Temple, remained, as an example of the Roman city, which, while the Gauls were attacking, preserved the patricians and the flower of youth in the citadel. But we can also speak about the Babylonian captivity: although Eusebius refers everything to the coming of Christ and thinks that it was completed in the times of Vespasian and Titus. Let us take each point briefly, touching on the threefold explanation. What about you? What do you have, Zion, that you too have ascended all the roofs? When he says 'you too', he shows that others had already ascended. Have you also been counted among the nations that you are besieged by enemies and ascend the roofs filled with the wailing and lamentation of miserable women, once a royal city?

22:3

(V. 3.) Your killed ones were not killed by the sword, nor dead in battle. All your princes fled together: and were severely bound. All those who were found, were bound together: they fled far away. If you refer to the times of Sennacherib, when the city was partly captured, it is rightly said that they were not defeated by the sword, nor killed in battle, but by treachery, while some fled from the city; others, whom the enemy oppressed, were bound in chains. But if we speak of the captivity in Babylon, which is truer: we shall say that they were overcome not by battle, but by siege. But if you wish to interpret it tropologically with respect to the coming of Christ, according to Eusebius: you will say that they were killed not by the sword, but by unfaithfulness, and that all their leaders have turned away from God and have been bound by the cords of sins, and that there was no Pharisee who was not bound by the snares of the devil.

22:4

(Verse 4.) Therefore I said, depart from me; I will weep bitterly: do not try to console me concerning the devastation of the daughter of my people. If the prophet weeps in the devastation of Babylon with great sorrow, and says: Anguish has taken hold of me, as the anguish of a woman in labor: I fell down when I heard it, I was troubled when I saw it, my heart became faint, darkness stunned me: Babylon, my beloved, has become a wonder to me, how much more now, in the ruin of her city, can she receive no consolation, surrendering herself entirely to mourning!

22:5

(Verse 5.) For it is a day of slaughter, and of trampling, and of weeping to the Lord God of hosts in the Valley of Vision. He reveals the reasons according to triple understanding why he said: Depart from me, I will weep bitterly; because Zion is trodden down, once a mountain of visions, and now a valley of weeping.

22:6

(Verse 6.) Searching the wall, and magnificent upon the mountain: and Elam took the quiver, the chariot of a man on horseback, and uncovered the shield the shield stripped the wall. The army of Babylon is described as entering the city, occupying the temple, and proudly advancing through the streets with chariots. And the fact that it uncovered the golden posts and the walls adorned with marble crusts, the shield that is used to cover others, elegantly resonates in Hebrew, and the meaning is most beautiful, that it did not protect anyone, but uncovered. This is because through the strength of the soldiers all resources have been plundered. But if the Elamites are mentioned in battle, which city is of the Assyrians: it cannot be referred to the times of the Roman overthrow, unless perhaps we interpret everything allegorically.

22:7-9

(Verses 7-9.) And your chosen valleys will be full of chariots, and the horsemen will set their seats at the gate. And the covering of Judah will be revealed, and on that day you will see the arsenal of the house of the forest, and the breaches of the city of David, for they have multiplied. It clearly describes the captivity that occurred in the eleventh year of King Zedekiah, of which Jeremiah also speaks: Behold, I will summon all the kingdoms of the north, says the Lord, and they will come and each one will set their throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and on all its surrounding

walls (Jeremiah 1:15). So that what was predicted in word and not fulfilled in deed, Jeremiah also says the same: In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the city was opened, and all the officials of the king of Babylon entered and sat in the middle gate (Jer. 39:2). Therefore, in the surrounding area of the city of Jerusalem, an innumerable army was spread out, and the Holy of Holies and the armory, which had been planted with groves, were opened due to hostile plundering, and the enemy entered through all parts of the city, divided by walls.

22:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) And you gathered the waters of the lower pool, and you counted the houses of Jerusalem, and you destroyed houses to fortify the wall. And you made a reservoir between the two walls, and the water of the Old Pool. And you did not look to the One who made it, and you did not see the One who fashioned it from afar. It tells how they prepared the city for siege, and transferred the waters of the lower pool to the upper fortification, and after destroying the houses, they built walls, and through each family, they counted the amount of water that each house should receive, and they made a cistern between the two walls, and restored the old pool to preserve the water. And they did not call upon the help of God, who is the creator of the city and the Lord of the pool; as if God had said in other words: You trusted in man and not in God, who is the maker of man. Certain people, according to a mystical understanding, understand the old pool to be a shadow of the Law, and between two walls, namely the new and old Testament, they see a lake built by the Pharisees' traditions and commands, which cannot contain water: and they did not look to the Son of God, nor did they believe in His presence, whom they had never seen before, because they have always been incredulous to God's precepts.

22:12-14

(Verse 12-14) And the Lord God of hosts shall call in that day to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth. And behold joy and gladness, killing calves, and slaying sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die. And it was revealed in my ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of hosts. In the present captivity and siege of Jerusalem, when the city was being pressed by sword, famine, and thirst, Jeremiah called the people to repentance (Jeremiah 34). On the other hand, kings, princes, and the miserable populace, in their desperate state, devoted themselves to feasting. However, nothing offends God more than a neck raised after sins, and being despised out of desperation. This is also spoken by Amos: I will not turn away from him for three or four transgressions; because he has thought and done them and has not repented, moreover he has taught evil. Wherefore now it is said: If this iniquity remain unpunished to you, until ye die. (Amos I, 4). Allegorical interpreters say it is about the passion of Christ, that God has called even after the crucifixion of the Lord and Saviour an unfaithful people to repentance, and nevertheless that people has delivered itself to despair and pleasure. The beginning of this vision, where it says: Full of outcry, a populous city, a joyful town, refers to that time when the people, instigated by the Pharisees, echoed with the same voice against Jesus: Crucify, crucify such a one: we have no king but Caesar. (John XIX, 6, 7). The Apostle also made use of this testimony, writing to the Corinthians about the resurrection: If the dead do not rise again, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die (I Cor. XV, 32).

(Verse 15 onward) Thus says the Lord God of hosts: Go, go into him who dwells in the tabernacle, to Shebna, the overseer of the Temple, and say to him: What are you doing here? Or who are you here, because you have dug for yourself here a tomb? You have dug your memorial on high, diligently in the rock you have made a dwelling for yourself. Behold, the Lord will carry you away: like the lifting of a rooster or like a garment he will lift you up. He will surely overthrow you and throw you into a wide and spacious land: there you shall die, and there shall be the chariots of your glory; the disgrace of your Lord's house. And I will drive you out from your office, and I will remove you from your position. And on that day, I will call my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah. And I will clothe him with your robe, and I will strengthen him with your sash, and I will give your authority into his hand. And he will be like a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I will place the key of the house of David on his shoulder, and he will open, and no one shall shut; and he will shut, and no one shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it. We have already mentioned that Shebna was a high priest who betrayed the city to the Assyrians. But because this is a Hebrew tradition and Scripture does not speak of it, let us understand him to be proud, arrogant, and indulgent, trampling on nations with his own feet. And because he did everything the Prophet describes, his priesthood was transferred to Eliakim son of Hilkiah, so that he would be expelled and a new high priest would be made. From this we understand that we must avoid pride with all diligence, which offends God, and even the privilege of the high priesthood cannot be considered secure. This is Shebna (as some think) and Eliakim, of whom the same Prophet says: The king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a heavy hand; and he stood near the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field. Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, came out to him, as did the court secretary Shebna and the royal historian Joah son of Asaph (Isaiah 36:2-3). Therefore, the Prophet is ordered to go to the high priest, who lived, according to the Septuagint, in the sanctuary; according to Aquila, in the tabernacle. For this, Theodotion, following the Hebrew truth, says: Go to this Shebna, which can be interpreted as just and right (so that he may be understood in the opposite sense, as unjust and wicked), to the high priest of the temple, and say to him: You who live in the house of God, where wickedness is rampant in the whole city, why are you so secure in your works, as if you do not fear captivity? You have carved for yourself a tomb in a rock, and you have built so proudly that your ambition follows you even in death? Listen to what is the Lord's message to you: just as a rooster carrying a hen on its shoulder is taken away, and each of the men lifts his cloak on his shoulder, so will your easy capture be. You will have a crown not of gold sheets and the sanctification of the Lord, but of tribulation and distress. For just as a ball, if thrown on a slope, cannot stand, but rolls with swift speed, so will you be led to the broadest land, which we understand as either the fields of Egypt or Babylon, and there you will die. And there will be chariots of glory, all power and wealth, with which you now walk supported. There you will experience the shame of the house of your Lord: because of your evil deeds, and the violation of the Temple of your God, you will suffer these things. I will remove you from your position, and I will cast you out from the office of the

priesthood, and I will clothe my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, with your garments, and I will adorn him with your sash, just as Eleazar was clothed in the garments of his father Aaron. I will give the authority of the Temple to him, who shall have a people not subject to him as a servant, but who loves him as a son. He himself will receive the key to my house, and he will carry it on his shoulder; he will have the authority over all the ceremonies. And just as a peg is fixed on the wall of the Temple, and placed in a secure place, all the vessels of the priests and Levites, both those necessary for sacrifices and all kinds of musical instruments, are suspended on it: so the entire people will depend on the authority of my servant Eliakim. But what he says: On that day the peg that was fixed in the faithful place will be removed, and it will be broken, and it will fall, and everything that was hanging on it will perish, because the Lord has spoken it, many attribute it to Shebna, that Eliakim, having fixed the peg, caused the previous peg to fall. But because it follows: And what hung on it will perish: we understand this to be said, that with Sobna deposed, it was by no means fulfilled, that Eliakim, who overturned the dignity of the priesthood, received the pontificate, and in the succession of Eliakim, which means God arising, the sacraments of the evangelical cult are shown: so that what follows may be understood: On that day, says the Lord of hosts, the peg that was firmly fastened in a secure place will be removed, broken and fallen, to the ruin of the former people. But there is no doubt, both according to history and according to allegory, that the flag, so to speak, signifies the suspension of vessels of different kinds; and that when the former are broken, others are suspended in their place.

23:1

(Chapter 23, Verse 1) The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of the sea; for the house is laid waste, from whence they come: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them. Be silent, ye inhabitants of the island; thou merchants of Sidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished thee. And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, was her revenue; and she became the mart of nations. Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. They shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will scrape her dust from her and make her like the top of a rock. (Ezek. 26:2-4) As for the many nations that will overflow Tyre like the overflowing sea, in the following verses it is specifically stated: Behold, I will bring against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, from the north, with horses, chariots, horsemen, and a great army and people. He will kill your daughters who are in the field with a sword; and he will surround you with fortifications; and he will gather a rampart around you and raise a shield against you; and he will temper vineyards and battering rams against your walls; and he will destroy your towers with his weapons; and other things that follow to the end of the vision. For in another prophecy, which is seen against the Egyptians, the same Scripture conceals: Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon made his army serve with great servitude against Tyre: every head was shaved, and every shoulder was shaved, and there was no payment given to him, nor to his army from Tyre (Ezek. XXIX). Through which it signifies that a mound was built up over a long time by the army of Babylon, so that what Alexander later did, uniting an island to the mainland, he attempted to do first. (Quint. Curt. lib. IV). Therefore, just as we read above about the Babylonians, Philistines, Moabites, Egyptians, Edomites, and Ishmaelites, that they insulted the captivity of his people, so too now a prophecy is hidden against the enemy Tyre, an insulter and overthrower of Jerusalem, that it also must be destroyed by the same enemy. We read the histories of the Greeks, especially those who describe

the wars of the Assyrian people; and there we find that after the captivity of Jerusalem, the Palestinians, Arabs, and Damascenes were subverted. As for the fact that these nations, especially Tyre, have always attacked Israel and rejoiced in its overthrow, the prophet Amos explains this at the beginning of his book (Amos. I), and the Psalmist briefly declares praises to God, saying: O God, who is like you? Do not be silent, nor be restrained, O God. For behold, your enemies have made a noise; and those who hate you have lifted up their heads. They have devised a wicked plan against your people, and have plotted against your saints. They have said, 'Come, let us destroy them from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.' For they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy against you: the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites, Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre (Psalm 83:1-8). From all of these things we learn that the weight of God's anger came upon the harlot Tyre, who here is described under the guise of a prostitute in the translation of Ezekiel (Ezek. XXVI). Howl, says he, ye ships of the sea. For this in the Septuagint we read Carthage: and it is found in the Hebrew Tharsis (): of which I have discussed in Jonah the prophet, and in a certain letter. But we can, because Carthage is a colony of Tyre, understand in the present place Tharsis, not the sea in general, but also Carthage: that by no means from Africa do ships come to Tyre, nor from the land of Chittim, which some interpret as Cyprus: even to this day there is a city called Citium among them, from which Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect, arose as a heretic: although most of our people, and especially the leaders of the Maccabees, consider Chittim to be the islands of Italy and Macedonia. For this Scripture recalls that Alexander, the king of the Macedonians, set out from the land of Cethim. And by naming the island, it does not lie: for afterward it became part of the mainland at the time of Nabuchodonosor or Alexander, on account of the many embankments constructed in the narrow strait. It also mentions the trading of Sidon, according to the following verse, in which it says: Be ashamed, Sidon. For the histories recount that Tyre was a colony of Sidon.

23:3

(Vers. 3.) Those crossing the sea fill you, in many waters, with the seed of the Nile, and the harvest of its river. Tyre rejoices in trade, and is the market of the whole world, and the present times prove it, as described by Ezekiel in his lengthy discourse. That merchants cross the seas in transporting goods is not doubted by anyone; nor does the city itself have such great wealth from the land of its region, which is very narrow, and is pressed by the borders of Galilee and Damascus, as it has from the transportation of ships. The entire Nile and the fertility of Egypt are poured out nearby Tyre. Regarding the Nile, which we read as Sior among the Hebrews, it was interpreted by the Septuagint and Theodotion as meaning turbid, and therefore signifies the waters of the Nile. As Jeremiah testifies, what do you have to do with the waters of Geon, and Egypt, that you drink from turbid waters (Jeremiah II, 18): for which in Hebrew it is called Sior, that is, turbid.

23:4

(Verse 4.) Blush, O Sidon: for the sea speaks as the strength of the sea, saying: I have not given birth, and I have not borne, and I have not nourished the youth, nor have I led the maidens to growth. I have said before that the colony of the Sidonians is Tyre. Therefore, listen, mother, all the seas together cry out against your daughter, and in a way, emit a voice that they cannot naturally speak: I have gathered riches in vain: for no reason did I bring wealth from the whole

world into Tyre: she, once rich, once luxurious, and once rejoicing in the multitude of peoples in which a crowd of mortals were born, a crowd of children, the trials of youth, whose streets were filled with the games of maidens, infants, youths, and girls: now she has been reduced to desolation. However, the practice of personifying mute objects is a common ritual.

23:5

(Verse 5) When it is heard in Egypt, they will grieve when they hear about Tyre. This is clear, that after the Egyptians hear about the most powerful and neighboring nation being destroyed by a long siege, they will also know that their own destruction is approaching.

23:6

(Verse 6.) Cross over, O sea! Cry out, you who dwell on the island! Once again, they have carried Carthage across the sea and to Tharsis, seventy ships. We read in the histories of the Assyrians that the besieged Tyrians, seeing no hope of escape, fled to Carthage, either to other islands of the Ionian and Aegean seas. Hence it is said in Ezekiel: No wages were given to him, nor to his army from Tyre (Ezek. 29); because all the wealth of the city has been transferred, and all its nobles have abandoned it empty.

23:7

(Verse 7) Is this not yours, which boasted in its ancient days? Tyre, pride, has been rebuked because it boasted in its ancient state and did not look to God. Instead, it remembered the names of its ancestors, thinking itself eternal.

He led her two hundred feet away for a pilgrimage. He says this to those who remained in the city, and the captives were led to Babylon.

23:8 (Verse 8.) Who ever thought about this regarding Tyre, once crowned? Again, read Ezekiel (Ezek. XXVII), and you will learn of the great glory of Tyre from the lamentation of its prince. He calls it crowned because just as a king raises his head adorned with a diadem among a great multitude of people, so Tyre, shining and rich in wealth, adorned with gold and gems, silk and purple, was considered a queen among all nations. Whose merchants were the principal ones, and his attendants were distinguished in the land. We marvel at the envoy of Pyrrhus who once said of the city of Rome, I have seen a city of kings. Behold, long before those times, the merchants and attendants of Tyre, the principal and distinguished ones, are described in such a way as to demonstrate the greatness of wealth, since a Tyrian merchant could be called a king in the words of another.

23:9

(Verse 9.) The Lord of hosts has thought of this, to take away the pride of all glory: and to bring into contempt all the glorious ones of the earth. For as he had said above: Who hath thought the former Tyre, crowned by the ancients, that such a thing should be done? Now he himself speaks: Not of the fates, as foolish men imagine, are these threads spun: not by the turning of fortune's wheel, but by the judgment of God and his own will, is all this accomplished, who resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble (James 4): and it warns the arrogant of their condition, that they may learn his power through misery, whose mercy they refused to feel through benefits.

23:10

(Verse 10) Go through your land like a river, O daughter of the sea; you have no more restraint. Just as a river, or as the Hebrew more significantly has it, a stream, for this is called Jabbok, is easily crossed on foot, so you, O daughter of the sea, whether because you are an island or because it is written about you: 'The sea has spoken, the strength of the sea, I have not travailed, nor given birth.' And what he adds, 'you have no more restraint', Symmachus clearly teaches us the meaning: you will no longer be able to resist, that is, you will not have strength, nor will you gird your loins for battle, so that you may oppose your adversaries.

23:11

(Verse 11.) He stretched out his hand over the sea, he troubled the kingdoms. Who stretched out his hand? Without a doubt, based on the context of the words themselves, it is God, about whom he said above: the Lord of hosts has planned this, to take away the pride of all glory. He therefore stretched out his hand over all the seas, signifying the world and its inhabitants, and troubled all the nations, among which, even you, Tyre, were troubled, whether it be over the sea, on which you are specifically situated.

23:12

(Verse 12) The Lord commanded against Canaan, to crush its strong ones. He showed that there is a sea, upon which the Lord stretched out his hand, saying: He commanded against Canaan. For Tyre was founded in the land of Canaan. Read the Scriptures, especially the Gospel (Mark 7), where the Syrophoenician woman, interceding for her daughter, comes out of the land of Canaan, which is called the Canaanite woman. And at the same time, because he had said: He stretched out his hand, lest you believe that the Lord was working with his limbs and physical function, he added that it was commanded, that it was done by God's order.

23:13

(Verse 13) And he said: You shall no longer boast, enduring slander, O virgin daughter of Sidon, rising up to Cythim, crossing over: there also you will find no rest. God, who has determined to bring down the pride of all glory, who has commanded against Canaan, to crush its warriors, he himself says, By no means shall you boast any longer, and trust in your own power. O virgin daughter of Sidon, that is, the colony of the Sidonians, you will indeed flee by ships to the islands of the West, or to Cyprus, and the other lands of Macedonia and Greece, but even there, when God opposes you, you will not find rest. Furthermore, he is always wandering and a stranger in the world, and in uncertain places, always in distress and constantly in sorrow.

23:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) Behold the land of the Chaldeans, such a people has never existed: Assyria laid it waste, they led away its strong men, they dug up its houses, they reduced it to ruins. Wail, O ships of the sea, for your strength is destroyed. For as it was said before: His feet will travel a great distance in exile; and again, Cross over your land like a river, and the people of Tyre will be doubly afflicted, those who fled and crossed over to Cyprus, and those who remained in the city. About those who had fled, he says above: Rising up, cross over to Cethim, there also there will be no rest for you. About those who remained and were led into captivity, he says: Behold, the

inhabitants of the land of the Chaldeans, whose power no other people had before, and which was founded by the Assyrians, they have led mighty men of Tyre. They not only dug up the walls, but also all the dwellings of the city, and turned it into ruins. Therefore, because some have fled and others have been captured, howl, O ships, whether of the sea or of Carthage; for your trade and colony have been destroyed. At the same time, consider how he praised the Chaldeans. He did not say that such a people will no longer exist: for indeed, the kingdom of the Romans is more powerful and harsher; but, there was not one before. He who denied the previous things, has conceded the following things.

23:15

(Verse 15.) And it shall come to pass on that day, Tyre, you shall be forgotten for seventy years, like the days of one king. From this point until the end of this prophecy, favorable tidings are announced for Tyre, that it shall repent, that it shall be rebuilt again, but that its destruction shall remain for only seventy years, the same number of years that the temple of God was desolate. Tyre shall imitate the time of its ruins, just as it had mocked the ruins of others. However, many believe that the seventy years of one king refer to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, during which the kingdom of the Assyrian people persisted in Jerusalem. Others generally claim that someone who has had a long reign cannot exceed seventy years.

23:16

(Verse 16.) After seventy years, Tyre will be like the song of a prostitute. Take up the lyre, go around the city, forgotten prostitute, sing well, sing often, so that there will be a memory of you. Because you have prostituted yourself with many nations, and you have been left desolate, naked, and filthy with the filth of captivity, your former lovers have despised you. Now take up the lyre, sing songs of lamentation, go around the city, weep for your former brothel, and wash away the traces of your ancient error with tears, so that you may provoke the mercy of God in yourself.

23:17

(Verse 17) And it will be, after seventy years, the Lord will visit Tyre, and He will restore it to its merchandise, and again it will commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the earth on the face of the earth. All these things are indicated by the consonant letters of the Greeks and the Phoenicians, that after seventy years, it was restored and returned to its former power, and it became a market for all nations, which I think are called fornications, just as one who commits fornication enters a brothel and gives a fee for immorality: in the same way, the instigator, coming together from the whole world, will fill the beauty of the city like that of a harlot.

23:18

(Verse 18) And his business shall be holy to the Lord, and his wages shall be set apart for the Lord; they shall not be stored up or hoarded away. For those who dwell before the Lord, his business shall be to eat in plenty and be clothed until old age. These things, according to history, we have not yet discovered if they have been fulfilled, unless it is to be thought that after the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the restoration of Tyre, the two cities were friendly with each other and frequently sent gifts to the temple of God in Tyre. Just as we read in Ezra (Esdras 13:16) that he drove away the Tyrians who were selling fish on the Sabbath and did not allow them to enter the

city, and it should be estimated from this example about other business dealings as well. The Jews delay their empty prayers for the future, stating that these will be fulfilled after the Antichrist in a thousand years. It is not surprising if they fabricate such things, as they have rejected the truth of Christ and are preparing to receive the Antichrist, the instrument of the devil. Even Christians who fall into Judaizing contend that these words refer to a thousand years of blessedness. However, I, in understanding the vision of Babylon as a type of its destruction, interpret it as the time of its fulfillment, and in Egypt, with its idols destroyed and the altar of the Lord erected, I refer it to the time of Christ. Likewise, in the vision of Moab, I recognize the throne of the Savior placed on his land, and in all the other visions of Damascus, I have no doubt that they are sacraments of our times. Thus, in the vision of Tyre, which is the most extreme, I interpret it as the time of Christian felicity: that after it is built and regains its former state, all merchants return to their ancient customs, entering its harbor, and their goods and labor are dedicated to the Lord. Let us consider the churches built in Tyre, let us think about the wealth of all, which is not stored up or hoarded, but given to those who live before the Lord, who, as altar servants, share with the altar (1 Corinthians 9). However, the Tyrians serve not for wealth, nor to accumulate the wealth of priests, but to provide for the necessary sustenance: so that, according to the Apostle, having food and clothing, we may be content with these (1 Timothy 6). And note that it did not say negotiations and goods of Tyre sanctified to be given to the Lord to those who dwell in Jerusalem as the Jews think, but to those who are before the Lord, who serve Him. For the Lord established it so that those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel (I Cor. IX). But to serve the Lord and to dwell before Him is not a matter of place, but of merit. Thus far we have discussed the visions of Isaiah, or the burdens that he imposed on certain nations, as you have commanded, and as we have been able to, following the historical interpretation, focusing only on the footsteps of Hebrew truth. The following things pertain to all nations, and generally to the completion of the whole world. About these things, neither did you ask me to write, nor was it a waste of time for me to dictate unasked and barely written about sought-after things.

Book Six

Book Six

What I promised in the previous volume, that if Christ were to grant our desire, I would build a spiritual structure upon the foundations of history and show the adornment of the perfect Church with its roof set, I will attempt to accomplish in the following two books, O virgin of Christ Eustochium, through your prayers and the mercy of the Lord, so that with the same effort that the fifth book encompasses history, the sixth and seventh may touch upon the anagoge: not discussing everything, lest the volumes become too numerous, but briefly indicating what the men of the Church before us have thought.

13:1

(Chapter XIII—Verse 1) The burden or vision against Babylon that Isaiah, son of Amos, saw. He saw not with the eyes of the flesh, but with the eyes of the mind, how great and weighty a burden is to be imposed upon Babylon. And because Babylon, which in Hebrew is called Babel (), signifies confusion; because there the speech of the builders was confounded, it is understood spiritually that this world, which is placed in evil, not only confuses languages, but also the works of individuals and their minds. The king of Babylon is the true Nebuchadnezzar, who rebels

against the Lord, saying in his heart: I will ascend to heaven, I will set my throne above the stars of heaven. I will sit on the mountain of the Covenant on the sides of the North. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. This is the one who shows the Lord all the kingdoms of the world, and said to him: All these things are given to me, and I will give them to you, if you fall down and worship me (Matthew 4:9). Finally, in the following statements, there is a threat not against Babylon, but against the whole world. The Lord of Hosts commanded the most warlike nation to come from a distant land, from the highest heavens, to destroy the world. And again: Behold, the day of incurable fury and wrath is coming, to make the world a deserted place, and to destroy sinners from it. And then: I will bring evils upon the whole world, and upon the wicked their own sins. From these things it is proved that everything that is said against Babylon pertains to the confusion and destruction of this world.

13:2

(Version 2.) On the dark or open plain, raise the sign. The Apostles and the Apostolic men and masters of the Churches are instructed to raise the sign of the Lord's cross when they are about to fight against Babylon, not in a lowly place or in sunken valleys, but on a dark or open mountain. The former signifies the hidden sacraments of the Church, which Moses entered into darkness and gloom in order to see and hear the voice of God. For God has set darkness as his hiding place: and clouds and mists surround him. (Psalm 17). The other teaches us that we should ascend to the heights of ecclesiastical teachings in such a way that, according to the Apostle Paul, we humble ourselves and say: 'I am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God' (1 Corinthians 15, 9). He himself raised a sign on the mountain plain, when, with inherent humility, he said: 'But I have judged myself to know nothing among you, except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' But this sign he himself shall raise up in the previous days, who has arisen from the root of Jesse amongst the nations, in order to gather the lost of Israel.

Exalt your voice, raise your hand. Regarding which, the Seventy translated: 'Console his hand.' He who speaks of lofty matters raises his voice and despises present things as if they were brief and fleeting. He also hears from Isaiah: 'Ascend to the high mountain, O bearer of good news to Zion. Raise your voice with strength, O bearer of good news to Jerusalem; raise your hand, O bearer of good news.' And he is able, like David, to say: 'The raising of my hands is an evening sacrifice.' And he raises holy hands in every place, not only to raise his hands, but also to console with his hand, so that he does not say to the poor: 'Come back tomorrow and take it,' but rather to console his poverty and need with present mercy. And let the leaders enter the gates. LXX: Open, O leaders. The leaders of the Church enter the gates of God's mysteries, and they understand the sacraments of the Scriptures, having the key of knowledge, so that they may open them to the people who believe in them. Therefore, it is commanded that the teachers open them, and the disciples enter.

13:3 (Verse 3) I have commanded my sanctified ones. Concerning this, in the Septuagint (LXX): I will command, and I will bring them. For he himself sanctifies his ministers, so that both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified may all be one. He also speaks in another place to the believers: Be holy, for I am holy, he himself commands, and he will bring his princes to do what has been commanded (Leviticus 19:2). And I called my strong ones in my anger: rejoicing in my glory. LXX: Giants come to fulfill my fury, rejoicing together and causing insult. According to the

Hebrew, they adhere to the previous statements, that He Himself called His strong ones, rejoicing in His glory, those whom He had commanded to be sanctified. However, according to the LXX, the coming giants to fulfill the wrath of the Lord, rejoicing in the injury of others and rejoicing, must be understood as the reception of left-handed and contrary virtues, of which we also read in the Psalms: He sent upon them the rage of His anger, wrath and trouble, by the sending of the worst Angels (Psalm LXXVII, 49). Among these is the destroyer in Egypt, who dares not enter the dwelling of the blood-stained doorposts (Exod. XII), and that spirit who went forth and stood in the presence of the Lord, and said: 'I will deceive Ahab.' And the Lord said to him: 'You will deceive and prevail, go forth and do so' (III Kings XXII, 21, 22). From the same book of Kings, Michaiah said: 'I saw the Lord of Israel sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven stood around Him on His right hand and on His left' (Ibid., 9). The virtues of the angels who are sent for good are on the right, but those who are entrusted with punishing are on the left. Hence, the Apostle says: 'Those whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme' (I Tim. I, 20). However, the name of the giants, for which in Hebrew it is Geborim (), that is, the strong ones, is translated by the Septuagint and Theodotion into a likeness of the fables of the gentiles, just as they name the Sirens, and Titans, and Arcturus, the Hyades, and Orion, which are called by different names among the Hebrews. But if the giants are rebellious against God, and all heresies rebel against the truth contrary to God: all heretics are giants, who rejoice in their error, and especially glory when they have insulted the Church.

13:5 (Verse 5) The voice of the multitude on the mountains is like the voice of populous nations, the sound of gathered kings of nations. This place is understood in three ways. First, that with a raised sign on a rural mountain, a multitude of nations may come, and they themselves, being situated on the mountains, are divided into two, namely, peoples and kings, disciples and teachers, of whom the Savior spoke in the Gospel: Many will come from the east and west and recline at table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 8:11). Therefore, one voice is said to be consonant, so that the apostolic saying may be proved: 'You all say the same thing and there are no divisions among you, but you are perfect in the same mind and in the same judgment' (1 Corinthians 1:10). Secondly, the pride of heretics is described, who, believing themselves to be on mountains, rise up against the knowledge of God and speak iniquity on high, and they raise their mouths to heaven. They themselves also have people, they have kings, who devour the deceived people. The third interpretation is as follows: because, as mentioned before, the giants come to fulfill my wrath, rejoicing together and committing insults; the passage describes the arrogance of the giants themselves and their agreement to carry out punishment against those who have been handed over to them. The Lord of hosts has commanded the army of war, coming from a far country, from the end of heaven: The Lord and his vessels of wrath, to destroy all the earth. LXX: The Lord of hosts has commanded the most warlike nation, to come from a distant land from the highest foundation of heaven. The foundation must be noted. We read in the Book of Kings and Chronicles (2 Kings 24; 1 Chronicles 21). The passage states that the anger of God was kindled against Israel when David numbered the people, which offended the Lord. In the Psalms, it is also written: 'O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath,' and so on with similar statements. It is mentioned in someone's (possibly Basil's) Commentaries that the anger of God can be understood as contrary to strength, which is given to us for punishment. This is also sung in the eighth psalm: 'To destroy the enemy and the avenger' (Psalm 8:3). Those can be called warriors who come from far away lands and

from the highest heavens, even the ministering angels who are to be sent in the consummation of the world to gather the bundles of weeds and prepare them for eternal fire (Matthew 13). Likewise, the whole earth is destroyed when earthly works are overthrown. There are also other warriors of the Lord, armed like the apostles, who daily in the Church, which is called the inhabited world, fight against and kill those who rise up against the knowledge of God.

13:6-7

(Verse 6, 7.) Howl, for the day of the Lord is near; it will come as destruction from the Lord. Therefore all hands will be feeble, and every man's heart will melt, and be crushed. For the warriors of the Lord are coming to destroy all the earth, howl and repent, for punishment is coming. For the day of the Lord is near, the end of the world, and judgment, or the end of each person's life. For plunder comes from the Lord, which we call destruction, to keep the metaphor, because the warriors had been sent ahead. When the day of judgment or of death comes, all hands will be dissolved, as it is said elsewhere: Take courage, you who have dissolved hands. The hands will be dissolved because no work worthy of God's justice will be found, and in his sight, no living creature will be justified (Psalm 142:2). Therefore, the Prophet says in the Psalms: If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, who could stand? (Psalm 130:3). Every heart and every soul of man will waste away, and the conscience of their sin will cause fear. This is a day of fear and terror, about which even Zephaniah speaks: 'Fear before the Lord; for the day of the Lord is near' (Soph. I, 14). And again: 'The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hastens quickly' (Zeph. I, 14). And Amos says: 'Woe to those who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the day of the Lord? It is darkness, and not light' (Amos V, 18). And that which is added in the Septuagint is: 'The messengers will be troubled and pains will seize them'. We can interpret those messengers as the citizens who sent against him who had gone into a far country to obtain a kingdom for himself (Luke XIX, 27). But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

13:8

(Verse 8.) They will be tormented with twists and pains. They will groan like a woman giving birth. Each one will be astonished at their neighbor. Their faces will be burned. When the warriors of the Lord come from a distant land, and all hands are loosened, and the heart is fearful and crushed, then the stomach turns, which we have interpreted as twists, and pains will torment them, similar to the pains of a woman in labor. Through this, it is shown that they are tormented by their own conscience and have faces burned by the fire they have kindled for themselves. Because they cannot say: 'The light of your face, Lord, has shone upon us' (Psalm 4:7); and: 'We all, with unveiled face, contemplate the glory of the Lord, and we are transformed into the same image' (2 Corinthians 3:18). Each one will be amazed to see their neighbor suffering in the same torments as themselves.

13:9

(Verse 9) Behold, the cruel day of the Lord is coming, full of indignation, wrath, and fury, to make the earth a desolation and to crush sinners out of it. For the phrase 'the earth' the Seventy interpreted it as 'the inhabited world', that is, the globe. And for 'cruel' they translated it as 'incurable'. For when the day of judgment or death comes, that will be fulfilled which is read in the

sixth psalm: 'For in death, who will give you thanks?' (Ps. VI, 6). For that time is not a time of repentance, but of punishment. And in another place it is said: How great is the multitude of your sweetness, Lord, which you have hidden for those who fear you! Therefore, much of God's mercy is hidden from those who are still in fear and do not have perfect love of God, so that when they hear of the cruel day of the Lord, and of the incurable and full of anger and fury, they may cease from sinning. The world or the earth will also be turned into a desert, and sinners will be crushed by it, which was previously burdened by the weight of sins, so that after wickedness is destroyed and lost, only justice may dwell and reign in the earth.

13:10

(Verse 10.) For the stars of heaven and their splendor will not expand their light: the sun will be obscured in its rising, and the moon will not shine in its brightness. LXX: For the stars of heaven and Orion, and all the adornment of the heavens will not give their light (or, will have it): and they will be darkened when the sun rises, and the moon will not give its light. Because we have interpreted the splendor of them, without a doubt the stars Aquila and Theodotion have placed the Hebrew word "Chisileem" (): for which reason the LXX translated it as Orion, adding from their own, and all the adornment of the heavens, which is to be marked with an obelus. The fables of the Gentiles say that Orion has twenty-two stars, of which four are of the third magnitude, nine of the fourth, and again nine of the fifth, and they are called Bootes by others. We also read in Job about the Hyades, the Evening Star, Arcturus, and the treasures or inner parts of the South (Job 9:9), about which will be said in their proper place. Nor should we think that these stars are called by these names among the Hebrews, which the Greek and Latin language sound forth, but they have their own proper names. For just as God called light, day; and firmament, heaven; and dry land, earth; and gatherings of waters, seas (Gen. I); so too he named each star with its own names, the properties of which our language does not express. It is written of God in another place: Who numbers the multitude of stars: and calls each of them by name. Therefore, when the day of the Lord comes to establish the barrenness of the earth and to completely remove sinners from it (Ps. CXLVI, 4); then, in comparison to the divine majesty, the stars of the sky and all their splendor will withdraw their light. And it is no wonder to say this about the lesser stars, since the sun itself becomes obscured at its rising, and the moon does not have its usual radiance. But that which the seventy translators rendered, that the stars and Orion, and all the adornments of the sky are obscured at the rising of the sun, does not have any significance or miracle; for this happens at all times, that when the sun rises, the stars that are in the sky do not appear. It is also not surprising to say this about the sun, since even during a full moon and when the entire night is shining, many stars do not shine. Moreover, it also proves the daily movement of the stars in the sky, as well as the eclipse of the sun, which, as philosophers argue, when the shadow of the earth and the orbit of the moon are obstructed, brighter stars are seen in the sky.

13:11 (Verse 11) And I will visit the evils of the world, and against the wickedness of their iniquities. When God visits and strikes; He strikes in order to correct. Indeed, when He is greatly angered against those who do not repent: 'I will not visit,' He says, 'upon your daughters when they have committed fornication, and upon your daughters-in-law when they have committed adultery' (Hosea 4:14). On the contrary, concerning those who will believe in Christ, it is said (Psalm 88:33): 'I will visit with the rod their iniquities, and with stripes their sins: but I will not take away my mercy from them.' And I will make the pride of the infidels rest, and I will humble the arrogance of the

strong. LXX: And I will destroy the injustice of the wicked, and I will humble the injustice of the proud. The Hebrew word Gaon (), which clearly conveys arrogance and pride, has always been translated by Theodotion and the Septuagint as injustice, expressing the meaning rather than the word: because every proud person is ready for injustice. Therefore, the Lord visits the world's evils, and against the wickedness of the wicked, to suppress the arrogance of the proud, and to humble the pride of the strong. For God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5). And in Proverbs we read: Before destruction, the heart of a man is haughty, and before honor is humility (Proverbs 16:18). Pride always follows with a fall, and humility with glory: For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 14). We read in another place: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the prudent I will reject (1 Corinthians 1:19). Not that true wisdom and true prudence are lost by the Lord, but the knowledge of a false name: those who treasure up the language of falsehood, and fail in their searching, and find nothing, speaking iniquity on high and setting their mouth against heaven. Hence the pride of heretics is properly called an injury to truth.

13:12

(Verse 12) A man will be more precious than gold and a human more adorned than the world. LXX: And those who have been abandoned will be honored more than refined gold, and a man will be more honorable than the sapphire stone. In the consummation of the world, when the globe will be reduced to desolation, and the sun will be darkened at its rising, and the moon will not give its brightness, there will be so many signs and wonders by the Antichrist, that with the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold, even to deceive, if possible, the chosen ones of God (Matthew 24). Then the man will be more precious than gold, which in Hebrew is called Phaz, and Aquila translates as κτ■v, which is the color of the finest and blood-red; and the man is dressed in the finest purple, which in Hebrew is called Ophir, and Aquila translates as στ■λωμα ■φειp, which the translators of the LXX rendered as the stone from Sophir. And it is a place in India where the finest gold is born; as we read in Genesis about the river Phison: This is the one that goes around the whole land of Evila, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is the finest: and there is carbuncle and green stone. However, it is considered more precious because it is rarer. For everything that is rare is precious, as we also read in the book of Samuel: And the word of the Lord was precious in Israel (1 Samuel 3:1).

13:13

(Verse 13.) On this, I will shake the heavens, and the earth will be moved from its place. LXX: For the heavens will rage, and the earth will be moved from its foundations. When a man shall be more precious than gold, and a human than a pure gold nugget, and it will fulfill what is written: Do you think that when the Son of Man comes, He will find faith on earth? (Luke XVIII, 8). Then both the heavens and the earth will be moved. For the heavens and the earth will pass away, not by their own will and choice, as many think, believing them to be living creatures. But because of the indignation of the Lord of hosts and because of the day of His fury, who looks upon the earth and causes it to tremble. Wherefore that which is said in the LXX, 'For the heavens shall rage,' is to be understood metonymically for those who are in heaven, just as if we were to say, 'The whole city shouted,' and 'The entire city went out to meet the judge.' But in Proverbs we read, 'God by wisdom hath founded the earth' (Prov. 3:19). And the Lord speaks to Job, 'Where wast thou when I

laid the foundations of the earth?' (Job 38:4). Not that the earth has its foundations deep in a mass of fallen matter; but the will and power of God, by which all things are upheld, are to be called its foundations. For He founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. And He set it above nothingness.

13:14-16

(Verse 14-16.) And it shall be like a frightened doe and like a flock of sheep, and there will be no one to gather them. Each one will turn to their own people, and they will each flee to their own land. Everyone who is found will be killed, and everyone who comes upon them will fall by the sword. Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be plundered, and their wives will be violated. With heaven and earth in turmoil, the devil will flee like a twisted serpent, or any doctrine contrary to the truth, which is divided among teachers and disciples, the former being called Dorcades, which means Fawns in the Greek language, and the latter are like brute animals, wandering here and there with no one to guide them. For they have lost the one about whom it is written: The steps of a man are established by the Lord (Prov. 20:24). Those who are freed from the worst teachers will turn to their own people, and they will each flee to their own land from which they came. But anyone who is found will be killed or slaughtered. However, this not only happened at the end of the world, but it still happens today in the Church: when the masters are overcome, the deceived flock returns to the people and to their own land; and in that which is found, it is killed so that it ceases to be a heretic, and whoever comes after will fall by the spiritual sword. Then their infants and little ones, who have not yet reached the age of perfected error, are blinded in the eyes of the masters, and their homes are plundered, and their wives are violated, with wicked wisdom and perverse teaching. Wherefore, for fathers of this kind, whose infants are to be killed, we ought to pray and say: Give them, O Lord. What shall you give them? A barren womb, and dry breasts (Hosea IX, 4). For they have brought forth iniquity, have conceived sorrow, and have brought forth injustice.

13:17-18

(Vers. 17, 18.) Behold, I will raise up against them the Medes, who do not seek silver, nor desire gold; but they will kill the small children with arrows, and have no mercy on the infants in the womb, and their eyes will not spare the children. We find in Genesis (Gen. X) that Madai was the founder of the nation of the Medes, which means measure, or from a mighty or strong one. Therefore, against the Babylonians, who are confused in mind, ministers are raised up by the mighty and strong God to punish their strength: to render to each one according to their works. For in the measure that they measured out, it will be measured back to them. The measure they shook up and jumbled and filled to overflowing will be restored to their own bosom (Matthew 16 and Luke 6). Those who will not receive silver or gold, that is, the beauty of eloquence or the sharpness of wit, in which they used to take pride, but will rather suffer punishments, and will not show pity to little ones and infants in the womb, will receive pity themselves. And may we also be awakened by the Lord, and may we be granted this power, that we do not desire silver or gold, or the eloquence and wisdom of the secular world, but that we may slay the children of heretics, and all who have been deceived, with spiritual arrows, that is, with the testimonies of the Scriptures, and may those who are nourished with the milk of error be mercilessly slaughtered, so that they may perish with merciful cruelty, and may we have no pity for their infancy, and may we be worthy of that

blessedness: Blessed is he who will hold and dash his little ones against the rock!

13:18-4 (Verse 18 and following) And Babylon will be glorious among the kingdoms, renowned in the pride of the Chaldeans, just as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will not be inhabited forever, nor will it be founded to generation and generation: nor will the Arabs pitch their tents there, nor will shepherds rest there: but beasts will rest there, and their houses will be filled with dragons: and ostriches will dwell there, and shaggy creatures will dance there; and owls will respond there in its houses: and sirens in the temples of pleasure. (Chapter XIV, Verse 1) The time is near for it to come, and its days will not be prolonged. LXX: And Babylon, which is called the glorious and famous city of the Chaldeans, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall not be inhabited forever, nor shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pass by it, nor the shepherds rest there, but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of howling creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there, and the wild asses shall dwell there, and hedgehogs shall make their lodgings in their houses. He will come quickly and will not delay. The following should be noted with asterisks, because they are additions from Theodotion. Stirring up the city of confusion against the Medes, who do not consider gold as valuable, nor silver; who kill young children with arrows, and show no mercy to infants, and do not spare the eyes of their children. Once a renowned city that was proud of the Chaldeans, who are interpreted as demons, it will be overturned just as Sodom and Gomorrah were overturned; so that no trace of its former glory remains: but after the new heaven and the new earth, and the passing away of the figure of this world (I Cor. VII), the city of confusion will not be inhabited forever; and it will never regain the same state. For he will not set up there, once he has ceased to be in his former glory, his tents, which are called 'Arabs', meaning 'western' and 'evening'; so that he desires to dwell in the place he sees as deserted. However, 'Arabs' is taken in a positive sense in this context: that he always strives towards the end, and forgetting the past, extends himself towards the earlier times. Nor will shepherds rest there, who usually feed the gentle flock of the Lord in Jerusalem; but on the contrary, beasts will rest there, which the Psalmist detests, saying: 'Do not hand over the life of your confessor to the beasts' (Ps. 73, 19). For which Aquila, and Symmachus, and Theodotion, have placed the Hebrew word Siim (סִימ). And their houses, that is, the houses of the Babylonians, will be filled with noise, that is, with sound and cries, according to the Septuagint and Theodotion; according to Aquila, with typhons, which we translate as dragons; according to Symmachus, with Oiim (וִיִּם), which word is contained in Hebrew. And ostriches will dwell there, a creature always desiring desolate places, about which more is written in Job: though it appears to have wings, it is not raised up higher from the earth; wherefore the Septuagint has interpreted it as sirens. However, those who are called Pilosoi in Hebrew (פִּילֹסוֹי) were translated by Theodotion with erect and standing hairs. Symmachus and the Septuagint (LXX) translated it as demons. The Proonocentauri, whom only the LXX translated, imitating the fables of the Gentiles, who say that they were hippocentaur, the three remaining translators put the Hebrew word לִיִּם (liim), which we translate as owls. But where the LXX said, 'Hedgehogs will make their dwellings in their houses,' and in Hebrew it is written תַּנִּינִים (Thannim), Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion translated it as sirens; signifying either some sort of animals or demons, according to the error of the Gentiles, sweetly singing and deceiving people who cannot pass by the shipwreck of this world with closed ears. Furthermore, the name onocentauri, composed of donkeys and centaurs, seems to me to signify those who in part possess something human; and again, they are

drawn away from virtues and into the pleasures and filth of vices. Therefore, according to the tropology, it is said that at the end of the world, or the death of each person, all the glory and pride of the Chaldeans, and the confusion of the world, should depart from us; and thus everything should be overturned, just as God overturned Sodom and Gomorrah; and there shall no longer be a future state of this world, but it shall perish eternally. And let not the Arabs pitch their tents there, of which it is said in the sixty-seventh psalm: Scatter them that delight in war. (Psalm 68:30). Nor let the shepherds rest there, namely the angels who preside over the human race, and daily behold the face of the Father: but let the beasts and dragons rest there, and the ostriches, and the shaggy ones, and the screech owls, and the sirens, all of which beasts we understand in the likeness of angels or demons, and those to whom we are delivered for punishment. And in the houses of former pleasure, where there was joy and happiness, there will be the lamentation of howling and the mournful voice of sirens, which leads its listeners to death. But those who daily see Babylon being overthrown through holy men among those who believe in the Lord, will not be amazed that the time of judgment is imminent and the day of Babylon's destruction is not delayed; and comparing it to eternity, they will consider all length to be near. We have briefly spoken about the different species of animals, or rather monsters, in the previous book, according to a partly detailed history. It is also worth considering that after the ecclesiastical discourse and teaching of the Savior overturned the city of confusion, so that it is compared to Sodom and Gomorrah, it is not inhabited by holy men, nor do shepherds rest there, who were accustomed to feed Christ's flock. Instead, it is inhabited by beasts, and dragons, and ostriches, and hairy creatures leap about in it. For whatever the heretics speak in the synagogues of Satan, it is not the doctrine of the Lord, but the howling of demons and the hairy ones, whom Esau imitated. And the sirens rest in the temples of pleasure, who draw souls into the depths with sweet and deadly song, so that, raging in a shipwreck, they may be devoured by wolves and dogs. Therefore, the time of the ruin of the heretics is near and imminent every day, and their overthrow is not delayed. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and will give them rest in their own land: and the stranger shall be joined with them, and shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall make them captives that had taken them, and shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve: That thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and shalt say For a stranger, that is, a proselyte, they are interpreted as georas in the Septuagint, which in Hebrew is called Ger (). Hence I think also Moses' son, who was a stranger in the land, was named by his father, Gersham. (Exod. 1). Therefore georas is a Hebrew word, declined according to Greek usage: although some unaware of the Hebrew language try to express a Greek etymology in it, from the fact that it has care for earthly things: for γῆ, he says, means earth, and οἶκος means care, that is, solicitude. Once again, Masal has translated the parable, which Aquila, Simmachus, and Theodotius have also translated. We have followed them and interpreted the lament as 70. However, the order is as follows: after Babylon has been deserted forever, so that it becomes a dwelling place for beasts, the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, namely the one who has overcome vices; and He will choose Israel, the one who sees God with his mind. And note the distinction of words: Jacob, who is still in struggle, will receive mercy; but Israel, who received his name after victory, is not fitted for mercy, but for rejection. He will also cause them to rest upon his land, of

which the Savior speaks: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:4), and I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 27:13). Also, the multitude of the Gentiles will be joined to the lords Jacob, who were chosen by the Apostles, and they will possess the remnants of the house of Israel and bring them to their place, so that they may dwell in their tabernacles; and the house of Israel shall possess them as servants and maidservants upon the land of the Lord. Indeed, it is advantageous for evil things to serve the good. Hence, it is said about Esau: 'You shall serve your brother.' And to Jacob: 'Your brother shall serve you.' (Genesis 27). And those who were previously deceived by sophisms will be received, and their exactors, who do all things for the sake of profit, will be reduced to servitude. But when Jacob and Israel rest from their labors, in which they had labored greatly against the world and heretics, and from their oppression and servitude, which they had previously served under malicious interpretations and false doctrines, then they will take up lamentation and parable against the king of Babylon, namely, the discourse of heretical error and confusion, and they will say the following. These Jews interpret that place in a carnal manner, because after they returned from Babylon, they will not be able to prove that it happened. For the Babylonians did not serve those who had previously captured them, nor did they possess the houses of the defeated Babylonians, nor did they have them as slaves or maidservants. Therefore, it remains that according to their fables, they think that this empire will become Roman: after they are conquered in the last times, the nations to which they were once slaves will serve them. But if those who follow the letter are deceived by false hope, who will allow them to be called Rome Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of the Roman empire?

13:5-6

(Vers. 5, 6.) How has the tax collector ceased, the tribute rested? The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked: the rod of the rulers, smiting the people in wrath, with an incurable plague, subjecting the nations in fury, persecuting cruelly. In the Epistle of Peter we read: The time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). And in Ezekiel it is said to the tormentors: Begin with my sanctuary (Ezekiel 9:6). For the diversity of sin, the order of judgment is established: so that those who have sinned less, may be purified first. But the final enemy to be destroyed is death. Therefore, when Israel has been liberated from harsh bondage, he will take up a parable against the king of Babylon, which we must understand as a parable. For if the speech is about Nebuchadnezzar and a simple explanation of history, how can it be called a parable, which is not compared to any other thing? So Israel wonders how the tax collector, who used to collect all the way to the last penny, has ceased. However, he is accustomed to pursue only debtors, who say in the Lord's Prayer: Forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors (Matth. VI, 12). These debtors are handed over to the collector by the judge, who sends them to prison and exacts from them up to the smallest sin. Moreover, the Apostle Paul also handed over to the collector the fornicator in Corinth, who had married his father's wife, as well as Phygellus and Hermogenes (I Cor. V; II Tim. I). And concerning these tax collectors, it is also said: My people, your tax collectors plunder you; and those who demand payment, they are your rulers. The eagle has interpreted hunger as tribute. For when our betrothed is taken away from us, we suffer hunger for the word of God, and continually fast from the body of the Lord. And so the rod and staff of the wicked, which are interpreted as a yoke of seventy, strike us or oppress us; because we did not want to bear the light yoke, the yoke of the Savior. However, with this staff and this rod, he would strike the people

with incurable madness and cruelly pursue those who fled: not wanting to correct those who were handed over, but to kill them.

13:7-11

(Verse 7 and following) The whole earth rested and was silent; it rejoiced and exulted. The fir trees also rejoiced over you, and the cedars of Lebanon. Since you have fallen asleep, no one will rise up to cut us down; the underworld below is troubled, and it has aroused giants in anticipation of your coming. All the rulers of the earth have risen from their thrones; all the rulers of the nations will respond and say to you: Are you also wounded like us? Have you become like us? Your pride has been brought down to the underworld, your body has fallen; below you shall be spread out maggots, decay, and worms shall be your covering. For the destruction of the impious king, who struck the nations with an incurable wound and cruelly pursued them, all the earth has rested and become silent, which previously was full of turmoil and sedition, to the extent that the firs and cedars of Lebanon rejoiced, of which it is written in the psalms: You have transplanted a vineyard from Egypt, you have driven out the nations, and you have planted it. His shade covered the mountains, and his cedars, the cedars of God (Ps. 79:9). These cedars of God, because they sinned at one time, the Lord handed over to be crushed by punishments. Hence it is said in another psalm: The Lord will crush the cedars of Lebanon (Ps. 28:5). However, the tall and lofty trees, which are exalted in the service of the Lord, should be understood as saying with a harmonious voice: Since you have slept. Note that even the death of death is called sleep. He who cuts us down will not ascend. For when the strong one is defeated and his vessels plundered, even the rest of his companions fall. Hence the Lord speaks in the Gospel (Matthew 25:41): 'Depart into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.' How many of these woodcutters and tree fellers have cut down and made fall with their axes? The underworld also, disturbed and turned towards bitterness, at the approach of the true Nebuchadnezzar, is the place of punishments and tortures, in which the rich one clothed in purple appears: to whom the Lord descended, in order to release the prisoners from the prison. We can speak of the opposing inferno and the angel who is placed in charge of the punishments of the underworld, who raised all the giants: for which some call them Raphaims, others call them Titans. Giants, according to the custom of the Gentiles, are called those whom they consider to be earth-born, whom the earth has produced. However, we can call giants, according to the etymology of the Greek language, those who served earthly works. Finally, it follows: All the rulers of the earth rose from their thrones, in the coming of their former ruler: so that those whom they previously honored for their power, afterwards marveled at their punishments, and said: You have been wounded just like us: you have become like us. What words have this meaning: We thought that because of our weakness we could not resist the power of God, and that you were the only one who would remain in your greatness; but as it is evident, you were wounded and captured, like us; so that whom dignity separates on earth, punishment may unite in the underworld. The pride, or your glory, has been taken down to the underworld, and your corpse has fallen, or as the LXX translated, your great joy, with which you used to rejoice over the nations subject to you. Under you shall be strewn putrefaction, and worms shall be your covering. This is the resting place of the devil, this is the bed of the tempter, who was raised up in such pride that he dared even to tempt the Lord, saying: 'All these things I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' (Matth. IV, 9). The putrefaction and worms, and the covering of vermin, signify the eternal punishments which the conscience

itself gives birth to, or the material of punishments which arises from one's own sins. For just as long as the material of a corpse exists, and there is any moisture in the corpse, worms are born from the putrefaction; so from the same material the punishments of sins are produced. Therefore, the Apostle Paul, speaking of the death that Hosea prophesied about, saying, 'I will be your death, O death; I will be your sting, O grave' (Hosea 13:14), speaks to it, saying, 'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O grave, is your sting?' (1 Corinthians 15:55). For when she is dead, there will be no one to cut us down: for there will be no sin that needs to be cut down, since the sting of death is sin.

13:12

(Verse 12) How you have fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! LXX: How you have fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning! You have been shattered on the earth, who once sent to all the nations. For Lucifer, which is translated in Hebrew as Elil (), Aquila rendered the howling son of dawn. Truly, he should have howled and lamented, for he was cast down to the earth and shattered due to his pride. And the Savior also speaks to the disciples: I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18). Not only do I see, but I saw beforehand when he fell. And if he fell because of his pride from such greatness, you also should not boast, because demons are subject to you: but because your names are written in heaven; so that as he fell through pride, you may ascend through humility. This is the prince of the world, who used to rise among the other stars in the morning, and by his fault became the evening star from Lucifer, and not rising, but setting: who wounded nations, or who sent his own satellites to nations, to deceive them all with his deceit. These are false Apostles, deceitful workers, who disguise themselves as Apostles of Christ, who sow tares among the good seed, while the shepherds of the Churches are asleep and unwilling or unable to resist their evil. But Jacob, whom the Lord has shown mercy to and chosen, is still speaking these things to the devil, or as the Seventy wish to say, about the devil, that is, not as referring to the second person, but to the third.

13:13-14

(Verses 13, 14.) You said in your heart: I will ascend to heaven, above the stars of God I will exalt my throne; I will sit on the mount of the covenant on the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. Whether you said these things before you fell from heaven or afterwards, if you are still in heaven, how can you say, 'I will ascend to heaven' (Psalm 113:16)? But because we read, 'The heaven of heavens is the Lord's,' when he was in the sky, that is, in the firmament, in the heaven where the Lord's throne is, he desired to ascend, not out of humility, but out of pride. But if after he fell from heaven, he speaks these words, we should understand arrogance, because he not only does not rest having been cast down, but he still promises himself great things, not that he may be among the stars, but that he may be above the stars of God. And when the Lord speaks to the Apostles: It is enough for the disciple that he be like his teacher, and the servant like his master (Matthew 10:25), and he says to the Father: Holy Father, grant that as I and you are one, so they may be one in us (John 17:11): he boasts to such an extent that he places his throne above the stars of heaven, which have not fallen. And what it implies: I will sit on the mountain of the testament on the sides of the North; for which the Seventy translated, on a high mountain, over lofty mountains, which are towards the North, let us refer to

that which is said in Jeremiah: From the North evil will burn upon all the inhabitants of the earth (Jer. 1:14). And that the pot kindled by the face of the North is ignited. This is the most severe wind of the North, from which the Lord wants to free His captive people and bring them back to the holy city, saying: I will say to the North, bring them in; and to the South, do not hinder, bring my children from a far country (Inf. 43:6). But that which can be contrary to this is easily resolved, O mountains of Zion, sides of the North, city of the great king. For those who were once the hardest on the sides of the North, through repentance have begun to be in the city of God. The devil always seeks to ascend over those who have the image of the heavenly, and who shine in the Church like the stars of God: and to sit on the mountain of the covenant or testament, that is, in the Church, which is placed in the high places, and possesses the inhabitants of the former North. He who is so forgetful of himself, that he desires to ascend above the clouds, to which the Lord commanded, so that they would not rain upon Israel, and to which the truth of the Lord reached, of which Obadiah speaks: 'Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, thence I will bring you down, says the Lord' (Obadiah, 4). Unfortunate Judas, who was sent along with the other Apostles like a cloud, so that he would rain upon Israel, and was like a star among the other stars, to whom the Lord spoke: 'Let your light shine before others' (Matthew 5:16), he accepted the devil as his partner in sin, who, in order to fulfill the words of pride, even dared to say: 'I will be like the Most High', so that just as Christ has His Prophets and Apostles, I too may have pseudoapostles. But all these things must be referred to the heretics, who, being beneath, boast themselves to be lofty with their leader.

13:15

(Verse 15.) However, you will be dragged down to the depths of the lake. LXX: But now you will descend to the underworld, and to the foundations of the earth. You will not descend to the underworld willingly (or, by your own choice), for this is the work of the Lord and Savior, to free the bound from the depths. But you will be dragged down to the underworld against your will, for while you were able to ascend to the heights through virtues, you will be dragged down to punishment through vices. The saints have the wings of an eagle, and the wings of a dove, and they can say: I will fly and find rest (Psalm 54). But the wicked, like the Egyptians, were submerged as lead in the violent waters, and they were submerged into the depths like a stone (Exod. XV). Therefore, iniquity, or as is better understood in Hebrew, impiety, is seen sitting upon a talent of lead (Zach. V). Therefore, what we read elsewhere, 'Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled' (Luke XVIII, 14), even the king of confusion suffered, so that he would be cast down to the foundations of the earth, or as is more true in Hebrew, into the depths of the abyss. In Deuteronomy, it is written about the foundations of the earth: A fire is kindled in My anger, and it shall burn to the lowest hell. It shall consume the earth and its foundations, namely those who are earthly. Concerning the pit, which signifies the depths of hell, there are these testimonies: I am made like those who go down into the pit. And: You have laid me in the lowest pit. Just as a lake receives descending waters, so does hell receive souls: to this lake did Benaiah descend in the time of snow and cold, and he killed a lion there. And so the heretics forsake the fountain of the living water, the Lord, and dig for themselves broken cisterns that cannot hold water. Concerning these cisterns, which do not have the fervor of the Holy Spirit, they are not like the prophet Jeremiah, who spoke according to the Septuagint translators: 'I found warm water in the desert' (Jeremiah 2). But with charity growing cold, they have lost the heat of the Holy Spirit. That is the cistern of which Jeremiah also speaks:

'As a cistern cools the water, so does malice cool those who have it' (Jeremiah 6:7). Oh, would that they were either hot or cold (Apoc. III), that is, either believers or not believers at all, so that they would not be rejected by the Lord because of lukewarmness and feigned faith!

13:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Those who see you will bow down to you, and they will look at you. Is this the man who troubled the earth? who shook kingdoms? who made the world a desert, and destroyed its cities, and did not open the prison to those who were bound? Or as the Seventy translated: did he not release those who were led? Those who see King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, not with the eyes, but with the sight of the heart, falling from heaven to hell, will bow down with humility, which is contrary to pride, and they will look at him saying these things: Is this not the man, or the human, who troubled or stirred up the earth? Testimony of the senses: Whoever said, 'I will be like the Most High, and exalted himself as God,' is proven to be a man, as is stated in the ninth psalm, which is specifically against the devil: 'Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail' (Psalm 9:19). And in the Gospel: 'An enemy has sown weeds among the wheat' (Matthew 13:25). Therefore, we read that it was said to him and his companions: 'I said, You are gods, sons of the Most High, but you shall die like men, and fall like any prince' (Psalm 81:6). And to the same person under the figure of the prince of Tyre it is said: Because your heart is exalted, and you have said: I am God, I dwell in the heart of the sea, whereas you are a man, and not God, and have set your heart as if it were the heart of God (Ezek. 28:2). This man, and this man alone, has troubled the whole earth, namely those who heard with Adam: You are dust, and to dust you shall return (Gen. 3:19), and has shaken kingdoms and kings whose hearts are in the hand of the Lord (Proverbs 21). He struck, he says, but did not overthrow. And hence one of those who had been struck, and yet had not fallen, spoke: But my feet have almost stumbled (Psalm 73:2). And the Apostle speaks to the believers, that they should take up the armor of God, and stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6). But the house which is founded upon a rock is not shaken by any storm (Matthew 7). It follows: He who established the inhabited world, or according to the Hebrew, all others have translated it as 'desolate.' For by vice and sins the world, which is called Thebel in Hebrew, was made a desert, so that it had no virtue, or was subject to the same vices with which the wilderness is full of nations. He also destroyed the cities of the same world, so that he might make the synagogues of the devil out of the Churches of Christ, and pollute the purity of true faith with heretical filth. But he did not open the prison to his captives, that is, to the world. We were all bound and held captive in prison, to whom the Savior said, 'Come out,' and to those who were in darkness, 'Be revealed.' For he sets free those who are bound; those who are freed by him give thanks, saying, 'You have loosed my bonds' (Ps. CXV, 17; Jer. II, Prov. V). For each person is bound by the cords of their own sins, which cords and bonds the Apostles can loose, imitating their Master who had said to them, 'Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven' (Matthew XV). And the Apostles loose them by the word of God, and the testimonies of the Scriptures, and the exhortation of virtues.

13:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) All the kings of the nations slept in glory, each one in his own house. But you have been cast out of your tomb like a fetid liquid: defiled, wrapped up with the slain and those pierced by the sword, who descend to the depths of the pit. LXX: All the kings of the nations slept in honor,

each one in his own house. But you will be cast down on the mountains like an untimely birth, abominable and wrapped up with the slain who descend to the foundations of the earth. The kings of the nations, to whom God had entrusted the governance of the nations according to the Song of Deuteronomy (Deut. XXXII), were shaken by Nebuchadnezzar, but not overthrown, because their sin did not reign over them; rather, because their hearts were in the hand of God, they did not fall. Indeed, just as the Savior is called the God of gods, so the Lord is the Lord of lords and the king of kings. Therefore, all these kings rested in their glory, each in his own house. For there are many mansions in my Father's house (John 14): and due to the variety of virtues, there are differences in dwellings. Moreover, Nebuchadnezzar was thrown out of his tomb and did not rest from torments in death. He was thrown out like a discharge, which in Hebrew is called *Neser*, which Aquila interpreted as *ichor*, i.e., decay and filth, which Symmachus called *abortion*, i.e., dead in the Septuagint, Theodotion *germ*: although this very word above (Chapter 11, verse 1) where we read about Christ: A shoot shall come forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit, in the Septuagint they translated it as *flower*, Theodotion *germ*, Aquila as *sapling*, i.e., *twig*. But *Neser* is properly called a *sapling*, which grows at the roots of trees and is cast aside by farmers as *useless*, hence we have transferred the *useless stock*. Therefore, let Nabuchodonosor, like a *useless sapling*, be prepared for fire, or like *polluted blood*, wrapped up with those who were killed by his sword and have descended to the depths of the lake, may he be dragged down into the abyss, and not even have the company of those whom he killed in burial. For the punishment of one is the act of the guilty, and of another who is compelled by the one who committed the act. This is the sword by which many were wounded and killed, of which we read in the seventh psalm: Unless you be converted, he will brandish his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. And he hath prepared for him the instruments of death; he hath made ready his arrows for them that burn. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the corpse of Nebuchadnezzar, along with many others who were killed, will be defiled and cast down on the mountains of pride, and they will be led to the underworld. But the foundations of the lake, interpreted by Symmachus as the stones of the lake, in other words, he meant the deep and abyss of the underworld.

13:20

(Verse 20) You will not have the fellowship of a putrid corpse nor be buried with them. For you have destroyed your land and killed your people. LXX: Just as a garment mixed with blood cannot be clean, neither will you be clean, for you have destroyed my land and killed my people. Because there is a significant difference between the Hebrew and LXX translations, let us discuss them separately. Like a putrid corpse, or as Aquila translated, *trampled*, you will not have the fellowship of burial, nor even with those whom you have killed. For you are the master, they were the disciples: and to whom more is entrusted, more is required from him. For you have destroyed your land, you have killed your people, namely those who were entrusted to you for governance. Therefore, dare to say to the Savior: All these things have been entrusted to me, and I will give them to you, if you prostrate yourself and worship me (Matt. IV, 9). However, the putrid carcass of the devil cannot doubt due to the magnitude of sins, as one who reads that sin is the foulest, with the sinner himself saying: My wounds have become rotten and have festered because of my foolishness (Psalm XXXVII, 6). On the contrary, the virtue of good odor is: from which also the love of spiritual brothers is compared to an ointment, which descended upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, and upon the edge of his garment (Psalm 132). And the bridegroom speaks to the bride:

Your fragrance is sweet, and your face is lovely (Song of Songs 2:14). But how the body of the devil is spiritually trampled, the Apostle teaches us: God will quickly crush Satan under your feet (Romans 16:20). And the Lord said: I will wipe them out like the mud of the streets (Ps. XVII, 43). Because he lost the land entrusted to him, and he crushed the people committed to him, not reserving them alive for God, but preparing partners for his own tomb: therefore he will not be, nor will he be called forever the seed of the wicked. Furthermore, according to the Septuagint, this has the following meaning: O Lucifer, you who rose in the morning, when you had the works of virtue and light, you were the garment of God, and it could be said of you: clothed with light as with a garment (Ps. CIII, 2): because you have killed many with the sword, who have descended to the underworld, and you are defiled by their blood, you will not be called the garment of God, but a garment mixed with blood, not stained and polluted, so that you appear to have something clean, but completely drenched in blood. And this should be noted, that concerning the devil it is said: just as a garment mixed with blood will not be clean, so you will not be clean. Where therefore are those who grant repentance to the devil, and say that he can be cleansed? Let us not immediately embrace the heresy that asserts there are diverse natures; and that there is another which will never receive healing. For this garment is not unclean in itself, and thus was ordained by God, by which God Himself was once clothed; but because it is mixed with blood, and has polluted itself entirely with its own vice, and with added evils, it will not be clean. And therefore it will not be clean, because it has lost the earth of the Lord, killing His people, destroying the land of Judah and the land of confession, and also killing and destroying the saints. And therefore it will not remain forever. Hence it is said in the Gospel: Go into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). But just as the holy garment is of God, and the new garment, and is clothed in the robe of salvation and joy, saying: My soul shall rejoice in the Lord, for he has clothed me with the garment of salvation and has wrapped me with the robe of joy (Isaiah 61:10): so, on the other hand, the sinner, who bears the image of the old and earthly man, deserves to hear: Behold, all of you shall become like a worn-out garment, and the moth shall devour you (Isaiah 50:9). But whoever progresses in evil and does not desire to cleanse the old with newness, will be compared not to an old garment, but to the cloth of a menstruating woman, saying: We have erred, and we have all become unclean, like the cloth of a menstruating woman; all our righteousness is as the cloth of a menstruating woman.

13:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) The seed of the wicked, prepare your sons for the slaughter of the sins of their fathers: they will not rise nor inherit the land, nor fill the face of the cities of the world. And I will rise up against them, says the Lord of hosts: and I will destroy the name and remnants of Babylon, and its seed, and its offspring, says the Lord of hosts. LXX: The wicked seed, prepare your sons for the slaughter of the sin of your father: so that they will not rise and possess the land, and fill the land of cities. And I will rise up against them, says the Lord of hosts: and I will destroy their name and remnants and seed. For the evil seed, which the Septuagint translated, is written in Hebrew as Zera Mrim (זרע מרמ), which others have interpreted as the seed of wicked men. Not that the seed itself is inherently evil: for God made all things good (Gen. I); but from those who are wicked by their own will, the seed has become evil, which is done by will, not by nature: Hence we read in Daniel: The seed of Canaan and not of Judah (Dan. XIII, 56). And of good sons it is said by the Apostle: In Christ Jesus through the Gospel I have begotten you (1 Cor. 4:15). And in the Gospel: To as many

as received him, he gave them power to become the sons of God (John 1:12). For whoever commits sin is of the devil. Therefore, it is commanded to this seed, that is to say, his sons, to prepare for destruction all wicked thoughts and evil deeds, which are born from impious fathers, undoubtedly signifying contrary strengths. The worst sons are therefore slain in the wickedness of their fathers, so that they may not rise up anymore and possess the land which is to be possessed and filled by the saints, that the cities of the Lord may be built in it. And because there is no perfect victory for men: For unless the Lord keeps the city, those who guard it will watch in vain (Psalm 126:2): therefore the Lord himself will rise up against the sons of the worst, and he will destroy their name and remnants from their confusion, and every offspring and progeny, so that they may no longer sprout forth in the cities of the Lord. We read in the Gospel of John (VIII) that the devil is a liar from the beginning and that his father, that is, of lies, which many do not understand, they want the father of the devil to be the dragon who reigns in the sea, which the Hebrews call Leviathan. And they think that this agrees with the present passage according to the Septuagint interpreters, who have said: for the sins of your father: when clearly in Hebrew, it means not 'your father' but 'their fathers'.

13:23

(Verse 23.) And I will make her a possession of hedgehogs, and of swamps of water: I will sweep her away with a broom of destruction, says the Lord of hosts. LXX: And I will make Babylon a desert, says the Lord, so that hedgehogs will dwell in it, and it will be nothing. And I will make it a pit of mud, for destruction. When the Lord of hosts has destroyed the name of Babylon, and its remnants, and its offspring, he will not be satisfied with its destruction unless he gives it as a possession to hedgehogs, and swamps of water, and sweeps it away not lightly, and accidentally: but thoroughly, so that nothing of ancient filth remains in it. In the Acts of the Apostles, it is written (Acts 10 and 11) that in that linen cloth, which was let down from heaven by four corners, all kinds of quadrupeds, and reptiles, and birds were contained, which afterwards, the Apostle, in his discourse, says, 'God showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.' Therefore, the manners of men were represented in various animals, just as the Pharisees and Sadducees are called offspring of vipers on account of their wickedness, and Herod is called a fox on account of his deceit (Luke 3 and 13); and those who are given to luxury and inclined to pleasure are called horses, raging after women (Jeremiah 5): 'And do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding' (Psalm 32). On the contrary, the innocent are called doves and sheep. Therefore, according to the teaching of the Lord and Savior, who referred to the cares of this world and the seduction of riches as thorns, the hedgehog seems to me to be someone who rejoices in the uncertainty of riches (1 Timothy 6) and trusts in being armed not with the armor of God, but with the thorns and sins of this world. To whom it is rightly said from the Gospel: Foolish one, tonight your soul will be taken from you, and what you have prepared, whose will it be? (Luke 12:20). The inhabitants of Babylon have deserts of virtues, where there is no irrigated field that brings fruits of different seeds, but unproductive marshes, and muddy and dirty, in which animals that delight in mud crawl. Therefore, the most merciful Lord swept it vigorously, and as it were with a broom, he cleaned it completely, so that the seeds of Babylon may perish, and be inhabited by only hedgehogs. When we see someone submerged in the mud of wealth, and as the Seventy have translated, in the pit, that is, in a deep abyss, and surrounded as if by a muddy swamp, let us not hesitate to call him a hedgehog, an inhabitant of deserted Babylon.

13:24-25

(Verse 24, 25) The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, 'Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. Afterward his habitation will be desolate in Babylon, and marshes shall cover the land: so that no seed of hers and no abundance shall remain in Babylon. The oath of the Lord will be fulfilled, and as I have purposed, so it shall happen, that the Assyrian shall be broken in his land, and upon his mountains he shall be trodden under foot.' For indeed the reckless enemy not only hastens to occupy the land of God and lowly things, but also those who have advanced in the service of God, so that they may be compared to mountains and it may be said of them: Its foundations are on the holy mountains (Ps. 86:1). And note the property. On earth it is crushed: on the mountains of God it is trampled by the Lord himself. For when all the enemies have been placed under the feet of Christ, so that death may be destroyed at the last, then the holy ones will be freed from the heavy yoke of Assyria, with which they had been oppressed before, and the burden, or as the Septuagint translated it, κ■δος, that is, glory, will be removed from their shoulders, so that with the yoke of the Assyrians lifted, they may see rest, because it is good, and the land, because it is fertile, and they may submit their necks to the yoke of Christ for the purpose of laboring, and become men of the field. And Issachar, which means 'reward,' received his name from his virtues. And in the Prophet we read: 'There is a reward for those who serve the Lord' (Jeremiah 31:16); and in another place: 'Behold the Lord, and his reward is with him' (Isaiah 40:10), who will render to each one according to his works. And as for the Assyrians being crushed and trampled, which represents opposing forces, the Gospel teaches us: 'Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy' (Luke 10:19). And the words of the Apostles testify: God will crush Satan under your feet quickly (Rom. XVI, 20).

13:26-27

(Verse 26, 27.) This is the plan that he has devised for the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations. For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who can annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back? For the whole earth has been interpreted as the entire world in the Septuagint, in the end of the oracle or vision against Babylon. What was hidden is revealed, that God has planned for the whole earth, that is, the world, and not just against the land of the Chaldeans and the king of Assyria and the Chaldeans: and his hand is stretched out or lifted up over all the nations, and not just over one nation, Babylon. From this it is shown that all the things that have been said pertain not specifically to one province, but generally to the whole world. And what is said, 'Who can weaken it, and who can turn it away?' should not be understood as difficult, as it is read, 'Who is wise and will understand these things?' (Psalm 106:43). And, 'Who do you think is the faithful and prudent steward?' (Luke 12:42), and similar things. But understood as impossible. For no one can thwart the plan of the Lord, nor can they turn away His outstretched or lofty hand from striking.

13:28-30

(Verse 28, etc.) In the year in which King Ahaz died, this burden occurred. Do not rejoice, all you Philistines, for the rod of your oppressor is broken. From the root of the snake will come forth a

ruler, and his offspring will swallow up the flying creatures. The firstborn of the poor will be fed, and the needy will rest securely. I will cause the root to die by famine, and I will slay your remaining ones. According to the LXX: In the year in which King Ahaz died, this word was fulfilled: Do not rejoice, all you foreigners, for his yoke that oppressed you is broken. Indeed, from the seed of the serpent, offspring of asps will come forth, and from their offspring, winged serpents will come forth. And the poor will be fed by them, and poor men will rest in peace. But your seed will be killed by famine, and your remnants will be destroyed. After the death of Ahaz, which means κατὰσχέσις, that is, possession or occupation, whom we read is the most impious king, this burden falls upon the Philistines, or word. For while he was living and reigning among sinners, neither the weight against foreigners nor the word of God could come to the Prophet. Indeed, I remember having said this before, when Uzziah died, Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a high and exalted throne. And in Exodus we read (Exodus 22) that after the death of the king of Egypt, the sons of Israel groaned because of their labors, and they cried out, and their cry rose up because of their labors, and the Lord heard their groaning. For if what was said was not mystical, they should have shouted all the more when he was reigning, when they were serving with mud and bricks. Therefore, it is commanded to the Philistines, whom they now call Palestinians, and always by the LXX called ἑλλήνοφύλοι, that is, foreigners; and it is said to them not to rejoice or be glad, because they have broken the rod or yoke of their oppressor (Heb. XII, 6). For whom the Lord loves, he chastises, and he punishes every son he receives. And as God instructs our children, when He visits our iniquities with a rod, and our sins with chastisements, so that He does not take away His mercy from us (Ps. 88). This is the rod about which it is written in another Psalm: Your rod and your staff, they comfort me (Ps. 23:4). This is the rod, and this yoke that the Savior wants to impose on the necks of all, so that having laid aside the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, they may carry the yoke of Christ. But if someone rejects and destroys it, immediately from the seed or root of the serpent, which is the winding serpent, little snakes and asps will come out, and from the asps flying serpents will come out, or those that devour birds. But when the yoke of God is rejected and the discipline of the Lord is destroyed, first the seed of the serpent takes root in our thoughts, secondly a little snake is born from the evil seed, which is the king of serpents, and it is said to kill men with its breath and sight: or the offspring of asps, of which it is said in the Psalms: The venom of asps is under their lips (Psalm 13:3, and 139:4), which are the various sins, and they burst forth from the wicked treasure of thoughts into evil deeds. And when they rule among alien men, who are strangers to God, immediately feathered serpents emerge; so that it is not enough for them to have thought and done evil things, unless they also seek the protection of evil works, and invent various heresies. I believe that these feathered serpents are those who exalt and rise up against the knowledge of God, and put their mouth in the heavens: or who swallow birds, that is, those who with their venomous mouth devour each one desiring to fly and rise to high places. And in the meantime, concerning the evils. Moreover, those who have not broken the rod and yoke of their oppressor, but have submitted their neck to the Lord, and are poor in spirit, will be nourished, and will say: The Lord feeds me, and nothing will be lacking for me (Ps. 122:1). And they will hear from the Lord: I will feed them in fertile pastures (Ezek. 34; John 10); and they will enter and leave, and will find pastures. And the poor will be nourished by Him who strikes them in order to correct them: and they will rest in peace, whether the shepherd is watchful, they will act confidently, and they will rest with Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham (Luke 16). But those who broke the yoke and the staff of their oppressor shall endure everlasting hunger, so that they may not be nourished by the word

of God, but all their remnants shall perish, so that nothing may grow from the evil seed.

13:31-32

(Verse 31, 32.) O gate, howl; O city, cry out; Philisthea is completely destroyed. For smoke comes from the north, and there is no one who can escape its ranks. And what will be the response of the messengers of the nations, when it is declared that the Lord has founded Zion and the poor of his people will hope in it? Concerning the messengers, that is, the angels, whom Symmachus alone translated, all the kings have been interpreted, deceived by the ambiguity of the word, because except for one letter Aleph, which is added in the word for angels, both kings and angels are called by the same name among the Hebrews, that is, Malache (kings, angels). In the book 'The Hebrew Names', I found that the word 'Philisthiim' is interpreted as 'falling down by a cup'. Therefore, those who are intoxicated by the cup of Babylon and drink wine in which there is debauchery, and among other vices, because of drunkenness, they have not attained the kingdom of God, as it is written by the Apostle (Ephesians 5). To them it is commanded that their gate howls and the city cries out. I consider the gate to be the mouth of heretics, where they blaspheme; and the city to be the soul, which is the treasury of evil thoughts. She should wail and lament, because everything is prostrated, cast to the ground, and there is nothing of sane intelligence and of God's wisdom in her. Why does the gate wail? For what reason does the city cry out? Because all of Philistia is prostrated. And why is it prostrated, the following verse shows: Smoke comes from the North, and there is no one who can escape its army. This smoke is kindled by the burning darts of the devil, which are harmful to the eyes and contrary to the light, and it arises from the North, from which the pot is kindled in Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:14), and from which evil is kindled upon all the inhabitants of the earth, who cannot say: I am a resident and a stranger, like all my forefathers (Psalm 119:19), but they dwell in the land. And in Proverbs it is read: Aquilo is a harsh wind (Prov. XXV, 23; Eccli. XLIII). However, by another name, it is called dexter, which, even though it is harsh and sinister in itself and does not want to receive the yoke of God with the hardest neck, is called dexter by those who regard the sweet as bitter and the bitter as sweet; those who regard darkness as light and light as darkness. And there is no one who can escape the smoke of this train; for no one is without sin, not even if his life were only one day long (Job. XXV). And when the Philistines fall and its smoke penetrates everything, so that no one can escape it, what will be said to the Angels, who oversee each nation, marveling and desiring to know why only Zion, placed in a watchtower and in high places, escaped the bitterness of this smoke? What, therefore, will be said to them? Surely what follows: Because the Lord has founded it, and He Himself is its foundation. And He has founded it upon the foundation of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, under which names Christ is understood, about whom the Apostle also says: For no one can lay another foundation, except the one that is laid, Jesus Christ (I Cor. III, 11). But whoever is foolish, and speaks foolishly, and understands his heart in vain, builds his house upon sand, which has no foundation. In this Zion, which is founded by the Lord, the poor or meek will hope, and his humble people, of whom it is said: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:4); and those who heard the Lord speaking: Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart (Matthew 11:29). Those who were humiliated before glory and heard the Apostle Peter saying: Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in the time of visitation. As for the poor, they are the ones of whom we read above: The firstborn of the poor shall be fed, and the poor shall rest securely.

15:1

(Chapter 15, Verse 1) The burden of Moab. LXX: A word against Moab. Symmachus and Theodotion: The assumption of Moab. How circumcision is both physical and spiritual and is spoken of in a spiritual sense by the Apostle: For we are the circumcision, who serve by the Spirit of God, and boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:3); and again, to distinguish the spiritual Israelites, it is said of the physical: See Israel according to the flesh (1 Corinthians 10:18); and, You Gentiles in the flesh (Ephesians 2:11); thus Moab is to be understood spiritually, which is interpreted as from the father, or paternal water, conceived from incest and drunkenness, in such a way that he seemed to be generated in the absence or even ignorance of his father. In many places in the Scriptures we read about Moab, especially in the book of Numbers, when Balak, the king of the Moabites, invited the magician Balaam to curse them. Among other things, Balaam also prophesied against Moab, saying: 'A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a man shall come forth from Israel, and he shall strike down the princes of Moab' (Num. XXIV, 17).

15:1

(Verse 1) Because at night Ar was devastated, Moab was silent; because at night the wall was devastated, Moab was silent. LXX: Moab perished at night, for the wall of Moab. Regarding Ar (), which Theodotion alone has placed in this way, as is read in Hebrew, Aquila and Symmachus have translated as 'city', not considering that between Ain and Res the Hebrew elements do not have the letter Yod, which if it were present, would correctly be called a city. Secular wisdom, of which the Lord speaks through the Prophet: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart (Obadiah 8; 1 Corinthians 1:19). For it has the author of its existence, being generated from the condition of God. It seems to be born from the father, which is interpreted as Moab; but because it is illegitimate and an adversary of the people of God, it is generated from incest and the den and the night. Therefore, it perishes in eternal darkness, namely in error. And the Egyptians in the Red Sea in the morning watch, which indicates the night time, were overwhelmed by the waves (Exodus 14). And Lot, when the people of Sodom perished in the night, came to Zoar, and the sun rose for him (Genesis 19). And understanding this, the blessed Apostle writes about the holy and perfect (1 Thessalonians 5:6-7): We are not of the night, nor of darkness, but we are sons of the day. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But we, who are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to the purchasing of salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us; that, whether we watch or sleep, we may live together with him. For therefore Christ died and rose again; that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. But thou, why judgest thou thy brother? Or thou, why dost thou despise thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. Therefore every one of us shall render account to God for himself. Let us not therefore judge one another any more. But judge this rather, that you put not a stumblingblock or a scandal in your brother's way. Furthermore, Ar, which is interpreted as **■ντ■δικος**, that is, adversary, shows this, that this wisdom, which is the adversary of God, has been overcome by the opposing Ecclesiastical discourse.

15:2

(Ver. 2.) The house ascends, and Dimon goes up to the high places to mourn. LXX: Be sad for yourselves, for Dimon will perish, where the altar is; there you shall go up to lament. The whole house of adversarial wisdom, and Dibon, which means their downfall, ascends to the high places, where it had pridefully exalted itself: not to offer sacrifices, but to mourn for the sins it had committed before. And truly, falsehood passes like a river, and flows by, and can never stay in a stable dwelling. But the word of God, which is compacted, is stable. And so the manna, which appears like ice upon the face of the earth, does not overflow, but remains. Furthermore, according to the Septuagint, the Moabites are commanded to mourn and lament, not for others, for this is the privilege of the perfected ones over themselves, because even their Dibon, that is, their composed word, which flowed like a torrent, will perish: in which they had as it were an altar of their consecration, and all secular riches. And in the psalm it is said: If riches abound, do not set your heart upon them. But the beginning of salvation is to understand one's own sins and to weep over them.

15:3-9

(Verse 3 and following) Over Nebo and over Medeba, Moab will wail; on every head there is baldness, every beard is shaved off. In its streets they are dressed in sackcloth; on its rooftops and in its squares everyone wails and goes down in weeping. Heshbon and Elealeh cry out; their voices are heard as far as Jahaz; therefore the armed men of Moab cry aloud; his soul trembles. My heart cries out for Moab; its bars are dragged away, to Luhith and to Heshbon they come, crying; on the way to Horonaim they raise a cry of destruction; the waters of Nimrim are a desolation; the grass is withered, the vegetation fails, the greenery is no more. According to the magnitude of their work and their visitation, they shall be led to the torrent of the willows; because a cry hath gone round the border of Moab unto Eglaim, the howling thereof unto Beer Elim. For the waters of Dimon have been filled with blood: for I will bring more upon Dimon, lions upon them that shall flee out of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land. Therefore, since every teaching contrary to the truth, which is born without the inspiration of God from human understanding in the darkness of error, has been laid waste by the night, and its arguments, which are understood as walls, have been destroyed by the words of Ecclesiastes; so that they fall into eternal silence, to such an extent that their entire faction turns to repentance and tears, over Nabo, that is, over prophecy and authority, that is, over their leaders, and over Medaba, where there are no fruitful trees, but barren thickets, in which beasts dwell, as it is written in the twenty-eighth psalm: And he will reveal the hidden things of the forest: there will be wailing and lamentation, and all the ornaments of eloquence will be taken away from their heads, so that they remain naked and deformed. And if anything seemed to have masculinity in a beard, when shaved by a Ecclesiastical man, it is considered effeminate and weak. In their crossroads, that is, the byways of errors, while each one fabricates according to his own will, he is equipped with the sack of penance, and over the roofs and tamed places, in which they first believed themselves to be lofty; and in the streets (because they do not enter by the narrow way, which leads to life, but by the broad way, which leads to death) there will be wailing. And they shall by no means ascend into pride, but descend into weeping. Then they shall understand all their vain thoughts, which are interpreted as Esbon, and the futile ascent of pride, which sounds like Eleale, so that the voice of their deeds may be heard, and the commandment they thought was from God, condemning themselves by their own

confession. Therefore, the bars, that is, those who were strong in Moab and understood their error, shall howl, and they who had hopes will begin to have regrets when their soul howls to itself. Where the Prophet speaks with compassionate affection to those whose souls cried out to him, and says: My heart will cry out to Moab, that I may provoke them to repentance. But their beams and all the foundations, which seemed to have support in their heresies, will reach as far as Segor, that is, to the little one: and it will be shown that they are not strong, but fragile. And this Segor, that is, the small repentance, if it perseveres, will lead them to perfect salvation: which is signified by the three-year-old heifer, as we read in Genesis, where Abraham is commanded to offer a calf, a ram, and a three-year-old goat, a perfect sacrifice, that he may deservedly be the heir of the Lord (Genesis 15). And when they have repented, through tears of sorrow, that is, the tears of their cheeks, they will ascend to higher things. And through this as if through a hole and entrance of sorrow, they will raise the cry of contrition to the Lord, so that they may say: Sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit: a contrite and humble heart God will not despise (Ps. 50:19). And this will happen because the waters of Nemrim, that is, the teachings of heretics, which are compared to leopards and transgressors, will be deserted and brought to nothing. They are stubborn, whose variations and blemishes are not changed (Jeremiah XIII), and apostates, of whom we read in the Psalms, I have regarded all the sinners of the earth as transgressors (Psalm CXVIII, 119). Also, every plant and sprout, and everything that seemed green in their speech, withered. And they were visited by God according to the magnitude of their sins, so that those whom they had not felt through blessings, they would come to know through afflictions. Finally, they will be led to the valley or torrent of willows, so that no fruit remains in them. For they say that this is the nature of the seeds of these trees, that whoever drinks it in a cup will be barren. Hence the holy ones who, because of their sins, began to be in the confusion of this world, hang their organs in the willows of the Babylonian rivers (Ps. CXXXVI). The cry of the Moabites goes around all the borders, either calling for repentance or mourning for the error, so that they can offer through their wailing the calves of their lips and reach the spring of the Lord's rams, or the mighty ones, because Elim signifies both. But the waters of Dimon, which is interpreted as sufficient pain or sorrow, which had polluted many with its sprinkling, will be accused by deceived peoples of not being for their salvation, but for their bloodshed. Hence the prophetic speech promises that over flowing tears, which is interpreted as Dibon, they will accumulate not just one sorrow, but multiple additions of sorrow: so that after they have fully repented and fled from the Moabite lion, they may have God as their leader, whom the Septuagint called Ariel, which is interpreted as lion of God: I will refrain from discussing their translation in this place, because it disagrees with the Hebrew truth in many places, and from what we have interpreted, the sense of that can also be understood.

16:1

(Chapter XVI—Verse 1) Send forth the lamb, the ruler of the earth, from the rock of the desert, to the mountain of the daughter of Zion. And it shall be like a flying bird, and the chicks flying from the nest. So shall the daughters of Moab be in the crossing of the Arnon. Plan a counsel, gather a counsel, place your shadow like the night at midday. Hide the fugitives, and do not betray the wanderers. My outcasts shall dwell with you, Moab shall be their shelter from the face of the devastator. For the dust is ended, the wretched one is consumed, the one who trampled the earth has ceased. And a throne will be established in mercy: and he will sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David: judging and seeking judgment; and quickly rendering what is just. This is what

we have interpreted from the Hebrew: send forth the lamb, the ruler of the earth, it can be read as follows: send forth the lamb to the ruler of the earth, in which case the lamb himself is not the ruler of the earth, as we have interpreted according to the history, but the lamb is to be sacrificed to the ruler of the earth. Therefore, this lamb, who either is the ruler of the earth or is sacrificed to the ruler of the earth, is from the nation of the Moabites, and from those who fled from Moab, and deserve to have the Prince be a lion. But Ruth, from whom Christ is born (Matt. 1:5), signifies the rock of the desert, because according to God's command, the Moabites and Ammonites do not enter the Church of God until the tenth generation, and not forever (Deut. 1). But whoever flees from the desert of Moab, so that we may return from prophecy to anagoge, and having disregarded falsehood, stands on the mountain of truth, will be like a flying bird; and like young birds flying from the nest, lest they be devoured by Moabite serpents. Thus, he says, all the daughters, that is, the Moabite souls, will be in the crossing of the Arnon, which is interpreted as their enlightenment: when they have abandoned errors and transcended to the knowledge of truth. Therefore, it is said to Moab itself, or to one who has escaped from Moab: Do nothing without counsel (Prov. XIII): Do not be carried about by every wind of doctrine, but follow him who is the great counselor Angel (Ephes. IV): And gather a council, so that out of the wanderers and strays you may make the Church of God. But your shadow and tent, in which you used to believe you found rest, which was of the night and darkness, put in the midday, that is, in the brightest light, in which you should hide those who flee from error, and not reveal the wanderers anymore. O Moab, my fugitive ones, who abandoned me, who had left the Church, and rejecting the teaching of the Holy Spirit, followed their own understanding; or those who had dwelt among you, when the devouring devil began to persecute them, you offer them refuge turned toward the fear of the Lord with your whole heart: and know that after the coming of the Lamb, who arose from the rock of the desert, the ruler of the whole earth; and He came to the mountain of the daughter of Zion, all the power of the devil, which is compared to dust, will come to an end. And the wretched one who made many wretched has been consumed, and the one who trampled on all the earth has fallen, those who became worldly. But with him consumed and reduced to nothingness, and completely depleted, a throne and eternal kingdom will be prepared. First in mercy (for we are all under sin: and we need the grace of God); and he will sit in the tabernacle of David, which had fallen and was raised up, who will judge after mercy, and seek justice, and render to each according to their works. Let us consider at the beginning either the burden or the discourse of Moab, in which it is said: 'In the night Ar Moab is laid waste' and so on until this place; and we will see how, by gradual steps and in order of repentance, the Moabites become Israelites: and they will flee like birds and fly like fledglings from the nest, to go beyond the Arnon and dwell on the mountain of the daughter of Zion: and with every power of the devil or Antichrist crushed, Christ will reign in them, and may He establish His throne for those who are saved by mercy and justice. For the Father does not judge anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son (John 5).

16:6-8

(Verse 6 and following) We have heard the pride of Moab: he is very proud. His pride, and his arrogance, and his indignation, are greater than his strength. Therefore Moab shall wail unto Moab, every one shall wail: to them that rejoice on the walls of the cooked brick, speak concerning his wounds: for the suburbs of Heshbon are desolate, the vine of Sibmah. LXX: We have heard the insolence of Moab: he is very contemptuous: his pride, and his insult, and his fury are not like

your divine prophecy: Moab will not wail like this: indeed everyone in Moab will wail: concerning the inhabitants of Dibon you will meditate: and you will not be confounded: the fields of Heshbon will mourn for the vine of Sibmah. It is clear from the obscurities in this passage, as it can hardly be read, how involved it is according to the Septuagint interpreters. Let us therefore speak according to the Hebrew, which is the custom of the Scriptures, that after they have relieved the despair of the human mind with glad news, they may again warn and deter those who are negligent and unwilling to repent with the threat of punishment, lest the goodness of God harden our hearts. Let us present just one example of this matter. In the 144th Psalm we read: The Lord is sweet to all, and his mercy is upon all his works. And after a little while: The Lord sustains all who fall, and raises up all who are cast down. The eyes of all look to you, O Lord, and you give them food in due season. And when he had finished, the Lord kept all who loved him; lest he make the listener negligent, he added: And he will destroy all sinners. Therefore, after the Antichrist and his parent, the devil, who trampled upon the whole earth, have been consumed, it is prophesied that a throne is to be prepared in mercy, and he who will sit in the tabernacle of David, from the person of the saints who have been saved from Moab, and through their experience have learned his pride, the prophet speaks: You have heard the pride of Moab, or rather, the injury, as the Septuagint translated. For who among heretics is not arrogant? They despise the simplicity of the Church and treat its people like brute animals. They are so filled with pride and arrogance that they arm themselves against the Creator, attacking His prophets as if they were challenging the authority of the Gospel. In which the Savior says, 'All who came before me were thieves and robbers' (John 10:8). They even dare to call Moses, the servant of God, a murderer, and they slander Joshua, the son of Nun, as if he were a bloodthirsty man, despite his great holiness that caused the sun and moon to stand still at his command. They also call David, from whose lineage Christ was born (Matthew 1), a murderer and adulterer, without considering his repentance and gentleness which are compared to the mercy of God. But although he may be proud and arrogant, and although he may rejoice in his madness: nevertheless he dares more than his strength allows. Therefore Moab shall howl unto Moab, that is to say, one shall cry out against another: all the diversities, of heretics and of secular wisdom, shall roar against themselves, when they shall be in torments (III Kings VI). For this reason, those who have walls built not with squared stones, from which the Temple was built; and so polished, that the sound of hammer and axe has not been heard in the house of God, O masters of the Church, or you who have been saved from the error of Moab, announce your wounds, with which you have been wounded by the javelins of heretics. For all their thoughts, which Ezeiel signifies, do not pertain to the habitation of the Lord's city, of which it is written: The streams of the river make the city of God glad (Ps. 45:5); but they are suburban, so that they may be thought to pertain to the city of the Lord: these suburbs are deserted, without divine protection, or burned by divine fire, especially the vineyard of Sabama, which signifies raising up to a height, because it strives to rise up high and build its tower of pride up to heaven. However, what is stated in the Septuagint is not found in the Hebrew text of the inhabitants of Deseth; but instead it is read as Ares (), which means a tile or a fired brick.

16:9-10

(Verses 9, 10.) The scourges of the Lord have fallen upon the nations: they have reached even to Jazer. They have wandered in the desert: their branches have been left behind: they have crossed the sea. Therefore, I will weep over the vineyard of Sabama with weeping: I will drench you with

my tears, O Heshbon and Eleale: for on your harvest and on your crop the voice of the treaders has fallen. Joy and gladness will be taken away from Carmel: there will be no rejoicing or jubilation in the vineyards: the one who used to tread the wine in the winepress will not tread it anymore: I have taken away the sound of the treaders. The suburban areas of Esebon, which we mentioned earlier, are deserted, and the vineyard of Sabama, which can be interpreted not only as a lofty elevation but also as some kind of conversion, because it seems that in the region of Moab, it wants to be partially converted to the service of the Lord. Therefore, the Apostles and apostolic men, servants of the Lord of nations, completely cut off the scourges and offshoots of this vine of Sabama, so that no other heresies would arise from other heresies, and a boundless multitude of the erring would not be made. And not only did the branches of Sabama fall, but they reached as far as Jazer, which is interpreted as their strength: that is, to the most powerful teachings of the heretics, and constructed with dialectic art, in which the strength of their error seemed to reside; and to such an extent was their sword brandished, that in the end they wandered in the wilderness and had no one to kill. And although those lashes were cut off, nevertheless, due to the fault of the rotten root, some branches remained. But the lords of the nations have passed over the sea, that is to say, the temptations of this world, of which we read in the psalm: Come into the depths of the sea, and the tempest shall swallow me up (Ps. 68: 3); and in another place: They that go down to the sea in ships, doing business in the great waters: these have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep (Ps. 106: 23). Therefore, these have passed over the sea, in order to behold the works of the Lord and his wonders in the depths of temptations, while they are delivered from them. Therefore, the prophetic discourse laments the strength of the heretics, that is, Jazer and the vineyard of Sabama, which exalts itself against the knowledge of God. And I will intoxicate you with my tears, Esebon, the thoughts of the wise, and Eleale, who ascend to lofty heights. But why does he lament Jazer and intoxicate Esebon and Eleale with his tears? So that while he himself weeps, he may teach them to weep. For, he says, the voice of those who trample upon your harvest and your crop resounds. The vineyard of the Moabites is such because of the proximity of the place, just like the vineyard of the Sodomites, of which it is said: 'For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah' (Deut. 32:31). And in the seventy-seventh psalm, we read about the Egyptian vineyard that God struck with hail. The Moabite harvests also grow in the valleys called Raphaim: but its vintage is false, of which it is said above: 'The rods of those who lifted it up have been broken' (Num. 24:8). For they crush the most bitter grapes and trample on them with their feet, so that the venom of the dragon may not be squeezed out of them and all who drink may be killed. Also, the joy and exultation of the heretics will be taken away, which they used to enjoy before, so that after they have repented they may deserve to hear this: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted (Matthew 5:5). And what he added about Carmel means this: not that the heretics truly have Carmel, that is, the knowledge of spiritual circumcision; but that they boast falsely of having it. And when the vines have been cut down and the joy and exuberance have been taken away because of false knowledge of their name, then there will be no more of the former grape treaders, who used to tread the grapes before, and their voice will be silenced in eternal silence.

16:11-13

(Verse 11 onward) Upon this, my belly will sound like a lyre to Moab: and my bowels will be like a wall of baked bricks. And when it becomes clear that Moab has labored in vain, he will enter his

sanctuaries to pray, but he will not prevail. This is the word that the Lord spoke to Moab from that time on. The error of Moab has been destroyed; indeed, false joy has turned into mourning and tears. My belly, the prophet, who is composed like a lyre with musical skill, and who, conceived in the fear of God, has produced many children, so that there is no string that does not produce its sound, will resonate the lament of Moab, who is repenting: and all my bowels will be like a wall of baked bricks, as Theodotius interpreted it as a wall scattered. For all the defenses of opposites, in which they previously trusted, will be destroyed and will fall. These, however, are the bowels and inner parts of the prophet, about which David also said in the Psalm: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all my innards proclaim his holy name (Psalm 102, 1). For just as a lyre does not emit a vocal sound and harmonious, if at least one string is broken; similarly, the spiritual belly of the prophet, if one string of virtues is lacking in it, will not be able to resound sweet melody; nor proclaim with all its innards against the brick wall. It is also the opinion of the philosophers to cling to virtues; and the Apostle James says that if one is lacking one virtue, all virtues are lacking in that person. But when he realizes that he has labored in vain in the lofty doctrines which he once believed, he will enter into his own holy things, not those things which are inherently holy, but those things which he erroneously thought were holy, and he will not be able to find help. Perhaps, in the desert of error and falsehood, he will attempt to enter into the holy Church, to make it his own, and to pray and beseech, but he will not prevail. For we cannot immediately, as we wish, attain perfect virtue. And this is what it means: That word which the Lord spoke to Moab from that time, with the introductory statement in which he said, the word against Moab, or the burden, let us understand it as the conclusion, so that what he began there, he may complete here. From that time, however, we should understand from when he began to speak to him, that everything he said is one word of God, that is, one sentence. Moreover, according to the Septuagint version, we can explain the prophet's innermost thoughts being renewed by God, and him being ashamed, that is, Moab, and entering into the altars, and the things that are made by hand, so that we may say that the prophet's innermost thoughts are always renewed, and made stronger by God, so that their adversaries may be confounded, and they may understand that the things made by human hand are useless, and do not contribute to salvation.

16:14

(Verse 14) And now the Lord has spoken, saying: In three years, like the years of a hired worker, the glory of Moab will be taken away from all its people, and only a few will be left, not many. The three years, in which the glory of Moab will be taken away from all its people, whether many in number or rich in wealth, as translated by the LXX, are to be understood mystically. For just as the mercy of the Lord is in weights and measures, so too do the torments and punishments have their measure. After these three years have passed, in which only a few will be left, not many, then the ingloriousness will cease. And this should be noted, that according to the prophecy of Ezekiel, when the days are counted for years for the Israelites (Ezek. IV), that is, the ten tribes which had sinned grievously, they are reckoned as three hundred and ninety years, as it is written in Hebrew, not one hundred and ninety years, as the Vulgate edition has it: and for the Jews, in which there was the Temple of God, forty years. For he who is small deserves mercy, but the powerful endure torment forcefully (Wis. VI). And the servant who knows his master's will and does not do it, will be beaten severely (Luke XII). Therefore Moab, because he was a foreigner, not of the people of God, but having turned away from error, will be left small and humble, and inglorious, not for many

years, but only for three. These are the years that we read about elsewhere: Remember the days of old (Isaiah XLVI), and again: I have considered the days of old, and have kept the eternal years in mind (Psalm LXXVI, 6). For if he served the shadows and copies according to the flesh of Israel, and all their solemnity was a type of future things, why do not the present times of this year also foreshadow future times? Concerning which, we read in another place: What will you do in the days of the assembly, and in the days of the feast of the Lord? And what is joined, Like the days of a hireling (Hosea 9:5), shows that false teaching does everything for profit and gain. For every hireling, and he that is not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees: and the wolf snatches them, and scatters the sheep: and the hireling flees, because he is a hireling: and has no care for the sheep (John 10). Therefore, I think that strangers and hirelings should not eat of the saints, nor be partakers of the servants of the saints. For they do all things not out of love for the Lord, but for reward, who devour the houses of widows, and bring their own flocks to be clothed in their wool, and milk them (Matthew 23). Let us apply what we have said about teaching for hire to other things. If I give alms in order to be praised by men, I have received my reward, and I am to be called a hireling. If I pretend to be chaste, but have something else in my conscience, I have not the glory of a hireling, but the punishments of a sinner. And in comparing two evils, it is a lesser evil to openly sin than to feign and pretend sanctity. Indeed, in this respect, Moab has made progress, so that one who previously had many companions in his error is reduced to few; or one who previously had much wealth in the sins, after repentance becomes small and poor in wickedness.

Book Seven Book Seven The seventh book is the same as the second according to the anagoge, or rather the last. For in this book the explanation of ten visions in the tropologic sense is concluded: when I have completed it with your prayers, Eustochium, and with the help of Christ, I will proceed to the eighth book and I will explain both explanations, according to the previous books, up to the fourth.

17:1

(Chapter 17, Verse 1) The Burden of Damascus. Symmachus and Theodotion, The Assumption of Damascus: LXX, The Word against Damascus, adding their own account of what they did in Moab at the beginning. We first read the name of Damascus in Genesis, who was a native of Abraham before Isaac, and he was considered the heir, unless he was born to Sarah by promise (Genesis 15). However, it is interpreted either as a kiss of blood, or one who drinks blood, or the blood of the Cilician garment, all of which are customs of the Gentile people, who before the faith of Christ, were a friend of bloodshed and cruelty, and performed worthy acts of mourning and sackcloth. In the book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 24), the story is told that at the end of the year, the army of Syria rose up against Joash, the king of Judah, and came to Jerusalem, and killed all the leaders of the people, and sent all the spoils to the king of Damascus, who had come with a few men. And God had delivered a very great multitude into their hands, because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. This should be considered in light of the spiritual meaning and the future significance, to determine whether we can apply it to the time of the Lord's coming. At the end of the acceptable year, in which the Gospel was preached by the Savior, a multitude of Gentiles rose up from Damascus in a few men against Judah and Jerusalem, who had forsaken the Lord. And they took away all their wealth of the Law and the Prophets, and sent it to the king of Damascus, namely, the ecclesiastical men and the teachers of the Gospel, who were few in comparison to the

whole world, which was still unbelieving at that time, and to the scattered Jews throughout the whole world. And yet the Lord delivered Jerusalem into their hands, because they had forsaken the Son of God, who had been predicted by the prophets before. Therefore, (perhaps it was I), for this reason, I believe that Saul, who later received the name Paul by virtue, because he was a persecutor of the Law, went to Damascus and wanted to fight against the believers from the Gentiles there, and after being defeated, he followed those who were already in Damascus, in order to go back to Jerusalem and conquer the Jews there. And it should not seem contradictory to anyone that in the Chronicles book, joyful things are said about Damascus, and now in Isaiah, sad things are prophesied, because both about Israel itself, which is certainly a part of God, both adverse and prosperous things are declared. And just as it is said that Israel according to the flesh, and the Gentiles are called uncircumcised by those who are called circumcised in the flesh, so it is the opposite for Israel according to the spirit, and the Gentiles are according to the spirit, and among the other Gentiles, Damascus is according to the spirit, so that we may not exclusively rely on Jewish fables.

17:1-3

(Verse 1 onwards) Behold, Damascus will cease to be a city, and it will be like a heap of stones in ruin. The deserted cities will be for flocks, and they will rest there, and there will be no one to frighten them away. The help from Ephraim will cease, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria will be like the glory of the children of Israel, declares the Lord of hosts. As indicated in the title, the calling of the nations is signified by Damascus, those who loved or drank blood, who, after believing in Christ, will cease to be cities of their former way of life, and will be like a heap of stones in ruin. For just as heaps of stones, which were scattered in the fields, are gathered into one mound, so a heap of believers from all nations was gathered together in the downfall of the Jewish people, as they fell, and we rose up. The deserted cities, Aroer, that is, Myrhae, will be for the Ecclesiastical flocks, so that we may inhabit those which the Jews deserted: whether the destroyed idolatry will be rebuilt as the Gospel. And we see that this has been fulfilled in our times: the Serapeum in Alexandria and the temple of Marnas in Gaza have arisen as churches of the Lord, and the cities of Aroer have been prepared for the Evangelical flocks. Aroer, that is, myrice, grows in desert places, according to what is written in the curse of the man who trusts in man and departs from the Lord: He shall be like a myrtle in the desert and shall not see when good comes; but he shall dwell in dryness, in the desert, in a land of saltiness and uninhabitable. So those who were once in the desert of the Gentiles, and hated the name of Christians, will serve the flocks of Christ, who will find rest in them, and there will be no one to frighten them, for the Lord will dwell among them, and with the Shepherd present, they will not be able to fear the wolf. Then the help of God will cease from Ephraim, who in this place are understood as the Scribes and Pharisees, according to the prophecy of Hosea, who calls them adversaries of the people of God and names them Ephraim (Hosea 5 and 8). And the kingdom shall cease from Damascus, so that sin shall by no means reign, and the prince of sin, the devil, shall reign in Damascus, which once loved bloodshed; but the remnant of Syria, that is, those from the Gentiles who have believed, shall be as the sons of Israel were before, the kingdom of God being taken away from them and given to the Gentiles, who bear its fruit, as the Lord God of hosts has spoken through all His prophets.

17:4-6

(Verse 4-6) And in that day, the glory of Jacob shall fade, and the fat of his flesh shall waste away. And it shall be like the gleanings of a harvest, what remains, and his arm shall gather the ears of grain, and it shall be like one seeking grain in the valley of Rephaim. And he shall be left like a cluster of grapes, like the shaking of an olive tree, with two or three berries on the top of the branch, or four or five on its fruitful branches, says the Lord God of Israel. After the remnants of Syria had been, just as once had been the glory of the sons of Israel, and their salvation had been given to the nations by their transgression, then all the glory of the Jews will be diminished, with which they were glorious in the entire world, and their plump flesh will waste away, lacking prophets, signs and wonders, the present help of God, and the dignity of the priesthood: but the whole body of their nation will wither away and be reduced to nothing. And when it is said of the calling of the Gentiles, 'The harvest is great, but the laborers are few' (Matthew 9), those poor people will gather the remnants of the harvest, which have been saved through the Apostles, and will gather the very rare grains, not from mountains and high places, but in the valley of Raphaim, that is, in the lowliness of letters. And consider that Raphaim, which is interpreted as giants, means the Pharisees and Scribes, just as Ephraim means above. Finally, the Seventy translated the valley of Raphaim as the hard valley, in order to express the hardness of the Jewish heart. Those who are chosen because of their humility are like grain on the threshing floor and grapes in the vineyard, that are saved: and like the shaking of the olive tree, whether two, three, four or five olives. For when the stroke of the Jewish people came, that olive tree of the people of Israel, which under Moses had six hundred thousand armed men (Num. 26), and under David, counted by Joab, an innumerable people (2 Sam. 24), could hardly offer a few fruits to the Lord and Savior: Paul and Barnabas two olives, and Peter and James, and John (Acts 13), who also saw the transfigured Lord on the mountain and deserved to go with the Lord to the house of the synagogue official's daughter (Matt. 17). But four and five olives make up the remaining nine Apostles, in whom Matthias took the place of the treacherous Judas, who, for some unknown reason, was separated into four and five olives, in order to demonstrate the number of the Gospels and the volumes of the Law within themselves, as if they were proclaimers of both Instruments (Acts 1).

17:7-8

(Verse 7, 8). On that day, man will bow down to his maker and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel. And he will not bow down to the altars that his hands have made, nor to the things that his fingers have worked on; he will not look to the groves and shrines. In that time, when the Lord your God called the people of Israel, who were once called a fruitful olive tree (Jeremiah 11:16), and as we read in the Psalms: Your children will be like young olive trees around your table (Psalm 128:3), if the Lord hungry for the dryness of spiritual grace finds barely two olives, or three, or four, or five, the fullness of the Gentiles will enter, and they will not bow down to idols made by hands, but they will bow down to their own God, looking to the Holy One of Israel, and they will despise altars, groves, and shrines, knowing that which is written: Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted (Matthew 15:13).

17:9-10

(Verses 9, 10.) On that day your fortified cities will be deserted like plowed fields and cornfields that have been deserted by the children of Israel. And it will be desolate, because you have forgotten your God, your Savior, and have not remembered your strong helper. LXX: On that day

your cities will be deserted like the cities abandoned by the Amorites and the Hivites before the children of Israel. And they will be deserted because you have abandoned your God, your Savior, and have not remembered the Lord, your helper. Just as under Moses and Joshua the son of Nun, the Amorites and the Eves and the other nations dwelling in the promised land abandoned their plows and crops and heaps in the fields and fled, lest they be seized by enemies, so too the land of Judea and all its mighty cities, with the Romans ravaging Judea and besieging Jerusalem, were deserted by their inhabitants. And there is an apostrophe to the very land of Judea, that is, to those who dwelt in it. But all these things you have suffered, because you have forgotten your God and Savior, who is called Jesus, whom the Law and the Prophets constantly proclaimed would come to you; and you have not remembered your strong helper, who has always come to your aid. Therefore, the reason for the desolation of the cities of Judea is the forgetfulness of the Savior, who, at the beginning of this prophecy, said: Israel did not know me, and my people did not understand me.

17:11

(Verse 11.) Therefore, you will plant a faithful plantation and sow a foreign seed. On the day of your planting, your grapevine will be in bloom, and in the morning your seed will sprout; the harvest has been taken away on the day of inheritance, and there will be great sorrow. LXX: Therefore, you will plant an unfaithful plantation and unfaithful seed, and on the day you plant, you will wander. But if you sow in the morning, it will bloom for the harvest on the day of inheritance, when a father gives inheritance to his sons. For that reason, because we have interpreted it according to Aquila and Symmachus and the LXX, on the day of inheritance, which in Hebrew is called *Biom Nehela* (), it can be read in Hebrew, on a very bad day. And for that reason, because it has been interpreted by Aquila and Theodotion, and the man will grieve: we learned from the Hebrews, for the man who is called Enos in their language, we have interpreted as Anus (), that is, heavily: concerning the ambiguity of this word, if there is time in this life, we will discuss it more fully in Jeremiah, where according to the LXX it says: And there is a man, and who will know him? Therefore I say what I proposed: Because you have forgotten, O land of Judah, your Savior God, and the one who always provided strength for you, you have not remembered; therefore you will indeed plant a faithful plantation, as the interpretations of Aquila and Theodotion say, beautiful; or as Symmachus says, good, preaching one God: but you will sow a foreign seed, not receiving the Father, because you do not receive the Son. For whoever believes in the Father, also believes in the Son. And because you have sown the seed of blasphemy against Jesus in the synagogues of Satan, therefore you shall not gather grapes, but wild grapes. And when it appears that your seed is flourishing and you have some shade of piety, while you withdraw people from idols: yet when you will grieve deeply in the day of harvest to gather the fruits, seeing that the people of the Gentiles are preferred to you. Hence the Apostle says: I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I myself wished to be anathema from Christ for the sake of my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption of sons, and the glory, and the testament, and the giving of the law, and the promises: whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all things, God blessed forever. Amen (Romans 9:3-5). And not only Paul, but also every saint speaks this, wishing to save even the root with the branches of the olive tree. But that inheritance is what we obtain from the Lord, about which the Apostle says: There are divisions of grace, but the same Spirit; and there are divisions

of ministries, but the same Lord; and there are divisions of operations, but the same God, who works all things in all. Let someone wonder why we have called our faithful congregation a faithful plantation, considering the beautiful and good translations made by Aquila, Theodotio, and Symmachus. The Hebrew word Neemanim, if spelled with the letter Aleph, means faithful; but if spelled with Ain, and pronounced as Neamenim, it means beautiful. Thus, Noemi, which is spelled with this letter, speaks in Ruth (Chapter I, 20): 'Do not call me Noemi, that is, beautiful, but call me bitter.'

17:12-14

(Verse 12 and following) Woe to the multitude of many peoples, like the roaring of the sea, and the tumult of the nations, they shall make a sound like the noise of many waters. The peoples shall sound like the noise of abundant waters: and he shall rebuke him, and he shall flee far off: and he shall be carried away as dust of the mountains before the wind, and as a whirlwind before a tempest. In the evening, and behold trouble: in the morning, and he shall not be. This is the portion of them that have wasted us, and the lot of them that spoiled us. Above, we read about the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews, and also about the election of a few Jews among the Apostles. And since in comparison to the whole world and all the nations, only a small part of the people believed in Christ, as it was said above: 'And the remnant of Syria shall be as the glory of the children of Israel' (for 'many are called, but few are chosen' - Matthew 22:14) and 'not all have faith' (2 Thessalonians 3:2), now it follows that there is not mourning, but woe to those nations who refused to believe and persecuted the Christian people. And they are compared to the mass of waves and the roaring sea, and as much as is within them, they desire to overwhelm and occupy everything. For the people will sound forth in the spectacles of theatrical luxury, and in the cruelty of the amphitheater, and in the madness of the circus, just as the sound of overflowing waters, when with a united voice of impiety they blaspheme, and they say to the Christians, 'Throw them to the lions and beasts,' and other things of this kind. But to them, like raging seas, the Lord will rebuke the instigator of their sedition, and He will drive him away from His people. And as dust moved on the mountains, the higher it is, the stronger it is carried away; and as a whirlwind, which rises from the earth, is carried away into the sky by a sudden storm: so also he, being carried away, will be separated from the people of God and will flee, lest he be relegated to the abyss. And when the day of consummation comes, which is interpreted as evening, then there will be turmoil, acknowledging his sins. And in the morning, on the day of resurrection, it will not continue, as the LXX translated, it will not be. But if it will not be, what will those who give penance to the devil respond, and they promise as much as they can, an archangelic rank? This is the role of those who have devastated us, and the fate of those who will plunder us. This is either the speech of the Christian people or the prophet speaking from the perspective of the believing people, that the persecutors will have eternal destruction, who have oppressed the holy ones of God with exile, imprisonment, and the seizure of goods, and will possess eternal punishments.

18:1-3

(Chapter 18—Verse 1 and following) Woe to the land of buzzing wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, that sends ambassadors by sea, in vessels of papyrus on the waters. Go, you swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth-skinned, to a people feared near and far, a mighty nation and conquering, whose land the rivers divide. All you inhabitants of the world, you who dwell on

the earth, when a signal is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and when a trumpet is blown, you will hear it. LXX: Woe to the land of winged ships beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, who send ambassadors by sea in papyrus vessels over the water. Go, swift messengers, to a tall and smooth-skinned nation, to a people feared far and wide, a powerful and oppressive nation whose land the rivers divide. All you people of the world, you who live on the earth, when a banner is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and when a trumpet sounds, you will hear it. I have placed both editions in the most obscure prophecy so that nothing may seem to be lacking to those who want to understand what is written. At the same time, I greatly admire those who think that our faith and Christian hope are satisfied with simplicity, because it is written: The commandment of God is a clear light, enlightening the eyes (Ps. XIX, 9): and that we should not seek more than what is commanded, but that what is commanded should be done: for this reason, both the whole Scripture and the Prophets are specifically involved in the mysteries of the future, so that they may provoke us to understanding and to what is said in the Gospel: Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you. Therefore, since I have explained the history and what is contained in Hebrew in the fifth book, now I will explain what seems to me according to the allegory. Perhaps a discerning reader may inquire what the Vision, or the Burden of Damascus, the sounding cymbal, and the other things that follow mean. After the calling of the Gentiles was mentioned, along with the objection of the Jews and their election, those who believed through the Apostles, and then the multitude of the Gentiles and the persecutors who were compared to the waves of the sea: it followed that the prophetic discourse would also announce the heresies that have troubled and continue to ravage the Church, which, while the master of the household slept, sowed weeds in the field of the Church (Matthew 13). And they are called cymbals, lacking the love of God, according to the saying of the Apostle: 'If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal' (1 Corinthians 13:1). And not only a cymbal with its harsh resounding sound, but because of the lightweight heretical discourse that flows in different directions, they are called cymbals of wings, or according to the Septuagint, wings of ships, who, promising great goods, sail in the waves of this world. But understand the wings of the ships, the sails by which they are suspended and drawn. And beautifully he called them the wings of the ships, for every heretic promises lofty things and boasts of having wings, yet he clings to the salty waves and does not depart far from land, and in the middle of his course he suddenly suffers shipwreck. Hence the Eagle, as a symbol of the ship, interpreted the shadow of the wings, for eagles do not have wings, but a resemblance to wings. And he brings forth the fact that which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, signifies that all heretics are conquered by their impiety. For example: Epicurus says that there is no providence, and that pleasure is the greatest good. By comparison, Marcion is even more wicked, and all heretics who tear apart the Old Testament. For when they reject providence, they accuse the Creator, and assert that He has erred in most of His works, and has not done them as He should have. For what benefit do serpents, scorpions, crocodiles, fleas, bugs, and mosquitoes bring to human beings? Therefore, these people across the rivers of Ethiopia are sending messengers into the sea of this world, that is, their disciples, who are said to carry their volumes, rightly called papyrus vessels, that is, papers carried on the water, which are quickly erased. For just as books are quickly obscured and destroyed by water and moisture, so too their message and teaching, once it appears to possess some strength in the beginning, passes away and slips away. Therefore, through irony, it is said to them: O Angels of heretics, go quickly. These false apostles,

deceitful workers, who transform themselves into apostles of Christ, are referred to as such by the blessed apostle Paul (2 Cor. XI). And go to the nation torn and ravaged: torn from God and torn apart by the bites of heretics. To a horrible people; for there is nothing more horrible than blasphemy, which lifts up its own mouth in arrogance. After which there is no other people; for every sin when compared to blasphemy is lighter. A people waiting, waiting, and trampled upon. For all heretics promise themselves celestial things, and they promise great things, and yet they are trampled upon by demons. Whose land the rivers have plundered, which do not have waters from the sky, but from the earth. For what corner is there, what remote wilderness of the earth, to which the polluted speech of heretics does not reach? Therefore, all who dwell and live in the world, lift up their eyes to the sign of the heretics, which is raised as if on mountains, and they hear the sound of the trumpet, that is, their teaching. These things are according to Hebrew. Furthermore, according to the Seventy, the wings of the heretics lament, which fly like ships across the sea of this age, and they surpass the impiety of the Gentiles, whom Scripture now calls Ethiopians: and it is said about their teaching and their language: You who send books of this age into the sea, the hostages of your perversity, and letters to deceive those who will read them. The swift messengers go to the high and foreign people, and the most wicked. For no ecclesiastics have so much zeal for good as heretics have for evil, and they believe they will gain advantage by deceiving others and destroying those who are already doomed. But this people is called exalted because of their pride: and foreign and wicked because they are estranged from God. Truly a people without hope, and oppressed, whose rivers throughout the whole earth imitate the dwelling of the Church, so that they may find for themselves a home and a region, in which they may raise the sign of their teaching, in which they may sound the trumpet of the Scriptures.

18:4-7

(Vs. 4 and following) Because this is what the Lord says to me, I will rest and observe in my place: just as the bright midday light is, and like the clouds of dew in the day of harvest. Before the harvest, the whole field has blossomed, and the immature perfection will sprout, and its branches will be cut off by the sickle: and what has been left behind will be cut off, shaken off. And they will be left to the birds of the mountains, and to the animals of the earth, and in perpetual summer, birds will be above it, and all the animals of the earth will winter over it. In that time the gift of the Lord of hosts will be brought by the scattered and torn people, by the dreadful and desecrated people, by the waiting and trampled people, whose rivers they have plundered, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, Mount Zion. God rests and contemplates in His place, or near the Eagle, in the firmament, that is, in the Church, of which the Apostle Paul speaks: Pillar and foundation of truth (I Tim. III, 15). But the things that happen in the Church are contemplated; and just as the clear midday light illuminates everything, so it surveys the whole: according to what is said in the eighteenth Psalm in the mystical sense about the sun of justice: There is none that can hide himself from its heat. And just as the clouds of dew in the day of harvest, and in the scorching heat of summer are most welcome, so the Lord refreshes the inhabitants of His Church, in whose presence all things flourish. And before the time of consummation comes, because now we know in part and we prophesy in part, many perfect ones will be found, of whom the Apostle speaks: As many as are perfect, let us think this way (I Cor. XIII; Phil. III, 15). But the useless branches will be cut off by the sickles, as the Savior says in the Gospel: I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he will take it away; and every branch

that bears fruit, he will prune it, that it may bear more fruit (John XV, 2). And those things which have been cut off will be left for the birds of the mountains and the beasts of the earth. For the birds, which are sown along the way, will be preyed upon, and for the beasts, to whom the soul is delivered, not confessing God, so that he who has been cut off and rejected by the Lord, and separated from his body, which is the Church, may find his dwelling among birds and beasts both in summer and winter, that is, in prosperity and adversity. And just as those who are useless and unfruitful in the Church are pruned and cast out, lest a little yeast corrupt the whole mass: so, on the contrary, it can happen that those who were deceived by heretical error, and torn away from the Lord and lacerated, and terrifying for their blasphemy, and waiting in vain for lies, and trampled by demons, and scattered in various parts by rivers, when they have remembered their God, and have abandoned their many teachers, offer a gift to the Lord of hosts, nowhere else but on Mount Zion, and in the watchtower, which is interpreted as the Church. We will be brief, because we have already discussed many things in the book of historical explanation.

19:1

(Chapter 19, Verse 1) The Burden of Egypt. Symmachus and Theodotion: The Assumption of Egypt. Septuagint: The Vision of Egypt. Where in Hebrew it is written Massa Mesraim (), which we have interpreted as the Burden or Weight of Egypt: for which Aquila translated ἄρμα Ἀγίου, we can say that because the prophet carries and bears the yoke of the Lord, it is fitting for him to carry the burden of Egypt and see or bear the prophecy of Egypt. Hence, I wonder that the Septuagint translated it as Vision in Babylon; and as Word in Philistia, Moab, and Damascus; and now as Version in Egypt; when in Hebrew it is not Word and Vision in all these cases, but Massa (), that is, Burden, weight, that is placed. But what Symmachus and Theodotion have always translated as λήμματα, that is, assumption, we must understand that the prophet received spiritual grace from the Lord to know the sacraments of Egypt, or to see with the eyes of the mind, as the Septuagint translated. However, this Egypt is not the same as the one the Jews think, as Josephus believed, who relates in the book of Antiquities: that Onias the priest fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah by building a temple in the region of Heliopolis, which the Egyptians call νομήν, according to the likeness of the Temple of God, and an altar. For let us grant that these things were said about Onias, and about the altar that he built in Egypt, which will be five cities that speak the Canaanite language in Egypt, of which one is called ἱεδικ according to the LXX; according to other interpreters, the city is called Ars or Ares, or city of the sun? And who will be this savior who was sent to the Egyptians to save them, and so that the Egyptians may know the Lord? When they worshiped him with sacrifices and gifts, and fulfilled their vows? When did the Lord strike Egypt and heal it? At what time can we teach that there was a way from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians entered Egypt and the Egyptians into Assyria; and the Egyptians served Assyria? When Israel was in Egypt for the third time; and among the Assyrians, it was like a blessing in the midst of the land, so that the Lord said: Blessed is my people in Egypt, and the work of my hands in Assyria? It is clear that these things do not pertain to the Egypt that the Jews estimate. Therefore, we can call this place in which we live, and the world which is situated in evil: Egypt, especially because Mizraim, which is called Egypt, is interpreted as κθλιβουσα, that is, troubling or bringing into distress. However, it should be known that many Egyptian burdens or visions pertain to the province of Egypt, which is inhabited and seen even today. But both in this and in other places of Scripture, many things are stated which cannot stand according to history, so that by

necessity we are compelled to seek a deeper understanding.

19:1-4

(Verse 1 and following): Behold, the Lord will ascend upon a light cloud, and will enter Egypt, and the idols of Egypt will be moved from before him, and the heart of Egypt will waste away within it. And I will incite the Egyptians against the Egyptians, and they will fight, man against his brother, and man against his friend, city against city, kingdom against kingdom. And the spirit of Egypt will be broken within it, and I will frustrate their plans; and they will consult their idols and their diviners, and the Pythons and fortune-tellers. And I will deliver Egypt into the hands of cruel masters, and a strong king will rule over them, says the Lord God of hosts. I have diligently examined many of the prophecies of Egypt, which Isaiah raised up or saw, in a historical explanation. Therefore, now according to tropology, the most important things are to be taken. The Lord ascends upon a light cloud, the body of the holy Virgin Mary, which is not burdened by the weight of any human seed: or certainly His own body, which was conceived of the Holy Spirit. And he entered into Egypt of this world; and immediately all the Egyptian idols were moved, so that the divinations and all the fraud of idolatry, which possessed and deceived the whole world, felt that it had been broken: to such an extent that the wise men from the East, who were taught by demons, or according to the prophecy of Balaam (Num. XXIV), understanding that the Son of God had been born, who would destroy all the power of their art, came to Bethlehem and, with the star guiding them, adored the child (Matt. II). Then the heart of Egypt trembled, and the Egyptians rose up against the Egyptians, according to that which the Lord speaks in the Gospel: Think not that I am come to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I am come to divide a man against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (Matt. X, 34 seqq.). At that time also this was fulfilled: The enemies of a man are they of his own household (Micah VII, 6). And a man will fight against his brother, and a man against his friend. For they were separated in one house, two against three, and three against two, and the father was divided against the Son, and the son against the father, city against city, and kingdom against kingdom, those who did not believe against those who believed, or certainly those who believed, desiring to save their closest ones. And the spirit of Egypt was disrupted in their hearts, so that they would not feel equal; but separated by a spiritual sword against themselves, they would recognize that all their plans had been thrown away: and nevertheless, remaining in their previous error, those who had refused to accept the truth of faith would consult idols and their gods, and Pythonesses, and soothsayers. And when they did this, the Lord delivered them into the hands of cruel masters, according to the apostle's saying: Whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme (1 Tim. 1:20); being oppressed by the harshest servitude, may they return to the most merciful Lord. And fittingly, he calls the cruel demons their masters, to whom nothing is more cruel. Also, the strong king, who is their Lord, clearly refers to the devil, whom the Lord also calls a fortune in the Gospel, by binding and oppressing whom, the vessels of his house are plundered.

19:5-11

(Verset 5 et suiv.) And the sea water will dry up, and the river will be deserted and dried up, and the rivers will fail, and the streams of the embankments will be thin and dry up. The reed and the rush will wither, the bed of the river will be exposed from its source, and all irrigated crops will dry up. It will dry up and cease to exist. And the fishermen will mourn, and all those who cast a hook

into the river and spread a net over the surface of the water, and they will dry up. And those who work with linen will be confused, weaving and creating delicate fabrics, and their irrigated fields will become dry, all those who make ponds to catch fish. Foolish princes of Tanis, wise counselors gave Pharaoh foolish advice. When a strong and harsh king shall have dominion over Egypt, all learning and beauty of secular eloquence shall wither, and the very source of all rivers, the devil from whom all lies originate, shall cause devastation: so that other rivers and streams, which were filled by the turbid waters of the Nile, shall fail. Even the reed and the rush shall dry up from excessive drought. They made paper from the papyrus reed, which grows in the Greek language, and added their own green ink, which is not found in Hebrew. When I asked the scholars what this meant, I heard that in the Egyptian language, this word refers to everything that grows in the green marsh. The reed, according to metaphor, is a hollow speech, having nothing solid in itself. And the papyrus, while it appears to have a core and is not hollow, is still fragile and quickly withers. Moreover, all the rivers, when the source of the rivers dries up, will also dry up, and whatever was previously irrigated by the waters of Egypt will be dried up, so that the fishermen of Egypt, who are strongly opposed to the fishermen of the Lord, may mourn, and those who cast a hook into the river and spread a net over the surface of the water may lament. They deceive each individual by casting a hook into the muddy waters. But those who deceive many together, so that they speak openly in the synagogues of Satan and lead away the flocks of the people, they cast a net over the Egyptian waters. Even those who worked with linen to make the priests' garments will be confused; twisting and weaving it, which properly belongs to the art of dialectics. For 'subtilibus', the Septuagint translates it as 'byssus', which is also used for the priests' garments. And what follows: 'And its ponds will be stagnant, all those who made fish traps, this signifies that all the traps of the Egyptian fishermen will be destroyed and perish. For the gaps that were made to catch fish, as we have interpreted according to sense, both in Hebrew and in all the interpreters, in the place of the fish, souls are placed, so that we are drawn from the history to the tropology, namely that these fishermen, who made the gaps and pits, did so in order to deceive souls in them. It should be noted that for the gaps the LXX translated ζυθον, which is a type of drink made from grains and water, and is commonly called sabaïum in the provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia in both the native and barbaric language. The Egyptians use this mainly so that they do not attribute pure water to those who drink, but rather turbid water, and similar to mixed feces, so that through this kind of potion the doctrine of heretical depravity is shown. Then the princes of Taneos will be fools, which is interpreted as a humble command. For all heretics teach humility contrary to exaltation, and they bring down to the depths, and they are the princes of humble and abject command. Also, the counselors of Pharaoh, who is the king of Egypt, and rightly a scatterer, and divided, and separated into various parts, are described as foolish for giving counsel when the Lord has scattered the wisdom of the wise, and has rejected the understanding of the prudent (1 Corinthians 1).

19:12-15

(Verse 12 and following) How can you say to Pharaoh: I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where are your wise men now? Let them tell you and make known what the Lord of hosts has planned against Egypt. The princes of Tanis have become foolish, the princes of Memphis are deluded; the leaders of Egypt have led it astray. The Lord has poured into them a spirit of confusion; they have made Egypt stagger in all its undertakings, as a drunkard staggers and

vomits. And Egypt will have no need for one who makes the head and tail bend and restrain. Heretics often say to their king or Pharaoh: We are the sons of the wise ones who from the beginning delivered to us the Apostolic teaching: We are the sons of the ancient kings who are called the kings of the philosophers, and we have knowledge of the Scriptures joined with secular wisdom. He now asks them, whether it be the king of the heretics himself, where are his wise men who despised Ecclesiastical simplicity: and he compels them to answer what the Lord of Sabaoth has thought concerning Egypt of this world, and what he will do in its consummation. The foolish princes of Taneos are approved, who held the lowly command of the heretics. All the princes of Memphis, who boast of polluting eloquence and speech, are confounded. For 'Memphis' signifies 'mouth' or 'from the mouth' and metaphorically means 'speech'. And what follows: They deceived the corner of Egypt, or according to the Septuagint: they will deceive Egypt through tribes, signifies that the kingdom of secular wisdom is shown to be foolish, and the leaders of individual doctrines, who are interpreted as tribes, are shown to have had foolish teachers. For the Lord has mixed for them the spirit of confusion, or errors, according to what is written: And as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, God gave them over to a depraved mind (Rom. I, 24). And just as the holy one, Isaiah, can say: We will make the spirit of your salvation come upon the earth, so the sinner will make the spirit of error, that is, the spirit of malice. This is in accordance with what we read in Jeremiah: Your own wickedness will punish you, and your turning from me will rebuke you (Jerem. II, 19). But if a heretic is scandalized who does not accept the old Testament, which is said to be mixed with the spirit of error or confusion, let him hear the writing in the Apostle, that is, in the new Testament: God gave them up to the desires of their hearts in uncleanness (Rom. I, 24). And again: Therefore, God gave them up to shameful passions. And again: God gave them up to a reprobate sense, to do what is not fitting. But they are delivered up in the desires of their hearts, because they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things. Which indeed is not only read in the Epistle to the Romans, but also in the Epistle to the Thessalonians concerning the Antichrist: Because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. Therefore God shall send them the operation of error, to believe lying: That all may be judged who have not believed the truth but have consented to iniquity (2 Thess. 2:10). I think the Apostle Paul took this from the present reading of Isaiah, in which he says: The Lord hath mingled for them the spirit of error, and they have erred in all their works, as an intoxicated man staggereth and vomiteth, so also shall Egypt stagger and vomit because of her excess. Joel speaks of those who are drunk: Woe to those who are drunk without wine. And not only drunk, but also vomiting the madness of dragons, and the incurable madness of asps, so that after they vomit up this kind of wine, they understand their drunkenness and recognize that as long as they are drunk, they have neither beginning nor end, that is, neither head nor tail, but a trunk on both sides of the animal. For beginning and end, which both Symmachus and the Septuagint translated, Theodotion added the Hebrew words Chaphphe () and Agmon (), which Aquila interpreted as bent and perverse. In incurvo, senes intelligi volens; in perverso, lascivientes pueros, qui omniaperversa faciant; ac per hoc esse sensum, quod in Aegypto non solum caput desit et cauda, sed et senes et pueri, id est, et principium et finis.

19:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) On that day, Egypt will be like women, and it will be astonished and afraid because of the shaking hand of the Lord of hosts, which he will bring down on it. And the land of Judah will be a terror to Egypt; everyone who thinks of it will fear because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts, which he has determined against it. At that time, which is now, as we have frequently mentioned, it signifies the day when the Lord will send the spirit of error and confusion, so that Egypt will vomit out the wine of dragons and the incurable madness of asps, understanding its own error and its former drunkenness. Egypt will be afraid like a woman, not with the usual fear that anyone may experience, whom Egypt does not love but suffocates and kills; but with a feminine fear, for Egypt alone does Pharaoh desire to live. But when the commotion, or raising up, of the hand of the Lord, by which punishments are demonstrated, moves and lifts up, in order to strike Egypt. Then the land of Judah, that is, the knowledge of the Scriptures, the law and the prophets, the Gospels and the Epistles of the Apostles, will be a cause for celebration for Egypt, if they recognize them: or a cause for fear, if by comparing their teachings and truths, they understand that they have held falsehood. All who remember this land will tremble with the fear that leads to life: For the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord (Prov. 9:10). And not only in the consummation of the world, but also in the present time, we can receive this; which, every heretic should fear and be frightened by, as it is a teaching of a man knowledgeable in heavenly doctrines. But he will fear and dread the counsel of the Lord, which he has conceived upon Egypt of this world. We briefly go over each thing, in order to move on to the rest.

19:18

(Verse 18.) On that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and swearing by the Lord of hosts. One city shall be called the City of the Sun. The raised and shaking hand of the Lord over Egypt greatly benefits, so that the land of Judah may be in fear of Him, and everyone who remembers Him may tremble. At that time, five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan, which our five senses understand: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. When we see a woman to be desired, our sight speaks in the Egyptian language. When we hear a judgment of blood, with the Lord saying: You shall not entertain a vain hearing (4 Kings 12:21, according to the Septuagint), our hearing speaks in the Egyptian language. When we live in luxury according to the prophet, and lie on ivory beds, and anoint ourselves with the best ointments, our sense of smell speaks in the Egyptian language. When our God is present (Philippians III), our taste speaks the Egyptian language. If we do not hear what the Apostle says: It is good for a man not to touch a woman (I Corinthians VII); but on the contrary, let us join with the harlot, our touch speaks the Egyptian language. But if, on the contrary, we lift up our eyes and see that the fields are already white for harvesting, and we have not bowed down to the ground, but according to the Gospel, with a woman who for eighteen years could not look up to heaven (Luke XIII), we lift up our eyes and say, To you I lift up my eyes, who dwell in heaven (Psalm CXXII, 1), our eye and sight speak the Canaanite language. If we cut off our ears and hear the Lord speaking, those who have ears to hear shall listen (Luke 8:8). Our hearing speaks the language of the Canaanite. Whoever can say to the bridegroom: After you we run for the fragrance of your ointments (Song of Songs 1:3), and: We are the sweet odor of Christ in every place (1 Corinthians 2:15), his sense of smell speaks the language of the Canaanite. The taste is also received in a good manner by the one who eats the bread that came down from heaven, the living and not the dead bread, and hears this: Taste and see how sweet the Lord is (Psalm 34:9),

immediately his tongue speaks the language of the Canaanite. But there is also a spiritual touch, of which the Apostle John says: Our hands have touched the Word of life (1 John 1:1); and whoever touches Jesus in faith, so that the Savior can say about him: Someone has touched me, for I know power has gone out from me (Luke 8:46). We have learned how great blessings the elevated hand of the Lord bestows; let us seek why the five cities of Egypt speak not in the Hebrew tongue, but in the language of Canaan. To this, we will attempt to respond as follows: the Hebrew word 'περπατην' means 'transitor', one who travels from one place to another. Therefore, even though we are holy as long as we are in Egypt and surrounded by the darkness of this world, we cannot speak in the Hebrew language, but in the language of Canaan, which is intermediate between Egyptian and Hebrew and closely related to Hebrew. Canaan, in translation, means 'commotion' or 'response.' Therefore, when we depart from Egypt and desire to leave the power of Pharaoh, so that our land and our fearful confession belongs to Egypt, then we are moved and as if we respond to the will of the Lord, and yet because we are still in the present age, we cannot yet speak the Hebrew language. And what follows: swearing by the Lord of hosts five cities, this signifies that even here, placed in no way among demons, but among the rememberers of almighty God. Out of the five cities, while the names of four others are not mentioned, one is called the city of the sun, which seems to me to refer to sight. Just as a city needs the sun and moon to be seen, so our eyes need the sun of righteousness to be enlightened.

19:19-21

(Verse 19-21) On that day there will be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar near its boundary to the Lord. And it will be a sign and a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. For they will cry to the Lord because of the oppressor, and he will send them a Savior and a defender to deliver them, and the Lord will be known by Egypt. Accordingly, to what he said above: On that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and swearing by the Lord of hosts, now it is introduced: There will be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, which Onias, according to Josephus (Antiquities of the Jews, Book 13, Chapter 6), mistakenly tried to fulfill. And the title of the Lord containing the passion, in which it is written in Hebrew letters, Greek, and Latin: Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews (John 19), as a sign of the Cross, and as a testimony to all nations, which are now called Egypt. And when the persecution of those who trouble the name of Christians grows, then they will cry out in their hearts: Abba Father (Romans 8). And the Lord of hosts will send the Savior, that is, Jesus, and the Judge, or defender who will deliver them, so that they may know the Lord, and they themselves may be known by the Lord; and where sin abounded, grace may superabound (Romans 5). But the one altar of Egypt, that is, of this world, as we know, all altars that are raised against the Church altar are not of the Lord. Until the end of the vision of Egypt, in the book of Historical Explanation, because it was a clear prophecy, we said that all things are referred to Christ.

19:20

(Verse 20.) And the Egyptians will know the Lord on that day; and they will worship him with sacrifices and offerings, and they will make vows to the Lord and fulfill them. And the Lord will strike Egypt with a plague, and he will heal it; and they will return to the Lord, and he will be appeased by them, and he will heal them. After the Egyptians have come to know the Lord, they

will worship him with spiritual sacrifices and offerings; and they will make vows to the Lord and fulfill them; and they will say with David: 'Sacrifice to God a contrite spirit' (Psalm 50:19); and: 'The lifting up of my hands is an evening sacrifice' (Psalm 140:2); when they believe in the Nazarene and themselves become Nazarenes, not drinking wine and strong drink (John 19); and the vinegar that was given to the Lord, and whatever is made from the Sodomite grape. And when they have fulfilled their vows with Abel, and God looks upon them, Cain, the older brother, that is, the people of Circumcision, will envy and shed Christian blood, which will cry out to the Lord (Gen. IV); and therefore he will go forth from the face of God, saying of the Savior: Crucify him, crucify him (Luke XXIII, 11); and: We have no king but Caesar (John XIX, 15). He offers and fulfills his vow to the Lord, who is holy in body and spirit. Zacchaeus also offered a vow and promised to give half of his possessions to the poor (Luke 19). The question arises, if the Savior and defender was sent to Egypt to deliver them from distress, how can it now be said, 'The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague?' But let us consider what follows: 'And he will heal it.' For whom the Lord loves, he chastises (Hebrews 12). And the Savior himself speaks to the Father in Psalm 68: 'For those who you struck, they pursued; and they added to the pain of my wounds.' If, therefore, He has not spared His own Son, but has surrendered Him for us, so that by His bruises and wounds we may be healed (Rom. 8): the Lord also surrendered the martyrs to suffering, but He will restore them in the resurrection, so that the faith of believers may be confirmed by their wounds. Hence, it is also said to Job: Do you think that I have spoken in any other way to you, unless that you might appear just? For He Himself causes pain and restores to former health; He visits His servants with a rod, so that He does not take His mercy away from them. Where are the daughters and daughters-in-law who have greatly sinned and spread their legs to everyone passing by, not visited or rebuked, as the Lord says: 'I will not visit your daughters when they fornicate, or your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery' (Hosea 4:14). Therefore, the Lord strikes the Egyptians, not with fire or sword, but with a rod. For what son is not disciplined by his father? So that once they have been healed, they may return to the Lord, and he may be appeased with them and heal them again. For we always need the mercy of God, and there is no end to His clemency.

19:23

(Verse 23) On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. As we have shown, the preceding events have been for the good of the Egyptians. Five cities in their land will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord of Hosts. They will have an altar to the Lord in their midst, as well as a marker, testimony, sign, and savior to deliver them. The Egyptians will recognize the Lord and offer sacrifices, gifts, and vows. They will be healed and return to the Lord, finding favor and healing once again. Therefore, it should be understood that serving the Assyrians is also for the good of the Egyptians. For the Apostle serves the believers in order to make them gain (1 Corinthians 9). And Esau submits to his brother Jacob (Genesis 33), in order to become a partaker of his blessings. Therefore, those who were saved first from the Gentiles and have the altar of the Lord in themselves, will save those who persist in hardness through their servitude, and through their mixture and association with them, they will go to the Assyrians, so that they may bring the Assyrians to Egypt; and afterwards they may be able to reach the Israelite people. For this reason, I believe that a faithful woman should serve an unfaithful man, in order to gradually draw him from Egypt and Assyria to Judaea.

19:25-26

(Verse 25, 26.) On that day, Israel will be a third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying: Blessed be My people Egypt, and the work of My hands Assyria, and My inheritance Israel. Israel will be a third with Egypt and Assyria, to mix together the full measure of its blessing, and those who had previously been hostile to it will be joined by this bond of blessing; and Egypt will be the people of God, and Assyria the work of His hands, but Israel will be His inheritance. Blessed is the Egyptian to the Lord, because he is blessed by the company of the Israelites. And the work of his hands is Assyrian, because in him he has shown his mercy. But Israel alone can say: The Lord is my portion (Lam. 3:24); he who sees God with the mind, and is called his inheritance.

20:1-6

(Chapter 20, verses 1 and following) In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod and took it, at that time the Lord spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go, and loose the sackcloth from your waist and take off your sandals from your feet," and he did so, walking naked and barefoot. And the Lord said, "As my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years, as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Cush. Thus the king of Assyria will threaten the captivity of Egypt, and the migration of Ethiopia, both the young and the old, naked and barefoot, with their buttocks uncovered, the shame of Egypt. And they will fear and be ashamed because of Ethiopia, and because of Egypt, their glory. And the inhabitants of this island will say on that day, Is this our hope? To whom did we flee for help, to be delivered from the face of the king of Assyria? And how can we escape? Pro Thartan LXX Thanatan transtulerunt: et pro Sargon, Arna: quod quid interpretetur, scire non possumus. Neque enim falsorum nominum falsas possumus etymologias fingere. Sunt autem nomina non Hebraea, sed Assyria, e quibus sonare cognovimus Thartan, turrem dedit, vel superfluum, sive elongans. Sargon autem princeps horti. Hic rex Assyrius quem supra legimus sensum magnum, habet duces plurimos, quorum unus est Thartan, elatus in superbiam, et longe procedens in scelere, et amplior caeteris: et mittitur ad impugnandam Azotum, quae Hebraice dicitur Asdod (), et interpretatur, ignis generationis; expugnatque dux regis Assyrii eos qui generationi et libidini serviunt. And beautifully the king of the Assyrians, Sargon the prince of gardens, is said to be dedicated to pleasure and luxury. Finally, even Ahab, the king of Israel, desired to turn Naboth's vineyard into a garden, understanding the figurative meaning according to the laws of tropology, he preferred to die rather than to do it, so that his paternal inheritance and ancient possession would not be turned into the delights of an impious king. Moreover, the prophet is commanded to walk naked and barefoot, with his sack and shoes removed, as a sign and wonder to the Egyptians and Ethiopians who persecuted the people of God, and to humble them because of their pride. For Egypt means pursuing or afflicting; the Ethiopians, are humble and dejected; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled. (Luke 14:11). And those who are to be led into captivity and suffer torment for three years, as we read in the Psalms: I considered the days of old and years long past. (Psalm 77:5). These are not small punishments, but ones extended for long periods of time. But in the very captivity and transmigration in Egypt, both young and old, who have been strengthened in evil and have reached the vices of perfect age, will go naked so that all their crimes may be exposed (For nothing is hidden that will not be revealed), and barefoot, because they will not be able to eat the Pascha of the Lord: whoever eats it has his loins

girded and holds a staff in his hand and stands with feet shod, so that while passing through the desert of this world he may not be bitten by serpents. Then their buttocks will be exposed, from which excrement is produced, and all the shame of Egypt will be revealed, so that those who had hope in Egypt and Ethiopia will be confounded, and they will see that their glory has been changed into confusion; to such an extent that the inhabitant of this island, that is, of this world, who is not a stranger and foreigner, but desired to have perpetual possession of the world, says in confusion: This is Egypt, and this is Ethiopia, from which we hoped for help, in order that they would free us from the prince of this world. How then can we escape, since those in whom we had hope are captured? And it should be noted that before Azotus is captured, he is clothed in a sackcloth and with feet shod, so that he may indeed bewail those who have been wounded by the burning darts of the devil and serve their lust; but nevertheless, he himself walks shod, so that he may tread upon serpents and scorpions, and walk securely through the wilderness of this world, in which there are serpents and scorpions, and a thirst for good things. But after Ashdod was captured, he walks barefoot and naked as a sign of the captivity of Egypt and the exile of Ethiopia. For he could not stand or walk in the holy land, to which he hurried to go, dressed in a sackcloth and with his feet covered with skins, as the Lord said: Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place you are standing on is holy (Exodus 3:5).

21:1-3

(Chapter 21—Verse 1 and following) The burden of the desert of the sea. As hurricanes come from the south, it comes from the desert, from a fearful land. A harsh vision has been revealed to me: he who is unbelieving acts unfaithfully, and he who is a plunderer lays waste. Rise up, Elam, besiege Media: I have caused all their groaning to cease. Therefore my loins are filled with pain: distress has gripped me, like the distress of a woman in labor. 70: Vision of the desert of the sea. Just as a storm passes through the desert, coming from the desert. A vision of horror has been announced to me from the land of distress: the transgressor transgresses, and the unjust acts unjustly. The Elamites are against me, and the messengers of Persia come: now I groan and console myself: therefore my loins are filled with anguish, sorrows have seized me, like a woman in labor. What seems to us according to History we have said briefly: now let us grasp the summary of tropologies. A vision, or a burden against this world, is seen as the sea: and it is seen by the Prophet, how great temptations this world is full of. However, as to why the sea is called a world (not to mention many other things), I am content with one testimony from the Psalms: Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on great waters, they have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep (Psalm 107:23). For those who work in this world do the work of God, and with the Prophet they say: Come into the deep sea, they themselves see his wonders in the deep; and having been delivered from temptations and distress, they say they have heard a terrible and harsh vision. But this very storm comes from the desert, in which the Lord was tempted (Matthew IV), and Israel suffered from the bites of serpents and the stings of scorpions (Numbers XXI). And when it comes, it passes through and goes by; and then he who endures understands that only the transgressor transgresses and only the wicked acts wickedly. Therefore, if we are overwhelmed by the waves of the sea and if a fierce storm overtakes us, it is because of our own vice, for we were transgressors and wicked before the storm. And what he says is this: Against me the Elamites and the ambassadors of the Persians come, here the meaning is: the Elamites interpret with contempt, the Persians try. Therefore, let those come who are accustomed

to despise, to scorn, and to try; but I will lament, and my groaning will be my consolation. But even my loins are filled with distress, and I have been seized by pains like a woman in labor, so that I may conceive and give birth from the fear of the Lord, and make his spirit of salvation come upon the earth. But according to the Hebrew, the whirlwinds and storms come from the desert and from the dreadful land, where there is no inhabitant, God is not present, and everything is earthly. And whoever is unbelieving acts in accordance with his unbelief, and the devastator lays waste. Therefore, he speaks boldly against his adversaries, saying, 'Ascend, Elam; lay siege to the Medes!' I have caused every groaning of the desert sea and the dreadful land, and the harshest vision that was announced to cease. Because my loins are filled with repentance, not with pleasure as before, but with sorrow, and I will say no more: My loins are filled with illusions. (Ps. XXXVII, 7). For anguish and tribulation have taken hold of me, as it is wont to hold a woman in labor. The Vulgate edition and the Hebrew text differ greatly in this place; therefore, we will briefly examine both, lest we leave ourselves an opportunity for captious fault-finding.

21:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) I fell down when I heard, I was troubled when I saw: my heart grew faint, darkness overwhelmed me: Babylon, my beloved, has become a wonder to me. Set the table, watch those who eat and drink: rise up, princes, take the shield. LXX: I acted unjustly so that I would not hear, I hastened so that I would not see, my heart went astray: iniquity has flooded over me; my soul is filled with fear. Set the table, watch the watchtower: eat, drink: rise up, princes, prepare the shields. Before hearing and seeing the harshest things that the Prophet foresaw about the desert sea, he says that he fell and was troubled, and with almost blinded eyes and a bewildered mind, he did not know what he was seeing. For that Babylon (about which Aquila and Theodotius interpreted as darkness, to signify this world, which is in the evil (1 John 5), and whose rulers are according to the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 6), the rulers of these darkness), which once was either loved by the Prophets or by God, has become marvelous in its downfall. Where the Prophets are commanded that, partaking of the table of the Lord and being satisfied with His food, they may more diligently contemplate the things that are to come to the world; and through him it is said to all believers that, by partaking of and drinking the body and blood of the Lord, they may become princes of the Church, etc., and listen to the Apostles when they say, "Arise; take up the shield of faith from the armor of the Apostle Paul" (Ephesians 6), in which they can extinguish the fiery darts of the devil. According to the Hebrew, and the interpretation begun on the world. Let us move on to the Septuagint edition, which differs greatly from the previous ones. The Prophet corrects himself, or rather confesses the error of others under his own person, who following the literal letter, despise the life-giving spirit; and he says that he has acted unjustly, so as not to hear the law spiritually: but on the contrary, he hastened not to perceive the sacraments of God, nor did he say with David: Open my eyes, and I will consider the wonders of your law (Ps. 118:18). Therefore, his heart wanders and is filled with Jewish superstition, not remaining in the love of God, but in fear, so that he may have a spirit of slavery in fear, and not the spirit of adoption, in which we cry out, Abba Father (Rom. VIII). Therefore, it is commanded to him to approach the table of spiritual food, and all who follow his example shall eat from it and drink. And with the old error despised, let them rise up in the spirit which lay in the letter, and let them become princes, and let them say with the Prophet: O Lord, you have crowned us with the shield of your goodwill (Ps. V, 15).

21:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) For the Lord said to me: Go and set a watchman, and whatever he sees, let him announce. And he saw a chariot of two horsemen, a rider on a donkey, and a rider on a camel, and he examined carefully with great attention, and the lion roared. LXX: For thus says the Lord to me: Go and set a watchman for yourself, and whatever you see, announce. And I saw two horsemen riding, a rider on a donkey, and a rider on a camel: I heard a great sound, and I called Uriah to the watchtower. The Prophet is commanded to place in his heart a lookout and to look more closely at what is to come to the world. And he saw two horsemen, one riding on a donkey and the other riding on a camel. Some have interpreted this as the rider on the donkey representing Christ according to the Gospel reading (Matt. XXI) and the prophecy of Zechariah (Zech. IX), and, on the contrary, the rider on the camel representing contrary strength because of the ugliness of the twisted animal. But others refer the two ascending letters and spirit to the two Testaments. And that which is said in Hebrew Arie (ארי), for which Aquila and Symmachus have interpreted lion and lioness, the Seventy, I know not what, have put οφθαλμους, which some think to be interpreted as the light of the Lord, while with other letters it is the light of the Lord, which is not here, and with others it is written lion, which is here read. And he wishes this beholder, whom the Prophet is commanded to place in his heart, to be called Uriah, and through the interpretation of the name, refers it to the understanding of Christ, so that with him dwelling in us, we may perceive what is to come. Indeed, Jacob (Gen. XLIX) and Balaam (Num. XXIII and II) are named under the mystery of Christ, and can be compared to the lion.

21:8-10

(Verses 8-10.) I am a watchman of the Lord, standing continuously during the day, and I am a guard of my duty, standing all through the night. Behold, here comes a chariot rider, a man riding in a pair of horses, and he answered and said: Babylon has fallen, has fallen, and all the idols of its gods are shattered on the ground. My threshing floor and my sons of the barn, what I have heard from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I have declared to you. LXX: The Lord said: I have stood throughout the day, and I have stood over the camp throughout the night. And behold, here comes a chariot rider, and answering he said: Babylon has fallen, has fallen, and all its idols, and its manufactured things, are shattered on the ground. Listen, you who have been forsaken, and mourn: listen to what I heard from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, who has announced to us. The Prophet stands on the lookout of the Lord, and in his light, he sees what is to come. He has this responsibility, and this task assigned to him, to see what is to come in the darkness of this age. Behold, he says, he is coming, indicating that he has seen this, the Lord Savior coming seated on a chariot, and joining together two animals, a donkey and a camel. The Prophet responded and said: Babylon has fallen, the confusion of the whole world has fallen. And in my coming, in which I took on a human body, it will completely collapse at the end of the world. And all its sculptures have been crushed on the ground. For this reason, the seventy idols and artifacts have been interpreted, signifying the Scriptures of the heretics and the various errors of heresies, who are the fabricators of idols and worship what they have imagined in their own hearts. And what follows from the person of the Prophet saying: My thrashing, and the son of my threshing-floor, which I heard from the Lord God of Hosts, I have announced to you; according to the Hebrew, it has this meaning: O people, who are to be stored in my barns, whom I have thus trampled in various hardships, so that I might separate the chaff from him, and pure wheat might be stored in my barns, which I heard from the Lord God of Hosts would come to the whole world, I

have announced to you who are in the world, all of you. But others say that the superior person is indeed the Lord Savior, because He Himself spoke to the Apostles: 'What I have heard from the Father, I have made known to you' (John 15:15). And because it is written in the Septuagint, 'Listen, you who have been left behind and feel sorrow' (Isaiah 5:9), the sense of their interpretation seems to me to be: 'O Apostles, of whom Isaiah writes: 'Unless the Lord had left us a remnant, we would have become like Sodom, and would have been like Gomorrah' (Romans 9), whose remnants the Apostle teaches to be saved. You who have been left from the people of the Jews in order to be saved; and you feel sorrow over the ruin of your nation, about which we also read elsewhere: 'I am filled with sorrow and continuous pain for my brethren, who are Israelites according to the flesh' (Romans 9:2-3): I announce to you the things that I have heard from God the Father, which God of Israel predicts will come to you.'

21:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) The burden of Dumah: he calls to me out of Seir: Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning comes, and also the night: if you will inquire, inquire: turn back, and come. Vision of Edom, he calls to me out of Seir: Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning comes, and also the night: if you will inquire, inquire: and dwell with me. The Hebrew word for Elai (), which all have interpreted for me, if you wish to read Eli, it means my God, or my strong one. And what we have said, he cries out, or calls, that is, καλεῖ, according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew and Greek language, can be called either 'cry out' or 'call'; and the meaning is: God, who is my guardian, calls me day and night to repentance, so that, leaving Seir, which means 'rough and hairy', I may return and dwell with Him. It sounds like thunder or a likeness, or silence. But Edom turns into earth. Therefore, the Lord speaks to the choir of the Apostles and commands him: Call to me those who are from Seir, so that the multitude of the Gentiles may serve me, which, in the likeness of Esau, has nothing soft, light, and shining in itself, but is rough, wild, and untamed. And you, Apostles, after you have called the nations from Seir to me, guard the fortifications of the Church, so that the enemy may not easily break in: let not the roaring and prowling lion, who seeks an entrance by which he may enter, tear apart and scatter the flock enclosed in the Church. And the multitude of the Church responded: not only in prosperity, but also in adversity, that is, both in day and in night, I will keep your commandments, O God. To whom God speaks: If you truly seek me, show by your actions how you seek me; and let it not suffice that you have sought me once; but whoever you find, always search; and in order to hold more perfectly, forget your people and the house of your father, and leaving behind the error of the Gentiles, dwell with me in the Church. According to the Septuagint, we have said that those who represent the vision of Edom, that is, earthly things, are placed in the title to show that they are called those who previously served earthly works. Moreover, according to Aquila, who put 'Duma,' that is, silence, or likeness, we can understand it in this way: that the multitude of the Gentiles is provoked to the likeness of the people of Israel, and where there was previously silence of the law of God, there let there be the cry of confession; and let the wild olive tree be grafted onto the good olive. We also read in the parable of the Gospel about the servants who were sent to call the good and the bad and to fill the banquet of the master of the house, because the first ones did not want to come (Matthew 22). The Church can also narrate that the Lord from Seir, that is, from earthly places, calls out to himself and challenges him to salvation, and says to him: O guardian, why do you wander in

darkness when you rise at night? Why are you a sinner without sin in the flesh? For what reason did you want to assume a human body? The guardian, that is, the Samaritan, who carried the wounded on his shoulders to the inn in the Gospel (Luke 9) replied: 'Day and night come. And the meaning is this: the sun of righteousness rose for the multitude of the Gentiles, and darkness came to the Jews. As it is said by the Lord: 'I have come into this world for judgment, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind' (John 9:39). And the guardian himself who had said, 'He comes morning and night,' speaks to the multitude of nations: If you seek me, seek more diligently. Turn to me, O converted children, and I will heal your brokenness, and come to me. The places are difficult, and since they are not widely known according to history, we are forced to follow various opinions according to interpretation.

21:13 (Verse 13.) Burden in Arabia. This is not found in the edition of the Seventy Interpreters: but what follows is: In the evening you shall sleep in the paths of Dodanim, which is connected with the previous vision, so that it is read, if you seek, seek: and dwell with me in the woodland. In our language, Arabia means evening, which is the beginning of night and darkness, and everyone who has the beginning of sins is involved in the evening. But whoever comes to the highest point, stands in the middle of the night. And in Egypt the firstborn are killed in the middle of the night (Exod. 12). And the Apostle Peter, before the rooster crowed, denied the Lord three times, which is understood as the middle of the night (Mat. XXVI): But after the night had passed, and the day began to approach, having overcome the darkness of the middle of the night, and with the rooster, the messenger of light, resounding, he wept bitterly, and understood his sin, and at that time he could say: At evening weeping endures, and in the morning there is joy (Ps. XXIX, 6). Meanwhile, let's talk about the present place. However, the name Arabia, that is, the evening and the west, receives different interpretations in other passages of the Scriptures. In the forest you will sleep until evening, on the paths of Dodanim. LXX: In the forest you will sleep until evening on the road to Dedan. Those who have begun in wickedness and enter the path of sin do not sleep, nor do they tarry in cultivated fields and fallow lands, nor in meadows and fields of grain, where the Savior teaches that they should be burning for harvesting, nor among fruit-bearing trees; but in barren forests, where there are brambles and thorns, and beasts dwell. We read in the book of Kings that the forests or woods devoured more people than were killed by the sword when Absalom, the enemy of his father, rebelled against him (1 Kings 18). And it is rightly said that evening is the beginning of evils, to dwell on the road and on the paths, and on the way of Dedan, which is interpreted as judgments. For as many kinds of sins as they have, so many sentences of judgments do they deserve. Moreover, Dedan can be interpreted as a great judgment.

21:14-15

(Verse 14, 15.) Bring water to the thirsty, O inhabitants of the land of the South; meet the one fleeing with bread. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow, and from the severity of battle. LXX: Bring water to the thirsty, O inhabitants of the region of Theman; meet the fleeing ones with bread because of the multitude of the slain, because of the multitude of the wanderers, because of the multitude of the sword, and because of the multitude of the bows drawn, and because of the multitude of those falling in battle. You who are in Theman, which is interpreted as Auster and perfection, and you turn in that place of which it is written: God will come from the south wind (Habakkuk III, 4), and you who are consummated and perfected, and have within you the light of the knowledge of the Scriptures, when those fleeing from Arabia and the

thicket come to you, meet them with water and bread, and do not wait until they come to you; but imitate the father in the Gospel parable, who reached out to his returning son. And indeed he gave a robe, and presented a ring (Luke XV): but you offer water and bread to the fleeing, so that those who are weary and exhausted may be sustained by your mercy, and quickly reach your seats. For they have fled the swords of heretics, the doctrine of the pagans, and the blasphemies of the Jews. And because they have seen many of them killed by spears and many fallen in battle, they themselves desire to be freed by your help. This place can properly be understood as being against those who surrender themselves to idleness and laziness, content with their own well-being, and do not reach out a helping hand to those who are repentant and converted.

21:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) For thus saith the Lord to me: Within one year, as the years of a hireling, all the glory of Cedar shall be taken away, and the residue of the number of archers of the mighty men of the children of Cedar shall be diminished: for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it. Therefore I said to you: Run ye to meet with water, and with bread, them that flee from the face of the battle. For thus saith the Lord: The whole glory of Cedar shall be taken away, and there shall be nothing left of the number of the very strong bowmen of the children of Cedar. For the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it. And it shall come to pass in that day, that every glory of Cedar shall be brought to nothing, and the bow long shall be made weaker. And the number of them that bow themselves down shall be diminished, and they that remain shall be diminished: because the Lord hath spoken it. And the men that shall be left in it, shall be as the biting of a flesh eating moth: and they shall be as a spark among the trees, and as dry stubble: And they that were shall be as a burning in lime: they shall be burnt and devoured together, and there shall be none that shall deliver them. Expect therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth: patiently bearing till he receive the early and latter rain. Be you therefore also patient, and strengthen your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand. For the Lord of all has spoken these things, and specifically the God of Israel, that is, the God who is perceived by those who have understanding.

22:1

(Chapter 22, Verse 1) The burden of the valley of vision. LXX: The word of the valley of Zion. In the book of Hebrew Names, we have defined Zion as the watchtower that is situated in the heights and contemplates those who come from afar. Therefore, when Zion is referred to in accordance with the laws of tropology, it signifies the Church. This is written in the second psalm from the perspective of the Lord and Savior: 'But I have been set as king by Him upon His holy mountain Zion' (Psalm 2:6); and, 'They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion' (Psalm 125:1); and, 'The Lord loveth the gates of Zion above all the tabernacles of Jacob' (Psalm 86:2); And the Apostle makes it even clearer: 'But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem' (Hebrews 12:22). Now we inquire why in the present vision, it is called the valley of Zion. And from the very sequence of words, we are led to spiritual understanding so that we may know that all the leaders of perverse doctrines, who have fallen from the sublimity of the sense of the Holy Scriptures and have descended to lowly things, are dwelling in the valley of Zion. I think that Solomon also says something similar in Proverbs, saying: 'The eye that mocks a father, and scorns to obey a mother, will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the

young eagles.' (Prov. 30:17). For as soon as the heretics mock the Creator Father and despise the old age of the Church mother, they are dug into by filthy and unclean birds, which are drawn to opposing strengths. And they cannot say: I lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where does my help come? (Ps. CXX, 1): but they are cast down like the beasts of the earth.

What is also true for you, because you ascended and you are all in the roofs? LXX: What happened to you now, because you all ascended into empty roofs? This, which is sought next to the interpreters of the LXX in the book of Kings, whether it was said by Elisha (4 Kings 2:14): Where is the God of Elijah Aphpho (), is more clearly stated in the present place, because the Seventy translated it as 'now'; in Hebrew it has Aphpho, which we also interpret as 'now', and Aquila, wishing to preserve the Hebrew idiom, put κα■περτοι, which the Latin language does not explain. But when he says, 'What is it to you also?' he asks why she ascends among others herself, and why she remains with the opinion of the lofty in lowly things. And the meaning is this: when philosophers swell, and all secular wisdom disputes about lofty things, despising the simplicity of the Church, why do you also follow lofty things? which the Seventy have interpreted as more important, 'vain dwellings,' that is, empty roofs, in order to show that there is another roof, from which the Savior prohibits descending (Matthew 24): which yet is not an empty roof. Finally, the apostle Peter at the sixth hour of prayer ascended to the roof (Acts X). Now, however, to demonstrate the great variety of heresies, he mentioned not one roof, but many roofs.

22:2

(Version 2.) Full of cries, a bustling city, a rejoicing community. The city is filled with those crying out, the bustling city is rejoicing. The teaching of the heretics is not in meaning, but in many words and clamor. Therefore, because of the multitude of the deceived, the city is called bustling and rejoicing, because of their pride. For they are inflated and boast that they have found more sacred things.

Those who were killed were not killed by the sword, nor did they die in battle. Seventy: Those who were wounded were not wounded by the sword, nor did your dead die in battle. The majority, without any struggle or disagreement, is taken in by the deceptions of the heretics, and this is the very large crowd. Therefore, those who were killed, or as the Septuagint translated, those wounded in the valley of Zion, were not killed, and those wounded by the sword, but of their own free will, they went over to the heretics, and in comparison to those who were defeated after the battle, he who surrendered willingly was more unfortunate, and he was wounded and killed. How much more in martyrdom is he who, after suffering punishment, gave his hand, a lesser punishment than he who, without any necessity and pain of torment, denied Christ.

22:3

(v. 3) All your leaders have fled together and have been harshly bound. In this place, we have followed the Septuagint interpretation, as it does not differ much in meaning from the Hebrew. However, in order to transfer the word from word from Hebrew, it is read among them as follows: All your leaders have migrated together, they have been bound by the bow. This edition has been followed by other interpreters as well. For indeed, all the leaders of the heretics have migrated to the synagogue of Satan from the Church of Christ, and they have passed by together in discord, united in perfidy, and have been bound by the bow, as it is written in the Psalm: Behold, the

sinners have drawn the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart (Psalm 10:2), and to hurl the fiery darts of the devil, which would wound equally and bind together. Therefore they are firmly linked, because they have stopped up their ears like deaf adders, and stopping up their ears, they will not hear the voices of enchanters, nor the wise voices of the enchanters. For this reason, even the Apostle Paul commands that a heretic should be abandoned after one warning, because he is perverted and condemned by his own judgment. And indeed they have gone out from us, but they were not of our number. For if they had been of our number, they would surely have remained with us. Of these fugitive princes, he is the chief whom the same Isaiah calls the fleeing dragon, the twisted serpent, who, when he has whispered deadly words into the ears of the deceived, securely binds them and does not allow them to escape from his chains. About whom the saint rejoiced when he was delivered in the Psalm: My soul hath been delivered as a sparrow out of the snare of the hunters (Ps. CXXIII, 7). And in another place, rejoicing that he has escaped, he speaks; Thou art my protector, and my refuge. My God, I will hope in him. For he himself will deliver me from the snare of hunters, and from the harsh or turbulent word (Ps. 90:23), which specifically signifies the doctrine of heretics.

All who were found in you, they were bound together, they fled far away. 70: And the strong ones fled far away from you. Yet the word of the Prophet is against the valley of Zion, whose inhabitants ascended to empty roofs and cried out with confused noise, and were wounded without battle. All its princes fled, and they were harshly bound, and those who were strong among them fled even further. For as much as one is wiser in heretical perversity, they recede farther from the Lord. But what it says according to the Hebrew: All have been found in you, we must note that even heretics claim to have found those whom they have deceived: but their finding is their destruction. In the end, let them be gathered together and flee far away. Nor do I approve of that explanation, that according to the diversity of heresies, there are different spaces for those who flee, since the holy Scripture says (Luke 11:23): all who are found with the heretics are gathered together and flee far away, with the Lord saying: Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. Where it is said of Moses (Exod. XXIV), Moses alone approached God, but the others did not approach. For God is near to his holy ones, God who draws near, and not from afar, says the Lord.

22:4-6

(Ver. 4-6.) Therefore I said: Depart from me, I will weep bitterly: labour not to comfort me, for the devastation of the daughter of my people. For it is a day of slaughter and treading down, and of weeping from the Lord God of hosts in the valley of vision, searching the wall, and magnifying upon the mountain. LXX: Therefore I said: Let me alone, I will weep bitterly: labour not to comfort me, for the destruction of the daughter of my people. For it is a day of tumult, and of destruction, and of treading down, and of error from the Lord God of hosts in the valley of Zion; they wander about from the least to the greatest: they are wandering upon the mountains. And Samuel wept for Saul (1 Samuel 15), and the Lord and Savior wept for Jerusalem (Luke 19; 2 Corinthians 12:21): and the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians: For if I cause you sorrow, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained? And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I would not be distressed by those who should have made me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. For I wrote to you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you. (2 Corinthians 2:2-4). So

with a compassionate affection, he speaks to others: Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? (2 Corinthians 11:29)? Therefore, seeing the people once climb the empty rooftops of vain visions, and being in turmoil; and all its leaders fleeing, and being bound by the chains of sins, the Prophet bursts into tears and dismisses the comforters, and with bitter weeping testifies that he weeps not for his sons, but for the daughter of his people, who has lost her dignity of manhood. For the Day of Judgment and slaughter and trampling shall never come to Jerusalem, which is interpreted as the vision of peace; but to the ancient name Jebus, which is interpreted as trampling. And also tears or errors, as the Seventy have translated from the Lord of hosts, not that tears and errors are from the Lord; but by the occasion of the holy Scriptures, which the Lord has given to be read, occasions of error are born to those who can say: Why have you made us to err from your ways? (Isa. LXIII, 27). And in another place: The Lord mixed for them the spirit of error (Ibid. XXIX, 10): so that they would not stand on the mountain of Vision, but in the valley of Zion. But this very day, which rises in the valley of Vision from the Lord of hosts, examines the wall of the heretics, which they have constructed against the Church as the strongest defense; and also the magnificent and glorious, that is, their teachers, who boast of standing on the mountain of Christ. We read elsewhere: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will instruct us in his ways (Isaiah 2:3). Moreover, what the Seventy translated, they err from the minimum to the maximum, they err over the mountains. We should understand that they are in a greater sin, who are greater, and yet all err from the minimum to the maximum, and err over the mountains: Moses, Jeremiah, and the other prophets, the evangelists and apostles. And when they are in the valley, they wander astonishingly in the mountains.

22:7-9

(Verses 7-9.) And he took Elam, the quiver, the chariot of a man, and the shield uncovered the wall. And your chosen valleys will be full of chariots, and horsemen will set their seats at the gate. And the covering of Judah will be revealed, and on that day you will see the arsenal of the house of the forest. And you will see the breaches of the city of David, for they are multiplied. LXX: But the Elamites took quivers, climbers, men upon horses, and a gathering of fighters. And your chosen valleys will be filled with chariots, and horsemen will crowd your gates. And they will reveal the gates of Judah, and on that day they will look upon the chosen houses of the city. And they will reveal the hidden things of the houses of the stronghold of David, and they will see that there are many. Aelam, which is interpreted as their ascent, or the Elamites, as the LXX translated it, whom we turn into despisers, have taken up the quiver, to drive the upright in obscurity, who are the horsemen in the chariot of men, to expose the wall of Zion and the foundations of the Church with their shield and attack. 'But', he says, 'your chosen valleys will be,' and humble teachings, oh valley of Zion, full of chariots, which the Lord submerged with Pharaoh, and their horsemen and climbers will place their thrones at your gates, so that they do not allow the besieged and confined to go out from you. Then Almighty God will reveal the coverings of the Jews through the ecclesiastical men; and all their secrets, who are established in the confession of faith, will be revealed. And then, O Valley of Zion, you will see on that day, and in the clear light of truth, all the armor of the Apostle, and the house of the jump, in which the multitude of the nations stands. Just as it is sung in Psalm 131: Behold, we have heard of it in Ephrata: we have found it in the fields of the forest. But when the veil of the Jews and their secret, which was previously concealed due to

mystery, has been revealed, and you see the armor of the Church; then you will understand the divisions of the city of David, which you have multiplied, in order to gather deceived peoples to yourself. These Elamites, according to the edition of the Septuagint, do not have a single quiver, but many; and they are mounted on men who ride on souls; and there is a great multitude preparing for battle against the Church, so that all its valleys are filled; and the horsemen hinder their senses, and by their conflict provoke the Ecclesiastical man, who is called Judas, to contend; so that, as he presents testimonies of the Scriptures and refutes all lies, the heretics will see the houses of the city of David, and know all the previously secret things, how in the stronghold of David, which means the strong hand, that is, of Christ, all the dogmas of truth exist. These are obscure places, not only according to history, but also according to reasoning. Therefore, those who are displeased with ours should present their own, so that we may agree with their explanation if it is true.

22:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) And you gathered the waters of the lower pool, and you numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and you destroyed houses to build a wall. And you made a reservoir between two walls, and the water of the old pool. And you did not look to Him who made it, and the worker of it from afar you did not see. LXX: And they turned the water of the old pool into the city, and they destroyed the houses of Jerusalem to strengthen the city wall. And you made water between two walls within the old pool, and you did not look to Him who made it from the beginning, and you did not see its creator. You who know the divisions of the city of David, that is, the Church, will see or have seen, which have multiplied throughout the world; you who have gathered the waters of your pool and your doctrine, not of the higher, but of the lower, and have counted the houses of Jerusalem, whether you have destroyed them to fortify your wall, you have not dug wells that would have had life-giving and eternal water, but broken cisterns that cannot hold water. And you have made them between the two walls of the old and new covenant, and you have neglected the water of the old pool, and you have not considered the giver of the law, God, and you have completely neglected the operator of the world. This is according to the Hebrew. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the heretics considered themselves many, and with this confidence, they turned the teaching of the old Testament away from the city of God, which is the Church, and destroyed the houses of Jerusalem, in order to build meeting places of the wicked; and while they reject the old Testament, they have not followed the new, because the new is confirmed by the testimonies of the old Testament. Therefore, between the two walls of the old and the new, they have made for themselves new waters, which they think are interior and contain greater mysteries than those contained in the old Testament; and they have not respected God, who is the creator of the old Testament, and they did not even want to see his maker from afar.

22:12-14

(Verse 12 and following) And on that day the Lord God of hosts will call for weeping and mourning, for baldness and the wearing of sackcloth; and behold, joy and gladness, killing calves and slaughtering rams, eating meat and drinking wine: 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.' And it was revealed in my ears by the Lord of hosts: 'Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you until you die,' says the Lord God of hosts. Every day the Lord God of hosts invites heretics to repentance, who, despising the water of the old pool between two walls, dig a pit for themselves

and gather the water of the lower pool, which does not have water from heaven but from the earth; and He calls them to weeping; Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted (Matthew 5:5). And to lamentation, lest they hear afterwards: We have mourned to you, and you have not lamented (Matthew 11:17). And for baldness, so that they may shave off all the works of death and rid their bodies of anything that does not live in the body. And for the belt of the robe, so that they may not be bound with a rope around their waist near Jerusalem. But on the contrary, for weeping and lamentation, baldness and sackcloth, they had joy and gladness, and as if everything were ending in death, they slaughtered calves and lambs, so that they could eat meat and drink wine, and they spoke words of blasphemy. While we are in the present age, we abound in delights. For tomorrow, which is the future time, will be without meaning. When they were saying these things, the Lord heard words of blasphemy and threatened that He would not let go of this wickedness until they either die and perish in sin and vices, or drag themselves down to the underworld with their own faults. And this can be understood not only of heretics, but of every sinner who, neglecting his sins, becomes worse through despair; and ensnared by pleasures, combines blasphemy with sin, thinking that all sense of living things ends in death, saying that statement of Epicurus: 'After death, there is nothing, and death itself is nothing.' »

22:15-25

(Verse 15, 16, etc.) Thus says the Lord, the God of hosts: Go, enter to him who dwells in the tabernacle, to Shebna, the overseer of the temple, and say to him: What are you doing here? or who are you here? for you have carved out a sepulchre here for yourself. You have carved out a lofty memorial for yourself diligently in the rock for your tent. Behold, the Lord will cast you down as one is cast down, like a cockerel; and he will lift you up like a cloak. The one who crowns will crown you with tribulation: he will throw you like a ball onto a vast and spacious land. There you will die, and there will be the chariot of your glory, the disgrace of the house of your Lord. I will remove you from your position and take away your authority. And on that day, I will call my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, and clothe him with your robe and strengthen him with your belt. I will give him your authority, and he will be like a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the house of Judah. And I will place the key of the house of David upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a peg in a sure place, and he shall be for a throne of glory to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, diverse kinds of vessels, from the smallest to the largest. In that day, says the Lord of hosts, the peg that was fastened in a sure place shall be removed; and it shall be cut down and fall, and the burden that was upon it shall be removed; for the Lord has spoken. LXX: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Go to the treasurer in Somna's temple and say to him, What are you doing here? Or what have you gained here? For you have dug a grave for yourself and made a memorial for yourself on high; you have carved out a dwelling place for yourself in the ground. Behold, the Lord of hosts will cast you out and bring low the man, and he will take away your glorious robe and crown, and throw you into a vast and measureless place, and there you will die. And he will bring your finest chariot to shame, and the house of your prince to trampling. And you shall be removed from your office, and from your position. And it shall be on that day, I will call my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him with your robe, and I will strengthen him with your belt, and I will give your authority into his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I will place the glory of the house of

David on him, and he will rule as prince, and there will be no one to oppose him. And I will give him the key of the house of David; he will open, and no one will shut; he will shut, and no one will open. And I will appoint him as a faithful ruler, and on the throne of glory in the house of his father. And every glorious one will have confidence in him, from the least to the greatest, in the house of his father. All vessels, from the smallest to the largest, will hang upon him. In that day, says the Lord of hosts, the man who was firmly established in a faithful place will be shaken and removed, and he will fall, and the glory that was in him will perish, because the Lord has spoken. The prophet Isaiah is commanded to enter into the one who dwells in the tabernacle, which in Hebrew is called Sochen, to Sobna, the overseer of the temple, or as the Septuagint translated, the treasurer, that is, the treasurer and steward of the treasures of the house of God. But Sochen interprets either tabernacle or pastophorion, that is, a chamber, in which the overseer of the temple dwells. But who else dwelt in the tabernacle of the Jews and in the former house of God, if not the word and reason of the Jewish law, which is revealed in the reading of the Old Testament? So it is said to this tradition and teaching: what are you doing here? Why do you want to build a house with the letter O in the west, and to fix your tent, which does not have a foundation, on a solid rock, which should not be called a tent or a house, but rather a tomb and a memory? Therefore, I tell you not to labor in the excavation of a tomb, because the Lord will transfer your priesthood; just as Geber (), which all men have interpreted, is usually transferred. But the Hebrew, who instructed us in the reading of the Old Testament, translated the rooster to be a chicken. Just as, he says, a rooster is transferred from one place to another on the shoulder of a porter, so the Lord will lightly take you from your place. And those who once had the crown of the high priest, and the sanctification in the golden plate, on which the name of God was written (Exodus 28), you will be crowned with tribulation and distress. And just as if a ball is thrown on a sloping and spacious place, it cannot stand, but rolls into the vastness: so all your people will be scattered to the ends of the earth. There you will die with your letter, and all your glory, and the chariots by which you were previously renowned; and the splendor of the house of God will be turned into ignominy. For the Lord will remove you from your position and from your ministry, that is, the ceremonies of the sacrifices, so that that which is written to the Hebrews may be fulfilled: For a change of the priesthood necessitates a change of the law (Hebrews 7:12). But when you are expelled from your ministry, I will call my servant Eliakim, to whom I have said also in another place: It is a great thing for you to be called my servant (Isaiah 49:6, according to the Septuagint). Eliacim is interpreted as God rising, or the resurrection of God. Therefore, this rising God, who is the son of Helcia, that is, a part of the Lord, will assume your place and will be clothed with your robe, and he will be strengthened by your belt, so that what you had in the letter, he may possess in the spirit, and he will be the father of those dwelling in Jerusalem, that is, in the vision of peace, which is interpreted as the Church, and of the house of Judah, where true faith is confessed. Where He Himself speaks to the Apostles: Little children, I am with you for a little while longer (John 13:33). And to another: Son, your sins are forgiven (Matthew 9:2). And to another: Daughter, your faith has saved you (Luke 7:50). I will give, He says, the key of the house of David, which opens and no one shuts; who shuts and no one opens (Revelation 3). And this same key will be upon His shoulder, that is, in His passion, according to what is written in another place: His dominion is upon His shoulder (Isaiah 9:6). For whatever he has loosed in his suffering, it cannot be closed; and whatever he has closed in the ceremonies of the Jews, it will be opened by no other. For I will fix the standard in a faithful place, where the assembly of the faithful is. Hence believers in Christ are called faithful.

And he will be on the throne of the glory of his father's house, that is, the Church; and they will hang all the glory of his father's house upon him. Hence it is written in the Gospel: All the people were hanging upon him (Luke 19). And indeed, this was not done only at that time, but is fulfilled even to this day, so that different vessels of God, wisdom and justice, and everything by which Christ is called, hang from him. Different kinds of vessels, for which Aquila interpreted as Sasaim and Sephoth, which Symmachus translates as grandsons and mixed: so that both the Apostles and all believers, that is, the sons of sons, and mixed from all the nations, hang upon him. From the vessels of the craterae, which Theodotius Aganoth set up, both small and great are believed to be in the Lord. And I think that the craterae are the Apostles, full of vital waters. Of which it is said: Bless God from the fountains of Israel (Ps. 67:27), in which fountains He mixed His wisdom with wine. And everything, he says, musical, of those who at all times sing praises to God. What follows seems to be contrary to our understanding, how this peg, which had been fixed in a faithful place, is removed and broken, and falls and perishes what had depended on it, and this happens because the Lord has spoken. This can be solved if we read that Gospel, which in the last days the charity of many shall wax cold (Matt. 24); and the Lord Himself says: 'When the Son of man cometh, think you that he shall find faith on earth?' (Luke 18:8) Therefore, the pillar will not be broken and fall and perish, which is impious to say, but the pillar will be taken away from a faithful place, that is, from the Church, through the impiety that grows daily, and those who had previously hung on it with faith will afterwards be broken by unfaithfulness and fall and perish. But this will happen in the last days, because the Lord has spoken. As for the sparrow, which is called Jathed in Hebrew, and is pronounced the same by everyone, the Seventy above all have interpreted it as referring to a person. And what almost passed us by in the haste of dictation, Sobnas interprets as meaning conversion now, or turning back. Therefore, it is said to the leader of the Jews to convert from the Law to the Gospel: and forsaking the images of victims, to turn to the truth of spiritual sacrifice.

23:1

(Chapter 23, Verse 1) The Word of Tyre. As for our view on the burden or word and assumption of Tyre according to the Hebrews, we have already explained it in the book of ten Historical Visions. Now we will briefly go through every prophecy against Tyre according to the interpretation and version of the LXX. Tyre is called 'angustia' in the Hebrew language, and it is translated into our language as 'narrowness'. Therefore, every soul occupied by vices and evil thoughts can be called 'angustia'.

Ululate the ships of Carthage, for they have perished, and they will not come again. From the land of the Citians, a captive has been led. To whom the inhabitants of the island, the merchants of Phoenicia, who cross the sea in many waters, are similar, the seed of merchants like the harvest brought in, the merchants of the nations. For Carthage is written in Hebrew as Tharsis, which all have likewise translated. But Tharsis is interpreted as contemplation or exploration of joy. They are also called Chetim in Hebrew, which means the freezing sea, and in their language it is called Sidon instead of Phoenicia. Therefore, those who are surrounded by a crowd of evil thoughts are accused, and those who desire to become rich, as the Apostle said, fall into temptations and snares of the devil, and into many harmful and destructive desires, which lead people into destruction. And they are told to wail, knowing that all the dealings of this world are perishable, and that the contemplation of joy and happiness must be turned into mourning and tears. For this

sea will no longer be navigable; but everything will freeze: and the Tyrian colonies will be led away as captives to punishment. For there are no others like them who inhabit this island, except for traders or translators who are carried around on every wind of doctrine, and who pass from one vice to another. But we dwell on an island, as long as we are beaten by the temptations of this world: and from every side our island and our little ship are struck by the waves of the sea. But the merchants of this island are from Sidon, which means huntress, and many hunters live there. Of them it is written: He will deliver you from the snare of the hunters (Ps. 90:3). And in another place the saint rejoices because he was delivered from their snares, saying: Our soul has been rescued like a sparrow from the snare of the hunters (Ps. 123:7). But all the merchants of the nations are compared to crops that wither quickly, or to harvests of a river that do not have rain from the sky but from the earth: therefore they are doomed to perish with the nations. Where we read, seed of business, in Hebrew it is written, seed of sior, which is understood as Nile, because it has turbid waters with which the crops of Egypt are irrigated.

23:4-5

(Verse 4-5) Blush, Sidon, said the sea; but the strength of the sea says, I have not given birth, nor have I brought forth, nor have I nourished young men, nor have I exalted virgins. But when it is heard in Egypt, sorrow will seize them over Tyre. The sea of this age, in which small creatures dwell with large ones, and the dragon which God created to mock it, seeing the hunters of Christ, who hunt from every mountain and hill, captured those who had been previously captured by demons, speaks to the opposing strength of the hunters, which is interpreted as Sidon, and says to it: Blush, Sidon; for I have not given birth, nor have I brought forth, nor have I nourished young men captured by you, nor have I exalted virgins, whose foolishness is condemned in the Gospel (Matthew 25). For by my travail, and travail, and nourishing, and the raising of virgins, is the travail of the Apostles of Christ abolished; of whom one spoke: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you (Gal. IV, 19). And: I have given you milk to drink, not meat (I Cor. III, 2). And again: But I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided (I Cor. VII, 32-34). Also: Woman is saved by bearing children, if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification, with sobriety (I Tim. II, 15). When Egypt shall hear this, which is called in Hebrew Mesraim, which is interpreted as pressing out, that is, afflicting, and oppressing, she shall be disturbed, understanding that she herself shall suffer the same things that Tyre endured. And when it is referred to all vices, it can be understood in the diversity of heresies, when one captivates through heresy, another trembles, and in the confusion of one, another feels that it must be captured. However, as it is said about Sodom: For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day; and it is inferred: Nevertheless, it will be more tolerable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you: thus we learn about Tyre and Sidon from the Savior saying: Nevertheless, it will be lighter for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for that city (Matthew 11:21 ff.). Now the Canaanite woman, who understood that her daughter, that is, her soul, was being severely vexed by a most fierce demon, is said to have come out from the borders of Tyre and Sidon. For she could not encounter the Savior otherwise, unless she had left the borders of Tyre and Sidon.

23:6-7

(Verse 6, 7.) Go to Carthage: howl, you who dwell in this island. Is this not your insult from the beginning before it was handed over? They will lead it far on foot to wander. That which follows: They will lead it far on foot to wander, is added from Hebrew, and is prenoted by an asterisk, that is, by illuminating stars. O Tyrians who dwell in narrowness and reside on the island, who are exposed on all sides to the waves of trials, depart from it, and go to Carthage, that is, to Tharsis, and hasten to true joy, mourning for ancient sins, and for the old insult, which either you yourselves inflicted on others, or suffered from them. But I give this command for a reason: because you see your city Tyre about to be moved from its original seats and purpose, when they have humbled their necks to the Gospel of the Savior, after having cast away their old error. So that those who previously dwelled in narrowness may withdraw farther and become strangers and inhabitants of the teaching of the Lord, the Savior.

23:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) Who has conceived these things against Tyre? Is it not the smaller one, or does it not prevail? Its merchants are the princes of Canaan, the famous ones of the land. The Lord of hosts has conceived to dissolve every insult of the proud, and to dishonor everything that is famous on the earth. The word of Canaan is added from the edition of Theodotion, for which Aquila translated merchants. Therefore, the Holy Spirit asks, or rather confirms by asking, that the Lord has conceived these things against the princes of Tyre, whose entire effort is to seek wealth through commerce. And as we read in the Gospel (Matt. XIII), the merchants of pearls, who having sold everything, desire to buy one pearl, and are certainly to be called illustrious merchants not of the earth, but of heaven: so, on the other hand, the merchants of Tyre, that is, of tribulation and distress, are to be called illustrious of the earth, because whatever they do, concerns the earth: and the princes of Canaan, which is interpreted as fluctuating and unsettled. For they do not establish their feet upon a rock, nor can it be said of them: A rock is a refuge for hedgehogs (Ps. XXXIX; CIII, 18), or hares; but rather they endure what the just man almost suffered: But my feet were almost moved; my steps had well nigh slipped (Ps. LXXII, 2). Therefore, the Lord of hosts has conceived this plan, in order to dissolve the wicked bonds of business, or rather to dissipate the compacted injustice through which all those who are subject to Tyre are insolent. And what he has done is not to dishonor everything that is glorious on earth; the Lord is not the author of dishonor, but rather what is ignominious is shown to be ignominious in and of itself. Indeed, we read this also about the priests in Leviticus: 'He has been contaminated by contamination' (Lev. XXI). No doubt, the priest is contaminated not by his own doing, but in order to show that he has been contaminated, who previously seemed to be clean to many.

23:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) Work your land: for the ships do not come from Carthage at all, and your hand does not prevail, which provokes the kings in the sea. There is much disagreement among other interpreters, and the Septuagint edition diverges from the Hebrew itself in this place, but let us continue with the proposed argument. Above, he had said: Go to Carthage, howl you who dwell on the island. Now he speaks the opposite, because the ships no longer come from Carthage, work your land. For it is beneficial for Tyre that foreign ships perish, so that its people are forced to work their own land. As it is said in Proverbs: 'Whoever works his own land will have plenty of bread' (Prov. 21:11), so that he may live off the produce of his work without the uncertainty of shipwrecks

and the danger of drowning, but instead with the fruits of his labor. Concerning this, it is sung in the Psalms to the righteous: 'You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands' (Ps. 128:2). It is written in Hosea that the ways of a prostitute are hedged with thorns by the Lord, so that she cannot pursue her lovers, and thus, compelled by this necessity, she may return to her original husband. And as we frequently observe in the affairs of the world, many who could not perceive the Lord through prosperity and the abundance of all things, came to understand through poverty, and turned to the works of justice, after the happiness of this world failed to prevail over the work of their hands, which formerly provoked kings in the sea, or disturbed them, as Symmachus puts it; whose heart is in the hand of God. And would that we too, despising the commerce of this sea, cultivate our own land, and not wait for the ships of Carthage, or the ships of Tyre, which used to go to Carthage, lest we be subjected to the power of the dragon who rules over the sea! But let us set a firm footing on the earth, rather hastening towards the heavens, let us work our own land, here sowing, there harvesting. Let our hand, which was previously engaged in the affairs of the world, and even capable of altering the state of kings, that is, the saints, according to its power and success, become weak in matters of the sea, so that it may be strong in the work of its own land.

23:12

(Verse 12) The Lord of hosts commanded to destroy its strength from Canaan, and they will say: 'You shall not add to do harm and injustice to the virgin daughter of Sidon. Tyre and Sidon are in the land of Canaan, and as we have shown above, presenting the testimony of the Gospel in which it is read that a Canaanite woman or a Syrophenician went out from the borders of Tyre and Sidon and met the Lord and Savior. But every soul that is placed in the waves of the world and is carried about by every wind of doctrine is to be called Canaan, which is interpreted as fluctuation or commotion.' Therefore, it is beneficial for Tyre and its distress for the Canaanite to perish, so that it may be said to its inhabitants that they are no longer able to do harm, and to oppress the virgin daughter of Sidon through wickedness. Whoever is captured by the devil in the various disturbances of vices and is handed over to the insults of ignominy, in order to pollute the body with pleasures and filth, that person is the son or daughter of Sidon. And it should be known that 'sabaoth' is not found in Hebrew, and, on the contrary, 'virgo' is added from Hebrew.

23:13

(Verse 13) If you go to the Citians, there will be no rest for you there; and if you go to the land of the Chaldeans, it has also been devastated by the Assyrians. Siim founded it, they established its fortifications, they raised its tower: its wall has fallen. And what follows in Theodotion's edition is added under asterisks: Siim founded it, they established its fortifications, they raised its tower, and without asterisks it is joined: its wall has fallen. The Cilicians are interpreted as a completed or perfect wound: the Chaldeans in this place, as if breasts: the Assyrians, accusing. We could not find the etymology ourselves, and the other interpreters translated it by the very name used in Hebrew. Therefore, it is said to Tyre that, although it seeks to go to the Cilicians and avoid the distress of its own wound, it cannot find perfect rest even there. And if it desires to go to the Chaldeans and enjoy their abundance and the abundance of all things, it will also find them deserted, with the Assyrians accusing their sterility, just as the Apostle handed over the sinners of Satan (1 Tim. 1), so that they may learn not to blaspheme: those who are handed over to the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved. However, the Chaldeans laid the

foundations of which I understand to be the most wicked demons, who raised up strongholds and the most proud towers of the city of Chaldea against the knowledge of the Lord. But all their building collapsed into ruins; for, its wall fell. For unless the Lord builds the house, in vain do those who build it labor. (Ps. CXXVI, 1). Often we see in the world certain individuals pass from one purpose to another. For example, those who have had a bad experience in the military can transition to business. And again, lawyers of warriors take up weapons. They change their profession in order to change their misfortune; and nevertheless, by the will of God, everything happens contrary to those who strive for everything to go well: so that through poverty and miseries they are forced to have confidence not in themselves, but in their Creator.

23:14

(Verse 14.) Howl, O ships of Carthage: for your strength is gone. The ships of Carthage, that is to say Tharsis, are commanded to howl: for they have not perished, as mentioned above, or will not come; but their strength has perished. Tharsis, according to another interpretation, is translated into our language as completion of six, or joy. However, we read that this world was made in six days, which according to ecclesiastical traditions will be consummated afterwards. Therefore, all the good things of this world, and the toil of all mortals, are compared to the uncertain course of ships, because they will soon perish and all the strength of sailors will be dissolved. Hence, it is written in Solomon: The wise man ascends to strong cities and destroys their fortifications (Prov. XXI, 22). Whatever is composed of heretics, worldly wisdom, and the art of opposing doctrines, the ecclesiastical man destroys and teaches that they should be subject to his teachings.

23:15-18

(Verse 15 and following) And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years, Tyre shall sing as a harlot. Take a harp, go about the city, O harlot that has been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that you may be remembered. After seventy years, the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall return to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. And his merchandise shall be holy unto the Lord: it shall not be gathered nor laid up; for his merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing. This that is spoken of: a memorial before the Lord: and upon the face of the earth. And as the time of a man's life, which is not contained in the Hebrew, but is added in the Greek. And Tyre, after the seventy years of her captivity, shall return, and shall play the harlot with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: it shall not be treasured nor laid up, for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing. The divine discourse exhorts Sidon and Tyre to repentance, and promises that his labors and rewards are to be sanctified by the Lord. Who does not have hope for salvation from sins, if indeed he has sung well, and all the strings of virtues, which were once slackened, are to be composed into praises of the Lord? We read in the forty-fourth psalm, which specifically pertains to the union of the bridegroom and the bride, that is, to God the Savior and the sacraments of the Church, it is said among other things: The daughters of Tyre will offer you gifts, the rich among the people will seek your favor (Ps. XLIV, 13). And the bridegroom himself speaks again to the Tyrian bride: Listen, daughter, and see, and incline your ear; and forget your people and your father's house, for the king desires your beauty. (Ibid. 11, 12).

Hence, in the description of her beauty, it is said: The queen stands at your right hand, in a golden robe, adorned with various ornaments (Ibid., 10). And again: All the glory of the king's daughter is within (Ibid., 14). But if the king desires the beauty of penitent Tyre, and having the ornaments of various virtues, how much more will his reward and business be not in Tyre, where he does not dwell, but among those who live in the sight of the Lord! After they have repented, they will hear from the Lord and Savior: 'Eat, my friends, and drink, and be intoxicated, my beloved' (Song of Solomon 5:1). What it means to eat and drink, and be satisfied with the gathering of all virtues, the faithful reader understands. The temple was desolate for seventy years, as Jeremiah (Chapter 29), Daniel (Chapter 9), and Zechariah (Chapter 7) teach. And in Ezekiel (Chapter 16) we read about Sodom being restored to its former state, and about Egypt receiving its former abundance after the desolation and dryness of the land and the seven rivers. The number seventy signifies complete and perfect repentance, either in the span of seven days or in the completion of seven decades, so that just as Tyre, when the time of repentance is fulfilled, may return to its former state. Concerning this, I believe that the prostitute is referred to in the mystical language of Solomon's Proverbs: Do not look at the worst woman; for honey drips from the lips of the harlot, who fattens your throat for a short time, and afterwards you will find it bitter as gall (Prov. V, 2-4). For she peers through the window of her house onto the streets (Matth. VII): for the way that leads to death is wide and spacious, and she dares not tempt the wise, for she only lures the foolish, and she walks beside the corners, having lost the straight line: she talks to him in darkness and in gloom, and under the guise of pleasures she leads him like a victim to death. If she has been converted and has sung well, and has completed the time of perfect penance of years, she will eat and drink, and will be satisfied. Let Novatian hear, and let him be silent.

Book Eight Book Eight The sixth and seventh books contain the allegory of the fifth volume, which I previously explained with a historical commentary. The present work, that is, the eighth book, returns to the interpretation that was begun, in order to discuss both the history and the tropology in both editions. If this seems lengthy to you, O virgin of Christ Eustochium, do not blame me, but rather the difficulty of the Holy Scriptures, especially the prophet Isaiah, who is enveloped in such great obscurities that I consider a brief explanation, which is itself lengthy, due to the magnitude of the matter. Certainly, we write for those who are eager to learn the holy Scripture, not for those who are arrogant and nauseated by every detail. If they desire a river of eloquence and well-crafted declamations, let them read Cicero, Quintilian, Gallio, Gabinianus. And if they come to our side, let them read Tertullian, Cyprian, Minucius, Arnobius, Lactantius, Hilary. Our aim is to understand Isaiah ourselves, and not to have our words praised under the guise of Isaiah.

24:1-3

(Chapter 24 - Verses 1 and following) Behold, the Lord will lay waste the earth, and make it desolate, and afflict its face, and scatter its inhabitants. And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. The earth shall be utterly laid waste and utterly plundered, for the Lord has spoken this word. After the special punishment of certain nations, namely Judaea, Babylon, the Philistines, Moab, Damascus, Israel, Egypt, the desert of the sea, Idumaea, and Arabia, the valley of vision, and finally Tyre, of which we have said what we could in their explanation; now the prophetic discourse describes what the whole world will suffer in its consummation, and it prophesies not

individually about each nation, but universally about all. And first, it describes the torments that the wicked will suffer, and how, according to the Gospel and the Apostle, heaven and earth will pass away, and the figure of this world (Matthew 24; 1 Corinthians 7), and sinners will be led into hell (Psalm 30), as it is written: They shall go to the ends of the earth, they shall be delivered into the hands of the sword, they shall be the parts for foxes (Psalm 62:10). Then, because of the diversity of merits, there are many mansions with the Father, it is said how the saints are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and will always be with Him (John 14; 1 Thess. 4). For the wasted world, seventy corrupt orbs were interpreted; and for its afflicted face, that is, the earth, the same ones were moved, and He will reveal His face; so that the dead may come forth from their tombs: whether He exposes it, so that all His works may be brought forth publicly, and its inhabitants may be scattered in different places, designated for rewards or punishments. Then there will be no distinction between noble and commoner, priest and layperson, slave and master, maid and mistress, rich and poor, lender and borrower, buyer and seller. For all will stand equally before the judgment seat of Christ, and there will be no partiality with God. (Romans 14; Colossians 3). About this, Job speaks in almost the same words: There, the small and the great are together, and the slave is not afraid of his master. (Job 3, 19). And the Savior testifies in the Gospel, to whom all judgment is entrusted, in full discourse. Therefore, the earth will be dispersed, and all earthly works will be reduced to nothing, so that the image of the earthly may be abolished, and the image of the heavenly may remain. For the first man is from the earth, earthly, and the second is from heaven, heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us also bear the image of the heavenly (I Cor. XV, 47-49). The same Apostle says: Flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God. It is not that the nature of bodies perishes according to the heretics, but rather that corruptibility will put on incorruption, and mortality will put on immortality. And all these things will happen, because what is to come, the Lord has spoken through the prophets.

24:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) The earth mourned and declined, and became weak: the world declined, the height of the people of the earth became weak, and the earth was destroyed by its inhabitants. (LXX: The earth mourns, the world is corrupted, the lofty ones of the earth mourn, but the earth acts wickedly due to its inhabitants. God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). From the first sentence, it is against those who are lofty in the earth, so that everything that is now strong may be weakened because of those who mixed blood with blood, and caused the blood of the slain to cry out to God in a manner similar to Abel's blood (Gen. 4).

24:6

(Verse 6.) Because they have transgressed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse devours the earth, and those who dwell in it are held guilty. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left. LXX: Because they have transgressed the law, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse devours the earth, because its inhabitants have sinned. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth shall be poor, and few men shall be left. Let the Jews listen, who boast that they alone have received the law of the Lord, that the whole world and all nations first received the natural law, and therefore the law was later given through Moses, because the first law was dispersed. Concerning this, the Apostle says: For when the Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law

requires, they, not having the law, are a law to themselves; who show the work of the law written on their hearts (Rom. II, 14). Therefore, those who observe these laws will receive rewards: but those who neglect them will suffer the punishments that the prophetic word now pronounces. And just as at the beginning God blessed all the creatures He had made (Genesis 1): so at the end of the world He will curse those who are earthly and have not been pilgrims, but residents of the earth, and have sinned in it; those who have forgotten their condition and have raged against each other in mutual fury. And only a few will remain who have the image of the heavenly: or, according to the Septuagint, the poor will be the inhabitants of the earth, because they have lost the spiritual riches.

24:7-12

(Verse 7 and following) The grape harvest has failed, the vine is weakened, all those who rejoiced in their hearts have sighed. The joy of the tambourines has ceased, the sound of the rejoicers has quieted, the sweetness of the lyre has been silenced, as those who do not drink wine with singing, bitter will be the drink for those who drink it. The city of vanity is worn away, every house is closed with no one entering. There will be a cry over wine in the streets, all joy is deserted, the pleasure of the land has been moved elsewhere. And the solitude was left in the city, and calamity will oppress the gates: for these will be in the midst of the earth, in the midst of the people. In the end of the world, the remembrance of past delights will be the material of torments. Wherefore even that rich man, clothed in purple at a banquet, who had received his good things in his life, lifting up his eyes from hell, sees Lazarus in rest (Luke XVI). And the Lord, reproving the rich and luxurious and laughing, speaks in the Gospel: Woe to you who are rich, because you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are now satisfied, for you will hunger. Woe to you who are now laughing, for you will mourn and weep (Luke 6:25). Therefore, when the resurrection of the dead will have occurred, and the day of judgment will have come, then the wine and the harvest will mourn, of which Moses speaks: Their vine is from Sodom, their vineyard is from Gomorrah. Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. The fury of dragons is their wine, and the incurable fury of asps (Deuteronomy 32:33). Then every drink, or as it is said in Hebrew, 'sycerah', that is, drunkenness, which overturns the state of the mind and does not allow people to stay awake, will be changed into bitterness, which deceives those who use it with its sweetness for a time, and in the end is found to be more bitter than gall. Then all the sweetness of those who rejoice and the sounds of tambourines and lyres will be turned into mourning and groaning. Let us present this testimony to those who in banquets not only indulge in gluttony and drunkenness but also in the luxuries of the ears, so that strength of the soul may soften through all the senses. The city of vanity is destroyed, that is, every city, or spiritual Babylon, which sits on seven purple mountains, whose punishments we read about in the Apocalypse of John (Apoc. XVIII). It is well said, the city of vanity. For if it is said of heaven and earth, and of all things that are earthly: Vanity of vanities and all is vanity (Eccl. I, 2); how much more should this be said of one city, which is a small part of the whole world! Then the houses, whose ceilings are now gilded, and the poor without shelter and dying in hovels, will be adorned with marble veneers and shining ivory panels, but they will remain empty. There will be clamor in the streets over wine, not on the narrow and cramped road that leads to life, but on the wide and spacious road that leads to death (Matthew 7). Their error is over wine and drunkenness, those who have fallen asleep in their slumber, and all the wealthy men found nothing in their hands (Psalm 75). For indeed the joy of the earth has been

translated to the heavens, and the once famous solitude is left in the abandoned city, and calamity will oppress the inhabitants of the crowded gateways through which the streams of peoples used to flow. And in order that we may know clearly the news of the destruction of the whole world, it added, These things shall happen in the midst of the earth: in the midst of nations or peoples.

24:13-15

(Verses 13-15) Just as when a few olives, which remain, are shaken from the olive tree, and the grape harvest is finished, these will lift up their voice and praise when the Lord is glorified, they will neigh from the sea: therefore, glorify the Lord in your teachings, in the islands of the sea proclaim the name of the Lord God of Israel. The following words will show how much the LXX translation differs from the Hebrew truth in this place: LXX: Just as if someone shakes an olive, they will shake them: and if the grape harvest rests, these will shout with a loud voice. But those who are left on the earth will rejoice together with the glory of the Lord, the water of the sea will be troubled, therefore the glory of the Lord will be in the islands of the sea, the name of the glorious Lord will be, the Lord God of Israel. With few men left, when the curse devours the earth, and there is solitude in the city, and all these things happen in the midst of the earth, in the midst of peoples and nations, the number of the saints will be so few, of whom the Lord speaks in the Gospel: Many are called, but few are chosen (Matt. 20:16); and the pressure on the righteous will be so great that, if possible, even the chosen of God will be tempted; and their number will be compared to the rarest berries of olives, which, when shaken and harvested, very few remain on the top of the branches; and just as after the harvest, the poor, forced by poverty, go around empty vines and gather a few grapes. Therefore, those who remain, and after the harvest of the world and the pressure, their hands trembling, will flee from the persecuting Antichrist or the impending flames of punishment, and they will raise their voices on high and praise God. When the Lord comes in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels, and they see him reigning in majesty, then they will neigh like horses, rejoicing with great joy, and they will neigh from the sea of this age. Therefore, you who are now learned in the holy Scriptures and know that great joy and rewards are reserved for you, glorify the Lord in your teachings, hearing what is written: 'Whoever boasts, let him boast in the Lord' (2 Corinthians 10:17). Not in the land of Judea, but in the islands, that is, in the Churches of this sea and age, where the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, is blessed and praised, or, the name of the man who sees God. According to the Septuagint, everything that we understand about the saints can be referred to as the wicked, because when the vintage is finished, then those who are established in punishment will cry out. But those who have escaped the number of the wicked shall rejoice in the glory of the Lord, and the waters of this people in this age shall be troubled.

24:16

(Verse 16) From the ends of the earth we have heard praises, the glory of the Just One. And I said: My secret to me, my secret to me. Alas for me! LXX: From others we have heard wonders of the earth: the hope of the just, and they say + my mystery to me **. This which is said my mystery to me is not found in the LXX, but it has been added from Theodotion's translation in Greek. Again, instead of what they placed as woe, so that it is joined to the following verse, in Hebrew it is said Oi LI (), which properly means woe to me. Furthermore, for the ends that we have set forth more clearly for the sake of explanation, it is found in Hebrew 'Mecchenaph' (which means 'wing', not

'end'). Therefore, concerning those about whom it was said above, 'They shall lift up their voice and praise, when they neigh from the sea, and glorify the Lord in their teachings, and see the name of the Lord God of Israel praised in the islands of the sea', then they shall sing with united voice and say: 'From the ends of the earth, that is, from the prophets and the saints of the Lord, who, with wings assumed like a dove, hasten to the kingdom of the heavens, we have heard His praises proclaimed; and may it be fulfilled that the glory and hope of the Just may not be in vain, but that all things may be fulfilled.' And while they were saying these things, and the saints were neighing from the sea, and lifting up their voice and praising, the Prophet speaks to himself: When, he says, I heard these things, and perceived that the prophecy of the prophets was to be fulfilled in the overthrow of the world, I spoke to myself with an internal affection of the heart: I cannot narrate all that I see. My tongue sticks to my throat, my voice is cut off by pain. Woe is me, how great a order of torments is passing before my eyes! I perceive things that are present and things that are to come. However, those who think that this should be understood as the person of God are mistaken, not following the order of things. And I wonder in what sense the Psalms and praises, which are read in Hebrew as Zemroth, were interpreted as portents by the LXX, unless perhaps it is a sign and portent that, with the Jewish people excluded, the unbelieving multitude of gentiles might be saved first.

24:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) The treacherous have dealt treacherously; indeed, they have dealt treacherously with treachery. Fear, the pit, and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall be that he who flees from the noise of fear shall fall into the pit, and he who comes up from the midst of the pit shall be caught in the snare. LXX: woe to the treacherous who deal treacherously! Fear, the pit, and the snare are upon you, O inhabitants of the earth. And it shall come to pass that he who flees from the noise of fear shall fall into the pit, and he who comes up from the midst of the pit shall be caught in the snare. This is the cause of my grieving and crying out, for which I have said again and again, my secret to myself, my secret to myself: because all have transgressed God's law, and the punishment of the Lord is not delayed, nor is it foretold, but it is imminent and holds captive the inhabitants of the earth. And when they think they have escaped, they will fall from one thing to another, and wherever they turn, they will not escape the impending anger of the Lord.

24:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) For the gates from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth will be shaken. The earth will be crushed to pieces, shattered, and shaken. It will be thrown into agitation like a drunkard, and it will be taken away like a temporary shelter, and its own iniquity will weigh it down, and it will fall and not be able to rise again. Therefore, no one will escape the fear, snare, and pit of the Lord, because the gates from on high, or as the LXX has made clearer, the windows of heaven, are open, so that the Lord may behold all the sins of mankind that he previously seemed to ignore because he did not punish sinners. But when, however, he saw all the works of mortals with the windows open, the foundations of the earth were shaken, according to what is written in another place about the divine sight: He looks at the earth, and it trembles (Ps. 103:32); then it will be shattered and broken, and the earth will be moved and agitated like a drunkard: not that the earth itself will be reduced to dust and to nothingness; but that all earthly things will pass

away, and another way of life will succeed. And just as a drunk person doesn't know what they are doing, but with the nerves dulled by drunkenness, neither foot nor mind stay in their proper function, so all the earth, that is, all the people who dwell on the earth, will be drunk with the magnitude of evils and punishments, and they will be astonished at everything they see. And just as the tent and dwelling place of one night is moved from place to place, and the previous location of the tent is abandoned by the traveler, so that no trace of the past dwelling remains: in the same way, the figure of this world will pass away, and the earth will be deserted, burdened by its iniquity, as is written in Zachariah: She who sits upon a talent of lead (Zech. V, 32). And it will fall, he says, and it will not be added so that it may rise again. Not that the resurrection of humans, and all who inhabited the earth, is denied, but there will in no way be an earthly conversation, and the former state of life, when human bodies rise for this purpose, so that souls may be clothed in the same bodies they had previously laid aside, and receive from God either the good or evil deeds they had done on earth.

24:21-23

(Verse 21 onwards) And it will happen in that day, the Lord will visit upon the host of heaven on high, and upon the kings of the earth who are on the earth. And they will be gathered together into one assembly, into a pit, and will be shut up there in prison, and after many days they will be visited. And the moon will be ashamed, and the sun will be confounded, when the Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and shall show forth his glory before his ancients. For what we have interpreted, the moon will turn red, and the sun will be confused. The Seventy translated it as 'to melt the brick and to make the wall fall.' The following words will show what the cause of the error is. The sun is called by the Hebrew language in three ways: Semes, meaning heat; Hamma, which means brightness; and Heres, which sounds like 'testam' or dryness. Maor, which in Greek is φωστῆρ, is called 'luminare' in Latin and is common to both the sun and the moon. Again, the moon is called Jaree (), which in Greek is called μῆνη, because it completes the month in a cycle of thirty days, and Labana (), that is, white or bright. In the present place, instead of Labana, that is, the moon, Seventy interpreted laterem, which in Hebrew is called Levena, deceived by the ambiguity of the word. Again, for Hamma, that is, heat, by which the sun is understood, they placed a wall, which in Hebrew is called Homa (). And the meaning of this whole chapter is as follows: The windows of heaven are opened, so that the Lord may look upon the earthly sins, and every form of earthly work may pass away, and fall, and never rise again to its former state. On that day, which is the day of judgment, the Lord will visit upon the heavenly host, or upon the adornment of the high heavens, so that He may judge not only the earthly, but also the celestial things. But let us learn from Moses, who is writing, what is the adornment of the heavens or the heavenly host: Be careful not to look up at the sky, and see the sun and the moon. You are deceived and worship the stars and all the adornment of the heavens (Deut. IV, 19). But the Lord will visit, according to the language of the Scriptures, as if he were visiting a sick army, needing both weapon and cauterization, according to this: I will visit their sins with a rod, and their iniquities with scourges (Ps. LXXXVIII, 3). For also in the following we read: My sword is drunk in heaven (Infra XXXIV, 5); And in Job: The stars are not clean in his sight. And concerning his angels who sinned, God found something perverted (Job 25:5). He will also visit the kings and princes of the earth, the rulers of these dark regions, and the spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. Of these princes, who preside over different provinces, it is written in Daniel: 'A prince of the kingdom of

Persia came to meet me, and a prince of the kingdom of Media, and a prince of the kingdom of Greece' (Dan. 10). Therefore, the Lord will gather these princes who did not keep their proper position, on the day of judgment, binding them together as in one bundle, and will cast them into the lake of hell, so that it may also be fulfilled in them what is written about the wicked: 'He made a pit, and excavated it, and fell into the hole he made' (Ps. 7:16). And they shall be cast into prison, according to what the Lord says: Go into the everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41) . But what follows: And after many days they shall be visited, seems to support the claims of my friends who say that the devil and demons will repent, that they will be visited by the Lord after a long time. But they should consider that the divine Scripture does not clearly say: They shall be visited by the Lord, or they shall be visited by the angels, but simply, they shall be visited. From this ambiguity of word and remedy, it can be understood both correction, in that after the just have received rewards, they are visited with perpetual punishments. However, it must be known that the judgment of God cannot know human frailty, nor can it pass sentence on the magnitude and measure of punishments, which is left to the discretion of the Lord. Then the moon will blush, and the sun will be confused, according to what the Apostle says: For the creature itself groans and gives birth (Rom. VIII, 22), seeing that men who enjoyed its light have done nothing worthy of the goodness of God, who makes his sun rise on the just and the unjust (Matth. V). If the steward and the overseer, when the master comes, see the household subjected to various tortures and have not fulfilled their commands. Concerning this same matter, the Savior teaches more fully in the Gospel: The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, when the sign of the Son of Man appears in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew 24:29-30). We have learned the overthrow of the earth, the visitation of the heavenly army, the gathering together of kings and princes into one bundle, and their casting down into the lake, and the keeping of the prison, and the visitation of those shut up after a long time, the reddening of the moon and the darkening of the sun. After all these things, the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in the celestial Jerusalem, of which it is also written in the Epistle to the Hebrews: And in the sight of his elders he will be glorified (Heb. XII). What kind of man was Abraham, who died in old age and was buried with his ancestors (Gen. XXV)? He was commanded to choose elders, whom he knew to be elders (Num. XI): for the wisdom of a man is seen in his grey hair (Sap. IV, 8), they who imitate the old days, whose hair is described as white, to show the length of their age (Dan. VII, 9). This can also be understood in terms of ecclesiastical rank, if they do not destroy the dignity with their actions.

25:1-5

(Chapter 25 — Verse 1 and following) O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for you have done marvelous things, faithful and true are your ancient thoughts. Amen. For you have made a city into a heap, a fortified city into ruins, a palace of foreigners, so that it is no longer a city and will never be rebuilt. On this the strong people will praise you, the city of the mighty nations will fear you. For you have been a stronghold for the poor, a stronghold for the needy in their distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat. The breath of the strong is like a whirlwind driving against a wall. Just as the tide quells the thirst, you will humble the uproar of strangers; and like heat under a torrential cloud, you will cause the offspring of the strong to

with. LXX: O Lord my God, I will glorify you; I will praise your name, for you have done wondrous things, an ancient true counsel, let it be done. For you have laid cities in ruin; strong cities, so that their foundations may fall. The cities of the wicked will not be built forever. Therefore, the people of the poor will bless you, and the cities of those who sustain injustice will bless you. For you have been a helper to every humble city and a protection to the sorrowful due to their poverty. You will free them from the worst men: a shade for the thirsty, and the spirit of men who endure injustice as weak and thirsty men in Zion from wicked men, whom you have delivered us to. There are two possible interpretations of this place. The Jews believe the voice of the saints to be that of the believing people: when God has done what was said against the whole world, and the prophecies of all the prophets have been fulfilled; and they interpret the city that has been overthrown as Rome, which should be completely destroyed, and they refer the strong people who praise the Lord and for whom the Lord has become their strength in their tribulation and distress to Israel, who has been freed from the persecution of the nations as if from the most intense heat and thirst. But others understand that it is said more truthfully and rightfully in the person of the prophet, giving thanks to the Father for the suffering of the Lord and Savior, because he did wonders and fulfilled ancient thoughts with truth, when they stand at the right hand and hear: Come, you blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matt. XXV, 34). And Paul also, understanding, was speaking: Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless (Ephes. I, 4). And desiring to become what he prophesied, he adds the word in Hebrew Amen, for which the Septuagint translated it as 'let it be so.' And the Lord often uses this word in the Gospel: Amen, amen, that is, truly, truly I say to you (John VI, 54). But why does he praise and confess the name of the Lord, and what are these wonders, and the ancient thoughts that he has truly demonstrated in his works, follows: For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin, the house of strangers, so that it is no longer a city and will not be built forever. The once strong city of Jerusalem is understood, which has become a house of strangers; concerning them, the Savior says in the psalm: The sons of strangers have lied to me, the sons of strangers have grown old and have stumbled in their paths (Ps. XVII, 46). When this city has been destroyed, it will never be rebuilt, so that the kingdom of a thousand years and the golden Jerusalem and the jewel-adorned dreams may rest. But the people of the strong will praise the Lord, when Jerusalem has been destroyed for its impiety. However, the following verse shows who the strong people are: The city of strong nations will fear you. While they blaspheme, the people of the nations will fear you. For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. IX, 10). The strong people will praise you, and the city of mighty nations will fear you; this is the Church gathered from the nations. For you have become the strength of the poor, your Christ, of whom we also read in the Psalms: Blessed is he who understands the needy and the poor (Ps. 40:1). And in Zechariah according to the Hebrew truth, the poor, that is, the Ebion, is described as sitting on a donkey's colt (Zech. 9). Strength for the needy in the tribulation of his passion, hope from the whirlwind of the gallows, and shade from the heat, when he spoke: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit (Luke 23:46). For just as the wind, if it were to strike against a wall and pass through it, was unable to harm the blasphemous Jews, so too, using another comparison, just as a branch is scorched by intense heat and withers, in the same way you will cause the commotion and shouting of those who have become strangers to you to wither away and perish. According to the Septuagint translators, I was unable to find, not to mention the meaning, but even the arrangement of words and continuity, in

this place. And in that place where we have interpreted, like the heat in thirst, for which in Hebrew it is written Basaion (), which among them means impassable, or thirst; therefore, they have translated it as impassable and in thirst, to Sion; the error is clear, because of the similarity of the words Saion and Sion (both), which are signified by the same elements.

25:6-8

(Verses 6-8.) And the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples on this mountain a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. LXX: And the Lord of hosts will make all nations drink joy on this mountain, they will drink wine. They will be anointed with an oil on this mountain. Give all these things to the nations, for this counsel is over all nations: the prevailing death has devoured. And again: the Lord God has taken away every tear from all faces, and he has taken away the disgrace of his people from all the earth. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. Because we have turned, the face of a bound captive over all people, the Eagle has interpreted, the face of darkness over all people. And when the eagle has twice spoken of darkness, Theodotius once named darkness, and similarly with the rest. For which Symmachus translated, the face of the Lord who rules over all peoples. But what the Seventy wanted to say about this place is clear to the reader, that they did not put the words of Scripture, but their own interpretation, because all the mysteries of the Law and the Temple are to be transferred to the Churches of the nations. After the passion of the Lord, when He will have freed Him from thirst and heat, and whirlwind, the Lord will make a rich feast not for the Jewish people, but for all nations on Mount Zion, with fatty delicacies and wine from the choicest vineyards, so that He may cause the face of death and the bonds by which all people were bound to be precipitated and swallowed up; He will break the net of death and the web that had captured all nations. And according to the Apostle, death will be swallowed up forever (I Cor. XVI). And the Lord shall wipe away every tear from their faces, when death is overcome and the kingdom of Christ arrives. And the reproach of the human race, which was created in the image of the Creator, shall escape the bondage of the devil and death. It is no wonder that, according to Symmachus, death is called the mistress, since the blessed Apostle said, 'Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam' (Rom. 5:14). They understand by the word "Antichrist" the one who is the ruler of all peoples, or the face of darkness over all peoples, and the web that is woven over all nations, and who is to be consumed on the Mount of Olives, as we have said in the last vision of Daniel. According to the Septuagint, a feast of gladness is prepared for all nations on Mount Zion, where they will drink the wine that the Lord promised to drink with his saints in the kingdom of his Father (Matt. 20 and Luke 22); and they will be anointed with oil, so that they may become a new people born again in Christ. Therefore it is said: "Give all these things to the nations, which Israel once celebrated in type and image. For this is the counsel of the Lord, that all things be transferred to the nations, because death has been swallowed up (1 Cor. 15) and every tear wiped away, and the reproach of the whole earth, with the command of Christ succeeding, has been erased.

25:9-12

(Verse 9 and following) And they will say on that day: Behold, our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have endured him, we will rejoice and be glad in his salvation. For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain; and Moab shall be crushed under him, as straw is crushed on a threshing floor. And he will stretch out his hands under him, as a swimmer stretches out to swim, and his glory will be humbled with the buffeting of his hands. And the fortifications of your lofty walls will fall, and they will be humiliated and brought down to the ground, even to dust. Swallowed up by death forever, the people of God, who have been delivered from the hand of death, will say to the Lord: Behold, this is our God, whom the unbelievers thought so little of; and we have waited for him, that is, we have believed in his words, because he will fulfill his promises and save us. Therefore, having been rescued from the jaws of death by his help, we will rejoice and be glad in him; and his hand and power will rest on this mountain. Regarding what we read above: When the Lord of hosts reigns on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and is glorified in the presence of his elders (Isaiah 24:23). But Moab, which means 'from the father', will be crushed like straw is crushed by a wagon. This is spoken according to the custom of Palestine and many provinces of the East, which, due to a shortage of meadows and hay, prepare straw for the feeding of animals. These are iron wagons, with wheels that rotate in the middle like saws, which crush and break the straw into pieces. Therefore, just as wagon wheels crush straw, so Moab would be crushed under him, either under God's power or in itself, so that nothing remains intact in it. And just as a person who swims tends to stretch out their whole body, so he will collide with the ground from his own power and make a crashing sound. All the fortifications of those mighty men, both the walls as stated in Hebrew, will collapse, be humiliated, and be brought down to the ground, shattered into dust. Therefore, although the prophetic discourse generally refers to the consummation of the world, it does not entirely neglect the present. It mentions Moab, who was an enemy of Israel, to such an extent that they committed fornication with the Midianites and consecrated themselves to the idol Beelphegor, which is interpreted as Priapus. Against this idol Jeremiah speaks: Chamos will go into captivity, along with its priests and princes (Jeremiah 48:7). And again: Moab will be confounded with Chamos, just as the house of Israel was confounded with Bethel (Ibid., 13), and similar things can be found throughout. And from one idol and the demon that presided over this idol, it indicates that all opposing strengths are to be humiliated and led into Tartarus, and crushed like dust. But if this is the case, where is the devil's repentance?

26:1

(Chapter 26, Verse 1) On that day, this song will be sung in the land of Judah: Our strong city, the Savior will set it as a wall and rampart. In that day, this song will be sung over the land of Judah: Behold, a strong city, our salvation will set up walls and bulwarks. When Moab is humbled and brought to the ground, and all the enemies of Christ are brought low, then this song will be sung in the land of Judah or Judea, which signifies both confession: that just as we have understood Zion and Jerusalem to be the heavenly city, so let us understand the confession of this city's region to be a heavenly confession. Finally, the saints unwilling to sing the song of Judah in a foreign land, say: How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? (Ps. 136:4). I think this is the song that is also commanded to the saints in another place: Sing to the Lord a new song (Ps. 95:1). And this song will be the one that follows: The city of our strength is the Savior (Matthew 5). What city is this? It cannot be hidden, for it is situated on a mountain. It is written about this in another place: The rushing of the river makes glad the city of God (Psalm 46:4); and again: Glorious things are

spoken of you, O city of God (Psalm 87:2). The founder of this city is the one about whom the Father speaks: he built my city. Indeed, the Savior is the city of our strength, that is, Jesus. And in it will be placed a wall and a bulwark. The wall of good works, and the bulwark of right faith, so that it may be protected on both sides by a double defense. For it is not enough to have a wall of faith, unless that faith is confirmed by good works. This wall and this rampart or surrounding wall are built of living stones, which, according to the prophet, are rolled upon the earth. The term we render 'rampart' Symmachus has interpreted 'firmament,' so that the walls themselves may be surrounded by fortifications and ramparts and trenches and other walls, which in the construction of camps they are accustomed to call breastworks.

26:2-4

(Vers. 2-4.) Open the gates, and let the just nation enter, guarding the truth. The ancient error has gone away, you shall keep peace: peace, because we have hoped in you. You have hoped in the Lord in eternal ages. LXX: Open the gates, let the nation enter, guarding justice, and guarding truth, holding onto truth, and guarding peace: peace, because they have hoped in you, Lord, forever. This entire chant, which is sung on earth by those who confess and praise the holy ones, suddenly changes personas, and is woven as if through question and answer. The people of God said: 'The city of our strength, the Savior, will be built with a wall and a rampart in it.' The Lord replied, or rather commanded, not those who said this, but the angels who presided over the gates of the Lord's city, to open the gates so that a righteous nation, guarding the truth, may enter through them, or as it is said in Hebrew, Emmunim, which in our language is translated as faith in the plural number, not singular. What are the gates, which are opened by angels, so that the people of Judah, who are rejected, may not enter, but rather the righteous nation, which has received its name from the faith of the faithful? Indeed, those of which the saint speaks: Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will enter through them and give thanks to the Lord (Ps. CXVII, 19). However, no one will be able to enter these gates unless they have been freed from the gates of death; and as the Psalmist says: You who lift me up from the gates of death, that I may declare all your praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion (Ps. IX, 15). For when we have been saved from the gates of death, then at the gates of the daughter of Zion we will be able to sing all the praises of the Lord. And just as I consider the gates of death to be sins, of which it is said to Peter: The gates of hell shall not prevail against you (Matthew 16:18); so the gates of righteousness, all the works of virtue, whoever enters them will find one gate, of which it is said: This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter it (Psalm 118:19). And how is it that through many pearls one arrives at one pearl: so through many paths and gates we come to Him who says He is the way and the gate, through which we enter to the Father. After the word of God, the people answered in Hebrew 'Jeser Samuch' (which Aquila and Symmachus similarly translated) which means 'our error is removed', or 'our thought is established', which previously wavered between you and idols, so that we are not carried about by every wind of doctrine, but with our whole mind we believe in you, the Lord and Savior. In order for us to have a clearer understanding, we have translated, the old error has gone away. And since our thought has been confirmed, therefore you will keep for us the peace that you promised to the Apostles, saying: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you (John 14:27); and not only once, but twice, so that the secure reward that is promised in twofold language may be assured, according to what the Apostle also spoke: Rejoice, I say again, rejoice (Philippians 4:4). But the consequence of this is what is said in Leviticus: 'A man, a man, of

the sons of Israel' (Lev. 17). And in the book of Numbers: 'A husband, a husband, whose wife has defiled the marriage bed' (Num. 5:12): so that a double man and a double husband may obtain double peace. And they say, 'We merit peace because we trust in you with our whole mind.' After the words of the people and the response of the Lord, the voice of the Prophet speaks again to the believers: 'You have hoped, or continue to hope, in the Lord, in everlasting ages,' and so on. According to the Septuagint, he enters the gates of the Lord, who guards justice in good works, and preserves or embraces truth in the truth of faith, so that he may attain peace through good works and faith, which surpasses all understanding, and deserve to receive that same peace; for he believed in God who is the dispenser of eternal good works (Philippians 4). Therefore, it is also written in another place: You have desired wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord will grant it to you (Ecclesiastes 1:33).

26:5-6

(Vers. 5, 6.) In the Lord, the mighty God forever: for He will bring down those who dwell on high; He will humble the lofty city and bring it down to the ground; He will cast it down to the dust. The feet shall trample it, the feet of the poor and the steps of the needy. LXX: O great and eternal God, who have humbled and cast down those who dwell on high, you will destroy strong cities and bring them down to the pavement, and their feet will be trampled by the meek and the humble. And this is what the Prophet speaks, who answered him in the place where he had said above: Hope in the Lord in eternal ages; and he joins to it what we have now proposed: In the Lord God Almighty forever, and so on. For the Lord God Almighty, in Hebrew has three names, Ia () and Adonai () and Sur (), which mean, respectively, invisible, ineffable, and strong, of which the first is placed in the last syllable of Alleluia (). And let the diligent reader observe this, that sometimes we divide the text in the proposition of testimonium: because one edition has one sense from the Septuagint and another has the sense expressed word for word from the Hebrew. Therefore the Prophet says: Hope in the Lord in eternal ages: in the Lord God Almighty forever, whose help is everlasting. For He will bow down those who dwell on high, because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled; those who boasted of having Abraham as their father, and spoke against the Lord: We are not born of fornication (John VIII, 41). He will also humble the lofty city, as the Jews believe, Rome (or rather Jerusalem), which killed the Prophets, and stoned those who were sent to it, and finally killed the son of the master of the house, so that the heir, being killed, the inheritance would perish (Luke XIII). And the city is not called the one [which] is called in Hebrew Ir, but Caria which Aquila translated as πολὺ χνην, which we can call either a small city or village or town, and frequently in the Scriptures it is referred to by this name Jerusalem. And beautifully, he placed a twofold humility: He will humble, he will humble it, first under the Babylonians, when the temple was destroyed, secondly under Titus and Vespasian, whose ruin continues until the end. It tramples it under foot, and treads upon it, and joins the feet of the poor, without doubt of Christ. Of whom we have already spoken above: He became strength to the poor; the strength of the needy in their tribulation. The steps of the needy, namely the Apostles, who imitating the poverty of the Lord, also obtained the privilege of his virtue; who, not being received, shook off the dust of their feet upon it. And because it is said in the words of the Savior, Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled: and he who humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 14:11), we can apply this not only to men, but also to contrary virtues. According to the Septuagint, the Prophet sings praises to God, because he humiliates all the proud and tears down the fortifications of all cities to the ground, and

he treads upon the heads of the holy, the meek, and the humble.

26:7-9 (Verses 7-9.) The path of the just is straight, the righteous path is for walking: and on the path of your judgments, O Lord, we have waited for you, your name and your memorial in the desire of our soul: my soul has desired you in the night. LXX: The path of the just is straight, made straight is the path of the just, and prepared. For the path of the Lord is judgment, we have hoped in your name: and in the memorial which our soul desires. Furthermore, the Prophet speaks about Christ, about whom he said above: His foot will trample it, the feet of the poor. Therefore, the path of this just man is straight, or, to use a new word, it is called righteousness, which the Greeks call εὐθιότητα and we can call equities in Latin, and in Hebrew they are called Messarim (). Therefore, in the one path of Christ, all righteousness is found, and for this reason, he trod upon it and crushed it with his foot, so that whoever desires to walk on it may walk without stumbling. In this path of the Lord's judgments, the saints sustained him and hoped in him, for hope does not disappoint. And they had both the name and the memorial in the desire of the soul, saying: My soul hath coveted to long for thy judgments at all times (Ps. CXVIII, 20); and again: My soul hath desired, and hath been consumed with longing for thy salvation (Ibid. 81). But he who has the name of the Lord in desire, desires nothing else. And this should be noted, that the desire of the Lord is not in the flesh, but in the soul, according to what we read in another psalm: My soul hath thirsted after the living God, the strong (Ps. LI, 2). For the flesh desires against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. For these are opposed to each other, so that you do not do what you want. And what follows: In the night, according to the Septuagint, it is joined to the following chapter, according to the Hebrew to the previous one. But he can say: My soul longed for you in the night, who speaks confidently with the Psalmist: I will wash my bed every night, with tears I will water my couch. Night and darkness can be seen as symbols of tribulation and distress. Therefore, in another psalm, the Prophet sings about the security of the righteous: The sun shall not harm you by day, nor the moon by night (Ps. 121:6), meaning that in both good times and bad, you will never be shaken from your position. But my spirit within me, from the morning I watch for you. LXX: From the night my spirit rises to you, O God, for your judgments are a light upon the earth. We desire to follow the Hebrew and not completely disregard the Vulgate edition, and out of necessity we are compelled to seek different understandings in different order and language. Therefore, what is said, 'from the night,' according to the LXX, is the beginning of this chapter, as we have said, but according to the Hebrew, it is the end of the previous; although it can also be understood at the end of the previous testimony according to the LXX, so that the meaning is: My soul desires you at night; and then begin, from the morning my spirit rises to you, O God. Therefore, in the morning he rises, because your light is precepts upon the earth. For he keeps your commandments, and is enlightened by their light, of which it is said: The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes (Ps. XVIII, 9). I cannot sleep, but desiring you at all times, I rise to you in spirit. And it should be observed that even when we are still in the night, we should desire the Lord in our minds. However, once our spirit has fully moved itself towards God in our hearts, let us wake up in the morning for him. To express it more clearly, the night and desire belong to the soul, but the morning and watchfulness belong to the spirit. Moreover, the spirit in their innermost being wakes up to God, who can say: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord (Ps. 130:1).

26:10

(Verse 10.) When you execute your judgments on the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Show mercy to the wicked, who does not learn righteousness; in the land of the saints he acts unjustly and does not see the glory of the Lord. Learn righteousness, you who dwell on the earth. The wicked will cease to exist and will not learn righteousness on the earth; he will not act with truth, let the wicked be taken away so he will not see the glory of the Lord. Let us first speak according to the Hebrew, and if we want to express the meaning of the prophet, then let us turn to the Septuagint Interpreters. As long as you do not exercise your judgments upon the earth, and neither reward the good with good nor the evil with evil, your justice, O Lord God, is ignored on earth. But when on the day of judgment you will render to each according to the quality of their deeds, then your justice will be known throughout the world, which previously seemed unjust among the unbelievers, so that even one of the saints would say: My steps were nearly weakened, my feet were nearly poured out, for I was zealous for the wicked, seeing the peace of the sinners (Ps. LXXII, 2). To which the Lord responded: Let us have mercy on the wicked; for except for the Seventy, all others have also translated it this way. And the meaning is: may the wicked obtain mercy even more, and may he learn my clemency; so that he himself may also be saved. And in response to the Lord speaking, the Prophet, representing human impatience, replied: And he will not learn justice. And the meaning is: and how will he be able to know your justice if he has only experienced your clemency? And the reasons why he wants to learn the justice of God are as follows: because he acted unjustly on the earth of the saints, and continually fought against your saints, he must feel torment. And again the Lord, tempering the judgment, says, And let him not see, whether he will not see the glory of the Lord. And this is the meaning: it is enough punishment for him that he will not see me reigning in my majesty with my saints. Some want the impious one, that is, Resa, to be understood as the devil, about whom it is written in the 108th psalm: You have rebuked the nations, and the wicked one has perished; you have destroyed their name forever and for eternity. The enemies have ceased their spears to the end, and you have destroyed their cities (Psalm 9:6). However, let us generally consider the wicked either as a sinner or as one who does not have the worship of God. According to the Septuagint, the inhabitants of the earth are commanded to learn righteousness. For every man seems just to himself; but God knows the hearts of all, who will render to each one according to his deeds (Proverbs 21). And in another place of the same volume it is said: There are ways that seem right to a man, but the ends thereof lead to the depths of hell (Proverbs 14:12). Where should we learn justice, and not rely on our own judgment. For he is just who perishes in his own justice (Eccles. VII); not because he is just, but because he appears just to himself. But if Christ has become for us from God wisdom, and justice, sanctification and redemption (I Cor. I), to whom it is commanded that they know justice, it is commanded that they learn and know Christ. Therefore I command you, he says, to learn justice, because the wicked one has been taken away; and his kingdom has been destroyed, who as long as he reigned on earth, could not know justice, nor do the truth. About which it is written elsewhere, that grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John XVII). And because the wicked does not make truth on earth, it will be taken away: for he does not deserve to see the Lord reigning.

26:11

(Verse 11) Lord, let your hand be exalted, and let them not see: let them see, and let the jealousy of the people be confused, and let the fire devour your enemies. LXX: Lord, your arm is exalted,

and they did not know, but those who know will be confounded: jealousy will seize the unlearned people, and now the fire will consume the adversaries. This which was said above, 'and he shall not see the glory of the Lord,' can be understood thus: You ask, O Prophet, that I have no mercy on the wicked, lest if I have mercy on them, they begin to not know righteousness, being the one who has acted unjustly in the land of the saints; I answer you, therefore, will he not see the glory of the Lord? Therefore, should not he see my triumphs, who owes it to me more to see me reigning, so that he may know how much good he lacks? And this must be read more urgently in the voice of one questioning. To which the Prophet responded: Lord, let your hand be exalted, and let it be stretched out to strike, so that the wicked may not see you, and may not even have the light of your glory to repent. To which the Lord responded: Let them see even more and be confounded, whether out of envy of the people or zeal for the people, and let the fire devour and consume your adversaries, that is, the enemies of your people, the saints. But the fire of repentance, which torments their hearts, because they have lost such a Lord. This can also be understood of the Jews, who did not know Christ, the arm of the Lord, and when they see him and recognize him, whom they had crucified, they will be confounded. Then the unlearned people and those ignorant of the law of God will be stirred up by the goads of zeal, when they see that the nations have taken their place, and they will be consumed by the fire of repentance, or the pain of punishment, when they hear that which is written: Go into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. XXV, 41).

26:12

(Verse 12) Lord, you will give us peace: for you have accomplished all our works for us. LXX: Lord our God, give us peace: for you have restored all things to us. It is notable that after restoring our works to us, he will give peace, and how he will explain the reasons why he seeks peace. For all the works that have been done on earth, they claim to have endured torments, and it is just that after punishment and torture, they obtain mercy. Or else: Because the end of the world has come, and all the things that you spoke through the prophets have been fulfilled, and you have fulfilled all that you promised, grant us peace that surpasses all understanding.

26:13

(Verse 13) Lord our God, we have been possessed by other lords without you; only in you do we remember your name. LXX: Lord our God, possess us: Lord; we know no other besides you, we invoke your name. Therefore, we seek mercy and peace, which must be given after all, because we have been possessed by other masters without you, namely idols or demons sitting on idols: and we ask for nothing else except that we may be worthy to remember your name after many errors. According to the Septuagint, they said: Lord God, possess us, they pray that they may become God's possession after peace is restored to them. Indeed, we read the same about Wisdom, which speaks according to the Hebrew in Proverbs: God possessed me at the beginning of His ways (Prov. VIII, 22), although some copies have the word 'possession' in a wrong way. Finally, it follows: Before all the hills, He has begotten me. For how could the generation of a creature be more suitable to possession? It is written in Deuteronomy: Did not this your father possess you, and make you, and create you (Deut. XXXII, 6)? And it must be noted that it does not say, the Lord or God possessed you, and made you, and created you; but rather father, in order to mitigate the severity of the power with the mercy of the name. And what follows: O Lord, we do not

know another besides you, does not exclude the Son, but joins him to the Father, for he did not say 'We do not know another,' but 'We do not know another outside of you.' But when the Son says, 'I am in the Father, and the Father in me,' we do not know the Son outside of the Father, for we know him in the Father. Finally, we also name him by saying in the Lord's Prayer: 'Our Father, who art in heaven.'

26:14

(Verse 14) Those who are dying shall not live; the giants shall not rise again. Therefore You visited and destroyed them, and wiped out all memory of them. LXX: For the dead shall not see life; nor will physicians bring them back. Therefore You brought in, and destroyed, and took away all their males. Symmachus in a clearer manner: The dead shall not be revived; the giants shall not rise. Therefore You visited and defeated them, and dispersed all memory of them. Let us first say according to the LXX: The question seems to be difficult, how do the dead not see life? The answer is sought: they do not see life as long as they are dead. Just as we say that a blind person does not see light as long as they are blind; but if they regain their health, they will see the light: so too, the one who is dead in iniquity and sins, before being enlivened by righteousness and virtues, through the one who says, I am the life (John 14), cannot live. And so He is called the God of the living, not of the dead (Matt. XXII). For the soul that sins, it shall die (Ezek. XVIII, 4). We read in the Epistle to the Hebrews: Let us not lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works (Heb. VI, 1). But if sins are called dead works, why are virtues not called living works? And what follows, Neither will physicians raise them up, is clear evidence that the fables of the poets, who boast of having raised Virbius from the dead, are condemned. Not only, however, is this to be said about the dead, but about every illness, that without the mercy of God, the art of healing is worth nothing. But how? Unless the Lord builds the house, in vain do they labor who build it: unless the Lord guards the city, in vain does he watch who guards it (Ps. 126, 1, 2). Similarly, unless the Lord heals the sickness, in vain do doctors labor who desire to heal the sick. Unless the Lord guards one's health, they guard in vain, who even eat the precepts of salvation in their own books: and it must always be learned not only in bodily health, but also in the health of the soul: Bless, my soul, the Lord, who heals all your weaknesses (Ps. 102, 1, 3). Moreover, those who persist in the sin of the dead, and cannot receive the health of the soul by any medical skill, they will be dispersed and taken away by the Lord, and whatever is robust in them, which is called masculine, will be completely taken away. And Pharaoh does not want to kill the female sex, which by itself is fragile and can easily die, but every male, if he becomes an adult and reaches manhood, is difficult to kill. According to Symmachus, the dead will not be revived, for the dead in sin cannot revive others, and there is no beautiful praise in the mouth of a sinner. And the giants, that is, the Raphaim, will not raise up others, even though they are called fallen ones according to the book of Genesis. And the Lord visits them, so that the memory of both the dead and the giants is completely wiped out. He alone is the one who raises the dead, of whom it is said: Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whomever he wishes (John 5:21). We can call the dead the images of dead men, and the giants demons, who sit upon their images. Nor should it frighten us why the Seventy translated it as "man," and the other interpreters translated it as "memory," since both are written in Hebrew with the same three letters: Zayin (ז), Khaf (כ), and Resh (ר). But when we say memoriale, it is read as Zachar; when we say masculum, it is read as Zochor. And they think that Saul was deceived by this ambiguity of the word when he fought

against Amalech and killed all their males (I Reg. XV). For by the command of God to destroy all memory of Amalech under heaven, he, not so much by error as by the desire for plunder, interpreted males, ignorant of that of the Apostle: Do not be deceived, God is not mocked (Galat. VI, 7).

26:15

(Verse 15.) You have shown mercy to the nations, Lord, you have shown mercy to the nations. Have you been glorified? You have extended all the ends of the earth. LXX: Add evils to them, Lord, add evils to the glorious ones of the earth: you have made all the ends of the earth far away. The evils that the LXX placed second are not found in Hebrew; but because it had said above, Therefore you have brought and destroyed, and you have taken away all their males, following the same meaning, they added from their own, evils: so that those who are glorious on earth may be oppressed by double evils. Furthermore, according to the Hebrews, the meaning is very different and agrees with the previous discussion. The Lord had said, 'Let us have mercy on the wicked.' The prophet had responded, 'And where is your justice? Especially when you have done such great evils to your holy ones.' To which the Lord said, 'And they shall not see the glory of the Lord.' Again, the prophet said, 'Raise your hand to strike, and let them not see your glory, which they do not deserve to behold.' To which the Lord said, 'Let them see even more and be confounded.' Again the Prophet says: Lord, give us peace and possess us, who remember your name. But let the wicked and proud not live, nor rise again in glory, but crush their every memory. And it renders reasons why he desires them to perish. You have shown mercy to the nations, Lord, you have shown mercy to the nations, have you been glorified? And the meaning is: You have often shown mercy to the nations, that is, to the human race, and you have exercised incredible kindness towards them, have they recognized you? Have they not glorified your name? Have they not, on the contrary, distanced themselves far (or even further) from you? For security produces negligence, and negligence begets contempt.

26:16

(Verse 16.) Lord, in distress they sought you, in tribulation they murmured your teaching. LXX: Lord, in tribulation I remembered you, in small tribulation your teaching was to us. For being indulgent, you have often been despised and not glorified; but on the contrary, all have departed from your knowledge; therefore, Lord, strike them, so that in distress they may seek you, and in tribulation may your teaching be to them: when such a weight of affliction rests upon them that they dare not even cry out confidently, but silently devour their sorrow. According to the Septuagint, in times of tribulation, the Prophet of the Lord remembers what is said in the psalm: In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he answered me and set me free (Psalm 117:5). And in another place: In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me (Psalm 120:1). Therefore, the Apostle speaks: We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair (2 Corinthians 4:8). And in another place: For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18). But if a small tribulation teaches, corrects, and reproves, how much more a great one, when we are reminded of our condition and the power of God!

26:17-18

(Verse 17,18.) Just as she who conceives, when she approaches childbirth, cries out in her pain: so have we become because of your presence, Lord. We have conceived and, as it were, given birth, and brought forth the spirit. LXX: And as a woman in labor draws near to childbirth, in her pain she cries out: so have we become ÷ your beloved, because of your fear, Lord. In the womb we have received, and as if giving birth, we have brought forth the spirit of your salvation, which we have made upon the earth. Just as a woman approaching childbirth is compelled to cry out in pain: thus do we seek you in distress, and from the face of your dread we conceive, and labor, and bring forth, not fleshly children, but spirits: so that with our whole mind we may believe in you, whom we have not experienced through blessings, but through trials. This which the LXX added, thus have we become your beloved; for this reason others have turned away, thus have we become from your face, O Lord, a mark to be noted. However, we can receive the beloved of the Lord, Christ, because of whose fear we conceive, and bear, and bring forth, and make the spirit of salvation upon the earth. This can also be said by the apostolic man, when he instructs and imitates the peoples like the apostle Paul: My little children, whom I bear again until Christ be formed in you (Galatians IV, 19). Is there any doubt that the apostle Paul made the spirit of salvation upon the earth, who preached the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Romans XV), and like a wise architect, laid the foundation, outside of which no one can lay, which is Christ Jesus (I Corinthians III)? Therefore, whether we read it, O Lord, because of your fear, we received it in the womb; or according to the Hebrew, we conceived it from your face, O Lord, and received it in the womb; both pertain to the fact that we conceive the word of God from the fear and remembrance of the Lord, and our heart is illuminated, saying: The light of your face, O Lord, is signed upon us (Psalm 4:7). And show your face, and we shall be saved (Psalm 79:4).

We did not make greetings on earth, therefore the inhabitants of the world did not fall. LXX: We will not fall, but the inhabitants of the earth will fall. A different interpretation is necessary in order to have a different meaning. According to the Hebrew, it is said: Because we have not done anything worthy of your mercy, therefore the wicked have not fallen, but they still prevail and possess the land. However, the LXX asserts that by doing the work of the Holy Spirit of salvation on earth, the inhabitants of the earth will fall, though there is much diversity between the world, which is called in Hebrew 'Thebel' and in Greek 'ο■κουμ■νη', and the land. Therefore, those who have surrendered themselves to the inhabitation of the earth will fall, and those who have been firmly rooted in earthly works will fall. But those who sit in the world and rest in the Church, which is the dwelling place of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, will not fall.

26:19

(Verse 19.) Let your dead live; let corpses arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in the dust; for your dew is a radiant dew, and the earth will give birth to the shades. LXX: The dead will rise, and they will rise from the graves, and those who are on the earth will rejoice. For your dew is their healing, but the earth of the wicked will fall. To the holy ones who give birth and to those who bear the spirit, and to the inhabitants of the earth who fall down, because they have not done good deeds on earth, those whom the Apostle calls dead in Christ and who were killed for the name of the Lord, will rise in glory (I Thess. IV). And because their death is sleep, they are said not to rise again according to the LXX, but to wake up and awaken. Hence Lazarus, who was to be awakened, is called sleeping by the Lord (John 11). Therefore, all martyrs and holy men who have shed their blood for Christ, and whose whole life was a martyrdom, will rise again and wake up,

and they will praise their Creator God, they who now dwell in dust, of whom it is written in Daniel: Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will arise, these to eternal life, and those to reproach and everlasting shame (Dan. 12:1). And in the Gospel of John we read: The hour is coming, and now is, when those who are in the graves will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live, and those who have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment (John 5:28-29). For the dew of the Lord, surpassing all the herbs of Paeonia according to the fables of the Poets, will give life to the bodies of the dead. And just as the dew, when cast upon the earth, gradually causes the herbs to grow and bear fruit of their kind, so the dew of the Lord, which is placed for mercy, will be the dew of many lights, which in Hebrew is called Oroth. But the land, that is, the bodies of the Raphaim, namely the giants and the wicked, the Lord will condemn to eternal punishment. In fact, for the Raphaim alone, seventy wicked were transferred. And because we read above: The dead will not see life, nor will doctors raise them up, for which reason Aquila and Symmachus, interpreted Raphaim and giants, we inquire what the cause of the error is, that some have translated Raphaim as Hebrew, others as giants, and others as doctors. The Hebrew word Raphaim, if it has the letter Vau after the first letter, is read as Rophaim (alternatively spelled Rosim) and signifies doctors; but if it is written without the letter Vau, it is read as Raphaim and is translated as giants. Likewise, because he had said above that the dead shall not see life, to demonstrate more clearly that this is not said there of the dead according to the law of nature and the separation of soul and body, but of those who are dead in sin, now on the contrary he says to God: Your dead shall live, who have been killed for your sake, who are not absolutely dead, as the Septuagint translated, but according to the Hebrew [text] where it is said 'Jeju Metheca', they are called your dead.

Go, my people, enter your rooms, close your doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath is past. For behold, the Lord is coming out from his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it, and will no more cover its slain. For behold, the Lord will bring wrath upon the inhabitants of the earth, and the earth will reveal its blood, and the slain will no longer be hidden. He had said above concerning the holy ones, The dead will rise, and they who are in the graves will rise; for the dew of yours is their healing: and on the contrary, concerning the wicked, the earth of the wicked will fall; now He speaks to the holy ones, because resurrection has been promised to you, until the wrath of God rages against sinners and the wicked: enter into your graves, and hide yourselves, for a short time until the indignation of God passes through. For the Lord indeed goes out from His place, because the Lord is merciful and compassionate, and the most gentle Father is compelled to strike negligent children, and in a way to change His own decision, in order to visit and bring His anger upon the inhabitants of the earth, of whom it is said in Hosea: 'Cursing and lying, and adultery, and theft have spread over the inhabitants of the earth' (Hosea 4:2). And in the Book of Revelation, we read in chapter 8, 'Woe to the inhabitants of the earth' (Rev. 8:13). Moreover, the righteous, though they may appear on earth, their conversation is in heaven, as those who can say: I am a stranger in the land, and a sojourner like all my fathers (Ps. XXXVIII, 13), and they enjoy the dwelling of the Most High, of whom the holy one speaks: He who dwells in the help of the Most High, shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven (Ps. XC, 1). Then the earth shall reveal its blood, of which God speaks to Cain: The voice of your brother's blood cries to me from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand (Gen. IV, 10, 11). This can also be understood about the Martyrs, who shed their blood for Christ, and under the

altar of God cry out: How long, O Lord, will you not avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? (Rev. 6:10) Of whom Moses also says in the Song: The blood of His children will be avenged and He will take revenge, and will render vengeance to His enemies (Deut. 32:43). The earth, which received this blood, will reveal it, and will by no means cover the slain of the Lord; but it will bring them forth to public condemnation, those who killed the Martyrs. This is about the simple resurrection of the intellect. It is commanded, according to the Anagoge of the people of God, that one enters one's own chambers or cells, for ταμεια signifies both: that one closes the door of one's chamber according to the Gospel precept (Matthew VI), and says with the Prophet: Set, O Lord, a guard to my mouth, and a door of protection to my lips (Psalm CXL, 3). And let one hide for a little while, until the wrath of the Lord passes by, so as not to do anything for the sake of glory; but let one enjoy the good of conscience, and await only the judgment of God. But there are cellars that must be closed and hidden from those who have become rich in works and words, with prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, so that the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing, so that we may enjoy the wealth of the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel. But since all the days of our life are short and small, Jacob, exceeding one hundred years, says: My days are short and evil (Genesis 47:9). But the anger of the Lord that will come is the anger of those who refuse to repent and store up for themselves; after it has passed, the storehouses will no longer be closed, but what is written will be fulfilled: Nothing hidden that will not be revealed, and nothing concealed that will not be made known (Luke 8:17). And what follows: Behold, the Lord will bring His anger from the holy place: this signifies that the anger of God begins with the holy ones, or that all His vengeance is just and holy, not stemming from a disturbance of the mind as is usual in humans, but from a desire to correct. But I think that land of inhabitants, of which it is written: Let the earth hear the words of my mouth (Deut. XXXII, 1). And: Hear, O earth, perceive with your ears (Isaiah, I, 2). And again: Earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord (Jeremiah, XXII, 27). For just as those who dwell on the earth cannot please God, so too those who are in the flesh cannot please Him (Rom. VIII). But in this place, the earth signifies the soul that lives in a carnal manner. And it will reveal its blood, if it scandalizes anyone, and it deserves to hear with Cain: The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the earth, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood (Gen. IV, 10, 11). Therefore, all blood will be required on the day of judgment, and the earth will not hide its blood; and it will present in the midst those who have been killed, whether intentionally or negligently.

27:1 (Chapter 27 - Verse 1) On that day the Lord will visit with His hard, great, and strong sword Leviathan, the twisted serpent, and Leviathan, the fleeing serpent, and He will slay the sea monster that is in the sea. LXX: On that day God will bring forth His holy, great, and strong sword against the fleeing dragon, against the twisted dragon, and He will slay the dragon that is in the sea. The Hebrews understand the devil, that is, the accuser, whose Greek name is Satan (), to be called in Hebrew Satan (), which means adversary. And in Zachariah it is said: Satan stood at his right hand, to resist him (Zech. III, 1). And he is also called Belial (), that is, apostate, transgressor, and without yoke. And so the Apostle says: What fellowship hath Christ with Belial? (2 Cor. VI, 15). And wherever the LXX translate the sons of iniquity, in the Hebrew it is written, sons of Belial. And that which is sung in the psalm about the mystery of the Savior: The son of iniquity shall not afflict him (Ps. LXXXVIII, 23), in the Hebrew it is said, son of Belial. And it is called by other names, as it is written in another psalm: You shall walk upon the asp and the basilisk, and you shall trample the lion and the dragon (Psalm 90, 13). This dragon is properly called Leviathan in the Hebrew

language. It is the great sea monster, of which, that it must be caught by Christ, is mystically narrated in the book of Job: He who will capture the great sea monster (Job 40, 20); for there, Leviathan is also used instead of sea monster; and again: You will draw out the dragon with a hook, you will encircle his jaws with a bridle; And immediately: This is the beginning of the creation of the Lord, which was made to be played with by his angels. And in the psalm: This great and spacious sea: there are creatures without number: small creatures with the great ones. This dragon that you formed to mock him (Ps. CIII, 25, 26). John also writes about this in the Apocalypse: A battle took place in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven (Apoc. XII, 7 et seqq.). And the great dragon was thrown down, the old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, 'Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.' (Revelation 12:9-10). It should be noted that in the psalm and in Job, the dragon is called Leviathan, to mock him by the angels. And so the Apostles receive power, that they may tread upon serpents and scorpions and upon all the might of the enemy (Luke 10). Therefore, from that place where it is written: Behold the Lord will lay waste the earth and make it desolate (Isaiah 24:1); or according to the Septuagint: Behold the Lord will destroy the world and lay it waste, until the present chapter, the judgment against the world at the consummation of the age has been preached, and the final enemy death will be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15): therefore, against the devil the ultimate sentence is that he be attacked with a holy, great, and strong sword, or according to the Hebrew and other interpreters, a harsh sword. For it is not as the Seventy perceived Cadesa, which, if it were, would sound holy; but Casa, which properly means hard. Hence also Saul, the father of Cis, is called hard. And some of our people understand the holy or hard sword to be the Word of God, because of its sense which it endures, of which the Apostle says: 'For the word of God is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword' (Hebrews 4:12). And in another place we read about the double-edged sword of the Savior coming forth from his mouth (Apoc. XIX). But at the end of the world, against Leviathan, who is called the most cunning serpent in the beginning of Genesis, the holy and strong sword will be brought forth, which will flee from the one who has never been accustomed to fleeing, not knowing that written: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? (Ps. CXXXVIII, 7)? A certain poet beautifully describes in the Gigantomachia about Enceladus: Where are you fleeing, Enceladus? Wherever you may go, you will always be under God. But that fleeing serpent Leviathan is called Bari in Hebrew, which the Eagle interpreted as a bolt, Symmachus as a lock, and Theodotion as strong. I think it is called a bolt or a lock because it has locked many in its prison and subjected them to its power, and it does not possess anything straight within itself, and for this reason it is called tortuous, and it cannot imitate the rod of the Lord, of which it is written: A rod of direction, a rod of your kingdom (Psalm 44). Whom the Lord will kill with the breath of his mouth (2 Thess. 2), the former inhabitant of the sea, the false and bitter waves. Those who say that the devil will repent and obtain forgiveness, let them explain to us how they understand this, which is written: And he will kill the dragon who is in the sea, or the whale. For in the second place, in the present chapter, in Hebrew it is not called Leviathan, but Thannin (תנין), which properly means whale. The Hebrews believe that Leviathan dwells under the earth and in the heavens, while the

sea monsters dwell in the sea, which is a Jewish fable. And what is said at the end of this chapter is connected by Eusebius to the previous chapter, so that the following prophecy is not related to this time. However, the Hebrews and other commentators explain the following, which we are now going to set forth.

27:2-3

(Verse 2, 3.) On that day, the vineyard of wine will sing for him. I am the Lord who tends it, and I will suddenly water it, lest anyone harm it. LXX: On that day, her desire will be a good vineyard, that she may be a prince. I am a strong city, a city that is besieged: in vain will I give her drink. For they will be captured at night, but the wall will fall during the day. There is much disagreement between the Hebrew and the LXX edition in this passage, therefore we will discuss each one separately. The vineyard about which Isaiah speaks: The vineyard has become a beloved one in a fertile place, which should be understood, let us learn from the Teacher himself (or, rather, let us say): For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel (Isaiah 5:1), of which it is sung in the psalm: You have brought the vineyard out of Egypt, etc. (Psalm 80:8). To this vineyard also, through Jeremiah, the most bitter cup is given (Jeremiah 25). For when he had sent him to intoxicate all the nations, and the Prophet had willingly offered himself for this task, he is first ordered to make Jerusalem drunk. Where it says: You have deceived me, O Lord, and I was deceived (Jeremiah 20:7). Therefore, Jerusalem will drink and be made to drink a bitter potion, so that she may learn lamentation and weeping. And the Lord says that He has kept her for a long time and given her a place for repentance, but because she refused to return, she will suddenly be made drunk. For the Scripture says that the Lord has acted in this way day and night, always preserving her with His help. And the same beautiful vineyard is called the Seventy by the LXX, in which there was the Law and the Prophets, the priesthood and the pontificate, and the knowledge of God, as the Scripture says: God is known in Judah, His name is great in Israel (Psalm 75:1). What others think, according to their edition, pertains to the Church, which is nothing more beautiful. And of which it is said: Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God (Ps. LXXXVI, 3): which is the mother of her offspring, and says in the Song of Songs: The sons of my mother fought against me (Cant. I, 5). And he speaks: I am a firm city, a city that is besieged. He said that it is beautifully besieged, not conquered. And immediately he connects it with the Synagogue, which has been turned from head to tail: In vain do I impart the drink of my teachings to her, for she will be taken in the darkness of her error. And because it does not receive clear light, its wall collapses during the day, that is, everything that it believed to be help for itself, and there will be no opponent who does not understand that we must grasp power from opposites.

27:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) Indignation is not mine: who will give me a thorn and a thistle in battle? I will march over it: I will set it on fire together. Or rather, shall I hold onto my strength? It will bring me peace, it will bring me peace. LXX: There is nothing that does not seize it. Who will appoint me as a keeper of the straw in the field? Because of this adversary, I have repelled it. Therefore, the Lord has done all that He has planned: I am consumed; its inhabitants will say, we will make peace with it: we will make peace with him. According to the Hebrew, the meaning here is: I who, day and night, have always kept my vineyard, so that the boar from the forest would not destroy it, nor the beasts devour it. Do I not have indignation? And do I not know how to strike the sinner and give to each

what he deserves? Where the eagle placed a thorn and a bramble, in Hebrew it is written 'Samir' and 'Saith', which means adamant and places full of thorns. Therefore, he says: Who will teach me to be firm and overcome my mercy, and to proceed fiercely in battle: so that I may walk over the vineyard which I kept, and burn it down which I enclosed with my wall? Or should my courage rather do this, that I postpone anger and save those who are not saved by the authority of the Law, with the mercy of the Gospel? But emphatically, according to the Hebrew reading, it is said: Who will make me hard and cruel, that I may overcome my nature? This is indeed signified in the desert and in thorns: that I may crush and burn it as if in battle, which I have always kept guarded by my diligence. Or should I hold onto my courage, which is undoubtedly Christ, and of which we read: Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24), so that it may itself make peace for me and reconcile the world? According to the Septuagint, here is the meaning: Let us understand it from the perspective of the Church: I am a strong city, a city surrounded by many enemies, to whom I have given in vain the cups of my enemy, the Synagogue. For she will be captured at night, and her wall will fall, and there will be no power of adversaries that will not seize her. Again I will say: What profit is it for me to guard her, which has straw in herself, not grain: which is so uncultivated, that it is full of disgrace and thorns, which I wanted to save? But because she treats me hostilely, I have departed from her. And the Apostles born in me and from me have said: Indeed, it was necessary for you to speak the word of God first, but since you have rejected it and deemed yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). Therefore, the Lord will do what He has threatened, so that all may burn in it surrounded by Roman fire. Or certainly let them burn with vices and sins, lest they be able to extinguish the burning darts of the devil. For all those who commit adultery are like an oven whose hearts are burning. And those who formerly dwelled in it, after they cry out, the city is captured and burned, and they leave it, and reconciling the world (or unclean) to God, they say: Let us make peace to her, let us make peace to Him, which is Christ, always writing in their Letters: Grace be with you and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord (1 Corinthians 1:3). Of whom we read in this same Prophet: How beautiful are the feet of those who announce peace (Isaiah 52:7)! Some refer this place to the Churches, because they are indeed guarded by God; but many of them do not bear fruit; and therefore the fervor of a good teacher should succeed, so that they may proclaim and confess their error, and afterwards make peace with God, who are truly called the children of Jacob.

27:6

(Verse 6) Those who come out from the root of Jacob will flourish and grow Israel: and they will fill the face of the world with their offspring. LXX: The sons of Jacob who come: Israel will flourish and bloom, and its fruits will fill the earth. After the Apostles, preaching the Gospel in the whole world, have said: We will make peace for Christ, peace will be made for you, those who come from the seed of Jacob and have reached the Apostolic dignity will be called sons of Jacob. Then Israel will sprout and flourish, seeing that the teachings of its children have filled the entire world, and have brought forth abundant fruits that it had not brought while remaining in Judaea.

27:7

(Verse 7.) Did he strike him according to the blow of the one striking himself: or as he killed his killers, so was he killed? This place is understood in two ways. Either against Jerusalem, so that

he may say that she was not struck by God in the same way that she struck Christ and his Apostles: or against the multitude of the Gentiles, so that the Apostles and apostolic men, despite being persecuted and shedding Christian blood, nevertheless had care for their salvation and reconciled them to God.

27:8

(Verse 8) When it has measured out against the measure, you shall judge it. LXX: He will send them out, quarreling and reproaching. According to the Hebrew sense here: As Jerusalem has done, so she will receive, and according to the measure with which she has measured, it will be measured to her in return. And then she will receive a full measure, when the time of judgment comes and God has rejected her. According to the LXX, it depends on what was said earlier. For Israel will not be struck as she has struck, nor will she be killed as she has killed. He argued against the Apostles, and reproached his teachers, and commanded them not to speak in the name of Christ. Therefore the Lord will reject them and cast them out from his flock.

He meditated in his hard spirit during the heat of the day. LXX: Were you not the one who meditated on destroying them with a hard spirit, with a spirit of fury? According to the Hebrew, it is said, 'In the measure that the table is, Jerusalem will receive.' Therefore, God meditated in his hard and vehement spirit, whether speaking against her during the heat of the day, that is, in the time of persecution, when there is a more intense day of indignation and punishment. According to the Septuagint, it is said of Jerusalem, or of Israel: Were you not the one who in your most stubborn and cruel spirit, and in the fury of your blasphemies, desired to kill the Apostles of the Lord and the teachers?

27:9

(Verse 9) Therefore, because of this, the iniquity of the house of Jacob will be forgiven, and all this fruit will be removed, so that its sin may be taken away. For they have set up all the stones of the altar like scattered ashes; neither the lights nor the shrines will stand. LXX: Therefore, the iniquity of Jacob will be taken away, and this will be his blessing when I remove his sin, when I set up all the stones of the altars shattered like crushed ash, and their trees and idols will not endure. The reason why they suffer no harm even after the Jews laid hands upon the Lord is that they may obtain forgiveness if they choose to repent, so that the prayer of the Savior may be fulfilled: Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34). Therefore, it is said, the iniquity of the house of Jacob will be pardoned, and its sin will be taken away, so that it may deserve the blessing of God, which had been cursed upon it when it said: His blood be upon us, and upon our children (Matthew 27:25). Because through the Apostles, the Gospel will be sown from the stock of Israel throughout the whole world, and idolatry will be destroyed, and altars will be crushed to dust, lights will be cut down, temples will fall, and the knowledge of the one God under the mystery of the Trinity will be proclaimed.

27:10

(Verse 10) The fortified city will be deserted; the beautiful city will be abandoned and left like a wilderness. There the calf will graze, and there it will lie down and consume its branches. Their idols will be cut down like groves, and the flock that dwells far away will be left like a deserted flock, and it will be a long time in the pasture, and there the flocks will rest, and after a long time

there will be no green in it, for it is dried up. Jerusalem, once a strong and fortified city, because it did not receive its masters but said: Come, let us kill him, for this is the heir and our inheritance (Matthew 21:38), will be deserted. And that which was once beautiful, of which it is said in Ezekiel: You ate fine flour, honey, and oil, and you became exceedingly beautiful (Ezek. 16:13), and in which dwells He of whom it is written: You are fairer than the sons of men (Ps. 45:3), will be left and abandoned like a desert, as the Lord says to the Apostles: Arise, let us go from here (John 14:31). There the calf, the Roman army, will graze, of which it is also said in another place under the name of boar: The boar from the forest will ravage it, and the singular wild beast has grazed on it (Ps. 80:14). And there he will lie down and consume its branches under the metaphor of a vine and its shoots, so that nothing green remains in it, nothing of the branches, but the enemy consumes everything. According to the Septuagint, because they did not receive a good shepherd: therefore they will be like a forsaken flock, and will be open to the bites of beasts; and nothing green will remain in them, because drought will possess everything.

27:11

(Verse 11) In the dryness of its harvest, women who come and teach her will be crushed. For the people are not wise; therefore, the one who made them will not show them mercy, and the one who formed them will not spare them. LXX: Women coming from the spectacle, come: for the people do not have understanding; therefore, the one who made them will not show them mercy, and the one who formed them will not spare them. This is what is said, 'In the dryness of its harvest, they will be crushed,' for which it is interpreted by the Seventy, there will be nothing green in it because it has withered, according to the Hebrew, it is joined to the following; according to the LXX, it is joined to the previous meaning. Let us therefore speak first according to the Hebrew. When the time of drought and harvest of Jerusalem comes, and to speak more clearly, the time of desolation will come, a multitude of synagogues from all over the world will come together to lament for Jerusalem and to console its evils. Whether he speaks openly about women, who, with their breasts exposed, strike their bleeding arms, and the prophecy of the Lord will be fulfilled: Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children (Luke 23:28). And a great unhappiness of the people is to learn the songs of lamentation from women; just as the people of Israel were rebuked when, in the book of Judges (Judges 4), the Lord brought salvation through the hand of the woman Deborah, and during the nearby captivity, when the men were silent, the woman Holda prophesied (2 Kings 22). Therefore, the women will be worn out by a long journey, weakened by frailty, hunger, and filth, and they will teach the pitiful people, because they are not a wise people, nor have they understood their Creator, who, neglected and despised by them, will not show mercy to their deeds, and will not spare his creation. According to the LXX, it is said of Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, and the other women, who first saw the Lord rising, and held his feet, and deserved to hear from him: Do not be afraid: Go, tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me (Matt. XXVIII, 10). Concerning these women, long before they were born, the prophetic word foretells and calls them from the sight of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection, to preach the Gospel and, according to the Hebrew, to teach Jerusalem or the land of Israel, that he is the Lord and God. For at that time the people of Israel did not have wisdom, when the Lord suffered, and the prophetic prophecy was fulfilled: Save me, O Lord, for the holy one has failed (Psalm 11:1). And: They have all gone astray, they have become useless together, there is no one who does good, not even one (Psalm 13:4), the women

are called from the show, so that they may announce to the Apostles what they themselves saw. But Israel, of whom it was said (above, 1:3): Israel did not know me, and my people did not understand, provoked their most merciful Creator and Maker to bitterness, so that he would not show them any mercy. These things are indeed said piously; but how they agree with the others, and how they are adapted to the times of the consummation of the world, is a difficult interpretation.

27:12 (Verse 12) And it shall be on that day, the Lord shall strike from the channel of the river to the torrent of Egypt. LXX: And it shall be on that day, the Lord shall shut off from the channel of the river to Rhinocorura. If it had not joined together, on that day, through which we are taught, the things that are to be connected with the things that were said earlier, we could have explained it as the proper sense of this chapter; but now all things must be referred back to the earlier ones. For the fortified city shall be desolate, and the beautiful city shall be forsaken like a desert, and there the calf shall lie down, and it shall devour the branches of the vine, and all things shall become dry, because there is no people who have understanding, and because of their foolishness, they have not obtained any mercy from their Creator. Therefore, the Lord will strike or close off from the channel or stream of the river to the torrent of Egypt, so that in all of Judaea, which was once the promised land, no teaching may be found, no knowledge of the Scriptures, of which the Apostle speaks: In order that we may not pay attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth (Titus 1:14); and again: For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision (Ibid., 10). But the riverbed, or the stream of the river, next to the Euphrates, we can call it, as it is written in the seventy-first psalm: He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth (Psalm 71:8). Others think it is the Jordan. And it should be noted that in the borders of Judea, it is called a river; in the borders of Egypt, a torrent, which has turbid waters and is not permanent. Instead of the torrent of Egypt, the seventy translators translated it as Rhinocorura, which is a town on the border of Egypt and Palestine, expressing not so much the words of the Scriptures as the meaning of the words. But what we said, he will strike, for which the LXX translated συμφορῇξει as concludet: Aquila and Theodotion interpreted as ἰαβδῶσει, which can be understood as either he will strike with a rod or he will count the number of his flock with a rod, so that it is not taken in a bad but in a good sense. And you shall be gathered one by one, O sons of Israel. LXX: But you, gather together one by one, O sons of Israel. O sons of Israel, for whom Symmachus has interpreted, the house of Israel: striking your enemies from the river stream, even to the river of Egypt, that is, from the Euphrates to the Nile, you yourselves shall be gathered to the faith of the Lord one by one, because the crowd of Jews did not believe, by which it signifies that only a few of the Jews will believe in the Savior Lord. Certainly, O Apostles and apostolic men, when the multitude of Jews did not believe, you, from the whole world, whom you were able, bring back like sick sheep to the folds of the Lord, and gather them with the people of the nations, so that what the Apostle Paul and Barnabas speak to the Jews may be fulfilled: For it was necessary for the word of God to be announced to you first; but since you judged yourselves unworthy of salvation, behold, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46).

27:13

(Verse 13) And it shall be in that day: the great trumpet shall sound, and those who were lost from the land of Assyria and those who were cast out into the land of Egypt shall come, and they shall

worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem. LXX: And it shall be in that day, a great trumpet shall sound; and those who perished in the region of Assyria and those who perished in Egypt shall come; and they shall worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem. In this place, the Jews make empty vows to themselves, that at the end of the world, when their Antichrist, as it is said, shall come, the dispersed people from Assyria and the land of Egypt shall gather together and come to Jerusalem, and having built the temple, worship the Lord their God. That which cannot stand completely according to the letter. For it does not only refer to the Assyrians and Egyptians, but to the whole world, which will believe in Christ. Therefore, this signifies that in the last trumpet, according to the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. XV), all those who perished in Assyria and Egypt will come to the Lord. He did not say all the children of Israel, but all those who perished, indicating the multitude of the Gentiles, who, bound by idolatry, magic, and the arts of philosophy, will come to the faith of Christ and worship Him in the Church. The great trumpet can be understood as the Gospel message, of which we also read in the same Prophet: Ascend to the high mountain, you who bring good news to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, you who bring good news to Jerusalem (Isaiah 40:9). Therefore, that mountain is holy and that Jerusalem is the one of which we have often spoken: You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:22). Up to this point, we have spoken about the end of the world starting from the place where we began: Behold, the Lord will scatter the earth and make it bare (Above, XXIV, 1), which is contained in the present volume. Now, with the help, or rather inspiration, of Christ, let us move on to the ninth, which will have the beginning of another prophecy.

Book Nine

Book Nine

Engaged with various difficulties, we dictate explanations on the prophet Isaiah at intervals. Therefore, having completed the eighth volume, we now transition to the ninth after a short period of time. Not without the bites and backbiting of the envious, who, ignorant of what they hear and speak, dare to pass judgment on what they do not know, and despise before they approve, considering themselves learned and eloquent if they criticize all the writers. Despising the envy and garrulous murmuring, let us implore the aid of God, and let us say with the imprecation of the Psalmist: Scatter the nations that desire war (Ps. LXVII, 32). For the dwelling place of the Lord is in peace, which surpasses all understanding. This is also desired by the Prophet when he cries out: O Lord our God, give us peace: for you have restored all things to us (Isa. XXVI, 12). But now let us propose the chapter of Isaiah, and let us enter with Moses into the cloud and darkness, so that our face may be glorified, and, according to the Hebrew, our face may be radiant: and may the thunders and lightnings be heard and shine forth, which the common people could not see (Exod. XIX).

28:1

(Chapter 28, Verse 1) Woe to the pride of Ephraim's crown, to the fading flower of its glorious splendor, which is at the head of the fertile valley of those who are overcome with wine. See, the Lord has one who is powerful and strong. Like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a driving rain and a flooding downpour, he will throw it forcefully to the ground. The proud crown of

Ephraim's drunkards will be trampled underfoot. The fading flower of its glorious splendor, which is at the head of the fertile valley, will be like a fig before the fruit harvest, as soon as someone sees it and takes it in hand, they swallow it. LXX: Alas for the crown of the pride of Ephraim's hired mercenaries, the flower that falls from the glory atop the fat mountain, those who are drunk but not with wine. Behold, the strong and fierce anger of the Lord, like hail that falls forcefully, without shelter, which violently falls like a multitude of waters drawing the ground, and making space for itself: the crown of the pride of Ephraim's hired mercenaries will be trampled by hands and feet. And there will be a flower that falls from the hope of glory on the summit of the high mountain, like an early fig, which anyone who sees it before it is ripe will desire to devour it. Let us first speak according to history, then according to allegory, and finally according to prophetic vision. The divine discourse speaks against the ten tribes that were reigning in Samaria, and because of Jeroboam, who was from the tribe of Ephraim, they were called Ephraim. And he calls them the crown of pride: because compared to the two tribes, which were called Judah, they were higher in number and strength. And he says that Ephraim has made them drunk, who do not understand their Creator, but worship golden calves as their Lord in Dan and Bethel. These were once in their prime, lords and in glory, when they were ruled by David and Solomon, and they were worshiping God in the temple of Jerusalem in the twelve tribes, which were in the summit of the fattest valley, which in Hebrew is called Ge Semanim (). It signifies the place where the Lord was delivered; on top of which valley the temple of the Lord was situated. These were intoxicated by the wine of error and madness, which Jeroboam mixed for them. Therefore, the Lord threatens punishment against them, because just as a hailstorm shatters everything in its path, and the force of overwhelming waters sweeps away anything in its way, so may the Assyrian army be destroyed, and whatever remains may be transported to the mountains or cities of Media. He compares the glory of the ten tribes to a crown of various flowers, which had such beauty that just as someone, before the arrival of summer and autumn, sees a precursor fig on a tree and immediately eats it as soon as they hold it in their hand, so may the Assyrians see the ten tribes, destroy and devour them, leaving nothing of the former people in Samaria. Let this be briefly said according to history. Let's move on to the allegory. According to the exposition of the prophet Hosea, in which Ephraim and Joseph and Samaria and the ten tribes, which were separated from the body of the twelve tribes, and the temple of the Lord, we refer to the heretics, who are truly, according to the Septuagint edition, a crown of injustice, blaspheming the Lord, and doing everything for the sake of profit, and falling from the glory of the Lord: they do not follow the meagerness of manna, and the ecclesiastical humility; but they wallow on a fattened mountain, drunk without wine. Therefore, the strong and fierce wrath of the Lord, who is going to punish them, is compared to a swift hailstorm that falls not on roofs, but on the heads of mortals, and to the flooding of many waters, which drags whatever it finds in its path. This is the crown of injustice, they are called mercenaries Ephraim, who, according to the Apostle, have fallen from the flower and hope and glory of their former faith, and are involved in pride, and they are the sweetest food of the devil, who devours them daily (1 Peter 5). According to the prophecy, we can say that the crown of injustice called the Scribes and Pharisees, who blasphemed the Lord. And they were called the hirelings of Ephraim, because of Judas, who from the tribe of Ephraim and from the village of the same tribe, Iscariot, sold the Lord for a price, who truly fell as the flower of apostolic glory upon the most fertile mountain, of which we believe it is said: Jacob ate and drank, and he was satisfied and fattened, and the beloved rebelled (Deut. XXXII, 15). Or according to the Hebrew: above the valley of

fatness, that is, Gethsemane: in which also the name of the place is signified, where Judas betrayed the Lord. But the valley of fatness, or of the fat ones, is said because of its fertility, and the Scribes and Pharisees who apprehended the Lord there: of whom it is written in the psalm: Fat bulls have besieged me (Ps. 21:13). This valley of fatness, that is, Gethsemane, is called in this second chapter; and I wonder how the LXX first called it a fat mountain, and later an exalted mountain. But the traitor was drunk not with wine, but with greed and the incurable madness of asps, and the food of the devil, which entered into him after the morsel (John 13), and he was entirely consumed, for his prayer was turned into sin, and even his repentance did not have the fruit of salvation. The Hebrew word Sacchore is ambiguous, and it can mean either drunkards or mercenaries. Hence, Issachar is also interpreted as being wages: and Sachar, μισθωμα, that is, drunkenness: and the others are drunkards: only the Septuagint translated it as mercenaries.

28:5-9

(Verse 5 and following) On that day, the Lord of hosts will be a crown of glory and a diadem of rejoicing to the remnant of his people, and a spirit of judgment to the one who sits in judgment, and strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate. But these also reel because of wine and stagger because of strong drink: priest and prophet reel because of strong drink, they are swallowed up by wine, they stagger because of strong drink; they reel while having visions, they totter when rendering judgment. For all the tables were filled with vomit and filth, so that there was no longer any place. LXX: On that day the Lord of hosts will be a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of his people. They shall put away in the spirit of judgment all wickedness and forbid every deed of violence. For they are deceived by wine, they stagger because of strong drink; priest and prophet reel with strong drink, they are confused with wine, they stagger because of strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in giving judgment. All tables are covered with filthy vomit. No place is clean. After the entire land of Samaria, that is, the ten tribes, was destroyed by the flooding Assyrians and trampled underfoot, the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim, and devoured like a temporary fig tree, then the remaining people of Israel, that is, the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, will be the crown of victory; and the spirit of judgment will be upon the king who sits in judgment, undoubtedly King Hezekiah of Judah; and their strength, who have avenged all the populated regions and returned from battle, will be their protection within the city. The prophet speaks about what we are going to read in the same passage (below chapter 37), when 185,000 armed soldiers from the Assyrian army were destroyed by an angel striking them. But these people too, that is, Judah and Benjamin, were intoxicated with the wine of idolatry, and having despised the religion of the temple, they worshipped the idols of demons and did not recognize the Lord who sees everything. For all their tables and their whole religion were filled with vomit and filth, so that not only in the temple, but on the top of mountains and in wooded places, they filled everything with the filth of idolatry, and the Lord did not have a place of dwelling in them. Let this be said according to the letter. Furthermore, according to tropology, let us follow the previous understanding and not leave aside the untouched Seventy Interpreters. For the heretics, devoured by the mouth of the devil, who have climbed the mountain of pride, the Lord will be the crown of glory; but for those who dwell in the Church, and compared to the multitude of many wanderers, they are few in number. However, there will be a spirit of judgment over judgment: for the Lord will cleanse the filth of the sons and daughters of Zion with the spirit of judgment. But if anyone has blood, he will be cleansed not by the breath of judgment, but by the fire of purification,

and he will be a strength to the people and will prevent them from being killed by those who are intoxicated with the wine of dragons and have gone astray because of their drunkenness. We have often said that wine is made from grapes. But drunkenness refers to any drink that can intoxicate and disturb the mind, which Aquila properly translated as ebriety, whether it is made from wheat, barley, millet, the juice of fruits, the fruit of palm trees, or any other kind. Therefore, the priests and prophets of the heretics lost their minds because of wine, and they were consumed because of alcohol, like Prisca and Maximilla, and their leader Montanus; and they did not know what to say. They are intoxicated by wine when they wrongly understand and distort the holy Scriptures. They are consumed by alcohol when they misuse worldly wisdom and the snares of dialecticians, which should be called not so much chains as phantasms, that is, certain shadows and images that quickly perish and dissolve. Those who believe that profit is piety and do everything out of greed will be cursed. The Apostle spoke about this phantasm, saying: 'Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy' (I Tim. IV, 1, 2). The third explanation is that after the Lord destroyed the Scribes and the Pharisees and their companion Judas, who was a thief from the beginning, he personally carried the money of the poor in a small wallet (John XII and XIII): then there is hope and a crown of glory for those who believe in the Lord from among the Jews, undoubtedly signifying the apostles, whom he has reserved for the preaching of the Gospel and has not immediately allowed to shed their blood for Christ. For all the scribes and Pharisees, as we have said above, were drunk with wine and cider, both the priests and the false prophets. But their schemes and traps were in vain, for even Judas himself, who betrayed [Jesus], did it for the sake of money, and the priests who corrupted the betrayer with money did it out of fear of their own lowly status. For he himself, making a whip out of cords, cast out of the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep, and overturned the tables of the money changers, saying to them: It is written, 'My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of thieves (Matthew 21:13). According to that Hebrew interpretation, in which we have said: For all their tables are filled with vomit and filth, so that there is no more room for heretics, scribes, and Pharisees, it can be understood that we say all their doctrine and all their mysteries are filled with vomit and filth, since they do not digest the food of the holy Scriptures, nor do they make it vital for the whole body; but they bring forth unripe and fetid things, so that God finds no place in them. But I wonder what Theodotion meant when he rendered the Hebrew word, Cisoa, which Aquila interpreted as 'vomit of filth,' and Symmachus only as 'vomit.' He said, 'vomit of dysalia,' which word I cannot find in Greek literature, unless he has invented a new term for a new thing. For it is also compounded in the Hebrew language, because vomit is called CI and Soa is filthy (also rendered as filth). Therefore, whatever causes nausea and vomiting can be called δυσάλια.

28:10-13

(Vers. 10 seqq.) Who will teach knowledge, and who will make understanding? Weaned from milk, pulled from the breasts: command, re-command; command, re-command; wait, re-wait; wait, re-wait; a little here, a little there. For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, to whom He said, 'This is the rest, give rest to the weary,' and 'This is the refreshing,' but they would not hear. And the word of the Lord will be to them, command, re-command; command, re-command; wait, re-wait; wait, re-wait; a little here, a little there, that they may go and fall backward, and be broken, snared, and caught. LXX: To whom shall we announce evil, and to whom shall we announce good news? Those who have been weaned from milk, those who have

been taken away from the breast. Expect tribulation upon tribulation; wait for hope upon hope; still little, still little: because of the mockery of lips, because of the other tongue with which they will speak to this people, saying to them: This is the rest for the hungry, and this is the crushing, and they did not want to hear. The word of the Lord will come upon them: Tribulation upon tribulation: wait, wait; hope upon hope: still little, still little; so that they may go and fall backward, and be crushed, and be endangered, and be captured. Who, he says, is worthy of the teaching of the Lord, to whom are the words of the Savior saying: 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear' (Matthew 12:15), so that what he has heard with his ears, he may understand with his heart? The following verse shows who they are: 'Weaned from milk, drawn from the breast, who are not nourished with milk in infancy, but are fed with solid food; who were drawn from the breast with Isaac: for the joy of this, Abraham made a great feast' (Genesis 22); they deserve to hear the mysteries of the Lord, and to understand what the priest and prophet do not know, intoxicated and absorbed by wine, who wandered and did not know the one who sees, because all their tables are filled with vomit and filth, who, when the prophets announce the future and threaten torments unless they did what was commanded, used to say scoffing: 'Command, re-command; command, re-command,' that is, 'order, order, command what we should do.' And when they abused the patience of God, who delays his anger in order to show mercy; who used to say even this in jest through the mouths of the prophets: Wait a little longer, wait a little while, the things that we have prophesied will come. But all of these things they spoke to the people, because they did not believe the words of God; and immediately the prophet brings this in: By no means will God speak to you with these words, in order to give you a commandment of what you should do, and to wait for the things that are to come, but he will speak to you in present fury, who had previously said to the people: This is my rest, revive the weary, I have labored for a long time, I have found no rest in anything. Foxes have dens, and birds of the sky have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head (Matthew 8; Luke 9). And this is my refreshment, that I may find rest in you at times. Those who did not want to listen and despised my warnings; therefore, they say to the prophets what they used to say when they were playing: Command, re-command; command, re-command; wait, re-wait; wait, re-wait; a little here, a little there, and they mock my patience, thinking that I am threatening things that I will never do: let them experience the fulfillment of their desires, so that they may go to destruction and fall back incurably; and may they never make progress and be unable to say with the Apostle: Forgetting the past, we stretch out to what is ahead (Philippians 3:13); but may they be broken and ensnared, and captured by either the Babylonian or the Roman army. For that which we have said: Command, re-command; command, re-command; expect, re-expect; expect, re-expect; a little here, a little there, in Hebrew it is written thus: Sau Lasau, Sau Lasau; Cau Lacau, Cau Lacau: Zer Sam, Zer Sam; and with these words the most impure heresy is accustomed to deceive and terrify the simple ones, in order to make them fear the novelty of the words, so that whoever knows these words and remembers them during their intercourse, without any doubt, will pass on to the kingdom of heaven. We read in the Apostle: 'In other tongues and with other lips I will speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me,' says the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:21). This seems to me to be taken from the present chapter according to the Hebrew, and we observed this in the Old Testament (except for a few testimonies, which only Luke abuses by having more knowledge of the Greek language). Wherever something is said from the Old Testament, we do not follow the Septuagint, but the Hebrew, not following any interpretation, but translating the Hebrew sense into our own language. Symmachus, Theodotion,

and the Septuagint had different opinions on this passage, and since it is long to speak about all of them, let us briefly pass over the Septuagint interpreters who are read in the Churches. I reject the Jewish people, the Priests and the Prophets, who have become drunk with wine, and have strayed and their plan, which they entered into because of greed, has been consumed by a curse. Will we announce future tribulations for the sake of Christ to them? To whom will evil be prepared as the crown of virtues? Surely it signifies the apostles, those who have been weaned from milk, those who have been torn away from the breast: Expect tribulation upon tribulation. But it speaks to the choir of the apostles and of all believers, that they should prepare themselves not for one, but for many tribulations, so that when they are troubled and oppressed, they may hope again, and have hope upon hope. And if the things that are promised are delayed a little, let them not be unbelieving: for indeed, it is a small and little delay, and the things that are promised will come. Indeed, tribulation works patience; patience, probation: probation, hope; and hope does not disappoint. (Rom. V, 3, 4, 5). And this same tribulation will be multiplied by the detraction of lips and the blasphemies of persecutors, with which they rage against the people of God with a rabid mouth. Moreover, the apostles and apostolic men will speak to the Jewish people, saying: This is the rest for the hungry for justice, and this is the contrition and anguish that leads to life. When these things were preached, the wicked refused to listen. Therefore, what was said to the people of God: Endure tribulation, endure tribulation; wait for hope, wait for hope: a little longer, a little longer, will be turned into punishment for those who refused to hear the word of the Lord, so that they may fall and go backwards, and fall into the danger of siege and death, and be captured without any end to their misery. But the Hebrew word *Dea*, which everyone translates as 'knowledge', was only interpreted poorly by the Seventy, a clear error. For the first letter is distinguished either as *Daleth* or *Res* with a small apex. Therefore, if it is read as *Dea* (*ד*), it means 'knowledge'; if *Rea* (*ר*), it means 'malice'; not from evil, which is contrary to good, but from constraint.

28:14-15

(Verse 14, 15). Therefore, hear the word of the Lord, you mockers who rule over my people in Jerusalem. For you have said: We have made a covenant with death, and with the grave we have made a pact. When the overwhelming whip passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made falsehood our refuge, and we have hidden behind deceit. LXX: Therefore, hear the word of the Lord, you men, and leaders of this people in Jerusalem, who are in distress: For you have said: We have made a pact with the grave, and with death we have made a covenant. If the storm passes through, it will not come to us, because we have made falsehood our refuge, and we will be protected by deceit. As we stated above, the leaders of the Jews are accustomed to mock the prophets by saying: Command, re-command; wait, re-wait, and other similar things, by which it is shown that they did not believe in the words of the prophets, but held their prophecies in contempt. The present chapter proves this, through which they are called mocking men. These are the scribes and Pharisees who rule over the people of God in Jerusalem, whom the Seventy call troubled men, and the leaders of the people of Jerusalem. For they said not in word, but in deed: We are like the other nations, we have a pact and covenant with hell and with death: once we have despaired of salvation. Certainly captivity will come after a long time, they will say to you: Yet a little while, yet a little while: wait and wait again. Therefore, when we are dead, we will not feel this scourge of captivity and this storm. For once we believed in falsehood, that is, we had hope in vain

in God and in His Law. And so we were protected by a lie, because we avoided impending captivity. The Hebrew word Sot (), Aquila and Symmachus interpreted as a whip, the LXX as a storm; Chasab () also translated it as a lie, in which the Jews hoped, according to the Gospel of John, the father is the devil.

28:16-20

(Verse 16 and following). Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will send in the foundations of Zion a tested, corner, precious stone, founded on a foundation: he who believes shall not hurry. And I will put judgment in the balance, and justice in the measure: and hail will overthrow the hope of lies, and the covering waters will flood. And your covenant with death shall be abolished, and your pact with Hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge passes through, you shall be trampled. When it passes by, it will seize you; for it will pass through in the morning, in the day and at night, and its vexation will only give understanding to the ear: For the bed is too narrow for one to stretch out on, and the covering is too small to wrap oneself in. Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, I will lay in Zion a precious stone, a chosen, cornerstone, and whoever believes in it will not be put to shame. And I will set judgment as hope; but my mercy as a burden, and those who believe in vain falsehood, for the storm will not pass through us, and it will not take away from us the testament of death, and your hope will not remain in hell. If the coming storm passes, you will be trampled by it; when it passes, it will lift you up in the morning, it will pass in the morning; day and night there will be the worst of hope. Learn to listen, you who are in tribulation: we cannot fight, for we ourselves are weak to be gathered. I had said, he says, to you: Listen to the word of the Lord, men who mock, or troubled rulers of my people, and do not have a covenant with death, nor an agreement with the underworld, who, despising my commandments, have put your hope in lies, and boasting, or rather despairing, say: with lies we will be protected. Therefore, the merciful and compassionate Lord, patient and greatly merciful (Ps. 145), says that he will send an elected, tested, precious, and corner stone into the foundations of Zion for those who do not want it. About which the Apostle also speaks: Like a wise architect, I have laid the foundation (I Cor. III, 10); and again: For no one can lay any other foundation than the one that's been laid, which is Christ Jesus (Ibid., 11). This stone is truly and again called a stone, just as in Leviticus, a man is called man twice and a corner stone, because it has united the people of the Circumcision and the Gentiles, about which it is also said in the psalm: The stone which the builders rejected, has become the head of the corner (Ps. CXVII, 22). But these are the builders and masons, who are now called deceivers and leaders of the people who are in Jerusalem. Concerning this stone, we read in Daniel that it was cut from a mountain without hands, and it filled the whole earth (Dan. II): because the divine dispensation of the divine seed assumed a human body, and the fullness of Divinity dwelt in it bodily. Upon this stone, which is also called rock, Christ built the Church, and according to the Hebrew, he established the foundation on a firm rock, on which anyone who believes will not be put to shame, or, according to the Hebrew, will not hasten, lest the coming of Christ appear slow to him. For if it delays according to Habakkuk, let no one despair: for it will surely come, and it will fulfill its promises (Hab. II). And God also promises to put judgment in Him: For the Father does not judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to the Son (John V, 22). And justice or mercy in measure, in order to render to each according to his works, and to temper justice and mercy with each other, according to what we also read in the Psalms: Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed (Ps. LXXXIV, 11). He also says that your

hope and falsehood, that is, the devil, the father of all falsehood, will overthrow the hailstorm of my punishments. And the protection, under which you thought you would be safe, a powerful storm and a multitude of waters will destroy, so that the friendship and treaty that you had with death and with Hell, that is, with the devil, may perish eternally. And the whip or storm, of which you said: 'When the overwhelming whip passes, it will not come upon us' - it will come, and you will be trodden down by it, that is, you will suffer all the torments that you believed you would never endure in despair. For always the wrath of the Lord will fall upon you, and you will feel it both in times of prosperity and adversity, and cruel death will ravage you. What shall I say about punishments? Fear of punishments alone and the dread of torments will correct you for salvation, and will make you understand your evils. And when you have been tormented, then you will know that my Prophets have spoken the truth. And what follows: For the bed is made narrow, so that one falls out, and the short cloak cannot cover both, it has the sense which we read in the Apostle: You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons (2 Corinthians 10:20, 21); and elsewhere: What fellowship does righteousness have with iniquity? What communion does light have with darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Belial? What part does a believer have with an unbeliever? What agreement does the temple of God have with idols (2 Corinthians 6:14, 15)? However, he speaks under the metaphor of a most chaste husband, who says to his adulterous wife: One bed cannot contain both me and an adulterer, and a short cloak cannot cover both a husband and an adulterer. Therefore, Jerusalem, to whom in Ezekiel under the guise of a wife speaking, her adulteries are spoken of (Ezek. XVI, 21), and whom in Hosea at the beginning is called a harlot and an adulteress (Hos. III), if you wish to be united with my embraces, cast away idols: if you serve idols, you cannot have me. According to the Hebrew. Furthermore, as for what is read in the LXX: Learn to hear, you who are troubled: we cannot fight, but we ourselves are weak so that we may gather together. I completely do not know the meaning of this, and how it is connected to the previous context. Unless perhaps the divine speech speaks to the leaders of the people and encourages them to have hope in God, and not in death and hell, and teaches them to listen to the prophecies of the prophets, and they respond that they cannot fight against opposing powers due to the weakness of their strength, nor gather among the people of God.

28:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) For just as the Lord will stand on the mountain of divisions, and will be angry in the valley of Gibeon, to do his work, his strange work, to carry out his task, his alien task. And now do not mock: lest perhaps your chains be tightened. For I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a conclusion and an abbreviation over all the earth. LXX: As the mountain of the wicked rises, the Lord will arise, and it will be in the valley of Gibeon, when he does his work with fury, the work of bitterness and his fury he will use as if it were alien: and his bitterness as if it were foreign. And do not rejoice, neither let your bonds be strengthened, for I have heard from the Lord God of Hosts that the things which he will do upon the whole earth are consummated and abbreviated. The Lord has promised to place a precious stone in the foundations of Zion, in order to overturn falsehood and the hope of the wicked; and to abolish the covenant with death and the agreement with hell by a powerful storm. Because the princes did not want to accept Him, just as in the past against the Allophyli, when David reigned on the mountain of divisions, which in Hebrew is called Pharasim, the Lord brought down his adversaries, from where the place also received its name. And as in the

valley of Gibeon, under the leadership of Joshua, when the confidence of the inhabitants in themselves spoke to God: Sun, stand still in Gibeon, and moon, in the valley of Aijalon ((or Elon)) (Joshua 10:12); and the sun stood still for the space of a whole day; and many of the foreign invaders perished: so the Lord will be angry with the wicked and the mockers, in order to accomplish His work. For it is not the work of the Lord to destroy those whom He has created; but to perform a work that belongs more to cruelty than to clemency. And again the same thing is repeated in other words, so that it may accomplish its work. It is not his task to punish sinners, but the stranger, and alien from him, that he may punish who is the Savior. Therefore, since the Lord is about to rise again from his patience, and will not spare: just as he did not spare on Mount Pharasim, and in the valley of Gibeon: I warn you, O mocking men, that you should not at all laugh at my prophets, and that you should not think that the things they proclaim are not going to happen, lest if you persist in mocking, the bonds of your sins may be tightened (For by the cords of his own sins each one is bound (Prov. V, 22), or lest the time of captivity may come upon you. Indeed, what the Lord delayed in time, the bonds, captivity, and punishments, or the final day of judgment, He is now about to fulfill, accomplish, and shorten. Therefore, as a prophet, I announce to you the things that I have known from the Lord God Almighty that will happen over the whole earth, so that you may prevent the impending wrath with repentance. According to the Septuagint, the Lord Himself is said to rise like a mountain of the wicked and to be present in the valley of Gibeon, in order to perform His works, which are all one work of bitterness: which should by no means be seen as blasphemous. For the Lord does not say that the mountain of the wicked will come, but that it is like a mountain, which appears to be very heavy to the wicked and those who endure them. Just as if one careless son and another sick son, the father and the doctor could be cruel if they restore them to health with beatings and cauterization. For the Lord will rise and will be in the valley of Gibeon, on account of those who, because of their sins, remain in a humble place, and because of the swelling of their souls, are raised up in pride. For Gabaon, the hill interprets: that it may do its works, which are works of bitterness; when forced to change mercy, it becomes bitter instead of sweet. Therefore, you who are about to suffer these things, do not now rejoice in that joy in which he rejoiced and was richly clothed in purple at the feast, while neglecting Lazarus the poor (Luke 16): lest your chains become stronger. For what the Lord is going to do and how he will fulfill his judgement, these things I have both heard and announced to you. And what it means: According to history, understand it as referring to the borders of Judea extending over all the land; according to allegory, understand it as referring to the entire world.

28:23-29

(Vers. 23 seqq.) Pay attention and listen to my voice: listen and hear my speech. Does the plowman plow all day to sow, break up the soil, and harrow it? When he has leveled its surface, does he not sow dill, scatter cumin, plant wheat in rows, barley, millet, and rye in their proper place? For his God instructs him and teaches him the right way. For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cartwheel rolled over cumin; but dill is beaten out with a stick and cumin with a rod, and the wheat for bread is crushed. But he will not crush him forever, nor will the wheel of his cart bruise him, nor will he grind him with his hoofs. This also comes forth from the LORD of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear my words. Does the plowman keep plowing all day to sow? Does he keep turning the soil and breaking the clods? When he has leveled its surface, does he not sow the

black cumin and scatter the cumin seed? He plants wheat in rows, barley in its designated place, and spelt along its borders, for he instructs him with judgment, and teaches him knowledge. For it is not when gith is cleansed by hardness, nor when the wheel of a cart goes over the cumin; but the gith is shaken off, and the cumin is eaten with bread. For I will not be angry with you forever, nor will the voice of my bitterness trample you, and these wonders have come from the Lord. Come, consult, exalt empty consolation. Now he even speaks to the same ones to whom he said before: Hear the word of God, you scoffers, who rule over my people who are in Jerusalem: and he commands them to hear his voice, and to carefully attend to his discourse. He says, 'Does the farmer always plow so that he may scatter the seed? Will he not first break up the soil and turn over the furrows with a plow, and break up the clods with a rake and a hoe, so that when he has leveled the surface of the earth and softened the previously hard fields, then he may spread spelt or cumin and sow wheat, barley, millet, and spelt in his fields, according to the variation of the soil and the seasons; for not all things are sown at the same time.' Some understand by farre what the Greeks call ζῆαυ. And God, by His natural judgment, teaches the farmer, that is, the sower, and instructs him to know what cultivation he should apply to each seed. Finally, when the time for harvesting comes, barley and cumin, which are weaker seeds, are not crushed by the wheels of carts, which are turned and pulled like sawmills over the harvested crops; but they are beaten out with a stick and a staff, which are commonly called flails. But bread, that is, wheat from which bread is made, is ground with iron wheels, and all its chaff is crushed into straw. However, it is not always ground and crushed by the nails of the wheels; for this reason, it is said in Hebrew with their horses: so that because he had mentioned the nails of the wheels, he would maintain the metaphor in the rest. Some want it to be shown from the fact that he mentioned nails and horses, the herds of mares, which are usually sent into the threshing floors for grinding wheat: but the Scripture could not say that the province of Judea did not have them. However, this, that is, that the branches of gith and cumin are shaken off with a stick: the grain of barley and far, perhaps also millet, is crushed with iron wheels, is not a perpetual judgment of God, who in all things shows his wonderful counsel, and shows the greatness of his justice in all things. We have said these things paraphrastically, so that we may more easily understand the meaning for which these things are said. God dispenses the human race in various ways, now punishing, now having mercy: now rebuking, now defending; that is, now he plows, now he sows, now he harvests the ripe fruits, and threshes them in the barns, and governs his own world as he pleases. He who knew the will of his Lord, and did not do it, will be beaten with many stripes (Luke 12:47); and in another place it is written: The mighty shall suffer mighty tortures (Wisdom 6:7). But they will not be tormented forever. For it is one thing to be impious, another thing to be a sinner. What we have interpreted concerning the nations and the Jews, others explain as referring to the people and the priests, so that the ignorant multitude will be chastised like a reed and cumin with a rod; but the priests who have the key of knowledge will be tormented with great punishments. And may this be done by the judgment of the Lord, who reveals his wonderful counsel and the truth of justice in all things, so that those who have received more will be required to give more. As for what we have translated: 'On a rod the gith will be shaken, and cumin on a staff.' I do not know why the LXX translators chose to translate it this way, but cumin is actually eaten with bread. And indeed, even the ancient Greek translators, discussing the Hebrew text, remained silent about this passage, perhaps because they did not know what to say. But what we have placed according to the Hebrew is: 'He will not continually thresh him, nor will a wagon wheel drive over him, nor will his hooves crush

him.' The LXX translators interpreted it not according to the exact words, but according to the meaning: 'For I will not be angry with you forever, nor will the voice of my bitterness trample you.' They were showing future blessings to sinners after torment, and that these things were like wonders and miracles that have come from the Lord. Where it is commanded to sinners who are about to be punished, that they should seek counsel and raise up their consolation, not in any way vain, as it is added by the Seventy, but absolutely consolation. For God would never command them to raise up their vain consolation, which would not be profitable for them.

29:1-8

(Chapter 19, verse 1, and following) Woe to Ariel, Ariel the city that David besieged. Year after year is added, the appointed feasts have come to an end. I will besiege Ariel, and she will be sad and mournful; she will be like an Ariel to me. I will encircle you like a sphere, and I will throw up a mound against you, and I will set up siege works against you. You will be brought low, and your speech will come from the ground, and your voice will be like that of a python from the earth, and your speech will mumble from the dust. And it will be like the fine dust of those who blow against you, and like the passing smoke of those who have prevailed against you. And suddenly, immediately, it will be visited by the Lord of hosts, with thunder and earthquake, and with a great voice of whirlwind and tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire. And it will be like the dream of a night vision, the multitude of all the nations that have fought against Ariel, and all who have warred against her and besieged her and prevailed against her. As a hungry person dreams and eats, and when he has awakened, his soul is empty; and as a thirsty person dreams and drinks, and when he has awakened, he is still thirsty, and his soul is empty: so will be the multitude of all the nations that have fought against Mount Zion. Woe to Ariel, Ariel, the city that David besieged! Gather together year after year, eat, for you will eat with Moab; for I will oppress Ariel, and her strength and wealth will be mine, and I will encamp around you like David, and I will send a rampart around you, and set up towers all around you, and your words will be humbled on the ground, and your words will be brought down to the ground. And your voice will be like that of those who speak from the earth, and your voice will weaken to the ground. And the wealth of the wicked will be like dust from a wheel, and like ashes that are carried away, the multitude of those who oppressed you; it will be sudden from the Lord of hosts. For there will be a visitation with thunder, and a great shaking, a powerful storm, and a devouring flame of fire. And they will be like a dreamer at night, the wealth of all the nations that have fought against Ariel, and all who have fought against Jerusalem and gathered against it, and afflicted it. And they shall be like those who hunger and eat in dreams: when they wake up, their dream is in vain, and like one who thirsts and drinks in a dream, when he wakes up, he will still be thirsty, and his soul will have hoped in vain. So shall be the riches of all the nations that have fought against Mount Zion. Because we have interpreted, Woe, in Hebrew it is written Oi (ׁ), which is sometimes used in the vocative case, so that Ariel may not mourn, but call out; although in the current context it should be understood as mourning. Ariel is also interpreted as the lion of God; and for the city which Aquila interpreted, πολὺ χνην, that is, a small town or village, is read in Hebrew as Cariath, which properly means a village, and in Syriac it is called Cartha, hence it is also called a village of forests Cariath Jarim. Finally, in the earlier passage (Isaiah 1:21) where we read: How has the faithful city Zion become a prostitute? for city, Cariath is written, that is, a village: which we can express as a translation of Aquila literally, as a little city. Therefore, Ariel, which means the lion of God, was once called the

strongest Jerusalem: or, as others believe, the temple and altar of God that was in Jerusalem. And what follows: Which David conquered, as Symmachus interpreted it, the stronghold of David, and Theodotion, the encampment of David, is read in Hebrew as Hana, which the most learned Hebrews wanted to signify as dwelling place. So if we read: which David conquered, let us refer to that time when David captured the fortress of Zion, while the blind and lame resisted, and Joab, the first, ascended the heights. But according to Symmachus and Theodotion, it should be understood that David restored and fortified it, and a year was added to the year, or subtracted, as Aquila interpreted; and the festivals have passed. For when the temple was destroyed and the Jewish religion abolished, all their festivities perished. And the Lord says that He will encamp around Ariel with the army of Babylon, and it will be sad and mournful when it is destroyed by them. And again under Jesus, the son of Josedech, the high priest, and Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel, were Ezra and Nehemiah, when Haggai and Zechariah prophesied that it would be like Ariel, having the appearance of the ancient temple, but without its magnificence and adornment. Moreover, the Lord threatens that He will surround Ariel with a sphere, and cast a rampart against it, and set up fortifications for its siege, and fulfill what He Himself laments concerning Jerusalem in the Gospel: 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground' (Luke 19:42-44). And Jerusalem will be trampled by the nations until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled. In other words, the same prophet now says that she who was humiliated will speak from the earth, and her voice will be heard from the dust. Her voice will be like that of a python from the earth, and it will murmur like sparrows, so that through these words he may signify the necromancy of the magi, by which they are said to summon souls and hear the voices of thin shades, or rather, of demons. Finally, regarding the python, Aquila interpreted the great one, which is called in Hebrew Cheb (), which the 70 interpreters translated as speaking of the earth. With these words, it is indicated that the ruin of the temple will last until the end of the world, collapsed into ashes and never to be raised again. And so, O Ariel, the army of Roman power will surround you, and they will be compared to an innumerable dust that flies through the air. Therefore, it is not the weakness of their opponents that the dust and ashes are compared to, but the multitude that is equal to countless grains of sand. And this will happen suddenly and quickly, so that in the midst of peace, wars will rise up under Nero, and the Lord of hosts will visit Jerusalem with thunder and earthquake, and whirlwind and devouring fire, which signifies the burning of the temple. But the Romans, after the Jews were defeated and Jerusalem was destroyed under Titus and Vespasian, offered the plundered vessels of God to the Capitol; and they thought that their own power and the favor of the gods, rather than the anger of God, was the reason for what they had done, as if in a dream and in a nightly vision, they will possess all riches. And just as someone who is hungry thinks in their dreams that they are eating, and someone who is thirsty drinks from dry throats, and when they wake up their thirst becomes even stronger, deceived by the empty drink: so the multitude of all nations, who fought against the power of Rome and subjugated to it, will have wealth like a shadow, and a cloud, and a dream of the night, which they will leave behind with their untimely destruction. In the place where we have been placed, all who have waged war and besieged and prevailed against it have been translated to seventy, and all who have fought against Jerusalem, which is not found in Hebrew. In this beginning of the chapter, where we said, 'A year is added to a year, or subtracted,' they are

interpreted as 'gather the fruits or produce, year upon year;' 'eat, for you will eat with Moab.' And the meaning is, before the acceptable year of the Lord's preaching comes, indeed two years, of which we read in the Song of Habakkuk according to the Hebrew: 'In the midst of two times you will be known' (Habakkuk 3), 'sow for yourselves in tears so that you may reap in joy' (Psalm 126). It is written in the Gospel according to John that the Lord came to Jerusalem three times during the Passover, which makes two years (John 2:13). However, what follows, 'For you shall eat with Moab,' is not found in Hebrew. We can say that unless the fruits of repentance are gathered for themselves, they will begin to eat with those who do not enter the Church of the Lord forever. The other things in which they seem to disagree are obvious, and from what we have explained, their interpretation is easy. I know that I have read Ariel's interpretation, my light is God's, which is far different. Here the first syllable is written with Aleph and Res: lux autem quae Hebraice dicitur Or, inter Aleph et Res mediam habet litteram Vau, quae in praesenti nomine non habetur. And everything that is now said against Ariel refers to heretics, who consider their doctrine to be the light of God, and they must be fought by the true David: all their solemnities must be taken away, and present joy must be turned into future sorrow: to whom God commands to repent, lest they begin to eat with the Moabites, and be similar to the Gentiles. For he will attack Ariel himself, and he will surround all their power and wealth with his army. And with the towers, that is, the leaders of the Church, he will humble their words on the earth, so that they may not raise their mouth to heaven, but be written on the earth, speak of the earth, and be like dust scattered by the wind. And all the wealth of the wicked will appear in an instant, when he visits them in his majesty, descending in a whirlwind, storm, and fire of punishment; and they will understand that all their wealth, the pomp of their words, and the arguments of their verses, are compared in vain to a dream of someone eating and drinking: those who fight against Jerusalem, the vision of peace; or against Ariel, the strongest lion, and ultimately against Mount Zion, where the city of the Church cannot be hidden.

29:9-12

(Verse 9 and following) Be astonished and amazed: fluctuate and waver, become drunk, not with wine, be moved, not with intoxication. For the Lord has mixed into you the spirit of deep sleep: he will close your eyes, your prophets and leaders who see visions he will cover. And the vision of all will be like the words of a sealed book, which when they give to one who knows letters, they will say: read this, and he will answer, I cannot, for it is sealed. And a book will be given to one who knows not letters, and it shall be said to him, read; and he shall answer, I know not letters. For the spirit of sleep, LXX, is interpreted as compunction: Theodotius, the passing away of the mind: Aquila, καταφορ■ν, that is, a heavy sleep; which in Hebrew is called Thardema (), which Scripture commemorates as sent by God to Adam (Gen. II), when woman was made from the rib of his side. And Jonah snored in the same sleep on the ship (Jon. I). But all prophecy after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, that is, Ariel, is against the scribes and Pharisees, who, possessing the key of knowledge, do not enter themselves, nor do they allow others to enter. And it is commanded to them, that they should be amazed and astonished, rather according to the septuagint dissolution of the whole body and the excess of the mind, and that they should be moved and fluctuate: staggering not from wine or from strong drink, but from the spirit of sleep or of the Lord's compunction, so that understanding their evil, they may at some point repent, and say with the prophet: I am troubled in my weakness, while the thorn is being fastened to me (Ps.

XXXI, 4). Therefore, know this, O scribes and Pharisees, who are the leaders of the Jews, that the Lord will render to you your recompense. For you, who have heard the Lord Savior, did not want to understand, and you closed your eyes so that you would not see him, and you weighed down your ears so that you would not hear. Therefore, he will also close your eyes, you who are the prophets through whom you saw the knowledge of God. Or he will close the eyes of your prophets, who are your leaders. For as the Law and the Prophets testified until John, so that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind, as it is written: They will hear the words of the book, even the deaf will hear, and the blind will see and rejoice. For judgment I have come into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind, that is to say, the people of the nations who were blind, may see and contemplate the Lord. Therefore, it is significant that he did not say that the vision of all the prophets is sealed to all readers, but to you he says, it will be sealed to those to whom I am now speaking, to whom I am foretelling these things that are to come: or He will forever shut the eyes of your leaders, who boasted of being able to see the hidden and secret things according to the Septuagint. And he said to them, 'All the holy Scripture will be closed and sealed to you, so that you, who consider yourselves knowledgeable in the letters of the Law and the prophecies of the prophets, and who constantly meditate on the volumes of Scripture day and night with tireless mouths, may not understand what you read, as it is written in the Book of Revelation of John: 'Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?' (Rev. 5:2) And when no one was found worthy to open the seals, he says that he wept; and that he deserved to hear the word of God: 'Do not weep; behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered, so that he may open the book and break its seals.' But the lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lord Jesus Christ, is he who unseals the seals of the book, not properly of one, as many suppose, of the Psalms of David, but of all the Scriptures, which are one Scripture of the Holy Spirit; and for that reason they are called one book. Concerning which Ezekiel testifies in mystical discourse (Ezek. II), that it was written within and without; in meaning and in letter. Concerning which also the Savior speaks in the Psalms: In the chapter of the book it is written of me (Ps. XXXIX, 9); not of Jeremiah, not of Isaiah, but in all the holy Scripture, which is called one book. Therefore, the Jewish leaders, up to the present day, being unable to read and open the seals, and to reveal the mysteries of the Scriptures, if you were to give them a book to the unlearned people who are devoured by their own teachers, they would admit to not knowing letters and therefore being unable to read. And out of the two evils, it is much lighter to confess ignorance of the law than to boast of prudence and not be able to understand what is said.

29:13-14

(Verse 13, 14) And the Lord said: Because this people draw near with their mouth, and with their lips glorify me, but their heart is far from me, and they fear me by the commandment of men, and teach me the precepts and doctrines of men. Therefore, behold, I will add to do wonders and great marvels among this people: for wisdom shall perish from their wise men, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden. LXX: And the Lord said: This people draw near to me with their mouth, and with their lips honor me; but their heart is far from me: in vain do they worship me, teaching the commandments and doctrines of men. Therefore, behold, I will add to transfer this people: for I will transfer them and destroy the wisdom of the wise, and hide the understanding of the prudent. This testimony was used by the Lord against the Pharisees in the Gospel of Matthew, saying: Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition (Matt.

15:3)? And again: Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men (Matthew, 15:9). In this we must note what we have often mentioned before, that the Evangelists and Apostles did not translate word for word; nor did they follow the authority of the Seventy Interpreters, whose edition was read at that time; but they used their own words, as if they were Hebrew and instructed in the Law, without compromising the meaning. However, the people of the Jews draw near to God with their mouth and with their lips, because they boast of having the worship of one God and rejecting idols; but their heart is far from Him, because they do not receive the Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever does not receive the Son, does not receive the Father. And let us learn together how someone approaches God, or how they become distant from Him. For it is written through Jeremiah: 'I am a close God, and not far away,' says the Lord (Jer. XXIII, 23, according to the Septuagint). But we approach God in mind, not in body; just as we read about Moses: 'Moses alone approached God, but the others did not approach' (Exod. XXIV, 2). For he was praying to God in spirit and truth, and he approached him with his mind and spirit. But those about whom it is written that they are taken from the womb and educated from infancy to old age; and in the Law of God they meditate day and night, they do not come near to God, because they accept the traditions of the Pharisees and Scribes, which keep them far from God, and they are whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead bones: those who chose Barabbas and rejected the Lord (Matthew 23:27): Therefore, he threatens to add to it, according to the Septuagint, that he will not transfer them to the Assyrians and Babylonians, but disperse them throughout the whole world. According to the Hebrew, he says that he will perform a great astonishment and a marvelous miracle to the Jewish people; so that he may destroy the wisdom of those who do not receive the power of God and the wisdom of God, and may hide and conceal the understanding of the wise, so that they may not find him who is contained in the scripture. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, gave testimony of this: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the prudent I will reject' (1 Cor. 1:19); in other words, he explained the same meaning: not that God, whose father is he, the enemy of wisdom, and through whom all wisdom is in mankind; but with an addition, as it is in Hebrew, he mentioned the wisdom of the people and the wise of that people, that is, the Jewish people. And truly God performed a great miracle in the people after the coming of the Lord Savior, so that at the same time Jerusalem burned, the temple collapsed, and all the knowledge of the teachers was taken away; this being fulfilled what was said above: (Chapter 3, 1 seq.): Behold, the Lord God of hosts will take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the strong and the strong: all the strength of bread, and all the power of water; the giant and the warrior, and the judge, and the prophet, and the diviner, and the elder, and the fifty-year-old, and the admirable counselor, and the wise architect, and the prudent hearer, and the rest, which the prophetic speech has woven.

29:15-16

(Vers. 15, 16.) Woe to those who are deep in heart, who hide their counsel from the Lord. Their works are in darkness, and they say: Who sees us, and who knows us? Your thoughts are perverse, as if clay should think against the potter, and the work should say to its maker: You did not make me; and the thing formed should say to its former: You do not understand. LXX: Woe to those who make deep counsel, and their works are in darkness, and they say: Who sees us? Who will know us and what we do? Will we not be regarded as clay in the potter's hands? Will the work

say to the one who made it, 'You did not make me wisely,' or the creation to its creator, 'You did not make me?' Against those of whom he spoke before, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and reject the intelligence of the intelligent. As the prophet writes, I will hide it away. Now even the word of God is directed towards those who are wise in themselves and prudent in his sight. From these things it can be very well understood: 'They have failed examining with examination' (Psalm 63); since it is written about the wisdom of God: 'For if someone is perfect in the sons of men without your wisdom, he will be considered as nothing' (Wisdom 3). Those who believe that God is unaware of their plans because their works are in darkness, say: 'Who sees us? And who knows us?' But this is also said by the wise of this world, and by the masters of heretics, and by the Pharisees of the Jews, because no one understands them; not remembering what is said to God: 'Darkness will not obscure you, and the night will be illuminated like day' (Psalm 138, 12). And as his darkness, so also his light (Genesis 3). Deceived by this error, Adam and Eve, upon hearing the sound of footsteps walking in the paradise of God, hid themselves under the tree in which was the knowledge of good and evil; and Cain also, saying: If you cast me out today from your presence, I will hide (Genesis 4, 14), thought foolishly that God was ignorant. And through Amos, it is said of the wicked and sinners: If they hide themselves from my eyes in the depths of the sea: there I will command the serpent and it will bite them (Amos 9, 3). Even if someone is wise and of fervent genius, if they do not have God's wisdom and teaching, let us say of them: Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord guards the city, the one who guards it stays awake in vain (Psalm 127:1-2). Let us make ourselves similar: Unless the Lord assists knowledge, the one who thinks themselves wise labors in vain. Unless the Lord keeps our hearts in every watch, the one who thinks it can be kept by their diligence stays awake in vain. He says, 'Your thinking is perverse, to think that the Creator does not know what He has made, and that the Creator is ignorant of His creation, as if clay were to say to the potter and to its maker, 'You did not make me,' or 'You did not make me well,' and you do not understand your own creation.' The Apostle also uses this testimony in other words to refute the slander of humans and to discuss the deep knowledge of God with the Romans: 'O man, who are you to answer back to God?' Does the thing formed say to its creator, 'Why have you made me like this?' Does not the potter have power over the clay, to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? (Romans 9:20-21). In all these things, the following rule is always to be observed: that the Evangelists and Apostles may without harm to the sense be translated into Greek from Hebrew, as it seems best to them.

29:17-21

(Verse 17 and following) Will not Lebanon soon become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be regarded as a forest? On that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see. The meek will obtain fresh joy in the Lord, and the neediest people will exult in the Holy One of Israel. For the tyrant shall be no more, and the scoffer shall cease to be; all those alert to do evil shall be cut off. Why do people sin in words and overthrow the one who argues at the gate? And they turned away in vain from the just. Let the Jews and friends of simple history answer, those who seek fruit not on the tree, but only leaves and the shadow of words, which quickly wither and perish. How is it that in the coming of the Lord Savior (because from the time of Isaiah until the incarnation of the flesh, for the comparison of eternity, it is a short and small span of time) the mountain of Lebanon turned towards Phoenicia and moved

to Mount Carmel? It is called in Hebrew Chermel, and it is near the border of Palestine and Phoenicia, overlooking Ptolemais: although another mountain in the holy scriptures is called Mount Carmel, where there was Nabal the Carmelite (1 Samuel 25), a foolish and wicked man, who had a wife named Abigail, who married David after her husband died; while her husband was alive, she could not marry David, so as not to be called an adulteress if she were associated with another man; and how is Carmel considered a desirable place and unfruitful trees? But since they are unable to express it, let them listen to Libanus, which means "whiteness", referring to the people of the Gentiles who, having been washed in the Lord and cleansed of their former filth, ascend as a whole world. They rely on the person of the Church as the bride of the Savior, and it is said about them in the Song of Songs: Who is this who comes up, shining white, leaning on her beloved? (Cant. VIII. 5) And let this people be transferred to Carmel, which means the knowledge of circumcision, so that they may recognize the mysteries of spiritual and true circumcision, and be in the place of the former people of the Jews. As for those who refuse to accept Christ, let them be considered as thorns and barren trees, which cannot praise the Lord with fruitful trees. But when Lebanon is changed into Carmel, and Carmel into a forest, then those who were deaf and could not hear the words of the prophetic book (of which we have spoken before, that all Holy Scripture is called one book, as Ecclesiastes says: 'The sayings of the wise are like goads, and like nails fixed deep in, given by one Shepherd') will hear and speak, to whom the Savior will say: Ephphatha (which means, 'Be opened') (Mark 7). And that which we translate, the eyes of the blind shall see darkness and mist, the interpretation of which is easy; Aquila and Theodotion and Symmachus translated: The eyes of the blind shall see darkness and mist: to show the sacraments of Christ to the people of the nations, who were previously blind, according to what is said: Dark water in the clouds of the sky (Ps. 17, 12). And in the same psalm it is written about God: He set darkness as his hiding place (Ibid. 12). And in Proverbs we read: This wise person will be wiser by hearing these things and will have possession of prudent governance and will understand parables and dark sayings spoken by the wise and enigmas (Prov. I, 5, 6). Moreover, Moses, in order to understand and see God (Exod. XX), entered into a cloud and darkness, of which it is said in the Psalm: Darkness is under his feet (Ps. XVII, 10). But when the blind or those who are initiated into mystical matters have first beheld these things or have lifted up their eyes from blindness and darkness to see, so that true light may arise for those sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, then the meek, of whom it is written: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matt. V, 4), whether they be the poor, of whom the leader says in the Psalms: This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him (Ps. XXXIII, 7); and he who judges the poor people and will save the children of the poor (Ps. XIII, 9), of whom it is said to the Jews: You have despised the counsel of the poor, they shall add joy in the Lord, so that he who glories, may glory in the Lord (II Cor. X); and poor men or those in despair and contempt by men, who did not have knowledge of the law before, will exult in the Holy One of Israel, who says: Be holy, for I am holy (Lev. XI, 44). And there is rejoicing for every downfall: for he who prevailed has fallen. The deceiver, or the arrogant and proud one, is brought to an end, who said: With my strength I will do it, and with my wisdom I will remove the boundaries of nations and destroy their strength; who deceived everyone to such an extent that even the holy one said: My loins are filled with deceits (Psalm 38:8). And all those who kept watch over wickedness have been cut off or destroyed, for their wicked vigilance does not cease: they caused the whole human race to sin by blaspheming the Word of God and placing their mouths in heaven. But the demons, themselves wicked, made

all men sin in speech, blaspheming with various teachings, and they would overthrow the one reproaching in the gate and in judgment as much as they could, and they made him turn away from righteousness, who was in the gates of the daughter of Zion, exalted from the gates of death; and he rebuked those who hated him in the gates. These things we understand concerning the devil and his angels, the Nazarenes consider them to be spoken against the scribes and Pharisees, because they failed in their second attempt, who before mocked the people with their wicked traditions; and they watched day and night to deceive the simple, who made men sin against the Word of God, to deny Christ the Son of God.

29:22-24

(Verses 22 onwards) Therefore, the Lord says to the house of Jacob, who redeemed Abraham: Jacob will not only be ashamed, but his face will also turn red. But when he sees his children, the works of my hands, in their midst sanctifying my name, they will sanctify the Holy Jacob, and they will proclaim the God of Israel. And those who wander in spirit will gain understanding, and murmurers will learn the Law. (LXX: Therefore, the Lord says about the house of Jacob, whom he overcame from Abraham: Jacob will not only be ashamed, but his face will not change now; but when he sees his children, my works, they will sanctify my name because of me, and they will sanctify the Holy Jacob, and they will fear the God of Israel, and those who wander in spirit will gain understanding, and murmurers will learn obedience, and what follows ÷ and those with stammering tongues will learn to speak peace. ** Note: marked with an obelus.) When the deaf hear, says he, the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind see: the Lebanon has been turned into Charnel, and Charnel is regarded as a forest, so that the meek and the poor rejoice in the Lord, and the proud and the scoffers are overcome: then Jacob, who now is not yet ashamed, will be put to shame. But this refers to the times of Isaiah. And his face will blush, so that blushing and confusion may be the occasion of salvation, especially when he sees his sons, that is, the Apostles and apostolic men, who were from the race of the Jews, performing miracles in the midst of the nations of the Lord, and preaching the name of Christ to the Gentiles, and saying: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name (Matt. 6:9). For they shall sanctify the Holy One who was born of Jacob, and they shall teach the God of Israel among the nations, so that, the idols being abandoned, they may say: how false were the idols that our fathers possessed, and there is no power in them; and then those who now wander in spirit will understand the knowledge of God, and those who once murmured against the Lord in the wilderness will learn the Law, of which they previously had no knowledge. For if they had received Moses, they would have also received the Lord Jesus Christ, because Moses spoke of him. What we have translated in the beginning of the chapter according to the Hebrew: This is what the Lord says to the house of Jacob, who once redeemed Abraham, and brought him out from the Chaldeans, and led him into the promised land (Gen. XI), is clearly evident. However, what the Seventy translated: This is what the Lord says about the house of Jacob, which he separated from Abraham, can be understood as meaning that he has separated the Scribes and Pharisees, who blasphemed the Lord, from Abraham, who saw the day of the Lord and rejoiced (John VIII). For if they were the children of Abraham, they would do the works of Abraham. And the Apostle argues that those who have the likeness of the faith of Abraham, that is, the people of the Gentiles, who are called children of Abraham not by works but by faith (Hebrews XI).

30:1-5 (Chapter 30, Verse 1 and following) Woe to the rebellious children, says the Lord, who make plans that are not from me, who weave a web without my Spirit, adding sin upon sin. You who walk to go down to Egypt, without consulting me, hoping for help from Pharaoh's strength and relying on the protection of Egypt's shadow. But Pharaoh's strength will be your shame, and the trust in Egypt's shadow will bring you disgrace. For there will be princes in Tanis, and your messengers have reached Hanes. All are confounded over a people that cannot profit them: they were not a help, but for confusion and for a reproach. Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, who have taken counsel, and not of me; and have made a league, but not by my spirit, that they might add sin to sin: Who walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt. There will be protection from Pharaoh for you, but it will lead to confusion; and those who trust in Egypt will be put to shame. For there are princes in Zoan, and their messengers are evil. They will labor in vain to help the people, for it will not benefit them. Instead, it will bring confusion and shame. After the prophecy against Ariel and everything that has been discussed up to this point, now begins another prophecy, which is proven to have been fulfilled after one hundred and fifty years between Isaiah and Jeremiah. For he predicts that story which we read in the volume of Jeremiah (Jer. XLI), when Jerusalem was overthrown and all its wealth and princes were transferred to Babylon, a leader of royal descent was appointed over those who remained in Judah, Godolias son of Ahicam. But after he was killed by trickery with the help of the Chaldean allies, all the leaders of the warriors, and Johanan son of Carai, and Jechoniah son of Hosea, and the rest of the people from small to great, approached the Prophet Jeremiah and said to him: Let our plea fall before you, and pray to the Lord your God for all these remaining ones. Because we are few out of many, as your eyes look upon us; and let the Lord your God announce to us the way by which we must go, and the word that we must do (Jeremiah 42:2, 3). And after ten days Jeremiah responded to the word of the Lord, saying: Thus says the Lord God of Israel: If you remain quiet in this land, I will build you up and not tear you down, I will plant you and not uproot you, for I am appeased by the evil that I have done to you. Do not be afraid of the face of the king of Babylon, whom you fear in your cowardice (Ibid., X, 11). And after a little while: But if you say, 'We will not dwell in this land,' and you set your face to go to Egypt and go to live there, the sword that you fear will overtake you there, and the famine about which you are anxious will cling to you in Egypt, and there you shall die (Ibid., XLII, 13, 15, 16). The proud men answered, saying to Jeremiah: You speak lies: the Lord our God did not send you, saying: Do not go to Egypt, to live there; but Baruch the son of Neriah incites you against us, to deliver us into the hands of the Chaldeans, to kill us and make us be carried away to Babylon (Jeremiah 43:2, 3). In the end, all the leaders of the people, gathering together with the women and the little ones and the daughters of the king, not heeding the voice of the Lord, entered Egypt, taking Jeremiah and Baruch with them, and they came to Tahpanhes, so that Jeremiah prophesied as a sign of the future captivity against the disobedient people, the things contained in his book. Therefore, what was going to happen afterwards, many years before, was predicted, and they are called deserters and betrayers, the sons who, abandoning God's counsel that they had received through Jeremiah, followed their own will, and they wove a web, not by the spirit of God, which resounded through Jeremiah's mouth. But he metaphorically placed the woven web, in order to demonstrate the wicked counsel, and they did this in order to increase their past sins with the sin of contention and pride. He said, 'You who go down to Egypt, and have not asked my advice. Not that they have not asked, but that they

have not wanted to listen to the counsel of the Prophet, hoping for assistance in the strength of Pharaoh, and having confidence in the protection, or shadow, of Egypt. Regarding the strength of Pharaoh, which is mentioned twice in this passage, it is written as 'Maoz' in Hebrew. We make this note so that when we read in the book of Daniel (Dan. II) about the vision of God as 'Maozim', we understand it to mean not as Porphyry imagines, the God of the village of Modim, but rather a mighty and powerful God. But Pharaoh among the Egyptians is the name of royal power; and each one is called by a special name, like Pharaoh Nechao, and Pharaoh Vafres (or Vafre): just as we use the proper names of kings for Caesar and Augustus. And it shall be, he says, that the strength of Pharaoh will be to you for confusion, and the confidence in the shadow of Egypt for shame. The same Jeremiah writes that in the city of Taphnis in Egypt he buried stones in the gateway of Pharaoh's house, and said to the men of Judah: Thus says the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will set his throne upon these stones which I have hidden, and he shall set his throne upon them. And it shall happen, as he strikes the land of Egypt, those destined for death, to death; those destined for captivity, to captivity; and those destined for the sword, to the sword. And he shall kindle a fire in the temples of the gods of Egypt, and he shall burn them, and he shall lead captives away. And the land of Egypt shall be made desolate, as a shepherd wraps himself in his cloak and departs from there in peace. And what follows: Your princes will be in Tanis, and your messengers have reached Hanes, to be read with mockery and emphasis, because they have rejected God's counsel and sent their princes to the city of Tanis in Egypt, where the royal house of Pharaoh was, and under Moses many signs and wonders were performed, as the Psalmist says: He did miracles in the land of Egypt, in the field of Tanis (Ps. LXXVII, 43). And the same Isaiah speaks against Egypt: Where are your wise men now? They will announce to you and say what the Lord of hosts has planned against Egypt. The princes of Tanis have failed, as Isaiah mentions that they failed at that time when the Lord entered Egypt on a light cloud. However, we do not read about the city of Hanes in any other place in Egypt, but from what is said: Your messengers have reached Hanes, we understand that it is the farthest city in Egypt near the Ethiopians and Blemmyas (also known as Blembas), for which the Septuagint translates as: The worst messengers will labor in vain, those who trusted in the Egyptian people, who could not help them, and became an eternal disgrace. Some people think that this place, contrary to the ten tribes in Samaria, was written because when they asked for help from the Egyptians, they were captured by the Assyrians. According to tropology: All those who, despising the religion of God, return to their own vomit, and with the name of children lost, are called shameless dogs, they make a plan, not through the Lord, and they make a pact, not through the spirit of the Lord, and they add sins to sins: so that, being overcome by enticing vices, they also receive the corruption of dogmas, and they descend into the darkness of Egypt, seeking help from Pharaoh, who reigns in Egypt, whose protection leads to everlasting disgrace and reproach. For indeed there are in Tanis, to be sure in a humble and dejected command, its worst messengers, who labor in vain over a people who cannot benefit them. For just as the salvation of the disciples helps the holy teachers, so the perdition of the seduced ones destroys their patriarchs who have turned to the aid of Egypt. The burden of the beasts of the south. In Hebrew it is called Massa Beemoth (Al. Behemoth) of the Negeb, which the Septuagint translated as 'The Vision of the Quadrupeds in the Desert'. The superior explanation, which we have extensively explained through the replication of the historical text, is the interpretation of this place, according to the prophetic custom, that the burden, that is, the weight

and burden of torment and punishment, not only came upon Babylon and the Philistines, and Moab, and Damascus, and Egypt, and the desert sea, but also upon Edom and Arabia, and the valley of Zion, and finally Tyre; but it also came upon the beasts of the south, which the Septuagint translated as quadrupeds in the desert. But the tribe of Judah, which is situated in the southern part, is bordering the wilderness; and those who rejected Jeremiah's prophecy, upon the capture of Jerusalem, refused to dwell in Judah; but they fled to the Egyptians through the desert. And rightly are they called the beasts of the South, or the quadrupeds in the wilderness, because they rejected the knowledge of God, and despising His command, fled to the idols of Egypt, having hope in Pharaoh, to whom whoever leans on, is like one leaning on a reed, which, if broken, will wound the hand of the one leaning on it. Concerning these kinds of animals, the sons of Korah spoke in the psalm: When a man is in honor, he does not understand; he is compared to the foolish animals and becomes like them (Ps. 49:13). And what follows: This is their way; their folly leads them astray, which can rightly be understood in relation to the present chapter, that their way through the desert led to their ruin. I have read, I know, that the animals of the south and the quadrupeds in the desert, who left the borders of Judah and fled into the darkness of Egypt, are referring to the spiritual wickedness in heavenly places; and the rulers of these darknesses, who lost all the wealth and former riches of Egypt in their desire. He said this. We say, according to tropology, that all those who, having abandoned the Creator, have given themselves to the errors of the world, are like quadrupeds in the desert of this age, from which they hope in vain for help, since they have abandoned the true help of God.

30:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) In the land of trouble and distress there will be a lioness and a lion: there will also be venomous snakes and flying serpents. They will carry their riches on the backs of donkeys and their treasures on the humps of camels to a people who cannot help them. Egypt will be useless and in vain for assistance. LXX: In trouble and distress there will be a lion and a lion's cub: then there will be asps and flying snake offspring. They will carry their riches on donkeys and camels to a nation that will not help them. The Egyptians will be empty and useless for your benefit. For the lion, in Hebrew it is written Leis (לֵאִישׁ) (also Lehis), and for the flying ruler, which the Seventy translated as flying asps, in Hebrew it is called מִן־מְרִיחַ־אֵשׁ and flying, which we can call the burner, and in Hebrew it is called Saraph (סָרַפ). Again, in that place where we have translated, carrying on the shoulders of the beasts, they have uniformly translated all the animals as foals, that is, the young of donkeys. But the land of tribulation and anguish signifies the very wide desert, through which the remnants of Jerusalem, along with John the son of Careah and the daughters of King Zedekiah, having taken away all they could have, fled to Egypt. Likewise, understand metaphorically the lioness and the lion cub as Jerusalem and its people, as Balaam says in Numbers: Behold the people shall rise up as a lioness, and shall lift itself up as a lion; it shall not rest until it devour the prey, and drink the blood of the slain (Num. XXIII, 24). In Ezekiel it is also written: Take up a lamentation for the prince of Israel, and say: Why has your mother the lioness lain down among lions, and reared her whelps in the midst of young lions? (Ezek. 19:1-2). And lest we think that Holy Scripture truly speaks of the lioness and the lion contrary to the nature of things, that a viper and a flying basilisk should be born of a lioness and a lion, that is, that worse offspring should be generated from evil parents, of whom the Gospel also spoke: Brood of vipers, who has shown you to flee from the wrath to come? (Matt. 3:7). And to the land of Israel it is said: You are a

land where it does not rain, nor does the rain come upon you in the day of anger, whose rulers are in its midst, like roaring lions, seizing prey, devouring souls by their power (Above, V). These offspring of vipers, or flying asps, that is, the rulers of the people and the whole crowd of the wicked, went to the people who could not help them, as Jeremiah says (Jer. LVI), that the Lord delivered Pharaoh, the crafty king of Egypt, into the hands of his enemies, and into the hands of those seeking his life, and all the men of Judah, who were in the land of Egypt, were consumed by sword and famine, to the point that the Hebrews delivered Jeremiah and Baruch, before Nebuchadnezzar captured Egypt, from the imminent captivity, avoiding death. A certain lioness and her lion cub, a celestial lion, were deceived by Jerusalem and exposed the people. And a flying king, and vipers, and offspring of asps, of whom we read above (Above. XIV and XXVII), a twisted serpent, and of whom the Savior spoke in the Gospel: I saw Satan, like lightning falling from heaven (Luke X, 19): who is called the dragon in the Apocalypse (Rev. XII), he drew with him a third part of the stars to the earth, who, by the perversity of their judgement, lost their former riches, abandoning them to the Egypt of this age.

Therefore I cried out concerning this: it is only pride: be silent. For this reason, I do not know what the Seventy Interpreters intended: Proclaim these things, because your consolation is in vain. Furthermore, Symmachus interpreted it as 'turbulence is to dwell', that is, they are tumultuous in their habitation. The Hebrew word Reeb, or Reheb according to some, is translated by Aquila as 'impetus and pride', by Symmachus as 'disturbance', by the LXX as 'vanity', and by Theodotion as 'latitudinarianism'; which is written with three letters, Res (ר), He (ה), and Beth (ב), and it is the same as what is read in the Psalms: 'I will be mindful of Rahab and Babylon, those who know me' (Ps. XXVI, 3). And the meaning is: Since the Egyptians offer empty help, I commanded him, that is, Jerusalem, or I exclaimed, that the Egyptians only have the name of a kingdom, and without power they boast; and Israel should sit or dwell in their own land, and not seek help in vain from the weak.

30:8

(Verse 8.) Now, write for them on a tablet. Carefully inscribe it in the book: and it shall be a testimony until the last day. The Hebrews say that in the Prophets there is one spirit, and all times are connected before the Lord. Jeremiah commands, and it is God's command, that he writes on a tablet when entering Egypt, which is made of imperishable wood. Or, as Symmachus translates, on a wide board. But to the Jews, without a doubt: and he had explained it carefully in the book, so that there is no difficulty in reading it, so that when the prophecy is fulfilled, they will then understand that the speech of the prophets was true. We will quickly run through the obvious points, so that we can dwell on the more obscure ones.

30:9-11

(v. 9 et seq.) For the people provoke to anger, and the sons are liars, sons unwilling to listen to the law of God. They say to the seers, "Do not see"; and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is right; speak to us pleasant words; see us errors. Depart from me the way; turn aside from me the path; let the Holy One of Israel cease from before us." It is clear that they have provoked the Lord to anger, not wanting to hear the words of Jeremiah (Jer. 43). And they said to Him, 'Do not show us what we do not want to see; do not forbid us from the way of Egypt, nor tell us what is right; but speak what pleases us, so that we may go to Egypt and accumulate sins upon sins. Why

do you impose on us what we do not willingly hear? Why do you show us the way which we do not want to enter? Why do you repeatedly proclaim to our ears, 'Thus says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel'? Let this preaching cease from us.' According to allegory, all heretics are called lying sons. For they went out from us, but they were not of us (1 John 2); they do not listen with the ears of the inner man to the Law of God, and they speak to the teachers of the Churches: Do not show us what is right, nor threaten us with the flames of hell; but promise us the kingdom of heaven, so that after indulgence and pleasures, paradise may be opened to us. Why do you show me the way of the Lord, which I do not willingly enter? What does the title Holy Israel or the word 'Israelis' mean, which does not penetrate the secrets of my heart? Indeed, it is also said to the negligent people of the Church if they turn away from the severity of the teachers and favor flatterers.

30:12-14

(vv. 12-14) Therefore thus says the Holy Lord of Israel: Because you have rejected this word and have put your trust in oppression and in deceit, and have relied on it, therefore this iniquity shall be for you like a breach in a high wall that is sought after and cannot be found, like a jar of clay that is broken beyond repair, so that no fragment of it is found for taking fire from the hearth or for drawing water from the cistern. For, as you have said above, 'Let the Holy One of Israel cease from our presence,' or as the Seventy translated it, 'Take away from us the word Israel'; therefore, thus says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and to those who are unwilling to listen, He approaches, so that you may feel the punishment of the one whom you have neglected, warning you. You have put your trust in the deceit and lies of the Egyptians, and you have relied on their tumult, their contradiction and pride, as Symmachus and Theodotion have interpreted, therefore this injustice or sin will turn against you, so that you may be like a suddenly falling wall of a strong and captured city, whose ruin will come suddenly, for thus the Seventy translated it. And the sense is similar to the Hebrew: Just as the interruption of a very high wall that has brought about a long ruin is difficult to restore and regain its former beauty, so sudden destruction will come upon you. And let me use another comparison: Just as the vessel of a potter, if it is broken by a very strong crushing, is shattered into fragments, such that only a tiny piece remains to carry a spark or a little water is drawn from a small hollow, so you, when you go to Egypt, pursued by Nebuchadnezzar, will perish completely. Heretics also rely on deceit and falsehood, and they mutter against their Creator according to the Septuagint. Therefore, their impious city will be destroyed, which Cain built, and it will face sudden destruction when it is captured by the men of the Church. It will be so completely destroyed and crushed that nothing will remain in it to reignite the extinguished fire and provide even muddy and meager water to the thirsty people.

30:15-16

(Verse 15 and following) For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: If you return and rest, you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength. But you were unwilling, and you said, 'No! We will flee upon horses'; therefore you shall flee away, and, 'We will ride upon swift steeds'; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. One thousand at the threat of one; at the threat of five you shall flee. LXX: Thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: When you turn to me and groan, then you shall be saved, and you shall know where you have been: for you trusted in idols, your strength became vain; and you were unwilling to hear, but you said, 'We will flee upon horses'; therefore you shall flee; and, 'We will ride upon swift steeds'; therefore those who pursue

you shall be swift. A thousand will flee at the threat of one, and at the threat of five, many will flee. The Holy One, whom I had kept silent about his name, is the Lord God, who speaks to you and through me and through Jeremiah (Jeremiah XII): If you repent and either abandon vices or the error of evil counsel, and remain in Judah, fearing not the attack of the Babylonians, but my commandments, you will be saved. Rest and hope in the Lord, and take hold of the strength of faith in my promises. You, who have despised the commandments of life and have said in despair, it will not be as you speak; instead, we will flee to the Egyptian horses and go swiftly to them in haste. Since you have said these things, you will indeed flee and enter Egypt with destructive haste; but the Babylonians will be faster, as they will pursue you all the way to Egypt, and such great terror and fear will hold Egypt that a thousand Egyptians will not be able to resist a single Chaldean, and the multitude of fleeing enemies, five against one, as we read in Deuteronomy: The Lord will cause you to fall before your enemies' eyes. By this passage, you will depart from them and flee through seven ways from their presence, and you will be scattered among all the kingdoms of the earth (Deut. XXVIII, 25, 32). According to the allegorical and Septuagint edition, the divine word encourages all sinners, especially heretics, to repent, so that when they have turned away from vices and have repented, they may be saved; and then they will understand where they were before, and that they had hoped in vain things. And when they are encouraged to repent, on the contrary, they trust in false teachers and in the uncertainties of the world: not wanting to hear the words of God, they long for Egyptian horses and rejoice in their swiftness, which the Lord has forbidden to be multiplied (Deuteronomy 17). Therefore, the men of the church will pursue them swiftly, and one warrior's voice, or five fighters (which we should understand to refer to the mind and the five senses), will not be able to withstand a thousand men and an undisciplined crowd fleeing.

30:17

(Verse 17.) Until you are left like a bad ship on the top of a mountain, and like a signal on a hill. Jeremiah also writes that after those who had taken refuge in Egypt had been killed by the sword and famine, few remained who returned to Judah (Jeremiah 46). And just as if a ship is broken and its structure is dissolved, only a tree, which is called a mast, remains, and is set as a signal on the top of the mountain or on a high hill, so as a sign and a trace, hardly one or two remain, to demonstrate the power of God. And then, he says, all the remnants of Judah, who are now entering the land of Egypt to dwell there, when they return to the land of Judah, will know whether my word or theirs shall be fulfilled.

30:18

(Verse 18) Therefore the Lord waits, to have mercy on you, and therefore he will be exalted in showing mercy to you, because the Lord is a God of justice: blessed are all they that wait for him. Great is the mercy of God, that he waits for our repentance, and until we turn away from our vices, he restrains his mighty hand, so as not to be forced to strike. But he shows mercy and spares, so that his mercy may be exalted, and the goodness of the Creator may be known to all. Certainly, as it is said in the Gospel (John 12:32): 'And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' Therefore, he is lifted up on the cross, so as to spare all. He himself is the God of judgment; and blessed are all who wait for the Lord, waiting for his conversion. But whose conversion it is, and what that conversion is, the following words will show.

30:19

(Verse 19) For the people of Zion will dwell in Jerusalem. The Jews refer these things to the time of Cyrus, when the people returned from Babylon to Judaea under Zerubbabel and the high priest Joshua. But we, as we have often said already, refer all the promises that surpass the mediocrity of that time to the coming of Christ, in which the once captive people, freed by the passion of the Lord, dwelled in Zion and Jerusalem, namely, in the watchtower and vision of peace, that is, in the Church. Furthermore, that which is added in the Septuagint as a word of sanctity, they said: 'For a holy people dwells in Zion' (alternative: will dwell), we can interpret it to mean that no one dwells in Zion unless they are holy and hear the Lord saying, 'Be holy, for I am holy' (Leviticus 11:44).

30:20

(Verse 20.) Crying, you will not weep in vain, showing compassion, he will have compassion on you: at the sound of your cry, as soon as he hears, he will answer you. When you return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem, you will not weep as you wept before, but your mourning will turn into joy: For blessed are those who weep, for they themselves will laugh (Luke VI, 21). And after you have called out and said to the Lord. I cried out with all my heart, hear me, O Lord (Psalm CXVIII, 145). And again: I cried out, have mercy on me, and I will keep your commandments (Psalm 85). And elsewhere: I waited for the morning and cried out (Psalm 118, 147), and your voice was so clear that it penetrated the heavens: immediately the Lord will answer you, and you will be like Moses, of whom it is written: Moses spoke, and the Lord answered him (Exodus 19, 20).

30:21

(Verse 21.) And the Lord will give you tight bread and brief water. If we refer these times to Zerubbabel, the interpretation is easy; that under him there was not perfect joy, as David says: When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, we were made like those who are comforted: so that they would receive not full and perfect consolation, but a likeness of consolation. But if we refer it to the coming of the Savior, tight bread and brief water, according to the Apostle Paul and the same prophet Isaiah, are predicted in the Gospel message, which, summarizing in one word all the tattered observances and commandments of the Law, is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. For the Lord has made his word complete and concise upon the earth (Galatians 5).

30:22

And your teacher will not fly away from you anymore, and your eyes will see your instructor, and your ears will hear the word behind you, saying: This is the way, walk in it, neither to the right nor to the left. LXX: And those who deceive you will never come near you again, for your eyes will see those who have deceived you, and your ears will hear the words behind you of those who deceive, saying: This is the way, let us walk in it, whether to the right or to the left. In this place there are many disagreements between the 70th edition and the Hebrew. Therefore, we will first discuss the edition of the Vulgate, and then we will follow the order of truth. When they understand and perceive with the eyes of their hearts the truth, and when they fully understand those who have deceived them before and discern the words of those who deceive from behind with educated ears, for they always hurry to deceive the blind part of the body, according to the psalm that we read: 'They shoot in the dark the upright in heart' (Ps. X, 2), they assume such authority for themselves that they do not want to examine the disciples with reason, whether they teach with

their right hand or their left, that is, whether they teach good or evil, but they want to follow their predecessors. Then those who previously deceived will never again be able to approach them once they realize they have been understood. Moreover, the explanation according to Hebrew is both easy and true. For when the Lord gives those who believe a narrow path and a short distance, he will never allow that person who teaches knowledge to fly away from them; but they will always see their teacher with their eyes, and they will hear the word of the one who admonishes them from behind, saying: This is the right way, walk in it, neither to the right nor to the left, according to what is read elsewhere: We will not turn to the right or the left, we will walk on the royal road (Numbers 20:17). For whatever is excessive in either direction is a fault. And concerning the right side it is said: Be not too just (Eccl. 7:17). But there is no doubt that on the left side they should be placed among the goats and the perishable.

30:23

(Verse 23.) And you shall defile the plates of your carved silver, and the garment of your molded gold, and scatter them like the impurity of a menstruating woman: go forth, you shall say to it. LXX: And you shall defile the silver and the gold idols: you shall break them and scatter them like the water of a menstruating woman, and you shall cast them away like feces. When you understand the truth, and those who deceive do not approach you, but your eyes have seen your teacher, and your ears have always heard him: This is the way, walk in it, neither to the right nor to the left; then you shall break and scatter all errors and idols, and the likenesses of truth, which the skilled tongue has composed in the splendor of eloquence, which is translated as silver, and in the reasoning of wisdom, which sounds like gold, and you shall judge them as unclean, like the most filthy blood of a menstruating woman, which the Seventy translated into other words for the water of a menstruating woman.

30:24

(Verse 24) And rain will be given to your seed wherever you sow it in the land, and the bread of the earth will be most abundant and rich. LXX: Then rain will be given to the seed of your land, and the bread of the earth will be plentiful and rich. It is written in the Book of Kings (3 Kings 18) that after the false prophets were killed by Elijah, rain was given to the land of Israel. And the bread of Elisha and later the Savior was most abundant and richest, and it had such abundance that many thousands of people were satisfied from it (4 Kings 4; John 6). And in the present place, rain will not be given to the spiritual seed, and the earth's most abundant and richest bread, unless the silver and gold idols have been broken and considered as dung. For unless vices have departed, virtues do not enter.

30:25

(Verse 25.) On that day, the lamb will graze abundantly in your possession. And your oxen and donkeys, who work the land, will eat a mixture of barley and chaff, like it has been winnowed in the threshing floor. And on that day, your horses will graze in a fertile and spacious place. Your bulls and cows, who work the land, will eat the mixture of chaff and barley in the winnowed grain. In the abundance of all things, with heavenly rain descending, and with that bread which comes down from heaven, whoever eats it will never hunger again. The lambs will graze in the most spacious place, following the lamb wherever it goes, and those who are always on the right side will also

graze. But the leaders of the herd, of whom we read: The congregation of bulls in the midst of cows of the people (Ps. LXVII, 31): and the foals of donkeys, on which the Lord sitting entered Jerusalem (Matth. XXI), who work the land, they will eat from the threshing floor in such a way that it has been winnowed, so that nothing mixed of course in their food there will be chaff, of which it is written in Jeremiah: What has chaff to do with wheat, says the Lord (Jerem. XXIII)? And those who are burned with unquenchable fire in the Gospel (Luke III). Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the animals, which are not yet full of reason and wisdom, and of which one speaks to God: I have become like a beast before you (Ps. LXXII, 23), will be fed in a rich and spacious place, which does not bring forth thorns and thistles, but flows like the land of Israel with milk and honey, and grants full freedom to those who feed on it. But the bulls and oxen that work the land, that is, the Apostles and apostolic men, of whom the apostle Paul also interprets the writing: You shall not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treads out the grain. And, is God concerned with oxen? But certainly He speaks about those who work their own land and of whom He speaks the same, we are God's agriculture, God's building. For the Father is the farmer, and Christ is the vine: they will eat chaff mixed with winnowed barley. We read that Isaac sowed barley, and because he was among foreigners, he received a hundredfold harvest of barley. And Hosea, having hired a cor and a half of barley, took to himself an adulterous woman (Hosea III). The Savior also, with five thousand men who still served the desires of the flesh and followed the Law of Moses, satisfied them with barley loaves (John VI). In another place, by breaking seven loaves of the Law and dividing them into pieces, he filled four thousand men with wheat bread, who followed the evangelical number (Matthew XV). People of this kind eat both the chaff and the grain. While in some respects they adhere to the letter, gradually they make progress through the chaff and barley, in order to pass on to the wheat.

30:25

(Verse 25.) And they shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every elevated hill, flowing streams of water on the day of the slaughter of many, when the towers fall. In this place, the Jews attribute to the power of the Roman Empire the many who were killed and the towers that collapsed, about which the Apostle also speaks (2 Thess. 7): Only he who now holds it, let him hold it until it is taken away. That is, in that time there will be such great prosperity for the people of Israel that not only valleys and plains, but all mountains and hills will be irrigated by flowing waters. But we, let us understand the mountains and hills, those who are elevated in high virtues, who hunger and thirst for justice (Matt. 5), whom the Lord challenges to drink. For whoever drinks from His waters, will not thirst forever (John 4). Hence, in the psalm we read: Bless the Lord from the fountains of Israel (Ps. 67:27). And in the Gospel it is said that anyone who drinks from the waters of Jesus, rivers of living water will flow from his womb (John 7). And he speaks to God the Holy One, saying: For with you is the fountain of life (Ps. 36:10), from which the purest river flows, of which Scripture again mentions: The rushing of a river makes glad the city of God (Ps. 45:4). And in another place: The river of God is filled with water (Ps. 65:9); namely, the one who speaks through Jeremiah: They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water (Jer. 2:13). But this will happen when they are killed or perish, many indeed are called, but few are chosen (Matt. 20:16). And when the towers fall, whether they be the powers of demons, or the proud and arrogant and great of this world; of whom it is said in the Psalms: I have seen the wicked exalted, and lifted up like the cedars of Lebanon, and I passed by, and behold, he was not, I sought him, and his place

was not found (Ps. XXXVI, 35, 36). These towers desired to build (Gen. XII), those who moved their feet from the East, whose tongues were confounded in Babylon, and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell (Luke XIII).

30:26

(Verse 26) And there will be the light of the moon, like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days, on the day when the Lord binds up the wounds of his people and heals the bruises inflicted by his blow. LXX: And the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, on the day when the Lord heals the brokenness of his people and cures the pain of your wound. I wonder how in this present place the Hebrew words Labana () and Hamma (), which Aquila translates as whiteness and heat, by which it signifies the moon and the sun above the same LXX, have been rendered as brick and wall, in that place where it is written: And the moon shall blush, and the sun shall be confounded. For as they have been interpreted, the bricks will melt and the wall will fall, and now those who follow the Hebrew have translated the moon and the sun. Hence I am suspicious that they did not err from the beginning, but gradually corrupted by the fault of the scribes. For it cannot happen that those who have interpreted the same words correctly in this place have erred in the previous ones. Therefore, on the day of the killing of many, when the arrogant and proud have fallen, and those who have put their mouth in the sky have learned that they are of the earth, there will be light of the moon, just as the light of the sun: when the Lord gives a new heaven and a new earth, and the current state of this world passes away, so that the moon and the sun may obtain the rewards of their toil and their course. For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope: Because the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain, even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen, is not hope. For what a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what the Spirit desireth; because he asketh for the saints according to God. And we know that to them that love God, all things work together unto good, to such as, according to his purpose, are called to be saints. And the sun will receive sevenfold light: just as there was light for seven days when the world was created from the beginning (although the Septuagint did not transfer seven days), when the Lord bound up the wound of his people, or healed the bruise of his people: when that which is written will be fulfilled: Sorrow and mourning and groaning will flee away (Isa. 35:10): when with the influx of the fullness of the Gentiles, all Israel will be saved; or certainly when vengeance comes upon those whose souls cry out under the altar: How long will you not avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth (Rev. 6:9)? And consider this, that it does not say, 'when he heals the brokenness of his people Israel, or Jacob;' but absolutely, 'his people,' in order to signify all who serve God. Some interpret this place and all that is contained in this chapter of promises as referring to heavenly Jerusalem, and to the return of its people, when what is written will be

fulfilled: 'Heaven and earth will pass away' (Matthew 24:35). Others interpret it as referring to the time of Elijah, and they say it is he of whom it is written above: 'Your eyes will see your teacher' and 'your ears will hear a word behind you, saying: This is the way, walk in it' (Isaiah 30:20-21). Then, according to the fables of the poets, rivers of golden milk will flow from the mountains and hills, and the purest honey will drip from the leaves of the trees. Those who receive these things will also receive a tale of a thousand years and will embrace the earthly kingdom of the Savior, misunderstanding the Apocalypse of John on the surface of the letter, weaving the sacraments of the Church into their marrow.

Book Ten Book Ten The tenth book, which we now have in our hands, will be smaller in the number of verses, but not in the magnitude of its meaning. For it follows the history of Sennacherib and Rabshacis and King Hezekiah, which cannot be joined with the preceding ones due to its enormous volume, nor can it be divided because of the continuity of the events. Therefore, as you desired, virgin of Christ Eustochium, and as it was agreed upon in general, as I have dictated before, I will dictate this and the remaining books, if Christ approves, in order to connect the prophecies to each other and not tear them apart or separate them at the end of one and the beginning of another. Furthermore, there is also the scorpion, a silent and venomous animal, which, upon hearing the response of my former commentary on the prophet Daniel, I know not what it mutters, or rather attempts to strike, in its own pure death. The dirges and mournful songs of which have not yet been revealed to me, and therefore a delayed response: rather, it is more necessary to obey you, and your holy and highly learned brother Pammachius, who compels me through his insatiable studiousness in letters, having completed Isaiah, to move on to Ezekiel, while I, worn out by both age and frailty of body, and lacking scribes who could assist me in their services, remain stuck in the same mire, and scarcely believe that I will finish even the middle part of Isaiah in this volume. But if, with you praying, I accomplish it, the remaining things, which will have their beginning from the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, must be seized.

30:27-29

(Vers. 27 seqq.) Behold, the name of the Lord comes from afar: His burning anger and heaviness to bear. His lips are filled with indignation, and his tongue is like a devouring fire. His breath is like a torrent overflowing to the middle of the neck, to destroy nations for nothing, and the bridle of error that was in the jaws of the people. It shall be a song to you, like the night of a holy solemnity, and the joy of the heart, like one who goes with a flute, to enter the mount of the Lord, to the mighty one of Israel. LXX: Behold, the name of the Lord comes after a long time: burning wrath with glory, the speech of his lips, full of anger, and the anger of fury like fire will devour, and his spirit like water in a valley, drawing will come up to the neck, and it will be divided to disturb the nations with vain error, and error will be cast aside, and it will take them in their sight. Should you always rejoice and enter into my holy things constantly, as if celebrating and rejoicing at feasts, to enter with a pipe to the mountain of the Lord to the God of Israel? Let us first speak according to the Hebrew. They depend on the preceding things which are said. The prophetic word had caught those who, despising the help of God, were fleeing to the Egyptians because of fear of the Babylonians, and it threatened that those who went down there would die. And again, after the punishments, he promises that those who wanted (or rather, didn't want) to hear him would not only dwell in Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, but also that he would promise greater blessedness to all who believe in the word of God, in the consummation of the world, when

the rivers of waters will run through all the mountains and hills, and many will be killed, and towers will fall. The moon and the sun will also receive a brighter light when the Lord binds up and heals the wounds of his people. Some may argue that these things were accomplished to an excessive degree in the times of Cyrus, who released the captivity of the people and filled the land of Judah. Therefore, because rewards have been promised to the good and obedient, now on the contrary, punishments are declared for the wicked and contemptuous, so that the Lord may fulfill his plan and come to punish sinners after a long time, and pronounce judgment upon all, and destroy the impious with the breath of his mouth, whom he calls the bridle of the peoples: not to rule over them, but to draw those subject to him to ruin. He also uses the analogy of a river overflowing and reaching up to the neck to testify that the end of all things has come. Just as the river suffocates the one it reaches up to the neck, so too the judgment of God will not allow anyone to escape unpunished. But when He loses the bridle that was on the jaws of all nations, and has brought them to nothing, then, He says, there will be a song for you, O saints, who obey my commands, like the night of a holy solemnity, when you came out of Egypt and threw off the yoke of Egyptian slavery in the solemnity of the Passover, saying at the Red Sea when Pharaoh was drowned: 'Let us sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously magnified' (Exodus 15:1). And with such great joy in your hearts that you imitate those who, carrying the first fruits to the temple and offering gifts in the presses of God, go with their pipes, demonstrating the joys of their heart through song. I have briefly explained these things according to the Hebrew language. However, it should be noted in both editions that it is not the Lord, but the name of the Lord that comes after a long time, as it is said in the Psalms: 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the Lord God, and he has shined upon us' (Ps. CXVII, 26). And he himself speaks in the Gospel: 'I have come in my Father's name, and you have not received me' (John V, 43). It is said to come after a long time, with human impatience speaking: 'How long, O Lord, will you forget me? Forever?' How long will you turn your face away from me? (Ps. XII, 1). His burning fury also comes with glory, so that the one we despise in humility, we may fear in majesty. This very thing is also written in the psalms: God will come manifestly, our God will not keep silent. Fire will burn before him, and there will be a mighty tempest around him (Ps. L, 3, 4). He himself speaks in the Gospel (Luke XII, 49): I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! Again in another psalm it is read: The voice of the Lord cutting through the flame of fire (Ps. XXVIII, 7), so that whatever is in the manner of hay, wood, and straw, the flame would consume. Hence, God is also said to be a consuming fire (Deut. IV). And it is inferred: The fury of his wrath will devour like fire, and many of our people interpret the fury of the Lord's wrath as the devil, to whom we are handed over for punishment, who, according to the book of Samuel, incited David to number the people of God (II Reg. XXIV). And the Apostle says: to deliver such a Satan to the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved (I Cor. V, 5). But this same fury, and so the fury of the Lord will do nothing by his own will, but what has been commanded to him. Hence it follows: The speech of his lips is full of wrath. His spirit also like water in a valley, drawing near even to the neck, to make punishments overflow upon sinners. He will be divided according to the quality of his merits, to destroy and trouble the nations which false error had deceived, so that they may understand themselves to be overthrown. When it is said of such people, who prevailed in the power of this world and delighted in their own error, that they will not always do this. And certain of our people think that this place and the whole content of the chapter is against heretics and all dogmas that are contrary to the truth, because when the time of judgment comes, they will not enter his holy mountain, that is, the Church of the

Lord, so that they may not gather riches under the name of religion and indulge in luxury, as if celebrating the feasts of the Lord. The Jews understand concerning the nations of Gog and Magog, which they believe will come from the North, that is, from the regions of Scythia, about which Ezekiel speaks more fully (Ezek. 19).

30:30-33

(Verse 30 and following) And the Lord will cause the glory of His voice to be heard, and He will show the terror of His arm in the threat of His fury and the devouring flame of fire. He will strike with whirlwind and hailstones. At the voice of the Lord, Assyria will tremble, struck down like a virgin, and there will be a passage firmly established by the rod: which the Lord will cause to rest upon him with timbrels and harps, and in battles He will conquer them in principal places. For Topheth has been prepared since yesterday, prepared by the king, deep and wide. Its fire is nourished, and there are many trees: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of burning sulfur, will set it ablaze. LXX: And the Lord will cause the glory of his voice to be heard, and he will show the fury of his arm with wrath and anger, and with a devouring flame of fire, he will strike vehemently, and like water and hail descending with force. For at the voice of the Lord the Assyrians will be overcome, with the blow with which he will strike them, and it will be all around him, that is, the place where he had hope of help, in which he trusted. They themselves will fight against him with tambourines and harps, in exchange. For you will be deceived before many days: is a kingdom also prepared for you? A deep valley, with wood placed, fire and the wood of many; the fury of the Lord, like a valley set on fire with sulfur. I could, in accordance with the Hebrew text, indicate to those who are reading what seems to me to be happening; but what shall I do, when some declare that I will have an incomplete work unless I also discuss the edition of the 70 interpreters? Therefore, I will follow the intended order of discussion. The voice of the Lord and his precept will become known to all, and the strength of his arm will be revealed to all when the time of retribution comes, when the flame and whirlwind, the size of hailstones, and the weight of stones will be abandoned. Indeed, in the prophecy of Ezekiel, as we have said, he writes at length about Gog and Magog (Ezek. XXXVIII, and Xxvix). At the command of his voice, Assur will tremble, struck with a rod. Every impious person, every imitator of the enemy nation: not that only the Assyrian will be struck on the day of judgment, but by the Assyrian we understand the devil. Finally, it follows: And the passage of the rod will be established, which the Lord will make to rest upon him. And this is the meaning: He will not strike him with a rod, and then lift him up again, as those who punish do; but rather, as if firmly rooted and firmly fixed, will cause him to remain in his punishments. And if it is understood in this way, where will be the repentance of the devil, especially when it is said to sinners: Go into eternal fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). With timbrels and harps, and with principal weapons, the Lord will conquer them, namely the demons and all the wicked ones, with the joy of all. For from yesterday and from past time, Topheth, that is, a broad and spacious hell, has been prepared by the Lord the King, which burns them with eternal fires. Its nourishment and fuel is fire, and many woods, that is, perpetual flame and the torments of sinners. And since, just as from a burning furnace and fire, the prophetic speech had foretold, it keeps the metaphor, so that by the breath and spirit and will of the Lord, we may know that it is set on fire, with mixed sulfur, which kindles the flames, to make the torments more fierce. Moreover, what is said in the Septuagint: 'At the voice of the Lord the Assyrians shall be overcome, when he shall strike them with the plague, and he shall be in a circle where he was

before, and the hope of help, in which he trusted: they themselves with timbrels and harps shall fight against him out of sudden change,' signifies that they rise up against the devil, who had once been subject to him, and fight against him with joy and gladness out of sudden change, while understanding their own error, they destroy him by whom they had been deceived. And it is said to him, because he deceived himself from the beginning, thinking his kingdom to be eternal, for which hell and eternal punishments are prepared.

31:1-3

(Chapter 31, verses 1 onwards) Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord. Yet he too is wise and can bring disaster; he does not take back his words. He will rise up against the wicked nation, against those who help evildoers. Egypt is a man and not a God: and their horses are flesh, not spirit: and the Lord shall lay his hand upon them that help, and the helper shall fall down, and he that is helped shall fall, and they shall all be consumed together. After the burden of the beasts of the south, and the treasures of their riches for the people of Egypt shall exhaust their aid, which shall be of no profit to them, but for a shame and a reproach. Look now towards the land of the north wherein is the king of Babylon: where is now the old king of Assyria? Where are their gods in whom they trusted? Who is the king of Hamath, and of Arphad, and of the city of Sepharvaim, of Ana, and of Ava? And as for Hamath it had the beginning from Samaria: but Samaria and Jerusalem shall receive the reward of their trusting in him. For their God is with them and they glory in their king. With their horses and chariots they shall go up, and with their horsemen and their troops they shall come down, and they shall cover the land as a sea. And they shall pass through it unharmed: and they shall fall into captivity. And they that shall be gathered together against them, shall be confounded: and all the beasts of the field, and all the fowls of the air, and the birds of the sea shall be gathered together upon them: and the Lord will for them carry on a war, and will afflict them. Their strength shall be consumed with famine: and their birds shall be devoured with a burning heat, and with most grievous destruction: because they have despised the words of the Lord, and have despised the counsel of the holy one of Israel. And this is both the present and the past, where it is prescribed that the Jews should not go down to Egypt; here, because they have despised the Lord's command, it is prophesied that they will go down, and that both Israel and the Egyptians, both the fugitives and the helpers, will be slain by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Jeremiah speaks at length about this (Jeremiah 42). Woe therefore to those who go down to Egypt and despise the Lord's command in fear of the Chaldeans, hoping in idolaters who boast of having the worship of God, and relying on the help of horses, not knowing the scripture: A deceitful horse brings salvation (Psalm 32:17); and they have confidence in chariots, horses, and riders, not remembering that song: He has cast chariots and their riders into the sea (Exodus 15:1). And they did not trust in the Holy One of Israel, who promised them help through Jeremiah for those who remained in the land of Judah. And they did not seek the Lord; not that they did not seek, but that they disregarded the words of the one they sought. And this is also said of the wicked priests: They devour my people and do not call upon the Lord (Psalm 52:5,6). But the wise one, that is, the Lord, brought evil upon them, and the worst, namely Nebuchadnezzar, or rather, he brought about evil as a consequence, not as a personal intention; and he did not take away his words that he had spoken through the prophets. How will it rise up against the tribe of Judah, the house of the

wicked, and against the help of the Egyptians, who work iniquity? For Egypt, or the Egyptians as the Septuagint translated, is a man and not God; and their horses are flesh and not spirit. Therefore, it is written in Jeremiah: Cursed is the man who puts his trust in man and has made flesh his strength, and his heart has turned away from the Lord. And he will be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes (Jeremiah 17:5-6). And in another place it is written: The salvation of man is in vain (Ps. 59:13), or, as is better understood in the Hebrew, in man. And when the Lord stretches out His hand to punish, or turns away, under the metaphor of a charioteer, and loosens the reins of the horses that are running, the Egyptian helper will fall, and the help that was given to Israel. Indeed, we can understand this about those who, in times of persecution, tribulation, and distress, do not trust in the Lord, but in the help of the Egyptians, that is, of worldly men; not knowing that Abraham was in danger in Egypt, and that the people of God served in that region of mud and bricks, which is spiritually called the iron furnace. Wherefore also in the Apocalypse of John it is read: The place in which the Lord was crucified is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt (Al. Egyptian) (Apoc. XI, 8).

31:4-5

(Verses 4, 5.) For thus says the Lord to me: Just as when a lion roars, and a lion cub over its prey, when a multitude of shepherds come against it, it will not be afraid of their voices, nor terrified by their numbers; so the Lord of hosts will come down to fight upon Mount Zion and its hill. Like birds hovering, so the Lord of hosts will protect Jerusalem, protecting and delivering, passing over and saving. In manifestis unam ponimus editionem, maxime ubi nulla diversitas sensuum est. Caesis in Aegypto Israelitis et Aegyptiis, in quorum auxilio confidebant, revertentur ((Al. revertuntur)) in Jerusalem, Cyro regnante, captivi. Et per duas similitudines, Domini, qui se fore adiutorem promiserat, fortitudo monstratur. Sicut leo et catulus leonis esuriens, si cernat ovium gregem, nulla pastorum voce terretur, et multitudinem eorum conscius virium suarum despicit: sic Dominus exercituum praeliabitur, non contra montem Sion et collem ejus, super montem Sion contra adversarios illius. Let us give another comparison: Just as birds defend their offspring by flying over their nests, and whether they see a snake or a human, the birds and others approach their chicks, forgetting their weakness, they fight with their beaks and claws, and with a chattering voice they express their anguish: so the Lord will protect Jerusalem and deliver it by passing over, and He will save it. For 'passing over' in Hebrew is 'Phase', and it is translated as 'παρβαίνων' by the interpreters, apart from the Septuagint. From which it is clear that Pascha, that is, the Lord's Passover, does not signify His passion, but His passage. Moreover, that the Lord acted as the protector in the likeness of birds over Jerusalem, He Himself testifies in the Gospel: 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you' (Matt. XXIII, 37): how often have I desired to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing? And in Deuteronomy it is said of the Lord: He spread his wings and took them, and carried them on his shoulders (Deut. XXXII, 11).

31:6-9

(Verse 6 onwards) Return, as you have deeply strayed, O children of Israel. For on that day a man will cast away the idols of his silver and the idols of his gold, which your own hands have made for yourselves to sin. And Assur will fall by the sword, not of a man; and a sword, not of a human, will devour him. He will flee not from the face of the sword, and his young men will become forced

labor. His strength will pass away in terror, and his fleeing princes will be filled with fear, says the Lord, whose fire is in Zion and whose furnace is in Jerusalem. LXX: Return, O children of Israel, as you have gone deep into sin. For on that day every man will throw away the idols of his silver and the idols of his gold that your own hands have made for your own sins. And Assyria will fall by the sword, not of a man, and a sword, not of a human, will devour him; he will flee, but not from the face of the sword; his young men will be defeated; they will be surrounded like a wall, and they will be conquered; but whoever flees will be captured. Thus says the Lord: Blessed is he who has offspring in Zion and who has a household in Jerusalem. While the Lord fights against his adversaries on Mount Zion and protects it like a rampart, O children of Israel, turn back! As Symmachus translated it: Repent, you who have strayed from the Lord due to deep counsel and sin. For if you do this, casting aside the golden and silver idols that have been a cause of sin for you, because of which your city was captured, Assyria will fall, from whose fear you now flee, not by the sword of men or the strength of an army, but by the power of God. But it signifies that an angel, by whom 185,000 Assyrians were destroyed in one night. Also, the Assyrian king himself will not flee from the sword of men, but from the wrath of God, so that his young and strong men will become tributaries to the Medes, of whom it is said above, in opposition to Babylon: Behold, I will raise up the Medes against you. And the might of Assyria will pass by with the terror of the Lord, and all its princes will tremble. For the Lord has spoken and promised, and what He has said, He has done: and He who has fire in Zion and a furnace in Jerusalem, so that He may consume His adversaries like straw and wood coming out of Jerusalem. Another thing that is said: On that day, a man will throw away his idols of silver and the rest, it is interpreted in such a way that it testifies that after the return from the Babylonian captivity until the coming of Christ, the children of Israel never worshiped idols. Assyria is also signified in the present place, not by an angel, but by the Medes, because it was the most ancient and once powerful kingdom, which was destroyed after offending the Lord, and served the conquerors. The Nazarenes understand this place thus: O children of Israel, who denied the Son of God with wicked counsel, return to Him and His Apostles. For if you do this, you will cast away all the idols that were previously a sin for you, and the devil will fall to you, not by your strength, but by the mercy of God; and its young men who once fought for it will be subjects of the Church, and all its strength and rock will be passed to it; even the philosophers and every perverse doctrine will turn their backs to the sign of the cross. For the opinion of the Lord is that this should be done: whose fire or light is in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem. Fire and light are written in Hebrew with the same letters Aleph, Vau, Res; if it is read as Ur, it means fire: if Or, it means light. This is said because for the fire, which Symmachus alone interprets, Aquila and Theodotion translate it as light. But I do not know what is meant by what is read in the Septuagint: They will be surrounded like a wall by rock, and they will be conquered: but whoever flees will be captured. Unless perhaps we can say this, that the young men of the Assyrian king who are to be conquered and captured, are surrounded like a rock, that is, by the strength of the Lord, just as a city is surrounded by a wall. Furthermore, what follows: Blessed is the one who has offspring in Zion, and domestic servants in Jerusalem, we can interpret it in such a way as to say that it agrees with the meaning of this place, that the divine word exhorts those who are fleeing to Egypt to return to Jerusalem and to bear children. To whom such great blessedness is promised, that it may be defended and protected by the help of the Lord. And in another place it is written about it: The glory of this last house shall be greater than the glory of the former (Haggai 2:10). Which can also be referred to the Church, the vision of peace and the

watchtower, of which it is written: Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God (Psalm 87:2). And elsewhere: The streams of the river make glad the city of God (Psalm 46:3). For in it there is fire and a furnace that shall devour the sinners, and shall consume the wood, hay, and stubble; or it is a light and an oven, that the brightness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, may be shown.

32:1-8

(Chapter 32, Verses 1 onwards) Behold, the king shall reign with justice, and princes shall rule with judgment. And a man shall be like one who hides from the wind, and conceals himself from the storm: like streams of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a towering rock in a barren land. The eyes of those who see shall not be dim, and the ears of those who hear shall listen carefully. And the heart of fools shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of stammerers shall speak quickly and clearly. He who is foolish shall no longer be called a ruler, nor shall the deceitful be called great. For the foolish shall speak foolishness, and his heart shall work iniquity, to accomplish deceit and speak deceitfully to the Lord, to empty the soul of the hungry and take away the drink of the thirsty. The vessels of the deceitful are the worst, for he has devised plans to destroy the meek with lies when he speaks in judgment of the poor. The prince will consider those things that are worthy of a prince, and he himself will stand above the leaders. LXX: Behold, a righteous king will reign, and princes will rule with justice. And there will be a man who conceals his words, and he will be hidden like water that is carried away: and he will appear in Zion, like a flowing river, illustrious in a thirsty land, and they will not place their confidence in men: but they will open their ears to hear, and the heart of the weak will attend to their hearing: and the tongues of the stammerers will quickly learn to speak peace: and they will no longer say to the fool, 'Be a prince,' nor will your ministers say, 'Be silent.' For a fool will speak foolishly, and his heart will understand in vain to accomplish wickedness, and to speak error towards the Lord, so as to scatter the souls of the hungry and to make the souls of the thirsty empty. For the counsel of the wicked will think iniquity: to kill the humble with wicked words, and to dissipate the words of the lowly in judgment. But the pious have thought wisdom, and this counsel remains. According to the Septuagint interpreters who said: Behold, for a just king will reign, and princes will preside with judgment, what follows must be joined with the previous, namely, the chapter that has ended: Blessed is the one who has offspring in Zion, and domestics in Jerusalem. According to the completion of the prior prophecy in Hebrew, concerning those who descended into Egypt, now begins the beginning of another prophecy, namely, concerning the coming of Christ and His Apostles. For this king shall reign justly, showing no partiality in judgment, and his princes shall govern with truth, considering causes, not individuals. And whoever is under his protection shall be safe in tribulations and hardships, and in the storms of this world, just as one who, fleeing the wind and whirlwind, safely hides in a place; and one who finds the purest springs in the desert; and one who, in the scorching heat of the sun, finds rest under a projecting rock while everything flows around him. Whereas we have said: as streams of water in a dry place, they have translated: and there shall be seen in Zion as a flowing river. For the Hebrew word, about which we have previously debated, Basaion, which means in thirst, or in dryness, and in barrenness, the Septuagint and Theodotion have translated into Zion: instead of Saion, meaning thirst, they read Zion, which is written with the same letters. Therefore, when Christ reigns, and his princes preside in judgement, the eyes of the believers will not be dimmed, and the ears of the attentive will listen

carefully to what was previously deaf, and the heart of the fools will understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers and the mute, which could not pronounce the name of Christ, will confess the Lord in full and clear speech. He who is foolish will no longer be called a prince. For God has made the wisdom of this world foolish. Nor will a deceitful and perverse teacher be called great among the people, namely the scribes and Pharisees, to whom the Lord spoke: Fools and blind ones, what is greater, gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? For a fool will speak foolishly, as it is written in Hebrew: Nabal Nabala Idabber. This we say, in order to explain the words of Abigail speaking about Nabal in Carmel: 'According to his name, he is foolish.' (1 Samuel 25:25) For truly a fool will speak foolishly, and his heart will devise wickedness; he feared where there was no fear, and he used foolishness as wisdom, saying: 'If this man were from God, he would not break the Sabbath.' (John 9:16) This is what the rulers of the synagogue still do today, in order to perfect their hypocrisy, about which it is written in Hebrew: Oneph, which means 'hypocrisy.' Where it is often said to the Pharisees: Woe to you, scribes and hypocritical Pharisees (Matthew 23:14). And let him speak deceitfully to the Lord: Teacher, we know that you are from God, and it is not your concern about people, although it is lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, isn't it (Ibid., 22:16-17). They empty the souls of the hungry people and take away the drink of the thirsty crowds, neither allowing themselves to enter nor allowing others to enter. For the vessels and weapons of a deceitful teacher and prince are all the worst; who contrives deceit to deceive the simple in the speech of falsehood, saying to the deceived people: Search and see, because the Prophet from Galilee will not rise again (John 7:52). When he spoke to them about the poor judgment, who, though rich, became poor for us (2 Corinthians 8). Truly, Christ is their judgment, and he spoke of righteousness, saying: If I do not do the works of my Father, do not believe me; but if I do, and if you do not want to believe me, believe in the works (John 10:37). This poor man who speaks judgment, the prince and Lord, will think about things that are worthy of a prince, saying: I have come only for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matth. XV, 14). And he will be anxious to save the unbelievers, wanting to save those who do not believe; and he will stand above his leaders, the Apostles, to whom he speaks to one: But you, my unanimous man, my leader and my friend (Psal. LIV, 14). These things are according to the Hebrew, from which the Septuagint not only differ in words, but also in meanings in many things. For when a just king reigns and his leaders govern with judgment, the man who is God by nature will conceal his teachings, speaking to them in parables (Matthew 20:21, 23, 24, and 25). He will conceal them like a flowing river hides beneath the surface, away from the people of Judah who are carried back and forth by the will of their leaders. But this man who hides his teachings among the unbelievers will appear in Zion, which is the Church, like a renowned river flowing through a thirsty land. For the people of the Gentiles, who previously suffered from a thirst for truth, will appear; and the river of God will water the thirsty fields as it is written: The rushing waters of a river make the city of God glad (Psalm 46:4). And in another place: The river of God is full of water (Psalm 65:10). For He Himself speaks in the Gospel: Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me, and let them drink. Whoever believes in Me, as Scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from within them (John 7:38). Then they will have no trust in teachers; but they will offer their ears to hear the Lord; and with both heart and tongue they will confess the peace of the Lord, forsaking foolish princes and their ministers, who commanded silence to those who believed in Jesus. The following words contain the same meaning, both in Hebrew and Latin, and can be adapted to heretics. For they speak lies against the Lord, and they pervert the souls of those who hunger and thirst, and they make them empty;

so that even if they have anything good by nature, they lose it because of the fault of the teachers, whose every plan is to destroy the humble with unjust words, and to scatter the words of the humble in judgment. Similarly, it should be noted that those who can be deceived by them should be humble and grounded.

32:9-20

(Verse 9 and following) Women of wealth, rise up and listen to my voice: confident daughters, hear my words. After days and years, you will be troubled, O confident ones: for the harvest is complete, and there will be no more gathering. O women of wealth, be astounded, be troubled: strip yourselves and be ashamed. As Symmachus interpreted, expose yourselves: it continues. Gird your loins, beat your breasts, over the desirable region, over the fertile vineyard: over the ground of my people, thorns and thistles will grow: how much more over all the houses of the joyful city? For the house was abandoned: the multitude of the city was left behind: darkness and groping became over caves forever: the joy of wild donkeys the pasture of flocks. Until the spirit is poured out upon us from on high: and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted as a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness will remain in the fruitful field. The work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness quietness and confidence forever. And my people shall dwell in the beauty of peace, and in tabernacles of trust, and in abundant rest. But there shall be hail in the descent of the forest, and with humility the city shall be humbled. Blessed are those who sow over all waters, sending forth the foot of the ox and the donkey. Seventy, for darkness and groping, which were made over the caves forever, they were transferred, and your cities shall be caves forever: which in Hebrew is called Ophel and Been, which the Hebrews think to be two towers in Jerusalem, lofty and very sturdy, which are called by these names. The first of these is interpreted as darkness or clouds, because it raised its head up to the clouds. The second is the proof and strength, or as Symmachus translates it, the inquiry: because the eyes were deceived in contemplating its summit. In the end, the chapters are interpreted as follows: Blessed are they who sow over all waters, where the ox and the donkey tread. After the calling of the Gentiles, when Christ the king shall rule with justice, and his princes, the apostles and apostolic men shall govern believers in judgment, the prophetic discourse will be directed to rich women, whom we should understand to be either the cities of Judea, or the synagogues of that time, or as most people think, the wealthy matrons of the former Jewish people, who are spoken of as if they were lying down after the ruin: Arise; and yet they are also called confident daughters, or hopeful: and it is commanded to them that they listen to the words of the Lord, and remember the days and years, about which we shall speak in what follows, the Savior himself saying: The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for which reason he has anointed me: he has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind: to call the year of the Lord acceptable (Luke IV, 18, 19), and let this remembrance be for them according to the Septuagint, in sorrow with hope, that they may lament that the Lord denied them, and have hope of salvation, if they repent. For he says that the vintage is finished, and after the final devastation, which happened under Vespasian and Titus and Hadrian, there will by no means be another captivity, nor will there remain grapes on the vines that need to be gathered afterward. Hence they are prompted to lamentation, and are commanded to bare their chests and gird their loins, because once a desirable region and a fruitful vineyard, of which it is written: I have planted you a fruitful vineyard, the whole of it true: how have you turned into the

bitterness of a strange vine (Jer. II, 21)? Being destroyed, he said, the land of my people shall be overgrown with thorns and briars, or it shall be covered with hay. And the meaning is this: If the land of Judea, which is the promised land, is overgrown with thorns and briars, how much more so other cities that are filled with joy, and those that will achieve that evangelical promise; Woe to you who are rejoicing now, for you shall mourn (Luke 6:25)! For the Lord (or, the House) has been forsaken, as I said to the Apostles: Arise, let us go hence (John 14:31); and to the unbelievers: Your house shall be left desolate (Luke 13:35). The secret chambers of the Temple and the hidden mysteries have been taken over by palpable darkness, and the cellars of the Lord's vessels have become caves forever. For they had heard from the Lord and Savior (Matthew 21:13): My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves. He says: The joy of wild donkeys, the grazing grounds of the flocks. This can be understood either literally, because all things are deserted, or spiritually, because after Israel was driven out, wild men, lacking knowledge of God, inhabit Judea. And let this be done until the Spirit from on high is poured out upon us, whom the Savior, ascending to the Father, promised to believers, saying: Behold, I go, and I will send you the Advocate, the Spirit of truth (John 16). And again: Until you receive power from on high (Luke 24:49). And what he said above: Yet a little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest. And in that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and out of darkness and obscurity the eyes of the blind shall see (Isaiah 29); he now repeats in other words the same thing, that the wilderness of the nations shall be turned into the riches of Israel, and Israel shall be esteemed as the nations. At that time the Lord and Savior, to whom the Father has given all judgment, will dwell in the desert. And justice will rest in Carmel, of which it was said above: And it will be in Carmel, a desert in which judgment and justice reside, and it will rest in Carmel, which was previously called a desert. The work of justice is also peace, which, according to the Apostle, surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4). And the worship of justice is silence, so that they may not worship the Lord with excessive words like the Jews, but with the brevity of faith; and may they rest in eternal peace, and may wealth be in their dwellings, about which the Apostle spoke (1 Corinthians 1:5): I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ, because in everything you have been enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge. But when the Christian people have settled or dwelled in beauty, as the LXX translated, in the city of peace, undoubtedly in the Church; then hail and storm, and the anger of the Lord raging, will descend in a leap, of which it was said above: And Charnel will be considered a leap; and the city of Jerusalem will be humbled, and according to another Scripture, it will speak from the earth. When these things are so, and we have learned from the prophetic prophecy how much good the Church will possess, and how many evils Jerusalem will suffer: blessed are you, Apostles, and other Teachers, who sow above all waters of holy Scripture, in which the ox and the donkey tread. The world is a dirty place because of the choices of the fathers, the donkey is unclean because of the idolatry of the former pagans, so that both the Church of the Lord may be assembled concerning Circumcision and concerning the Uncircumcision. That which is said above, according to the Septuagint, is: On the earth of my people thorns and hay shall come up. It can be understood as referring both to heretics and to simple believers who do not understand Holy Scripture as it befits its majesty. Therefore, we have connected each thing to its corresponding thing, so that the land of the people of God may bring thorns to the heretics and hay to the ignorant ones.

33:1

(Chapter XXXIII - Verse 1) Woe to those who plunder: will they not be plundered themselves? And to those who despise: will they not be despised themselves? When you have finished plundering, you will be plundered; when you have grown weary of contempt, you will be scorned. LXX: Woe to those who make you miserable: for no one makes you miserable. And those who condemn you, do not condemn you: they will be condemned, and handed over, and be consumed like moths in clothing. He had spoken about the Apostles, and about the leaders of the churches: Blessed are those who sow over all water, where ox and donkey tread: now he directs his curse against their persecutors; in fact, against their ruler, who possesses the hearts of the wicked, that whatever they do, they may receive; and by his present power, let it be the material of future torments. Wherefore, according to the Septuagint it is said: 'Woe to those who make you miserable; for no one makes you miserable. And the meaning is this: as much as is in them, when they persecute you and afflict you with various tortures, they consider you miserable, killed and tortured. But no one can make you miserable, for they do not have power over your soul, but over your body. And he who reproaches you, does not reproach you, but him who sent you, according to that which the Savior speaks to the disciples: 'He who reproaches you, reproaches me; and he who reproaches me, reproaches him who sent me' (Luke 10:16). Therefore, the persecutors will be captured and handed over to eternal fires. And just as a moth consumes clothing, so will the flame devour them. This is also written in the end of this prophecy. Their worm will not die, and their fire will not be extinguished.

33:2-6

(Verse 2 and following) Lord, have mercy on us: for we have waited for you: be our strength in the morning, and our salvation in time of trouble. At the voice of the Angel, the people fled; at your exaltation the nations were scattered. And your spoil will be gathered, as the locust is gathered, as when the ditches are full of it. The Lord is magnified, for he dwells on high: he has filled Zion with judgment and justice. And there will be faith in your times: wealth of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge: the fear of the Lord is its treasure. LXX: Lord, have mercy on us, for we trust in You: the seed of the unbelievers has been brought to destruction, but our salvation is in the time of tribulation: because of the voice of fear, the peoples are astonished by your fear, and the nations are scattered. But now your spoils, both small and great, will be gathered together: when someone gathers locusts, they will mock you: O holy God who dwells on high. Zion is filled with justice and righteousness, salvation is stored in the law: wisdom, discipline, and piety come from the Lord, these are the treasures of justice. This is a chapter from the Hebrews, in which it is read: Woe to those who plunder, will they not be plundered themselves? and so on until the end. They believe that this is a statement against King Sennacherib of the Assyrians, who, after overthrowing the ten tribes known as Israel and capturing the cities of Judah, will himself be defeated and his army destroyed by the Angel. Now, from the perspective of the people, giving thanks to God and saying, 'Lord, have mercy on us, we have waited for you,' these words contend, which are contained in the present (or following) chapter, that His arm and strength were the protection for the people besieged in the morning, and salvation in their time of need and distress. For by the voice of the Angel, whom Symmachus translated as it is written in Hebrew, Amun (whom the Hebrews consider to be Gabriel) and has the etymology of the people; the Assyrian fled, and the nations that came with him were scattered here and there from the exaltation of God. As they fled, the spoils were gathered by the Jews, just as a multitude of caterpillars and locusts are collected when

they have been heaped into pits. In their victory, the Lord was magnified, and Zion was filled with justice and righteousness, and the faith of the besieged people was proven. And they possessed all riches in wisdom and knowledge of God and fear of the Lord, who alone was their treasure. They said these things according to the history, striving in every way to undermine the sacraments of Christ and his Apostles. But after the happiness of the Apostles, about whom it has been said above (Ad. cap. XXXI, 20): Blessed are those who sow upon all waters, where the ox and the donkey tread, and the lamentation and mourning of those who persecute them, about whom it is said in what follows: Woe to those who make you miserable; but no one makes you miserable; and like moths on clothing, they will wear away, from the person of the same Apostles, we confirm these words for all believers. And this is the sense: Lord, we have hoped in your help, and have trusted in you. The seed of the unbelievers has perished forever, and our salvation has appeared in the time of tribulation. For with your assistance, the multitude of nations has been scattered, and those who sought to conquer and deceive have been defeated. And this has happened because the holy Lord dwells on high, and Zion is filled with judgment and justice, as it is written: Justice and judgment will rest in the wilderness. Therefore, she is Zion, which was previously called a desert, and whoever dwells in her will receive the law of the Gospel, in whose treasure our salvation is, and the wisdom of the believers, and discipline and piety, or faith, which is specifically of the Christians, and the fear of the Lord, in which the treasures of wisdom are contained.

33:7-12

(Verse 7 and following) Behold, those who see will cry out: The angels of peace will weep bitterly. The roads are abandoned, the passer-by has ceased on the path, the pact has become void, cities have been thrown down, men have not been regarded. The land has mourned and languished, Lebanon is confused and darkened, Sharon has become like a desert, and Bashan and Carmel have been shaken. Now I will arise, says the Lord: now I will be exalted, now I will be lifted up. You will conceive chaff, you will give birth to stubble; your spirit will devour you like fire. And the peoples shall be like ashes from a fire: thorns gathered together shall be burned with fire. The Hebrew word *Arellam* (), which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion interpreted, I will reveal to them, dividing the final syllable and reading it as *Are Lahem* (), the Hebrews believe it signifies Angels, and is a prophecy concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the wealth of the Church, and the destruction of the Temple, which the Angels shall lament, not dwelling within but departing from it: and those who were previously messengers of peace shall bitterly weep. Whether the apostles themselves who were sent to announce peace to Jerusalem, to which the Lord spoke, 'If you also knew the things that are for your peace' (Luke 19:42): at which the Lord appeared to them, in order to comfort them with His presence, Jerusalem will weep, because it did not receive His preaching, because the ways have been scattered, and the one passing by the righteous path has ceased, according to what is said in the Lamentations of Jeremiah: The ways of Zion mourn, because there are none who come to the solemnity (Lamentations 1:4). The covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was also made void: He cast out the cities of Judah: He did not consider the people, who by their own fault wanted to be beasts. The land mourned and grew weak for those who lived in it (Genesis XV and 22). Lebanon is confused and darkened, undoubtedly signifying the Temple, as we read in Zechariah. Open, Lebanon, your gates, so that fire may devour your cedars (Zechariah XI, 1). Or Jerusalem, which is called Libanus in Ezekiel, the Prophet saying: A great eagle, with great wings, which has the ability to enter into Lebanon

(Ezekiel II, 3); which afterwards, the divine word interpreting, says: when Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem, he clearly referred to the eagle as the king of Babylon, and to Lebanon as Jerusalem. Sharon became like a desert, and Bashan and Carmel were shaken. As for Bashan, the Seventy translated it as Galilee, a province, for one place of the province. But the region around Joppa and Lydda, also called Saron (or Saronas), is a place where wide and fertile fields extend. There is also the region of Basan beyond the Jordan, which was possessed by two and a half tribes and is interpreted as the most fertile and abundant (Deut. III): and Carmel, of which we have spoken above. Therefore, the once fertile lands of Judea will be turned into desolation, through which metaphorically the entire wealth of the Jews will be exchanged for poverty and scarcity. Therefore, since they refused to accept the words of the Apostles, Lebanon was confounded, and Sharon became a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel were shaken. Therefore, the Lord says that either because of his excessive patience or because he will rise from the dead, he will be exalted among the nations and lifted up on the cross. And he addresses the Jews themselves, saying, 'You will conceive burning anger and bring forth stubble, and your breath will ignite a fire that will devour you as the flames consume what is conceived and born.' And there shall be, he said, the people of the Jews showing the magnitude of their misfortune through the ashes remaining from the fire. For the thorns of their sins, which have been gathered in great numbers, shall be consumed by the fire, which many interpret as referring to the ultimate captivity and destruction of Jerusalem. Others affirm that it shall happen more fully and completely in the time of judgment.

33:13-19

(Ver. 13 et seq.) Hear, you who are far away, what I have done, and know the strength of my neighbors. Sinners are terrified in Zion, hypocrites are trembling. Who among you can dwell with devouring fire? Who among you can endure everlasting burnings? The one who walks in righteousness and speaks truth, who rejects greed by slander, and keeps his hands away from every gift, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil. He will dwell on high, the height of his fortress of rocks; bread is given to him, and his waters are faithful. His eyes will see the king in his beauty; they will behold the land from afar. Your heart will meditate on fear. Where is the scribe? Where are those who weigh the words of the law? Where is the teacher of the little ones? You will not see an ignorant people, a people of deep speech beyond your comprehension, in whom there is no wisdom. LXX: Let those who are far away hear what I have done; let those who are near acknowledge my power. The wicked in Zion are afraid; trembling grips the godless: 'Who can live with the consuming fire? Who can dwell with everlasting burning?' The one who walks in righteousness and speaks with integrity, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes, who stops his ears from listening to murderous plots and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil— this is the man who will dwell on the heights, whose refuge will be the mountain fortress. Bread will be given to him, and his water will be faithful: your eyes will see the king with glory, they will see the land from afar; your soul will meditate fear. Where are the grammarians? Where are the counselors? Where is he who counts those who nourish both the small and the large population? To whom he did not give counsel: nor did he know the deep voice of him, so that the despised people would not hear, and the one who is listening would not have understanding. For the paths are scattered, the one passing through the pathways has ceased, the covenant with the people of Judah has been voided, God has cast

away their cities, he has not considered them among men; therefore, you who are far away, hear what I have done, and approach to recognize my strength. They were terrified, or those who were sinners or wicked withdrew from Zion, and trembling possessed the hypocrites, to whom the Lord spoke in the Gospel: Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites (Matthew 23:14)! Who among you can dwell with the devouring fire? Who among you can dwell with everlasting burnings? Or according to the LXX: Who will declare to you that eternal fire burns, which God has prepared for the devil and his angels? So who then can dwell with God, or declare the coming punishments? Everyone who is of this kind, as the prophetic discourse describes, who walks in many justices, and not once, but always loves justices, and not just once, but constantly speaks the truth: who rejects greed, which is the mother of slander. For money is not heaped up for one's own gain at the expense and harm of another. And he withdraws his hands from every gift. Indeed, gifts blind the eyes, even of the wise. He who stops up his ears does not hear the judgment of blood. Every wickedness and oppression and injustice is a judgment of blood: and although it does not kill with a sword, it kills by will. And he closes his eyes so as not to see evil. Blessed is the conscience that does not hear, nor see evil. Therefore, whoever is such, he himself shall dwell in the highest, that is, in the kingdom of heaven, or in the lofty cave of the strongest rock, in Christ Jesus: which rock followed the people of Israel, so that they might drink of it and be protected by its strength. Bread will be given to him, and its waters are faithful: which the fables of the Gentiles understand as ambrosia and nectar. But we, the most faithful breads and waters, will interpret the law of God. Therefore, whoever is such, will see the king Christ in his glory, of whom it is said above (Ad cap. XXXII, 1): Behold, a just king will reign, and princes will preside in judgment. And his eyes will see the earth from afar, which they have desired for a long time, the land of the gentle and meek, of which it is written in the Gospel: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matth. V, 4): whether they are placed in heaven, they despise earthly things. Your heart will meditate on fear: so that when you have accomplished all things, you may say with the Apostle: I am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God (1 Corinthians 15:9). For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Where is the scribe? Where is he who weighs the words of the law? Where is the teacher of children? Where, it is said, are the scribes and Pharisees, who weighed the words of the Law, deceiving the unhappy people? whom Scripture now calls little children, little in understanding, little in intelligence. But when the eyes of the believer behold the king in his majesty, and his heart is filled with awe, then he will not see the foolish people, the people of the Jews, or the philosophers and orators of the world, who applaud themselves in secular knowledge and eloquence, about whom he now says: They are a people of high speech, so that you cannot understand the eloquence of their language; their allurements are in words, which have only the foliage and shadow of discourse, and do not possess the fruit of truth. Finally it follows: In this there is no wisdom, about which it is said in another place: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the prudent I will reject (1 Corinthians 1:19). Why? because God has made the wisdom of this world foolish.

33:20-24

(Verse 20 and following) Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnity: your eyes shall see Jerusalem, a wealthy habitation: a tabernacle that cannot be moved, and its nails shall not be taken away forever, and all its cords shall not be broken. For our Lord is only magnificent there: a place of wide and open rivers, no ship of rowers shall pass through it: nor shall any great trireme pass over it.

For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will save us. Your ropes are loosened, and they will not prevail; so will be your evil, that you cannot extend your sign. Then the spoils of many spoils will be divided: the lame will plunder the prey. And the neighbor will not say: I am faint: the people who dwell in it will be taken away by iniquity. LXX: Behold, Zion is a city of our salvation: your eyes will see Jerusalem. A wealthy city, immovable dwellings: its tent pegs will not be taken away forever, and its cords will not be torn apart. For the name of the Lord is great for you: your place will be wide and spacious rivers and streams: no ship propelled by oars will enter through it. For my God, the Lord, is great: the Lord our judge will not pass over me, the Lord our leader, the Lord our king, the Lord Himself will save us. Your cables have been disrupted (or plundered), because they did not prevail: your evil is bent, to let out the sails: it will not raise the sign, until it is delivered into desolation. Therefore, many will make booty of the closed goods: and the people who inhabit them will not say, I will labor, their offense will be forgiven. O just one, to whom it has been said above: your heart will meditate fear; and you will not see the unwise (or impudent) people; and those whom you have heard before, your eyes will see the king in his beauty, contemplate the city of our solemnity, see the Church of Christ, in which the true solemnity is; your eyes will behold the vision of peace, and the unexpected riches, which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor have they ascended into the heart of man, and the tabernacle that cannot be transferred. For first the tabernacle which had the people of the Jews was translated and lifted up. Neither shall the nails thereof be moved forever, and all the cords thereof shall be strong; so that the Lord may dwell in it, who is the place of all flowing rivers and running streams, through which no one of the adverse party shall be able to sail: neither shall the great trireme, which is interpreted the devil, be able to pass over it: for the Lord himself is the judge, and prince, and king, and our Savior, and under his protection we shall fear no ambushes of any kind. These things are said about the city of our solemnity, about Jerusalem, the richest dwelling place, which the Lord himself will surround and fortify with his rivers. But now he speaks to earthly Jerusalem, because the cords of her tent have been loosened and they are unable to support the tent, and her mast, on which once hung the most beautiful sails, has fallen with the cords broken, so that she is not only unfit for sailing, but also marked by a mutilation. But after their ship has been destroyed and their tent scattered, so that the ropes are torn on both sides, the spoils will be divided to the victors: those who are so weak in their own strength that they are called cripples; and yet, with God's wrath giving them strength, they will not feel any weakness, nor will they say 'I have labored.' For whoever is among them, injustice and sin will be taken away from him, for he has carried out God's will.

34:1-7

(Chapter 34, Verse 1, etc.) Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth and all that fills it hear, the world and all that springs from it. For the Lord's indignation is against all the nations, and His fury is against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them and given them over to slaughter. Their slain will be thrown out, and the stench of their corpses will rise; the mountains will be drenched with their blood. And all the host of heaven will rot away; the skies will roll up like a scroll, and all their host will wither away like a withered leaf from the vine, like foliage from the fig tree. For my sword is drenched in the heavens; indeed, it is drunk with blood. Behold, he will come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my slaughter, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made thick with fatness, with the blood of

lambs and goats, with the fatness of the kidneys of rams: for there is a victim of the Lord in Bosra, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls: and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their soil made fat with fatness. After the overthrow of Jerusalem, and the shipwreck of the once very firm ship, and the plunder of all its furnishings, it is said concerning the destruction of all nations, and concerning the consummation of the world, which is in the future day of judgment. Whereby all peoples and nations of the earth and its fullness, the world and all its offspring, both those inhabited places and those uninhabitable due to excessive cold and heat, are commanded to hear, and to know with every trembling of the mind what is to come. For the wrath of the Lord is not only against one nation, the Jews, but also against the Assyrians and Chaldeans, the Egyptians, Moabites, and Ammonites, and the Philistines; but also against all nations, and against the entire host, or as the Septuagint translated, their number. She is described as a venture, which kills them and causes the stench of decaying bodies to rise up high, signifying the sins of all nations, so that their filth and impurities fill the mountains with blood. The lofty virtues and angels that presided over each nation and all the celestial hosts wither away, or fold up like a book, and all their armies and forces, as the LXX have translated, and the stars flow down like leaves, which, with the approaching cold, fall off dried and contracted from the vine and fig tree. Which also the Savior speaks in the Gospel: Stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven (Matthew 24:29-30). And it is to be considered that it does not say that the heavens will perish, but that they will be folded up or rolled up, like a book, so that after all sins have been exposed and read, those that were previously open may be folded up, so that the sins of many may no longer be written in them. Regarding these type of books, Daniel speaks in his volume: Judgment sat, and the books were opened (Dan. 7:10), in which the deeds of each individual were described. Many people think that the stars are falling, according to the Book of Revelation of John (Rev. 6 and 8). And that which is written elsewhere: All the stars will burn out and the sky and earth will pass away (Luke 21:2). For the figure of this world is passing away. Some believe that these stars are being referred to, which glow in the sky, so as to show in part and as a whole, namely that through the fall of the stars even the destruction of the heavens is revealed. But others think that these stars are going to fall, of which even the Apostle Paul writes: For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. It is not surprising, therefore, if the demons who dwell in the air are said to be heavenly, since even the birds of the sky, which certainly do not fly in the heavens but in the air, are called celestial in Scripture. For Satan himself transforms into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11), simulating a star. And the Savior saw him falling from heaven like lightning (Luke 10). And in a metaphorical sense, he is called fallen from the great star: How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! (Isaiah 14:12). All these things will happen, because his sword is drunk in the sky, the punishment and the sentence, and the vengeance against sinners, which is brought forth by the Lord. This sword and dagger in Ezekiel (Ezek. XXI) is sharpened against the wicked; and after many are killed, he is ordered to enter his sheath. And when he is drunk and filled in the sky; that is, in the air, which is called heaven according to the custom of the Scriptures, then he will also descend to Edom, that is, to the earthly: so that after the punishment of the demons, even the souls of men may be judged. Idumaea indeed in our language means earthly. And it is filled with blood; and thickened with the fat of lambs and goats, and of the marrow of rams

and bulls: that it may signify both princes and people to be punished. For the Lord's victim is in Bosra, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. Of which Bosra and Idumaea the same prophet also witnesses in the following, saying: Who is this that comes from Edom, with red garments from Bosra? And some think that Bosra, which means 'flesh', is called so because through the sacrifice of the Lord in Bosra, the torments of all are shown in the flesh: they are caught in a pious error. In the present place, it is not by the letter Sin, which is put in Bosor (), that is, in the flesh: but it is written with Sade, and it is called Bosra (), which according to Jesus and Jeremiah is not in Edom, that is, Edom; but it is found in the land of Moab (Jeremiah 48). But Bosra in our language sounds fortified and surrounded, or firm: it teaches that the city of the lands of the Lord is solidified by His will, according to what is sung in the psalm; He founded it above the seas, and He placed it above the rivers (Psalm 24, 2); and about the firmness of the earth, it is said in the person of God: I have strengthened its pillars (Psalm 75, 3). And when the sacrifice of the Lord shall be in Bosra, and his slaughter in Edom, unicorns shall come down with them, and the powerful bulls, namely kings and princes of the earth; and all the slaughter and blood shall be filled with the fat of the once rich and powerful. Through these words, according to human custom, instilling terror in those who hear them, torments are shown to all the rulers and powerful ones, as well as the people and the humble. Bosra, that is, fortified and strengthened, and Edom, or Duma, and Idumaea, are understood by the Jewish teachers to refer to Rome, and everything concerning it is said in the following chapter.

34:8-17

(Verses 8 and following) For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, the year of retribution in the judgment of Zion. Its streams will be turned into pitch, and its soil into sulfur; its land will become burning pitch. Night and day it will not be extinguished; its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will lie desolate; no one will pass through it forever. The pelican and the hedgehog will possess it, the owl and the raven will dwell in it. It will be stretched out with a measuring line, and it will be reduced to nothing, and its plumb line to desolation. Her nobles will not be there; rather, they will call upon the king, and all his princes will be nothing. Thorns, thistles, and briers will grow in his palaces; it will become a haunt for jackals, a feeding place for ostriches. And wild creatures will meet with hyenas; the wild goat will cry to his fellow; indeed, there the night bird settles and finds for herself a resting place. There the owl nests and lays and hatches and gathers her young in her shadow; indeed, there the hawks are gathered, each one with her mate. Search diligently in the book of the Lord and read. One of them did not fail, and one did not seek the other. For what proceeds from my mouth, he commanded, and his spirit gathered them. And he sent them a lot, and his hand divided it for them in measure; they will possess it forever, and they will dwell in it from generation to generation. The Hebrews, as we have said above, contend that these things are prophesied about the Roman Empire and are preached as a vengeance on Zion, the former devastation of the most powerful kingdom, which many of ours also think is written in the Apocalypse of John according to the letter. But we consider this to be the year of the vengeance of the Lord, the year of retributions and judgments in Zion, of which the Savior himself spoke: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.' (Luke 4:18-19, Isaiah 61:1-3). Also, as it is written: 'Rise up, you women who are at ease.' (Isaiah 32:9). And remember the days

of the year in sorrow with hope, so that, after the general consummation of the whole world, the prophecy may return to Jerusalem, to which it was spoken at that time, and its devastation be described in full detail: namely, that after the time of the Roman siege has come, everything will be consumed by pitch, sulfur, and burning flames, and its smoke will remain forever, and it will be inhabited by the pelican and the hedgehog, and the ibis and the raven, which are creatures accustomed to inhabiting desolate places. And let this be done, because the cord and the plumb line of the Lord, that is, his judgment, cannot be changed. His nobles, that is, the Apostles and believers, will not be there, nor will they be joined with the number of the damned: but rather they will invoke King Christ. But all the leaders of the city, namely the Scribes and the Pharisees, will be reduced to nothingness, and thorns and nettles and brambles will grow in their once ornate houses. And there will be a haunt for dragons, and pastures for ostriches, which themselves are signs of extreme desolation. And there they will encounter, according to the LXX, various apparitions of demons, or as all others have translated according to the Hebrew, Siim and lim, onocentaurs, and shaggy figures, and lamia, which the fables of the Gentiles and the creations of poets describe. Also, there the hedgehog nurtures its puppies, and it has a very faithful watchpost: there the kites gather, a very carnivorous bird, which in Hebrew is called Dajoth (or, as the LXX translated, deer, which we will discuss later). Among these things, the Prophet speaks to those who hear: O men (or, all) who hear me speaking, what I announce about the future, all things will be fulfilled. For in the book the words of the Lord are written, and His intention is determined, and not even one thing will be in vain. For whatever proceeds from my mouth, he has commanded, that is, I speak on his behalf; but the words are the Lord's, and by his spirit whatever is said will be accomplished. Each thing will be fulfilled according to his decree and measure: and they will not leave their order even unto eternal generations. Let these things be said according to the Hebrew and historical explanation. Moreover, those who follow the allegory, expelling the people of the Jews under the names of beasts and monsters, affirm that they will dwell in Jerusalem, serving idols and various superstitions: and these are the onocrotali and hedgehogs, the raven and dragons, and ostriches, and onocentaurs, and demons, and shaggy creatures, and the lamia, which is called Lilith in Hebrew (); and the lamia has been translated from the ground by Symmachus, which some Hebrews suspect to be the Fury. And indeed, if we consider the various colonies brought to Jerusalem from different nations, and according to the customs of their provinces, each family worshipped their own demons as wonders, we will affirm that all of this existed in Jerusalem. And what the LXX translated: 'There the deer met them and saw their own faces: they passed by in number, and not one of them perished or sought another. For the Lord commanded them, and his spirit gathered them; and he himself gave them lots, and his hand divided them: that they may feed forever, and possess it in generation after generation, and rest in it.' We will interpret this allegorically, teaching that the deer, that is, the Apostles and all holy teachers, about whom it is written: 'As the deer longs for the fountains of water, so my soul longs for you, O God' (Ps. 41:1); and elsewhere: 'The voice of the Lord perfects the deer' (Ps. 28:9); and again: 'Let the deer of friendship and the colt of your graces speak to you' (Prov. 5); and in Job: 'You keep the minds of the deer, and you send forth their offspring' (Job. 39:2); and in the Song of Songs it is said: 'My beloved is like a roe or a young deer on the mountains of spices' (Song. 2:9); that they met each other in Jerusalem and saw each other's appearances, and passed by and left it, and went to different provinces, because the Lord had commanded them: 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' (Matthew

28:19); and his spirit gathered them, giving them lots and dividing them, so that some would go to the Indians, others to Spain, others to Illyricum, others to Greece; and each would rest in their own province of the Gospel and teaching. What we have said above about Jerusalem being prophesied, and the Jews suspecting that it refers to the Roman rule, some people attribute to the whole world, so as not to seem to differ from the earlier interpretations.

35:1-2

(Chapter 35, verses 1, 2) The desolate and impassable will rejoice, and solitude will exult and flourish like a lily. It will sprout and blossom; with joy and praise it will exult. The glory of Lebanon has been given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the Lord and the splendor of our God. LXX: Rejoice, O desert, thirsting, and let the solitude exult and flourish like a lily. The deserts of the Jordan will blossom and exult; the glory of Lebanon has been given to it, and the honor of Carmel. And my people will see the glory of the Lord and the majesty of our God. Since Jerusalem has been turned into pitch and its smoke rises forever, and it is inhabited by the pelican and the hedgehog, the ibis and the raven, the dragons and the ostriches, demons and half-man half-horse creatures, lamia and hairy beings: and the Lord's fulfilled sentence is upon it: 'Your house will be left to you desolate' (Luke 13:35): therefore, what was once deserted, of which it is said in the Psalm: 'The voice of the Lord shaking the wilderness', and the Lord will shake the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of the Lord prepares the stags; and it reveals the thickets of the forests (Psalm 28:8,9), it will be transformed into the abundance of all things, and the beasts of the nations will be driven out from the fighting stags, from all the forests, which previously possessed them, so that what is said in the same Prophet may be fulfilled: Rejoice, O barren one, you who do not bear; burst forth and cry out, you who are not in labor; for the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who has a husband (Isaiah 54:1). This was previously thirsty, or impassable, not having life-giving waters, and the Lord did not walk (or enter) through it, which now will blossom into a lily, or as the Eagle expressed more significantly, an opening, which we can call a swelling rose with not yet expanded leaves. However, it will blossom, as the Apostle declares: We are the good odor of Christ in every place (II Cor. II, 15). And that from the Song of Songs: Flowers have been seen in the land; mandrakes have given forth their fragrance (Cant. VII, 12, 13). And what is placed in the LXX, 'and the deserts of the Jordan shall rejoice,' is not found in Hebrew, but we can say: in the Jordan river, the baptism of repentance was shown, which the Lord signed and confirmed with his washing. And because it is figuratively said about the wilderness, which refers to the nations, in which John was, it can be subsequently joined to the Jordan, so that through the desert of the nations we come to the baptism of the Savior. And what follows, the glory of Lebanon was given to him, and the beauty of Carmel and Sharon, according to the previous explanation we must understand, in which we said that Lebanon or the Temple of Jerusalem is meant, as Zachariah says: Open, Lebanon, your gates (Zach. XI, 1); and Ezekiel: A great eagle with great wings and full of feathers, which has a direction to enter Lebanon and Carmel (Ezek. XVII. 3): the former meaning the people, of whom it has been said above: And it will be a desert in Carmel, and Carmel will be counted as a wilderness (Isa. XXIII, 9); and Sharon has the same meaning, Scripture saying: Sharon has become like a desert. Therefore, all brightness, worship of God, and knowledge of circumcision, and the most fertile and open places, which are called Sharon, for which Symmachus interpreted as fields, will be given to the once deserted Church, and its inhabitants will see the glory of the Lord, and the beauty or greatness of our God.

35:3-4 (Verse 3, 4.) Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will bring vengeance and retribution. God Himself will come and save you (or as the Septuagint translates, us). Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will hear. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will sing, for water will burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert, and the dry ground will become a pool (or marsh), and the thirsty land springs of water. In the dens where the dragons once lived, green rushes and reeds shall grow (in the version of the Seventy: There will be the joy of birds and the folds of flocks). And there shall be a path and a road (or a clean road) and it shall be called the holy road, no unclean person shall pass through it. And this shall be for us a direct road, so that fools shall not go astray (or as the Seventy translated, There will be no unclean road there, those who are scattered shall pass through it and shall not wander. There will be, it says, no lion there, and no wicked beast shall ascend it, nor shall it be found there; but they who are set free shall walk on it. And those who are redeemed by the Lord shall return and come to Zion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. We have mixed together both editions, so that the size of the books may not be stretched in presenting each one, which has already exceeded the limit of brevity.) To the apostles, about whom it was said above: They themselves will see the glory of the Lord and the beauty of our God, it is commanded that they strengthen the hands that are weak among the nations, and make firm the feeble knees, so that those who were unable to do the work of God with weak hands and had a dry right hand, may extend it to good works. And those who once stumbled among idols in various errors, may walk firmly on the path of truth, and may the faith of the Lord strengthen the weak and fearful, so that they may not be afraid, and may the fear of the one God drive away all fears of error. The reason, however, is security and constancy, because Christ is coming, to whom the Father has given all judgment: and he will render to each one according to their works (John 5). He himself will come and save you, to whom it is said, do not be afraid: whether us, as the Apostles say that salvation is common with those who believe. Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be opened. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will be opened. Although this was fulfilled by the magnitude of the signs, when the Lord spoke to the disciples of John, who were sent to him: Go and report to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise, the poor have the good news preached to them (Luke 7:22); yet it is fulfilled daily among the Gentiles, when those who were previously blind and used to stumble into wood and stones, now see the light of truth. And those who could not hear the words of the Scriptures with deaf ears, now rejoice in the precepts of God; for those who were previously closed off and did not follow the right path, leap like deer, imitating their teachers, and the tongue of the mute will be opened, whom Satan had closed off in order that they could not confess the Lord. Therefore, the eyes will be opened, the ears will hear, the lame will leap, and the tongue of the mute will be opened, for they have been torn apart, or have burst forth, in the desert of the Church of baptismal waters, and there are streams and rivers in the wilderness, namely different spiritual graces; and what was dry has been turned into marshes and a pond, so that it not only lacks the heat of thirst but also becomes navigable and irrigated, and has many springs that the deer desires, and those who drink from them can bless the Lord, according to what is written: Bless the Lord from the fountains of Israel (Ps. 67:27). In the prisons of the souls of the Gentiles, in which dragons dwelled before, there will be reed and rush, on which the faith of the

Lord will be written, and on which the weary limbs will rest; whether it will be the joy of birds, and the cages of flocks: so that the doves may take wings, and leaving behind the lowly, may hasten to the heights, and be able to say with the Psalmist, The Lord feeds me, and I shall not want: He has placed me in a place of pasture: He has nourished me by refreshing waters. There will be a path, and a very clean road, which will be called holy, and which says of itself: I am the way (John 14:6), through which someone who is defiled cannot pass. Hence it is also said in the psalm, Blessed are the undefiled in the way (Psalm 119:1). And this way will be for us, that is, our God, so straight and level and plain, that it has no error: and the foolish and senseless may perish trying to enter, to whom Wisdom speaks in Proverbs: If anyone is little, let him come to me. And she has spoken to the foolish, come and eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mixed for you. Leave behind foolishness, and live, and walk in the ways of prudence (Prov. 5:4-6). For God has chosen the foolish things of the world (1 Cor. 1): of which the prince of fools speaks in the psalm, God, you know my foolishness. And the foolishness of God is wiser than men (Ps. 68:6). Therefore the Septuagint translated: And those who were scattered (1 Cor. 2), and separated from the fellowship of the Lord, will by no means wander. It follows, There will not be a lion there: our adversary the devil, who prowls around roaring, how could he enter the sheepfold of the Lord (1 Peter V). And the evil beasts, his satellites, will not climb through it. For the track of a snake cannot be found on a rock. But those who have been freed from the chains of sin, redeemed by the blood of the Savior, and have repented; and have come to Zion, of which we have often said: You have come to Mount Zion, and to the heavenly city of the living God Jerusalem (Hebrews XII, 22); let us not seek a golden Zion in the manner of the Jews, and a gemmed Jerusalem, which, according to the prophecy of Daniel, has been dissolved into eternal ashes (Daniel IX). And there will be everlasting joy for those praising the Lord over their heads, so that after they have conquered the world, they may say with the Apostle and Prophet: I have completed the race, I have kept the faith, the crown of righteousness has been reserved for me (2 Timothy 4:7-8); and, Lord, as with the shield of your good will, you have crowned us (Psalm 5:12). Then, with joy and gladness succeeding, sorrow and groaning will flee when He comes from Zion to deliver. All these things we interpret, according to the Apostle Paul, as referring to the first coming of the Savior: but the Jews and our Judaizers refer them to the second, on account of a single verse, 'They shall be converted, and shall come to Zion with praise; desiring the blood of sacrifices, the bondage of all nations, and the beauty of wives.' Book Eleven Book Eleven

It is difficult, or rather impossible, to please everyone: there is not as much variety in faces as there is in opinions. In my explanation of the twelve prophets, I seemed longer to some than necessary; and for this reason, in my commentary on Daniel, I strived for brevity, except for the last and penultimate vision, in which I had to stretch my speech due to the enormity of the obscurity. Especially in the exposition of the seventy-two weeks, in which I discussed what the African writer of time, Origen, and Eusebius of Caesarea, as well as Clement, a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria, and Apollinaris of Laodicea, said. And Hippolytus, and the Hebrews, and Tertullian, have all agreed to this in a nutshell, leaving it up to the reader's judgment to choose among the many. Therefore, what we have done out of respect for judgment, and for the honor of those who would read, may not please some, who desire to know not the opinions of the Ancients, but our own view. To them, an easy response is that I did not wish to accept one in such a way as to appear to condemn others. And certainly, if such esteemed and erudite men displease fastidious readers, what would they have done to me, who, by the weakness of my little talent, am

exposed to the bites of envious people? But if those aforementioned men, whom I have called masters of the Church, understand this, let them know that I do not approve the faith of everyone, who certainly contradict each other; but I have said this in the manner of Joseph and Porphyry, who have debated extensively on this question. And if in the interpretation of the statue and its feet, and the inconsistency of its fingers, I have interpreted the iron and the clay as representing the Roman Empire, which at first may be strong but later weak, let them not blame me but the Prophets. For it is not proper to flatter princes in such a way that the truth of the Holy Scriptures is neglected, nor is it a general offense to criticize one person. When this was avoided by the kind attention of those close to me, it was suddenly taken away by the judgment of God, so that the support of my friends and the schemes of my rivals were revealed. But let's leave that for another time: now let's continue with what we have started. The eleventh book on Isaiah, O virgin of Christ Eustochium, because it will deal with a large part of the history, will be easier in the beginning and up to the first two parts; the rest should be told in a similar way, and so we must strive for brevity without causing any harm to the understanding.

36:1-10

(Chapter 36—Verse 1 and following) And it came to pass in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway to the washer's field. And Eliakim the son of Hiliah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him. And Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you rest this trust of yours?' By what plan and courage do you prepare to rebel? On whom do you have confidence, because you have turned away from me? Look, you trust in this broken reed staff, in Egypt: if a man leans on it, it will enter into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to all who trust in him. But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is it not he whose heights and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'? And now make a deal with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, and you will not be able to provide riders for them. And how will you withstand the face of one judge from my lord's servants? And if you rely on Egypt: and on chariots, and on horsemen: and now, did I ascend to this land without the Lord, to destroy it? The Lord said to me: Go up on this land and destroy it. The history is clear and does not require interpretation: and this same thing is reported more fully in the volumes of Kings and Chronicles. In the third year of Hosea the son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. And afterwards: In the Lord God of Israel he trusted, and there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among those who came before him. He clung to the Lord and did not turn away from his commandments. He did the commandments that the Lord had given to Moses. Therefore, the Lord was with him, and he acted wisely in all that he did (2 Kings 18:2,7). But he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. In the sixth year of his reign, Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, captured Samaria and took away the ten tribes of Israel that were called Israel. He deported them to Assyria and settled them in Halah and Habor, along the rivers of the Gozan, in

the cities of the Medes (2 Kings 17 and 18). After seven years, that is, in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, the king of Assyria, Sennacherib, entered Judah and besieged its fortified cities, intending to capture them. And when he besieged Lachish, Hezekiah sent messengers to him, saying: 'I have sinned, withdraw from me and whatever you impose on me, I will bear.' And when he had paid three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold to the king's command, the king of Assyria broke down the doors of the temple of the Lord and took away its panels, which he himself had put up, and he sent the Tartan and the Rab-saris and the Rabshakeh with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. And when they had come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the highway to the washer's field, and they called for the king. But Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, went out to them, along with the court secretary, Shebna, and the court historian, Joah, the son of Asaph. Rabshekah addressed them as follows: "Tell Hezekiah: This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says... and so on, as recorded in the history. In this, we can see the arrogance of Rabshekah, who, in a manner contrary to true strength, imitates the custom of the prophets. While they usually begin their pronouncements with 'This is what the Lord says,' he now says, 'This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says.' But Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, went out to him, along with the royal secretary Shebna and the court official Joah son of Asaph. Eliakim is the same person mentioned in the Vision of the Valley of Zion (see Isaiah 22:20-21): I will call my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, and I will clothe him in your robe and fasten your sash around him. I will hand your authority over to him, and he will be like a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the people of Judah, and so on. But these things are said to Shebna, who was the governor of the Temple before him, of whom it is written in the same vision: Go and enter to him who dwells in the tabernacle, to Shebna the governor of the Temple, whom the Hebrews say handed over his hands to the Assyrians, terrified by Rabsaris' threats, and betrayed the lower part of Jerusalem to the enemy, and except for the fortress of Zion and the Temple, nothing else remained that the Assyrian did not hold. Where are those who think that Sobna, who is now going out with Eliakim and Joah to meet Rabsacen, is the same person as before. There, Sobna, the head of the Temple, is said to be captured by the Assyrians; but here Sobna is a scribe, that is, a γραμματεὺς, who is called Sopher in Hebrew, and is the same as the previous one. Rabsacen, on the other hand, is believed to be the son of Isaiah the Jewish prophet, who also was a traitor; and the other son of Isaiah, who is called Jasub, is said to be left behind, which means 'left' in our language. Others, on the other hand, think that he was a Samaritan, and therefore knew the Hebrew language, and boldly and impiously blasphemed the Lord. Let us consider the words of Rabshakeh; and first what he says: You trust in this broken reed, in Egypt, is false: for no history tells that Hezekiah sent to the Egyptians and asked for the help of Pharaoh. And what he infers: If you answer me, we trust in the Lord our God, is true. But again, he joins a lie to the truth, that Ezechias took away its high places and altars. For he did this not against God, but for God, so that idolatry and ancient error being destroyed, he commanded God to be worshipped in Jerusalem, where his Temple was: although we read that by a very bad custom, the people offered sacrifices to God on altars already built on mountains and hills. And he, wanting to show the scarcity of the besieged, promises two thousand horses, of which Ezechias cannot provide the riders, not because of the weakness of the people of Judah, who lacked knowledge of riding: but by observing the commandments of God, who had commanded Israel through Moses concerning the king: He shall not multiply horses for himself, nor have many wives. And he said to me, 'By

yourself, you cannot withstand the servant of Sennacherib, who am the least of his servants, how then will you withstand the great power of the king? And to what he had said, if you answer me, we trust in the Lord our God, he cunningly and wisely responded that he had come not by his own will, but by the command of the Lord. The Lord said to me, Go upon this land and destroy it. And this is the proof: certainly, without the will of the Lord, I could not have come here.' But when I come and capture many cities, and part of Jerusalem remains untouched, it is evident that I have come by its will. I read in a certain Commentary that the same person is Sennacherib who also captured Samaria, which is completely false. For the Sacred History recounts that first Phul, the king of the Assyrians, devastated the ten tribes under Manahen, the king of Israel. Secondly, Theglathphalasar came against Samaria under Phacee, the son of Romelia of Israel. Salmanasar III, under the reign of King Hoshea of Israel, supposedly captured the entire city of Samaria (2 Kings 15:17). Sargon II is said to be the fourth king who captured Ashdod (Isaiah 20). Asarhaddon, the fifth king, supposedly relocated Israel and sent the Samaritans as guardians to the land of Judah (2 Kings 17). Sennacherib, the sixth king, besieged Jerusalem after capturing Lachish and other cities of Judah during the reign of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18). However, some believe that these names could refer to one and the same king with multiple names.

36:11-15

(Verse 11 and following) And Eliakim, Sobna, and Joah said to Rabshakeh, 'Speak to your servants in the Aramaic language, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in Judahite in the hearing of the people who are on the wall.' But Rabshakeh said to them, 'Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words? Has he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?' And Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the language of Judah and said, Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus says the king: Let not Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you out of his hand. Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Do not listen to Hezekiah. For the king of Assyria says: The testimony of Rabshakeh is that he relies on the Lord, who has captured all the cities of Judah and said to the people: Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the multitude that is with him, for there are more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; with us is the Lord our God, our helper, who fights for us. And the people were strengthened by the words of Hezekiah, king of Judah. But Sennacherib wants to destroy what Hezekiah has built; and he speaks to the people, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, and do not put your trust in the Lord our God.' And as Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah humbly implore, 'Speak to your servants in the Syrian language, for we understand; and do not speak to us in the language of Judah in the hearing of the people who are on the wall,' it means: 'Why is it necessary to stir up the people with false terrors and boast of empty power?' Speak the language that the people do not understand. For if we have knowledge of your language: and we know the Syrian language, which is common to both. To which Rabshakeh replied arrogantly: Did my master send me to your lord and to you, and not rather to the men who sit on the wall? And he increased the threat, saying that they should eat their own feces and drink the urine of their own feet with them? By these means he showed that they were to be taken by hunger, scarcity, and thirst. At the same time he joins enticement with fear, so that he may deceive those whom he did not conquer with terror, with promises and persuasion, saying from the speech of the king

Assyrians.

36:16-18

(Vers. 16 seqq.) Join me in blessing, and come out to me, and each one eat his own vineyard, and each one eat his own fig tree, and each one drink the water of his own cistern, until I come and take you to a land, which is like your own land: a land of wheat and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. Do not let Hezekiah disturb you, saying: The Lord will deliver us. Have the gods of the nations ever delivered each one his own land from the hand of the king of Assyria? This is what is read in the Book of Kings: 'Do with me what is beneficial, and come out to me' (2 Kings 18:31). Therefore, the meaning is the same. 'Do what is profitable for you,' he says, 'and may it contribute to your blessing.' Whether he is saying this: 'Bless the Assyrian king and praise him, and confess the Lord, so that you may obtain rewards, and until I return from Egypt, or when Lobna is captured, I will return. Dwell in your city and enjoy your possessions.' Later, however, I will come and lead you to a land that is similar to your land, with wheat, wine, and oil. It does not mention the name of the region, because it could not find an equivalent land promise: but it promises similarity. For each person desires what they were born into. Some think that the land of Media is promised to them, which had a similarity to the land of Judaea, both in location and in crops. And this is what he brings up.

36:19-22

(Verse 19 and following) Where is the God of Hamath and Arpad? Where is the God of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria from my hand? Who among all the gods of these lands has delivered their land from my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand? But they were silent and did not answer him a word. For the king had commanded, 'Do not answer him.' This shows that all these gods have served Samaria, and that is why it has been captured. But, he said, if we easily overcame ten tribes with such great gods presiding over them, how much more easily will we conquer you, or rather Jerusalem alone, with one God as our ruler? And all the people remained silent and did not answer him anything. For they had received a command from the king not to answer him. Truly, Ezechias is just, doing everything faithfully and with wisdom. Therefore, he had ordered them not to answer the Assyrian blasphemer, so as not to provoke him to greater blasphemies. Where it is written: Do not kindle the coals of a sinner (Ecclesiastes 8:13); and in the psalm we read: When the sinner rose up against me, I was silent and humbled myself, and I kept silent about the good things (Psalm 38:23); and again: Set, O Lord, a guard at my mouth, and a fortified gate at my lips: do not incline my heart to the words of evil (Psalm 140:3).

37:1-7

(Chapter 37, Verse 1 and following) Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary and Joah son of Asaph the recorder went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him what the field commander had said. When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and went into the temple of the Lord. He sent Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary and the leading priests, all wearing sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. They told him, 'This is what Hezekiah says: This day is a day of distress and rebuke and disgrace, as when children come to the moment of birth and there is no strength to deliver them.' If you want to know how the Lord your God heard the words of Rabsaces, whom the

king of the Assyrians, his lord, sent to blaspheme the living God and to reproach the words that the Lord your God heard, lift up a prayer for the remainder that have been found. Then the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, and Isaiah said to them: 'Thus you shall say to your master: Thus says the Lord: Do not be afraid of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria blasphemed me.' Behold, I will give to him the spirit, and he will hear the message, and he will return to his land, and I will make him fall by the sword in his land. Leaving aside the clear things, let us discuss only those in which the hidden meaning is present. They tear their clothes because they hear Rabshekah blaspheming. The king himself tears his own clothes because he believed it to be his and the people's sins that Rabshekah has come all the way to the gate of Jerusalem and has spoken such things against the Lord. Whereupon, the high priest, because he believed that he had blasphemed the Savior, tore his garments (Matt. XXVI); and Paul and Barnabas, when the people of Lystra wanted to worship them as gods, tore their garments (Acts XIV). Therefore, he wrapped himself in sackcloth for the royal worship, and as he walked from the palace to the temple, he sent Eliakim the high priest, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests to Isaiah the son of Amos the prophet. In this, the humility and prudence of the king are worth considering. He himself proceeded to the Temple; the leaders of the people and the elders of the priests, not dressed in priestly garments but covered in sackcloth, sent to Isaiah son of Amos, the prophet. Concerning him, it is read in the Book of Kings: He himself was covered with a mantle, and entered the house of the Lord, Eliakim the steward of the house, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests sent covered in sacks to Isaiah the prophet, son of Amos (2 Kings 19:1-2). Here, because Isaiah himself was writing the history about himself, he did not call himself a Prophet, but the son of a Prophet; there, because another person was writing the history, he writes about him as a Prophet. Indeed, we read this also concerning the Evangelist Matthew, that Matthew himself said that he was a tax collector (Matt. IX); but the other Evangelists remained silent about the name tax collector, and only mentioned his apostolic dignity; and that in the ranks of the Apostles, he is second in his own account and first in the others'. And they said to him: Thus says Hezekiah, not a king, not swollen with the name of empire: The day of tribulation, and the day of corruption, and the day of blasphemy: the day of our tribulation, the day of God's correction, the day of the enemies' blasphemy. And the likeness of a woman in labor and in distress, that she has come to labor and cannot give birth, nor can she say: We have conceived, O Lord, from fear of you, and we have grieved and given birth to the spirit of salvation. It follows: As how should the Lord your God hear the words of Rabshekah (Isaiah XXVI, 18, according to the LXX). For we do not dare to say O Lord, Lord of all, when such great wrath is upon us; but we say, your Lord. And we have this confidence of vengeance: because the living God is blasphemed by the worshipper of dead idols. And they reproached with the words, which the Lord your God heard: Therefore, lift up our lying prayer: not for all the people who have already perished, but for the remnants that are besieged. And when the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, the name of the Prophet was silent again, so that he would preserve the humility that had been started. And Isaiah anticipated them: for with the same spirit with which he knew the future, he had also heard the absent king; and he said what they should respond to their Lord, humbled in this trust of conscience. He said, 'Say to your master, who is your Lord; for my Lord says these things: Do not fear the words by which not you, but I am blasphemed. Nor do I say that I am going to do all the things that the king of the Assyrians wishes, lest it seem that I am boasting of my power; but that a spirit, not of God, but an adversary, is to be given to him. And upon hearing the message, let him return to his own

land, and let him fall by the sword in it, so that both things which Hezekiah desired equally, he would hear: that he would be freed from the siege and danger, and that the angry and hostile king would die in his own land.' If someone asks why the book of Prophecies, which is written in the volumes of Kings and Chronicles, seems mixed, let them consider that the prophecy of history is linked, both concerning the liberation of the city and the destruction of Assyria, and concerning the return of the sun with ten and fifteen years elapsed, which is both prophecy and history.

37:8-13

(Verse 8 and following) But when Rabshakeh returned, he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. And he heard that Tirhakah, the king of Ethiopia, had come out to fight against him. When he heard this, he sent messengers to Hezekiah saying: 'Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah, king of Judah, saying: Do not let your God deceive you, in whom you trust, saying: Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.' Behold, you have heard about all that the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands they have devastated, and can you be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed: Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the sons of Eden who were in Telassar? Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, or of Hena, or of Ivvah? These words were written in the Book of Kings and Chronicles, that the commander Rabshekah had left the siege of Jerusalem according to the will of the Lord, and went to his master, who he had learned was besieging Lachish, having either abandoned or captured it, to attack Libnah. He also, upon hearing that Tarachamregem, the king of the Ethiopians, was preparing to make war against him, went out to meet him, and yet sent messengers to Hezekiah and letters, in order to frighten those whom he had not yet conquered by force. And just as he had said to the people, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you' (2 Kings 18:29), he speaks the same blasphemy to the king, saying, 'Do not let your God deceive you' (2 Kings 19:10). And he gives examples from the past, how their gods were unable to deliver other lands from their hands, and therefore Jerusalem will not be able to be delivered either. In his enumeration of the other nations, Ana () and Ava () are mentioned, which the Seventy mixed, saying, anavegava, and they called it a conjunction, that is, vau, between the two nations Ana and Ava, in the Hebrew language, so that to those unaware it seems one nation or city. We pass over what is clear, so that we may dwell on uncertainties. Herodotus relates that Sennacherib, the king of the Assyrians, fought against the Egyptians and besieged Pelusium. And when the mounds for capturing the city had been built, Taracham, the king of the Ethiopians, came to their aid, and in one night, near Jerusalem, 185,000 of the Assyrian army perished from plague. This is reported by Herodotus and most fully by Berosus, a writer of Chaldean history, whose credibility must be sought from his own books.

37:14-20

(Verses 14ff.) And Hezekiah took the letters from the hand of the messengers, and he read them, and he went up to the house of the Lord, and he spread them out before the Lord. And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, saying: Lord, God of hosts, God of Israel, who resides above the cherubim, you are the only God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Incline your ear, Lord, and hear; open your eyes, Lord, and see. And hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he sent to blaspheme the living God. Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have made the lands and regions of the desert; and they have given their gods to the fire: for they were

not gods, but the work of the hands of men, wood and stones; and they have destroyed them. And now, O Lord our God, save us from his hand: and let all the kingdoms of the earth know that You alone are God. Against the blasphemies of King Sennacherib, Ezechias took up his arms. And he goes again to the Temple, and spreads his letters before the Lord. Before, he had remained silent, for he did not dare to open his mouth in the Temple, terrified by the fear of the Lord, nor to offer free prayers to God. But now, because he had already heard Isaiah saying, 'Do not be afraid of the words that you have heard, with which the boys of the king of Assyria blasphemed me,' and so on, he boldly prays to the Lord and asserts that God alone is the living one, whom we understand to be idols, the images of the dead. And he brings forth this point: Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have deserted the lands and regions of their gods and have given their gods to the fire. For they were not gods, but the works of human hands, wood and stone. And they shattered them, as proven in many histories, which write that the kings of Persia came to Greece and destroyed and plundered the temples of the Greeks. And he demands revenge, so that by this occasion, all kingdoms might know that God alone is able to free his own from danger.

37:21-25

(v. 21 seqq.) However, Isaiah (also known as Josiah), the son of Amos, sent to Hezekiah saying: Thus says the Lord God of Israel: concerning what you asked me about Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, this is the word that the Lord spoke about him: He has despised you and mocked you, O virgin daughter of Zion. After you, the daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head. Whom did you reproach and blaspheme? Against whom did you raise your voice and lift your eyes in pride, to the Holy One of Israel? You reproached the Lord in the hand of your servants and said: In the multitude of my chariots I have ascended (Al. I will ascend) the height of the mountains, the peaks of Lebanon, and I will cut down its lofty cedars, and its chosen fir trees, and I will enter the height of its summit, the Carmel of its cliff. I dug and drank water, and I dried up with the sole of my foot all the rivers of the banks. Because Hezekiah prayed to the Lord so boldly, and did not send to Isaiah, as he had sent before, the Prophet himself does not go to him, but sends messengers to him, who would say to him in the words of God: concerning Sennacherib, against whom you pray, this is the Lord's sentence: The virgin of Zion and the daughter of Jerusalem (who is called virgin and daughter because, while all the nations worship the idols of dead men, she alone preserves the purity of the religion of God and the worship of the one divinity) has derided you and despised you; and in order not to incite greater blasphemy against you, she did not respond immediately, but after you departed, she moved her head, certain of vengeance and secure in punishment. And she spoke these words: You have not sinned against me, but against the Lord; and it is not for your own sake, but for the sake of your servants, that the pride of the blasphemer becomes greater. For you have said that you would ascend to the heights of the mountains and the peaks of Mount Lebanon in your chariots, and cut down its tall cedars and its firs. This we can take either metaphorically of all nations and their rulers, or of Jerusalem, which is interpreted as Lebanon, so that its cedars and firs refer to the powerful and the nobles; but the height of its summit and the leap of Carmel refer to the Temple. For he had said above: Have you not heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands that they have destroyed? Therefore, you will not be able to be saved. And what he infers: I dug and drank water, and I dried up with the sole of my foot all the streams of the ramparts, according to the story, this can be understood that, due to the multitude of the army, he has dried up all the rivers so that he is compelled to dig wells for himself.

According to the translation: he has devastated all the peoples who are sometimes described by the names of waters with his own army. For whom alone they translated the Seventy, and I made the bridge (i.e. the powerful one, or the power), and I made the waters deserted, and all the congregation of waters: so that no nation might have any unpassable way for itself, but that it might trample the waters underfoot above all the peoples.

37:26-29

(Verse 26 and following) Have you not heard what I did to him in the past? From ancient times I formed it, and now I have brought it forth, and it has become a ruin of the hills that fight against me, and of fortified cities. The inhabitants of those cities were brought low, they trembled and were confused. They became like the grass of the field, and the green herb, and the roof grass that withered before it could mature. I have seen your dwelling place, your going out and your coming in, and your rage against me, when you raged against me. Your pride reaches my ears, so I will put a hoop in your nostrils and a bit in your lips, and I will bring you back on the path from which you came. These words are to be understood from the perspective of God in response to the blasphemy of the Assyrians: Do you not know that what you have done, you have done by my will, and that I have foretold these things, and commanded you to do them through you? Therefore, what I decreed long ago has been fulfilled in its time, that the hills, that is, the rulers who were previously fighting among themselves, and the heavily fortified cities, by my strengthening of my hand and without providing assistance as usual, would be uprooted and tremble and perish, and instead of olives and vineyards, and fruitful trees, there would be grass and weeds, and plants that are beaten down by hay and wither before reaching maturity. Therefore, I have known both your sitting down and your going out and your coming in beforehand, and the madness with which you were about to rage against me, as prophesied by the prophets. I spoke through them, knowing that you alone would declare, 'I will ascend into heaven, I will set my throne above the stars of heaven, and I will be like the Most High.' Therefore, your fury and your pride have reached my ears, and I will no longer bear you so that you may understand that you were able to act not by your own power, but by my will. For impious nations and unfruitful trees were deserving that they be cut down and fall by you, like my axe and saw. Therefore, I will place a circle or a bridle in your nostrils, so that I may restrain blasphemy from your mouth, and you may not dare to speak such things again; and I will apply a bridle to your lips, which will tame your ferocity and bring you back to the Assyrians. With this translation, the Scripture also uses it in the Psalms against the wicked: Put a bridle and a halter on their jaws, who do not come near you (Ps. 31:12).

37:30-32

(Vers. 30 seqq.) But this will be a sign for you: Eat in this year what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that; then in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. The remaining survivors of the house of Judah shall take root downward and bear fruit upward; for out of Jerusalem shall come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. All these things the Prophet speaks through messengers to Hezekiah, what Sennacherib said, what the Lord answered him: now he speaks to him directly, so that he may not doubt the things that were said to come. And for this reason, especially, the words of the prophets had credibility among the people: because they not only remembered things that would happen many centuries in the future, but also things that would

happen immediately, and would be fulfilled after a short period of time: and that within two years, the Assyrian king would perish and security would be restored to the city of Jerusalem. This will be, he says, a sign of what I predict will happen, that in this year you will eat what grows naturally. Or according to the Seventy, those things which you harvest first. But in the second year, according to Symmachus, eat from the fruits: or according to the same people, those things which have sprouted from the past crops and fallen to the ground as seed. But in the third year, after the Assyrians have been driven away and the siege has been lifted, sow, reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits of them. Indeed, the remaining fragments of this small city, which are now being surrounded by hostile armies, do not believe that they will escape. They will receive such an abundance and happiness of all things that they will be filled, like a tree firmly rooted in a high mountain, with the thickest of fruits. For the remnants will come forth from Jerusalem and from Mount Zion, and they will fill the land of Judaea, not by their own merit, but by the mercy of God, indeed by the zeal that He has shown towards His wicked people.

37:33-34

(Verse 33, 34.) Therefore, thus says the Lord about the king of Assyria: He shall not enter this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with a shield, nor build siege works against it. By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not enter this city, says the Lord. I will defend this city and save it for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David. It turns back to its purpose and dispels present fear after the hope of future things. For there was not so much joy upon the things which she had promised would come after a long time, as there was care for the impending. But what she says about Assyria returning and not lifting up a shield against Jerusalem, not shooting arrows, nor that the city should be fortified with walls and a rampart, and that the enemy would return by the way he had come, and that the city should be freed from the present siege, and finally she brings forth: for my sake and for the sake of my servant David, this signifies that they are preserved not by their own merit, but by the clemency of God, indeed by the memory of their father David. In which both his own negligence and that person's trustworthiness and justice are admonished, because God loves justice to such an extent that he protects even the descendants of holy men, not by their own merit, but by the virtue of their ancestors.

37:36-38

(Vrs. 36 seqq.) However, the Angel of God went out and struck down in the Assyrian camp 185,000 men; and when they arose in the morning, behold, all the dead bodies. Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned to Nineveh, and he lived there. And it came about as he was worshiping in the temple of Nesrach his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, killed him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place. One hundred and eighty-five thousand brave men are killed by one Angel in one night, and the cruel death of the slain runs rampant without wounds, by the will of God, separating the souls from their bodies. On this, it is written in the Chronicles: And the Lord sent an Angel, who struck down every strong man, warrior, and prince of the army of the king of Assyria: and he returned with disgrace to his own land (2 Chronicles 32:24). He was saved for this reason, so that he would know the power of God and silence the blasphemous mouths: and he became a witness of that majesty, which he had recently condemned. And what he experienced: And they rose in the morning, whether Israelites or the rest of his armies, let us accept: although it is written in the Book

of Kings, that when the king himself rose in the morning, he saw all the bodies of the dead (3 Kings 19). Pharaoh also suffered ten plagues in Egypt, so that he might perish in the end: which this person is also going to suffer. For when he returned to the city of Nineveh, the capital of his kingdom, and worshipped in the temple of his god Nesrach, as if he had achieved victory over his enemies, and walked triumphantly and joyfully in the shrine of his false deity, the despiser of the true God is killed in the temple of the false god. It was not the sword that was the weapon of the Angels, which was common to many, but the parricide of his sons. When they fled to the land of Ararat, which is known as Armenia, Asaraddon succeeded his father, whom the Scripture testifies sent inhabitants to Samaria so that the land would not remain uncultivated. But the region of Ararat in Armenia is a plain through which the Araxes River flows, of incredible fertility, near the foothills of the Taurus mountain, which extends all the way there. Therefore, the Ark in which Noah was saved with his children, when the Flood ceased, was not taken to the mountains of Armenia in general, which are called Ararat, but to the highest peaks of the Taurus mountain, which tower over the plains of Ararat.

38:1-3

(Chapter 38, Verses 1 onwards) In those days, Hezekiah fell sick even unto death. And Isaiah, the son of Amos the prophet, came to him, and said to him: Thus saith the Lord: Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live. And Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the Lord, saying: I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight: and Hezekiah wept with great weeping. Whom the Lord loves, He corrects and disciplines every son whom He receives (Prov. III). In order that Ezechias' heart would not be lifted up after incredible triumphs, and victory over the midst of captivity, he is visited with infirmity of his body, and hears that he will die, so that, being converted, he may turn to the Lord's judgment. Indeed, we read about this in the prophet Jonah, and in the threats that are said to be future against David, which did not happen, not because God changed His judgment, but because He incited the human race to the knowledge of Himself. For the Lord is remorseful over evils. And Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, because he could not go to the Temple. To the wall of the Temple, next to which Solomon had built a palace. Or rather, next to Jeremiah, to his heart; who calls the heart a wall, so that with his whole mind he might pray to the Lord. And he said: I beseech you, Lord, remember, please, how I have walked before you in truth, and with a perfect heart, and that I have done what is good in your eyes. And knowing that he is about to die, he does not pray for a long life and many years, but instead asks what he should offer in God's judgement. For he knew that Solomon pleased God because he did not ask for a longer life; but going to the Lord, he recounts his works, how he walked before Him in truth and with a perfect heart. Happy is the conscience that remembers good deeds during times of affliction: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8). And when elsewhere it is written: Who shall glory in having a pure heart (Prov. XX, 9)? This is solved as follows: the perfection of the heart is now said to consist in the fact that it has destroyed idols, perverted the vessels of the temple of Baal, broken the brazen serpent, and done other things that Scripture mentions. However, he wept with great weeping because of the Lord's promise to David, which he saw would perish in his death. For at that time Hezekiah had no sons; for after his death, Manasseh, when he was twelve years old, began to reign in Judah. From which it is clear that three years after his life was granted, Manasseh was born. Therefore, all this

weeping is because he despaired of Christ being born from his own seed. Others assert that even holy men are afraid of death due to uncertainty of judgement and ignorance of God's sentence, of which seat they will inhabit. And at the same time, the question of fate is resolved, and the bonds of necessity and causes, in that the day of death is by no means appointed to each individual, but rather someone may live or die by the will of God and unknown mortal causes, especially since the appointed necessity of death is now delayed, and we have read of many who were resurrected after death.

38:4-8

(Vers. 4 seqq.) And the word of the Lord came to Isaiah, saying: Go and tell Hezekiah: Thus says the Lord God of David, your father: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add fifteen years to your days, and I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will protect it. And this shall be a sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do this word that he has spoken: Behold, I will turn back the shadow of the steps by which it has gone down on the sun dial of Ahaz ten steps backwards: and the sun returned ten steps by the same steps that it had gone down. The history, which is read consecutively in the volume of Kings, is referred to in a seemingly backwards order, as if it were a prophetic account. While Hezekiah was weeping with great sorrow, before Isaiah had left the middle part of the courtyard, the word of the Lord came to him, saying: Return and tell Hezekiah, the leader of my people: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. And Hezekiah said to Isaiah: What will be the sign that the Lord will heal me? To whom did the prophet respond: This will be the sign from the Lord that the Lord will do the word he has spoken: Do you want the shadow to approach by so many lines, or do you want it to go back the same number of steps? To whom Hezekiah said: It is easy for the shadow to advance ten lines, but I do not want it to happen; rather, I want it to go back ten steps. And when Isaiah invoked the power of the Lord, the sign was fulfilled. Isaiah was commanded to have a lump of fresh figs brought, which they did, and they placed it on the wound, and he was healed. But the Prophet of the Lord returns to the king by the command, in order to heal the one who had struck him; and he is called Hezekiah, the leader of his people, and the son of David, whose works he followed, for he did what was right in all things as David his father had done; and his prayer is heard, and tears are seen, for he walked before the Lord in truth and with a perfect heart, and he wept with great weeping; and he did what was pleasing in his eyes. Fifteen years are added to his life, which he did not ask for, and moreover, while he is still alive, the security of the kingdom is promised to him. But if, as some think, to live in the body is a condemnation, and according to what is said: Return, my soul, into your rest (Ps. 114:7). And in another place: Bring my soul out of prison (Ps. 141:8), death is to be desired so that we may be freed from prison: how then does the Lord now grant as a favor that he who was to be set free should still live for fifteen years in prison? However, a sign is given that the sun turns back by ten degrees, which we turn according to Symmachus into lines and a sundial, which understood the degrees in the lines in order to make a clearer sense to those reading. Whether the steps were constructed with mechanical skill, so that as the shadow descended, it would mark the hours. This sign was a type of both the present time and the future, so that just as the sun would return to the beginning of its course, so would Hezekiah's life return to the disclosed years; and for us who live in the week and the octave, through the resurrection of Christ, the spaces of life are extended. The holy places in this province are accustomed to show within the enclosed Temple the steps of the

house of Hezekiah, or of Ahaz, which the sun descended through them. But I will never believe, not to mention Ahaz, who was a wicked king; but of any righteous king, that their house was in the Temple of God: since it is said that Solomon, among other things, offended God because he built on a high place, from where he used to look down on the courtyard of the Temple while walking in the tower of the palace (3 Kings 9).

38:9

(Verse 9) The Scripture of King Hezekiah of Judah when he became ill and recovered from his illness. LXX. The Prayer of King Hezekiah of Judah when he was sick and rose from his sickness. I wonder why only the Seventy have included this prayer in the scripture, since the prayer is called Thephellath (), not Machthar (). which is written in the current place; otherwise the prayer would be said subsequently, if it were about the present time and not the past. For it is evident that, after he had regained his health, he wrote this, as a testimony not of speech, but of thanksgiving for the favor he had received.

38:10-14

(Verse 10 onwards) I said in the middle of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I have sought the remainder of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord God in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more, nor the inhabitant of rest. My generation has ceased: it has been taken away and rolled up from me like a shepherd's tent. My life has been cut off as by a weaver: while I was still beginning, it cut me off: from morning until evening you will make an end of me. I hoped until morning; like a lion, it has crushed all my bones. From morning until evening you will finish me. LXX I said in the height of my days, I will go to the gates of hell: I will leave the remaining years: I said, I will no longer see the salvation of God in the land of the living, nor will I see any more with those who dwell: I am cut off from my kin. He has gone out and departed from me, like a tent that is loosened from its moorings; like the thread, my spirit has departed, when it is cut from the weaver. On that day I was delivered until morning: like a lion, so has it broken all my bones. From day to night I was delivered. He narrates what he silently thought during the time of pressing distress and imminent weakness; I said, he says, in my heart, in the midst of my days, or as Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion have interpreted, in the weakness and silence of my days, for which the LXX have interpreted it as 'exalted' due to the similarity of the letters, reading 'Rame' instead of 'Dame': although some have turned it into 'Dame', so that the sense is 'In the blood of my days', when my blood, my destruction, was eagerly awaited. Therefore, in despair, I said: I will go to the gates of hell, either by the common law of nature, or those gates about which the Psalmist sings that he has been freed: 'You raised me up from the gates of death, that I may proclaim all your praises at the gates of the daughter of Zion' (Psalm 9:15). I believe these are the gates of hell, which do not prevail against Peter (Matthew 16), for he slept in the fullness of his days. The saints fulfill their days, as was the case with Abraham, who died full of days in old age (Genesis 25). But the sinners and the wicked die in the midst of their days, of whom the Psalmist also speaks: Men of blood and deceit will not live out half their days (Ps. 54:25). For they do not fulfill the works of virtue, nor do they strive to repent and amend their sins. Therefore, in the middle of the course of life, and in the darkness of errors, they will be led to Tartarus. I sought, he says, the remaining years of my life, not thinking that I would live any longer. I said, I shall not see the Lord God in the land of the living. For in Hebrew, the name 'Jah' is placed twice, which in the final

syllable sounds 'Alleluia', for which the Seventy translated: 'I will not see the salvation of God in the land of the living' (Ps. CXIV, 9). It is also written in another place: 'I will please the Lord in the land of the living' (Ps. CXIV, 9). And again: 'I will please the Lord in the light of the living' (Ps. LV, 9). Therefore, the very region of the Saints is called the light of the living. For God is not the God of the dead, but of the living (Matt. XXII). But this is everything that he fears: not to deserve to behold the salvation of God led to the underworld. It follows: I will not look upon man anymore, and the inhabitant of quietness. This we once connected with the following verse due to the ambiguity of the word; for the Hebrew word Holed, if read or written as Eled, means rest; if read or written as Edel, it means the West. Therefore, he fears that he does not dwell in quietness with the saints and men of God, that he does not see the Lord in the land of the living, that his generation will not dwell in an unshaken tabernacle, that it will not be cut off from the likeness of the web at the beginning of light, and that Christ will not arise from his seed. But as for our body being called a tabernacle, the Apostle instructs, saying: We who are in this tabernacle groan, burdened (2 Cor. V, 4). In the morning, he says, you will finish me until evening: I hoped until morning: which Job also says he endured in his distress and bodily torments (Job IV), when in daylight he awaited night, and in darkness awaited light, thinking that the punishments could be changed by the shifting of seasons. He knows this to be true who is burning with great fevers, whose internal fire, like that of a lion, consumes all his bones, and who does not think he will survive beyond the magnitude of his pain.

38:15

(Verse 15.) Like the chick of a swallow, so will I cry out: I will meditate as a dove: My eyes are weakened looking towards the height. Lord, I suffer violence; answer for me: what shall I say or what shall he answer me when he himself has done? LXX: Like a swallow, thus will I cry out; like a dove, thus will I meditate. For my eyes have failed from looking towards the height of heaven to the Lord: who delivers me, took away the pain of my soul, and he himself did it. Death was imminent, and the pain of illness weighing upon me, like a lion, was breaking all the bones of my body; but I, like a swallow and a dove, joined together day and night with weeping and moaning; and from God alone, who was able to help, I waited for assistance, with my eyes lifted up to the heights. And I said to him: I suffer more than my merits require; but even if I have gone astray, I will turn to the better; you answer for me: For it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy (Rom. 9:16). And it turns back again into itself: What can I say, or with what can I argue against my Creator? Or what will he answer to me, he who did himself what he wanted? Therefore, whatever he decides must be endured. The word for swallow, or swallow, as translated by the LXX, is written in Hebrew, Sus Agor (), which Aquila interpreted as horse Agor: Theodotius, Sis Agur (); for the middle vocal letter vau, if placed between two Samechs, is read as pig, and is called horse; if yod, it is read as swallow. However, Symmachus translated it as follows: As a swallow enclosed, so will I sing. This word is also found in Jeremiah, where it is written: The kite in the sky knew its time: the turtle-dove, and the swallow, and the stork kept their times (Jeremiah VIII, 7).

38:16-20

(Verse 16 onwards) I will consider all my years in the bitterness of my soul. Lord, if this is how one lives, and in such a life of my spirit, you will correct me and give me life. Behold, in peace is my

bitterest bitterness. But you have saved my soul from perishing: you have cast all my sins behind your back. For neither the underworld will confess to you, nor death praise you: those who descend into the pit will not await your truth. Living, the living himself will confess to you, as I do today. The father will make your truth known to the children. Lord, save me, and we will sing our songs all the days of our life in the house of the Lord. LXX. Lord, it was announced to you about her: and you have revived my spirit and comforted me. Behold, in peace is my bitterness: for you have saved my soul from perishing, and you have cast behind me all my sins. For neither will they praise you in hell, nor will the dead bless you. Nor will those who are in the underworld hope for your mercy: the living will bless you, just as I do. For from today I will make children who will proclaim your righteousness, O Lord of my salvation, and I will not rest, blessing you with the Psalter, all the days of my life in the presence of the house of God. Nothing of the long things of mortals lasts, and all the happiness of the world, while it is held, is lost. For when the time of tribulation comes, everything that is past does not help the one who endures. Hence, the foolish sentiment of Epicurus is, who claims that the remembrance of past good things mitigates present misfortunes. Therefore, Hezekiah says that he considers all the years of his reign, and of his past, as happiness believed to be bitter in the present. And because he is now secure, and does not suffer what is recounted, he philosophizes about the human condition, and says: Lord, if this is how we live, and this is the condition in which we are born, You have chastised me, but You have also given me life, and You have bestowed peace by driving away the Assyrian; but my peace has been more bitter to me than all bitterness, because with tranquility restored to the people, and the city secure, I alone have entered the threshold of death. But you have delivered my soul, so that it would not perish, either in this present life or in the future. You have cast all my sins behind me, so that I may not behold them in sadness, but rather contemplate your mercy. For hell and death will not confess or praise you, according to what is written: For in death there is no remembrance of you (Psalm 6:5). And here confession is understood not for repentance, but for glory and praise, as we also read in the Gospel, I confess to you, O Lord, Father of heaven and earth (Matthew 11:25). Those who descend into the pit will not expect your truth, he says, but rather your mercy, better than in the Septuagint. For he who is in hell does not expect the truth of judgment, but the mercy of God, especially when the Savior descended into hell to free the captives from the depths. They transferred the dead to the same place more clearly. The living, the living themselves will confess to you, just as I do today. And this confession is set forth for praise. For he does not confess his own crimes, but gives thanks to God; and there is no beautiful praise on the mouth of a sinner (Sirach 15). And when Hell and death do not confess or praise God, on the contrary, life and the living glorify the Lord. And what follows: The Father will make your truth known to your children, this signifies what is said in Deuteronomy: Ask your father, and he will tell you; your elders, and they will inform you (Deuteronomy 32, 7), so that God's mercy may be proclaimed to posterity through successions and individual generations. For this reason the LXX translate it: 'From today I will beget sons who will announce your righteousness.' And the causal conjunction connects the following with what came before: that indeed, living beings and he himself, who will beget sons from this day, might bless God, because it was certainly not within their power. For those children were not promised through the prophet, but rather through the present life. Especially since Manasseh, the most impious son, was born, who filled Jerusalem with blood from gate to gate, and did not bless but cursed God, persecuting his saints. Therefore we can say according to the Septuagint that he said, 'I will make children' instead of 'sons': but by 'children' we

understand either little ones, or young boys, or infants and later generations, so that all future posterity, knowing this, may praise his incredible mercy which he has obtained. Therefore save me, O Lord; and all who believe in you and are delivered by your help, may we sing to you in the Temple all the days of our life.

38:21-22

(Verses 21, 22.) And Isaiah commanded them to take a lump of figs and apply it to the boil, and he would be healed. And Hezekiah said that the sign would be that he would go up to the house of the Lord. This should be read before Hezekiah's prayer, or Scripture, which we have just interpreted: for the poultice was applied to the wound first, and the sign of future healing was requested from him before he thanked the Lord for healing him. The Hebrews say that the word Siin (סין), which the LXX omitted, means ulcer and not wound. For both Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion have interpreted it as sore, by which they want to understand a royal disease, which they think is contrary to, whether it is taken in food, or whatever sweet things are applied to the body. Therefore, in order to demonstrate the power of God, health is restored through harmful and adverse things. Others suspect Siin to be not an ulcer, but an abscess: when the body swells and becomes putrid, it is filled with pus. According to the art of doctors, all pus is drawn to the surface of the skin by applying dried and crushed figs: and therefore medicine should not be despised, which is based on use and experience: because God made this also. Therefore, the speech and expression of thanks have been written up to this point. But as for the sign that was given, the previous order of the story has narrated it.

39:1-2

(Chapter 39, verses 1 onwards) At that time Merodach Baladan, son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and gifts to Hezekiah, for he had heard that he had been sick and had recovered. And Hezekiah was pleased with them; and he showed them his treasury, the house of his precious things, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his whole armory, and all that was found in his treasuries. There was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah did not show them. Above we read that in the fourteenth year of the reign of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, the king of the Assyrians, ascended over all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. Then he besieged Lachish, passed through Libnah, sent part of his army to Jerusalem, and slaughtered one hundred and eighty-five thousand of his soldiers. He himself fled to Nineveh and was killed by his sons in the temple of his god. After that, his son Esarhaddon reigned in his place. Hezekiah became sick but was saved by a message from the prophet. A remarkable sign occurred when the sun turned back ten hours and nearly became a two-day event. Now we read that in that time, that is, in the same year in which all these things happened, Merodach Baladan, son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent books and gifts to Hezekiah; not Assaraddon, who had succeeded his father Sennacherib as king of the Assyrians, of whose death or life Scripture is silent. From this it is clear that there was another kingdom of the Assyrians and another of the Babylonians at that time. Finally, the Assyrians captured Samaria, that is, the ten tribes. But we read that Jerusalem was later conquered by the Chaldeans, whose king was Nebuchadnezzar. And because they practice the observation of the stars and have acquired knowledge of the courses of the stars through long use and exercise, which is also demonstrated in the birth of the Lord: they understood that the sun had reversed its course, the length of the day doubled, and they believed that it served the only

true God. And when they investigated the causes and reason for this miracle, with the rumor spreading to all nations, they learned that due to the illness of the king of Judah, even the course of the most brilliant constellation had changed. That it is not my opinion, but the faith of the Holy Scriptures, which testify with the words of Isaiah, who said among other things: Hezekiah himself, who closed the upper springs of the waters of Gihon and diverted them below to the west of the city of David. In all his works he prospered in whatever he desired; however, when the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had happened on the earth, God left him to be tested and to make known all that was in his heart (2 Chronicles 32:30, 31). Therefore, he was left to temptation because after such a great victory, and the return of the sun, and the congratulations of the most powerful kingdom, his heart was lifted up. Finally, in the same volume it is written: Many brought offerings and sacrifices to the Lord in Jerusalem, and gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah, and he was exalted in the sight of all the nations. In those days he became sick unto death, and he prayed to the Lord, and He heard him, and gave him a sign; but He did not repay him according to the benefits he had received, for his heart was lifted up and wrath came upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 32:23-24). And the holy Scripture again says that the exaltation of his heart was tempered by repentance, stating: 'And he was humbled thereafter, because his heart was lifted up, both he, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and therefore the Lord's wrath came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.' So he rejoiced at the arrival of the ambassadors of Merodach, whom the Hebrews consider to have been the father of Nebuchadnezzar; and in the bringing of gifts, and in the celebration of his health. And he showed them the house next to the Septuagint, which was translated by Symmachus for his spices; and the treasures of silver, and gold, and fragrances, and the best ointment: which is written in Hebrew, good oil; and all the treasures of the vessels of the treasure, or, as it is read there, of his vessels. But in the Persian language, riches are called Gaza: it is not a Hebrew word, but a Barbarian one. He said, there was no word (which according to Hebrew custom is often taken for a thing), that he did not show them in his house and in all his power. Wherefore God's most just wrath, since he manifested not only his treasures and palaces, but also the Temple: which surely was in his power, from whose gates he had already taken sheets of gold.

39:3-8

(Verse 3 onwards) Then Isaiah the Prophet came to King Hezekiah and said to him: What did these men say, and where did they come from to you? And Hezekiah said: They have come to me from a distant land, from Babylon. And he said: What did they see in your house? And Hezekiah said: They saw everything that is in my house; there was nothing, neither word nor thing, that I did not show them in my treasures. And Isaiah said to Hezekiah: Listen to the word of the Lord of hosts. Behold, the day will come, and everything that is in your house, and what your fathers have laid up until this day, will be carried away to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. And of your sons who shall come forth out of you, whom you shall beget, they will take away, and they will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. And Hezekiah said to Isaiah: Good is the word of the Lord which he has spoken. And he said: Let there be only peace and truth in my days. The Hebrews report that Hezekiah fell ill for this reason: because after the unheard of victory of the Jews and the death of the Assyrian king, he did not sing praises to the Lord, which Moses sang after the drowning of Pharaoh (Exod. XV), and Deborah after the killing of Sisera (Judges IV), and

Anna after the birth of Samuel (1 Samuel II). Hence, he was reminded of his weakness. And again, after regaining his health and the greatness of the sign, he offered another opportunity for pride, which as a wise man and worshiper of God, he should have avoided; not showing his wealth to foreigners, which he possessed by the grace of God. From which, according to the Laws of tropology, we learn that we should not throw pearls before swine, nor give what is holy to dogs (Matth. VII). For whoever has a faithful spirit conceals his affairs; and whoever does not do this, all his power is weakened; and his posterity perishes, and with the loss of manly strength, he is reduced to feminine softness (Prov. XI, 13-15). Therefore, Isaiah enters the king's presence and inquires as if unaware. What did these men say, and where did they come from? Two questions, what they said and where they came from, were asked. He responded to one, ignoring the other: this must be read with emphasis and a raised eyebrow: They came from a distant land, from Babylon: the longer the distance from where they came, the more glorious they are because of whom they came to see. And he said, they came to me; he should have said, they came to glorify God for the greatness of the sign, from Babylon, which is the most powerful city in the whole world. And Isaiah said again, 'What did they see in your house?' And he answered truthfully that they had seen everything in his house, and that he had not withheld anything from them in his treasures. But he kept silent about the other, which he feared would offend them, because he had shown them everything he had in his power, undoubtedly including the furnishings of the Temple. Therefore, Isaiah delivers the judgment of God's word: 'Listen to the word of the Lord of Hosts: A time will come when all these things that are in your house, acquired not by your own labor but by the labor of your fathers, will be transferred to Babylon, and from your descendants they will become eunuchs in the royal palace.' From where the Hebrews want Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who were of royal descent, to become eunuchs, it is beyond doubt that they served in the ministry of King Nebuchadnezzar. So Hezekiah said: It is a good word of the Lord that he has spoken. In this, he is criticized by the Hebrews for not imitating the goodness of Moses, who said to the Lord: Either forgive them this crime, or if you do not, then erase me from your book which you have written (Exodus 32:32). And so the Apostle Paul wishes to be accursed from Christ for his brethren who are Israelites (Rom. IX); and therefore, Hezekiah was not approved by God in His words who spoke in the following: 'Console, console my people,' says your God, so that by whom He had not prayed, they may be consoled by the mercy of the Lord.

40:1-2

(Chapter 40, Verses 1 onwards) Console, console my people, says your God: Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and call out to her; for her wickedness is complete, her iniquity is forgiven. She has received from the hand of the Lord double for all her sins. LXX: Console, console my people, says God. O priests, speak to the heart of Jerusalem; console her, for her humility is fulfilled. His sin has been forgiven, for he has received from the hand of the Lord double for all his sins. According to other interpreters, others are commanded to console the people of God and Jerusalem together. According to the Hebrew text, the people themselves are commanded to console, speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and advocate for her. Speaking to the heart of Jerusalem is the language of the Scriptures. For one who speaks to the mournful and soothes is called a consoler who speaks to the heart. Let us be taught by Sichem, the son of Hemor, who spoke corruptly to his heart about the defiled Dinah, and comforted her (Genesis XXXIV). And wherever you find something similar, it has this meaning. The reason for consolation is the forgiveness of sins, and

the cause of forgiveness is that he received double from the hand of the Lord for all his sins. For whoever knows the will of his Lord and sins, will be beaten with many stripes (Luke XII). And everyone who has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, whom the Savior promised to the Apostles, saying: I will ask my Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever, the Spirit of truth (John XIV, 16); and again: But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes forth from the Father, he will bear witness about me (John XV, 26); and: It is profitable for you that I go away: for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you (John XVI, 7); the Comforter is the one now commanded to console the people of God. Wherefore also the Apostle Paul was speaking to believers: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God: for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ (2 Corinthians 1:1-6); and again: And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation (2 Corinthians 1:7). But who is this people, who through the Apostles and Ecclesiastical men is consoled, not Israel, and Jacob and Juda, as the Scripture mentions in other places, but the people of God, as the Prophet Zacharias testifies saying: Rejoice and be glad, daughter of Zion, for I will come and dwell in your midst, says the Lord. And many nations will flee to the Lord in that day, and they will be His people, and they will dwell in your midst, and they will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you (Zach. II, 10, 11). By this testimony, it is clearly demonstrated that many nations are to be turned into the people of God. And this is what the Lord, sent by the Lord, whose name is Almighty, says. And it should be noted that our sins are not forgiven unless we receive them from the hand of the Lord. And it is not the same thing to have sins forgiven as to have them pardoned. For those to whom they are pardoned, there is no need for forgiveness, as it is written in the Gospel: Believe, my child, your sins are forgiven you (Matthew 9:2). But those who are released are released because they have been cleansed and freed through punishments. According to history, Jerusalem received its sins twice from the hands of the Babylonians and secondly from the Romans. And what is added by the Seventy, the Priests, must be noted.

40:3-5

(Verse 3 onwards) The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. LXX: The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God, for the Lord has spoken. When the scribes and Pharisees and Jewish leaders heard John preaching in the wilderness and baptizing with a baptism of repentance, they sent messengers to ask him if he was the Christ, or Elijah, or a prophet. And when he answered that he was none of these, they asked him again, 'Then who are you?' So that we may give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself? And he answered: I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord, as Isaiah the Prophet said (John 1:22-23)'. In which it should be noted that the straight paths of the Lord and the ways of our God: the filling of valleys and mountains, the humbling of hills and the correction of the wicked, and the rough places made level: and the glory of the Lord and the salvation of our God, will not be proclaimed in Jerusalem, but in the solitude of the Church, and in the deserted multitude of the nations, of which we read above (Isaiah 35:1): 'Rejoice, O desert, and let the wilderness exult, and let it blossom like the lily.' For this knowledge of God was unknown and humbled by idols, lowly in confession, exalted in pride, rough and unyielding in wrath. But after the glory of the Lord appeared, and all flesh saw the salvation of God, everything suddenly changed, and the way of the Lord was prepared, so that the glory of God would appear in the wilderness. When the Lord was baptized in the Jordan and the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove and remained in him, and the voice of the Father from above was heard, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him. (Matthew 3:17). And all flesh saw the salvation of God. Which is why it was called flesh, because it did not have the Holy Spirit before. Concerning this, the Lord says: My spirit will not remain in these people, because they are flesh (Gen. VI, 3). But that flesh will see the salvation of God, of which the same Joel spoke: I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and they shall prophesy (Joel. II, 28). This is not only what John proclaimed at that time, who was the precursor and forerunner of the word of God, rightly called the voice (Matth. III); but even to this day in the wilderness of the Gentiles, the teachers of the Churches cry out: that we may make straight paths and ways for God in our hearts, that we may be filled with virtues, and may be inclined with humility; that we may change what is evil into what is right, and what is rough into what is gentle: and thus we may deserve to see the glory of the Lord and the salvation of God.

40:6-8

(Verse 6 and following) The voice of one saying, Cry out. And I said, What shall I cry out? All flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower falls; because the breath of the LORD blows upon it. Truly the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower falls; but the word of our God will stand forever. (LXX: The voice of one saying, Cry out. And I said, What shall I cry out? All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man is like the flower of grass.) The grass withers, and the flower falls; because the breath of the Lord blows upon it. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower falls. But the word of our God remains forever. This portion marked with asterisks is added from the Hebrew and Theodotion's edition. From this it is clear that it was either omitted by the LXX or gradually lost through the error of scribes, since both the preceding and following verses end with 'flower'. Above we have read, the Prophet saying: And I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people? And I said: Here I am, send me; and he said: Go and tell this people: Hearing you will hear, and will not understand: and seeing you will see, and will not perceive, and so on. After enduring a harsh preaching, now the voice of the Lord saying, he asks what he should shout, fearing similar things; and starting from the general, All flesh is grass, and all its glory like the flower of the grass, he comes to the particular, so that he may still say about the people: Truly the people are grass. And in truth, if anyone were to consider the frailty of the flesh, and how we grow and decline in a matter of hours, and do not remain in the same state: and that which we speak, dictate, and write, passes quickly from our lives: he will not hesitate to call the flesh hay, and its glory as the flower of hay, or the meadows of the fields. For the one who was recently an infant suddenly becomes a child; the

child suddenly becomes a young person; and throughout the uncertain passage of time, he is transformed into old age; and he realizes himself to be old before he marvels at no longer being young. A beautiful woman who drew after her flocks of young men, is contracted in her countenance: and she who was once for love, afterwards is for disdain. Which an excellent orator among the Greeks writes: The beauty of the body either fails with time, or is consumed by sickness. Therefore the flesh is withered, and the beauty is fallen off; because the spirit of the madness of God and of his sentence has blown upon her (that I may return from a general discourse to the order of the Scripture), of him who bears the image of the earthly, and serves vices and luxury; and he is like hay and a passing flower. But whoever has and keeps the image of the heavenly, that person is the flesh which sees the salvation of the Lord, which is daily renewed in knowledge according to the image of the Creator, and receiving an incorruptible and immortal body, changes glory, not nature. But the word of our Lord, and those who are associated with the word, endure forever.

40:9-11

(V. 9 and following) Ascend to the high mountain, you who bring good news to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, you who bring good news to Jerusalem. Lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' See, the Lord God comes with might, and His arm rules for Him. See, His reward is with Him, and His recompense accompanies Him. He tends His flock like a shepherd; He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads the nursing ewes. LXX: Go up on a high mountain, you who bring good tidings to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, you who bring good tidings to Jerusalem. Lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the cities of Judah, 'Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.' The choir of the Apostles is commanded to ascend to the preaching of all flesh, which is going to see the salvation of God, and to dwell in high places, about to speak about great things. Moreover, the Hebrew and other interpreters put it in the feminine gender, so that they say, 'you who preach the gospel to Zion and you who preach the gospel to Jerusalem.' This word is ambiguous according to the Greeks, so that we can understand it as either the one who announces or the one to whom the announcement is made. Therefore, whether the word of God and the saving word of the Lord are announced to Zion and Jerusalem: for the law went forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah II, 3); or whether it is announced to them through the Apostles, they ought to ascend to the heights and pass over the mountains. And in a wondrous way, even though Zion itself is a mountain, as Scripture says: Mount Zion, in which you have dwelt (Psalm LXXIII, 3): it is commanded to ascend another, higher mountain, from which the prince of Tyre was wounded. And because the teachings of the Apostles were going to be greatly opposed, and they were going to be led before governors and tribunals, it is joined, exalt, do not be afraid: say to the cities of Judea, namely the synagogues and the people of the Jews, of whom the Lord spoke: I have come only for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24). And the Apostle Paul says: It was necessary for the word of God to be proclaimed to you first (Acts 13:46). But what is it that they are commanded to say? Behold your God, whom you have always awaited: Behold the Lord God shall come in strength, whom you have despised coming in humility. And his strength shall rule, who first took the form of a servant,

being obedient to the Father even unto death (Philippines III). Behold his reward is with him, and his work before him (Isaiah XL, and LXII). According to what he himself says in the Gospel: For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father and he shall render to every man according to his works (Matthew XVI, 17). As a shepherd, he will feed his flock. This one who will come later in majesty, first takes on the form of a shepherd, and he says about himself: I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, and they know me, and I lay down my life for my sheep (John 10:14, 15). About this, the Father speaks in Zechariah: I will strike the shepherd; and the sheep will be scattered (Zechariah 13:7). In his arm, he says, he will gather the lambs; not bulls, and rams, and goats, and large sheep, of whom through Ezekiel (Chapter 34) he threatens that they should feed on milk and be covered with wool, and crush the weak flock, but rather the still tender lambs, and those new to Christ's infancy, who have recently been reborn in baptism, of whom the Lord himself spoke to Peter: Feed my lambs (John 21:15). And in the same Ezekiel it is written: I will raise up for them a single shepherd, and he will feed them, my servant David; he will be their shepherd, and I the Lord will be their God, and David will be their prince in their midst. I the Lord have spoken, and I will establish a covenant of peace with David (Ezekiel 34:23-25). It should be considered that after many generations, David, in contrast to the greedy and unworthy shepherds, says that our Lord, who is of the lineage of David, will rise up, gather the lambs, and nurture them in his bosom, and he himself will carry the lambs or sheep on his shoulder. As we read in the Gospel, that he carried the wandering sheep and the one remaining from the usual flock on his shoulders to the sheepfold (Luke 15). We can say that the pregnant ewes are the Apostles and the Apostolic men and all the doctors of the Church, who give birth to the salvation of many, and they say with the Apostle: My little children, whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you (Galatians 4:19). The Hebrews assert, and there is no doubt among them about this matter, that the Holy Spirit is called in their language by the feminine gender, that is, the Shekinah. And that which is said in the sixty-seventh psalm: The Lord will give the word to the preachers with great power: they understand it thus: The Lord will give the word to the preachers with great power (Ps. 122:3): namely, to those souls who have received the Holy Spirit. Also this: As the eyes of a handmaid are in the hands of her mistress, so the soul is in the hands of the Holy Spirit, both a handmaid and a mistress. But also in the Gospel written according to the Hebrews, which the Nazarenes read, the Lord speaks: Now my mother took me up, the Holy Spirit. But no one should be scandalized by the fact that in the Hebrew language the Spirit is referred to as feminine, while in our language it is referred to as masculine, and in Greek it is referred to as neutral. For in divinity there is no gender. And therefore, in the three principal languages in which the title of the Lord's Passion is written, it is referred to in three genders, so that we may understand that there is no gender that is different.

40:12-17

(Verse 12 and following) Who measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills on a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or instructed him as his counselor? Whom did he consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge, or showed him the path of understanding? Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust. And Lebanon is not enough to burn, and its animals are not enough for

a burnt offering. All nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness. Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has measured the Spirit of the Lord, or what man shows him his counsel? Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? Who has shown him the way of justice, and who has taught him knowledge? Behold, all the nations are as a drop in a bucket and are accounted as the dust on the scales. Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor all the animals enough for a burnt offering. All the nations are as nothing in his sight, and they are counted as worthless. Let no one think that the calling of the nations is difficult, and that all flesh will see the salvation of God. They are commanded to climb the high mountain, those who proclaim the good news to Zion; and the Lord himself will come in strength, and will reward each one according to his work; he will gather the lambs in his arms and carry the nursing ewes. His greatness is described, for nothing is impossible for him; and he who has created everything, and is the Creator of all, can accomplish even these things which are small in comparison. But he uses the words and measurements of human custom, that we may learn the power of God through our words. In the place where the Seventy translated: Who has measured the water with his hand? or as we translate: Who has measured the waters with a handful? Aquila translated: Who has measured the waters with the smallest finger? For this word λῡχ signifies that the vastness of all the waters is weighed not with the whole hand but with the small finger, which is commonly called the taster: but σπιθαμ, that is, the palm, signifies the hand stretched out from the thumb to the extreme finger. But if we contract our hand, it becomes a fist, so that through the palm and the fist we might know the outspread heavens and the globe of the earth. For the fist, which they brought over to the comprehension of the earth as seventy, is written in Hebrew ש (), which Symmachus interprets as threefold and Aquila as three-handed: and to make it more evident, we turn it into three fingers; so that, indeed, the mass of the earth and the lofty mountains and hills seem to hang by means of three little fingers and in a small moment from the balance; whereby the majesty of God and the power of the Creator is demonstrated. Who, he says, aided the spirit of the Lord, or who was his counselor and showed him? etc. For which Symmachus interpreted: Who prepared the spirit of the Lord, and who showed him the man of his counsel? with whom he entered into counsel, and gave him understanding, and taught him the way of judgment, and instructed him in knowledge, and showed him the path of prudence? By which it is shown more clearly that the spirit is prepared or established, of which it is read in the Apostle: But the Lord is the Spirit. And on whom the Spirit of God rested, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, etc. He says in the following: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me: because He has anointed me (Isaiah 61:1). He is truly the Spirit of the Lord and the man of His counsel, in whom the fullness of divinity dwelt bodily (Colossians 2). With Him entered into the counsel, of which we spoke above (Ad 11:6): Wonderful, counselor. And in Proverbs it is written: God by wisdom hath founded the earth, by prudence hath prepared the heavens (Prov. III, 19). Moreover, the LXX said: Who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? They wish to understand that the mind, reason and understanding of God, by whom all things were made and without whom nothing was made, is the one of whom it is sung in the Psalms: By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and all the power of them by the breath of his mouth (Ps. XXXII, 6). All peoples who did not know their Creator or the whole human race in comparison to God are like a drop from a bucket and like a

speck of dust on a scale that tilts lightly to one side. And just as if a small drop falls from a bucket, it is ignored by the one carrying it; so too the entire multitude of nations, compared to the divine ministries and the multitude of angels, is considered as nothing. Even islands are considered like spit, or as Symmachus and Theodotion place it in their Hebrew translation, as 'leptos (a little thing)' which falls off, for which Aquila translated as 'leptos ballo[■]menon (a tiny thing thrown).' But the Hebrews say that this word signifies the finest dust, which, being carried by the wind, is often thrown into the eyes and is felt rather than seen. Therefore, the tiniest particles of dust, almost invisible, are called by this word: which perhaps Democritus, with his atom, calls them with Epicurus. There are many names which are read (or understood) in Greek in the same way as they are in Hebrew, because of the difficulty of interpretation, and for the comparison of the poverty of the Hebrew language, both in Greek and in Latin speech. At the same time, as he gradually withdraws people from idolatry, he abolishes the ceremonies of sacrifices; and he teaches that all the trees of Lebanon and the cattle that feed on them are not sufficient for his burnt offerings. But if all nations are in his sight as if they were not, and are considered as nothing and empty (though in all nations and in Israel also), therefore he himself is also as if he were not, and is considered as nothing and empty. We say this, so that his pride may be broken, and so that he may know that he is like the other nations.

40:18-20

(Verse 18 and following) To whom then will you liken God, or what image will you set before Him? Can the craftsman make a graven image, or the goldsmith overlay it with gold, and the silversmith spread silver plates upon it? Or perhaps the skilled craftsman chooses a piece of wood that will not rot and seeks out a proficient artisan to fashion an image that will not move. Having described the greatness of God and shown His power in part, and having compared the nations and islands to a drop from a bucket and a speck of dust on the scales, and having refuted the use of ashes and sacrificial ceremonies, he teaches those who follow that all the nations before Him are as nothing and are counted by Him as less than nothing. To whom then will you liken God, or what image will you set before Him, who is a Spirit, who is in all things and is everywhere present, and who holds the earth in His hand as if it were a small container? At the same time, he derides the foolishness of nations, because the artisan, whether a blacksmith or a goldsmith or a silversmith, makes their own god and fastens it with nails and firmly establishes it so that it is not blown away by the gusts of wind. And this is what he introduces: a wise artisan has chosen a strong and incorruptible wood, which is called Amsuchan in Hebrew; this type of wood is incorruptible and is used especially for making idols. However, he says this so that, rejecting idols, the way of the Gospel may be followed, and all wrongs may be made right; the valleys may be lifted up, and the hills may be brought low; and the glory of the Lord may be revealed, so that all flesh may see the salvation of God. According to the tropology, we can say that the leaders of the heretics are rebuked for inventing diverse idols from their own hearts; either by the charm of eloquence, which is interpreted as silver; or by the brilliance of gold, which appeals to the senses; or by the incorruptibility of wood, which represents the baser doctrines: and they are considered permanent by the inventors, and are supported by dialectical skill, so that they may not be moved or fall, but may stand firm on a solid root.

40:21-26

(Vers. 21 seqq.) Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been announced to you from the beginning? Have you not understood the foundations of the earth? He sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like locusts. He spreads out the heavens like nothing, and expands them as a tent to dwell in. He makes secret things known as if they were not. He has made the rulers of the earth as nothing. They are not planted, nor are they sown, nor do their roots take hold in the earth. He blows on them and they wither, and the whirlwind carries them away like stubble. And to whom have you compared me and made me equal? says the Lord. Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these things: he who brings out their host by number, and calls them all by name. Because of his great power and strength, and because his power has no end.

LXX: Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told to you from the beginning? Have you not understood the foundation of the earth? He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers. He who sets the heavens like a tent and stretches them like a dwelling place. He who makes princes rule for nothing, and reduces the earth to nothing. For they shall not be planted, nor shall they be sown, nor shall their root be established in the earth. He blows upon them, and they wither, and the storm carries them away like straw. So now to whom will you compare me? Or how am I equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who leads according to his ordered number, he will call all by name, from much glory and in the strength of fortitude: nothing escapes you. From the beginning, he said, I have taught you by the natural law, and afterwards I have testified through the written law of Moses, what idols are nothing, and that the Creator of the world himself is God, who has founded such a great mass of land upon the seas, and has placed it upon the rivers: so that the heaviest element hangs by the will of God upon the thin waters, who sits as a king upon the circumference of the earth: from which some contend that it is like a dot and a globe, and its inhabitants like locusts. For if we consider the various nations in the whole world, from the Ocean to the Ocean, that is, from the Indian sea to the British, and from the Atlantic to the harshness of the North, where the waters freeze and beautiful amber grows, we see that the entire human race dwells in the middle like locusts. So why does the earth and ash boast? Because the heavens, indeed, as I will use the authority of the Scriptures, are stretched out like a chamber; or, as it is contained in Hebrew, like a tent, of which we have spoken above: for which the LXX interpreted it as saliva there: and one word now translated as spit, now as chamber, that is, a vault; and its width extends above them like a tent and a canopy, so as to cover people like a roof and make them dwell as if in a very large house. Why should we be surprised if the small bodies of humans are considered like locusts and tiny creatures? Again, in this place, they argue that the semicircle is close to the earth (or rather, the heavens), and they claim that the sky is similar to a sphere. They use the term 'arch' because the middle part of the sphere covers the earth: when in Hebrew, we read not 'arch' but 'dust', that is, very fine powder. For the saliva that is thrown onto the ground and mixes with the dust and disappears, shows that the magnitude of all bodies should be regarded as nothing. But he who stretched out the heavens and spread them out, so that either above could dwell the multitude of angels, or below could dwell human beings, and as if he created a great house for reasonable creatures, he himself established princes according to the quality of the times, whether as secret scrutineers, so that they may be as if they are not; and he made judges of the earth as if they were nothing. For this reason, the Seventy translated it, but they translated the earth as if it were nothing; indeed, in the beginning of Genesis where it is written, 'But the earth was invisible and unfinished' (Gen. 1:1), others translated it as, 'But the earth was empty and nothing.' How

many kings, both Greek and Barbarian, does Roman history narrate! Where is that countless army of Xerxes? Where is the multitude of Israel in the desert? Where is the incredible power of kings? What about the ancient ones? Let present examples teach us, that princes are considered as nothing, and rulers of the earth as empty. Those princes and rulers of the earth (or, as others suspect, of heaven) are neither satisfied, nor established, nor firmly rooted, and by the sudden command of God they are taken away and perish, as straw is carried away by the whirlwind and storm; according to what is written: 'I passed by, and he was not there; I sought him, and his place was not found' (Ps. XXXVI, 36). So with such great power and majesty of the Creator, how can you compare God to the likeness of a creature? And do you not rather understand the Creator from the magnitude of the creatures? If you do not believe in words, believe at least in your own eyes; and consider the power of the Lord from the service of the heavens and all the elements. He summons their army, that is, the heavens, in number; and he calls them all by name, and it is understood, the stars. Of which it is also sung in the Psalms: He counts the multitude of the stars: and he calls them all by name (Ps. 46:4). Whether we interpret the hosts of heaven as the army of angels and all the heavenly hosts of which Daniel speaks: Thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him (Dan. VII, 10). Hence the Lord of hosts is called, which in our language is called the Lord of armies and forces, or powers. He brings forth his host according to the number of the heavens: so that the sun, and the moon, and the other stars, which Abraham could not number, are numbered by Him, and serve the assigned function (Gen. XV): while the same course of the heavens is completed by the sun in one year, by the morning star and the evening star in two years, by the moon in each month, and all the stars follow their appointed times, and some of them are called wandering, and we see their movements with our eyes, not with our minds, nor do we understand them as much as we marvel at them. For the magnitude of God's strength makes all things serve in its own order. Whether according to the Seventy, by the multitude of his glory and the power of his virtue, nothing can escape him; but he knows all the ways, plans, and courses of the Creator by his majesty.

Book Twelve Book Twelve No writer is so unskilled that he does not find a reader similar to himself: and there are far more people who revolve the fables of Miletus than the books of Plato. In one there is play and amusement, in the other difficulty and sweat mixed with labor. Finally, Tullius himself, who interpreted Timaeus discussing the harmony of the world and the course of the stars and numbers, confesses that he does not understand. But in the schools, children sing the will of Grunnius Corocotta Porcellus among laughing crowds. Therefore let our friend Luscus Lanuinus enjoy his witnesses, or rather his supporters; and let him conquer by the number, because perhaps he conquers by his talent. For me, the testimony of a few is enough, and I am content with the praise of my friends, who, in seeking my little works, slip with love for us and with enthusiasm for the Scriptures; and I believe there will be some who will contend that this very conversation I am having with you, Eustochium, is open to criticism, not considering that Holda, Anna, and Deborah prophesied while men were silent; and in the service of Christ, there is no difference in the value of genders, but of minds. Therefore, the twelfth book of explanations on Isaiah will have this beginning.

40:27-31

(Verse 27 and following) Why do you say, Jacob, and speak, Israel: My way is hidden from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over by my God? Do you not know, or have you not heard? The

everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, does not faint, neither is He weary, and there is no searching of His understanding. He gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall take wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. LXX: Do not say, Jacob, and what you spoke, Israel: My way is hidden from the Lord, and my judgment is disregarded by my God, and now you do not know, and have not heard? The eternal God, the God who created the ends of the earth: he shall not hunger, nor shall he labor, nor is there any finding of his understanding. He gives strength to the hungry: and does not grieve the sorrowful. For the young will hunger, and the adolescents will labor, and the chosen ones will be weak. But those who wait for God will change their strength. They will take wings like eagles: they will run, and will not labor: they will walk, and will not hunger. The greatness of the Almighty God is so vast that nothing escapes him, and everything is governed by his will. So why do you say Jacob, that is, the two tribes that were called Judah; and you speak of Israel, the other ten tribes in Samaria, who have already been led captive into Assyria: My way is hidden from the Lord: and my just judgment will pass by my God? And this is the meaning: You say that earthly things do not pertain to God, nor does He consider what each of us does. Hence we are unjustly oppressed by our enemies, and, like the beasts and the fish, we are scattered without any governor, according to Habakkuk. To this God responds: Do you not know? Have the words of the preceding Scriptures not taught you, or do you not know according to the Septuagint, because you have not heard that the eternal God and Creator of all things knows all things, contains all things, and governs all things with His majesty? Does it not fail at any time, nor does it labor; so that it does not understand your judgement, and your ways are hidden from it? There is no investigation of his wisdom, about which place I think that saying of the Apostle is taken: His judgments are incomprehensible, and his ways are investigable (perhaps 'unsearchable') (Rom. XI, 33); or, as the LXX translated, he does not hunger, and he does not labor. For where there is food, there is often hunger if you remove the food: and where there is hunger, there is also labor. But since these things are not in God, why do you attribute human passions to him? Rather, he gives strength to the hungry and weary, and he multiplies virtue and strength to those who seem to be nothing in the world. According to the Septuagint, it is he who gives sorrow to those who do not grieve, for it is sadness that leads to death, and it is sadness that leads to life. Therefore, to those who have a hardened heart, he gives sadness so that they may understand their sins. And because many take pleasure in bodily health, and consider youth and childhood to be perpetual, he joins this and says that the flourishing age quickly falls, and strong bodies wither. But those who have confidence not in their own strength, but in God, and always await His mercy, let them change their strength and go from virtue to virtue: and let them take wings like eagles, and hear: Your youth will be renewed like the eagle's (Psalm 103:5); let them run to the Lord, and not grow weary of desiring Him; let them walk, and never grow faint. We have frequently said that the eagles' old age is rejuvenated by a change of feathers, and only those eagles can look upon the sun's rays and behold the splendor of its shining with sparkling eyes: and they should prove their noble offspring, by means of this experiment. And so even the saints are made young again, and with an immortal body, they do not feel the toil of mortals, but are caught up in the clouds to meet Christ, and never go hungry according to the LXX, because they have the Lord himself as food.

41:1-7

(Chapter 41, verses 1 and following.) Let the islands be silent before me, and let the nations change their strength: let them come near, and then let them speak: let us come together to judgment. Who raised up the Just One from the East, and called him to follow him? He will give nations before him, and he will rule over kings: he will make them like the dust with his sword, and like stubble driven by the wind to his bow. He will pursue them, and he will pass in peace, a path will not appear under his feet. Who has accomplished and done this, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, am the first and the last; I am He. The islands have seen and feared; the ends of the earth tremble; they have drawn near and come. Each one helps his neighbor and says to his brother, 'Be strong!' The blacksmith takes a tool and works with it in the coals; he fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He also gets hungry and his strength fails; he drinks no water and grows faint. LXX: Come near to me, you islands; let the leaders approach together and declare judgment. Who has stirred up one from the east, calling him in righteousness to his service? He hands nations over to him and subdues kings before him. He makes them like dust with his sword, like windblown chaff with his bow. He pursues them and moves on unscathed, by a path his feet have not traveled before. Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord—with the first of them and with the last—I am he. He will call her who has been called from the beginning of generations. I am the first God, and I am present in the things that are to come. The nations have seen and feared: the ends of the earth have stood in awe and approached: they have come together, each judging their neighbor to help and support their brother: and they will say: the skilled craftsman and blacksmith have prevailed, striking the hammer together, producing: sometimes indeed they say, 'it is good to strengthen'. They have strengthened it, they have set it in nails: and it will not be moved. People, that is, the islands, which are buffeted by the false and bitter waves of this age, are commanded to listen and to close their mouths, and to know that which was said to Israel: Listen, Israel, and be silent; and to change their strength, lest they cannot hear the word of God because of their former weakness, so that they may approach the Lord first, and that they may not be satisfied with their own salvation; but that which they have learned, they may teach to others, and may argue with the Lord whether God has kept justice for all. But he interrogates them and challenges them to respond, in order to teach them through the questioning what they are ignorant of: Who raised up the just one from the East, or justice? For it is not only the God of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles, who called Christ the Lord and Savior, who became for us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. 1). In which, according to the same Apostle, God's righteousness is revealed (ibid). But he called him, so that he might follow him in all things and do the works of the Father; and he fulfilled that saying: O God, I desired to do your will (Ps. 39:9). In his presence, kings and nations will submit their necks, and the opposing powers, like stubble and dust, will be subjected to his sword and arrows. He will pursue them, namely the kings and princes of each nation, and he will pass by in peace, calling all to peace so that they may be reconciled to God. His path will not be visible, that is, he will not feel the labor of the journey or any weakness or fatigue of human nature; but he will drink from the stream on the way, and therefore he will lift up his head. Who, he says, has worked and made these? Who raised up the righteous, or righteousness? Who delivered nations and kings to him? Who subjected all things to his sword and bow? Certainly he, who from the beginning of the world predicted these things, who is the creator of all. And because he had said, in response to the questioner's emotion: Who raised up the righteous from the East, etc., while all were silent, he answered himself: I am

the Lord, I am the first and the last. He Himself is the one who speaks in the Apocalypse of John: I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end (Rev. I, 8; and XXII, 13). The islands, that is, the nations or the Churches gathered from the nations, have seen and feared the Lord, for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. IX, 10). All the ends of the earth trembled at the words of the Apostles, approaching and likewise coming to the Gospel of Christ. And when they saw themselves to be saved, they completed the work that they had heard before: let them approach, and then let them speak; that they may assist their neighbors, and that they may wish to strengthen their brothers in the Lord, and may say to them: Depart from idols, despise ancient images of demons, which were created by human hands, which were produced by a hammer striking, which were bound with glue, which were fastened with nails, so that they would not be moved; and when they stood, they could not walk. Some report that we, interpreted as the ones above all others, through the calling of the Gentiles and the preaching of the Gospel and the condemnation of idols, led Cyrus, the king of the Persians, to rise up against the Babylonians from the East, and made him submit to his command, prostrating many nations before him and subjecting everything to his sword and bow. And they relate other things that follow concerning his person, namely that their idols, which were made with human skill and skillfully crafted by the bronze smith, were of no avail to the Babylonians. Some Hebrews believe that Abraham was called righteous from the East, that is, from the Chaldeans, because he alone was found to be righteous. He followed God, leaving his homeland to a land that he did not know, and he delivered kings into his hand who had come against Sodom and Gomorrah. He made them like stubble and dust before his sword and bow. He pursued them, returned in peace, and did not feel the effects of the long journey, and all this was not by his own strength but by the mercy of the Lord, who knew these things from the beginning. They saw, he said, the islands, that is, the nations in the surrounding area, and they were terrified by his power: and the ends of the earth. Indeed, he was the son of Noah, who had escaped the Flood with his father and brothers in the final time of the earth; and he had been preserved until that time: they want him to be understood as Melchizedek, and to have come to meet Abraham returning from battle, and to have received him, and blessed him, and strengthened him with the blessings of God: and to be the skillful craftsman who had fashioned for Abraham, and with the hammer of his art had brought forth better things: and to have said to him, It is good that you are united and joined to him in the fear of the Lord. And he strengthened him, or established him on the key of the commandments of the Lord, so that he would not be moved, but would remain in fear of Him.

41:8-16

(Verse 8 and following) And you, O Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend. I have taken hold of you from the ends of the earth, and summoned you from its farthest corners. I said to you, 'You are my servant; I have chosen you and have not rejected you.' So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish. You will seek them, and you will not find them: your rebel men will be as if they were not: and like the destruction of warring men against you. For I, the Lord your God, took hold of your hand, saying to you: Do not fear, I have helped you. Do not fear, words of Jacob, you who are dead from Israel. I have helped you, says the Lord, and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. I have made you like a new

threshing sledge, with sharp teeth. You will crush the mountains and reduce them to dust; you will make them like fine dust. You will scatter them to the wind, and a whirlwind will blow them away. Then you will rejoice in the Lord; you will glory in the Holy One of Israel. LXX: But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend; whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, "You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off"; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Behold, they shall be confounded and ashamed, all your adversaries. They shall be as if they were not, and all your enemies shall perish. You shall seek them and not find them, those who rage against you. They shall be as if they were not, and they shall not fight against you. For I am the Lord your God, who holds your right hand, who says to you, 'Do not fear, O Jacob, O little Israel.' I have helped you, says God, who redeems you, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I have made you like new grinding wheels of a wagon, in the manner of saws: and you will grind the mountains and crush the hills: and you will scatter them like dust and the wind will carry them away, and the storm will disperse them. But you will rejoice in the Lord and in the holy ones of Israel. Paul the Apostle teaches that Jacob and Israel are both carnal and spiritual: See Israel according to the flesh (1 Cor. 10). From which we understand that there is also another according to the spirit; and the carnal are called Israel: If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham. And above all, it is said (In Chapter 40, verse 27): Why do you say, Jacob, and speak, Israel: My way is hidden from the Lord: and my judgment has passed over from my God? On the contrary, now God speaks to the spiritual Israel, who has received the coming of his Lord, whom he first calls servant, then chosen, and finally the seed of Abraham. For before we received the spirit of slavery in fear (Romans 8); and afterwards, as the chosen ones, we are joined in friendship with God. Therefore, after the calling of the Gentiles, when they saw the islands and were afraid, they were astonished at the ends of the earth; they came near and approached, they are called the remnants, according to the choice of grace, of whom both the Gospel and the Evangelist write: Jesus chose these twelve, whom he also named Apostles (Luke 6), who were chosen after the servitude of the Law, in the Gospel; and they deserved to be the seed of Abraham, friends of God. For in that he apprehended them from the ends of the earth, and called Israel from its farthest borders, gathering first the people of the Jews, of whom also the Apostle Paul says: 'It was necessary that the word be preached to you first, but since you reject it, we will go to the Gentiles' (Acts 13:46). Therefore, to you, who are both my servant and my chosen one, who will preach among the Gentiles and endure many persecutions, I say, do not be afraid, for I am with you, to whom I speak in the Gospel: Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). Do not wander, nor deviate from the truth, nor deceive yourself with false persuasion, thinking that with your inexperienced and unarmed strength, you can enter the wilderness of the nations and call the fiercest nations to gentleness. I am the one who has strengthened you and helped you; and my right hand, that is, the right hand of the righteous, that is, the Lord Savior, has supported you or protected you, as the Septuagint translates. Behold, for your adversaries, the people of the Jews and all who fight against you, and your persecutors will be turned into nothing, and you will seek your adversaries, and you will not find them. And the reason why you will not find your adversaries is explained: because they will be as if they do not exist. But you should not be afraid, because I have taken hold of your hand. I say to you, Do not be afraid: I have helped you; do not fear, worm of Jacob, who are dead from Israel, or as the LXX says, very few from Israel. This that we have set

forth, I have helped you: do not fear, worm of Jacob, which is not found in the LXX. But the worm which is said in Hebrew, Tholath (), is called the chorus of the Apostles because of their humility and contempt, imitating the Savior, who speaks in the psalm: I am a worm, and not a man: the reproach of men, and the despising of the people (Psalm 22:7). For just as the worm penetrates the earth, so the apostolic word penetrated the cities of the nations and first entered the hardest hearts. And rightly few are called from Israel, because in comparison to the whole world, very few from the Jewish nation believed, to whom the Lord speaks in the Gospel: 'Do not be afraid, little flock' (Luke 12:32). Or, according to the Hebrew, the dead from Israel, who also say with the Apostle: 'I die daily' (2 Corinthians 15:31). And elsewhere: I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. (Galatians 2:20). And what follows: I have set thee as a new threshing cart, having tearing beaks, signifies that the preaching of the Gospel crushes the opposing powers and lifts up the spiritual wickedness that exalts itself against the knowledge of God; which, according to the variety of pride, are called mountains and hills. And when these are taken away and scattered like a whirlwind, let Israel exult and rejoice in the Holy Lord of Israel. We can also say that an ecclesiastical man, having the serpents of evangelical preaching on a new wagon, which does not work at all in the oldness of the letter, but in the freshness of the spirit, crushes the hardest hearts of unbelievers: separating the wheat from the chaff, and breaking mountains and hills, that is, all the leaders of heretics, who, being crushed and broken, are reduced to dust and taught that they are nothing, so that those who were gathered wickedly may be divided into their own good.

41:17-20

(Verse 17 and following) The poor and needy seek water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs. I will put in the desert the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive. I will set junipers in the wasteland, the fir and the cypress together, so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it. LXX: And the poor and needy will rejoice, for they will seek water and there will be none; their tongue will be parched with thirst. I, the Lord God of Israel, will hear them; I will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the barren heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the cypress, together with the fir tree and the pine, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it. The common people, poor and humble, who did not have knowledge of the truth, sought through various teachers and the various doctrines of philosophers for healing waters, and they did not find them, because they do not exist; their language was parched with thirst, without Law and Prophets. For they had consumed all their substance on doctors according to the faith of the Gospel (Luke 8); and they could not be freed from the blood of idolatry and the blood of sacrifices. Therefore, the Lord God of Israel did not completely abandon them, nor did he allow them to perish forever; but he opened rivers on the tops of the hills, or springs in the midst of the fields. Which rivers drew their beginning from that river which is read in the Psalms: The impetuousness of the river makes the city of God glad (Ps. 46:4). And in another place: The river of God is filled with water. Which waters and

springs sprang from that fountain which speaks through Jeremiah: They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water (Jer. 2:13). And above, in this same Prophet, it is said: They shall drink waters from the springs of the Savior. Of which it is also sung in the Psalms: Bless the Lord, O God, from the springs of Israel (Ps. 68:27). And he made, he said, a desert into a pool of water, and a dry land into flowing water. Concerning these waters, the Savior spoke in the mystical discourse of the Gospel (John 4:13-14): 'Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.' And again: 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37-39). But, says the Evangelist, he was speaking about the Holy Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive. Therefore, since the multitude that had once been deserted by the Church had been irrigated with life-giving water, according to the Septuagint, cedars, boxwoods, myrtles, cypresses, and poplars sprout from it, and according to the Hebrew and other interpreters, cedars, junipers, myrtles, olive wood, firs, elms, and boxwoods together. These varieties of trees signify the diversity of spiritual grace. And because the nature of them is well known to all, we will now explain the Setta, which Theodotio translated as a thorn. It is a type of tree that grows in the desert and resembles a white thorn. From this tree, all the wood for the ark and the tabernacle was made, which is called Settim (Exodus 37). This wood is incorruptible and very light, surpassing all other types of wood in both strength and beauty. But cedar and cypress, and myrtle, of excellent fragrance and incorruptible, are joined with elm and poplar, or with boxwood, or they are most suitable for grafting vines or for various works. All these things are placed together in solitude, so that at least one string of the Lord's lyre and some virtue of the Church's graces may not seem to be lacking. That all may understand and know together in their minds that the hand of the Lord has brought forth all these things, so that in the dryness of the nations the streams of virtues may be found, and in a once deserted and full of saltiness land, cedars and cypresses, and other trees may be born, whose height and top reaching toward the heavens would be illuminated by the wood of the olive, which is the nourishment of light and rest for those who labor.

41:21-24

(Verse 21 and following) Make your case, says the Lord: bring forth if you have anything to say, says the king Jacob. Let them come near and declare to us what has happened: declare the past events, and we will set our hearts and know their outcome; and reveal to us what is yet to come. Announce what will happen in the future, and we will know that you are gods. Do good or do evil, if you can, and let us talk and see together. Behold, you are nothing (from nothing): and your work is from something that does not exist: an abomination is he who chooses you. LXX: Your judgment is near, says the Lord God: they have come and drawn near your counsels, says the king of Jacob. Let them draw near and announce to us what is to come: or tell us the former things that have happened, and we will set our minds on them: and we will know the last things. Also, tell us what is to come, and announce to us what will happen in the end: and we will know that you are gods. Do good and evil, and we will admire: and we will see at the same time where you are, and where your work is: they have chosen you from the land of abominations. As we said above, Jacob and Israel are two, those who do not believe and those who believe in the Lord Savior: thus the nations are called, and they flow in rivers and springs in the once desert Church, and with a wonderful abundance of a variety of trees, all most abundantly fruitful, those who refused to believe in Christ

from the nations are provoked to judgment, that they may answer why they did not want to see, and know and understand, because the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created all things. He says, 'Let your idols approach, which you think are the strongest. Or bring forward, if you have anything by chance within you; and reveal your plans, in what way, with what understanding, you have not wanted to accept the revealed truth. At the same time, there is a direct challenge to the idols themselves, which are insensible, and have neither the ability to hear nor to respond. Tell us,' he says, 'either about the past or the future, and demonstrate your power from the events of things.' However, this signifies that after the coming of Christ, all the idols fell silent: where is Apollo of Delphi, and Loxias, and Delius, and Clarus, and the other idols, promising knowledge of the future, which deceived the most powerful kings? Why could they not predict anything about Christ; nothing about his Apostles; nothing about the ruin and destruction of the temples? If they could not predict their own demise, how could they announce the fate of others, whether good or evil? But if someone were to say that many things have been predicted by idols, it must be understood that they have always joined falsehood with truth, and thus moderated their statements, so that whatever happened, whether good or bad, could be interpreted in either way. Like the saying of King Pyrrhus of the Epirotes:

I assure you, descendant of Aeacus, that you are able to conquer the Romans. And as for Croesus: Craesus, having crossed the river Halys, will lose his vast kingdom. Another indication is that idols are not gods, because they can neither do good nor do evil. Not that idols, or demons sitting on idols, have often not done evil; but rather, unless power has been granted to them by the Lord, they cannot do this. Finally, they implore in the Gospel to have power over a herd of pigs (Matthew VIII). And in Job we read, without the Lord's command (Diabolus) that a holy man was not even able to destroy animals and possessions. And it is not surprising that this is true about God, for the Apostle Paul also teaches that certain people belong to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme. Or this may be said, that mute images of humans and insensible things are neither able to do good nor evil, nor to know the past nor the future, because they are made out of nothing and out of that which does not exist, and not they themselves, but rather the one who worships them, is deserving of abomination. For the idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but do not speak; they have eyes, but do not see (Psalm 115: 4-6). So how can they know and proclaim the future or recount the past, and do good or evil, when they have no understanding like humans and animals? It does not matter what material they appear to be made of, since they are all earthly.

41:25-29

(Verse 25 onwards) He stirred up from the north, and he will come from the rising sun: he will call my name, and he will bring magistrates like clay: and like a potter treading the earth. Who announced it from the beginning, so that we may say: You are just. There is neither announcer, nor predictor, nor listener to your words. The first to Zion will say: Behold, they are here, and I will give Jerusalem a messenger. And I saw, and there was none among them that could counsel, and when I asked, no one could answer a word. Behold, all are unjust, and their works are vain; their idols are wind and emptiness. LXX: But I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come from the rising of the sun; they shall call upon my name. Let the princes come and be like the potter's vessel, and let the potter tread down the clay. For who can declare to you the things that are from the beginning, that we may know them that shall be in the future? And we shall say that

they are true: there is none that announces, nor that hears your words. I will give the beginning to Zion: and I will console Jerusalem in the way: for there is no one from the nations, and from their idols there was no one who announced. And if I ask them where they are, they will not respond to me: for they are your makers, and they deceive you in vain. Yet he speaks against the idols, and those who did not want to abandon them after the coming of Christ. He says that he himself, having arisen from the North, has raised up the people of the nations. For from the North shall evil be kindled against all inhabitants of the earth. And to Jeremiah it is said: What do you see, Jeremiah? And he answered: I see a burning pot, and its face is towards the North. They are stirred up from the North, that they may believe in him who came from the East. As we read above: Who has stirred up the just one from the East, or justice? Also in another place: Behold a man, the East is his name. Those who call them (Others have called them) by my name, so that, forsaking idols, they may worship one God. For he himself speaks in the Gospel: I came in my Father's name, and you did not receive me; another will come in his own name, and you will receive him (John 5:43). He will trample down the princes and rulers and all the pride of the world, and they will be subjected to him like clay in the hand of the potter, so that he may make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor (Romans 9). These things, which I say I have done according to the prophetic tradition, as if they were already past, or, according to Symmachus, I promise they will be in the future, no demon or idol can predict. Therefore, all oracles have remained silent, because there is no one to announce, no one to hear, while the dull hearts of the Gentiles were first understood in their own terror, and they left behind false prophecies. And the Lord will speak first to Zion, that is, to His Church, and He will say to her: See, your children are here, whom I have given to you through my faith. But it signifies the Apostles, who preached the Gospel throughout the whole world. Zion and Jerusalem differ in name; but as one city, so is one Church. Therefore, let all the nations that follow the error of idols be questioned by us, so that they may respond where they come from. And this will be the answer of all, that they all follow vanity and winds, and adore the works of their own hands. Whatever we have said about idols and nations, let us attribute it to the doctrines of wickedness; and to their leaders, heresiarchs, who, when the Church announces peace in Christ and shows them the way of truth, themselves follow error and are compared to wind and whirlwind. The Hebrews, rising from the North, and coming from the rising of the sun, interpret it as Assyria and Persia, who will come to Jerusalem, and trample all its princes; and let him know that none of the idols they worship will come to pass, except the Lord alone, who has avenged them for their sins.

42:1-4

(Chapter 42, Verses 1 onward) Behold my servant, I will uphold him: my chosen one, my soul is pleased with him. I have put my spirit upon him: he will bring justice to the nations. He will not cry out or raise his voice: his voice will not be heard in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break: a smoldering wick he will not put out: he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not be sad or discouraged, until he establishes justice on earth: and the coastlands will wait for his law. LXX: Jacob my servant, I will take him: Israel my chosen, my soul has received him. I have put my spirit upon him: he will bring forth justice to the nations: he will not cry out, nor raise his voice, nor will his voice be heard in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and smoking flax he will not extinguish: he will bring forth justice in truth: he will shine and not be broken, until he establishes justice upon the earth: and the nations will hope in his name. Jacob and Israel are not mentioned

in the current chapter, nor did Matthew the Evangelist include them, following Hebrew truth. We say this as a rebuke to those who despise us. This matter was discussed in more detail in the little Commentary on Matthew, and in the book we recently wrote to Algasia. And in the meantime, it should be noted that when the chorus of the Apostles is mentioned, both Jacob and Israel are called the seed of Abraham: to whom, as if to men and servants, it is subsequently said: Fear not, you worm Jacob, and you little one of Israel. But when it comes to Christ's prophecy, it is read without Jacob and Israel: Behold my servant, I will uphold him; my chosen, my soul is pleased with him. And in the following: I have given you as a testament to the race, as a light to the nations: to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring out prisoners from confinement, and those who dwell in darkness from the house of the prison. It is not surprising if he is called a servant, being made from a woman, and being made under the law (Galatians 4); who, although being in the form of God, he humbled himself, taking the form of a servant, and being found in human form (Philippians 2). In whom the soul of God was pleased, seeing in him all the virtues: indeed, seeing him as the power and wisdom of God. He said: 'I will send my Spirit upon him, who will come down in the form of a dove. He will bring judgment to the nations, which they did not know before. He will not cry out, for he will be gentle and meek. He will not show favoritism in judgment, nor will he raise his voice in the streets. According to Symmachus, he will not be deceived, understanding all the schemes of the devil. Or according to the Septuagint, he will not leave the people of the Jews, but will call them to repentance.' Nor will his voice be heard outside of Galilee and Judea, for he did not preach the Gospel among the other nations. And if we read that he was in the region of Tyre and Sidon (Matt. XV), or in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi, which is now called Paneas, it should be understood that it is not written that he actually entered those cities. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. For he will be merciful to all and will grant forgiveness to sinners, saying to the woman: Have confidence, daughter, your sins are forgiven (Luke VII, 48). And the smoking flax, or as the others have translated it, dim and gloomy, will not be extinguished: those who were near to being extinguished were saved by the mercy of the Lord (which we have discussed about the Jews and the nations in the aforementioned writings); but with truth He will judge all things; not fearing the Scribes and Pharisees, whom He boldly called hypocrites (Mat. VII, XV, XXII, XXIII throughout, and Luc. VI, XII): But what follows: It will shine, and will not be crushed, until He establishes judgment upon the Earth, the Evangelist Matthew did not include (Mat. XII): or perhaps between judgment and judgment, they were omitted due to an error by the writer. But it signifies that, rising from the dead, he enlightened all, and was not crushed by death, until he placed judgment upon the earth: of whom it is spoken in the Gospel: I have come into this world for judgment, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind (John 9:39). Concerning which we have interpreted: He will not be sad, nor troubled; but will always maintain an equal countenance: which they falsely boast about Socrates the Philosopher, that he was never, more than usual, either sad or joyful. For which reason Aquila and Theodotius are interpreted: It will not hide, and it will not run, until it establishes judgment on earth. And the meaning is: no sadness will deter the face, nor will it hurry to punishment, who has reserved the truth of judgment for the last time. What follows: and the law of that island they will expect, the nations, clearly, put hope in its name: which in the Scriptures are called islands, because they are open to incursions of persecutors from every side. But let us understand his law, not the one given through Moses, but the Gospel: For from Zion a law shall go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (see above, II). Concerning this law, Jeremiah also prophesies: Behold, the days are

coming, says the Lord, and I will establish a new covenant, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (Jeremiah 31:31, 32).

42:5-9

(Verse 5, 6 and following) Thus says the Lord God: He who creates the heavens and stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord, this is my name; I will not give my glory to another, nor my praise to idols. The things that were first, behold they have come, and new things I declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them: It was uncertain who has said before: Behold my servant, I will take him: my chosen, my soul has pleased him. I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. After the condemnation of idols, a sudden speech had burst forth. Behold my servant, and the rest, which we have interpreted from the Father's perspective on Christ. Therefore, to not leave it ambiguous who said the previous things, he adds and says: Thus says the Lord God, creating the heavens and stretching them out. Or as the Septuagint translated: He made the heaven and fixed it. Therefore, the Creator and Lord of the universe himself promised the coming of his Christ, who not only stretched out and fixed the heavens, but also established the earth with its lofty mass, and everything that springs forth from it, so that the invisible things of him may be understood and seen from the things that are made (Rom. I); as well as his everlasting power and divinity. He who gave breath to all who dwell on earth, the first law of mortals. For God breathed into the face of Adam the breath of life, and he became a living soul (Gen. II). But the Spirit properly belongs to those who tread upon the earth; and the wisdom of the flesh subjects itself to its own power. Therefore, he to whom such great praises are sung has spoken these words to him, whose law the islands await and the nations: I am the Lord who called you in righteousness; of whom he himself speaks in the Gospel, Father, the world does not know you (John XVII, 25); so that he may be not only the God of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. And I took hold of your hand, for whatever the Son does, the Father does also. And I saved you, who preserves all things yourself. And I gave you into a covenant with the people of Israel, to whom I had promised that you would come. And into the light of the Gentiles, who were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, so that you would open the eyes of the blind who had not seen God before. And you would bring out those who were bound in confinement (Prov. 2:16); for each one is bound by the cords of their own sins. And in the Gospel, which Satan had bound, the Lord set free (Matt. VIII). Those sitting in the darkness of the prison house, who were dwelling in the night of error and darkness. And He declares: I am the Lord, this is my name; I will not give my glory to another, nor does He exclude the Son, to whom He said in the Gospel: Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with You before the world was (John XVII, 5), He Himself answered; And I have glorified, and will glorify. For He did not say, 'I will not give My glory to anyone,' for if He had said this, He would have excluded the Son as well, but He said, 'I will not give My glory to another, except to You, to whom I have given it, and to whom I am going to give it.' Therefore, I greatly admire the uniqueness of the holy Scripture, that the phrase 'another' all interpreters have translated consistently, unlike the many other instances where they

differ. And so that we may know that the Son is not excluded by this statement, but rather idols are, the following words testify: 'And My praise to carved images.' Pro quo LXX: nec virtutes meas simulacris. Cum enim Christus Dei virtus sit, Deique sapientia, omnes in se virtutes continet Patris. Sequitur, Quae prima fuerunt, ecce venerunt. Et est sensus: Quae locutus sum, quae per Moysen, Prophetasque pollicitus sum, universa completa sunt. Nunc autem annuntio vobis Evangelium, vocationem gentium, passionem Christi, novitatem fidei: ut quomodo priora cernitis rebus expleta, sic et ea quae nunc polliceor, credatis esse ventura.

42:10-17

(Verse 10, 11 and following) Sing to God a new song: his praise from the ends of the earth: you who descend into the sea, and its fullness; islands and their inhabitants. Let the desert and its cities lift up: in the houses shall Cedar dwell, praise you inhabitants of Petra, they shall shout from the top of the mountains. They shall give glory to the Lord, and his praise in the islands they shall declare. The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, as a warrior he shall stir up zeal: he shall shout and cry out: he shall strengthen himself against his enemies. I have always kept silent, I have been quiet, I have been patient: like a woman in labor, I will speak. I will scatter and devour together. I will make mountains and hills desolate, and I will dry up all their vegetation, and I will turn rivers into islands, and I will dry up ponds. And I will lead the blind on a path they do not know, and I will make them walk on paths they have not known. I will turn darkness into light in front of them, and I will make crooked paths straight. These are the things I will do for them, and I will not abandon them. They have turned back: let them be confounded with confusion, that trust in idols, that say to molten things: You are our gods. Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: his praise is in the church of the saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: and let the children of Sion be joyful in their king. Let them praise his name in choir: let them sing to him with the timbrel and the psaltery. For the Lord is well pleased with his people: and he will exalt the meek unto salvation. The saints shall rejoice in glory: they shall be joyful in their beds. The high praises of God shall be in their mouth: and two-edged swords in their hands. To execute vengeance upon the nations, chastisements among the people. To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron. To execute upon them the judgment that is written: this glory is to all his saints. Alleluia. They will give glory to God, his virtues will be proclaimed in the islands. The Lord God of hosts will go forth and crush the battle, he will stir up zeal, and he will cry out against his enemies with strength. Have I been silent from the beginning, will I always be silent and endure? As one in labor, I have acted with patience; I will burst forth and dry up together, I will lay waste the mountains and hills, and I will dry up all their grass. And I will turn rivers into islands, and I will dry up marshes. And I will lead the blind along a way they do not know, and I will make their paths uneven; I will turn darkness into light for them, and crooked things into straight paths. I will speak these words to them, and I will not abandon them, but they have turned backward; you will be confused with confusion, you who trust in idols, who say that they are gods. He who had said: what was first, behold, it has come; I also announce new things: before they arise, I will make them heard to you; and he had promised that he would say what they did not know: what are those new things, he states in the following discourse, commanding the Apostles and the Apostolic men to sing a new song, not in the antiquity of the letter; but in the novelty of the spirit. Not only in the old Instrument, but also in the new; and His praise reaches to the ends of the earth. For He has come forth from the highest heaven and His circuit is to the highest point of it (Psalm XIX). The

sound of the Apostles has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. Or according to the Septuagint: Glorify His name in the ends of the earth, that the name of Christ may be announced to the nations in the whole world. But who are those who should sing a new song, the following words declare: You who go down to the sea and sail upon it, or the fullness of the sea. For seeing the apostles, Jesus by the sea of Galilee, mending their nets, called and sent them into the great sea (Luke 5); to make fishermen of fish, who preached the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyria and Spain: taking the power of the Roman city itself in a short time. Or certainly they descended into the sea and sailed it; enduring the storms and persecutions of this age. Also the islands and their inhabitants, whether understanding the diversity of nations or the multitude of churches. Let the desert and its cities raise their voices, as we mentioned earlier. Whether the desert and its villages rejoice, and Cedar, which was once an uninhabitable region beyond Arabia of the Saracens. And the inhabitants of Petra, which is also a city of Palestine. But this signifies that the deserted people of the nations, previously bound by the ignorance of God and the errors of idolatry, should be converted to the praises of the Lord. Whether because Cedar is interpreted as darkness, and according to the Apostle (I Cor. X) Christ is the rock, it is commanded to all believers, that those who were previously in darkness, and now believe in the Lord Savior, shout from the top of the mountains, and openly proclaim Christ, to whom it is also said above (Ad cap. XL, 9): Ascend to the high mountain, you who proclaim the good news to Zion. Lift up your voice with strength, you who proclaim good news to Jerusalem. And I will set his glory among the islands, of which we have spoken before. And the prophetic discourse describes the glorious advent of the Savior, about which even the Apostle Paul speaks: According to the illumination of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4; 2 Timothy 1:10); and he compares him to a mighty man who will fight against his adversaries, arousing zeal. Of whom it is also prophesied in the Song of Deuteronomy: They have made me jealous with what is not a god; they have provoked me with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a nation; I will provoke them with a foolish nation (Deuteronomy 32:21). He will also shout and cry out against his enemies, openly condemning their faithlessness, and with loud voice proclaiming: I have been silent, I have always kept silent, I have been patient, or as the Septuagint translated: I have been silent, will I always be silent? (Ecclesiastes 3:7) That which is said through Solomon may be fulfilled: A time to keep silent, and a time to speak. And the meaning is: I have often borne with you as you have transgressed for a long time; but because I remained silent before, I will by no means keep silent any longer. And just as a woman giving birth brings forth a child into the light and makes what was previously hidden in the depths of her womb open and visible, so too I will reveal my pain and the deceit that I have always harbored regarding your crimes, and I will expose your plans. And at once I will devour the entire nation and all the pride of your mountains and the swelling of your hills. And the grass, of which it was said: Truly the grass is the people, that is, both the leaders and the common people, I will reduce to a desert. What is added in the edition of Theodotion of the Septuagint, who had omitted these words (See above, Chapter IV, 7). And when I have dried you up from head to toe and wiped you out, then I will make the rivers of my teaching flow in the islands of the nations, and I will turn your lakes or marshes into dry land, so that there may be knowledge of the Scriptures among the nations and dryness of teaching among you. And I will lead the blind along a path they did not know, of whom we have also read above: I have made you a covenant of the people, a light of the nations, to open the eyes of the blind. They will be led along the way by which Christ speaks. I am the way, that is, the way of the knowledge of God, and

I will make them walk on the prophetic paths. Then their darkness will be changed into light, and their faults will be turned into righteousness, so that they may understand what they read and with the eyes of their hearts may gaze upon the clear light of Christ in the Old Testament. At the same time, he adds: These words that I have spoken or will speak to them do not promise anything further in the future, but fulfill what I promised before. But when this was said, the Jewish people turned backward so as not to believe the promise, and in their errors they were confused and neglected the pledge of God, whom they had believed in before idols. Or when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then also the people of Israel will be converted (Rom. 11), and they will repent of their error, by which they had served idols before. Or certainly after the calling of the Gentiles, they will return to the beginning: so that it may be said, all the Gentiles who did not want to believe in the Gospel will be confounded in their idols.

42:18-25

(Verse 18, 19 onwards) The deaf, hear! And the blind, look to see. Who is blind, if not my servant? And who is deaf, if not the one to whom I send my messengers? Who is blind, if not the one who has been sold? And who is blind, if not the servant of the Lord? You who see many things, will you not observe? You who have open ears, will you not hear? And the Lord desired to sanctify him, and to magnify the law, and to exalt it. But the people are plundered and devastated: all the youth are trapped in snares, and hidden in prison houses. They have become a prey, and there is no one to deliver them; a spoil, and no one says, 'Restore them.' Who among you hears this, pays attention, and listens to the future? Who has given Jacob over to plunder, and Israel to the plunderers? Is it not the Lord himself, whom we have sinned against? And they have refused to walk in his ways and have not listened to his law. So he poured out his wrath on them, and the fierceness of battle: and he set them on fire all around, but they did not understand; and he burned them, but they did not comprehend. LXX: Hear, you deaf! Look, you blind, that you may see. Who is blind, but my children? And deaf, but those who rule over them? Who is blind (According to the Complutensian edition of the Septuagint) but he who receives: and the servants of God were made blind. You have seen many things, but you have not observed them: your ears are open, but you do not hear. The Lord God was pleased for the sake of his justice, that he might magnify his law. And I saw, and behold a people is destroyed and taken captive. For there was a snare in the hidden places, and a net over their houses. They have become a prey: and there was no one to deliver the spoil: and there was no one to say, Restore. Who is among you that will hear this, and will consider the future? Who hath given Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to robbers? hath not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? and they would not walk in his ways, neither would they hearken to his law. And he hath poured out upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart. Lest anyone think that what is said, 'Hear, you deaf; look, you blind,' applies to the Gentile people, who were previously deaf and blind (as the Jews foolishly claim to approve by interpretation), the prophetic speech itself shows that the deaf and blind should be understood. 'Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one in covenant with me, blind like Israel?' Who is blind, but the one who was previously a servant of the Lord? To whom it is said: O Israel, who sees many things, and has many prophets through whom you may know the commandments of God, will you not keep the precepts that have been given to you? You who have open ears, will you not hear what is being said, of which we also read above:

You will hear with your ears, and will not understand; and seeing you will see, and will not perceive: for the heart of this people has grown dull (Isa. VI, 9). The Lord, he said, wanted to sanctify him, and magnify his Law, and lift up and comfort his suffering people. But he did not want to do God's will: and therefore he was plundered and devastated by his adversaries, whom we should understand as either demons or enemies. The snares of young men, and those hidden in the houses of prisons. Or as the LXX translated, snares in every hiding place, and in the houses where they concealed them: signifying the scribes and the Pharisees, who deceived the miserable people, and everywhere set traps against the Lord Savior and his Apostles (Luke 11): having the key of knowledge, neither entering in themselves, nor allowing others who wanted to enter. Their beautiful hearts in which they lived were called prisons of evil thoughts. Therefore, they became a prey and a plunder: and there was no one to deliver them, and to speak for them. At the same time, the Prophet encourages them, so that if everyone cannot hear, at least a few would know and understand what they have endured. And they would recognize the reasons for their desolation, who neither wanted to hear nor to do what was commanded by the Law. Therefore the Lord poured out upon them all his wrath and the fury of his anger; uttering also against them exceeding hard words, behold how he incenses them with the Roman Empire he newly built. He burns them completely and leaves nothing healthy in them, yet they do not understand the reason for their punishment, that they have not received the Son of God.

43:1-13

(Chapter 43, Verse 1 and following) And now, thus says the Lord, the one who created you, Jacob, and the one who formed you, Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the water, I will be with you, and the rivers will not overwhelm you. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you. From the moment you became honorable and glorious in my eyes: I loved you, and I will give men for you, and peoples for your soul. Do not fear, for I am with you: I will bring your descendants from the East, and gather you from the West. I will say to the North, give up: and to the South, do not withhold: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. And everyone who calls upon my name, I have created him for my glory, and I have formed him and made him. Bring out the blind people who have eyes, and the deaf who have ears. Let all the nations gather together, and let the peoples be assembled. Who among you will declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring their witnesses to justify them, and let them hear and say, 'It is true.' You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I am, I am the Lord, and there is no savior without me. I have declared and saved; I have made known, and there was no strange one among you. You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God, and from the beginning I am myself, and there is no one who can rescue from my hand. I will work, and who can turn it aside? LXX; And now thus says the Lord who made you, Jacob, and formed you, Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are mine. If you pass through water, I am with you, and rivers will not cover you. And if you pass through fire, you will not be burned: the flame will not burn you: for I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I have made your exchange for Egypt, and Ethiopia, and Seba for you. Since you have been honorable

and glorified in my sight: and I have loved you, I will give men for you, and princes for your life. Do not be afraid, for I am with you: I will bring your offspring from the East, and gather you from the West. I will say to the north, give up; and to the south, do not withhold: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made. Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears. All the nations gather together, and the peoples assemble. Who among them can declare this, and show us the former things? Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right, and let them hear and say, 'It is true.' Let them bring their witnesses, and let them be justified, and let them hear and speak the truth. Be my witnesses, and I am a witness, says the Lord God, and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe and understand that I am: Before me there was no other God and after me there will be none. I am God, and there is no Savior besides me. I have declared and saved: I have rebuked and there was no stranger among you. You are my witnesses, and I am the Lord God from the beginning, and there is no one who can deliver from my hand. I will do it, and who will turn it away? The Hebrews interpret this as the second coming of the Savior, when after the fullness of the Gentiles, all of Israel will be saved. But we do not think that the promise will be fulfilled for them, as it has been said: Who is blind, but my children? And who are deaf, but those who rule over them? And the servants of God have become blind. And again: The people have been devastated and plundered, and similar things. Finally he brought upon him the outpouring of his furious indignation, and perhaps war, and consumed him all around, and did not recognize, and set him ablaze, and did not understand. Therefore, what we have said above, there are two Jacobs and two Israels, one carnal and the other spiritual, those who did not want to believe in the Savior and those who received the Son of God. This should also be understood now, that the chorus of the Apostles and the first Church of Christ, gathered from the Jewish people, may understand their Creator and Maker, who is both the creator of their soul and body. And let him not fear persecutors, because he has been redeemed by the blood of Christ, who has called him by his name, and let him specifically call his people because of their special relationship; but let him preach fearlessly, and let him not fear any dangers. And what he implies: he describes the attack and fury of persecutors as waters and rivers, and fire and flames, who envy the salvation of the Gentiles and do not want the gospel message to be preached. Although the Jews want the Egyptians to be understood as waters, the Babylonians as rivers, the Macedonians as fire, and the Romans as flames. Therefore, He commands them not to fear, because the Lord their God, the Savior, and the holy one of Israel will be with them, who made them known in Egypt, Ethiopia, and Syene, and even to the ends of the earth to proclaim. Regarding Syene, the remaining interpreters have placed it in Saba (), where the queen of the South came to hear the wisdom of Solomon (III Kings 10). Therefore, the chorus of the Apostles became honorable in the sight of God, and beloved by Him; and they are the salvation of all people and nations who are called to the Gospel through them, and they will be considered for the salvation of their souls. And he joins and says: Do not be afraid, I am with you, who speak to you in the Gospel: Behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world (Matt. 28:20). For I will bring your sons from the East and from the West, who will rest in the bosom of Abraham, and from all parts of the world the people of my sons and daughters will be gathered, who will either invoke my name or be called by my name, so that they may be called Christians to the glory of their creator. And what follows: Educate the blind people, who have eyes; the deaf, who have ears; many people think that it is said about the Gentile people, who began to

hear and see through the teaching of the Apostles. But we should also understand this about the dispersed Israel, who was called by the Apostles and believed first; to whom Paul also speaks: It was necessary for the word of God to be preached to you first (Acts 13:46). And the Lord Himself in the Gospel: Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:6). Finally, it follows: all the nations are gathered together, and the tribes are assembled, that is, with the people who believed from the Jews, so that there may be a dual calling, of circumcision and of uncircumcision. But what is said, 'Bring forth, O Lord, the word is spoken to the Son.' Or, according to the Septuagint, the Father speaks to the Son, that He may bring forth His blind and deaf people, and join them to the nations, and make many leaders of the Church from them. And the prophet marvels that no one among the nations could have known these things in advance, nor could they have known the plans of God; but only His people who have received the Law and had prophets: For God is known in Judea, His name is great in Israel (Ps. LXX, 1). Whether he himself is the witness of his own words, both the doer and the boy and servant whom he has chosen. There is no doubt that it signifies Christ, to whom he also says above: It is great for you to be called my servant. And all these things will happen, so that the truth may be preached to the world, and they may know, and believe, and understand, whose minds were previously brutish and insensible, that besides one God, there is no other God, neither before nor after. For the creator of times never has a beginning, since time itself sometimes exists. And how did He speak: I am a witness, says the Lord God; and the boy whom I have chosen, saying this very thing to the Lord in the Gospel: The testimony of two men is true. I am the one who testifies about myself, and the one who sent me is the Father (John 8:17-18). Thus, we must understand the divinity of Him, that there is no God except Himself who speaks, and His chosen boy. Besides God the Father, there is no other God: because Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1), who speaks in the Gospel: I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me (John 14:11). For just as the one Lord Christ does not take away from the Father so that he may not be Lord, so the one God the Father does not take away from the Son so that he may not be God: who in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: this was in the beginning with God (John 1:1-2). And what follows: And there is no Savior without me, shows that the Son saves all things in the Father. Concerning whom the same prophet testifies: And the Lord will send them a Savior, who will make them safe (Isaiah 9). For indeed, God is wise and strong, and His wisdom and virtue cannot exist without Him. So when I foretell these things from the beginning, there will be no one who rejects my will: indeed, what I have done, they could make void. These things are indeed said to Jacob and Israel, but they refer to the apostolic choir and all who want to believe in Christ and be saved from the Jewish people.

43:14

(Verse 14.) Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their bars, and the Chaldeans glorying in their ships. I am the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your king. LXX: Thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, your redeemer: For your sakes I will send to Babylon, and will bring down all their fugitives, and the Chaldeans, in the ships of their rejoicing. I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, who have shown your king, Israel. According to the Hebrew, the prophetic speech is still directed to Israel, to whom their redeemer, the Lord and Holy One of Israel, spoke these words: 'Because of you who preach the Gospel with me, to whom I said above: Do not be afraid, for I am

with you, you who are the witnesses of my will, and you announce my other Son to the unbelieving world, I have sent my Son into Babylon and the confusion of this age. And I have removed all its bars, which are called Barihim in Hebrew (or Barichim, as interpreted by Theodotion).¹ And, he said, the Chaldeans are implied, I have removed those who boasted in their ships: in these, namely, who floated like ships among idols. No one doubts about the Chaldeans that they sound like demons. I, the Lord, have foretold these things, who am your Creator and the king of Israel. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the meaning is quite different: I, the Lord, who have delivered you from dangers, and the holy one of Israel: because of you, I will send the king of the Medes and Persians to Babylon, and I will make its inhabitants flee, and the Chaldeans who captured you will be bound and transferred across the Caspian Sea to other nations. I, the Lord, have determined these future events, which will reveal that the King of Israel will be the one who believes.

43:16-21

(Verse 16, 17 and following) Thus says the Lord, who made a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. Who brought out the chariot and horse, the army and the strong: they lay down to sleep together, they will not rise again; they are broken like flax, they are extinguished. Do not remember the former things, and do not consider the ancient things. Behold, I am doing something new, now it will spring forth; will you not know it? I will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The animals of the field will glorify me, the dragons and ostriches; for I have given waters in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people. I have formed this people for myself; they will proclaim my praise. LXX: For thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. Who brings out chariots and horses, and a multitude of warriors. But they lie down, they shall not rise; they are extinguished, extinguished like flax. Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it shall spring forth, shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beasts of the field, the sirens, and the daughters of ostriches will bless me, for I have given water in the wilderness and rivers in the dry land, to make my chosen people, my acquired people, drink. They will declare my virtues. The Lord, who destroyed and cast down Babylon and took away its mightiest ones from power, and made all the Chaldeans who sailed prosperously on the waves of this age captives, He Himself found a way in the rushing waters of the Red Sea, so that his liberated people could cross from Egypt. Whether it was he who made a path in the Red Sea, or who found a way in the raging waters of the river Jordan, so that the departure from Egypt and the entrance into the promised land would have a miracle. He submerged Pharaoh's chariots, horses, and entire army in the depths, who slept an eternal sleep. They were crushed and annihilated, like flax in a short span of time, and in an instant. For flax, even before being consumed by fire, is immediately extinguished due to its light substance, and dissolves into ashes. Therefore, I command you that among my signs and miracles, by which the most powerful city of Babylon was destroyed, and by which the way was opened for my people in the Red Sea and the Jordan river, you must not remember the past, for in the Gospel I am going to do much greater things; in comparison to which, the past should be forgotten. For I will no longer find a way in the Red Sea, but in the desert of the whole world. And not just one river or spring will burst forth from a rock, but many rivers that will refresh not bodies as before, but thirsty souls. And that which we read above will be fulfilled: You will drink the waters from the fountains of the Savior (On Chapter

12, Verse 3). Then, what has never been done will be done, so that all beasts and dragons, and ostriches who dwelt in the wilderness of the nations, and those who were like idolatry in their blood and the savagery of beasts, will glorify and praise me. As for the dragons, whom only Theodotius, as it is written in Hebrew, called Thannim (or Al. Thennim), the rest were interpreted as Sirens, monstrous creatures who would throw sailors to be torn apart by the barking Scyllaeen dogs with their sweet song and deadly charm. And this means that those who were formerly devoted to pleasure and luxury are converted to the service of the Lord; although it is better to understand it as dragons, because they are joined with ostriches, since he spoke about beasts of the wilderness once, he put these animals, which are familiar in the desert. They will praise me, he says, and the animals of the field will glorify me, and the dragons, and the ostriches, because I gave waters in the desert of the nations, and rivers in the dry land of the peoples, so that my people, whom I have chosen for myself, or my chosen race, and the people whom I have acquired with my blood, may drink, and they may tell my praises and virtues.

43:22-24

(Verse 22, 23 and following) You did not call upon me, Jacob: you did not labor for me, Israel. You did not offer me the ram of your burnt offering, and you did not glorify me with your sacrifices. I did not make you serve in the offering, nor did I require labor from you in the burning of incense. You did not buy for me fragrant reeds with silver, and you did not satisfy me with the fat of your sacrifices. However, you served me in your sins: you provided labor for me in your iniquities. LXX: You have not now called, Jacob, nor have I made you labor, Israel. You have not brought me the sheep of your holocaust; nor have you magnified me with your sacrifices; nor have you made me serve with your offerings; nor have you bestowed upon me labor with frankincense; nor have you purchased for me with silver the sweet odor of your sacrifices; nor have you desired the fat of your victims; but you have defended yourself in your sins, and in your iniquities. The beasts of the field, dragons and ostriches praising me, you, Jacob, did not want to invoke me, nor afterwards did you labor to amend sin through repentance. But what you think you offered me as victims and sacrificed rams, know that they were not accepted by me, because they were common to me and idols. And he repeats the sense that he stated above: Why do I need the multitude of your victims, says the Lord? I am full of burnt offerings of rams, and fat of lambs, and blood of bulls and goats I do not desire. For I have not required anything precious from you, that I would make you labor in acquiring them. I have not required offerings from you, nor have I sought incense: not reed, nor incense, nor diverse kinds of pigments, with which you would intoxicate and satisfy me with their smoke. But I desired obedience, which is above sacrifice: and sacrifice, of which David says in the Psalms: Sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit: a broken and humbled heart God does not despise (Ps. 50:19), that is what I wanted, that is what I sought. But you have made me serve and labor in your sins, so that I am compelled to say: I have labored and endured; and I can no longer bear you. And through Hosea, God says the same: What shall I do to you, Ephraim? I will protect you, Israel. What shall I do? I will make you like Adam, and like Sodom. But what the Septuagint has is, I have defended you in your sins, and in your iniquities, so it can be connected to the previous statements, that it is God's labor and weariness to defend sinners.

43:25-28

(Verse 25, 26 and following) I am, I am myself, who blots out your iniquities for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins. Bring me to remembrance, let us argue together; set forth your case, that you may be proved right. Your first ancestor sinned, and your interpreters transgressed against me. And I profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and delivered Jacob to destruction and Israel to reviling. LXX: I am, I am he who blots out your iniquities, and I will not remember. But remember, and let us argue together. Declare your iniquities first, that you may be justified. Your fathers have sinned, and your princes have dealt unjustly with me, and they have defiled my holy ones. And I gave up Jacob to destruction and Israel to reviling. You, Jacob and Israel, you have caused me to labor in your sins, and I could barely bear the burden of your iniquities. I do not call you my servants or slaves, but I address you simply by the names Jacob and Israel, so that I may show and prove your sins. But I, because I am kind and patient, and have many mercies, will wipe away all your iniquities in the sprinkling of the blood of the new Testament: I will wipe away the old handwriting, which was written against you; and I will no longer remember your sins, which I am willing to forgive you, if you believe, in baptism. Therefore, bring me to remembrance: if you have any just thing to answer to me, I will gladly accept it, so that we may be judged together, and you may accuse me of not doing what I should have done for you. Whom we find fuller in understanding than in Micha, saying: My people, what have I done to you, and how have I harmed you? Answer me: for I brought you out of the land of Egypt and freed you from the house of slavery, and I sent Moses and Aaron and Miriam before your face. And in the fiftieth Psalm David speaks to God: That you may be justified in your words, and may overcome when you are judged (Ps. 50:5). Therefore, tell me if you have anything, so that you may be justified. And the meaning is: I will not speak against you first, lest you claim to be overwhelmed by the multiplication of words; but if you have anything just to say, speak for yourself; so that you may seem to endure the things you suffer unworthily. And so that you may know that I have mercy on you, not because of your merit, but because of my compassion, I will repeat it from your fathers and ancestors, so that you may understand that you were born from sinners: Your father first sinned in solitude: namely, the entire people of Israel. Whether Abraham, the founder of your race, is shown to have sinned when, in response to the Lord's promise to give the land of promise to his descendants, he asked, 'How shall I know that I am to possess it?' And of your interpreters, he says, 'they have acted unfaithfully toward me' (Gen. XV, 8). Aaron and Moses at the waters of contradiction, when they were speaking between me and the Israelites (Exod. XVII). And so that we may understand this is not a forced interpretation, it is followed by the statement, 'And I have defiled the holy princes,' concerning whom it is said in the psalm, 'Their rulers were swallowed up by the rock' (Ps. CXL, 6). He says that they contaminated themselves on purpose because they did not enter the promised land. He devoted Jacob and Israel to destruction and blasphemy, so that no one except two of those who had come out of Egypt would enter into Judah, but their bodies would lie in the wilderness. According to the Septuagint, who added from their own: You speak first of your own iniquities, so that you may be justified. God calls them to repentance, so that they may understand their crimes and sins, and obtain forgiveness. For it is written in another place: 'He who pleads his own cause in the beginning of his speech is just' (Prov. XVIII, 17). And their leaders and fathers are said to have violated the holy things of the Lord, not obeying the Law of God, but seeking the traditions and commandments of men. Because of them Jacob perished, and Israel was given into reproach, expelled from his own province, and became an exile and wanderer throughout the whole world.

(Chapter 44, verse 1 and following) Now listen, my servant Jacob, and Israel, whom I have chosen. Thus says the Lord, your maker and shaper from the womb, your helper. Do not fear, my servant Jacob, and you, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They will sprout among the grass, like willows by flowing streams. He will say, 'I am the Lord's,' and another will name himself by the name of Jacob, and another will write on his hand, 'The Lord's,' and adopt the name of Israel. LXX: But now hear, Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen. I am the Lord your God, who created you and formed you from the womb; you will still have my help. Do not fear, my servant Jacob, and beloved Israel whom I have chosen. I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessings on your descendants.' And they shall spring up as among the grass, and as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's: and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. When the people of Judah are accused of unbelief and blasphemy, they are called by simple names without any dignity: You have not called upon me, O Jacob, neither have you labored about me, O Israel; and again: I have given Jacob to utter destruction, and Israel to reproaches. But when he speaks to the choir of the Apostles, who are from the Jews, the privileges of their names are also joined. Listen, Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen: that servitude be first, election second. Thus says the Lord, your maker and your creator, who aided you in the womb (Gen. XXV): that even in the womb of your mother you would grasp the heel of your brother. Or who, at the beginning of the nascent Church, preserved you from persecutors. Do not fear their cruelty, my servant Jacob, whom I have chosen. He is also called Israel; Isurun in Hebrew, and the others, the most upright or the straightest. Only the LXX called him the most beloved, combining it with their own, Israel. Specifically, according to the Hebrews and the faith of the scriptures, Israel is called the upright one of God. But a man who sees God is not in the elements, but in the sound of his voice. And the book of Genesis is called εἰς τοῦς, that is, the book of the righteous: Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. Therefore, do not be afraid, Jacob and Israel, for I will pour out water on the thirsty and the dry land, of which it has often been said: 'I will pour out, or I will put my spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing upon your descendants, who will be born again in water and the Holy Spirit in baptism. This promise was also made by the Savior in the Gospel, when he said: 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.' And immediately he brings in: Now he said this about the Holy Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive (John 7). He also compares those who are reborn in baptism to evergreen herbs and willows that grow by flowing waters, and he brings forth fruits against nature, which was previously barren, or whose seed, when consumed as food, renders them barren. This is indeed read in the first psalm: And he shall be like a tree planted beside the running waters, which shall yield its fruit in due season, and its leaf shall not fall. Others among the herbs and the growing willows understand a twofold calling: that the people of the nations be in the herbs; in the willows, those who believed from Israel. And at the same time it describes the variety of believers: One will say, 'I am of the Lord', who trusts in the works of righteousness within himself; another will call, it is understood, 'sinners to repentance in the name of Jacob', so that they themselves may uproot vices and sins. Another will write with his own hand, 'I belong to God'. Or as they translated it in the Septuagint, he will write in his hand: I am of God, so that he may boast in the new

apprenticeship of the service of Christ. And he will be assimilated in the name of Israel. For not all from Israel, but a great part from the multitude of the Gentiles, will be assimilated in the name of Israel, so that he may receive the Law and the Prophets, and all the graces of the Holy Spirit that were promised to the Israelite people.

44:6-20

(Verse 6 and following) This is what the Lord, the king of Israel and his redeemer, the Lord of hosts, says: I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides me. Who is like me? Let him call and declare, and lay out the order for me, since I established the ancient people: what is coming and what will happen, let them declare to them. Do not be afraid, nor be troubled: from that time I have made you hear and announced it; you are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me, and a creator whom I do not know? All the idols of the nations are worthless, and the things they love do not profit them. They themselves are witnesses to their own worthlessness, for they do not see or understand, so that they may be put to shame. Who formed a god or cast an idol that is profitable for nothing? Look, all his companions shall be put to shame; the craftsmen are mere men. Let them all assemble, let them stand forth. They shall be terrified; they shall be put to shame together. The blacksmith takes a tool and works it with the coals; he fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He will be hungry and will become weak, he will not drink water, and he will grow weary. The carpenter extends the rule (or the form), he shapes it on the plane, he forms it with angles, and rounds it off with a compass. And he makes an image of a man, like a handsome man dwelling in a house. He cuts down cedars, he takes an oak, and a tree that stood among the woods. He plants a pine, which the rain nourishes, and it becomes fuel for men. He takes from them, and warms himself; he kindles it, and bakes bread. But the rest of it he made into a god and worshipped; he made an idol and bowed down to it. He burned half of it in the fire and cooked meat on it; he roasted a stew and ate it, and then he was satisfied. He warmed himself and said, 'Ah! I am warm; I see the fire.' The rest of the wood he made into a god, his idol. He bows down to it and worships; he prays to it and says, 'Save me, for you are my god.' They do not know, nor do they understand; for their eyes are too dim to see, and their hearts too dull to perceive. They do not recognize in their mind, nor do they know, nor do they feel to say: I burnt its middle with fire, and I baked bread on its coals. I cooked meat, and I ate, and from the rest of it I will make an idol, I will prostrate before the trunk of a tree, a part of it is ashes: the foolish heart worshipped it: and it did not save its soul, nor will it say: perhaps there is a lie in my right hand. After the preaching of the Apostles, the calling of the Gentiles, the coming of the Savior, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which he promised to give to all who believe, when another will say, I belong to the Lord: another will call himself in the name of Jacob: another will write with his own hand that he belongs to the Lord, and when he has arisen from the unbelieving crowd of the Gentiles, he will be likened to Israel, so that having abandoned idols, he may be a worshipper of one God: it begins another section, which we have presented in its entirety, so as not to divide the unity of its meaning. And because the Septuagint in this chapter, with the exception of a few words, does not differ from the Hebrew, we are satisfied with our edition, by understanding which, the others will be understood as well. And this is a discourse against the idolaters of that time, to whom the prophet Isaiah proclaimed the coming things for the people, and he reproves those who, despising the religion of Almighty God, incline to wooden idols and worship the works of their own hands. Let us therefore run through each point. Thus says the Lord, the king of Israel, who is to be

believed in me, and his redeemer, who will receive the coming of my Son: The Lord of hosts and virtues, and Almighty. For in Hebrew, it means Sabaoth (). I am the first and the last, I am A and Ω; and there is no God without me, for the child whom I have chosen is God in me. Of whom I said above: Behold my child, whom I have chosen: my chosen one, whom my soul has received: he will bring judgment to the nations: and in his name the nations will hope. He does not say that he alone exists, but that apart from his own virtue and wisdom there is no external God, and condemns the belief in many gods and images: Who, he says, is like me? Let him call those things which are not as though they were, and explain the order of my creation, which I have balanced with reason, since I made man upon the earth. And not only do I desire this, but I also seek knowledge of the future. Therefore, you, Israel, of whom I am both king and redeemer, do not fear the images that you have learned are nothing on Mount Sinai. Is there perhaps another Creator, whom I do not know? Or is there another world beyond this one, which reveals the power of an unknown God? And not only the things that are made, but also those who make them, will be considered worthless. And when the time of vengeance comes, they will not be able to free themselves from the works of their own hands, which blind and senseless artisans confuse. For who can believe that God is formed by an axe, file, drill, or hammer? And are there statues made of thorns; or do the plumb-line, plow, and corner-squares, and the compass suddenly rise up into gods? Especially since the poverty of the artist is shown by hunger and thirst. For a wooden statue is made, representing human form, and the more beautiful it is, the narrower is the God thought to be. It is placed in a shrine, and is enclosed in eternal prison, which grew for a long time in the woods, and depending on the variety of trees, was either a cedar or an oak or a pine. And in a wondrous manner, its segments and scratches are thrown into the hearth, so that they may warm the artisan of God and cook different dishes. But the other part is fashioned into a god, so that, with the work complete, the creator may adore it and seek assistance from his own creation. Yet he does not understand or consider, indeed, he does not even look upon it with the eyes of the flesh or the mind, that it cannot be God, whose part has been consumed by fire, nor can the divine majesty be made by the hand of man. Moreover, the prophetic language is more fully covered with ridicule, which is easily understood and does not require a verbose, rather superfluous commentary. This is what Horace also writes about in his Satire, mocking the idols of the nations (Satire VIII, Book I).

Once I was a fig tree trunk, useless wood: When a craftsman was unsure whether to make a bench or Priapus. He preferred it to be a god: I became a god, the greatest fear of thieves and birds. Whatever is said about idols can also be applied to the leaders of heresies, who create images of their doctrines and lies with cunning hearts and worship things that they know are made by themselves. And their own error is not enough for them, unless they deceive even the simplest of their followers with their worship. Those who think that gain is godliness and devour the homes of widows (I Tim. VI), taking advantage of the ignorance of the common people, in this way, with dialectic art, as if with an axe and drill, they shape their own god, and they forge with a hammer, and they gild with the elegance of rhetorical language: of whom their god is their belly, and their glory is in their shame (Philipp. III).

44:21-23

(Vers. 21 seqq.) Remember these things, Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant: I have formed you, you are my servant, O Israel, do not forget me. I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like a mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you. Praise, O heavens, for the

Lord has shown mercy: rejoice, O ends of the earth, let the mountains resound with praise, the forests and every tree in it: for the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and Israel will be glorified. LXX: Remember these things, Jacob and Israel; for you are my servant: I have formed you, my servant: and you, Israel, do not forget me. Behold, I have blotted out your iniquities as a cloud, and your sins as a mist. Return to me, and I will redeem you. Rejoice, heavens, for the God of Israel has shown mercy. Sound the trumpet, foundations of the earth, cry out, mountains, with joy: hills and all the trees in them, for God has redeemed Jacob: and Israel will be glorious. When these things are thus, and know that idols of men are figments, O Jacob and my Israel, do not forget your Creator, and do not do injury to yourself, so that you bow down to the work of your hands. Because these things are completely destroyed in the coming of my chosen child, therefore with all the eagerness of your mind, understand that just as a cloud and darkness, and mist, either dissolve in the heat of the sun, or are weakened by the wind that carries them away: so I will dissolve your iniquities and all the sins by which you have previously offended me. Just return to me and repent, for you are to be redeemed by precious blood. If you do this, know that in your salvation, the heavens and the earth will rejoice, and all the elements will harmonize. Whether it be the angels who reside in the heavens, and other powers that support the foundations of the earth. Or certainly the Apostles and Prophets, of whom the Apostle spoke: 'Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets' (Ephes. II, 20). The mountains and forests, or hills, which, for the variety of their virtues, possessed the first and middle and last places, are commanded to rejoice and sound the trumpet, knowing that the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and in Israel there is joy in the conversion, or that Israel himself, having turned from error, may become illustrious.

44:24-28

(Verse 24 and following) Thus says the Lord, your redeemer, and your creator from the womb: I am the Lord, the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens alone, establishing the earth, with no one beside me. Making the signs of the diviners void, and driving the soothsayers mad; turning the wise men backward, and making their knowledge foolish. Fulfilling the word of my servant, and performing the counsel of my messengers. I say to Jerusalem: you shall be inhabited, and to the cities of Judah: you shall be rebuilt, and its desolate places I will restore. I say to the depths: be desolate, and I will dry up your rivers. I say to Cyrus: you are my shepherd, and you will fulfill all my desires. I say to Jerusalem: you will be rebuilt; and to the temple: you will be founded. LXX: Thus says the Lord who redeemed you, and formed you from the womb. I am the Lord, who fills all things: I alone stretched out the heavens, and established the earth. Who else has dispersed the signs of the pythons, and the divinations from the heart? Who turns wise men backward, and makes their counsel foolish. And I establish the word of my son, and I approve the true counsel of the Angels. I say to Jerusalem, you will be inhabited: and to the cities of Judah: you will be built, and its desolate places will be restored. I say to the abyss, you will be desolated, and I will dry up your rivers. I say to Cyrus, so that he may understand, and do all my will; I say to Jerusalem, you will be built: and I will establish my holy house. With the idols and injustices of Israel destroyed, and sins cleansed, when every creature will rejoice together; and according to the faith of the Gospel (Luke 15), the Angels will rejoice in heaven for the repentance of sinners, the power of God is described, that it is not great for him to redeem Jacob, and to restore Israel, whom he formed from the womb. And if this seems significant to someone, let it not be difficult for them who alone stretches out the heavens. As it is written elsewhere: He who stretches out the heavens like

a skin (Ps. CIII, 2). Not that the Son is excluded from the stretching out of the heavens: For all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made (John I, 3), but so that, as we have often said, idols may be excluded by this understanding. For even in the Proverbs of Solomon, from the person of Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God is said: When he established the heavens, I was with him (Prov. VIII, 27). For he himself spoke, and they were made; he himself commanded, and they were created (Psalm 148:5; Psalm 33:9). And: By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and all the power of them by the breath of his mouth (Psalm 33:6). We frequently proclaim these things so that no occasion is given to the heretics to blaspheme Christ. In the stability of the earth, when he was establishing its foundations, there was no one with God except him who was in it. Therefore, when the appointed time of the predetermined mystery arrives, so that all idols are destroyed and the knowledge of the one true God is preached in the world, he will destroy and overthrow all the prophecies of the divine, the pythonesses, and the soothsayers, along with the signs and wonders by which they have deceived the human race. And he will show that the wisdom of the philosophers, which is itself the greatest part of error, is foolish, since by no means can human thoughts comprehend the wisdom of God. And furthermore, the word of the boy, or his servant, about whom we spoke earlier, and the advice of his messengers, will accomplish these things: namely, the Apostles and all the teachers, who will proclaim the will of their master to the nations. Therefore, he himself, who will accomplish such great things, whose power I have described in a few words, also says to Jerusalem, which will be destroyed by the Babylonians, before it is destroyed, that it will be inhabited again by the people, and to the cities of Judea, that they will be restored, and he will raise up its desolations, so that all may be filled with cultivators. Therefore, whoever says that Jerusalem, and Judah, and its deserts should be inhabited, and built, and restored, he is saying that Babylon, which is the deep or abyss, should be made desolate and your rivers should be dried up, along with all the power of kings. And because he had said the deep and abyss, he appropriately added the translation of rivers, about which even the Psalmist sings: By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept (Psalm 137:1). And he who restores Jerusalem, destroys Babylon. He also says to Cyrus, the king of the Persians, who first destroyed Babylon and the Chaldeans: you are my shepherd, or as the Septuagint translated, so that you may understand. The reason for this difference is clear. For the Hebrew word Roi, if we read it with the letter Res (ר), it is understood as my shepherd; if we read it with the letter Daleth (ד), it means my knowing or understanding, which are distinguished by a small apex, and therefore are often confused. It is written at the beginning of Ezra, that by the edict of Cyrus, the king of the Persians and Medes, the captivity of the people of Israel was released, and those who wanted to return were sent back to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Josedech the high priest. For to him the Lord inspired to do his will, and to fulfill his commandments. Significantly, he added, I say to you Jerusalem, you shall be built, and to the Temple, you shall be founded. For under Cyrus, it was commanded to build Jerusalem and the Temple, of which only the foundations were laid while he was alive. However, under Darius, in his second year, with the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the building of the Temple was begun.

45:1-7

(Chapter 45, Verses 1 onwards) Thus says the Lord to Cyrus, his anointed one, whom he has taken by the right hand to subdue nations before him and strip the loins of kings, to force gateways

before him that their gates be closed no more: I will go before you, and level the mountains; I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. Because of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen one, I have called you by your name: I have likened you to myself, and you have not known me. I am the Lord, and there is no other: besides me there is no God: I have girded you, and you have not known me. So that they may know, from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is no one besides me ((Previously it was added: God)). I am the Lord, and there is no other. Forming light and creating darkness: making peace and creating evil. I am the Lord who does all these things. I know that in this chapter not only many Latin but also Greek people greatly err, thinking that it is written: Thus says the Lord to my Christ, the Lord; so that it is understood, according to what we read elsewhere: The Lord rains from the Lord (Gen. II). And: The Lord said to my Lord (Ps. CIX, 1). For it is not κυρ■ω■, which means Lord, but it is said to Cyrus, who is called Chores in Hebrew, the king of the Persians, who overcame Babylon and the Chaldeans. And with the Medes joined together, the charioteer of the chariot, that is, of the camel and the donkey, is read above. This one is called Christ, that is, the anointed of the Lord, which was a sign among the Hebrews of royal power, just as with us the emperor is given a diadem and purple robe: so among the Hebrews those who were to reign were anointed with oil. Hence Saul is also called the anointed of the Lord (1 Samuel 24). And in the Psalms we read: 'Do not touch my anointed ones, and do no harm to my prophets' (Psalm 105:15). He grasped and held the right hand of this man, so that no one could resist his strength. Let us read the history of Cyrus the Great, consisting of eight books by Xenophon, and we will see the prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled. What city did not yield to him? What king did not submit to him? What walls, before impregnable, were not brought down by his siege? Therefore, God addresses Cyrus himself: I have given you treasures and hidden riches of all cities, so that you, who previously worshipped idols, would acknowledge one God through my blessings, especially since you know that your name was foretold long before you were born. Which indeed Josephus also relates in the eleventh book of Jewish Antiquities, that Cyrus read of himself prophesied by name by Isaiah, and therefore the Jews loved him greatly as if he were one of God's own familiar ones. These things, he says, I attribute to you because of my servant Jacob, and my chosen Israel, and I called you by your name, just as I called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and long before, I foretold you, Isaac and Josiah, so that you would not think that he is the Christ, to whom you are compared, and in whose type and image you have preceded. But you did not know me, that is, you worshiped idols, not God. I have equipped you with strength; I have made you conquer many nations, and you did not know your helper. In this respect, I cannot help but be amazed at the foolishness of the readers; that they would refer these things to Christ, through whom the world is reconciled to God. I, says the Lord, and there is no one besides me. Besides my word, reason, power, and wisdom, which are in me, there is no other God. And I have done these things so that from the East and the West the whole world may recognize that there is no other God besides me. I am the Lord, and there is no other. For the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father. He who speaks in the Gospel: I and the Father are one (John 10:30). And it is written in the book of Ezra that Cyrus wrote to all nations that there is no God except the God of Israel. Or it is to be understood in this way, that the release of captives and the mercy of God towards his people has made God known to all nations. Therefore, I, the only God, give you strength. I myself create opposing things, light and darkness, that is, day and night; peace and

evil, that is, calm and war, through which I indicate that I was angry with my people when they endured the darkness of captivity and the evils of slavery. And again, I showed mercy when I released them to their homeland and they received peace and joy. Just as light is opposed to darkness, so war is opposed to peace. In order to combat heresy, which considers God, the creator of all things, as evil, it must be noted that this evil is not opposed to good, but rather serves as a means of affliction and struggle, as it is written in the Gospel: 'Sufficient for the day is its own evil' (Matthew 6:34). We can apply this understanding to a wise man of the Church, to whom God has granted speech and wisdom, so that through his arguments he may undermine all sects that are contrary to the truth. Just as the Holy Scripture also mentions about Stephen (Acts 6), that no one was able to resist his wisdom, and so that he may subject kings, that is, the leaders of each heresy, to his authority, and open and break down what previously seemed to be concluded by the art of dialectic, and bring forth the secrets of the heretics, surpassing and convincing them, so that they may know the secrets of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2). God calls this man by His own name because he is the defender of His servant Jacob and His chosen one Israel. God accepts him and conforms him to His word, which he must be careful not to think that what he speaks is his own, but rather he should attribute all glory to the giver; lest he himself deserves to hear: 'I have called you, and you have not known me.' For when, equipped with the armor of an Apostle, he teaches everyone that there is no other God but one, who is the God of Jacob and Israel, Marcion will be confounded, for he understands two gods, one good and the other just; one the creator of the invisible, the other of the visible. From these, the first makes light, the second darkness; the former brings peace, the latter brings evil: and yet the same God created both, according to their different merits.

Book Thirteen

Book Thirteen.

Multiple dangers overwhelm the sailors. If the wind blows stronger, the storm is a source of fear. If a milder breeze ruffles the surface of the highest waves, they fear the attacks of pirates. And so it happens that, entrusted to a fragile plank of wood, they either fear danger or endure it: both are equally severe, either to fear death perpetually or to endure what you have feared. I see this happen to me while sailing on the sea of Isaiah; for while the sails are being set in an undisturbed course, and the keel, cut by the hands of nature, glides over the plains of the sea, a sudden whirlwind of languor arises, with so many waves heaving and crashing against each other with a resounding noise, frightening the timid hearts of their friends, so that they were forced to say: Master, save us, we are perishing (Matth. VIII, 25). Therefore, Eustochium, the unique example of nobility and virginity in the whole world, do not remain silent, the apple of your eye; and cry out in your heart: Abba Father (Rom. VIII, 15). And with the Psalmist, say: Arise, why do you sleep, O Lord (Ps. XLIII, 23)? So that I may complete the work assigned to me by Isaiah, with your prayers and the mercy of Christ. For now, the thirteenth book of Explanations is being compiled, which has not yet reached its completion. And in the meantime, until the merciful and compassionate Lord, patient and full of mercy (Ps. 185 and 144), restores the former health, I have dictated this Preface in a hasty manner; so that what is contained herein may be written down on papers; and the complete correction may be reserved for the judgment of the reader.

45:8

(Chapter 45, Verse 8) Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just: let the earth be opened, and bud forth the saviour, and let justice spring up together: I the Lord have created him. Septuagint: Let the heavens above rejoice, and let the clouds rain down righteousness: let the earth bring forth salvation, and let mercy spring up, and let justice bud together: I the Lord have created thee. There is a double interpretation of this passage. For some believe that it refers to the previous statements, and that when Cyrus the king releases the captives, heaven and earth rejoice: metaphorically, this signifies those who dwell in heaven and on earth. Others separate it from what has gone before, and consider this chapter to be the beginning of its own section, and to prophesy concerning the coming of the Lord, which is commanded to come with clouds, about which it was written above (in ch. V, 6): 'I will command the clouds that they rain not upon it,' that is, upon the vineyard of Israel; and concerning those to whom the truth of God has come, so that they may rain righteousness upon the world or righteousness; and let the earth open, and let it bring forth a Savior. Concerning whom it is sung in the Psalms: 'Truth has sprung from the earth, and righteousness has looked down from heaven' (Ps. LXXXIV, 12); or, according to the Septuagint: 'The earth has brought forth mercy and righteousness together,' so that both sinners may obtain mercy and the righteous may receive rewards. And furthermore, I, the Lord, who created him, or, I, the Lord who created you, shall not be scandalized by the name of the creature, who has read him to be a worm, a servant, and a plant sprung from the earth.

45:9-13

(Verse 9 and following) Woe to those who contradict their maker, a pot made of clay, and say to the one who formed them, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no hands.' Woe to those who say to their father, 'What are you begetting?' or to their mother, 'What are you in labor with?' This is what the Lord says, the Holy One of Israel, and its maker: Ask me about the things to come, concerning my children, and about the work of my hands, give me orders. I made the earth and created humans on it, I stretched out the heavens with my hands, and I command all their host. I have raised him up to righteousness, and I will direct all his ways. He will build my city, and he will release my captivity, not for a price or with gifts, says the Lord of hosts. LXX: What better have I done than clay to a potter? Will the plowman plow the earth? Will the clay say to the potter, what are you doing, since you do not work and do not have hands? Woe to him who says to his father, what do you beget, and to his mother, what do you give birth? For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, who created what is to come. Ask me about my sons and command me concerning the work of my hands. I made the earth and created man upon it. I, with my own hand, stretched out the heavens; I commanded all the stars. I raised him up with righteousness as a king; all his ways are straight. He himself will build my city and will turn the captivity of my people, not with price nor with gifts, says the Lord God of hosts. Those who want to apply what was said to the character of Cyrus interpret this place as follows: With me promising great things, because of the return of my people to Judea, I will subjugate all the kingdoms to Cyrus: Woe to him who is incredulous and does not believe what I say will come to pass, as if clay and broken pottery were to criticize its potter why it was made or why it was made in that way; and a work should speak against its artist's hands; and a son should criticize his father and mother, why he was poured out onto the earth by the law of nature. Since I am the Holy Lord of Israel who formed Cyrus and caused him to be born by my command, it is pointless for you to doubt the future. Rather, you should know that my sons, the people of Israel, and the work of my hands are not subject to your

control, but to my will. I, who created darkness and evil for them in the past, will now give them light and peace. For I am the God who did not create the earth in vain, but for the purpose of habitation by humans. I have extended and established the heavens as the dwelling place of the angels. I have adorned them with the diversity of the stars, and I have commanded each one to run its course in order, and to fill the different spaces of days, months, and years. Therefore, if I have made the heavens and the earth, what is it of great significance if I create one king who will obey my commands and direct all his ways? For he will be commanded to build my city, Jerusalem, and to bring the captives back to Judah. Not for reward or gifts, but for my own willingness, says the Lord God of hosts. But whoever brings understanding to Christ refers to his explanation in the following words: Woe to those who contradict God and do not believe that Christ will come; as if clay and a vessel were to contradict its potter. Woe to him who says to the Almighty Father, why do you beget a son, and to the holy woman Mary, what are you giving birth to? Of whom the Apostle also writes (Galatians 4): That Christ was made from a woman, made under the law. Therefore, the Holy Lord of Israel, who formed the Savior in a virgin womb, says, speaking through Gabriel: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you (Luke 1:35). And what will be born in you, holy, will be called the Son of God. Let the earthen vessel ask me, and let it seek the secrets of the future. And let it command me how I should regenerate the adopted children who will believe in my Son. And the evangelist John says: Whoever received him, he gave them the power to become children of God (John 1:12). But if I made the earth to be inhabited by men, and stretched out the heavens above, and adorned them with the variety of stars, so that the worshipers of God might dwell on earth: why is it surprising that I sent my Son, the righteous king, into the world, or raised him from the dead, whose ways are all straight? For he did not commit sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth (1 Peter 2:22). Whoever builds my city upon a rock, against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail (Matth. XVI); and which, when placed on a mountain, cannot be hidden (Ibid., V): and who first binds the possessed with chains, and sets all the children free, not for a price or reward: for we have been saved freely, both those who listen and those who act: You have received freely, freely give (Matth. X, 8). Some attribute these words to Zorobabel, who led the captives out of Babylon, and built the city, and constructed the temple, as prophesied by Haggai and Zechariah, who said: The hands of Zorobabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands shall complete it (Zach. IV, 9). But we say more correctly and truly, neither did Cyrus build the city that was later built under Nehemiah, nor were all its roads straight. To whom it was said above: I have taken you, and girded you: and you have not known me; and Zerubbabel, who was under the authority and power of the Medes and Persians, exceeds all that is said. For Zerubbabel did not build the city, nor did he release the captivity, nor can he be called a king, who, living under other kings, lacked this title. But what do the Seventy mean, who translated at the beginning of this chapter: What have I done better than the clay of the potter? Will the one who tills, till the earth? I do not know: unless perhaps I follow the edition of Theodotion, who put instead: Woe to him who contends against his maker, the one who tills tilling the earth: because he would wound the hearts of mortals in repentance, and in the manner of plows, he would undermine and overthrow it. But even this interpretation is frivolous. Furthermore, because a potter, that is, our Creator and Maker, is called God, and the apostle Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Romans: Does the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why have you made me like this? Does not the potter have power over the clay, to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? (Romans 9:20) And in Jeremiah it is

written in more detail, where he narrates among other things: I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he was making a work on the wheel, and the vessel that he made was marred in his hands. And again he made another vessel from the same clay, as it pleased him in his sight. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Cannot I do with you, as this potter, O house of Israel, saith the Lord? Behold as clay is in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel (Jeremiah 18:3-4). And that which is written: I have commanded the stars to all, and I have given opportunity to some, so that the stars may have reason and soul and sense. For they say that He would not have commanded [these things] unless they were intelligible: not remembering [what is] written in Jonah: 'The Lord commanded a burning wind' (Jonah 4:8). And again: 'The Lord commanded the morning worm' (Ibid., 7). And that in the Gospel the Savior rebuked the winds and the sea (Luke 8), in which it is clear that there is no sense or reason.

45:14-17

(Verse 14 onwards) Thus says the Lord: The labor of Egypt and the trade of Ethiopia and the Sabaeans, men of stature, shall come over to you and be yours; they shall follow you; they shall come over in chains and bow down to you. They will plead with you, saying: Surely God is in you, and there is no other, no god besides you. Truly you are a hidden God, the God of Israel, the Savior. All of them are put to shame and are confounded; the makers of idols go in confusion together. Israel has been saved by the Lord with eternal salvation: you will not be confounded, and you will not be ashamed forever. LXX: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Egypt has labored, and the merchandise of Ethiopia and the Sabaeans: men of stature shall come over to you, and they shall be yours, they shall follow you in chains, and they shall come over to you, and they shall adore you, and they shall pray to you: for in you is God, and there is no other God beside you. You are indeed God, and we did not know it: the God of Israel, the Savior: let all his adversaries be confounded and ashamed, and let them walk in confusion. In this place, those who follow the story say that Egypt and the nations of Ethiopia and the Sabaeans, who are beyond Ethiopia, served Cyrus and were subject to him. And they understood by a marvelous victory that the Lord was in him, and there was no other God besides him who dwelt in him. But this that follows, 'Truly you are a hidden God, the God of Israel, the Savior,' how can it apply to the person of Cyrus, I do not understand. Unless, perhaps, they use the edition of Theodotion, who translated, 'In you is strength, and there is no other God besides you: therefore you are a hidden God, the God of Israel, the Savior.' Whatever way they twist it, they will not be able to escape the snares of truth. For if they make God to be in Cyrus, and there is no other besides him who is God in Cyrus, how can it be said of the person of Cyrus, 'Truly you are a hidden God, the God of Israel, the Savior?' Therefore, God in whom God is, our Lord Jesus Christ is understood more rightly and truly, who speaks in the Gospel: I and the Father are one (John 10:30). He who is called God, hidden because of the sacrament of assumed body, and the God of Israel the Savior, which is interpreted as Jesus. For it is he who, according to the Angel Gabriel, will save his people (Luke 1). Indeed, all were confused and ashamed together. Specifically, the scribes and the Pharisees. And the fabricators of error went away in confusion, who spread lies throughout the whole world, saying that it was stolen from the Apostles. But Israel, saved in the Lord with eternal salvation, refers to the chorus of the Apostles and those who believed through the Apostles. Therefore it is said to them: You will not be confused or ashamed, not only in this present age, but also in the future. It is not doubted that Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Sabaeans, great and lofty men, served him, when they

see the world subjected to him, and from the names of a few nations dwelling at the ends of the earth, they see that all the corners of the heavens and all the shores of the earth will believe in him. From where 'Cessarelabor of Egypt' is called, elegantly as if to those who are laboring in the error of idolatry. For no other nation was so dedicated to idolatry and worshipped so many countless wonders as Egypt, of which we read above (19:1): 'Behold, the Lord will ascend on a light cloud, and will enter Egypt, and the idols of Egypt will be moved from his presence, and the heart of Egypt will waste away within it.' Moreover, what is added in the Septuagint: 'Be renewed to me, O islands,' we can explain in this way, that the churches gathered from the Gentiles are renewed in Christ, and are called islands because they endure the madness of persecutors and the storms, and, being founded upon the rock, are not shaken by the mass of whirlwinds. The Hebrews foolishly strive to assert, up to the point where it is read: There is only in you, God, and there is no God outside of you, God, neither to Jerusalem, nor to Cyrus to be called. However, what follows: Truly you are a hidden God, the God of Israel the Savior, suddenly turns into an apostrophe to the omnipotent God, even though it is clear to the foolish that there is one connected context of the discourse, and that the meaning cannot be divided, which is linked in the very order and reason of the narration.

45:18-25

(Vers. 18 seqq.) Because this is what the Lord says, the one who created the heavens, the one who formed the earth and made it, the one who established it; he did not create it in vain, but formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is no other. I did not speak in secret, in a dark place on the earth. I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek me in vain.' I am the Lord, speaking truth, declaring what is right. Gather together and come, draw near, you who have been saved from the nations. They have no knowledge, those who carry about their wooden idols and pray to a god who cannot save. Announce, and come, and counsel together: Who has declared this from the beginning, and from then on predicted it? Is it not I, the Lord? There is no other God besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.' Therefore, in the Lord, it is said: My justice and power belong to me; they will come to him, and all who oppose him will be put to shame. In the Lord, all the descendants of Israel will be justified and praised. LXX: Thus says the Lord who made the heavens: this is the God who revealed the earth and made it, he prepared it: he did not make it empty, but formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is no other. I have not spoken in secret, nor in a dark place on the earth. I have not spoken in secret, in a place of a land of darkness: I have not said to the seed of Jacob: Seek me in vain. I am the Lord that speak justice, that declare right things. Assemble yourselves, and come, and draw near together, ye that are saved of the Gentiles: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven work, and pray to a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and come, and consult together: who hath declared this from the beginning, who hath foretold this from that time? Have not I the Lord, and there is no God else besides me? A just God and a saviour, there is none besides me. Turn to me and you will be saved from the ends of the earth. I am God, and there is no other. By myself I swear: righteousness will go out of my mouth, my words will not be turned away, for every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will swear and confess to God, saying: Righteousness and glory will

come to him, and all who separate themselves from the Lord will be put to shame. Every descendant of Israel will be justified and glorified in God. He calls Egypt, and Ethiopia, and the Sabaeans with their exalted men, through whom the salvation of all barbarian nations and the conversion of the whole world to God is shown, God shows His justice; so that the Lord is not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. For He is the maker of heaven and earth equally the God of all, and He created the earth for no other reason than that it should be the habitation of mankind who would worship and understand their Creator, and despise all idols. For on Mount Sinai, from its lofty summit, he spoke these words to the listening people: You shall have no other gods before me, nor shall you make for yourself an idol (Exod. XX, 3, 4). But it is better to believe this saying about the preaching of the Gospel: For Moses spoke to the people in the hidden solitude alone. But the sound of the Apostles went forth into the whole world, and their words reached to the ends of the earth (Psal. XVIII). I did not say, he said, that I am seeking the seed of Jacob in vain. For I have promised them the kingdom of heaven, and I spoke first to them: I have come only for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matth. XXV, 24). And for this reason I spoke of justice and proclaimed what is right, or the truth, so that, with the images of the Law and the ceremonies set aside, they would follow the truth of the Gospel. But because they did not want to believe and judged themselves unworthy of salvation, therefore I say to the Gentiles: Gather from all over the world; and come and join me, all of you who have been saved from the Gentiles. By which he shows that not all nations will believe immediately, but gradually and in part. Finally, he rebukes those who remained in their former error, saying: They did not know those who lift up the wood of their carved image, and they pray to a God who does not save. And the meaning is: They did not understand my words, burdened by the weight of their idols, and hoping in them, in which there is no salvation. Therefore, the Apostles are commanded to proclaim the truth opportune and importune (2 Timothy 4), and to devise a plan for the salvation of the nations. But, that is, in order that many might be saved, God spoke from the beginning that they should be gathered and come from the nations, and the mouths of all the prophets proclaimed those who spoke the word of the Lord, except for whom there is no other. For the Son is not without Him, but in Him is God. And elegantly He joins together: God is just, not of one nation alone, but of the whole world, to whom He speaks: Turn to me and you shall be saved, all the ends of the earth; this having been fulfilled which the Father promised to the Son: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession (Psalm 2:8). And He swore by Himself, since His word and judgment are unchangeable, that the declaration which He uttered once concerning the salvation of the nations might not in any way be voided, but that His promise might be fulfilled by His work, saying above: Turn to Me, and you will be saved, all the ends of the earth. He also swore by the Apostle (Heb. 6) that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong consolation; and He also swore that every knee should bow to Him, heavenly, earthly, and infernal, and every tongue should swear by Him among mortal men (Phil. 2). In which it is clearly stated that the Christian people are signified. It is the custom of the Church to bow the knee to Christ: which the Jews, demonstrating the pride of their minds, absolutely do not do. But also every tongue of all barbarian nations, not in synagogues but in the Churches of Christ, confesses God. Moreover, every tongue confessing Christ will speak in the Lord, and will say: 'Mine are righteousness and mine is dominion, not the people of the Jews.' To him all nations will come, and those who previously resisted his Gospel will be put to shame; and all the descendants of Israel will be justified and praised, whose preaching and most fruitful

sowing has brought abundant fruit throughout the whole world. Whether according to the Seventy or in every language, swearing and confessing God, it will be said that the righteousness and glory of the whole world come to him, and the Jews who separate themselves from him will be confounded. But those who are descended from the children of Israel and have sprung from the seed of the Apostles, and have believed in Christ, may they have eternal righteousness and glory.

46:1-2

(Chapter 46, Verses 1, 2.) Bel is broken, Nabo is crushed. Their idols have become beasts and livestock, burdening you with heavy loads until exhaustion. They have melted together and crumbled. They could not save those who carried them, and their souls will go into captivity. Seventy: Bel has fallen, Dagon is crushed. Their statues have become beasts and livestock, bound together as a burden for the laboring, the weak, and the hungry, unable to prevail together. They could not save from war. However, they themselves were led away as captives. After the calling of the Gentiles and the election of the believers from Israel, it is testified that the idols have fallen. Bel has fallen, indeed, he has fallen, or Saturn has been broken: whom the Greeks call Belus and the Latins call Saturn. So great was the reverence for him among the ancients that they not only offered him the human sacrifices of captive and lowly mortals, but also sacrificed their own children to him. But now even that idol itself, which is interpreted as prophecy and divination, signifies that it has fallen silent throughout the whole world after the truth of the Gospel. Or, according to the Septuagint, Dagon, which, however, is not found in Hebrew. And it is the idol of Ashkelon, Gaza, and the other cities of the Philistines. And from a specific case it passes to a general one: their images were made in the form of beasts and animals. Not that the images of the Gentiles were exposed as prey to beasts and animals, but that the religion of the nations is such that the images are of beasts and brute animals, which are especially consecrated to divine worship in Egypt. About which Virgil says (Aeneid VIII, 698):

All the various gods and the barking dog Anubis. For most of their towns have names derived from animals and beasts, κυνιον from the dog, λιον from the lion, θμοσις from the Egyptian verb 'to have a bad smell', λικων from the wolf, not to mention the fearful and horrible onion smell, and the sound of their bloated bellies, which is part of the religious customs of Pelusium. These idols, he says, which cannot save those who carry them, are nothing more than burdens for the priests, weighing them down to exhaustion. And when captivity comes, as payment for the metals from which they are made, the first captive is taken, and they cannot free their own soul or those who carry them. Not that the lifeless images have a soul and some sense of pain, which are devoid of sensation; but that the soul is erroneously called soul, and the limbs of those things which are without sensation and limbs. Otherwise, it is also written in the Proverbs: In the hand of the tongue is death and life. Or it must be said that the heaviest burden among the nations was the error of idolatry, which brought down its worshippers to the ground, and could not save them, but made their souls captive to the devil and demons.

46:1-7

(Verse 1, 3 and following) Hear me, house of Jacob, and all the rest of the house of Israel, who are carried from my womb, who are born from my womb. Even to your old age, I am the one, and even to your gray hairs, I will carry you. I have done it, and I will bear it; I will carry, and I will save. To whom have you likened me, and equalized, and compared me, and made me similar? You who

pour out gold from the bag, and weigh silver on the scales, hiring a goldsmith to make a god, and they fall down and worship. They carry him on their shoulders, carrying and placing him in his place, and he will stand, and he will not be moved from his place. But when they cry out to him, he will not hear: he will not save them from distress. Listen to me, house of Jacob, and all the remnant of Israel who are carried from the womb, and be instructed from infancy to old age. I am, and until you grow old, I am: I will sustain you: I have made you, and I will carry you: I will support you, and I will make you safe. To whom do you liken me? See, consider those who go astray and compare gold from a bag, and silver in a scale, and hire a goldsmith. They make it into an idol, and they bow down and worship it. They lift it to their shoulders and carry it. If they place it in its rightful place, it stays and will not move. It cannot hear those who cry out to it, and it will not save them from their troubles. It is not called Jacob or Israel, as we have explained above, because it is inferior, the house of Jacob, and the remnant of Israel, due to their close relationship of flesh and blood, and they are like the waste and remnants of Israel. And it teaches that they were carried from Egypt as infants and sucklings, just as from God, as if from a mother's womb and the pregnant womb, they were carried. Not because the ineffable and incomprehensible majesty of God has a womb or a womb, feet, hands, and other members of the body; but that we may learn the affection of God through our words. Otherwise, the same is sung in the hundred and ninth psalm from the person of God. For in that place where the Seventy translated, 'From the womb before the morning star I begot you,' in the Hebrew script it has 'Merehem,' which is interpreted as 'from the womb.' But at present, not only is it written about the womb and the vulva, that is, Mebeten and Merehem but also Menni, which signifies 'from my womb' or 'from my vulva'. And the meaning is: I who have begotten you from infancy and carried you in my womb and vulva, I myself will protect you even until old age, not my own, but yours, so that divine mercy may teach them to be saved. For the Creator spares his creature, and the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (John 10). But the hired hand, whose sheep are not his own, sees the wolf coming and flees. Therefore, because I have made and begotten children, I will bear and carry them myself. According to the Septuagint, which says: 'You who are carried from the womb, and are taught from infancy until old age,' this signifies that it is in vain for them to meditate on the law of God day and night, not having knowledge of God, but venerating the idols of humans and animals. To the extent that they require prophetic correction, by which God speaks to them: 'To whom have you made me similar and equal?' And the rest: what gold and silver they have brought, and what idols they have made by hiring a sculptor, and what works of their hands they have worshiped, which are carried on their shoulders, and which, when nailed and fixed, are unable to move, nor are they able to benefit those who worship them. We pass over the obvious things to uncover the closed mercy of Christ.

46:8-11

(Verse 8 onwards) Remember this, and be established, and return, you transgressors, to the heart. Recall the former age, for I am God, and there is no other God, nor is there anyone like me. I declare the end from the beginning, and from long ago the things that have not yet been done, saying: My purpose will stand, and I will accomplish all my desire. I call a bird of prey from the east, and from a far country a man of my counsel; I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have planned it, and I will do it. LXX: Remember these things, and groan: repent, you who go astray. Return with your heart, and remember the former things from of old: for I am God, and there is no

other besides me. I announce the first things before they come to pass, and I tell you, my will shall stand, and all that I have planned, I will accomplish. I call forth a bird from the East, and from the distant land, what I have planned: I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have created and I will do it. Because I myself begot you, I myself carried you, and from infancy to old age, not by your merit, but by my mercy, you are saved: abandon the idols you have made, and return to the worship of the one God. Repent, groan for the error that has held you; rather, establish yourselves, lest a sudden whirlwind of idolatry overthrow you again: and return to your heart, that is, to your mind, which, worshipping images as if insane, you were striking against wood and stones. From the beginning, consider that there is no god apart from me, and no one else can know the future except me, who through the prophets announce what I am going to do. So when I fulfill what was predicted, I will prove my divinity through divination. For I declare that I will establish the mystery that was previously unknown to all generations and reveal my plan. And when you see it come to pass, you will know that there is no god except the one who knew and commanded these future events. I am the one who calls the bird from the East, as the Hebrews believe, the king Cyrus of the Persians, or the prince Darius of the Medes; and from a distant land, a man of my will, who fulfills all my will against Babylon and the Chaldeans. Or as we are convinced to be true, the Lord Savior, about whom even Balaam prophesies: A star shall come out of Jacob, and a man shall rise out of Israel (Numbers 24:17), whose name is the East (Zechariah 6), whom the Magi from the East worshipped. For he speaks here in the Psalms: 'God, I desired to do your will' (Psalm 39:9), about whom the Father spoke and confirmed his promise by his works. In the Septuagint, since we translated from the Hebrew, they have put 'a man of my will' instead, which I have considered. Therefore, according to them, the birds called from the East, we can understand the ministries of the angels, which run throughout the world in obedience to the Lord's command. They are the ministering spirits who are sent for the salvation of the believers. Of whom it is also sung in the Psalms: 'You make your angels spirits, and your ministers a burning fire' (Psalm 103:4).

46:12-13

(Verses 12, 13.) Hear me, you with hard hearts, who are far from justice. I have brought forth my justice: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not delay. I will give salvation in Zion and my glory in Israel. LXX: Hear me, you who have lost heart, who are far from justice. I have brought forth my justice, and the salvation that is from me, I will not delay. I have given salvation in Zion and glory in Israel. To those whom He had spoken before: Hear me, house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel. And again: Return, O transgressors, to the heart, even now He calls them by the Hebrew term for unbelief, hardhearted, and according to the Septuagint, those who have lost heart and mind. This was followed by the most learned man and worthy of his name, Stephen the martyr, in his speech to the Jews: With stiff neck and uncircumcised hearts and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit, just as your fathers did (Acts 7:51). So, they are far from the justice of God because they did not believe in it, which God, in his mercy, made to be near and to come to the lands, not wanting to delay or be far away. For he gave his salvation to Zion and his glory to Israel. Let this be said about the prophecy of the future, and the coming of the Lord and Savior. Moreover, according to history, salvation is given to Zion and glory to Israel; because God has made his justice near, to call from the East a bird and from a far land a man of his will, who would avenge the injustices of Israel and the destroyed Jerusalem, and would destroy the Medes and Persians, and the Babylonians and the Chaldeans, as the following words of the

Prophet testify.

47:1-3

(Chapter 47, verses 1 and following) Descend, sit in the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon: sit on the ground, there is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans, for you shall no longer be called tender and delicate. Take a millstone and grind flour: uncover your nakedness, uncover your shoulder, reveal your legs, cross the rivers. Your shame will be exposed, and your disgrace will be seen; I will take vengeance, and no one will be able to resist me. 70: Descend, sit on the ground, virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground. There is no throne of the daughter of the Chaldeans, for you shall no longer be called delicate and tender. Take the millstone, grind the flour. Uncover your head, strip off your hair, uncover your legs, cross the rivers; your shame will be uncovered, your disgrace will be seen. What is right about you, I will take away; I will not deliver you to men anymore. Just as in Ezekiel under the figure of a ship and all its instruments, the adornments of Tyre are set forth, which were devoted to trading (Ezek. 26), and because of the abundance of water, the king of Egypt is called a dragon, and its scales, reeds, and papyrus, and its fish are described, and Jerusalem, together with idols, testifies to the fornication of harlots and the likeness of a brothel: so in this present place, under the person of a captive woman, who once was a queen, the servitude of Babylon is indicated; and she is told to descend from the pride of her kingdom and to sit on the dust. But she is also called a virgin and a daughter, either because all human beings are creatures of God and therefore not damnable by nature like the heretics of Babylon, or because of the luxury and splendor of the once most powerful city, which, as it grew old and approached its decline, boasted of being a maiden and a girl. Although some interpret the daughter of Babylon, as written in the Septuagint, as not referring to Babylon itself but to the city of Rome, which is specifically called Babylon in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 14) and in the Epistle of Peter (2 Pet. 5), and all that is now said about Babylon testifies to its ruins, it must be understood as the bird and the justice of God. After Zion, that is, the Church, is saved, Babylon should perish forever. Therefore, it is said that the queen and daughter of the Chaldeans (for she was founded by the Chaldeans) is no longer called soft and tender, and abundant in luxuries, which was carried in the hands of all nations; so much so that she could barely leave footprints on the ground: and it is ordered that she removes the mill, and grinds grain, which is a sign of hard captivity and extreme servitude; so that she, who was once a queen, may now serve the work of grinding flour. But because it follows: Strip off your shamefulness, even the mill is understood figuratively by the Hebrews, namely that it should be open to the lust of the conquerors, like a prostitute. And what is written in the Book of Judges about Samson (Judg. 16), that he was condemned by the Philistines to the mill, they want to signify that he was compelled to do this to foreign women as the most powerful of men for offspring. In the place where we have interpreted 'strip off your shamefulness', for which the LXX translated 'reveal your covering', Theodotion put the Hebrew word Samthech; Aquila Semmathech; Symmachus τὸ σιωπηλόν σου: which we can express as 'your silence', which should be kept silent out of shame. Indeed, we also read this in the Song of Songs, where the beauty of the bride is described: at the end it says, 'Without your silence' (Song 4). Those who were unwilling to translate the name, which in Holy Scripture signifies shamefulness, made a valid point. And rightly so, it uses indecent names against Babylon (even though there is no shame in calling a part of the human body by its proper name), to whom it is commanded to bare the breasts, and to open the thighs and expose the woman, and to go into captivity, so that her shame

may be seen and her disgrace may be forever exposed. And the Lord says that He has done this in order to take vengeance on her who oppressed His people, and that no one should hear her prayers, who tries to appease the anger of the Lord with their presence. But the angel of the nation of Babylon, who speaks with the other angels, signifies: We took care of Babylon, but she was not healed. And what the Seventy translated as 'I will take away what is just from you' is understood to mean Babylon: or at least this, that what is just has been taken away from Babylon. The Stoic disputants argue that many things that are considered shameful and wrong by human convention are actually morally good, such as parricide, adultery, murder, incest, and other similar acts. Conversely, things that are considered morally good appear shameful in name only, such as procreating children, relieving a swollen stomach with flatulence, emptying the bowels with feces, and urinating to relieve the bladder: in short, we cannot, as we say, turn up our nose at a fart. Therefore, that which Aquila set up, as we have said, is called the venerable woman. Its etymology among them signifies, 'thirsty yours,' indicating the unquenchable pleasure of Babylon.

47:4-7

(Verse 4 onwards) Our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name. Holy One of Israel. Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for you shall no longer be called the mistress of kingdoms. I was angry with my people; I profaned my heritage, and gave them into your hand: you showed them no mercy. You have made your yoke very heavy on the aged, and you have said, 'I shall be a mistress forever': you did not lay these things to heart, you did not remember their outcome. LXX: The Lord of hosts, his name, the Holy One of Israel, says: Sit down in darkness, daughter of the Chaldeans; you shall no longer be called the strength of the kingdom. I am angry with my people, I have profaned my heritage. I have given them into your hand, but you have shown them no mercy. You have made your yoke exceedingly heavy on the elderly and have said, 'I shall be queen forever'. You did not take these things to heart, nor did you remember the consequences. The first verse is connected to the previous ones according to the Septuagint, with the meaning: And this is what the Lord of hosts, whose name is the Holy One of Israel, will do for you who have been delivered. On the other hand, according to the Hebrew, the Prophet speaks in the person of the people, saying that the Lord of hosts will do these things against Babylon, whose name is the Holy One of Israel. And once again, the discourse is directed towards Babylon itself. Sit in silence, or in remorse, and remember your sins. Enter into darkness, because you cannot bear the light due to confusion and ignominy. You shall no longer be called the mistress of just one kingdom, nor of all kingdoms. And at the same time, because a hidden question was arising: why God was angry against the Chaldeans, whom he himself sent to capture Israel: he answered that he had been angry against his own people, wanting to rebuke them, not to destroy them, to chastise them, not to kill them. But they had abused his cruelty, and had imposed more punishments than the vengeance of God demanded: and it is a great sign of Babylonian cruelty that they had not spared even the old men, whose age is also respected among enemies. But this is also a sign of pride, that, deceived by present happiness, it did not consider the uncertainties of the future. Therefore, in times of prosperity, we must always beware of what is to come: not to oppress those who are entrusted to us, who are taught to become better.

47:8-11

(Verse 8, onwards) And now listen to this, you delicate and confident one, who says in your heart: I am, and there is no one besides me; I will not sit as a widow, nor will I know the loss of children. But suddenly these two things will come upon you in one day: widowhood and loss of children. They have come upon you in their entirety because of the multitude of your sorceries and the great abundance of your enchantments. And you have trusted in your wickedness, and you have said: There is no one who sees me. Your wisdom and your knowledge have deceived you, and you have said in your heart: I am, and there is no one else besides me. Evil will come upon you, and you will not know its origin, and calamity will rush upon you, which you will not be able to atone for; suddenly, misery will come upon you, which you will not know. Babylon will come with two things together, sterility and widowhood, so that she will have no children, that is, peoples subject to her; nor a man, whom we can understand as king: while she did not hope for these things, she suddenly endured them. For she could not anticipate that the Persians, of no previous strength, would overcome her, with Cyrus reigning, and subject her to their power. He said, 'The sufferings that you endured were not only because of your pride and abundance of wealth and luxuries, but also because of the multitude of your evils and your enchantments, in which you placed your trust. And a calamity will come upon you that you did not know before, and whose origin you were ignorant of. As the Seventy translated: Destruction will come upon you, and you will not know: a pit, and you will fall into it: so that the evil of captivity that you prepared for all nations, you yourself will fall into the pit that you prepared.' We quickly skim over things that are clear in conversation.

47:12-15

(Verse 12 and following) Stand with your sorcerers, and with the multitude of your evil deeds, in which you have labored since your youth, if perhaps it will benefit you, or if you can become stronger. You have failed in the multitude of your plans: let the astrologers of the heavens stand and save you, who observe the stars and calculate the months, to announce to you what is to come. Behold, they have become like stubble, fire has burned them up: they will not deliver their souls from the hand of the flame: there are no coals to warm themselves, nor a fire to sit beside: thus have they become to you in all your labors: each of your merchants has wandered in his own way since your youth: there is no one to save you. LXX: Stand now in your incantations and in your many sorceries, which you have learned from your youth, if they can be of any help to you; and you have labored in your counsels: let the astrologers of the sky stand and save you, those who look at the stars and tell you what is coming upon you. See, they will all be consumed like stubble in the fire; they will not deliver themselves from the flame; for you have coals of fire, and you will sit upon them. They will be for your help. You have labored in your change from youth: man has wandered in himself: but there will be no salvation for you. The reading of the Prophet Daniel proves to have had all of Babylon and all of Chaldea, the study of sorcerers and soothsayers and diviners and exorcists, whom we call haruspices, whom for their advice he recounts as having done all things for the Babylonian kings. Also, because we have interpreted it according to Symmachus and Theodotion: Let the astrologers of the heavens stand and save you, the Seventy have translated more explicitly, Let the astronomers of the heavens stand and make you safe; who are commonly called mathematicians, and by the course and movement of the stars, they judge human affairs to be governed. And so the Magi from the East came, saying that they had seen the Lord's star, either through the knowledge of their art or through the prophecy of their own prophet Balaam, who had said in Numbers: A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a man

shall come forth from Israel (Num. XXIV, 17). Therefore, these people who calculate months and count years, and weigh the moments of hours, promise knowledge of the future. Let them tell you what the Lord has thought concerning you. And when they are silent about what is to come, the Prophet responds: Behold, they have become like straw; fire has devoured them. Those who promised salvation to others were ignorant of their own punishment. And there is no doubt that, with the city on fire, its inhabitants were consumed by the voracious flame. And what follows: They are not like prunes that can be heated, nor a hearth for them to sit by, as the Hebrews have taught. They have no knowledge of heat, nor a sense of light that can dispel their darkness and drive out the cold of error. For this reason, I do not know what the Seventy translators intended when they rendered it: You have coals of fire, you shall sit upon them; they shall be a help to you; unless, perhaps, we can say that the fire and burning of Babylon were much more useful than the magi and the Gazarenes, the astrologers and the enchanter. For indeed he provokes them through punishments and penalties to repentance; they, on the other hand, are led into pride by error. All his labor and the merchants of his, whom we understand to be magicians, accomplished this, that each one would wander in his own way; and he himself, being lost, would not offer salvation to another. Let us ask those who assert different natures, whether Babylon is of evil nature or of good? If they say evil, which it is not doubtful that they will answer, how is it provoked to repentance, and it is said to it: Sit in remorse, enter into darkness, daughter of the Chaldeans. After the enumeration of sins and crimes, you have charcoal fires, you will sit upon them: will they be of help to you? And what does it mean that it is mentioned next to them in the Septuagint: You have labored in exchange from youth? What is this exchange? Surely it is for the worse. From which it is clear, that by nature one becomes good, by will one becomes bad. Finally it is said: Man has wandered in himself, not by nature, but by the choice of the mind.

48:1-2

(Chapter 48, Verses 1 and following) Listen to this, house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and come from the waters of Judah: who swear in the name of the Lord, and remember the God of Israel, not in truth or justice. For they are called from the holy city: and they are established upon the Lord, the name of the God of Israel. These things I foretold to the Chaldeans and the Babylonians, and it is necessary for what I have spoken through my prophets to be fulfilled. But you, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and who come forth from the waters of Judah, and the rest that follows, listen attentively to what I am about to say. And it should be noted that he does not call them Jacob, but the house of Jacob; nor Israel, who are falsely called by this name, as they have no need for a name. And concerning the waters, he says, you come forth from the waters of Judah, calling them more reverently waters instead of seed, so as not to show that they are sons of the patriarchs in terms of virtue, but of the flesh. And rightly he called the waters of Judah, because at that time it was the only tribe that remained in the land of Judah; and the seed of David was preserved as king. You swore, he said, in the name of the Lord, not to honor the Lord; but taking his name, you commit injustice, while you want him to be a witness to your lie, and you rest in the holy city, and rely on the Lord of Israel; so that you boast to be the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem, and to have the privilege of the Lord of hosts, when you assume the names of the empty Jacob, Israel, and the holy city, and the omnipotent God.

48:3-11

(Verse 3, 4 and following) I announced the former things long ago, they went out from my mouth, and I made them heard. Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass. For I knew that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew, and your forehead is bronze. I foretold them to you long ago, before they came to pass I announced them to you, lest you should say, 'My idols did these things, and my carved images and molded idols commanded them.' You have heard; see all this. And will you not declare it? I have made known to you new things from this time, even hidden things which you have not known. They are created now, and not from before; even until this day you have not heard of them, lest you should say, 'Behold, I knew them!' Neither have you heard, nor have you known, nor from that time your ear has been opened. For I knew that you would deal treacherously, and called you a transgressor from the womb. For my name's sake I will defer my anger, and for my praise I will hold it back from you, so that you do not cut off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have chosen you in the furnace of poverty. Because of me, because of me I will act, so that I may not blaspheme; and I will not give my glory to another. I have announced beforehand: and from my mouth they have gone forth, and it has been heard: suddenly I have done it, and they have come. I know that you are stubborn, and your neck is an iron sinew, and your forehead is bronze. I have announced it to you long ago, before it came to pass, so that you would not say, 'My idols have made these things for me, and my images and molded idols have commanded them to me.' You have heard all, and you have not understood: but I have told you new things that will happen now. And you did not say, now they are happening, and not in the past days. Do not even say that you knew them: neither do you know, nor do you understand, nor have you opened your ears from the beginning. For I know that you will act deceitfully: and you will be called unjust even from the womb. Because of my name, I will show you my anger: and I will bring my glory upon you, so that I do not kill you. Behold, I have sold you not for silver: I have redeemed you out of the furnace of poverty: for my own sake will I do this, lest my name should be polluted: and I will not give my glory to another. I have declared to you the things that are to come, before they come to pass I have foretold them to you: lest thou shouldst say: My idols have done these things, and my graven and molten things have commanded them. Thou hast heard, see all this, and will you not declare it? I have shown thee new things from that time, and things before they came to pass I foretold thee: and thou hast not heard them, lest thou shouldst say: Behold I knew them. Thou hast neither heard, nor known, neither was thy ear opened of old. For I know that transgressing thou wilt transgress, and I have called thee a transgressor from the womb. For my name's sake I will remove my wrath far off: and for my praise I will bridle thee, lest thou shouldst perish. Behold I have refined thee, but not as silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of poverty. For my own sake, for my own sake will I do it, that I may not be blasphemed: and I will not give my glory to another. Behold, you have heard all things that are to come, and yet you conceal the truth in silence. I do not speak of past events, in which my power has often been proven, such as when I led the people out of Egypt, drowned the Egyptians in the Red Sea, gave them the promised land, and subjected various nations to you. But I announce the new things that I am going to do against Babylon, so that the impudence of your mouth may be refuted, you who claim to know what you do not know. From the beginning you have been a transgressor of my commands; and from the womb you were called a transgressor by God, when you were delivered from Egypt, as if you were conceived in my womb, and brought up, and taught. You desired the head of the Egyptian bull, saying: These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, not by your merit, but by my mercy, I have delayed my anger,

so that you would not be completely destroyed, and for the sake of the praise of my name, I will restrain you, so that you will follow me like a beast and an unwilling horse with reins. Behold, I have tested you, that is, I have proved how silver is refined. Whether in wealth or in the furnace of poverty, I desired to test you. From which it is shown that both wealth and poverty tempt many, if they either misuse them or cannot endure poverty with virtue. Therefore, I will act for my own sake, so that my name is not blasphemed among the nations, and so that they do not think that you have overcome by my anger, but by the assistance of their own idols. And what it brings forth, I will not give my glory to another, this signifies that it should not be thought that idols have oppressed the people of God. Certainly, when he says, 'I will not give to another,' he indicates that he has already given to another, for he is said to have given to another in order to distinguish the first. Many of our people, as I will briefly mention in accordance with the Seventy Interpreters, think that the coming of Christ is prophesied, that he will come suddenly, unexpectedly, and demonstrate his presence to a very stubborn people; to whom the Lord has never revealed, because their heart has become fat and their ears have become heavy. And immediately, as the Lord came forth from the virgin womb, he was called a transgressor and unjust, seeking to kill him. And he connects: For My name's sake I will show thee My fury, and My glory I will bring upon thee. He abuses the sense of the Apostle Paul, or the Apostle Paul takes testimony from this passage (Rom. I), so that the wrath of God may be revealed to terrify those who sin, and afterwards glory may be given to those who are converted: Behold, he says, I have sold you not for money, but I have sold you in your sins, and I have delivered you from the furnace of poverty. For this reason, Solomon (Prov. III) does not want to have wealth and poverty, but only the necessities, so that his heart is not lifted up in pride because of them, or compelled to do things he does not want, and to blaspheme God while pressed by poverty. Hence the Apostle says: Having, he says, food and clothing, let us be content with these (I Tim. VI, 8).

48:12-16

(Verse 12, 13 and following) Hear me, Jacob and Israel, whom I call. I am the first and the last. My hand also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand measures the heavens: I have called them, and they will stand together. Gather yourselves and listen: who among them has declared these things? The Lord loved him: he will fulfill his will in Babylon and his arm in the Chaldeans. I, I have spoken and called him: I have brought him, and his way is made straight. Come to me and listen to these (Vulg. this): I did not speak in secret from the beginning; from the time before it happened, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit. LXX: Listen to me, Jacob and Israel, whom I call. I am the first, and I am forever: and my hand has founded the earth, and my right hand has established the heavens. I will call them, and they will stand together: and all will be gathered, and they will listen: Who has announced these to them? I, who am diligent, have carried out your will over Babylon, to remove the seed of the Chaldeans. I have spoken and I have called. I have brought him and made his way prosperous. Bring near to me, and hear these things: I did not speak in secret from the beginning, when it happened, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent me, and his spirit. To those to whom he had already spoken: Hear these things, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and who have come forth from the waters of Judah, now he speaks to them again, Listen to me, Jacob and Israel, whom I call. For many are called, but few are chosen. (Matthew 22). Therefore, He calls them the non-elect, because they had not yet received the Savior; but He refers to them as the called. I am the Alpha and the

Omega, the First and the Last, who is alive and was dead. (Revelation 22); so that you may bring life back to the beginning, and the last to Him who died. He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, and became obedient to the Father; He humbled Himself to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2). My hand founded the earth. And it is also said in Proverbs: God, by His wisdom, founded the earth, and His right hand is the measure (Prov. III, 19), or He established the heavens or the sky, as the Septuagint translated. He calls the heavens to obey His command, and to declare His glory. But if the heavens obey the will of the Lord and run in their own order, why does the earth and ashes boast (Eccli. X) and not know its own fragility? Gather yourselves, all of you, and listen, whether heaven or all of creation or the entire multitude of Israel. What are the things that are commanded to be heard? Surely it signifies that which the Lord loves, no doubt Cyrus and Darius, who carried out the will of the Lord against Babylon, and exerted their power over the Chaldeans. And He himself spoke and called him by his name, and led him, and his path was made straight, so that no one dared to resist his strength. And he is provoking them to come and listen, and to know, through the Lord's prediction, that the king of the Persians and Medes is coming, who will overthrow Babylon and destroy the Chaldeans. And to announce this, the Prophet says that he is sent by the Lord and his spirit. This is according to the Hebrews and their opinion. However, according to Symmachus, who interpreted it, 'Who has declared these things to him?' refers to the one whom the Lord loves, who does his will in Babylon. And according to the Septuagint, 'to carry away the seed of the Chaldeans' is referred to the person of the Lord: the one who is truly loved by the Father, and who does all the will of the Father, and who overturns in Babylon, that is, in the confusion of this world, all the seed of the Chaldeans, which are interpreted as demons. He himself spoke and heard the Son, and brought him, who speaks to the believers: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened (Matthew 11:28). And hear these things that from the beginning were spoken in secret, that is, through the enigmas and mysteries of the Prophets, which were unknown to all previous generations. When all things were made by the Father, he was with him, who rejoiced, who even now says: I who have always been with the Father, and in the Father, and have never been without the Father, even now I speak (John 14); and according to the frailty of the assumed flesh, I say that the Lord God sent me and his spirit: and in a brief verse, the sacrament of the Trinity is revealed to us.

48:17-19

(Verse 17, 18 and following) Thus says the Lord, your holy Redeemer, the God of Israel: I am the Lord your God, teaching you what is profitable, leading you in the way you should go. Oh, that you had paid attention to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Your descendants would have been like sand, and the offspring of your womb like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me. Because God has promised future blessings to Israel, he explains why he afflicted them before. If they avoid the same mistakes, they will not suffer similar consequences. Yes, he said, if you had followed my commands: as the Seventy translated; or at least, with a desire for it, if you had followed my commands: if you had done so, your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea, signifying abundance of all things. And what follows: and your offspring would have been like the sand, and the descendants of your womb like its grains: indeed, it seems to remain in the Jewish people, who to this day, like worms, produce children and grandchildren; but how is this to be understood in terms of the promise, when they do

not have peace and righteousness? For either he is angry with them, or appeased. If he is angry, how is his seed multiplied every day? If he is appeased, how do they serve and not possess peace and justice? From this it is clear that it is said now of the apostolic seed, of which we also read above (In Chapter I): Unless the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we would have become like Sodom. And because it seems at that time not to have been fulfilled, it is fulfilled in the coming of Christ: and before his face the seed of Israel remains.

48:20-22

(Verse 20, 21, 22.) Go out of Babylon, flee from the Chaldeans; proclaim it with a shout of joy, make it heard, proclaim it to the ends of the earth, and say: The Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob. They did not thirst when he led them through the desert; he made water flow for them from the rock; he split the rock and water gushed out. There is no peace for the wicked, says the Lord. Those above in that place, where it is written: I have spoken and called it; I have brought him and his way is straight; they understand it concerning Cyrus and Darius; even this refers to those times when the people went out of Babylon and fled from the Chaldeans, and they were redeemed by their Lord God. This also, which is said: They did not thirst in the desert when he led them out, he brought water from the rock for them; and he split the rock, and water flowed. Although they cannot teach that it was fulfilled according to history; for they did not come through the desert under Zerubbabel and Ezra, and the split rock provided them water, as is narrated to have happened to those coming out of Egypt: however, they testify hyperbolically that it was fulfilled in likeness to the previous happiness, when they came through the desert of nations into Judaea, and were liberated from captivity. And so, they say, it is not about Christ, but about Cyrus that it is prophesied: There is no peace for the wicked, says the Lord. And it is understood to mean that perfect happiness will not exist except under Christ, which is reserved for the last time. Moreover, those who interpret this more truly and rightly refer it to the coming of the Savior, of whom it is said: He has sent me to announce good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for prisoners. They understand it as an exhortation for those who proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Savior himself, so that we may come out of Babylon, that is, the confusion of this world, and flee from the Chaldeans, of whom it is often said: For the Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob with his precious blood and led him through the desert of the world and split the rock to give water. The Apostle speaks excellently: But the rock was Christ (1 Cor. X, 4). However, the divine word is divided and divided into many parts, so that we may receive it in parts, since we cannot receive it all at once. And so that it may not be thought that this preaching is directed to all the descendants of Jacob and not only to those who will believe through the Apostles, it is added and connected: There is no peace for the wicked, says the Lord, namely those who have remained in their original error; those who do not deserve to drink from the rock. Whose side pierced with a spear, flowed with water and blood (John 19), giving us baptism and martyrdom.

49:1-6

(Chapter 49—Verse 1 onwards) Listen, O islands, and pay attention, O peoples from afar: The Lord called me from the womb; from the body of my mother he remembered my name. He made my mouth like a sharpened sword; in the shadow of his hand he protected me. He made me like a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me: You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified. And I said: I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and

vanity; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my reward is with my God. LXX: Hear me, O islands, and pay attention, O nations. After a long time, I will stand, says the Lord. From the womb, He called me, and from my mother's womb, He pronounced my name. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, and He hid me in the shadow of His hand. He made me like a chosen arrow and concealed me in His quiver. And He said to me: You are my servant, Israel, and in you I will be glorified. And I said, I have labored in vain and have spent my strength for nothing. Therefore, my judgment is before the Lord, and my work is before my God. I know that both these things and the things beneath, which we are about to discuss, pertain to the knowledge or understanding of one chapter, and all should be understood from the person of Christ. But I did not want to burden the reader's mind by presenting everything at once, nor did I want to confuse the magnitude of what can be said in parts. Therefore, I have provided both editions: so that what seems obscure in one may be revealed by the reading of the other. Therefore, after calling the remnant of Israel and rejecting the unbelieving people, of whom it was said: 'There is no peace for the wicked,' says the Lord (Isaiah 48:22), he turns to the Churches gathered from the nations and speaks to them under the name of islands. These, being exposed to the attacks of the persecutors, are like the waves of the sea, and are battered on all sides by a raging storm, rather than being moved. And lest anyone think that our interpretation is forced and does not apply to the Gentiles, but to the synagogues of the Jewish people, it follows: 'And listen, O peoples from far away, that is, from the ends of the earth.' Just as the Seventy translated, it will stand for a long time, that is, not in this time in which they are being said; but after many times have passed. The Lord, He says, called me from the womb, and He remembered my name from my mother's womb. Which now, in the meantime, seems obscure to those who hear it, but afterwards it will become known to all nations, when Gabriel said to Joseph about the birth from the Virgin: 'And you shall call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people' (Matt. 1:21). He has also made His mouth like a sharp sword, in order to kill the wicked with the breath of His mouth. Regarding this sword, he himself speaks in the Gospel: I have not come to bring peace upon the earth, but a sword, separating the wicked from the good: For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (Matthew 10:34-35). And in shadow, he says, his hand protected me, so that the lowliness of flesh would be covered by the power of divinity, as the Angel announced to the Virgin: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you (Luke 1:35). He has set me like an arrow chosen, in his quiver he has hidden me. When he says 'an arrow chosen', he shows that God has many arrows, but not chosen ones: which arrows are the Prophets and Apostles, who run throughout the whole world. Of whom it is also sung in another place: Your arrows are sharp, O mighty one; the peoples fall beneath you (Psalm 45:6); and again: Your arrows are sharp, with coals of desolation (Psalm 119:41). But Christ, out of many arrows and many sons, is the chosen arrow, and He is the Only Begotten Son: whom He has hidden in His quiver, that is, in a human body, so that the fullness of divinity might dwell bodily in Him. And rare indeed is the faith of believers, to whom it is also said above (Chap. XLV, 15): You are a hidden God, and we did not know. With this arrow, and as a wounded bride, the Song of Songs speaks and says: I am wounded with love. And he said to me: You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified (Cant. IV, 9). A servant, because although he was in the form of God, he chose to take on the form of a servant (Philippians II), and Israel, because he was born from the seed of the Jews. And what can be understood about no other servant is joined together: In you I will be glorified (or I will be glorified). For he himself says in the Gospel, Father,

glorify your name (John XII, 28). He who speaks in the psalm to the Son: Arise, my glory, and arise, psaltery and harp (Ps. LVI, 9), that is, the chorus of all virtues. But when I said these things to my Father, I responded to him: How have you been glorified in me, Father, because I have labored in vain, and I have not been able to bring back a great part of the Jewish people to you? But all these things are said in order to show the free will of man. For it is God's job to call and our job to believe; and if we do not believe immediately, it does not mean that God is impossible; but he leaves his power to our free will so that the righteous will receive the reward of their will. Because, therefore, they did not want to believe in you through me, my judgment is before you, that I have done all that I should have done for them, saying in the Gospel: I have glorified you on earth, having completed the work which you gave me to do (John 17:4); and again: I have made your name known to men. And my work or labor and my suffering (for this is what $\pi\lambda\upsilon\sigma$ signifies) are before your eyes. For he wept over Jerusalem in the Gospel (Luke 19), and in a certain manner, in Psalm, he says that he suffered in vain on account of the multitude of unbelievers: What profit is there in my blood, when I descend into corruption? (Psalm 29:10). And hanging on the cross, he speaks according to the Hebrew: Far from my salvation are the words of my lamentations (Ps. 21:1). (Verse 5, 6 and following) And now says the Lord, who formed me as his servant from the womb, to bring Jacob back to him, and Israel will not be gathered: and I am glorified in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength. And he said: It is not enough for you to be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the remnants of Israel. Behold, I have given you (Vulg. Behold I have given you) as a light to the Gentiles, that you may be my salvation to the end of the earth. LXX: And now thus says the Lord who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to gather Jacob to him and Israel: I will gather and be glorified before the Lord, and my God will be my strength. And he said to me: It is a great thing for you to be called my servant, and to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dispersion of Israel. Behold, I have set you as a testament to the people, as a light to the Gentiles, that you may be salvation to the end of the earth. While I was speaking, I labored in vain, without cause, and in vain I consumed my strength: because the Jews refused to believe, and my judgment is with the Lord; and my work, which I accomplished with His help, is with the Lord. The Lord answered me, who formed me from the womb to be His servant. From the moment he was formed in the womb, it was shown that he would be called His servant. He also says in the psalm: You are my God from my mother's womb (Psalm 22:10). What then did the Lord say to him? That he should bring Jacob back to him who had strayed, who, having forsaken the Creator, served idols. Hence he himself speaks to his disciples: Do not go on the road of the Gentiles, and do not enter the cities of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:5); and in another place: I came only for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24). Therefore, it was the will of the Father that the wicked vine-dressers should receive the Son who was sent, and render the fruits of the vineyard, but they killed him, saying. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours (Matth. XXI, 38); and this is what it now says: And Israel will not be gathered together, that is, will not return to the Lord. And I am greatly amazed how the common edition, by another interpretation, overturns this strongest testimony against the perfidy of the Jews, saying: I will be gathered together and glorified before the Lord: when it agrees with our interpretation of Theodotion and Symmachus. But I am not amazed concerning Aquila, who was most learned in the Hebrew language and expressed word for word, that in this place he either pretended ignorance or was deceived by the perverse exposition of the Pharisees, who wanted to interpret it

as, and Israel will be gathered together to him, that is, to God. Since the Hebrew word Lo, in this place, is not written with Lamed and Vav (ו), which, if it were, would signify 'to him' or 'to them', but with Lamed and Aleph (א) which properly does not have a sound. Therefore, because Jacob has not been converted to God, nor Israel gathered together, the Son speaks to those who do not believe: I have been glorified in the eyes of the Lord. For in me, the whole world has believed, and my God has become my strength, who has comforted me in my sadness over the rejection of my people; and he said to me: It is not enough for you to serve me in raising up the tribes of Jacob, which have fallen by their own fault; and in converting the dregs or remnants of Israel. For this Hebrew word Nesure (נשור) signifies. For I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And that which is read in the Septuagint, 'I will gather and glorify before the Lord,' can be understood as meaning that the Lord is gathered with the believers. And what follows: He said to me: It is a great thing that thou shouldest be called my servant; a great thing let us ascribe to man and to a child who, in comparison with God, is small.

49:7

(Version 7.) Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to the despised soul, to the abhorred nation, to the servant of rulers. Kings shall see and arise, princes, and they shall worship because of the Lord, for he is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel who has chosen you. LXX: Thus says the Lord, who delivers you, the God of Israel. Sanctify him who despises his own soul, who is an abomination to the nations, who is the servant of rulers. Kings shall see him and rise up, and princes shall adore him because of the Lord, for the Holy One of Israel is faithful and has chosen you. For what we have said, 'He has transferred us to the contemptible soul, to the abominable nation, to the slave of lords, Theodotius', applies clearly to him who despises the soul, who is an abomination to the nation, who is a servant of princes, which clearly applies to the person of Christ. For he himself, the good shepherd, has laid down his life for his sheep (John 10), and he has despised him who is an abomination to the Jewish nation, whom they curse three times a day with the name 'Nazarene' in their synagogues. He was a servant of the princes, and so humble that he stood before Annas and Caiaphas; and he was to be crucified by Pilate and sent to Herod. This interpretation was agreed upon by Aquila, and partly by the Septuagint, although they changed the meaning and made it weaker, interpreting 'pro gentes' as 'pro gente' and 'pro servos' as 'pro servo'. Others are of the opinion that this is said in reference to the Jewish people, who despised their own soul and are an abomination to the whole world; and they serve the princes, of whom it is written: 'They devour my people as bread.' (Psalm 13:4). But a better interpretation is above Christ. Therefore, which Father, once the redeemer and Holy One of Israel, speaks to the son? Kings will see and princes will rise, and they will worship, when he comes in the glory of the Father with his Angels, and he will sit on the throne of his glory, judging the living and the dead: then everyone will worship him because of the Lord his Father, who chose him. Or it is to be understood in this way: Kings whose heart is in the hand of God, and the princes of the Church of God, will worship you: for the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, who chose you, is faithful. But all these things apply to him who despises his own soul, who is despised by the nation, who is a servant of princes.

49:8-13

(Versed 8 and following) Thus says the Lord: In a time of favor I have answered you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages; saying to the prisoners, 'Come out,' to those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.' They shall feed along the ways, on all bare heights shall be their pasture; they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them. And I will make all my mountains a road, and my paths will be exalted. Behold, these will come from afar, and behold, those from the north and the sea, and these from the land of the south. Praise, heavens, and rejoice, earth; sing praises, mountains, for the Lord has comforted his people and will have mercy on his poor ones. LXX: Thus says the Lord: In the time of opportunity, I have heard you, and on the day of salvation, I have helped you. And I have formed you and given you as a covenant to the nations, to establish the land and possess the deserted inheritances. And you will say to those who are in chains, 'Come out,' and to those who are in darkness, 'Be revealed.' They will have pasture on all the ways, and their grazing grounds will be in all the paths. They will not hunger or thirst, nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them; for He who has compassion on them will comfort them, and He will guide them to springs of water. I will make every mountain into a road, and every path into their grazing ground. Look, these will come from far away; these from the north and the sea; and others from the land of Persia. Rejoice, O heavens, and let the earth exult, let the mountains burst into joy, for God has had mercy on his people and consoled the lowly. The Apostle Paul used this testimony in his second Letter to the Corinthians, saying, 'In an acceptable time I have heeded you, and on the day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the acceptable time, etc. (1 Cor. 6:2). Therefore, if the vessel of election pertains to the understanding of what is said about the first advent, and we follow the footsteps of its exposition, and like little children, imprint the letters on the shadowed lines of the Teacher. Time is favorable and opportune, and the day of salvation, it is the passion of the Savior and his resurrection, when he prayed on the cross: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46). And he saved him, or rather formed him, by overcoming death, and he gave him to the covenant of the Jewish people, namely to those who wanted to believe: so that he would revive the earth, which lay in the errors of idolatry, and possess the scattered or deserted inheritances, which had no God as its inhabitant, and he would say to those who were in chains, 'Come out, you who are bound by the chains of sin, for each one is bound by the ropes of his own sins' (Proverbs 5); and to those who were in darkness, 'Be revealed.' Those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death, and could not see the light, after they have been converted and have seen the bright light of Christ, will be nourished in the ways and paths of the holy Scriptures, and will say: The Lord feeds me and nothing shall be lacking to me, He has placed me in a place of pasture: He has brought me up on the waters of refreshment (Ps. 22:2). And whoever has been nourished and nurtured in these ways and paths, will not hunger, nor thirst, nor feel the heat of the sun: and what is written about him will be fulfilled: The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night (Ps. 120:6). So that he may not feel the adversities or the prosperity of this world. For indeed the Lord, who is merciful and compassionate, will console and guide them, and lead them to the fountains of water. He will give them to drink from the fountains, as it is written: Bless the Lord, you fountains of Israel (Psalm 68:27) . And in another place: Draw water with joy from the fountains of salvation (Isaiah 12:3) . These fountains are both in the Old Testament and the New. And the Lord will turn all the stumbling blocks that could hinder the steps of the believers into

level ground, and he will humble the high places and exalt the lowly, so that they may have a smooth and open path. He makes it more apparent who these people are for whom the way is being prepared: Behold, these will come from afar: and behold, those from the north and the sea, and these from the land of the south. Showing the four corners of the world, the East and the North, the West and the South, he placed the East far away: for the southern region, it is read in Hebrew as Sinim (which the LXX interpreted as Persians). The rest expressed sinim as it is read in Hebrew, which we have interpreted as from the south (or also from the south wind): suspecting that Mount Sinai is located in the southern part, according to the Prophet Habakkuk: God will come from the south: and the Holy One from Mount Paran shaded and hiding (Habakkuk 3). But if we follow the Septuagint, we understand the Persians, who are situated towards the East, to be referred to in the above passage: Behold, they shall come from afar, from the South. And it is commanded to the heavens and the earth, or to those powers which dwell in heaven and earth, or to the angels and men, to sing praises to God. And those who are set in high places of power should testify to the joy of their minds with rejoicing and exultation. For the Lord has comforted His people, those among the Jews who wished to believe. And he had compassion on his poor and humble people: whether they were called to him from the East and the West, the North and the South, not having the Law or the Prophets or spiritual riches: but abandoned, poor and humble, they were subject to all demons.

49:14-21

(Verse 14 and following) And Zion said: The Lord has abandoned me, and the Lord has forgotten me. Can a woman forget her nursing child, so as not to have compassion on the son of her womb? Even if she forgets, I will not forget you. Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; your walls are always before my eyes. Your builders have come, and those who destroyed and devastated you will depart from you. Lift up your eyes all around and see; all these have gathered together, they have come to you. I live, says the Lord: that you may be adorned with all these, and that you may surround yourself with them as a bride, for your desolate and deserted places, and the land of your ruins, will now be too narrow for your inhabitants, and those who devoured you will be far away. They will still say in your ears, the sons of your barrenness: It is too small for me, make room for me to live. And you will say in your heart: Who has borne these for me? I am barren and not bearing children, a wanderer and captive: and who raised them? I am abandoned and alone: and where were they? LXX: But Zion said: The Lord has forsaken me, and God has forgotten me. Will a woman forget her infant, that she would not have compassion on the child of her womb? But even if a woman were to forget these, I will not forget you, says the Lord. Behold, I have engraved your walls on my hands: and you are always before me. You will be rebuilt quickly by those from whom you were destroyed; and those who scattered you will come out from you. Lift up your eyes all around and see: all these have gathered together, they have come to you. As I live, says the Lord, you shall put them all on like an ornament, and wrap them around you like a bride's necklace: for your desolate and ruined places and your destroyed land will now be too small for your inhabitants, and those who humbled you will be far away from you. For they will say in your ears, your sons whom you have lost: There is narrow space for me: make room for me to live. And you will say in your heart: Who has borne these for me? And I, without children and a widow, who has brought up these for me? I have been forsaken alone, and where were they? Jerusalem and Zion are understood in four ways in the holy Scriptures, as we have often

mentioned. One, according to the Jews, which the Lord laments in the Gospel, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the Prophets, and stones those who are sent to you (Matthew 23:37). And in another place: When you see Jerusalem surrounded by an army, then know that its desolation is near (Luke, XXI, 20). Secondly, the congregation of the Saints, who are established in the peace of the Lord and in the towers of virtues, are rightly called Zion, of whom it is said: Its foundations are on the holy mountains: the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob (Psalm LXXXVI, 1). For the foundations of the Jewish Zion, which we see to be destroyed, were not loved by the Lord, nor could that which was loved by the Lord be destroyed. Thirdly, Jerusalem is called the multitude of Angels, Dominions, and Powers, and everything that is established in the ministry of God. Concerning this Jerusalem, the Apostle speaks: But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (Galatians 4:26). And in another place: But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22). Fourthly, Jerusalem is called the one which the Jews and our Judaizers, according to the Apocalypse of John, think should be placed in the celestial realm as a golden and bejeweled one, which they do not understand (Apocalypse 21), whose boundaries and infinite breadth are also described in the final part of Ezekiel. Therefore, since these things are so, let us now examine more closely what Zion has said: The Lord has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me. There is no doubt that the congregation of the saints, which was once among the Jews and was abandoned by the Lord, laments this and bitterly mourns that it has been deserted and deprived of the Lord's help. To this, God responded, using a natural analogy: Can a mother forget her infant, be without mercy towards the child of her womb? Even if she could forget, I will not forget you. I will say something more: even if she has forgotten, overcome by the hardness of her mind, the laws of nature; I, however, will not forget my creature, and I will always keep the souls of the saints in my heart. For you should know that what you think is completely abandoned, is written and depicted in my hands; and your walls always remain before my eyes. From this we learn that Jerusalem is not to be sought in the region of Palestine, which is the worst of the whole province, and is rough with rocky mountains, and suffers from scarcity of water, so much so that it needs heavenly rains and makes up for the scarcity of springs with the construction of cisterns; but it is in the hands of God, to which it is said: Your builders have hastened. Or according to the Septuagint: 'You will quickly be rebuilt by those by whom you were destroyed. For it was destroyed by the Jews, it was built by the Jews. It was deserted because of the fault of the Scribes and Pharisees, but it was gathered together for the preaching of the Apostles of Christ, both from the Jews and from the nations. It follows: And those who destroyed and scattered you will come out of you: the worst teachers; so that you do not follow at all the commandments and traditions of men (Matt. XV), but the law of God.' And it is said to her, to raise her eyes around, and to see the children who had gathered to her. Of whom also the Lord spoke: Lift up your eyes, and see that the harvest is already white for reaping (John 4:35). And to make us secure: As I live, says the Lord (which is said according to the custom of swearing in the Old Testament), you will be clothed with all these as with ornaments, and you will surround yourself with them, as a bride adorns herself with a necklace. Blessed is he who has such great merit and virtue that he is called an adornment of the Church. I think, however, that these various spiritual graces are signified, by which the bride is adorned. And this is sung about in the forty-fourth psalm: The queen stood at your right hand, in a garment adorned with gold, surrounded by variety (Ps. 44:10). For those places which were previously deserted and fallen into ruins, with the coming of Christ's Gospel, will be restored and will have such a multitude of

inhabitants that they cannot be contained. So, while the persecutors are kept far away, or those about whom we have spoken above: Those who destroyed you and scattered you, will go out from you. And the sons of your barrenness, whom you thought you had completely lost, and that you were widowed by them, will say in your ears: 'The place is too narrow for me in the synagogues, make room for me in the Churches, so that I may dwell more expansively, so that I may not be constrained by the blasphemies of the Jews, so that the whole world may contain your wideness with you.' But unable to express the magnitude of my joy with my mouth, you will think silently in your heart, and say: Who has given birth to these for me? I was barren and a widow, forsaken and captive among the people of Judah, I had ceased to have children, for a long time I had not given birth. After Haggai and Zechariah and Malachi, I had seen no other prophets until John the Baptist; and how is it that being alone and deprived of the help of a husband, I have now begun to have so many children? But so that we may know that Christ is built upon a rock and foundation from both peoples, Paul speaks to the believers: Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone. (Ephesians 2:20.) From this it is clear that the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets is one, our Lord Jesus Christ.

49:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will raise my hand to the nations, and I will exalt my sign to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. And kings shall be your foster fathers, and queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet; and you shall know that I am the Lord, those who wait for me shall not be put to shame. LXX: Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will raise my hand against the nations, and raise my signal against the islands; they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who wait for me shall not be put to shame. And the Church said: Who has borne me these? I was bereaved and barren, exiled and put away. I, abandoned and alone, where were they? The Lord answered: Are you surprised why these things have happened? You will not be surprised when you hear, for I have raised my hand against the nations. It is of this that the Holy One speaks: You formed me and laid your hand upon me (Ps. 138:4). And the Savior himself: No one can snatch from the hand of my Father (John 10:29). And the Apostle Peter: Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time (1 Peter 5:6). This hand lifted up towards the nations is the same of which the Prophet spoke: Jesse's root will arise to be the ruler of nations; in him the nations will place their hope (Isa. XI, 10). Not only will he lift up his hand towards the nations, but he will also exalt his sign among the peoples. Undoubtedly, the banner of the cross, so that what is written may be fulfilled: the earth is filled with his praises. And again: his wonderful name is praised in all the earth (Ps. VIII, 1). Then they shall bring in their arms, or on their shoulders, the sons of Zion, and her daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. Such was Lazarus, and all the saints who rest in the bosom of Abraham (Luke XVI), and the souls of the believers, to whom the Apostle Paul spoke: I have fed you with milk (1 Cor. III, 2). And elsewhere: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you (Galat. IV, 19). And in another place: As a nurse cherishes her children: so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God

only, but also our own souls (I Thess. II, 8). Moreover, it is ridiculous according to Jewish custom to carry grown-up sons and daughters on one's shoulders and arms. But kings are nursing fathers, and queens and princes are nursing mothers, clearly showing the Apostles and Apostolic men: such was also Abraham, to whom it is said, 'You are a king from God among us' (Gen. 23:6), and those whose heart is in the hand of God (Prov. 21): who say to believers: 'Desire the pure milk like newborn infants, rationally and without deceit' (1 Pet. 2:2). Also the prince, that is, the ruler, which signifies Sarah's name; and the queen, or queen, of whom it is sung in the forty-fourth psalm: The queen stood at your right hand in a gold embroidered garment, she nourishes Christ's little ones daily, and leads them to perfect age: and every age, sex, and dignity, will adore Zion because of Him who dwells in it. For if Christ is the head of the Church, the head is worshiped in the body. And if it is said to some: Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at the footstool of His feet (not that the footstool is to be worshiped; but that the majesty of His feet is revealed), why should not the Church, which embraces the whole body of Christ, be worshiped, so that what is written in Zephaniah may be fulfilled: They shall worship Him every one from his place: all the islands of the nations (Zep. 2:11), so that not according to the Jewish custom, tribes come to Jerusalem three times a year: but worshiping the Lord in their own place, they possess Jerusalem. And what follows: and they shall lick the dust of thy feet, signifies that kings and princes should wipe and wash away with their words whatever earthly work adheres to the feet of the Church. Hence, it is commanded to the Apostles that they shake off the dust from their feet. And it is said to Peter that he who is once washed needs only to wash his feet. (Matthew 10; John 13). Through all these things the Church learns that there is no other Lord besides Him, and those who have awaited Him will possess eternal glory.

49:24-26

(Verse 24 and following) Will the prey be taken from the mighty, or what is captured by the strong be saved? For thus says the Lord: Indeed, the captivity will be taken from the mighty, and what has been taken by the strong will be saved. But I will judge those who have judged you, and I will save your children. And I will feed your enemies with their own flesh, and they will be drunk with their own blood as with wine. And all flesh will know that I am the Lord, your Savior, and your strong Redeemer, Jacob. LXX: Will anyone take spoils from a giant? And if anyone unjustly leads captive, will they be saved? Thus says the Lord: If anyone captures a giant, they will receive spoils, and the one who receives from the strong will be saved. But I will execute my judgment. And I will deliver my sons, and those who have afflicted you will eat their own flesh, and they will drink their own blood like new wine, and they will become drunk. And all flesh will know that I am the Lord, who delivered you, and the helper of the strength of Jacob. Our Lord and Savior, who had previously spoken through Isaiah, repeats the same meaning in the Gospel: how can anyone enter the strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house (Mark 3). The strong man and giant is the devil, who had subjugated all peoples under his empire, daring to say to the Savior: All these things have been delivered to me, and I will give them to you if you will fall down and worship me (Matthew 4, 9). The world is indeed placed in the power of the evil one (1 John 5), whom no righteous person could overcome; nor, according to Amos, could one take prey from the mouth of a lion (Amos 3). Therefore, given the question that no one can overcome a strong and mighty one, nor save what was taken from him, the Lord responded that by His coming, all things would be accomplished: namely, that the

nations previously captured by the giant would be taken away, and all his possessions and entire household would be divided among the Apostles. Fulfilling that which is written: 'The beloved king of virtues, and of beauty, divided the spoils of the house.' For it is he who ascending on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men (Psalm 67:13, 19; Ephesians 4): namely, those who were previously captured unto death, he received into life. Wherefore Symmachus interpreted it more explicitly: 'But even the strong captivity shall be taken away, and the terrible spoils shall be preserved.' Desiring the strong and terrible devil to be understood, who was overcome by the power of the Lord. Therefore, the Lord who judges those who oppressed Zion, whether he judges their judgement or liberates the children of those who were captured by the giant, he will save and feed his adversaries with their own flesh, and he will make them drunk with wine, so that they will be satisfied not with the death of others, but with their own death. And those who are flesh, because they have lost God's spirit, let them feed on their own flesh. Indeed, the Holy One speaks of this in the Psalms: When those who afflict me come near, to devour my flesh (Ps. 26:2). For it is not the incorporeal spirit, but the flesh that is devoured by the bites of fierce beasts. And then Zion will say: truly all flesh that sees the salvation of God, that the Redeemer and Savior is the one who struggled with Jacob, or the one who helped the strength of Jacob: so that in his suffering, he would bless those who crucify him: Father, forgive them: for they do not know what they are doing (Luke XXIII, 34).

50:1

(Chapter 50, Verse 1) Thus says the Lord: Who is this bill of divorce of your mother, whom I have sent away? Or to whom have I sold you? Behold, because of your iniquities you were sold, and because of your sins your mother was sent away. For I came and there was no man; I called, and there was none to answer. LXX: Thus says the Lord: What is this bill of divorce of your mother, whom I have sent away? Or to whom have I sold you, to the creditor and exactor of me? Behold, you have been sold for your sins, and for your iniquities I have dismissed your mother. For I came, and there was no man: I called, and there was none that obeyed. After the calling of the nations, and the kings and princes, the nourishers and the nurses, and the captivity of the strong and the mighty, whose prey was distributed to the Apostles, and after the fury of the demons, who were satiated with their own flesh and intoxicated with their own blood: when all flesh knew that the Redeemer and the strong God of Jacob himself, speaks to the people of Judah concerning Zion, which he had previously said: The Lord has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me. Do you think that I, through my stubbornness, have cast down your earthly Jerusalem and that because of my rigid mind, I gave her a bill of divorce, and rather, as is true, you understand that she has departed from me because of her own fault? For when I said to her, 'Stop acting unjustly, learn to do good, listen to me,' she did not want to listen but turned her back on me as she departed. Therefore, I spoke to her children: Woe to them, for they have departed from me. Those who acted wickedly against me have been made evident. And against her, You, your departure and your wickedness will reprove you; and you will know that it is evil for you to leave me. But perhaps you cannot show a certificate of divorce, and one of my creditors demanding money, with me having nothing to give back, do you accept a repayment of debt? It is not so: but I will show you why I have abandoned the mother with her children. Your crimes and sins have sold you to demons, so that, entangled in the pleasures of this present age, you would abandon both your parent and that wife. I could not continue to hold your adulterous mother any longer, but I allowed her to leave

willingly. And it is true that each person is sold by their own sins, as we are abandoned by our own free will, either led to goodness or led to evil, and the Apostle Paul teaches: 'But I am carnal, sold under sin' (Rom. VII, 14). For whoever commits sin is a slave to sin (John VIII). And just as misers and plunderers are slaves to money, so every sin dominates sinners. To whom it is said: Let not sin reign in your mortal body (Rom. VI, 12). But so that you may know, I did not reject your mother's soul; rather, she withdrew of her own accord. After many benefits, I assumed a human body, and I spoke not through the prophets, but in person. I came, and I was not a man, nor a human being. For all men, leaving the image of a man and of a human being, took on the images of beasts and serpents. Therefore, due to her wickedness, it is said to Herod: Go, and tell this fox (Luc. XIII, 32). And to the Pharisees: 'Brood of vipers' (Matthew 23:33). And to the lustful: 'They have become insane horses longing for females' (Jeremiah 5:8). And about the indulgent: 'Do not cast your pearls before swine' (Matthew 7:6). And to the shameless: 'Do not give what is holy to the dogs' (Matthew 7:6). And in general, about everyone: 'The vision of the beasts that were in the wilderness' (Isaiah 30). So the Lord came, but did not find a man. For when man was in honor, he did not understand; he was compared to dumb animals and became like them' (Psalm 49:13). I called, he said, them as if they were rational animals, and I said: Incline your ear to the words of my mouth (Psalm 77), and my people did not hear my voice. I cried out, and said: Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let them drink (John 7:37). And in another place: Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden (Matthew 11:28). And there was no one to hear; therefore I spoke to them in the Gospel: You have not seen the form of God, nor have you heard his voice, because you do not have his word abiding in you (John 5:37, 38).

50:2

(Verse 2.) Has my hand been shortened and become small, that I cannot redeem? Or is there no power in me to deliver? Indeed, I will make the sea a desert, I will dry up the rivers. The fish will rot without water and die of thirst. I will clothe the heavens in darkness and make sackcloth their covering. LXX: Can my hand not save, or is it not strong enough to deliver? Behold, by my threat I will make the sea a desert, and I will dry up the rivers, and their fish will wither away because there is no water, and they will die of thirst. And I will clothe the sky in darkness, and I will make its covering like sackcloth. Against those who believed that the Lord could not deliver his people from captivity, he sets forth overwhelming proof and most abundant examples. He made the Red Sea passable for his people (Exod. XIV), he dried up the flowing waters of the Jordan, and as the rivers in Egypt dried up, he turned their fish into rot. (Exod. VII). And He who made the darkness in Egypt palpable for three days, so that the sky appeared covered as if with a sack and with darkness, certainly could also deliver His people from danger. Whether because He had said before, 'I came, and there was no man; I called, and there was none to hear,' we can say this: He who is the performer of such great signs, who makes the sky, the earth, and the seas serve His will, could also escape the cross himself, saying in the Gospel, 'Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?' (Matthew 26:53) According to the anagoge, the sea becomes a desert through the rebuke of the Lord, when all the bitterness of this world is dried up, and the rivers are desolated, about which the spiritual dragon said in Egypt: 'The rivers are mine, and I have made them' (Ezek. XXIX, 9). And about which we read in another place: 'What have you to do with the ways of the Assyrians, to drink the waters of the rivers?' (Jer. II, 18). Also, the fish that are thrown into the sea with nets rot, having been

separated from the good fish. And what follows: I will clothe the heavens in darkness, and its covering will be like sackcloth; or everything that is above us, let us understand as heaven, just as those flying creatures that are in the air are called celestial; and the opposing powers are said to be celestial, which move between heaven and earth. Or certainly, the heavens are clothed in darkness when they are covered with clouds. According to what is written: Who covers the heavens with clouds, and gives rain to the earth (Psalm 147:8). And in the threat of drought, God says: I will make the sky bronze and the earth iron (Deut. XXVIII, 23). Not that the nature of the elements is changed, but that the magnitude of the punishment is shown through bronze and iron. Philosophers say that clouds are lifted no more than ten stadia above the earth and hide the brightness of the sun. Therefore, the sky is not wrapped in a sack, but the air beneath, with the light of the sky blocked, is darkened by the darkness of the clouds. We can interpret that the heavens are covered with darkness, and being covered with a sack, in such a way that we say all are under sin, and even the holy ones need the mercy of God.

Book Fourteen Book Fourteenth. The Lord who looks upon the earth and makes it tremble; who touches the mountains and they smoke (Psalm 103), who speaks in the song of Deuteronomy: I will kill, and I will make alive: I will strike, and I will heal (Deuteronomy 32, 39), in frequent illnesses He also made my earth tremble, to whom it is said: You are dust, and to dust you shall return (Genesis 3, 19). And forgetting the condition of humanity, He often reminds me that I am a man, old, and soon to die. About what is written: What does the earth and ashes boast of? (Eccli. X, 9) From whom, having struck me suddenly with a powerful blow, he healed me with incredible speed, so that he might terrify rather than afflict, and correct rather than beat. Therefore, knowing to whom everything that I live is owed, and perhaps my sleep is delayed for this reason, in order to complete the work begun on the Prophets, I devote myself entirely to this study, and, like being placed in a certain watchtower, I contemplate the storms and shipwrecks of this world with sighs and sadness; not thinking about the present, but the future; not trembling at the opinions and rumors of men, but fearing the judgment of God. And you too, Eustochium, Virgin of Christ, who supported the sick with your prayers, also pray for the grace of Christ, so that with the same spirit with which the Prophets foretold the future, I may enter into their cloud and darkness, and know the word of God, which is not heard by the ears of the flesh, but by the heart; and to say with the Prophet: The Lord gives me the tongue of instruction, so that I know when I should speak. The testimony of the fourteenth chapter of the book of Isaiah, which I now desire to discuss, is the beginning.

50:4-7

(Chapter 50—Verse 4 and following) The Lord has given me a learned tongue, so that I may sustain with words the weary. He awakens me morning by morning, awakens my ear as a master. The Lord God has opened my ear; I do not resist, I do not turn back. I offered my body to the ones striking me, and my cheeks to those plucking my beard. I did not turn my face away from those reproaching and spitting. The Lord God is ((added by the Vulgate)) my helper, therefore I am not ashamed; therefore I set my face like flint, and I know that I will not be put to shame. LXX: The Lord gives me the tongue of instruction, so that I may know when it is necessary for me to speak a word. He has set me in the morning, and added an ear to listen; and the instruction of the Lord opens my ears. But I do not refuse or contradict. I have given my back to the lashes, and my cheeks to the slaps. But I have not turned my face away from the shame of spitting. And the Lord

is my helper, therefore I am not ashamed: but I have set my face like a mighty rock, and I know that I will not be put to shame. The Jews, separating this chapter from the previous ones, want to refer it to Isaiah, who says he received a word from the Lord about how to sustain and call back the weary and wandering people to salvation. And, in the manner of little children who are instructed in the morning hours, let him hear what the Holy Spirit says. And [let it be known] that he did not contradict His command, but when the Lord asked, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?' he answered, 'Here I am, send me' (Isaiah 6:8). And because it has been said: 'Listen to the word of the Lord, princes of Sodom: listen attentively to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah' (Isaiah 1:18), he endured so much hardship, not only the insults of words, but also the pains of wounds. However, he was not terrified by the conscience of the commanding God; but according to what is said in Ezekiel: 'Behold, I have made your face stronger than their faces, and your forehead harder than their foreheads, like adamant and flint I have made your face' (Ezekiel 3:8, 9), he crushed all their attacks. This they say, who by every means try to overturn the prophecies about Christ and distort them with a perverse interpretation, as if also these things were written about Isaiah, they could take away other testimonies about Christ that are so clear that they shed light on themselves for the eyes of everyone. Therefore, concerning the person of the Lord, in whom also the previous book ends, these things must also be mentioned: that, according to the arrangement of the assumed body, he was trained and acquired the language of learning, so that he would know when he should speak and when to be silent. Finally, he who was silent in his suffering now speaks through the Apostles and the men of the Apostolic age throughout the whole world. And it is a mark of great knowledge to give timely food to those under your care and to consider the individuality of your audience. Thus, the Apostle Paul, speaking by the testimony of his authorities, addresses those who do not accept the faith of the Prophets, saying: 'For we are indeed his offspring,' as some of your own poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring' (Acts 17:28), signifying Aratus. Again about the Comedian: Evil conversations corrupt good morals (1 Cor. XV, 33); and Epimenides' hexameter verse: Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons (Titus I, 12). If they do not maintain the order and measure of the meters in translation, it should be known that in Greek they run with feet. However, he did this because he had learned the language of discipline, so that he would know when to speak a word. To this was added an ear through grace, which he did not have by nature: so that we understand that ears should not be received from the body, but from the mind, about which the Lord also spoke in the Gospel: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke VIII, 8). The discipline and education that opened his ears, so that he might transmit the knowledge of the Father to us; who did not contradict him, but became obedient even unto death, and death on a cross (Philippians 2). So that he would offer his body or back to the blows; and his chest, capable of receiving the scourges of God, would not turn away from the blows. It is clear that he endured this from the minister of the chief priests: so that both the Jewish people and the priests would mock him. He who was struck and spat upon did not blush, but was led to the victim like a lamb; and like a sheep before the shearer, he did not open his mouth. But what the Son heard from the Father regarding the mystery of his assumed body, we learn more fully in the Gospel, where he himself says: And he who sent me, the Father, has given me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. And again: As I hear, I judge.

50:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) He is near who justifies me: who will contradict me? Let us stand together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God is my helper: who is he that will condemn me? Behold, all of them shall wear out like a garment, the moth shall eat them up. LXX: He is near who justifies me: who is he that will judge me, stand up against me together? And who is he that will enter into judgment with me? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord is my helper, who shall afflict me? Behold, all of you shall grow old like a garment, and like a moth shall eat you. If anyone, says He, thinks that I am justly addicted to the cross and have committed some sin, let him resist me. Who is there to be judged with me, so as not to be overcome by the power of my majesty, but by reason? However, he is judged with the Lord, not by the authority of the reigning, but by the comparison of virtues: just as the apostles judged the twelve tribes of Israel, and the Ninevites, and the queen of Sheba judged the people of the Jews. According to which sense, it is said to Jerusalem: Sodom is justified by you (Ezech. XVI, 52). Therefore, since no one can be justified in the presence of the Lord, all will grow old like a garment (Ps. CI). And what grows old is close to ruin. And it will consume them like a moth, it says. Clearly the conscience of sinners; and the zeal of the saved gentiles. About which it is said at the end of this volume: Their worm will not die. And in Micah against perverse princes: I will take away their goods like a moth devouring, and walking on the standard on the day of speculation (Micah VII, 4, sec. LXX). And in Proverbs: The moth of bones has understanding of the heart (Prov. XIV, 30, sec. LXX). For tineia, in this place Symmachus interpreted it as rust: while Aquila as worm.

50:10-11

(Verse 10, 11.) Who among you fears the Lord, and listens to the voice of his servant? Who walks in darkness, and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and rely on his God. LXX: Who among you fears the Lord, and listens to the voice of his servant? Who walks in darkness, and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and rely on his God. You have struck me, you have spat on my face: yet I call my persecutors to repentance. For I do not desire the death of a sinner, but only that he should turn back and live (Ezek. 33). And I say: who among you fears the Lord, and listens to the voice of his servant or his child, that is, his Son? of whom one is assumed flesh, the other is of nature. And indeed, let us not think it is enough to fear the Lord, according to what is said in Proverbs: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10). For perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment. But whoever fears is not perfect in charity. But this fear is placed for timidity and caution; about which we read elsewhere: Blessed is the one who fears everything (Prov. 20), because of caution, that is, because of timidity: those who are commonly called timid in the religion of God. For the Lord protects their path; and guards the way of the timid. Regarding this fear it is written: The fear of the Lord conquers all things. And elsewhere: There is no lack for those who fear Him (Sirach 25:14; Psalm 34:10). Finally, after many steps of virtue, one arrives at this kind of fear of the Lord. For the divine word speaks in the person of a master and father, instructing the disciple and son: If you call upon wisdom and give your voice to understanding, and if you seek it like money and search for it like treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and you will find the knowledge of God (Prov. 2:3). This is the fear that preserves the souls of the holy ones intact, chaste, and pure, of which it is said, The fear of the Lord remains forever (Ps. 19:9). To whom the divine scriptures exhort us: Fear the Lord, and give him glory (Apoc. XIV, 7). Therefore, whoever fears the Lord in this way, let him listen to the voice of his servant or his child, who walked in darkness and had no light; who had no appearance

or glory, but in the likeness of sinful flesh took on the form of a servant, that he might overcome sin in the flesh. Concerning this, it is said, let him hope in the name of the Lord, and rely on his God: so that whatever belongs to human frailty, may be strengthened and sustained by divine majesty. This is in accordance with the Hebrew. However, according to the Septuagint, it is said about sinners, who refused to obey the voice of His Son, and they walk in the darkness of error, and therefore they do not have light. For it was not possible for wisdom to enter into a perverse soul. They did not know or understand, and therefore they walk in darkness. For they did not do the works of the Lord and His commandments, nor did they sow righteousness for themselves, nor did they harvest the vine in order to kindle the light of knowledge for themselves. For whoever desires wisdom, let them keep the commandments, and the Lord will give it to them. Thus it is said to God: Your commandments are a light. And elsewhere: The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes (Ps. 19:9). And it is commanded to the wicked to trust in the Lord, and those who fall into sin rely on his help and support.

50:11

(Verse 11) Behold, all of you who kindle fire, girded with flames, walk in the light of your fire, and in the flames that you have kindled: it is made by my hand, you will sleep in sorrows. LXX: Behold, all of you who kindle fire, and strengthen the flame; walk in the light of your fire, and in the flame that you have kindled; these things have been made for you because of me. You will sleep in mourning. Exhortation is useless, and there is no hope of salvation after wicked deeds. All have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one (Psalm 14:3); all light their own fire and prepare their own torches. For they are like a bundle of dry grass, wood, straw, thorns, and thistles, which will be consumed by eternal fire. Hence it is also written in Proverbs: Fire thrives where there are many logs (Proverbs 26:20). But if a small spark can ignite a large material, how much destruction can a great flame cause? It is also said in the Letter to the Hebrews, concerning the land which produces thorns and thistles, that it is worthless, cursed, and its end is to be burned (Hebrews 6:8). Therefore, those who are girded with flames and surrounded, and have made the fire strong in themselves, are provoked to salvation, and it is said to them: Walk in the light of your fire; and in the flames that you have ignited, so that they may learn the power of God in punishment and suffering, and return to salvation. However, it signifies the devastation of the Jewish people, who were handed over to the Romans, and who continue to bear the yoke of captivity. For all these things have been done by the hand of Christ, and they will sleep in sadness and sorrow; because they did not want to receive the Son of God with either kindness or torment. He speaks to them, saying: Go into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). This is also what the Apostle says: Wrath has come upon you to the end (1 Thess. 2:16). In this chapter, we learn that according to the quality of sin, each person kindles a fire for themselves. And just as in the same location, and if it can be said, in the same bed, some are healthy while others are burning with the heat of fever, feeling different torments due to the diversity of bodily fluids and phlegm: so the fire that is kindled by sinners has its material in sins and iniquity, of which it is written: Evil will burn like a fire, and like dry grass it will be consumed by fire (Isaiah 9:18).

51:1-3

(Chapter 51, verses 1 and following) Listen to me, you who pursue what is just and seek the Lord. Consider the rock from which you were hewn, and the quarry from which you were dug. Consider Abraham your father, and Sarah who bore you; for when I called him, he was but one, then I blessed him and made him many. Therefore, the Lord will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of praise. LXX: Listen, you who pursue what is just, and seek the Lord. Pay attention to the sturdy rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who bore you; for he was alone when I called him, but I blessed him and multiplied him. And now I will comfort you, Zion. I have made her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of praise. While the sleeping ones are in sorrow and perpetual grief, who kindled a fire for themselves and made the flames very strong, you who pursue justice and seek the Lord (which signifies the choir of the Apostles and of those who believe through the Apostles), look back at the rock, that is, your father Abraham, from whom you were cut off, and at the cave of the lake, from which you were cut off, that is, Sarah who bore you. And consider this, that when he was of one hundred years and his wife was barren, I multiplied his children like the stars of the sky, so that the multitude would surpass the number. If, therefore, from one man so many thousands of people have been born, what great thing is it for me to restore the ruins of Zion and to change its deserts into a paradise of pleasure and into the garden of the Lord which God planted in Eden opposite the East? And let there be found in it joy and gladness instead of diverse trees, confession and the voice of praise. The Jews refer this to Zerubbabel's time, because after the devastation of Babylon, Zion was restored, the Temple was built, and the ancient religion was restored. But how does it say above (in chapter XLIX, 22, 23) to Zion: They will bring your sons in their arms, and they will carry your daughters on their shoulders. And your kings will be your foster fathers, and your queens will be your foster mothers. And: Behold, these will come from afar, and those from the north and the sea, and those from the southern land; when Zion says: The place is too narrow for me, make room for me to dwell, which excludes the mediocrity of those times, and are not known to be fulfilled above earthly Jerusalem: thus the Lord also speaks here to those who persecute what is just, according to what is said elsewhere: Seek peace, and pursue it (Psalm XXXIII, 5); and again: Pursuing hospitality (Romans XI, 13). And they seek the Lord, so that from past events he may infer his presence: since much more difficult things have already happened, they should not doubt the future things that are promised. Furthermore, it is said by the persecutors of justice according to the Septuagint, that they may look upon the most sturdy rock, which they have cut down, and the pit of the trap they have dug, that is, the Lord as Savior, about whom the Apostle speaks: And that rock was Christ (I Cor. X, 4). And elsewhere it is written: He set my feet upon a rock (Ps. XXXIX, 3). And again: They have pierced my hands and feet. For they have pierced my side with a spear, from which blood and water have flowed, and they have pierced my hands and feet, as the Lord and Savior himself said: They have pierced my hands and feet, they have numbered all my bones (Ps. 22:16). We can call the rock that was hewn out the sepulcher of the Savior, in which he was buried, and rising from the dead, he begot innumerable children. And he was called Abraham, that is, the father of many nations. Just as Sarah, once barren, is interpreted as the Church, which is also called Zion, whom the Lord has comforted, and has made her desolate places like a paradise. For she has more children of the desolate than of her who has a husband. And what is said: And I

will place in the paradise of the Lord those things that are towards the West, or in the garden of God, signifies that which, while sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, a sudden light has risen. The paradise, in which we turn our delights, is translated in Hebrew as Eden (), about which it is written in the beginning of Genesis. And this should be noted, that in Zion, which is compared to the paradise of God, there should be nothing other than joy and gladness, confession and the voice of praise, so that what the saints with the Angels of God will do in heaven, they should also meditate on this constantly on earth in the praise of the Lord.

51:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) Listen to me, my people, and my tribe, listen to me: for the law will come forth from me, and my judgment will rest on the light of the nations. My righteous one is near, my savior has come forth, and my arms will judge the peoples. The islands will wait for me, and my arm will sustain them. LXX: Listen to me, listen to me, my people, and kings, give heed to me: for the law will come forth from me, and my judgment will be a light to the Gentiles. My justice approaches quickly, and it will come forth like the light of my salvation. And nations will place their hope in my arm. The islands will wait for me, and they will place their hope in my arm. Once it is said in Hebrew: 'Listen,' and secondly according to the Septuagint: 'Hear me, hear me,' so that it may teach us that we should hear with the ears of the body and the understanding of the soul. And a multitude of nations, which is the people of God, is called upon to diligently listen to what is said about it, as Zacharias says: 'Many nations will take refuge in the Lord, and they will become his people' (Zech. II, 11). They are called a people, as some will have it, the remnant of believers of Israel; and for tribe, or race, those who have believed from the multitude of nations, as Moses in Deuteronomy says to the nations in his song: 'Rejoice, O nations, with His people' (Deut. 32:43). For tribe, which we have interpreted as Theodotion, means 'race'; Symmachus translates it as 'nation'; the Seventy, as 'kings'. For we are both tribe and race, and people, and a royal and priestly lineage of the Lord, just as Abraham, who was called a king, and the other saints, of whom it is written: 'Touch not my anointed ones' (Ps. 105:15). What is it that is commanded to be heard? Because the law, he says, will go forth from me, and my judgment into the light of the people, or nations. This law of the Gospel is shown to be spiritual, which will go forth from Zion; not of Moses, which was given of old on Sinai; and my judgment will proceed into the light of the nations, through which it has been established and decreed that all nations will be saved. And lest we should think that what he promised would come after a long time, he adds, my righteousness, or justice, is near. For Christ has been made for us wisdom and redemption from the Father (1 Cor. 1), holiness and righteousness, and all things by which virtue is called by name. And it is beautifully said, justice will proceed, so that not just one nation, but the whole world may be saved. And the Savior, or salvation, which in Hebrew is called Jesus, is called the Son of God, who was sent by the Father. Simeon, holding the child in his arms, says: Now you dismiss your servant, Lord, because my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all peoples, a light for the revelation of the gentiles (Luke 11, 29 et seq.). And what follows: And my arms will judge the peoples. Whether according to the LXX, and in my arm the nations will hope, or this signifies that all will be judged by his power, or that all nations will believe in Christ, who is the arm and strength of God. It is also said in another place: Your arm with power. Let your hand be strengthened, and let your right hand be exalted (Ps. 88:14). And again: Sing to the Lord a new song: his right hand and holy arm will save him (Ps. 27:1, 2). For the right hand and arm of the Lord, is He who first

saved the lost for Himself, so that none of those whom the Father had given Him would perish (John 17). And as for the islands, or the souls of the Saints, who in the persecutions of this world are firmly rooted in God by faith, or the multitude of Churches from the nations, we have often explained. And just as the arm of the Lord is the Savior, so we can understand all the saints as His arms that will judge the peoples, in whom God will judge the world.

51:6

(Verse 6) Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look down to the earth beneath: for the heavens will vanish like smoke, and the earth will wear out like a garment, and its inhabitants will die like flies. But my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness will never be abolished. LXX: Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and behold the earth beneath, for the heavens are established like smoke. But the earth will grow old like a garment, and its inhabitants will die like these things. But my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness will never fail. This is what the Lord speaks in the Gospel: Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away (Matt. XXIV, 35). And David sings in the psalm: In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the works of your hands are the heavens. They will perish, but you will endure, and all of them will wear out like a garment; you will wrap them up like a cloak, and they will be changed (Ps. CI, 26). From this it is shown that the destruction of heaven does not mean annihilation, but a change for the better. Of this it is said: 'There will be a new heaven and a new earth, which I will make to remain in my sight' (Apoc. XXI, 2). For if it is written of the saints: 'We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed' (I Cor. XV, 51); and in the titles of four psalms it is said: 'For those who shall be changed'; how much more must this be believed of the heaven, the sun, and the stars, when the moon will receive the light of the sun and the sun will shine seven times brighter? And every creature groans and labors, awaiting the revelation of the sons of God, to be changed for the better (Rom. VIII). And not only the souls of humans, which are immortal, but also their bodies will be transformed into a glorified substance. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality (I Cor. XV, 53). And when the heavens and the earth grow old, along with all that is contained within the circle of the heavens, and humans, who are the inhabitants of the earth, will die like this: not for their destruction, but for the abolition of their former lowliness, and for the renewal of future glory; when the righteous will shine like the sun (Matth. XIII, 43); and as the past and old things pass away, all things will become new. Some people understand perishing and growing old as abolition and death. According to what we read in the Catholic Epistle: The heavens and the earth which now exist are reserved by the same word for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. And again: The elements will be dissolved with burning heat (2 Peter 3:7). This is indeed the opinion of the philosophers of the world, that all things which we see will perish by fire. Hence the Apostle says: The fashion of this world is passing away, for those who contemplate not the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. (I Cor. VII, 32). This is also what the apostle John writes: The world passes away, and the desire thereof (I John II, 17). And in Hebrew it is said: The heavens shall fade away like smoke. Or, according to Aquila and Symmachus, they shall be broken into nothingness, and crushed like salt and vanish away, of which the former said, they shall be dissolved; the latter, they shall perish; which clearly indicates a meaning derived from the breaking and dissolving of salt. Therefore, I wonder what the Seventy wanted to say when they said that the

sky is firm like smoke. For if firmness is understood as strength, how can smoke, which is only firm, be compared to it? Unless, perhaps, we can say this: that the firmness, strength, and power of the sky are equal to the most empty wind and smoke, which dissolves in the air, as stated in Ecclesiastes: 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity' (Eccl. I, 2). And it must be said that if the sky and the earth will perish and grow old, by what reasoning can we believe that its inhabitants will die and disappear, while we know that souls are eternal and bodies will be resurrected? From which it is clear that the sky and the earth do not perish and are not reduced to nothingness, but are changed for the better.

51:7-8

(Verse 7, 8.) Listen to me, you who know righteousness, (people add "my" in Vulg.): my law is in their hearts. Do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their blasphemies. For like a moth, it will consume them; and like a worm, it will devour them. But my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness for generations upon generations. LXX: Listen to me, you who know judgment, my people: whose law is in their hearts. Do not be afraid of the disgrace of men, and do not be overcome by their contempt. For just as clothing will be consumed with time, and as wool will be eaten by moths. But my righteousness will be eternal, and my salvation for generations upon generations. He who said above: The law will come forth from me, and my judgment to the light of the nations: now speaks to the same ones who know his judgment, and have his law in their hearts, so that they may do all things with judgment, and have the law which the Lord promises through Jeremiah, saying (Jer. XXXI, 31 et seqq.): I will establish a new testament, not according to the testament which I made with their fathers: but I will establish a testament, giving my laws in their minds: and I will write them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be my people: so that they may not live according to the letter, but according to the spirit, restoring the natural law in their hearts, about which the Apostle writes: For when the Gentiles, who do not have the law, naturally do the things that are of the law: they, not having the law, are a law unto themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts (Rom. II, 14). Regarding which it is signified in the psalm: The mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom: and his tongue shall speak judgment. The law of his God is in his heart, and his steps shall not be supplanted (Psalm 36:30-31). And because the prophetic spirit knew that there would be many persecutions for those who believe, he exhorts them to fortitude, even to the contempt of those who will persecute them. This is what the Lord also spoke of in the Gospel: Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body into hell (Matthew 10:28). And in another place: Rejoice, when all evil things are said against you falsely (Ibid., V, 11). For just as a garment is consumed by worms or by time, and just as wool is devoured by moths, so all the reproach of persecutors will pass with the persecutors. Therefore the Apostles boasted that they were considered worthy to suffer insults for the Lord (Act. V). But they boasted because the salvation and righteousness of the Lord, which had promised them victory and rewards, that is, the Lord and Savior may remain forever, both in the previous and later generations, who have received his coming, about whom it is also said above: My righteous one is near, my savior has gone forth.

51:9-11

(Vers. 9 seqq.) Arise, arise; put on the strength of the arm of the Lord. Arise as in the days of old, in the generations of ages. Have you not struck down the proud, wounded the dragon? Have you not dried up the sea, the water of the great abyss, who made the depths of the sea a path, so that the redeemed might pass over? And now those who have been redeemed by the Lord will return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy will be upon their heads: they will have gladness and joy, sorrow and sighing will flee away. LXX: Arise, arise, O Jerusalem, and put on the strength of your arm. Arise as in the beginning of the day, as the everlasting generation. Are you not the one who formed the width, who crushed the dragon? Are you not the one who made the desert into a sea, the waters of the abyss many: who made a deep passage through the sea, for those who were freed and redeemed? For they shall be returned by the Lord, and they shall come to Zion with eternal joy and rejoicing. For in their head shall they apprehend praise and joy. Grief and mourning and sighing shall flee away. The name Jerusalem, which is added here by the LXX, is not found in Hebrew, nor is it found in any of the three Interpreters, from which it should be noted with an obelus and thus connected with the previous sense of the following chapter. The Lord had encouraged those who believed in him, saying: Do not fear the reproach of men, and do not be afraid of their blasphemies. And he had promised them his eternal salvation and justice as an aid, which is none other than Christ, the arm of the Lord, of whom he had said above: And the Gentiles shall hope in my arm. Where the people speak to the arm of the Lord, and implore His coming, and beg for the promised help, saying: Arise, arise: put on strength, arm of the Lord. Arise as in the ancient days, and exercise all your strength, so that you who have saved your Saints from dangers through many centuries may also protect us with your strength. For it is you who struck down the proud, wounded the dragon, the king indeed of Egypt Pharaoh, who is also called the great dragon in Ezekiel (Ezek. XXIX). You dried up the Red Sea, so that through the raging waters and deep sea, your people could find a way and escape the pursuing Egyptians. Therefore, you who did these things: now also bring back those redeemed and liberated by your blood to Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem, or to the Church which you prepared for yourself with your blood. In this place, when they are present, they will rejoice with eternal joy and say: Lord, you have crowned us with the shield of your good will. For they shall have joy and gladness, with sorrow and sighing fleeing away. This is according to the Hebrew. However, according to the Septuagint, Jerusalem, that is, the sinful soul is provoked to put on the strength of its arm and to take up its former works, just as it was before it fell: when it turned about in the day and in the light. For you are the one, it says, who have overcome the broad and spacious way that leads to death: and you have crushed the dragon, the twisting serpent: of which it is also read in the Psalms: You have crushed the heads of the dragons in the waters (Ps. 73:13). Remember your former strength, that you trampled the sea of this world and made it a desert, and you found a way in the midst of the waves. Therefore, the Apostle Peter also crossed the sea of this world to the Lord, and as he walked by faith, he began to sink in unbelief, except that he was supported by the right hand of the Lord. Just as the previous victory was granted with the help of the Lord, so also to those who return after repentance and listen: Will the one who falls not rise again? The Lord says: (Jer. VIII, 4). And, 'Turn to me, sons who are turning away; and I will heal your contritions' (Ibid., III). He himself will extend his hand and lead them back to Zion, the pinnacle and stronghold of virtues, with eternal joy and gladness, and put praise and rejoicing on their heads. For the eyes of the wise are in his head; and they will have this crown, and will be protected by this diadem, so that they may always rejoice and praise the Lord, because joy has succeeded sorrow, mourning, and groaning.

(Verse 12, 13.) I, I myself will comfort you. Who are you that you fear from a mortal man, and from the son of man, who will dry up like grass? And you have forgotten the God your maker, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth; and you were constantly afraid all day long because of the fury of the one who was afflicting you, who had prepared to destroy. Where is the fury of the one afflicting you now? It will come quickly, walking to open and will not kill to the point of destruction: and his bread will not fail. But I am the Lord your God, who stirs up the sea and its waves roar; the Lord of hosts is His name. I have put My words in your mouth, and have covered you with the shadow of My hand, that I may plant the heavens, lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion, 'You are My people.' LXX: I am, I am He who comforts you. Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and of the son of a man who will be made like grass? And you forget the Lord your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth; you have feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, when he has prepared to destroy. But where is the fury of the oppressor now? For when you are saved, it will not stand, nor will it remain; it will not bring destruction, and its bread will not fail. For I am your God, who stirs up the sea and makes its waves roar. The Lord of hosts is my name. I will put my words in your mouth, and cover you with the shadow of my hand; in which I have set the heavens and established the earth; and Zion will say, 'You are my people.' The people of the faithful is the arm of the Lord, who is the strength of God and the wisdom of God, and they had prayed that he would rise up and provide them with aid, and with him fighting for the saints, they would have joy and gladness, with sorrow and groaning banished. Therefore, either the arm of the Lord, or the Lord Himself responded: I am, I am; and not through the Prophets, but I myself will console you: God of mercies, and Father of all consolation. And I wonder how, with me saying above: Do not fear the reproach of men and their blasphemies, you may fear the rage of persecutors, and not know that they are mortals, who dry up suddenly like hay, and perish. And certainly at that time when you feared them, you forgot the Lord your Maker. For if you had always kept me in your heart, you would never have feared men who are destined to turn to ashes. And whom have you forgotten? God, who suspends the heavens with incredible power and establishes the earth with solid mass. And you feared your adversaries, not for a short time, which could have been granted to you in some way; but constantly and throughout the day, so that even when you had the light of faith, darkness of fear would possess you, and the one who believed you would perish. Where now is the pride of the persecutors? Where is the secular power by which they raged with furious mouth against you? My son will come quickly, treading on and trampling your adversaries, to open for you the way of victory: whether to open the abyss, which he will not destroy until complete annihilation; but he desires to save the converted. Finally, the bread of him, who is interpreted by the Gospel, the teaching proving, will never fail, but will always be open to those willing to partake. At the same time, He makes reference to the Son, whom He promises will come quickly and whose bread He says is eternal: because He is the Lord God Himself, who, in the dispensation of assumed flesh, causes the sea to be troubled and its waves to swell, so that the pride of persecutors may be inflated against His servants, who will then find rest again with the help of the Lord. And He says that He has placed His words in his mouth. For whatever the Son speaks, the words are of the Father, and He will protect him in the shadow of His hand. And for this reason he will be protected so that he may plant new heavens and pour out a new earth, and say to Zion, that is, to the Church: You are my people. Therefore, Zion is none other than the people of God.

Symmachus, in that place where we said, 'He will come quickly, walking to open,' and he will not kill until extermination, he interpreted it thus: Hell will open quickly, and he will not die into corruption. Christ is understood, who speaks in the fifteenth psalm: You will not abandon my soul to hell, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption. In that place also we translate the words in the Hebrew and Aquila: I have set my words in your mouth, and I have covered you with the shadow of my hand, that you may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth and say to Zion: You are my people. He translated it in this way: I will put my words in your mouth, and I will protect you with the shadow of my hand, in which I have planted the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, and that I may say to Zion: You are my people. According to the LXX, it is said to the soul of every believer, because it, having been created in the image and likeness of God, has ignored its own dignity; but it fears man and the son of man, who can only kill the body, and has not known that it is immortal, nor has it said with the Prophet: The Lord is my light and my savior, whom should I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life; from whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27:1, 2) And again: The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man can do to me. The Lord is my helper, and I will look down upon my enemies. (Psalm 118:6, 7) The nature of man is shown in another verse: In the Lord I will put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do to me. (Psalm 56:5) Therefore it is now said: You have feared mortal man, and the son of man, who are as dry grass. For all flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of grass (Isaiah XL), and you have been terrified by the power of the judge, forgetting that he was your protector, who made the heaven and the earth, and all the elements that we see; or those heavens that bear the image of the celestial above, and that earth which multiplies the seed of the Lord. However, what is said above: And his flesh shall not decay, and his bread shall not fail, is added from the edition of Theodotion from the Hebrew. He stirs up the sea and makes its waves roar, as is sung in the Psalms: You rule the might of the sea and calm the tumult of its waves (Psalm 89:9). In Jeremiah it is also written: You shall not fear me, says the Lord, and from my presence you shall not tremble, who have set a boundary for the sea, an everlasting decree that will not be surpassed (Jeremiah 5:22). The seas were stirred up when the net of the Lord drew in a multitude of fish (Matthew 13). And the Lord put His words in the mouth of the believer, and He covered him with the shadow of His hand. He also speaks in the Gospel: When they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you should say; for it will be given to you in that hour what you should say. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you (Matthew 10:19-20). And in another place, He says to the righteous: Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it (Psalm 81:10). And again: Open your mouth to the word of God: for the Lord will give the word to those who proclaim it with great power. Therefore, God speaks to the inner man of Jeremiah, after touching his mouth: Behold, I have put my words in your mouth (Jeremiah 1:9). Who could sing with the Psalmist: He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn to our God (Psalm 40:4). But who has worked all these things if not the Lord and Savior, who made heaven and earth, and says to Zion: You are my people? What belongs to the gathered people of the Church. And in Hosea, He promises to those who believe, saying: I will call them 'my people,' who were not my people; and they will say to me, 'You are my God' (Hosea 2:24).

51:17-19

(Vers. 17 seqq.) Lift up, lift up, arise, O Jerusalem, who have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his wrath: you have drunk to the dregs the cup of sleep, and have drained it to the bottom.

There is no one to support her among all the sons she has borne, and there is no one to take her by the hand among all the sons she has brought up. There are two things that have befallen you; who will grieve over you? devastation and destruction, famine and sword: who will comfort you? Arise, arise, O Jerusalem, which have drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury. For thou hast drunken the cup of ruin and the dregs of the cup of fury: thou hast utterly drained it. And there is none to comfort thee among all the sons whom thou hast brought forth; neither is there any that taketh hold of thy hand, of all the sons that thou hast raised up. These two things are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: who shall comfort thee? I often taught that Jerusalem and Zion are synonymous: of which Zion, which is interpreted as a watchtower, is called a fortress because it is located on a mountain: but the rest of the city, Jerusalem, which was previously called Jebus and Salem: which now the Prophet exhorts to rise, which previously fell into denial, saying in the Passion of the Lord: Crucify, crucify such [a man]: we have no king but Caesar (John 19:15): and let her repent, and feel the evils of captivity, why she offended her Creator. Doctors usually provide the most bitter antidote, which is named from its taste, to a nauseous stomach, so that it may expel harmful substances and be able to pass through the cooked and digested foods into the intestine, which the quantity of phlegm did not allow to be digested. Therefore, both Jerusalem, which drinks from the cup of the Lord's wrath, and from his κ■νδύ, which Symmachus interpreted as a wine bowl, and which according to the book of Genesis, Joseph ordered to be hidden in his brother Benjamin's sack (Gen. XLIV), is ordered to rise up from drunkenness because she has drunk and emptied it, and has drunk it until the dregs: which three have indicated in one word, ■ξεστρ■γγισαζ. Here is the chalice about which we read in Psalms: The chalice in the hand of the Lord is full of mixed wine. And he poured from this into that, but its dregs were not emptied: all the sinners of the earth will drink. (Psalm 74:9, 10). God also speaks about this to Jeremiah: Take the chalice of mixed wine from my hand, and you will offer it to all the nations to which I send you. And they will drink and vomit, and become insane because of the sword that I will send among them. (Jeremiah 25:15, 16). And when he says that he came near to other nations, and to Jerusalem, and to the cities of Judah, he declares: Thus says the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel: Drink and get drunk, and vomit, and fall down before the sword that I will send among you (Jer. 25:27). And it should be noted that this cup of the fury of the Lord is his sword, which is sent in the midst of sins. From this a question arises: how can it be said in Jeremiah that Jerusalem cannot rise up after drinking, drunkenness, vomiting, and ruin, and now through Isaiah it says to her: Lift up, lift up, rise up Jerusalem. This is how it is resolved: As long as someone drinks from the cup and becomes intoxicated and insane, and vomits and falls, they cannot rise, for they have not yet drunk the cup of the Lord, nor have they reached the dregs, so as to drink it to the bottom. But now concerning Jerusalem from the past, it says: you have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury, and not the one you are drinking. At the same time, it must be considered that neither a prophet nor an Apostle has been in Judea who could have comforted him and taken hold of his hand and raised him up while he was lying down. From which it is evident that these things are said after the last captivity; otherwise the history relates that Ezekiel and the other prophets had it while in Babylon and after Babylon. But what he says: There are two things that have happened to you, or rather these two things that have opposed you: who will be sorrowful for you? And instead of two, he presents four: devastation and destruction, famine and sword: this is similar to what is sung in the Psalter: God has spoken once, these two things I have heard: that power belongs to God, and to you, O Lord,

mercy: for you will render to each one according to his works (Psalm 62:11-12). And there, indeed, God speaks once, that he is omnipotent, and the two prophets hear that his omnipotence prevails on both sides, so that he may grant mercy to the penitent and render the punishments they deserve to those who persist in sin. Similarly, in another place, two occurrences of Jerusalem are found, each of which has two things. For ruin or devastation is followed by contrition, and death by famine and sword. We can understand these things in an analogical and spiritual sense, referring to the sinful soul that, unwilling to drink the cup of the Lord's fury, says in the psalm: Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath (Ps. 6:1). But if he drinks, it is good for him to feel his own punishments, and to hear the Lord saying: When the anger of my fury has passed, I will heal again. And elsewhere: Shall the one who falls not rise again, says the Lord (Jeremiah 8:4)?

51:20

(Verse 20.) Your sons are cast out, they have slept at the head of all the streets, like a trapped wild goat: full of the indignation of the Lord, the rebuke of your God. LXX: Your sons are destitute and sleeping at the head of all the streets: like a half-cooked beet, full of the fury of the Lord, and lacking from the Lord your God. As for the half-cooked beet, the remaining interpreters translated it as a captured and trapped wild goat, which is called 'Tho' in Hebrew, a type of wild animal found in the wilderness, listed among the clean animals in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. The Syriac language they have translated as thoreth, which means beta. Let us pass over the name and consider the meaning of it. Your sons, like wild oxen caught in snares, have slept in the streets and public squares, placing their naked bodies on the bare ground, thereby revealing the wrath of the Lord and the rebuke of their God, indicating their own misery. Furthermore, according to the Seventy: those who do not desire spiritual riches in every word, knowledge, and good work, but choose to be poor and not endure the threat, will by no means dwell in the houses that are built with virtues, but will remain at the beginning of the roads and at the exit, touching everything and leaving everything behind. Those who are said to sleep well in that sleep, of which it is written: They have slept their sleep and found nothing (Ps. 75:6). In that sleep, the Assyrian king has put them to sleep. And they are compared to half-cooked beets, which are a type of vegetable that is very cheap and fragile. About these vegetables, I believe that it is said in the Psalms: Do not be jealous of evildoers, nor envy those who do iniquity. For like grass, they will quickly wither, and like the green vegetables, they will quickly fall (Ps. 36:1, 2). For it is the food of the sick. He who is once unbelieving is called raw beetroot. But he who is content with simple faith, without reason and the truth of doctrines, performs the works of justice, can be called cooked beetroot. Furthermore, he who fluctuates between vices and virtues, and approaches the service of God with a double heart, is most rightly called half-cooked beetroot, of whom God speaks in the Apocalypse of John: Would that you were either hot or cold: but because you are lukewarm, I will vomit you out (Rev. III, 15, 16). Those who are lukewarm and sleeping are full of the fury of the Lord, and they are loose, or failing, through the Lord God. Not that the Lord is the cause of their loosening, who did not make death, nor does he take pleasure in the destruction of the living. But rather, those who have sinned in the Law, let them be judged by the Law, which works the wrath of God against those who are transgressors of it.

51:21-23

(Verse 21 and following) Therefore, listen to these things, poor and drunken one, not from wine. This is what your Lord and your God says, who fought for his people: Behold, I have taken from your hand the cup of slumber, the bottom of the cup of my indignation; you shall not add to drink it any further. And I will place it in the hand of those who humbled you, and they said to your soul: Bow down, that we may pass over, and you have made your body like the ground, and like a road to those passing by. LXX: Therefore listen, humiliated and drunk, not from wine. Thus says the Lord God who judges his people: Behold, I have taken from your hand the cup of ruin, the chalice of my fury; and you shall no longer drink from it. And I will deliver it into the hands of those who unjustly oppressed and humiliated you, who said to your soul, 'Bow down, that we may pass over,' and you have made your back like the ground and like a street for those who pass by. O Jerusalem, to whom I said, 'Lift up, lift up, arise, and repent,' for you have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; and you have drunk it to the dregs. And your sons, who were scattered throughout the whole world and led away captive, have lain prostrate in the streets and on the corners of the roads. Know that you are poor and humiliated, and drunk, not from wine, but from the fury of the Lord. Therefore, if you repent and rise lifted up, you will know the chalice of sleep and ruin: whether according to Symmachus and Theodotion, of tearing and shaking, to be taken from your hand: and that, which in this place Symmachus interpreted as a cup, you will no longer drink: but deliver it to your adversaries, who said to your soul, bow down, so that we may pass: and to those who said, you have bowed down by your own will. And you made your body like the earth, or back: or according to the Septuagint, your middle and your necks passing outside. Let this be said according to history, that if Jerusalem wants to lift itself and rise, it should not drink the cup of the Lord's fury, nor endure what it previously endured. But in order to understand it spiritually according to the Septuagint, it is said to mean a soul humbled by vices and intoxicated by disturbances, so that it may know that it has the Lord as its judge, and that it will render an account of everything. But if it were turned to better things, the cup of ruin would be taken away from his hands, and the bowl of the fury of the Lord, which contained punishments, about which Ezekiel also says to Jerusalem: You will drink the deep and wide cup of your sister Samaria, so that you may be drunk (Ezec. 23:32), should be given into the hands of those who humbled her. There is no doubt that it signifies opposing powers, which said to her souls: Bow down, so that we may pass by. In which it must also be noted that they did not bend it, nor did they force it, so that it would be inclined to the ground as before; but they left it to their own choice. However, it placed its neck or back, or its whole body, not inwardly, but outwardly, for those who trampled upon it. We also read something similar in the Gospel (Luke 13), because Satan had bent a woman for eighteen years, whom the Lord restored to her former state, so that she could say: I lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where will my help come? (Psalm 120:1); and: To you I lift up my eyes, you who are enthroned in the heavens (Psalm 123:1).

52:1

(Chapter 52, Verse 1) Arise, arise, put on your strength, O Zion; put on your garments of glory, O Jerusalem, holy city; for the uncircumcised and the unclean will no longer pass through you. (Verse 1 according to the Septuagint) Rise up, rise up, O Zion; put on your strength, O Zion, and put on your glory, O Jerusalem, holy city. Never again will the uncircumcised and the unclean pass through you. Again, in this place the name Zion is added, as in the Septuagint above, and for this reason it has been slain with the spear. To whom, therefore, he had said above (Chapter 51, verse

9): Lift up, lift up, arise, O Jerusalem; now he speaks to the same: Arise, arise, put on your strength, O Zion. But the following verse shows what Zion is: Put on your garments of glory, O Jerusalem. We have said this in order to prove that Jerusalem and Zion are one city. And it is commanded to her that she shall put off her mourning garments, and put on those which she had before she drank from the hand of the Lord the cup of fury. And the city is called the sanctuary, for it signifies 'codes' due to the temple that was established in it. Whether it is called 'holy' due to the knowledge of God, or 'sacred' because it alone in the world received the law. Therefore, even after the resurrection of the Savior, the bodies of the dead appeared in the holy city. However, because of blasphemy and the shedding of blood against the Lord, it could not be called holy (Matthew 27). And what is promised, if it rises after its ruin and is clothed with strength and glory, signifies that it will no longer be crossed by the uncircumcised and impure, as the Apostle Paul also says: 'What fellowship can righteousness have with iniquity?' Which society for light to darkness? Which agreement for Christ to Belial? Which part has the faithful with the unbeliever? What consensus has the temple of God with idols (I Cor. VI, 14, 15)? All of these, as we have begun to explain, refer to the state of the soul. And if it regains its original strength through repentance, let it be called the dwelling place of the Holy One, and let it become the temple of God, and by no means let the uncircumcised and unclean reasoning pass through it. Of these it was said: Cleanse me from my hidden sins, O Lord, and spare your servant from alien sins. If I am not dominated by them, then I will be blameless and cleansed from great offense (Ps. XVIII, 13, 14). But all the things that are promised to Zion and Jerusalem, are not as the Jews dream, referring to its stones and ashes and embers, so that it may be restored to its former state, but to the people of Jerusalem, who killed the Prophets and stoned those who were sent to them (Matt. XXIII), and finally even laid their hands on the Son of God. He who falls in the passion of Christ is raised in his resurrection: when many thousands believed of the Jews, and the remnants were saved. The same can be said of the Church, which is the vision of peace and a mirror; if it falls into heresy, it is commanded to depart and to receive the ornaments of the ancient faith. And if it is raised up, the rewards of holiness and continence are promised to it, so that no uncircumcised and unclean person may pass through it. This can be referred not to the circumcision of the flesh and the foreskin, but to the impurity or purity of works, so that we may call the uncircumcised and impure those who serve the pleasure of the body and lust. In fact, Jeremiah speaks not of circumcision of the flesh, but of the spirit: All the nations are uncircumcised in the flesh, but the children of Israel are uncircumcised in their hearts (Jeremiah 9:26). And the blessed Apostle, in discussing virginity, continence, and marriage, made this statement: Someone who is called circumcised should not let his foreskin be brought forward. He who is called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised (I Cor. VII, 18). Which seems to me to say in other words: He who is called without a wife, and believes, let him not take a wife. Or conversely: having a wife, he has believed in Christ, let him by no means divorce her. This meaning, not only in circumcision and in uncircumcision, but also in freedom and slavery, he keeps, calling the unmarried and the continent free, and the slaves who render the debt to their wives. For it is not in our power to bring forth a foreskin after circumcision, as those who are said to have made foreskins for themselves in the book of Maccabees, which is said to apply to newborn sons and not to fathers. Or, as the book called, is more of a servant of Christ (Ibid., VII, 22), since in the baptism of Christ there is no difference between Jew, Gentile, Greek, and Barbarian, male and female, free and slave.

(Verse 2, 3.) Shake off the dust; arise, Jerusalem! Loose the bonds of your neck, captive daughter Zion. For thus says the Lord: You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. LXX: Shake off the dust; arise, Jerusalem! Loose the bonds of your neck, captive daughter Zion. For thus says the Lord: You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. By no means does the word of the Prophet refer to Jerusalem, that is, to the ruins of its stones, and to the ashes and cinders, but it refers to the people who dwell within it. And it is called the daughter, because of the weakness of its spirit, as the following verse shows, in which it says: Loose the bonds of your neck, captive daughter Zion. Truly, the people of Judah are captives, who still bear the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar to this day, and are bound by the ropes of their sins and blasphemies. They were sold for nothing, and have done nothing deserving of redemption. As it is said above: 'Behold, you were sold for your sins, and I have dismissed your mother because of your iniquities.' And it gives the reasons why they were sold, why they were rejected. For, he says, I came and there was no man; I called and there was no one who would listen. From which it is clear that they were handed over to error and demons because they had not heard the one shouting: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened (Matthew 11:28). But those who want to believe will be redeemed, not with silver and money, but with the precious blood of Christ, so that they may hear through the apostles: Grace to you and peace (Romans 1:7). For we are reconciled to God, not by merits, but by grace and faith in Christ. It is also said of the soul, which, defiled by the filth of vices, had lost the brightness of its former conduct, that it shakes off the dust with the Apostles, who clung to His feet (Matthew 10). For it could not be that the soul, which had submitted its neck to those passing by and had mingled with the earth, saying, 'My soul is humbled even to the dust, my belly has adhered to the earth' (Psalm 43:25), should receive the likeness of the earth. From which the Apostle calls us back, saying: As we have borne the image of the earthly, let us also bear the image of the heavenly (I Cor. XV, 49). Therefore those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. VIII). Not that the nature of the flesh is condemned, of which God is the creator, and in which many have pleased God and reign with Christ: but that the works of the flesh are rejected, of which the same Apostle speaks: But I am carnal, sold under sin (Rom. VII, 14). Finally, he says to people like this: When there is envy and rivalry among you, are you not carnal and walking according to human standards (1 Corinthians 3:3)? And on the contrary to the saints: But you are not in the flesh; indeed, the Spirit of God dwells in you. Therefore, dust is expelled, as it is written: Will dust confess to you, or declare your truth (Psalm 30:9), so that the chains of our neck may be loosened; and may we not hear: Your neck is an iron sinew; but may we deserve to hear as a bride: How beautiful are your cheeks, like doves; your neck, like jewels (Song of Solomon 1:9). And again: I surrounded your wrists with bracelets, and a necklace around your neck; so that, liberated from heavy burdens and receiving your former adornments, we may cease to be captives, redeemed by him who came to proclaim remission to the captives. And of whom it is written (Isaiah 45:13): 'He shall build my city and bring back the captivity of my people, not with price nor with gifts.' To this meaning also agrees the Apostle Peter: Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of the spotless Lamb (1 Peter 1:18).

52:4-6

(Verse 4 and following) Because thus says the Lord God: My people went down into Egypt at the beginning, to dwell there as strangers: and Assur without any cause has oppressed them. And now what have I here, says the Lord? For my people have been taken away for nothing: their rulers have acted unjustly, says the Lord, and my name is constantly blasphemed all day long. Therefore, on that day my people shall know my name, because I myself am the one who spoke, behold, I am here. LXX: For thus says the Lord: My people went down into Egypt to sojourn there, and they became slaves in Assyria. And now, what will happen here, says the Lord? For my people have been taken away for no reason; you marvel and wail. Thus says the Lord: Because of you, my name is constantly blasphemed among the nations. Therefore, on that day, my people will know my name, for I myself am present. He reproaches the people of Judah and predicts what is to come. Those who descended to Egypt by their own will and travelled in the land of Goshen during a time of necessity and famine (Genesis XLVII): later suffered slander by the Assyrians, whom they had not harmed, and were taken into captivity in Babylon (2 Kings XVII, 25). From this, it is inferred: 'And now, what do I have here, says the Lord?' And the meaning is: I have nothing left that would cause me to remain in this region, from which my people was taken away for nothing, and sold into captivity because of their sins, and like a wild bull caught in a net, either by the strength of the Romans or by the snares of the devil, by which it is held captive until now. But in order to allow these things, their rulers and masters acted unfairly; those who, according to Symmachus and Theodotion, will howl; those who, according to Aquila, will weep, when they have been handed over to torments. For they are the ones who incited the people against the Savior, so that they might shout with one voice: Crucify, crucify such a one (John 19:15). Concerning whom he had already said: The Lord himself will come with the elders of the people and with its princes. But why have you set my vineyard on fire and plundered the poor in your houses? (Is. III, 14) Therefore, according to the Septuagint, it speaks to them: Because of you, my name is always blasphemed among the nations. And it should be known that, among the nations, my name is not blasphemed in Hebrew, but absolutely, so that it may be understood, my name is constantly blasphemed in your synagogues: on the days and nights they blaspheme the Savior, and under the name, as I have often said, of Nazarenes, they heap curses upon Christians three times a day. Therefore, while they blaspheme and curse the Lord, his people, of whom it has been frequently said, that is, the Christian people, will know the name of him who is to come in the name of the Father. And for this reason, they will know, because he who spoke previously through the prophets will personally teach the people. According to the Septuagint, God speaks to Israel that he descended into Egypt by his own will. As Moses said in Deuteronomy: 'Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy souls' (Deut. 10:22), and they were violently taken captive by the Assyrians. Where is it said to them: And now what are you doing here? what are you doing in the land of Judah, who after the death of the Prophets, laid hands on the Son of God? Or surely to the angelic powers, and the guardians of the Temple, God speaks to the Angels: What are you doing here, why do you not leave the blaspheming people? which Josephus also relates (Book VI, Jewish Antiquities, c. 12): suddenly the doors of the Temple opened, and were spontaneously unlocked, which many men could hardly close, and a voice came out from the inner sanctuary of the Temple, saying: Let us leave these seats. Considering the appropriateness of their words, let us depart from what they did not say, but let us go on to the people of the nations. Therefore, the veil of the Temple from the top to the bottom was torn in two parts, to expose all the Jewish ceremonies, and at that time be fulfilled what is said in this same Prophet: The law will go forth from Zion, and the

word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between many nations even unto the farthest (Isaiah 2:3-4). For their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (Psalm 19). And in every place incense is offered to God, and a pure offering (Malachi 1), when the prophetic word is fulfilled: They shall remember and return to the Lord all the ends of the earth: and all the families of the nations shall worship in his presence; for the kingdom is the Lord's, and he shall rule over the nations (Psalm 22, 28-29). Therefore it is said to the princes of Judah: Be amazed, and howl, for you are the cause of the ruin of the people. Furthermore, according to the anagogical sense, we can say that the people of God of this age willingly descend into Egypt when they are more lovers of pleasures than of God, and do not heed that prophetic message: Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help (Isaiah 31:1). When someone is stained with vices and dwells in a place of waters and rivers, not having the dryness of chastity, then they will be violently handed over to the Assyrians to be ruled by them, who will later accuse and convict them of sin. For they are both enemies and avengers, of whom he speaks to Israel: And now what is to you and the way of Egypt, that you drink the water of Geon: and what is to you and the way of the Assyrians, that you drink the water of the rivers (Jer. II, 18). Therefore, whoever descends into Egypt, and from the heights of Jerusalem falls to lower things: going to Jericho, the other Egypt, he receives many wounds from the robbers, it is said to him: And now what is this to you? What on earth and in the Church of God do you pretend to be, you who have descended to Egypt with zeal and desire, and are possessed by Assyrians, and have been captivated? And you should wail and lament even more; because because of your vices and sins, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles. As it is said in Ezekiel: You have defiled my name among the Gentiles (Ezek. XXXVI, 20). And just as the Lord speaks to his disciples in the Gospel: Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matth. V, 16): so, on the contrary, when we do evil works, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of us. Therefore, whoever has knowledge of the name of God and that he was created in his image and likeness, will not be ignorant, but will dwell in the light. And it will be in the day, of which Abraham rejoiced that he saw it (John 8); of which also the holy David speaks: This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118:24). For those who have enlightened themselves with the light of knowledge, and have eternal light, which is promised to those who believe: The Lord will be your eternal light (Isaiah 60:20), they walk honorably in the day, and are the children of light and day; and they will know him who says to Moses: Go, say to the children of Israel, 'I AM who I AM' (Exodus 3:14): and they will recognize that he whom they had known before in the saints, is also present with them.

52:7-8

(Verses 7, 8.) How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of good news, who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the Lord to Zion. LXX: As the hour over the mountains, so the feet of the messenger who hears the message of peace, who hears the message of good news, for I will make my salvation heard, saying, 'Zion, your God reigns.' The voice of those who keep watch over you is exalted, and they shall rejoice together, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord has mercy on Zion. Consequently, concerning the one who said above, 'I myself who spoke, behold I am present,' now the Prophet testifies that he himself has preached the Gospel over the

mountains, that is, over the Apostles, about whom it is written: 'Approach the everlasting mountains' (Micah 2:9, LXX), and their doctrine is the illumination of God. Where in the Psalms it says of Him: Thou enlightenest wonderously from the everlasting hills (Ps. LXXV, 5). He has announced and preached peace to those who were far off, that is, to the Gentiles; and near, that is, to the Jews: reconciling the world to God, of whom it is sung in the psalm under the name of Solomon: Justice shall rise up in his days, and abundance of peace, till the moon be taken away (Ps. LXXI, 7). And in the same Prophet, about the Child who is born, and the Son who is given to us, whose principate is upon his shoulder, and he shall be called the Angel of great counsel, it is said afterwards (above, IX, 7): And there shall be no end of his peace. For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of two one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. These are the good things that the Lord promises to those who believe: Hear me and you will eat good things; and your soul will delight in good things; and not only good things, but also salvation he announced to all, which he himself gave who says to Zion, that is, to the Church: Your God reigns. Hence the Apostle speaks to the Holy Ones: Let sin not reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires (Rom. VI, 12). And writing about sinners, he says: Death reigned from Adam to Moses (Rom. V, 14). And what follows: The voice of your watchmen, or your custodians, signifies the Apostles, about whom God speaks to the Church in another place (Below, LXII, 6): I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence. Wherefore it is said unto them (Above, XL, 9): Get thee up into the high mountain, O Zion, that bringest good tidings; lift up thy voice with strength, O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings. These same ones will praise God with equal voice, and with eyes they will see face to face. Which the Apostle says in other words: Face to face (1 Corinthians 13); when the Holy One sings: My eyes are always toward the Lord (Psalm 25:15). And: To you I lift up my eyes, you who are enthroned in the heavens (Psalm 121:1). And the Lord will answer them: For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer (Psalm 34:16). The translation of the Septuagint is like this: as the hour, that is, time above the mountains: just as the feet of one who brings good news of peace, and so on, Paul, following the sense of the Hebrew Truth, puts in his Epistle to the Romans: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news, who bring the message of peace (Romans 10:15): intending the Apostles, whose feet the Lord washed (John 13), so that they might be clean and beautiful for preaching, and go throughout the whole world, and quickly fill the world with the teaching of Christ. Now, ὥρα, that is, hour, according to the Septuagint, and the ambiguity of the Greek word can mean either time or beauty. If it refers to time, it will be appropriate to say: I heard you at the right time, and I was your helper on the day of salvation (Isaiah 49:8). Hence, the Apostle concludes: Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2). For at the right time, he shed his blood for all, when

everyone had turned away and had become useless at the same time. There was none who did good, not even one (Ps. 14:3): so that he might taste death for all, because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). But if we refer beauty to that which is said in the psalm: You are fairer than the sons of men (Ps. 45:2); (for what is more beautiful than for the form of a servant to become the form of God, and to sit and reign with Christ in the heavens?) it can be called watchfulness according to the breadth of the Greek language, and solicitude, according to what the Saint says: You will multiply me in my soul, in your power (Ps. 137:4). For you will make me abound [multiply] in Greek, it is said πολυωρσεις με [poluor-seis me], which means you will consider me worthy with much care and concern. And elsewhere: According to your greatness you have multiplied [πολυρησας | polur-sas] the sons of men (Ps. XI, 9); which in other Greek words means you have valued [ξιωσας | xis-sas] them with much time [πολλος ρας | poll-s h-ras] and thought [φροντιδος | phrontidos]. But these [translations] are superfluous; and it is more fitting to receive the beautiful feet of Christ or the Apostles, since, besides the Seventy [Septuaginta], all others have translated [it] similarly, with Paul approving their interpretation.

52:9-10

(Verse 9, 10.) Rejoice and praise together, O deserted Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has prepared his holy arm in the sight of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. LXX: Let the deserted Jerusalem burst into joy together, for the Lord has had mercy on her, and has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord will reveal his holy arm in the sight of all the nations. And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. After the people of Judah were led into captivity and the city was burned, there were few or no inhabitants in Jerusalem. But when the one who spoke through the prophets and was with God in the beginning, the Word of God, dwelt amongst us and became flesh, the deserts of Jerusalem were restored. And he came, of whom it is written: 'He will build my city and bring back the captivity of my people, so that it shall never again be lamented by Jeremiah: How lonely sits the city that was full of people: she has become like a widow who was multiplied among the nations' (Lamentations 1:1). But let David hear the one singing, 'When the Lord restored the captivity of Zion, we became like those who are comforted' (Psalm 126:1, 4). And after a little while: We became joyful. And so that we know that these things are said not about the Jewish people, but about all who will believe in the Lord through the apostles, he sets forth and says: He who comforted her, or had mercy on her, and he who rescued or redeemed her, he himself has prepared or revealed his holy arm, in the sight of all nations: and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. From which it is clear that, after the spiritual Jerusalem, that is, the Church, which was abandoned by the Jews, has been built by the Apostles, the arm of the Lord is revealed to all nations, and all the ends of the earth see his salvation. Which is understood in two ways. Either the Father reveals his arm to all nations, or the Son reveals his strength. Concerning which it is written: For power went out from him and healed all (Luke 6:19). And again: I perceived that power had gone out from me, which healed the woman with an issue of blood (Mark 5:30). But that the Son of God is called the right hand and arm of the Father, there are many testimonies, of which we will mention a few: His right hand and holy arm have worked salvation for him (Psalm 98:2). And elsewhere: In my arm the nations will hope (Isaiah 51:5). Concerning this, Jacob says: To him shall be the expectation of the nations (Genesis 49:10). And the eighty-eighth psalm: Your arm with power. With this arm the Lord brought the people of Israel

out of the land of Egypt. Concerning this, he spoke to the prince of the Apostles: Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven (Matthew 16:17). And the Apostle Paul about himself (Galatians 1:15): When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal His Son in me. And what was foretold that He joined together all the ends of the earth, those who are to see the salvation of God, is shown from what is said in another place: Turn to Me from the ends of the earth, and you will be saved (Isaiah 45:22); and through Jeremiah: The nations shall come to you from the ends of the earth (Jeremiah 16:19); and again: All the families of the nations will remember and turn to the Lord, because the kingdom belongs to the Lord, and He shall rule over the nations (Psalm 22:28 and following); so that not only the diversity of individual nations, but also all the corners of the world, who will believe, may be foretold in Christ. According to what he himself says: But when this Gospel has been preached in the whole world, then the end will come (Matthew 24:14). Others understand the highest and farthest parts of the earth to mean those who do not dwell in the middle of the earth, but on its extreme borders like the ends of wheels, leaving low things behind and hastening towards lofty ones.

52:11-13

(Vers. 11-13.) Step back, step back, go out from there, do not touch the impure: go out from its midst, you who carry the vessels of the Lord. For you will not go out in tumult, nor will you hurry in flight. For the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will gather you together. LXX: Step back, step back, come out from there, and do not touch the unclean thing: go out from its midst: separate yourselves, you who carry the vessels of the Lord, for you will not go out in tumult, nor will you go in flight, but the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will gather you together. And the Jews try to argue this: Go out of Babylon, and abandon their idols. Go out from its midst, and bring back the vessels that Nebuchadnezzar, having captured Jerusalem, took (2 Kings 15), with Cyrus releasing the captives under Zerubbabel and Ezra (Ezra 1), to the temple; not as before when you fled from Egypt with tumult and fear, so you shall go out of Babylon; but with peace and the will of the Persian and Median king, in whom the will of the Lord appeared, who protected and gathered you. Others interpret what we have said about Babylon as referring to the Roman kingdom, that in the coming of Christ, who will set them free, all these things will be fulfilled. But we, hearing above: How beautiful are the feet of the one announcing and preaching peace on the mountains. And: The Lord will reveal his arm in the sight of all nations. And, all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God, by no means do we understand this about the Jews, but about the choir of the Apostles and all the Saints. To them it is commanded, that they depart from Jerusalem, and preach the Gospel in the whole world, the Lord and Savior saying: Go forth and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19): so that they may in no way remain with the blasphemous Jews, upon whose destruction the Roman army is prepared; but rather they should leave the polluted ones and be separated and cleansed from them, who bear the vessels of the Lord. For indeed they are temples of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. III), and great houses are vessels of gold and silver. Such was the Apostle Paul, who is called a chosen vessel (Act. IX), for he had prepared himself as a precious and suitable vessel for the ministry of God. Or certainly this must be said, that the vessels of the Lord are the spiritual armor of God. Of which even the Apostle Paul spoke: Put on the armor of God (Ephes. VI, 11), and he enumerates each one: the breastplate of righteousness, and the shield of

faith, and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. To these things, add the belt of truth and shoes for the preparation of the Gospel of peace. And elsewhere: Therefore, putting aside the works of darkness, let us put on the weapons of light (Rom. XIII, 13). It follows: You will not go out in tumult, nor will you go in flight. For as victors they departed from Jerusalem, not as those defeated, in order to subjugate the world to the Gospel of God, who daily preached in the Temple, and had subjected many thousands of Jews to the faith of Christ, also to subjugate his world to the Gospel. For they held the Lord as the leader, who would gather them, the God of Israel, that is, to make one flock out of the entire world, so that what the Lord speaks in the Gospel to the Father would be fulfilled (John 17:21): Give that as you and I are one, so may they be one in us: so that with the same mind and the same opinion, leaving behind conflicting vices and opposing things, they may embrace one and only virtue. For vices and disturbances do not follow one another: that which is said about virtues, in which there are no excesses or deficiencies, that is, neither more nor less, but all things are moderate. Furthermore, in vices, everything is contrary, such as fear to boldness, impiety to superstition, and extravagance to restraint.

Behold, my servant shall understand, he shall be exalted and extolled, and shall be very high. As many were astonished at him; so his appearance was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. He shall sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider. LXX: Behold, my servant shall understand, and he shall be exalted, and shall be very glorious. Just as many were astonished at you, so your appearance will be marvelous among people, and your glory among the children of men. So many nations will be amazed at him, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For they will see what was not proclaimed to them, and they will understand what they had not heard. So that there may be no ambiguity for readers, it is clear who will say: I, who spoke, am here; and the holy arm of the Lord, which has been revealed to all nations, God the Almighty Father clearly teaches: Behold my servant or my son whom I have sent, about whom we have spoken of his difference before. But he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2). Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. As it is written in the psalm: I will bless the Lord who gives me understanding (Psalm 16:7); and concerning him, David sings: Who made the heavens with understanding (Psalm 135:5). He Himself is indeed wisdom and understanding, who progressed in wisdom and understanding as if a child in age and wisdom: of whom Peter also speaks: God of our fathers has glorified His Son Jesus, whom you indeed handed over and denied in the presence of Pilate who was willing to release Him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One (Acts 3:13-14), of whom we have also shown above: I am a witness, says the Lord, and the chosen child upon whom many will marvel when they perceive His signs (Isaiah 43:10). And from this will be a greater miracle, that his appearance will be inglorious among men: not because it signifies ugliness of form, but because he came in humility and poverty. Though he was rich, he became poor for us; and to those who believe, he said: Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart (Matt. XI, 29); of whom Clement, an apostolic man who governed the Church of Rome after Peter, writes to the Corinthians: The Lord Jesus Christ, the scepter of God, did not come in the boasting of pride, though he could do all things, but in humility. As soon as he was struck by the officer of the priest,

he answered, If I have spoken wrongly, give evidence of the wrong; but if well, why do you strike me? having twelve legions of angels who would obey his command. He shall sprinkle many nations, purifying them with his own blood and consecrating them in the baptism of God's service. Kings themselves will hold their mouths in check, and rulers of the world whose wisdom has been overthrown by the preaching of the cross; and those who had no Law and Prophets, and to whom he had not been proclaimed, will see and understand. Of whom the Savior also speaks: Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed (John 20:29). In comparison to them, the hardness of the Jews is reproved, who, seeing and hearing, have fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy in themselves, saying: 'You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear' (Isaiah 6:9-10).

53:1-4

(Chapter 53, verses 1 and following) Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: he has no form or comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from him; he was despised, and we did not esteem him. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows; yet we considered him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. LXX: But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. A man in distress, and knowing how to bear infirmity, because his face is turned away, despised and not esteemed. He carries our sins, and grieves for us, and we have reckoned him to be in pain, and in affliction. After the words of the Father, by which he had announced to the world that his son would come; and before the scandal of the cross, about which he was going to say: His appearance will be inglorious, and his form unlike that of other men, he had foretold the glory of the resurrection: He will be exalted and lifted up, and will be greatly exalted: so that, by the humility of the cross, he might anticipate the glory of the resurrection. The choir of prophets responded that they had fulfilled their duty, and had proclaimed to all the power and strength of his arm, as much as they could. But concerning what he says: Who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? he signifies the rarity of those who believe among the Jews. And what follows: It shall spring up as a root before him; for which the LXX translated, We have announced it as a little one before him: for root, Symmachus interpreted as a branch, in order to show that the man who proceeded from the virgin womb was assumed. Of whom he infers: As a root from a thirsty land. For the thirsty one, the Eagle was interpreted as a sign, in order to demonstrate the privilege of virginity, that he was created from the earth without any human seed. This is the one about whom we read above: A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots (Isaiah 11:1), in order to signify his birth and ascent into the world. But he did not have appearance or glory; his form was ignoble and lacking compared to the sons of men, or as it is said in Hebrew, despised and the last of men, as it is said in the Psalms: Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one, in your glory and majesty (Psalm 45:4). What is easily solved. He was despised and ignoble when he hung on the cross, and became a curse for us, bearing our sins. And he said to the Father: My God, my God,

why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46). But he was famous and beautiful in appearance, when the earth trembled at his passion, rocks were split, and with the sun fleeing, the elements feared eternal night. Of whom the bride also says in the Song of Songs: My beloved is white and ruddy, chosen from thousands (Song of Solomon 5:10). Candidus, in the fullness and purity of virtues, ruddy in passion, about which we will read later: Who is this that comes from Edom, his garments yellowish; chosen from thousands for resurrection; so that the one who was the firstborn of all creation might be the firstborn from the dead. And he brings forth this: a man in sorrow and knowing how to bear weakness, a man of sorrows, and knowing weakness, a true human body, and a true soul, who, knowing how to bear weaknesses, overcame them all by divinity. And his hidden and despised appearance, so that the divine power might be concealed in a human body. Regarding which it has been said above: You are a hidden God, and we did not know. He truly carried our weaknesses and sins, and he grieves for us, not just in appearance, that is, to seem so, as the ancient and new heresies suspect; but he truly was crucified. He truly suffered, saying in the Gospel: My soul is sorrowful even unto death (Matthew 26:38). And: Now is my soul troubled (John XII, 27). And we thought him to be unclean, or in pain, as the Seventy translated, for which Aquila and Symmachus translated as a leper, Theodotion, as scourged. Which in other words is understood as leprosy in Hebrew idiom, according to what is written in the Psalms: And the scourge shall not come near your tent (Ps. XC, 10). And the sense is: We thought him to be struck by God for his sins, who was humiliated for us and crucified with thieves. Regarding what Symmachus translated as ■v ■φ■ ■vτα, which means 'in lepra'; Aquila rendered it as ■φημ■vov, meaning 'leprosum': many, not understanding, think it was left out, and others read καθ■μενον, meaning 'sitting'. At the beginning of the chapter, where it is said according to the Septuagint: 'Lord, who has believed our report?': and the arm of the Lord, to whom it is revealed (Rom. X), which testimony the apostle Paul also uses in Romans, explaining about the passion of the Lord: 'Lord' is not in the Hebrew, but for the understanding of the person to whom it is said, it was added.

53:5-7

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. LXX: But he was wounded for our sins, and he was weakened for our iniquities. He was wounded for our iniquities, saying in the psalm: They have dug my hands and my feet (Ps. XXI, 18), so that with his wound he might heal our wounds, and he was crushed, or afflicted because of our sins, so that he became a curse for us, to deliver us from the curse. For every man who hangs on a tree is cursed (Deut. XXI, Galat. III). Therefore, our discipline of peace is upon him. For what we should have endured for our own sins, He suffered for us, making peace through the blood of His cross, whether those on earth or those in heaven. For He Himself is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, abolishing in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man, making peace. From which it is clear, that just as the bruised and lacerated body bears signs of injury in bruises and discoloration: so too the soul truly suffered for us, lest it be believed in Christ partly as truth and partly as falsehood (Rom. III). All, as it is said, have gone astray like sheep, and we are in need of God's mercy,

saying in the psalm: I have strayed like a lost sheep (Ps. CXVIII, 176); which in the parable of the Good Shepherd in the Gospel was carried on his concerned shoulders (Matth. XV). But the following verse shows who these sheep are. Man has wandered in his way; or rather, each one has turned aside in his own way, in order to follow his own error, abandoning the right path, and thinking differently about the Crucified. However, the Lord placed on him the iniquity of all of us, or he handed him over for our sins; so that what we could not bear on account of our weakness, he would bear for us, who was offered, because he himself willed it. For He endured the cross not out of necessity, but out of His own will, saying in the Gospel: 'The cup which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?' (John XVIII, 11). And to Peter, who was scandalized by the name of the cross because he did not know the mystery and was trembling with human fear, He said: 'Get behind me, Satan, you are a stumbling block to me; for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men' (Matthew XVI, 23). Otherwise, if He had not been willingly offered, He who could indicate and foretell the traitor and was speaking to the Apostles, 'You will all fall away because of Me this night,' could have caused those who were sent to him to turn away, but he boldly came to meet them and offered Himself saying, 'Whom do you seek?' (John XVIII, 4, 6). Those who immediately fell backward; for they could not bear the voice of the present God. And beautifully he added: And he did not open his mouth. When Pilate said to him: Don't you speak to me? he refused to answer. Or according to the Septuagint: He did not open his mouth in affliction. Or according to Symmachus and Theodotion, he did not open his mouth when he heard.

53:7-9

(Verse 7 onwards) Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. He was taken away by distress and judgment. Who can describe his generation? For he was cut off from the land of the living; because of the transgression of my people he was struck down. He will be given the wicked as a burial place, and the wealthy as his tomb, because he did no violence, nor was deceit found in his mouth. And the Lord was pleased to crush him in infirmity. LXX: He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humility his judgment was taken away. Who will declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth? He was led away to death because of the iniquities of my people; I will give the wicked for his burial, and the rich for his death. He did not commit iniquity, nor was deceit found in his mouth; and the Lord desires to cleanse him from his wound. This testimony is about the Ethiopian eunuch, who was riding in a chariot of Queen Candace while reading the book of Acts (Chapter 8 and following). He did not understand what he was reading, but with the help of Philip, he came to understand the passion and the name of the Savior. He was immediately baptized in the blood of the Lamb that he had been reading about and deserved to be called a man. The apostle was then sent to preach to the Ethiopian people. Just as Jesus was offered to Pontius Pilate, because he himself wanted it, and did not respond when asked to climb the Cross for our sake, he was led like a sheep to slaughter and remained silent like a lamb before the shearer. Indeed, our Passover lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed (I Cor. 5), whom John the Baptist pointed out, saying: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). He is also often mentioned as the slain lamb in the Apocalypse of the Evangelist John (Apocalypse 5). He speaks of Himself in Jeremiah (Jeremiah 11). But I, like an innocent lamb, being led to the victim, did not know. For when He did not know sin, He became sin for us (II Cor. 5). And just as a lamb, when led to the slaughter, does

not resist, so He suffered willingly to destroy him who had the power of death (Heb. 2), humbling Himself unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2). This is the lamb, in whose type the lamb was sacrificed, whose blood, when smeared on the doorposts, drove away the destroyer from the Egyptians (Exod. 22); who not only redeemed us with His own blood, but also covered us with His wool, so that, shivering in disbelief, He might warm us with His garment, and we might hear the Apostle speaking to us: As many as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ (Gal. 3:27). And in another place: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. XIII, 14). And what follows: He was taken away from distress and judgment; or as the Septuagint translated, in his humility his judgment was taken away, it signifies that he, having conquered, ascended from tribulation and judgment to the Father; or that the judge of all will not find truth in judgment; but that he was condemned without any fault, through the sedition of the Jews and the voice of Pilate. Therefore, the Prophet marvels that God has delivered himself to the passion of all. About what Paul is speaking: For if they had believed, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8). It follows: Who will declare His generation? This is understood in two ways: either it is to be understood about His divinity, that the mysteries of His divine birth are impossible to know; about which He Himself speaks in the Proverbs: Before all the hills He brought me forth (Prov. 8:25); according to what we read elsewhere: For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? (Rom. 11:34)? That is, no man; or about the birth of the Virgin, which can hardly be explained. Finally, when it was said to Mary by the Angel: You shall conceive and bear a son, she responded: How shall this be, since I do not know man? To which the Angel again said: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you (Luke 1:31, 34, 35), so that the mysteries of this birth may be attributed either to the Angel or to the Evangelist alone. Whose narrator is very rare, according to that: Who is wise, and will understand these things: prudent, and will know them? (Hosea XIV, 10) But if a wise reader responds in silent thought: And how is it written: No one knows the Son except the Father: and no one knows the Father except the Son, and to whom the Son wills to reveal? And he who knows the Father and the Son, surely he can explain the mystery of their generation. Let him hear that knowing something and speaking it are different, because often we cannot explain with words what we conceive in the mind. Therefore, the mystery of the divine nativity in the body can be known by the saints through faith more than it can be expressed in words. Otherwise, even the Apostle, who was caught up to the third heaven and into paradise, heard words that human language cannot utter (2 Corinthians 12). But the Spirit intercedes for us with ineffable groanings. Therefore, the life of the one whose generation can be narrated by no one or by few has been taken away from the earth, so that he would live not on earth, but in heaven. Whether he was cut off from the land of the living, in order to fulfill what was written in the Apocalypse of John: I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore (Rev. 1:17-18); so that after the life he lived on earth, dead to the world, he would live in eternity. And the statement is connected, He struck them for the wickedness of my people; or, according to the Septuagint, he was led to death because of the iniquities of my people, has a twofold meaning. For either he struck down persecutors and wicked people of his own people with his death, or on account of the greatness of the sins of the people, whom he always held as his own, he was led to death in order to call them back to life by his death. He gave the impious for his burial; and the rich for his death. Whether the worst for his burial; and the rich for his death: signifying both peoples, that the multitude of the Gentiles may be shown in the wicked and the worst, who did not have knowledge

of God before (Rom. IX); the Jewish people may be shown in the rich, whose people had the Testament and the Legislation and the Prophets. Therefore for this reason the Lord suffered and was buried, so that he might gather for himself a Church from both peoples. Or should this be said, that God delivered the Scribes and Pharisees, as well as the Sadducees, priests and pontiffs, who ruled over the people before the Lord's passion and were filled with excessive wealth, to the Romans after the Lord's passion, and subjected them to eternal servitude. He, for the sake of whose burial and death, the wicked and the rich were handed over, did not commit iniquity, nor was deceit found in his mouth. That which can be understood about no man at all, that he has not sinned in deed or in speech, the Scripture says: There is no one who is clean from filth, not even if his life is only for one day. And, we have all strayed like sheep, each one has turned aside in his own way (Job 25): except for him, who carried our sins and grieves for us, and was wounded for our iniquities, and was afflicted for our crimes, by whose bruise we are healed. In this, indeed, you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His footsteps. He committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth. When He was reviled, He did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten (1 Peter 2:21-23). However, the Lord wanted to cleanse him from the wound that he had received from the soldier's spear. Whether to crush him in weakness and wound: of whom he himself said: Because whom you struck, they persecuted (Ps. 68:27). And through Zacharias God speaks: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered (Zech. 13:7). Therefore, it was not of necessity that he suffered, but of the will of the Father and his own, to whom he himself said: Father, I have wanted to do your will (Ps. 39:9). Of whom also we read above: He was offered, because he himself wanted.

53:10-11

(Verse 10, 11) If he shall offer his soul for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, and the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand. Because his soul hath laboured, he shall see and be filled: by his knowledge shall this My just servant justify many, and he shall bear their iniquities. LXX: If you shall give for sin, your soul shall see a long-lived seed: and the Lord will take away the evil of his anguish, to shew him light, and give him understanding. Justify the righteous servant for many: and he shall bear their iniquities. According to the Hebrew sense here: If he shall offer his soul for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, which he hath sowed in good ground. Of whom it is written in the Gospel: He that soweth, went forth to sow; and again: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field (Matthew XIII, 3). And the will of the Lord will be directed in his hand, so that whatever the Father desired will be fulfilled by his virtues, saying to the Father: I have kept those whom you gave me in your name. I have guarded them, and none of them perished except the son of perdition. (John 17:12). But the seed will see eternity, and the will of the Father will be directed in his hand: because his soul has labored for a long time, finding no rest among the Jews, and saying in the Gospel: Foxes have dens, and birds of the sky have nests: but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. (Matthew 8:10). And in this same place the Prophet says: I have labored and endured (Isaiah 1:14). Therefore, since he has labored, he will see the Churches rise in the whole world, and he will be filled with their faith. Finally, when he sat down hungry and thirsty at the well of Jacob (John 4), in the middle of the day with the sun shining, he did not want to use the food that had been bought, because he was already satisfied with the faith of the Samaritans and those who were coming out of the city of Shechem to see him. According to this meaning, he said among the eight beatitudes: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for

righteousness (Matthew 5:6). In his knowledge, that is, in doctrine, he himself, the righteous one who did not sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth: and the servant of the Father, who took on the form of a servant and served the will of the Lord, will justify many believers from the whole world. And he himself will bear their iniquities, which they themselves could not bear, and by the weight of which they were oppressed. According to the Septuagint, it is said: O you, for whose sins the Son of God was led to death, who are most wicked and rich in evil, you were given for burial and for his death, if you are willing to repent and offer a pleasing sacrifice to God for your sins, your contrite spirit will see the seed of long time, the Lord Savior himself. It is said in the eighty-eighth psalm: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. And again: I will establish his seed forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. This, in other words, refers to the Virgin in Gabriel's message: Behold, you shall conceive in your womb and bear a son, who shall be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end (Luke 1:31-32). For the Lord indeed desires to take away the soul from grief, who said: 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death' (Matt. XXVI, 38), so that the insult of the cross may be tempered by the glory of the resurrection. And to show him light, so that he may see all illumined through himself. And to shape the understanding, it is understood that the spirit of wisdom and understanding will descend upon him. And to justify the just, who has served others well; for he did not come to be served, but to serve (Matt. XX), at the feet of Peter (John XIII), washing away the sins of all the Apostles. He who appeared in flesh, was justified in spirit. About whom even Judas the betrayer confesses: I have sinned, betraying innocent blood (Matthew 27:4). And Pilate's wife: Have nothing to do with that righteous man; for I have suffered much in a dream today because of him. And it should be noted that he was not justified in order to become just, as if he were wicked. But the just one is justified, not to begin to be what he was not; but that what he was might be evident to all. This righteous man suffered for the unjust, so that he might offer us all to God. Of whom it is said to the Jews: And you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you (Acts III, 14). And he carried their sins, he himself, as a physician, carries the illnesses of the sick, but the healthy do not need him (Luke V).

53:12

(Verse 12.) Therefore I will divide him among the many, and he will share the spoils of the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors. Yet he himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors. LXX: Therefore he shall receive many as his portion, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty, because his soul was poured out to death and he was numbered with the wicked. He himself bore the sins of many and was delivered up for their iniquities. Christ endured many sufferings so that he might attain great rewards. For, he said, he suffered and accomplished all that the previous word described, and he himself bore the iniquities of many: therefore I will divide to him many, so that for the part of the Lord Jacob, and his inheritance rope of Israel, they may believe in him coming from the East and West, and may recline in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matth. VIII): when that which is written is fulfilled: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession (Ps. II, 8). Concerning which and in this same Prophet it is read: There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise up to reign over the Gentiles, in him the Gentiles shall hope (Isaiah 11:10). But these many previously were held captive by the strong; and

under the appearance of an ass and a colt, they had many masters, to whom the Apostles said: The Lord has need of them (Matthew 21:3). Those who were strong before Christ assumed a human body, and strong overcame him, would plunder his house. Therefore, he delivered and distributed the spoils of the strong Apostles to his own, so that Peter, James, and John became the leaders of the circumcised people, and Paul and Barnabas were sent to the Gentiles, not separated in spirit but in different places, and stood on different fronts under one Lord, so that they might raise a triumph to the victorious army on both sides, for the Savior. From this, those who truly say that there was a disagreement and contention between Peter and Paul regarding the dispensation (Acts 15), in order to satisfy the blasphemous Porphyry: and they assert that the ceremonies of the old Law must be observed in the Church of Christ, by the believing offspring of Israel, and that they should expect Jerusalem to be golden for a thousand years, in order to sacrifice victims and to be circumcised, to sit on the Sabbath, to sleep, to be satiated, to be intoxicated, and to rise to play, a play that offends God. We said this because of what is now being prophesied: And he shall divide the spoils of the strong (Is. LIII, 12). According to what is written in another place: When he divided the heavenly kings in it. And again: The beloved king of hosts, and of beauty, shall divide the spoils (Ps. LXVII, 13). Finally, regarding the Apostle Paul, who was from the tribe of Benjamin, according to the Hebrew it is said: Benjamin, a ravenous wolf: in the morning he shall devour, and in the evening he shall divide the spoils (Gen. XLIX, 27). Of which we have already spoken: They shall rejoice in your presence, as those who rejoice in the harvest, and as those who divide the spoils (Isaiah IX, 3), dividing the churches of Christ for themselves in the whole world. Therefore, he will receive many nations, who came to preach remission to the captives and led captive captivity before, from the devil and demons, and gave it as a gift to men and believers, because he delivered his soul to death, and was reckoned with the wicked or unjust (I Cor. IX). For if the Apostle became as one without law to those who were without law (although he was not without law toward God, but was within the law of Christ), why then was Christ considered to be with the unjust, so that he might redeem the unjust from sin, and become all things to all people, so as to save everyone? For he carried our sins in his body (1 Peter 2), affixing them to the wood of the cross, in order to erase the handwriting that we had made for the devil and his angels, written by the deeds of our soul, that is, by our actions. About which Paul the apostle speaks: And you, when you were dead in sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he has quickened together with him, forgiving you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it (Eph. I, 2; Coloss. II, 14, 15). But the lawless men with whom he is counted, Mark the Evangelist understands to be the robbers, writing: And they crucified with him two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled which says: 'And he was reckoned among the transgressors' (Mark 15:27). This can also be understood at a deeper level, as the Lord himself says: 'I am reckoned among those who go down to the pit; I have become like a man who has no strength, forsaken among the dead' (Psalm 88:4). Indeed, he was reckoned among sinners and transgressors, in order to descend to hell; and in many places in the scriptures, hell is referred to as a pit, and he would free the prisoners from the prison. He was handed over for our sins and was raised for our justification (Rom. IV). Such was His great mercy that He prayed for His transgressors, and even for His persecutors, on the cross, saying: Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke XXIII, 34).

Book Fifteen

Book Fifteen.

Recently, Eustochium told me that whenever the Apostles and Evangelists cite testimonies from the Old Testament, if there is no difference between the Hebrew and the Septuagint, they usually use their own words or the words of the Septuagint translators. But if there is a difference between the Hebrew and the old edition, they prefer to follow the Hebrew rather than the Septuagint translators. Finally, as we have shown in many cases, they have inserted things from the Hebrew that are not found in the Septuagint; so let our rivals demonstrate that they have taken certain testimonies from the Septuagint that are not in the Hebrew books, and the dispute is settled. We have said this because although this chapter is united in meaning, it differs in words. Its explanation begins with the fifteenth chapter in the Book of Isaiah.

54:1

(Chapter 54, Verse 1) Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married, says the Lord. LXX: Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who has a husband. For the Lord has spoken. Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: Rejoice, O barren one who did not give birth. Rejoice in exultation, and neigh, you who have not given birth: For more are the children of the desolate than of her who has a husband. Theodotius and Aquila agree with him in most points. After the birth of the Savior, and the order of life and virtues, the passion of the cross, and the glory of the resurrection, when he laid down his life, he saw an everlasting seed, and in his knowledge he himself justified the just, and divided spoils of the mighty, and prayed for transgressors, giving them a place for repentance, he passed on to the calling of the Gentiles, and describes with full words those who will believe in him. The Apostle Paul refers to this place under the names of Sarah and Isaac, in reference to the Church (Galatians IV, 27 et seq.), stating that the former people from Mount Sinai and Hagar serve with their children; but the following book says: Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband. And immediately after: But we, brothers, are children of the promise, like Isaac. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. But what does the Scripture say? Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman. Now we, brothers, are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman. It is by this freedom that Christ has set us free (Galatians 4:27-31). Therefore, if the vessel of election, citing the testimony of Isaiah which we now have in our hands, refers to the sons of the promise and the Church gathered from the Gentiles or from both peoples, which had been deserted and left behind by the Jews, and which had not had God as its husband, nor received the Law or the Prophets, we are compelled by reason itself to follow the footsteps of our predecessor and declare it deserted, as we read above (Chapter XXXVI): Rejoice, deserted one, and similar things. It is written in Jeremiah, from the perspective of God: The one who gave birth to seven has become empty, her soul has failed. The sun has set for her even in the middle of the day (Jeremiah 15:9). And in the book of Samuel: The barren woman has given birth to seven, but she who had many

sons has become weak (1 Samuel 2:5). And in the Psalms: He makes the barren woman dwell in a house, a joyful mother of children (Psalm 113:9). The synagogue is said to have given birth to seven sons, representing the mystery of the week and the Sabbath, to which the previous people were bound. Whether for seven, more should be understood according to the ambiguity of the Hebrew language, by which both the Sabbath and many [days] are signified. About this, more has been said in the book of Hebrew Questions, which we wrote on Genesis. Therefore, as long as she had God as her husband, she produced many sons by God's divine Word and was joined to the Law. But when she received a bill of divorce and refused to answer her calling husband, and heard: You are the daughter of your mother who abandoned your husband (Ezek. 16:15). And again: You have not called me as your Lord, nor as the father and prince of your virginity (Jeremiah 3:4); therefore in this same Prophet it is lamented: How has the faithful city become a harlot, Zion full of judgment; in which righteousness used to dwell, but now there are robbers (Isaiah 1:21). But it should also be noted that when it says: More are the children of the desolate than of her who has a husband, the synagogue is not completely excluded from giving birth; but the multitude of Gentiles is preferred to her. And she herself, in the Apostles and through the Apostles, first gave birth to the people from the Jews. Therefore, the two leaders of the Apostles divided the two groups of believers in Christ, the Circumcision and the Gentiles, in order to first build up Jerusalem, which had been deserted and impoverished by both peoples. And the Hebrew word for joy, 'hinnitum,' signifies the greatness of joy, in the likeness of a neighing horse to victory. More is written about this in the Book of Job (Job 39). The Jews and our Judaizers refer this place and the rest that follows to Jerusalem, which they say will be restored in the kingdom of a thousand years, and that it will be the same as it had before, and afterwards it will cease to have a husband, and will have many more children after being divorced than she had with her husband. Clearly, a comparison is made between two women: one who had a husband and was abandoned, and one who was always without a husband. And it is not surprising about the Jews, whose eyes and ears are closed, if they do not see the open truth. As for the Christians, I do not know what to say, who, as the Apostle says, interpret things allegorically and refer to the two Testaments, the old and the new, with Sarah and Hagar as examples. They give themselves over to the desires of the earth for a thousand years.

54:2-3

(Vers. 2, 3.) Dilata locum tentorii tui, et pelles tabernaculorum tuorum extende: ne parcas: longos fac funiculos tuos, et clavos tuos consolida. Ad dexteram enim et ad laevam penetrabis, et semen tuum gentes haereditabit, et civitates desertas inhabitabit. LXX: Dilata locum tabernaculi tui, et pelles aulaeorum tuorum fige, ne parcas. Protende funiculos, et clavos tuos conforta adhuc in dextris, et in sinistris dilata, et semen tuum possidebit gentes, et civitates desertas habitare facies. To whom he had said: Praise, O barren one, who does not bear; break the bonds by which you were previously bound, and shout in confession of the Lord, whom you did not have children with, now you are commanded the same as the likeness of the tent of Moses, which he once had (Exodus 36) in the desert, to expand his tent and stretch out his skins; and make longer cords and fix nails, with which the entire tent is formed, so that it may be firmly set and strengthened, lest it be dispersed by the blasts of the wind. And it should extend to both the right and the left, and by no means should it imitate the narrowness of the Jewish tabernacle, which measured one hundred cubits in length and fifty in width, nor should it be constrained by the brevity of the Temple, which

had sixty cubits in length and twenty in width. But it should continue to have space on the right and on the left. (Exodus 27). And so that we may not think this can be said in vain concerning the frivolous contention of the Hebrews about Zion, which is to be restored to its ancient state by the Lord, he explains more clearly what was hidden: And your offspring shall inherit the nations. About which we also read in the Gospel: 'He went out who sows to sow' (Matthew XIII, 3); and again: 'Did you not sow good seed in your field?' (Ibid., 27)? This seed will also make deserted cities be inhabited, so that Churches of the nations may rise in the whole world. Or surely the seed must be said to be the Apostles, and the remnants of the Jewish people. About which in this same Prophet it is said: 'Unless the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we would have been like Sodom, and similar to Gomorrah' (Isaiah I, 9). And the Apostle says: 'The remnants were saved' (Rom. II, 5). This refers to the greatness of the Churches, which, starting from one place in Judea and that too very narrow, will extend their boundaries to the whole world. Let us come to spiritual understanding. He who is in a tabernacle does not possess a firm and permanent dwelling; but he always changes places and hastens to go further, saying in the psalm: 'I will pass to the place of the wonderful tabernacle' (Ps. XLI, 5), forgetting the things that are past and extending himself into the future, until he reaches the reward of the heavenly calling. We read about this tabernacle and in another place: How lovely are your dwelling places, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD (Psalm 84:1). And it continues: Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they will praise you forever and ever (Ibid., 6). For the end of the tabernacles is the possession of the eternal house, which does not change its foundations, nor is it moved from one place to another. For those who are planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God, that they may go from flowers to fruit, and may say: But I am like a fruitful olive tree in the house of God (Psalm 52:10). Finally, the holy man, hastening to pass by the tabernacles and desiring to see the house of God, says that he has one wish, that he never leaves the house of God: One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I will seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life (Ps. 26:1). Therefore, the tabernacle must be enlarged, and curtains and skins must be stretched, and ropes of various and diverse discourses must be extended further, and nails must be firmly fixed on the right and left, so that the seed of the word, that is, the teaching of God, may be able to possess the nations; and to make habitable cities, which he received who doubled the mina. However, the right hand and the left hand in the Holy Scriptures are then interpreted in a good sense, when we understand them both according to the spirit and according to the letter through the weapons of righteousness on the right and on the left (2 Corinthians VI), so that we may embrace the more humble understanding of life's instruction and the examples of our elders, and be transferred from the present to the future in a spiritual and sublime manner. This is what the Lord was speaking to the Pharisees when they asked Him: 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's' (Matthew XXII, 21), so that we may be subject to the powers of this world, which rightly hold the sword for the punishment of those who do evil, which is understood as the left hand; and let us render to God the things that are God's, so that we may fear no other, except Him who has power over both soul and body, which is understood as the right hand (Matthew X). Finally, it is said about the wisdom of God, to which nothing precious can be compared, that it has length of life and many years in its right hand; and in its left hand, riches and glory, so that those riches are understood which exist in present knowledge and good works, and the glory which the one who receives it, through whose works God is glorified among the nations, but the length of life and many years

signify eternal life, which, neglecting the present, hastens to the future.

54:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) Do not be afraid, for you will not be put to shame; do not be ashamed, for you will not be disgraced. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood. For your Maker is your husband— the LORD Almighty is his name— the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. LXX: Do not be afraid, for you have been put to shame; do not be disgraced, for you have been reproached. You will forget the shame of your eternal confusion and will no longer remember the reproach of your widowhood. For the LORD who made you is your husband— his name is the LORD Almighty— the God of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. A question arises, how is it said to the Church gathered from the Gentiles: Rejoice, you barren one who does not bear; and: More are the children of the desolate one than of her who has a husband, that is, she who had no husband, who later had more children, and she who had a husband turned into sterility: how is it now said to her who had no husband: You will no longer remember your widowhood, and the disgrace of your youth you will forget. From which the Jews want to understand that everything that is said is to be said to Jerusalem, which is deserted by God, and to be restored by Him again. Those who are easily repelled, when they are warned, are said to be spoken to in the person of the Lord in Zachariah: 'And I took for myself two staffs: one I called Beauty, and the other I called Cord: and I fed the flock' (Zech. 11:7). We have spoken more fully about this in its proper place, and now it will be partly spoken. The two staffs, each of them is the people, of the Gentiles and of the Jews, of which the former is called the multitude of the Gentiles, who have received the natural law fixed in their hearts, of which Paul, writing to the Romans, argues most forcefully (Rom. 1); by which staff, nothing is more beautiful than that all creatures are equally called to the worship of their Creator. But the second, that is, the people of the Jews, was called a cord: which after the offense of the nations is called the portion of the Lord, and his inheritance is Israel (Deut. XXXII). Finally, after Israel was called in Abraham, the Lord says: I took my rod, which was called beauty: and I cut it off, to make void my covenant which I struck with all the nations (Zach. XI, 10). Therefore, at the coming of Christ, it is said to the rod that had been cut off: Do not be afraid, nor be ashamed, nor blush with shame. For you will never again be confused as you were before, nor will you remember the confusion of your youth, and you will not recall your widowhood, by which you were forsaken by God: for your maker himself will rule over you, whose name is Almighty, who reigns not in one nation of Judah, but in the whole world. Finally, it follows: He who created you, himself redeemed you with his own blood: and God will be called the God of all the earth: for he is the God of all who dwell on earth. From this it is clearly evident that it should not be said of Jerusalem, which has never ruled over the entire world, but of the Church of Christ, whose inheritance is the possession of the world.

54:6-7

(Verse 6, 7) Because the Lord has called you, a forsaken and grieving woman, with the Spirit: and said your God to the wife rejected from her youth. For a moment, in a small thing, I have forsaken you: and in great mercies, I will gather you. In a moment of anger, I have hidden my face from you for a little while: and in everlasting mercy, I have shown compassion to you, says your Redeemer, the Lord. LXX: The Lord did not call you a forsaken and timid woman, nor did your God say of you,

a woman who is hated from her youth. I have left you for a short time, but with great mercy I will have compassion on you. In a little burst of anger I turned my face away from you, but with everlasting mercy I will have compassion on you, says the Lord who delivered you. These friends of the Jews insult the abandoned woman and the wife despised from her youth, whom the Lord left for a moment and for a little while, saying that Jerusalem is. He who hides his face for a little while will receive her in everlasting mercies and will change her past sorrow into joy. According to the Hebrew, it does not say that she was called a forsaken and despised woman by the Lord, nor like a wife who has been hated since her youth, but rather that He left her for a little while and turned His face away from her in order to have mercy on her forever. So if the Jews and those among us who are Judaizers say that Israel has been forsaken for a little while so that God may have mercy on them in the coming of Christ, and they interpret 'a little while' in comparison to all of eternity, why do they not allow us to say that there is a little while of time in which the Gentiles have been forsaken, so that those who were once of God in their youth may receive eternal mercy in their old age? Especially when, in the calling of Israel, the crowd of Gentiles was never excluded; but the door of return was always open to them through proselytes, so that just as we seem to be temporarily excluded by their calling, so may their perpetual exclusion grant us a return to God. But we said perpetual exclusion, if they do not repent. Otherwise, the Apostle Paul says: God has confined all under sin, so that he may have mercy on all (Galatians 3:22). We, who are gathered from both the Church of the people, are interpreted; and the Jews of Jerusalem receive: who follow only allegory, and in the most difficult places of free debate, they avoid nascent questions, referring them to the sinful soul, which, rejected by God, not out of hatred, but out of dispensation, so that, burdened by the weight of evils, she may return to her original man; and having lost her substance, she may not despair of the mercy of the Father (Luke 15). It is a great mercy to meet a returning son, to extend a ring and a robe, and a kiss, and to say to a blind brother, according to the likeness of another parable, 'Friend, if I am good, why is your eye wicked?' (Matthew 20:15).

54:9-10

(Vers. 9, 10.) As in the days of Noah, this is for me, to whom I swore, that I would not bring the waters of Noah any more over the earth: so have I sworn, not to be angry with you, and not to rebuke you. For the mountains shall be moved, and the hills shall tremble: but my mercy shall not depart from you, and the covenant of my peace shall not be moved, says the Lord, your merciful one. LXX: This is for me from the water that was under Noah: as I swore to him at that time, that the earth will never again be angry with you, nor shall the mountains be moved by your threats, nor shall your hills be moved. So neither will my mercy fail, nor will the testament of my peace be taken away, says the Lord your merciful God. In order that the congregation of saints may believe in the eternal mercy of the Lord, and therefore at this point, and briefly, that they may be deserted, in order to be joined in friendship with God, in an eternal covenant, he presents examples of the ancestors, saying: Just as with the whole world sinning, after all the earth corrupted the way of the Lord, the flood came: and when all sins were deleted with all their authors, and in one man Noah the human race was saved: to whom I swore that the flood would never be brought upon the earth: and my promise has been kept until now, and will never be made void (Gen. 8 and 9); in the same way, I swear to my Church, which I redeemed with my blood, that I will never be angry with those whom I have shown mercy, nor will my clemency be changed by any hardness of reproach. For it is easier for mountains and hills to be moved than for my opinion to be changed. Just as it is said

in the Gospel: Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away (Matthew 24:35). This, however, is my mercy, like the covenant of peace by which the world was reconciled to me, preserved not by the merit of those to whom it was given, but by my own clemency. According to the Septuagint, the meaning is confused, and everything is so disturbed that it is difficult to understand what is being said. Not because I am ignorant of what the most prudent man said in this chapter, but because it does not satisfy my mind. For it puts forward the flood, which is interpreted in the baptism of the Savior, gathering together many examples, as it is written: The Lord makes the flood inhabit (Ps. 28:10). And again: The Lord is sweet to those who wait for him in the day of tribulation, and he knows those who fear him, and he makes the consummation of the journey in the flood (Nahum 1:7, according to the Septuagint): namely, that he has washed away all sins in baptism, saying in another place: I am, I am, the one who blots out your iniquities (Isaiah 43:25). For all have turned away; together they have become useless (Psalm 13:3). There was no one who would do mercy, nor truth; nor was there knowledge of God upon the earth. Curse, and falsehood, and murder, and adultery, and theft had taken possession of all things, and they had mixed blood with blood. Therefore, He speaks through the Prophet: Woe to me! for the returning one has perished from the earth. There is no one who does what is right among humans; all are judged in my blood. Each person troubles their neighbor with tribulation, and they prepare their hands for evil (Mich. VII, 2, sec. LXX): and similar things to these. Among which is this: No one is clean from filth, not even if his life is only for one day upon the earth (Job XV, 14). Therefore, the Lord made a flood, who according to the apostle Peter was killed in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit (I Pet. III); and He preached to the spirits in prison, when the patience of God was expected in the days of Noah, bringing a flood upon the wicked. In whose example water cleanses us: not washing away the dirt of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience towards God. But the mountains and hills which were not moved, and those that wavered in such a flood, are to be understood as holy ones, having received the everlasting covenant: those who were moved in the previous flood, and had lost their steadfastness. The mountains, and the demons, and the opposing powers, who saw the daughters of men, that they were good, and wounded by the arrow of love, took for themselves wives from all whom they chose, and lost their former strength: and they will by no means exist in this flood (Gen. VI). He said this, the explanation of which I leave to the reader's discretion.

54:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) The poor thing, torn apart by the storm without consolation. Behold, I will lay your stones in order: and I will lay your foundations in sapphires. And I will make your battlements of jasper, and your gates of carved stones, and all your boundaries of desirable stones. I will make all your children taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children. And you shall be founded in righteousness. LXX: Humble and unstable without consolation. Behold, I will prepare for you your carbuncle gem and your foundations sapphire. And I will set your battlements with jasper, and your gates with crystal stones, and your walls with chosen stones. And all your children shall be disciples of God, and there shall be much peace for your sons, and you shall be built in righteousness. When we said: I will lay your stones in order, it is written in Hebrew, 'Baphphuch,' which all others translated similarly to 'I will lay your stones in stibium,' in the likeness of a adorned woman, who paints her eyes with stibium, to symbolize the beauty of the city. And when we said above that the jasper, following the LXX, has the Hebrew word Chodchod (), which

only Symmachus translated as χαλκηδόνιον (chalcedony). For the crystal too, in the place where it is read among the Hebrews as Ecda (), Symmachus and Theodotion put sculpting, that is, γλυφίς (glypheis), and Aquila put τρυπανισμός (trupanismou) which means the sense of bore and engraving of gemstones. We have spoken about the diversity of translations, let us come to the meaning. Still speaking to the Church, previously humble and poor, which did not have the Law, nor the Prophets, nor the word of God, and was convulsed or unstable by the storm, which had endured many whirlwinds of ages and fluctuated among various errors of idols, which had no comforter, and in vain lost all its substance in physicians; He Himself should come, should descend, and should build in the earth the heavenly Jerusalem, which is called bride and wife of the Lamb in the Apocalypse of John, having a light similar to a precious stone, such as jasper and crystal, and a great wall, and twelve gates inscribed with the names of the tribes of Israel, of which three were from the East, and three from the North, and three from the South, and three from the West of the sun (Apoc. XXI): and the wall supported by twelve foundations, and its entire construction of jasper stone, and each foundation of the walls had individual stones, the first jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius ((Al. sardius)), the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst; which as we read, we exclaim and say: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? (Romans 11:33-34) And again: Who is wise and will understand these things, prudent and will know them? (Hosea 14:10) Let the lovers of western letters answer, those who prepare exquisite foods for their gluttony and luxury in a thousand years, whose god is their belly and whose glory is in their shame. (Philippians 3) They hope for marriage after the second coming of the Savior, and for children of one hundred years, and for the injury of circumcision, and for the blood of sacrifices, and for the perpetual Sabbath. They say with Israel in a perverse way: Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall reign. What is this heavenly Jerusalem, to which it is now said: Behold, I will lay your stones in order, or according to the Septuagint Version: Behold, I will prepare a carbuncle for you, your stone, so that the whole city will be filled with carbuncles, and will have sapphire foundations and jasper ramparts, or chalcedony, and crystal gates, or engravings, and a wall encircling it with precious stones. And all its children will not have human teachers, but God, and they will be called disciples of God. And let there be in it everlasting peace, and the building up of justice. From this it is clear that under the occasion of justice, which is the name of virtue, we ought to seek the other virtues for the building up of the Church and not to follow Jewish delusions. For let them explain what is meant by that which is said in Proverbs about wisdom: 'She is more precious than all precious things' (Prov. 3:15). For if Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24), it is foolish to compare Christ to insensible stones. And again we read about the judgments of God: The judgments of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: more to be desired than gold and much precious stone (Psalms 19:10-11). From which it is clear that this stone is compared to other stones, about which it is said earlier in the same Psalm, speaking in the person of God: Behold, I will lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste (Isaiah 28:16). The builders rejected this stone (Psalm 118), namely, the scribes, Pharisees, and Jewish leaders, which has become the cornerstone (Matthew 21). Concerning this, the Apostle Peter says: Therefore, to us who believe, it is an honor, a precious and chosen stone. But to those who do not

believe, it is a stumbling stone and a rock of offense (1 Peter 2:7-8). He also speaks to the chief priests in the Acts of the Apostles, saying: This is the chosen, precious stone which you rejected (Acts 4:18), which has become the cornerstone and embraces two peoples, the Gentiles and Israel. He built a city, of which God is the architect and creator. Concerning this, the Apostle writes to the Corinthians: You are God's building. And: Like a wise architect, I have laid the foundation, and another builds upon it. But let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 3:9-10). Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done (I Corinthians 3:12-13). Concerning this foundation, he also speaks in another letter: built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20); and again: You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:5). Concerning these stones, it is said mystically: Holy stones roll upon the earth (Zech. IX, 16), by which Christ builds the Church upon the rock, saying in the Gospel: Upon this rock I will build my Church (Matt. XVI, 18). The one who is worthy to enter this city speaks joyfully to the Lord: As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God has established it forever (Ps. XLVII, 9). The great builder of this city, and in another place it is said: 'He shall build my city and bring back the captivity of my people' (Isaiah 45:13). But it is not for this time to speak of the nature of twelve stones and gems, since many Greeks and Latins have written about it. Of these, I will mention only two: the man of holy and venerable memory, the bishop Epiphanius, who left us a remarkable volume of his genius and erudition, which he titled 'On Stones'; and also Pliny the Elder, the same esteemed as an orator and philosopher among the Latins, who completed in his most beautiful work of natural history the thirty-seventh book, which is also the last, with a discussion on stones and gems. Hello, twelve stones are written in order in Exodus and in Ezekiel, that is in the treasury of the high priest, and in the crown and diadem of the prince of Tyre. Let's first talk about Exodus: Four woven orders of stones were there (Exod. XXVIII). The first order had the stone sardius, topaz, emerald. The second order, carbuncle, sapphire, jasper. The third order, ligure, agate, amethyst. The fourth order, chrysolite, beryl, onyx, surrounded by gold; and they were inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. In which it should be noted that the second order of stones is also mentioned in the present Scripture, carbuncle, sapphire, and jasper. For we have not yet attained perfection, nor have we reached the beginning, because now we see through a glass, darkly. Moreover, in Ezekiel it is written as follows: You are the seal of semblance and the crown of beauty, in the delights of God's paradise you were. You were adorned with every first stone, sardius, topaz, and emerald, carbuncle and sapphire and jasper, also with silver, gold and onyx, and agate, and amethyst, and chrysolite, and beryl, and chrysoprase, and onyx; and you filled your treasures and your vaults with gold as well. From the day you were created, when I placed you with the cherubim on my holy mountain, you were in the midst of fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until iniquity was found in you. (Ezekiel 28:12 et seqq.). For who is so foolish and of such a dull mind to think that in the paradise of God, the prince of Tyre, whoever he may be, was placed, and conversed among the cherubim and the fiery stones (which undoubtedly we understand to be the celestial angels and virtues), and that he was made with earthly stones and had resemblance and

sign? Therefore, it is not the time to speak about the nature of all stones and each part of them; for not everything must always be said. Now let us discuss only about the carbuncle, sapphire, and jasper. The carbuncle, which is obtained or placed in order, appears to me as the fiery speech of doctrine, which, by dispelling the darkness of error, illuminates the hearts of believers. This is the one that was taken by one of the Seraphim with a pair of tongs, to purify Isaiah's lips (Isa. VI): who is born, according to the faith of Genesis, in the land of Havilah, where the finest gold (Gen. II) and the carbuncle and the emerald are. Moreover, the sapphire, which is placed in the foundations, has a resemblance to the sky, and is above the air: such that it can say that Aristophanic phrase with Socrates: ■εροβατ■ κα■ περιφρον■ τ■ν ■λιον; which we can translate into Latin as: *Scando aerem, solemque despicio* (See Suidas in περιφρονε■ν). Or as Paul the Apostle said: *Nostra autem conversatio in coelis est* (Philipp. III, 20). The Scripture of Ezekiel also mentions that the place where the throne of God is located has a resemblance to sapphires, and the glory of the Lord is in this color, which carries the image of the heavenly above us. But even the fortresses of the city of God, that is, the walls, are strengthened with jasper, which can destroy and prove false every height that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and subject falsehood to truth (Ezekiel 1; 1 Corinthians 15). Therefore, the strongest in disputing and bolstered by the testimonies of the Holy Scriptures, is the fortress of the Church. There are many kinds of jasper: for there is another kind called emerald, which is found in the springs of the river Thermodon, and is called 'Grammarian,' by which they believe that all phantasms are driven away. Another greener man, and tinted as if with flowers; it is said to be born on Mount Ida in Phrygia, and in its deepest caves. Another, however, is found near the Iberians, the Hyrcanians, and the Caspian Sea, and especially near the lake Neusin. There is also another jasper that is similar to snow and the foam of sea waves, and it sparkles like mixed blood. We have said this so that we may recognize all spiritual graces in the defenses of the Church; whoever has them drives away vain fears and can say with the bride: 'My brother is white and ruddy' (Song of Songs 5:10). But the gates of this city are made of crystal stone, which is carved in various ways, and with this stone nothing is purer. Finally, they say that water freezes into crystal in the strongest cold of the Alps and in inaccessible caves: and the touch is stone, but the sight is water. By this it is shown that those who are at the gates of the Church should not be stained by any impurity, but should have the purest faith and say with the prophet: From your commandments I have gained understanding (Ps. 119:104). And this to hear: Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God (Matt. V, 8). But the walls of the city, or the boundaries and enclosure, are built with chosen stones, which we can understand as the remaining stones, and all his children are taught, or disciples of God: which testimony the Lord uses in the Gospel of John, saying: No one can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draws him, and everyone who hears and learns from the Father, comes to me (John VI, 44, 45). And after a little while, it is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God. He also speaks through Jeremiah, saying: I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. And they will no longer teach each other, saying: Know the Lord. For they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more (Jeremiah 31:33-34). But the doctrine of the disciples of God has a multitude of peace, which has been abandoned by the Lord: and the building up of the most beautiful city is completed through justice; so that God may not be of one nation, but of the entire world, calling His servants and children, Greeks and Barbarians, the rich and the poor, the noble and the lowly, men and women, children and the elderly, and all things that appear to be contrary in the world (John XIV). We have

exceeded the limit of brevity, which is useful in everything that needs to be said: by no means are we seeking the city of God on earth, as the Hebrews and our Semijudaeos ((Al. by seeking)), but rather in heaven, which cannot be hidden on the mountain of Christ.

54:14

(Verse 14.) Stay away from slander, for you will not be afraid; and from fear, for it will not come near you. LXX: Depart from evil, and you will not be afraid, and trembling will not come near you. Most beautiful order. He had comforted the poor and humble, promising them spiritual favors. Now he teaches what he should do if he does not want to fear the attacks of his adversaries. And the meaning is: If you do not want to fear your enemies, do what I say: Stay away from slander, or from wickedness: because all wickedness and plunder springs from slander; and you will not be afraid, trembling and fear will not come near you, so that you may fear not men, but God, saying with Moses: I am trembling and fearful (Deut. 9:19); and with one of Job's friends: Horror and trembling have come upon me; and my bones have greatly shaken (Job 4:14); and with the prophet: At the voice of my prayer, trembling entered into my bones (Psalm 66:2); and: On whom will the Lord rest, if not on the humble and quiet, and on him who trembles at his words (Prov. 10)? Moreover, there is another trembling of the wicked, which is born out of fear of punishment. Of this it is written: Trembling seizes the wicked (Psalm 47:7).

54:15

(Verse 15.) Behold, a resident will come, who was not with me; your former stranger will be joined to you. LXX: Behold, proselytes will come to you through me, and they will be your settlers, and they will flee to you. And the Jews believe that this is said about Jerusalem, that many from the Gentiles will become proselytes and accept the law of Moses and its ceremonies. This, according to our interpretation made in reference to the Church, which is gathered by the apostles from both peoples, which has no blemish or wrinkle, which is free, and the mother of all believers (Ephesians 5; Galatians 4). The Lord sent his disciples to gather the lost, converts, and strangers, saying: Teach all nations (Matthew 28:19), so that they may seek refuge in the Gospel and receive the new Law, that former inhabitants of idolatry may become members of the Church. Concerning them, it is said in the Psalms: The Lord makes the wise blind. Or as it is read in Latin manuscripts: The Lord enlightens the blind, The Lord loves strangers (Psalm 146:8-9): so that after the blind receive the light of truth and fools learn wisdom, then those who come to the Church are loved by the Lord, and they hear through the prophet: I will call not my people, my people (Hosea 2:24); with the entrance of these individuals into the Temple of God, zeal seizes the unlearned people.

54:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Behold, I have created the blacksmith who blows the coals in the fire, and brings forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the destroyer to destroy. Every weapon formed against you shall not prosper, and every tongue that rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from me, says the Lord. LXX: Behold, I have created you not as a blacksmith blowing the coals in the fire and bringing forth an instrument for work. But I have created you not to destroy: every vessel that is made against you will not prosper: and every voice that rises against you in judgment, you will overcome and they will be subject to you. This is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, and

you will be righteous to me, says the Lord. Let us first say in Hebrew: If you want to not be afraid, and to be far from fear, do what the previous word has narrated; for I am the one through whom you will have proselytes. I am the one who created the blacksmith blowing on the embers in the fire, that is, the devil, the artisan of all evil, not by necessity of nature, but by the decision of the mind. I who kindled fires, and will bring forth vessels against you: such as Simon and Elymas were, resisting Peter and Paul (Acts 13). I created the destroyer of those who will become unbelievers. Not that I am the cause of their perdition, but that the created adversary may engage in battle, and for the defeated, there may be destruction, and for the victors, the cause may be rewards. And all those who have been fashioned against you by the blowing of a blacksmith's bellows will not be directed, but they will feel both present and future punishments. And what was previously hidden will be said more clearly in the consequences: And you will judge every language resisting you in judgment, destroying the wisdom of the wise, and rejecting the prudence of the prudent. And you will condemn all the leaders of heretics and the teachers of the Jews and the philosophers of the world, whom that blacksmith had fashioned, by your judgment. How Queen Sheba and the Ninevites condemned the unbelievers, and on the other hand, Sodom will be justified by the comparison with Jerusalem's worse state (Matthew 12). After this, it is explained what the rewards of the future are, so that they do not think that their struggle is in vain and that it ends with death. This is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, that is, the kingdom of heaven, eternal life, and the retribution of their labor, which eye has not seen, ear has not heard, and it has not entered into the heart of man, that which God has prepared for those who love him (2 Corinthians 2). But if you love, therefore also serve those who have no other Lord except God. And this is the justice of those who are before God, says the Lord, that present tribulation may be compensated with future joy. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, this seems to me to be the meaning: I, your Creator, did not make you like the devil, the worst craftsman who molds vessels of iniquity with an unclean spirit and brings them to destruction, and who should know that such vessels do not have a successful journey, but are broken in the middle of the course. He explains what the vessels are in the following discourse; And every voice that rises against you in judgment, you shall overcome them all. The vessels of iniquity have a voice, which voice rises against the Church, when heretics put their mouth high, and their tongue passes through the earth. And what follows: And they shall be subject to you, we have marked with a note that it seems to have been added not so much by the LXX as by evil writers. But when the Church has overcome every voice rising against it, then to those who serve the Lord and obey, there will be an inheritance, an eternal possession. And in Jeremiah it is said in other words: There is a reward for your works (Jeremiah 31:36). And the inhabitants of the Church will be righteous before the Lord. For everyone who practices righteousness is born of God. To whom the Lord speaks: Be holy, for I am holy (Leviticus 20:26).

55:1

(Chapter 55, Verse 1) All you who are thirsty, come to the waters, and you who have no money, hurry and buy and eat; come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? LXX: You who are thirsty, go to the water, and you who have no money, go, buy and eat, and walk, and buy wine and fat without money and without price. Why do you spend money, and your labor not for satisfaction? The Hebrew word Oi (), which I mentioned earlier in the prophecy against Ariel

(Isaiah chapter 29), was ambiguous, and it could either mean an interjection of calling or woe. Here at the beginning of the chapter, it is not read as a lament, but with the emotion of calling. Therefore, since he had said that every earthen vessel against the Church should be crushed, and every voice and tongue that had rebelled against the knowledge of God should be overcome, he calls believers to the river of God, which is filled with water, and whose flowing brings joy to the city of God, so that they may drink from the fountains of the Savior, who spoke to the Samaritan woman: If you knew the grace of God, and who it is that says to you, give me something to drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water. The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up into eternal life (John 4:10, 14). Of these waters He cried out in the Temple: If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. He who drinks of the water that I shall give him, rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly (Ibid., 37, 38), signifying the Holy Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive, as also the Prophets did declare in mystic language: My soul thirsts for the living God (Psalm 42:2); and again: With you is the fountain of life (Psalm 36:10). He himself spoke of himself, saying: They have abandoned me, the fountain of living water, and they have dug for themselves broken cisterns that cannot hold water (Jeremiah 2:13). These waters are scattered by the clouds, to which the truth of God reaches. As it is written: Let the clouds scatter righteousness (Isaiah 45:8, Septuagint). And it is commanded to those who are thirsty, that they must not drink the turbid waters of Sion and the swollen torrents of the Assyrians, but rather go to the waters of Siloam, which flow silently, and not fear the poverty of speech, if perhaps they do not have silver (Isaiah 45; Jeremiah 2), but listen to the Apostle saying: By grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:8); and the Lord said to the disciples: Freely you have received, freely give (Matthew 10:8). They amazingly buy water without money; and they do not drink it, but eat it. For he himself is both the water and the bread, which descends from heaven (John VI). Therefore, what is read in some copies, 'Buy and drink,' has been changed by ignorant writers, who thought it would be more consistent if water were drunk rather than eaten. And money is also very bad, or silver, which the Scripture condemns, saying: Money that is given with deceit will be considered as a broken piece of a pot (Proverbs XXVI, 23, sec. LXX); and in another place: Your silver is worthless (Jeremiah VI, 30). And silver is compared to the words of God: The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver that is tested in a furnace of earth, refined seven times (Psalm 12:6). Therefore, despising that silver and wealth, with which we cannot buy the waters of the Lord, let us go to Him, who, holding the chalice of the Sacrament, spoke to the disciples: Take and drink, this is my blood, which will be shed for you for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:27, 28). He mixed wine and wisdom in his cup, challenging all the fools of the world who have no wisdom, to drink. And not only wine, but also milk, which symbolizes the innocence of children, as is still practiced today in Western Churches. It is given as wine and milk to those reborn in Christ. Concerning this milk, Paul also said: 'I gave you milk to drink, not solid food' (1 Corinthians 3:2). And Peter: Desire the rational milk, as newborn babes (1 Pet. II, 2). Therefore, even Moses, understanding wine and milk in the passion of Christ, testifies in mystical language: His eyes are gracious from wine, and his teeth white from milk (Genes. XLIX, 12). For they translated milk into fat in the present passage. Concerning this, the holy David says in the psalm: Let my soul be filled as with fatness and abundance (Psal. LXII, 6); and in another place: He fed them with the fat of wheat, and filled them with honey from the rock (Psal. LXXX, 17). Those who desire nothing other than mystical flesh. To which the Lord urged his disciples, saying: Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you

(John 6:54). Therefore, he was handed over in Gethsemane, which signifies a valley of fatness, or the fattest. At the same time, he rebukes those who follow secular wisdom and the perverse doctrines of heretics, as well as the traditions of the Pharisees, and all false knowledge that exalts itself against God, and who pay great prices and work constantly for money in that discipline in which there is no bread, and they sweat for food in which there is no satisfaction. From which it is shown that wisdom must be sought, which is not in the leaves and flowers of words, but in the marrow and fruits of senses; which does not fly past the ear, but refreshes the mind. And in order to learn this, we do not cross seas, nor do we need great expenses, but the word is near in our mouth and in our heart.

55:2-3

(Verse 2, 3.) Hear me, you who listen, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in abundance. Incline your ear and come to me; listen, and your soul will live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, the sure mercies of David. And I will establish for you an everlasting covenant, holy and faithful to David. Lest anyone think these are hearsay of the flesh, not of the mind, to whom the divine word encourages them to listen, promising them not the goods of the flesh but of the soul. For, he says, if you listen to me, you will eat the good things of the earth (Isaiah 1:19). Or of the one who says: I am the good shepherd (John 10:11). And your soul will delight in good things and in richness. Therefore, the goods that are promised to the soul are not riches, and bodily health, and worldly honors, which even the philosophers call indifferent, that is, neither good nor bad, and vary according to the quality of the users; but they must believe in those things to which God encourages us: Turn away from evil and do good (Psalm 37:27). But if the soul is said to be good, then honesty and virtues are also said to be good. Therefore, not poverty, bodily infirmity, and low social status should be considered as evils, but rather all vices that are truly bad. In conclusion, Abraham was not considered good because he was wealthy, but because he made good use of his wealth (Genesis XIII). And Lazarus, who later rested in his bosom, did not endure evils because he suffered the torment of diseases in poverty, but he attained true good through the evils that were considered in the world. And so that rich man, clothed in purple, received his good things in his life, which were good to him, who thought them good (Luc. XVI), and of Lazarus it is not said on the contrary: He received his evil things in his life; but he received his evil things in his life, which were not evil to him, who suffered, but seemed evil to others. The blessed Job gives us an example of both things, who was not conquered in the good things or the evils of the world, but endured everything with equal strength of mind (Job. II). Therefore, Solomon prays to God: Do not give me riches and poverty. But establish for me what is necessary and sufficient for my sustenance, so that I may not become satiated and speak falsely, saying, 'Who sees me?' or 'I am needy and therefore become a thief and swear falsely by the name of the Lord' (Prov. X, 8, 9). But if he prays for this, that he may neither possess riches nor poverty, but only the necessary sustenance, of which the Apostle also says, 'Having food and clothing, with these we shall be content' (I Tim. VI): it is evident that riches and poverty, health and sickness, pleasure and torment, are not inherently good or evil, but become good or evil depending on the diversity of those who endure them. Therefore the Lord promises not a thousand riches, abundance of wealth, and luxurious food, and corpulence of the body, and bean dishes and stuffed turtles, mead, wine, and the beauty of wives, the offspring of bees, but those delights to which he mystically provokes us, saying: Delight yourself, or enjoy delights in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your

heart (Psalm 36:4); and elsewhere: I believe I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 26:13); and in another psalm: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless his holy name. Who fills your desire with good things (Ps. 102:1, 5). Finally, he adds: Hear me, and your soul will live (Isaiah 55:3). The promise of all good things is eternal life. But if you wish to hear and your soul will live forever, I will make with you an everlasting covenant, the faithful mercies of David. Concerning which the same Psalmist sings: I will sing the mercies of the Lord forever. In generation and generation I will announce your truth (Ps. 88:1, 2). And so that we may know what these mercies are, he explains in the following discourse: Once I swore in my holiness: if I lie to David, his seed will endure forever, and his throne will be like the sun before me, and like the moon, perfect forever, and a faithful witness in heaven. He is called faithful for this reason, because he has fulfilled the promises. For this reason, the Seventy translated it as 'the holy and faithful things of David' (Acts 13:34), which can be understood as strong and firm. That is, faithful is he in all his commandments: confirmed for ever and ever (Ps. CX, 8). And in another place: God is faithful, and there is no iniquity in him (Deut. XXXII, 4). And the apostle Paul says: If we deny him, he remains faithful: he cannot deny himself (II Tim. II, 13). And in another place, writing to Timothy: Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance (I Tim. XV). But this pact, which the Lord promises, will not be brief and of one time, as it was for the people of the Jews, but it will remain forever, so that the true David may come, and what has been promised from the person of God may be fulfilled in the Gospel: I have found David my servant, with my holy oil I have anointed him (Ps. LXXXVIII, 21). Whose hand he placed in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. Whom, according to Ezekiel, David, who has been sleeping for many centuries, calls his servant and shepherd, saying: I will raise up for you one shepherd, my servant David (Ezekiel 34:23).

55:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) Behold, I have given him as a witness to the peoples, a leader and instructor to the nations. Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and a nation that did not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. See, I have given him as a witness to the nations, a prince and ruler of the nations; nations that did not know you will call upon you, and peoples who do not know you will seek refuge with you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified you. He had provoked the Jewish people to believe, so that they would incline their ear and accept the eternal covenant that the Lord had promised to David, and to Abraham, and to his descendants, saying: 'In your seed all the nations will be blessed' (Genesis 22:18). The apostle Paul, explaining this, says, 'He did not say "seeds," but "seed," which is Christ' (Galatians 3:16). And because he knew that the unbelieving Jews would believe, he turned to the Gentiles, and says that he sent his Son as a witness to all the nations, who would announce his commandments and teachings to the people. He speaks of himself, saying, 'This Gospel must be preached in the whole world, as a testimony to all the nations' (Matthew 24:14). Finally, he refutes Pilate, who was acting arrogantly, with this statement: 'For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth' (John 18:37). Concerning whom the Apostle Paul writes to Timothy: 'For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was given at the proper time' (1 Timothy 2:5). Therefore, everything that is said must be referred to him, who, like a sheep led to the slaughter, and like a

lamb before its shearer is silent, did not open his mouth. Concerning which it is said above: We saw him, and he had no form nor comeliness (Isaiah 53:2); and: He himself bore our sins and suffers for us. Those who previously did not know him have taken refuge in him, saying: Our God is our refuge and strength (Psalm 46:1); and again: Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations (Psalm 90:1). About their faith and what was said above, we read: Those to whom it has not been proclaimed will see, and those who have not heard will understand. This is the witness of all that the Father promised and provided for the world, the mystery of which Paul comprehends in his letter to the Ephesians: God, he says, is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glory (Eph. I, 3). And it is written: For the sake of the Lord your God and the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified you, and the glory that he had before the world was made. About whom the Prophet also testifies: The glory of God will appear (Heb. I), who is the splendor of glory and the form of his substance, when every tongue confesses that the Lord Jesus is in the glory of the Father (Phil. II). Who answered the Son, demanding the glory that he had before: And I have glorified, and will glorify. About whom also the Apostle John says: We have seen, he says, his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 12:28; 1:14). Therefore, when he speaks of himself: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, he is called the Father of glory; but when he speaks of himself who says in the Gospel: Why do you persecute me, a man who speaks the truth to you (John 8:4)? He is called the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not that there is one and another (which is the worst of many errors), but that the same Son of God, now in the glory of his divinity, now in our nature, which he deigned to assume, speaks with emotions.

55:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and he will have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. LXX: Seek the Lord: and when you have found him, call upon him. And after he has drawn near to you, let the wicked forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts and return to the Lord; and he will obtain mercy, for he will abundantly forgive your sins. Therefore, since, as we have said before, you refused to accept the eternal covenant and the faithful mercies of David, which the multitude of Gentiles, unwilling as you were, received, I warn you, my fellow countrymen, I am a Prophet and I call upon you, while there is still time, to repent. Turn to him who now speaks to you through the prophets, who will speak to you in person later. Seek him while he can be found, while you are in the body, while there is a place for repentance, and seek him not only in place, but in faith. However, how God is to be sought is more fully explained in another place: 'Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who seeks refuge in him. Fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing' (Psalm 34:8-9). Therefore, knowing this saying about sinners, 'Those who are far from you will perish,' let us speak to the Lord: 'Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there' (Psalm 139:7-8). And let us call upon Him while He is near, so that He does not withdraw far from our faults and sins. For He draws near to those who draw near to Him, and He joyfully meets His son returning after a long time. Therefore, the saint sings in the psalm: But for me it is good to cling to God (Ps. LXXII, 28). And Moses alone approached the Lord (Exod. XX). And God speaks through Jeremiah: I am the God who draws near, and not from afar (Jer.

XXIII, 33). Approaching those who approach me with faith, and distancing myself from those who depart from me in disbelief. For this reason it is said to believers: Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. And lest we think this is enough, immediately he adds: Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:8). Regarding this, he said previously: Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith (1 Peter 5:8-9). It is not enough to seek the Lord, and while it is the time of penance, to find and invoke Him when He is near, unless the wicked person has abandoned their former ways and the old thoughts by which they had turned away from the Lord. For then we will return to the Lord, who will have mercy on us, and to the most merciful Father, who is abundant in mercies and ready to forgive, when we have abandoned our former thoughts and ways, so that we may deserve to hear afterwards: Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered (Psalm 32:1).

55:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. LXX: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. But as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and your thoughts than my thoughts. Do not think, he says, that what I promise is difficult, and that it seems unbelievable to you, that the impious and unjust can be saved, either the Jewish people or all those among the Gentiles who did not know God. Consider this: there is much difference between my thoughts and yours, and as great as the difference in nature, so too is the difference in will. (Proverbs 19). For many thoughts are in the heart of a man, but the counsel of the Lord remains forever. You, like humans, often, repenting of a promised will, overturn an old desire with a new one. For the Lord frustrates the plans of the nations, and rejects the thoughts of the people, and renders the will of the rulers void (Psalm 33). But the thoughts of his heart endure from generation to generation, and whatever he has decreed cannot be changed. Do you want to know the difference between my plan and yours? Just as the sky's location is far from the earth, and the dwelling place of angels is different from that of humans, so my thoughts are separated from your plans. For it is said of my thoughts: His judgments are inscrutable, and his ways are unsearchable (Rom. XI, 33). Moreover, of yours: They devised a plan, but they could not establish it (Psal. XX, 12). And in another place: Whatever counsel you take, it will be scattered, and whatever you say, it will not remain within you (Isa. VIII, 10). They do not need a clear interpretation, therefore they are tightened rather than discussed.

55:10-11

(Verse 10, 11) And how does rain and snow descend from the sky, and it will not return there until it has soaked the earth and makes it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread for eating. So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it will not return to me empty, but it will accomplish what I desire, and it will succeed in the purpose for which I sent it. LXX: Just as the rain and snow descend from the sky and do not return until they have soaked the earth, causing it to bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread for eating. So shall my word be that comes out of my mouth; it will not return until it accomplishes what I desire, and I will make its ways prosperous and fulfill my commands. Based on what has been said earlier, the meaning here

is briefly: may the people of the nations not be incredulous, that after so many wicked deeds the impious may suddenly be saved. For my thoughts are not the same as human thoughts, and as far as the heavens are from the earth, so are my thoughts separated from human thoughts. For I am most merciful and abundant in forgiving. Would you like to hear another similarity? Just as rain and snow descend from the sky and do not return there but drench the earth, and make it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish what I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. According to the twofold interpretation of anagoge, the word of the Lord can refer to that one of whom it is written: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1). He who does not turn to him empty, unless he has done the will of the Father; and has completed all things for which he was incarnate, and has reconciled the world to God. He who is said to come forth from the mouth, and from the womb and birth canal: not that God has these members, but that we learn the nature of the Lord through our words. Or certainly this must be said, that the sermon of the Gospel doctrine is called a shower, and the rains that are poured out upon good earth, spiritual clouds, to which the truth of God reaches. In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses promises rain and showers, saying: Let the earth hear the words of my mouth; let my speech come down as the rain and the dew, so that those who sow in tears may reap in joy. And those who sow in righteousness and in the spirit will reap the fruit of eternal life, receiving the bread of the Gospel teaching, as it is written in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes: Open your eyes and be filled with bread. And again: Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. For it is not to be believed that it is commanded to those who eat, that they should open their eyes to eat this bread, by which bodies are nourished, and thus be satisfied with bread, which the poor secretly eat in Abacuc (Abac. III). But God's teaching encourages us to the bread of doctrine, which we cannot eat unless we open the eyes of our heart. Of whom Paul often writes to these, who are nourished by the words of faith and truth (II Cor. IX). And it is commanded to the teacher, that he may send the bread of his doctrine over all the water, and pour out spiritual grace upon all, and know that if he does what is commanded, he will receive rewards in the last time. And it will seem unjust that the one who gives alms should make friends for himself from unjust mammon, who will receive him into eternal tabernacles (Luke XVI): and the one who gives spiritual food and gives food to his servants in their time, will not find them after many ages, which Ecclesiastes calls the multitude of days (Ecclesiastes XI).

55:12-13

(Vers. 12, 13.) Because you will go out in joy, and be led forth in peace. The mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thornbush, the cypress will grow; and instead of briers, the myrtle will grow. And the Lord will be called an everlasting sign, that will not be taken away. LXX: You will go out in joy, and be led forth in gladness. The mountains and hills will leap with joy, eagerly awaiting your coming, and all the trees of the field will applaud with their branches. And in place of a heap of rubbish (that is, the lowest branches (Al. stems)) cypress will rise up; and in place of conyza myrtle will rise up. And the Lord will be a name and a perpetual sign, and he will not fail. My word, he says, will not return empty, but after it has accomplished all that I desired, and has made my will on earth, then it will come back to me; and that which is written will be fulfilled: The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand: until I make your enemies a footstool under your feet (Ps. 110:1-2). For in joy you will go

forth from the blood of idolatry, and you will be led in peace, so that you may hear from the Apostle: Grace be to you and peace (Rom. I, 7). Whether you are led in joy, that you may learn the truth of the Gospel after the shadow of the Law. For the mountains and hills, which we can understand to be Angels, and the souls of the Saints, which are called mountains and hills by reason of the variety of virtues, will rejoice over the repentant and will indicate the joy of the mind by leaps. What the Lord says in the Gospel: There will be rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner (Luke 15:7). Also, all the trees of the field will clap their hands, or branches, that are planted along the watercourses, which will bear fruit in their season, and their leaves will not wither (Psalm 1). Concerning these trees, one tree was spoken of in the psalm: But I am like a fruitful olive tree in the house of the Lord (Psalm 52:10). Let us ask those who follow only simple history and eat cooked lamb. Whether the woods applaud with branches and crackle in the hand, and what is said about rivers: The rivers will clap their hands (Psalm 98:8), in what sense it should be understood. Not only will the mountains and hills leap and sing; and all the trees of the field, blessed by the Lord, will applaud with branches and clap their hands: but even the bush and the fern, as well as the reed and the nettle, will turn into fir trees, and myrtle and cypress. The word κονίζη, which is written as Nesus in Greek and סרפוד (Sarphod) in Hebrew, is translated by Aquila and Theodotion as κονίζη. κονίζη is a very cheap and bitter herb with a very bad odor. But when the Septuagint translated κονίζη, which is called Sarphod in Hebrew, Symmachus translated it as urticam (nettle). And as for the nature of proper names, it must be said that evil things are turned into good things, and virtues are born from vices, that is, justice from injustice, fortitude from temerity, temperance from luxury, and prudence from foolishness. Let us give examples of our ancestors: Matthew and Zacchaeus and the tax collectors were like salt and piles of ashes, and useless stumps, and bitter flavors, and extremely foul odors, saying: My wounds have festered and become corrupt, because of my foolishness (Ps. XXXVII, 6). Suddenly, these people were transformed into apostles, becoming cypress trees, and firs, and myrtles, with the best fragrance, and necessary for various works. Even Paul, the persecutor of the Church, when he heard from the Lord: Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard to kick against the goad (Acts 9:4-5), it was a nettle with the stings of persecution. But when he preached the Gospel throughout the whole world, he could say: We are the sweet aroma of Christ (2 Corinthians 2:15), rightly called cypress and myrtle. Prostitutes and tax collectors enter the kingdom of God before the Pharisees, and the thief from the cross passes into paradise (Matthew 21). Therefore, what is said in the Gospel: A good tree cannot bear bad fruit (Luke 6:43; Matthew 7:18), does not refer at all to the nature of things, as the heretics want it to, but to the choice of the mind. Finally, it is inferred: Either make a good tree and its fruits good. From this it is clear, each one by their own will makes their soul a good or bad tree, whose fruits are varied. It follows: And the Lord will be an everlasting name and sign, which will not fail. For those who have been changed from evil to good, the Lord will be an eternal name and sign, so that they may be called Christians by his name, and branded by his crucifix. About which sign Simeon, holding the little one in his arms, spoke: This one will be for the ruin and the resurrection of many, and for a sign which will be contradicted (Luke 2:34): about which it is also said above: The Lord Himself will give you a sign (Isaiah 7:14): And the holy one sings in the psalm: Make with me the sign of the Lord for good (Psalm 85:17). And He Himself who is the sign says: When you see, He says, the sign of the Son of Man, which will not fail, and will not be changed by any end, but will pass from the present conversation into the future.

(Chapter 56, Verse 1) Thus says the Lord: Keep justice, and do righteousness, for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. The Seventy, instead of righteousness, have translated mercy, the rest likewise. With the prophecy of the nations being fulfilled, which speaks of the coming of the word of God, changing the thorn and the nettle into cypress and myrtle, Isaiah speaks to the listeners of that time, urging them to do all that is right and prepare for the coming of the Savior, for He is the justice and mercy of God. For if the thoughts of the Saints are judgments: and we should have trained senses to discern between good and evil, why do we not always hold judgment, so that we do not despise the person of the poor in judgment, nor be intimidated by the power of the rich: but rather judge great as small, knowing according to Moses that the judgment of the Lord is, who judges the judges (Deut. 1); according to which it is also read in the psalm: God stands in the congregation of the gods: but judges among the gods (Ps. LXXXI, 1). This that is now said: Keep judgment, and do justice, is similar to: Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do justice at all times (Psalm 105:3); so that they may justly pursue what is just. Although in the name of justice, every place seems to signify to me that whoever has done one justice is said to have fulfilled all the virtues that follow one another and adhere to one another: so that whoever has one, has them all, and whoever lacks one, lacks them all. This is what the fourteenth psalm signifies: He who walks blamelessly, and works righteousness (Ps. XIV, 2). And elsewhere it is written: Learn righteousness, you who dwell on the earth (Isai. XXVI, 9). And the words of the saints testify that the Savior, who became our righteousness, holiness, and redemption, is the mercy of God (I Cor. 1): And God has sent forth his mercy and his truth (Ps. LVI, 4).

56:2

(Verse 2.) Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who understands it: who keeps the Sabbath, so as not to pollute it: who keeps his hands from doing evil. LXX: Blessed is the man who does these things, and the person who retains them, and keeps the Sabbaths, so as not to profane them, and keeps his hands from doing iniquity. He who can say with the apostle Paul, 'When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things' (1 Corinthians 13:11): he attains the present blessedness, forgetting the past and reaching forward to the future until he reaches the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that the psalm may be fittingly applied to him: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked (Psalm 1:1). Therefore, this is the man, and the son of the inner man, of whom it is frequently said in Leviticus: Man, man (Lev. XVII, 8): in him is blessedness, because he accomplishes the first and grasps these things: judgment, namely, and justice, and the salvation of the Lord, which is near, and is to be revealed to all nations: so that he not only does what is commanded, but holds fast with a strict hand; and keeps the Sabbath, lest he defile it: Now what the Sabbath is, which he commanded to be observed, the following verse shows: Observing his hands, lest he do any evil. It profits nothing to sit idly on the Sabbath, or to sleep, and to long for feasts. But if one does good, let them rest from evil, and let them have a constant Sabbath of injustice, that is, leisure, and let them only do those things which pertain to the salvation of the soul, and not engage in any servile work. For whoever commits sin, is a servant of sin (John 8). But we have been called to liberty, by which liberty Christ has given us, so that we may not labor for food that perishes; but by cleaving to the Lord, let us say with the Prophet: It is good for me to cleave to God (Psalm 73:28). Let us be of one spirit with Him, and let

us observe the dedicated Sabbaths, so that we may not be of the six days in which the world was made, of which the Apostles were not, and of which the Lord spoke: If you were of this world, the world would certainly love what is its own. But now you are not of this world, because I have chosen you, and therefore the world hates you (John 15:19).

56:3 (Verse 3.) And let not the son of the stranger, who adheres to the Lord, say, 'The Lord will surely separate me from His people.' And let not the eunuch say, 'Behold, I am a dry tree.' LXX: Neither let the foreigner, who is joined to the Lord, say, 'The Lord will surely separate me from His people.' And let not the eunuch say, 'I am a dry tree.' Those who understand this passage humbly refer it to proselytes from the nations and truly to eunuchs, as it is said that even strangers, if they receive the law of the Lord and are circumcised, and eunuchs, like the eunuch of Queen Candace (Acts 8), who could not even be idle on a journey, and while he was seeking an interpreter of the reading, found Christ whom he was seeking, may not be excluded from the salvation of God. But this, they say, is said against the Jews, who boast of the nobility of their lineage, and claim to be descendants of Abraham, and believe those to be blessed who have offspring in Zion and dwellers in Jerusalem (John VIII). But we, who were previously interpreted as thorns and thistles and κον■ζη and στοιβ■ν (Above, to chapter LV), we now understand to be turned into fir trees, cypresses, and myrtle trees, and the same people are being challenged in regard to the faith of the Gospel: which they should not despair of, as long as they adhere to the Lord; and they should not consider themselves separated from God's people. For all who have been baptized in Christ have clothed themselves with Christ (Galatians 3:27). There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, nor free, but Christ is all and in all (Colossians 3:11). And it is written in Deuteronomy: Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people, that is, the God who had the prior people of the Jews (Deuteronomy 33:43). Those who come from the East and West will rest in the bosom of Abraham. This is what John the Baptist also said: And do not say, we have Abraham as our father. For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham (Matthew 3:9). And just as there is no distinction among proselytes, both men and women are equally called to salvation; so also in eunuchs who have castrated themselves for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, both sexes are accepted; those who have mortified their members upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, until they all attain to the perfect man, and can say with the Apostle: We know no one according to the flesh. And if we have known Christ according to the flesh, but now we no longer know him (I Cor. V, 16). Therefore, in the case of eunuchs, they should in no way be understood, whom a passionate poet describes (Lucan. lib. X): And also the unfortunate youth, cut off by the sword, and the men who were cut off But those of whom the Lord speaks in the Gospel: 'Those who have castrated themselves for the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 19:12), such were also the Apostles, to whom, marveling and saying because of the difficulty: 'Who then can be saved?' the Savior answered: 'He who can accept it, let him accept it.' Therefore, the Apostle also testifies that he does not have the commandment of the Lord regarding such eunuchs, that is, regarding virgins, but he gives advice as if having obtained mercy from the Lord, desiring that all be like himself: 'For the time is short,' he says, 'it remains, that both they who have wives be as though they had none' (1 Corinthians 7:29). For whoever is called to freedom and released from the duty of marriage, that person is truly a servant of Christ.

56:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) Because the Lord says these things to the eunuchs: If they keep my Sabbaths, and choose what I desire, and hold fast to my covenant, I will give them a place in my house and within my walls, and a better name than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. LXX: Thus says the Lord to the eunuchs: Those who keep my Sabbaths, and choose what I desire, and hold fast to my covenant, I will give them a place in my house and a named place within my walls, better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not fail. He had proposed two things, proselytes and eunuchs. First, he speaks about eunuchs and gives them instructions for living, and promises them future rewards. And after them, he comes to the proselytes, promising them similar things. Therefore, he speaks to the eunuchs who have said in despair, 'Behold, I am a withered tree' (Exod. 23), so that they may not consider themselves subject to the curse spoken of the barren: 'Cursed is the barren one who does not bear seed in Israel' (Deut. 7). Yes, he said, if they have kept my Sabbaths and chosen the things I wanted and not the things I allowed for the weakness of the listeners, and have faithfully kept my covenant or testament, I will give them a place in my house, and in my Temple, and in the strong walls of my city, and a better name to my sons and daughters, which will never be erased from memory. Those who are eunuchs, as we mentioned before, who are devoted to the things of God; to them speaks Wisdom, which is called by the name of Solomon: Blessed is the sterile and stainless woman, who has not known a bed in sin, she will have fruit in the visitation of souls. And the eunuch, who has not worked with his hand iniquity, nor thought evil against the Lord. For the chosen grace of his faith will be given, and a pleasing part in the temple of the Lord (Wisdom 3:13, 14). This one is fruitful in virginity; this eunuch exercises power in the kingdom of heaven, and violently seizes it. This one is the keeper of the sabbaths, so that he never engages in the works of marriages (I Corinthians 7). This one has chosen what the Lord willed, to offer more than what was commanded: to consider not his indulgence, but his will. This one holds the everlasting covenant of the Lord, so that he does not cease from prayer for a time, and again returns to it, but knows that he will be accepted in the house of the Lord, which is his Church, the best place. For there are many mansions with the Father (John XIV). And whoever is a eunuch, and does all the things that are written, will have the best place within its walls, so that he may become a tower of the Lord, and may stand in a priestly rank, and may have many spiritual children for the children of the flesh. It is said that such was the eunuch whom Jesus loved most, the Evangelist John, according to the accounts of Ecclesiastical history, who reclined on Jesus' breast (John 13); who, with Peter walking more slowly, ran to the Lord on the wings of his virginity (John 20); who, immersing himself in the mysteries of the divine birth, dared to say what all ages did not know: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; this was in the beginning with God (John 1, 2). Therefore, let all the mockery of the Jews cease, and let him no longer offer himself for ridicule, opening the kingdom of heaven to those of half-heartedness, when chastity does not lie in the weakness of the body, but in the willingness of the soul.

56:6-7

(v. 6, 7.) And the sons of the stranger, who adhere to the Lord, to serve Him and love His name, to be His servants: everyone who keeps the Sabbath from defiling it, and holds fast (or holding) to my covenant, I will bring them to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer. LXX: And to the foreigners who have joined themselves to the Lord to serve Him and love His name, to be His servants ÷ both men and women ÷ and all who keep my Sabbaths without profaning them,

and hold fast (or holding) to my covenant, I will bring them to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer. After eunuchs pass over to foreigners, whom he had previously mentioned, he also promises rewards to them: that if they serve him, and pass from servitude to the love of that name, they will be his servants: such was also the Apostle Paul, writing at the beginning of his Epistles: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ (Rom, I, 1). And Moses, a servant of God (Heb. III). But what was added in the Septuagint: and female servants, we have marked with an asterisk. For it cannot happen that there be any diversity of sex in spiritual gifts: since in Christ Jesus there is no male or female; but all are one in him (John 17). We have already spoken about the Sabbath and the eternal covenant. Therefore, whoever does these things, God will bring him to his holy mountain, and he will be filled with joy in his house of prayer. The holy mountain, or the teachings of truth, and the confession of the Trinity: or the Lord himself, to whom in the last times (according to this same Isaiah and the prophet Micah) many nations will come together (Isaiah 2, Micah 4). The Church is the house of prayer, which is divided throughout the whole world, and not the Temple of the Jews, which was confined to the narrow confines of the land of Judea.

56:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will please me on my altar: for my house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples, says the Lord God, who gathers the dispersed of Israel: I will still gather together those who have been gathered to him: All the beasts of the field, come to devour, all the beasts of the forest. LXX: Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar. For my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations, says the Lord, who gathers the dispersed of Israel: for I will gather a congregation to him. All wild animals, come, eat, all wild animals of the forest. We learn more fully about the difference between sacrifices and burnt offerings in Leviticus. Burnt offerings are those that are completely burned on the altar. The victims and offerings, of which part is offered on the altar, part is handed over to the priests. Therefore, it should not be believed that the offerings of foreigners and eunuchs are required in the Jewish rite. But we must know that eunuchs offer burnt offerings, those who consecrate themselves fully to God; while foreigners offer victims, who are temporarily dedicated to prayer, of whom God speaks: The sacrifice of praise has glorified (alternatively, will glorify) me; and in another place: Offer to God the sacrifice of praise (Psalm 49:14). Concerning these victims and burnt offerings, the Lord speaks through Hosea: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice; the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings, which are offered on the altar of the Lord' (Hosea 6:6). This is testified by John in the Apocalypse, when he saw souls of martyrs under the altar (Apocalypse 6). From this, one of the Seraphim took a coal with tongs and brought it to Isaiah to cleanse his lips (Isaiah 6:6). This is the altar and the tabernacle, to which all things made in Exodus refer, on which spiritual offerings were presented to God (Exodus 38). Furthermore, concerning bodily sacrifices and burnt offerings, God also testifies the same thing: 'Why do I need the multitude of your victims?' says the Lord. I am full of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of lambs, and I do not desire the blood of bulls and goats. For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. Not for one nation of Judah, nor for one place of Jerusalem and the city, but for the whole world: not of bulls and goats and rams, but of prayer. By the testimony, the Lord denounced those who were selling the gifts of the Holy Spirit under the name of doves in the Temple, and sitting in the seats of pestilence, and having the tables of money-changers (Matthew 21 and John 2), doing all things for the sake of shameful profit, not knowing what is written: 'You

have received freely, give freely' (Matthew 10:8). But the Lord promised that these things would come to pass, he who gathers the scattered Israel. To whom also Peter the Apostle writes an Epistle, concerning whom the Evangelist speaks: 'But this he said not of himself: but being the high priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation. And not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God, that were dispersed' (John 11:51-52), and that what was said might be fulfilled: 'A congregation of people shall surround thee: and for this cause return thou on high' (Psalm 7:8). But when the remains of Israel were gathered together by the Apostles, and the flock, who had been previously scattered, were united into one, all the beasts are provoked to come and devour Israel, that is, those who refused to believe, of whom the Apostle says: For their end will come upon them (Philippians 3). And the Lord in the Gospel: But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by an army, then know that its desolation has come (Luke 21:20). Or it must be said, that they are given over to beasts to devour, whom the Prophet detests, saying: Do not hand over to beasts the souls professing to You (Ps. 73,19): concerning these tropological beasts, which have devoured a certain part of the Lord, and we read above (In Ch. IX), Syria from the rising sun, and the Greeks from the West, who devour Israel with all their mouth. And in Jeremiah: Israel, the wandering sheep, the lions have driven her away: the first king of Assyria devoured her, and the last king of Babylon will crush her bones (Jeremiah. 50, 17). This can also be said, that when the people of Israel, full of rage, first provoked the nations to faith, so that they would come to the Church and eat the heavenly bread, and be satisfied with the flesh of the Lamb, which killed many from the army of Abessalon, in the deserted forests.

56:10-12

(Verses 10-12.) His spies, blind all, knew nothing: mute dogs unable to bark, seeing vain things, sleeping, and loving dreams. And the most shameless dogs knew not satisfaction: the shepherds themselves ignored understanding: all turned aside unto their own way, each to his own greed, from the highest even unto the lowest. Come, let us take wine, and be filled with drunkenness, and it shall be as today, so tomorrow, and much more. LXX: See that all are blind: they all do not know, mute dogs cannot bark: dreaming of a bed, loving sleep. And impudent dogs have ignored satisfaction. And they are evil, not understanding intelligence: they have followed all their own ways. Each together from its summit. Come, let us take wine, and let us become drunk, and let tomorrow be such a great day, even more so. That all, he says, beasts should come forth from the forest, and devour those gathered together, whether they succeed into the place of the Jews, the crowd of the Gentiles, their spies are in fact the Scribes and Pharisees: because all the blind have not known the Lord Savior, nor did they want to see the present light. To whom the Lord spoke: Foolish and blind, what is more, gold or the altar that sanctifies the gold (Matthew 23:17)? And again: Blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel (ibid., 24); and: Blind leading the blind, both fall into a pit (Matthew 15:14). But as for why they are called watchmen and we have read above. In that place where according to the LXX it says: The voice of your watchmen has been lifted up (Isaiah 52:8), it is written in Hebrew: The voice of your watchmen. Of whom was Ezekiel, to whom God speaks: Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel (Ezekiel 3:17). But those watchmen were not blind. In fact, they were called seers. But these of whom the Prophet is now speaking, are not only blind watchmen, but they are also called dumb dogs, unable to bark. For those who were supposed to protect the flock of the Lord, and drive away the wolves, and bark for the Lord, they love dreams and take pleasure in demonic visions.

And it is understood: They cannot speak the truth, but only lies. And they are not satisfied with this, those who slept in the care of the flock of the Lord, and could not bark, and loved the bed, which indicates the pleasure of the body; but among themselves, they did not know the shamelessness of their souls, who are never satisfied with their own error. Those who devour the people of the Lord like the bread, and the houses of widows: and serve their gluttony and lust. For they cannot say: The commandment of the Lord enlightens the eyes (Ps. 18:9), nor know what is written: The wisdom of a man enlightens his face (Prov. 17:24). And they are mute dogs against enemies, of whom it is written: Do not give what is holy to dogs (Matt. 7:6). And they are sleeping dogs, who do not know the commandment: Do not give sleep to your eyes, and slumber to your eyelids (Ps. 131); and again: Watch, because you do not know at what hour your Lord will come (Matt. 24:42). And for this reason, giving a place to the devil, they are shameless dogs, who are never satisfied. For they vomit what they have eaten, and they return to their vomit (Prov. XXVI). Of whom Peter the Apostle also speaks: That true proverb has happened to them: The dog has returned to its own vomit, and the sow that was washed to the wallowing in the mire (II Pet. II, 22). The following discourse shows that these spies and dogs are the same as the shepherds: The shepherds themselves have neglected understanding. For the Hebrew word 'Roim' (also spelled 'Rom') which is written with four letters, 'resh' and 'ayin' and 'yod' and 'mem', if it is read as 'roim', it means shepherds; if it is read as 'raim', it sounds like the worst. We have said this to show the reasons for the various interpretations. For everyone has sought their own things, and not the things that are of God, nor have they walked in the way of the Lord (Philippians 2), of which it is written: Seek what the good way is, and walk in it (Jeremiah 6:16). But according to what is read in the Book of Judges: There was no king in Israel; everyone did what he thought was right, and followed his own errors (Judges 17:6), and what follows: Everyone to his own greed, from the greatest to the least: come, let us take wine, and let us fill ourselves with drunkenness, and it will be as today, so also tomorrow, and much more, is not found in the Seventy Interpreters, but is added from the Hebrew, indicated by the shining stars. Finally, no interpreter of the Church has discussed these verses, but they leap and pass over it as if it were an open pit. However, what he says is this, that is, because they have turned away from the way of the Lord, they have followed their own paths. Therefore, greed burns from top to bottom, from leaders to the common people, so that after they have started to strike their fellow servants and eat and drink with the drunkards, they say: Come, let us take wine and be filled with drunkenness. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. And it will be as today, so also tomorrow: and much more (I Corinthians XV, 2). This is what has been said above: They did not know satiety; nor are they satisfied with past pleasure, but they prepare for future delights, much greater than those they had previously enjoyed. If this is said of the leaders of the Jews, because of whom the people were devoured by beasts, let us avoid the examples of the wicked, let us not be drunk with wine, in which there is luxury, nor overwhelmed by pleasures; let us not be silent in speaking, but let us be fierce dogs against our adversaries; rather, let us follow the ways of God rather than our own, and let us heed the Scripture that warns us: Taste and see that the Lord is good (Wisdom I, 1). And again: The best intelligence is for those who do it. And if we were dogs, let us not despair of salvation, hearing the words of the Canaanite woman saying to the Lord: Yes, Lord, for even the little dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table (Matthew XV, 27). For this reason, having obtained mercy, she hears from the Lord: O woman, great is your faith: let it be done to you as you wish. For she could have said with the Prophet: I have run in the way of your commandments (Psalm CXVIII, 32). Again: Lead me on the

straight path.

57:1-2

(Chapter 57, Verses 1-2) The righteous perish, and there is no one who takes it to heart; the men of mercy are gathered, but there is no one who understands; for the righteous is taken away from the face of evil. Let peace come; let him rest in his bed who walks in his integrity. Look, how the righteous perishes, and no one takes it to heart; the upright are taken away, and no one considers. For the righteous is taken away from the presence of iniquity; his burial will be in peace; he is taken away from among us. Because of blind spies and mute dogs, who themselves are shepherds, lacking understanding, nor are they satisfied with present pleasures, but always prepare themselves for future ones, the righteous one perishes, concerning whom the wife of Pilate says: 'Have nothing to do with that righteous man' (Matthew 27:19). With washed hands, innocent am I, says she, from the blood of this righteous one. In which it should be considered that the word "perdition," concerning which heretics often make false accusations, signifies destruction and abolition forever, and is applied to Christ, whose perdition demonstrates the magnitude of persecution and not an end of substance. And no one, he says, is there who reflects in his heart, or ponders. For it could not be that the blind and mute, seeing vain and loving dreams, and ignorant of understanding and wisdom, would think those things which belong to God. And what follows: And the men of mercy, or the just, are gathered and taken away, signifies the Apostles, who are killed by the wicked, and are gathered by the Lord. And he gives the reasons why the just one is killed and taken away, saying: For the just one was collected from the face of evil, so that he would not see the evils of the world. Whether due to the wickedness of humans, whose sins he himself bore, he ascended to the Father as the victor. Now, concerning what is said in Hebrew: Let peace come, let it rest in its own dwelling; let it walk in its own direction, the meaning is indeed clear, but the coherence of the words, which stands in its own idiomatic language, seems to be disturbed among us. Now, concerning what he says, this is it: Let the peace of the Just One come, which he left to the Apostles when ascending to the Father, saying: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John 14:27). And when the peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding, comes, his apostles will rest in their beds, and their death will rest. From this it is shown that the martyrs do not perish, but conquer, and rest in an eternal dwelling. And he, whose peace it is and whose apostles rest in their beds, walks in his own direction, ascending to the Father as a victorious one on a straight path. Furthermore, what is read in the Septuagint: The righteous one was taken away from the presence of evil, his burial will be in peace, he was taken away from among us, everything is referred to Christ without the mingling of the apostles' person, whose burial is in peace and taken away from among us. For His flesh did not see corruption, nor did it remain in the tomb, which is the place of the dead, as the angel said to the women: 'Whom do you seek, Jesus? He is not here; come and see the place where the Lord was laid.' (Matthew 28:5-6). The Jews understand these and the following things, either in a general sense concerning all the righteous, whose blood Manasseh shed and filled Jerusalem from one end to another, or certainly concerning Isaiah's prophecy of his own death, that he would be sawn in two by a wooden saw, which is a most certain tradition among the Jews. Hence many of our people refer that which is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews about the sufferings of the Saints to the suffering of Isaiah: They were sawn asunder (Heb. XI, 37).

Book Sixteen Book Sixteen. The eminent saying of a most eloquent orator is that the arts would be happy if only artists judged them. And so as not to appear to take an example only from secular sources, this is indeed that which the Prophet demonstrates in other words: Blessed is he who speaks into the ears of the listeners (Eccles. XXVI, 12): With what happiness, daughter Eustochium, you have made me familiar; for when you read the preface of the previous book, in which I asserted that the Apostles and Evangelists only put forth testimonies from the Seventy Interpreters, either in their own words or in those words which agreed with the Hebrew: but if anything was added by others, to completely disregard it: immediately you presented to me not an insignificant question, namely why the Apostle, writing to the Romans, used the eight verses that are read in the Churches but are not found in the Hebrew, of the thirteenth Psalm: Their throat is an open sepulcher: with their tongues they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways. And the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:13 seqq.). When I heard this, I was struck as if by a mighty boxer, and I began to seethe in silence and to show the astonishment of my mind in the paleness of my face. He, I say, who was a Hebrew among the Hebrews, according to the law a Pharisee, and educated at the feet of Gamaliel, either ignored these things or abused them through ignorance of those who were to read them (Philippians 6, Acts 22:3). The first of them is unlearned, the second is cunning in malice, and not he who said, "And even though I am unskilled in speech, yet not in knowledge" (2 Corinthians 11:6); and again, "For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that with simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world" (2 Corinthians 1:12). Finally, turning to myself, I asked for a single day's time, so that my response would in no way be an argument based on human intelligence, but rather the fruit of diligent study. Thus, thoroughly examining every Scripture in my mind, I noticed that just as almost the entire letter to the Romans is constructed from the Old Testament, so this testimony is taken from the Psalms and Isaiah. There are two first verses: Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have practiced deceit. They are verses 11 of the fifth psalm. And that which follows: The poison of asps is under their lips, is verse 4 of the 139th psalm. And it is again said: Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness, is taken from the ninth psalm, verse 29. But the three verses that follow: Their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known, I found them in the prophet Isaiah, which I will explain in the sixteenth book of my commentary, which I now desire to dictate. But the last verse, that is, the eighth: 'There is no fear of God before their eyes,' is at the beginning of the thirty-fifth psalm. And in this it does not seem to anyone to be different, if what is said in singular number in its place may be said in plural by an Apostle, who was writing to many, and was bringing together many examples into one meaning. I think your question is resolved, and our rule on the translation of the Old Testament is more shaken than moved. And not so much that the Apostle took from the thirteenth Psalm, which is not found in Hebrew, as those who did not know the art of connecting the Scriptures with each other, sought a suitable place where they could put the testimony taken from him, which they did not think was placed in the Scripture without authority. Finally, all the commentators of Greece, who have left us their comments on the Psalms, clearly note and pass over these verses, confessing that they are not found in Hebrew, nor in the Seventy Interpreters, but in the Vulgate edition, which is called 'common' in Greek, and is different throughout the whole world. But now it is time to devote

ourselves to the task and pursue the rest.

57:3-4

(Vers. 3, 4.) But you come here, sons of a fortune teller: whose seed have you played with? Whose mouth have you opened wide, and whose tongue have you cast out? LXX: But you come here, wicked sons, seed of adulterers and prostitutes, with whom have you played? Whose mouth have you opened: and whose tongue have you cast out? By removing the just one, whose burial is in peace, indeed by removing from the midst, you who are sons of wickedness, come to me, and hear what I say (John 8). For just as he who does wickedness is called a servant of wickedness, so anyone who betrays like Judas, is called a son of perdition, and can be called a son of wickedness. Finally, it is written about the Lord and Savior: And a son of wickedness shall not be able to afflict him (Ps. LXXXVIII, 23). For wickedness, or the wicked, which the LXX translated, Theodotion put the Hebrew word 'Onena' (Ps. LXXXVIII, 23), which according to Symmachus, we translate as an augur, meaning that Jerusalem, which is always the mother of those who listen, has been devoted to idolatry. Therefore, He calls them offspring of adulterers, or adulterers themselves (of whom it is said: They committed adultery with wood and stone (Jeremiah III, 9))) and prostitutes: there is no doubt that it signifies the same, of whom we read above: How the faithful city Sion has become a prostitute (Isaiah I, 21) ? Whom, he says, have you mocked, spitting in His face and pulling His beard; and whom have you enlarged your mouth at and opened your lips against, saying to Him: You are a Samaritan, and have a demon (John VIII, 48) ? And again: He does not cast out demons, except by Beelzebub the prince of demons (Matt. XII, 24). And then during the Passion: Crucify, crucify him (Luke XXIII, 21). And again: His blood be upon us and our children (Matt. XXVII, 25). And elsewhere: Woe to you who destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. He saved others, but he cannot save himself. Come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him (Ibid. 40).

57:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) Are you not wicked children, a deceitful seed, who console yourselves in gods beneath every leafy tree, sacrificing little ones in the torrents under threatening ((Vulg. lofty)) rocks? LXX: Are you not sons of perdition: an unjust seed, who call upon idols beneath leafy trees, sacrificing your sons in the valleys amidst the rocks? You, he says, have done these things that the preceding discourse narrated. Who are you, wicked sons of perdition, like Judas the betrayer, who is called the son of perdition (Jn. 17): and offspring of wickedness or deceit and falsehood, who delight in gods under every leafy tree, and sacrifice your children in the rivers (Acts 8). This is also recounted in the history of the Kings and Chronicles, that they sacrificed their sons to the gods, and consecrated them in fire (2 Kings 16 and 17). Indeed, it is without a doubt that both Achab, the king of Israel, and Manasseh, the king of Judah, committed, who went from the murder of their own children to the blood of the Prophets, as also mentioned in Hosea: 'Sacrifice,' he says, 'men, for the calves have failed' (Hosea 13:2).' Or, as it is written in Hebrew: 'Sacrificing men, you worship calves.' And in the Psalms it is written more fully: 'They were mingled with the nations, and they learned their works, and they served their idols, and it became a stumbling block to them.' And they sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons, and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, and sacrificed to the idols of Canaan. And the land was contaminated with blood, and was defiled in its works (Psalm 105, 35 et seqq.). Therefore, since it is evident

from history that the sons are the murderers of Christ, the question arises as to how the sons are called sons of perdition, against those who wish to be different natures: one that is lost and evil, and cannot be saved; and another that is good, and cannot perish. For if, as they believe, the sons of perdition are of the most wicked nature: how is it that what was lost has been found? In the parables of the repentant, the lost sheep out of a hundred sheep and the lost coin out of ten are found, and the lost son is found, of whom the father had said to the older son: Your brother was lost, and is found: he was dead, and he has come to life again (Luke 15:32). For nothing perishes unless it was first safe, and nothing dies unless it had lived before. Therefore, those who are now called sons of perdition, or of wickedness and crime, have abandoned the Lord through their own fault, and have begun to be sons of perdition from among the sons of the Lord, as the same Prophet says to them: You have forsaken the Lord, and have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger (Isaiah 1:4). We can understand these words according to the allegorical sense, and apply them to heretics, who are sons of perdition and of the most wicked seed, or of falsehood. For from the beginning they are liars, like the devil, who is their father, who is the father of all lies. They call those whom they have deceived to idols, or to the images of their doctrines, under leafy and wooded trees, promising pleasures and delights to them, or hiding their impurities. Therefore, after Adam sinned, he hid himself in paradise under a tree, so that he would not be revealed to the sight of God (Genesis 3). There is no doubt that the children of such destruction, and the wicked seed, have many offspring wherever they deceive and kill in deep valleys, and under the looming rocks of impiety, which always threaten ruin, which, due to the diversity of lies and the variety of perverse teachings, are called many rocks. But we have one rock, which always follows the people of God, from which the people of Israel once drank, when they enjoyed the intimacy of the Lord.

57:6

(Verse 6.) In the parts of the torrent is your portion: this is your fate, and you have poured out libations for them, you have offered sacrifices. Shall I not be angry with these things? LXX: This is your portion, this is your fate: and for them you have poured out libations and prepared sacrifices. Shall I not be angry with these things? They fit with the times of Isaiah, who says: For all the mountains, valleys, and torrents were full of the worship of demons, of which Jeremiah speaks: They make idols of wood, and kindle fire to worship them, to make the heavenly powers angry, with women kneading dough and mixing fat, to provoke the Lord to anger (Jeremiah 7). There is no doubt that pancakes, or small crusts prepared by the hand of the artisan, are delightful. For in our language, they are called chavonas. Concerning these, Moses, as the mouthpiece of the Lord, foretold in the Song of Deuteronomy with prophetic spirit: They stirred me to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations they provoked me to anger; they sacrificed to demons, not to God (Deut. XXXII, 16, 17). And they did this of their own accord, for it lies within our power to choose between good and evil. Finally, those who offer themselves to God with virtues are said: He has chosen his inheritance for us: the beauty of Jacob, which he has loved (Psalms 46:5). And in another place: The people of Jacob have become the portion of the Lord, his inheritance is Israel (Deuteronomy 32:9). And it is reported in the Acts of the Apostles that many have given themselves as part and portion of Paul and Silas. Therefore, those who are the portion and inheritance of the Lord, like the Levites, will have a share of the Lord and can say with David: The Lord is my portion (Psalms 73:26). Which things we are able to receive and, regarding the person of the heretics themselves, they indeed, having set aside the worship of God, worship the images of their errors, and offer

sacrifices and pour out libations to them, doing secretly those things which are shameful to even speak of, and leading away captive weak-willed women loaded with sins, who are led on by various lusts, always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 3). Therefore, since the wicked do these things in both impieties, is it not just for God's wrath to be provoked against them?

57:7

(Verse 7.) You have placed your dwelling on a high and lofty mountain, and there you ascended to offer sacrifices. And behind the door and beyond the threshold, you have set up your memorial. The Septuagint says the same. The sacred history tells that on high mountains and hills, the gods of the nations offered sacrifices to Israel, and like a shameless prostitute, spread her legs for all the demons. There was no place that was not polluted by the filth of idolatry, to the extent that they would place idols after the doors of their houses, called domestic Lares, and even shed the blood of their own souls, both publicly and privately. Many cities of various provinces struggle with this error and the worst habit of antiquity: even Rome itself, the mistress of the world, venerates Tutela's image with wax and lamps in each island and house, which they call by that name for the protection of their homes, so that both those entering and exiting their houses are always reminded of their unfamiliarity. The heretics as well, whose hearts are lifted up in pride, and who, despising Ecclesiastical humility, promise themselves lofty things, ascend the highest mountains of their own doctrines, and there they prostitute their couch to demons. And because, according to the Prophet, they turned back, imitating Lot's wife (Gen. XIX), they are transformed into a pillar of salt, having the image of Ecclesiastical condiment, and not having any taste at all: who are thrown out and are useful for nothing, except to be trampled under the feet of all. Therefore, the Lord warns in the Gospel, that whoever holds the plow's handle, should not look back (Luke VIII).

57:9

(Verse 9.) Because you uncovered yourself beside me and took in an adulterer, you spread your bed and made a covenant with them. You loved their bed openly and adorned yourself with royal ointment and multiplied your perfumes. You sent your messengers afar and lowered yourself even to the depths. You thought that if you would depart from me, you would have more. You loved those who slept with you and multiplied your adultery with them, and you made many far from you and sent messengers beyond your borders, and you humbled yourself even to the depths. First, let us discuss the Hebrew text, which differs greatly from the LXX in this passage. As mentioned above, to the place where it says: 'You have set your bed on a high and lofty mountain,' and it accuses and rebukes her as a prostitute, in the entrance of houses and in dark places, a harlot behind the doors, so that anyone who wished to enter the house would have the pleasure exposed before their eyes. Now it accuses and refutes her as an adulterous wife, because while she was sleeping with her husband, she secretly received an adulterous man and uncovered his cloak, or even widened her bed and made an agreement, composing instruments of deception with adulterers. But he says this to show that not only in the fields and houses did they worship idols, but also in the Temple they placed the image of Baal, which Ezekiel also says he saw when the wall was pierced. 'You loved their bed,' he says, 'with an open hand' (Ezek. VIII), so that you would not be ashamed of your sin and desire to hide the shame of your fornication, but rather sin freely. And you adorned yourself with royal ointment and multiplied your idols. And the meaning is this:

You sought various ornaments, so that you could attract adulterers both by sight and by smell. But what is said, 'You have adorned yourself with ointment for a king,' is understood in two ways: either for the king God, when you adorn yourself with those things which he has given you and prostitute yourself to idols; or certainly for the idol king of the Ammonites, who is called Moloch, and in our language, 'king sounds': which we read as Melchom in other places according to the LXX (Zephaniah 1). And you sent your ambassadors far away, so that you would have an inclination for fornicating not only with the idols of nearby nations but also with those of distant nations. But the Babylonians and Egyptians have their own meaning. And you have been humbled, it says, even to the underworld. Not the humility that is praiseworthy, but the one in which Ammon humbled his own sister Tamar (2 Kings 13). And truly great is this humility, or rather a descent even to the underworld, from the light and pinnacle of chastity into the darkness of a brothel, or rather a plunge into the abyss of lust. To whom it is said in another place: You will be led even to the underworld. According to the Septuagint, in those things which differ, this seems to me to be the meaning: You thought, O harlot, that if you had left me and joined yourself to your lovers, you would have found something more. To whom also God speaks through Ezekiel: Every harlot receives wages; but you, on the other hand, have given wages, and that act has become perverse for you (Ezek. 16:33). For not only did you receive nothing from your lovers, but you also lost what you had received from your husband. And what follows: You have enlarged your bed, and made a covenant with them; you love their bed where you see their blind spies and mute dogs dreaming vain dreams while they sleep. And you have multiplied your prostitution, so that you have not only slept with one, but frequently and with many. Because of this, you have caused many to withdraw from you: angels who were in your protection, or holy men who have departed from the company of such a harlot. Indeed, we can say the same about heretics who, having abandoned God, follow their own errors and believe they have something more when they embrace falsehood. They have lost the truth and multiplied their fornication, not in one doctrine, but in many. They have even caused the leaders of the Churches, who were like angels, to depart from themselves. Not satisfied with the fornication in their own vicinity, they send messengers beyond their own borders to spread the doctrines and errors of barbarian nations, in order to deceive those who listen with the novelty of their words.

57:10

(Verse 10) In the multitude of your ways you have labored, and you have not said: I will rest. You have found life in your hands, therefore you did not ask me to be silent (Vulgate: you remain silent). LXX: In many journeys you have labored, and you have not said, I will cease: you have made these strengthen. Therefore, you did not ask me. He who walks in one royal path does not labor, as God commanded through Moses: You shall walk in the royal path and you shall not turn aside to the right or to the left (Deuteronomy 5:32). There is one way of truth, which is said in the Gospel: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). And there are many paths of lies, through which Jerusalem is now accused of having walked, of which paths God, knowing the difference, speaks above to those who stray: Not like my paths, your paths (Isaiah 55:8), which those confessing say to the Lord: You have made our paths turn aside from your paths (Psalm 44:19). Therefore, having known the one royal way, let us see which paths are on the right and on the left, through which we are prohibited from walking. The middle way is temperance, having neither too much nor too little. For example, prudence is the straight and royal way. We deviate to the right if

we know more than we should know, and we value cunning for prudence: because the serpent was wiser than all the beasts in paradise (Genesis 3): And the children of darkness are wiser than the children of light (Luke 16). We turn to the left when we are foolish and know less than is necessary. Of which it is said: The fool has said in his heart, there is no God (Ps. XIII, 1). Piety and true religion are also the royal way. He who is superstitious turns to the right and deserves to hear, Do not be overly righteous (Eccles. VII, 17). To the left, is he who neglects the worship of God and is counted among the goats and the rams. Generosity and giving are also the greatest virtues, from which he turns to the right, who is frugal and does not give to others, nor even to himself, what is necessary. On the left, he who consumes his substance with prostitutes and says with Israel: Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die (Isaiah 22:13). Strength and steadfastness are also the royal road, from which the reckless and stubborn turn aside to the right, the fearful and timid to the left. Therefore, the holy man, desiring to walk on the straight path, prays: Lead me, O Lord, in the straight path (Psalm 139:24). And in another place: Make known to me, O Lord, the way in which I should walk; for I have lifted up my eyes to you (Psalm 142:8). Scripture also speaks about this kind of way in other places: Seek the good way, and walk in it, and you will find the purification of your souls (Jeremiah 6:16). Therefore, Jerusalem was humbled to the depths because it labored in many ways, and did not say, 'I will amend my error through repentance,' but on the contrary, 'I will be strengthened in my beginnings, and I will not heed the judgment of the person who warns me: Turn your foot from the rough way, and your throat from thirst' (Jeremiah 2:25). Finally, it follows: But she replied, 'I will act like a man,' that is, 'I will act bravely,' which is now expressed by another word: 'I will be strengthened.' And because she did these things that the previous discourse narrated, that is why she did not implore the Lord, having more confidence in her own strength rather than in God. Furthermore, the phrase that is placed next to the Hebrew: 'You have found life in your hands,' therefore implies this meaning and understanding: 'Because you have abundance in all things and have become rich, you have neglected the Lord.' These are the riches that even Solomon detests, lest he forget God (Proverbs 30 and 31). And it is said concerning Sodom in Ezekiel: 'Because she was satisfied with bread, she became proud' (Ezekiel 16). Not only wealth, but also poverty tests a person. Hence it is written: I have tested you in the furnace of poverty (Isaiah 48), in which Lazarus, the poor man, was also tested, who endured both poverty and weakness (Luke 15).

57:11

(Verse 11.) For what reason did you fear anxiously? Because you lied and did not remember me, nor did you think in your heart? For I was silent and as if not seeing, and you forgot about me. LXX: Whom you feared, you were greatly terrified, and you lied to me, and you did not remember me. Nor did you place me in your mind and in your heart. And I, seeing you, despise you, and you did not fear me. Because you have confidence in riches with full granaries, you did not want to ask me, therefore you feared many. For you could not say: The Lord is my helper, and I will despise my enemies (Ps. CXVII, 7); And again: The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear (Ps. XXVI, 1)? And even if you ever wanted to say this against the conscience of your mind, you have lied. For how could you invoke me, when you did not have any memory of me, nor did you ever consider the precepts of the one who says: Honor the Lord, and you will be strengthened, and without him you will have no fear (Eccles. XXXVIII)? For I am the one who, like Symmachus and Aquila, always remained silent about your sins, and whatever crimes you committed, as if I did

not see them, I disregarded with dissimulation, so that if not out of fear of me, at least out of patience, you would return to me. I do not question with my eyes, but with my eyelids I interrogate the sons of men. But on the contrary, you have forgotten about me, and you deserved to hear: You have forgotten the law of your God, and I will forget your children (Hosea 4:6). And again: They have walked against me in perversity, and I will walk against them in furious perversity. What is associated with the mind in the Septuagint, not written in Hebrew, but as if an interpretation has been added, what the heart should be understood as in the Scriptures.

57:12

(Verse 12.) I will proclaim your righteousness, and your deeds will not benefit you. When you cry out, let your congregations deliver you. LXX: I will proclaim your righteousness and your evils, which will not benefit you. When you cry out, let them snatch you out of your tribulation. I have always remained silent and as if I did not see your sins, I have ignored them, but I will no longer remain silent, but rather speak what I have already said: Have I always been silent? And I will proclaim your righteousness, and your deeds. It is to be read as irony, as if someone caught in wrongdoing were to say: 'Look at your good deeds.' Therefore, if a time of trouble comes upon you and you begin to reach out not to the idols you worshiped, but to heaven and implore the help of God, may they hear you and deliver you from the danger you embraced without concern. This is also spoken by God through Jeremiah: 'Where are your gods, the ones you made? Let them rise up and save you in your time of trouble' (Jeremiah 2:28). On account of the fact that the seventy translated it as 'May they deliver you in your tribulation,' and we have said, 'May your congregations deliver you,' Symmachus translated it as 'May your synagogues deliver you.' Therefore, it speaks specifically to the Jews, that the multitude of their synagogues is not able to deliver them in the time of siege.

57:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) And the wind will carry them away: the breeze will lift them. But those who have confidence in me will inherit the land and possess my holy mountain. And I will say, Make a way, offer a path, turn aside from the path, remove stumbling blocks from my people's way. LXX: For the wind will carry away all of them, and the tempest will take them away. But those who hope in me will possess the land and inherit my holy mountain, and they will say: Make his ways clean and remove stumbling blocks from my people's way. The Jews of Babylon assert that these things are prophesied: that, by the power of God, after overcoming their enemies, the people will return to Judah and possess Mount Zion, and all obstacles of the journey will be removed, and they will not suffer any ambush from any nation, because the Lord will make a straight path for His people. And they claim that these things were fulfilled under Zerubbabel and Ezra. But we, joining what has been said before, assert that the wind and storm will remove all the idols that could not save them, and they will be like dust that the wind blows away from the face of the earth. But those who have trust in the Lord will possess the land which we will read about in this same Prophet: He will exalt you to the good things of the land. From which it is clear that this land is not below, but above. To which the holy one, lifted up by the Lord, will ascend, of which we have often said: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land (Matthew 5:4); and I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 27:13). But the holy mountain of God, that is to be understood, is the one about which he speaks to the Hebrews, who wrote the Letter: You have come to Mount

Zion and to the heavenly city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the countless angels and the assembly of the firstborn who are written in heaven (Hebrews 12:22). We can understand the land and mountain of the Lord, which the saints will possess, and the holy Scriptures, which were to be carried from the Jews, the Lord threatens, saying: The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation producing its fruits (Matt. XXI, 43); so that they may find in them that same mountain, of which we read in this same Prophet (Isaiah II), and in Micah: In the last days, the mountain of the Lord will be made manifest (Micah IV, 5). And the Lord himself commanded the Apostles and all the teachers of the Church to dissolve with their interpretation whatever seemed harsh and difficult, and to provide the way of understanding, and to remove all scandals from among them so that the people of the Lord may understand what they read without any impediment, and may progress in the fear of God. Concerning these ways, John the Baptist said: Prepare the way of the Lord, etc. (Matthew 3:3). Where we have taken the place of God, and I will say, the 70 translators have put and will say: namely those who will possess the land, and inherit the holy mountain of God. They will not be content with their own salvation, but they will also challenge others to teach the people. Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: But whoever trusts in me will possess the land and will inherit my holy mountain, and will say: Make the way straight and the rest. Because he, who possesses the land and the mountain himself, should instruct others, so that they may obey the way of the Lord.

57:15

(Verse 15) For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite. LXX: Thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite. The prophetic speech began against the people of the Jews, whose leaders he accused of being blind spies, mute dogs, ignorant shepherds, wicked sons, and the offspring of adulterers and prostitutes. After this, he came to Jerusalem, to which he reproached for its immorality, because it had spread its bed to its lovers, and had openly welcomed and adorned itself with all idols, and had sent envoys far away, in order to enjoy foreign lovers as well. With the rebuke finished, he came to those who trust in the Lord, and to whom he had promised to possess the land and the mountain, and for whom he had commanded the journey to be prepared for their return; undoubtedly the Apostles, in whose preaching they believed from both peoples. Hence he begins with the praises of God and testifies in the following discourse what he promised concerning the return of his people. For thus says the exalted and sublime Lord, who dwells in the highest places and is Holy in the Holy, not by place, but by the merit of those in whom he dwells, of whom one says in the psalm: I will exalt you, Lord, for you have upheld me (Ps. 29:1). And again: Exalt Yourself, O Lord, You who judge the earth (Ps. XCIII, 2); not so that God is lifted up by human words, but according to what is said elsewhere: The Lord has become my salvation (Ps. CXVII, 21), let Him also be exalted by the humble. He resists the proud and gives grace to the humble (James IV): so that He may lift them up and make them dwell in the heights. For the Lord is exalted, and He looks upon the lowly (Ps. CXXXVII, 6). And in the Gospel the angels cry out: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace (Luke II, 14). And again in the Psalms: Praise the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the highest. And not only does the Most High dwell in the highest,

but the Holy One also dwells in the holy. As it is said elsewhere: Be holy; for I am holy. And just as wisdom does not enter into a perverse soul, nor does it dwell in a body subject to sin: so the holy one dwells in the holy; and wherever there are impurities, purity cannot dwell, as the holy one says to the Lord: But you inhabit the holy place, the praise of Israel. And we also dare to say in prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. And in the second psalm we read: He who dwells in heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall mock them (Ps. II, 4). For Christ does not dwell in those who are earthly, but in those who are supercelestial, who proclaim the glory of the Lord, of whom it is said: He shall hear him from his holy heaven (Ps. XIX, 7). And again: The heavens are the Lord's heavens (Ps. XIII, 16): in which sense even Moses, the servant of God, agrees with the same voice: Behold the heavens of the Lord thy God, and the heaven of heavens (Deut. X); which we must certainly not understand in the Jewish manner, that God is confined to any place and dwells only in heaven, for he is everywhere present and all things are contained by him: but by heavens, let us rightly understand the highest ones, the Saints and the Virtues. For this is the one who dwells in heaven, of whom it is written in the Gospel: No one ascends to heaven unless he descends from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven (John 3:13). This one finds rest in the holy and dwells with the humble and those who are contrite in spirit. Of them, it is said: A crushed spirit is a sacrifice to God; a contrite and humbled heart, O God, you will not despise (Psalm 51:19). He himself gives patience to the weak, so that they may endure tribulation while being placed in narrow circumstances, with hope for the future. He himself gives life, especially to those who were dead by sin. Of whom it is said: With you is the fountain of life (Ps. XXXV, 10) . He who speaks in the Gospel: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John XIV, 6) .

57:16 (Verse 16.) I will not contend forever, nor will I be angry to the end: for the spirit will go forth from my presence, and I will make breath. LXX: I will not take vengeance on you forever, nor will I be angry with you always. For the spirit will go forth from me, and I have made every breath. The Lord, who dwells on high and looks upon the lowly, whose name is holy and who finds rest in the holy ones: who sustains the afflicted and gives life to the oppressed (Ps. CXII), has spoken these words: I will not always be angry, nor will I be indignant forever. I strike in order to correct, I kill in order to give life. I have pity on my creature; and those whom I have created, I will not allow them to perish forever. My spirit, which emanates from me or, according to the Hebrew, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, encompasses all things (for this is the meaning of περιελθ[ε]σαι and περιβαλλε[σθαι]), is the life-giver of all. And the breath, or in the plural breaths (for this is what Nasamoth signifies), I have made, about which it is written elsewhere: Let every breath, let everything that breathes, praise the Lord (Ps. 150:6). Regarding the spirit and breath that is written in the beginning of Genesis: God breathed the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Job also speaks of such a thing: The spirit of the Lord is in my nostrils, and the breath of the Almighty teaches me (Job 27:3). Therefore, when my spirit goes out and by my breath and inspiration all things are invigorated and live, it is not right for those who are sustained by my breath and spirit to perish forever. Some of us say that this is the spirit by which the whole world is inspired and governed; and all things have knowledge of God, whom the renowned poet, according to the Stoics, writing in the Aeneid (Book 6), says: In the beginning, the spirit nourishes the sky and the earth and the flowing fields, the shining globe of the moon, and the stars of Titania. It infuses the whole through all its limbs, the mind moves the mass, and mingles itself with the great body. And so on. But others understand the Holy Spirit, who in the beginning was carried upon the waters and gave life to all things: who proceeds from the Father, and, because of the fellowship of nature,

is sent by the Son, who says, 'It is expedient for you that I go.' For if I do not go, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. (John 16:7) And again he says of him: When the Paraclete comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father. (John 15:26) Let no one be scandalized if it is said that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, when the Son himself has also said: I came forth from the Father, and I have come; I did not come of myself, but he sent me. (John 16:28) About this Spirit, he spoke: I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, that he may be with you always, the Spirit of truth (John 14:16). This is the Spirit of whom Moses also wrote: Would that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them (Numbers 11:29). And Joel, speaking on behalf of God, said: I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters will prophesy (Joel 2:28). And Zacharias: Nevertheless, receive my words and my laws, which I command in my Spirit, to my servant the Prophets (Zach. I, 6). And again: I will pour out upon Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of mercy (Zach. XII, 10). And many other things from both the Old and New Testaments that it is now too long to repeat. We only say this, that the same Prophet has spoken about this Spirit and breath in the same way: Thus says the Lord God who made the heavens. And afterwards a little: He who gives breath to his people, who is above her, and spirit to those who trample on her (Isaiah 42:5).

57:17-21

(Verse 17 onwards) Because of the wickedness of his greed, I became angry and struck him; I hid myself and was indignant, and he went on his way grieving (Vulgate: he went astray). I saw his ways and healed him; I led him and gave him comfort to him and to those who mourned for him. I produced the fruit of lips, peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near, says the Lord, and I healed him. But the wicked are like a boiling sea that cannot rest, and its waves churn up mire and filth. There is no peace, says God, for the wicked. LXX: Because of sin I have afflicted him for a little while, and struck him: and I turned my face away from him, and he was saddened and walked sadly in his ways. I saw his ways, and healed him: and I comforted him and gave him true consolation, peace to those who are far away and those who are near, says the Lord, and I will heal them. But the wicked will waver and cannot rest. There is no joy for the wicked, says the Lord God. After the rejection of the people of Judah and those who refused to believe in the Savior, God had promised those who had confidence in Him a gentle land and a holy mountain, and He commanded the Apostles: Make a way for the people who are returning and remove all stumbling blocks from their path. And lest it seem unbelievable, He reveals His power, that the lofty and great God can easily grant forgiveness to the repentant, and it is just that the Creator should have mercy on His creatures. Therefore, because of those things, He joined together, because He was angry and saddened His people: therefore, He made Himself, because He sinned, and He had greed for iniquity, and He was not satisfied with one iniquity, but He always added sins to sins. And I struck Him for a little while, He says, in order to heal, and I hid, it is understood, My face, so that He would desire Me more, and would say: Show Your face and we shall be saved (Psalm 79:4). And I was indignant; which He sensing, He approached sadly, saying: I walked sad all day long (Psalm 38:7). And he walked in sorrow, whether turned towards the way of his heart, so that he did not act for the appearance of men, but in his heart he performed repentance. Therefore, seeing the ways of his conversion, I healed the wounds with which I had previously struck him. And I brought him back to me, whom I had previously expelled,

and I gave him true consolation. For many consolations are false, by which the human race is deceived. Whether I have comforted his mourners, saying in the Gospel: Blessed are the mourners, for they will be comforted (Matthew 5:5). And what follows: I have created the fruit of the lips, this has meaning, I have fulfilled what I promised, saying: As I live, says the Lord, I prefer the repentance of the sinner to death (Ezek. 33:11). Or, I have granted all that I previously promised. What, then, is the promise of the Lord? My peace I give to you: My peace I leave to you (John 14:27). And this is what he now says: Peace upon peace; not only to one nation, but to the whole world: specifically to those who were far away and to those who were near, that is, first to the Gentiles, and then to those who wanted to believe from Israel. About whom the Apostle says: 'It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; but because you have judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we now turn to the Gentiles' (Acts 13:46). Writing to the Ephesians and discussing at length the people of the Circumcision and the Gentiles, he declares: 'But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition, abolishing in his flesh the enmity' (Ephesians 2:13-14); and again: 'He came and preached peace to you who were far off, and to those who were near' (ibid., 17). Since through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father: giving peace upon peace to those who were far away, and to those who were near and to those who did not have the Law and the Prophets; and to those who had received it before, He received them and healed them. But the wicked and the unjust will be tossed like a boiling sea and will never be able to rest. Although this can be understood of every wicked person, it is especially applicable to the Jewish people, who with one voice cried out and persisted in their impiety, saying: Crucify him, crucify such a person. We have no king except Caesar (John 19:15). Therefore, just as a boiling sea cannot become calm, but its waves overflow and roll back to the shore, and when broken, they become mud that is trampled by the feet: so the wicked will be subjected to eternal trampling, having no joy and finding no peace in their persistence in wickedness. Some understand this passage specifically about the Savior, that he was deeply grieved for the sins of the world, saying: My soul is sorrowful even to death (Matthew 26:38). And the Father who speaks through Zacharias says: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered (Zech. XIII, 7); and he himself says of himself in the sixty-eighth psalm: Because it is you who have struck, they have persecuted (Psalm LXVIII, 27). And God turned his face away from him, so that he might assume the appearance of a servant for a short time, walk in sadness, lamenting the sins of the people, mourning and weeping over Jerusalem. And whoever saw the Father's ways, therefore healed him, who was free among the dead: and his flesh did not see corruption, so that he, who was struck on the cross, might be healed in the resurrection. And I consoled him, he said, giving him for the one nation of the Jews, the whole world. And those who mourned him, it is understood, he consoled. There is no doubt that he refers to the Apostles. And he fulfilled the fruit of his lips, who said to him: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession (Ps. 2:8): peace upon peace, reconciling the world to God, so that both peoples may be called to him, and be healed by the Father. But the impious, about whom we have spoken above, he compares to the sea, which can never be at rest, but even in the greatest calm, is tossed with broken waves onto the shores, and its end is mud and trampling.

58:1

(Chapter 58—Verse 1.) Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and declare unto my people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins. (LXX: Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and declare unto the people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins.) After finishing the previous chapter, in which peace is proclaimed to the righteous and no rest is given to the wicked, God commands the prophet Isaiah to cry aloud in strength, and to exalt his voice like a trumpet, and not to fear to declare the sins and transgressions of the people of Israel, neither fearing death nor the insults and threats of the wicked, but rather considering the Lord who rules over all. And because they have deaf ears and can barely hear, according to Symmachus and Aquila, they should turn their throat into a trumpet, which is called a shofar in Hebrew, and which they have interpreted as 'horn made of horn'. And indeed, when it was said to the Apostles, 'Ascend to the high mountain, you who evangelize Zion: lift up your voice with strength, you who evangelize Jerusalem: lift it up, do not be afraid' (Isaiah 40:9), neither a trumpet nor a horn is mentioned, but they are commanded to ascend the mountain. But because they were sinners whom he had to announce, and they dwelt below, the prophet is not commanded to ascend the mountain, but only to raise his voice like a trumpet and announce to them the coming wars. Otherwise, on the day of judgment, when it is said that the dead will rise in the resurrection and at the last trumpet, it is written, for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise incorruptible, so that just as they will be judged at the sound of the trumpet, so may Israel, dead in sin, hear its own crimes; at the same time, it is referred to as the people of God, so that they may learn what kind of father they have lost, who even calls his people sinners.

58:2

(Verse 2) They search for me day after day and desire to know my ways, like a nation that has done righteousness and has not forsaken the judgment of their God. LXX likewise. This specifically applies to the Jews, who run to the synagogues every day and meditate on the law of God, desiring to know what Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the other saints have done, and diligently studying the books of the Prophets and Moses, reciting the divine commands. To them, the following is most fittingly applied: The wicked seek me out but will not find me. For thus it is written: Everyone who seeks, finds (Matt. VII): whoever does not find, is convicted of seeking badly; for the Lord is found by those who seek Him in goodness, and is revealed to those who are not incredulous towards Him. Therefore, for those who have forsaken the justice and judgment of God, by what names is Christ revealed, as the Psalmist says: O God, give your judgment to the king, and your justice to the king's son (Ps. LXXI, 1): for Christ has become for us redemption, holiness, and righteousness (I Cor. I): in vain do they boast of knowledge of the law, when the holy one boasts not in knowledge of the Scriptures, but in works, saying: I have run the way of your commandments, when you have enlarged my heart (Ps. CXVIII, 31).

58:3

(Verse 3) They ask me for judgments of justice, and for the nearness of God. Why did we fast, and you did not look upon us? We humbled our souls, and you did not know? Behold, in the day of your fast your will is found, and you exact all your debtors. Behold, you fast for strife and contention, and you strike with the fist wickedly. LXX: They now seek a just judgment from me, and they desire to draw near to God, saying: Why did we fast, and you did not see? We have humiliated our souls, and you have not acknowledged? For on the days of your fasts, your desires

are found, and you afflict all those subject to you, fasting for judgments and arguments, and you strike the humble with your fists. There is another rashness of the Jews, as if with the confidence of a good conscience, they demand a just judgment, and they imitate the words of the saints saying: Judge me, O Lord, for I have entered in my innocence (Ps. XXV, 1, 2). And again: Test me, O Lord, and try me: burn my reins and my heart. And in another place: Judge my cause, and redeem me (Psalm 118:154). And they desire to draw near to God: but this does not occur in a physical place, but in affection, nor in idle thoughts, but in laborious deeds. Finally, Scripture instructs us on what it means to draw near to God, saying: Seek the Lord. And when the wicked draws near to you, let him forsake his ways, and the unjust his thoughts. For the Lord is near to those who approach Him, and to those who pursue what is just. And they can say: But for me it is good to cling to God (Ps. LXXII, 28). For if Almighty God is the Father of truth and justice, whoever is deceitful and unjust cannot draw near to God, of whom it is written: The wicked shall not dwell with you, nor shall the unjust remain before your eyes (Ps. V, 6). Why did we fast, they say, and you did not look? We humbled our souls, and you did not know? They accuse the Lord of injustice, because he does not regard good works, and they offer to God only the hunger of the belly, without the work of virtues: not eating the foods that God created for the faithful and those who know the truth, so that they may take them with thanksgiving. But those of whom it is written in Proverbs: For they are nourished with the foods of impiety and are intoxicated with the wine of iniquity (Prov. 4:17). The Pharisee, satisfied with these kinds of banquets, among other words of pride, boasted on the Sabbath that he was fasting. (Luke XVIII): he did not drink wine from the vineyard of Sorec, but from the vineyard of the Sodomites, whose wine is the madness of dragons, and the madness of asps is incurable, and their grapes are grapes of gall: whom God reproves through the Prophet: They eat the sins of my people (Hos. IV, 8). And again: Why have you remained silent about their wickedness, and gathered and eaten the harvest of falsehood? (Hos. X, 13). Therefore, because they had posed the question to God, desiring to know why they had fasted and humbled their souls, and God did not respond, forgetting the old story of why He did not regard Cain's offering, who offered correctly but did not divide rightly with his brother (Gen. IV), not seeing the love of God, as the Scripture says: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself (Matt. XXII, 39): therefore, God answered that He does not reject fasting, but the works that are done in fasting, saying: In the days of your fasting, your own wills are found, that you do not do God's will, but your own wills, which Paul, writing to the Ephesians, rejects: According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of unbelief, among whom we all once conversed in the desires of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and thoughts. And we were by nature children of wrath, like the others (Eph. 2:2-3). And what follows according to the Septuagint: 'And you oppress, or afflict, all your subjects,' which Theodotion and Symmachus translated better, whom we have followed in this place, 'and you demand payment from all your debtors.' From this it is evident that it is not without danger to demand repayment from a poor person who is unable to pay, and to not return a cloak taken as a pledge to a debtor who is shivering, lest his cry come before God. For he who has pity on the poor lends to God (Proverbs XIX). And on the contrary, he who withholds from the poor, harms God. And so that we may know that this is the meaning in the present passage, we will also read in the following verses in this same chapter: Break the bonds of wickedness, untie the bundles of oppression. It is undoubtedly clear that the bonds refer to: For what profit is it if you make your face pale with fasting, and fast for quarrels and arguments, as the Scripture says, He who loves

sin rejoices in arguments (Proverbs XVII, 11)? But a servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle (2 Tim. 2), and imitate Him who says: Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart (Matt. 11, 29): so that humility is not affected, but of the heart, not seeking the glory of men, but the conscience of the soul. You fast and strike with fists the humble, and with slaps you beat (1 Tim. 3). Therefore, a bishop must not be a striker. For how can he restrain lust, who is unable to restrain his own hand or tongue? The Lord reproves such fasting and in the beginning of this prophet he says: My soul hates your fasting and rest, your new moons and Sabbaths, and your other solemnities (Isaiah 1:13). Therefore, Joel commands: Sanctify a fast, proclaim a healing (Joel 2:15); so that we may fast from vices and become holy through good works and the healing of sins. Finally, it follows: Let the bridegroom go forth from his chamber, and the bride from her bridal chamber; so that during the time of fasting we may give ourselves to prayer: lest our inner self be nourished by the dragon's flesh, which has been given as food to the peoples of Ethiopia. And we say this, not because we disapprove of fasting, through which both Daniel, a man of desires, knew the future (Daniel IX), and the Ninevites appeased the anger of God (Jonah III), and Elijah (III Kings XIX) and Moses (Exodus XXXIV), satisfied with the familiarity of God through a forty-day fast, and the Lord Himself (Matthew IV) fasted for the same number of days in the wilderness, in order to leave us the solemn days of fasting. But fasting alone should not be empty, and one should not do other things that displease God. And, leaving aside other things, you will make their faces disfigured so that they appear to be fasting ((or fasting)), those who, by obtaining glory in the present, will be excluded from the kingdom of God, because they have received their reward (Matt. VI). Therefore, even if the Apostle were to offer his body to martyrdom, as it were, to be burned or to boast (both are mentioned in the copies), without the love of God (which is in the conscience of the heart), he says in vain that he pours out his blood (I Cor. XIII).

58:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) Do not fast as you do to this day, to make your voice heard on high. Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? LXX: 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' And when you have bowed your neck like a circle, and have put sackcloth and ashes under you: do not call this an acceptable fast. He teaches not to reprove fasting itself which he had commanded, but how one should fast: moreover, before he teaches what they should follow, he instructs what they should avoid: That it may be heard, he says, in high places. Do not bring your clamor to prayer, praying in synagogues and corners of the streets, so that you may be seen by men (Matthew 6), and raise your voice on high, and with the Pharisee, who is condemned by the judgment of the Lord, proclaim your fasts and works (Luke 18). Because of these things, the Lord, reproving the prayer of the Pharisees, teaches the disciples how they should pray (Matthew 6). They should enter into the hidden chamber of their hearts, to speak to God alone, who can hear the silence of the heart; so that they may cry out in their hearts, 'Abba, Father' (Romans 8:15); and not make their faces disfigured, but wash with water and anoint their heads with oil. John the Evangelist also writes about this: 'And you have an anointing from the Holy One' (1 John 2:20): that by being anointed, they themselves may become holy. For God does not seek only affliction and humiliation of the soul through injury to the body, as if to twist the body in the manner of a circle and bow the neck, and to walk in sadness. According to what is said in

the Psalms: I am afflicted and bowed down to the end; I was mournful all day long (Psalm 37:9). Nor does He seek for one to be clothed in sackcloth and sleep in ashes, as we read of David and Ahab (2 Samuel 3; 1 Kings 21); but that one should do these things along with those that follow. Moreover, the Apostle frequently says that he fasts (2 Corinthians 6 and 11), and the Lord, when he is taken away as a bridegroom from his disciples, teaches them to fast (Matthew 6). And in the Psalms, speaking of repentance, he says: I ate ashes like bread and mixed my drink with tears (Psalm 102:10). And when they were troublesome to me, I put on sackcloth (Psalm 34:13). From this, we learn that these are the things that the Lord wants to be done first, and not to overlook them for anything else.

58:6-7

(Verses 6, 7.) Isn't this the fast that I have chosen? To loosen the chains of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Isn't it to share your bread with the hungry, and to bring the poor who are cast out into your house? When you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Isn't it to deal your bread to the hungry, and that you bring the poor who are cast out to your house? When you see the naked, that you cover him, and that you not hide yourself from your own flesh? Isn't this the fast that I have chosen?' says the Lord: 'to release the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke?' Dissolve the bonds of violent obligations. Release the broken ones in remission, and cut off all unjust writings. Break your bread to the hungry, and bring the homeless into your house. If you see someone naked, cover them, and do not despise the members of your own household. After he taught what kind of fasting he disapproves of, he showed what kind he gladly accepts. Dissolve, he says, the bindings of impiety: untie the bundles that weigh down: or as the Septuagint translated more clearly, the bonds of violent obligations, which our people, deceived by the ambiguity of the word, that is, exchanges in certificates, interpreted as transfers. However, it signifies the bundles of documents in which the deceit of lenders is contained, and the poor are oppressed by debt, which is the main cause of revolt in all cities. Therefore, the Roman people occupy neighboring mountains, and there are new records, which the Greeks call 'χρ[ι]σ[τ]ων [π]οκοπ[η]ς'. Therefore, the Prophet does not command that each person should not demand what is owed, especially when it was justly given and justly sought after; otherwise, he would be a supporter of sedition. But where there is unfair surety, where the poor are oppressed by slander: there the bundles of sureties and all the chains of injustice must be broken. Or indeed, this must be said, because it is about fasting, and fasting has affliction and humiliation of the soul: but the affliction of sinners' bodies begs for indulgence. Divine Scripture teaches us to forgive our debtors, so that the Heavenly Father may also forgive us our debts (Mark 11). The ancient history tells that in the year of the Jubilee, which is the true Jubilee, all possessions return to their owners and slaves regain their freedom, and all obligations, commonly known as cautions, become void (Leviticus 25 and 27). If this is commanded in the old Law (Exodus 21), how much more in the Gospel, where everything that is good is multiplied: and not an eye for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth is commanded, but to offer the other cheek to the one who strikes! And so that we know what we have said above: Collect all your debtors, have the creditors written down, and join them with the debtors more clearly: Forgive those who are broken, that is, those who are broken by poverty, whom affliction has afflicted, so that you do not allow them to beg. And break all burdens by which they are oppressed. For which the Seventy

translated it more clearly, and cut off all unjust writing: which Symmachus translated: And break all false caution. But it could happen that someone would say, 'I have no debtors, what should I do to observe my fast?' It follows: Break your bread to the hungry. Not many loaves, nor cause poverty, but one loaf. Not the whole loaf itself, but a portion of bread: which if you did not fast, you would eat; so that your fast is not a profit for your purse, but a satisfaction for your soul. And beautifully he added 'your', so that you do not make your alms from robbery: For the redemption of a man's soul is his own treasure (Proverbs 13, 6). And in another place: Honor the Lord with your just labor (Proverbs 3, 9). Certainly if you do not have bread, and there is a great multitude of hungry people, give from what you suffer no harm. In which there are no expenses, bring the homeless, the poor without shelter, into your home. Or as it is said in Hebrew, into the house, so that if you do not have your own, you bring them into a small guesthouse, which you either rent or possess as a favor. If you see someone naked, cover him. And what the Lord said in the Gospel: Whoever has two tunics, let him give one to him who has none (Luke 3, 11). For he did not command that one be torn and divided, as many do for the sake of popular applause, but that the other not be preserved, increasing the precepts of justice, so that he also may say that having handed a cup of cold water has its rewards. And he says 'your' flesh, do not despise it. For every man is our flesh. And according to the Gospel parable, he is called the neighbor who does good to the one who came down from Jerusalem to Jericho and was wounded by robbers (Luke 10). Or certainly according to the Seventy who said: And do not despise the servants of your own seed, let us understand those servants of your own seed, about whom the Apostle also teaches, saying that alms should be done to all, but especially to the servants of faith (Galatians 6). For they are our flesh and our seed, being generated with us by the same parent. To whom the Savior also extended his hand, saying: These are my mother and my brothers, who do the will of my Father (Mark 3, 34, 35). And so that we know that there is one Lord, both of the new and the old Testament, the Lord speaks the same in the Gospel about those who will stand on the right on the day of judgment, saying: Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was sick and in prison, and you visited me. I was a stranger and you brought me into your home. And I was naked and you clothed me (Matthew 25, 34-36). And to those who humbly say that they have done nothing for the Lord and Savior, he responds: As long as you have done it to one of the least of my brothers, you have done it to me. According to tropology, we can say: Whoever fasts from all evil and wishes his fast to be respected, not only must turn away from evil, but also do good, so as to break every bond of iniquity by which simple believers are bound by the deceit of heretics. And the Prophet also speaks about the bonds of violent contracts, which he demonstrates in the psalm, saying: But those who go astray in their obligations, the Lord will bring with those who work iniquity (Psalm 125, 5). For all those who are bound by the bonds of heretics, turn away from the Lord; they are like a bull led to the slaughter; and they choose and exchange falsehood for truth. Therefore, let the Ecclesiastical man dismiss and dissolve these kinds of men, who are broken in judgment; and break and tear apart all the writings of heretics, about whom the same Prophet says: Woe to those who write iniquity: for they write malice, stealing the judgment of the poor people of mine (Isaiah 10, 1, 2), so that they do not hold every simple person ensnared by their traps. And when he does this, let him break his bread to the hungry of the Ecclesiastical doctrine, which the Lord also did, giving broken bread to the Apostles, which he left for them in seven baskets and twelve small baskets, not whole as they were in the

Law, but crushed and broken in the Gospel, so that they would have something to give to the poor (Matthew 15). When you see those who do not have the warmth of faith, but who freeze outside the Church in the coldness of unbelief, bring them into the house of the Church, and cover them with the robe of incorruption; so that, clothed in Christ's tunic, they do not remain in the graves, as we read of the one who was possessed by a legion of demons, who lived naked among the memorials of the dead. And when you have done this, let your generosity be shown to all, especially to the faithful servants.

58:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your righteousness shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am. LXX: Then your light shall break forth like the morning; your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of God shall surround you. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say: Here I am. While you are still speaking, he will say: Here I am. When you have not done those things that the previous conversation narrated, and you have done those things that we are now speaking about, then your fasting will be acceptable, and your morning light will break forth; the sun of righteousness, about which Malachi the prophet speaks in the person of God the Father, saying: For you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise, with healing in its wings (Malachi 4:2). That sun is called the light here. For just as the morning light dispels darkness, so the light of knowledge and truth dispels all errors. And your healings, it is said, will quickly arise. For this reason, Aquila, expressing word for word, put: And the scar of your wound will quickly be covered; so that, namely, the wounds of our sins may be closed with a quickly covered scar at the rising of the sun of righteousness. Because of this, the Seventy translated τὰ ἰατῆρά σου, that is, your healings, with the similarity of the word ἱματία, that is, garments. Therefore, deceived by the falseness of many translations, they use this testimony to prove the resurrection of the body, namely that the garment of the soul will receive a body, which will arise on the day of resurrection. And it says, 'Your righteousness will go before you.' (Genesis 30:33, according to the Septuagint). According to what Jacob says: 'Tomorrow my righteousness will answer me,' and what is written will be fulfilled: 'Behold, the man and his works.' And the glory of the Lord will surround you, like a beautiful garment, so that you may be glorified before God and before men. Then you will call upon Him, and the Lord will answer; you will cry out, and He will say: 'Here I am,' not in words, but in works; not in response, but in acts of kindness. This is confirmed in the letter and in the Gospel, when the leper said to the Lord, 'If you will, you can make me clean,' and the Lord answered, saying: 'I will, be clean.'

58:10

(Verse 10.) If you remove the chain from your midst, and you cease to extend your finger, and to speak what is not helpful. When you pour out your soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. LXX: If you remove from yourself the yoke, and the pointing of the finger, and the speaking of murmuring, and you give your bread to the hungry from your soul, and satisfy the humble soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. The Hebrew word Mota (מֹטָא), which is interpreted as an iron torque in Jeremiah (Jer. XVIII), is read twice in the present chapter.

In that place where we have said above according to the Septuagint: Dissolve the obligations of violent exchanges, by one word Mota we may know that they have put violent bonds, for which Aquila translated error, Symmachus translated declination, and Theodotion κλοιον, that is, torque. Again, in the present place where we translate: If you remove the chain from your midst, and for chain Septuagint translated συνδεσμον, that is, binding or bond; Aquila, as above, interpreted error; Symmachus, agreeing with Theodotion's ideas ((Al. conceding)), put torque. This is said about the variety of interpretation. Otherwise, the meaning is connected as follows: The morning light will arise for you, and your health will quickly arise; and your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will crown you. And when you pray, he will immediately hear you, and he will show himself to be present. This is true, only if you add these things to the previous works, in order to remove from yourself the obligation and the chain with which your soul is bound. About which Peter spoke to Simon: 'For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity' (Acts 8:23). And Paul was grieved, as he observed the city of the Athenians bound by the obligation of idolatry. For each person is bound by the ropes of their own sins (Proverbs 5). And concerning these bonds of the soul, David prayed in the psalm: 'Cleanse me from my hidden faults, O Lord, and spare your servant from the deeds of others' (Psalm 19:13). It is difficult to find someone who is not bound by these chains. It is rarely found a soul that does not have this heavy burden encircling its neck, weighing it down with earthly pursuits, so that it does not look to the heavens but only to the earth. This is also reflected in the Gospel story of the woman whom Satan had bound for eighteen years, so that she was bent over and could not see the heavenly things (Luke 13). Therefore, it is said, if you remove this chain from the midst of your heart and break these kinds of bonds, and if you also extend your hand, as three other interpreters render this phrase, and refrain not only from thinking or doing evil, but also from speaking ill of your neighbor and pointing out each person's faults as if with a finger, and if you avoid speaking what does not benefit your soul, considering not your own faults but the errors of others, then you will receive what the following passage adds. Most of our people understand the ordination of clergy, which is fulfilled not only by the invocation of the voice, but also by the laying on of hands (so that, as we have laughed at in some cases, the clandestine invocation of the voice may ordain unknowing clerics), in this way: they take as evidence the writing of Paul to Timothy: Do not lay hands on anyone too hastily and thereby share in the sins of others (1 Tim. 5:22). For it is not a light matter to cast pearls before swine and to give what is holy to dogs (Matt. 7); and to attribute the ordination of the clergy, not to the holy and most learned in the law of God, but to their followers and ministers of lowly duties; and what is more shameful for them, to the prayers of little women. In considering the wisdom of Christ's Apostles, who, to demonstrate the danger of ordination, connected the torments of sinners: You shall not partake in others' sins. Therefore, just as in the ordinations of evil men, the one who appoints them is a participant in their sins, so in the ordination of the saints, the one who chooses them is a participant in their righteousness. It follows: And the word of murmuring is understood to mean, 'from the common,' if you remove it from yourself. But the word of murmuring is when God speaks against us: Let the murmuring of this people cease from me, and they shall not die; and we refer our sins to God, in order to excuse ourselves for our sins, and we say: The heat of the body overcame me, the incentives of youth overcame me, God created me this way: poverty forced me to steal. Therefore, if we do not do those things which are said, and if we do those things which are to be said, let us not give our bread to the hungry as before, but our soul, so that we may help him however we can, and let us not do it with sadness

and necessity, but willingly, receiving more than giving charity. For God loves a cheerful giver, so that we may not refresh the hungry or the afflicted partially, but fully satisfy them; and let us grieve with those who grieve and mourn with those who mourn, then our light shall rise in the darkness, he who says: I am the light that came into the world, so that everyone who believes in me does not remain in darkness, but has the light of life. For the eye is the light of our body: if it is simple, our whole body will be full of light. But if it is evil, our whole body will be full of darkness. And it will be said to us: If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! Let us consider with what virtues we may come to the light of God, so that darkness may be turned into noonday, and let us say with the bride: Where do you pasture, where do you rest at noon?

58:11

(Verse 11) And the Lord will always give you rest, and will fill your soul with splendor, and will free your bones. And you will be like a well-watered garden, and like a fountain of water, whose waters will not fail. LXX: And your God will be with you always: and you will be filled as your soul desires, and your bones will become fat. And they will be like a drunken garden, and like a fountain, whose water will not fail. What is added at the beginning of this chapter in the Alexandrian manuscripts: And still praise will be in you always; and in the end your bones will rise like grass, and become fat, and they will possess the inheritance for generations upon generations. This is not found in Hebrew, nor even in the corrected and true copies of the Seventy: hence, it should be marked with an obelus. When the darkness, says he, of thine heart shall be dissolved in the rising light, and midday shall have arisen from palpable night, then wilt thou always have God as thy inhabitant, who shall fill thy soul with brightness. Of whom it is said in the Psalms: With thee is the principality of thy power, in brightnesses of the saints, from the womb before the morning star I begot thee (Ps. 109:4) . Whether thou shalt be satisfied with all things which thy soul desireth, because thou also hast satisfied the hungry soul, and shalt be able to say: Bless the Lord, O my soul, who filleth thy desire with good things (Ps. 102:5) ; and thy bones shall be delivered from death and perpetual fire. Or, they will cause them to become thick again, which had been made thin by the hunger of speech of the Lord. And indeed, we can understand this both in a literal sense concerning the resurrection of bodies that are going to fall, and concerning the virtues of the soul, which the holy one speaks of in the psalm, 'All my bones will say, Lord, who is like you?' (Ps. 34:10). Regarding these matters, it is also written in Proverbs, 'Good fame fattens the bones' (Prov. 15:30). And to those who are promised rewards, Health will be to your body, and healing to your bones (Prov. XVI, 24). Concerning them it is written again, The Lord keeps all their bones, not one of them shall be broken (Ps. XXXIII, 21). On the contrary, the sinner, who has lost strength and virtue of the soul, laments and speaks: Our bones are scattered nearby the underworld (Ps. CXL, 7). For we cannot believe that the bones of sinners are not in hell, but near hell. And good fame fattens the bones (Prov. XV, 30), which does not pertain to the nourishment of the body. It follows: And you will be, or it will be, that is, either you or your soul, like a well-watered garden: of which it is written: A spring went out and watered the whole face of the garden (Genes. II, 6), which is read as 'garden' in Hebrew. We can say that this spring is none other than the one to whom it is said, With you is the fountain of life (Ps. XXXV, 10): which continually waters His Church and the hearts of all believers.

58:12

(Verse 12.) And the deserts of the ages will be built in you: you will raise the foundations of generation after generation: and you will be called the builder of walls, turning paths into peace. LXX: And the deserts will be built for you from the age and your foundations will be everlasting for generations and generations: and you will be called the builder of walls, and you will make paths rest in the middle. Not only, he says, will your light arise in the darkness, and your darkness will be like midday, and the Lord will give you rest always, and you will be like a well-watered garden, and so on; but what has long been deserted will be rebuilt in you, and the foundations of your buildings will remain for many generations: so that either you yourself will be called the builder of walls and ramparts, or someone will arise in you who will be the builder of walls, and he will turn the paths into peace, or according to the Septuagint, he will make the roads in the middle to rest. These Jews and their friends in the western provinces are referring to the restoration of the cities of Palestine. They argue that either these things were done under Zorobabel and Ezra, and Nehemiah, or they will happen in the future: the highest foundations must be laid for the restoration of Jerusalem and the surrounding cities, and such high walls must be built that no enemy can enter, and the entrance of all enemies into them must be prohibited. But we, following the order of the explanation that has been begun, say that what was deserted among the Jews is being built in the Church, not for a short time, but forever, and its foundations must be raised from both peoples, that is, in two generations. Where the Apostle says: Like a wise architect, I laid the foundation; another builds upon it. But let each one see how he builds upon it (1 Corinthians 3:10). And in another place: We are God's field, God's building (Ephesians 2:20). And it is to be called, or when someone is born in it, the builder of fences. About this we read in the psalm: Man is born in it, and the Most High has founded it (Psalm 87:5). The Scripture mentions that fields and vineyards are surrounded by hedgerows and walls, which is signified by the Greek term φράγμο■ς. You have transferred a vineyard from Egypt: you have uprooted the nations and planted it. And a little later: Why have you destroyed its walls? And let all who pass by pluck its grapes (Ps. LXXXIX, 9 and 13). And in the same Prophet: A vineyard has been made for the beloved; describing it in beautiful language, he says: I have built a tower and surrounded it with a wall (Eccles. II, 4). According to Ecclesiastes, whoever destroys her will be bitten by a snake. She is surrounded so that the access of all animals to the vineyard of God is prohibited. This snake is the crafty one who deceived Eve in paradise. Because she had destroyed God's commandments, she was exposed to his bites, and she heard from the Lord: You will watch his head, and he will watch your heel (Genesis 3:15). In that place where we have translated according to the Septuagint, so as not to seem to be innovating anything, because the testimony is well-known, and you will be called the builder of fences, in Hebrew it is written, and you will be called Goder Pheres, which Aquila interpreted as περιφ■κτης διακοπ■ς, which, according to the meaning, we can say opposes God's fierce anger. Finally, Symmachus translated, opposing a wall to the one who was killing (1 Kings 7), like Moses and Aaron, and Samuel, who resisted the anger of the Lord, and as if by building a wall, they set a limit to his indignation. This is also said to Jeremiah: Do not meet the Lord, do not want to resist His anger, and block the indignation with prayers as if with a wall (Jeremiah 7): and to Moses, as if the Lord was holding him: Let me go, he said, and I will strike down this people (Exodus 32, 10). Therefore, this builder of walls, fences, and hedges will transform paths into tranquility, so that the anger of God may not rage, but the Lord may be appeased and all the pathways of indignation may find rest.

(Verse 13.) If you turn your foot away from the Sabbath, and do your own will on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, and holy to the glorious Lord, and honor him by not doing your own ways, nor finding your own will, nor speaking idle words. LXX: If you turn your foot away on the Sabbaths, so as not to do your own desires on the holy day. And you shall call the Sabbaths delightful and holy to the Lord: you shall not lift up your foot for work, nor shall you speak a word ÷ in anger from your mouth. To whom he had said above: Is not this the fast that I have chosen? loose the bands of wickedness, undo the bundles that oppress, and the like: even now he promises rewards if he will do what follows (Exod. 20); that is, that he restrain his foot on the sabbaths, and not do his own will, and that he profane not the holy day of the Lord with his own will (or lusts). It is written in the law, that we should not do servile work on the sabbaths, nor kindle fire, nor sit in one place only, but that we should do those works only which pertain to the salvation of the soul. But if we take it literally, it cannot be completely fulfilled. For who can do this, that sitting all day and night on the Sabbath, does not move from one place, indeed, does not even move slightly? And if he does, would he not be a transgressor of the law? Therefore, from one commandment, which is impossible to be taken literally, we are compelled to understand the rest in a spiritual sense, so that we do not perform servile work and lose the freedom of the soul. For whoever commits sin is the servant of sin (John 8): let us not bear the burden on the Sabbath, such as the burden borne by him who says, My iniquities are raised above my head: they are like a heavy burden pressed down upon me (Psalm 38, 5). Let not the wickedness that sits upon the talent of lead have power over us; nor let bodily pleasure and lust prevail. (Zech. 5); For they all commit adultery, and their hearts are like an oven. (Hosea 7); And the fiery darts of the devil are cast, to shoot straight at those with a righteous heart in darkness. (Ps. 10); It is also commanded to us that, having taken hold of the plow, we do not look back; that, ascending the height of the roofs, we do not wish to come down to remove the garments of the world. (Luke 9); but rather that we hear with Moses, 'But you stand here with me' (Exod. 34, 2); and that we sit with the Lord, weary on the way of this world, by the well of the Samaritan woman, desiring the conversion and salvation of the erring. (John 4); that we hear the Apostle admonishing, 'Stand firm and immovable' (1 Cor. 15, 58); that we not suffer what Judas, the traitor, suffered, who lost his place of ministry, and became a transgressor, and that we always remember his words: 'If the spirit of the one who has power ascends over you, do not abandon your place' (Eccles. 10, 4). Here lies one who rests on the Sabbath, washing his hands among the innocent, not moving his feet to carry out his own desires: this person celebrates the delicate Sabbath of the Lord. Sabbath-keeping, as written in the Letter to the Hebrews, is promised to us in heaven, and glory is prepared (Hebrews 4): so that while we do not follow our own ways on the Sabbath, and our own will is not found, we may speak words by which we do not sin in deed or in speech. Otherwise, if these things are only prohibited on the Sabbath, then on the other six days freedom is given to us to commit wrong. But if it is foolish to believe this, it remains that the Sabbath, which is interpreted as rest, should be sanctified at all times by the faithful, while they do the will of not the flesh, but the soul. And what is added, according to the Septuagint, 'in wrath from your mouth', is not found in the Hebrew. For this Sabbath, to be celebrated with all festivity, the Savior calls us in the Gospel, saying: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28); for this signifies 'I will refresh you', so that laying aside the burdens of sins, we may rest in Christ, and say: He has set my feet upon a rock (Psalm 40:3), and avoid that which the holy one says he almost endured: My feet were almost moved (Psalm 73:2).

(Verse 14.) Then you will delight in the Lord [Vulg. the Lord]; and I will lift you up above the heights of the earth, and I will feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. LXX: And you will trust in the Lord: and he will exalt you above the good things of the earth, and he will feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. After you have called the delicate Sabbaths and have not moved your foot on the Sabbath to do servile work, nor have you spoken a word, that is, you have always been silent, and have fulfilled what is commanded: Restrain your tongue from evil, and let your lips not speak deceit (Psalm 34:14): then you will delight in the Lord and see that you are fulfilled: Delight in the Lord, and he will grant the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4). Whether you have confidence in the Lord, according to what is written: Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord. And in Jeremiah: Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and the Lord will be his hope (Jeremiah 17:7). And elsewhere: It is good to trust in the Lord rather than to trust in man (Psalm 118:8). And the Lord will lift you up and exalt you above the heights and the good things of the earth. For the earth is soft, and the earth of the living is not downwards, but upwards. Finally, to Lot fleeing from the valley of Sodom and Gomorrah, it is said: Make yourself safe on the mountain (Genesis 19). And when he reached there, the sun rose for him in Segor. Concerning this land, the Lord said: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:4): and many other things that we have frequently mentioned, among which is this: Honor your father and your mother, and you will live long on the earth that the Lord your God has given you (Exodus 20:12). Which cannot be completely true according to the letter. For many honor their parents and die quickly, while others who are parricides live for a long time. But that the land is situated in the heights, let us briefly recall the 36th Psalm, in which it is written: The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. After this, it is added: Wait for the Lord, and keep his ways: and he will exalt you, that you may possess the earth (Psalm 37:11): concerning which it is sung in another place, The righteous shall inherit the earth, and shall dwell on it forever and ever (ibid., 34). Which in itself is also impossible. For if the earth shall pass away, how can the righteous dwell on it forever and ever? From this we learn that there is a land that is situated in the heights. After this, it is added: And I will feed, or rather, the Lord will feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father. For just as he who has faith is called the son of Abraham, so he who suppresses vices and sins is called the son of Jacob. And the one who imitates someone's virtue is called their son. But the good things of the land, which is situated in the heights, with which the son of Jacob is satisfied, must be understood as those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have they entered into the heart of man (1 Corinthians 2). Concerning these, it is written in the Letter to the Hebrews: For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland: and if, indeed, they sought one, from which they had departed, they would have had an opportunity to return to it. But now they desire a better homeland, that is, a heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 11:14 et seqq.). From this we learn that the fable of a thousand years, in which again marriages and food and the conversation of earthly life are promised, must be rejected. For if in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels; for they are sons of the resurrection (Matthew 22); and concerning the belly and food, the Apostle says: Food for the belly, and the belly for foods: but God will destroy both it and them (1 Corinthians 6:13), how can we seek the vices of the former mortal and corrupt flesh again, with an incorrupt and spiritual and immortal body? And we say these things, not because we deny the substance of the glorified body, but in

order to completely remove the former works in those who are like the angels. Otherwise, even in this still existing body, through fasting and continence, and perpetual chastity and charity, we imitate the angelic virtues, and yet we do not lose the substance of our bodies. In order to believe that all these things will come to pass, let us know that they have been promised by God, whose mouth has spoken: so that just as in the hands there is activity, and in the feet there is movement, and in the belly there is generation, and in the ears and eyes there is hearing and seeing: so in the mouth let us understand the word of God.

59:1-2

(Chapter 59, Verses 1, 2) Behold, the hand of the Lord is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. (Chapter 70) Is the Lord's hand shortened, that He cannot save, or His ear heavy, that He cannot hear? But your sins have separated you from your God, and because of your sins, He has turned His face away from you, so that He will not show mercy. I could do what I said I would do: You will be confident in the Lord, and He will lift you up to the good things of the land, and He will feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father, before the completion. For my hand is not shortened, nor is it contracted, that I cannot stretch it out to deliver my people: nor do I have deaf ears, that I cannot hear. From this it is shown that the ears of the Lord, which listen to the righteous and do not listen to sinners, are in no way similar to our ears, which equally hear the spoken word of either justice or injustice; but your sins, like a certain wall in the middle, separate you and God. And so, the Savior in His passion made both one (Ephesians 2), and by breaking down the middle wall of partition, He destroyed enmity in His flesh, so that the blood of Christ might unite those whom the wall of sin had divided. He opened the door of paradise, which had been closed for a long time (Genesis 3), and He extinguished the fiery sword with His own blood, so that the thief might hear: Today you will be with me in paradise (Luke 23:43). And what follows: And because of your sins, He turned His face away from you; to not hear, or to not show mercy, he demonstrates this, that he was not able to bear the stench of sins and their iniquities, but he turned his face away, so as to not see their shamefulfulness, and he would immediately be forced to strike. In the psalm, when the sinner desiring to see the face of the Lord says: How long, O Lord, will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? (Ps. XII, 1). And elsewhere: Show your face, and we shall be saved. (Ps. LXXIX, 4).

59:3-4

(V. 3, 4.) For your hands are polluted with blood, and your fingers with iniquity: your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wickedness. There is no one who calls for justice, nor is there anyone who truly judges: but they trust in nothingness, and speak vanities. LXX: For your hands are polluted with blood, and your fingers with sins. Your lips are polluted with iniquity, and your tongue meditates injustice. No one speaks the truth: there is no fair judgment. They trust in empty things, and speak worthless words, injustices and sins. What he has mentioned generally above, he now explains in detail. And it should be considered that he does not accuse them of idolatry, which they were practicing in the time of Isaiah, but rather of shedding blood, about which he had already spoken: The righteous is perishing, and there is no one who takes it to heart. The upright are taken away, and no one understands in his heart. For the righteous man is taken away

from the face of wickedness: his grave shall be in peace, and his tomb shall be with honour. Though their hands have not injured in any wise the Lord, yet they take upon them to cry out with blasphemous voices, saying: His blood be upon us and upon our children. His death shall therefore bear witness against them, and their hands shall be defiled. Of whom the same Prophet testifies, saying: If ye stretch forth your hands against me, I will not hear you. Your hands are full of blood. Your lips and tongue speak iniquity and lies, claiming to be Christ's chosen ones but behaving as Antichrists. There is no one among your people who cries out for justice and judges according to truth, or in the Hebrew language, faith in Christ. Instead, they trust in nothingness and speak empty words. Therefore, the Apostle commands us not to pay attention to Jewish fables and the commandments of those who turn away from the truth. For truly they trust in nothing, and they follow vanities, in which is fulfilled the prophecy of the Lord: I am come in my Father's name, and you receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive. (John 5:43).

59:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) They conceived labor and gave birth to iniquity: they broke the eggs of vipers and wove spider webs. Whoever eats their eggs will die, and what is hatched will break out into a viper. Their webs will not be turned into clothing, nor will they be covered with their works. LXX: For they bring forth pain and generate iniquity. They broke the eggs of vipers and wove spider webs. And whoever wants to eat their eggs, breaking them open, will find something rotten, and in the end a viper; their webs will not be used for clothing, nor will they be covered with their works. Those who await the coming of the Antichrist cannot say: 'We have conceived and brought forth from fear of you, O Lord, and we have made the spirit of your salvation come upon the earth' (Isaiah 26:18), they conceive pain correctly, and give birth to wickedness, so that they receive iniquity instead of what they seek with much effort; of whom it is written in the Psalms: 'They conceived pain, and brought forth wickedness' (Psalm 7:15). They break and shatter the eggs of asps, so that they may receive their venom in their own minds, of whom it is said in the Gospel: 'You offspring of vipers' (Matthew 3:7). And beautifully they have laid the eggs of asps and serpents, which eggs are said to generate first. And because they not only retain the poisons of malice in their hearts, but also meditate on old wives' fables day and night, they are therefore said: And they weave webs of spiders: by which they catch flies and mosquitoes and small creatures; to which when something happens by chance, it flies through the empty air. Whoever eats, he says, of their eggs, will die, that is, whoever agrees with their counsels, as Abel agreed to Cain when he said, Let us go into the field (Genesis IV, 8), will instantly be killed: or as the Seventy have translated it: Whoever wants to eat of their eggs, he will find decay when crushed, and in it a ruler. For whoever, being deceived by mere appearance, thinks that the eggs of hens and other birds, the consumption of which is harmless, if he breaks them before eating, will immediately recognize the most foul odor and stench, and will find what is cooked, the rule. Or according to Symmachus and Theodotion, the asp. But the eagle put the viper; for which in Hebrew it is read Ephee (). Therefore, whoever, hearing the Jewish traditions, wishes to prepare himself for the pleasures of a thousand years, and being ensnared by the promises, reaches out his hand to the egg: if before he eats, that is, he agrees with deadly words, he wishes first to consider what is said, and to examine each word, and to handle their meaning, he will immediately discover that the Antichrist is being prepared in them. Therefore, according to the Hebrew text, whoever eats from their eggs will die. But according to the Septuagint, whoever breaks them beforehand and carefully looks and sees what lies hidden

will discover a most foul stench and the prince of all serpents, the devil, lurking in their traditions. And because he had said above, 'They weave spider webs,' he explains that the weaving of these webs is not profitable. Their labor, he says, and all their teaching does not make the garment of Christ, nor the cloak by which the nakedness of the soul is protected, but they sweat in vain labor, as the same Prophet says: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.' But they worship me in vain, teaching doctrines and precepts of men (Isaiah 29:13): which following, they neglect the law of God. And that we may know that their works are like a spider's web, he added: Neither shall their works cover them. Some have explained this passage thus: They have crushed, or broken, the eggs of asps, that is, they have disregarded all the words of the prophets and have woven for themselves the flattering words of false prophets: of whom whoever partakes, shall be bitten by the serpent; and he will understand that the words of lies have profited him nothing.

59:7-8

(V. 7, 8.) Their deeds are useless deeds: and the work of iniquity is in their hands. Their feet run towards evil: and they hasten to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are worthless thoughts: destruction and ruin are in their ways. They have not known the way of peace: and there is no justice in their steps. Their paths are crooked for them: whoever walks on them does not know peace. LXX: For their deeds are the deeds of iniquity: and their feet run towards malice. They are swift to shed innocent blood, and their thoughts are the thoughts of fools. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and they do not know the way of peace. There is no justice in their ways. Their paths are twisted and they do not know peace. Therefore, their deeds are not hidden, for their actions are the works of wickedness, which the Apostle calls unfruitful, that is, having no fruit (Ephesians 5). And their feet run to evil, and they are swift to shed innocent blood (Prov. 1). For they also had the custom of killing the prophets. To whom Stephen was speaking: Which of the prophets have your fathers not persecuted (Acts 7:52)? And the Lord in the Gospel: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you (Matt. 23:37); and again: On you will come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you killed between the temple and the altar (Ibid., 35). And it is said above to them: Your hands are polluted with blood: and your tongue speaks wickedness (Isaiah 1:15). And through this meditation of cruelty and blasphemy, they came to the death of the Lord. Likewise, Judas came to murder through the path of greed, rather sacrilege coupled with greed. And what follows: Their thoughts are the thoughts of foolish ones: destruction and unhappiness are in their ways, and they have not known the way of peace. And above: Their feet are swift to shed blood, the Apostle placed in Romans (Ch. III): which many ignorant people think is taken from the thirteenth psalm, which verses are added in the Vulgate edition and are not found in Hebrew. We have spoken more fully about this at the beginning of this volume. But those who have refused to accept its author have rightly ignored the way of peace. For he himself is our peace, who speaks to the Apostles: Peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John XIV, 27). And to Jerusalem: If you knew the things that are for your peace, for the days shall come upon you when your enemies shall cast a trench about you, and encompass you round, and straiten you on every side, And beat you flat to the ground, and your children who are in you. It follows: Their paths are perverse, not by nature, but by their own will. For whatever is distorted and curved, is twisted from straight to crooked. Every teaching of the Pharisees is a subversion of truth, through

which one who follows it not only does not find peace, but also does not even know it, so as to know what they should seek.

59:9-11

(Verse 9 and following) Because of this, judgment has been far from us: and justice does not overtake us. We waited for light, and behold darkness: for brightness, and we have walked in gloom. We have groped like the blind against a wall: and we have touched as if without eyes: we have stumbled at noonday, as if in darkness: we are in dusky places as dead. We roar like bears, all of us: and we moan like doves, meditating. We waited for judgment, and it does not come: for salvation, and it is far from us. LXX: Therefore judgment has withdrawn from them, and justice does not apprehend them. While they wait for light, darkness shall come upon them. They shall grope in the dark and feel their way like blind men; they shall stumble at noonday as in the twilight; they shall be like those who die in the midst of their groaning. They shall be like a bear and a dove walking together. We hoped for judgment, but there is none; salvation has far from us. After the accusation of the Jewish people, their Prophet responded, advising what repentant individuals should say if they wish to receive healing after their wounds. And I am amazed why the Seventy, as if speaking on behalf of the Prophet, do not respond to the words of the Prophets themselves, but instead weave together a prayer, when later, overcome by the truth, they themselves do the same, saying: We have waited for judgment, and it has not come; salvation has moved far from us. For our iniquities are many in your sight; and our sins testify against us, and we know them. In this present time, everything is being fulfilled. Judgment has been delayed for the Jews, which has been announced to the Gentiles. And justice, which has been embraced by the nations, will not seize them. They have waited for the light, saying: Send forth your light and your truth (Ps. 42:3), which had been promised to them through the prophets, and they are occupied with the darkness of error. They sustained splendor; and they walked in darkness. Thus they handle the holy Scriptures, like blind people feeling the wall, seeking only words and leaves, not understanding the meaning and fruit that is held within the letters. Finally, the author joins and says: We stumble, or we fall at midday, as if in darkness: in the shadows, as if dead. For in the whole world, with the sun of righteousness shining brightly, they dwell in darkness, namely because they are dead in sin. He says, let us roar like bears, and let us moan like doves; that they may be equally cruel and miserable: fierce and savage towards the humble and submissive: fearful and trembling before those who are stronger, whom they dread like hawks. We also read in another place: Like a bear robbed of her cubs. And in Daniel, a bloody kingdom compared to the fiercest bears (2 Kings 17:8; Dan. 7). And, like doves, we groan, without sense and understanding of the Scriptures, only meditating on words that we recite from memory. But just as the doves, of which it is written: Ephraim is like a dove without sense (Hosea VII, 11); and just as in the Gospel, simplicity is set against the malice of serpents (Matthew X): so in the present place, simplicity without prudence, which is close to foolishness, is shown in the meditation on words alone. They will await judgment, and it will not come. Salvation is implied: they will wait and it will not come, because she has migrated far away to the nations. In this, it should be noted that everything is said in the future tense, so that what the Jews are now enduring is indicated.

59:12-15

(Ver. 12 seqq.) Our iniquities have multiplied before you, and our sins have answered us: for our crimes are with us, and we know our iniquities. To sin and lie against the Lord: and we turned away, so as not to go after the back of our Lord, to speak calumny, and we conceived transgression, and we spoke deceitful words from the heart. And judgment has been turned away backwards, and justice has stood far off, for truth has fallen down in the street, and equity could not enter. And truth has been turned into forgetfulness, and those who have turned away from evil have become a prey. LXX: For our iniquity is great in your sight, and our sins have held us back. For our iniquities are within us, and we have acknowledged our injustices. We have acted impiously, and we have lied, and we have turned away from our God. We have spoken wickedly and we have been disobedient. We have conceived and contemplated wicked words in our hearts. And we have gone away from judgment, and justice stands far away, because truth has been consumed in their ways, and they were not able to pass through the straight path. And truth has been taken away, and they have turned their mind so that they do not understand. They roar like bears; they meditate like doves; they wait for judgment that is not there, and salvation has passed on to the nations. For our iniquities have multiplied, saying, our iniquities are before you, from whom you have turned away your face for a long time, so that you would not see them, nor strike us. And our sins have answered against us, so that we receive what we deserve. And our crimes are with us: we have recognized our injustices, which we used to think were righteousness for a long time. But what are these injustices? To sin and to lie against God: or as Aquila translated according to the Hebrew, to deny God: which refers to the Savior. And they say: We have abandoned our God, saying: We know that God spoke to Moses: but we do not know where this one comes from (John 9:29), so that we may speak false accusations, If this man were from God, he would not break the Sabbath (Ibid., 16). And he cast out devils from the prince of devils (Luke 11:15). And transgression, which is more significantly called apostasy in Greek, is when someone denies God and is accused of rebellion. We have conceived and spoken words of falsehood from the heart, despising the law of God and following the traditions of men, which they call second commandments, and which we have pretended in our heart. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice stands afar off. For what part does justice have with iniquity? What fellowship does Christ have with Belial? Righteousness has stood among the nations and has departed from us, for truth has fallen in the squares. For the way that leads to death is wide and spacious (Matthew 7), for they refused to enter the narrow path where truth resides. And truth has been forgotten, as it is written: Truth has sprung up from the earth, and righteousness has looked down from heaven (Psalm 85:12). It should be noted that the truth is frequently mentioned in order to show the person of Christ, whom they abandoned and followed falsehood. And he who departed from evil was exposed to plunder. Although this may seem obscure, it can be explained as follows: when we fabricate lies from our own hearts and abandon God's law, righteousness remains far away, and truth falls in the streets, and fairness cannot enter us, and the Son of God, who is the truth, is forgotten: to such an extent that whoever desires to depart from the traditions of the Jews immediately becomes exposed to snares and persecutions, so that they expelled the man blind from birth who received sight from the synagogues (John 9). And after the resurrection of the Lord Savior, all those who believed in him were persecuted and stripped: to whom the ministries of the Church were directed, which were distributed through the hands of the Apostles to the whole world of the nations.

59:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) And the Lord saw, and evil appeared in his eyes: because there is no justice, and he saw that there is no man, and he was astonished, because there is no one to oppose. And his own arm will save him: and his righteousness itself will strengthen him. He is clothed with righteousness as with a breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head. He is clothed with garments of vengeance, and covered with a cloak of zeal. As for revenge, it is like retaliation for his enemies, and retribution for his foes; he will repay the islands. LXX: The Lord saw, and it displeased him that there was no justice. He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede; then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him. He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in fury as in a mantle, repaying his enemies with their just deserts. Up to this point, the prophetic discourse has been from the perspective of the people: now the prophet speaks from his own perspective. While they were saying these things, the Lord saw that they were professing repentance with their mouths, but not acting with their hearts, and this did not please Him. For He sought truth in judgment among them, which had been transferred to the nations, but He did not find it. He desired a righteous man who could meet Him in anger, but He did not find one; as He had previously said: 'I came, and there was no man; I called, and there was none to hear.' (Isaiah 50:2) And because those who persist in wickedness, not even one righteous person is found: but all have turned away, and together they have become useless; there is no one who does good, not even one (Psalm 14). But God has strengthened him with his arm and righteousness, and confirmed him with mercy, so that those who desire to turn from error may be saved not by their own merit, but by God's mercy. Finally, he has put on the armor of righteousness, and the helmet of salvation, and the garments of vengeance, and has wrapped himself in the cloak of zeal. Thus, armed, he has gone forth to battle, to exact vengeance upon his enemies. Without a doubt, this signifies the Jews, who persist in blasphemies, and the Roman army surrounding their enemies. When they are conquered, the Lord is shown to have fought. Paul used this testimony when writing to the Ephesians, and wanting us to put on the armor of Christ, by which we may be able to resist the fiery darts of the devil (Ephesians 6). And this is not found in the Septuagint: He will repay the islands, that is, he means the cities of Judea, which the Roman army devastated. For also above (Chapter 20), the Lord speaks to the inhabitants of the island, that is, to Jerusalem, through the Prophet.

59:19-20

(Verse 19, 20) And those from the West shall fear the name of the Lord, and those from the East, His glory, when He comes like a rushing river, driven by the breath of the Lord. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to those who turn from wickedness in Jacob, says the Lord. This is my covenant with them, says the Lord: My spirit, which is in you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, says the Lord, from now on and forever. LXX: And those from the west shall fear the name of the Lord, and those from the east, the glorious name. For he shall come like a violent river, the wrath of the Lord. He shall come with fury and he shall come from Zion to deliver. And he shall turn away wickedness from Jacob, and this shall be a covenant to them from me, says the Lord. My spirit, which is in you, and my words, which I have given in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, and from the mouth of your seed, says the Lord, from now and forever. After the Lord is clothed with the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, and the garments of vengeance, and is clad

with the cloak of zeal for battle, and comes to the contest and vindication, in order to repay the enemies and render to his adversaries, and to subvert their islands, that is, their cities and villages, then the foreigners who come from the West and the East, in order to rest in the bosom of Abraham (Matthew 8), of whom it is also said above (Isaiah 49:12), 'Behold, these will come from far away, some from the West, and some from the North, and some from the land of the Persians, they will fear the Lord with that fear which is the beginning of wisdom (Sirach 1).' Of which we read in many places, from which let us put a few: Blessed is the man who fears the Lord (Psalm 111:1). And: There is no want for those who fear Him (Psalm 34:10). And: The fear of the Lord is discipline and wisdom (Proverbs 15:33). And: Come, my children, listen to me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord (Psalm 34:12). And: Blessed is the man who fears the Lord (Psalm 127:4). And: The fear of the Lord prolongs days (Proverbs 10:27). But that after Israel is rejected, a multitude of Gentiles succeeds, the prophet Malachi teaches more fully, in which it is said to the Jews: My will is not in you, says the Lord Almighty. And I will not accept a sacrifice from your hands (Malachi 1:10,11). And again from the multitude of nations: From the rising of the sun to its setting, my name is glorified among the nations. The author of this blessing is the one who will come like a violent river, whom the spirit of the Lord forces. Whether as the eagle carries, like a narrow river, the spirit of the Lord is his seal. Or as Theodotio, like a river attacking, the spirit of the Lord is sealed. In this passage, which the Seventy have translated, the anger of the Lord will come with fury, like a violent river. The last part is not found in the Hebrew. For in the promises of God, anger and fury should not be placed, since in the other things that follow, there is the blessedness of the future and the threat and punishment of sinners. However, according to Aquila and Theodotion, the Spirit of the Lord, who is sealed in Christ, confirms that example which is read in the Gospel of John: 'For him, God the Father has sealed' (John 6:27); about whom it was previously said: 'A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord' (Isaiah 11:1-2). Therefore, we also say: 'The light of your face, O Lord, has shone upon us' (Psalm 4:7). And in Ezekiel, the foreheads of weeping men are marked with the letter Thav, the last Hebrew letter among them, by an imprint (Ezek. 9). But if we want to know how the Holy Spirit is a violent river, let us turn to the Acts of the Apostles, in which it is written: When they were all together in one place, suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which settled upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:2-3). It follows: 'A Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from wickedness in Jacob,' says the Lord. For this reason, the Seventy translated it: 'A Deliverer will come from Zion, and will turn away wickedness from Jacob.' Therefore, if He will come from Zion to turn away wickedness from Jacob, we understand that a man will be born in Zion, and the Most High will establish it, He who turns away the crimes of Jacob. But if the Redeemer of Zion shall come and those who return from iniquity in Jacob, says the Lord, this is the meaning: Christ will come who will redeem Zion with his blood. Or according to Hebrew custom, who is near to Zion and born of the lineage of Israel, for this is what Goel (i.e., γκιστες) means. And lest we think that all of Zion is redeemed and delivered from the bloody sins of the Lord, he significantly adds: those who return from iniquity, if they are willing to repent, in whom the Lord's prayer is fulfilled: Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34). Therefore their redemption is in Zion: and the one who receives him from Jacob, and he promises to them, saying:

This is my covenant with them, whether the agreement, as all others transferred, or the testament, as the Seventy have set forth. But what the covenant, agreement, and testament are, the following verse shows: My spirit, he says, who is in you, and my words that I have placed in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your seed, from now on and forever. What is said either to Isaiah, as it seems to me, or to the Lord, as most people think. Therefore, the order is connected to Isaiah in this way: This is the everlasting covenant of the Gospel, that my spirit which is in you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, by which you will foretell the future, may not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouths of your sons and grandsons, and your descendants, so that every generation may be shown: that is, that the grace of the Prophets may come in the Apostles, and through them, to those who will believe in Israel through the Apostles. But what He adds is in perfect harmony with this testimony: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Matthew 24:35). Expounding this passage carefully, Paul writes to the Romans that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, but the Lord is the Lord of all, rich unto all that call upon him. (Romans 10). And that the Gentiles have not so believed, as that Israel should be entirely rejected. For I also, says He, am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people, whom He foreknew (Romans. XXII). And after a little while, when he had set an example with Elijah, who complained to the Lord that he alone was left, and heard from Him that the Lord had reserved for Himself seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings. XIX), he brought it to this: Even so now, at this time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. What therefore is it? What Israel was seeking, this it has attained: but the elect have obtained it, and the rest have been blinded. And if they shall remain not in unbelief, they shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the wild olive tree, which is natural to thee; and contrary to nature, were grafted into the good olive tree; how much more shall they that are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery (lest you should be wise in your own conceits)... Because blindness has happened in part to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles enters, and so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins (Rom. 11:25-27). We have explained this in more detail so that whatever promises we read and will say, we understand them to be said specifically to Zion and Jerusalem, not generally to all Jews, but specifically to those who were chosen in the Apostles and through the Apostles from Israel.

Book Seventeen

Book Seventeen.

I would like to briefly go through with the virgin of Christ, Eustochium, how many mysteries the seventeenth number contains, to which now the book of Explanations has come in Isaiah in the holy Scriptures. But because I cannot say everything in every place, I strictly admonish this: that the psalm, which is noted with the title of this number, is of the Son of David, and he sang the words of the Canticle on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul, and he said, 'I will love you, Lord, my strength,' and so on. But this is the servant of the Lord, of whom the Father speaks in Isaiah: 'It is a great thing for you to be called my servant' (Isaiah 44). And in another place: 'Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in

whom my soul is well pleased' (Isaiah 42, 2). This servant, who is interpreted as 'mighty in hand,' on the day when the Lord freed him from the hand of Saul; who in our language, sounds like 'desirable' or 'inferno,' and from all his enemies, who cried out against him: 'Crucify, crucify such a man' (Luke 23), when he ascended as the victorious one to the Father in glorious apparel from Bosra, among other things he spoke the words of a triumphant one: 'Deliver me from the contradictions of the people: you shall make me the head of the nations.' The people that I have not known, has served me: at the hearing of the ear, they have obeyed me (Ps. XVII, 44, 45). And again of the people of Juda: The strange children have lied to me: strange children have grown old, and have halted from their paths (Ibid., 46); to whom Elias also said: How long do you halt on both sides (II Reg. XVIII, 21)? Finally, what is difficult to find in others, this psalm is contained both in Samuel and in the Chronicles (II Reg. XXII). He who, progressing from one number to seven, comes to the twenty-eighth psalm, which is also titled David, in the completion of the tabernacle, when the Angels are commanded: Bring to the Lord sons of God: bring to the Lord sons of rams. And all the saving waters of baptism and mysteries of the Church are sung: The voice of the Lord is over the waters: The God of majesty has thundered: The Lord is over many waters, the voice of the Lord is with power (Ps. 28:1): And after a little while: The voice of the Lord preparing his servants, and has revealed the depths, and in his Temple, all shall declare his glory (Ibid., 3, 10). And in order to demonstrate the multitude of believers, he introduced: The Lord made the flood to inhabit, and the Lord will sit as king forever. And again, by adding the eighth sacrament, he creates the written thirty-sixth psalm, the beginning of which is: Do not be envious of evildoers, nor be jealous of those who do iniquity. The explanation of this, not of the preface, but of the proper volume. And lest we now repeat many things, until the fifteenth number by increasing additions, in which there are degrees of psalms, and the vessel of election resides with Peter in Jerusalem, it makes the one hundred and twentieth number, who were the first believers in Christ and ascended with the Apostles to the upper room of faith (Acts 5): and the Holy Spirit descended upon them (Galatians 1). And going up to the seventeenth number in order, and possessing the dignity of the Gospel, at the Lord's command from the right side, he catches one hundred and fifty-three large fish and places them in the Church (John 21). To whom now the prophet Isaiah speaks.

60:1-3

(Chapter 60—Verse 1 and following) Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. 70: Arise, arise, O Jerusalem, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. Behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples. But the Lord will appear great upon you, and His glory will be seen in you. And nations will walk in your light, and kings in the splendor of your light. Regarding what we think about the restoration of Zion and Jerusalem, and all that is promised to it by prophetic prediction, we have spoken more fully at the end of the previous book, where we have interpreted what that verse meant: Zion's Redeemer will come, and to those who turn away from wickedness in Jacob. Now we must briefly examine what most people think about this place, so that after understanding the mistake, we can more easily accept the truth. The Jews and our half-Jews, who expect a golden and gem-studded Jerusalem to descend from heaven, argue that these things will happen in the thousand-year reign, when all nations will be subject to Israel, and

the camels of Midian and Ephah, coming from Sheba, will bring gold and frankincense, and all the flocks of Kedar will be gathered, and the rams of Nebaioth will come to be sacrificed on the altar of the Temple, which will have been built. Also, the daughters of that land, especially the ships of Tarshish, will fly like doves, bringing treasures of gold and silver. And the walls of Jerusalem will be built by foreigners, who will be ruled by kings from foreign nations. The gates of the city will always be open, day and night, to allow the wealth of Jerusalem and the offerings to be brought in. And everything that was once desolate will be rebuilt with cypress, pine, and cedar from Lebanon. The Temple of the Lord, in particular, will be constructed, where there will be eternal joy. It will draw in the milk of nations and consume the treasures of kings. There will be such abundance of all things that bronze will be valued like gold, iron like silver, and wood like bronze, and even stones like iron. Moreover, the princes will enjoy eternal peace, and the bishops will lead the people in righteousness, and the gates will be future symbols. And what is greater than this, the Lord Himself will shine with eternal light, replacing the sun and the moon. And for one man, it will be equal to a thousand mighty warriors, and for the little ones, it will be possessed by the strongest nations. These are the words of those who desire earthly pleasures and seek the beauty of wives and the number of children, for whom God is their belly, and their glory is in their shame (Philippians 3). Those who follow their error confess themselves to be similar to the Jews under the name of Christians. Others, however, assert that all these things were promised to the Jews in a carnal manner, if they had received him who says in the Gospel: I am the light of the world (John 8:12), which enlightens every person coming into the world, so that just as the sacrifices were granted to the people of Israel, not because they were good in themselves, but so that they would not be offered to demons, in the same way the Lord promises these things to the gluttonous Jews, who seek nothing else but bodily pleasures, so that at least for their carnal desires and their abundance of wealth, they would receive the Son of God. Because they did not receive him, the promises also became void. Finally, to the Canaanite woman begging for her daughter: 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matthew 15:24). And to his disciples: 'Do not go into the road of the Gentiles, and do not enter the cities of the Samaritans; instead, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matthew 10:5, 6). For this reason, the Apostles first preached the Lord in the synagogues, but when the people did not receive the Gospel, they said to them: 'It was necessary to preach the word to you, but since you did not accept salvation, behold, we turn to the Gentiles' (Acts 13:46). For the light indeed came into the world, but the Jews loved darkness more. Therefore, when the Lord wept over Jerusalem, He added: If you had known, even you, the things that are for your peace (Luke 19:42). Because they did not receive this, He brought upon them: But now the days will come upon you, and your enemies will surround you with a rampart, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground, and your children within you (Ibid., 43). However, according to the previous meaning, let us believe that all these things are said about the Church, which was first gathered from the Jewish people, and the light that had risen upon her was transmitted to the Gentiles through the Apostles. To whom it is said: Rise, shine; so that what has fallen among the unbelievers may rise among the Faithful: what has fallen in the synagogues may rise in the Churches: and once it has risen, may it be illuminated, so that they may have no darkness of error. For behold, your light comes, which all the Prophets promised, which you have awaited continually. And the glory of the Lord, which once was upon his tabernacle and his Temple, has risen upon you: of which it is said: Glorious things are spoken of you, City of God (Ps. 86:2). For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and a mist the people: but the Lord shall arise

upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD. And the nations will walk in your light. We all will walk in the light of the Apostles, which shines in the world, and the darkness did not comprehend it. And the kings, he says, in the splendor of your birth: when you were first born in Christ. This is fulfilled both spiritually and carnally, as kings whose heart is in the hand of the Lord, and in whom sin does not reign in the mortal body (Prov. 21:1), walk in the splendor of the nascent Church, or in him who has risen in the Church, and submit to the yoke of the true king, the faith of Christ (Rom. 6:14). What we see fulfilled every day when the error of idolatry is removed, and the rage of persecution, Roman leaders pass to the faith and tranquility of Christ. There are those who await these things that we remember from the first coming of the Savior until the consummation of the world, both in part completed and fully to be fulfilled in the future, when the fullness of the Gentiles enters and all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11). The opinion of no one should be condemned, as long as it is spiritually fulfilled and not known carnally. Furthermore, the name Jerusalem and the nations, which are placed here by the Septuagint, are not found in Hebrew, and it should be noted with an obelus, against those who claim that everything that is said is said about Jerusalem.

60:4

(Verse 4.) Lift up your eyes all around and see: all these gathered together have come to you. Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried at your side. LXX: Lift up your eyes all around and see: all your sons have gathered together. Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on shoulders. It is said to the Church, which was first gathered in Zion by the Apostles, of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that religious men from the whole world were in Jerusalem, who received the word of God in their own and foreign tongues, either hearing others speaking or speaking to others themselves (Acts II). And it is commanded that they lift up their eyes around: which the Lord also commanded the Apostles, saying: Lift up your eyes, and see, for the fields are already white for harvest (John 4:35). For out of Zion, and not out of Mount Sinai, shall the law come forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And it is commanded that with lifted eyes he see his gathered children, who come from afar. To whom it is also said in another place: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, proclaim, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold, I come, and I will dwell in your midst, says the Lord (Zephaniah 3:17); and, Many nations shall come to the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God (Zechariah 2:11). But we are the sons who have come from afar to the Lord, once pilgrims from the Testament of God and His promises, having no hope and without God in the world. But what does the Apostle say? You who were once far away, have now been made near (Ephesians 2:13). And what follows: 'And your daughters shall be nursed at your side,' signifies that souls nurturing in Christ, and in the baptism of infants, of whom also the Apostle Peter speaks, 'As newborn babes, desire the genuine milk of the word, that you may grow thereby' (1 Peter 2:2), shall suckle the milk of the Apostles. He spoke to them as little children and infants, saying: My little children, for whom I am in labor again

until Christ is formed in you (Galatians 4:19). And in another place: Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of Christ but also our own lives (1 Thessalonians 2:7-8). It should be noted that the statement in the Septuagint, 'your daughters will be carried on their shoulders,' is especially important. For the sons, who are strong, they themselves come from afar and gather to the faith of the Lord. But the daughters, who are weaker, and because of the fragility of their sex, have not yet come to maturity as women, are carried on the shoulders of the Apostles, in order to be brought into the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

60:5

(Verse 5) Then you will see, and you will be wealthy, and your heart will be amazed and expanded: when the multitude of the sea turns to you, the strength of the nations will come to you. LXX: Then you will see, and you will be afraid, and you will be astonished in your heart: for the riches of the sea and the nations and the peoples will be transferred to you. When you lift up your eyes and see your sons and daughters coming quickly or being carried on the shoulders of the holy ones, then you will rejoice, and you will be flooded with sudden waters like rivers, and your heart will be amazed and expanded, hearing the Apostle say: My mouth is open to you, O Corinthians. And again: Expand yourselves, and us (2 Corinthians 6:11); lest you not be able to have Christ as a guest in your narrow heart, who says in the Gospel: My Father and I will come and make our dwelling with him (John 14:23). But that which is added in the Septuagint, 'and you shall fear,' is not found in the Hebrew. Unless perhaps after the greatness of joy, fear has entered lest such a great good be lacking. Is it not joy, to see riches and the multitude of the seas transferred and converted to oneself, and the strength of nations coming to oneself, so that whatever is in the world and the earth's orbit is one's own; and with faith strengthened, the nations say: I can do all things in him who strengthens me, Jesus Christ (Philippians 4:13)?

60:6-7

(Verse 6, 7) The flood of camels shall cover you, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah. All those from Sheba shall come, bringing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the praise of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall be offered on my acceptable altar, and I will glorify the house of my majesty. LXX: And the herds of camels shall come to you, the camels of Midian and Ephah shall cover you; all those from Sheba shall come, bringing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the salvation of the Lord. All the flocks of Cedar shall be gathered unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The regions of Midian and Ephah are across Arabia, fertile for camels, and the whole province is called Sheba, where the Queen of

Sheba was, who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and she brought gold and frankincense, bringing many things to the peaceful king, and receiving even greater things from him (3 Kings 10). But the region of the Saracens is called Kedar, who are called Ishmaelites in Scripture. And Nebajoth is one of the sons of Ishmael, from whose names the desert is named, which is lacking in crops but full of cattle. Therefore, through the names of the barbarian peoples who are near Israel, the conversion of the whole world is preached. For Midian, indeed, is interpreted as wickedness in this place. Ephah, loosened, or pouring out. Sheba, conversion, or captivity. Kedar, darkness. Nebajoth, prophecies. Therefore, the flocks of camels, being freed from the bonds of wickedness and pouring out their souls to God, will cover Jerusalem with gifts, and all will come out of captivity, bringing the gold of faith with their conversion, and the incense of sacrifice. And not content with these gifts, they will progress, so that they may preach the salvation of God to others as well. That rich man, who carried the weight of riches like a camel in the Gospel, and a camel he was, did not want to hear the Lord's advice, nor be freed, so that, having thrown off the burden, he could fly to heaven on the wings of a dove; therefore, he went away sad. And about this kind of camel, the Savior speaks: It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:24). She proposed the difficulty of the thing, not the impossibility. Finally, your mother of sacred memory, Paula, and your brother Pammachius, through the eye of a needle, that is, through a narrow and tight path that leads to life, passed through the stars of heaven, leaving behind the wide road with burdens, which leads to Tartarus. Indeed, they carried whatever they had as gifts of the Lord, fulfilling what is written: The redemption of a man's soul is his own riches (Prov. XIII, 8). For what is impossible among humans is possible for God (Matthew 19). Having as principal gifts gold, in the sense of the best odor, and incense, and saying: Let my prayer be directed like incense in your sight. And: We are the good odor of Christ in every place (2 Corinthians 2, 15); by the example of his virtue, announcing the salvation of the Lord every day, so that all the sheep of Kedar may be gathered in the Church, and may pass from the darkness of error to the light. The rams of the Prophets, about whom it is sung in Psalm 28: Bring to the Lord, O sons of God, bring to the Lord the sons of rams, let them come and be offered, or according to Theodotion, let them offer themselves as a sacrifice to the Lord, and let them become propitiatory victims, so that the Church of Christ may be glorified. The Savior spoke to his disciples about these kinds of sheep: Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:3). And again: My sheep hear my voice (John 10:3). And in Ezekiel more fully: Behold, I will seek my sheep, and I will visit them: as the shepherd visiteth his flock. Thus saith the Lord God: I will require that which is lost, and bring back that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was weak, and that which was strong I will preserve: and I will feed them in judgment (Ezech. XXXIV, 11, 12). And that we may know what those sheep are, He explains more clearly: And they shall know that I am the Lord their God: and you, O my flocks, the flocks of my pasture, are men: and I am the Lord your God (Ibid., 27, 28). If therefore anyone among the Gentiles is wealthy, let him be saved like a camel, not without gifts and offerings, so that he may preach the word of the Lord. If anyone is like the simplicity of sheep and the authority of rams, let him ascend or be offered on the altar of the Lord by those who are in power, so that his house may be glorified. But what we have noted in Hebrew script: The rams of Nabajoth shall minister to you, and they shall offer on my acceptable altar, is properly understood of those who, chosen from among the Gentiles, are ministers of the Savior. But if someone is contentious and disputes these things in a carnal way, let us respond to him: We do

not have such a custom, nor does the Church of God (1 Corinthians 11:16). And let us say that even if these things were promised carnally to the Jews, they were still promised conditionally, so that if they had received their own light, which had been sent to them, then they would also have followed these things. Namely, that through desire for gold and the abundance of wealth and carnal things, by which this nation was always captivated, they would receive the sent Son of God to themselves. But because they did not receive him, everything was taken away and the inheritance was spiritually restored to those who receive it.

60:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) Who are these who fly like clouds, and like doves to their windows? For the coastlands wait for me, and the ships of the sea are in the lead, to bring your sons from afar, with their silver and gold, to the name of the Lord your God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you. LXX: Who are these who fly like clouds, and like doves with their young to me? The coastlands have waited for me, and the ships of Tarshish in the first place, to bring your sons from afar, and their silver and gold with them, for the sake of the holy name of the Lord, and because the Holy One of Israel has been glorified. Because the Lord entered Egypt on a light cloud, and through the clouds he commanded the prophets not to rain upon Israel, the Church, to whom the truth of God had come, marvels at the first people gathered for circumcision, that a crowd of Gentiles from the whole world flies to her. And with the wings of the Holy Spirit taken up, they hasten, according to Symmachus and Theodotion, to her windows; according to Aquila, to her waterfalls, that they may enter the Church. Or the teachers with their disciples, that is, doves with their chicks, will fly to the church from the islands of the gentiles, which, according to the prophecies of the prophets, will await the Lord. The ships of Tarshish, that is, of the sea, about which we have spoken more fully in the vision of Tyre, will also bring the children of the Church at the beginning of faith, carrying gold and silver. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. X, 10). In the sixty-seventh psalm, it is written: 'The wings of the dove are silver, and its back is gold in brightness' (Psalm 70:14). And in the seventy-first psalm: 'The kings of Tarshish and the islands shall bring gifts, and the kings of Arabia and Sheba shall offer gifts' (Psalm 71:10). All these things are brought to the name of the Lord God and the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified him.

60:10-12

(Verse 10 and following) And the sons of strangers will build your walls, and their kings will serve you. In my indignation I struck you, but in my mercy I have shown you compassion; and your gates will always be open, never closed day or night, so that the strength of the nations may come to you and their kings may be brought. Indeed, any nation or kingdom that does not serve you will perish, and the nations will be devastated. For because of my anger I struck you, and because of my mercy I have loved you. And your gates shall always be open; they shall not be shut day or night, so that the strength of the nations may come to you, and their kings who are to be brought. For the nations and kings who do not serve you shall perish; the nations shall be devastated in their desolation. Among the many things with which the Church is enriched, and the city of the Savior is built, foreigners and sons of foreigners also build its walls, so that the enemy cannot enter and find a place for treachery. But aliens and foreigners properly signify the people of nations who have truly built the Church of Christ, to such an extent that their kings and princes serve and assist her.

This is either understood in a literal sense or in a spiritual sense. If understood literally, we see that the Roman Caesars submit their necks to the yoke of Christ and build churches at public expense, and rely on the laws against the persecutions of the nations and the snares of the heretics. If, spiritually, those who possess self-control, eloquence, holiness, are leaders, and through the power of their souls subjugate the servitude of the flesh, they themselves govern and assist, they come to the aid of him whom he often abandons due to negligence or strikes with the rod of persecutors, so that again, out of his own mercy, he may love him. Or certainly this must be said, that he may reconcile to himself the once afflicted and handed over to captivity among the people of the Jews, in the calling of the Gentiles, so that its gates may always be open, and neither day nor night be closed, and may continually be open to those who desire salvation, that is, that the entrance may not be denied to those who wish to believe in joy and in tribulation. And let strength be brought to her, whether it be the wealth of nations; and let her kings serve her or be led to her as captives. Then you will understand, when you see the most eloquent being brought to the faith of Christ; and the folly of the wisdom of the wise becoming foolish, and the prudence of the prudent being rejected (1 Corinthians 1): so that the wisdom of God may be wiser than men. But the nations and their kings who refuse to serve the Church in good and useful service, in order to be transferred into the Apostolic dignity, will perish in the destruction that is prepared for the wicked, and whatever is in them will be reduced to solitude, for they have refused to receive God as their guest.

60:13-14

(Verses 13, 14.) The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the cypress, the fir tree, and the pine tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will glorify the place of my feet. The descendants of those who oppressed you will come to you bent low, and all who spoke against you will bow down at your feet and call you the city of the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. LXX: The glory of Lebanon will come to you with the cypress, the pine tree, and the cedar tree together to glorify my holy place, and I will glorify the place of my feet. And those who have humiliated you, and have provoked you, will come to you trembling, and they will bow down at your feet, all those who have provoked you; and you will be called the city of the Lord, Zion. Sancti Israel. Many things are missing in the Septuagint, which I have placed under asterisks from the Hebrew, and what they have added, I have marked with an obelus. Mount Lebanon is a mountain in Phoenicia, planted with tall trees, which the Psalmist describes saying: I have seen the wicked exalted and lifted up like the cedars of Lebanon (Ps. 36:35). And in another place: The Lord will shatter the cedars of Lebanon (Ps. 29:5). And many other things that I pass over for the sake of brevity. About this, once King Hiram of Tyre used to send cedars to Solomon in Joppa for the building of the Temple of God (3 Kings 5). Concerning this, Scripture also now promises the fir tree, the box tree, and the pine tree, or according to the Septuagint, the cypress tree and the pine tree, and the cedar tree, or according to Aquila, the fir tree, the thaadaor tree, and the thaassur tree; or according to Theodotion, the Brais tree, the Thadaar tree, and the Theassur tree, should be cut down together, so that the temple of Zion may be built (2 Chronicles 2). But if this is the case, where will the golden and jeweled Jerusalem be? Where will the Lamb's wife be? Where will the twelve gates, distinguished by a variety of precious stones, be? Unless perhaps it will be built with walls adorned with gems, and its foundation, and the Temple, which ought to be more beautiful, will be built with wood. By what means are we compelled to understand all things spiritually, that the fir, cypress,

pine, and cedar, once lofty trees of Lebanon, have glorified the Temple of God, and made His holy place illustrious? So that I do not drag out the sense in a lengthy discourse, does not the holy and most eloquent martyr Cyprian, and the confessor Hilary of our time, seem to you to have built the Church of God like once towering trees in the world? And what follows: And they shall come to you bowed down, or returning, the sons of those who humbled you, and they shall adore the steps of your feet, all who detracted from you, we should understand this about those who are Christians not by choice but by necessity, and who, fearing the offense of the rulers, bend with fearful minds. Certainly, what persecutors believed later. Such was also the apostle Paul, who persecuted the Church of God, and later was called a vessel of election (Acts 9). When this has been fulfilled, so that the fullness of the Gentiles may enter, then all Israel will be saved. And it will be truly called the city of the Lord Zion, Holy Israel, which stands on a hill and is gathered from both peoples.

60:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) Because you were abandoned and hated, with no one to pass by, I will make you a pride for all generations, a joy from generation to generation. You will suck the milk of the nations and nurse at the breast of kings. And you will know that I am the Lord, your Savior and strong Redeemer, Jacob. LXX: Because you were abandoned and hated, with no one to help, I will make you an eternal exultation, a joy for generations to come. And you shall suck the milk of nations, and you shall eat the riches of kings. And you shall know that I am the Lord who saves you, and who redeems you, the God of Jacob. What was previously abandoned and despised, with broken branches because they did not bear fruit, they were broken because there was no one to pass by and provide help there. Concerning them it is said in the psalms: And those who passed by did not say: The Lord's blessing upon you (Ps. 128:8); therefore I will make you an everlasting pride, or a source of joy and gladness for two generations: for the former branches, others inserted from the wild olive tree of nations, which will bring forth fruit contrary to their natural example, not of bitterness, but of sweetness, which they have taken from the root. You will suck the milk of the nations, and the breast of kings you will nurse. We have explained in greater detail the meaning of this place, discussing that verse, 'Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall nurse at your side.' Or according to the Septuagint, you will eat the riches of kings. These riches, according to the Hebrew truth, are the breasts of kings and doctors, by which the infancy of those born in Christ is educated and nourished. When you have sucked and have come to solid food, so that you also eat the riches of kings of this kind, then you will know that I am your Savior, who redeemed you with my blood, or the mighty God of Jacob.

60:17-18

(Vers. 17 seqq.) I will bring gold instead of bronze, and silver instead of iron, and bronze instead of wood, and iron instead of stones; and I will appoint peace as your overseer, and justice as your ruler. No more shall iniquity be heard in your land, devastation and destruction within your borders; but your walls shall be called Salvation, and your gates Praise. LXX: I will bring gold instead of bronze for you, and silver instead of iron, and bronze instead of wood, and iron instead of stones. And I will give your princes peace, and your bishops justice, and in your land no more iniquity will be heard, nor affliction and misery in your borders; but your walls shall be called Salvation, and your gates Praise. The same thing applies to places, some being foreign, others native. And lest I should seem to say anything about the arts of rhetoric and dialectic, I will give common examples

that can instruct the average reader. My son, who resembles me and has my nature, has a son of his own. Let me also say something else: one is greater, the other is lesser. The centurion is greater than the common soldier, but lesser than the tribune. There are few compared to ten: more compared to one. Therefore, in the spiritual restoration of Jerusalem, wood will turn into bronze, and stones will be transformed into iron. That is, once brutish and insensitive men will be transformed into those materials that provide some utility to the city. And brass and iron will be changed into gold and silver through the growth of virtues, so that they may not only have the appearance of usefulness, but also value and beauty. We have often spoken about what gold and silver signify in the Holy Scriptures. 'I will set your rulers in peace, and your bishops in justice,' says the Lord. Concerning this, it is written in Hebrew: 'I will appoint your visitation as peace, and your overseers as justice.' In the Holy Scriptures, the marvelous majesty is evident, as it named the future rulers of the Church as bishops, whose entire visitation is in peace, and the title of their dignity is in justice. So that no partiality is shown in judgment, nor anything wicked is heard in the land of the Church, nor affliction and misfortune in its territories. Wherever there is iniquity and justice is not observed, and peace is lost, all these things will follow. But for these reasons, he says, salvation will occupy all your walls, whether the savior, who is called Jesus in Hebrew, which properly means the name of the Lord. For he is the strength of the walls of the Church, which has gates in praise of the Lord: so that those who enter it may first learn to praise the Lord, and confess his name. And what the Seventy have interpreted for praise as γλυμμοι, that is, sculpture, we can say that the gates of the Church should be engraved with virtues, through which we enter it.

60:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) The sun will no longer be your light by day, nor will the splendor of the moon shine on you; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. Your sun will never set again, and your moon will not decrease; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning will be fulfilled. LXX: And there will be no more sun for you to shine by day, nor will the moon's light shine on you at night; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. For the sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. And the Lord will be an everlasting light, and your days of mourning will be ended. From this chapter, we are compelled to refer all that has been said and will be said, to the final time: when the sun and moon cease their function as they pass through heaven and earth. And the Lord Himself will be a perpetual light, so that what the carnal-minded assert to be fulfilled in a thousand years, we may believe will be fulfilled spiritually, in the quality of the promises, not differing in time. To these things it must be briefly answered that if the sun sets at noon for false prophets and sinners, and conversely, the sun of justice rises for those who fear the Lord: why then does the one who says, 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12), who shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not comprehended him (John 1)? For indeed, the sun does not scorch us during the day, nor does the moon during the night (Psalm 121:6). Because we have the Lord as our perpetual light, and the days of our mourning will be fulfilled, not in the lamentation of the destruction of Jerusalem, but in the rejoicing of the instruction of the Church. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are those who weep, for they will laugh. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied (Matthew 5). After being satisfied with the flesh of the Lord, they will proclaim the word of the Lord and declare their works to the king (Psalm 44).

60:21-22

(Vers. 21, 22.) But your people, all the righteous, will inherit the land forever, the offspring of my planting: the work of my hands for glorification. The least will become a thousand, and the smallest will become a mighty nation. I, the Lord, will do this suddenly in its time. LXX: Your people, all the righteous, will always possess the land: preserving the plantation, the works of their hands for glory. The one who is small will become a thousand, and the least will become a great nation. I, the Lord, will gather them in due time. After the days of mourning and completion, when sadness turns into joy, the people of Zion will be completely righteous, not for a short time, but forever. And because they are righteous, they will possess the gentle land. It is not surprising if the land of the meek and the living holds the good things of the promise, which the Prophet yearns for, saying: I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living (Ps. 26:13), since it is the offspring of the Lord's planting and the work of His hands to glorify God. For every plant, my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. (Matt. 15). According to the Septuagint, the people who keep God's plantation and the works of the Lord will be saved in the glory of the Creator. God speaks about a good plantation through Jeremiah: I planted you a good and true vine, which is called the vine of Sorec in Isaiah. (Isa. 5). And because Paul, with the consciousness of Christ speaking in him, could say: Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. (1 Cor. 11:1), therefore he spoke to the Corinthians: I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. (1 Cor. 3:6). For they who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God (Psalm 92). Then the one who was small shall become a thousand, and the least shall become a mighty nation, hearing from the Lord: You shall have authority over five or ten cities (Luke 19:17, 19); so that he shall be called a chiliarch. And he who, along with the Apostle, said: To me, the least of all the saints, this grace was given (Ephesians 3:8), shall be a prince of a great nation in the heavens, when the Lord sends his angels at the appointed time, and they gather together to him all the saints, from the highest heaven to the highest of it (Matthew 24): not only from Israel, but also from the people of the Gentiles, whom he was signifying when he said: And I have other sheep that are not of this fold, and it is necessary for me to gather them, so that there shall be one flock and one shepherd (John 10:16). But this will happen suddenly, so that when all things are desperate, then they will gather into the strongest nation. Although we see this being fulfilled in part in the Church every day, it will be more fully completed in the consummation of the world and in the second coming of the Savior.

61:1-2

(Chapter 61—Verse 1 and following) The Spirit of the Lord God (in the Vulgate it is "God") is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me: to bring good news to the meek, He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted (in the Vulgate it is "broken-hearted"), to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to grant to those who mourn in Zion: to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit. LXX: The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of

gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. To whom the Psalmist had already said: You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions (Ps. 45:7). When "companions" are mentioned, understand the nature of the flesh, because God does not have companions of his own substance. And because it was a spiritual anointing, and by no means of the human body, as it was in the priests of the Jews, therefore it is mentioned that he was anointed above his companions, that is, above the other saints. Whose anointing was completed at that time, when he was baptized in the Jordan, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove, and remained in him (John 1). Of whom this same Prophet also said: A branch shall come forth from the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up from his root, and the spirit of God, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety, shall rest upon him (Isaiah 11:1, 2). And when the Savior came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, after being baptized in the Jordan, he entered, according to his custom, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And when he had risen to read, the book of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. And opening the book, he found the place where it was written: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. When He had rolled up the scroll, He gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. Then He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." And all were speaking well of Him and marveling at the gracious words that were falling from His lips. They were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in Your hometown what we have heard that You did in Capernaum.'" And He continued, "Truly I tell you that no prophet is accepted in his hometown. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and great famine swept over all the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian." When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue was enraged. They got up, drove Him out of the town, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, in order to throw Him off the cliff. But Jesus passed through the crowd and went on His way. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. He has been anointed with the Holy Spirit to proclaim good news to the poor or meek, saying to them in the Gospel: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. And he was sent to heal those who are brokenhearted and say: A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Or according to Symmachus and Theodotion, to preach the remission of sins to captives, the ability for the blind to see, or the opening for the closed, which Symmachus interpreted more clearly as the release of the bound. As it is said above, or rather to whom it is said: Behold, I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out those who are bound, and those who sit in darkness out of the prison house (Isaiah 42:6-7). But understand that the acceptable year and day of retribution, the entirety of his preaching in which he was present in the flesh, refers to a specific

time. This is also interpreted by the Apostle Paul in reference to the first coming of the Savior, saying: Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation (1 Corinthians 6:2). We have spoken more fully about this above (Chapter 60). However, if retribution is understood not in the rewards of the good, but in the punishments of sins, then it should be understood in relation to the day of vengeance, which pertains to the Jewish people, upon whom immediately after his passion, the wrath of God came. He consoled all those mourning, saying: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted (Matt. 5); so that he would console those who mourn for Zion and give them a glorious crown instead of ashes. Among them was also the Apostle Paul who mourned for Zion and said: I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish (Rom. 9): And again: I wished myself to be cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kin according to the flesh, who are Israelites (Ibid., 3). And therefore, mourning and lamenting, they received the oil of joy, seeing that many of the Jews had believed, and received the most pure garment, instead of mourning clothing.

61:3-5

(Verse 3-5) And they shall be called in her strong justices, the plantation of the Lord, to glorify. And they shall build the ancient places that were waste, and shall raise up the desolate cities, that were destroyed for generations and generations. And strangers shall stand and shall feed your flocks: and the sons of strangers shall be your husbandmen and your vinedressers. LXX: And they shall be called the generations of justice: the planting of the Lord to glory. And they shall build everlasting desolate places, which were previously deserted, they shall be raised up and renew deserted cities, desolate in generations, and foreigners shall come, and they shall feed your sheep, and the plowmen and vintners of other nations. After the Apostles, and the apostolic men have taken on the spirit of ashes and mourning, the oil of joy, and the garment, or according to the Septuagint, the robe of glory and praise: then they shall be called the generations of righteousness, the glorious planting of the Lord. Or according to the Hebrew, the strong ones, strong with the justice of God, or (according to Al. ut) the planting of the Lord for glorification: so that when they have been glorified, or they themselves have glorified the Lord, they shall build deserted cities from ancient times, and raise up ancient ruins, both the people of Judah and all the nations, who will have not only the knowledge of building and restoring cities, but they shall also be excellent shepherds, so that the old shepherds, to whom God had spoken through Ezekiel saying: O shepherds of Israel, do the shepherds feed themselves and not the sheep? (Ezek. 34:2) Let them hear with the apostle Peter: 'Feed my sheep' (John 21:17). And in a wondrous way, they shall move from being stone workers and shepherds to being farmers, that is, ploughmen and vintners, so that they may say with the Apostle: 'We are God's building, we are God's farm' (1 Corinthians 3:9). Finally, the Savior asks the scribes and Pharisees, the vintners and farmers of the Jews, what he should do to the evil vintners and farmers. And they answered: 'He will destroy the evil ones and give the vineyard to other farmers' (Matthew 21:41). He said to them: 'The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that will produce its fruit' (ibid., 43). These matters do not require interpretation. For how many of the leaders of the Churches are from the Jews, not from foreigners and people of foreign nations? They, who formerly served idols and were strangers to the covenant of God and outsiders to his promises, now lead the Churches and tame the stubborn hearts of the gentiles, previously untamed, to bear the fruits of faith; so that they may multiply the sowing of the Lord's teaching through the abundance of good works.

(Vers. 6, 7.) But you will be called priests of the Lord, ministers of our God. It will be said to you: You will devour the strength of the nations, and in their glory you will boast. Instead of your shame, you will have a double portion, and instead of disgrace, they will rejoice in their inheritance; and so they will inherit a double portion in their land, and everlasting joy will be theirs. For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. LXX: But you will be called priests of the Lord, ministers of our God. You shall devour the strength of nations, and in their riches you shall be admired. Thus they shall possess the land a second time, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. For I am the Lord, who loves justice, and I hate robbery and injustice. The builders of desolate cities and the shepherds of flocks, who themselves are the plowmen and vintners, that is, the sons of strangers, they too are the priests of God, to whom the Prophet now says: But you shall be called the priests of the Lord, and ministers of our God, it shall be said to you: doubtless it signifies the leaders of the churches. Certainly, it is to be understood about the Apostles that there is an order: When builders, shepherds, plowmen, and vine-dressers were appointed over the Churches from the Gentiles, you, about whom it is said: The remnants will be saved (Rom. IX, 27). And: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have been like Sodom, and similar to Gomorrah (Isai. IV, 9), you will be called priests and ministers of God, just as the sons of David were. Of whom the Scripture says: But the sons of David were the priests of God (2 Kings 8:18). They shall devour the strength of the nations, and on their riches they shall be admired. For the glory of children are their fathers, and the profit of the people, the feasts of the priests (Proverbs 17). Concerning such riches, Paul wrote to the Corinthians: I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because in everything you have been enriched in Him, in all speech and in all knowledge, as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you lack no gift in any grace (2 Corinthians 1:4-5). But the courage of the nations is the triumph of the Martyrs: and we are proud in their glory, not with the pride that is a vice, to which God resists, in order to give grace to the humble; but with the pride that is received for power and glory. Therefore, Moses had a horned face, who could say: With you we will scatter our enemies with a horn. And for the pride of glory, the Eagle interprets it as 'and you will be clothed in purple with glory', that is, you will be dressed in purple to show the insignia of royal beauty. And what follows: For their double confusion and shame, they shall praise their own part, which is not found in the Septuagint, seems to me to be explained as follows. Because you had a double confusion, both over the people of Judah, who had turned away from God, and over the nations, who served idols, you will see them converted to the fear of God, praising their own part. Without a doubt, the Lord, of whom he was speaking, is holy: The Lord is my portion (Ps. 73:26). However, no one can say this except those who do not have the other side. Therefore, since you have had double the confusion and shame of their sin, on which they themselves were not ashamed, for this reason, in their own land, that is, in the land of the meek and living, they will possess double: both for the present, and for the future. And they will have eternal joy. For which it is read in the Septuagint, they will possess the land a second time. And there will be eternal joy upon their heads, so that those who possessed the land in the narrowest boundaries of Judaea, afterwards may possess the entire world. Concerning this land, the Father speaks to the Savior: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession (Ps. 2:8). But the Lord, who loves the truth of justice, has granted this, and he hates robbery in the burnt offering. For this reason, the Seventy translated it as 'robbery from injustice,' as if there is any robbery that does not consist of injustice. Therefore,

what he says is this: God loves the poverty of the righteous more than the gifts of the wealthy, which are obtained through plunder and injustice.

61:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) And I will give their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed will be known among the nations, and their offspring in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them, that they are the offspring whom the Lord has blessed. LXX: And I will give their labor to the righteous, and I will establish an eternal covenant with them. And their seed will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. Everyone who sees them will recognize them, that they are the blessed offspring of God. O God, who loves justice and judgment, and detests violent holocausts (for whatever is stolen is considered as the wages of a prostitute, and the price of a dog), you will give labor to those who possess the land secondly and whom you will crown with double joy, to the righteous, or as it is better understood in Hebrew, in truth: so that it may not be like the shadow of truth in the Law, but that it may be the truth itself. And you will make an everlasting covenant, not like the one Moses gave, which has passed away, but the covenant of the Gospel, about which Christ speaks: Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away (Matthew 24:35). And then the Apostolic seed will be known among the nations, and all future generations will receive the seed of the doctrine of God, not saying at all in which the people of circumcision previously erred, saying: For what else, except for the seed, does God seek? Anyone who sees them will recognize from the first appearance that they are the seed to whom the Lord has blessed. For who, from the order of life, gentleness, self-control, hospitality, and all virtues, does not understand the people of God? And who does not detest the bloody hands of the Israelis, against whom the Prophet curses, saying: Fill their faces with shame, O Lord (Ps. LXXXII, 17).

61:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my soul shall exult in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and with the robe of justice he hath covered me, as a bride adorned with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth her seed to shoot forth: so shall the Lord God make justice to spring forth, and praise before all nations. LXX: They shall be glad in the Lord, and shall rejoice in God. For he has clothed me with the garment of salvation and wrapped me in a robe of joy. Like a bridegroom adorned with a crown, like a bride adorned with her jewels, like the earth bringing forth its flower, like a garden with its seeds germinating: so the Lord God brings forth righteousness and praise in the sight of all nations. The beginning of the chapter according to the Septuagint, which says: They shall rejoice with joy in the Lord, is connected to the end of the previous chapter. But according to the Hebrews, the beginning of another chapter is introduced, in which the Church, responding to the words of Christ, says: I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God. Not at all among the fathers, as the Jews used to boast, saying: We are the seed of Abraham and have never been in bondage to anyone (John 8:33); but in God, as Scripture says: The multitude of believers had one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32). And he gives the reasons for joy: Because he has clothed me with the garment of salvation, and with the robe of righteousness and joy, which is called Mail in Hebrew, he has adorned and surrounded me. For as many as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ, and have the garment of righteousness: who has become sanctification,

righteousness, and redemption unto us (Gal. 1). And he sets forth the likeness of two groups in the Church, the perfect and the beginners (I Cor. 1). He compares the perfect to the beauty of the bridegroom; he likens the beginners to the adornment of the bride. Paul was perfect, who, as a decorated bridegroom or, as Aquila translated, crowned priest, bearing the crown, spoke by the authority of Christ in himself, saying: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: from now on there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness (II Tim. IV, 7). And in another place: Therefore, let us be wise in how many soever are perfect (Philippians 3:15). But he begins by drawing a comparison of maturity, when speaking in the person of beginners: When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child (1 Corinthians 13:11). And again: For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away (ibid., 9). And for this reason, the bride is likened to adornment, which adorns the female world, whether, as others have translated, with vessels or with her jewels. And he sets forth examples of the comparison of each, the former of which refers to the bridegroom, the latter to the bride. Just as the earth brings forth its fruit, and is watered by the heavenly rains; and as a garden germinates its seed, which longs for the waters of fountains and rivers: so, he says, the Lord will bring forth righteousness and joy before all nations: not before Israel, so as to shake off the brow of the Jews; but before all nations, who are gathered in the Church.

62:1-3

(Chapter 62, verses 1 and following) For the sake of Zion I will not keep silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. And the nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will name. You shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. (Chapter 70) For the sake of Zion I will not keep silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not rest; until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. And the nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory, and you will be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will name. You will be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. This is what the Lord and Savior said, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me' (Luke 4:18), until the place where it is written: 'All who see them shall acknowledge, that they are the seed which the Lord has blessed' (Isaiah 61:1). After the promise, the Church responded: Rejoicing, I will rejoice in the Lord, who in the third psalm of the degrees, sung with joy from the perspective of the repentant people, said: I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: We will go into the house of the Lord (Ps. 121:1); now the prophet is introduced as saying: For the sake of Zion, I will not keep silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem, I will not rest. Day and night, he says, I will not close my mouth, and my prayer will never be silent; I will cry out for as long as it takes, and I will join prayers with prayers, until the promised one comes and illuminates the whole world with his splendor. He makes it more clear who this person is that he seeks, whom he desires to come: Until his righteous splendor goes forth, and his savior is kindled like a lamp. Or according to the Septuagint: Until his righteousness goes forth like light, and his salvation is kindled like a lamp. This is what was said in the Gospel: I am the light of the world (John 8:12): when it is kindled in Zion and in Jerusalem, it will not shine only in Judea, but it will be said to her: The light that is in you, is kindled; the one that has come forth from the Father, it

begins to burn in your borders, and it will illuminate all nations (Matthew 6). And all kings shall see your famous city, O Jerusalem and Zion: he who was born of your lineage, who was exalted on the cross, drew all people to himself, so that the nations may see his justice, by which he, the Creator of all, showed mercy to the nations; and kings shall see his glory, by which he was glorified on the cross, and he subjected all kingdoms to his authority. Ultimately, Jerusalem and Zion shall no longer be called by their name, but they shall receive a new name which the Lord shall give them, as He said to the Apostle Peter: You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). The word 'Dominicus' is derived from the name 'Dominus', so that it may be called 'Dominicum'. And the people of that land should not be called by the old name 'Israel', but by a new name, that is, 'Christian'. And it will be like a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and like a diadem of the kingdom in the hand of their God, when the crowd of believers crowns it, and the diadem of the empire, which the Martyrs have distinguished by the variety of their gems, will be in the hand of God to crown their son with victories. Wherefore also the apostle Paul was speaking to the Saints: My joy and crown.

62:4

(Verse 4.) You will no longer be called forsaken, and your land will no longer be called desolate; but you will be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land will be inhabited, for the Lord takes pleasure in you; and your land will be married. LXX: And you will never again be called forsaken, and your land will not be called deserted anymore. Indeed, you will be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land will be inhabited. For Zion and Jerusalem, you will be called the Church, and the Lord's: for the Jews, they will be called Christians. Nor will you be content with this end of the words; but what was previously called Azuba in Hebrew, you will be called Epesi-Ba, which means my will in it; and your land, which was previously called Semema, desolate or deserted, will later be called Bula, which Aquila interpreted as formed; Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted it as inhabited; Septuagint as established, which all signify inhabited and possessed. This is indeed a Hebrew custom, that names are always given to things based on their outcomes: like Abram, who was previously called 'father of heights', when he heard the promise: 'And in your seed all the nations shall be blessed' (Gen. XII, 3), was called 'father of many nations', that is, Abraham. And to the Lord the Savior a name is given above: 'Quickly take plunder, swiftly seize spoil' (Isa. VIII, 1). Also, the sons of Zebedee, one of whom could emit the voice of thunder (Mark III): 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God' (John I, 1), were called 'Sons of Thunder', which means 'sons of thunder'. But what follows is omitted by the Septuagint, and it provides reasons why it is called Ephsi and why it is called Bula, because the Lord has been pleased with it in Zion, and has made its land habitable, which was previously deserted due to Jewish error. Whether we apply this to the Church, which was previously possessed by idols and deserted by God.

62:5

(Verse 5.) For a young man shall dwell with a virgin, and your sons shall dwell in you. And your God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride. LXX: And as a young man dwells with a virgin, so shall your sons dwell in you. And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall the Lord rejoice over you. And the Apostle says: Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25). And when he had given an example in another place: For this

reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh, he added, This is a great mystery: but I speak in Christ and in the Church (Ephesians 5:31, 32). If, therefore, due to the brevity of time, which is limited, men ought to have their wives as if they did not have them, how much more holy will be the union between the bridegroom and the bride? This is the bridegroom of whom it is sung in the twelfth psalm: 'And he, like a bridegroom, comes forth from his chamber' (Psalm 18:6). And this is the bride who is frequently mentioned in the Song of Songs, who has no wrinkle or blemish (Song of Songs 4). How Paul desires to offer a chaste virgin to one man, so that she may be holy in body and spirit (I Cor. 7). Concerning her, and under the name of the beloved, the 44th Psalm sings: The queen stood at your right hand, clothed in golden garments, surrounded by variety. (Verse 10). Therefore, just as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride, and a young man with a virgin, in whom there is a holy union: so the Lord will rejoice in her, whose names have been changed.

62:6-7

(Verse 6, 7.) I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem, who shall never hold their peace day or night: you who make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, until he establishes, and until he makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. LXX: And upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen, who shall never hold their peace day or night, remembering the Lord: there is no one like you, if he corrects you, and he will make Jerusalem rejoice upon the earth. The Prophet said: 'For Zion I will not be silent, and for Jerusalem I will not rest, and so on until that place where the chapter is now completed: The bridegroom will rejoice over the bride; your God will rejoice over you.' And he had promised that he would pray day and night, so that the Savior and the Just One who had been promised would come, and like a lamp illuminate the whole world. After this, the person of God speaking to Jerusalem is introduced, that is, the Church of the early Christians, and the one that was built up in the Apostles and through the Apostles: 'I have set watchmen on your walls, who we can understand to be either angels or apostles, and all its rulers and teachers.' Those who guard the walls of the Church, lest our adversary the devil, who prowls around like a roaring lion, may seize an opportunity to devastate the flock of the Lord. The guardians should not be silent, neither during the day nor at night, neither in times of joy nor in times of sorrow; but should always pray for the mercy of the Lord, so that His flock and the walls of Jerusalem may be guarded and strengthened by His help. Therefore, a speech is directed to the same guardians and teachers: O you who remember the Lord and tirelessly pray for His mercy day and night, be careful never to let prayer be silent in your mouth. Do not give silence to him, I imply, O Lord; but always be annoying, opportune, importune, and imitate the interruption of a harsh judge. For if he has put aside the fierceness of his mind by constant supplication, how much more will the Heavenly Father give good things to those who ask? However, you should pray for a long time, until Jerusalem, which has fallen among the Jews and is both an example and a curse, is praised throughout the whole world. And why did the Seventy wish, because of what is contained in Hebrew, that you do not remain silent about it until she establishes and places praise in Jerusalem on the earth, saying, the meaning of which does not agree with what was said before: For there is no one like you, if she corrects and makes Jerusalem rejoice over the earth. Unless perhaps by this skillful eloquence we may add, that it may be said to the guardians of the Church, that none of them will be like those who have made it through their preaching, so that she may be corrected, and all the earth may rejoice in Jerusalem.

62:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by the strength of his arm: If I give your wheat beyond food to your enemies, and if the sons of aliens drink your wine, in which you have labored: for those who gather it will eat it and praise the Lord, and those who carry it will drink it in my holy courts. LXX: The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by the strength of his arm: If I give my wheat beyond food to your enemies, and if the sons of aliens drink your wine, in which you have labored: but those who gather it will eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather it will drink it in my holy courts. Almighty God, who said to the Church, 'I have set watchmen on your walls who shall never hold their peace day nor night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.' Now He swears by His right hand and by the arm of His strength. Concerning whom we frequently say that He is our Lord and Savior, who, according to the Apostle, is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1). He swears that the grain and wine of Jerusalem shall never be given as food to the enemies, nor shall aliens devour the labor of it; but those who sow in tears shall reap in joy, and those who reap, with joyful shouting, and with the chaff removed, they shall gather the pure grain into the barns. They themselves shall eat the labor of their hands, and shall lift up the Lord with eternal praise, and shall drink wine in His holy courts. Because either we understand many dwellings with the Father, if we accept them as the future blessedness in the kingdom of heaven, or certainly the Churches divided throughout the whole world, in which we are planted, and afterwards we will flourish in the house of the Lord. But when He says: I will no longer give your wheat to your enemies, and foreigners will not drink your wine, in which you have labored, He shows the previous labor of the Jews, and that all their works were possessed by demons when they were wavering between God and idols, when Elijah said to them: How long will you limp with both feet? if the Lord is God, follow him (III Kings XVIII, 21). And according to the typical history narrated in the book of Judges, the Midianites came and devastated their crops as far as Gaza, so that the food of men was turned into fodder for animals (Judges VI). This is the wheat and this is the wine that they will not eat unless they praise the Lord, and they will not drink unless in his holy courts, of which the Lord said during his passion: Amen, amen I say to you, I will not drink from the fruit of this vine until I drink it new in the kingdom of my Father (Mark XIV, 25). Which part of the Church is fulfilled when the Lord says to His disciples: Drink, my friends, and be intoxicated, my brothers, for wine gladdens the human heart (Psalm 104). And it is drunk in broad daylight by Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 44). And it will be fulfilled more fully when the earth is intoxicated with the blessings of the Lord. The wheat from which the heavenly bread is made, that is what the Lord speaks of: My flesh is truly food. And again regarding wine: And my blood truly is drink (John VI).

62:10-12

(Vers. 10-12.) Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people, make the road smooth, and choose stones, raise a signal for the people. Behold, the Lord has made his message heard to the ends of the earth: say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your Savior comes: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them the holy people, redeemed by the Lord. But you shall be called a sought-after city, and not forsaken. LXX: Go through my gates and make a way for my people. Cast stones out of the way. Lift up a sign among the nations. For behold, the Lord has made his hearing reach to the ends of the earth. Say to the daughters of

Zion: Behold, your Savior comes, having his reward with him, and his work before his face. And he will call them a holy people, redeemed by the Lord. But you will be called a sought-after city, and not forsaken. He commanded the keepers of the walls of Jerusalem, to whom he had previously commanded not to keep silent, not to cease praying, so that they may pass through the gates of Jerusalem and make a way for the people. The statement argues that in the last days, when Israel is to be saved after the fullness of the Gentiles, the semi-Jews believe that they will return to the Lord. However, others think that it will be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven, when there will be true joy and each person will receive according to their merit. They will not see the Lord in humility, but will feel His judgment when He comes on the clouds with a multitude of angels to render to each person according to their works. But according to the explanation given, we can understand these things at the first coming, so that we may say that the Apostles and the men who succeeded them, should enter and pass through the gates which hell cannot prevail against, and remove all obstacles from the path, so that the people may enter the Church of the Savior without any stumbling block. Therefore, John cried out in the wilderness: I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, as Isaiah said: Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low (John 1:23, Isaiah 40:3-4). And in other words, the man of the Church has chosen stones that soften the hardness of the hearts of the believers. Of these stones, John the Baptist said: God is able to raise up children of Abraham from these stones (Matthew 3:9). Or according to the Septuagint, he throws stones from the path that separate the unbelievers from the believers. So that the Jews would not think that this is about them, it is added: Raise a sign to the nations, and to the peoples of the nations, so that the narrowness of salvation is not provoked only in the land of Judea, but let it be heard in the ends of the earth, so that the whole world may hear the passion of the Creator. Say, he says, to the daughter of Zion. She is called the daughter of Zion because she was first born from the Jews, as it says in the Song of Songs: The sons of my mother fought against me (Song of Songs 1:5); or certainly because she received the name of daughter from God through adoption. For as many as received him, he gave them power to become children of God (John 1). But what is it that the teachers and doctors of the daughter of Zion are commanded to announce? Behold, your Savior comes, who is called Jesus in Hebrew. Thus Gabriel said to Joseph: And you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). This Savior is the judge of all believers, to render to each according to their works: rewards to the righteous, and eternal punishments to the sinners (Matt. 16). And he shall call them Lord and Savior himself. Or, according to the Hebrew, the Apostles and Apostolic men shall call them, the holy and redeemed people of the Lord, who are redeemed by the blood of Christ. Moreover, the city itself will not be called abandoned, as it had been previously, either among the Jews due to commerce, or among the Gentiles due to idolatry, but rather sought after, as it is said in Hebrew, Drusa (); so that for the increase and variety of virtues, they always receive new names.

63:1

(Chapter 63, Verse 1) Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This one is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength. (Chapter 70) Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This one is beautiful in his attire, strong and mighty. From the place where it is said in the Septuagint: "Arise, shine, Jerusalem, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you" (Chapter 60, Verse 1), to the present

chapter where it says: Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosrah? Many of our own refer to the end of the world, in which, whether in a physical or spiritual sense (for there are various opinions of many), they strive to fulfill. But we, because we have also read earlier in this same chapter: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor: he has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free (Luke 4:18). And now it is said of the same, that after his passion he ascended to the Father in a bloody manner, we are compelled by necessity to understand all that is said in reference to the first coming of the Savior. For it cannot happen, as many of our people strive to do, that things which are connected in the works should be varied in time; nor do we deny that it requires great effort to unite all these things to be fulfilled in a spiritual way in the consummation, so that we may teach that they have already been accomplished in Christ, both according to the flesh and according to the spirit. Therefore, since the Savior of the daughter of Zion has come, whose reward is with Him, and His work before Him; and the righteous One has gone forth as brightness, and the Savior has been kindled as a lamp, and the bridegroom has rejoiced over his bride the Church, indeed his God has exulted over her, who is Himself both bridegroom and Lord: therefore, according to the assumption of the flesh and the passion of the cross, it is said to Him: Let Your foot be dipped in blood (Ps. 68:24). And under the name Judah in Genesis it is prophesied: Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the necks of your enemies. Your father's sons shall bow down to you. Judah, you have ascended as a lion's cub; you lie down and rest like a lion, and like a lioness; who shall rouse you? And again: He binds his foal to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine; he washes his garments in wine, and his robe in the blood of grapes. This is the one whom the angelic powers, seeing him ascend to the Father, command the other angels, and they hear from them: Lift up your gates, O princes, and be lifted up, eternal gates, that the King of glory may enter. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle (Psalm 24:7-8). And again: The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory (ibid., 10). We have said this as a prelude, so that we may show that this chapter agrees with other testimonies as well. And in the Song of Songs it is said: My beloved is ruddy and white (Song of Songs 5:10); ruddy in passion; white in resurrection. Therefore, the angels ask, terrified by the novelty of the matter (for the mystery of the passion and resurrection of Christ, according to the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 2), had been unknown to all previous generations). Who is this coming from the land of Edom, with garments stained crimson? Indeed, Edom is expressed in our language as both earthly and bloody. With dyed garments from Bosrah? Many, in their pious error, think that it refers to the flesh of the Lord: that is, Basar (בָּסָר), which word, if it signified flesh, would be written with the middle letter Sin, but is now written with the letter Sade, and is interpreted as firm and fortified: which we either understand as referring to Jerusalem (Psalm 59:11), which was surrounded by very strong walls, in which the Lord suffered; or to hell, of which it is written in Psalm 59:11 and Psalm 107:10: 'Who will bring me into the fortified city?' In which the souls of the dead are closed, and they are surrounded by the strongest custodies. It should also be known that according to the history of Bosra, it is not in Edom but in Moab. It follows: So beautiful in his robe, walking in the multitude of his strength. Of which the forty-fourth psalm also sings: Beautiful in beauty above the sons of men. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty. With thy comeliness and thy beauty, proceed prosperously and reign (Psalm 44, 3-5). Why they translated the Septuagint, violence with strength. A wise reader will inquire into the meaning.

I am the one who speaks of justice, and I am a champion for salvation. LXX: I am the one who speaks of justice, and the judgment of salvation. The Lord replied to the questioning Angels: Do you ask who I am, who will ascend to the bloody heavens, and the blood with which I am covered will not give me ugliness, but beauty? I am the one to whom the Father has entrusted all judgment (John 5). Of whom the Psalmist also said: Grant your judgment to the king, O God, and your justice to the king's son (Psalm 72:1). I speak justice: to give evil to the wicked, and to repay good to the righteous; to come and fight against opposing powers, and to preach freedom to the captives, and to release those in prison, so that both adversaries may feel punishment and captives may experience freedom.

63:2

(Version 2.) Why then is your garment red, and your clothing like one who treads in the winepress? LXX: Why are your garments red, and your clothes like those who tread the winepress, full of trampled grapes? Where it is now spoken of as red, in Hebrew it is read as Edom (). Therefore, even above where Edom is written, it is not a place name, but the name of blood. Again, the Angels inquire and say: We have learned that you are the one who speaks of justice, and salvation for all is established in your judgment. Now we want to know why your clothes are stained as if with wine, or what could have caused the tunic, which is woven from above and cannot be torn, to have such whiteness from the virgin womb, as no fuller could achieve on earth, reddened with bloody blood? For mercy is more fitting for you than cruelty: whiteness is more fitting than blood. To these the Lord responded, not with one verse as before, but with many words, in order to teach all those who are ignorant, so that they may not be compelled to seek again.

63:3-6

(Verse 3 and following) I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the peoples there was no man with me. I have trodden them in my anger, and trampled them in my fury: and their blood has stained my garments, and all my clothing is polluted. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come. I looked around, and there was no helper: I sought, and there was no one to assist. So my own arm brought salvation to me, and my own wrath supported me. And I have trampled upon the peoples in my anger, and I have made them drunk in my indignation, and I have brought down their strength to the earth. Seventy times because of what we said, I alone have trampled the winepress, they have interpreted, a full trampling, which is more to be read with the previous chapter than as the beginning of the following one. The rest they have translated thus. And there is no one among the nations with me, and I have trampled upon them in my anger, and I have crushed them like the ground, and I have poured out their blood upon the earth, and I have defiled all my garments. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come. I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me. I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth. For the press is called Geth in Hebrew, as Theodotion has translated the Hebrew word in Greek. But Symmachus, whom we also follow, renders it better in this place. For the word Phura is ambiguous, and usually signifies both a winepress and a jug. It must be said, therefore, about the winepress, that according to the custom of Holy Scripture, sometimes it is

used for vengeance and punishments of sins, sometimes for the gathering of new fruits. It is used for punishments and torments, when Jeremiah, lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem, speaks: The Lord has trodden the virgin daughter of Judah with the winepress, therefore I mourn (Lam. 1:15-16). The psalms for those who are assigned to the winepresses are written in a favorable light in the eighth and eighty-third. Concerning them, if life accompanies them, with the Lord's help, they will be said. This winepress, in which both punishments for the wicked and rewards for the good are trampled on by the Savior himself, he alone trampled on, and he had no helper. For neither an Angel, nor an Archangel, Thrones, Dominions, or any celestial powers assumed a human body and suffered for us, and he trampled on opposing forces and shattered them, except for the one who speaks in the psalm: Save me, O Lord, for the holy one has failed (Psalm 11:1); to such an extent that even the most confident and firmly established in the truth of faith, the apostle Peter, afraid, fled, rather denied the Lord (Matthew 27). And what follows: And their blood was sprinkled upon my garments, and all my raiments are defiled, should not be understood in such a way that we believe that demons and adversarial powers have blood. But everything should be understood tropologically, when the most merciful God is compelled to strike enemies in order to instruct His people and liberate them from the bonds of captivity. For He says: "The day of vengeance is in my heart, the year of my redemption has come. About which we also read above (In chapter LXI), to preach in a favorable way the accepted year of the Lord, and the day of retribution to our God; both now in the bad and in the good. In the bad: For the day of vengeance is in my heart. In the good: The year of my redemption has come; so that at the time when the adversaries are punished, the people of God may be liberated, or rather redeemed by the precious blood of the lamb who is said to be slain in the Apocalypse of John. Moses prophesied about this day of retribution by the Holy Spirit: And he will repay vengeance to his enemies, and will restore to those who hate him. I looked around, and there was no helper; I sought, and there was no one to assist. (Deuteronomy XXXII, 41). He also said in the psalm: And I waited for one who would grieve, but there was none; and for one who would comfort, but I found none. (Psalm LXVIII, 21). For even though he was in the form of God, he did not consider equality with God as something to be seized, but emptied himself (Philippians II), taking the form of a servant, and being obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. And because of this, God exalted him and gave him the name above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Whether he extirpated believers in his arm, and did not delay his fury beyond: and he led their blood unto the ground, whether in a figurative sense of demons, or certainly the blood of the Jews: for this reason, other interpreters have transferred the dispute; who were exerting every effort to release the captive people.

63:7

(Verse 7) I will remember the mercies of the Lord; I will praise the Lord for all the good things the Lord has done for us, and for the abundance of blessings to the house of Israel that he has bestowed upon them according to his mercy, and according to the multitude of his mercies. LXX: I have remembered the mercies of the Lord, I will remember the virtues of the Lord in all the things he has done for us: The Lord, a good judge to the house of Israel, will repay us according to his mercy, and according to the abundance of his justice. Finished, as we believe at first, as many think at second, with the coming of the Savior, in which is implied the voice of the judge, or rather

of the combatant, slaughtering his own people and the adversaries of his people, described as bloody and victorious: another section begins, in which the Prophet speaks from the perspective of the people, recounting the benefits of God upon himself and the hardness of his own heart, because of which Jerusalem was set on fire and Israel was handed over to captivity. What the Jews report about the Babylonian times. However, we have shown in order and reason the present time, in which they serve the Romans, and with Israel excluded, a throng of nations has succeeded. Let us therefore run through each part of the speech, and in order to avoid a long-winded explanation, let us briefly expound on them. Crushed by the weight of evils, I have hope in nothing else but in the mercy of God, who shows mercy to thousands of those who love him, and extends his mercy to those who know him. From this it is shown that the mercy of the Lord comes to those who love and know God. It is not of the one who wants or the one who runs, but of the one who has mercy from God (Rom. IX). Unless the Lord builds the house and watches over the city, the one who builds and watches over it does so in vain (Ps. CXXVI). For He will give strength, so that we may have courage and be able to say: My strength and support, and my refuge in the day of my troubles (Jerem. XVI). In the present context, we should understand virtues not as vices and sins, but as difficulties. As it follows in the Septuagint: I will remember the Lord's virtues in all the things He has rewarded me, which in Hebrew are contained as praises to the Lord, let us understand signs and miracles, for which virtues are often mentioned, as in the following passage: I will not give my glory to another, nor my virtues to idols (Isaiah 42:8). And elsewhere: His virtues will be announced in the islands, or among the nations of the whole world, or among the churches which are firmly founded and are more struck than overthrown. Sometimes virtue is not accepted for fortitude and miracles, but for good conduct, as it is said by the Apostles, Peter: Serve with virtue in your knowledge (1 Peter 1:5); and Paul: Whatever is true, whatever is honorable (Philippians 4:8). According to this, it is also said in another place: Better is sterility with virtue. The first understanding of virtue belongs to God, the second is fitting for humans. However, what we have interpreted is this: Above all that the Lord has given us, which can be taken in both a good and bad way, Symmachus more clearly placed it in the retribution of good, saying: For all the things in which He has done us good, and for the multitude of goodness which He has shown upon the house of Israel. Why did they translate the Seventy: The Lord is a good judge to the house of Israel, he has repaid us according to his mercy, and according to the multitude of his justice. But this can only be said by one who understands justly how to endure what he suffers. Finally, in the seventy-second psalm, whose beginning is: How good is God to Israel, the prophet speaks in the person of those whose hearts are upright, who are disturbed by the judgments of God: But my feet were almost shaken: my steps were almost scattered, seeing the peace of sinners, and so on, until the end of the psalm. Therefore, the holy law is good, and the holy commandment is good, just and good, so that goodness is understood in general, and justice is understood in particular. Therefore he writes to the Romans: For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die (Rom. III. 7).

63:8-10

(Vrs. 8 seqq.) And He said: Yet My people are; sons not denying: and He became a Savior unto them. In all their affliction He was not afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bore them, and carried them all the days of the age. But they provoked Him to anger, and vexed the spirit of His Holy One; and He turned Himself

against them as an enemy, and He fought against them. 70: And he said: Not my people, the children will never reject. And he became for them salvation from all their tribulation: not a messenger, nor an angel, but he himself saved them because he loved them, and spared them, he himself redeemed them, and received them, and exalted them all the days of the world. But they did not believe, and they provoked his Holy Spirit: he turned against them as an enemy, he himself fought against them. Where we have interpreted: In all their tribulation he was not troubled, which in Hebrew is said Lo, and is a denying adverb, for not, it can also be read itself, so that the meaning is: In all their tribulation he himself is troubled, that is, God: so that he himself might bear not only our sins, but also our tribulations. For he himself carries our weaknesses, and he suffers for us. Moreover, the Seventy put another thing that is not found in Hebrew, not an envoy, nor an angel, but he himself saved them: of which we will speak in its proper place. Therefore God, who is a just judge to the house of Israel, and mitigates the severity of justice with mercy in judging: Indeed, I have begotten sons and exalted them, and they have despised me. However, because they are my people, and once named sons, they will not perish forever; if they stop rejecting and denying me, they will recognize the Savior: because he himself was troubled in all their tribulations. Whether he was not troubled, so that he could temporarily abandon them and force them, stripped of his help, to plead. Indeed, He did not afflict them, but on the contrary, while others pursued them, He was their helper and sent His Angel to deliver them from danger. Or according to the Septuagint, He did not want to save His people through angels and prophets and other holy men; rather, He himself descended to the lost sheep of the house of Israel to carry the sick sheep on His shoulders and to find the lost coin, and joyfully welcome the prodigal son upon his return. For this reason, the Bride says in the Song of Songs: Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. Not through the patriarchs, Moses, and the prophets, but let him take my body, let him dwell in my flesh, let the Word become flesh, and thus let him kiss me dwelling in me, so that he may be Emmanuel. Therefore, not as a messenger, nor as an angel, but he himself will save those who have received salvation: not by the merit of works, but by the love of God. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. But if the perceptive reader answers with silent thought, why are many not saved, if he himself saved them, and loved them, and spared his sons, and redeemed them with his own blood, and received and exalted those who were assumed? The clear reason is inferred. But they did not believe, and they provoked his Holy Spirit, or his holy ones, which in Hebrew is called Cadeso. Therefore, God wanted to save those who desired it, and he provoked them to salvation, so that the will might have its reward; but they did not want to believe. Otherwise, it is written about John: There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came to bear witness to the light, so that all might believe through him (John 1:6). And it is not immediately to be blamed if many did not believe, but the intention of the one coming was that all would believe and be saved. But if anyone shall have provoked and afflicted the Holy Spirit, or His Holy Ones, that is, Christ, he provokes God: the same Holy Spirit is of the same nature as the Father and the Son. Therefore, the Apostle commands: Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, in whom you have been sealed (Ephesians 4:30). The Holy Spirit withdraws from a body subject to sin, and does not enter a perverse soul (Wisdom 1). Therefore, David, in order not to lose the Holy Spirit, prayed saying: And do not take away your Holy Spirit from me (Psalm 51:11). And so, that we may know that anyone who vexes the Holy Spirit offends God, and becomes an enemy and foe of a friend, the Apostle Peter speaks more significantly in the Acts of the Apostles: Why have you agreed to lie to the Holy Spirit? You

have not lied to men, but to God (Acts V, 9). This is the Holy Spirit, of whom the Lord said in the Gospel: If you love me, keep my commandments: and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever, the Spirit of truth (John XIV, 15, 16). We also find this in the Book of Wisdom, which is written under the name of Solomon: For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit and will withdraw from foolish thoughts (Wisdom I, 5).

63:11-14

(Vers. 11 seqq.) And he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up from the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put his holy Spirit in the midst of them? He who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name. He led them through the depths like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble. Like a beast going down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord was their guide. So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name. LXX: And he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying: Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put in the midst of them the spirit of his Holy One? He led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the waters before them, to make himself an everlasting name. He led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, they stumbled not. As a beast goeth down into the valley, the spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name. The Lord, who became the protector of the adversaries of the people of Judah, who provoked his Holy Spirit to anger, and he defeated them: he remembered the ancient days, when Moses interceded for them in the wilderness, saying: Either forgive them this sin, or if you do not, blot me out from the book which you have written (Exodus 32:31-32). So Isaiah, recalling the story of old, says: Where is the Moses who led them out of the Red Sea? Where is the shepherd of the sheep? Where is he who labored with the other shepherds of the flock of the Lord? Who obtained and bestowed the Spirit of God through his prayers and supplications on the flock of the Lord? Or surely should it be understood this way: Where is that mercy of the Lord, by which he once had pity on his people, so that he would also grant them the grace of the Holy Spirit? He who led Moses, his servant, with the arm of his majesty to the right side, not to the left; he who split the waters before them, to make for himself an everlasting name, so that his power would be spoken of even to this day? For He led His people through the immense depths of water, like a horse through a wilderness, and beasts through a plain, and the Spirit of the Lord was their guide, that is, the flock of the Lord. (Exodus 14). Now by this Spirit we must understand the Angel, who was the guide of the people of Israel, according to what is written: He makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire (Psalm 104:4). And in the Letter to the Hebrews: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14). Let us consider that which is written in the Acts of the Apostles: The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more (Acts 8:39). Should we understand this as referring to an angel? There are those who testify that it was an angel working through the Holy Spirit. We are exploring the obvious in order to dwell on the obscure.

63:15-17

(Verse 15 and following) Look down from heaven and see, from your holy and glorious habitation. Where is your zeal and your might? The stirring of your inner parts and your compassion are held

back from me. For you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name. LXX: Return from heaven and see, from your holy dwelling and your glory. Where is your zeal and your might? Where is the multitude of your mercies and the compassions you have shown us? For you are our Father, because Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us. But you, Lord our Father, free us: from the beginning your name is upon us. You have granted such great things to the people, as the higher discourse has related, that you might lead us worthy of your spirit's companionship. Now also, pay attention from heaven and see our works, if indeed they are worthy of you. Why do you turn your face away from us? But heaven is called the holy dwelling place, and the house of his glory (Psalm 43), according to this: Heaven is my throne: and the earth is my footstool (Isaiah 66:1); and in another place: He who dwells in the heavens shall laugh at them; and: Unto you I lift up my eyes, O you who dwell in heaven (Psalm 113:1). Not that the omnipotent God, who holds heaven in the palm of his hand and the earth in his fist, is confined to any place; but rather that those things which are holier may be said to be his place and dwelling. Finally, Solomon, who built the house of God, speaks to him in prayer, 'The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you' (Sirach 16:18). And in the Lord's Prayer it is said, 'Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10). Therefore, wherever God's will is done, that is His dwelling place and the house of God. As for what follows, 'Where is your zeal and your might?' We can explain this with the testimony of God through Ezekiel to Jerusalem, which had followed her lovers: 'I will no longer be angry with you, for my jealousy has turned away from you' (Ezekiel 16:42). And the meaning is this: Because we have sinned and you have begun to hate us, your zeal has departed from us, which does not depart when speaking through Zachariah: I am zealous for Zion and Jerusalem with great zeal (Zech. I, 14). Therefore, in the following, he says: And I will be angry with the nations that have gathered against it all around. But as zeal departs, so does the strength of God, and the affection of the father's womb is overcome, while the incredible mercy of God is defeated by the greatness of sins, so that it may hold itself above my help, who could not see me overwhelmed. For you are our father, the creator of all, says he. Neither Abraham knows us, nor does Israel recognize us, because we have offended you, nor do they know the children who they understand are not loved by their God. A sudden question arises, why did Abraham and Israel, that is, Jacob, receive their names, while Isaac's name remained silent (Gen. XXXII)? To which we will respond, with the beginning and end stated, even the middle shall be named. Or thus: Abraham, called from the Gentiles to faith, underwent a change in his name according to the quality of the preceding and succeeding condition. Jacob, too, worked hard to be called Israel. Hence Abraham had three wives and Jacob had four. But Isaac, from the beginning to the end, possessed an ancient name, indicating the chastity of the Church, content with one wife. Therefore, those who pray for sinners, assume their semblance, to whom joy followed after sorrow. However, this is everything they request, that because He is their father, and He has dignified them with this name, He does not forget His children; lest through them the name of God be blasphemed among the nations.

63:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) Why have you made us err, O Lord, from your ways: you have hardened our heart, so that we would not fear you? Turn again for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance. Your holy people have possessed nothing: our enemies have trampled upon your

sanctuary. We have become like in the beginning: when you did not rule over us, neither was your name invoked upon us. LXX: Why have you led us astray, O Lord, from your holy way: you have hardened our hearts, so that we would not fear you? Convert for the sake of your servants, for the sake of your inheritance, so that we may possess a little of your holy mountain: our adversaries have trampled your sanctuary: we have become as those who were not ruled by you from the beginning: nor has your name been invoked upon us. The letter that Paul writes to the Corinthians, when it is written to the people of a certain city, by reason of the diversity of its inhabitants, that is, of saints and sinners, now praises them, now corrects them, now teaches them, now rebukes them, provokes them to continence; he does not refuse marriage; he refrains from idolatry; he instructs them about the resurrection; he extends his hand to the divorced, so that he does not give a place to fornication. We have said this, so that we may understand that the present chapter, which is entirely covered by the prayer of the people, may be understood either as of the just or of sinners: and now to praise the Lord, now to bring a question to the Lord, and to attribute one's own guilt to God. Hence, even afterwards they speak of this: Why have you made us err, O Lord, from your ways, or have led us astray from your path: you have hardened our heart that we should not fear you? Not that God is the cause of error and hardness, but so that his patience, waiting for our salvation, may seem to be the cause of error and hardness by not punishing the wrongdoers. Being extremely angry with certain people, he refrained from striking them and said: 'I will not visit your daughters when they have committed fornication, and your wives when they have committed adultery' (Hosea IV, 14). He chastises every son whom he receives, and he strikes in order to correct (Hebrews XII). Finally, regarding those who have not lost the title of children but are drawn back to repentance through punishment, he says about them: 'I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with stripes; but I will not take away my mercy from them' (Psalm LXXXIX, 33). For there is a sorrow that leads to life, and there is a sorrow that leads to death. Hence the sinner speaks in the psalm: You have made our paths turn away from your way, and you have humbled us in a place of affliction (Psalm 44:19). And for forty years the people wander in the desert, so that they may not find the former way, nor return to the Egyptians (Numbers 32). Also in Hosea, the paths of Jerusalem are separated and closed with thorns, so that she may not follow her lovers, and being compelled by need, she may return to her former husband (Hosea 2). And it is said that the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, so that he would not let his people go, and that he would be afflicted with ten plagues (Exodus IV). This question was discussed in great detail by Paul to the Romans (Romans IX). And we have briefly addressed it in a certain work. Turn, O Lord, or turn us on account of your servants, Abraham and Israel, who do not know us, or whom we believe to be among the people. For our adversaries have possessed your holy people as if it were nothing and without any effort. Whether convert us, so that according to the Septuagint, we may possess a little of your holy mountain, because we cannot possess your whole mountain, so that when we have a part, we may come to its fullness and contemplate the glory of the Only Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1). Concerning this, it is said in the same prophet: In the last days, the mountain of the Lord shall be revealed (Isaiah 2:2). But concerning what is stated above: Why have you made us stray (Isaiah 63:17)? Jeremiah teaches in the fullest sense in what meaning it is to be understood: You have seduced me, Lord, and I have been seduced: you have taken hold of me, and you have been able to ((Al. you have placed)) (Jeremiah 20:7). For while you promise me mercy, and as a merciful father you hide your severity, and as a skilled doctor you hide the sharpest iron, lest you frighten the sick before you cure them, you have

made me negligent; therefore, God says about Jerusalem: Behold, I will seduce her, and I will make her like a desert, and I will lay her waste like a land without water, and I will speak to her heart: and I will give her belongings from there, and the valley of Achor for opening understanding (Hosea 1:14, 15). Let us consider the order of these things: he seduces her and makes her a deserted and without water, so that she suffers from thirst for virtues. After she has said: My soul thirsts for you, how greatly my flesh longs for you (Psalm 41:2), then he will speak to her heart and console her in mourning. And he will give her possession, that is, of repentance and sorrow that works salvation. And the humility of her troubled heart (for this is what the valley of Achor signifies) opens understanding, so that she may not ignore her Creator. The enemy, he says, have trampled upon your sanctuary. There is no doubt that it signifies the Temple, which the victorious Romans trod upon. And we have become as in the beginning before we were called in Abraham, and while we were in Egypt, having neither God, nor kings, nor princes, nor prophets, nor the Law of God's commandments (Ose. III), all of which were completed after the passion of the Lord, and are fulfilled even to this day. For when they said: His blood be upon us and upon our children (Matth. XXVII, 25), there remains an everlasting curse, and their God does not reign, nor is his name invoked above, since he is not at all called the people of God.

64:1-3

(Chapter 64, Verses 1 and following.) Oh, that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake before you! As when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil, to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. Chapter 70: If you open the heavens, trembling will seize the mountains from you, and they will melt like wax before fire, and the fire will consume your adversaries, and your name will be made known among your adversaries, and the nations will tremble at your presence. When you have done glorious things, the mountains will tremble because of you. For our enemies have trampled your sanctuary, and we have become like those in the beginning, when your name was not invoked upon us. Therefore, we implore and say: Oh, that you would tear open the heavens and come down; that you, who are always promised, would finally fulfill your promises. But this was said at that time when the Saviour had not yet come, nor had he taken upon himself a human nature and substance from a virgin's womb in order to save humanity: so that as we have borne the image of the earthy, we may bear the image of the heavenly (1 Corinthians 15). But if you were to do it, they say, and the heavens were to open up, or even the heavens, at the coming of your majesty, would flow down, or if trembling were to seize the mountains, and they were to be consumed, as wax is consumed by fire. And the heavens were opened before Ezekiel, and he saw a great vision (Ezek. I). But even Moses, in the blessings of Deuteronomy, implores: May the Lord open his good treasury, the heavens, to give you blessing (Deut. XXVIII). And in the Gospel (Matt. III), it is said (or it is testified) that John the Baptist saw the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit descending upon the Lord in the form of a dove. But the mountains, which at the coming of the Lord, of whom it is written: God is a consuming fire (Deut. IV, 24), will be consumed like wax and melt, are the opposing powers, and all those who rise up against the knowledge of God. Concerning them, it is also sung in the ninety-sixth psalm: The earth saw and trembled. The mountains melted like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of all the earth (Psalm 96:4, 5). For if you were to come down and fulfill your promises, the waters of the sea

would dry up and their saltiness would be consumed by fire (according to Symmachus). This is also written in another psalm: Like smoke disappears, let them disappear; like wax melts before fire, let the sinners perish before God (Psalm 68:2). And it should be noted that when the waters of the sea are consumed by divine fire, then the name of the Lord Savior becomes known to his enemies. Concerning this, it is said in the sixty-seventh psalm: The tongue of your dogs is from enemies themselves, so that those who had not sensed his kindness may know by the destruction and their own captivity of their city. And the nations will be troubled by his presence, or rather, as it is more significantly said in Hebrew, they will be moved: so that those who were previously immobile may come to salvation. And when he has done wonderful things and shown signs in the Gospel, which he once showed in Egypt and in the wilderness, they will confess that they cannot bear the glory of his coming, either because trembling has seized the mountains. And beautifully, as if those who had prayed above were heard: Oh, that you would tear open the heavens and come down, that the mountains would melt away at your presence, afterwards they say: You have descended, the Word has become flesh and dwelt among us, truly Emmanuel, which is interpreted as God with us. And therefore all the mountains have flowed down from your face, of which we have spoken above. The Hebrews have interpreted this passage as follows: Thus the fire will burn the wicked, just as water boils with the heat of fire; for they do not understand the word Amasim () as destruction and decay, as others have interpreted, but they understand it as referring to the wicked.

64:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who rejoice in doing righteousness, who remember you in your ways. (LXX: From ages past no one has heard, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him, and the works that you will do for those who hope for mercy. For you meet those who rejoice in doing righteousness, and they will remember your ways.) The Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, takes a paraphrase, as it were, of this testimony from a Hebrew of the Hebrews, from the authentic books, not rendering word for word, which he altogether despises, but expressing the truth of the sense, which he uses to strengthen what he wants to say. Hence, let the delirium of the apocryphal writings be silenced, which are foisted upon the Churches of Christ on the occasion of this testimony. Of which it can truly be said that the devil sits in ambush with the rich in the apocrypha, in order to kill the innocent. And again: He lies in wait in the apocrypha like a lion in his den; he lies in wait to seize the poor (Psalm IX, 8). For the Ascension of Isaiah and the Apocalypse of Elijah bear witness to this. And on this occasion, many such women, burdened with sins, who are led by various desires, always learning but never able to come to knowledge of the truth (3 Timothy III), were deceived in Spain, and especially in Lusitania, so that they would embrace the marvels of Basilides, Balsamis, and Thesaurus, as well as Barbelo and Leusibora, and other such names. About which the apostolic man Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons and martyr, writes very diligently, explaining the origins of many heresies, especially the Gnostics, who deceived noble women of Egypt first around the Rhone, and then of Spain, mixing pleasure with their fables and claiming the name of knowledge for their ignorance (Irenaeus, Book 1 on Heresies). But what the people say at present is that they have never known, neither with their ears nor with their eyes, what God has prepared for his saints in the future: that it happens to those who practice righteousness and remember His ways.

Moreover, according to the Septuagint, they say that they never knew any other God except for the one who truly is God, nor have they seen any other works so great that He will do for those who wait for His mercy, and they will do justice and remember His ways. And as it is written: No one has ever seen God (John 1:18). And again: No one can see My face and live (Exodus 33:20). Therefore, God is not explained by words, nor is He visible to the eyes, but He is seen by those about whom it is written: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8).

64:6

(Verse 6.) Behold, you are angry, and we have sinned; we have always been in them, and we shall be saved. And we have become like the unclean, all of us, like the soiled cloths of our entire righteousness. And we have fallen like leaves, and our iniquities have swept us away like the wind. LXX: Behold, you are angry, and we have all sinned; therefore, we have erred and have become like all the unclean, like a cloth that sits, all our righteousnesses: and we have flowed away like leaves because of our iniquities: as the wind will take us away. A disorder of priorities. Not because you are angry, we have sinned; but because we have sinned, you are angry. And because we have sinned, you are angry with us, O Lord: therefore we have gone astray and have left the right path. Whether according to the Hebrew, who we have always been in sins, we shall be saved only by your mercy, who we are defiled through ourselves; and whatever righteousness we appear to have is compared to the rag of a sitting or menstruating woman. For which Theodotion put the Hebrew word Eddim (), which Symmachus interpreted as κυουσσεν, that is, of those giving birth; Aquila as μαρτυριον, that is, of testimonies: when blood is approved in the first marital union of a virgin. And we have fallen away, he says, like leaves from trees, which are scattered by the blasts of the winds because of our iniquities. In this, it should be considered that the righteousness which is in the Law is called impurity in comparison to the purity of the Gospel. For what was once glorified is not glorified anymore because of the surpassing glory. Therefore, the apostle Paul, who had fulfilled everything according to the righteousness which is in the Law, says that he has considered all things as loss in order to gain Christ (Philippians III), and because of the surpassing knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, for whom he considers everything as worthless, so that he may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having his own righteousness which is from the Law, but the righteousness which comes from God through faith in Christ. For he is just who dies in his own righteousness (Eccles. 7), if after the truth of the Gospel he wishes to exercise legal shadows, and not to pursue what is justly just. Hence, according to the wisest Solomon, every man seems just to himself, when he is engaged in the law: to whom the Lord speaks in the Gospel: 'You are they who justify yourselves before men' (Luke 16:15). Which Paul, in fleeing, says: 'I am conscious of nothing, yet I am not justified in this' (2 Cor. 4:4). But the righteousness of God, of which Solomon speaks: Understand true righteousness. Therefore there is another righteousness which does not have truth, and this is true righteousness, about which it is said again in the Gospel: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6). Many prophets and righteous people desired to see it, and did not see it. But Abraham saw this righteousness and rejoiced, not following the dead letter, but the life-giving spirit. No wonder these things are said about men, since even the stars, compared to the justice of God, are not clean, and what perverse thing He has devised against His angels. If anyone, therefore, after the Gospel of Christ and the coming of the Son of God, observes the ceremonies of the pedagogue Law, let him hear the people confessing that all that righteousness is compared to the filthiest rag,

to which even Esther compares her diadem, which was the emblem of royal power, which she wore not by choice, but by necessity: You know my necessity: for I detest the sign of my pride which is over my head in the days of my appearance: I abhor it like a menstrual cloth: nor do I wear it on my days of rest.

64:7

(Verse 7) There is no one who calls upon your name, who rises and holds on to you. You have hidden your face from us and have afflicted us in the hand of our iniquity. LXX: And there is no one who calls upon your name and remembers to grasp you. For you have turned your face away from us and have delivered us because of our iniquities. Like leaves from the trees, we have flowed and the dry wind has scattered us, therefore no one was found who would call upon your name and rising from the ruin of their iniquities, would grasp or hold on to you, and would say with the bride: I have found him whom my soul sought: I will hold on to him, and I will not let him go (Song of Solomon 3:4). The wind is mentioned in the Scriptures in three ways; either in the magnitude of temptations, or in the perversity of doctrine, or simply as the wind, by which clouds gather and the air is forced into clouds. Concerning temptations, there is this Gospel passage: The rivers came, the winds blew, and they beat against that house, but it did not collapse, because it was founded on a solid rock (Matthew 7:27). Concerning the perversity of doctrine: So that we may no longer be tossed around by every wind of doctrine in the wickedness of men (Ephesians 4:14). On wind in general: And they could not sail, for the wind was contrary (Mark 6:48): not that this cannot be understood metaphorically, but only that it bears a resemblance to our present experience. For when the Lord turns his face away from us, we are thrown into the hand of our own wickedness, or we are delivered to temptations because of our sins. From this we learn that wickedness also has a hand, and all the sins that strongly desire to keep us tightly bound. And in the hand of the tongue is both death and life (Prov. XVIII); and the holy one prays: Let not the foot of pride come to me (Psal. XXXV, 12). But we, because the Lord has turned his face away from us, knowing that which is written: Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved (Joel. II, 32), let us call upon his name and say: I have confessed my sin to you, and I have not covered up my iniquity. I said I will confess my iniquity to the Lord, and you forgave the impiety of my heart (Psal. XXXI, 56). And immediately we will have the Lord responding: I have blotted out your iniquities as a cloud, and your sins as a mist (Isaiah XLIV, 22), and we will say, Show us your face, and we shall be saved (Psalm LXXIX, 4): so that we may not be servants of sin, but servants of yours. For whoever commits sin is the servant of sin (John VIII).

64:8-12

(Verse 8 and following) And now, Lord, you are our father, and we are clay; you are our potter, and all our works are the work of your hands. Do not be exceedingly angry, Lord, and do not remember our iniquity any longer. Look, your people are all of us. The city of your holy ones has become a desert; Zion has become a desert, Jerusalem is desolate. Our house of sanctification and glory, where our fathers praised you, has become a burning ruin, and all our desirable things have turned to ruins. Will you restrain yourself from punishing us, Lord, and be silent? Will you afflict us severely? - LXX: And now, Lord, you are our father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry with us, Lord, and do not remember our sins forever. Look now, for we are all your people. Your holy city has become a wilderness, Zion

has become a desolation, Jerusalem a curse. Our holy and glorious temple, where our ancestors praised you, has been burned with fire, and all that we treasured lies in ruins. And above all these things you have endured, O Lord. And you have remained silent and humbled us greatly. If we consider our own merits, we must despair. But if we consider your mercy, you who chastise every son whom you receive, we dare to pour forth prayers (Hebrews 12). For you are our father, who deemed to say: My firstborn son is Israel (Ezekiel 4:22). And although we are but clay and the work of your hands, and you are our creator; and not even a potter's vessel can answer why it was made thus or so: yet knowing that we are your children, we dare to say: Do not be angry, Lord, that is sufficient. We do not forbid anger, nor do we seek your patience beyond measure, through which we have stored up anger for ourselves on the day of wrath. But we beseech you, do not be excessively angry with us, do not remember the iniquity of our retaliation and vengeance at the time of our vengeance: but rather look upon your people, who were once called your people. And have mercy on the city of your sanctuary, in which your name has been invoked. This city is called Zion and Jerusalem, which the rushing of the river gladdens; and in which there was once a gazebo of virtues and contemplation of peace (Ps. 43). Moreover, your house, that is, the sanctuary of our sanctification and glory, in which our fathers praised you, has fallen into ruins and ashes, and has been destroyed by a raging fire, so that no victims are offered in it, no Passover is celebrated, nothing is done of the ceremonies that you commanded to be done, but all our desires have been turned into ruins. Therefore, since these things are so, O Lord, will you not restrain your mercy over them, and be silent to the blaspheming adversaries, and afflict and humble us, not in the usual manner, but excessively? All these things the Jews believe to have been accomplished in the times of the Assyrians and Babylonians. But according to what follows from the perspective of the Savior's person, I appeared to those who did not inquire. I was found by those who did not seek me (Isaiah 65:1); we refer everything to the time of Roman victory, which Josephus, the Jewish historian, explains in seven volumes, under the title of the Jewish Captivity, that is, **περὶ τῆς ἑβραίων ἀλωῆς**. And it is superfluous to discuss these things in words, which are evident to the eyes, as all their desirable things have been turned into ruins, and the Temple, celebrated throughout the whole world, has become a dung heap in the new city, which was called Elia by its founder; and it has become a dwelling place for owls: and in vain they say every day in their synagogues: Over all these things, O Lord, you will sustain and afflict us, and you will greatly humble us. We can refer these things to the Church, or to the soul of a holy man, which can rightly be called a mirror and vision of peace, when the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit dwell in it. But if, by our fault or the fault of the people, such a Zion is abandoned by the Lord, immediately the fire of ignited devilish arrows will become evident: for all who commit adultery are like a burning oven in their hearts. And with the coldness of chastity expelled, the flame of lust will rage in the temple of God, so that whatever was glorious and renowned in us before will fall, be destroyed, and perish. And let that which is said in the Psalms be fulfilled: They have burned your sanctuary with fire, they have profaned the tabernacle of your name on earth. Which only He can extinguish, from whose belly flow the rivers of living water.

Book Eighteen

Book Eighteen.

We have now come to the Book of Isaiah, indeed the final book of the Old Testament, which is dedicated to you, O daughter Eustochium, and to the name of your holy mother Paula, so that I

may now recall with equal celebration those whom I have looked upon with equal honor. Especially since she, while alive, urged me more frequently to undertake this work with you, and your very learned brother Pammachius, both then and afterwards, did not cease to encourage me with his numerous writings. And may it be the same for me and for the present and absent friends, both men and women, who sleep in Christ, that is, may there be the same bond of souls, that is, love of hearts and not of bodies. I am not ignorant of how great a diversity of opinions exists among humans. I am not speaking of the mystery of the Trinity, the correct confession of which is ignorance of knowledge, but of other ecclesiastical doctrines, namely, the Resurrection and the state of souls and human flesh, the promises of the future, how they should be understood, and how the Revelation of John should be understood, which, if taken literally, requires us to be Judaizers; if interpreted spiritually, as it is written, we will appear to be opposing the opinions of many ancient authorities: of the Latins, Tertullian, Victorinus, Lactantius; of the Greeks, to pass over the others, I will mention only Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyon, against whom the most eloquent man, Dionysius, the bishop of the Church of Alexandria, wrote an elegant book, mocking the fables of a thousand years, the golden and gem-studded Jerusalem on earth, the restoration of the Temple, the blood of sacrifices, the Sabbath rest, the injury of circumcision, marriages, childbirth, the education of children, the delights of banquets, and the slavery of all nations; and again, wars, armies, triumphs, and the deaths of conquerors and the hundred-year-old sinner. To whom did Apollinarius respond with two volumes, whom not only the people of his own sect, but also a very large number of our own followers in this matter, follow eagerly, so that I can already foresee with a prescient mind how great the rage against me will be incited by them. I do not envy them, if they love the earth so much that they desire earthly things in the kingdom of Christ; and after an abundance of food and the gluttony of the throat, they seek those things that are under the belly. Concerning these, the apostle Paul says: 'Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food' (I Cor. VI, 13). And 'The kingdom of God does not consist in food and drink' (Rom. XIV, 17). And the Lord and Savior said, 'You are wrong, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, people neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven (Matthew 22:29-30).' And in saying this, I do not take away the truth of the body, which will rise again incorruptible and immortal: it will change in glory, not in substance. And so we must walk the straight path, neither leaning to the left nor to the right, that is, we must not follow Jewish or heretical error. Some of those who are of the flesh, love only the things of the flesh: others, ungrateful for God's blessings, refuse to have what Christ had both in his birth and in his resurrection. For when the apostles thought he was a spirit, or according to the Gospel which the Nazaraeans, who are Hebrews, read, a disembodied demon, he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, for I myself am he: touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet (Luke 24:38, 39). And again he spoke to Thomas, who was doubting: Put your finger here and see my hands; and put out your hand and place it in my side; do not be unbelieving, but believing (John 20:27). Finally, to prove the reality of his body, it is written that he ate food, which is also ordered to be given to the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, whom he raised from the dead. And Lazarus, so that his resurrection would not be considered a phantom, is reported to have had a meal with the Savior (Mark 5; Luke 13; John 12). Not that after the resurrection we eat and drink, as our adversaries the Millenarians would have it, and that immortal and incorruptible bodies need earthly nourishment to sustain them;

otherwise, where there is food, diseases follow; where there are diseases, doctors are necessary; where there are doctors, there is often death; and then, there is resurrection again, and a new way of life; but rather, the consumption of food proves the faith in the resurrection. We take great care to avoid, and we speak more forcefully, knowing that we must walk among serpents and scorpions who bite and sting in secret (Ezekiel 2). And about these things the Preacher says: If the serpent bites in silence, he who secretly detracts from another has no advantage. (Ecclesiastes 10:11); and David, their father, says: While you were sitting against your brother you spoke, and against the son of your mother you placed a stumbling block. These things you have done, and I kept silent. You thought that I would be like you. I will reprove you and set them before your face, (Psalm 50: 20-21) so that you, who accuse others, may learn to have them yourself. However, if anyone is displeased with the length of the explanations on the Prophets, let him listen freely. I have said much fewer things than the obscurity of the matter demands, and each person is capable of making brief commentaries for themselves, which, however, are not sufficient for a complete understanding. For the history and order of events are not simply narrated by the Prophets, but everything is full of riddles; one thing is sounded in the words, another is held in the meanings, so that what you may have considered clear and unoffending in reading may again be enveloped in the obscurities of what follows. But it is time for me to put an end to the prophetic volume, in the exposition of which, if I have been more prolix than usual, the final parts must be granted, which I did not want to divide so as not to increase the number of books.

65:1

(Chapter 65, Verse 1) They asked me who did not ask before me: they found me, who did not seek me. I said, behold me, behold me to a nation that did not call upon my name. 70: I appeared to those who did not seek me: I was found by those who did not ask me. I said, behold me in a nation that did not invoke my name. In the mixed prayer of the people, in which he had said: Why have you made us stray, O Lord, from your way: you have hardened our hearts, so that we do not fear you (Isaiah 63:17)? He replied, as the Jews would have it, God the Father; as we maintain, the Lord and Savior: to such an extent am I not harsh and cruel, that I prefer the repentance of a sinner to their death: nor do I reject penitent children, who, however, have preserved the dignity of their own name, so that I even desire to save strangers (Ezek. XXXIII). For those who did not seek me, nor were able to say: Whom Moses wrote about in the Law and the prophets, we have found Jesus (John I, 45); I appeared to them, of whom the Prophet testifies elsewhere: Those to whom it has not been announced about him will hear; and those who have not heard, will understand (Isa. LII, 15). But you who meditate on the law of God day and night, you boast in vain of repentance, the works of which you do not perform. Hence the evangelists and apostles, desiring to confirm the coming of the Lord with testimonies from the Old Testament, said: 'That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet' (Matt. 1:22). The centurion did not seek the Lord, and he heard from the Lord: 'I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel' (Luke 7:9; Matt. 8:10). The Syrophenician woman did not understand the words of the Prophets, but she is praised by the voice of the Lord: O woman, great is your faith. Regulus (John 4), who is called βασιλικός in Greek, which we can more correctly interpret as palatinum from the royal court, found not only healing for his son, but for the whole of his household. And what is said in Hebrew: Those who did not ask of me have sought me, is referred to the same meaning: that those who did not previously have knowledge of God, later seek the Lord, and come to know him through revelation: as

happened to Paul when he persecuted the Church of the believers, he was revealed (Acts 9). And to the Apostle Peter, he said: Blessed are you, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven (Matt. XVI, 17). This was what Moses sought when he spoke to God: If I have found grace in your sight, show yourself to me manifestly, so that I may see you (Exod. XXXIII, 13). Desiring the greater riches of the treasures of Egypt, he endured the reproach of Christ, looking forward to the recompense of the future, and he contemplated the invisible God as if he could see Him with his mind. Of whom it is read in the Psalms: 'The hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those who are far away on the sea' (Psalm 64:6). And in Genesis: 'He shall be the expectation of the nations' (Genesis 49:10). And what follows: 'I said: Behold me: to a nation that did not invoke my name' (Exodus 3:14), fits that sense: 'He who is, sent me to you.' Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, etc. (Philippians 2); but calling all the nations of the world, he made one nation of his own name, the Christians.

65:2

(Verse 2) I have stretched out my hands all day long to an unbelieving people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own thoughts. LXX: I have stretched out my hands all day long to an unbelieving and contradicting people, who have not walked in the good way but after their own sins. This, which is said above, 'I appeared to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me,' the Apostle Paul, writing to the Romans, after he had explained concerning the role of the Gentiles, added: But to Israel he says, 'I have stretched out my hands to an unbelieving and contradicting people' (Rom. 10:21), who, though overcome by the Lord's blessings and witnessing signs beyond human capability, said, 'This man does not cast out demons, except by Beelzebub, the prince of demons' (Luke 11:15). And again: You are a Samaritan and have a demon (John 8:48). And again: Though you are only a man, you make yourself out to be God (John 10:33). And elsewhere: This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath (John 9:10). And many other things that would take too long to tell. Finally, when he stretched out his hands to the unbelieving people from the cross and said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing' (Luke 23:34), those nearby said, 'Bah!' He who destroys the Temple, and in three days builds it up again: let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe him. He saved others, himself he cannot save. (Matt. XXVII, 40) . And Simeon, taking the child in his arms, prophesied about him: Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. (Luke II, 34) . In Rome, the Jews speak to Paul: We have heard of this sect, that everywhere it is spoken against. (Acts XXVIII, 41) . We can extend our hands and receive in the generosity of the giver, because he denies nothing to those who ask: but immediately restores health to the leper when he asks (Matth. VIII): and receives eyes to the blind man from birth (John. IX): and the hungry, apart from children and women, were satisfied with thousands of people in the desert (Matth. XIV). They signify extended hands and the mercy of a parent who eagerly receives their children into their embrace. Those who walked in the wrong way and followed their own thoughts. To them the Lord speaks through the Prophet: Turn your foot away from the rough path (Prov. IV, 27). For they loved strangers and, like a prostitute, said: I will go after my lovers (Hos. II, 5). And leaving the good way, which is said in the Gospel: I am the way (John XIV, 6), they walked along the wide and spacious road that leads to death, and followed their own thoughts, which the Prophet, avoiding, implores the Lord: Cleanse me from my hidden sins, O Lord, and spare your servant from

strangers. If the dominion had not dominated me, then I will be blameless (Ps. XVIII, 13, 14). And the Apostle teaches that those who did not have knowledge of God should be handed over to a reprobate mind and evil works, so that they do things that do not befit them (Rom. I). But let us, the Psalmist, say with our voice: Lead me in the right way (Ps. CXXXVIII, 24).

65:3

(Verse 3.) The people who provoke me to anger are always before my face: they sacrifice in the gardens, and offer incense upon bricks (Exodus XX, 4). LXX: This people who provoke me are always before my eyes, they always sacrifice in the gardens, and offer incense upon bricks to non-gods. ** The Lord says: You shall not make for yourself an idol or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath. And they provoked me with strange gods, and with abominations they provoked me to anger. They sacrificed to devils and not to God (Deut. 32:16, 17). They, by their eagerness to sin, as if they were provoking and challenging God, not only did what was not allowed, but continuously and always sinned in the sight of the Lord, whose eyes see everything, even in his temple, sacrificing victims to idols. So that nothing would indeed be lacking in sacrilege, they would sacrifice in gardens and burn incense on bricks, joining the luxury of idolatry with the pleasure of sacrifices, and instead of one altar built according to God's law from unpolished stones, they would smear cooked bricks and strips of land with the blood of the victims. Let it be said in a literal sense: otherwise, according to spiritual understanding, every heretic provokes the Lord to anger and offers impure sacrifices in the falsehood of their teachings, which are by no means firm and lasting forever, but rather like gardens that quickly wither, providing for the delights of the flesh. To whom it is said: All flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls: but the word of the Lord, which is preached in the churches, remains forever (Isaiah 40:6-7). Not wanting his vineyard to become gardens, Naboth refuses to them to the impious king Ahab and he sheds blood (1 Kings 21). For it was not fitting for the paternal inheritance to perish: and so that the vineyards, which bring forth the fruit that gladdens the heart of man, would not be replaced with vegetables of virtue, delights, and vices. It is said that the most wise sentiment among the Greeks, rightly celebrated and praised, calls all the pleasures of the world, the pomp of the world and the quickly passing luxury, the gardens of Adonis. The heretics also sacrifice over stones, when they try to strengthen their errors and exquisite lies by the art of dialectic, and to construct them into a square, and to strengthen them with linear necessities, as they say, that is, they cover them with scattered dust and reinforce them with drawn lines. But what is read in the Septuagint, which is not found in Hebrew, is to be understood in the sense that, according to the letter and the spirit, demons do not exist, because they have already fallen from God, who truly is. Nor do heretical sects, which hold no truth, but pass away and perish like shadows. Hence Esther also speaks to the Lord: Do not give your inheritance to those who do not exist. And the saint prays in the psalm: Forgive me, so that I may be refreshed before I depart and no longer exist (Ps. XXXVIII, 14). For whoever, while living in this body, has not obtained the forgiveness of sins, and thus departs from life, perishes to God and ceases to exist, although they may continue to exist in punishment.

65:4-5

(Verses 4, 5.) Those who dwell in tombs and sleep in the temples of idols, who eat pork meat and unclean broth from their vessels, who say, 'Go away from me, do not come near me, for you are

unclean.' LXX: They sleep in tombs and caves because of the nightmares, those who eat pork meat and the broth of sacrifices, all their vessels are profane. They say, 'Go far away from me, do not come near me, for I am clean.' There was nothing of sacrilege that the people of Israel would omit, not only sacrificing in gardens and burning incense on bricks, but also sitting or dwelling in tombs, and sleeping in the temples of idols, where they used to lie down on the skins of sacrificial animals to learn the future in dreams. This error is celebrated today in the temple of Aesculapius and in many other ethnic cults, which are nothing more than the tombs of the dead. They were not satisfied with this limit of impiety, but they also feasted on the flesh of pigs, which was prohibited by law, and they devoured yesterday's food, which the Greeks call '■ωλον', with greedy mouths (Leviticus 12). As a result, they and their vessels were unclean, and their audacity and arrogance grew daily to such an extent that anyone who did not share their error was considered unclean, and they would avoid coming into contact with them, just as the Samaritans and Jews do to us, and all heretics, like those that recently sprouted under the brainy master in Gaul, who veer away from the basilicas of the martyrs and flee from us, who perform prayers there in the customary manner, as if we were unclean. However, it is not they themselves who do this so much as the demons dwelling within them, not enduring the strength and punishments of the holy ashes. But who among the heretics does not rest in memories, does not sleep in the dens of the masters? What kind of people were Marcion and Valentinus, and more recently Eunomius, who, contesting the impurity of their mind with leprous flesh, abandon the light of the Holy Spirit and dwell in the darkness of the devil, and love the caves which Jeremiah condemns in mystical language: 'My inheritance has become to me like a cave of hyenas' (Jeremiah 12:8), which our people call a wild beast, as this animal always pursues carcasses and lives on the juice and pus of dead bodies. Against these, who dwell in caves, and Abacuc spoke with a lamentable voice, saying: Woe to him who gives his neighbor a drink of turbid potion and intoxicates him, so that he looks towards his caves. (Abac. II, 15). Concerning these caves, the Lord spoke: It is written, My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer; but you have made it a den of robbers. (Matth. XXI, 13), in which you slay the souls of the deceived, so that you do not see visions in them, of which the same Savior said: I have multiplied visions, and I have assimilated myself to the hands of the Prophets. (Ose. XII, 10). And another said to him: You have spoken, he said, in a vision to your children (Psalm 88:20), but you believe in dreams and illusions, which the Lord has commanded not to be believed. They feed on the flesh of pigs, of which it is said: Do not cast your pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6). And they consume profane law, which is hidden in their books by heretical art. All their vessels are unclean, both in body and in doctrine, and they have come to such madness that anyone who is not like them is detested as if lost.

65:6-7

(Verse 6, 7.) These people will be in my fury, a burning fire all day long. Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but I will repay and recompense into their bosom your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, says the Lord, who sacrificed upon the mountains and upon the hills, reproached me, and I will measure their work first into their bosom. LXX: This is the smoke of my fury: a fire burns in it all the days. Behold, it is written before me: I will not be silent until I repay and recompense their sins, and the sins of their fathers, says the Lord, those who burned incense on the mountains and on the hills have reproached me; I will repay their deeds into their bosom. Because of your deeds and your incredible arrogance of mind, thinking that the

unclean are clean, you shall be smoke, a burning fire that is kindled by my fury. But we must understand fury, forgetfulness, anger, repentance in God in the same way as we understand feet, hands, eyes, ears, and other bodily members which are said to belong to an incorporeal and invisible God. Not in the sense that these perturbations are open to Him, Who, by His gift of grace, extinguishes them in us, but in the sense that we understand by our words the affection of God toward us. For anger is not defined in God as it is in men, who find its material in our vices rather than in the will of the Lord, Who will heap His anger on us on the day of wrath and of the revelation of His just judgment, to burn up our thistles, thorns, and tares, which we have brought forth instead of the seed of God, and also the wood, hay, and stubble which we have built on the foundation of Paul (I Cor. 3). We read of this perpetual fire in the song of Moses: A fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell. It shall consume the earth and its produce, and shall burn the foundations of the mountains, and my arrows shall pierce them (Deut. XXXII, 22). The meaning of this testimony is that the fire of God's wrath always burns against sinners and pursues them even to the depths of hell. Such was also the rich man in the Gospel (Luke XVI), clothed in purple, who, while Lazarus rested in the bosom of Abraham, was tormented by eternal fires. It will also burn the earth, that is, our flesh, and its offspring, that is, the desires of the flesh, with the same flame. And it will destroy the foundations that rise up against the knowledge of God. It will also scatter the arrows of God's mountains, so that humiliated in punishment, they cease to be mountains. Behold, it is written before me. For all our sins are open to the eyes of God, and they are written in these books, as we read in Daniel: Thrones were set up and books were opened (Dan. 7:10). Of these, it is said in another place: Let them be written above the earth (Jerem. XVII, 13). And he who had said previously will by no means remain silent any longer, I was silent: shall I always be silent? says the Lord (Isai. XLII, 14). But he will give to each one according to what he has done in his bosom, that is, in the secret of his heart, so that his own conscience may torment them. About which the prophet Hosea also prophesies: Their leaders will fall by the sword because of the insubordination of their tongue (Hosea VII, 16). This is their deviation within themselves, which proceeds from the heart of each individual. Something similar is written in Proverbs; All things are returned to the wicked in their own deviation. The term 'sinus' is also called 'caput' in another sense, relating to the ruling part of the soul (Greek: κεφαλή). Their ways are directed towards their heads. And elsewhere: His pain will turn upon his own head, and his wickedness will descend upon the crown of his head. But there is also a good bosom, which enjoys the sanctity of conscience, of which the Psalmist said: And my prayer will be turned into my bosom (Psalm 34:13). Bosom here refers to any affection and love, such as when speaking to a husband, 'The wife that is in your bosom'; or to a parent, 'Bring your children into your bosom' (Luke 16). Therefore, all who have Abraham as their father and have deserved to be like him in virtues, find rest in his bosom. For we should not accept those fathers, whose injustices and sins are now being repaid to us, from whose seed our bodies are born. Otherwise, Moses himself, who said that the sins of the fathers are to be repaid to the third and fourth generation, interprets his own statement, saying: The children shall not die because of the sins of the fathers, but each one shall die in his own sin. With the approval of the same Ezekiel, it is said that the parable 'The fathers ate sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge' (Ezek. XVIII, 2) should not be spoken in that way, but only the teeth of the one who eats are set on edge, and the sinful soul perishes without expiating external sins. From this we understand, either in a positive or negative sense, that each father to whom one is assigned is to be taken when he has departed from this life. But

they sacrificed upon the mountains and hills of Israel, when they set up golden calves in Bethel and Dan. And they reproached God with their commandments, while neglecting His ceremonies, and they gave worship to demons instead of God: the works of which should be restored in their bosom (Hosea 4). And every heretic who despises the simplicity of the Church sacrifices on the mountains and reproaches God, while despising His commandments.

65:8

(V. 8) Thus says the Lord: Just as when a grain is found in the cluster, and it is said: do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it; so I will do for the sake of my servants, that I will not destroy them all. LXX: Thus says the Lord: Just as when a grape is found in the cluster, and it is said: do not touch it, for there is a blessing in it; so I will do for the sake of my servant, that I will not destroy them all. The Lord declared that Israel would perish and all their sins would be revealed before their eyes, and He would repay them according to the works of each individual in their bosom. After this, he presents a similitude and example of comparison, in order to teach that everyone perishes in their own sin, and even if there is a great multitude of sinners, one righteous person does not perish due to the fault of all. If someone, he says, takes a cluster of grapes that could not ripen, and brings fruits that have turned sour, or is corrupted by some fault of the air or earth, they find one intact seed which has the hope of becoming even greater and reaching its usual ripeness. Let them say to another person, do not touch it, but let it grow, because it is the blessing of the Lord that in such a multitude of grapes, only one would escape dryness. Likewise, he says, with the countless multitude of Jews who have offended God, if I find a few righteous ones, I will deliver them from the destruction of the many. And I will do this for the sake of my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom the promise was made, or for the sake of those who serve me among many sinners. We read something similar in Genesis, when from fifty down to ten the righteous are gradually sought after, who could free the city from sin (Gen. XVIII), and only the righteous Lot is saved from Sodom with his daughters (Gen. XIX). This is written about in the Catholic Epistle (II Pet. II), that his soul was tormented by witnessing abominable acts, and that the judgment of his soul demonstrated the character of his body. Enoch also, among the very numerous multitude of sinners, was alone taken up to God (Genesis 5). And Noah, with his children, because he turned away from the servitude of the Lord, could not destroy the Flood (Genesis 7). But Abraham, preserved from the fire of the Chaldeans by the integrity of his faith (Genesis 11). In this sense, the words of Jeremiah, spoken from the perspective of the Lord, agree: 'I have found Israel like a warm desert, with those slain by the sword' (Jeremiah 38:2 in the Septuagint; in the Vulgate, Jeremiah 31:2). For when, he says, the whole world lay wounded by idolatry as if slain by the sword, Israel was found to have the warmth of faith in Abraham, like a physician who, after a battle among the dead bodies, where he perceives some vital signs in the pulsing veins, applies care to the wounds in order to restore health. For it is written, ζ θερμν, that is, like something warm, deceived by the ambiguity of the word, the Latin interpreter translated it as "lupinum," in which even many of the Greeks err. And yet it should be known that in Hebrew it is written as 'Thoda' (), which means grace; namely, that Israel is saved by the grace of God and not by the merit of their own works.

65:9

(Verse 9) And I will bring forth offspring from Jacob, and from Judah those who possess my mountains; my chosen ones will inherit it, and my servants will dwell there. They will pasture their flocks in the open fields and find rest in the valley of Achor, for my people who have sought me. He who above called the grape of the goblet, or the berry, or (as many wills) the cluster, now calls it the seed of Jacob and Judah, who possess the mountains or its mountain. Many understand the seed of Jacob and Judah to mean Christ, of whom it is said in Genesis: Judah, your brothers shall praise you (Gen. XLIX, 8), and so on. For no one doubts that the Savior was born from the lineage of Judah. Others, however, understand it to mean the Apostles, of whom we have often said: A remnant will be saved (Isai. I, 9). And: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we would have been as Sodom, and we would have been like Gomorrah (Rom. IX, 29). They have possessed the mountain of the Lord conscious of dwelling in Christ, saying: We have come to Mount Zion and the heavenly city of the living God, Jerusalem (Heb. XII, 22). Or its mountains, of which it is sung in the Psalms: Mountains surround it, and the Lord surrounds his people (Psalm CXXIV, 2). And: His foundations are in the holy mountains (Psalm 86:1). But the elect of the Lord shall possess Zion, and they shall dwell in it, his servants. Of whom it is written in the same volume: The seed of Abraham, his servants, the sons of Jacob, his elect (Psalm 105:6). Therefore, whoever is still seed, not yet formed into a son, is a servant of the Lord, to whom he says in the Gospel: I know that you are the seed of Abraham, but you are not yet sons (John 8). For if they were Abraham's seed, they would do the works of Abraham. But the one who is a son, he is also chosen by the Lord. Therefore the chosen one possesses Jerusalem, and the servants dwell in it, and it is said that there is a distinction between the sons and servants: You have not received again the spirit of bondage in fear, but the spirit of adoption (Rom. VIII, 15). And it shall be, he says, fields or forests for sheepfolds. In Hebrew, it is called Sharon for fields. Every region around Lydda, Joppa, and Jamnia is suitable for grazing flocks. Concerning this, it is written in the Acts of the Apostles: 'The wilderness will turn into pastures' (Acts 9), as it is also sung in the psalm: 'The voice of the Lord perfects the stags, and it reveals the pastures' (Psalm 28:9), or the dense forests, so that thieves may cease to lurk there, and venomous beasts and poisonous animals, and the once places of ambush and bloodshed, may be transformed into churches of the Lord, and the flocks may be grazed there by Him who laid down His life for His sheep. Concerning which it is written: He himself shall feed us forever (Psalm 45:15). This voice, fulfilling the deer, and revealing the depths of the forest, cries out through John in the wilderness: Now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bring forth good fruit shall be cut down, and cast into the fire (Matthew 3:10). And again: Every valley shall be filled (Luke 3:5); concerning which it is also said now: and the valley of Achor for a fold of cattle, and for a resting place for my people who sought me. From which, in the book of Joshua son of Nun, we read that Acham, who stole from the ban and the spoils of Jericho, was killed there, along with all his household, because he had troubled the people. The place itself, where it happened, was called Achor, which means the name of trouble and tumult (Jos. VII). Therefore, the Valley of Achor, where there was once a curse and punishment, will be a resting place for cattle. Paul, explaining this, says: Is God concerned about oxen (I Cor. IX, 9)? That truly he speaks concerning us, for it is necessary that he who plows, plow in hope, and he who threshes the threshing floor, thresh in hope, so that he may partake. Concerning this valley, it is mystically written in Hosea: 'I will speak to her heart, undoubtedly Jerusalem; and I will give her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor, so that her understanding may be opened.' (Hosea 2:14) For this reason, the Valley of Achor is given as a

possession of the cattle of the people of God, and the pastures are turned into sheepfolds, so that understanding may be opened, and the truth of the Lord may be known.

65:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) And you who have forsaken the Lord, and have forgotten my holy mountain. You who set a table for fortune, and pour out libations upon it. I will number you for the sword, and you shall all fall in the slaughter. LXX: But you who have forsaken me, and have forgotten my holy mountain, and prepare a table for fortune, and fill a cup for the demon: I will deliver you to the sword; you shall all be killed. In the former wilderness and chaos. In the lands of the Gentiles there will be sheepfolds, that is, the Churches of all believers from the whole world. But you, O people of Israel, who have forsaken the Lord and have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, who have forgotten His holy mountain, of which we have frequently spoken, or the Lord Savior, who is the mountain of mountains, and all holy ones, or Mount Zion, and the heavenly city of the living God, Jerusalem, who do these things and these things, I will deliver you to the sword, so that you all may be killed together. If you ask what the sword is, we shall say later: You set out a table for Fortune, he says, and pour libations on it; or, according to the Seventy: You prepare a table for Fortune, and fill a cup for a demon, or κ■ρασμα, as all the translators similarly rendered it, that is, a mixed potion. Now, in all cities, especially in Egypt and Alexandria, there is an ancient custom of idolatry, that on the last day of the year and month, which is the last, they set out a table filled with various kinds of food, and a cup mixed with honeyed wine, either wishing for the fertility of the past year or that of the coming year. But the Israelites were doing this, venerating the monstrous images of all the idols at once, and not offering sacrifices on the altar, but pouring out this kind of offering on the table. And what the Seventy translated as 'Menni', in Hebrew it has 'absque me', which Symmachus interpreted to mean 'without me', so the sense is: 'The one who prepares a table for fortune, and fills the cup without me'; to teach that it is not done for oneself, but for the demon. And the sword with which they are killed is taken as a punishment. For not all the people of Israel were handed over by the sword, as we see how many thousands are scattered throughout the whole world; but by punishments and tortures, captivity and ultimate servitude, according to what is said elsewhere: 'All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword,' and in the Song of Deuteronomy: 'I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh—the flesh of the slain.' (Deut. XXXII, 42). It is not credible that the arrows of the Lord could be drunk with blood, and that his sword could be satiated with the flesh of the wounded. About these arrows that Job speaks of, which pierce him every moment of the hour. The arrows of the Lord are in my body: their fury drinks up my spirit; for when I begin to speak, they prick me. (Job 6:4). According to the allegory, it must be said that all those who abandon the Church and forget the holy mountain of God, and give themselves over to the spirits of error and the teachings of demons, prepare a table for their fortune, believing that nothing pertains to God but that everything is governed by the course of the stars or the variety of fortune: these are the ones whom Paul reproaches, saying: You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons (1 Corinthians 10:20-21): because they will be handed over to eternal punishments, so that none of them can escape death and destruction.

65:12

(Verse 12.) Because I called and you did not answer, I spoke and you did not hear. But you did evil in my sight and chose what I did not want. LXX: I called you and you did not hear, I spoke and you despised, and you did evil in my presence and chose what I did not want. You have been handed over to the sword, for not only have you forsaken me and forgotten me, but you have also mixed the cup of fortune. But when I was Emmanuel, that is, God with us, about whom John also writes: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14), I called you in the present: Return to me, O returning children (Jeremiah 3:14). And: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened (Matth. XI, 28), and you did not want to respond. I have spoken in parables, and I have done everything that I should do, and you did not hear me, rather you despised me. For I am the one who said before: I came and there was no man: I called, and there was no one who obeyed (Isai. L, 2). And it was not enough for you to show impiety by despising me while I am present, and to send the heir, sent to you, to be killed; but you did evil in my sight, and you chose what I did not want, and you blasphemed the Son of God, so that you would choose Barabbas the thief, the author of murder and sedition; and yet you dare to say: Why did you make us stray from your way (Isai. LXIII, 17)? If those who did not know me found me, and those who did not call upon me received me, to whom you are worthy of tortures, who rejected me when I was sent to you and saying: I have come only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24), but instead you crucified me? Let us consider what it means when he says: And you chose what I did not want; or what is the will of the Son of God, who speaks in the Gospel: Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (Matthew 7:21). About which God Himself says: 'I wanted to do Your will' (Ps. 39:9). This is the will about which the Lord Himself spoke: 'I have found David, son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will' (Acts 13:22). Therefore the saint prays and says: 'Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God' (Ps. 143:10). For all things are lawful, but not all things are expedient. And the Apostle says about virgins that he does not have a command from the Lord, but he still wishes them to be as he is himself (1 Cor. 7). From this he shows that the indulgence of the master should by no means be followed, but rather his will (I Cor. VII); and that we should choose what is profitable, not what is permissible, as is the case with second marriage. I want young women to marry, to bear children, to be mothers of families (I Tim. V, 14). And he sets forth the reasons why he grants these things: For certain things have gone astray in the past after Satan. Therefore, the pure will of the second marriage is not to be belittled by a comparison to fornication.

65:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, my servants will eat, and you will be hungry. Behold, my servants will drink, and you will be thirsty. Behold, my servants will rejoice, and you will be put to shame. Behold, my servants will praise with the exultation of the heart, and you will cry out because of the pain of the heart, and because of the brokenness of the spirit you will howl. LXX: Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, my servants will eat, but you will be hungry. Behold, my servants will drink, but you will be thirsty. Behold, my servants will rejoice, but you will be confounded. Behold, my servants will exult in joy, but you will cry out because of the pain in your hearts, and because of the brokenness of your spirits you will wail. Not only will you fall by the sword, you who have forsaken the Lord and done evil in his sight, and refused to listen to his words, but you will also see a great difference between yourselves and the multitude of the

nations. For those who serve me will eat and drink, rejoice and praise with exultation of the heart. But on the contrary, you will hunger and thirst, you will be confused and cry out in pain of heart and contrition of spirit. They think that all these things will be accomplished in a thousand years, believing that food and drink are the kingdom of God, without understanding that which is written: Labor not for the food which perishes, but for the bread of life and truth (John VI, 27), desiring to eat the flesh of Christ and the fruit of the tree of life. About which the Savior speaks: I am the bread that came down from heaven (John 6:33). And the Ecclesiastes says: Open your eyes and be satisfied with bread (Proverbs 20:13). And the Psalmist says: I was young, and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be a blessing (Psalm 37:25). He was instructing his disciples about this bread and spiritual banquet: But you are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom (Luke 22:28). But if we consider simple bread, how can we explain it: The Lord will not let the soul of the just perish by famine (Prov. 10:3). And again: The Lord knows the ways of the blameless, and their inheritance will be forever. They will not be put to shame in the time of distress, and in the days of famine they will be satisfied (Psalm 37:18, 19). For how many holy ones die in persecution, consumed by hunger and poverty; how many righteous ones go hungry, while the wicked are filled with their excesses! But that drink is to be received, which is drawn from the fountains of Israel; whoever drinks it, will have within themselves a fountain of water springing up to eternal life (John 4; Luke 22). This is the same drink that the Savior promises to drink with the Apostles in the kingdom of the Father: who gives joy to the heart of man (Psalm 103:14), so that those who drink it may say: You have given joy in my heart (Psalm 4:7). Of this food and drink, among the eight beatitudes it is said: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6). And the mother of the Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied: He has filled the hungry with good things (Luke 1:53), those who previously did not have the food of the Lord; and he has sent the rich away empty, who were given for his burial; and they rejected the one whom the Prophets had promised. Of whom the Psalmist also sings in another place: The rich have become poor and hungry (Psalm 34:11), that is, the people of the Jews. But those who seek the Lord, that is, the crowd of Gentiles, will not lack any good thing. And when the servants of Christ, believing in Him, will have been joyful and praised God with exultation of heart and joy, then they will be confounded, seeing that others have taken their place; and they will cry out in sorrow of heart, fulfilling that which is written: There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:50): when the lambs of the gentiles and the righteous stand on the right, and the goats of the Jews and the wicked on the left; some receiving eternal rewards, others eternal punishments. The contrition of the spirit, on account of the pain of the heart, is to be understood in the conscience of sins, according to what is written: 'They will know those who go astray in spirit, and there will be understanding' (Isaiah 29:24). And: 'A contrite and humbled heart, O God, you will not despise' (Psalm 50:19). The spirit is crushed when it is raised up; this is written about the enemy king of Israel: 'The Lord hardened his spirit' (2 Kings 17:14). And about the prince of Babylon, when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened, so that he would proudly say: 'This is Babylon, and I made it' (Daniel 4:27).

65:15-16

(Vers. 15, 16.) And you shall dismiss your name in the oath to my chosen ones, and the Lord God will kill you, and He will call His servants by another name, in which whoever is blessed on earth will be blessed in God, amen: and whoever swears on earth will swear in God, amen. LXX: For you shall abandon your name to my chosen ones. But the Lord will kill you, and to those who serve me, a new name will be called, to whom blessings will be given on earth: for they bless the true God, and those who swear on earth will swear by the true God. In reference to satiety, which is called Sabaa in Hebrew, others have interpreted it as an oath; a word that has many meanings and is varied according to the different accents. It is understood as both an oath and satiety, and fullness, and many, and seven. We have spoken about it in the book of Genesis, and in this volume (Chapter IV), where seven women took hold of one man. Again, because it is translated by the Septuagint, it is true, and in Hebrew it is called Amen; Aquila translates it as *πεπιστωμένος*, that is, faithfully. But what he says is this: as others succeed you, your name will be the oath of my chosen ones, so that they may have you as an example of evils and detest such endurance, and they may swear thus: I will not suffer what the people of the Jews have suffered. Whether your name will be in satiety, which is usually said of those whose remembrance and memory is odious, and who have come to the point of satiety and disgust. Or certainly this should be said, that they should abandon their own name for the chosen ones of the Lord, so that a crowd of nations may succeed them; and they themselves may be called sons of Abraham and Israel. About whom Paul speaks: Peace be upon them, and upon the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16). For neither are those who are of Israel, Israel; nor are those who are the descendants of Abraham all his children (Romans 9:7), to whom it is said: If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham (John 8:39). And because they are the descendants of Abraham, and not his children, as we explained above, John the Baptist reproaches them, saying: And do not presume to say, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham (Matthew 3:9). For how can they be his children, who said to wood and stone, you have begotten me: when, on the contrary, those who are from faith, are called the children of Abraham? But you, he says, will be killed by the Lord, so that you will not be called circumcision, but incision (Galatians III): so that you may lack eternal life, so that you may not have the one who says: I am the life (John XIV, 6). But he says that he will call his servants by another name, or a new one, which will be celebrated throughout the whole world. And it shall be blessed: to such an extent that whoever is called by that name shall be blessed in the Lord, and shall receive the sign of true Circumcision, amen: which the Lord often uses in the Gospel to affirm what has been said: Amen, amen I say to you (John 5:19). However, there is no new or different name, except one that is derived from the name of Christ, so that the people of God should no longer be called Jacob, and Judah, and Israel, and Ephraim, and Joseph, but Christian. For whoever swears on the earth, does not swear in idols and false gods, but in God; this statement is confirmed again by the seal of Amen. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, those who translated the true God as Amen, so that the true God may be blessed, and those who swear on the earth, may swear by the true God, we refer not only to the person of God the Father, about whom it is written: That they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (John 17:3), but also to the Son, who is himself the true God, as the evangelist John says: The Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know the true one, and we are in his true Son, Jesus Christ (John 5:20). This is the true God and eternal life. For if the Savior speaks of himself: I am the truth (John XIV, 6), consequently he received the name true God from the truth, so that he would not be called

God according to false gods, but according to the true God the Father, and he himself is the true God. Otherwise, if he is not true, he will be similar to an idol, which leads to the damnation of those who deny Christ as the true God. This is, however, a new name, which is written for him in the Apocalypse upon a stone (Chapter II), to which blessing is given in the whole world.

65:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) Because the former troubles have been forgotten and hidden from my eyes. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. LXX: For they shall forget the affliction of the past, and it shall not come to mind. But there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, and they shall not remember the former things, nor shall they come to mind. But they shall find joy and exultation in it. The cause of joy and confession of the true God is that the eternal oblivion will follow the previous sorrows, so that they will not remember the idols and the former errors, but will pass from darkness to light, so that they may enjoy eternal blessedness. For they will forget the past evils, not by the forgetfulness of memory, but by the succession of good things, according to what is written: 'In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider: God has made the one side by side with the other, so that man may not find out anything that will be after him.' (Eccles. 7:14). And elsewhere it is said: 'Affliction makes joy forgotten in an hour' (Eccles. 11:29): because while they are in distress, they will not enjoy the former pleasures, according to the mistaken mind of Epicurus. Although it can also be said, that in the new heaven and the new earth, all memory of previous conversations is erased, so that this very thing does not become a part of the evils, to recall the narrowness of the past. But those who believe that everything we see will perish interpret it according to the testimony of the Gospel: Heaven and earth will pass away (Matthew 24:35). And according to the testimony of the Apostle Paul: For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18). Moreover, those who embrace change, improvement, and do not consider the destruction of elements to be a demise, use this example: In the beginning, you established the earth, O Lord, and the works of your hands are the heavens. They will perish, but you remain, and all of them will wear out like a garment, and you will change them like clothing, and they will be changed (Psalm 102:26-27). This clearly demonstrates a transformation for the better, not an annihilation into nothingness, but a change. For the scripture that is written in another place, 'The moon shall shine as the sun, and the sun shall receive sevenfold light' (Isaiah 30:26), does not indicate the destruction of the former things, but their transformation for the better. In order to understand this, let us consider examples from our own condition: when an infant grows into a child, and a child into a youth, and a youth into a man, and a man into an old man, each age does not perish completely. It is still the same person as before, but gradually changes and is said to have perished from its former state. What the intelligent and Apostle Paul said: For the figure of this world passeth away (1 Cor. VII, 31). Let us consider what he said: The figure passeth away, not the substance. Peter also signifies the same: For this they are willfully ignorant of: that the heavens were before, and the earth out of water, and through water, consisting by the word of God: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire (2 Pet. III, 5 seqq.): in what sense this is to be understood, he teaches afterwards: But we look for new heavens and a new earth, according to his promise (Ibid., 13): he

did not say, we shall see other heavens and another earth, but the old and ancient ones changed for the better. We can say this also, that those who have turned away from idolatry and forsaken their former error, see new heavens and a new earth, not considering the elements as gods or as those things that are born from the earth. Now we confess that the heavens and the earth are the work of God's hands. But during that time, we worshipped as servants and creatures with reverence for God, which David also acknowledges in the psalm: 'I will see the heavens, the work of your fingers' (Psalm 8:4). Not that David did not see the heavens at that time when he said these things; but by each increase of virtues and knowledge of future things, he sees new heavens that he did not see before. But what is said at the end of this testimony: 'Which I create,' is omitted by the Septuagint.

65:19

(Verse 19.) For behold, I am creating Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people as a joy; and I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people. Septuagint: For behold, I am making Jerusalem a rejoicing, and my people a gladness; and I will rejoice over Jerusalem and be glad over my people. You should rejoice and exult with everlasting joy in the creation of new heavens and a new earth, and not remember the former things. Let no remembrance of past sorrows arise in you; for I will not only create new heavens and a new earth, but also Jerusalem in rejoicing, and her people in joy. There is no doubt that the joy which was once exclusive to one nation is now a source of happiness for all nations. The rejoicing and joy over the city and the people of God will be so great that even I, their creator, will rejoice and be glad over Jerusalem and over my people who will eat, drink, and be joyful, and will rejoice in it, and those who are called by a new name.

65:20

(Verse 20) And there shall no longer be heard in her (in him) the voice of weeping, and the voice of crying. There shall no longer be an infant of days, nor an old man who has not filled his days. For the child shall die at a hundred years old, and the sinner at a hundred years old shall be accursed. LXX: And there shall no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping, and the voice of crying. Neither shall there be any more premature and old person who does not fulfill their time. For there shall be a child of a hundred years, and a sinner who dies at a hundred years old shall be cursed. For it will not be fitting that in the city of Jerusalem, the people of God, who will receive the eternal creature of exultation and joy, should any longer hear the voice of weeping and shouting; when pain, sorrow, and groaning have departed. For indeed, opposites cannot be present at the same time. And where there is exultation and joy, which are the fruits of the Holy Spirit, there can be no weeping and lamentation, which are suitable for those who lament and mourn, especially the shouting, which Paul expels from the Church of believers, so that we do not make a clamor resembling that of the Jews (Ephesians 4). In such a city, there will be no diverse ages: infant and old, small and great, who do not fulfill their days; but like children of the resurrection, all will reach perfect adulthood, to the measure of the fullness of Christ's age, so that no one lacks the span of years, nor exceeds it, and one who does not yet have solid strength may cease to be what he was, and with advanced age may wither away; and all will reach the number of one hundred years, such as Abraham was, who received the promise of his son Isaac at this age (Gen. XXI). Of the praises of which number, it is not necessary to mention many, lest the discussion be superfluous. We only say this, that the tens have equal sides and possess the firmness of square shapes. Also,

in the promises for the things which we have consumed (rather despised), the Lord promises us a hundredfold, and falling into good soil for sowing, it first has the number of abundant crops, a hundredfold. Finally, Isaac also sowed one seed of faith, and his works were multiplied by this number of his labor. Therefore, at that time, when the age of all will be one, both the holy and the sinner will be perfected by a similar resurrection, and they will not be subject to change in time; but one will be drawn to rewards, another to punishment: and in that the sinner will be cursed, because he will suffer eternal punishment in an incorruptible body. Moreover, what we read in the Book of Revelation by John (Chapter 20), that after the resurrection the presence of the judge will show differences not of age, but of merits, for the small and the great. For whoever is small according to the opinion of Solomon is worthy of mercy: but the powerful endure torments powerfully (Wisdom of Solomon 6:7). The words of the Lord also agree with this sentiment: The servant who knows the will of his master and does not do it will be beaten with many blows (Luke 12:47). But the one who does not know and still does worthy things of punishment will be beaten with few blows. Blessed Apostle Paul, speaking of the Old Testament as Christ spoke to him, asserts that Abraham, the patriarch, is not only the father of circumcision but also of those without circumcision (Romans 4). That is, two peoples were generated from him, and the one who was born according to the flesh, at the age of a hundred because of Christ, who was born from the descendants of Abraham, to whom he extended his hand, will be subject to perpetual curse. The gospels teach this story (Mark 5), in which it is reported that a woman suffering from hemorrhage started when the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue was born, and when the woman was immediately healed, the daughter died. And within the same period of years, a new people persists in their youth, and the old people dies in disbelief, and is cursed. We have said this according to the Septuagint interpreters, whose edition is widely known throughout the world, so that we may not seem to resort to the fortress of the Hebrew language. Whether after the resurrection you understand in the second coming of the Savior, or after baptism in the first resurrection, it does not contradict the faith of the Church. The Hebrews argue that these things will happen before the resurrection in a kingdom of a thousand years on earth, and such long spaces of future life are promised that a hundred years are considered infancy; but a sinner will die in his hundredth year of age, so that he may not enjoy his accumulated wealth, but may know himself to be cursed because of his sin. But if this is so, where will perfect happiness be, which is violated and corrupted by sin, and sin is punished with premature death?

65:21-22

(Ver. 21. 22.) And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat. LXX likewise. Concerning these houses, the prophetic psalm in the sixty-eighth chapter promises, saying: Because God will save Zion: and the cities of Judah shall be built, and they shall dwell there, and inherit it, and the seed of his servants shall possess it: and those who love his name shall dwell in it. All these things the Jews understand in a carnal manner, so that Jerusalem and the cities of Judaea may be restored to their former state. And if we were to give them this, they would not only hear that Jerusalem is promised, but also Sodom, as Ezekiel says: 'Sodom shall be restored to its former state.' Therefore, the houses in which those who build them will dwell must either be understood as virtues, or as various dwelling places with the Father, which whoever builds them will possess forever. In Exodus, those who are said to have built for themselves and

were midwives were called obstetricians, who feared God: although it is written in Hebrew that God built houses for them because they feared Him (Exod. 1). And Jacob, because he was simple, or as it is said in Greek ■πλᾱστος, that is, not at all artificial; not like those condemned in Peter's Epistle, of whom he says: 'In covetousness they will make merchandise of you with fictitious words' (II Pet. II, 3); therefore they lived in a house that Esau, who delighted in wild beasts and forests, could not possess. Such words describe the house of the Savior in the Gospel: Everyone who comes to me, and hears my words, and does them, will be like a wise man who built his house upon a rock, (Matthew 7:24), and so on. Otherwise, according to the letter, many saints build houses and do not inhabit them, either due to pilgrimage, or the theft of another, or death. Such was Job, who, though rich in flesh and spirit, was brought to such poverty that he sat in the dung heap outside the city gate (Job 2). On the contrary, that rich man in the Gospel was clothed in purple and built a house, and he dwelt in it, of whom it could rightly be said: Fool, this night they will take your soul from you; and the things which you have prepared, whose shall they be (Luke XII, 20)? However, not only does He say that they will build houses and dwell in them, but they will also plant vineyards and they themselves will eat their fruit. According to what is said in Micah: Each one will rest under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and there will be no one to make him afraid (Micah IV, 4). This is the vine that spoke in the Gospel: I am the vine, and you are the branches, and My Father is the vinedresser (John 15:5). Every branch that does not bear fruit will be cut off and thrown into the fire (Matthew 3:10). Its fruits are eaten and drank, and they gladden the heart of man and intoxicates the friends of the bridegroom, and they are drank daily in the kingdom of God. But it rests under a fig tree and fears no one's treachery, who enjoys the sweetness of the Holy Spirit and is satisfied with its fruits: love, joy, peace, faith, continence, and patience. It is said about the planter: Whoever plants a fig tree, will eat its fruits (Amos 9:14). Whoever builds such houses and plants vineyards, about whom the Apostle also speaks: I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6), will eat the labor of his hands (Psalm 127); and sowing in the Spirit, will reap eternal life from the Spirit (John 4), and will not be thwarted by the tricks of the devil and his minions.

65:23-25

(Verse 23 onwards) For according to the days of a tree, the days of my people will be, and the work of their hands will grow old with my chosen. They will not labor in vain, nor bring forth children in trouble, for they are the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their descendants will be with them. And before they call, I will answer; while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They shall do no harm, neither shall they kill in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. LXX: For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of my people: and the works of their hands shall be multiplied. My chosen ones shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for a curse: for they are the seed blessed by the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer them: while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together: the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the serpent shall eat dust like bread. They will not harm or destroy on my holy mountain, says the Lord. The dwelling and plantation of the righteous will be eternal, so that the days of the life of my people may be compared to the days of the life of the tree, about which it is said in the Psalms: The righteous will flourish like a palm tree (Psalm 92:13), triumphing over their adversaries daily and displaying the emblem of victory.

However, if we read it according to the Septuagint, we understand 'the days of the life of the tree,' which conveys more the meaning from the Hebrew rather than the words, and we understand it as the tree of life that was situated in paradise. So that Adam would not extend his hand to live, he was driven out of paradise (Genesis, III). In the custody of which, Cherubim, that is, a multitude of knowledge, and a fiery sword was placed to guard the way of the tree of life, so that Adam, who was in sin and not yet aware of his sins, would not eat from it and die from the death of impenitence, desperation, and pride. Solomon explains more clearly what this tree of life is, who, discussing the wisdom of God, says: The tree of life is for all who approach it, and who rely on it, as a firm foundation on the Lord (Proverbs III, 18); there is no doubt that it signifies the Word of God, who himself is the way and wisdom, and speaks of himself: I am the life (John XI, 25). And as the Prophet sings: You have made everything in wisdom: the earth is full of your creatures (Psalm 104:24); and the Apostle Paul: Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24). The works of the people of God will also not grow old, but will be renewed daily, so that they do not walk in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit (Romans 7). Just as through the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one man, many will be made righteous. Certainly, this must be said, that the works of those whose house is founded upon rock endure forever, and those who build upon the foundation of Christ with gold, silver, and precious stones (1 Corinthians 3): and on the contrary, the works of those whose house is founded upon sand perish in a sudden tempest; and those who build upon the foundation of Christ with wood, hay, and straw. Does it not seem to you that their works grow old every day, who, forgetting the past, extend into the future? Both the old and the new are called the Testament: not that the old one perishes, but that the new one does not succeed it. This can also be said in accordance with the Hebrew, that the works of the people and of those who believe in Christ are the fruits of the Apostles, that is, of the elect of God, and are stored in their treasures. For many are called, but few are chosen (Matthew 20). These people will not labor in vain, as the Jews once labored; but they will eat the labors of their hands. They will not generate in confusion or in curse, and, as is more expressly put in Hebrew, into non-existence, which in their language is called Labala (Al. Labaala), that is, that they should cease to be and have an end to their substance: for which reason Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion interpreted it as hastening: so that they should not believe without reason, but imitate Nathanael, who was praised by the voice of the Lord, Behold a true Israelite, in whom there is no deceit (John 1:47), who sought Christ by the authority of the Scriptures and desired to know about the prophets, saying, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? And the meaning is: How do you bring the Messiah to me from Galilee and Nazareth, when I know that he was promised to come from Bethlehem in Judah? Therefore, the apostles and apostolic men will generate children in such a way that they instruct them from the Holy Scriptures, so that they do not imitate the curse of the Jews, but rather say with the Prophet: From your fear, Lord, we have conceived in the womb, and have given birth and brought forth (Isaiah 26:18). For it was said of them: Blessed shall be the offspring of your womb (Deuteronomy 28:4). These are the sons of Abraham, who do his works: and in the old history they are called the sons of the Prophets (John VIII): such as in the new Testament the apostles begot (Acts XVI), Paul begot Timothy, Luke, and Titus, and many others; Peter begot Mark the evangelist, and the others, whose blessed seed is, and thus far blessed, and the sons remain of their sons. Concerning whom the Prophet says: Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, he will greatly desire his commandments. His descendants will be mighty on the earth; the generation of the upright will

be blessed. (Psalm 112:1-2) And elsewhere: Your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord. (Psalm 128:4-5) On the contrary, it is said of Judas, the traitor, and all who are like him, Let his children be orphans, and his wife a widow. Let his children wander and beg; let them be driven out of their ruined homes. (Psalm 109:9-10) For the end of a wicked generation is the worst. They conceive sorrow and give birth to iniquity. Concerning them it is written: Behold, he travailed with injustice, he has conceived sorrow, and has brought forth iniquity (Psalm 7:15). But if this is said of the wicked, how then did Samuel, a blessed and righteous man, beget wicked sons who did not walk in their father's ways (1 Samuel 8)? And David, from whose seed Christ was born, begot two sons, Amnon and Absalom, one of whom became the murderer of his brother and the other the murderer of his father (2 Samuel 13, 15, and 16)? From all these things we learn that sons and grandsons should be understood according to what we have said. Therefore, Paul also begets sons until Christ is formed in them, and Onesimus is begotten in chains (Gal. IV). When they cry out, they are immediately heard, and when they speak, the Lord will say, 'Here I am.' All these things we also see fulfilled according to the letter in the Acts of the Apostles. For all the nations could not have believed in such a short time unless their faith had been somehow forced out by the miracles of signs. For while the Apostles and apostolic men were speaking and shouting out, the Lord would respond with the greatness of signs, such as when Dorcas rose up at the prayers of Peter (Acts 9), when the father of Publius on the island of Melita, who was suffering from fevers and dysentery, which are diseases that are contrary to each other, was healed by the prayers of Paul (Acts 28), and when the whole world declared that gods were walking among men (Acts 28). At that time, the wolf and the lamb were grazing together, the persecutor Paul and the disciple Ananias (Acts 9). That wolf, of which it is written: Benjamin, a ravenous wolf, in the morning he will eat prey, and in the evening he will divide the spoils (Gen. XLIX, 27); or as it is said in Hebrew, he will divide the spoils. Whose teaching was the food of believers, and who triumphed over vanquished adversaries in the whole world. But all who believe are lambs, who follow the Lamb wherever he goes (Apoc. XIV), whom the Lord handed over to Peter to feed, saying: Feed my lambs (John XXI, 16). The lion also, like an ox, will eat straw, when the most eloquent men, once powerful in the world, submit themselves to rusticity, so that they may not feed on worldly eloquence, which trickles like honey from the lips of a harlot, but rather follow lowliness and straw in history until they earn the wheat of understanding with much labor and industry. Concerning these straw and wheat, Jeremiah speaks: 'What has straw to do with wheat?' says the Lord (Jeremiah 13:28). And it must be considered that it is not the ox that turns into madness, but the lion that is transformed into gentleness. The serpent that observed the heel of the man, and whose head was observed by the man, will by no means be nourished by the destruction of others, but will eat the earth, or rather dust, as bread (Genesis 3). Or certainly it must be understood that the devil, who previously fed on the deaths of men, will only devour those who are dust and earth: through which everything demonstrates the transformation of evils into good, those who are innocent will be, with the ancient ferocity abandoned: not outside, but on the holy mountain of the Lord, that is, in the Church, and in the confession of that mountain, from which the prince of Tyre was wounded, and having been cut from the mountain without hands, grew into a great mountain, and filled the world (Daniel 2). Let us ask in this place the Jews, and all those who still eat the chaff of the Scriptures under the name of Christian, which will be separated from the wheat in the Lord's winnowing fan and will be delivered to the wind and the flames, how the beatitude is to be estimated, namely in the

thousand-year kingdom, on Mount Zion, the city of present Christ's Jerusalem; and in the most august Temple, will wolves and lambs, lions and oxen, serpents and humans eat together and live together in harmony? And will these (i.e. the holy ones) alone be harmless, who have dwelt on the holy mountain of the Lord? From which we understand that all who are outside the mountain are to be killed. Therefore, the entire world will be laid bare for wolves, lions, bears, leopards, and serpents, and all other beasts; and the vast forests, and the Egyptian wilderness, which is fertile with venomous animals, and the city of the holy ones will be a dwelling not only for humans, but also for beasts and serpents, as according to the earlier prophecy, the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard with the goat, the calf and the lion, and the sheep shall all die together. And a little child shall lead them, and an infant shall put his hand into the hole of the asp, and shall destroy the brood of the reptile in its lair. (Isaiah 11) And the cause of such great happiness is because the whole earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

66:1

(Chapter 66, Verse 1) Thus says the Lord: Heaven is My throne, and the earth is the footstool for My feet. What is this house that you are building for Me, and what is this place of My rest? All these things My hand has made, and so all these things have come into being, says the Lord. Similarly, let us understand that Mount Zion is the holy mountain, and let us not be deceived by the Jewish error that believes that Jerusalem must be rebuilt and that all the promises of the Lord must be fulfilled there carnally. He takes away this suspicion from us and presents the testimony that Stephen, the first martyr in Christ, used against the Jewish contention (Acts 7). Solomon built him a house, doubtless for God; but he does not dwell in man-made structures, as the Prophet says: Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. And Paul in the same volume: God, who made the world and all things in it, does not dwell in temples made by hands (Acts 17:24). For if heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool, how can he be confined to a small space, who fills all things and in whom all things exist? And Moses also said: 'Lest thou shouldst say in thy heart: 'It is afar off,' God is in heaven above, and in the earth beneath: and there is no other God besides him (Deut. IV, 39).' And the Psalmist: 'Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy face? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there: if I descend into hell, thou art present (Psal. CXXXVIII, 7).' To whom Jeremiah also agrees, speaking in the person of God, saying: 'I am a God nigh at hand, and not a God afar off.' Can anyone hide in secret places where I cannot see them? Do I not fill heaven and earth? (Jeremiah 23:23-24) For in Him we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17) He says this to expose the error of the Jewish belief that God, who is invisible, incorporeal, and incomprehensible, can be confined to the temple in Jerusalem. Even Solomon, the builder of the temple, acknowledges this in his prayer to the Lord. (1 Kings 8) Lest we think that the magnitude of God should be measured in both heaven and earth, in another place we read about Him: He holds the heavens in the palm of His hand, and the earth in a fist. (Isaiah 40:12) Through this it is shown that God is both external and internal, infused and surrounding, as He is not contained by the surrounding throne, yet He is contained by a fist and a palm. He is not only the creator of heaven and earth, but also of the invisible beings, the angels and archangels, dominions and powers, and all mankind, as the Apostle speaks about them (Colossians 1). All of these things were made by the hand of God. Job and the Psalmist both mention this: Your hand made me and fashioned me (Job 10:18; Psalm 119:73). For everything was made through him, and without him nothing was made (John 1). He Himself spoke, and they were made; He

commanded, and they were created (Psalm 33). And as the Scripture of Genesis demonstrates in mystical speech, God said, and God made (Genesis 1). For by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. There is no place of rest of the Lord, except the one that the Prophet mentions.

66:2-3

(Vers. 2, 3.) But to whom shall I look, except to the poor and contrite in spirit, and trembling at my words? He who slaughters an ox is like one who slays a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog's neck; he who presents a grain offering, like one who offers pig's blood; he who remembers frankincense, like one who blesses an idol. LXX: And to whom shall I look, except to the humble and peaceful, and trembling at my words? But unjust is the one who sacrifices a calf as if striking a man. Sacrificing from the flock as if killing a dog. Offering fine flour as if it were swine's blood. Giving frankincense as a memorial as if blaspheming. With the altar and earthly temple removed, which human hands had built, the Jewish victims are rightly taken away, lest they should say: We are not so foolish as to think that God can be confined to a place; but in a separate place for sacrificing, we offer to God the victims that are commanded by the law. Therefore, the Inhabitant of heaven, indeed the Creator of all, who refuses to have a temple on earth, willingly assumes a humble, peaceful, and trembling human being into the temple, according to the words of the Apostle: But you are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells in you. If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which you are (I Cor. III, 16, 17). Therefore, whoever is humble and peaceful, and trembles at the words of God, the Lord looks upon him; and it can be understood from this saying that he is prophesied under the name of "earth": The earth trembled and was still when God arose to judge (Psal. LXXV, 9, 10). For its inhabitants, for whom the land is metaphorically called 'earth,' considering the judgment of God, they rest from evil works; and sitting in their house, they rest on the eternal Sabbath, so as not to engage in the servile work of sin, just as the builders of the tower once moved their feet from the East and abandoned the rising of true light. They did not hear what was said to Cain: 'You have sinned, rest.' But according to the Proverbs of Solomon: 'Whoever listens to God will dwell confidently and rest without fear from all evil.' This is a humble and poor person, with a contrite spirit, and trembling at the words of the Lord, about whom it is written in the Gospel: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3). And elsewhere: Blessed is he who understands the needy and the poor (Psalm 41:1). And again: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor (Isaiah 61:1). And what follows in the Vulgate edition: But the wicked, in Hebrew, is not found, but simply it says: He who sacrifices a bull is like one who kills a man. And in another place it is written: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings' (Hosea 6:6). And through Malachi: 'You have done what I hate; you have covered the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and groaning, because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand' (Malachi 2:13). Let the Jews hear that God does not desire sacrifices, but the disposition of the offerer's heart. And he who sacrifices, he says, an animal, as if he were cutting a dog's throat. Hence it is also written through Moses: You shall not offer the hire of a prostitute, nor the price of a dog, in the house of your God. (Deut. XXIII, 18). And dogs and prostitutes couple beautifully, because both animals are inclined to lust. Let us also consider that he did not say: He who sacrifices a ram, as if he were sacrificing a dog; but he says, kill the dog. This word is not used in sacrifices, but in those

things that are unlawfully killed. Who offers an oblation and a sacrifice, as if offering his own blood. This is also prohibited by the Law, such are the ceremonies of the Jews (Lev. XI and Deut. XIV). Whoever offers incense as if blasphemous, indeed as if blessing an idol. However, there can also be this meaning: After my Son who comes meek and poor, sitting on a donkey's colt, I do not desire meats, I detest the victims, I reject the sacrifices of the Jews, I disapprove the shadows of the Law, because the truth of the Gospel is pleasing to me (Zech. IX, Matt. XXI, Luke XIX, John XII). But if it is said that, after the lightning of the Gospel, the old religion ceases in a cloud, what will they respond, who believe that those from the Jews can offer sacrifices carnally without guilt?

66:4

(Verse 4.) They have chosen all these things in their ways, and their soul delighted in their abominations. Therefore I will also choose their delusions, and I will bring upon them what they feared. Because when I called, there was none that answered; when I spoke, they did not hear. They did evil in my sight and chose what I did not desire. (Septuagint: And they chose their own ways, and their soul desired their abominations; and I will choose their delusions, and I will repay them for their sins.) Because I called them, and they did not obey: I spoke, and they did not hear. And they did evil in my sight, and chose what I did not want. They sacrificed a bull, slaughtered a ram, offered a sacrifice, burned incense, which God considers as murder, and the offering of a dog. They chose the blood of pigs and blasphemy. And it was their choice to worship such things, as it is stated by Ezekiel: I gave them bad rules and bad commands. (Ezek. XX, 11). And they walked in their own ways, not in the way of the Lord. And their souls desired their abominations, that they would rather be lovers of themselves than lovers of God. For this reason, those who choose their own ways and not Him who says: I am the way (John 14:6), and the Lord chooses illusions, or their deceivers, who are called Thalule in Hebrew, that is, mockers, to establish the most wicked leaders and bring about all their evils, including those they feared. And you write that the reasons why they were handed over to the deceiving scribes and Pharisees, about whom the first psalm according to the Hebrews sings: And He did not sit in the seat of the deceivers, whom they call the pestilential Seventy: such were the sons of Eli, sons of pestilence, for which it is written in Hebrew Belial (or Blial) , that is, of the devil. For, he says, I called, and there was no one to answer; I spoke, and they did not hear; they did evil in My sight; and what I did not want, they chose. He places these verses second in the present location, and above, where it is said: I will number you with the sword, and you will all fall in the slaughter: because I called, and you did not answer (Isaiah 65:12), and so on. The meaning and interpretation of this testimony is explained there.

66:5

(Verse 5) Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at his word. Your brothers who hate you and cast you out because of my name have said: Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy; but they will be put to shame. LXX: Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at his word. Say to your brothers who hate you and despise you, that the name of the Lord may be glorified, and appear in their joy; and let them be put to shame. About which he had already said before: On whom shall I look, unless on him who is humble and quiet, and who trembles at my words? He commands them to pass over to his worship, despising the sacrifices of the Jews and disregarding the arrogance of the Scribes and Pharisees, whom they did not want to hear when he called them,

and whom they despised and did evil in his sight. Not content with the end of these precepts, he also commands them to love their enemies, to do good to those who hate them, and to pray for their persecutors, and to imitate the clemency of the Father, who makes his sun rise on the just and the unjust, so that, seeing your works, they may glorify your Father who is in heaven. What is specifically commanded to the general understanding of the apostles and apostolic men, that they should love their Jewish persecutors and those who abhor them, and have them in the place of brothers, saying with Peter: Men, brothers and fathers, listen; and with the Apostle Paul: I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart for my brothers, who are Israelites (Romans 9:2). But the name of the Lord is glorified when men see the fierceness of the persecutors broken by our patience and the hand of the one who strikes, confounded by the downfall of another evil. In the Gospel, it is commanded: Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:16); and in the Apocalypse of John: Fear God, and give glory to Him (Rev. 14:7). Paul also writes to the Corinthians, urging them to chastity: That you may glorify God in your body (1 Cor. 6:20). And again: Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). And the Lord did not curse those who cursed him (1 Peter 2); and he prayed for his persecutors. But what he commands: 'Say to your brothers' (Matthew 28:10), should not be taken simply, otherwise many call themselves brothers, yet do not preserve love in their hearts, of whom the Apostle writes: They confess to know God, but deny him by their works (Titus 1:16). Concerning them, the Lord also spoke: Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (Matthew 7:21). And this statement can stand: No one says, 'Jesus is Lord,' except in the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3). For when the heretics say, 'Lord Jesus,' and many will say at the resurrection, 'Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' The Lord will answer them: 'Depart from me, you evildoers. I never knew you.' Therefore, it is not merely saying with words, which is easy, but it is proven by one's attitude and actions. From these we learn that the Lord of both Testaments commands us, that if we see the beast of our enemy fall under its burden, we should not pass by, but should lift it up with him, and if we find a wandering ox or donkey, we should return it to him (Luke 15, Matthew 18). According to the Septuagint, it seems to me that the meaning is: Listen, Apostles, listen, my disciples, who tremble at the word of the Lord, I will tell you what your brothers who hate you say, and separate you, and consider you strangers, not because of your evils; but because of my name, they think all the unclean ones of their own nation who believe are unclean, and say: Get away from me, for you are unclean. What, therefore, is it that he reminds them of having said: Let the Lord be glorified, and we shall see in your joy? The meaning of this little verse is: Why do you introduce to us a humble God? why a crucified man and a man acquainted with sorrows, and knowing how to bear infirmities? we desire to see him reigning in his (as you say) majesty: we are unable to see him humble and abject. And immediately he adds: But they shall be confounded, implying those who speak such things, who do not understand the mysteries of the Scriptures, and who interpret his power by their own evil, having despised him on account of his humility.

66:6

(Verse 6) The voice (of the common people) cries out from the city, the voice from the Temple, the voice of the Lord giving retribution to his enemies. They put "LXX" in place of "cries out" and "clamor", and so on. We want to know what the confusion of the Jews is, who said: Let the Lord be

glorified, so that we may see your joy and the triumphs of your king, not in vain through promises, but with our own eyes. The voice, he says, of the cry from the city: undoubtedly it signifies Jerusalem surrounded by the Roman army and divided internally into three factions, when one occupied the Temple and possessed all things previously sacred, fighting against external enemies and internally against fellow citizens. At that time, both in the city and in the Temple, the cries of priests and Levites, as well as the cries of the common people, women, and children, were heard when the Lord fulfilled His promise of vengeance against His enemies, fulfilling the prophecy: 'Your house shall be left to you desolate' (Luke 13:35), and that prophecy: 'I have left My house.' When the leaders of the temple, with voices harmonizing like angels, said: 'Let us depart from these seats.' About which not only Josephus, a writer of Jewish history, testifies but also many centuries before the Psalmist, saying: I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city (Ps. 54:10), which surrounds its walls all day and all night, so that the city would be overturned (Mic. 3), and another prophecy would be fulfilled: Zion will be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem will be left like a hut in a cucumber field (Isa. 1:8).

66:7

(V. 7) Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a male child. Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her sons. Shall I bring to the point of birth and not give delivery? says the Lord. Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb? says your God. LXX: Before she who is in labor gives birth, before the pains of childbirth come upon her, she escapes and gives birth to a male. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children. But I have given this expectation, and you have not remembered me, says the Lord. Have I not made the barren woman give birth, says your God? With a noise as of a woman in labor, with a cry of distress from Jerusalem and her Temple, when she was besieged and destroyed, and with the enemies of Christ, who refused to receive God as their king, receiving eternal punishment for their impiety and blasphemies, the Church, gathered in the name of the Lord, of which it is said in the psalm: "A man is born in her"; and the Most High himself has founded her before she gives birth, she has given birth, before her labor pains come, she has given birth to a male. For it was not long, as the people of the Jews through Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve Patriarchs, and again through their children and grandchildren, grew in size, but at the preaching of the Gospel the whole world immediately conceived, and brought forth, and gave birth to a male, whom Pharaoh and Herod were trying to kill, who was also saved in Egypt both in Moses and in Christ. Finally, Abraham and Isaac had male children, and Jacob was the father of many sons, and he begot one daughter, for whom he endured hardship. But if the daughters of Zelophehad, according to the will of God, inherit their father's property (Num. 27), it should be considered that their father died in his sin, having no sons, and Moses did not dare to judge them, but referred the matter to the Lord, who commanded them to marry their kinsmen so that they would not be left destitute. The book of Genesis (Ch. 6) also tells us that after people began to multiply, a great number of them engaged in wickedness, and the daughters born to them were taken by the sons of God, not angels, from whom the giants were born; or as it is written in Hebrew, **■πλπ■πτοντες**, that is, 'falling upon' or 'descending upon.' In contrast to the holy, it is said: 'Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your

house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table' (Psalm 128:3). And again: 'May you see your children's children' (ibid., 128:6). Therefore, Zion gave birth, that is, the remnant of Israel and the faith of believing Apostles, to the male Lord and Savior, who was generated in the whole world at the same time, which no one heard, which no history or teaching narrates, so that all nations would believe in a short time. And of all nations, one nation became Christian, of which Paul also speaks: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (II Cor. V, 17): in accordance with what is written elsewhere: And they shall worship before him, all the families of the nations: for the kingdom is the Lord's, and he shall have dominion over the nations. For, says he, all nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, and shall glorify thy name (Psal. XXI, 28 et seqq.). About whom Jacob says: He is the expectation of the nations (Gen. XLIX, 10). And the Psalmist: The hope of all the ends of the earth (Ps. LXIV, 6). And the same Isaiah whom we will now explain: There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise up to rule the nations, in him the Gentiles shall hope (Isai. XI, 10); the Apostles fulfilling what was commanded: Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matth. XXVIII, 19), so that a new people may be born, of whom the twenty-first psalm also sings: The heavens shall declare his justice, to a people that shall be born, which the Lord hath made (Psal. XXI, 32). And again: The people that shall be created shall praise the Lord (Ps. 101:19). But this people was created in one day, which the sun of justice illuminates, as the Scripture says: The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light (Isa. 60:19). We can understand this that is said: A nation shall be born together, because Zion has brought forth and borne her children, and refer it to that time when, in one day, three thousand and five thousand of the Jewish people believed (Acts 2). It is also said in the same book of the Acts of the Apostles that people from all the nations under heaven were in Jerusalem, hearing them speak in various languages about the great deeds of God (Ibid.). And what follows according to the Septuagint, 'But I have given this expectation, and you have not remembered me,' says the Lord. 'Did I not make the barren woman give birth?' your God says, and it is more clearly stated in Hebrew, which all other interpreters agree with: 'Did I not, who make others give birth, not give birth myself?' says the Lord. If I, who give birth to others, am sterile, says the Lord your God, according to what is said elsewhere: 'He who planted the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see?' (Psalm 39:9). That is to say, the one who created all men out of nothing, can make one part of all nations into the Church of believers. Finally, in the twenty-eighth psalm, where we read: 'The voice of the Lord shakes the desert' (Psalm 29:8), in Hebrew it is written: 'The voice of the Lord makes the desert give birth' (According to the Hebrew), so that the desert may first give birth to the Church, and the stags may be completed in open and broken places. Furthermore, according to the Septuagint, here the meaning is that at one time the preaching of the Gospels will arise from one nation of the whole world. This has been promised many times by the prophets, and you have not remembered my promise, O city that is full of cries: O Temple that has been abandoned by the Lord: O people, to whom I have restored their fortunes. Did I not, it is said, make the barren woman give birth; she who was once barren, later gave birth and brought forth? About which it is written in the psalm: He maketh the barren woman to keep house and to be a joyful mother of children (Psalm 113:9). Or certainly, the order of things has been reversed: the one who was bearing children has become barren, and the one who was once barren has borne many, for this is the sentence of the Lord.

(Verse 10.) Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her. Delight in her with joy, all you who mourn over her, so that you may nurse and be satisfied from her comforting breast, and drink deeply and enjoy the abundance of her glory. LXX: Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and gather together all you who love her. Delight in her with joy, all you who mourn over her, so that you may nurse and be filled from her comforting breast, and after you have nursed, be delighted by the entrance of her glory. The apostles are commanded, and the apostolic men, who love both Jerusalems, and the one that has fallen they mourn and lament, and the one that will rise again they eagerly await with all desire, so that they may rejoice with her and in her, the one that is built with living stones, which roll upon the earth, and in the likeness of the wheels of the Cherubim, they follow the preceding spirit: not in those who have been dissolved into eternal ashes. About which the Lord spoke: Amen, amen I say to you, not one stone will remain upon another, until all these things are accomplished (Matthew 24:2). Rejoice, He says, with joy, all you who mourn for her. As we have taught about Peter and Paul, the apostles, and all who were awaiting the redemption of Israel, in order to suckle and be filled with the breasts of her consolation. For it could not be that she who gave birth to a male and was a mother, lacked an abundance of milk for the raising of her people and infants, who were born together, so that she would offer them two breasts, not at all like before in Egypt, broken and lying down, but whole and standing in virgin beauty, of the old and new Instrument, to offer rational milk. About whom the bridegroom speaks to her: Your breasts are better than wine (Song of Solomon 1:1). These were the ones about whom it was specifically said: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted (Matthew 5:5). And it should be noted that those who are little children are in need of milk for consolation, and they are still in a mortal place. But those who have progressed from the milk of consolation to solid food will have abundant delights of truth and knowledge of all glory, which is called Ziz in Hebrew. For this reason, where in our and the Greek codices it is read μ■νιος ■γριος, that is, singular wild, in Hebrew it is written Ziz Sadai, which Aquila translated as παντ■δαπον χ■ρας, that is, various kinds of regions, to signify that Israel was devastated not only by the Romans, but by all nations. However, the glorious entrance of the Church is to be understood, about which the apostle John writes: 'And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, and the streets of the city were pure gold, as transparent glass' (Rev. 21:21). These pearls are forbidden by the Lord to be thrown before swine (Matt. 7), which the good merchant, when he found them in the Prophets and the Apostles, goes to one most precious pearl, not rejecting the others, but seeking through them something more precious (Matt. 13).

66:12

(Verse 12) For thus says the Lord: Behold, I will incline upon her like a river of peace, and like a torrent overflowing with the glory of the nations, whom you will nurse at your breast; they shall be carried on your side, and cuddled on your knees. LXX: For thus says the Lord: Behold, I will incline towards them like a river of peace, and like a overflowing torrent of the glory of the nations. Their little ones shall be carried on shoulders, and cuddled on knees. After Jerusalem has been rebuilt by the Apostles and restored to its former state, once its children and inhabitants have been comforted by the abundance of milk and have reached the delights of truth, through which we come to the glory of God, then the Lord will incline upon it a river of peace, of which we have often spoken: The river of God is filled with water (Psalm 64:10). And the rush of the river makes the city of God glad (Ps. 45:5); so that when peace possesses all things, and the wars of the nations

cease, of which Scripture says, Scatter the nations that desire wars (Ps. 68:32), the torrent of God's teachings may irrigate the fields of the believers. Then his children, or the little ones (as the LXX translated), will be carried on shoulders and receive consolation on the knees. On shoulders, about which it was said in the earlier prophecy and which Jacob curses his son Issachar with: For he has placed his shoulder to work (Gen. 49:15), and he is called a farmer. For it is through excessive sweat and toil that we reach the abundance of fruits. Hence, it is said to Zion through Jeremiah: Put your heart upon your shoulders (Jerem. XXIV, 7), so that he may understand the Lord's commandments, imitating Him of whom it is written: Jesus began to do and to teach (Act. I, 1), so that faith may not be idle, but may run towards the reward through works. However, I have briefly explained the meaning of knees and bosoms above, and now Abraham can teach us by his example, in whose bosom Lazarus finds rest, and all who come from the East and the West will recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

66:13-14

(Verse 13, 14) Just as a mother caresses her child, so will I comfort you, and in Jerusalem you will find comfort. Your heart will rejoice and your bones will flourish like grass. The hand of the Lord will be known to his servants, and he will be angry with his enemies. The Septuagint translates 'servants' as 'those who fear' and 'enemies' as 'unbelievers'; the rest is the same. We learn from the example of mothers, who surpass all charity by nourishing their children with love in their arms, the mercy of the Creator towards his creatures. Finally, wanting to show how much He loves and cares for those whom He has created, God asks, 'Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you' (Isaiah 49:15). This sentiment is also expressed in the Gospel when the Lord speaks to Jerusalem, saying, 'How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not' (Matthew 23:37). And in Deuteronomy, it is written: As an eagle protects its nest and desires its young, spreading its wings, it receives them and carries them on its shoulders (Deut. XXXII, 11). Those who have written about the nature of animals say that all beasts, and even beasts of burden, and cattle, and birds have an innate affection for their offspring, but the greatest love is that of eagles, which build their nests in high and inaccessible places to protect their young from the serpent. They also say that among its feathers is found a stone called amethyst, which surpasses all poisons. If this is true, the affection of God towards his creatures is rightly compared to that of the eagles, who protect their offspring with constant vigilance, so that the ancient dragon and serpent, the devil and Satan, may not approach the newly hatched chicks, and so that all the snares of their adversaries may be broken by the name of the stone that is laid in the foundations of Zion. This Jerusalem, in which the sons will find consolation in their mother's embrace and will kneel, is the same Jerusalem of which the Apostle writes: 'But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother' (Galatians 4:26). Satisfied with the milk of this consolation, he comforted others who needed his words, saying: Blessed be God, the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our tribulation, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any tribulation, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted by God (1 Corinthians 1:3). And when they have been comforted, it will be said to them: And you will see, and your heart will rejoice, and your bones will flourish like an herb; or according to Symmachus: they will bloom (John 16:22). But they shall indeed see God, which is true joy. Of whom the Lord spoke: Blessed are the clean of heart; for they shall see God (Matthew

5:8). The vision of God is perfect joy, which dwells in a heart full of faith: and the resurrection of the bones follows, of which we have already spoken. If the reader has forgotten these things, let them return to the original explanation. For it is better for them to reread what has been written, than for us to repeat what has been said. And he says, 'Behold, the hand of the Lord will be upon his servants, or upon those who fear him, and he will threaten his enemies, or his unbelievers. But the hand is also understood as power, because God is able to do all things that he promises, according to what Moses, speaking as the voice of God, says to Pharaoh: 'Now I will stretch out my hand and strike you and your people with pestilence, and you shall be cut off from the land' (Exodus 9:15). And again, concerning the same tyrant, Moses says: 'Behold, the hand of the Lord will be upon your livestock' (Exodus 9:3); about which the Psalmist says to God: 'Your hand has destroyed nations and planted them' (Psalm 44:2). Certainly, the hand of the Lord Christ must be understood, about whom we have also read above: My hand has made all these things. The Lord will make this known to his servants and those who fear him, and he will threaten the unbelievers and his enemies, so that he may promise rewards to some and threaten punishment to others. In this, the proper use of words must be considered, that he did not say: He will inflict upon his enemies; but he will threaten, so that, being deterred by the threat, they themselves may pass into the service of the Lord.

66:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) For behold, the Lord will come in fire: and like a whirlwind, his chariots, to render his anger with indignation, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire will the Lord judge, and by his sword, all flesh: and the slain by the Lord shall be multiplied. Septuagint: Behold, the Lord will come like fire, and his chariots like a storm, to render his vengeance in fury: and his rebuke in flames of fire. For in the fire of the Lord all the earth shall be judged: and all flesh shall fall by the sword thereof: many shall be wounded by the Lord. The hand of the Lord, which shall be made known to his servants, and which shall threaten the unbelievers and his enemies, so that if they do not repent, they shall suffer what follows: For behold, says the Lord, he shall come in fire, and like a whirlwind or storm shall be his chariot. Which we should understand as the angelic powers, when the Lord is coming in the glory of the Father with his angels, to judge the living and the dead: not that the Lord is fire, but that to those who endure punishment, he appears to be fire. And although Moses said (Deut. IV, 24), the same thing is confirmed by the Apostle (Hebr. XII, 29): God is a consuming fire. However, the Savior, expressing the substance of divinity, says: God is Spirit (John IV, 24). But between spirit and fire, according to corporeal understanding, there is much difference. For if fire or spirit, how is it said that they have eyes, ears, hands, feet, a stomach, and other members of the body, when these do not belong to spirit or fire? Therefore, the consuming fire is called God, so that it may consume whatever vices are in us, like hay, wood, and straw, and thorns, that is, the anxieties of this world, which the unfruitful earth brought forth instead of good seed, of which it is said to the Hebrews: But that which brings forth thorns and thistles is rejected, and is near to being cursed: whose end is to be burned (Hebrews 6:8). The Lord also spoke of this fire in the Gospel: I came to cast fire upon the earth (Luke 12:49). And above we read: Iniquity will burn like fire, and dry grass will be consumed by the fire (Isaiah 9:18), and all the weeds that the enemy sowed will grow while the father of the family sleeps (Matthew 13). Concerning this, it is also written in the Letter of James: A small fire kindles a large fuel (James 3:5)! And in Proverbs: Fire thrives on many logs (Proverbs 26:20). Although in that which

is a Proverb, another meaning can be understood (Sirach 28). I believe this fire sat upon the tongues of all the apostles and believers when they spoke in various tongues, and it dispelled the darkness of error and illuminated the hearts of those who received the word of the Lord (Acts 2). And what follows: Like a storm, we proclaim the examples of the Psalms, in which it is written: God will come openly, our God, and he will not keep silent. A fire will burn before him, and around him there will be a powerful storm (Psalm 49:3-4). And elsewhere: The chariot of God is ten thousandfold, thousands of joyful ones (Ps. 67:18). With these chariots and horses, Elisha was surrounded, which his servant could not see. Therefore he said: Lord, open the eyes of this boy so that he may see. And when his eyes were opened, he saw the chariots and the charioteers and the horses all around (2 Kings 6:17). With this fiery chariot, Elijah was taken up to heaven, when Elisha cried out: My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its charioteer (2 Kings 2:12). But all these things are narrated, not because God has chariots or horses or is carried by their speed; about whom it is written elsewhere: 'Who walks upon the wings of the wind' (Psalm 103:3); but rather, it is said that He sits on a throne when He assumes the appearance of a judge; and when He comes for vengeance, to destroy His adversaries, He is displayed in the appearance of a victor and triumphalist. We have frequently spoken of the anger of the Lord, which should be understood as His forgetfulness, and repentance, and sadness, and other affections that do not befit His majesty. And in this fire and fury, in these chariots and in the flame of fire, all flesh shall be judged, whether the Lord himself with his creatures, so that he may appear to give judgment not by his power, but by the truth of judgment, according to what is said more fully in Micah, and more briefly in the fiftieth psalm: That you may be justified in your words, and may overcome when you are judged (Psalm 50:5). But the sword by which all flesh is to be judged, that must be understood, of which we have spoken before, and now we will speak in part: Unless you be converted, he will brandish his sword (Psalm 7:13). The Israelites complain about this avenging sword, given into the hands of Pharaoh, against the flesh of sinners and all vices; and they say to Moses and Aaron: May God see and judge you, for you have made our odor abominable before Pharaoh, so that the sword would be given into his hand and he would kill us. (Exod. IV, 21). Concerning this sword, it is also written in Amos: By the sword, all the sinners of the people will perish (Amos IX, 10): while certainly there are other kinds of punishments. Therefore, whatever pricks, strikes, twists, and torments is called a sword in the Holy Scriptures, by which sword those who do not do God's will shall be wounded or killed; and having forsaken the light of truth, they shall be enveloped in the darkness of error. Concerning whom it is written in Jeremiah: 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin?' (Jeremiah 13:23). And in Zephaniah: 'You Ethiopians who have been wounded or killed by my sword.' (Zephaniah 2:12). The Apostle explained in more detail the meaning of the entirety of this passage when he wrote to the Romans: 'But according to your hardness and unrepentant heart, you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds.' To those indeed who, according to patience in good work, seek glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life. But to those who are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man who works evil, Jew first and Greek' (Rom. 2:5-10).

66:17

(Verse 17.) Those who were sanctified and considered themselves clean in gardens afterwards: those who ate pork, abomination, and mouse, will be consumed together, says the Lord. LXX: Those who are sanctified and purified in gardens and thresholds: eating pork, abominations, and mouse: they will be consumed together, says the Lord. Symmachus and Theodotion interpreted this passage as follows: Those who are sanctified and purified in gardens one after another, among them are those who eat pork, abomination, and mouse, they will perish together, says the Lord, in order to show that it is not themselves who eat pork, abomination, and mouse, but those who are sanctified in gardens one after another; rather, it is those who are purified who associate with them, who eat what is forbidden. But the divine word accuses the people of the Jews, rather the Scribes and Pharisees, whom the Lord also accused, saying: You are the ones who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts, for what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God (Luke XVI, 15). Therefore, he reproached them and said: Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside are full of greed and wickedness (Matthew XXIII, 25). And again: You are whitewashed sepulchers, full of dead bones and all uncleanness (Matthew 23:27): those who blessed with their mouth and cursed with their heart (Psalm 62): those who spoke peace to the Lord and softened their words over oil, but they were spears, of whom it was rightly said: This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me (Isaiah 29:13). But God commanded through Moses (Numbers 19) that if anyone had been contaminated by sin beforehand, they should be sprinkled with the ashes of a red cow and other means of expiation, through sacrifices and victims, and return to the Temple. However, those negligent ones built baptisteries or pools for irrigating gardens in places of delights and pleasures: thinking that adulteries and all forms of lustful behavior could be washed away with simple water, to whom that saying truly applies: And they cleanse the night with a river (Horace). And let it not seem incongruous to anyone that things that are done shamefully should be explained more clearly in order to correct those who are not ashamed to commit such things, which are shameful both to speak of, while they cling to prostitutes like dogs, and to engage in homosexuality with other males, receiving the punishment of their sin upon themselves. Those who do these deeds are of the same will and wickedness as those who eat pork and all the things that are prohibited by the Law, and the mouse, which we call a dormouse, or in the Eastern provinces, μυωξομύς. And therefore those who eat these things, and those who practice all kinds of immorality, do the same things that even the pagans do. According to the allegory, we can say: All lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God, are sanctified in gardens and thresholds, because the mysteries of truth are not able to enter, and to eat the food of impiety, while they are not holy in body and spirit: nor do they eat the flesh of Jesus, nor drink his blood. Regarding which He Himself speaks: 'Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life.' (John 6:55). For indeed Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed. (1 Corinthians 5). It is not consumed outside, but in one house and inwardly.

66:18-19 (Verse 18, 19.) But I come to gather together with all nations and tongues their works and thoughts: and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and will send some of them, who have been saved, to the nations in the sea ((or sea)), to Africa, to Lydia spreading the bow, to Italy and Greece, to distant islands: to those who have not heard of me, and have not seen my glory. LXX: And I know their works and thoughts, and I come to gather all nations and all tongues: and they shall come and see my glory, and I will send a sign upon them: and I will send some of them, who have been saved, to the nations, to Tarshish and Put, and Lud

and Mosoch and Tubal, and to Greece, and to distant islands, who have not heard my name, nor seen my glory. Before I explain what the enumeration of many nations signifies, it must be briefly said about the variety of interpretation. Tharsis, in the Hebrew language, is called sea; and (as they say) the region of India: although Josephus, changing the letter, thinks that Tarshish is now called Tarsum, a city of Cilicia, to which Jonah, fleeing from Joppa, wanted to go (Jonah 1). Phud, or Phul, however, refers to the Libyans, and the whole of Africa up to the sea of Mauritania, in which the river that is now called Phud, and the whole region around it, is named Phutensis. But the Lydians are called Lud, whose colonists, the Etruscans, who are now called the Tuscans, were once the most skilled in shooting arrows, and they are now said to be arrow shooters. For this reason, it is written in Hebrew as Mosche Ceseth, which all translated similarly without the Septuagint, interpreting it as 'those who shoot arrows.' And the Septuagint put $\mu\sigma\sigma\chi$, interpreting the word as a name. If this is accepted, it means 'Cappadocians,' whose capital is Mazaca, which later received the name Caesarea from Caesar Augustus. Those who do not know what they want, even in Genesis (Chapter X) the last son of Aram, that is, the Syrians of Damascus, who are called Mes, are interpreted as $\mu\sigma\sigma\chi$: for which we more correctly transfer to Moeonas. Thubal, however, is interpreted as either Italy or Iberia, that is, Spain, from the river Iberus, from which today the region of Spain is called Celtiberia. Concerning these, Lucanus (Lucan, Book IV) beautifully says: The Celts of Gaul mixing with the Iberian people: whom we can call Gallo-Hispanics. The Greeks, however, who are called Javan in the Hebrew language, are signified by Jonas: hence Greeks are also called Jones, and the Ionian Sea. And it should be considered that the Eastern nations are mostly descended from Japheth, one of Noah's sons: although Tharsis and Phut, as well as Shem and Ham, that is, the names of India and Africa, were also mentioned, in order to show the whole world. Therefore, the Lord comes to gather the works and thoughts of each individual. From this, we learn that not only actions but also thoughts will be judged on the day of judgment. For whoever looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matthew 5). Regarding this, it is said: 'Now their own thoughts have surrounded them: when the Lord will judge the hidden things of men according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ' (Romans 2:15). So that what the Apostle writes may be proven true by the judgment, with thoughts accusing and satisfying one another, on the day when God will judge the hidden things of men. That all our thoughts, gathered together at once, may be proven by the just judge, whether our conscience accuses us or satisfies us for our wrongdoing, whether there are more sins or good deeds, whether they are old or new, whether they have been erased by repentance or rebuilt with new crimes, as the Lord says: 'I will give them their ways upon their heads, and I will repay their thoughts to them' (Hosea 9:7). He who formed every heart and understands all their works. (Psalm XXXII, 15) About whom we also read in another place: You alone know the hearts of men. (2 Chronicles VI, 30) For no one knows what is in a man, except the spirit of man that is in him. (1 Corinthians II) Therefore, God speaks through Jeremiah: Am I a God at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can a man hide himself in secret places, and I will not see him? (Jeremiah XXIII, 23) Finally, it is said to the scribes and Pharisees: You are the ones who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts (Luke XVI, 15). In this, it should be considered that he did not say 'Father,' according to the blasphemies of heretics, so as not to appear to exclude the Son, but 'God,' which is common to both the Father and the Son. For in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; this was in the beginning with God (John I, 1, 2). About which John also writes: But Jesus himself did not believe in them,

because he knew all men, and he did not need anyone to bear witness of man: for he himself knew what was in man (John 2:24-25). This is also consistent with this: But Jesus knowing their thoughts (Luke 6:8). And in another place: But Jesus knowing their wickedness (Matthew 22:18). And to prevent any doubt, when heretics maliciously slander the Word of God, that it knows all things, it is stated more fully in the Epistle to the Hebrews: For the word of God is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword; and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit, of the joints also and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature invisible in his sight. But all things are naked and open to his eyes, to whom our speech is. (Hebrews IV, 12). But after all thoughts have been gathered into one, accusing or defending us: then all peoples and languages ■■ will be brought together with their thoughts. And according to the Apostle Paul, we not only read the languages ■■ of men but also of Angels (I Corinthians XIII). From this it is understood that all creatures are to be judged by the Lord, not only on earth, but in the air and in the heavens, as he himself said in the passages above: My sword is intoxicated in heaven, and it will come down to the earth (Isaiah 34:5). But everyone will come to see the glory of God, and he will put a sign on them, as shown in the beginning of the book of Ezekiel under the interpretation of the Hebrew letter Thau (Ezekiel 9). By this sign, the hand of the one who struck will flee. This was also marked on the doorposts of houses in Egypt when Egypt was perishing, and only Israel remained untouched (Exodus 12). Concerning this sign that King Ahaz of Judah did not want to receive, the prophet Isaiah testifies: Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son (Isaiah 7:14). And so the Prophet prays for what was promised: Show me a sign for good (Psalm 86:17). And in another place: You have given a sign to those who fear you, that they may flee from the face of the bow (Psalm 59:4). The Lord left this to us as he ascended to the Father, or placed it on our foreheads, so that we may freely say: The light of your face, Lord, has shone upon us (Psalm 4:7). But what follows: And I will send those who have been saved to the nations: and he enumerates them individually, seems to be contrary to our interpretation. For if it is said of the Day of Judgment: how does the coming of the Savior recur to the first, when the Apostles are sent to the Gentiles, and hear from the Lord: Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. XXVIII, 19.) This is how it is resolved: The Day of Judgment is preached, or rather threatened, so that out of fear of future punishment, they may receive the coming of the Savior and the Gospel of the Apostles, who are to be sent before. But beautifully he said, 'And I will send out of them that shall be saved' (Isai. LXVI, 18). For unless the Lord had left us seed, we had been made as Sodom and we should have been like unto Gomorrha. And the Apostle says: 'The remnants, he saith, have been saved' (Rom. IX, 27). These are sent to the Gentiles in Tharsis, and Phud, and Lud, and Mosoch, and Thobel, and Greece, and to many islands which are far off, and have not heard my name, nor seen my glory. Of which we have already spoken in the account above (Ch. XII). Now the anagoge must be sought. Tharsis signifies the exploration of joy: so that we may consider not those things which are in the present, but those which are in the future; and may deserve to hear: 'Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord' (Matt. XXV, 21). Concerning which the Apostle Peter also writes: 'Rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory' (I Pet. I, 8); so that we may praise God, saying: 'Our mouth is filled with joy, and our tongue with exultation' (Ps. CXXV, 2). And what follows, Phud is interpreted as the exclusion of the mouth: that we may exclude all blasphemy, and speak those things which are good, and say: My mouth shall declare thy righteousness, O Lord: all the day long

thy salvation (Psalm 70:15). And again: I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy salvation (Psalm 39:11). Lud also in our language signifies usefulness, and Mosoch signifies extension, and Thubal, or Thobel, signifies mourning, or turned, or universal: all of which are in accord with the calling of the nations, that they may follow usefulness through the confession of their soul, forgetting the past and extending to the future. And let the ancient sins be mourned, and let them be dragged to lamentation and sadness, which leads to life. Blessed are those who mourn, for they themselves will laugh (Matthew 5). And let everyone turn to the Lord, so that they may later pass to grace, and know the saying by the Apostle: Glory and honor, from peace to everyone who works good, to the Jew first and to the Greek (Romans 2:10): for God is not only the God of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. Furthermore, that which is said: And to the distant islands, who have not heard my name, nor seen my glory, applies to them, of whom we read above: Those to whom it has not been announced about him, they will see; and those who have not heard, they will understand (Isaiah 55:5). And again: I manifested myself to those who did not question me: I was found by those who did not seek me (Isaiah LXV, 1). I said: Behold, I am here, to those who do not call upon my name. However, we often said that the islands signify either all the nations of the world, or the Churches dispersed throughout the whole world.

66:20

(Verse 20.) And they shall proclaim my glory among the nations, and they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on carts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord. LXX: And they shall proclaim my glory among the nations, and they shall bring your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, with horses and chariots, and with litters on the backs of mules, with sunshades to the holy city Jerusalem, says the Lord. Those who have been saved and sent to various nations, and to those who have not heard or seen the glory of the Lord, will proclaim it to all nations, and will bring the brothers of the Jewish people, whose remains have been saved, as a gift to the Lord from all nations: either those who have followed the knowledge of the true God, rejecting the error of idolatry, or those who have believed from the entire world among the Israelite people. To them, the apostle Peter writes (1 Peter 1). They brought in horses, chariots, litters, mules, and wagons. As for the wagons, which Symmachus alone interpreted and which we have followed in this place, Aquila, Septuagint, and Theodotion translated them as 'mulos'. And where Septuagint placed 'cum umbraculis', which we can interpret as dormitories or sleeping chambers, others translated with the similar-sounding word 'basternas'. And when they said 'φορμα■α', which we interpret as various types of vehicles, Septuagint and Theodotion used the term 'lampenas', for which Symmachus interpreted as 'lecticas'. Aquila used 'σκεπαστ■', which itself means 'covered with skins', as a translation for 'lecticas'. This is said about the variety of translations. However, by horses, and chariots, and litters, and mules and wagons, and vehicles of various kinds, we can understand Angelic ministries, of which elsewhere it is said to God: Ascend upon your horses, and your riding is salvation (Hab. 3:8). With these horses, chariots, and chariots, Elijah was taken up to heaven, and Elisha showed himself to be surrounded and protected by them, demonstrating to the unaware boy (2 Kings 2). And Zacharias saw in the night: Behold a man ascending upon a red horse, and he stood in the midst of two shady mountains: and after him there were red, black, and white horses. And I said: What are these, my Lord? And he said to me: I will show thee what these are. And the man that stood in the midst of the mountains answered, and said to me: These are

they, whom the Lord hath sent to walk through the earth (Zach. I, 8-10). John also testifies in the Apocalypse that he saw these things: I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse: and he who sat upon it was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed which no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, followed him on white horses. From his mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations (Rev. 19:11-15). The Lord and Savior was sitting on a red horse, assuming a human body, to whom it is said: Why are your garments red? And: Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah (Isaiah 63:2). And there followed him horses of various colors, either red in martyrdom, or starlings in flight, or varied in virtues, or white in virginity. But he was sitting on a white horse when he took on an immortal and incorruptible body after the resurrection. And whoever followed him used white horses, clearly with incorruptible and immortal bodies. It would take a long time, if we wanted to explain both testimonies: I will only say this, that the different vehicles by which people are led to faith are angels, or holy men who have progressed from being human to being angels. That each of us has angels is taught by many Scriptures, among which is this: Do not despise one of these little ones, for their angels behold the face of the Father who is in heaven (Matthew 18:10). And when Rhoda, a girl, announced that Peter was at the door, others believed that he was his angel (Acts 12). But if this is said about the least, and about one man, how much more should it be thought about all the saints, and especially about the Apostles? Whose angels see the face of the Father daily, according to what is written: The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him (Psalm 34:7). And Jacob speaks of himself: The angel who redeemed me. These are those who ascend and descend upon the Son of Man. Those who are swift in faith ride on horses; those who are abundant in grace ride on chariots; those who are in need of consolation are carried in covered litters and shaded tents, so that they may deserve to hear: The sun shall not scorch you by day, nor the moon by night (Psalm 121:6). However, we understand mules in Holy Scripture in two ways: either in terms of barrenness and continence, which is how David and Solomon sat, one interpreted as strong-handed and the other as peaceful, or in a negative sense, of which it is said: Do not be like the horse and the mule, without understanding (Psalm 32:9), to which Doeg was appointed (1 Samuel 21). But the carriages, for which (as we said above) the Seventy, the covered vehicles, the others simply carried them, they are to be understood as the ones the Apostle is speaking of: Bear one another's burdens (Galatians VI, 2). Moreover, the lamps are to be understood as the shining bodies of the saints, and the souls illuminated by the faith of the Lord, of which it can be said: You are the light of the world (Matthew V, 14). However, all this apparatus serves to enter the holy city of God, or the holy mountain of the Lord Jerusalem: not the one that kills the Prophets, and that stones those sent to her; but the heavenly Jerusalem, of which we have frequently said: But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother (Galatians IV, 26). And again: But you have approached Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. XII, 22). This can be understood either of the present Church, which is gathered throughout the whole world by the Apostles, or of the future: so that what the Apostle prophesied by the Holy Spirit may be fulfilled: We shall be caught up together with the Lord in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord (I Thess. IV, 16). The Jews and the followers of the Judaic error, the Ebionites, who, for the sake of affected humility, have taken the name of the poor; all those who are looking

forward to a thousand years of delight, understand horses and chariots, and chariots, and litters, or palanquins, and beds, and mules and donkeys, and carts, and various types of vehicles, as they are written. Indeed, at the consummation of the world, when Christ will come to reign in Jerusalem, and the Temple will be restored, and the Judaic victims will be offered, the sons of Israel will be gathered from the whole world, not on horses, but on the mules of Numidia. And those who will be of senatorial rank and hold positions of authority, they will come in carts from the Britons, the Spaniards, and the Morini, who are called Morinos by Virgil (Aeneid VIII), and from where the Rhine is divided by the two-horned [river], with all the nations prepared for their service meeting them.

66:21

(Verse 21) Just as the sons of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. And I will take from among them priests and Levites, says the Lord. LXX: Just as the sons of Israel offer their sacrifices to me with Psalms in the house of the Lord; and I will take from among them priests and Levites, says the Lord. As they have been directed to the nations, and have proclaimed my glory to them, so they shall bring your brothers from all nations as an offering to the Lord, with horses, and chariots, and litters, and mules, and carts, and various vehicles, to the holy mountain Jerusalem, just as the sons of Israel used to do when their religion was established and the ceremonies of the Temple were observed, offering sacrifices with Psalms in the house of the Lord. Or, as it is written in Hebrew, they rendered it all with consonant voice in pure vessel: which they also offer until this day in the House of God, which is the Church, the sons of Israel who behold God with their mind, spiritual sacrifices with the fruits and virtues of their soul in pure vessels, that is, in holy bodies. Concerning which the Apostle writes: Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Holy Spirit dwells in you (1 Corinthians 3:16)? And I will select, says the Lord, priests and Levites from among them, so that those who are saved may proclaim the message to the nations. Of whom one spoke: Thus let a man consider us as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (I Cor. IV, 1). And Luke the evangelist says: Just as they handed down to us, who from the beginning saw and were ministers of the word. Of whom we also read above: You shall be priests to me, says the Lord (Isaiah LXI, 6). For just as a Jew is hidden, who is circumcised in spirit (Rom. II), of whom it is written: We are the circumcision, who serve God in spirit (Philipp. III, 3), and offer spiritual sacrifices pleasing to God, and sing with spirit and understanding: thus also the priests and Levites are hidden, who do not follow the order of their lineage, but the order of faith. Or certainly he does not speak of the Apostles and apostolic men, who were the leaders of the Church from the Jewish people, but of those mentioned above the nations, from the sea, from Africa, from Libya, from Cappadocia, from Italy, from Greece, from all the islands, the inhabitants of which had not first heard the Lord, nor seen His glory, and afterwards they turn into priests, so that those who were tail become the head, and those who were the head, turn into the tail.

66:22-23 (Vers. 22, 23.) For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make to stand before me, saith the Lord: so shall your seed stand, and your name. And there shall be month after month, and sabbath after sabbath: all flesh shall come to adore in my sight, saith the Lord. LXX: For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make to remain before me, saith the Lord: so shall your seed and your name remain. And there shall be month after month, and sabbath after sabbath: all flesh shall come to adore in my sight in Jerusalem the Lord. When he says:

'Assume from among them priests and Levites,' he indicates that the old priesthood was passed over, which was owed to the Levitical tribe, where there is not an election, but a natural order, and it is a succession of a family descending through offspring. For with the translation of the priesthood, it is necessary that both the translation of the Law be made, and the election pertain to those to whom priesthood is conferred, not according to blood, but according to merits and virtues, who will come from the islands of the Gentiles and announce the glory of the Lord. And they shall be brought in on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and in wagons. But as for the new heaven and the new earth, and the new Jerusalem, that it may not be said: The heaven and the earth shall pass away (Matt. XXIV, 35). And again: The heaven shall be folded up like a book: and the earth shall be dissolved by its corruption (Apoc. VI, 14): so in all things new, the people of God shall be made new, as scripture says: The old things have passed away: behold all things are made new (Isa. XLIII, 19). And in another place: If any man be in Christ a new creature (II Cor. V, 17) . And there shall be a new people; for Christ is the firstfruits, then they that are Christ's, at his coming: and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, whereof it is said among the eight beatitudes: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land (Matth. V, 3, 4) . For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope (Rom. VIII). But they will be set free from the slavery of corruption into the glory of the children of God, who will be made sons of him through men, and they will stand before him forever, and their name will always remain so that no other nation may succeed them, as happened among the Jews; but they shall remain forever. And, he says, month by month there will be a month, and Sabbath after Sabbath: so that from carnal Sabbaths and months, delicate spiritual Sabbaths may be made, which is the Sabbath of God reserved for the people. The spiritual month, when it is completed from one point to another by the moon, and follows its own order, in order to make a month, that is, the kalends, which in Greek are called 'neomeniai', that is, the beginning of the new month. Among them, the beginning of the kalends does not start and end according to the course of the sun and the different spans of the months, but according to the circuit of the moon. This is the moon about which in praise of the true Solomon it is said: 'It shall endure as long as the sun and before the moon throughout all generations' (Psalm 72:5). She who is called the chosen one in the Song of Songs: Who is this that comes forth like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun, awe-inspiring? (Song of Songs 6:9) Physicists, who are concerned with discussing celestial matters, say that the moon does not have its own light, but is illuminated by the rays of the sun. It is always filled and shines by a part of it, from which it is closer to the sun, and it is not hidden by the shadow of the earth, as the poet also demonstrated in a single verse (Virgil, Georgics Book I). Nor does the moon rise under the rays of her brother.

If this is true, and we can also say in a metaphorical sense, that the Church which grows and diminishes in times of peace and persecution, and once again takes on its original light, shining with the radiance of the sun of justice, and this is what is meant by: 'The moon will shine like the sun' (Isai. XXX, 26); and its inhabitants will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father. And during these months, the seed of the Lord, which is renewed forever, comes to its solemnities, which the holy one proclaimed with mystical words, saying: 'I have considered the eternal years, and I have meditated' (Psal. LXXVI, 6). But on the Sabbath, which signifies rest, we have treated extensively in the sermon (On Chapter LVI), about the prophecy of the eunuch strangers. And now it must be said briefly that they come on the new moons and on the Sabbaths, those who, having

passed and left behind the six days in which the world was made, hasten to the seventh day, that is, the Sabbath, in which true rest is found. Concerning these solemnities, the believing Apostle Paul instructs, saying: For the law having a shadow of the good things to come (Hebrews X, 1). And again: Therefore let no one judge you in food, or in drink, or regarding a festival, or a new moon, or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come (Colossians II, 16). But if these have preceded in the shadow of future goods, and in an image, then the whole law must be understood spiritually, of which the same Apostle said: We know that the law is spiritual (Romans VII, 14), the mysteries of which David desired to know: Open my eyes, and I will contemplate the wonders of your law (Psalm CXVIII, 18). For the things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal. (II Corinthians IV). To quickly run through a discussion about these things is not of this time. For if the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him (I Corinthians II), how can we attempt to show the summary of the entire Law and the world in a short tablet? And what follows: All flesh shall come to adore in my sight in Jerusalem, it should be known that it is not written in Hebrew, Jerusalem, so that we may deride the pride of the Jews, but only 'in my sight', so that the word of the Lord may be fulfilled, saying in the Gospel: Amen, amen, I say to you, that the hour comes when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem adore the Father (John IV, 21). And again: The Spirit is God. And those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth (John, 4:24). And the Apostle also said: Lifting up holy hands in every place (I Tim. II, 8). But all flesh does not signify the Jewish people, but every kind of people, according to what was said above: All flesh shall see your salvation (Isaiah, 40:5). And in Joel: I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters will prophesy (Joel, 2:28). And in Zechariah: Let all flesh fear before the Lord (Zech. II, 13). And in the Psalms: To you all flesh will come (Ps. LXIV, 2). Which in other words is said in another psalm: All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name (Ps. LXXXV, 9). They interpret from month to month, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, when all flesh will come to worship God, the "chiliasts," who we can call the Milestones: so that those who are nearby come to Jerusalem every Sabbath; those who are far away come through months, that is, completing the cycle of the calendar; those who are very far away come through individual years, that is, on the days of Passover or Tabernacles, according to what is said in Zechariah: And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles (Zech. XIV, 16). And to provide greater laughter to the hearers, which is written in the last volume of the same prophet: 'And there will no longer be a merchant in the house of the Lord of hosts on that day,' thus they interpret, that merchants will cease to exist for a thousand years, because everything will be produced in all places, so that neither will we need the leaf of amomum and pepper, nor will the Indians desire pennyroyal from us.

66:24

(Verse 24.) And they shall go forth, and see the bodies of the men who have transgressed against me. Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be extinguished. And they shall be a vision to all flesh, even to the point of satiety. LXX likewise. All flesh that is to worship before the Lord, whether in heavenly Jerusalem or in any place where clean hands are raised, shall go forth to see the bodies of the dead men who have transgressed against God. What can be understood about

the Jews, of whom it is said: I have begotten sons and exalted them, but they have rejected me; or about all those who, having knowledge of God in their hearts, have turned to vanity, worshiping the creature rather than the Creator. However, they will depart not from their place, but from their understanding. For the bodies of the dead cannot be in the presence of the Lord. But if all flesh is to worship the Lord, then, on the contrary, the bodies of men who have transgressed against the Lord will be delivered to eternal burnings. In this way, the resurrection of true flesh will occur on both sides. But the worm that does not die, and the fire that is not extinguished, is understood by many as the conscience of sins, which torments those set in punishments: why they have been deprived of the good of the elect by their own fault and sin, according to what is said: I am tormented in misery, while the thorn is fastened to me (Psalm XXXI, 4). And in Proverbs: The moth of the bones is the intelligent heart (Prov. XXV, 20). And again, under a disguise: Just as a moth to clothing, and a worm to wood, so grief tortures the heart of a man (Ibid.). Thus, while they do not deny the eternal punishments of the evildoers and those denying the Lord, as the Lord says in the Gospel: Go into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). And in another place: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into outer darkness: there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 22:13). If we understand by hands and feet the outer darkness, which is the punishment of the eyes that do not see the light of God; and weeping, which certainly also pertains to the eyes; and gnashing of teeth: I wonder why some introduce an airy body, gradually dissolving into thin air after the resurrection; for the Lord, by the power of His majesty, entered through closed doors to the Apostles (John 20). Certainly, he walked on the sea before the resurrection with a suspended step; and he even demonstrated this to the apostle Peter: that he who walked with faith, afterwards was submerged by disbelief; to whom it was said: Why did you doubt, you of little faith (Matt. XIV, 31)? The fire also must be understood in the same way as the worm, which is burnt for as long as it has matter with which the voracious flame can be nourished. Therefore, if anyone has in their conscience the weeds that the enemy sowed while the master of the house was sleeping, these will be burned by fire, these will be devoured by the flame (Matt. XIII). And in the eyes of all the Saints, the punishments of those who built upon the foundation of the Lord with gold, and silver, and precious stones will be revealed as hay, wood, straw, and the eternal fuel of fire. Moreover, those who desire that the punishments will eventually end, and although after many ages, they will have an end to their torments, use these testimonies: 'When the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved' (Rom. 11:25). And again: God concluded all under sin, that he might have mercy on all (Galatians 3:22). And in another place the holy one speaks: I will bear the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him; until he pleads my case and takes away my judgement, and brings me into the light (Micah 7:9). And again: I will bless you, O Lord, for you were angry with me. You turned your face away from me, and had mercy on me (Isaiah 12:1). The Lord also speaks to the sinner: When the fury of my anger has passed, I will heal again (Psalm 30:20). And this is what is said elsewhere: How great is the multitude of your goodness, Lord, which you have hidden for those who fear you. All these things they repeat, seeking to affirm, after pains and torments, the future refreshments which must now be hidden from those for whom fear is useful, so that while they dread the punishments, they may cease from sinning. This we God alone must leave to knowledge, whose torments are not less in weight than his mercies; and he knows whom, how, and how long he ought to judge. And let us only say what is suitable to human frailty: O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath (Psalm 6:1, 38:1) . And just as we believe in eternal

torments for the devil and all deniers and impious ones, who have said in their heart: There is no God (Psalm 14:1) , so we consider that the punishment of sinners and impious ones, even of Christians, whose works are to be tested and purified by fire, is a moderated and mixed sentence of the judge's mercy (1 Corinthians 3:13) .

Commentary on Jeremiah

The six books of the Commentaries on the Prophet Jeremiah by Saint Jerome, the priest from Stridon.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue We are now sending to you, brother Eusebius, the explanations of the twelve prophets, of Isaiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel, and finally, the explanation of Jeremiah. We dedicate them to you, along with the same little commentaries, so that you may connect the Gospel man, the evangelist Matthew, whom I discussed with you many years ago with clear reasoning, at your urging. And because the volume is very long, and in many places, it covers well-known history, I remind you of your wisdom, that you should not seek a broad explanation of this; especially about those things which have already been said in other prophets and are easily understood on their own. And so I will attempt to write in the handwriting of scribes, so that nothing is lacking in meaning, although much is lacking in words. I will prepare the threads, warp, and weft for you, you yourself create the most beautiful garment, so that you can not only listen to us but also teach others. However, I did not consider it necessary to discuss the spurious Epistle of Jeremiah, which is commonly coupled with the edition of the Seventy, nor is it held among the Hebrews, but rather to rearrange and complete the order of Jeremiah, which has been confused by the error of copyists and contains many things that are missing, from the Hebrew sources: so that you may hold a new and true Prophet from the old and corrupted one: disregarding the rage of detractors, who not only attack the words but also the syllables of our words: thinking that they know something if they detract from the works of others: as just recently an unlearned detractor emerged, who thinks my Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians should be condemned. He does not understand, the foolish one, the laws of the Commentaries, in which many opinions of various authors are set forth, either silently or explicitly with the names of the authors, so that it is up to the reader to decide what should be chosen or determined: although in the first book of that same

work, I have stated that I will speak either in my own words or in the words of others: and that the Commentaries themselves are those of both ancient writers and our own. This Grunnius, not seeing that, once tried to criticize it. I responded to two books, where he presents things as if they are his own, and another person, who was already accusing, has been refuted: not to mention the volumes against Jovinianus, in which he grieves that virginity is preferred to marriage, and that bigamy and polygamy are preferred to monogamy. The most foolish does not remember, and burdened by Scottish porridge, we said in the very work: 'I do not condemn two, indeed not three, and if possible not eight: I will bring something more, even a repentant whore: whatever is allowed in equal measure must be weighed on an equal scale.' Let him read the Defense of the same work, which many years ago he joyfully undertook against his master in Rome: and then he will notice that he blasphemes with other people's words; and to such an extent is he unskilled, that he does not even possess his own curses: but he also uses the rage of enemies long dead against us. But now it is time to begin the proposed work.

Book One

Book One

1:1-3

(Chapter 1, Verses 1 onwards) The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah concerning the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: the word of the Lord that came to him in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. And it came to pass in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the exile of Jerusalem, in the fifth month. The other prophets, such as Isaiah, Hosea, and Joel, were before the captivity of the ten tribes of Israel, or of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. Others were after the captivity, such as Daniel, Haggai, and Zechariah. However, Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied as the captivity was imminent: one of them in the land of Judah, the other in Babylon. Jeremiah began prophesying when he was still a young boy, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah. And he prophesied during his reign for nineteen years, and afterwards under his son Joachim for eleven years, and under Zedekiah, who was the last of the kings of Judah, for eleven years, until the fifth month when Jerusalem was taken by the Babylonians. But the three months of Joachaz and Jehoiachin (one of whom was taken to Egypt and the other was taken with his mother to Babylon) are included in the aforementioned years: thus, from the beginning of his prophecy until the captivity of Jerusalem, in which he himself was also taken captive, he prophesied for forty-one years, except for the time when he was taken to Egypt. Here, he prophesied in Taphnis, as is contained in this very volume. According to the words of Jeremiah, the Septuagint placed, 'The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah' (Jeremiah 43:8), in this sense, that the words of Jeremiah are the word of the LORD. He belonged to the class of priests who lived opposite the north of Jerusalem, in the third mile, and the village of Anathoth. At the same time, there was the wonderful mercy of the LORD, that even with the captivity approaching and the Babylonian army besieging Jerusalem, He still prompts the people to repentance, preferring to save the converted rather than to destroy the sinners. Regarding the transmigration, which all others have translated with a consistent voice, the Seventy have expressed captivity. But after the beginning of Jeremiah's prophecy, in the thirty-fifth year of his prophecy, Ezekiel, who was in Babylon with those who had been captured with him, began to

prophecy.

1:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; and before you came forth out of the womb, I sanctified you: I have made you a prophet to the nations. Not that Jeremiah existed before his conception, as some heresy suspects, but that the Lord foresaw him to be. To whom things not yet made already exist, according to what the Apostle spoke: Who calls those things that are not, as those that are (Rom. IV, 17). But what is sanctified in the womb, we should understand according to the words of the Apostle: But when it pleased him, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me; that I might preach him among the Gentiles (Galatians 1:15). John the Baptist is also sanctified in the womb, and receives the Holy Spirit, and is stirred in the womb, and speaks through the mouth of his mother (Luke 1). And when it is said, I have made you a prophet to the nations, it means that we are going to read about the prophet in him later, that he prophesied not only in Jerusalem, but also to many nations around." Some understand this place to be about the Savior, who was specifically the Prophet of the Gentiles; and through the Apostles, he called all nations. For he was truly sanctified in the womb before being formed in the virgin womb, and before coming out of his mother's womb; and he was known to the Father, who is always in the Father, and in whom the Father is always.

1:6

(Verse 6.) And I said: Ah, ah, ah, Lord God, behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am a child. LXX: And I said, O Lord God, I do not know how to speak, for I am young. He detests the office that he cannot sustain due to his age, with the same modesty that Moses himself says he has a thin and weak voice (Exodus IV and 6). But he, as if he were seized with great and robust age, is caught up; forgiveness is given to this childhood, which is adorned with modesty and shame.

1:7-8

(Vers. 7, 8.) And the Lord said to me: Do not say, I am a boy, for you shall go to all whom I shall send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces: for I am with you to deliver you, saith the Lord. Do not consider your age, says he; for by another prophet speaking, you have learned: The wisdom of a man is in his gray hairs (Wis. 4:9): Let it be only your will that you continue; you will have me as a companion, by whose assistance you will accomplish all things: open your mouth and I will fill it (Psalm 81:10). And do not consider the multitude of those to whom and against whom you are about to speak, but me, who am with you, so that I may rescue you, says the Lord. But the Lord does not deliver in order that the Prophet may be free from persecutions and hardships, for we read of him enduring many things; but rather that he may endure everything with patience and not be overcome by distress.

1:9

(Verse 9) And the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth: and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. It is to be noted that here the hand of God is sent, which touches the prophet's mouth, and it is said to him: Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth; but in Isaiah it is written: And one of the seraphims flew unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he

had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged (Isaiah 6:6-7). For there, because he was of solid and perfect age, he himself confesses openly that he has unclean lips, and he dwells in the midst of a people with polluted lips. So, one of the Seraphim is sent, who does not touch his mouth with his hand, but with tongs and a burning coal, to take away his iniquities and cleanse his sins. Now, it is the hand of God Himself that is sent, through which all things are accomplished, and which is called the arm in another place: not to take away sins, which he had not committed many in his childhood; but to bestow the grace of speech. Furthermore, Ezekiel devours the book, both inside and outside, containing both divine mysteries and simple history. Jeremiah's mouth is touched, and the words of the Lord are given to him, so that he may receive confidence in preaching. And beautifully, according to the letter, a hand is sent, so that seeing the likeness of human limbs, it does not fear the touch of the hand.

1:10

(Verse 10) Behold, I have appointed you today over nations and over kingdoms, to uproot and to destroy, and to scatter, and to demolish, and to build, and to plant. This addition that we have made from Hebrew, 'and to scatter,' is not found in the Septuagint. And it must be considered that two joys follow four sorrows. For good things cannot be built unless evil things are destroyed: and the best things cannot be planted unless the worst things are uprooted. For every plantation that the heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted, and any building that does not have its foundation on the rock but is constructed on sand will be dug up and destroyed by the word of God. But that which Jesus will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy by the coming of His presence, namely all sacrilegious and perverse doctrine, He will utterly destroy forever. Moreover, He will dissipate and overthrow those things that are exalted against the knowledge of God and rely on their own wisdom, which is foolishness before God, so that humble things may be built up and in place of the high things that have been destroyed and uprooted, new things may be constructed and planted that are in accordance with the teachings of the Church. And let that which the Apostle says be fulfilled, 'You are God's building, you are God's field' (2 Corinthians 3:9). Here they understand this place as being above the person of Christ: for Jeremiah interprets high of the Lord, who destroyed the kingdoms of the devil, which he had shown to him on a high mountain: he will destroy the opposing powers, wiping out the handwriting of errors on the cross. Concerning which, in the Psalm, after the truth of the stories, he speaks tropically: Why do the nations rage, and the people meditate on vain things? The kings of the earth stand up, and the princes gather together in one (Psalm 2:1-2). For these things having been uprooted, destroyed, and lost, and having been dragged down into the depths, the Church of God is built and planted. However, there is no doubt concerning the person of Jeremiah. For we read in the following (Ad. cap. XXV) that he should take a cup full of pure wine in his hand; and he is ordered to offer it to all the nations around.

1:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: What do you see, Jeremiah? And I said, I see a watching rod. And the Lord said to me: You have seen well, for I will watch over my word to perform it. For the watching rod, the Septuagint translated it as a nut-stick. Therefore, we must work so that the Latin reader understands the Hebrew etymology briefly. Seced is called a

nut: but watching or watch or to watch is called Soced. And in the later [books], the leopard is placed in this position as a vigilant guardian. From this, therefore, because it is called a nut, due to the similarity of the word to the understanding of 'watchful', it alluded to the name: which indeed is also written in Daniel according to Theodotion, so that the dividing and cutting of the trees (namely oak and mastic) is appointed to adulterous priests. Likewise, in the beginning of Genesis, from the man who is called Is (), the woman is called Issa (), as some kind of mannish woman, because she is taken from man. For the nutcracker staff, the vigilant rod, the Eagle and Symmachus; but they transferred the almond to Theodotius. The rod, however, keeps watch, considering all the sins of the people, in order to strike and rebuke the transgressors. Therefore the Apostle writes to the sinners: What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and the spirit of gentleness? (1 Corinthians 4:21). This is the rod, or staff, that David speaks of: Your rod and your staff, they comfort me (Psalm 23:4). Beautifully he placed, they were consoled. For in this way the Lord corrects, so that he may amend. And just as a nut, or an almond, has a very bitter shell, and is surrounded by a very hard shell, so that when the bitter and hard parts are removed, the sweetest fruit is found: in the same way, all correction and the labor of self-restraint seem bitter for the present: but they produce the sweetest fruits. Hence that old saying: The roots of letters are bitter, the fruits are sweet. A certain rod and nut are understood to symbolize the Lord, of whom Isaiah says: 'A rod shall come forth from the root of Jesse' (Isaiah 11:1). Therefore, even the rod of Aaron, which was thought to be dead, is said to have blossomed at the resurrection of the Lord.

1:13-14

(Vers. 13, 14.) And the word of the Lord came to me a second time, saying: What do you see? And I said, I see a boiling pot, and its face is from the north. And the Lord said to me: From the north evil will be opened (or kindled) upon all the inhabitants of the land. To some degrees, the torments are given to the sinners, so that they may gradually come to salvation. Those who do not want to be corrected by the striking rod are thrown into the bronze and burning pot, as Ezechiel writes more fully, which is kindled from the face of the north (Ezech. XXIV), signifying the king of Babylon and the city of Jerusalem. And it is beautifully inserted: From the North, evil things will ignite upon all the inhabitants of the earth: either the land of Judah, or certainly the entire earth, about which it is written in the Apocalypse: Woe to all the inhabitants of the earth (Apoc. VIII, 13). For the holy ones are not inhabitants of the earth: but rather strangers and pilgrims, of whom one says: I am a stranger upon the earth; and a pilgrim like all my fathers (Psal. XXXVIII, 13). And another: My days are few and evil, in which I sojourn on the earth (Gen. XLVII, 9). And Peter also writes the Catholic Epistle to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, and Cappadocia (1 Peter 1). And according to mystical interpretations, Solomon speaks of the harsh north wind (Proverbs 25:23), which is called the east wind by those who have lost the warmth of faith due to its coldness.

1:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) For behold, I will gather all the families of the kingdoms of the North, says the Lord, and they shall come and each one shall set their throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and over all its surrounding walls, and over all the cities of Judah. And I will speak my judgments with them concerning all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and worshiped foreign gods and bowed down to the work of their own hands. Without a doubt, many nations and the kings of each nation were subjected to the Babylonian king, who, besieging Jerusalem, placed their

thrones and tents around it, so that none of those who were closed in could escape. And not only Jerusalem, but also all the cities of Judah were surrounded by a similar siege. And when, he says, the city has been captured, then I will speak to them that my judgments were right, and that each one received what they deserved: not for the other vices to which human nature is subject, but especially for idolatry, by which they deserted me and worshipped the works of their own hands. Some interpret this passage in a positive way, namely that those who have been refined in the bronze furnace and purified through torments will afterwards become princes of Jerusalem; and after the Lord has shown compassion to them, then he will rebuke them because, when he deserted them, they worshipped idols. But this is a violent and wicked interpretation: so that an ignorant handler does not commit slander.

1:17 (Verse 17.) So gird up your loins and arise, and speak to them all that I command you. And Job is commanded to gird up his loins (Job 4); and to the Apostles (Luke 12), that with girded loins, which Elijah (2 Kings 1) and John the Baptist (Matthew 3) had mortified with haircloth belts, they may hold lamps in their hands, namely for the proclamation of the Gospel. Therefore, whoever is going to speak the words of God must gird up his loins, knowing that all the power of the devil is in the loins (Job 40); and let the righteous man say in the Psalms: My loins are filled with illusions (Psalm 37:8). And when he has girded his loins, let him hear what is written: Arise, you who sleep, and arise from the dead: and Christ shall enlighten you (Ephesians 5:14); that being always vigilant and rising from sleep, he may speak the things that God has commanded him. Do not be afraid of their face: for I will not make their appearance fearful to you. Whether as the Septuagint and other interpreters have: lest I make you afraid. And the sense is according to our translation: Do not be afraid of their face: for with me as your helper, you will not be able to fear them. According to the Septuagint: Do not be afraid of their face, have the confidence of my command. For if you do not offer what you have, in order to stop being afraid, I will abandon you and deliver you to fear, and in a way it will seem that I make you afraid while I abandon you to fear. But this signifies that truth should always be loved: and the multitude of men should not be feared, who, when rebuked, do not endure it; but they lay snares for the one who rebukes them. And what follows in the Septuagint: 'For I am with you to deliver you,' says the Lord, is not found in the Hebrew. And the meaning is: I will deliver you, not so that no one lays snares for you; but so that, enduring the snares, you do not transgress.

1:18-19

(Verse 18, 19) For I have set you today (or Behold I have made you on this day) as a fortified city, and as an iron column, and as a bronze wall over all the earth: to the kings of Judah, to its princes, and to its priests, and to the people of the land. And they will fight against you, but they will not prevail, for I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you. The divine word describes why the Prophet should not be afraid. I, he says, have set, or made you today, that is, in the present life, until it is called today, as a very strong city: not as one house, nor a tower, or any walls (Matthew 5); but as every city that is situated on a mountain cannot be hidden. About which it is written: Glorious things are said of you, O city of God (Psalm 86:2). And: I am a strong city, a city that is under attack (Isaiah 27:3). And, in a column, it is said of a pillar of iron, about which the Apostle writes: The pillar and foundation of truth (1 Timothy 3:15). Thus Peter and John, who were considered pillars of the Church, gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas. And not only this, but it is said to be a bronze wall, which is not damaged by rust and does not perish when beaten by

rain, but becomes stronger with age. But you are such against kings and princes and people, not of any place, but of the land; those who have earthly wisdom and do not know heavenly things, who have the image of the earth and not of the heavenly. These, he says, will fight against you and will not prevail. Why, I ask? What is the cause of such great strength that neither kings, nor princes, nor priests, nor people can prevail against one? It follows: Because I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you. If at any time the kings of Judah, who are called confessors, and their princes, and the priests, and the people, namely the bishops and presbyters and deacons, and the lowly and ignoble commoners, should rise up against the holy man, let him have firm faith and cease to fear: for with the help of the Lord, he will prevail.

2:1

(Chapter 2, Verse 1) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying. This is not found in the Septuagint, but it was added under asterisks in the edition of Theodotion, who interpreted the Hebrew word Carath () as clama; or praedica, meaning 'read'. And it signifies both reading and crying out and preaching because of its ambiguity. However, we should understand the ears of Jerusalem as the ears of its inhabitants.

2:2

(Vers. 2.) Thus says the Lord: I have remembered your youth, the kindness of your betrothal, when you followed me in the desert, in a land that is not sown. LXX: Thus says the Lord: I have remembered the mercy of your youth, and the love of your betrothal. This is said more fully in Ezekiel (Ezek. I), when the Lord joins Jerusalem to himself in marriage, and under the persona of a wife, unites her with his embraces: either to show a more ardent affection, he calls her a girl, a young woman, and betrothed. For what we have not yet obtained, we desire to obtain more. 'When,' he said, 'you followed me in solitude; and, like betrothal and dowry, the adornments of the Law were distributed to you as necklaces of words. And all of this does not refer to his merit, but to his mercy, through which he also obtained charity. This also which we have placed, in the desert, in a land which is not sown, is not found in the Septuagint.'

2:3

(Verse 3.) Holy is Israel to the Lord, the first fruits of his harvest: all who devour him shall be guilty; evil shall come upon them, says the Lord. When Israel speaks of the first fruits of the Lord's harvest, it shows that the people are gathered from the nations after the first fruits; according to what is written in another place: Remember your congregation, whom you have possessed from the beginning (Psalm 73:2). However, the first fruits are always owed to the priests, not to the enemies. What follows is this: All those who devour him will sin: evil will come upon them, says the Lord. This is its meaning: Just as those who devour the offerings (Numbers 5) are not from the priestly lineage, they are guilty of a sinful act, so those who defile Israel will be subjected to great evil: as it is written in the twenty-sixth psalm by the holy David: While evil men approach me to consume my flesh, my enemies who trouble me have become weak and fallen (Psalm 26:3-4). For indeed, those who carry out the sentence of God will not be exempt from punishment, and evils come upon them; for scandals must come, but woe to him through whom the scandals come (Mat. XVIII).

2:4-5

(Verses 4, 5.) Hear the word of the Lord, house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus says the Lord: What did your fathers find in me of iniquity, that they went far from me, and went after vanity, and became vain? This meaning is also testified by another prophet: O my people, what have I done to you, and how have I been a burden to you? Answer me: for I brought you out of the land of Egypt, and delivered you from the house of slaves (Micah 6:3-4). However, both names, Jacob and Israel, are used: not according to the twelve tribes, but according to the entire people. For Jacob himself was later called Israel. But the sins of the fathers do not have an effect on their children, although the children, having the likeness of the fathers, may be punished for their own sins and the sins of their parents. We often read that God has mercy on the children because of the holy fathers. However, the fathers of the sinful people have forsaken God, and not for a short time, but for a long time. And they have followed vanity, that is, idols, which are of no benefit to their worshippers. And they have become like them, as it is written: Let them become like those who make and trust in them, and all who trust in them.

2:6

(Verse 6) And they did not say, Where is the Lord who led us up out of the land of Egypt, who led us through the desert, through an uninhabited and impassable land, through a land of thirst and the shadow of death, through a land in which no man walks, nor does any man dwell. For son of man, they interpreted as the seventy sons of man; and for the shadow of death, it was added from Theodotion, the shadow of death. And while this is evident according to history, it should be considered in light of the anagoge, that as long as we are in this world and are led out of Egypt, we ascend gradually, and first we pass through the deserts and the uninhabitable land, which the holy one ought not to inhabit, and the impassable land, to show the difficulty of the journey. You are thirsty for the earth, where we always desire greater things and are never content with the present. And it is an image, or rather a shadow of death: for we are always in danger, and everywhere the devil sets his traps. On the earth where no man has walked, who is perfect in Christ. For we will all rise to become perfect men, to the measure of the fullness of Christ's age. Neither does he who is a man of God or the Son of Man ever reside in it, but always hastens to greater things. From this it is clear that there is no perfection in the journey, but in the end of the journey and in the dwelling place that is prepared for the saints in heaven, and about which it is said: Those who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God (Psalm 133:1). Therefore, it is in vain that this new heresy suspects perfection to be here, where there is a battle and a contest, and an uncertain outcome of future events.

2:7

(Verse 7) And I led you into the land of Carmel, that you may eat its fruit and its goodness; and when you entered, you polluted my land and made my inheritance an abomination. For the labor of a very hard journey, I gave you abundance of all things. Indeed, Carmel, which is called Chermel in Hebrew, signifies this, and in our language it means the knowledge of circumcision. Just as that people defiled and violated the holy land and the fertile land of all things with idolatry, so we, receiving the knowledge of true circumcision, eat its fruits; and with negligence creeping in, we pollute God's land and make his inheritance abominable.

2:8

(Verse 8.) The priests did not say, 'Where is the Lord?' and those who held my Law did not know me, and the shepherds transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied in Baal and followed idols. After so many benefits, they turned the privileges of dignity into contempt, so that the priests would not seek the Lord, so that the teachers of the Law would ignore him whom they should teach, and the shepherds (or rather, preachers) would become transgressors through negligence, and the prophets who dispute among the people would not speak to God, but to idols, and would worship their own creations. But we must use words against the masters of our order, who devour the people of God like bread, and by their evil deeds do not invoke the Lord.

2:9

(Verse 9) Therefore I will still contend with you in judgment, says the Lord, and I will reason with your children. So that it may not seem that I strike with power, as if contending with equals in reason; according to what David sings and the Apostle uses: That you may be justified in your words, and may overcome when you are judged (Psalm 50:6; Romans 3:4). And he testifies that he has done this many times in the past, and he demonstrates a similar stubbornness in the children of evildoers. However, it secretly signifies that the ancient denial of God, even their children followed in the coming of the Lord.

2:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) Go to the islands of Kittim, and see: and send to Kedar, and consider carefully, and see if such a thing has happened: if a nation has changed its gods (or its own gods). And certainly they are not gods: but my people have changed their glory into an idol (or something that will not profit them). He makes a comparison of that which is incomparable, and gives the true God to liars. Go, he says, to the islands of Kittim: which we should understand as either Italy or the Western lands: because the island of Cyprus, which is called by this name, is near the land of Judah. Of which both Zeno and the leader of the Stoics were. But the region of Cedar is one of solitude and of the Ismaelites, who are now called the Saracens: against whom the prophecy of the very Prophet himself is covered in the farthest parts (infra ad cap. XLIX); and of whom David mentions, saying: I have dwelt with those who dwell in Cedar: my soul has traveled much (Psal. CXIX, 5). And the meaning is: Either go to the West, or send into the wilderness, and see if any nation has done what you have done. For they did not despise their gods, neither the wooden and stone ones, nor did they change them in comparison to gold, but following the ancient error, they held onto what they had received from their ancestors. And certainly this is true, since none of their gods exist, but rather they are man-made idols. But my people have exchanged the truth for a lie and have preferred an idol to me, which will not be able to help them in times of need. We can also say this against those who pursue vices with more zeal than virtues, whom the Apostle warns, saying: I speak as a human, because of the weakness of your minds. Just as you presented your members as servants to impurity and lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as servants to righteousness leading to sanctification. (Romans 6:19).

2:12-13

(Verses 12, 13.) Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and shudder, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord. For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. LXX: The

heavens were astonished at this, and were greatly alarmed, and the rest likewise. The heavens to whom it was said: Listen, O heavens, and I will speak. (Deut. 32:1): and, Hear, O earth, the words of the Lord (Isaiah 1:2), seeing that the commands of God are trampled upon, it shudders, and cannot hide its astonishment. For every creature groans and laments over the sins of men. But God's people have done two things against Him. First, they have forsaken God who is the source of life, and He gave them a commandment, saying: 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt' (Exod. XX, 2). Second, it is written in the same place: 'You shall have no other gods before me'; for this reason they have followed demons, whom He calls broken cisterns, because they are unable to keep God's commandments. And this must be noted, that the fountain is perpetual, and it has life-giving waters. But the cisterns and lakes, either from torrents or from muddy waters, are filled with earth and rain. The gates of heaven are called those, of which it is also written in the twenty-third psalm: Lift up your heads, O gates, and the king of glory will enter. Concerning which the Septuagint translated: Lift up your gates, O princes: of which more will be said in its proper place. And what Aquila and Symmachus interpreted as 'coelos', and LXX and Theodotion as 'coelum', should not be confused. For in Hebrew, 'Samaim' is a common noun, and both the plural and singular forms are referred to as 'coeli' with the same name, just like Thebes, Athens, and Salonae.

2:14

(Verse 14) Is the Israelite a servant or a native? I believe that from this place, the Jews who were filled with pride said to the Savior: We are the seed of Abraham and have never served anyone. How do you say, 'You will be free' (John 8:33)? Ignorant that everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin, and each one serves the one by whom they are overcome. Therefore, the ones born from the friend of God, Abraham, by their own vice, became like the sons of Ham, to whom it was said: 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant shall he be to his brothers' (Genesis 9:25).

2:15

(v. 15) So why did he become prey? The lions roared against him and gave forth their voice. They made his land a desolation; his cities are burned and no one lives in them. The divine speech asks a question in order to answer it. But indeed, the lions can be understood as the princes of Babylon, who made their land a desolation and destroyed their cities with fire. Or certainly, by way of anagoge, we can understand the lions as adversarial powers or the leaders of heretics, who devastate the land of the Church and lay waste to all her cities with heretical fire, the fire about which it is written: "All of them are adulterers, their hearts are like an oven" (Hosea 7:4). For they truly give their voice, and in this same prophet under the figure of the partridge they cry out: They gather what they have not brought forth: they make riches, but not with judgment (Jerem. XVII, 17). Therefore, her cities have been devastated and destroyed: because they do not have God as an inhabitant, as the Scripture says: And there is no one who dwells in them (Ibid., 4).

2:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) The sons of Memphis and Taphne have defiled you, even to the crown. Is it not because you abandoned the Lord your God at the time when He was leading you along the way? This that we have said, is not found in the Septuagint at the time when He was leading you along the way. However, he names two great cities of Egypt, Memphis and Taphne, and he says that

their sons defiled Israel even to the crown, in the sense in which Isaiah expressed it: From the sole of the foot to the crown, there is no soundness in it (Isaiah 1:6). For there was such a great lust among the Egyptians, who are of large bodies, that they spared no member, but defiled everything. Literally, it refers to the idols of the Egyptians; spiritually, to the teachers of a perverse doctrine, who defile the purity of the Church with their filthiness. These things happened to them because they abandoned their Lord God, especially at the time when they should have followed him as their leader.

2:18

(Verse 18.) And now, what do you want, on the way of Egypt, to drink the water of Shior? And what do you want on the way of the Assyrians, to drink the water of the river? Concerning Shior, we have interpreted it as turbid, because the Hebrew word signifies that. The common edition has it as Geon. Therefore, because he had previously mentioned the sons of Memphis and Taphnis, who had violated Israel up to the crown: now he more clearly mentions Egypt itself. There is no doubt that the Nile has turbid waters, and it signifies the river of the Assyrians, as Scripture says, that the promised land extends from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates. But those who abandon Christ, the source of life, and dig for themselves the pits of heretics who cannot contain the waters of doctrine, must necessarily submit to the lions who reduce their land to a wasteland and destroy all the Churches. They will be polluted even to the top, and drink turbid waters from the streams of the Assyrian river and the North wind, from which evil is kindled upon the earth.

2:19

(Verse 19.) Your wickedness will reprove you, and your apostasy will rebuke you. Know and see that it is evil and bitter for you to have forsaken the Lord your God, and that you have no fear of me, says the Lord of hosts. It should be noted that after wickedness or apostasy has fully satisfied the one who commits it, and has come to the point of being nauseating like the quails, it instructs the one who does penance: commanding them to see what they have left behind, and what they have followed; and how, spurning what is good and sweet, they have chosen what is evil and bitter. But all this has happened because he has forsaken his Lord God, and his fear is not with him. For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. IX): and because he did not have it, he is delivered to evil and bitterness.

2:20

(Verse 20.) You have broken my yoke from the age (or your own) and shattered my chains (or yours); and you said, 'I will not serve.' For on every high hill and under every leafy tree, you lay as a prostitute (or were spread out in fornication) there. This is spoken as if to a prostitute, Israel, who has broken the marriage covenant and said, 'I will not serve.' It is understood to mean the Lord, or husband. But on every high hill and under every leafy tree, she has prostrated herself to idolatry. For pleasant and lofty places are always dedicated to idols. This can also be said of those who, originally Christians and educated in sacred Scriptures, afterwards, desiring secular literature, which is signified by the hills, and pleasant eloquence (according to Al. in pleasant eloquence) which is displayed in leafy trees, prostrate themselves before demons, who under the pretense of knowledge and lofty wisdom, pollute the souls of believers and trip up the feet of anyone passing by.

2:21

(Verse 21.) But I planted you as a choice vine, all true seed; how have you turned into a corrupt, foreign vine to me? Septuagint: But I planted you as a fruitful vine, all true; how have you turned into a bitter foreign grapevine? For the fruitful vine, or the chosen one, is called Sorec in Hebrew: which is mentioned in the song of Isaiah (Isaiah 5). And it is of the best kind of grapevine: with which branch Israel says that the Lord has planted himself; and he marvels at how the true seed and the chosen vine have turned into bitterness: and therefore has become a foreign vine; and no one is secure, if even the planting of the Lord and the true seed and the vine of Sorec are so changed by their own fault, that they depart from the Lord through bitterness and become a foreign grapevine. And in this we must consider the clemency of the Savior, that he who said in the Gospel, 'I am the true vine' (John 15:1), also gave to his disciples and to the people who believe in him, that they may be chosen or true vine, if they desire to remain in what has been planted.

2:22

(Verse 22) If you wash yourself with niter, you will multiply for yourself the herb borith, you are stained in your iniquity before me, says the Lord God. As for the herb borith, which we render in Hebrew, the LXX translated it as 'poan' to signify the herb of fullers, which grows in green and moist places according to the custom of the province of Palestine; and it has the same power for washing away stains as niter. But our niter and the herb of the fuller is repentance. The book of Ecclesiasticus, which also rebukes and rebukes and corrects wrongdoers, has the similarity of sharp nitre. However, one who is stained with light stains of sins is cleansed by lighter admonitions. But serious sins, which lead to death, cannot be diluted by nitre or the herb Borith: but they require more severe torments. For the work of each person will be tested by fire, and it will be revealed in the fire (1 Cor. III). And he added beautifully: You are spotted in your wickedness in my sight: for even if you seem clean to men, you are not clean to me, who know the consciences of each one. Hence it is said in another place: Not every living thing shall be justified in your sight (Psalm 42:2).

2:23

(Verse 23) How can you say, 'I am not defiled; I have not gone after the Baals'? Look at your way in the valley; know what you have done - a restless young camel running here and there, (valley in Hebrew is called Ge, which is translated as 'multitude' in our language, and can be referred to as the tomb of the multitude). In vain you have made your plea; you have all the signs of guilt, yet you deny having worshipped the idols of the Baals (below, in verse 19). Look at the valley of the sons of Hinnom, where the waters of Shiloah flow, and there you will see the temple of Baal, whom you have worshipped instead of God. And what is added: know what you have done uncovers the closed eyes of the denier, so that he may see what he is ashamed to look at. According to tropology, we accuse the impudence of those who do not want to confess their own faults by their works. For such people do not walk in the narrow and confined way that leads to life; but in the broad and spacious way, through which many enter, which leads to death (Matthew VII). Therefore it is appropriately named a πολυ■νδριον, or according to the history, because a multitude of people were killed and lost there due to the evil of idolatry.

2:24

(Verse 24.) The swift courser, unfolding its paths: the wild donkey accustomed to solitude, attracted by the desire of its own soul, drew the wind of its love: none shall turn her away: all who seek her shall not be lacking. In her monthly flow they shall find her. In the evening her voice howled, unfolding her paths over the waters of solitude, carried by the wind of her own soul: she was handed over: who shall turn her back? All who seek her shall not labor: and in her humility they shall find her. In this place, the Septuagint edition differs greatly from the Hebrew truth: nevertheless, both have their own meaning. As stated above, I am not defiled; but as if speaking to a woman who has behaved shamefully, it describes her fornication. How, it says, like a light deer, which we called a runner in common language, and even more significantly, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion translate it as swift courses, it explains her ways, and she is carried swiftly to her pasture. And just as a wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness draws in the wind or the breath of its own desire (for among the Hebrews, both wind and breath are called the same, Ruah), so Israel, or rather Jerusalem, was carried away with all urgency to the desire of lust, and burned with love for all idols; and there is no one who can turn her away from this impulse by their warnings: not because the incapacity of the Prophets did this, but the wicked malice of the one who desires it. Whoever, he says, seeks it, will not labor greatly. In menstruation and in its impurity they will find it. For which reason Aquila, νεομηνία, that is, the kalends, Symmachus, month, and Septuagint and Theodotion, interpreted it as "humility". Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the meaning here is: The harlot Jerusalem, according to that woman who is described in Proverbs, at evening she wailed with her voice, and provoked lovers to lust, opened the ways to the most shameful acts, and spread her legs to every passerby (Prov. V and VI). It was a place having the charm of flowing waters, which becomes more delightful when there is solitude all around, so that no one sees those engaged in sexual acts. In her desire, he said, her soul was filled with a spirited air, either being led by a perverse spirit or seeking the refreshment of love: or certainly she sang songs of her own depravity. She is given over, he said, to her vices and lust: no one can turn her away: all who wish to find her will find her in the lowliness of immorality: so that she can never be satisfied with the love of pleasure.

2:25

(Verse 25.) Keep your foot from nakedness, and your throat from thirst. And you said, I have despaired, I will not do it. I have loved strangers, and will follow after them. LXX: Turn your foot away from the rough path, and your throat from thirst. She said, I will act boldly because I have loved strangers, and I will follow after them. They who will celebrate the Passover are commanded to have shoes on their feet (Exodus 12). And the Apostle (Ephesians 6) preaches to have feet shod ready for the Gospel: lest while they walk through the solitude of this world, they be exposed to venomous creatures, which are to be trodden upon and crushed by the Gospel foot. We prevent our throat from being thirsty, when we fulfill the commandments of the Savior saying: Whoever is thirsty, let him come to me and drink (John 7:37). By this despair of evil, she denied that she would do what the Lord commanded, and she explained the reason, saying: I have loved strangers, and I will follow them, thinking that by this impudent confession she could avoid sins. Furthermore, next to the road of sinners there is a rough path, which is turned into a smooth path by the Lord. Let anyone who follows heretics be noted for the praise of this verse; for he said, I have despaired, whether I act boldly in evil, and I will be strengthened in my error. However, it is necessary for someone who follows a different doctrine from the Church to love those who are different and to

follow their footsteps, whether they are demons or the leaders of heretics who are alienated from God.

2:26-27

(Verse 26, 27.) Just as a thief is ashamed when he is caught, so were the people of Israel and their kings, leaders, priests, and prophets ashamed. Even though the faces of thieves are shameless and bold, they are still embarrassed when caught in the act. And so, when Israel says to a piece of wood, 'You are my father,' and to a stone, 'You have given birth to me,' they are calling their own creations their parents, and they are ashamed when caught in their idolatry. And let us not say this about him of the common people: He sets up kings and princes, and priests, and their prophets. Let us use this testimony against our leaders, and against those who are considered leaders in the Church, when they have been caught in shameful sins.

They turned their back to me, and not their face. Those who reject the words of God, turn their back against Him and not their face. For when a master gives a command, the sign of obedience is if the servant listens with head lowered. But if they turn their back, it is a sign of contempt; as it is written in another place: And they turned their shoulder, wanting to go away (Zach. VII, 11). So much have they despised my commands, that they did not even want to hear, but showed their arrogance with their body language. And in the time of their affliction they will say: Arise, and deliver us. Those who did not perceive through blessings will perceive through torments that God.

2:28

(Verse 28.) Where are your gods, whom you made for yourself? Let them arise and deliver you in the time of your affliction. It is a shameless request to seek help from one whom you have despised in times of peace. And it should be read with the emotion of rebuke: Let your gods deliver you, whom you made for yourself. So that when God, the Creator of mankind, becomes a man, man may make a god, and the necessity may prove what power those whom you worshiped with confidence before possess.

According to the number of your cities, your gods were the gods of Judah. Each individual city worshipped either the same gods or different ones, so that they did not seem to have agreement in impiety, but rather, by fighting against each other, superstition followed different errors. And what follows is that, according to the number of roads, they sacrificed to Baal in Jerusalem, as added by the seventy translators.

2:29

(Verse 29) What do you want to contend with me in judgment? You all have forsaken me, says the Lord. Human perversity is inclined to make excuses for itself, so that whatever it rightfully endures, it may seem to endure unjustly; and it may attribute its own fault to the judgment of God. Therefore, in vain, you present complaints, and an unjust cause to the judge, when it is because of your impiety that you suffer. And what follows: And you have all acted unjustly against me, is added by the Septuagint.

2:30 (Verse 30) Without cause, I struck your sons: they did not receive discipline. For this reason, you did not receive the 70. And the sense in Hebrew is: Those who were struck did not want to receive discipline. But in the Septuagint: Therefore, I struck your sons so that you may be taught

by their death. And lest you say: You did not want to correct sinners, learn from the blows inflicted upon your sons, because I desired to heal you with a more severe remedy. Your sword devoured your prophets. Not mine, but yours: not my sword, but yours, devoured, which you endured for your sins. Moreover, the 70 do not have yours: but they have simply interpreted 'your sword devoured your prophets' to show either an enemy sword or my sword, through which your sins were stabbed. As a destructive lion is your generation. LXX: As a destructive lion, and you did not fear. The sword, he says, which devoured your prophets; undoubtedly this signifies Baal and the soothsayers of idols, like a lion he ravaged everything: and yet your generation, which should have improved through the punishment of a few, continued in all wickedness. But in the Septuagint the sense is this: The sword of the Lord, which showed the sword of the adversaries, devoured and tore apart your false prophets, like a lion, which fiercely tears apart the prey it finds, and yet you were not able to be converted to better things through the punishment of your prophets.

2:31

(Verse 31.) See the word of the Lord: Am I become a wilderness to Israel, or a barren land? Why then said my people, We are gone, we will come no more at you? LXX: Hear the word of the Lord: thus says the Lord: Am I become a wilderness to Israel, or a land full of darkness? Why do my people say, We will not serve, we will not come to you? And Moses saw the voice of God (Exod. XXXIII), and John the Apostle says that he has seen and touched the word of God (I John I). But he wonders how the people of Israel had treated God as if it were a wilderness, when they followed idols as if they were the bustling city. It is a late land, which does not receive the showers of teachings, nor the discipline of the Gospel; and it is full of thorns, because it had not been cultivated. Therefore, the once people of God are more wicked in that they have turned away from the Lord and do not want to return to their Lord anymore. It is a great offense not to seek to appease the one you have offended.

2:32

(Verse 32.) Will the virgin forget her adornment, and the bride her breastplate? My people have forgotten me in countless days. Through these things we learn that Christ is the bridegroom of the virgin Church, which has no blemish or wrinkle. But if he is the bridegroom, his words are, as John the Baptist speaks: He who has the bride is the bridegroom (John 3:29). Therefore, he loses his adornment who departs from the Lord, and loses the understanding of the teachings, which is symbolized in the breastplate. Wherefore also John the Evangelist leaned on the breast of the Lord (John 13), and among other things, the chest of the victims is separated for the priests (Numbers 18). But as the number of times in which we forget the Lord increases, so does the greater punishment of sin, which neither the length of the ages can subdue.

2:33-34

(Verse 33, 34) Why do you insist on showing your good path in seeking affection, when you have also taught your wicked ways? And on your wings (or in your hands) the blood of the souls of the poor and innocent is found. I did not find them in ditches (or pits), but in all of these (or under every oak tree). In vain, he says, you desire to defend yourself with the art of words, and to show your works as if they were good, so that you may deserve affection. Moreover, you have also taught others your ways, and you have become an example for all evil works, and on your wings (or in

your hands), indeed, the blood of the innocent is found, whom you sacrificed to idols, or whose souls you lost through the likeness of sacrifices. We placed the poor, from Hebrew, who are not found in the Septuagint. However, he says, the poor and innocent ones, I did not find slain in ditches, which is usually the result of the plots of robbers: but in all the things I mentioned above, whether under the oak, which in Hebrew is called Ella (אֵלָא): which indeed also signifies this; so the meaning is: In all these things, whether under the oak or terebinth, under whose shade and foliage you enjoyed yourself as if in pleasant places of idolatrous crimes.

2:35-36

(Ver. 35, 36) And you said: I am without sin and innocent: and therefore let your anger turn away from me. Behold, I will contend with you in judgment, because you have said: I have not sinned: how despicable you have become, repeating your ways too much (or how greatly you have despised). This should be used against those who refuse to acknowledge their own sins: but in the time of affliction and distress, they claim to unjustly endure what they endure: and they provoke the wrath of God even more, because the greater sin is not to mourn what they have done, but to offer empty excuses for their sins. He said, 'I will argue with you in court for what you have said, 'I have not sinned': as if this sin is any greater, to have something in one's conscience and to speak it out in one's words. Let the new heresy hear that the wrath of God is even the greatest, not to humbly confess one's sin, but shamelessly boast of righteousness.'

2:37

(Verse 37.) And you will be confounded by Egypt, just as you were confounded by Assyria: for you will also go out from there, and your hands will be on your head: because the Lord has broken your confidence (or hope), and you will have nothing prosperous in it. In order to avoid the attack of the Egyptians, they fled to the Assyrians, whose defense was in vain, for we read that they were defeated by the Egyptians. Again, in order to escape the wrath of the Assyrians, they used the help of the Egyptians; whom the Assyrians overcame, as the history tells. Therefore, they are rebuked because, having abandoned hope in the Lord, they rely on the assistance of men, which is totally broken and so destroyed that they cannot find any usefulness in it. Hence it is said: 'And you shall leave this, that is, Egypt, just as you left Assyria; and your hands shall be upon your head, and you shall grieve in vain for having expected help from the Egyptians.' Let us remember the story when Tamar was corrupted and violated by her wicked brother Amnon, and she put her hands sprinkled with ashes on her head, and thus she returned to her house (II Kings XIII).

3:1 (Chapter III - Verse 1) It is commonly said (for which the Seventy have translated 'only said'). If a man divorces his wife and she goes and becomes another man's wife, will he return to her again? Will not that woman be considered defiled and polluted? (or that land?) And you have committed adultery with many lovers (or shepherds.) For the word 'Reim' (רַעִים), which is written with four letters Res, Ain, Yod, Mem, signifies both lovers and shepherds. And if we read Reim, it means lovers; if Roim, it means shepherds. But return to me, says the Lord (or you have returned to me, says the Lord). In Hebrew, even after fornication, he accepts the repentant, and exhorts them to return to him. But in the Septuagint, it does not invite to repentance, but reproaches the impudence of the prostitute who dares to return to her husband after adultery. And what it says: and that woman will be defiled, for which in Hebrew we read the land, provides an example, and speaks more clearly about the land of Israel, which is compared to the adulterous woman. Let us

use this testimony against those who abandon the faith of the Lord and, hindered by the errors of heretics, after many fornications and deceptions of souls, pretend to return to the ancient truth: not to remove the venom from their hearts, but to deceive others.

3:2

(Version 2.) Lift up your eyes and see where you have not fallen. On the roads you were sitting, waiting for them like a robber in the wilderness (or like a deserted raven). For it is written in Hebrew, Arabic, and can also mean Arabs, that this people, devoted to robbery, still raids the borders of Palestine today, and they besiege the roads for those descending from Jerusalem to Jericho: of which the Lord also mentions in the Gospel (Luke 10). So lift up your eyes, O Jerusalem, and look around, and see where you are not laid low by fornication. For just as thieves are accustomed to lay traps for travelers in the evening and in deserted places, so you, sitting by the brothel of Proverbs, were sitting in the streets in the evening, in order to destroy the souls of those who commit fornication. Therefore, the whole land is polluted with your fornications. And significantly, next to these who promise to abandon heretical errors, it is commanded that they lift their eyes straight ahead. For unless they begin to see straight, they cannot condemn their former wickedness.

3:2-3 (Verse 2, 3.) And you have polluted (or killed) the land with your fornications, and in your evils (Alternative: in malice): therefore the drops of rain have been withheld, and the late rain has not come (or you have had many shepherds to stumble). The land has been killed (or polluted), because of the killing of those who perished in idolatrous fornication. Hence the blessing of all things has been taken away, so that they would suffer the drought of the word of God. Whether they had shepherds through whom they offended God, so that those who should have been teachers, to prevent others from error, became authors of impiety. The forehead of a prostitute has become yours, and you were not ashamed. LXX: The appearance of a prostitute has become yours: you have become without shame towards everyone. Because above (To chapter II, 35) he had said: I have not sinned, and yet he had sinned more by denying his own crimes: therefore now he accuses [you] as if [you were] a shameless and excessively impudent woman: so that [you] do not carry [yourself] with a shameless expression only towards one or two, but [you] are not ashamed before anyone. Let us use this language against the assembly of heretics, who boast in their errors.

3:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) Therefore, at least from now on, call me, my Father, you are the leader of my virginity: will you be angry forever, or will you persist until the end? Let the heretics be ashamed who do not want to convert to better things, nor return to their Father and Creator, and let them hear: At least from now on, call me, my Father, you are the leader of my virginity. He himself embraces your soul with his affection, and teaches how one should pray and repent. However, the more merciful he who shows the way to salvation after fornication, the more wretched the prostitute who does not want to receive health after wounds.

Behold, you have spoken, and you have done evil, and you have been able. For words of repentance, with words of pride you blasphemed: and you fulfilled your evil intention, and you showed your strength against a man, so that you could do what you discussed in speech.

3:6-10

(Verse 6 and following) And the Lord said to me in the days of King Josiah: Have you seen what the adulteress Israel has done? She went upon every high hill and under every leafy tree and committed adultery there. And I said, after she had done all these things: Return to me, but she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw that I had dismissed the adulteress Israel and had given her a bill of divorce. But her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she also went and committed adultery. She defiled the land with her adulterous acts and committed adultery with stone and wood. And in all this, her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but in falsehood, says the Lord. The torments of some are the remedies of others. And when a murderer is punished, he receives indeed what he has done, but others are deterred from the crime. Therefore, when the ten tribes, which were called Israel, were captured by the Assyrians and taken to Media, the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which should have feared similar things and turned their whole minds towards God, overcame the crimes of the ten tribes. And they followed idols to such an extent that they placed a statue of Baal in the Temple of God, which is called an idol by Ezekiel, set up for zeal and emulation of the Lord. But it speaks under the figure of two sisters, because from one are generated Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by the stock, and the former is called the adversary, the latter the rebellious one. For the former completely turned away from God, immediately worshipping golden calves in Dan and Bethel. But the latter, in whose possession was the Temple and the true religion of God, gradually departed from the Lord (3 Kings 12). And for this reason, she is called the rebellious one. According to the spiritual interpretation, prophecy about heretics is this: those who, thinking themselves wise in heretical cunning, ascend the mind of pride with knowledge of a false name; and, defiled by the pleasures of this flesh, expose their fornication under every leafy and pleasant tree. When they are delivered to the devil for the destruction of the flesh, it often happens that the house of Judah, that is, the confession and true faith, is not at all frightened by their example but commits much greater evils. And they contaminate the land of the Church with the ease of their fornication, committing adultery with stone and wood, following the teachings that are against God. But if an ecclesiastical man wishes to correct someone who has gone astray, and to cut away the rotten flesh, and to bring back to repentance those who have followed falsehood: and nonetheless they continue to adhere to the ancient error under the guise of Ecclesiastical truth, it can be said of them: In all these things, her treacherous sister Judah has not turned back to me with her whole heart, but in deceit. But this prophecy was fulfilled during the time of Josiah, a righteous king, under whom Jeremiah began to prophesy.

3:11

(Verse 11.) And the Lord said to me: He has justified his soul, the one who turned away from Israel, by the comparison of the one who acted treacherously in Judah. Israel is more just, he said, in comparison to Judah: because she perished immediately in the beginning, while the other could be corrected by her sufferings. Let us observe that the new heresy is compared to the old, in which Israel is said to be justified in comparison to Judah. And it is not surprising that the name of justice is attributed to one sister of a nation, when even Sodom receives the name of justice in comparison to Jerusalem, as the Lord says through Ezekiel: Sodom has been justified by you (Ezek. 16:55): and the tax collector becomes just by comparison to the Pharisee (Luke 18).

3:12-13

(Verse 12 onwards) Go, and cry out (or read) these words against the North, and say: Return, O backsliding Israel, declares the Lord, and I will not turn away (or strengthen) my face from you (or against you), for I am holy (or merciful), declares the Lord, and I will not be angry forever. However, know your iniquity, for you have transgressed against the Lord your God (or acted wickedly), and have scattered (or poured out) your ways to strangers under every green tree, and have not listened to my voice, says the Lord. The Hebrew word Carath () signifies 'call, shout, and read'. Hence it was translated by Aquila and Symmachus as 'shout: read the Septuagint and Theodotion'. However, it is directed towards the North, against Babylon and the Assyrians, to the twelve tribes: and their return is preached. And I will not turn my face away from you, he says; or I will not set my face against you, so that I will not receive you with the severity of judgment, but with the countenance of mercy. For I am holy and merciful, so that I may not remember your iniquities anymore, nor recall that you have departed from the Lord and that you have delighted in idols for him, and that you have committed fornication under every shady and leafy tree. Indeed, this can be said about heretics and those negligent in the Church, who are daily called to repentance by ecclesiastical men: and it can properly be applied to them, 'And you did not hear my voice.' But every heretic dwells in the North, and has lost the heat of faith, nor can he hear that of the Apostle: fervent in spirit (Rom. XII, 11). And because he has given himself over to pleasures, he has departed from the Lord, and has scattered his ways with alien doctrines, and has followed pleasure. For no heresy is constructed except for the sake of gluttony and the belly, so as to seduce burdened women with sins, always learning and never coming to the knowledge of truth (II Tim. III), concerning whom it is truly said: who devour my people like bread (Psal. XIII, 8): and those whom Christ points out, devouring the houses of widows (Matth. XII). And when I have mercy on you, do not think that it is just: but remember always your iniquity, and know that you have fornicated against the Lord, and lower the proud neck, so that as you have offended the Lord through arrogance, you may please Him through humility. But what we said above, 'And I will not set My face upon you,' fits with that prophetic saying: 'Turn away your face from my sins, and blot out all of my iniquities.' (Psalm 50:11).

3:14-16

(V. 14 seqq.) Turn to me, O sons, returning (or wandering and straying), says the Lord: for I am your husband (or master), and I will take you, one from a city, and two from a family, and bring you to Zion, and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, and they will feed you with knowledge and doctrine. And when you have increased and multiplied in the land, in those days, says the Lord, they will no longer say, the ark of the covenant (or testament) of the Lord: neither will it come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will it be visited, nor made anymore. The Jews think that this was fulfilled after the return from Babylon under the rule of Cyrus, king of Persia, and to Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel (Isaiah 1). Even if not all returned, this is meant to signify: let one be taken from the city and two from the clan. But it is better understood in the coming of Christ, when the remnant was saved, as the Apostle says and explains: Unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left us seed, we would have been like Sodom and similar to Gomorrah (Romans 9:29); then they were brought into Zion, about which it is written: Glorious things are said of you, O city of God (Psalm 87:2). And there were given shepherds according to his heart, the apostles and apostolic men, and they feed a multitude of believers, not in Jewish ceremonies, but in the knowledge of Christ and

doctrine, and by preaching the Gospel spread throughout the whole world, they will not have confidence in the Ark of the Lord, which was the guardian of the Mosaic law, but they themselves will be the temple of God: nor will they follow the wandering Nazarenes, serving abolished sacrifices, but they will follow a spiritual worship. But others interpret this as referring to the end times, when with the coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles, all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11).

3:17

(Verse 17) In that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all nations shall gather unto it in the name of the Lord, in Jerusalem, and they shall not walk after the stubbornness of their wicked heart. The Lord shall not sit upon the ark of the Covenant and Cherubim, as was previously said to that people: You who sit upon the Cherubim, manifest (Psalm 79:2): but all who truly believe with perfect mind, shall be the throne of God. Or certainly, it is better understood as the whole Church: when all nations gather together in the name of the Lord in Jerusalem, where the vision of peace is found; and they shall not walk after the stubbornness of their wicked heart, to do what they desire, nor follow their own errors; but they shall say with the Prophet: My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me (Psalm 63:9).

3:18

(Verse 18.) In those days, the house of Judah shall go to the house of Israel, and they shall come together from the land of the North to the land that I gave to your fathers. This is fulfilled specifically in the coming of Christ, when the twelve tribes believed in the Gospel together, abandoning the land of the North, the harshest cold, and leaving behind the dominion of the devil. They then received the promised land, which had been promised to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I recently edited a small book about the promised land.

3:19

(Verse 19) But I said: How shall I put you among the children, and give you a desirable land, an excellent heritage of the armies of the nations? And I said, you shall call me father, and you shall not cease to follow me. For the excellent heritage of the armies of the nations, which the Seventy translated, Theodotion more significantly translated as the renowned heritage of the strongest nations, signifying Christ, who is the leader and Lord of all nations, to his name and the belief in his passion. He himself said to Israel: 'You shall call me Father.' And: 'Whoever believes in me, believes in the Father' (John II, 19). He himself promised: 'I will make you into sons: in the number, namely, of my sons, who have believed in me from the people of the nations; and to whom I have given the desirable land.' For as many as received him, he gave them the power to become sons of God (John I).

3:20

(Verse 20) But as a woman may despise her lover, so the house of Israel has despised Me, says the Lord. The voice of Christ is near the people of Judah, to whom He said: I will make you as sons, and I will give you a desirable land. And you shall call Me Father, and you shall not cease to go after Me. Just as a woman, he says, despises not her husband, but her lover, if she has once been united with him, seeing him serving her lust, and the law of nature changed in her, by which she was once subject to her husband, with the Lord saying: And her conversion shall be to you. So

the house of Israel, that is, the people of Judah, has despised the Lord the Savior to their own destruction.

3:21-22

(Verses 21, 22.) A voice was heard in the streets (or on the lips), the weeping and wailing of the children of Israel, for they have done wickedness, they have forgotten the Lord their God. Return, O returning children, and I will heal your turnings (or contritions): for which Symmachus translated as conversions. God willingly receives the penitent, and runs to meet the son who is wasted with want and filth, and immediately clothes him with the former garments, and restores glory to the one who returns: but only if he returns with weeping and wailing. For he has done wrong because of his own fault; and he has forgotten the Lord his God and his Father, to whom he speaks with prophetic words: Return, O returning sons. I call you sons for this reason, because understanding your sins, you return with weeping and wailing to your parent. And when you have returned to the Lord, he will heal all your contritions, whether aversions by which you had gone away from the Lord, or certainly conversions. Although we may return to the Lord of our own volition, yet unless He draws us and strengthens our desire with His protection, we cannot be saved. Let us understand this both in relation to the Jewish people returning to the Lord and to the heretics who have forsaken the Lord.

3:23

(Verse 23.) Behold, we come to you: for you are the Lord our God. Truly the hills were deceitful, and the multitude (or strength) of the mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. Let the penitent say this, forsaking all pride, and the multitude or height of the mountains and hills, by which he exalted himself against God, and being humbled, let him speak: Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.

3:24

(Verse 24.) The confusion devoured the labor of our fathers from our youth: their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters. All the labors of the heretics, of which it is written, They have failed in searching examination (Psalm 63:7), from their youth whom they deceived, their sons and daughters who progressed in heresy or were merely held captive by luxury, our confusion has overwhelmed them. From this they conclude:

3:25

(Verse 25) Let us sleep in our confusion, and let our disgrace cover us: for we have sinned against our God, both we and our fathers, from our youth until this day, and we have not listened to the voice of the Lord our God. Let Israel speak this, who has not listened to his Lord: let every heretic who repents speak this; and yet it is a part of salvation to confess one's own sins and to know them. Say, he says, your iniquities first: that you may be justified (Isaiah 43:26). For indeed Israel rejected Christ their Lord God, and sinned against Him, not only at the time when He was seen in the flesh, but even before His coming. Hence they say, both we and our fathers from our youth until this day have not heard the voice of our God speaking to our fathers: If ye believe Moses, ye would believe me also: for of me he wrote (John 5:46).

4:1

(Chapter IV, Verse 1) If you return, O Israel, says the Lord, return to me. The Septuagint translates it as: If Israel turns back, says the Lord, it will return to me. And the meaning is, if it returns to me, it will be delivered from captivity. Alternatively: when it offers what it has: For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. (Matthew 25:29). Furthermore, according to the Hebrew text, the meaning here is: If you return to me, O Israel, and once desiring salvation, you confess to having sinned and not heeded the voice of the Lord your God, fully convert and believe in the one you denied, and then there will be complete conversion.

If you remove your offenses from my face, you will not be disturbed. When we are moved and say, 'But my feet were almost ready to stumble' (Ps. 73:2), we do not suffer this because of the weakness of our nature, but because we place stumbling blocks and idols against the Lord.

4:2

(Verse 2.) And you shall swear, 'As the Lord lives, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless him, and they themselves shall praise him.' And how does the Gospel forbid us to swear? But here (Matt. 5), to swear is said for confession, and for the condemnation of idols, by which Israel used to swear. Finally, stumbling blocks are removed, and one swears by the Lord. And what is said, 'As the Lord lives,' in the Old Testament it is an oath for the condemnation of the dead, by whom every idol worshiper swears. At the same time, it must be noted that an oath has these companions: truth, judgment, and justice. If these are lacking, the oath will by no means be valid, but rather perjury. And when, he says, Israel does this, and through the Apostles becomes the teacher of the nations, then all nations will bless or be blessed in him, and they will praise him because salvation has come forth from Israel.

4:3-4

(Verse 3 and following.) For thus says the Lord to the man of Judah and Jerusalem: Break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and remove the foreskins of your hearts, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my fury go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your thoughts (or inventions). For we have said, Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and remove the foreskins of your hearts. Symmachus adds, Purify yourselves to the Lord, and remove the evil of your hearts: understanding circumcision, purification, and the foreskins to be a vice. But this is commanded to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, who follow the true faith and dwell in the Church, that they should not sow upon the thorns which the Gospel speech signifies, which choke the seed of God, but first make the field new and uproot all the brambles, and remove the thistles, so that clean seeds may receive clean fields. This is what is said in another place: Do not cast your pearls before swine, and do not give what is holy to dogs (Matthew 7:6). For how can someone hear the word of God and conceive seeds and bear fruit, whose soul is full of the tribulations of the world? And what follows: Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskins of your hearts. This is commanded to no one else except the man of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that they may abandon the letter that kills and follow the life-giving spirit. For if you do not do this, my wrath will go forth like fire, and it will be kindled, and there will be no one to extinguish it. Therefore he warns and predicts beforehand so that he is not compelled to act: which we confirm in the case of the Ninevites, to whom the sentence was predicted, so that they would avoid the impending wrath

through repentance. However, all these things happen due to the wickedness of your (or our) thoughts or inventions. Where are those who say in their thoughts that there is no sin, when all vices, according to Gospel truth, proceed from the heart (Matthew 15)?

4:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) Announce in Judah, and make it heard in Jerusalem, speak: blow the trumpet in the land, cry aloud, and say: Gather together, and let us enter the fortified cities. Let Judah hear this, let Jerusalem hear this, in which the confession of faith is, and in which the peace of Christ dwells, and to which it was said through Isaiah: Ascend to the high mountain, you who proclaim good news to Zion. Raise your voice, you who proclaim good news to Jerusalem (Isa. 40:9): cry aloud, and thus command: Let us enter the fortified cities. The wars of the heretics are rising: hold fast to the protection of Christ. Raise the sign of the cross on the watchtower, in the loftiness of the Church. Take courage, you who are afraid, do not stand still, but run to the aid of Christ. Evil, he says, I bring from the North and great destruction, truly it is Nebuchadnezzar, who is allowed by me to be in this world, so that your strength and victory may be proven.

4:7

(Verse 7) The lion has come up from his den, and the destroyer of the nations has risen; he has left his lair to make your land a desolation. Your cities will be laid waste, with no inhabitant remaining. This is, as we have said, the true Nebuchadnezzar, of whom the blessed Apostle Peter speaks: 'Our adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour' (1 Peter 5:8). But he has also ascended from the abyss, from which he must be bound, and he pleads not to be cast out; and the plunderer or destroyer of the nations has risen, of whom it is said: 'You will rule over all your enemies' (Psalm 9:5), and 'He who boasts in the sight of the Lord: I have gone around and trampled on the whole earth' (Job 2:2). For who is it, indeed, whom the poisons of the devil do not touch, except for he alone who can say: Behold, the prince of this world is coming, and in me he has found nothing (John 14:30)? This person frequently puts the whole earth of the Church in solitude, so that those who have gone out of the Church fight against the Church. Concerning these, John the Evangelist speaks: They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us (1 John 2:19). The cities of the land of Judea are being devastated, and the assemblies of heretics flourish. Therefore, if anyone is a supporter and author of perverse doctrines, it can be said: The lion has come up from his den, and the destroyer of nations has risen!

4:8

(Verse 8.) So gird yourselves with sackcloth, weep and howl, for the fierce anger of the Lord's fury has not turned away from us, or as the Septuagint translated, from you. We cannot avoid the lion and the most savage beast unless we repent and turn to the Lord, not only in our minds but also in our actions. For as long as he devastates the Church and the land of Judah, and also ravages Jerusalem, the clear anger of God is evident.

4:9

(Verse 9.) And it shall be on that day, says the Lord: the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes, and the priests shall be amazed, and the prophets shall be confounded. While

the Church of the Lord is being devastated by the plunderer, and the anger of the Lord remains against us, all help will be useless. The heart of the king, whose heart should be in the hand of God, will perish, and the hearts of the princes, who were thought to be wise. For God has made the wisdom of the world foolish, because through it they did not know God (1 Corinthians 1). Even the priests themselves, who were supposed to teach the law of the Lord and defend their subjects from the fury of the lion, will be infatuated with a certain stupor. For the Septuagint translated it as 'stupor', expressing a loss of mind. And the prophets will be dismayed, or, as Aquila translated the Hebrew word 'lethmau', they will be insane. For who would not go mad, who would not lose heart, when they see their princes, kings, priests, and prophets being devoured by the lion?

4:10

(Verse 10) And I said: Alas, alas, alas: O Lord God (which the LXX translated: O Lord God), have you deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying: There will be peace for you? And behold the sword has reached to the soul. For earlier he had said: At that time they will call Jerusalem the throne of God, and all nations will gather to it on the mountain of the Lord in Jerusalem; and now he says: The heart of the king and the hearts of the leaders will perish, and the priests will be astonished and the prophets will be dismayed. The Prophet is troubled and thinks that God has lied to him. He does not understand that the promise will be fulfilled in the distant future, but this will happen in the near future, as the Apostle also speaks: Has God rejected his people? But it reaches to the soul, when nothing vital is reserved in the soul. And at the same time, it shows this, that unless the sword goes before, which cuts off and purges the vices of the soul, peace and promise do not follow.

4:11-12 (Verse 11, 12.) In that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: A burning wind (or dew) in the ways that are in the desert. The ways of my people's children: not for winnowing, and not for purifying. A spirit full of these will come to me. When the sword reaches to the soul, and the threshing floor is complete: then a burning wind will come from the desert, which will not purify and winnow it, but with the chaff scattered here and there, the grain will be stored in the barns: but a full spirit, not for the people, but for me, will come, so that my wheat may be scattered. The wind and the spirits are called by the same name among the Hebrews, namely 'Rua'. And depending on the context or the place, we should understand it as either wind or spirit. Others have explained this passage as follows: after the area has been cleared, the remaining things are saved. Hence it is also written: 'The Spirit of fullness will come to me,' as the Evangelist says: 'We have all received from his fullness' (John 1:16), and we will receive the grace of the Holy Spirit. As for the burning wind, according to the story, take Nebuchadnezzar, who consumes everything. According to the tropology, the opposing power, which comes from the desert and solitude where there is no hospitality of God, will try to overthrow his Church. And now I will speak my judgments with them. ■πoσt■πnσtς is, according to that Virgilian saying (Aeneid. I): Whom I... but it is better to calm the troubled waves. Therefore, about to speak of prosperity, he holds back and joins sad things with sad. For these are the judgments, by which God once spoke with his people, so that they may know how to justly endure what they endure.

4:13

(Verse 13.) Behold, like a cloud it will ascend, and like a storm its chariots: swifter than eagles are its horses. Woe to us, for we are devastated. It sees what is coming: it describes the army of

Babylon, the noise of its chariots and wheels is compared to the fiercest storm, and the swiftness of its horses is joined to that of eagles. When the Prophet had said this and pointed as if to approaching enemies, the people groan, and not foreseeing but already experiencing, they say: Woe to us, for we are devastated. This same thing applies to the Church, just as the army of the true Nebuchadnezzar attacks us daily, and the chariots of Pharaoh, and all his cavalry, surpass the onslaught of eagles. If the Ecclesiasticus man understands, believing in that sentiment: When you have turned, you will groan, then you will be saved, he will say: Woe to us, for we are devastated (Ezech. XXXIII, 11).

4:14

(Verse 14.) Wash your heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem, that you may be saved: how long shall evil thoughts dwell in you? To the people who say, 'Woe to us, for we have been devastated,' the Prophet responds, rather through the Prophet God responds: Wash your heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem, with that water about which Isaiah also speaks: 'Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean' (Isaiah 1:16), the water of saving baptism, the water of repentance. But he speaks to the metropolis of the Jews, so that by the city the nations may be understood: How long will you surrender to wicked thoughts that proceed from your heart? However, in the Holy Scriptures, we must accept the heart and soul as the meaning.

4:15

(Verse 15) The voice of the messenger from Dan, announcing the idol (or pain) from Mount Ephraim. Near the location of the land of Judah, the divine word now speaks. For Dan, a tribe near Mount Lebanon and the city now called Paneas, looks towards the north: from where Nebuchadnezzar will come. But the idol Bel, or pain or wickedness, is described as coming from Mount Ephraim. After the tribe of Dan, the land of Ephraim follows, through which one reaches Jerusalem. Then judgment is interpreted: Ephraim, abundance. Therefore the judgment of the Lord will come upon the land that has sinned against the Lord, with all the abundance of punishment.

4:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Say to the nations: Behold, it has been heard in Jerusalem, the watchmen come from a distant land and they have given their voice over the cities of Judah: they have become like watchmen over it all around, because they have provoked me to anger, says the Lord. God wants all the nations around to know our judgment: and Jerusalem, being afflicted, to receive all discipline. It is announced with a famous saying in Jerusalem that the adversaries come from a distant land, and the noise of a roaring army rises against it, who besiege the city and close the city with fortifications so diligently, that you would think they are not adversaries, but rather watchmen over fields and vineyards. But all this was done not by the strength of the enemy, but by the fault of Jerusalem: because it provoked God to anger. For if they do not have power over the strength of their adversaries in pigs, how much more in men, and men who were once citizens of God's city?

4:18

(Verse 18.) Your ways and thoughts have brought these things upon you: your wickedness, because it is bitter, has reached your heart. It makes an apostrophe to the city of Jerusalem, that her ways and thoughts, by which she sinned in both deed and word, have caused all these things to come upon her: and her own wickedness, which is inherently bitter, has touched her heart and penetrated her innermost being. Whatever happens to us, happens because of our own fault, as we turn a sweet Lord into bitterness and force Him to be unwillingly harsh.

4:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) My belly, my belly is in pain: the feelings of my heart are troubled within me. I will not be silent because my soul has heard the sound of the trumpet, the cry of battle. Destruction upon destruction is called out, and the whole land is laid waste. Suddenly my tents are destroyed, my curtains in an instant. When we stood by Symmachus, we were troubled, and in Hebrew it is written, Homa (); the Septuagint and Theodotion used the word μαμ■σσει, which I do not know the meaning of to this day. But the eagle puts up with the disturbance, which also means turmoil itself. Let it be said about this word, about which I know there is a great debate among many. The voice of the Prophet, speaking through the Prophet of God, is brought in: that he may grieve over the contrition of his people, and that his inner organs may be torn apart like those of a man. Just as the Savior grieved over the death of Lazarus (John 11): and he wept over Jerusalem, lest he hide his sorrow in silence (Luke 19): and every sound of the trumpet and the noise of battles disturbs his emotion, while evils are multiplied by evils, and the whole land of two tribes is laid waste. While I did not think, he says, my tents and my skins were ravaged by the raging Babylonian army: and my former lodgings have turned into spoils of the enemy. And God himself speaks these same words, when he sees tumults and discords in the Church and in his assemblies crying out day by day like a partridge, and the peace of God turning into war. Hence it follows:

4:21

(Verse 21.) How long will I see those fleeing (Vulgate: the one fleeing), hear the sound of the horn? Whether those fleeing from the king of Babylon, or those fleeing from me and departing from my service.

4:22

(Verse 22) Because my foolish people did not acknowledge me: they are foolish and senseless children. They are wise to do evil, but do not know how to do good. The cause of their brokenness, devastation, fleeing, and trumpet sound is that the people have become foolish, not by nature, but by their own deliberate choice. And this foolishness is further proven by the fact that they do not know God, and the wise children have become foolish and senseless. For what greater foolishness can there be than, when the ox knows its owner and the donkey the manger of its master, to not know the Lord, the God of Israel, and to despise the present one whom one always desired to see? And it is inferred: They are wise to do evil, but they do not know how to do good. Here wisdom must be understood as wickedness, just as the children of this age are wiser than the children of light: and the steward of iniquity is narrated to have done certain things wisely (Luke 16); and the serpent in paradise is recorded as being wiser than all the beasts (Genesis 3). Therefore true wisdom is that which is joined to the fear of God. Otherwise, where there are plots

and evasion, it is not wisdom, but cunning and deceit that should be called. For this reason, as we have said, because my foolish people did not know me, the Seventy translated it as: because the leaders of my people did not know me, so that the blame may be more on the teachers than on the people who do not have knowledge of God.

4:23-26

(Verse 23 and following) I looked at the earth, and behold, it was empty and void; and the heavens, and there was no light in them. I saw the mountains, and behold, they were moving; and all the hills were shaken. I looked, and there was no man, and every bird of the sky had fled. I looked, and behold, Carmel was a desert, and all its cities were destroyed before the Lord's face, and before the fierceness of his anger. The prophet sees in spirit what is to come, so that the people, when they hear it, may be terrified, and, having repented, may not endure what they fear. The land is empty, with its inhabitants destroyed. The heavens have no light, and the magnitude of terror prevents people from seeing. The mountains and hills themselves have safe hiding places, but they seem to be shaken and disturbed to an extreme degree. Looking around, the observer saw nothing, not even a bird. For the elements feel the anger of God, and the irrational creatures are filled with fear. The entire world now demonstrates that this is true, as the multitude of humans, and even the birds that usually follow them, have vanished and perished. Also Carmel, which overlooks the great sea, planted with olive trees and vineyards, will come to such a solitude that it will have the desolation of a desert. Likewise, all cities will become deserted, and the cause of all evils is that the anger of the Lord has been provoked by the sin of the guilty people. Whatever we have said about the history of Jerusalem and Judea, let us apply it to the Church of God, when it offends God, and when it is either ruined by vices or persecuted, and where once there was a choir and joy of virtues, there the multitude of sins and sorrows will prevail.

4:27-28

(Vers. 27, 28.) For thus says the Lord: The whole earth shall be desolate, but I will not make a complete end. The earth shall mourn and the heavens above shall be sorrowful, because I have spoken ((or thought)). I have planned and will not regret it; I have not turned away from it. The earth is deserted due to the mixture of God's anger and mercy, but there will not be a complete destruction so that those who understand His mercy may exist. The heavens above will also appear sad, and the earth itself will mourn, because the judgment of the Lord has reached its end and He does not regret what He has planned and spoken. But the repentance of God is said to occur when the aforementioned sentence is removed, and the raging wrath does not reach its end. He threatened through Jonah, and the impending sword of tears and sighs was overcome by a multitude (John 3).

4:29

(Verse 29.) At the sound of the horseman, and of him who sends forth the arrow (or bends the bow), every city (or region) flees. They have entered the heights and climbed the rocks. And what follows: They have entered the thickets, or caves, which the Seventy have added. But the divine word describes the raging army of Babylon, how at its trembling the entire people have abandoned the city, and have climbed the heights; and yet they could not escape the wrath of the Lord. But whatever, as we said above, is understood in history against Jerusalem, it refers to the Church,

when it has offended God, and has been handed over to its adversaries, either in the time of persecution, or certainly because of vices and sins.

4:30 (Verse 30.) But what will you do, O devastated one? The word 'devastated' in Hebrew is 'Sadud', which only Aquila has translated, others have translated it as 'miserable and wretched', by their own fault, for they have offended a merciful God. Finally, it follows: When you dress yourself in scarlet and adorn yourself with a golden necklace, and paint your eyes with antimony, you are in vain: your lovers have despised you, they will seek your soul. In the form of an adulterous woman speaks: when you have once offended God, and as if you had abandoned your Creator, you in vain seek ornaments. Your lovers, the demons, have despised you, and not the filth of debauchery, but they will seek the destruction of your soul. This same thing is to be understood spiritually against those who have lost conjugal affections and the modesty of true faith. 'If,' he says, 'you clothe yourself in scarlet, that is, you assume faith in the blood of Christ; if you adorn yourself with a golden necklace, that is, you have the meditation of spiritual senses and understanding; and if you paint your eyes with antimony, that is, you have the study of mysteries and the knowledge of God's secrets, you are in vain adorned. For these things you have also prepared for your lovers; and therefore a narrow bed cannot contain both, nor does God receive the ornaments by which you pleased your lovers before.'

4:31

(Verse 31) For I heard a voice like that of a woman in labor, the anguish (or groaning) of one giving birth. The voice of the daughter of Zion, fading away and stretching out her hands: Woe to me, for my soul is faint because of the slain! Like a woman in labor, that is, one who is giving birth for the first time, she describes the city of Jerusalem lamenting and crying out. For just as a woman in labor, not yet experiencing the pain of childbirth, almost dies and endures anguish, barely able to breathe, with hands spread out, she collapses, so too the daughter of Zion, when she sees her children slain, will burst forth in these words and say (or bursts forth and says): Woe to me, for my soul is faint because of the slain! But two examples have been compared in one chapter, the giving birth of children and the mourning: so that whatever a woman suffers in childbirth, or in the deaths of children, Jerusalem may suffer in the nations.

5:1-2

(Chapter 5 - Verse 1, 2) Go around the streets of Jerusalem and look, observe, and search its squares, whether you find a man who does justice and seeks faithfulness. I will be merciful to him. But even if, by the living Lord, they say and falsely swear this. Great is the love of justice, as God did not deliver the city (Genesis 18) according to the request of Abraham and the response of God for the sake of ten righteous men, but if He finds even one in the now perishing Jerusalem who does justice and seeks faithfulness (or, as Symmachus translated, truth), then God will have mercy on Jerusalem. And because it could happen that some would be found among the people who would feign the worship of God and swear by God, this is prevented so that God is not pleased by empty words but by the truth of faith, and He says: I do not love those who swear by me and swear falsely, but rather those whose hearts and lips are in agreement.

5:3

(Verse 3) Lord, your eyes look upon faith: you struck them, and they did not hurt; you crushed them, and they refused to accept discipline. They hardened their faces like rock, and they refused to turn back. After the words of the Lord, in which he commanded, saying: Go around the streets of Jerusalem, etc., the Prophet speaks to the Lord: Lord, your eyes look upon faith, which in Hebrew is called Emuna: not the works of the Jews, in which they rejoiced according to the ceremonies of the Law; but the faith of the Christians, through which we have been saved by grace. In this chapter, we learn that punishments are inflicted in order to correct vices. Finally, it says, 'You have struck them, and they have not felt pain; you have crushed them, and they have refused to accept discipline.' Through all the torments and whips, Jerusalem is corrected, and yet they did not even have shame for their vices; but like a stone hardening their foreheads, they refused to be converted to better things.

5:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) But I said: Perhaps they are poor and foolish (or they were unable) and ignorant of the way of the Lord, the judgment of their God. Therefore, I will go to the noble ones, and I will speak to them: for they have known the way of the Lord, the judgment of their God. Here, the poor and the noble ones, he does not speak of poverty and wealth, but compares the people to the rulers. And the meaning is this: Seeing the stubbornness of the unfaithful people, and that with hardened face, he did not want to receive instruction, this is the reasoning I had with myself: Perhaps the common people, who are ignorant of God, cannot know the teachings, and therefore it is excusable, because due to their lack of knowledge of God, they are unable to know the commandments. Therefore, I will go to the priests and those who preside over the people, and I will speak to them. For they have known the will of the Lord and understand His judgment. However, this is said in the manner of one who is uncertain, according to the Gospel saying: 'I will send my son, perhaps they will respect him' (Matthew 21:37), so that through the ambiguity of the sentence and the suspension of words, the free will of man might be shown.

5:6

(Verse 6) And behold, these men have broken the yoke together: they have broken the bonds, therefore the lion from the forest has struck them, the wolf has laid waste to them in the evening, the vigilant leopard is over their cities; everyone who goes out from them will be captured. Because their transgressions have multiplied, their apostasies have become strengthened. Those whom I thought were teachers, have been found to be worse than the disciples, and the greater authority there is in the rich, the greater the insolence of sins. For they have broken the yoke of the Law, as the Apostle says: 'Now therefore, why do you tempt God by imposing a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But by the grace of the Lord Jesus, we believe to be saved, even as they:' (Acts 15:10-11). And they broke the bonds of God's precepts, and not of the Pharisees, of whom it is said in the second Psalm: 'Let us break their bonds asunder, and let us cast away their yoke from us' (Psalm 2:3). Therefore, because they did these things, a lion from the forest struck them, namely the kingdom of Babylon; a wolf ravaged them at evening, signifying the Medes and Persians. For this reason, in the vision of Daniel, a bear is placed, with three rows of teeth in its mouth (Daniel 7): a watchful leopard over their cities, foreshadowing the attack of Alexander, and a swift attack from the West to India. It is called a leopard due to its variety and because it fought against the Medes and Persians with

many subject nations. And four, he said, were the heads on the beast, and power was given to it. And because he does not prophesy of the future, but of the past, as if weaving a story about things that are about to happen soon, he is silent about the Roman empire, about which perhaps it is said: Everyone who goes out from them will be captured. And he gives reasons why they have suffered these things: Because their transgressions have multiplied, and they have persisted in their disobedience. Hence it is said: And their aversions have been strengthened. That which we have set forth at the beginning, the Hebrew word Soced, which means 'vigilance', is now revealed in its proper place: for where we have said 'pardus vigilans', it is written in Hebrew Nemer Soced. According to typology, those who are considered great in the Church, because they break the yoke and break the chains, are therefore delivered to the shame of sufferings, so that they do what does not befit them.

5:7-9

(Vers. 7 seqq.) How can I be propitious to you? Your sons have forsaken me, and they swear by those who are not gods. I have satisfied them, and they have committed adultery, and they have indulged in the house of a prostitute. They are lovers of horses, and they have become emissaries to me. Each one neighs after his neighbor's wife. Will I not visit them for these things, says the Lord? Will my soul not avenge itself on such a nation? Catalogue of the sins of Jerusalem: while she says that she does not know God, by whom she can be shown mercy. Your sons have forsaken me, she says. Not my sons, but yours: they swear by those who are not gods, I have fed them and they have committed adultery. Let those who received wealth from the Lord listen to this and serve luxury. The lovers of horses have become lovers of women. Concerning emissaries, it is written in Hebrew: Mosechim (), which all translated with a consonant voice, that is, pulling, to show the greatness of the genitals, as in the said Ezekiel: like the flesh of donkeys, their flesh (Ezek. XXIII, 20). This is what is written in another place: They were compared to foolish beasts, and became like them (Psalm 48:13). And it shows such madness of lust, that not only does it call desire for pleasure, but also neighing, that is, the sound of horses, and it preserves the metaphor of raging horses for lust. When you do these things, he says, are you not worthy of punishment? And note that here visitation is used as punishment and torment, according to what is written: I will visit their iniquities with a rod. And in such a nation my soul will not be avenged (Psalm 88:33)? After it is bound by sins, it is not called the people of God, but a nation from which the soul of God has departed, according to what is written: My soul hates your new moons, your Sabbaths and your festivals (Isaiah 1:13). But what is said in the Old Testament for emotion, is written in the New Testament for truth: With the Savior saying: I have the power to lay down my life, and I have the power to take it up again (John 10:18).

5:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) Ascendite muros ejus (sive propugnacula) et dissipate: consummationem autem nolite facere. Auferte propagines ejus (sive sustentacula) quia non sunt Domini. Praevaricatione enim praevaricata est in me domus Israel, et domus Juda, dicit Dominus. Imperat gentibus, de quibus supra dixerat: Percussit eos leo de silva, lupus vastavit eos, et pardus in civitatibus eorum, ut ascendant muros Jerusalem, sive propugnacula, et dissipent eam: consummationem autem non faciant, ut salventur reliquiae, et sit qui annuntiet in gentibus gloriam Dei, severitatisque miscet clementiam. And he commanded that its branches or supports be taken away, all the help

that he had lost by his own fault, because it had transgressed against God (or the Lord), the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, signifying the ten tribes and the two. Let the Church hear this, that the walls and defenses of those who have no hope in the Lord and transgress against Him may quickly be destroyed, but let there not be complete destruction because of the mercy of the judge, and not because of the merits of the offenders.

5:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) They denied the Lord and said: He is not (or these things are not), and evil will not come upon us. We will not see sword and famine. The prophets spoke in vain and there was no answer (or response) in them. Therefore, these things will happen to them. Because they denied the Lord or lied to the Lord, and said: He is not, by whose judgment all things are done, but these things happened by chance: and the things that the voices of the prophets threaten us with will not happen, nor will we see the sword, nor will we endure the siege famine, and whatever the prophets said, they spoke in vain, and all their words were in vain, and they did not receive an answer, which means the oracle or word of God was not in them, therefore they will endure what the following passage describes. Let the negligent Church listen to this and refute the providence of God, that it may believe the things that are said, lest it endure both the sword and famine.

5:14

(Verse 14) Thus says the Lord God of hosts, because you have spoken these words: behold, I will make my words in your mouth like fire, and this people like wood, and it shall devour them. You said: The prophets have spoken in vain, and their threats will not come to pass: therefore, O prophet, I will make my words in your mouth have the power of fire, and I will turn this people into wood, so that through your words and the disbelief of the prophecy they may be consumed. Thus God is said to be a consuming fire, so that He may consume in us, if we build on the foundation of Christ, wood, hay, straw (Deuteronomy IV).

5:15-18

(Verse 15 and following) Behold, I will bring upon you a nation from afar, O house of Israel, says the Lord: a strong nation, an ancient nation, a nation whose language you will not understand, nor will you know what it speaks. Its quiver is like an open tomb, all mighty warriors. And it will devour your crops and your bread; it will devour your sons and daughters; it will devour your flocks and herds; it will devour your vineyards and fig trees; and it will crush your fortified cities, in which you trust, with the sword. However, in those days, says the Lord, I will not make an end of you. Not much later, and not falsely believed, the Prophets will speak to you in vain, but now I will bring upon you the nation of the Babylonians, who will come from afar: a strong nation, as it is written in Hebrew, Ethan (Gen. X), an ancient nation, once ruled by the giant Nimrod. Whose language you will not understand, as it is written in Hebrew: you will not understand what they say: for it is the solace of evil, if you have those enemies whom you can ask, and who understand your prayers. And what follows: Her quiver is like an open grave; it is not referred to as Babylon in the Septuagint edition, but it signifies the armory. There is no doubt that the kingdom of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians is extremely skilled in archery. And it also describes the devastation of the land of Judah, the slaughter of sheep, the herding away of livestock, the destruction of cities and walls, because they are all captured by the enemy sword, and yet in such

great evils He does not destroy them completely; but He preserves the remaining ones, either those who were led into Babylon and sent back to cultivate the land of Judah, or those who, after the heat of persecution, have kept the faith of the Lord through flight or confession.

5:19

(Verse 19) But if you shall say: why has the Lord our God done all these things to us? You shall say to them: Just as you have forsaken me and served foreign gods (or foreign deities) in your land, so you shall serve foreigners in a land that is not yours. It is a great folly not to know why they have suffered, since they have sinned so greatly. And a brief response to those who are doubting: just as you have served foreign gods, that is, Baal, or the foreign gods of all the nations in the land of Judah, so you shall serve foreign gods in a land that is not yours, undoubtedly Babylon and Chaldea. For if a foreign religion delights you, why is it necessary to embrace distant error? Dwell with such people, indeed serve those whose gods you worship. This can also be understood about heretics, of whom it is written: They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us (1 John 2:19), that the Lord may cast out heretics from the Church, who for a long time under the name of it have worshiped the idols of their lies, so that they may worship outside what they formerly worshiped within, so that the chaff may be separated from the wheat.

Book Two

Book Two

According to brother Eusebius, in the book of Jeremiah we dictate in swift speech, briefly turning away our ears so that we do not hear the judgment of bloodshed and deplore the souls of the slain, who, by the expectation of virtues, daily fall into arrogance and consider themselves equal to God, so that they may attribute equality to all men, which the impious Arian heresy denies in the Son, and may put their mouth in heaven and leave nothing more for the future blessedness of the Saints. We have responded to the madness of those with whom we were able, and if the Lord grants us life, we will respond more fully. Now the path must be taken up, and the Commentarioli must be dictated: neither burdening the understanding of readers with excessive length, nor depriving them of understanding with immoderate brevity, of which one overloads the senses of those reading, the other hinders the desire of students.

5:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) Announce this to the house of Jacob, and make it heard in Judah, saying: Hear, foolish people, who have no understanding: who have eyes but do not see, and ears but do not hear. In many ways they sin, turning away from salvation, and he calls the people foolish, who have abandoned the author of wisdom, and he compares them to idols, about which it is written: They have eyes but do not see: they have ears but do not hear. Let them be like those who make them, and all who trust in them (Psalm 115:5, 6). But he speaks specifically to Judah and the house of Jacob, for Israel had long rejoiced in Assyria. And at the same time, he gives the understanding that even without command, we should naturally understand what is right.

5:22-24

(Verse 22 onward) So you will not fear, says the Lord, and you will not be in pain before me? (or will you fear?) I have set the sand as a boundary for the sea, an eternal decree that will not pass. And the waves of the sea will be disturbed, and they will not be able to pass through it. This people has become stubborn and rebellious in their heart: they have turned away and gone, and they have not said in their heart: Let us fear the Lord our God, who gives us rain in its season, both the early and the late rains, preserving the harvest for us. He narrates the benefits to accuse the ungrateful. 'Will you not fear me,' he says, 'who have bestowed such great favors upon you? I do not desire the love of the perfect, but the fear of beginners, who have set the shore as a boundary to the sea; who, by my command, have restrained the powerful element and the immense masses of waves, according to what is written: 'He has placed a boundary, and it shall not pass.' (Ps. 148:6) They hear and perceive me, who do not possess the capacity to hear; and my foolish people, having become foolish by their own fault, not only despise me, but also provoke the gentle God. They turned away from me, he said, and they turned their backs on me, and they left quickly; and their conscience did not withhold them, to say in their hearts: Let us fear him, who gives us temporary and late rain. Through all these things it shows the good abundance of the annual harvest, for which the first edition of the Aquila, and Symmachus, have interpreted as weeks. In Hebrew, it is written Sabaoth, which signifies both weeks and abundance due to the ambiguity of the word.

5:25

(Verse 25) Your iniquities have turned these things away, and your sins have withholden good things from you. Therefore, if at any time the sea shall pass its bounds, and the rain shall be kept back, verily the hand of the Lord is not shortened, that it cannot do these things: but your sins, being present, have turned away good things from you, that they should not come unto you, but should go to others who have not sinned. And it is said that they have withholden the good things that were coming to us, according to that which is written in the literal sense: I will command the clouds, that they rain not upon it (Isaiah 5:6). But we can receive both the temporary and the late rain, the Law and the Gospel, and various vocations from the first hour until the eleventh, in which the owner of the vineyard promises one reward of eternal life to the workers (Matthew 20).

5:26

(Verse 26.) Because there were found among my people wicked ones plotting like bird catchers, setting snares and traps to capture men; like a net full of birds, so is their house full of deceit. Why did a temporary and late rain deviate from them, and all good things not come? The reasons are given: because there were found among his people wicked ones. He did not say, the unjust and sinners (as the new heresy wants), but the wicked. Impiety openly denies God; if it confesses error iniquity and sin, it easily turns God to mercy. And as we said: Insidious like bird-catchers, and it is not found in the Septuagint, Aquila and Symmachus translated Jasir (), like the net of a bird-catcher, so that even he who seems good and upright among them may lay snares like a bird-catcher, while they hunt each other to death, and bring ruin and loss to others, filling their own houses, so that the saying of the philosophers is fulfilled: Every rich person is either unjust or the heir of an unjust person. And if only these things were done by those who seem to be outside, and whom the Lord judges; and not in our gatherings, which are filled by the root of all evils, greed (Colossians III), so that we do not consider the faces of those who come to us, but their hands.

5:27-29

(Verse 27 and following) Therefore they have been magnified and enriched: they have become fat and grown thick, and have passed over my words wickedly: they have not judged the cause, the cause of the orphan, so they did not direct the judgment of the poor (or widow). Will I not visit them for these things, says the Lord: or will not my soul take vengeance upon a nation of this kind? If I were to list all the things that have been omitted in the Septuagint edition, it would be a long task. Those who plot, he says, delight in the nudity of others, thus they have been magnified and enriched because they have done superior things. They have become thick and fat, according to what is written: He has grown fat and has become fat, and he kicked. And they have disregarded my words, because with the conscience of wealth they have said about the Gospel: Soul, you have many good things stored up for many years: rest, eat, drink, revel. However, they have gone astray in their wickedness, and they have not set the judgment of God before their eyes, despising all men. They have scorned the orphan and the poor: for which reason the LXX have said, 'widows,' which is not found in the Hebrew; for 'Ebionim' properly signifies the poor, not widows. But what follows, 'Shall I not visit for these things?' says the Lord: 'or shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation?' has already been explained above.

5:30-31

(Verse 30, 31.) Astonishment and wonders were done on the earth. The prophets were prophesying falsehood (or wickedness) and the priests were applauding with their hands. And my people loved such things. What then will you do in the end? As it was said before: Shall I go to the nobles and speak to them? Perhaps they knew the way of the Lord, but behold, they have broken the yoke and burst the bonds. Now he describes who the nobles are, namely the prophets and priests: some of whom prophesy future events, and others decree what must be done according to the law. And behold, he said, when they, the false prophets, prophesied falsehood, the priests applauded with their hands. And in order to show that even the people are not without guilt, being led astray by such things, it is written: And my people loved such things: once mine; but after they loved such things, they ceased to be mine. So what will they do when the last time of judgment comes, or the necessity of captivity? Hence the astonishment and marvels, that neither among the rulers nor among the people was there found anyone who understood what is right.

6:1

(Chapter 6, Verse 1) Take courage, sons of Benjamin, in the midst of Jerusalem; and in Thecua sound the trumpet; and on Bethacherem raise a sign (or banner), for evil has been seen (or appeared) from the North and great destruction. No one is ignorant of Jerusalem situated in the tribe of Benjamin. We also see Thecua, a village situated on a mountain and separated from Jerusalem by twelve miles, every day with our own eyes. Among these is another village, which is called Bethacherem in the Syriac and Hebrew languages, and it too is situated on a mountain. Therefore, what he says is this: because Nebuchadnezzar is coming soon from the North, and the nearby captivity is imminent, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, seize your weapons, and sound the trumpet in Tekoa; and raise the banner in Beth-cherem, saying, so that you may be able to resist against the enemy. Benjamin means son of the right hand; Tekoa means trumpet; Beth-cherem means vineyard city. Let us apply all these things to the Church: so that if it sins, and the onslaught of persecution comes, it may prepare itself to resist.

6:2-3

(Verse 2, 3.) I have likened the daughter of Zion to a beautiful and delicate woman. And the shepherds and their flocks shall come to her. They have pitched their tents around her and each one shall feed those under his hand. Prepare for battle against her. Arise and let us go up at noon. The beauty of Jerusalem is described, which is the same as Zion, indicating that the whole city and the citadel of the city are one and the same. For Zion means a watchtower and it is compared to a beautiful woman; just as lovers come to her, so the shepherds are said to come to her. And in Hebrew, a word that is written with four letters, Resh, Ayin, Yod, Mem, if read as Reim (), it means lovers, if read as Roim (), it means shepherds, so that either, according to a metaphor, lovers of a beautiful woman, or, according to the overthrow of a city, shepherds may be understood: some of whom hasten to defile a prostitute, others to besiege and overthrow a city. Among these shepherds and their flocks, let us discern the princes and the armies of the Chaldeans. But they shall pitch their tents during the siege of the city all around: and each one shall feed those who are under his hand, that is, his troops and numbers. The leaders, or shepherds, shall say to their flocks: Sanctify war upon Jerusalem: for the Lord has command. Rise up, and let us go up to the south: not by night and ambush; but let us fight in full light: for no one can resist us.

6:4-5 (Verse 4, 5.) Woe to us, because the day has declined, because the shadows in the evening have become longer (or have failed). Arise and let us ascend in the night, and let us scatter its houses (or its foundations). They say: Arise, and let us ascend at noon, and let us fight in the clear light. Those respond: Woe to us, because the shadows in the evening have become longer. According to that line from Virgil (Eclogue I): And now the tops of the distant villas smoke: And the shadows of the mountains fall higher. And the meaning is: If we suffer these things during the day, what will we suffer at night? And again, those who spoke before, saying: Sanctify war upon it, and rise up, now challenge themselves to fight, saying: Arise, and let us ascend in the night: so that our adversaries may know that victory is not a matter of time, but of strength: and let us scatter the houses, which are vainly fortified by the strength of walls.

6:6

(Verse 6.) Because thus says the Lord of hosts: Cut down the wood (or its woods) and pour out (or carry) it around Jerusalem as a mound. Therefore, they say, we are confident of victory, because it is the command of the Lord who orders the Chaldeans: cut down the trees and carry them to build fortifications. By this it is shown that before the crown comes, the city is not immediately to be captured: but through a long siege, as we read later.

6:7

(Verse 7) This is a city of visitation (or falsehood); all slander (or oppression) is in its midst. Just as a well or a lake makes its water cold, so it has made its evil cold. The Lord has commanded that trees be cut down, and that mounds be built all around. For the time of its visitation has come, to receive payment for its sins, the greatest of which is false accusation, to oppress the innocent through slander. Just as a well or a cold pond makes its water cold, so in the midst of Jerusalem, the malice that is in it has lost all the warmth of life. And it should be noted that those who are kindled by the Holy Spirit are called fervent, but evil things are cold. Hence it is written (Matthew 24) that in the last days, when iniquity shall be multiplied, the charity of many shall grow cold. I

believe this also sounds like that: I am made like those who go down into the pit (Psalm 28:1). However, let the Latin reader understand, as we have said once, that lacus does not sound like stagnum among the Greeks, but like cisterna, which is called Gubba in the Syriac and Hebrew languages. However, in the present place, instead of lacus, which everyone has similarly translated, it is called Bor in Hebrew.

6:8

(Verse 8) Iniquity and devastation will be heard in it before me always, weakness and affliction. Learn, Jerusalem, lest my soul may depart from you, lest I make you deserted, an uninhabitable land. LXX: Impiety and misery will be heard in it before its face. Through every pain and scourge you will be taught, Jerusalem, lest my soul may depart from you: lest I make you an impassable land, a land that is not inhabited. Through these things we learn that the Lord chastises every son whom he receives. And for this reason Jerusalem is chastised with blows and torments, so that it may be corrected, and the soul of God does not depart from it, and it is brought into solitude. Therefore, if at any time we are subjected to frequent trials, let us remember for our consolation this verse: Through all pain and scourge you shall be taught, O Jerusalem.

6:9

(Verse 9) Thus says the Lord of hosts, they will gather the remnants of Israel like grapes in a vineyard. Turn your hand like a grape harvester into the basket. LXX: For thus says the Lord of hosts: Gather, gather the remnants of Israel like grapes in a vineyard. Return like a grape harvester to your basket. Some interpret these words in a positive way, others in a negative way. In a positive way, when Jerusalem has been devastated, the remnants will be saved. In such an evil way, not even a single cluster, and a small bunch remains in the vineyard, everything will be gathered: and whatever you find, gather it like a harvester in a basket; so that as he presses the grapes in the winepress: you may likewise drag captives into Babylon.

6:10

(Verse 10.) To whom shall I speak, and whom shall I answer, that he may hear? Behold, their (or your) ears are uncircumcised, and they cannot hear. They cannot hear because they have refused to circumcise their ears; yet the impossibility that comes from contempt and unbelief is not without punishment. Therefore, if anyone does not receive the words of God, neither does he have the understanding of His commandments, he has uncircumcised ears. It should also be noted that circumcision is called by three names in the Scriptures: in the foreskin, in the heart, and in the ears. Hence the Lord says: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Matthew 11:15). Therefore, by our own will, we do not accept the word of God; and thus it becomes a reproach to us, that what was given to us for salvation, is turned by our fault into punishment.

6:11

(Verse 11) Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord, I have labored holding it. LXX: And I have fulfilled my wrath, and have endured: and I have not consumed it. According to the Hebrew, it is spoken from the perspective of the Prophet, who foresees the coming wrath of God, and is full of the fury and anger of the Lord, and cannot bear it anymore: nor does he dare to intercede with the Lord for sinners. According to the LXX, however, a new meaning is given, that the Lord himself

has fulfilled it by striking the sinful people: and yet he has restrained it, and has not poured it all out, so that the remnants may be saved: which seems to me to be contradictory to itself. For if he completed his fury, how did he manage not to complete it?

6:12

(Verse 12) Pour (or he pours) on the little one outside, and on the assembly of young men together: for a man will be captured with a woman, an elder with one full of days. And their houses will pass on to others, fields and wives alike. Perhaps the Prophet commands, by the Spirit coming to the Chaldeans, to pour out the fury of the Lord on the little ones, and not spare even the innocent age: or certainly, he narrates what happened to the assembly of young men together, who had taken up arms to resist. For when a man is captured with a wife, they together will feel the sweetest names of captivity: an old man with full days. Therefore, old age is not the final age, but of those who are full of days, whom we call in our language the deposited or the decrepit. It follows, And their houses will pass on to others, with the evil of captivity, along with fields and wives: so that the spouse passes over to the enemies and possession. Whatever we understand literally about Jerusalem, let us refer spiritually to the Church, if it has offended God.

6:13-14

(Vers. 13 seqq.) For I will stretch out my hand over the inhabitants of the land, declares the Lord. From the least of them to the greatest, they all pursue greed, and from prophet to priest, they all practice deceit. They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace. In Hebrew, it is said, 'I will stretch out my hand against sinners or the inhabitants of the earth,' but in the Septuagint it is always written, 'I will continuously raise up,' which signifies both the one who strikes and the one who is struck. According to what is written: 'Yet his hand is still stretched out, or lifted up' (Isaiah 5:25). But the inhabitants of the earth are always in sin. Therefore, it is frequently said in the Apocalypse: 'Woe to the inhabitant of the earth' (Revelation 8:13). From the least to the greatest, all strive for greed, according to the saying of the Apostle: 'For the love of money is the root of all evil' (1 Timothy 6:10). And from the prophet to the priest, all practice deceit. Some prophesy lies, others perversely interpret the law of God. For in another place the Prophet says: 'Inquire of the priests for the law' (Jeremiah 18). And they would declare all the good things they did for my people and pretended to care for the wounds and dishonor of my daughter saying: 'Peace, peace' when there was no peace at all. This should be understood specifically of the priests and teachers who promise prosperity to the wealthy and those they see in the highest honor, and proclaim a merciful God, preparing them more for punishment and anger.

6:15

(Verse 15.) They are confused because they have committed an abomination; rather, they have not been confused by their confusion, and they have not known how to blush. This should be read with greater precision according to the Hebrew. And when, he says, they have done so much, are they confused? Have they blushed for their sins? Rather, they have increased sin through contempt, and they have not known how to blush. However, here 'nescierunt' is used in place of 'noluerunt': either due to excessive contempt and the vice of accustomed evil, they were not even able to understand.

Therefore, they will fall among the fallen: at the time of their visitation they will stumble, says the Lord. For, they say, they have not learned to be ashamed, and they have not only lacked work, but even knowledge and the sense of repentance. Therefore, those who once stood among them will fall, along with those who will fall into their vices, and when the time of their visitation and punishment comes, they will join all the fallen. However, it is a great wickedness, not only not to beware, but also not to want to understand sins, and to have no distinction between good and evil deeds.

6:16-18

(Versed 16 and following) Thus says the Lord: Stand on the roads and see, and inquire about the ancient paths, which is the good way, and walk in it, and you will find refreshment (or purification) for your souls. And they said: we will not walk (or we will not go). And I appointed watchmen over you, listen to the sound of the trumpet. And they said, we will not listen. Therefore hear (or they have heard) O nations: and know (or know) the congregation (or those who feed the flocks): or according to Symmachus, and know (the testimony that is in them) how much I will do to them. Listen, O earth. If the parable of the Gospel is understood, it will provide understanding of this place: in which a good merchant is said to sell all pearls, in order to buy the most precious pearl for its price (Matth. XIII); which, indeed, through the Patriarchs and Prophets, we come to him who says: I am the way (John XIV). Therefore, we must stand in the prophets, and contemplate and inquire diligently about the ancient or eternal paths, which have been trodden by many holy ones, which are more significantly called 'trails' in Greek, which is the good way in the Gospel (Matth. VII), and we must walk in it: and when this way is found, it provides refreshment or purification for the souls of believers. But they replied in opposition, we will not walk in the way of the Gospel: as the Prophet specifically says about the perfidy of the Jews. And immediately he brings forth: And I have set watchmen over you. No doubt that the chorus of the Apostles is indicated, according to Ezekiel: Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel (Ezek. III, 17). And I have commanded you to listen to the sound of the trumpet, or the commandments of the Gospel, or the teachings of the Apostles, according to Isaiah: Go up to the high mountain, herald of good news to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news (Isai. XL, 9). They said: We will not listen; and when invited to the dinner, they did not want to come: therefore it is said: Hear, O nations. This is what the Apostles followed, when they spoke in Lycaonia: It was necessary for you to speak the word of God first: but because you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life: behold, we turn to the nations (Acts 13:46). And know, congregation, not at all Jewish, but of all nations: whether you who shepherd the flocks, bishops and priests and all the ecclesiastical order: or you know the testimony that is in them. For the testimony of God is faithful, providing wisdom to the little ones (Psalm 18:8). To whom the Lord speaks: Do not be afraid, little flock (Luke 12:31). And: Behold, I and the children whom God has given me (Isaiah 8:18). Therefore, know the great things I will do for the unbelieving people. And it is added: Hear, O earth, the whole world is called to listen: just as we read in the beginning of Isaiah: Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth (ibid., 1); what the Lord will do for the people of Judah.

6:19

(Verse 19). Behold, I will bring evil upon this people, the fruit of their thoughts (or turning away): because they have not listened to my words, and have cast aside my law. The evil refers to the

punishments and sufferings of those who endure, not upon the nations that are called to the truth of the Gospel, but upon the people who have responded: We will not listen. And they will receive the fruit of their thoughts, or their turning away, as David says: You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands (Psalm 127:2). And it is clear because they did not listen to the words of the Lord and rejected His law.

6:20

(Verse 20) Why do you bring me frankincense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a distant land? Your burnt offerings are not accepted, and your sacrifices do not please me. That frankincense from Sheba should come is beyond doubt, as Virgil also says: And a hundred altars glow with Sabeian incense (Aeneid, Book I). The cane, which is called "Cane" in Hebrew, is translated as "cinnamon" by the Septuagint and Theodotion and the prophetic speech testifies that it comes from a distant land, so that we understand it to be India, from which many spices come by way of the Red Sea. This type of medicinal pigment is called κασ■α. And the meaning is this: In vain do you mix sweet-smelling pigments in making ointments, as the Law commands, and burn sacrifices, who do not do my will in the Law, as it is written: They have not heard my words, and have cast away my law. But this properly applies to those who offer sacrifices from the spoils and plundering of the poor, and think they can redeem their sins with unjust alms, as the Scripture says: The ransom of a man's soul are his own riches (Prov. 13:8), which are gathered not from injustice, but from labor and righteousness.

6:21

(Verse 21) Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, I will bring destruction upon this people, and they shall fall into it (whether weakness, and they shall be weakened by it), fathers and sons together, neighbor and friend, and they shall perish. We see all the things that the Lord has threatened against this people come to pass: for every day they fall into their blasphemies, and they have no strength within them, but every weakness is found among them. The sons follow in their fathers' blasphemies; and every day they receive that imprecation: His blood be upon us and upon our children (Matthew 27:25); and not only they themselves, but also their neighbors and friends, and all who follow the Law and the Prophets according to the letter, and not according to the life-giving spirit, shall likewise perish, for all have sinned together.

6:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) Thus says the Lord: Behold, a people comes from the land of the north, and a great nation will rise from the ends of the earth. They will take hold of the bow and shield (or javelin); they are cruel (or shameless) and will not show mercy. Their voice will sound like the sea, and they will ride on horses, prepared like a man for battle against you, daughter of Zion. This is specifically prophesied about the Babylonians, who will come against the people of Jerusalem, and the entire order of their armament is described, as well as the attack of the fighters, so that, shaken by the terrifying sound, they may repent and please the most merciful God. Finally, the opportunity to ask arises, as it were, against you, daughter of Zion. We can use this testimony during the time of persecution, when the rage of the devil is stirred up against us, and there is no mercy: and like the most violent waves of the sea, they overwhelm those who resist.

6:24

(Verse 24.) We have heard his fame: our hands are weak; distress has seized us, like the pain of childbirth. The people responded to the Prophet, or rather, through the Prophet, the Lord has threatened the Babylonians: before they come, they will be overcome with fear, unable to lift their hands, and distress will grip them like the pain of childbirth; in this pain, they affirm that nothing is more severe than what they have experienced.

6:25

(Verse 25.) Do not go out to the fields, and do not walk on the road, for the sword of the enemy is all around. The Gospel teaches (Matthew 24) that we should not go out into the field or descend from the height of roofs, but rather listen to this: 'Escape to the mountain to be saved' (Genesis 19:17). We are instructed in Isaiah and Micah (Isaiah 2, Micah 4) to run to and climb to this mountain. According to the literal meaning, we are commanded not to go outside or leave the walls, but to protect ourselves with strong fortifications.

6:26

(Verse 26) Daughter of my people, gird yourself with sackcloth and sprinkle yourself with ashes, mourn for the only begotten (or beloved), make for yourself a bitter lament (or miserable), because the devastator (or misery) will come suddenly upon us (or upon you). For he had said before: Do not go out to the fields and do not walk along the road, for the sword of the enemy, panic is all around; and he had also forbidden flight, he teaches what they should do, namely, to repent, and to have this most firm and secure armor. When we say 'luctum unigeniti', it means 'mourning for the only child', which in Hebrew is written as 'Jaid', which sounds more lonely than 'unigenitum'. If it were 'dilectus' or 'amabilis', as the Septuagint translated it, it would have been written as 'Idid', which God also named Solomon. But there is nothing more painful than losing one's only son (II Reg. XII). Also, the phrase we interpreted as 'the devastator will come suddenly', or 'misery will come upon us', the Septuagint translated as 'upon you', but God has said with much more mercy that whatever is to come upon his people, he also testifies will come upon himself. Vastator properly signifies either Nabuchodonosor or the devil.

6:27-30

(Verse 27 and following) I have appointed you as a strong tester among my people, and you will know and prove their ways. All these leaders are turning away (or disobedient), walking deceitfully (or perversely). Bronze and iron are all corrupted, the bellows in the fire have failed (which the Greeks more significantly call a 'puffer'), the lead is consumed, the refiner has vainly blown (or the moneylender). For their wickedness is not consumed: call them reprobate silver, for the Lord has rejected them. The prophet is given as a strong proof to an unbelieving people, which is called Mabsar in Hebrew, which either means fortified, according to Aquila, or enclosed and surrounded, according to Symmachus and the Septuagint, like a very strong city, so that it fears no treachery from any people; and when you have proven and understood the way of a sinful people, then you will understand that silver mixed with copper cannot be purged in any way. For just as lead is mixed with metals that are adulterated and corrupted, so that the foreign material can be separated, and if perhaps it has not been purified, all the lead is consumed and reduced to nothing: in the same way, every discourse of teachings and prophetic speech perishes in those who scorn to listen (Psalm 57). Let us speak also about those who, like deaf asps, plug their ears

so as not to hear the voices of those who enchant. For the mint worker and the metal smelter have labored in vain: their wickedness has not been consumed. Therefore, they are called not silver, but reprobate silver, because the Lord has rejected them. And the princes are those who turn away from the Lord, who walk perversely and deceitfully.

7:1-2

(Chapter 7, Verses 1-2) The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: Stand in the gate of the house of the Lord, and proclaim (or read) there this word, and say: Hear the word of the Lord, all you people of Judah who enter in through these gates to worship the Lord. This is not found in the LXX edition, but is added from Theodotion's translation from Hebrew. The Prophet is commanded to stand in the gate of the Lord, through which the multitude of the people enters to worship the Lord, so that they may hear what the Lord commands. By which we understand the hardness of the Jewish people, because they regarded the prophets as liars and madmen, while they were compelled by the opportunity and the fame of the place to hear the words of the Lord; and not because the words were from the Lord.

7:3

(Verse 3.) Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Make (or direct) your ways and your pursuits (or inventions) good, and I will dwell with you in this place (or make you dwell in this place). The most merciful physician desires to heal all those wounded with medicine. For when he says, 'Make (or correct) your ways good,' he shows that they are perverse and have no good in themselves. And because it is natural for each person to love their homeland alone and have nothing sweeter, rewards are promised to the obedient. 'I will dwell with you,' he says, 'to make you secure in your habitation': either I will establish a stable dwelling for you yourselves, according to Symmachus, who says, 'And I will strengthen you in this place.'

7:4-7

(Verse 4 and following) Do not trust in deceitful words, saying: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord is here. For if you will bless (or direct) your ways and your pursuits, if you will administer justice between a man and his neighbor (or his), if you will not commit injustice (or oppress them) against strangers, orphans, and widows, if you will not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you will not walk after foreign gods to your own harm; then I will dwell with you (or make you dwell) in this place, in the land which I gave to your fathers from the age to age. What the Seventy added to the beginning of this chapter: 'In words of falsehood, which will not benefit you at all,' is not found in the Hebrew. And at that time he commanded both the people of Judah and us who seem to be established in the Church, not to place our trust in the splendor of buildings, in gilded ceilings, and in walls adorned with marble crusts. And let us not say, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.' For that is the temple of the Lord, in which true faith dwells, holy conversation, and the chorus of all virtues. Finally, it brings forth: If you walk in the right paths, and your thoughts do not stray after error, and if you follow justice and do not commit evil, nor shed innocent blood, nor cause the simple to stumble, and if you do not walk after foreign gods and worship perverse doctrines, which you have imagined in your hearts for your own harm; then I will dwell with you in this place, which you call the Temple of God, and in the land that I have given to your fathers, to the Apostles, namely, and

to the Apostolic men; or certainly I will make you dwell securely from the beginning to the end. This can apply to those virgins who boast of their chastity and present their chastity with an impudent countenance, when their conscience holds something else and they do not understand the Apostle's definition of virginity: that it should be holy in body and spirit. For what good is the chastity of the body to a mind corrupted, if it does not possess the other virtues described by the prophetic discourse?

7:8-10

(Verse 8 and following) Behold, you trust in yourselves with words of falsehood (or lies) which have not benefited you. To steal, to kill, to commit adultery, to swear falsely, to offer sacrifices to Baal, and to follow foreign gods that you do not know. And you have come and stood before me in this house, in which my name is invoked, and you have said: We are delivered (or we have ceased): because we have done all these abominations. They vainly have confidence in the temple, as the following sins show. For what profit is it to boldly enter the threshold of God's house, standing with erect neck: and not only to have a polluted heart, but also hands defiled with theft, homicide, adultery, perjury, sacrilege, and worship of those gods whom you do not know? No one doubts that these things happen spiritually in the Church, when considering the happiness of the present time, they do not consider their own sins: and they think that God is hidden, because punishment does not immediately follow; rather, they break forth into such madness, that they think themselves freed, because they have also turned away from the worship of the Lord after evil deeds.

7:11

(Verse 11.) Has this house (or mine) become a den of thieves, as it is written (Vulg. Therefore), in which my name has been invoked in your eyes? I, I am: I have seen, says the Lord. I think this is taken from the Gospel: It is written: My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer: but you have made it a den of thieves (Matthew 21:13); or, as it is written in another Gospel, a house of trade (John 2:16). The Church of God turns into a den of thieves, when thefts, homicides, adulteries, sacrileges, perjuries, the invention of heresies, and all those crimes are committed within it: when the princes are inflamed with the torches of greed, and the once riches of kings possess a cheap or certainly not costly cloak. From this it follows: I, I am, I have seen, says the Lord. My eyes have seen what you think is hidden: the darkness of treasures does not escape my consciousness. He who was rich became poor for us, now he blushes at our wealth (I Cor. VIII), and says: Woe to you, the wealthy, who have your consolation (Luke VI).

7:12

(Verse 12.) Go to my place in Shiloh, where my name dwelt from the beginning, and see what I have done to it because of the evil of my people Israel. The present teaches from the past: and to those who say, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord,' and who rejoice in the splendor of the precious house, Shiloh, where the tabernacle of God was first, recalls a history, about which it is written in the psalm: 'And he rejected the tabernacle of Shiloh' (Psalm 78:60). Just as that place collapsed into ruins and ashes, so too shall the Temple collapse, since it was a dwelling place of similar sins. Therefore, just as the destruction of the Temple serves as an example for us, so too shall the Temple, when the time comes for that prophecy to be fulfilled: Do

you think, when the Son of Man comes, he will find faith on earth? (Luke 18:8)

7:13-15

(Verse 13 onwards) And now because you have done all these works, says the Lord: and I spoke to you rising up early and speaking, and you did not hear: and I called you, and you did not answer: I will do to this house, where my name has been invoked, and in which you have trusted, and to the place which I have given to you and your fathers, as I did to Shiloh: and I will cast you away from my face, just as I cast away all your brothers, the entire offspring of Ephraim (also called Israel). This, which we have set forth, is not found in the Septuagint when one rises in the morning and speaks. However, God rises in the morning, not because there is any time without dawn for Him, but so that after the rest of the night, with the strength of the body restored, the soul of man may be more lively and not occupied by pleasures and the desire for food, and may be able to hear and do what is said. Therefore, we also read this in the psalm: In the morning, you will hear my voice; in the morning, I will stand before you and see (Psalm 5:4-5). And in Isaiah: By night, or at daybreak, my spirit will rise up to you, O God: for your commandments are a light upon the earth (Isaiah 26). Therefore, Paul the apostle also calls the sons of light (Ephesians 5), and not of the night or darkness, nor of those who sleep, as the rest do, who do not perceive the commandments of God. Because God called them, rising up from the night, in order to deliver them from darkness, he threatens to do similar things to them as he did to the Temple in Jerusalem, which he made in the place of Shiloh, where the tabernacle first was: so that similar sins may be punished with the same verdict. And how the Lord rejected the seed of Ephraim, that is, the ten tribes which were called Israel, and had princes because of Jeroboam the son of Nebat from the tribe of Ephraim, which was also called the tribe of Joseph; so also Jerusalem and the tribe of Judah with Benjamin testify that they will be rejected. He rejected Shiloh, intending to reject the Temple as well: he rejected the ten tribes, intending to reject the two as well. Whatever is said to that people, let us understand it also of ourselves, if we do similar things.

7:16

(Verse 16.) Therefore, do not pray for this people, nor take on their praise and prayer (or do not ask to obtain mercy for them). And do not resist me, for I will not listen to you. So that it may not seem that the Prophet does not obtain what he asks for, God commands that he not pray for the sinful people who do not repent. And when he says, 'And do not resist me,' he shows that the prayers of the saints can resist God's wrath. And the Lord spoke to Moses: Let me alone, that I may destroy this people: and I will make thee into a great nation (Exod. XXXII, 10). And in the psalms it is written: And Phinehas stood up and appeased him, and the shaking ceased, and it was counted to him for justice (Psal. CV, 30). And Aaron, having taken the censer, stood in the midst between the living and the dead, and the wrath of God ceased. And lest we think that God is cruel, who does not even allow himself to be asked, he gives reasons why he does not listen (Num. XVI), saying:

7:17-19

(Verse 17 and following) Don't you see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The sons gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead dough to make cakes for the queen of heaven. They also pour out drink offerings to other gods, provoking

me to anger. Do they provoke me to anger?" says the Lord. "Do they not provoke themselves, to their own shame? Therefore thus says the Lord: 'Behold, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, on man and beast, on the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched.' They do these things that follow: Both inside and outside, both in the streets and in the exits of Jerusalem, the sons carry wood, and the fathers light the fire, and the women sprinkle fat with flour, in order to make Chauonim, which we have interpreted as pancakes, or preparations, to show all kinds of sacrifices to the queen of heaven, whom we should accept as the moon; or certainly to the army of heaven, so that we understand all the stars. And after this they willingly offer incense to foreign gods: not because they are gods, but because under their names they summon demons, and provoke me to anger by doing these things. The wretched fools do not understand that this dispute does not harm me, whom anger never affects: but it brings upon themselves confusion of their own countenance, and everlasting dishonor. Therefore, whatever we do, we do not harm God, who can never be harmed: but we prepare destruction for ourselves, storing up wrath for the day of wrath. Therefore, He established different duties for sons, fathers, mothers, and even wives, so that no age would dissent from impiety.

7:20

(Verse 20) Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, my wrath and my indignation have been poured out (or have dripped) upon this place, upon men and upon animals, upon the trees of the region, and upon the fruits of the earth; and it shall burn and not be extinguished. He who said before: Do they provoke me to anger? How now does he say: Behold, my wrath and my indignation have dripped upon this place? And here is the meaning: I, indeed, naturally do not get angry, but they act in such a way as to provoke me to anger, and I seem to change my nature. Therefore, they try to make me angry as much as they can. And beautifully, he does not say that my anger was poured out on this place, but that it dripped: to signify a moderate punishment. But if in a drop of anger there is such harshness, what will happen if the entire rain pours out? But even a mixed feeling of indignation can be understood in such a way that what he did not want to do for a long time, he is compelled to do because of the multitude of sins. But when God becomes angry, both humans and the things that belong to humans will experience a similar destruction. And it will be set on fire, he says, no doubt because of the rage of the Lord, and it will not be extinguished, because the people do not act in a way that can extinguish it.

7:21-23

(Verse 21 onwards) Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the flesh. For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.' When He condemns the temple, He consequently condemns the sacrifices as well; and He indirectly accuses them because they offer victims not out of reverence for Him, but out of a desire for feasts. Moreover, when He says, 'I did not speak with your fathers, nor did I command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, it is clearly understood that He first gave the Decalogue on stone tablets, written by the finger of God, and after the offense of idolatry and the worship of the golden calf, He then ordered sacrifices to be made to Him instead of to the demons, thus

setting aside the pure worship of God's commandments and allowing the offering of blood and the desire for meat.

7:24-25

(Ver. 24, 25.) And they did not listen, nor incline their ear, but they went after their own desires and the wickedness of their evil hearts. They turned backwards, and not forwards, from the day their fathers left the land of Egypt until this day. When I spoke, saying, 'Listen to my voice, and I will be your God,' they did not listen, nor incline their ear, but they followed the desires of their own hearts. And contrary to the opinion of the Apostles, who forgot the past and reached out to the future, they did the opposite: desiring the past and despising the future. And he says that, from the day their fathers left the land of Egypt until this day, they have always been transgressing against the Lord. Hence, the grace of the Gospel was necessary, which preserved them not by their own merit, but by the mercy of the Lord.

7:26

(Verse 26) And I sent to you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, 'Turn now everyone from his evil way and amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and you shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers.' But you have not inclined your ear nor listened to me. Instead, you have stiffened your neck and done worse than your fathers. Therefore, the anger of the Lord was kindled against this people, and it has poured out and not been quenched.'

7:27-28

(Verse 27, 28.) And you shall speak to them all these words, and they will not listen to you. And you shall call to them, and they will not respond to you. And you shall say to them: This is a people who has not heard the voice of their Lord God, nor received discipline. Faith has perished and has been taken away from their mouth. Do not doubt, he says, that they have hardened their neck, and have done worse than their fathers. Behold, I give them a place for repentance: and yet I do not speak that they may become, but because they will be, therefore I foretell. Speak now to them with my words, and yet they will not listen to you; and you will call to them, and they will not respond to you. For their pride will be so great that when you call them to hear, no one will deign to respond. And you will say to them: This is a nation that has not heard the voice of their God, nor received discipline. Beautifully, as I have said before, he calls not his people, but a nation. Although this was done in part during the time of the Prophets, and it has preceded in shadow and in image, it is more fully fulfilled in Christ, when they refused to receive discipline and despised the voice of their Lord. Where elegantly is inferred: Faith has perished, which properly belongs to Christians; and it has been taken away from their lips: namely, all confession of the Son of God and of faith.

7:29

(Verse 29.) Shave your hair and cast it away, and take up a lamentation upon your lips: for the Lord has cast off and abandoned the generation of his wrath. And when Job heard of the death of his sons and daughters, he tore his garments and shaved his head (Job 1): and among the ancients, it was the custom of mourners to shave their hair. But now, on the contrary, letting one's hair down is a sign of mourning. However, every lamentation and prophetic wailing is undertaken

for this reason: because the Lord has cast off and abandoned the generation of his wrath. There is no doubt that it signifies the people of the Jews. And especially this can be referred to the time of Christ, when faith perishes, and the Lord is blasphemed by the people.

7:30-31

(Verse 30, 31.) Because the sons of Judah have done evil in my sight, says the Lord: they have set up their stumbling blocks in the house where my name is invoked, to defile it. And they have built the high places (or altar) of Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in fire: which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind. We learn in the beginning of Ezekiel that the sons of Judah put a statue of Baal in the Temple of God. However, the high places, which are called Bamoth in Hebrew, or the altar of Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom, signify that place which is watered by the springs of Siloam; and it is pleasant and wooded, and even today offers delights of gardens. However, the error of paganism occupied all the provinces, so that they would sacrifice victims on the tops of mountains and in the most beautiful groves, and all the superstitions of corrupt religion would be observed. Topheth, in the Hebrew language, is interpreted as "width"; and it is reported in the book of Joshua the son of Nun concerning this place, which is in the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom, and in Hebrew it is called Gehenna (γεεννα), for it signifies a gorge, that is, a valley; and Hinnom either signifies a man's name or "favor". And the Hebrews report that this place is called Gehenna, because all the people of the Jews will perish there, offending God. In this place they also consecrated their sons with fire to the idols, or offered them as a burnt offering, which God did not command them, nor did the Law prescribe any such thing. If Jephthah offered his virgin daughter to God, it is not the sacrifice that pleases, but the intention of the offerer. And if a dog, or a donkey, or any unclean animal had come first to meet the father returning from the slaughter of the enemies, he should not have offered it to God.

7:32-33

(Verse 32, 33.) Therefore, behold the days are coming, says the Lord, and it shall no longer be called Topheth, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth until there is no more room. The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the air and the animals of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away. The time of the siege is indicated, which they endured from the ninth year of King Zedekiah until the eleventh year (2 Kings 25); and the fact that the valley itself should not be called Gehenna, that is, the Valley of Hinnom or the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom, but rather the Valley of Slaughter due to the killing of many. But there will be such a slaughter, that in the place previously dedicated to religion, countless graves will be buried: and those who could not be buried, will be torn apart by birds and devoured by beasts. And let there be no one to drive them away, fearing the same, and the duties of burying the dead. We hurry through the obvious, so that wherever there is a place, we may dwell in darkness. For the magnitude of the book itself can cause disgust to readers, let alone if it is more extensively discussed by us.

7:34

(Verse 34.) And I will cause the cities of Judah to cease, and I will silence in the streets of Jerusalem the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of

the bride. For the land shall become a desolation. And when places of idolatry are turned into tombs, the unburied corpses of those who offended God shall lie there, from the once city of Jerusalem and from the other cities that were under its dominion, all joy and mourning and groaning and desolation shall be removed.

8:1-3

(Chapter 8, verses 1 and following) In that time, says the Lord, the bones of the king of Judah and the bones of his princes and the bones of the priests and the bones of the prophets and the bones of those who lived in Jerusalem will be thrown out of their tombs. And they will spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of the heavens, which they loved and served and after which they walked and which they sought and worshiped. They shall not be gathered nor buried; they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth. And all those who remain from this wicked kinship will choose death over life, in all the places that have been abandoned, to which I have cast them out," says the Lord of Hosts. "We witness in our time that everything that the prophetic word describes has happened: not only to Jerusalem, which suffered these things from the Chaldeans and Romans, but to the whole world, so that tears have dried up, and everything is filled with the bones of the dead. And because they used to bury gold and certain ornaments, either of women or men, in tombs according to the ancient custom, greed also broke and dug them up so that they would be exposed to the sky and light. And therefore the bones of the kings of Judah, and its princes, and of the priests and prophets, and of all the people who had been in Jerusalem, were brought forth from the tombs, exposed to the sun and moon, and to the sight of all the stars, so that those whom they had served, abandoning God, would be exposed to their sights, and consumed in dung and ashes. But if anyone were able to escape from the crowd and go to whatever place, he would prefer death to life: and he would think that the destruction of an unfortunate soul is a remedy.

8:4

(Verse 4.) And you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: Shall the one who falls not rise up again? And the one who turns away not return? After so many evils, it provokes those who were able to remain to repentance. Before the things that were threatened come, it exhorts to conversion, and gives place to repentance. But what is written in Hebrew: And the one who turns away not return, it signifies that the one who has turned away from God, if he wishes to turn to better things, can also turn the anger of God to better things and resist the coming and avoid the blows through prayers.

8:5

(Verse 5) Therefore, why is this people in Jerusalem turned away with contentious turning away? They have grasped falsehood and did not want to return. As much as I have provoked them to repentance, they have turned away from me, not so much out of a desire to sin, but to overcome me. For they have strongly grasped falsehood, whether idols or every corrupt thing that is contrary to truth and justice, and they did not want to return. It is not said: they were not able; but they have eagerly followed unjust things.

8:6

(Verse 6.) I listened and heard: no one speaks what is good. There is no one who repents for his sin, saying: what have I done? All have turned to their own course, like a horse rushing into battle. Called to repentance, they scornfully refuse to listen: and it is not enough for them to have sinned against the Lord and spoken blasphemy, but they all rush like horses, and with fervent speed into battle, not reflecting on their sin, nor saying, what have I done? By these things we understand that either these things are said about the whole human race, because it is prone to vices, or about the time of the Savior, when all together they became useless: there was no one who did good, there was not even one (Psalm 13). Therefore, he himself cries out mystically: Save me, Lord, for the holy one has failed (Psalm 11, 1). But if these things are so, where are those who say that we are free from sin by our own will? No one, he says, speaks what is good (Matt. XI): because we will also be held accountable for idle words on the day of judgment.

8:7

(Verse 7) The kite in the sky knows its time: the turtledove and the swallow and the stork keep the time of their arrival. But my people do not know the judgment of the Lord. Regarding the kite, which Symmachus interpreted, the Septuagint and Theodotion used the Hebrew word 'Asida' (). Aquila translated it as 'herodium'. Again, for the swallow, Symmachus translated it as 'cicada', which is called 'Sis' in Hebrew (). But for the stork that we have translated, both Aquila and Symmachus translated it as it is written in Hebrew, 'Agur' (). However, the Septuagint translated it as 'agri passeret'. But it is the same perception, which is also placed at the beginning of Isaiah: The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's manger; but Israel does not know me, and my people do not understand me (Isaiah 1:3); so even small birds know their seasons, and know when they should avoid the harshness of winter and return to their usual regions in the beginning of spring. But here we should understand "heaven" as the air that is above.

8:8

(Verse 8.) How do you say, 'We are wise, and the Law of the Lord is with us'? Truly, the deceitful pen has worked deceit, scribes who boast knowledge of the Law, and the writers write iniquity. And he says:

8:9

(Verse 9) The wise are confused, terrified and captured. For they have rejected the word of the Lord, and there is no wisdom in them. Not because they are wise who do these things; but rather, He calls the wise so that they may be condemned under judgment and their wisdom may be proven foolishness, as the Apostle Paul says: 'You who teach others, do you not teach yourself?' (Romans 2:21). And because they have rejected the word of the Lord, therefore there is no wisdom in them. Therefore, those who destroy doctrine with their actions boast in vain of their knowledge of the law.

8:10-11

(Verses 10, 11.) Therefore I will give their women (or wives) to foreigners: their fields to their heirs. Because from the least to the greatest, all are eager for greed; from prophet to priest, all practice falsehood (or iniquity). And they healed the brokenness of my people lightly, saying: Peace, peace, when there is no peace. They received the wages of their works: those who rejected the

word of the Lord were rejected by him. Their wives, he says, and possessions I will hand over to the enemy. And so that my opinion may not be considered cruel, let the judge hear the reasons: From the least to the greatest, all are devoted to greed (1 Timothy 6). For greed is the root of all evils. From prophet to priest, who should be preventing others from sinning, the first are guilty of crimes: and all either commit injustice by plundering others, or at least lie, so that there is no truth in their mouths. And after these things, as good physicians, they desired to heal the wounds of others with their words, who themselves were afflicted with wounds of all kinds of crimes. We see this every day also in our own people, with the blessed Apostle Paul saying: 'You who preach against stealing, do you steal?' (Rom. II, 21), and so on. When they see sinners and the wealthy, they desire to heal the contrition of the daughter of the people of God, that is, the Church; to the shame either of those who are deceived or of those who deceive others, so that they may say, with every wicked deed concealed: peace, peace, when there is no peace, and war of sins threatens them.

8:12

(Verse 12.) They were confused because they committed abominations. However, they were not confused by their confusion, and they did not blush. Questioningly, is this to be read, so that the meaning would be: Did they blush at their crimes and understand the abominations they had committed? By no means, but they burst forth into such madness that they neither desired to correct their vices through confusion, nor to confess their crimes in the hope of forgiveness.

They will fall among the fallen (or rushing), at the time of their visitation they will fall, says the Lord. These are the rewards of those who have not known how to be ashamed: whose dignity was higher than the peoples, they will be mixed with the ruins of the people. From the least to the greatest, everyone goes after falsehood, from prophet to priest, all practice deceit: but the time of visitation is coming, a near captivity.

8:13

(Verse 13) I will gather them together, says the Lord. There are no grapes on the vines, and there are no figs on the fig tree; the leaf has fallen off, and I have given them what has passed by. The time of visitation, in which the transgressors will fall, is more clearly shown, saying: I will gather them together. Without a doubt, in Jerusalem, so that they will be besieged by the Chaldeans for a long time, and endure the evils of famine. When, he says, the seasons pass by, and summer turns into autumn, and the leaves of the trees fall in winter, you will see everything from afar, and from these things you will not obtain food. For there is no grape on your vines, from which you do not take the fruit (he will take): and there are no figs on the fig-tree, which the oppressed people sees the fruits of their trees devoured by enemies. The leaves, he says, will fall in the summer and autumn. For I have given them things that they would see passing by; and they would lose the abundance of all things with greater pain than they were not allowed to touch.

8:14-15

(Vers. 14, 15.) Why are we sitting? Come together, and let us enter the fortified city or cities, and let us remain silent there or be cast out there, for our Lord has made us silent and has given us the drink of gall water. For we have sinned against the Lord, we have waited for peace, and it was not good: a time of healing, and behold, fear. The voice of the people responding is introduced, and

confessing its own vices, and encouraging one another, to enter the fortified cities or walled city, or one city, Jerusalem: for the others had already been captured. And let us be silent there, he says, because our Lord has made us silent: for we do not have confidence in praying, whether we are cast there or expelled like refuse. He himself has given us a drink of bitter water: because we have turned sweet into bitterness against God. And the reason is clear why we drink such waters: For we have sinned against the Lord, and we have expected peace, even though we have done no good works: and we thought that the time of healing had come for us, when everything was filled with fear and terror. The change of persons, especially in the Prophets, makes understanding difficult: but if they are restored to their proper places, causes, and times, what seemed obscure will become clear.

8:16

(Verse 16.) And a sound of his horses was heard, from the voice of the neighing of his warriors (or cavalry) the whole earth was shaken. And they came and devoured (or they will come and devour) the land and its abundance, the city and its inhabitants. Therefore, as the Septuagint translated above, the people did not say: Let us enter fortified cities, but a fortified city, to signify Jerusalem. Finally, even now he brings forth: the city and its inhabitants. But it is described by Dan, coming through Phoenicia with the army of Nebuchadnezzar, in the place where the river Jordan rises, and it predicts the events that will happen in the future, in Hebrew for the sake of truth.

8:17

(Verse 17) Behold, I will send you serpents, rulers (or as the Septuagint translated, deadly ones) with whom there is no enchantment. And they will bite you, says the Lord, incurably, and you will fail with the pain of your heart. Those who come from Dan, whose noise has been heard and who have turned the whole land into a wilderness, are the same ones that the prophetic word indicates under a different figure, calling them deadly serpents or rulers as the Hebrew word Saphphonim (). I do not understand why the second edition of his work, as he says, was intended for spies, unless perhaps because of the similarity of words. To them, he says, there is no enchantment. For they pour out prayers in vain to God against the ancient serpent, the twisted serpent, who have despised the commandments of God. Let us use this passage against those who, by disregarding the words of the Savior, are delivered to hostile powers.

8:18

(Verse 18) My sorrow is upon sorrow, my heart is mourning within me. As we have said before, the previous seventy sentences, which were said, were connected in order to establish: 'And they will bite you,' says the Lord, 'incurably: with the pain of your heart, you will faint.' However, in Hebrew, the word for pain, which is translated into Greek as **δύσκολον**, is not so much a physical pain as it is a grimace of the mouth, contracted and resembling a laugh. These words must be read emphatically from the perspective of God, mourning the downfall of Jerusalem and not enduring its miseries.

8:19 (Verse 19) Behold, the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people from a distant land. She describes weeping and the howling of the city of Jerusalem as the enemies enter. Is not the Lord in Zion, and is not his king in her? Indeed, the Lord himself is the king. Or certainly the Lord refers to the Father, and the king refers to the Son, according to that which is written under the name of Solomon: 'Give your judgment, O God, to the king, and your justice to the king's son' (Psalm 72:1).

But why is there a voice of shouting in Jerusalem, and why does the shout come from a far away land? The clear reason is that the Lord is not in her, and her king has departed from her.

Why, then, have they provoked me to anger with their idols and their foreign vanities? The Lord has departed from them, he said, because they provoked me to anger with the worship of idols, even though I, who am their Lord and king, was the one they should have worshipped.

8:20

(Verse 20.) The harvest has passed, the summer is ended: and we are not saved. Once again the people speak, who were besieged in Jerusalem for a long time, because the times have changed, and the cycle of years has come to an end, and all their hope has been in vain, and has passed away.

8:21

(Verse 21.) I am crushed with the contrition of the daughter of my people, and I am sorrowful: astonishment has taken hold of me. God replied that he would be seen afflicted in the affliction of Jerusalem, and would be crushed in human likeness by astonishment.

8:22

(Ver. 22.) Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people? Not only in this place, but also in many other passages of the Scriptures, we find the balm of Gilead being used as a symbol of repentance and healing. And now we wonder, why have the wounds of Jerusalem not been healed, and why have they not yet covered their skin with scars? This is because there are no prophets or priests to administer the healing balm.

9:1

(Chapter IX — Verse 1) Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes, so that I may weep day and night for the slain daughters of my people? If I could only be turned into weeping, and tears were to flow abundantly like a river, still I would not be able to weep worthy tears for the slain daughters of my people. For their affliction is so great that it surpasses all sorrow. And this can be understood both from the perspective of the Prophet and of the Lord.

9:2

(Verse 2.) Who will give me lodging in the solitude of travelers, and I will leave my people and depart from them? LXX: Who will give me a final dwelling place in the solitude, so that I may leave my people and depart from them? It is better, he says, to dwell in extreme solitude than to dwell among such great crimes of men. Hence the Savior spoke in the Gospel: How long shall I bear with you? And in another place it is written: In that time, the one who understands will sit and be silent, for it is a time of great distress (Lamentations 3:28, Micah 2:7).

9:3

(Verse 3.) Because they are all adulterers, a gathering of transgressors. And they have stretched out their tongue like a bow of falsehood and not of truth. They have grown strong in the land, for

they have gone from evil to evil, and they have not known me, says the Lord. Sinners go from evil to evil, when they exchange idols for idols, and they go from sins to sins, or certainly from the evil of siege to captivity. And indeed, concerning the saints, it is said: They will go from strength to strength (Psalm 83:8). But concerning sinners: They have gone from evil to evil. And the cause of all miseries is that they did not acknowledge the Lord, and there is a gathering of transgressors and their tongues are armed like a drawn bow for blasphemy. And they are comforted on the earth so that they may deserve to hear: You are dust, and to dust you shall return (Gen. III).

9:4-6

(Verse 4 and following) Let each person guard themselves from their neighbor, and let them not have trust in any brother, for every brother will deceive and every friend will act deceitfully; and a man will mock his brother, and they will not speak the truth. For they have taught their tongue to speak lies (or their tongue has learned to speak lies), in order to act wickedly, they have labored (or acted unjustly) and have not ceased from turning away. Your dwelling is in the midst of deceit, in deceit (or usury upon usury, and deceit upon deceit); they refused (or did not want) to know me, says the Lord. This place should be used in times of persecution and distress, when either faith is rare or non-existent: when neither brother nor neighbor can be trusted, and the enemies of a man are those of his own household (Mich. 7): when, according to the Gospel, the father will betray the son, and the son the father, and two will be divided into three, and three into two. And what it implies, They have taught their tongue to speak falsehood, or their tongue has learned to speak falsehood (Matt. X), shows that the habit of lying is somehow turned into nature: and they diligently act so that they may do wicked things. And what follows, Your dwelling is in the midst of deceit, in deceit, is specifically directed to the Prophet, that he dwells among a lying people; or as the Seventy translated: Usury upon usury, and deceit upon deceit: and that they increase their crimes daily, and have no remorse for their previous actions, but rather accumulate past offenses with new ones. They do these things, with all zeal, so that they may not know the Lord, who did not command these things to be done.

9:7

(Verse 7.) Therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will melt (or refine) and test them. For what else shall I do from the face of the daughter of my people (or what shall I do from the face of the malice of the daughter of my people)? As often as we are subject to difficulties, we receive evil from God, and we are tested by persecutions, so that whatever adulterous matter is in us, it is consumed (or burned up) by the fires of tribulations and miseries: For the silver of the Lord is refined by fire, tested by the earth, purified sevenfold (Psalm 11:7).

9:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) The arrow that wounds their tongue speaks deceit: in their mouth they speak peace with their friend but hide traps for them secretly. Will I not visit them for these things, says the Lord, or will not my soul take revenge on a nation such as this? Every heretic who wounds the hearts of those who hear and do not understand the scripture possesses an arrow that wounds, and speaks in deceit. And when he promises peace to his neighbor with his mouth, he secretly sets traps. But in the following verses, in which he says: 'Will I not visit these things?' says the Lord: or will not my soul be avenged on a nation like this?' he frequently abuses this as a Prophet, so that when he

enumerates the individual works of evil, he may infer that he does what he does justly.

9:10

(Ver. 10.) Over the mountains I will lift up weeping and lamentation, and over the beautiful paths of the deserted plains there will be mourning. For they are burned up because there is no man passing through, and they have not heard the voice of the possessor, from the bird of the sky to the livestock they migrate and depart. With the coming of the Babylonian army, and as it devastates everything, the solitude of the province is prophesied, that there will be lamentation on the mountains, weeping in the desert or on the paths of the wilderness, that everything will fail and burn up, and there will be no one who walks the earth, with everyone slain and nothing remaining that can breathe and live. From the word 'possidente' (possessing), seventy substances were transferred, which in Hebrew is called Macne (): and here substance is not taken in the sense of essence, but in the sense of power and wealth. And what it implies is this: They have withdrawn and gone away from the birds of the air to the cattle, which shows what we have often said, that the whole creation feels the anger of God, and not only the birds of the air, but also the fish of the water perish. According to the allegory, we understand weeping upon the mountains, and lamentation upon the beautiful wilderness, when the leaders of the Church sin and nothing of God's substance is found in her, nor is the voice of the Lord who possesses the Church heard through the holy and apostolic men; and from the birds of the air to the cattle, from those who can ascend to the heights to the irrational and simplest creatures who have withdrawn (or have withdrawn) from God's assembly.

9:11

(Verse 11) And I will make Jerusalem a heap of sand (or in exile) and a dwelling place of dragons, and I will make the cities of Judah desolate; because there is no inhabitant. When ecclesiastical men and teachers have failed, then Jerusalem is given into exile, or into a heap of sand, so that the heretic's speech prevails in it, and it becomes a dwelling place of dragons, and its cities are reduced to solitude, and there is no habitation of divine discourse in it, and he who says: I will dwell and walk in them, and I will be their God (Leviticus 26:12).

9:12-14

(Verse 12 onwards) Who is the wise man who understands this, and to whom is the word of the Lord spoken, that he may declare it: why has the land perished and become scorched like a desert, because there is no one to pass through it? And the Lord said: Because they have forsaken my law that I gave to them, and have not listened to my voice, and have not walked in it, but have followed the stubbornness of their own hearts and after the Baals, which they learned from their fathers. He interrogates the Prophet, if anyone among the wise in Jerusalem is able to find, and those to whom the word of God is spoken, and who are able to announce the will of the Lord, and to provide reasons why Judah has been reduced to a desolation, and with everyone killed, there is no one remaining who can pass through it. And the Lord responds and provides reasons: because they have forsaken His Law that He gave to them, and have not listened to His voice, nor have they done what they should have done; but they have gone after the wickedness of their own hearts. Therefore, it is necessary to confess not according to our will, but in the Lord. For the heart is corrupt in all things. And from our heart come evil thoughts. And after the Baals,

they went, as it is said, whom they learned from their fathers. Baal is the idol of the Sidonians, and Baalim is the plural number. Therefore, neither the error of our parents nor of our ancestors should be followed, but rather the authority of the Scriptures and the command of God, who teaches us.

9:15-16

(Verses 15, 16.) Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood (or distress), and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them among the nations, which neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will send a sword after them until they are consumed. It can also be prophesied about the near future, when they were taken captive by the Chaldeans, and specifically about this time, when they were dispersed among the nations, which they and their fathers had not known, and were divided throughout the entire world, and were fed with wormwood, or with hardships and distress. And they drank a drink of water mixed with gall, which signifies either the magnitude of their evils, or the eternal yoke of captivity: or certainly, because of their ignorance of God's law, they are about to receive Antichrist in place of Christ. But a sword is sent after them, to consume them even to their destruction. Or certainly, a sword that divides them and does not allow them to have agreement in evil, so that they may perish in what is evil.

9:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider (or understand) and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for the wise women, that they may hurry, and let them take up a lamentation for us (or for you), and let our (or your) eyes shed tears, and let our (or your) eyelids flow with water; for the voice of lamentation is heard from Zion (or in Zion). Because of the future captivity and destruction of Jerusalem, he orders the mourners to be called, who are accustomed to wailing, striking their chests with a lamenting voice, to provoke the people to tears. For this custom remains in Judaea even to this day, that women with their hair scattered and their breasts exposed, with a melodious voice, stir everyone to weeping. And God joins Himself with compassionate feeling, or the Prophet, so that whatever the people endure, he may declare that he himself endures and feels it. But what follows is: Because the voice of lamentation is heard from Zion, immediately follows what this voice is.

9:19

(Verse 19.) How desolate and utterly confused we are! Because we have forsaken the land, for our tents have been abandoned. This is the voice of those lamenting Zion: how desolate and utterly confused we are! And immediately they answer themselves and explain the reasons for their devastation, saying: Because we have forsaken the land, through our own fault and sin, and our tents have been abandoned, which once possessed as if passing by. Let them say this also to the crowds of once believing, in persecution: that they have been devastated and confused because they have abandoned the land of the Lord and have deserted their tents.

9:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) Therefore, listen, women, to the word of the Lord, and let your ears receive the speech of His mouth, and teach your daughters lamentation, and each one her neighbor mourning. For death has entered through our windows, it has come into our houses: to destroy the

children from outside, the young men from the streets. In the previous chapter, He had said: call for the mourning women to come, and send for the wise women, and let them hurry: now He speaks as if they were present, in condemnation of the priests and the teachers and all men: so that when they cease from teaching, these women may hear the word of the Lord, and receive the words of His mouth, and teach their daughters and neighbors the causes of mourning and the reasons for tears: For death has entered through our windows, it has come into our houses. Although it can be understood spiritually, because through all the senses death enters the soul's destruction of sins; yet it can also be understood about the attack of the Babylonians: that their strength and swiftness in fighting is so great that they do not wait to unlock doors; but they climb through windows and rooftops, to lay waste to the houses of Jerusalem. And the children who are outside perish, and leave Jerusalem; and the young ones, to whom John also writes, who do not enter through the narrow and restricted path that leads to life; but they walk through the streets, of which it is written: How broad and spacious is the path that leads to death (Matthew 7:13).

9:22

(Verse 22.) Speak these things, says the Lord, and the mortality of man (or the corpses of men) will fall like dung on the face of the region (or the field) and like hay behind the reaper, and there is no one to gather. The Hebrew word, which is written with three letters Daleth, Beth, Res (for it does not have vowels in the middle), signifies speech for a consequence and at the discretion of the reader if it is read as Dabar (), it signifies a word; if Deber, it signifies death; if Daber, it signifies speak. And both the Septuagint and Theodotion joined that previous chapter, so that they said, 'They will scatter the little ones outside, and the young men will die in the streets.' But Aquila and Symmachus translated λ■λησον, which means 'speak': so that God commands the Prophet to speak what follows: Thus says the Lord, and the rest. And the meaning is: When death ascends through our windows, and enters the houses of Jerusalem, and the little ones and young men outside perish in the streets: then there will be their death, or the corpses of the dead, like dung on the face of the earth, and like straw that is left behind by those who have reaped, and is not collected as useless. He wants to show by these things that such a great slaughter will happen in Jerusalem and around the city that there will be no one to bury the fallen.

9:23-24

(Verse 23, 24.) Thus says the Lord: Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, and let not the strong man boast in his strength, and let not the rich man boast in his riches. But let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord." All of humanity's pride is removed, as their wisdom, strength, and wealth are considered as nothing. The only true boast is to know and understand that He is the Lord who practices love, justice, and righteousness on the earth. All things are governed by God's providence and justice, and what may seem to lack reason to us is filled with justice and reason. For these things alone please God, and in them is his will. So where are those who say that man can reign according to his own will, and thus the power of free will is given, so that the mercy of God is taken away and justice? Hence the Apostle, taking up this testimony, sets forth an example: Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord (2 Corinthians 10:17).

9:25-26

(Vers. 25, 26.) Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will visit everyone who is circumcised and has the foreskin, including Egypt, Judah, Edom, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and all those who have shaved their heads and live in the desert, for all the nations are uncircumcised. But the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart. Many of the nations, especially those bordering Judea and Palestine, still practice circumcision to this day, particularly the Egyptians, Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, and all the region of the Saracens who dwell in the wilderness and are said to have shaved heads and live in the desert. Therefore, Judah, who is mixed with the aforementioned Gentiles, should not boast, because he does not have foreskin, but is circumcised according to God's law. For there are others who do these things and do not keep the commandments of the law, and they are ignorant of the God of Israel. Circumcision does not profit, which is given as a sign, unless the commandments of the Lord are fulfilled; just as the hair, which signifies a nation, does not provide strength of body and the might of warriors. And what follows: All nations have foreskin, but all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart. This has the meaning that, except for the Egyptians, Edomites, Ammonites, and Moabites, and the Ishmaelites who dwell in the wilderness, most of whom are circumcised, all other nations throughout the world are uncircumcised in flesh; but the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart, not in flesh; and this uncircumcision leads to death. For that is the flesh, this is the spirit.

10:1

(Chapter 10, Verse 1) Hear the word that the Lord has spoken to you, O house of Israel. Thus says the Lord: Do not learn the ways of the nations or be dismayed at the signs of the heavens, for the nations are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are vanity. He specifically speaks against those who worship the celestial bodies and use the signs of the years, seasons, months, and days to determine the fate of humankind and to govern earthly matters based on celestial causes. And what he says: Laws, or legal regulations, of the people are empty, it shows that all human wisdom is futile, and has no usefulness in itself.

10:3-5 (v. 3-5.) Because it was cut down from the forest, the work of a craftsman with an axe: decorated with silver and gold, fastened with nails and hammers, so that it would not be dissolved (or moved). They are made in the likeness of a palm tree and do not speak: they are carried and brought, because they cannot walk. Therefore, do not fear them, because they cannot do evil, nor can they do good. Description of the idols that the nations worship. He said that he cut down the wood from the forest. Therefore, the material of idols is cheap and perishable: the work of a craftsman's hands. Since the craftsman is mortal, the things he makes are also mortal. He decorated it with silver and gold, to deceive the simple-minded with the splendor of both materials. This error has also passed to us, so that we consider wealth as a religion. He fastened it with nails and hammers, so that it would not be dissolved or moved. The power of these idols, which cannot stand on their own, unless they are fastened together with keys and hammers! They are made to resemble a palm tree, adorned with the beauty of metals and the art of painting: but they do not possess utility, by which they provide any benefits to the craftsman. And they cannot speak. For they have no life within them. Of them it is written: They have mouths, but do not speak; they have ears, but do not hear. They will be carried away (Psalm 115:5-6). He is stronger who carries than those who are carried; indeed, in him there is meaning, in this there is form without meaning. Therefore, do not fear them, because they can neither do good nor evil. For, indeed, many of the gentile demons are accustomed to worship, so as not to harm, and to beseech others to bestow

blessings: Whence also that saying of Virgil (Aeneid. I): The dark winter sky, the white sheep with favorable west winds. Whatever we have said about idols, it can be referred to all teachings that are contrary to the truth. For they themselves promise great things and fashion an image of empty worship from their own hearts. They boast of great things and deceive the simple, as if they were dazzling with golden senses and eloquent words, they bind the eyes of the foolish and are exalted by their inventors, in whom there is no usefulness, and whose worship is specific to the nations and those who do not know God.

10:6-10

(Verse 6 and following) There is none like you, O Lord: you are great, and your name is great in power. Who will not fear you, O king of the nations? Yours is the glory among all the wise of the nations, and in all their kingdoms there is none like you. Both fools and wise men will be proved, their teaching is empty as a wooden idol. Silver brought from Tarshish is plated (or brought) and gold from Ophaz, the work of an artist and the hand of a craftsman. Hyacinthus and their purple garment: the work of craftsmen (or wise men) all these things. But the Lord God is true: this God is living and everlasting king. The earth will be moved from his indignation, and the nations will not be able to withstand his threat. These are not found in the Septuagint, but were added in many places from Theodotion's Edition, and although they seem clear according to the letter, they present a great difficulty according to allegory. For there is no one like the true God, of those gods who are fabricated by heretical art. All will fear him, for he is the king of the nations. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord (Prov. IX, 10): and from it we advance to true charity. 'The glory is yours,' he says. In truth, there is beauty; in falsehood, there is ugliness: although heretics, according to the wisdom of the world, which is destroyed, may seem wise to themselves; nevertheless, in all the kingdoms which they tear the Church in, none are like you, as the divine word says: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will reject the prudence of the prudent' (I Cor. I, 19). Both the wise and the foolish exist together. Their education, depending on the quality of their intelligence, is either cheap and compared to wood, or similar to silver because of the elegance of their speech. It is brought from Tharsis. Tharsis is either a region of India, as Josephus says, or certainly the entire sea is called Tharsis, and it has a resemblance to the sky; and yet it is wrapped in the artifice of words, or extended. If it wants to deceive, it will not be able to. And gold from Ophaz. Gold is called by seven names among the Hebrews, one of which is called Ophaz, which we can call obryzum, so that it shines on the surface of idols, which internally is wood and of cheap material. They are covered with hyacinth and purple, so that they deceive the eyes with their surface, while promising to themselves the color of the heavens and the kingdoms of the sky; and yet all these things are the work of the wise, who are considered wise in this world; but before God they are foolish. But our Lord God, the true God, is. Therefore, all those things are lies. And He is the living God: therefore, those things that are feigned are dead. And He is the eternal king. The shadows of heretics prevail for a time, but are corrupted over a long time. The earth will be moved from His indignation: those who engage in earthly works and fashion worldly idols. And the nations will not endure, nor the people of the Lord, but the multitude of nations who are unable to bear the threat of God.

10:11

(Verse 11) So you shall say to them: The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth, let them perish from the earth and from those things that are under the heavens. These things must be said about false gods and those that are artificially composed. For they neither made the heavens nor the earth. Those who are co-workers of Christ are called gods: and by the teaching of the Church, they assist greatly in building the house.

10:12-16

(Verse 12 and following) The one who made the earth in his strength, who established the world in his wisdom, and who stretched out the heavens in his understanding. By his voice, he gives a multitude of waters in the sky, and he lifts up the clouds from the ends of the earth. He made lightning for rain, and he brings forth the wind from his storehouses. Every man has become foolish because of his knowledge; every artisan is put to shame by his idols. For what he has made is false and there is no spirit in them. They are worthless and fit only for ridicule. They will perish at the time of their visitation. It is not like these, the portion of Jacob. For He who formed all things, He is, and Israel is the rod of His inheritance; the Lord of hosts is His name. He who makes the earth by His power, He is God the Father. But He also makes by His power the Lord the Savior. For Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24). He Himself is both wisdom and the one by whom the heavens are stretched out. For He Himself spoke and they were made; He Himself commanded and they were created (Psalm 33:9); speaking to the Son: Let us make man in our image, and according to our likeness (Genesis 1:26). He gives a multitude of waters in the heavens at his voice. For all the doctrine of the Lord flows from the heavens, as David says: You will separate God a voluntary rain for your inheritance, and it was weakened, but you have perfected it. And he raises or brings forth the clouds from the ends of the earth (Psal. 67:10). The clouds, or the clouds by which God commanded that they should not rain a shower upon Israel (Isa. 5), are brought forth from the ends of the earth, of which one cloud spoke: For I think that God has set forth us the apostles last, as men appointed to death, because we are made a spectacle to this world, and to angels, and to men (1 Cor. 4:9). He made lightning into rain. For when the rain of doctrine comes down from heaven and nourishes the parched hearts of men, then you will find flashes and bright flashes of wisdom. And he brings forth winds from his treasures; in them are all the treasures of hidden wisdom and knowledge. All men have become fools because of knowledge. Though that Paul, though Peter, though Moses, and Abraham may be wise, in comparison to God, all their wisdom will be considered as nothing: hence, even the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Every artist who sculpted images without a heart is confused and what he created is false. But if every person is ignorant of knowledge, everything false that he made is foolish. And there is no spirit in them. It should be noted that in this chapter, wind and spirit are called by one name among the Hebrews, *Rûa* (רוּחַ); but he calls it the Spirit of sanctification, which cannot be found in the minds of heretics. They are vain and worthy of laughter. For who would not laugh when they see the images of heretics? Either they are rustic and wooden, or they are composed in beautiful language and contain silver, or they are admittedly simulated with their own sense and falsely promise the image of gold. In the time of their visitation, they will perish. Heresy is valuable for a time, so that the chosen ones may be made manifest and proven. But when the visitation of God comes and His foolish eye sees everything, all things fall silent (I Cor. XI). There is no one like these people of Jacob: those who have supplanted the Jews and destroy heretics every day. But the part of God is the Saints: of whom the prophet says: My

part, O Lord. For he who formed all things, he is (Psalm 72:26): who made and fashioned all things, both in spirit and in body. And Israel is the rod of his inheritance. Whoever is upright in God or perceives God with understanding, is the scepter of his inheritance. Whose name is the Lord Almighty, or of Hosts, for this means the Lord of Hosts, which is written in Hebrew as the Lord Sabaoth.

10:17-18

(Vers. 17, 18.) Gather from the land your confusion, you who dwell in siege; for thus says the Lord: Behold, I will cast far away the inhabitants of the earth this time, and I will afflict them that they may be found. LXX: It has gathered from outside its substance, which dwells in the fortified place. For thus says the Lord: Behold, I will overthrow the inhabitants of this land, and I will afflict them, that they may be found. Jerusalem is commanded to gather whatever substance it has outside into the heavily fortified city, and to prepare provisions for a long siege. For never in the past has it been threatened about the future and long time, but now about the imminent captivity, which is soon to come. Gather, he says, both from outside and from the land, that is, from your fields, your possessions or confusion. For whatever you have, it is worthy of confusion: which, although you may prepare these things, learn the words of the Lord about them. Behold, in this case, at this time, I will cast, or rather throw far away the inhabitants of this land like a sling: for which the Seventy translated 'I will supplant' and 'I will make them fall.' For the Hebrew word *Colea* (), Aquila and Symmachus interpreted it as *σφενδονισω*. And the meaning is: I will cast like a sling with all my might, and thus I will besiege them: and I will distress and constrain them, so that all may be found in the city, and they may not be able to escape the disaster.

10:19 (Verse 19.) Woe is me for my brokenness, my grievous wound. LXX: Woe is you for your brokenness, your grievous wound. According to the Hebrew text, Jerusalem itself speaks, expressing that it has been heavily afflicted and endures an incurable wound. However, according to the LXX, it is the Prophet who speaks to Jerusalem and laments over its brokenness and its wound. But I say, truly this is my weakness (or my wound), and I will bear it (or it seizes me). Jerusalem itself speaks: whatever I suffer, I suffer by my own fault: I understand my wound which seizes me, or I will endure the wrath of the Lord, for I have sinned against Him.

10:20

(Verse 20.) My tent has been devastated, all my ropes have been torn (or all my skins have been ripped), my sons have left me (or my sheep), and there is no one left ((Alternatively: remaining)): there is no one to extend my tent any further (or there is no place beyond my tent) and to set up my skins. Jerusalem laments the ease with which its city is overthrown, not by walls and fortifications completely destroyed, but by the removal of tents and tabernacles. The tabernacle, he says, that is, my dwelling, was suddenly taken away. All my cords were broken. He preserves the metaphor of the tabernacle, that is, all my coverings were torn. My sons have left me, that is, my livestock, which is added by the Septuagint, does not fit the story. For in a long siege, how could sheep and livestock be taken away from Jerusalem, which even if they had been there, would have been consumed by famine? And they do not remain, that is, they are not. For they have not been translated into Chaldean, but a great part of them has been completely destroyed and wiped out. There is no one to extend my tent anymore: there is no one to restore me and lay the foundations of my walls, which have been laid down to the ground.

10:21

(Verse 21.) Because the shepherds acted foolishly and did not seek the Lord: therefore, they did not understand, and the whole flock was scattered. Through the fault and dispersal of the shepherds and sheep, the culpability and scattering of the people is described. For the princes acted foolishly and did not seek the Lord, whom they should have sought with their whole heart: therefore, they did not see the coming evils, or did not understand the Lord, and the whole multitude of Jerusalem was scattered here and there.

10:22

(Verse 22) A voice of the cry, behold it comes, and a great commotion from the land of the North: to make the cities of Judah desolate, a habitation of dragons (or a den of ostriches). And as Symmachus has interpreted, of sirens: for which in Hebrew, Thannim () is put. The words of the prophet: Behold, he says, the noise and the tumult of the Babylonian coming is heard, and great commotion, or earthquake, from the land of the North: to reduce all the cities of Judah, with the inhabitants being killed, into desolation, and to make dragons dwell instead of men, and all venomous creatures, or ostriches, which animal itself is familiar with desolation and is born and nurtured in the wilderness. Certainly, we can understand certain sirens, monsters, and phantoms of demons. All of these things that both past and present speech have described, let us refer them to times of persecution of the Church, when the tabernacles of the Lord are overthrown, and all the dwelling of the Church is reduced to solitude. And in order for all these things to happen, it is the fault of the shepherds, who acted foolishly and did not seek the Lord, nor understand Him, and therefore the whole flock is scattered.

10:23

(Verse 23) I know, Lord, that it is not in man to direct his own steps: nor is it in man, to walk and guide his own footsteps. Let the new preachers be ashamed, who say that each one is ruled by his own will, when even the Prophet says: It is not in man to direct his own steps (Psalm 36:23). And let David sing in his lyric song: The steps of man are directed by the Lord, and his way he greatly desires. Whether this is referring to what we suffer from the Babylonians, it is not due to their strength, but to our own merit and your indignation.

10:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) Rebuke me, O Lord, but with justice, not in your anger, lest you reduce me to nothing. Pour out your indignation on the nations that do not know you, and on the provinces (or generations) that have not invoked your name, for they have devoured Jacob and consumed his dwelling place, and they have scattered (or reduced to desolation) his glory (or pasture). We also read this passage in the psalm: O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger; do not discipline me in your wrath (Psalm 6:1; 38:1). And the meaning is this: We indeed deserve all that we endure, and we deserve much greater things than what we suffer. Nevertheless, I beseech you, that you may correct me as a father, not as an adversary: that you may correct me as a son, and not punish me as an enemy (Hebrews 12); for you discipline every son whom you receive, and you correct Jerusalem through every pain and scourge. However, the enemies who do not know you, and the provinces or regions who have not invoked your name, should not feel your judgment, but rather your displeasure (Psalm 88). For you have handed us over to be corrected. But they have made

their yoke heavier: they have not spared the elderly, and they have afflicted the little ones: they have eaten us up and completely devoured us, and they have reduced Jerusalem to such desolation that they have plundered both public and private buildings and killed your people.

11:1-3

(Chapter 11, verses 1-3) The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord saying: Hear the words of this covenant (or testament), and speak to the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and say to them: Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel. It is not indeed stated in the title under which time, or under which king, and in which year of his, this prophecy was made: but we understand that either this is to be connected with the previous prophecy and time, or certainly after some interval of time the word of the Lord was made to the Prophet in this message. However, it should be noted that the word Berith, in Aquila and Symmachus, is always translated as pact, while in the Septuagint and Theodotion it is translated as testament. Specifically, it now refers to Jerusalem and the men of the tribe of Judah.

11:4

(Ver. 4.) Cursed is the man who does not listen to the words of this covenant that I commanded your fathers on the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron furnace, saying: Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you, and you shall be my people, and I will be your Lord (or God). Not because of the privileges of lineage, not because of the injury of circumcision, and the rest of the Sabbath, but because of obedience, God becomes the people of Israel, and Israel becomes his people. And here indeed He speaks as if to slaves, so that they may please God. But in the Gospel, the Lord says to His disciples: 'You are my friends,' He says, 'if you do what I command you. I will no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from My Father.' (John 15:14-15). And when they have become My friends, they pass on to being children: For as many as received Him, He gave them the power to become children of God. (John 1:12). Where he instructs his friends and disciples: Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48); he is commanding likeness, not equality. And there is obedience to the commandments, here is the likeness of God. And when he says: On the day when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron furnace, he gives us understanding that the furnace and the iron furnace, and the kindling of tribulation and punishment signify magnitude, not a specific place of punishment, prepared with iron material.

11:5

(Verse 5.) In order to fulfill the oath that I swore to your fathers, I will give them a land flowing with milk and honey, just as it is on this day. The fathers seem to receive, as the sons receive; and the promise to Abraham is fulfilled in his descendants. However, we must understand the land flowing with milk and honey metaphorically as representing the abundance of all things, as Virgil says in Eclogue III.

Let honey flow for them, let the rough bramble bear cinnamon. And again: And everywhere he restrained the wines flowing in the rivers. Or certainly, tropologically, let us perceive the Church of Christ as the land flowing with milk and honey, in which we are nurtured as infants and sucklings through faith, so that we may be able to receive solid food. And I answered and said, Amen, Lord.

For which reason the Seventy translated 'Fiat, Domine' as 'Amen' (for this is what 'amen' signifies). The Lord had said, 'I have sworn to give to your fathers a land flowing with milk and honey,' as is confirmed today by the very things themselves (Exod. III). The diligent prophet takes up the voice of the Lord for his people and desires to be true and to endure forever what has been given. Therefore he says, 'Truly, Lord, you have fulfilled what you promised; whether it be done, Lord, or whether it endure forever, this is what you have given.'

11:6

(Version 6.) And the Lord said to me, proclaim (or read) all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying: Listen to the words of this covenant and do them. The most merciful God often predicts the future, so that the hard heart may be softened to believe. He predicts both in the city of Jerusalem and in the field outside, so that the same repentance may apply to both, which is the common distinction of those places.

11:7-8

(Verses 7, 8.) For I solemnly warned your fathers on the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, 'Obey my voice.' Yet they did not listen or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not do.' Up to this point it is not found in the Septuagint, and what follows is inserted by them, connected with the end of the previous chapter, in which it is written: 'Hear the words of this covenant and do them,' but they did not do. But as for the morning rising, and God frequently speaking to them through the prophets, and leading them out of Egypt, and often admonishing them and saying, 'Listen to my voice'; and that they went astray after the wickedness of their own hearts, and afterwards received what they deserved, as we have already mentioned.

11:9-10

(Vers. 9, 10) And the Lord said to me: A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem have turned back to the iniquities of their former fathers, who refused to listen to my words. And so they went after foreign gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant, which I made with their fathers. As for the conspiracy, which we have interpreted according to Symmachus, Aquila, and the Septuagint, Theodotion has translated it as 'connection,' which we can also call 'binding.' And so Athalia, when she discovered that an ambush was being prepared for her in the Temple, spoke the same word: Conspiracy, conspiracy (2 Kings 11:14). The Scripture properly uses this word when it refers not to a sudden and accidental sin, but to a deliberate plot and conspiracy aimed at committing a crime, and when they all have the same mind and intention and work together to despise God's commandments. And it is said that both the fathers and the sons, with one mind and one judgment, neglected God and worshipped idols, both in Israel and in the house of Judah, that is, in the ten tribes as well as in the two tribes whose authority was in Jerusalem, so that, in their contempt for God, the punishment they suffered in captivity was equal.

11:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, I am bringing upon them evil from which they cannot escape. They will cry out to me, but I will not listen to them. And the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they offer libations, but they will not save them in their time of distress. God does not listen in the time of necessity and distress because they also refused to listen to the voice of the Lord, just as Saul did. For when he was terrified by the Philistine armies and could not receive the word of the Lord, he turned to the Pythoness in order to learn from idols what he should have obtained through instant prayer and tears from the Lord (1 Kings 21). From this we learn that even if the Lord does not hear, we must by no means give up or turn to demons, who cannot help their worshipers, but to the Lord's help, who is quickly moved to anger and changes his mind if those who angered him are changed. But all that is now said pertains to the tribe of Judah and the city of Jerusalem, against which captivity threatens.

11:13

(Verse 13) For according to the number of your cities were your gods, O Judah, and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars of confusion to burn incense to Baal. Let us read the books of Kings and Chronicles (2 Kings 21, 2 Chronicles 33), and we will find that Judah and Jerusalem have done far worse than Israel, so that as many cities as they had, they had just as many idols. And as many squares and street corners as there were in the city of Jerusalem, they had just as many altars of confusion, on which they would sacrifice to the idols of Baal.

11:14

(Verse 14.) So you, do not pray for this people, and do not take on praise and prayer for them: for I will not listen to their cry to me, in the time of their affliction. It is commanded to Jeremiah, not to intercede for them to the Lord, for their sentence is already accomplished: lest his prayer appear weak, and not be heard because of their own wickedness. Do not, he says, pray for them, nor take on praise, so that by recalling the kindness of the old story, by which I have always had mercy on them, and by praising, you try to change my judgment. For if you do this, I will not hear those who are forced to ask me in their time of need. From them we learn that it is in vain to ask for someone else when he does not deserve to receive, for whom God is asked.

11:15-16

(Vers. 15, 16.) What is it that my beloved has done many wicked deeds in my house? Will the holy flesh take away your malice, in which you have boasted? The Lord called your name a fruitful, beautiful, and pleasant olive tree, but when the great fire of his voice blazed in it, its branches were consumed. He called the people of Judah his beloved and most beloved, who placed idols in his temple and worshiped them, thinking that by offering many sacrifices he could appease God's anger and boasting in the multitude of offerings, which cannot take away the wickedness of sins. But Jerusalem, or rather the whole people of the Jews, is compared to fair and fruitful olive trees, which, exalted by pride, did not act humbly, nor did they understand their Creator and Lord; but, elevated by pride and speaking arrogantly, they were consumed by the fire of the Lord; so that their branches, or rather their orchards, were burned and reduced to nothing, and the entire people of their adversaries were destroyed by the sword. This sense is also found in another place

(Chapter II), where it is said to Jerusalem: I planted you as a productive vine, the true vine: how have you turned into a bitter foreign vine? When its walls are destroyed, and a wild boar from the forest devastates it, and all the animals devour its fruits (Psalm 78), let us say this chapter to the princes of the churches: What is it that my beloved has done many crimes in my house? Or surely to the rich, who plunder another's goods and do not take away the malice of their heart, they think they deserve God's mercy: Will holy meats take away your malice from you, in which you have boasted? But now the names of those offering are being publicly recited, and the redemption of sins is turned into praise: they did not remember the widow in the Gospel, who by putting in two small coins surpassed the offerings of all the rich people (Mark 12).

11:17

(Verse 17.) And the Lord of hosts, who planted you, spoke evil against you, for the evils of the house of Israel and the house of Judah, who have made themselves a provocation to me by pouring out offerings to the Baals. The Lord your God called you a fruitful and beautiful olive tree, and planted you. But because at the sound of his speaking, a great flame of God descended upon you and consumed all your branches, therefore the one who planted you has now spoken evil against you: not by the injustice of his judgment, nor by a sudden perversity of his speech, but because of the evils that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done to themselves, and they have diligently made offerings to the Baals in order to provoke me to anger. And since God can do whatever He wants, He gives reasons so that He does not appear to act unjustly, according to what is written: That you may be justified in your words, and win when you are judged (Psalm 50:6).

11:18-20

(Verse 18 onwards) But you, Lord, have shown me and I have known: you have revealed to me their desires, and I, like a gentle lamb being led to the sacrifice, did not know that they were plotting against me. Let us cast wood into his bread, and let us wipe him from the land of the living, so that his name may be remembered no more. But you, Lord of hosts, who judge justly and test the heart and the mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for I have revealed my cause to you. This is the consensus of all the churches, that under the person of Jeremiah, these things may be understood to be said by Christ, that the Father has shown him how he ought to speak, and has revealed to him the intentions of the Jews, and that he himself, like a lamb led to the slaughter, has not opened his mouth and has not known, sin being implied; according to what is said by the apostle: He who knew no sin, was made sin for us: and they have said: Let us place wood in his bread, namely the cross in the body of the Savior. For it is he who says: I am the bread that came down from heaven; and we will uproot or crush him from the land of the living (John 6:51). For they have conceived this wickedness in their hearts, that they may erase his name forever. But on the contrary, in accordance with the sacrament of the assumed body, the Son speaks to the Father, and he calls for his judgment, while praising his justice, and invokes God, the observer of the kidneys and the heart, that he may give to the people what they deserve. And he says: Let me see your vengeance upon them, namely, those who persist in wickedness, and not upon those who turn to repentance. He said about them on the cross: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34). And he reveals to the Father and opens his cause: because he was crucified not by any merit of his own, but by the crime of the people, saying:

Behold, the prince of this world is coming, and he finds nothing in me (John 14:30). The Jews and our Judaizers understand these things to be said in the person of Jeremiah: they confirm that he endured these things from the people on account of his prophecy of future events and the coming evils of captivity. But I do not know how they can approve that Jeremiah was crucified, since the Scripture does not mention it, unless perhaps they have thought about it and not acted upon it.

11:21-23

(v. 21 onward) Therefore, thus says the Lord to the men of Anathoth who seek your life and say: Do not prophesy in the name of the Lord, or you will die by our hand. Therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will visit them. The young men shall die by the sword; their sons and daughters shall die by famine, and there shall be no remnant of them. For I will bring disaster upon the men of Anathoth in the year of their visitation. It seems that this contradicts the previous opinions, in which we wanted to approve what was said from the person of Christ, and not from Jeremiah, who resided in the village of Anathoth, which is three miles from Jerusalem. But if we understand the etymology of the town of Anathoth (which means obedience), it will clearly show that the men of Anathoth, who once obeyed the Lord's commands, were all called Jews, and especially the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem, upon whom the final judgment came, that they would perish in the evils of the siege, by sword, famine, and disease. In order to free ourselves from all the annoyance of interpretation, let us follow this rule: Whatever the prophets have done in the manner of the Lord and Savior, and whatever has been fulfilled in the present time in Jeremiah, let it be prophesied in the future about the Lord.

Book Three Book Three The stories tell of the Lernaean serpent, which is said to have sprouted many snakes from its middle head: and of Scylla, the monster of the Sicilian strait, who had a virgin-like face but was girded with dogs and tore apart the shipwrecks of the unfortunate: and on the same shore, the deadly song of the Sirens, which Ulysses is said to have blocked out by closing his ears, and the unconquerable evil, which he avoided by his wise counsel. When I desired to do this, and to avoid the rage of heretics ((or rather, that I would avoid the rage of heretics)), and near the Ismenian spring, singing to myself and to mine, and pondering that prophetic verse: When the sinners stood against me, I became mute and silent about the good things (Psalm 38, 2, 3), the devil did not allow me to be content with desired peace, to devote myself to the explanation of Holy Scriptures, and to impart to men the knowledge of my language, Hebrew and Greek; but he carries out that plan day and night, openly and through deceit mixing true things with false, indeed wrapping all lies in deceitful honey, so that those who hear the sweetness of his words do not fear the poisons of the heart: he promises peace in order to wage more serious wars: he laughs in order to bite: he offers his hand in order to suddenly kill the innocent Abner (2 Samuel 3). Doubtless this is what the Apostle was talking about: 'For we are not ignorant of his devices' (2 Corinthians 2:11). Here he is silent, elsewhere he accuses: he sends letters throughout the whole world, former ones full of gold, now full of curses, and interprets our patience coming from the humility of Christ as a sign of a guilty conscience. And he himself, mute, barks through the dog Albinus, big and corpulent, who can harm more with his heels than with his teeth. For it has the offspring of the Scottish race, from the vicinity of the Britons: who, according to the fables of the Poets, must be struck like the spiritual Cerberus with a club, so that he may be silent in eternal silence with his master Pluto. But enough of this. Now I will proceed to the third book of Jeremiah, in which, brother Eusebius, I will attempt to confine the very broad fields of

explanation in a narrow path of Commentaries.

12:1-2

(Chapter 12 - Verses 1 onwards) Indeed, you are just, O Lord, if I argue with you (or because I want to satisfy you); however, I will speak to you about judgments. What is it that the way of the wicked prospers? It is well for all who break the law and act unjustly. You have planted them and they have taken root, they grow and bear fruit (or they have borne children and produce offspring). You are near their mouths, but far from their hearts. Truly, this is a discussion of all those who act unjustly, and the meaning is summarised in the 72nd Psalm, in which the Prophet says: How good is the God of Israel to those who are upright in heart! But my feet were almost moved; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious of the wicked, seeing the prosperity of sinners, etc. (Psalm 73:1-2). However, this is especially said against heretics, who, though they are impious, prosper in their ways; and they beget children whom they have deceived in their heresy, and they act deceitfully and unjustly, so as to rob the Church. And while they persist in their wickedness of opinion, they boast that they are planted by God, and that they have sent forth roots, and have begotten children and brought forth fruit. But although they often repeat the name of Christ, they do not have God as their dweller, according to that of Isaiah: This people honors me with their lips: but their heart is far from me (Isaiah 29:13).

12:3

(Verse 3.) And you, Lord, you know me: you have seen me, and you have tested my heart with you. Gather them together like a flock for the sacrifice, and sanctify them on the day of slaughter. There is no scandal, it is said, that the wicked, or all heretics, flourish for a time: For you, Lord, know me, and you have seen me, and you have tested my heart with you. How does the Father God know his Son this way? For no one knows the Son except the Father: and no one knows the Father, except the Son, and whom the Son wants to reveal (Matt. XI, 17). It is permitted, he says, that they may prosper, that they may generate children, and that heretics may produce fruit, and you may be close to their mouth and far from their kidneys, that is, their conscience: nevertheless, there is some consolation, in that they are fattened like sheep for the slaughter. Gather them in the city of Jerusalem, or in their assemblies: so that they may be slaughtered as if they were victims of death, and then may be sanctified, when they have been beheaded by the sword of the Church: for the killing of heretics is the salvation of those who had been deceived.

12:4

(Verse 4) How long will the earth mourn, and all the herbage of the region wither because of the wickedness of those who dwell in it? The animal and the bird have perished because they have said: Our last things will not be seen (or God will not see our ways). Whatever happens in the world, whether good or evil, happens not without the providence and chance of God, but by his judgment. The earth is now barren, the herbage dries up. Do you want to know the reason? Those who dwell in wickedness do this: so that the animals on the earth and the birds of the sky are consumed, because all these creatures were created for the use of humans: who have risen to such blasphemy as to say that God is ignorant of His own ways, and does not know what each individual will suffer. But what he says, 'How long?' signifies the enduring wrath of God, because the hearts of sinners were not inclined to repentance.

12:5

(Verse 5) If you have struggled running with foot soldiers, how will you be able to compete with horses? If you have relied on the land of peace, what will you do in the pride or tumult of the Jordan? If, as they say, you have been wearied by the frequent captivities of neighboring nations, the Moabites and Ammonites, the Philistines and Edomites, what will you do in the face of a long captivity that will be led by the Chaldeans all the way? And he compares foot soldiers to horsemen, for in truth both the Persians and the entire Chaldean empire and the armies of those regions take delight in cavalry according to history. But these nations, which I mentioned above, are not so suited for battle because of the difficulty of the terrain, as they are for robbery. And he preserves the metaphor and says: If you became weak with fatigue while running alongside foot soldiers, what will you do if you want to keep up with horses? And if you had any confidence in your own land, what will you do when you cross the Jordan and endure its currents?

12:6

(Verse 6.) For even your brothers and the household of your father themselves fought against you, and they cried out after you with a loud voice: do not believe them when they speak good things to you. To such an extent, he says, you will be overwhelmed by the most violent waves of the Jordan, and the multitude of horsemen coming from afar will devastate you, so that even your brothers from the Edomite lineage, and the household of your father, who are descendants of Lot, Moab and Ammon, themselves will fight against you in times of necessity and distress, and will insult you (Genesis 19). Beware of trusting them and having hope in kinship, through which they may rage against you more than your enemies. This can also be understood in reference to Jesus, that his brothers and the household of his father fought against him and cried out loudly, saying: Crucify him, crucify him: we have no king but Caesar (John 19:15).

12:7-8

(Vers. 7, 8.) I left my house, I abandoned my inheritance: I gave my beloved soul into the hands of its enemies. My inheritance became like a lion in the forest: it roared against me, therefore I hated it. He who spoke in the Gospel: Rise, let us go from here (John 14:31). And again: Your house will be left desolate (Luke 13:35), here and also in the same prophet he threatens; and he says that he has done what he was going to do. For the inheritance of the Lord is Israel, and his inheritance is as a rope. But when he says: 'I have given my beloved soul into the hand of his enemies,' that means, I have the power to lay down my soul, and I have the power to take it up again (John 10:18). Indeed, the inheritance of the Lord, the people of the Jews, once rebelled against him like a lion in the forest: when they shouted with a loud voice against him in their suffering. And because they raised their voice against him, he therefore hated them, and rejected them, and what was once beloved and cherished is now called hateful.

12:9

(Ver. 9.) Is my inheritance like a colorful bird to me? Is it like a bird dyed all over? Come, gather all the beasts of the earth; hurry to devour. LXX: Is the den of the hyena my inheritance? Is there a den all around it, above it? Go, gather all the animals of the field; let them come and eat it. According to the letter, he calls the colorful and fully dyed bird a peacock. He says that Israel had such great beauty and Jerusalem was distinguished by such virtues that there was nothing good

that could not be seen in it. Therefore, since an inheritance was once made for me, that is, the people of Israel, like a lion in the forest, and they spoke against me, and I detested them with all hatred: therefore come and gather against them all the beasts of the earth, a multitude of diverse nations, and devour them who have not known their Lord. But if, as the Septuagint and other interpreters have translated, it is read: Is my inheritance to me a den of hyenas, shall we return to the uncleanness of the nocturnal beast, which lives on the corpses of the dead, and is accustomed to dig up bodies from tombs, and there is no filthiness that it does not feed on. Such is Israel offending his Lord, and delivered to the bites of all beasts.

12:10

(Verse 10) Many shepherds have destroyed (or disrupted) my vineyard, they have trampled (or polluted) my portion: they have given my desirable portion into a desert wasteland (or uninhabited). They have made (or it has been made) it into a desolation. Let those who want to be leaders of the people hear this, because they will have to give an account not only for themselves, but also for the flocks entrusted to them, on the day of judgment. For because of them, a part of the Lord's dwelling place is trampled and polluted, so that where once there was a hospice, there may now be a dwelling place for beasts. Others, however, understand the leaders of the enemies, who have scattered the vineyard of the Lord, not as being placed over the people and priests.

12:11-12

(Vers. 11, 12.) And the earth mourned, desolate it is, because there is no one who thinks in their heart. The devastators have come over all the paths of the desert, for the sword of the Lord has devoured from one end of the earth to the other: there is no peace for all flesh. LXX: Therefore the earth is utterly ruined, and the rest. This that we have set, 'and the earth mourned,' is joined to the previous verse according to the Hebrew, so that the meaning is: They have made it into ruin, that is, my inheritance: And the earth mourned, deprived of my help. But according to the Septuagint, God spoke that because of him the earth is devastated and turned into a wilderness, because there is no one who remembers in their heart, nor any peace for all flesh. For the flesh cannot receive the peace of God. For the wisdom of the flesh is hostile to God; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. And according to the Hebrew, therefore all of Judaea is desolate, because there is no one who remembers God in their heart, nor is there any survivor who can escape. For through all the ways of solitude came the devastators, that is, a hostile army, and the sword of the Lord devoured from one end to the other; and there was no rest for those fleeing from the city. Hence it is said: There is no peace for all flesh.

12:13

(Verse 13) They sowed wheat and harvested thorns: they received an inheritance, but it will not benefit them. LXX: You have sown wheat and harvested thorns: their clergy will not benefit them. They expected better things, but the worst came: they hoped for success, but endured adversity: they received an abundance of all things from the Lord, which will not benefit them. According to the Septuagint, all heretics sow wheat and harvest thorns, while the Lord waits for them to bear fruit, but they do not bring forth judgment, only outcry. But it is said also of Ecclesiastics who scatter the words of the Lord and his doctrine by evil conduct. Concerning them it is inferred: Their clergy shall not profit them. For what can bishops' name and presbyters, or the rest of the

Ecclesiastical order, do to help them, when they are burdened more by their own dignities and suffer powerful torments severely, and when more has been entrusted to them, more is required of them (Wisdom 6).

12:14-15

(Vers. 14, 15.) You shall be confounded by your fruits (or by your boasting (because of the anger of the fury of the Lord (or by the reproach in the sight of the Lord). Thus says the Lord against all my wicked neighbors, who touch the inheritance which I have distributed to my people Israel: Behold, I will uproot them from their land and uproot the house of Judah (or cast them out) from among them. And when I have uprooted them, I will turn (or return) and have mercy on them, and I will bring them back (or make them dwell) man in his inheritance, and man in his land. It is said to them, to whom their own clergy and ecclesiastical order will not benefit, that they should be confounded by their own boasting and by reproach before the Lord. And it brings forth: against all my wicked neighbors, according to the letter, the neighbors of the holy land are the Edomites, Philistines, Moab, and Ammon. But according to the allegory, all heretics who are considered under the name of Christ are even more neighbors than the inhabitants of the holy land, who touch the inheritance of God and devastate it. And it is said of them that they shall be taken away from the midst of the land, and the house of Judah shall be taken away from their midst. Whoever is uprooted and freed from the jaws of the heretics will obtain the mercy of God, and they will be restored to their inheritance and their land.

12:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) And it shall come to pass, if the learned ones have learned the ways of my people, to swear in my name, as the Lord lives: just as they taught my people to swear by Baal, they shall be built up in the midst of my people. But if they do not listen, I will uproot that nation with destruction and annihilation, says the Lord. If those who have been translated from heresy into the Church have learned the ways of the people of God, and have sworn in the name of the Lord, and not in the name of the idols they themselves imagined, they shall be built up by the Lord, and they shall be a part of his people. But if those who have been translated into the Church hold on to the remnants of perverse doctrines and do not heed the words of the Lord, that people shall be uprooted from the midst of God's people, through perpetual destruction and removal, so that not a single place of repentance is left for them. We see this happening every day, and we have evidence that heretics, in order to deceive the simple-minded, pretend to uphold the truth of the faith, not so that they themselves may convert to the faith, but rather to lead the faithful into disbelief.

13:1-11

(Chapter 13, verse 1 onwards) Thus says the Lord to me: Go and acquire for yourself a linen loincloth (or belt) and put it on your loins, and do not bring it into water (or do not pass it through water). So I acquired a loincloth according to the word of the Lord and put it around my loins. Then the word of the Lord came to me a second time, saying: Take the loincloth (or belt) that you acquired, which is around your loins, and go to the Euphrates and hide it there in a hole in the rock. And I went and hid it in the Euphrates, as the Lord had commanded me. And after many days, the Lord said to me: Arise and go to the Euphrates, and take from there the girdle (or belt)

that I commanded you to hide there. And I went to the Euphrates, and dug, and took the girdle from the place where I had hidden it, and behold, the girdle had decayed so that it was of no use. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Thus says the Lord: So will I cause the pride (or injury) of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem and this evil people, who refuse to hear my words and walk in the stubbornness (or direction) of their evil hearts: they have gone after foreign gods to serve them and worship them, and they will be like this useless girdle. For as the waist is joined to the loins of a man, so have I joined to me all the house of Israel, and all the house of Judah, saith the Lord: that they might be my people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear. The girdle, or waistband, which is joined to the loins, is the people of Israel: they who have been taken up from the earth, and have not been softened, nor made white, and yet they have cleaved to God through his mercy. And when he sinned, because linen and a linen apron made of such material is rational, he was led across the Euphrates, that is, into Assyria, and there he was hidden, that is, absorbed in a multitude (or rather, magnitude) of great and innumerable nations, and regarded as nothing. But after a long time, the Prophet himself, as a type of God, freed the people from captivity. However, even after their return, they did not keep God's commandments; but they followed foreign gods, and in the end even laid hands on God's Son and brought about eternal damnation. Moreover, every holy man is a loin cloth of God, who, taken from the earth and from the mud of the earth, is joined in the partnership of God, and covers and surrounds, with greater diligence, those things which appear obscene in His Church, so that they may not be exposed to the bites of the Gentiles and the heretics. And if this loin cloth touches water and crosses the streams of the Euphrates, so that it is soaked with the moisture of the Assyrian region, it loses its original strength and decays, and is dissolved. And although it returns to the use of God, it cannot have its former beauty, not due to the hardness of God, but due to its own fault: because they do not want to hear His words, and they walk in the wickedness of their own heart, doing what seems right to them. But He Himself explains why He has put forth this similitude, saying: Just as the girdle clings to the loins of a man: so I have joined and made to cling to Me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, specifically the twelve tribes, so that they would be for Me a people renowned and for praise and for glory; and for all this, they did not listen to Me, but followed their own faults. Therefore, let the one who can say: 'But for me it is good to be close to God' (Psalm 73:28), beware lest he be separated from his reins through negligence and cross the Euphrates and be given into the power of the Assyrian king, and be occupied not in the most solid rock but in the crevice of a corrupted and tainted rock, that is, be occupied with the filth and vices of heretics, and come to such putrefaction that he can no longer return to the service and the belt of the Lord.

13:12-14

(Verse 12 onwards) You shall say therefore to them (or to the people) this message. Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Every pitcher (or vessel) shall be filled with wine. And they shall say to you: Do we not know that every pitcher (or vessel) shall be filled with wine? And you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, and the kings who sit on David's throne, and the priests and the prophets and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness. And I will scatter them, man from his brother, and fathers and sons together, says the Lord. I will not spare (or show mercy) and I will not relent, nor will I have compassion, so as not to destroy them. The Hebrew word *Nebel* () has been translated by the Aquila's first edition as

'laguncula', by the second edition as 'nebel' itself, by Symmachus as 'crater', by the LXX as 'utres', and by Theodotion as 'vas'. All of them interpret it as a vessel that is not filled with oil, water, honey, milk, or any other liquid material, but with wine and drunkenness. This shows that we are fragile vessels, as the Apostle says: 'But we have this treasure in earthen vessels' (2 Corinthians 4:7), and that it is impossible for us not to be filled with what is written: 'For no good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh'. And again, I do not do the good that I want, but the evil that I do not want, that is what I practice (Rom. VII, 18). And then, wretched man that I am, who will rescue me from this body of death (Ibid., 19)? But by this drunkenness, where we forget the commandments of God, and every human condition is filled with vice and sin, as the Prophet says: No living being will be justified in your sight (Psal. CXLII, 2), not in comparison to God (as the ancient and new heretics claim, and the supporters of heretics), but in knowledge of Him: for man sees the face, but God sees the heart (I Sam. XVI, 7); and what may appear clean to us, is found filthy in His eyes: not only the common and lowly crowd, but also the kings of the Church, descendants or sons of David, who lie back with their heads raised and stretch their necks, and with outstretched necks, sit upon His throne. The priests themselves, the second in rank in ecclesiastical honor, and the prophets, who are thought to have knowledge of the Scriptures, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, are filled with a variety of sins: whether Jewish, as the Seventy have added. And when they are drunk, they are scattered from the company of their own, and fathers are separated from sons and sons from fathers, so that they are polluted by various heresies, and under the name of Christ they fight among themselves, and they fight against their mother, who gave birth to them, the Church. Where it says: I will not desire them, but I will have them in everlasting hatred: I will not spare, and I will not grant mercy, nor will I show compassion: not out of cruelty of judgment, but out of the truth of justice. For those who have slain my people, they themselves shall perish forever. This can be understood simply according to history, that kings, priests, and prophets, and all the people of Jerusalem must be made drunk with the cup of Babylon, and overwhelmed by the evils of captivity.

13:15

(Verse 15.) Hear and perceive with your ears: Do not be lifted up, because the Lord has spoken. Because he said above, every vessel shall be filled with wine: so that even kings, and priests, and prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem may be filled with drunkenness, therefore he joins and says: Hear and perceive with your ears, both externally and internally, both in mind and body; and do not be lifted up with pride, considering your own weakness, and that there is no one who is without this drunkenness according to the extent of their sin. Where he is scattered, and corrupted, and unworthy of God's mercy, lifting himself up against Him through pride.

13:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Give glory to the Lord your God ((or our)) before it grows dark, and before your feet stumble upon dark (or gloomy) mountains. You will wait for light, but there will be only darkness (or according to the Hebrew, he will put it in darkness and gloom). And if you will not listen, your soul ((or mine)) will weep in secret because of arrogance (or injury). To those to whom the divine discourse had been spoken, saying: 'Listen and perceive with your ears, and do not be exalted', now it calls to repentance, so that before they are led to Babylon, and their feet stumble upon dark or gloomy mountains, they may give glory to God. Hence, it is often said to sinners: 'Give glory to God' (Psalm 67:35). And as for why Babylon and the whole region of the Chaldeans are called

dark or gloomy mountains, we read in the beginning of the vision of Isaiah against Babylon, where it is written: 'Raise a signal on a dark mountain' (Isaiah 13:2), which in Hebrew is called Nesepha. Therefore, he commanded them to repent before they are led into captivity and experience the evils of slavery. And while they wait for light, they should sit in darkness. But if, he says, you refuse to listen to me in secret, near the Eagle, in darkness, your soul will weep, or according to the Septuagint, from the face of pride; so that not even a sigh or a cry may be free, so that the eyes of the conquerors may not be offended. But we can interpret this place in the following way: The Savior says: Work while it is day: the night is coming when no one can work (John 9:4). Concerning this time, there is also the prophecy of Isaiah: For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be darkened at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light (Isaiah 13:10). Zephaniah also agrees with these words, saying: A day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness (Zephaniah 1:15). Therefore, before the time of judgement comes, and our feet stumble upon dark mountains, the opposing fortitudes, which are placed in front of us with torments and tortures, let us repent, lest while awaiting the light, we be enveloped in the darkness of night; and let us know that unless we do this, we shall refuse to hear the weeping soul, either of God or of the Prophet, because of our own arrogance. Hence, the Prophet himself also says:

Jerusalem will weep, weeping the eye pulls down a tear: for the flock of the Lord has been captured (and I cannot hide my grief with silent groans). But the cause of all torments is that the flock of the Lord has been captured. Let us say to the Jews and to our Judaizers, who only follow a simple and superficial history, unless you hear secretly, that is, in mystery or in darkness, which God has established as His hiding place (Ps. XVII), and according to Solomon, so that they may understand the parable and the obscure discourse, the soul of the Prophet will weep, or rather, their own souls from the face of pride, while they resist God through stubbornness. And so there will be weeping and perpetual tears on the hills, because the flock of the Lord has been captured and corrupted by the true Nebuchadnezzar.

13:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) Say to the king and the queen (or say to the king and the powerful): Humble yourselves, sit down, for the crown of your glory has been taken off (or has descended) from your head. The cities of the South are closed, and there is no one who will open them. All of Judah has been carried away (or all of Judah has been taken away) in complete exile (or captivity). The prophets are commanded to speak to King Jehoiachin and his mother, whom he addresses as lady and queen, that they should humble themselves and sit in the dust, for they have lost their royal dignity and must be handed over to the Babylonian king. The cities of Austria are closed, that is, the tribes of Judah and Jerusalem, which are turned towards the south near the desert, and there is no one who can open them surrounded by the siege. All of Judah, or all of Judea, has been transferred by complete migration: whether it received what it deserved, and it was fulfilled in it, as the Seventy translated. It is foolish in this place, who understands the king, Christ, and the powerful ones, the angels or apostles, as assuming the body of humility and sitting in the dust, and losing either the king or the powerful from their head the crown; and that the glory of Judah was transferred when it was fulfilled in the passion: All have turned aside, together they have become useless, there is no one who does good, not even one. The Hebrew word Gebira (). Aquila and Symmachus interpreted it as *dominatricem et dominam*, which the Septuagint believed to be

Geburoth (), and they said potentes.

13:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) Lift up your eyes and see those who come from the north: where is the flock that was given to you, your splendid flock? What will you say when they visit you? You have taught them and trained them against you, and it will come upon your own head. The inhabitants of Jerusalem are commanded to lift up their eyes and see the Chaldeans coming from the north: the city itself is questioned and asked: Where is the flock that was given to you, your splendid flock? Where is your people, whom you received from God? Where is that great and illustrious multitude, that you believed the entire province was gathered in one place? What will you say when the Lord visits you with His rod, and hands you over to the enemies of Babylon, whom you, against yourself, either on your own head, or from the very beginning, taught to flee to their help and follow their idols; who, under the pretense of friendship with you, learned by what route they should come to you. Let the Church heed this, that she herself may teach her adversaries how they can capture her in spiritual captivity and tear her flock apart with the cruelty of beasts.

13:22

(Verse 22) Do not pains seize you, like a woman in childbirth? And if you say in your heart, why have these things come to me? It is because the shameful things of your iniquity have been revealed, your plants have been defiled (or dishonored). While you do not know, like a woman experiencing sudden labor pains, so will sudden captivity seize you. And if you wish to argue and inquire why you have been handed over to the enemy, hear clearly, this multitude has brought upon you the iniquities of your own doing, so that your shame may be revealed, like that of a prostitute, with your clothes lifted and your public fornications exposed. By these things we learn to act patiently towards the Lord and to await our repentance as long as our sins are minor. But if we should desire to join sins to sins and to accumulate a heap of sins, our shameful things will be revealed and our deeds will be shown to all, either in this present age or in the future. For nothing is hidden that will not be revealed (Matth. X): when that of Daniel will be fulfilled: These will rise to eternal life, and those to everlasting shame and confusion (Dan. XII, 2).

13:23

(Verse 23.) If an Ethiopian can change his skin, or a leopard its spots, then you can do good, once you have learned evil. They use this testimony against the Church, those who want to assert different natures; and they say that the darkness or diversity of sins is so great that they cannot pass into whiteness and the beauty of one color: not taking into account what follows: And you can do good, once you have learned evil. For whatever is learned, it is not of nature, but of study and one's own will: which by excessive habit and love is in a certain way turned into nature. But that which is impossible for humans is possible for God (Matthew 19 and Luke 18): so that the Ethiopian and the leopard do not seem to change their own nature; but He who works in the Ethiopian and the leopard, as the Apostle says: I can do all things in Him who strengthens me, Christ (Philippians 4:13). And in a foreign place: Moreover, he says, I have labored more than all of them: not I, but the grace of God which is in me (I Cor. XV, 10). And: I am not living anymore, but Christ is living in me (Galat. II, 20). And again we read: What do you have that you did not receive? And if you have received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it (I Cor. IV, 7)?

For these reasons, let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches, nor the virtuous man in his virtue, knowing that in all these things there is the power of Christ, not of those who boast in their own virtues.

13:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) And I will scatter them like chaff that is blown away by the wind in the desert. This is your portion and your measure from me, says the Lord (or also a part of your disobedience against me). Because by excessive habit of evils, they could not change their nature, not by the fault of the creator, but by the inclination towards wickedness, therefore I will scatter them like chaff blown away by the wind into the wilderness, according to what is written elsewhere: Like dust that the wind scatters from the face of the earth (Psalm 1, 4). And it makes an appeal to Jerusalem itself: that this is its fate, and this is the portion that it has chosen for itself, complete and overflowing, or rather, a part of its disobedience, in which it did not want to submit to God. For the measure with which it measures will be measured back to it.

13:26

(Verse 26) Because you have forgotten me, and have trusted (or hoped) in lies: therefore I will also uncover your thighs, and your shame will be revealed, your adulteries and your whinings, the wickedness (or alienation) of your fornication: The cause of Jerusalem's dispersion, because she has forgotten God, and has trusted, or hoped, in lies. Whoever trusts in worldly things besides God, forgets God. Where the thighs or buttocks are exposed, so that she may see her own shame: and what should be behind, is placed in front: so that she may observe what she has done, and her shame may be apparent not only to herself, but to everyone. Your adulteries and your lustful neighing not only show desire, but also the madness of desire, like the behavior of mares that are eager for mating, as Virgil said (Georgics III, 280-281).

. . . . Hippomanes, which the shepherds call by name, slow virus drips from the loins. Let us pray to Jesus that he may not reveal our thighs ((alternatively, loins)) in the present or in the future age, and our backsides, but that he may erase all our iniquities and not allow all sins to appear.

13:27

(Verse 27) On the hills in the field, I saw your abominations. Woe to you, Jerusalem, you will not be cleansed (or because you have not been cleansed) after me, how much longer? Not only in the midst of the city of Jerusalem, but on every hill and in all the regions, I saw your idols, from which it is said to you: Woe to you, Jerusalem, because you have not been cleansed after me, to boast about following in my footsteps and proclaiming my name, yet you have never been cleansed because you have forgotten me and put your hope in lies. From where does he chastise her and say, How much longer? and what sense, how long will I wait for you? how long will I endure? how much longer will you forget me to the end, and despise my teachings? She commits fornication on the hills and in the fields, and is never cleansed, who with erect neck is not humbled by pride under the powerful hand of God, but trusts in her own sins and vices.

14:1

(Chapter XIV—Verse 1) The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah concerning the words of drought. The anger of God is evident in everything. Therefore, the sun sets on sinners at noon, and the

moon, stars, and other celestial bodies do not give their light (Amos VIII). It can be assumed that there was no rain during the time of the siege, so that the besieged would suffer from a lack of water. Truly, the city only has one source, the fountain of Siloam, and it does not have a continuous supply. And to this day, the lack of rainfall not only causes a scarcity of crops but also a shortage of drinking water.

14:2-4

(Versedio 2 and the following verses.) Judah (or Judea) lamented and its gates collapsed (or became empty), and it was darkened (or obscured) over the land, and the cry of Jerusalem went up. Its elders sent their young ones (or younger ones) to the water: they came to draw (or to the wells) and found no water, they brought back their empty vessels, they were confused and distressed (or ashamed), and they covered their heads because of the desolation of the land (or the works of the land, for they failed), because there was no rain upon the land: the farmers were confused, they covered their heads. In times of drought, when the multitude suffers from hunger for hearing and learning the word of God, Judea mourns, boasting of having the worship of God first, and the confession of true faith, and its gates are either emptied or fall down, which we should attribute to the senses, through which discipline is conceived by souls. Then everything is obscured and wrapped in darkness; and reason and the teaching of doctrine do not reign in Jerusalem, but there is clamor and confusion. Moreover, those who should themselves go to fetch water send the younger ones, in whom there is no wisdom, and therefore they come to the wells and do not find water, which the history narrates that the patriarchs found (Genesis 26). They return with their vessels empty, namely the younger ones: not because there was no water, but because they could not find it. They are confused and afflicted, or they blush and cover their heads; because they could not say with the Apostle: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord (1 Corinthians 3:18). Because of the desolation of the land, or rather, because the works of the land have failed, through which we come to know God. And the reason is clear: because, he says, rain has not come upon the earth. For it was commanded to the clouds not to rain down rain upon it. (Isai. V). Also, farmers, of whom one speaks, you are the agriculture of God, you are the building of God. (II Cor. III, 9). And in another place: we are the co-workers of God, they cover their heads, and they are confused, understanding that without the grace and assistance of God, they strive in vain.

14:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) For even the deer (or deer) in the field give birth (or gave birth) and abandon (or abandoned) because there is no grass. And the wild donkeys stood on the cliffs, they drew in the wind like dragons, their eyes failed, because there is no grass (or hay). Great sterility, when even the deer in the field give birth and abandon their offspring, because there is no grass or hay; just as serpents draw out venomous animals from caves with the smell of their nostrils and kill them, they do not use food as a means of gratitude. And also about the wild donkeys it is written in Job: Who has let the wild donkey go free into the wilderness? (Job 39:5) They wander about for food, seeking sustenance in the desert. They live among the rocks and make their home in the cliffs. They cannot run but drag themselves along like serpents. Their eyesight fails, and they cannot see. They survive on sparse vegetation. This drought often happens in the churches, when deer and wild donkeys are found among the people, and there is a scarcity of teachers: there are those

who can learn, but there are not those who can teach.

If our iniquities answer (or resist) against us, O Lord, do it for your name's sake, because our turnings away (or sins) are many. We have sinned against you, O expectation of Israel: the Savior thereof in time of trouble. If we doubt why the rains do not descend upon the earth, why all things wither with dryness, let us hear. Our iniquities have resisted against us; therefore, O Lord, not according to our works, but according to your holy name, overcome our many turnings away (or sins). For we have sinned against you, whom the secrets of the heart do not deceive, and we wait for you, who are the true hope and expectation of Israel: and you save them in the time of tribulation, according to what is written: I cried to the Lord in my trouble, and he heard me (Psalm 119:1). Let us also say in the time of drought and shortage of water: We have sinned against you, and we have done evil before you (Psalm 50:5), we await your coming, who save Israel, not by their own merit, but by your mercy.

14:9 (Verse 9) Why are you going to be like a tenant on the land, and like a traveler turning to stay? Why are you going to be like a wanderer, or like a strong man who cannot save? Septuagint: Why have you become like a stranger in the land, and like a foreigner turning to stay? Are you going to be like a sleeping man, and like a man who cannot save? The Jews understand this place thus: Why do you separate yourself from your people? And like a traveler seeking shelter for only one hour, you do not care about the quality of the lodging you use, but going on to other things, you do not save your people, and you abandon the once illustrious temple? But they believe that of the future dispensation of Christ it is said that he will be a stranger on earth, and, for a short time, will inhabit the earth as a guest, and, like a passing and robust man, having left Israel, will turn towards the multitude of nations; so that he may pass from place to place, from people to people, from Temple to Church. And what is said according to the Septuagint: Will you be like a sleeping man, and like a man who cannot save? He sets forth a likeness, not the truth of the thing, according to what is written: Arise, why do you sleep, O Lord (Psalm 43:23)? not that the Lord sleeps, of whom it is said: Neither will He sleep, nor slumber who keeps Israel (Psalm 121:4); but because it appears that He sleeps to those whom He forsakes. Moreover, it is not written in the following, a man sleeping who cannot save; but it is written as if it were a man, in both cases subject to human passions. But you are in us, Lord, and your name is invoked upon us, do not forsake us (or do not forget us). You, who are about to become like a stranger and traveler among the Jews, and a wandering man, and who abandon the old dwelling, dwell in us; and your name is invoked upon us (Prov. 31), so that we may be called Christians, therefore do not forsake us, and do not forget us, to whom the mouths of all the Prophets have sung about your future coming.

14:10

(Verse 10.) Thus says the Lord to this people, because they loved (or loved to) move their feet and did not rest (or did not spare (Alternative reading: spared)) and did not please the Lord (or and God did not please (Alternative reading: was pleased)) in them; now their iniquities will be remembered, and their sins will be visited. When the people say: why have you become a stranger, a traveler, and a wanderer, to forsake your own dwelling? The Lord answers his former people: Do you want to know the reason? Listen to what is said: Because the people loved to move their feet, and did not take them off from the shackles of sin, they did not rest, and could not stand: therefore I have forsaken them, and there is no pleasure in them for me. Therefore, those

who have delayed for a long time, and have not wanted to punish the sinners through patience, because they have remained in wickedness; He will remember their iniquities; and like those who are sick and do not perceive God, He will visit their sins, so that they may cease to sin any further. But it should be noted in the Holy Scriptures that the feet of sinners are always moved, and it is said to the Saints with Moses: But you stand here with me (Deut. 5:31). And elsewhere it is written: Praise the servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God (Psalm 134:1, 2).

14:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) And the Lord said to me: Do not pray for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not listen to their prayers, and if they offer burnt offerings and sacrifices, I will not accept them; for I will consume them by sword, famine, and pestilence. It is foolish to pray for one who has sinned unto death, as John says: There is a sin unto death, I do not say that anyone should pray for him (1 John 5:16). All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not unto death. Fasting, prayers, and offerings and burnt offerings are then effective when we turn away from vices and repent of our ancient sins. But if we remain in wickedness and think that we can redeem ourselves through vows and sacrifices, we are greatly mistaken, for we consider God unfair. For whoever has been appointed once to the sword, hunger, and disease cannot be saved by any prayers. Hence, it is said by the Prophets, let him not pray in vain for what he cannot obtain.

14:13-14

(Verses 13, 14.) And I said, ah, ah, ah, Lord God, (or who you are, Lord God) The prophets tell them, you will not see the sword, and there will be no famine among you: but true peace will be given to you in this place. And the Lord said to me: The false prophets prophesy in my name: I have not sent them, nor commanded them, nor spoken to them. They prophesy a false vision, and a fraudulent divination, and the seduction of their own heart to you. Listen to these teachers who promise prosperity to those who persist in their sins and vices, who say to the rich: You will not see the sword of God's torments, and there will be no hunger among you. For you will be satisfied with the words of God; and the Lord will give you true peace in the place of the Church, or Jerusalem. But as he said, according to the Hebrew, three times ah, ah, ah, he responded to the previous (on his own) where the Lord had threatened, saying: I will consume them with the sword, and famine, and pestilence. Because the prophets, or rather the false prophets, had made false promises: therefore the Lord spoke through Jeremiah: Do not listen to the words of false prophets, who were not sent by me, but came of their own accord. The so-called prophets, but rather should be called deceivers, speak seduction to the people. For it is much better to correct sins through fear of punishment than to subject oneself to the hope of favorable divine judgment.

14:15-16

(Verse 15, 16) Therefore, the Lord says these things about the prophets who prophesy in my name, whom I did not send, saying: 'Sword and famine will not be in this land; by sword and famine those prophets will be consumed.' And the people to whom they prophesied will be thrown into the streets of Jerusalem, because of famine and sword. And there will be no one to bury them, their wives, their sons, and their daughters. And I will pour out their own evil upon them. Beware of false prophets, who by promising prosperity, deceive the people of God, so that they may perish

and the deceived people may be destroyed in a similar way, and may lie in the streets of Jerusalem, trampling on the Lord's commandments, and may perish by hunger and sword, and there will be no one to bury them; nor may their disgrace be covered by the dust of repentance. For both the prophets themselves and the people, their wives and children, and all generations without any propagator will be in the dung heap. How many lie on the streets of Jerusalem! How many we see receiving their own misfortunes unburied, which, as the Lord pours out, they endure!

14:17

(Verse 17) And you shall say to them this word: Let my eyes shed tears (or let your eyes shed tears) day and night, and let them not be silent (or let them not cease), for the virgin daughter of my people has been greatly afflicted, a very severe wound. This place can be understood in two ways, either that God himself mourns for his people, and his eyes do not cease to weep, or certainly he commands that the eyes of the peoples flow with tears, and it is no small thing that there is something to mourn; since the virgin daughter of his people has been struck with great affliction and an intolerable wound. Others think that these things are said from the perspective of the Prophet.

14:18

(Verse 18) If I go out to the fields, behold the slain with the sword: and if I enter the city, behold those who are weakened by hunger (or by the pain of hunger). The prophet and the priest have also gone to a land they do not know. It is a just cause for mourning, because a virgin has been broken, a daughter has been struck, and the people have been destroyed. For if, he says, I want to go out, I will see the killed; if I enter the city, I will see those who are weakened and barely clinging to their bones, visible due to the necessity of hunger. And what is surprising about saying this about the common people and the lowly crowd? When even the prophets and priests, who prophesied prosperity to others and who were supposed to unveil the commandments of the Law, themselves went to a land they did not know and endured the evil of captivity. Let our prophets and priests hear this, that there is no security either inside or outside because of their negligence: that those who are outside are scandalized and those who are inside perish from hunger; and those who were the authors of sin become associates in torment.

14:19

(Verse 19) Have you rejected Judah completely? Has your soul despised Zion? Why have you struck us, so that there is no healing for us? We hoped for peace, but there is no good; for a time of healing, but behold, terror! The prophet is amazed that the Lord has suddenly cast away Judah and Jerusalem, the kingdom of the two tribes where the religion of God and the ceremonies of the Temple were. And He has struck them with such a great plague that no remedy can be applied. We have waited, he said, for peace and a time of healing, and there is no good; but instead, there is turmoil: so that where there was once worship of God and tranquility, there, now everything is filled with seditions and hostile uproar. So if ever our Zion, our Judah is rejected and the soul of God abhors it, let us not be surprised, but rather let us say what follows:

14:20

(Verse 20.) We have known, Lord, our impieties and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against you. And He says, both we and our fathers have neglected the precepts of God with the same folly, and the measure of our ancestors has been fulfilled; so that whatever was lacking to them, may be fulfilled by our accumulation. Therefore, concerning Judah, it is said: Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them always be against the Lord: and let their memory be eradicated from the earth (Psalm 108:14).

14:21

(Verse 21.) Do not put us to shame because of your name, and do not bring disgrace upon us. Remember your glorious throne; do not invalidate your covenant with us. We consider not only the Temple of Judah, which has often been destroyed, as the seat of your glory, but also every holy place where, as it is written, you threw down his throne to the ground. It is thrown down and destroyed when it offends God with the multitude of its sins. But even one who perishes by his own fault is sustained by the mercy of the Lord, which changes the severity of the sentence if the Lord invalidates his covenant by which he promised that we would be saved.

14:22

(Verse 22.) Are there any among the idols of the nations that can make it rain? Or can the heavens themselves give showers? Are you not the Lord our God, whom we have waited for? For you have made all these things. After many and various discourses, he returns to the title of the prophecy, in which it is written: that the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah concerning the words of drought. Therefore, what he says is this: because the idols of demons cannot make it rain, nor can the heavens themselves give their own shower, you, Lord our God, whom we have always waited for, in whom we turn our hopes and desires, give us your rain. For all things are yours; and whatever good exists, without you, to whom it belongs, cannot be given. Let us say this also against the heretics, who cannot bestow the rain of doctrine; and although they promise themselves to be heavens and boast about themselves: The heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1): yet they cannot give the downpour of doctrine. For God alone is the one who instructs his people and grants different graces to those who await him.

15:1

(Chapter 15, Verse 1) And the Lord said to me: If Moses and Samuel stood before me (or against me), my soul would not be for this people. For we read that these men resisted the anger of the Lord for the people and turned away the impending judgment. Although, he says, if they were to stand, either in my presence or against me, to whom God said: Let me alone, and I will destroy this people (Exodus 32:10): yet I will not listen, because the sins of the guilty people have been completed.

Drive them (or send them away) from my presence, and let them depart. Sinners do not depart from God by place, but by will: although we read that both Adam and Cain were driven away from the presence of God (Gen. III and VIII).

15:2-3

(Verses 2, 3.) But if they say to you: Where shall we go out? You shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: He who is for death, to death; and he who is for the sword, to the sword; and he who is for famine, to famine; and he who is for captivity, to captivity. And I will visit upon them four kinds, says the Lord: the sword for killing, and dogs for tearing, and birds of the sky and beasts of the earth for devouring and scattering. The four plagues by which the people of the Jews were handed over, as the prophecy of Ezekiel also shows, are the sword, pestilence, famine, beasts, and captivity (Ezek. 14). Among the beasts, dogs and birds are also understood, to whom bodies were given to be torn apart, devoured, and scattered. For it was not possible for the whole creation to rise up against sinners without the Creator being neglected.

15:4

(Verse 4.) And I will give them into the heat (or turmoil and distress) of all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for all that he did in Jerusalem. We read in the Book of Days that Manasseh, after captivity and repentance, returned to Jerusalem and reigned (2 Chronicles 33). But how the merits of the saints descend to their descendants, like David and the others, so the scandals of sin, if their children and grandchildren do similar things, reach to their descendants. But when he says, I will give them heat, or commotion, and distress to the whole earth, it was fulfilled under the Babylonians in part, and now it is being fulfilled completely, when the wicked king, who filled Jerusalem with the blood of the righteous from one gate to another, was imitated by the impious people. From this we learn that peoples are often destroyed by the wickedness of kings, princes, and rulers.

15:5

(Verse 5.) Who will have pity on you, Jerusalem? Or who will grieve for you? Or who will go to ask for your peace? For no one can, having offended God, ask for forgiveness for the sins; for neither can a creature be as merciful as its creator, nor can it be as distant from foreigners as the Lord is inclined to spare his own people.

15:6 (Verse 6.) You have forsaken me, says the Lord: you have gone backward. The reason is given why no one has pity on Jerusalem, nor is she grieved for; nor is she beseeched for the sake of her peace: which, according to the Apostle (Philippians 3), should forget the things that are behind and extend oneself to the things that are before, is on the contrary turned backward, and desires the fleshpots of Egypt. And I will stretch out my hand over you, and I will kill you: I have labored when asked (or asking): for which the Seventy translated: I will by no means let them go any further. The outstretched hand is a sign of striking: the killing of sinners signifies complete anger. But what it brings: I have labored when asked, or asking, has a double meaning, that God may now have failed, frequently forgiving them, and may always be weary, provoking them to salvation.

15:7

(Verse 7.) And I will scatter them with a winnowing fan at the gates of the land (or my people). I have killed and destroyed (Vulgate: scattered and destroyed) my people; yet they have not returned from their wicked ways. What use is it for me to be asked repeatedly, when they do not return from their wicked ways and do not repent? For I have scattered them like chaff, to cleanse my threshing floor. And I scattered them at the gates of the land, to tread upon the thresholds like

the depths of hell. And I killed and destroyed my people, so that, compelled by the necessity of evil, they would avoid impending evil.

15:8

(Verse 8.) Her widows are multiplied to me above the sand of the sea: I have brought upon them the destroyer at noonday: I have sent troubles suddenly upon the cities. With various medicines God desires to save sinners: so that those who despised His gentle entreaties may fear His threatening. Widows are multiplied above the sand of the sea, with men being killed; mothers, with their children being lost, have felt the destroyer, not in the night and by treachery, but in broad daylight: so that He may show the open force of a stronger adversary. He sent, he says, over the cities, no doubt with the intention of causing sudden terror to Judah, and the sinful people, so that the more sudden the disaster was, the more difficult it would be to escape.

15:9

(Verse 9) She has been weakened (or cast aside, or made empty) who gave birth to seven (or many); her soul has failed: the sun has set upon her while it was still day (or midday). She is confused and ashamed: and I will give her remaining ones into the sword in the sight of their enemies, says the Lord. We have often said that the Hebrew word Saba () can mean either seven, or oath, or many. Therefore, there is also a different interpretation: Aquila, the Seventy, and Theodotion translate as seven; Symmachus, as many. Therefore, she who was once wealthy and had children became suddenly bereft and perished in clear light, and she was confused in the solitude of herself. But the remainder, he said, I will deliver to the sword, so that no one may escape the death and wrath of God. Others attribute it to the Synagogue, which was weakened, so that the multitude of the Church might grow; according to what is written: The barren woman has borne seven, or more: and she who had many children was weakened (1 Samuel 2:5). And the sun of justice sets upon him, in whose wings is health (Malachi 4); and therefore it is covered with eternal confusion, destroying its people with a spiritual sword.

15:10

(Verse 10) Woe to me, my mother, why did you give birth to me as a man of strife (or judgment), a man of discord (or one who judges), in the whole world? This can be understood συνεκδοχικῶς from Jeremiah, that he was judged not in the entire world, but in the land of Judah. Truly, it belongs to the Lord, the Savior, who speaks in the Gospel: I have come into this world for judgment, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind (John 9:39), of whom it is written: Behold, he is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (Luke 2:34). For who of the philosophers, who of the pagans, who of the heretics does not judge Christ, affirming the laws of his nativity, passion, and resurrection? No wonder, in accordance with the truth of his assumed body, Christ says: Woe to me, my mother; when in another place it clearly pertains to his person what is said: Woe to me, for I have become like one who gathers stubble in the harvest, and like a cluster of grapes in the vineyard, having no ear of grain to eat as the firstfruits. And so that we may not attribute the worthlessness of our groans to the Word of God, who is this one who weeps, it immediately follows: Woe to me, for my soul has perished in returning from the earth: not because we divide the Persons, as the wicked do; but so that the one and the same Son of God may speak now according to the flesh, now according to

the Word of God.

I have not lent, and no one has lent to me; everyone curses me. In the Septuagint: I have not profited, and no one has profited me. In Theodotion: I have not owed, and no one has owed me. The sense of all these is from the perspective of Christ: No one has offered themselves to receive my debt; and no one has lent to me in supporting the holy and the poor, making me their debtor. Whether I have not profited, and no one has profited me; for no one has desired to receive as much as I have desired to give. No one has been of use to me; for the salvation of the creature is the profit of the Creator. Or certainly no one should have, nor could have, benefitted me: No one has given me as much as I desired to receive, nor made me indebted to them in any way. And this bears repeating: No one should have benefitted me, which means: How could I owe interest to someone who did not deign to receive interest? Everyone, he says, curses me. For who among the heretics and the wanderers does not curse Christ, by believing perverse things and blaspheming even more perversely?

15:11

(Verse 11) The Lord says: If your remnants are not for good, if I do not come to you in the time of affliction and in the time of tribulation and anguish against the enemy. These things can also be understood from the perspective of Jeremiah, who was compelled to prophesy in the worst of times, with captivity imminent, and enduring hardship from an unbelieving people. In response to what he had said before: Woe to me, mother! Why have you birthed me as a man who judges? And I will be distinguished among all the lands and the rest, the Lord answered: Do not consider the present, but the future; for your remnants and last shall be for good. Moreover, in the present when your enemies sought to oppress you, I was with you, and you were protected by my help. This can also be referred to Jeremiah, as well as to the dispensation of the assumed flesh, to the Savior. Because according to the Hebrew interpretation, we have translated it as: All curse me, to the point where it is written, in the time of tribulation against the enemy, in the Vulgate edition it is written as follows: My strength has failed in those who curse me; may it be, O Lord, for those who direct them, if you did not stand by you in their time of affliction, and in their time of tribulation, in good against the enemy. And the meaning is: My strength is weakened in those who curse me. For they do not understand my virtue, which is perfected in weakness, and the more they curse me, the more my strength diminishes in them. And either the Prophet or the Lord joins in, and says: Let it be, Lord ((or Lord)), for those who direct them, that is, let the curses that the enemies speak against me happen to me; and may they be directed to good, if not in the time of their tribulations and distress, when the enemy was ravaging them and hastening to capture them, I stood before you and interceded for them, and I said: Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34). But we often find that Jeremiah also prayed for the people in this volume.

15:12

(Vers. 12.) Will iron be bound to iron by the North Wind, and bronze? Symmachus, Will iron be harmed by iron by the North Wind, and bronze? LXX and Theodotion, If it recognizes iron and a copper covering? It is clear for the sake of variation: for the word 'Jare' () which is written in this place, depending on the ambiguity of the utterance, it can mean both friendship and malice, but if the letter 'Res' is read as 'Daleth' (which is similar to the letter 'Daleth'), it signifies knowledge and

understanding. But what is said must be understood like this: Do not grieve that the people are your enemy; for if you bring them harsh news, those who are harsh cannot love you. Whether it be the Babylonians who come from the North, and are very hard, and resemble unyielding bronze, they will not be able to form a friendship with this more unyielding people. Whether it be that they are as hard as iron, that is, the people of Israel who are unworthy of the knowledge of God, who have reached such great wickedness that they are surrounded by the more unyielding metal of bronze.

15:13-14

(Verse 13, 14) I will give your riches and treasures as plunder, freely (or without payment), for all your sins and in all your territories. And I will bring your enemies (or make your enemies serve you) from a land you do not know: for a fire is kindled in my anger, it shall burn upon you. I will deliver all your substance to your enemies without any payment, because of the sins you have committed in all your territories. Therefore I will bring your enemies, or make them serve you in the land of Chaldea, because my fire, once ignited in my fury, will burn in you and cannot be extinguished. For you have provided the material for your own ardor, so that my fire may consume the wood, hay, and straw that are within you. And so, the cause of the ardor is not in the Lord, but in those who have supplied fuel to the fire.

15:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) You know, O Lord, remember me and visit me, and protect me from those who persecute me. Do not take me in your patience, know that I have endured reproach for you. Your words have been found and I have eaten them (or consume them from those who reject your words). And your word has become joy and gladness to my heart, for the name of the Lord God of hosts has been invoked upon me. What we have said, you know, is not found in the Septuagint. But blessed is that conscience which endures reproach for God. Hence he says: Your words were found by me, which you spoke with my mouth. And I ate them, that is, they were turned into food for me; or according to Symmachus: I received them, that they might be turned into joy for me, who had long been in reproach. Hence even the Babylonians confess that what Jeremiah had predicted was fulfilled: Or this is the meaning: I experienced distress: I endured the hardships of a persecuted people; but nevertheless, I rejoiced that I obeyed your commandments: and for the sake of your name, I endured hardships.

15:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) I did not sit in the council of the jesters, and I boasted (or feared) from the face of your hand: I sat alone, for you filled me with bitterness ((Vulgate: threat)). Why has my pain become perpetual (or why do those who distress me, find comfort) and my incurable wound refuse to be healed (or my strong wound, from where shall I be cured)? It has become to me like the falsehood of unfaithful waters (or like water that deceives and lacks faith). The Hebrews believe that these things are said from the perspective of Jerusalem: that she alone sat, and is filled with bitterness, and her pain has become everlasting; and just as waters pass by, so the words of the Prophets, with which they promised themselves prosperity, have passed falsely. But it is better, if we understand these things to be said from the perspective of the Prophet, by the words of a holy man, who did not sit in the assembly or secret gathering of those who mock, because he feared

the impending hand of God; or rather, boasted that he did not have fellowship with evil. Alone, he said, I was sitting, according to what is written: I did not sit with the council of vanity, and I will not enter with those who do evil. I hated the congregation of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked (Psalm 26: 4, 5). And in another place, I am solitary until I pass through. On your face, he said, your hands, I was sitting alone (Psalm 140: 10), while I fear you, while I always expect your impending hand. I did not want to sit in the council of jesters, but I swallowed my bitterness, so that I might prepare joy for myself in the future. I had no intervals of pain, but I was constantly weighed down by unceasing misery, expecting no remedies. Those who afflicted me prevailed, and my wound became severe. But in this I had consolation, that it was like deceitful water, passing away. Just as passing waters flow and seem to vanish, so too does every attack of my enemies pass by with your help. May the Lord grant that we do not sit in the council of the mockers, or with those who do not consider the future, nor yield to adversity, but always fear God's judgment and say with the Prophet: I sat alone because I am filled with bitterness. Therefore, let him rejoice in the present time, not in the advice of the wise, but in the secret and hidden amusement of the playful; let it be good for me to adhere to God, to place my hope in God, to be satisfied with reproaches, and to await the judgment of my judge: which when the end shall come, will show by its work that all sadness and bitterness has passed like flowing waters.

15:19-21

(Verse 19 onwards) Because of this, the Lord says: If you turn back, I will restore you, and you shall stand before me. And if you separate the precious from the vile, you shall be like my mouth. They will turn to you, but you shall not turn to them. And I will make you to this people a fortified bronze wall; and they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail, for I am with you to save you and deliver you, says the Lord. And I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the hand of the strong (or the pestilent). It is clear that the things mentioned do not pertain to Jerusalem, but rather the Prophet said them. To whom the Lord responded, if you turn the people away from sins, I will turn you from tribulation to joy, and you will stand before my face, just as the Angels stand in the presence of God, seeing His face daily. And if you separate the precious from the vile, you will be like my mouth. Do not think, he says, that there is no reward for good works: if you separate even my saints from the number of sinners with your words, you will be like my mouth, and you will be connected to my commandments. For indeed they should be your imitators, and not you theirs. Do not be dismayed, and say: Why has my pain become perpetual, and my wound strong or hopeless, so that I despair of being able to be healed. For I will give you like a wall of bronze, strongest, so that you may resist the adversary with all strength; and you will have me as a helper and I will free you from the hand of the wicked or the pestilence, and I will redeem you, either with my own blood or for now with my help. Let us consider what reward the teaching of a doctor has, if he is able to free someone from error and lead them out of the number of sinners.

16:1-4

(Chapter XVI—Verse 1 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Do not take a wife, and there shall not be sons and daughters for you in this place. For thus says the Lord concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them, and concerning their fathers, from whose lineage they were born in this land, they shall die by the deaths of sickness: they shall not be mourned, nor shall they be buried; they shall be

like dung on the face of the earth. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, and their corpses shall be food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth. If, in the time of impending captivity, the prophet is forbidden to take a wife, so as not to have the affliction of the flesh; and if he is also tormented by the sorrow of his own wife and the miseries of his children, how much more does the Apostle command (I Cor. VII) that, because the time is shortened and the consummation is at hand, even those who have wives should be as if they had none! Hence the superfluous reproach of the new heretics (Jovinians), by which we have taught that bigamy and trigamy do not come from the law, but from indulgence. For it is one thing to do what is good in itself, another to concede something so as not to do worse. For he himself gives the reasons why he wants young widows to marry, saying: For some of them have already gone astray after Satan (I Tim. 5:15). At the same time, as a teacher of self-control and perpetual chastity, he praises three or four marriages, which I will not so much call marriages as comforts for the wretched and the last hope for shipwrecked souls. Unless perhaps he grants indulgence to his Amazons, that they may experience the wars of desire until decrepit old age. But why the Prophet is prevented from taking a wife is clear, because with the nearby siege, pestilence, sword, and famine, all perish, and such is the number of the dying that the duty of burial is surpassed, but the bodies lie like dung to be torn apart by birds and beasts. And it should be noted that to waste away with sickness and long infirmity is the wrath of God. Thus, Joram son of Josaphat is consumed by illness (2 Chronicles 21). And the Apostle teaches that those who violate holy things become sick, waste away, and die (I Cor. XI).

16:5-8

(Verse 5 onwards) For thus says the Lord: Do not enter the house of the feast, nor go to mourn, nor console them, for I have taken away my peace from this people, says the Lord, mercy and compassion. And the great and the small shall die in this land, they shall not be buried, nor mourned, nor shall they make a cut in themselves, nor shall there be baldness for them. And they shall not break bread among those who mourn, to console them regarding the dead, and they shall not give them the cup of consolation for their father and mother. And do not enter the house of the feast, so that you may sit with them and eat and drink. The Apostle commands that one should not even eat with those who turn away from God (I Cor. V). Furthermore, you should not even greet such people (II John X). And the Savior prohibits the Apostles from greeting anyone on the journey (Luke X). Therefore, Elisha forbids Gehazi from greeting someone while going to heal a boy (IV Kings IV). But it is customary for those in mourning to bear food and prepare a feast, which the Greeks call 'παρθεῖνα' and are commonly known as 'parentalia' by us: because they are celebrated for the parents. Scripture also says elsewhere: 'Give wine to those who are in sorrow' (Prov. XXXI, 6); so that they may forget their sorrow. Therefore, the Prophet is commanded not to console anyone from the people, not to mix with the banquets of God's enemies, and not to celebrate the rites over the funerals of the deceased. For it is one thing to forget by the common law of nature, another thing to kill by the judgement of God. 'I have taken away my peace from that people,' he says, 'and they are unworthy of mercy. I will spare no age, but both the great and the small will perish equally, so that they will even lack a burial.' 'Neither shall they shave their heads,' he says, 'nor shall there be baldness (Al. They shall make no mourning) for them.' This was the custom among the Ancients, and it still persists among some of the Jews today, that they shave their arms and make themselves bald in mourning; and we also read that Job did this (Job. 1 and

22). And it is also said of the prophets, neither shall he break bread among them, nor enter in to mourn, nor give them the cup to drink, nor go into the house of feasting, nor mix with those who are prepared for the word of God. But if this is said of those who are mourning, what will be done with heretics, whose speech spreads like cancer, and who daily lay low in the Church the dead bodies of the deceived?

16:9-12

(Verse 9 onwards) For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will remove from this place in your sight and in your days the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. And when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, 'Why has the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against the Lord our God?' You say to them: 'Because your fathers have forsaken me,' says the Lord, 'and have gone after foreign gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law. But you have done worse than your fathers. When the Church sins, all joy and gladness are taken away from it, of which the Apostle says: Rejoice, again I say, rejoice (Philippians 4:4): The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, of which it is written: He who has the bride is the bridegroom (John 3:29).' But if, he says, the people question you, asking why these sufferings are allowed and seeking the reasons for their miseries, you shall reply to them: Because your fathers have forsaken me, says the Lord, who preside over you in the Churches, and have gone after foreign gods, whose god is their belly, and they serve them for the sake of greed and lust, and their glory is in their shame, and they have worshipped them. For whoever is overcome by someone, becomes their servant. And they worshipped them: For each one worships what they love. And they have forsaken me, and have not kept my law. It is the duty of the priests not only to teach, but also to follow the law: so that they may teach by example, not only by words, the people who are subject to them and the entrusted flock. And lest they should say that the judgment is unjust, it brings forward the saying: 'The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge' (Jeremiah 31), and 'The teeth of the sons shall not be set on edge' (Ezekiel 18). But you have done worse than your fathers; so that just punishments should be inflicted on those who have sinned worse than their fathers.

16:13

(Verse 13) Behold, everyone walks according to the wickedness of their evil heart, so that they may not hear me. And I will cast you out of this land into a land that you and your fathers do not know, and there you will serve foreign gods day and night, who will not give you rest. Once abandoned by the Lord, they do things that are not fitting, so that they may pursue the desires of their evil heart, from which come wicked thoughts (Matthew 15), and therefore they are separated from the Church, to go into a distant land, which neither they nor their fathers knew before they sinned, to serve foreign gods, who are not gods, but are thought to be by those who worship them in error. But what he introduced: Day and night, he shows the continuous perseverance of sinners in wickedness, while they serve both in days of shame and in nights of lust. 'They will not give you rest,' he says. There is no doubt that he signifies false gods, of whom he said: 'And you will serve foreign gods there.' Therefore, whatever we sin, whatever we do day and night, and whatever evil works we commit, is the dominion of demons, who never give us rest, but always impel us to

increase sins with sins, and to make a accumulation of sins.

16:14-15

(Vers. 14, 15.) Therefore, behold, days are coming," says the Lord, "and it will no longer be said, 'As the Lord lives, who brought the children of Israel up from the land of Egypt,' but 'As the Lord lives, who brought the children of Israel up from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had banished them.' For I will restore them to their land that I gave to their ancestors. Clearly, the future restoration of the people of Israel is predicted, and after their captivity comes mercy; which, according to the literal sense, was partially fulfilled under Zerubbabel and the high priest Joshua and Ezra; but according to the spiritual understanding, it is more truly and perfectly fulfilled in Christ. The time will come, he says, when it will no longer be said that the people were brought out of Egypt by Moses and Aaron, but that they were brought out of the land of the North, with Cyrus, the king of the Persians, releasing the captives. And concerning all lands, he says, this will not be fulfilled in the time of Cyrus, but at the very end, as the Apostle says: After the fullness of the Gentiles has entered, then all Israel will be saved (Rom. XI, 25, 26). We can also say this about the persecutions that happen to our people, from the days of Nero, about whom the Apostle writes: And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion (I Tim. IV, 17), up until the times of Maximinus: how the Lord has had mercy on his people and brought them back to their land. Doubtless into the Church, which their fathers received, the Apostles and apostolic men.

16:16-18

(Verse 16 onwards) Behold, I will send many fishermen, says the Lord, and they will catch them. And after this, I will send them many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and from the clefts of the rocks, for my eyes are upon all their ways. They are not hidden from my sight, and their iniquity was not hidden from my eyes. And I will first repay double their iniquities and sins, for they have defiled my land with the carcasses of their idols, and have filled my inheritance with their abominations. There are different interpretations of this chapter. For the Jews, it is believed to refer to the Chaldeans, who are described under the name of fishermen, and later to the Romans, who are compared to hunters, and who hunted down the unfortunate people in the mountains, hills, and caves of the rocks. But the Lord says that He Himself has done this because He has looked upon their ways and has returned upon them the iniquities with which they have polluted the land by worshipping idols and defiling His inheritance with abominations. But our Prophet thinks more rightly and better that these things are prophesied about the future. For as he had said before: I will bring them back to their land, which I gave to their fathers, now he shows how they are to be brought back, that first he should send Apostles, to whom the Savior said: Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matthew 4:19). And afterwards hunters, whom we can understand as either ecclesiastical men or Angels, who, when the time of completion comes, will hunt down all the holy ones from the mountains of lofty doctrines, and from the hills of good works, and from the caves of rocks, to the Apostles and apostolic men. For not only did Christ give the name Rock to Peter the Apostle (I Cor. X, Matt. XVI). In the senses of which, resting rightly, they are said to be transferred from rock. And it shows either the Apostles or those who came after them, having sins, and receiving their double injustices. For the servant who knows his master's will and does not do it, will be beaten with many blows (Luke XII). And it should be known that in Hebrew it is placed first, and in the Septuagint edition it was omitted. But when he

says, 'I will first repay them double for their iniquities and their sins,' he indicates that after they have received evil, they will also receive good. However, those who will be transferred later have defiled the land of the Lord with the corpses of their idols and with their abominations they have filled his inheritance, so that the whole world may be subject to God, and may be preserved not by their own merit, but by his mercy. This we have inserted from the Hebrew: 'They are not hidden from my face,' which is not found in the Septuagint.

16:19

(Verse 19) Lord, you are my strength and my refuge in the day of trouble (or evil). All human strength, without the power of God, which is Christ, is considered weak and worthless. Therefore, we must turn to the Lord and say: Lord, you have become our refuge, from generation to generation (Psalm 89:1). And in another place: Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1). But this tribulation, or evil, is to be understood, of which the Apostle says: That he might deliver us from this present wicked world: And, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Gal. 1:4).

16:20 (Verse 20) To you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth and say: Truly, our fathers have possessed a lie, vanity that has not profited them. Septuagint: To you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth, and say: How have our fathers possessed false idols, and there is no profit in them? After Israel was expelled and carried away by fishermen and hunters, a multitude of nations is subsequently called to faith and confesses that their fathers were involved in prior error. But those who say, 'How did our fathers possess false idols, in which there is no utility?' confess that the things they pass by are true, and supported by every defense. Does a man make gods for himself when they are not gods themselves? And this is what the nations, who came to the Savior from the ends of the earth, speak, or rather are called, as they expose both their own ignorance and that of their ancestors, because they thought that gods were made by man, when it is actually men who make gods.

16:21

(Verse 21.) Therefore behold, I will show them in turn this: I will show them my hand and my power, and they will know that my name is the Lord. The hand of God by which he has accomplished all things, and the power, of which the Apostle said: Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24), is revealed to the Gentiles, through the completion of the Son's passion. And beautifully he said: I will show them in turn this: but I will show them openly, and not as before, in shadow and in image, and in the prophecy of future things, so that after they have known, they may know my name, and hear from the Son: Father, I have manifested your name to men (John 17).

17:1

(Chapter 17, Verse 1) The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen, engraved with an adamantium nail, upon the width (or height) of their hearts (or in the depth of their hearts), and upon the horns of their altars (or thrones). Concerning the nations that have turned to the Lord, it has been said: Behold, I will show them in turn, I will show them my hand and my power. Now, speaking of Israel who is rejected: The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen, engraved with an adamantium nail, and so on. Why the Septuagint has been omitted, I do not know; unless perhaps they spared their

own people: just as it is clear in Isaiah that they did so: Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for why should he be esteemed? (Isaiah 2:22); and many similar things, which if I wanted to arrange them all, it would not be a book, but books. Because his mercy is confirmed upon us, and the truth of the Lord remains forever (Psalm 116, 1, 2). And concerning those whom he said to Moses: Let me alone, that I may destroy this people, and make you into a great nation (Exodus 32, 10). But the sin of the Jews is indelible, and, so to speak, cannot be abolished by any means; it is written with an iron stylus on an adamant nail, which in Hebrew is called Samir (); not that there is any nail that is called Samir; but that the adamant stone (which has received this name because it is untamable and unbreakable) has such brilliance and lightness that it can be written on without any impediment with an iron stylus: so that the hard material of iron may write on the harder adamant tablet, and what is written may endure forever. For they themselves said: 'His blood be upon us and upon our children' (Matthew 27). Therefore, it has been written or engraved on the horns of their altars or shrines, so that sacrilegious works may be remembered forever. But if this is the case, where is that which an old woman madly fabricates, that a person can be without sin if they wish, and that God's commandments are easy?

17:2-3

(Verse 2, 3.) When their sons remember their altars, and the groves of trees and leafy branches on the high mountains, sacrificing in the field, I will give your strength and all your treasures to plunder. Your lofty places will be destroyed because of your sins in all your borders. And you will be left alone in the inheritance that I gave you, and I will make your enemies serve you in a land that you do not know, because you kindled the fire in my anger, and it will burn forever. And these are not found in the Septuagint, for the same reason (as I believe) that we have mentioned above, namely, lest the eternal sentence should remain against them. 'You shall be left,' He says, 'alone from your inheritance, which I gave you, and I will make you serve your enemies in a land which you do not know, either under the Babylonians or, as is more accurate, under the Romans. For they themselves have kindled the fire and provoked the most merciful Lord to anger, whose fire of fury will burn forever.' I am ashamed of our argument, which disputes the truth of the Hebrews. The Jews read against themselves, and the Church does not know what is in their favor. Thus, we, who are the sons of the Apostles, remember the injustices of the previous people and testify that they suffered justly. However, the high places, which are called Bamoth in Hebrew, can also be understood as a reference to the heretics who have exalted themselves, and their language has spread throughout the land. Those who have burst forth into such great madness, that they have remained alone without the grace of the Holy Spirit, and have lost the inheritance of the Lord, namely the prior truth of faith. Hence, eternal fire is prepared for them, and the servitude of demons, who are enemies and avengers.

17:5-6

(Verses 5, 6.) Thus says the Lord: Cursed is the man who trusts (or has hope) in man, and relies on flesh for his strength, and turns his heart away from the Lord. He will be like a shrub in the desert, and will not see when good comes; but he will live in dryness in the desert, in a land of salt and uninhabitable. If every man is cursed who trusts in man, then Paul of Samosata and Photinus, although they proclaim the Savior as holy and surpassing all virtues, still confess him as a man; therefore, they will be cursed for having hope in man. But if it is opposed to us, that we also

believe in him who says: Now you seek to kill me, a man who has spoken the truth to you, which I have heard from God, Abraham did not do this: you do the works of your father. (John 8:40) We will respond with that of the Apostles: And if we have known Christ according to the flesh at some time, but now we no longer know him. Finally, the same Apostle writes in the beginning of his letter to the Galatians: Paul, an Apostle, not from men, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead, and who are with me all the brethren. (Galatians 1:1-2). For if death was swallowed up in victory (Hosea 13), why did not the lowliness of the flesh, which was assumed for the salvation of mankind, pass into the majesty of divinity, so that it might make both one; and we do not worship the creature, but the Creator, who is blessed forever? Therefore, he is cursed, not only who has hope in man, but who puts his trust in the flesh, that is, his own strength, and whatever he accomplishes, considers it to be not of the mercy of the Lord, but of his own power. For whoever does this, departs from the heart of the Lord, asserting that he can do what he cannot. And he will be like myrtle, which in Hebrew is called *Aroer*, or as Symmachus interpreted, a fruitless tree in the desert. And he will not see the good things that the multitude of nations will see when they come, but he will dwell in dryness in the desert. This is said of the people of Judah who dwell in the desert, do not bear fruit, and live in a land of salt, which produces no fruit, and is uninhabitable, having no guest of God, nor the protection of angels, nor the grace of the Holy Spirit, nor the knowledge of teachers.

17:7-8

(Vers. 7, 8.) Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and the Lord will be his hope (or confidence): and he will be like a tree, which is transplanted (or fruitful) over the waters, which sends its roots to the moisture, and will not fear when heat comes: and its leaves will be green (or its branches flourishing), and in the time of drought it will not be anxious (or will not fear) nor will it ever cease to bear fruit. Let this be said about the Jews and heretics, who have hope in man, namely in their Christ, whom they think to be not the Son of God, but a pure man who is to come. On the other hand, the man of the Church, who has confidence in the Lord, hears this: 'And know that the Lord himself is God' (Psalm 99:3). He has confidence in the Lord, and he will be compared to that tree, about which it is also sung in the first psalm: 'And he will be like a tree, planted near the streams of water, which will bear its fruit in due season, and its leaves will not wither.' But over the waters, the grace of the Holy Spirit, various gifts. He sends his roots to the moisture: so that he may receive abundance from the Lord. But we can also say in another way, that we have been translated from Jewish dryness into the eternal grace of baptism. And he will not fear, he says, when the heat comes, or the time of persecution, or the day of judgment: And its leaf will be green, or there will be leafy branches in it: so that he may never fear dryness, but may bring forth the grace of all virtues. And when the time, or year, of dryness comes, it will not be afraid, when the Lord, angry, commands the clouds not to rain upon Israel (Isaiah 5). And what follows: it will not cease to bear fruit, that place which is written in Mark, when the Lord comes to the fig tree, and does not find fruit in it, because it was not yet the time, and curses it, so that it does not bear fruit forever, can explain (Mark 11). For whoever trusts in the Lord, the Lord is his confidence, even in times of drought he will not fear; but he will always bring forth fruit, believing in him who once died for us and will never die again (Romans VI), and he says: I am the life (John XIV, 6).

17:9-10

(Verse 9, 10.) The heart of all is perverse and inscrutable, who can understand it? I am the Lord, searching the heart and testing the kidneys, who gives to each according to their ways and according to the fruit of their inventions. LXX: The heart is deep above all, and man is, who can know him? and so on. The Hebrew word Enos is written with four letters, Aleph and Nun and Vau and Sin. Therefore, if Enos is read, it means 'man', but if Anus, it is inscrutable or desperate, because no human heart can find it. But Symmachus interpreted this passage as follows: Inscrutable is the heart of all: but who is the man that can find it? Some of ours, indeed, with good intentions, but not according to knowledge, use this passage against the Jews, because He is called Lord and Savior, according to the dispensation of the assumed flesh, and no one can know the mystery of His birth, according to what is written: Who shall declare His generation? (Isaiah 53:8) Unless God alone who searches the depths and renders to each according to his works. However, it is better that we simply accept that no one knows the secrets of our thoughts except God alone. For as it was said above: Cursed is the man who has hope in man. And conversely: Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. Hence, in order for us not to think that the judgment of men is certain, it was introduced that the hearts of almost all are perverse, as the Psalmist says: Cleanse me from my hidden faults, and spare your servant from the faults of others (Psal. 19:13): undoubtedly referring to thoughts. And in Genesis: But God, seeing that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that every thought and intent of the heart was inclined towards evil at all times (Gen. 6:5). And again: For the sense and thought of the human heart are prone to evil from their youth (Gen. 8:21). From this we learn that only God knows our thoughts. But if it is said of the Savior: But Jesus, seeing their thoughts (Luke 9:17); and no one can see their thoughts except God alone; therefore Christ is God, who searches the hearts, and tests the kidneys; and rewards each one according to their works (Ps. 7).

17:11

(Verse 11.) The partridge hatches (or gathers) what it did not lay. (And as the Septuagint translated: The partridge cried out, it gathered what it did not lay.) It acquired its riches not with justice. In the middle of its days, it will leave them (or in the middle of its days, they will leave it) and in its last days, it will be foolish. Writers of natural history, both of animals and birds, as well as of trees and plants (of whom the Greek leaders are, Aristotle and Theophrastus, and among us, Pliny the Second), say that this is the nature of the partridge, to steal the eggs of another partridge, that is, to steal from another, and to incubate and care for them: and when the offspring grow up, to fly away from them, and leave behind their adoptive parent. Such are the wealthy who plunder others, and without the consideration of God's judgment, amass riches without judgment, which they leave behind in the midst of time, taken away by sudden death, when it is said to them: Fool, this night they will demand your soul from you, what you have prepared, whose will it be? And nothing is more foolish than not to foresee the last things, and to consider the fleeting as eternal. Others, however, interpret the partridge to be the most aggressive and unclean bird both because of the earlier historical account and because of another reason they state, in that it contaminates the defeated, and they interpret the devil under its name, because it has gathered riches for itself, saying to the Lord: All these things I will give to You, if You fall down and worship me (Matthew 4:9). Those riches that were gathered poorly by him will be abandoned, and they will be converted (or rather, restored) to the Lord through the Apostles; and the one who seemed to be the most prudent to himself will be considered foolish by the judgment of all. And what is said by

the LXX: The partridge cried out, is to be referred to the person of the heretics, that this partridge, the devil, cried out through the leaders of the heretics, and gathered what it did not bear, and gathered a multitude of those it deceived, which it will later dismiss; and it will be proven most foolish by the judgment of all.

17:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) The throne of glory on high from the beginning, the place of our sanctification. The expectation of Israel, O Lord, all those who forsake you shall be put to shame, those who turn away shall be written (or described) on the earth; for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain (or source) of living waters. Declare them because of their foolishness, the expectation of Israel, that is, the people of God and believers in the Lord, He is the one who made all things; whose throne is glorious and exalted from the beginning, and the place of sanctification for all believers, so that the Lord is not in a place, but that wherever He is, that place may be sanctified. On the other hand, those who forsake the Lord will be confounded with everlasting confusion, and those who depart from Him or turn away from Him will be written on the ground, deleted from the book of the living. Just as it is written of those who dwell in heaven that our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3), so those who forsake the Lord or turn away from Him will be written on the earth with those who have earthly desires. And the reason is clear why they are written on the earth: because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of life, or the Lord, the fountain of living waters, as spoken in the Gospel: If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink; whoever believes in me, as Scripture says, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But He said this about the Spirit, whom believers in Him were going to receive (John 7:37, 38).

17:14

(Verse 14) Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise. In the Gospel (Matthew 9), many physicians had cured the woman with the issue of blood, who had lost all her substance on them, yet she could not be healed by anyone except by Him who is the true physician, and whose healing is in His wings. Therefore, even now, the Prophet, having suffered reproaches from the people and being constantly surrounded by snares, desires to be healed and saved by Him whose true praise and true medicine He is.

17:15-17

(Verse 15 onwards) Look, they say to me: Where is the word of the Lord? Let it come. But I am not troubled, following you as a shepherd (or not laboring, following you), and I have not desired the day of man: you know. What has come out of my lips has been right in your sight (or before your face). Do not be a source of fear to me, you are my hope in the day of affliction (or do not become a stranger to me, sparing me on the worst day). Those who do not believe in the future, speak to the Prophet: Where is the word of the Lord? Let us come: considering the dissimulation of judgment, thinking of delay. But to those, he says, speaking these things, I am not troubled, nor have I labored following you as a shepherd, either entering your footsteps. Nor was I satisfied with this end, but I did not desire the day of man, either a longer life, or the prosperous things of this age. And he calls himself a witness, whom he also calls a judge: You know. He continues: What has come forth from my lips, was right in your sight; that he has never lied, and never spoke against the will of the Lord. Be not to me, he says, a source of fear, my hope in the day of affliction.

Which is clear according to the Hebrew. But according to what the Seventy translated, saying: Do not become a stranger to me, sparing me in the day of evil, the meaning is: Do not spare me in the present age, which is evil; but repay me according to my sins, so that I may have eternal rest. For I know it is written: Whom the Lord loves, he chastises; and he scourges every son whom he receives (Hebrews XII, 6). But this day is evil, either the entire age, or the day of judgment, for those who suffer because of their sins.

17:18

(Verse 18.) Let those who pursue me be put to shame, while I am not put to shame. Let them fear, while I do not fear. Bring upon them the day of affliction, and crush them with double contrition. The Prophet curses against them, who reproach him with the word of the Lord, and say: Where is the word of the Lord? Let it come, that those who pursue him may be put to shame and may be ashamed and may return to salvation, so that they may fear the liars and not the one who predicts the truth. And when the day of vengeance comes, it will crush them with a twofold affliction, hunger and sword.

17:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) This is what the Lord says to me: Go and stand at the gate (or gates) of the people's children: through which the kings of Judah enter and exit, in all the gates of Jerusalem. And you shall say to them; Listen to the word of the Lord, kings of Judah, and all Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter through these gates. Because, he says, they despise hearing your words, and they do not come to you to seek the wisdom of God, you go to the most famous place, either the gate of the temple or the gate of the city, through which the kings and the entire crowd enter and exit, so that they may be compelled by necessity to hear, and you shall proclaim the word of the Lord continuously, whether convenient or inconvenient (1 Timothy 4): and no excuse shall remain among them, that they did not do it because they did not hear.

17:20-27

(Verse 20 and following) Thus says the Lord: Guard your souls, and do not carry burdens on the Sabbath day, or bring them through the gates of Jerusalem. And do not cast burdens out of your houses on the Sabbath day, and you shall not do any work, and sanctify the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. But they did not listen, nor inclined their ear, and they stiffened their necks (and what is not found in Hebrew, against their fathers), so that they would not listen to me, and would not receive discipline. And it will be, says the Lord, if you listen to me, that you shall not carry burdens through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, and if you sanctify the Sabbath day and do not do any work on it, then the kings and princes occupying the throne of David shall enter through the gates of this city. They shall arrive in chariots and on horses, along with their princes, the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And this city shall be inhabited forever. And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the surrounding of Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plains, and from the mountains, and from the south, bearing burnt offerings and sacrifices (or incense) and grain offerings (or manna) and frankincense, and they shall bring an offering (or praise) into the house of the Lord. But if you will not listen to me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to carry burdens, and not to bring them in through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces

of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched. I decided to disregard the commandment of the Sabbath restored through Jeremiah in vain, so that we may understand all at the same time. He who does not carry the burdens of sins on the day of rest and Sabbath guards his soul: nor does he bring them through the gates of Jerusalem, which virtues we should receive. And do not, he says, cast off burdens from your houses. For they are not to be carried, but to be completely cast away. And do not do any work, either servile or that which is written: 'Food for the stomach and the stomach for food,' but God will destroy both this and that (I Cor. VI, 13); but that work must be done, of which the Savior speaks; 'Work for the work that does not perish' (John VI, 27). Sanctify, he says, the Sabbath day, so that we may spend all the time of our life in sanctification, just as our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did. And when God commanded these things, they did not incline their ear, certainly not their mind, nor their flesh; but they hardened their neck, rejecting the yoke of the Law, and having a likeness to untamed animals by metaphor. Let us see what is the reward of those who do not bear the burdens of the Sabbath day and sanctify it. Kings will enter through the gates of this city, whose heart is in the hand of God, and who reign over their bodies (Prov. 21); and princes sitting on the throne of David, in order to imitate the example of Christ, and those who ride in chariots and on horses, of whom it is written: The chariots of God are ten thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place (Psalm 68:17). And elsewhere: Your horses are a salvation (Habakkuk 3:8). Every man who confesses God and dwells in Jerusalem, of which it is said: His place is in Salem (or Jerusalem), that is, in peace, and his dwelling is in Zion (Psalm 75:2), and the Church of God will dwell there forever. They will come from the cities of Judah and from around Jerusalem, of which we have already spoken, and from the land of Benjamin, who is the son of strength and the right hand, and from the plains, which in Hebrew is called Sephela, and it signifies a plain understanding of history, and from the mountains, namely the lofty doctrines, and from the South, of which it is written: God will come from the South (Habakkuk 3:3). Where there is heat and full light, and where all cold is expelled: Carrying, he says, holocausts, consecrating themselves to God, and a victim, or incense, so that they may say: 'A sacrifice of a broken spirit, O Lord' (Psalm 50:19). And, we are a sweet odor of Christ in every place (1 Corinthians 2:15). And elsewhere: 'Let my prayer be directed as incense in your sight' (Psalm 140:2). And the sacrifice, for which the 70 translators themselves put down the Hebrew word Manaa, which, by a most wicked custom, indeed the negligence of the scribes, is read as manna in our language. And thus, concerning which it is written: 'Why do you bring me frankincense from Sheba?' (Jeremiah 6:20) And they bring an offering, which in Hebrew is called Thoda, and can be translated into a thanksgiving. And which praise the Septuagint translated. Into the house of David, no doubt into the Church. These are the rewards of those who sanctify the Sabbath and are not burdened with any weight. But if, he says, you do not listen to my commandments, and do what I have not commanded to be done: I will kindle a fire in its gates, that is, in Jerusalem, about which it is said: 'All of them, like a baker's oven, their hearts' (Hosea 7:4): who devour houses or streets of Jerusalem, which the LXX translated as alleys, Aquila and Symmachus as turrets, and are called Armanoth in Hebrew. And this fire will never be extinguished, as the Apostle says: Each one's work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work (1 Cor. 3:13). And again: If anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss but yet will be saved - even though only as one escaping through the flames (ibid., 15). But if our Judaizing opponents reject this figurative interpretation, they will either be compelled to be Jews and

observe the Sabbath and circumcise foreskins, or certainly censure the Savior who commanded the paralyzed man on the Sabbath to take up his bed, as the Evangelist says: Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God (John 5:18).

Book Four Book Four The devil always threatens good work ((Perhaps he envies it)) and sets traps for those who walk everywhere, as the Prophet narrates about his minions' snares: 'They set a stumbling block for me beside the path' (Psalm 139:6), and the Gospel (Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8) provides a more complete instruction, explaining that birds of the air snatch and scatter seeds thrown along the way. Brother Eusebius, the following discourse will reveal why I have used this principle. Being occupied with the cares of the multitude converging from all over the globe, as well as with the duties of the Holy Brothers and the monastery, I was dictating commentaries on Jeremiah at intervals, so that what was lacking in leisure might be made up for by industry. However, suddenly the heresy of Pythagoras and Zeno, the apathy and sinlessness, that is, impassibility and impeccability, which was once crushed in Origen and then in his disciples Grunnius, Evagrius Ponticus, and Jovinian, began to revive and not only hissed in the Western, but also in the Eastern parts, and stained many people in certain islands, especially Sicily and Rhodes, and increased day by day, while they teach in secret and deny publicly. Remaining silent for a long time, he swallowed his grief in silence, compelled by his brothers' reproach: yet I have not yet broken out to name the authors, preferring them to be corrected rather than disgraced (or imitated, as Alexander reads). For I am an enemy not of men, but of error: who, to exact retribution on me and to inflict their genuine pain (or sweat, as Alexander reads), concocted slanders against the ancient masters, they were so tongue-tied (or double-tongued) and pitiable that they were not even able to speak ill in their own words. At that time, with the publication of books against them, the nonsense was refuted, which those who wish to read will see clearly that they are like dogs, as Isaiah says, who do not know how to bark: they have the will and rage to lie, but they do not have the skill of pretending and barking (Isa. 56). In brief, I will say this to them: Either the things you teach are good, or they are bad. If they are good, defend them freely; if they are bad, why do you secretly kill the miserable ones with deception, and openly expose those who are simple-minded to deceive them? If it is true, why is it hidden? If it is false, why is it written? I ask, what is this madness? The apostle commands (1 Peter 3) that we be prepared to give a reason to everyone who asks us about the hope that we have within us, and the Prophet declares: I spoke of your testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed (Psalm 119:46). These people flee from public view and whisper in the corners of the wicked, grieving as if for their own sins, which they fear to confess. And when we have spoken generally against vices and heretics, they complain that they are being attacked; and with hidden malice they pronounce long-lasting indignation. But if we must beware of harming our long-standing relationship, if we cut off the most arrogant heresy with the spiritual sword, then we must endure the crosses of faith that have been handed down to us, and say with the Prophet: I am surrounded by misery, while the thorn is being pierced into me (Psalm 31:4). Rather, let them listen to that Apostolic saying: It is necessary to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29; Gal. 1). And again: If I were pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ. However, we will carry out these things more fully in practice, unless they keep silent. Now let us proceed with the work begun on Jeremiah, and briefly pass over the fourth volume on him, focusing only on those things that were obscure.

18:1-10

(Chapter XVIII — Verses 1 and following) The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there you shall hear my words. So I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he was working on a wheel (or stones). And the vessel that he was making of clay with his hands was spoiled in his hands; so he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to him to do. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Can I not do with you, house of Israel, as this potter does? (Vulgate: Can I not, according to the Hebrew?) The Lord says, behold, as clay in the hand of a potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. Suddenly (or at the highest point), I will speak against a nation and against a kingdom, to uproot (or remove) and to destroy, and to utterly destroy it. If that nation turns away from the evil that I have spoken against it, I will relent and not carry out the harm that I planned to do to it. And suddenly (or at the highest point), I will speak about a nation and a kingdom, to build and to plant it. If he does evil in my eyes, so that he does not hear my voice, I will repent of the good that I have spoken to do to him. It is through all the senses that one arrives at the judgment and understanding of the mind, through hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, but it is retained more by the mind, which is seen by the eyes. Hence, the Prophet is commanded to go to the house of the potter and there to hear the commandments of the Lord. And when, he says, I had gone and descended into the house of the potter, he himself was working on the wheel, which, enticed by the ambiguity of the seventy-word, the stones were moved. For by Abanim, that is, the wheel of the potter, is meant the quality and diversity of the place and the pronunciation, and the instrument, that is, the wheel of the potter, and the stones. And when, he said, I saw a vessel being made of clay, suddenly it was dissipated, by the providence of God acting, so that the hand of the craftsman, while unaware, would shape a parable by its own mistake. And that potter, who had lost the vessel made of clay, with the wheel spinning, made another for himself as he saw fit. And immediately the Lord said to the Prophet: If the potter, he said, has the power to make again from the same clay what had been dissipated: I, in you, who as far as is possible in you, seem to have perished, will I not be able to do this? And in order to signify free will, he says that he both announces evil to a nation and kingdom, or to that one, and again good things: yet not that this will actually happen that he himself has predicted; but rather the opposite will occur, so that good things happen to evil people if they have repented, and bad things happen to good people if they have turned to sin after making promises. And we say this, not because God is unaware that this or that nation or kingdom will come into existence, but because he allows a person to follow their own will, so that they may receive rewards or punishments according to their own choice and their own merit. Not immediately will everything that happens be the accomplishment of man, but of his grace who has bestowed all things: so that the freedom of choice must be reserved, in such a way that the grace of the bestower excels in all things, according to that prophetic saying: Unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that build it. Unless the Lord guards the city, he watches in vain who guards it (Psalm 126:1-2). For it is not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs, but of God who shows mercy (Romans 9).

18:11-13

(Vers. 11-13.) Now therefore say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Thus says the Lord: Behold, I am devising evil against you and devising a plan against you. Return everyone from his evil way, and amend your ways and your deeds. But they say, That is in vain! We will follow our own plans, and will every one act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart.

Therefore, thus says the Lord: Inquire of the nations, who has heard such dreadful things, which the virgin of Israel has done exceedingly? The Lord fulfills the parable which He had taught by both His words and His appearance, and He says: Behold, I am devising evil against you, like a potter shaping clay. But the evil mentioned by Isaiah, who says, 'Making peace and creating evil' (Isa. 45:7), is not evil in itself, but appears as evil to those who suffer it. And I am pondering a plan against you, that is, to pass judgment according to your deserts. Change your ways, and direct your paths, so that punishment may be changed to prosperity. Those, he said, who have spoken otherwise: We will be strengthened, namely in evil works, or according to Aquila, we have despaired, and according to Symmachus, we have fallen away, both of which offend God; so that either he thinks he cannot be saved at all, or he has fallen away in his mind to appease God. And after our thoughts, he said, we will go. Where then is there free will without the grace of God, and judgment of one's own will, when it is a great offense to follow one's own thoughts and to do the will of an evil heart? Therefore he brings this forward, saying: Inquire of the nations, and all the nations around, who has done this, who has heard of serving idols, what great things the virgin Israel has done? And he calls her a virgin because she has served only one God, as the Prophet says: God is known in Judah, his name is great in Israel (Psalm 75:2).

18:14

(Verse 14.) Will the snow of Lebanon's mountain fail from the rock of the field? Or can the rushing, cold waters be removed? Septuagint: Will the breasts fail from the rock, or the snow from Lebanon, or will the violently lifted water decline? It sounds like something similar to Virgil's (Eclogue I, 60 seq.)

Therefore, the gentle deer will feed in the sky, and the naked fish will leave the straits on the shore, before her face glides in our breast. And in another place (Aeneid. I, 611 seqq.)

While the rivers flow in the seas, while the shadows traverse the mountains, while the vaulted sky feeds the stars, your honor, name, and praises shall always remain. Just as, he says, the snow cannot fail from the summits of Lebanon; nor can it be overcome by any amount of sunlight so as to melt entirely; and the flowing streams from the mountains, by no means dry up in the fountains: so my name, which is steadfast of its own accord and everlasting, cannot be changed, and yet when all the other things of nature observe their order, my people have forgotten me. Sequitur enim:

18:15

(Verse 15) Because my people have forgotten me, offering sacrifices in vain and stumbling in their ways, in the paths of the world (or eternal) in order to walk through them on an untrodden journey. Whoever forgets God and forsakes him, who says: 'I am the way' (John 14:6); offers sacrifices to foreign gods, stumbles in his own ways, not God's, and forsakes the ancient and eternal paths, which are trodden by the footsteps of all who worship God. But these truly have walked on an untrodden path, and having abandoned the worship of God, they have revered idols, for which the punishment that follows is inflicted.

18:16

(Verse 16.) So that their land became a desolation and an eternal hissing, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and shake his head. And because they have forsaken the worship of God and followed the wicked paths of idolatry, therefore their land has been reduced to a wilderness and a wonder of all hissing, so that those who once saw the land and the flourishing city now see it as a desert and a heap of ashes, and they marvel and are astonished, and show the confusion of their souls by the movement of their bodies; for this is to shake the head and demonstrate the astonishment of the mind in silence. That which we understand to be more fully and accurately fulfilled after the coming of the Lord, when no Jew is allowed to enter the land and the holy City by law; but when they come to the earth, they marvel and weep over the prophecies of the Prophets, fulfilled by their deeds.

18:17

(Verse 17) Like a burning wind, I will scatter them before the enemy (or enemies); I will show them my back, not my face, on the day of their destruction. Until this day, God's judgment remains on the Jews. They were scattered before the enemy devil or enemy demons throughout the entire world; and as they invoke the name of God in the synagogues of Satan day and night, God shows them his back, not his face, so that they may understand that he is constantly withdrawing and never coming to them. But this is the time of the destruction of the Jews, from the passion of the Savior until the end of the age: so that after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel may be saved (Rom. 11).

18:18

(Verse 18) And they said: Come, let us devise schemes against Jeremiah, for the law will not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us attack him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to all his words. These are the thoughts of the Jews against Jeremiah, or the Lord Savior, then and today, of the heretics against his servants, to construct calumnies and preempt the holy men with accusations, not considering what they speak of truth, but what they fabricate in lies. For they boast in their priests, and in their wise men, and in their false prophets, that the law and counsel of God, and the word, will remain, as the Scripture says: Wisdom will not enter a malicious soul.

18:19-21

(Verse 19 and following) Attend, O Lord, to me: and hear the voice of my adversaries. Is evil repaid for good, because they have dug a pit for my soul? Remember that I stood in your presence, to speak good for them, and to turn away your wrath from them. Therefore, let their children become a byword, and let them be led into the hands of the sword. May their wives be without children and widows, and may their husbands be killed by death, may their young men be pierced by the sword in battle, may the cry be heard from their houses. Indeed, these things were suffered by the people of Judah under the type of the Savior, which were subsequently fulfilled more fully and perfectly in Christ. And after the coming of the Babylonians, they were devastated. But they were completely fulfilled in Christ, and after the city was destroyed by the Roman sword, they were put to death, not because of idolatry, which was not present at that time, but because of the killing of the Son of God, when the whole people cried out together: Take him away, take him away; we have no king but Caesar (John 19:15). And their curse is a complete eternal damnation;

His blood is upon us, and upon our children (Matthew 27:25). For they dug a pit for Christ, and said: Let us remove him from the land of the living (Isaiah 53:8). He showed them such great mercy, that while standing in the presence of the Father, he spoke good things for them, to turn away his anger from them, even saying on the cross: Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34). We hasten through the obscure, in order to dwell in the clearer things, by no means interpreting the delusions of certain individuals or the captivity of the celestial Jerusalem, but rather pursuing a clear history and a most evident prophecy, with every confidence in words and meanings.

18:22-23

(Vers. 22, 23.) For he brings upon them suddenly a robber, because they dug a pit to capture me, and hid snares for my feet. But you, Lord, know all their counsel against me to bring about my death. Do not forgive their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from your sight. Let them be overthrown (or let them stumble) before you; in the time of your anger, deal with them (or do to them). If we understand this from Jeremiah, let us refer the sudden robber to Nebuchadnezzar; if we understand it from the Savior, which is both truer and better, let us refer it to the Roman army. And so that the sentence of God may not seem unjust, he explains what they did against the Son of God, Christ, and what they suffered. But what he concludes, that you may not show favor to their wickedness, and their sin may not be blotted out from your presence, is by no means contrary to the previous sentence, in which he intercedes for the people to the Father; but after the time for repentance has passed, and they persist in their wickedness, the people and the elders are punished not so much for themselves as for others, so that their unavenged sin may not harm others by example. And what he brings forward: That those who stumble, or fall, in your sight, are similar to that of Isaiah and the Apostle Peter. And you will not stumble like on a stone of offense, and a rock of scandal (Isaiah VIII, 14; I Peter II, 8). The Prophet also mentions this in the Psalms: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This has been done by the Lord (Psalm CXVII, 22).

19:1-3

(Chapter 19, verses 1 and following) Thus says the Lord: Go, and take the potter's earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests, and go forth into the valley of the son of Ennom, which is by the entry of the earthen gate (or Charsith); and there you shall proclaim (or cry out, or read) the words that I shall speak to you, and you shall say: Hear the word of the Lord, kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem. For the potter's bottle, which is called 'Bocboc' in Hebrew, the Septuagint translated it as 'doliolum', and for the earthen gate, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion put the Hebrew word 'Harsith'. For this, the Septuagint, according to their custom of aspirating the letter 'Heth', added the Greek letter 'Chi', so that they would say 'Charsith' instead of 'Arsith', just as they say 'Chebron' for 'Hebron', and 'Jericho' for 'Jeriho'. But divine Scripture wants to instruct the people not only with their ears, but also with their eyes. For what is seen is more retained in the mind than what is heard: 'Take,' he says, 'your little bottle or earthenware jar as a witness, and go out to the valley of the sons of Hinnom, of which we have spoken before, where there is a temple of Baal, and a grove, and a grove irrigated by Siloam's springs. The valley itself, he says, is next to the gate, which in Hebrew is called Harsith, that is, earthenware.' And you will proclaim, or read there the words that I speak to you: so that

they may hear what I am going to say. And as we have already said, you will proclaim, and cry out, and read it, because the Hebrew word Carath (כרת), signifies these three things. And she wants both the kings of Judah to hear, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that is, both the royal lineage, and the whole people, so that those who refuse to listen may be without excuse.

19:4-6

(Verses 4-6.) Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring calamity (or evil) upon this place, such that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle, because they have forsaken me and have made this place a foreign land, and have burned incense in it to foreign gods, whom they and their fathers and the kings of Judah did not know. And they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent, and have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, something that I did not command (or think), nor did it come into my mind. And certain individuals foolishly refer this place to the heavenly Jerusalem. Lest we always remind, it suffices to have said this only: that this kind of explanation is to be avoided, indeed it is heresy, which clearly subverts and attempts to introduce certain deceits to the Churches of Christ. But there is no doubt that they placed the idol Baal in the Temple of God, whether in the shrine that was in the valley of the son of Hinnom, where the grove of Baal and his altar were located, on which they sacrificed and burned their children. What the Lord neither thought nor spoke, nor did they ascend into his heart. Not that God does not know the future, but because he says that he chooses not to know unworthy things, according to the words of the Gospel: Depart from me, workers of iniquity, I do not know you (Luke 13:27). For the Lord knows those who are his (2 Timothy). And, Whoever is ignorant, let him be ignorant (1 Corinthians 14:38). Or certainly in a human way, and these things must be understood about God, as well as others. But every heretic forsakes God and makes room for the dwelling of God, whom he has defiled by his deceit and offers sacrifices to foreign gods, whom neither he nor his fathers knew, namely the Apostles and apostolic men; but the kings of Judah, that is, the patriarchs of heretics, fill the place of God once with the blood of deceivers and the innocent. For unless he is foolish and simple, he is not quickly overthrown. And they build high places for Baal, while claiming to debate lofty matters. And they burn their sons as an offering to idols, whom they have begotten in their heresy. The Lord says that he is unaware of all these things and that they have never entered his mind.

19:6

(Verse 6.) Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when this place shall no longer be called Topheth or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. LXX: Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when this place shall no longer be called ruin and πολυανδριον (multiplicity) of the son of Hinnom, but πολυανδριον (multiplicity) of slaughter. The valley of the son of Hinnom, which is called Gehenna in Hebrew (גהנום), from which it is thought to be named Gehenna, as we have said above. But I wonder what the meaning of the number 70 is for Topheth (תופת), which means the place of ruin, and for the valley, πολυανδριον, which signifies a multitude of men, unless it is because the people there have fallen and a multitude of men have been slain, either spiritually, in the error of idolatry, or literally, by the Babylonian army, as is more clearly stated in the following passage.

19:7-9

(Verse 7 and following) And I will scatter the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will overthrow them with the sword in the presence of their enemies and those who seek their lives, and I will give their dead bodies as food to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth. And I will make this city a horror, a hissing, and everyone who passes by it will be astonished and hiss because of all its wounds. And I will feed them with the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and everyone shall eat the flesh of his neighbor in the siege and in the distress, with which their enemies and those who seek their lives shall distress them. Although we know that these things also happened to the people in the Babylonian captivity, they are more fully related to the times of the Savior, when they were besieged by Vespasian and Titus, and their city, in the times of Hadrian, collapsed into eternal ashes, so that those who had offered their children to idols were themselves later compelled by the necessity of famine to turn them to the use of food, and the flesh of all creatures of the sky and of the earth was given to them, so that those who had abused the gifts of the Lord into impiety and had sacrificed their own entrails to idols, would make graves of their own children's bellies.

19:10-11

(Verse 10, 11.) And you shall break the jar in the eyes of the men who go or come with you. And you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord of hosts: So shall I break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, which cannot be restored any longer. Clearly it is spoken not of the Babylonian, but of the Roman captivity. For after the Babylonians, the city was rebuilt, the people brought back to Judah, and the former abundance restored. But after the captivity, which happened under Vespasian and Titus, and later under Hadrian, the ruins of Jerusalem will remain until the end of the world, although the Jews believe that golden and jeweled Jerusalem will be restored to them, and again there will be sacrifices and holy marriages and the kingdom of the Lord Savior on earth. Although we may not follow these beliefs, we cannot condemn them, because many ecclesiastical men and martyrs have spoken of these things. And let each one abound in his own sense, and let all things be reserved for the judgment of the Lord (Rom. XIV). However, just as a clay vessel, once it has been broken, cannot be restored to its former appearance: so too the people of the Jews and Jerusalem, once they have been destroyed, will not have their former condition. Finally, today the name of that city is empty, and it is called Aelia by Aelius Hadrianus, and it has lost its former name along with its former inhabitants, in order to destroy their pride. However, the names of the Holy Cross and Resurrection do not signify a city, but a place: nor the former greatness of riches, by which the Jewish people perished, but the glory of sanctity, which our humble Bethlehem possesses, not having gold and gems, but the bread that was born in it.

19:12

(Verse 12.) And they will bury (or be buried) in Topheth, because there is no other place to bury. Thus I will do to this place, says the Lord, and to its inhabitants, and I will make this city like Topheth (or like ruins), and the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be like Topheth (or like ruins). But what is inserted in the Septuagint: All the houses of the kings of Judah, like Topheth, is not found in the Hebrew. And it follows:

19:13

(Ver. 13.) All the houses are unclean, in whose dwellings (or roofs) they sacrificed to the whole heavenly host, and poured out drink offerings to foreign gods. What he said above. This place will no longer be called Topheth or the Valley of the son ((or sons)) of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter, now he explains more clearly that there will be such a great slaughter in that place, that the people will be buried there in heaps, and the once sacred grove ((or place)) will become a tumult of the dead. Also, let the city that is above this place become like Tophet, for which seventy were destroyed. Let the houses of Jerusalem and the palaces of the kings be turned into similar ruins. And the reason is given, because they were unclean and polluted by the crime of idolatry, because they sacrificed to the sun, moon, and stars of heaven in their houses and on their roofs, and burned incense. And they were not satisfied with this error, but they also sacrificed to demons and poured out libations to foreign gods (Zephaniah 1).

19:14-15

(Verse 14, 15) But Jeremiah came from Topheth, where the Lord had sent him to prophesy, and he stood in the court of the house of the Lord and said to all the people: This is what the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, says: Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all its towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their necks, refusing to hear my words. After breaking a jar or a small bottle in the presence of the elders of the people in Topheth, which Jeremiah had brought with him, he prophesied the words of the Lord to crush the people and the city of Jerusalem. Then he returned and stood in the court of the house of the Lord and spoke to the whole multitude that had not gone to Topheth, warning them that the Lord would bring upon the city of Jerusalem and all its towns all the evil that he had spoken against it. And lest we should think the sentence cruel, he gives the reasons why he will bring evil upon them. 'Because,' he says, 'they have hardened their neck, that they might not hear my words: nor have they done penance for their many wickednesses, desiring to do penance.'

20:1-2

(Chapter 20 — Verses 1, 2) And Phasur, the son of Emmer, a priest who was appointed as the chief in the house of the Lord, heard Jeremiah prophesying these words. And Phasur struck the prophet Jeremiah and sent him into the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the Lord. For Phasur, the Septuagint translated as Phascor, which means "blackness of the mouth," and for the stocks, which we have mentioned, the Septuagint and Theodotion translated as "cataract," Symmachus as "instrument of torture" or "torture device," both of which signify torment. But we have called it by the common name of a nerve, which we also read as a type of torture in the Acts of the Apostles, when the apostles Paul and Silas were placed in prison (Acts XVI). But this man was the high priest of the Temple, and he abused the dignity of the Priesthood for evil purposes, not to teach and correct with words, but to terrify with tortures (John XIX). Therefore, both the Savior and the apostle Paul were beaten by order of the high priest (Acts XVI). It is not surprising if today the servants of God are killed by Phaschor, or sent to prison and held in terrible custody. For this power is given by God, so that the faith of the Prophets may be shown. However, the one who kills is not greater, but the one who is slain is stronger. And the Prophet accepts the judgment of God patiently, without protesting the blows, but considering the one who commands. Emmer () sounds like the word from which darkness is often generated, not by the fault of the parent, but by the wickedness of the degenerating. However, the torment by which the

Prophet is afflicted seems to be on the right side, which is interpreted as Benjamin; and in the lofty gate, which indicates not truth, but the unjust power of the pontiff.

20:3

(Ver. 3.) And when it dawned on the next day, Phasur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks and Jeremiah said to him: The Lord did not call your name Phasur, but fear from all sides. And here both the name of the high priest and the type of torture are interpreted in the same way as before. However, the name of the high priest is changed, so that it may show the punishment of the future from the name. You will by no means have a blackened face and the unjust rule of power; but you will be led captive to Babylon, for this signifies fear from all sides or all around: that trembling and uncertain of your own safety, you look around here and there, and shrink back at the adversaries coming against you. For fear, which is written in Hebrew as Magur ((Al. Magor)), LXX and Theodotio μ■τοικον, that is, a migrant, Aquila's second edition as a foreigner, the first as a watcher, Symmachus as taken away or gathered together.

20:4-6

(Vers. 4-6.) Because this is what the Lord says: Behold, I will make you a terror, along with all your friends, and they will fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes will see it. And I will give all of Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will carry them away to Babylon, and strike them with the sword. And I will give all the wealth (or strength) of this city, and all its labor, and all its precious things (or glory), and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hand of their enemies, and they will plunder them, and take them away, and bring them to Babylon. But as for you, Phasur, and all the inhabitants of your house, you will go into captivity, and you will come to Babylon, and there you will die, and there you will be buried, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied falsehood. According to the previous interpretation, in which Phasur (also known as Phaschor) had its name changed to Magur (or Magor), all similarly translated it to signify either terror, or sojourning, or removal and relocation, and congregation. And he is being pursued by his friends, about to be seized and handed over to the enemy's hands, and the whole Jewish population is to be occupied by the hands of the Babylonian king, some to be killed by the sword, and others to be led into captivity, and all the riches of both the city and the royal treasures are to be taken by the enemies. And Phasur himself and his entire family are to be led into captivity, and he is to die in Babylon, because he deceived his people with lies, promising not true and sad things, but prosperous things through deceit. At the same time, the patience and prudence of the Prophet are to be noted, as he remains silent when sent to prison, and through silence, he overcomes the injustice. However, he does not conceal what he knows will come to pass, so that at least in this way, the false prophet, the high priest, may cease to sin and implore the mercy of God.

20:7-8

(Verse 7, 8.) You have deceived me, Lord, and I have been deceived (or you have beguiled me, Lord, and I have been beguiled). You were stronger than me and prevailed (or you obtained and were able to). I have become a mockery all day long, everyone mocks me; because now I speak, crying out injustice and devastation (or because with bitter words I will laugh at transgression and call upon misery). The Prophet says he was deceived by the Lord, because from the beginning

hearing: I have appointed you as a Prophet to the nations (Jeremiah 1:5). And again: Behold, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build up, and to plant (Jeremiah, 1:10), thinking that he would say nothing against the people of Judah, but rather against the various nations around. Therefore, he gladly accepted the prophecy; and it happened contrary, that while predicting the captivity of Jerusalem, he endured persecutions and hardships. And he accomplished it. I have become a laughingstock all day long, everyone mocks me, because they think that he has been lying about everything and that all the things he predicted would happen were lies. And the Prophet immediately thought that what the Lord had threatened would come true, and the people thought that it would not come any more because it had not come immediately. And I cry out about the destruction of Babylon and the wickedness of the enemies through which my people will be oppressed. But if we follow the Seventy in what they said, that with bitter words I will laugh at their prevarication and call upon their misery, this is the meaning: I know that present sorrow will be exchanged for future joy, according to what is written: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted (Matthew 5:5); and therefore I willingly endure misery, wickedness, and affliction, so that I may desire and invoke them, and compensate for the brevity of the injustice with the eternity of happiness.

20:9-10

(Verse 9, 10.) Because the word of the Lord has become a reproach to me, and a mockery all day long. And I said: I will not mention him (or I will not call the Lord by name), nor speak any more in his name. But there was as it were a burning fire in my heart, shut up in my bones, and I was weary (or dissolved) in enduring it, and could not bear it. For I heard the reproach of many, and terror on every side (or as they gathered together everywhere), persecute him, and we will persecute him. As I was proclaiming and saying that the Babylonian army was already coming and that all would be plundered by the hostile sword, the word of the Lord came to me as a reproach and mockery, as they considered the delay of the prophecy to be a lie. Therefore, I made up my mind not to speak any longer to the people of God with words, nor to mention His name. But when I was overcome with shame, though timidly and foolishly, it became like a burning fire in my heart, shut up in my bones; and I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it any longer. For the divine word conceived in the mind, not spoken by the mouth, burns in the heart. Therefore, Paul also says: If I preach the Gospel, there is no glory for me. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel! For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if unwillingly, a stewardship is entrusted to me. And when he was in Athens and saw the city given to idolatry, he was stirred up in his spirit and greatly distressed. And shortly after in the same volume we read: 'And when Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.' (Acts 18). But even today, many of the Doctors in the Church endure similar things, hearing the condemnation of many that are gathered together against them, saying: 'Persecute them, and let us pursue them.'

20:11

(Verse 11.) All the men, who were peaceful towards me, and guarding my side: if we are deceived in any way, let us prevail against him, and achieve vengeance from him. But the Lord is with me as a strong warrior. When the adversaries rise up, and former friends and peaceful men turn to war,

and they want to set traps for us, let us not be greatly concerned; but let us desire to say this which the Prophet speaks: But the Lord is with me as a strong warrior.

Therefore those who persecute me will fall and be weak (or because they have persecuted me and could not understand). Let them be greatly ashamed because they did not understand the everlasting disgrace, which will never be destroyed. Because they have persecuted, they could not understand the prophetic word, and intense confusion followed their ignorance, and they did not understand the everlasting disgrace, which will possess them and will not be erased by any forgetfulness. So let them say what they want, those once peaceful men who guarded my side and desired to deceive, as long as a just man and teacher of the Church after such persecution may obtain such vengeance and rewards.

20:12

(Verse 12.) And you, Lord, the tester of the righteous (or the one who tests the righteous), who sees the reins and the heart, may I please see your vengeance from them, for I have revealed my cause to you (Luke 6). The Lord alone is the one who knows how to test righteousness, just as he alone is the one who can see the inner thoughts of the heart. Thus, Jesus, knowing the thoughts of men, is not from advancement, as some may think, but by nature is God. Something similar is also expressed in the Psalms: No one living shall be justified in your sight (Psalm 143:2). If one who lives by virtues will not be justified, how much more so one who is dead because of sins? And even though he knows he has God as his advocate, still in the impatience of human frailty, he desires to see what he knows will come in the future, even now. And he to whom he revealed his cause, who says in another place: Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, says the Lord (Deut. 32:35). But happy is the conscience for whom the cause is revealed to the Lord (Heb. 10:30), as the Apostle says: Everything that is revealed is light (Eph. 5:13).

20:13

(Verse 13) Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, for he has delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of the wicked. The one who is poor in spirit and does not have riches, which have received their consolation in this world, about which Paul also speaks: Only that we should be mindful of the poor (I Cor. 13), when he has obtained vengeance from the Lord, praises the Lord in spirit, and boasts of being delivered from the hand of the wicked. However, all this happens not by our merit, but by the grace of Him who freed the poor, and it does not have the riches of the falling pride, but the humility of the freed poor.

20:14-18

(Verse 14 and following) Cursed be the day in which I was born, the day in which my mother bore me, let it not be blessed. Cursed be the man (or person) who brought the news to my father, saying, 'A male child is born to you,' and made him rejoice as if with joy. Let that man be like the cities that the Lord overthrew without regret; let him hear the cry in the morning and the wailing at noonday, because he did not kill me from the womb to be my mother's grave, and her womb forever pregnant. Why did I come forth from the womb to see labor and sorrow, and that my days should be consumed in confusion? Those who consider that the souls were in heavenly things, and were precipitated from a better to a worse state, make use of this and similar testimonies, which indeed imply that it is better to dwell in heavenly things than in earthly things and to assume

a body of humility: certain new things, or rather old, seeking arguments for their heresy. But we, on the other hand, reading that of the blessed Job: Cursed be the day wherein I was born; and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived (Job 3:3). And cursed is the man who announced to my father, saying, a boy is born to you, we fit this testimony, namely that it is better not to exist than to live in torments, according to what is written: Death is rest for a man, to whom God has closed his way (Sirach. XXII, 11). And again: Why is light given to the miserable, and life to those who are bitter of soul (Job. III, 20)? And in the Gospel we read a simple statement: It would have been better for him if he had not been born (Matthew XXVI, 24): not that there is anyone who has not been born; but that it is better not to exist than to be in a bad state. For it is one thing to not exist at all, another to exist but suffer without any respite, just as we prefer a peaceful death to a miserable life. Hence Amos refers to it as a day of darkness, a day of affliction (Amos, V). And Jacob, because he had lived in labor and distress, calls the days of his life few and evil (Gen. XLVII). And the Apostle Paul says: Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the present evil world (Gal. I, 4). And again: Redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Ephes. V, 16). The Hebrews calculate the fifth month, when Jerusalem was captured and the Temple was destroyed, as the birth of Jeremiah, with certain and extraordinary arguments. But if they can prove this, I do not know how they can interpret the testimony of Job, unless perhaps they consider that day as a certain prefiguration and prophecy of the future destruction of the Temple. And I think that the similarity of the destroyed cities to Sodom and Gomorrah is mentioned, and every time is in mourning, so that there is a cry and a wailing in the morning and at midday. But what he brings forward: 'Whoever does not kill me in the womb, they think signifies God.' So that, he says, there would be eternal conception for me, which are all said hyperbolically. Finally, he explains the reasons why he prefers death to life, and indeed that not existing at all is better than existing badly, adding: 'Why did I come forth from the womb to see toil and sorrow, and that my days should be consumed in confusion?'

21:1-2

(Chapter 21, verses 1 and following) The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur the son of Malchiah and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, saying, 'Inquire of the Lord for us, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is making war against us. Perhaps the Lord will deal with us according to all his wonderful deeds and will make him withdraw from us.' Pashhur the priest, the son of Immer, who struck Jeremiah, had a son named Pashhur. But Phasur is the son of Melchiah. This is why, so that no one might think he is the same. And King Zedekiah sends to the Prophet, not wanting either the people or the leaders to know, in order to secretly through messengers inquire, what judgment the Lord has against the city of Jerusalem and the people of Judah. And what he brings forward: Because King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is making war against us, it is already shown that Jerusalem is besieged, Sedekiah inquires about this from the Prophet. And it should be noted, that in the Prophets, especially in Ezekiel and Jeremiah, the order of kings and times is not followed, but rather in reverse, that which happened later is recounted first, and that which happened earlier is recounted later. For it is one thing to write history, and another to write prophecy: as in this place, Zedekiah, who was captured with the city of Jerusalem, is mentioned sending a letter to Jeremiah, and at the same time when Jerusalem was under siege, and later the history of his brother Jehoiakim is narrated, who was king before him, and Jehoiachin. That is, Jechoniah, who was the son of Joachim, about whom it

will be said in the following.

21:3-6

(Vers. 3 seqq.) And Jeremiah said to them: Thus shall you say to Zedekiah: Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war (or the weapons of warfare) which are in your hands, wherewith you fight against the king of Babylon, and the Chaldeans that besiege you round about the walls: and I will gather them (or it) together in the midst of this city, and I will fight against you with stretched-out hand, and with a strong arm (or an exalted one), and in fury, and in wrath, and in great indignation. And I will strike the inhabitants of this city: both men and animals will die from a great pestilence. In vain, he says, do you want to resist the Chaldeans who are besieging you, and prepare your weapons of war, of which you will only have use in the middle of the city, so that you seem to be armed. However, against those besieging you, I will conquer you with an outstretched hand and a strong arm, and I will strike you with my fury and indignation: so that both you and everything that breathes may die in the middle of the city from hunger and pestilence. Indeed, we have read that this indeed happened. Without any crown and without any noise of the combatants, such a great city was captured by siege, that they did not have those whom they had conquered, but only those whom they had captured. Better, he says, were those wounded by the sword than those killed by hunger.

21:7

(Verse 7) And after these things, the Lord said: I will give Sedecias, king of Judah, and his servants, and his people, and those who have been left in this city from the plague, and the sword, and famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their lives. And he will strike them with the edge of the sword, and he will not show mercy, and he will not spare, and he will not have pity. What we have translated is not found in the Septuagint. And concerning what we have said: He will not be moved, neither will he spare, nor will he have mercy, the Seventy translated: I will not spare, neither will I have mercy. And it is better according to the Hebrew, that the sentence may seem cruel and unyielding, more like that of the Babylonian king than of the Lord. But first it was prophesied concerning the entire city: now it is specifically predicted of Zedekiah and his people, who will remain after the plague, that he is to be captured by the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, and to be killed with his friends by the sword. Nor should he hope for any mercy from him, whom he betrayed his covenant and friendship by perjury.

21:8-10

(Verse 8 and following) And to this people you shall say: Thus says the Lord: Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. Whoever remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live, and shall have his life as a prize of war. For I have set my face against this city for harm and not for good, declares the Lord. It shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon and he shall burn it with fire. Those who were sent by the king and came to the Prophet to plead with him to inquire of the Lord for them, received an answer concerning the king of Judah and what they should report to him. Now he encourages them to respond to the people and advises them to surrender to the Chaldeans against the king's will, which the Prophet knows was

dangerous. Therefore, he curses the day of his birth, saying: 'Cursed be the day on which I was born.' (Jeremiah 20:14). And why did I come out from the womb, to see toil and sorrow (Ibid., 18)? Not because it is a trivial matter, nor yet to give advice to those already captured, that they should willingly submit to captivity, as if a shipwreck were ordered on those about to suffer it, so that, before the shipwreck and the ship being dashed to pieces, they should seize the oars and planks and cast themselves into the waves; but because it is more tolerable to live in whatever way, having been captured, than to be consumed by the sword, famine, and pestilence. There are those who have expounded this passage as follows, according to a metaphorical interpretation: the secular disciplines, and especially philosophy, are better than remaining within that Church in which there is hunger for the word of God, and the entire people die from both a scarcity of doctrine and a heretical plague.

21:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) And to the house of the king of Judah, hear the word of the Lord, O house of David. Thus says the Lord, Judge in the morning, and deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor, lest my indignation goes forth like fire and is kindled with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds. The phrase 'because of the evil of your deeds' is not found in the Septuagint. Because above (Al. already above) it had said, And to this people you shall say, Thus says the Lord, subsequently it now adds, and to the house of the king of Judah: so that it is understood, you shall say, thus says the Lord: for both the higher and the lower are connected; so that the meaning is: And to this people you shall say, Thus says the Lord. But a proper speech is made to the royal house, because of whose fault the city is besieged, so that it may correct the error through repentance, and obtain the mercy of the Lord. Judge, he says, justice in the morning, not in the darkness of iniquity, but in the light of justice. And deliver the one oppressed by force, from the hand of the slanderer, so that you do not show favoritism in judgment, but that the authority of God may prevail more among you than the power of the persecutor. And if, he says, you do this, the fire of my anger will not be kindled in you, nor will it find material to consume. In this place the incredible mercy of God is demonstrated, as concerning those of whom it was said before: For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good; it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire, with the judgment of the Lord already approaching, so as to provoke them to seek salvation. Not that he is unaware that the city of Jerusalem is to be taken, but because the free will of man is preserved, so that they may seem to perish not by ignorance of the future, but by their own choice. How did the Savior know that the Apostle would deny him and that he himself would be crucified? Surely he had often foretold this to the Apostles and nevertheless reminded them, desiring to correct them for repentance, so that whatever they would subsequently endure, it would happen to them by their own fault, not because of the severity of the one threatening.

21:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) Behold, I am against you, O inhabitants of the solid and level valley, says the Lord, those who say, who will strike (or terrify) us? And who will enter our houses? And I will visit upon you; and what follows, according to the fruit of your endeavors, says the Lord, is not found in the Septuagint. And I will set fire to its forest, and it will consume all around it. For the inhabitants of the solid and level valley, the Septuagint translated, Behold, I am against you, who dwell in the

valley of Sor () the level, for which Symmachus interpreted as a rock besieged, Theodotius as a fortified place; in the first edition of Aquila it is solid, in the second Tyre. For Tyre speaks its language, and the land of the Hebrews, and the area around it, and it sounds like a restricted place. However, it speaks against Jerusalem, which is surrounded by siege, or in the likeness of Tyre, like a vast sea, it is encircled by the Babylonian army and cannot escape. Or certainly, it sees itself as an impregnable and robust rock due to the strength of its walls and their size, and it says: Who can frighten us? And who will enter our house? When God speaks in the opposite way: I will visit you; you will not be able to escape my eye. But I will visit you for destruction, and I will repay you the fruit of your wickedness. And I will kindle a fire in your forest. Not the Babylonians, as you think, not the king of the Chaldeans; but my anger will accomplish all these things. But he calls the forest Jerusalem, and all the surrounding region, which does not have the fruitful trees of good works, because it is prepared for burning. He calls the valley beautiful because it is easily passable by enemies, and not a high mountain that can be difficult to climb, next to which it is also said in Isaiah: The vision of the Valley of Zion (Isa. 22:1). Let us refer whatever is prophesied about the royal house and the metropolis city to the ecclesiastical order and the leaders of the Churches, only those who have surrendered to pride, riches, and indulgence. Not immediately because it is the royal house, it will be saved from destruction, just as those who are of the Davidic lineage, very few have been found who pleased the Lord like David himself, Hezekiah and Josiah, and a great part of the leaders and the royal lineage as a whole provoked the wrath of the Lord against the people.

22:1-5

(Chapter XXII - Verses 1 onwards) Thus says the Lord: Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter by these gates. Thus says the Lord, Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the hand of his oppressor. And do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. For if you do this word, then the kings sitting upon the throne of David will enter in by the gates of this house, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their servants, and their people. But if you will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation. This vision, or rather this word of the Lord, either happened before the messengers of Sedecias were sent to him, or certainly after they were sent, and before they returned again, Jeremiah is commanded, that he should not speak to the king by messengers, but that he himself should go into the house of the king, and there speak to him. At the same time, we notice the divine wisdom, that through messengers he commands sad news to be announced, mixed with good news, if the king will repent. However, because he is commanded himself to move forward, he does not announce sad news, and the impending captivity; but he warns what he should do to avoid the impending judgment of God. But it is the duty of kings to administer judgment and justice, and to deliver those oppressed by the violence of slanderers, and to provide assistance to foreigners, orphans, and widows (who are more easily oppressed by the powerful). And in order to impose a greater care of the commandments of God upon them, he said: Do not be distressed, so that you not only do not rescue, but also do not even allow others to be distressed through your connivance. And do not shed innocent blood in this place. For punishing murderers, sacrilegious, and poisoners is not the shedding of blood, but the ministry of

the laws. If you do these things, O kings of Judah, you will maintain your former power, and you will enter the gates of Jerusalem with ambition. But if you refuse to do so, O royal household, the cruelty will not be so much of the Lord as it will be of your will, so that the whole city will be reduced to desolation. Let the bishops, along with their associates the presbyters and deacons, and all the ecclesiastical order, understand whatever has been said to the royal household, so that if they do what has been commanded and, among other things, do not shed innocent blood, causing offense to the least of these and striking the consciences of each individual, they may obtain the dignity entrusted to them by the Lord. But if they refuse and despise, let them themselves reduce the Church of God to solitude. And they enter by the gates of Jerusalem from the lineage of David, and they sit upon his throne, which is interpreted as strong by hand, and they ascend in chariots and horses, when they restrain both their own and the disturbances of the people, and in an orderly manner they enter the Church, with the chorus of many virtues, and singing in harmony from every side. And to believe that this is true, he swears by himself, because, according to the Apostle, he has no one greater by whom he may swear (Heb. VI).

22:6-8

(V. 6,-8.) Because this is what the Lord says about the house (or to the house) of the king of Judah, Gilead, you are to me the head (or the beginning) of Lebanon. If I do not make you a desolation, cities uninhabitable. And I will consecrate (or build) upon you the one who kills men, and his weapons: and they will cut down your chosen cedars, and throw (or send) them into fire, and many nations will pass through this city, and each one will say to his neighbor: Why did the Lord do such to this great city? And they will answer, because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God, and worshiped foreign gods, and served them. Scripture mentions the land of Gilead, which was possessed by half the tribe of Manasseh, beyond the Jordan. On this mountain, Jacob pursued Laban as he fled, and the mountain received the name $\sigma\omega\pi\eta\varsigma$, which means heap of testimony, because there Jacob and Laban swore an oath, gathering a heap of stones (Genesis 31). But the head, or beginning, of Mount Lebanon, which is entirely composed of cedars, is mentioned next by David when he sings: And the Lord will shake the cedars of Lebanon (Psalm 29:5). And elsewhere: I have seen the wicked exalted, and raised up like the cedars of Lebanon (Psalm 36:35). And in Zechariah we read: Open your doors, O Lebanon, and let the fire consume your cedars (Zechariah 11:1). Therefore, in this present passage, because he was speaking to the royal house, he metaphorically speaks to the Temple, or to the house of the tribe of Judah, either because it itself is on high, or because all the remedies for sins were sought from the Temple and the Sanctuary. Therefore, the same prophet also mentions: Is there no balm in Gilead, or physician there? Why then has there been no healing for the daughter of my people? (Jeremiah 8:21). He threatens therefore the royal household, the city of Jerusalem, and the Temple, which he calls the head of Lebanon, that it shall be reduced to a deserted state along with all its cities, not by the power of the Babylonian king, but by the command of the Lord, who says: I will sanctify over you a destroyer. But Nabuchodonosor is called holy, and all his army, because he carries out the judgement of God. And he will cut down, he says, your chosen cedars: the powerful and the leaders of the city; and they will throw them into the fire, so that the devouring flame consumes everything. And when everything has been destroyed, many nations will pass through the city and the Temple, which they were previously not allowed to enter; and each person will speak to their neighbor, asking why the Lord has caused such a sudden and great destruction to the famous and

great city. And those who are questioned will respond and explain the causes of the ruination, saying: because they have forsaken the covenant of their Lord God, and have worshiped idols instead of God. Let the royal house of our city and its princes listen to this, and let the high cedars, which reach up to the heavens, also listen. They speak with arrogance: who will not see? Let them be consumed quickly by the flame of the Lord if they refuse to comply with His commandments. But there is another sanctification (or rather sacrifice) of the murderer and his weapons; and another of the priests and those who serve the Lord.

22:10-11

(Verse. 10, 11.) Do not weep for the dead, nor mourn over him; weep rather for him who is departing, for he will not return anymore, nor see the land of his birth. For thus says the Lord concerning Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, king of Judah: He who reigned in place of Josiah his father, who has gone out of this place: he shall not return here anymore, but he shall die in the place where I have transported him, and he shall not see this land anymore. King Josiah had three righteous sons, Joachaz, Jacim, and Sedeciam, of whom the first, Joachaz, the king of Egypt, Pharaoh Necho, led captive into Egypt, where he died, and appointed in his place as king his brother Eliacim (also known as Joachim) (2 Kings 23, 24, 25). When he died, his son Jechoniah reigned, but he was taken into captivity by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, along with his mother and the princes. In his place, his uncle Sedecias reigned, who was taken captive to Babylon after the capture of Jerusalem. Therefore, the question arises, who could be fittingly called the one who should not weep, who should be led into captivity, and will never return again, when three are taken captive and carried away? The Hebrews believe that this applies to all three, that is, to Joachaz, Jechonia, and Zedekiah, who are all called the sons of Josiah, or Sellem, which means completion; this is because the kingdom of Judah ended with them. But it seems to me that this is specifically said about Zedekiah, concerning whom there is a prophecy in the present and past chapter, in which the kingdom of Judah truly ended, and under whom the city was captured and he was led to Babylon, where he is recorded as having died. This is Jehoiachin, that is, the culmination and completion, son of Josiah, king of Judah, who reigned for his father Josiah. However, Jehoiachin was not a son but a grandson of Josiah, the son of Jehoiakim. From the beginning of the vision, when King Zedekiah sent to Jeremiah the son of Hilkiyah and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, until this chapter, we understand all that is said to the king and about King Zedekiah.

22:12-17

(Verse 12 and following) Woe to him who builds his house with injustice, and his upper rooms without justice. He oppresses his neighbor in vain, and does not pay him his wages. He says, 'I will build for myself a spacious house with large upper rooms.' He opens windows for himself, and makes it with cedar and paints it with vermilion. Are you going to reign because you have luxury? Didn't your father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice when he was prospering? He judged the cause of the poor and needy for their own good: did he not do so because he knew me? says the Lord. But your eyes and heart are set on greed, on shedding innocent blood, on deceit, and on pursuing evil. LXX: O you who build your house without justice, and your upper rooms without judgment! Your neighbor works for him for nothing, and does not receive wages. You built for yourself a small house, upper rooms with open windows, and paneled with cedar, and painted with

vermilion. Will you reign because you contend against your father Achaz? They shall not eat, and they shall not drink. It would have been better for you to do judgment and good justice; they have not known, they have not judged the judgment of the humble, nor the judgment of the poor. Is it not to ignore me? says the Lord. Behold, your eyes are not straight, nor is your heart good, but for your greed, and to shed innocent blood, and to wickedness and murder, to do these things. I have presented both editions in their entirety, so that both the Hebrew truth and the difficulty of the Vulgate edition can be more easily understood. This is a discourse against Jehoiakim, the son of King Josiah of Judah, about whom we spoke earlier, whom Neco Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, made ruler in place of his brother Jehoahaz, whom he took captive to Egypt. However, we read in the histories of both Kings and Chronicles (2 Kings 23-24, 2 Chronicles 36) that Jehoiakim reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years, and he reigned cruelly and became impious, and afterwards he died. Yet, the Scripture does not mention his burial, even though it is customary for the holy Scriptures to mention all the kings who died and were buried. But he specifically narrates about this dead and unburied man, about whom we will speak in the later parts. Therefore, the aforementioned king laments because he trusts in injustice and thinks it is his perpetual royal dignity. He makes for himself chambers and oppresses his friends, and he does not give them their due wages for their work, and he believes it is the eternal construction of his palace. Can you, the divine word says, reign forever because you desire to be compared to the lofty cedar, namely your father Josiah, the righteous king? Father, he says, both ate and drank, and enjoyed royal wealth, yet he did not offend God because he had riches, but he pleased Him because he administered justice and righteousness. And therefore, both in the present age and in the future, it went well with him, and will continue to do so. He judged the case of the poor and needy, and for their relief he heard them, and for his own good. But all these things happened to him prosperously because he knew me, says the Lord. But truly, O Joacim, your eyes turn towards greed, and you shed innocent blood, towards slander, and towards the path of evil deeds. However, according to the Septuagint, I cannot understand what meaning they have. For although the other parts somewhat agree with each other, that which is inferred: Will you reign because you strive against your father Achaz? for which in Hebrew it is written 'Araz', and here the word signifies a cedar, it is clear that it has no meaning. Also what follows: They shall not eat and they shall not drink, and the other things that are so scattered and confused among themselves, that they have no understanding without the truth of Hebrew reading. However, we can understand this place against the heretics in a mystical sense, who build for themselves a not great house, and not a very abundant Church, but a small one. However, they build not with righteousness and judgment, desiring to plunder what belongs to others. Where it is said: You have built for yourself a small house, with low-roofed chambers, which are surrounded by every wind of doctrine, and distinguished by windows: for they do not have a permanent structure, nor solid stability. And it is adorned, he says, with cedar. Indeed, they seem to have a most beautiful adornment; but they quickly rot and collapse in rains and storms of persecution. And they are painted with red lead. And they indeed participate in the suffering of the Lord, and they are stained with his blood; but they do not reign forever, because they strive and provoke to anger Araz, that is, their father cedar. For every heretic is born in the Church, but is expelled from the Church, and contends and fights against the parent. And what he brings in is understood to be the Body and Blood of the Savior, and other things similar to these. And he says that every error descends from this, namely, that they have ignored God, and do not have upright eyes, but their heart is inclined to greed so

that they may plunder what belongs to others, and shed the blood of the deceived. This is indeed committing murder. The obscure things need to be discussed more extensively.

22:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) Therefore, thus says the Lord to Joachim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah: They shall not mourn for him, woe to the brother and woe to the sister, they shall not lament for him, woe to the Lord and woe to the illustrious one. He shall be buried like a donkey, decomposed and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem. This, which we have put from Hebrew: they shall not mourn for him, woe to the brother and woe to the sister, is not found in the Septuagint. And it is specifically said against Joachim, king of Judah, and the riddle is opened, which before seemed hidden and ambiguous among the three brothers, so that it is not about Joachaz or Zedekiah, but specifically about Joachim, whom the Hebrew history narrates was killed by the bandits of the Chaldeans, Syrians, Ammonites, and Moabites. And in Malachi it is written that he died and was buried in silence (2 Kings 24). In the book of Chronicles we read that he was bound with chains and taken to Babylon (2 Chronicles 36): and nothing more is mentioned about him. It is said in a beautiful burial of an ass that he should be buried, which means in other words that he should be left unburied, that is, torn apart by beasts and birds. For this is the burial of an ass.

22:20-23

(Verse 20 and following) Ascend Lebanon and cry out, and in Bashan give forth your voice, and cry out to the passersby, for all your lovers are crushed. I spoke to you in your abundance, you said: I will not listen. This is your way from your youth, for you have not listened to my voice. The wind will pasture all your shepherds (or lovers), and your lovers (or friends) will go into captivity. And then you will be confounded and ashamed of all your wickedness. Which resides in Lebanon, and nests in cedars, how did you wail when pains came to you like the pains of a woman in labor? The metaphor of Lebanon and Bashan, regions and mountains beyond the Jordan, is directed to Jerusalem, which in vain relied on Egypt, or to King Joacim himself, who was reigning in Jerusalem at that time and had been appointed king by the Egyptians, that in vain she hoped for help from the Egyptians, and that they themselves would also be overcome by the Babylonian king and led into captivity (2 Kings 23). And he said, I have spoken to you, that is, God himself through the Prophets; or, the Prophets have spoken to you, that is, my Prophets; and in your abundance you said, I will not listen: he reproaches her for her pride, and for abusing the greatness of her wealth in contempt of God. And he narrates that not only at this time, but from the beginning when she was brought out of Egypt, she did not listen to the voice of God; therefore all her shepherds and leaders have been scattered here and there, and have submitted their necks to the captivity of Babylon. And it brings forth: You who dwell in Lebanon and nest in the cedars, it marks with a bruise the arrogance that had grown from the abundance of all things, and just as sudden pain and unexpected captivity come to a woman in childbirth. And what we have said: cry out to those passing by, and it is written in Hebrew Meabarim (), the Seventy translated it as "transmarine," Theodotion did likewise. Symmachus, on the other hand, translated it to mean that the voice of the Prophet should reach from Jerusalem to Mount Lebanon, and to Bashan.

22:24-27

(Verse 24 and following) I live, says the Lord: Even if Coniah the son of Joachim king of Judah were a signet on my right hand, I would still pluck him (or you) out. And I will give you into the hand of those seeking your life, and into the hand of those you fear their faces, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (which is not found in the Septuagint), and into the hand of the Chaldeans. And I will send you (or cast you) and your mother who bore you into a foreign land where you were not born: and there you will die. And to the land (Al. to the land moreover), to which they lift up their soul in order to return, they shall not return there. Above, he had said, to the house of the king of Judah you speak these things: and then, go down to the house of the king of Judah: again: thus says the Lord concerning the house of the king of Judah, and in reverse order, after he spoke of Zedekiah, who was the last of the kings in Jerusalem, he returns to his brother Joachim, who reigned before him. With the fulfillment of this prophecy, now he speaks to the son of Joachim, the grandson of Josiah, king of Jerusalem, Jechoniah, who is also called by another name Joachin, who was captured by Nebuchadnezzar with his mother, princes and craftsmen, and many nobles, and was led into Chaldea, and there he died. Therefore, it is said that if a ring does not depart from the hand of the bearer, and it slips off the finger with difficulty: so it will be in my hand, Jechonias; however, I will uproot him and deliver him to the king of Babylon, and there he will die with his mother and all his allies, and he will not see the land of Judah, which he desires, anymore. Miserable Grunnius, who opened his mouth to slander holy men and taught his tongue to speak falsehood, he interpreted one book of Sextus Pythagoras, a very noble man, into Latin; and he divided it into two volumes and dared to publish it under the name of the holy Martyr Xystus, bishop of the city of Rome: in which book there is no mention of Christ, no mention of the Holy Spirit, no mention of God the Father, no mention of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles; and with his usual recklessness and madness, he named this book 'The Ring', which is read in many provinces, especially by those who preach atheism and immorality. Therefore, in the same way that the Lord threatens to throw Jeconiah like a ring from his hand and finger, I beg the reader to cast aside this nefarious book; and if he wishes, to read it not as a ecclesiastical volume, but like the other books of philosophers. In my commentaries and explanations, it is customary to present the various opinions of interpreters and mix such discourse: some say this, others think that, some feel this way. Both the wretched Grunnius himself, and after many years the disciples of Jovinian, have slandered me and continue to slander me, attributing their own opinions to other names, which I do out of goodwill so as not to appear to harm anyone specifically. Therefore, since benevolence has turned into slander, I now declare, both to those who are dead and to those who are alive and attempting to revive his heresy, that their teacher Origen refers this passage to Christ, whom, like a ring taken from the hand of God the Father, was sent into the land of captivity, into the valley of tears, and handed over to the cross. And he does not hesitate to mention this, as is evident from what follows: Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord: Write about this detestable, or barren, man, and the rest, to understand about the Lord of majesty. He writes this so that his disciples may not dare to deny it, in the fifth book of Stromata.

22:28

(Verse 28.) Is that man, Chonias (also known as Jechonias), like a broken and useless clay pot? Is he a vessel without any pleasure or usefulness? Why are he and his descendants rejected and thrown onto the ground that they do not know? Because of what we have said, Symmachus translated it as: Is he a vessel for trash, or worthless and discarded rubbish? In the Septuagint,

there is nothing on this, but this is the only interpretation: Jechonias is dishonored, like a vessel in which there is no usefulness. And when this is said of Jechoniah, the son of Joachim, someone dares to refer it to the type of Christ; and from this, the Apostle says that the Lord Savior is the image of the invisible God (Colossians I), the firstborn of every creature, that is, wisdom, the Word, truth, life, and righteousness, he is called the ring that is thrown or pulled from the hand of the Lord and given to Nebuchadnezzar to rule. They were cast down, he says, he and his seed, and cast upon the unknown land: which no one doubts was done to Jechoniah. Jechonias is interpreted as the preparation of the Lord, in which in the present place the first syllable, that is, the name of the Lord, is taken away, and it is called Chonias, so that it is understood as prepared for destruction and perdition.

22:29-30

(Verse 29, 30.) Earth, earth, earth, listen to the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord: Write down this man as childless, a man who will not prosper in his days. For there will not be a man from his seed who sits on the throne of David and has authority in Judah (or Judea). If I were to note every individual difference, how much the Septuagint may have omitted or changed, it would be lengthy, especially since a diligent reader can consider from both editions what has been changed, added, or subtracted. For in Hebrew it is written, Ariri, which in the first edition of Aquila means sterile, in the second, ■ν^α■ξητον, that is, not increasing, Symmachus, empty, Septuagint and Theodotion, abominable and rejected. And the question arises, how can the prophecy stand, that from his offspring no one will be born who will sit on the throne of David, nor will there be a ruler anymore in Judah, when the Lord and Savior is born from his seed; concerning whose birth Gabriel speaks to Mary: Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He himself will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end (Luke 1:31-33). Therefore, we can say that what is missing in the Septuagint, namely, 'in his days there will be no prosperity or growth', is a question that has been debated by those who are ignorant. For the Seventy translated: Write down this man as a man who is rejected: because no man who descends from him will grow to sit upon the throne of David, a ruler forever in Judah, which is repeated twice in Hebrew; and those who initially wrote it, thinking it was added in the Greek books, removed it. Let us therefore respond that in the days of Jechoniah there will not be a man who will sit upon his throne; but after a long time a descendant of his will be born who will obtain his throne. However, it can also be solved in this way: A man and a human being will not indeed sit upon the throne of David, but God will sit, and his kingdom will not be earthly and short-lived, as David's was, but everlasting and heavenly, as Scripture says: He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end (Luke 1:32). Therefore, he was born of Joachim, who was the son of Jechoniah, who was the son of Salathiel, who was the son of Zerubbabel, and in this way it comes down to Christ. But in the days of Joachim, a son did not succeed him as king, as he himself had succeeded his father, but he and Salathiel and Zerubbabel were in captivity, and until Christ, no one obtained royal power. However, this happened because it is written in Hebrew: in his days and in his time, there will be no man who sits on the throne of David. For all were captives, and no one from the lineage of David thereafter held the principate in the land of Judaea. Hence, Josephus reports that the priestly line and tribe of Levi were leaders, succeeded by Herod Antipater, a proselyte and son,

and later under Vespasian, the kingdom of this line, indeed the image of the empire, was utterly destroyed.

23:1-4

(Chapter 23, Verse 1 and following) Woe to the shepherds who scatter and tear apart the flock of my pasture, says the Lord. Therefore, thus says the Lord God of Israel to the shepherds who feed my people: You have scattered my flock, driven them away, and have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to the evil of your doings, says the Lord. And I will gather the remnant of my flock from all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their pasture (or I will restore them to their pastures), and they shall increase and multiply. And I will raise up shepherds over them, and they shall feed them. They shall not fear anymore, nor be terrified, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord. The prophetic discourse is directed to the shepherds, or concerning the shepherds. And because we read in the writing about Jechoniah, the second-to-last king of Judah, who was of the lineage of David: 'Earth, earth, earth, hear the words of the Lord, write down this man as childless, as a man who will not have any descendants to sit on the throne of David' (Jeremiah 22:29-30), all hope of the kingdom of Judah had been cut off: it passes on to the leaders of the Church, and the Synagogue is abandoned and condemned with its shepherds, the discourse is directed to the Apostles, of whom it is said: 'And I will raise up shepherds over them, and they shall feed them, they shall not fear anymore, nor be terrified, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord' (Ezekiel 34:24). For the apostles, with confidence and without any fear, will feed the Church's flock, and the remnant of the people of Israel will be saved from all lands and will return to their fields or pastures, and they will grow and multiply. But the Lord will visit the wicked shepherds, the scribes and Pharisees, because of the malice of their studies. And we can understand this in a tropological sense, and apply it to the leaders of the Church, who do not govern the Lord's sheep worthily. In this way, the people who have been rejected and condemned are saved, while those who are deserving will remain and be saved. The shepherds who teach heresy destroy the sheep. Those who create schisms tear apart and scatter. They cast them out, those who separate from the Church against justice. Those who withhold their hand from the repentant do not visit. The Lord will have mercy on all of them, restoring them to their former pastures and removing the wicked shepherds.

23:5-6

(Vers. 5, 6.) Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous branch (or a righteous king); and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: The Lord is our righteousness. In Hebrew, it is called Sadecenu. This which is wrongly added in the Septuagint, in the Prophets, must be completely cut off. For another chapter follows, which they have omitted, after which there is the title 'to the Prophets' or 'against the Prophets', about which we will speak in its proper place. Therefore, after casting off the shepherds of the synagogue, namely the Scribes and Pharisees, and saving the remnants of Israel, and establishing the Apostles of the Gospel in place of the former leaders, the shepherd of shepherds is introduced, and the prince of princes, and the king of kings, and the Lord of lords, namely Christ our Savior, who is properly the righteous branch, or the righteous Rising Sun, about whom we read: 'In his days shall justice spring up' (Psalm 71:7). And in another place:

Behold the man, his name is Oriens (Zach. VI, 12), and under him it will rise, and he will build a temple to the Lord: just as in Isaiah he is called Emmanuel, which means, God is with us (Isai. VII, 14): so in Jeremiah he will receive the name of our righteousness. Therefore the apostle also speaks: He who became wisdom for us from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption (I Cor. I, 30). Against him is the Antichrist, and his inhabitant the devil, called the foolish shepherd in Zechariah (Zach. XI). And he will execute judgment and justice on the earth, for the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22). In those days, the twelve tribes of Judah and Israel will be saved together. And of the two sticks, according to Ezekiel, one stick will be made (Ezekiel 37). And his name, if according to the Septuagint, the Lord will call him Josedeck, which means the Lord is righteous; if according to the Hebrew, those who say his name will call him, it will be said, the Lord is our righteousness. For this signifies Adonai Sadecenu (), for which Symmachus translates, Lord, justify us.

23:7-8 (Vers. 7, 8.) Because of this, behold, days are coming, says the Lord. And they shall no longer say, As the Lord lives, who brought the sons of Israel up from the land of Egypt; but they shall say, As the Lord lives, who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where I had driven them, and they shall live on their own soil. This entire chapter is not found in the Septuagint. The meaning here is that the people of God will not be delivered from Egypt by Moses, but by Jesus Christ from all the corners of the earth, to which they had been dispersed. What is now being completed in the world in part will be completed in its entirety when those from the East and the West, the North and the South come and recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matthew 8). So that after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved (Romans 11). To the Prophets (or in the Prophets, or against the Prophets). This designation, as we have said above, is placed at the end of the previous chapter in the Septuagint edition, where we read the following script: and this is the name by which the Lord will call him Josedeck, in the Prophets. Many ignorant people, not knowing this, invent various delusions of explanation. And it would have been much better to simply confess their ignorance than to make others heirs to their incompetence. But this is a discourse against the prophets, rather, the false prophets of Jerusalem and Samaria, whom he now calls collectively and commonly Prophets, concerning whom it is written in the following passages: And in the prophets of Samaria I saw wickedness; and immediately after: And in the prophets of Jerusalem I saw horrible things. However, when he uses the conjunction 'and', he shows that the previous statements were said by the Lord concerning the prophets themselves, who also turned out to be like false prophets.

23:9

(Verse 9) My heart is broken within me (or within myself), all my bones tremble (or are trembling); I have become like a drunken man, like a man drenched (or overwhelmed) with wine, before the face of the Lord, and before the face of His holy words (or and before the face of the beauty of His glory). When contemplating the countenance of the almighty God, that is, the Father, and when contemplating the countenance of the Son, who according to the Apostle is called the brightness of His glory, and the very image of His substance (Hebrews 1), the Prophet is filled with dread in both mind and body, and understands that he is nothing, as it is also said in another place: "I have become like a beast before you" (Psalm 73:22). Whether it offers to God a victim of conscience and humility, according to that which is read in the Psalms: A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit:

a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. (Psalm 50:19). But let us understand that the shaking or movement of the bones is spoken of, of which the same David sings: All my bones shall say: Lord, who is like to thee? (Psalm 34:10) He was made like a drunken man, and like a wet person: having no understanding, nor sapience. For the Lord knows the thoughts of men, that they are vain (Psalm 93:11) . But if this is so, where are those who preach perfect justice in man? And if they respond that they say this about the saints, not about themselves, certainly I believe there is no one holier than Jeremiah, who is a virgin, a Prophet, and sanctified in the womb, his very name foreshadowing the Lord Savior. For Jeremiah means 'exalted of the Lord.'

23:10

(Verse 10) Because the earth is filled with adulterers (or adulteresses), because the face of the earth mourns because of a curse (or oath), the fields (or pastures) of the desert are dried up, and their course is evil, and their strength is dissimilar. This that we have put from Hebrew: because the earth is filled with adulterers, is not found in the Septuagint, who have spoken an oath, instead of a curse. And they give the reasons, that because of adulteries and curses, or excessive oath, or rather perjuries, there has been a result of the sterility of crops. Whatever you understand from the land of Judaea according to the written word, report it to the congregation of believers, because due to adultery, lies, or perjury, the churches are barren of the virtues and gifts of God.

23:11-12

(Vers. 11, 12.) For the prophet and the priest have become polluted, and in my house I have found their evils," says the Lord. "Therefore, their way will be like a slippery path in the darkness. They will be pushed and fall in it, for I will bring upon them the year of their visitation," says the Lord. "When evils are found in the Church of God, especially in its leaders, let us know that the prophecy and the priesthood have become polluted. In my house I have found their evils," says the Lord. But the house of Christ is the Church, of which the Apostle writes to Timothy: That you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. III, 15). In the prophet, receive a teacher; in the priest, the dignity of the ministry. If they consent with a perverse mind, their way will be slippery and dark; and they will not have the Lord speaking to them: I am the light of the world; he who believes in me shall not remain in darkness (John XII, 46). Where the Saint says, fleeing all darkness: Signet is upon us the light of your face, O Lord; you have given joy in my heart. But when they are in darkness and on a slippery path, namely the path of heresy, they will be driven to every movement and will fall. And the Lord brings evils upon them, not because evils are theirs, so that the Lord may bring evils, but evils are for those who endure punishment. Otherwise, the same things are both evil and good. Evil, according to those who are tormented; good, according to those who are corrected. And this must be noted, that the year of the Lord's visitation, the correction of sinners is called and the torment, according to that which is written: I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with stripes: but my mercy I will not scatter away from him (Psalm 88:33-34).

23:13

(Verse 13) And in the prophets of Samaria I saw foolishness (or wickedness (Vulgate: foolishness)); they prophesied in Baal and deceived my people Israel. I think that the prophets of Samaria, according to mystical understanding, are properly called heretics, and all who boast of

false knowledge. However, just as the prophets of Samaria prophesied in Baal, that is, an idol consecrated to demons, so heretics speak whatever they say in the Church or outside the Church, in order to deceive the people of Israel, who previously beheld God, they speak in demons. And significantly it says: And I have seen foolishness in the Prophets of Samaria (I Cor. I, 24): for they do not possess him of whom it is said, the power of God and the wisdom of God, Christ.

23:14

(Verse 14.) And in the prophets of Jerusalem I saw a likeness (or dreadful things), adultery and the path of lies, and they strengthened the hands of the wicked, so that each one would not turn away from their evil ways. They have become to me like Sodom, and its inhabitants like Gomorrah. Not only, he says, are these things found in the assemblies of heretics, but also in the prophets of Jerusalem, that is, the teachers of the Church, I saw similar things, or dreadful things, the adulterating of the word of God and the walking in the way of lies, so that they might acquiesce in the deceits of heretics and strengthen the hands of the wicked, adding their evils to their own sins, and leading those whom they should have corrected to destruction. Let those who have done this not consider themselves unpunished. For they and those who support them will be like Sodom, and all those who dwell with them will not depart from such evil, like Gomorrah. Therefore, let the worst doctrine rejoice as much as it wants, and let the prophets of Jerusalem boast that they have obtained through lies and strengthened the hands of the wicked. Their end will be like Sodom and Gomorrah.

23:15

(Verse 15.) Therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts to the prophets: Behold, I will feed them wormwood (or sorrow, and according to Symmachus, bitterness) and give them gall to drink (or bitter water), because from the prophets of Jerusalem pollution has gone out into all the land. Let us use this testimony against those who disseminate letters full of lies, deceit, and perjury throughout the world, so that they may defile the ears of those who hear them and harm the reputation of the innocent. Thus, may what is written be fulfilled in them: Pollution has gone out from the prophets of Jerusalem to all the land. For it is not enough for them to devour their own iniquity and harm their neighbors, but they strive to defame those whom they once hated throughout the world, and spread blasphemies everywhere.

23:16-17 (Verse 16, 17.) Thus says the Lord of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, and deceive you. They speak a vision of their own heart, and not from the mouth of the Lord. They say to those who despise me (or reject my word), the Lord has spoken, you shall have peace. And to everyone who walks according to the stubbornness of his own heart, they say, no evil shall come upon you. So that the people may not think they are innocent if they follow the wicked teachers, do not listen, he says, to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you deceit, and deceive you. For there will be punishment for both the master and the disciple. They do not speak from the Lord's mouth, but rather things they have concocted in their own hearts. They say to those who blaspheme against me, namely heretics and perverted individuals, or those who reject my message: what do they say? The Lord has spoken, there will be peace for you. Do not fear harsh punishments, nor be frightened by empty threats. There will be peace and tranquility for you, and whatever we say and announce to you, the Lord has spoken; nor will any evil come upon you that you fear out of a guilty conscience; but rather the good that the Lord has

spoken to you will come. Who indeed was present in the counsel of the Lord, and saw, and heard His word? Who considered His word, and heard it? Where we have interpreted, in the counsel, and in Hebrew it is written Basod (): Aquila, secretum: Symmachus, sermonem: Septuagint and Theodotion, substance or essence. And the sense is: Do not believe, O uninformed crowd, the false prophets who announce to you, saying, 'The Lord has spoken this, peace will be upon you; no evil will come upon you.' For where can the secrets of God be known, or by whom have we learned the counsel of God? How does the word of divine arrangement reach them? Some of our people think they have found this place, where the substance of God is described.

23:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) Behold, a whirlwind (or a storm, and commotion) of the Lord's indignation will go forth, and a bursting storm will come upon the head of the wicked, and the Lord's fury will not turn back until He has done, and until He has fulfilled the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days, you will understand His plan. Those who previously said, 'The Lord has spoken to us, there will be peace for you,' and those whom He corrected because they could not know the future or understand God's judgment, now He reveals the opposite, that they do not know at all. For the sake of peace and security, the storm will come to Babylon, and it will not come upon just anyone, but upon the heads of the wicked, whether the entire people or those who falsely reported to the people. Not like in past times when God's anger and fury were appeased, but what he foretold and threatened many times must be fulfilled by action, and the thoughts and intentions of the wicked must be proven by punishments. When, he says, the end of captivity comes and the triumphant conqueror takes hold of you, and the hands bind you with the clanking of chains, then you will understand his plan, which you now boast of knowing in vain.

23:21-22

(Verses 21, 22). I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied. If they had stood in my council and had made my words known to my people, then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their actions. This sentiment is explained by the Apostle to the Romans: And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. (Rom. 1:28, 29), and so on. For when false teachers have once surrendered themselves to lies and perjuries and the deaths of the deceived, they do not run slowly, nor with careful steps, but headlong into destruction, both their own and those whom they have deceived. The Lord does not speak to them, but they themselves speak as if from the mouth of the Lord, concerning whom it is also said: If they had stood in my counsel, that is, if they had been willing to acquiesce to my will, and had made my words known to my people, not flattering them and corrupting them with flattery, so that they would say, you have no sins; you possess perfect justice; holiness and chastity and righteousness are found only in you: and I would not have given them over to uncleanness and shame, to do what is not fitting, and to follow their wicked thoughts. Let us consider the heretics, how once despairing of salvation, they surrender themselves to gluttony and pleasures, feast on meats, frequently visit baths, smell of perfume; being adorned with various ointments, they seek bodily beauty. For they do not hope for things to come, nor do they believe in the resurrection. Although they do not speak of these things in words, they show them in their actions. For if they believed, they would not do such

things. And in this passage where it is written: if they had stood in my counsel, let Aquila, and Symmachus, and Theodotio, and the Seventy, likewise translated it above.

23:23-24

(Ver. 23, 24.) Do you think that I am a God nearby, says the Lord, and not a God from afar? If a man hides himself in hiding places, shall I not see him? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord. LXX: I am a God who approaches, says the Lord, and not a God from afar. If a man hides himself in hiding places, shall I not see him? says the Lord; do I not fill heaven and earth? The Lord says, 'Am I a God who is near, and not a God who is far away?' Aquila and Symmachus likewise interpreted it: 'Am I a God who is near, and not a God who is far away?' But the Septuagint and Theodotion translated it in the opposite sense, saying: 'I am a God who is approaching,' says the Lord, 'and not a God who is far away.' The latter meaning asserts that God not only knows what is near, but also what is far away; and not only sees what is present, but also what is future. Truly, they consider God to be present everywhere, and there is no place where God is not. For God is close to all, especially the saints, as if a garment were adhering to the skin. But sinners who distance themselves from Him will perish. We read this meaning in the Psalms as well: Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me (Psalm 139:7-10). Amos also agrees with these words, saying: If they descend to the grave, from there my hand will bring them out; and if they ascend to heaven, from there I will bring them down. And if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, I will search for them and take them away. And if they hide from my eyes in the depths of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it will bite them (Amos 9:2-3); and again in the previous psalm: For darkness will not hide from you; and night will be as bright as day: as its darkness, so its light (Psalm 139:12). But what is frequently said in the Prophets, 'Thus says the Lord,' is always added, so that the words of the Prophets are not despised, but rather, it is constantly reminded that they are the words of God that they speak.

23:25-27

(Verse 25 onwards) I have heard what the prophets have said, prophesying in my name lies and saying: I had a dream (or I saw a vision). How long will this deceit be in the hearts (or minds) of the prophesying prophets, who desire (or think) to make my people forget my name because of their dreams, which each one tells to their neighbor, just as their fathers forgot my name for Baal (or in Baal). Because the previous title is against the Prophets, or to the Prophets, whom we clearly understand to be false prophets (and there are many types of prophesying: one of which is dreams, such as in Daniel), therefore the prophetic discourse is directed towards those who believe in dreams and think that everything they see is a divine revelation, which is properly revealed to the saints and servants of God. And if we read about Pharaoh (Gen. XLI) and Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. II) seeing true dreams, it was not because of their merit that they saw them; but rather so that through their occasion the holy men Joseph and Daniel might shine forth, and the hard and unyielding hearts of the tyrants might feel the majesty of the Lord through their own conscience. Today there are also dreamers in the Church, and especially in our flock, who boast their own errors as the prophecy of the Lord, and frequently insert, 'I dreamed, I dreamed.'

These the Lord rebukes, saying, 'How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies, and the prophets of the deceit of their own heart? For they do these things, that, as the ancient people, that came out of Egypt, forgot my name,' However, this prophecy is not in the name of the Lord, but in the name of Baal, which is properly the idol of the Sidonians or Babylonians, and is also called Bel.

23:28-29

(Verse 28, 29.) The prophet who has a dream, let him tell the dream, and the one who has my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is straw compared to wheat? says the Lord. Are not my words like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer (or an axe) shattering rock? It is for them to interpret the dream who are deserving of having the word of God, and to say: Thus says the Lord; to whom the Lord has spoken, in whom there is truth, and not deceitful lies. What do the heretics' chaff have to do with the wheat of the Church? about which John the Baptist speaks more fully (Matt. III), that the Lord may cleanse his threshing floor, and by the winnowing fan scatter the chaff to be burned by the winds, and leave it to be consumed by fire; but may store the wheat in the barns, that it may become heavenly bread; and let each believer say: Taste and see, for the Lord is sweet (Ps. XXXIII, 9). And fittingly is false doctrine compared to chaff, which has no substance, nor can it nourish the people of believers, but it is crushed by empty husks. And because heretics usually promise prosperity and open the kingdoms of heaven to sinners, saying, 'The kingdoms of heaven are prepared for you', you can imitate the majesty of God, so that you may be without sin; for you have received the power of free will and the knowledge of the law, by which you may attain what you desire. And they deceive the wretched with flatteries, especially the women burdened with sins, who go about listening to every wind of doctrine, always learning but never coming to the knowledge of the truth, and they deceive all their hearers with adulation (Ephesians 4); therefore the Lord, comparing his words to the chaff of heretics, says: Are not my words like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock? For my part, he said, my speech announces future punishments so as to deter people from sinning; and he threatens the fire of sinners to the chaff, so that the hardened hearts of heretics, like flint, may be crushed by the hammer of his word: taking away a heart of stone, so that he may put in its place a heart of flesh, namely, one that is soft and capable of receiving and understanding God's commands. The Lord speaks of such a thing through Ezekiel as well (Ezek. 13), because false prophets smear the wall with their seductions and without mortar, which is later destroyed by a violent rain and the truth of judgment. And the false prophets may sew pillows under every arm to make sinners rest, and by no means soothe the wrath of God with tears. For a hammer, they have interpreted the axe of the Seventy, which undoubtedly John the Baptist speaks of: Now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees (Matthew 3:10). This axe cuts down unfruitful trees, and this hammer crushes the hardest stones. Therefore, the Prophet Nahum also speaks: His fury, undoubtedly God's, will consume the principalities and the rocks will be crushed by Him (Nahum 1:6). This is against heretics. Moreover, it is written about Ecclesiastical men, that the hammer and axe are not heard in the house of the Lord (3 Kings 6).

23:30-32

(Verse 30 and following) Therefore behold, I am against the prophets,' declares the Lord, 'who steal my words from each other (or from their neighbor). Behold, I am against the prophets,'

declares the Lord, 'who use their own tongues and say, "declares" (or who sleep and dream). Behold, I am against the prophets who dream lies,' declares the Lord, 'and tell them, and lead astray (or have led astray) my people with their lies and with their miracles (or with their wonders and terrors), when I did not send them or command them; they are of no benefit to this people,' declares the Lord. Always does a lie imitate truth: and unless it has some resemblance to what is right, it cannot deceive the innocent. Therefore, in the olden days, the prophets used to deceive the people and say: Thus says the Lord. And, I saw the Lord; and, the Word of the Lord that came to him, or to her: in the same way, heretics assume testimonies of the Scriptures from the old and new Testaments, and steal the words of the Savior from one another, from the Prophets and Apostles, and the Evangelists: and they use their tongues to pronounce the poison of their hearts, and they sleep a deep sleep, about which it is truly said: They have dozed off, and have found nothing (Psalm 76:5). Or according to the Hebrew: And they say, so that the Lord may be understood, or certainly (alternatively), divine speech. Therefore, the Lord threatens (alternatively, adds now) that He Himself will come against such masters, who deceive His people with their lies and with stupors and miracles. For they promise great and incredible and enormous (alternatively, imperceptible) things, in order to deceive the miserable ones who have done nothing to benefit the people of God. And they fulfill this Apostolic teaching, teaching that it is not necessary for the sake of shameful gain: those who are accustomed to announce prosperity to the wicked and adversity to the righteous.

23:33-36

(Verse 33 and following) So if this people, or a prophet, or a priest asks you, saying: what is the burden of God (or what is the assumption of the Lord)? you shall say to them: You are the burden (or assumption). For I will cast (or hurl) you away, says the Lord. And the prophet and the priest and the people, who says the burden (or assumption) of the Lord, I will visit (or avenge) upon that man and upon his house. Each one will say to his friend (nearest in the Vulgate) and to his brother: what did the Lord answer, and what did the Lord speak? And the burden (or assumption) of the Lord will not be remembered anymore, because the burden (or assumption) will be each one's own word (in the Alexandrian version). The Hebrew word *massa* means burden and weight, as interpreted by Aquila as ■ $\rho\mu\alpha$, that is, burden and weight: Symmachus, Septuagint, and Theodotion translate it as assumption. Therefore, wherever it is heavy, what the Lord threatens, and full of weight and labor, and unendurable, it is also called a burden in the title ■ $\rho\mu\alpha$, that is, weight. Wherever, indeed, the Lord promises prosperity, or after a threat, he promises better things, there the Vision is spoken, or certainly the word of the Lord: and it was clear from the very title of the prophecy of the weight, or vision, and the Word of God, what kind of prediction would follow. Therefore, since the Prophets used to announce sad things and threaten punishments to the sinful people, in order to turn them back to repentance: but the merciful and compassionate Lord delayed his judgment for a long time, the deceived people, led astray by the fraud of false prophets, thought that what the Lord threatened would not come true, and they turned the true matter into a game and a joke; and mocking the prophets, they said: Here again he sees the weight and burden of the Lord. And so it happened that, not at all seriously but as a joke and mockery, the burden and weight were called the Vision. Therefore, the Lord instructed that whether the people, the prophets, or the priests asked Jeremiah what the burden or assumption of the Lord was, he should respond to them and say: You are the burden, and you are the

assumption. For I will take you and cast you away, and I will crush you and make you perish. But if anyone thereafter, whether a prophet, a priest, or a member of the people, dares to name the burden and weight of the Lord, I will visit," he said, "upon that man and upon his house; and I will destroy him forever. Therefore let each person say to his neighbor and friend, 'Surely it is not the burden of the Lord?' But what did the Lord respond? And what did the Lord say? You have forgotten the Old: burden and weight, or assumption, should no longer resound in your mouth. For to each person, his own words and deeds will be considered a burden and weight, according to what is written: 'By your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned' (Matthew 15).

23:37-40

(Verses 37 onwards) And you pervert the words of the living God: the Lord of hosts, our God. This is what you say to the Prophet: What did the Lord respond to you, and what did the Lord say? But if you say the burden of the Lord. Up to this point, it is not found in the Septuagint, and it continues: Therefore, this is what the Lord says: Because you have said this word, the burden of the Lord, and I have sent to you, saying: Do not say, the burden of the Lord: therefore, behold, I will take you up and cast you and the city that I gave to you and your fathers away from My presence, and I will make you an everlasting reproach and an eternal disgrace, which will never be forgotten. The Lord commanded that the discourse of burden and weight and assumption should never be spoken among the people; but rather the response to the word of God: because the people had scorned to fulfill it, the word itself is interpreted over them, and it says, 'Because you have said that I did not want this, even though I have often sent prophets and commanded you not to say it: therefore I will fulfill your discourse of assumption, burden, and weight in you by action. Indeed, I will assume you and lift you up and carry you, and I will make you stumble and cause you to fall from the heights to the ground.' Not only you, but also your city, which I gave to your fathers. And I will make you a disgrace and eternal ignominy, which will never be erased by forgetfulness. And we know that this happened during the Babylonian captivity; but it is more fully and perfectly fulfilled after the passion and resurrection of the Savior, when the Lord spoke: Your house will be left deserted to you (Luke 13:35): and this sentence will remain until the end. Let us also speak in another way, only according to the Septuagint: the word λαμβανω not only signifies assumption, but also gift and gift. Because the people always promised themselves prosperity, it says that they should not say this anymore. For they are unworthy of God's gifts and favors, rather they should be rejected and completely abandoned by God's help. However, often things are shown from the words and interpretation of names, as in the case of Abraham, Sarah, and Peter, and the names of the sons of Zebedee, where the changing of names signifies a change in circumstances. And in this same prophet, Phasur is said to mean fear, or translation, and colonus, or foreigner. It should be noted that the words 'Dei viventis,' 'Domini exercituum,' 'Dei nostri' are not found in the Latin and Greek manuscripts, and the Hebrews themselves read against this in their volumes, as it properly signifies the mystery of the Trinity.

Book Five Book Five The book of Quintus's Commentaries on Jeremiah will have its beginning from two baskets, in which one will demonstrate the sweetness of true faith and the other the bitterness of the perfidy of heretics. Although Ananias, son of Azur, opposes Jeremiah, and Shemaiah, the Nehelamite, desires to send the prophet to prison, and the priest Zephaniah speaks against the words of the false prophets (Jeremiah 28, 29): nevertheless, the truth can be

closed and bound, but it cannot be conquered. It is content with its few followers and is not frightened by the multitude of its enemies. Therefore, raise your hands with Moses to the sky, and hang the ancient serpent in the wilderness; immediately Amalek will be destroyed, and venomous bites will not prevail, and the people of the Lord, safe with Jesus, will cross the waters of the Jordan; and after the vast solitude, they will eat the bread that was born in our little Bethlehem. (Exodus 17, Numbers 21).

24:1-10

(Chapter XXIV. - Verse 1ff.) The Lord showed me, and behold, two baskets (or baskets) full of figs, placed before the temple of the Lord. After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes, the craftsmen, and the captives from Jerusalem to Babylon. One basket had very good figs, like the figs that ripen early, and the other basket had very bad figs, which could not be eaten because they were bad. And the Lord said to me: What do you see, Jeremiah? And I said: I see good figs, very good; and bad figs, very bad, which cannot be eaten, because they are bad. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Thus says the Lord God of Israel: As these good figs, so will I know the captivity of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans, for good. And I will set my eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them back to this land, and I will build them up, and not tear them down: and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return to me with their whole heart. And as the fig tree, which cannot be eaten, because it is bad: thus saith the Lord, so will I give (or hand over) Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the remnant of Jerusalem, that remain in this city, and that dwell in the land of Egypt. And I will give them for vexation, affliction (or dispersion) to all the kingdoms of the earth as a reproach, and as a parable, and as a proverb, and as a curse in all places where I have driven them. And I will send upon them the sword, and famine, and the pestilence, until they are consumed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers. The two baskets, or baskets of good and evil (or of good things and evil things), are interpreted in the Law and in the Gospel; the Synagogue and the Church; the Jewish people and the Christians; Gehenna and the Kingdom of Heaven, of which one pertains to the punishment of sins, and the other to the dwelling place of the Saints. But we, knowing according to the Apostle Paul (Rom. VII) that the law is good and holy, and the commandment is good and holy, and that the God of both Testaments is one, or rather let us refer to those who believed and did not believe in the coming of the Lord Savior, who, instigated by the Scribes and priests, cried out, saying: Crucify, crucify such a one (Luc. XXIII, 21), let them be baskets of bad figs; but those who believed after his ascension, let them be referred to as good figs and the best basket and basket. But let us follow a simple and true history, which Jeconiah, who had surrendered himself to the counsel and command of Jeremiah and God, had called the basket of good figs, to whom the Lord also promises prosperity. But of Zedekiah, who went against the advice of God, he was captured, his eyes were blinded, and he was led to Babylon, where he died (2 Kings 25). However, God showed favor to those who obeyed His command and brought them back to their land. He built and did not destroy, planted and did not uproot, and gave them a heart to know Him, so that they would be His people and He would be their God. Even in captivity, God looked upon them and allowed them to work the land, build houses, and plant gardens in the region of Babylon. Daniel, through the signs and miracles, became a ruler suddenly from being a captive (Daniel 5), and the three young men

were gloriously delivered from the fiery furnace (Daniel 3). And after seventy years, under Zerubbabel, Joshua the high priest, Ezra, and Nehemiah, a great number of people returned to Jerusalem, which is recorded in the book of Ezra (Ezra 2). It should also be noted that this vision was given to the prophet during the time of Zedekiah, after Jehoiachin was taken into exile. For he did not mention captivity, since he had willingly surrendered himself. However, we should understand the blacksmiths and the enclosers, or the interpreters and teachers of the law, or the craftsmen and enclosers of gold and gems, which art is most precious among barbarian nations. They were interpreted for the jailers as referring to the seventy who were bound, in order to signify the evil of their captivity; and they added something of their own, the wealthy, which is not found in the Hebrew. Moreover, he compares a basket which had good figs, and very good ones, the figs of the first season, which in Greek are called $\pi\rho\sigma\mu\alpha$, namely, those of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Aaron, and Job, and the other holy men, concerning whom one of the twelve Prophets speaks: I found Israel as grapes in the wilderness, and as figs in the fig tree's first season I found your fathers. And we are also called sons of Abraham. And on the contrary, it is said to the Jews: If your father were Abraham, you would do his works (John 8:39). However, these nets, which had good and bad figs, were not outside and outside the Church, but in front of the temple of the Lord, because all of that knowledge is open: nor do these figs outside have such bitterness, as those which have been changed after the confession of faith through transgression. They lack the sweetness of a good fig, which are not in the presence of the temple of God: such were the worldly philosophers, who, though they seemed more to praise than to follow the virtues, recognized the natural good and intelligence of the Creator: how great is the sweetness of the figs that are in the temple of God, of which the Prophets and Apostles were, of whom one fig spoke: I have given you milk, not solid food (I Cor. III, 2). And: My little children, of whom I am in travail again until Christ be formed in you (Galat. IV, 19). Where it is said that in the sight of the temple of God, the good figs were very good; and the bad figs were very bad. And so that we do not think that our interpretation is incorrect, Scripture itself explains. Just as it says, these figs are good: so I will acknowledge the transmigration of Judah, which I sent from this place to the land of the Chaldeans for good: signifying Jeconiah and the princes who were taken captive with him. And, on the contrary, concerning the basket that had the bad figs; and just as the figs, it says, which cannot be eaten because they are bad: so I will give Zedekiah the king of Judah and his princes, and those who fled to Egypt, and those who remained in this city, into vexation and affliction for all the kingdoms of the earth (Jeremiah 42), when they were also taken captive in Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar set his throne in Tahpanhes, and the Lord sent against them the sword, famine, and pestilence until they were consumed from the land that he gave to their fathers. But what he said about the good figs: I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord, is similar to the Apostle's: It is God who works in you both to will and to do (Philippians 2:13), so that not only our actions, but also our desires rely on the help of God. In this passage, the allegorical interpreter goes astray, always wanting to give a historical meaning to the truth, referring to those captured and taken to Chaldea from the heavenly Jerusalem, and then returning to their original place, like Jeremiah and the other holy prophets; but he says that the others who were sinners will die in this land and in the valley of tears. I placed the entire vision here without any cutting, so as not to divide the meaning in the explanation.

25:1

(Chapter 25, Verse 1) The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah. These events took place before the vision because it was during the reign of Zedekiah, after Jehoiachin was deported to Babylon. But this event took place during the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, and the father of Jehoiachin. For the prophets (as I mentioned before) were not concerned with keeping track of the times, which require the laws of history, but rather with writing in a way that would be useful to those hearing or reading it. Some people wrongly seek the order of the history of the psalms in the Psalter, which is not observed in lyrical poetry.

25:2

(Verse 2) This is the first year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (which is not in the LXX. And it follows): What Jeremiah the Prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying. In the fourth year of the reign of King Jehoiakim, son of Josiah and father of Jeconiah, Nebuchadnezzar became the ruler in Babylon, and it happened that the year which was the first for Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon was the fourth for King Jehoiakim in Jerusalem. Finally, in the eighth year of his reign, Jeconiah, along with his mother and the princes, was led into captivity, having only reigned for three months after the death of his father, Joachim. However, Joachim was killed in the eleventh year of his reign in Jerusalem (2 Kings 24).

25:3 (Version 3.) From the thirteenth year of Josiah, son of Ammon, king of Judah, until this day, which is the twenty-third year, the word of the Lord came to me, and I spoke to you, rising up at night and speaking, but you did not listen. In the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, who reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-one years, Jeremiah began to prophesy, and he prophesied under him for nineteen years. After him, his son Joahaz became king, but he was immediately taken into captivity by Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, and his brother Joachim succeeded to the throne (2 Kings 23). In the fourth year of his reign, this message of the Lord comes to Jeremiah and thus it was the twenty-third year of the prophet Jeremiah, since he began speaking to the people. And he never ceased to preach, but every day, rising at dawn and in the night, he spoke to the people. And you have not listened, he says. But if, as the heretics want from the old things, the law was given once for help, and established precepts which we do or do not do according to our own will; how does the Prophet always thrust himself forward and daily repeat the commands of God, which, certainly once received, were enough for those to whom they were given, unless to show this, that we always need the help of God and can never be sufficient, what was given once, unless it is renewed daily by the reminder of the Lord? And the Lord sent to all of you his servants the Prophets, rising up in the morning and sending them; and you did not listen. Not through one Prophet, but through all his people, God always warned, and as if he himself arose in watchful vigil and stood up in the morning, to warn his people. And you did not listen; so with the more frequent admonition, how much greater have been the sins of those who despise?

25:4-5

(Verse 4, 5.) You did not incline your ears to listen when I said (Vulgate: said): Return to me, each one of you, from your evil ways and from your wicked thoughts. And you will dwell in the land that the Lord gave to you and your fathers from eternity to eternity. The hardness of the people was so great that they would not even assume the habit of listening and incline their ear, particularly when the Lord was warning them to turn each one from their evil ways and from their wicked thoughts.

And, O infinite mercy, not to inflict punishment for crime, but to provoke to repentance, both for evil deeds, which the wicked way signifies, and for the worst thoughts, which are considered sin even without action. And He promises a reward, if they do what is commanded, that they may dwell in the land which was given to the fathers, and for the sins of their children to be removed. And He says: From age to age, or, from eternity to eternity, He shows the eternal gifts of God, if those to whom they are given are worthy.

25:6-7

(Verse 6, 7.) And do not go after foreign gods, to serve them and worship them; and do not provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, and I will not afflict you. But you did not listen to me, says the Lord, to provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, to your own harm. And this, I said to your forefathers, not to serve and worship foreign gods, and by doing so, provoke me to anger because of the works of your hands, so that I would do what I did not desire, and afflict you, and you did not listen to me. And what follows, says the Lord, that you have provoked me to anger with the works of your hands, for your own harm, is not found in the Septuagint.

25:8

(Verse 8.) Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: Because you have not listened to my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, declares the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. Moreover, I will banish from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the grinding of the millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. But the Lord sends forth angels to stir up the nations, or certainly moves such tribes, so that they may do the will of the Lord. And he calls his servant Nebuchadnezzar, not called as the prophets and all the saints are called, who truly serve the Lord; but so that in the destruction of Jerusalem, he may serve the will of the Lord: as the Apostle also speaks: Whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme (1 Timothy 1:20). There is no doubt that the Chaldeans are located in the northern part, near the site of Jerusalem.

25:9

(Verse 9) And I will bring them upon this land and upon its inhabitants and upon all the nations around it. And I will destroy them and make them a horror, and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. These are the rewards of those who despise and refuse to listen to the words of God. Therefore, whatever evil comes upon us, it is because of our sins. And all the nations were brought against Jerusalem in that way, just as they are brought against the negligent Church today, to destroy them and make them a horror, and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation, so that they may serve as an example and a wonder to all. But the hissing is a sign of a miracle and wonder; and eternal loneliness is found in those who do not have God as their guide.

25:10

(Verse 10) And I will destroy from among them the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness; the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; the sound of the millstone, and the light of the lamp. And the whole land shall be desolation and astonishment, and these things are proven today in the assembly of the wicked; so that their teachers do not teach the word of God, but hiss like a serpent. And the voice of joy and the voice of gladness perish in them, so that they never hear the words of the Apostle: Rejoice, again I say, rejoice (Philippians 4:4). The voice also of the bride, of the Ecclesiastical faith; and the voice of the bridegroom, of the Lord Savior: For he who has a bride, is the bridegroom (John III, 29). The voice of the mill, so that the grains are not crushed in it, and are given to the peoples for nourishment: and the light of the lamp, namely the teaching and knowledge (or, rather, the teaching and knowledge) of the Prophets. Finally, it is also said about John the Baptist: He was a shining lamp (John V, 35). And another Prophet: Your word, Lord, is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths (Psalm CXVIII, 105). All, he said, the land of heretics will be as a wasteland and in astonishment, when its final folly has been revealed.

25:11-13

(Verse 11 and following) And these nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. And when seventy years have been completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, says the Lord, for their iniquities, and the land of the Chaldeans, and I will make it an eternal wasteland. And I will bring upon that land all my words that I have spoken against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. Just as Jerusalem, after seventy years, received back its former inhabitants and, having completed its punishments because it obeyed the command of God, now enjoys its former happiness; so the king of Babylon, who was lifted up in pride and trusted in his own strength, because he reigned among the nations and not according to the will of the Lord, will be destroyed when the Medes and Persians come. Ultimately, only the remains of the city of Babylon exist to this day. And the Lord placed her in everlasting solitude, and fulfilled all the words that are contained in the volume of this very prophet. For in the following, the sermon of Jeremiah describes the evils that Babylon is to suffer.

25:14

(Verse 14) Because many nations and great kings have served them, and I will repay them according to their deeds and according to the works of their hands. This is not found in the Septuagint. However, it signifies that Jeremiah prophesied not only against Babylon, but against the other nations that were in the Babylonian army and fought against the people of the Lord. Finally, it is said in the following verses against Egypt, and the Philistines, and Moab, and Ammon, and Edom, and Damascus, and Kedar, and the kingdoms of Hazor and Elam, and finally against Babylon and the land of Chaldea.

25:15-17

(Verse 15 and following) For thus says the Lord God of Israel to me (Vulgate adds 'of hosts, and is silent to me'): take the cup of wine of fury (or strong drink) from my hand, and give it to all the nations to which I send you, and they shall drink it, and become intoxicated (Vulgate says 'disorderly') (or vomit); and they shall become mad because of the sword that I will send among them. And I took the cup from the hand of the Lord, and gave it to all the nations to which the Lord sent me. The drinking of the cup, and the cup of wine, whether unmixed or mixed, which is called

■κρ■του in Greek, is an indication of the Lord's furious wrath, so that all nations who have waged war against God's people may drink from the cup of the Lord's fury, about which Isaiah writes against Jerusalem: 'You have drunk the cup of fury, the chalice of ruin, and have drained it out, therefore arise' (Isa. 51:17). This cup, however, is drunk by all nations so that they may vomit and become insane. That which a certain corrupt interpreter takes in a good sense: so that, like a cathartic potion, it compels whatever bile and phlegm and harmful humor is in the chest to exit and restores its original health. It also takes the Savior for Jeremiah, in that he offered himself to all nations to which he was sent, so that they would abandon idolatry and devote themselves to the worship of God. The following will show that this is contrary to Holy Scripture. For they are offered not for remedy, as he wishes, but for punishment, deservedly served in a bitter cup.

25:18

(Verse 18) Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and its kings, and its princes, to make them a desolation, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a curse, as it is this day. 'I thought,' he says, 'that I would give this only to the nations, and therefore I gladly offered myself to this ministry; but among all the nations, indeed before all others, I have given it to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and its kings, and its princes, to make them a desolation, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a curse, as is proven by the present example.' And as it is said above: You have seduced me, O Lord, and I have been seduced; you have been strong and have prevailed.

25:19 (Verse 19.) To Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people, and everyone in general. After Jerusalem, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and his companions drank: the princes and all the people drank, as did everyone who is not Egyptian, but who dwells in his territories: whom the Seventy translated as 'συμμ■κτους', that is, mixed, the common people not of the land of Egypt, but foreign and alien. And all the kings of the land of Uz, which is called Us in Hebrew, from which the history also narrates that Job was: There was a certain man in the region of Uz, named Job (Job 1). And yet it should be known that this verse is not found in the Septuagint, and Theodotion interpreted it as an island.

25:20

(v. 20) And to all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and to Ascalon, Gaza, Accaron, and the rest of Azotus. He generally placed the Philistines, that is, the land of the Palestinians, and specifically their cities Ascalon, Gaza, Accaron, and Azotus; he only remained silent about Gath, which is included in the rest. For this is what is written: And the rest of Azotus: for it is near and adjacent to Azotus, which in Hebrew is called Esdod, the region of the city of Gath. But Isaiah writes that the Palestinians were captured and devastated by the Babylonians.

25:21

(Verse 21.) Idumea, and Moab, and the sons of Ammon, and all the kings of Tyre, and all the kings of Sidon. Idumea, where the mountains of Seir are, and which is called Edom in Hebrew (): Moab and Ammon, they are the sons of Lot, close to the Dead Sea. Tyre and Sidon are the chief cities on the coast of Phoenicia, which themselves were conquered by the Babylonians when they came, among which Carthage is a colony. Hence the Phoenicians are also called the Phoenicians, their language being for the most part closely related to the Hebrew language.

25:22

(Verse 22.) And to the kings of the islands across the sea. He crossed over to Cyprus, and Rhodes, and the islands called the Cyclades. And these were indeed occupied by the Babylonians.

25:23

(Verse 23.) And Dedan, and Teman, and Buz, and all who have their hair cut short. These are the nations that live in solitude, near and mixed with the regions of the Ishmaelites, whom they now call Saracens, and of whom it is said: those who have their hair cut short.

25:24 (Verse 24) And all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the West, who dwell in the desert. This is not found in the Septuagint. After Dedan, therefore, and Teman, and Buz, and the Ishmaelites, follows the order of the regions. And all the kings of Zamri. This is also not found in the Septuagint.

25:25 (Verse 25.) And all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes. From this, since Zamri follows Elam and the kings of the Medes, we conclude that Zamri is the region of Persia, unless perhaps because Arabia came before, and these kings should be understood as the kings of the wilderness. Elam, however, is a region of Persia beyond Babylon, from which also the Elamites. Likewise, the Medes and the Persians, by whom Babylon was captured and destroyed. And they themselves were able to drink from the mixed cup, with Alexander, the king of the Macedonians, offering it. And all the kings of the North ((or of Babylon)) from nearby and far away. Because he had listed the regions of Persia and Babylon, Elam and the Medes; now he generally includes all the kings of the North, those who are nearby and those who are far away. For the North, which is called Saphon in Hebrew (), the Septuagint translates it as 'the furthest', which we can call 'Subsolanum'.

25:26 (Verse 26.) To each one against his brother, and to all the kingdoms of the earth that are above its surface. In order not to make it long to enumerate all the regions of the Eastern provinces in detail, he generally placed all the kingdoms of the earth that are mentioned in that land. And that which he said against his brother is implied: I gave them a full measure to make them all rage, vomit, go mad, and fight with each other in mutual battles. And what he brought: And King Sesach will drink after them; and though it is not found in the Septuagint, it has this meaning: All, he says, will be subject to the Babylonian empire, and it will subject everything to its power, so that all the nations that the previous passage mentioned will serve and drink from its cup. Thus, in the vision against Babylon, it is written: Babylon, the golden cup, that intoxicates the whole earth. (Jeremiah 51:7) And finally, the king of Babylon will drink this potion, offered to him by the charioteer of the chariot, consisting of camels and donkeys, Cyrus the king of the Medes and Persians. However, someone who has at least a small knowledge of the Hebrew language will not struggle greatly to understand how Babylon, which is called Babel in Hebrew (), is also understood as Sesach (). Just as in our case the Greek alphabet is read in order up to the last letter, that is, Alpha, Beta, and so on up to Omega: and again for the memory of children we are accustomed to reverse the order of reading and mix the first letters with the last, so that we say Alpha, O, Beta, Psi: similarly among the Hebrews the first is Aleph, the second Beth, the third Ghimel, and so on up to the twenty-second, and the last letter is Thau, with the penultimate being Sin. Therefore, we

read Aleph, Thau, Beth, Sin. And when we come to the middle, Lamed, the letter Chaph appears: and as, if we read correctly, we read Babel: thus, with the order changed, we read Sesach. However, the vowel letters are not placed between Beth and Beth, and Lamed, according to the language of the Hebrew tongue in this name. And I think it was wisely hidden by the holy Prophet, so as not to openly provoke the madness of those who were besieging Jerusalem, and were about to take possession of it very soon. We read that the Apostle also acted against the Roman Empire, writing about the Antichrist: 'Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time,' the Antichrist is understood. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:3-8). He who holds it, shows the Roman empire: for unless this be destroyed, taken out of the way, according to the prophecy of Daniel, the antichrist will not come. But if he had wished to state it openly, he would have aroused foolish persecution against the Christians and the Church, which was then just beginning. We have spoken on this chapter at greater length than the brevity of the Commentaries allows, because it is not found in their codices, the Greeks and Latins perhaps despising it. But what profit will it be when the very Prophet himself says concerning these things which follow in this country: How is Sechach taken, and how is the renowned city of the whole earth captured? How is Babylon become a wonder among the nations? Allegorical interpreters refer this whole place to all the nations which the devil has made drunk with the most bitter cup of sins. And this very man himself will also drink torments and tortures, of whom the Apostle writes: Whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the spirit of his mouth (II Thess. 2:8). And in another place it says: The last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Corinthians 15:26). This is the power of being able to transfer the words of different nations under their etymologies, and to adapt individual vices to individual names.

25:27

(Verse 27.) And you shall say to them, thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink and be drunk, and vomit, and fall, and do not rise up (according to the Vulgate, do not rise up) before the sword that I am sending among you. Once you have made all the nations drink, and filled them with the command of the Lord, you shall again give this command in the words of the Lord, and you shall say: Drink and be drunk, and vomit, and fall, and do not rise up. If to drink and become drunk, to vomit, and to fall are signs of health, so that all noxious things are expelled like a cathartic potion: how then does it follow, 'do not rise'? Moreover, what is the potion that causes them to fall forever, he explains more clearly, that is, the face of the sword which I will send among you.

25:28

(Verse 28.) And when they refuse to accept the cup from your hand to drink, you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord of hosts: You shall drink! For behold, in the city where my name has been invoked, I will begin to afflict, and you shall be as innocent ones, immune (or you shall be as clean ones, pure)? You shall not be immune (or you shall not be clean). He covertly shows, the command of God, that those who do not wish to do so willingly, will have to do so out of necessity, and shall hear: You shall drink! He says, whether you want it or not, the will of God must be

fulfilled. For if the city of Jerusalem, in which the name of God was known, as the Prophet says: 'God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel' (Psalm 76:1), drinks from the bitter cup of wrath, how much more will you, who worship idols in the name of God, not be pure!

25:29

(Verse 29.) For I will call the sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, says the Lord of hosts. This is the most bitter potion, this cup of the Lord's fury, which is not only upon Jerusalem, but upon all the earth, and upon all the surrounding nations. As it was said before: And I will send to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring him over this land, and over its inhabitants, and over all the nations around it.

25:30-31

(Verse 30, 31.) And you shall prophesy to them all these words, and you shall say to them: The Lord will roar from on high (or give a response), and from His holy habitation He will utter His voice. He roars loudly over His glorious place (or responds to His place), His shout resounds like those who trample the earth. The sound (or destruction) reaches to the ends (or above) of the earth: for the Lord has a judgment with the nations: He shall judge all flesh: I have given the wicked (or I gave the wicked) to the sword, says the Lord. First, let us say that the truth of the interpretation is evident. You will prophesy to all nations, he says, and you will declare that the Lord roars from on high, that is, he gives a clear sign of his anger; according to what is written: The lion will roar, and who will not fear? The Lord has spoken, and who will not prophesy? And from his holy dwelling he will make his voice heard, to terrify all who hear it. He will roar over his sanctuary, that is, over the Temple. And when he roars like those treading the winepress, a loud noise will be sung, and during the pouring out of the mutual blood, a mournful song will be chanted: which Symmachus calls a conclusion; Aquila, a remedy. The sound of this singing and song will reach to the ends of the earth, because the judgment of the Lord is with the nations. But if the judgment of the Lord is with the nations, then the merits of the nations are different (Hosea 4). To explain that passage, as some want: Whoever does not believe is already judged (John 3:18). Indeed, he is judged because he did not believe; but those who do not believe among themselves will be subjected to different punishments. He himself is judged with all flesh, so that no one may leave unjudged. But the ungodly, that is, those who do not believe in the Lord, are handed over to eternal sword. Allegorical interpreters according to the Septuagint explain this passage in such a way that they interpret the Lord's open threat in a positive manner. The Lord, they say, will give a response from on high to those whom he intends to save. And from His holy place He will give His voice, and He will answer with His word in His place. But they, like reapers full of fruit, will respond to His message: Destruction will come upon all the inhabitants of the earth, not upon the whole earth, but upon a part of the earth, namely those who do not believe. Judgment will be among the nations, and He will judge with all flesh. But the wicked will be delivered by the sword.

25:32-33

(Verse 32, 33.) Thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold, affliction (or evil) will come forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind (or storm) will come forth from the ends of the earth. And those slain (or wounded by the Lord) on that day will be from one end of the earth to the other end. They shall not be lamented, nor shall they be gathered or buried; they shall lie on the surface of the

earth like manure. Let those who try to do violence to the Holy Scripture be ashamed, as they interpret those things which are full of threats in a positive way. But concerning this matter, I believe the Lord also said: 'A nation will rise against a nation, and a kingdom against a kingdom' (Luke 21:10), and the other things that are contained in the sentiment of the Gospel. Let us understand these things either according to the historical events themselves, when all the nations around were subjugated by the Babylonian king and felt the cruelty of his empire, or according to the prophecy that will happen long after in the end of the world. They are said to be killed by the Lord, not because the Lord Himself strikes, but so that in the destruction of the wicked, the will and authority of the Lord may be fulfilled.

25:34-35

(Verse 34, 35.) Howl (or rejoice) you shepherds, and shout, and sprinkle yourselves with ashes, you noble flock (or lament, you rams of the sheep); for your days are fulfilled that you may be slain, and your dispersions, and you shall fall like precious vessels (or like chosen rams). And flight shall perish from the shepherds, and salvation from the noble ones (or rams) of the flock. It should be noted that only in this place have the Seventy interpreted 'jubilum' in a negative sense: for which reason other interpreters have translated it as 'howl' (as it is written in Hebrew). Between shepherds and rams, or leaders of the flock, there is this distinction: the shepherds are rational beings; but the rams and leaders are referred to the wealthy, who themselves are also called part of the flock. And it brings forth: Your days are complete, that you may be killed: then their days shall be completed, when their sins are fulfilled; and they shall be scattered and fall, like precious vessels, so that when broken they cannot be restored; and the more precious they were before, the greater the damage in their breaking; or like chosen rams, desiring to devour a fat sacrifice. He says that the flight of the shepherds will perish when they do not repent. Finally, it is said to the Pharisees: Offspring of vipers, who has shown you how to escape from the coming wrath (Luke 5:7)? And in the Psalms we read: The flight has perished from me (Psalm 141:5). And salvation, he says, from the best of the flock, or from the rams: in common, it is understood that it will perish.

25:36

(Verse 36.) The voice of the shepherds crying out, and the howling of the leaders of the flock (or the jubilation of the rams): because the Lord has laid waste to their pastures. And the fields of peace (or the beautiful ones) have fallen silent before the face of the wrathful fury of the Lord. And here it should be noted that in the Septuagint, jubilation is used instead of howling. However, there is a difference between the shepherds and the rams, in that the shepherds are considered to be in the Church, who oversee the flock with wisdom and knowledge and teaching. But the leaders who seem to be in the crowd, have nothing of teaching and wisdom in themselves, and due to excessive simplicity they are almost neighbors of foolishness. But when we will have peace, and we will not understand either the good or beautiful things of peace, but we will give ourselves to luxury, idleness, and pleasures: then the good things of peace will rest, or rather be silenced, and they will be taken away from us because of the anger of the Lord's fury, and that which is written will be fulfilled: 'When they shall say, peace and security, then sudden destruction shall come upon them' (I Thess. V, 3), and when it comes, everything will be silent.

25:37-38

(Verses 37, 38) He has abandoned his shelter (or den) like a lion. (And to be more accurate, his tent: for this is what 'Succho' means in Hebrew.) Because their land has become a desolation (or impassable) from the wrath of the dove (or from the face of the great sword) and from the face of the fury of the Lord. The Lord, of whom it was said above, will roar from on high, and from his holy dwelling he will give forth his voice. Roaring, he will roar over his glory, he himself will abandon his tent, of which it is written: He has made it in peace, or in Salem, that is, his dwelling place, and his habitation in Zion (Psalm 75:2): he himself will abandon his seat, and he will fulfill what he spoke through the same prophet: I have forsaken my house, I have abandoned my inheritance (Jeremiah 12:7). But it left its den like a lion, so that all the beasts have power over its land. For with the lion as their guardian and ruler, no one dares approach it. It has become, he says, their land, undoubtedly to the point that either the Jewish people or certainly all the nations will be desolated and made impassable by the face of the dove's wrath. It is not surprising that the dove of the Lord is understood to be Nebuchadnezzar, who has read himself being called the servant of the Lord above him. For why they have translated Seventy, a great sword. May we receive a dove and in the person of Jerusalem, that he may be angry and sad, having lost the custody of his lion, and his land coming into desolation.

26:1-3

(Chapter 26, Verse 1 and following) In the beginning of the reign of Joahim, son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the Lord, saying: Thus says the Lord: Stand in the court of the house of the Lord, and speak to all the cities of Judah, from which they come to worship in the house of the Lord, all the words that I have commanded you to speak to them. Do not withhold a word, lest they listen and each one turn away from their evil way. And I may repent of the evil (or remain silent about the evil) that I intend to do to them because of the wickedness of their deeds. This prophecy is superior to the previous one: although it was made under the same king. For that one was made in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, but this one at the beginning of the same king, as the Scripture says: In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, this word came from the Lord. Therefore, as we have often said, the order of history should not be woven in the prophets, since at present, the earlier things are spoken afterwards, and the later things, before. But whoever is going to speak the word of the Lord, must stand with Moses (Deut. V), and listen with the Psalmist: Those who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God (Psalm CXXXIV, 2). And it is commanded that he speaks to all the cities of Judah: although the seventy cities did not translate, lest it should appear unseemly to speak in the court of the house of the Lord to cities that were not present: but when he speaks to the people and to the citizens, he speaks to those cities. But it stands beautifully in the atrium and vestibule of the Temple of the Lord, so that by the opportunity of the Lord's prayer and adoration, they are compelled to hear the words of the Prophet. Do not, he says, withhold the word: though it may be sad, though the rage of the listeners may be stirred up against you, nevertheless say what has been commanded to you: not fearing the persecutions of those who are stirred up against you, but the command of the Lord who orders it. Perhaps, he says, they may hear and be converted. An ambiguous word, perhaps, cannot befit the majesty of the Lord, but it speaks to our affection: that man's free will be preserved, so that he is not compelled to do or not to do anything by its foreknowledge, as if by necessity. For it is not because God knows something will happen that it will therefore happen, but because it will happen, God knows it, as if he were

prescient of future events. And yet it is to be understood, according to this same Jeremiah: if the Lord predicts evil and the people repent, he will also repent of the punishment he threatened to carry out. And if he has promised prosperity and the people act negligently, God may change his judgement and bring misfortunes instead of blessings. Such a thing is also mentioned in the Gospel: 'I will send my son, perhaps they will respect him' (Luke 20:13). This is indeed spoken from the perspective of almighty God. In fact, he also says this in the present: 'Perhaps they will listen and turn from their evil ways, so that when they have repented and I have relented of the disaster I had planned to bring on them, I will not carry out my plan.' But I think to do [it] because of the wickedness of their studies, which if they are changed, my opinion will be changed. Let us read the story of Jonah and Nineveh.

26:4-6

(Vers. 4 seqq.) And you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: If you do not listen to me and walk in my law, which I have given you, and listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I have sent to you, rising up early and sending them, and you have not listened: I will make this house like Shiloh and this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. Therefore, it is within our power to do or not to do: provided that whatever good work we desire, strive for, and accomplish, we attribute it to the grace of God, who has given us both the will and the ability to do (Phil. 2). But if it sufficed to walk once in the law, which was given to us by Moses, as a foolish sect suspects, how did he add: 'That you may hear the words of my servants the prophets.' Who, indeed, were sent after the law, and not once, but frequently: not leisurely and without care, but always and with concern. 'I have sent,' he says, 'to you my servants the prophets daily, and rising by night: if you will not listen to them, I will give this house, that is, the temple of God, as Shiloh, where the tabernacle was.' And when the temple will have been destroyed, consequently the city will be cursed by all the nations of the earth. Just as when the temple was built in the area of Ornan, and on Mount Moriah, that is, the place of vision, where it is narrated that Abraham offered his son Isaac, the religion of Shiloh ceased, and no sacrifices were celebrated there afterwards: so when the Church was built, and the spiritual victims were offered in it, the ceremonies of the Law ceased (2 Chronicles 3); and the city of the Jews was given over to curse by all the nations of the earth: from which the Lord has delivered us, as the Apostle says: Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13).

26:7-9

(Verses 7-9.) And the priests and prophets (or false prophets) and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, the priests and prophets (or false prophets) and all the people seized him, saying, 'You shall surely die! Because you have prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant.' The priests and prophets, whom the LXX have more clearly translated as false prophets, are angry with Jeremiah because he preaches the truth, that the religion will perish with the Temple and the deserted city, and the profits that come from religion; therefore they seize him and, with the consent of the people, condemn him to death. Thus he says in the name of the Lord, just as Shiloh will be this house and the city will be desolate, because there is no inhabitant. Therefore, if at any time the priests, or false prophets, or the deceived

people become angry with us because of the commands of the Lord and the truth of faith, let us not care greatly, but let us carry out God's will, considering not present evils but future goods in our minds.

26:10

(Verse 10) And all the people gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the Lord, and the leaders of Judah heard these words and came from the king's house to the house of the Lord, and sat at the entrance of the Lord's gate (Vulgate: house of the Lord) new. Jeremiah was prophesying in the temple of the Lord, and he had said: I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. And immediately, a sedition arose among the priests and prophets and the people, and the entire crowd gathered against the Prophet in the Temple, where the Prophet and the priests and prophets and the people were held by force. When the leaders of the city, who were staying in the royal house, heard this, they crossed over or went up from the king's house to the house of the Lord. And it should be noted that going to the house of the Lord was always an ascent. And they sat at the entrance of the new gate of the Lord. For it was the duty of the princes to sit at the gate of the house of the Lord, and there to discern the truth of matters and seditions. And the gate was called new because those who sat in it and presided over judgment resisted the slander of the priests and false prophets.

26:11

(Verse 11) And the priests and prophets spoke to the officials and to all the people, saying: This man deserves the punishment of death, for he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears. But the leading men of the city, who had come from the king's palace to the temple, sat in the gateway of the temple and in the new gateway, in order to calm the people and gather them for a meeting. The priests and false prophets accused Jeremiah, and the prophet would have perished if the accusers themselves had the power of judgment. From this, we understand that those who were devoted to religion were seen as more cruel towards the Prophet due to envy of his holiness than those who were in charge of public affairs.

26:12-15

(Verse 12 and following) And Jeremiah said to all the leaders and to all the people, saying: The Lord has sent me to prophesy to this house (or over this house) and to this city (or over this city) all the words that you have heard. Therefore, now make your ways and your pursuits good, and listen to the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent of the evil that He has spoken against you (or the Lord will cease from the evils that He has spoken against you). But behold, I am in your hands: do to me what is good and right in your eyes (or what is expedient for you). However, know and understand that if you kill me, you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants. Truly, the Lord has sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears. While the people were present, the princes sat in the gate of the city and accused Jeremiah the prophet to the priests and the prophets, and they conspired to bring about his death. Jeremiah spoke to the princes and to all the people, whom the faction of priests and false prophets had incited, wisely and humbly, yet steadfastly. Prudently, because he said that he had been sent by the Lord to speak against the temple and the city, and to give advice, that if they would listen to his advice and repent, the Lord would also change His decision. Yet humbly, in what he said: Behold, I am in your

hands: do to me what is good and right in your eyes. Furthermore, firmly: The Lord has sent me to you in truth, to speak all these words in your ears. And he speaks in other statements: If you are angry because I have spoken against the temple and the city of the Lord, and you are concerned about the salvation of the city and the temple: why do you increase sins with sins, and make the city and its inhabitants guilty of my blood? Therefore, if and when we need humility due to the constraints of necessity, let us accept it in such a way that we do not abandon truth and steadfastness. For it is one thing to arrogantly insult the judge, which is a sign of foolishness; it is another thing to avoid impending danger in such a way that you do not subtract anything from the truth.

26:16

(Verse 16) And the leaders and all the people said to the priests and prophets: This man does not deserve death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God. The people, who had previously been deceived by the priests and false prophets, join forces with the city's leaders and speak up for Jeremiah, stating that he is not guilty of deserving death, but rather that he has prophesied in the name of the Lord and according to His word. For the uneducated masses easily change their opinion when given a valid reason. But the pain of the accusers, especially of the priests and false prophets, cannot be changed. And therefore, with them accusing and persevering in their accusation, the people are changed: which the Lord had given them hope of mercy, if they would do good in their ways and listen to the voice of the Lord their God, so that the Lord would change his judgment.

26:17-19

(Verse 17 onwards) And the men of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to the whole assembly of the people, saying: Micaiah of Moresheth was a prophet in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the house like the high places of a forest. Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did they not fear the Lord and pray to the face of the Lord? And the Lord repented of the evil that he had spoken against them. Therefore, we are doing great evil against our own souls. The leaders of the city and the people understand the truth of judgment. However, the elders, whose duty it was to know the ancient things, recount the history - and the prophecy of Micah from Moresheth, who prophesied during the reign of King Hezekiah, they compare it with the prophecies of Jeremiah, for which he is being threatened with death; and they show that he said more serious things, and yet suffered nothing from the righteous king Hezekiah: but that those who turned to repentance, the sentence of the Lord turned into a good one. For Micah said: Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height (Micah 3:12). And Jeremiah further said: I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth (Jeremiah 26:9). And they devised a plan, thinking that what Micah had prophesied would not come to pass, because a long time had passed without it happening due to the people's repentance. And this also, that Jeremiah spoke, it will by no means happen if they follow his counsel in their good ways and pursuits, and listen to the voice of the Lord their God, so that the Lord does not bring upon them the evil that he had threatened. At the same time, they break the fury of the accusers and join with them saying: Therefore, we commit great evil

against our own souls: not that they should do so, but because if they do, they will not harm the accused, but their own souls, which they can free through a change of sentence.

26:20-24

(Verse 20 onwards) There was also a prophet man in the name of the Lord, Uriah, the son of Shemai from Kiriath-Jearim, and he prophesied against this city and against this land, according to all the words of Jeremiah. And King Jehoiakim and all his powerful men and officials heard these words, and the king sought to put him to death. But Uriah heard about it and was afraid, so he fled and went to Egypt. And what follows: King Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt, including Elnathan son of Achbor, and his men with him, but it is not found in the Septuagint. Your question: And they brought Uriah out of Egypt, and brought him to King Joakim, and he struck him with a sword, and cast his body in the graves of the common people. However, the great Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that he would not be handed over to the people to be killed. It is asked why Uriah the son of Shimei from the town of Kiriath-jearim, who prophesied the same things as Jeremiah, was terrified and fled to Egypt, and when he returned, he was killed; and yet Jeremiah was able to escape, even though he certainly did not flee, but boldly persisted in his previous judgment, and was freed from the judgment of both the common people and the rulers, as well as the advice of the elders, against the accusers, the priests, and the false prophets. To briefly respond to this: it is not at all possible to know the judgment of God, since the same cause and the same opinion result in one person being punished and another being set free. Unless, perhaps, we can respond by saying that Uriah was condemned and killed by the accusers and the people, while Jeremiah was reserved for the judgment of God in order to preach to the rest of the unfortunate people and bring them to repentance. This is indeed also read in the Acts of the Apostles, where we learn that the Apostle James (Acts 12) immediately endured the sentence of Herod and was rewarded with martyrdom, while blessed Peter and the other Apostles were reserved for the teaching of the Lord. And the steadfastness of the prophet Uriah is worth noting, as he did not change his opinion even when he was brought back from Egypt, but rather, seeing that death was being planned against him, he still spoke the words that the Lord had commanded. And his fear and flight and entry into Egypt are not signs of unfaithfulness, but rather of prudence: so that we do not offer ourselves to dangers in vain. Otherwise, we also read of the Lord and Savior falling into the hands of those who pursued him (Luke 4, John 8); and he commanded the Apostles: 'When they persecute you in this city, flee to another' (Matthew 10, 23). It is also asked how Joacim, the king of Judah, of small and weakened empire, and already on the verge of perishing, had the power to send to Egypt and bring back Uriah. This is easily solved if we consider that he was appointed a ruler by the king of Egypt, Nechao, and this prophecy was made at the beginning of his reign. Although Jeremiah was freed by the help of the Lord, it is also attributed to Uriah as the one through whom the Lord freed his prophet. This Uriah is, of course, the son of Stephan, as we will read later, when Jeremiah is freed from the danger of death by the advice and assistance of Abdelech the Ethiopian eunuch (Jeremiah 38).

27:1

(Chapter 27 - Verse 1) In the beginning of the reign of Joachim, son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying. This is not found in the Septuagint edition. And many think that the beginning of the following chapter should be joined to the previous one, so that

whatever is said and done in the beginning of Joachim's reign is believed to have happened. Hence, he had the power to send to Egypt, as to a friendly king. But it seems to me that they have deliberately omitted this title for the following reason, so that they would not appear to be contradicting themselves. For they had already stated at the beginning: In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, this word came from the Lord to Jeremiah, saying.

27:2

(Verse 2.) This is what the Lord says to me: Make for yourself chains and shackles. Or κλοιοι■ς, which are called Mutoth () in Hebrew, and in the common language they are called Boias.

27:3-4

(Verse 3, 4.) And you shall put them on your shoulder, and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the sons of Ammon, and to the king of Tyre, and to the king of Sidon, by the hand of messengers who came to Jerusalem to King Zedekiah of Judah. And you shall command them to speak to their masters: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. You shall say this to your masters. The past vision was given at the beginning to the prophet of the reign of Joachim, son of Josiah, king of Judah. But these things happened under Zedekiah, who was the last ruler of Jerusalem, and under whom the city was captured and destroyed. And Jeremiah was commanded to put chains, or wooden yokes called "Mutoth" in Hebrew, around his neck and send them to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon, through the messengers who had come to Zedekiah. And he was to instruct his messengers to announce that they should serve King Nebuchadnezzar and listen to what the following prophecy says. And so that perhaps the ambassadors and kings of those nations would respond, why do you not command this to your people? It also speaks similar things to King Zedekiah, and to the priests and prophets. This passage is always understood allegorically (by Origen), and fleeing from the truth, it interprets the heavenly Jerusalem, that its inhabitants should willingly take on bodies and descend into Babylon, that is, the confusion of this world which is placed in evil, and serve the Babylonian king, undoubtedly the devil. But if they refuse to do this, they will by no means bear heavy burdens; instead, they will perish by the sword, and by famine, and by pestilence; and they will not become men, but demons. He said this so that his defenders do not accuse us of slander. However, let us follow a simple and true history, so that we are not entangled in certain clouds and deceptions.

27:5

(Verse 5.) I made the earth and man, and the animals that are on the face of the earth, by my great strength and by my outstretched arm, and I gave it to him whom it pleased in my eyes. Although this Scripture speaks anthropomorphically, how can we humans speak and understand: nevertheless, the strength of God and his arm is the one about whom the Apostle speaks: Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24). And Isaiah says: Lord, who has believed our report? and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? (Isaiah 53:1) John the Evangelist also writes: All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made. (John 1:3) David also speaks in his song: By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth. (Psalm 33:6) And when he says, I have given her to him

whom it pleased me, it signifies that all things are given to the human race through the grace of God. I, he says, made the earth, and man, and animals (Psalm 35). The reverse order. In Genesis, indeed, animals are created first, and the last is man (Genesis 1), but here it names man first, and afterwards those things that are subject to man.

27:6-7

(Verse 6, 7.) Now therefore I have given all these lands into the hand of my servant Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon: and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son. How then is Israel in a state of misery, when compared to him, Nebuchadnezzar, the servant of God? It is written in the Gospel: The world was made through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (John 1:10). Therefore, the creator rightly hands over his creation to whom he wishes. Moreover, even the devil, in whose likeness Nebuchadnezzar preceded, confesses: all these things have been handed over to me. And what he has brought in: Moreover, I have also given him the beasts of the field to serve him, or rather we should understand all kinds of animals; for indeed, both man and those things that are subject to them are handed over to them; or certainly, let us accept that wild beasts are also savage tribes, in that they also serve, whereas previously they did not know how to serve. But his son, and the son of his son, according to the Hebrew, is called Belshazzar and Evil-Merodach, about whom Daniel writes.

Until the time comes for its land and itself. So that the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar would not be thought to be everlasting, it is said that it will be taken by the Medes and Persians. For this is what it means: Until the time comes for its land and itself. But this is not included in the Septuagint. And many nations and great kings shall serve him. It is not said, all: for this empire properly belongs to Christ, even though it is not read according to Symmachus: And many nations and great kings shall serve him; but many nations and great kings shall subject themselves to him in servitude, so that he himself may also serve the Medes and Persians, to whom all nations had previously served. This is what we have put from the Hebrew: I have given him that they may serve him, and all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his grandson, until the time of his land and himself come: and in servitude when many nations and great kings shall subject themselves, it is not read in the Septuagint (as we have already said) edition.

27:8

(Verse 8) However, the nation and kingdom that will not serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and whoever will not bend their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will visit upon that nation with the sword, famine, and plague, declares the Lord, until I have consumed them by his hand. Not only does the Lord subject sinful nations to Nebuchadnezzar, but the Apostle also speaks of sinners: whom I have handed over to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme (1 Timothy 1:20). And in another place: I have handed over such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved (1 Corinthians 5:5). It also warns to obey the authorities, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience, so that we may not be condemned by them.

27:9-11

(Verse 9 and following) So do not listen to your prophets, and diviners, and dreamers, and augurs, and sorcerers, who say to you: 'You will not serve the king of Babylon, for they prophesy lies to you, in order to drive you far from your land and to expel you, and you will perish.' But the nation that puts its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serves him, I will let it stay in its own land, says the Lord; and it will till it and dwell in it. The allegorical interpreter raves at this place and encourages those placed in heaven to not listen to their prophets, diviners, dreamers, and sorcerers, but rather to serve Nebuchadnezzar and take on the body of humility, the cries of infants, and the cradle of little children. For if they do these things, having completed their servitude and the condition of human mortality, they will return to their own land, live there, and do what they did before. And he says that he suspects those who have despised God's commandments will become burdened with human bodies as future demons and unclean spirits, and they will not regain their former abode. But we will simply explain that there are prophets among the nations who pretend to predict the future by divine inspiration. And there are diviners, of whom the common proverb says: The wise claim to divine. And there are dream interpreters who imitate Joseph and Daniel. And there are soothsayers, who interpret the flight and calls of birds and announce what should or should not be done. And there are sorcerers, whom we can call either poisoners or servants of the phantasms of demons, who are called Kasaph in Hebrew. All these, he says, deceive you and undermine you, so that you do not serve the king of Babylon. For it is much better to willingly embrace servitude, to have a friend whom you serve, and to cultivate one's ancestral land, than to serve as a captive by force and necessity.

27:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) And to King Zedekiah of Judah I spoke according to all these words, saying: Submit your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and you shall live. Why will you die, you and your people, by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, as the Lord has spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? Do not listen to the words of the prophets who say to you, 'You shall not serve the king of Babylon,' for they prophesy a lie to you. I have not sent them, says the Lord, but they prophesy falsely in my name, in order to drive you out and make you perish, you and the prophets who are prophesying to you. After all the nations pass over to King Zedekiah of Judah, he speaks with the same nations he threatened, saying: for the nation of Israel does not deserve the privilege, who has sinned either similar or greater than the other nations. Finally, because the rebellious people refused to listen, they were destroyed by sword, famine, and pestilence. It should be noted in the holy Scripture that it refers to false prophets as prophets who prophesy falsely in the name of the Lord. But they, says he, do this, in order that they may cast you out, and bring destruction upon you, as well as upon the prophets who prophesy to you. And therefore the destruction is alike of those who are deceived and of those who deceive. This is what we have put from the Hebrew: Serve under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and you shall live. Why will you die, you and your people, by the sword, and by famine, and by pestilence, as the Lord has spoken concerning the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? Do not listen to the words of the prophets who say to you, 'In the Septuagint it is not found.' And therefore I advise, so that the intelligent reader may understand how much is lacking in each Greek and Latin codex.

27:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) And I spoke to the priests and to this people, saying: thus says the Lord: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying: Behold, the vessels of the Lord will return from Babylon now quickly: for they are prophesying lies to you. This, which we have now set, in the Septuagint is not present: and that which follows, Do not listen to them, but serve the king of Babylon, so that you may live. Why is this city being laid waste? But to the nation and the king, he speaks to the priests and the people, who had already predicted the destruction through the prophets, saying: that I will cast you out and you will perish, both you and the prophets who prophesy to you. He speaks the same things that he had spoken to the king and the nation, so that they do not hear the words of their own prophets and say that the vessels of the Lord's temple should now be brought back, which had been taken away with Jechoniah and his princes and his mother: and he warns that they should serve the king of Babylon and live, and that the city, which voluntarily submitted, should by no means be handed over to fire. And in this the mercy of the Lord is to hand over to a lighter punishment, so that they do not bear a heavier one. ((Al. wants to hand over))

27:18

(Verse 18) And if there are prophets, and the word of the Lord is in them, let them come forward. And what follows, 'and we shall be subjected to the end of this chapter,' is not found in the Septuagint.

27:19-22

(Verse 19 onwards) O Lord of hosts, let the vessels that were left behind in the house of the Lord, and in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem, and in Babylon, not come back. For thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases (which are written as Mechonoth in Hebrew) and concerning the remaining vessels that are in this city, which Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, did not take when he took Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, along with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem. Because this is what the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, says about the vessels that have been left behind in the house of the Lord, and in the house of the king of Judah and Jerusalem: They will be carried to Babylon and there they will remain until the day of their visitation, says the Lord. And I will bring them back and restore them to this place. These things, as we have said, are not found in the Septuagint, but have been translated from the Hebrew truth: for they have added something that was not written, saying, 'Thus says the Lord to me: And the rest of the vessels that the king of Babylon did not take when he carried Jeconiah from Jerusalem to Babylon, they will enter, says the Lord,' putting more emphasis on the meaning than on the words, perhaps thinking it irrational that God would speak to columns and to the sea, and to the bases, and to the remaining vessels in Jerusalem, as if we did not read that the Lord rebuked the morning worm and spoke to the sea, saying, 'Be silent and be still.' (Jonah 4). And he says: Let them come to me, whether it be the Lord of armies (Mark 4:39), this shows that a true Prophet can resist the Lord with prayers, just as Moses stood in opposition to the Lord, in order to turn away the anger of his fury. Samuel also did the same (1 Samuel 8). And the Lord said to Moses: Let me alone, he said, that I may strike this people (Exodus 32:10). But when he says, Let me alone, he shows that he can be held back by the prayers of the saints. The prophets, he says, and whatever they predict, should demonstrate their fulfillment through their actions; and then the prophecy will

be confirmed by truth. However, we read about the pillars, sea, bases, and other vessels in the book of Malachi and in the final volume of this prophet (2 Kings, chapter 25). And the vessels that were carried away to Babylon are listed, when Zedekiah was captured, the city was burned, and the temple was destroyed.

28:1-2

(Chapter 28, Verses 1 onwards) In that year, at the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, Ananias son of Azur, a prophet from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and all the people. He said: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two years, I will bring back all the vessels of the Lord to this place. They interpreted the Hebrew prophets, that is, the Nebeim, as pseudo-prophets in order to make their understanding clearer. Finally, in this place, the prophet is called Nebia, not a pseudo-prophet. And the word of the Lord came to him during the reign of Zedekiah, in the fourth year of his reign, in the fifth month (while the prophet Ezekiel was still prophesying in Babylon to those who had been exiled with Jehoiachin). And he speaks with confidence in the temple of the Lord against the Prophet, because he promises prosperity to the people, and they willingly listen to lies, especially those that promise joy. Jeremiah had also said that the rest of the vessels, whether of the temple or the royal palace, and all the people that Nebuchadnezzar had taken away, were to be transferred to Babylon. But here, on the contrary, he promises that even those things that had been carried away are to be brought back.

28:3-4

(Vers. 3, 4.) What Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, brought from this place, he also brought to Babylon. And I will bring back Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the exiles of Judah who went to Babylon, to this place, declares the Lord. For I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Regarding these matters, the LXX translated: Jehoiachin and the exiles of Judah, for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon, summarizing the meaning of the Hebrew truth rather than giving word-for-word translations. However, Ananias, who at that time seemed to be a prophet to the people, promised not only to bring back the vessels, but also to restore King Jechoniah to Jerusalem, and to break the yoke of the king of Babylon, that is, to destroy his empire. And this would not yet be accomplished for another two years, in order to increase the greatness of the joy and to enhance the nearness of the promised time.

28:5-6

(Vers. 5, 6.) And Jeremiah the prophet said to the prophet Ananias, in the eyes of the priests and in the eyes of all the people who stood in the house of the Lord. And Jeremiah the prophet said: Amen, let the Lord do so. May the Lord fulfill your words that you prophesied; so that the vessels may be brought back to the house of the Lord, and all the exile of Babylon to this place. He wishes to become what the false prophet lies about, for this is what Amen signifies: a word that the Lord often uses in the Gospel: Amen, amen I say to you (John 5:19). And he desires, for the prosperity of things, to speak more kindly than strictly. Hence another prophet bears witness, saying: O that I were not a man having the spirit, and spoke rather falsehood (Micah 2:11). On the contrary, Jonah is distressed why he lied, and is reproved by the Lord, that it is more profitable for prophets to

speaking falsehood than the multitude of such ruin (Jonah 3). And lest he seem to approve the prophecy of a false prophet, he asserts the truth under the example of others lying without injury.

28:7-9

(Vers. 7 seqq.) Nevertheless, listen to this word that I speak in your ears and in the ears of all the people: The prophets who were before me and you from the beginning, prophesied about many lands and great kingdoms, about battles, affliction, and famine. The prophet who prophesied peace, when his word comes, the prophet whom the Lord has sent in truth will be known. Jeremiah could have said to Ananias: You speak falsely, you deceive the people, you are not a prophet but a false prophet. But if he had said so, the false prophet could also have retorted the same against Jeremiah, so he does no wrong. And he is speaking as if to a prophet. Not only, he says, am I a prophet and you, but there were many others before you and me, among whom were Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, and Amos, and the rest. They prophesied, he says, against many lands and not insignificant kingdoms, but great ones, announcing war and adversity to them, and announcing a scarcity of all things. And on the other hand, there were others who promised peace and prosperity. Both opinions, not through flattery or lies, but proven by the outcome of events. Therefore, following the example of others, Ananias speaks of himself, so that when the end of things comes, the truth of the prophets may be revealed. The Lord himself also spoke through Moses (Deut. 23), that the end of prophecy may be shown. And it should be noted that he does not threaten or intimidate, but confidently rebukes the liar with the truth, and postpones it for the future, so that those who hear may await the outcome of events.

28:10-11

(Verse 10, 11) And Ananias the prophet took a chain (or a yoke, which in Hebrew is called Mutoth) from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, and broke it. And Ananias said in the presence of all the people, saying: Thus says the Lord: I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, within two years from the necks of all nations. And Jeremiah went his way (The Vulgate adds prophet). The Seventy did not transfer two years. Moreover, they did not call Ananias a prophet, lest they seem to be calling someone a prophet who was not a prophet. It is as if not many things are said in the holy Scriptures, according to the opinion of that time in which the events are recounted, and not according to what the truth of the matter contained. Finally, even Joseph is called the father of the Lord in the Gospel, and Mary herself, who knew that she had conceived by the Holy Spirit, and she had responded to the angel: 'How will this be, since I do not know a man?' (Luke 1:34). He speaks to the Son: Son, what have you done to us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in sorrow. At the same time, the prudence of Jeremiah, and humility, and patience must be considered. The false prophet does wrong things, and crushes the snatched club from his neck, which he certainly could not do with an iron one. He is silent, and disguises his pain: for the Lord had not yet revealed to him what he should speak. As the holy Scripture shows, prophets do not speak by their own will alone, but by the will of the Lord, especially about the future, of which only God has knowledge. He left, he said, and went on his way, as if defeated, and fulfilling that prophecy: I have become like a deaf man, and like a man who does not have reproofs in his mouth.

28:2-4

(Ver. 2 and following) And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah after Ananias the prophet broke the chain (or yoke) from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying: Go and tell Ananias, this is what the Lord says: You have broken the wooden chains (or yokes), and I will make iron yokes in their place. For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I have put an iron yoke on the neck of all these nations, so they will serve Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. And what follows: 'And they shall serve him, and the beasts of the earth I have given to him. But in the present place, according to the Septuagint, Ananias the prophet is not written, and in the following, lest they should seem to call a false prophet a prophet. But what about the Hebrew truth? After Jeremiah the prophet went on his way and swallowed up the injury in silence, the word of the Lord came to him, so that he would not speak in his own words to the false prophet boasting in lies; but he should say: thus says the Lord: even though Ananias, breaking the wooden yoke, spoke with the same authority in the presence of the Lord: thus says the Lord.' For falsehood always imitates the truth. And that which it has brought in: You have shattered wooden forks, and instead of them have made iron chains, shows this, that, rejecting the lesser punishment, it was for the sake of a greater penalty among the people. The allegorical interpreter also raves in this passage, calling the wooden forks and chains, ethereal and airy bodies, namely, of demons and adverse powers. But the wooden forks or iron chains, are our grosser bodies, which are woven together with nerves and bones and flesh and veins, so that those who do not wish to undergo lesser tortures for the quality of their sin may be condemned to the chains of our bodies; and they may endure the wailing of infancy, the bonds of swaddling clothes, and filth; and may serve the devil, the king of Babylon, that is, of this world, as the Scripture says: The world is set in the wicked one (1 John 5:19), with the beasts of the earth, which are linked to the bodies of brute animals. An uneducated handler compelled me, and a follower of Grunnius' slander openly presents the faults of others, which I previously spoke of with pretense, abandoning the discretion of the reader.

28:5-17

(Verse 5 onwards) And Jeremiah the prophet said to the prophet Hananiah: Listen, Hananiah: The Lord did not send you, and yet you have made this people trust in a lie. Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, I will send (or cast) you away from the face of the earth, you will die this year. And what follows: Because you have spoken against the Lord. And Hananiah the prophet died in that year, in the seventh month, which is not mentioned in the Septuagint. For as much as they have set him forth above: He died in the seventh month. And this Ananias is not spoken of in the Septuagint as a prophet, though the Holy Scripture of the Hebrews calls him a prophet, even though Jeremiah accuses him, saying: Hear, Ananias, the Lord has not sent you, yet thou have prophesied. For how could he call him a prophet, whom he denied to be sent by the Lord? But the truth and order of the history is preserved, as we have said, not according to what it was, but according to what it was thought to be at that time. You deceived, he says, the people with a lie, so that they would not submit to the judgments of God. Therefore, you know that you will die this year. When we die, we are released from the prisons of the body, according to that testimony, which heretics interpret wrongly: Bring my soul out of prison (Ps. 141:8): so how is death now imposed as a punishment on false prophets? But in this place it should be noted that Jeremiah, after suffering injury from a false prophet, and before receiving a direct message from the Lord, remains silent; later, however, sent by the Lord, he boldly accuses the liar and announces his impending death. And that he who usually translates the seventh month is said to rest under this

number, perhaps they falsely claim that he died in the seventh month so that he may be freed from the evils of the body, according to what they quote from the writing. Death is rest for a man. But we know that the bodies of believers are temples of God, if indeed the Holy Spirit dwells in them (Sirach 22:11).

29:1-7

(Chapter 29, verses 1 and following) These are the words of the book that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders of the exile, to the priests, to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon. After King Jeconiah, the queen mother, the eunuchs, the officials of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and the metal workers had departed from Jerusalem, by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and generate sons and daughters; give your sons wives and give your daughters to husbands, and let them bear sons and daughters, and multiply, and do not be few in number. And seek the peace of the city (or land) to which I have led you, and pray to the Lord for it, for in its peace you will have peace. This letter, or rather book, of Jeremiah the prophet is sent to Babylon by the messengers Sedecias, Ellassa and Gamaria, to those who were transported with Jechoniah and his mother by Nebuchadnezzar: so that, by the opportunity of the royal legation, the Prophet might fulfill his own work and admonish the transplanted people of the things that had been commanded to him by the Lord. He spoke beautifully: Jehoiachin the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, and the princes of Judah, and the rest went out. And: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: They shall seem to have been relocated not by the power of the king of Babylon, but by the will of the Lord. And first, the word is directed to the elders, then to the priests, thirdly to the prophets, fourthly to the whole people of God: so that according to the order of age, letters would also reach the prophets who were being instructed. But they should not rely on their own words, but on the Lord's, to build houses and live in them, and to plant gardens, or orchards, and eat their fruit, take wives, and generate sons and daughters, and multiply in the place of their migration, and not be few in number, and seek the peace of the city or land to which the Lord has brought them, and pray for them ((or it) to the Lord. And giving reasons, he says, because in the peace of that land there will be peace for you. Jeremiah, because after a short time there was going to be captivity for Jerusalem, it is ordered that he should not take a wife or have children. Hence it is said to us by the Apostle: Time is short, it remains, that those who have wives should be as if they had none (I Corinthians VII, 19). If the use of wives is taken away from those who have them due to the narrowness of time, how much more is it commanded that those who do not have them should not take them! But this whole prophecy warns against the false prophets, who were promising them a return to Jerusalem after a short time; but so that they know that they will stay in Babylon for a long time: in such a way that they should take wives, plant orchards, sow gardens, build houses, and have children. And what he added: Seek the peace of the city, or the land. And again: For in its peace there will be peace for you, it will be compared to the Apostolic, in which he commands: I beseech you therefore, first of all, to offer supplications, prayers, petitions, thanksgivings, for all men, for kings and for all that are in high position, that we may lead a quiet

and tranquil life in all godliness and honesty (2 Timothy 2:1-2). Furthermore, according to mystical understanding, after we have been cast out from Jerusalem, that is, the Church, because of our sins, and delivered to Nebuchadnezzar, about whom the same Apostle says: I have delivered such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord (1 Cor. 5:5). And again: Whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme (1 Tim. 1:20), we should not be secure, nor be sluggish in idleness, nor completely despair of salvation; but first build houses, not on sand, but on rock, and such houses as the midwives built in Exodus: because they feared the Lord (Exod. 1). Then to plant gardens, or orchards, such as the Lord planted a paradise in Eden, and placed in it the tree of life, of which it is written: The tree of life is to those who lay hold of her; and he that takes hold of her is fortunate (Prov. III, 18). Thirdly, to take wives, of whom one is wisdom, of which Solomon writes: Love her, and she will keep you; embrace her, and she will exalt you (Prov. IV, 6). And in another place: I sought to take this spouse for myself, and I became a lover of her beauty (Wis. VIII, 2). It is not enough for us to have one wise wife, unless we also have the other virtues, courage, moderation, and justice, so that we may generate more children from them. Let us also give our daughters to husbands, so that the truth of faith, which is understood in children, may be connected to good works, which are related to daughters, and let good works be joined to the health of faith. By generating such sons and daughters, may we multiply in number, so that as we demolish what is small, and grow into perfect manhood, we may be worthy to hear: I write to you, fathers: because you have known him, who is from the beginning (1 John 2:13); and let us say with the Apostle to our children: For in Christ Jesus by the Gospel, I have begotten you (1 Corinthians 4:15). Let us also seek peace for the Church, our city, and our land, so that we may be deserving to return to it, from which we have been transferred by the judgment of the Lord, to dwell in the error of confusion. For if it receives us, we have peace. Together with the mercy of the Lord to be considered: He has commanded us to pray for our enemies and to do good to those who persecute us, so that we are not content only with our own salvation, but also seek the salvation of our enemies (Luke VI).

29:8-9

(Verse 8, 9) For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets who are among you and your diviners deceive you, nor give heed to your dreams which you dream. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them, says the Lord. The prophet Ezekiel testifies that there were prophets, or rather false prophets, and diviners and dreamers in Babylon, among those whom Nebuchadnezzar had brought with Jehoiachin and his mother, as he writes against them, to whom Jeremiah also commands not to believe (Ezekiel 13). However, at the time when this Epistle was being directed, Ezechiel had not yet begun to prophesy in Babylon. For this speech is sent in the beginning of the reign of King Sedeciae. But Ezechiel, in the fifth year of the exile of Jechonias, began to prophesy, which was also the same year of the reign of Sedeciae. Furthermore, according to the allegory, we should consider as false prophets those who interpret the words of Scriptures differently than the Holy Spirit sounds. And we should consider as divine those who pronounce their own conjecture and uncertain future events as if they were true, without the authority of divine words. And also the dreamers, who do not heed that writing: Neither give sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids (Prov. VI, 4); of whom the apostle Judas speaks: Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion (Jude 8): whose mind is not

awake, but is oppressed by the sleep of arrogance and error, and is surrounded by the horror of night, of whom the apostle Paul speaks: Awake, thou that sleepest? And arise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you (Ephes. V, 14).

29:10-13

(Vers. 10 seqq.) Because this is what the Lord says: When seventy years are completed in Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill my good word to bring you back to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of affliction, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me, and you will go and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart, and I will be found by you (or I will appear to you), says the Lord. Do not, he says, believe in false prophets, diviners, and dreamers of yours, who promise you the return to Jerusalem soon. For unless seventy years are completed, while Cyrus, the king of the Persians, releases the captives, you will not return to your homeland; and then I will fulfill my promises, to bring you back to this place: For I know the thoughts that I think about you, says the Lord. It is said that we know what he thinks, but they, together with their prophets, gods, and dreamers, are ignorant. The knowledge of the future, therefore, belongs only to God. 'I will give you,' he says, 'an end and patience: the end of captivity and the patience of present struggles, or the hope of the future. Then you will call on me and go to Jerusalem: and you will pray, and I will hear you. Certainly, without the invocation and prayer of the captives, the Lord could fulfill what he promised; but he encourages them to pray, so that they may deserve to receive what was promised. You seek me, and you will find me, when you seek with all your heart; according to that Gospel: Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you (Matt. VII, 7). According to the anagoge, we are immersed in the confusion of this world as long as we merit to receive the rest of the sevenfold number, and having received penance, may God fulfill what He has promised, and may we be restored to our place in the Church. Therefore, the Lord has seemed to strike us in order to heal us: He will give us an end to our labor and patience: and we will call upon Him, and return to the Church, and we will pray, and be heard: we will seek and find Him when we have sought Him with all our heart, and then He will appear to us. Some interpret seventy years according to what is written: The days of our years in them are seventy years (Psalm 89:10), which when completed, we shall return to the Lord with all our heart, and we shall be heard, and the end of our labor and patience shall come: for now we possess all things in shadow and in image.

29:14-20

(Verse 14 and following) And I will restore your captivity, and gather you from all the nations and from all the places to which I have driven you, declares the Lord. And I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile. For you have said, 'The Lord has raised up prophets for us in Babylon.' Thus says the Lord concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who live in this city, your fellow countrymen who did not go with you into exile. Thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will send against them the sword, famine, and pestilence, and I will make them like rotten figs that cannot be eaten, because they are so bad. And I will pursue them with the sword, famine, and pestilence, and I will give them as a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, a terror, a hissing, and an object of scorn among all the nations where I have driven them, because they did not listen to my words, declares the Lord, that

I persistently sent to them by my servants the prophets, but you would not listen, declares the Lord. So hear the word of the Lord, all the exiles whom I sent from Jerusalem to Babylon. + Up to this point, it is not found in the seventy, which I have marked with asterisks. For the rest, in which either individual verses or a few words have been omitted, I did not want to note, so as not to make the reading tedious. But the Lord promises to those who were in exile that after seventy years of captivity he will make them return from all the nations and from all the places to which he has driven them, and after the captivity has been ended, they will regain their former state and homeland. And when I, says he, shall do these things of my own accord, and shall surely return to you at a certain time, you are being deceived in vain, and you think you have prophets in Babylon who promise you false things. So you should know that you should by no means hope for a return now: but build houses, plant orchards, take wives, and give birth to children, and multiply in number, and wait for the promised time. Hear what the Lord speaks to Zedekiah, who now reigns in Jerusalem, and to all the inhabitants of his city, that is, to your brothers, who did not want to obey my advice, and to migrate to Babylon with you, because they can by no means escape captivity, but will die by sword, and hunger, and pestilence. And I will set them like a basket of bad figs, which Theodotio interpreted as rotten figs: the second worst: Symmachus, the last: which in Hebrew are called Suarim (סוּאִרִּים), but due to the mistake of the scribes, instead of the middle syllable or letter Alpha, the Greek Delta is written: so instead of Suarim, it is read as Sudrim. However, just as a basket or a crate, which had good figs, is said to have had first figs: likewise, the other basket, which had bad figs, is written to have had last figs. And I will pursue, he says, those who now dwell in the city of Jerusalem, with sword, famine, and pestilence: so that as soon as they are able to break through the siege and escape, they may be scattered throughout all lands, and may be an example to all of curse, shame, hissing, and reproach: to whom I will cast out (Ah, you), because they did not listen to my words, says the Lord, which I spoke to them through my servants, rising up early and sending them: and I have never ceased warning them, that they should imitate you who now enjoy peaceful leisure in exile, until the promise of the Lord is fulfilled. But you, who have obeyed my command and handed yourselves over to the Babylonian king, listen to what I have to say. And in this place, a delusional Interpreter dreams of the downfall of heavenly Jerusalem and suspects that the prophecy is directed to those who dwell in the region of Babylon in this world: that they willingly descend into these bodies and build homes in the land of the Chaldeans, plant orchards, take wives, bear children, and through good works be restored after seventy years to their original place and to heavenly Jerusalem. But those who refuse of their own will to descend to earthly matters will suffer these things that the Lord threatens to Zedekiah and his people. Those who refuse to imitate their brothers and come to Babylon will be struck by the sword, famine, and pestilence, that is, a scarcity of all things, and they will be like the worst figs that cannot be eaten; and they will be pursued by an eternal sword, and will be a vexation to all the kingdoms of the earth, so that they will not become humans, but demons, aerial powers, and they will be among all the Angels who preside over each province as a curse, astonishment, hissing, and reproach to all nations. And this they will endure for this reason, because they refused to listen to the words of the Prophets in heavenly Jerusalem, who urged them to descend to earthly things and assume a humble body; and after true Sabbath observance, to possess the original place through acts of repentance. He said these things. When his disciples hear them, and the refuse of the Grunnian family, they think they hear divine mysteries. And we who despise these things are regarded as mere animals and called 'mud people,' because being formed in the mud of this body,

we are unable to perceive heavenly things.

29:21-23

(Verses 21-23) This is what the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, says to Ahaziah son of Coliah, and to Zedekiah son of Maasiah, who prophesy to you falsely in my name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will strike them down before your eyes. And a curse will be taken up against all the exiles from Judah who are in Babylon, saying, 'May the Lord make you like Zedekiah and like Ahaziah, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, because they have done foolishness (or wickedness) in Israel and have committed adultery with the wives of their friends (or fellow citizens); and they have spoken a false word in my name, which I did not command them. I am the judge and witness, says the Lord.' The Hebrews say that these are the elders who have done foolishness in Israel and have committed adultery with the wives of their neighbors. To one of them, Daniel speaks: Old age of evil days. And to another: The seed of Chan has deceived you, not Judah, and desire has undermined your heart. This is what you did to the daughters of Israel, and they, being afraid, spoke with you; but the daughter of Judah did not endure your wickedness. And what the Prophet now speaks: And they have spoken a word in my name falsely, which I did not command them; they think that it signifies that those wretched women who are carried about by every wind of doctrine have deceived them, by saying to them that because they were of the tribe of Judah, Christ was to be born from their own seed; enticed by desire, they offered their bodies as if they were future mothers of Christ; But what is said at present: whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, seems to contradict the story of Daniel. For he asserts that they were stoned to death according to the judgment of Daniel by the people: but here it is written, that the king of Babylon cast them into the fire. Hence, by most and almost all Hebrews, it is not received as a true story, nor read in their synagogues, as if it were a fable itself. For, say they, how could it happen that captive princes and their prophets had the power of stoning? And they affirm more strongly that this is true, which Jeremiah writes, that the elders were convicted indeed by Daniel, but that the judgment against them was pronounced by the king of Babylon, who held dominion over the captives as a victor and lord. How many, similar to Ahab and Zedekiah from our flock, prophesy falsehood in the name of the Lord, and commit foolishness in Israel, and commit adultery with the wives of their fellow citizens who were born in the same city of the Church! Those whom the true Nebuchadnezzar freezes in the fire of sin, as the prophet Hosea says: 'All those who commit adultery are like an overheated oven, ignited by the baker' (Hosea 7:4). Blessed is he who takes off the yoke from his youth, and sits alone, because he is filled with bitterness (Lamentations 3); he can say with David: 'I have not sat in the council of the wicked, and I will not enter with the evildoers' (Psalm 26:4). And what the Prophet now declares: 'I am the judge and witness,' says the Lord, has this meaning: 'What I say about the two false prophets, who speak my word falsely in my name, which I did not command them, I did not know by mere opinion, but I know for sure to be true, which no one can hide, nor escape from the truth of my judgment.'

29:24-29 (Verse 24 and following) And to Semeias the Nehelamite you shall say. And what follows: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Since you have sent in your name letters to all the people who are in Jerusalem, and to Sophonias the son of Maasias the priest. And again from the Hebrew: And to all the priests (the Vulgate adds saying). And then the story continues: The Lord made you a priest to Joiada the priest, so that you may be a leader (or teacher and

bishop) in the house of the Lord over every man seized and prophesying, to send him into punishment and into prison (or custody) and into the trap, which Symmachus translated as μ■χλος, but Aquila put the Hebrew word itself, Sinac. And why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, who prophesies to you? For he has sent to us in Babylon, saying: 'Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their fruits.' So the priest Zephaniah read this book in the hearing of the prophet Jeremiah. Shemaiah of Nehelam, who was brought to Babylon with King Jehoiachin, also prophesied falsely to the people, saying that they would quickly return to Jerusalem. However, the following words of Jeremiah demonstrate that he was a false prophet: 'Thus says the Lord to Shemaiah of Nehelam, Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, though I did not send him, and has made you trust in a lie, therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, I will punish Shemaiah of Nehelam and his descendants. He shall not have anyone living among this people, and he shall not see the good that I will do to my people, declares the Lord, for he has spoken rebellion against the Lord.' It is evident, then, that Jeremiah sent letters to those who were in Babylon, instructing them to build houses and dwell in them, to plant gardens and eat their produce, to take wives and have sons and daughters, and to seek the welfare of the city where they were in exile. He warned them not to listen to the false prophets among them, who were prophesying lies in the name of the Lord. Jeremiah knew that Shemaiah was one of those false prophets, so he sent a letter to Jerusalem addressed to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, and to the rest of the priests. In the letter, Jeremiah asked why he was not being reprimanded by Zephaniah, whose responsibility it was to distinguish between true prophets and false prophets. Jeremiah requested that Shemaiah be put in prison as a punishment for his lies, so that he would stop deceiving the people and causing more harm. Joiada was a priest who handed over the kingdom to Joash after the death of Athaliah, and he killed the priests of Baal (2 Kings 11; 2 Chronicles 23). This is therefore what it says: Why don't you imitate the priest Joiada and kill the false prophet Jeremiah? The Lord has established you as a successor to Joiada, to take care of the temple, and especially to discern those who speak with the Holy Spirit from those who speak with a demonic spirit. But the discernment of spirits is a gift of divine grace, as the Apostle John mentions (1 John 4). Why, he said, did you not rebuke Jeremiah of Anathoth? And because he himself deserved it as a false prophet, he turns it against the true prophet, and distorts the truth by lies. Thus, the more intelligent ones are considered sons of darkness to the sons of light in this generation. While we, who act with patience and await the salvation of the wretched, are preceded by the heretics, and they call us by their own name, leading the blind blind into the pit. He sent, he said, to us in Babylon, saying: It is far away. This is all that he lamented: why Jeremiah wrote the truth against his own lie, that it was a long way off, and that they would return to Jerusalem after seventy years: from where they should build houses, plant orchards, and eat their fruits, take wives, and have children, as the past speech narrated. When the priest Zephaniah received these letters, which were specifically written to his name, he read them to Jeremiah, rebuking him in a way and reproaching the reading itself, questioning why he dared to write such things in Babylon.

29:30-32

(Verse 30 and following) And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying: Send to all the exiles, saying: Thus says the Lord to Shemaiah of Nehelam: Because Shemaiah prophesied to you, though I did not send him, and made you trust in a lie, therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, I will punish Shemaiah of Nehelam and his descendants. He shall have none of his own people

sitting in the midst of this people, and he shall not see the good that I will do to my people, declares the Lord, for he has spoken rebellion against the Lord. The false prophet Semeias, truly a Neelamite, who had taken foreign and turbid waters from the stream, becomes angry because he had written the truth about Jeremiah against his own lie, and he sends letters to the priest Sophonias. He desires that the prophet be imprisoned so that he cannot speak. He also secretly accuses the prophet Sophonias while reading the letter of the liar, and boasts that he has an accusation against him. The more of a crime are those who defend false prophets, and foster lies, and make other people's evil acts their own sins! Let the false prophet hear, let the priest understand what he deserves to hear from him: Thus says the Lord: Behold, I will visit Semeiah. The Lord speaks this, not the prophet, that he might visit Semeiah the Neelamite, not for healing, but for punishment of the liar, according to what is written: I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with scourges (Psalm 89:33). He not only visits the false prophet himself, but also his followers, whom he has deceived with his error. There will be, he says, no man seated in the midst of this people. Let the wicked brood be erased from the council of the saints, and let him not sit among the quiet ones, who, when he could not stand with those who stand, neither heard this: 'If he had stood in my substance' (Jer. XXIII). And although the Lord promises the perfection of all virtues at the end of a set time, he will not see the good that he claimed for himself in the present time. However, all this will happen because he has spoken rebellion against the Lord, saying that those captured by sins will return to Jerusalem; to whom the Apostle threatens: You are already full, you have already become rich, you have reigned without us; and I wish you would reign, so that we could reign with you (I Cor. IV, 8)!

Book Six Book Six The length of the book of the prophet Jeremiah exceeds our intention, so that although briefly, we may say many things. Therefore, the present sixth book of Commentaries on Jeremiah will contain mystical promises, which the Jews believe and our Jewish converts believe will be fulfilled at the end of the world, for they are not yet convinced that they have been fulfilled under Zerubbabel. But we, following the authority of the Apostles and Evangelists, and especially the Apostle Paul, show that whatever is promised to the Israelite people in a carnal sense is spiritually fulfilled in us today, and continues to be fulfilled. There is no other contention between Jews and Christians except this: that both they and we believe that Christ, the Son of God, has been promised; and they say that the things which are still future under Christ are to be fulfilled by them, which we say have been fulfilled by us. Therefore, since we already believe that Christ has come, it is necessary that we teach the things that are said to happen under Christ and that we are the children of Abraham, as it is written: God is able to raise up children of Abraham from these stones (Matthew 3:9), to whom the promise was made: And in your seed all nations will be blessed (Genesis 22:18). Teaching that this blessing of the vessel of election is accomplished in Christ: He did not say, he says, seeds, but seed, which is Christ (Galatians 3:16). Therefore, brother Eusebius, let us now, by the same labor and grace of the Spirit, with which we have interpreted the prophecies of other prophets, especially those of Isaiah, be able to explain the prophecies of this prophet as well. For as simple and easy as he seems in his words, he is just as profound in the majesty of his meanings.

30:1-3

(Chapter XXX—Verse 1 and following) This word, which was made to Jeremiah by the Lord, saying: Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, saying: Write for yourself all the words that I have

spoken to you, in a book. For behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will turn the conversion of my people Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will convert them (or I will cause them to sit) in the land that I gave to their fathers, and they will possess it. For those who sent out false prophets to Babylon, to quickly bring back the people who had been captured with Jechoniah, and Ananiah son of Azur in Jerusalem preaching the same, Jeremiah the prophet affirmed that it would indeed happen, not within two years as they lied, but at the end of seventy years. And then he is commanded to write in a book and hand down to memory what the Lord predicts will come. From where it is clear that the time of the prophecy is not at hand, but many things must be fulfilled after these times, when Israel and Judah return to their land, and that which Ezekiel prophesied is fulfilled: two sticks to be joined together, and David reigning over them, as it is written: And my servant David shall be king over them, and there shall be one shepherd for all of them (Ezek. XXXVII, 24). Therefore, whatever we have said in that prophecy, it should also be understood in the present place, especially since Ezekiel in Babylon and Jeremiah in Jerusalem prophesied at the same time.

30:4-6

(Verse 4 and following) And these are the words that the Lord spoke to Israel and Judah, for this is what the Lord says: We have heard the voice of terror (or fear), and there is no peace. Inquire and see if a male gives birth. Why then do I see every man with his hand on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces have turned pale? First, sadness is announced, so that after the magnitude of evils, joy may follow. Indeed, good health is more pleasant when illness has been driven away; and the magnitude of pain is turned into the magnitude of joys. But what he says is this, that such will be the fear and such the terror, that with peace driven away, everything will be filled with wars and blood, and even men (whose proper role is to fight against enemies) will be overcome by feminine fear: and their hands will not be directed to weapons, but to holding onto their kidneys, as if a woman in labor were holding onto her loins. And so the appearance of all will be turned into rust, the terror of the heart, the paleness of the countenance testifying. Some interpret this place according to tropology, so that they think that testimony: From fear of you, O Lord, we have conceived, and brought forth, and brought forth: we have made the spirit of your salvation upon the earth (Isaiah 26:17-18), and that Apostolic one in which it says: My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you (Galatians 4:19), is compared to this example: which is manifestly not to be pertained to terror, but to joy, since the present Scripture denotes the devastation of Israel, and the time of ruin.

30:7

(Verse 7) Alas, for that great day, there is no other like it, and it is a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved from it. It predicts a time of misery, so that it may bring a time of joy. When, it says, such great evils have gone before, that the pain of all men may be compared to the pain of a woman in labor: yet the time of trouble for Jacob, that is, the people of God, will be changed into prosperity; and he too will be saved, with the understanding that it will happen in the time about which the prophecy was made. But understand Jacob as the twelve tribes, which by no means were under Zerubbabel, as some falsely think; but they were saved by the Gospel calling.

30:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord of hosts, that I will break the yoke from your neck and I will tear apart your chains; and they (or the foreigners) shall no longer have dominion over them (or you), but they (or you) shall serve (or work for) the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. This is the David of whom even the Gospel speaks (Luke 1), who will give himself to us, so that, liberated from the hand of our enemies without fear, we may serve him in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives. For just as the first Adam and the second Adam are written according to the truth of the body, so too is the Lord and Savior David: because, according to the flesh from David, Mary, who conferred everything holy upon Him, contained whatever was from the seed of David, and He had His origin and conception from the Holy Spirit. And what He says, 'I will break his yoke from your neck, and I will tear apart his chains,' undoubtedly should be understood as a type of the devil from Nebuchadnezzar.

30:10-11

(Verse 10, 11) Therefore do not be afraid, my servant Jacob, says the Lord; and do not be terrified, Israel. For behold, I will save you from a distant land, and your descendants from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return and be at rest, and shall enjoy abundant blessings, and there will be no one to fear: for I am with you, says the Lord, to save you. For I will make a complete destruction among all the nations where I have scattered you. But I will not make a complete end of you; I will discipline (or instruct) you in judgment, so that you may not appear innocent to yourself (or I will cleanse you and not leave you unpunished). This passage is not found in the Septuagint, and in many codices of the Vulgate edition it is added under asterisks from Theodotion. However, the divine word promises, and familiarly calls his servant Jacob, and Israel, just as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are called servants of God (Moses also, and other prophets, and the apostle Paul glories in this title at the beginning of his Epistles); so that the twelve tribes may know that they are to be saved from a distant land, and their captivity will be freed, and peace will be restored, and they will be filled with every abundance, according to what is said in the psalm: Let there be peace within your walls, and abundance within your towers (Psalm 122:7). But this will happen when they enjoy the presence of the Lord, when the opposing nations that had captured them will perish, and they will be freed from the nations. And they will be taught not for punishment, but for instruction, so that they may be judged as if they were their own and not be lost as if they were strangers. For whoever does not believe has already been judged (John 3:18), that is, prejudged for destruction. And what he said: 'So that you may not appear innocent to yourself', according to Symmachus, 'and I will not cleanse you who are already clean', or according to Aquila, 'when I have instructed you through judgment, I will not make you innocent in any way', means that the entire world, even if it is impure, is in need of God's mercy, and no one, however holy, can approach the judge with confidence. This goes against the new heresy from the old belief, which believes that in this age and in this mortal flesh, before it puts on this corruptible state of incorruptibility and this mortal state of immortality, there can be perfection in anyone, and that all together can fulfill the virtues of righteousness.

30:12-15

(Verse 12 onwards) For thus says the Lord, your fracture is incurable, your wound is grievous. There is no one to judge your judgment for binding, there is no usefulness in your healing. All your

lovers have forgotten you, they will not seek you. For the enemy has struck you with a cruel (or strong) punishment because of the multitude of your iniquities, your sins have become severe (or multiplied). Why do you cry out about your contrition? Your pain is incurable, because of the multitude of your wickedness, and because of your stubborn sins I have done this to you. As if speaking to a beautiful woman, to whom he had said before: I will chastise you in judgment, so that you may not appear innocent to yourself, whether male or female; and by metaphor ((Alexander adds speaking)) to Jerusalem, which has been most grievously wounded by the judgment of God, and can be healed by no one else but the one who struck her. There is no one, says the Lord, who can judge your judgment: nor can the Highest heal the wound with the skin of a scar. Wherever you turn, there is no profit for you, because you have offended him who is true, and the only physician. All your lovers have forgotten you, be they priests, or rulers, or surely the protectors of the Angels, by whom you were fortified before you offended the Lord. They will not seek you, acting against the Apostle, who sought believers, and not those things which belonged to the believers (2 Corinthians 12). For the enemy strikes you with a cruel punishment. The friend strikes differently than the enemy: the father strikes differently than the enemy. The former strikes to correct, the latter strikes to kill (Psal. VI). Therefore, the Prophet mournfully says: Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor chastise me in your wrath (Psal. XXXVII, 1). And this has happened because due to the multitude of your wickedness, your sins have become hardened. And what follows: Why do you cry out over your contrition? Your pain is incurable because of the multitude of your iniquities, it is not found in the Septuagint; namely because it is said further on, because of the multitude of your iniquities, and your harsh sins; and those who were writing from the beginning, thought it necessary to add it. And the meaning is: So that I may strike you as an enemy, and beat you with cruel discipline, your multitude of iniquities and your harsh sins, which could not be healed, except by the most biting powder, and burning cauterization, and the sharpest iron, with which I may cut away the rotten flesh and the incurable parts. And yet, because of the multitude of your iniquities and your harsh sins, I have done these things to you, not by my will, but forced by the reasoning of medicine.

30:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Therefore, all who devour you shall be devoured, and all your enemies shall be carried into captivity; and those who plunder you shall be plundered, and all your plunderers I will give for prey. For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, declares the Lord, because they have called you an outcast: 'It is Zion, for whom no one cares.' And under Zerubbabel we know that these things happened, when the Babylonians and Chaldeans devastated the Assyrians, and then the Babylonians and Chaldeans, along with the Medes and Persians, captured Babylon and destroyed it. Then Zion began to have the Lord seeking, and the scar of its wounds was covered, and it was healed from its ailments, which is more fully and perfectly accomplished in Christ.

30:18-22

(Verse 18 and following) Thus says the Lord: Behold, I will turn the fortunes of the tents of Jacob, and have compassion on their dwellings (or captivity). And the city shall be rebuilt on its mound, and the temple shall be founded according to its order. And praise shall come forth from them, and the voice of those who play. And I will multiply them, and they shall not be few. (And what follows:

And I will glorify them, and they shall not be made small, is not found in the Septuagint). And they shall be, says the Lord, His sons as from the beginning, and His congregation shall remain before me, and I will visit all those who trouble him. And his leader shall come forth from him, and the ruler shall be produced from among them. And I will bring him near, and he shall approach me. For who is this who has applied his heart to draw near to me, says the Lord? (And this also is not found in the Septuagint.) And you shall be my people, and I will be your God. Whose image prefigured this in Zerubabel and Ezra, when the people returned and the city began to be built in its exalted state, and the religion of the Temple was observed, and the other things contained in the book of Ezra himself. But it was more fully and completely fulfilled in the Lord Savior and the Apostles, when the city was built on its highest point, of which it is written: A city set on a hill cannot be hidden (Matthew 5:14); and the Temple was established according to its order and ceremonies, so that whatever was done in the former people carnally, would be spiritually fulfilled in the Church. Then praise and thanksgiving came forth. For this means Thoda, as all the Apostles said: Grace to you and peace (1 Corinthians 1:3). And the voice of those who play, not in that game where the people ate and drank and rose up to play (Exodus 32:6), but in that game where David played before the Ark of the Lord (2 Samuel 6). And they were multiplied and not diminished, so that the whole world would believe in the Lord and Savior: and they were glorified, so that what is written would be fulfilled: Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God (Psalm 87:3). And his sons were, that is, the Apostles, just as they were from the beginning, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, the leaders of the Israelite race. Then the Lord visited all those who troubled the people of God, namely, the opposing powers. And He was their leader from that time: without a doubt, the Lord and Savior according to the flesh came forth from the race of Israel, and the prince arose from their midst. The Father applied Him to Himself, and He approached Him, so that the Son might say: I am in the Father, and the Father in Me (John XIV, 11): for no one can so apply his heart to God, nor be joined to the Father as the Son is. And what he says according to the Septuagint: 'And you shall be my people, and I will be your God', we see fulfilled in part in Israel, and entirely in the multitude of the nations.

30:23-24

(Verse 23, 24) Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord's fury going forth, and the rushing storm. It will rest upon the head of the wicked. The Lord will not turn away the anger of His indignation until He has performed and accomplished the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days, you will understand this. The whirlwind of the Lord's fury and the rushing storm and tempest will rest upon their heads, whether they be demons or those who have blasphemed the Son of God. And He will not turn away His anger until He has performed and accomplished the thoughts of His heart. And Jerusalem will be surrounded by armies and utterly destroyed. However, just as an artisan cannot be understood unless their work is complete, and the industry of medicine cannot be understood unless health has been achieved, so when Jerusalem has been destroyed and the rejection of the former people has occurred, then believers will understand that the expulsion of the Jews is an opportunity for our salvation.

31:1

(Chapter 31, Verse 1) In that time, says the Lord, I will be the God of all the tribes of Israel (or the people of Israel), and they will be my people. Unless the thought of the Lord is fulfilled and his fury

rests upon the head of the wicked, the Lord cannot be the God of all the tribes of Israel. But he says this to the remnant who have been saved. Now if what has been said to us is opposed to us: I will be the God of the people of Israel, or all the tribes of Israel, let us consider the example: If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of your father (John 8:39). And the Apostle writes: See Israel according to the flesh (I Cor. X, 8). From which he teaches that there is another Israel according to the spirit. Therefore, that Israel is the one who perceives God with the mind, or is the most righteous of the Lord, and such a people will be the people of God.

31:2

(Version 2.) Thus says the Lord: The people who remained with the sword found favor in the wilderness, let Israel go to their rest. LXX: Thus says the Lord: I have found warmth in the desert with those who have perished by the sword. Go, and do not kill Israel. The Latin texts in this place are laughed at for their ambiguity in the interpretation of the Greek word. Instead of warmth, they are interpreted as lupine: for the Greek word θερμότης has both meanings, which is not found in Hebrew. For it is written that Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion translated χάρις as 'grace'. Only the Seventy translated it as 'heat', thinking that the last letter Mem was intended. For if we read Hen as Nun, it means 'grace'; if as Mem, it means 'heat'. But the sense according to the Hebrew is: The people of the Jews, who had remained under the Roman sword, or surely could have escaped the wrath of the Lord in fury, found grace in the desert of the Gentiles, so that they might be saved among the multitude of nations in the Church, to which they will both go and find their rest, Israel which they have always hoped for, as the prophecies of the prophets had promised them. Furthermore, according to the translation of the Septuagint, the understanding is this: the Lord found the chosen ones and living Apostles, and their companions in the desert of the gentiles, among those who had been killed by their own unfaithfulness, they did not possess the warmth of life. Therefore, it is commanded to the Angels and those who are in the service of God, not to kill all, lest Israel be completely destroyed, and it is said to them: Go, and do not kill Israel; otherwise there should be some who live, some who are warmed by the fervor of faith, some who escape the coldness of unfaithfulness and death, whom the Lord finds in the desert.

31:3-6

(Versed 3 and following) Far off the Lord appeared to me (or to him): and in everlasting love I loved you: therefore I have drawn you with mercy. And again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel: you shall again be adorned (or crowned) with your timbrels, and you shall go forth in the dance of them that make merry. You shall again plant vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria: plant, and you shall enjoy the fruits thereof: for there shall be a day, that the watchmen on mount Ephraim shall call to the shepherds: Arise, and let us go up to Sion to our Lord God. Because Israel had offended the Lord, and had said: We have no king but Caesar (John 19:15). And: Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours (Mark 12:7); and had strayed far from God: therefore the Lord appeared to him after a long time, not in the time of Zerubbabel and Ezra, after they had been taken captive again, but in everlasting love He loved him, which will never be destroyed. And He drew him with His mercy. For he was saved not by merit, but by mercy. And he says again: I will build you up, and you will be built up, O virgin Israel. Let us understand this specifically in the Church. For those who long for golden and jeweled Jerusalem are mad, consecrating their greed for the mystery of the city of the Lord. You will still be adorned with your

tambourines, to sing to the Lord in the Churches, with all the flesh of evil works consumed in you. And you will go out in the chorus of those who play, with the crowds of nations, you will plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria. Not in valleys and low places, but in the mountains of Samaria, which were possessed by foreigners after the captivity of the people of Israel, to whom it is said: Plant vineyards and harvest. Then it was the day of the Lord, on which the custodians of the Apostolic faith, and apostolic men on the mountain of Samaria, and on the mountain of Ephraim, of which one signifies guardianship, the other abundance. But what do the custodians of Samaria say, or rather, what do they cry out on the mountain of Ephraim? Arise, you who lie low, abandon lowly things, despise the victims of sacrifice. Let the broken spirit be a sacrifice to the Lord (Psalm 50). Let us ascend to Zion, that is, to the Church, where there is the vision and sight of God. And when we are in Zion, or rather when we ascend to it, let us together ascend to our Lord God.

31:7

(Verse 7.) For thus says the Lord: Rejoice with joy, O Jacob, and shout for joy at the head of the nations; proclaim, sing, and say: Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel. It is significant that not all of Israel is saved, but the remnant of Israel, as the Lord commands and says: Rejoice with joy, you who are of Jacob, and shout for joy, bringing all things back to the head of the nations, because once the tail was turned into the head. Perform, sing, and say. What is it that they are commanded to say? Save, O Lord, your people. Which people? Certainly the remnant of Israel, who have been saved according to election. Concerning whom Paul, taking up the testimony of Isaiah, speaks: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and made like Gomorrah (Isa. 1:9; Rom. 9:29).

31:8

(Verse 8) Behold, I will bring them from the land of the North, and gather them from the ends of the earth. What follows: In the solemnity of the Passover, he shall beget many sons, which is not found in Hebrew, but is only read in the Septuagint, for which it is written among the Hebrews:

Among them will be the blind, and the lame, and the pregnant, and those giving birth together: the great Church of those returning here. The remaining people of Israel will be gathered by the Apostles and the apostolic men, of whom we read above: The custodians on the mountain will cry out, and to whom it is commanded: Resound, sing, and say, so that the remaining people of Israel may be saved. The Lord himself also promises to bring them back from the land of the North, which is a very harsh wind, but by the name of dexterous is called, from unbelief, from the coldness of the Lord's love; and to gather them from the ends of the earth, not at any other time, but on the solemnity of the Passover, that is, on the feast days of the Lord's passion: when the Lord was crucified, and that which he himself promised in the Gospel was fulfilled. When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself (John 12:23). Then he generated a great multitude, so that the prophecy of Isaiah might be fulfilled: For a nation has been born once (Isaiah 66:8). For on one day, three thousand believed, and on another day, five thousand men (Acts 2 and 4). And what is written in Hebrew: Among them will be the blind and the lame, and the pregnant and those giving birth together, a great church of those returning here; although it is also fulfilled according to the letter, that the blind will see, and the lame will walk: nevertheless, it can be better understood according to allegory, that those who were previously blind in faith,

afterwards believed in the Savior; and those who were lame, to whom Elijah once spoke: How long will you limp on both feet (1 Kings 18:21)? Afterwards, they may have walked (Al. seen). And: The people who sat in darkness and the shadow of death have seen a great light. (Isaiah 9:2); the lame may have run, and the pregnant woman may have given birth to sons, the great Church of those who return to faith. The Jews imagine this to have been fulfilled when, under Ezra, they departed from Babylon after the Passover to return to Jerusalem, in which there was a figure, and not the reality. For in that time, not all the things that we read and are going to read could have been proven to be complete (Al. could have been approved).

31:9

(Verse 9) In their weeping they will come (or go); I will lead them in mercy, and bring them by the torrents of water in a straight path, and they will not stumble (or wander) in it. For I have become the father of Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. If we read according to the Hebrew, they will come in weeping: for this indicates Job (); we will say that sometimes, the weeping of excessive joy is a sign, according to that: I weep with joy. But according to the Seventy who said: 'He will go out in weeping, and I will lead them in mercy or consolation,' we understand that it is also said in the Psalms: 'They went forth weeping and cast their seeds, but they will come with joy, carrying their bundles' (Ps. 125:6-7). For they wept when they were led away captive, but they received great consolation when they were brought back by the mercy of the Lord. And the Lord brought them through the apostles and apostolic men, full of waters and of a most abundant river, on the straight path, namely the path of faith, not in the deceit of the Jews. And they will not stumble in it, he says, because the blind have ceased to be blind, to whom it was once said: If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now, because you say: we see, your sin remains. We can understand the straight path, and Christ, in which whoever walks will not stumble. I have become, he says, the father of Israel, who has been brought back, and Ephraim is my firstborn. For where sin once abounded, grace has superabounded. But Scripture testifies that Ephraim is a type of the people gathered from the nations. For he was the younger son of Joseph, and he took the birthright from Manasseh, who was by nature the firstborn (Gen. XLVIII); but in the mystery of the cross, with crossed hands, he stood at the left side of Jacob and received the blessing from his right hand. And he who had stood on the right, blessed with the left, was reduced to the second rank. And just as Jacob took the birthright from Esau, so Ephraim took the firstborn position from Manasseh. And the entire people of the ten tribes were called Ephraim, because Jeroboam the son of Nebat, from this tribe, was the first to obtain the kingdom in Samaria (Ibid., 27).

31:10-14

(Verse 10 and following) Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and proclaim it in distant islands, and say: He who scattered Israel will gather him and will watch over him as a shepherd does his flock. For the Lord has redeemed Jacob and delivered him from the hand of the stronger (or the hand of the more powerful). And they will come and praise on Mount Zion, and they will gather to the good things of the Lord, abundant with grain, wine, oil, and the offspring of cattle and sheep. And their soul shall be like a well-watered garden (or like a fruitful tree), and they shall never hunger again. Then the virgin shall rejoice in the dance (or the virgins) and the young men and the old men together, and I will turn their mourning into joy, and I will comfort them and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will make the souls of the priests drunk with fatness (or the sons of

Levi), and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, says the Lord. Clearly the calling of the nations is shown, with the Scripture saying: Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it on the islands far away, and say. What do the islands that are far away announce? It is the Lord, who dispersed Israel, who will gather them together. Therefore, it was not by the power of their enemies that they were scattered, but by the will of the Lord. And He will guard them as a shepherd guards his flock. For a good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (John 10). Because the Lord has redeemed Jacob with the price of His own blood and has liberated him from the hand of the more powerful or stronger one. By these things are shown the stronger opposing powers of the nature of human frailty. And as far as strength is concerned, they are stronger by nature, but we are stronger by faith, if indeed we deserve to be freed from him who can bind the strong and plunder his house. And they will come, he says, without a doubt, that when freed from the hand of the powerful, they will praise their liberator on Mount Zion, that is, in the Church, and they will gather to the good things of the Lord, the abundance of all things, which is felt not in the fruits and food of this flesh, but in the variety of virtues. He said, 'With wheat, and wine, and oil, from which the bread of the Lord is made, and the type of His blood is filled, and the blessing of sanctification is shown, as the Scripture says: 'God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions' (Psalm 45:8). And with the offspring of livestock, which are simple in the Church, and with cattle, which are horned, they drive away adversaries. But so that we may know that these blessings pertain not to the body, but to the soul, it follows: 'Their soul will be like a well-watered garden, or like a fruitful tree, which is planted by the flowing waters, and the Lord's paradise in delights' (Psalm 1). And furthermore, he says, you shall not hunger. In no way will you be hungry, of which it is written: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6); but that which is changed by satiety, and excludes the scarcity of all things. Then the virgin will rejoice in the choir, of whom the Apostle writes: For I have betrothed you to one husband to present a chaste virgin to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2). And to the young men, to whom John speaks: I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one; and to the elders, to whom he testifies in mystical language: I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning (1 John 2:14). And, he says, I will turn their mourning into joy, so that the cross that had terrified them may bring joy through the resurrection. And I will console them and make them glad from their sorrow, according to what the Lord says: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. And I will gladden the souls of the Priests, who have knowledge of God, from whose mouths they seek the law of the Lord, those who believe in Him, of whom the Prophet sings: You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4). But what follows according to the Septuagint: Of the sons of Levi, it is not found in Hebrew. And it is clear that it is not said of those priests who are sons of Levi, but of those in whose type Melchizedek preceded. And the drunkenness of the priests is also proven in the Apostles, when they were fervent in faith and were said to be full of must (Acts 2). Hence, the place in which the Lord was apprehended is called Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36), which in our language means the valley of fatness. And when the priests, who are rich with the teachings of the Lord, have been intoxicated at the feast, they will say to Joseph: How splendid is your intoxicating cup (Gen. 43 and 44)! Then this promise of the Lord will also be fulfilled: And my people will be filled with my blessings (Ps. 22:5). All these things are now given in part, but then they will be given in full, when we see face to face, and our humble bodies will be transformed into the glory of resurrection.

(Verse 15.) Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in the heights, lamentation, weeping, and mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and she refused to be comforted over her children, because they are no more. LXX: Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Rama, lamentation, weeping, and mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and she refused to be comforted, because they are no more. Neither according to the Hebrew, nor according to the Seventy, did Matthew take testimony. For we read in it: Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not (Matthew 2:17-18). From which it is clear that the Evangelists and Apostles did not follow the interpretation of any Hebrew, but rather expressed in their own words, as if Hebrews, what they read in Hebrew. Rachel, the mother of Joseph, when she was coming to Bethlehem, suddenly seized with the pain of childbirth, gave birth to a son, whom the midwife, because she was dying in childbirth, called Benoni, that is, the son of my sorrow. But Jacob the father changed the name and called him Benjamin, that is, the son of his right hand (Gen. XXXV, 18). Therefore, it is questioned how the evangelist Matthew transferred the testimony of the Prophet to the killing of the infants: when it is clearly written about the ten tribes, of which Ephratha was not the leader, and it is by no means in the tribe of Ephraim, but in the tribe of Judah: for it is itself, and Bethlehem with two names. And the names of both correspond. Bethlehem is called the house of bread. Ephrata, which we can call fertility. Therefore, since Rachel was buried in Ephrata, that is, in Bethlehem, as both the Holy Scripture and her tombstone testify to this day, it is said that she weeps for the children who were killed nearby and in their own regions. Some Jews interpret this place as meaning that when Jerusalem was captured under Vespasian, countless thousands of captives were sent to Rome through this road, Gaza, and Alexandria. But others, because in the final captivity under Hadrian, when the city of Jerusalem was also destroyed, an innumerable people of various ages and both sexes were sold in the market of Terebinth. And therefore it is detestable for the Jews to visit that renowned market. Let them say whatever they want, we will rightly say that the Evangelist Matthew took testimony for the place where Rachel was buried, so that she mourned the sons of neighboring villages as if they were her own.

31:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) Thus says the Lord: Let your voice be still from weeping, and your eyes from tears: for there is a reward for your work, says the Lord. And the enemies (or of the enemies) will return from the land, and there will be hope for your future, says the Lord: and the children will return to their borders. This has not yet happened literally, for we do not read of the ten tribes who were exiled in the cities of the Medes and Persians returning to the land of Judah: but it has been fulfilled according to the spirit, and in the passion of the Lord, and it continues to be fulfilled: when all Israel is saved from the whole world, and Rachel is said: Let your voice be still from weeping, and your eyes from tears. And there is a sense: Stop weeping, for the Lord has considered your previous works. And your children will return from the land of the enemy, so you may not be held back by present sorrow. For there is hope for your future, says the Lord. And your children will return to their borders, which their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had. But we understand better concerning little ones, that they shall receive the reward of shedding blood for Christ: and for the land of Herod's enemies, they shall hold the kingdom of heaven: and they shall return to their former dwelling place, when, for the body of humility, they shall receive a glorious body. This is the

ultimate hope, when the just will shine like the sun (Wis. III), and once little infants and nursing babies, without any increase in age, and without injury or physical labor, will rise again as fully grown men, to the measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. IV).

31:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) Hearing, I heard Ephraim passing through (or lamenting); you chastised me, and I was instructed like an untamed heifer (or like a calf, and I did not learn); turn me, and I will be turned; for you are the Lord my God. For after you converted me (or I was captured), I repented. And after I knew (or you showed me), I struck my thigh (or I groaned), I was ashamed and embarrassed (or from the day of confusion, and I saw you), because I endured the reproach of my youth. God speaks, having heard Ephraim speaking and lamenting. There is no doubt that it signifies the ten tribes, over whom Jeroboam son of Nabath first ruled, who also made golden calves in Dan and Bethel, so that, deceived by this error, the people would cease to worship and adore the God of Israel. You have chastised me, he says, and I have been chastised. Every correction leads to salvation, which for the present seems to be sadness; and afterwards it brings forth peaceful fruits. And he says: 'Just as an untamed calf or a young bull, and I have not learned, this signifies that I have been trained with much labor and beatings in order to be converted, and I have not progressed. Convert me,' he says, 'and I will be converted.' Therefore, we cannot fulfill the same thing that we are doing penance for unless we rely on God's help. For after you have converted me and I have been converted to you, then I will know that you are the Lord my God, and my mistakes and sins will not destroy me. And after you converted me, I repented. See how great is the help of God, and how fragile is the human condition: that even this very thing, that we repent, we cannot accomplish unless the Lord converts us beforehand. And after, he says, you showed me, either repentance itself, or knowledge of you, or I recognized you, I struck my thigh. Which is an indication of one who is in pain and lamenting, and weeping over their previous error, that they would strike their thigh with their hand, and confess that they were foolish before. Confucius, he said, I am confused and embarrassed, or from the day of confusion. For what time is not our confusion, if we remember the ancient sins, and all the things we have done wrong, let us recapitulate them? And what LXX said, and I showed you, means that after he groaned and recognized his own sins, he has come to such progress that he has also shown God to others who were ignorant, according to what the repentant David says: I will teach the wicked your ways, and the impious will turn to you (Psalm 50:15). And when he says, 'Because I endured the reproach of my youth,' he confesses that he sinned in his ignorance of youth, so that he may more easily obtain forgiveness, according to what David sings: 'Remember not the sins of my youth and my ignorance' (Psalm 25:7). Therefore, in the following passages, God calls him a little child and full of delights. He says this because of the greatness of the riches and the fertility of the land in which the tribe of Ephraim luxuriates even to this day.

31:20

(Vers. 20.) If Ephraim is an honorable son (or beloved) to me: if he is a delicate child, since I spoke of him (or my words about him), I will still remember him; therefore my heart is troubled for him: I will have mercy on him, says the Lord. As Ephraim repents and says: In the beginning you taught me, and I was instructed like a young untamed bull; and in the end: Because you endured the reproach of my youth; the Lord responds, and with a full mind turned towards him, he sustains with

the following oracle: Beloved son Ephraim (Gen. XLVIII), whom I have loved so much from the beginning, that I preferred him to Manasseh. The honorable son, who, contrary to the order of nature, has received the honor of the firstborn by the grace of the Lord. A delicate boy, of whom it is written: The sons of Ephraim, being armed and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle (Psalm 78:9). Against whom and for whom, the entire book of Hosea is the prophet, whom Jacob blessed. But let us understand delights in this place, according to what is said in the psalm: Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4). In Greek and Hebrew, it is referred to as pleasure. Thus, the paradise in Eden is called the paradise of delights. For, he says, my words were in him, and I will be mindful of him even now. Lest it be thought a gratuitous blessing, and rather a gift of the indulgent giver than a reward for his merit, to whom it was granted, he therefore says: I will remember him, because my words were in him. Not in his mouth, not on his lips, but in the deepest affection of the heart. Because of this, my guts are troubled over it. To whom he speaks, through Hosea: What shall I do with you, Ephraim? What shall I do with you, Israel? I will make you like Adam, and like Seboim (Hos. 6:4; 11:8). My heart is turned within me; my guts are troubled. I will not carry out the fury of my anger, and I will not destroy Ephraim. I will have compassion on him, says the Lord. Truly, my words were in him, and he received all my commands with an eager spirit, and he kept them in his heart; but nevertheless, I will have compassion on him, says the Lord, to show that all human righteousness needs the mercy of God.

31:21-22

(Vers. 21, 22.) Set up watchmen for yourself, make for yourself bitteresses: direct your heart to the straight path in which you have walked. Return, O virgin Israel, return to your cities. How long will you indulge in pleasures, wandering daughter? For the Lord has created something new on the earth: a woman will encompass a man. LXX: Set up watchmen for yourself, do penance, put your heart on your shoulders, the way in which you have walked. Return, O virgin Israel, return to your mourning cities. How long will you turn away, despised daughter? For the Lord has created you for salvation in a new plantation: men will surround you in your salvation. Where we say, how long will you dissolve in pleasures, Symmachus set forth, how long will you sink into the depths? But I have presented both editions in their entirety, so that I may show the most obscure passage, containing the sacraments of the Church, either unknown or omitted, from the Septuagint (or anyone else who has interpreted this prophet). The Hebrew word 'Sionim' can be translated as either 'watchers' or 'watchtowers', as Aquila and Symmachus have interpreted. I am puzzled by what the Vulgate edition intended by replacing 'Sionim' with 'Sion', which confuses the reader's understanding, making them think that after Ephraim, suddenly God's word happened to Sion and the tribe of Judah, even though the continuous speech is directed towards Ephraim, as mentioned earlier: 'I have surely heard Ephraim.' And: Son, honorable to me Ephraim, or delicate boy, to whom even now he speaks: Set up for yourself watchtowers, or spies, who may inform you of the coming of such great happiness in all things. And what follows, the bitteresses, which in Hebrew are called Themrurim (), for which Symmachus interpreted, the transformations, this indicates that he should weep either for past sins or for the greatness of joy, and with the whole mind turn to the Lord, and set, or direct, his heart on the path along which it has gone, for from there it will return. And what the Seventy said about this: 'Put your heart on your shoulders', signifies that thoughts should be joined to actions, or contemplate the shoulders of those who bear themselves, from the

captivity of those bringing them back. This is more fully expressed by Isaiah in regard to camels, chariots, and dromedaries, stating that they are to be brought back (Isa. 60). 'Return,' he says, 'O virgin of Israel, return to your cities which you have deserted as a captive. How long will you be dissolved in neglect and wander in profound error?' Consider what I am about to say, and carefully consider where such great happiness is to be expected. Listen to what you have never known before. The Lord has created a new thing upon the earth. Without the seed of a man, without any sexual intercourse and conception, a woman will enclose a man in the chamber of her womb, who, as it were, by the cries of infancy and the progress of wisdom and age, will appear to grow in size; but the perfect man will be contained within the female womb for the usual months. Where Symmachus and Aquila have been interpreted according to our edition. However, what the Vulgate edition wanted to convey in this place, I could say, and find some meaning, if it were not sacrilegious to argue about the words of God with a human sense; but Theodotius, following the Vulgate edition itself, has interpreted: The Lord created a new salvation, in which salvation man will go around, using the singular instead of the plural. And at the same time, it should be noted that the nativity of the Savior and the conception of God are called creation.

31:23-24

(Verse 23, 24) Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Again they will say this word in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I restore their fortunes: 'The Lord bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill!' And Judah and all its cities shall dwell there together, and the farmers and those who move about with the flocks. According to the Hebrew text, it is clear that upon the return of Israel and the conversion of their captivity, the cities of Judah will be inhabited, and it will be said to them individually: 'May the Lord bless you, who is the true beauty of righteousness and the holy mountain, in which whoever dwells will fear no plots.' And Judah will dwell in its cities without iniquity: there will be farmers and a multitude of livestock, which seems to have been fulfilled in part under Zerubbabel and Ezra. However, the fullness of the prophecy refers to the times of Christ: either in his first coming, when these things were fulfilled spiritually, or in his second coming, when everything will be fulfilled both spiritually, according to the Jews and our carnal-minded judaizers. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, this is the meaning: 'This word will still be spoken in the land of Judah and in its cities when I restore their captivity.' What will be said? 'Blessed is the Lord upon his holy mountain, the mount of Zion.' There is no other mountain that deserves the meaning of justice and holiness except the Savior. However, it is foolish to believe that the mountain, which is irrational and insensible, is just and holy due to Jewish error. He is the one about whom it is written in the following: 'And in every city of his, the Savior is implied.' When the farmer is mentioned, there is no doubt that it signifies the Lord, about whom it is written in the Gospel: 'I am the vine, you are the branches. My Father is the farmer' (John 15:1). And the Apostle also says: You are God's field, you are God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9). And what follows: And he will be exalted in the flock, it shows that the righteous and holy Lord himself is exalted in each flock, and ascends to heights in his servants and believers.

31:25-26

Because I have made the weary soul drunk (or because I have made every thirsty soul drunk) and I have satisfied (or filled) every hungry soul: therefore I am awake and I have seen, and my sleep has been sweet to me. The change of persons makes the understanding of the Prophets obscure.

The Lord had said, 'Yet they will say this word in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I turn their captivity.' But what will they say? No doubt this follows: May the Lord bless you, the beauty of righteousness, the holy mountain, etc. And again, when they said these things, the Lord responded: Because I have refreshed the weary soul, whether thirsty or hungry, and I have satisfied every hungry soul. And when he said this, the people responded, those who came from captivity: Therefore I awakened and saw, and my sleep was sweet to me. For the Lord refreshes the weary soul, whether thirsty or hungry, and he says in the Gospel: Whoever thirsts, let him come to me and drink (John 7:37). And he said: 'Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from his belly.' (Ibid., 38). And he satisfies every hungry soul and thirsty soul. Regarding this hunger and thirst, the same is testified in the Gospel: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.' (Matthew 5:6). And it should be noted that intoxication is being portrayed positively in this passage, as it is mentioned in the Song of Solomon: 'Eat, friends, drink, and become intoxicated, my beloved.' (Song of Solomon 5:1). Joseph was intoxicated with wine along with his brothers at noon (Gen. XLIII). And being intoxicated and satisfied, those who had been tired and hungry give thanks, responding: I have awakened and seen the Lord, namely raising up and saying: Arise, you who sleep, and rise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you (Ephes. V, 14). And my sleep, he said, was sweet to me, so that I might imitate the words of my Lord saying: I slept, and was filled with sleep, and I arose, because the Lord will receive me (Psal. III, 6).

31:27-30

(Verse 27 and following) Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of men and the seed of animals. And as I have watched over them to uproot, demolish, scatter, and afflict, so I will watch over them to build and plant, says the Lord. In those days, they shall no longer say, 'The fathers ate sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge,' but each one shall die for his own iniquity. Every person who eats a sour grape, their teeth will be stunned. The phrase 'domum et domum' or 'house and house', that is, the house of Israel and the house of Judah, is not found in the Septuagint, but only Israel and Judah, so it says: and I will sow Israel and Judah. And what he brought: we must understand that it refers to the seed of humans and animals, to rational and simple beings. And as it is said in the beginning of Jeremiah: Behold, I have set you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant; and I watched over them to do what I threatened, so, he says, I will now watch over them to build and to plant. For the cultivation of God, for the building up of God (1 Corinthians 3:9). All such promises are thought by the Jews and our Judaizers to be fulfilled in the thousand-year kingdom. But we, as the Apostle says, I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase (Ibid., 6), and as the prophet Isaiah mentions that the Savior is the builder of walls and houses (Isaiah 58), we defend that these were spiritually fulfilled in the first coming of Christ, but only partially fulfilled: for now we see in a mirror, dimly, and we do not know as we ought to know (1 Corinthians 13). But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away with. Or certainly, we believe that in the second coming, when the Lord appears in His majesty and the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, all Israel will be saved, and not partially by individuals, but God will be all in all (Romans 11 and 1 Corinthians 15). And what is implied by: In those days they shall no longer say, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge, and so on, we have explained more

fully in the explanations of Ezekiel, when we interpreted that passage: Son of man, what do you mean by these proverbs of the children of Israel, saying, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. Thus says the Lord: 'As I live, if there is beyond this parable in Israel, for all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sins, it shall die' (Ezekiel 18:1-4). From this, we learn that it is not death that the Lord does, but sin. For the soul that sins, it shall die. And in this present place, it is said that Israel will by no means be condemned eternally for the sins of their fathers; but through their own merits and faith in Christ, they will be saved after many ages. And it should be noted that vices and sins are called sour grapes, so that the teeth of those who eat them are stunned, and they cannot taste its sweetness, of which it is said: Taste and see, for the Lord is sweet (Psalm 33:9). Whoever does not understand the Scriptures as the truth of the matter has eaten sour grapes. Hence all heretics who believe perverse things cannot eat the bread that comes down from heaven, but their teeth are stunned, not by the harshness of food, but by the vice of their teeth.

31:31-32

(Verse 31, 32.) Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will strike (or establish) the house of Israel and the house of Judah with a new covenant (or testament), not like the covenant (or testament) that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. The covenant (or testament) that they broke, though I was their master (or I disregarded them), says the Lord. And ((Vulg. but)) this will be the covenant (or testament) that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach ((Vulg. man and man)) his neighbor, and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. The apostle Paul, or someone else, wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, and all subsequent Ecclesiastical men say that everything was fulfilled in the first coming of the Savior, and that the new Testament, that is, the Gospel, succeeded the old Testament, from which the law of the letter was changed to the law of the spirit, so that all sacrifices, circumcision, and the Sabbath were spiritually fulfilled. But as for the covenant we set forth as Testament, it is of Hebrew truth, although it is correctly called a Testament, because the will and testimony of those who enter into the covenant are contained in it. When Israel was brought out of the land of Egypt, there was such a familiarity with God in that people that it is said that their hand was held and a covenant was made, which they made void, and therefore the Lord neglected them. But now in the Gospel after the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, he promises to give the covenant not on stone tablets, but on fleshy tablets of the heart. And when it is written that the Testament of the Lord is in the minds of the believers, it means that he is their God and they are his people, so that they should not seek Jewish teachers, traditions, and human commands, but be taught by the Holy Spirit, if they are worthy to listen: You are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you (1 Corinthians 3:19). But the Spirit breathes where He wishes, and He has various graces. And the knowledge of one God is the possession of all virtues. And this, He says, will come to pass, because I will be propitious to their iniquity, and I will no longer remember their sins. From which it is clear, according to the understanding of this passage, that the things above are to be understood in the first coming of the Savior, when both peoples, Israel and Judah, were joined together. But if anyone finds difficulty in

understanding why He said: I will make a covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, a new covenant, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, let him first understand that the Church of Christ came from the Jews, and that the Lord and Savior came to them and said: I came only for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24); and the apostles themselves confirmed this: It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). For it was not fitting to give the bread of the children to the dogs, but because the sons did not want to receive their father coming to them, He gave power to all, so that those who receive Him may become children of God (Matthew 15; John 1).

31:35-36

(Verse 35, 36) Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day, the order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar: The Lord of hosts is his name. If these laws (or statutes) depart from before me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before me forever. And in the beginning of Genesis, we read that the sun was placed in the sky for light by day, and the moon and stars for light by night (Gen. 1). And in the psalm it says: Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge (Psalm 19:2), meaning that night and day succeed each other. Just as, he says, the order of things, especially the celestial spheres, cannot be changed, and the waves of the sounding sea roll toward the shore, and the terrifying noise of the swelling waves is heard, but it cannot go beyond what is commanded by God, according to that: You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth (Psalm 104:9). Similarly, he says, the offspring and lineage of Israel will be perpetual by the will of the Lord, and will never fail. However, here the laws are not to be understood as Mosaic, but as the constitution and order of nature. Let us ask the Jews, if the heavens will perish, and all will become old like a garment; and to the Lord it is said: But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail (Ps. CI, 28), how can the seed of Israel be perpetual? For if the heavens perish, the seed of Israel will perish; but if it is perpetual, then the heavens will not perish. But if the Scriptures cannot lie, and the heavens are perishable, then the seed of Israel will perish as well, especially since Jacob speaks to his sons, saying: Come, and I will tell you what will happen in the last days (Gen. XLIX, 1). When it is said, in the last days, therefore the world will cease to exist, and there will be a different arrangement of things (or dispensation). This is against them. Furthermore, the Gospel also shows that this world is not everlasting, saying: Heaven and earth will pass away (Matth. XXIV, 35). And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. XXVIII, 20). Let us also say it differently: As long as this world exists, the seed of Israel and the Jewish nation will remain, not in those who are now unbelievers, but in those who believed with the Apostles and through the Apostles, so that the remnants may be saved.

31:37

(Verse 37) Thus says the Lord: If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will reject all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, says the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Lord: If the heavens are raised high above and the floor of the earth is humbled below, then I will not reject the nation of Israel, says the Lord, for all that they have done. The Hebrew text in this passage differs greatly from the Vulgate edition. Let us first

speak according to the Hebrew: If the heavens above can be measured and their height known, or the foundations of the earth investigated and their outermost limits understood, then I will reject the whole offspring of Israel because of all that they have done, says the Lord. Just as it is impossible for us to know the height of the heavens and the foundations of the earth, so it will also be impossible for me to reject the whole offspring of Israel. But if I reject the entire seed of Israel, the summit of the heavens will be shaken, and the ends of the earth. This syllogism is woven in the Gospel: when the impossible is compared to the impossible: Easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matth. XIX). For just as that ((or: the impossible)) cannot be done, so neither can this be done; but if this is done, then that which was thought to be impossible will be done. Therefore, those who interpret this passage differently, also placing that testimony, that the Son might be able to seek help from the Father and summon twelve legions of angels to His aid. The Septuagint translated this meaning in opposition, saying: 'If heaven is exalted higher and the pavement of the earth is lowered below;', and I, says the Lord, will not reject the seed of Israel because of all they have done. But if that is the case, the Israelite people will be rejected. For just as the sky cannot be higher than what it is, nor the earth lower than what it is, so too the people of Israel will by no means be rejected. If we see the Jews boasting according to this Hebrew testimony, we agree with them that the entire seed of Israel is not cast away. For not all are cast away, but only those who were unbelieving.

31:38

(Verse 38) . Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when the city will be rebuilt for the Lord, from the tower of Ananeel (also known as Anamehel) to the corner gate. And the measuring line will extend beyond it, to the hill of Gareb, and will encompass Goatha (or according to the Septuagint, with chosen stones). And the entire valley of ruins (for which Theodotius placed the Hebrew word Phagarim, and ashes, and all Asaremoth, which we better read as Asademoth, for which Aquila interpreted as suburban) will extend to the Kidron Valley, to the corner of the Eastern Horse Gate. The holy place of the Lord will not be rooted up or destroyed forever. Those who receive the kingdom of Christ in the land of Judea, namely the Jews and our Judaizers, try to show the tower of Ananeel and the gate of the corner, and the hill of Gareb, and Goatha, and the valley of Phagarim, and all Asademoth, and the Cedron torrent, and the place of the corner gate of the east horses: and there they say that the sanctuary of the Lord, that is, the temple, is to be built, and will remain forever. Because they cannot show this accomplishment after the captivity during the times of Zorobabel and Ezra, they move on to the times of Christ, whom they say will come at the end of the world, so that he may descend upon Jerusalem adorned with gold and jewels, according to the Book of Revelation, and be built around this land, that is, from that place to this place, in a circuit (Rev. 21). And they take this ring of theirs, because it is situated by the tower of Anathoth, which is now called Jeremiah, three miles separated from Jerusalem, all the way to the Brook of Kidron, which is written in the Gospel (John 18), and is in the valley of Jehoshaphat, where there was a garden, in which Judas the betrayer handed over the Savior, the foundations of the city are laid. We are about to read, they say, that Anameel, the cousin of Sallum, was the son of Jeremiah, who bought the field, and this is the tower of Ananeel, ignorant of the Hebrew truth. For here it is written according to the Hebrew text, from the tower of Ananeel (which means 'grace of God') through Nun, namely the middle letter. There it says: 'Behold, Anameel (which means 'grace of God') the son of Sallum, your cousin, will come to you, through the middle letter Mem.'

Therefore, invoking the Lord and Savior, who has the key of David, who opens and no one can shut, who shuts and no one can open; who also opened the sealed book of Isaiah and all the prophets (Isaiah 22); and the twenty-four elders who held harps worshiped (Revelation 3), indicating that only He can reveal the divine mysteries, let us approach the building of the city to which the prophetic word is directed: 'Glorious things are said of you, O city of God' (Psalm 87:3); and 'The streams of the river make glad the city of God' (Psalm 46:4). So the Church is built from the tower of obedience, or grace, and the gifts of God (for this is what Ananeel interprets), up to the gate of the corner, which may seem to have a lofty beginning, as long as we continue in this flesh, we cannot possess the straight line of truth: but we stand in the corner and with broken lines, and go out beyond the measuring line against it, that is, the gate of the corner, over the hill Gareb, which in our language is translated either as sojourning or scabies, to teach us to be strangers and foreigners, and not to easily consent to itching ears and the novelty of the worst dogmas. And Goatha will go around, he says, for which they were interpreted as seventy by a circuit, with chosen stones that roll upon the face of the earth, and are bound with a corner stone, as the apostle Peter says: And you yourselves are built up as living stones into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices and acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5). And she will go around, he says, all the valley of Phagarim, which is interpreted as ruins; and ashes, understood, so that although we may seem to be without inhabitants: nevertheless, let us always fear ruins and consider ashes; and in repentance let us say with David: For I have eaten ashes as bread, and mixed my drink with weeping (Psalm 102:10). And it is said to those who lie down: Does one not rise again who falls? says the Lord (Jeremiah VIII, 4). And he says that the whole place, which we translate as the region of death, is divided into two words; Sade (), which means region, and Moth (), which translates as death: for which Aquila translates as suburbs, or fields, and rural areas. The region of death is the region of sins; and the suburbs are the region of pleasures, which goes up to the Brook Kidron, where the Lord was handed over, who is interpreted as darkness (John XVIII). See how many places the Church has, and how that Apostolic saying is fulfilled: That it may be without stain or wrinkle (Ephes. V, 27), and be preserved in the future and in the heavenly realms. You hear of corners, you hear of decay, you hear of ruins and ashes, and the region of death, and darkness, and you boast of your power and sinlessness. Finally, it follows: even up to the corner of the gate. And this corner, so that no true justice, no certain victory, may be shown in this world. Even though it is the eastern corner of the gate from which the light comes out, it is nevertheless called the horses: to teach us that we need to run and compete, and finally deserve to hear with the Lord: You have ascended on high, you have led captivity captive: you have received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them (Psalm 68:18). In the Eastern gate, in the gate of the chariots, is the sanctification of the Lord. And then we may consider ourselves perfect, when we say to the Lord: The chariot of God is ten thousand times ten thousand: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai in the holy place (Psalm 68:17). Such a building, which is built upon the foundation of Christ, of which the Apostle speaks: 'As a wise architect, I have laid the foundation' (I Cor. III, 10), will never be destroyed, but will remain forever. The obscure and difficult matters must be discussed in more detail, so that we may quickly go through the obvious ones.

32:1-3

(Chapter XXXII, verse 1 and following). The word that was spoken to Jeremiah by the Lord in the tenth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, was the eighteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar. At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the courtyard of the prison, which was in the palace of the king of Judah. For King Zedekiah of Judah had locked him up, saying, 'Why do you prophesy, saying, "Thus says the Lord"? Not only the words and deeds of the prophets are an example to us for virtue. Jeremiah could have announced prosperity and enjoyed the friendship of King Zedekiah, but he preferred to obey God rather than men (Acts 5), and he who can destroy both soul and body in hell, rather than he who could only have power over the body (Matthew 10). And it should be noted that it was the tenth year of Zedekiah's reign, with Jerusalem already besieged and consumed by sword, famine, and plague, and captivity imminent. Yet Zedekiah persists in his decision, and to some extent demonstrates his clemency by ordering that he not be confined in a prison, but in the courtyard: a form of free custody, so that he could not escape, as if the entire Jerusalem, closed by fortifications, were not a common prison for its inhabitants. This is the twenty-second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim's reign took control. However, the reason for the king's anger is that he speaks in the name of God, and he was commanded to do so.

32:4-5

(Verses 4, 5) Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it. And King Zedekiah of Judah will not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, but he will be handed over to the king of Babylon, and they will speak face to face and his eyes will see his eyes. And Zedekiah will be taken to Babylon, and he will stay there until I visit him, says the Lord. But if you fight against the Chaldeans, you will not have success. This was the reason for the anger of the king, that he preferred falsehood over truth and said that both the city of Jerusalem and King Zedekiah would be captured. And what is even worse, he will see the face of the king of Babylon and speak humbly and as a captive, as the most powerful king's madness. For it is a more serious terror to see the one whom you fear, and to be subjected to the verbal accusation before enduring the torment of punishment. And he says that he will lead Zedekiah into Babylon, and he will be there. The Septuagint translates it as "one of whom is unwillingly dragged, the other one signifies willingly going." And he says that he will be there. The word is ambiguous, so as not to seem to prophesy torture and miseries. And what follows is: Until I visit him, says the Lord, and if you fight against the Chaldeans, you will have nothing prosperous, which is not found in the Septuagint. And he wisely moderated his opinion, which can be referred to both the good and the bad. For visitation, as I often said, signifies both consolation and punishment.

32:6-7

(Version 6, 7.) And Jeremiah said: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: Behold, Anameel (also known as Anemeel), the son of Sellum (or Sallom), your cousin (which is said in Hebrew as Dodach), is coming to you, saying: Buy my field, which is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption belongs to you. The hidden word of God to Jeremiah was known to no one, except by his revelation to whom it was made: and he is informed that his cousin Anameel will come to him and transfer the ownership of the field that was his; and that the place is in Anathoth, among the suburbs that were given to the priests from each tribe and city according to the law: and it was not

32:8

32:9-11

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him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul, and said: I will love you, O Lord, my strength; the Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer. My God, my helper, and I will hope in Him: my protector, and the horn of my salvation (Psalm XVII, 1). The number ten indicates a mystical number, as shown in the Decalogue which was written on stone tablets by the finger of God, and the days of fasting and propitiation in the seventh month (Exodus XIII). We also prove, with numerous testimonies from the Scriptures, that the number seven, in which true Sabbath and rest exist, is holy. I could have provided at least a few examples, if it were not pointless to teach what is already known. Therefore, in this number, a possession is bought by a prophet and priest, and it is written in a book and signed, and witnesses are brought forth, and silver is carefully weighed out, so that all the rights of sale and purchase are preserved, and there is a certain ownership, confirmed by agreements and promises. Or let those who try to claim false wills, and sometimes even wills with witnesses, listen to this.

32:12

(Verse 12.) And I gave the book of possession to Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Anameel my cousin, and in the sight of the witnesses who were written in the book of purchase; in the sight of all the Jews who were sitting in the prison courtyard. Although the possession was to be immediately given up, indeed to be bought back by later generations, and to be bought back by one who did not have children (for he had not taken a wife), nevertheless, obeying the command of the Lord, he duly carried out everything: and Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, gave the sealed book of possession. Baruch is called blessed in our language; he was the son of Neri, which means 'my light', as the Prophet says: 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path' (Psalm 119:105). Neri was also the father of Baruch, the son of Maasiah, meaning 'the work and the operation of the Lord'. Let us now consider the great privileges of virtue that the disciple Baruch rendered to Jeremiah, as David says: 'He who walks in the way of integrity, he shall minister to me' (Psalm 101:6). And so, Elisha, the servant of Elijah, pleased God so much that after the translation of his master, he also merited to receive a double spirit (2 Kings 2). I say this as a warning to those who abuse the ministries of evil men and do not dare to reject those whom they know are bound to them by a guilty conscience. And it is handed down that the book of Baruch was sold to such a man, Anameel, with witnesses who signed, and their names were kept in the book of purchase. And, in the sight, he said, of all the Jews who were sitting in the courtyard of the prison: those who had come either to console the Prophet, or out of a desire to hear the words of the Lord in fear and reverence of God.

32:13-15

(Verse 13 and following) And I commanded Baruch before them, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these books, this sealed book, and this open book, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may last for many days. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall still be possessed in this land. To all whom the previous message has been told, both those present and those who see it, Baruch, the minister and disciple, is commanded not by the words of a teacher, but by the command of God, to take the books, one sealed and the other open, which have been kept in the custom of purchases, so that he may show the open volume to those who wish to read what the sealed book contains within: both in an earthen vessel, so they may last for many days. Therefore, the firm and long-awaited

possession, which was guarded with such great care, so that neither if the books placed outside for sale were exposed to theft, nor if they were buried in the ground, would be destroyed by moisture from the earth. However, all of this was done so that those who saw it would understand once again that Jerusalem should be inhabited and lands should be possessed, which though they should have understood on their own without the words of Jeremiah, they are reminded by the words of the Lord, and it is said to them: The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, says: Houses and fields and vineyards will still be possessed in this land. This is what Jeremiah had previously said: I understood that it was the word of the Lord; and for that reason, he bought a field that he was not going to possess.

32:16-19

(Verse 16 and following) And I prayed to the Lord after I had delivered the book of possession to Baruch the son of Neriah, saying: Alas, alas, alas, O Lord God (or who you are, O Lord God). Behold, you have made the heaven and the earth with your great power, and with your outstretched (or exalted) arm nothing will be difficult (or impossible) for you (or according to the Septuagint, nothing is hidden from you). You show mercy to thousands and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them, O mighty, great, powerful (which is said in Hebrew) Gibbor (): The Lord of hosts (or of powers) is your name. Great in counsel and incomprehensible in thought. Whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of Adam (or humans), to render to each according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his inventions (Vulgate: his). After the celebration of the lawful purchase of the field, and after the sentence of the Lord, in which he promised houses, fields, and vineyards to be possessed henceforth, the Prophet prays to the Lord and expresses the anguish of his heart with groans, saying: Alas, alas, alas, Lord God: for which the Septuagint translated, **■ ■v**, that is, who is, Lord God, according to what is said to Moses: Go, speak to the people of Israel: The One who is, has sent me to you (Exod. III, 14). Not that there are no others; but it is one thing for the Creator to exist by His own beneficence, another for Him to exist by the eternity of His nature. He praises the Lord and proclaims the Creator through His creatures. First, with his voice, he extols His power, mercy, and justice towards all of mankind; then he turns to Israel and describes in a famous discourse the great things He has done for them. And after so many blessings, he says that they, being forgetful of His goodness, provoked His mercy to bitterness, so that the city was besieged, and before the enemy broke in, it was consumed by famine, sword, and plague. But he first put forward all these things so that he could subsequently present what seemed to be a reproach to the divine judgment. And you say to me, Lord God, buy a field for silver, and have witnesses, when the city has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans? This portion of the text contains the entirety of this passage. Now let us return to each point individually. You made heaven and earth in your great power. And John says of the Son: All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3). For this is the strength of the Lord, as the Apostle confirms: Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. I, 24). And in your outstretched or lofty arm, both of which are indications of striking. But what is this arm, of which Isaiah speaks: And the arm of the Lord, to whom it is revealed (Isa. LIII, 1)? No word will be difficult for you. For what is impossible for men is possible for God; to whom nothing is hidden (Mic. XIX), according to the saying of the Psalmist: For the darkness shall not obscure you, and the night shall be as bright as day (Psalm CXXXVIII, 12). You show mercy to thousands; and you repay the iniquity of the fathers into the

bosom of their children after them. The great mercy of the Creator, to extend his mercy to a thousand generations, and to show justice immediately in the next generation, which, however, is also mixed with mercy. For he does not immediately punish the wrongdoer, but waits for repentance, so that if the children imitate the vices of their parents, punishment is delayed for a long time. Most powerful, great, mighty, Lord of hosts, or virtue, is your name. These names indicate the power of the Creator. However, properly speaking, the name of God is Father, which is revealed in the Gospel when the Lord says: Father, I have revealed your name to mankind (John 17:6). Great in counsel. And anyone who presumes to insert themselves secretly into the Lord's affairs and judge his judgments. And incomprehensible in thought. The mind that cannot comprehend him, how can speech comprehend him? Whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of Adam. Therefore, in vain does man think he can hide himself from God's knowledge. And this leads to the fact that in order to render to each according to their ways, and according to the fruit of their inventions, this indicates that sometimes, due to excessive patience, his judgments may seem unjust. This place the Apostle further explains to the Romans: Do you not know that the kindness of God is leading you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God (Rom. II, 4, 5). Therefore, the later the punishment of sinners, the more just it is: in the likeness of Pharaoh, who, after being warned by ten plagues, was not punished, and persisting in his hardness, was finally overwhelmed by the waves of the Red Sea (Exodus 14).

32:20-23

(Vers. 20 seqq.) You have set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt until this day, both in Israel and among mankind (or among earthlings), and have made a name for yourself, as it is this day. You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror. And you gave them this land, which you swore to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey. And they entered and took possession of it, but they did not obey your voice and did not walk in your law. Everything that you commanded them to do, they did not do, and all these disasters happened to them. From a general overview, it then focuses on what specifically Israel has accomplished. It says, 'You have set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, which have afflicted Egypt until this day, and in Israel and among mankind, whether native-born or foreign.' This that is said, up to this day, must be connected to what follows, so that we may read and understand that your signs are fulfilled both in Israel and in all mortals daily. Alternatively, you not only performed signs and wonders in Egypt, but your power of mercy has also saved your people even until today, and you assist the whole human race as the Creator with your power. And it should be noted that Israel is separated from men and earthborn beings, as it is written: 'My firstborn son is Israel.' And you have made for yourself a name as it is to this day (Exodus IV, 22). Your praises, he says, are celebrated in the language of the whole world. And you have brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt. It is well said, your people, for at that time when they were brought out, they served under the Lord's command. And you brought them out with signs and wonders, by which Egypt was struck, and with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terror: when the Red Sea provided a way for the people of Israel to cross over, and it obliterated the Egyptian army: And you have given them this land, which you swore to their fathers to give to them: namely, Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, not by their own merit, but by the virtues of their fathers, they received the land flowing with milk and honey. For they were not yet able to consume solid food, but were nourished with milk and honey in their infancy. Indeed, with the abundance and plenty of all things, milk and honey. And they entered and possessed it. And immediately there was no middle ground between possession and disobedience. For abundance produces security, security produces negligence, negligence produces contempt. And they did not obey, he says, your voice, and they did not walk in your law. Therefore, they promised in vain in the wilderness, saying: We will do everything that the Lord has commanded (Exodus 19:8). For the reward is not in the promise, but in the action: to refute the impudence of those who think that a man can fulfill everything that he has promised. They did not do everything that you commanded them to do, and they certainly promised to do so. And all these evils happened to them. Evils for those who are patient, but according to the judgement of the Lord, good things that give to each person according to their ways.

32:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) Behold, fortifications have been built against the city, in order to take it; and the city has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans, who fight against it with the sword, famine, and pestilence. And whatever you have spoken has happened, as you yourself see; and you say to me, Lord God, buy the field with silver, and have witnesses, when the city has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans? It was the tenth year of King Zedekiah, for thus it is written: The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah: at that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the court of the prison. And rightly now it is said: Behold, the fortifications are built against the city, so that it may be captured; and the city has been delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans; they have neither whom to conquer nor whom to capture. For now they have been consumed by sword, famine, and pestilence; and we see that whatever you have said has been fulfilled; therefore why do you say to me, Lord: Buy a field for silver, and call witnesses; when the city has been delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans? Therefore, he does not reprimand, but he asks; and he wants to learn not so much for himself as for others, who were sitting in the courtyard of the prison; and perhaps they silently reprimanded, how the same prophet, whom they believed to proclaim the truth, could say that the city is to be captured and buy a field as if he were going to possess it.

32:26-29

(Verse 26 and following) And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying: Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too difficult (or impossible) for me? Or will any word be hidden from me? Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, I will hand over this city to the Chaldeans and into the hand of the king of Babylon, and they will capture it. And the Chaldeans will come fighting: the Chaldeans will come against this city, and they will set it on fire and burn it, and the houses - in whose homes they sacrificed to Baal and poured out drink offerings to other gods to provoke me - they will burn as well. She joins joy to the sorrowful and promises the return of the captive people after the destruction of Jerusalem. And first she explains the causes of God's offense and righteous fury, so that the greater the guilt of the sinners, the more abundant the mercy of the Creator towards the sinners. I am, she says, the Lord God of all flesh. Not at all of all nations, nor of the people of Israel, or certainly, as He is often called by the holy ones, the God of

Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, but God said to all flesh, so that it is believed that He made both rational and brute animals Himself. For there are those who confess the providence of the Creator even up to rational beings: but they assert that brute animals either perish or live by chance events. And the prophetic speech declares that there is nothing that escapes the providence and knowledge of God; because some things are created for their own sake, while others are created for the use of humans. Is anything difficult or impossible for me? Or surely, will every word be hidden from me? And as we have said above: The things that are impossible among humans are possible among God. But we must understand the word here and in many other places to mean 'things.' 'What is it,' he says, 'that has happened?' Therefore, he says these things: 'For this reason, thus says the Lord. For, he says, it is my concern to rule everything, to order all things, and to give to each according to its ways. Therefore, I will deliver this city into the hand of the Chaldeans and into the hand of the king of Babylon, and they will capture it.' First, the city is fortified by the army, and while Nebuchadnezzar is absent, Zedekiah is captured and taken to Riblah, where he is handed over to the king. And they will come, he says, the Chaldeans fighting against this city. Aquila translates it better as 'they will come,' because of what is written, 'they will enter,' which means they will enter the city. For they were not absent to come, since they had surrounded Jerusalem, as the Scripture testifies. Then the army of the king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem. And then: Behold, fortifications were built against the city in order to capture it: and the city was given into the hands of the Chaldeans. So how will those who were present come? But those who were besieging the city, he says, will enter and capture it, and they will advance, and they will burn it down even to the ground (for the Hebrew word 'Bau' (which is ambiguous) can mean both 'come' and 'enter'). And they offered sacrifices to the idol Baal in the houses where they lived, and poured out libations to foreign gods to provoke me, not because of religious error, but rather because of a certain rivalry and contempt towards the Creator. However, how the world is going to perish is written, according to what is written: Heaven and earth will pass away (Matthew 24:35), because it is placed in the wicked one: so also the very houses and places in which wickedness is perpetrated are subject to the wrath of God. There are those who contentiously refer what is written: The place where the Lord and Savior was crucified is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt (Revelation 11:8), to those very places. But others believe that under the name of Egypt and Gomorrah, they signify the whole world. For just as Gomorrah was destroyed by divine fire, so also the world will be consumed by the judgment of God.

32:30

(Verse 30) For the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel continually (or alone) did evil in my sight from their youth. The Hebrew word 'Ach' (אֶחָד), Aquila interpreted as 'pl■n', which signifies a conjunction, however. The first edition of Symmachus, as well as the Seventy, and Theodotion, interpreted it as 'diolon'. We now follow the latter, so that we may say 'continually'. Let us therefore say first according to the Hebrew, the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah continuously doing evil. And ten, he says, and two tribes continuously did evil without ceasing, and perseverance in the worst works was with them. But if there is continuous and always in the whole people, where is eternal justice? Furthermore, according to the LXX, who said: Only those who do evil, a question arises: Did not other nations at that time when Israel and Judah were sinning, also do evil? Which is thus resolved: Whoever has knowledge of God and departs from him, sins alone in the eyes of God; but those who remain unbelievers, as if he does not see and neglects, they commit

delinquencies. And so David, a holy man, because he had fallen into sin with the wife of Uriah, Bathsheba, later repented (2 Kings 12), speaks: Against you alone have I sinned, and I have done evil in your sight (Psalm 50:4), that is, in your presence. Finally, it is joined: Those alone who do evil in my eyes, in my presence, from their youth. And what follows: The Israelites who still continue to provoke me in the work of their hands, says the Lord, is not found in the Septuagint, but is added from the Hebrew. Because from their youth until the present day they have continually sinned, therefore the just judgment of God is upon them, and the Scripture rightly covers it.

32:31

(Verse 31.) In my fury and indignation, this city has become a ruin from the day it was built until this day when it is taken away from my sight. From the time when the foundations of the city were laid until this day, when it was captured, burned, and taken away from the Lord's presence, it has always been in fault and has provoked the Lord's indignation against itself. Where is the peace of sinners (as we have often said)?

32:32 (Verse 32.) He says, because of the wickedness of the children of Israel and the children of Judah, which they have done, provoking me to anger, they themselves, and their kings, and their leaders, their priests, and their prophets, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Because he had said before: In my fury and in my indignation this city has been made for me, from the day when they built it until this day, when it is taken away from my sight; and he had shown that there was no one without sin in general, now he enumerates them individually, and includes kings, and leaders, and priests, and prophets, comprehending everything in one statement: The men of Judah, he says, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And he did not say it beautifully: Their kings, and their rulers, and their priests, and their prophets, but because their kings, and their rulers, and their priests, and their prophets have sinned. And they turned their backs to me, and not their faces. According to what is written elsewhere: And they turned against me the shoulder that was turning away (Zech. 7:11). For the one who prays, bowing down with a bent neck is cast down to the ground; but the one who turns his back, by that bodily gesture indicates his disregard for the one threatening him. And, he says, they were doing this.

32:33

(Verse 33.) When I was teaching them early in the morning, and instructing them, and they were unwilling to listen, in order to receive discipline. When the darkness of errors and all worship of idols had been driven away, my opinion being refuted, I desired daily to illuminate their hearts and teach what is right. And in order to preserve their free will, he adds and says: And they were unwilling to listen in order to receive discipline. It follows:

32:34

(Verse 34) And they placed their idols in the house where my name is invoked, to defile it. Not only in that time did Judas place in the Temple of God the statue of the idol, which we read about in the beginning of Ezekiel (Ezek. VIII): but even today in the house of God, which is interpreted as the Church, or in the hearts and souls of believers, an idol is placed when a new doctrine is established, and according to Deuteronomy it is worshipped in secret (Deut. IV): Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you (1 Cor. III, 16).

32:35 (Verse 35.) And they built high places (or altars) to Baal, which are in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters as offerings to the idol Moloch. The word 'initiate' is written in Hebrew as 'Ebir', which Aquila and Symmachus translated as 'offer'. The Seventy and Theodotion interpreted it as 'sacrifice'. We have already spoken more fully about the valley of the sons of Hinnom, which in Hebrew is called Ge-Hinnom, that it lies below the fountains of Siloam and has its own charm, because it is a watered place, which has led the people (some manuscripts add 'of Israel') to indulge in luxury, following the worship of idols. It should also be noted that altars and high places are called Bamoth in Hebrew, because there are doubts among those who read the books of Samuel and Kings about the meaning of this word. Moloch is the idol of the Ammonites, which is turned into a king. The divine Scripture signifies that the people not only served the idol Baal, but also Moloch and all the other demons in that place. Which I did not command them, neither did it come into my heart that they should do this abomination, and lead Judah into sin. Specifically, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin worshipped the idols of Baal and Molech in the temple (3 Kings 12). It is clear that the golden calves in Bethel and Dan, as well as the ten tribes known as Samaria, Joseph and Ephraim, also indulged in this (Alt. wanted). So much evil was done by the people that God testifies He never even considered or thought of the things they did. But all these things are humanly. And now because of these things, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to this city, of which you say, 'It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.' As those who hope for aid and trust in the strength of the walls, it is prophesied that Jerusalem will be overthrown and the people will soon be captured, and will perish by the sword, famine, and pestilence before captivity. So to those who despair and expect no salvation after the destruction of the city, He promises His aid, so that both confidence and pride may merit just judgment, and despair and humility may merit God's aid.

32:37-40

(Verse 37 and following) Behold, I will gather them from all the lands to which I have driven them in my anger, in my wrath, and in great indignation, and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell securely. They will be my people, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and for the good of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, and I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. And I will rejoice over them, when I have done good to them (or when I have visited them, to do good to them). And I will plant them in this land in truth (or in faith), with all my heart and with all my soul. Many thought this at the time of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Jozadak, the high priest, when Haggai and Zechariah prophesied during the time of the completion of the Temple under the priest Ezra, and the walls were rebuilt under Nehemiah, that those whom He had cast out in anger, wrath, and great indignation from Jerusalem, and had scattered throughout the whole world, He had afterwards made them dwell confidently and be a people of God; and that the Lord had been their God, and the other things that the Scripture contains. But how can this be adapted to that time: That I will make them dwell confidently, and I will strike for them an everlasting covenant, or I will establish for them an eternal testament, cannot be thoroughly approved: indeed, those whom we have read and holy history narrates were often taken captive not only by neighboring nations, but also by the Persians and Macedonians, and by the Egyptians and Romans, and until now they serve. Therefore, all things must be referred to the advent of the

Savior: which we see fulfilled in our time of faith, and the election of the remnant has been preserved according to the Apostle (Romans 9). And those who confidently dwell in Christ have been given one heart, according to what is written: Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul (Acts IV, 32). And he said, I am the way, the truth, and the life (John XIV, 6). And let them fear me all the days. For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs IX). To all he said: if it does not fit with the Jews, it must be taken from our people: to whom it was, is, and will be good, not only to themselves, but also to their children after them. For He made an everlasting covenant with us and will not cease to show us kindness. And what follows: "And I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," (Jeremiah 32:40) He grants free will to choose, yet the fear that is given remains as a grace from the giver. And when I do good to them, I will rejoice. For He rejoices because He sees His creation saved. Hence, there is joy in heaven among the angels over one sinner doing penance. (Luke 15) And I will plant them, says [the Lord], in this land in truth, or (as the Septuagint translated it) in faith, so that it properly signifies the Christian people whose religion is faith. With all my heart, and with all my soul. If the words of the Savior are true, it is rightly believed that his heart and soul say, in the Gospel: I have the power to lay down my life, and I have the power to take it up again (John 10:18). But if we understand it from the perspective of God the Father, it is to be understood according to that saying: My soul hates your new moons and your sabbaths, and your festivals.

32:41-44

(Verse 41 onwards) What does the Lord say about this: just as I brought upon this people all this great evil, so I will bring upon them all the good that I promise to them. And the fields in this land, of which you say it is deserted because no man, nor animal, remains, will be possessed. The fields will be bought with money, and recorded in a book, and sealed with a seal, and witnesses will be present in the land of Benjamin, and around Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, and in the mountainous cities, and in the cities of the plain (or Shephelah), and in the cities of the Negev (which are to the south). For I will restore their captivity, says the Lord. These things, although they may have happened literally after the return from the Chaldeans, when the people returned to Judaea under the reign of Cyrus the king, are more truly and fully fulfilled spiritually in Christ and the Apostles. Then both men and animals were brought into the Church, according to what is written: 'You will save men and animals, O Lord, both rational and simple.' Then fields were bought with money, so that we could make friends for ourselves with the unjust mammon, who would receive us into eternal tabernacles (Luke 16). And it is written in the book, without doubt concerning the living. And it is imprinted with the sign of the banner of the Cross of the Lord and of Victory; and witnesses have been called, the Martyrs, and the chorus of all the saints. In the land of Benjamin, where the strength of the Lord exists, and in the vicinity of Jerusalem, where the vision of peace and eternal security resides: in the cities of Judah, where the true confession of Christ is found. And in the mountainous cities, of which there is one, about which it is said: a city cannot be hidden, when it is situated on a mountain (Matthew 5). And in the countryside cities, which are called Sephela in Hebrew, so that from the depths and depressions through the equality of the fields we may rise to the highest point. And in the cities that are to the south, which the LXX translated as Nageb, where the noon and the full light of truth are. But when all these things are accomplished, what is written will be fulfilled: I will turn their captivity, says the Lord, of whom it is written: ascending on high, he led captivity captive (Psalm 67:19). He received, or (as the Apostle

says) he gave gifts to men (Ephesians 4:8).

Commentary on Joel

Commentary on Joel

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

The order of the twelve prophets among the seventy interpreters is not the same as the one retained in Hebrew truth. For they place Amos second, Micah third, Joel fourth, Obadiah fifth, Jonah sixth, Nahum seventh, Habakkuk eighth, Zephaniah ninth, Haggai tenth, Zechariah eleventh, and Malachi twelfth. But the Hebrews, after Hosea, who is first among both, read Joel second, Amos third, Obadiah fourth, Jonah fifth, Micah sixth, Nahum seventh, Habakkuk eighth, Zephaniah ninth, Haggai tenth, Zechariah eleventh, and Malachi twelfth, who is also the last. And since once we have listed all the prophets of one volume, it seems useful to us to briefly annotate the etymologies of each in both Greek and Latin. Hosea means 'savior', which we can call the Savior. Joel means 'beginning', that is, starting. Amos means 'bearing', which is called 'carrying' in Latin. Obadiah means 'servant of the Lord', that is, servant of the Lord. Jonah means 'dove'. Micah, from two parts of speech, a compound name, which means, 'who is like', or 'who is as if'. Naum, παρ■κλησις, that is, consolation. Abacuc, περιλαμβ■νων, that is, embrace or struggle. Sophonia, κεκρυμ■νος Κυρ■ου, which means, hidden of the Lord. Aggaeus, ■ορτ■ζ■ν, which we can say is festive or solemn. Zacharias, μν■μη Κυρ■ου, that is, remembrance of the Lord. Malachias, ■γγελ■ς μου, that is, my messenger. The meaning of all these should be discussed in their respective volumes. But the other four prophets, to complete sixteen, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Daniel, have these interpretations: Isaiah is called the salvation of the Lord; Ezekiel, the power of the Lord, which we can call strength or rule of the Lord; Jeremiah, the highness of the Lord, that is, the exaltedness of the Lord; Daniel, the Lord has judged me. Since things are in this state, I beseech you, my Pammachus, who fight against the devil with every art of combat, to help us overcome our adversaries by praying to the Lord, just as Moses's hands were lifted up to God while we fought against Amalek (Exod. XV), and as you overcame the enemies of Israel by your prayers, after we had recently escaped from Egypt and crossed the Red Sea with Pharaoh being submerged in it (Exod. XIV). Now, after the extensive wilderness, we must toil much in order to reach the seventy palms and the apostolic springs. The scorpion may rise up and attempt to strike with its arched wound: you are the companion of the journey, and the enchanter of venomous bites, show us the spiritual flea as promised to your holy and venerable mother Paula, pious heir, accept it and support us with the favor of a friend whatever we may lack in talent or knowledge, do not consider our strength, but our willingness.

1:1

(Chapter 1, Verse 1) The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. The Seventy Interpreters translated Pethuel as Bathuel, which has no meaning in Hebrew. However, Pethuel is translated into our language as the breadth of God, or God opening, as we read in Mark with the Savior saying to the deaf-mute: Ephphatha, which means, be opened (Mark 7). For just as the Apostle could say: Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians, our heart is widened (2 Corinthians 6:11), and he heard from the Lord: Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it (Psalm 81:11). The opening of the mouth itself is in the power of God, not of man, as Paul says: A great and evident door has been opened to me; but there are many adversaries (1 Corinthians 16:9); therefore, God is said to be the opener. When the saint always makes progress, knowing in part and prophesying in part, until what is perfect comes, generated from breadth and openness, he is called Joel, which in our language means beginning, or is God, as the Apostle says: Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it (Phil. III, 13); growing in humility, he deserves to hear with Moses: I Am Who I Am (Exod. III). For the distinction is made between those who are not, about whom we also read in Esther: Do not give your scepter to those who are not (Esther XIV, 11), to show that God and His saints exist. Let these things be briefly described about the name of Joel and his father, so that the word of God, which was in the beginning with God, may be correctly told to have been made, as John the Baptist reports: He who is coming after me has become before me, because he was before me (John 1:30). Moreover, the word is said to have been made according to his merit, to whom it is said, not according to the condition of the one who is said to be made, as we read elsewhere: The Lord has become my salvation (Psalm 118:21). But in the book of the Prophet Hosea, whom we explained at the beginning as one of the twelve prophets, the prophecy is attributed to the ten tribes under the name Ephraim, which are often mentioned as either Samaria or Israel: in the same way, in Joel, who is second according to the Hebrews, it is to be believed that everything that is said pertains to the tribe of Judah and to Jerusalem, and no mention at all is made of Israel, that is, the ten tribes. We must also consider the times in which he prophesied, which we also read about in Hosea: In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, son of Joash, king of Israel.

1:2-3 (Version 2, 3.) Listen to this, elders, and perceive with your ears, all inhabitants of the earth, whether this happened in your days or in the days of your fathers: tell this to your children, and let your children tell their children, and let their children tell the next generation. LXX: Listen to these things, elders, and perceive with your ears, all inhabitants of the earth, whether such things happened in your days or in the days of your fathers: tell this to your children, and let your children tell their children, and let their children tell the next generation. The elderly are ordered to listen, the inhabitants of the earth to perceive with their ears. It is not said to the elderly, 'Listen, everyone'; to the inhabitants of the earth it is added, 'Perceive with your ears, everyone.' For in the holy scriptures, hearing is not that which resonates in the ear, but that which is perceived in the heart, according to what the Lord speaks in the Gospel: 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear' (Matt. 13:9). And what we have translated as 'perceive with your ears' is the same word in Greek and Hebrew, in Greek it is ■νωτ■σασθε, in Hebrew it is Eezinu, which is properly perceived not in the heart, but in the ear. And in order that we may know that hearing is more sacred than that which resonates in the ears, let us learn from the words of Isaiah: 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth' (Isa. I, 2). The elderly, who are heavenly, hear spiritually; those who dwell on the earth, and are called earthly, hear with their ears. And this should be noted in all the Scriptures where these two words are joined together. We also read this in the case of Lamech, a sinner, who spoke

to his wives Ada and Sella: 'Hear my words, O wives of Lamech, give ear to my words, for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt' (Gen. IV, 23); he knew that what he spoke was obscure, and therefore he called his wives not only to the simple sound of his words, but also to the understanding of his hidden sayings. So if someone is an old man, and an old man chosen in the Lord of mature age, as we read in the following passages according to the Septuagint Interpreters, and he has left behind the infancy of little ones, let him hear what is being said. But whoever still dwells on the earth, and cannot say, "I am a stranger and a pilgrim like all my fathers" (Ps. 39:12), let him perceive with his ears. If it has happened, he says, in your days, or in the days of your fathers. The art of rhetoric, focused on the magnitude of things, captivates the listener: no age, he says, remembers these things, which have not happened in your time, nor in the time of your fathers and ancestors. But recognize the fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers, and the sons of sons, and all the subsequent offspring, according to that Virgilian saying (Aeneid, Book III): And the children of the children, and those who will be born from them: And therefore, old men and inhabitants of the earth, tell your sons and posterity; let the old man teach his children the mysteries: let the inhabitant of the earth tell a simple story. Until this day, we who believe in Christ, from whom the veil has been taken away from our eyes together with Moses, and of whom it is said: The wisdom of an aged man is in his gray hairs (Wis. IV, 8), we narrate secret and wonderful things to our children. But the Jews who inhabit the land speak earthly things, and cling to the earth, of whom it is written: He who is of the earth speaks of the earth: He who comes from heaven is above all (John III, 31).

1:4

(Verse 4) The residue of a caterpillar is eaten by a locust, and the residue of a locust is eaten by a beetle, and the residue of the beetle is eaten by rust. In the same way seventy times. The beginning is followed by a narrative: there, to make the listener pay attention, he promised that he would say great and incredible things, which neither the ancient history nor the present age would know. Here he placed the caterpillar, and the locust, and the beetle, and the rust, so that what each one rarely experiences, all may be remembered as happening at the same time, and therefore be marvelous. The caterpillar, which is called 'gezem' in Hebrew and 'kamp' in Greek, is interpreted by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Chaldeans, who, coming from one climate of the world, devastated all the ten tribes and two, namely, the Israelite people. The locust, however, is interpreted by the Medes and Persians, who held the Jews captive after the overthrow of the Chaldean empire. The worm, on the other hand, refers to the Macedonians and all the successors of Alexander, especially the king Antiochus, who was known as Epiphanes, and who sat like a worm in Judaea and devoured all the remnants of the previous kings, under whom the wars of the Maccabees are narrated. They refer to the Roman Empire that completely oppressed the Jews during the fourth and final reign, to the extent of driving them out of their own territory. Josephus writes about this extensively in seven volumes, recounting the triumphs of Vespasian and Titus. We also read about the expedition of Elius Hadrian against the Jews, who so completely destroyed Jerusalem and its walls that he established a city named after himself, Eliam, from the remnants and ashes of the city. Zacharias writes that he saw in a vision four kingdoms that would overthrow Judah, represented by four horns, with an angel saying to him: 'These are the horns that scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.' (Zechariah 1:19). And again: I lifted up my eyes and saw, and behold, four chariots coming out from between two mountains, and the mountains were

mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses, and in the second chariot black horses, and in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth chariot dappled strong horses (Zach. VI, 1). And when the prophet had said to the angel who spoke in me, What are these, my Lord? the angel answered: These are the four winds of heaven, who come out to stand before the Lord of all the earth. And the meaning is: These are the ones who come forth from the face of the Lord, to fulfill his will. When we hear with our ears what the caterpillar, locust, weevil, rust signify to the inhabitants of the earth: now let us hear with the old men what has been said. All schools of philosophers proclaim that there are four disturbances, by which the health of souls is subverted. Two are present and contrary to each other, two are future and mutually dissenting. The present ones are sorrow and joy. We speak of sorrow of the soul, otherwise it is not sorrow of the body, but it is called illness. Therefore, we are sad and consumed by grief, and our state of mind is overturned. Hence, the Apostle warns that the brother should not be swallowed up by excessive sadness (I Cor. II). On the contrary, we rejoice and are filled with joy, and we cannot bear our blessings in moderation. It is the mark of a just and strong man not to be broken by adversities or lifted up by prosperity, but to be moderate in both. We have spoken about the disturbance of present things; let us also speak about things to come, in which there is either fear or hope. We fear adversity, we await prosperity; and what causes sorrow and joy to operate in the present, fear and hope do regarding the future, while either we fear adversity more than it is appropriate for it to be coming, or prosperity which we hope for makes us rejoice to such an extent that we cannot keep a measure, especially in those things which are uncertain, because the future is expected rather than held. The illustrious poet captures these disturbances in one incomplete verse (Aeneid, Book VI):

They fear and desire (this about the future), they grieve and rejoice (this about the present), nor do they look at the breezes, he says, enclosed in darkness and a blind prison. For those who are enveloped in the darkness of disturbances are unable to behold the bright light of wisdom. Therefore, we must beware lest sorrow, like a caterpillar, consumes us; lest joy, like a locust, flying here and there and exulting in gladness, ravages us; lest fear and anxiety about the future, like a worm, devour the roots of wisdom; lest rust and longing for things to come desire useless things and lead us to ruin. Rather, in all things, let us govern the four-horse chariot with the four reins and the four red, various, white, and black horses, that is, navigate through both adverse and prosperous circumstances, guided by the reins of wisdom. I believe that anger is a passion that is slow and cannot be controlled, and delay itself and persistence weaken and exhaust all strength: if we do not kill it, it grows in us and flies away, and now it devours whatever it touches, now departing, it moves on to other things: and returning to its former seat, it becomes a pest, so that not only does it devour the crops, leaves, and bark, but even the very marrow with its slowness. But if it should happen, which, however, is rare, that even after the spirit of life has departed from us, rust destroys everything, so that it turns straw and worthless hay into blackness, so that they are not only useless for eating, but also for manure. Concerning these four disturbances, we will also discuss in the beginning Amos, if life is a companion, where it is written: On account of three transgressions of Damascus, and of four, I will not convert them, says the Lord (Amos 1:3). The disturbances that we have interpreted, the Greeks call them $\pi\alpha\theta\eta$, which if we translate $\kappa\alpha\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ $\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ into passions, we will have expressed the word rather than the meaning of the word.

(Verse 5.) Wake up, you drunkards, and weep and howl, all you who drink wine in sweetness, because it has perished from your mouth. LXX: Wake up, you who are drunk with your wine, and mourn and lament, all you who drink wine in intoxication, because it has been taken away from your mouth. Like old men and elders, we should listen: nothing intoxicates like disturbance of the mind. There is a sadness that leads to death: this detestable drunkenness is it. Anger is that which does not accomplish the justice of God, and is very close to madness, rendering the mind powerless: to the extent that the lips tremble, the teeth grind, and the face changes color with paleness. And rightly is that praised which Archytas of Tarentum said when he was angry with his steward: 'I would kill you now,' he said, 'if I were not angry.' Why should I mention about joy and pleasure, and especially love, which blinds the eyes of the heart: and it allows the lover to think of nothing else except that which he loves. Is drunkenness to be called freedom of the soul when, because of a cheap prostitute and a shameful part of the body, freedom of the soul inclines towards servile flattery? when it makes its own work the pleasure of another? when it prepares for future wealth through theft, crime, and perjury? and when it seems to everyone that it does not exist: as long as it possesses what it desires. But greed also blinds the mind of one who is never satisfied: and the fear of women, and the desire for sweet vices. Where it is said to them: Be watchful and wake up, you who are drunk, not with wine, as it is contained in the seventy alone, but with every disturbance of vices. Weep, and mourn, and repent, and take on the sorrow that leads to life, and howl, all you who drink wine in sweetness (Prov. III), or in drunkenness. For vices are sweet: because honey distills from the lips of a harlot woman: and therefore it is not offered in sacrifices to God: because the wine, drunkenness, and sweetness which deceived you, has perished or has been taken away from your mouth. For often, indeed, by the providence of God, those who have not known God in prosperous times come to know Him in adversity; and those who have abused wealth are corrected by a shortage of virtues. Let the elders listen to this meaning: let the inhabitants of the earth perceive with their ears the following instructions about that wine, in which there is luxury, and by which those who become intoxicated cannot possess the kingdom of God (Ephesians 5). Let the one who is asleep due to the intoxication of wine awaken and lament that they were drunk, and let them howl; so that afterwards their howling and weeping may turn into laughter, and let them rejoice in not having the material of intoxication, which had made them drunk and insane through its abundance.

1:6-7

(Verse 6,7.) For a strong and innumerable nation will ascend over my land: its teeth, like lion's teeth, and its molars, like lion cubs. It has turned my vineyard into a desert, and has stripped my fig tree bare: it has made it naked and thrown it away; its branches have turned white. LXX: For a strong and innumerable nation will ascend over the land: its teeth, like a lion's teeth, and its molars, like lion cubs. He has made my vineyard into a desolation, and my fig tree into a splinter: he has thoroughly searched and thrown it away: he has whitened its branches. The Jews believe in the days of Joel that such an innumerable multitude of locusts came upon Judea to the extent that they filled everything: and I will not say just the crops, but indeed the bark of trees and the branches of vines they would leave behind, so that with all moisture consumed, the withered branches of the trees and the dry scourges of the vines would remain. We cannot affirm with certainty whether this happened or not, for it is not a historical account of the Kings and Chronicles (3 Kings 17). If it had been, then we would never read of the three and a half years of famine under

Elijah in the Scriptures. We only say that under the metaphor of locusts, the coming of enemies is described, either the Assyrians and Babylonians who were approaching at that time, or the Medes and Persians who would come later, or the Macedonians whom we only learned about much later, or finally, the Romans about whom we have already spoken. Now it seems appropriate to speak more about the Babylonians and the Chaldeans, whose cruelty and savagery towards the people of God are described. And, if I am not mistaken, I think I have found something in this Prophet. The wickedness of the enemies is narrated under the figure of locusts, and then it is said about these locusts, as if they were compared to enemies, so that when you read about locusts, you think of enemies; when you think of enemies, you return to locusts. Therefore, a swarm of locusts rises from the wilderness, or an army of Chaldeans over the land of God, powerful and innumerable. For what is more numerous and stronger than locusts, against which human industry cannot resist? Its teeth, namely the teeth of locusts (but understand everything τυπικῶς), are like the teeth of a lion; and its molars, like the cubs of a lion, are compared to locusts in strength and number, and to lions in fierceness and cruelty. This is the nation, it is said, that has turned my vineyard into a desert, which I brought from Egypt and planted, and it has stripped my fig tree, the people of Judah (or my Jewish people), to whom the Savior came to eat of its fruits, and did not find any; and he cursed it, and it withered forever (Matthew 11). But let us know all the things said under the metaphor of locusts: which devour everything so much that they strip tree barks, cast them aside, and leave behind white and dry branches after consuming all the sap. We have mentioned the history; let us now move on to spiritual understanding, so that we may hear with the elders: The nation of God ascends upon the earth, namely the human soul. For all souls are of God: just as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son. And there arose a nation of the princes of this world, and of darkness, and of spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, against whom we have a struggle and a contest, of whom it is said: If the spirit of the ruler ascend upon thee, do not leave thy place (Ecclesiastes X, 4): whose teeth are like the teeth of a lion, of whom the apostle Peter speaks: Our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter V, 8). And its molars are like lion cubs. Understand the lion cub as someone who rises up against everything called God and religion, or certainly every perverse dogma. Concerning its broken molars, which are hidden inside and not visible, so that they are not easily avoided, even the Psalmist rejoices, saying: The Lord will break the molars of the lions (Ps. 57:7). Therefore, if we allow this race to take hold in us, it will immediately turn our vineyard into a desert, from which we used to make wine that gladdens the heart of man (Ps. 103); and it will strip or break our figs, so that we do not have the sweetest gifts of the Holy Spirit within us, and our vineyard and fig tree will not provide rest for the holy man. While under them, he will not fear the attacks of adversaries. And it is not enough for this people to destroy the vineyard and break the fig tree, unless they search them thoroughly and destroy whatever vitality is in them, so that, with all moisture consumed, only white and lifeless branches remain, and it is fulfilled in us: If they do these things in the green wood, what will they do in the dry? (Luke 23).

1:8

(Verse 8.) Lament like a young woman dressed in sackcloth, over the man of your youth. (Vulgate: Lament like a young woman dressed in sackcloth, over her young husband). LXX: Lament to me over the bride dressed in sackcloth, over her young husband. The man of youth, or as the Septuagint translated, παρθενικῶς, which is commonly called virginal, because he is understood

to be none other than God, who in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob betrothed himself to a pure bride untainted by any idolatrous filth. To whom and through Jeremiah it is said: You have not called me Master, and Father, and Prince of your virginity (Jer. III, 4). Hence, the Apostle speaks to believers: I have betrothed you to one man, to present a chaste virgin to Christ (I Cor. XI, 2). As long as the bridegroom is with this bride, he cannot fast (Matth. IX), nor mourn, nor indicate the longing for the absent bridegroom with tears. But when the bridegroom is taken away from her, she mourns and weeps, and girds herself with sackcloth and cilice, and is bound with a cord as a sign of mourning. We have understood who the bridegroom of the virgin is: but because this bridegroom, or husband, not only accepted the virgin as his bride, but also took a harlot as a wife in Hosea, therefore it is written in Deuteronomy: If you go out against your enemies, and the Lord your God delivers them into your hand, and you take captive women among them, and see among the captives a beautiful woman, and desire her, and would take her as a wife, you shall bring her into your house; and she shall shave her head and trim her nails and put off the clothes in which she was captured, sit in your house, and bewail her father and mother a month's time, and afterwards you shall go in to her, and be her husband (Deut. 21:10-13). Such a woman does not have a husband, that is, a master of virginity, but she has taken a prostitute from the filth of the nations as a wife. And we can say this about every believing soul. If she believed in the Lord from a young age, she has the Lord as her virgin bridegroom. But if she comes to the truth of faith, from the most unclean depths of the Jews, the Gentiles, or the heretics, and transitions from darkness to light, she will indeed have a bridegroom, but not a virgin one. And it is said about people like this: Your breasts were broken in Egypt, and there you lost your virginity (Ezek. XXIII, 3).

1:9-12

(V. 9 seqq.) The sacrifice and libation from the house of the Lord have perished; the priests, ministers of the Lord, mourn. The land is laid waste, the earth mourns; for the wheat is destroyed. The wine is spoiled, the oil languishes, the farmers are confused. The vintners wail over the wheat and barley, for the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, the fig tree languishes; the pomegranate, palm, and apple, all the trees of the field are dried up; because joy has been confounded among the sons of men. LXX: The sacrifice and offering have been taken away from the house of the Lord. Mourn, O priests, ministers of the Lord, for the fields are devastated. Let the land mourn, for the wheat is afflicted, the wine has dried up, the oil has diminished. The farmers have withered away. Mourn, O possessions, for the grain and barley have perished. The grape harvest is lost, the vine has dried up, and the fig tree has withered. The pomegranate tree, the palm tree, the apple tree, and all the trees of the field are dried up. The joy of mankind has been destroyed. As far as history is concerned, due to the multitude of locusts or enemies that are described under their appearance, the sacrifice and libation from the house of the Lord perished, with everything devastated and consumed. The former used to offer from flour, and the latter from wine. Therefore, the priests, who are the ministers of the Lord, mourned, since neither the sacrifices nor the libations were properly performed, especially because the tithes, which they used to receive, were not offered at all. For the entire region was populated. The earth mourned, metaphorically, because of what happened to those who work the land: wheat, wine, and oil languished. Even the tenant farmers and vine dressers were confused and wailed because not only did the wheat dry up, but also the barley, which is cheaper and more abundant. And the vegetables, which I believe are signified by what he says, the harvest of the field perished, that is,

all that the earth usually produces. What can I say about the grain, wine, oil, and barley, when even the dried fruits of the trees have withered, the fig tree has languished, and the pomegranate, palm, apple, and all the trees, whether fruitless or fruitful, have been devoured by the locust? All these things have happened so that the joy of the children of men may be taken away or be confounded. We can say that the same things happened to the people of Judea after the coming of the Savior when, with equal fury, they cried out, 'Crucify, crucify him! We have no king but Caesar' (John 19:9 and 15). When Jerusalem was surrounded by an army and such great necessity came upon them of famine and pestilence that they ate the bodies of their own children who were not yet mature. And all sacrifices were abolished, and the joy of the children of men was confounded because they did not want to receive the joy that the angel announced to the shepherds: 'I bring you tidings of great joy' (Luke 2:10). According to this interpretation, after the bride, who has received the teaching of God, has been separated from her bridegroom by sins, and has clothed herself in mourning attire, that is, the garments of one in mourning, then the sacrifice will perish, of which it is written: 'A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit' (Ps. 50:19), and the libation of wine, which gladdens the heart of man, from the house of God, which is the Church, as the Apostle says to Timothy: 'So that you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God' (1 Tim. 3:15). But the sacrifice and libation will be taken away from the house of the Lord, when charity has grown cold due to the multiplication of iniquity (Matt. 24): and the leaders of the people and the ministers of the altar will see that the fields and plains of the believers do not produce the fruits of virtue, but that everything is filled with vices: when the wheat and barley, vineyards and olive groves, rocket, grasshoppers, weevils, and rust have consumed everything, and we will not have the chalice that is written about: Your inebriating chalice, how preeminent it is (Ps. 23, 5)! And the oil shall perish, of which we read in Ecclesiastes: Let your garments be always white, and let not oil be lacking on your head (Eccl. IX, 8): whereby your face may shine, and your head may be anointed when you fast. Then the farmers shall be confounded, when they see that wheat does not grow in their fields, which sustains men, and barley which sustains irrational animals, and that the vineyard is in disorder, of which it is written: O vineyard of Israel, abundant in fruit (Isai. V, 2): the Lord was waiting for it to produce grapes, and it produced thorns. The fig also withered under which Nathanael was before he believed (John 1), and the pomegranate, whose cheeks are compared to the bride's cheeks in the Song of Songs (Song of Songs 6), and the palm tree that, losing its sap, withered, of which it was once said: But the righteous shall flourish like a palm tree (Psalm 92:13), and the apple tree of which we read in the same Song: As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons (Song of Songs 2:3). Why is it necessary to traverse all the trees, when everything is burned, and for joy and happiness, the sorrow and confusion of mankind will oppress and confound?

1:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) Clothe yourselves and lament, priests; howl, ministers of the altar; enter, lie down in sackcloth, ministers of my God, because the sacrifice and libation have perished from the house of your God; sanctify a fast, call an assembly, gather the elders, all the inhabitants of the land into the house of your God, and cry out to the Lord. LXX: Clothe yourselves and lament, priests; bewail, you who minister at the altar; enter, sleep in sacks, ministers of God, because the sacrifice and libation have failed from the house of your God; sanctify a fast, proclaim healing; gather the elders, all the inhabitants of the land into the house of your God, and cry out to the Lord forcefully.

Whoever is a holy priest and eats the Pascha of the Lord, let him gird himself with the belt of chastity and listen with the apostles: Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning in your hands (Luke XII, 35). But whoever is a sinner and is tormented by his own conscience, let him gird himself with sackcloth and weep, either for his own sins or for the sins of the people, and let him enter the Church from which he had departed because of his sins, and let him lie down or sleep in sackcloth, so that he may make up for the past pleasures, through which he had offended God, with the austerity of life. For those who dress in soft clothing are in the houses of kings (Matt. XV). But let the priests gird themselves and wail and howl, and sleep in sackcloth, as the prophet exhorts them to repentance, saying: O ministers of my God, how the sacrifice and libation have perished from the house of your God (Joel II), of which it has been said above. It is not enough to weep or lament and put on the attire of mourners, unless they sanctify the fast and call for a gathering. If every fasting pleased God, He would never say: 'Sanctify the fast.' And: 'I have not chosen such a fast,' says the Lord (Isaiah 58). And in the Gospel, those who make their faces appear pale, so that they may be seen by men to fast, are condemned (Matthew 6); and on the days of your fasts, you strike with fists, and oppress the poor. Therefore, now He says: 'Sanctify the fast.' Manichaeus fasts, and many heretics, especially the Encratites, of whom Tatianus is the leader, but this fast is worse because of excess and drunkenness. And let us call upon heaven, or healing, that through our repentance we may cure our sins. For it is written in Hebrew, Asara (), which Symmachus interprets as a council, Aquila as a day of gathering. Let the elders be gathered, whose age is near death, and whose mature judgment seeks more fear and reverence for God. Also, let all the inhabitants of the earth, of whom it was said above: Hear this, elders, and perceive with your ears, let both the elders and the inhabitants of the earth be gathered into the house of God, which is the Church. And when they are in the Church, with priests and people from different groups, the elderly and the inhabitants of the land, let there be one group formed, and cry out, he says, to the Lord in your hearts and say:

1:15

(Verse 15.) Ah, ah, ah, woe to the day, for the day of the Lord is near, and it will come like a devastation (or storm) from the Almighty. LXX: Woe is me, woe is me, woe is me on that day! For the day of the Lord is near, and it will come like misery upon misery. Because we have translated it as 'from the Almighty,' in Hebrew it is said Saddai (), which is one of the ten names of God, as we have mentioned several times, the LXX translated as misery, reading Sod () instead of Saddai. Therefore, the voice of the priests and the people crying out to the Lord is heard, so that they may say for the third time, 'Woe is me!' I believe that, because of the sins they have committed, they have offended the Holy Trinity. But that day is the day of retribution for all sins, of which all the prophets write, and especially Isaiah cries out: 'Behold, the day of the Lord, inexorable, of fury and wrath, is coming, to make the whole world a desert, and to destroy sinners from it.' (Isaiah XIII, 9). This day is rightly called incurable; because when the day of judgment comes, there will be no place for repentance, which is compared to eternity, it is near, and not far. And what follows: And as misery will come from misery, or, devastation will come from the powerful, this means that evils will succeed evils, and all affliction will be dispensed by God the judge, who is able to destroy both body and soul into hell (Matthew X). Let us now specifically refer to the time of the Jewish captivity when Jerusalem was captured and the temple was destroyed; for not long after, the captivity of the ten and a half tribes by the Assyrians and Chaldeans followed. And it is predicted that this future

event will not seem to have happened by chance or by the strength of the enemies, but by the anger and threat of God, or certainly, if the people continue in their sins, it will come as a result of their repentance.

1:16

(Verse 16) Have not the provisions perished before our eyes from the house of our God, joy and exultation? LXX: The provisions have perished before your eyes: from the house of our God, joy and delight. The provisions of sinners perish before our eyes when the expected crops are taken from their hands, and the locust precedes the harvester, so that what is stored in the barns with hope is consumed by weevils and rust. Likewise, those who dwell in the Church, according to the quality of their merits, if they have sinned, the grain of the spirit, and the barley of literacy, is taken away from them, so that they may experience the hunger of the word of God. And when the nourishment is removed, joy and gladness are also taken away from the house of God, so that those who heard before the Apostle saying: Rejoice in the Lord always, I say again, rejoice (Philippians 4:4); afterwards they hear the Lord calling them to repentance: Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted (Matthew 5:5).

1:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) The animals have trampled in their own dung; the barns have been destroyed, the storehouses have been scattered, because the grain has been mixed up; why does the animal groan, why do the herds of cattle moo? Because there is no pasture for them; and the flocks of sheep have also perished. LXX: The calves have jumped in their stalls; the treasuries have been scattered, the wine presses have been buried, because the grain has dried up; what shall we put aside for ourselves? The herds of oxen have mourned, because there is no pasture for them, and the flocks of sheep have perished. After the provisions have perished, and the joy and delight of the house of God have been taken away, even the beasts have decayed in their own filth, or, according to spiritual understanding, have become lascivious in their mangers, and have kicked against their Creator, so that what is written may be fulfilled: If they are not satisfied, they will murmur (Ps. 58:16). The one whose god is his belly decays in his own filth, and he who says: Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (Isaiah 22:16): to him the storehouses of future happiness are destroyed, and the storehouses of eternal abundance are scattered or destroyed. Even the winepresses are overturned, for if there are no wheat and wine, in vain are storehouses and winepresses prepared. And when everything burns, they will then lament with a mournful voice and say: What shall we restore for ourselves? And what follows according to the Septuagint: The herds of oxen mourned because there are no pastures for them, it compels us not to receive from oxen and herds what has been said; but from those, who are called oxen and sheep for their simplicity. Concerning their pastures, the Savior speaks: He will enter and go out, and will find pasture (John 10:3). But understand all these things metaphorically, as caterpillars, locusts, worms, and rust, which, with the crops removed and ravaged, have possessed everything with hunger and pestilence.

1:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) I will cry out to you, Lord, for the fire has consumed the beautiful things of the desert, and the flame has set all the wood of the region ablaze; even the beasts of the field, like a

parched land thirsting for rain, have looked up to you; for the springs of water have dried up, and the fire has devoured the beautiful things of the desert. LXX: I will cry out to you, Lord, for the fire has consumed the beautiful things of the desert, and the flame has set all the wood of the field ablaze, and the animals of the field have looked up to you, for the streams of water have dried up, and the fire has devoured the beautiful things of the desert. The prophet cries out to the Lord, or to the people through the prophet: for the fire has consumed the beautiful things of the desert, and the flame has set ablaze all the wood of the region, the beasts and the farm animals, or the fields, look to the Lord, like a little field thirsty for rain. This, in one word, is signified by the Eagle saying, 'it has been desolated'; and they look to him, because the fountains, or the outlets of water, have dried up, and the fire has devoured the beautiful things of the desert, because indeed the caterpillar, and the locust, and the devourer have done so, and the rust, because the fire is in the straw, and the flame in the bushes. However, the beautiful places of the desert, which are called Naoth in Hebrew (), let us understand either the flat plains, or the flourishing meadows, or the green places with herbs, which provided pastures for animals. But when the prophet cried out to the Lord, fire caused the animals to look towards him, which devoured the beautiful places of the desert, and the flame that ignited all the wood of the region, so that the crops and fruits were destroyed together, and because the water sources dried up, and whatever could be found in the desert, the voracious flame consumed. At the same time, let us consider that unless because of narrowness and the taking away of pleasures, neither the prophet nor the beasts would cry out to the Lord, or look up to the Lord, which indeed can be referred to a righteous man once, who when he turns away and does evil, his former virtues will by no means benefit him; but the Lord will judge him in whatever he finds. We can call them the beautiful things of the desert, about which it is written: 'More are the children of the desolate than of her who has a husband.' (Isaiah 54:1). However, the flame that sets fire to all the wood in the region is to be believed to be the one that is sent by the burning arrows of the devil, so that nothing of good fruit remains in us; but everything is consumed by fire. For all adulterers, like a furnace, their hearts; and not only the prophet, or the people through the prophet, who is a rational being (Hosea VII), but also the animals, of which it is said: You will save both humans and animals, Lord (Psalm XXXV, VII). And elsewhere: I have become like a beast before you (Psalms VII, 23). And again: I will sow them with the seed of humans and beasts (Jeremiah XXXI, 27). They looked up to the Lord and begged for the dew of His mercy; for the springs of water had dried up, which the deer desires. And of whom the Lord speaks through Jeremiah: They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water (Jeremiah II, 13). But when the springs of water, which irrigate and refresh all that is dry, are dried up, whatever was beautiful in us is consumed by the heat of fire, of which the Lord speaks in the Gospel: I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke X, 18).

2:1-11

(Chapter 2 — Verses 1 onwards) Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like the dawn spreading over the mountains, a large and strong people appears, such as has never been before and will never be again in generations to come. Before them, a devouring fire; behind them, a blazing flame. The land is like the garden of Eden before them, but behind them, it is a desolate wilderness. There is no escape from them. They have the appearance of horses; they gallop along like cavalry. With a

sound like that of chariots they leap over the mountaintops, like the crackling of fire consuming stubble, like a mighty army drawn up for battle. Before them, peoples are in anguish; all faces turn pale. They charge like warriors; they scale walls like soldiers. They march each on his way; they do not swerve from their paths. They do not jostle one another; each marches in his own column. They burst through the weapons and are not halted. They run to and fro in the city; they run along the wall; they climb into the houses; they enter through the windows like a thief. But they will also fall through the windows and not be destroyed, they will enter the city, run on the wall, climb the houses, they will enter through the windows like a thief. The earth shook before his face, the heavens were moved, the sun and moon were darkened, and the stars withdrew their brightness, and the Lord gave his voice before his army, for his camps are very numerous, because they are strong and do his word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can endure it? LXX: Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord comes, for it is near at hand; a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there has not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. Before him a devouring fire, and behind him a flame kindled. As a paradise of pleasure is the land before his face; but his latter end shall be as a barren wilderness, and he shall not be saved. As the appearance of horses, so are they; and as horsemen, so shall they run. As the sound of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, and as the sound of a flame of fire devouring the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before his face the people shall be in anguish; all faces shall be as flames. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks. Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path. And when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall; they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord shall utter his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Again, by the metaphor of locusts, the onslaught of the Chaldeans is described, and the prophet is commanded, or rather through the prophet all who can hear the word of God, to exalt their voice like a trumpet, and to proclaim in Zion, and to sound the alarm on his holy mountain, so that the people of Jerusalem may tremble at the noise of the cry and trumpet. And when, he says, you have sung, say this: Surely the day of the Lord will no longer be delayed, that is, the day of vengeance and retribution; the captivity is near, the army has already come forth from its place in Babylon, the day of darkness and distress is close, a day of gloom and cloud and whirlwind, in which all the light of joy (or rather of righteousness) will be taken away, and all things will be overwhelmed by darkness. Just as, he says, the morning and dawn suddenly dispel darkness, and the sunrise illuminates all the mountains, so the Babylonian army will be poured out over your entire land. And do not think that this is a weak crowd, it is a numerous and strong people, unlike any other nation that has existed in the past or will exist in the future: whatever it touches, it will consume like a voracious flame, and it will leave nothing behind; it is like a garden and paradise, all the land that it does not touch: it is like a desert and wasteland, whatever it has plundered, and there will be no one who can escape its grasp. Their appearance is like that of fierce horses, and they run here and there like

horsemen. Not that they are to be compared to Babylonian horsemen; but they are called horsemen because they appear to run here and there like locusts in the movement of the enemy: Just as the sound of chariots and horses, so will be the sound of locusts. They will leap over the tops of the mountains, as if to climb every lofty place; and just as quickly as fire consumes straw, so the sound and terror of their voices will lay waste to everything. And what he brings in: just as a strong people prepared for battle, they bring back to the locusts, so that it seems that they are bringing back not as from enemies, but as from locusts; and yet while we read about the locusts, let us think of the Babylonians. Such will be the terror, that all nations around will tremble, both in spirit and in body, indeed they will be tormented: and by the magnitude of fear, the faces of all will be turned into the likeness of pots, which, when burned by fire, show the blackness and soot of a hideous appearance. He says, 'They move about, as it were, like strong men, no doubt locusts; and, as it were, like warriors, they ascend the wall, so that the height of the walls is unable to withstand the attack of the strong, and they do not enter through the gates but rather through the walls. They will go in their own paths and will not deviate from their tracks. We recently saw this in this province. For when the swarms of locusts came and occupied the space between the sky and the earth, they flew in such great order by the arrangement of God's command, as if they were small tiles laid by the hand of a craftsman on the floor, each in its own place, not deviating even by a point, and, so to speak, not even by a single crosswise slit.' And to make the metaphor clear, he said they will fall through the windows and not be destroyed. For locusts have no obstacle, since they can penetrate fields, crops, trees, cities, houses, and the secrets of bedrooms. However, this is said about locusts in order to be understood about enemies. And what we have interpreted as 'they will fall through the windows and not be destroyed,' the LXX translated as 'they will go heavily burdened in their weapons and they will fall through their spears and not be consumed.' But it seems to me that this does not fit with the order of the explanation, but rather that there has been an error in it, because we understood the Hebrew word Sala as 'spears' and not as 'windows.' And he continues the narrative, saying that they enter the city, run through the walls, climb on the houses, and enter through the windows like thieves, not because they have the fear of thieves who are victors; but just as thieves usually enter through windows and secretly steal, so they, with the doors closed, will burst in fully with audacity through the windows without any delay. The earth trembled at the sight of these locusts, and the heavens were moved, let us understand this hyperbolically stated, not because the force of locusts or enemies is so great that it can move the heavens and shake the earth; but because to those enduring adversity, it seems as if the sky is falling and the earth is trembling due to the magnitude of terror. Finally, due to the multitude of locusts covering the sky, the sun and moon will turn into darkness, and the stars will withdraw their splendor. While the light is placed in the midst of the cloud of locusts, it does not allow it to reach the earth. The Lord will also give his voice before the face of such a powerful army, for his camps are many, and the greatness of his power is demonstrated even in small creatures. But these many camps, and countless strong ones, are too numerous and perform his word. By saying this, it is shown that the Babylonians will come by the will of God, and they will obtain their rule. 'It is a great day of the Lord,' he says, 'when Jerusalem must be taken, and it is exceedingly terrible, and no one will be able to endure it, and will necessarily escape captivity or death.' I did not want to divide the connected and coherent passage, lest what was one in meaning be picked apart in different chapters. Let us move on to spiritual understanding, repeating each and every thing. We read of the sound of trumpets and horns not only in the book of Leviticus and Numbers (Num. X),

in which it is commanded that Moses make two silver trumpets, to be played on the first day of each month, on the seventh month, on the day of jubilee, and on other festivals, as well as when going to battle, by those who are assigned to this duty; but it is also written that the walls of Jericho fell at the sound of the trumpets (Joshua VI). And the Lord says that he will send an angel with the blast of a trumpet (Matt. XXIV), and the Apostle preaches that the resurrection of the dead will occur at the sound of the trumpet (I Cor. XV). And in the Apocalypse of John, we read that seven angels received seven trumpets, and as they sounded them in order, the events described in Scripture occurred (Apoc. VIII). Therefore, priests and teachers are now commanded to exalt their voices like a trumpet, and fulfill what is written: 'Go up to a high mountain, O herald of good tidings to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, O herald of good tidings to Jerusalem' (Isaiah XLVIII, 9), so that the trumpet may sound in Zion, that is, in the Church, which is interpreted as a watchtower and exalted place. And on the holy mountain of God, which is Christ, let all the inhabitants of the earth be troubled or confounded, and may confusion lead them to salvation. Understand the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, or the day of the departure of each body. For what will happen to everyone on the day of judgment, is fulfilled in each person on the day of death. It is a day of darkness and distress, a day of clouds and whirlwinds; for it is full of punishments and torments. A multitude of strong angelic people will come to render to each according to their deeds; and just as the morning and rising dawn first occupy the mountains, so judgment will begin from on high and the powerful, so that the powerful may endure powerful torments. There was no one like him before, and there will be none after him, for generations and generations (Wisdom 6). For all the evils that are contained in the ancient histories, whether it be the flood of the sea, the overflow of rivers, the plague, diseases, famine, wild beasts, or the devastation of enemies, cannot be compared to the punishments that will be rendered on the day of judgment. Before the face of this people, who is strong and numerous, there will be a devouring and consuming fire, so that it may consume everything in us like hay, wood, and straw. Therefore, it is said about God: God is a consuming fire, and after Him, a burning flame (Deut. IV, 24); so that He may leave nothing without punishment. Whoever this people does not touch, nor comes into contact with the material of combustion, will be likened to the garden of God and the paradise of pleasure, which in Hebrew is called Eden. But whoever shall have burned him, will reduce him to ashes and embers, and there is no one who can escape his fury, whose cruel appearance will resemble the snorting of raging horses, and thus they will rush to torment those whom they have taken into their power, like horsemen flying here and there: their sound will be terrible, like chariots rushing down steep slopes; and they will leap over the tops of mountains, desiring to torment even those placed in high positions on the pinnacle of the Church. And because before their face there is a voracious fire, and consuming, dry things shall be laid waste, even as tow burnt by the flame: so shall they be in the sight of the punishments, that are to come. They shall be swift in running to and fro like sparks among the reeds. They shall devour diverse things as stubble fully dry. They shall devour the earth and her increase as the standing corn, with the stalks thereof, as the grasshoppers. They shall gather together in the cold time, as the creeping things that live in the desert. The spirit of the Lord is their mouth: and his anger shall burn in their wrath, and his words devour: for his spirit is as fire overflowing, that kindleth the wrath of his enemies, and inflameth his adversaries in a flame. By this shall they be visited from the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. But they will also enter through the windows, whether they fall or climb; or they will walk burdened with their weapons, and those

whom they receive will fall, to be consumed. These are the windows of which Jeremiah also says: Death will enter through our windows (Jer. VI, 21): for the enemy desires to enter all our senses and take possession of the city of good conscience, to run through our defenses, and to destroy the homes that we have built with good works. But they do all things through the windows, like a thief: for they do not enter freely, so as to shoot straight in the darkness with a straight heart (Psalms 10). From the face of this people, who is many and strong, the earth trembled, and the heavens were moved. For the heavens and the earth will pass away, but the word of the Lord remains forever (Matthew 24). But even the sun and the moon will not be able to see such great punishments of the wicked, and they will mourn, not having the righteousness of their duty, and for the bright light, they will be covered with terrible darkness; even the stars will withhold their brightness, while those who are holy will not see the presence of the Lord without fear. In all these things, the Lord will give his voice, before the face of his army. For just as the Babylonians punishing Jerusalem are called the army of God, so too the wicked angels (of whom it is written: They provoked him with their high places, and moved him to zeal with their graven images - Psalms 78:58), are called the army of God, and are referred to as his camps, while they carry out the will of the Lord. Great is the day of the Lord and terrible, of which it is written elsewhere: Why do you desire the day of the Lord? - Amos 5. And here is darkness, and not light; and very terrible; and rare or none will be able to endure him, without offering himself the material of raging.

2:12-14

(Verse 12 and following) Now therefore says the Lord: Turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning; and tear your hearts, not your clothing, and turn to the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and relents from punishing. Who knows if he will turn and forgive, and leave a blessing behind him, a sacrifice and offering to the Lord your God? LXX: And now says the Lord our God: Turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, with sackcloth, with weeping, and with mourning; and tear your hearts, not your clothing, and turn to the Lord your God; for he is merciful and compassionate, patient and full of mercy, and repents of evil. Who knows if he will turn and have mercy on him, and leave behind him a blessing, sacrifice, and offering to the Lord our God? The beginning chapter from the place where it is written: Blow the trumpet in Zion, shout in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the earth be troubled, until that place where we read: Great is the day of the Lord and very terrible, who shall be able to endure it? By the translation of locusts, it announces the coming of the Chaldeans, and what evil things are to come to the people. Now it provokes them to repentance, and exhorts them to turn to the Lord, so that, being corrected in their whole mind, they do not suffer what the Lord threatens, and the sense is: All the things that are contained in the previous discourse, therefore I have spoken, so that I might terrify you with my threat. But convert to me with your whole heart, and show repentance of the mind with fasting and weeping and lamentation; so that now, fasting, you may afterwards be satisfied; now, weeping, you may afterwards laugh; now, lamenting, you may afterwards be comforted. And because it is customary, in times of sadness and adversity, to tear one's garments, as the high priest is mentioned to have done to increase the guilt of the Savior in the Gospel (Matthew 26), and as we read that Paul and Barnabas, upon hearing words of blasphemy, did (Acts 14); therefore, I command you, never tear your garments, but rather the hearts that are full of sins, which, like wineskins, will burst open if they are not torn willingly. And when you have done this, return to your Lord God, whom your previous sins have made a stranger

to you: and do not despair of the forgiveness of sins because of their magnitude; for great mercy will wipe away great sins. For He is kind and merciful, preferring the repentance of sinners to their death, patient and abundant in mercy, not imitating human impatience; but waiting for our repentance for a long time: and He is steadfast, whether the sinner repents of his wickedness, so that if we repent of our sins and He repents of His threats, He will not inflict the evils He has threatened, and by the change of our decision, He Himself will change. However, in this place, we should not consider malice contrary to virtue, but rather affliction, according to what we read elsewhere: Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof (Matt. VI, 34). And: If there is malice in the city, which the Lord does not bring (Amos III, 6). Similarly, because he had said above, kind and merciful, patient and abundant in mercy, and excellent, or repentant over malice, lest the greatness of mercy make us negligent, he joins in the person of the Prophet and says: Who knows whether he will turn and forgive, and leave behind a blessing? I exhort, he says, that which is mine, to repentance, and I know that God is ineffably merciful, saying with David: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great mercy, and according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out my iniquity (Psalm 50, 1, 2). But because we cannot comprehend the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God, I hesitate and wish rather than presume, saying: who knows if he will turn and forgive? What someone says, either it is impossible or difficult must be felt: Sacrifice and offering to the Lord our God, so that after he has given the blessing and forgiven our sins, we may be able to offer sacrifices to God.

2:15-17

(Verse 15 and following) Blow the trumpet in Zion: sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the people: sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and those who still nurse at the breast. Let the bridegroom come out of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet: between the porch and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say: Spare, O Lord (Vulgate adds, spare), your people, and do not let your heritage become a reproach, that the nations should rule over them. Why do they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?' LXX: Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and nursing babes; let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, and the bride from her dressing room. Between the vestibule and the altar, let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say: 'Spare Your people, O Lord, and do not give Your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" } Still he exhorts them to repentance, before the enemy army comes. Above, he said: Blow the trumpet in Zion, wail on my holy mountain, and so on, because the day of the Lord is coming, the day of darkness and gloom, the day of clouds and whirlwinds, announcing to you a numerous and powerful people that will come, which will overthrow your possessions and cities. Now because I am kind and merciful, patient, and abundant in mercy, I again command and say: Blow the trumpet in Zion, and preach repentance to the peoples; sanctify the fasting, preach healing, or gathering, of which we have already spoken: gather the people, so that the one who had sinned by being dispersed, having been gathered, may cease to sin. Sanctify the Church so that no one in the Church is not holy, lest your prayers be hindered and a small amount of yeast corrupts the whole batch (I Cor. V). Unite or choose elders, so that it is not age but holiness that is chosen in them. Also gather little children and those nursing at the breast, so that there is no age that does not turn to the Lord. Little children and infants, of

whom we read in the Psalms and in the Gospel: 'From the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise' (Psalm VIII, 3; Matthew XXI, 16). Petrus says about those who are nourished with milk without guile or deceit (1 Peter 2), to whom Paul also speaks: I gave you milk to drink, not solid food (1 Corinthians 3:2), whom the Savior also mentions: Do not despise one of these little ones (Matthew 18:10). Let the bridegroom also come out of his chamber, and the bride out of her bridal chamber, so that in the time of fasting, calling, assembly, sanctification of the Church, election of the elders, gathering of the little children and those who suck the breast, the bridegroom and bride do not serve the wedding work, as it is allowed by the Law, not to go to war. Therefore, the Apostle commanded that we should temporarily abstain from sexual relations in order to devote ourselves to prayer (1 Corinthians 7). So, someone who claims to be doing penance through self-discipline, fasting, and almsgiving, promises in vain unless they leave their bed and fulfill chaste repentance with a holy and pure fast. And what follows: 'Between the vestibule and the altar, the priests will weep.' For the vestibule, some have interpreted it as 'seventy steps,' others as 'the porch,' and Theodotion as 'the entrance hall.' It is what we can call the area in front of the temple doors and portico. And note what the (others, that) priests who are ministers of the Lord should do, that they should weep between the temple and the altar, and say with the Apostle: Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not burned? (II Cor. XI, 29) And: Weep with those who weep. And the suitable place for repentance and confession is the temple and the altar: and it teaches what the priests should say, or rather how to pray to the Lord: Spare, O Lord, your people; when they sinned, they were called not your people: now that they have turned away from vices, they are called your people. And do not give your inheritance into disgrace, so that nations may rule over them. The hidden riddle has been revealed. For that people, numerous and strong, who are described by the names of locusts, and caterpillars, and worms, and rust, are now shown more clearly who they are: So that nations may rule over them, He says. But the inheritance of the Lord is given into disgrace when they have served their enemies and the nations have said: Where is their God, whom they boasted to be their ruler and defender? We can interpret nations and opposing powers, which as long as we do not repent, dominate us, and reproach and say: Where is their God? The Jews refer this place to Gog and Magog, the most savage nations, which they say will come against Israel in the last days, as is more fully written in Ezekiel.

2:18-21

(Verse 18 and following) The Lord was zealous for His land, and spared His people. And the Lord answered and said to His people: Behold, I will send you grain and wine and oil, and you will be filled with them, and I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations. And I will remove him who is from the north far away from you, and I will drive him into a dry and desolate land: his face will be towards the eastern sea, and his end towards the western sea. And his stench will rise up, and his rottenness, for he has acted arrogantly. LXX: And the Lord was jealous for his land and spared his people and the Lord answered and said to his people: Behold, I will send you grain and wine and oil, and you will be filled with them, and I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations, and I will drive away the one from the north and bring him into a land that is without water, and I will destroy his face in the first sea and his hind parts in the last sea: and his stench will rise, and his decay will rise, because his works are magnified. After the priests prayed for the people and said: Spare, Lord, your people, and do not give your inheritance into reproach, and the people

did what was commanded, to sanctify the fast, to preach healing, to gather (or compel) the multitude, to sanctify the Church, to choose the old men, to gather the little ones and those suckling at the breast, and for the bridegroom to go forth from his bed, and the bride from her chamber, and to serve not the flesh and pleasure, but the soul and tears. The Lord was zealous for his land, which he had previously treated as if it were foreign, and he had allowed the locusts to devastate it. He had spared the repentant ones so much that he made them worthy of his response and said, 'Because the locusts, the cankerworm, and the mildew have destroyed all your crops, I will give you grain and everything else that the prophet has described, and I will not deliver you to captivity again. I will also keep the Assyrians and the Chaldeans from the north, especially those from Babylon, far away from you.' As it is written, 'A numerous and mighty people, with fire devouring before them and flames burning behind them, like the appearance of horses.' And I will cast him into a land of solitude, says he, and his former parts shall fall into the Eastern Sea, and his latter parts into the Western Sea, and his stench shall ascend, that is, the one from the North, and his decay, because he has acted arrogantly. Often I have heard it said under the figure of the flight of locusts to describe the assault of the Chaldeans, by which Judaea was laid waste. Therefore, he keeps the metaphor in the remaining parts, and he speaks in this way, according to the location of the province, as if he seems to refer not to enemies, but to locusts. Even in our times, we have seen swarms of locusts cover the land of Judea, which later, with the mercy of the Lord, were driven by the wind into the sea, between the vestibule and the altar, that is, between the place of the cross and the resurrection, while the priests and the people were praying to the Lord and saying: Spare your people. The first and the last were cast into the sea. Understand the first sea that is near the desert and faces the East, which is the place where there were once Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which is now called the Dead Sea because no living creatures exist there." } But the western sea, which leads to Egypt, has on its shore Gaza, Ascalon, Azotus, Joppa, Caesarea, and other coastal cities. And when the shores of both seas were filled with heaps of dead locusts disgorged by the waters, the stench and decay of them was so harmful that it corrupted the air, and a pestilence arose affecting both animals and humans. The learned reader may inquire where this was done literally regarding the Chaldeans. Not long after these prophecies were made, as we read in Isaiah, one hundred eighty-five thousand Chaldeans were struck down by a raging angel in one night under the reign of King Hezekiah (Isa. XXXVII). This we will say according to history. However, according to allegory, every soul is the Lord's earth, in which the father of a family sows his seed, which when it grows among the wheat produces weeds, that is, oats and darnel, and offends its Lord. But afterwards it repents, and with weeping says: Spare, O Lord, your people. The Lord is zealous for his earth, and he will spare it, which he had previously despised, and he addresses it with his own words, saying: I will send you grain, of which it is written: Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces many fruits (John XII): and wine that gladdens the heart of man, and oil that makes the face shine, so that the old sorrow of sins may be tempered by the joy of wheat and wine and oil, that is, the joy of virtues, and they will have such an abundance of all good things that they will be filled and satisfied. And when they have achieved this, they will never be handed over as a reproach to the nations about whom the Apostle speaks: Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers and powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual wickedness in the celestial places (Ephesians 6:12). Also, the one who is from the north (about whom Jeremiah speaks: From the north evil will be

kindled on all the inhabitants of the earth (Jeremiah 1:14): about whom Solomon also writes: The north wind is extremely harsh). I will remove him far away from you, and I will expel him into an uninhabited and deserted land, which has no knowledge of God, in which the Holy Spirit does not dwell. And his appearance will be in the first and last sea, among those who have opened the door of sin for him, and with whom he will remain until the end of his life, and its stench and decay even rises against those who promise great things to themselves, and they fall because of their pride: for human frailty is never secure, and the more we grow in virtues, the more we ought to fear falling from the heights. According to the letter, the swarms of locusts are more often brought by the south wind than the north wind, that is, they do not come from cold, but from heat: but since he was speaking about the Assyrians, putting the similitude of locusts, he included the north wind, so that we understand not a true locust, which usually comes from the south, but under the locust we understand the Assyrians and Chaldeans.

2:22-27

(Verse 22 onwards) Do not be afraid, O land; rejoice and be glad, for the Lord has done great things. Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures in the wilderness are becoming green. The trees are bearing their fruit; the fig tree and the vine yield their riches. Be glad, O children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he has given you the autumn rains for your vindication. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before. The threshing floors will be filled with grain; the vats will overflow with new wine and oil. I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten— the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm — my great army that I sent among you. My strength is great, which I have sent upon you: and you will eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of your God, who has worked wonders with us, and my people will not be put to shame forever. And you will know that I am in the midst of Israel, and I am the Lord your God, and there is no other, and my people will not be put to shame forever. Rejoice, O earth, and be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has magnified and done great things: believe, O animals of the field, for the meadows of the wilderness have put forth their greenery, because the tree has produced its fruit, the fig tree and the vine have given their strength. And the children of Zion, rejoice and be glad in the Lord your God, for He has given you the food of righteousness, and has showered upon you a timely and late rain, as in the beginning, and the barns will be filled with wheat, and the vats will overflow with wine and oil. And I will compensate you for the years in which the locust, the beetle, the mildew, and the caterpillar have consumed your crops. My great strength, which I have sent upon you, will sustain you and you will eat and be satisfied. You will praise the name of your God, who has done wonders with you, and my people will never be put to shame. You will know that I am in the midst of Israel, and I am the Lord your God, and there is no other besides me. And my people will never be put to shame. He now promises the opposite of what he had threatened above. He had said before: the fire consumes the beautiful things of the desert, and the flame sets ablaze all the wood of the region, and the beasts of the field, like a dry patch of land, look up to you as they thirst for rain: because the springs of water have dried up, and the fire has devoured the beautiful things of the desert. Now he mitigates sadness with joy, and turns tears into laughter. Do not be afraid, he says, animals of the region: because the beautiful things of the desert have budded forth: because the tree has brought forth its fruit, the fig and the vine have given their power: and there will be such abundance of all things, that there will by no means be a lack of wheat, wine and oil for you to be

satisfied with; but the threshing floors will be filled with wheat, and the wine presses will overflow with wine and oil, so that you may not only eat for yourselves, but also be able to provide for others. To the sons of Zion also He speaks specially, that they may exult and rejoice, not in any trivial thing; but in the Lord their God, who has given them the nourishment of righteousness. And as the Seventy have translated it, He gives them both the early and the late rain, that they may eat and be glad, and praise the name of their Lord God, who has done wonders with them, and that they may by no means be put to shame; and that they may know that the Lord God of Israel dwells among them, and besides Him there is no other, for the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father; and His people will not be put to shame forever. We believe that these things happened literal, because they were promised by the Lord, and that the past sterility was compensated by new crops: so that whatever the locust, the cankerworm, the mildew, and the caterpillar had consumed, would be replenished in the following years. We wonder why the caterpillar is called the strength, or virtue of the Lord, and not only virtue, but great virtue? How was the power of God shown in the plagues of the Egyptians by small animals, especially the gnats, which are such small mosquitoes that they can hardly be seen with the eyes. Thus, now, in a small and slow-moving little worm, which can barely move and is crushed by a light touch, the power of God and the frailty of humans are demonstrated. Not that God cannot overturn the earth and cover everything with a flood, or consume everything with lightning at His command and the majesty of His power; but He shows human frailty through small, and, so to speak, tiny bodies. Therefore, we often respond to Marcion and other heretics who tear apart the old Testament, that God made even fleas and mosquitoes and bugs, and creatures like them, in order to show the frailty and weakness of our flesh, which is so insignificant that it is wounded by such small things. But if a slow and tiny caterpillar is stronger than a human, why does the earth and ashes, being from which man is called, boast? Some interpret this place as follows: On the right and on the left, we read the virtues and powers of God, which the Greeks call δυνάμεις. On the right, Seraphim and Cherubim, and all the angelic powers; on the left, opposing strengths, of which it is written: He sent upon them the wrath of his indignation, anger, and tribulation, by sending evil angels (Ps. LXXVII, 49); of which Micheas also speaks in the book of Kings: I saw the Lord God of Israel sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left (3 Kings XXIII). I think the left spirit was the one who went out and stood before the Lord and said, 'I will deceive Ahab and go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets.' To the power that was suitable for deceiving and skilled in causing destruction, and had deceived many before, God speaks: 'You will deceive and prevail, go out and do so.' That spirit who tormented Saul, about whom his servants said, 'Behold, an evil spirit from God is afflicting you' (1 Samuel 16:15), was from the left side, they minister to the Lord to punish those who have deserved to suffer for their sins. For not only are men ministers and avengers of His wrath upon those who do evil, and not without cause do they bear the sword; but there are also contrary powers, which are called the fury and wrath of God, which the prophet, declining, says: Lord, do not rebuke me in Your fury, nor chastise me in Your anger (Ps. 6:1). The Apostle delivered such (so to speak) interrogators and torturers to destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved (1 Cor. 5), of whom Satan is, to whom he delivered others to learn not to blaspheme (1 Tim. 1)." } These things about the caterpillar, why it is called the power of God. Let us move on to the order of spiritual intelligence: Do not be afraid, O earth, indeed trust and rejoice, you who had previously lost the Lord's seed with your dryness: for the Lord has magnified, so as to show mercy to you, to such an extent that

even the animals of the region and the deserted solitude are filled with joyful new growth, and the wood of the cross bears its fruit, and the sweetest gifts of the Holy Spirit bestow their abundance to all. You also, whom I rightly call sons of Zion and of the Church after repentance, rejoice and be glad; for God the Father has given you a teacher of righteousness or has granted you the nourishment of righteousness, and has caused the rains of temporal and late (Isa. XXX) to come down upon you. Rain is said to be late when we first receive the rain of doctrine; it is said to be late when we receive the fruits of our labor and attain to a perfect knowledge of the holy Scriptures. There may be temporary and late rain, the old and new Testament received. And not only that, he said, he did not only give this; but he made you abound with new fruits of virtues, and be satisfied and intoxicated with wheat, wine and oil, of which we have often spoken. And the years that you had lost in disturbances under the previous rulers, when your works had been consumed by locusts, weevils, rust and caterpillars, God did not allow you to perish. Then you shall eat the fruits of righteousness, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has done wonders with you. But if after such great repentance God promises such abundance of all things, what will Novatus, denying repentance and the possibility of sinners being restored to their former state if they perform worthy works of repentance, answer? For God receives penitents to such an extent that He calls them His people and does not in any way claim that they are to be confounded; and promises to dwell among them and that they shall not have any other God but Him; rather, they will trust in Him with their whole hearts, who will abide in them forever.

2:28-31

(Verse 28 and following) And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Acts 2:17-19: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke.' The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and illustrious day of the Lord comes. And it will be, that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. The blessed apostle Peter explained this passage fulfilled at the time of the Lord's passion, when the Holy Spirit descended on the believers on the day of Pentecost, and they spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, so that those present marveled and said, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own native language?' Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and others; some were saying, 'What does this mean?' But others were mocking and saying, 'They are filled with new wine.' Then Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice, and declared to them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen carefully to my words. These people are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ' And it shall come to pass afterward, says the Lord: I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall

prophecy, and your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. And also on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls. From the beginning, therefore, until the place where it is written: 'Great is the day of the Lord and very terrible, and who can endure it?' it is a threat and description of what the Lord will inflict upon the sinful people. But from the place where we read: 'Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning,' until the place where it says: 'Why do they say among the peoples, "Where is their God?"' it is the exhortation of the Lord, calling for repentance after punishment and affliction. Again, from that place which follows: The Lord was zealous for his land and spared his people, and the Lord answered and said, even to the place where it is written: And my people shall not be put to shame forever, the promise of things to come is that they should await the good after they have repented. And after many things which it is now tedious to recount, these things also are said in the promise, which we now endeavor to explain: I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and the rest. I seem to myself to have saved the text of the conversation from the beginning up to this point. It is a great labor how what follows should be connected to what we are now discussing. Another [person] says what was generally promised in the last times is now partly completed. And because the apostles felt the reward of future [events] at the first coming of the Lord, they mentioned certain offerings and first fruits of miracles that had been fulfilled, so that until what is perfect comes, we would feel what had previously come in part. But another asserts that it is an apostolic tradition, according to what is written about a holy man: 'He will dispense his words in judgment' (Ps. CXI, 5): so that whatever useful things they saw to be for the listeners and not contradicting what is present, they would strengthen them with testimonies from another time, not that they would exploit the simplicity and ignorance of the listeners, as the impious Porphyrius calumniates, but according to the apostle Paul, they would preach at the right time, and at the wrong time (II Tim. IV). And the following is the rule of the prophets: whatever the Jews in the last times promise themselves carnally, they would say was fulfilled spiritually in the first coming of the Lord and Savior: especially since both they and we say that the promises were to be fulfilled in Christ, only differing in this, that they contend for future things, while we maintain that they have already happened: about which more should be discussed in what follows. But every flesh on which the Lord promises to pour out His Spirit, that is the flesh about which Isaiah speaks: And all flesh shall see the salvation of God (Isaiah 40:5). Therefore, the salvation of God cannot be seen unless the Holy Spirit is poured out. And whoever claims to believe in Christ, without believing in the Holy Spirit, will not have the eyes of perfect faith. Hence, in the Acts of the Apostles, those who had been baptized with the baptism of John, in the one who was to come, that is, in the name of the Lord Jesus, are re-baptized when they respond to Paul's question: 'But did you receive the Holy Spirit?' (Acts 19). Indeed, they receive true baptism, because without the Holy Spirit and the mystery of the Trinity, whatever is received into one or the other person is imperfect. But indeed, not everyone who receives the Holy Spirit will immediately have spiritual grace; but through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they will obtain different graces (I Cor. XII). Some will receive prophecy, like sons and daughters who are of greater merit; others will have dreams, like the

elderly of advanced age; others will have visions, like the young who have conquered evil. However, servants and handmaids who still have the spirit of fear, and not of love, because perfect love casts out fear, will not have prophecy, dreams, or visions; but, content with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they will possess only the grace of faith and salvation. Then the Lord will give signs in the sky and on earth: in the sky, because the sun will turn into darkness, and the moon into blood; on earth, because the earth will shake so violently and unusually that tombs will be opened and rocks will be split. And what he says, blood and vapors, or the vapor of smoke, that blood is the one of which we read in the Psalms: That your foot may be dipped in blood (Psalm 47:24). And in Isaiah: How red are your garments (Isaiah 63:2)! And when, after striking the side of the Savior, the Roman soldier poured out mixed water (John 19). And the fire of the Holy Spirit, which descended from heaven, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles: Tongues as of fire appeared to them, and it sat on each one of them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:3-4). This is the fire that the Lord came to send upon the earth, and before he suffered, he desired it to burn in his disciples (Luke 12). Fire is of a double nature: it has light for those who believe; it has darkness and punishment for unbelievers, who are called the fumes of smoke. This smoke is very bitter, which blinded the eyes of the Jews, as we read in the proverbs: 'As smoke is harmful to the eyes, and an unripe grape to the teeth, so is wickedness to those who use it' (Prov. X, 26). Isaiah also speaks about this smoke in a great vision, in which the blindness of the Jews was foretold: 'And the threshold has moved, and the house is filled with smoke.' Then it follows: Go, and tell this people: You shall indeed hear, but not understand; and you shall indeed see, but not perceive. For the heart of this people has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing (Isaiah VI, 9, 10). The sun also turns into darkness when it does not dare to see its hanging Lord, and the moon into blood, which we may believe happened according to history and was passed over in silence by the evangelists. For not everything that Jesus did is recorded, and if every single thing were written, I do not think that even the world itself could contain the books that would be written (John XXI). Certainly, when the sun was obscured in darkness, it was not because it had turned to darkness itself, but because it had brought darkness upon the world: thus, the moon was not turned to blood, but it condemned the Jews covered in horror of blasphemies and denial of Christ with the eternal testimony of its blood, saying: 'His blood be upon us, and upon our children' (Matthew 27:25). These are all things that are described as future before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. But this day of the Lord is to be believed as either great and terrible of the resurrection, or certainly, after a long time, a day of judgment, which is truly great and terrible. But since it follows: And it shall be, everyone who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, and the apostle Paul refers this to the time of the Lord's passion, it is more to be understood of the day of resurrection. For he says in writing to the Romans: There is no distinction between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? (Rom. 10:12-15) And when it is said, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, let us not lightly esteem it, for although the same apostle writes: No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. 12:3) Yet we must understand that to say this is not a matter of mere words, but of heartfelt faith. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. So Paul and Sosthenes write

to the Church of God which is in Corinth: Sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, together with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1): according to what we read in the Psalms: Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among those who call upon his name. They called upon the Lord, and he answered them; he spoke to them in the pillar of cloud (Ps. 99:9). So if it is written about the believing Corinthians, and about Moses and Aaron and Samuel, that they invoked the name of the Lord, let us believe that this grace is not for beginners but for those who have reached perfection. The word 'effusion', which is said in Hebrew Esphoch (), and which all have translated similarly, shows the abundance of the gift, that it has not descended upon a few Prophets (as it once did in the Old Testament), but upon all who believe in the name of the Savior, the gifts of the Holy Spirit: not just on this one or that one, but on all flesh. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female; for we are all one in Christ. (Romans 10). Therefore, Agabus prophesied in Caesarea (Acts 21), and there were many prophets in Antioch. The Apostle commands that if one person is prophesying and another has a revelation, the first should keep silent. (1 Corinthians 14). We also read that the four daughters of Philip the evangelist prophesied. (Acts 21). Even the old men saw visions, as when Paul, an old man, heard a man from Macedonia saying to him: 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' (Acts 16:9). And all the young men who stood forth strong in Christ, and fought the Lord's battles, saw visions, with the Lord fulfilling his promises: I multiply visions, and I am likened to the hands of the prophets (Hosea 10:12).

2:32

(Verse 32) Because on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be salvation: as the Lord has said: and in the remnant whom the Lord has called. LXX: Because on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be the one who has been saved: as the Lord has said: and the announcer whom the Lord has called. In that place, where we have set ourselves, salvation, or the one who has been saved, and in Hebrew it is written Phaleta (), Symmachus translated, the one who has fled. And again where we have said, in the remnant, and the Septuagint translated, announcer, in Hebrew it is read Saridim ((Al. Saradim)) (), which the Jews believe is the name of the place. Therefore, when the great and dreadful day of the Lord came, and whoever called upon his name after the resurrection of the Lord, everyone who was on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem was saved. For the law came forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2), of which it is written: A prophet does not perish outside Jerusalem (Luke 13:33). So the beginning of their salvation was in Zion and Jerusalem, in the watchtower and in the vision of peace, and in those who remained, whom the Lord called. We must understand those remnants who believed from the Jewish people, of whom Isaiah speaks: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and would have been made like Gomorrah (Isaiah 1:9). The Lord called and evangelized these remnants, whom He called, for so the LXX interpreted. This passage is very difficult, and receiving multiple explanations: so that under tropology we may refer everything that has been said to those times, to which Peter and Paul the apostles related, that is, when the Lord suffered and rose again." } For it is not possible that we understand the previous events during the time of suffering, and the events that follow on the day of judgment, especially when it is said: 'For behold, in those days, and in that time.' And this verse, connecting the subsequent events with the preceding ones, declares that everything was accomplished at once.

3:1-3

(Chapter 3, verses 1 onwards) For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into judgment against them concerning my people, my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations and have divided up my land. They have cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they have sold girls for wine that they may drink.

LXX: For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land. They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine to drink. Let us say that we promised, first connecting the later things to the earlier ones according to anagoge, if we are able, we will try to refer them to the day of judgment. With the believers saved on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and with the rest of the people of Judaea called, who believed with the apostles and through the apostles, at that time after the Lord had turned the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, who had come to preach seen, and to the captives, remission, and delivered those who confess the Lord, and who are in the Church, in which there is a vision of peace, will gather all the nations that did not want to believe: and will lead them into the valley of Jehoshaphat, which more significantly, according to the Hebrew truth, is said in Greek κατὰ βῆμα, that is, I will lead them down, and I will draw them from the highest to the lowest. At the same time, consider when the Lord summons unbelievers, even hostile powers, to judgment and disputes with them on behalf of his people: 'I will bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.' But when he encourages believers to battle, he says: 'Stir up the strong ones: let all the warriors come forth and ascend.' The nations are urged not to descend, but to ascend into the Valley of Jehoshaphat. For everyone who is judged because of their sins is placed in the valley, which is called Jehoshaphat, that is, the judgment of the Lord. For whoever believes in the Lord will not be judged. And there he will argue with them, not by the power of majesty, but by convincing them with the truth of reason, those who have divided the people of God and dispersed his inheritance among the nations, in order to compel the servants of God to serve themselves. And they divided his land, separating it with many errors among themselves, so that some worshiped Jupiter, others Juno, and Minerva, and fever, and rust, and Anubis, and the crocodile, and the ibis, and the owls, and hawks, and storks. Under these names, the people of God were once divided: those hostile nations, that is, the princes of this world and the rulers of darkness, not only divided the people of God among themselves, but they also put boys in brothels, forcing them to change their natural disposition, about whom the Apostle speaks: Therefore, God handed them over to shameful passions: indeed, their women exchanged the natural use (or, their own nature) for that which is against nature. Similarly, men, forsaking natural use with women, were inflamed with lust for one another, men committing indecent acts with other men, and receiving in themselves the penalty that was due for their error. And not content with this, they sold the girl for wine, so that they could drink and satisfy their lustful desire. All of these things, according to the Jews, were fulfilled in the times of Vespasian, Titus, and especially Hadrian, exactly as described. But if we want to refer to what is written on the day of judgment, we say that everyone who is saved is saved in the Church, whether in heavenly Jerusalem. And after the captivity of the Jews and Jerusalem is turned, then all are to be gathered and led into the valley of Josaphat: and there the Lord will judge with those who persecuted his people, and divided for themselves the inheritance of the Lord, and scattered them among the

nations, and cast lots for their land: which we must not only accept concerning heretics, who divided God's people for themselves and made them into gentiles, but also against every rigid and proud teacher, who rule over the clergy under the name of doctrine and priesthood, and oppress those who are subject to them. And when they are negligent and cause scandal to one of the least, they even place boys in brothels or hand them over to prostitutes. They sell girls for the sake of their pleasure, whose god is their belly, and they glory in their shame (Philippians 3). Furthermore, they entrust young men to prostitutes and sell girls for the sake of luxury, not hesitating to corrupt wrongdoers for the sake of shameful profit.

3:4-6

(Verse 4-6.) But what do you want with me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? Will you retaliate against me? If you retaliate against me, I will quickly repay you for your actions upon your own heads. For you have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried off my precious treasures into your temples. You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, in order to remove them far from their own land. LXX: What have I to do with you, Tyre and Sidon, and all the Galilee of the Gentiles? Are you rendering retribution to me, or do you hold anger against me in your heart (for this is what μνησικακέτε means in Greek)? Quickly and swiftly I will repay your retribution upon your heads, because you have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried off my precious treasures into your temples. And you have sold the sons of Judah and the sons of Jerusalem to the Greeks, in order to remove them far from their borders. And the Jews consider these places, Tyre, Sidon, and the borders of Palestine, or Galilee, to be inhabited by foreigners: because during the Jewish captivity, when they were conquered by the Romans, they persecuted the people of God; in fact, they persecuted the very God who presided over the people, according to what is written: 'He who receives you, receives me' (Matt. 10:40). Therefore, on the contrary, whoever persecutes the people of God, persecutes the very God to whom the people belong. I will restore, he says, to you what you have done to my people: for you have taken my silver and gold, that is, the vessels of the temple, and whatever was most precious and beautiful in it, the golden candlestick and the golden table of proposition, and the two golden Cherubim, and the mercy-seat, and the golden bowls and censers, and you have consecrated them to your idols (2 Kings 25). However, the Chaldeans are said to have done these things more, who placed the vessels of the Lord's temple in the temple of Bel: from which afterwards Belshazzar drinks in the vessels, and immediately his kingdom is transferred to the Medes and Persians (Daniel 5). But because after the Great and Horrible Day of the Lord, these things are said to happen, which the apostles interpret in the resurrection of the Lord, and the Hebrews differ in the future time of judgment, it is more to be understood about the Romans: that Vespasian and Titus, after the Temple of Peace was built in Rome, consecrated the vessels of the Temple and all its offerings in its sanctuary: which Greek and Roman history narrates. At that time, the sons of Judah and Jerusalem (not Israel, and the ten tribes, which until today live in the cities and mountains of the Medes) were sold to the sons of the Greeks, so that they would exterminate them from their borders, and the whole Jewish world was filled with captivity. They interpret this as referring to the vengeance of the blood of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened by the judgment of God, confirming that it happened against Tyre and Sidon. But according to the intended allegory, we interpret Tyre and Sidon and the Palestinians as those who oppress, afflict, and persecute God's people (for Tyre resonates with our language) and hunt him

down (or rather, for them to be hunted down) unto death, which the name Sidon indicates, and they drink blood and fall in the mud, which signifies the Philistines and Galilee. The Lord will quickly and swiftly restore to them what they deserve, because they have persecuted him. And their silver and gold, namely the words of the Scriptures, and their meanings, that is, their ideas and theses, and everything that was beautiful in the Church, they have delivered into the bondage of their errors. Whoever deceives heretics and causes them to worship idols, sells the sons of Judah and the sons of Jerusalem to the Greeks, or to the pagans, and makes them become heathens among the Christians, in order to exterminate them from their borders, in which they were born in Christ, and not in Judea, and in the confession of the truth, but they wander in the error of the nations. All of these things, we can refer to the Day of Judgment, without a differing punishment: although they may seem to differ in time from what the superiors say. For in Hebrew it is written 'Galilaea', which Aquila translated as 'Θάλασσα', and Symmachus as 'Terminos'. And 'Θάλασσα', which means 'Tumulos Arenarum', let us refer to the shores of Palestine, not to Galilee of the Philistines, which is nothing at all.

3:7-8

(Verse 7, 8) Behold, I will raise them up from the place where you sold them, and I will turn your retribution upon your own heads. I will sell your sons and daughters into the hands of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, a distant nation. For the Lord has spoken. LXX: Behold, I will raise them up from the place where you sold them, and I will return your retribution upon your heads. I will sell your sons and daughters into the hands of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them into captivity to a distant nation, for the Lord has spoken. The Hebrew word Sabaim (סבאים), which Aquila and Symmachus translated as 'captives' according to the written text, was interpreted as 'captivity' in the Septuagint, which better signifies captives. However, the Sabaim people are said to come from India, from which the queen of Sheba also came to hear the wisdom of Solomon (3 Kings 10), about whom Isaiah also speaks: 'And the Sabaim, men of high rank, will come to you' (Isaiah 43:14). Hence, it is also said that incense (thus) comes from there, as Virgil says: 'From Sabaim, a wealthy kingdom, come the gift of frankincense' (Aeneid, Book I).

. . . And a hundred altars burn with Sabeian incense: though some suspect that they are Arabian. Therefore, the Jews promise to themselves, or rather dream, that in the last days they will be gathered by the Lord and brought back to Jerusalem. Not content with this happiness, they assert that God himself will deliver into their hands the sons and daughters of the Romans, so that the Jews may sell them, not to the Persians, Ethiopians, and other neighboring nations, but to the Sabaeans, a very distant people: because the Lord has spoken and will avenge the injury to his people. And to them and to our Jewish followers who promise for themselves a thousand-year kingdom in the borders of Judea, and a golden Jerusalem, and the blood of sacrifices, and sons and grandsons, and incredible delights, and gates adorned with a variety of gems. But we say that the Lord raised them up after his coming, and continues to raise them up daily, and will raise up those whom various errors led astray from their borders. 'I will raise them up beautifully,' he says, 'as if they were lying and falling, so that those who were lying in heresy may stand in the Church, giving to heretics what they did: That he may deliver their sons and daughters, whom they had instructed in the mysteries and in the fleshly things, into the hands of the sons of Judah, into the hands of those who became rulers of the Churches; and they are instructed in the armor of the Apostle, and they have the shield and spear of the Old and New Testament.' So when they

capture them, they sell their sons and daughters to the Sabaeans, and make them slaves, so that they are far away from their borders; and when they are converted to better things, they begin to be subject to Ecclesiastical teachings.

3:9-11

(V. 9 et seq.) Cry out these things ((or: Cry out this)) among the nations: sanctify war, awaken the strong. Let all men of war come near and ascend. Convert your plows into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weak say, 'I am strong.' Burst forth and come, all you nations around, and gather together, there the Lord will cause your strong ones ((or: his strong ones)) to fall. LXX: Proclaim these things ((or: Proclaim this)) among the nations: sanctify war, arouse fighters, bring and ascend all men of war. Plough your ploughs into swords, and your sickles into spears. Let the strong say, 'I prevail.' Gather together and come in, all nations round about, and gather yourselves together there, let the warrior be meek. This place is understood in two ways: for some think that these things are said to the holy nations, that they may prepare for war and fight for the people of God, that they may convert all the tools of agriculture into swords and spears, that the weak may say that they are strong, and let them all come from round about and be gathered together in the battle of the Lord, especially since according to the Septuagint it follows: 'Let the warrior be meek and gentle,' and according to what is written in Chronicles (1 Chronicles 5:8): 'And across the Jordan from Reuben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh, with all their warlike gear, one hundred and twenty thousand men: all these warriors, prepared for battle with peaceful intent.' They wish to be the imitators of the true David, of whom we read: 'Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness' (Psalm 131:1). And he himself speaks in the Gospel: 'Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart' (Matth. XI, 29), that is, gentle. They also want men to be understood, who, having destroyed the beginnings of infants, have grown in strength to the maturity of age, and have transferred all the zeal with which they previously cultivated the fields of their souls to the necessity of battle. However, it seems to us, who follow the opinion of the Hebrews, that the contrary is true. For this reason, the opposing nations are preparing for battle against Israel, and they exchange their plows and hoes, or sickles, for swords and spears (Isa. II), and the weak says that he is strong, and they burst forth and come from all sides, and they gather against the army of the Lord, so that the Lord may cause their strong ones to perish, and that they may understand that they are overcome by God opposing them. Israel promises miserable things for itself according to the letter. According to the applied allegory, we can understand it as the nations of demons, those who fight against the Church daily, and finally, those who will fight against the saints of the Lord under the Antichrist, who are gathered together for the purpose of perishing.

3:12-13

(Verse 12 and following) Let the nations arise and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Send in the sickles, for the harvest is ripe. Come and go down, for the winepress is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is multiplied. LXX: Let all the nations arise and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Send in the sickles, for the grape harvest is ripe. Come in and tread, for the winepress is full, and the wine vats overflow, for their evil deeds are abundant. And these things are interpreted in two ways according to a higher meaning. Some people understand that the

nations will ascend into the valley of Josaphat, which means the judgment of the Lord, and sit there before God, so that He may judge all the nations that come from every direction in a favorable manner. In this way, the saints will gather against the adversaries of God and send forth their sickles to reap the ripe harvest of the enemies, and they will come and go, treading on the wine vats, because there is a vintage present, and the must is so abundant that the wine vats cannot contain it. And so, in order to understand what the vintage is and what the full winepress signifies, he has introduced the multiplication of their malice, and without a doubt it signifies those who have congregated against the Lord. But others say that the nations will rise up and come together in the Valley of Josaphat and sit before the Lord, so that he may judge all nations. They assert that they will prepare themselves and gather all the weapons of the fighters, and in the valley of Josaphat they will be cut down by the sickles of the Lord. For the time of judgment had come against them, and their evils had grown so much that they overcame God's patience. For the Amorites were expelled then, when their sins were fulfilled. The Jews interpret this place as referring to the fierce nations of Gog and Magog, about which we have spoken above, believing that in the last time, when Jerusalem is restored, they will come against God's people during a thousand-year reign, and in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which is situated to the east of the temple, they will fall ((another reading: rage)). For the time of their destruction has come, and the time of pouring out blood is imminent.

3:14-15

(Verse 14, 15) O people, people in the valley of slaughter, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of slaughter. The sun and moon are darkened, and the stars have withdrawn their shining. LXX: The sound is heard in the valley of judgment, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of judgment. The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars will make their shining go away. In that place where we have set ourselves, people, people, and the Seventy have translated, the sound is heard. In Hebrew it is written 'Amonim, Amonim,' which certainly means multitude and the multitude of those who are to be judged, and noise and sound. Again, when we mentioned in the valley of cutting, following the translation of Aquila and Symmachus and the fifth edition, the Septuagint and Theodotion translated τῆς δόξης καὶ τῆς κρισεως as 'causae et iudicii': for which it is written in Hebrew Harus (), which the Hebrews interpret not only as cutting, but also as gold, which, namely, in the valley of judgment, which they suspect to be Gehenna, after the impurities of sins have been burned away, pure gold remains. Therefore, the people of the nations, of which we have spoken above in the valley of judgment or destruction, are gathered together to be killed and to perish, and to be judged by the Lord. The grief of the day and the torments of those who perish will be such that not even the sun, moon, and other stars will be able to look upon them; but they will withdraw their brightness and the severity of the judge and grant each one according to their works, they will not dare to look upon. Not because they are more merciful than the judgments of God; but because every creature fears for their own judgment in the torments of others.

3:16-17

(Ver. 16, 17.) And the Lord will roar from Zion, and from Jerusalem He will give His voice, and the heavens and the earth will be moved. And the Lord is the hope of His people and the strength of the children of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy

mountain. And Jerusalem will be holy, and strangers will not pass through it anymore. LXX: But the Lord will cry out from Zion, and from Jerusalem He will give His voice, and the heavens and the earth will be moved. And the Lord will spare His people, and will strengthen the children of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain. And Jerusalem will be holy, and foreigners will not pass through it anymore. When the brightness of the sun, moon, and all the stars will be changed into darkness, the Lord will roar from Zion like a lion, or he will cry out, and his voice will be so loud and terrifying that the pillars of the heavens and the foundations of the earth will shake. And when he is so severe towards those who deserve punishment, he will be merciful towards his people, and he will give strength to those who are called the children of Israel, namely the ones who see God with their minds; or the most upright of God, whom we can rightly call the most righteous God: those who have not walked on crooked paths, but have walked in the path of Christ, have done all things righteously. Then those who are punished and those who are taken up into glory will know that the Lord dwells in His watchtower in Zion, and on His holy mountain in Christmont, or in the one who has prepared himself as a worthy dwelling for God. Then there will be the holy vision of Jerusalem, the vision of peace, from which Solomon received his name, and no foreigners will pass through it any longer. By foreigners, understand demons who are external to God, or all wicked thoughts and sins, of which the prophet speaks: 'From foreigners spare your servant' (Psalm 18:24), which would no longer find a way in us if we have the peace of God and our heart is not open to our adversaries. The Jews and our people, as we have said, who follow Jewish practices, recount a story of a thousand years, when they believe that Christ will dwell in Zion, and in Jerusalem adorned with gold and jewels, gathering the people of the saints, so that those who have been oppressed in this age by all nations may reign over all nations in this same age.

3:18 (Verse 18) And it shall come to pass in that day, the mountains shall drip sweetness, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streams of Judah shall flow with water. LXX: And it shall come to pass in that day, the mountains shall drip sweetness, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streams of Judah shall flow with water. The Lord will dwell in Zion and on His holy mountain, when no one attempts to pass through the holy Jerusalem, whoever is on the mountain and has reached the heights of virtue, shall sweat with sweetness and honey shall drip from him, and from him shall flow spiritual graces, of which the prophet speaks: How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth (Ps. CXVIII, 103)! But those who are lower in the mountains, and have not yet ascended to the summit of perfection, will be called hills, and from them will flow streams of milk, by which the roughness of infancy in Christ is nourished, and rivers of water, which the Lord has testified will flow from their womb (John 7). For all the streams, or outpourings, of Judah will be filled with water, and there will be nothing dry in them, with all spiritual grace overflowing. And a spring will come forth from the house of the Lord and will water the torrent of thorns. The Septuagint translated 'torrent of thorns' as 'torrent of ropes,' that is, $\sigma\chi\omicron\nu\omega\nu$, which either means ropes or, according to the Egyptians, a certain measure of distance. The Psalmist says: 'You have searched out my path and my rope' (Psalm 138:2). For in the river Nile, or in its streams, ships are accustomed to be pulled by ropes, having certain spaces called ropes, so that fresh necks of those tired from labor may succeed to those pulling. It is not surprising that each nation designates specific distances with their own names, considering that the Latins call a thousand paces, the Gauls leucas, the Persians parasangas, and the Germans, the entire region, rastas, and each one has a different measurement. This is because the Hebrew

word *sattim* () was translated as "funiculos" by the Seventy. However, there is no doubt that all the things we read in the tabernacle of God were made of acacia wood, which the Seventy interpreted as indestructible wood. But there is a species of tree in the desert, resembling white thorns in color and leaves, not in size. Otherwise, these trees are so large that the widest planks are cut from them, and the wood is very strong and incredibly light and beautiful, so much so that the wealthiest and most skilled craftsmen make presses, which they call '■ρσενας' and 'θηλ■ας', from these woods, which cannot be found in cultivated places or on Roman soil, but only in the wilderness of Arabia. For the stream of ropes or thorns, Symmachus translated it as the valley of thorns. This place is near Livias, across the Dead Sea, six miles away from it, where Israel once fornicated with the Midianites. The prophet Micah mentions this place on behalf of God, saying: My people, remember, I beg you, what Balak, the king of Moab, planned, and what Balaam, the son of Beor, answered him from Settim to Gilgal (Micah 6:5). For this reason, the Seventy translated it as 'from the ropes,' that is, from the ropes all the way to Galgal. Therefore, a spring will come out of the house of the Lord, which is interpreted as the Church. About this, both Ezekiel and Zechariah write at the end of their volumes (Ezek. 47, Zech. 13), that our thorns and vices and sins, which have produced no fruit of righteousness, will be transformed into the Lord's new vineyards, and our aridity will be moistened by abundant waters, and instead of thorns and thistles, we will bear multiple flowers of virtues. And in that place, where Israel once fornicated and Beelphegor was initiated, lilies of chastity and roses of modesty and virginity abound.

3:19

(Verse 19.) Egypt will be in desolation, and Edom will be a desert of destruction, because they have acted unjustly towards the sons of Judah and have shed innocent blood in their land. According to the Septuagint: Egypt will be in ruin, and Edom will be a field of desolation, because of the iniquities of the sons of Judah, because they have shed righteous blood in their land. And in this place, the Jews sleep a very heavy sleep: in the last time, when they will not receive Christ but will receive the Antichrist, they vainly imagine revenge upon the Egyptians who are nearby and upon the Romans whom they interpret as Edomites." } Just as Pharaoh and his entire army, who held the people of God captive for four hundred and thirty years, were submerged in the Red Sea, so too may the Romans, who will possess the Jews for the same period of time, be destroyed by the vengeance of the Lord. Let them not hope in vain for this. For they cannot explain why, when there are so many nations in the world, only two, the Egyptians and the Edomites, are expected to be punished. Or why the Romans are seen as equivalent to the Edomites, when we can assert with equal license of lying from the opposite perspective, that the term 'Edomites' refers to the Persians, or the Elamites, or the Franks, or the Alemanni, and other nations." } But let us say that in the time of the Lord's resurrection, or on the day of judgment (we receive both), Egypt and Edom, in that Egypt and Edom signify, must be destroyed. Egypt is called Egypt, which means 'oppression', that is, persecuting and troubling the holy people of God. Edom means 'earthly' or 'bloody'. Therefore, whoever persecutes the people of God and is occupied with earthly works and sheds innocent blood daily, that is, of those whom he deceives, will be brought to destruction, just as we know the souls of the martyrs also cry out under the altar: 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, will you not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' (Rev. 6:10)

3:20-21

(Vers. 20 seqq.) And Judaea shall be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation; and I will cleanse their blood, which I have not cleansed: and the Lord will dwell in Zion. LXX: But Judaea shall be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation, and I will require their blood, which I have not yet avenged, and the Lord will dwell in Zion. It is not this Judaea, which we see desolate, that shall be inhabited forever; nor is it this Jerusalem, whose ruins we behold; but it is that Judaea, whose daughters have rejoiced and been glad in all the judgments of the Lord. And at the end of the fiftieth psalm we read: Do good, O Lord, in your good pleasure to Zion, that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up. In this province of confession and glory, and in this city where the peace of the Lord is seen, there will be an eternal dwelling, not in one, or in three, or in many generations, but from generation to generation, that is, in two generations of those who have believed, both from the Jews and from the Gentiles. And the Lord will cleanse the blood of all sins, which He had not cleansed before, so that He may cleanse them in the Gospel, whom He had left impure as sinners in the Law. For He has concluded all under sin, so that He may have mercy on all (Rom. 11); whether He avenges the blood of His servants, which they shed in martyrdom for the confession of His name. And the Lord will dwell in Zion, of which it is written: Its foundations are in the holy mountains; the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob (Ps. 68:1).

Commentary on Jonah

Commentaries on the Book of Jonah by Saint Jerome of Stridon, Priest

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Prologue

About three years have now passed since I first started writing the commentaries on the five Prophets, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Haggai. Detained by another work, I was not able to finish what I had undertaken. For I was writing a book on famous men and two volumes against Jovinian, an apology and an essay on 'the best way to translate', which was addressed to Pammachius, two books to or about Nepotian, and other works which it would be lengthy to recount. Therefore I retake up my commentaries with Jonah after such a long absence. Jonah, a type of Saviour, who prefiguring the resurrection of the Lord by spending "three days and three nights in the belly of a whale" [Mt. 12:40], was able to attain the first ardour so that we might deserve the arrival of the Holy Spirit to us. If indeed Jonah is to be translated as 'dove', and if the dove can be seen as the Holy Spirit, then we can also interpret the Dove as signifying the dove's entrance into us. I know that some classical authors, both Latin and Greek, have spoken much about this book, and through all of their Questions have less enlightened than obscured the ideas, so that in effect their interpretation needs to be interpreted and with the result that the reader comes away feeling less sure of the meaning than beforehand. I am not saying this to criticise these great minds, to abase others in order to extol myself, but rather because it is the place of the commentator to clarify in short and clearly what is obscure; they should be less concerned with displaying their eloquence than with explaining the meaning of the author. We ask therefore where else the prophet Jonah appears in the Holy Scriptures apart from this book and the allusion made to him by the Lord in the Gospels [Mt. 12:39, Luke 11:30]. And if I am not mistaken he is mentioned in the book of Kings in this way: "in the fifth year of Amasiah, the son of Joash, King of Judah, began to rule the son of Jeroboam son of Joash King of Israel in Samaria, for forty-one years. He did much wickedness before the Lord and did not distance himself from all the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. He re-established the frontier of Israel in Samaria from the entrance of Emathia to the Sea of Solitude, according to the word of the Lord

God of Israel, which was spoken by the mouth of his servant Jonah, son of Amittai the prophet, from Gath which is in Ofer." [4 Kings 14:23-25] The Hebrews recount that he was the son of the widow of Sarepta, incited by the prophet Elijah; his mother later said to him, "I know now that you are indeed a man of God, and that the word of God is truly in your mouth" [3 Kings 17:24]; on account of this the child was called Truth. For Amittai in Hebrew can be rendered 'truth' in our language, and because Elijah spoke true, he who was encouraged was called the son of Truth. And Gath is located two miles from Sepphoris, which is now called Diocaesarea, when you are travelling to Tiberia: there is a small castle where his tomb can be seen. Others, however, prefer to place his birth and tomb near Diospolis, which is in Lydia. They do not see that when he writes 'Ofer', this is to distinguish Gath from other towns of this name that can be seen now near to Eleutheropolis or Diospolis. The book of Tobit, though not in the canon, is all the same used by the men of the Church, and it mentions Jonah when Tobit says to his son, "my son, I am old and ready to leave this life. Take your sons and go to Media, my son. For I know what the prophet Jonah has said about Nineveh: she will be destroyed" [Tob. 14:3]. And, indeed, according to the Hebrew and Greek historians, Herodotus in particular, we read that Nineveh was destroyed in the time of King Josiah according to the Hebrews, and King Astyage of the Medians. From this we understand that in the past Jonah predicted that the Ninivites would repent and seek pardon; but afterwards, as they persisted in their sins, they brought the judgement of God upon themselves. The Hebrew tradition is that Hosea, Amos, Isaiah and Jonah prophesied at the same time. This is historical tradition. Not forgetting the others of course: the venerable Pope Chromatius, who took great pains to recount to the Saviour the story of the prophet: he flees, he sleeps, he is thrown into the sea, he is swallowed by a whale, thrown back onto the shore and prays for repentance. And saddened by the safety of this town of many people, he finds comfort in the shade of a fig tree. There he is reproached by God for having taken more care of a green vine which had dried up, than of such a great number of men, and the other details I will try to explain in this volume. But to grasp the complete meaning of the prophet in this short preface there is no better interpretation than that which inspired the prophets and which marked out the lines of the truth of the future for its servants. He therefore speaks to the Jews who do not believe his words and are ignorant of Christ, the son of God: "the men of Nineveh will rise up at the time of judgement with that generation and they will condemn it, for they repented as Jonah required, and here there is more than Jonah!" [Mt. 12:41]. The generation of the Jews is condemned, while the world has faith and Nineveh repents, Israel the disbeliever dies. The Jews have the books themselves, we have the Lord of books; they hold the prophets, we have an understanding of the prophets; "the letter kills them", "the spirit makes us live" [2 Cor. 3:6]; with them Barabbas the robber is released, for us Christ the Son of God is freed.

Chapter 1

Verses 1-2. "Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." Apart from that which the Septuagint translates as, "the noise of their wickedness has risen up even to me", it has translated the rest similarly. Jonah is sent to the gentiles to condemn Israel, because Nineveh had to repent, but the Israelites still persisted in their sin. And when God says, "their wickedness has come up to me", or "the noise of their wickedness..." it is exactly the text of Genesis: "the noise of Sodom and of Gomorrah is very loud" [Gen. 18:20], and to Cain: "the blood of your

brother cries to me from the earth" [Gen. 4:10]. According to tropology the Lord, our Jonah, that is to say 'dove' or 'suffering', (he is given both meaning, either because the Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove and stays with him [Mark. 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32-33], or because he has suffered for our wounds, wept for Jerusalem [Luke 19:41], and because we have been cured by his malice [Is. 53:5]) is truly the son of Truth, for God is Truth [John 14:6]. He is sent to Nineveh the beautiful, that is to the world, where there is nothing more beautiful to our eyes than flesh. In Greek the idea of adornment is in the word cosmos. And when everything had been completed, each one by one, it was said, "and God saw that it was good" [Gen. 1:10]. It is to Nineveh that he goes, the great city, so that although Israel has not wanted to listen, the whole world of peoples will hear God's word. And this is because their wickedness has gone up to God. For although God had made the most beautiful house for man who was devoted to serving his creator, man deprived himself of this by his own will; from childhood his heart fixed upon wickedness [Gen. 8:21; 6:5]. He turned his face to the heaven [Ps. 72:9] and constructed a tower of pride [Gen 11]. He deserves then God to come down to him so that he may be able to rise to heaven by the destruction of repentance, he that did not succeed by the swell of pride.

Verse 3a. "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD." The Septuagint here is similar. The prophet knows by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the repentance of the people is the destruction of the Jews. In this situation it is not that he is trying to save Nineveh, but that moreover he does not want to see it destroyed. In another place Moses prays for his people: "if you can spare them this sin, spare them; if not, erase me from your book that you have written" [Ex. 32:31-32]; to this prayer, Israel was saved and Moses was not erased from the Book: even better the Lord indeed profited from his servant by sparing his other servants. For when God says, "release me", he shows that he can be held. This is similar to what the apostle says: "I wished to be anathema for my brothers who are Israelites according to their flesh" [Rom. 9:3]. Not that he desires to die however, for whom to live is Christ and to die is a profit [Phil. 1:21]; but he deserves life more when he wants to save others. Besides, seeing the other prophets sent to the lost flocks of the house of Israel [Mt. 10:6] to incite the people to repent, and Balaam [Num. 23.24] the divine author of a prophecy about the deliverance of the Israelite people, Jonah feels himself punished by being chosen alone to speak against the Assyrians, the enemies of Israel, in the foreign capital where idolatry and ignorance of God still ruled. And what is more he feared that in spite of his prophesying they would still not be converted to repent, and that Israel would not be completely abandoned. For he knew by this Spirit which had entrusted him with the role of hero among the gentiles, that once the nations had come together in belief, then Israel would surely perish. And he feared that whatever was to happen in the future would not happen in his time. Thus Jonah does as Cain does: he flees from the face of the Lord [Gen. 4:16] and wants to flee to Tarshish, which Josephus interprets as that Tarsus of Cilicia, but changes the first letter. This can also be seen in the book of the Paralipomenon [2 Chron. 20:36-37], which says that there is a place in India which is called the same. According to the Hebrews Tarshish means more generally 'sea', according to this passage: "by a fierce wind you will break the ships of Tarshish!" [Ps. 47:8], or the ships of the sea. And in Isaiah: "cry out, O ships of Tarshish!" [Is. 23:1,14]. I remember that I have already spoken about this several years ago in a letter to Marcella. The prophet did not intent to flee to such a place, but throwing himself into the sea, he just wants to go anywhere. And this is more pertinent when talking of a fugitive or one who is afraid, that he does not choose carefully where he wants to flee to, but just jumps at the first opportunity to take to the

seas. We can also say this: he thought that God was "known" only "in Judea", "and in Israel his name is great" [Ps. 75:2]. After he had seen that God was also in the waves he confesses and declares: "I am a Hebrew and I fear the Lord of heaven" [Jonah 1:9], who made the sea and the dry land. But if he had made the sea and the dry earth, why believe when you leave the land that you can escape the creator of the sea on the sea? At the same time when he sees the others sailors saved and converted, he learns that all the wickedness of Nineveh can be saved and converted by a similar confession. We can say too about our Lord and Saviour that he abandoned his home and country: at the incarnation he fled in some manner the heavens for Tarshish, the sea of that age, according to what is written in another place: "here is the sea, great and wide; there are numerous beings, animals great and small; there the boats come in and go out, and this dragon that you created to be crushed" [Ps. 103:25-6]. And he says too in his passion, "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by!" [Mt. 26:39], lest at the unified complaints of the people, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him!" [Luke 23:21], and "we have no king except Caesar" [John 19:15], the crowd of people should enter all together; and lest the branches of the olive-tree should be broken, and in their place the shoots of the wild olive should grow [Rom. 11:17-25]. He had such honour and love of his country in light of the choice of the patriarchs and of the promise of Abraham, that he said on the cross, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do" [Luke 23:34]. Or even since Tarshish can be translated as 'the contemplation of joy', the prophet, coming to Joppa, whose name means 'beautiful', hastens to hurry towards the joy and to rejoice in the pleasure of rest, to give himself completely over of contemplation. For he thinks that it is better to rejoice in beauty and in the variety of knowledge than to save the other people by letting that people die, from whom Christ would have been born.

Verse 3b. "And went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD." LXX: "and he went up to Joppa, and he found a boat going to Tarshish; after paying his fare he went on board to sail with them to Tarshish, far from the face of the Lord." Joppa is a port of Judea [2 Chron. 2:16], and it has been seen in the book of Kingdoms [i.e. 'Kings'] and of the Paralipomenon. It was there that the King Hiram of Tyr transported wood from Liban by raft, then they were taken by chariot by road to Jerusalem. In this place even to this day rocks can be seen on the shore on which the chained Andromeda was saved by Perseus. The learned reader will know the story. And in light of the nature of the countryside, it is said quite rightly that the prophet came from a direction that is mountainous and precipitous, and went down to Joppa in the plain. He found there a ship that was moored and he went upon the sea. He paid his fare or the price of embarking, that is of his journey, according to the Hebrew, or the fare for himself, as the Septuagint has translated it. "and he went down into it" as the Hebrew itself says, (for *iered* in Hebrew is translated as 'went down'), for in his flight he took great care to find a hiding place. Or "he goes up", as it is written in the Vulgate edition, for going where the boat is going, thinking that he has escaped if he has left Judea. But our Lord is also at the edge of the shore of Judea, which is called 'very beautiful' because since he was in Judea, he did not want to take the bread of sons to give it to dogs. [Mt. 15:26] But because he had come for the lost flocks of the house of Israel [Mt. 10:6] he paid the price to those who transport him. Thus he who at first wants to heal his people, saves the inhabitants of the sea, and through great winds and storms, (that is his suffering and the reproof of the cross) he is plunged into Hell and saves those whom had not noticed by appearing to sleep on the boat [Mt. 8:24-5]. The wise reader will not want to try to make tropology

and history concur. For the Apostle refers Agar and Sara [Gal. 4:22-31] to the two Testaments, and all the same we are not able to interpret everything that is recounted in this story in a tropological way. And when explaining about Adam and Eve to the Ephesians, he says, "this is why man leaves his mother and father to join with a wife, and both will become one flesh. [Gen. 2:24] There is a great mystery: I mean Christ and the Church." [Eph. 5:31-2] Are we then first to refer the beginning of Genesis, the creation of the world, the formation of mankind, to Christ and to the Church under the pretext that the Apostle has used regarding this text? Let us admit what is written here: "thus man will leave his father" [Gen. 2:24], we can apply this to Christ by saying that he left God his Father in heaven to unite the people of the world in the Church. But how can we interpret what follows, "his mother"? Unless perhaps we are to say that he left heavenly Jerusalem, that mother of saints, and other ideas that are more complicated? And this too is written by the same Apostle: "they were drinking from a spiritual rock which was accompanying them, and this rock was Christ" [I Cor. 10:4], but let us not try to relate the entire book of Exodus to Christ. For what can we say? That this stone was hit by Moses not just once, but twice [Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:11], that the waters flowed [Ps. 77:20] and that the floods were filled up. Are we to regard the entire story of this passage in this case as allegory? Is it not rather that each passage ought to receive a spiritual meaning according to the diversity of history? Therefore just as these texts each in this way have their interpretations and do not entail the same allegory in their context, so the prophet will not be able to be taken completely to the Lord without difficulty for the interpreter. And if it is said in the Gospel, "O wicked and adulterous generation, that she asks for a sign? As a sign she will only have the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah spent three days and three night in the belly of a fish, so the son of man will spend three days and three nights in the bosom of the earth" [Mt. 12:39-40]. The remainder of this account does not concern Christ to the same extent. Indeed wherever this reading can be said to apply without discrepancy, we also try to make it fit.

Verse 4. "But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." LXX: "and the Lord induced a great wind over the sea and a great storm was over the sea, and the boat threatened to break up." The flight of the prophet can be related to man in general, who, forsaking the commands of God, flees from his face and goes out into the world. But in consequence a storm of wickedness and the shipwreck of the entire world are sent against him, and he is made to pay attention to God and to return to that which he had fled. From this we can understand that what appears to be advantageous to mankind, turns into their downfall by God's will. And not only is their aid no use to those whom it is offered, but even those who offer it are destroyed. Therefore we read that the Assyrians conquered Egypt because she helped Israel against the will of the Lord [Is. 20:3-6]. The boat is in danger because it has taken on board a dangerous passenger. The waves are aroused by the wind, a storm begins over a calm sea. When God is opposed nothing is safe.

Verse 5a. "Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them." LXX: "and the sailors were afraid and each one cried out to his God and they threw the boat's cargo into the sea to lighten the boat". They believe that the ship with its normal cargo is too heavy, and do not understand that all the weight comes from the fleeing prophet. The sailors are afraid, each one cries out to his God. They do not know the truth, but they do not forget providence, and with a false religion they know that

there is something to pray to. They cast their cargo into the sea so that the ship might cross the immensity of the waves more lightly. But for Israel, neither prosperity nor wickedness can lead her back to know God. Christ weeps for the people, but He has dry eyes.

Verse 5b. "But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep." LXX: "Now Jonah went down to the heart of the boat and slept and snored". According to the history of this passage it describes the peace of the spirit of the prophet. He is troubled by the storm, or by the dangers; he just keeps the same manner of spirit when the storm is imminent, as when the weather is calm. The others though cry out to their gods, and cast the cargo overboard: each man to his own. But Jonah is so peaceful, so calm, his spirit is so at rest that he goes down to the heart of the ship to enjoy a peaceful sleep. Indeed we can also say: he knows he is a fugitive and a sinner, because he has not obeyed the commands of the Lord. It is because all the other men do not know why there is a storm that Jonah knows that he alone is the cause of it. This is why he goes down to the interior of the ship and hides himself sadly, so that he does not see the waves, like the avengers of God, rise up against him. And if he sleeps, this is not necessarily a sign of his security, but of worry. For we read that the apostles gave in to sleep on account of great sadness at the sight of the Lord's suffering [Luke 22:45]. For if we interpret the sleep of the prophet as a sign, his terrible torture, they represent a man who has fallen asleep from the drug of his wickedness: not only has he fled from God but moreover he ignores the wrath of God as his spirit is clouded by a sort of madness. He sleeps therefore in a kind of false security and his deep sleep sounds out through his nostrils.

Verse 6. "So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest you, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." LXX: "and the helmsman come to him and he said to him, what are you doing sleeping? Get up, and call upon your God. If he can find a way to save us then we may not die. It is natural that each one has more confidence in someone else when they feel themselves to be in such danger. This is why the helmsman or captain, who should have been encouraging the frightened crewmembers, but saw the seriousness of the danger, woke and reprimanded the sleeper for his thoughtless security and asked him to pray to his God immediately. He shared everyone's danger, and therefore he had to pray along with everyone else. According to tropology there are many men sailing with Jonah, who each have their own God and hasten towards the 'contemplation of joy'. But when Jonah has been discovered by chance and his death has appeased the all-encompassing storm and made calm the waters, then the one God is revered and spiritual victims are sacrificed, which according to the text were not found when they were amongst the waves.

Verse 7. "And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah." LXX: 'and they said to each other: come, let us draw lots to see who it is that has brought this wickedness upon us. And they drew lots, and the lot fell to Jonah.' They knew the ways of the sea and knew the causes of the storms and winds in such weather. Without a doubt they had seen the waves rise up as usual, and as they must have seen many times before, but they must never before have found the person to blame for the shipwreck, and through him tried to avoid certain danger. We should not be driven by this example to believe in fate, or to believe that this text should be connected to that of the Acts of the Apostles where Matthias is chosen by lot [Acts 1:26], because personal privileges do not make common law. For just as an old lady speaks up for the condemning of

Balaam [Num. 22:28], as Pharaoh [Gen. 41] and Nebuchadnezzar [Dan. 2], in their own judgement, knew the future through dreams and yet do not see that there is a divine judgement in this, like Caiaphas prophesies unknowing, that it is better for one to die for all [John 11:50; 18:14]: just as this fugitive is betrayed by fate, not by the powers of the fates, above all the powers of the pagan fates, but by the will of hi who controlled uncertain fate. With regard to the meaning of the expression "to know by whom this wickedness had come upon us", we ought to take 'wickedness' as a synonym of affliction, of disaster, as in this passage: "every day his wickedness was enough" [Mt. 6:34], and in the prophet Amos: "is there wickedness in a town without God being the author?" [Amos 3:6]. And in Isaiah: "It is I the Lord, who make goodness and wickedness" [Isaiah 45:7]. But in other places too wickedness can be seen to be the opposite of virtue, as in the passage of our prophet that we have read above: "the cry of their wickedness went up to me" [Jonah 1:1].

Verse 8. "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray you, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence do you come? what is thy country? and of what people art you?" LXX: 'and they said to him, 'tell us how this wickedness has come upon us: what is your occupation, where do you come from, where you are going to, from which country, and which people you are from?' '. Fate had shown him to them: they force him to admit why such a great storm, or for what reason divine wrath had come against them. Tell us, they say, where this wickedness comes from, which has come upon us, what work you do, from what land, from what people you flee, and where you are going to so quickly? Let us note the brevity here that is also seen in Virgil [Aen. 8:112]: young men, what cause has brought you to try out unknown ways? Where are you going? He says. Your people? From which land? Do you bring war or peace? This questioning brings his identity, his country, his journey, the town he comes from, so that the reason for the wickedness can be known.

Verse 9. "And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land." LXX: 'and he replied: I am a worshipper of the Lord, and I revere God of the heavens who made the sea and the dry land'. He did not say, 'I am a Jew', the name given to the people after the schism between the ten and two tribes [3 Kings. 12:19; 14:21], but 'I am a Hebrew', that is to say perates [Grk. 'a pilgrim and traveller'] , passing by as Abraham who was able to say: "I am a guest and a traveller as all my fathers" [Ps. 38:13], and about whom it is written in another psalm: "they passed from one nation to another, from one realm to another people" [Ps. 104:13]. Moses says, "I will go so that I might see this great vision." [Ex. 3] I fear the Lord God of the heavens, not the gods that you have invoked and who cannot save us, but the God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land. The sea that I flee to, the earth that I flee from. And appropriately the land is not just called land, but rather dry land so that it contrasts with the sea. In short here he mentions the creator of the universe who is the Lord of heaven, earth, and sea. But one question begs to be asked: how do they know that he speaks the truth? 'I fear the Lord God of heaven', since he has not done what this God has actually commanded him to do. The reply would surely be that the sinners themselves would fear God, and that it is appropriate for servants of the Lord not to love, but to fear. Here however you can see fear in the cult according to the meaning of those who were listening and until now knew not God.

Verse 10. "Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why have you done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them." LXX: 'Then the men were very afraid and said to him, "why have you done this?" for the men knew that

he had fled from the face of the Lord, since he had told them.' The chronological order is reversed here, for you could have said there was no reason to fear because of his declaration: "I am a Hebrew and I fear the Lord God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land". Immediately we are told why they were afraid: because he had told them that he was fleeing the presence of the Lord without having carried out his commands. Then they make excuses and say, "why did you do this?", and this means, "if you fear God, why did you do this? If this God that you revere is so powerful according to you, then how can you believe that you will be able to escape him?". They are seized by a great fear, for they realise that he is holy, and from a holy nation (having set out from Joppa they must have known the privilege of the Hebrew people), yet nonetheless they are not able to hide the fugitive. For he who flees may be powerful, but he who seeks is all the more powerful. They do not dare to hand him over to the Lord, yet they cannot hide him. They reprehend blame, and avow their fear. They pray to Jonah to give himself up for the sin he has committed. Or indeed, when they say, "why have you done this?", they are not inciting him, but questioning, wanting to know the cause of his flight, the flight of a servant from his master, of a son from his father, of a man from his God. They ask, therefore, what is this great mystery that makes you flee from the land and seek the seas, leave your country and set out for foreign lands?

Verse 11. "Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto you, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous." LXX: 'then they said to him, what should we do with you, so that the sea is calm for us? For the sea was surging its waves more and more'. It is because of you, you say, that the winds, the waves, the sea and swells have been unleashed. You have revealed the cause of this wickedness, now tell us how to stop it. The sea swells against us, and we know that a God is angry because we took you on board. If we have sinned by taking you in, then what can we do so that the Lord does not become angrier? "What should we do with you?" that is to say: "shall we kill you?" but you are faithful to the Lord. Are we to protect you? But you flee from Him. All we have to do is carry out whatever you command, all you have to do is give the command that the sea be calm, for now its wildness attests the wrath of the creator. The narrator also adds the reason for this question. The sea, he says, was continually increasing in wildness. It was swelling, in the known way; it was swelling for the revenge of its Lord; it was swelling, following the fleeing prophet. And at every moment it was becoming more and more wild, and to the delaying sailors' eyes it rose in greater waves to show that it would not put off for long the creator's revenge.

Verse 12. "And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." LXX: 'and he said to them, take me and throw me into the sea, and the sea will become calm for you. For I know well that it is on account of me that these great waves are against you.' It is against me that the thunder sounds, it seeks me, it threatens to shipwreck you in order to reach me. It will seize me so that my death might let you live. For I know this, he says. This great storm is on my account. And I am not unaware that this is my punishment, this confusion of the elements, this trouble of the world. This wrath is for me, but you are going to be the victims of a shipwreck. The waves themselves command you to throw me into the sea. And since I will have felt the full effect of the storm you will be in calm seas again. We must note here the greatness of spirit of our fugitive: he is not evasive, he does not hide or deny his guilt, but having confessed his flight he accepts his punishment willingly. He would rather die so that the other sailors do not perish on account of him, and so that

he does not add murder to desertion. That's it for the story. But we are also not unaware of the wild winds, which the Lord orders in the Gospel to quiet, that the ship in danger in which Jonah was sleeping, and that the raised sea which is reprimanded: "silence, and calm down" [Mk. 4:39], refer to the Lord the Saviour and to the Church in peril, or even to Christ awaking the apostles, and they themselves leaving their sufferings behind throw him somehow headlong into the waves. Our Jonah says, "for I know that it is on account of me that this great storm is upon you", for the winds are watching me journey to Tarshish with you, that is travel to the contemplation of joy to lead you with me to goodness so that wherever I am, so is the Father and you will be there too [John 14:3; 17:27]. This is why this anger rumbles, why the world which is in wickedness [1 John 5:19] groans. It is in this way that the elements are disturbed. Death wants to devour me so that you may be killed as well: she does not see that as she took food in a net, my death will cause her death. Take me and throw me into the sea. For we do not have to run away from death, but receive it with open arms when it takes us from others. Thus, in the persecutions it is not allowed to kill oneself, unless chastity is in danger, but one must put one's neck to the executioner. Go, he says, calm the winds, pour libations on the sea: the storm which savages against you on account of me will be calmed by my death.

Verse 13. "Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them." LXX: 'and the sailors strive to turn the ship to dry land but they cannot, for the sea swelled up against them'. The prophet has pronounced sentence against himself; but the sailors do not dare touch him because they have learned that he is a follower of God. They were striving to return to the dry land, to get out of this danger; they refused to shed blood, preferring rather to die than kill. O how changed are they now! The people that had served God [Deut. 10:12] saying, "crucify him, crucify him" [Lk. 23:21]. They are ordered to kill him: the sea is raging, the storm commands this, and they forget their own danger and only think to save another. Therefore the phrase of the Septuagint is appropriate: *parebiazonto*, they wanted to use all their force and conquer nature so as not to offend the prophet of God. If the sailors rowed to regain the land, it was because they believed they could deliver the ship from danger without realising what Jonah, who ought to have suffered, had said. All the while Jonah was in the sea the ship sat safely in the water.

Verse 14. "Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech you, O LORD, we beseech you, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for you, O LORD, have done as it pleased you." LXX: 'and they cried to the Lord and said, but no, Lord, let us not die to let this man live. Lay not innocent blood upon us. For O Lord you have done as you wished.' The sailors' faith is strong: they are all in danger of losing their lives, and yet pray for the lives of another. They know well that spiritual death is worse than natural death of the body. Do not lay innocent blood upon us, they say. They take the Lord as witness not to visit them for what they are about to do, and say something like this: 'we do not want to kill your prophet, but he himself has proclaimed your wrath, and the storm shows us that you have done what you wished, O Lord. Your wish is accomplished by our doing'. This seems to be the confession of Pilate, as he washes his hands and says, "I am clean of the blood of this man" [Mt. 27:24]. The gentiles do not want Christ to die, and affirm that it is innocent blood. And the Jew say, "let his blood fall upon us again and on our son" [Mt. 27:25]. This is why when they raise their hands to the sky, they will not be heard, for they are full of blood. For your will has been done, Lord. We welcomed the passenger,

and the whirlwind began, the winds blew and the sea swelled in waves. The fugitive was brought by fate, and tells what we must do: all of this, Lord, is the effect of your will. Yes, Lord, your will has been done. In this way the Saviour speaks in the Psalm, "Lord, I wanted to do your will" [Ps. 39:9].

Verse 15. "So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging." LXX: 'and they took Jonah and they threw him into the sea, and the sea became ceased from its agitation'. He did not say, they grabbed him and threw him but they raised him up as if they were carrying him with respect and honour, and they threw him into the sea without him struggling, but rather he went willingly. And the sea ceased because it had found the man it was searching for. Just as when you pursue a fugitive, and running, catch up with him, then stop to grab hold of him; so too the sea was wild without Jonah, and then when it had in its lap what it desired it rejoiced in having him and cherished him, and the calm returned by this joy. If we consider before the suffering of Christ, the confessions of the world, the contrary winds of different opinions, the ship and all human kind, that is all creation to be in danger, then, after the suffering of Christ there is the calm of faith, the peace of the world, universal safety, conversion to God, and we will see how after Jonah has been thrown overboard the sea ceases from its raging.

Verse 16. "Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows." LXX: similar. Before the anger of the Lord the sailors implored their gods under the effect of their fear; after his anger they fear the Lord, that is they revere and worship Him. They do not worship Him in the usual way, as we have seen in the beginning, but with "a great fear", according to that which is said: "from all their spirit and all their heart and all their soul" [Deut. 6:5; Mt. 22:37]. And they sacrificed victims that indeed, to take this literally, they were not able to have out at sea. But this is because sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit. [Ps. 50:19] And it is said in another place: "offer to God a sacrifice of praise, acquit your vows to the Highest." [Ps. 49:14] And again: "we acquit ourselves to you of our vows that we have promised". [Hos. 14:3] This is how they offer a sacrifice in the middle of the sea, and they promise others vowing never to be far from Him whom they have begun to revere and worship. They were seized by a great fear for they recognised from the calm sea and the disappearing storm that the prophet had spoken true. Jonah at sea, a fugitive and shipwrecked, once dead saves the ship in the waves, saves the pagans who had been beforehand divided in different beliefs by the wickedness of the world. And Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, and Joel, who prophesied at the same time did not manage to convert the people in Judea. This shows that the shipwreck could only be saved by the death of the fugitive.

Verse 17a. "Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." LXX: 'and the Lord ordered a great fish to swallow Jonah'. The Lord commanded death and the underworld to receive the prophet. To the eager jaws of death he seemed a prey: she had such joy in swallowing him, and such sadness in spitting him out. Thus happened what is written in Hosea: "I will be your death, O Death! I will be your bite, Hell!" [Hos. 13:14]. In the Hebrew we read "a great fish", which the Septuagint and the Lord in the Gospel call a whale, to explain the matter in short. For the Hebrew says dag gadol that we translate as 'a big fish'. Evidently this means a whale. We must note too that where he awaited death, he found his salvation. And when it says, "he had prepared", this is even right at the beginning of creation, the animal which is mentioned in the psalm: "this dragon which you have created to play with him" [Ps. 103:26]. Or even he makes a fish come near to the ship to take in its belly Jonah who has been thrown over board, and to provide his rescue not his death. So he who felt the wrath of God in the boat was to feel his

benevolence in his death.

Verse 17b. "And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." LXX: 'and Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights'. The Lord shows in the Gospel the symbolism of this passage [Mt. 12:40], and it is superfluous to say in the same terms or even in other terms what he who has suffered has already said. But we ask ourselves this: how was he three days and three nights in the belly of the earth. Some scholars take the view according to *paraskeuen*, because of the solar eclipse from the sixth to the ninth hour when night followed day, this would be two days and nights, and adding the Sabbath, believe that we should count this as three days and three nights. But I prefer to understand this by reason of *synecdoche*, seeing the whole as a part: where he is dead in *paraskeuen* [Lk. 23:54], let us count one day and one night; two with the Sabbath; the third night which arises from the day of the Lord, let us take that as the beginning of the next day, for, in Genesis [Genesis 1:5-8] the night is not of the preceding day, but of the following day, that is to say the beginning of the next day, not the end of the previous. To understand this better I will say it more simply: if a man leaves his house at nine and the next day he arrives at his other house at three. And if I say that he has been two days in travelling, I will not be reprimanded as a liar, because he has not used all the hours of two days, but only a part for his journey. Nonetheless this seems to me to be the interpretation. If someone does not agree with this, and he can explain the meaning in a clearer way, then we should follow his interpretation.

Chapter 2

Verse 1. "Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly." LXX: similar. If Jonah is compared to the Lord, and his time of three days and three nights in the belly of the whale is a sign of the suffering of the Saviour, his prayer also ought to be a kind of prayer of the Saviour. Some people, I don't doubt, will find it difficult to believe that a man can spend three days and three nights in the belly of a whale, especially after a shipwreck. These people can either be religious or not. But if they have faith, they will believe this all the more: how three children thrown into a furnace of hot fire were so well protected that their clothes were not even singed [Dan. 3:94/27]; how the sea drew back on itself into two sides and held itself up like a wall to offer a route for the people who wanted to pass [Ex. 14:22-29]; how with all human moderation the anger of a lion that had been increased by hunger was taken by fear at the sight of his prey, and didn't want to touch it [Dan. 6:23]; and even other such miracles. If they do not have faith, let them read the fifteen books of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and all Greek and Latin history. Therein they will see Daphne changed into a bay-tree, or the sister of Phaeton changed into poplars; how Jupiter the highest god, was transformed into a swan, flowed in gold and became a raging bull, and other adventures where the ugliness of the stories attest the holiness of the divinity. They believe in these stories and say that everything is possible for one god. And while they believe these ugly stories and defend the absolute power of a god, they do not attribute this same power to honest deeds. With regard to these words: 'then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God out of the belly of the fish and said...' we understand that feeling that he is safe in the belly of the whale he does not despair of divine mercy and concentrates wholly on praying. For God, who had said, "I am with him in his distress" [Ps. 90:15], and when he calls to me, I will reply, "I am here." [Is. 58:9], came to his aid and he whose prayer had been answered was then able to say, "in distress you have made me greater" [Ps. 4:2].

Verse 2. "And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and you heard my voice." LXX: similar except: 'from the belly of hell I threw out my cries'. He does not say, "I cry", but "I cried". He does not pray for the future, but gives thanks for the past. That shows us that from the moment he is thrown into the sea and sees the whale, that great bulk, that immense mouth which opened wide to swallow him, he remembered God and cried out, either by the waves giving passage for his cry, or by a feeling from the depths of his heart, according to that which the apostle says: "crying in your hearts" [Col. 3:16]: "Abba! Father" [Rom. 8:15]. He cried to him who alone knew the hearts of men and said to Moses, "why do you cry out to me?" [Ex. 14:15], while the Scriptures remember that Moses had never cried out before this speech. This is the text that we read in the first psalm of the steps: "I cried to the Lord in my distress and he replied to me." [Ps. 119:1] By the "belly of hell" we understand the stomach of a whale of such great size that it took the place of hell. But this can better be referred to the person of Christ, who under the name of David, sings in the psalm: "you will not leave my spirit in hell, and you will not allow your saint to see putrefaction" [Ps. 15:10], living in hell free among the dead.

Verse 3a. "For you had cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about." LXX: 'you cast me into the deep of the heart from the sea, and the waves surrounded me'. The interpretation of the person of Jonah is not difficult: from the moment when he was closed in the stomach of the whale and found himself at the deepest and middle of the sea, he was surrounded by waves. For the Lord, the Saviour, prefiguring psalm 68 in which he says, "I am enshrouded in the deep mud where there is no ground. I have come to the deepest part of the sea and the storm engulfs me" [Ps. 68:3]. It is said of him in another psalm: "but you, you have rejected, despised and disquieted your Christ; you have cursed the covenant of your master, you have dishonoured his sacred place on earth, you have destroyed all its walls" [Ps. 88:39-41], and so on. For in this comparison of divine blessing and that place about which is written, "his home is in sacred peace" [Ps. 75:3], all habitation on earth is full of waves, full of storms. And the "heart of the sea" means hell, for which we read in the Gospel, "in the heart of the earth" [Mt. 12:40]. For just as the heart is at the middle of animal, so we say that hell is in the middle of the earth. Or according to anagoge he recalls that he is "in the heart of the sea", that is in the middle of temptations. However, although he has been among the bitter waters and been tempted by all things without sin, he has not felt the bitter waters, but has been surrounded by the waves about which we read elsewhere, "an impetuous wave rejoices in the city of God" [Ps. 45:5]. Others drank the salty waves; myself, surrounded by temptation, I endured sweeter currents. And do not think what the Lord says now is impious: "you have cast me into the deep", who says in the psalm, "for they have followed him that you smote" [Ps. 68:27], according to the phrase which in Zechariah is spoken by the Father: "I will smite the shepherd, and the flocks will be scattered" [Zechariah 13:7].

Verse 3b. "All thy billows and thy waves passed over me." LXX: 'all your whirlwinds and your waves passed over me'. No one can doubt that the swelling waves of the sea encompassed Jonah, that there was fierce thunder in the storm. But we ask how all the whirlwinds, billows and the waves of God encompassed the Saviour. "The life of men on earth is temptation" [Job 7:1], or as there is in the Hebrew, "a military service", for we serve here to be crowned elsewhere. There is no man who can sustain all the temptations, except him who has been tempted by all, in our image, except sin [Heb. 4:15]. This is why it is said in Corinthians, "no temptation will take you, I hope, unless it is human. God is faithful, he will not let you try beyond your ability, but he will

produce an exit that you may hold on to." [1 Cor. 10 ,13] And like all persecutions and all wicked things that happen to us they do not happen without the will of God, we speak of whirlwinds and waves of God, which have not crushed Jesus, but have come down upon him with a simple threat of shipwreck which does not happen. Thus all persecutions and whirlwinds which tortured mankind and broke all the ships have passed thundering on my head. And myself, I have sustained storms and broken whirlwinds which were raging, to allow others to sail more easily.

Verse 4. "Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight;" LXX: 'I said, I am cast far from your sight'. Before I cried out from the depths of my distress and before you heard me, me who had taken the position of slave and imitated its weakness, I said, "I am cast out of your sight". When I was with you enjoying your light and you, light, being light, I did not say "I am cast out". But once at the bottom of the sea and surrounded by the flesh of a man, I say: "I am cast out of your sight". I said this as a man. And as God being in that condition I did not think of my equality with you, because I wanted to raise mankind to you, so that wherever I am with you they are there as well and those who have believed in me and in you, I say: yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. LXX: 'do you not think I will be able to see your holy temple again?'. To express the Greek *ara*, the Vulgate edition's 'do you think' can be interpreted as 'therefore', like the last conclusion of the proposition, of the assumption and of the confirmation and syllogism, not in the uncertainty of someone who hesitates but in the confidence of someone who affirms. This has been translated by, "yet I will look again on your holy temple", according to that which is said in another psalm by the spokesperson of Christ: "Lord, I have loved beauty of your house and the tabernacle where your glory lives" [Ps. 25:8], and the passage of the Gospel in which it says, "Father, glorify me with you by that glory which I had before the world existed" [John 17:5]. And the Father replied to heaven: "I have glorified him, and I shall glorify him" [John 12:28]. Or even because he says, "the Father is in me, and I am in Him" [John 10:38; 14:10.11; 17:21], for the temple of the Father is the Son, thus the temple of the Son is the Father. He Himself said, "I left my Father and have come" [John 16:28], and "the word was with God and the word was God" [John 1:1]. Or even the Saviour, the one and the same, asks as man and promises as God, and he is sure of the right that was always his. For the person of Jonah you can clearly see that with a feeling of desire and confidence, at the bottom of the sea, he wished to see the temple of the Lord, and with a prophetic spirit he found himself elsewhere and thought of other things.

Verse 5a. "The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about," LXX: 'the water ran about me up to my spirit; the last depth closed around me'. These waters, near to the deep, which cycle and slide about the earth, which drag much mud with them, tend to kill not the body but the soul, for they are friendly to the body and warmed by its desires. This is why, according to that which I have said above, the Lord says in the psalm, "save me, Lord, because the waters have penetrated even to my soul" [Ps. 68:2], and in another passage, "my soul has passed a torrent" [Ps. 123:5], and, "let not the well press its mouth on me" [Ps. 68:16], let hell not imprison me! Let it not refuse me an exit! I freely made the descent; so let me make the ascent back again freely. I became a captive voluntarily, I ought to free the captives so that this verse is fulfilled: "ascending into the higher parts he led the captives" [Eph. 4:8]. For those who were beforehand captives in death, he brought them to life again. We must heed certain wicked forces in the deep, or the specific powers in torture and supplication; demons, in the Gospel, ask not to be forced to go to them [Mt. 8:30; Mk. 5:10; Lk. 8:31]. This is why "the darkness was over the

deep" [Gen. 1,2]. Sometimes the deep is taken to mean the sacraments in a deeper sense, the judgements of God: "the judgements of the Lord are a great abyss" [Ps. 35:7], and "the deep cries out to the deep in a cry of your cataracts." [Ps. 41:8]

Verse 5b-6a. "the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever:" LXX: 'my head has penetrated to the base of mountains; I descended to into the earth whose bars are eternal bonds'. No one doubts that the ocean covered Jonah's head, that he went down to the roots of mountains and came to the depths of the earth by which as bars and columns by the will of God the earthly sphere is supported. This earth about which is said elsewhere, "I consolidated her columns" [Ps. 74:4]. With regard to the Lord Saviour, according to the two editions, this seems to me to be what is meant. His heart and his head, that is the spirit that he thought worthy to take with a body for our safety, went down to the base of the mountains which were covered by waves; they were restrained by the will of God, the deep covered them, they were parted by the majesty of God. His spirit then went down into hell, into those places to which in the last of the mud, the spirits of sinners were held, so too the psalmist says: "they will go down to the depths of the earth, they will be the lot of wolves" [Ps. 62:10.11]. These are the bars of the earth and like the locks of a final prison and tortures, which do not let the captive spirits out of hell. This is why the Septuagint has translated this is a pertinent way: "eternal bonds", that is, wanting to keep in all those whom it had once captured. But our Lord, about which we read these lines of Cyrus in Isaiah: "I will break the bronze bars, I will crack the iron bars" [Is. 45:2], He went down to the roots of the mountains, and was enclosed by eternal bars to free all the prisoners.

Verse 6b. "yet have you brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God." LXX: 'and from corruption my life comes up to me, O Lord my God.' He says rightly "you have brought up" or "let my life come up from corruption", because it had descended to corruption in hell. This is what the apostles interpret in the fifteenth psalm as prophetic speech of the Lord: "for you will not leave my spirit in hell, and you will not permit your holiness to see the corruption" [Ps. 15:10], given that David is dead and has been buried, but the Saviour's flesh has not known corruption. Others understand that compared to celestial blessing and to the Word of God the body of man is corruption itself, for "it is sown in corruption" [1 Cor. 15:42], and in the psalm one hundred and two, the meaning is applied to a righteous man: "he who cures all illnesses, who has brought his life back from death" [Ps. 102:3.4]. This is why the Apostle says, "O wicked man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" [Rom. 7:24]. It is called "the body of death", or "body of misery". These people take the text in the sense of their heresy, to see an Antichrist in the place of Christ, and to take the Churches in order to feed a fat stomach and discuss contrary to the flesh living in the flesh. But we, we know that the body taken from the pure Virgin was not the corruption of Christ, but his temple. If we pass then to the thought of the Apostle in Corinthians, where there is the question of a spiritual body, we would say, in removing any appearance of chicanery, that the same body, the same flesh rises again, which has been buried and placed in the soil; but the only thing that changes is the glory, not nature. "for this corruptible being must cover incorruptibility, this mortal being must clothe immortality." [1 Cor. 15:53] When he says "this being" it is almost as if one showed the body by pinching it between two fingers: in which we are born, in which we die, that those who are guilty fear to receive as punishment, that virginity awaits in recompense, that the adulterer fears in punishment. For Jonah, this is how we can understand it:

he who would have had to corrupt himself physiologically in the belly of the whale, and get by on the food of beasts and survive by drinking from the veins and arteries, still managed to remain safe and sound. And when he says, "Lord my God", this is a feeling of flattery: he thinks that God, who is common to all, is also common to him, and feels he is his own because of the greatness of his benevolence.

Verse 7a. "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD." LXX: 'when my spirit failed in me, I remembered the Lord'. Although I hoped for no aid, he says, the memory of the Lord saved me, according to this passage: "I remembered the Lord and I rejoiced" [Ps. 76:4], and in another passage, "I remembered former days and I remembered the days of eternity" [Ps. 76:6]. I had lost all hope of finding a way out: my body was so frail in the intestines of the whale that I could not hope for my life. And so, everything that seemed impossible I found to be surpassed by the thought of the Lord. I saw myself imprisoned in the intestines of the whale, and all my hope was the Lord. From this we can learn that, according to the Septuagint, at the time when our spirit fails us, it is wrenched from its union with the body, and we ought not to turn our thoughts from Him who inside and outside our body is the Lord. For the Saviour the interpretation is not very difficult because he said, "my spirit is sad to die" [Mt. 26:38; Mk. 14:34], and "My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass me by" [Mt. 26:39], and, "I place my spirit in your hands" [Ps. 30:6; Lk. 23:46], and other passages which are similar to this. And my prayer came in unto you, into thine holy temple. LXX: similar. In my distress I remembered the Lord so and my prayer came in to heaven from the depths of the sea and from the roots of the mountains, and came to your holy temple where you reside in eternal beatitude. This new kind of speech should be noted here: a prayer made for a prayer. Jonah asks that his prayer rise up to the temple of God. He wishes like the Pope that in his body the people should be freed.

Verse 8. "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." LXX: 'those that keep mistaken vanities lose their mercy'. By nature God is merciful and ready by his mildness to save those whom he can't save by justice. But because of our vices we lose the mercy which is reserved for us and is offered to us. Jonah did not say, "those who make vanities", for "vanity of vanities, all is vanity" [Eccl. 1:1], not to have an air of condemning everyone, and of refusing mercy to all mankind, but "those who keep vanities" or the lie "those who have come to love their heart" [Ps. 72:7], who are not happy with doing, but who keep their vanities as if they cherished them, thinking they have found some kind of treasure. Note too the greatness of the prophet's spirit: at the bottom of the sea, surrounded by an eternal night in the intestines of a great beast he is not thoughtful of his danger, but philosophises on the question of nature. "they will lose" he says "their mercy". Although mercy is offended and we can understand that it is God Himself: for "God is merciful and good, patient and full of pity" [Ps. 144:8], yet mercy does not abandon those who keep their vanities, she does not curse them, but waits for them to return, while they intentionally abandon the mercy which is before them, offered to them. This can also be prophesied for the Lord on the subject of the infidelity of the Jews, who think themselves to observe the precepts of mankind [Mk. 7:7] and the commandments of the Pharisees, this is vanity and a lie, and they have abandoned God who always had pity for them.

Verse 9. "But I will sacrifice unto you with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD." LXX: 'but I will sacrifice to you with the voice of praise and the action of thanksgiving. I will pay all that I have vowed to you, Lord, in salutation.' Those who keep

their vanities have abandoned their mercy. But I who have been eaten for the sake of the safety of the multitude, will offer you sacrifices with the voice of praise and thanksgiving, offering myself. For "Christ, our Easter, has been sacrificed" [1 Cor. 5:7]. As a true Pope and lamb he offers himself for us. And I will give thanks to you, saying, "I bless you Father, lord of heaven and earth" [Mt. 11:25], and I will keep those vows to the Lord that I made for the safety of others, so that all that "you have given me never dies" [John 6:39; 10:28; 17:12]. We see what the Lord promised in his suffering for our safety: let us not make Jesus a liar [1 John 1:10], and let us be pure, delivered from all the uncleanness of sins so that he offers us to God the Father as the victims he had promised.

Verse 10. "And the LORD spoke unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." LXX: 'and he ordered the whale to vomit Jonah out onto the dry land'. That which we read above as being about Jonah, the Lord prayed for in the stomach of the whale about which Job speaks in an unclear way: "let he who curses this day curse him, he who will capture the great whale" [Job. 3:8 LXX]. The great whale, the deep and hell are then ordered to give back the Lord to the dry earth; thus he who had died to free those detained by the chains of death, can lead with him many others towards life. With regard to the expression 'vomited' we must take this to be said in a very emphatic way, to mean that triumphant life has emerged from the deepest and most impenetrable parts of death.

Chapter 3

Verses 1-2. "And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid you." LXX: 'and the message of God came to Jonah a second time, saying, arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach there this message that I have told you'. He did not say to the prophet, "why have you not done what you were ordered to do?". But the punishment of the shipwreck and his drowning are enough for him to understand the Lord, the liberator, whom he hadn't known to be ordering. Moreover it is superfluous to see his wounds as those of a false servant of God, once he has been smitten, for such a punishment is less of a correction than a reproof. And our Lord is sent to Nineveh a second time after his resurrection: he who had fled by whatever means beforehand when he said, "My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass me by" [Mt. 26:39], and who had not wanted to give bread of children to dogs, now the children have cried out, "crucify him, crucify him! we have no king except Caesar" [Lk. 23:21; John 19:15], he makes his way towards Nineveh of his own accord to preach after his resurrection that he underwent as he was ordered to do before his suffering. The command is given, he hears it, he refuses, then he is forced to want, and the second time he carries out the will of the Father: all of this is connected to man and to the "form of a slave" [Phil. 2:7], to whom such expressions are appropriate.

Verse 3. "So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. [And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey]" LXX: 'so Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was a city of godly size, around three days in journey. Jonah began to enter the city, about one day's travel.' Jonah immediately carries out the command that he has been given. Nineveh to which the prophet was journeying, was a great city, which it took around three days' journey to circle. But he remembers the command he has been given and the recent

shipwreck and makes the normal journey of three days in one day. However, there are some people who believe that he simply proclaimed his message in a third of the city, and that his speech quickly was made known to the other inhabitants. And our Lord is said to arise and speak of his own accord after being in hell, and announces the word of the Lord when he sends the apostles to baptise those who were in Nineveh in the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit [Mt. 28:19]. So there are the three days of journey! And this sacrament of mankind's safety is "a journey of one day", that is it is finished by the proclamation of one sole God. Jonah preaches not so much to the apostles but more by the method of the apostles. He himself says, "and I will be with you always until the end of the world" [Mt. 28:20]. There is no doubt that Nineveh was a city of godly magnitude because the world and all things have existed through God and because without Him nothing would ever have existed. [John 1:3] Note too that he has not said, "of three days and three nights" or "of one day and of one night", but simply "and of three days", and "of one day", to show that in the sacrament of the Trinity and of the confession of one sole God there is no darkness.

Verse 4. "[And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey], and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." LXX: 'he proclaimed and said, another three days and Nineveh will be destroyed'. The umber three written in the Septuagint does not agree with the penitence, and I am quite astonished at this translation, for in Hebrew neither the letters or syllables or accents or the word show any common element. For three is said, salos and forty arbaim. Moreover the prophet who was sent from Judea to the Assyrians was to claim after such a journey penitence worthy of his prediction to cure with a long-present dressing his old and putrid wounds. Moreover the number forty is appropriate to sinners, to hunger, to prayer, to sackcloth, to tears and to perseverance in prayer. In this way Moses fasted for forty days on mount Sinai [Ex. 34:28; Deut. 9:18] and Elijah fleeing Jezebel [3 Kings. 19:8] is presented to us as having fasted for forty days after having told Israel about the famine [3 Kings. 17:1], when the anger of God was upon them. And the Lord Himself, the true Jonah who is sent to preach to the world fasts for forty days [Mt. 4:2]. And he leaves us as hereditary fasting to prepare our spirits, by this number of forty, as the food of his body. "he cried out": the Gospel shows this expression more fully: "standing, he cried out in the temple: if anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and he shall drink" [John 7:37], for all speech of the Saviour is called a cry because he speaks about weighty subjects.

Verse 5. "So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them." LXX: similar. Nineveh believed but Israel did not believe; the foreskin believed, but circumcision remained without faith. First of all the men of Nineveh believed who had arrived at the age of Christ [Eph. 4:13]: they announced a fast and dressed in sackcloth, from the greatest to the smallest of them. This regime and clothing is very worthy of penitence, so that those who had offended God through their indulgence or lust appeased him by condemning all that they had previously offended with. Sackcloth and fasting are the weapons of penitence, the rescue of sinners. First of all fasting, then sackcloth; first of all what is not seen, then what is visible; the one is always shown to God, the other sometimes to man. And if it were necessary to remove one from the two then I would rather keep fasting without sackcloth than have sackcloth without fasting. Elder men give the example which pertains to youths: for no one is without sin; and if his life only lasted one day, the years of his life would still

be counted [Job 14:5. LX]. For if the stars are not pure before God, they are still more so than a worm or putrefaction, and those who are held by the sin of Adam, the great offender. Note here too the order, which is well written: God commands the prophet, the prophet proclaims to the city. First of all the men believe, announce fasting, and then everyone puts on sackcloth. The men do not announce the putting on of sackcloth, but only the fasting. All the same, with reason, those to whom penitence has been proscribed wear sackcloth and fast so that empty stomach and mourning clothes give the Lord more of an opportunity to remit.

Verses 6-9. "For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" LXX: 'the message reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, took off his robe and covered himself with sackcloth, and he sat down upon the earth. And by the order of the king and his nobles it was announced throughout Nineveh, saying, it is forbidden for any man or beast or oxen or sheep to eat anything, to drink any water. Men and beasts were covered in sackcloth and cried out to the Lord mightily. Let each one turn away from his wicked practises and from the unfairness that was in his hands, saying, who knows if God will turn and repent, if he will not abandon the fierceness of his wrath so that we might not die?'. I know certain men for whom the king of Nineveh, (who is the last to hear the proclamation and who descends from his throne, and forgoes the ornaments of his former vices and dressed in sackcloth sits on the ground, he is not content with his own conversion, preaches penitence to others with his leaders, saying, "let the men and beasts, big and small of size, be tortured by hunger, let them put on sackcloth, condemn their former sins and betake themselves without reservation to penitence!) is the symbol of the devil, who at the end of the world, (because no spiritual creature that is made reasoning by God will perish), will descend from his pride and do penitence and will be restored to his former position. To support this opinion they use this example of Daniel in which Nebuchadnezzar after seven years of penitence is returned to his former reign. [Dan. 4:24, 29, 33] But because this idea is not in the Holy Scripture and since it completely destroys the fear of God, (for men will slide easily into vices if they believe that even the devil, the creator of wickedness and the source of all sins, can be saved if he does penitence), we must eradicate this from our spirits. Let us remember though that the sinners in the Gospel are sent to the eternal fire [Mt. 25:41], which is prepared for the devil and his angels, about whom is said, "their worm will not die and their fire will not be extinguished" [Is. 66:24]. All the same we know that God is mild, and we sinners do not enjoy his cruelty, but we read, "the Lord is kindly and righteous, and our God will be merciful" [Ps. 114:5]. The justice of God is surrounded by mercy, and it is by this route that he proceeds to judgement: he spares to judge, he judges to be merciful. "Mercy and Truth are to be found in our path; Justice and Peace are to be embraced" [Ps. 84:11]. Moreover if all spiritual creatures are equal and if they raise themselves up by their virtues to heaven, or by their vices take themselves to the depths, then after a long circuit and infinite centuries, if all are returned to their original state with the same worthiness to all conflicting, what difference will there be between the virgin and the prostitute? What distinction will there be between the mother of the Lord and (it is wicked to say) the victims of public pleasures? Will

Gabriel be like the devil? Will the apostles be as demons? Will the prophets be as pseudoprophets? Martyrs as their persecutors? Imagine all that you will, increase by two-fold the years and the time, take infinite time for torture: if the end for all is the same, all the past is then nothing, for what is of importance to us is not what we are at any given moment, but what we will be forever more. I am not forgetting what is often said to argue against this point, preparing hope for oneself and some kind of safety with the devil. But this is not the appropriate time to write at length against the opinion of the wicked and against the synphragma of the devil from those who teach one thing in private only to deny it in public. It is enough for me to have shown what I believe this passage signifies, and as is appropriate in a commentary, to remark briefly who the king of Nineveh is, he who is the last to hear the word of God. Just how much eloquence and secular knowledge are worth to mankind can be seen in Demosthenes, Cicero, Plato, Xenophon, Theophrastus, Aristotle and the other philosophers and orators who are considered kings and their precepts are not taken as the work of mortals but as oracles of the gods. About which Plato says, happy are those states where philosophers rule, or if kings are philosophers. How difficult it is for such men to believe in God! I am neglecting though those examples from daily life, and pass over the stories of pagans and content myself with the text of the apostle who writes in Corinthians, saying, "look, brothers, to your vocation, among you. For there are not many who are wise about their flesh, nor many powerful, or noble. But there is much madness in the world, and this is what God has chosen to confuse wise men. That which is weak in the world, this is what God has chosen to confuse strength, and that which is in the world without good birth this is what God has chosen..." [1 Cor. 1:26-8] and again he says, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will reprove the knowledge of those who know." [Is. 29:14; 1 Cor. 1:19] And: "see that no one robs you, through philosophy, this is a vain seduction" [Col. 2:8]. From this the predication of Christ is clear, the kings of the world hear last; then they put down the clamour of eloquence and the beautiful appearance of words, they abandon themselves completely to all simplicity and rusticity, and return to the ways of peasants, sitting in the dirt and destroying what they had formerly said was good before. Let us take as an example the benevolent Cyprian: who is firstly the champion of idolatry, and had such a reputation of good speaking that he taught the art of rhetoric at Carthage. He finishes by listening to the speech of Jonah, is converted to repent and gains such courage as to preach about Christ in public and lays his neck under the sword for him. For sure we know that the King of Nineveh descended from his throne, exchanged his red gown for sackcloth, his perfumes for mud, and cleanness for uncleanness- not uncleanness of meanings but of his words. In the same way in Jeremiah it is said about Babylon that "Babylon is a golden chalice which makes all the earth drunk" [Jer. 51:7]. Which man has not been made drunk by secular eloquence? Whose spirit has not been shot through by the composition of words and by the brightness of his elegant speech? Those powerful, noble and rich have great difficulty in believing in God; then how much more so for the masters of speech! Their spirit is blinded by riches, wealth, abundance, they are prevented by their sins and cannot see their virtues; they judge the simplicity of the Holy Scripture not on the majesty of its meanings, but out of the baseness of its words. But when they who have previously taught wickedness are converted to repent and start to teach what is good then we will see the people of Nineveh converted with a single proclamation, and the speech that we read in Isaiah will come true: "is a people thus born in one go?". [Is. 66:8. LX] Men and animals are covered with sackcloth, crying out to the Lord, this is to be understood by the same meaning as this: that those who have reason and those who do not, the wise and the simple

repent according to that phrase said elsewhere: "You will save men and the animals O Lord" [Ps. 35:7]. It is possible however to interpret differently the animals covered in sackcloth, especially according to those passages in which we read, "the sun and moon will be dressed in sackcloth" [Joel 2:10], and in another passage, "I will cover the heavens with sackcloth". [Is. 50:3] This will be the clothing of mourning, the worry and sadness that are designated metaphorically by sackcloth. And this phrase: "who knows if God will turn and pardon?" places us in uncertainty and doubt. Thus men in hypothetical cleanness repent with more intent and arouse even more God's mercy.

Verse 10. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." LXX: 'God saw their works since they turned from their wicked ways. And God repented for their wickedness that he had said he would do to them and he did not do it.' According to the two meanings of this passage God is threatening the town of Assyria and threatens the people of the world every day so that they repent: if they convert then he will change his judgement, and it will be changed by the conversion of the people. Jeremiah and Ezekiel explain this more clearly: the Lord has not fulfilled the good that he has promised to do if the good turn to sinners; nor the wickedness that he threatened the wicked if they return to safety. Thus now God sees their works, since they turn from their wicked way. But he did not hear those vain promises that Israel was in the custom of making: "all that God has said, we shall do" [Ex. 24:3.7], but he sees the works. And because he prefers a sinner's repentance rather than his death [Ez. 33:11.] he willingly changes his sentence because he has seen a change in the works. Or rather God has continued in his proposition, since he wanted to pity right from the beginning. No one in fact who desires to punish, threatens what he will actually do. The word 'wickedness' as we have noted above, can be taken to mean supplication or torture, not that God could think to do nothing on account of the wickedness.

Chapter 4

Verse 1-2a. "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was very angry. [And he prayed unto the LORD, and said]" LXX: 'Jonah was saddened by a great sadness, and he was confounded. And he prayed to the Lord, and he said'. Seeing the crowd of gentiles enter [Rom. 11:25], and that fulfils what is written in Deuteronomy: "they annoyed me with these gods who are not gods, so I will annoy them with a people that is not one; I shall anger them like a foolish nation" [Deut. 32:21]. He despairs of Israel's safety and is hit by a great suffering which breaks out in words. He shows the signs of his suffering and more or less says this: 'I have been the only one of the prophets chosen to announce my people's ruin to them through the safety of others.' Thus he is not sad that the crowd of gentiles should be saved, as some people believe, but it is the destruction of Israel. Moreover our Lord wept for Jerusalem and refused to take bread away from the children to give to the dogs [Mt. 15:26; Mk. 7:27]. And the apostles preach firstly to Israel, and Paul wishes to be anathema for his brothers who are Israelites [Acts. 13:46] and have adoption, glory, alliance, promises and law, and from whom the patriarchs come, and from them too according to the flesh came Christ. [Rom. 9:3-5] But suffering in vain, which is interpreted as the word Jonah, he is smitten by suffering, and 'the spirit is sad until death' [Mt. 26:38; Mk. 14:34]. For lest the people of the Jews should die, he has suffered as much as he was in power. The name of the sufferer also is appropriate to the story, since it signifies the toil of the prophet, weighed down by the miseries of his journey and the shipwreck.

Verses 2-3. "[And he prayed unto the LORD, and said], I pray you, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that you are a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and you repent of the evil. Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech you, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live." LXX: 'O Lord, is this not what I said when I was still in my country? This is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish. For I know that you are rich in mercy and are kind, patient, and full of compassion, and ready to repent for the evils that you promised. But now all-powerful Lord, take my spirit, because it is better for me to die than to live.' What I have interpreted as 'I pray you' and which the Septuagint has translated as 'O indeed' [[Gr. 'w dh']] is read as *anna* in Hebrew, which seems to me to express the prayer with a kind of coaxing. For when he had said quite justly that he wanted to flee his prayer accuses the Lord of injustice in a certain manner, and he tempers his complaints by a suppliant and rhetorical speech. Was this not what I said when I was in my country? I knew that you would do this. I am not unaware that you are merciful: this is why I refused to denounce you as harsh and cruel. Therefore I wanted to flee to Tarshish, to be free to think, and I preferred the quiet and rest on the sea of this age. I abandoned my home and left my inheritance, I left your lap and came here. If I had said that you are merciful, gentle, that you pardon wickedness, no one would have repented. If I had denounced you as a cruel God only fit to judge, I should have known that such is not your nature. In this dilemma I preferred to flee, rather than to deceive the repenters with mildness, or to preach things about you that you are not. "Therefore Lord take my spirit for death is better for me than life." [3 Kings 19:4] "Take my spirit which has been sad even until death." [Mt. 26:38; Mk. 14:34] "Take my spirit. I place my spirit in your hands." [Ps. 30:6; Lk. 23:46] I was not able to save the whole nation of Israel by living, but I will die and the whole world will be saved. The story is clear and regarding the prophet's character, we can note as has often been said before that he is saddened and wants to die so that Israel should not be destroyed for ever after the conversion of such a multitude of gentiles.

Verse 4. "Then said the LORD, Do you well to be angry?" LXX: 'The Lord replied to Jonah, are you so much afflicted?' The Hebrew word *hara lach* can be translated as 'are you annoyed?' and 'are you afflicted?'. And each one pertains to the prophet and to the Lord: either he is annoyed and fears appearing a liar to the inhabitants of Nineveh, or he is afflicted, knowing that Israel is going to be destroyed. And with reason God does not say to him: 'you are wrong to get angry' or 'to be afflicted', not wanting to reprehend one suffering, nor does he say, 'you have reason to be angry or afflicted', so as not to contradict his former sentence. But he asks him whether he is angry or afflicted so that he replies the causes of his anger or suffering, or even, if he remains quiet, so that God's truth can be proved by his silence.

Verse 5. "So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city." LXX: similar. Cain who initiated civilisation by fratricide and homicide in killing his brother was the first to build a city, and he gave it the name of his son Enoch. [Gen. 4:17] This is why the prophet Hosea declares, "I am God, and not a man, amongst you I am a saint, and I will not come into the city". [Os. 11:9] For the Lord, says the psalmist, is the charge of "the transition of the dead" [Ps. 67:21]. This is why one of this cities of refuge is called Ramoth [Deut. 4:43], which is translated as 'vision of death'. Therefore quite justly anyone who is a fugitive and on account of his sins does not merit living in Jerusalem lives in the city of death and is across the waves of the Jordan, which signifies

'descent'. The dove, or the suffering, comes out from such a town and lives in the east whence the sun rises. And it is there in his tent, where having contemplated every hour that passes, he hears what is going to happen to this city. Before Nineveh was saved and before the gourd dried up, before the Gospel of Christ becomes famous and the prophecy of Zechariah is realised: "here is a man whose name is East" [Zac. 6:12], Jonah was under his shelter. And nor had Truth come, about which the apostle of the Gospel says: "God is truth" [John 3:33; 14:6; 1 John 5:6], and he adds elegantly, "and he made there a shelter" near to Nineveh. He makes it himself, for no inhabitant of Nineveh of that age would have been able to live with the prophet, and he was seated under the shade in the attitude of a judge or if you like, constrained by his majesty, "having pulled in vigorously his reins" [Prov. 31:17], so that his robe did not fall upon his feet and upon us who are low down, but was held together by a straighter belt. More precisely with regard to what he says, "to see what would happen to the city", this uses the accustomed usage of recourse to Scriptures to preach to God about human feelings.

Verse 6. "And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd." LXX: 'and the Lord commanded a gourd to grow up over the head of Jonah to form a shade to protect him from his evils. And Jonah was very glad of the gourd indeed. In this place a certain Canterius from the ancient family of Corneli, (or as he himself says from the lineage of Asinius Pollion), has accused me recently, it seems, of sacrilege for having translated 'ivy' instead of 'gourd'. Apparently he feared that if ivy were taken instead of gourds that there would not be anything to drink in his secret place and his shade. And justly on the veins of this gourd, which are called saucomariae in general, it is customary to paint the image of the Apostles from which this individual has borrowed his name, which is not his own. If it is this easy to change ones name, (after having been the Corneli, seditious consuls, they renamed themselves Paul Emile consuls), I ask myself why in surprise I should not be allowed to translate ivy instead of gourd. But let us return to more serious matters. For gourd or ivy in Hebrew we read qiqai, which is also written qiqia in the Syriac and Punic languages. It is a type of shrub or sapling with wide leaves like a vine, and which casts a large shadow and is supported by a trunk and often is found growing in Palestine especially in sandy areas. It is interesting to note that if the seed is cast on the ground it germinates quickly and in a few days it can be seen to have grown from a seedling to a bush. For my part when I was translating the prophets I wanted to just transliterate the Hebrew word seeing that Latin has no word for this kind of tree. But I feared that the men of letters would find in this some argument, imagining those animals of India or the mountains of Boeotia or even other marvels of this type. I have also followed the example of the former translators who translated it as ivy, in Greek chissos, because they had no other word to use. let us now look carefully at the story, and having looked at the mythical meaning then go on to study each word individually. The gourd and the ivy creep along the ground by their nature, and if they have no restraints or ladders as support they do not try to climb. How is it possible then that a gourd could grow up without the prophet knowing in one night to provide shade, if its nature is not to climb unless it has some supports, reeds or pegs to hold on to? Although the gourd, offering a miracle in its sudden appearance, and showing the power of God in the protection of a leafy shade, was only following its own nature. Even this though can refer to the person of the Lord Saviour, let us not completely abandon our gourd on account of our philocholochunthos, so that we remember that passage of Isaiah, which says, "and the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, or as a lodge in a

garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city." [Is. 1:8] And because we do not find a gourd mentioned elsewhere in the Scriptures let us say then that where the cucumber grows gourds usually grow too. And Israel is compared to this kind of plant because, at a certain time, it protected Jonah with its shadow whilst he was waiting the conversion of the gentiles and made him feel greatly happy. It made more a shady shelter for him rather than a house, and that suggests a roof of some kind but not having the foundations of a house. Moreover the gourd, our little bush, which grows quickly and dries quickly, could be compared to Israel, pushing its little roots into the ground and trying to raise itself up, but is not able to equal the height of cedars [Ps. 79:11] and cypress trees [Is. 37:24; Zac. 11:2] of God. It seems to me that one could interpret the locusts that were food for John similarly, who said symbolising Israel, "It must grow but I must die" [John 3:30]. The locust, a small animal with weak wings managing to rise up from the ground but not able to fly very high so that it is better called a reptile yet not similar either to birds.

Verses 7-8. "But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, it is better for me to die than to live." LXX: 'and God commanded a worm early the next morning, which smote the gourd that it withered. When the sun had risen the Lord immediately commanded a hot and burning wind. The sun hit upon Jonah's head in his distress and suddenly became very exhausted and he said, it is better for me to die than to live.' Before the sun of justice [Mal. 4:2] rose the shade was verdant and Israel was not dry. But after it rose, and when the darkness of Nineveh had been dispersed by its light, a worm obtained for the first light of the next day smote the gourd, (the worm, which is mentioned in the title to psalm twenty-one: "in honour of the morning incarnation", and which was born from the earth without any seed, can say, 'I am a worm and not a man' [Ps. 21:7]. And Jonah, abandoned by God's aid, loses all his strength. The Lord ordered a hot and burning wind, which was prophesied by Hosea: "the Lord will bring a wind out of the desert, which will dry up the rivers and abandon his fountain" [Hos. 13:15]. And Jonah began to get hot and once again he wants to die in the baptism of Israel to receive in this basin the moisture which he lost in his refusal to do God's word. This is why Peter speaks to the Jews who are parched, saying, "Repent, and let each of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for payment for your sins, so that you might receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" [Acts. 2:38]. There are those for whom the worm and the burning wind represent the Roman generals who, after the resurrection of Christ, completely destroyed Israel.

Verse 9. "And God said to Jonah, Do you well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death." LXX: 'and the Lord God said to Jonah, are you so afflicted for a gourd? He replied, 'I am very afflicted even to the point of death'. When he was asked about the repentance of the inhabitants of Nineveh and the safety of the city of the gentiles, 'do you well to be angry?', the prophet replied nothing, yet justified God's question by his silence. For he knew that God is kind, merciful, patient, and full of pity [Ex. 34:6; Psalms 102:8], pardoning wickedness and he did not feel sad for the safety of the gentiles; but once the gourd, (Israel) had dried up, when he is asked, 'do you well to be angry for the gourd?', he replies with assurance, 'I do well to be angry and to suffer even unto death. I did not want to save one only to see the others perish, to gain foreigners only to lose my own'. And in truth up until this day Christ weeps for Jerusalem and he weeps until death; not his own death, but that of the Jews, so that they die refusing and rise up

again confessing the Son of God.

Verses 10-11. "Then said the LORD, You have had pity on the gourd, for the which you have not laboured, neither made it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" LXX: 'and the Lord said, 'you wanted to keep safe a gourd which has done you no wickedness, that you have not cared for, which was born in one night and died in one night. But should I not spare Nineveh the great city in which live over three thousand people who are unknowing of their right and their left, and an equal number of cattle?' It is too difficult to explain how according to tropology this is said to the Son of man: 'you worry for a gourd that has done you no harm, that you did not plant' [John 1:3], since all has been done by him and with him absent nothing has been done. This is why someone interpreting this passage and wanting to resolve the question which he asked himself, fell into blasphemy. For, if we look at the text of the Gospel, which says, "why do you call me good? Nothing is good except God himself." [Mk. 10:18] He interprets the Father as good and places the Son one place lower, in a comparison with one who is perfectly and completely good. And he has not seen that this opinion made him fall into the heresy of Marcion, who proposes a God that is uniquely good, with another for judging and for creating, rather than the opinion of Arius who proposed a superior Father and an inferior Son yet admits the Son as creator. We must be indulgent therefore for that which we are about to say, and our attempts ought to be encouraged with good criticism and prayer, rather than declaimed by an argumentative audience. Criticism and declamation are easy for those who are most ignorant, but one must be learned and know the labours of workers to stretch out ones hand to those weaker or to show the way to those who are lost. Our Lord and Saviour did not work for Israel as for the people of the gentiles. In this instance Israel declares in faith, "Look these many years do I serve you, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, you have killed for him the fatted calf." [Lk. 15:29-32] And in spite of all he is not reprimanded by the Father, but he says to him kindly, "Son, you art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." The fat calf has been slaughtered for the people of the gentiles, and its precious blood has been spread about, about which Paul to the Hebrews (9 and 10) explains in great detail. And David in the psalm says, "the brother does not redeem, man will redeem" [Ps. 48:8]. Christ decided that this people would be great and he died so that they might live; he went down to the underworld so that this people might rise up to heaven. For Israel there is no comparable toil. This is why he is jealous of his young brother, seeing that after having spent his fortune on his prostitutes and pimps, he receives the ring and the robe and recovers his former dignity. The phrase 'which was born in one night' can be applied to the time just before the arrival of Christ, who was the light of the world [John 8:12;9:5], about which is said, "the night has passed, and the day is near" [Rom. 13:12]. And this people died in one night when the sun of righteousness [Mal. 4:2] set for them, and they lost the word of God. The city of Nineveh which is great and very beautiful, prefigures the Church in which there is a greater number of inhabitants than the ten tribes of Israel: this is what the rest of the twelve baskets in the desert represent [Mat. 14:20; Mk. 6:43; Lk. 9:17; John 6:13]. "they do not know the difference between their right and their left", either on account of their innocence and their simplicity (to show first childhood and let it

be known what the number of those is who have reached an older age, when the very young are so numerous), or even, (because the city was great, and "in a great house there are not only golden and silver objects but also some made of wood and pottery" [2. Tim. 2:20]) because there was a great crowd that needed to repent and was ignorant of the difference between good and bad, between their right and left. And there is a great number of animals and of men who do not possess the faculty of reason and who can be compared to mad animals to whom they are similar. [Ps. 48:21.]

Commentary on Malachi

Commentaries on the Prophet Malachi, Book One, by Saint Jerome of Stridon, Presbyter, addressed to Minervius and Alexander.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

We want to interpret the last of the twelve prophets, Malachi ((or Malachim)), whose name was translated by the Seventy as 'His Messenger'. They said, 'The assumption of the word of the Lord is upon Israel in the hand of His Messenger', which is read in Hebrew as 'Malachi' (His Messenger), which rightly and explicitly means 'His Messenger', that is, My Messenger. And it should not be thought, according to the opinion of some (Origenists), that an angel came down from heaven and assumed a human body in order to speak to Israel the things that are commanded by the Lord. If names are to be interpreted, and from names there is not spiritual understanding, but the order of history is to be woven: therefore both Hosea, who is called savior, and Joel who is interpreted as Lord God, or the beginning, and the other prophets will not be men; but either angels, or the Lord and Savior, because their names resonate with this. Finally, except for the Seventy, other interpreters translated the name Malachi as it is read in Hebrew. However, the Hebrews consider Malachi to be Ezra the priest, because he mentions all the things that are contained in his book, and even here the prophet says: The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, for he is the angel of the Lord of hosts (Mal. II, 7). The time also matches: 941-942, and the title matches as well, as we have said in the Psalms, which do not fabricate titles, they should be believed, those whose first psalms are designated by names. Therefore, it is to be believed that Malachi, that is, Ezra, after Haggai and Zechariah, who prophesied under Darius, existed. And for this reason, he does not have a title, because his book serves as his title: in which we learn that in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, and the others, ascended from Babylon and the king, according to the hand of his Lord God, granted all his request. And they ascended with him from the sons of Israel and the sons of the priests, and the sons of the Levites, and the singers, and the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim in Jerusalem, in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes, and they came to Jerusalem in the fifth month. This is the seventh year of the king, because on the first day of the first month he began to ascend from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem. These things, my Minerva (or Minerva), and Alexander, not so much united by blood as by religion, so that I might not let go of the undertaking I have begun, and so that I might not toil in vain for your benefit, I have briefly spoken in the Prologue: in order that, relying on the help of your prayers, I might explain what follows, setting forth the words of Malachi first according to the Hebrew truth, then according to the Septuagint interpreters. Origen wrote three volumes on this book; but he did not touch the history at all, and in his usual fashion he was entirely engaged in allegorical interpretation, making no mention of Ezra at all; but he thought that it was an angel who wrote, according to what we read about John: Behold, I send my angel before your face (Matt. 11:10). We absolutely do not accept that we are compelled to take on the collapse of souls from heaven. I don't know of any other commentaries that I have read on this prophet, except for a short book by Apollinaris, of which the points of interpretation rather than the interpretation itself should be mentioned.

1:1

(Chapter 1, Verse 1) The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by the hand of Malachi. LXX: The assumption of the word of the Lord upon Israel, by the hand of his angel. What the word 'onus' means, that is, a burden, which in Hebrew is called 'Massa' (), and by Aquila is called '■ρμῶ', or what 'λ■μμῶ' means, that is, assumption, which the Septuagint and other interpreters have also translated, we have mentioned in other prophets. For even Nahum writes: The burden of Nineveh: The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite (Nahum 2). And Habakkuk: The burden which Habakkuk the prophet saw (Hab. I). And Zechariah: The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Adrach, and Damascus shall be his rest (Zech. IX and XII). And again in the following: The burden of the word of the Lord upon Israel. Let us be content with this explanation: and now let us say only this, that the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel, or as the LXX say, upon Israel, is indeed heavy because it is called a burden, but it has something of consolation in it, for it is taken not against Israel, but to Israel. For it is one thing when, for example, we write to him or them, and another thing when we write against him and him: because in the former, there is a part of friendship, whereas in the latter, there is an open confession of enmity. And it must be known that when Israel was taken captive, that is, the ten tribes, they were indiscriminately called by the former name, while the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were called Israel. And when it is said, 'In the hand of his angel,' or Malachi, take 'hand' to mean 'works.' And it came to pass in the hand of Haggai, and in the hand of Jeremiah, and in the hand of Moses, the word of God was made. For in their hands is iniquity, and their right hand is filled with gifts, and their hands are full of blood, in them the word of God does not happen; but those who wash their hands among the innocent (Psalm 25). And whoever Pilate attempted to wash his hands, so that he would not consent to the blasphemies of the Jews (Matthew 27), of whom the Psalmist rejoices, saying: He led me out over the waters of refreshment (Psalm 22, 2). Concerning this water, the Lord promises through the prophet: I will sprinkle you with the cleanest water (Ezekiel 36). But whoever is a sinner, is intoxicated by the Babylonian cup, and it is said about him: Thorns are born in the hand of the drunkard (Proverbs 26, 9).

LXX: Put on your hearts. This is not found in Hebrew, but I believe it was added from Haggai, in which we read: And now put on your hearts from this day and onward (Haggai II, 16). Therefore, after the title of the prophet or the preface, it must be understood in two ways: Put on your hearts, that is, pay attention and consider, as mentioned above: The assumption of the word of the Lord on Israel in the hand of His Angel. Or carefully pay attention to what will be said afterwards, so that you may not know them with the ears of the body, but with the understanding of the mind and heart, and make for yourselves treasures in which you may receive the riches of the words of God; and let wisdom act confidently, when your hearts have been enlarged, and when the heart has been filled with the words of God, cast out evil thoughts that come from the heart, such as murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts (Matt. XV), and the rest, and fulfill what the Savior said: He who has ears to hear, let him hear (Luke VIII, 8).

I have loved you, says the Lord. Yet you say, 'In what have you loved us?' Was not Esau Jacob's brother? says the Lord. Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert. If Edom says, 'We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins,' the Lord of hosts says, 'They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called the wicked country, and the people with whom the Lord is angry forever.' And your eyes will see, and you will say: Let the Lord be magnified beyond the border of Israel. LXX: I have loved

you, says the Lord: and you said, in what have you loved us? Was not Esau brother to Jacob, says the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, but Esau I hated: and I have made his borders a desolation, and his inheritance a dwelling of the desert. For Idumea will say, it is destroyed: let us return and rebuild the desolate places. Thus says the Lord almighty: They themselves will build, and I will destroy: and they will be called the borders of iniquity, and the people over whom the Lord has prepared until eternity. And your eyes shall see, and you shall say: The Lord is magnified upon the borders of Israel. Israel, that is, Judah, to whom the word of God was accustomed to be made and the vision of the Lord, is compelled to bear his burden and the weight of the heaviest punishments, in order to cast off more grievous sins and to feel through torments what he did not feel through benefits. And lest the punishment may seem unjust upon his own, the Lord subjoins: I have loved you: For whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth; but every son whom he receiveth, he correcteth. (Hebrews 12:6). And in saying, I have loved, the present denies, while it confesses the past. They respond there with the rashness with which they sin, forgetting His benefits: 'In whom have you loved us?' To which the Lord says: 'In order that I should be silent about other things, I will discuss your origins, the beginnings from which you came, before you were born, indeed before Rebecca conceived Esau and Jacob in her womb (Gen. 25): I loved you in Jacob, I hated the Edomites in Esau.' The apostle Paul, expounding this passage in a mystical argument, writes to the Romans, connecting two testimonies together, one from Genesis and one from Malachi: 'But even Rebecca also, having conceived of one, even our father Isaac.' For when they were not yet born, nor had done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand: not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said to her: The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written: Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated (Rom. 9:10, et seqq.). For this saying: Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated, is referred to the Book of Genesis, and to the prophet Malachi. And not only she: For when they were not yet born, nor had done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand: not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said to her: The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written: Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated (Rom. 9:10, et seqq.). For this saying: Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated, is referred to the Book of Genesis, and to the prophet Malachi. And not only she: Before the twins were born or had done anything good or evil, in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls she was told, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." (Romans 9:10, et seqq.). For when they were not yet born, nor had done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand: not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said to her: The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written: Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated (Rom. 9:10, et seqq.). For this saying: Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated, is referred to the Book of Genesis, and to the prophet Malachi. And not only she: Before the twins were born or had done anything good or evil, in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him

who calls she was told, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." (Romans 9:10, et seqq.). But if Edom, that is, Esau, shall say: We are destroyed indeed, but we will return and build up the ruinous places; thus saith the Lord of hosts: They shall build up, and I will throw down: and they shall be called the borders of wickedness, and the people with whom the Lord is angry for ever. And your eyes shall see, and you shall say: The Lord be magnified upon the border of Israel. If a son be a father, where is my honour? And if a master be a lord, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts. The Jews falsely flatter themselves that the Edomites, Romans, and Israelites prophesy about the end of the world: that when the Roman empire, that is, the Idumean empire, is destroyed, the kingdom of the world will come to the Jews. We have spoken these things, laying the foundations of history: now let us come to the spiritual understanding. Israel, a man, or rather, a person perceiving God, or as I think better, most upright before God, is loved by the Lord, and wants to know the reason for his love in himself. And the Lord answered, that Esau and Jacob, being born from the same stock, that is, vices and virtues proceed from one source of the heart: while from the freedom of our will, we lean in whichever direction we desire; but the former vices are born through infancy, childhood, and youth, which afterwards stronger age refines and supplants. The elder brother is rough and bloody (Gen. XXV): he delights in hunting, forests, and beasts. He lives a small and simple life, dwelling innocently in his home. God turns the borders of Edom, that is, the earthly and bloody ones, into solitude, and does not allow anything to grow or last on the land. But if impudent wickedness tries to rebuild what has been destroyed by the word of God, the Lord declares himself an adversary to their efforts to restore vice. And once all the boundaries of the enemies have been overthrown, then we can see with our own eyes the Israelites and all the saints saying: Let the Lord be glorified in their borders, all those who have their minds fixed on God (Wisdom 11). Moreover, love and hatred of God arise either from His foreknowledge of future events or from His works. Otherwise, we know that God loves all things and hates nothing that He has created; but He properly avenges those who are enemies and rebels against His own charity. And on the contrary, He hates those who desire to rebuild what has been destroyed by God. However, God is said to hate anthropopathetically: to weep, to grieve, to be angry; so that when we hear of His hatred towards the wicked, we may avoid what we understand God to hate.

1:6

(Verse 6.) The son honors the father, and the servant his master: if therefore I am a father, where is my honor? and if I am a master, where is my fear? says the Lord of hosts. LXX: The son glorifies the father, and the servant his master will fear. And if I am a father, where is my glory? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the Almighty Lord. Although before you were born, I began to love you like sons: yet choose how you will call me, either father or master. If you are a father, give your father the respect that is due, and show the appropriate devotion to your parent. If you are a master, why do you despise me? Why do you not fear the master? However, he is speaking to those who have returned from the Babylonian captivity under Zerubbabel and the son of Josedech, and the priest Ezra, and Nehemiah, and have constructed an altar, but have not yet built the temple, nor have they rebuilt the walls of the city, and nevertheless they remained in their former sins, not venerating God with love or fear. But what we have called glory, or honor, is one word both among the Greeks, δόξα, and among the Hebrews 947 כבוד (Chabod), but for the sake of the Latin language we have used the word honor. For even in the Gospel where the

Lord speaks and says: Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you (John 17:1), it is read as δόξασον among the Greeks, that is, glorify. But many Latin translators have rendered this passage as honorifica. At the same time, let us consider that a son and a servant in the Holy Scriptures are chosen by will, not by necessity of nature. For whoever receives the spirit of adoption becomes a son of God; but whoever receives the spirit of servitude becomes a servant of God in fear (Rom. VIII). Therefore, God desires first that we be His sons and that we do good willingly. If we wish to attain this, let us at least be His servants and depart from evil through fear of punishment. We read in a negative light the sons: We were children of wrath, and sons of Gehenna (Ephesians 2:3), whom the Pharisees, going around the sea and land, worthy progenitors of torments (Matthew 23). And Judas the traitor is called the son of perdition (John 17); and in the eighty-eighth psalm it is written about the Lord: The son of iniquity will not be able to harm him (Psalm 88:23). Also in Hosea, the sons of fornication are called, who are generated from a prostitute mother, of whom it is written: Your mother has fornicated (Hosea 2:5). And in the Gospel, the sons of the devil are criticized: You are born from the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father (John 8:44). We read the sons in a positive sense, as sons of God: Whoever received him, he gave them power to become sons of God (John 1:12). And sons of wisdom, proclaimed by the Gospel: Wisdom is justified by her children (Matthew 11:19). And sons of Abraham: Amen, amen, I say to you, God can raise up sons of Abraham from these stones (Matthew 3:9). And the apostle's children: My little children, for whom I am in labor again until Christ is formed in you (Galatians IV, 19), and many similar passages. Therefore, the Son honors, or glorifies, the Father, according to what is written: Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matthew V, 16). The servant also honors his master, but not with the same love as the son; rather, it is implied from the common rule that the son honors his father and the servant his master; yet Almighty God, knowing the difference between a son and a servant, seeks glory from the son and fear from the servant: For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ecclesiastes I, 16), so that we may pass from the fear of servants to the glory of sons.

1:7

(Verse 7) To you, O priests, who despise my name, and you say: 'How have we despised your name?' You offer on my altar defiled bread, and you say: 'How have we defiled you?' By saying that the table of the Lord is despised. LXX: You, O priests, who despise my name, and you say: 'How have we despised your name?' You offer on my altar polluted bread, and you say: 'How have we polluted it?' By saying that the table of the Lord is despised ÷ and what remains, you have despised ÷ But what follows: And what remains you have despised, we have marked with an obelus, because it is not found in the Hebrew, and it has been added from the following verses. To you, therefore, O priests, who despise my name, this discourse is directed: you who have returned from Babylon, fearful of past servitude, should have turned to the Lord with a full heart. And not only do you not do this, but imitating Cain, you respond with arrogant words against God, and you ask Him whom hidden things do not deceive, and it is said: Wherein have we despised thy name? (Gen. IV) so that with the impudence of dissimulation, you may cover the wound of conscience. Do you want to know in what way you despise my name? You offer on my altar polluted bread: that is, the bread of offering, which according to Hebrew traditions, you yourselves should sow, you yourselves should reap, you yourselves should grind, you yourselves should cook. And now you

take whatever you please from the midst, and with a reckless voice you respond, and you say, in what way do we pollute them, or you? For while the sacraments are violated, he himself, of whom they are sacraments, is violated. But we can interpret this in the following way: In what you say, the Lord's table has been despised, referring to the fact that, when they returned from Babylon and the temple had not yet been rebuilt, they dwelled in huts and in the ruins of the ancient city. They only built an altar, but it did not have the same glory as the previous one, and they believed that the sanctity of the religious practice was lacking because there was no ambition for construction. We have drawn thin lines to highlight the spiritual explanation that must be imprinted. He reproaches the divine word to bishops, as well as to neglectful priests and deacons, whether because we are of the priestly and royal lineage, or because all those who are baptized in Christ are considered (or should be considered) in the name of Christ. Why do they despise the name of God? And when asked in what way they have despised His name, He reveals the reasons for their offense: 'You offer on my altar polluted bread,' He says. We pollute the bread, that is, the body of Christ, when we unworthy approach the altar, and when we, dirty, drink the world's blood, and say, 'The table of the Lord has been despised.' Not that anyone would dare to say this, and not that anyone would think of uttering such an impious thought with a wicked voice, but the deeds of sinners despise the table of God. We can also say this: The Doctor of the Church who makes the spiritual bread and distributes it to the people, if he speaks to the people and flatters the rich either for human glory or for worldly gains that follow glory, and honors sinners, and according to James, welcomes those who come to him with gold rings (James 2), and rejects the holy poor, despises the name of God, defiles the bread of teachings, and hurls insults at God himself, thinking that the table of his writings is a common table of idols and secular teachings.

1:8

(Verse 8) If you offer the blind animal for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if you offer the lame and sick animal, is it not evil? Offer it to your governor; see if he is pleased with it or accepts your face, says the Lord of hosts. LXX: For if you offer the blind animal for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if you offer the lame and sick animal, is it not evil? Offer it to your governor; see if he receives you, if he accepts your face, says the Almighty Lord. We learn more fully about the diversity of victims and what should or should not be offered in Leviticus (Lev. 21 and 22). Therefore, the priests and Levites, gatekeepers and singers, and the servants of Solomon who returned from Babylon, including those whose names were listed by Ezra, offered illicit victims to God, namely blind and lame animals, and those weakened by various infirmities (1 Esd. 2); for this is what is meant by 'languid,' encompassing everything in one word. If you were to offer gifts to your leader, would he not reject them? Would he not consider it an injustice done to him? And yet, you dare to offer this to God, when you do not dare to give it to humans? It would take too long to explain the mysteries of all the sacrifices; I will only speak about those that are contained in this present chapter. The victim of the soul is blind, as it is not enlightened by the light of Christ, nor does it have an eye that gazes upon the Gospel (Matthew 6). The prayer of the petitioner is lame, as it approaches prayer with a divided mind and listens to the people of the Jews: How long will you limp with both feet? (1 Kings 18:21) And weak, and covered with all infirmity, which does not have the power of Christ God, and the wisdom of God. Prayers of this kind, which are without the light of truth, and do not have firm traces of wisdom, decay with various weaknesses, if they are offered to the leader of the Church, or to any educated and wise teacher, will they not be rejected, and fall into contempt for

him who dared to offer such things?

1:9

(V. 9) And now beseech the face of God that he may have mercy on you: for by your hand has this been done, if in any way he may accept your faces, says the Lord of hosts. Who is among you that shut the doors, and kindle my altar to no purpose? LXX: And now beseech the face of your God, and pray to him: these things have been done by your hands, if I may accept your faces, says the Lord Almighty: because even among you the doors shall be closed, and my altar shall not be kindled for nothing. In this place, the Seventy interpreters differ greatly from the Hebrew truth: and where the interpretation is different, it is necessary that the meaning also be different. Because you have offered blind, lame, and weak victims, for you have done all these things that I have said: repent, if in any way God will have mercy on you, for there is no one among you to the very end, not even a high priest, not a priest, not even a Levite, not a singer, and not even a doorkeeper, and the one who sets fire on the altar for burning sacrifices, who should not receive payment for his work from me. However, when he says this, he means tithes of all the crops that are offered by the people. By this, it is shown that servitude to the Lord is more acceptable, which does not demand a reward in the present. Hence the Apostle preaches the Gospel for free (1 Thess. 2); and he works with his hands night and day, so as not to be a burden to anyone, and he testifies that this glory of his free preaching to the Gentiles should by no means be diminished (2 Thess. 3). Furthermore, LXX others suggest a much different meaning: O priests, who offer weak sacrifices, turn to repentance, and seek the face of the Lord and pray for the works of your hands. But what it brings forth: If I 951 take your faces, I do not know if it agrees with the exhortation of repentance. For no one says, pray to me, and I will not spare you. It follows: In you the doors will be closed, namely, those of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Where the Savior says: I am the door (John 10:9). Or in other words: The doors of the Scriptures will not be opened to you, nor will you be able to understand the holy of holies or know the sacraments of the Lord; nor will you be able to offer incense on his altar, because your prayers will not reach him. And what is said to be given freely, we interpret as meaning without reward: those who follow this understanding that we now explain turn it into a favor, so that they do not have the grace to serve at the Lord's altar.

1:10-14

(Verse 10 seqq.) I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand. For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts. But you profane it when you say: 'The table of the Lord is polluted, and its fruit, its food, is despised.' And you have said: 'Behold, we have labored and blown it away', says the Lord of hosts. And you have brought in the lame, and the sick, and you have brought in an offering: will I accept it from your hand? says the Lord. LXX: It is not my will in you, says the Lord Almighty, and I will not accept a sacrifice from your hands, for from the rising of the sun to its setting my glorious name is among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure sacrifice, for great is my name among the nations, says the Lord Almighty. But you have defiled it by saying, 'The table of the Lord is polluted, and its fruit, its food, is despised.' You also say, 'These things are from affliction,' and you scoff at them,' says the Lord Almighty. You bring stolen goods, lame or sick animals, and offer them as sacrifices.

Should I accept them from your hands?' says the Lord Almighty. The rule of Scriptures is this: When a clear prophecy about the future is given, do not diminish what is written by uncertain allegories. So now, specifically, the Lord's message is addressed to the priests of the Jews, who offer the blind and the lame and the sick for sacrifice, so that they may know that spiritual victims will succeed the carnal victims. And not the blood of bulls and goats, but incense, that is, the prayers of the saints, are to be offered to the Lord, not in one province of the world, Judea, nor in one city of Judea, Jerusalem, but in every place, an offering is to be made, not unclean, like the people of Israel, but clean, like in the ceremonies of the Christians. For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, the name of the Lord is great among the Gentiles, as the Savior says: Father, I have manifested your name to men (John 17:6). And when, he says, my name shall become great among the Gentiles, oh you princes of the Jews, you have defiled it and continue to defile it. Thus, the prophecy covers both the future and the present time. But therefore, oh priests and princes of the Jews, in every place a clean offering is presented to me, and my name is great among the Gentiles, because you say the Lord's table is defiled, and what is placed on it is contemptible with the fire that devours it. The people, upon returning from Babylon, built an altar made only of random and unpolished stones, according to the book of Ezra (Ezra 1:6), without a temple, without city buildings, without the construction of walls, and they believed that the worship of the religion was of lesser value because it lacked the adornments of the temple. To them, the Lord says: Do you think that the altar and the burnt offerings and the sacrifices placed on it are polluted? Do you also think that the fire, which consumes the sacrifices, is polluted? You do not understand that the almighty God does not seek gold, gems, or a multitude of sacrifices, but rather the will of those who offer. 953. But those who think that the altar should be understood as the table on which the loaves were placed, how can they interpret what follows, when I do not see at all the fire that devours it: for the fire does not devour the loaves of the offering, which were always exchanged for new ones instead of the old ones, and taken away to be used by the priests (Leviticus 2:4). Or certainly it should be understood in this way: You have defiled my name by saying: What good is it if we offer the best? Whatever is offered must be consumed by fire. But the fruit of the altar is fire, and the food of fire is the offerings of the host or the holocaust. And it is not enough that you spoke blasphemy in the previous discourse, but you also said this: 'Behold, we have labored and blown away what we had, says the Lord of hosts.' The meaning of this statement is as follows: You said, 'We have returned from captivity, we have been plundered by our enemies, we have labored greatly on a long journey, we are poor, whatever we could have, has been consumed by the hardships of the road. Whatever we have, we offer.' And by saying this, you have blown away your own sacrifices, that is, you have made them unworthy by my exhalation. Or as it can be read in Hebrew: 'And you have blown me away by saying this.' You have done injury not to the sacrifice, but to me, to whom you were sacrificing. Therefore, I will by no means accept that from your hand, says the almighty Lord. Some think that this is specifically said to the Jews because their offerings are unclean and polluted, and sacrifice is transferred to the Gentiles. It should be understood as pertaining to the priests of the Church who offer sacrifices to the Lord negligently. But if we accept this, then the offerings must be transferred again from the Church to another religion. And just as I read the Gospel, so again what is not yet future will happen in accordance with the Gospel. They also refer to the contaminated table of the Lord in holy Scriptures, if they are understood differently than they are written.

2:1-2

(Chapter 2, verses 1, 2.) Woe to the deceitful one who has a male in his flock and makes a vow, sacrificing something weak to the Lord. For I am a great king, says the Lord of hosts, and my name is feared among the nations. + And now, to you, O priests, I give this command: If you will not listen and if you will not set it on your heart to give glory to my name, says the Lord of hosts, I will send poverty upon you and curse your blessings, yes, I have cursed them, because you have not set it on your heart. LXX: And cursed is the one who is powerful and has a male in his flock, and his vow is upon him, and he sacrifices a weakling to the Lord. For I am a great King, says the Lord Almighty, and my name is renowned among the nations. And now I have this command for you, O priests. If you do not listen and if you do not set your heart to give glory to my name, says the Lord Almighty, I will send a curse on you, and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honor me. This which is written, and I will scatter your blessing, is added in the Septuagint, and is not found in Hebrew. Whatever the human mind can find to excuse its sin and defend itself with false satisfaction, this divine word, foreseeing it, rebukes and condemns. And the meaning is, because you offer the blind and the lame and the sick, and this is not from your own, but from robberies and spoils and the tears of the miserable, and moreover you say, we offer what we have from labor and poverty: therefore I say generally, that your own conscience may accuse you. Certainly you hide poverty and the injustice of captivity, and the weakness of your family affairs: listen to what I say: Cursed is the deceitful one who has a male in his flock, and making a vow he sacrifices an inferior one to the Lord. If you do not have a male, the curse does not harm you. By saying this, he shows that they have what is best and offer what is worst. Therefore, priests, this commandment is for you, you have done what is wicked in contempt of me. But because I prefer the repentance of a sinner to death, I say even now: If you refuse to listen and understand, so as to give glory to my name, which is terrible among the nations, I will send a true plague to you, so that you will not lie; but, compelled by the lack of all things, you will say that you do not possess the best things to offer. And I will curse, he says, your blessings, that is, those things which you now possess through my blessings; whatever is blessed by you will be cursed by me. And I will curse them, implied by your blessings; for you did not want to understand what is being said; for it is said: you have not set it upon your heart. We can receive the curse and deception of the Jewish people, who, although they had in their flock the male Lord Savior, and the spotless Lamb who takes away the sins of the world (John 1), and being warned by the prophecy of all the prophets, to sacrifice and accept the ram, which was caught by its horns in the thicket of Sabec (Genesis 22), they did not want to do this; but instead, they sacrifice the weak to the Lord, crucifying the Savior, and choosing Barabbas, the author of robbery and sedition (John 18), who is interpreted according to mystical understanding as referring to the devil: and for those despising and preferring the devil to the Savior, the name of Christ is horrible among the nations, who have received the passion of the Lord and fearfully honor Him. It can also be said about us: If we, created by God, wise and possessing a nature suitable for sacred disciplines, neglect our own skill and give ourselves to vices and excesses, and having power, we sacrifice the weak to the Lord. However, our prayer is weak and tainted, when it is corrupted by anger, envy, enmities, and other disturbances of the soul: if we offer a gift at the altar and remember that our brother has something against us, we do not proceed and make amends to him (Matthew 5:23). And so the Apostle commands: 'I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger and dispute' (I Tim. II, 8). And the shepherd is the one who knows our thoughts and the senses of our virtues, as it is said in the one hundred and second

Psalm (Verse 1): 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless his holy name'. If he governs his flock well, he fulfills that blessing: 'Blessed shall be the offspring of your cattle and the produce of your ground' (Deut. XXVIII, 4). But if he who naturally possesses masculinity, that is, strength, rigidity, and robustness, sacrifices lightness or excessive femininity and lasciviousness, or if he is weakened and corrupted by various disturbances of the soul, he will feel within himself that which is written: The powerful endure torments powerfully (Wisdom 6:7). And: To whom much is given, much will be demanded from him (Luke 8). Therefore, it is specifically said to priests that if they refuse to listen and hold it in their hearts, so as to give glory to the name of the Lord through good conduct (Romans 2); but on the contrary, his name is cursed among the nations because of them, he will send upon them poverty of all good things, and will turn their blessings into a curse. Those who abuse their health for pleasure, and turn their wealth into luxury, and tarnish their good reputation with impure conduct, they change the blessings of God into curses. Indeed, it is specifically the priests who are commanded, and their blessings are turned into curses when they do not bless the saints with true heartfelt affection, like Isaac with Jacob, and Jacob with the patriarchs, and Moses with the twelve tribes (Genesis 27 and 49, and Deuteronomy 23), but they deceive the hearts of the innocent with sweet words and blessings (Romans 16), and those who act wickedly are blessed by them, and they flatter sinners as long as they are rich and indulge in their vices, of whom it is said: My people, those who call you blessed are leading you astray and causing you to stumble in your paths (Isaiah 3:11).

2:3-4

(Vers. 3, 4.) Behold, I will cast the branch to you, and I will scatter the refuse of your solemnities upon your faces, and it shall take you away with it. And you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, that my covenant might be with Levi, says the Lord of hosts. LXX: Behold, I will separate for you the shoulder, and I will scatter the belly upon your faces, the belly of your solemnities, and I will take you together: and you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, that my testament may be with the Levites, says the Lord Almighty. Because he speaks to the priests, he says: I will cast in your faces those things which you consider holier in the Law, and which have been forgiven to you by God as a gift of virtues from sacrifices: The arm, which the Seventy translated as shoulder, that is, the right arm of the animal. And I will scatter, he says, the dung, that is, the abdomen; or according to the Hebrews, excrement, that is, Phares, metaphorically using the term to refer to what contains, calling that which is contained, for the priests received both the arm and the chest, as well as the tongue and the abdomen, and those things which are described in Leviticus (Lev. VII and IX) from sacrifices. He testifies that all these things are cast away for their sins, and that they are sent upon the faces of the priests (Num. 18; Deut. 18), so that those who offer may be such as those things that are offered. And He says that He will take you with Him, that is, the dung of your solemnities, so that the filthy faces may be defiled by the mixture of foul dung, and from that which I cast away from you, you may understand that I am He who once chose your father Levi, and through Levi Aaron, and granted you the glory of the priesthood, so that it might be My covenant or testament with Levi, and he might minister to Me in an eternal priesthood. Note that 'Brit' in Hebrew is translated as 'pact' or 'covenant' by Aquila, 'testament' by the LXX, and in many places in Scripture, 'testament' does not mean the will of the deceased, but a covenant of the living. God desired that all people, especially priests, not have any blemish and adorn their shoulder or arm with good works. A good conscience is signified

by the heart, holy confession by the tongue, so that what we believe in our hearts for righteousness, we confess with our mouths for salvation (Romans 10). In the stomach, there is nothing deadly; but rather that which sustains and nourishes our life: for if food is not digested in the stomach and its juice irrigates the body, it becomes weak and leads to death. However, we turn everything the opposite way, so that the Lord may reject us or separate our works from the works of the saints, and it is prescribed for us to anoint our heads (Matt. VI) and to wash our faces from the filth of sins while fasting, and to contemplate the glory of the Lord with unveiled face (III Cor. III). Now we say: Confusion covers my face (Ps. XLIII, 16) and like Cain, our face falls (Gen. IV), and we cannot fulfill what is commanded: Lift up your eyes and see (Jer. XIII, 20); but we have faces covered with the filth of vices and we say: My wounds have putrefied and have become corrupt, because of my foolishness (Ps. XXXVII, 6). Wherefore all these things are turned into dung, as the Scripture saith: And he shall take you with him as dung, even the faces of our sacrifices which ought to have come full and clean to the solemnities of God, and to eat the flesh of the lamb shod with shoes (Exod. XII), or after seven weeks, to offer the fruits of our works to God (Lev. XXIII), or to live passing through in the tabernacles of this world, and to say: I am a stranger and a pilgrim, as were all my fathers (Ps. XXXVIII). And because for this reason we translate: He will take you with himself to the dung, the Septuagint translated it as: I will take you together, intelligence is added, that after the priests have been covered with disgrace and ignominy, and have recognized their sin and repented, then they shall be taken by the Lord, and it is fitting for this meaning what follows: And you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you. But the interpretation that seems true to me is superior, lest between the words of threat, he may have inserted words of flattery, especially since even the things that follow sound like God's indignation.

2:5-7

(Verse 5 onwards) My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave him fear, and he feared me, and trembled at the presence of my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and equity, and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of the priest preserve knowledge, and people seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. LXX: My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave him fear to fear me, and he was in awe of the presence of my name. The law of truth (also called truth itself) was on his lips, and iniquity was not found on his tongue. He walked with me in peace and turned many away from wickedness. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, because he is the messenger of the Almighty. It is described from the perspective of God, the perfect duty of a priest, what he should be like, and how God wanted him to be, whom he commanded to be. For He had said above, 'On account of the pact between Me and Levi,' says the Lord of Hosts, 'and it was through Levi the Patriarch that the pact reached his descendants, Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas, and others who were generated from his lineage. But now in the end, He says, 'You have made void the pact with Levi,' says the Lord of Hosts. From this, it is clear that everything that is said about Levi pertains to the priests and specifically to the high priest. We read in Numbers about Phinehas, who killed Zimri and the Midianite woman with a sword. Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, caused My fury to rest upon the Israelites because he was zealous for My honor and did not let Me destroy the Israelites in My anger. Therefore, I said, 'Behold, I will give him the covenant

of peace, and it shall be for him and his descendants after him a covenant of eternal priesthood.' This is because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the Israelites.' (Numbers 25:11) But let us not consider the testament or pact of life to be that which is common to us with animals and all living creatures, but that which says: I am the life (John 14:7). For indeed our life is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3): of whom we can say that he himself is our peace, as the Apostle affirms: For he himself is our peace (Ephesians 2:14). Therefore, the Lord gave to Levi and through him to his descendants, that they might fear him; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10), and they should fear and withdraw themselves from his presence, showing the fear of the mind by the horror of the body, according to what is written: On whom shall I rest, except on the humble and quiet and trembling one who keeps my words? (Isaiah 66:2) The law of truth was on his lips, that is, the teaching of the peoples, which in the priest should not be defiled by any falsehood; but should proceed entirely from the fountain of truth. And injustice was not found on his lips, so that he might imitate his Lord, of whom it is said: 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth' (1 Peter 2:22). He walked with me in peace and equity, so that he himself may have peace within him and may bring peace to others, and may show no partiality in judgment, and therefore he walks with God as Enoch walked, who was taken up by God and was found no more (Genesis 5); and he turned many away from iniquity. Whoever is a priest and does not correct wrongdoers, passes over the duty of the priest. The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge: they shall not say, pronounce, but shall keep, so that they may speak at the proper time, and give food to the servants in due season, and seek the law from his mouth. The same is written in Haggai: 'Ask the priests about the law of the Lord' (Haggai 2:12). It is the duty of the priest to respond to the disciplined inquiry about the law. If someone is diligent in ignorance of other things, but negligent in the Holy Scriptures, they boast in vain of a dignity whose works they do not exhibit. This is what the apostle Paul writes to Titus: That he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9). And to Timothy: Since from childhood you have known the sacred writings, which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, so that the one who sins in the presence of all may be rebuked (2 Timothy 3:13). It follows: Because the angel of the Lord of hosts is. He explains his name as Ezra, the priest of God, that is, Malachi, which is interpreted as the angel of the Lord; however, an angel, that is, a messenger, is truly called a priest of God, because he is the mediator between God and men, and he announces God's will to the people: and therefore in the priest's breastplate it is the rational (Exodus 29), and in rational learning and truth is placed, so that we may learn that a priest must be learned and a proclaim of the Lord's truth. Some falsely think that what is said about Levi and through Levi to the priests should be understood about Christ, not considering the things that follow, which are contrary to the person of Christ.

2:8-9

(Vers. 8, 9.) But you have departed from the way, and have caused many to stumble in the law: you have made void the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts. Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base before all the people, because you have not kept my ways, and have had respect of persons in the law. LXX: But you have turned aside from my way, and have made many weak in the law, you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Almighty Lord. And I gave you contemptible and dissolute ones to all nations, because you did not keep my ways, but showed partiality in the law. This does not pertain to the person of Christ, nor to those who are dedicated to

his worship, even if I remain silent, the wise reader understands. And the meaning is: I wanted to make you do what is contained in the previous chapter, and what I spoke through Moses in Deuteronomy: Give his teaching and truth to the righteous man (Deut. XXXIII, 8, sec. LXX), and the rest: but you have departed from the straight path, or deviated, as I said: Do not turn to the right or to the left (Deut. V, 32); and you have made many weak in the law, or caused them to stumble, as Aquila and Symmachus translated. To turn to the right is to abstain from the foods that God created for use; to condemn marriage and to fall into that which is written in another place: Do not be overly righteous (Eccl. 7:17). To turn to the left is to give oneself over to luxury and lust, and to cause scandal to many in the law. It is better for such a person to have a millstone tied around their neck and be thrown into the sea, than to cause one of the least of these to stumble. But many make the weak, who, having received the strength of faith in Christ, make them weak by their negligent behavior, of whom rightly it is said: You have made void the covenant of Levi, the covenant of life and peace, and other things which we have said pertain to the priest's duty. For this reason, I too have made you contemptible and lowly to all the people, so that they would despise you and trample upon your honor and glory: Because you have not kept my ways and have shown partiality in the law. Among all the sins of Levi, or those who are from Levi, the priests of God, that one is placed last and greatest, why they receive faces in the law, so that they consider not causes, but persons, despising the just poor, receiving and honoring unjust rich. To whom it is said in the eighty-first psalm: How long will you judge unjustly and accept the faces of sinners (Psalm 81:2)? And Paul says to the Galatians: God, he says, does not accept the person of man (Galatians 2:6). The apostle James more fully argues this sin and condemns it (James 2). However, whatever is said to the previous people, let us consider it also said to us, so that we may be more cautious in avoiding vices and not adopt a face against the law, nor prefer falsehood to the truth as worshippers of God.

2:10-12

(Verse 10 and following) Is not the Father one of us all? Is not God one who created us? Why then does each one of us despise his brother, violating the covenant of our fathers? Judah has transgressed, and abomination has been made in Israel and in Jerusalem: because Judah has defiled the sanctification of the Lord, which he loved, and has taken the daughter of a foreign god. The Lord will destroy the man who does this, the master and the disciple from the tents of Jacob, and the one who offers an offering to the Lord of hosts. LXX: Is not the Father of you all one? Did not one God create you? Why have you each forsaken his brother, making the abominable testament of your fathers? Judas has been abandoned, and abomination has been made in Israel and in Jerusalem, because Judas defiled the holy things of the Lord, in which he loved, and he discovered foreign gods. May the Lord destroy the man who does these things, until he is driven out from the tents of Jacob, and from those who offer sacrifice to the Almighty Lord. Before we discuss the current chapter, the tradition of the Hebrews must be presented, indeed the truth of the Scriptures must be explained. We read in a volume titled Ezra, spoken in the person of Ezra himself: The leaders approached me, saying: The people of Israel, as well as the priests and Levites, have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands and from their abominations, namely the Canaanites, Ethiopians, Persians, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: and the holy seed is mixed with the people of those lands. Moreover the hand of the princes and

magistrates hath been first in this transgression. And when I had heard this thing, I rent my mantle and my coat, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down mourning (1 Esdras 9:1). And again in the following: And there were found of the sons of the priests that had taken strange wives: of the sons of Jesus, the son of Josedec, and his brethren, Maasia, and Eleazar, and Jarib, and Godolia: and they gave their hands to put away their wives, and to offer for their offence a ram of the flock (1 Esdras 10:18-19). At the end of the chapter, after listing those who had taken foreign wives ((or had taken)), the Scripture states: All of these took foreign wives, and there were women among them who gave birth to sons. Therefore, upon their return from the Babylonian captivity, both the leaders, priests, and Levites, as well as the rest of the people, rejected their wives of Israelite descent, who, due to poverty and the injustice of a long journey, as well as the frailty of their gender, could not bear the labor and had become worn out, and had contracted physical weakness and deformity. And they had entered into matrimony with foreigners, who were either in the prime of life or possessed more attractive physical appearances, or were the daughters of the powerful and wealthy. So Ezra the prophet rebukes them and challenges them to reject their new wives and take back the wives they had divorced. He says, 'Is not Abraham our father? Didn't Isaiah write about him: Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah, who bore you; for he was one, and I called him.' Isn't it one God who created us, who chose our lineage from Abraham? Why then do we despise our old wives and cast aside the daughters of our brothers, in order to abandon the covenant of our fathers and not take wives according to the Law? Juda transgressed (for this tribe alone returned from Babylon with the priests and Levites, and abomination was committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. Not from the ten tribes which were held by the Assyrians did this happen, but from those who returned under the authority of King Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah from Babylon. Because Judah defiled the sanctification of the Lord, which he loved, and took a daughter of a foreign god, mixing Israel's seed with foreigners and the daughters of the nations, that is, with non-Israelite women who served idols, by marrying them. Therefore, the word of the prophets is directed towards them, and they are drawn away from sin by curses. May the Lord destroy the man who does this. How beautifully he does not pardon the error, nor does he say, 'May the Lord curse the one who did this,' but the one who does it, stretching the curse towards the future, in order to provoke sinners to repentance. The teacher, he says, the disciple from the tents of Jacob, whether he be a priest or a layperson, they shall be struck with the same curse, and there shall be no difference in punishment for those in whom the sins are equal. And the one offering a gift to the Lord of hosts: it is understood that the Lord will destroy him as well, who wishes to offer a gift at the altar for men of this kind, whose only remedy is not to do what they have done. Some, not understanding this passage, nor knowing the truth of history, understand what he says: 'Is not the father of us all one?' concerning Abraham, so as to also mention Abraham as the father of the Gentiles, according to what is written: 'God is able from these stones to raise up children of Abraham' (Matt. 3:9). Certainly they affirm one God the Father according to what we read in Deuteronomy: Is not this the same Father who possessed you, and made you, and created you (Deut. XXXII, 6)? And again: You have deserted the God who created you (Ibid., 18). And elsewhere: I have begotten sons and exalted them, but they have forsaken me (Isaiah I, 2). And in the Book of Psalms: The sons of strangers have lied to me: the sons of strangers have grown old and stumbled from their paths (Ps. XVII, 46). 964 From this one father, who sinned, departing, they made many fathers of their vices: For everyone who commits sin is born of the devil. And this is what follows: Therefore each one of us despises his brother, violating

the covenant of our fathers, they interpreted it in such a way as to say: We who are all generated from one father ought to be one, and to have one confession of faith; but afterwards by pride and the building of the tower against God, they were divided into many languages and opinions (Gen. XI). They also refer to acts of charity, saying: Let us despise our brothers when we do not share with them what we have received from God for sustaining life. And they further allege that our brother is called Lord according to the Scriptures, who commanded Mary Magdalene to announce to his brothers that the Lord has risen (John 20), and he speaks in the Psalm: I will declare your name to my brothers, in the midst of the Church I will sing praise to you (Psalm 22:23). So the Jews deserted their brother and contaminated the covenant of their fathers, which God had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that in their descendants, who is interpreted as Christ, all the nations would be blessed. They suspect these things in various ways because they do not find a certain way. Finally, even this which follows according to the Septuagint: Judas has been forsaken, and abomination has been made in Israel and in Jerusalem, they explain thus: The Jews have been deserted because they have blasphemed the Lord Savior and have endured what is written: According to the multitude of their wickedness, drive them out, for they have provoked you, O Lord (Ps. 5:11), so that they would be scattered as wanderers and fugitives into all the provinces. For they have polluted the holy things of the Lord, being devoted to the Son of God, and approaching foreign gods: For whoever does not accept the Son, does not accept the Father who sent him (Luke IX, 43). And because they have done this, they will continue to be destroyed until they are humbled, either by the injustice of captivity, or by the guilt of their conscience: and they will be cast out from the tents of Jacob, so that with the temple and altar destroyed, no sacrifices may be offered among them (or by them). Not content with this explanation (because Judas is interpreted as the confession of the Lord), they transfer understanding to the penitent, who, after confessing the Lord, if he sins, commits an abomination in Israel, and in Jerusalem, in the sense of seeing God, and in the vision of peace. For he pollutes the mysteries of Christ, unworthily receiving his body and blood (I Cor. XI), because he loves vices and finds for himself foreign gods, having the number of gods according to the number of sins. According to the Apostle Paul: God is a voracious belly (Phil. III), and according to Peter (also James). Whoever is conquered by him, is subjected to him (II Petr. II, 19). And whoever does this, will be exterminated from the Church, and from the tents of Jacob, who supplants vices and sins, until he is humbled for his own good, and a victim is offered for him to the Almighty Lord.

2:13-16

(v. 13 ff.) And you have done this again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, weeping and groaning, so that I will no longer look upon your sacrifices or accept anything pleasing from your hands. Yet you ask, 'Why?' Because the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, whom you have despised, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did not one God create us all? Did not one God give us life and breath? And what does one seek, except the seed of God? Therefore, guard your spirit and do not despise the wife of your youth. When you have hatred, let it go, says the Lord God of Israel; but iniquity will cover its clothing, says the Lord of hosts: guard your spirit and do not despise. LXX: And you have done these things that I hated: you covered the altar of the Lord with tears, weeping and groaning, looking for a sacrifice still worthy of labor, or to receive something acceptable from your hands. And you said, why? Because the Lord has testified between you and the wife of your youth, whom you have

abandoned, and she is your companion, and the wife of your covenant, and no other person has done this, and the remainder of your spirit. And you said, what else does God seek besides offspring? And guard in your spirit, and do not abandon the wife of your youth. But if you hate her and divorce her, says the Lord God of Israel, he will cover your thoughts of wickedness, says the Almighty Lord. And guard in your spirit, and do not abandon. Let us interpret the story, and connecting short sentences to each verse, let us discuss what has been handed down to us from the Hebrews. The abandoned wives of the Israelites, contemplating the women of foreign nations in the beds of their husbands, sought refuge only in God's help, prostrating themselves before the altar of the Lord for 966 days and nights with tears, groans, and wails, causing envy towards His providence; because He did not regard human affairs and did not alleviate their miseries. Where God says that he cannot accept sacrifice and offering from the hands of priests who have committed these things, being hindered by the weeping and lamentations of their wives, and moreover, he asks why he does not accept sacrifice from their hands, and immediately he declares: Because the Lord has testified between you and the wife of your youth, whom you have despised, saying: Because of this, a man will leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and the two will become one flesh (Gen. II, 24): and therefore she is called a partner and wife of union and covenant, who was made from the rib of man by God. And the remainder of his spirit, whether of God, as some suppose, or of the husband, as others suspect, because on this account it seems that, in a certain manner, one soul exists in two (persons), with the spirit and mind united. Therefore, when one (person) has made both the man and the woman, on this account the conjunction of both was made by God, so that children would be born. For there is only one God, what does he seek except the seed of God, that is, children generated from the Israelite stock? So when you have fruitful wives and rejoice in children, why do you seek the beauty of women, which is suitable for prostitutes, not for wives? Therefore, God commands through the prophet and says: Guard your spirit; do not be led astray by desire, so that you are not overcome by the love of strangers. And do not despise the wife of your youth, who was first joined to you in virgin marriage, let her remain with you until old age. But it could happen that the rulers, priests, Levites, and people would respond: God commanded through Moses that when we hate our wives, we should divorce them. And it is written: You say to me that it is written: When you hate your wife, divorce her, says the Lord God of Israel (Deut. XXIV). And immediately he replied: Indeed, this is a commandment in the Law, but because of the hardness of your hearts. Which the Lord further expounds in the Gospel: But whoever, except for the cause of fornication, unjustly divorces his wife (Mat. V, 32), his garment of iniquity will cover him, that is, the body in which the soul is clothed, says the Lord of hosts: so that he may be punished in the same way he sinned. Therefore, in this dissolved question, it inculcates and repeats what it said above: Guard your spirit, and do not despise, either the guardianship of your spirit, or certainly a wife, if she is poor or ugly. What we specifically explained according to the book of Ezra concerning abandoned wives, some people believe this statement is generally against those who plunder the possessions of others and unjustly amass wealth, daring to offer gifts to God, which it says it cannot accept, forbidden by the tears of those who have been devastated, and by weeping and groaning. And it is fitting to apply this testimony to that place: Honor God from your just labors (Prov, III, 9). But they also mix in this feeling, those who on account of the loss of family property, the death of their children, shipwreck, and other things that pertain to the loss of worldly possessions, are turned to weeping, and give themselves wholly to mourning and lamentation: not with the strength of mind

and hope in God, and disregard everything for the rewards of the future; even if they direct their prayers to God, they are not received by him, because they are defiled by unseemly and incongruous lamentations for a man. But as for what follows: Because the Lord has testified between you and the wife of your youth, whom you have despised; and she is your partner, and the wife of your covenant or testament; and no other has done so; and the remnants of your spirit are interpreted in such a way that they say the natural understanding of the wife of your youth, and the law written in the heart, which is inherent in all human beings. Therefore, even the nations without the law of God do the things that are of the law. And about this wife, it is preached in Proverbs: A wife is joined to a man by God (Prov. XIX, 24); and we are commanded to drink from our own wells and fountains, and let no one share in drinking, and to take delight in the wife of our youth. This wife even impels us to say to the gullible: God will judge, and God will see (Judges VII, 13); and I leave all things to be judged between me and you, about which even Ecclesiastes speaks: And live your life with the woman whom you have loved all the days of your vanity, which have been given to you under the sun (Eccl. IX, 9). This wife is the remaining spirit of ours, because she is always joined to our perception: and if she departs from us, we immediately offend God, and our impiety covers us. Hence it is again suggested: Keep your spirit (Galatians 6), not the flesh in which those who are cannot please God, not the soul: For the animalistic man does not receive those things which are of the spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14); but the spirit: for the Spirit intercedes for us with unspeakable groanings (Romans 8:16).

2:17

(Verse 17.) You have wearied the Lord with your words, and you say: in what way have we wearied Him? In that you say: everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and such please Him; or certainly where is the God of justice? LXX: You have provoked the Lord with your words, and you say: in what way have we provoked you? In that you say: everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and in these things he delights; and where is the God of righteousness? This place is more fully described by the seventy-second psalm, the beginning of which is: How good is God to those who are upright in heart! But my feet were almost moved: my steps were almost poured out: for I was jealous of the wicked, seeing the prosperity of sinners: For there is no regard for their death, nor is there a firm foundation in their affliction. They are not troubled by the toil of men, and they will not be scourged with men (Ps. 72, 1 seqq). And then I said, therefore I have justified my heart without cause: and have washed my hands among the innocent. So when the people returned from Babylon and saw all the nations around them, and saw them serving the idols of Babylon, and abounding in wealth, and flourishing in their bodies, and possessing all the things that are considered good in this world; but as for me who have knowledge of God, I am covered in squalor, hunger, and servitude, and I am scandalized and say: There is no providence in human affairs, everything is carried by uncertain chance, and is not governed by God's judgment, but rather evil pleases Him, and good displeases Him. Or surely if God judges all things, where is His fair and just judgment? This kind of question, unbelievably, is continually raised to God regarding the future, and when He sees the wicked powerful, He sees the humble saints abounding in all things, even not having those things necessary for sustenance; and sometimes with deaf ears and blind eyes, and with sores in every part of their bodies, and burdened by weakness, like Lazarus in the Gospel (Luke 16) who, covered in purple, desired to be nourished by the crumbs that were thrown from the remnants of tables; but the rich person, in such

great cruelty and brutality, does not have compassion on a fellow human, whom even the tongue of dogs has compassion on, not understanding the time of judgement, nor that those things which are eternal are the true goods, saying: Evil things please him, and where is the judgement of God?

3:1

Chapter 3, Verse 1: Behold, I send (or will send) my angel, and he will prepare the way before me: and immediately he will come to his temple, the Lord whom you seek, and the angel of the covenant whom you desire. LXX: Behold, I will send my angel, and he will prepare the way before me: and suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his temple, and the angel of righteousness whom you desire. This the Lord interpreted in the Gospel according to John the Baptist, saying: This is he of whom it is written; Behold, I send my angel before your face, and he will prepare your way before me (Matthew 11:10); and he did not use the same words that the translators of the LXX rendered. Marcus the evangelist also, combining two testimonies of Malachi and Isaiah in the discourse of one prophet, began as follows: The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah: Behold, I send my angel before your face, who will prepare your way (Mark 1:2). This we also read in other words in Malachi. And what follows: The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths (Isaiah 40:3), is said by the prophet Isaiah. And immediately explaining both testimonies, he says: There was, he said, John in the wilderness, baptizing and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:4). But even the evangelists have interpreted the prophecy of the prophets concerning John, and while they agree in meaning, they differ in wording. For what the LXX translated as 'Make straight the paths of our God,' Mark and Luke said, 'Make straight his paths.' But John said, 'Prepare the way of the Lord.' From this it is clear that the apostles, the evangelists, and the Lord Himself, do not follow the authority of the LXX translators, whom having knowledge of the Hebrew language, they do not need; but they transfer from the Hebrew what they have read, not caring about the syllables and punctuation of the words, as long as the truth of the meaning is transferred. Indeed, we have taught that they did this in many places, especially in the book which is titled by us, on the best method of interpretation, it is confirmed by many testimonies together. Therefore, what is said: Behold, I send my angel and he will prepare the way before my face, it is said in the person of Christ, that he sent John into the desert of Judea to preach the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins. But what follows: And immediately he will come to his temple, the Lord whom you seek, and the angel of the testament whom you desire, he speaks of himself as if of another, according to the custom of the Scriptures. There is no doubt that this Lord is the Savior, who is the Creator of all, and is called the Angel of the Covenant, and the Angel of Great Counsel. However, others think that what is said, 'Behold, I send my angel and he will prepare the way before me,' is spoken from the person of the Father. And what follows, 'The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple, the Dominator and the Angel of the Covenant whom you desire,' they understand as being said by the Lord Savior himself. But John prepares the way and makes straight paths for the hearts of the faithful of our God, in which, because of wickedness and unbelief, God could not walk first. However, the temple or the Church is interpreted, or each of the faithful in the Church: Build spiritual houses, a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices, and acceptable to God through Christ Jesus (I Peter 2:5). But to those who believe: Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you (I Corinthians 3:16)? The Jews understand this which is said: 'Behold, I send my angel', to refer to Elijah the prophet, and what

follows: 'He will immediately come to his temple, the ruler whom you seek' they attribute to the anointed one, that is, their Christ, whom they say will come at the end of time. But I wonder how the course of events does not teach them the truth. For if the ruler will find his temple, which is destroyed down to its foundations, or if it is to be rebuilt by another before Christ comes, what more will their Christ do, since all things have already been restored by another? Our Lord, in the Gospel, interpreting Elijah the prophet, speaks of John the Baptist, saying: If you want to know, he is Elijah who is to come (Matthew 11:14), of whom also the same prophet whom we have been discussing writes at the end: Behold, I am sending to you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes (Malachi 4:5). But how John is Elijah, he has given us the way of understanding, by mentioning that he came in the power and spirit of Elijah.

3:2-5

(Verse 2 and following) Look, says the Lord of Hosts, who can think of the day of his coming? And who will stand to see him? For he will come like a refining fire and like the fullers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will offer sacrifices to the Lord in righteousness. And the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years. And I will come to you in judgment, and I will be a swift witness against sorcerers and adulterers, and perjurers, and those who oppress the hired worker, the widow, and the fatherless, and those who thrust aside the sojourner: they have not feared me, says the Lord of hosts. For I the Lord do not change. Behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts, and who will endure the day of his coming? And who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. And the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. And I will come to you in judgment, and I will be a swift witness against evildoers, and against adulterers, and against those who swear falsely by my name. And those who cheat hired workers of their wages, and oppress widows, and orphaned children, and pervert the justice due to foreigners, and those who do not fear me, says the Lord Almighty. For I am the Lord your God, and I do not change. Above, we have read the question raised to the Lord by those who say: 'Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delights in them.' Or surely, if He is displeased, where is the God of judgment? This is where is the truth of justice? To which the Lord's response was: I will send my angel, who will prepare my way, and he will come to his temple, the ruler whom you seek, who is the judge of truth, of whom it is said in the Psalm: O God, grant your judgment to the king, and your justice to the son of the king (Psalm 71:1). For the Father does not judge anyone; but he has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22). And that Son is the angel of the covenant whom you seek, who does not delight in evil, who does not show partiality in judgment (Colossians 3:25), who is not changed by either mercy or severity: for the cup in the Lord's hand is full of mixed wine, and he pours from one side to the other (Psalm 75:8-9), meaning that mercy tempers justice, and justice tempers mercy. So he will come immediately and swiftly to his temple, that is, the Church. And who will be able to conceive the day of his coming? If no one can conceive the day of his coming because of the power of his majesty, who will be able to endure it? And who will stand to see him, that is, who will be able to behold him in his glory with dimmed and blinded eyes, he who is the sun of righteousness, and in whose wings is healing? He will come like a consuming fire,

and like the fuller's herb. For fire will burn before him, and around him will be a mighty tempest. Then He will call the heavens from above, and the earth, that He may judge His people. The rivers of fire will go before Him, and will engulf the sinners. The Lord is said to be a consuming fire (Deut. IV), that will burn up our wood, hay, and stubble. And not only fire; but also the herb of fullers, which in Hebrew is called Borith, and in the Septuagint πικρα, that is, the herb of fullers, they translate. For those who commit grave sins, it is a fire that melts and consumes; but for those who commit lesser sins, it is the herb of fullers that restores cleanliness, according to what is written in Isaiah: The Lord will wash away the filth of the sons and daughters of Zion, and will cleanse their blood from their midst, with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning (Isai. IV). Those who have filth need the spirit of judgment in order to be cleansed; those who are full of blood need the spirit of burning in order for the blood that is externally attached to them to be removed. And the one who sits and melts and purifies like silver, according to Ezekiel (Chapter 22), whatever is mixed in our gold and silver, that is, in our understanding and speech, in bronze, tin, iron, and lead, let it be cooked in the furnace of the Lord, so that pure gold and silver may remain. And the Lord also says in the Gospel: I came to cast fire upon the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled (Luke 12:49); and he shall purify the sons of Levi. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). And elsewhere it is written: Begin at my sanctuary (Ezekiel 9:6). But in the sons of Levi: understand all priestly dignity. If, however, the priests are to be purified and worshiped, so that pure gold and silver may remain, what is to be said of the others? When they have been cleansed and purified, then they will offer righteous sacrifices to the Lord, and their sacrifice will be pleasing, which they offer for Judah and Jerusalem, that is, for those who confess the Lord and contemplate His peace with their minds, as in the days of old and the years of ancient times, so that just as they pleased God in the beginning, they may begin to please Him again after sin and repentance, having been cleansed from all the filth of sins. And I will approach, he says, to you in judgment, and I will be a swift witness. How great is the fear of judgment, when he himself is witness and judge. He is a witness against all wrongdoers and adulterers, for these crimes are committed in secret and therefore are brought to light, so that they may not remain hidden for long. After the wrongdoers come the adulterers: after the adulterers come the perjurers: after the perjurers come those who falsely accuse for the payment of a hireling, and they refuse to repay for the labor of their work that they owe. Widows and orphans are also understood to be falsely accused, and they oppress the stranger and foreigner, or at least the catechumen, who has not yet become a citizen of the city of Christ. And if they have not done all these things, it is enough for them to be punished, because they did not fear the Lord. Therefore, we should not consider perjury, not giving wages to the laborer, slandering the widow and the orphan, and oppressing the foreigner and the stranger as light sins: which are compared to wickedness, sorceries, and adultery. We understand this both according to history and according to metaphor, so that what was said at that time to the rulers of the Jews may now be said to the rulers of the Churches. And that which follows: I am the Lord and I do not change, he states this because he had said earlier: he is like a consuming fire, and like the soap of fullers, so that we do not think that he changes his divine nature, since he is called an angel, or fire, or Borith for us.

3:6

(Verse 6) And you, sons of Jacob, were not consumed. For from the days of your fathers, you have strayed from my commandments and have not kept them. LXX: And you, sons of Jacob, have not strayed from the sins of your fathers, you have turned away from my commandments, and have not kept them. As I said before: I will be a swift witness against sorcerers, adulterers, perjurers, those who exploit hired workers, widows and orphans, and those who oppress the foreigners, for they have not feared me, says the Lord of hosts. Calling Himself a just judge, He brought in the statement: 'I am the Lord and I do not change.' And the meaning is this: You are daily changed by wickedness, adultery, perjury, slander, and violence, but I, in judgment, am not swayed by the diversity of persons. And though I admit to being a severe and just judge, O sons of Jacob, you are not consumed by the variety of torments, according to what is written in Jeremiah: 'Without cause I struck your sons, you did not receive discipline' (Jer. 2:30): and you have not done this only recently, nor once, to merit forgiveness for your error, but you will have inherited impiety, departing from my statutes from the days of your fathers, and not keeping what I commanded. But the sons of Jacob according to the supplanter's reckoning, and the brothers of the original snatcher, who do not depart from the sins of their fathers, and deviate from what is lawful, and do not keep the commandments, let us understand those who in the Church constitution depart from vices, and falsely assume for themselves the name of Christian religion.

3:7-12

(Verse 7 and following) Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?' Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? And you say: in what way have we deceived you? Because the tithes and first fruits are with you, and you look upon them, and you defraud me ((or: deceive me)): the year is complete, and you have brought in the fruits into the storehouse, and there will be plunder in your houses. Therefore, return to this, says the Lord Almighty: unless I open for you the floodgates of heaven, and pour out my blessing upon you until it is sufficient, and I will divide food for you, and your land will not be destroyed, and your vineyard will not wither in the field, says the Lord Almighty: and all the nations will call you blessed, because you will be a land of delight, says the Lord Almighty. And in the beginning we said that Malachi should be understood as the prophet Ezra; and all the things that are written about him in history, are contained in this book as well: and now we say that during his time and that of Nehemiah (whom it is clear lived together) there was a very severe famine, and because of the famine there was a revolt, and the poor, compelled by the necessity of things, sold their sons and daughters, and all their possessions, and their entire substance. Finally they say: Our sons and daughters are too many, let us take their price in wheat, and eat and live. And there were those who said: Let us sell our fields and vineyards, and our houses, and let us take wheat in hunger.

And I was angry, says Ezra, when I heard their outcry according to these words: and my heart thought within me, and I reproached the nobles and magistrates, and the rest. Therefore, during a time of famine, food was so scarce that they were forced to sell their own children, and even those who had little and had stored many crops in barns refused to give tithes out of necessity or due to the magnitude of the price to the Levites, who did not have a share in the inheritance of Judah; but the firstfruits and tithes were their inheritance. Lest it be thought to be ours, let us consider the testimony of Ezra: 'And I realized,' he said, 'that the portions of the Levites had not been given, and each one had fled to his own region from the Levites, from the singers, and from those who served. And I brought a complaint against the officials, and I said, 'Why have we abandoned the house of God?' And I gathered them together and made them stand in their stations. And all of Judah brought the tithes of grain, wine, and oil into the storehouses, and we appointed Shelemiah the priest and Zadok the scribe (Nehemiah 13:10-11),' and so on. We have heard the story of Ezra, now let us repeat the words of the prophets, carefully considering whether the prophecy and the history agree. When it is said, 'Return to me, and I will return to you,' says the Lord Almighty, it is clear that those whom he exhorts to return have departed from the Lord. And behold the mercy of the Lord, he promises an equal return, so that the measure with which they have measured will be measured back to them (Matt. 7:1). And as it is written in Leviticus: 'If you walk contrary to me, then I will also walk contrary to you in fury' (Lev. 26:27-28). So now he encourages the people to return, so that he himself may also return to them. Those who do not understand that they have fallen away from the Lord impudently ask: Where are we returning to? And they say: When did we fall away, that we should be compelled to return? The Lord answered: If a man opposes God, because you are opposing me? The Hebrew word, which is written 'Hajecba', the LXX translated as 'if he supplants': for which Aquila, and Symmachus, and Theodotio substituted 'if he defrauds', so that the meaning is: If a man defrauds God, because you defraud me? And truly, according to the order of history, because the people did not give the tithes and firstfruits to the Levites, 977 the Lord says that he himself suffered fraud, whose ministers were forced by hunger and shortage to abandon the temple. For if he is visited by others in prison, if he is received as a sick person, and if he receives food and drink when hungry and thirsty, why should he not himself receive tithes from his own ministers, and if they are not given, be deprived of his own portion? What we have said, Hajecba interprets in the language of the Syrians and Chaldeans, if it is affixed: from where also we translated it many years ago, more towards the mystery of the Lord's passion, in which men crucified God, than towards tithes and firstfruits (by which one is visited in prison, and received by the sick, and receives food while hungry and thirsty, and is given to drink), referring to written things. Let the prudent reader inquire how our interpretation agrees with the following: In tithes and firstfruits, and see if we can say this: 'For you to crucify me: for you to lay wicked hands on your God', you have done by meditating upon many things, by withholding tithes and firstfruits, I do not say from my priests and Levites, but from me, who commanded them to be given through Moses (Exodus 23). This has been said to us about one word, leaving the judgment of understanding to the reader; now let us follow the order of prophecy. Because you have not given me tithes and firstfruits, therefore you are cursed with hunger and poverty, and you deceive me, or defraud and deprive me, the whole nation for the nation, which is written in Hebrew as Aggoi, the year Seventy was interpreted as a nation. And this is the meaning. Behold, the year has come to an end, and you have gathered nothing into my treasure, but into your barns: And for tithes and firstfruits, which were small, if given to me, you have lost the abundance of your possessions and all the

abundance of crops. But in order for you to know, I, being angry with you, because you have cheated me of what is mine, urge and remind you to bring the tithes into the barns, that is, into the treasury of the temple, and let the priests and Levites, who minister to me, have food: and test me, if I will not pour out such great rains, that the floodgates of the heavens seem to be opened. And I will pour out blessing upon you until abundance. The word 'effusion' shows the name 'generosity'. But it is possible for fertility to exist in the fields that are irrigated by rain, yet locusts or weevils, or rust or caterpillars may destroy them, and the labors of humans perish. Therefore, He joins and says: And I will rebuke for you the devourer, namely the locust, and the rest that we have mentioned; and it shall not corrupt the fruit of your land. And vineyards will fill vine-presses also, and all nations around will marvel at the fertility of your land, to such an extent that everyone will desire to live in it, and the abundance of all things will be an example to all peoples. Understand also concerning tithes and first fruits, which were once given by the people to the priests and Levites, in the same way for the people of the Church, to whom it is commanded not only to give tithes and first fruits, but also to sell all that they have and give to the poor, and to follow the Lord Savior (Matthew 19 and Mark 10). But if we do not want to do this, let us at least imitate the beginnings of the Jews, so that we give a portion to the poor from the whole, and defer the due honor to the priests and Levites. Hence the Apostle says: Honor widows who are truly widows (I Tim. V, 3): and let the presbyter be honored with double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine of God. Whoever does not do this is proved to defraud and supplant God, and is cursed in the lack of all things: as he who sows sparingly, shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows in blessings, shall gather abundant fruits in blessings (II Cor. IX, 6). If at any time hunger and poverty, and the lack of all things oppress the world: let us know that this comes from the anger of God, who speaks of being defrauded and deprived of their portion if the poor do not receive alms. We can interpret tithes and firstfruits in this way: if someone is learned and educated in the Law of God, they can teach others, but they should not attribute their knowledge and abilities to their own wisdom and talent, but rather give thanks first to God, who bestows everything, and then to his priests and teachers, from whom they have learned. For if one does not give thanks, but claims knowledge for oneself, they will be cursed in poverty. But if one, understanding God as the giver, and giving thanks to those through whom they have been taught by God, humbles oneself and brings the food into the storehouse of God, that is, ministers the nourishment of Holy Scripture to the people in the Church, then the floodgates of heaven will immediately open upon them, and a spiritual rain will pour forth, and God will command his clouds to rain upon them, and they will enjoy the abundance of all things, and God will even rebuke the devourer for their sake, bringing forth opposing strengths, and their efforts will bear fruit, and they will attain what is written: Blessed is the one who speaks into the ears of those who listen. He will also lift up his eyes and see the regions, for they are already white for harvesting (John 4); and he will gather fruits for eternal life. The vineyard in his field will not be sterile, as he who says in the Gospel: I am the vine (John 15, 1). And he who speaks through the prophet: I have planted a fruitful vineyard, the whole truth (Jeremiah 2, 21); and through humble confession, gratitude to God, and his teachers in the Church, he will attain such blessedness that all nations will call him blessed, and desire to dwell in his land and teachings, those who have heard him speaking in the Church.

3:13-15

(Verse 13 and following) Your words have become burdensome to me, says the Lord, and you have said: What have we spoken against you? You have said, 'It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his precepts, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?' Therefore now we call the arrogant blessed, for they who practice wickedness are built up and they have tested God, and they have escaped.' LXX: You have wearied me with your words, says the Lord. And you said, 'In what way have we spoken against you?' And you said, 'It is vain to serve God; and what good is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the arrogant blessed. Yes, they who work wickedness are built up; yes, they tempted God and escaped.' In that, when you were saying 980: Whoever does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and such people please Him; or certainly where is the God of judgment? Now, he repeats the same more fully: For the people who appeared to have knowledge of God and to observe the law, and to understand their sin, and to offer victims for their sins, to give tithes, to observe the Sabbath, and all the other things that are commanded by the Law of God, seeing that all the nations around them are abundant in all things, he was scandalized by his own poverty, hunger, and misery, and he said: What advantage is it to me that I worship the one true God, reject idols, and in sorrow I go before God with a guilty conscience? The 72nd Psalm, which we mentioned previously, continues more fully and extensively in the same place. Therefore, the prophet, who is a spiritual physician, heals all wounds and declares that blasphemous words against the Creator are cut off. And he speaks in the person of God, saying: 'Your words have prevailed against me, or they have become burdensome.' Indeed, according to Zachariah, wickedness sits upon a talent of lead (Zach. V): and what is said against God is crushed under the heavy weight of blasphemy. Those who do not understand the most serious words and their blasphemy ask, What have we spoken against you? To whom the Lord replied: You have said, It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his precepts? In this present world they demand reward for serving God, therefore they do not receive it. And because we have walked sorrowful before the Lord, according to what is written in the Psalms: All the day long I walked in sadness (Psalm 37:7). Therefore, we call those arrogant individuals blessed, who boast against God and hurl impious blasphemies. Indeed, they have been successful and enjoy prosperity even after their crimes and blasphemies. They have tested God, whether they resist Him or not, and have been saved. They consider worldly health and happiness to be salvation, and therefore they are deceived by errors. We can understand this about the heretics Marcion and Valentinus, and others who do not accept the Old Testament and speak against the Creator of the world, that they make progress in their impiety and have many partners in crime. Those who are scandalized by them, but persevere in the Church, and are ignorant of the reasons for God's judgment, weave together the words of the prophets.

3:16

(Verse 16) Then those who feared God spoke to one another. LXX: These are the ones who spoke, those who fear the Lord, each one to his neighbor. According to the Hebrews, it is to be understood in this way: those who blaspheme against God's judgment, those who fear God have spoken to one another, that the retribution of good or evil is not in the present and brief age, but in the future and eternal; and that man cannot know God's judgments and argue about his fairness and justice; and other things that a just person should speak with a just person. And he did not say what they had spoken; but from what he brought forth: Then they spoke, fearing God, each with

their neighbor, we must understand that those who feared God spoke what is contained in the words of all the Scriptures. But according to the LXX it should be read as exceptional, and with a strong voice, so that we may say: These are the ones who spoke, fearing the Lord, each to their neighbor: that is, those who boast in vain and say, 'What is the benefit, because we have kept his commandments and walked sorrowfully before the Lord?' For if they feared the Lord, they would not say such things.

3:17-18

(Ver. 17, 18.) And the Lord waited, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and meditate on His name. 'They shall be Mine,' says the Lord of hosts, 'on the day that I make them My special possession. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.' LXX: And the Lord waited, and heard, and wrote a book of remembrance in His sight for those who fear the Lord and revere His name. And they shall be mine, says the Almighty Lord, on the day that I make, as a possession, and I will choose them as a man chooses his own son who serves him. And you shall return and see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him. These are the words of the righteous and those who fear God, speaking to each other and not wanting to hear or speak blasphemy. The Lord listens and hears, and a book of remembrance is written before him for those who fear and think of his name, so that when the day of judgment comes, he may give punishment to the blasphemers and rewards to those who fear him. However, a book was written, about which we read in Daniel: Thrones were set up, and books were opened (Dan. VII, 10). And they will be a possession of the Lord of hosts, in the day when the time of judgment comes. In Hebrew, possession is called *Sgolla* (סגולה), which Aquila interpreted as περιποίησιον, and the others as περιποίησιν. Therefore, those who fear the Lord, those who have spoken with their neighbor and have answered words of blasphemy, will be a possession on the day of judgment, and He will spare them, because every man is under sin. Whether you choose them, just as a man chooses his son to be his servant. In this there is a twofold affection, both of a father towards his son, and of servitude towards a servant. And then those of you who now blaspheme and say: What benefit is it, because we have kept his commandments, and have walked sadly before the Lord? From their choice and happiness, you will know their misery, and turned to repentance, you will see what difference there is between the just and the wicked, and between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

4:1-3

(Chapter 4, verse 1 onward) Behold, for the day is coming, burning like a furnace, when all the proud and all the evildoers will be stubble; and the coming day will set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. And you shall trample the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts. LXX: For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when it will burn them up, and all the aliens and all the evildoers will be stubble; the day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its

wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts. For the wicked have made me labor in their speeches, and have said: Every one that doth evil, is good in the sight of the Lord, and such please him: and if it be not so, who will confront him? and since he is good to those who serve him not, they have said: Where is the God of justice? And behold I speak these things to justify myself, for I am full of complaints against the ungodly; but if I had a cause, I would just speak, and would not fear him as he is. And when He shall have inflamed and burnt them, He will leave in them no root nor germ of wickedness. This is what the impious will suffer on the day of judgment. On the contrary, it is said what will happen to those who fear the name of God: And the sun of justice shall rise upon you, who ((elsewhere: because)) will judge all things truly: and neither good nor evil, neither virtues nor vices, shall be able to remain hidden. And health shall be in His wings, to carry the repentant on His shoulders, according to what is written in Deuteronomy: Spreading His wings, He has received them, and has carried them on His shoulders. (Deut. XXII, 11). Then those who are now included in the world as if in prison will go out, and they will leap like calves from the herd, or like calves freed from chains. Hence the Apostle says: I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ (Philippians 1:23), so that he may go out and leap like a calf freed from chains, and like a victim of the Lord. And he is not content with the end of this joy; but he will trample on the wicked when they become ashes. Hence, there is also an imprecation for the righteous: But the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet swiftly (Romans 16:20). Abraham spoke to the Lord, feeling himself to be like the ashes of divine majesty: 'I am dust and ashes' (Gen. XVIII, 27); and therefore he will see the sun of justice, and will rest among its chosen ones, and carried by him, he will be raised up to the heavens. But he, through pride, said: 'I will set my throne above the stars, I will be like the Most High' (Isai. XIV, 13); he will be cast down to the earth, and will be like ashes under the feet of the holy ones, when the day of the Lord of judgment comes.

4:4

(Verse 4.) Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Likewise in the Septuagint. The just retribution in the future will be righteous, when the flame will devour and burn the root and offspring of the proud, and the sun of righteousness will rise for those who fear the Lord, with healing in its wings. Therefore remember the law of Moses my servant, which I gave him on Mount Horeb, which is Sinai, for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. But the Apostle says: We know that the law is spiritual (Rom. VII, 14); and blessed David: Open my eyes, and I will consider the wonders of your law (Ps. CXVIII, 18); and because all ate the heavenly manna in a spiritual manner, and the whole people of Israel drank from the same spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. (I Cor. X, 3, 4); those who believe in Christ must spiritually observe the precepts of the law, which were given in Horeb (which means dryness), through which the moisture of all vices is dried up, and to the rays of the sun of justice, the rheum of lust is dried. But the Lord spoke to all of Israel, who understands with their heart God, and of whom it is said in the Gospel: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matt. 5:8).

4:5-6

(Ver. 5, 6.) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord comes: and he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. LXX: Behold, I will send you Elijah the Tishbite, before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes: he will turn the heart of the father to the son, and the heart of man to his neighbor; lest I come and strike the earth completely. After Moses (whose commands we have taught are to be observed spiritually), Jesus says that Elijah must be sent: in Moses, the Law, in Elijah, signifying prophecy, as Abraham said to a certain wealthy man dressed in purple: They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them (Luke 16:29). And the Lord and Savior, transfigured on the mountain, was speaking with Moses and Elijah in radiant clothing, who were also telling him what he would suffer in Jerusalem (Mark 9): for the Law and the chorus of all the prophets proclaim the passion of Christ. Therefore, before the day of judgment comes, and the Lord strikes the earth with a curse, either utterly or suddenly, as the LXX translated it (for this signifies ■pδ■v), the Lord will send Elijah (who is interpreted as 'my God' and is from the city of Thesbi, which means 'conversion' and 'repentance') to convert the hearts of the fathers to the children, namely, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the patriarchs, so that their descendants may believe in the Lord and Savior, in whom they also believed. For Abraham saw the day of the Lord and rejoiced (John 8:56), that is, the heart of the father to the son, that is, the heart of God to every one who has received the spirit of adoption. And the heart of the children to their fathers, like the Jews and Christians, who now disagree among themselves, may they agree equally in the religion of Christ. Hence it is said to the apostles, who spread the seed of the Gospel throughout the whole world: For your fathers have begotten sons for you (Ps. 44:17). For if Elijah does not convert the heart of the fathers to the children beforehand, and the heart of the children to their fathers, when the great and terrible day comes (great for the saints, terrible for sinners), the true and just judge will strike, not the heavens, nor those who dwell in heaven, but the earth with a curse, those who perform earthly works. The Jews and the Judaizing heretics believe that Elijah will come before their own Messiah and will restore all things. Hence, in the Gospel, a question is posed to Christ: Why do the Pharisees say that Elijah will come? To which He responded: Elijah will indeed come, and if you believe, he has already come, referring to John the Baptist as Elijah.

Commentary on Matthew

Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

There were many who wrote the Gospels, and Luke the evangelist testifies, saying: Indeed, many have attempted to arrange the narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and became servants of the word. And their perseverance until the present time declares the monuments, which were published by various authors and were the beginnings of diverse heresies, such as that according to the Egyptians, and Thomas, and Matthew, and Bartholomew, and also the twelve apostles, and Basilides and Apelles, and others, whom it is a very long task to enumerate. However, it is necessary to say only this for the present, that there have been some who have attempted to arrange the narrative more as an order of events than to weave the truth of history with the spirit and grace of God. To whom can that prophetic utterance be applied: Woe to those who prophesy from their own heart, who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing. (Ezekiel 13:3) Of whom the Savior also speaks in the Gospel of John: All who came before me are thieves and robbers. (John 10:8) They came, but were not sent. For he himself says: They were coming, and I was not sending them. (Jeremiah 14:14; and 23:21) To those who come, there is a presumption of rashness; to those who are sent, there is an obligation of servitude. But the Church, which is founded on the rock of the Lord's word, which the king introduced into his chamber (Song of Songs 1 and 2), and to which he reached out his hand through the hidden opening (Song of Songs V) , is like a young doe and a little deer (Song of Songs 2:9), gushing forth four rivers like the paradise (Genesis II) , having four corners and rings, through which it is carried like the ark of the Testament and the guardian of the Law of the Lord, by immovable wood (Exodus 25:10 and following).

Matthew is the first of all, a tax collector by the name of Levi, who published the Gospel in Judea in the Hebrew language, mainly for the sake of those who believed in Jesus from among the Jews, and did not observe the shadow of the Law once the truth of the Gospel had come. Mark is the second, the interpreter of the apostle Peter, and the first bishop of the church in Alexandria. Although he himself did not see the Lord Savior, he narrated the deeds according to the faith of what he had heard the Master preach, rather than in chronological order. Lucas, the third physician, from Syria Antioch (whose praise is in the Gospel), who himself was a disciple of the apostle Paul, composed a volume in the regions of Achaia and Boeotia (2 Corinthians 8), delving into certain things deeper and, as he himself confesses in the preface, describing what he heard more than what he saw. John, the last apostle and evangelist, whom Jesus loved greatly, who reclined on the chest of the Lord (John 13 and 21), drank from the purest streams of doctrine, and alone deserved to hear from the cross: Behold, your mother (John 19:27). When he was in Asia, and the seeds of heretics Cerinthus, Ebion, and others who deny that Christ came in the flesh were already sprouting (whom he himself in his epistle calls antichrists (1 John 2:18), and the apostle Paul frequently rebukes (Romans 3; 2 Corinthians 5)), he was compelled by almost all the bishops of Asia at that time, and by the embassies of many Churches, to write more deeply about the divinity of the Savior, and to break forth to Him (so to speak), the Word of God, not so much with audacity as with fortunate boldness. And the Ecclesiastical History recounts that, when he

was compelled by the brothers to write, he responded that he would do so if they all prayed to God together with a declared fast. And when this was fulfilled, being filled with revelation, coming to a preface, he exclaimed from heaven: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This was in the beginning with God (John 1). Therefore, these four Gospels were predicted long before, and it also proves the volume of Ezekiel, in which the first vision is woven as follows: And in the midst there was a likeness of four living creatures: and the appearance of their faces was like the face of a man, and the face of a lion, and the face of a calf, and the face of an eagle (Ezekiel 1:5 and 10). The first face of a man signifies Matthew, who begins to write as if from man: The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matt. 1). The second [face] signifies Mark, in whom the voice of a roaring lion is heard in the wilderness: The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths (Mark 1:3). The third signifies a calf, which signifies that the evangelist Luke took his beginning from the priest Zacharias. On the fourth, John the Evangelist, who had assumed eagle's wings and was hastening to higher things, discusses the Word of God. The rest of what follows advances in the same sense. Their legs were straight, and they had feathered feet, and wherever the spirit went, they went, and they did not turn back: and their backs were full of eyes, and sparks and torches running in between, and a wheel within a wheel, and on each of the four sides there were faces. Therefore, the Apocalypse of John, after the exposition of the twenty-four elders who were holding harps and bowls, adored the Lamb of God, introduces lightning, and thunder, and seven spirits running, and a sea of glass, and four animals full of eyes (Apoc. IV and V), saying: The first animal was like a lion, and the second was like a calf, and the third was like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. And a little later: They were full, he says, in their eyes, and they did not have rest day and night, saying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come (Rev. 4:7-8). By all these things it is clearly shown that only the four Gospels should be accepted, and all the foolishness of the apocrypha should be sung to the dead heretics rather than the living Church. And I am quite surprised, beloved Eusebius, why, suddenly setting sail for Rome, you wanted this present of mine to be given to you as a kind of provision, so that, briefly explaining Matthew, I might compress it in words and expand it in meaning. If you remember my response, you would never ask for years in a few days. First of all, it is difficult to read all those who have written on the Gospels 7-8. Then, it is much more difficult, with judgment applied, to receive the best ones. I admit that I read, many years ago, twenty-five volumes of Origen on Matthew, as well as his Homilies and his commatic interpretation. And also the Commentaries of Theophilus, bishop of the city of Antioch, of the martyr Hippolytus and of Theodore, bishop of Heraclea. And those of Apollinaris of Laodicea and Didymus of Alexandria. And of the Latin authors, Hilary, Victorinus, Fortunatianus' little works, from which, even if I were to omit some small parts, something worthy would still be written in memory. But you, within two weeks, with Easter approaching and the winds blowing, force me to dictate: when the notaries should be present, when the documents should be written, when they should be corrected, and how much time should be allowed for clarification. Especially since you know that I have been ill for three months, barely able to begin walking now; and I cannot make up for the magnitude of the work with the brevity of time. Therefore, setting aside the authority of the Ancients, whom I have neither the ability to read nor follow, I have briefly arranged the historical interpretation that you particularly demanded; and at times I have mixed in the flowers of spiritual insight, reserving the complete work for the future. But if my life should be longer, or if you fulfill your promises on your

return, then I will strive to complete what remains, rather I will lay the foundations and partially construct the walls, and I will place a most beautiful pinnacle, so that you may know the difference between sudden boldness in dictation and thorough diligence in writing. Surely you know, and I would be ashamed to call you as a witness to my lies, that I have dictated this small work with such speed that you might think I am more inclined to read the works of others than to compose my own. And do not think that this is said out of arrogance and confidence in my abilities, but rather because I want to show you how much influence you have with me, as I would rather endanger myself for the sake of the learned than deny you anything you diligently ask for. Therefore, I beg you, if my speech is unpolished and my words are not flowing as smoothly as usual, attribute it to my haste, not my incompetence, and when you come to Rome, bring copies with you for the Virgin Christ the Prince, who has asked me to write on the Song of Songs. Due to a prolonged illness, I have postponed my hopes for completing this work in the future. I am imposing this condition on you, that if you are to keep the writings I send to you, she must also seal them in a small chest and write her own replies afterwards.

Book One

Book One

(Caput I.—Vers. 1.)

(Chapter I - Verse 1) The book of the generation of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah we read: Who shall declare his generation (Isaiah 53: 8)? Therefore, we cannot say that the Evangelist is contradicting the prophet, as what the prophet said was impossible to express, the Evangelist begins to narrate here: because there the generation of divinity is spoken of, while here the incarnation is spoken of. But he begins with the physical, so that we may begin to say that God is man through a human.

Sons of David, sons of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac. Isaac, however, begot Jacob. Jacob, however, begot Judah and his brothers. A reverse order, but necessarily rearranged. For if Abraham had been placed first, and then David: Abraham would have had to be repeated, so that the series of generations would be covered. Therefore, among others being omitted, he called them sons; because the promise regarding Christ was made to them alone, to Abraham: In your seed, all nations will be blessed (Gen. XXII, 18), which is Christ. To David: I will set the fruit of your womb upon your throne. (Psalm 132:11)

1:3

(Verse 3.) But Judas begot Phares and Zaram of Tamar. Phares begot Esron. Esron begot Aram. Aram begot Aminadab. Aminadab begot Naasson. It should be noted in the genealogy of the Savior that no holy women are included; only those whom Scripture reproaches, since He came for sinners, being born of sinners, in order to erase the sins of all. Therefore, even in the following generations, Ruth the Moabitess and Bathsheba the wife of Uriah are mentioned.

1:4-11

(Vers. 4 seqq.) Naasson, however, fathered Salmon. Salmon, however, fathered Boaz by Rahab. Boaz, however, fathered Obed by Ruth. Obed, however, fathered Jesse. Jesse, however, fathered King David. David, however, king, fathered Solomon by her who had been Uriah's. Solomon, however, fathered Rehoboam. Rehoboam, however, fathered Abijah. Abijah, however, fathered

Asa. Asa, however, fathered Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat, however, fathered Joram. This is Naasson, the prince of the tribe of Judah, as we read in Numbers (Num. I and II).

Joram, however, begot Ozias. Ozias, however, begot Joathan. Joathan, however, begot Achaz. Achaz, however, begot Ezechiam. Ezechias, however, begot Manassen. Manasses, however, begot Amon. Amon, however, begot Josiam. Josias, however, begot Jechoniam and his brothers in the Babylonian exile. In the fourth book of Kings (Ch. III, VIII and following), we read that Joram was begotten by Ochoziam, and after his death, Josabeth, daughter of King Joram and sister of Ochozia, took Joas, the son of her brother, and rescued him from the slaughter that was being carried out by Athalia (or Atholia). His son Amasias succeeded him to the kingdom, and after him his son Azarias, who is also called Ozias (or Ochozias). His son Joathan succeeded him. Therefore, you can see that according to the history, there were three kings in the middle whom the Evangelist omitted: for Joram did not beget Ozias, but Ochozias, and the others we mentioned. However, because it was the intent of the Evangelist to list three sets of fourteen generations in different periods of time, and Joram had married the most wicked Jezabel, his memory is removed up to the third generation, so as not to be included in the order of the holy birth.

1:12-15

(Verse 12 and following) And after the Babylonian exile, Jechonias fathered Salathiel. Salathiel fathered Zorobabel. Zorobabel fathered Abiud. Abiud fathered Eliacim. Eliacim fathered Azor. Azor fathered Sadoc. Sadoc fathered Achim. Achim fathered Eliud. Eliud fathered Eleazar. Eleazar fathered Matthan. Matthan fathered Jacob. If we were to place Jechonias at the end of the first fourteen generations, in the next there would not be fourteen but thirteen. Therefore, let us know that Jeconiah is the same person as Joachim, the former being the father and the latter being the son; the former is written with 'c' and 'm', while the latter is written with 'ch' and 'n'. This confusion arose due to errors of the scribes and the passage of time among both the Greeks and the Latins.

1:16

(Ver. 16) But Jacob begot Joseph. Here Julianus Augustus has presented to us the disagreement of the Evangelists, why the evangelist Matthew called Joseph the son of Jacob, and Luke called him the son of Heli; not understanding the custom of the Scriptures, that one is according to nature, the other according to the Law his father. For we know this by the command of God given through Moses, that if a brother or relative without children dies, another should take his wife to raise up offspring for his brother or relative (Deut. II). Both Africanus, a historian of the time, and Eusebius of Caesarea extensively debated in their books the discrepancies in the Gospels.

1:17

(Verse 17) The man of Mary, from whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. When you hear the word 'man', do not entertain the suspicion of marriage; but remember the custom of the Scriptures, that the husband is called the spouse of the bride.

1:18 (Verse 18.) And from the deportation to Babylon to Christ, fourteen generations. Count from Jechoniah to Joseph, and you will find thirteen generations. Therefore, the fourteenth generation will be reckoned to be in Christ himself. But the generation of Christ was as follows. Let the diligent reader inquire and say: Since Joseph is not the father of the Lord Savior, why does the order of the

generation lead to Joseph? To this we will first respond that it is not the usual practice of the Scriptures to trace the order of women in generations. Furthermore, Joseph and Mary were from the same tribe, so according to the Law, Joseph had to take her as a relative, and they were both counted in Bethlehem, being from the same lineage. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, why is she conceived not from a simple virgin, but from a betrothed one? First, so that through the generation, the origin of Mary could be shown by Joseph. Second, so that she would not be stoned by the Jews as an adulteress. Third, so that fleeing to Egypt, she would have the comfort of her husband. Ignatius the Martyr also added a fourth cause as to why she was conceived from the betrothed one: in order to hide the birth from the devil, while he thought it was not from a virgin, but from a wife.

Before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel' (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

1:19

(Ver. 19.) But Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded privately to put her away. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: If any man take her as wife that has been defiled, her defilement is upon him (1 Cor. VI, 16). And it is commanded in the Law, not only guilty persons, but also those who have knowledge of the crime, to be subject to punishment (Lev. V): how then does Joseph, who conceals the crime of his wife, deserve to be called just? But this is a testimony to Mary, that Joseph knowing her chastity, and wondering at what had happened, kept silent about it, not understanding its mystery.

1:20

(Verse 20.) Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son. And as we said before, the term 'spouses' is used for wives, as the book against Helvidius explains more fully. And an angel speaks to Joseph in a dream with gentle affection, to confirm the righteousness of his silence. It is also noteworthy that Joseph is said to be the son of David, in order to show that Mary is also from the line of David.

1:21

(Verse 21.) And you shall call his name Jesus. For he will save his people from their sins. Jesus means 'Savior' in Hebrew. The evangelist noted the etymology of his name, saying: 'You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people.'

1:22-24

(Verse 22 onwards) Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him. And all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: Behold, a virgin shall conceive in her womb. But the prophet, because he predicts the future, signifies what is going to happen, and he writes, he will receive: but the evangelist, because he narrates a story not about the future but about the past, changed he will receive to he has received. For he who has, will by no means receive. We read something similar in the Psalms: You have ascended on high, you have led captivity captive: you have received gifts among men (Ps. 67:19). The apostle, in citing this testimony, did not say he received, but he gave: because there it signified about the future that he would receive; here it narrates about the one who had already given what he had received.

1:25

(Verse 25.) And he took his wife, and did not know her until she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus. From this passage, some very perverse people suspect and say that Mary had other children, arguing that the term firstborn is only used when someone has siblings. However, this is contrary to the custom in the divine scriptures, where the term firstborn is not applied to someone who has siblings, but to the one who is born first. Read the aforementioned book against Helvidius.

2:2-4

(Chapter 2, Verses 2 and following) For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him. When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. To confound the Jews and make them understand the birth of Christ from the Gentiles, a star rises in the East, which the successors of Balaam, through prophecy, had known. Read the book of Numbers (Chapter XXIV). The magi, however, were guided by a star to Judea, so that when questioned by the priests, they would be able to give an account of the coming of Christ.

2:5

(Verse 5) But they said to him: in Bethlehem of Judea. For thus it is written by the prophet: And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah. For from you shall come forth a ruler, who will shepherd my people Israel. This is an error of the scribes. We think that it was first written by the evangelist, as we read in the Hebrew itself, 'of Judah,' not 'of Judea.' For what other Bethlehem of the nations is there, that it should be distinguished here as 'of Judea'? But it is called Judaea for this reason, because there is another Bethleem in Galilee. Read the book of Joshua the son of Nun (Joshua 19). Finally, even in the testimony itself, which is taken from the prophecy of Micah, it is written thus: And you, O Bethlehem, land of Judah (Micah 5:2).

2:11

(Verse 11.) And opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The presbyter Juvencus beautifully captures the significance of the gifts in one verse.

Thus, they bring gifts of gold, myrrh, and incense to the king, the people, and the God. And having received an answer in a dream, they returned to their own country by another way, so as not to go back to Herod. Those who had presented gifts to the Lord subsequently received a response. However, the response (which is called χρηματισθ^ντες in Greek) was not made through an angel, but through the Lord Himself, in order to demonstrate the privilege of Joseph's merits. They returned by another way because they were not to mix with the unfaithfulness and treachery of the Jews.

2:13-14

(Vers. 13, 14.) Behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying: Rise and take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For it will come to pass that Herod will seek the child to destroy him. So Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt; and he stayed there until the death of Herod. When he takes the child and his mother to go to Egypt, he takes them by night and in darkness; but when he returns to Judea, neither night nor darkness are mentioned in the Gospel.

2:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) So that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying: Out of Egypt I called my son. Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Let those who deny the truth of the Hebrew scriptures answer where this is read in the Septuagint translators. But since they did not find it, we will tell them it is written in the prophet Hosea (Chapter 11), as they can also confirm with the copies we recently published. However, we can reconcile (or console) this passage differently for the contentious, whose behavior the Apostle Paul denies having. And we present the testimony from Numbers, with Balaam saying: God has called him out of Egypt; His glory is like a unicorn (Numbers 23:22).

2:17-19

(Vers. 17 seqq.) Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying: A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they are no more (Jerem. XXXI, 15). But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying: Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel. From Rachel was born Benjamin, in whose tribe Bethlehem is not (Genes. XXXV). Therefore, it is asked how Rachel mourns the sons of Judah, that is, Bethlehem, as if they were her own. We will answer briefly, because she is buried near Bethlehem in Ephrath, and from the maternal womb, she received the name of the mother's lodging. Whether because Judah and Benjamin were two joined tribes, and Herod had ordered not only the killing of children in Bethlehem, but also in all its borders. By the slaughter of Bethlehem, we understand that many from Benjamin were also killed. But she wept for her children, and she did not receive consolation, according to a twofold interpretation. Either because she considered them dead for eternity, or because she did not want to console herself about those whom she knew would

survive. But what is said in Rama, let us not think that this is the name of a place, near Gabaa, but 'rama' is interpreted as 'an elevated place', so the meaning is: A voice was heard in an elevated place, that is, far and wide dispersed.

2:20

(Verse 20) For those who sought the child's life are dead. From this we understand that not only Herod, but also the priests and scribes at the same time had planned the death of the Lord.

2:21

(Verse 21.) He rose and took the child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. He did not say, 'I took my son and my wife,' but the child and his mother, as if a foster father, not a husband.

2:22

(Verse 22) But hearing that Archelaus was reigning in Judea, in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee. Many fall into error due to ignorance of history, thinking that he is the same Herod who mocked the Lord in his passion, and who is reported to be dead now. Therefore, this Herod, who later became friends with Pilate, is the son of that Herod, the brother of Archelaus; and Tiberius Caesar himself, the city of Lugdunum, which is in Gaul, banished him, and made his brother Herod successor to the kingdom. Read the story of Joseph.

2:23

(Verse 23) And coming, he lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene. If he had set a fixed example from the Scriptures, he would never have said, what was spoken by the prophets; but simply, what was spoken by the prophet: but now, calling them prophets in the plural, he shows that he did not take words from the Scriptures, but the meaning. Nazarene, interprets as holy. But all Scripture testifies that the Lord would be holy. We can also say in another way, that even in the same words, according to the Hebrew truth, it is written in Isaiah: There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Nazarene shall rise out of his roots (Isa. 11:1).

3:1

(Chapter III - Verse 1) Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near. John the Baptist proclaims the kingdom of heaven, honoring the Lord as its precursor with this privilege.

3:3

(Verse 3.) For this is he who is spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.' He was preparing the souls of the believers, in whom the Lord was going to walk, to walk in the purest ways, saying: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people' (Leviticus 26:12). Porphyry compares this passage to the beginning of the Gospel of Mark, where it is written: 'The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah: Behold, I send my angel before your face, who will prepare your way.' The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. (Isa. XL, 3). For

even though the testimony is from Malachi (Chap. III) and connected to Isaiah, it is asked how we can consider it as an example taken from one Isaiah. This question was answered fully by learned scholars. However, we think that the name of Isaiah was added by mistake of the scribes, which we can also prove in other places, or certainly from the fact that different testimonies of the Scriptures have become one body. Read the thirteenth Psalm, and you will find the same.

3:4 (Verse 4.) Now John himself had a garment made of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist. He said, 'It is made of hair, not wool.' The type of clothing indicates austerity, not luxury. The leather belt that he wore, just like Elijah, is a symbol of mortification (IV Kings 1). Furthermore, what follows is... But his food was locusts and wild honey. It is fitting for a dweller of solitude to fulfill not the delights of food, but the necessity of human flesh.

3:9

(Verse. 9.) God is able to raise up children of Abraham from these stones. He calls them ethnic stones because of the hardness of the heart. Read Ezekiel: I will take away the heart of stone from you and give you a heart of flesh (Ezek. XXXVI, 26). In the stone, hardness is shown, in the flesh, softness is shown. Or it simply indicates the power of God, that he who created everything out of nothing can also create a people from the hardest stones.

3:10-11 (Verse 10, 11.) For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I. The preaching of the Gospel word, which is sharp on both sides, is called an axe, according to the prophet Jeremiah, who compares the word of the Lord to an axe cutting through a rock (Jeremiah 46). Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. In another Gospel: Whose, he said, I am not worthy to untie the strap of his shoe: here humility is shown, there mystery is demonstrated, that Christ is the bridegroom, and John does not deserve to untie the bridegroom's shoe, lest his house be called according to the law of Moses, and the example of Ruth, the house of the barefoot (Deut. XXV, and Ruth. IV).

3:12

(Verse 12.) He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. This is because the Holy Spirit is like a fire, as the Acts of the Apostles teach, which, when it descended, sat upon each of them like tongues of fire (Acts 2); and the word of the Lord was fulfilled when He said, 'I came to send fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled' (Luke 12:49). Whether it be because in the present we are baptized by the Spirit, and in the future by fire. The Apostle also concurs with this meaning: The work of each one shall be made manifest: for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire. (1 Corinthians 3:13).

3:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent him, saying: I need to be baptized by you, and you come to me? But Jesus answered and said to him: The Savior accepted baptism from John for three reasons. First, to fulfill all righteousness and humility of the Law, because he was born as a human. Second, to confirm

the baptism of John with his own baptism. Third, as Jordan sanctified the waters, by the descent of the dove, the Holy Spirit would show forth the coming in the baptism of believers.

3:15

(Verse 15.) Without measure. He spoke beautifully, without measure, to show Christ in water, John to be baptized by Christ in spirit. Or differently, without measure: so that I, who assumed the form of a servant, may fulfill his humility. Otherwise, know that you shall be baptized by me in the day of my judgment. Without measure, says the Lord Jesus, I have another baptism by which I must be baptized. You baptize me in water, so that I may baptize you for me in your blood.

3:16

(Verse 16) For thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he let him go. And Jesus, having been baptized, immediately came up from the water. He did not add the righteousness of the Law or of nature, so that we may understand both: if God accepted baptism from a man, let no one refuse to accept it from a servant.

3:17

(Verse 17) And behold, the heavens were opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him. And behold, a voice from heaven, saying: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' The mystery of the Trinity is demonstrated in the baptism: the Lord is baptized, the Spirit descends in the form of a dove, and the voice of the Father, testifying to the Son, is heard. The heavens are opened not by the opening of the elements, but by spiritual eyes; as Ezekiel also mentions in the beginning of his book that they were opened. And the dove also sat upon the head of Jesus, so that no one would think that the voice of the Father was made to John, not to the Lord.

4:1 (Chapter 4 - Verse 1) Then Jesus was led into the desert by the spirit. There is no doubt that it was the Holy Spirit. It follows: In order to be tempted by the devil. However, he is led not unwillingly or captivated, but by his own will to fight.

20 (Vers. 2.)

(Ver. 2.) And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards he was hungry. And the tempter coming, said to him: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. In this number of forty, the sacrament is shown to us, in which Moses also fasted on Mount Sinai (Exodus XXIV), and Elias near Mount Horeb (3 Kings XIX). But it is allowed to be hungry in the body, so that an opportunity for tempting by the devil may be given.

4:3

(Verse 3.) Say that these stones become bread. It is fittingly said to the hungry: say that these stones become bread. You are tempting him with two opposing arguments, O devil. If these stones can become bread at his command, then you are foolishly tempting someone of such great power. But if he cannot do it, then you are foolishly suspecting the Son of God. If you are the Son of God, say that these stones become bread.

4:4

(Verse 4.) He answered and said: It is written: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God. The testimony is taken from Deuteronomy (Deut. VIII, 3). The Lord responded in this way because His intention was to overcome the devil through humility, not power. It should also be noted that if the Lord had not begun to fast, the devil would not have had an opportunity to tempt Him, according to this: My son, when you come to serve God, prepare yourself for trials, and put your soul in order (Eccli. II, 1). But the very response of the Savior indicates that he was a man who was tempted. Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Therefore, if anyone does not feed on the word of God, he does not live.

4:5

(Verse 5.) Then the devil took him to the holy city. This assumption, which is called, does not come from the weakness of the Lord, but from the pride of the enemy, who thinks that the will of the Savior is a necessity. From this passage, however, it is understood what is meant by what is written in another place: They went into the holy city and appeared to many (Matthew 27:53).

4:6

(Verse 6.) And he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'

If you are the Son of God. In all temptations, the devil does this in order to see if you are the Son of God; but the Lord responds in such a way as to leave him in doubt.

Send yourself downward. For it is written: The voice of the devil, who always desires everyone to fall downward, says, Send yourself downward, it can persuade, it cannot force.

He has commanded his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. We read this in the ninety-first psalm, but there it is not about Christ, but about a holy man, a prophet. Therefore, the devil misinterprets the Scriptures. Surely if he truly knew that it was written about the Savior, he should have also said what follows in the same psalm against himself: You will tread on the lion and the serpent; you will trample the young lion and the serpent. He speaks of the assistance of angels as if speaking to a weak person: he is silent about his own trampling as if a turncoat.

4:7

(Verse 7) Jesus said to him again: It is written: You shall not tempt the Lord your God. He breaks the false arrows of the devil's scriptures with the true shields of the scriptures. And it should be noted that he presented only the necessary testimonies from Deuteronomy, to show the sacraments of the second law.

4:8

(Verse 8) Again, the devil took him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and said to him, 'All these things I will give you if you fall down and worship me.' The glory of the world, which is passing away with the world, is shown on

the mountain and on the pinnacle. But the Lord descends to humble and lowly places in order to overcome the devil through humility. Furthermore, the devil hastens to lead him to the mountains, so that through the same mountains by which he himself fell, others may fall as well, according to the saying of the Apostle: 'Lest he be lifted up with pride and fall into the judgment of the devil' (1 Timothy 3:6).

4:9

(Verse 9) I will give you all these things if you fall down and worship me. Even in this boasting, the arrogant and proud one speaks: not because he has power over the whole world or can give all the kingdoms, since we know that many holy men have been made kings by God. If you fall down, he says, and worship me. Therefore, whoever is going to worship the devil, falls before him.

4:10

(Verse 10.) Then Jesus said to him: Go, Satan: for it is written. Not as many think, Satan and the apostle Peter are condemned with the same sentence. For to Peter it is said: Get behind me, Satan (Matt. XVI, 23), that is, follow me, who are contrary to my will: but here he hears, go, Satan: and it is not said to him, behind me, so that it may be understood, go into the eternal fire, which is prepared for you, and your angels.

You shall worship the Lord your God and serve only Him. The devil said to the Savior: if you fall down and worship me, on the contrary, He hears that He should rather worship the Lord, His God.

4:11

(Verse 11.) Then the devil left him: and behold, angels came and ministered to him. Temptation precedes victory. Angels minister, to demonstrate the dignity of the victor.

4:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light, Those who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined. These were the first to hear the Lord preaching, that where the first captivity had occurred by the Assyrians, there the proclamation of the Redeemer would be born.

4:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) Then Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.' And as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them. When John was handed over, he begins to preach rightly: as the Law ends, the Gospel arises accordingly. But if the Savior preaches the same things that John the Baptist had foretold before, he shows himself to be the Son of the same God, whose prophet John was.

4:19-20

(Ver. 19, 20.) Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed him. These first ones were called to follow the Lord: fishermen and unlettered

men are sent to preach, lest the faith of believers be thought to come about not by the power of God, but by eloquence and teaching.

4:24

(Verse 24) And he healed the lunatics and the paralytics. And many crowds followed him from Galilee and Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond the Jordan. Not truly lunatics, but those who were thought to be lunatics due to the deceit of demons, who, by observing the phases of the moon, desired to defame creation so as to overflow with blasphemies against the Creator.

5:1-2

(Chapter 5, Verses 1, 2.) But Jesus, seeing the crowds, went up the mountain, and when he had sat down, his disciples came to him. And opening his mouth, he taught them, saying, 'The Lord goes up to the mountains, so that he may draw the multitudes to higher things with him. But the crowds are not able to ascend. And the disciples follow, to whom he speaks not standing, but sitting and huddled. For they were not able to understand him shining in his majesty.' According to the letter, some of the simpler brothers think that he taught the Beatitudes and the rest that follow on the Mount of Olives, which is not at all the case: for from what precedes and follows, the place is shown to be in Galilee, which we thought was either Mount Tabor or any other lofty mountain. Finally, after he finished his speeches, it immediately follows: But when he entered Capernaum.

5:3

(Verse 3.) Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This is what we read elsewhere: And the humble in spirit will be saved (Psalm 34:16): But lest anyone should think that poverty, which is sometimes borne out of necessity, is being preached by the Lord, he added 'in spirit,' so that you would understand it as humility, not as lack. Blessed are the poor in spirit, who are poor by choice for the sake of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, concerning such poor, the Savior also speaks through Isaiah: The Lord has anointed me; therefore, he has sent me to preach to the poor (Isaiah 61:1).

5:4

(Ver. 4.) Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Not the land of Judah ((Al. Judea)), nor the land of this world; not the cursed land, bringing forth thorns and thistles (Gen. V), which the most cruel and warlike possess; but the land that the Psalmist desires, saying: I believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (Ps. XXVI, 13). Such a possessor, and after victory a triumphator, is also described in the forty-fourth psalm: Attend, proceed and reign prosperously (Al. and prosperously): for truth, meekness, and justice. No one possesses this land by meekness, but by pride.

5:5

(Verse 5.) Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. This mourning is not a common law of nature for the dead, but for the sins and vices of the dead. Thus Samuel wept for Saul, because he regretted that God had anointed him king over Israel (1 Samuel 15). And so the Apostle Paul says that he weeps and mourns for those who have not repented after committing

fornication and impurity (2 Corinthians 12).

24 (Vers. 6.)

24 (Verse 6.) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. It is not enough for us to desire justice unless we also endure the hunger for justice: so that under this example, we may never consider ourselves sufficiently just, but always understand the works of justice to be lacking.

5:7

(Verse 7) Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Mercy is not only understood in acts of charity, but also in bearing each other's burdens in every sin, if we carry the burdens of one another (Galatians 6).

5:8

(Verse 8.) Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Those who have no consciousness of sin are not accused. The world is seen by the pure in heart: the temple of God cannot be defiled.

5:9

(Verse 9.) Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Those who first make peace in their own hearts, and then among quarreling brothers. For what good is it to reconcile others through you, when there are wars of vices in your own soul?

5:10

(Verse 10.) Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Notice that it explicitly adds (or, says), for righteousness' sake. For many endure persecution for their own sins and are not righteous. Also, consider that the blessedness of true circumcision is ultimately achieved through martyrdom.

5:11

(Verse 11.) Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. That curse should be despised which brings about blessedness, which is uttered falsely by the mouth of the reviler. Hence, it specially defined what blessed cursing is: every curse uttered against you falsely on my account. Therefore, where Christ is the cause, there also the desired cursing is.

5:12

(Verse 12.) Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. I do not know who can fulfill this for us, so that our reputation may be torn apart by insults, and we may rejoice in the Lord. Whoever pursues vain glory cannot fulfill it. Therefore, we must rejoice and be glad, so that a reward may be prepared for us in heavenly places. We read elegantly written in a certain volume: 'Do not seek glory, and you will not grieve when you are without it.' »

5:13 (Verse 13) You are the salt of the earth. The apostles are called salt because through them the entire human race is season 25 Quod si sal evannerit, in quo salietur? Si doctor erraverit, a quo alio doctore emendabitur?

It is worthless beyond nothingness, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. An example is taken from agriculture. For salt, indeed, as a condiment for foods, and for drying meats, it is necessary, but it has no other use. Certainly, we read in the Scriptures that certain cities, sown with the salt of the victors' anger, so that no sprout would arise in them (Judith IX). Therefore, let the doctors and bishops beware and see: the powerful endure torments powerfully (Wisdom VI, 7); and there is no remedy, but to lead the ruins of the ancestors to Tartarus.

5:14-16

(Verset 14 et suiv.) You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. It teaches the confidence in preaching, so that the apostles are not hidden out of fear, and are not like a lamp under a basket, but rather they freely reveal themselves, so that what they have heard in the inner rooms, they may proclaim on the housetops (Matthew 10:27).

5:17

(Verse 17.) Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish, but to fulfill. Whether it is that he has fulfilled the prophecies about himself through others, or because by his preaching he has fulfilled those things which before were crude and imperfect on account of the weakness of those who heard them, taking away wrath and excluding retaliation, and suppressing hidden desire in the mind.

5:18

(Verse 18.) Until heaven and earth pass away. The new heavens and the new earth are promised to us, which the Lord God will create. Therefore, if new things are to be created, the old things will necessarily pass away. And what follows is:

One iota, or one iota, will not pass from the Law until all is done. It is shown from the figure of the letter, that even what are thought to be the least in the Law, are full of spiritual sacraments, and all are recapitulated in the Gospel. Whose, then, is the erudition and whose teaching, to demonstrate that even diverse sacrifices and those which appear superstitious are fulfilled in daily victims?

5:19-21

(Verse 19 and following) Therefore, whoever shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but he who shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your justice exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. You have heard that it was said to those of old: You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment. But I tell you. This chapter, sticking with the previous testimony, in which he said: Not one iota, or one apex, will pass from the Law, until all things are fulfilled.

Therefore, he seals the Pharisees, who, despising the commandments of God, establish their own traditions, which do not benefit them in teaching the people if they destroy even a small thing that is commanded in the Law. However, we can also understand that the education of teachers, even if subject to a small sin, leads them down from the highest rank, and it does not benefit them to teach righteousness, which the smallest fault destroys. And let perfect happiness be to fulfill with action what you have taught in words.

5:22 (Verse 22) Because whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment. In some manuscripts it is added, without cause: but in the true definitive sentence, anger is completely eliminated, as the Scripture says: Whoever is angry with his brother. For if we are commanded to offer the other cheek to the one who strikes us, and to love our enemies, and to pray for those who persecute us (Luke 6), all occasion for anger is removed. Therefore, without cause must be removed, because the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God (James 1). But whoever says to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be liable to the council. This word 'Raca' is properly of the Hebrews: for Raca signifies 'empty,' that is, foolish or senseless: which we can call a common insult, without a brain. If we are to give an account for idle words, how much more for an insult (Matthew 5:22)! But it is also distinctly added: Whoever says to his brother, 'Raca.' For our brother is no one else, unless he has the same Father as us. When someone believes in God in the same way and knows Christ as the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1): by what means can it be indicated by the praise of foolishness? But whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. ■π■ κοινο■ ex superioribus subauditur: Whoever says to his brother, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. For whoever says to a believer, 'You fool!' is impious in religion.

5:23-24

(Vers. 23, 24.) Therefore, if you offer your gift at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to your brother: and then coming, offer your gift. He did not say, if you have something against your brother, but if your brother has something against you, so that a harsher necessity of reconciliation may be imposed on you. As long as we cannot appease him, I do not know whether we should consequently offer our gifts to God.

5:25-27

(Verse 25 onwards) Be reconciled quickly with your adversary while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Truly I say to you, you will not get out of there until you have paid the last penny. You have heard that it was said to the ancient ones: 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that everyone. Because what we have in Latin codices is 'consentiens,' it is written in Greek as 'E■vo■v,' which means benevolent or kind. From the preceding and subsequent passages, it is clear that our Lord and Savior, while we run on the path of this world, encourages us to peace and harmony, according to the Apostle, who says: If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all men (Rom. XII, 18). For in the preceding chapter, he also said: If you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you: and when this is finished, he immediately adds: Be reconciled to your adversary, etc. And in the following he commands: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and slander you. When this is clear and the consequent understanding, many think

it is said about the flesh and the soul, or about the soul and the spirit, which is not entirely correct. For how can the flesh be sent to prison if the soul does not agree, since both the soul and the flesh must be imprisoned together? And the flesh can do nothing except what the mind commands, or the Holy Spirit dwelling in us can deliver judgment to the flesh or the soul that resists, since he himself is the judge. Others, according to the Letter of Peter saying: Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8), and the rest, interpret the adversary as the devil, and they want to command from the Savior that, as long as it is in our power, we may be benevolent towards the devil, who is an enemy and avenger, and not make him suffer punishment on our behalf. For since he himself supplies the incentives of vices, and even to us who sin willingly, if we agree with him who suggests vices, he must also be tormented on our behalf. And they say it is a kind act for each saint to sustain his adversary, if he does not make him endure torments for himself. Some say more forcefully that in Baptism each person enters into a pact with the devil and says: I renounce you, devil, and your pomp, and your vices, and your world, which is in the evil one (1 John 5:19). Therefore, if we keep the pact, we are kind and consenting to our adversary, and by no means are we to be shut up in prison. But if we have in fact transgressed anything of what we promised to the devil, we will be handed over to the judge and the officer, and we will be thrown into prison, and we will not be released from it until we repay the last quarter. A quarter is a type of coin that has two minutes. Hence, in another Gospel, that poor and widowed woman is said to have sent a quarter into the treasury (Mark 12), and in another, two minutes (Luke 21). Not that the Gospels are in disagreement, but that one quarter has two minute coins. This is therefore what he is saying: You will not leave the prison until you have paid even the smallest sins.

5:28

(Verse 28.) Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Between passion and pre-passion, that is, between feeling and intense feeling, there is a difference: passion is considered a vice, while pre-passion, although it carries the fault of initiation, is not held accountable in the crime. Therefore, whoever looks at a woman and his soul is tickled, he is struck by pre-passion. But if he agrees and allows himself to be affected by the thought, as it is written in David: They passed into the feeling of their hearts (Ps. 73:7), he moves from pre-passion to passion, and it is not a lack of will to sin, but an opportunity. Therefore, whoever sees a woman with lustful intent, that is, if he looks at her in order to lust after her, he is rightly said to commit adultery in his heart.

5:29-30

(Verse 29, 30.) And if your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell. For he had spoken earlier about a woman's desire, and now correctly referred to the wandering of thought and sense as an eye. On the right hand, as well as other parts of the body, the beginnings of the will and emotions are demonstrated: such as what we conceive in our minds, we accomplish in our actions. Therefore, we must be careful that what is best in us does not quickly turn into vice. For if the right eye and right hand cause stumbling, how much more those things that are on the left in us! For if the soul falters, how

much more the body, which is inclined towards sin! Otherwise, in the right eye and in the right hand, the affections of brothers, wives, children, relatives, and close ones are shown, which if we see as an impediment to contemplate the true light, we must cut off such portions, so that while we desire to make others gain, we ourselves do not perish forever. Where is it said, concerning the high priest, whose soul is dedicated to the worship of God: 'He shall not defile himself for the dead among his people, except for his close relatives.' (Lev. 21:11), that is, he shall not experience any emotions except for those related to his dedication.

5:31-33

(Vers. 31 seqq.) However, it is said: Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. But I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for the cause of fornication, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. Again, you have heard that it was said to the ancients: You shall not swear falsely, but you shall perform your oaths to the Lord. In the later part, the Savior explains this place more fully, that Moses commanded the certificate of divorce to be given because of the hardness of the hearts of the husbands, not granting a separation, but removing homicide. For it is far better, even if a sorrowful discord were to arise, for blood to be shed through hatred.

5:34-37

(Versed 34 onwards) But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor should you swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. Let your word be 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything more than this comes from evil. The Jews have always had this wicked habit of swearing by the elements, as the prophetic word often accuses them (Isaiah 65). Whoever swears, worships, or loves the one by whom they swear. In the law it is commanded that we do not swear, except by the Lord our God (Deut. VI and VII). The Jews, by swearing by angels, and by the city of Jerusalem, and by the temple, and by the elements, honored and worshipped creatures and earthly things with the honor and worship due to God. Finally, consider that here the Savior did not prohibit swearing by God, but by heaven, and earth, and Jerusalem, and by your own head. And this was granted in the law as if to little children, so that just as they would sacrifice animals to God and not to idols, they would be allowed to swear by God: not that they would do this rightly, but because it was better to offer this to God than to demons. However, evangelical truth does not require an oath, since every faithful statement is considered as if made under oath.

5:38

(Verse 38.) You have heard that it was said: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, do not resist evil. Whoever says an eye for an eye does not want to take away the other, but to preserve both. Our Lord, by taking away vengeance, cuts off the beginnings of sins. And in the Law there is retribution, in the Gospel there is grace. There, fault is corrected, here the beginnings of sins are taken away.

5:39

(Verse 39.) But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. The man described in Ecclesiasticus is an imitator of him who says: Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart (Matthew 11:29). And he confirms his promise by saying: If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if well, why do you strike me? (John 18:23). David says in the Psalm: 'If I have repaid those who did evil to me' (Ps. VII, 5). And Jeremiah in the Lamentations: 'It is good for a man to bear the yoke from his youth' (or sit by it, etc.). He will give his cheek to the one who strikes him; he will be filled with insults (Thren. III, 27,30). This is directed against those who think there is one God of the Law and another of the Gospel, which is taught both there and here. According to mystical understanding: our right hand, when struck, we are not commanded to offer the left, but the other, that is, the other right. For justice does not have a left hand. If a heretic strikes us in a dispute and wants to wound the right doctrine, let another testimony from the Scriptures be set against him, and let us continually offer him our right hands while he is weary with anger.

5:42-43

(Verse 42, 43.) Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said: Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. If we understand this saying to mean only about almsgiving, it cannot apply to most of the poor. But even if the rich give constantly, they cannot give constantly. Therefore, after the good of almsgiving, instructions are given to the apostles, that is, to the teachers, so that those who have received for free may give for free (Matthew 10). Money of this kind never runs out; but the more it is given, the more it is doubled. And when it waters the fields under its control, the spring's waters never dry up.

5:44

(Verse 44.) But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and slander you. Many, considering the weakness of their own abilities and not the power of the saints, think that the commandments of God are impossible and say that it is enough to have virtues and not to hate enemies. However, they command to love more than human nature can endure. Therefore, it should be understood that Christ does not command the impossible, but the perfect: what David did to Saul and Absalom (1 Samuel 24 and 26, and 2 Samuel 18). Stephanus also, the martyr, prayed for those who were stoning him as enemies (Acts 7). And Paul desires to be accursed for his persecutors (Romans 9). Moreover, Jesus both taught and did these things, saying: Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34).

5:45

(Verse 45) So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. If someone keeps the commandments of God, they become a child of God. Therefore, being a child is not by nature, but by his own choice.

6:1

(Chapter 6, Verse 1) Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward from your Father in heaven. When you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. From all these things it is gathered that they are hypocrites who do anything in order to be glorified by men. It seems to me also that he who says to his brother: 'Let me remove the speck from your eye' (Matthew 7:4), does this for the sake of glory, in order to appear righteous himself. Therefore it is said to him by the Lord: 'Hypocrite, first remove the beam from your own eye.' Thus, not virtue but the motive for virtue has reward with God. If you veer slightly off the right path, it doesn't matter whether you go to the right or to the left, because you have lost the true way.

6:3-4

(Vers. 3, 4.) But when you give alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. Not God's reward, but their own. For they have been praised by men, for whom they have exercised virtues.

6:6

(Verse 6) But when you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. This is simply understood, it teaches the listener to flee from vain glory in prayer. But it seems to me that this is more of a command, that we should pray to the Lord with our thoughts confined within our hearts and our lips closed, which we also read Anna did in the Book of Kings; Her lips, it says, were moving (1 Samuel 1:13).

6:7

(Verse 7.) But when praying, do not speak much, as the Gentiles do. For they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Therefore, do not be like them. If a Gentile speaks much in prayer, then a Christian should speak little. For God is not the listener of words, but of the heart. (Wisdom 1:6).

6:8

(V. 8.) For your Father knows what you need before you ask him. So you will pray like this. In this place, a certain heresy arises, as well as a perverse doctrine of philosophers, who say: If God knows what we pray for, and before we ask, he knows what we need, then we speak in vain to the one who knows. To these it must be briefly answered, we are not storytellers, but askers. For it is

one thing to tell the ignorant, another to ask the one who knows. In that, there is evidence; here, there is obedience. There, we faithfully indicate; here, we miserably beseech.

6:9

(Verse 9.) Our Father, who art in heaven. By calling Him Father, let them confess themselves to be His sons.

Hallowed be thy name. Not in you, but in us. For if because of sinners the name of God is blasphemed among the nations (Rom. VIII), on the contrary, because of the righteous it is sanctified.

6:10

(Verse 10) Your kingdom come. This can mean either a general prayer for the kingdom of the whole world, that the devil may stop reigning in the world, or that God may reign in each individual, and sin may not reign in the mortal body of humankind (Rom. VI). At the same time, we must consider that it requires great courage and a pure conscience to ask for the kingdom of God and not fear judgment.

Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Just as the angels serve thee blamelessly in heaven, so may men serve thee on earth. Let those be ashamed of this opinion who daily lie about there being disturbances in heaven. For what benefit is the likeness of heaven to us, if there is also sin in heaven?

6:11-13

(Vers. 11-13.) Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. The word 'supersubstantial,' which we have expressed, is rendered in Greek as '■πιο■σιον,' a term that the Septuagint translators frequently translate as 'περιο■σιον.' Therefore, we examined the Hebrew, and wherever they translated 'περιο■σιον,' we found 'Sgolla,' which Symmachus translated as '■ξα■ρετον,' meaning exceptional or outstanding, although he did interpret it differently in one particular instance. Therefore, when we ask that God give us extraordinary or exceptional bread, we ask for Him who says: 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven' (John 6:51). In the Gospel called according to the Hebrews, instead of 'supersubstantial bread,' I found the word 'mahar,' which means 'for tomorrow'; so the meaning is: 'Give us our bread for tomorrow,' that is, for the future, today. We can also understand the 'supersubstantial bread' in another way, referring to the bread that is above all substances and exceeds all creatures. Others simply think, according to the words of the Apostle (I Tim. VI, 8): Having food and clothing, with these we are content, that we should only be concerned with providing for the holy present food. Hence, in the following it is commanded: Do not worry about tomorrow.

Amen. The sign of the Lord's Prayer is: which the Eagle interprets faithfully: we, truly, can say.

6:14

(Verse 14.) For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you your offenses. This is what is written: 'I said, you are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High;

nevertheless, you shall die like men, and fall like one of the rulers.' (Psalm 82:6-7) This is said to those who have deserved to be called gods because of their offenses. Therefore, rightly are they called men to whom offenses are forgiven.

6:16

(V. 16) For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to fast. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. The word exterminate, which is frequently used in the books of Ecclesiastic writers, has a much different meaning than is commonly understood. For it means that those who are exiled are exterminated, as they are sent beyond the borders. Therefore, we should always understand this word in this sense: which is said in Greek as **■φαν■ζουσι**. However, the hypocrite demolishes his face to simulate sadness; and with a strong mind rejoicing, he bears grief on his countenance.

6:17-20

(Verse 17 and following) But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting to men, but to your Father who is in secret: and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where rust and moth destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. He is speaking according to the custom of the province of Palestine, where they usually anoint their heads on festive days. Therefore, he commanded us to show ourselves joyful and festive when we fast. Those reading it from the Psalmist: The oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head (Ps. 140:5), on the contrary they want the good oil, about which it is said elsewhere: God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Ps. 44:8). And He commands that we, who practice virtues, should anoint the principal (**■γεμονικ■ν**) oil of our hearts with spiritual oil.

6:21

(Verse 21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. This applies not only to money, but also to all passions and possessions. The stomach is the god of gluttons: there it has its heart, where its treasure is. The treasure of the luxurious is feasts. For the lascivious, it is playfulness; for the lover, it is desire. Everyone serves the one by whom he is conquered (2 Peter 2:19).

6:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) If your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! Those with failing eyesight often see many lights: a sound and pure eye perceives only one light. This can be transferred to the realm of perception. For just as the whole body is in darkness if the eye is not sound, so the soul, if it has lost its primary light, will abide in darkness in all its senses. If therefore the light which is within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! If the sense which is light is obscured by the fault of the soul, do you think in what darkness it will be enveloped!

6:24

(Verse 24) You cannot serve God and wealth. Wealth is called mammon in the Syriac language. You cannot serve God and wealth. Let the greedy person hear this, let the person who is thought to be unable to serve both wealth and Christ hear this. And yet it did not say, the one who has wealth, but the one who serves wealth. For the servant of wealth guards the riches, like a servant; but the one who has shaken off the yoke of servitude distributes them, like a master.

6:25

(Verse 25.) Therefore I say to you: Do not be anxious about your souls, what you will eat, nor about your bodies, what you will wear. In some manuscripts it is added: nor what you will drink. Therefore, we are completely freed from the care of what nature gives to all, and is common to animals and humans. But it is commanded to us not to be anxious about what we will eat: because in the sweat of our face we prepare bread for ourselves. Labor must be exercised, worry must be removed. What is said here: Do not be anxious about what you will eat, or about what you will wear (Gen. III), let us take it as referring to physical food and clothing. However, we should always be concerned about spiritual food and clothing.

6:26

(Verse 26) Is not the soul more than food, and the body more than clothing? He says this in such a way: He who has provided greater things, surely will provide lesser things.

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? The Apostle instructs (Rom. XI), not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. This testimony should be kept in mind in the present chapter. For there are some who, while they want to exceed the boundaries of the fathers and fly high, are immersed in the depths: saying that the birds of the air are angels and other strengths in the ministry of God, which are nourished by the providence of God without worry for themselves. If this is how it is, as they want it to be understood, how does the statement follow for human beings: Are you not worth more to them? It must be taken simply: if the birds, without care and toil, are nourished by God's providence, which exist today and will not exist tomorrow: how much more are human beings, to whom eternity is promised, ruled by God's will!

6:27

(Verse 27.) But which of you by thinking is able to add one cubit to his stature? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

6:28-30

(Vers. 28-30.) Consider how the lilies of the field grow: they do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

6:31-33

6:34

7:1-2

(Chapter VII - Verses 1, 2) Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. If judging is prohibited, what is the consequence of Paul judging the fornicator in Corinth (1 Cor. 5), and Peter rebuking Ananias and Sapphira for lying (Acts 5)? But he shows what he prohibits from the consequences, saying: just as you judge, you will be judged. Therefore, he did not prohibit judgment, but taught it.

7:3-5

(Vers. 3-5.) But why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, and not see the beam in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck from your eye,' while the beam is in your own eye? Hypocrite, first remove the beam from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. He speaks of those who, while being subject to mortal sin themselves, do not overlook minor sins of their brothers: straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel (Matthew 23). Therefore, those who hypocritically pretend to be just, as we said above, are called hypocrites, who, while they have a beam in their own eye, look at the speck in their brother's eye.

7:6 (Verse 6) Do not give what is holy to the dogs. Holy, it is the bread of the children. Therefore, we should not take the bread of the children and give it to the dogs. Do not cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces. The pig does not appreciate ornamentation, as it wallows in the mire. And according to the Proverbs of Solomon: If he has a golden circle, he is found to be more vile. (Prov. XI, 22). Some interpret them as dogs who return to the vomit of their sins after believing in Christ: but they interpret pigs as those who have not yet believed in the Gospel, and who wallow in the mire of unbelief and vice. Therefore, it is not fitting for men of this kind to quickly believe the Gospel pearl, lest they trample on it and, once converted, begin to scatter us.

7:7-10

(Verse 7 and following) Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? He shows what we should seek, who had forbidden earthly things to be asked for. If it is given to the one who asks, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it is opened, then it is clear that the one who has not been given, and the one who has not found, and the one to whom it has not been opened, has not asked, sought, and knocked properly. Let us therefore knock at the door of Christ, of which it is said: This is the gate of the Lord, the just shall enter into it (Ps. CXVII, 20); so that when we have entered, the hidden and dark treasures may be revealed to us in Christ Jesus, in whom is all knowledge (Coloss. II).

7:11-12

(Ver. 11, 12.) So if you, being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. It should be noted that when he referred to the apostles as evil, unless perhaps under the guise of the apostles the

entire race of men is condemned, whose hearts are inclined to evil from infancy in comparison to divine mercy. Read Genesis (Genesis 8). It is not surprising if people of this age are called evil, since even the apostle Paul recalls: Redeeming the time, for the days are evil (Ephesians 5:16).

7:13-14

(Verse 13, 14) Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and spacious is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it. How narrow is the gate and confined is the way that leads to life! And few are those who find it. The wide path is the pleasure of the world, which people desire. The narrow path, which is opened through struggles and fasting, which even the Apostle entered (II Cor. VI, XI): and Timothy is encouraged to enter through it (I Tim. V). At the same time, consider how clearly he has spoken about each path. Many walk the broad path, but few find the narrow one. The broad path is not sought after, nor is there a need for discovery: it offers itself willingly, and is the path of those who wander. But the narrow path, not everyone finds it, and those who do find it, do not immediately enter it. Indeed, many, once they have found the path of truth, are captivated by the pleasures of the world and turn back from the middle of the journey.

7:15-17

(Verse 15 and following) Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. And by their fruits you will know them. It is possible to understand all things, as those who promise one thing in appearance and speech but show another thing in action. But especially, this should be understood about heretics, who seem to clothe themselves in the appearance of piety through continence, chastity, and fasting, but inwardly they have a poisoned heart and deceive the minds of the simple brothers. Therefore, from the fruits of the soul, which drag innocence to ruin, they are compared to ravenous wolves.

7:18-20

(Verse 18 and following) A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits you will know them. Let us ask the heretics who claim that there are two contradictory natures, if according to their understanding, a good tree can never bear bad fruit, then how did Moses, a good tree, sin by striking the rock (Deut. 32)? And how did David, after killing Uriah, sleep with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11)? And how did Peter, during the Passion of the Lord, deny Him, saying: 'I do not know the man' (Matt. 26:72)? Or what connection is there between Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, a bad tree who did not believe in the God of Israel, giving good advice to Moses (Exod. 18)? And how did Achior, in speaking to Holofernes, say something useful (Judith 5)? And as the comedian said (which the Apostle confirmed): 'Evil company corrupts good morals' (1 Cor. 5). And when they do not find what to answer, let us infer that Judas (John 13) , once a good tree, bore bad fruits after betraying (or handing over) the Savior; and that Saul (Philippians 3) , a bad tree at the time he persecuted the Church of Christ, bore good fruits afterwards, when he was transformed from a persecutor into a vessel of election (Acts 9) . Therefore, a good tree does not bear bad fruits as long as it perseveres in the pursuit of goodness; and a bad tree remains in

the fruits of sin as long as it does not convert to repentance. For no one remains in what he was, he begins to be what he has not yet begun.

7:21

(Verse 21.) Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. As he said before, those who have a garment of good life should not be received on account of the wickedness of their teachings: so now he asserts the opposite, that even faith should not be given to those who, although they possess the integrity of faith, live wickedly and destroy the integrity of doctrine with evil deeds. For both the work is necessary for the servants of God, so that both the work is confirmed by speech, and speech is confirmed by works. This statement may seem contrary to that: No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except in the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). But it is customary for the sayings of the Scriptures to be taken for actions, as it is immediately approved in the following passages, refuting those who boast of having knowledge of the Lord without works, and they hear from the Savior: Depart from me, you workers of iniquity, I do not know you (Luke 13). And the Apostle speaks in this sense: They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him (Titus 1:16).

7:22

(Verse 22.) Many say to me on that day: Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles? It is not always the merit of the one who does the prophesying, performing miracles, and casting out demons, but either the invocation of the name of Christ accomplishes this, or it is for the condemnation of those who invoke it and for the benefit of those who see and hear. So, even though people may despise those who perform miracles, they still honor God, for it is by invoking His name that such great wonders are accomplished. For both Saul (1 Samuel 10) and Balaam (Numbers 23) and Caiaphas (John 11) prophesied, not knowing what they were saying; and Pharaoh (Genesis 41) and Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2) knew the future through dreams. And in the Acts of the Apostles, the sons of Sceva were seen casting out demons (Acts 19). But it is also narrated that the apostle Judas, with the intention of a traitor, performed many signs among the other Apostles.

7:23

(Verse 23.) And then I will confess to them, because I never knew you. He said explicitly, I will confess, because he had pretended to speak a long time ago: I do not know you. The Lord does not know those who perish. However, observe why he added, I never knew you, if, according to some, they have always lived among rational creatures.

7:24

(Verse 24) Depart from me, you who practice iniquity. Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. He did not say, 'you who have practiced iniquity,' so as not to seem to take away repentance, but rather 'you who practice,' that is, those who, up until the present hour, when the time of judgment comes, though they do not have the power to sin, still have the inclination.

7:25

(Verse 25.) And the rain descended, and the rivers came, and the winds blew, and they rushed upon that house, and it did not fall. This rain which seeks to overthrow the house is the devil. The rivers, all the Antichrists, who are against Christ. The spiritual winds of wickedness in heavenly places (Ephesians 6).

7:26

(Verse 26.) For it was founded upon a rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man. Upon this rock the Lord built his Church (Matthew 15): from this rock the apostle Peter obtained his name. Upon a rock of this kind, serpent's tracks are not found (Proverbs 30). Concerning this, the prophet speaks confidently: He set my feet upon a rock (Psalm 40:3). And in another place: The rock is a refuge for rabbits, or porcupines (Psalm 104:8). For a timid animal takes refuge in the caves of the rocks: and with its rough skin and completely armed with javelins, it protects itself with such defense. Therefore, it is said to Moses at that time when he had fled from Egypt, and the rabbit was the Lord's: Stand in the opening of the rock, and you will see my back parts. (Exodus 33:21).

7:27-28

(Verse 27, 28) Whoever built his house on sand: and the rain descended, and the rivers came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell: and great was the fall thereof. And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, that the multitudes were astonished at his doctrine. The foundation which the Apostle, the architect, laid (I Cor. 3), is one, our Lord Jesus Christ. Upon this stable and firm foundation, and by itself a strong structure founded on massive support, is built the Church of Christ. Truly, every heretic's discourse is built for the purpose of collapsing upon a super unstable arena which cannot be securely cemented together nor reduced into one bond.

7:29

(Verse 29.) For he was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes and Pharisees. For they taught the people, what was written in Moses and the Prophets. But Jesus, being like God and the Lord of Moses himself, for the freedom of his will, either added to the law what seemed less, or changing it, preached to the people, as we also read above: It was said to the ancients: But I say to you.

8:1 (Chapter 8, Verse 1) When Jesus had come down from the mountain, many crowds followed him, and behold, a leper came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.' When the Lord came down from the mountain, crowds gathered, for they were unable to ascend to higher places. And the leper was the first to meet him. For he had not yet been able to hear the Savior's message about the leprosy while on the mountain. And it should be noted that he was the first to be cured, specifically: second, the centurion's servant; third, Peter's mother-in-law, who had a fever; and in the fourth place, those who were brought to him possessed by demons, whose spirits he cast out with a word, when he healed all who were ill. And behold, a leper came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.' 8:2 (Verse 2.) Lord, if you will, you can cleanse me. He who asks for the will, does not doubt about the power.

8:3

(Verse 3) And Jesus, extending His hand, touched him, saying: I will, be clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. By extending His hand, the Lord caused the leprosy to flee. Consider also how humble and devoid of boasting His response is. The man had said, if you will: the Lord answered, I will. The man had said, you can cleanse me: The Lord unites and says, be cleansed. Therefore, it is not, as many Latin speakers believe, to be joined and read as, I will-be-cleanse, but separately, so that first, He says, I will: then, giving the command, He says, be clean (or be cleansed).

8:4

(Verse 4.) And Jesus said to him: See that you tell no one. And in truth, why was it necessary that he boast in speech, which he excelled in bodily?

44 But go, show yourself to the priests and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them. He sends him to the priests for various reasons. First, out of humility, so that he may seem to defer honor to the priests. For it was commanded by the law that those who had been cleansed from leprosy should offer gifts to the priests. Second, so that seeing the cleansed leper, they might either believe in the Savior or not believe. If they believed, they would be saved; if they did not believe, they would be without excuse. And at the same time, in order to avoid being accused of frequently violating the law.

8:5-8

(Verse 5 onward) Then a centurion came to him, pleading with him and saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.' And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.' We must not accuse the Lord of boasting, because he immediately promises to go and heal, seeing the faith, humility, and prudence of the centurion. He had faith that a paralytic could be healed by the Savior from among the gentiles. He had humility in that he considered himself unworthy for the Lord to enter his house. He had prudence in that he recognized the hidden divinity within the flesh, knowing that what was visible to unbelievers would not benefit him, but rather what was hidden inwardly. Concerning this prudence, he also said:

8:9

(Verse 9.) For I am also a man under authority, having soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it. He wanted to show that the Lord can fulfill his will not only through the coming of his body, but also through the ministry of angels.

8:10

(Verse 10.) But when Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, 'Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Amen I say to you, I have not found such great faith in Israel. He speaks about the present, not about all the past patriarchs and prophets: unless perhaps the faith of the Gentiles is preferred over that of Israel.

8:11

(Verse 11.) But I say to you, that many will come from the East and the West, and will recline with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Because God, the creator of the heavens, is the Father of Christ, therefore Abraham is also in the kingdom of heaven, along with whom the nations that believe in Christ, the Son of the Creator, will recline. And that same understanding is fulfilled, as we mentioned above, in the faith of the Gentile centurion: as the peoples who will believe from the East and the West are mentioned.

8:12

(V. 12) But the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness. The sons of the kingdom signify the Jews, over whom God reigned before. They shall be cast out into outer darkness. Darkness is always within, not without. But because he who is expelled from the Lord leaves behind the light, therefore outer darkness is so named.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. If there is weeping of the eyes, and gnashing of teeth demonstrates the bones: therefore, the resurrection of the bodies and their members that had fallen is true.

8:14

(Verse 14) And when Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying down and feverish (or trembling): and he touched her hand, and the fever left her. The hand of the woman is touched, and with her healed works, the weakness of sins departs. It is the nature of human beings that after a fever, their bodies become more tired, and as health begins, they feel the afflictions of sickness. But the health that is granted by the Lord restores everything at once, and it is not enough to be healed; but to indicate an increase in strength, it is added:

8:15

(Verse 15) And he rose up and served them. That hand which had been touched was also healed.

8:16-18

(Vers. 16-18.) But when evening came, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases." And seeing great crowds around him, Jesus gave orders to go to the other side. Everyone is healed not in the morning, not in the afternoon, but in the evening, when the sun is setting: when a grain of wheat dies in the ground in order to bring forth many fruits (John 12).

8:19-20

(Verse 19, 20) And one scribe, approaching, said to him: Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. And Jesus says to him: Foxes have dens, and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man

has nowhere to lay his head. This scribe of the law, who knew only the letter that kills, if he had said: Lord, I will follow you wherever you go, he would not have been rejected by the Lord; but because he esteemed one teacher out of many, and was a learner of letters, which is more significantly said in Greek, γραμματεῖς, and not a spiritual hearer: therefore, he has no place where Jesus can lay his head. Now, it is shown to us, and because of this the scribe is rejected, that he, seeing the greatness of the signs, wanted to follow the Savior in order to seek profit from the miracles of his works, desiring the same thing that Simon Magus wanted to buy from Peter (Acts 8). Therefore, such a faith is rightfully condemned by the Lord's judgment and it is said to him: Why do you desire to follow me because of riches and the profits of the world, when I am of such great poverty that I don't even have a small shelter and I don't use my own roof?

8:21

(Verse 21.) And another of his disciples said to him: Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father. What is the similarity between a scribe and a disciple? The former calls him master, the latter confesses him Lord. The former desires to go and bury his father due to an opportunity for piety; the latter promises to follow him wherever, not seeking a master, but seeking profit from the master.

8:22

(Ver. 22) But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead. He is dead, whoever does not believe. But if a dead person buries the dead, we should not be concerned about the dead, but the living: lest while we are concerned about the dead, we ourselves may also be called dead.

8:23

(Verse 23) And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves. He performed the fifth sign when he got into a boat from Capernaum and commanded the winds and the sea. The sixth sign, when he gave power to the demons to enter into the pigs in the region of the Gerasenes. The seventh, when he entered his own city and healed a paralytic lying on a bed. Firstly, the paralytic is the son of a centurion.

8:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) But He was sleeping. And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, 'Lord, save us, we are perishing!' And Jesus said to them, 'Why are you afraid, you of little faith?' We read the foreshadowing of this sign in Jonah (Jonah 1), when, as the others were in danger, he was secure, and slept, and was awakened; and by the power and mystery of his passion, he saved those who woke him.

8:26

(Verse 26.) Then rising up, he commanded the winds and the sea: and there was a great calm. And from this place we understand that all creatures feel their Creator. For those whom he rebukes, and those whom he commands, feel the one who commands: not by the error of heretics, who think that all things are animate; but by the majesty of the creator, which to us is

imperceptible, but to them is perceptible.

8:27-29

(Verse 27-29) And men marveled, saying: What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him? And when Jesus had come across the sea into the region of the Gerasenes, two men with demons met him as they came out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass by that way. And behold, they cried out, saying: Not the disciples, but the sailors and others who were in the boat, marveled. But if anyone wants to argue that those who marveled were disciples, we will answer that they were rightly called men who had not yet known the power of the Savior.

8:30-31

(Verse 30, 31.) What have we to do with you, Jesus, Son of God? Have you come here before the time to torment us? Now there was a herd of many pigs feeding not far off from them. And the demons begged him, saying, 'This confession is not of free will, which is followed by the reward of the confessor, but of forced necessity, which compels unwillingly, as if fugitive slaves see their master after a long time: they only beg to be spared from the beatings.' So, demons, seeing the Lord suddenly present on earth, believed that they had come to judge. The presence of the Savior is torment for demons. And some people foolishly think that demons know the Son of God, but are ignorant of the devil, because these demons are of lesser evil than the one whose servants they are. Since all knowledge of the disciples must be referred to the teacher, demons as well as the devil are more suspect of understanding the Son of God than knowing Him. No one knows the Father, except the Son, and whoever the Son chooses to reveal him to. (Matthew 11:27)

8:32-33

(Verse 32, 33.) If you cast us out, send us into the herd of pigs. And He said to them: Go. And they, going out, went into the pigs. And behold, the whole herd rushed headlong into the sea, and they died in the water. But the shepherds fled; and coming into the city, they announced all these things, and about those who had demons. Not that the Savior granted the demons what they were asking, He said, go: but so that through the destruction of the pigs, an opportunity for salvation would be given to the people. For when the shepherds see these things, they immediately report them to the city. Let Manichaeus be ashamed, if the souls of men and beasts are of the same substance and from the same author, how is it that for the salvation of one man, two thousand pigs are choked?

8:34

(Verse 34) And behold, the whole city went out to meet Jesus, and when they saw Him, they begged Him to pass through their borders. They ask Him to pass through their borders, not out of pride as some think, but out of humility by which they judged themselves unworthy of the Lord's presence, just as Peter, falling to the knees of the Savior in the catch of fish, said: Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man (Luke 5:8).

9:1-2

(Chapter 9, Verses 1-2) And Jesus got into a boat and crossed over, and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic lying on a bed. And Jesus seeing their faith, said to the paralytic: Take heart, my son, your sins are forgiven. By his city, we understand none other than Nazareth, from where he is also called the Nazarene. And they brought him, as we said before, a paralytic lying on a bed, because he himself was not able to enter. But Jesus, seeing not the faith of the one who was being offered, but of those who were offering, said to the paralyzed man: Have confidence, my son, your sins are forgiven you. Oh, wonderful humility! He calls despised and weak, dissolved in the joints of all his limbs, his son, whom the priests did not consider worthy of touching. Or certainly he calls him son because his sins are forgiven him. According to the allegory, sometimes the soul, lying in its body, with all the powers of its limbs dissolved, is offered to the Lord to be healed by the perfect teacher, and if it is healed by his mercy, it receives such great strength that it immediately carries its bed.

9:3-4

(Verses 3, 4.) And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves: He blasphemes. And when Jesus saw their thoughts, he said: Why do you think evil in your hearts? We read in the Prophet, saying God: I am the one who blots out your iniquities (Isaiah 43:25). Therefore, the scribes, because they thought he was a man and did not understand the words of God, accuse him of blasphemy. But the Lord, seeing their thoughts, shows himself to be God, who can know the hidden things of the heart, and speaks in a silent manner: With the same majesty and power with which I behold your thoughts, I can also forgive sins to men. Understand what the paralytic suffers from among you.

9:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) Which is easier to say: your sins are forgiven you; or to say: rise up and walk? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins, then He says to the paralytic. There is a great difference between saying and doing. Whether the paralytic's sins were forgiven, only the one who forgave them knew. But both the one who rose up and those who saw him rise up could verify it by his walking. Therefore, a bodily sign is given in order to prove something spiritual, although it has the same power to forgive the faults of both body and soul. And intelligence is given to us, because many bodily weaknesses occur due to sins. And perhaps your sins are forgiven first, so that with the causes of weakness removed, health is restored.

9:7-8

(Verse 7, 8.) Rise, take up your bed, and go to your house. And he rose and went to his house. And when the crowds saw it, they were afraid and glorified God, who had given such authority to men. And if the paralyzed man rises, if he recovers his former strength, he carries his bed on which he lay before, and carries it into his house of virtues.

9:9

(Verse 9) And as Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man sitting at the tax booth, named Matthew. And he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he rose and followed him. The other evangelists, out of respect and honor for Matthew, did not want to use his name openly, but they said, 'Levi,' for he had two names. But Matthew himself, according to what is commanded by Solomon (or rather,

it is said), 'The righteous is an accuser of himself at the beginning of his speech' (Proverbs 18:17). And in another place: Confess your sins, that you may be justified (Isaiah 43:26). Matthew calls himself and the tax collector, in order to show to the readers that no one should despair of salvation if they have turned to better things; since he himself was suddenly changed from a tax collector to an apostle. Porphyry and Julian the Emperor argue in this place, either the incompetence of the lying historian, or the foolishness of those who immediately followed the Savior, as if they irrationally followed anyone who called them, when there were so many virtues and signs that the Apostles had seen before they believed. Certainly, that very brilliance and majesty of hidden divinity, which also shone forth in a human face, was able to draw those who saw it for the first time to itself by its appearance. For if this power is said to exist in a magnet and amber, so that they attract rings, straws, and stalks to themselves, how much more could the Lord of all creatures draw to himself those whom he wished?

9:10-12

(V. 10 seq.) And it came to pass, as he sat at table in his house, behold many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice." For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.'

9:13

(Verse 13) I desire mercy, and not sacrifice. For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners. And the Lord was going to the feasts of sinners, so that He may have an opportunity to teach and provide spiritual food to His invited guests. Ultimately, as He was frequently described as going to feasts, it is only important what He did there, what He taught, in order to demonstrate both the humility of the Lord in going to sinners and the power of His teaching in the conversion of repentant sinners. But as for what follows: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice' (Hosea 6:6). And: 'I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners,' testifying of the prophet, he rebukes the scribes and Pharisees who consider themselves righteous, but reject the company of sinners and tax collectors.

9:14

(Verse 14) Then the disciples of John came to him, saying: Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast? Proud question, and full of the arrogance of the Pharisees. Certainly, to say nothing else, the boasting of fasting should be reprehended. And the disciples of John could not be blameless, who were slandering him, whom they knew had been proclaimed by their master's words, and were joining themselves to the Pharisees, whom they knew had been condemned by John, saying: O generation of vipers, who has shown you to flee from the coming wrath?

9:15

(Verse 15.) And Jesus said to them: Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they

will fast. Christ is the bridegroom: the Church is the bride. From this holy and spiritual union, the Apostles are born, who cannot mourn as long as they see the bride in the bridal chamber and know that the bridegroom is with the bride. But when the wedding is over and the time of his passion and resurrection has come, then the sons of the bridegroom will fast. Some believe that after forty days of the Passion, fasting should be observed: although the immediate arrival of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit indicate the celebration to us. And on this occasion, Montanus, Prisca, and Maximilla also observe Lent after Pentecost: because, with the bridegroom taken away, the children of the bridegroom should fast. However, the custom of the Church comes from the passion of the Lord and the resurrection through the humility of the flesh, so that we may be prepared for the spiritual nourishment of the body through the fasting of the flesh. According to the tropology, it must be known that as long as the bridegroom is with us and we are in joy, we cannot fast or mourn. But when he departs from us because of our sins, then fasting must be announced, then mourning must be undertaken.

9:16-17

(V. 16, 17) However, no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. For the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved. These words were spoken by him to them. What he means is this: Until someone is born again and the old self is removed through my suffering, and he puts on a new self, he cannot bear the stricter commands of fasting and continence, lest through excessive severity he lose even the faith that he seems to possess now. But he set forth two examples, both of the old and the new, and of clothing. By the old wineskins we must understand the scribes and Pharisees. The new patch of clothing and the new wine represent the teachings of the Gospel, which the Jews cannot bear, lest a greater tear be made. The Galatians also desired to do something similar, mixing the precepts of the Gospel with the precepts of the Law, and putting the new wine into old wineskins; but the Apostle speaks to them, saying: O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you into not obeying the truth? (Gal. III, 1) Therefore, the word of the Gospel should be infused into the apostles rather than the Scribes and Pharisees, who were corrupted by the traditions of the elders and could not keep the sincerity of Christ's teachings. For there is a difference between the purity of a virginal soul, untouched by the contamination of previous vices, and the filth of one that has succumbed to the desires of many.

9:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) Behold, a certain ruler came forward and worshipped him, saying: My daughter has just died; but come, lay your hand upon her, and she will live. And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his disciples. The eighth sign is in which the ruler asks for his daughter to be raised, not wanting to be excluded from the mystery of true circumcision; but a woman who had been flowing with blood enters, and is healed in the eighth place, so that the ruler's daughter comes as the ninth, according to what is said in the Psalms: Ethiopia will stretch out her hands to God (Psalm 67:32). And so, all Israel will be saved; as it is written: 'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.' (Romans 11:25-26).

9:20

(Ver. 20) And behold, a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak. In the Gospel according to Luke, it is written that the daughter of a ruler had reached the age of twelve (Luke 8). Note, therefore, that during that time this woman, that is, the people of the Gentiles, began to be sick, while the people of the Jews believed. For unless a comparison of virtues is made, vice is not revealed. But this woman, flowing with blood, does not approach the Lord in the house, nor in the city, for according to the Law she was excluded from the cities (Leviticus 15, Numbers 5); but on the way, as the Lord walks, so that while He goes to another, another may be healed. Hence the apostles say: 'It was necessary that the word of God should be preached to you, but since you judged yourselves unworthy of salvation, we turn to the Gentiles' (Acts 13:46).

9:21

(Verse 21) For she said within herself, If I shall touch but his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, According to the Law, he who touches a woman who is menstruating or has a discharge of blood is unclean (Lev. 20:25). She touches the Lord for this reason, that she may be healed of the defect of blood.

9:22

(Verse 22) Have faith, daughter, your faith has saved you: and the woman was saved from that hour. Therefore, daughter, because your faith has saved you. He did not say, your faith will save you, but has saved you. For in what you have believed, you have already been saved.

9:23

(Verse 23) And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He said, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

9:24

(Vers. 24.) Step back, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping. And they laughed at him. For in God, all things live.

9:25

(Verse 25.) And when the crowd had been thrown out, he entered. For they were not worthy to see the mystery of the one rising again, who they derided with unworthy insults.

9:26

(Verse 26) And he took her by the hand. And the girl arose: And this report went forth into all that land. Unless the hands of the Jews, which are full of blood, are first cleansed, their synagogue will not rise again.

9:27

(Verse 27) And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying out and saying, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David.' As Jesus passed through the house of the ruler and was going

to his own house, as we read above: Getting into a boat, he crossed over and came to his own city. The two blind men cried out, saying, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David.' And yet they were not healed on the way, as they thought; but after he came to his own house, they approached him and entered: and their faith is first tested, so that they may receive the light of true faith. Earlier we presented a sign regarding the prince's daughter and the hemorrhaging (or sick) woman, now this is added: that as there was death and weakness there, here blindness is shown. Both peoples were blind when the Lord passed through this world, and desired to return to their homes. But unless they confess and say, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David,' and when Jesus asks, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' He responds: Indeed, Lord, he does not receive his former sight. In another Gospel, one blind man is written about, with torn clothes, sitting in Jericho, who is forbidden by the apostles to cry out; but through impudence, he receives healing (Mark 10). This passage properly pertains to the people of the Gentiles and should be explained in its own volume.

9:28-29

(Verse 28, 29.) Have mercy on us, Son of David. And when he came into the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them: Do you believe that I can do this for you? They said to him: Yes, Lord. Then he touched their eyes, saying: Let it be done to you according to your faith. And their eyes were opened. Let Marcion and Manichaeus, and other heretics, who tear apart the Old Testament, hear this and learn that the Savior is called the Son of David. For if he was not born in the flesh, how is he called the son of David?

9:30-31

(Verse 30, 31.) And Jesus warned them, saying, "See that no one knows." But when they went out, they spread the news about him throughout that whole land. And the Lord, fleeing the glory of boastfulness because of his humility, had commanded this. And they, because of the remembrance of his grace, cannot remain silent about the kindness. Note, therefore, that something contrary to what was commanded must have happened. These blind men are healed in the tenth place.

9:32

(Verse 32) And when they had departed, behold, they brought to Him a man who was mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!" But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."

9:33-34

(Verse 33, 34.) And the crowds marveled, saying: Never has it appeared like this in Israel. But the Pharisees said: By the prince of demons he casts out demons. The crowd confesses the works of God, and says: Never has it appeared like this in Israel. In the crowd, there is a confession of the nations. But because the Pharisees could not deny the power of God, they slandered his works and said: By the prince of demons he casts out demons, thus demonstrating the unbelief of the Jews through their slander even today.

9:35

(Verse 35.) And Jesus went about all the cities and towns, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all illness and every infirmity. You see that He preached the Gospel equally to both villages and cities, that is, to both large and small, so that He would not consider the power of the nobles, but the salvation of the believers. He went through the cities, having this work that the Father had commanded: and this hunger, to save the unbelievers with His teaching. But He was teaching the Gospel of the kingdom in the synagogues and villages, and after preaching and teaching, He cured every illness and every infirmity, so that those whom his words did not persuade, his deeds would persuade. He is properly called the Lord, who cares for every illness and every infirmity, for nothing is impossible for Him.

9:36

(Verse 36.) But seeing the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples. The persecution of the flock and sheep and the disturbance of the crowds is the fault of the shepherds and the vice of the leaders. Hence it follows.

9:37-38

(Verse 37, 38.) Indeed, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. The abundant harvest signifies the multitude of people, while the few laborers represent a shortage of workers. And it is commanded to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. These are the laborers whom the Psalmist speaks of, saying: Those who sow in tears will reap with joy. Going forth, they went and wept, carrying their seeds. But when they come, they will come with joy, carrying their sheaves (Psalm 126:7-8). And to speak more plainly, the abundant harvest is the entire crowd of believers. However, the workers are few, like the apostles and those who imitate them and are sent to the harvest.

10:1

(Chapter 10, Verse 1) And having called his twelve disciples together, he gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. The kind and merciful Lord and Master does not withhold His powers from His servants and disciples. And just as he had healed all manner of sickness and all manner of disease, he also granted the apostles the power to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. But there is a great difference between having and giving, donating and receiving. Whatever he does, he does it by the power of the Lord: they, if they do anything, confess their weakness and the power of the Lord, saying: In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk (Acts 3:6). It should be noted that in the twelfth place, the power of signs is granted to the apostles.

10:2

(V. 2.) The names of the twelve apostles are as follows. The catalog of apostles is provided in order to exclude those who will be false apostles.

10:3

(Verse 3.) The first is Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus. The order and merit of each apostle was determined by the one who searches the secrets of the heart. The first is written Simon, with the surname Peter, to distinguish him from the other Simon who is called the Cananaean, from the village of Cana in Galilee, where the Lord turned water into wine (John 2). He also calls James the son of Zebedee, because another James follows, James the son of Alphaeus. And he pairs the apostles together. He joins Peter and Andrew as brothers, not so much in flesh as in spirit. He also joins James and John, who, leaving behind the bread of the body, followed the true Father. He pairs Philip and Bartholomew, and also Thomas and Matthew the tax collector. The other evangelists, in the order of names, first mention Matthew; and afterwards Thomas, they do not mention the name of the tax collector, so as not to appear to criticize the evangelist while recalling the early way of life. But indeed, (as we said above), he places himself after Thomas and calls himself a publican, so that where sin abounded, grace may abound even more (Rom. V, 20).

10:4 (Verse 4.) Simon the Cananaean. He is the one who is referred to in another Gospel (Luke VI) as Zealot. For Chana means zeal. Thaddaeus the apostle is said in the Ecclesiastical History to have been sent to King Abgar of Edessa, who is called by the evangelist Luke Judas, the son of James; and elsewhere he is called Lebbaeus (Acts I), which means little heart. And it is believed that he had a triple name: just as Simon was also called Peter (Mark III); and the sons of Zebedee were called Boanerges (or Banerges), because of the firmness and greatness of their faith. And Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. He took his name either from the village or city where he was born, or from the tribe of Issachar, so that it was born by some prophecy into the condemnation of itself. For Issachar is interpreted as wages, to signify the price of the traitor.

10:5-6

(Verses 5, 6.) Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter into the cities of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This place is not contrary to the commandment which is afterwards said: Going, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19) . Because this is before the resurrection, and that after the resurrection is the commandment. And it was necessary to announce the first coming of Christ to the Jews, so that they would not have a just excuse for rejecting Him; because He sent the apostles to the Gentiles and to the Samaritans. But according to the tropology, those of us who are called by the name of Christ are commanded not to walk in the error of the way of the gentiles and heretics, so that as their religion is separated, let their way of life be separated as well.

10:7-8

(Verse 7, 8.) And as you go, preach, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. And let no one among the rural and uneducated people doubt, for those who promise the kingdom of heaven are given the power to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons, in order to prove the greatness of the promises by the greatness of the signs. And because spiritual gifts (if the reward is of medium value) always become less valuable, condemnation of greed is added.

Freely you have received, freely give. I, as the master and Lord, have bestowed this upon you without cost, and you give without cost, so that the grace of the Gospel is not corrupted.

10:9-10

(Vers. 9, 10.) Do not possess gold, silver, or money in your belts. Take no bag for the journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staff. For the worker deserves his food. Therefore, he gives these precepts to the evangelizers of truth, to whom he had said before: Freely you have received, freely give. For if they preach in such a way that they do not accept payment, the possession of gold, silver, and money is superfluous. For if they had gold and silver, they seemed to preach not for the sake of the salvation of souls, but for the sake of profit. Nor is there money in their purses. He who cuts off wealth, almost cuts off the necessities of life, as the apostolic teachers of true religion, who taught that all things are governed by the providence of God, showed themselves to think nothing of tomorrow. Not a bag on the way. By this precept he condemns the philosophers, who are commonly called Bactroperitae, because they despise the world and consider everything as worthless, and carried the storeroom with them. Nor two tunics. In two tunics it seems to me to show a double garment. Not that in the regions of Scythia and freezing snow, one should be satisfied with one tunic: but rather that we understand clothing in the tunic: so that, dressed in one thing, we do not preserve another thing out of fear of future events. Nor footwear. And Plato taught that the two summits of the body should not be covered, nor should we become accustomed to the softness of the head and feet. For when these things have strength, the rest are stronger. Not the rod: Why do we seek the help of the Lord, the protection of the staff? And because he had sent apostles somewhat dumb and unprepared to preach, and the condition of masters seemed hard, he tempered the severity of the command with the following sentiment, saying: The worker is worthy of his food. Only, he said, take what is necessary for you in food and clothing. And the Apostle also repeats: Having food and clothing, let us be content with these (1 Tim. VI, 8). And in another place: Let him who is being catechized communicate the word to him who is catechizing him in all good things (Galat. VI, 6): so that those who reap spiritual things may make them companions of their carnal things: not in greed, but in necessity. We have said these things historically. However, according to the anagoge, it is not permitted for teachers to possess gold and silver, and money that is in belts. We often read about gold in terms of its value; silver, in terms of its use in conversation; copper, in terms of its sound. These things we are not allowed to receive from others, but to possess them as gifts from the Lord. Nor are we to embrace the teachings of heretics, philosophers, or false doctrines that are weighed down by the world, nor should we have two minds or allow our feet to be bound by deadly chains. Instead, as we enter the holy land, we are to be naked; we are not to have a staff that turns into a snake or rely on any support from the flesh. For this kind of staff and stick is made of reeds, and if you press on it even a little, it will break and pierce the hand of the one leaning on it.

10:11

(Verse 11) Whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. Concerning the appointment of bishops and deacons, Paul speaks; They must also have a good testimony from those who are outside. (1 Timothy 3:7). When the apostles entered a new city, they could not know what kind of person he was. Therefore, a host should be chosen by the reputation of the people and the judgment of the neighbors, so that the dignity of the preacher is

not tarnished by the infamy of the recipient. When everyone should preach, one guest is chosen, not giving a favor to the one who is going to stay, but receiving it, for it is said, who is worthy in her, so that he may know himself more to receive grace than to give it.

10:12-13

(Verses 12, 13.) But when you enter the house, greet it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. The hidden greeting is expressed in Hebrew and Syriac speech. For what is said in Greek, $\chi\alpha\iota\rho\epsilon$, and in Latin, ave, is called in the Hebrew Syriac language Salom Lach () or Salom Emmach (), which means peace be with you. And the instruction is as follows: When you enter a house, bless the guest with peace, and as much as you can, calm the strife and quarrels. But if a contradiction arises, you will receive a reward for the offered peace: they, who wish to have war, will possess it.

10:14

(Verse 14.) And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. The dust is shaken off the feet as a testimony of their labor, that they have entered the city and the apostolic preaching has reached them. Whether the dust is shaken off so that they receive nothing from them, not even necessary food, those who have rejected the Gospel.

10:15

(v. 15) Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that city. If it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah ((or Gomorheis)) than for that city which did not receive the Gospel, and therefore more tolerable, because to Sodom and Gomorrah the preaching was not given, but to this city it was given, and yet it did not receive the Gospel: therefore among sinners there are different punishments.

10:16

(Verse 16) Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. He calls them wolves, scribes, and Pharisees, who are the Jewish clerics.

10:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) Be therefore wise as serpents, and innocent as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. So that by prudence they may avoid snares, and by simplicity they may not do evil. The cleverness of the serpent is set as an example: because it hides its head with its whole body, and it protects the part where life is. And so, let us also, at the risk of our whole body, guard our head, who is Christ. The simplicity of doves is demonstrated by the appearance of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the Apostle also says: Be little children in malice (1 Corinthians 14:20).

10:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you should say. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should say. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of

your Father who speaks in you. Above, he said: For they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake. Therefore, when we are brought before judges because of Christ, we should only offer our own will for Christ. Moreover, Christ himself, who dwells within us, will speak for himself, and the grace of the Holy Spirit will be ministered in answering.

10:21

(Verse 21) But brother will betray brother to death, and father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. And you will be hated by all because of my name. We frequently see this happening in persecutions: there is no loyal affection among them, for they have different beliefs.

10:22

(Verse 22.) But whoever perseveres until the end, he will be saved. For it is not to begin, but to complete virtue.

10:23-24

(Verse 23, 24.) But when they persecute you in this city, flee to another. Amen I say to you, you will not have finished going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes. A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. This refers to that time when the apostles were sent for preaching, to whom it is specifically said: Do not go into the way of the gentiles, and do not enter the cities of the Samaritans (Above, same.), they should not fear persecution, but should avoid it. Indeed, we see (or rather, we saw) that in the beginning, believers did this: when the persecution of Jerusalem arose, they were scattered throughout all Judea, so that the occasion of tribulation would become the seedbed of the Gospel. However, we can say spiritually: when they persecuted us in one city, that is, in one book of Scripture or testimony, we fled to other cities, that is, to other volumes. Although the persecutor may be contentious, the Savior's protection will come before victory is granted to our adversaries.

10:25

(Verse 25) If they called the head of the household Beelzebub, how much more his household members! Therefore, do not fear them. Beelzebub is an idol of Accaron, which is called the idol of flies in the book of Kings (2 Kings 1). Beel is the same as Baal: Zebub means fly. Thus, they called the prince of demons by the filthy name of the most impure idol, which means fly, because of the filth that destroys the sweetness of oil (Ecclesiastes 10).

10:26

(Verse 26) For nothing is hidden that will not be revealed, and nothing secret that will not be known. And how in the present age the vices of many are not known? But about the future time it is written, when God will judge the secrets of men, and will illuminate the hiding places of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts. And the meaning is: Do not fear the cruelty of persecutors, and the rage of blasphemers, for the day of judgment will come, in which both your virtue and their wickedness will be demonstrated.

10:27

(Verse 27.) What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. What you have heard in secret, declare openly; what you have learned in private, speak publicly: what I have taught you in the small place of Judea, proclaim boldly in all cities and throughout the world.

10:28 (Verse 28) And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Truly, the soul is invisible and incorporeal, according to the denser substance of our body. And it will certainly be punished and feel torments when it receives its original body, so that it may be punished with the one with whom it sinned. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. The name Gehenna is not found in the old books, but is first mentioned by the Savior. Let us therefore inquire what is the occasion of this statement. We have read more than once that there was an idol of Baal near Jerusalem, at the roots of Mount Moriah, where the Siloam flows. This valley and plain of small fields was irrigated and wooded, full of delights, and a grove consecrated to the idol. But the people of Israel had fallen into such great madness, that they sacrificed in the desolate vicinity of the temple, surpassing the strictness of religion with their delights, and they burned or initiated their sons into demons. And that place was called Gehenna, that is, the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom. This is written in the Book of Kings (2 Kings 23), Chronicles (2 Chronicles 28), and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 7, 19, and 32) in great detail. And God threatens that He will fill the place itself with the bodies of the dead, so that it may never be called Topheth and Baal, but may be called Polyandrium, that is, a burial mound of the dead. Therefore, the future punishments and eternal torments by which sinners are tormented are denoted by the name of this place. Moreover, we read in the book of Job (Job 24) that there are two hells, one of excessive heat and one of cold.

10:29-33

(Verse 29 onwards) Are not two sparrows sold for an assarion? Yet not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. Therefore, whoever confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. The Lord's discourse is attached to itself, and the following depend on the preceding. Wise reader, always beware of a superstitious understanding; so that you do not conform the Scriptures to your own senses, but join your senses to the Scriptures, and understand what follows. Above he had said: 'Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul'; now he speaks consequently, 'Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father.' And the meaning is this: If small and worthless animals do not perish without God as their author, and if there is providence in all things, and those things which are destined to perish do not perish without the will of God, then you who are eternal should not fear living without the providence of God. This meaning I have stated above: Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they? And afterwards: Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, and so on. But if the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, God clothes it, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith! Some forcefully interpret the two sparrows as representing the soul and the body. Even five

sparrows, according to Luke (Luke XII), which are sold for two pennies, are referred to the senses. But how that understanding is adapted to the whole body of the Gospel message is not of little difficulty. But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. The deeper meaning of our previous explanation is expressed: that those who can kill the body should not be afraid, for they cannot kill the soul, and if even small animals do not fall without God's knowledge, how much more so for humans, who are supported by apostolic dignity! Moreover, when it is said that even the hairs of your head are all counted, it shows the immense providence of God towards humans and signifies His ineffable affection, that nothing about us escapes God, and even the smallest and most insignificant things do not elude His knowledge. They mock the ecclesiastical intelligence in this place, who deny the resurrection of the flesh, as if we were all saying that even the hairs that have been counted and cut by the barber will rise again, when the Savior did not say, 'But all the hairs on your head will be saved,' but 'They are counted.' Where there is number, the knowledge of number is demonstrated, not the preservation of the same number.

10:34

(Verse 34) Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth: I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. Above, he had said: What I tell you in the dark, say in the light; and what you hear in your ear, preach on the housetops. Now he explains what follows after preaching. By the faith of Christ, the whole world is divided against itself: every household had both unbelievers and believers, and therefore a good war was sent, so that a bad peace would be broken. It is written that in Genesis God did a certain thing against the rebellious men who had been moved from the East and were hastening to build a tower (Gen. XI) through which they might penetrate the heights of heaven, in order to divide their languages. Therefore, in the psalm, David prays: Disperse, O Lord, the nations who desire war (Ps. LXVII, 32).

10:35

(Verse 35) For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household. This passage is written in almost the same words in the prophet Micah (Micah 7). And it should be noted whenever a testimony from the Old Testament is presented, whether the meaning alone or also the wording agrees.

10:37

(Verse 37.) Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He who had previously stated: I did not come to bring peace, but a sword; and to divide people against father and mother, and mother-in-law, so that no one would put piety before religion, he added, saying, Whoever loves father or mother more than me. And in the Song of Songs we read: Set me as a seal upon your heart (Song of Solomon 2:4). This order is necessary in every affection. Love after God the Father, love the mother, love the children. But if necessity comes, that the love of parents and children be compared to the love of God, and both cannot be preserved, let there be hatred towards one's own, and devotion towards God. Therefore, he did not forbid loving the father or mother, but specifically added: Whoever loves the father or mother more than me.

10:38-39

(Verse 38, 39.) And whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it. In another Gospel it is written: Whoever does not take up their cross daily. Let us not think that the ardor of faith can be enough once and for all, the cross must always be carried, so that we may always teach ourselves to love Christ.

10:40

(Verse 40.) Whoever receives you, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives the one who sent me. A most beautiful order. It sends for preaching, teaches not to fear dangers, and subjects one's feelings to religion. He had carried gold above, and had shaken off bronze from his belt. The condition of the evangelists is difficult. So, where does the income come from, where does the necessary sustenance come from? Hope moderates the severity of the commandments with the promises. Whoever receives you, he says, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives the one who sent me, so that in receiving the apostles, each of the believers may consider that they have received Christ.

10:41

(Verse 41.) Whoever receives a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. And whoever receives a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet and understands him speaking of future things, he will receive a prophet's reward. Therefore, the Jews, understanding the prophets in a carnal way, will not receive the reward of the prophets. On another note: In every profession, there is a mixture of weeds with wheat. He had said earlier: Whoever receives you, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives the one who sent me. He had invited the disciples to the reception of the masters. The response of the believers could be hidden; therefore, we must receive both false prophets and the traitor Judas, and provide them with sustenance. The Lord, anticipating this, says that it is not the persons that should be received, but the names, and those who receive them should not lose their reward, even if the person received was unworthy.

10:42

(Verse 42.) And whoever gives a drink to one of these little ones, only a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, amen I say to you, he will not lose his reward. We read in the prophet David: To make excuses for sins (Ps CXL, 4): that many present their sins as if they were justifying circumstances, so that they may appear to sin out of necessity rather than by choice: The Lord, the searcher of hearts and reins, contemplates future thoughts in each one. He had said: Whoever receives you, receives me. But this commandment could be hindered by many false prophets and false teachers; he also addressed this scandal, saying: Whoever receives the righteous in the name of the righteous, will receive the reward of the righteous. Again, another could argue and say: I am prevented by poverty, thinness holds me back, so that I cannot be hospitable. And he dilutes this excuse with a very light commandment, so that we may offer a cup of cold water with all our heart. He said, cold waters are not hot, nor is there any lack of firewood in hot waters, lest it be an occasion for poverty and want. The Apostle also commanded such a thing to the Galatians,

as we have said before: 'Let him who is catechized communicate his word to him who catechizes him in all good things' (Galatians 6:6), and he urges his disciples to provide refreshment to their teachers. Because anyone could feign poverty and evade the command, before he presents it, he solves the imminent question, saying: 'Do not be deceived, God is not mocked.' For whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. And this is the meaning: you argue in vain about poverty, when your conscience tells you otherwise: you can deceive me who encourages you; but know that as much as you sow, so shall you reap.

Book Two

Book Two

11:1-2

Chapter 11, Verses 1-2. And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished instructing His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities. It is not as if He was unaware and asking; for He had already shown the others who were unaware, saying: Behold, the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29), and He had heard the voice of the Father, thundering: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17). But the Savior asks where Lazarus has been laid, so that those who were indicating the place of the tomb would at least be prepared to see the dead man rising again, and the disciples would be sent to Christ to witness the signs and miracles, so that through this opportunity they would believe in Him and learn from their Master. But the disciples of John, through their pride against the Lord, and their envy and malicious opposition, also revealed their thoughts in a superior manner, as the Evangelist reports: Then the disciples of John approached him, saying: Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast (Ibid., IX, 14)? And in another place: Master, to whom you gave testimony at the Jordan, look, his disciples are baptizing and everyone is coming to him (John III, 26), as if to say: We are being abandoned, there is a scarcity here, while a crowd gathers around him.

11:3

(Verse 3.) Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect another? He does not say, 'You are the one who has come,' but rather, 'You are the one who is to come.' And the meaning is this: Send to me, because I am about to descend into the underworld, whether I should announce you to the dead, who I have announced to the living? Does it not befit the Son of God to taste death, and to send another to these sacraments?

11:4-5 (Ver. 4, 5.) And Jesus answered and said to them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up.' John had asked through his disciples: 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' Jesus shows the signs, not responding to what had been asked, but to the stumbling block of the messengers: 'Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up.' And what is no less important about these things, The poor are evangelized. Either the poor in spirit, or certainly the poor in wealth (or works), so that there is no distinction in preaching between the noble and the lowly, the rich and the needy. These things confirm the strictness of the teacher, the truth of the instructor, that all are equal before him who can be saved. And what he says:

11:6

(Ver. 6.) And blessed is he who is not scandalized in me. He strikes down the messengers, as will be shown in the following.

11:7

(Verse 7.) But as they were departing, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Look, those who wear soft clothing are in the palaces of kings. If a harsh judgment had been pronounced against John, as many believe, then why is he now being praised so highly? But because the surrounding crowd did not know the mystery of the question, and thought that John doubted about Christ, whom he had pointed out with his finger, so that they would understand that John was not asking for himself, but for his disciples: Why, he said, do you go out into the desert? Is it perhaps to see a man resembling a reed that is carried by every wind, and to have doubts about the one he had previously proclaimed? Or is it possible that he is compelled by the stings of envy against me, and his preaching seeks empty glory, so that he may seek profits from it? Why does he desire riches, so that he may abound in feasts? He feeds on locusts and wild honey. Does he dress in soft clothing? The covering of his body is made of camel hair. Such food and clothing are received in the prison's lodging, and the preaching of truth has such a dwelling. But those who are flatterers and pursue gains, seeking wealth, and abound in pleasures, and dress in soft clothing, they are in the houses of kings. From which it is shown that a strict and austere life and preaching should avoid the courts of kings, and decline the palaces of soft people.

11:8

(Verse 8.) But what did you go out to see, a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. In him, John is greater than the other prophets, because while they had predicted someone who was to come, he pointed to the one who has already come, saying: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. And because to the privilege of being a prophet, John added the reward of baptizing his Lord, it follows that he increased in merits, fulfilling the testimony of Malachi, in which even an angel is prophesied (Mal. II). However, here the term 'angel' cannot be understood as referring to John by nature, but rather by the dignity of his office, that is, as a messenger who announced the coming of the Lord.

11:11 (Verse 11) Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it. For it does not immediately follow that if others are not greater than him, he is greater than others; but that he has equality with the other saints. But whoever is lesser in the kingdom of heaven is greater than him. Many want to understand this about the Savior, that whoever is lesser in time is greater in dignity. But let us understand simply: that every saint, who is already with God, is greater than him who still stands in battle. For it is one thing to possess the crown of victory, another to still fight in the battle. Some want to receive the last angel in heaven ministering to the Lord as better than any first man who dwells on earth.

11:12

(V.12) But from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

11:13

(Verse 13) For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. Not that they exclude the prophets after John. For we read in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 11:21) that Agabus and the four virgin daughters of Philip prophesied. But what the Law and the prophets, whose writings we read, prophesied, they prophesied about the Lord. Therefore, when it is said, 'All the prophets and the Law prophesied until John,' it indicates the time of Christ, so that John, who they said would come, would show that he has come.

11:14-15

(Verse 14, 15.) And if you want to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. This which was said, if you want to receive it, he is Elijah, signifies a mystical understanding and requires intelligence, as the following words of the Lord demonstrate, saying: He who has ears to hear, let him hear. For if the meaning were clear and the sentiment evident, why would it be necessary for us to be prepared for its understanding? Therefore, John is called Elijah, not according to foolish philosophers and certain heretics, who introduce reincarnation, but because, as another testimony of the Gospel states, he came in the spirit and power of Elijah, he had the same grace or measure of the Holy Spirit. But the austerity of life and the firmness of mind of Elijah and John are equal. For Elijah lived in the desert, and so did John: Elijah wore a leather belt, and so did John. Elijah, because he accused King Ahab and Jezebel of impiety, was forced to flee (3 Kings 19); John, because he accused Herod and Herodias of unlawful marriage, was beheaded. There are those who think that John is called Elijah because just as Elijah is said to precede the second coming of the Savior according to Malachi, and announce the coming Judge, so did John in the first coming; and both are messengers of either the first coming of the Lord, or the second.

11:16-19

(Verse 16 onwards) But to whom shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to their playmates, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.' For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' And wisdom is justified by her children. To the boys sitting in the marketplace and shouting and saying to their companions: We sang to you, and you did not dance; we mourned, and you did not weep. The generation of the Jews is compared, the Scripture saying: To what shall I compare this generation? It is like the boys sitting in the marketplace, and so on. Therefore, not to us is attributed free intelligence, and the passive interpretation of allegories: but whatever we are going to say about the boys, it must be referred to the likeness of the generation. You are the children who sit in the forum, of whom Isaiah speaks: Behold, I and the children whom God has given me (Isa. VIII, 18). And in the 18th psalm (Verse 8): The testimony of the Lord is faithful, providing wisdom to the little ones. And elsewhere: Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise (Ps. VIII, 3). Therefore, these

children sat in the forum, or **■v ■yop■** as it is more significantly expressed in Greek, where many things are for sale. And because the people of the Jews did not want to listen, they not only spoke to them, but shouted with full mouths: We have sung to you, and you did not dance; we have provoked you to do good works to our song, and to dance to our pipe, just as David danced before the ark of the Lord (2 Samuel 6), and you did not want to. We have lamented, and we have provoked you to repentance, and you did not want to do this either, rejecting both preaching, both exhortation to virtues and penance after sins. It is not surprising if you have despised the double way of salvation, both the fasting of God and also abundance. If fasting pleases you, why was John displeasing? If feasting, why was the Son of Man displeased? One of them you call possessed by a demon, the other a glutton and a drunkard. But because you did not want to accept both disciplines, wisdom has been justified by her children: that is, by the dispensation and teaching of God. And I, who am the power and wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1), have been proved right by my apostles and sons, to whom the Father has revealed what he had hidden from the wise and prudent among themselves (John 17). In certain Gospels it is read: Wisdom is justified by her works (Luke 7:35). For wisdom does not seek testimony from words, but from actions.

11:20

(Verse 20.) Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. The reproach of the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum is explained by the heading of this chapter. He reproached them because after performing many miracles and signs, they did not repent.

11:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) Woe to you, Chorazin; woe to you, Bethsaida: for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. Chorazin and Bethsaida, cities of Galilee, are mourned by the Savior because despite the many signs and miracles, they did not repent, and are surpassed by Tyre and Sidon, idolatrous cities given to vice. They are preferred, however, because Tyre and Sidon have only violated natural law, whereas these, after transgressing natural law, have also disregarded the signs that were performed among them. We are inquiring where it is written that the Lord performed signs in Chorazin and Bethsaida. Above, we read: 'And he went through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction' (Matthew 9:35). Therefore, among the other cities and villages, it is to be presumed that the Lord also performed signs in Chorazin and Bethsaida.

11:23

(Verse 23) And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the realm of the dead. In another version, we find: And you, Capernaum, which was exalted to heaven, will descend to the depths. And there are two different understandings. Perhaps you will descend to the depths because you have proudly resisted my preaching. Or perhaps because you, exalted to heaven in my presence and witnessing my signs and miracles, having such privilege, will be punished with greater sufferings for refusing to believe in them as well.

11:23-24

(Vers. 23, 24.) Because if in Sodom (or, as some say, in Sidon) the miracles had been done that have been done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you. Let the prudent reader ask and say whether Tyre and Sidon and Sodom could have repented at the preaching of the Savior and the signs of miracles, and it is not their fault that they did not believe, but the sin of silence is in him who did not want to preach repentance to those who would have acted on it. To which the easy and clear answer is: to be ignorant of the judgments of God, and to not know the sacraments of his dispensations. The purpose was for the Lord to not exceed the boundaries of Judea, so as not to give the Pharisees and priests a just occasion for persecution. Therefore, before the passion, he commanded the apostles: Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter into the cities of the Samaritans (Matthew 10:5). Therefore, Chorazin and Bethsaida are condemned because they refused to believe in the present Lord. Tyre and Sidon are justified because they believed in his apostles. Do not question the times when you witness the salvation of the believers. However, in Capernaum, which means the most beautiful town, unbelieving Jerusalem is condemned, to whom it is said through Ezekiel: Sodom was justified because of you (Ezek. XVI, 52).

11:25

(Verse 25) At that time, Jesus answered and said: I confess to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. Confession, not always repentance, but also signifies thanksgiving, as we often read in the psalms. Let those who calumniate the Savior for calling his Father the Lord of heaven and earth, not as one who is born, but as one who is created, hear. For if he is also a creature, and a creature can call its creator father, it would be foolish not to call both himself and the Lord of heaven and earth, or Father, in the same way.

74 Because you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to little ones. He gives thanks and rejoices in the Father, because the sacraments of his coming have been revealed to the apostles, which the scribes and Pharisees, who consider themselves wise, have ignored, and in their own sight, prudent. Wisdom has been justified by her children.

11:26

(Verse 26.) Yes, Father, because it was pleasing to You in this way. Speaking with affection to the Father, that the work begun in the apostles may be completed.

11:27 (Verse 27.) Everything has been handed over to me by my Father. And understand mystically the One who hands over the Father and the One who receives the Son. Otherwise, if we want to feel according to our weakness, when the one receiving starts to have, the one giving will start to not have. However, everything that has been handed over to Him does not mean the heavens and the earth, and the elements, and the rest that He Himself made and created: but those who, through the Son, have access to the Father, and who previously were rebellious, began to feel God afterwards. And no one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal. Let Eunomius be ashamed of claiming to have such knowledge of the Father and the Son as they have of each other. But if he persists in this and consoles himself in his madness because it follows, and the

one to whom the Son wills to reveal. It is one thing to know by the equality of nature what you know, and another by the dignity of the revealer.

11:28-29

(Verse 28, 29.) Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. The weight of sin is heavy, and the prophet Zacharias testifies, saying, iniquity sits upon a talent of lead (Zacch. 5). And the Psalmist laments: My iniquities have overwhelmed me (Psalm 38:4). Certainly, it invites those who were oppressed under the heavy yoke of the Law to the grace of the Gospel.

11:30

(Verse 30.) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. How is the Gospel lighter than the Law, when in the Law murder is condemned, but in the Gospel anger is condemned? In what way is the grace of the Gospel easier, when in the Law adultery is punished, but in the Gospel lust is punished? In the Law there are many precepts, which the Apostle teaches cannot be fully fulfilled (Acts 15). In the Law, works are required, and whoever does them shall live. In the Gospel, the will is sought, and even if it does not have the desired effect, it does not lose the reward. The Gospel commands what we are able to do: that we do not desire, namely, this is within our power. When the law does not punish the will, it punishes the effect, so that you do not commit adultery. Imagine a virgin prostitute in persecution. This virgin is accepted according to the Gospel, since she does not sin by her own will, but she is rejected in the Law as if corrupted.

12:1

(Chapter 12, Verse 1) At that time, Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. In another Gospel, we also read that because of their great need, they did not even have a place to eat, and therefore they were hungry like men (Mark 2 and Luke 6). The fact that they rubbed the heads of grain with their hands and found solace in hunger is an indication of a more austere life; they sought simple food, not prepared feasts.

12:2

(V2.) But the Pharisees, seeing this, said to him: Behold, your disciples do what is not lawful for them to do on the Sabbath. Note that the first apostles of the Savior destroy the letter of the Sabbath against the Ebionites, who, while accepting the other apostles, reject Paul as a transgressor of the law.

12:3-4

(Ver. 3, 4.) But he said to them: Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? To refute the slander of the Pharisees, he recalls an old story, when David, fleeing from Saul, came to Nob and was received by the priest Ahimelech. He asked for food, and since he did not have any ordinary bread, Ahimelech gave him the consecrated bread, which only the priests and Levites

were allowed to eat. And he merely asked if there were any boys in the world born of women; and when he responded, without hesitation, he did not hesitate to give bread, deeming it better to free people from the danger of hunger, as the prophet says: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice' (Hosea 6:6), rather than to offer sacrifice to God. For a merciful offering is pleasing to God and the salvation of humanity. Therefore, the Lord opposes and says: 'If even David, who is holy, and Ahimelech the high priest, are not condemned by you, but rather both have transgressed the command of the Law with a justifiable excuse, and hunger is the cause, why do you not approve the same hunger in the apostles, which you approve in others?' Although there is a great difference in this. Those people rubbed the ears of grain in their hands on the Sabbath, while others ate the Levitical loaves and came near the feast of the New Moon, on which day he was sought for at the banquet and fled from the royal court. Note that neither David nor his servants took the showbread before they answered that they were clean from women.

12:5

(Verse 5.) Have you not read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple violate the Sabbath and yet are without guilt? But I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. If you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath." (Matthew 12:5-8) However, the Laws of God are never contradictory to themselves. And wisely, when his disciples were able to be accused of transgression, David and Achimelech mention examples that they followed: but he attributes the violation of the Sabbath, true and without excuse, to those who had committed slander.

12:6

(Verse 6.) But I tell you that here is a greater temple. Here, is not a pronoun, but an adverb of place; that the place, which holds the Lord of the temple, is greater than the temple.

12:7

(Verse 7.) But if you knew what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. What it means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' we have already explained. But what follows, 'You would not have condemned the guiltless,' refers to the apostles. And the meaning is this: If you approved of Achimelech's mercy, because he refreshed David and his men who were in danger of starvation, why do you condemn my disciples, who have done nothing similar?

12:8

(Verse 8) And when he had passed from there, he came into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man with a withered hand. This is the thirteenth one who is healed in the synagogue. And it should be noted that his hand was healed not on the road or outside, but in the council of the Jews.

12:9

(Verse 9.) And they asked him, saying: Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? that they might accuse him. Because he had previously defended himself and his disciples against the accusation

of breaking the sabbath by a valid example, the Pharisees now want to falsely accuse him. They ask whether it is lawful to heal on the sabbath day, so that if he does not heal, they can accuse him of cruelty or weakness; but if he does heal, they can accuse him of transgression.

12:10-12

(Vs. 10 seqq.) But he said to them: Which one of you, having a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath. In this way, he solved the proposed question, so as to condemn those who were questioning out of greed. If, he said, on the Sabbath you hurry to rescue a sheep or any other animal that falls into a pit, not because of the animal, but because of your greed, how much more should I free a man, who is much more valuable than a sheep!

12:13

(Verse 13) Then he said to the man, \"Stretch out your hand.\" And he stretched it out, and his health was restored like the other. In the Gospel used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites (which we recently translated from Hebrew into Greek, and which some call the authentic Gospel of Matthew), this man, who has a withered hand, is said to be a mason, praying for help with these words: \"I was a mason, seeking food with my hands. I beg you, Jesus, to restore my health, so that I may not shamefully beg for food.\" Until the coming of the Savior, the hand of God was dry in the synagogue of the Jews, and His works were not performed in it: but after He came to the earth, His right hand was restored to the believing apostles, and the former work was renewed.

12:14

(Verse 14) But the Pharisees went out and plotted against him, how they might destroy him. The reason they plot against the Lord is envy. For what had he done to provoke the Pharisees to kill him? It was because he had stretched out his hand. For who among the Pharisees does not stretch out their hand on the Sabbath, carrying food and extending a cup, and all the other things that are necessary for sustenance? Therefore, if it is not a crime to stretch out one's hand and lift up food or drink on the Sabbath, why do they accuse him of doing something they themselves are guilty of, especially when this builder did not carry such things, but only stretched out his hand in accordance with the command of the Lord?

12:15-17

(Verse 15 and following) But Jesus, knowing this, departed from there, and many followed him, and he healed them all. And he commanded them not to make him known, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled, saying, Knowing their plot, that they wanted to destroy their Savior, he departed from there, in order to take away from the Pharisees the opportunity for wickedness against himself.

12:18

(Verse 18.) Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry out. Through the prophet Isaiah, this is spoken in the person of the Father: I will put my spirit upon him (Isaiah 42:1). The spirit is not placed upon the Word of God, nor upon the only

begotten, who proceeded from the Father's bosom, but upon him of whom it is said: Behold my servant (ibidem).

12:19

(Verse 19.) Neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets. For the way is broad and spacious that leads to destruction, and many enter through it (Mat. 7:13). Those who do not hear the voice of the Savior are many, because they are not on the narrow path, but on the spacious one.

12:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) He will not break a bruised reed, and he will not extinguish smoking flax, until he brings forth judgment to victory. And in his name the Gentiles will hope. He who does not reach out his hand to the sinner, nor carries the burden of his brother, he breaks the bruised reed. And he who despises the small spark of faith in the little ones, he extinguishes smoking flax. Christ has done neither of these; for this is why he came, to save what was lost.

12:22

(Verse 22.) Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that he could speak and see. All the crowds were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?' But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, 'This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul, the prince of demons.' Three signs were performed simultaneously in one man: the blind see, the mute speak, and the one possessed by a demon is set free. This was indeed done in a physical sense at that time, but it is also fulfilled daily in the conversion of believers, so that after the demon is expelled, they first see the light of faith, and then their mouths are opened in praise of God.

12:25

(Verse 25) But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them: Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. The crowds marveled and confessed that he, who performed such great signs, was the son of David. But the Pharisees attributed the works of God to the prince of demons. To them, the Lord did not respond to their words, but to their thoughts, so that they might be compelled to believe in his power, who saw the hidden things of the heart.

12:26

(Verse 26) And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? A kingdom and a city divided against themselves cannot endure; but just as small things grow by harmony, so great things are destroyed by discord. Therefore, if Satan fights against himself, and a demon is an enemy of a demon, then the end of the world should have already come; so that opposing powers would not have a place in it, and their war would be the peace of mankind. But if you think, O scribes and Pharisees, that the expulsion of demons is by the power of their prince, in order to deceive ignorant men by fraudulent pretense, what can you say about the healings of bodies, which the Lord performed? It is one thing if the weakness of limbs and the signs of spiritual virtues are also assigned to demons.

12:27

(Verse 27) And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. He indicates the sons of Judaeans, either the exorcists of that nation according to custom, or the apostles generated from their lineage. If exorcists, who were casting out demons by invoking God, are constrained by wise questioning to confess that it is the work of the Holy Spirit. He says that if the expulsion of demons is attributed to God and not to demons in your sons, why should the same work and cause not apply to me? Therefore your judges will be, not by power, but by comparison: while they assign the expulsion of demons to God; you to Beelzebub, the prince of demons. But if it is said of the apostles, which we must understand more, they will be their judges: because they will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19 and Luke 22).

12:28

(Verse 28.) But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. In Luke, we read this passage as follows: But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you (Luke 11:20). This is the finger that the Magi confessed, who were making signs against Moses and Aaron, saying: This is the finger of God (Exodus 8:19). By this finger, the stone tablets were written on Mount Sinai (Deuteronomy 9). Therefore, if the hand and arm of God is the Son, and his finger is the Holy Spirit, then the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are of one substance: let the inequality of the members not scandalize you, for the unity of the body builds it.

Therefore, the kingdom of God has come upon you. It signifies either himself, about whom it is written in another place: The kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:21). And: One stands among you, whom you do not know (John 26). Or certainly that kingdom which both John and the Lord himself preached: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 3:2). There is also a third kingdom of Holy Scripture, which is taken away from the Jews and will be given to a nation producing its fruits (Matthew 21).

12:29

(Verse 29.) Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. We should not be secure: Our adversary is strong, which is confirmed by the voice of the victor. His house is the world, which is situated in evil (1 John 5), not by the dignity of the Creator, but by the greatness of the transgressor. We were once his vessels. The strong man has been bound, and bound in Tartarus, and crushed by the foot of the Lord. And with the seats of the tyrant plundered, captivity has been taken captive.

12:30-31

(Verses 30, 31.) Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. Therefore I say to you: every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven to men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Let no one think that this is said about heretics and schismatics (although it can be understood in that way from what is said in excess), but it refers to the consequences and context of the discourse to the devil: because the works of the

Savior cannot be compared to the works of Beelzebub. He desires to hold captive the souls of men; the Lord desires to set them free. He preaches idols; this one preaches the knowledge of the one God. He draws towards vices; this one calls back to virtues. How, then, can they have concord, whose actions are divided (or different)?

12:32

(Verse 32.) And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the age to come. And how is it that some of our bishops and priests, after blaspheming against the Holy Spirit, are reinstated in their positions, when the Savior says that all sins and blasphemies will be forgiven to men, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in the present time or in the future? Unless perhaps we take that example from the evangelist Mark, who expressed the causes of such anger more clearly, saying: 'Because they were saying, He has an unclean spirit.' Therefore, whoever attributes the works of the Savior to Beelzebub, the prince of demons, and says that the Son of God has an unclean spirit, to this person blasphemy will never be forgiven. Or perhaps this passage should be understood as follows: Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, being scandalized by my flesh and considering me only human, that I am the son of a carpenter and have brothers named James, Joseph, and Judas; and that I am a glutton and a drunkard, such an opinion and blasphemy, although it is not without fault of error, nevertheless will receive forgiveness on account of the lowliness of the body. But those who clearly understand the works of God, since they cannot deny the power, driven by the same envy, they slander; and they say that Christ, the Word of God, and the works of the Holy Spirit are Beelzebub: these will not be forgiven, neither in this age, nor in the age to come.

12:33

(Verse 33.) Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad. For the tree is known by its fruit. It constrains them with an unassailable argument, which the Greeks call **■φικτον** and we can call inevitable: it concludes from questions asked here and there, and presses with both horns. If, he says, the devil is evil, he cannot do good works. But if the works you see are good, it follows that the one who does them is not the devil. For it is not possible for good to arise from evil, or for evil to arise from good. But as follows:

12:34

(Verse 34.) Brood of vipers, how can you speak good when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. It reveals that they are a bad tree, producing fruit of blasphemy, which have the seeds of the devil.

12:35

(Verse 35) A good man brings forth good treasures. And an evil man brings forth evil treasures. Either it shows the Jews themselves blaspheming the Lord, from what wicked treasure they bring forth blasphemies, or with the previous question, the opinion clings that just as a good man cannot bring forth evil things, nor can an evil man bring forth good things, so Christ cannot do evil things, and the devil cannot do good works.

12:36-37

(Verse 36, 37.) But I tell you that every idle word that men speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned. This also aligns with what was said before. And the meaning is this: If an idle word, which does not edify the listeners, is not without danger for the one who speaks it, and each person will have to give an account for their own words on the day of judgment, how much more will you, who revile the works of the Holy Spirit and say that I cast out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, have to give an account for your slander! Idle speech is that which is spoken by the speaker and heard by the listener without any usefulness: if we omit serious matters and talk about frivolous things, and tell old stories. However, whoever responds with jests and breaks out in laughter and utters something shameful, they will be held guilty not of idle speech, but of a crime.

12:38

(Verse 38) Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." They demand a sign as if the signs they had seen were not enough. But in another Gospel it is explained more fully what they are asking for: "We want to see a sign from heaven" (Mark 8:11). They either wanted fire to come down from above like Elijah, or they wanted thunder to roar, lightning to flash, and rain to pour down in the summertime against the natural order of the place, so that they could not accuse Jesus of working these wonders in secret or attribute them to various natural phenomena. For those who calumny the things which they see with their eyes, hold with their hand, and experience through usefulness: what will you do with those things which have come from heaven? Surely you will respond that the magicians in Egypt performed many signs from heaven (Exod. VII).

12:39

(Verse 39.) And he answered and said to them: An evil and adulterous generation. Admirably said adulterous: because she had dismissed her husband, and according to Ezekiel, had joined herself to many lovers (Ezek. 16).

12:40

(Verse 40.) He seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given to him, except the sign of Jonah the prophet (John 2). For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. We have discussed this passage more fully in the Commentaries of the prophet Jonah; therefore, we leave it to the diligence of the reader to refer to that passage. Having briefly mentioned this, we are content that the whole should be understood in part through synecdoche: not that the Lord stood in hell for all three days and three nights, but that in part of the day of Preparation, the day of the Lord, and the whole day of the Sabbath, three days and three nights are understood.

12:41 (Verse 41) The men of Nineveh will rise up in judgment with this generation, and will condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah. Not by the power of judgment, but by the example of comparison. And behold, here is more than Jonah. Here, 'here' is an adverb of place, not a pronoun. Jonah, according to the Septuagint Interpreters, preached for three days: I for so much time. He to the unbelieving Assyrians: I to the people of God, the Jews. He to foreigners: I to fellow citizens. He spoke in simple words, doing nothing of signs: I doing so many signs, enduring the slander of Beelzebub. Therefore, there is more of Jonah here, that is, currently among you.

12:42

(Verse 42.) The Queen of Austria will rise in judgment with this generation, and will condemn it because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And behold, someone greater than Solomon is here. In the same way, the Queen of Austria will condemn the people of Judah, just as the men of Nineveh condemned the unbelieving Israel. This, however, is the Queen of Sheba, of whom we read in the Book of Kings and Chronicles: she, despite all the difficulties and leaving her people and empire behind, came to Judah to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and she brought him many gifts. But in Nineveh, the faith of the nations is secretly preferred to that of Israel.

12:43

(Verse 43) But whenever an unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it roams through arid places, searching for rest but does not find any. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept clean, and put in order. Then it goes and brings along with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person becomes worse than the first. For heretics are in a much worse condition than the Gentiles: because in the former there is hope of faith, and in the latter there is the battle of discord. Although this understanding seems to prefer applause and the appearance of doctrine, I do not know whether it has the truth. For from the fact that a finite or parabolic, or exemplary, sequence follows: so it will be for this wicked generation: we are compelled not to refer to heretics and any other people, but to the Jewish people as a parable, so that the context of the passage does not flow passively and vaguely in different directions and is confused like the custom of fools; but let it adhere to itself, either responding to what came before or what comes after. An unclean spirit went out from the Jews, when they received the Law, and walked through dry places, seeking rest for itself. Being driven out by the Jews, it walked through the deserted places of the Gentiles; and when they later believed in the Lord, he, not finding a place among the nations, said:

12:44

(Verse 44.) I will return to my home, from which I departed. This is, I will go to the Jews, whom I had dismissed before.

12:45

(Verse 45) And coming, he finds it empty, swept clean, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. So it will be with this wicked generation. For the temple of the Jews was empty, and it did not have Christ as a guest, who said: Rise, let us go from here (John 14:31). And in another place: Your house shall be left to you desolate (Luke 13:35). Therefore, since both God and the angels did not have protection, and they were adorned with superfluous observances of the Law and traditions of the Pharisees, the devil returns to his former seat: and adding to himself a group of demons, he inhabits his former home, and the last things of that people become worse than the previous ones. For now they are possessed by a much greater number of demons, blaspheming Christ Jesus in their synagogues, than they were possessed in Egypt before the knowledge of the Law: for it is one thing not to believe in the coming One, and another not to receive Him who has come. But the number seven, whether understood to refer to

the devil because of the Sabbath, or because of the number of the Holy Spirit: just as it is narrated that the seven spirits of virtues descended upon the rod from the root of Jesse and the flower that ascended from the root (Isa. XI); so, on the contrary, the number of vices is consecrated in the devil.

12:46-48

(Verse 46 and following) While he was still speaking to the crowds, behold his mother and brothers stood outside seeking to speak to him. But someone said to him: Look, your mother and brothers stand outside seeking you. But he answered the one who told him, saying: Who is my mother, and who are my brothers? And stretching out his hand towards his disciples, he said. The Lord was occupied with the work of speaking, teaching the people, and fulfilling the duty of preaching, while his mother and brothers came and stood outside, desiring to speak to him. Then someone announces to the Savior that his mother and brothers are standing outside, seeking him. It seems to me that this person who announces it is not doing so by chance and simply: but is setting a trap for the Savior, whether he prefers spiritual work over flesh and blood. Therefore, the Lord, not because he denied his mother and brothers, ignored their request to go out; but because he responded to the one laying a trap, extending his hand towards his disciples, he said:

12:49-50

(Verses 49, 50.) Behold my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother. These are my mother, who daily begets me in the souls of believers. These are my brothers, who do the works of my Father. Therefore, he did not deny his mother, as Marcion and Manichaeus believed, that he was born from a phantom; but he preferred the apostles to kinship, so that we may also prefer the spirit to the flesh in comparison of love. Behold, your mother and brothers are standing outside, seeking you. Some of the Lord's brothers suspect that Joseph had children by another wife, following the delusions of the apocryphal writings and inventing a certain Melcha or Escha as a little woman. But as it is contained in the book that we wrote against Helvidius, by the brothers of the Lord, we understand the children of Mary's sister, who is said to be the mother of James the Lesser and Joseph and Judas, whom we read are called the brothers of the Lord in another place in the Gospel. But Scripture demonstrates that brothers are called consobrinus. Let us also say differently: The Savior speaks to the crowds, teaching the nations from within. His mother and brothers, that is, the synagogue and the Jewish people, stand outside and desire to enter, but they become unworthy of his word. And when they ask, inquire, and send a message, they receive the answer that they are free to enter and believe if they wish, but they cannot enter unless they ask someone else.

13:1

On that day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. And great crowds gathered around him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. The people couldn't enter Jesus' house or be where the apostles were hearing the mysteries. Therefore, the compassionate and merciful Lord goes out of his house and sits by the sea of this world, so that great crowds gather around him and hear on the beach what they do not deserve to hear inside. He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood on the beach. Jesus is in the midst of the waves, tossed to and fro by the sea, and in his majesty he approaches his boat to draw near to

the land. But the people, not enduring the danger, nor surrounded by temptations that they could not bear, stand firmly on the shore in order to hear what is said.

13:3

(Verse 3.) And he spoke many things to them in parables, saying: The crowd is not of one mind, but of various desires in each person. Therefore, he speaks to them in many parables, so that they may receive different teachings according to their various desires. And it should be noted that he did not speak all things to them in parables, but many. For if he had said everything in parables, the people would have left without benefit. He mixes the clear with the obscure, so that through what they understand, they may be provoked to understand those things which they do not understand.

13:4

(Version 4.) Behold, he who sows went out to sow. And while he was sowing, he was inside, at home, speaking to the disciples the mysteries. Therefore, he who sows the word of God went out from his house, in order to sow in the crowds. But this sower who sows is signified to be the Son of God, and to sow the word of the Father among the people. And at the same time, observe that this is the first parable, which is placed with its interpretation. And beware that wherever the Lord explains his words and is asked by the disciples to explain inwardly, we should not want to understand anything else, or anything more, or anything less, than what was explained by him.

13:5-8

(Verse 5 and following) Some fell by the wayside: and the birds of the air came and devoured them. Others fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Valentinus uses this parable to prove his heresy, introducing three natures: spiritual, natural or animal, and earthly; while there are actually four: one by the wayside, another rocky, a third full of thorns, and a fourth of good soil. We postpone the interpretation of it for a while with the disciples, wanting to hear privately what is said.

13:9

(Verse 9.) He who has ears to hear, let him hear. We are prompted to understand these sayings whenever we are moved by these words.

13:10-11

(Verse 10, 11.) And the disciples came and said to him, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?' He answered them, 'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.' It is necessary to inquire how the disciples approach him while Jesus is sitting in the boat, unless it is understood that they had recently boarded the boat with him and there,

standing, were asking about the interpretation of the parable.

13:12

(Verse 12.) For whoever has, more will be given to him, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Those who have the ability to judge are given more, and those who do not have it, lose even what they seem to have: but what the apostles have in Christ, namely faith, is granted to them even if they have fewer virtues. But to the Jews who do not believe in the Son of God, even what good they possess by nature is taken away. For those who do not have wisdom, they cannot understand anything wisely.

13:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) Therefore, I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they do not see, and hearing, they do not hear, nor do they understand; so that the prophecy of Isaiah may be fulfilled in them, which says: You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. This applies to those who stand on the shore and are separated from Jesus, and despite the loud noise of the waves, they do not hear what is being said clearly; and the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled in them: You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive (Isaiah 6:9). These things are prophesied about the crowds, which stand on the shore, and do not deserve to hear the word of God. Let us therefore approach with the disciples to Jesus, and let us ask him for the explanation of the parable, lest we seem to have ears and eyes in vain with the crowds.

13:15 (Verse 15) For the heart of this people has become fat, and with their ears they have heard heavily. They see without seeing, and hear without hearing. For the heart of this people has become fat, and with their ears they have heard heavily. And lest we think that the thickness of the heart and the heaviness of the ears are natural, not voluntary, he adds the fault of their own judgment and says: And they closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For amen I say to you, many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things that you hear and have not heard them.

13:16

(Verse 16) But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. Unless we had read above about auditors called to understanding, with the Savior saying: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear," we would now think that the eyes and ears that receive blessedness are understood as bodily (or physical). But to me, those blessed eyes seem to be the ones that can recognize the sacraments of Christ, and those ears that Jesus commanded to be lifted up on high so that they may behold the gleaming wheat fields (John 4:9); and those blessed ears of which Isaiah speaks: "The Lord has opened my ear" (Isaiah 50:5).

13:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) Truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see; and to hear what you hear, and did not hear. Therefore, listen to the parable of the sower. It seems that this passage is contrary to what is said elsewhere: Abraham desired to

see my day, and he saw it, and rejoiced (John 8:56). However, it is not said that all the prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, but many. Among many, it can happen that some have seen it, while others have not seen it: although even in this interpretation is dangerous, as we seem to make any discretion among the merits of the saints. Therefore Abraham saw in an enigma, he did not see in form: but you hold him in the present, and you have your Lord, and you question him at will, and you dine with him.

13:19

(Verse 19.) Everyone who hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it. By saying this beforehand, he exhorts us to listen more attentively to what is being said.

13:20-21 He comes, the wicked one, and snatches away what was sown in his heart; this is the one who was sown along the path. And as for the one sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. The wicked one snatches away the good seed. And understand at the same time what was sown in the heart, and the diversity of the soil of the souls of believers. But in fact, through tribulation and persecution, he is continuously stumbled because of the word. Pay attention to what has been said, he is continuously stumbled. Therefore, there is some distance between him who is compelled to deny Christ by many tribulations and punishments, and him who is immediately stumbled and falls at the first persecution.

13:22

(Verse 22) But he who was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, and the anxiety of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. It seems to me that even that which is said literally to Adam, 'Among thorns and thistles you shall eat bread' (Gen. III, 18), signifies mystically that whoever devotes themselves to the pleasures and concerns of this world, shall eat heavenly bread and true food among thorns. And he elegantly added: the fallacy of wealth suffocates the word. For wealth is beguiling, promising one thing and doing another. Its possession is slippery, as it is carried here and there, and those who have it, either with an unsteady step, abandon it, or those who do not have it, seek to obtain it. Hence, the Lord declares it difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven, as wealth suffocates the word of God and softens the rigor of virtues.

13:23

(Verse 23) But he who was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit: one hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold. As for the bad soil, there were three types: along the path, rocky places, and thorny areas. Likewise, on good soil, there is a threefold diversity: a hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold fruits. And in both the bad and the good soil, the substance does not change, but the will does: both the hearts of unbelievers and believers are the ones that receive the seed. He came, he says, the evil one, and snatches away what is sown in his heart; and second and third, here is, he says, the one who hears the word. In the explanation of the good land also, this is the one who hears the word. Therefore, first we must hear, then understand, and after understanding, produce the fruits of teachings, and produce either a hundredfold, or sixtyfold, or thirtyfold, of which we have spoken more fully in the

book against Jovinian, and now we briefly summarize: A hundredfold for virgins, sixtyfold for widows and the continent, thirtyfold for chaste marriage. For honorable are marriage and a pure bed (Heb. XXXI, 3, 4). Some of our people refer the hundredth fruit to the martyrs: if this is so, the holy union of marriage is excluded from the good fruit.

13:24-30

(Verses 24 onwards) He proposed another parable to them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while people were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the plants sprouted and produced grain, then the weeds also appeared. So the servants of the householder came and said to him: Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? And so, where does it get the weeds? And he said to them: An enemy has done this. The servants said to him: Do you want us to go and gather them up? And he said: No, lest while you gather up the weeds, you root up the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the weeds, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. This is the second parable with its interpretation not immediately stated, but delivered after other parables were interjected. For here it is proposed, and afterwards the crowds having been dismissed, they come to his house, and his disciples come up to him, asking: Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field, and the rest. Therefore, we ought not to seek with hasty desire of understanding before his knowledge, what is to be explained by the Lord.

13:31

(Verse 31.) He proposed another parable to them, saying: The Lord was sitting in a boat, and the crowd stood on the shore: those far away, the disciples closer, could hear. He presents them with another parable, about a rich head of the household who invited guests and provided them with various foods according to the nature of their appetite. Therefore, in the previous parable, He did not say 'another' but 'another one'. For if He had said 'another', we could not expect a third; instead, He said 'another one', so that more would follow.

13:32

(Verse 32) The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown, it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches. It should not be a burden to the reader if we present all the parables. For those things that are obscure should be explained more fully, lest they be more entangled by excessive brevity than expounded. The kingdom of heaven is the preaching of the Gospel, and the knowledge of the Scriptures which leads to life; and of which it is said to the Jews: The kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and given to a nation producing its fruits (Matthew 21:43). Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. The man who sows in his field is understood by many as the Savior, who sows in the hearts of believers. By others, the man himself who sows in his field, that is, in himself and in his own heart. Who is this who sows, if not our understanding and our soul, who, receiving the grain of preaching, and nurturing the seed with the moisture of faith, causes it to sprout in the field of his own heart? The preaching of the Gospel is the least of all disciplines. Indeed, for the first doctrine has no faith in the truth, preaching man as God, God as

dead, and the scandal of the cross. Compare such doctrine with the dogmas of philosophers and their books, the splendor of eloquence and the composition of speeches, and you will see how much smaller it is than the other seeds of the Gospel. But when it grows, it demonstrates nothing biting, nothing vivid, nothing vital, but all flabby and withered, and soft, it boils in vegetables, and in herbs, which quickly wither and fall. However, this preaching, which seemed small at first, when it is sown either in the soul of the believer or in the whole world, does not rise in vegetables, but grows into a tree: so that the birds of the sky (which we must understand as either the souls of believers or the strengths owned by God's service) come and dwell in its branches. The branches of the evangelical tree, which have grown from the mustard seed, are diverse in doctrines, on which each of the aforementioned birds rests. Let us also assume the wings of the dove (Ps. LIV), so that, flying towards higher things, we may be able to dwell in the branches of this tree, and make nests for ourselves of teachings, fleeing earthly things and hastening towards heavenly things. Many, reading the smallest seed of mustard, and what is said in the Gospel by the disciples: 'Lord, increase our faith' (Luke XVII, 6), and the Savior answers them: 'Amen I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, and you say to this mountain, move from this place, it will move,' they think the apostles are either seeking little faith or doubting the Lord about little faith; whereas the apostle Paul considers faith compared to a grain of mustard seed to be very great. For what does he say? If I have faith to move mountains, but do not have love, it profits me nothing (I Cor. XIII, 2). Therefore, what the Lord said about faith being able to move mountains, the Apostle teaches can be done with complete faith.

13:33

(Verse 33.) And he spoke another parable to them. The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until it was all leavened. The stomachs of different people are different: some are pleased with bitter, some with sweet, some with more harsh, and some with more gentle foods. Therefore, as we have already said, the Lord presents various parables, so that there may be different remedies according to the varieties of wounds. That woman, who took the leaven and hid it in three measures of flour until it was all leavened, seems to me to be the apostolic preaching or the Church, which is gathered from diverse nations. She takes the leaven, namely the knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures, and hides it in three measures of flour, so that the spirit, soul, and body, brought together as one, do not disagree with one another; but when two or three come together, they obtain from the Father whatever they ask for (Matthew 18). This place is being discussed, and in another way. We read in Plato, and the common teaching of philosophers is that there are three passions in the human soul: the rational, which we can interpret as reason; the spirited, which we can call full of anger or irascible; the appetitive, which we name concupiscible. And that philosopher thinks that our reason dwells in the brain, anger in the gall, and desire in the liver. And so, if we accept the fermentum of the Evangelical holy Scriptures, about which it was said above, the three human passions will be brought together into one, so that we may possess prudence in reasoning: in anger, hatred against vices; in desire, longing for virtues; and all this will be accomplished through the Gospel teaching, which our mother Church has provided for us. I will also mention a third interpretation for some, so that the curious reader may choose from among many what pleases them: They interpret this woman and the Church itself, which has mixed the faith of man with enough flour for the belief of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And when it has been fermented into one, it

leads us not to the threefold God, but to the knowledge of one divinity. Likewise, three sown grains of wheat, while there is not a different nature in each, draw substances toward unity. Indeed, *pius quidem sensus*, but never can the understanding of parables and the interpretation of obscure enigmas proceed to the authority of doctrines. Now, the sown grain is a measure, according to the custom of the province of Palestine, holding one and a half modius. Other things are said about this parable, but it is not the purpose of this material to speak about everything.

13:34

(Verse 34) Jesus spoke all these things in parables to the crowds, and he did not speak to them without a parable. He speaks to the crowds in parables, not to the disciples; and even today the crowds listen to him in parables: the disciples ask the Savior at home.

13:35

(Verse 35) So that what was said through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying: I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world. This testimony is taken from the seventy-seventh psalm (Verse 2). It is read in some codices, and a diligent reader may perhaps find the same thing in the place where we have put it, and the Vulgate edition has: So that what was said through the prophet might be fulfilled, written there, through the prophet Isaiah, saying. Because it was not found in Isaiah, I believe it was later removed by prudent men. But it seems to me that it was originally written like this: 'What is written by the prophet Asaph, saying. The seventy-seventh psalm, from which this testimony is taken, is inscribed with the title of Asaph the prophet.' And the first scribe did not understand Asaph, and thought it was a mistake of the scribe, and corrected it to the more obvious name of Isaiah. It must be known, therefore, that in the psalms and hymns and songs of God, not only David, but also the others whose names are written, are to be called prophets: namely, Asaph and Idithun, and Heman the Ezrahite, and Ethan, and the sons of Korah, and the rest whom the Scripture mentions. And that which is said in the person of the Lord: I will open my mouth in parables: I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world, must be carefully considered and found to describe in a more detailed manner the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and all the signs that are contained in the story of Exodus. From this we understand that all those things that are written should be understood in a parabolic manner: not only to sound out the obvious letter, but also the hidden mysteries; for this is what the Savior promises, opening his mouth in parables, and revealing secrets from the foundation of the world.

13:36

(Verse 36) Then Jesus dismissed the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' Jesus sent the crowds away and returned to the house, so that his disciples could come to him and privately ask him about the things that the people were not worthy to hear or understand. 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.'

13:37-42

(Verse 37 onwards) And he answered, saying: The one who sows good seed is the Son of Man. But the field is the world. And the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom. But the weeds

are the sons of the evil one. And the enemy who sowed them is the devil. And the harvest is the end of the age. And the reapers are angels. Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and those who practice lawlessness, and will throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. He clearly explained that the field is the world: the sower, the Son of Man; the good seed, the sons of the kingdom; the tares, the sons of the evil one; the enemy who sowed them, the devil; the harvest, the end of the world; the reapers, angels. All scandals are referred to the tares; the righteous are considered sons of the kingdom. Therefore, as I have said above, we must apply our faith to what has been explained by the Lord. And those things which have been left unspoken and neglected by our understanding must be briefly touched upon. Understand that the men who are asleep are the leaders of the Churches. Do not welcome servants of the household of the father except for the angels, who daily see the Father's face (Matt. XVIII). But the devil is called the enemy of man because he stopped being God. And it is written of him in the ninth psalm: Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail (Psalm IX, 20). Therefore, let the one who is placed over the Church not sleep, lest through his negligence the enemy sows weeds, that is, the dogmas of heretics. But what is said, 'Lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat together with them,' gives place to repentance, and we are warned not to cut off our brother immediately, because it may happen that he who is corrupt in his understanding today, may tomorrow begin to be sound and to defend the truth. Also that which follows: 'Allow both to grow until the harvest,' seems to be contrary to this precept: 'Take away the evil from among you'; and there is to be no fellowship with those who are called brethren, and are adulterers and fornicators. For if eradication is prohibited, and patience must be maintained until the harvest, how are certain ones to be expelled from among us? Between wheat and weeds, which we call darnel, as long as it is grass and the stem has not yet come to the ear, there is a great similarity, and in distinguishing, either no difference or a very difficult one. Therefore, the Lord warns us not to quickly pronounce judgment when there is any ambiguity, but to reserve the judgment of God: so that when the day of judgment comes, he may expel not suspicion of crime, but a clear guilt from the assembly of the saints. But what he said, that the bundles of weeds are to be burned with fire, and the wheat is to be gathered into barns, it is clear that the heretics and hypocrites are to be burned with the fires of hell; but the saints who are called wheat are to be received into the barns, that is, the heavenly mansions.

13:43

(Verse 43.) Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

13:44

(Verse 44) The kingdom of heaven is like a hidden treasure in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Hindered by frequent obscurities of parables, we surpass the literal interpretation, so that we seem to have transitioned from one kind of interpretation to another. This treasure is either all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden, or God's Word, which is seen hidden in the flesh of Christ (Colossians 2), or the holy Scriptures, in which the knowledge of the Savior is preserved: and when someone finds Him in them, they should consider all the benefits of this world as nothing in order to possess Him

whom they have found. But what follows: When a man finds it, he hides it, is said not because he does this out of envy, but because out of fear of losing it, he hides it in his heart, which he preferred to his former abilities.

13:45-46

(Verse 45, 46.) Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls. Upon finding one exceedingly precious pearl, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. In other words, the same thing as was said above. The good pearls that the merchant seeks are the Law and the Prophets. Listen, Marcion; listen, Manichaeus: the good pearls are the Law and the Prophets, and the knowledge of the Old Testament. But there is one most precious pearl, the knowledge of the Savior, and the sacrament of his passion, and the mystery of his resurrection. When a person, like the apostle Paul, discovers it, they despise all the mysteries of the law and the prophets, and the practices of their former life, in which they were blameless, as worthless filth and rubbish, in order to gain Christ (Philippians III). Not that the discovery of a new pearl condemns the old pearls, but by comparison, every other gem is worthless.

13:47-50

(Verses 47 and following) Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a fishing net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, they pulled it ashore, sat down, and sorted the good fish into containers, but threw away the bad ones. This is how it will be at the end of the world: the angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This fulfills the prophecy of Jeremiah, who said, 'Behold, I will send many fishermen to you' (Jeremiah 16:16). When Peter, Andrew, James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, heard this, they followed Jesus and became fishers of men (Matthew 4:19). They wove together a net of gospel teachings from the old and new testament and cast it into the sea of this world, which even to this day stretches in the midst of waves, capturing whatever falls into it from the salty and bitter depths, both good and bad people, and the best and worst fish. But when the consummation and end of the world comes, as he explains more clearly below, then the fishing net will be drawn to the shore: then the true judgment of separating the fish will be displayed, and as if in a very calm harbor, the good will be placed in the vessels of celestial mansions: but the wicked will be received to be burned and dried up by the flame of hell.

13:51

(Verse 51.) Did you understand all these things? They said to him: Yes. He said to them: To the apostles specifically this speech is; and to them it is said: You understood all these things; He does not want to hear them only as a people, but to understand them as future teachers.

13:52

(Verse 52.) Therefore, every learned scribe in the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a household who brings forth from his treasure new and old things. The apostles were instructed, the scribes and notaries of the Savior, who recorded his words and precepts on the tablets of the fleshly heart, in the sacraments of the heavenly kingdoms, and they possessed the wealth of the household, casting forth from their treasure new and old teachings: so that whatever they

preached in the Gospel, they would confirm with the voices of the law and the prophets. Wherefore the Bride also in the Canticles saith: 'I have kept for thee my brother, both New and Old.' (Cant. VII, 13)

13:53-54 (Verse 53, 54.) And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that he departed from there. And coming into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, so that they marveled and said. After the parables that he spoke to the people, and that only the apostles understood, he went to his own country to teach more openly there. Where does this wisdom and these virtues come from? The Nazarenes marvel at where he gets his wisdom and virtue; but the error is obvious, for they suspect that he is the son of a carpenter.

13:55-56

(Verse 55, 56.) Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother called Mary, and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did he get all these things? And they took offense at him. The error of the Jews is our salvation, and the condemnation of the heretics. For they saw Jesus Christ merely as a man, so that the carpenters thought him to be the son: Isn't this the carpenter's son? Are you surprised if they err about his brothers, when they err about his father? This place has been explained more fully in the aforementioned book against Helvedius.

13:57

(Verse 57.) But Jesus said to them: A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country and in his own house. It is almost natural for citizens to envy each other. For they do not consider a man's present deeds, but they remember his fragile infancy, as if they themselves had not also passed through the same stages of age to mature adulthood.

13:58

(Verse 58) And he did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief. Not because he was unable to do many miracles for them, who were unbelieving; but rather because in doing many miracles he would condemn the unbelieving citizens. It can also be understood in another way, that Jesus is despised in his own home and country, that is, among the Jewish people. And therefore, he performed only a few signs there, so that they would not become completely without excuse. But he performs greater signs daily among the nations through his apostles, not so much in the healing of bodies, but in the salvation of souls.

14:1-2

(Chapter 14, Verses 1, 2.) At that time Herod the Tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus, and he said to his servants, 'This is John the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.' Some of the interpreters of the Church inquire about the reasons why Herod suspected this, that he believed John had risen from the dead and that is why miraculous powers were at work in him, as if an explanation of this strange error should be given to us, or it provides an opportunity for belief in transmigration of souls based on these words, even though at the time John was beheaded, the Lord was thirty years old: but transmigration of souls, on the other hand, suggests that after many years in different bodies, souls enter into various bodies.

14:3-4

(vv. 3, 4.) For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Because John had said to him, 'It is not lawful for you to have her.' The ancient history tells us that Philip, the son of Herod the Great (under whom the Lord fled to Egypt), the brother of this Herod under whom Christ suffered, had married Herodias, the daughter of King Aretas; but later, due to some disputes arising against his son-in-law, he took his daughter back and gave her in marriage to Herod, his enemy and the former husband of Herodias. However, who this Philip is, the evangelist Luke explains more fully: In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea; and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee; and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis (Luke 3:1). Therefore, John the Baptist, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, with the same authority that Elijah had rebuked Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 21), accused Herod and Herodias of having entered into an unlawful marriage and of not being allowed to marry his brother's wife while his brother was still alive. John preferred to risk his life before the king rather than be forgetful of God's commandments because of flattery.

14:5

(Verse 5.) And wanting to kill him, he feared the people: for they held him as a prophet. Indeed, he feared the sedition of the people because of John, from whom he knew that many crowds had been baptized in the Jordan; but he was overcome by the love of his wife, because of whose ardor he had even neglected the commandments of God (Genesis 40).

14:6

(Verse 6.) But on Herod's birthday, Herodias' daughter danced in the midst, and it pleased Herod. We have found no other to have observed their own birthday except Herod and Pharaoh, as their impiety was on equal terms, so too was their festivity.

14:7

(Verse 7.) So when he had promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask from him. But she being forewarned by her mother. I do not excuse Herod, that unwillingly and against his will he committed murder because of the oath, who perhaps swore to do this in order to prepare the machinery for a future killing. Otherwise, if he had said that he did it because of an oath, if he had asked for the death of his father or mother, would he not have done it? Therefore, since he was going to reject it in himself, he ought to have despised it and the prophet.

14:8 (Verse 8.) 'Give me,' she says, 'here on a platter, the head of John the Baptist.' Herodias, fearing that Herod might someday come to his senses and become a friend to his brother Philip, and that their unlawful marriage would be dissolved, instructs her daughter to immediately request the head of John at the very banquet itself: a worthy reward for the dance, a worthy prize for the blood. And the king was saddened. It is the custom of the Scriptures that the historian narrates the opinion of many, just as it was believed by all at that time. Just as Joseph was also called the father of Jesus by Mary herself, so now Herod is said to be saddened, because those reclining at the table thought so (Luke 2). For he was a deceiver of his own mind and a skilled murderer, showing sadness on his face when he had joy in his mind.

14:9-10

(Verse 9, 10) However, because of the oath and because of those who were reclining at the table with him, he commanded it to be given. And he sent and beheaded John in prison. The wickedness excuses the oath, so that under the pretext of piety he might become impious. But what he added: 'And because of those who were reclining at the table with him,' he wants them all to be partakers of his wickedness, so that they might be carried away in a luxurious and impure banquet of bloody feasts.

14:11 (Verse 11.) And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. We read in Roman history that Flamininus, a Roman general, agreed to have a certain accused of a capital crime beheaded at a banquet because he was lying next to a prostitute who claimed to have never seen a decapitated man before. He was expelled from the Senate by the censors because he mixed food with blood during the feast, and he preferred the death of a guilty man to the enjoyment of another person, so that lust and murder were mixed together. How wicked Herod and Herodias and the girl who danced demand the prophet's head as the price of blood, so that she may have power over the tongue that condemned unlawful marriages. This happened exactly as written; but we still see to this day, the Jews having lost Christ, who is the head of the prophets, in the person of John the Baptist. And his disciples came and took his body and buried it. Josephus reports in a certain town of Arabia that John was beheaded. And what follows: His disciples came and took the body, both of him (John) and of the Savior, we can understand.

14:13 (Verse 13) And they came and told Jesus. When Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. They announced to the Savior the death of John the Baptist, and when he heard this, he withdrew to a deserted place. Not, as some think, out of fear of death, but sparing his enemies, lest they join one murder with another. Or deferring his own death to the day of his Passover, on which he was to be sacrificed as the Lamb (Exodus 12), and the doorposts of believers to be sprinkled with blood. Or perhaps He withdrew to give us an example of avoiding unnecessary danger, because not all have the same perseverance in enduring torments as they do in offering themselves to be tortured. For this reason, He also gives the command in another place: 'When they persecute you in this city, flee to another' (Mt. X, 23). The evangelist also elegantly does not say, 'He fled to a deserted place,' but 'He withdrew,' in order to avoid the persecutors rather than fearing them. Another interpretation: After the Jews and the king of the Jews cut off the head of the prophets and silenced the voice and speech of prophecy among them, Jesus moves to the desert, a place that the Church had not had before. And when the crowds heard this, they followed him on foot from the cities. It is possible that, for another reason, upon hearing of the death of John, they withdrew to a deserted place to confirm the faith of the believer. Finally, the crowds followed him on foot, not on pack animals, not in various vehicles, but by their own physical effort, to show their fervor of the mind. If we were to explain the reasons behind each word, we would exceed the brevity of the stated task. However, it must be said in passing that after the Lord came into the desert, many crowds followed him. For before he came into the solitude of the nations, he was worshiped by only one people.

14:14

(Verse 14.) And going out, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, and he cured their sick. In the Gospel message, the spirit is always joined with the letters, and whatever seems cold at first glance, if you touch it, it becomes warm. The Lord was in a deserted place; the crowds followed him, leaving their cities, that is, their former ways of life and the varieties of teachings. But Jesus going out signifies that the crowds indeed had the will to go, but they did not have the strength to arrive: therefore, the Savior goes out from his place and goes to meet them, just as he had met the repentant son in another parable (Luke 15). And seeing the crowd, he has pity on them and cares for their illnesses, so that full faith immediately obtains the reward.

14:15

(Verse 15.) And when evening had come, his disciples approached him, saying: This place is deserted, and the hour has already passed. Send away the crowds so that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food. All things are full of mysteries. He departed from Judea and came to a deserted place. The crowds followed him, leaving their cities behind. Jesus went out to them, had compassion on the crowds, and cured their sick. And he did this not in the morning, not as the day was growing, not at noon, but in the evening, when the sun of justice had set.

14:16 (Verse 16.) But Jesus said to them: They have no need to go. They have no need to seek different foods, and buy for themselves unknown breads, when they have heavenly bread with them. On that day he commanded you to eat. He challenged the apostles to break the bread, so that, in them testifying that he did not have it, the greatness of the sign may become more known.

14:17

(Verse 17) They replied to him: We have here only five loaves and two fish. In another Gospel, we read: There is a certain boy here who has five loaves (John 6:9) ; which seems to me to signify Moses: But two fish, either we understand both Testaments, or because the even number is referred to the Law. Therefore, the apostles before the passion of the Savior and the radiance of the shining Gospel had only five loaves and two little fish, which were moving in salty waters and in the waves of the sea.

14:18

(Verse 18) He said to them: Bring them to me here. Listen, Marcion, listen, Manichae, Jesus orders five loaves and two fish to be brought to him, so that he may sanctify and multiply them.

14:19

(Verse 19.) And when he had commanded the multitude to recline upon the hay. The sense is clearly evident according to the letter: let us reveal the sacraments of spiritual interpretation. They are commanded to recline upon the hay, and according to another Evangelist (Luke 9), upon the ground, by fifties or hundreds, so that after they have trampled upon their flesh and all its desires, and subjected all the pleasures of this world to themselves like dry hay, then by the number fifty they may ascend through penitence to the summit of perfection represented by the number one hundred.

Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples. He looked up to heaven, teaching that our eyes should be directed

there. He took the five loaves and the two fish in his hands, and he broke them and gave them to the disciples. With the Lord breaking them, the food became a source of abundance. For if they had remained whole and not been torn into fragments, nor divided into a plentiful harvest, they would not have been able to feed such a great multitude of crowds, children, and women. Therefore, the law is broken with the prophets, and it is torn into pieces and its mysteries are brought forth in the midst, so that what was whole and permanent in its original state may be divided into parts and nourish the multitude of nations.

14:20 (Verse 20.) However, the disciples gave to the crowds. And all ate, and were satisfied. The crowds received food from the Lord through the apostles. And they took up the remnants of the twelve baskets full of fragments. Each of the apostles fills his own basket with the remains of the Savior, so that he may either have something to give food to the Gentiles afterwards, or teach from the remnants that the loaves were truly multiplied. And at the same time, consider how in the desert and in such a vast solitude loaves are not found, except only five and two fish, and yet twelve baskets are easily found.

14:21

(Verse 21) Now the number of those who ate was five thousand men, besides women and children. According to the number of five loaves and the multitude of five thousand men who ate, it had not yet reached the seven-fold number according to another account, of whom there are four thousand who eat, close to the number of the Gospels. But those who ate were five thousand men who had grown into full maturity, and they followed him of whom Zacharias says: Behold the man, his name is the Rising Sun. But women and children, being of the weaker sex and younger age, are considered unworthy of being counted. Therefore, in the Book of Numbers, whenever priests, Levites, armies, or fighting crowds are described, slaves, women, children, and the common people are omitted from the count.

14:22

(Verse 22.) And immediately Jesus compelled his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him across the sea, while he dismissed the crowds. He instructed the disciples to cross over and compelled them to get into the boat, which shows by his words that they unwillingly left the Lord, as they did not want to be separated from him even for a moment.

14:23

(Verse 23) And when the crowd was dismissed, he went up the mountain alone to pray. But when evening came, he was there alone. If Peter, James, and John, who had seen the glory of his transfiguration, had been with him, perhaps they would have gone up the mountain with him. But the crowd cannot follow to the heights, unless he teaches them by the sea on the shore and feeds them in the desert. But as for him going up alone to pray, do not attribute it to the one who satisfied five thousand men with five loaves, excluding women and children; but to the one who, upon hearing of John's death, withdrew into solitude. Not that we should separate the person of the Lord, but that his works are divided between God and man.

14:24

(Verse 24): However, the little boat was being tossed by the waves in the middle of the sea; for the wind was contrary. Rightly, as if unwillingly, and the apostles, drawing back, had departed from the Lord, lest they should suffer shipwrecks in His absence. Finally, while the Lord was staying on the mountain peak, immediately a contrary wind arises, and it stirs up the sea, and the apostles are in peril, and the impending shipwreck persists as long as Jesus does not come.

14:25

(Verse 25.) However, during the fourth watch of the night, he came to them, walking on the sea. Military stations and night watches are divided into three-hour intervals. Therefore, when he says that the Lord came to them during the fourth watch of the night, it indicates that they were in danger throughout the entire night, and in the last part of the night, and at the end of the world, he will provide them with help.

14:26 (Verse 26.) And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying: It is a ghost. If, according to Marcion and Manichaeus, our Lord was not born of a Virgin, but appeared in a vision: how is it that now the apostles fear seeing a vision? And they cried out due to fear. The confused shout and uncertain voice is a sign of great fear.

14:27

(Verse 27) Immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying: Have confidence, I am, do not be afraid. He takes care of what was first in the matter and commands those who fear, saying: Have confidence, do not be afraid. And what follows, I am, does not add who he is, either from a voice they could recognize, who spoke through the darkness of the obscure night, or they repeated that he himself is the one who spoke to Moses: Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: He who is, has sent me to you (Exod. III, 14).

14:28-29 (Verse 28, 29.) But Peter, responding, said: Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water. And he said: Come. In all places, Peter is found to have the most fervent faith. When the disciples were asked who they said Jesus, the Son of God, confesses. He prevents him from going to his passion, and although he may be mistaken in understanding, he is not mistaken in his feelings: not wanting him to die, whom he had confessed as the Son of God just a little while before. He is the first among the first to ascend the mountain with the Savior, and in his passion he alone follows, washing away with bitter tears the sin of denial that had descended from sudden fear. After the passion, when they were in the lake of Genesareth, fishing, and the Lord was standing on the shore, as others were slowly sailing, he did not allow any delays, but girding himself with his own girdle, he immediately threw himself into the waves. Therefore, with the same ardor of faith as always, now also, while others are silent, he believes that he can do by the will of the master what he could do by nature. Command me to come to you over the waters. You give the order, and immediately the waves will be still, and the body which is naturally heavy will become light. And when Peter descended from the boat, he walked on the water to come to Jesus. Those who think that the body of the Lord was not true, because he walked on soft waters, let them explain how Peter walked, whom they certainly will not deny to be a real human being.

14:30

(Verse 30) But when he saw the strong wind, he was afraid. And when he began to sink, he cried out, saying: Lord, save me. The faith of his soul burned, but human frailty dragged him into the deep: therefore a little is left to temptation, so that faith may increase, and he may understand that he is not saved by the ease of his request, but by the power of the Lord.

14:31-32

(Verse 31, 32.) And immediately Jesus, stretching out His hand, took hold of him and said to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' And when they got into the boat, the wind stopped. If it is said to the Apostle Peter, of whose faith and ardor of mind we have spoken above, who confidently asked the Savior, saying, 'Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water,' because he was a little afraid, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' What must we say, who have even the smallest portion of this little faith?

14:33

(Verse 33.) But those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." At the one sign of calm being restored to the sea, which sometimes happens after great storms by chance, sailors and passengers truly confess the Son of God, and Arius preaches a created being in the Church.

14:34

(Verse 34.) And when he had crossed over, they came to the land of Genesaret. If we knew what Genesaret would resonate in our language, we would understand how Jesus, through the symbol of the apostles and the boat, leads the Church freed from the shipwreck of persecution to the shore, and makes it rest in a very peaceful harbor.

14:35

(Ver. 35.) And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent throughout all that region. They recognized him by his reputation, not by his appearance, or certainly by the greatness of the signs he was performing among the people; even his face was well-known to many. And see how great is the faith of the people of the land of Genesareth, that they are not content with the salvation of those present, but send to other cities in the vicinity, so that all may come running to the physician.

14:36

(Verse 36.) And all who were sick approached him, and they begged him to touch the fringe of his garment. And whoever touched it, they were healed. But those who were sick should not touch the body of Jesus or the entire garment, but only the edge of the fringe, and whoever touched it, they would be healed. Understand the fringe of his garment, or at least understand this commandment: whoever breaks it will be considered the least in the kingdom of heaven (Above, III). And through the assumption of the body, by which we come to the Word of God, and afterwards enjoy His majesty.

15:1

(Chapter 15, Verse 1) Then came to him from Jerusalem scribes and Pharisees, saying: Why do your disciples transgress the traditions of the elders? The stupidity of the Pharisees and scribes is evident as they accuse the Son of God of not keeping the traditions and precepts of men.

15:1-2

(Vers. 1, 2.) For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread. Hands, that is, works, are to be washed, not of the body for sure, but of the soul, so that the word of God may be made in them.

15:3

(V. 3.) But he, answering, said to them: Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? He refutes false slander with a true response. For, he says, you disregard the precepts of the Lord for the sake of human tradition, why do you think that my disciples should be accused, because they disregard the commands of the elders, in order to maintain the knowledge of God?

15:4-10

(Verse 4 onwards) For God said, 'Honor your father and mother, and whoever curses his father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, Whatever help you would have received from me is given to God,' and does not honor his father or mother, you have made void the commandment of God because of your tradition. Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me' (Exodus 20, Leviticus 20). But they worship me without cause, teaching doctrines and commandments of men. And, calling the multitude to him, he said to them: Hear and understand. Honor in the Scriptures is not only felt in greetings and deference to offices, but also in acts of charity and the offering of gifts (Exodus 20:12, 21 and Leviticus 20). The Apostle says, 'Honor widows who are truly widows' (1 Timothy 5:3); here honor is understood as a gift. And in another place: Elders are to be honored with double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine of God (ibid., 17). And by this command we are commanded not to close the mouth of the ox that is treading out the corn (Deut. XXV) . And may the worker be worthy of his wage (Luke X) . The Lord had commanded, considering the weaknesses, ages, and hardships of parents, that children should honor their parents even in providing for their basic needs. The scribes and Pharisees, desiring to undermine this most provident Law of God and to introduce impiety under the name of piety, taught the worst sons that if anyone wished to vow to God (who is the true Father) those things which are to be offered to parents, the offering of the Lord should take precedence over the gifts of the parents; or certainly, the parents themselves, fearing that they would incur the crime of sacrilege by rejecting what had been consecrated to God, were consumed by poverty. And so it happened that the offering of children, under the pretext of the temple of God, went to the profits of the priests. This wicked tradition of the Pharisees came from another occasion. Many, having debts to pay and unwilling to repay what was owed, entrusted it to the priests, so that the money collected would be used for the services of the temple and their own needs. And this can also be understood briefly. He says, 'You compel the children to say to their parents: whatever gift I was going to offer to God, I consume it as food for you, Father, and it benefits you, Mother, so that they, fearing to receive what seems to be dedicated to God, would rather live in poverty than eat from the consecrated offerings.'

15:11

(Verse 11.) It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles a person; but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles a person. The word, properly speaking, is communicated through Scripture and is not worn out in everyday conversation. The Jewish people, boasting to be a part of God, call common foods, which all humans use, 'unclean.' For example, pork, oysters, rabbits, and other animals that do not have split hooves, do not chew the cud, and are not scale-covered in fish. And it is also written in the Acts of the Apostles: 'What God has cleansed, you must not call common' (Acts 10:15). Therefore, that which is commonly available to other people, and is as if it is not from God's side, is called impure. It is not what enters the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth that defiles a person. Let a wise reader oppose and say: If what enters the mouth does not defile a person, then why do we not eat idol-offerings? And the Apostle writes: You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons (1 Corinthians 10:20). Therefore, it must be understood that while food itself, being a creature of God, is clean, it becomes unclean through the invocation of idols and demons.

15:12

(Verse 12.) Then his disciples approached him and said to him, 'Do you know that the Pharisees were scandalized when they heard this word? From one speech, all the superstitious observance of the Jews had been eliminated; those who considered their religion to be based on the eating and abstaining from certain foods.' And because the term 'scandal' is frequently used in Ecclesiastical Scriptures, let us briefly explain what it means. Σκάνδαλον and scandalum can be translated as 'stumbling block,' 'fall,' or 'the stumbling and falling of the foot.' Therefore, when we read this: 'Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.'

15:13

(Verse 13.) But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Even those things which seem plain in the Scriptures, are full of questions. Every plant, he says, which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Therefore, that plantation also shall be rooted up, of which the Apostle says, I have planted, Apollos watered (1 Cor. III, 6). But the question is resolved by what follows: But God gave the increase (Ibid., 9). He himself also says: You are God's field, God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9). And in another place: We are God's co-workers. Now if we are co-workers, then God is the one who plants and waters, while Paul and Apollos are only servants who work with God (1 Corinthians 3:6-7). Some people misuse this passage, introducing various interpretations, and say: If the planting that the Father did not plant will be uprooted, then the planting that he did plant cannot be uprooted. But listen to what Jeremiah says: 'I planted a true vineyard, how have you turned into the bitterness of a foreign vine?' (Jeremiah II, 21). Indeed, God planted it, and no one can uproot His plantation. But because this planting is in the will of one's own free choice, no one else can uproot it unless it itself gives consent.

15:14

(Verse 14.) Let them alone, they are blind, leaders of the blind. But if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit. This is what the Apostle commanded: Avoid a heretical man after the

first and second admonition, knowing that he is perverted and condemned by himself (Titus 3, 10). In this sense, the Savior also commanded that the worst teachers should be left to their own discretion, knowing that they are difficult to be drawn to the truth, and that they are blind and lead the blind people into error.

15:15-16

(Ver. 15, 16.) But Peter, responding, said to him: Explain this parable to us. And he said: Are you still without understanding? What had been clearly stated and was clear to the hearing, the apostle Peter thinks was said in a parable and seeks a mystical understanding in a matter that is manifest. And he is reprimanded by the Lord for thinking that what was clearly spoken was said in a parable. From this, we observe that the listener is faulty, who wants to understand either clearly stated but obscure things, or things clearly stated in an obscure manner.

15:17-18

(Ver. 17, 18.) Do you not understand that everything that enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is expelled into the sewer? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile a person. All the passages of the Gospels among heretics and evil-doers are full of scandals. And some people falsely accuse this statement, saying that the Lord, ignorant of physical processes, thinks that all foods go into the stomach and are digested there: whereas immediately after being ingested, the nourishment is distributed through the limbs and veins, as well as the marrow and nerves. And so, many people who suffer from a constant stomach disorder, immediately vomit what they have eaten after meals and snacks, and yet they are still corpulent: because at the first touch, more liquid food and drink are poured through the limbs. But while these people want to criticize the ignorance of others, they show their own. For although a thin and liquid food, when it has been cooked and digested in the veins and limbs, passes through the hidden passages of the body, which the Greeks call *πύλοι*, and goes to the lower regions and into the intestines.

15:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies: these are the things that defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a person. 'For out of the heart,' he says, 'come evil thoughts.' Therefore, according to Christ and not according to Plato, the soul's principal place is in the heart, not in the brain. Those who believe that evil thoughts are instilled by the devil and not born out of one's own will can be argued against based on this statement. The devil can be a helper and instigator of evil thoughts, but he cannot be the author. However, if he is always lying in wait, he may ignite the slightest spark of our thoughts with his fuel, but we should not assume that he can explore the secrets of our hearts. Rather, we should judge what we have within us by our physical appearance and actions. For example, if he sees us frequently admiring a beautiful woman, he understands that our hearts have been wounded by Cupid's arrow.

15:21-22 (Verse 21, 22) And Jesus went out from there and withdrew to the parts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from those territories and cried out to him, saying. He leaves behind the scribes and the Pharisees who accuse him, and he goes into the parts of Tyre and Sidon, in order to care for the Tyrians and Sidonians. But the Canaanite woman

goes out from her former territories, in order to fervently plead for her daughter's healing. Note that in the fifteenth place, the daughter of the Canaanite woman is healed. Have mercy on me, Lord, son of David. For He knew how to call upon the son of David, because she had already gone out of her borders, and had abandoned the error of the Tyrians and Sidonians by changing their place and faith. My daughter is being tormented by an evil spirit. I think the Canaanite people believed that those who were tormented by evil spirits were ignorant of the Creator and worshipped stones.

15:23 (Verse 23.) He did not answer him a word. Not out of Pharisaic pride, nor out of the scorn of the Scribes; but so that he would not seem to be contrary to his own command, by which he had instructed: Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter into the cities of the Samaritans (Luke 10:5). For he did not wish to give occasion to the accusers and reserved the perfect salvation of the Gentiles for the time of his passion and resurrection. And his disciples approached him, saying: Send her away because she cries out after us. At that time, the disciples still ignorant of the mysteries of the Lord, either moved by mercy, or desiring to be free from her persistence, were asking for the Canaanite woman, whom another Evangelist calls the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7), or wanting to avoid her importunity; because she shouted more frequently not for the purpose of calling a compassionate person, but to call for a harsh physician.

15:24

(Verse 24.) But he answered and said: I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Not that he was not sent also to the Gentiles, but that he was first sent to Israel, so that when they did not receive the Gospel, the migration to the Gentiles might be justified. And he significantly said, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, so that from this passage we may also understand one wayward sheep from another parable.

15:25-26

(Verse 25, 26.) But she came and worshiped him, saying: Lord, help me. He answered and said: It is not good to take the bread of the children and throw it to the dogs. The faith, patience, and humility of the Canaanite woman are preached in this remarkable passage. Faith, by which she believed that her daughter could be healed. Patience, by which she persevered in prayer even when rejected. Humility, by which she compared herself not to dogs, but to puppies. However, the ethnic dogs are called such because of their idolatry, being given to the consumption of blood and carried away by the corpses of the dead into madness. Note that this Canaanite woman persistently called first David her son, then the Lord, and finally worshipped Him as God.

15:27-28

(Verse 27, 28.) But she said: Even so, Lord. For even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus, answering, said to her: O woman, great is your faith: be it done to you as you wish. And her daughter was healed from that hour. I know, she said, that I am not deserving of the bread of the children, nor am I able to receive the whole food; nor to sit at the table with the father; but I am content with the crumbs of the puppies; so through the humility of the crumbs, I may obtain the greatness of the whole bread. Oh, the wonderful change of things! Israel, once a son, now dogs. Because of the diversity of faith, the order of names is changed. Concerning them, it is later said: Many dogs have surrounded me (Ps. 21:17). And: See the dogs, see the evil workers, see the mutilation (Phil. 3). We have heard with the Syrophenician woman

and the woman who had a flow of blood: Your faith is great, let it be done to you as you wish. And: Daughter, your faith has made you well.

15:29-30

(Verse 29, 30.) And when Jesus had passed on from there, he came near the Sea of Galilee; and going up on the mountain, he sat there. And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the mute, the blind, the lame, the weak, and many others. And they threw them down at his feet. In the place where the Latin interpreter translated, 'weak' is written in Greek as 'κυλλο■ς', which is not a general term for weakness, but the name for a specific infirmity: just as someone is called lame when they limp with one foot, so 'κυλλ■ς' is used to describe someone who has a weak hand. We do not have the property of this word. Therefore, the evangelist explained the healings of the others in the following passages, but he was silent about these. For what follows?

15:31

(Verse 31.) And he healed them, so that the crowds marveled, seeing the mute speaking, the lame walking, the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel. Concerning the mute, he remained silent, for he had nothing to say in opposition. This is accomplished with one word. Now let us consider the fact that the healed daughter of the Canaanite woman returned to Judea, and to the Sea of Galilee, and went up to the mountain; and like a bird calling its young to fly, she beckoned them, and there she sat, and the crowds gathered around her, bringing with them various afflictions; and after he healed them, he gave them food; and when this work was completed, he got into a boat, and came to the region of Magadan. And ascending the mountain, he sat there: and the crowds approached him. Notice that the mute, the lame, and the blind are led to the mountain, so that they may be healed by the Lord.

15:32

(Verse 32) But Jesus, calling together his disciples, said: I have compassion for the crowd, because they have persevered with me for three days already and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way. He wants to feed those whom he has healed; first, he removes their weakness so that later he can offer food to the healthy. He also calls his disciples and speaks to them about what he is going to do, either to provide an example to the teachers, that they should share their plans with their subordinates and disciples, or so that they understand the magnitude of the miracle from their conversation, responding that they do not have loaves of bread in the desert. He said, 'I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been staying with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way; and some of them have come from a great distance.' Therefore, he who hurries to reach the desired dwelling without heavenly bread is in danger. Thus the angel speaks to Elijah: Arise and eat, for you will walk a long way.

15:33-39

(Verse 33 and following) And His disciples said to Him, "Where would we get so many loaves in this desolate place to satisfy such a large crowd?" And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish." And He directed the people to sit down on the ground. Taking the seven loaves and the fish, He gave thanks and broke them, and He

gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over from the fragments, they took up seven baskets full. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. And after dismissing the crowd, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan (Μαγδαλ■). We have already discussed this sign above, and it is pointless to repeat the same things: let us only dwell on those things that differ. Above we read: When it was evening, the disciples came to him, saying: This is a deserted place (above, XIV, 15), and the rest. Having summoned the disciples, the Lord himself speaks: I have compassion on the crowd, because they have persevered with me for three days already. There, there were five loaves and two fish; here, there are seven loaves and a few fish. There, they recline on the hay; here, on the ground. There, those who eat are five thousand, according to the number of loaves they eat; here, four thousand. There, twelve baskets are filled with the leftover fragments; here, seven baskets. Therefore, in the previous sign, those who were close and near to the five senses, the Lord himself does not remember them, but the disciples remember them in the evening of the neighboring night, and with the sun declining. But the Lord himself remembers and says that he has compassion, and he explains the reason for his compassion: because they have been persevering with me for three days now, and he does not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way. Those who are fed with the sacred seven loaves, that is, with the perfect and complete number, are not five thousand, but four thousand, a number that is always praised, and the square stone does not waver and is not unstable; and for this reason, the Gospels are also consecrated in that number.

16:1-4

(Chapter XVI—Verse 1 and following) And the Pharisees and Sadducees came to him and tested him, asking him to show them a sign from heaven. But he answered and said to them: When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; and in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. This is not found in most codices: it is clear that from the arrangement and stability of the elements, both fair and rainy days can be predicted. However, the scribes and Pharisees, who seemed to be experts in the law, could not understand the advent of the Savior from the prophecy of the prophets.

16:5

(Verse 5.) And leaving them, he went away, and when his disciples had come across the sea, they forgot to take bread. He said to them: Leaving behind the scribes and Pharisees, to whom he had said, An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given to it, except the sign of Jonah the prophet, he went over the sea correctly, and he followed the peoples of the Gentiles. But what the sign of Jonah means, has already been said above.

16:6-7

(Verses 6, 7.) Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But they were discussing among themselves, saying, 'We did not bring any bread.' He who avoids the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees does not observe the precepts of the Law and the teachings of men, neglecting the traditions in order to fulfill God's commandment.

(Verses 8 and following.) But Jesus, being aware of this, said to them: Why are you discussing among yourselves, O you of little faith, that you have no bread? Do you still not understand or remember the five loaves for the five thousand men, and how many baskets you took up? Nor the seven loaves for the four thousand men, and how many baskets you took up? How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. By occasion of the precept, which the Savior had commanded, saying: Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, He teaches them what the five loaves and the seven signify: the five thousand men, and the four thousand, who were fed in the wilderness. Although the greatness of the miracles is clear, yet something else is shown in spiritual understanding. For if the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees signifies not bodily bread, but perverse traditions and heretical doctrines, why do the foods, with which the people of God are nourished, not signify the true and complete teaching? Let someone ask and say: How is it that they did not have bread, who, when seven baskets were filled immediately, they got into the boat and came to the region of Magadan; and there the sailors hear that they should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? But the Scripture testifies that they forgot to take bread with them. This is the leaven that the Apostle speaks of; A little leaven leavens the whole lump (I Cor. V, 6). Marcion and Valentinus and all heretics had this kind of leaven, which is to be avoided in every way. This fermentation has the power that if it is mixed with flour, which seemed small, it grows into something greater, and attracts the entire mixture to its flavor ((or conversion)) : and so also heretical doctrine, if it has thrown even a small spark into your heart, in a short time it grows into a great flame, and draws the entire possession of the person to itself. Finally, it follows: Then they understood that he did not say to beware of leavened bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Book Three

Book Three

16:13 (Verse 13) And Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi. This Philip is the brother of Herod, about whom we spoke before, the tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis regions, who built Caesarea, which is now called Paneas, in honor of Tiberius Caesar, and in honor of Caesar, and also named it after himself, Caesarea Philippi, and it is in the province of Phoenicia. He imitated his father Herod, who named Caesarea in honor of August Caesar, which was formerly called the Tower of Straton. And he built, in the name of his daughter Julia, across the Jordan. This place (which is also called Ille) is Caesarea Philippi, where the Jordan River originates at the foot of Mount Lebanon, and it has two springs, one called Jor and the other Dan, which, when mixed together, become the Jordan River. And he asked his disciples, saying: Whom do men say that the Son of man is? He did not say, whom do men say that I am, but the Son of man: lest he should seem to seek glory from men. And note that wherever it is written in the Old Testament, son of man, in Hebrew it is written as son of Adam. Just as it is in that (also), which we read in the psalm: Sons of men, how long will you be heavy of heart? (Psal. IV, 3), which in Hebrew is said as sons of Adam. But beautifully he asks: Whom do people say the Son of Man is? For those who speak of the Son of Man are humans; but those who understand his divinity are not humans, but gods are

called.

16:14

(Verse 14.) But they said: Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. Jesus says to them, I wonder that some interpreters seek the reasons for each individual's errors, and weave a lengthy argument about why some thought that our Lord Jesus Christ was John, others Elijah, others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. If they could be mistaken about Elijah and Jeremiah, how did Herod mistake John, saying: I myself beheaded John, he has risen from the dead, and powers are at work in him (Mark 6:16).

16:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Wise reader, take note that from the following text and the discourse, the apostles are not called men, but gods. For when he had said: Who do men say that the Son of man is, he added: But who do you say that I am? To them, who are men, forming their opinions based on human things; but to you, who are gods, what do you think of me being? Peter, speaking on behalf of all the apostles, declares: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. He calls Him the living God, in distinction from those gods who are thought to be gods but are dead: Saturn, Jupiter, Venus, Minerva (or Ceres), Bacchus, Hercules, and other monstrous idols.

16:17

(Verse 17.) But Jesus answered and said to him: Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. The Apostles answer on behalf of Jesus. Peter had said: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God; a true confession has received a reward: Blessed are you, Simon Barjona. Why? because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but the Father revealed it. What flesh and blood could not reveal, has been revealed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, from confession, it obtains the name which has revelation from the Holy Spirit, whose son is also to be called. For indeed, Barjona in our language means son of a dove. Others simply understand that Simon, that is, Peter, is the son of John, according to the question in another place: Simon, son of John, do you love me? (John 21:15) He answered: Lord, you know. And by the fault of the writers, it is corrupted so that instead of Bar Joanna, that is, son of John, it is written Barjona, with one syllable removed. Joanna, however, means 'by the grace of the Lord.' Both names can be understood mystically, as both the dove represents the Holy Spirit and grace represents the spiritual gift of God. Also, what is said, 'For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you,' is compared to the apostolic narrative where it says, 'I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood' (Galatians 1:16), signifying the Jews as flesh and blood, so that here also it may be demonstrated in a different sense that Christ, the Son of God, was revealed to him not through the teaching of the Pharisees, but through the grace of God.

16:18

(Verse 18.) And I also say to you. What is it that he says: And I also say to you? Because you have said to me: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God; and I say to you, not with empty words, and having no need, but I say to you: what I have said, I have done.

Because you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. Just as he gave the title of 'light' to the apostles, so too did he bestow upon Simon, who believed in Christ the rock, the name of Peter. But according to the metaphor of the rock, it is rightly said to him: I will build my church upon you. And the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. I consider the gates of Hell to be vices and sins: or certainly the doctrines of heretics, through which deceived men are led to Tartarus. Therefore, let no one suppose that it is said concerning death, that the apostles were not subject to the condition of death, whose martyrdoms he sees flashing.

16:19

(Verse 19.) And I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. And whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. The bishops and priests who do not understand this passage, arrogantly assume to themselves something of the Pharisees, either to condemn the innocent or to release the guilty; whereas with God, it is not the judgment of priests, but the life of the accused that is sought. In Leviticus (Chapter 14), we read about leprosy, where they are commanded to show themselves to the priests, and if they have leprosy, then they become unclean by the priest: not that priests make lepers and unclean; but so that they have knowledge of who is leprous and who is not, and they can discern who is clean and who is unclean. So just as the priest there makes the leper clean or unclean, so here the bishop and priest bind or loose, not those who are innocent or guilty; but according to their office, when they hear the varieties of sins, they know who should be bound and who should be loosed.

16:20

(Verse 20) Then he commanded his disciples not to tell anyone that he was Jesus Christ. Before sending the disciples to preach, he had ordered them to announce his coming: here he instructed them not to say that he was Jesus Christ. It seems to me that preaching Christ is one thing, and preaching Jesus Christ is another. Christ is a common name of dignity: Jesus is the proper name of the Savior. However, it may be that before his passion and resurrection, he did not want to be preached; but after the completion of the sacrament of his blood, he would more fittingly say to the apostles: Go, teach all nations (Matthew last chapter, verse 19), etc. So that no one thinks that our intelligence alone, and not the Gospel teachings that follow, explain the reasons for the prohibition of preaching at that time.

16:21

(Verse 21) Then Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And the meaning is: Proclaim me then, when I have suffered these things, because it is not profitable to publicly proclaim Christ and make known his majesty to the people, who after a little while will see him whipped and crucified, and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and scribes. And now Jesus suffers many things from those who crucify the Son of God again (Heb. VI): and when the elders are thought to be in the Church, and the high priests, following the simple letter, kill the Son of God, who is wholly felt in spirit.

16:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying: Lord, be it far from you, this shall not happen to you. But he turned and said to Peter: Get behind me, Satan, you are a hindrance to me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man. We have often said that Peter had great zeal and love for the Lord Savior. Therefore, after his confession, when he said: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God, and heard the Savior's response: Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven, he suddenly hears from the Lord that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things from the elders and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day rise again. He does not want his confession to be destroyed; he does not think it is possible for the Son of God to be killed. And he takes him into his affection, or leads him separately, so that he does not appear to accuse the teacher in front of the other disciples, and he begins to rebuke him out of love and desire, saying: Lord, be it far from you; or as it is better in Greek, ■λ■ζ σοι, Κ■ριε, ο■ μ■ ■σταί σοι το■το, which means, be propitious to yourself, Lord, this shall not happen to you; it cannot happen, and my ears do not accept that the Son of God should be killed. To whom the Lord, turning, said: Go behind me, Satan, you are a stumbling block to me. Satan is interpreted as adversary or opposer. Because you speak contrary to my will, you must be called adversary. Many believe that it was not Peter who was rebuked, but the opposing spirit who suggested these words to the Apostle. But to me, this Apostolic error, coming from a feeling of piety, will never seem like an incentive of the devil: Go behind me, Satan. The devil says: Go away. Peter hears: Go away from me, that is, follow my opinion: for you do not understand the things that are of God, but those that are of men. It is my will, and the Father's (whose will I have come to do (John VI)) that I should die for the salvation of men, while you, considering only your own will, do not want a grain of wheat to fall to the ground, so that it may bring forth many fruits (John XII). Let the wise reader inquire how, after such great blessedness: Blessed are you, Simon Barjona; and: You are Peter; and on this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and: I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and: Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; now let him hear: Go away from me, Satan, you are a stumbling block to me? But what kind of sudden conversion is this, that after so great rewards, he is called Satan? But if he considers who is asking this, he will understand that Peter received that blessing and beatitude, and power, and edification upon the Church, promised for the future, not given in the present. I will build, he says, my Church upon you and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And: I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. All these things are for the future, which if he had immediately given them to him, the error of wrong opinion would have never found a place in him.

16:24-26 (Vers. 24 seqq.) Then Jesus said to his disciples: If anyone wants to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul? Whoever puts off the old man with his works (Colossians 3), denies himself, saying: Now I live, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20): and he takes up his cross and is crucified to the world. But the one to whom the world was crucified follows the crucified Lord. But what exchange will a man give for his soul? For Israel, Egypt and Ethiopia are given in exchange, and Syene (Isaiah XLIII, 3, 4): for the human soul, that alone is the retribution, which the Psalmist sings: What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered to me? I will take the cup of salvation, and will invoke the name of the Lord (Psalm CXV, 3).

16:27

(Verse 27) For the Son of Man is coming in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will repay each according to his deeds. Peter, scandalized by the preaching of the Lord's death, was rebuked by the Lord's sentence. The disciples were provoked to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow their teacher with a willing heart. The great terror of the listeners, and the ability of the chief apostle to instill fear in others, led to sadness followed by joy, and he said: The Son of Man is coming in the glory of His Father with His angels. Fear death, listen to the glory of the triumphant. Fear the cross, listen to the ministries of the angels. And then, it is said, he will repay each according to his works (Rom. X, 12). There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile, man and woman, poor and rich, where not persons, but works are considered.

16:28

(Verse 28.) Truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. He wanted to heal the terror of the apostles with the hope of promised things, saying: The Son of Man is coming in the glory of his Father with his angels. Moreover, with the authority of a judge added: and he will repay each one according to his works. The silent thought of the apostles could bear such a scandal: you now say that killing and death are coming, but what you promise to be present in the glory of the Father with the ministry of angels and the power of a judge, this will be in the future, and will be delayed for a long time. Therefore, foreseeing what the knowers of secret things could object, he counterbalances present fear with present reward. For he says: There are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom; so that the manner in which he will come afterwards may be shown to you at the present time, because of your unbelief.

17:1

(Chapter 17 - Verse 1) And after six days, Jesus took Peter and James, and John his brother. Why Peter, James, and John are separated from the others in some places in the Gospels, or what privilege they have over the other apostles, we have frequently discussed. Now it is asked how he assumed them after six days, and led them to a high mountain apart: since the evangelist Luke mentions the number eight (Luke 9). But the answer is easy, because here the intermediate days are placed, the first and the last are added. For it is not said: After eight days Jesus took Peter, and James, and John; but on the eighth day.

He leads them to a high mountain apart. To lead the disciples to the mountains is part of the kingdom. They are led apart, because many are called, but few are chosen (Matthew 20:16 and 22:14).

17:2 (V2.) And he was transfigured before them. Just as he will be at the time of judgment, so he appeared to the apostles. But when it says, 'He was transfigured before them,' no one can think that he lost or abandoned his original form and appearance, or that he took on a spiritual or aerial body. Rather, the evangelist demonstrates how he was transformed, saying. And his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as snow. Where the splendor of his face is shown and the whiteness of the garments is described, substance is not taken away but glory is transformed. His face shone like the sun. Certainly the Lord was transformed into that glory in which he would come afterwards in his kingdom. Transformation added splendor, it did not take

away his face. Even if his body was spiritual, were the garments also changed, which were so white that another evangelist said: Such as no fuller on earth can make. But what the lightning can do over the earth is corporeal, and subject to touch, and not spiritual and airy, which deceives the eyes, and can only be seen in a mere illusion.

17:3

(Verse 3.) And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with him. When the scribes and Pharisees tested him, seeking signs from heaven, he did not want to give them, but refuted their wicked request with a prudent response. But in order to increase the faith of the apostles, he gives a sign from heaven, with Elijah descending from where he had ascended, and with Moses rising from the dead. This is also commanded to Ahaz through Isaiah, to ask for a sign from above or from below (Isaiah 7 and 2 Kings 2). For what was said: Moses and Elias appeared to them, speaking with him; and in another Gospel it is reported that he announced what he would suffer in Jerusalem (Luke IX): The law and the prophets are shown, who announced with frequent voices both the passion of the Lord and his resurrection.

17:4

(Verse 4.) But Peter, replying, said to Jesus: Lord, it is good for us to be here. He who had ascended to the mountains does not want to descend to earthly things; but always to persevere in the lofty things.

If you wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. You are mistaken, Peter, as another evangelist testifies. You do not know what you are saying. Do not seek three tabernacles, for there is one tabernacle of the Gospel, in which the Law and the Prophets are recapitulated. But if you seek three tabernacles, do not compare servants with the Lord, but make three tabernacles: indeed, one for the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; so that, since they are one divinity, there may be one tabernacle in your heart as well.

17:5

(Verse 5) While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And behold, a voice from the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him. Because he had asked foolishly, he does not deserve an answer from the Lord, but the Father speaks for the Son, so that the word of the Lord may be fulfilled: I do not testify of myself, but the Father who sent me, he testifies of me (John 5:37 and 8:18). But the cloud is seen as both bright and shadowed: like those who sought the tabernacle from the fleshly leaves or tents, they would be covered by the shadow of the bright cloud. Moreover, the voice of the Father speaking from heaven is heard, which also testifies to the Son; and through Peter, with error removed, teaches the truth: even through Peter to the other apostles. This is, he says, my beloved Son: to him the tabernacle must be affixed, to him obedience must be given. Here is the son, those slaves are: Moses and Elias themselves must prepare a tabernacle for the Lord with you in the innermost depths of their heart.

17:6

(Verse 6.) And when the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were exceedingly afraid. They were terrified for three reasons: either because they realized they had made a mistake, or

because a shining cloud had covered them, or because they had heard the voice of God the Father speaking. For human frailty cannot bear the sight of greater glory and, trembling in mind and body, falls to the ground. The more one seeks greater things, the more one will collapse into lower things if one does not know one's own measure.

17:7 (Verse 7) And Jesus came and touched them. Because they were lying down and unable to rise, he kindly approached and touched them, so that fear would flee with the touch and their weakened limbs would be strengthened. And he said to them: Rise up, and do not be afraid. He who healed with his hand, heals with his command. Do not be afraid. First, fear is expelled, so that later, knowledge may be given.

17:8

(Verse 8.) But lifting up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus alone. Reasonably, after they had risen, they saw no one except Jesus alone: lest if Moses and Elijah had continued with the Lord, the uncertain voice of the Father would be seen, to whom he would give the testimony. Therefore, they see Jesus standing, the cloud having been taken away, and Moses and Elijah had vanished: because after the shadow of the Law and the Prophets had departed, which had covered the apostles with its veil, both lights are found in the Gospel.

17:9

(Verse 9) And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying: Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man rises from the dead. The anticipation of the coming kingdom, and the glory of the triumphant one, had been shown on the mountain. Therefore, He does not want this to be preached to the people, lest it be regarded as unbelievable for the greatness of the matter, and lest the cross, following such glory, would become a stumbling block to simple minds.

17:10

(Verse 10.) And the disciples asked him, saying, Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first? Unless we know the reasons why the disciples asked about the name of Elijah, their questioning seems foolish and extraordinary. For what does it matter to inquire about the coming of Elijah, which is written above? The tradition of the Pharisees is, according to the prophet Malachi (who is the last of the twelve), that Elijah will come before the coming of the Savior and restore the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, and restore everything to its former state (Malachi 4). Therefore, the disciples think that this transformation of glory, which they see on the mountain, is the one they have seen, and they say: If you have already come in glory, why does your precursor not appear, especially since they saw Elijah depart? However, when they add: The scribes say that Elijah must come first; by saying 'first,' they show that unless Elijah comes, the coming of the Savior according to the Scriptures is not fulfilled.

17:11-12 (Verse 11, 12.) But he answered and said unto them, Elias indeed cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him. And they did not recognize him; but they did to him whatever they wanted: That is, they despised him, and beheaded him.

17:13

(Verse 13) And so the Son of Man will suffer at their hands. Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist. Now, as Herod and Herodias are said to have killed John, how can they also say that they crucified Jesus, when we read that he was killed by the scribes and Pharisees? The answer is that both the Pharisees were in agreement with the death of John, and Herod willingly participated in the killing of the Lord. He sent him, mocked and despised, to Pilate to be crucified.

17:14-15

(Vers. 14, 15.) Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and suffers greatly: for he often falls into fire and frequently into water. And I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him. This is why the devil, observing the course of the moon, seizes upon men and strives to defame the Creator through His creatures, as we have said above. But it seems to me, according to the spiritual interpretation, that the lunatic is one who is constantly changing to vice in the moments of the hours, not persisting in what he has begun, but growing and diminishing: and now he is carried to the fire, by which the hearts of adulterers are inflamed (Hosea VII): now to the waters, which cannot quench charity. But when he says, 'I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him,' he secretly accuses the apostles, since the inability to heal sometimes refers not to the weakness of those who are healing, but to the faith of those who are being healed, as the Lord says, 'Let it be done to you according to your faith' (Mark 5:34, and 10:52).

17:16

(Verse 16.) But Jesus replied, saying: O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to me. Not because he was overcome by weariness, and gentle and meek, who did not open his mouth like a lamb before the shearer (Isaiah 53), nor did he burst forth in words of fury; but because, in the likeness of a physician, if he sees a sick person behaving contrary to his instructions, he may say: How long shall I come to your house, until I lose the skill of my craft, you commanding one thing and doing another? But he is not angry with the man, but with the fault; and through one man he accuses the Jews of unfaithfulness, so that he immediately says: Bring him here to me.

17:17

(Verse 17) And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was healed from that hour. It was not the boy who suffered, but rather the demon who ought to be rebuked. Whether he rebuked the boy, and the demon came out of him: because he had been oppressed by the demon due to his own sins.

17:18

(Verse 18) And they said, why could we not cast him out? Jesus said to them: Because of your unbelief. Amen I say to you. This is what he says in another place: Whatever you ask in my name, believing, you will receive (John 15:2). Therefore, whenever we do not receive, it is not due to the impossibility of the one granting, but the fault of those praying.

17:19

(Verse 19.) If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain: Remove from hence, and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible to you. Some people think that faith compared to a grain of mustard seed is small, because the kingdom of heaven is compared to a grain of mustard seed; when the apostle says: And if I shall have all faith, so that I could remove mountains (I Cor. XV, 2). Therefore, great is the faith that is compared to a grain of mustard seed. The translation of the mountain does not signify the one that we see with our physical eyes, but rather the one who has been transferred by the Lord from the lunatic. For when he says, 'You will say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move,' it is understood to refer to the devil. From this, those are shown to be foolish who argue that the apostles and all believers, did not even have a little faith, because none of them moved mountains. For the movement of a mountain from one place to another is not beneficial in itself, and seeking the vain display of miracles; but this mountain must be moved for the benefit of all, which is said by the prophet to corrupt all the earth (Zech. IV).

17:20

(Verse 20.) However, this kind does not go out, except by prayer and fasting. While he teaches how the most wicked demon can be expelled, he instructs everyone for life.

17:21-23

(Ver. 21 seq.) While they were conversing in Galilee, Jesus said to them: The Son of Man is to be handed over to the hands of men, and they will kill him; and on the third day he will rise again. And they were greatly saddened. He always mixes sorrows with prosperity, so that when they come suddenly, they do not terrify the apostles; but they are carried by their prepared minds: For if they are saddened by his impending death, they should be joyful at the news of his resurrection on the third day. Furthermore, their grief and sorrow are not due to disbelief (otherwise they would have known that Peter was rebuked because he did not understand the things of God, but those of men), but rather because out of love for their master, they are willing to hear nothing negative or humiliating about him.

17:24 (Verse 24) And when they came to Capernaum, those who received the didrachma came to Peter and said, 'Does your teacher not pay the didrachma?' He said, 'Yes.' After Augustus Caesar, Judea became subject to taxes, and all were registered. Hence, Joseph with Mary, his betrothed, went to Bethlehem to be registered. Again, since he was brought up in Nazareth (which is a town in Galilee, adjacent to the city of Capernaum), they demand taxes as custom dictates. Because of the magnitude of the signs, those demanding taxes do not dare ask for it directly from Jesus, but approach his disciple and ask maliciously whether he pays taxes or opposes Caesar's will; as we read in another place: 'Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not?' (Mark 12:14) And when he entered the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying: "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their sons or from others?" And when he entered the house, before Peter could speak, the Lord asks, so that the disciples would not be scandalized by the demand for tribute; since they see him knowing what happened in his absence.

17:25

(Verse 25) What do you think, Simon? Do the kings of the earth receive tribute or census from their sons or from strangers? And he said: From strangers. Jesus said to him: Therefore, the sons

are free. Our Lord, both according to the flesh and according to the spirit, was the son of a king, either born of the lineage of David or begotten by the Almighty Word of the Father. Therefore, as a son of a king, he should not have to pay taxes, but because he took on the humility of the flesh, he had to fulfill all righteousness. And we, who are unhappy, are called by the name of Christ and yet do nothing worthy of such majesty: He endured the cross and paid tributes for us, we do not pay tributes for His honor, and we are like children of a king who are immune to paying taxes.

17:26

(Verse 26) But that we may not offend them: go to the sea, and cast in a hook, and that fish which shall first come up, take: and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a stater: take that, and give it to them for me and thee. What I should first admire in this place, I know not, whether the foreknowledge, or the greatness of the Saviour. The foreknowledge that he knew the fish would have a stater in its mouth, and that he himself would be the first to be caught. The greatness and power, if at his word a stater was immediately created in the mouth of the fish, and that which was to come to pass he effected by his speaking. But it seems to me, according to a mystical understanding, that this is the fish that was first caught, which was in the depths of the sea and dwelled in salty and bitter waters, so that through the second Adam the first Adam might be freed; and that which was found in its mouth, that is, in its confession, would be given back to Peter and the Lord. And indeed, the same thing is given a beautiful price, but it is divided, because it was given as a price for Peter, as if for a sinner; but our Lord had not committed any sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth (Isaiah 53). The stater is called so because it has two didrachms, to show the likeness of the flesh, while both the slave and the Lord are redeemed at the same price. But it also builds up the understanding of the listener: that the Lord was of such great poverty that he had no means to pay taxes for himself and his apostle. If someone wants to object: how did Judas carry money in the purse? We will answer that he thought it would be wrong to convert the resources of the poor for his own use, and he gave us the same example.

18:1

(Chapter 18, Verse 1) At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Who do you think is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? This has often been discussed and is still worth considering. We must examine the reasons for each of the Lord's words and actions. After finding the coin, after paying the taxes, what does the sudden question from the apostles mean? At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Who do you think is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Because they had seen the tribute paid by Peter and the Lord, equal in price, they decided that Peter should be preferred to all the other apostles, who had been compared to the Lord in the payment of the tribute. Therefore, they asked who is greater in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus, seeing their thoughts and understanding the causes of their error, wanted to heal their desire for glory and their striving for humility.

18:2

(Verse 2.) And calling a little child, he set him in the midst of them, and said. Either simply any little child, to inquire about his age, and to demonstrate the likeness of innocence. Or certainly he placed a little child in their midst, who had come not to be served, but to serve, in order to give them an example of humility. Others interpret the little child as the Holy Spirit, whom he placed in

the hearts of the disciples, in order to transform pride into humility.

18:3

(Ver. 3.) Amen I say to you, unless you are converted and become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. It is not commanded to the apostles to have the age of children, but to have the innocence, and what they possess through years, let them possess through industry: so that they may be like little children in malice, not in wisdom.

18:4

(Verse 4.) Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Just like this little child, whose example I give to you, does not persist in anger, does not hold grudges, does not delight in seeing a beautiful woman, does not think one thing and say another; in the same way, unless you have such innocence and purity of heart, you will not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven. Or in another way: Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever imitates me and humbles himself as I have humbled myself, taking the form of a servant, he will enter the kingdom of heaven.

18:5

(Verse 5.) And whoever receives such a little child in my name, receives me. And whoever is such, that he imitates the humility and innocence of Christ, in him Christ is received. And wisely, lest when it is reported to the apostles, they should think themselves honored, he added that they should be received not through their own merit, but through the honor of the master.

18:6

(Verse 6.) But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Note that whoever is scandalized is little: for the greater ones do not receive scandals.

Let him be hanged with a millstone around his neck, and let him be thrown into the depths of the sea. Although this general idea can be applied against anyone who causes scandal, it can also be understood in the context of the apostles, who seemed to be competing with each other over rank when they asked who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. If they had remained in this vice, they could have caused those whom they called to the faith to stumble through their scandal, as they saw the apostles fighting amongst themselves for honor. But when he said, 'It is expedient for him that a millstone be hung about his neck,' he speaks according to the custom of the province, with which the punishment for more grievous crimes among the ancient Jews was that they should be plunged into the deep with a stone fastened to them. It is expedient for him, because it is much better to receive a brief punishment for a fault than to be preserved for eternal tortures. For the Lord will not judge twice for the same thing (Nahum 1).

18:7 (Verse 7) Woe to the world because of scandals. For it is necessary that scandals come, but woe to the man through whom the scandal comes. Not that it is necessary for scandals to come, otherwise those who cause scandal would be without guilt, but since it is necessary for scandals to occur in this world, everyone is exposed to scandal due to their own fault. At the same time,

Judas, who had prepared his mind for betrayal, is struck by a general consensus.

18:8-9

(Verse 8, 9) But if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell. Indeed, it is necessary for scandals to come, but woe to the person through whom the scandal comes! Therefore, every affection is cut off and every proximity is amputated, so that no one of the believers may be exposed to scandals through the opportunity of piety. If, he says, someone is so connected to you like a hand, foot, eye, and is useful and caring, and sharp in discerning: but he causes scandal to you, and he drags you into hell because of the disparity of his behavior: it is better that you both avoid his proximity and carnal benefits, so that while you want to profit your relatives and necessary ones, you don't end up causing ruins. Therefore, neither brother, nor wife, nor children, nor friends, nor any affection that can exclude us from the kingdom of heaven, should be preferred to the love of the Lord. Each believer knows what harms themselves, what troubles their soul, and is often tested. It is better to lead a solitary life than to lose eternal life for the needs of this present life.

18:10-11

(Verses 10, 11.) See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. The Son of Man came to save what was lost. Above, he had said that all close relationships and connections that could cause scandal should be cut off by hand, foot, or eye. Therefore, he tempers the severity of the sentence with a subordinate command, saying: See that you do not despise one of these little ones. Thus, he said, I command severity, so that I may teach the mixing of mercy. As much as is in you, do not despise, but seek the health even of those. But if you see them persevering in sins, and serving vices, it is better for you to be saved alone than to perish with many. For their angels in heaven always see the face of the Father. Great is the dignity of souls, so that each one has been assigned a guardian angel from birth to watch over them. Where do we read in the Apocalypse of John: 'To the angel of the church in Ephesus, write...' (Rev. 2:1). The apostle also commands women to cover their heads in the churches, because of the angels (1 Cor. 11).

18:12-13

(Vers. 12, 13.) What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine in the mountains, and goeth to seek that which is gone astray? And if it so be that he findeth it: Amen I say to you, he rejoiceth more for that than for the ninety and nine that went not astray. In conclusion he calls to clemency one who had despatched him, saying: See that you do not despise one of these little ones, and he adds the parable of the ninety and nine sheep left in the mountains, and of the one that went astray, which the good shepherd, because of its great weakness, could not go after, and so he brought it back on his shoulder to the rest of the flock. Some think that he, who was in the form of God, yet did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being obedient to the Father even unto death, even death on the cross (Philippians 2:6-8):

and for this reason he descended to the earthly realm, to save the one lost sheep, that is, the human race. But others think that the number of ninety-nine sheep represents the righteous, and the one sheep, the sinner, as he said elsewhere: I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners: for it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick (Luke 5:32). This parable in the Gospel according to Luke is written with two other parables, the parable of the ten drachmas and the parable of the two sons (Luke 15).

18:14

(Verse 14) So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. He refers to the previously stated proposition, of which he said: See that you do not despise one of these little ones; and he teaches this by means of a placed parable, so that the little ones may not be despised. And in what he says: It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish: whenever one of these little ones perishes, it is shown that it is not by the will of the Father.

18:15-17

(Verse 15 and following) But if your brother sins against you, go and confront him between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two more with you, so that by the testimony of two or three witnesses every word may be confirmed. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. If our brother sins against us, and he harms us in any way, we have the power, indeed the necessity, to forgive our debtors as is commanded. But if someone sins against God, it is not within our power. For divine Scripture says: If a man sins against another man, the priest will pray for him. But if someone sins against God, who will pray for him? On the contrary, we are kind in the face of God's injustice, and in our own insults we exercise hatred. However, the brother must be rebuked privately, so that if he has once lost shame and modesty, he may not remain in sin. And if indeed he listens, we gain his soul, and through the salvation of another, we also acquire salvation for ourselves. But if he refuses to listen, let a brother be called in. And if he does not listen to him, let a third person be called in, either to correct him or to meet with witnesses. But if he refuses to listen to them as well, then it is necessary to bring in many people, so that he may be held in detestation, and let him who could not be saved by shame be saved by disgrace. However, when it is said, 'Let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector,' it is shown that there is a greater detestation for someone who acts as a faithful person under the title of an infidel than for those who openly identify as Gentiles. For publicans are called according to tropology, those who pursue worldly gains and demand taxes through dealings and frauds, thefts, and wicked perjuries.

18:18

(Verse 18.) Truly I tell you: whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. For it was said: If, however, he does not listen to the Church, let him be to you like a Gentile and a tax collector, and it could be a hidden response of contempt for a brother, or a silent thought, if you despise me, I despise you, if you condemn me, you will be condemned by my judgment: he gives the power to the apostles, so that they may know that those who are condemned by such are confirmed by human judgment, and whatever is

bound on earth is bound equally in heaven.

18:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) Again I say to you: if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. The above discourse has encouraged us towards harmony. Therefore, it promises a reward so that we may hasten eagerly towards peace, as it says that it will be present among two or three. Similar to the example of a tyrant, who wanted to prove that he had captured two friends (when one returned to see his mother and gave his friend as a surety for himself), so he wanted to test one, and release the other. And when he returned on the appointed day, marveling at the faith of both, he asked that they have a third. We can also understand this spiritually, that where the spirit and soul and body agree and do not have war between themselves of different desires (or pleasures); with the flesh desiring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, they obtain from the Father whatever they seek about any thing. And there is no doubt that the request of good things is certain, where the body wants to have those things which the spirit wants.

18:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) Then Peter came to him and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times? Jesus said to him, I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. The Lord's words weighed heavily on him, and they could not be broken like a triple cord. Earlier, he had said, See that you do not despise one of these little ones; and he had added, If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. And he had promised a reward, saying, If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them. The apostle Peter, provoked, asks how many times he should forgive his brother who sins against him, and when he proposes the question, should it be up to seven times? Jesus responds: Not up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven, that is, four hundred and ninety times, so that he should forgive his brother who sins against him as many times in a day as that brother cannot sin.

18:23

(Verse 23.) Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is likened to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. It is customary for the Syrians and especially the Palestinians to connect all their speech with parables, so that what cannot be understood by the listeners through a simple commandment may be understood through similarity and examples. Therefore, he instructed Peter using the comparison of a king and master, and servants. The servant, who owed ten thousand talents, begged the master for forgiveness and obtained it; so he also should forgive his fellow servants for their lesser sins. That king and lord forgave the servant debtors ten thousand talents as easily as he did. How much more should servants forgive their fellow servants lesser debts? To make it more clear, let's say it with an example: If one of us commits adultery, murder, sacrilege, greater crimes worth ten thousand talents, they are forgiven when asked, so should we forgive lesser sins of others. But if we, because of an insult, remain unforgiving and perpetuate discord because of a bitter word, don't we seem to be rightly sent to prison? And using our own

work as an example, shouldn't we act in such a way that we don't receive forgiveness for greater offenses?

18:24-34

(Verse 24 onwards) And when he began to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed ten thousand talents. But since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' And his fellow servant falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will render thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. Now his fellow servants seeing what was done, were very much grieved, and they came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him; and said to him: Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest me. Therefore, should you not also have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you? And his master, being angry, delivered him to the torturers until he should pay back all the debt. I know certain individuals who owed ten thousand talents, interpreting the devil, whose wife and children they wanted to sell while he persisted in wickedness, to represent foolishness and evil thoughts. For just as the wife of the righteous is said to be wisdom, so the wife of the unjust and sinner is called foolishness. But how will the master forgive him ten thousand talents; and he did not forgive us, his servants, one hundred denarii, neither is it of Ecclesiastical interpretation, nor should it be accepted by prudent men.

18:35

(Verse 35) In this way, my heavenly Father will also do to you, unless each one of you forgives his brother from your heart. This is a frightening statement, if the divine judgment is turned and changed according to our own judgment. If we do not forgive our brothers for small offenses, God will not forgive us for great offenses. And because each one can say: I have nothing against him, he knows: he has God as judge, I do not care what he wants to do, I have forgiven him; he confirms his own judgment and destroys all pretense of false peace, saying: Unless each one of you forgives his brother from your heart.

19:1-3

(Chapter XIX. — Verse 1 and following) And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee and came into the borders of Judea, beyond the Jordan; and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them there. And the Pharisees came to him, tempting him and saying: Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause? He had come from Galilee to Judea; therefore, the faction of the Pharisees and Scribes questioned him, whether it is lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause, so that they may hold him in a trap as if he were caught in a syllogism, and whatever he answers, may be used against him. If he says that wives should be dismissed for any reason whatsoever, and other wives should be taken, he will appear to preach against chastity. But if he responds that not every reason warrants dismissal, he will be held guilty of sacrilege as if he were a transgressor of the law given through Moses and by

Moses from God. Therefore, the Lord tempers his response so that their disciple may understand, citing sacred Scripture as evidence and opposing the natural law and the first intention of God with the second intention, which was granted not by the will of God but by the necessity of sinners.

19:4

(V. 4.) And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female? This is written in the beginning of Genesis. But in saying male and female, he pointed towards monogamous marriages. For he did not say males and females, which was sought after due to the repudiation of the former, but male and female, so that the bond of one spouse might be established.

19:5-6

(Vers. 5, 6.) And he said: Because of this, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Likewise, he said, a man must be united to his wife, not wives. And the two will become one flesh. The reward of marriage is for two to become one flesh. Chastity joined to the spirit makes one spirit.

Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man separate. God has joined, by making one flesh of man and woman: this the man cannot separate, unless perhaps by the power of God alone. Man separates, when, due to desire for a second spouse, he dismisses the first. God separates, who had also joined, when by consent due to the service of God (because time is limited) we have wives as though we have none (I Cor. VII).

19:7

(Verse 7) They said to him, 'So why did Moses command us to give a bill of divorce and dismiss?' They open the trap they had prepared. And certainly the Lord had not given his own opinion, but had remembered the old history and commandments of God.

19:8

(Verse 8.) He said to them: because Moses allowed you to divorce your wives due to the hardness of your hearts, but it was not like that from the beginning. This is what he meant: Can God be opposed to himself, so that he would command one thing before and then nullify his own command with a new one? It should not be understood this way. Rather, Moses, seeing that because of the desire for second wives, who were either richer, younger, or more beautiful, the first wives were being killed or leading a bad life, preferred to tolerate discord rather than continue with hatred and murders (Deut. XXIV). At the same time, consider that God did not allow it because of the hardness of your hearts, but Moses did, so that, according to the Apostle's counsel (1 Corinthians 7), it may be a human choice, not a commandment from God.

19:9

(Verse 9.) But I say to you, that whoever divorces his wife, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. And he who marries a divorced woman, commits adultery. Only fornication is what overcomes a wife's affection: indeed, when she divides one flesh into another, and separates herself from her husband through fornication, she should not be held: lest she also

make her husband subject to a curse, as Scripture says: Whoever holds onto an adulteress, is foolish and wicked. Therefore, whenever there is fornication, or even suspicion of fornication, the wife is freely dismissed. And because it could happen that someone falsely accuses the innocent person and implicates them in an old crime due to a second marriage, the husband is commanded to divorce the first wife so that he does not have a second wife while the first one is still alive. For what he says is as follows: If you divorce your wife not for lust but for injury, why do you expose yourself to the danger of unhappy previous marriages by entering into new ones? Moreover, because it could happen that, according to the same law, a wife could also give a divorce to her husband, the same caution is prescribed so that she does not marry a second man. And because a prostitute, and one who has once been an adulteress, does not fear disgrace, the same caution is prescribed for the husband, that if he marries such a woman, he is subject to the crime of adultery.

19:10

(Verse 10.) His disciples said to him: If such is the case between a man and his wife, it is not expedient to marry. The burden of wives is heavy, for apart from the cause of fornication, they cannot be divorced. For what if she is drunken, if she is angry, if she is of bad morals, if she is lascivious, if she is gluttonous, if she is wandering, if she is quarrelsome, if she is abusive? She must be endured. For when we were free, we willingly subjected ourselves to servitude. Therefore, seeing the heavy burden of wives, the apostles express their thoughts and say, if it is so, it is not expedient for a man to marry.

19:11

(Verse 11.) He said to them: Not everyone can understand this word, but only those to whom it is given. No one should think that under this word, either fate or fortune is introduced: these are the virgins to whom it has been given by God, or whom certain circumstances have brought to this, but it has been given to those who have asked, who have desired, who have worked to receive it. For everyone who asks will receive, and the one who seeks will find, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened (Matthew 7:8 and Luke 11:10).

19:12

(Verse 12.) For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it. There are three types of eunuchs: those who are eunuchs from birth, those who are made eunuchs by men, and those who make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Some are born eunuchs, others are made eunuchs by men, and others choose to be eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. And those who can accept it should accept it. A reward is promised to these people, but to the previous ones, for whom the necessity of chastity is not voluntary, nothing is owed at all. We can say differently. There are eunuchs who are born from their mother's womb, who are of a colder nature and do not desire lust. And there are others who are made by humans: whom either philosophers make, or they are softened into women because of the worship of idols: or they pretend chastity due to heretical persuasion, in order to lie about the truth of religion. But none of them will inherit the kingdom of heaven unless he has castrated himself for the sake of

Christ. Therefore, it is concluded: He who is able to receive this, let him receive it; so that each person may consider his own abilities, whether he can fulfill the commands of virginity and chastity. For chastity is enticing in itself, attracting anyone to itself. But one's abilities must be considered, so that he who is able to receive it, may receive it. It is like the voice of the Lord urging and inciting his soldiers to the reward of chastity. Let whoever is able to understand, understand; let whoever is able to fight, fight, overcome and triumph.

19:13-14

(Verses 13, 14.) Then little children were brought to him, so that he could lay his hands on them and pray. But the disciples rebuked them. Jesus said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'

19:15

(Verse 15.) Allow the children, and do not prohibit them from coming to me: for such is the kingdom of heaven. And when he had laid his hands on them, he departed from there. He specifically said 'such', not 'these', to show that it is not age that reigns but character; and that those who have similar innocence and simplicity will be rewarded. The apostle also agrees with this sentiment: Brothers, do not be children in your thinking, but be infants in evil, and mature in your thinking (1 Corinthians 14:20).

19:16

(V. 16.) And behold, one approached him and said to him: Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said to him: This one who asks how to obtain eternal life is both young and wealthy, and proud; and according to another evangelist, he asks not out of a desire to learn, but to test (Mark X).

19:17

(Verse 17) Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one good God. Because he had called a good teacher, and not God, or the Son of God, he learns that even a holy man is not good in comparison to God, of whom it is said: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good (Psalm 117:1). But lest anyone think that the goodness of God excludes the Son of God, we read in another place: The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (John 10). And in the Prophet, the good Spirit and the good earth. Therefore, the Savior did not reject the testimony of goodness. But the teacher eliminated error without God.

19:18-19

(Verse 18, 19.) But if you want to enter life, keep the commandments. He said to him, 'Which ones?' Jesus replied, 'You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony. Honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.' This young man is tempting, and from this we can prove that when the Lord tells him, 'If you want to enter life, keep the commandments,' he deceitfully asks what those commandments are: as if he himself had not read them, or as if the Lord could command something contrary to God.

19:20

(Verse 20.) The young man said to Him: All these things I have kept from my youth, what do I still lack? Jesus said to him: The young man lies. For if he had fulfilled the commandments: You shall love your neighbor as yourself, how then, upon hearing: Go, sell what you have and give to the poor, did he go away sad, for he had many possessions?

19:21

(Verse 21.) If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. It is in our power to choose to be perfect. However, whoever wishes to be perfect must sell what they have: and not sell only a portion, as Ananias and Sapphira did (Act. V); but sell everything: and when they have sold, give everything to the poor, and thus prepare for themselves treasure in the kingdom of heaven. And this is not enough for perfection unless one follows the Savior after despising riches, that is, by leaving behind evils and doing good. For it is easier to despise a purse than pleasure. Many who leave behind riches do not follow the Lord. But he who is an imitator of the Lord follows him and walks in his footsteps. For whoever says that they believe in Christ should walk as he walked (1 John 2:6).

19:22

(Verse 22.) He went away sad, for he had many possessions. This is the sadness that leads to death. And the cause of the sadness is that he had many possessions, that is, thorns and thistles, which choked the Lord's seed.

19:23

(Verse 23) But Jesus said to his disciples: Amen I say to you, that it is difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And how did Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, being rich, enter into the kingdom of heaven (Genesis 13 and 36), and in the Gospel Matthew and Zacchaeus, leaving their riches behind, are proclaimed by the testimony of the Lord? But it must be considered that at the time they entered, they ceased to be rich. Therefore, they will not enter as long as they are rich. And yet, because riches are difficult to despise, he did not say, 'It is impossible for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven,' but rather 'It is difficult.' Where difficulty is presented, not impossibility is claimed; but rarity is demonstrated.

19:24-26

(Verse 24 and following) And again I say to you: It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, 'Who then can be saved?' But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.' This statement shows that it is not difficult, but impossible. For if a camel cannot enter through the eye of a needle, so a rich person cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, no rich person will be saved. But if we read Isaiah, how the camels of Midian and Ephah come to Jerusalem with gifts and offerings (Isa. 60): and how those who were previously bent and distorted by the corruption of vices enter the gates of Jerusalem, we will see how even these camels, to whom the rich are compared, when they have unloaded the heavy burden of sins and the corruption of the whole body, are able to enter through the narrow gate and the narrow way that leads to life (Above 7). But when the disciples asked and

were amazed at the severity of his words, he tempered the severity of his statement with his mercy, saying: What is impossible for men is possible for God.

19:27

(Verse 27) Then Peter answered and said to him: Behold, we have left everything and followed you: What therefore will be for us? Great confidence: Peter was a fisherman, he had not been wealthy, he sought food by hand and skill: and yet he speaks confidently, We have left everything. And because it is not enough to just leave, he adds what is perfect: and followed you. We have done what you commanded, so what reward will you give us?

19:28

(Verse 28.) But Jesus said to them: Amen I say to you, that you who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. He did not say: you who have left all things, for this Crates the philosopher also did, and many others despised riches; but you who have followed me: which properly belongs to the apostles and believers. In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, you will also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel: because they refused to believe in Him, who believed in you.

19:29-30

(Verse 29, 30.) And everyone who has left houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or fields for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess eternal life. But many who are first shall be last, and the last first. This passage is in agreement with that saying in which the Savior speaks: 'I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.' (Matthew 10:34) Therefore, those who for the sake of the faith of Christ and the preaching of the Gospel have despised all affections, as well as riches and worldly pleasures: they will receive a hundredfold and possess eternal life. In connection with this statement, some introduce the idea of a thousand years after the resurrection, saying that then a hundredfold of all the things we have given up will be restored to us, and eternal life will be given: not understanding that if in other matters there is a worthy promise, in the case of wives there appears a shameful thing; so that one who leaves one for the Lord will receive a hundred in the future. Therefore, this is the meaning: Whoever renounces earthly things for the sake of the Savior will receive heavenly things, which will be suitable and proportionate to the merit of the renunciation, as if a small number were compared to a hundred. Thus the Apostle says, he who has renounced only one house and the small fields of one province: As if having nothing, and possessing all things (2 Corinthians 6:10).

20:1-12

Chapter 20, Verse 1 onwards: The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. After agreeing to pay them the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. Going out again at about the third hour, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will give you whatever is right.' So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour and did the same. At about

the eleventh hour, he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.' So when those hired at about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. But when the first came, they thought that they would receive more; and they themselves also received each a denarius. And receiving it, they murmured against the householder, saying: These last have worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have borne the burden of the day and the heat? But answering one of them, he said: This parable or similitude of the kingdom of heaven is understood from the things that have been set forth. For it is written before it: Many will be first who will be last, and the last first. Not deferring to time but to faith. And he said that the householder went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard and agreed to pay them a denarius for their work. Then he went out again around the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he promised to pay them what is just, not a denarius. He also did the same at the sixth hour and the ninth hour. And the eleventh hour workers also found others standing idle all day long, and sent them into the vineyard. And when it was evening, the owner of the vineyard instructed his steward to begin paying the workers, starting with the last ones hired and ending with the first ones hired; and all were equally incited against the last ones, accusing the father of the household of unfairness. Not because they received less than what was agreed upon, but because they wanted to receive more than those upon whom the steward had shown his mercy. It seems to me that the first hour belongs to the workers Samuel, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist, who can say with the Psalmist: 'You are my God from my mother's womb' (Psalm 22:11). The third hour belongs to those who began to serve God from their youth. The sixth hour belongs to those who took up the yoke of Christ in mature age. The ninth hour belongs to those who are already declining towards old age. And the eleventh hour belongs to those in their final old age. Yet all receive the same reward, although the labor is different. There are those who explain this parable in a different way. The first hour is said to represent the time from Adam and the other patriarchs to Noah; the third, from Noah to Abraham and the giving of circumcision to him; the sixth, from Abraham to Moses, when the Law was given; the ninth, from Moses to the prophets; the eleventh, from the apostles to the Gentile people, whom everyone envies. Therefore, understanding this itself after the eleventh hour, when it was near the setting of the sun and towards evening, John the Evangelist speaks: My little children, it is the last hour (1 John 2:13). And at the same time, consider that the injustice of the head of the household, which everyone equally accuses the eleventh hour workers of, they do not understand in themselves. For if the head of the household is unjust, he is not unjust in one, but in all: because the worker who was sent to the vineyard in the third hour did not work as much as the one who was sent in the first hour. Similarly, the worker who was sent in the sixth hour worked less than the one in the third hour; and the worker in the ninth hour worked less than the one in the sixth hour. Therefore, every backward calling is envied by the peoples, and is twisted in the grace of the Gospel. Hence, the Savior concludes the parable, saying: The first will be last, and the last first. Thus, the Jews are turned from head to tail, and we are changed from tail to head.

20:13 (Verse 13.) Friend, I do not harm you. I read in a certain book that this friend who is rebuked by the head of the household is understood as the first hour worker, the prototype, and those who believed at that time. Did you not come with me from a denarius? A denarius has the figure of a

king. Therefore, you have received the reward that I promised to you, that is, my image and likeness: what more do you seek? And it is not so much that you want to receive more yourself, but rather that you desire that no one else receive anything, as if the merit of the reward would be diminished by sharing it with another.

20:14-15

(Verse 14, 15) Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last worker the same as I give to you. Or is it not lawful for me to do what I want with my own money? Is your eye evil because I am good? So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen.

20:16

(Verse 16.) Is your eye evil because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen. This is the same meaning as the parable of the prodigal son in Luke, where the older son envies the younger and does not want to receive him when he returns and accuses the father of injustice. And so that we may know that this is the meaning we have said, the title and the end of this parable agree. So the last shall be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen.

20:17-19

(Ver. 17 seqq.) And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took his twelve disciples aside privately, and said to them: Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and on the third day he will rise again. He had often told this to his disciples, but because they were engaged in many disputes among themselves, they could easily forget what they had heard. So, as he was about to go to Jerusalem and take the apostles with him, he prepared them for the trial, so that they would not be scandalized when persecution and the ignominy of the cross come.

20:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, bowing down and asking something of him. He said to her, 'What do you want?' She replied to him, 'Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.' From this, we can infer that the mother of the sons of Zebedee has the expectation that when the Lord says, 'The Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified,' and when he announces the shame of the passion to the disciples who fear it, she desires the glory of the triumphant one. This, as I understand it, was the reason why, after everything the Lord had said, the woman believed that he would immediately begin ruling after the resurrection. And she desired this to be fulfilled in the first coming, what is promised in the second coming, and with feminine eagerness she longs for his presence, forgetting about the future. But when the Lord asks and she requests, 'What do you want?', it is not out of ignorance but is said from her perspective, who was to be scourged and crucified, just as with the woman with the issue of blood, 'Who touched me?' (Luke 8:15). And about Lazarus: Where have you laid him (John 11:34)? In the Old Testament as well: Adam, where are you (Genesis 3:9)? And: I will go down and see if they

have indeed done all according to the outcry that has come to me; if not, I will know (Genesis 18:21). However, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, driven by feminine error and a sense of piety, requested without knowing what she was asking for. And it is not surprising if this is attributed to ignorance; as it is said about Peter, when he wanted to make three tabernacles, not knowing what he was saying (Mark 9).

20:22 (Verse 22) But Jesus answered and said: You do not know what you ask. The mother asks, and the Lord speaks to the disciples, understanding her prayers to come from the will of the children. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink? They said to him: We can. In the Holy Scriptures, we understand the cup to represent suffering, as it is written: Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me (Matt. XXVI, 39). And in the psalm: What shall I render to the Lord for all the things he has rendered to me? I will take the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord (Ps. CXV, 3 et seqq.); and immediately it explains what this cup is: Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

20:23

(Ver. 23.) He said to them: 'You will indeed drink my cup. But to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to give you, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.' It is questioned how James and John, the sons of Zebedee, drank the cup of martyrdom, when the Scripture narrates that only James the Apostle was beheaded by Herod (Acts XII): but John ended his life by his own death. But if we read the ecclesiastical histories, in which it is reported that he himself, on account of martyrdom, was sent into a vat of boiling oil, and from there as an athlete proceeded to receive the crown of Christ, and was immediately banished to the island of Patmos, we will see that the spirit for martyrdom was not lacking, and that John drank the cup of confession: which three young men also drank in the fiery furnace (Dan. III), although the persecutor did not shed blood. But what he says: to sit at my right hand and my left, is not mine to give to you, but to those for whom it has been prepared by my Father, it is to be understood as follows: The kingdom of heaven is not about giving, but about receiving. For there is no partiality with God (Acts 10:34): but whoever presents themselves in such a way as to become worthy of the kingdom of heaven, will receive what has been prepared not for individuals, but for life. Therefore, if you are among those who will attain the kingdom of heaven, which my Father has prepared for the triumphant and victorious, you will also receive it. Others want to interpret the saying about Moses and Elijah, whom they had seen talking with him on the mountain a little while ago, but it does not seem so to me. For the names of those who are seated in the kingdom of heaven are not spoken; lest, with a few being named, the others are thought to be excluded.

20:24

(Verse 24.) And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. The ten apostles did not show indignation towards the mother of the sons of Zebedee, nor did they refer to the boldness of the woman making the request; but to the sons, because they, not understanding their own measure, were inflamed by excessive desire, to whom the Lord had also said: You do not know what you are asking. It is understood either from the Lord's response or from the indignation of the apostles that the sons sent their mother to make great requests.

20:25-27

(Verses 25 and following) But Jesus called them to Himself and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.' Therefore, it is in vain that some have sought excessive things, or that others grieve over the longing for their ancestors, since the summit of virtues is reached not through power, but through humility. Finally, he presents his own example, so that if his words were disregarded, they would be ashamed of their actions, and he says:

20:28 (Verse 28) Just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve. Note that we have frequently said that the one who serves is called the Son of Man. And to give his life as a ransom for many. When he assumed the form of a servant, in order to shed his blood for the world (Philippians 2). He did not say that he would give his life as a ransom for all, but for many, that is, for those who would be willing to believe.

20:19-31

(Verse 19 onwards) And as they were departing from Jericho, a great crowd followed him. And behold, two blind men sitting by the roadside, heard that Jesus was passing by, and they cried out, saying: Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David. But the crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent. Yet they cried out even more, saying: Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David. There were many robbers in Jericho who used to attack and harm those who were coming in and going out of Jerusalem; therefore the Lord came to Jericho with his disciples, to heal the wounded and to bring a large crowd with him. Finally, after they want to leave from Jericho, a large crowd followed him. If he had stayed in Jerusalem and never descended to the lowly things, the crowd would still be sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death until today. But there were also two blind men by the road. He calls blind those who could not yet speak: In your light we will see light (Ps. XXXV, 10). Along the road, because they seemed to have knowledge of the Law: but they were ignorant of the way, which is Christ: whom most understand as the Pharisees and Sadducees, and others as both the people, the old Testament and the New: because one, following the written Law, was blind without Christ. Because they could not see by themselves, they heard the proclamations of the Savior, and confessed him as the son of David. But if both blind men are referred to the Jewish people, what follows, 'The crowd rebuked them,' should be understood in relation to the Gentiles: whom the Apostle warns not to boast and be arrogant against their own root (Rom. 11); but since they themselves were grafted in by the error of those before them from the wild olive tree into the good olive tree, they should by no means envy the salvation of those before them. Have mercy on us, O son of David. They are reproached by the crowds, and yet they do not remain silent: but rather they repeat the same thing more frequently, so that they may show the desire for the fullness of true light.

20:32-33

(Verse 32, 33.) And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What do you want me to do for you? They said to him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. They were blind, not knowing where to go, and unable to follow the Savior. There were many pits in Jericho, many rocks and cliffs plunging into the deep: therefore the Lord stands, so that they can come and be called, lest the

crowds hinder them: and he asks as if ignorant of what they want, so that from the blind men's answer their manifest weakness may be revealed, and the power may be known from the remedy.

20:34

(Verse 34.) But Jesus, having mercy on them, touched their eyes: and immediately they saw, and followed him. He touches their eyes and provides as an artist what nature had not given. Or certainly what weakness had taken away, he restores with mercy. And immediately they saw, and followed him. Those who were previously sitting in Jericho, contracted and blind, had heard that he was passing by, and now they follow Jesus, not so much with their feet as with their virtues.

21:1-3

(Chapter 21, verses 1 onwards) And when he drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once.' He went out of Jericho, with a multitude following him, and many blind people were healed, and he approached Jerusalem, greatly enriched with merchandise. The greeting of the believers was returned, he desired to enter the city of peace and the site of God's vision, and the fortress of the watchtower. And when he was approaching Jerusalem, and had come to Bethphage to the house of the jaws (which was a village of the priests, and bore the type of confession; and it was situated on the mount of Olives, where the light of knowledge, where the rest of labors and sorrows), he sent two of his disciples, the contemplative and the active, that is, knowledge and work, to enter the fortress. And he said to them: Go into the fortress that is opposite you. For it was opposite to the apostles, and he did not want to accept the yoke of teachings. And immediately, he says, you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her: untie them and bring them to me. The donkey was tied with many chains of sins. The colt, too, was wild and impatient with the reins, as according to the Gospel of Luke (Chapter 19), it had many owners, not subject to one error and doctrine: and yet many owners who claimed illegal power for themselves, seeing the true Lord and his servants who had been sent to untie, dared not resist. We will explain what a female donkey is, and the offspring of a female donkey, in the following sections.

21:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) However, this happened so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying: Tell the daughter of Zion, behold your king comes to you, meek and sitting on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden. This is written in the prophet Zechariah: of which, if there is enough time in life, it will be said in its proper place. Now, briefly, it must be understood that according to the literal meaning, it was not possible for him to sit on both animals in a short distance of the journey. For either the she-asses sat and the foal was without a rider, or if the foal, which is more fitting, was used for sitting, the she-ass was led freely. Therefore, when the story seems to have impossibility or shame, we are led to deeper meanings: so that that she-ass which was submissive, and tamed, and had taken the yoke of the law, may be understood as the Synagogue; the foal of the she-ass, wanton and free, may be understood as the people of the Gentiles, on whom Jesus sat, and when he sent two of his disciples to them, one to the Circumcision, and the other to the Gentiles.

21:6-7

(Verse 6, 7) However, the disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. This colt and donkey, on which the apostles spread their cloaks so that Jesus might sit more comfortably, were naked before the coming of the Savior, and they shivered without cover, with many claiming dominion over them. But after they received the apostolic garments, they became more beautiful and had the Lord as their rider. The apostolic garment, or the teaching of virtues, or the exposition of Scriptures, can be understood, or the variations of ecclesiastical doctrines: unless the soul is instructed and adorned by these, it does not deserve to have the Lord as its dwelling.

21:8 (Verse 8.) But a great crowd spread their garments on the road. Notice the difference in each person. The apostles put their garments on the donkey, while the crowd, which is more humble, lays their garments in front of the donkey's feet, so that it does not stumble on a stone, step on a thorn, or fall into a ditch. On the other hand, some were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. They were cutting branches from fruit-bearing trees, with which the Mount of Olives is planted, and spreading them on the road in order to make the crooked straight and the rough places smooth, so that Christ, the victor over demons and vices, could walk more easily and securely in the hearts of believers.

21:9

(Verse 9.) But the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!' Let us now follow the spiritual order of discourse, for the story is clear. The crowds that had come out of Jericho and had followed the Savior and his disciples, after they saw the foal of a donkey loosed (which had been tied up before) and adorned with the apostles' garments, and the Lord Jesus sitting on it, they placed their garments on the ground and spread branches of trees on the road. And when they had completed all things with great effort, they also give testimony of their voice: and those who went before and those who followed after confessed not with a short and silent confession, but with a very loud clamor: Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. And what he says: The crowds that went before and that followed after, showed both the people who believed in the Lord before the Gospel, and those who believed in the Lord after the Gospel, praising Jesus with a unified voice of confession: and according to the example of the parable of the workers of different hours in the higher story, to accept one reward of faith. Furthermore, regarding what follows: 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' I remember having said, in a short letter to Damasus, who was the bishop of the city of Rome at that time, and now I will briefly explain. In the 117th psalm, which clearly speaks of the coming of the Savior, among other things we read: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.' This was done by the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. And immediately it follows: O Lord, save me: O Lord, prosper me. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord, etc. (Psalm 118:22 seqq.). For what is said in the Septuagint interpreters; O Lord, save now, that is, O Lord, save; in Hebrew we read: Hosanna, which Symmachus interprets more clearly, saying: I beseech thee, Lord, save, I beseech thee. Therefore, no one thinks that the phrase is composed of two words, namely Greek and Hebrew, but it is entirely Hebrew and

signifies that the coming of Christ is the salvation of the world. Hence, it follows: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. This is also confirmed by the Savior Himself in the Gospel: I came in my Father's name, and you did not receive me. Another will come in his own name, and you will receive him (John 5:43). Moreover, the joining of 'Hosanna', that is, 'salvation in the highest', clearly shows that the coming of Christ is not only the salvation of mankind, but of the whole world: connecting the earthly with the heavenly, so that every knee shall bow, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth (Philippians 2:10).

21:10

(Verse 10) And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, 'Who is this?' And the people ((or Many)) were saying, 'This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.' As Jesus entered the city with the whole crowd, the city of Jerusalem was stirred up, amazed at the multitude, not knowing the truth, and saying, 'Who is this?' Indeed, we read in another place the angels saying: 'Who is this King of glory?' (Psalm 24:8). But to others who were doubting or asking, the lowly common people confess: starting from the least, in order to reach the greatest, and they say:

163 This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee. The prophet whom even Moses had said would come, and who is specifically written with the article among the Greeks. From Nazareth in Galilee because he was brought up there: so that, like a flower of the field, he would be nurtured in the flower of virtues.

21:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) And Jesus entered the temple of God and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling doves. And He said to them, 'It is written: My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers.' Then Jesus entered the temple area accompanied by the crowd of believers (who had spread their garments so that the colt could walk on them without being harmed). He expelled all those who were selling and buying in the temple, overturned the tables of the money changers, and scattered the seats of those selling doves. And he said to them, quoting from the holy scriptures (Isaiah 56) and (Jeremiah 7), that his Father's house should be a house of prayer and not a den of robbers or a house of merchandise, as it is written in another Gospel (John 2). First of all, it must be known that according to the commands of the most august Law, in the whole world, in the temple of the Lord, and from almost all the regions of the Jews, countless offerings were being sacrificed, especially on festive days, of bulls, rams, and goats; so that the poor would not be without offering, those who offered would present young doves and turtles; it often happened that those who had come from afar did not have victims. Therefore, the priests devised a way to take prey from the people, and they sold all the animals they needed for sacrifices, so that they would sell to those who did not have them, and they themselves would receive them again when bought. He dispersed this band of people who were frequently coming due to their lack of resources, those who were in need of expenses, and not only did they not have offerings, but they didn't even have birds and cheap gifts to buy. So they appointed moneylenders who would lend money under collateral. But because there was a law, as commanded in Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 23, that no interest should be received, and borrowed money could not bring any benefit, as it had no gain, and sometimes it could even result

in loss, they invented another technique, that they would make 'Collybistas' instead of moneylenders, which the Latin language does not express the exact meaning of the word. Among them, what we call trinkets or cheap gifts are called collybadicuntur. For example, roasted chickpeas, dried grapes, and various types of fruits. Therefore, because the moneylenders, called Collybistae, could not charge interest, they would accept various goods instead of interest, so that they could demand what was not allowed in currency, but could be purchased with these items, as if Ezekiel himself did not preach this, saying: 'You shall not take interest and profits.' (Ezek. XXII, 12). The Lord, seeing such a trade or robbery in his Father's house, was stirred with zeal (as it is written in the 68th Psalm, verse 10: The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up), and he made for himself a whip out of cords, and drove out such a great multitude of people from the temple, saying: It is written: My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves. For he is a thief, and he turns the temple of God into a cave of thieves, who seeks profits from religion, and whose worship is not so much the worship of God as it is an opportunity for business. According to the story, Jesus enters the temple of the Father daily, and drives out all, both bishops and priests and deacons, as well as lay people, and the entire crowd from His Church, and He has only one crime, that of buying and selling. For it is written: Freely you have received, freely give. He also overturns the tables of the money changers. Note, because of the greed of the priests, the altars of God are called the tables of money changers. And he overturned the seats of those who were selling doves, who were selling the grace of the Holy Spirit, and they do everything to devour the subject peoples, of whom it is said (as is said): They devour my people like bread (Ps. 13:4). According to simple understanding, doves were not in seats but in cages, unless perhaps the caretakers of the doves were sitting in seats. But that is completely absurd, because in seats, the dignity of teachers is more clearly indicated, which is reduced to nothing when it is mixed with profits. Concerning the churches, let each one understand concerning themselves. For the Apostle says: You are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells in you (I Cor. VI, 15, and II Cor. III, 16). Let there be no dealing in the house of our hearts, no buying and selling, no desire for gifts, lest Jesus enters angry and stern, and does not cleanse His temple except by using a whip, so as to make a house of prayer out of a den of thieves and a house of commerce.

21:14

(Verse 14) And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. If he had not overturned the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, the blind and the lame would not have deserved to receive their former sight and the ability to walk.

21:15

(Verse 15) But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David', they were indignant and said to him, 'Do you hear what these are saying?' Many believe that the raising of Lazarus is the greatest sign, that the blind man received sight from birth, that the voice of the Father was heard at the Jordan, and that he showed the glory of the triumphant one when he was transfigured on the mountain. Among all the signs that he performed, it seems more amazing to me that one man, at that time considered despicable and exceedingly lowly to the point of being crucified later, could drive out such a multitude with a whip of cords, overturn tables, break chairs, and do other

things that an infinite army would not have done. For a fiery and heavenly radiance shone forth from his eyes, and the majesty of divinity shone upon his face. And though the priests dared not lay hands on him, they nevertheless plotted against him, and they twisted the testimony of the people and children who cried out, 'Hosanna to the son of David,' into a slander: for it is clear that this can only be said of the Son of God alone. Therefore, let the bishops and all holy men see with what danger they allow these things to be said of themselves, if the Lord to whom this was truly said is accused of a crime, since the faith of the believers was not yet solidified.

21:16

(Verse 16.) But Jesus said to them: Of course. Have you never read that from the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have perfected praise? How moderate is this statement, and how balanced is the response, not giving in to slander? He did not say what the Scribes wanted to hear, that children do good, to testify to me, nor did he say they are mistaken: they are children, you should forgive their age; but he brings forward an example from the eighth psalm, to strengthen the testimony of the Scriptures through the words of children, when the Lord is silent.

21:17

(Verse 17) And leaving them, he went out outside the city to Bethany, and he stayed there. He left the unbelievers and, leaving the city of opposition, he went to Bethany, which means house of obedience, foreshadowing at that time the calling of the gentiles, and he stayed there because he could not remain in Israel. This also should be understood, that he was of such great poverty and was not flattered by anyone, that in the greatest city he found no guest, no dwelling, but he lived in a small field with Lazarus and his sisters: for their village is Bethany.

21:18-20

(Verse 18 and following) But when he returned to the city in the morning, he was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, he went to it and found nothing on it except leaves. And he said to it, 'May no fruit ever come from you again!' And immediately the fig tree withered. And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, 'How did the fig tree wither at once?' After the darkness of the night had dispersed, as the morning light shone and midday approached, during which the Lord was going to illuminate the world by means of his passion, when he returned to the city, he was hungry. Whether to reveal the truth of his human flesh or to hunger for the salvation of believers and to burn with incredulity towards the Jews. And when he saw a certain tree (which we understand to be the Synagogue and assembly of the Jews) by the road, for it had the Law and therefore it was by the road, because it did not believe in the way, he came to it, standing namely and immobile, and not having the feet of the Gospel: and he found nothing in it, except leaves alone, the noise of promises, Pharisaic traditions, and the ostentation of the Law, and the ornaments of words without any fruits of truth. And another evangelist says: For the time had not yet come (Mark 10:13); either because the time of the salvation of Israel had not yet come, since the Gentile people had not yet entered, or because the time of faith had passed, because, coming to him first, and rejected, it had passed to the nations. And he said to him: May no fruit ever be born from you, either forever or for eternity: for both $\alpha\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\varsigma$ ((Al. $\alpha\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\varsigma$)) in Greek means. And the little bed was dried up, which did not have the food that the hungry Lord desired. Likewise, the leaves withered, so that only the trunk remained, and with the branches broken, the root revived. If

it wishes to believe in the last times, may the shoot of faith sprout, and may the Scripture be fulfilled, saying: 'There is hope for a tree.' (Job 14:7). However, according to the letter, the Lord, who was to suffer among the peoples and bear the scandal of the cross, had to strengthen the hearts of his disciples with the anticipation of a sign. And the disciples were amazed, saying: How did it wither immediately? Therefore, by the same power, could the Savior also dry up his enemies, unless he had awaited their salvation through repentance.

21:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) And Jesus answered and said to them, Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen. And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive. The dogs of the Gentiles bark against us in their volumes, which they have left as a memorial of their own impiety, asserting that the apostles did not have faith because they were not able to move mountains. To which we will respond, many signs were done by the Lord, according to the testimony of St. John the Evangelist, which were written down, the world could not contain them all (John 21:25). Not that the world could not contain the books, which it can, even though they are many, in one small chest or bookcase; but rather that the magnitude of the signs cannot be borne by miracles and unbelief. Therefore, we believe that the apostles did these things, but they were not written down so as not to give greater occasion to unbelievers to contradict. Otherwise, let us ask them whether they believe in these signs that are written about or not. And when we see them as unbelievers, we will consequently prove that they will not believe in greater things if they do not believe in smaller things. This is against them. But let us understand the devil, who is called corrupt mountain by the prophet, as we have said before, proud and boasting against his Creator. And when it possesses the soul of a man and is rooted in it, it can be transferred by the apostles and those who are similar to the apostles into the sea, that is, into salty, turbulent, and bitter places that have no sweetness of God. And it is read in the Psalms: We will not fear when the earth is troubled, and the mountains are carried into the heart of the sea (Ps. XLV, 2).

21:23

(Verse 23.) And when he came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people approached him as he was teaching, saying, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' In different words, they construct the same accusation as before, when they said, 'He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons.' For when they say, 'By what authority are you doing these things?' they doubt the authority of God and want it to be understood that what he does is by the power of the devil. Moreover, they added: Who gave you this authority? They openly deny the Son of God, whom they consider to be not working by his own power, but by the power of others, to perform miracles.

21:24-26

(Verse 24 onwards) But Jesus, answering, said to them: I will also ask you one question, which if you tell me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven or from men? But they thought within themselves, saying: If we say, From heaven, he will say to us: Why then did you not believe him? But if we say, From men, we are afraid of the multitude: for all held John as a prophet. And answering Jesus, they said: We do not

know. This is what is commonly said: A bad knot of a tree, a bad nail or wedge must be driven in. The Lord could have refuted the calumny of the tempters with an open response, but He wisely asks a question, so that they themselves, either by silence or by their answer, may be condemned. For if they had answered that the baptism of John was from heaven (as they cleverly handled in their malice), the consequent response would have been: Why then were you not baptized by John? If they had wanted to say that it was a human invention and had nothing divine, they feared the rebellion of the people. For all the crowds had received John's baptism in groups, and they held him as a prophet. Therefore, the most impious faction responded and, using the word of humility by which they claimed not to know, used it to plot deceit.

21:27

(Verse 27) He also said to them: Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things. They answered and said to him: We don't know. Then Jesus also replied to them: Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things. But the Truth cannot lie, and he said: Neither do I tell you. From this, he shows that they know but refuse to answer, and he knows but refuses to say, because they keep silent about what they know. And immediately he tells a parable that not only condemns their impiety, but also teaches that the kingdom of God will be given to the Gentiles.

21:28-31

(Verse 28 and following) What do you think? A certain man had two sons; and going to the first, he said: Son, go today to work in my vineyard. But he, answering, said: I do not want to. Afterwards, however, moved by repentance, he went. Going to the second, he said similarly. But he, answering, said: Yes, sir, and he did not go. Which of the two did the will of the father? And they said to him: The first. Jesus said to them (Luke XV). *Hi sunt duo filii, qui et in Lucae parabola describuntur, frugi et luxuriosus, et de quibus Zacharias propheta loquitur: Assumpsi mihi duas virgas: unam vocavi decorem, et alteram vocavi funiculum, et pavi gregem (Zach. XI, 7) . Primo dicitur Gentilium populo per naturalis legis notitiam: Vade, et operare in vinea mea: hoc est, quod tibi non vis fieri, alteri ne feceris (Tob. IV) . Qui superbe respondit: Nolo. But afterwards, upon the arrival of the Savior, the works of repentance were done in the vineyard of God, and the insolence of speech was corrected by labor. However, the second son, who is the people of the Jews, replied to Moses: 'We will do everything that the Lord has spoken' (Exod. XXIV), but he did not go into the vineyard because, thinking himself the heir after the son of the household had been killed. But others do not consider it as a parable of the Gentiles and Jews, but rather of sinners and the righteous, as the Lord Himself later expounded on the matter.*

Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

21:32

(Verse 32.) For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him. Now, which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of

God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. Even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

21:33

(Verse 33.) Listen to another parable: There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and then went on a journey. This is what the Lord meant by the proverb: It is hard to kick against the goads (Acts 9:5). The chief priests and the elders of the people, who questioned the Lord, said to him, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' And they desired to attain wisdom in words, they are surpassed by their own skill; and they listen in parables, because they did not deserve to listen with an open face. This man, the head of the household, is the one who had two sons; and in another parable, he hired workers for his vineyard; who planted a vineyard, of which Isaiah speaks most fully in the Song, bringing it to a conclusion: The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel (Isaiah 5:7). And in the Psalm: You have brought a vine out of Egypt, he says, you have driven out the nations, and planted it (Psalm 80:9). And he surrounded her with a hedge, or with the walls of a city, or with the help of angels: and he dug into her a winepress, or an altar, or those things for pressing wine, which are noted in the title of three Psalms: the eightieth, and the eighty-third. And he built a tower: no doubt the temple, of which it is said through Micah: And you, O cloudy tower, daughter of Zion (Mic. 4:8). And he placed it for the farmers, whom elsewhere he called vineyard workers: who were hired at the first, third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hour (Matt. 20). And he went on a journey: yes, not by a change of place; for how can God be absent where all things are fulfilled? And as it says through Jeremiah: I am a God who is near and not far away, says the Lord (Jeremiah 23:23). But he seems to be leaving the vineyard so as to leave the vine-dressers free will in their work.

21:34-36

(Verse 34 and following) But when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the vinedressers took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. And last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. We read the letter of Paul to the Hebrews (Heb. XI) ; and from it we learn in great detail the sufferings endured by the servants of the Lord.

21:37-38

(Verse 37, 38.) But lastly, he sent his son to them, saying: They will respect my son. However, the farmers, upon seeing the son, said among themselves: This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and we shall have his inheritance. In the passage above, we read: Again, he sent other servants more than the previous ones, and they did the same to them. The patience of the householder is shown in that he sent them more frequently, in order to provoke the wicked tenants to repentance. But they treasured up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath (Rom. 2). Moreover, that which is joined: They fear for my son, he does not come from ignorance. For what does the head of the

household not know, who in this place is understood as God the Father? But God is always said to be ambiguous, so that free will may be preserved for man. Let us ask Arius and Eunomius. Behold, the Father is said to be ignorant, and he tempers his judgement, and as far as you are concerned, he is proven to be lying. Whatever they may answer on behalf of the Father, let them understand it as being on behalf of the Son, who himself says that he does not know the day of consummation.

21:39

(Verse 39) And they apprehended him, cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. And the Apostle speaks, that Jesus was crucified outside the gate (Heb. 13). We can also understand it differently; that he was cast out of the vineyard, and there he was killed: so that when the gentiles received him, the vineyard would be given to others.

21:40-41

(Verse 40, 41.) When therefore the Lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those farmers? They say to him: He will destroy those wicked men and will lease out his vineyard to other farmers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons. The Lord asks them not because he doesn't know what they will answer, but in order to condemn them by their own response. And a vineyard has been leased to us, and it has been leased under the condition that we render to the Lord the fruits in their seasons, and we should know at all times what we must either say or do.

21:42

(Verse 42.) Jesus said to them: Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner? This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. (Psalm 118:22-23). Various parables and different teachings are woven into this story. For those whom he previously called workers, vine-dressers, and farmers, he now calls builders, that is, masons. Hence the Apostle says: You are God's field, you are God's building. (1 Corinthians 3:9). So just as bricklayers and vine-growers take possession of a vineyard, they also took possession of a stone, which they either place in the foundations, next to the architect Paul (Ibid.), or in the corner, to join together two walls, that is, both peoples (Ephesians 2), who were rejected by them, became the cornerstone. And this was done by the Lord, not by human strength, but by the power of God. Peter also confidently speaks of this stone of support: This stone, which was rejected by you builders, has become the cornerstone (1 Peter 2:7). And Isaiah said: Behold, I will send a chosen, precious, corner stone into the foundations of Zion: and he that believeth in him, shall not be confounded (Isa. II, 16).

21:43

(Verse 43.) Therefore I say to you, that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and it will be given to a nation producing its fruits. I have said many times that the kingdom of God is to be understood as the holy Scriptures, which the Lord took away from the Jews and gave to us, so that we may produce their fruits. This is the vineyard that is entrusted to the farmers and winegrowers, and those who do not work in it, having only the name of the Scriptures, will lose the fruits of the vineyard.

21:44

(Verse 44.) And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder. It is one thing to offend Christ through evil works, another to deny Him. Whoever is a sinner, yet believes in Him, falls indeed on the stone and is broken, but is not utterly crushed; for he is preserved through repentance for salvation. But on whomever the stone falls, that is, on whom the stone itself will crash down, and who completely denies Christ, it will grind him to powder, so that not even a shard remains, in which a little water could be poured.

21:45-46

(Verse 45, 46.) And when the chief priests and Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. And they sought to arrest him, but they feared the crowds because they regarded him as a prophet. Though they had hard hearts and were dull in their disbelief and impiety towards the Son of God, they could not deny the clear accusations, and they understood that all of the Lord's judgments were directed against them. Therefore, they indeed wanted to kill him, but they feared the crowds because they regarded him as a prophet. The crowd is always fickle, and does not persist in a fixed will: it is like the waves, being carried back and forth by the force of different winds. They now venerate and worship him as if he were a prophet, but later they shout against him: Crucify him, crucify such a person (John 19:6).

22:1-2

(Chapter 22—Verses 1, 2.) And Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like a king who made a marriage for his son. The Pharisees, understanding that these parables were about them, sought to seize him and kill him. Knowing their intention, the Lord rebuked them, undeterred by their rage, and without fear, so as to convict the sinners. This king who made a marriage for his son is the almighty God. But it signifies the union of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Church, which is gathered from both Jews and Gentiles.

22:3

(V. 3.) And he sent his servant to call the invited guests to the wedding, but they did not want to come. There is no doubt that it refers to Moses, through whom the Law was given to the invited guests. But if we read it in reference to the servants, as most copies have it, it should be understood as referring to the prophets, who were ignored by those invited through them.

22:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) He sent other servants again, saying: Tell those who are invited: Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and fatted cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready: come to the wedding feast. But they disregarded him. The servants who were sent the second time are better understood as prophets than apostles, if the word 'servant' is written above. But if you read 'servants' in the same place, then the second servants should be understood as apostles. The prepared dinner, the oxen, and the slaughtered fatted cattle either describe the riches of the kingdom using a metaphor, so that the spiritual may be understood from the carnal, or certainly the greatness of doctrine and the richness of God's teaching can be perceived.

22:6

(Verse 6) And they went away, some to their own village, and others to their business. The rest held his servants, and treating them with contempt, they killed them. Among those who do not accept the truth of the Gospel, there is much diversity. For those who were occupied with other matters and did not want to come are guilty of a lesser crime than those who, despite the invitation of the host, turned their affection into cruelty and mistreated or killed the king's servants. In this parable, the silence of the wedding guests and the deaths of the servants illustrate the contempt for the wedding feast.

22:7 (Verse 7) But when the king heard this, he was angry. Regarding what was said above: The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding feast and showed acts of mercy. The man's name was given, but now when it comes to vengeance, the man is silent and only the king is mentioned. And having sent his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. The armies, or avenging angels, of whom it is written in the Psalms: He sent upon them a destroying angel (Psalm 77:49); or we may understand the Romans, under the leadership of Vespasian and Titus, who, having killed the Jewish people, burned the rebellious city.

22:8-10

(Verse 8 and following) Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore, go to the street corners and invite to the wedding feast whoever you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad and the good alike, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. There were no Gentiles on the streets, but at the exits of the streets. However, it is questioned how among those who were outside, some bad and good ones were found. The Apostle to the Romans discusses this place more fully ((al. added, saying)) (Rom. 2:14): that the Gentiles, who naturally do the things that are of the law, condemn the Jews who have not made the written law. Among the ethnic groups themselves, there is infinite diversity; since we know that some are prone to vices and inclined to evil, while others are dedicated to the virtues of honorable customs.

22:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) But the king entered to see the guests, and he saw there a man who was not wearing a wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' But he was speechless. Those who were invited to the wedding feast had filled it up from the hedges and corners and streets and various places. But later, when the king came in to see the guests at his feast (that is, those who were resting in his trust, so that on the day of judgment he could visit the guests and discern the merits of each one), he found one who was not wearing a wedding garment. This one, all those who are associated with wickedness are understood. But the wedding garment, the commandments of the Lord, and the works that are fulfilled from the law and the Gospel, make the clothing of the new man. Therefore, if anyone is found at the time of judgment not having the wedding garment, that is, the garment of the heavenly ((Al. celestial)) man; but having a polluted garment, that is, the old man's rags, he is immediately seized and it is said to him: Friend, how did you enter here? He calls his friend because he was invited to a wedding: he accuses him of impudence because he has stained the wedding with his dirty clothes. But he remained silent. For in that moment there will be no place for repentance, nor the opportunity to deny, when all the angels and the world itself are witnesses of sins.

22:13

(Verse 13) Then the king said to the servants: Bind his hands and feet and send him into the outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The hands and feet being bound, the weeping of the eyes, and the gnashing of teeth, signify the truth of the resurrection being tested. Or certainly, the hands and feet are bound so that they may not do evil and run to shed blood. In the weeping of the eyes and the gnashing of teeth, the intensity of the torments is shown metaphorically through the limbs of the body.

22:14

(Verse 14) For many are called, but few are chosen. This parable encompasses in a brief sentence: that in the work of the vineyard, in the building of the house, and in the wedding feast, the focus should be on the end rather than the beginning.

22:15

(Verse 15.) Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to trap him in his words. And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" Caesar Augustus had appointed Herod, the son of Antipater, a foreigner and a proselyte, as the king of the Jews, who would be in charge of collecting taxes and obeying the Roman rule. Therefore, the Pharisees sent their disciples along with the Herodians, that is, the soldiers of Herod, or those who were called Herodians by the Pharisees because they paid taxes to the Romans and were not devoted to divine worship. Some Latin speakers foolishly believed that the Herodians were those who believed Herod to be the Christ, but we never read this anywhere at all.

22:16

(Verse 16.) Teacher, we know that you are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and you do not care about anyone's opinion. For you do not show partiality to people. So tell us, what do you think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? This is a clever and deceitful question, designed to trap the one being questioned and force him to fear God more than Caesar, and say that taxes should not be paid, so that the Herodians listening will immediately arrest him for sedition against the Roman ruler.

22:18

(Verse 18.) But Jesus, knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt me, hypocrites? The first virtue of a respondent is to understand the minds of those who ask, and to call not disciples, but tempters. Therefore, a hypocrite is called someone who is one thing and pretends to be another, that is, someone who acts one way in action and another in words.

22:19

(Verse 19.) Show me the coin of the census. And they offered him a denarius. Wisdom always acts wisely, so that its accusers are mainly confuted by their own words. Show me, he said, the denarius, that is, the kind of coin which was valued at ten coins and had the image of Caesar.

22:20

(Verse 20) And Jesus said to them, Whose image is this and superscription? Those who think that this question indicates ignorance on the part of the Savior, and not dispensation, let them learn from the present passage that Jesus could certainly know whose image was on the coin; but he asks in order to respond appropriately to their words.

22:21

(Verse 21) They said to Him, 'Caesar's.' Then He said to them, 'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' We cannot consider Augustus as Caesar, but Tiberius is understood to be his stepson, who succeeded him and under whom our Lord suffered. However, all the Roman emperors, from the first Caesar, who seized power, have been called Caesars. Furthermore, what He says, 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's,' that is, the tribute and money, and to God the things that are God's, let us understand as tithes, first fruits, offerings, and sacrifices, just as He Himself paid taxes for Himself and Peter (Matthew 17). And He rendered to God the things that are God's, doing the will of the Father (John 6).

22:22 (Verse 22) And those who listened were amazed. They, who should have believed in such wisdom, were amazed that their cunning for plotting had found no opportunity. And having left him, they departed. Bringing back unfaithfulness along with a miracle.

22:23

(Verse 23) On that day the Sadducees approached him, who say that there is no resurrection. There were two sects among the Jews: the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees prioritized the righteousness of traditions and observances, which they call 'second law', and this is why they were referred to as 'separated' from the people. However, the Sadducees, who are referred to as 'just', claimed for themselves what they were not: while the former believed in the resurrection of the body and soul and confessed angels and spirits, the Sadducees denied all of these (according to the Acts of the Apostles). These are two houses, of which Isaiah teaches more clearly that they are causes of offense in the stumbling block (Isaiah 8).

22:24-27

(Vers. 24 seqq.) And they asked him, saying: Master, Moses said: If any man die, having a wife, and he have no children, that his brother should take her to wife, and raise up seed to his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, having taken a wife, died; and, not having issue, left his wife to his brother. In like manner the second and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Those who did not believe in the resurrection of the body and thought that the soul perished with the body rightly invent such a fable, which demonstrates their madness in asserting the resurrection of the dead. However, it is possible that this might actually happen in their nation at some point.

22:28

(Verse 28) Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife will she be? For they all had her. They oppose the absurdity of the story in order to deny the truth of the resurrection.

22:29

(Verse 29.) But Jesus, answering, said to them: You err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. Therefore, they err because they do not know the Scriptures, and because they are ignorant of the Scriptures, they consequently do not know the power of God, that is, Christ, who is the power of God and the wisdom of God (I Cor. 1).

22:30

(Verse 30) For in the resurrection neither do they marry, nor are they given in marriage; but they are as the angels of God in heaven. The Latin custom does not correspond to the Greek idiom. For to marry is properly said of women, and to take wives of men; but let us simply understand the statement, that to marry is written of men, and to be given in marriage of women. If in the resurrection they do not marry, nor are they given in marriage, then the bodies that are able to marry and be given in marriage will rise again. For no one indeed says about a stone and a tree, and these things which do not have reproductive organs, that they do not marry, nor are they married; but about those things which can marry, they do not marry in a different way. But what is brought forth: But they are like the angels of God in heaven. A spiritual conversation is promised.

22:31-33

(Vers. 31 seqq.) But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken by God, saying to you: I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the crowds heard this, they were amazed at his teaching. To prove the truth of the resurrection, he could have used many other more obvious examples, among which is: The dead will be raised up, and those who are in the graves will rise again (Isaiah 26:19). And in another place: Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some unto everlasting life, and others unto shame and everlasting contempt (Dan. XII, 2). Therefore, it is asked what the Lord intended by this testimony, which seems ambiguous or not sufficiently related to the truth of the resurrection: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and as if having proclaimed this, he proved what he wanted by immediately adding: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Those who also surrounded the turmoil, knowing the mystery, were amazed at his teaching and answers. We have already said above that the Sadducees, confessing neither angel, nor spirit, nor resurrection of bodies, also preached the destruction of souls. These accepted only the five books of Moses, rejecting the prophecies of the prophets. Therefore, it was foolish to present testimonies whose authority they did not follow. Furthermore, in order to prove the eternal nature of souls, he presents the example of Moses: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' (Exodus 3:6). And immediately he deduces: 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,' so that when he has proven that souls continue to exist after death (for it could not be that God would be their God if they did not exist at all), the resurrection of the bodies, which have carried out good or evil deeds along with the souls, would consequently be introduced. In the final part of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul expands on this topic more fully (1 Cor. XV).

22:34-40

(Verse 34 and following) But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him: "Teacher, which is

the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. In his two commands, the whole law and the prophets hang. What we read about Herod and Pontius Pilate, that they conspired in the death of the Lord, we also see now concerning the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who are opposed to each other, but agree with the same mind in testing Jesus. Therefore, those who had already been confuted in the display of the coin and had seen the faction of the opposing party undermined, should have been warned by example not to plot further snares: but malice and envy nourish audacity. One of the legal experts, not desiring to not know but attempting, asks whether the one being questioned knew what was being asked, what the greater commandment is: not asking about the commandments, but what the first and great commandment is; so that when all that God has commanded is great: whatever he may answer, he may have an opportunity to slander, asserting that something else is great among many. Therefore, whoever knows and asks not by desire to learn, but by the desire to know, whether the one who is going to respond knows, approaches in the likeness of the Pharisees, not as a disciple, but as a tempter.

Book Four

Book Four

22:41-45

(verses 41 onwards) But when the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them, saying, 'What do you think about the Christ, whose son is he?' They said to him, 'David.' He said to them, 'How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool?" If David then calls him Lord, how is he his son?' Those who had gathered together to test Jesus and tried to capture the truth through deceitful questioning, gave an opportunity for their own refutation. They are asked (or, it is asked) about Christ whose son he is. The questioning of Jesus benefits us even today against the Jews. And indeed those who confess that Christ is to come assert that he is a simple man and a holy man from the lineage of David. Let us therefore question those who are taught by the Lord: if he is a simple man and only a son of David, how does David call him his Lord? Not by uncertain error or personal will, but in the Holy Spirit (or, but in the Holy Spirit, he is silent). The testimony, however, which he presents, is taken from the one hundred and ninth Psalm. Therefore, David is called Lord, not according to what he was born, but according to what he always was, born from the Father, surpassing his own Father in the flesh. The Jews, in order to evade the truth of the question, invent many idle things, asserting that the native of Abraham, whose son was Damascus Eliezer, and that the psalm was written from that person's perspective, in which the Lord God said to his lord, Abraham, after the slaughter of the five kings: Sit at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool. (Genesis 14). Whom should we ask: How did God say to Abraham these things that follow: With you is the beginning in the day of your power, in the splendors of the saints, I have begotten you before Lucifer; and: The Lord has sworn, and will not regret it; you are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek? And we should try to answer how Abraham was born before Lucifer and was a priest according to the order of Melchizedek: regarding whom Melchizedek offered bread and wine, and from whom he received tithes of the spoils.

22:46

(Verse 46) And no one was able to answer him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask him any more questions. The Pharisees and Sadducees, seeking an opportunity to accuse him, and to find some word by which they could trap him, because they were confounded by his teachings, no longer questioned him, but were clearly apprehended and handed over to the Roman authorities. From this we understand that the poisons of envy can indeed be overcome, but it is difficult for them to rest.

23:1-3

(Chapter 23, Verses 1 and following.) Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying: The scribes and Pharisees have seated themselves on the chair of Moses. Therefore, whatever they tell you, observe and do it, but do not do their works. For they speak, but do not practice. What is gentler, what is kinder than the Lord? He is tempted by the Pharisees, their plots are crushed, and according to the Psalmist: The arrows of little children have become their wounds (Psalm 63:8). And nevertheless, because of their priesthood and the dignity of their office, he urges the people to submit to them, considering not their works, but their teaching. But when He says, 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat,' He shows that the seat represents the teaching of the Law. Therefore, we must also understand the teaching in the passages that say, 'He did not sit on the throne of pestilence' (Psalm 1:1) and 'He overturned the seats of those selling doves' (Matthew 21:12; Mark 11:15).

23:4

(Verse 4.) However, they bind heavy and burdensome loads and lay them on people's shoulders; but they themselves are unwilling to move them with their finger. This applies generally to all teachers who command heavy things but do not do smaller things. However, it should be noted that both the shoulders, the finger, the burdens, and the chains with which the burdens are bound should be understood spiritually.

23:5

(Verse 5.) All their works they do to be seen by others. Therefore, whoever does anything to be seen by others, is a scribe and a Pharisee.

23:6

(Verse 6.) For they enlarge their phylacteries and magnify their fringes. They love the places of honor at banquets, the chief seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called Rabbi by men. Woe to us, miserable ones, to whom the vices of the Pharisees have been passed on. When the Lord gave the commandments of the Law through Moses, He added at the end: Bind them upon your hand, and they shall be before your eyes (Deut. VI, 8). And the meaning is: Let my precepts be in your hand, so that they may be fulfilled in action: let them be before your eyes, so that day and night you may meditate on them. The Pharisees, by misinterpreting this, wrote the Ten Commandments of Moses on scrolls, folding them up and binding them on their foreheads, making them like a crown on their heads so that they would always be before their eyes. This is still done today by the Indians, Persians, and Babylonians, and those who do this are considered religious among the people. Moses also commanded (Num. XV) that the Israelite

people should make blue tassels on the corners of their garments, to distinguish them as the chosen people, just as circumcision is a sign for the Jewish people's bodies, so their clothing should have some distinction. Superstitious teachers, seeking popular applause, and pursuing gains from women, made large phylacteries and bound the sharpest thorns in them so that, as they walked or sat, they would be punctured and, as it were, be drawn by this admonition to the duties of the Lord and to the ministries of his service. Therefore, because the Lord had said that they do all their works to be seen by men, which he had accused in general, he now divides them into parts. Those little tablets of the Decalogue were called phylacteries, which whoever had them would have as a safeguard and a reminder of themselves: the Pharisees not understanding that these things should be carried in the heart, not on the body; otherwise, even cabinets and chests have books, but do not have knowledge of God. This is done among us by superstitious women, in little Gospels, and in the wood of the cross, and in similar things (which indeed they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge). (Romans 10) Even today, they strain out a gnat and swallow a camel (Below, in the same place). Such was the fringe, small and short, from the Law and the precepts, which was touched by the woman who was flowing with blood, in the cloak of the Lord (Luke 8, above). But she was not moved by the superstitious thorns of the Pharisees; rather, she was healed by touching it. And when they excessively enlarge their phylacteries and make large fringes, seeking glory from men, they are accused in the rest, why they seek the first places at dinners, and the first seats in synagogues; and in public they cut throats and glory; and they are called Rabbi by men, which is said in Latin language, teacher. Denique sequitur:

23:8-12

(Verse 8 onwards) But you must not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, who is in heaven. Nor are you to be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted. Neither be called masters; for One is your Master, that is, Christ. And do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. Father, because from Him all things are. Teacher, because through Him all things: or because through the dispensation of His flesh, we all are reconciled to God. It is asked why the Apostle, the teacher of the Gentiles, declared himself to be against this precept (2 Corinthians 5; Colossians 1); or how, in the common language, especially in the monasteries of Palestine and Egypt, they call each other Fathers? This is resolved as follows: It is one thing to be a father or a teacher by nature, another thing by indulgence. If we call someone our father, we show honor to their age, not that they are the author of our life. Likewise, a teacher is called such from the fellowship of a true teacher. And to avoid endless repetition, just as one God and one Son do not prejudice others from being called gods and sons by adoption, so one father and one teacher do not prejudice others from being called fathers and teachers in an abusive manner.

23:13-14

(Ver. 13, 14.) But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive the greater condemnation. The scribes

and Pharisees have knowledge of the Law and the Prophets, and they know that Christ is the Son of God; they are not ignorant that He was born of a Virgin. But while they seek to prey on the subject people, they themselves do not enter the kingdom of heaven, nor do they allow those who could enter to do so. This is what the Prophet Hosea accuses: The priests have hidden the way, they have murdered Shechem (Hosea 6:9). And again: The priests have not said, 'Where is the Lord?' (Hosea 4). Indeed, every teacher who scandalizes his disciples with evil deeds shuts the kingdom of heaven before them.

23:15

(Verse 15.) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel over sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. We do not serve with the same zeal with which we seek. Scribes and Pharisees, while traversing the whole world for the sake of gains or different profits to be sought both by attracting disciples and by the image of holiness, they had the intention to make a proselyte, that is, a stranger and uncircumcised, mix with the people of God. But he, who before, while he was an ethnich, simply wandered, and was once the son of Gehenna, seeing the vices of the masters, and understanding to destroy them by works, what they were teaching by words, returns to his vomit: and becoming a gentile, as if a transgressor, he will be worthy of a greater punishment. But he is called the son of Gehenna, just as the son of perdition, and the son of this age. For each one is called the son of him whose works he does.

23:16-22

(Verse 16 onwards) Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple is nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the temple is bound by his oath.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? And, 'Whoever swears by the altar is nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on it is obligated.' Blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore, whoever swears on the altar, swears on it and on all things that are above it. And whoever swears in the temple, swears in it and in him who dwells in it. And whoever swears in heaven, swears on the throne of God and on him who sits on it. Above, as it seemed to us, we have explained what the tradition of the Pharisees meant, saying: Whatever gift is from me will benefit you: now the double tradition of the Pharisees, enticing to one occasion of greed, is condemned, so that they may be proved to do everything for gain and not for the fear of God. For just as in the phylacteries and fringes, by enlarged expectations of holiness, it was trying to capture glory, and was seeking gains through the opportunity of glory, so another tradition found fault with the teachers of impiety. If anyone were to swear in the temple during a dispute, or in some argument, or in a doubtful case, and later be convicted of lying, they were not held accountable for the crime. But if they were to swear on gold and money, which was offered to the priests in the temple, they were immediately compelled to fulfill what they had sworn. Again: If anyone swore upon the altar, no one held him guilty of perjury; but if he swore falsely on a gift, or on offerings, that is, on victims and on fine flour and on the rest, which are offered to God upon the altar, these were most diligently sought after. Therefore, the Lord reproached them both for foolishness and deceit, because the temple is much greater than the gold that is sanctified by the temple, and the altar is greater than the offerings that are sanctified by the altar. But they did it not out of fear of God, but out of greed for riches.

23:23

(Verse 23.) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. Many precepts are given in the law that foreshadow future events. But others are open, according to the Psalmist, saying: The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes (Psalm 19:8), which are immediately to be desired. For example, thou shalt not commit adultery: thou shalt not steal: thou shalt not bear false witness, etc. But the Pharisees, because the Lord had commanded (let us for the present leave out the mystical understanding) tithes to be offered in the temple for the maintenance of the priests and Levites, whose portion was the Lord's, were studious in this one thing, that the commands should be observed: but as to the other matters, whether a man should do them or not, they made little account. And from this chapter it accuses them of greed, because they eagerly demand tithes even of cheap vegetables, and neglect justice in the handling of business disputes, and mercy towards the poor, orphans, and widows, and faith in God, which are great.

23:24

(Verse 24) Blind leaders, straining out a gnat but swallowing a camel. I believe the camel refers to the understanding of the present situation, the magnitude of the teachings, judgment, mercy, and faith. The gnat, on the other hand, represents the tithing of mint, dill, cumin, and other cheap herbs. We devour and neglect these great commandments of God, while showing diligence in matters of religion that bring profit and have little importance.

23:25-26

(Verse 25, 26.) Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and impurity. Blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and the plate, so that the outside also may be clean. In different words, with the same meaning as above, Jesus accuses the Pharisees of hypocrisy and deceit, because they pretend one thing to others outwardly, but do something different at home. Not that their superstition delayed them in the cup and dish; but that they displayed holiness to others, in their attire, in their speech, in their phylacteries, in the fringes, in the length of their prayers, and other such things, while internally they were full of the filth of vices.

23:27-28

(Verse 27, 28.) Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful to people, but inside are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to people, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Just as he had shown with the cup and dish, that they were clean on the outside but dirty on the inside, he now repeats the same example with tombs: how tombs are whitewashed on the outside and decorated with marble and gold and different colors, but inside they are full of dead people's bones. This is how the perverse teachers, who teach one thing and do another, demonstrate cleanliness with their clothing and humility of speech, but inside they are full of all uncleanness and desire. Finally, this expresses more clearly the very thing itself, inferring: Thus you indeed appear just to men on the outside: but within, you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

23:29-32 (Verse 29 onwards) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' Thus you bear witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. In the most skillful syllogism, they are proven to be the offspring of murderers, while they themselves, by the opinion of goodness and glory among the people, build tombs for the prophets whom their forefathers killed, and they say, 'If we had lived in that time, we would not have done what our fathers did.' However, even if they do not say it in words, they speak through their actions by ambitiously and magnificently building monuments to the slain, whom they do not deny were killed by their forefathers. And you, fulfill the measure of your fathers. Having proven with the previous words that they were the children of murderers and those who killed the prophets, he now concludes what he wanted and puts forth the final part of the syllogism. And you, fulfill the measure of your fathers. What was lacking for them, you complete. They killed the servants, you crucify the Lord. They killed the prophets, you kill him who was preached by the prophets.

23:33

(v. 33) Serpents, ((Al. additur et)) offspring of vipers, how can you escape the judgment of Gehenna? This very thing John the Baptist also said (Luke III). Therefore, just as vipers give birth to vipers, so you, he says, are born of murderers fathers, are murderers.

23:34

(Verse 34.) Therefore, behold, I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town. And so upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. At the same time, observe the Apostle writing to the Corinthians (1 Cor. VII), that there are various gifts of the disciples of Christ; some are prophets, who preach the coming things; some are wise, who know when they should speak; some are scribes, most learned in the Law, from whom Stephen was stoned, Paul was killed, Peter was crucified, the disciples were whipped in the Acts of the Apostles: and they were persecuted from city to city; driven out of Judea, so that they might migrate to the Gentile people.

23:35-36

(Verses 35, 36.) So that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I tell you, all these things will come upon this generation. Regarding Abel, there is no doubt that he is the one whom his brother Cain killed. But the righteousness of Zechariah is not only confirmed now by the judgment of the Lord, but also by the testimony of Genesis (Gen. IV), where the offerings accepted by God are narrated. We inquire who this Zacharias son of Barachiah is, because we have read of many Zachariases. And so that no opportunity for error might be given, it has been added: whom you have killed between the temple and the altar. Different things are read in different places, and I ought to present the opinions of different authors. Some say that it is Zacharias son of Barachiah, who is the eleventh among the

twelve prophets, and that the name of the father agrees with him; but where he was killed between the temple and the altar, Scripture does not speak: especially since during his time there were hardly any ruins of the temple. Some suggest that Zacharias is the father of John, approving this based on certain apocryphal dreams, stating that he was killed because he preached the coming of the Savior. However, since this does not have authority from the Scriptures, it is dismissed with the same ease with which it is proven. Others believe this Zacharias to be the one who was killed by King Joash of Judah between the temple and the altar, as the history of the Kings narrates. But it should be noted that this Zacharias is not the son of Barachiah, but the son of Jehoiada the priest. And Scripture also reports: He did not remember the kindness Joash, his father, had shown him (2 Chronicles 24:22). Therefore, if we consider Zachariah and the place where he was killed, we wonder why he is called the son of Barachiah and not Joiada. Barachiah in our language means blessed by the Lord, and the righteousness of the priest Joiada is demonstrated in the Hebrew language. In the Gospel used by the Nazarenes, we find written that he is the son of Joiada instead of Barachiah. The simpler brethren among the ruins of the temple and the altar, or at the exits of the gates that lead to Siloam, pointing to the red stones, consider them to be polluted with the blood of Zechariah. We do not condemn the error that stems from hatred of the Jews and devotion to the faith. Let us briefly explain why the blood of the righteous Abel to the son of Barachiah is sought from that generation, even though neither of them killed him. The rule of the Scriptures is to present two generations, of the good or the evil, that is, one for each individual. Let us take examples of good things: Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? or who shall rest in his holy mountain? (Ps. 23:3) And when he has described those who are going to ascend into the mountain of the Lord, who were of different ages, afterward he adds: This is the generation of them that seek the Lord, that seek the face of the God of Jacob. And in another place concerning all the saints: The generation of the righteous shall be blessed. (Ps. 112:2) But concerning the wicked, as in the present place: The generation of vipers. And all things will be required from this generation. And in Ezekiel, when he described the sins of the land, the prophetic word added: If Noah, and Job, and Daniel were found there, I will not forgive the sins of that land (Ezek. 14:14): All the righteous who would be like them in virtues, by Noah and Job and Daniel, wanting to be understood. Therefore, those who have done similar things to Cain and Joash against the apostles are referred to as being from the same generation.

23:37

(Verse 37.) Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you: how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were unwilling! Jerusalem, He calls not the stones and buildings of the city, but the inhabitants, whom He mourns for with a fatherly affection, as we also read in another place that He wept upon seeing her (Luke 19). And in saying, how often I have longed to gather your children together, He testifies that all the prophets sent by Himself were rejected. We also read in the song of Deuteronomy the image of a chicken gathering its chicks under its wings: As an eagle protects its nest and desires its young, spreading its wings, it receives and carries them on its feathers (Deut. XXXII, 11).

23:38

Verse 38. Behold, your house shall be left desolate. This very thing Jeremiah had already said in the person of Jeremiah: I have forsaken my house, I have cast off my inheritance: my inheritance is become to me as a lion in the forest. We see with our eyes the house of the Jews left desolate, that is, that temple which shone more brightly, because it lost its inhabitant Christ, and, desiring to seize the inheritance, killed the heir.

23:39

(Verse 39) For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' He is speaking to Jerusalem and to the people of Judaea. However, this verse, in which even infants and nursing babies used at the entrance of the Lord's Savior in Jerusalem, when they said, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest,' is taken from the 117th psalm, which clearly is written about the coming of the Lord. And what he says, he wants this to be understood: Unless you repent (Luke 13), and confess that I am the one about whom the Prophets sang, the Son of the almighty Father, you will not see my face. The Jews have been given a time of repentance: let them confess the blessed one who comes in the name of the Lord, and let them contemplate the face of Christ.

24:1-2

(Chapter 24 - Verses 1, 2.) And Jesus went out of the temple and was going on his way. And his disciples came to show him the buildings of the temple. But he answered and said to them: Do you see all these things? Amen I say to you: there shall not be left here a stone upon a stone, that shall not be destroyed. According to the manifest sense of the story, when the Lord departed from the temple, all the buildings of the law, and the composition of the commandments, were so destroyed that nothing could be fulfilled by the Jews; and with the head removed, all the members fight among themselves.

24:3-4

(Vers. 3, 4.) But while he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying: Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? And Jesus answered them, saying: See that no one deceives you. He sits on the Mount of Olives, where the true light of knowledge was born, and the disciples come to him privately, who desired to know the mysteries and revelations of the future, and they ask three things: When will Jerusalem be destroyed; when will Christ come; when will the end of the age be.

24:5

(Verse 5.) For many will come in my name, saying: I am the Christ, and they will deceive many. One of them is Simon the Samaritan, whom we read about in the Acts of the Apostles, who claimed to be a great power of God (Acts 8). Leaving these things aside, he also wrote among other things in his own volumes: I am the word of God, I am beautiful, I am the Paraclete, I am omnipotent, I am all things of God. But even the apostle John speaks in his epistle: You have heard that the Antichrist is coming, now many antichrists are already here (1 John 2:18). I believe that all heresiarchs are Antichrists, and they teach under the name of Christ those things which are contrary to Christ. It is not surprising if we see some being led astray by them, since the Lord has said: And many will be led astray.

24:6

(Verse 6.) For you will hear of battles and rumors of battles: see that you are not troubled. For these things must happen; but the end is not yet. Therefore, when we see these things happening, let us not think that the day of judgment is imminent, but that it is reserved for that time, whose sign is clearly set forth in the following events.

24:7-8

(Verses 7, 8.) For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be pestilences and famines, and earthquakes in various places. But all these things are the beginnings of sorrows. I do not doubt that these things indeed shall come to pass literally as they are written. But it seems to me that the kingdom against kingdom and their pestilence, whose speech spreads like cancer (2 Timothy 2), and the famine to hear the word of God, and the commotion of the whole earth, and the separation from true faith, are more understood in heretics who fight against each other, making victory for the Church. But what he said: These things, however, are the beginnings of sorrows, are better translated as birth pains, so that it may be understood as a kind of conception of the coming of the Antichrist, not as childbirth.

24:9

(V. 9.) Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. The apostles are a representation of all believers, not that the apostles themselves will be found in physical form at that time.

24:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) And since iniquity will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who perseveres to the end, he will be saved. He did not deny the faith of all, but of many. For many are called, but few are chosen. For in the apostles and those like them, charity will remain, of which it is written: 'Many waters cannot quench love' (Song of Solomon 8:7). And even Paul himself said: 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' tribulation, or distress, or famine (Rom. VIII, 35)? and so on.

24:14

(Verse 14) And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come. The sign of the Lord's coming is the preaching of the Gospel in the whole world, so that no one may be without excuse; which has either already been fulfilled, or is about to be fulfilled very soon. For I do not think that any nation remains which does not know the name of Christ. And although it may not have had preachers, it cannot ignore the expectation of faith from neighboring nations.

24:15

(Verse 15.) When therefore you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place: he that readeth, let him understand. When we are called to understanding, it is shown to be a mystical happening. We read in Daniel in this way: And in the middle of the week, sacrifice and oblation shall be taken away: and in the temple shall be the

abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end. The apostle speaks about this (II Thess. II): that the man of sin and the adversary will be exalted against everything that is called God and worshiped, so that he dares to stand in the temple of God and show himself to be God, whose coming is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and destroys those who do not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. It can be understood either simply or of the Antichrist, or of the image of Caesar, which Pilate placed in the temple, or of the equestrian statue of Hadrian, which stood in the holy of holies until the present day. Abominatio quoque, secundum veterem Scripturam, idolum nuncupatur; et idcirco additur, desolationis; quod in desolato templo atque destructo idolum positum sit.

24:16-18

(Verse 16 onwards) Then those who are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains; and those who are on the roof, let them not come down to take anything from their house; and those who are in the field, let them not turn back to take their cloak. The abomination of desolation can be understood, and every perverse teaching; when we see it standing in the holy place, that is, in the Church, and proclaiming itself as God, we must flee from Judea to the mountains, that is, leaving behind the letter of the law and Jewish corruption, and approach the eternal mountains, from which God wonderfully enlightens (Psalm 75); and be on the roof and in the inner room, where the fiery darts of the devil cannot reach: neither coming down and taking anything from the former way of life: nor turning back are they to seek; but rather to sow in the field of spiritual Scriptures, so that we may bear fruit from it. Neither to take off the other tunic, which the apostles are forbidden to have. On this subject, that is, on the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by the prophet Daniel, Porphyry blasphemed against us in the thirteenth volume of his work, while standing in a holy place. To him, Eusebius of Caesarea, the bishop, responded in three volumes: the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth. Apollinaris ((also known as Apollinarius)) also wrote extensively, and attempted to discuss in one chapter what has been disputed in so many thousands of verses.

24:19

(Verse 19.) But woe to those who are pregnant and nursing in those days. Woe to those souls who have not brought forth their offspring to perfect manhood, but have the beginnings of faith, that they should need the nourishment of masters. This can also be said, that in the persecution of Antichrist, or the Roman captivity, those who are pregnant and nursing, burdened with the weight of their wombs and their children, were unable to make an easy escape.

24:20

(Verse 20.) Pray, however, that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. If we wish to receive the captivity of Jerusalem, when it was captured by Titus and Vespasian, they ought to pray that their flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath; for in the former, the harshness of the cold prevents them from going to the desolate places and hiding in the mountains and deserts; in the latter, it is either a violation of the Law if they wish to flee, or imminent death if they remain. But if the end of the world is understood, this commands us, that our faith may not grow cold and our love for Christ may not grow dim, nor may we become idle in the work of God, languishing in the

virtues of the Sabbath.

24:22

(Verse 22.) And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. The shortened days, not according to the delusions of some (who think that the moments of time can be changed; and do not remember that writing: Your ordinance endures (Ps. CXVIII, 91)), but we should understand it according to the quality of time, that is, the days are shortened not in measure, but in number; just as in the blessing it is said; I will satisfy him with long life (Ps. XC); so now the shortened days should be understood: lest the delay of time shake the faith of the believers.

24:23

(Verse 23.) Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. Many leaders arose during the time of the Jewish captivity who claimed to be the Christ, to the extent that there were three factions inside the besieged Romans. But the end of the world is better understood.

24:24

(Verse 24) For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will perform great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you beforehand. There are three ways, as I have already said, in which this may be interpreted: either concerning the time of the siege of Rome, or concerning the end of the world, or concerning the struggle of heretics against the Church and similar antichrists, who under the guise of false knowledge fight against Christ.

24:25-26

(Verses 25, 26.) So if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out; 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. If someone promises you that Christ is staying in the wilderness of the Gentiles and philosophers' doctrine, or in the inner rooms of heretics who promise the secrets of God, do not go out, do not believe it; or (because during times of persecution and distress false prophets always find a place for deception) if someone wants to boast under the name of Christ, do not immediately give them your trust.

24:27

(Verse 27.) For as the lightning comes from the east and shines even to the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Do not go out, do not believe that the Son of man is in the deserts of the nations or in the inner chambers of heretics; but rather that from the east even unto the west, his faith may shine forth in the Catholic Churches. It must also be said that the second coming of the Savior will not be in humility as before, but in glory to be shown. It is foolish, therefore, to seek him in a small or hidden place, who is the light of the whole world.

24:28

(Verse 28.) Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together. From the natural example that we see every day, we are instructed by the sacrament of Christ. Eagles and vultures are also said to sense corpses even across the seas, and to gather for such food. Therefore, if

irrational birds with their natural sense can feel a small corpse wherever it lies, separated by such vast distances of land and the waves of the sea: how much more should we and the whole multitude of believers hasten to him, whose lightning comes from the East and appears even to the West! But we can understand the body, that is, the corpse, which is more significantly called cadaver in Latin, as a representation of the passion of Christ, in which we are called to participate. So whenever it is read in the Scriptures, let us gather and through it, come to the Word of God, as it is written: They have pierced my hands and feet (Ps. 22:17). And in Isaiah: Like a sheep being led to the slaughter (Isa. 53:7). And similar things can be found in other passages. But the holy ones are called eagles, to whom youth is renewed like the eagles; and they who grow feathers like Isaiah, and assume wings, so as to come to Christ's passion.

24:29

(Verse 29.) But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. The sun and the moon will be darkened and will not give their light; and the other stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, not by a diminishing of light (otherwise we read that the sun will have sevenfold light (Ibid. XXX)), but because all things will be dark to the sight compared to true light. Therefore, if that sun, which now shines throughout the whole world, and the moon, which is the next luminary, and the stars, which are kindled for the solace of the night, and all the powers (which we understand to be the multitudes of angels) shall be regarded as darkness in the coming of Christ, let the pride of those who, thinking themselves saints, do not fear the presence of judgment, be cast down.

24:30 (Verse 30) And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven. Let us understand this sign, either as the cross, so that the Jews may see the one they crucified (according to Zechariah (Zech. XII) and John (John XIX)); or as the banner of triumphant victory. And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Those who did not have citizenship in heaven will mourn, but they are written in the earth.

24:31

(Ver. 31.) And He will send His angels with a trumpet and a loud voice; and they will gather His chosen ones from the four winds, from the highest heavens to their ends. The Apostle speaks of this trumpet in I Corinthians XV; I Thessalonians IV: and we read in the Apocalypse of John (Apocalypse VIII): and in the Old Testament (Numbers X), we are instructed to make trumpets of gold, silver, and bronze, so that the lofty mysteries of doctrine may resound.

24:32-33

(Verse 32, 33.) But learn a parable from the fig tree: when its branch is already tender and the leaves have sprouted, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the doors. Under the example of the tree, he taught the coming of the consummation. How, he says, when the twigs of the fig tree become tender and a bud comes forth into a flower, and the bark brings forth leaves, you understand the coming of summer, and the entrance of the west winds and spring: so when you see all these things that have been written, do not think that the consummation of the world is already here, but rather like some preludes and

forerunners coming, to show that it is near and at the doors.

24:34

(Verse 34) Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things happen. Above, we mentioned the generations of the righteous and, on the contrary, the wicked being separate. Therefore, it either signifies all types of people or specifically the Jews.

24:35

(Verse 35.) Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. Heaven and earth will pass away by change, not by their destruction: otherwise, how will the sun be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall, if the heaven in which these things are, and the earth, do not exist?

24:36

(Ver. 36.) But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, except the Father alone. In some Latin manuscripts, it is added, not even the Son: since in Greek and especially in the exemplars of Adamantius and Pierius, this is not found written, but because it is read in some, it seems worthy of discussion. Arius and Eunomius rejoice, as if the ignorance of the teacher is the glory of the disciples, and they say: One who knows and one who is ignorant cannot be equal. Against whom are these things to be said briefly: When Jesus has done all things, that is, the Word of God: For all things were made through him, and without him was made nothing (John 1:3), in all times, even the day of judgment: by what consequence can he ignore a part of which he knows the whole? This also must be said: What is greater, the knowledge of the Father, or of the judgment? If he knows the greater, how does he not know what is lesser? We have read the scripture. All that belongs to the Father has been handed over to me (Luke 10:22). If all that belongs to the Father also belongs to the Son, then how is it that the Son reserved the knowledge of one day for himself and did not want to share it with the Son? But we must also infer this: If he is ignorant of the last day of times, he is also ignorant of nearly the last, and, looking backward, of all. For it cannot happen that one who is ignorant of the first knows what the second is. Therefore, because we have proven that the Son does not ignore the day of the consummation of all things (God is added in some versions), a reason must be given why he is said to be ignorant. The Apostle writes about the Savior: In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3). Therefore, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, but they are hidden. Why are they hidden? After the resurrection, when questioned by the apostles, he answered more explicitly about the day: It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established in His own authority (Acts 1:7). When he says, 'It is not for you to know,' he shows that he himself knows, but it is not expedient for the apostles to know, so that they may always live uncertain about the coming of the Judge, as if every day were a different Judgment Day. Finally, the consistent sermon of the Gospel urges us to understand this same thing, saying that only the Father knows: in the Father he includes the Son. For every father, the name of the son is.

24:37-39

(Verse 37 onwards) Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. It is asked how the following is written: For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be famines and earthquakes; and now they should remember those things that are signs of peace. But it is to be considered, according to the Apostle, that after wars, and strife, and plagues, and famines, and earthquakes, and other things by which the human race is devastated, peace will soon follow, which promises tranquility to all, so that the faith of believers may be confirmed, whether they may hope that the judge will come after the evils have been completed. For this is what we read in Paul: When they shall say, peace and security, then sudden destruction shall come upon them, as the pain of a woman in labor, and they shall not escape (I Thess. V, 3).

24:40-41

(Verse 40, 41.) Then there will be two in the field: one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken, and one will be left. Then, He said, there will be two in the field, when, at the time of the consummation and judgment, two will be found in the field having the same labor and almost the same sowing, but not receiving the fruits of labor equally. Two women grinding together will also be there: one will be taken, and one will be left. In the two who reside in the field, and in the two who grind together, understand either the Synagogue and the Church, which seem to grind together in the Law, and to grind the flour of God's precepts from the same Scriptures, or the other heresies, which seem to grind the flour of their doctrines from either Testament or from the other, and when they have the same Christian name as their purpose, they will not receive the same reward: some being chosen, and others being left behind.

24:42-43

(Verse 42, 43.) Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know at what hour your Lord is coming. But understand this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Clearly, he is showing why he said earlier: But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only: because it is not expedient for the apostles to know, so that they may always believe he is coming in uncertain expectation, whom they do not know when he is coming. And he did not say, because we do not know at what hour the Lord will come; but you do not know. And by giving the example of the father of the family, why he keeps silent about the day of the end, he teaches more clearly, saying:

Therefore, you also must be ready, for you do not know at what hour the Son of Man will come. Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. He further emphasizes and repeats why he did not predict the day of judgment and hour to the angels or himself, but only to the Father, because it is not fitting for the apostles to know; and he uses the example of a householder, that is, himself and faithful servants, that is, the apostles, to encourage their anxious

minds, so that they may provide spiritual nourishment to their fellow servants at the proper time.

24:48-49

(Verse 48, 49.) But if that wicked servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

24:50-51

(Verse 50, 51.) The lord of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and he will divide him and place his portion with the hypocrites. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This teaches that they should know when the lord is not expected, then he will come, and it warns the stewards of vigilance and diligence. Furthermore, when it says he will divide him, it does not mean that he will cut him with a sword; but rather, that he will separate him from the company of the saints and place his portion with the hypocrites; namely, with those who were in the field and grinding, yet were still abandoned. We often say that a hypocrite is one thing, and another thing to show: just as it seemed to be doing the same thing in the field and in the mill, that is, the man of the church, but the outcome of different wills appeared.

25:1-4

(Chapter 25, verses 1 onwards) Then the kingdom of heaven shall be like ten virgins who, taking their lamps, went forth to meet the bridegroom and the bride. But five of them were foolish, and five were wise. The foolish ones, having taken their lamps, took no oil with them. But the wise ones took oil in their vessels with their lamps. This parable, that is, the similitude of the ten virgins, some interpret simply in the virgins: some of whom, according to the Apostle, are virgins in both body and mind, while others only preserve the virginity of their bodies, lacking similar works or being kept by their parents, nevertheless they have married in their minds (I Cor. VII). But it seems to me that there is another meaning from what is said before, and it pertains not to virgin bodies, but to the whole human race. For just as two in a field and two grinding at the mill signify two peoples, Christians and Jews, saints and sinners, who are in the Church, they indeed appear to plow and grind themselves; but they do everything in hypocrisy: so now all the ten virgins embrace all men, who seem to believe in God and applaud themselves in the holy Scriptures, both ecclesiastics and Jews, and heretics. Therefore, all women are called virgins because they boast in the knowledge of one God, and their minds are not defiled by a crowd of idolatry (or lust). Virgins have oil, who are adorned with faith and good works. Those who appear to confess the Lord with a similar faith do not have oil; but they neglect the works of virtue. We can interpret the five virgins, wise and foolish, as the five senses: some hasten to heavenly things and desire heavenly things; others, gaping at earthly dregs, do not have the ointments of truth with which to enlighten their hearts. It has been said spiritually by sight, hearing, and touch: What we have seen, what we have heard, what we have beheld with our own eyes, and what our hands have touched (1 John 1:1). As for taste: Taste and see that the Lord is sweet (Psalm 34:9). As for smell: We run after the fragrance of your ointments (Song of Solomon 1:3). And: We are the sweet fragrance of Christ (2 Corinthians 2:15).

25:5

(Verse 5) And while the bridegroom delayed, they all slumbered and slept. For not a little time passes between the first and second coming of the Lord. They all slumbered, that is, they died, because the death of the saints is called sleep. Moreover, it is said that they slept, because they will be raised afterwards.

25:6

(Verse 6.) But at midnight there was a cry, 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out to meet him.' For suddenly, like in the darkest night and with calmness all around, when the heaviest sleep is upon everyone, the arrival of Christ will resound through the loud cry of angels and the trumpets of preceding powers. Let us say something that might be useful to the reader. It is the tradition of the Jews that Christ will come at midnight in a similar way to the time of the Egyptians, when the Passover was celebrated and the exterminator came, and the Lord passed over the tabernacles, and the blood of the lamb consecrated the doorposts of our foreheads (Exodus 12). Hence I think that the apostolic tradition has remained, that on the eve of Easter it is not allowed to dismiss half of the people, waiting for the coming of Christ. And after that time has passed, with assumed security, everyone celebrates the feast day. Hence the Psalmist said: At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous rules (Psalm 119:62).

25:7

(Verse 7) Then all those virgins arose, and adorned their lamps. All the virgins arose, and each adorned their lamps, that is, their senses, in which they received the oil of knowledge, so that they may have the works of virtue, which would shine before the true judge.

25:8

(Verse 8) But foolish women say to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out. They show that their lamps shine in part, and yet they do not have an inexhaustible light, nor perpetual works. Therefore, if anyone has a virgin soul and is a lover of chastity, they should not be satisfied with mediocre things that quickly fade away and wither when the heat is turned on. Instead, they should pursue perfect virtues, so that they may have eternal light.

25:9

(Verse 9) The wise men answered, saying: Lest perhaps there may not be enough for us and for you. They respond, not out of greed, but out of fear. For each one will receive a reward according to his deeds, and on the day of judgment, the virtues of some cannot mitigate the vices of others. And just as during the Babylonian captivity, Jeremiah could not help the sinners, and it is said to him: Do not pray for this people (Jeremiah 7:16): so fearful will be that day, when each one will be concerned for himself.

Go instead to the sellers and buy for yourselves. This oil is sold and is bought at a high price, and it is acquired with difficult labor, which we understand in acts of charity and all virtues and counsels of the masters.

25:10 (Verse 10.) But while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came. Indeed, they give a wise counsel, that they should not meet the bridegroom without oil for their lamps: but because the time for buying had already passed, and on the day of judgement- being imminent- there was no

place for repentance, as the Psalmist says: In hell, who will confess to you? (Psalm 6:6). They are not compelled to perform new deeds, but rather to give an account of their past actions. And those who were invited came in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut. After the day of judgment, the opportunity for good works and justice will not be left (or abandoned).

25:11

(Verse 11) And lastly come the remaining virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. Truly, an excellent confession in addressing the Lord, and the repetition of the same is an indication of faith. But what use is it to invoke with words, when you deny him with your actions?

25:12

(Verse 12) But he answered and said, Amen I say to you, I do not know you. The Lord knows those who are His, and those who do not know, will not be known (2 Timothy 2:19). The Lord does not know the workers of iniquity: and although they may be virgins, and boast of their bodily purity and true confession of faith (1 Corinthians 14:38); yet because they do not have the oil of knowledge, it is enough for them as punishment that they are unknown by the Bridegroom.

25:13

(Verse 13.) Therefore, watch, for you do not know the day or the hour. I always advise the prudent reader not to rely on superstitious interpretations, and not to consider what is said in a fictitious manner, but to consider the previous, middle, and subsequent parts, and to connect everything that is written. From this, therefore, he concludes: Watch, for you do not know the day or the hour. All that he said is understood, that is, about the two in the field, and about the two grinding at the mill, and about the master of the house who entrusts his possessions to his servant, and about the ten virgins. Therefore, these parables have been given, so that because we all do not know the day of judgment, we may diligently prepare the light of good works, lest, while we are unaware, the judge comes.

25:14-15

(v. 14, 15) For just as a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, each according to his ability. Then he went away. This man, the head of the household, undoubtedly is Christ, who after his resurrection victoriously ascended to the Father and, calling the apostles, handed down the gospel teaching, not giving more to one and less to another based on generosity and stinginess, but according to the abilities of the recipients: just as the Apostle says that he fed those who could not receive solid food with milk (I Cor. IV). And finally, he who had made five talents also gained ten, and he who had made two gained four, receiving the same joyful reward; not considering the magnitude of the gain, but the willingness to strive. Let us understand the various gifts that have been given to each, whether it be five, two, or one talent. In the first, let us consider all the senses examined: In the second, understanding and actions: In the third, reason, which separates humans from animals.

25:16

(Verse 16) And he who had received the five talents went and worked with them, and gained five more talents. With the earthly senses, he doubled his knowledge of heavenly things: understanding the Creator through His creation, the incorporeal through the corporeal, the invisible through the visible, the temporal through the eternal.

25:17

(Verse 17) Likewise, the one who received two, gained two more. And this person, according to their abilities, doubled whatever they had learned in the Law in the Gospel: whether knowledge and works of the present life or understanding the types of future blessedness.

25:18

(Verse 18.) But the one who had received one went away and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. The wicked servant, through earthly works and worldly pleasure, neglected and defiled God's commandments: although it is written by another evangelist that he bound it in a burial cloth (Luke 19), meaning that he weakened the teaching of the master of the house by living softly and delicately.

25:19-20

(Verse 19, 20.) After a long time, the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' It is a great time between the ascension of the Savior and his second coming. But if the apostles are going to give an account and be judged with fear, what should we do?

25:21-23

(Verse 21-23) His master said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master. And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' I keep reminding both those who had made five talents and those who had made ten, and likewise the same speech flatters the master of the household who had made four from two. And it should be noted that all the things we have at present, though they may seem great and numerous, are small and few in comparison to what is to come. 'Enter into the joy of your master,' he says, 'and receive what neither eye has seen nor ear heard nor has it entered the heart of man.' (I Cor. II) But what greater gift can be given to a faithful servant than to be with the Lord and see the joy of his Master?

25:24-25

(Verse 24, 25.) But he who had received one talent came forward and said: Lord, I know that you are a hard man; you reap where you did not sow, and gather where you did not scatter seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours. Truly it is written: To make excuses for sins (Ps. 140:4), even to this servant, the crime of sloth and negligence was added, along with the sin of pride. For he who should simply confess his laziness and beg the head of the family, on the contrary, accuses and says that he acted wisely, so that

while seeking monetary gains, he would not even endanger his own fate.

25:26-28

(Verse 26-28) But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' The lazy person, because he did not want to double the talent, was condemned in one part to pride, in the other part to negligence. 'If,' he said, 'you had known that I am harsh and cruel, and pursue what is not mine, and reap where I have not sown, why did not such a thought instill fear in you, so that you would know that I would diligently seek what is mine, and give my money, or rather silver, to the moneylenders? For both ἀργύριον, as the Greek word signifies. The words, he said, of the Lord are chaste words, silver tested in the fire, proven to the earth, purified sevenfold (Ps. 11:7).' Therefore, money and silver are the proclamation of the Gospel and a divine message, which should be given to money changers and bankers, that is, to other teachers (which the apostles did, appointing elders and bishops in each province), or to all believers who can double money and return it with interest, so that they may fulfill whatever they have learned in word with actions. However, the talent is taken away and given to the one who had made ten talents, so that we may understand that even though the Lord's joy is equal in both labors, that is, in the one who had doubled five to ten and the one who had doubled two to four, a greater reward is owed to the one who has worked more with the Lord's money. Where the Apostle says: Honor the elders who are truly elders, especially those who labor in the word of God (I Tim. V, 17). From the fact that the wicked servant dared to say: You reap where you did not sow, and gather where you did not scatter, we understand that even the good life of the Gentiles and philosophers receives the Lord, and that those who act justly are different from those who act unjustly, and that those who neglect the written law are condemned in comparison to those who serve the natural law.

25:29

(Verse 29) For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who doesn't have, even that which he seems to have will be taken away. Many, though naturally wise and possessing sharp intellect, if they are negligent and laziness corrupts the good of their nature, in comparison to the one who is slightly slower but has compensated for what he lacked through effort and industry, they lose the good of their nature and the reward that had been promised to them, and see it pass to others. It can also be understood thus: to him who indeed has faith and a good will in the Lord, even if he may have something lacking in his works as a man, it will be given by the good judge. But to him who does not have faith, even the other virtues that he seemed to naturally possess, he will lose. And elegantly also, as it appears, he says, what he seems to have will be taken away from him. For whatever is without the faith of Christ, it should not be imputed to him who has wrongly abused it, but to him who even attributes good to the evil servant of nature.

25:30

(Verse 30) And cast out the useless servant into outer darkness: there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The Lord is the light; whoever is sent out from Him is truly without light. But what we mean by weeping and gnashing of teeth, we have already explained above.

25:31-33

(Verse 31 onwards) But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. And all the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them from one another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the king will say to those on his right hand, 'After two days I will celebrate the Passover, be handed over to the cross, mocked by men, and be given vinegar and gall to drink, for he rightly precedes the glory of the triumphant, so that he may compensate for the scandals that will follow with the reward of his promise.' And it should be noted that the one who is to be seen in majesty is the Son of Man. And what follows: He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left, understand this according to what you read elsewhere: The heart of the wise is in his right hand, but the heart of a fool is in his left (Eccl. 10:2). And above in this same Gospel: Let your left hand not know what your right hand does (Matt. 6:3). The sheep are commanded to stand on the right side of the righteous: the goats, that is, sinners, on the left, who are always offered for sin in the Law (Exod. 12). And he did not say, the goats, which can have offspring, and when they are shorn they come out of the bath, all with twin offspring, and there is none sterile among them (Canon 4); but the kids, a lustful and playful animal, and always eager for copulation.

25:34-39

(Verse 34 onwards) Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see you as a guest, and welcome you? Or naked, and clothe you? When did we see you sick, or in prison, and visit you? And the king will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' This should be understood according to God's foreknowledge, in whom the future has already happened.

25:40-41

(Verse 40, 41.) Amen, I say to you: as long as ((Also: when)) you did it to one of these, my least brothers, you did it to me. Then he will say to those on his left: Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. I was a stranger and you did not welcome me. I was naked and you did not clothe me. I was sick and in prison and you did not visit me. Then they will answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister to you? Then he will answer them, saying: Amen I say to you, as long as you did not do it to one of these least ones, neither did you do it to me. It was fitting for us to understand that in every poor person Christ, hungry, would be fed, thirsty would be given drink, a stranger would be brought into shelter, the naked would be clothed, the sick would be

visited, the imprisoned would have the consolation of speaking with him. But from this that follows: As long as you did it to one of these least brothers of mine, you did it to me, it does not seem to me that he spoke generally about the poor, but about those who are poor in spirit, to whom he extends his hand and said: These are my brothers and my mother, who do the will of my Father (Mark 3:34-35; Luke 8:21).

25:46

(Verse 46.) And these shall go into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. Wise reader, take note that both eternal punishments and perpetual life should no longer have fear of ruin.

26:1-2

(Chapter 26, Verses 1 and following) And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished saying all these words, He said to His disciples: You know that after two days the Passover will take place, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified. Let those who think that the Savior feared death be ashamed, and let them realize that He spoke out of fear of suffering when He said, 'Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me' (Luke 22:42). He knew that He would be handed over to be crucified two days after the Passover, and yet He does not avoid the snares, nor does He flee in fear, to the extent that, even when the others do not want to go, He continues boldly, as Thomas says: 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him' (John 11:16). And desiring to put an end to the carnal celebration, and while the shadow is passing, to restore the truth of Easter, he said: 'With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer' (Luke 22:15). Indeed, our pasch is sacrificed, Christ, if, however, we eat it in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5:7). Furthermore, when he says 'After two days the pasch shall be' (Matthew 26:2), let us seek with a simple understanding that which is sacred, without neglecting the sacrament. After two days of clear light, the true Passover of the world is celebrated, of the old and new Testament. The Passover, which is called in Hebrew Phase (), is not named after suffering as many suppose, but after the passage: because the exterminator, seeing the blood, passed over the doors of the Israelites and did not strike them. Or rather the Lord himself, providing assistance, walked above his people. In the book of Exodus (Ch. XI, XII), which we will discuss more fully if life permits, we can find more about this. But our passage, that is, the Passover, is celebrated in such a way that, leaving behind earthly things and Egypt, we hasten to heavenly things.

26:3-5

(Ver. 3 and following) Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the courtyard of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and they plotted to arrest Jesus by trickery and kill him. But they said, 'Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.' Now those who were supposed to prepare the Passover sacrifices, cleanse the walls of the temple, sweep the floors, purify the vessels, and be ritually purified according to the Law in order to be worthy to eat the Passover lamb, were gathered together to devise a plan on how to kill the Lord, not fearing rebellion, as the simple words show; but careful that they were not hindered by the help of the people.

26:6

(Verse 6) But when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper. About to suffer for the whole world and redeem all nations with his blood, he stayed in Bethany, the house of obedience, which was once Simon the leper's. Not that he remained a leper at that time, but he who was formerly a leper was cleansed by the Savior, with his former name remaining, so that the power of the healer may be apparent. For in the list of apostles, with his former vice and occupation, Matthew is called a tax collector, who had certainly ceased to be a tax collector. A certain Simon, a leper's house, they want it to be understood as a part of the people, which has believed in the Lord, and has been cured by him. Simon himself is also said to be obedient, who can be interpreted in another sense as the world, in whose house the Church is healed.

26:7

(Verse 7) A woman came to him with an alabaster jar of expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table. No one should assume that she who poured the perfume on his head is the same as she who poured it on his feet. For she washes with her tears, wipes with her hair, and is clearly called a prostitute. However, nothing of this sort is written about her. For the prostitute could not immediately become worthy of the Lord's favor. Another Gospel writer placed the precious perfume in an alabaster jar (which is a type of marble), and called it pure and without deceit, to demonstrate the faith of the Church and the Gentiles.

26:8-9

(Ver. 8, 9.) But when the disciples saw this, they were indignant and said, "Why this waste? This could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor." I know that some criticize this passage, questioning why only one evangelist, Judas, is mentioned as being upset, when it is said that all the apostles were indignant. They do not understand the figure of speech known as synecdoche, by which one person can be used to represent all, or one can be used to represent many. For even Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews (although many Latin writers doubt it), when he described the sufferings and merits of the saints, introduced the following: They were stoned, they were tested, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword (Heb. 11:37), since the Jews only admit that Isaiah the Prophet was sawn. We can also say that the apostles were truly indignant because of the poor: but Judas because of his gains. And his muttering is also attributed to the crime that he did not have care for the poor, but wanted to provide for his own theft.

26:10-11

(Verse 10, 11.) But Jesus, knowing this, said to them: Why do you trouble this woman? For she has done a good work upon me. For the poor you have always with you, but me you do not always have. Another question arises, why did the Lord say to the disciples after the resurrection: Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the world; and now he says, but you do not always have me. But it seems to me that in this place he is speaking of his bodily presence, which will not be with them in the same way after the resurrection, as it is now in all their meetings and familiarity. The Apostle, being mindful of this matter, says: 'Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we no longer know Him.' (II Cor. 5:16)

26:12

(Verse 12.) For she has poured this ointment on my body, to bury me. What you perceive as a waste of ointment is actually a burial ritual. It is not surprising that she has given me the sweet smell of her faith, as I am about to shed my blood for her.

26:12-14

(Verse 12-14) Truly I tell you, wherever this Gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her. Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests. In the whole world, not so much this woman, as the Church is preached, that she has buried the Savior, that she has anointed his head. And pay attention to the knowledge of the future, that he will suffer in two days and die, and his Gospel will be celebrated in the whole world.

26:15

(Verse 15.) And he said to them: What do you want to give me, and I will betray him to you? Unfortunate Judas, he believed that he could make up for the loss caused by the spillage of the ointment with the price of the master. However, he does not demand a specific amount, so that the betrayal would at least appear profitable, but rather, like someone selling a cheap slave, he put it in the power of the buyers to give as much as they wanted.

26:16

(Verse 16.) But they agreed to give him thirty pieces of silver. And from then on he was looking for an opportunity to betray him. Joseph was not sold for twenty gold pieces, as many think according to the Septuagint translators, but according to the Hebrew Truth, for twenty silver pieces; for no servant could be more precious than the Lord.

26:17

(Verse 17) Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?' The first day of Unleavened Bread is the fourteenth day of the first month, when the lamb is sacrificed and the moon is full, and the yeast is thrown out. Among the disciples who came to Jesus, they asked him, 'Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?' And I suspect Judas to have been the traitor.

26:18

(Version 18.) And Jesus said: Go into the city to a certain person, and say to him: The teacher says: My time is near; I will celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house. The new Scripture preserves the custom of the old Testament. Often we read: He said to him, and in that place and that place; which in Hebrew is called Pheloni Elmoni (), and yet the names of persons and places are not mentioned. And you will find there a certain person carrying a jar of water. For this reason, these words were omitted so that a free opportunity for celebration would be offered to all who would observe Easter.

26:19

(Verse 19.) And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them, and they prepared the Passover. In another Gospel it is written (Luke 22) that they found a large upper room furnished and prepared, and there they made ready for him. But it seems to me that the upper room is to be

understood as the spiritual law, which, departing from the confines of the letter, receives the Savior in a lofty place, as Paul himself speaks (Philippians 3), that he has counted as dung and refuse whatever things he previously regarded as gain, in order to prepare a worthy dwelling for the Lord.

26:20

(Verse 20.) And when evening came, he was reclining at table with the twelve disciples. Judas acts in such a way that suspicion of being a traitor is removed.

26:21

(Verse 21.) And while they were eating, he said: Amen I say to you: that one of you will betray me. He who had foretold of his passion also predicts the traitor, giving him an opportunity for repentance, so that when he understands his own thoughts and hidden plans, he may repent of his actions, and yet he does not specifically identify him, so that he may not be openly accused and become more shameless. He attributes the crime to a number, so that the guilty party may repent.

26:22

(Verse 22.) And greatly saddened, they began to each say: Am I the one, Lord? And certainly the eleven apostles knew that they had not thought anything like that against the Lord: but they believed more in their teacher than in themselves, fearing their own weakness, they sadly asked about the sin whose consciousness they did not have.

26:23

(Verse 23) But He answering, said: He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, he shall betray me. Oh, the wondrous patience of the Lord! He had said first: one of you shall betray me. The traitor persists in evil, making it more evident, yet without clearly indicating his name. With the others saddened, holding back their hands, and denying the food to his mouth, with audacity and impudence, by which he was to betray, he even sends his hand into the dish with the master, in order to falsely testify to a clear conscience.

26:24

(Verse 24.) Woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Neither at first nor at second exposure to treachery does he retract his step, but the patience of the Lord nurtures his impudence, and in the day of wrath he accumulates wrath for himself (Rom. II). Punishment is predicted, so that those whom shame did not conquer, may be corrected by proclaimed punishments. But what follows:

It would have been good for him if that man had not been born: He is not to be considered as having existed before he was born, because no one can be well off unless they have existed: but it was simply stated that it is much better not to exist than to exist badly.

26:25

(Verse 25.) But Judas, who betrayed him, answered and said: 'Is it I, Lord?' Lest he should appear to betray himself by remaining silent, he likewise asks, being tormented by his conscience, who

had boldly put his hand into the dish.

Am I, Rabbi? He said to him: You have said it. And he joins a mingling of emotion, or a sign of disbelief. For the others who were not going to betray, they say: Am I, Lord? This one who was going to betray did not call him Lord, but rather teacher, as if he had an excuse, if he denied the Lord, at least he betrayed the teacher. And he said to him: You have said it. The betrayer is refuted by the same response, with which he will later answer Pilate.

26:26-28

(Vers. 26 seqq.) However, while they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it, he broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. After the symbolic Passover had been fulfilled, and he had eaten the flesh of the lamb with the apostles, he took bread, which strengthens the heart of man, and transcended to the true sacrament of Passover, so that just as in its prefiguration Melchizedek, the high priest of the Most High God, had offered bread and wine (Gen. XIV), he himself also in the truth would represent his own body and blood. In Luke, we read about two cups which Jesus gave to his disciples (Luke 22). One was for the first month, and the other for the second, so that he who could not eat the lamb among the saints in the first month would eat the goat among the repentant in the second month.

26:29

(Verse 29.) But I say to you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. He transitions from the physical to the spiritual, citing that the vineyard transplanted from Egypt is the people of Israel, to whom the Lord speaks through Jeremiah: I planted you a true vine, but how you have turned into the bitter fruit of a foreign vine (Jeremiah 2:21). And the prophet Isaiah sings in a song to his beloved, and the entire Scripture testifies accordingly. He says, therefore, that he will in no way drink of this vine until the kingdom of his Father comes. The kingdom of the Father, I believe, is the faith of believers, as the Apostle also confirms: The kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:21). Therefore, when the Jews have received the kingdom of the Father (notice that he says Father, not God), every Father is named the Son. When, I say, they have believed in God the Father, and the Father has brought them to the Son, then the Lord will drink of their wine, and, reigning in Egypt in the likeness of Joseph, he will be intoxicated with his brothers (Genesis 43).

26:30

(Vers. 30.) And having sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. This is what we read in a certain psalm: All the fat of the earth have eaten and adored (Ps. XXI, 30). According to this example, whoever is satisfied with the Savior's bread and intoxicated with the chalice can praise the Lord and ascend to the Mount of Olives, where there is refreshment from labors, consolation from sorrow, and knowledge of true light.

26:31

(Verse 31.) Then Jesus said to them: All of you will be scandalized by me in this night. He predicts that they will suffer, so that when they have suffered, they will not despair of salvation, but by

repenting, they will be freed. And he specifically added, in this night you will be scandalized; for just as those who get drunk, get drunk at night: likewise those who are scandalized, endure in the night and in darkness (I Thess. 5). But let us say: The night has passed, and the day is at hand (Rom. 13:12).

26:32

(Verse 32.) For it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you into Galilee. This is also written in different words by the prophet Zachariah; and (if I am not mistaken) it is said by the voice of the prophet to God: Strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered (Zech. 13:7). In the sixty-eighth Psalm, which is completely devoted to the Lord, this meaning is also in agreement: For those whom you have struck, they have pursued. But the good shepherd is struck, so that he may lay down his life for his sheep; and out of many flocks of errors, one flock is made, and one shepherd (John. X) . This testimony is further explained in the book that we wrote about the Best Way of Interpretation.

26:33

(Verse 33.) But Peter, answering, said to him: Even if all shall be scandalized in thee, I will never be scandalized. It is not rashness, nor falsehood; but it is the faith of the apostle Peter, and a fervent affection towards the Lord and Savior, of whom we have spoken above.

26:34

(Verse 34.) Jesus said to him: Truly I say to you, that in this night before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times. And Peter, with fervor of faith, promised, and the Savior, as if God, knew the future. And note that Peter will deny in the night, and deny a third time. But after the rooster crowed, and the darkness diminishing, the approaching light was announced, he turned and wept bitterly, washing away the stains of denial with tears of repentance.

26:36

(Verse 36.) Then Jesus came with them to a village called Gethsemane and said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' Gethsemane means 'very fertile valley,' in which he ordered the disciples to sit for a little while and wait for the Lord to return, while he prayed for everyone alone.

26:37

(Verse 37) And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sad and sorrowful. What we have said above about the passion and pre-passion is also shown in the present chapter, that the Lord, in order to prove the truth of his assumption as a man, was truly saddened, but so that the passion would not dominate his soul, he began to be saddened through pre-sorrow. For it is one thing to be saddened, and another thing to begin to be saddened. But He was saddened not by the fear of suffering, for which He had come, that He might suffer; and He had reprimanded Peter for his timidity; but on account of the most unfortunate Judas, and the scandal of all the apostles, and the rejection of the Jewish people, and the destruction of miserable Jerusalem. Hence Jonas also, grieving over the withering of a gourd or a ivy, was grieved (Jonah

4), unwilling to lose his former shelter. But if the sadness of the soul is interpreted by the heretics not as the affection of the Savior towards those who are about to perish, but as the suffering, let them answer how they explain that which is said through Ezekiel in the person of God: And in all these things you have saddened me (Ezekiel 16, Septuagint version).

26:38

(Verse 38.) Then he said to them, My soul is sorrowful, even to death; wait here, and watch with me. The soul is saddened and not, however, by death, but is saddened even unto death, until he frees his apostles by his suffering. And what he commanded: wait here, and watch with me, he does not forbid sleep, the time of which was not imminent with danger, but he forbids sleep of unfaithfulness, and dulness of mind. Therefore, let those who suspect that Jesus took on an irrational soul declare how he could be saddened and know the time of sadness. Although even dumb animals die, they do not know the reasons or the time until which they must be saddened.

26:39

(Verse 39) And going forward a little, he fell on his face, praying and saying: My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will. Having given the apostles the command to endure and keep watch with the Lord, he advanced a little and fell on his face, showing the humility of his mind in the appearance of his flesh, and he said in a gentle way: My Father, and he asked that, if possible, the cup of suffering pass from him, about which we have spoken above. But, he does not ask to be spared out of fear, but out of mercy for the earlier people, so as not to drink from the cup that they have offered. Therefore, he specifically does not say, let this cup pass from me, but let this cup pass, that is, the cup of the Jewish people, who cannot claim ignorance as an excuse, if they kill me, having the Law and the prophets, who daily prophesy about me. Yet, turning back to himself, what he had hesitantly declined from the perspective of a human, he confirms from the perspective of God the Son. However, not as I want, but as you. No, he says, let this not be done, which I speak with human emotion; but because of what I descended to earth by your will.

26:40

(Verse 40.) And he came to his disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, 'So you could not watch with me one hour? He who said above, 'Even if all are scandalized in you, I will never be scandalized,' now cannot overcome sleep due to the magnitude of sorrow.'

26:41 (Verse 41.) Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation. It is impossible for the human soul not to be tempted. Hence, in the Lord's Prayer, we say: Lead us not into temptation, which we cannot bear (or be able to bear) (Matthew 6:13; Luke 11:4). Not completely rejecting temptation, but praying for the strength to endure it. Therefore, at present, it does not say: Watch and pray, lest you be tempted; but, lest you enter into temptation, that is, lest the temptation overcomes and conquers you, and keeps you within its grasp. For example, the martyr, who sheds his blood for the confessing the Lord, is indeed tempted; but he is not caught in the snares of temptations. However, whoever denies, falls into the traps of temptation. The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak. This is against the reckless ones, who think they can achieve whatever they believe. Therefore, as much as we trust in the ardor of the mind, so much do we fear the fragility of the flesh. But nevertheless, according to the Apostle, in the spirit the works of

the flesh are put to death (1 Peter 3).

26:42

(Verse 42.) Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, saying: Father, if this chalice cannot pass away, unless I drink it, let your will be done. He prays for the second time, that if Nineveh cannot be saved in any other way, unless the gourd withers, let the will of the Father be done, which is not contrary to the will of the Son, as he himself said through the prophet: To do your will, O God, I desired (Ps. 39:9).

26:43-44

(Verse 43, 44.) And he came again and found them sleeping. For their eyes were heavy. And leaving them, he went away again and prayed for the third time, saying the same thing. He alone prays for all, just as he alone suffers for everyone. But the apostles' eyes grew weak and burdened by imminent denial.

26:45

(Verse 45.) Then he came to his disciples and said to them: Sleep now, and rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of sinners (Matthew 26 and 2 Corinthians 13). After he had prayed three times, that every word might stand in the mouth of two or three witnesses, and had obtained by subsequent penance that the fear of the apostles be corrected, he proceeds secure in his passion to his persecutors, and offers himself to be put to death, and says to his disciples:

26:46-47

(Verse 46, 47) Get up, let's go, behold the one who will betray me is approaching. While He was still speaking, behold Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and elders of the people. Let us not be found as if fearing and retreating, let us willingly go towards death, so that they may see the confidence and joy we will endure.

26:48

(Verse 48.) But he who betrayed him gave them a sign, saying: Whomever I shall kiss, that is he, hold him fast. Miserable Judas, and yet not pitiable, with the same unfaithfulness with which he betrayed his master and Lord, he believed that the signs which he had seen the Savior performing were not done by divine majesty, but by magical skills. And because he had heard that he was transfigured on the mountain, he feared that he might slip away from the hands of the attendants through a similar transformation. Therefore, he gave a sign so that they would know that it was him, whom he demonstrated with a kiss.

26:49

(Verse 49.) And immediately coming to Jesus, he said, Hail, Rabbi! And he kissed him. Shameless indeed and wickedly confident, to call the master and to throw a kiss to the one he was handing over. Nevertheless, the disciple still has something of discretion, as he does not openly hand him over to the persecutors, but through the sign of a kiss. This is the sign that God placed on Cain, so

that whoever found him would not kill him (Genesis 4).

26:50

(Verse 50.) And Jesus said to him: Friend, why have you come? Then they drew near and laid hands on Jesus, and seized him. The word 'Friend' should be understood either in the opposite sense, or certainly according to what we have read above: Friend, how did you enter here without a wedding garment? (Matt. XXII, 12)?

26:51

(Verse 51) And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and striking the high priest's servant, cut off his ear. In another gospel, it is written that Peter did this with the same zeal as the other things. The servant of the high priest is also called Malchus: the ear that was cut off is the right one. By way of a passing remark, it should be said that Malchus, meaning the former king of the Jewish people, became a servant of the impious and devouring priests. And he may have lost his right ear, so that he hears all the worthlessness of letters in his left: but the Lord in those who wanted to believe from the Jews restored the right ear, and made them a royal and priestly people.

26:52

(Verse 52.) Then Jesus said to him: Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. And if one does not carry a sword in vain, who is appointed as the avenger of the Lord's wrath against those who do evil: nevertheless, whoever takes up the sword will perish by the sword. Which sword? That same one which turns fiery before Paradise (Genesis 3): and the sword of the spirit, which is described as the armor of God (Ephesians 6).

26:53-54

(Verse 53, 54.) Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen this way? I do not need the help of twelve apostles, even if they all defended me. I could have twelve legions of angelic armies. In ancient times, one legion consisted of six thousand men. In order to keep this brief, I will not go into the exact number for now. Just know that seventy-two thousand angels, divided into twelve legions, is the approximate count for the number of nations divided by language. The following sentence demonstrates a ready mind to suffer, because the prophets sang in vain unless the Lord truly affirmed their words by his own suffering.

26:55

(Verse 55.) At that hour Jesus said to the crowds: Are you coming out with swords and clubs to arrest me like a robber? Every day I was sitting in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. It is foolish, he said, to seek him with swords and clubs, who willingly surrenders himself to your hands, and to search for him like a lurking fugitive in the night, and to investigate him through a betrayer, who teaches in the temple every day. But you are gathering against me in the darkness, because your power is in darkness.

26:56

(Verse 56.) But all this has happened so that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples, leaving him, fled. What are the Scriptures of the prophets? They have pierced my hands and feet (Psalm 22:17); and elsewhere: He was led as a sheep to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). And in another place: He was led to death because of the iniquities of my people (Ibid., sec. 70).

26:57

(Verse 57.) And they who were holding Jesus led Him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. Moses, by God's command, had decreed that the priests should succeed their fathers, and that the line of succession should be preserved among the priests (Exodus 29). Josephus reports that Caiaphas purchased his high priesthood from Herod for a sum of money for only one year. Therefore, it is not surprising if this wicked high priest judges unjustly.

26:58

(Verse 58.) But Peter followed Him from afar off, even unto the palace of the high priest. He followed Him from afar off, who was to deny the Lord.

26:59-60

(V. 59, 60.) And entering inside, he sat with the ministers, to see the end. But the chief priests and the whole council sought false testimony against Jesus, so that they could deliver him to death. And they did not find any, although many false witnesses came forward. Whether out of love for his disciples or out of human curiosity, the high priest wanted to know what he would decide about the Lord: whether he would condemn him to death or release him after beating him. And there was a difference of opinion among the ten apostles and Peter. Those (people) flee, but this one, although far away, still follows the Savior.

26:61

(Verse 61.) But finally came two false witnesses, and said: He said: I can destroy the temple of God, and after three days rebuild it. How are they false witnesses if they say the things that we read the Lord said? But a false witness is one who does not understand the words in the same sense in which they are spoken. For the Lord had spoken about the temple of his body. But even in the words themselves, they slander, and by adding or changing a few things, they make it seem like a just accusation. The Savior had said: Destroy this temple; those men change it and say: I can destroy the temple of God. You, he said, destroy it, not me, because it is unlawful for us to lay hands on ourselves. Then they turn it: and after three days rebuild it; so that it may seem he had spoken properly about the Jewish temple. But the Lord, in order to show that an animal and breathing temple, had said: And in three days I will raise it up. To build is one thing, to raise is another.

26:62

(Verse 62) And the high priest stood up and said to Him, 'Do You answer nothing? What is it that these men testify against You?' But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest became furious and impatient, unable to find a place for false accusations, he threw the high priest off his seat, in order

to demonstrate his madness of mind through the movement of his body. The more Jesus remained silent in response to unworthy individuals, false witnesses, and wicked priests, the more the high priest, overcome with rage, provoked Him to respond, so that he could find an opportunity in any occasion of conversation to accuse Him. Nevertheless, Jesus remained silent. For he knew, as if God, whatever response he gave would be twisted into a false accusation.

26:63

(Verse 63.) And the high priest said to him, I adjure you by the living God that you tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God. Why do you swear, most wicked of priests, to accuse rather than to believe? If to accuse, others argue: condemn the silent one. If to believe, why did you not want to believe the one confessing?

26:64

(Verse 64.) Jesus said to him: You have said it. Nevertheless, I tell you: from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the power of God, and coming on the clouds of heaven. And against Pilate, and against Caiaphas, a similar response, so that they are condemned by their own sentence.

26:65-66

(Vers. 65, 66.) Then the high priest tore his garments, saying: He has blasphemed. What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think? And they answered, saying: He is deserving of death. The same fury that had driven him from the priestly throne now provokes him to tear his garments. He tore his garments to show that the Jews had lost the glory of priesthood and that the high priests had an empty seat. But it is also a Jewish custom, when they hear something blasphemous and seemingly against God, to tear their garments. We read that Paul and Barnabas did the same when they were esteemed as gods in Lycaonia. However, Herod, because he did not give honor to God but acquiesced to the excessive favor of the people, was immediately struck by an angel.

26:67

(Verse 67.) Then they spat in his face and struck him with their fists. As it was foretold: I have given my cheeks to those who struck me; I have not turned my face from disgrace and spitting. (Lamentations 3:30)

26:68

(Verse 68.) But others slapped his face and said: Prophecy to us, Christ, who is it that struck you? It would have been foolish to respond to those who were beating him and to prophesy about the one who was striking him, since it would seem like madness to openly predict someone who was already striking. But just as he did not prophesy this to you, so he prophesied very clearly that Jerusalem would be surrounded by an army and not a single stone would be left upon another in the temple.

26:69

(Verse 69.) But Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. He was sitting outside to see the outcome. And he did not come near Jesus, so that no suspicion would arise among the servants.

26:72

(Verse 72.) And again he denied it with an oath, 'I do not know the man.' And after a little while those standing there came up and said to Peter, 'Surely you also are one of them, for your accent betrays you.' Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, 'I do not know the man.' And immediately the rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly. Some pious people have interpreted this passage in such a way that they say Peter did not deny God but only a man, and the meaning is: 'I do not know the man, for I know God.' A discerning reader understands how frivolous this interpretation is; they defend Peter in such a way as to make God guilty of lying. For if he did not deny, then the Lord lied, who said, 'Truly I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.' See what he says, you will deny me, not a man.

26:73

(Verse 73.) Truly, you are also one of them: for even your speech gives you away. Not that Peter spoke a different language or came from a foreign nation. For all of them were Hebrews, both those who accused and those who were accused. But each province and region has its own peculiarities, and cannot avoid the sound of their native language. Hence, even the Ephraimites in the Book of Judges (chapter 12) could not pronounce the word σ■νθημα.

26:74-75 (Verse 74, 75.) Then he began to curse and swear, saying that he did not know the man. And immediately the rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus that he had said: Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times. In another Gospel, we read that after Peter's denial and the rooster's crowing, the Savior looked at Peter and with his gaze, he caused him to burst into bitter tears. It was not possible for him to remain in the darkness of denial, whom the light of the world had looked upon. And going out, he wept bitterly. Sitting in the courtyard of Caiaphas, he could not do penance. He goes out from the wicked council to wash the fearful filth of his denials with bitter tears.

27:1-4

(Chapter 27, verses 1 onwards) Now when morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And they bound him, and led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. He was not only taken to Pilate, but also to Herod, so that both of them might mock the Lord. And see the eagerness of the priests for evil. They stayed awake all night in order to commit murder. And they handed him over bound to Pilate. For they had this custom, that whoever they had condemned to death, they would hand over to the judge bound.

Then seeing Judas, who had betrayed Him, that He was condemned, being moved by repentance, he returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. He cast away the weight of impiety from the greatness of his greed. Seeing that the Lord was condemned to death, Judas returned the price to the priests, as if he had

the power to change the sentence of those who persecuted. Therefore, although he changed his will, he did not change the outcome of his first intention. But if he who handed over the innocent blood sinned, how much more did the Jews sin, who bought the innocent blood, and by offering a price, provoked the betrayal of the disciple? Let those who attempt to introduce different natures and say that Judas, the traitor, had an evil nature, and could not be saved by election, answer how an evil nature could have repented.

27:5

(Verse 5.) But they said: What is that to us? You see. And throwing the silver coins into the temple, he left: and going away, he hanged himself. It availed him nothing to have repented, by which he could not correct his crime. If at any time a brother sins against his brother, so that he is able to amend what he has sinned, it can be forgiven to him. But if his works remain, repentance is taken up in vain with words. This is what is said in the psalm concerning the same most unfortunate Judas: Let his prayer be turned into sin (Psalm 108:7); so that he not only could not correct the wickedness of his betrayal, but also added the crime of his own homicide to the former sin. Here's what the Apostle says in his second Epistle to the Corinthians: 'So that on the contrary ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.' (2 Corinthians 2:7)

27:6

(Verse 6.) But the chief priests, having received the silver, said: It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. Truly straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel. For if they do not put money into the treasury, that is, into the storeroom for gifts to God, because it is the price of blood, why is the blood itself being spilled?

27:7-8

(Vers. 7, 8.) However, with a plan devised, they bought a field from that potter, for the burial of strangers, therefore that field was called Acheldemach, which means the field of blood, to this day. Indeed, they acted with a different intention, that they might leave a lasting monument of their impiety from the purchase of the land. But we, who were strangers to the Law and the prophets, have embraced their corrupt practices for salvation: and we find rest in the price of his blood. But the field is called 'figulus' because our potter is Christ.

27:9-10

(Verse 9, 10) Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.' This testimony is not found in Jeremiah. But in Zechariah, who is almost the last of the twelve prophets, a certain similarity is mentioned (Zech. 11). And although the meaning does not differ much, nevertheless both the order and the words are different. I recently read in a certain Hebrew volume, which a Hebrew of the Nazarene sect offered to me, an apocryphal book of Jeremiah, in which I found the following words written verbatim. However, it seems to me more like a testimony taken from Zechariah: just like the Evangelists and Apostles commonly do, who, omitting the order of words, only present the meaning from the Old Testament as an example.

27:11

(Verse 11.) But Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, saying: Are you the king of the Jews? The Jews accuse Jesus of impiety, because they were not even able to find anything false to accuse the Savior.

Jesus said to him: You say so. Thus he answered so as to speak the truth and not reveal his speech to calumny. And notice that although Pilate, who unwillingly pronounced the sentence, answered in part: yet he did not want to answer the priests and rulers, considering them unworthy of his speech.

27:13-15

(Verse 13 and following) Then Pilate said to him: Do you not hear how many testimonies they speak against you? And he did not respond to him with any word, so that the governor wondered greatly. Now it was customary for the governor to release one prisoner to the people on the solemn day, whom they desired. Indeed, it is a Gentile who condemns Jesus, but he refers the matter to the Jewish people. Do you not hear how many testimonies they speak against you? But Jesus refused to respond, in order to not diminish the accusation from the governor, and to prevent the delay of the usefulness of the cross.

27:16-18

(Verse 16 onwards) At that time he had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them: Whom do you want me to release to you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ? For he knew that they had handed Him over out of envy. Now, in the Gospel written according to the Hebrews, 'the son of their teacher' is interpreted as referring to this man, who had been condemned for sedition and murder. However, Pilate offers them the option of releasing whoever they want, either the robber or Jesus, not doubting that they would choose Jesus, knowing that He had been handed over out of envy. Therefore, the evident cause of the cross is envy.

27:19-21

(Verse 19 onwards) Now while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, 'Have nothing to do with that righteous Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.' But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release to you?' They said, 'Barabbas!' Note that God often reveals dreams to the Gentiles; and that the testimony of the people is that Pilate and his wife confess the righteous Lord.

27:22-23

(Verse 22, 23.) Pilate said to them: What then shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ? They all said: Let him be crucified. The governor asked: What evil has he done? But they shouted even louder, saying: Let him be crucified. Pilate gave many opportunities to release the Savior. First, he compared him to a just thief. Then he asked: What then shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ? That is, who is your king. When they replied, Let him be crucified, he did not immediately agree;

but according to the suggestion of his wife, who had said: Have nothing to do with that righteous man, he also replied: What evil has he done? By saying this, Pilate absolved Jesus. But they shouted even more, saying: Crucify him. So that what was said in the twenty-first psalm would be fulfilled: Many dogs have surrounded me; A congregation of evildoers have encircled me. And that which Jeremiah said: My inheritance has become like a lion in the forest; They have raised their voices against me. Isaiah also agrees with this statement: I waited for them to do justice, but they did iniquity, not righteousness; they made a loud cry.

27:24

(Verse 24) But Pilate, seeing that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a tumult was taking place, took water and washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man: you shall see. Pilate took water, according to that prophetic saying: I will wash my hands among the innocent (Ps. 25:6); so that in the washing of his hands, the works of the Gentiles might be cleansed, and he might separate us from the impiety of the Jews, who cried out, crucify him, thereby attesting in a way that I indeed wanted to free the innocent man; but since sedition arises and an accusation of treason against Caesar is brought against me: I am innocent of the blood of this just man. The judge who is forced to pass sentence against Christ does not condemn the accused; but he accuses those who offer him, pronouncing that the one who must be crucified is just. He says, 'You will see. I am the minister of the laws: your voice sheds blood.'

27:25

(Verse 25) And all the people answered and said, 'His blood be on us and on our children.' This curse persists upon the Jews until the present day, and the blood of the Lord is not removed from them. Hence, Isaiah speaks: 'If you raise your hands to me, I will not listen to you. For your hands are full of blood' (Isaiah 1:15). The Jews leave the best inheritance to their children, saying, 'His blood be on us and on our children.'

27:26

(Ver. 26.) Then he released to them Barabbas, but Jesus, after he had been scourged, he handed over to them to be crucified. Barabbas, a robber, who had caused insurrections in the crowds, who was a murderer, was released to the Jewish people, that is, the devil, who reigns in them even to this day, and therefore they cannot have peace. But Jesus, being handed over by the Jews, is acquitted by Pilate's wife, and is called just by the governor himself. And the centurion confesses that he is truly the Son of God. The learned reader may wonder how it is fitting for Pilate to have washed his hands and said, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just man,' and then handed over Jesus to be crucified after he had been scourged. But it should be known that he served the Romans' laws, which decreed that whoever is to be crucified should first be scourged. Therefore, Jesus was handed over to the soldiers to be scourged, and they tore into that most sacred body, capable of containing the heart of God, with lashes. However, this was done so that, as it is written: 'Many are the scourges of the wicked' (Psalm 31:10), by him being scourged, we might be freed from scourges, as the Scripture says to the righteous man: 'No scourge shall come near your tent' (Psalm 90:10).

27:27-29

(Verse 27 onwards) Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe around him. And twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' The soldiers, since Jesus had been called the King of the Jews and the scribes and priests had accused him of claiming to be the ruler of the people of Israel, did this mockingly. They dressed him in the scarlet robe as a symbol of royalty, put a crown of thorns on his head, gave him a reed as a scepter, and pretended to worship him as a king. But we must understand all these things mystically. For just as Caiaphas said, 'It is necessary for one man to die for all' (John 11:50), not knowing what he was saying, so these people, whatever they did, although they had different intentions, nevertheless gave us, who believe, the sacraments. In the scarlet robe, he bears the bloody works of the Gentiles; in the crown of thorns, he undoes the ancient curse; with the pen, he kills poisonous animals. Whether he held the pen in his hand to write the sacrilege of the Jews.

27:30

(Verse 30) And spitting on him, they took a reed and struck his head. At that time it was fulfilled; I did not turn my face away from the shame of spitting (Isaiah 50:6), yet when they strike his head with the reed, he endures everything patiently, to fulfill the true prophecy of Isaiah, which says: He will not break a bruised reed (Isaiah 42:3).

27:31

(Verse 31) And after they had mocked him, they stripped him of his cloak and dressed him in his own clothes, and led him away to be crucified. When Jesus is whipped, spat upon, and mocked, he does not have his own garments, but those which he had taken on for our sins. But when he is crucified and the spectacle of mockery and illusion is over, then he receives his former clothes again and puts on his own attire. And immediately the elements are disturbed, and the creature gives testimony to its Creator.

27:32

(Verse 32) And as they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon: him they compelled to bear his cross. Lest anyone think that this account is contradictory to the story of John the Evangelist. For he said that the Lord, going out of the praetorium, carried his own cross; but Matthew reports that they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon, whom they compelled to bear Jesus' cross. But this is to be understood, that Jesus, going out of the praetorium, himself carried his own cross; afterward they encountered Simon, to whom they imposed the task of carrying the cross. According to anagoge, the nations accept the cross of Jesus, and the obedient stranger carries the ignominy of the Savior.

27:33

(Verse 33.) And they came to a place called Golgotha, which is the place of Calvary. I have heard someone explain the place of Calvary, where Adam was buried, and therefore it is called that because there the head of the ancient man is buried, and this is what the Apostle says: Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light. A favorable interpretation that pleases the ears of the people, but not true. For outside the city and beyond the gate, there

are places where the heads of the condemned are severed, and they took the name of Calvary, that is, beheaders. Therefore the Lord was crucified there, so that where there had been a place of condemnation, there might be erected the banners of martyrdom. And just as He was made a curse for us, and was scourged, and was crucified, so for the salvation of all, even though guilty among the guilty, He would be crucified. But if someone should wish to argue, why was the Lord crucified there, so that His blood might drop upon the tomb of Adam, let us ask him why, then, were the other thieves crucified in the same place? From which it is clear that Calvary does not signify the tomb of the first man, but the place of the beheaded, so that where sin abounded, grace might more abound (Rom. 5). But we read in the volume of Jesus son of Navé that Adam was buried near Hebron and Arbee (Josh. 14).

27:34

(Verse 34.) And they gave him vinegar to drink mixed with gall, and when he had tasted it, he would not drink. God speaks to Jerusalem: I have planted you as a true vine, how have you become bitter like a foreign vine (Jeremiah II, 21)? A bitter vine makes bitter wine, which they gave to the Lord Jesus, so that what is written may be fulfilled: They gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink (Psalm LXVIII, 22). But when it is said, 'And when he had tasted, he did not want to drink,' this indicates that he did indeed taste the bitterness of death for us, but on the third day he rose again.

27:35

(Verse 35.) And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: They divided my garments among themselves, and upon my vesture they cast lots. And this was prophesied in the same psalm: They divided my garments among themselves, and upon my vesture they cast lots (Psalm 22:18).

27:36

(Verse 36.) And they kept watch over him while he was sitting. The diligence of the soldiers and priests helps us so that the greater and more evident power of his resurrection may appear.

27:37

(Verse 37.) And they placed over his head the charge against him, written, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' I cannot sufficiently admire the magnitude of the matter, that, for the sake of the redeemed, with a false accusation and having incited the unfortunate people to sedition and outcry, they found no other cause for his execution except that he was the King of the Jews. And perhaps they did this in mockery and ridicule. However, Pilate also responded unwillingly, 'What I have written, I have written.' Whether you want it or not, Jews, a crowd of all nations responds to you: Jesus is the king of the Jews, that is, the emperor of believers and confessors.

27:38

(Verse 38.) Then they crucified him with two thieves, one on his right hand, and one on his left. If Golgotha is the hill of Adam and not the place of the condemned, and therefore the Lord is crucified there to raise up Adam, why are the two thieves crucified in that same place?

27:39-41

(Verse 39 seqq.) And those passing by were blaspheming him, shaking their heads, and saying, 'Vah! You who destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days, save yourself; if you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' Similarly, the chief priests, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him; for he said, "I am the Son of God."' But he, mocking, says that the foolish people had produced false witnesses.

27:42

(Verse 42.) He saved others, but he cannot save himself. Even unwillingly, the scribes and Pharisees confess that he saved others. Therefore, your own judgment condemns you. For if he, who saved others, had wanted to, he could have saved himself.

27:43

(V. 43) If he is the king of Israel, let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver him now if He wants. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.' A fraudulent promise. What is more difficult, to come down from the cross while still alive, or to rise from the grave when dead? He has risen, and you did not believe. Therefore, even if he were to come down from the cross, you would not believe. But it seems to me that demons are sending him this message. For as soon as the Lord was crucified, they sensed the power of the cross and understood that their powers had been broken. And they are doing this in order for him to come down from the cross. But the Lord, knowing the snares of his adversaries, remains on the cross to destroy the devil.

27:44

(Verse 44) Now even the robbers who were crucified with him were reviling him. Here, in a figurative sense known as σπληνισμός, both robbers are depicted as blaspheming him. However, Luke asserts that while one blasphemed, the other confessed, and contrary to expectations, rebuked the blasphemer (Luke 23). It is not that the Gospels are inconsistent; rather, both robbers initially blasphemed, but then, as the sun set and the earth shook, and with rocks splitting and darkness descending, one believed in Jesus and rectified his previous denial with a subsequent confession. Among the two thieves, both the Gentiles and the Jews initially blasphemed the Lord. Later, one of them, struck by the magnitude of the signs, repented and to this day scolds the Jews for blaspheming.

27:45

(Verse 45) But at the sixth hour, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. Those who wrote against the Gospels suspect a solar eclipse, which usually occurs at certain fixed times, as the reason for the disciples of Christ being misunderstood about the resurrection of the Lord: since a solar eclipse only occurs when the moon is rising. However, there is no doubt that during the time of Passover, the moon was full. And so it would not seem that the shadow of the earth, or the opposite side of the moon, made brief and rusty darkness, is placed in a space of three hours, so that every opportunity of causing harm is removed. And I think this was done in order to fulfill

the prophecy, saying: The sun shall go down at noon, and it shall be dark over the earth in broad daylight (Amos 8:9); and in another place: The sun went down while it was still day (Jeremiah 15:9). And it seems to me that the most radiant light of the world, that is, the greater luminary, withdrew its rays so as not to see the Lord hanging, or so that the wicked blasphemers might not enjoy their own light.

27:46

(Verse 46.) And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying: Eli, Eli, lammasabacthani, which means: My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? He made use of the beginning of the twenty-first psalm, and that which is read in the middle of the verse: Look upon me, for it is useless. For it is read in Hebrew: My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? Therefore, those who think that this psalm is spoken from the perspective of David, Esther, or Mordecai are wicked, since the evangelists also understand the testimonies taken from it concerning the Savior, as in: They divided my garments among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots. And another thing: They pierced my hands and my feet. Do not be surprised at the lowly words and the complaints of one who is forsaken, when you see the form of a servant and the scandal of the cross.

27:47

(Verse 47.) But some of those standing there, when they heard it, said: This man is calling Elijah. Not all, but some whom I believe were Roman soldiers, not understanding the nature of the Hebrew language, but from what he said: Eli, Eli, thinking that he was calling Elijah. But if we want to understand the Jews who said this, they do this in their usual way, to dishonor the Lord of weakness, who invokes the aid of Elijah.

27:48

(Verse 48.) And immediately one of them, running, filled a sponge with vinegar and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. And these things were done so that the prophecy would be fulfilled: They gave me vinegar for my thirst (Psalm 68:22). Even to this day, the Jews and all the unbelievers give Jesus vinegar and gall to drink on the Sunday of his resurrection; and they give him wine mixed with myrrh to make him sleepy, so that he does not see their evil.

27:50

(Verse 50.) But Jesus, again crying out with a loud voice, gave up his spirit. It is a sign of divine power to release the spirit, as he himself also said: No one can take my life from me; but I lay it down of my own accord, and I will take it up again (John 10:18).

27:51

(Verse 51.) And behold, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The veil of the Temple was torn, and all the sacred mysteries of the Law, which were previously covered, were revealed and passed on to the Gentile people. In the Gospel, which we often mention, we read that the threshold of the Temple, of infinite size, was broken and divided. Josephus also reports that the angelic powers, the former guardians of the Temple, together cried out: Let us leave these seats.

27:52

(Verse 52) And the earth shook, and the rocks were split, and the tombs were opened. There is no doubt that this signifies, literally, the magnitude of the signs, such as the crucified Lord and the heavens and the earth, demonstrating everything. But it seems to me that the earthquake and the rest symbolize the belief of the believers, who, having abandoned the vices of their past errors and softened the hardness of their hearts, who were previously like the tombs of the dead, have now recognized the Creator.

27:53

(Verse 53.) And many bodies of saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. Just as Lazarus, who was dead, rose again, so too many bodies of saints rose again to show the rising of the Lord (John 11). And yet, although the tombs were opened, they did not rise before the Lord rose, so that he would be the firstborn of the resurrection from the dead. But let us understand the holy city, in which they [the risen ones] were seen, either as the heavenly Jerusalem, or as this earthly one, which was previously holy. Just as Matthew is called a tax collector, not because he still remains a tax collector, but because he retains the former title. The city of Jerusalem was called holy because of the temple and the holy of holies, and in distinction from other cities where idols were worshipped. When it is said 'truly', they appeared to many, it is shown that the resurrection was not general, which would appear to everyone: but specific to many, so that those who were worthy could see.

27:54

(Verse 54) But the centurion and those who were with him, guarding Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, were very afraid, saying: Truly, this was the Son of God. In another Gospel, after the earthquake, a more clear cause of the centurion's miracle is explained: when he saw him breathe his last, he said: Truly, this was the Son of God. For no one has the power to dismiss the spirit except the one who is the creator of souls. But in this place, let us understand spirit as the soul, either because it constitutes a spiritual and vital body, or because the substance of the soul itself is a spirit, according to what is written: 'You will take away their spirit, and they will die' (Psalm 103:29). And it should be considered that the centurion, before the cross, truly confesses the Son of God in the scandal of his passion, while Arius preaches a creature in the Church.

27:55-56

(Verse 55, 56.) And there were many women there from afar who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Joseph's mother, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. It was a Jewish custom, and it was not considered wrong according to the ancient customs of the gentiles, for women to provide food and clothing to their teachers out of their own means. Paul mentioned that he had rejected this because it could cause scandal among the nations. For he himself says: Do we not have the power to lead about sisters, women, as the other Apostles do? And the Lord commanded that they ministered of the substance they had, to support their carnal needs, which they themselves were able to provide for their spiritual needs. Not that the Lord needed the food of creatures, but to

show by example to teachers that they should be content with the food and clothing provided by their disciples. But let us see what companions he had: Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons, and Mary the mother of James, and Joseph's mother, the sister of Mary, the mother of the Lord, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee, who had asked just a little before for a kingdom for her children, and others whom we read about in the other Gospels (Luke 8).

27:57-58

(Verse 57, 58.) And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given. The mention of Joseph being rich is not to boast of the writer, but to show why he was able to obtain Jesus' body from Pilate. It would not have been possible for a poor and unknown person to approach Pilate, the governor of Roman authority, and obtain the body of someone who had been crucified. In another passage of the Evangelist (Luke 23), Joseph is called βουλευτής, that is, counselor, and some believe that the first psalm was composed about him: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, and so on.

27:59

(Verse 59.) And taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. Through the simple burial of the Lord, the ambition of the rich is condemned, who cannot even be without riches in their tombs. However, we can understand spiritually and also feel that the body of the Lord should be wrapped not in gold, gems, and silk, but in pure linen cloth; although this also signifies that he wrapped Jesus in a clean linen cloth, who received him with a pure mind.

27:60

(Verse 60) And he placed it in his new tomb, which he had cut out of the rock, and rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. The new tomb could be understood as a symbol that after the resurrection, being mistaken for someone else among the other bodies that remained, would not have occurred. It can also represent the virgin womb of Mary: the stone placed at the entrance, and the large stone, showing that the tomb could not be opened without the help of many people.

27:61-63

(V. 61 seqq.) Now there was there Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, sitting opposite the sepulchre. And on the next day, which followed the day of preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying: Lord, we remember that that seducer said, while he was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. But the rest having left the Lord, the women persevered in their duty, expecting what Jesus had promised; and therefore they were the first to see the risen Lord, for he who perseveres to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22; 24:13).

27:64-66

(Verse 64 and following) Therefore, command that the tomb be guarded until the third day, lest his disciples come and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and

setting a guard. It was not enough for the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees to have crucified the Lord and Savior, unless they also guarded the tomb, took a cohort, sealed the stone, and opposed their hands to the one rising, so that their diligence would benefit our faith: For the more it is kept hidden, the more the power of the resurrection is revealed. And in the new monument, which had been cut out of the rock, He was buried, so that if it had been built with many stones, the foundation of the tomb being dug up, it could be easily taken away by thieves. But as for where He was to be placed in the tomb, there is the testimony of the prophet, saying: He shall dwell in the rocky cave which is the strongest rock (Isaiah 33:16). And immediately after two verses, it follows: You shall see the King with glory (Ibid., 17).

28:1

(Chapter 28, Verse 1) But on the evening of the Sabbath, which dawns on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. The fact that different times of these women are described in the Gospels is not a sign of falsehood, as the wicked claim, but rather the diligent duty of visitation, as they frequently go and come back, and do not allow themselves to be away from the Lord's tomb for a long time or further.

28:2-3

(Vers. 2, 3.) And behold, there was a great earthquake. For an Angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and approaching, rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. And His appearance was like lightning, and His garment like snow. Our Lord, the one and the same Son of God and Son of Man, according to both natures, divinity and flesh, now demonstrates signs of His greatness and humility. Therefore, even in this place, though He is a man who was crucified, who was buried, who was confined in a tomb, whom a stone held back, yet the things that happen outside reveal the Son of God: the sun fleeing, darkness falling, the earth shaking, the veil torn, rocks split, the dead raised, the ministry of angels, which from the beginning of His nativity confirmed Him as God. Gabriel came to Mary, while Joseph speaks with the angel; the same announces it to the shepherds, afterwards the chorus of angels is heard saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will (Luke II). He is tempted in solitude, and after victory immediately served by angels. Now also the Angel comes, the guardian of the Lord's tomb, and in white garments signifies the glory of the triumphant. Moreover, as the Lord ascends to heaven, two angels are seen on the Mount of Olives, promising the apostles according to the Saviour's coming (Acts I).

28:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) However, because of his fear, the guards were terrified and became like dead men. But the angel, responding, said to the women: Do not be afraid. For I know that you seek Jesus, who was crucified: He is not here, for he has risen as he said. The guards, terrified by fear, lie stupefied like dead men, and yet the angel comforts not them, but the women. Do not be afraid. Let them, he says, fear: let fear continue in those in whom unbelief persists. Furthermore, because you seek Jesus who was crucified, listen to the fact that He has risen and fulfilled the promises.

28:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) Come and see the place where the Lord was laid. And quickly going, say to his disciples. That if you do not believe my words, you may believe in the empty tomb, and go with quick steps and announce to his disciples.

Because he has risen, and behold, he goes before you to Galilee: there you will see him: behold, I have told you.

28:8

(Verse 8.) And they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, running to tell his disciples. The women's minds were filled with mixed emotions, fear and joy: one because of the greatness of the miracle, the other out of longing for the risen one; and yet both stirred up a feminine fervor. They went to the apostles, so that through them the seed of faith might be scattered.

28:9 (Verse 9.) And behold, Jesus met them, saying: Greetings. Those who were searching, those who were running in this manner, deserved to meet the risen Lord, and first to hear, Greetings: so that the curse of the woman Eve would be overturned in women. But they drew near and held his feet, and adored him. These came near and held his feet, because they adored him. But she, who sought the living among the dead, and still did not know that the Son of God had risen, rightly hears: Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father (John 20:17).

28:10

(Verse 10.) Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid. And in the old and new Testament, this must always be observed: that when a more august (or narrower) vision appears, fear is first dispelled so that, with the mind calmed, the things that are said can be heard.'

Go, tell my brothers to go to Galilee, there they will see me. And when they had gone, behold, some of the guards came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. These brothers, of whom he spoke elsewhere: I will announce your name to my brothers (Ps. XXI, 23): who do not see the Savior in Judea, but in the multitude of the Gentiles.

28:12-15

(Vers. 12 seqq.) And when they were gathered with the elders, after taking counsel, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying: Tell them that his disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep. And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble. So they took the money and did as they were instructed. And the story spread among the Jews to this day. The guards confessed the miracle: they returned to the city and reported to the chief priests all that they had seen and experienced. Those who were supposed to convert to repentance and seek the risen Jesus persist in wickedness, and they turn the money that was given for the use of the temple into the redemption of lies, just as they had previously given thirty pieces of silver to Judas the betrayer. Therefore, all those who misuse the temple offerings and those things that are given for the use of the church for other purposes, in order to fulfill their own desires, are similar to the scribes and priests who bought the lie and the Savior's blood.

28:16-17

(Verse 16, 17.) However, the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. After the resurrection, Jesus is seen on a mountain in Galilee and is worshipped there; although some doubt, their doubt strengthens our faith. Then he shows himself more clearly to Thomas and shows him the wound in his side from the spear and the nails in his hands.

28:18

(Ver. 18.) And Jesus came to them and spoke, saying: All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth. The power was given to him who was recently crucified, who was buried in a tomb, who had been dead, and who later rose again. Power has been given in heaven and on earth, so that he who previously reigned in heaven may now reign on earth through the faith of believers.

28:19

(Verse 19.) Therefore, go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. First they teach all nations, then they immerse the instructed ones in water. For it cannot be that the body receives the sacrament of baptism unless the soul has first embraced the truth with faith. But they are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, so that there may be one divinity among them, one bestowal: and the name of the Trinity is one God.

28:20 (Verse 20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. The main order: He commanded the apostles to first teach all nations, then to immerse them in the sacrament of faith, and after faith and baptism, to command what should be observed. And lest we think that what has been commanded is light and few, he added: All things whatsoever I have commanded you. So that whoever believes, who has been baptized in the Trinity, may do all the things that are commanded. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. He who promises to be with his disciples until the end of the age, and shows them that they will always be victorious, and that he will never leave those who believe in him. But he who promises his presence until the end of the world, does not ignore the day when he knows he will be with the apostles.

Commentary on Micah

Commentary on Micah

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Micah, whom I now desire to dictate commentaries on, is the third in order among the twelve prophets according to the Septuagint interpreters; according to the Hebrew (or rather, the Hebrew truth), he is the sixth, and is followed by the prophet Jonah, who succeeds Obadiah, and so it happens that Amos is the third and Joel the second after Hosea, who is the first among all. Therefore, as if placed in the heart of the volume, it must contain profound mysteries and the word of God, which always descends to the prophets, also descends to Micah, who is interpreted as humility: to Micah from Moresheth, which is a small village near the city of Eleutheropolis in Palestine even to this day. But 'humility' () in our language means 'heir'. Therefore, humility, which is among the virtues or even the chief virtue, is born of the hope of the Lord's inheritance. However, it is not the humility that comes from the awareness of sins; rather, it is the humility that is placed among the virtues, as it is said: Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time (1 Peter 5:6). And: Whoever humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 18:14). And: Before contrition, the heart of a man is lifted up, and before glory, it is humbled (Prov. XVI, 18). Therefore, even the Lord says: Learn from me, for I am meek and humble-hearted (Mat. XI, 29). So how is it that among us, words are placed as votive and almost as auspicious for virtue? For example: victorious, chaste, pious, upright. And in Greek it is called σφρων and εσεβς. And appellative names are translated into proper names. Similarly, among the Hebrews, children are given names from the vocabulary of virtues, such as Michaeas, Abdias, and Zacharias, and others like them.

Book One

Book One

1:1

(Chapter 1, Verse 1) The word of the Lord that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem, or according to the Septuagint, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. The word of the Lord came to Micah after Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah, who prophesied during the reign of Uzziah. From this we understand that Micah did not prophesy during the times of Uzziah, but rather during the times of his sons Jotham, after whom Ahaz reigned, and Hezekiah, who succeeded his father Ahaz and during whose reign the ten tribes were taken into captivity by the Assyrians (2 Kings 18). Therefore, it pertains to history according to the order of the captivity (because Samaria, the capital of Israel, was captured first, then the city of Jerusalem) that the title of prophecy is first placed concerning Samaria, and secondly concerning Jerusalem. But as for the mystical understanding, because Samaria is always understood in heresies, and Jerusalem in the Church, we say that the word of the Lord becomes for the humble (or Jerusalem) and for the coheir of Christ, about perverse doctrines, and about the Church, if she has perhaps committed any sins, and to weave together the order of the whole volume. But as for Samaria and the ten tribes, who were separated from the kingdom of Jeroboam of the Davidic lineage (3 Kings 12), they may be considered as heretics, and this is testified not only by the entire Scripture, but especially by the prophet Hosea, and even this very book, which calls them impious heretics and sinful church members. For immediately afterwards it says: What is the wickedness of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the sin of the house of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? This translation is according to the Seventy translators. Furthermore, how it is read in Hebrew, we will briefly explain. But also, that which heretics always rely on as if in the sublimity of their dogmas and despise the simplicity of the Church, is said elsewhere: Woe to those who despise Zion and trust in the mountain of Samaria (Amos 6:1); for from Zion shall come forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3). Moreover, Samaria has made for itself golden calves, which indeed have beauty on the surface but do not possess the breath of life; and it was made in the house of God, which is interpreted as Bethel. For the people of Israel could not receive gods except those that were made from scriptures, and in the house of God. Although they call their assemblies Bethel, after the making of idols, Bethel ceased to be and is called Bethaven, which means house of idols. This is in reference to the title. Now let's come to the beginning of the prophecy and invoke the coming of the Holy Spirit while the Lernaean Hydra beast rages. You, O Paula and Eustochium, pour forth prayers to the Lord and Savior, that envy may not harm me, but that my free mind may think only of that which it strives to explain, and may not feel the blows of insults, which the Lord despised in His suffering (Mark 14 and John 16, 18).

1:2

(Verse 2.) Hear, all people, and let the earth and its fullness attend, and may the Lord God be a witness to you, the Lord from his holy temple. LXX: Hear, all people, and let the earth and all who are in it listen, and may the Lord God be a testimony to you, the Lord from his holy house. Because according to the narrative the meaning is clear, I leave it to the discernment of the wise reader. But according to the figurative interpretation, he calls all people to listen, that is, the churches of the whole world, and to listen to the earth, because earthly doctrines of heretics have

been constructed in it. But when heresies are numbered among the works of the flesh, which is always referred to as earthly, and the Apostle to the Galatians does not remain silent (Gal. 5), and the Lord in the Gospel indicates to the wise listener: 'He who is of the earth speaks of the earth.' And in distinction to them, he again says of the Ecclesiastics: 'He who comes from heaven is above all' (John 3:31). And: 'What he has seen and heard, this he testifies.' But if this that he says, 'Hear, O people,' refers to that saying of the Lord: 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear' (Luke 8:8), it sounds like something more than what is later added: 'Let the earth attend, we will adjust to the Church, Hear, O all people.' But let those heretics who have accepted earthly doctrine take notice: let the earth and all those who are on it attend, so that both these people, if they hear, and those people, if they pay attention, may not suffer the things which the word of the Lord threatens afterwards. And may the Lord be a witness to them, as it is read in Hebrew, a witness, or as Symmachus has more clearly interpreted, testifying and testifying not from elsewhere, but from his own house, which is the Church, or certainly in the Son, that is, in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the temple of the Father, and from whose mouth the Father speaks, penetrating the depths and marrow of those who wish to pay attention and hear.

1:3-5

(Verse 3, sequence) Because behold the Lord will go out from his place, and he will come down and tread upon the heights of the earth, and the mountains will be consumed beneath him, and the valleys will be split like wax before the fire, like waters flowing down a steep slope. Because of the wickedness of Jacob, all this, and because of the sins of the house of Israel. What wickedness of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what heights of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? LXX: Behold, the Lord will go out from his place, and he will come down, and he will ascend upon the heights of the earth, and the mountains will tremble beneath him, and the valleys will wither like wax before the fire, and like water flowing down: because of the impiety of Jacob, all these things, and because of the sin of the house of Israel. What is the wickedness of the house of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the sin of the house of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? O Samaria and Jerusalem, listen, and carefully heed the Lord testifying against you from His temple, and proclaiming whatever He will do. Behold, the Lord will come out from His place. For He who is humble and kind, and whose nature is mercy, is forced for your sake to assume a role of cruelty that He does not possess. And he shall come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. The descent of God is, and his majesty runs down to lower things, to tread upon the earth, and to crush even the powerful. And they shall be consumed, he says, whether the mountains waste away, and the valleys beneath him, whom we understand to be the leaders and the people. And just as nearby fire does not sustain wax, and flowing water is carried headlong: so shall the pride of all the wicked, when the Lord comes, be dissolved and flow away. But all this will happen because of the sins of the ten tribes, which Jacob and Israel called, and because of the transgression of Judah; for in the ten tribes Samaria was the metropolis, and in the kingdom of Judah Jerusalem, idolatry was practiced: this is according to the literal sense. However, the Lord will come out from his place, whom we can understand as either the Son or all the saints. For the Son himself says: I am in the Father, and the Father in me (John 14:10). And of the saints: I will dwell and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Leviticus 26:12). Therefore, concerning these things, it goes forth, not that He may abandon them; for even concerning the apostles, the word of the Lord went forth to those who heard, and yet He did not abandon them. And such places, that is, those that

deserve to have God as a guest, have been raised up, as if resurrected with Christ, and seated with Him in heavenly places. And it is said that he descends to those who cannot hear his teaching on the mountain. And when he descends, he will not ascend to the lowly and those who are in a low position; but those who are called high and who understand the majesty of the coming of the Lord, they will be moved. And although there are mountains, they will still fear the presence of such a charioteer and ascender. But the valleys, that is, souls inserted into earthly bodies, and not rising with the celestial man, will not be able to bear his presence; but whatever is hard in them will be dissolved, and thus flow, just as if flat waters are carried swiftly into the depths. Therefore, the terrible Lord will come to teach, that is, to move mountains, and to dissolve the low things of valleys, because Jacob has committed impiety, and Israel has sinned. The impiety of Jacob is indeed the meeting places of heretics, which are called Samaria. And the sin of Judah, that is, of him who confesses the Lord, is none other than Jerusalem, in which many crimes are found. And as for the fact that the house of Judah refers to Christ, whose Church it is, and as we have often said, let us also consider this for the present: Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies. (Genesis 49:8). It can also be understood in this way, that because of the impieties of Samaria and the crimes of Judah, the Lord went out from his former place, and said to the Jews (Matt. 23:38): Behold, your house will be left desolate for you (Luke 13:35). And he will come down from heaven, and ascend above the heights of the earth, that is, above those who, believing in the humility of the Gentiles, have deserved to be exalted. And the mountains, the doctrines of the philosophers, and the lofty kingdoms were moved, and those who remained humble were consumed and broken by the coming of the Savior and the growing Church, and by the idols falling into the depths when the mountains rose up high. Therefore the Lord has left his place, and the Church has been built among the nations, so that the mountains would tremble under his feet, and the deep valleys would be dissolved, because Jacob acted wickedly, and Israel sinned, and all the tribes denied the Lord.

1:6-9

(Verse 6 onwards): And I will make Samaria a heap of stones in the field, when a vineyard is planted, and I will pour down her stones into the valley, and will lay bare her foundations. And all her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, and all her wages shall be burned with fire, and all her idols will I lay desolate: for she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of a harlot. Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls. For her wound is incurable; for it is come unto Judah; he is come unto the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem. LXX: And I will make Samaria a caretaker of fruits in the field, and a plantation of vineyards; and I will uncover its foundations and reveal all of its carved images, and all of its wages will be burned with fire, and all of its idols I will put to destruction, because it gathered them from the wages of prostitution, and destroyed them with the wages of prostitution. Because of this, it will lament and mourn, it will go barefoot and naked, it will make a lamentation like the dragons, and a mourning like the daughters of Sirens, because its wound has obtained, because it has come to Judah and has touched the gate of my people, even Jerusalem. According to the order of sins, there is an order of punishments. Samaria was the first to sin, and they made idols and worshiped calves instead of the Lord: therefore, let it perish first. I will destroy it when the Assyrians come, and I will make it like a heap of stones when a vineyard is planted, so that it is turned into mounds. And I will remove its stones into the valley. It was indeed

situated in the mountains, where Sebaste is now, and it is where the bones of the holy John the Baptist are buried. And I will reveal its foundations. Such will be the ruin and the destruction of the city, that not only the walls and buildings will collapse, but even the foundations will be exposed to the very last stone. And all its sculptures and treasures, which were gathered by various kings, will be brought down and burned by fire, and reduced to nothingness. For the riches and abundant possessions, which were presumed to be the result of idolatry, will be taken to another harlot, that is, to Nineveh. Just as they committed fornication with the idols they made in their own land, so they will go to another land of idols and prostitution, that is, to the Assyrians. So far concerning Samaria. And because the same calamity will happen to Jerusalem (for it also sinned with a similar error, abandoning its God and making idols), therefore the prophet attributes a kind of personification to God, and under his own persona he expresses a lamenting affection, and says: About this I will mourn and wail; I will go stripped and naked (for I have lost ten tribes), and I will make a lamentation like jackals, and mourning like ostriches. For just as dragons roar with a terrifying hiss, according to the accounts of those who have written about natural history, at the time when they are defeated by elephants; and just as ostriches are forgetful of their eggs, as if they had not laid them, and leave their young to be trampled on by the feet of beasts in the sand (Job 39); as it is more fully described in the book of Job: so I also, stripped of children and naked, will go on my way. And I shall do this, because her wound is desperate, that is, Samaria. And the same sin, or rather the same punishment of sin, which destroyed Samaria, will come even to Judah, and even to the gate of my city Jerusalem. For just as Samaria was overthrown by the Assyrians, so Judah and Jerusalem will be overthrown by the Chaldeans. And indeed, as we understand, Samaria was once the Church of heretics, which, separated from God, became a gathering of the people; the Lord himself threatens that he will make it a place for the keeping of apples, an orchard and a planting ground for a vineyard. For it is much better to overthrow an useless city, and its stones with which it was built, to be thrown down, and to prepare it as an orchard and a plantation of vineyards, than to remain in the worst kind of construction. For when it has been destroyed, and its foundations have been revealed (by which it seemed to hide its mysteries, and to have firm doctrines on which it stood, and all idols appeared to have a kind of beauty, composed by skillful craftsmanship, and have been cut down by the ministers of God, that is, by the Ecclesiastical men), then in the place of the worst construction, various fruits of the Church will be born, and not only will they be born, but they will also be guarded, and the vineyard of Sorek will be planted, from which wine will be made, which the Lord promised to drink in the kingdom of the Father (Mark 14). Not only, however, will the foundations of that which was previously hidden in the earth be opened and brought forth into the open, and the idols which they had fashioned for themselves be overthrown; but even the glory and wealth which she seemed to possess through her fornication and her error will be consumed by my fire, of which I spoke in the Gospel: I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled (Luke 12:49): and they shall be burned up and reduced to nothing, for they have been contracted not from the truth of doctrines, but from the fornication of the soul and from errors collected from here and there. For heretics, indeed, do not have riches coming from paternal inheritance, but daily they find what they cultivate, and they fashion idols for themselves with skillful hand and curious mind. Therefore, when their field has been converted into a custody of fruits, and prepared for vineyards, and the stones with which the city was built have been removed into the depths, and their foundations have been revealed, and all the carved and burnt images, and the rewards that they

promised themselves with empty hope, and whatever they seemed to worship as God, have been reduced to nothing, because in the fornication of the soul, they had obtained all their price for themselves: then, understanding their former error, having turned back upon themselves, they will lament in those things at which they previously laughed, and they will mourn in those things in which before, in a certain manner, they rejoiced in their fornication. And the deponents will cast off from their feet whatever is deadly, and they will be barefoot, for the ground on which they stand is holy, and they will throw away all the clothes of their fornication, and they will be naked so that they can be clothed in the garment of Christ, and they will lament like dragons. For sometimes even dragons lament when they see the greatest dragon captured and hanging on the hook of a fisherman, and the sea deserted. And they shall lament like the daughters of the Sirens, for the songs of heretics are sweet, and deceive the people with their sweet voices. None can pass by their songs unless they stop up their ears and become deaf. Therefore, Samaria shall weep and mourn for these things, for the arrow of the Lord has wounded her, and she shall recognize the error of her ways. Not only has she sinned herself, but she also desires to bring her iniquity and error into the gates of Judah. It is said of her: She came up to Judea and touched up to the gates of my people, up to Jerusalem. She touched the gates, as we understand them with our ears. However, she could not enter the middle city: for if she had entered, she would have made Samaria from Jerusalem. How often we see some in the Church scandalized by the heretical teachings and seeking how to answer their questions, yet not leaving the Church, let us say, she came to Samaria, or the region of Samaria up to the confessing people, up to the ears of God's people, up to the ears of Jerusalem. For what is said touches as well the gates of my people, it is to be understood in general, so that it may be supplied, it also touches even the gates of Jerusalem. Up to this point, against Samaria and against Jerusalem, let us see the rest, which follows.

1:10-15

(Vers. 10 seq.) In Geth, do not announce, do not weep with tears, sprinkle yourselves with dust in the house of dust: pass by, you inhabitants of Saphir (Beautiful), confused with disgrace, she who dwells in Sennan (Exit) has not come out. The lament of the house of Asel (Neighboring) will receive you: she who stood for herself, because she is weakened in good, she who dwells in Maroth (Bitterness): for evil descends from the Lord to the gate of Jerusalem. The tumult of chariots has amazed the inhabitants of Lachish, the beginning of sin is the daughter of Zion: for in you were found the wickedness of Israel? Therefore, He will send messengers over the inheritance of Gath: the houses of falsehood for deceit to the kings of Israel. Yet I will bring the heir to you, O inhabitant of Mareshah; to Adullam the glory of Israel will come. LXX: Those in Gath, do not boast; those in Beth-leaphrah, do not rebuild the house of mockery: sprinkle your mockery on the land, you who inhabit the towns! The inhabitant of Sennacherib has not come forth. Mourn for the house near her; it will receive a blow of sorrow, who has taken for good what dwells in sorrow? For evils have come down from the Lord upon the gates of Jerusalem. The sound of chariots and horsemen is heard in Lachish: the prince of sin is the daughter of Zion: for in you have been found the iniquities of Israel. Therefore, he will give emissaries to the inheritance of Gath: empty houses: they have been in vain for the kings of Israel: until I bring heirs to you, who dwell in Lachish, the inheritance will come as far as Odollam. The Hebrew greatly disagrees with the Septuagint translation, and both translations are involved in such great difficulties, both mine and theirs, that if

at any time we are in need of the Spirit of God (but we always need His coming in the interpretation of holy Scriptures), now especially we desire Him to be present and to unfold what He has said in the prophets, so that it may also be understood about us, as He deigns to promise elsewhere: Open your mouth, and I will fill it (Ps. LXXX, 11). Moreover, as the history of the kingdom also testifies (1 Samuel 17), Gath is one of the five cities of Palestine, near the border of Judah, and as one travels from Eleutheropolis to Gaza, it is now just a small village or even a large hamlet, where that Philistine giant Goliath, whom David killed in battle, was from. Therefore, because the prophet, or rather the Lord through the prophet, had said, 'I will mourn and wail, I will go stripped and naked; I will make a lament like the dragons and mourn like the ostriches,' since the wound of Samaria is despairing and incurable and had come even to Judah, and had touched the gate of my people Jerusalem, therefore in a voice still lamenting I command: 'Do not announce it in Gath, lest the enemies hear and rejoice; do not weep with tears, that is, do not let even the pain burst forth into sobs; suppress your weeping, lest the adversaries rejoice, lest they have tears in their mouths while their hearts have sorrow; do not go out, but rather sprinkle yourselves with the dust of the ruins in your house, and scatter yourselves with the falling ashes.' Pass through (Al. Passes through) to you, the dwelling of Saphir (which is called beautiful in the Syro-Hebraic language). For Samaria is situated in the most beautiful part of Judaea, and is also abundant in resources. It is said to her: O you who dwell in the most fertile region, because you are disgraced and confused, pass through like this, be led into captivity in such a way that, because of the magnitude of your evils, not even a foreigner will hear your voice. Furthermore, what follows: She has not gone out who dwells in Sennam, which means exit, or as Symmachus translates, the abundant dwelling has not gone out, it is said of the same Samaria which is within the gates of Assyria's captivity, and as soon as it moves from its borders, it enters hostile land. The dwelling, as we said above, is abundant and beautiful. Therefore, she who resides (or resided) did not leave by her own will, but was led by force into Assyria. Hence, the neighboring house on the side, which is interpreted as Asel, namely the kingdom of Judah, will receive lamentation from you, which now, in the meantime, after Samaria was captured, has been restored and had God as its defender. But she received lamentation, and she is struck with fear, and her prosperity is weakened, who dwells in Maroth (or Ramoth), that is, in bitterness, or as Symmachus translates, a dwelling that incites bitterness, i.e. a dwelling that causes bitterness; which in Hebrew is called Josebeth Maroth, because of the captivity of the neighboring tribes, for evil comes down from the Lord to the gate of Jerusalem, for the Assyrians, having laid waste Samaria, also came to Jerusalem, at the time when Rabshakeh was sent to insult, of whom the fourth book of the Kingdoms (2 Kings 18) and Isaiah (Isaiah 36) write more fully. Where it is said that the Assyrian king sent from Lachish to Jerusalem, and afterwards, after Lachish was captured, he passed over to besiege Libnah. Therefore, the city of Lachish, dedicated to idols, will come, and to you the chariot and horsemen of the Assyrians, because the crimes of Israel were also found in you, and you were the beginning of idolatry in Judah: for through you, as through a gate, the impiety of the ten tribes migrated to Jerusalem. But not only will there be tumult over Lachish and chariots, but also over Gath, the metropolis of Philistia, of which I have spoken above: Do not announce it in Gath: for the Assyrian will send his robbers, whom he calls messengers, and will possess the house of idolatry and the city of deceit, which was a snare for the kings of Israel. But as for what follows: 'I will still bring an heir to you, who dwells in Maresa,' he beautifully alluded to the name. For Maresa, which means 'inheritance,' he called the arrival of the enemy against the heirs, and he will come to the city of

Odollam, which is Judah, Maresa, that is, inheritance. And Odollam is glorious in its cities of Israel. Finally, Symmachus translated it as follows: 'I will still bring an heir and a dwelling to you in Maresa, until the glory of Israel comes to Odollam,' that is, I will still bring an heir to you and a dwelling in Maresa until the glory of Israel comes to Odollam, that is, you who are glorious among the cities of Israel. And where it is said 'of glory', the genitive case should be in the singular number, 'of this glory', and not in the nominative case, 'of these glories'. Or certainly understand it thus: The captivity of Israel which came to Lachish, and Gath, and Mareshah, will also come to Odollam. And the phrase 'the glory of Israel' should be read more closely, so that the meaning of κατὰ ντφρᾶσιν, 'shame' or 'devastation', may be felt. Furthermore, what we have interpreted above as the inheritance of the city of the prophet Micah, let the reader know in the same verse which we have set down: Therefore He will send envoys over the inheritance of Gath, in Hebrew instead of the inheritance of Gath, Maraseth Gath (also called Moraseth) is placed. Thus far, according to the Hebrew, as much as we were able and as it seemed to us, certainly as we heard from the Hebrews, we have steered our little boat between rocks and sharpest cliffs, which whether it has entered the harbor or is still floating on the sea, it is for the reader's judgment. Now, let us continue with your prayers to other waves, and with the imminent danger of shipwreck on all sides, if we can, let us escape. 'Geth' is interpreted as a press, so those who are in Geth, that is, in a press, thinking that they have gathered the fruits of life and squeezed the juice from the vine of Sorek, are lifted up in pride, not knowing that the cluster of the land of Judah is not found in the borders of foreign nations. Do not boast, says the Lord, you who are in the wine presses: For your vineyard is of Sodom, and your offspring of Gomorrah: And your grapes are of bitterness, and your clusters of gall to you, and the wine of fury of dragons is your wine, the fury of invincible asps. For if you also produce fruit (since your vineyard is not only from Sodom and Gomorrah, but also from Egypt and other enemy nations) the Lord will give your fruit to rust, and your labors to locusts, and He will destroy your vineyards with hail, and your mulberry trees with frost. Do not let the appearance of wine deceive you, and do not say that sweet is bitter: taste your wine carefully, and you will find that it is like the wine of Sorek, the fury of dragons and the venom of asps. Therefore, do not be proud, but humble yourselves under the mighty hand of the Lord, and go to that winepress from which I, who am coming from Edom, am red in my speech, as Isaiah the prophet says: I have trodden the winepress alone, and there is no man from the nations with me. Again, there are those who speak of aliens and others (for the province of the Allophylans has many regions and cities) who, through their evil works and contrary senses, speak against God: 'We have been destroyed, but let us rebuild that which has been destroyed.' Hence they are called the boundaries of impiety, and the people whom the Lord is angry with. It is said to them: 'Do not build with derision from the house in Bachim.' Bachim () in our language means lamentation and weeping. Finally, with the exception of the Septuagint, all have translated κλαυθμῶν, which means weeping. So, who are you then in such works and sentiments that are worthy of tears, do not build up a bad edification, nor consider your understanding as the construction of God, nor build upon sand (Matt. VII), lest when the storm comes and your house collapses, your futile labor may provide laughter for onlookers. Rather, understanding that your edification is worthy of ridicule, sprinkle your heads with its ruins and dust, and repent for wanting to build a house without counsel. It follows: Those who dwell well in their own cities have not gone forth dwelling in Senna. This seems to me to have this meaning: You, who boast in Geth and in Bachim, attempt in vain to build a house worthy of laughter: sprinkle yourselves with dust and repent, because you desired to

crush detestable wine and to build a construction contrary to God. But the Church of Christ, which dwells well and possesses churches in the whole world, is joined together by the unity of the Spirit and has the cities of the Law, the Prophets, the Gospel, and the Apostles. It has not gone forth from its limits, that is, from the holy Scriptures; but it retains the possession that it began; because it dwells in Senna, which is interpreted, as we said above, by Symmachus as abundance; for it has the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, with whom all spiritual graces and abundant virtues are. And it is said to her: Let peace be made in your strength, and abundance in your towers (Psalm 121, 7). But you, who dwell near Sennan, that is, near the abundant Church, oh heretics, oh contrary teachings, lament yourselves, because you have built a house for yourselves in mockery, and you have pressed the winepress in pride, not in the Scriptures, but in the vicinity of the Scriptures, a house worthy of not laughter, but lamentation, and you have built it with tears. Where it is joined, lament the house which is next to it, that is, next to Sennan. But also this which is added, it shall receive from you a blow of sorrow, it is said to the same heretics, to whom it is commanded to lament the neighboring house of the Church, that the enemy and avenger devil, to whom they are to be handed over for punishment, himself may inflict blows on them, and may extract from them the pain of wounds for the purpose of evil edification. Which are therefore inflicted, so that they may feel the sins which they have committed, may do penance, and may make the habitation of sorrows an occasion for good things. Whether the Church is indicating its grief because it laments its former sons, and is itself the cause of the salvation of heretics if they wish to return to their mourning mother. Furthermore, what is brought forth: For evils have descended from the Lord upon the gates of Jerusalem: and the Marcionites and Manichaeans use this scripture, because the God of the Law is the creator of evils. Let us say that evils have descended from the Lord, just as the Savior speaks in the Gospel: I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke X, 18). For just as Lucifer, who rose in the morning (Isaiah 14), fell from heaven and was crushed upon the earth, so too these evils that have fallen from the Lord and have come to the gates of Jerusalem were not evils before they fell; but because they have fallen from the Lord, they have become evils. And so that we may know the snares of evils: they came, he says, to the gates of Jerusalem, which, because they are secure and made of adamant, are closed off by the apostles, to whom the keys of Jerusalem have been entrusted; before these gates the enemies lurk, and those whom they see leaving, they kill. If someone is from Jerusalem, who lives well in his own cities, he does not go out when he dwells in abundance; but he always remains within, and does not go out of its gates, for whoever goes out of them is killed: he is killed by those who rise up in Geth, and dwell in Bachim, and build a house for mockery. Finally, the evils that have descended from the Lord to the gates of Jerusalem only have the noise of chariots and the tumult of horses, and a confused sound in place of the gates of Jerusalem, so that they will kill with their spear anyone they see wandering. After this was written: You who dwell in Lachish are the chief of sin for the daughter of Zion. Lachish is interpreted as 'walk' or 'journey'. And those who went up in their chariots and had horses, and made only empty noise and sound, concerning whom she who dwells well in her cities spoke: these are in chariots and these are on horses: but we will invoke in the name of the Lord our God (Ps. XIX, 8); for they have moved their feet, and have been carried about by every wind of false doctrine (Ephesians IV), and they desired to go out of the Church, which is interpreted as 'watchtower', that is, Zion, the chiefs of sin were the daughters of Zion. And in the same, that is, in Latin, were found the impieties of Israel, which separated the people of God from their former kingdom. Therefore, the leader of sin is the

daughter of Zion, who dwells in Lachish, that is, in the worst way of life, constantly wavering in her steps, and the impieties of Israel are found in those who always move their feet and are said to dwell in Lachish. There will also be emissaries sent to the inheritance of Gath: Gath, the worst and the press of poisons, which is built against the house of God, where there are vain houses that have been built for ridicule. And these vanity homes, made in vain, were among the kings of Israel. As far as history is concerned, these are the kings whose sins are written in the Books of Kings and Chronicles: but as far as the anagoge is concerned, they are the princes of heretics and leaders of perverse doctrines; for these homes are vainly built and in vain. And as long as they persevere, until the heirs who are to be brought by the Lord possess them. After this follows: You who dwell in Lachish, the inheritance will come all the way to Odollam. The word 'testimonium' here is interpreted as the act of drawing or taking in water. In Greek, it is more significantly called 'μαρτυρία ντλσεως', meaning the testimony of their drawing. We read in Proverbs: 'If you are wicked, you will alone drink in evil' (Prov. IX, 21). So, what dwells in Lachis, that is, in a very difficult situation, will come to the point of complete exhaustion, which it will completely drain and drink according to the measure of its works. Or certainly it should be distinguished in this way, that what is said, 'you who dwell in Lachis,' refers to the things above, and the order and meaning are as follows: I will bring your heirs from the Church, you who dwell in Lachis, because you will be of the inheritance of the Lord when you have drawn and received what you deserve. I beg the reader at the end of this chapter not to think of it as a necessity, a desire, or a lengthy explanation, but rather to marvel at finding something in such difficult places and not overlooking anything that needs to be said.

1:16

(Verse 16.) Shave and shear the sons of your delights, spread your baldness like an eagle, for captives have been led away from you. LXX: Glory of the daughter of Israel, shave and shear the sons of your delicacy; spread your baldness like an eagle, for captives have been led away from you. This that was spoken by the Seventy, glory of the daughter of Israel, with the daughters adding it, the Hebrews read at the end of the previous chapter. But it is necessary for us, as you have desired, to interpret the Scriptures in the way they are read in the Church, and moreover not to neglect the Hebrew truth. It is therefore said to Israel for the time being according to the letter, so that we may understand that either the ten tribes were taken to Samaria or all Israel together; because the people were led captive, and all Judaea was devastated by the Assyrians and Babylonians, let them assume lamentation and weep for their children. And just as an eagle, which is the queen of birds, loses its feathers at a certain time and remains featherless, so too let Israel cast off all its former glory, with which it was once adorned, and lament for the sons subjected to the power of the enemy. And as for the eagle, it is accustomed to lose its feathers at a certain time, and it is written in the Psalter: 'Your youth will be renewed like the eagle's' (Ps. 103:5). And the comic poet says in The Self-Tormenter: 'Indeed, it is true, as they say, that the eagle grows old' (Terence, Act III, Scene 2). However, if we want to take this same thing in regard to the present time of the Judean destruction, we will see that all the favor that once flourished with God has completely departed from them. For where is the prophet? Where is the teacher of the Law? Where are the defenses of the angels? Where, on the other hand, is the unexpected (or expected) victory against many by a few? Jerusalem has been bald, losing all the hair of its former glory, and its children, who cried out against the Lord, 'Crucify him, crucify him,' have been led into captivity. I

read in the Commentaries of someone that this which is said, to shave and tear over the sons of your delights, can be understood about the condition of humanity: as God to Adam, or to heavenly Jerusalem, to direct conversation. O human soul! O city once the mother of the saints, which you were first in paradise, and you enjoyed the delights of various trees, and you had the most beautiful hair: now since you have been cast down from the heights and brought to Babylon, and you have come to a place of captivity, and you have lost your hair, shave and assume the habit of a penitent, and mourn your sons, mourn your offspring, who is led captive from you.

2:1-5

(Chapter 2—Verse 1 onwards) Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil upon their beds! In the morning light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. They covet fields, and seize them; houses, and take them away; they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance. Therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, I am devising against this family an evil from which you cannot remove your necks, and you shall not walk haughtily, for it will be an evil time. On that day, this parable shall be taken up against you, and a song shall be sung with sweetness, saying: We have been utterly devastated. The portion of my people has been changed. How shall he withdraw from me, when he shall return, who will divide our regions? For this reason, there will be no one sending out a measuring line to the assembly of the Lord. LXX: They have become those who think about labors and do evil in their beds. And together, on the day of the consummation, they will complete them. For they have not lifted up their hands to God, and they have desired fields, and they have plundered the orphan, and they have oppressed houses, and they have seized a man, and his house, a man and his inheritance. Therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, I am devising evil against this tribe, from which you will not remove your necks, so that you will not walk upright, for it is a time of disaster. In that day a proverb will be taken up against you, and a lamentation with the singing of mournful songs will be sung: We are utterly ruined; my people's portion is measured out with a measuring line, and there is no one to restore it. Our fields are divided up; therefore there will be no one to set a milestone for you in the inheritance. What we have placed at the end of the chapter according to the Hebrew, in the assembly of the Lord, for which the Seventy translated, in the Church of the Lord; according to the Vulgate edition, the beginning of the following chapter is. And therefore, if the Lord permits, we will discuss it. Woe to you, assembly of the Jews, who both plan evil and carry it out. And you defile the sleeping chambers given for rest with lewdness, and whatever wickedness you engage in during the night, as if it were not permissible to delay, you hastily fulfill it as soon as day breaks, not considering that your hand is strong against the Lord. And in order to teach through Scripture what they were thinking at night and doing during the day, he explains in parts. 'They coveted,' he says, 'the fields and forcefully took them; and the houses, it is understood, they coveted and plundered the ones they coveted. And not only did they malign people and their homes, but they also ravaged their descendants who deserved mercy for their tender age with their voracious mouths. Therefore, because you have done these things and thought them useless, I, the Lord, will plan evil against this family. Not that the evil I plan is actually evil, but because it seems evil to those who suffer when I inflict it. And I will afflict you in such a way that you will not be able to lift up your necks and walk proudly, namely those whom the time of captivity has oppressed.'

Then a parable will be spoken against you, and your miseries will be turned into a song: We have been devastated by depopulation, the portion of my people: My temple, which I alone had more

than other nations, will be changed into ruin. How will the Assyrian depart from me, when he returns to distribute my fields by lot for himself? Therefore, O family of Israel, against whom I am devising evil, you will not have a portion in the inheritance of the righteous. But even about the final captivity this can be understood, that everything happened to them because they crucified the Lord: in such a way, however, that the version of the Seventy interpreters is discussed. For the glory of the daughter of Israel was stripped, and shaved over the once most delicate sons, and if anything of hair was born afterward, it was immediately cut off and shaved. Then all their plans turned into labor, and what they conceived, with the mind and soul asleep, brought them troubles: and what they did, as soon as the light of Christ and retribution appeared, was disturbed. For when they had read that Israel had conquered, when Moses raised his hands to the Lord, and that Amalek had been defeated when Moses grew weary and lowered his arms (Exodus XVII), they did not lift their hands to the Lord, but committed all kinds of crimes against the poor and the people of the Lord. They desired fields and plundered the houses of orphans, and they ravaged the man and his wife and their children and their possessions. Therefore the Lord planned evil against that tribe: not against the twelve tribes, but against the tribe corrupted by malice and wickedness, who could not lift up their heads or walk uprightly. Finally, up until the present day, they have been subjects of the Roman Empire, and they are burdened by the yoke of captivity, and they do not lift their necks. However, the following phrase, ξαφνης, which means 'suddenly,' is not found in the Hebrew volumes, yet it can correspond with the present passage in such a way that we may say: Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, I am devising evil against this tribe suddenly, from which they cannot lift their necks, and for this reason, they will not be able to lift them, because it is a time of evil. For just as they worked evil against the Lord Jesus, so they will endure the evils of perpetual captivity, and they will come into such great distress that all their songs and psalms will be turned into mourning. And the people will know nothing else to say except for this: we have become wretched in our misery. For the promised land, which had previously been divided by lot among the two and a half tribes beyond the Jordan, with Moses sending the measuring cord and later divided among the remaining tribes by Joshua, has now been divided among the Gentiles under Roman rule. And there is no one to prevent them from ruling over all the nations. Not a single Jew possesses the ancient freedom of their homeland. But if we choose to follow the third exposition, we will see that every thought of ours is labor and sorrow, and our bed is filled with evils, and even the light itself, which seems bright, is mixed with darkness. And whatever we handle at night, we do so in darkness. For which of us can lift holy hands to God without anger and thought? Who does not desire the villas of this age, forgetting the possessions of paradise? You may see others connecting fields with fields and joining boundaries with boundaries, and the small body of a man not being sufficient for the countryside of cities. Therefore the Lord thinks upon us evil things, from which we are unable to lift up our necks, nor to walk upright, because it is a very bad time, according to the words of John saying: The world is placed in the evil one (1 John 5:19). The same thing is signified by that noble soul in the Gospel, the daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound and bowed down, and unless she could be raised up before the coming of the Lord, nor could she look upon her Creator. Then Jesus said: 'Shouldn't this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day?' (Luke 13:16). Therefore, because our glory has been completely diminished and we have extended the shaving or our nakedness (for thus it is found in some codices), those who would lament with Jeremiah and take up a parable against us were sent, saying with the Apostle: 'I will mourn for the

many who have sinned and have not repented' (2 Corinthians 12:21). For who would not lament seeing human souls as if they were a diverse collection of furniture possessed by demons and various vices? One demon sends the cord of fornication, another of greed. This one extends the lines of murder, while that one of perjury. The portion of the people of God is divided by a cord. And the fields once holy and like paradise, of which Isaac delighted in the smell, were handed over to the Assyrians and to the Babylonian king. And while foxes have dens and birds have nests, the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head (Matt. 8). I have explained, according to the limitations of my small intelligence, the first captivity of the people by the Assyrians and Babylonians, the second by the Romans who crucified the Lord, and the third spiritual captivity in which each one of us fell from paradise with Adam and is held captive in this world. When the Lord comes, he will raise up the fallen and release the imprisoned (Psalm 144). He will also gather the once captive of the devil into his possession, fulfilling the words of the Psalmist: As he ascended on high, he led captivity captive (Psalm 68:18). According to this explanation, the fourth captivity can also be understood as the Church, from which each person departs through sin, and then, through Ezra, who interprets as helper, that is, through the word of God, is brought back to Jerusalem (1 Esdras 7). However, if someone has been meditating on the Law of the Lord day and night, they have had greater zeal, greater intelligence, leisure, and grace, and they may be able to say something more probable about the present chapter. I do not envy, I do not reject, but rather I desire to learn from him what I do not know, and I will gladly profess myself as his student, as long as he teaches and does not detract. For nothing is so easy as to debate about the work and efforts of others when one is idle and asleep.

2:6-8

(Verses 6-8) Do not speak, speaking ones, for the droppings will not fall upon them, confusion will not overtake them, says the house of Jacob. Has the spirit of the Lord been shortened, or are such his thoughts? Are not my words good when dealing with the one who walks rightly? And yet my people have risen up against me as an adversary, you have lifted up the tunic, the cloak, over those who pass by innocently, and you have turned them into battle. In the church of the Lord, should you not weep with tears, nor should you mourn over them? For he will not reject reproaches, saying, 'The house of Jacob has provoked the spirit of the Lord, if these are his inventions: are not his words good with him, and have they not walked uprightly?' And before, my people resisted against their own peace with enmities: they scraped off its skin, to take away the hope of crushing war. 'Do not speak,' he said, speaking; for which Aquila interpreted: 'Do not be silent, dripping droplets, formerly in the Hebrew idiom, calling the speech that flows and reaches the ears of the hearers, likening it to descending rain, calling it a drip.' Do not let yourselves be deceived, O house of Jacob, and do not say to one another in mutual consolation, God is good: the captivity that we fear will not come. Will his great mercy, his most compassionate spirit, who has risen up widely and abundantly for all, be so limited and severe in us? Or are his thoughts like those that we see in humans, that he holds onto ancient anger and is suddenly stirred up with fury for vengeance? To which the Lord responded: I am certainly good, and my words sound like kindness: but to those who walk the right path. But as for the one who, not just once, but yesterday, revered idols in my dishonor, and as much as he could, seized tyrannical weapons against me, who plundered the unfortunate people with the help of God, and like a garment from above, took away their cloak, who turned even the simplest of believers and those who acquiesce

to the authority of their elders into enemies against me, will not the Lord rain down punishment from above and bring confusion upon him? But what we translate as 'Et econtrario populus meus in adversarium consurrexit;' Symmachus translates more openly to say: 'my people rose up against me as an enemy, one day before;' in order to solve the question of why God would not impute past sins to the people, but rather recent ones that seemed like they were committed yesterday. This is according to the Hebrew understanding, but the Septuagint translators do not agree with this interpretation in this passage. For to that which has been said, 'In the Church of the Lord do not weep,' which is a consequence, it is inferred, for he will not reject the reproaches which he says, 'The house of Jacob has provoked the spirit of the Lord.' But also that which follows: 'If these are his inventions: are not his words good with him, and have they not walked uprightly?' What do the following refer to, which are said: 'And my people resisted first, against their own peace, they have flayed his skin, to take away the wound of war?' However, it seems to me that, in a difficult place, the meaning can be rendered or expressed in this way, if the wise reader agrees with our reasoning. Therefore, it is commanded to the Church not to have sadness and concern about worldly matters, and the losses that usually happen in this world, and it is said to the inhabitants of it, O you who are in the Church of the Lord, always rejoice, and whatever judgments may befall you, be glad. I do not say this so that you should not weep; for blessed are those who weep, for they themselves shall laugh (Luke 6:21). But I warn you not to mourn over the things of the world. If someone among your close ones has died, if the treasury has seized your property, if your body is oppressed by gout or any other illness, do not weep, do not shed tears, and do not consider the present, but the future, and be more burdened that you dwell longer in this mortal tent. Rather, be careful not to insult those who have fallen, and do not consider their ruin to be your own accomplishment: let each person measure themselves by their own strength, not the weakness of others. Otherwise, what kind of justice is it to insult the branches of an olive tree with the branches of an olive tree that were broken off due to their unbelief (Rom. XI), and to say, 'The house of Jacob has provoked the spirit of the Lord to anger, killing the prophets, worshiping idols, crucifying the Son of God'? Whoever does this will not be unfamiliar with shame, and the measure by which he judged will be used to judge him. And just as he speaks of the sins of the falling, so another will insult him in his ruin. It follows: If these are his inventions, are not his words good with him, and have they walked uprightly? What offends, he says, the Jewish people, so that the fullness of the Gentiles might enter, is the dispensation of God, so that afterwards, with Israel believing, all might be saved, and all might need God's mercy. And so the Apostle, coming to this place, declares that the depths of wisdom and knowledge and judgments of God are unfathomable. Therefore, if the inventions and thoughts of God are such that the previous branches of the olive tree are broken off, and other branches are grafted in from the wild olive tree, you should not insult, but fear lest you fall, nor should you think that you please God if you read His words, that is, His Scriptures. Then the Scriptures are of benefit to the reader if what is read is fulfilled by deeds. If you can speak about the Scriptures: Are you seeking a proof of Christ speaking in me (II Cor. XIII, 3)? For the Lord will give his word with great power to those who proclaim the Gospel (Ps. LXVII, 12): Ascend to the high mountain, you who proclaim good news to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, you who proclaim good news to Jerusalem (Isai. XL, 9). In this way, the words of God are good if they are accompanied by Him, that is, if God does not abandon the preacher, whose heart and lips are in agreement. Moreover, he who confesses with his lips and his heart is far from God, and narrates his righteousness, and takes his testament on

his mouth, and is defiled with the filth of sins, with this, the words of God are not good. Not only of the sinner, but also of him who does not have spiritual grace, that is, of prophecy and doctrine, and interpretation, and the greater charisms, it must be said that if such a man wishes to give reasons for the causes of the elements and for his own faith, and why God, who is good and the Creator of all, came only to the Jews and called the nations in the last age, he does not have good words of God with him; but even those things which are good, he contaminates the words of God, which walk rightly and require righteous ears. And indeed, the Lord commands the people who are his successors and the Church gathered from the nations, not to insult the previous generation and not to be alienated by insulting others. However, it is important to note that he himself, who is the true judge and speaks without disturbance, reveals how in his suffering Israel was against him, and he did this not because the Creator could be harmed by his actions, but because he committed everything against his own peace. Hence, the word came to Jerusalem: If you knew what is for your peace (Luke 19:42). But with peace lost, they stripped off their own skin, that is, they took away from themselves the protection of God, and left themselves like naked flesh without skin and covering, so that whatever appeared beautiful, with the mercy of God covering it from above, would offer ugliness to those who saw it when it withdrew. But with peace and the help of God withdrawing, because they resisted the Lord, of whom it is said: The Lord who breaks wars, the Lord is his name (Judith XVI, 3), they could not resist their adversaries, but in every battle they were defeated, and there was no one to crush the wars that arose against them, on either side of the enemy, or of the men who took them captive, or the strength of their adversaries, who slaughtered their souls daily with blasphemy.

2:9-10

(Versed 9, 10.) You have expelled the women of my people from their delightful homes, and you have taken their praise from their children forever. Arise and go, for you have no rest here, because of your uncleanness. It will be corrupted with the worst decay. The interpretation of the Septuagint (if indeed it is Septuagint; for Josephus writes, and the Hebrews affirm, that only five books of the law of Moses were translated by them and given to King Ptolemy, or rather contradicted) differs so greatly in this passage from the Hebrew truth, that we cannot put the chapters equally nor explain their meanings together. Therefore, let us first discuss our translation, and afterwards we will come to the same points. This is still in opposition to the people of God, of whom he had already said: On the contrary, my people have risen up against me as an adversary: you have taken away their outer garment, not only that, but also the women, that is, the once delicate matrons, have made them go as captives, or under the metaphor of the cities of Judea, which he also calls the daughters of Zion in Isaiah (Isaiah 26), because Zion was the metropolis. You have also taken away the praise of them from their little ones, he says, forever, there remained no one in the people, all being either killed or captured, who would sing my psalms; but even the few who remained in Babylon testify that they cannot sing. How, they say, shall we sing the song of the Lord in a foreign land (Ps. 136:4)? Arise and go into captivity, for in this land you shall not have rest, which has been defiled because of your sins, and it cannot be cleansed unless it has first observed a long sabbath. Therefore I say to you, you do not have rest here, because your land is polluted, and it will be corrupted with the worst decay, namely captivity, whether Babylonian or Roman, because it has shed the blood of the Lord: for it can be understood according to the truth of both histories.

LXX: The leaders of my people will be cast out from their luxurious homes; they have been rejected because of their wicked inventions. This can be understood both generally of the leaders, priests, and Pharisees of the Jewish people, who were cast out of their city of luxury after the passion of the Lord, where they had previously indulged in wicked inventions, and specifically of the lineage of David, because as soon as the Lord was born, the prince of Judah failed, and the ruler from his loins, who was awaited by the nations, came. But even the leaders of the Church who abound in pleasures, and believe that they can preserve their chastity amid feasts and revels, are described by the prophetic word as being expelled from spacious houses and luxurious banquets, and from meals acquired with great effort, and expelled on account of their evil thoughts and deeds. And if you want to know where they will be expelled to, read the Gospel: Into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 22:13). (Is it not a confusion and disgrace to preach Jesus crucified, the master, poor and hungry, while gorging on well-fed bodies, and to proclaim the doctrine of fasting with blushing cheeks and bloated mouths? If we are in the place of the Apostles, let us not only imitate their speech, but also embrace their conduct and abstinence.) It is indeed holy and the ministry of the Apostles to serve widows and the poor (Acts 6:2). They say that it is not fitting, with the word of God dismissed, to serve ourselves at the table. But now I am not speaking of the poor, I am not speaking of brothers, and those who cannot invite in return (from whom, except for the favor, the episcopal hand hopes for nothing else), but rather soldiers and those girded with a sword, and judges, with centurions and troops standing guard before their doors, the priest of Christ invites to the meal. The whole clergy runs through the city: they seek to display to judges what they cannot find in their own praetoriums, or certainly what they have found but do not buy. Nor indeed should it be thought that this invective is directed generally at everyone; but rather that the prophetic discourse strikes those who are such, and threatens them with punishments and eternal darkness: so that those who are not bound by shame and modesty may at least take action in repentance through the threat of punishment.

LXX: Approach the eternal mountains. By eternal mountains, we can understand either angels or prophets, about whom it is also written in the psalm: His foundations are on the holy mountains (Ps. 86:1). And in another place: I lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? (Ibid. 120:1). But he approaches the eternal mountains who is not separated from the company of the blessed by his own sins, just as Moses approached God, not by place, but by merit. And to those who approached the eternal mountains, the Lord himself spoke. I am a God who is near, and not a God from afar (Jer. XXIII, 23). But the eternal mountains are called so to distinguish them from those that are not eternal, namely the beginning of the dark mountains of this world, which when they are raised up like the cedars of Lebanon and pass away with the world, their place cannot be found.

LXX: Arise and walk, for there is no rest for you here. We are commanded to think of no rest in worldly things; but, as if rising from the dead, to strive for the heavenly, and to walk after our Lord God, and to say: My soul clings to you (Ps. 62:9). But if we neglect and refuse to listen to the one saying: Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you (Eph. 5:14), we will indeed sleep, but we will be deceived, and we will not find rest because where Christ does not illuminate one rising up, what appears to be rest is tribulation.

LXX: Because of uncleanness, you have been consumed by corruption. For what we have said, you have been consumed; according to the Greek understanding, in Latin it can sound as 'you

have been corrupted', so that there is order, because of uncleanness you have been corrupted by corruption. However, this is said to those who, serving the pleasure of the body and lust, corrupt not only the soul but also their own body, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God. He could also say, because of your uncleanness, you were corrupted, and even your understanding would have been filled without corruption. But now, because he says, you are corrupted by corruption, it seems to me that he is speaking of beneficial corruption. Along the lines of which the Apostle also speaks: And if our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day (II Cor. IV, 16). The one who always carries the death of Jesus in his body, and corrupts the external man, and subjects the flesh to the control of the soul, he is indeed corrupted, but not by corruption, because his corruption is of a beneficial nature.

You fled, with no one pursuing. It is said of those who, because of the filth of corruption, have been corrupted, that their conscience, even without punishment, does not dare to resist enemies and fight. And so, they are expelled from the camp and repelled from the battle line, in order to not terrify the minds of their brethren, the fearful ones in the battle of the saints (Deut. 20), and in the curses of Leviticus, a word is directed towards such men: The voice of a flying leaf shall pursue you, and you shall flee, with none pursuing you (Lev. 26:36). I know that I have read in certain commentaries, explaining the beginning of the Gospel of John: All things were made through him, and without him was made nothing, that they have attributed this saying, 'nothing,' to wickedness, and furthermore, that they have interpreted wickedness itself as the devil, and in that same sense, they have understood that which was made without Christ, as nothing, as the devil. Therefore, if malice or the devil is nothing, and those who have been corrupted by corruption have fled, with no one, that is, nothing pursuing, the devil has pursued them into nothingness. But if this seems too forced to anyone, and contrary to the simplicity of Scripture, let him rather follow the skill of speech than a true interpretation, or let him follow the former exposition or any other he may discover.

2:11-12 (Verse 11, 12.) I wish I were not a man with a spirit, and I spoke lies instead. I will pour for you into wine and into drunkenness, and this people on whom it is poured will be overcome. I will gather Jacob together, I will gather all of you: I will bring the remnants of Israel together. And in this chapter, the Septuagint interpreters differ greatly from Hebrew. Therefore, let us first explain according to what has been handed down to us by the Hebrews, and then, if the Lord wills, we will discuss their translations. O Jewish people, to whom belong the promises, the covenants, the law, and from whom Christ came according to the flesh (Rom. 9), to whom, facing the imminent Babylonians or Romans, I have said: Rise up and go into captivity, for there is no rest for you in this land, which will be devastated by its own wickedness in the final destruction. Do not think that I am unwilling to speak and preach joyfully, for I see the coming of the Lord. I myself would wish to be accursed for the sake of my brethren, the Israelites (Rom. 9:3). I wish I could speak of my own understanding, and not have the Holy Spirit; and be counted among the false prophets, and perish alone, and not have the things I say be true: and such a multitude would believe in the Son of God, and not be handed over to eternal captivity. But because I speak with the spirit of prophecy, and am sent from divinity (or truth), I proclaim the truth: therefore I will pour out my words to you like bitter wine that intoxicates you and makes you fall. But while I am still dripping, and singing of the evil of the future captivity, this people will receive my rain, whether they want it or not, for it has the capability to endure what I say. And do not think, that I am only a prophet of evils (although great evils indeed), for now the predicted captivity will come; but behold, in me the word speaks, a word

that is applicable to all the prophets. For when the prophet is silent, he does not speak, and now he says: I will come, and I will assume a human body, I will be born of a Virgin. Either this: Because I came in the humility of flesh, and you did not believe in me, I will come in the consummation of the world in my majesty with the angels and other powers, and then I will gather you, Jacob, completely. Then I will bring together the remnants of Israel and join them together with the people of the nations in my fold. Then I will surround you with a most strong wall, and there will be such a multitude of believers and such a commotion among the sheepfold that the number of sheep will be overcome by the abundance. Lest you possibly think, because I said, I will place him like a flock in a sheepfold, and like a herd in a stable, that I am speaking of sheep, understand that these sheep are men. For it follows: They will be troubled by the multitude of men. Tumult is the voice of many, and the shout of an excessive multitude equally emitted: let us not think it is the voice of one man, but the common voice of all, praising the good shepherd, who has leveled every difficulty and made it equal with his foot, he himself is the gate of paradise, and says: I am the gate: by which, dividing and preceding the journey, and the gate of the way, the believing flock will pass through him. But this shepherd is a king and Lord. Hence follows: And their king shall pass before them, and the Lord at the head of them. And if we wish to understand all these things about His first coming, and the whole of Jacob and the remnant of Israel as signifying the apostles, and that multitude saved out of the Jews which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, we shall not depart from the truth in the interpretation of the expositor. For the Lord has truly gathered these together in His sheepfold, and has placed them in the midst of the folds, and has gone before them, and has brought them into the Church, and has been their king before them, and shall be the Lord at the head of them for ever.

LXX: The spirit establishes a falsehood. It drips into wine and drunkenness, and it will be from the drop of this people, Jacob will be gathered together. Not, as many think, the spirit stood as a liar; but the spirit establishes a falsehood, it is read, which in Greek is called πνεύμα στήσε ψευδής, that is, deception. Just as in putrid wounds, so that cancer does not spread and devour the dead flesh, doctors establish and burn the wound with a cautery, or with a caustic powder: in the same way, the spirit of God has set a limit to falsehood, so that the people of God are not overthrown by the voices of false prophets. But the Spirit, wherever it is mentioned without addition, should be understood in a good sense, as we have often said, and now we will partially explain, so that no one should be in doubt. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace (Galatians 5:22). And: If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit (Galatians 6:25). And elsewhere: But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:13). And in the Old Testament: Giving breath to the people who are in it, and spirit to those who tread on it (Isaiah XLII): without doubt from what comes before that it signifies the earth. For those who trample earthly works and subject them to their feet, certainly deserve to receive not an evil, but a good spirit. On the contrary, an evil spirit is always read with an additional clause, as in this passage: But when the unclean spirit has gone out of a man (Matthew XII, 43). And in another place: He rebuked the unclean spirit (Luke 9:43). And: An evil spirit came upon Saul (1 Samuel 16:14), and similar things to these. Therefore, the Spirit of God, who puts an end to deceit in false prophets, will pour into you wine and drunkenness. Wine that gladdens the heart of man (Psalm 104); and drunkenness with which Noah was intoxicated, and of which it is said: Eat, O friends, and drink until drunk (Song of Solomon 5:1). But all this joy and drunkenness, in comparison to the wisdom of God, is like a heavenly river that waters Jerusalem, it is a drop, and a very small drop. The wisdom of God will

not hesitate to call a drop in men, those who have gathered a stone cut from a mountain without hands (Dan. II), and the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Apostles themselves have known in part, and have prophesied in part (I Cor. XIII, 9). Therefore, concerning this wisdom, that is, concerning the tribe of the Jewish people (for He came only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel), Jacob was gathered: every one who supplants Esau and steals his birthright and blessing, and even before he is born, in his mother's womb, he attacks the heel of his hairy brother.

LXX: When I receive the remnant of Israel with all the Gentiles, and the entire world is brought to my faith, and the fullness of the Gentiles enters, then the remnant of Israel will also be saved, not those remnants about which it is written in the Book of Kings: I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed their knees to Baal (3 Kings 19:18). And concerning them, Paul says: Therefore, even in this present time, the remnants according to the election of grace have been saved (Romans 11:5); concerning whom, the prophet testifies above: And he will gather together the remnant of his people from this drop of water, Jacob will be gathered together. But those remaining, who after all have been received, will be received in the end by God. And concerning them it is now said: 'Gathering the rest of Israel, I will surely receive all, just as it is written: God will conclude all under sin, and have mercy on all.' (Rom. 11:32).

LXX: I will make their destruction like that of sheep in distress. The remaining ones of Israel, whom I will take in after I have taken in all, I will take in: now in the meantime, because they have turned away from me, I will put them in distress, and I will oppress them, and I will make them sit, without priest, without altar, and without prophet: so that those whom they did not perceive through blessings, they may understand through punishments.

LXX: Like a flock in the midst of their fold: it is understood, I will set. Not only, he says, will their aversion, by which they have turned away from me, be set like a flock in tribulation; but after they have been troubled and the time of distress has been completed, they will be set at rest, that is, in their fold. And then (now) they will migrate from men and surpass the state of human condition, and fulfill what follows: They will rise up from among men. Not only they will leap out and go away, but all those to whom the word of God comes, and who, forsaking human vices, imitate the behavior of the divine, and hear: I said, you are gods, and all of you children of the Most High, they will leap out from among men, and be carried as if to heaven.

LXX: Ascend by division. The present passage has a sort of proper beginning and apostrophe of prophetic discourse, speaking to someone who wishes to be saved and commanding them to ascend by division. This will be made clearer if we take an example from Genesis, where twins are born to Tamar, with whom the patriarch Judah had relations: 'And it came to pass, when she travailed, that one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.' But when he withdrew his hand, his brother came out, and she said, 'Why has the wall been divided because of you?' And she called his name Perez, which means division. And after this his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and she called his name Zerah, which in our language means seed or east (Gen. XXXVIII, 27, seqq.). Therefore, the elder people showed with their hand, in which there was origin and seed before the Church was born from the nations, and afterwards they withdrew it, hearing the words of Isaiah: For your hands are full of blood (Isai. I, 15). And when he pulled back his hand, and ceased from the works of justice, his brother went out among the nations. And because of him the fence was

divided, and the Lord and Saviour destroyed the wall in the middle, and the barrier that separated two peoples: and he made one flock, and in himself he created two, making peace in the new man. Hence the prophetic midwife speaks to the younger people, saying to Phares: Why was the wall divided because of you? If you understand the example from Genesis, ascend to be saved not through the old people who have a contracted hand, but through the new people, in whom is the way of Christ, in whom is the door Jesus, through whom we walk toward the Father, for he himself broke through the middle wall and partition, that is, the darkness of the old prophets, and opened all the sacraments of the ancient Law, and by dispelling the difficulty of walking, revealed the way to the eyes of all: so that whoever wants to proceed is not entangled by any obstacle, nor is he terrified by the darkness of obscurity.

LXX: Before their face they divided and passed through the gate, and went out through it. Their king went out before their face: but the Lord their prince (Heb. shall be) before them. Therefore I said to you: Ascend through the division, you who have risen with Christ, and seek those things that are above: because the Angels, whether the Father and Son, and Holy Spirit, have divided what seemed to obstruct, and have made a way for those who wish to enter, and because they have invaded the path, not only have they entered the gate, but they have also passed through it. But they entered because their king also entered the same gate, and he opened for them the way, so that they could walk without any difficulty. For he himself is the Lord, and king, and shepherd, and the way and the gate, and he says: I am the gate: through me whoever enters will be saved: he will enter and he will go out, and he will find pastures. (John 10:9). Concerning this gate, it is also prophesied elsewhere: This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter through it. (Psalm 127:20). But whoever enters, should not remain in the state in which they entered; but should go out to the pastures, so that in entering there may be a beginning, in going out and in finding pastures, there may be the perfection of virtues. Whoever enters is still in the world, and through creatures understands the Creator. But whoever goes out, transcends the whole creation, and considering all that can be seen as nothing, will find pastures above the heavens, and will feed on the word of God, and will say: The Lord feeds me, and I shall lack nothing (Psalm 23:1). This is why, in order to understand the Gospel testimony: He will enter and He will go out, and will find pasture; and what is now said through the Prophet: And they passed through the gate, and went out through it: which passage and going out, however, cannot be attributed to our king and Lord Christ, who is king and Lord. For immediately it is connected: But the Lord shall be the Prince.

3:1-4

(Chapter III, verses 1 and following) And I said: Listen, leaders of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know judgment, you who hate good and love evil, who violently take off their skin from them, and their flesh from their bones, who have eaten the flesh of my people, and have stripped off their skin from them, and have broken their bones and cut them up like meat in a pot. Then they will cry out to the Lord, but he will not answer them; he will hide his face from them at that time, because they have acted wickedly in their deeds. Clearly, this speech is directed against the princes of Israel, and under the metaphor of lions or robbers, their cruelty is described: that they have plundered the poor, killed them, broken their flesh and bones, and afflicted the miserable people of Jerusalem as if in the midst of a pot. And because of these things, punishment will be brought upon them later on the day of captivity, either by Nebuchadnezzar or by Vespasian and Titus. And they cry out to the Lord, but He does not hear them, and He hides His face from

them, because they have acted wickedly in their crimes.

LXX: And he will say: Listen to these things, leaders of the house of Jacob, and the rest of the house of Israel. The idea clings to what precedes. For he had said before: But the Lord will be a leader, and he will say: Listen, leaders of the house of Jacob, and the rest of the house of Israel. Regarding the rest of the house of Israel, except for the Seventy, all the leaders of the house of Israel have passed away. Therefore, the Lord who made a way for his people, and went before them, is the leader of the simpler journey of the people, whom he calls a flock: to those who do not want to follow the easier path, but act arrogantly, and do not follow the footsteps of that judge of the people, he threatens and says: Listen, leaders of the house of Jacob, and leaders of the house of Israel. But why is it that they are determined to hear? It is not your place, he says, to know judgment, you who hate good and seek evil: that is, you do not deserve to understand the judgment that is a bottomless pit; and the twisted mind of justice does not find the depths of his righteousness. Or how can you know the judgment of God, you who hate good, how can you know the judgment of God, you who hate good and seek evil, you who detest the holy poor, and honor sinful rich? At the same time, let us consider the significance of words: to not love good is a sin; how great a wickedness is it to even hate? And conversely, if one does not flee from evil, it is a fault; how great an impiety is it to even diligently inquire? After this, the cruelty of judges is described, and the cruelty towards those who are subject.

LXX: They will take their skins from them, and their flesh from their bones. Just as they devoured the flesh of my people, and peeled the skin from them, and broke their bones, and cut them up like meat in a kettle, so they will cry out to the Lord, but he will not listen to them, and he will turn his face away from them at that time, because they have acted wickedly in their inventions. It was not enough to plunder the helpless flock; they also afflicted their bodies with a harsh rule, and broke their bones, so that they would break and crush whatever happened to be in them. So how they plundered my people and stripped them of all beauty and adornment of skin, and put flesh and bones into a boiling pot, which the Assyrian king lit, delivering my flock to the devil and his angels: so they themselves, when the day of vengeance comes, will cry out to the Lord, and they will not be heard, because they did not hear those who were praying: and they will stretch out their hands to the Lord, and God will turn his face away from them, because they also turned their face away from those who were praying. And all these things suffer, because they acted very badly in their studies and pleasures: and they were not kings, but tyrants: not leaders, but lions: not masters of disciples, but wolves of sheep, and they satisfied themselves with flesh, and they became fat, and like the fattest victim of slaughter, and prepared for the punishments of the Lord. So far against evil rulers: but the following discourse is against false prophets and very bad teachers, who deceive the people of God with flattery, promising knowledge of the Scriptures.

3:5-8

(V. 5 seq.) This is what the Lord says about the prophets who deceive my people: they bite with their teeth and proclaim peace. But if someone does not give them something to eat, they declare war against him. Therefore, night will be for you instead of a vision and darkness instead of divination. The sun will go down on the prophets and the day will be darkened for them. Those who see visions will be put to shame, and the diviners will be confounded. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God. However, I am filled with the power of the spirit of the

Lord, with justice and strength, to proclaim Jacob's wickedness and Israel's sin. LXX: Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who deceive my people, who bite with their teeth and proclaim peace, but there is no word from their mouths. They have sanctified a battle against him. Therefore, night shall be to you instead of vision, and darkness instead of divination. The sun shall go down on the prophets, and the day shall be dark for them. Those who see dreams shall be confused, and the soothsayers shall be mocked. All these will speak against them because there is no one who listens to them. Only I will fill them with the power of the spirit of the Lord, with justice and strength, to proclaim Jacob's wickedness and Israel's sins. We read that there were false prophets in Israel, who, because they lacked the gift of peace, which was not given to them, preached, and if someone did not give gifts, even if he was holy, they would announce that the wrath of God would come upon him. Therefore, it is now said to them that they speak falsehoods, and their words are not prophecy, but false divination: they do not have light, but darkness and error. And when the opposite of what they promised is fulfilled, then they will be covered in confusion, because, it is said, there was no answer from God.

Now neither can the power of demons deceive, to deceive them by their own deceit. The oracles will be silent, the unclean spirit will be silent, and it will not dare to mock. This is about false prophets. Again, a speech is introduced about the prophet speaking of himself, while they falsely predict, and with confusion and disgrace hidden, I, who speak, speak from the Holy Spirit, and I speak the judgment of the Lord and the power of truth. And when false prophets bite with their teeth and proclaim peace, I fearlessly proclaim the wickedness of Jacob and the sin of Israel; for they have worshipped either idols or crucified the Son of God. But if we wish to follow the Septuagint, which is said concerning heretics who are truly false prophets and say, 'Thus says the Lord,' and the Lord did not send them, we will not be led astray. For they deceive the people of God by their former error, and they do this in order to consume them, either simply by accepting gifts or mystically in the slaughter of their souls, and they promise them peace and heavenly kingdoms and say, 'You do not need to live constantly and holy, have faith in what we teach and you will attain all the promises of the Lord.' Those who speak these things, rather than appeasing the wrath of the Lord, actually provoke it and sanctify the battle against them. Therefore, O heretics, who think you have prophecy, and you imitate the Church of God, where you deem there to be vision, there it will harm you; and where you boast of prophetic prediction, there the unclean spirit will speak. For the sun of justice will kill such prophets, and they will see their darkness and be confounded. And when they are shown to be more divine than prophets, they will laugh at their dreams, and the people who were previously deceived by them will speak against them. Then even the teachers themselves will repent, and no one will listen to them except me whom they have offended. And because I am merciful and do not desire the death of the sinner (Ezek. XVIII), but rather want them to turn back and live, when I hear them, I will give them the power of my spirit, and I will fill them with my judgment and strength, so that those who previously deceived the people with flattery will later deter them by proclaiming the truth and lead them back to the right path, and those who were the cause of error will begin to heal the wounds they have inflicted and become a source of healing. Take note, in the present place, that someone can be taught after sin, if indeed they have washed away their previous sins with worthy penance. Hence, even David speaks after adultery and murder in the psalm: You will sprinkle me with hyssop and I shall be cleansed; You will wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. He is not satisfied with his own purity alone, but adds: Restore to me the joy of your salvation and strengthen me with a generous

spirit. And when you have done this, he says, I will teach the wicked your ways, and the impious will be converted to you (Psalm 50).

3:9-12

(Verse 9 onwards) Hear this, rulers of the house of Jacob, and judges of the house of Israel: you who abhor justice and pervert all that is right, who build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity. Its rulers give judgment for a bribe, its priests teach for a fee, its prophets divine for money, yet they lean upon the Lord and say, 'Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No disaster shall come upon us.' Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field, Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height. LXX: Hear this, you leaders (or judges) of the house of Jacob and the remnant of the house of Israel, who despise justice and pervert all that is right; who build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity. Its leaders make judgments for a bribe, its priests teach for a price, and its prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they lean upon the Lord and say, 'Is not the Lord in our midst? No disaster will come upon us.' Therefore, because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem will be a watchman's hut, and the mountain of the Lord will be a wooded hill. No one doubts that Jerusalem, because of the crimes described in this chapter, was overthrown, and that a warning had preceded to either the judges or the false prophets: Listen, leaders of the house of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel. And after a few verses: Thus says the Lord about the prophets who deceive my people, and the rest: now, generally and against the judges, and against the false prophets, and against the priests, and against those who promised themselves knowledge of God, the prophetic discourse is woven, and it accuses them that because of their crimes, Zion will be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem will collapse like a heap of stones, and the mountain of the temple will become a high forest. We see the fulfillment of what was said: the eloquence of the lips is proven by the eyes; the testimony of prophecy is seen. This very testimony is also written in the volume of Jeremiah (Jer. 26), where mention is made of the prophet Micah and the devastation of Jerusalem. The judges and rulers of the house of Jacob, and the house of Israel, that is, the twelve tribes, not only did not administer justice, but they abhorred it and twisted everything that was right, so that not even a little justice remained in the city. Those who built Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity, plundering the poor, killing the innocent, and slaying the saints. And if any of the princes seemed to judge what was right, they would sell their verdict, and they would judge based on bribes. The priests also did not teach the people unless they received payment; and when it is said to the holy ones, 'You have received for free, give for free' (Matt. X, 8), they, bringing forth money as payment, sold the grace of the Lord for a greedy wage. And after these evils, not understanding their sin, they would pretend to redeem the love of God with their wickedness, saying that they were judges, priests, and prophets of God, and according to their unrepentant heart they would say: The Lord is among us, and no evils will come upon us. Therefore, because they did not repent, and the entire people followed the vices of the leaders, priests, and prophets, Zion will be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem will become a heap of stones, and the temple, which once shone with gold and silver, will collapse into complete ruin. These things happened against the Jewish people, whose true captivity and extreme destruction, and not only because of previous crimes, but especially because of the shedding of the Lord's blood, were inflicted. Hence Zion was plowed like a field, and Jerusalem was turned into mounds of stones, and that once noble and towering temple was reduced to ashes. But if anyone applies these things that are said about

Jerusalem and Zion to the Church (for it is indeed the house of Jacob and the house of Israel, according to what is written in Isaiah: 'Jacob, my servant, I will uphold him' - Isaiah 41:8), And that to Timothy: That you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church (1 Tim. 3:15), this will clearly see that the rulers of the house of Jacob, and the rest from the house of Israel (or, as it is better written in Hebrew) the judges of the house of Israel, are none other than bishops, presbyters, and deacons, who, unless they diligently keep their hearts guarded, abhor judgment and overturn all that is right: for when they judge according to the person, and in the dispute of a case the merit of the cause does not hold, but the power of the offenders, do they not abhor judgment and pervert all that is right? But it can also be understood in another way, that the leaders of the house of Jacob and the judges of the house of Israel detest and reject judgment, turning away from the judgment of God and distorting every rule of the Scriptures with evil interpretations. These people build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with wickedness. For when Scripture commands: 'Do not bring the wicked into the dwelling of the righteous' (Psalm 5), and the Lord abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit: whoever ordains clerics from among their followers and exposes their way of life as a scandal to the people, they are guilty of the unfaithfulness of those who are scandalized (Matthew 18). Where it is said to be expedient for a man, that a millstone be tied around his neck and be thrown into the depth, so as to scandalize one of the least of the Church. And when the prophet Malachi calls the priests angels (Malachi 2), and their mouth is the oracle of the Lord (Deuteronomy 19), they judge without accepting bribes, reading: Gifts blind even the eyes of the wise, and like a bridle on the mouth turn away reproof (Ecclesiasticus 20); and when it is said to the apostles: Do not possess gold, or silver, or brass in your belts (Matthew 10, 9): and let money earned even through labor be cast out of the hands of a holy man, they sell the words of the Lord, and buy doves in the temple. But even the prophets of Jerusalem practiced divination for money, not realizing that prophecy and divination are two different things: for divination is never regarded favorably in the Scriptures. 'There is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel,' says the augur (Num. 23:23). The prophets thought they were prophesying, but because they accepted money, their prophecy became divination. The Apostle Peter declared, 'Silver and gold I do not have' (Acts 3:6). He could have sold what Simon Magus was seeking, or he could have pretended to sell it (for the Holy Spirit cannot be bought or sold), but Peter condemned the money offered to him along with the offerer (Acts 8). Now you see that the prophets of Jerusalem do not have prophecy in their mouths; but they rest in the Lord and say: No evil will come upon us. Their cause, which is God's watchtower, is divided by the hostile plow; and the once peaceful place is filled with ruins, and the temple of the Lord is turned into thorns and thistles, and it becomes a dwelling place for beasts. Let no one be moved by what we read in the first book of Kings, when Saul wanted to go to Samuel and said to his servant that he could not go because he did not have the price to offer for the prophecy. And the servant replied: Behold, I have found in my hand a quarter of a shekel of money, and I will give it to the man of God, and he will tell us our way. For it is not written that Samuel received, or that they offered him, but rather they are fed by the prophet and invited to a meal. But let him receive, the stakes of the tabernacle are more to be valued than the gifts of prophecy. For a shekel is worth twenty obols, and a quarter shekel is worth five obols. And therefore, if our priests want to sell prophecy and offer doves in their chairs, which the Lord overturned with a whip (John 2), let them receive five obols, not the prices of villas. This is also stated in the third book of the Kings, when the wife of Jeroboam, her son being sick, goes to the

man of God Achias, and brings him bread and raisins, and a little jar of honey (3 Kings 14). For it is said what she carried with her, and yet it is not written that the prophet received it: for even though he rebuked her and predicted the coming sorrow, those who were accustomed to go to soothsayers (because there were many diviners and soothsayers in Israel) could have mistakenly assumed the same about the prophets, and wished to offer to holy men what they were accustomed to offer to the gods, and to only recount what the prophets desired, without actually bringing what they themselves were either daring to offer or the prophets to receive. The Apostle Paul: Those who serve the altar, he says, partake of the altar and live by it (1 Corinthians 9:13). It is permitted for you, O priest, to live by the altar, not to indulge in luxury. The mouth of the ox that treads out the grain is not muzzled (ibid., 9). We know these things, and yet the Apostle does not abuse this permission: he is content with food and clothing. He labors night and day with his own hands so as not to be a burden to anyone. And he swears in his letters that he has lived in a holy and unselfish manner in the gospel of Christ, and not only of himself, but also of his disciples. He asserts that he has not sent anyone to ask for anything from the churches, nor has he desired to receive anything (1 Thessalonians 3). But if he rejoices in certain Epistles, and calls the gifts of those who send them the kindness of God, he does not collect them so much for himself as for the poor of the saints, who were in Jerusalem. But the holy poor, these were in Jerusalem, who first believed in Christ from the Jews, and were driven out by their parents and relatives, as well as by their affinities, wasting both possessions and all the furnishings of the temple, and had lost everything. If they are such poor people, let them receive. But if a few houses become enriched under the guise of the poor, and we eat gold with glass and clay dishes, or exchange treasures and clothing, or if a poor person does not seek the riches of senators in their attire. What profit is there in not having a linen cloth around the neck to wipe away sweat? What good is it to be a monk and prefer poverty in dress, when our purse is envied by the entire crowd of the poor? Because of this, the reason for our existence, we who are such, who build Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity, who judge for bribes, who answer for rewards, who divine in money, and claiming a false sanctity for ourselves, we say: No evil will come upon us. Let us heed the judgment of the Lord that follows: Zion and Jerusalem, and the mountain of the temple, a watchtower, and a vision of peace, and the temple of Christ in its fulfillment, and in the end, when charity grows cold, and faith becomes rare, as if a field were plowed and turned into mounds, and it will become a high forest or a keeper of fruits: so that where once there were spacious houses and countless heaps of grain, there will scarcely be a small hut preserving the appearance of food, providing nourishment for those who have none.

4:1-7

(Chapter IV - Verses 1 onwards) And it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; he shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth

of the Lord of hosts has spoken. For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever. On that day, says the Lord, I will gather the lame and gather her whom I have driven away, and the one whom I have afflicted; I will make the lame a remnant, and the one who was cast off a strong nation; and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever. And in the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; he shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. For all the peoples walk, each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever. But we will go in the name of the Lord our God forever and beyond. In that day, says the Lord, I will gather her who was crushed, and her who was cast out, I will receive, and those whom I had rejected: and I will make the crushed into a remnant, and the cast out into a strong nation, and the Lord will reign over them on Mount Zion, from now and forever. For the leaders of Judah have despised justice, and have perverted all that is right, and have built Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity: and not only have they done these things, but they have also judged for bribes, and the priests of Jerusalem have answered for payment, and her prophets have divined for money, and because of them, Zion was like a plowed field, and Jerusalem had fallen into heaps of stones, and the mountain of the temple of God, desolate among the high forests. Therefore now, their house is abandoned and deserted, when the Son of God, going out of the temple, said: Rise, let us go hence (John 14:31): And: Your house shall be left to you desolate (Luke 13:15). The angels also, with Joseph reporting, said: Let us go forth from our abodes, for the mountain of Zion is exalted, of which it is said to the prince of Tyre. And you were wounded on the mountain of the Lord (Ezek. XXVIII). But this mountain of the Lord was revealed in the last days, when the kingdom of heaven was drawing near. For in the consummation of the ages, for the condemnation of sinners, our Savior appeared through his sacrifice, and he came at the eleventh hour to hire workers. And completing His passion, John says: It is the last hour (1 John 2:18): in six thousand years, if five hundred years are divided by the hours of each day, the last hour will consequently be called the time of the faith of the Gentiles. And it will be made manifest, he says, the mountain of the Lord prepared upon the tops of the mountains. It will be made manifest, which was previously hidden, and prepared not only in the mountains, but upon the tops of the mountains, Moses and the Prophets, who prophesied about Him. For although they have written all things holy, nevertheless, in comparison to the prophecy in which they foretold the coming of the Savior, all other things are humble and do not reach to the top of the mountains. And it is said, 'He will be exalted upon the hills.' (Philippians 2:8-9) Indeed, he appeared as a man and took on the form of a servant; he humbled himself unto death, even death on a cross. But the Father exalted him and gave him a name that is above every name, and the whole life of mankind, compared to his way of life, is called fields and valleys. So to this mountain, which is prepared on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, all people will hasten, or as it is written in Hebrew, all the people will flow, that is, in the manner of rivers,

innumerable crowds will gather. But the people will hasten when the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya which are near Cyrene, and Roman visitors, Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs will have believed in him together. Do they not seem to you to have hurried to the mountain, to whom it was said: Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matt. 4:19-20), and they immediately followed the Savior? And again, the Scripture relates about James and John, that having left the boat and father and the waves of the world, they hurried to the mountain. And when Matthew the tax collector heard: Follow me (Matt. 9), he immediately ran. And that too in the Gospel, when great crowds from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and beyond the Jordan followed him, and he healed them, he approves the peoples who hurried. But as the people hasten, many nations will also go to the mountain: indeed, the whole world believing in it, and they will say to the standard, mutually challenging themselves to the gallows: Come, let us ascend to the mountain of the Lord. Ascension is necessary in order for anyone to be able to reach Christ, and to the house of God of Jacob, the Church, which is the house of God, the pillar and foundation of truth. Moreover, what Jacob signifies the Savior, as we have said: Jacob, my servant, I will uphold him (Isaiah 2:3). But they will also say to those to whom they had spoken: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and they will add: So that they may show us His way, which we either understand in the Angels who are present in the Churches, or in the holy Scriptures, which show the way of the Lord, and Him who says: I am the way (John 14). And let us walk in His paths, namely in the Apostles, through whom we have believed in Christ. For from Zion a spiritual law has come forth, and the word of God has passed from Jerusalem to the nations, who He will judge among many peoples (John 5:22): For the Father has given all judgment to the Son. And he shall rebuke many nations unto a great distance (Ps. XCIII, 11): For the Lord takes hold of the wise in their craftiness, and he understands the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile. But he shall judge among the peoples who are deserving of salvation, and those who are unworthy, and at his coming all zeal for war shall be directed towards peace (Isai. II, 4). Swords shall be turned into plowshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and the nation shall cease to wage war against another nation. No one will learn to fight, in the absence of the necessity to fight. And there will be such peace, that not only in cities, but also in villages and fields, everyone will be safe: and this will happen, because the mouth of the Lord has spoken. And first indeed, according to the letter, before a child was born to us, whose government was upon his shoulder, the whole world was full of blood, nations fought against nations, kings fought against kings, and peoples fought against peoples. Finally, even the Roman Republic itself was torn apart by civil wars, with Cinna and Octavius and Carbo fighting, with Sylla and Marius, Antony and Catiline, Caesar and Gnaeus Pompeius, Augustus and Brutus, and with the same Augustus and Antony: in their battles, entire kingdoms shed blood. But after the reign of Christ began, Rome obtained a unique reign; the path of the Apostles became known throughout the world, and the gates of cities were opened to them, and a unique reign of one God was established for preaching. It is also possible to interpret this saying in a tropological sense: that we may say to the faith of Christ, anger and unbridled insults are put aside, so that each person may place their hand on the plow and not look back, and desiring to reap spiritual fruits, breaking the darts of insults and spears of contempt, so that while others labor, we may enter into their labors, and it may be said of us: 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy, carrying their sheaves.' Now no one fights against another, because we read: Blessed are the peacemakers

(Matt. V, 9). No one learns to argue to the downfall of the listeners, but puts silence on his mouth, and is silent; because it is an evil time (Ps. CIII). And each one rests under his vine, to press the wine, which makes glad the heart of man, under that vine, whose farmer is the Father (John XV), and under his fig tree collecting the sweet fruits of the Holy Spirit, charity, joy, peace, and the rest. But all these things happen, according to both interpretations, because the words of the Lord are true, and he said and did them. All the peoples will go, each one on his own way: but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and beyond. They say to all the nations going astray according to their error, we hastened to the mountain of the Lord, and we said: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob (Isaiah 2:3), and we will walk in the name of Christ our Lord, because he is the mountain who is God. In that day, in which the sun of justice will shine, that which was formerly crushed will be gathered together, and that which was expelled will be received, and to this the crushed will be gathered together, so that it may be placed among the remnants, and the forsaken will be made into a strong nation. For unless the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we would have been like Sodom, and we would have been similar to Gomorrah (Rom. 9:29). But according to the Hebrew, it is beautiful: I will gather the limping one, and the one who has walked badly and to whom Elijah said: How long will you limp? (1 Kings 18:21). Whose foot had been scandalized was cut off (Mark 9). I will gather the one whom I had cast out, and to whom I had given the bill of divorce. And the one whom I had afflicted with various captivities, or had delivered to the devil and his angels. And so that a diligent reader may not immediately oppose us, saying how can you claim that the limping one has been gathered, and the one that had been cast out has been collected, when the Jews remain in unbelief? Let him hear about the first Church of Christ that believed from the Jews, from which even the Apostles came, about which Luke describes in the Acts of the Apostles: that in one day three thousand believed, and elsewhere five thousand (Acts 2). And about whom James speaks to Paul: You see, brother Paul, how many thousands there are among the Jews who believe, and all of these are zealous for the Law (Ibid., 21). But consider also the prophetic significance: He did not say, 'I will make the whole lame person whole,' but 'I will make the lame person into a remnant, so that the remnant and the chosen ones may be saved, and those who have labored may become a strong nation, namely the Christian people, which neither sword nor fire nor torments will overcome. See the faith and passion of the Martyrs, and you will not doubt the strength of this nation. And the Lord will rule over them, that is, over many nations, and over the lame remnants on Mount Zion, in the Church, in the watchtower, in the contemplation of virtues, from the present world to the future.' But if anyone wants to understand this which is said: 'I will gather that which was broken, and I will receive that which was cast out, etc.,' to refer to the human soul which, before the coming of Christ, was subject to various sufferings and vices, and was like a lost and diseased sheep torn apart by the jaws of wolves, he will not be mistaken, as long as he knows that the one that was broken and afflicted will later be part of the Lord's kingdom, and will live in Zion, and will be carried on the shoulders of the good shepherd to the former mountain. It should also be known, and this chapter which we have now exposed, and a similar one from Isaiah, refers the Jews and the heirs of their errors to the thousand-year reign of Christ and the saints. And that which is said: All peoples will worship, each one in the name of their Lord God, should be interpreted as each nation being tormented with their own idol, and being cast into the fire of eternal punishment. But from the subsequent things, it is argued that this is not said about the end of the ages, but about the first coming of Christ, in which the remnants of the limping are gathered and the nations are saved

beforehand. Therefore Isaiah has given this testimony: The word that was spoken to Isaiah son of Amos concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days the mountain of the Lord's house will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.' The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. (Isaiah 2) It is significant here that it is said that the word of God, coming out from Jerusalem, will judge between many nations and specifically rebuke the people of Judah. For he will judge us as sinners according to the measure of our works: but he will not judge them as wicked and deniers, but will reprove and condemn them.

Book Two

Book Two

We always respond to envy, because envy never ceases: and the beginning of our books refute the curses of rivals: who commonly boast that I write certain foolishness of sterile and jejune speech, and that I am unable to be silent when unable to speak. Therefore, I beseech you, O Paula and Eustochium, to close your ears to such barking, and to support my infancy, as they say, with your prayers, obtain for me, in accordance with the opening of my mouth as the Apostle says, that I may be able to adapt to speaking about the Scriptures: The Lord will give a powerful word to those who preach the Gospel (Psalm 68: 12). But I warn the fat bulls, who surround me (Ps. XXI), to rest and cease from cursing, lest they recognize their own evil deeds which will be revealed later, if they continue to harm. For what they say, that I compile the works of Origen, and that it is not fitting to contaminate the writings of the ancients: that vehement curse which they think it is, I consider it the greatest praise, since I want to imitate him, whom I have no doubt pleases all wise men, and you as well. For if it is a crime to translate the blessed works of the Greeks, then Ennius and Virgil should be accused, as well as Plautus, Caecilius, and Terence, and also Cicero and other eloquent men, who have translated not only verses, but also many chapters, lengthy books, and entire plays. Our Hilarius is also guilty of theft, because he has translated nearly forty thousand verses of the aforementioned Origen's psalms into understandable language. Out of all of these, I aspire to imitate their negligence, rather than the obscure diligence of those individuals. But now is the time to forge another book in Michael, and to crush the heads of the resurgent hydra with the prophet's staff.

4:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) And you, tower of the flock, cloudy daughter of Zion, there will come to you the first power, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem. Now why are you contracted with sorrow? Is there no king for you, or has your counselor perished? For pain has seized you like a woman in labor. LXX: And you, tower of the flock, darkened daughter of Zion, there will come to you the first principality, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem from Babylon. And now, why have you known evil? Was not the king your husband, or has your plan perished, because pains have overtaken you like a woman in childbirth? The cloudy or desolate tower, which is called Ophel in Hebrew, we should not accept any other but that which Isaiah says: And I built a tower in the midst

of it, that is, the vineyard. But the vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel (Isaiah 5:2). This tower, as long as it has a winepress, that is, an altar, and a wall around it, namely the assistance of the Angels, and the devil, the wild boar, does not enter the vineyard, it is not desolate, it is not dark, but having received its name from the shining Lord, it is called a city, which cannot be hidden on the mountain. Therefore the tower of the flock and the people of God (because the wicked tenants killed the son of the master of the house (Luke 20) is now desolate and forsaken, and under the name Ariel, cries out from the earth in Isaiah. And this tower is the daughter of Zion, or as Symmachus renders it in Greek: She is the daughter of Zion (Isaiah 29): and to her will come God, or the first power, which is the power of the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem. And the first power, or the first principality, comes to this tower, the one who said: I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last (Revelation 22:13). And he who from the assumed person of man says in Proverbs, 'The Lord created me in the beginning of his ways, before his works' (Prov. VIII, 22), or, as it is written in Hebrew, 'The Lord possessed me: Canaanite did not create me, but possessed me and had me,' signifies. And the first power came, and the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem, that after the first one comes the second, just as he confidently says: 'I am the light of the world' (John VIII, 12): thus he also gives to his disciples that they too may be called the light of the world, and he says to them: 'You are the light of the world' (John VI). But also, calling himself the true vine in the Gospel, he speaks of the believers through Jeremiah: 'Yet I planted you a choice vine, a completely faithful seed.' (Jeremiah 21) And since he is the living bread descending from heaven, he gave it to his disciples so that it might be called bread. Hence, the apostle Paul speaks confidently: 'For we, though many, are one bread.' (1 Corinthians 17) In this manner, the first authority and kingdom enter into Jerusalem, so that it may grant power and kingdom to those who believe in it. But what is read in some books: And the first prince shall enter (Al. shall journey), the kingdom of the daughter of Zion, and from (Al. is from) Babylon, we know that it has been added because it is neither in Hebrew, nor in the other interpreters. And it seems to me that it refers to the captivity of Babylon, that the people who came out from there came to Jerusalem. It follows: And now why do you contract with sorrow? or, as it is written in the Seventy, And now why have you known the evils which the Lord and the first power and kingdom said were coming? Why are you now contracting with sorrow, or why have you known evil? Immediately it is answered and said: Because the king is not for you, and your counselor has perished, because sorrow has seized you like a woman in labor. Or certainly when you have all these things, by your own fault, you do not deserve the help of either the king or the counselor. But when he says: Why have you known evil? it is to be understood in this sense, that everyone who deserves and suffers evil, is said to know evil, and to be ignorant of good. According to what is written in the first book of the Kings: The sons of Eli, sons of wickedness, did not know God (1 Sam. 2:12). And elsewhere: Whoever keeps the commandment will not know evil speech (Eccles. 8:5). And to the sinners: Depart from me, says the Lord, you who work iniquity, for I do not know you (Ps. 6:9). On the other hand, concerning the Lord: He who knew no sin, for us he made sin (2 Cor. 5:21), understood as God the Father. But the king, and the angel of great counsel, is understood to be the Savior, who perished for the unbelieving people, whom pains seized like a woman in labor: for he, thinking that Israel was to obtain the empire, was suddenly devastated. And just as a woman in labor cannot escape the pain: so he could not avoid and delay the impending captivity and the army surrounding the city. Let us read the Scriptures, and we will never find that holy women, except Rachel, gave birth with pain: because she was on the way and

in the hippodrome, that is, in the race of horses, which are sold in Egypt, she gave birth to a son of pain, whom later the father called the son of his right hand (Genesis 35). Eve, expelled from paradise and hearing: 'In pain you will bring forth children' (Ibid., III, 16), is said to have given birth in pain. The wife of Phineas, contracted and unable to straighten herself, like the woman whom the devil bound in the Gospel (Luke XIII), gave birth after she learned of the capture of the ark of God and the ruin of the people (2 Samuel IV). But Sarah, because she was holy and had ceased to menstruate, after the birth of Isaac said: 'God has made me laugh; whoever hears will laugh with me' (Genesis XXI, 6). Therefore, those who occupied the tower of the flock, they are pains of the underworld and pains of death, who indeed surrounded and encircled even the Savior; but they were by no means able to obtain him, as he himself speaks in the seventeenth Psalm: Pains of death surrounded me, and rivers of iniquity troubled me, and pains of hell enclosed me. Some think that the squalid tower, or dark tower, and daughter of Jerusalem, are to be understood as the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of the saints, of whom the Apostle also says: You have come to Mount Zion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. XII, 22), which remains squalid as long as her sons are not brought back to her, and a king and counselor are not in her, and pains seize her like a woman in labor, because she has given birth in vain, seeing so many sons killed.

4:10

(Verse 10.) Grieve and take action, daughter of Zion, like a woman in labor, for now you will leave the city and dwell in the country, and you will come all the way to Babylon; there you will be saved, there the Lord will redeem you from the hand of your enemies. LXX: Grieve and act courageously, daughter of Zion, like a woman giving birth, for now you will leave the city and dwell in the open field, and you will come all the way to Babylon; from there you will be saved, and from there the Lord your God will redeem you from the hand of your enemies. To whom it is commanded that she should grieve or give birth, and afterwards be brought forth, act courageously, it is not commanded in vain. But let her, enduring the pains patiently, go out of the city, and dwell in the plain or in the region, and come even to Babylon. And when she, sustaining captivity for sin, shall have borne what hath been inflicted on her bravely, then the Lord may deliver her, and her God may redeem her out of the hand of her enemies, that, being set free, she may say unto them that rejoice against her: 'Rejoice not against me, my enemy, because I have fallen; I shall rise again; although I have walked in darkness, the Lord is my light; I will bear the wrath of the Lord, for I have sinned against Him, until He justify my cause, and shall make my judgment, and bring me forth into the light, and I shall see His righteousness, and mine enemy shall behold it, and shame shall cover her.' (infra8,9). And in the Psalms it is sung with a fitting voice: The Lord will not be angry forever, nor will he threaten forever (Psalm 102:9). And it belongs to the salvation of the one who is suffering to grieve and to act bravely, and Jesus, the son of Nun, is also a witness to this, to whom the Lord says: Be strong and act bravely (Joshua 1:1). But the daughter of Zion grieves and acts bravely because she has been cast down and has come out of the city naked, and she is being led captive into the field of Shinar, and she will be in Babylon until Zerubbabel comes and Ezra, whose name means helper, will deliver her from the hand of the Chaldeans. Since it is clear according to the literal meaning, it seems to me that the soul is understood to be expelled from the Church because of sin, and handed over to the enemy and avenger for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved by departing from the city which the force of the river delights, and not dwelling on

the mountain where it was before, but in the plain, where the army of the Assyrians wanders, and being in the confusion of its vices, and after it has put on shackles, and has drawn the millstone, and has made flour for the Babylonians, to say upon returning to itself: How many hired servants of my father are filled with loaves, and here I perish with hunger! (Luke 15:17) And to welcome him as he returned to his father's house, and to be redeemed from the hand of a most harsh master. Let us take as an example what is commanded to the daughters of Zion, and it is said: Grieve and act manfully as a woman in labor, not for punishment, but for her benefit. Paul speaks to the Galatians: My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you (Galatians 4:19). And he grieved for them for so long, and he gave birth to them again through repentance, who had perished through their transgression. If a physician is called to someone with a fever or a wound, they should say: Endure the pain and act courageously, quench your thirst, and bring a cautery, so that you may achieve a more certain recovery.

4:11-13

(Verses 11-13.) And now many nations have gathered against you, saying: Let her be stoned, and let our eyes see her downfall in Zion. But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord, and they do not understand His plan, for He has gathered them like the hay of the threshing floor. Rise up and trample, daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hooves bronze, and you will crush many peoples. And you will dedicate their plunder to the Lord, and their strength to the Lord of all the earth. LXX: And now many nations have gathered against you, saying, 'Let us insult and see with our own eyes in Zion.' But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord, and they do not understand His counsel, for He has gathered them like sheaves into a threshing floor. Arise and trample them, O daughter of Zion, for I will make your horns iron and your hooves bronze, and you will crush many peoples. And you will devote their multitude to the Lord, and their strength to the Lord of all the earth. O Jerusalem, O daughter of Zion, who will come to Babylon, and there you will be set free, and the Lord will redeem you from the hand of your enemies. But now many nations have gathered against you, who speak as if of an adulteress, saying: Let her be stoned, and let our eyes look upon her. As it is written in the Septuagint: Let us insult and rejoice, and let our eyes despise Zion; and they did not understand the will and plan of the Lord, for this reason the nations have gathered against you, so that you may crush them like the threshing floor crushes the chaff or straw. Rise up, therefore, daughter of Zion, and with the iron horns that I promise to give you, and with the bronze hooves that you will receive, scatter and crush the peoples, and kill them for the Lord of the whole earth. For He takes pleasure in such a victim and such a sacrifice. The Jews, seeing that these things have not yet been fulfilled, promise themselves the coming of Christ in the future, and they say that all nations will serve the Jewish people, and that the Roman empire, which they interpret as Edom, will be crushed under their hooves and scattered with their horns. It is easy to prove from all the Scriptures how foolish this is, but that is a matter of another time. Therefore, we who follow not the letter that kills, but the life-giving spirit, say that many nations of demons gather against the daughter of Zion, which is translated as the Church, and insult her in the present age, which is under the power of evil, and rejoice in the killing of her children, ignorant of the thoughts of the Lord and not recognizing His plan. For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of majesty (I Cor. II, 8). Therefore, He will gather them as sheaves in the area, so that whatever appeared to have thorns and be scattered, empty and light, may be crushed by their hooves, and winnowed by their horns, and the pure remaining grain may

be offered as gifts to the Lord. But what does it mean when he says: You will crush many peoples, and consecrate their multitude to the Lord, and their strength to the Lord of the whole earth. We read Numbers, and Jesus on the ship, and the first book of the Kings, and we will see how, concerning the subject peoples, when all things perish by the edge of the sword, both gold and silver, and also how a certain number of people and animals dedicated to the Lord as spoils. Finally, Achor, who stole something from the ban of Jericho, disturbed the people, and the name of the valley was imposed from sin, Emec Achor (), meaning valley of tumult, or disturbances (Joshua 7). But so that you may know, according to the Septuagint interpreters, who said: 'You shall consecrate their multitude to the Lord, and their strength to the Lord of all the earth,' the word 'consecration' should be understood in a positive sense: Theodotion translated it as 'multitude,' the Fifth Edition as 'benefit,' which means 'advantage,' and Symmachus as 'gain,' which means 'their profit.'

5:1

(Chapter 5, Verse 1) Now you will be devastated, daughter of a robber: sieges have been placed upon us; they will strike the judge of Israel on the cheek with a rod. LXX: Now the daughter will be obstructed with an obstruction; distress has been placed upon us; they will strike the tribes of Israel on the cheek with a rod. Not that one tribe strikes the cheek of another, but that others strike the tribes of Israel on the cheek. Indeed, I have promised you, O daughter of Zion, that there will come a time when I will place an iron horn upon you, and your hooves will be made of bronze, and by the multitude of demons being shattered, you will offer whatever they had previously possessed to the Lord (Romans 11) of the entire earth. But because this will happen when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and all Israel has been saved, now for the time being you are being laid waste, or as it is said in Hebrew, destroyed. For you are not called Circumcision according to the Apostle (Philippians 3), but rather cutting off: nor do I call you my daughter, but the daughter of a thief, which in Hebrew is called Bath Gedud (), that is, always ready to plunder for the devil. For you have made my house a den of thieves, you have fought against me, and your sons have laid siege against me, and against the Son, and against my Spirit. Is it not an insult to the Trinity, when by your hand the Romans struck the head of the judge of Israel with a rod and a reed, saying: Prophecy to us, O Christ, who is it that struck you (Matt. 26:60)? Or when one of your servants struck him on the cheek, saying: Is this how you answer the high priest (John 18:22)? According to the Hebrew, to which the interpretations of Aquila and Symmachus, and Theodotion, and the fifth edition agree. But according to the LXX, the meaning is much higher and is understood as if from its own beginning. Now the synagogue is obstructed by obstruction: and those who are closed in it will say: He has placed distress upon us; and subject to Roman authorities, they will be struck on the cheekbones by the three Israels. For the Lord has taken away from Judah and from Jerusalem the strong and mighty, and the wise architect, and the intelligent listener (or helper), and its ways are closed and blocked up even until today, and it cannot go out of captivity; but it is pressed down by the harshest rule (Isaiah 3:1-2). But if we want to understand the above sense as referring to the Church, let us bring forth the example from Hosea, in which the adulteress speaks: I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread, and my water, and my clothing, and my linen, my oil, and everything that is beneficial to me (Hosea 2:5). And afterwards, God, wanting to hinder her wicked thoughts, does not allow her to fulfill what she desires; but He obstructs her ways, so that she does not obtain her lovers, and no longer commits adultery. He says: Therefore, behold, I will

block her ways with thorns, and I will wall her in, and she will not find her path, and she will pursue her lovers, but she will not catch them, and she will seek them, but she will not find them, and she will say: I will go and return to my former husband, for it was good for me there. (Ibidem, VI, sec. LXX). Notice how the work of the Lord has progressed: the adulteress, not finding her way, and unable to go where she wanted, is compelled by necessity to return to her former husband, and she confesses that it was better for her in the house of her former husband than it had been with her former lovers, and through the tribulations and plagues of Israel she is instructed. Therefore, God has placed tribulation upon the daughter of Israel, and the angels who are in charge of administering punishment will strike her on the cheek. Lest you should not know who the daughter is, who is obstructed by obstruction and is placed in distress, is immediately inferred and is said to be the threefold Israel. But we are the Israel, who perceive God with the mind, to distinguish whom the Apostle speaks: "See Israel according to the flesh" (I Cor. XIX, 18). For he would never call carnal Israel, unless he knew that there is also a spiritual one.

5:2

(Version 2.) And you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. LXX: And you, Bethlehem, house of Ephrathah, are small among the thousands of Judah; out of you shall come forth for me one who will be ruler in Israel, and his goings forth are from of old, from the days of eternity. In the Gospel according to Matthew (Mat. II), when the magi from the East came and Herod asked the scribes where the Christ, the Lord, was to be born, they are said to have responded: In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it was written by the prophet: And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel. It is clear to me, even without my speaking, that the testimony does not agree with the Hebrew or the Septuagint interpreters. And I believe that Matthew, wanting to accuse the Scribes and priests of negligence in regard to the reading of divine Scripture, also placed it in this way, as has been said by them. Furthermore, those who assert that in almost all testimonies taken from the Old Testament there is such an error, that either the order is changed, or the words, and sometimes even the sense itself is different, testify not from a written book, but from their memory, which is sometimes mistaken, to the apostles and evangelists. Therefore, let us explain the Hebrew: And you, Bethlehem, that is, the house of bread, which is called Ephratha, are indeed the least among the cities of Judah, and compared to so many thousands, you are hardly a small village; but from this small village will come forth Christ, who is the ruler in Israel. And do not think that he is only from the lineage of David, to whom I promised, saying: I will set upon your throne the fruit of your womb (Ps. CXXXI, 11), the assumption of flesh does not hinder the divine majesty: for he is born of me before all ages, and as the creator of time, he is not bound by it. He is the one of whom I said in another psalm: Before Lucifer I begot you (Ps. 109:3). For in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1). This was in the beginning with God. And therefore his coming forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity. That Bethlehem itself is Ephrath, the book of Genesis shows, in which Scripture records: Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem (Gen. 35). And in both names it signifies a sacrament: for the house is called bread, because of the living bread, which came down from heaven (John VI). And Ephrata, which translates as seeing madness, because of Herod's insanity, since he was deceived by the wise

men, he was very angry, and sent and slew all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. And because of the great amount of bloodshed, a voice was heard in the heights, lamentation and weeping, Rachel weeping for her children (Jer. XXXI). We read according to the Septuagint, specifically in the book of Joshua, where three cities and towns of Judah are described, among others, including: Thaeco, Ephratha, which is Bethlehem, Phagor, Aetham, Culon, Tami (also called Tatami), Soris, Caraem, Gallim, Baether, and Manoch, eleven cities, and their villages (Josue XV). This is not found in the Hebrew text, nor in any other interpreter, and whether it was erased from the ancient books by the malice of the Jews so that Christ would not appear to have been born from the tribe of Judah, or whether it was added by the Septuagint without clear knowledge, we do not know for certain. Nevertheless, we can confirm this from the book of Judges, that Bethlehem is in the tribe of Judah, for it is written: 'And there was a Levite man, living in the farthest parts of the hill country of Ephraim, who took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. And his concubine was angry with him, and she went back to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah' (Judges 19:1). It is well said, Bethlehem in Judah, to distinguish it from Bethlehem, which is situated in Galilee, as I found in the same volume of Jesus. Ephratha can sound in our language as fruitful, abundant, and fruitful, and it also shows in the mystery, which is the house of bread.

5:3

(Verse 3) Because of this, He will give them until the time when she who is in labor gives birth, and the rest of his brothers shall return to the children of Israel. LXX: Therefore, He will give them until the time of the one giving birth: she shall give birth, and the rest of his brothers shall return to the children of Israel. Because from Bethlehem, which is Ephrathah, Christ the ruler has come forth in Israel, and his coming forth was not only at the time when he was seen in the flesh, but from the beginning of eternity, or from the beginning of the age. Because He always spoke through the prophets, and the word of God became incarnate in their hands (the hands of the saints): therefore, He will give the Jews, and He will permit them to rule until the time of childbirth, when that is fulfilled: Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry out, you who are not in labor; for the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of the one who has a husband (Isaiah 54:1, LXX). For when the barren woman has borne seven, and she who had many children is weakened, and through the offense of the Jewish people, the fullness of the Gentiles enters, then all Israel will be saved, and the remnant of his brothers will be converted to the children of Israel; and when the prophet Elijah comes, which means, God is Lord, he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers (Luke 1:17), and the last people will be joined to the ancient, so that they may truly be called the sons of Abraham, when they believe in the one whom Abraham saw and rejoiced (John 8). But what is the time in which the barren woman will give birth? I believe it is the time spoken of by Isaiah: 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you' (Isaiah 49:8). And Paul, understanding this as referring to the time of Christ, says: 'Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation' (2 Corinthians 6:2). I think this also symbolically demonstrates what is written in Ecclesiastes: 'A time to be born, and a time to die' (Ecclesiastes 3:2), which refers to the time when the synagogue, which was barren, gave birth to the people of the Gentiles but lost its own children. Nevertheless, it can also be understood differently: The Lord

will give the temple and Jerusalem, and the Jews, until the time when the virgin gives birth, who after giving birth and receiving the spoils of Samaria and the power of Damascus, with the people of Judah being killed, the remnant of Israel will be saved. And the brothers of Christ, that is, the apostles, will turn to the faith of the prophets and patriarchs, who announced the coming of Christ, and the prophecy of the psalm will be fulfilled: You were born for your fathers sons, and so on (Ps. 44, 17).

5:4

(Verse 4) And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of his God: and they shall be converted, for now he shall be magnified even to the ends of the earth. LXX: And he shall stand, and shall see, and shall feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, and they shall be in the glory of the name of the Lord their God: for now they shall be magnified even to the ends of the earth. Afterward the sun of justice shall rise to the heights of heaven, and shall come to the borders of the people: and he shall give his light to everyone, and shall be made manifest in his power: and the residue shall be turned into the children of Israel. Then shall the Lord our God appear to them: and they shall pass in a cloud, and shall come to the places mentioned before: the Lord our God shall enlighten them, and shall perpetuate the work of his justice in peace. (Psalm 22, 1) But He feeds them, not only in the strength of the Lord, but also in the exaltation of the name of His God, when He says to the Father: Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are: while I was with them, I kept them in Your name: those whom You have given Me, I have guarded, and none of them has perished (John 17:11). And they will turn, or as Symmachus interprets it better, they will dwell. Jasubu () enim verbum Hebraicum utrumque significat. Habitabunt autem in Ecclesia Domini, quiamagnificatus est Christus usque ad terminum terrae. Sive, juxta LXX, quia magnificabuntur ((Al. magnificantur)) ipsi cum pastore suo usque ad extremum terrae, ut in omnem terram exeat sonus eorum et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum (Ps. XVIII) .

5:5

(Verse 5.) And this will be the peace: When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads on our houses. LXX: And this will be the peace; When the Assyrian comes and rises over your land and when he ascends over your region. When the devil comes, who is interpreted as 'accuser', that is, accusing and reproving, over the land and region of the believers, and of those whom the Lord will feed in strength and in the exaltedness of the name of His Lord God, and he treads on them with various tribulations, and on the houses of our souls, that is, our bodies, as if he were proudly rising and pressing down, and yet nothing separates us from the love of Christ: then the peace of Christ, or Christ Himself, will be in us, and it will be said of the holy one, The enemy will not profit anything against him. Let us give an example, so that what we say can become more evident. An Assyrian came upon the land of Paul long ago, and he ascended above his territory, when he was in great difficulties; more abundant in afflictions, excessively in prisons, frequently in deaths: when he received forty-minus-one beatings from the Jews, he was beaten with rods three times, stoned once, shipwrecked three times, he was in the depths of the sea night and day, in dangers from robbers, in dangers from false brothers, in dangers from his own people, in dangers from gentiles; but in all these things he overcame because of him who loved him. And so he was filled with peace, because he had been filled with insults. (1 Corinthians 11) The Jews in the coming of

Christ, which they pretend for themselves, contend that all these things will happen according to the letter.

5:6

(Verse 6.) And we will raise up against him seven shepherds and eight principal men, and they will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod with their spears; and he will deliver from Assyria when it comes into our land and when it treads within our borders. LXX: And seven shepherds will rise against him, and eight bites of men, and they will shepherd Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod with their pitfall; and he will deliver from Assyria, when it comes upon your land, and when it ascends upon your borders. Where we have placed the first human beings, and it is written in Hebrew Nesiche Adam, Symmachus interprets it as Christos hominum; Theodotion and the fifth edition, prinipces hominum; Aquila, heavy, or established men, that is, καθιστάμενους. Again, in the place where I and Aquila have translated it, in his spears, so that it is understood, the land of Nimrod, Symmachus renders it as εν τῷ πυλῶνι αὐτοῦ, that is, within its gates; Theodotion, within their gates; the fifth edition, ἐν παραξήφῃσιν αὐτοῦ, which we can say, in their marshes: but in Hebrew it is written Baphethee. So then there will be peace, when the remnants of the brothers of Christ are converted to the sons of Israel, and the Assyrian comes into our land, and with the help of the Lord, we will quickly crush him who desired to trample on our houses under our feet. For the Lord himself says: We will raise up seven shepherds against him, and eight leaders of men, or human bites. But I and my Son and the Holy Spirit will raise up, according to what is written in Genesis: Let us make man in our image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). And in the beginning of Abdiel: Rise up and let us ascend against her in battle. I believe the seven shepherds, all the patriarchs and prophets and holy men, served in the week, that is, in the old Instrument. But the eight bites of men, or rather the eight chief men, as Symmachus interpreted, are the Christs, all of the New Testament, who from the apostles to this age have bitten the Assyrian and torn him with their teeth. And it is commanded in Ecclesiastes: Let us give seven parts, let us also give eight (Eccl. XI). And in the temple of Ezekiel, which is interpreted as the Church and the heavenly Jerusalem, one ascends by seven and eight steps (Ezek. XL). And in the Psalter there are fifteen steps by which we ascend through the week and the octave to sing praises to God. On the eighth day, the spiritual circumcision is celebrated, and in the temple of the Jews, the Sabbath is destroyed, and certain psalms are inscribed for the Octave. Therefore, these seven shepherds and eight offenses of men will feed Assyria with the sword. For the living and effective word of God, sharper than every two-edged sword (Heb. IV, 12), was sent by Him who came to send a sword upon the earth, so that two might be divided into three (Matth. X). And they will feed the land of Nimrod (which means 'descending temptation') in its pit; for the land of the giant and hunter and one who proudly opposes the Lord is not in the mountains, but in the pits. He has fallen like lightning from heaven, and he always dwells among beasts; and because he is a hunter, he roams through unfruitful woods and forests. As far as I can recall from my memory, I have never read favorably about a hunter. Ishmael and Esau were hunters (Gen. XVI and XXVII), and they foreshadowed the people of Judah, of whom one is a son of Egypt, walking according to the flesh and living according to the flesh: the other lost the birthright for a lentil soup, and envious of his brother's blessings, he sends him away to Mesopotamia. Therefore, let the earth swallow up Nimrod in its pits: For he who digs a pit will fall into it (Prov. XXVI, 7): and he who opens a well and digs it, will fall into the pit he made, and his pain will turn upon his head, and his wickedness will

descend upon his own skull (Ps. VII, 16, 17). And Christ freed us from the hand of Assyria, the Assyrian who came upon our land, and desired to trample the boundaries of Israel, confessing to the seven shepherds and to eight princes. But what Symmachus says: And Assur will feed the land with the sword, and the region of Nemrod within its gates, this should be understood, that the strong will be bound in his own house, and the adversary will be wounded. And according to the Eagle and the fifth edition, let the seven shepherds be pierced with dryness and the eight men of Christ with spears.

5:7-15

(Verse 7 onwards) And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples, like dew from the Lord, like showers on the grass, which do not wait for man or delay for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if it goes through, treads down and tears in pieces, and there is none to deliver. Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots: And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds: And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy thy cities. And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. LXX: And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many people, as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off. And it shall be in that day, says the Lord, I will kill your horses from your midst, and I will destroy your chariots, and I will overthrow the cities of your land: and I will take away all your fortresses. And I will take away your sorceries from your hand, and those who speak, they shall not be in you: and I will destroy your carved images, and your statues from your midst, and you shall no longer worship the works of your hands. And I will cut down your groves from your midst, and I will demolish your cities, and I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the nations, because they did not listen. When Assyria comes upon our land and rises upon our borders, we shall be freed by the Lord who raised up seven shepherds and eight attacks of men against him, the remnants of Jacob, whom we understand as the apostles, and the first Church of the Jews, will be among many peoples like dew falling from the Lord. For the hearts of the people burned with the fiery arrows of the devil, and all the nations, being unfaithful to God, had hearts like a furnace kindled with fire (Hosea 7). Where the dew falling from the Lord, the health of the sick was made. And just as we read in Daniel (Dan. 3), that the spirit of the roaring dew extinguished the fiery furnace, let us generally understand this of all nations, that the doctrine of the Apostles was like dew from the Lord in the midst of all nations. But what follows: And like lambs on the grass, so that no one gathers and is not among the sons of men, let us receive this concerning those who from the nations did not want to believe, that they are the heavenly Apostles and the remnants of Jacob, like lambs grazing on grass, and gathering

grass with their teeth. And they shall do this, so that those who did not want to be angels, receiving the spiritual dew, are by no means gathered among men, nor are they assigned to a rational part, but it is said of them: They are not in the toil of men, and they shall not be scourged with men (Ps. 73:5). And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of the nations like a lion among beasts in the forest, and like a young lion among flocks of sheep. For the Lord Jesus, of whom it is prophesied in Genesis: Judah, you have ascended from the offspring, my son, you have laid down to sleep as a lion and as a young lion (Gen. 49:9). And in another place, reclining as a lion, and like a lion's cub, who will rouse him? He also gave to his apostles, to whom he said: Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19): so that just as no one can resist a lion among beasts, and a lion's cub among sheep, in the same way, those who have been freed from the hand of Assyria and from the hand of the devil would snatch away cattle and livestock; for the Lord will save both men and animals (Psalm 36:7). And they ravaged, not to kill, but to divide, that is, to separate from the infidels, and there would be no one to resist them. But with the lion and the lion's cub wandering among the livestock and the sheep, the hand of God is exalted over those who either troubled God or the relics of Israel before. And all his enemies will be scattered, not because the enemies perish and stop existing, but because they perish as enemies. As it is written to the Thessalonians: Whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth (II Thes. II, 8). This killing does not signify abolition, but rather the cessation of a wicked life, which they were living badly before. Finally, it concludes: And he will destroy with the brightness of his coming. However, he would never destroy if the killing signified abolition, since it would have already ceased to exist: thus the destruction of enemies here is understood, according to the Proverbs of Solomon, in which it is written: The destruction will lodge with the wicked: it will not be perpetual, it will not reduce them to nothing; but it will lodge with them as long as the wickedness that is in them is consumed. For God created man, so that he would not perish, and He did not make death. After this follows: And it shall come to pass in that day, when your hand is lifted up against your enemies, O Israel, and all your enemies are destroyed, I will kill your horses from among you, that is, the principal (■γέμονικ■) impulses of your heart's lust, like horses breaking loose from their chains, rushing forward, and your chariots in which you delighted in your vices, and associating sins with sins, as if triumphing you were carried in triumphal chariots. And I will destroy the cities of your land. For you have not built a city that delights in the rushing of God's river (Psalm 49), nor the heavenly Jerusalem that is situated in the mountains (Matthew 5), but rather the city that Cain built (Genesis 4). Hence, the cities of the earth are said to be built with earthly works. And I will take away, it says, all your fortresses, your wealth, indeed, and the pomp of the world, and the eloquence of orators, and the arguments of dialecticians, in which you trusted as in fortresses. And I will take away the evil deeds from your hands, by which either you yourself were deceived by others, or being deceived, you deceived others. And those who speak or pronounce will not be to you. Now the world is full of those who speak and pronounce: they speak what they do not know, they teach what they have not learned: they are masters, when they have not been disciples before. Therefore, when God teaches man knowledge, false presumptions will cease, and perverse teaching will be removed. And I will destroy your idols and your statues from your midst. Our idols are those that are made by those who speak, or that we ourselves create for ourselves. Hence it is commanded in the Law (Exodus 20) , that we do not make idols for ourselves, and do not place statues in our land (Leviticus 26) : and you shall not worship the works of your own hands (Deuteronomy 5) . Unfortunate is the human condition, full of foolishness and

error, knowing that doctrines are composed from one's own understanding, not ignorant that it is a simulated idol created by oneself, and worships the works of one's own hands as God, and man bends down, deceived to deceive. It is added in the promise that is directed to the remnants, that is, the remnants of Jacob: And I will cut down the woods from the midst of you, and will destroy your cities, so that all the trees of the forests, and the woods that were prohibited to be planted in the temple of God, and the badly constructed cities, which previously were called cities of the land, may be destroyed and consumed. But after he has done this to the remnants of Jacob, then he will turn to the nations that the Apostles, like lambs, have grazed. And because they did not want to receive the dew of speech, he said, 'I will make vengeance in anger and fury upon the nations, because they did not want to hear.' Hence the prophet says: 'Lord, do not rebuke me in your fury; nor chastise me in your anger.' (Psalm 6:1). According to the Septuagint interpreters, this is because it is a spiritual understanding, and we ought to connect the meaning with the previous chapters, as has been discussed. However, the Hebrews dream such delusions: After the seven whom they imagine, and the shepherds whom they want, and the eight princes of the Assyrians whom they have conquered, and they have fed the land of Nimrod with their swords, and this has happened when the Assyrian came into the land of Judah, then, they say, when Christ comes, all the remaining descendants of Jacob who can survive among the nations will be in blessing, like dew coming from the Lord, and like rain upon the grass, and they will not hope in men, nor in the sons of men, but in God. And they will be among the nations and peoples, bloodthirsty and cruel, seeking vengeance against their former masters, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, and like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, and there will be no one who can resist their strength. Then, O God, or O Israel, your hand will be exalted over the Assyrians and all your enemies who now possess you will perish. On that day, when you are liberated from the nations, I will remove your horses and chariots that are in your midst cities. Not because Israel had horses and chariots at that time, but rather the horses and chariots of the Assyrians that are in the midst of your cities. And I will destroy all your cities and the fortified places that you have dedicated to idols. And I will remove sorcerers and fortune-tellers from your land, and I will cause all your sculptures and statues to perish, and you will no longer worship the works of your hands. I will also uproot and overthrow all your groves, and the cities that you have dedicated to idols. And when I have done this to you, and have been appeased in this way, so that whatever evil is in you may be removed, then I will also avenge you in my fury and indignation against all the nations that have refused to listen to my word. Let the fleshly Israel respond here, whether it speaks of past or future events. If it mentions past events, let it provide a history and cite the authority of ancient books: let it teach all nations that Assyria was once subject to Israel. But if someone thinks that he will be secure while indulging in sinful pleasure, when Christ comes, what idols of Israel will be removed, which are not currently worshipped? What lights will be extinguished, which it does not have? What cities will be destroyed, which were once destroyed? What soothsayers will be taken away, whom it does not have, and should not glory in having? Yet for so long, the daughter of Zion has been abandoned, and she sits without an altar and without priests; while others enjoy the fruits of their labor, they themselves promise themselves a future with dry throats, not knowing what it will bring.

6:1-2

(Chapter VI—Verses 1, 2.) Listen to what the Lord is saying: Rise up, contend with the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Listen, O mountains, to the Lord's judgment, and you mighty

foundations of the earth, for the Lord will judge with his people and with Israel. Septuagint: Listen to what the Lord has spoken: Rise up, judge among the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Listen, O mountains, to the Lord's judgment, and you valleys, foundations of the earth, for the Lord will judge his people and with Israel. For the firm foundations of the earth, which are interpreted as the seventy valleys and foundations of the earth, Symmachus and Theodotion translated it, and the ancient foundations of the earth: but the fifth edition presented the Hebrew itself, Ethanim, the foundations of the earth. Therefore, the first voice of the prophet is: Hear what the Lord is saying. Then God speaks to the prophet: Rise up, contend with judgment against the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Again, the prophet, as he had been commanded, speaks to the mountains, and not only to the mountains, but also to the strong foundations of the earth, and says, Hear, O mountains, the judgment of the Lord, and you strong foundations of the earth. He gives the reason why he compels them to hear. Because the judgment of the Lord will be pronounced upon his people, and with Israel it will be judged. They have transferred hills and valleys to the mountains to which the prophet speaks and to the strong foundations of the earth, understanding this, as it seems to me, that the people have done nothing worthy to be heard from the mountains, either from the hills that are inferior to the height of the mountains, or from the valleys submerged in the deepest part. Arise, he says, contend in judgment before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. He commands those who are sitting, lying, sleeping, or dead to arise, according to what the Apostle says: Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light (Ephesians 5:14). Arise from the dead, so that you may walk in newness of life, that you may leave the earth and strive for higher things. And contend in judgment against the mountains, which I believe to signify no one other than the Angels, to whom the care of human matters is entrusted, as the Song of Deuteronomy concords with the same: When the Most High divided the nations, when he scattered the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God (Deuteronomy 32:8). Hello, we are the administrators of the spirit, sent to minister to those who will inherit salvation. And strive for justice, so that whether mountains or hills ((or valleys)) are found, it may not be considered unworthy of the people whom I have appointed, or that the blame be removed from the people and referred to the leaders. Let us read the Apocalypse of John the Apostle, in which the Angels of the Churches are praised and accused for their virtues and vices, for which they are said to preside. For just as sometimes the fault lies with the bishops, sometimes with the people; and often the teacher sins, often the student; sometimes it is the fault of the father, sometimes of the son, so that they may be taught either well or poorly: in this way, in the judgment of God, either a charge will be brought against the angels, if they do not carry out everything that pertains to their duty, or against the people, if they have disregarded those who do everything themselves. There are those who interpret the mountains and hills and the strong foundations of the earth as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the other patriarchs, to whom it is as if they were listeners and authors, and who are summoned to judgment, for the cause of the people of Israel may be investigated. Others believe that mountains, hills, and valleys are inhabited by angels, as we said above, either serving God in the heavens, or governing over humans on this earth, or being stationed below, among those who have become earthly due to their own fault, they are said to be the foundations of the earth: concerning which foundations and elsewhere we find it written: A fire is kindled in my wrath, it shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains (Deut. 32:22). The strong and ancient foundations of the earth

(whose cause the earth has not passed until now, and hanging over the void, remains balanced) are the merits of the righteous, of whom the Apostle speaks: Built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:20). Therefore, just as the apostles, prophets, and the entire chorus of martyrs are the strong foundations of the earth, so according to the Septuagint, the valleys and cliffs, which are more significantly called φεγγες in Greek, are their foundations, who have received the image of the dwelling place (Mss. choici). Therefore, the judgment of the Lord will be with His people, and with Israel it will be judged. He who could, as it were, inflict punishments like God for the sins of a sinful people, does not want to appear mighty, but just, and calls sinners to judgment, according to the prophecy: Come, let us argue it out, says the Lord (Isaiah 43:26), even now He calls the people of Israel, with the presence of Angels and all creatures, if there is anything to be answered, so that God may be justified in His words and prevail when He is judged (Psalm 50).

6:3-5

(Verse 3 onwards) O my people, what have I done to you, and how have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember, I pray, what Balak king of Moab devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him, from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the Lord. LXX: My people, what have I done to you, or how have I troubled you? Answer me: for I brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, and sent before you Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam. My people, remember what Balak, king of Moab, devised against you, and what Balaam, the son of Beor, answered him from Seir unto Gilgal; that the righteousness of the Lord might be known. Symmachus interpreted 'justitiis' or 'justitia' as 'misericordias', and where LXX Shanis; all translated it as Settim. It is the place where Balak, the king of the Moabites, gathered an army against Israel, like the trees that still grow through the desert of Mount Sinai. For in the LXX, whether it be the Ark of the Covenant, or the altar and tabernacle, and other things made of imperishable wood, they are called Settim in Hebrew, which resemble a tree that we commonly call the White Thorn. Therefore, I believe that both LXX σχινον and σχοινιοι have been interpreted as lentisk; but gradually, due to a mistake made by copyists, σχοινιοι, meaning ropes, were read instead of σχινιοις, meaning lentisks. Therefore, God speaks to the people of Israel and challenges them to a judgment, granting them permission to argue against Him. My people, what have I done to you that I should not have done? Or how have I wearied you? Although this is not found in Hebrew. But the father is saddened by his son being flogged, and he visits the sins of the sheep with the shepherd's rod. How have I been troublesome to you? Or, as it is more significantly written in Hebrew, how have I burdened you with my labor? Will you interpret my favors as an insult, and while desiring Egyptian melons and meats, will you grieve being brought out of the land of Egypt, and being freed from the house of slavery with my help, because I have given you Moses as your leader, my friend, and Aaron as your priest, and Miriam as your prophetess? But if this seems insignificant to you, remember that at that time, when Balak, the king of Moab, hired Balaam, a diviner, to curse you and how, against his own will, Balaam, desiring to curse you, blessed you instead (Numbers 22): from Shittim to Gilgal, surveying the entire army of Israel with his eyes and changing places, as if I could not continue going with you and passing over with you. And I did this so that my mercy and justice would be known to you, who love you so much, that even though I curse the blasphemers every

day with my mouth, I have not allowed myself to curse you as an enemy. The Hebrews interpret this passage, where it is said, 'from Sethim to Galgal, that you may know the justices of the Lord' (Numbers 25), in this way: from the time you committed fornication in Madian, until the time when Saul was anointed king in Galgal (1 Samuel 10), recall the memory of the evils you have done, and how much good I have done for you, and you will know my mercy towards you. This is how God spoke to carnal Israel according to history. But we, who desire to contemplate the glory of the Lord with an unveiled face, truly have the father Abraham, let us hear when we have sinned against disputing God, and let us be accused by the magnitude of his benefits. For we have served Pharaoh and the Egyptian people, and we have made mud and bricks. And he redeemed us who gave himself as redemption for all, so that we may declare those who were redeemed by the Lord, whom he redeemed from the hand of enemies, and whom he gathered from the regions, for his mercy endures forever. He also sent before our face Moses, the spiritual law, and Aaron, the great high priest, not having a typological Ephod, but carrying the truth, and having on his forehead the seal of holiness that God the Father has signed. And he sent Mary, the prophetess, and she not only accomplished this for us, but also delivered us from the hands of our enemies. For let us remember what he had intended against us, who wanted to devour and to ridicule our congregation, the true devil Balak. For Balak signifies 'the emptying out,' that is, 'depriver,' the king of the paternal water: indeed, according to another etymology, Moab is said to mean paternal water. Therefore, when Balak plotted against us, and he plotted against us through his empty people, which is interpreted as Balaam, God did not allow us to fall under his curses; but on the contrary, He blessed us, compelled by the truth of the matter, the empty people of the nations, born of the one who is in the skin: for Beor signifies 'in the skin,' always devoted to flesh and works of death. And the empty people responded for us, sprung from the one who is entirely in the skin, always changing places, or standing upon thorns, or upon ropes, so that we may also follow the error of the Vulgate edition. But according to the saying of the Savior, the cares of this world, and riches, and pleasures are in which the people are vain. (Matthew 13, Mark 5). But what stands in the ropes, namely in the chains of sins (for each one is bound by the ropes of their own sins (Proverbs 5)), and Isaiah is a witness, saying: Woe to those who draw out their sins like a long rope, and like the strap of a young heifer, their iniquities (Isaiah 5, 18). Therefore, if it stands, it only stands among thorns and ropes; if, however, it wishes to walk around, it does not have a stable step, but is always wavering and unstable, and it reaches even to Gilgal, which means rolling, that is, volatility or instability. If ever we see some rise up against us, and they thirst for our blood with eager jaws, and by the unexpected providence of God, they become for us, who they came against, let us say, 'Balaam came from ropes to Gilgal,' so that the justice of God may be known.

6:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) What shall I offer to the Lord? Shall I bow down before the Most High God? Shall I offer burnt offerings to Him, and yearling calves? Can the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with many thousands of fattened goats? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? LXX: Where shall I find the Lord? Shall I seek my God on high? Shall I seek Him in burnt offerings, in yearling calves? May the Lord receive in the thousands of rams, or in the ten thousands of fat goats? If I offer my firstborn for my impiety: the fruit of my womb for the sin of my soul. God has called the people to judgment: he, knowing his own sin, does

not want to contend, but to plead, and yet he has no confidence in his own prayers. For nothing is worthy to be offered to God for sin, and no humility can cleanse the stains of transgressions, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and calves, and the marrow-burning holocaust, and the blood of rams and fat goats, to wash away the filth of the soul. Will I, he says, give my firstborn for my crime, as it is described that the king of Moab did (2 Kings 3)? Or the fruit of my womb for the sin of my soul, as Jephthah did, offering his daughter for the rashness of his vow (Judith 11)? Therefore we who are of the people of God, knowing that not every living creature will be justified in his sight (Psalm 142), and saying: I have become like an animal before you (Psalm 73:22-23), repenting for our sins, we doubt and say: Where shall I find the Lord, shall I receive my exalted Lord? How can I capture him as he flees? How much cleanliness will I be able to prepare for the Trinity's lodging? Should I seize him in burnt offerings, so that I offer myself as a whole burnt offering to him, or in one-year-old calves, so that I, deserting milk and coming to solid food, may become worthy of the acceptable food in the year of the Lord? If I offer a thousand rams, if I offer ten thousand goats, and if I spiritually understand and present all the Levitical sacrifices in myself, and if a thousand and ten thousand fall from my side, yet I will not be able to give anything worthy in which I can apprehend or receive God. If I give my firstborn for impiety, and the fruit of my womb for the sin of my soul: indeed I will give whatever is first in me, but for my sin and impiety I will offer nothing worthy to God. Therefore, even David prays and says: Wash me more and more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my iniquities, and my sin is always against me (Psalm 50, 3). Only the blood is offered worthily for the sin of the soul: and the blood, not of calves, nor of rams, nor of goats, but one's own blood is offered worthily, as the prophet says and asks: What shall I repay to the Lord for all that he has repaid to me? And afterwards, responding, I will receive the chalice of salvation and invoke the name of the Lord. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. (Ps. CXV). But we do not give the blood itself, but we give it back. And what is similar? When the righteous person died for sinners, the Son of God died for men, shall we sinners and men die for the confession of his name?

6:8 (Verse 8) I will show you, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. LXX: It has been told to you, O man, what is good, or what the Lord requires of you: only to do justice, and to love mercy, and to be prepared to walk with your God. For you hesitate, O people of Israel, indeed the entire human race (for I am not speaking specifically to the Jewish people, but generally to all mankind, my message reaches everyone), how you can appease God for your sins if you do not have victims with which your wickedness can be atoned: I will answer you, what God seeks, indeed I have shown it already in the Law. For it is written in Deuteronomy: And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord your God and his statutes, which I command you today for your good? (Deut. X, 12) The Lord asks of us, seeking our necessary salvation, demands to receive what is profitable for the giver, so that we may exercise judgment, that is, do nothing without reason and counsel, and consider before our mind judges what it should do, and afterward complete it in action; so that we may love mercy, and not be merciful as if compelled or by necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver (II Cor. IX). And let us not say, go today, and return tomorrow, and I will give to you. And when we shall have done judgment, and loved mercy, what reward shall we receive? We shall walk with the Lord our God, as Enoch walked with God according to the faith of the Hebrew volumes (Genesis 5;

Ecclesiasticus 44), and pleased him, and was not found, because God had translated him. For you have said, in what shall I obtain the Lord, or in what shall I apprehend him? I promise you more, do judgment, and love mercy, and you shall walk with your God. Certainly, to walk with God is not a reward, but a commandment. Just as we are commanded to do justice and love mercy, so we are instructed to be prepared to walk with our Lord God; we should not sleep at any hour, we should not be secure at any time, but always expect the coming of the father of the household, and fear the day of judgment, and in the night of this world say: I sleep, but my heart is awake (Song of Solomon 5:2). Theodotius expressed more significantly the phrase 'Verbum Esne' (which the Septuagint translated as 'ready to go and we have said, anxious to walk') as 'καὶ σφάλλου το πορεύεσθαι μετ' ἡμῶν', that is, 'and be careful to walk diligently with your God'. Or, as the fifth edition translated, 'καὶ φροντισεῖν', meaning to act diligently and have this care, to walk with your God. For whoever says they believe in Christ should walk as He walked (1 John 2:6). And the Apostle Paul said: 'Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.' (1 Cor. 11) The voice of the Lord cries out to the city, and salvation will be to those who fear your name. The Septuagint version says: The voice of the Lord will cry out to the city, and those who fear his name will be saved. In the Hebrew, this is the beginning of another chapter, but in the Septuagint, it is the end of the previous chapter. It means: God asks nothing else of you, O man, but that you do justice, love mercy, and be ready to walk with your God. For the voice of the Lord is heard in his city, the Church, and in the holy Scriptures, it resounds every day, that not only those who love mercy, but also those who are lowly and still fear the name of the Lord, may be saved by his teaching and mercy. But if the beginning of the following chapter is, let us recount according to the story, what is said about the metropolis of the ten tribes, which, as Michaelas prophesied, was captured, and let us say: The Lord rebukes Samaria, and he threatens the blows that are to come, so that the people of Judah, either out of fear of the name of the Lord, or out of fear of suffering other punishments, may themselves, being seized by fear, obtain salvation. For when a city is plagued by pestilence, not only the wise, but even the foolish become more prudent. And this itself applies to sinners in general and to the righteous, so that the suffering of others becomes an example to the rest. Indeed, the Lord also interprets this in the Gospel concerning those on whom the tower in Siloam fell (Luke 13): that they were not the only sinners among the people, but rather that their punishment would provoke the others to repentance.

6:10-16

(Verse 10 and following). Listen, you who are wise, and who will approve of it? The fire is still burning in the house of the wicked, the treasure of impiety, and the measure of anger is not yet full. Shall I justify the wicked scales and the deceitful weights of the bag? In them, her rich ones are filled with iniquity, and those who dwell in her speak lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. And so I have begun to strike you with destruction because of your sins. You will eat, but not be satisfied, and your humiliation will be in your midst; you will try to save, but you will not succeed; and those whom you do save, I will give over to the sword. You shall sow, and not reap: you shall tread the olive, and not anoint yourself with oil; and the must, and you shall not drink wine. And you have kept the precepts of Omri, and all the works of the house of Achab; and you have walked in their wills, that I should give you up to destruction, and the inhabitants thereof to hissing, and you shall bear the reproach of my people. If the unrighteous is justified on the scales, and fraudulent weights on the balance, by which they have filled the riches of their impiety (or

yours), and those who dwell (or dwelt) in it speak wickedly, and their tongue is exalted in their mouth. And I have afflicted you with destruction because of your sins: you will eat, but not be satisfied; I will cast you into yourself, and you will grasp, but not save; and all those who are saved will be handed over to the sword: you will sow, but not reap; you will tread the olive, but not be anointed with oil; and you will crush the grapes, but not drink wine; and the laws of my people will be scattered, and all the works of the house of Ahab; and you have walked in their councils, to deliver you to destruction, and its inhabitants to hissing, and you will receive reproach from the peoples. In this chapter, there are many discrepancies from the Hebrew truth, especially in the beginning: 'Hear, three, and who will adorn the city? And the legitimate people of mine will be scattered.' For this reason we have substituted 'And you have kept the commandments of Amri' for the sake of consistency in the narrative, even though in Hebrew it is written: 'And the commandments of Amri were kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab.' For if it had been written in Hebrew 'Ammi' (), then the LXX would have translated correctly as 'my people.' But now, since it is written 'Amri' (), and the letter 'Res' added, it signifies not the name of a people, but the father Ahab, about whom the history of King wrote (3 Kings 16), there is no doubt that there is an error. Finally, after the father's name, the son is named, and it is said, and all the deeds of the house of Ahab. Let us return, therefore, to the beginning of the chapter. And first, speaking literally, we strive to grasp the spiritual meaning while you pray. Listen, O ten tribes of Samaria, whom the Lord testifies to: there is still fire, that is, wickedness, in the house of the impious Amri, and the treasures of impiety persist in the royal house. Do you want to hear in detail with what evils your city is filled? Learn: By provoking the lesser measure of God's wrath, using deceptive scales and different weights, and selling in one weight and buying in another, they buy and sell merchandise (Prov. XI; Deut. XXV). And if the poor were to do this, poverty could justify the crime. But now the rich, full not so much with wealth as with iniquity, because all their wealth is gained through the plundering of others. A congregation of wealth is followed by deceit, and a hand accustomed to hide treasures possesses a deceitful tongue. Truth brings poverty, falsehood brings wealth. When your leaders did this, I did not immediately overthrow you; but I began to strike gradually and admonish with various blows. I sent hunger upon you, I sent thirst, I sent sickness, and hostile devastation all around: the harvest did not yield crops, the pressed olive did not produce oil, the barren vines denied wine. Against injustices, deceitful measures, and fraudulent weights, I inflicted these punishments. However, since you have kept all the ceremonies of idolatry that the wicked king Amri established (3 Kings 16ff), and all the works of the house of Ahab and Jezebel, you have preserved for my law, I have been moved by your wickedness to give you and your inhabitants over to a hissing and a reproach, so that while you are captured by the Assyrians, you are conquered like the people of God, and because of you my name is blasphemed among the nations (Rom. 2:24). It should be noted in the present place that where it is read, 'and you shall bear the shame of my people': or, as the Septuagint translated it, 'you shall receive the reproaches of the peoples,' in Hebrew it is written 'Ammi,' which means 'my people.' Therefore, if it sounds bad that I, the son of my people, was transferred for Amri, my people. We have expressed what seemed to us according to the Hebrew until now: now returning to the translation of the LXX interpreters, let us discuss each one as best we can. The Samaritan is called upon to listen, who has separated herself from the people of God. And it is said to her, 'You futilely make idols, you skillfully fashion golden calves with your own hand, and you desire to build another metropolis like Jerusalem: for who can adorn a city?' Is the fire, which is kindled by the burning darts of the devil;

and the house of the wicked, which according to its stubbornness and unrepentant heart treasures up wrath for itself on the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God (Rom. II, 5)? And does injustice increase wickedness, so that it not only snatches away from the house of God, which is the Church, but also arrogantly and disdainfully devastates what belongs to others? Can one who deceitfully gathers riches from the testimonies of the Scriptures without balance and measure be justified, riches which are the treasures of wickedness? For when the Lord commands, 'You shall not have in your bag unequal weights, a great and a small' (Deut. XXV): these people, for the sake of shameful gain, always show favoritism in judgment, and in the same case they judge the rich and the poor, not according to the merit of the case, but according to the disparity of their wealth. And the inhabitants of their city, who think they are adorned by wicked teachings and perverse doctrine, speak falsehood and set their mouth on high, and despise the simplicity of the Ecclesiastical people. Whereas the most merciful God does not strike them equally, but strives to admonish them gradually through blows, saying: And I will begin to strike you with destruction because of your sins; and the sense is: O city that the heretics want to build, I will strike you, so that you may perish, not for annihilation, but according to what you are, a sinner. It follows: You will eat, and you will not be satisfied. For they read, and do not understand; and feasting on the words of Scriptures, they suffer from a lack of truth. And I will cast you out," he says, "and you will seize, and you will not save; and whoever is saved, will be handed over to the sword. By your own judgment, I will abandon you; and after seeking many things, finding nothing, understanding your error, you will see that you cannot be saved by all your teachings. But whoever thinks they are satisfied, and is not cast out by themselves, nor grasps the truth, will be handed over to the sword and will be educated by punishments. Therefore, you will sow, O three, and O most wicked city, which heretics build with fire, injustice, insults, deceitful scales, and fraudulent bags; you will sow, but not reap; you will press olives, but not anoint yourself with oil; you will gather grapes, but not drink wine. It is indeed profitable for you, once your error is known, not to have disciples, not to anoint your head with the oil of sinners, not to be intoxicated by drinking the wine of Sodom. And the rightful people of mine, or rather the people of Amri, and all the works of the house of Ahab, those who have arisen as leaders in heresy, will be scattered. We can refer either to opposing powers or to heretics, as was the case with Marcion and Basilides, and recently Arius and Eunomius. And you have followed their desires, namely those of Omri and Ahab. And it is rightly said, in their desires. For the doctrine of wicked teachers is not the doctrine of God, but the inventions of their own hearts. And I will deliver you to destruction, so that you may perish according to what you are, heretical. And your inhabitants into a hissing, or that you may follow the hissing of a good shepherd according to Zechariah, saying: I will whistle for them and gather them, for I have redeemed them (Zechariah 10:8). And certainly into the hissing of the dragon, that is, into the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved (I Cor. V), and let the ones being rebuked learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. I). And let them endure all of this so that they may understand their error, that they have borne the reproaches and sins of many peoples and nations. I know that some have referred to the Church, which we have interpreted as surpassing heresies. But how the names of Amri and Ahab, the leaders of Samaria, can be related to Jerusalem and Judah, under whose names the Church is interpreted, I do not quite understand.

7:1-4

(Chapter 7, Verses 1 onwards) Woe is me, for I have become like one who gathers the grapes of the vineyard in autumn: there is no cluster to eat; my soul longed for the early figs. The holy one has perished from the earth, and there is no upright person among mankind. They all lie in wait for blood; each hunts his brother to death. They declare their evil deeds as good; the ruler demands, and the judge accepts bribes, and the great one speaks of the cravings of his own soul, and they trouble it. The best among them is like a thornbush, and the most upright is like a thorn from a fence. Woe is me, for I have become like one who gathers straw in the harvest, and like grape clusters in the vineyard, when there is no first-ripe fig for my hunger, which my soul craves. Woe is me, for the reverent one has perished from the earth, and there is no one who corrects among men. They are all judged in bloodshed; each one of them inflicts trouble on his neighbor, and they prepare their hands for evil. The ruler makes demands, and the judge speaks peaceable words; his desire is for the longing of his soul. And I will take away their goods, like a consuming moth, and walking over the ruler in the day of your watchfulness. In the aforementioned captivity and ten tribes and two (For the word of the Lord has come to Micah the Morestite concerning Samaria and Jerusalem), the prophet laments that no just person is found in the land who can resist the anger of God and stand as a wall in the middle. In vain, he says, I have spoken: in vain I sought the last clusters of the vine and the destroyed city; and since there is no bunch to eat, I will at least take immature figs, which the Hebrews call "Bechchora", that is, thick figs, as food: as if to say, not finding bread because of the magnitude of the famine, I have sought scraps and chaff. The saint has perished from the earth, and the righteous among men are no more. Everywhere there are traps, everywhere there is deceit. Innocent blood is shed. Due to greed and lust, kinship is disregarded. Not only do they commit evil deeds, but they also defend them. They change names and claim that what is evil is good. The rulers do not accept gifts from those offering them, but they force their subjects to give and demand. And in rendering judgment, the judge treats another as he himself is judged by another, so that they may mutually favor each other in their crimes and defend themselves in the crimes of others. Whoever is great and almost most learned in the Law, speaks not the will of God, but his own will. And they have disturbed it, either the city, or the truth, or the land, of which it is said above: The holy one has perished from the earth. For whoever is the best among them, like a sharp thorn, pierces and holds, injuring the one who approaches him, and grasping with a hooked tooth: and whoever is found to be upright, like a thorn from a fence, so that there may be found pain where help was supposed to be. According to the Hebrew text, however, according to the Septuagint, who differ in some respects, and at the end of the chapter they translated completely differently, this is the meaning that seems to me: The prophetic or apostolic discourse laments, in general, the human race, which has in vain cast the seeds of doctrines, and instead of crops and grain, the late reaper finds only empty straw and useless stalks, and he cannot even find small grapes in the vineyard, and so on until the end of the chapter. For if it is a blessing for the speaker to be heard by the listener's ears, and the desire of the wise is the ear of the listener, and the understanding of the listener is the joy of the speaker; on the contrary, the grief of the teacher is a bad disciple, with Jeremiah's words also fitting this complaint: I have not profited, nor has anyone else profited me (Jeremiah). There are those who believe that these words are spoken from the perspective of the Savior, who is the cause of not finding worthy works in such a great multitude of believers and in the whole world of human kind, and who also says in Psalm 29: What profit is there in my blood, while I descend into corruption? Although others assert that these words do not fit his person at all, as he says: Woe is me, because I have become as

one who gathers straw in the harvest; he who spoke in the Gospel: Lift up your eyes and see the regions, for they are already white for harvest (John 4:35). And elsewhere: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few (Matthew 9:35). Therefore, those who want to understand this from the perspective of the Savior say that it is not surprising if he says: Woe is me, who wept in Jerusalem and shed tears at the death of Lazarus (Luke 19). But also this, I have become like one who gathers straw in the harvest, they apply it to the end of the age: and the harvest is interpreted to signify this, and they say that at that time this prophecy can be fulfilled, when, with the increase of wickedness, the love of many will grow cold, and when the Son of Man comes, he will scarcely find faith on earth (Mat. XIV, 24): for then, like straw after the harvest, and like grapes after the vintage, there will be few found among them who will maintain faith amidst the devastation of all things, and they believe that this statement, spoken from the perspective of the assumed man, approves of what follows: Woe is me, my soul: of whom he was speaking: My soul is sorrowful even unto death (Mat. XXVI, 38). He will perish (or He will be destroyed) returning from the earth, either by the Antichrist killing the saints, or by everyone collapsing due to the magnitude of scandals. And there is no one to correct among men: all are judged by blood, not by slight and small sins, but by the greatest sins and those related to bloodshed. Proximity, friendship, and kinship will not delay the crime: all will raise their hands to evil, so that even one who couldn't commit evil, yet, while preparing the hand, may sin by the will. The ruler himself seeks, and the judge speaks peaceful words; for he receives gifts, the desire of his soul. And because this is evident, and I avoid the envy of rulers and judges, leaving it to the understanding of the reader, I will only add this: Gifts blind the eyes even of the wise (Deut. XVI, 19): they also give life to the soul, which they should not have given life to, and they kill her who lives by her own merit and virtues, and they do this because of the gifts they demand shamelessly, and accept them more shamefully. To those whom the Lord threatens, saying: 'And I will take away their goods, which they think are good, but which appear good to them. Moreover, the truth of the matter will never be called good, which both deprives the giver and kills the receiver: although it is not so much a threat as a blessing, to take away evil from them, and for the Lord Himself and His divine word to enter into their consciences like a moth eating away whatever is perverse, and to make a devastation of plunder and evil thoughts, and to walk above the measure and rule of truth, and to lead back those who were led by false opinions to what is straight; and to do this in the light of truth, and on that day when those who are holy and elected from the Church ascend to the watchtower, and in the height of their learning and works, they will discuss heavenly matters.'

7:5-7

(Verse 5-7) Your day of reckoning has come, your visitation is here. Now there will be destruction: do not trust your friend, and do not rely on your leader. Guard the doors of your mouth against the one who lies in your bosom; for a son insults his father, and a daughter rises up against her mother; a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and enemies are those of a man's own household. But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for God, my savior; my God will hear me. LXX: Woe, woe, your vengeance has come, now there will be weeping for them: do not trust in friends, nor hope in leaders. Beware of those who lie with you, do not trust them, for a son brings shame to his father, and a daughter rises against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: a man's enemies are the members of his own household. But I will look to the Lord, I will wait for God my savior: my God will hear me. Except for the beginning of the chapter,

both editions agree in the rest of the parts, and in the meantime, according to the historical context, it indicates the day of the siege of Samaria or Jerusalem, which had been eagerly awaited and feared, and its visitation, meaning captivity, saying: Your devastation has come: now there will be devastation for them, that is, for the inhabitants, or siege: *Mabucha* () indeed signifies more *πολιορκισάν* and *φρουρησιν*, that is, siege and custody, than devastation in Hebrew. Therefore, do not believe the words of prophets, nor lend your ear to the deceitful flattery of the divine; because if trust is rare among dear names and blood relations, how much more so in those who flatter you, lying for their own gain, and who command not what is useful for the sick, but what is delightful and pleasing! Do not trust a friend; for Achitophel rose up against David (2 Samuel 15), and true Achitophel Judas rose up against Christ (Matthew 26). And, do not trust in a leader, like the men of Shechem trusted in Abimelech (Judith 9). They made him king, and they were oppressed by him. Guard the gates of your mouth from the one who sleeps in your bosom (Ibid., 16): do not allow what Samson endured from Delilah (2 Kings 16). For a son brings shame to his father; notably Absalom to David: he defiled not only the kingdom, but also his father's concubines with incestuous relations. A daughter rises against her mother: although we may not find direct evidence in the Holy Scriptures, there are so many examples in everyday life that we should mourn their magnitude rather than seek them out. *Nurus contra socrum suam: ut uxor Esau consurrexit contra Rebecam* (Gen. XXVI). *Inimici hominis, viri domestici ejus. Hic exempla non quaero, cum plura sint, quam ut testimoniis indigeamus. Cum ergo haec ita se habeant, nolite credere, Samaria ((Al. Samariae)) et Jerusalem, pseudoprophetae. Ego autem, inquit propheta, ad Dominum aspiciam, exultabo in Deum Salvatorem meum, sive Jesum meum, et audiet me Deus meus.* The Seventy interpreters follow, who say, Woe, woe, thy revenges are come, that is, the punishments which are to be inflicted for sins. For the Lord saith, Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord (Rom. XII, 19; Deut. XXXII, 35). And in another place: The days of thy retribution are come (Hosea IX, 7). For the Lord doth avenge the clamours of them that cry unto him day and night, saying: How long, O holy and true Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth (Rev. VI, 10)? So the avengers have come, and now there will be their lamentation, that is, of the avengers, so that those who laughed before may mourn, and immediately departing from the world, they may endure the torments, which that once richly robed and abundant in delights man endures in Hell, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Luke 16; Matthew 8, 13). But what follows, 'now there will be'; understand either at the end of each person's life, or at the consummation of all things, and on the day of judgment, when the avengers will come upon all people. Therefore, do not trust friends, because every friend deceives through deception, and one who is a friend because of something is not as much a friend to the one they pretend to love (for he is called a friend by love) as to the thing that they cherish. When asked what a friend was, someone responded: Another self. But if the example of the Pythagoreans is opposed to us, who pledged themselves as sureties to a tyrant, we say that this is not a general statement against all friends and affections of love, but was uttered by God not against all time, but specifically concerning that which the Apostle says: In the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (2 Timothy 3:1-2), and so on. For then a brother will betray a brother, and a father his son, and children will rise against their parents and have them put to

death (Matthew X, 35, 36). But even now faith is rare: what is said on the lips is different from what is in the heart: the poison of the soul is hidden by the honey of the tongue. Many are friends of the wealthy, but they depart from the poor as well those who appear to be their friends. Hence it is said: If you have a friend, possess him in times of temptation (Ecclesiasticus VI, 7). I read in a certain Controversy: A friend is sought for a long time, found with difficulty, and difficult to keep. Theophrastus wrote three volumes about friendship, extolling it above all other virtues, yet also declaring that it is rare among human affairs. There is also Cicero's book On Friendship, which he dedicated to Laelius: in which he states what is often said among our people: Let our friend be like old wine, and let us drink it with pleasure, the word themselves almost the same. Friendship either accepts or creates equals: where there is inequality and one person is superior and the other subservient, there is not so much friendship as flattery. And elsewhere we read: Let the same soul be a friend. And the lyric poet praying for a friend says: Preserve, he says, the half of my soul. Therefore, do not believe in friends, that is, in those men who seek profit in friendships. If you want to delight in true friendship, be a friend of God, like Moses who spoke to God as a friend to a friend. Be a friend, like the Apostles, to whom the Savior said: I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know what his master desires; but I call you friends, because you have persevered with me in all my temptations. Friendship is delicate, which follows the successes and wealth of friends. Such people do not seem to me to be friends, but to love themselves. Let us consider more carefully the words of the Lord: But I call you friends, he says. And he gives the reasons why he calls them friends: Because you have persevered with me in temptation, and have not given up until now: but in all, he says, my temptations. Indeed, it sometimes happens that one who has persevered with us in one temptation is defeated by others and departs. Secondly, it is commanded: Do not hope in leaders, for cursed is the man who has hope in man (Jeremiah 17:5). In man there is vain hope, and true hope is in God. Therefore, Paul speaks: And from among yourselves, men will rise up speaking perverse things (Acts 20:30). And the Lord Himself through the prophet: The leaders of my people do not know me, the foolish sons are senseless and do not understand: they are wise to do evil, but they do not know how to do good (Jeremiah 4:22). Indeed, they were called leaders, he says, both my leaders and the leaders of my people. But because they did not know me and destroyed the meaning of the word by their actions, therefore the children are foolish and unintelligent: they have wisdom only to subjugate a simple flock to themselves and trample them under their feet; however, they do not know how to do good and govern the people. Do not believe in leaders (or judges), not in bishops, not in priests, not in deacons, not in any dignity of men. Nor do I mean that you should not be subject to such authorities in the Church: For whoever curses his father or mother shall be put to death (Lev. XX, 9). And the Apostle teaches that we should obey the authorities in the Church; but it is one thing to honor leaders, another to place hope in leaders (I Pet. II). Let us honor the bishop, let us defer to the priest, let us rise for the deacon; and yet let us not place our hope in them: for the hope of man is in vain, and our certain hope is in the Lord (I Thess. IV). Third commandment: Guard against believing a woman who shares your bed. Hence the Apostle calls women vessels of weakness and orders that honor be shown to them by their husbands. For man was not created for woman, but woman for man (Ephesians 5). And he says, 'Wife, fear your husband' (1 Corinthians 11). To fear one's wife is to love one's husband with reverence. Men only to love; for love is the perfection of the saints. He says, 'Men, love your wives and do not be loved by them' (Ephesians 5:25); even though they may provoke anger and do things for which they deserve to endure bitterness. For this

indeed signifies to be embittered: but you should not render them in return with bitterness. But also Solomon in Ecclesiastes: And he said, I have found one man among a thousand, but I have not found a woman among all these. Perhaps, having learned from his own example, he does not trust women, through whom he had offended God. But also the sublime Poet (not another Homer, as Lucillus suspects about Ennius; but the first Homer among the Romans):

.. Varium et mutabile semper Femina. Plenae sunt historiae Graecae et Latinae, quanti viri ab uxoribus suis decepti sint eorumque vita sit prodita. De Scripturis autem et Dalilae, cujus supra fecimus mentionem, et alterius ante Dalilam testantur exempla, quae arcanum Samson septem dierum expressit lacrymis, et amore simulato, quod latebat, invenit. Unde Samson postea loquitur: Nisi domuissetis vitulam meam, non invenissetis propositionem meam (Jud. XIII, 19) . So far, it is commanded that we not trust easily in friends, leaders, and wives. And the reason given is not sufficient in response to the proposition; for it is said: Because a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and the enemies of a man are those of his own household. For what does it pertain to a friend, a leader, a wife, if a son and daughter and daughter-in-law rise against their father, mother, and mother-in-law? Therefore, it seems to me that it can be connected in this way with the previous statements: Do not trust in friends, leaders, and wives, who can be changed and can be for a time: since even a son and daughter, forgetting their upbringing and infancy, rise against the authors of their lives and bodies, and it is a crime to harm them, whom it is also a crime to injure with one's face. But this explanation does not at all apply to the daughter-in-law rising up against her mother-in-law, and to a man, to whom his domestic enemies are hostile. Terence in Hecyra:

What is this? All mothers-in-law hate their daughters-in-law: which, although it may be ambiguous, is nevertheless almost natural: that daughters-in-law hate their mothers-in-law, and mothers-in-law hate their daughters-in-law. This prophetic discourse describes the consummation and end of the world, and what kind of generation will precede the coming of the Antichrist. Now we must discuss according to the previous interpretation, in which we spoke about heretics: Listen, O three, and who adorned the city? Was it not the fire and the house of the wicked? And again, concerning the Church: Woe to me, for I have become like one who gathers straw in the harvest. And again: Woe to me, my soul: reverence ((Al. returning)) from the earth has perished; and among men there is no one who corrects. And furthermore: The prince demands, and the judge has spoken peaceful words, the desire of his soul. Hence, a double curse follows: Woe, woe, your vengeance has come: now there will be lamentation, and let us speak the scripture concerning heretics: Do not trust in friends, O simple people, and in wicked leaders who promise to be friends and leaders of heresy: for they seek not your salvation, but their own gain, and they trample the flock deceived by them underfoot: and be cautious not to believe anything of her who sleeps with you, whom I can only understand to be flesh, so that we may not easily believe the flattery of the flesh, lest the hardness of the soul and the manly steadfastness be softened by her allurements. For the son who is born of God, neglecting his Creator, blasphemes him by whom he was created, as the Scripture says: 'Did not one God create you? Did not one father create all of you?' (Malachi 2:10). And he despises the heavenly soul of Jerusalem, and he scorns the Church as a mother, and whoever scorns her will die by death. And the daughter-in-law rises against her mother-in-law, which seems difficult to understand figuratively; but whoever reads the Song of Songs and understands the bridegroom of the soul, the word of God, and believes in the Gospel, which we

have recently translated according to the Hebrews (wherein, in the person of the Savior, it is said: 'My mother recently brought me forth, the Holy Spirit in one of my hairs') (Matthew 10). He will not hesitate to say that the word of God has its origin in the spirit and that the soul, which is the bride of the word, has the Holy Spirit as its mother-in-law, who is called Rua in the feminine gender by the Hebrews. Therefore, heretics, having previously believed in the Scriptures, which were written and published by the Holy Spirit, transfer themselves to new doctrines and the leaven of the Pharisees and the commandments of men. And while they despise the word of God, they do harm to their mother-in-law. And so that you do not doubt, consider the words of Gabriel to Mary: 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God' (Luke 1:35). After this, it follows: 'The enemies of man will be those of his own household.' According to our interpretation, it seems that every man's head is Christ, and Christ is the head of the Church (1 Corinthians 11:3): these are often his enemies, those who are thought to be in his house, that is, in the Church, and do not depart from the head, but go against their own head. They arrogantly promise knowledge of the Scriptures by their own judgement, without a teacher and the grace of the Lord, and they are ignorant and quarrel about questions, contentions, and battles of words. Truly, those who are truly in the house are enemies of the truth. However, we must know that in the Gospel the same words are used as we now read in the Prophet, but according to the context of that place, they have a different meaning. Whether they are taken from the Prophet or accepted by His own authority, it is for us to know, who has spoken both in the Prophets and in the Gospels. But there the Lord says: 'I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' (Matthew 10:35-36) Therefore, let us expound (if indeed we have been able to grasp the meaning of the Scriptures). The holy one understands that charity has grown cold, and that people in the end times will not be lovers of God, but lovers of themselves. They will believe in friends, leaders, wives, sons, daughters, and daughters-in-law, rising up against fathers, mothers, and mothers-in-law. Even the enemies within one's own household. He himself believes in the Lord, and all his contemplation is in his God. And although he may be oppressed by the tribulations and pressures of the world, having no confidence in anyone except the one who says, 'Do not be afraid, I have conquered the world' (John 16:36), he waits for his God and Savior, believing in him and always directing his eyes towards him, hoping to be heard whenever he calls upon him.

7:8-13

(Verse 8 onwards) Do not rejoice, my enemy, over me, for I have fallen: I will rise again. When I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light: I will bear the anger of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he judges my cause and executes judgment for me, and brings me into the light, and I will see his righteousness, and my enemy will behold it, and she will be covered with shame, who says to me: Where is your God? My eyes will see her; now she will be trampled as the mud of the streets. The day will come when your walls will be rebuilt. On that day the law will go forth afar off: on that day it will come even to you from Assyria, and even to fortified cities, and from fortified cities even to the river, and from the river even to the sea, and from the sea even to the mountain. And the land will be a desolation because of its inhabitants, and because of the fruit of their thoughts. LXX: Do not insult me, my enemy: for I have fallen, and I will rise again: if I walk in darkness, the Lord will enlighten me. I will bear the anger of the Lord, for I have sinned against

Him, until He pleads my cause and executes judgment for me. He will bring me out to the light, and I will see His righteousness. My enemy will see this and be covered with shame, the one who said to me, 'Where is your God?' My eyes will see her; at that time she will be trampled down like mud in the streets. The day of your punishment has come, O Assyria; the time has come for your destruction. The Lord will abolish your power and authority. Your cities will be laid waste, from Tyre to the river, from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain. The land and its inhabitants will be scattered because of their wickedness. It seems to me that in the literal sense, Jerusalem speaks against Babylon and the other nations that had insulted it: Do not rejoice in my downfall, for with the mercy of the Lord, I will rise again. After I have sat in captivity, He will bring me out of darkness, and He will be my light. I will endure the wrath of the Lord, for I know that I deserve what I have suffered, until I take vengeance upon the nations, and my judgment is fulfilled. I know that He will bring me into the light, and I will see His justice, and Babylon, my enemy, and the other nations around will be covered in shame, those who now mockingly say: Where is your God, O Lord? My eyes will see her, not long after time, but now and in the present trampled, as if the mud of the streets. Thus far Jerusalem, or rather the prophet speaking on behalf of the people: Now God is brought in responding to Jerusalem: O Jerusalem, the days have come for your walls to be rebuilt, which were destroyed by the Babylonian devastator. On that day a law will be established, or rather an ordinance and command, as interpreted by Symmachus and Theodotion, saying, ■πιταγ[■]ν κα[■] πρ[■]σταγμα; and the meaning is: You will no longer be subject to the rule of the Babylonians, on that day when your walls are rebuilt, people will come to you from Assyria and fortified cities: from the fortified cities, I say, as far as the Jordan, which the people crossed over before, and from the Red Sea, and from all the nations as far as the Dead Sea, which is near your land, and to Mount Zion, from the mountains of Persia and Media, where they were previously taken; and the land will be a remnant of the Chaldeans and those who laid you waste, because of their inhabitants and their wicked deeds. The Jews promise themselves this until today, and in that place where we exposed ourselves: On that day the law will be far-reaching, as it seems to us, and as their wiser ones argue, some frivolously lie and say: On that day, when the walls of Jerusalem were built by Christ, the holy Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets, which are now held by us, will be taken from our hands and given to the Jewish people. For what is said according to the Septuagint, 'a day of smoothing out the edge, your erasure,' is not understood to be in Jerusalem, as we have explained according to the Hebrew; but we understand it to be said even now to Babylon, for it too must be erased and trampled upon like an edge. And that legitimate day will repel, not the legitimate day of God, but the legitimate day that you, Babylon, commanded to be observed against the law of God. And your cities will come to an end, or to division, as the Assyrians fight against you (for Babylon was a city of the Chaldeans, not of the Assyrians). And your fortified cities will be divided by the hostile army, from Tyre to the Tigris River, which you encircle, and from the Great Sea to the Red Sea, which touches your regions as they travel from the side to India. And from mountain to mountain: from the mountains of Judea to the mountains of Media and Persia, all of Mesopotamia and the entire region that is now held by you in the middle, will be subjugated by the empire of the enemies. And the land will be in desolation because of the evil fruits of your studies. Where the Seventy were interpreted, let us know about Tyre, it is written in Hebrew, Masor, (): which word, if it is divided into the preposition Ma and the name Sor, is understood about Tyre; but if it is one word, it signifies a stronghold. Finally, they transferred everything, the territory, the enclosure, and the siege, not from Tyre, as

the Septuagint says, but from the fortified city. This is in accordance with the Hebrew, and the prayers of the Israelites and the people of circumcision, as if a superfluous discourse had preceded. Now let us come to the spiritual understanding, and with the Holy Spirit himself as the interpreter, let us explore even the most difficult passages. It seems to me that every soul of Jerusalem, in which the temple of the Lord was built, and the vision of peace, and the knowledge of the Scriptures; and afterwards, having been overcome by sins, was led into captivity, and handed over to torments, speaks against Babylon, that is, the confusion of this world, and against the opposing strength that presides over this world: Do not insult me, my enemy, because I have fallen and will rise again: for the Lord raises the fallen (Ps. 144), and speaks through the prophet. Will he not rise again who falls? (Jer. VIII, 4). And: I do not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he may be converted and live (Ezek. XXXIII, 11). But if you despise me because I suffer torments, learn from Ezekiel that punishments are inflicted first on the more holy, and it is said by the Lord: Begin with my saints (ibid., IX, 6). For even if I walk in darkness, the Lord is my light. For although the rulers of these dark spirits have deceived me, and I sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and my feet are stuck in dark mountains, nevertheless, while sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, a light has dawned, and the light shines in the darkness (Isaiah, IX, 2). And the Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? (Psalm 27:1) And I will speak to Him, and say: Your word is a lamp to my feet, O Lord, and a light to my paths. (Psalm 119:105) For He Himself commanded me, when the darkness of this world comes: Let your loins be girded, and your lamps burning in your hands. (Luke 12:35) It follows: I will bear the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him: until He justifies my cause, and executes judgment for me, and brings me out into the light, and I shall behold His justice. Every correction for the present time does not seem to be of joy, but of sorrow, and afterwards it will yield the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore, feeling that the soul has sinned and has the wounds of sins, and lives in dead flesh, and needs cauterization, it steadfastly says to the physician: Burn my flesh, cut the wounds, constrict all the harmful humors and discharge with a harsh hellebore potion. It was my fault to be wounded; let it be my pain to endure so many torments, so that afterwards I may receive healing. And the true physician shows the cause of the medicine to the one who is already safe and secure, and teaches that he has done rightly what he did. Finally, after torture and punishments, the soul is brought out from the outer darkness, and with the last coin restored, it says: I will see his justice, and I will speak: Your judgments are justified, O God. But if Christ has become for us from God wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. 1): he who says he sees the justice after the wrath of God, promises to himself the sight of Christ. And this, however, is only about penitents. However, it is much better to not have wounds and not need a doctor. Healing is not the happiness of the healed, but rather the consolation after pain. Therefore, someone who has been healed should be careful not to sin again, lest something worse happen to them again. We read in Leviticus (Lev. 13), if indeed we read with open eyes, that the covering prescribed in the Law does not exclude the view of the inner eye; in fact, leprosy is accustomed to develop in a vesicle and scar from a burn, and to change the color of the hair, and to add a new deformity to the previous disfigurement of the scar. For this reason, so that no one is secure about repentance, because after sin he can say: I will endure the wrath of God because I have sinned against Him, until he justifies my cause, let him sin and need a cautery, and when he is healed, let him be wounded again. But when the Lord brings us into the light, and we see His justice, then our enemy Babylon will see and be covered in

confusion, those who previously spoke against us: Where is your God? thinking that Jerusalem cannot be healed after wounds. And our eyes will look upon her, and she will become trampled like the mud of the streets. And because the end of all punishments is the beginning of good things, and pain leads to healing, bricks will be made from her mud, and her destruction will become the formation of bricks. And on that day, the old errors will be cast aside, and the cities that were poorly fortified will come to an end, whether in unity or in division, and they will be separated from the Assyrians; and from Tyre, which means 'confinement', that is, narrowness, other strengths will arise, and there will be discord even among those who delight in the corruption of this world, and they will generate desires in people. And from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain, wars will arise against one another, so that bitterness may fight against bitterness, and a lofty pride may fight against another height, and then it will truly be fulfilled: 'Come, let us go down and confuse their languages, so that each one may not understand the voice of their neighbor' (Gen. XI, 7), for it is profitable indeed for the worst strengths not to have harmony among themselves. And when Satan is divided against Satan, then at last his entire kingdom will be destroyed. And what often happens in great armies, that after the tyrant is slain, his followers divide his kingdom among themselves, rise against each other, and there is civil war among them: this will also happen at the end of the world, when the walls of Jerusalem are built and Babylon falls, and the Assyrians and Tyrians from the river, and from the sea, and from the mountains, that is, all the demon nations will fight among themselves, and with their kingdom destroyed, the kingdom of the Lord Jesus will come, and every knee will bow, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. But so that you may know that the outcome of this rebellion is advantageous, the land of Babylon will be brought to ruin along with all its inhabitants, and the Babylonians will not bear fruit.

7:14-17

(Verse 14 and following) Feed your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, dwelling alone in the forest of Carmel. They will graze in Bashan and Gilead as in ancient times, as in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show (or have shown) them wonders. The nations will see and be ashamed of all their might. They will lay their hands over their mouths; their ears will become deaf. They will lick the dust like serpents; they will tremble from their hiding places. They will fear our Lord God, and they will fear you. LXX: Feed your people with your staff, the sheep of your inheritance, who dwell alone in the woods. They will be fed on the mountains of Carmel, in Bashan and Gilead, as in days of old, as in the days when you led them out of the land of Egypt. I will show them wonders. The nations will see and be ashamed of all their might. They will put their hands over their mouths; their ears will be deaf. They will lick the dust like snakes, moving along the ground. They will be in distress in their own territories. They will fear and be afraid of our Lord God; they will fear you. This is what is said: Feed your people with your staff, God the Father speaks to the Son, that is, to our Lord Jesus Christ, that because he is a good shepherd, and he lays down his life for his sheep (John 10), he may feed his people with his staff, and the sheep of his inheritance. And lest we think that the same people are both the sheep, in another place we read: But we are your people, and the sheep of your pasture (Psalm 78:21). The people refers to those who are rational, but the sheep refers to those who are not yet using reason, being content only with simplicity, and they are called the heritage of God." Both the people and the sheep need the shepherd's staff, of which the Apostle also speaks: 'What do you

want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?' (I Cor. IV, 21). I think it was for this reason, because the people of Israel were stiff-necked and always longed for Egyptian meat, that Moses used the staff not only against the Egyptians, whom he struck with ten plagues, but also against the people in the wilderness, with the legal staff, the striking staff, and by breaking all the earthen and fragile vessels. But the Apostles of the Lord Savior, who spoke wisdom among the perfect (I Cor. II), the staff was shaken out of their hands, because perfect love casts out fear (I John IV). But if anyone opposes us, how can it now be said to Christ, that is, to the good shepherd, who is certainly greater than the Apostles, and better, that he should use a staff, when it is a greater advancement not to have a staff, than to use a staff to correct peoples and sheep: we will respond to them according to what the Lord promises to his Apostles, that they will perform greater signs among the people than he himself has done (John XIV). And because the Lord was still speaking to the carnal Israel, and not yet to him who could fully understand the mysteries, therefore it was said about him that he would feed the people and his flock with a rod. However, the apostles had the rod taken from their hands, and the severity of the Law was tempered by the mercy of the Gospel. Furthermore, these people and these sheep are struck and fed with a rod because they had dwelt alone in the wilderness. Indeed, we can apply this to those who, separating themselves from the Church, engage in feasts and friendships with the heathens, as well as to those who, out of hatred for the human race, seek a solitary life, such as we read about Timon in Athens. Not because a solitary and prophetic life, like that of Elijah (1 Kings 17 and 19) and John (Matthew 3 and 11), should be condemned, but because if one despises others and exalts oneself, living in the wilderness of vices, the rod should be corrected. He who dwells alone, and does not dwell in the wilderness, is to be praised for his virtues; but he who is alone and does not do the works of justice, and enjoys only the pleasure of rest, and does not toil in the work and labor of Christ, nor seeks food with his own hands as the Apostle commands (I Cor. IV), and is lifted up in pride: he dwells in the wilderness and wanders among barren trees. However, because he is a good shepherd, his staff strikes in order to correct, and a better prophetic word promises, saying: They will graze on the Carmel and the Galaadite, according to the days of eternity, and according to the days of your departure from Egypt. *Carmelus interpretatur scientia circumcisionis: Basanitis confusio, et Galaad transmigratio testimonii. Populus ergo Dei, et oves pascuae ejus, quae prius pascebantur absquegrege Domini, et extra Ecclesiam ejus, in saltu versabantur errorum, postea transferentur ad notitiam verae circumcisionis, et servient Deo in spiritu, et gloriabuntur in Domino, et non in carne confident, et erunt vera circumcisio, et non concisio.* And when they have been nourished with spiritual circumcision, understanding their former sins, they will be confounded in their vices, and they will be ashamed, and they will be in the confusion that leads to life (Ecclesiastes 4), for there is another confusion that leads to death, in which Og, the king of Bashan, once dwelt, for Bashan means confusion: concerning which worst confusion, the Lord promises to deliver his people: The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring again from the depths of the sea (Psalm 68, 23). And when we know true circumcision, and are confounded concerning our sins, then we shall be in Galaad, which is interpreted as the transmigration of testimony, in the Church of Christ, to which the testimonies of the Law and the words of the Prophets have transcended, and this will happen to us according to the ancient days, according to the days when we went out of the land of Egypt, of which Moses says: Remember the days of eternity (Deut. XXXII, 7), not the days of this world, which are called evil, but eternal days. But he remembers the days of eternity, which does not look at the present, and rose with Christ,

and sits with him in heavenly places, now assuming in mind that he has been liberated from the days of the present age. The divine word also promises that it will show to its people and to the sheep of its inheritance wonders: Then, it says, the nations will see and will be confounded in all their strength, because they had once devastated and prevailed against the people of God, and their confusion will have profit, when they understand their own evils. For they will place their hands upon their mouths, and evil deeds will take away from them all freedom of speech. In the same way that the hands of impious nations close their mouths, so will the hands of the righteous unlock their mouths, receiving the ability to speak with God from the good work of those who accept it. Their ears will also become deaf, for wickedness has not only blinded the sight of their eyes, but it has also made their ears deaf; for they refused to hear the voice of those who enchant, and the wise sorcerer. And according to Isaiah: They have heard heavily with their ears (Isa. XXXIII): although it is much less to hear heavily than to not hear at all, and to become deaf to the word of truth. After so many evils are spoken of them, it is said that they lick the ground like serpents, which drag the earth, walking in their belly, and eating the earth all the days of their life (Gen. III). And of the flesh, that is, doing earthly works, and dragging them with themselves until the day of vengeance and visitation of the Lord, not dust, not the small traces of the earth, but the whole ground. And when they have done this, and come before the judgement of God, and have been convicted and disturbed, they will be disturbed and convicted as long as the earth they have drawn upon remains in them, like serpents. But when that departs from them, they will be astonished and amazed, not in the Lord their God (for they have not yet deserved to be called the Lord their God), but in the Lord our God. And suddenly there is a turning towards Christ and it is said to him: And they will fear you. For the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 7). And these things will happen so that the nations may see and be confounded in all their strength of evil; and they will place their hand over their mouth, and their ears will be stopped, and they will lick the ground like serpents that drag the earth, so that they may be brought to a close and be troubled by the closure, and then, terrified, be astonished by the Lord God of the holy ones, and in the end, they themselves may also fear Him. This is according to the Septuagint (LXX). Furthermore, because our edition does not differ much from theirs, at least in the present context, we believe that what was said in their edition is also said in ours.

7:18-20

(Verse 18-20.) Who is God like you? You who take away iniquity and pass over the sin of the remnant of your inheritance. He will not continue to be angry, for he delights in showing mercy. He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot and hurl all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will be faithful to Jacob, and show mercy to Abraham, as you swore to our fathers long ago. LXX: Who is like you, O God? You who removes iniquities and surpasses injustices for those who remain as your heritage? He did not retain his anger as testimony because he desires mercies. He will return and have mercy on us, he will submerge our sins, and all our sins will be cast into the deep sea. He will give Jacob truth and Abraham mercy, as you swore to our fathers in the days of old. The wise prophet, seeing the multitude of nations disturbed in its conclusion, is amazed and afraid of God, and therefore the Lord rages in order to take away sins and grant salvation. He praises and marvels at the Lord, saying: Who is like you, O God, taking away iniquities and surpassing injustices (Exodus 12): just as the exterminator passed over the people of Israel in Egypt and did not destroy them (hence the name Passover, which means

passing over), so you spare the nations, not counting their iniquities against them. Furthermore, what follows is this: Those who remain of his inheritance have not held his wrath as a testimony. This is the meaning: If he spared the nations that did not want to believe in his Law, and those who were left from the people are abandoned, he did not want to impute their injustices to them nor did he inflict his wrath as a testimony of just punishment. What will he do with his flock, which grazes in the middle of Carmel, and in Bashan, and in Gilead? For he is willing to show mercy, and he will have compassion on us, and he will carry our sins, and the iniquities that weigh upon us like a talent of lead, he himself will bear and plunge into the sea, and he will not allow them to be. He will give truth to Jacob, and mercy to Abraham, in order to restore his people, who are like supplanters and novelties, and who are always in strife. In Christ, he will fulfill his promise, and he will grant mercy to the multitude of nations (for Abraham is called the father of many nations), just as he swore to our ancestors who were witnesses to our ancient faith, that he would save some from the whole multitude of humanity in truth and others in mercy. But when we have interpreted, he will no longer unleash his fury; 'ultra' Symmachus rendered as 'forever'; Theodotio as 'to the end'; Seventy-five edition as a testimony: 'for whom it is placed in the Hebrew Led' (); and both 'ultra' and 'forever' can be understood as testimony. I, too, will speak at the end of my work, by sealing the labor of my booklet with the invocation of the Lord: O God, who is like you? Take away the iniquity of your servant; pass over the sin of the rest of my soul, lest you unleash your fury upon me, nor chastise me in your anger: for you are merciful, and abundant in your mercies. Turn back, and have mercy on me: throw down my iniquities, and cast them into the depths of the sea: so that the saltiness and bitterness of vices may perish in the false region. Give the truth which you promised to your servant Jacob, and the mercy which you promised to your friend Abraham, and deliver my soul from the persecutors of your prophets, Ahab and Jezebel, as you swore to my fathers in ancient days, saying: As I live, says the Lord, I do not desire the death of the sinner, but only that he may turn back and live (Ezek. 33:11). And elsewhere: Immediately when you turn and groan, you will be saved. Then my enemy will see, and she will be covered with confusion, who now says to me: Where is your Lord God (Ps. XLI, 4, 11)? I will see your vengeance in her, and it will be like the mud of the streets, and she will be trampled on, so that she may no longer build Egyptian cities with mud and straw.

Commentary on Nahum

One book of the comments of Saint Jerome, the Priest of Stridon, on the prophet Nahum

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

According to the Septuagint interpreters, in the order of the twelve prophets, after Jonah comes Nahum, because they seem to prophesy about the same city. For it is written in Jonah: The word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amathi, saying: Arise and go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach in it (Jonah 1:1). But in Nahum, this is the beginning: The oracle of Nineveh: The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. Therefore, both of them weave a prophecy about Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrians, which is now called Ninus. Furthermore, in Hebrew, after Jonah, Micah is placed, and Micah is followed by Nahum, which means consoler. For indeed, ten tribes had already been taken into captivity by the Assyrians under King Hezekiah of Judah, under whom they had also now migrated for the consolation of the people. This vision against Nineveh is seen by those who were already serving the Assyrians as well as by the rest who were being besieged by the same enemies under Hezekiah from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. It was not a small consolation for them to hear that the Assyrians would also be captured by the Chaldeans, as will be shown in the following parts of this book. It should be known (since Ninive in our language, in Hebrew, means beautiful: but this world is called beautiful: hence also among the Greeks it has received the name κ■σμος from its adornment) that whatever is said against Ninive now, is figuratively spoken against the world. For this reason, the assumption, which the Seventy interpreters translate as λ■μμα, and Aquila interpreted as ■ρμα, is placed among the Hebrews as Massa, that is, a heavy burden: because it presses down on that against which it seems, and does not allow it to raise its head. Moreover, what is added, some people think that Naum of Elcesa was Naum's father, and according to the Hebrew tradition, he was also a prophet himself: since Elcesa ((also called Elcesaei)) is a small village in Galilee to this day, showing only the traces of ancient buildings in ruins; but still known to the Jews, and also pointed out to me by those around. At the same time, it should be noted that this very assumption, or burden, or weight, is the vision of the prophet. For he does not speak in ecstasy, like Montanus and Prisca and Maximilla who rave; but he is a book of prophecy, understanding the visions of everything he speaks, and revealing the weight of the foes making a vision in his people. Therefore, concerning the end of the world according to the analogy, o Paula and Eustochium, the prophecy is woven for the consolation of the saints: so that they may despise whatever they see in the world as passing and transient, and prepare themselves for the day of judgement, when the avenger against the true Assyrians, the Lord, will come.

1:1 (Chapter I—Verse 1.) God, zealous and avenging Lord. The voice of the prophet praising God for avenging the injury done to his people by the Assyrians. Or, in a deeper understanding, that he hears the groaning of his saints and will make his adversaries feel punishment at the end of the world. And that zeal is to be taken in a good way, as the Apostle Paul shows, saying: Be zealous for the greater gifts (I Cor. XII). Also in another place: For I am jealous for you with a godly

jealousy (II Cor. XI). And the Lord Himself says in the psalm: The zeal of your house has consumed me (Ps. 69). And Elias says: With zeal I have been zealous for the Lord God of hosts of Israel (3 Kings 19). We also read of the zeal of Phinees and of Mathathias (Numbers 25; 1 Maccabees 2). And Simon the apostle, called the Zealot by the evangelist Mark, whom Mark calls Simon the Canaanite (Acts 1; Mark 3). And the Lord is zealous for the salvation of those for whom He is zealous, so that He might save by His jealousy those whom His mercy could not save. And so, to Jerusalem, which, because of its excessive sins, did not deserve a visitation of zeal and fury, God spoke in Ezekiel: My zeal has turned away from you, and I will no longer be angry with you (Ezek. 16:42). Therefore, as long as the world was repenting, its consummation did not happen; but after the multiplication of iniquity, the love of many grew cold to the point that even the chosen ones of God are tested. Then the zealous Lord comes for vengeance; not because He is an enemy and avenger, as is said of the devil, but because His vengeance is hostile (or friendly) to them, and it consumes like fire, wood, hay, and straw, so that only pure gold and silver remain (Matt. 24). The Lord avenges and has wrath: The Lord avenges against his enemies, and he is angry with his adversaries. According to both understandings, because the Lord loves whom he corrects (Prov. III), and he chastises every son whom he receives, therefore he is angry, so that he may remove what is adverse and hostile to himself, and to the enemies, and with contrary thoughts shattered, and with words lifted up, they may return to their former state. Finally, in the following statements he says: The Lord is patient, and his longsuffering is enduring. But because we have also set out to explain the story, let us understand the Assyrians as the enemies and adversaries of God, against whom he will be patient for a long time, but later he will arise as an avenger with fury and wrath.

1:2

(Vers. 2.) The Lord is patient and of great strength, and cleansing, He will not make the innocent. The more significant translation in Greek is: καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὁ κριτὴς τοῦ σέου ((Al. καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὁ κριτὴς τοῦ σέου)). And the meaning is: Indeed, the Lord has been patient with the wickedness of the Assyrians and has endured their injustices with the strength of His magnanimity, calling them to repentance. But because they have despised the goodness of God and, according to their unrepentant heart, have stored up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath (Rom. II), the one who was patient before will by no means allow them to depart unpunished, as though pure and innocent. Certainly, it is patient to endure all who are falling, and to raise up those who have been knocked down (Psalm 144): to heal the brokenhearted, and to bind up their wounds; and His great virtue is to reconcile enmity in the flesh, and to not make the innocent guilty; even when someone who excessively praises themselves has been reproved, because they have been saved not by their own merit, but by the mercy of God. For it is permitted to say: Behold, I have served you for so many years, and I have never transgressed your command (Luke 15:29); yet because the Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all his works (Psalm 145:9), and all have sinned, and lack the glory of God (Romans 3:23), those who are justified by him will hear it freely: Is your eye evil because I am good? (Matthew 20:15) And so it will happen that in the very act of accusing and forgiving, he will not allow any innocent to go unpunished.

1:3

(Verse 3) The Lord is in the storm and the whirlwind of his life, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. For the storm and the whirlwind, the Septuagint translated it as consummation and commotion: although in the place where we have positioned ourselves, it is written in Hebrew as Basupha (), which can also be understood as commotion. However, this signifies that at the end of the world everything will be moved, according to what is written in Haggai: 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.' (Haggai 2:7) And when all things are shaken (so that the ways of the Lord may be believed, as he says in the Gospel: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.' (John 14:6); and in Mark: 'When the Son of Man comes with the clouds, as it is commanded in Isaiah' (Chapter 5), so that the rain may not fall on the vineyard, and to which the truth of God has come, as the Psalmist says: 'Your truth reaches to the clouds.' (Psalm 36:6)), then even the clouds themselves, namely the prophets and the souls of the saints, who were previously burdened by the connection of the flesh, will be elevated to the heights, becoming of a more refined substance, and brought down as a footstool of God, and will minister to angelic duties in various places. Indeed, the previous and ancient things that pertain to the head cannot be known. On the other hand, another cloud will receive in the opposite direction, which always disturbs the clear and bright light of the sun and the stars with its darkness, and which afterwards reduces the subject to the power of the Lord to dust and nothingness, and dissolves the earth in those things which are rich.

1:4

(Verse 4) Rebuking the sea, and drying it up, and leading all the rivers to the desert. It is described according to the power of God, who will avenge Israel's adversaries, showing that it is not difficult for Him to destroy the Assyrians, whose majesty even includes the ability to change the elements. Or certainly because we have already said that this is a prophecy about the end of the world, and you can simply understand this: When the consummation of the world comes and the heaven and earth pass away, the sea and rivers will also dry up. But to me, reading this in the Psalms: The great and wide sea, in which are creeping things innumerable, both small and great beasts. There the ships pass through. This dragon which You have formed to play there (Psalm 104:25-26), seems worthy of the goodness and mercy of God to destroy all the bitterness and saltiness of the sea by its threat, and to humble the dragon reigning in the waters, and to dry up the abyss of malice in which small creepy things swim, innumerable whose worth is not to be numbered, for they are united with the dragon. Also leading rivers into the desert, it is draining all false knowledge of name, which, rising against God, it waters with the river of eloquence and the flow of words, and twisting whirlpools, it is carried with the amazement of spectators into the abyss. Look at Plato, behold Demosthenes, also Cicero, both philosopher and orator, and consider the leaders of the heretics, about whom there were Valentinus, Marcion, Bardesanes, Tatian, and you will not doubt about the rivers. But all of these things the Lord Jesus will consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming, and he will lead to the deserts. And at the same time, observe that according to the title, which is inscribed: The Assumption of Nineveh: the book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite, rightly and in a figurative sense, the world is understood to represent Nineveh, and the rivers of its eloquence will dry up in its culmination.

Basan and Carmel are sick, and the flower of Lebanon is withered. Metaphorically, by Basan and Carmel and Lebanon, a fertile region and mountains adorned, the devastation of Assyria is shown, because once powerful and flourishing and ruling over many nations, it will be laid waste by the

wrath of the Lord. We can also understand this as referring to the end of the world, where the powerful and noble, who abound in great riches, will suddenly perish and it will be said to them: Fool, tonight is the time when your soul will be taken from you, and what you have prepared, whose will it be? (Luke 12:20). Furthermore, according to the interpretation of names, because Basan signifies confusion and ignominy, we affirm that at the consummation of the world, all things worthy of shame and disgrace will be weakened when the Lord comes. Not only will sins be brought to nothing, but even Carmel, which signifies the knowledge of circumcision, as well as those who seem rich and flourishing in good works, will tremble and be filled when Christ comes. And that which is said in the Gospel will be fulfilled: 'When the Son of man comes, will he find faith upon the earth?' (Luke 18:8). Indeed, as wickedness increases, the love of many will grow cold, and because of this, the wrath of God will come.

1:5

(Version 5.) The mountains were moved by him, and the hills were made desolate, and the earth trembled before him, and the world, and all that dwell therein. LXX: The mountains were moved by him, and the hills were shaken, and the earth was contracted before his face, the whole universe and all who dwell in it. It can also be understood simply that at the end of the world, when the Savior comes in his majesty, the mountains, hills, world, and earth will be moved. For if in His passion the sun fled, the rocks were split, and the earth trembled (Matt. XXVII, and Luke XXIII): much more in His glory will all things be troubled. But also, figuratively, the mountains and hills, the lofty and powerful ones, are understood to be those who will be cast down to the ground at the advent of the Lord, and removed from their throne will adhere to the pavement. For the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, in order to destroy their memory from the earth (Psalm XXXIII, 17). Then the earth will shake, and the world and universe will fear the face of the Lord: this is the greatest torment and punishment, that they will not dare to look upon his countenance.

1:6 (Verse 6) Who can stand before the face of His anger, and who can endure the fury of His wrath? LXX translation: Who can withstand the face of His anger, and who can resist in the fury of His wrath? Symmachus has interpreted it more clearly: Who can endure the wrath of His fury? Therefore, it is rare or nonexistent to find anyone who is not worthy of being seized by anger. And there will be no soul that does not tremble at the judgment of God, since even the stars are not clean in His sight (Job. XXV, 5). Moreover, the Hebrew word Jaccum, which both Aquila and the Septuagint translated, resists the transfer to that understanding which is mentioned in the second book of Kings and in the first book of Chronicles, concerning the wrath of God, in the masculine gender. There is no doubt that in that passage the wrath of God is understood as the devil and the wicked angels who are sent to punish those who are worthy of wrath. So it will be difficult to find at the end of the world someone who is blameless and pure who dares to say, 'Behold, the ruler of this world is coming, and he finds nothing in me' (John 14:30) and stands boldly against him. However, we must think this way against the Assyrians: when the Lord comes in storm and whirlwind, drying up the empire of Babylon, which is interpreted as the sea, and overthrowing all its kingdoms, which are understood as rivers, and reducing its power and abundance to nothing, which figuratively are called Bashan, Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon, and the mountains and hills, and shaking the breadth of the empire, which is called the entire world: then no power will be able to resist the angry God, punishing his people. His indignation was poured out like fire, and the rocks were dissolved by Him. LXX: His wrath consumes the principalities, and the rocks are

crushed by Him. For because we have poured out, Aquila translated it as συνεχωνε■θη, which means it was mixed together: Symmachus and Theodotion translated it as ■σταξεν, which means it dripped. Therefore, whether the indignation of God was mixed together like fire, or His wrath dripped in the likeness of a fire, in order to break and dissolve the hard hearts of men, which are called rocks, the indignation of God is useful. It sustains our sins for a long time through our patience, and only rarely does it mix together fully, and yet it does not burst forth completely for punishment, but it drips lightly upon us with a small flame. But if the drop of His indignation consumes the principalities against whom our fight is, what would happen if the whole wrath of God were poured out upon us? May Jesus grant that the stony heart be taken away, and that in us the fleshly heart be changed, with hardness softened, so that it may be able to receive the commandments of the Lord which are written: For a sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit, a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. (Psalm 50:19) And so that you may know that the words spoken indicate the mercy of God, not severity, learn from what follows.

1:7

(Verse 7) The Lord is good and strengthening in the day of tribulation, and He knows those who hope in Him. Septuagint: The Lord is sweet to those who wait for Him in the day of tribulation, and He knows those who fear Him. When He begins to be angry with the nations, and to destroy once powerful kingdoms, He will know those who are His, and He will not overwhelm those who sail with one storm. But the day of tribulation, according to interpretation (■ναγωγ■ν), let us understand as the day of judgment, about which Isaiah wrote: "Behold, the day of the Lord comes, inexorable, full of fury and rage, to make the world a desert, and to destroy sinners from it" (Isaiah 13:9). Let us hope in the Lord, and through his patience let us await his coming, so that when he comes, we may perceive him as good, not as a judge, and let him recognize those who hope in him or fear him (2 Timothy 2). For the Lord knows those who are his.

1:8

(Verse 8.) And in the passing flood, he will bring about its destruction, and darkness will pursue his enemies. LXX: And in the passing flood, he will bring about its destruction: those who rise up against him and his enemies will be pursued by darkness. The Lord is patient and full of mercy, and he will not be angry forever, nor will he be indignant for eternity; but when wickedness increases upon the earth, and all flesh has corrupted its way, he will bring a flood that will pass over, not one that will remain forever. But the consummation, or end, will be made by its place, that is, the flood, just as it is said of the wicked: 'And I passed by, and his place was not found' (Psalm 37:36); and: 'The way of the wicked shall perish' (Psalm 1:6); so let the way of the flood perish after the wrath of the Lord, with only His mercy appearing. This can indeed be understood according to history, because when it has devastated Israel, and has flooded the land of promise like a flood, it will bring an end to captivity by restoring them to their former dwellings. On the contrary, the Assyrians, who led the people into captivity, will be pursued by darkness. What we have said about Israel and the Assyrians can be understood in relation to the end of the world, and concerning the saints and the persecutors, or contrary virtues, it is possible that God will have mercy on the saints after his wrath; but the persecutors and their enemies, who have chosen darkness and not light, the very darkness they have chosen will overtake them. For they will be cast into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8 and 22).

The word 'Macoma', which we have interpreted, its parts of speech they divided into two parts, so that 'Ma' was translated as a preposition, that is, 'from'; 'Coma' was interpreted as 'rising'. Finally, Aquila said 'from those who rise'; Septuagint said 'rising'; Theodotus said 'rising to him'; the fifth edition said 'from those who rise to him'. Only Symmachus, agreeing with our interpretation, said: 'And when the flood passes, he will bring about the completion of his place.' Some of our people, rising up and enemies, interpret Marcion and all the ancient heretics, who argue against the Creator.

1:9

(Verse 9) What are you planning against the Lord? He himself will bring about the consummation: there will not arise a double tribulation. LXX: What are you planning against the Lord? He himself will bring about the consummation: he did not avenge twice on the same in tribulation. Symmachus more openly: They will not withstand the attack of a second distress: Theodotion, A second tribulation will not arise. However, he speaks according to the tropology against Marcion, about whom we have spoken above, and all the ancient heretics, who, inventing some unknown good God, say that he himself will bring about the consummation of the world, and they accuse the God of the Law as if he were cruel, because he punishes many and inflicts tortures for sins. What then, he says, do you propose against the Lord? He who created the world will also bring about its consummation. But if it seems cruel, strict, and bloody to you that he destroyed the human race in the flood, rained fire and sulfur upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 7), submerged the Egyptians in the waves (Exod. 14), and cast down the bodies of the Israelites in the desert (Num. 32), know that he has inflicted these punishments in the present so as not to punish eternally. Certainly, what the prophets say is either true or false. If what they seem to say about his severity is true, they themselves said: 'The Lord will not take vengeance twice on the same in tribulation.' But if what they say is false, and this statement is false: 'There will not be a double tribulation,' then his cruelty, which is described in the Law, is also false. And if it is true, as they cannot deny, with the prophet saying: 'The Lord will not take vengeance twice on the same in tribulation,' then those who have been punished will not be punished afterwards. But if they are punished afterwards, Scripture lies, which is unthinkable to say. Therefore, those who perished in the flood, the Sodomites, the Egyptians, and the Israelites in the wilderness received the punishment they deserved in their lives. Someone may ask here, if a faithful person caught in adultery is beheaded, what will happen to them afterwards? Either they will be punished, and this statement is false: 'The Lord will not punish twice for the same thing in affliction.' Or they will not be punished, and it is to be wished that adulterers, in the brief and quick pain of the present, frustrate their eternal torments. To this we will respond that God knows the measures of all things, as well as those of punishments, and that the judgment of the judge cannot be anticipated, nor can the power to exercise punishment on the sinner be taken away from him thereafter, and that great sin can be cleansed by great and lasting torments. If someone is unpunished, like the one in the Law who cursed the Israelites and gathered wood on the Sabbath (Leviticus 24): such people are not punished afterwards because their light fault has been compensated by immediate punishment. The Hebrews explained this passage as follows: What do you think, O Assyrians, plotting wickedness against the Lord, that he himself would destroy the people of Israel, that is, the twelve tribes, completely? There will not be a double trouble, that is, he will not deliver Judah and Israel to you, as he delivered the ten tribes and Samaria.

1:10

(Verse 10.) Because just as thorns embrace each other, so their feast will be consumed by those who drink together, like straw full of dryness. Septuagint: Because they will be reduced to thorns down to their foundations, and will be eaten like a rolling wheel surrounded, and like straw full of dryness. The three different types that the Lord placed in the parable of the sower (Matt. 13), except for the good soil, which produces a thirtieth, sixtieth, and a hundredth, seem to me the prophet to be replying, one which falls beside the road, and another that is among the rocks, and a third that is among the thorns: which indeed the Apostle also points out about those who do not build well on the foundation of Christ (1 Cor. 3), showing that some build with wood, hay, and straw. Therefore let us carry the wood to that which is now called: Because they will be reduced to thorns even to their foundations. But the hay refers to that which follows: And it will be consumed like the wrapping around a piece of meat. Moreover, the chaff is clearly referred to the chaff, of which it is now said: And it will be like chaff full of dryness. Therefore the Lord will not twice take vengeance on the same thing, because the malice that had arisen in the authors of heresy will be consumed even to its foundation and roots. But even if someone among them seemed to have a display of words, that is, empty leaves that only please the eye, like the volvola, which is called σμύλαξ in Greek, it will be devoured and consumed into nothingness. Volvola (also called Vulvula) is a plant similar to ivy, which is usually surrounded by vines and branches, and it creeps along. Whatever also seems to have the pomp of a harvest in them, but does not have ears and grains of wheat, like straw filled with dryness, will be handed over to the fire. This is according to the Septuagint. However, according to the Hebrew, the covenants and relationships of the heretics are like thorns embracing each other, and their feast and mysteries, because they also claim to have the Lord's table, are a covenant of thorns, a feast and drink of those who eat and drink together. For when the drunkards of the vineyard of Sodom blaspheme against the creator with their ravenous mouths, is it not a feast of the senses? Yet it will be consumed by its own authors, like straw full of dryness.

1:11

(Verse 11) For from you will come forth a wicked thought, thinking against the Lord, pondering rebellion. LXX: From you will come forth the worst thought, thinking opposing thoughts against the Lord. Truly from heretics will come forth a hostile thought against the Lord. Do you not see the wickedness and rebellion against God, to say that Valentinus, like a miscarriage of erring wisdom, was the final creation of the Creator? Is not the thought of Basilides impurity against God, and the detestable name βραξας, which is attributed to the Lord of creation? Furthermore, since we, the learned ones, want to follow the tradition of the Hebrews and also explain the history to our own, that is, the Christians, it must be said: There will not arise a double tribulation, that is, those who were not captured by the Assyrians will not be captured, just as the ten were captured. For while the Assyrians are still in the land of Judah and are embracing each other like thorns, rejoicing and delighting, they will be consumed by the angel, when one night 185,000 enemies were killed (2 Kings 19). Moreover, he gathered a large multitude of their army, comparing it to a drunken feast, and he said that the feast itself was not of roses, nor lilies, nor flowers, but rather resembled thorns entwined with one another, which are always handed over to the fire and are burned with gentle heat, like dry straw full of dryness. As for what follows: 'From you shall come out one who plots evil against the Lord' (Isaiah 36), they want it to be understood as referring to Rabshakeh, who, having

come out from the Assyrians, blasphemed the Lord and tried to persuade the people to give themselves over to the Assyrians, not to God, but to serve idols.

1:11-13

(Verse 11, 13) Thus says the Lord, if they are perfect, and so they will be many: thus also they will be trimmed and will pass through: I will affix you, and I will not afflict you anymore: and now I will break his rod from your back, and I will break your chains. LXX: Thus says the Lord who rules over many waters, and thus they will be divided, and your hearing will not be heard anymore, and now I will break his rod from you: and I will break his chains. The sense is clear according to the letter: Even though, he says, the Assyrians are strong, and their strength increases with the number of all the nations: thus they will also be trimmed by the devastating angel. For just as the number of hairs on our head does not resist being cut by a pair of scissors, so too the number of God's adversaries will be easily cut off and Assyria will pass through, or it will cease to exist, or, with its army destroyed, it will return to its homeland, leaving you unharmed. And again, the speech is directed towards Judah and Jerusalem: I have afflicted you, and I will not afflict you any longer, not because it promises perpetual security, but only for that time and from those enemies by whom you were then being besieged. Finally, He says: And now I will break his rod, that is, the Assyrian's, from your back, and I will snap your chains: either by metaphor, signifying his power, or certainly, the rod with which he was trying to strike, and the chains which he was preparing for captives: although it can also be understood as the siege of a closed multitude in place of chains. Moreover, according to the Septuagint, the meaning is very different. For it still seems to speak against those to whom he had said above: What do you intend against the Lord? And: From you will come the most wicked thoughts against the Lord, thinking contrary things. Thus says the Lord who reigns over many waters, or virtues, which are called waters above the heavens: and it is commanded to them to praise the Lord: or indeed to the intelligences and wisdom and teachings of God. For as rivers flow from the belly of the just, and abundant fountains for eternal life, through various and manifold sentiments, by which the word of the Lord commands (John VII): so the heresiarchs also have their waters, which they command, and which flowed forth from their first source. But what follows: And so they are divided, can be understood either of the celestial beings that serve God's virtues in the heavens, each of which has its own function and ministry, or of the manifold variety of wisdom. Not because he had said that God rules over many waters, he should be considered confused and disordered in the number of his senses, but because each idea has its own distinct meaning and separate subjects and suppositions. For what is said: Your hearing will no longer be heard, is an accusation against those who had planned things contrary to God, because with the false arguments and deceits by which the people of God were snared, their speech will no longer continue and will not be accepted by the people. But also this which is brought forth: And now I will break his rod from you, and I will tear apart your chains, is said against those to whom the threat is made, so that they may not be harmed by the devil and be subjected to him, by whose authority they had devised and fabricated such great things. Therefore, his authority will be crushed against them, and the chains by which the souls of sinners were bound will be broken by the word of God, with him saying to those who are in chains, 'Go out!'

1:14

(Verse 14) And the Lord will command against you, your name will no longer be sown: I will destroy the carved and cast images from the house of your God: I will make your grave, for you are dishonored. LXX: And the Lord will command against you, your name will no longer be sown: I will destroy the carved and cast images from the house of your God: I will make your grave, for you are swift; behold, on the mountains the feet of the messenger announcing peace. Therefore, I have placed more emphasis on the Septuagint interpreters, because the second περικοπ could not be separated from the first one. In what is said, 'because you have been dishonored,' the fifth edition puts 'because you have been insulted.' The Septuagint translates it as 'because you have been swift,' which is read as Chi Calloth in Hebrew. However, unless you refer it to the feet of the lower chapter, the meaning is ambiguous. Therefore, according to my custom, I will first explain the story and then discuss the meaning of the Vulgate edition. He will command, he says, against you, O Assyria, that what you are about to suffer comes not by chance and without any judge, but, with God proclaiming it, you will endure it. No harvest will be sown from your name any longer: for as soon as Sennacherib returned to Nineveh, he was killed by his own sons. Read Isaiah, and he was killed in the house of his own god which he had entered to worship. For this is what he says, I will destroy your god's house where you had entered to worship (Isa. XXXVII): you will be punished from where you hoped for help. Your tomb will be sculpted and crafted, so that wicked blood may be shed among the altars and cushions of idol worshipers. But join what follows with the Septuagint and earlier interpreters: 'It will not be sown, he says, from your name anymore.' By no means, O heretics, will the souls of the deceived accept the names from your teachings, which they had previously invoked upon their lands, as it is figuratively sung in the forty-eighth psalm. And this very cessation of planting, which used to kill the soul of the planter and then the one in whom he was planting, will be beneficial to you. So the doctrines of errors will die for you. But you, who previously seemed to live for yourself, will die to error, and having died to your own good, you will possess the idols which you worshipped as a tomb. And thus it will happen that from your heart, which was previously the temple of your pretended God, all errors will be removed. But these things will come to you, who once thought contrary to the Lord, when the word of God, which always ascends to the mountains, namely to exalted and lofty souls, comes quickly to you, and the waves of previous errors having been trampled upon, and having been brought into tranquility, it restores peace to you, the sense of faith and understanding. Forgive the lengthiness, for I am not able to summarize both the history and the tropology following either in a brief manner: especially since I am both tortured by the variety of interpretation and compelled to sometimes weave together the coherence of the Vulgate edition against my conscience.

1:15

(Verse 15.) Behold, upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of good news and of the announcer of peace. Celebrate, O Judah, your festivals, and fulfill your vows, for Belial will no longer pass through you; everything has perished. I will postpone the discussion of the Septuagint translators for a little while, because even the chapters themselves have been confused by the variety of interpretations. And when I briefly explain the history, I will adapt their edition to my own style. In the book of Paralipomenon, it is written that when Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem, they were unable to celebrate the Passover in the first month (2 Chronicles 32). However, after Sennacherib was defeated by the angel and news of his death spread, they celebrated the day of Passover with great joy in the second month. Therefore, do not be anxious, O Judah, who reigns

in Jerusalem, for your enemy has been slain in the temple of his God. Behold, a messenger comes to you, running through the mountains and hills, and from a high tower far away, proclaiming the death of Sennacherib; his city has been delivered from his rule. Celebrate the feast, fulfill the vows for the death of the enemy, which you promised to God: the transgressor and apostate will no longer pass through you, for this is Belial, as it is interpreted. All has perished, that is, the army, the king, and the empire of the Assyrians have completely fallen. And this is indeed according to the literal meaning. Furthermore, according to the interpretation, it is said to the Church, it is said to the souls confessing the Lord, because the devil who used to plunder you and oppress you with a heavy yoke, perished in the idols and with the idols he had made: celebrate your festivities, and render your vows to God, singing with the angels incessantly: for Belial will no longer pass through you, of whom the Apostle also says, What partnership does Christ have with Belial (2 Corinthians VI, 15)? Because, with the destruction of Nineveh, everything was lost. If ever there is a severe persecution, like under Valerian, Decius, Maximian (or Maximus), and the Lord's vengeance appears against his adversaries, let us say to the Church: Celebrate, O Judah, your festivals, and fulfill your vows, etc.

LXX: Celebrate, O Judah, your festivities, fulfill your vows, for they will no longer oppose you to pass into old age: it is complete, it is accomplished: it ascends, blowing onto your face, delivering from tribulation. Once I said, by the variety of interpretation, the chapters themselves are defined differently, and I am not able to reconcile the sense of the chapters with the Hebrew interpretation. Therefore, what is now said is of this kind: O Ecclesiastic, because the name of your adversaries will no longer be sown, and their rod is broken; and the chains are scattered, and the one who announces peace to you has come, celebrate your festivities, not in wine and feasts, as the carnal Jews esteem, but in spiritual delights and the pleasure of a torrent. O Judah, fulfill your vows, for your enemies will no longer pass through to bring you to old age, that is, to make you bear the image of the old man. For what is old grows old, and what grows old is close to ruin. The world is fulfilled, the adversary is consumed: Christ comes to you, who first blew into your face when he fashioned you from clay, and after his resurrection also breathed into the faces of the apostles, saying, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (John 20:22). He is the one who delivers you from tribulation. For the destruction of Nineveh, and as the world passes away, so too will tribulation pass.

2:1-2

Chapter 2, verses 1 and 2: He who scatters has ascended before your face, guarding the siege: consider the way, strengthen your loins, greatly fortify your strength. For just as the Lord has repaid the pride of Jacob, so He will repay the pride of Israel. Because the desolators have scattered them and spoiled their branches. I am compelled by necessity to turn my course between the rocks and the cliffs, with imminent shipwreck, so as to navigate between the history and allegory of my discourse, and to be cautious lest it suddenly collide. Indeed, according to the fables of the poets:

Scylla threatens on the right side, Charybdis on the left, unrelenting. If we flee the rocks, we plunge into the deep; if we avoid the swirling whirlpools, we are thrown onto the rocks. The Lord is my witness that in all I have said according to the Hebrew, I am not speaking in my own sense, which is an argument used against false prophets, but rather following the interpretation of the Hebrews, from whom I have learned a great deal over a considerable time, and I must simply

indicate what I have learned to my own people. Certainly, it will be at the discretion of the reader, when he goes through both, to judge which one he should follow more. Now, the speech is turned to Nineveh (and hence the prophets are especially obscure because suddenly, while something else is being discussed, the person is changed to others) and it is said to her: Nebuchadnezzar, who will besiege you, is coming to you, who will devastate the fields in front of your mouth, pursue the farmers, plunder the countryside, and also keep you enclosed herself. Therefore, because war is imminent for you, behold, the joyful prophet now predicts: carefully consider and behold what may happen to you. Strengthen your loins, that is, prepare yourself: gather strength greatly, that is, gather an army: just as the Lord avenged Judah from the pride of Sennacherib, with his army being killed in Judah, and he himself being slain by his own sons: so will he avenge Israel, that is, the ten tribes that are possessed by Nineveh. For both the Assyrians devastated and destroyed both Judah and Israel, and under the metaphor of the vine, they corrupted the offspring of both (or 'of both trees').

LXX: Contemplate the way, hold your loins, strengthen yourself vigorously, because the Lord has turned away the disgrace of Jacob, as the disgrace of Israel: for those who shook them off have shaken themselves off, and their branches have been demolished. Three things are commanded to the Jews. First, that they contemplate the way, and diligently look at the path by which they will walk, according to what is written in Jeremiah: Stand in the ways, and ask for the eternal paths, and see what the good way is; And walk in it (Jeremiah 6:16): so that when we stand in many ways, we may come to that way which says: I am the way (John 14:6). Then it is said to him, to hold his loins, that is, to mortify his body after the election of the way, and to subject himself to servitude, lest, preaching to others as a king and master, he himself be found reprobate (1 Corinthians IX). It is now too long to say how the virtue of the devil is chiefly in the loins, and how the promise is made to David: I will set the fruit of thy loins upon thy throne (Psalms CXXXI, 11). And that of the Apostle: For as yet Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham: For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedech met him (Hebrews VII, 10). And that John is girded with a leather belt (Matth. III), and that the disciples are commanded by the Savior: Let your loins be girded (Luke XII, 35). And the Apostle to the Ephesians: Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth (Ephes. VI, 14): for although exercise is very beneficial, and a life of self-control is superior to the mortification of the loins, yet nothing mortifies them so much as the knowledge of the truth. Hence it is said: Gird your loins with truth. For if the truth is Christ, he who believes with his whole mind in Christ has mortified his desires in Christ. Thirdly, it is commanded to be strengthened exceedingly: 'You have chosen,' he says, 'the way, you have held tight to your desire, take on virtue, so that you may be able to fight against your enemies.' And lest perhaps you doubt, a reason is given to you why you should hope: 'The Lord has turned away the disgrace of Jacob, just as he has turned away the disgrace of Israel,' which is ambiguous: either he has turned away the disgrace of Jacob himself, which he was inflicting on others, or he has turned away the disgrace which Jacob was enduring from others. But it seems to me better that the insult which Jacob used to do to others should be turned away from the Lord. For it is not of such great virtue to endure injury done by others, as it is of the grace of the Lord to be unable to do injury, being gentle, meek, and tranquil. It is asked, how injury is turned away from Jacob, just as it had been turned away from Israel. After Jacob wrestled with the angel, he deserved to receive the name Israel (Genesis XXXII), and because he saw God, he ceased to do injury. Just as Israel, the understanding or man who sees God, and always thinking about God, does not know how to do

wrong, so every insolence and outrage is turned away from Jacob, that is, from the supplanter, from him who is still in the struggle and supplants enemies. But in order that we may know how wrong is taken in a bad sense, Solomon is witness, saying: Eyes full of contempt, a wicked tongue (Prov. 6). But how according to both interpretations wrong is turned away from Jacob, which was first turned away from Israel, the following passage makes clear: Because they shook them off, and demolished, or corrupted, their scourges. The angels, he says, of each one who daily behold the face of the Father (Matthew XV, 10), shook off whatever dust had adhered to Jacob and Israel. Hence also the feet of Peter are washed (John XIII). And through the prophet it is said: Shake off the dust, and arise, Jerusalem (Isaiah LII, 2). It is also commanded to the disciples by the Savior: Shake off the dust from your feet (Matthew X, 14). And in the Psalms it is written: Like arrows in the hand of a mighty one, so are the children of the shaken off (Psalm CXXVI, 4). Therefore, the mind is inclined towards insult, not only by Jacob, but also by Israel: because whatever was earthly in them and formed from the lower elements, this was shaken off and purified by the ministering angels, or rather by the guardians and teachers, who not only expelled them, but also scattered the vices which temporarily satisfy the senses and are like whips and branches devoid of fruit, as the Lord says: Every branch that abides in me and bears fruit, my Father cleanses, that it may bear more fruit; but what does not abide in me and does not bear fruit, my Father cuts off and throws into the fire (Matthew 15).

2:3-7

(Verse 3 and following) The shield of the strong is ablaze, the men of the army in scarlet; the fiery chariots are on the day of its preparation; and the drivers are asleep, they are disturbed on the journey, the chariots collide in the streets. Their appearance is like torches, like lightning running to and fro. They will remember their mighty men, they will rush on their way, they will quickly climb its walls, and the shelter will be prepared. The gates of the rivers are opened, and the temple is laid waste to the ground, and the captive soldier is taken away, and her maidservants threatened, moaning like doves, murmuring in their hearts. LXX: The arms of his power are from men, strong men mocking in fire, the reins of their chariots on the day of his preparation, and the horsemen will fear in the exits: and the chariots will be confounded, and they will collide in the streets. Their appearance is like lamps of fire, and like running lightning, and their nobles will be remembered, and they will flee in the days, and they will be weakened on their journey, and they will hasten to the walls, and they will prepare their defenses: the gates of the cities are open, and the royal palaces have fallen, and the wealth has been revealed; and she herself ascended, and her maids were led like doves speaking in their hearts. According to the history, the order follows against Nineveh, and the army of the Babylonians coming against it is described. Moreover, what it says: fiery reins of chariots, in burning cords, signifies the preparedness of speed, and is narrated as the parade of those preparing for battle. And now the Scripture weaves together things that Israel once suffered, things that Assyria did, and things that the Babylonians practice against the Assyrians. Therefore, he says, it is not surprising that they come so quickly to devastate, since the charioteers and strong men, either before or after, have been put to sleep, either in Israel or in Assyria. And returning to the order of description: The multitude of those coming is so great, that the marching column is mixed together on the path, and cannot be distinguished. The chariots themselves, while not finding the way, collide with each other in the streets due to the multitude. The appearance of the Babylonians is like lamps, like lightning running around, so that they terrify

their enemies before they defeat them with the sword. Then Assyria will remember its strong ones, and will seek out those who fell on the journeys, and will quickly climb the walls of Nineveh, and because of the very long siege will prepare tents to drive away the heat. But what does it profit to build a house, unless the Lord builds it? What does it profit to close the gates, which the Lord opens? The gates of Nineveh are open, which had a multitude of citizens like rivers, and its temple, that is, its kingdom, is destroyed, and its soldiers are taken captive, that is, they are all led into Babylon. But understand that the handmaids of Nineveh, by metaphor, are the smaller cities, villages, and castles. Indeed, even the captive women will threaten before the faces of the victors; and there will be so great a terror that not even a sob or a wail of pain will burst forth, but they will silently groan within themselves and, with a muffled murmur, swallow their tears in the manner of cooing doves. This is according to Hebrew tradition. Now let us come to the translators of the Septuagint. They examined, who shook off Jacob and Israel, and dispersed their scourges; they also broke the weapons which they had been accustomed to have in order to hurl insults, and with which they had oppressed the weak; and not only did they do this, but they also burned the strong men who were mocking in the fire. Consider if you can say that strong men deride in the fire, the opposite strengths that serve as burning darts of the devil, who once had strong men deriding in the fire Jacob and Israel, having chariots and horses on which they were carried swiftly into battle on the day of their preparation. Therefore, the reins of these chariots and the horsemen will be confused on their journeys, and they will collide in the streets, when the illumination of the Lord shines upon Jacob and Israel, both demons and those who serve their will, will be overthrown by the Lord. We can understand these things by his coming, when brave men and charioteers and horsemen were speaking: What have we to do with you, Son of David? Have you come here to torment us before the time? (Matth. VIII, 29) But since we have once received a prophecy against Nineveh concerning the end of the world, it is better that we say that the weapons of the power of the devil were then taken away from men, and his strong ministers, who deceived men in fire. For all those who adulterate, their hearts are like an oven; the chains by which they were led into vices and the chariot's wheels will be released. The horsemen will be fearful at the exits, which is at the end of the world, and they will be confused and the chariots will collide in the streets. For although there is a wide and spacious road that leads to death, they will not be able to find the right path due to the pressure of time. They will collide with each other and yet continue to breathe out their old fury, flashing here and there like lightning. I saw, said the Lord, Satan falling like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18). When the devil and all his officials understand this, they will remember the end that was predicted in the past, and they will flee in those days. For they will not move about at night, but as the day dawns, darkness will be driven away, and they will be weakened on their journey, making no progress and not fulfilling their efforts, and they will hasten to the walls. Indeed, such a great terror of the coming Lord will invade them, and they will be so weak to resist that they will flee to the ends of the world, where the world is enclosed and surrounded like walls, and they will prepare themselves to resist. When someone flees from an enemy, not daring to resist them, and comes to a solitary place, if by chance the enemy pursues them, they are forced to fight back out of necessity. But as they ponder these things, everything they have obtained and possessed will be brought forth and the doors they had closed will be opened, and their kingdoms will fall, and their wealth, that is, their riches, will be revealed. However, the substance of the world itself and all its servants, after they submit themselves to Christ and begin to serve Him, will be led joyfully and with gladness, and from the depths of their hearts they will believe, so that they may be compared

to the cleanliness of doves, and they will murmur or speak in their hearts. And then will be fulfilled what is said in the sixty-seventh psalm about the victory of the Savior: He ascended on high, he led captivity captive.

2:8-9

(Verses 8, 9.) And Nineveh is like a pool of water; its waters are fleeing. Stand! Stand! But there is no one who can turn back. Plunder the silver, plunder the gold; there is no end to the treasures, the desirable vessels. LXX: And Nineveh is like a pool of water; and they who flee do not stand; there is no one who looks back. They plunder silver, they plunder gold, and there is no end to its ornaments; it is burdened with all the vessels of its desire. It is evident that, when the cities of Nineveh (which Scripture calls her daughters) were led into captivity, Nineveh herself, which had nourished such great populations that it could be compared to the waters of the sea, now has a useless multitude because there is no one who resists and endures the attack of the Babylonians. For it had populations that only fled, and when the mother shouted, 'Stand, stand, close the gates, climb the walls, resist the enemies,' there was no one who would return, no one who would look back at the mother, but everyone turned their backs and abandoned the city to the spoils of the enemies. Where it is said to the Babylonians, because they fled, plunder the silver, and in such a long time gather riches and seize them by sudden devastation. For there is no end to riches, furniture, and vessels that were stored up in Nineveh; nor can you plunder as much as it offers itself for plundering. But because we have already said that Nineveh is splendid, that is, the world, let us see what kind of pool the world is. Scripture does not say that the waters of Nineveh are like the waters of the sea, nor like the waters of rivers, nor like the waters of springs, nor like the waters of wells, but like the waters of a pool: just as, in the book of Jeremiah, the people are accused who have forsaken the fountain of living water and have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that cannot hold water (Jeremiah 2): so also in Nineveh, all those waters that have fallen from the sky, leaving behind their former depth, have poured down into the lowest depths. For all the teachings of the world, which are outside the Church's source and sealed garden, cannot say: The river's current makes the city of God rejoice (Ps. 45:4): nor are they the waters that praise the name of the Lord above the heavens, although they may seem great, yet they are small and confined within a narrow boundary. Let no one be disturbed because we understand the pool in a negative sense, while that pool is understood in a positive sense, to which Isaiah the son of Amos the prophet is commanded to ascend. For there, with an addition, it is said: A pool of flowing water, and a pool of the cloth washer (Is. VII and XXXVI), which is accustomed to wash away filth and stains of clothing (or filth). Because it is placed on high, therefore the prophet is commanded to ascend to it, and to promise victory in the encounter with the king from the two burnt towers. It follows: The fleeing did not stand firm, namely the inhabitants of Nineveh. First, indeed, they should not have fled from God, then also if they had fled, at some point they should have stood firm: For there is a great difference between someone who flees and stands firm, and someone who, fleeing, never stands firm. For the one who stands firm has ceased to flee; the one who does not stand firm always remains in flight. In such a great crowd of those fleeing, there was none who would look back, and repent, and hear the Lord speaking: Return to me, my children, returning, and I will heal your contritions (Jerem. III, 22). Hence also the Holy One speaks in the Psalms: Flight has perished from me (Ps. CXLI, 5). Indeed, I think this also signifies the mystery of leprosy, above which it is said in Leviticus: When a leper has been separated from the priest outside the

camp: if the leprosy should stand firm, it [the person] is to be a clean human (Levit. XIII and XIV), and he who had been cast out like a leper is to be cleansed, and to return to camp, and to dwell among the people. But if, the text says, the leprosy has spread, that is, if it does not stand firm but grows and makes progress in evil, and has changed the color of its former health, then the leprosy is most plainly proved by the one who has the knowledge to examine and cleanse the leprosy. But we are also instructed by the true Solomon to dwell in Jerusalem, and to never go out from it. But if that which had been subjected before us flees from us, and goes to other nations, let us not go out of the walls of our city, nor follow the tracks of the fugitives: lest while we wish to save those who are fleeing, we ourselves perish: rather, let us allow them to bury their own dead (Matth. VIII): and let us cut off and cast away from us the eye, hand, and foot that causes scandal, while it is still possible (Marc. IX). Now, what is said: They plundered silver, they plundered gold, and there was no end to their treasures: it refers to the waters of Nineveh, and to those who fled and did not stand firm: there was no one who would look back; and not content with having fled and not looked back, they also plundered silver, whatever eloquence seemed to be in the world: they plundered gold, whatever brilliant sentiments there were in the doctrine of the age, so that they might adorn Nineveh, so that they might compose their teachings with the full flower of all senses and words. Therefore, Nineveh was weighed down with all the treasures of its desires; for the more it possessed a great amount of gold and silver wealth, and various valuable possessions, which were heavy, the more it itself was weighed down, for it loved things that were heavy. Hence, in the book of Zechariah, iniquity sits on a weighed-down talent (Zach. V); and the Egyptians, who were heavy with sins, were submerged in the sea like lead (Exod. XIV). And in the persona of a sinner it is said in the psalm: They were weighed down on me like a heavy burden (Ps. XXXVII, 5). And Peter, who before lightly stepped on the waves: after being weighed down by unbelief, was swallowed up by the waves, is lifted up by the hand of the Lord (Matth. XIV).

2:10

(Verse 10) She is scattered and torn and ripped apart, with a wasting heart, and knees loosened, and weakness in all the kidneys, and the faces of all like the darkness of a pot. LXX: Shaking, trembling, and bubbling, and the breaking of the heart, and knees loosened, and pains over every loin, and the faces of all like the burning of a pot. Under the metaphor of a captive woman, Nineveh is described as scattered, torn, and ripped apart: with a wasting heart, loosened knees, and broken kidneys, and the faces of all its inhabitants, due to the terror of the enemies and the magnitude of fear, appear burnt, wasted, and deformed with paleness. Furthermore, according to the Septuagint, a higher understanding is needed of what the terms 'excussio' and 'rediscussio' signify. As for the people of God, it is as if a person has sinned at some point and returns to their previous state, as Jerusalem is said to them: Shake off the dust from your feet and arise, Jerusalem (Isaiah 52:2). And for someone who is such, that after being shaken off, they may deserve to pass into the arrows of God and be aimed against the enemies by the Lord, it is sung about them: Like arrows in the hand of a mighty one, so are the children of those who are shaken off (Psalm 127:4). And when his footsteps, as though entering upon the earth, are sprinkled with dust, we hear from the Savior: Shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony to them (Mk. 6:11): doubtless he speaks of those who refuse to receive the preachers. But as for Nineveh, which was burdened with all the vessels of its desires, it is not merely shaken off once, but frequently. And after it has been shaken off again, and its surface has been cleaned (so that no impurity remains

inside), there is even a boiling, which is more significantly called **■κβρασμ■** in Greek: for properly speaking, **■κβρασμ■** is used in such cases, when what was hidden inside erupts to the surface. And the pimples that also arise on the lips after an illness are called **■κβρ■σμάτα**, and it seems to indicate health, that the disease has erupted on the surface. But not only is this remedy applied in Nineveh, so that it is frequently shaken off and the hidden illness within its vital organs is forced to leave; but also the breaking and dissolution of the heart and knees ((or kidneys)) is proclaimed, just as the hard and stony heart of Pharaoh was broken, which as long as he had it, he did not let the people of God go (Exodus VII and thereafter): so too the broken heart of Nineveh is softened and transformed into flesh, and the stiff knees that were not previously bowed to God are dissolved, and bend to God: from which all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named: and at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth (Philippians II, 10). So after they come to know their creator, let them hear: Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees (Isaiah 35:3). And he says, 'Pain upon every loin.' We have already said that intercourse is signified by the loin, and that all works related to mingling are designated by the term 'loins.' Therefore, in the consummation, there will be great pains in the loins, because all the power of the dragon is in the loins (Job 40:11). And for all these things, because of which there is shaking, shaking again, bubbling, and breaking of the heart, dissolving of the knees, pains of the loins, the faces of all will be like the scorching of a pot, so that it either becomes close to fire and heat, or loses the shine of oil and turns black like coal, and is covered with eternal confusion, from which the saint is far off, saying, 'The light of your face has shone upon us, Lord' (Psalm 4:7). For when the face of God is revealed, He is contemplated in His glory (2 Corinthians III). And I think, just as the glory of the sun is different from the glory of the moon and from the glory of the stars, and one star differs from another in brightness (1 Corinthians XV, 41), so in the resurrection of the dead, there will be a great distance between the glory of the saints and the darkness of sinners.

2:11

(Verse 11) Where is the den of the lions, and the feeding ground of the lion cubs, to which the lion went to enter there with its lion cub, and there is no one to drive them away? The lion has taken enough for its cubs, and has killed for its lionesses; and it has filled its dens with prey and its lair with the spoils. Concerning dens and lionesses, seventy are carried off in translation, and the same meaning holds for the rest. However, it is still said about Nineveh: that it was the dwelling place of kings and the court of nobles; to which the Babylonian lion king, that is, Nebuchadnezzar, went, along with his lion cub, his sub-rulers, and there was no one to resist them. The lion captured its own cubs sufficiently, and killed its own lionesses. Likewise, Nabuchodonosor rightfully possessed all the spoils of victory, and he delivered the captured captives into slavery to his free cities or certainly to his wives, and he filled his caves with booty, or as it is said in Hebrew, his pits, and his den with plunder, fully enriching it with treasures, cities, gold, silver, clothes, and all kinds of ornaments, so that he would possess what he had in Nineveh, and conquered Babylon. But according to the **■ναγω■** (i.e., interpretation), both in Jonah and in this Prophet, we have interpreted the world as Nineveh; and according to John: The whole world is set in the evil one (1 John 5:18); after the world has passed through the dwelling place of beasts, and in which lions were fed, then amazed and rejoicing we will say: Where is the dwelling place of the lions that the devil went to, about which Peter speaks: Your adversary (or our adversary) the devil is like a

roaring lion, prowling around, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). And the lion's cub, the Antichrist, and all perverse teachings, a contrary word. You have heard, says John, the Antichrist will come: but now there are many Antichrists (1 John 2): for as many false doctrines as there are, there are as many Antichrists. And before the coming of Christ there was no one who expelled; but after our Lord came and entered Nineveh, he saw Satan falling from heaven like lightning (Luke 10): and Lucifer, who rose in the morning, fell from heaven (Isaiah 14). For the true Samson came to the Philistines; and while he was going to Thamna, which means his consummation, to take as his wife the poor girl from the nations, Delilah, he killed a lion to whom his consummation had come, and when it was dead, he ate the sweet honey. And the true David, keeping his father's sheep, seized the lion and killed it (1 Samuel 17); and Baniyas, which means the builder of the Lord (1 Chronicles 11), went down into the lake of this age, which is accustomed to refresh the hot waters, and killed the lion. And in the vision of Isaiah, which is seen against quadrupeds, first the distress of these beasts is mentioned: In tribulation and distress, a lion and the whelp of a lion (Isa. XXXV). This lion, before being killed by Christ, captured many as prey for his cubs: and he killed his lion cubs, his attendants, that is, demons. See the assemblies of the heretics and you will not find many captured by the lion. Consider the dead who have left life, and you will not call their churches the shepherd's flock, but rather the lion's dens, which are filled with corpses and the blood of the dead. You have set darkness (says David), and it became night: in it all the beasts of the forests will pass by. Lion's whelps roar and seek food from God. The lion is difficult to find during the day, but he always prowls at night, in order to snatch from the Church of Christ, in order to be satiated with the chosen ones, according to Habakkuk's foods. Finally, Judas was from the sheepfold of Christ, and he was snatched by the lion and suffocated by hanging. But that prophet, to whom the Lord had commanded not to eat bread in that region where the golden calves were, and who falsely claimed that he did not eat, was struck by a lion (3 Kings 13). Jeremiah also speaks about sinners: The lion has struck them from the forest, and the wolf has dispersed them even to their houses, and the leopard has watched over their cities. Everyone who goes out from them shall be caught (Jeremiah 5:6). Take note that no one shall be caught except those who have gone out from the cities of God. In the fourth book of Kings (verse 17), the inhabitants of the cities of Samaria, not knowing the judgment of God, were being killed by lions until they learned to worship God and were freed from the lions. For this reason, I believe and whatever is captured by beasts should not be offered in the sacrifices to God (Leviticus 22:8), and it is said by the prophet: 'Unclean and captured by a beast has not entered into my mouth' (Ezekiel 4:14). Therefore, the lion was slain, and the false doctrines were refuted, the food came out of the one who was eating, and the sweet came out of the strong (Judges 14).

2:13

(v. 13) Behold, I am coming to you, says the Lord of hosts, and I will set fire to your chariots until they are smoking, and the sword will devour your young lions, and I will eliminate your plunder from the land, and the voice of your messengers will no longer be heard. (LXX: Behold, I am coming to you, says the Almighty Lord, and I will set fire to your multitude until it is smoke, and the sword will devour your lions, and I will take away your plunder from the land, and your works will no longer be heard.) O Nineveh, all that has been said, with me as the author, you will suffer. I, the Lord, will set fire to your chariots until they are smoking and consumed, and I will make even your nobles and officials be devoured by the sword. You will no longer ravage the lands, nor demand

tribute, and your messengers will not be heard throughout your provinces. Even if I do not hear the angels, who are your guardians, praying continuously for your protection. But these same words are also spoken to the world, where there is a multitude that travels along a broad and spacious road leading to death (Matthew 7), which the Lord threatens to set ablaze, suffocating in the smoke of its own wickedness (or excessive goodness). The sword will also devour lions, the living word of God, sharp and polished on all sides. It promises to take away its prey from the land, so that no one in Nineveh will be captured, and like a merciful one, it removes evil deeds and suppresses them, so that the sound of their voice and noise can no longer be heard. Hence it says: And your deeds will no longer be heard.

3:1-4

(Chapter 3, verses 1 and following) Woe to the city of blood, full of deceit and torn apart. The plunder will not cease. The sound of the whip, the sound of the rattling wheel, the galloping horses and the blazing chariots, the ascending knight and the flashing sword, the gleaming spear and the multitude of the slain, and the weighty destruction. There is no end to the corpses. They will stumble over their own bodies because of the multitude of the prostitute's charming and enticing acts of fornication, and her sorceries which she sold to the nations through her acts of fornication, and her enchantments which she used to deceive the families. LXX: O city of blood, completely deceitful, full of wickedness, the hunting will not touch you: the sound of scourges, and the sound of turning wheels, and of pursuing horses, and of a blazing chariot, of a rider ascending, and a gleaming sword, and of shining armor, and of a multitude of wounded, and of a heavy downfall, and there will be no end to its nations, and they will be weakened in their bodies by the multitude of their fornication. A beautiful and pleasing harlot, leader of wickedness, who sells nations in her fornication, and tribes in her wickedness. Where we have been placed, full of laceration, is called Pherec Malea in Hebrew, which Aquila interpreted as 'full of decapitation', that is, full of excision. Symmachus, on the other hand, interpreted it as 'full of amputation', which we can say is full of cruelty or severity. In another edition of his work, I found 'full of dismemberment', that is, with the sections of flesh and pieces torn through the limbs: finally, he immediately added, where there is uninterrupted prey. The Hebrew scholar Pherec does not interpret it as 'exervicationem', which we find in the edition of Aquila, but as 'gubernaculum', that is, 'governance': to show that the city was royal, and as if it held the governance of all nations like a ship. Its power, that is, Nineveh, is described, and it is condemned under the lamentation of cruelty. Woe, city of blood, in which there is no truth, but all falsehood, full of plunder and tearing of prey. The voice of a cruel whip always and of a raging empire, and the voice of the wheel's momentum. Let us understand the voice as a sound: the roaring wheel, racing through different places, and the snorting horses, and the fiery chariot, are heard in all. However, the description of an army preparing for battle, so beautiful and resembling the Hebrew and the pictures, is worthy of all my speech being considered cheap. For what is said: And heavy is the downfall, and there is no end to the corpses, let us understand it as referring to the adversaries who were killed by them. And they will fall in their own bodies, or they will fall from their multitude, while they crowd themselves together: or they will fall on the corpses of the slain; for it signifies both their own and others'. Because of the multitude, he says, of the harlot's fornications: because she has fornicated with many nations and has cultivated idols of the whole world, which she had subjected to herself. It signifies the beautiful and pleasing, and those having evil deeds, the magicians: who have sold nations in their own fornications, and families in

their own evil deeds, that is, those whom she had power over all nations. These things about Nineveh are said simply. But if we understand the name 'world' in a rational manner, because of its beauty, rightly the world, which is situated in evil, is called the city of blood because of the multitude of archers and those who kill people with their tongues like swords. Therefore, consequently, the whole world is a liar, which pertains to the perversity of teachings, not having the word of God, where it should find its foundation, when all perverse doctrines possess it. There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God: they are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (Psalm 14:2-3). Although these things are partly done even now, they will be more completely fulfilled in the end, when charity of many shall cool because of the multiplied iniquity. (Matthew 24). How many are caught by the giant Nimrod, the most cruel hunter, who, being proud against God, has ensnared many with the snare of his own vices, of whom many will not touch as prey or game. For he has many followers, and likewise hunters who delight in his hunt, and they stand around him like captives. But the sound of whips is also heard in the world, for there are many tribulations of the just (Psalms 33), to which those who are whipped cry out and testify to the magnitude of their pain with a mournful voice: when one is seized by a demon, another by anger, which is similar to madness, another by desire, hatred, envy, and pride, the whip of the king of Assyria sound in them. But even in bodily ailments, we understand the whip of the devil, concerning which it is said to the just: And the whip will not approach your tent (Ps. XC, 10); when we see this royal disease decay, and its corpse still remaining: one cut open from water, and the body floating while swollen, with the limbs growing, the form of the former man diminishing, which we recently saw in the dissecting room: him expelling certain purulences and the wounds suffered by the damaged lung: him experiencing the dryness of the moisture turned to stones, the bitterness of the urine, and the torments of the bladder, let us not hesitate to say that the voice of the whips is in Nineveh: although some suspect that these things happen either from the corrupted air or from the variety of food and bodies. Let us who read and tremble at the feverishness (Luke IV), and the woman who had been bound by the devil for eighteen years (Ibid., XIII), healed by the Lord, know that all these are scourges for Nineveh. Hence it follows: And the voice of the wheels; while here and there the human race is carried away, uncertainly wandering in all directions, where there is danger, where there is safety, we do not know; concerning which wheel it is also written at the beginning of Ezekiel (Ezek. I): in the seventy-sixth psalm we read: The voice of your thunder is in the wheel (Psalm LXXVI, 19). But Nineveh also has a pursuing horse, whose neighing and hooves digging into the ground and chest boiling, always desires war, while the Lord speaks against the devil. From afar, war can be smelled: it does not spare those who flee with a leap and a cry; it does not allow those who turn their backs to escape; but it pursues in order to overthrow, kill, trample, and crush them. There is also in Nineveh the sound of a steaming chariot, like I imagine Pharaoh had, which were submerged by the Lord (Exodus 14). To this team are harnessed four horses, namely the four disturbances, about which both philosophers argue and Virgil does not remain silent, saying (Virg., VI Aeneid.):

They desire, fear, grieve, and rejoice... With these horses and this chariot, he disturbs all of Nineveh. But also the voice of the mounting knight resounds in it, who, prepared by a certain skill and a circuit, advances to battle not without danger against the one fighting against himself. This knight has a sword of speech, sharpened with the blade of dialectic and smoothed with the oil of rhetorical art: he has shining weapons, Satan transforming himself into an angel of light (II Cor.

XI), which are contrary to the arms of apostolic armor. It is not surprising if there is a multitude of wounded in Nineveh, since there is a multitude of arrows. And just as we have four shields with which we fight and protect ourselves, they are the virtues of wisdom, justice, temperance, and courage; similarly, there are four vices: foolishness, injustice, luxury, and fear, with which we are struck by the enemy. Each of these vices contains numerous kinds of arrows that cause wounds. If these wounds are not immediately healed by medicine, they become a heavy burden and, I wish, as heavy as they are in Nineveh, falling lightly and being lightly wounded, they are so great in their weight of ruin that they sink down to the depths of hell. And there is no end to their nations' groaning: their wickedness has no end. As there are so many forms of sins, there are as many nations as Nineveh, which will be weakened in their bodies by the multitude of fornication. Although it can also be understood about those who, due to sexual desires, are also weakened in their bodies, and with the destruction of their soul, they also break the flesh they serve: nevertheless, these nations, of which we have spoken, do not fall, according to the Hebrew, except in their bodies, and do not offend (as Symmachus interpreted) except in the corpses of the dead, which are laid low by the multiplication of fornication. In this place, the 70 interpreters, when we have followed the Hebrew, because of the multitude of the harlot's fornications, wanted there to be another beginning, so that they would say: Before the multitude of fornication; and up to this point is the end of the sentence, afterwards they would begin, a beautiful and pleasing harlot, leader of evils. Aquila and Symmachus translated leader of evils, having evils. And it will not be surprising if Nineveh is now the most pleasing of harlots, who has seen such a great multitude of people fornicate with her, and is almost able to lead everyone to love her through her evils and certain enchantments. These sell nations in their fornications, which take away the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot; and they delight in their evil deeds. For they make themselves love those that they ought to hate, and hate those that they ought to love, so that when they are deceived, according to what is written: 'Evil communications corrupt good manners' (1 Corinthians 15:33), they may also overthrow others by their wicked arts. I have read in the Holy Scriptures that even malefactors can be taken in a good sense: 'The wise malefactor enchants' (Psalm 57). But this sorcerer uses such incantations that he can bring back those captivated by the love of a harlot of Nineveh to their right mind.

3:5-6

(Verse 5, 6.) Behold, I am coming to you, says the Lord of hosts, and I will reveal your shame before your face, and I will show your nakedness to the nations, and your disgrace to the kingdoms. And I will cast abominations upon you, and afflict you with insults, and make you an example. LXX: Behold, I am coming to you, says the Lord Almighty, and I will uncover your backside over your face, and I will show your confusion to the nations, and your disgrace to the kingdoms, and I will cast abomination upon you according to your uncleanness, and make you an example. Because you have sold, O Nineveh, nations in your fornications, and families in your sorceries, and have spread your feet as a public whore to all divided lands: therefore I myself will come to you to overthrow you, I will not send an angel, I will not trust others to judge you. I will uncover your private parts before your face, so that what you did not see before will be placed before your eyes. I will show your nakedness to the nations, and your shame to the kingdoms, so that those who fornicated with you will despise you, mock you, and treat you with contempt, and you will be an example to all who see you. But all these things are narrated under the metaphor of

the adulterous woman, who, when she is caught, is brought into the middle and exposed before the eyes of all. Indeed, this is fully described through a prophetic sermon in the Book of Ezekiel, also concerning Jerusalem. However, they are more truly and usefully said about the world, to which the true doctor came from heaven, both to cut off and to heal. Behold, I am your Lord almighty, and because I am almighty, I can heal all diseases. And what is impossible for others is possible for me. I will reveal your behind on your face, that is, my virtues, precepts, and teachings, which you have cast behind your back. Although you do not deserve it, I will make you see. For I had commanded you concerning my teachings, that they should always be moved before your eyes, bound and hanging. But you, despising the command of the one who orders, left them behind your tracks, so that not only did you not do them, but you did not even deign to see what I had commanded. Indeed, I will make you see and understand your errors, which before, when you were blind and reckless, you thought were virtues. After this, I will also reveal your nakedness to the nations you have sold yourself to in your prostitution, so that they are not captivated by your love, but rather see your dirty and shameful body from within, which they were initially drawn to by its surface. With you, they will cease to prostitute themselves. I will also show the dishonor that you have brought upon kingdoms that are greater than nations, which you yourself created in order to have. And I will cast upon you the abomination according to your uncleanness, so that as you are unclean, you may appear unclean; and do not deceive many who were once united with you, who became one body with you. And I will make you an example, so that the terrifying likeness of punishment may prevent the likeness of wrongdoing (II Cor. V).

3:7

(Verse 7) And it shall come to pass, that whoever sees you will flee from you, and say: Nineveh is laid waste; who will mourn for her? In Hebrew, there is no 'head', but we have added it to make the meaning clearer. Finally, Symmachus interpreted it as follows: And whoever sees you will depart from you and say: Nineveh is dispersed, who will mourn with her? Moreover, the Seventy: And it shall come to pass, that whoever sees you will descend from you and say: Wretched Nineveh, who will lament for her? Where shall I find a consolation fitting for her? ** Whoever sees the ruins of Nineveh, and sets it up as an example for all, will be filled with awe and wonder, and will say: Nineveh is destroyed, who will shake their head at you? That is, who will grieve for you, who will be your comforter? As long as you were powerful, like a cruel mistress, you had no pity for the old ((or old men)) or the little ones: you did not look upon the small ones: you did not prepare a companion for your mourning, because you did not want to have a partner in ruling. But whoever despises these earthly things, and looks down on the evil deeds of the witchcraft of Nineveh, and is not ensnared by its false beauty when they see all its ugliness within, and begins to hate what others love, they will flee and reject it, or as it is said in the Septuagint, they will descend. For as long as we honor earthly things, and think them to be lofty, we are like those who were once on the summit of pride, and we admire the beauty of Nineveh. But when we consider its nature, and despise all earthly goods as lowly, subjecting ourselves to the power of God's hand, then we will have mercy on the Ninevites, and we will judge all earthly goods as worthy of lamentation, and we will say: Wretched Nineveh, how many are ensnared by your snares, how many are bound by your chains! Who do you think will break free from you and descend from your pride, and judge you as miserable? But when he says, 'Who, do you think, is the faithful and prudent steward?' (Matthew 24:45)? And, 'Who is wise and will understand these things?' (Hosea 14:10)? And, 'Who shall

ascend into the mountain of the Lord?' (Psalm 23:3)? Who, then, will lament over Nineveh? Who will be found, who, burdened with this tabernacle, will say with Paul, 'Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death?' (Romans 7:24)? We see every day, if death comes close to someone and they realize that they are being taken away from this world due to fever, injury, or any kind of illness, they panic, tremble, and cling to the embrace of the beautiful prostitute, barely able to be pulled away from her body. But what follows: Where can I find consolation, or a consoler for you, who can tune the chord? It is yet spoken in the persona of the one who will rebound or descend from Nineveh, and say: Miserable Nineveh, who will mourn for her? Discussing the confusion of this age, in which nothing can please anyone forever: but what pleased displeases, and what displeased, pleases again. Who, therefore, can be found as such a consoler? And (so to speak) a lyric writer and a harpist who can bring its dissonant strings into one harmony, and make the vocal sound praise to God? What we have explained, which is to bring together a chord, or one bringing together a chord, is called in Greek, ἁρμονία χορδῶν, but we have not found it in Hebrew, nor in the translations of others, but instead the beginning of another speech: Are you better than Amon who dwells in rivers? Therefore, it seems to me that it should be more closely connected with the following.

3:8-12

(Verse 8 and following) Are you better than Amon ((Vulgate: Alexandria of the nations)), who lived by the rivers? Her water was like a sea, her walls were like fortifications, Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and there was no end to her wealth; Africa and Libya were her allies. But she too was led into captivity, her young children were dashed to pieces at every street corner, her nobles were cast lots upon, and all her dignitaries were bound in chains. And so you will be intoxicated and despised; and you will seek your help from your enemies, all your fortresses like fig trees with their ripe fruit, if they are shaken, will fall into the mouth of the eater. LXX: Aptly did Ammon, who dwells in rivers, water surrounding it, whose beginning is the sea, and its water is a wall. Ethiopia is its strength and Egypt, and there is no end to your flight. Put and the Libyans have become its helpers, and it itself will go into exile, and its little ones will be dashed to pieces at the head of its roads, and they will cast lots over all its noble men, and all its princes will be bound in fetters; and you will be intoxicated and despised, and you will seek there to stand against your enemies; all your fortresses, like fig trees with ripe fruit, if they are shaken, will fall into the mouth of the eater. Because in the Septuagint it is read, Αἴψα χορδὰμ, the part of Ammon; and the other interpreters have translated: Are you better than Amon? The Hebrew scholar who instructed me in the Scriptures asserted that it could be read as: Are you better than No, Amon? And he said, in Hebrew No is called Alexandria: but Amon means multitude, or peoples, and is the order of reading: Are you better than populous Alexandria, or the peoples that dwell by its rivers, with water surrounding it? Not because at that time it was called Alexandria, since it received its name long after Alexander the Great, the Macedonian; but because under its first name, that is, No, it was always the metropolis of Egypt and exceedingly populated. Finally, even those who recorded the deeds of Alexander believe that it was the chief city of Egypt. Moreover, the prophet Jeremiah, understanding by Amon or No Alexandria in his vision against Egypt, to which he says: Beautiful heifer Egypt, a destroyer comes from the north to her (Jer. 46:20), also adds more clearly: The daughter of Egypt is put to shame, given into the hand of the people of the north, says the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel. Behold, I will visit upon Amon of Menno () , that is, upon the

mound (or tomb) of Alexandria (Ibid., 24 ff.): For Amon, as we said, signifies peoples; But Men the preposition de signifies; And No signifies Alexandria. And he says, I will visit upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt, and upon its gods, and upon its kings, and upon Pharaoh, and upon those who hope in it; and I will give into the hand of those seeking their souls, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants. Therefore it is said to Nineveh: Are you richer or more powerful than Alexandria? And the location of Alexandria is described, which is situated on the Nile and the sea, surrounded by waters and rivers on both sides. Water surrounds it, the wealth of the sea; its walls are made of water: on one side by the Nile River, on the other side by Lake Mareotis, and on another side by the sea. The fact that Ethiopia and Egypt, and Africa, which is called Phut in Hebrew, and Libya are under its protection, demonstrates the location of the provinces and the city. And so, as the prophet says, this is how your speech describes it, will be captured by the Babylonian king, and he will be both your devastator and his. This is also recounted by Josephus, a writer of Jewish history, in his books. Her little ones will be dashed in the streets, her nobles will be divided by the lot of the victors, and the once mighty princes will be led away in chains. Therefore, as Alexandria suffers these things, you, O Nineveh, will drink from the same cup, and you will be intoxicated and despised while lying in a state of unconsciousness, and you will come to such great necessity that you will seek help from the Babylonians or against the Babylonians, from your enemies. All your firmaments and walls stretching high, and the heights of towers, which you now think are impregnable, and your strong men and warriors will be compared to primitive figs, which if shaken with a light touch, will fall and be devoured. For what is read in the Septuagint: 'Fit, or compose a chord,' is still said to Nineveh. And the meaning is: Your disorderly and unarranged, and discordant in different ways, is fitted to the likeness of chords, Nineveh, because your appearance and greatness, which you believe to be exceptional, will be of no use to you unless you fit yourself for singing. Consider then all the part of the lot of the sons of Ammon, and whatever possessions are considered good, how did they not defend them so that they would not go into captivity, and so that their little ones would not stumble in the ways? What good were the rivers near which the city of Ammon was situated? What, besides the rivers, did the multitude of wells and springs, beginning from the Dead Sea and surrounding its region, provide to it? What help did Ethiopia and Egypt, once its allies, provide to it? How then did the help of the allies not benefit her? In this way, Nineveh, there will be no end to your fleeing, but you will be devastated here and there. What can I say of the Ethiopians, and of the Egyptians who were rulers of the descendants of Ammon, when even the Libyans were allied with her? And so she will be led into captivity, and her little ones, because they will not be able to enter, will be killed in the streets, lying prostrate before their parents' eyes, and all her wealth will perhaps be divided among the victors. And no one of the leaders will escape, for they will be bound with iron and shackles. And so, o Nineveh, you will be intoxicated, and once rich and beautiful, who had so many lovers, you will be despised by all, and while your enemies pursue you, you will seek rest and not find it. All your warriors and all your allies will be plundered by the enemy, and without any effort they will be captured like ripe figs, which when shaken do not fall to the ground, so that at least there is some small labor for those gathering, but they will immediately fall into the mouth of the devourer. Let these words be paraphrased according to the Septuagint interpreters: for we have once proposed to follow the Vulgate edition, so that we do not appear to have given any occasion for reprehending the excetrae and Sardanapalus. Moreover, the example of the overthrow of Nineveh does not seem to me to be sufficiently congruent with the sons of Lot,

who are called Ammon. For first, it is said Ammon (Genesis X), not Amman; secondly, Ammana, which is now called Philadelphia, is not situated beside rivers, nor are its riches gathered from the sea, since it is inland, neither does it have Ethiopia and Egypt and Africa and Libya as allies, when all these things, both according to power and according to example, and according to the description of the place and region, and the friendly nations, are more suited to being compared to Alexandria; and never would the most powerful city of Nineveh, compared to the lesser Philadelphia, have heard from the prophet: Are you better? But to whom is it said: Are you not better? It is shown that you are lesser than the one you are compared to, and you should not bear it unworthily if it is captured, since it was overcome by the same enemy who is greater, stronger, and more powerful both in the nature of the place and in brave men. But since we have interpreted Nineveh and this world, it is commanded to him to tune and compose his strings, and to prepare himself for a mournful song: for indeed the part of the sons of Ammon, which was much better than Nineveh and had dwelt over the rivers, because it was found in error, paid the penalties for its own crime. First, according to the history of Alexandria, it must be said that 'Ammon' interprets the people, and the meaning is according to the laws of allegory: Consider the people of the Church who dwell upon the rivers of the prophets, and it has teachers in its vicinity, from whose womb rivers flow, with its beginning being the sea. From the reading of the Law, which is bitter without the wood of Christ, we arrive at the likeness of Myrrh to its mystery, which has Ethiopia in its strength: Ethiopia indeed shall stretch out her hands to God (Ps. 68) : and Egypt into which the Lord came in a light cloud: and the Libyans who formerly dwelt in barrenness, but afterwards became his helpers. And if she does not realize this and guard her heart with all diligence, she will be taken captive and will mourn for her children. Her little ones, who are still in the early stages of their journey and have not reached the middle of the road, will be stumbled in their own beginnings. And the most cruel enemies will hasten to divide among themselves the splendid things of hers, and they will drag into captivity the noble ones whom we can understand as the leaders and governors, bound in chains and hindered by the weight of the heaviest fetters. And so, Nineveh, you, infidel men, who adhere completely to the world, will feel punishment, and you will drink from my cup and fall into the same vice as those who were on my side and fell by their own fault. And you will despise me; you will seek an end between the vices and disturbances that oppress you, and yet you will not be able to find a stop and an end to your evils. And all your desires and pleasures, and worldly powers, and the doctrines that you thought you had so firmly, will be devoured by the one who eats, as Samson says in a parable: 'Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness' (Judges 14:14). For then, all your strong things and the sweet fruits that promised delights to the eyes of the beholders will fall into the mouth of the devouring devil with the first shaking of the tree, by whom Nineveh had always been tested and possessed. Furthermore, what we have omitted: And there is no end to your flight, because it is said to Nineveh, and among those things which are written about Ammon, it is placed, and it seems extraordinarily inserted in a foreign place, as if we refer to Nineveh by way of excess: And you will be intoxicated, and there is no end to your flight, and you will be despised, and the rest of the things that are said to Nineveh. And we will interpret that there is no end to the flight of Nineveh from God, because it always makes progress in fleeing, and never wants to stop, according to what we said above: And those who flee did not stand, and there was no one to look back. And we will say that Holy Scripture is interwoven with these difficulties, especially the prophets who are full of riddles, so that the difficulty of meaning also involves the difficulty of

language: so that the holy things may not easily be revealed to dogs, and pearls to pigs, and sacred things to the profane. And if we wish to interpret Ammon as referring to the sons of Lot, let us say that Lot had two sons from his two daughters, Moab and Ammon, of whom the older, Moab, is interpreted as from the father or paternal water, but the younger, Ammon, may be understood as either the son of my generation or our people (Genesis XIX). And I consider how (or in what manner) he who was born from Judah, because of sin, is said to him: Seed of Canaan, and not Judah (Dan. XIII, 56). And in Ezekiel to Jerusalem, the sinner (or harlot): Your root and your generation are from the land of Canaan, your father is an Amorite (or Canaanite), and your mother is a Hittite (Ezek. XVI, 3): thus those who were from the former people, that is, the Jews; and from the latter, that is, from us, Moabites and Ammonites are figuratively called. And because they had turned away from their father (for the name Lot means 'turning away'), they will be subjected to punishment and will suffer all that we have mentioned above. But if even those who were once holy incur the severity of God, and she who dwelt among the rivers will be purged by the fire of Gehenna, how much more will Nineveh, which had no law before and did not receive the yoke of God's commandments, fall in the end into the devouring mouth because of its pride!

3:13-17

(Verse 13 onwards) Behold, your people, women in your midst: the gates of your land will be opened wide to your enemies: fire will devour your bars. Draw water for the siege: build your fortifications, go into the mud, and trample: force the brick. There the fire will consume you; you will perish by the sword, you will be devoured like the chigoe: gather therefore like the chigoe: multiply like the locust. You have made more deals than there are stars in the sky: the chigoe has spread out and flown away. Your guards are like locusts, and your little ones are like the grasshoppers of locusts, which settle in the hedges in the cold weather. The sun rises, and they have flown away, and the place where they were will not be known. LXX: Behold, your people are like women in you, opening the gates of your land to your enemies: fire devours your bars. Draw water for the siege, strengthen your fortifications: go into the mud and trample in the straw, strengthen it upon the brick. There the fire will devour you, the sword will scatter you; it will devour you like a locust. Multiply yourselves like the locust, multiply your trades like the stars of heaven. Yet even now, in Nineveh, it is said: 'Your strong men are like the ripe figs, which when shaken fall into the mouth of the eater. Your people have become effeminate and unable to resist.' Your gates will be opened wide, and the city will be exposed to the enemy. The strongest bars that secured the gates will be consumed by fire. So, gather water and make sure there is no shortage of drink for the besieged garrison: make bricks, so that you can build up the interrupted walls, for the siege is close at hand. And when you have done all these things, just as the earth is devoured by drought, so shall you be devoured by the sword. But even when you have multiplied like the drought and gathered together like locusts, and gathered together your riches like the stars of the sky, like locusts and drought, and the small offspring of locusts, which are called attelabi (Al. adtelebi), flying away when the sun grows hot, they are not found: thus you will disperse and flee. For it is the nature of locusts that they become sluggish in the cold and fly in the heat. Furthermore, the attelabus, which the eagle interprets as a more significant devourer, is a small locust between the locust and the cankerworm, crawling with small wings rather than flying, and always leaping up: and for this reason, wherever it arises, it consumes everything to dust, because until its wings grow, it cannot fly away. I have explained these things more clearly, following the

Hebrew text, in order to make it easier for the reader to understand. But I will speak according to the beginning of the Translation, following the Septuagint, first briefly, that is, as in an epitome, and then more fully, discussing each point separately: Your people, O Nineveh, that is, the secular men who are properly called the people of the city of Assyria, are so weakened by passions and enfeebled by vices that they are compared to the weakness of women; for they possess nothing strong or manly in their souls. Therefore, their enemies, prevailing against them, have opened all their senses and entered through the gates of their bodies. And notably, the senses of the body are called the gates of the Assyrian land. Moreover, even those who have enslaved themselves to vices have the opportunity to know God, like very strong bolts, with which they block and seal the gates of the senses. But they will also be consumed by the fire, which is carried by burning arrows, which is why it is said to Nineveh: Draw water for yourself, and cleanse yourself with the word and reason, and use the opportunities to understand God and to exercise the virtues that are inherent in you, for the sake of battle. But you, with your loose hands, that is, with the works of pleasure, have lost whatever strength you had: therefore turn back and repent, and again obtain your defences. And because you have once entered into mud, and are shut up in a body (which is compacted together like earth and straw and water, so also with flesh, blood, veins, nerves, and bones), endure the injuries and necessities of the body: and suffer to be trodden down by enemies, and endure all things that are worthy of repentance in order to accomplish the flesh. For once, assuming clay and chaff, and involved in the empty matters of this world, you must willingly endure injury and yet not completely despair of salvation: be confident, and subject your body, that is, your clay, to the assumed word as if you were bringing water into servitude, and submit yourself to it, so that you may rule over your clay; otherwise, unless you do this, the living flame will consume you afterwards, either as punishment through Gehenna, or by the burning darts of the enemy raised up: and not only will you be laid waste by fire, but the sword will also devour you like a green locust on the earth. And if you were not to endure this, you would fall heavily upon the brick, and, weighed down by your own burden, losing all elevation, you would be dragged down to the ground, just as a beetle suddenly falls to the ground when it can no longer fly. Therefore, you should have virtues so countless, just like a beetle, so that you are not dragged down to the ground by your own weight, just like a beetle. All of these things which you have suffered, since you have multiplied riches for yourself and engaged in various doctrines, thinking that they shine more brightly than the stars and gleam more than the stars of the sky. These things, as I have said, have been briefly spoken by us to comprehend the meaning: now returning to the beginning of the chapter, let us explain each one as best we can. Who would not say that beautiful Nineveh, a soul naturally beautiful, delving into the delights and pleasures of this age, has come to feminine delicacies and, having lost its manhood, has languished into a woman? For if a righteous soul, coming into perfect manhood and preserving the strictness of its condition, adhering to God, becomes one spirit with Him: why should not, on the contrary, a soul that loves the world, become one with the world and, reduced to softness, lose the strength of manliness? I think for this reason in Exodus, Pharaoh commanded that every male who is born to the Hebrews be thrown into the river, and every female be kept alive. For the Egyptian king, who says elsewhere: The rivers are mine, and I made them, could not command anything other than this, that whatever is Hebrew, and their descendants who pass through this age, perhaps even their males, be thrown into the water and carried away through their currents into the sea. And, on the other hand, whatever appears feminine, soft, and beautiful in this world, is vivified, grows, and generates. At the same

time, consider that the Egyptian emperor cannot kill the Hebrew men, nor those who have already left infancy, but those whose age is still tender, and whose body is soft, and whose progress is beginning: he knows that women cannot be nurtured unless the males have been killed. Therefore, he wants to suffocate in the depths of his river whatever is by chance strong and masculine among the Hebrews, so that those things which are feminine may grow more freely on their own. But what follows: Your enemies will open the gates of your land openly, you will be able to understand, taking testimony from Jeremiah, in which it is written: Death has come up through our windows (Jer. IX, 21). And what is asserted to be demonstrated by Jeremiah through windows, you will relate to these very gates. For knowing that divine speech has twofold meaning, to distinguish evil meanings, it says in Proverbs: You will find divine understanding. But here you should not take 'sense' to mean 'mind and intellect,' which in Greek is called νοῦς, but rather 'sensation,' from which the five senses are named: sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing. Therefore, the gates of Nineveh are to be understood as bodily senses, while the gates of Jerusalem are heavenly, representing all divine and supernatural senses. The people of Nineveh open these gates through sight and hearing, as well as through all the other senses, by seeking to pursue bodily pleasures, which close the gates of God for humans, blocking their ears so they do not hear the judgment of God, shutting their eyes so they do not see wickedness, closing their nostrils so they do not inhale the first scent of temptation into the softening of their souls, closing their mouths to gluttony and restraining their hands from soft touch, so that their belly, inflamed with desire, does not force their burning soul into embraces with women. But those who are the people of God open their senses, that is, the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, so that the word of God may enter them. An example of evil gates is: You have exalted me from the gates of death. And an example of good gates is: That I may declare all your praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion (Ps. IX, 15). When you see someone who loves pleasures more than they love God, and is given to luxury, immediately say about them: He has opened the gates of his land to his enemies, for they do not open the gates to their soul's friends, but to their enemies they open the gates of the land of Nineveh. But if these who are considered the leaders of the people also do the same, you will not hesitate to say about them: The rulers of my people have been driven out of their luxurious houses. But if you see them indulging in pleasures and being hindered by excessive luxury, having no compassion for the poor, and not being concerned for the people of God, you will apply to them what follows: Those who sleep on ivory beds and revel in their pleasures, those who eat young goats from the flocks and calves from the herds, those who drink wine to excess and are anointed with the finest oils; but they do not care about the downfall of Joseph (Amos 6:4). Furthermore, what is said: Your stakes are devoured by fire, is as follows: If there was any natural good in your soul, which could protect and defend against enemies who were attempting to break through the gates of your senses, like stakes, it was consumed by the fire of Babylon. And also, draw for yourself the water of fortification, it is said from the speech of God, that it may surround itself with the strongest wall of the teachings and reasoning of Scriptures, so that the enemy may not be able to invade its innermost parts. Get, he says, your defenses. Whatever good you have by nature and the beginning of the best creator in you, oh unfortunate soul of Nineveh, hold on to for your defense, and do not allow the outflow from the ruling authority of the heart. But what is added after this: Walk (or cut) into the mud, and trample in the streets: perhaps someone else might think that it speaks of the soul, which, being fixed in the mud of the body and the husks of this world, of course empty and fleeting, is completely trampled by demons. But it seems to me

that this is said to her: Endure temptations, injuries, to which you are subject: the punishments you suffer are deserved; for if you tread upon the empty and fragile affairs of this world, you know that you sustain them for your remedy, if indeed you attain the mark and subjugate the flesh to the rule of the soul. Finally, it follows: There the fire shall consume you. If you are not on the mark, and do not have dominion over the flesh, but remain on the side, and love chaff, and live alongside the flesh in the fashion of the flesh, not only will the burning arrows of the enemy consume you; but his sword will also kill you, and whatever appeared green in you like locusts, and what was naturally producing good, will be consumed by the greedy tooth: and like a eating moth without flight: and burdened by its own weight: so too you, burdened by the weight of sins, are drawn down to the earth. Therefore, in order to avoid such things and endure such great things, you should multiply like a weevil, and have as many virtues as it has numbers. For you have multiplied your businesses and gathered riches by fair means and foul means, as if you desired to possess heavenly things, which are destined to perish. You should equal the multitude of your sins with the multitude of virtues. I had come close to understanding it according to the Hebrew text, up to the point where it says: The sun rose and they flew away, and the place where they were is not known. And I said what seemed to me in the context of the very discourse. Now because the LXX seem to have their own meaning, having set aside their testimony, I will follow the order of the explanation that has been begun.

LXX: The Bruchus attacked and flew away; it leapt out like your mixed-breed Attelabus, like a locust that rises above the hedge on a frosty day; the sun rose and it leapt out, and did not recognize its place. Woe to them. It seems to me that the multitude of Nineveh is without a ruler, mixed together without order, and wherever the rushing impulse takes it, it is compared to a bruchus, a small and innumerable animal, which appears to lift itself a little bit from the ground. But also the attelabus, which in Greek is called συμμικτός, and in Latin is translated as 'commixticius', is known among us as the common people gathered from different nations, that is, not citizens, but foreigners. Hence, it is said that the people of Israel who came out of Egypt had a great mixture, that is, Egyptians, Ethiopians, and various other nations. And here, so to speak, the mixed population of Nineveh is compared to the attelabus and the locust, which, during the day of cold when it cannot fly, remains in a hedge, and then, when the sun rises and warms it up, it leaps out and flies to other regions, completely forgetting the hedge where it had sat during the cold. These things have been said in a paraphrastic manner so that the speech of the prophet himself can be understood more easily. Nevertheless, you cannot doubt that the multitude of men, who travel along the broad way, moves about in the world like a caterpillar when you see them completely devoted to the earth, running around with the levity of opinion, and unable to fly to higher things. Behold Rome and Constantinople, changing their former name for poverty. See Alexandria, the head of Egypt, and when there is either a shortage of grain or (which is a shame and embarrassment) a riot stirred up on account of charioteers and mimes and actors, the people rush about like a caterpillar, attached to all vices with their levity, and fly here and there with the change of opinion in a single moment: then you can truly say: The caterpillar has gone away with a sudden attack and has flown off. Furthermore, what follows, the attelabus jumped out, and your mixticius like a locust, I think the difference between mixticius and bruchus is that bruchus is compared to an ignorant and countless multitude, while mixticius is collected from various nations. And just as some are citizens in cities and others foreigners who like to live in a city that is not their own, I believe mixticius is someone who lives in Nineveh, who seems to follow certain doctrines of

truth according to their own opinion, and in this regard they are better than bruchus because bruchus does nothing but always stays on the ground, without wings, serving only its food and belly. The attelabus, on the other hand, at least has small wings, and even though it cannot fly high, it still tries to jump out of the ground. And finally, when it reaches the locust, it does indeed fly, but its flight is not perpetual, for its feathers become weak, and it contracts from the cold, and the locust settles down, not on a fruitful tree with green leaves, but on a hedge, entwined with thorns and shrubs, or on a wall made up of random stones from here and there. Let us consider the wise men of Greece, and the Egyptians and Persians, and the Gymnosophists of India, and the Samaritans, and the various opinions among them: and the Jews, their Pharisees and Sadducees, and the many heresies of the Church, and we shall see a web being slightly raised from the ground, and a locust flying indeed, but not with full speed: and because it does not have the heat of the sun of justice, sitting in thorny bushes while charity towards God grows cold. For all their teachings, when they are cold and cannot fly, they find a seat and rest among the thorns of Aristotle and Chrysippus. From there Eunomius says: What is born did not exist before it was born. From there Manichaeus, in order to free God from the creation of evil, introduces another author of evil. From there Novatus withdraws forgiveness in order to remove repentance. And so, in conclusion, in a brief speech, they draw streams of all their arguments from those sources, in such a way that they even inscribe the places themselves from which the arguments are taken as titles. Therefore, this locust, which now sits in the bushes, when the time of judgment comes and the world heats up at the rising of the sun, will leave its seat and the places in which it clung during the time of cold; and, turned towards better things, it will not remember the previous seat. What we have said generally about the time of judgment can now be understood in part, so that through learned and wise men the light of justice may rise for such locusts; and leaving behind their thorns, they may fly into the pure and free air.

3:18-19

(Verse 18 onwards) Your shepherds have fallen asleep, O king of Assyria; your princes shall be buried, your people are scattered on the mountains. There is no one to gather them, your injury is not hidden, your wound is severe. All who hear of your downfall clap their hands over you, for against whom has your evil not passed continually? Septuagint: Your shepherds have fallen asleep; the king of Assyria has fallen asleep, your strong men have gone away, your people have gone up to the mountains, and there was no one to support them, and there is no cure for your injury, your wound is swollen. All who have heard your message will applaud you, because against whom does your malice never attack? It is not surprising if your shepherds have fallen asleep, O king of Assyria, who ruled over Nineveh, and may they be buried or wander, your princes, the little kings and the rulers of all nations who once served you: when the women of your people are in the midst of your city; and the gates of the city are open to your enemies, and a multitude sits on the wall like a swarm of locusts, which flees at the approach of the scorching sun, so will Nebuchadnezzar flee from the fortifications and turn his back on the enemy, and no place will be found for him. Therefore, angry with God, because you devastated His people, O Assyria, and exalted yourself even to the heavens, where you are said to have great understanding, your city is destroyed. And with all the princes slain, who could resist your adversaries, the rest of your people, weak and ignoble, are scattered in the mountains, and there is no leader to be found who can gather them together, and from those scattered, gather an army again. Your wound is not

hidden, nor is it such a blow that can be healed by the hand of physicians. All those who hear of the destruction of Nineveh and the defeat of the Assyrian king, and the once powerful city and its wounded and half-dead king, lying in his own blood and rolling around, will either be amazed at the greatness of the event and the unexpected news, and they will clasp their hands or, certainly, they will rejoice greatly and applaud you with their hands and make a joyful noise. For there is no one who can grieve over you and give tears to your destruction and wounds, because there is no one whom your malice does not always pass over. And it passes over beautifully: for the malice of the Assyrian king cannot always remain in his bones. Thus far let the order of the story be the text. But we must also, according to the Hebrew, before we discuss the Septuagint edition (for in that the meaning is far different and diverse), ascend a little from the story to the sublime, and teach that in the last prophecy of Nahum, a turning away is made to the devil, a great sense, the prince of the Assyrians, who once proudly said: By my strength I will do it, and by my wisdom I will remove the boundaries of nations, and I will break their powers, and I will shake the cities that are inhabited (Isaiah 10:13), and let it be said to him: O Lucifer, who used to rise in the morning, who used to send your flames to all the nations: how you have fallen to the earth, and you are shattered (Isaiah 14:12, 13)? Your beautiful and powerful city, Nineveh, has been destroyed, in which you presumed to have so much power that you dared to say to the Son of God: All these things have been given to me: if you fall down and worship me, I will give them to you (Matthew 4:9). Your shepherds and rulers slumbered, who did not feed the people for their salvation, but nourished them for your destruction, so that you could devour fatter sacrifices. Your entire population and the multitude of nations that once worshipped you have deserted you and your city, and have fled to the mountains, seeking refuge among the hiding places of the apostles of Christ and the learned, and in the meantime, none of your leaders are able to call back your once loyal followers. Your wound and your plague have spread throughout the whole world: all who were once deceived by your treachery have insulted you; for there is no one, or very few, whom you have not deceived at some point, and through whom your malice has not passed. And it should be noted that wherever the malice of the devil has stood, it cannot mock his downfall and wound, since it is from the shepherds and people of the king of Assyria; but wherever it passes, let it mock him, and let it resound upon his good and righteous works, as if the hands were clapping over him. And appropriately, according to the Hebrew, it has been said about the destruction of the world: in the end, it is also said about the devil himself, who was the prince of the world. For the world is placed in wickedness, it is proclaimed as a wound and a plague. But in the Septuagint it is still said to be mixed, that is, a mixture of the world, because its shepherds have slept and have been lulled to sleep by the Assyrian king; and thus it happens that while it is described among them what the Assyrian does among others, and not what he himself suffers, there is silence about the wound, plague, and killing of the devil. Woe therefore to those who are masters of perverse doctrines in Nineveh. And it is rightly said to them: Your shepherds have slumbered (Ps. CXXXI): for they have given sleep to their eyes, and slumber to their eyelids. And therefore they have not found a place for the Lord, nor a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. They have not heard of Ephrata, that is, the fruitful Church; nor have they found her in the thickets of the forests. But not only have the mixed shepherds of this generation, and the locusts, which, with impending frost, sit on the hedges, slumbered; but even the king of the Assyrians himself has been put to sleep. For the Assyrian king knows that he cannot deceive the sheep unless he first puts the shepherds to sleep. It is always the devil's endeavor to put to sleep vigilant souls. Finally, even in the Passion of the Lord, he

oppresses the eyes of the apostles with a deep sleep, whom the Savior awakens and says: Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation (Mark 14:38). And again: What I say to you, I say to all: Watch (Ibid., 13:37). And because he never stops putting to sleep those who are vigilant, whomever he deceives, and bewitches as with a sweet and pernicious song of the Sirens to make them sleep, the divine word awakens and says: Rise, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you (Ephesians 5:14). Therefore, with the arrival of Christ and the word of God and the teaching of the Church, and the destruction of Nineveh, once a beautiful prostitute, the people who had previously been asleep under their masters will be raised up and will hurry to the mountains of Scripture. There they will find the mountains of Moses and Joshua son of Nun; the mountains of the prophets; the mountains of the apostles and evangelists of the New Testament. And when they take refuge in such mountains and become skilled in their reading, if they do not find someone to teach them (for the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, Matt. IX, 37), then their zeal will be proven because they have sought refuge in the mountains, and the laziness of their teachers will be exposed: for they bring forth fruits, but there was no one to receive them. It follows: There is no healing for your fracture, your wound swells. Therefore, the mixed people of Nineveh cannot be healed, because they do not cast off their pride, and the wound is always fresh, and they are struck by the devil daily. And after all this, there is no healing for their fracture: although he may seem to be healthy, his soul is broken and crushed, struck by the hammer of the whole earth from above, and he is not healed, because he is always standing erect. But if he humbles himself and submits to Christ: God does not despise a contrite and humble heart (Ps. 50:19); And: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit. In the end it is said: All who have heard of you will clap their hands over you. Against whom does your wickedness not always rush? When it begins, O shameless one, to endure punishments, all who have heard of it, with harmonious clapping and vocal sound, and (so to speak) with the sound and harmony of actions, will insult you and rejoice. For there is no one, or certainly very few, into whom your malice has not rushed or has not come upon. For if the city of Nineveh has mixed shepherds and strong ones, and every false doctrine and deceitful opinion of knowledge comes from the mixture, it must be feared that there is no one upon whom the malice of the mixture has not come. And carefully observe, because it does not say: Into whom your malice has not entered, O mixture, but into whom it has not come upon. For often false dogmas shoot their arrows at us, and they desire to enter into the secret of the soul: but with us closing the gates, there certainly comes σμικτός (a mixed thing), and as much as it can, it rushes forth, and it always does this: but with the help of Christ the Lord, and with all watchfulness guarding (or preserving), our heart (Prov. IV), it does indeed rush forth, but it cannot enter.

Commentary on Obadiah

Commentary on the Prophet Obadiah

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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- 1:20-21 Prologue Prologue When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put away childish things (1 Corinthians 13). If the Apostle advances (or advanced) and, forgetting the past every day, stretches forward to what is ahead, and as according to the command of the Lord and Savior, he holds the plow and does not look back (Philippians 3; Luke 9): how much more should I, who have not yet reached the age of a perfect man, and have come to the measure of Christ (Ephesians 4), deserve forgiveness, because in my youth, provoked by zeal and enthusiasm for the Scriptures, I allegorically interpreted the prophecy of Obadiah, whose story I did not know. My soul was on fire with mystical knowledge, and because I had read that all things are possible for those who believe, I was ignorant of the different charisms: I knew the letters of the world, and for that reason I thought I could read a book with a sealed cover. How foolish I was, for the twenty-four elders holding golden bowls and harps, and the four living creatures full of eyes, rise up from their thrones and confess their ignorance, singing glory to the Lamb (Apoc. V), and from the root of Jesse's rod, and I thought I could do what I believed: in whose hand the Word of God did not take place, nor could I

say: I have understood your commandments (Ps. CXVIII): nor did I remember his Gospel of beatitude: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matt. V, 8). I had not yet been lifted up from the charcoal of the altar, and my lips had been cleansed (Isaiah VI, 8). Not yet had the error of old ignorance been circumcised by the fire of the Holy Spirit, and boldly I spoke to the Lord: Behold, here I am, send me. I hoped to hide in my little writings what I had written, and I had dedicated the first rashness of my talent to the fires, when suddenly a copy is brought from Italy by a certain young man, as many years as I had once written, praising my little work. I confess that I am amazed that no matter how badly someone writes, they find a reader like themselves. He boasted, I blushed: he carried the mystical understanding to heaven, I, with lowered head, was prevented from confessing my shame. So what then? Do we condemn the things we played with as children? No. For we know about the tabernacle of God and the gold and the goat's hair that were offered in the same way. We read in the Gospel (Mark 12) that two small coins of the poor widow were approved more than the possessions of the rich. And so we have given what we had, and now, if indeed we have made any progress, we give it back to the Lord. For by his grace I am what I am (I Cor. XV). I do not deny that I have sweated in his work and labor for these thirty years. Clement is a father: he receives his returning son quickly, and does not wait until someone opens the door: he himself goes out to meet him, prepares a ring and a robe; although the jealous brother may envy and call him a wastrel and a grandson, the symphony of Angelic joy and all virtues resound in heaven for his salvation (Luc. XV). This is that time, my Pammachus, sweeter than this light, when we, having left the school of the Rhetoricians, were being carried away by different pursuits, when Heliodorus, my dearest, and I were seeking to live together in the solitude of Chalcis in Syria ((in Alexandria we wanted)); what I thought was hidden, became known. I will again go through the old traces, correcting, if possible, the curved points of the letters. I was a child, I had not yet learned to write: my hand staggered, my fingers trembled. Now, that I have accomplished nothing else, at least I have this Socratic saying: I know that I do not know. Your own Tullius says that certain things, begun and unpolished, have fallen from him as a young man. If he could say this about those books addressed to Herennius, as opposed to the ones about Rhetoric, which I consider to be very complete, in comparison to his old expertise: how much more freely will I declare, both that to be a characteristic of youthful talent, and this of mature old age! In his books, Septimius Tertullianus also suffered the same thing against Marcion, as did Origen in the Song of Songs, and Quintilian in his twelve books of the Institutes of Oratory. From these, it is clearly shown that each age is perfect in its own, and should be judged by the number of years. But now it is time to propose the beginning of Obadiah, and with the help of your speeches, to cross the rough sea and the winding currents of the world.

(Vers. 1.)

(Verse 1.) The Vision of Obadiah. They say that this is the Hebrew who, during the reign of King Ahab of Samaria, fed a hundred prophets in caves, who did not bow their knee to Baal, and of the seven thousand who Elijah accused of not knowing (1 Kings 18), his tomb, along with the tomb of the prophet Elisha and John the Baptist, is venerated in Sebaste, which was once called Samaria. Herod, the king of Judea and son of Antipater, called it Augusta in honor of Augustus Caesar in the Greek language. Therefore, because he had raised up a hundred prophets, he received the gift of prophecy, and from the leader of the army, he became the leader of the Church. Then in Samaria, he had fed a small flock; now he feeds the Churches throughout the whole world, and, as

in the Acts of the Apostles, Stephen was crowned with martyrdom, so too this servant is called by the Lord. Moreover, the fact that he looks against Edom, does not see the burden, that is, the prophecy, and the weight of Edom according to the rule and distinction which we have written in Nahum, is due to the fact that either Edom, that is, Esau, is not reckoned among foreign nations, being the son of Isaac and brother of Jacob, whence his land is not given into the possession of Israel, nor is it allowed to wage war against it or to arm against his brother, or certainly it is a vision not of Edom, which he could have done if it were written so, but of Obadiah, that is, the servant of the Lord, whom he sees among the nations to whom the Lord sent a messenger. And to whom is it said: Rise up, and let us rise up against her in battle. For the destruction of Edom is the vision of Nahum. But if it is asked why it is placed in the title, Vision of Obadiah; and nothing afterwards that is seen is shown, according to that of Isaiah: I saw the Lord sitting upon a high and exalted throne (Isa. 6:1). And Ezekiel: The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God: and immediately it is added: And I saw, and behold a whirlwind spirit (taking away) came from the North, and a great cloud, and a brightness around it (Ezek. 1:1ff.); but after the vision of Obadiah it is immediately added: Thus says the Lord to Edom. And again: Behold, I have given you among the Gentiles, we will take an example from Deuteronomy, in which not things, but words are seen: Take heed to yourself, and keep your soul earnestly, lest you forget the words, which your eyes have seen (Deut. IV, 9). And John in his Epistle says: That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life (1 John I, 1). And Moses says that he saw the voice of the Lord speaking to him (Exod. XX). Therefore, if what was said afterwards is inferred from the vision, and what is usually perceived by the ears is seen by the eyes of the mind, the one who sees rightly, because the prophets were previously called seers, indicates the vision by the title.

Thus saith the Lord God to Edom: A small prophet, by the computation of verses, not of meanings. Otherwise as in the three volumes of Solomon, the Song of Songs is as much briefer, so much more difficult. And concerning the Epistle to Philemon, what meaning it would have, we have expressed. Likewise, the Gospel discourse, when abbreviated, is narrower than the word of the Law with its lengthy works. Thus this prophet also, like a servant of the Lord, near Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses the servant of God, and the word of Christ as an apostle, sees and hears those things which are worthy of prophetic service. Many believe, according to the interpretation of the name, that this servant is the Lord, to whom it is said in Isaiah: 'It is a great thing for you to be called my servant' (Isa. XLIX, 6, sec. LXX), who emptied himself taking the form of a servant (Phil. I). But if we understand this in such a way, we must seek another envoy who is sent to the nations. And while we follow typology, we lose the most obvious prophecy. Therefore, we ask who this Edom or Idumea is, to which the Lord is now speaking through Obadiah. In the book of Genesis, we read that Esau, the son of Isaac, was called Edom because he sold his birthright for a red lentil stew (Gen. XXV). Edom is interpreted as 'red' in Greek. In the same book, it is written that he was also called Seir, meaning 'hairy', because he was rough and did not have the smoothness of Jacob. Therefore, he is called by three names: Esau, Edom, and Seir. He possessed the region that is now called Gebalena, which is located in the land of the Horites, who were called 'free people'. Hence, the city itself was later named after them. Therefore, what is called Edom in Hebrew () and Idumaea in Greek is now a small village in Palestine, named by its founder. Its Latin and Greek names are also mentioned in history. This is the place that Amos refers to when he says: 'For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not revoke its punishment, because he

pursued his brother with the sword and cast off all pity, and his anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.' (Amos 1:11). In Isaiah, we also read according to the Hebrew: The burden of Dumah calls to me out of Seir: Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? (Isa. XXI, 11). And Jeremiah, in the same prophecy, agrees with the same voice, saying: Is there no more wisdom in Teman? (Jer. LIX, 9). And so on to the end of his prophecy, where it is said: And the heart of the mighty men of Edom in that day shall be as the heart of a woman in labor. And with the order changed, and other things that seem to disagree, a great part of Obadiah is included in the volume of Jeremiah. These are the mountains of Seir against which the face of Ezekiel is strengthened, and it is said: I will make the mountain of Seir desolate and deserted. And a little later: You will be scattered, O mountain of Seir, and all of Edom. It is a long endeavor if I were to thoroughly elaborate on all the Scriptures and present them in detail concerning the mountains of Seir, especially Malachi, where it is immediately written at the beginning: Was not Esau Jacob's brother, says the Lord? Yet I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau. And I will make its mountains a desolation and its inheritance a dwelling place for dragons. And if Edom shall say: We are destroyed, but we will rebuild the desolate places. Thus says the Lord of hosts: They shall build, and I will destroy, and they shall be called the borders of wickedness, and the people whom the Lord is angry with forever. Therefore, since we have learned that the land of Edom is an adversary to the promised land, and Esau is an enemy to Jacob, and a people whom the Lord is angry with forever, we must understand according to the laws of tropology that this speech was made either against the Jews (who are rivals to Christians and persecute their brother Jacob, the supplanter of the firstborn), or certainly against all heresies and doctrines contrary to the truth, which may indeed seem close to us, but actually are adversaries and strive to expel the simple and inhabitant of the house of Jacob from their paternal inheritance. Furthermore, because Idumaea is interpreted as earthly, and because the color red can also be understood as bloody, therefore the Savior, accomplishing victory over the world, when the angels cried out, 'Lift up your gates, O rulers, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may enter' (Psalm 24:7). And in Isaiah they wonderingly asked, 'Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this beautiful one in his splendid robe?' (Isaiah 63:1-3). And they were speaking of the very same thing: Why is your garment red, and your attire like those treading in the winepress? He speaks in triumph, spreading the palms of his cross: I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the nations there is no man with me. There are those who refer Idumea to the flesh, and against its battle they think the soul is provoked, so that by mortifying our bodies upon the earth, we may attain eternal victory in Christ, conquering fornication, impurity, passion, and every evil of the flesh. The Jews dream in vain about this prophecy against the city of Rome and the Roman Empire, that it will come to pass; and that which is written in Isaiah, 'The Burden of Dumah,' with a slight change of the letter apex, can be read as 'The Res,' and it sounds like 'Rome': for the letter Vau is accepted by their language as a substitute for u and o.

We have heard a report from the Lord, and a messenger has been sent to the nations: Arise, and let us rise up against him in battle. LXX: I have heard a report from the Lord, and a message has been sent among the nations: Arise, and let us rise up against him in battle. Now, as we have said before, Edom is the same as Idumea, because in Hebrew the one who founded it is called Edom, and in Greek the city founded by him is named. Therefore, either Obadiah heard it, or all the prophets together heard it (for they all write against Edom) that a messenger has been sent to the nations, the mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, about whom the Father also

speaks through Haggai: I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations shall come (Haggai 2:8). This is written in Isaiah, the Angel of great counsel and the Father of the future age (Isa. IX). But what is translated as 'legation,' that is, Sir (), the Septuagint translated as 'περιούχιον,' that is, 'fortress,' we can say that he himself is our ambassador and he himself is our stronghold, saying the things that the prophetic word has woven together: Arise, and let us rise up against him, or her, in battle. The ambassador who is sent to the nations speaks these words: Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you (Ephes. V, 14). In order that this battle may perhaps not seem burdensome and unusual to us (or you), you have me at first in the front line, says he. I will be the commander-in-chief of the battles, who also appeared wielding a sword before Jesus son of Nun: and I overcame Amalek under the banner of my cross while Moses was fighting (Exodus XVII). Jeremiah in a vision against Edom does not differ much from these: I have heard by hearing, says he, from the Lord, and a messenger has been sent to the nations: gather together and come against it, and let us rise up to battle (Jeremiah XLIX, 14). Sequitur:

1:2-3

(Version 2, verse 2) Behold, I have made you a little one among the nations: you are very contemptible. The pride of your heart has lifted you up, dwelling in the clefts of the rock, exalting your throne, saying in your heart: Who will bring me down to the ground? If you elevate yourself like an eagle, and if you place your nest among the stars: from there I will bring you down, says the Lord. LXX: Behold, I have made you a little one among the nations: you are very dishonored. The pride of your heart has lifted you up, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, exalting your dwelling and saying in your heart: Who will bring me down to the ground? Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the Lord. Jeremiah, of whom we have mentioned above, agrees in almost the same words, saying: Behold, I have made you small among the nations; you are utterly despised among mankind. Your arrogance has deceived you, and the pride of your heart, you who live in the clefts of the rock, who strive to grasp the height of the hill: though you soar aloft like the eagle, from there I will bring you down, declares the Lord. In prophetic interpretation, we must follow our custom, that first we lay the foundations of history, and then, if possible, we raise lofty towers and the peaks of roofs. 'O Edom,' He says, 'though you are the least among all the nations around, and small in comparison to the other peoples, you rise up in arrogance beyond your strength. And though you dwell in caves, or rather in the rocky caverns, humble and poor, and not possessing the lofty roofs of buildings, you are lifted up as an eagle to the heights, and you swell with such pride in your thoughts, that you believe yourself to dwell among the stars. Even if you could penetrate the heights of the heavens beyond nature, I would bring you down from there and bring you to the earth,' says the Lord God. But what is added in Jeremiah, and which you strive to understand, reveals the height of the hill, representing Mount Zion, and through this either the city of Jerusalem itself or the temple built within it. As for the eagle, it is known by those who discuss the nature of birds that it flies higher than all other birds. It is said to have such a keen sight that while it soars above the motionless sea with its steady wings, it can see fish swimming from such a great height and, when they are near the shore, descend like a weapon and drag its captured prey with its wings to the shore. If we learn history, let us follow spiritual intelligence. Although you, o heretic, may seem great and despise the smallness of the Church, you are nonetheless small among the nations, and contemptible, and not only contemptible, but also very contemptible with arrogance.

The pride of your heart has lifted you up. For who among heretics is not lifted up in pride, despising the simplicity of the Church and considering faith as ignorance? Dwelling in the clefts of the rock, and exalting his throne. Although the rock is often seen as representing the Lord Himself or His steadfastness (hence the prophet says, He set my feet upon a rock (Ps. XXXIX, 5)) and is also said to Peter, You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church (Mat. I, 8), yet it is often interpreted in the opposite sense: I will take away the stony heart, and will give you a heart of flesh (Ezek. XXXVI, 26). And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham (Matt. 3:9). Especially here, where it does not say dwelling upon the rock, upon which the wise builder builds his house, but in the clefts of the rock, in order to signify the heresies that arise from Christ the rock and from the Church. Moreover, what follows, 'Exalting your throne,' and, 'Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand?' reveals the arrogance of a heretical mind, confident in its mysteries and its secrets, and insofar as it is able (but we should take this hyperbolically) promising itself the kingdoms of heaven. Where the Apostle writes to such people: 'Now you reign without us, and I wish you would reign, so that we may also reign with you' (I Cor. IV, 8). So also David speaks: 'They have set their mouth in heaven, and their tongue has passed through the earth' (Psalm LXXII, 9). If therefore they are exalted, like the eagle (for they also promise themselves a likeness to eagles, which are accustomed to gather around the Lord's body), and if they have set their nest among the stars, from there I will bring them down, says the Lord. For just as a father of a family, while sleeping, an enemy man oversows darnel among good seed (Matthew 13): so does that great eagle, (Ezekiel 17, 3), with its large wings, long body members, full of feathers and variety, which has the way of entering into Lebanon, and takes from the top of the cedar, and plants on many waters, so that shoot out into a vineyard, as plantings among the stars of the Church, concerning which it is also said in another place: But the just shall shine as the brightness of the firmament (Matthew 13, 43), they shall set their nest. I said above that this very thing, contrary to the flesh, can be understood as its strength being diminished in the coming of Christ, and it is contemptible, subject to the soul's rule, and is in vain exalted when it dwells in the caves of the rock, either in our senses or in our thoughts, and it desires to dominate the soul, exalting its own throne, and not believing that its works can be overcome. It is said to this, that although it exalts itself and imitates the lofty eagle, and deceives many of the saints, nevertheless it is overcome and cast down by the Lord. What we understand in heretics and in the flesh can also be understood against the Jews.

1:4-6

(Verse 4 onwards) If thieves entered your house, or robbers at night, how would you remain silent? Wouldn't they have stolen enough for themselves? If grape harvesters entered your vineyard, wouldn't they at least leave some grapes for you? How deeply they searched, how thoroughly they investigated his hidden places! Septuagint: If thieves entered your house, or robbers at night, where would you hide? Wouldn't they have stolen enough for themselves? And if grape harvesters came to you, would they not leave some grapes? How Esau has been searched, and his hidden things have been discovered? Similarly Jeremiah, though with the order changed: If grape harvesters had come upon you, would they not leave some grapes? If thieves came at night, they would surely take what is enough for themselves. But I have uncovered Esau, I have revealed his hidden things, and they cannot hide (Jer. XLIX, 9, 10). What he is saying is this: If

thieves and robbers who are accustomed to digging up houses during the night and stealing what is in the houses had entered your house, and, hidden in darkness, had searched through the corners of your house, surely they would have taken what they thought could suffice for themselves, and would have left something in your house, either from satiety or from ignorance. If grape gatherers had entered your vineyard, and if they wanted to either destroy it hostilely or harvest it because they were hired by you, even if their grape harvest had been diligent, still they would have left behind grapes hidden among the vines and leaves, among the stems. But all the enemies, who came to you at the command of the Lord (meaning the Babylonians and the army of Nebuchadnezzar), have searched all your secrets, and have explored the caves, and the openings of the caves, where you dwell. And truly, to say something about the nature of the place, the entire southern region of the Edomites, from Eleutheropolis to Petra, and Aila (which is the possession of Esau), has little dwellings in the caves. And because of the excessive heat of the sun, since it is a southern province, it makes use of underground dwellings. 'I have discovered,' he says, 'Esau, that is, what was pressed down on the ground I have brought out into the open, and everything that you were keeping closed up has been revealed, and while I was seeking your substance along with your enemies, no secrets could be hidden.' Otherwise, I think that thieves and robbers, who enter at night, because they are children of the night and of darkness, are heretics, preaching doctrines contrary to the truth, who steal enough for themselves and hasten to snatch away from the flocks of the Church daily. Those who enter the vineyard of our Lord (Psalm 79), which he transferred from Egypt of this age, and from whose offspring he promises to drink wine in the kingdom of the Father, desire everything to be shared, so that hardly any grapes are left on it. But on the contrary, the Lord acts: for all their secrets and hidden mysteries, and the craftiness of the patriarchs Esau (these are indeed the ones who first discovered heresies), he brings forth into the open through his saints and Churchmen and learned teachers, and his first victory is to reveal what was hidden and secret. And when it is said with admiration, 'How did Esau search out and discover his hidden secrets?' Look at Marcion and Valentinus, and all heretics, how in the teachings of demons, having seared consciences, they applaud themselves, and by composing deceptive speeches, they lead astray simple souls as if initiating them into divine mysteries. But when they bring forth in their discourse the thirty aeons, and the square and octad and twelfth and dualistic god, and the monstrous Abraxas, then the wisdom of Esau will be shown to be foolishness, and his secrets will be revealed.

1:7

(Verse 7) All the men of your covenant have sent you to the borders, they have mocked you, the men of your peace have prevailed against you, those who eat with you have set a trap under you: there is no wisdom in him. 70: They have sent you to the borders: all the men of your covenant have resisted you, the men of your peace have prevailed against you: they have set a trap under you: there is no wisdom in him. As we explained earlier, when Esau searched and discovered his hidden things, they are distinguished to the borders: so the meaning is that your hidden and secret things have been revealed to the borders. But it seems better to us that he be joined with those who came later. Therefore, when Nebuchadnezzar came (of whom it is said in Jeremiah against Edom: Behold, like a lion he will ascend from the pride of the Jordan to the strong beauty, because I will make him run suddenly to it (Jer. 49:19): And then: Behold, like an eagle he will ascend and fly, and will spread his wings over Bozrah, and the heart of the mighty men of Edom will be like the

heart of a woman in labor on that day (ibid. 49:22)), all those who were previously allied with Edom and had been in the garrison of the most proud city, left him and joined the enemies against him, and set traps for him: and they prevailed against him, and then it was made known that there was no wisdom in Edom: while he hoped in those who were shown to be his adversaries. Otherwise: When the hidden things of Esau, and as it were magnificent sacraments, by which previously the people had been ensnared, have been brought forth into the midst, so that the ecclesiastical man is able to say: For we are not ignorant of his cunning (2 Cor. 2), they will leave the borders of Edom, and abandon him, and migrating as far as the borders of the Church, they will bring forth the most wicked doctrines. Then they will mock and resist their former teacher, saying that what they had learned is false: they will prevail against him, and the learned ones in the faith of the Church will refute the false doctrine. Those who once ate with heretics will pose questions about the Scriptures, They will lay snares for the Idumean and the worldly, and they will be carnal in all things before the fleshly teacher (for we read about heresies that are counted among the works of the flesh in Galatians 5), and then it will be shown that there is no understanding in Edom.

1:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, destroy the wise out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? And thy mighty men shall be dismayed, O Teman, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter. Septuagint: In that day, saith the Lord, I will destroy the wise out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau. And thy mighty men, O Theman, shall be afraid, that every one from the mount of Esau may be cut off by destruction. When thy despoilers have seized thy borders, and all the men of thy league have mocked thee and have acquired strength against thee: then shall wisdom perish out of Edom and his subtlety shall be made foolishness. Moreover, the Lord will also take away prudence from Mount Esau, that is, from the mountains of Seir, either because the city of Idumea is situated on the mountain, or because all that region which borders on the south is desert, situated high on the mountains. Hence it is also said: Your warriors will be afraid, O Theman, which we interpret as the south. However, as I said above, Esau is called by three names: and likewise, the region of his kingdom, which borders on the south, is called by three names, Darom, Theman, Nageb, which all, according to Ezekiel, signify the south, the west, and the south. But when the strong men of his kingdom who dwelt in the South shall truly fear, then a man from the mountain of Esau, who both used to fight for the city and to wisely give counsel, shall perish. Otherwise: After those who were previously deceived have been converted to the Church, then, with the Lord Himself fighting, the wise men of Edom, who had a taste for worldly and earthly things, shall perish, and wisdom shall be taken away from the mountain of Esau, which was exalted against the knowledge of God. And those who previously fought for Esau and the dialectical art of Edom, and were in the garrisons of Teman, which means completion, will cease to fight for their former masters. Whether those who had promised themselves the light of knowledge and thought they were at noon, will fear and be afraid, with a scholarly man mastering their sophistries: to such an extent that no one will remain who is able to fight, either with the counsel of the king or with warrior men, against the pride and false teaching of the heretics.

1:10-11

(Verse 10, 11.) Because of the killing and (the Vulgate adds 'because of') the wickedness against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall perish forever. On the day when you stood against him, when strangers captured his army and foreigners entered his gates, and they cast lots for Jerusalem: you were also like one of them. LXX: Because of the killing and wickedness against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be taken away forever. From the day that you stood against him, when foreigners captured his strength and strangers entered his gates, they cast lots over Jerusalem, and you were also like one of them. Therefore, a man from the mountain of Esau will perish, and wisdom will be destroyed from Edom, and understanding from the mountain of Esau, because you have killed your brother and acted unjustly against Jacob, when the Chaldeans and Babylonians laid waste to Jerusalem, besieged the city, entered its gates, and cast lots for its treasures. You were their ally and counted among the enemies. Otherwise: you, bloody, earthly, ruthless Edom, will suffer all the things that have been written above, because you have killed your brother Jacob, speaking false and deadly doctrine and speaking impiety against the Lord. We read in Solomon: There are those who speak and kill with the sword (Prov. 25:18). And in another place: The venom of asps is under their lips (Ps. 140:4). And, Their tongue is a sharp sword (Ps. 56:5). Therefore, shame will cover you, and you will say: Shame has covered my face (Ps. 69:8), and you will perish, not for a short time, but forever. For you struck your brother with an eternal wound. But this will also be the cause of torment: for when foreigners were devastating the army of Jacob and entering through its gates into the formerly peaceful Jerusalem, and casting lots to divide its spoils among themselves, you were one of the enemies. We read, we see, and we daily experience that when persecution arises against the Church, the persecutors of Jews and heretics become much worse towards Christians than towards pagans. We can bring foreign ingredients through the gates of Jerusalem, that is, speak evil thoughts, and through the gates of Jerusalem, that is, the soul at rest and seeing God, interpret the five senses through which the enemies enter and divide Jerusalem. If we see a woman to lust after her (Matt. 5), death has entered through our windows (Jer. 9): if we receive lies and the judgement of blood through our ears, the enemy has entered through another gate. Also, the sense of smell, taste, and touch, if it has been captivated by various odors, sweet food, or delicate embraces, enter through other gateways, and divide the spoils of miserable Jerusalem. Therefore, at that time when someone falls from the Church due to the onslaught of persecution and deadly pleasures, we see heretics rejoicing, Jews being glad, and them being counted among the persecutors and included in the number of the Gentiles.

1:12

(Verse 12.) And do not despise the day of your brother in the day of his journey. And do not rejoice over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction, and do not boast in the day of distress; nor enter the gate of my people in the day of their ruin. LXX: And do not despise the day of your brother in the day of strangers. And do not rejoice over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; and do not speak proudly in the day of distress; nor enter the gates of the nations in the day of their labors. The same sentiment as above: When the man from Mount Esau is destroyed, on account of his killing and wickedness towards his brother Jacob, and eternal confusion covers him, he will by no means do what he did before against his brother; for he will not despise or scorn, seeing his brother go into captivity; nor will he rejoice over the sons of Judah. Indeed, two tribes, except for the Levitical, which reigned in Jerusalem and were called Judah,

were captured by the Chaldeans. And you will not boast greatly, and thinking yourself to be one of the victors, you will laugh at the distress of your brother. Nor on the day of the devastation and ruin of the people, will you walk through the gate of Jerusalem with glory. And for this reason, you will not do these things, because you will suffer similar. Otherwise, when you see your brother taken captive by different persecutions, and being led away bound from the faith of the Church, not pursuing his own city, but all foreign things, you will not rejoice at all, because you will suffer similar. For you rejoiced when Jacob was captured and when the sons of Judah, whom we understand to be the disciples of Christ, were brought low on the day of their destruction. It is signified, however, that the soul is placed in the midst of vices and virtues, and can be turned in either direction in the space of a moment. 'You shall not magnify your mouth on the day of distress,' he says. This we should understand in two senses: the bodily distress in persecutions and sins, and the spiritual distress when the soul, captured by its enemies and vices, is led into Babylon. Nor shall you enter the gate of my people on the day of their ruin: for when either denial or pleasure oppresses us, and an unfortunate conscience does not preserve the former rigor, then we easily slip into contrary doctrines, flattering our error and not caring for the wound, but touching it. It is a solace of misery, although lost, to have something to hope for.

1:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) And you shall not despise them in their adversities on the day of their destruction, and you shall not send forth your army against them on the day of their destruction. And you shall not stand at the exits to kill those who flee, and you shall not capture the survivors on the day of their distress. LXX: And you shall not despise even their assembly on the day of their ruin, and you shall not put your strength against them on the day of their ruin. And you shall not stand at their retreats to kill those who have been saved from them, and you shall not capture their fugitives on the day of their trouble. When you yourself have been captured and destroyed by the Babylonian, among the other things that you have done, do not do the following: Do not despise or scorn your brother Jacob on the day of his devastation; do not join the army of the Babylonians or fail to send against the army of Judah when it has been defeated by the enemy and turns its back. And when they start fleeing along their familiar paths, detours, and roads leading to the wilderness, do not stand at the crossroads or wait for them at the intersections to kill those who have been set free and to release the others who have been captured; and either you yourself will be captured or you will keep watch over the captives of the enemy. We have said these things according to history: for we must briefly grasp the clearer things, and proceed to those which are obscure. Who despises the ecclesiastics of heretics? Who does not rejoice in their misfortunes, if at any time they are handed over to persecution due to the sins of the people, and many, either weak in faith or sown on stony ground, fall into denial? You may see them rejoicing, finding pleasure, considering our downfall as their own victory: to such an extent that they join with the nations, and a more furious persecution arises, either from the Jews or from those who pretend to be our brothers and are considered by the same name. And when someone, whether by flight or by repentance, has escaped, they stand in the byways and propose sophisms and testimonies, as if they were presenting them from the Scriptures: so that, worn out and exhausted, they offer stitched pillows and place them under every elbow. And thus it happens that those who perhaps have overcome persecution either by strength or by fear, deceived by false teachings, are held again in the prison of errors, and this tribulation becomes much worse than that which was from the Gentiles; for it is

easier to free someone captured by pagans than one entrapped by the tricks of heretics.

1:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) For the day of the Lord is near upon all nations: as thou hast done, so shall it be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the nations drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been. LXX: For the day of the Lord is near upon all nations: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, all the nations shall drink wine continually: they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been. But you, O Idumea, will cease to do these things because the vengeance of the Lord will come upon you. For if, according to Jeremiah, they who were not deserving of judgment drank from the cup, you, though innocent, will not be left innocent, but you will drink. Furthermore, what he says, 'The day of the Lord is near against all nations,' let us read the same in Jeremiah, and we will see the cup of the Lord being passed to all nations. Where it is said in the same: The golden cup Babylon in the hand of the Lord making all nations drunk. Indeed, the Assyrians and Babylonians held all the nations as far as the Propontis, the Scythian Sea, and the Ionian or Aegean Sea. Let us read Herodotus, and Greek and barbarian histories, and we shall see how this which is said, 'The day of the Lord is near upon all nations,' was fulfilled among the Babylonians and Assyrians. But what follows, 'As you have done, it shall be done to you; your recompense shall return upon your own head,' has the same meaning as we read in the Psalm: 'Remember, O Lord, the sons of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, when they said, 'Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations!' (Psalm 137:7 et seqq.)' Therefore, the prophet curses Babylon by saying: 'Daughter of Babylon, miserable one! Blessed is he who will repay you according to your deeds, which you have done to us. Blessed is he who seizes and dashes your little ones against a rock. Just as you have drunk with the Babylonians on my holy mountain, Zion, and rejoiced, so all the nations that the Babylonians had as allies will turn against you and drink, and they will rejoice.' Not only will they drink your blood, but they will suck you in so much that the Edomites will be as if they were not: or at least the same nations, when they will have sucked you in, will be sucked in by the Medes, and this revenge will proceed in a circle, so that you, Israel, the Babylonian, will consume Babylon, the Medes, and the Persians. Let us follow the order of interpretation. The day of the Lord is near, O heretic, over all nations: the time of judgment is near when all nations will be judged. Just as you have done against the church, your pain will turn against you, and your wickedness will descend upon your head. For how you have rejoiced in their death, and celebrated a feast, and on my holy mountain, that is, the Church, you have drunk not from my cup, but from the devil's: of whom it is said in Habakkuk, 'Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk' (Habakkuk 2:15): so too, all the nations, or opposing powers subjected to punishment, or every opposing virtue, will drink and consume your blood, and in the end, when torment comes upon all, they themselves will be as if they do not exist. For he who perishes, is counted as not being, and he who said to Moses: I am who am sent me to you (Exod. III, 14), according to the rule of the Scriptures, is said not to be. Hence, we also read in Esther: Do not give, O Lord, your kingdom to those who are not (Esth. XIV, 11). We can interpret this passage differently: Because you have rejoiced in the ruin of my servants, the same persecution will come against you also, and you will suffer for whatever you have done. And just as you rejoiced against my people with the

rest of the nations, so all nations will rejoice against you, and they will devour and drink, and crush with a similar persecution.

1:17-18

In mount Zion, there will be salvation, and it will be holy and possess the house of Jacob, those who possess it. And the house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau straw. They will set them on fire and consume them, and there will be no survivors in the house of Esau, for the Lord has spoken. The Septuagint version: In mount Zion there will be salvation, and it will be holy, and possess the house of Jacob, those who possess it. And the house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, but the house of Esau will be stubble; they will set them on fire and consume them. There will be no survivor for the house of Esau, for the LORD has spoken. The land of Edom will be a devastation; every ally will plunder it and there will be no survivors from it, for the LORD has spoken. The survivors of the house of Jacob will possess the land of Mount Zion. There will be deliverance and holiness, and the house of Jacob will possess their inheritance. The LORD Himself will return to the temple, which He had previously forsaken because of their sins, or it will be completely holy, that is, the Holy of Holies. And the house of Jacob shall possess Zorobabel, and Esdras, and Nehemiah, those who have inherited. And the house of Jacob, that is, Judah, shall be fire, and the house of Joseph, that is, the ten tribes, shall be flame. For from Joseph was born Ephraim, from which tribe the kingdom of Samaria arose; but the house of Esau, that is, the Edomites, who were so fierce and cruel against their brother, shall be turned into stubble. And just as fire and flame quickly devour stubble, so the two kingdoms under the rod of one alliance, according to the book of Ezekiel (Ezek. XVII), shall lay waste to Edom and consume it, and there shall be no remnant of the people who can announce the overthrow of their adversaries to neighboring nations. This is indeed what the LXX translated as πυροφάνρον, which we render as Frumentarium, according to the language of ancient discourse; for they called those who are now called Agentes in rebus or Veredarios, the Ancient Frumentarios. But it is better to follow the Hebrew itself, that is, Sarid (), which means either remaining, according to Aquila, or escaping, according to Symmachus, or according to Theodotion and the fifth edition, residue. But all these things will be done because the Lord has spoken, and what He has commanded, He has done. Otherwise: With the works of the flesh destroyed, and the earthly rule laid waste, there will be salvation in the Church for those who have not come forth from their mother. And in her will dwell the holy one, of whom it is said in Isaiah: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts (Isaiah 6:3), for both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are from one. And the house of the supplanter Jacob will possess those who had possessed themselves as heirs, making Christians out of the persecutors, and receiving even the Edomites into the faith of the Church. But the house of Esau will be turned into stubble. And just as fire cannot sustain the proximity of straw, so the argument of Jacob, which is inflamed by the word of the Lord, cannot be sustained: for the words of the Lord are tested by fire (Ps. 17:31), and the flame of Joseph, who is interpreted as 'increase' (Gen. 37), because he was sold to his brothers and fed the people in Egypt, will not be able to sustain the house of Esau: but at the first encounter, their sophisms will be turned to nothing. And they will be devoured for their own salvation, according to what is said in the blessing of Isaac to Esau: 'But I have made him your lord, and have subjected all his brothers to him as his servants: and with grain also will you serve your brother' (Gen. 27:37). And there shall be no remnant of the house of Esau, when all things

shall bow to Christ, of those in heaven and on earth, and under the earth (Philippians 2), and all things shall be subjected to him, so that God may be all in all. But because Esau had built upon the foundation of Christ with hay, wood, and straw (1 Corinthians 3): therefore the house of Jacob and Joseph shall be turned into fire and flame, imitating their Lord who says: I am a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24), so that the pure wheat may be gathered into the barns after the chaff of sinners is consumed. All the things we have said, and all the things we are about to say, the Jews promise for themselves in the future, when they will accept the Antichrist instead of Christ, fulfilling the prophecy of the Lord Savior: 'I came in the name of my Father, and you did not receive me: if another comes in his own name, you will receive him' (John 5:43). And whatever we have interpreted against Edom, they dream against the Roman kingdom: what we say is either already fulfilled according to history under Zorobabel, or certainly according to prophecy, and mystical understandings happen daily in the Church, and are fulfilled in the kingdom of the soul against the flesh, in each individual. But we say that the frumentarium, according to the allegory, ceases among heretics when there is no one among them who boasts of having the grain of wheat, which is dead in the earth, and the bread from heaven. There are those who think that it is not πυρφορον, that is, frumentarium, but πυρφορον, that is, one who can carry a little fire, as translated by the Seventy. Therefore, agreeing with the various interpretations, we will say according to the allegory that not only the frumentarium will cease among heretics, but also the one who pretends to have the light of Christ. For even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11).

1:19

(Verse 19) And those who are in the South shall inherit the possessions of Esau, and those in the plains shall inherit the possessions of the Philistines. They shall possess the region of Ephraim and the region of Samaria, and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. LXX: And those in the Negeb shall possess the mountain of Esau, and those in the Shephelah shall possess the foreigners, and they shall possess the mountain of Ephraim and the plain of Samaria, and Benjamin and Gilead. And Judah, who dwelt in the South and possessed the entire region according to the division made by Joshua the son of Nun, which extends toward the Scorpion, that is, toward all the Acrabatene, those who were previously confined to narrow boundaries shall possess the mountain of Esau, that is, the mountains of Seir and the mountains that Edom previously possessed. But those who dwell in Sephela, that is, in the plains, namely Lidda and Emmaus, the city of Diospolis, and Nicopolis, shall possess the Palestinians, five cities of the Palestinians: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath, or all that region which is called Sharon in the Acts of the Apostles. Others, however, think that this Sephela, that is, the region around Eleutheropolis, is promised: that they should extend as far as Rhinocolura and the sea, that is, not only hold Eleutheropolis from the tribe of Judah, but also reach the coast, and subject the Philistines to their rule, whom they had not previously subdued. The border of the sons of Judah will also extend to Ephraim, where Neapolis is now, and to the region of Samaria, where Sebaste is founded. But Benjamin, whose borders immediately extend northward from Jerusalem, will possess all of Arabia, which was formerly called Gilead and is now called Gerasa. According to the Septuagint, those who will be in the south will possess Mount Ephraim, the plains of Samaria, Benjamin, and Gilead. Whether this has been fulfilled, God alone knows; it could have been completed in part up until the coming of Christ over a period of five hundred years. As I am absolutely certain, it is being fulfilled daily and

confirmed in the kingdom of the Church. For those who dwell in the south, that is, in Negeb, and live in the light, and those who hold the plains and the lowlands, that is, his disciples, to whom he says: Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart (Matt. X, 24), they shall possess the mountain of Esau and the Philistines: whom we can understand in the person of the pagans on account of the pride of their teachings and secular eloquence. So that on the mountain there are teachers, in the Philistines, and foreign disciples, who are led by the authority of the teachers. And not only the mountain of Esau and the strangers, but also the region of Ephraim and Samaria will possess. We often read about Ephraim and Samaria in Hosea, and we have interpreted them in the heresies that divide the Church under the name of Christianity. For it is there that abundance is hoped for, and there they promise to safeguard the faith. Furthermore, Benjamin, the son of the right hand and virtue, will possess Gilead, which is interpreted as the migration of testimony, signifying the carnal Israel: for from them the testimony of the Lord has migrated to us. But Benjamin and Gilead, those who were in the south, will possess it, according to the Septuagint.

1:20-21

(Verse 20, 21.) And the migration of his army, the sons of Israel: all the Canaanites as far as Zarephath (or Saraptam). And the migration of Jerusalem, which is in the Bosphorus, will possess the cities of the South. And the saviors will ascend Mount Zion, to judge the mountain of Esau: and the kingdom will be the Lord's. LXX: And this is the beginning of the migration for the children of Israel: the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, and the migration of Jerusalem as far as the Euphrates, will possess the cities of the Negeb. And those who were saved shall ascend from Mount Zion, to punish the mountain of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's. In this place, our translation differs greatly from the Vulgate Edition, so we must follow the Hebrew truth in the exposition of the story. Those who returned from Babylon according to the volume of Ezra and Nehemiah shall be rightly called the migration. The whole army of the children of Israel shall possess the Edomites, the Philistines, the mountain of Ephraim, and Samaria to the south, west, and north. Benjamin also, because it is adjacent to solitude, will specifically obtain Gilead. However, all the things that are in the land of the Canaanites, will be ruled as far as Zarephath of the Sidonians, where the widow once fed Elijah (4 Kings 7). Moreover, those who were transferred from the very city of Jerusalem to Sapharad, which we translate as the Bosphorus, will possess the cities of the South, which are in the tribe of Judah: for they have returned to their city, they will obtain those things that are near to the city. And when these things have been accomplished, just as in the book of Judges, the Lord sent saviors who would save the people from captivity: so they will ascend and come to Mount Zion, to judge and discern, like a subject and obedient mountain to themselves, the mountain of Esau, that is, the Edomites. And once all are subjugated, there will be a kingdom for the Lord. Where we have placed Bosphorus, in Hebrew it has Sapharad (), which I do not know why the Septuagint wanted ((or could)) to translate as Ephratha, since Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion all agree with the Hebrew truth. But we have learned from the Hebrew, who instructed us in the holy Scriptures, that the Bosphorus is called thus: and, like a Jew, he says: this is the region to which Hadrian transferred the captives. Therefore, when our Christ comes, that captivity will also return to Judea. However, we can understand any place of the kingdom of Babylon, although I think it refers to something else. For it is the custom of the prophets, when they speak against Babylon, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Philistines, and other nations, to use many words of their language and to preserve the idioms of the provinces.

Therefore, since the Assyrian language's term, which is called Gebul in Hebrew, is said to be Sapharad, I guess that this has the following meaning: The migration of Jerusalem, which is divided in all its boundaries and regions, will receive its own cities of the south, that is, its own tribe. But as for what we have interpreted, and the saviors will ascend, and the Septuagint translated, it is written in Hebrew as Mosim (): those who have been saved, not as Aquila, and Septuagint, and Theodotion passively saved, or being saved; but according to Symmachus, they are to be understood as actively saving. Indeed, those who are saved, that is, rescued, are called Phelistines in Hebrew. For according to the story, as we have been able to interpret, we have steered our little ship among rocky cliffs: let us unfurl the sails of spiritual understanding, so that with the Lord blowing and revealing its mysteries, we may joyfully reach the harbor. At the time when Benjamin possessed Gilead, the migration of the army of the sons of Israel, or certainly the beginning of the migration of the former carnal Israel, will occur, so that it may reach the land of the Canaanites, and the prophetic discourse that was at risk of famine in Judea, having dried the skin of Israel, may pass to the dew of the nations: and there it may feed and be fed, while it is received by believers and also feeds believers themselves. Sareptha, or composed of two, and interpreted as the narrowness of bread: or it is one word, and transferred to fire. Canaan, however, is turned into a commotion, that is, motion: or certainly it is called a merchant and a lowly one. Therefore, when the sons of Israel shall have forsaken the letter of the West and shall have come to the enlivening spirit, they shall move all things that are of the Law. He shall trade for many pearls one most precious pearl, and having set aside the pride of the Jews, he shall follow Christian humility, and shall come even there, where previously there was trouble of bread, and a widow woman was barely sustaining her orphan son deserted by his creator, and where all his sins and vices shall accumulate. But the captivity or transmigration of Jerusalem, where once there was a vision of peace, and which is now dispersed throughout the whole world, will possess the cities of the south, that is, the Churches of true and perfect light, and the repentant bride will say: Where do you pasture, where do you lie down at noon? (Cant. II, 6). And when Joseph is received into his ancient brotherhood, he will be intoxicated with the blood of the shepherd and prince. And if we read it according to the Septuagint as Ephratha, there is no doubt that it refers to the faith of Christ. For Ephratha is interpreted as καρποφορία, that is, fertility, and it is called Bethlehem, in which the heavenly bread was born. With these things being done, the saviors, or those who have been saved from the remnants of the Jewish people, will ascend to Mount Zion to judge and avenge the mountain of Esau. Just as the Lord calls his apostles the light of the world and says, 'You are the light of the world' (Matt. 5:14), and the very rock granted to Peter that he might be the rock, so too the good shepherd bestowed names upon his shepherds, and whatever is said of him, he assigned to his servants to be said. Thus, the Savior himself willed his apostles to be the saviors of the world, who ascended the watchtower of the mountain of the Church and, by casting down Jewish arrogance and all the mountains that stood against the knowledge of God, prepared the kingdom for the Lord.

Following these two little exercises, I have relied on the authority of the ancient authors, and especially the Hebrew explanation, and have dictated with haste in my own language, and have opened my mouth: but I do not know if Christ fulfilled it. Therefore, a wise reader should seek the consistency of the meaning more than the elegance of the language. For we do not dictate with that smoothness and arrangement of words with which we write. It is one thing, my dear Pammachus, to often change one's style and to write down what is worthy of memory; it is another

thing to dictate, with prepared notes of the scribes, whatever comes to mind in a state of embarrassment. In this, both the prophet and the young men have played, and the old men have presumed. Whoever has spoken truer and better things, follow his opinion.

Commentary on Philemon

Commentaries on the Epistle to Philemon by Jerome

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

Those who do not wish to receive the letter written to Philemon amongst the epistles of Paul, say that the Apostle did not always speak, nor did he say everything, while Christ was speaking in him, because human weakness could not bear the guidance of the Holy Spirit uninterruptedly; and also, because the necessities of this body were not always fulfilled in the presence of the Lord, such as arranging a meal, taking food, becoming hungry, being satisfied, digesting what had been eaten, satisfying what had been exhausted. I pass over the other things which they object to sharply and deliberately, to the extent that they affirm there was some time in which Paul would not have dared

to say "I live, but not I, Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20), and that "Do you seek an experiment of Christ who speaks in me?" (2 Corinthians 13:3) What sort of experiment of Christ is it, they ask, to hear "Bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus when you come" (2 Timothy 4:13). And that (is written) to the Galatians: "Would that they who disturb you might also cut themselves off" (Gal. 5:12). And in this very Epistle (he says): "But at the same time, prepare also a lodging for me." But this (happened) to not only the apostles but also likewise to the prophets, whence (it) is often written: "... The word of the Lord came to Ezechiel ..." (Ezech. 22) or to any other of the prophets, because after the prophecy was fulfilled, returning again to himself, (the) common man would become (a) prophet; and except our Lord Jesus Christ, (there was) no one in whom the Holy Spirit would remain ((or dwell)). Which John the Baptist also accepted as a sign, that he might know that he himself was (the one) on whom he had seen the Holy Spirit descending and remaining in him (John 1). From which it is shown that the Holy Spirit descends upon many indeed; but it is proper to the Savior's distinctive because it remains in him. With these and other things of this kind, they wish either that the Epistle to Philemon not be Paul's, or even if it is Paul's, it has nothing that could build us up; and it is repudiated by most of the ancients, while it is written only in the office of commendation, not of teaching. On the contrary, those who defend that it is of genuine authority say that it was never received by all of the churches in the world, unless it was believed by the Apostle Paul; and by this same law, not even the second to Timothy and to the Galatians should be received, about whom he himself has cited examples of human weakness: "The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee," and "Would that they who trouble you might cut themselves off!" Many things are found also that were composed in letters to the Romans and to the other churches, chiefly, however, to the Corinthians; these are almost daily discourses, in which the apostle speaks: "To the rest I speak, not the Lord." And because even these writings contain something like this, it must not be supposed that they are not the writings of Paul; or if they are received, then the letter to Philemon also must be received, as a matter of course, from the authority of these others already received. But it is a great and simple error, if they think that it is a sin to buy food, to prepare lodging, to acquire clothing, and to assert that the Holy Spirit is driven away if we momentarily serve our bodily needs. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30), says the Apostle. The prophet remembers those works which sadden the Holy Spirit with many sins and vices put in order, finally bringing to an end: "In all these things you have grieved me". Otherwise, is it a sin to offer a cup of cold water, to wash feet, to sacrifice a calf, to prepare a lunch, since we know from these things that some are adopted as children of God? It is not for this time to answer to all, because we have not entered the ones that they are used to present. If they do not consider it a small thing to be both great and small, one ought to attribute one of those to me, the Creator alongside Valentinus, Marcion, and Apelles, the ants, worms, flies, and locusts; the other one ought to introduce the heaven, earth, sea, and the angels. Or rather, is it of the same power, that you do not deny the talent you have exercised in greater things, even in the smallest ones? And since we made mention of Marcion, let it be taught that the Epistle to Philemon is at least by the authority of Marcion. While he may have rejected or altered certain other Epistles of his, he did not dare to lay a hand on this one alone: because its brevity defended it. But in my opinion, while they accuse it of simplicity, they reveal their own incompetence, not understanding what virtues and wisdom are concealed in each statement. Which, with you praying on it, and also our Holy Spirit prompting us, we will attempt to explain in their places where they were written. But if brevity is

held in contempt, let Abdias, Naum, Sophonias, and the other twelve prophets be despised ("Al." the prophets)), in which such wonders and grandeur are reported that you do not know whether you should admire brevity of speech or magnitude of meaning in them. But if those who reject the Epistle to Philemon understood this, they would never despise brevity: which, written with gospel grace, is abbreviated and accomplished by the Lord upon earth. But now the words of the Apostle himself must be put forward, which begin thus.

1:1-3

"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our dear fellow worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." However, it pleased me to dictate to you in a somewhat different and disordered order the Epistles of Paul; for although you frequently asked me, Paula and Eustochium, to do so, and I earnestly refused to comply, at least as far as arranging them in the order of verses which seemed to you the best in sense and arrangement, you nevertheless compelled me to do so. Therefore I will attempt to start at the beginning of the matter, and am compelled to deal now with a question which another Apostle asked in his opening, "Why, or at what time, or by whom, the name of Saul was changed to Paul," although, as they say, not even a "mu" dared to be added to it before this day. Nor indeed is it to be thought, as is read by the simpler Latinists, that "Saulum" was said before, and not "Saul": because he was also from the tribe of Benjamin, in which this name was more common. For even that Saul, the king of Judaea, who persecuted David, was from the tribe of Benjamin. But that Saulus is said by us, it is not strange that Hebrew names are declined according to the likeness of Greek and Roman cases, so that just as for Joseph, Josephus; for Jacob, Jacobus; so for Saul also, Saulus is said in our language and speech. Therefore it is asked why, or by whose order, either the ancient name was lost or a new one was adopted. It was by God's command that Abram was called Abraham (Gen. 17, etc.); and similarly, it was by God's command that the name of Sarai was changed to Sarah. And to take an example from the New Testament, Simon received the name "Peter" (Mark 3); and by the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ the sons of Zebedee were called Boanerges, that is, "sons of thunder" (ibid.). But why Saul was called Paul, no scripture mentions. Therefore, boldly I will do it, but perhaps confirming my suspicions about the Acts of the Apostles. We read in them, that the Holy Spirit said at Antioch: "Separate for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, after fasting and praying, and laying their hands upon them, they sent them away (Acts 13:3). And when they had come down to Seleucia, they sailed to Cyprus and reached Salamis, and they had John to assist them in their ministry. They traveled and preached throughout the whole island until they reached Paphos, where they met a certain magician named Bar-jesus (or Elymas), who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence. And when Barnabas and Saul (who is also called Paul) had come to them, he desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul, when he saw what had happened, believed, marveling at the

teaching of the Lord. And when Paul and those with him had sailed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia. "Pay close attention to the fact that Paul receives his name here for the first time. For just as Scipio, after Africa was subdued, assumed the name Africanus for himself; and Metellus, after the island of Crete was conquered, brought back the insignia of Creticus to his family; and now the Roman emperors are named from conquered peoples, Adiabenici, Parthici, Sarmatici, so also Saul, sent to preach to the gentiles, brought back trophies of his victory from the spoils of the Church to the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, and raised the banner so that he should be called Paul from Saul. But if the interpretation of the name is sought, "Paul" in Hebrew means "wonderful". Truly wonderful, that after "Saul," which means "desirable," he who had been requested by the devil to persecute the Church, would become a vessel of election as a persecutor. It was perhaps more than necessary to dispute this, but necessary. However, the phrase "a prisoner of Jesus Christ" was not used with this cognomen in any Epistle, although in the body of the Epistles, namely to the Ephesians, and the Philippians and Colossians, he testifies that he is in chains for the sake of his confession. But it seems to me that it is more of an arrogance to say that one is a prisoner of Jesus Christ than an Apostle. The apostles were proud to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 5:41), but a more authoritative chains was necessary. He who was to ask for Onesimus ought to pray in such a way that he could obtain what he asked. Fortunate indeed is he who does not boast in wisdom, riches, eloquence, or secular power, but in the sufferings of Christ. Concluding in this manner his discourse to the Galatians: "Henceforth, let no man give me trouble: for I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body" (Galatians 6). Not every one that is bound is bound for Christ; but whosoever is overcome for Christ's name and confession, he is truly said to be bound of Jesus Christ, and only he is a martyr, who sheds his blood for Christ's name. Therefore, while imprisoned in Rome, he writes to Philemon, at which time I seem to myself to have been written to the Philippians, Colossians, and Ephesians. This is due to the fact that, firstly, he writes with only Timothy, which he also does in this epistle. Then because of his chains, manifestly declared to be for Christ, throughout the whole of the Praetorium. But the Praetorium itself he indicates at the end of the Epistle, saying, "All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Caesar's household." Sent by Caesar to prison, in becoming better known to his [Caesar's] family, he found their house the Church. Then he proceeds: "Some indeed preach Christ out of contention, not sincerely, supposing that they raise up affliction for my bonds" [Philippians 1:17]. Moreover, at the beginning of his Epistle to the Colossians, he speaks to the same effect: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother." And in the sequel: "Whose head I am Paul, a minister: who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh, for his body, which is the Church" [Colossians 1:2, 23, 24]. And in the end: "The salutation of me Paul with my own hand. Be mindful of my chains" (Col. 4:18). This is so that we know that these Epistles were also written from prison and while in chains. However, what is specifically for the Colossians is that the same Onesimus, who is now commended to Philemon, was also the bearer of the same message. Finally, he says: "All my affairs Tychicus, my beloved brother, and faithful minister, and fellow-servant in the Lord, will make known to you, whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts, together with Onesimus, most dear and faithful brother, who is one of you" (Ibid., 7, 8). But if Philemon, to whom this letter is written, is the master of Onesimus, in fact, he has begun to be a brother in the Lord, and it is reported to the Colossians that Onesimus is one of them: the very reason and order leads

us to deduce that Philemon is also from Colossae, and at that time Onesimus carried a letter to every church, common and commendable, which he had taken to the Lord. There is also another indication, which Archippus is named in this same letter: to whom he writes along with Philemon: "Say," he says, "to Archippus, consider the ministry that you received from the Lord, that you may fulfill it." What is the ministry that Archippus received from the Lord? We read to Philemon: "And to Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the church that is in your house." From which I think he was either the bishop of the Colossian Church, who was admonished to diligently and carefully preside, as a preacher of the Gospel. But if it is not so, what suffices for me at present is that both Philemon and Archippus and Onesimus himself, who brought the letter, were Colossians and that at the same time four (as we have said before) letters were written. But to the Ephesians, for this reason also, that he declares himself here to be bound for Christ and the same things that he had ordered to the Colossians, he orders in this epistle that wives be subject to their husbands, and husbands love their wives, that children obey their parents, that fathers not provoke their sons to anger, that servants obey their carnal masters, that masters, leaving threats aside, offer to their servants what is just: and at the end of his epistle he concludes with this purpose: "What I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make known to you: whom I have sent to you for this very thing, that you may know what is about me, and that he may comfort your hearts." But Tychicus is the same one who is sent to the Colossians with Onesimus, and at that time he had Onesimus as a companion when he was carrying letters to Philemon.

"And Timothy, a brother." In other letters, Sosthenes and Silvanus are sometimes mentioned, along with Timothy as a brother (the "Al. tacet" brother). Only in four [letters] is Timothy mentioned because they were dictated either at the same time, or in the presence of Timothy and the others. I think this was done for two reasons: so that the letter would have greater authority, since it was not written by one person alone; and because there was no rivalry among the apostles. If anything had been suggested to Paul's spirit while he was dictating, he added it to the letters without any sadness. This is in accordance with what he himself commanded the Corinthians, that if something was revealed to another prophet while another was prophesying, the first should keep silent. (1 Cor. 14). Thus he himself also fulfilled his own precept by his work, and because of the few things which he had added to another's letter, as his own suggestion, so too he composed an epistle to another. "To Philemon," he says, "beloved." In Greek φιλεμων is not used, which means "beloved," but rather φιλητις, which means "dear." Truly, there is a difference between "beloved" and "dear," in that the former can be called so even if he does not merit the affection, but dear only is he who is loved deservedly. Finally, we are commanded to love even our enemies, who may be beloved but not dear. In fact, we love those, not because they deserve to be loved, but because we are commanded not to hate them. That which is noted in the title of the forty-fourth psalm, "for the beloved," has a better reading in Greek, "for the dear one," which passage is most clearly understood of Christ. For although the Jews may think that Solomon is called "beloved of God," because God has imposed upon him the name on account of his wisdom; nevertheless, who else can be called "beloved of God," unless the One whom the Father speaks about in the Gospel: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him"; and finally, in Isaiah it is written like this: "I will sing a song to my beloved concerning the beloved of my vineyard. The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden of his delight" and thinking that this is to be received from the Jewish people according to circumcision, they stumble upon the rock of offense and the stone of scandal, not recognizing that the vineyard

which was transplanted from Egypt is the house of Israel, and that Christ is called either beloved or dearly beloved here, while he himself deserves to be loved by the saints and the saints love him, offering him more charity than they demand any other rewards of charity. Therefore, Paul and Timothy write to Philemon, beloved and coworker, who was for this reason called beloved because he is engaged in the same work of Christ. Also to Apphia, the sister, not having anything false or imaginary in herself, and to Archippus, a fellow soldier whom I believe, along with Paul and Timothy, stood as a victorious opponent for Christ's name against adversaries and for this reason is now called a fellow soldier because he triumphed in the same battle and war. It is also written to the church that is in his house. But this [is] uncertain, whether [it refers to] the church which is in the house of Archippus, or [that] which is in the house of Philemon. But to me it seems that the person, to whom this letter is also addressed, should be referred not to Archippus, but to Philemon. For although Paul and Timothy jointly write to Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and [the] church, yet in the following [part] it is [only] approved that only Paul write to Philemon, and speak of one with another. "I give thanks to my God always", "[and] making mention of thee." And you will find this way of writing in some of his letters: that although many [people] are introduced and mentioned in the preface, [only] one person, arguing, is [mentioned] throughout the whole body of the Epistle. That which the Apostle says when writing to the Galatians: that in Christ's faith there is no difference between a Gentile or a Jew, a man or a woman, a slave or a free man (Gal. 3:28): even in this place it is clear. For between two men and apostles, between Paul's co-worker and his comrade, the name of Apphia is inserted: in such a way that supported by such a company on both sides, it does not seem to indicate the order of sex but of merit. But the expression, "Grace be to you, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ," is still written to many by two, and in almost all the Epistles, its beginning is the same, so that grace and peace may be invoked upon them from God the Father and Christ the Lord. From which it is shown that there is one nature of the Son and the Father, since the Son can do what the Father can, and it is said that the Father can do what the Son can. Grace, however, is by which we are saved without any merit or work. Peace, by which we are reconciled to God through Christ, as it says: "We beseech for Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

1:4-6

I always give thanks to my God, making mention of thee in my prayers, hearing of thy charity and faith which thou hast in the Lord Jesus and towards all the saints: that the communication of thy faith may be made evident in the acknowledgment of every good that is in you in Christ. "This, now not as Paul and Timothy, to Philemon and others; but as Paul alone, speaks only to Philemon: "I give thanks," he says, "always to my God, making mention of thee in my prayers." It is said ambiguously, whether he always gives thanks to his God, or whether he always mentions him in his prayers. And both can be understood. For whoever commands others to give thanks to God in all things, cannot be restricted by any difficulties to himself not to give thanks to God always. But if Paul always prayed for the saints and for the better ones (Philemon, who is indeed a saint, who also demonstrated such great faith and love that he was known not only by his reputation, but also by his works) and it is likely that he always prayed for Philemon, so that the faith and love he had in Christ, and in all his holy ones, through the communication of faith and the operation of knowledge, would be kept by the mercy of Christ in all goodness. And indeed the interpretation of the love that he had in Christ Jesus, and in all his holy ones, is not difficult: by which we are

commanded to love God and our neighbors. Now the question is, how can someone have the same faith in Christ Jesus and in all his saints, since charity you have in the Lord Jesus and in all his holy ones resonates in common, and the faith you have in the Lord Jesus and in all his holy ones. To illustrate this point from Exodus, let us take an example: "The people believed God and Moses, His servant" (Exod. 19). The same belief is attributed to Moses and to God so that the people who believed in the Lord may be said to have likewise believed in His servant. But this is not only true of Moses; it is true of all His saints, so that anyone who believes in God cannot really receive His faith save by believing also in His saints. For to love God perfectly and to have faith in Him, we must not hate or have infidelity toward His ministers. But what I say is this: someone believes in God as the creator: he cannot believe unless he first believes that what is written about his holy things is true: Adam was created by God, Eve was made from his rib, Enoch was translated, Noah alone was saved from the flood; Abraham was the first to be commanded to leave his homeland and his kin, he left behind for his posterity the circumcision which he had received as a sign of future generations; Isaac was offered up as a victim, and for him a ram was slain, crowned with briars, and prefigured the passion of the Lord; Moses and Aaron afflicted Egypt with ten plagues; at the voice and prayers of Jesus, the son of Naue, the sun stood still at Gabaon, and the moon in the vale of Ajalon. It is long to go through all the deeds of the Judges: and to draw the whole story of Samson, to the true sun (for his name indeed means this) is to bring sacrament. I will come to the books of Kings ("or" The Books of Kings) when, during the harvest time, at Samuel's entreaty, rains fell from heaven, and rivers suddenly overflowed: David was anointed king: and Nathan and Gad prophesied mysteries; when Elijah was carried up in a fiery chariot, and Elisha, dead with twofold spirit, raised the dead. These and other things which are written about the saints, unless someone believes them all, he will not be able to believe in the God of the saints, nor will he be brought to faith in the Old Testament, unless he approves whatever is narrated in history about the patriarchs, and prophets, and other notable men, so that, through faith in the Law, he may come to faith in the Gospel, and the justice of God may reveal in him through faith to faith, as it is written: "but the just man liveth by faith" (Habakkuk 2). It is commanded in another place: "Be holy, for I am holy, says the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:2). Likewise, holiness is owed to both servants and the Lord: all are sanctified from one. Let us not consider Philemon's preaching lightly, if he has the same faith in the saints as in God. Whoever believes that God is holy does not err. But if anyone believes that a man who is not holy is holy, and joins him to the fellowship of God, he violates Christ, of whose body we are all members. "Whoever says," he says, "that the just are unjust, and the unjust just, is abominable to God" (Proverbs 17:15); similarly, whoever says that someone who is not holy is holy, or vice versa, is saying that the holy is abominable to God. According to the Apostle, all believers become the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 6). Whoever wanders and falls in the body of Christ, asserting that a member of his is either holy when it is not, or not holy when it is, sees what kind of crime he becomes subject to: 'Woe,' Isaiah says, 'to those who call sweet bitter, and bitter sweet: who put darkness for light, and light for darkness' (Isaiah 5:20). Sweet, I think, is holiness: bitter, that which is contrary to holiness; light can be understood in the same way as holiness, darkness as its opposite. Do you think that a crafty moneychanger, experienced in testing our coins, will not err in judging the saints? One who has equal charity and faith toward God or His saints, ought also to have an equal share in the communication of His faith, so that as he believes and loves, he may also consummate his love and faith by his works. He says, "Let it become clear in knowing all

good"; or as is better had in Greek, "effective"; for it can be properly translated "effective" or "operative"; so that we may not only believe that faith and charity towards God and His saints are sufficient for us, but also that what we believe is accomplished by action. However, it may happen that someone has faith and consumes it by actions: truly and simply, however, not having knowledge or understanding of it, according to that of the Apostle: "I bear witness that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10:2). Today, most of the simple practice works of justice, and they do not have knowledge of what they are working on. Hence, it was added: "That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledgment of every good thing." To what degrees and with what leaps, does the apostle strive towards higher things in his speech? Someone may have charity and faith in God and his saints: but perhaps he may not communicate it equally in all directions. Perhaps he may communicate it to all, but he may not fulfill it in action: someone may fulfill it with willingness and action, but he cannot have a perfect understanding of his deeds. There is such a person who has both skill and knowledge, but not every understanding of good; for he is unequal to his own virtues in some part, though doing many things justly, gently and studiously. Isn't Philemon such a person? He indeed has a participation in the working faith and knowledge of all good things. And although it is in the apostles, we should not consider it perfect just because it is in them, but rather that it is full in Christ, since Christ is the source from which all the good in Philemon is praised and taken from the example of the apostles. Therefore, it is good, because it is derived from the source of Christ.

1:7

"For we have had great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother." He emphasizes and teaches more fully why he said, "I give thanks to my God always remembering you in my prayers." It was worthy indeed to give thanks to God for the love of Philemon, who had refreshed the internal affection of the heart and the deep recesses of the saints by receiving them. And this is the apostolic idiom; to always call it "hearts," wanting to show the fullness of love in the mind. Thus, rejoicing with those who were rejoicing, and believing himself to have been refreshed with those who had rested, he has a joy not transient and light, and one that might happen by chance; but great, and as love was to Philemon, eminent, increased by the consolation descending upon Philemon's love, full of the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation.

1:8-9

I am writing to you because of the confidence I have in Christ Jesus, commanding you to do what is proper for the sake of love. I urge you even more, as one such as Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus. With many praises given to Philemon before him, considering the matter at hand, which would be both excellent and helpful to the requester, Paul was able to command rather than request. And this confidence came from the fact that whoever had done such great works for Christ could not be unequal to himself in other aspects. But he wishes to ask more than to command, with the authority of one asking for something great being proposed, through which both the Apostle begs, and the old man and prisoner of Jesus Christ. But that for which he is asking the whole time is: Onesimus, the servant of Philemon, he had fled and compounded some domestic item by theft: hence he had gone to Italy, so that he would not be easily apprehended in the near future, he had squandered his master's money through luxury.

Lest anyone think this rashly, and that it is made up as we please, let him learn in the following. For Paul would never say: "If he has harmed you or owes anything, put it to my account: I, Paul, have written with my own hand; I will repay it." Nor would he become the surety of a lost thing, and if that which was lost had not been squandered. Therefore, when Paul was in prison in Rome because of the confession of Christ, he believed in Christ; and after being baptized by him, he wiped away the stains of his former life with worthy penance, to such an extent that the apostle himself became a witness of his conversion, who had once rebuked Peter for not walking rightly in the truth of the Gospel (Galatians 2). Therefore regarding sin and wrongdoing, in which he had injured the lord, he doesn't deserve forgiveness; however, regarding the testimony of the Apostle, who knows that he has been fully converted, he is burdened with great weight, since he is being asked who was once a fugitive slave and a robber, yet had become a minister of the Apostle. (And what other ministry does the Apostle have except the Gospel of Christ Jesus?) Now he is no longer to be forgiven as if by his master, but rather as if by a fellow servant and co-evangelist, as he too is a servant of Christ and a minister.

1:10-13

"I beseech you concerning my son, whom I have begotten in chains, Onesimus, who was once useless to you, but is now useful to both you and me, whom I have sent back to you. But you, receive him, that is, my own heart, whom I wished to keep with me, so that he might serve me on your behalf in the chains of the gospel. " In wishing to obtain what he asks for, he now asserts that he is pleading not for Philemon's slave, but for his own son. And regarding that son whom he has begotten in the chains of the gospel, that is, which he endured for the sake of Christ's gospel: who, although he was once useless to his master (for a slave who steals and runs away harms no one but his own master), now on the contrary, by way of compensation for his usefulness to both his master and Paul, and to others through Paul, he deserves more love than he had previously deserved hatred. He says, "Who was useless to you at one time." "To you alone," he says, "not to others: but now it is useful to both me and you." It is useful to the master in that he could serve Paul as his master; Paul, however, is useful in this: that he could minister to him in the Gospel while he was being held in prison and chains. And at the same time we admire the magnanimity of the apostle and his fervent mind in Christ. He is held in prison, is bound in chains, is oppressed by the filth of his body, by separation from his loved ones, is cramped by penal darkness, and yet he feels no wrong, he is not tortured by pain, he knows nothing else but to think about the Gospel of Christ. He knew the slave, he knew the fugitive, he knew that he had been converted to the faith of Christ by a kidnapper. It is a great effort for a man to persevere in what he has begun. Therefore, he impresses, repeats, and urges his son and the son of bonds, and minister of the Gospel who is imprisoned, that Philemon, praised only in the preface, would not dare to refuse, lest he appear unworthy of his own praises. And what he says: "But you accept him, that is, my heart," this is what I said a little earlier, that "heart" signifies the internal affection of the heart and the full willingness from the soul, when everything that is in us is received from the one asking. But otherwise, all children are the parents' hearts.

1:14

"But I did not want to do anything without your advice, so that your goodness would not be like a necessity, but voluntary." This question, which is asked by many and often withdrawn, can be

solved from the present place, why God, creating man, did not create him good and right. For if God is good voluntarily, and not out of necessity, creating man, he ought to have made him in his image and likeness, that is, so that he too would be voluntarily, and not out of necessity, good. But those who assert that it should have been done so that evil could not be received, say this: he should have been made who was good out of necessity and not of his own accord. If such a result had been done that is good not by will, but by necessity, it would not be similar to God: who is good therefore because he wills, not because he is compelled. From which it is clear that they demand opposing things from each other. For from what they say, 'Man ought to become similar to God', they ask that free will should be obtained, just as God himself has. However, from what they infer, 'Such an individual ought to be made who could not obtain evil'; while they impose necessity upon a person for the sake of good, they desire that man should not become similar to God. And so the Apostle Paul was able to retain Onesimus for himself in service without the consent of Philemon. But if he had done this without Philemon's consent, it would have been a good thing, but not voluntary. And what is not voluntary is argued to be not good in another way. For nothing can be called good unless it is voluntary. From this it follows that the prudence of the Apostles must be considered: he who sends back a fugitive slave to his master, so that he may be of use to his master, does so for the benefit of his master, who could not benefit if the slave were held in the absence of the master. Therefore, the question is solved in this way: God was able to make man good without his will. Moreover, if He had done this, it would not have been voluntary goodness, but of necessity. But that which is good by necessity is not good, and is argued to be evil of another kind. Therefore, leaving us with our own free will, He created us more in His image and likeness. And to be like God is absolutely good.

1:15-16

Perhaps for this reason he departed from you for a time, so that you might receive him forever. No longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a beloved brother, especially to me: but how much more to you both in the flesh, and in the Lord." Sometimes, evil is the cause of good things, and God can turn the wicked intentions of men to good. What I am saying will become clearer through an example. Joseph's brothers, incited by jealousy, sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver (Gen. 37). From this evil beginning, good things came to his father, his brothers, and all of Egypt. Finally, he said to his brothers: "You thought evil of me: but God turned it into good." (Gen. 45:8). We can understand a similar thing in the case of Onesimus, that bad beginnings were the occasion of a good thing. For if he had not fled his master, he would never have come to Rome where Paul was imprisoned. If he had not seen Paul in chains, he would not have received faith in Christ. If he had not had faith in Christ, he would never have been sent out for the work of the gospel as Paul's son. Thus little by little, and by its own steps, with changing judgments, Onesimus became a minister of the gospel, because he had fled from his master. And with a beautiful addition, he tempered his judgment, saying, "perhaps." The judgments of God are hidden, and it is reckless to pronounce as certain what is doubtful. "Perhaps," he said, "this happened": cautiously, timidly, tremblingly, without taking a firm stand: as if he had not said "perhaps," all the slaves would have fled, and become as apostates. But what he added, "for an hour," we must take for a time. For in comparison with eternity, all time is brief. "That you might receive him as if he were eternal." No eternal lord has a servant: for his power, and the condition of each, ends in death. But Onesimus, who has become eternally so through the faith of Christ, was eternal to Philemon,

because he too had believed in Christ, and had received the spirit of liberty, so that he no longer was a slave, but had begun to be a brother from a slave, a most dear brother, an eternal brother; eternal to his Apostle and Lord also, to whom Onesimus had been subject as long as he was in the flesh, but afterwards united by the spirit. And thus we may understand that a servant who has believed in Christ is bound by a twofold law to two masters, so that he may be united to them by the necessity of the flesh for a time, and by the spirit in eternity.

1:17

"If therefore you have me as a partner, receive him as you would me." Philemon desired to have Paul as a partner, and believing in Christ, he truly wanted to make such progress as to become like Paul, so that he could share his chains with him. Let us consider how much praise Onesimus is given here, how much he is said to have profited: since he must be received in such a way as the Apostle, and so should desire his fellowship, as belonging to Paul. In brief what he says is this: If you want to have me as a partner, have Onesimus also, whom I have as a partner, and my son, whom I have as my own flesh: whom if you do not receive, nor desire to have, you yourself see that you are not able to have me.

1:18

But if anyone has wronged you, or owes you anything, charge that to me. As an imitator of his master, and having Christ speaking in him, he ought to do the things which Christ did according to his ability. For if he bore our weaknesses and suffered our wounds, the Apostle rightly opposes himself on behalf of Onesimus and promises what he owed. But as we have said above, all that which was taken away by theft and lost through luxury could not be made right, which Philemon valued greatly while he received his runaway slave, lost money and eternal brother, thus making himself a debtor to the Apostle through him.

1:19

I, Paul, have written this with my own hand. I will repay it, not to mention that you owe me your very self." What he says is this: "Whatever Onesimus may have wronged you, I will repay. I, Paul, write this with my own hand. I will not remind you that you owe me your very self. But I say this as speaking to a stranger. Moreover, if I should regain my right due to the message of Christ, which I have preached to you, and you have become a Christian, you owe yourself to me. So if you are mine, and all your possessions are mine: Onesimus also, who is yours, is mine. Therefore, I could use him as my own; but I leave it to your will, so that you may have a reward by forgiving.

1:20

"So, brother, I might enjoy you in the Lord." The Latin language does not clarify the Greek word 'proprietaem'. What he says, "yes, brother, yes" is something like the adverb of flattery. But we interpreters sound more flowing and diluted as "so, brother," something else more than what is written. For as Anna's Hebrew word frequently translated by the seventy interpreters as "oh yes", indicates a prayerful attitude in their own language. Hence sometimes Symmachus translated Anna as "I pray," that is, "I beseech." We also suffer the same strength in the Greek language that Greeks sustain in the Hebrew language. What he says, "I might enjoy you in the Lord," is understood as something far more than it is thought. The Apostle enjoys nothing but that which

has many virtues and sings in itself, and everything that is called Christ for a variety of reasons: namely, wisdom, justice, self-restraint, gentleness, temperance, chastity: Philemon invokes these to abound in them, so that he himself may be fulfilled in enjoying them. And lest you think that fruition is said, in which we often delight in the presence of our own, he added, "in the Lord:" so that from the fact that the name of the Lord is added, it is understood that there is another enjoyment, by which one enjoys without the Lord.

"Renew my being in Christ." Thus just as Philemon wanted to enjoy him in the Lord, so he wants his own being Onesimus, whom also previously he called by the same name, to be renewed through Philemon, and it is said ambiguously: whether it is Onesimus' being in Christ that is of Paul, or whether it must be said that Onesimus' being is to be renewed through Philemon in Christ. If you wish to understand the former, correctly you will say that Onesimus is of Paul's being in Christ whom he begot in Christ's chains. If the latter applies: Onesimus is to be renewed in Christ through Philemon, as he is trained by his teachings in Christ.

1:21

"Confident in your obedience, I have written to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say." Whoever presumes of him whom he is about to ask, prejudices himself in a certain manner, that it may not be lawful for him to deny what he is asked. Moreover, if he who asks knows that he will be asked for more than he has asked, he seeks smaller things, that he may have the voluntary compliance of the person asked, and a greater reward in return. But if Philemon does these things according to the precept of man: how much more will he do them for the love of God? Therefore, he is justly praised by the voice of the Apostle, because he anticipated his commands by his actions and could say, "Let the voluntary offerings of my mouth be pleasing to you, Lord" (Ps. 119:108), doing more than the precept required, he conquers those who only did what was commanded and are ordered to say, "We are useless servants because we have done what we were obliged to do" (Lk. 17:10). Virginity is also awarded a greater prize for this reason: because the precept of the Lord does not have it and it extends beyond what was ordered.

1:22 "But at the same time prepare a lodging for me." I do not think that the Apostle was so rich, and occupied with such great burdens, that he needed a prepared lodging, and that he would not be content with a single cell, a house of small size for his body's limited capacity, but rather to do what he was asked while he was being waited for by Philemon. However, if someone thinks that he was given a command to prepare a lodging for himself, not in a discretionary manner, but truly, the Apostle had to prepare a lodging more than Paul. He was about to go to a new city, to preach the Crucifix, and to impart unheard-of dogmas, knowing that many would come to him; and it was necessary first, that the house be in a celebrated place of the city, to which he could easily be convened. Then, that it be empty of all importunity: that it be spacious, so that it could hold many listeners: not near places of spectacle, not in an unseemly and detestable neighborhood; finally, that it be located on a level site rather than in a cenacle. For which reason, I believe he even stayed in Rome for two years (("Al." biennio)). And the dwelling place, as I think, was not small, to which the crowds of Jews flowed every day. For I hope that I will be given to you through your prayers. The Son pleads to the Father, and God grants indulgence, and a brother is often saved by the prayer of his brother. But the Apostle is granted by the prayers of the whole Church, for the benefit of those who are going to hear him. And this gift is said not so much to be on him to whom

it is given who is prepared from martyrdom to martyrdom, as on those to whom the Apostle is sent. But that Paul was frequently in prison and was freed from chains, he himself says in another place: "In prisons frequently" (2 Cor. 11), from which sometimes, with the help of the Lord, and frequently even his persecutors finding nothing worthy of death in him, he was let go. For there had not yet been decrees of the Senate against the name of Christian; nor had Nero's sword as yet grown red with Christian blood. But, for the novelty of the new name, either through the envy of wicked men, or the zeal of people eager to destroy their ancient customs, they were sent to prison and again released in a frenzy of popular excitement, which soon subsided. And this is how we say it to be, Acts of the Apostles testify, in which Felix also speaks to Agrippa: that Paul could have been released, if he had not appealed to Caesar (Acts 25). And because he found no reason except for some questions about his own religion, and a certain Jesus, whom Paul preached as alive. From this we observe that, and similarly from other judges, they could have been released, the Lord causing a new preaching to be spread throughout the whole world.

1:23-24

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. As we mentioned earlier, the letter to the Colossians was written at the same time and through the same person as the letter to Philemon, and the names of those who send greetings are mentioned in both letters. In fact, in the letter to the Colossians, it is written: "Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, as does Mark the cousin of Barnabas, and Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ" (Colossians 4:10, 12). And a little later: "Luke the beloved physician greets you, and Demas; greet Archippus, who is in the Lord. See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord" (Colossians 4:14, 17); and: "Remember my chains" (Colossians 4:18). But if someone does not consider the writings to be equally authorized, because a few names that are not mentioned here are written to the Colossians, let them know that not all are friends to everyone or are known; and that it is one thing to write a private letter to one individual, and another to write a public letter to the entire Church. "Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you," he says. As for who Epaphras, Paul's fellow prisoner, is, we have received such a story: They say that the parents of the apostle Paul were from the region of Gyscalis in Judea; and when the whole province was laid waste by the Roman forces, and the Jews were dispersed throughout the world, they were sent to the city of Tharsus in Cilicia; and young Paul followed his parents' condition. And so it can be said that what he testifies about himself is true: "They are Hebrews, so am I. They are Israelites, so am I. They are descendants of Abraham, so am I" (2 Cor. 11:22). And elsewhere: "A Hebrew of Hebrews" (Philip. 3:5): and other things that indicate him as a Jew rather than from Tarsus. If this is so, we can suspect that Epaphras was captured at the same time as Paul, and when he was released placed with his parents in the city of Colossae in Asia, he later received Christ's words. Hence to the Colossians, as we have said above, is written: "Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you" (Col. 4:12). If this is so, then Aristarchus, who is said to have been his fellow prisoner in the same Epistle, will be interpreted in the same way, unless perhaps something hidden and sacred, as some think, is shown in the word captivity ("Al." shows) that those who were captured and bound were brought ("Al." led) into this valley of tears. And if neither [interpretation] is accepted, from what has been added here 'in Christ Jesus,' we can suspect that they endured the same bonds for Christ as Paul

did at Rome; and just as a prisoner of Christ [referring to Paul], so also to one caught [in the bonds of Christ]. Or certainly because he is noble himself among the apostles, like Andronicus and Julia, about whom it is written to the Romans: 'Greet Andronicus and Julia, my relatives and fellow prisoners, who are notable among the apostles, and who were in Christ before me' (Romans 16:7). This is about Epaphras. Furthermore, when writing to Philemon about his Gospel and its constraints, he lists Mark, whom I believe to be the founder of the Gospel, and Aristarchus, whom we previously mentioned, and Demas, about whom he complains elsewhere: "Demas has abandoned me, because he loves the present age, and he went to Thessalonica." And Luke the physician, who, abandoning the Gospel and Acts of the Apostles for the Churches, has been turned from a fisherman of fish to a fisherman of men by the Apostles (Matth. 4): so of the physician of bodies, he has been changed to a physician of souls, of whom it is also said elsewhere: "I have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel through all the churches" (2 Cor. 8:18): every time his book is read in the churches, his medicine is unailing.

1:25

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." As the people of Israel are numbered according to their tribes (Num. 1:2) from the better part of the head of man, so indeed in the whole man, and in every part of the saints, there is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. But from the greater and better part, that is, from the spirit, it is said by synecdoche for the whole man: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." Since grace is in the spirit, it makes the whole man spiritual; that the flesh also serves the spirit, and the soul is not overcome by the flesh, and is brought together in the substance of the spirit, so that it clings to the Lord; for whoever clings to the Lord is one spirit (2 Cor. 6). "Paul, admirable," is interpreted according to the Jews ('Al.' Hebrews). Timothy, a benefactor. Philemon, wonderfully gifted," or "mouth of bread," from the mouth, not the bone. "Apphia, continent," or "freedom. Archippus, length of work. Onesimus, responsive. Epaphras, fruitful," and "seeing," or "growing. Mark, sublime in command. Aristarchus, a mountain of greater work. Demas, silent. Luke, rising himself." If you wish to understand these names according to their meaning, it is not difficult to write wonderfully and benevolently to him for whom all faults are granted and whose mouth is open to heavenly bread. Then for the continent, the free, and the length of the work: that they never cease from holy labors. But to write for he who will answer by his own testimony, and also for him, (whom the letter) is specifically dedicated to, greetings (from the) growing abundance. And (for) him who has (been) made (through) sublime commands, and also (for) him, who has risen up through great works to the mountain, even (for) him who has set a guard upon his mouth, and a fortified gate upon his lips: who perhaps was silent for this reason, because he had left the Apostle for a little while. And finally, (for) him, who rising up daily by himself, grows and has a progress: while the world is filled with his Gospel, and increases as often as it is heard and read, it builds up.

Commentary on Song of Deborah

Commentary on the Song of Deborah.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Judges 5:1

(Judges 5:1) And Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang. Barak is said to have been a man of Deborah the prophetess. Barak himself is also called Barak son of Lapidoth. For Lapidoth means lightning, and Barak, thunder. Lightning, therefore, because before he avenged Israel against the Canaanites, there was a lightning shining among the people, by merit and prerogative of his deeds: but after he avenged Israel against the Canaanites, he was called Thunder, that is, striking.

Judges 5:4-5

(Judges 5:4-5) Lord, when you went out from Seir and passed through the regions of Edom, the earth trembled, the heavens and clouds poured down with water. It is said that the Lord went out from Seir and passed through Edom because the Edomites refused to receive his law, so he gave the law of Israel on Mount Sinai. The earth trembled, the heavens and clouds poured down with water. The earthquake of Mount Sinai is described. And when it says, 'The heavens and clouds poured down with water,' it means that in the presence of the Lord, the heavens, as if in fear, emitted sweat, which is said to have dripped down like water. Similarly, the mountains flowed from the presence of the Lord. And what follows, 'Sinai from the presence of the Lord God of Israel,' must be understood: it trembled and smoked.

Judges 5:6

(Judges 5:6) In the days of Sangar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jahel, the paths remained empty, and those who entered through them walked along crooked roads. The paths are said to have remained empty because during the time of Sangar, the leader of Israel, the paths had been taken over by enemies of Israel, and they did not dare to freely ascend to the house of the Lord to pray; instead, those who entered through them secretly ascended through crooked streets, out of fear of the enemies. Concerning which enemies Sangar is said to have not fully freed them (Judg. 3:31). But what is inserted a little above, in the days of Jahel, is to be understood, because when Sisara was killed by Jahel, the roads were opened, and they went into the house of the Lord without any fear, who previously went there by winding paths. And that Jahel is mentioned before Debbara here, it is said that Debbara did this for the sake of humility, because Jahel, the wife of Aber the Cinaean, killed Sisara.

Judges 5:7

(Judges 5:7) However, the strong ones in Israel ceased, they paused until Deborah, a mother in Israel, arose. These strong ones are the learned teachers and preachers of the law, who are said to have paused, that is, to not have been present, until she arose to teach Israel through preaching, exhortation, and counsel, and to deliver them from their enemies. Deborah also provokes these strong ones in the previous verses to bless the Lord together with her, saying: 'You who willingly offered your lives for the peril of Israel, bless the Lord!' (Verse 2). Hi, strong men, that is to say, the learned ones, are said to have offered their souls to danger, that is, to have submitted themselves to the law of God and his service, and to have sacrificed their body and soul in meditations on the law day and night.

Judges 5:8

(Judges 5:8) The Lord has chosen new wars, and he himself overturns the gates of the enemy. If a shield and a spear appeared among forty thousand Israelites, it is to be understood that he said

this as if by swearing an oath, that among forty thousand Israelites neither a shield nor a spear could be found. Therefore, the Lord is said to have chosen new wars, and to have overturned the gates of the enemy because he has made the weak strong and victorious. But it is explained in the previous verse that the Israelites had been despoiled of their weapons by Jabin, king of Canaan, where it is said: And the children of Israel cried to the Lord. He had nine hundred chariots armed with scythes, and for twenty years he severely oppressed them (Judg. IV, 5). He severely and forcefully oppressed them, because it is said that he despoiled them of their weapons: as it is written in the book of Samuel: When the day of battle came, there was no sword or spear found in the hand of all the people who were with Saul and Jonathan, except for Saul and his son Jonathan (1 Sam. XIII, 22).

Judges 5:9-10

(Judges 5:9-10) My heart loves the leaders of Israel. It should be noted that in Hebrew, not leaders, but teachers is read. This is spoken by Deborah in the person of God, that God loves the teachers who study the law of God. Of whom it follows: You who offered yourselves willingly among the people, bless the Lord. Of whom it has also been said above in that place where it says: You who willingly offered your lives from Israel, etc. You who ride on bright donkeys. In Hebrew, female donkeys. And you sit in judgment. In Hebrew, sitting on judgment. And you walk on the road, speak where the chariots collide, and the army of the enemies is suffocated, there the righteousness of the Lord, the strength of Israel, is proclaimed. The people of Israel who ride on donkeys are called ascenders; but the female donkeys on which they ride are called the teachers of the tribes of Israel, on whose doctrine the rest of the people are said to ascend like on donkeys, that is, to find rest. They are called asses themselves, that is, they walk like an ass in the law, sitting on judgment, that is, on the law. They are also said to sit on judgment, that is, on the law, and to walk in the way under the law, because they would by no means exceed the path of the law. Therefore, Deborah, provoked the people who rested on these asses, that is, on these teachers, to bless the Lord, and she said: Speak, that is, praise. And as if they were asking: where and when will we praise the Lord? she responded: Where the chariots collided, and the army of the enemy was drowned, there let the justice of the Lord be recounted, the strength of merciful Israel; as if she said: Although God is always and everywhere to be praised; nevertheless, he is now to be praised and blessed by us, who overturns our enemies, just as he did with the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

Judges 5:11

(Judges 5:11) Then the people of the Lord went down to the gates and obtained the leadership. The people of the Lord went down to the gates, that is, to the gates of the house of the Lord, because with the Lord blessed and praised at the place of victory, they descended into the house of the Lord to praise the Lord there, offering prayers and sacrifices to Him. But as for the tribe of Issachar, that they were the teachers of the other tribes is shown in the Book of Chronicles, where it says: Of the sons of Issachar, there were men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, two hundred chiefs; and all their brethren followed their command (1 Chronicles 12:32). And the reason these scholars are called asses is shown in the book of Genesis where it says: Issachar, a strong donkey lying down between the borders, saw that rest was good and the land was pleasant, and he bowed his shoulder to bear the burden and became

a servant under tribute (Gen. XLIX, 14, 15). The donkey is called strong in the Book of Genesis because of the strength of the law, since it carried the law on its shoulder and gave tribute, that is, imparted the teaching of the law to the other tribes. In the Book of Judges, they are called donkeys, because they were weakened and humiliated, and remained weak, oppressed by the yoke of the nations, and only satisfied with the law of God.

Judges 5:12

(Judges 5:12) Rise, rise Deborah; rise, speak the Song. It is noteworthy that in Hebrew it is read 'exspergisce,' that is, 'exspergisce' in the spirit of prophecy. Therefore, by the voices of the aforementioned teachers, Deborah is urged to be 'exspergisce' in the spirit of prophecy and praise, and not to cease from praising God. Hence, it follows: Speak the Song. Rise, Barak, and take your captives, son of Abinoam. In Hebrew, it is said: 'Praedare praedam, tuam fili Abinoem.' This statement also warns the same wise men of Barak to plunder the remnants of their enemies, and to bring them to utter destruction, and to commendably acquire the name of victory for themselves.

Judges 5:13

(Judges 5:13) Then the remnants of the people were saved. This sentence is to be connected to the previous sentence, which says: Where the righteousness of the Lord is told, the strength of Israel's mercy; because then the remnants of the people were saved. The Lord fought in the strongholds. In Hebrew it is written: The Lord fought for me in the strongholds. And this is the voice of all the people of Israel; for He fought for them against the Egyptians and against the other enemies of Israel. Unde et sequitur.

Judges 5:14

(Judges 5:14a) From Ephraim, he destroyed them in Amalek, that is, Joshua, who was from the tribe of Ephraim, destroyed the strong ones, that is, the enemies of Israel, in Amalek, as it is read in the book of Exodus: 'And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword, etc.' (Exodus 17:13). And that the same Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim is shown in the book of Numbers, where it is said: 'From the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun' (Numbers 13:9), whom Joshua also calls in the following passages, saying: 'Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.' And after him, that is, Joshua, rising from the tribe of Benjamin, Saul destroyed the people of Amalek, as commanded by the Lord, which Deborah prophesied about Saul in the spirit of prophecy. And this is said according to the figure of speech called prolepsis, that he himself would destroy Amalek, as you have in the Book of Samuel (1 Samuel 14:48). But the phrase 'O Amalek' is not found in the Hebrew text, but the Latin interpreter added it for the sake of clarity.

(Judges 5:14b) From Machir, the leaders descended, and from Zebulun, those who led the army to fight. In Hebrew, it is written: From Machir, the leaders descended, and it is understood, to fight, that is, to overthrow the prince Sisera. And from Zebulun, it is understood, they descended, who led the army. And from the tribe of Levi, and from the tribe of Issachar, it is understood, to fight, that is, to praise and humbly beseech the Lord. Of which, it follows.

Judges 5:15

(Judges 5:15) The leaders of Issachar were with Deborah. In Hebrew: the princes, that is, the teachers of the Law, were with Deborah to praise the Lord, and Barak followed in the footsteps of the age. It is to be understood that a certain part of them remained with Deborah to praise the Lord, and a part followed Barak to exhort and vanquish Sisera. Who, as if into a precipice, gave himself to danger. Barak, indeed, believing the words of the Lord, gave himself to danger, throwing himself into the torrent Kishon, pursuing and vanquishing the army of Sisera. For in this place a raging torrent is understood as the abyss. Ruben, on the other hand, is divided within himself, and a dispute of noble men is found. It is written in the Book of Judges against itself. For the voice of Deborah is heard, rebuking the tribe of Ephraim, because they did not obey the command of the Lord and did not go with their brothers to fight against the enemies of the Lord. But he, being terrified by fear and unbelieving in the words of the Lord, separated himself from them and, because of that, was found to be proud, that is, arrogant. And so their reproof follows in the spirit of prophecy, saying:

Judges 5:16

(Judges 5:16) Why do you dwell between two boundaries, to hear the hissing of flocks? It is not read in Hebrew, 'between two', but rather 'between your boundaries', namely the boundaries of your neighboring tribes, to hear the hissing of flocks; as if to say: You desire to preserve the flocks with which you abound, and fear losing them, and you take greater pleasure in hearing their hissing than in striving with your brothers to conquer the enemies of Israel. And because you do this, you proudly resist the command of the Lord. And so it follows the same thing as above: after the division of Reuben, a dispute of the magnanimous is found: because he did evil, despising the authority of the Lord and being proud.

Judges 5:17

(Judges 5:17) Gad remained beyond the Jordan. And this is set forth as a reproach because while Reuben remained, Gad remained with him of equal mind. And Dan was free with ships. For seeing that the tribes of Reuben and Gad did not go with their brothers to battle, being terrified by fear, he took flight by being free with ships. Asher dwelt on the seashore and stayed in the ports. Likewise, this is set forth as a reproach because Asher, while dwelling on the seashore, stayed in the ports, choosing instead to flee rather than fight with his brothers.

Judges 5:18

(Judges 5:18) Zebulun and Naphtali offered their lives unto death in the region of Morome. In Hebrew, it is 'super regionem Morome'. The meaning is that while the other tribes were unwilling to go, these two tribes offered their lives unto death. In the region of Morome. For Morome is interpreted as 'exalted': they are said to have offered their lives for the sake of the exalted region, that is, for God, and therefore they are praised, while the other tribes are criticized.

Judges 5:19

(Judges 5:19) Kings came and fought. The kings of the land of Canaan said, who were subject to King Jabin. The kings of Canaan fought. It repeats the same thing in Tanach. Tanach is indeed a province where the Kishon River is. Near the waters of Megiddo. Megiddo is a city situated on the Kishon River. And what is said, Near the waters of Megiddo, is understood near the Kishon River,

the city of Megiddo. Yet they took nothing as plunderers. This is said in mocking, implying that not only did they not obtain any spoils, but they were also unable to save their own lives.

Judges 5:20

(Judges 5:20) There was a battle fought against them from heaven. Because in the forty thousand men of Israel a shield and spear could not be found, therefore the Lord fought for them from heaven with hailstones and fire against their enemies. Just as it is also written in the book of Joshua: The stars remained in their order and fought against Sisera (Joshua 10:11). The stars are understood to be the angels who fought against Sisera from heaven.

Judges 5:21

(Judges 5:21) The River Kishon swept away their corpses. For there is the place of their downfall; and it is as if one were to ask, where? and the answer is: In the River Kishon, that is, in the Red Sea. Hence it follows: The river Kishon, the river of Kishon. It calls the River Kishon the Red Sea. For Kishon means of old, because ancient miracles were performed there, when the children of Israel passed over and the Egyptians perished. And because the Red Sea vomited forth the dead Egyptians, so that the Israelites saw their dead bodies on the shore of the sea, and the same bodies were carried away by the fish and sea creatures: therefore the River Kishon swept away their corpses, so that the fish and sea creatures of the Red Sea might eat the bodies of the Canaanites, in place of the bodies of the Egyptians taken from them. Trample, my soul, the mighty ones. This is what Deborah, representing all of Israel, says, that they may crush the necks of their strongest enemies with one mind, that is, the strongest ones: as it is also written in the book of Joshua about the five kings of the Canaanites (Josh. 10:24).

Judges 5:22

(Judges 5:22) Then the hooves of the horses fell off, with a powerful force to those fleeing, and headlong to the bravest of the enemies who were rushing. 'Their hooves,' it is read in Hebrew; for it is reported that the hooves of their horses fell off from hailstones from the heavens, that is, from their angels. So the meaning is: If the hooves of the horses fell off from touching the stones, what do you think happened to the riders?

Judges 5:23

(Judges 5:23) Cursed be the land of Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord. In Hebrew it is written: Curse Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord. The Angel of the Lord is understood by the Hebrews to be Michael, who commands Deborah to have the people of Israel curse Meroz, that is, the power of the Angel that presided over the Canaanites. For Meroz is interpreted as secret. Therefore, he is commanded to be cursed, that is, anathematized, because while the other angels fought for Israel, he not only did not fight, but also persevered in their adversity. Curse the inhabitants of Meroz, says the Lord's angel. Curse them bitterly because they did not come to help the Lord. They did not come to help the strong Lord.

Judges 5:24

(Judges 5:24) Blessed among women, Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. Among women, namely Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, and almost all women. Let her be blessed in the temple, the Lord

is understood, so that her memorial may be there, just like Judith. And the reason why she is blessed is given, namely because she acted wisely and prudently, in that she gave milk to the one asking for water. Therefore, she gave milk, so that the fleeing enemy would find a stronger faith in her. And if it is asked why he did not give wine, it must be answered that the house of Rechab do not drink wine, as you have in the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. XXXV, 14).

Commentary on Titus

Commentaries on the Epistle to Titus by Saint Jerome of Stridon, Priest

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

Although they are not worthy of faith, who annulled the first faith, I am speaking of Marcion and Basilides, and all heretics who tear apart the old Testament: we would still tolerate them to some extent, if at least they would contain their hands in the new Testament: and not dare to violate (as they boast) Christ, the Son of the good God, or the evangelist, or the apostles. Now, however, since they have scattered his gospel and the apostles' epistles, and have not made themselves the apostles of Christ, but their own, I wonder how they dare to claim the name of Christians for themselves. For, to pass over the other Epistles, from which they have erased whatever seems to conflict with their own doctrine, they believed that certain undivided ones should be rejected: namely, both to Timothy, to the Hebrews, and to Titus, which we are now trying to explain. And if they were to return the reasons why the apostles did not consider them, we would try to respond to something and perhaps satisfy the reader. Now truly when they pronounce with heretic authority and say: This is Paul's epistle, this is not; let them understand that they are refuted by the authority that they themselves do not blush to pretend false. Tatianus, patriarch of the Encratites, who himself rejected some of Paul's epistles, believed that this one, especially Titus, should be pronounced by the Apostle; despising Marcion and others who agree with him on this point. Therefore, the Apostle writes, O Paula and Eustochium, concerning Nicopolis, which is situated on the Actian shore, that now the largest part of it belongs to your possession. And he writes to his disciple Titus, and his son in Christ whom he left in Crete to instruct the churches, and commanded him, that when Artemas or Tychicus arrives in Crete, he should come to Nicopolis himself. Indeed it was just, that he who had said, my concern is for all the Churches: and who, when departing from Jerusalem had founded the Gospel of Christ as far as Illyricum, should not allow the Cretans to be deserted by both him and Titus; among whom the seeds of idolatry first grew: but that he would send Artemas or Tychicus to them instead of himself and Titus, by whose doctrine and consolation they would be nurtured.

1:1

"Paul the servant of God: an apostle however of Jesus Christ." In the Epistle to the Romans he begins thus: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle," but in this one he calls himself "a servant of God," while he is "an apostle of Jesus Christ." For if the Father and the Son are one, and he who believes in the Son, believes also in the Father, that servitude of the Apostle

Paul is to be referred, indiscriminately, either to the Father or to the Son. But, however, this servitude is not that of which the Apostle says himself: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15), but it is a noble servitude, of which David speaks to God: "Behold, oh Lord, I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid" (Psalms 116:16), and of which the blessed Mary speaks to the angel: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). Moses had this bondage, of whom the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, 'Moses, my servant, is dead' (Joshua 1:2). And in another place, 'Moses, the servant of the Lord, died on the land of Moab according to the word of the Lord' (Deuteronomy 34:5). It is to be far from thinking that Moses and Mary had the spirit of servitude in fear and not in love for God. It is not surprising that although called holy men, they were nobly called servants of God, as the Father speaks to the Son through the prophet Isaiah: 'It is great for you to be called my servant, my child' (Isaiah 49:6), which is said in Greek: $\mu\gamma\alpha\sigma\sigma\tau\iota\tau\omicron\kappa\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\sigma\epsilon\pi\alpha\delta\mu\omicron\upsilon$. But we sought after 'my child' in Hebrew and found it not written, but 'my servant,' that is, Abdi. Hence, Obadiah the prophet, whose name means 'the servant of the Lord,' received his name from serving God. If anyone is moved when he hears that the Lord and Savior, who created the universe, is called a servant of God, he will not be moved if he listens to the apostles speaking to themselves, 'Whoever wills among you shall be the greatest, let him be the servant of all,' and 'The Son of Man came not that he should be served, but that he should serve' (Matthew 20:27-28). He did not only seem to teach this with words, but also demonstrated it through example. For once, he took a towel, girded himself, and filled a basin with water and washed the disciples' feet (John 13). It is not therefore impious to believe that he who assumed the form of a servant did those things which were the duty of a servant, so that he should be said to have served his Father's will by serving his own servants. But this servitude is of charity, by which we are commanded to serve one another. And the Apostle himself, though free from all, made himself the servant of all (1 Cor. 9). And in another place: "Your servant for Christ's sake." He is the servant of God who is not the servant of sin. For everyone who commits sin is the servant of sin (John 8:34). Therefore, the Apostle, who was not the servant of sin, is rightly called the servant of God the Father and of Christ. Furthermore, when he says, "The Apostle of Jesus Christ," it seems to me to mean the same as if he had said, "The appointed prefect of the emperor Augustus, the commander-in-chief of the army of Tiberius Caesar." For just as judges of this world, in order to appear more noble, take their titles from the kings they serve and from the dignity with which they are inflated, so the Apostle, claiming for himself a great dignity among Christians, designated himself by the title of Apostle of Christ, so that he might inspire terror in those who read his name itself, indicating that all who believed in Christ should be subject to him. Moreover, what we have just written in Romans: "The servant of Jesus Christ" does not differ from his saying, "The servant of wisdom, the servant of righteousness, the servant of sanctification, the servant of redemption, for Christ became for us from God the Father, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30).

1:2-4

"According to the faith of the elect of God and the knowledge of the truth, which is in accordance with piety towards eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before eternal times and has manifested in due time His word in preaching, believed in accordance with the command of our

Savior God by me, Titus, his dear son according to the common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father, and Jesus Christ our Savior." If anyone knows the art of grammar, or dialectic, in order to have the correct reasoning of speech, and to judge between false and true. Also, geometry and arithmetic and music have truth in their science; but that is not the science of piety. The science of piety is to know the Law, understand the prophets, believe in the Gospel, and not ignore the apostles. Conversely, there are many who have a true knowledge of piety: but not immediately the truth of the other arts of which we have just mentioned above. Therefore, this truth, whose knowledge is in line with piety, is placed in the hope of eternal life: because he who knows himself immediately bestows on him the reward of immortality. Without piety, knowledge of the truth is pleasing at present: but it does not have the eternity of rewards, which the truthful God promised before eternal times: and he manifested it in his time in Christ Jesus. To whom did he promise it before and afterwards made it clear except to His wisdom, which was always with the Father, when He rejoiced over the perfect world and rejoiced over the sons of men, and promised them who would believe in Him, that they would have eternal life? Before the foundation of the world was laid, before the seas were spread, the mountains established, the sky hung, and the earth with a solid mass lowered, God promised this, in whom there is no falsehood. Not because He can lie, and does not want to break out into words of falsehood: but because He is the father of truth and has no lie in Him, according to the saying: But let God be true: and every man a liar (Rom. 3:4). Therefore, God is called not a liar: indeed, when He promises certain things to the prophets with an oath, in order that we may be more secure, we hope that what is foretold will come to pass, and believing with our whole heart, we may be prepared to attain what is to come.

It seems not irrelevant briefly to discuss why God alone is true, and every man a liar, as it is said by the voice of the Apostles. And if I am not mistaken, how is he alone said to have immortality, when he has made angels and many rational creatures to whom he has given immortality: so too he is said to be true alone, not because the others, who are not immortal, are not lovers of truth, but because he alone is naturally, and immortal, and true. The others, indeed, attain immortality and truth by his gift, and it is one thing to be true, but another to have something in and of oneself: it is another thing to have what the giver has in his power to give. But I also think that this should not be passed over in silence, that God is not a liar, having promised eternal life before the eternal ages: from which, according to the history of Genesis, the world was made, and through the succession of nights and days, months and years, times were established. In this cycle and wheel of the world, times slip away and come, and either the future or the past is. Hence some philosophers do not believe that there is a present time: but either the past or the future; because everything that we speak, do, or think, either passes if it has happened, or if it has not yet happened, we expect it to come. Therefore, before the times of this world, it must be believed that there was a certain eternity of centuries, in which the Father always was with the Son and the Holy Spirit: and, so to speak, the time of God is one, that is, all eternity: in fact, there are innumerable times, since he who exceeds all times was there before all time. But not even a thousand years of our world are yet completed: and how many previous eternities, how many times, how many origins of ages must be considered, in which the angels, thrones, dominations, and other powers served God: and without the vicissitudes and measures of times, they stood by God's command! Before all these times, therefore, which neither speech can utter nor mind can grasp, nor silent thought dare touch, God the Father promised his Word and Wisdom, and his very Wisdom and the life of those who were to believe, should come into the world. Pay close attention to the text and

order of the reading: for eternal life, which the not false God promised before eternal ages, is none other than the Word of God. For he has manifested his word in due time, saying: Therefore the word itself, which was in the beginning with the Father, must be that life eternal which he had promised; and the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1) But that the Word of God, which is Christ himself, is life, he testifies in another place, saying: I am the life (John 14:6). Now life is not short, not bounded by certain periods; but eternal, which was manifested in the last ages, in the preaching which was believed in by the teacher of the gentiles, Paul, and revealed to the world, and made known to men, according to the command of the Savior God, who wished us to be saved, and fulfilled what he had promised. And the Apostle writes to his beloved son Titus, which is called in Greek, γνησ■ τ■κν■: and cannot be explained in Latin: for γν■στος means this rather, when someone is called faithful and proper, and (so to speak) legitimate or genuine without comparison to another. From which we understand that there was much difference even among the sons of Paul, that he had some γνησ■ους, that is, most genuine, closely connected to himself, and born of true marriage and free procreation; but others almost from a handmaid and from Hagar, who cannot receive inheritance with the free son, Isaac. For the speech and wisdom and doctrine by which Titus instructed the Churches of Christ, made him a true son of the Apostle, and separate from all the companionship of others. Let us see after this what follows: According to the common faith, whether he said that it was common to all who believed in Christ, or common to him and Titus alone. Indeed, to me it seems that the common faith of the Apostle Paul and Titus was better than that of all believers; among whom, due to the variety of opinions, faith could not be common but diverse. Finally, the preface of the Epistle and the greeting of the Apostle's preface to Titus are completed with such an ending: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. Whether both grace and peace are given to both the Father and Christ Jesus, and both can be understood from each other, or whether grace refers to the Father and peace to the Son, must not be passed over without doubt. The Apostle had cursed some, that grace and peace would multiply to them: now, to Titus, peace and grace are placed without multiplication. Noah the righteous man, and the only one saved in a storm-tossed world, is said to have found not many graces, but one grace before God. And Moses said to the Lord, "If I have found grace with you" (Exodus 33:13). And wherever grace is placed in the person of the saints, seek and you shall find it, not that they have found graces but grace. That merchant of the Gospel who had many pearls, at last found one precious one, which he bought alone from many pearls (Matthew 13). For the perfect, indeed, it is to buy one pearl and one treasure for all pearls and all their substance by their business: but for those who are just beginning and are still on the way, not only one and alone but many pearls must be had.

1:5 "For this reason, I left you in Crete, so that you would correct what was lacking." It is the dignity of the apostolic Church to lay the foundation, which no one can lay except the architect. And the foundation is none other than Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11). Those who are lesser artisans can build houses upon the foundation. Therefore, as a wise architect, Paul exerted himself in every labor, not to glory in what had already been prepared, but after he had softened the hard hearts of the Cretans to faith in Christ, and had subdued them by both word and signs, and had taught them to believe in God the Father and in Christ, not in their native Jupiter, he left Titus as his disciple in Crete, to confirm the rudiments of the nascent Church and to correct anything that might appear lacking, while he himself went to other nations, in order to lay again the foundation of Christ in them. But when he says, "so that you would correct what was lacking," it shows that they had not

yet attained to the full knowledge of the truth, and even though they had been corrected by the Apostle, they still needed further correction. However, everything that is corrected is imperfect. Moreover, in Greek, the addition of the preposition in the word **ἐπιδιορθήσῃ**, which means "correct," does not mean exactly the same thing as **διορθήσῃ**, that is, "to correct," but rather, to over-correct, so that the things that I have corrected, and which have not yet been brought to the full line of truth, may be corrected by you, and receive the rule of equality. And (as) you should appoint presbyters through cities, just as I arranged for you. Bishops who have the power to appoint presbyters in individual cities should listen, under which law the order of Ecclesiastical constitution is maintained: nor should they think that the words of the apostles are their own, but Christ's, who said to the disciples: He who despises you, despises me; but he who despises me, despises him who sent me (Luke 10:16). So whoever hears you, hears me; and whoever rejects me, rejects him who sent me. From this it is clear that those who wish to confer the Ecclesiastical grade on anyone without merit, but through grace, contrary to the law of the apostles, do so against Christ himself, who through his apostle carried out the appointment of presbyter in the Church. Moses, the friend of God, to whom God spoke face to face (Deut. 5 and 31), could certainly have made his sons his successors in the principality and bequeathed his dignity to his descendants; but Jesus, a stranger from another tribe, was elected so that we would know that the principality must not be conferred on bloodline, but on life. But now we see many doing this as a favor, so that they do not seek to elevate pillars in the Church who can benefit the Church more, but those whom they themselves love, or with whose services they are entangled: or for whom someone of their ancestors begged, and, to not speak of worse things, who obtained the office by gifts. Let us carefully attend to the words of the apostles, saying: That you appoint presbyters in cities, just as I arranged for you. The person speaking about who ought to be ordained as a presbyter says this: "If anyone is without blame, a one-woman man, etc., for it is necessary for the bishop to be blameless, as a dispenser of God." Therefore, the presbyter is the same as the bishop, and before, by the instigation of the devil, competitions arose in religion and it was said among the people, "I am of Paul," "I am of Apollo," "I am of Cephas" (1 Cor. 1:12), the governance of the church was conducted by the joint counsel of the presbyterate. But when each person began to consider those whom he had baptised as his own rather than Christ's, it was decided throughout the world that one chosen from among the presbyters should be placed in charge of the others and have care of the general well-being of the church, so that the seeds of schism might be rooted out. Someone may think that this is not the teaching of the scriptures but our own opinion, that a bishop and a presbyter are the same, that the difference lies only in the age of the office. That person should pay attention to the words of the Apostle to the Philippians, where he addresses his epistle to "Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons; grace to you and peace" (Phil. 1:1–2), and so on. Now, although the city of Philippi is one in Macedonia, it is impossible for there to be several bishops in one city. But because they used to call the same persons bishops then, whom they did "presbyters" also, for this reason he spoke without distinction of bishops and presbyters. Finally, lest this statement be confirmed only by one witness, let it be confirmed by another. In the Acts of the Apostles it is written, that when the Apostle came to Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and called the presbyters of the same Church, to whom afterwards among other things he spoke: 'Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood' (Acts 20:28). And here

observe carefully how, calling the Ephesian presbyters to him, he afterwards called the same men bishops. If anyone desires to receive the Epistle which is written to the Hebrews under the name of Paul, and in which the care of the Churches is equally divided, it is read among many. For he writes to the people: 'Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief. For this is not expedient for you' (Hebrews 13:17). And Peter, who for the strengthening of the faith received the name of Firm, speaks in his epistle to the elders, saying: 'The ancients therefore that are among you, I beseech, who am myself also an ancient and a witness of the sufferings of Christ: as also a partaker of that glory which is to be revealed in time to come: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking care of it not by constraint, but willingly according to God: not for filthy lucre's sake, but voluntarily' (1 Peter 5:1-2). This we have shown in order to demonstrate that in former times those same people were presbyters whom later on were called bishops; and gradually it was so arranged that the various obligations were entrusted to one person. Therefore just as the presbyters know that by the custom of the Church they are subject to him who has been placed over them as their head, so also let the bishops know that according to the custom of the Church they are greater than the presbyters and ought to regulate the whole church by common council, imitating Moses, who, when he alone had power over the people of Israel, chose seventy others with whom he might judge the people (Numbers 11). Let us see therefore what sort of man ought to be ordained presbyter or bishop.

1:6

"If anyone is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of reckless living, or disobedient." Therefore he must be blameless, which I believe is also referred to in Timothy as irreprehensible (1 Tim. III): not that during the time he is ordained he has no crime, and has washed away past stains with a new life, but from the time he is reborn in Christ, he is not tormented by any consciousness of sin. For how can the leader of the Church remove evil from those who are in similar transgression? Or with what freedom can he rebuke the sinner, when the sinner answers silently that he himself has committed the same thing he is rebuking? Therefore, whoever desires a bishopric, desires good work. He says work, not privilege, not glory. But he must also have a good testimony from those outside, so that he does not fall into shame, and into the trap of the devil. And what he says, the husband of one wife, must be understood thus: so that we do not think that every monogamist is better than a widower; but so that he can exhort to monogamy and continence, who offers his example in teaching. For suppose a young man lost his wife and was overcome by the necessity of the flesh, and took a second wife, whom he also immediately lost and then lived continently; another, however, married until old age, and, as most believe, never gave up the work of the flesh: which of the two do you think is better, more chaste, more continent? Certainly he who was unfortunate even in a second marriage and afterwards conducted himself modestly and piously, is preferable to him who has been separated neither by the embrace of his wife nor by advanced age. Therefore, whoever is chosen as a quasi-monogamist should not applaud himself because he is better than every man who is twice married, since the greater happiness rather than his will has been chosen. Some people think this about this place: it was the custom of the Jews either to have two or more wives: which we read in the Old Law of Abraham and Jacob: and now they want it to be a precept, that he who is to be elected bishop should not have two wives at the same time. Even those who have been with the

Gentiles, and after losing one wife, have taken another after the baptism of Christ, think more superstitiously than truly, that they should not be read in the priesthood: for certainly, if this is to be observed. those who, before taking one regenerated wife, indulged in wandering through prostitutes, should be more strongly barred from the episcopate: and it is much more detestable to fornicate with several than to find one who is twice married; because in the former, there is a kind of unhappiness in marriage, while in the latter there is a tendency to voluptuousness towards sin. Montanus and those who follow the Novatian schism, took the name of cleanliness to themselves: and they think that second marriages should be prohibited from the communion of the Church: whereas the Apostle, imposing this on bishops and presbyters, relaxed it in other respects. Not that he encourages second marriages; but that he indulges the necessity of the flesh. And Tertullian wrote a heretical book about Monogamy, which no one who has read the Apostle will be ignorant of opposing. And indeed, it is in our power to have a bishop or a presbyter without blame, and to have one wife. But that which follows, to have faithful children, not accused of lewdness, and not subject, is beyond our power. For to be sure, if parents have well instructed their children and always taught them the precepts of the Lord from a young age, if later they give themselves to lewdness, and putting aside the reins of vice, will the fault then rebound to the parents, and the sins of the father will stain the holiness of the son? If anyone has well instructed his children, I believe that includes Isaac, who is to be held as having well instructed his son Esau. But Esau, a fornicator and profane, sold his firstborn for one meal (Gen. 25:29-34). Samuel too, who was such that he called upon the Lord, and the Lord answered him, and in the time of harvest obtained the rain of the winter season, had sons who turned aside after bribes, and became such wicked judges that the people, not bearing it, demanded a king for themselves like the other nations (1 Samuel 8:4-5). Therefore, if the election of the priests were to take place, and Isaac on account of Esau and Samuel on account of his sons were deemed unworthy of the priesthood. And since the sins of parents are not attributed to their children, will the faults of the children prejudice the parents? (Ezekiel 18:2) First of all, it must be said that the name of the priesthood is so sacred that even external things are considered for us, not because we are not bishops because of our faults: but because we are barred from this position because of the incontinence of our sons. For with what freedom can we correct other people's children and teach what is right: when immediately he who has been corrected can say to us: First teach your sons? Or with what confidence do I correct a stranger who commits fornication when my own conscience responds to me: Therefore disinherit the fornicating son: reject your sons serving vices? But when a wicked son comes together with you under the same roof, do you dare to remove the speck from someone else's eye, not seeing the beam in your own eye (Matthew VII and Luke VI)? Therefore, the righteous is not polluted by the vices of his children: but freedom is reserved by the Apostle for the prince of the Church: so that he may become such that he may not be afraid to rebuke outsiders because of the vices of his children. Then also it must be inferred against those who are swollen with pride about the episcopate and think that they have achieved not the dispensation of Christ, but authority: because they are not immediately better than all those who have not been ordained bishops: and from the fact that they have been elected they themselves think that they are more confirmed: but understand that some are removed from the priesthood because their children's vices have hindered them. But if the sins of the children prohibit the righteous from the episcopate: how much more should each one consider himself and know that the powerful suffer torment powerfully (Wisdom VI), so he will withdraw from this not as much honor as burden: and he will not seek to

take the place of others who are more worthy! Finally, it must be said that in the Scriptures by sons are meant reasonings, that is, thoughts; but by daughters, deeds, that is, works, and now he who will become a bishop must be commanded to have both thoughts and works in his power, and he truly believes in Christ, and is not stained by any creeping vice.

1:7

"For it is necessary that a bishop be without blame, as the steward of God: not arrogant, not prone to anger, not given to wine, not a striker, not greedy for filthy lucre." Therefore, it is required among stewards that a faithful person be found: and not eating and drinking with drunkards, striking slaves and maidservants; but uncertain of the return of God, and giving food to his servants in due season. But between the stewards and the servile, this is the only difference: that a servant is appointed over his servants. Therefore, a bishop and a priest must know that the people are their servants, not slaves. The rest that follows is up to us: Not arrogant, that is not swelling and pleasing himself because he is a bishop, but like a good steward, seeking what will benefit many. Not prone to anger. He is angry who is always angry and is moved like a leaf by a light breeze of provocation and sin. And indeed, there is nothing more shameful than an angry teacher, who ought to be gentle (and according to what is written: But the servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle to all, masterful, patient, instructing in meekness those who oppose him), he, on the other hand, with an angry face, trembling lips, wrinkled front, unrestrained invective, a face varying between paleness and redness, shouting uproariously, does not lead astray so much towards good, as hurries towards evil by his cruelty; hence Solomon says: Anger destroys even the wise (Prov. 21); And: The anger of a just man does not work the justice of God (James I, 20). Nor is he who is sometimes angry, actually irascible: but he is called irascible, who is frequently overcome by this passion. The bishop is also prohibited from being given to wine, about which it is written to Timothy: Not given to much wine. (1 Tim. 3:8). But what kind of bishop is it to see intoxicated, with his mind occupied, or to raise laughter against the gravity of his position, and to cackle with loose lips: or if, when he has remembered some little thing sad, he bursts into sobs and tears among his cups. It is a long journey to go through all the follies that drunkenness suggests. You may see some hurling drinking cups across the room, or throwing them in the countenance of their fellow guests; some tearing their clothing and wounding themselves on the bodies of others; some shouting; some nodding off; while he who drinks most is regarded as the strongest: it is even an accusation against him, that he has not drunk frequently enough when the king has called upon him to testify. They vomit in order to drink, and drink to be able to vomit. The stomach and the throat are engaged in but one business. Let it suffice to have said thus much, that according to St. Paul, intemperance lies in wine. And wherever there is gluttony or drunkenness, there debauchery reigns. Look at the belly and the genitals, and according to the character of the vices so is the order of the members. I will never consider a drunkard to be chaste, for even if he has fallen asleep in his cups, he could still have sinned through the wine. But we are filled with wonder that the Apostle should condemn intoxication in bishops or priests, when in the old law it was commanded that the priests, when they entered into the temple, should not drink wine at all; and when a lawful Nazarite is bidden to nourish his holy locks, to avoid all defilement, to abstain from wine, or anything that is made of grapes, from the husks that remain after wine has been pressed, and from every sort of strong drink which perverts a sound mind. Let every one say what he likes: I speak my own thoughts: I know what abstinence has done for me, and what harm has come of its

intermission or its excess. After drunkenness, however, he warns that a person should not be a striker; as in simplicity of understanding it builds up the listener so they do not easily reach out to strike, so that the insane person does not burst out to strike another in the face. However, it is better not to say that one is a striker who is gentle and patient, who knows in time what should be spoken and what should be kept silent, and who does not hit the conscience of the weak with useless talk. For when the Apostle was forming the leader of the church, he did not forbid him from being a boxer and pancratiast (that is, an athlete) (which is also reprehensible in any plebeian or pagan), but as I said: so that the abusive and garrulous one does not lose him, who could be corrected by modesty and gentleness. The desire for shameful gain from someone who is to become a bishop should also be alien. For there are many who teach things that are not proper, for the sake of shameful gain: who destroy entire households, and think that piety is a business. But it is better, according to Solomon, to have a little with righteousness, than to have much gain with iniquity (Prov. 16:8): and a good name is to be preferred in poverty than in wealth. A bishop who desires to be an imitator of the Apostle should be content with food and clothing alone (1 Tim. 6). Those who serve at the altar should live by it (1 Cor. 9). They live, he says, but do not become rich. Hence also, money is shaken off our belt; and we have only one tunic (Matt. 10 and Mark 6): nor do we think about tomorrow. The desire for shameful gain is to think more about the future than the present. What a bishop or presbyter should not have has been taught by the Apostle's word; but now, on the contrary, what he should have is explained.

1:8-9

"But [he should be] hospitable, a lover of good, chaste, just, holy, continent or abstinent, one who holds to the correct doctrine, faithful in speech, so that [he] is able to comfort [others] in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict it." Above all, hospitality is required of a future bishop. For if everyone wishes to hear it from the Gospel: "I was a stranger and you took me in" (Matt. 25:35): how much more should a bishop, whose house should be a common inn for everyone! For a layman receiving one or two, or a few, fulfills the duty of hospitality. If a bishop does not receive all, he is inhuman. But I fear that just as the Queen of the South came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon (Matt. 12), judging the men of her own time, and the men of Nineveh, who repented at the preaching of Jonah will condemn those who disdained to hear a greater Savior than Jonah: so most people judge bishops, withdrawing themselves from the ecclesiastical rank and exercising things that do not befit a bishop; of whom I think John writes to Gaius: "Dear friend, you are faithful in whatever you do for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. Please send them on their way in a manner that honors God. It was for the sake of the Name that they went out receiving no help from the pagans" (3 John 5ff.). And truly, with the Holy Spirit speaking through him, [John] foretells what will happen in the churches, even then condemning those who desire to have the first place, Diotrephes, who does not receive us. Therefore, when I come, I will call attention to the works he is doing, spreading malicious nonsense about us. Not satisfied with that, he even refuses to welcome other believers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church. Truly, it is now evident that what was predicted [has come true]: in many cities, bishops or priests, if they see laypeople being hospitable, lovers of good, [they] envy, become angry, excommunicate, and expel them from the Church, as if it were not lawful to do what the bishop does not do: and that such laypeople should be damned by the priests. Therefore, [the priests]

hold them [i.e. the laypeople] in heavy burdens, and, as if imposed on their own necks, they turn them away from good work and disturb them with various persecutions. But let the bishop be chaste, whom the Greeks call σφρον; and the Latin interpreter, being deceived by the ambiguity of the word, translated it as "prudent" instead of "chaste". But if it is ordered for lay people to abstain from sexual intercourse during prayer, what should be thought of a bishop who will offer God the unstained victims daily for his own and the people's sins? Let us turn to the books of the Kings and find priest Abimelech who did not want to give bread to David and his men until he questioned whether they were pure from women. And unless he had heard that they had been pure from work with their wives yesterday and the day before, he would not have allowed the loaves that he had previously denied. There is as much difference between the loaves of the offering and the body of Christ as there is between shadow and body, image and truth, exemplars of the future and the very things that were foreshadowed by the exemplars. Therefore, just as meekness, patience, sobriety, moderation, renunciation of gain, hospitality, and kindness must be especially present in the bishop and outstanding among all laymen, so must personal chastity and (if I may say so) priestly modesty be present, so that the mind, which will make Christ's body, is free not only from unclean works but also from the error of the eye and thought. And the bishop also should be just and holy so that he may exercise justice among the peoples whom he presides over and give to each what he deserves, not showing partiality in judgment. The difference between laypersons and bishops in justice consists in this: a layperson can appear just in a few things, while a bishop can exercise justice in as many people as he has subjects. But sanctus, which in Greek is called σιος, signifies this more: when sanctity itself is mixed with piety and refers to God. For whom we call sanctum, the Greeks call ιον; but whom they call σιον, we can call pious towards God. Let the bishop also be abstinent: not only (as some think) from lust and embracing his wife, but from all disturbances of the soul, so that he not be roused to anger, not be cast down by sadness, not be agitated by fear nor lifted up by excessive joy. Abstinence, moreover, has been counted among the fruits of the spirit by the Apostle. And if it is required of all, how much more from a bishop, who must bear the sins of sinners with patience and gentleness: console the fearful: sustain the weak: render no evil for evil, but overcome evil with good. Finally, let him hold fast to the faithful word which is according to doctrine, so that just as the word of God is faithful and worthy of every acceptance, so he may present himself in such a way that everything he says is considered worthy of faith, and his words are a rule of truth. Let him also be able to console those who are agitated by the turmoil of this age and to destroy weak precepts through sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is said, in distinction to weak and frail doctrine. Let him also be such that he can refute contradicting heretics or Jews and the wise of this age. And indeed, the virtues that he has placed in the bishop pertain to life. But what he says here, that he may be able to console in sound doctrine and to refute the contradicting, refers to knowledge. For if a bishop's only holy life, it can benefit him to live so. Moreover, if he is learned in doctrine and speech, he can instruct himself and others, and not only instruct and teach his own but also strike back at adversaries, who unless they are refuted and convicted, can easily pervert the hearts of the simple. This passage is against those who think it is a sin to read scriptures and who despise those who meditate day and night on the Law of the Lord, as though they were useless talkers, not realizing that the Apostle, after the catalogue of the bishop's conversation, likewise commanded doctrine.

1:10-11

For there are many who are not subject, vain talkers, and deceivers of minds: especially those who are of the circumcision, who must be indicated as silent: who overturn whole houses, teaching what they ought not, for the sake of base gain. Let him who is to be a prince of the Church have eloquence associated with integrity of life, lest his works be taciturn without speech, and let his words blush when his deeds fail: especially when they are not a few, but many: neither subject, but insolent, who do not care to say what the Psalmist says: Is not my soul subject to God (Ps. 61:1)? But let them overthrow the good seed of minds, which naturally have knowledge of God, with empty persuasion. For this, it seems to me that Paul meant when he said "deceivers", not as the Latin interpreter simply translated "deceivers", but "deceivers of the mind". And indeed, without the authority of the Scriptures, their talk would not have faith, unless their perverse doctrine appeared to be confirmed by divine testimonies. These are of the circumcision of the Jews, who at that time were striving to subvert the nascent Church of Christ and to introduce legal precepts, on which Paul explains more fully both to the Romans and to the Galatians. And just a few months ago, we presented three volumes on the explanation of the Letter to the Galatians. Men of such a kind, as the Doctor of the Church, to whom the souls of the people are entrusted, ought to surpass with reason the Scriptures, and to impose silence upon them in evidence: they overthrow not merely one or few houses, but all homes with owners and families, teaching [them] about differences of foods, about the long-ago abolition of the Sabbath, about the harm of circumcision: and if they did this very thing by zeal for the faith, it might be pardoned to some extent, with the Apostle saying: I bear witness that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (Romans 10:2). But because God is their belly, they willingly seek to make their own disciples for shameful gain, so that they may be fed by their followers as masters. But we can interpret this, which has been said for the sake of shameful gain, in another way: that we may think the Apostle used a common word, by which all heretics with their perverse teachings usually assert that they are gainers of men. When in fact it is not gain, but destruction, deceiving the souls of the deluded. On the contrary, he who has corrected his erring brother according to the Gospel, if he was converted, has gained him. For what greater gain can there be or what is more precious than if one gains a human soul? Therefore, every teacher of the Church who persuades rightly by the reason of faith in Christ is an honest gainer. And every heretic who deceives and is deceived by certain tricks of men, speaks what ought not to be spoken, for the sake of shameful gain.

1:12-14

"A certain one of them, their own prophet, said: 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true. For this cause, reprove them sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of people who turn away from the truth." As for the text of the discourse and the context of the passage, what he says: "A certain one of them, their own prophet," seems to be referring to those he spoke of earlier, especially those who are of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting entire households by teaching things they should not for the sake of shameful gain. And he continues, "A certain one of them, their own prophet." However, since this hexameter verse is not found in any of the prophets who prophesied in Judah, it seems to me that it should be read in two ways: either that what he says, "A certain one of them, their own prophet," is connected with what came before, in order to correct the things that were lacking in Crete, or that it refers specifically to the Cretans. But because there are many things in between, and this seems absurd and perhaps

no one will accept it, therefore, with regard to the things that are closer, it must be read differently from what came before, as follows: "For there are many rebellious people, full of meaningless talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision group; they must be silenced, because they are disrupting whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach, and that for the sake of dishonest gain." A certain one of them, their own prophet, said: so that what is said, "their own prophet," does not refer specifically to the Jews, and especially to those of the circumcision, but rather to many who are rebellious, full of meaningless talk and deception, who must be silenced along with those of the circumcision group, who are disrupting whole households by teaching things they should not, and who, since they were in Crete, should be believed to be Cretans. However, this couplet is said to be found in the oracles of the Cretan poet Epimenides; he called him a prophet, jokingly or allusively, meaning that Christians of such kind deserve to have prophets, just as prophets belonged to Baal and to the confusion of the Jews and to other offenses, and the scriptures mention any wicked prophets, genuinely because he wrote about oracles and responses that also foretold the future and predicted things that were to come long before. Finally, the book itself is titled Oracles, and because it seemed to promise something divine, I think the Apostle looked into it to see what the pagan divination promised, and in due time he used the couplet when he wrote to Titus, who was on Crete, in order to convict the false teachers of Crete with their own teacher. However, Paul is found to have done this not only in this place, but also in others. In the Acts of the Apostles, when he preached to the people, and in the Areopagus, which is the court of the Athenians, he argued, he says among other things: For we are his offspring, as some of your own poets have said (Acts 17), which hemistich is read in the Phaenomena Arati; which Cicero translated into Latin; and Germanicus Caesar, and recently Avienus, and many others, whom to enumerate is too long. To the Corinthians also (1 Cor. 15:33), who were themselves polished by Attic eloquence; and because of the proximity of the places, they were seasoned with the taste of Athenians, he took an iambic verse from Menander's comedy: Evil company corrupts good habits. Nor is it surprising if, for the opportunity of the time, he abuses the verses of pagan poets: for even altering some inscription of an altar, he spoke to the Athenians: "For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. But the inscription on the altar was not as Paul asserted, to an unknown God, but as follows: To the Gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa; to unknown and foreign gods. But because Paul did not need many unknown gods, but only one unknown God, he used a unique expression; so that he would teach that he was their God whom the Athenians had marked with the title of the altar; and, knowing it correctly, they ought to worship him whom they were ignorant of and could not ignore. But Paul did this seldom, and as the circumstances of the place more than suitability demanded it, in the manner of bees, which are accustomed to compose honey from various flowers and to adapt the cells of their favors. Some consider this verse taken from Callimachus the Cyrenian poet, and are not entirely wrong. In his praise of Jupiter against the Cretans, who boasted about showing his tomb, he says, "The Cretans are always liars, who also built his tomb with a sacrilegious mind." But, as we said above, the whole verse was taken by the Apostle from Epimenides the poet, and Callimachus used his exordium in his poem. Or perhaps he turned the common proverb by which the Cretans were called deceitful into a meter without stealing the labor of others. Some believe that the Apostle should be blamed for having imprudently fallen; and when he rebuked false teachers, he proved that verse by saying that the Cretans were called deceitful

because they had built the empty tomb of Jupiter. For they say that Epimenides or Callimachus accused the Cretans of being deceitful and dangerous beasts and lazy gluttons, because they do not feel the divine; and (even though) they create Jupiter, who reigns in heaven, buried on their own island; and this that they said is confirmed by the view of the Apostles: thus it follows that Jupiter is not dead, but alive. Therefore, it was unskillful of Paul, the destroyer of idolatry, while fighting against perverse teachers, to assert that the gods which he was attacking did exist. To this we must briefly respond that, in the case where he said "Evil company corrupts good morals," he did not immediately approve Menander's entire comedy or Aratus' book, but rather he used an opportunity provided by a verse. Similarly, in the present case, he did not confirm the entire work of Callimachus or Epimenides, whose one praises Jupiter and the other writes about oracles through one verse; rather, he only rebuked the Cretans as liars, blaming them for the vice of their people, not due to their opinion, which is praised by poets, but due to their innate ease of lying. But those who think that the whole book ought to be followed by the one who has made use of a part of the book, seem to me to admit the Apocryphal Book of Enoch, ((or of the Enochs)), concerning which Judas the Apostle gave testimony in his Epistle, among the sacred Scriptures of the Church; and many other things which the Apostle Paul spoke of in a hidden way. For we can say this by way of argument: that since he said that he worshipped the unknown God among the Athenians, whom they had written on an altar, Paul ought to follow and do those things also which were written on the altar, and those things which the Athenians were doing, since he had come to an agreement with them in part regarding the worship of an unknown God. Far be it from me to draw argument and scholastic elegance into calumny. There is no one so wicked, so much of a criminal, so much of a poisoner, who has not done something good at some time. Therefore, if I approve of one good thing of his, when I see it, and it is necessary for me to support the rest, which were bad, what is that to be blamed? If he is accused by an enemy against us and cries out, will he not speak some truth among the words of conflicts? And this too, is not always blamed by us against whom he speaks. So Callimachus and Epimenides, did not say that Jupiter is a god, and the rest that is contained in their poems, because the Cretans are deceitful; but they only spoke the truth, because they were expressing the inborn vice of the Cretans in terms of lies: because they are deceitful, they did not always speak the truth. For Jupiter would not cease to be a god even if the Cretans spoke the truth; but nevertheless, while they were silent, he who was dead would not have the name of a god. Finally, let us know that the Apostle spoke against the Cretans not by chance, and not incidentally (as they think), but carefully and watchfully, and defending himself in every way against the Cretans: This is a true testimony, he says; not the whole poem from which the testimony is taken, not the whole work: but only this testimony, this verse in which they are called liars. And certainly he who agreed only in one part of the poem, is to be believed to have refuted the rest. However, we have discussed in the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians how either the Cretans are deceitful and foolish, or the Galatians are hard-necked, or each province is represented by its own vice. And since there is nothing else we can add here, we are content with that. Therefore rebuke them sharply, he says, they are liars and evil beasts, and lazy gluttons, who deceive with falsehoods and thirst for the blood of the deceived like wild animals, and not working in silence, eat their own bread, whose god is their belly, and their glory is in their shame, and rebuke them so that they may be sound in the faith. Speak of the health of faith and what follows: that old men be sober, honorable, chaste, sound in the faith and love and patience, to whose faith the health of teachings is also called. For a time will come, he says, when they will not listen to

sound doctrine. There are also speeches of health, of which he speaks in the first letter to Timothy: if anyone teaches differently and does not agree to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the teaching that is according to piety (1 Tim. 6:3). And in the second: Holding the example of sound words that you have heard from me (2 Tim. 1:13). Those who have this health of faith and doctrine and sound words, do not heed Jewish fables and the commands of men who turn away from the truth. Let us acquiesce for a short time to the Jews, and listen patiently to their foolishness, and then we will understand what the Jewish tales are which have no authority from Scripture, nor any rational basis, but are the product of the fables and imaginations of certain people about animals and legends, of whom Isaiah prophesied, saying: "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. They worship me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Isaiah 29:13). This is confirmed by the testimony of the Savior in the Gospel, who accuses them of giving preference to the commandments of men over the Law of God. For God said, "Honor your father and mother." They, on the other hand, say, "Whatever gift you might have received from me is Corban, that is, an offering to God" (Mark 7:11-12). Anyone who falls short of circumcision after the coming of Christ is a slave to Jewish myths and the commandments of men, who turn away from truth. For it is not the one who appears to be a Jew outwardly who is, but the one who is in secret; and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. Whoever keeps the Passover, but not in the sincerity and truth of unleavened bread, so that he may purge out of his soul all the old leaven of wickedness and malice: this person attends to fables, and follows shadows, neglecting the truth. Whoever does not rise with Christ, nor seek the things that are above, but those that are below, saying, "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," which all perish with use, according to the commandments and doctrines of men: this person follows not good justices and not good precepts. But where is truth, and where is the spiritual law, where there are good justification, and the best of precepts is observed, and whoever does them shall live in them.

1:15

"All things are clean to the clean, but to the unclean and unbelieving nothing is clean; instead, both their mind and their conscience are corrupted." For he had said earlier: "For there are many rebellious people who deceive others with their empty talk and false teaching. This is especially true of those who insist on circumcision for salvation. They must be silenced, because they are turning whole families away from the truth by their false teaching. And they do it only for money." So he is telling Titus to sharply rebuke them, so that their faith will be healthy and they will not waste their time in endless discussion of myths and spiritual pedigrees. This kind of talk only leads to meaningless speculations, which don't help people live a life of faith in God. The Bible clearly states that all things are clean to those who believe in Jesus Christ and know that everything God created is good. But to those who are defiled by sin and unbelief, nothing is clean; in fact, both their mind and their conscience are corrupted. Therefore, even things that are clean by nature become unclean to them. This is not because there is anything inherently unclean or clean, but because of the kind of people who eat them. So, the clean remain clean for the clean, and the unclean become defiled for those who are defiled. Otherwise, even the unbelievers and defiled do not benefit from the bread of blessing and the Lord's cup; for whoever eats of that bread and drinks from the cup unworthily eats and drinks judgment upon themselves (1 Cor. 11). Everything has been cleansed by the coming of Christ. We cannot partake of what He has purified. But let us

consider that in handling this, we do not give occasion to that heresy which, according to the Apocalypse (Chapter 2) and even the Apostle Paul himself writing to the Corinthians, thinks that it is right to eat of things offered to idols because all things are clean to the clean (1 Cor. 8). For the Apostle did not intend to discuss those things which are sacrificed to demons, but rather those who, according to the discipline of the abolished Law, regarded some things as clean and others as unclean. For we cannot partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons: nor can we drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons at the same time (1 Cor. 10:20-21). Therefore, it is up to us to eat clean or unclean. For if we are clean, then the creature is clean for us. But if we are unclean and faithless, then all things become common to us, whether through the heresy that dwells in our hearts or through the consciousness of sins. Moreover, if our conscience does not condemn us, and we have confidence in God's mercy, then we will pray with our spirit and with our mind, we will sing praises with our spirit and with our mind (1 Corinthians 14), and we will be far from those of whom it is now written: "Their mind and conscience are defiled."

1:16

"They confess to know God, but deny Him with their deeds: abominable and disobedient, and disqualified for every good deed." Those whose mind and conscience are defiled confess to know God, but deny Him with their deeds, according to what is said in Isaiah: This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me (Isaiah 29:13). Therefore, just as someone who honors with their lips but moves far away in heart, so anyone confessing God with their words but denying Him with his deeds is. But he who denies God with his deeds, and with a deceitful confession is rightly accursed and profane, and having no reasonable conviction of truth, he is called disobedient and incredulous. So it happens that he is disqualified for every good work: namely, that even those things which he may have done well, having been overcome by his own natural goodness, are not good, while they are corrupt by his distorted state of mind. Some think that only if someone, when captured by Gentiles during persecution, denies themselves as Christians that they would be denying God. But behold the Apostle asserts that God is denied by all perverse deeds. Christ is wisdom, justice, truth, holiness, and strength. Wisdom is denied through foolishness, justice through iniquity, truth through lies, holiness through depravity, and strength through weakness of the soul. And as often as we are overcome by vices and sins, we deny God. Conversely, as often as we do good, we confess God. And it is not to be judged that only those who denied Christ in martyrdom will be denied by the Son of God on the day of judgment, but in all works, words, and thoughts, Christ, either denied, denies or confessed, confesses. Regarding this confession, He commanded His disciples, saying, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8), so that in all good works and words the mind dedicated to Christ may confess Him. There is also a commendable denial, of which the Apostle himself says: "As we deny impiety and worldly desires, we should live chastely, justly, and piously in the present age, while awaiting the blessed hope and coming of our God and Savior" (Titus 2:12). Whoever denies this denial and wants to follow the Savior speaking these words, "Whoever wishes to come after me, let him deny himself" (Luke 9:23), stripped of his old self with its works, and putting on the new, shall follow his God. But how one is to deny oneself must be considered. The chaste denies the fornicator he once was; the wise, the foolish; the just, the unjust; the brave, the weak. In general, we deny ourselves as often as we, trampling on our former vices, cease to be what we were and begin to be what we were not before.

2:1 But you speak what befits sound doctrine. The speaking of sound doctrine is one thing, the teaching of those things that are fitting for sound doctrine is another; in the one there is only the simplicity of instruction, while in the other there is also the correction of life in those who teach. For whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:19). When the Lord commanded His disciples to labour not only in the meditation of the Scriptures, that they might repeat and lay them up in the treasure-house of their memory, but also that they should first do what was commanded, whoever shall do and teach shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For unless your justice surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5) Those who sit in the chair of Moses preach but do not practice. They burden the backs of others with loads that are heavy and difficult to carry, but they themselves will not lift a finger to lighten the load. Therefore, the Apostle now teaches his disciple Titus, a son in Christ, to speak the things that are in accord with sound doctrine, for then there will be spiritual health when the teaching of the doctor and his life agree.

2:2

Older men should be sober, honorable, chaste, sound in faith, love, and patience. Titus, before directing him what he should say to everyone, in what he says, "But you speak what befits sound doctrine," he explains in detail what is appropriate for each age group. First what is appropriate for older men, then what is appropriate for older women, thirdly what is appropriate for young people, both men and women: although in the commandment of older women he included instructions regarding young women, so that he did not teach young children, but explained what they should be taught by older women. Finally, he fittingly established rules for servants, and for each age and condition, so that his speech becomes a guide to life and morals. Therefore, older men should be sober, or watchful, since "νηφελισι" means both in Greek: honorable, so that the gravity of age decorates the gravity of morals: chaste, lest they luxuriate in someone else's youth, lest they be an example for young people to ruin in their lusts after their own blood has already cooled. Healthy in faith, about which faith's health we have spoken above. However, not only healthy in faith, but also in charity and in patience, so that when they have obtained the first health of faith, they may hear from the Savior: Your faith has saved you (Mark 10:52). And elsewhere: For I have not found such great faith even in Israel (Matthew 8:10). And by means of the same health of faith, let them become the children of Abraham, concerning whom it is written: Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:8). And Habakkuk, referring to this health of faith, says: The just lives by my faith (Habakkuk 2:3). Read the Epistle to the Hebrews of the Apostle Paul (or whichever other you think it to be, because it is already recognized among the ecclesiastical), enumerate that whole list of faith, in which it is written: By faith Abel offered to God a greater sacrifice than Cain's (Hebrews 11:4 ff.). And: Enoch was translated so that he would not see death; and Noah, believing in God, built an ark for the things he had not yet seen. And Abraham went out into a land he did not know. And so that Scripture might not seem to give no example of faith to women, it is written in the same Epistle that Sarah also received strength to conceive seed, even beyond the time of her life, because she considered Him faithful who had promised. There, the faith of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Rahab, and others who the reader of the Epistle can better know, are praised. So, how is faith the health of the soul? In the same

way, this health is also found in charity. And who possesses the health of charity except the one who loves God first with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength? Then, hearing Christ's commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself (Matthew 5), he divides charity into two: because all the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments. Whoever possesses the health of charity does not envy, does not boast, does not act improperly, does not behave dishonorably, is not easily angered, does not think evil, does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth, endures all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and waits for all things (1 Corinthians 13). And because love never fails, whoever is in the health of love, he never fails. For neither tribulation, nor distress, nor hunger, nor persecution, nor nakedness, nor danger, nor sword can separate him from the health of love, which he has in Jesus Christ. What shall I say about the sword and other minor things that cannot divide him who possesses the love of health when neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature can separate him who has the love of health in Jesus Christ? If we understand the health of love, let us take an example from the Scriptures of those who are in the weakness of love. The Savior says about the end times: Because iniquity hath abounded, the love of many shall wax cold (Matthew 24). For love is warm in those who are fervent in spirit, but cooling, freezing, and cold in those who have received the hardest blasts of the North Wind. "For from the north shall an evil break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land" (Jer. 1:14). Ammon too became hot in carnal desire for his sister Tamar because of this coldness of charity (2 Kings 13). Let us, then, fear lest we too are ever overcome by this infirmity of charity. Indeed, it sometimes happens that our first holy love is for a virgin or any other woman, and when our mind has been softened by affection, the healthy state of charity gradually fades away and begins to grow weak, and carries the loving soul to its last breath. Hence the Apostle rightly and prudently charges Timothy to encourage younger women to preserve their chastity in all things (1 Tim. 5). But all chastity is in flesh and spirit and soul, lest our eye be offended, lest we become enchained by the beauty of a woman's face, lest listening to sweet words delight us, lest our heart be first softened by counterfeit conversation. Therefore let them be careful, as we have said, both young and old, both girls and elderly women, and let them guard their hearts with all diligence: lest through the health of their love, the sickness of charity enters, and through holy love, unholiness becomes love, which draws them towards hell. Let him who is sound in faith, who is sound in charity, also be sound in patience: and patience, which is especially tested in temptations: because it is of no benefit to have the wealth and merchandise enumerated above, unless all the goods and merchandise with which the ship is laden are preserved in the storm, and, being blown hither and thither by winds, the things which have been well acquired are saved without shipwreck. For he who shall have persevered even to the end, he shall be saved (Matthew 24:13).

2:3-5

Similarly, with holy habits, not inciting, not serving much wine; teaching well, that they may instruct young women towards chastity, that they may love their husbands, that they may love their children: modest, chaste, having diligence of the house, kind, submissive to their husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Although the apostle Peter has commanded that husbands should give honor to their wives as to a weaker vessel, nevertheless it is not to be judged that a wife, who has a weak vessel of the body, is at once weaker also in soul. Hence they

are now commanded that also in them that of the Apostle may be fulfilled: Virtue is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9), and it is said that they may have all things, which are commonly commanded to old men, in that namely which he says: Similarly the aged women, that is, as elderly men, in all things honorable, sober, modest, healthy in faith, and charity, and patience, and for their gender this may have as their own, that they may be with holy habits, or as it is read better in Greek, τὴν κατασκευῇ καὶ ἐροπρεπείᾳ, that even their own conduct and movement, expression, speech, silence, they may prefer a certain sacred dignity of decorum. And because this type of woman is usually talkative, in accordance with that: "And at the same time they also learn to be idle and wander around from house to house. Not only are they idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they shouldn't" (1 Tim. 5:13): therefore He wishes that they not be provocative, that is, not accusers, not such that they please others, and speak ill of others. Or certainly because they have already crossed adolescence themselves, they argue about the ages of young girls, and say: "She is adorned thus, she combs her hair thus, she walks like this: she loves him, she is loved by him": and even if these things are true, they should not accuse others so openly, but rather correct themselves in secret with the love of Christ, and teach more to not do rather than publicly accuse them of what they did. These ages usually indulge in bodily lust (although there are many who are not shy about their gray hairs, and trembling young girls are composed before a flock of grandchildren), giving themselves up to wine for pleasure; and when they have appeared wise and eloquent to themselves between cups, they assume a kind of morality, speaking this which they see in themselves, and not remembering what they were. And let old women be prohibited from too much drinking of wine, because what in young women is desire, in old women it is drunkenness. And how can an old woman teach young girls chastity, when if she herself has imitated the drunkenness of an old woman, she cannot be chaste? And he expressed emphatically: Do not be enslaved to much wine. For it is a kind of slavery and a miserable condition for a person's senses to be occupied by wine, and not to be one's own, but that of the wine. Therefore, because he taught what kind of old women they should be at first, and after those things which are common with old men, he also exposed their own particularities, that they may be full of honest and holy decorum: neither accusers, nor detractors of others, nor having their senses occupied by wine. Now, following his doctrine, he allows them the reins, so that when they are such, they may have the freedom to teach the good things. For although he said elsewhere, "But I do not allow women to teach" (1 Tim. 2:12), it is to be understood that for them the doctrine should be removed. However, they should teach young girls as if they were their own daughters. First, chastity: because the enemy fights more fiercely against it in the flourishing age, and all its virtue is directed against women in the womb; then that they may love their husbands, care for their children. Which doctrine is to love their husbands; is it not established in the heart of the lover rather than in the speech of the teacher? She wants to love her husband chastely: she wants a chaste love between man and woman, so that, with modesty, and reverence, and as if compelled by the sex, she may rather give her due to her husband than demand it of him, and she believes that she must perform the work of her children before the eyes of God and the angels: thus she will not even be ashamed of her secret bedroom, and the darkness of the night, and her closed bedroom, when she has considered that all things are open to the eyes of God. But they love their children thus, if they educate them in God's discipline. Moreover, not wanting to sadden them by teaching what is good, and granting them the freedom to sin ((or of sinning)), is not loving one's children, but hating them. Young girls, too, are to be educated to have diligence in the

house. And because it could happen that the diligence of the house is governed with severity, and thus by this precept of the Apostle, the matron becomes severe towards her servants: therefore, he coupled kindness: so that then she would believe that her husband was ruling the house well if he commanded the servants with kindness, not in fear. And also [women] subject to their own husbands: lest perhaps they remember not God's sentence, and by occasion of riches or nobility, despise the divine ordinance, whereby they are subject to their husbands. For he saith: 'Thy will be to thy husband, and he shall have dominion over thee' (Gen. 3:16). The prudence to be observed in the Holy Scriptures is that the Lord did not speak to the man, saying, "You shall rule over your wife," but to the woman herself, that she might leave to her obedience the reward, since it is in her power, if she desires to obey the precepts of God, to serve her husband and to be subject to him as to a husband, so that it might be in some way a free servitude, full of love, serving her husband while she fears offending him. For indeed, man was not created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man. And while the head of the woman is the man, the head of the man is Christ. Whatever wife does not submit herself to her husband, that is, to her head, is guilty of the same offense as the husband who does not submit himself to Christ, his head. But the word of the Lord is blasphemed, either when the first sentence of God is despised and considered of no account, or when the Gospel of Christ is defamed, while it desires, contrary to the law and faith of nature, that which is Christian and subject to the law of God, to command the husband. Even pagan women serve their husbands according to the common law of nature.

2:6-8

Similarly, exhort the youth to be pure in all things, setting yourself as an example of good works in teaching, integrity and chastity, in sound and irreproachable speech, so that the outsider may respect us, having nothing bad to say about us. Just as what he had said previously, "Similarly, with elderly women dressed in a sacred manner," we said the similitude of elderly women should be referred to as the elderly; and so now with what he introduced: Similarly, exhort the youth to be pure, we think this similitude applies to the youth in relation to the elderly, and through the elderly to the elderly, so that they may have the sobriety of the elderly, and be honorable and pure, and sound in faith, and charity, and patience. But with regard to the elderly, he places them in the sanctity of their attire so that they may not be accusers, not slavishly devoted to much wine, teaching well, and so forth. But this has particular bearing on young men, that they should be pure in all things, namely in mind as well as body, as much in action as in thought, so that there might be no suspicion of indecency in the young man. And although some among the Latins think that it should be read thus: "Likewise exhort young men to be of honourable character, and afterwards to bring forth, in all things showing thyself a pattern of good works", nevertheless, let us know that, in all things, reference must be made to the higher, that is, to exhort them to be of honourable character in all things. It must also be known that continence is not only necessary in physical works and in the desire of the soul, but in all things, so that we do not seek undue honors, we are not inflamed by avarice, and we are not overcome by any passion. "Showing thyself," he says, "a pattern of good works." It is of no use for someone to be practised in speaking and to have learned the language for speaking, if he has more instructed by his example than by his word. Finally, whoever is shameless, although he be eloquent, if he exhorts those who hear him to chastity, his speech is feeble, and he does not have authority to exhort. And, vice versa, although he may be rustic and slow in speaking, if he is chaste, he can impel men to a likeness of life by his example.

That which it says, "in incorruption," must be accepted as meaning that incorruption properly signifies virginity. Finally, those who are virgins are commonly called incorrupt; and those who have ceased to be virgins are called corrupt; and we say, she who was once a virgin, is corrupted. Wherefore I think that Titus, before he was occupied with the work of the flesh, received baptism as a believer of the Gospel, and remained a virgin, and is now reminded by the Apostle to show the form of incorruption; but we do not see this incorruption in Timothy. For when he said to him, Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity (1 Timothy 4:12), he was silent about incorruption and only mentioned chastity. However, purity even in celibacy can be understood without virginity. Unless we take purity in the mind and incorruption in the body as it is written elsewhere in the definition of a virgin: That she may be holy both in body and in spirit (1 Corinthians 7). He himself then added: in doctrine, in incorruption, in chastity. We might even interpret chastity and incorruption in the integrity of doctrine, but what particularly follows, "with wholesome speech that cannot be condemned," should have its own precept regarding the instruction of doctrine. However, when he says "speech cannot be condemned," he does not mean that anyone is so eloquent and wise that no one ever criticizes him (for both apostles and evangelists are criticized by heretics and pagans), but that he does not say or do anything worthy of criticism, though his opponents are ready to condemn him. And since there are many who are disobedient, vain talkers and deceivers of minds, who hate the one admonishing at the gates, and abominate holy discourse, therefore in all things let us set an example of doctrine, in integrity, in chastity, in sound and irreprehensible speech: that the adversaries of our life and doctrine, terrified by our soundness, may not dare to accuse, that is, to fabricate anything likely in accusation. And indeed we see some such today in churches (although this is a rare thing), of such gravity and continence that even from adversaries they have testimony, and it is said, that is a great man, and of holy conversation, and of good and proper behavior, if he were not a heretic. For there is no one of such unrestrained impudence that he can accuse the bright rays of the sun of darkness, and cast the clear light of night into obscurity. Hence also the Apostle, aware of this, says: To take away occasion from them that desire occasion (2 Cor. 11:12). Yet he can be understood to mean he who is an adversary, and that is the devil, who is the accuser of our brethren, as John the Evangelist preaches: who when he has nothing evil to accuse us of, is put to shame, and the accuser cannot accuse. But in the Latin language, devil signifies accuser.

2:9-10

Slaves should be subject to their masters in all things: pleasing, not contradicting, not stealing; but showing all good faith, so as to adorn the doctrine of our Savior God in all things. For our Lord and Savior, who says in the Gospel: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you (Matt. 11:28), considers no condition, age, sex, or beatitude to be foreign. Therefore, now the apostle establishes precepts for the servants and members of the body of Christ as part of the Church. And just as he taught Titus how he should instruct the old men, old ladies, young girls, and young men above, he now establishes appropriate precepts for the servants. First, that they should be subject to their masters in all things. But in all these things which are not contrary to God: so that if the master commands something which is not adverse to the holy Scriptures, then the servant should be subject to the master. But if he commands something contrary, then the spirit should obey the master rather than the body. Pay careful attention to how he decrees

precepts suitable for people. Servants, he says, should be subject to their masters in all things (Ephesians 6:5). In another place, discussing sons, he says: "Children obey your parents" (Colossians 3:20). For it is right for sons to obey their parents, just as servants are subject to their master. Nor should we consider it contradictory that in another letter he says, "Women, be subject to your husbands" (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18), and in this one he asserts that wives are subject to their husbands, as if he uses the same word for both servants and wives. For in a sense, a husband is the lord of his wife. "He will rule over you," he says (Genesis 3:16). The Savior himself was subject to his parents (Luke 2), but this was when he was still only twelve years old and not yet of an age to inherit his kingdom. And it is also written elsewhere of him: "When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). And all things will be subject to him when he says, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool'" (Psalm 110:1). In subordinate servants the Lord is subject. And just as it is said to be a curse for us when it is not a curse but a true blessing, so it is written for us, either subject or not subject: whether we are subject to God or not. Some read this passage as follows: Let servants be subject to their masters, and after they have distinguished this, they infer, please in all things: whereas in Greek there is a different order of reading, that is, let servants be subject to their masters in all things; so that it follows, to be pleasing: which, though not fully, can still be interpreted in part, as pleasing to themselves: so that the divine sentence does not seem unjust to them on their own terms. But how can a poor person be saved according to their own measure; and a woman in her sexual weakness is not excluded from the kingdom of God, and every condition can receive happiness according to its own order: Thus let slaves be pleased with themselves that they are slaves, and not think that they cannot serve God because they are subject to men; but they will please the will of God more, if they are also subject to their masters in all things, and are content with their condition; and what the Apostle commands to do thereafter, that they should not be contradicted, not stealing. Or the greatest vice of servants is to contradict their masters, and when they have ordered something, to whisper among themselves. Therefore, he admonishes Titus, so that through sound doctrine he may remove such passion from those who are Christian slaves. For if a master commands things, a servant must fulfill: why should he not do this willingly, with goodwill; but also offend the lord, and yet do what is ordered: especially when God is offended by contradiction? And in another place he speaks of grumbling people: Let their murmur cease from me, and they shall not die (Num. XIV). After the contradiction and other vice of the servants let the doctrine of Christ correct them, lest they be thieves. A thief, however, is judged not only in great things, but also in small things. For not only what is taken away by theft is considered, but also the intention of the thief. Likewise in fornication and adultery, fornication or adultery is not different if it is done with a beautiful or wealthy, ugly or poor, prostitute or adulteress: but whatever it is, it is one fornication or adultery. Thus, in theft, however much a servant takes away, he incurs the crime of theft. Therefore, in the law of Moses, thieves are sometimes forced to pay back sevenfold, sometimes fourfold, and sometimes they are put to death, or the thief himself is sold for theft, about which recently I remember having explained to you in Leviticus. But if this is forbidden in regard to a slave, how much more in regard to a free person, so that neither a judge should seize, nor a soldier who is not content with his wages should destroy what belongs to another? A certain very honorable man spoke excellently when the integrity of a certain judge was praised to him, and he who was praising him said, "He is not a

thief." He responded, "He would make an excellent slave if he were not also a fugitive, for suspicion of theft should be far removed from every free person." Therefore, let slaves be subject to their masters in all things, let them be compliant with their condition, so that they do not bear their servitude bitterly, do not contradict their masters, do not act extravagantly, and after these things show good faith in all things, so that they might adorn the teaching of our God and Savior in all things. For if they have been faithful with earthly masters, they will begin to be entrusted with greater things by God. But the doctrine of the Lord adorns, who does those things which are fitting for his condition. And he confounds from the opposite, who is not subject in all, whose condition displeases him, who shows no good faith as a contradictor and defrauder in nothing. For how can one be faithful in the substance of God, who could not exhibit faith to an earthly master?

2:12-14

For the grace of God our Savior hath appeared to all men, instructing us, that denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse to himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works. After enumerating what he should teach to Titus - the old men, and old women, and young women and young men, and, lastly, servants, he now accurately declares. For the grace of God our Savior hath appeared to all men. For there is no difference between free and slave, Greek and barbarian, circumcised and uncircumcised, woman and man: but we are all one in Christ, we are all called to the kingdom of God, we are all reconciled to our Father after the offense; not by our merits, but by the grace of the Savior: whether it be that the living and subsisting grace of God the Father himself is Christ or that this is the grace of Christ the God and Savior, and that we are saved not by our own merit, according to what is said in another place: You will save them for nothing (Ps. 55: 8). This grace has shone upon all men in order to instruct us to renounce impiety and worldly desires and to live chastely, justly, and piously in this world. However, to deny impiety and worldly desires, as we have explained above, they confess to knowing God, but deny it by their deeds. I believe that this can be understood through opposing arguments. Therefore, worldly desires are those that are suggested by the prince of this world, and since they belong to this world, they pass through it like a cloud. But we, living in Christ in a chaste and just manner, not only avoid sin with our body and mind, but also live piously in this world. This piety expects a blessed hope and the advent of the glory of the great God, and of our Savior Jesus Christ. Just as impiety fears the advent of the great God, so does piety confidently await it, secure in its works and faith. Where is the snake Arius? Where is the serpent Eunomius? The great God Jesus Christ, is called Savior, not the firstborn of every creature, not the Word of God and wisdom; but Jesus Christ: which words are of a human assumed. Nor indeed do we speak of one Jesus Christ and another Word, as a new heresy calumniates: but the same both before ages, and after ages, and before the world, and after Mary: nay, from Mary, we call Him Jesus Christ, our great God and Savior, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse for Himself a people pleasing (for so it is held in Greek), and might make us zealous of good works. Often considering with myself what the word "pleasing" might mean, and asking of the wise of this world if they had perchance read it anywhere, I have never been able to find anyone who could tell me what it signified. Therefore, compelled, I have returned to the old testament, from which I thought that even the Apostle had taken what he had said; for, as a Hebrew among

Hebrews, and as a Pharisee according to the law, he certainly placed in his letter what he knew he had read in the old testament. So in Deuteronomy I found this: "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God, and the Lord your God chose you to be his own possession out of all the nations on the face of the earth." (Deut. 7:6) And in the 134th Psalm, where we have, "Praise his name, for it is pleasant, for the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself; he has chosen Israel as his own possession" (Ps. 134:3-4): the words "his own possession" are in the Greek text ἐν περιουσιασμῷ, which Aquila and the fifth edition translate as "his own possession," while the Septuagint and Theodotion translate ἑξουσίασμα as "possession," changing only the syllable, not the sense. Symmachus therefore, for what is in Greek περίουσιον, in Hebrew, Sgolla, expressed ἑξάρετον, that is, excellent or outstanding: for which word in another Latin book, he interpreted it as 'peculiar'. Therefore Jesus Christ, our great God and Savior, rightfully redeemed us with His Blood, so that He would make us a peculiar Christian people to Himself, which could then be peculiar if they were to exist as emulators of good works. Hence that which is written in the Latin Gospel, Give us this day our daily bread (Matt. 6:11), is better expressed in Greek as περίουσιον bread, that is, excellent, outstanding, and peculiar, which indeed descending from heaven, says, I am the bread which came down from heaven (John 6:41). For it is inappropriate that we who are forbidden to think about tomorrow, should be commanded to pray to the Lord about that bread which is to be slightly prepared and thrown away. There is little difference between "περίουσιον" and "ἐξουσίασμα"; for only the preposition is changed, not the word. Indeed, some think that in the Lord's Prayer, "ἐξουσίασμα" means bread that is above all substances, that is, above all material things. And if this meaning is adopted, it does not differ greatly from the sense we have explained. For whatever is outstanding and exceptional, is outside everything and above everything.

2:15

Speak these things, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. He has set out three things: speak, exhort, and rebuke. And indeed, in what he says, "speak," it seems to refer to teaching. But what he introduced, "exhort," that is, παρακλήσει, means something else in Greek than in Latin: for παρακλήσις sounds more like comfort than exhortation. This word was also spoken of earlier concerning young people: Likewise, comfort the young, be modest in everything. About this we have expressed it in its place as it is read in Latin, as if it was written to exhort. Therefore, he comforts the listener who says: "For Christ, we beseech you, be reconciled to God" (1 Cor. 5:20), and humbles and submits himself, in order to gain whom he comforts. But as for the third, rebuke, it seems to me contrary to consolation, so that whoever despises consolation is worthy of rebuke and deserves to hear, 'You have forgotten the consolation that speaks to you as sons.' To Timothy we also read of one consolation and another rebuke, as the Apostle says, 'Be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort' [2 Tim. 4:2]. And there rebuke is taken up beforehand, and afterward severity is tempered by consolation. Here, however, he wants to console his disciples beforehand, and if they do not profit by consoling, then to rebuke them, and to rebuke them with all authority. For I interpret this to mean, 'Rebuke with all authority,' so that it is referred specially to rebuke, and not to the two preceding points in general. For it is not fitting to say, 'Console with all authority,' or 'Speak with all authority,' but only 'rebuke with all authority.'

Let no one despise you. Someone might think that this now written to Titus is the same as what was said to Timothy: Let no one despise your youth (1 Tim. IV, 14). But we, according to the

differences of the Greek language, think that one thing signifies περιφρονε[■]τω, which is written here, and another thing καταφρονε[■]τω, which was said to Timothy, and the prepositions περ[■] or κατ[■] make a different meaning. And that it is not by chance or as he pleases that the Apostle Paul uses not only different names and words, but also different prepositions for the variety of causes, can be made clear from what he says: For the woman is of the man, and man by the woman (2 Cor. XI, 12). Elsewhere: For from him and through him and in him are all things (Rom. XI, 36). Also that, Paul an apostle not of men, neither by man (Galat. I, 1). Therefore, we consider καταφρ[■]νησιν to properly pertain to contempt or when someone, stretched out between a horse and a rack, disregards pain and is not afraid of the judge's threat or the people's outcry, but for the confession of martyrdom, despises and disregards all punishments. On the other hand, there is a bad contempt which Habakkuk also testifies, speaking in the Holy Spirit: Look at the contemptuous, and behold, and wonder and perish (Hab. I, 5). According to what we have also written to Timothy: Let no man despise thy youth (1 Tim. IV, 12), that is, I do not want you to be seen such that you could be despised by anyone for merit. However, contempt as it is expressed, as the Stoics assert, who distinguish words subtly, wherein one who trusts himself, thinking himself better than another, despises someone whom he considers inferior and determines that he, that is, more knowledgeable, should be held in contempt. Such a thing, swelling with the vanity of pride and despising even the sky and sun, some Greeks have said in jest: [■]εροβατ[■] κα[■] περιφρον[■] τ[■]ν [■]λιον, which can be translated in Latin as, "I walk on air, and I am worth more than the sun." Therefore, contempt, which is now placed before Titus, has this meaning: No one among those who are in the churches should live this way while you are being idle, thinking that they are better. For what kind of disciple-building will exist if one considers oneself greater than the teacher? Hence, bishops, presbyters, and deacons should not only take great care that they should precede all the people to whom they preside in conduct and speech: indeed, lower ranks, exorcists, readers, doorkeepers, and all in general who serve the House of God. For the idea that the laypeople should be better than the clergy greatly destroys the Church of Christ.

3:1-2

Remind them to be subject to the rulers and authorities, to obey; to be prepared for every good work; not to blaspheme anyone, not to be quarrelsome; to be modest, showing all meekness to all people. Such a thing is also written to the Romans: Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but from God (Romans 13:1). And I think this precept was given here and there for this reason, because the doctrine of the Galilean Jews still prevailed at that time and had many followers, and it is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles in reference to it: for before these days rose up Theodas, saying that he was somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves (Acts 5:36); and after him rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed (Acts 5:37). The heresy had grown so much that it troubled even the Pharisees and a large part of the people: so that this question was referred also to our Lord: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not (Mat. 22:17)? To which the Lord answered wisely and cautiously, saying: Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's (Ibid., 21). To which response the Apostle Paul rightly teaches that believers should be subject to principalities and powers. For the beginnings which are read in Greek sound more like principalities than princes: and they indicate power itself, not the men who are in power. But

since he had said, Admonish them to be subject to principalities and powers: the opportunity could be given to those who fear torment to deny it: according to the Apostle's saying, they would assert that they were subject to principalities and powers, and do what they commanded; therefore he added: To be obedient to every good work. If it is good, obey the will of the emperor and governor who orders. But if it is evil, and against God: answer him with that from the Acts of the Apostles: We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29). Let us understand this also about servants with their masters, and wives with their husbands, and children with their parents, that they should only be subject to masters, husbands, and parents for those things which do not go against God's commands. But what follows, "to be ready", is to be read in two ways, either as if it were implied, to be ready for every good work; or certainly, with the previous statement, obeying for every good work, and with that finished, as though another proper and specific commandment were given, "to be ready," according to what is written in Leviticus: "And the goat that beareth the curse of the people shall be brought before the Lord, ready to be offered." (Lev. 16:21) Therefore, if someone is prepared to take up an escort of dismissal and lead him ((Al.lead him away)) into the desert and scatter him there, and to the extent that he can, eliminate him by the act of a curse, on obeying he will also be ready for every good work. It can also be accepted in another way to be prepared: they should envision everything that could happen to them in their minds, and when they do happen, they should not endure them as if they are new, but instead everything must be prepared for them. Moreover, to blaspheme no one is not simply taken. For he does not say to blaspheme no man: but absolutely no one: not an angel, nor any creature of God. Because everything that was made by God is very good. For when Michael the Archangel disputed with the devil over the body of Moses, he did not dare to bring a judgment of blasphemy, but said, "May God rebuke you" (Jude. 9). If Michael therefore did not have the audacity to bring judgement upon the devil, certainly deserving of a curse, for blasphemy: how much more should we be pure from every curse? The devil deserved a curse: but it should not have come out through the mouth of an archangel. Read the old books, and see what was in the minds of the three appointed on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, and what was in the minds of those on the other mountain to curse them. Reuben, who had defiled his parent's bed, and Zebulun, Leah's youngest son, and the children of the handmaidens, are placed on Mount Ebal ((alias Eliel)), to curse those who are worthy of a curse (Deut. 27). It would take too long to enumerate now how Jacob, who had called his sons for a blessing (Gen. 49:1), saying: "I will bless you," afterwards associates them in a curse, "Their fury is cursed, because it is fierce". And even the Lord speaks in Genesis: "Cursed be the earth in thy work" (Gen. 3:17). It is enough to have said this now, that it is not necessary to blaspheme the disciples of Christ, nor is it necessary to be contentious. For if we are the children of peace, and we wish to rest in peace, and we have approached the heavenly Jerusalem, which has received its name from peace, with those who hate peace, let us have peace: and as much as is within us, let us be at peace with all men: not only with the humble, but also with the quarrelsome; because there is no power in bearing the meek: and we permit the place of anger, displaying all meekness towards all men: not because we ought to show ourselves to be meek towards all men, by the desire of vainglory: but while we bear with all things, and do not repay injuries, these very works may become better known to all. For someone can simulate meekness and feign kindness for the sake of boasting, and for the sake of public favor before certain people. But where there is not true and genuine and solid meekness, I do not know whether he can persuade everyone that he is meek.

For we also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:3-7) Someone might ask how Paul was foolish, unbelieving, wandering, and serving various desires and pleasures in wickedness and envy, hateful and hating, before the goodness and mercy of our Savior made him safe through the washing of regeneration: not by works of righteousness which he had done, but by his mercy, poured out abundantly and richly upon the apostles and believers through Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit: that, having obtained the inheritance of grace, they might possess the hope of eternal life. And indeed, we read that he was circumcised on the eighth day without objection according to the righteousness under the Law (Philippians 3:5): he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, according to the Pharisaic Law, of the tribe of Benjamin, educated at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed from childhood in the sacred writings (Acts 22). To which it is replied that the Jews who were versed in the Law before the coming, passion, and resurrection of the Savior, although not full, nevertheless had some righteousness: just as Simeon and the prophetess Anna were also found serving in the temple of God. But once the people cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him; we have no king but Caesar!" (John 19:15) and "His blood be on us and on our children!" (Matthew 27:25), the kingdom of God was taken away from them and given to a nation producing its fruit. From that time on, anyone who did not believe in Christ was foolish, wandering, unbelieving, and serving various desires. Does it not seem to us [you] that Paul was foolish when he had zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; and was persecuting the Church: and was keeping the clothes of those stoning Stephen? When he had been so inflamed with hatred against the Savior that he received a letter from the priests, he went to Damascus to have those who believed in Christ bound? He could not have any virtues apart from the virtue of God, Christ Jesus, or put out the burning flame of desire, since he was not a temple of God? But what could be a greater evil and envy, than to take letters against those who are absent, and to destroy Christ's disciples everywhere; not wanting Him to be saved and envying those who were able to be saved; hating Christians and consequently earning hatred from everyone? What greater error both in obedience and in folly than to want to keep the Law that was abolished, and to say: Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle, and to desire to be given milk like an infant when solid food is appearing and manly? Let us pay closer attention, and we will find in this present chapter the most obvious Trinity. For the kindness and mercy of our God and Savior, not of anyone else but of God the Father himself, justified us to eternal life through the regeneration of baptism and the renewal of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out richly upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. The salvation of believers is the mystery of the Trinity. Some understand this passage in such a way that they think it is not about Paul and the apostles, but rather, spoken by another under the apostles' authority, about others; this is so that just as under his own name, Apollo, and Cephas spoke about the dissension and schism he was pointing out in the Corinthians, so also in the present passage, he who names himself and the apostles shows what kind of people who had believed in Christ, no matter what they were like before the regeneration of spiritual baptism. At the same time, his humility is admirable, that he, who disregarded all humility and righteousness of the Law

as if it were mere refuse and garbage, rightly remembered how he served without Christ and all his flaws.

3:8

Faithful is the saying, and I wish to confirm (or affirm) you about these things, that those who believe in the Lord should have care to preside over good works. These things are good and useful for men. This saying, faithful is, must be joined to the preceding part, in which he said that, having been justified by his grace, we may become heirs in the hope of eternal life. For the saying about the inheritance of God is worthy of faith, and about the hope of eternal life. Therefore, it is necessary concerning these matters, not only to believe and to confirm others who believe, without any doubt or fear, but also to confirm him who wants to believe in these things along with others. Therefore, it is said: "And I want to confirm you concerning these things." But those who truly believe in these things must take care of good works, through which the inheritance of God and the hope of eternal life are prepared. And to more firmly establish their faith, he did not say "those who believe in men," but "those who believe in God." For it is necessary that they take care of good works which, when fulfilled and carried out with every effort, are good and useful to believers.

3:9

But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. For there are many questions and divers contentions, wherefore Solomon said: "Those who seek God in the right way, find peace" (Proverbs 8:35). Therefore, those who do not seek God in the right way cannot find peace. There are many examples of those who seek God in the wrong way. The Jews seek God wrongly, hoping to find Him without Christ. Heretics, making a noise with vain words, seek that which they cannot find. Philosophers and barbarians, having different opinions about God, seek God. But because they do not seek in the right way, their questions are foolish, thinking that God may be comprehended by human senses. Therefore, Paul calls us away from these questions. Moreover, to the wise, and those things which are supported by the authority of the Scriptures, it is urged and provoked more, being knowledgeable of the precepts of the Savior, in which he says: Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you, ask and it shall be given to you. For everyone who seeks finds, and who asks receives, and who knocks, it shall be opened to him (Luke 11); provided our body is not subject to sins, and wisdom will enter us. Let our understanding be exercised, let our mind be nourished daily by divine reading: and our foolish questions will not be questions. But he who said: Avoid genealogies and contentions and quarrels, which come from the Law, properly rebukes the Jews, who boast in it and think they have knowledge of the Law, if they hold the names of each one: which because they are barbaric, and we do not know their etymology, they are often uttered incorrectly by us. And if by chance we err in accentuation, in the length or brevity of a syllable, whether lengthening the short or shortening the long, our ignorance is wont to be ridiculed, especially in the case of aspirations and certain letters pronounced with throaty constriction. Now this happens because the Seventy Interpreters by whom the Divine Utterance was translated into the Greek language, have rendered the Heth and Ain and other similar letters, because they could not transfer them into the Greek language with the double aspiration, by adding other letters. For example they said 'Rahel' for Rachel, and 'Jeriho' for Jericho, and 'Hebron' for Chebron, and 'Seor'

for Segor; but in other instances this method failed them. For we and the Greeks have only one letter s, but they three, Samech, Sade, and Sin, which have different sounds. Isaac and Sion are spelled with Sade, Israel with Sin, and do not sound as they are written. Seon, king of the Amorites, is spelled and pronounced with the letter Samech. Therefore, if we have not expressed these names and idioms of language, namely barbarian, in the way Hebrews express them, they are accustomed to laugh and swear that they completely do not understand what we are saying. Hence, it was our concern to correct all the books of the Old Law, arranged in six columns by the learned man Adamantius, written in the Caesarean library, from the authentic ones, in which the Hebrew itself is written in its own characters, and are expressed in the Greek letters on the margin. Aquila and Symmachus, as well as the Septuagint and Theodotion, follow their order. But some books and especially those written in verses among the Hebrews have three other variations added, which they call the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh translations, having gained authority without the names of interpreters. This immortal talent has given us, through his own efforts, the ability not to greatly fear the arrogance of the Jews; those who are happy with loose lips, a twisted tongue, a hissing spittle, and a hoarse throat. And there is another source of their pride, because just as we who are Latins, having Latin names and origins from our language, [that we learn] with greater ease from memory; so they, from a young age, have deeply absorbed the words of their own language [with] the most exact senses [possible]. From the beginning with Adam to the end with Zerubbabel, they run through all the generations from memory so quickly that you might think it is their own name that they are relating. We who have either learned other languages or have only later believed in Christ or even if we are infants made over to the Church, rely more on the sense of the Scriptures than their wording. If perhaps we do not know [the Latin] text so well, they believe themselves better [than us] in reciting names, in computing years, in [knowledge of] their children's children to the third and fourth generation, of their ancestors, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers. I heard from certain Hebrews in Rome who pretended to have believed in Christ, on the genealogies of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are written in Matthew and Luke; specifically that they do not agree with each other in number or in the equality of words, from Solomon to Joseph. This person disturbed the hearts of simple people as if he was bringing forth responses from some sacred inner-sanctums and oracles, despite the fact that he should have been seeking justice, mercy, and love of God instead, and after this, if it happened to arise, disputing names and numbers. We have perhaps said enough about the haughtiness of the Hebrews, more than was necessary, but we were given an opportunity to speak of the genealogies and the contentions and disputes that arise from the Law. The dialecticians, of whom Aristotle is the foremost, are accustomed to weaving nets of argumentation, and to attaching the loose freedom of rhetoric to the threads of syllogisms. Those who spend all their days and nights in questioning, answering, giving and accepting propositions and confirming and concluding them are thus called contentious, who argue not based on reason, but through their gut. If they do this, whose proper art is contention, then what should a Christian do other than completely shun contention? Even legal disputes should be completely discarded and the foolishness of the Jews abandoned. For they are useless and vain, which have only the appearance of knowledge: besides, they are not of advantage either to those who speak them, or to those who hear them. For what is it to me to know how many years Methuselah lived, or in what year of his age Solomon obtained a wife, lest perhaps it should be believed that Rehoboam was born in his eleventh year? and many things of this kind, which either are difficult to find on account of the variety of books,

and (while they are gradually written faultily) unwonted errors: or even if we find them with great study and labour, we have known that they are of no value. It frequently happens that we have disputes about the Law, not for the sake of the desire of truth; but for the sake of the love of glory, while we wish to be respected as learned among those who hear us: or certainly we pursue base profits from this little rumour: For what profit is it to babble with foaming lips, and to bark like dogs: since a simple and moderate answer either can appease you, if it is true, or if it is false, can be corrected gently and quietly?

3:10-11

Avoid a heretical man after one and a second admonition, knowing that such a one is subverted, and sins, being condemned by himself. The name of heresy is stated in the Epistle to the Corinthians: For there must be also heresies: that they also, which are approved, may be made manifest among you (1 Cor. 11:19). And among the works of the flesh, it is listed in the Epistle to the Galatians: Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:19-21). It should be carefully observed in these things, that just as the other vices, which are counted among the works of the flesh, exclude us ((Al. are excluded)) from the kingdom of God: so too heresies take away the kingdom of God from us; and it does not matter how someone is excluded from the kingdom. But what is even more remarkable seems to be that thing in the Acts of the Apostles, our faith in Christ, and Ecclesiastical discipline, already being labeled as heresy by perverse men at that time. For the Jews say to the Apostle Paul, "Neither have we received letters from you from Judea ((Al. from you... from Judea)), nor has anyone coming from the brethren reported or spoken any evil of you. But we ask to hear from you what your views are; for it is well known to us about this heresy, because everywhere it is contradicted (Acts 28:21,22)." And though the name of the heresy of Miletus is not mentioned, yet they are designated by the labours of Paul, in his address to the presbyters of the Church, 'I know that after my departure grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them' (Acts 20:29-30). These remarks are made in passing, as it were, where elsewhere also heresy is spoken of. The name itself must now be fully examined. In Greek, heresy means an election, that is, everyone chooses for himself that which he thinks best. The philosophers, too, Stoics, Peripatetics, Academics, Epicureans, are called followers of this or that sect. It is needless to go through each one separately, and to enumerate the various dogmas of Marcion, Valentinus, Apelles, Ebion, Montanus, and Manichæus, seeing it is very easy for everyone to know what are the particular errors advocated by each individual. Arius and Eunomius, and the author of the new heresy, would that they were not so well known, perhaps they would have deceived fewer! Therefore, avoid a heretic after the first admonition, or as is better expressed in Greek, νουθεσια, which signifies warning or teaching rather than reproach; which is approved in Latin copies sometimes cited with approval by Pope Athanasius, to the effect that people who are wronged are not sufficient to be informed or warned once or twice, but that the second time they should be given instruction, and that every word should stay in the mouth of two or three witnesses. But why he should be avoided after the first and second admonitions, he gives the reasons, namely, that he

is perverted and sins, being condemned by himself. For he who, having been corrected once or twice, does not wish to be corrected after hearing his mistake, is considered to be in error by the corrector: and on the contrary, when preparing for arguments and disputes with words, he wishes to make profit from the one from whom he learnt. Therefore, it is said to be condemned by oneself: because fornication, adultery, murder, and other vices are repelled by priests of the Church. But heretics bring judgment upon themselves, departing from the Church by their own choice: which departure seems to be a condemnation of their own conscience. They think that heresy differs from schism in that heresy has perverse doctrine, while schism separates from the Church due to episcopal dissension, which can be understood to some extent at the beginning. However, no schism does not invent some heresy for itself, so that it may appear to have departed from the Church correctly.

3:12

When you come, please hurry to me in Nicopolis, Artemas or Tychicus. I have decided to spend the winter there. In the beginning of this letter we read, "The reason I left you in Crete was to straighten out what was left unfinished and to appoint elders in every town, as I directed you." So that after Paul's departure, the Cretans, who had recently believed and were not left as orphans, but had an apostolic man who would correct what appeared to be lacking. Therefore, because after the foundation of other churches it was necessary for Titus, who would build up the building, he writes to him, that he would send Artemas or Tychicus to Crete, one of the two who were with him, to fulfill his position: he himself would come to Nicopolis, testifying that he would winter there. We approve Paul's paternal affections towards the Cretans from this. Titus has a necessary ministry in the Gospel: however, he does not want him to come to him before Artemas or Tychicus, his successor, arrives in his place. Nicopolis itself is so named because of Augustus' victory, which he won there against Antony and Cleopatra.

3:13

Send Zenam, the learned in the law, and hasten to send Apollo, so that nothing may be lacking to them. This is the Apollo of whom mention is made in the epistle to the Corinthians: Every one of you saith: I indeed am of Paul; and I am of Apollo; and I am of Cephas (1 Cor. I, 12). He was an Alexandrian man, a Jew, very eloquent, and skilful in the scriptures; he was the bishop of the Corinthians; and he is supposed to have gone to the island of Crete with Zenas, the doctor of the law, and to have returned thence to Corinth, after having there regulated the Christian church by his preaching; as Paul too had done by his epistle. But we cannot say who the old testament lawyer was from another passage of scripture, except only this, that he himself, as an apostolic man, had the same work which Apollo exercised: to establish the churches of Christ. Therefore, Titus commands that since they were about to sail from Crete to Greece, he should not allow them to be in need of the bare necessities, but should have what is necessary for a journey.

3:14

But also let our people learn to lead in good works for necessary uses, that they may not be unfruitful. He had said above: Send Zenas, the teacher of the law, and Apollo and care for them that nothing be wanting to them. Since therefore a hidden answer might arise, so that anyone who reads this Epistle, not Titus only, might ask whence he should supply those who had no provision

for their journey, he solved this difficulty and removed every obstacle by saying: But also let our people learn to lead in good works for necessary uses, that they may not be unfruitful. He calls our own those who had believed in Christ, who, because they were Christ's, deserved rightly to be called both Paul's and Titus's. You have, he says, the power over the disciples; teach them not to be unfruitful, but to serve as evangelists and apostolic men, who serve with good works, and to serve not in any causes, but in necessary uses, for having food and clothing ((or clothing)), let us be content with these (1 Timothy 6:8); and those who serve the altar should live by the altar; and those who have become participants in our spiritual things should share their carnal goods with us. And lest they easily despise either the letter of Paul or the instruction of Titus, he calls those who do not minister to the evangelists unfruitful. And Solomon himself says in Proverbs: But the fruit of charity (Prov. 3:12). And Paul himself first calls charity the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5). But charity is especially proven in communication and in ministry. That they may not be unfruitful. For every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire (Mat. 5:10) . But I say this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. To not give necessary support to apostolic men and evangelizers of Christ is to condemn oneself to sterility.

3:15

Those who are with me greet you. And he had accustomed himself to say hello to Titus from everyone who was with him or at least properly to Titus, because he was such that he deserved the love of all who were with Paul. Truly great praise was attributed to Titus by everyone through Paul.

Salute those who love us in faith. If everyone who loves, loved in faith, and there were no others who loved without faith, Paul would never have added love to faith, saying, "Salute those who love us in faith." For truly mothers love their children, so prepared as they are to die for them; but they do not love in faith, and wives, their husbands, with whom they very frequently die; but that love is not of faith. The love of only the saints loves with faith to such an extent that even if the one who is loved is unbelieving, yet the saint loves him in faith according to this: "Let all your things be done in faith" (1 Cor. 16:14). And elsewhere: "Love your enemies" (Luke 6:35). The saint loves his enemies and therefore loves them in faith because he believes in him who promised to reward him for the fulfillment of his commandment. The grace of our Lord be with all of you. It should be known that in the Greek codices it is written thus: "Grace be with all of you," so that neither "our Lord" nor "ourselves" is carried in the authentic books. Therefore, he (Paul) invokes grace upon the saints and believers in general, upon Titus and the others who were with him. And just as Isaac the Patriarch blessed his son Jacob (Gen. 27) and the twelve Patriarchs themselves (ibid., 29), so the Apostles, entering a house, would say: "Peace to this house" (Mat. 10:12). And if the house was worthy, their peace rested upon it; but if it showed itself unworthy, their peace returned to those who had invoked it. So even now, at the end of his Epistle, the Apostle invokes grace upon the believers, which, when it had taken effect according to his wish, was in the power of the believers to present as blessed to himself, just as he wished to give it.

Commentary on Zechariah

The Two Books of the Commentaries on the Prophet Zechariah, by Saint Jerome, Priest of Stridon, to Exsuperius, Bishop of Toulouse.

Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus.

Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Prologue

During the last part of autumn, your son Sisinnius, a monk, handed me a letter of your divine indignation. Upon reading it, I was glad to know that you are safe and that you remember me and all the brothers who serve the Lord in holy places, where you make friends for yourself from unjust wealth and prepare eternal dwellings, so that you may say with David: How lovely are your dwelling places, O Lord of hosts: my soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord (Ps. 84:1). If the sparrow finds a home for itself, and the turtledove a nest where she may lay her young (Ibid.): why do you, who are the high priest of the Lord, trample the winepresses at the end of the world, so as to give the thirsty people the wine of Christ's blood, not proclaim freely and say: My heart and my flesh have exulted in the living God: blessed are those who dwell in your house (Psalm 83:3). I hear you in the valley of tears, in the place which God has set for the struggle, in order to give a crown to those who conquer, to arrange ascensions in your heart, to go from virtue to virtue, and to imitate the poverty of the Lord, so that you may become rich with Him and He may recline upon you, and be received, visited, nourished, clothed by you every day, and above all, be inflamed by the reading of the holy Scriptures. And although I wished to offer you some small gift of my talent, and the explanation I have begun on the twelve prophets has reached its conclusion, I did not want to abandon the undertaking, but rather dedicated it to your name, especially because what I was going to dictate even without you, I now dedicate to you. And I am glad that the most obscure book of the prophet Zechariah, and the longest among the twelve, is being discussed at a time when, because of the hastiness of the one who is returning, the interpretation allows no delay. But whether I want to or not, I am compelled to dictate, at least during the

profitable night hours and under cover of darkness, what I will send to you. Origen wrote two volumes on this prophet, up to the third part of the book from the beginning. Hippolytus also published commentaries, and Didymus dictated books of explanations, at my request, which he addressed to me along with three others on Hosea. But their entire allegorical interpretation and historical aspects were rarely touched upon. Therefore, wishing to imitate that householder who brings forth from his treasure both new and old (Matt. 13:52), and the spouse from the Song of Songs who says, 'With the old, I have kept for you the new, my brother' (Song. 7), I mingled the tropology of our own people with the history of the Hebrews, in order to build on rock and not on sand (Matt. 7) and to lay a stable foundation, which Paul the architect writes that he himself laid (1 Cor. 3). Your kindness, not our knowledge, which is either non-existent or small, will be appreciated; but I am ready to take on a willing spirit towards you: that you may challenge us in other matters and encourage us to run in the long field of Scripture. However, if there are any to whom I have promised both the interpretation of these books and others, may they forgive my incredible love for you, and consider whatever I have written to you as written to themselves: for love is kind, love does not envy, love does not seek its own. But now it is time, as we follow the words of Zachariah, to uncover the sails of interpretation for the Holy Spirit.

Book One

Book One

1:1

(Chapter 1, Verse 1) In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, son of Barachiah, son (Vulgate: sons) of Addo, the prophet, saying. LXX: In the eighth month of the second year under Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, son of Barachiah, son of Addo the prophet, saying. In the second year of Darius, son of Hystaspis, in the seventieth year of the desolation of the temple, which was predicted by Jeremiah (Chapter 25 and 29), Zechariah himself testifies, saying, O Lord of hosts, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you are angry? Behold, this is the seventieth year (Zech. I, 12): and there is no doubt that Cyrus, the king of the Persians, who destroyed the empire of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign, released about fifty thousand captive men from Babylon into Judah: and he also returned the vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away, and ordered the temple to be rebuilt in Jerusalem: and he appointed Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, and Joshua, the son of Josedec, as the high priest and leaders of the people who returned. Therefore, after the death of Cyrus, who reigned for thirty years in Persia, at the hands of Tomyris, the queen of the Massagetae, his son Cambyses succeeded to the throne. After ruling for eight years, Cambyses had two magi brothers as his successors, who were killed by the people. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, was then established as king of Persia by the consent of the seven noble families, in the second year of his reign the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai and to Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, the son of Addo. We have already spoken about the book of Zechariah. Now a few things need to be said about the title 'son of Barachiah'. It is questioned why he is called the son of Addo. There is no doubt, according to the book of Chronicles, that he is Addo, who was sent to Jeroboam, the son of Nabath, under whom the altar was destroyed and the king's hand withered, but was restored again at his prayers. Therefore, from the first year of the reign of King Cyrus until the second year of the reign of Darius, son of Hystaspis, forty years are

reckoned in which the altar was constructed and the foundations of the temple were laid, with the neighboring nations in the surrounding area hindering the work, and King Cambyses of Persia, who sent letters about this matter to the rulers of Syria, Cilicia, Phoenicia, and Samaria. Super quo plenius Esdras scribit historiam. Sed Aggaeus in mense sexto in die prima ejusdem mensis prophetare exorsus est. Zacharias vero in eodem quidem anno, sed non in eodem mense: nam post duos menses octavo anni mense fudit vaticinium. Unde recte juxta ordinem duodecim prophetarum, ille decimus, et hic undecimus ponitur. Magnaeque confidentiae est, immo spei fideique in Dominum, ut quod tanto tempore praetermissum est, vel rege prohibente, vel gentibus, ad commonitionem duorum hominum facere incipiant. According to the usual practice, we have sent this following the story. Now, we must briefly discuss it according to interpretation. The eighth month among the Hebrews, called Maresvan by them, Athir by the Egyptians, and November by us, is the beginning of winter: in which, with the heat of summer consumed, all the earth is stripped of its greenery, and the bodies of mortals contract, and there is no solemnity according to the law. For it is written that every kind of male must appear before the Lord our God three times a year (Exod. XXXIV). The first feast is the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Passover, which is called Pascha in Greek and Latin. The second is Pentecost, seven weeks after, in which the loaves of offering from the new crops are first presented. The third is in the seventh month, the propitiation of trumpets and tabernacles, that is, the pitching of tents, whose final day is called the day of departure and end. Therefore, the people, being in captivity and still under the rule of the Persians, with neither the temple nor the walls and fortifications of the city yet built, do not see prophecy in a time of joy, but after joy. And yet he who had the memory of the Lord, and because of the memory, the blessing, and because of the blessing, the testimony: therefore to him Zacharias, son of Barachias, son of Addo, is sent. Zacharias interprets as the memory of the Lord: Barachia, the blessing of the Lord: Addo, his testimony. Let us therefore see, the word of the Lord who was in the beginning with God the Father, what the prophet Zachariah spoke to the people.

1:2-3

(Version 2, 3.) The Lord is angry with your fathers with great anger, and you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Return to me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets cried out, saying. LXX: The Lord is angry with your fathers with great wrath, and you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord Almighty: Return to me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. And do not be like your fathers, whom the former prophets rebuked, saying. The anger of the Lord does not signify a disturbance in Him who becomes angry; but rather the merits and sins of those on whom the anger of God falls. Otherwise, the Lord never avenges in anger; but He corrects in order to bring about improvement. Hence the prophet prays in the Psalms: O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger, nor chastise me in Your wrath (Psalm 6:1). And in another place we read: Correct us, O Lord; but not in Your anger, but in Your mercy (Jeremiah 10:24). Therefore, the Lord is angry with their fathers who are now being criticized, not according to the Seventy interpreters with great anger, but simply with anger. For if he were angry with great anger, he would never have provoked the captives to repentance through Daniel and Ezekiel. And when he is angry with them, the Lord of hosts speaks to you, for which 'Sabaoth' is placed in Hebrew, which sometimes the Seventy translate as Almighty, sometimes as Virtues. And he says: Return to me, and I will return to you, according to what we read: Come near to the Lord, and he will come near to you.

But to those who have turned away from me, I have also turned away from them. He commands them to return to the Lord, those who have returned from Babylon, so that the Lord will also return to them, lest the children begin to suffer what the fathers once suffered, to whom likewise the prophets of that time spoke. Note that in a few short verses and sentences, in both Haggai and Zechariah, the phrase 'says the Lord of hosts' is always added, so that they may know that it is the Lord who commands against the king's authority and the surrounding enemies; and they are encouraged by this confidence in the building of the temple.

1:4

(Verse 4) Thus says the Lord of hosts: Turn away from your evil ways, and from your wicked thoughts; but they did not listen, nor pay attention to me, says the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Almighty Lord: Turn away from your wicked ways, and from your evil inventions; but they did not pay attention to listen to me, says the Lord. The conclusion depends on the preceding statements, and what follows must be connected with what came before. For it is not Zacharias speaking to the people; but he shows what the former prophets spoke to their fathers, to which they cried out, saying: 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: Turn from your evil ways and from your wicked thoughts.' This was cried out by Isaiah, by Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Jeremiah, urging them to forsake their evil ways and abandon their wicked thoughts, in which they sinned both in action and in mind. However, they did not listen or pay attention to the Lord speaking through the prophets who spoke to them, but to me, says the Lord: I was the one speaking and being despised among them. Wherefore, the Lord also said in the Gospel: 'He who receives you, receives me' (Matthew 10:40).

1:5-6

(Vers. 5, 6.) Where are your fathers and the prophets? Will they live forever? However, my words and my ordinances that I commanded my servants the prophets, did not your fathers understand them? And they turned and said: Just as the Lord of hosts planned to do to us according to our ways and according to our inventions, He has done to us. LXX: Where are your fathers and the prophets? Will they live forever? However, listen to my words and accept my law, which I command in my spirit to my servants, the prophets who have understood your ancestors. And they answered and said, 'Just as the Lord Almighty was ready to do to us according to our ways and our inventions, so he did to us.' 'Where are,' he said, 'your ancestors who did not listen or pay attention to me?' Where are your prophets? In common it must be heard: Where are your fathers, and where are your prophets? That is, false prophets: for never would it be said of the holy prophets, 'Will they live forever?' And so, those who have sinned and refused to return to me, and those who, while sinning, deceived others with false promises, have been taken away by death, but my words, which I spoke through my prophets, endure forever, which your fathers understood and showed to be true. Your fathers, confirming the fulfillment of the prophecies of my prophets by the outcome of events, turned to repentance and said: As the Lord of hosts foretold, he has dealt with us according to our works and sins. Let us read Daniel confessing in his own person and in the person of the people to the Lord, that they did not want to hear him, and that whatever they have suffered has rightfully befallen them (Dan. III).

1:7

(Vrs. 7.) On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sabat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, the son of Addo, the prophet, saying. LXX: On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sabat, in the second year under Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, the son of Addo, saying. Some place the eleventh month as the twelfth month and interpret the twenty-fourth day of the same month by mathematical calculations, suspecting it to be a firm and stable number, wanting what is written to be certain and stable; but we say that in the same year, the second year of King Darius, in the third month after the first Vision, that is, the eleventh month after the eighth, which is called Sabat by the Hebrews, again the word of the Lord came to Zechariah. According to the number, it is unclean and pertains to the union of flesh and worldly things, pertaining to matter, as we often teach. But the eleventh month, which is called Sabat, and is translated in our language as "rod," signifies severity and chastisement, as the Apostle says: What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod? (1 Corinthians 4:21). And as the Psalmist says: Your rod and your staff, they comfort me (Psalm 23:4). And it is during the harshest time of winter, which is called Mechir by the Egyptians, περσιος by the Macedonians, and Februarius by the Romans. The twenty-fourth day of the month also signifies the illustrious shadow of the night, with the moon waning into darkness and the blind and perpetual horror of the night growing. Therefore, it is fitting that those who were still in captivity, the majority of whom were in Media and Chaldea, and were exiled in Assyria, saw what follows on the second year and eleventh month, during the most severe cold, and on the twenty-fourth day of the same month, to the Jewish people.

1:8-13

(Verse 8 and following) I saw during the night: and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the ravine, and behind him there were red, sorrel, and white horses. And I said, 'What are these, my lord?' And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, 'I will show you what these are.' And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said, 'These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to go throughout the earth.' And they reported to the angel of the Lord who was standing among the myrtle trees, and said, 'We have gone throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet.' And the angel of the Lord answered and said: O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Juda, with which thou hast been angry? This is the seventieth year. And the Lord answered the angel that spoke in me, good words, and comfortable words. LXX: I saw in the night: and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees, that were in the bottom: and behind him were horses, red, speckled, and white. And I said: What are these, my Lord? And the angel who spoke with me said: I will show you what these things are. And the man who stood among the mountains answered and said to me: These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to go around the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord, who stood among the mountains, and said: We have gone around the whole earth, and behold, all the earth is inhabited and at rest. And the angel of the Lord answered and said: O Lord Almighty, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you are angry? This is the seventieth year. And the Lord answered the angel who spoke to me, good words and consoling speeches. First, let us discuss the story: I saw, he said, during the night: not during the day, like Moses, who saw God face to face: and Isaiah who spoke: I saw the Lord sitting on a high and

exalted throne (Isa. VI, 1): before the people were led into captivity, before Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple; but still, while the people were in the midst of the evils of servitude, he sees what he sees for them in darkness. And behold, a man riding on a red horse. The Hebrews believe this to be the angel Michael, who is the avenger of iniquities and sins of Israel. And the standing among the myrtle trees that were in the depths, they want to understand as the prophets and saints who dwelled among the captive people and were in the depths. But the man, that is, Michael, was followed by red and various-colored horses, and white ones, with the order, as they think, changed: so that the white ones signify the Medes and the Persians, because under them the captivity was dismissed and the temple was rebuilt; the various-colored ones, the Macedonians, some of whom were friends, others were persecutors (the last vision of Daniel [Chapter 8] speaks most fully on this matter); but the red ones signify the kingdom of the Romans, bloody and murderous, which killed the people and destroyed the temple. But others, preserving the order that was written, interpret the man who rides a red horse and the red horses as representing the four kingdoms. The first and second, the bloodshedders, are interpreted as the Assyrians and Chaldeans, whose first ten tribes were led captive by Salmanasar. The second, Judah and Benjamin, with the city of Jerusalem burned and the temple destroyed. The third and fourth, the various and white horses, are thought to represent the Medes and Persians: some of whom were merciful, such as Cyrus, Darius son of Hystaspis, and Artaxerxes, called by the Greeks Assuerus, under whom the story of Esther is fulfilled; others were cruel, such as Cambyses and the rest. Therefore, the seer and prophet sees a man riding on a red horse, followed by red, spotted, and white horses. Not knowing what he had seen, and desiring to understand the meaning of his vision, he asks, 'What are these, my Lord?' The angel who was speaking with him promises to reveal the answer. As the seer remains silent, a man standing among the myrtle trees recounts, 'These are the kingdoms that the Lord has commanded to go throughout the earth and subdue it under their authority.' Finally, the angels who presided over kingdoms and nations do not come to anyone else, but to the very man and angel of the Lord who stood among the myrtles, and they say: We have walked through the earth, and behold, all the earth is inhabited and at rest. And the meaning is: all the kingdoms under us are safe and peaceful, and no distress weighs upon them. From this response, the angel who interceded for Israel takes the opportunity to pray for the people, and says to the Lord: Since the whole world is quiet and peaceful, why, O Lord, do you not have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, especially since the time of captivity, according to your promises, has been fulfilled? And the Lord answered the angel who spoke in the prophet with good words, comforting words. Good words regarding the promises of the future, comforting words regarding the needs of the present. These, according to the letter, so that we may not see our own concealed things, which we have learned from foreign language teachers. But the teachers of the Churches understand the darkness of the mystical vision on the night when the vision is seen. For God has placed darkness as his hiding place (Psalm 18:12). And according to the Septuagint translators, it is said of him: 'The abyss is like his garment' (Ps. 103:6). But the man who was riding on a red horse is the Lord Savior, who, by taking on the dispensation of our flesh, hears in Isaiah: 'Why are your garments red?' (Isa. 63:2). This one who is now shown as red to the captive people is described in the Apocalypse of John as sitting on a white horse, wearing white garments (Rev. 3 and 6). But what is said to be standing between two shady mountains (although in Hebrew it does not have two), the New and Old Testaments understand, which is said to be covered with dense leaves, and forest, and shady

woods, because it is enveloped in many obscurities. But the myrtles that were in the depths, among which it is described as standing, understand the angelic powers, which also ministered to him even in the flesh. Or certainly the mountains (to remove what is not written, two) absolutely and without number, we can understand many holy people and apostles and apostolic men, who are reported to have traveled the whole world, red, and various, and white. Some have been crowned with martyrdom and are called 'rufi'. Others, through their works, teaching, and variety of signs, are called by various names. Others have received rewards for their virginity, purity of doctrine, and pure heart that sees God. Finally, the prophet asks the same man and angel who stood among the myrtles, saying: Who are these, my lord? And the angel who spoke in him, namely the prophetic sense, promises to show what is seen. And when he had promised, he did not answer himself, but another who stood among the myrtle trees, and said: These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to walk the earth. For the apostles were sent by the Lord to complete the preaching of the Gospel throughout the whole world, and after they had fulfilled their mission, they returned to the angel of the great council who stood among them, who spoke with the Apostle: We are the pleasing aroma of Christ to those who are being saved and to those who are perishing (1 Corinthians 2:15), and among peoples of both callings. And they said to him: We have traveled the land, fulfilled the work that was assigned to us, and behold, the whole land is inhabited and at rest, which was once deserted by God. Now it is His dwelling place, resting from wars, battles of vices and sins. For He has received the inheritance of the Lord, who has returned to the Father, and who says: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave you (John 14:27). And as for the full mercy that is requested, they refer to the imminent seventieth year when God will have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with respect to that understanding: that as long as true peace comes and the Sabbath and the number of seven decades, that is, the seventieth year is fulfilled, neither Jerusalem may receive complete freedom, which is interpreted as the vision of peace and is the Church, nor may the cities of Judah, who confess the Lord, receive it. Finally, the Lord promises good words, consoling words: which we now see in part, and in part we prophesy (1 Cor. XIII, 12). But when that which is perfect has come, those things which are in part will be done away with: and being delivered from the Babylon of this age, let us cry out: When the Lord brings back the captivity of Zion, we became like those consoled (Psal. CXXV, 1).

1:14-16

(Verse 14 and following) And the angel who spoke in me said to me: Cry out, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and Zion with great jealousy, and with great anger I am angry (alternate: I will be angry) with the prosperous nations, for I was angry only a little, but they (alternate: they themselves) assisted in bringing about evil. Therefore, thus says the Lord: I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and my house will be built in it, says the Lord of hosts, and the plumb line will be stretched out over Jerusalem. LXX: And the angel who was speaking with me said, 'Cry out, saying: Thus says the Lord Almighty: I am zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great zeal, and with great wrath I am angry with the nations that are above them, for I was indeed angry for a little while, but they themselves are subjected to evil. Therefore, thus says the Lord: I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and my house will be rebuilt in it,' says the Lord Almighty, 'and the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem.' Still good words, and consoling words these are, which now the prophet is commanded to cry aloud: that the Lord is zealous for Jerusalem and Zion with a great zeal. But he who is zealous, shows by loving the thing that he is

zealous for, not saying, as Isaiah says, 'As a wife despises her husband, so has the house of Israel despised me' (Jeremiah 3:20). To whom the Lord spoke through Ezekiel: 'I will no longer be angry with you, and my zeal has turned away from you' (Ezekiel 16:42). Therefore, he who is jealous for Jerusalem and Zion (which are one and the same city) now becomes angry with the rich nations, whom he called upon above red, white, and various colored horses, because he himself delivered them for punishment. However, they raged against those who were delivered; here, as if wanting his son to be corrected by a tutor; there, as if wanting to kill an enemy and punish him. Similar to this is what is written in Isaiah: 'I gave them into your hands, but you showed them no mercy.' You have laid a heavy yoke on the aged and said, 'I will be mistress forever' (Isaiah 47:6). But zeal is understood in a human way, like anger. From this passage heretics are refuted, who detract from the Old Testament, claiming that God, when angry, does not want to destroy those towards whom He is angry, but to correct them. Therefore, he says, I have been zealous for Jerusalem, and with great zeal I have consumed those who opposed her: therefore, thus says the Lord: I will return not in one mercy, but in many mercies to Jerusalem, and my house, that is, the temple, will be rebuilt in it under Zerubbabel and Joshua son of Jehozadak; and the measuring line of the builders will be stretched out over Jerusalem. Jerusalem and Zion can be understood as the vision of peace and the watchtowers, which do not belong to the wars of this age, nor to the lowly and earthly, but to peace and harmony, and to the lofty heights of the heavens, the Church. Because of its vices and sins, and because of its daily cooling love, the Lord becomes angry and delivers it to persecutions, so that it may appear as gold and silver in a furnace. However, its adversaries, to whom it has been entrusted, seek to destroy it. Jerusalem will be built again with the blood of Caesar, from one gate to another. Where the Lord promising peace and mercy, says that it will be built again. And a plumb line or a cord should be stretched in it according to the measurements and orders of each. However, what a cord is, is demonstrated in the following chapter, where the prophet says: I lifted up my eyes and saw: and behold a man, and in his hand a measuring cord. But the temple of God that the adversaries destroyed can also be understood as the venerable body of the Lord, of which he himself said: Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up (John 2:19). What was destroyed in the passion, was raised up in the resurrection, and it was the origin and foundation of all temples, about which the Apostle also speaks: You are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells in you (2 Corinthians VI, 16).

1:17

(Verse 17.) Still cry out, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: My cities shall still overflow with goods, and the Lord shall still comfort Zion, and shall still choose Jerusalem. LXX: And the angel who spoke in me said: Still cry out, saying: Thus says the Lord Almighty: Still cities shall be spread with goods, and the Lord shall still have mercy on Zion, and shall still choose Jerusalem. The angel who had spoken above to the prophet said: Cry out: Thus says the Lord of hosts, now he also urges him to cry out, not with the intensity of his voice, but with the intensity of his mind: and this is what he commands to be cried out: My cities shall still overflow with goods, which you now see devastated by the fire of the Babylonians, they shall again abound with all things, and the Lord shall comfort the present miseries with future goods, and shall choose Jerusalem, which he had recently cast away. But if we refer to the Church, to which true and eternal goods are promised, those goods must be believed, about which we read: See the good things of Jerusalem (Ps. 127:5). And in another place: If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the

land (Isa. 1:19). And that: Trust in the Lord, and He will exalt you to possess the good things of the earth. Which a wise man, to whom the Lord had revealed the uncertain and obscure things of His wisdom, promises to himself with hope for the future, and says: I believe I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living (Ps. 26:13). After the fires of the most savage persecution which the Church of the Lord endured from both the pagans and the heretical Arians, peace being restored, we see the Churches of the Lord flourish, and Zion consoled, and Jerusalem chosen, which it had previously rejected. We can understand this to refer to the temple of the Lord and to each and every believer. Some interpret the consoled Zion and chosen Jerusalem, and the other things that are preached in this manner by all the prophets, as referring to the heavenly Jerusalem, which, having been destroyed through ruin, is to be restored through virtues. We will interpret all these things more correctly about the Church.

1:18-19 (Verse 18, 19.) And I lifted up my eyes and saw: and behold four horns, and I said to the angel who spoke with me: What are these? And he said to me: These are the horns that have scattered Judah, and Israel, and Jerusalem. And the Lord showed me four craftsmen, and I said: What are these coming to do? And he said, saying: These are the horns that have scattered Judah, each one by his own man, and none of them has lifted up his head, and these have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations that have lifted up their horn over the land of Judah, to scatter it. LXX: And I lifted up my eyes and saw, and behold four horns. And I said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, Lord?' And he said to me, 'These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.' Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen, and I said, 'What are these coming to do?' And he said, 'These are the horns that have scattered Judah, so that no one raised his head. And these have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it.' Four horns, the nations that lifted up a horn over the land of the Lord to scatter it. Four horns that scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem, to be four nations, the Babylonians, Medes and Persians, and Macedonians, and Romans, and now the Lord, questioned by the prophet, explains, and Daniel fully repeats. He, in the vision of the image, had a golden head, and a silver chest, and a bronze belly, and legs and feet of iron and clay, these four nations he interpreted (Dan. II). And again, in another vision, four beasts, a lion and a bear, and a leopard, and another horrible beast, whose name was not given, showed the same nations under a different appearance. And let no one doubt that the Medes and Persians are one kingdom after the victory of Cyrus, who has read both secular and sacred letters. And he rightly placed horns for kingdoms, the Holy Scripture having this custom of always interpreting kingdom as horns, as in this passage: And He has exalted the horn of His Christ (Psalm 148:14). And in another place: And he raised up the horn of salvation for us, in the house of David his servant (Luke 1:69). And ten horns will reign in the end, as the prophet Daniel also testifies (Daniel 7). At that time when this vision was seen, the kingdom of the Babylonians had already passed, the Persians and Medes were pressing in, the Greeks or rather the Macedonians were to come, and then the Romans. What the Babylonians, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks or rather the Macedonians did to the Jews, Israel, and Jerusalem, a learned man knows, especially during the time of Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, under whom the history of the Maccabees is recorded. After the arrival of the Lord and Savior, when Jerusalem was surrounded and the Israelites endured, as the Gospel before tells (Luke 19), and as the Jewish historian Josephus explains in great detail. These horns scattered and dispersed Judah, almost every single man, so that none of them, burdened by the weight of great tribulation, could raise their

head. The prophet himself did not see the four craftsmen or artisans whom the Greeks call τέκτονες, but the Lord showed and explained to him who these craftsmen are, whom we understand to be obedient to the Lord's authority, to rebuild what the nations destroyed. But this, for which we have been interpreted from the Hebrew: They came to destroy these things, namely, kingdoms, interpreted by the Seventy: They came to sharpen these things, in their hands. But to sharpen these things means to understand them. Or certainly, to destroy, so that all may submit their necks under the yoke of Christ, and not (as some have interpreted) when they have been sharpened, become worse. For if the angels come for this purpose, to make the wicked worse, they should not be called craftsmen, that is, destroyers of evil, and builders of good; but they themselves should be understood as wicked and destroyers. And it should be noted that these four horns of the nations, one opposed to the people of God, raised a horn; for they did not reign equally and at the same time oppress Israel, but they succeeded each other, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians. The kingdom of the Persians, the kingdom of the Macedonians; the kingdom of the Macedonians, the empire of the Romans. We have mentioned these following the order of history. But what the prophet says, that he lifted up his eyes, must be understood in a spiritual sense: I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me (Ps. 120:1). And: Lift up your eyes and behold the regions, for they are already white for harvesting (John 4:35). And that which we read in Isaiah: The holy one said, Lift up your eyes and see who has shown all these things (Isaiah 51:6). Therefore, it is necessary to lift up our eyes and have spiritual understanding, so that we may see the opposing forces that have exalted their horn against us, and concerning which the Apostle speaks: For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against the spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12). These four adversaries, who always fought against the Saints, were crushed by Christ when He came. And concerning them, the Psalmist says: You shall tread upon the asp and the basilisk, and you shall trample the lion and the dragon (Psalm 90:13). We can understand four horns, which reigned against the people of God, and four passions, which the learned do not express word for word with envy, but interpret as disturbances, the affliction of the soul and joy: two present, and two future, fear and desire, of which even the illustrious poet signifies (Aeneid VI). From here they fear, desire, grieve, and rejoice. Against these [virtues], four craftsmen, and (so to speak) doctors, and good artisans, are not perceived by the prophet, for without the revelation of God he could not yet see them on his own, but they are revealed to him by the Lord, namely the four virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, about which Cicero extensively argues in his book On Duties, also writing a separate book about the four virtues. Therefore, those who destroy vices and build virtues, and all the saints who continually restore the Church possessing these remedies, are to be called craftsmen. Hence, the Apostle spoke: Like a skilled builder, I laid the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:10). And the angry Lord said that He would remove the architect and wise man from Jerusalem (Isaiah 3). And the Lord Himself, the Son of God Almighty and Creator of all, is called the son of a craftsman. I read in someone's Commentaries that the four blacksmiths are the four Evangelists, who, by understanding the oppressed Israel, namely, seeing God, and confessing the Lord Judah, and the vision of peace in Jerusalem, restore them to their former seat, and who the sinful nations had dispersed from the Church, they brought back to salvation through the preaching of the Gospel.

2:1-2

(Chapter 2, Verses 1, 2.) And I lifted up my eyes and saw: and behold, a man, and in his hand a measuring line. And I said: Where are you going? And he said to me, to measure Jerusalem, and see how wide it is, and how long it is. (Alternate translation: And he said to me, to measure Jerusalem, and see how high it is, and how long it is.) Septuagint: And I lifted up my eyes and saw: and behold, a man, and in his hand a measuring cord, and I said to him: Where are you going? And he said to me, to measure Jerusalem, and see how wide it is, and how long it is. With his eyes raised, Quiprius had seen sad things on the four horns. Now he raises his eyes again, to see the man about whom it is written: 'Behold the man, his name is the East' (Zech. VI, 12); about whom we also read above: 'And behold, a man riding on a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, or in the shady mountains' (Zech. I, 8). And about whom the Father speaks: 'He has built my city' (Heb. XI), of which God is the architect and builder. Here it is seen also from Ezechiel, holding a rope in his hand, and a reed measuring a cubit, to measure Jerusalem, the description of which, namely, its width and length, the same prophet continues in mystical language (Ezek. 40). Some think that this was fulfilled in part under Zerubbabel, and Jesus, and Ezra, and Nehemiah, and other leaders or kings, who ruled the people of Israel until the coming of the Lord and Savior. But others, especially the Jews, interpret it as a thousand-year kingdom, seeking physical things. But many of us refer to the heavenly Jerusalem, and say that it must be rebuilt, as it had been destroyed by the sins of the souls. The heretics suspect this. However, we interpret Mount Zion, the mother of the firstfruits and the saints, as the Church, which was built in the passion and resurrection of the Lord, and is continually being built by him who knows the measures and merits of each individual. What we said about the Church can also be applied to the souls of the believers, which are daily built by the Lord and experience His peace that was left to the apostles.

2:4-5

(Verse 4 and following) And behold, the angel who spoke to me went out, and another angel went out to meet him, and said to him: Run, speak to this young man, saying: Jerusalem shall be inhabited without walls, because of the multitude of people and animals in its midst. And I will be to it, says the Lord, a wall of fire all around, and I will be in the midst of it in glory. LXX: And behold, the angel who spoke to me stood, and another angel went out to meet him, and said to him: Run and speak to that young man, saying: Jerusalem shall be inhabited as a fruitful place, because of the multitude of people and animals in its midst. And I will be a wall of fire all around, declares the Lord, and I will be the glory within her. The angel who spoke to the prophet, and stood, or as it is read in Hebrew, went out, this signifies Jasa (the Hebrews think it is Michael). And the other angel who went out and came to meet him, they suspect is Gabriel, who speaks to Michael, so that he may speak to the prophet, about the great abundance of all things, and the multitude of people and animals, and the strength of the walls that Jerusalem will have, which at present seems to be destroyed to ashes and dust. But according to the spiritual sense, we interpret all these things in the Church, which, without a wall, or as they have translated it in the Septuagint, κατὰ καρπὸς, that is, it may be inhabited with the abundance of all fruits and may have a multitude of people and animals, and the Lord of fire may be around it, and He Himself may move in the midst of it in glory. This is the city of which we read elsewhere: Glorious things are said of you, O city of God (Psalm 86:2). And again: Great is the Lord and exceedingly praiseworthy, in the city of our God, on his holy mountain (Ps. VII, 1). Whoever dwells in this place can say: But I, like a fruitful olive tree in the

house of God (Ps. LI, 10). And: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want: he has placed me in a place of pasture, by the waters of refreshment (Ps. XXII, 1). And it shall be inhabited, it says, Jerusalem, because of the multitude of men and animals, without walls, or abundance of all kinds of fruits. A certain one, humans and animals are interpreted as two peoples, Jews and Gentiles, because those who have been versed in the Law and come to faith in Christ are called humans: but we who were in idolatry as if in the desert of the Law and solitude of the prophets, and have received his passion, should be called animals. But others want that even rational and knowledgeable in the Scriptures, be understood as humans: but that simple believers be called animals, and concerning them it is said: You will save humans and animals, O Lord (Ps. XXXV, 7). These animals, and these living beings, hear the voice of the good shepherd, and they recognize, and follow him: who himself is both shepherd, because he guides us; and door, because through him we enter the Church, and to the Father (John 10); and a wall of fire around, so that it may warm up (or may warm up) those who believe and dwell in the midst, who had previously grown lukewarm in the coldness of charity, and may be fervent in spirit. But let it consume with its fire the wolves and the most savage beasts (of whom it is written: Do not give the soul confessing you to beasts (Psalm 73, 19): and whose fruits are hay, wood, straw (1 Corinthians 3, 12): and they bring thistles and thorns); and may the one who is an adversary of the fire, be in the midst of believers with glory. But as for the wall of Jerusalem, it is the Lord, and in another place we read: Mountains surround it, and the Lord surrounds his people (Ps. 124:2). The Jews think that all these things will come about in a carnal way under the hope of a most vain promise, thinking that Jerusalem will have such great blessedness that, due to the multitude of people and all the animals, it will not be able to have a wall; but the wall will be the defense of the Lord Himself, and let it enjoy the glory of the One dwelling in its midst.

2:6-9

(Verse 6 and following) O, O flee from the land of the North, says the Lord, for I have scattered you like the four winds of heaven, says the Lord. O Zion, arise, you who dwell in the daughter of Babylon. For thus says the Lord of hosts, after glory He has sent me to the nations who plundered you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. For behold, I will shake My hand over them, and they shall become spoil for those who served them. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me. LXX: O flee from the land of the north, says the Lord, for I will gather you from the four winds of heaven, says the Lord. In Zion you shall be saved, you who dwell in the daughter of Babylon. For thus says the Lord Almighty: after glory He has sent me to the nations that plundered you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. Behold, I will raise my hand against them, and they shall become plunder for those who served them. Then you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me. The regions of the world, which the Greeks call climates, are understood to be located near Jerusalem and the temple. Therefore, the Assyrians and Babylonians, who devastated the people of God, dwell in the land of the North. Finally, in Jeremiah (Chapter I), the pot that is filled with meat (which is understood to be the city of Jerusalem) is set on fire from the face of the North. Therefore, since the angel had commanded the angel who met the prophetic angel in Zechariah to speak to the boy (for in comparison to the angelic dignity, all human nature is called boyhood, because we do not progress from angels to us, but from us to angels), and to say to him: Jerusalem shall be inhabited without walls, and the rest. Now the same word of the Lord comes to those who live in the North: that they should gather from the four winds,

to whom they had been scattered throughout the whole world, and return to Zion, those who dwelt in Babylon. Or certainly in this way: O you who have been scattered in the four parts of the heavens, flee from the land of the North, and, O Zion, who now dwells in Babylon, flee and return to your former home. And that when it is said in the vocative case 'O' for the third time, it is an exhortation to flee, so that they may know that they have been warned not once, but repeatedly, to flee. It is said in another way: Aquilo is the most violent wind, which hardens the hearts of its inhabitants and from which all the evils that dwell on the earth are kindled, and towards which, according to the same prophet Zachariah, the black horses go out to stand in their own region (Zach. I and VI). He also, who in Isaiah boasted, saying: I will ascend into heaven, I will set my throne above the stars of heaven, I will sit upon the mountain of the covenant, in the heights of the north (Isai. XIV, 13), boasts of having a kingdom in the coldest place on earth. We read in another place: Behold, smoke comes from the north (Ibid., 31): and it is said of those who have departed far from the holy city: Behold, these come from afar from the north and the sea (Ibid., XLIX, 12). And through Jeremiah the Holy Spirit speaks, calling those who are in captivity to return to Jerusalem: Go and read my words to the north, and you shall say: Return to me, O dwelling of Israel, says the Lord (Jer. XLVI). Therefore, it is commanded to us who dwell in the North, and have lost the heat of the Lord's fervor, who have been scattered throughout the world, and about whom the Gospel preaches, that the Lord send his angels in the four winds, and gather us, and that we, who are involved in the vices and confusion of this age, flee to the Church of the Lord in Zion, and, forsaking worldly desires, stand firm in the watchtower of its teachings and greatness. But what follows is this: Thus says the Lord of hosts, after the glory He sent Me, and so on, the voice of the speaking Savior is introduced, who says that He is sent by the Almighty God from the Almighty Father, not according to what is almighty, but according to what He was sent after the glory. Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal to God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:6). It is not surprising that Christ is called omnipotent, from whose person we read in the Book of Revelation of John: 'These things saith the faithful witness, the beginning of the creation of God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty God' (Rev. 1:4, 5). Also, what we read in the twenty-third psalm: 'Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall enter in' (v. 7). And again, it is said by other angels who were ignorant of the mystery of the assumed flesh: 'Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory,' and this refers to Christ. For wherever we read 'the Lord of hosts,' it is written in Hebrew as 'Sabaoth,' which is translated by the Septuagint interpreters as 'omnipotent.' From this we understand that wherever 'the Lord of hosts' is said of Christ, He is to be understood as omnipotent. It is not surprising if Christ is called omnipotent, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). And who says, 'All things that the Father hath are mine' (John 17:10). But if all things, that is, God of God, Lord of the Lord, light of light, then also omnipotent of omnipotent; for it cannot happen that where one nature is, there be diverse glory. Therefore, He was sent after the glory of divine majesty to the Gentiles, who had despoiled the people of God, so that those who were once their plunderers might be slaves to them, and that the whole crowd of former slaves might know that God is omnipotent and merciful. And He says, 'He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye'; understand the touch as vexation and injury, according to what we read: 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets

no harm' (Ps. 105:15). For whoever touches the saints of the Lord is as if he desired to vex the apple of His eye, and endeavored to deprive him of the bright light spoken of in the Gospel, 'Ye are the light of the world' (Matt. 5:14). But God lifts His hand to strike the adverse nations and to restore His people, either in Jerusalem or in the Church. By adverse nations, according to the allegorical interpretation, understand the opposing powers, which subject sinners daily to their authority and compel them to serve themselves.

2:10-12

(Verse 10 onwards) Praise and rejoice, Daughter Zion, for behold, I am coming and will dwell in your midst, declares the Lord. Many nations will be joined to the Lord on that day and will become my people. I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the Lord of Hosts has sent me to you. The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and he will choose Jerusalem again. Rejoice and be glad, Daughter Zion, for behold, I am coming and will dwell in your midst, declares the Lord. Many nations will flee to the Lord on that day and will become his people. They will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you. The Lord will possess Judah as his portion in the holy land, and he will choose Jerusalem again. And these things must still be understood from the perspective of the Lord: that he encourages his people to rejoice and be glad about their restoration from captivity to their former dwelling place, that the Lord himself will come and dwell among them, and that many nations will believe in him, as it is said: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession (Psalm 2:8); and he will dwell among them, speaking to his disciples: Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). And may the Lord possess Judah as his own portion, confessing and believing in his name, and may he not possess elsewhere, except in the holy land, which is interpreted as the Church, and may he choose Jerusalem again, which he had forsaken in temptation and persecutions. Some Jews believe that this happened under Zerubbabel and Joshua, Ezra and Nehemiah, who completed this in part, especially because Jerusalem is chosen and possessed by Judah: namely, the two tribes that returned from the Babylonian captivity and were called Judah, not Israel, because the latter are still living among the Medes. But others differ in their interpretation of the future, because they believe that there will be nations who will believe in the one sent by the Lord, and that Jerusalem must be chosen. However, since all nations have already believed in the Lord Savior, it cannot be chosen because it is completely destroyed. But rightly after the captivity, the daughter of Zion is called to rejoice, as it is said in the psalm: 'When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice, and Israel will be glad' (Psalm 53:7).

2:13

(Verse 13) Let all flesh be silent before the face of the Lord, for He has risen from His holy dwelling. LXX: Let all flesh fear before the face of the Lord, for He has risen from His holy clouds. When these things happen, and the Lord possesses His portion, Judah, and chooses Jerusalem, every human race fears the coming of the Lord, for He has risen from His holy dwelling. The Lord is said to rise, and as if awakening from sleep, when He rises for the vengeance of His people, according to what is written: Rise up, why do you sleep, O Lord? (Ps. XLIII, 23) Or according to the Septuagint, He rose from His holy clouds, understand the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, to whom the Lord commanded not to rain rain upon Israel. These are the clouds, of which it is

written: And let the clouds rain down righteousness (Isaiah 45:8): for these clouds are not corporeal, in which denser air is condensed, they cannot rain down righteousness. In these clouds, and with these clouds, the Lord says in the Gospel that He will come (Luke 21). And in Isaiah we read that the Lord came into Egypt in a light cloud (Isa. XIX). Egypt is understood as the world, into which the Lord is said to have descended in the flesh, which was born from a virgin womb, not burdened by the weight of human seed and sin. But that the term 'every flesh' does not apply to all creatures, including humans, animals, birds, and fish, but specifically to humans, is indicated by the Scripture: 'To you all flesh will come' (Ps. LXIV, 3). For not all flesh of irrational animals will come to the Lord, but that which is to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and of which it is said: I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy (Joel 2:28).

3:1-5

(Chapter III - Verse 1 and following) And he showed me Jesus, the great high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord: and Satan was standing at his right hand to oppose him. And the Lord said to Satan: May the Lord rebuke you, Satan, may the Lord rebuke you who has chosen Jerusalem. Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire? And Jesus was clothed in filthy garments, and he stood before the face of the angel who responded and said to those who stood before him, saying: Take away the filthy garments from him. And he said to him, 'Behold, I have taken away your iniquity, and I will clothe you with rich garments.' And they put a clean turban on his head, and they put clean clothes on him. LXX: And the Lord showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan stood at his right hand to oppose him. And the Lord said to Satan, 'The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!' Is not this man like a brand plucked from the fire? And Jesus was clothed with dirty clothes, and he stood before the face of the angel, and he answered and said to those standing before his face, saying: Take off the dirty clothes from him. And he said to him: Behold, I have wiped away your iniquities from you; and dress him in fine clothing, and put a clean turban on his head, and they put a clean turban on his head, and they surrounded him with garments. Before we come to the understanding of the spiritual intelligence, it must be said strictly and briefly how the Hebrews explained this passage. They want Jesus the great priest, whom the Greeks call ἱερεὺς and the Latins call pontifex, to be understood as the son of Josedec, who presided over the people with Zorobabel. The adversary (for this is what Satan means) stood at his right hand to oppose him. And he rightly stood at his right hand, not at his left, because the accusation was true, since he himself had taken a foreign wife, as is written in Ezra and in Malachi, who follows this prophet, (1 Esdras 12 and Mal. 2). And the Lord said to Satan, the accuser and adversary, for he is the enemy and avenger, and the accuser of his brothers: Let the Lord rebuke you, Satan: for it is raining from the Lord: and let the Lord rebuke you, who chose Jerusalem. Therefore, since Jerusalem has now been chosen from among all the cities of Judah, with the Lord not imputing to her the sins she has committed, why do you attempt to bury Jesus, who escaped from the captivity of Babylon as if half burnt, like a tower which is commonly called a torch? But what follows, 'Jesus was clothed in dirty clothes,' is interpreted in three ways. Either because of illicit union, or because of the sins of the people, or because of the squalor of captivity. But the angel, before whose face Jesus stood, commanded the other angels on behalf of the Lord to take away from him the dirty clothes of which we have spoken above. When they had fulfilled the command, the same angel spoke again to Jesus:

'Behold, I have taken away your iniquity; these are the dirty clothes, and I have clothed you with new garments.' This refers to the joining of an Israelite wife to you, which the Seventy interpreted as 'ποδῖρη,' which we can call a long tunic, because it flows down to the ankles and feet. And what follows: Place a clean headband over his head, because we read in Hebrew Sanipth (), which is called by many a headdress, and in this they want the dignity of the priest to be understood, that he, having removed the filth of sins, may have a clean priesthood. This is how the Jews interpret it. But our argument is that the priest is great, to whom it is said: You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. CIX, 4). But since he (the angel) cannot be seen by himself, he is shown to the prophet by the Lord standing before the angel of the Lord, whom they wish to be the angel of great counsel, not because one and another are, or that we should accept two persons in the Son; but that he is shown to be the same and as one, and is said to appear as if in the form of a defiled man and as if an angel, mediating between God and men. However, they attempt to show that he is not Jesus son of Josedech, because it is not appropriate in the present place for him to be called the son of Josedech, who in other places, and where Jesus is truly called the son of Josedech, is always considered under the name of the Father. Therefore, Jesus is seen standing and standing firmly; and Satan stood at his right hand to oppose him. For he was tempted in every way without sin. And in the Gospel, the tempter approaches him, always seeking to oppose him with his right hand and his powers. And that which follows: The Lord rebuke you, Satan, and the Lord rebuke you, who choose Jerusalem, they have said, because the Father and the Son are Lord, and in the 109th psalm we read: The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand. The Lord speaks to another Lord, not because the Lord who speaks cannot rebuke, but because out of the unity of nature, when the other rebukes, he himself who speaks rebukes. For he who sees the Son, sees also the Father (John 14:9); and this is he who chose Jerusalem, the Church which contemplates the peace of the Lord. But the tower taken out of the fire can rightly be understood as one who, while he is in Babylon, is not consumed by the fire of Babylon, nor touched by the flame of this world. Therefore Moses also sees a great vision in the desert, in which the bush was burning, but was not consumed (Exodus 3). This Jesus was clothed in filthy garments; although he had not committed any sin, he was made sin for us, and he himself carries our infirmities, and suffers for us, and we thought of him as being in sorrow, and in wounds, and in anguish. But he was wounded for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:4). And in the Apostle we read: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). Here in the twenty-first psalm it says: Far from my salvation are the words of my offenses (Psalm 22:1). And in the sixty-eighth psalm: O God, you know my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from you (Psalm 69:6). All the garments that are called dirty will be taken away from him when he has washed away our sins, so that because he was clothed in dirty garments, we may hear after baptism: May your garments always be white (Eccl. IX, 8): and the whole Church of believers hears through Isaiah: Wash, be clean (Isa. I, 16). And she is prophesied about in the Song of Songs: Who is this that ascends, white (Cant. III, 6)? But take the incarnation of Him, which is from the earth, and is signified in the feet. Understand the clean robe over His head, understand the splendor of divine majesty, so that he may seem to be adorned as one and the same according to man, and according to God.

3:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) And the angel of the Lord stood and testified to the angel of the Lord saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: If you walk in my ways and keep my custody, you shall also judge my house and keep my courts and I will give you those who walk among those who stand here. LXX: And the angel of the Lord stood and testified to Jesus saying: Thus says the Lord Almighty: If you walk in my ways and keep my commandments, and you shall judge my house; and if you keep my courtyard, I will give you those who dwell among those who stand here. Following the order of the proposed interpretation, the Hebrews understand the following words spoken to Jesus, son of Josedech, by the angel of the Lord: that after the removal of dirty garments and the restoration of the dignity of the priesthood, he is commanded according to what is written in the Gospel: 'Behold, you are healed, sin no more, lest anything worse happen to you' (John 5:14); and a reward is promised to him if he walks in the ways of the Lord and keeps His commandments, that he may be the judge of His house, that is, the high priest who perseveres in the temple and guards its courts and vestibules, and may the Lord grant him assistance from the number of the angels (who at that time stood before Him) to surround him and protect him from all enemy deceit. According to our companions who refer all these things to the Lord Savior, this seems difficult, what Jesus says by the angel: If he walks in the ways of the Lord and keeps his commandments, he himself should judge his house, and guard its courts, and the Lord will give to those who walk with him. This is easily resolved if we consider him who deigned to take the form of a servant (Philippians 2). And though he was rich, he became poor for us (2 Corinthians 8). Therefore, whatever is said about the members, is referred to the body: our progress is the victory of the Lord. And when we have reached the perfect man, to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4), he will judge the house of God, according to what the Apostle said: But Christ as a son over His own house, whose house we are (Hebrews 3:6). And to Timothy: If I delay, that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). And not only will he judge his own house, but he will also keep the courts of the Lord, about which it is written: Worship the Lord in his holy courtyard (Ps. 28:2). However, he will judge or settle the matter with his lord, and according to the merits of each, some will be given ten cities and others five (Luke 19), and some will be appointed as prophets in the Church, and others as apostles, others as teachers, others performing miracles (1 Cor. 12), some having concern for the eyes, others for the hands, others for the feet, according to what we read: God stands among the gods' assembly; among them he judges gods (Ps. 82:1). He also gave him ministers of the number of the angels, who, being constituted in the flesh, are like unto the angels, and of whom the Apostle spoke: Our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). For if the angels neither marry nor are given in marriage, and those who persevere in virginal continence are like unto the angels (Matt. 22), why should we not consider the apostles and the saints given by Jesus, who assist him in the Church, and never have wavering feet, but stand with the Lord standing?

3:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) Listen, great priest Jesus, and your friends who dwell before you, for they are men who foresee. Behold, I will bring my servant the East, for behold, the stone which I placed before Jesus, upon it are seven eyes. LXX: Listen, therefore, great priest Jesus, and your neighbors who sit before your face, for they are men who observe wonders, that is, spectators of miracles, for behold, I will bring my servant the East, for the stone which I placed before Jesus, upon it are seven eyes. Our people in this place are being hindered by the Jews, because according to the

context and the wording of the discourse, they should understand Jesus the priest as the son of Josedeck, rather than the Lord and Savior. For if the discourse is about the Lord, and it is said about Christ: 'Hear, O great Jesus the priest', who is it referring to: 'Behold, I will bring forth my servant the East, who is called by another name, and he has been given before Jesus, and upon this stone there are seven eyes?' On the contrary, our opponents strive to assert that Jesus is the great High Priest, and the East, and the Stone, according to different understandings, are called Christ. But how this can be said of himself is very difficult to explain. Therefore, those who want Jesus to be the son of Josedeck, the great High Priest, interpret his friends who dwell or sit before him, and who are men bearing signs, as his disciples and prophets. For prophets are placed as signs of future events. So what is it that Jesus and his friends are compelled to hear: I will bring my servant, the East, and the rest? Above, God had promised (or permitted) Jesus, the great high priest, that if he walked in his ways and kept his commandments, he would judge his house, guard his courts, and give him ministers of angelic dignity. Now he says the same to him and his friends, full felicity and perfect blessedness that will come when the East arrives, of whom it is written: Behold, a man named the East (Zach. VI, 12). And in Malachi: The sun of justice shall arise to you that fear my name, and health in his wings (Mal. IV, 2). And in Numbers: A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a man shall spring up of Israel (Num. XXIV, 17). In the Gospel also we read very clearly about Christ: In whom the Orient from on high hath visited us: To enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death: to direct our feet into the way of peace (Luke I, 78). He himself is called the Rising Sun and the Cornerstone, because he unites both peoples and joins two walls into one house: He is the stumbling stone for unbelievers, of whom it is said in the Psalms: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone: This is from the Lord. On this stone, there are seven eyes, of which Isaiah speaks: A shoot will come forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and reverence for the Lord, and his delight will be in the fear of the Lord. Those who want to understand the great High Priest, and his friends the Lord Savior, and his disciples, interpret them as men of miracles, and predictors, in such a way that they refer to the apostles (or disciples who have seen his mystical signs and have known the future from the present), while in the case of the man blind from birth (John 9), they interpret the restored eyes as referring to the Gentile people, and in the case of the woman with the flowing blood (Matthew 9), they explain that the Church is freed through the works of blood. Now, what follows is understood by lovers of history about Christ, that after Jesus, the son of Josedeck, they say that Christ will come. For this is what it means to be before Jesus, that is, in His presence, and to be called a stone for strength and power, by which He will shatter all kingdoms, which we also read about in Daniel, when the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands (Dan. II).

3:10

(Verse 10) Behold, I will plow her sculptured image, says the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the wickedness of that land in one day. On that day, says the Lord of hosts, each man will call his friend under the vine and under the fig tree. LXX: Behold, I will dig a pit, says the Almighty Lord, and I will investigate all the wickedness of that land in one day. On that day, says the Almighty Lord, each person will call their neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree. He had said above: behold the stone which I have given before Jesus, upon this one stone there are seven eyes. Now,

accordingly, he preserves the metaphor from the stone, and says: I will engrave its sculpture; or I will carve its engraving. For what is written in Hebrew MaphatePhethee (), Aquila has interpreted as διαγλ■ψω ■νοιγμα α■τ■ς, that is, I will carve its opening: Theodotion and Symmachus, I will carve its sculpture. And the sense is: I will make this stone be wounded by the key of the cross, and by the spear of the soldier, and in its passion I will take away the iniquity of the earth in one day, of which it is written: This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it (Ps. CXVII, 24). On that day of the Passion of Christ, the man who is perfect in Christ will be called, and with the apostles he will ascend to the summit of the Lord's benevolence, his neighbor, whether they believe from among the Jews or certainly the multitude of the Gentiles, under the vineyard which is called Sorec, and of which he says in the Gospel: I am the true vine (John 15:1), and its fruit gladdens the heart of man, and under the fig tree, the most sweet fruits of the Holy Spirit, so that they may rest in eternal peace and, with the suppression of the world's turbulence and the bloodshed of warriors, know themselves to be under the reign of him whose mystical name in Solomon is peace. In the same session, the prophet Micah also mentions the vineyard and the fig tree, saying: 'In that day, each person will call their neighbor and their brother under the fig tree and their vineyard, and there will be no one to frighten them away' (Mic. IV, 4). And that which is written in the Septuagint: 'Behold, I will dig a pit,' we can understand as 'pit' or 'hole' for the carving of a stone, for everything that is carved is also dug. However, if someone does not want to interpret this more contentiously in reference to a stone, but rather to have its own beginning and its own opinion, let us say that God Almighty, on the day of the passion of His Son or (as the Jews believe, at the end of the world, when He comes to judge) will dig and bring forth each person's works and will touch the whole earth on the day of judgment; for this is the one day, and on that day each of the saints will call their companions and friends, who are also holy, to rest and to rejoice in the virtue of their works.

4:1

(Chapter 4, Verse 1) And the angel who spoke to me came back and woke me up like a man who is awakened from his sleep. LXX: And the angel who spoke to me came back and woke me up as a man is usually awakened from his sleep. For wherever he had gone, in order to return he had to be with the prophet who was speaking to him, and without him he could not exist. But whenever human frailty is left to its weakness, we must believe that the help of God and his angels departs from us. Therefore, the prophet, astonished by the wonder of a great vision, was bewildered in his whole mind and could not see the clear light of truth. Thus, he is awakened from a past vision and brought to another vision as if waking from sleep, in order to see what he could not see with closed eyes. Let us say it differently. The proverb of Solomon testifies: If you sit, you will be without fear; but if you sleep, you will sleep sweetly and you will not fear the terror that comes upon you, nor the attacks of the wicked (Prov. III, 23 et seqq.) . Let us, therefore, see for what things, as if rising from sleep, the prophet may contemplate.

4:2-7

(V. 2 onwards.) And he said to me, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I see, and behold, a golden lampstand, and its lamp on top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven pipes to the lamps that are on top of it. And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the lampstand and one on its left.' Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?' And

the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' And he answered and said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forth the capstone with shoutings of "Grace, grace to it!" Then he said to me, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I see, and behold, a golden lampstand, and a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it.' And behold, two olive trees were standing by the lampstand, one on the right side and one on the left side. So I asked the angel who was speaking with me, 'What are these, my lord?' And the angel who was speaking with me replied to me, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' Then he answered and said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying: Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts. 'Who are you, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel? You will become a plain.' And I will bring out the stone of inheritance: the equality of grace shall be his grace. The angel who raised up Zacharias as if from a sleeping man, asks what he sees, so that when he responds, ignorant and questioning what he discerns, and says, 'What are these, my lord?' let us hear from him: This is the word of the Lord to Zorobabel: Not in an army, nor in strength; but in my spirit, says the Lord. Let us therefore discuss each point in order, first what it seems to the Hebrews, from whom we have learned in the Old Testament: then through these steps let us ascend to the heights of the Church. The solid golden candlestick represents the Law, that is, the νόμος. And the lamp, that is, the flame shining and sparkling at the top of the candlestick, represents Christ, who is the head of the Law and illuminates the entire world. The seven lamps on the candlestick represent the seven graces of the Holy Spirit, which we mentioned above, because it is said that in one stone there are seven eyes. There is no doubt that the Law was written with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. However, the seven infusions in which there is oil, which is put into lamps that shine on the candelabrum, are understood to mean that these seven graces descend from heaven to humans through the Law. But the two olive trees on the candelabrum, on the right and left side, between which the central lamp shines, are interpreted as the Law and the Prophets. And when the prophet narrated his vision, not knowing what he was seeing, he asked the angel who was speaking in himself, namely the sense illuminated by God. For this is our angel, who intelligently understands, and reveals to us the will of God, and says: What are these, my lord? But the angel does not explain the vision to the prophet, as he had been asked; but he asks the inquirer again: Do you not know what these are? And when he replied, I do not know: he himself also replied; This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying: Not by an army, nor by strength, but by my spirit, says the Lord. Therefore, the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, who spoke not in the army, nor in strength, but in my spirit, he is the interpretation of the vision: not in the army, nor in the multitude of warriors, but in the spirit of God, the people are to be led back and more fully restored, and the adversaries are to be devastated. And what follows: Who are you, great mountain, before Zerubbabel, to become level ground? This is understood as a saying to the devil, who stood at the right hand of Jesus, to oppose him, and he was lifted up against Zerubbabel and the people of Judah. But he was brought low and humiliated; and Israel is trampled underfoot, for God will bring forth the chief stone, Christ his Son, who has always been a help to the people of Israel. And by his grace, that is, the stone, he will equal the grace that he always exercised towards their ancestors. We find these things said by the Hebrews. Now let us discuss what has been written by the learned men in the Commentaries. The golden candlestick (which some call the candelabrum)

is understood to represent the Church, which in the Holy Scriptures seeks the meaning and intention rather than the words themselves. The fact that gold is understood in a figurative sense is shown in the later part of the 67th psalm, where it is said that the shoulders of the dove radiate with the brilliance or gleam of gold. They understand the lamp itself to represent Christ, who shines in the Church and who said of himself: 'No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bushel (Matt. V, 15),' that is, under the measure of the Law; but on a candlestick, that is, on the freedom of the gospels, so that it may shine for all who are in the house. The seven lamps and their pouring vessels (also called 'suffusoria') symbolize and represent the grace of the Holy Spirit, through which the Church receives the oil of God's mercy and all virtues. The two olive trees on the candlestick symbolize Moses and Elijah, who spoke with the Lord on the mountain and foreshadowed what would happen to him in Jerusalem (Matthew 17). For the entire law and the prophets preach about the passion of Christ. Others interpret the two olive trees on the right and on the left as the Law and the Gospel, so that the Gospel is on the right and the Law is on the left. Concerning the right and left, it is said in the Song of Songs: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me (Song of Songs 2:6). But many of our people interpret the mountain as the devil and the Antichrist, who dares to stand before Zerubbabel (from whom Christ is to be born) and raise himself up, and say in the Gospel: All these things have been given to me, and I will give them to you if you will prostrate yourself and worship me (Matthew 4:9). He who prostrates himself at the Lord's feet, and makes the proud humble and the lowly, says: 'Get behind me, Satan, for it is written: You shall worship the Lord your God, and him alone shall you serve' (Ibid., 10, and Deut. VI, 13). And they give an example in the Gospel of the lunatic whom the apostles could not heal, they ask why they could not heal him, and they hear: Truly I say to you, if you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting (Matt. XVII, 19, 20). Here the mountain is clearly accepted as the devil. However, others, not without considerable rashness, interpret what is clearly spoken about the devil as referring to Christ, who is often called a mountain in the Holy Scriptures. It is not necessary to give examples, as there is a great abundance of them. But they are led into error because it is written in the Septuagint: Who are you, O great mountain, before the face of Zerubbabel, to be made level? Indeed, this mountain which is before the face of Zorobabel, that is, one who is descended from the lineage of Zorobabel, desires to correct the world itself. And of him it is said: 'I will bring forth the stone of inheritance of which it is written: You are the one who will restore my inheritance to me' (Psalm 15:5). And in another place: 'He has chosen for us his beautiful inheritance, the pride of Jacob whom he loved' (Psalm 46:5). And again: 'The portion of the Lord is Jacob, the line of his inheritance is Israel' (Psalm 105). And in the second Psalm: The Lord said to me, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance' (Psalm 2:7-8). But the Lord will bring forth the chief cornerstone, of which we read: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God' (John 1:1). And: 'All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made' (John 1:3). And when he says, 'He will equalize grace to his grace,' he signifies this. We all have received from His fullness, and grace for grace, that is, grace of the Law, grace of the Gospel, so that believing in Israel may receive equal grace, and the people of the Gentiles as well. Hence, Gabriel speaks to Mary: 'You have found favor with the Lord' (Luke 1:30). And the apostle Paul writes: 'For by grace you have been saved' (Ephesians 2:8). And the evangelist John says: 'For

the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ' (John 1:17).

4:8-10

(Vers. 8 seqq.) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands shall finish it: and you shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me to you. For who hath despised the day of small things? and they shall rejoice, and shall see the tin in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands shall complete it. And you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you. For who has despised the day of small things? They will rejoice and see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel: these seven eyes of the Lord, which scan throughout the whole earth. Many things are said by the Hebrews and by our own people, some of whom follow them and others reject them. Let us bring forth what pleases us, preserving the truth of history, so that from this we may recognize the one who is prophesied through history. The hands of Zerubbabel, the leader of the Jews who returned from Babylon, laid the foundation of the temple, and his hands will also complete it, reaching up to the pinnacle of the temple. They will fulfill what they began and will construct everything that was started. We read in Ezra that the temple was started and completed by Zerubbabel (1 Esdras 4 and 6). And when, says the prophet Zechariah, you see the pinnacle placed on the temple that you are now building, then you will understand that I have been sent by the Lord and that everything I have spoken, I have spoken at his command. For who despises small days? Who here is received as rare, according to that: Who do you think is a faithful and wise steward (Luke XII, 42)? And, Lord, who shall dwell in your tabernacle, and who shall ascend to your holy mountain (Psalm XIV, 1)? Therefore, rare is the one who despises the small days of this age, and thinks royal power is worth nothing. When we see the powerful of the age shining with gold, purple, and gleaming with gems, surrounded by an army, let us say within ourselves: who, do you think, despises small days? And so Jacob, understanding the brevity of human life, said: 'They are short and the worst days of my life' (Gen. XLVII, 9). Therefore, those who despise the short days (which refers to royal power, as a reminder to Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people building the temple of God, not to fear their adversaries but to listen to the Lord encouraging them) will rejoice and see the help of the Savior, who is promised from the lineage of Zerubbabel, and is called the cornerstone and the stone of tin: For which it is written in Hebrew as Abdil (Al. Abdel), because it is the wall and strength and firmness of the believers. For just as tin protects other metals from fire, and although copper and iron are extremely hard by nature, if they do not have tin, they become consumed and burnt; so too, the strength of every angel and human, if they do not have the help of the Savior, is revealed as weak and fragile. But this stone, that is, the mass, which is called Abdil among the Hebrews, that is, tinstone, is etymologically derived from the word **■ποχωρ■ζων**, that is separating and segregating, just as tin separates and dissociates mixed and adulterated metals through fire. Thus the true Lord, the assayer and refiner, separates good works as gold and silver from vices as lead, so that pure gold and silver may remain. In other words, **■ποχωρ■ζων** is written as 'separating' in the Gospel: Whose winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor, and gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire (Luke 3:17), he who speaks through Jeremiah: What have straw to do with grain? says the Lord (Jeremiah 23:28). Many of us interpret Zerubbabel, who laid the foundation of the temple and

completed it, as Christ. And if we accept this, we will be forced to explain what the stone of tin in the hand of Zerubbabel means. For indeed in the hand of Christ, is Christ to be approved? For although certain people have received a stone-like body of the Lord, which was not defiled by any stains of sins, nor called lead, but the purest tin. However, we have previously explained that the seven eyes that roam throughout the whole earth and judge all things are the seven spirits: and that nothing escapes God's knowledge, who is conscious of past, present, and future events, and renders to each person according to their deeds, especially when he comes in the person of the one who separates the good from the evil, and the inflator.

4:11-14

(Verse 11 and following) And I answered and said to him, 'What are these two olive trees on the right and the left side of the lampstand?' And I answered the second time and said to him, 'What are these two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, from which the golden oil pours out?' And he said to me, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' And he said, 'These are the two anointed ones who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.' LXX: And I answered and said to him, 'What are these two olive trees on the right side of the lampstand and on its left side?' And I answered a second time and said to him, 'What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which pour out the golden fluid from themselves?' And he said to me, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my Lord.' Then he said, 'These are the two sons of fatness who stand before the Lord of the entire earth.' Asking the prophet what the two olive trees meant, one of which stood at the right side of the lampstand and the other at the left, the Lord or the angel of the Lord refused to answer. When the prophet understood this, he inquires a second time, saying: What are these two branches of the olive trees or two golden pipes, which in Hebrew are called Sinthoroth (in Greek, $\mu\upsilon\chi\omega\tau\epsilon\rho\epsilon\varsigma$), and which are themselves the two $\mu\upsilon\chi\omega\tau\epsilon\rho\epsilon\varsigma$ upon which the two branches or two olive trees are placed, made of the purest gold. And when the prophet asked about the two branches, and was again questioned by the angel whether he knew what the two branches signified, and he said, 'No, Lord,' the angel of the Lord answered: 'These are two sons of oil, as Symmachus wished, or of splendor, as Aquila interpreted, that is, of brightness, or of richness, as the Septuagint translated, or of clarity, as Theodotion rendered: they stand before the Ruler of all the earth.' We read above about the two olive trees that were on the right and left of the lampstand. And therefore, the one who now asks about them, does not deserve to hear, because he does not remember the previous things, or because what was said there is obscure, he desires to hear more clearly here, or surely the silence of the angels confutes his stubbornness, because he claims to know greater things, although the Hebrews confirm that when he asked about the olive trees, he heard nothing, because he did not ask properly, nor did he inquire about everything he should have known. Finally, afterwards he inquires more fully, adding the olive branches or sprigs, about which he had remained silent above; for there he said: What are these two olive trees? here he asks; What are these two olive sprigs? metaphorically because, just as straight tree trunks are like ear heads, so these are covered by a certain wall of branches and leaves and rise up on high. Some of our people interpret the two olive trees as the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the middle lamp as God the Father. But I do not know how, without blasphemy, they accept one on the right, the other on the left. The branches or the clusters of olives also point to the incarnation of the Savior and the likeness of the dove of the Holy Spirit, because we cannot see the whole olives, but only a certain

part and, so to speak, the little branches of the incarnation of Christ and the manifestation of the Holy Spirit shown to us. Others understand the two Testaments, the Gospel on the right, the Law on the left, because in the former there is a spiritual meaning, in the latter a physical one; and because we cannot explain the whole Gospel or the whole Law, and now we know in part and prophesy in part (1 Cor. 13:9), and we are not yet able to understand what is perfect. There are those who interpret the two branches of olives or the two ears of grain as representing the priesthood and the Law, which bring joy to the whole earth. Others believe that Enoch and Elijah, one of whom pleased God in uncircumcision and the other in circumcision, were taken up to heaven with their bodies (Genesis 5 and 1 Samuel 2). As for splendor, oil, fatness, and brightness, in Hebrew we read 'Isaar' (according to what is written in the Psalms about the joy and happiness of the saints: 'They shall be satisfied with the fatness of your house' - Psalm 36:8). The word 'πι■της' (or 'πι■τητος') in Greek signifies more fatness than abundance. We have spoken these things as best we could and as far as the powers of our talent allowed, briefly touching upon the various opinions of the Hebrews and our own. If anyone should speak better or rather more truly, we willingly defer to them.

5:1-4

(Chapter 5, verses 1 onwards) Then I turned and lifted up my eyes, and behold, a flying scroll! And he said to me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits." Then he said to me, "This is the curse that is going out over the face of the whole land. For everyone who steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cleaned out according to what is on the other side. I will raise up, says the Lord of hosts, and it will come to the house of the thief and to the house of the one who swears falsely in my name, and it will remain in the midst of his house and consume it and its wood and its stones. LXX: And I turned and lifted up my eyes and saw a flying sickle. And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see a flying sickle, twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide. And he said to me: This is the curse that goes out over the face of all the land: because every thief will be punished from this until death, and every perjurer will be crucified from this until death. And I will bring it, says the Lord Almighty, and it will go into the house of the thief, and the house of the one who swears falsely in my name, and it will rest in the midst of his house, and it will consume him, and his wood, and his stones. Turning, the prophet said, to another vision, and lifting my eyes from joyful and fortunate things to sadder things, I see a flying scroll that is called Megella in Hebrew, and it is translated as διφθ■ρα by Aquila and Theodotion, and as κεφαλ■ς by Symmachus, meaning, chapter, according to what we read in the psalm: In the chapter of the book it is written about me (Ps. XIX, 8); or according to the Seventy, δρ■πανον πετ■μενον, meaning, a flying sickle. For all the things that he had seen above, the construction of the temple, the coming of the Lord Savior, the liberation of the people from Babylon, had been proclaimed. Therefore, so that his heart would not be lifted up with the Apostle (to whom the angel of Satan had been given to buffet him), he also sees the things that are sad, so that whatever had increased in arrogance from the revelation of good things, may decrease from the threat of sad things. Moreover, a flying scroll is shown, in which all sins are written down, so that each person may receive according to their works, whether good or evil, as Daniel says: Thrones were set up, and books were opened. But if we take the sickle, as the LXX translated it, let us take the example from the Apocalypse of John, in which it is written: And the angel answered, and said to him who sat on the horse: Send

forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of thy vineyard, for the grapes thereof are ripe (Apoc. XIV, 18). For sickle, in Deuteronomy we read arrows and sword: I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh (Deut. XXXII, 42). And because God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;). The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished And in Jeremiah we read: How long will you cut with the sword, or the sword of the Lord? How long will you not rest? Return to your sheath (Jer. XLVII, 6). This sword is not only called a sickle, which cuts hay, straw, and thorns; but it is also called an axe of trees, which will cut down those who have not made themselves worthy of the fruits of penance. And about whom John the Baptist proclaimed: Behold, the axe is laid to the roots of the trees: every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire (Matt. III, 10). This volume, in which the sins of everyone are described, or rather, the sickle that cuts down the sins of all, is sent into the vineyard of Sodom, of which it is written: Our enemies are foolish; for their vineyard is the vineyard of Sodom, and their offspring is from Gomorrah: Their grapes are grapes of gall, and their clusters are bitter. The fury of dragons is their wine, and the incurable madness of asps. (Deuteronomy XXXII, 31 ff.) This sickle measures twenty cubits in length and ten in width, in a number joined together that is sad for the afflicted. For the Lord corrects in order to improve. In the twentieth, which is made up of two decades, harsh and difficult things are announced: in the tenth, that is, one decade, better and prosperous things are revealed: for Israel is taught through all kinds of scourges and punishments. At the same time, let us warn those who think small crimes like theft and perjury, that the curse which is written in the book and (by Al. a) with a sickle, be brought upon the house of the thief and perjurer, and let it remain in it, and consume all its wood and stones. But if there is such a threat of punishment for what is considered lesser offenses (such as theft and perjury), what shall we say about fornication, adultery, homicide, sacrilege, and all other crimes numbered among the works of the flesh by the Apostle (Galatians 5)? It has been said that the length of twenty cubits and the width of ten cubits correspond to the age of our Lord and Savior, that is, the number thirty. This is not for the Father to judge anyone, but all judgment has been given to the Son, and he will judge the world (John 5).

5:5-8

(Verse 5 seq.) And an angel came out who spoke to me, and said to me: Lift up your eyes and see what is coming. And I said: What is it? And he said: This is a departing vessel; and he said: This is their eye in all the land. And behold, a weight of lead was being carried, and behold, a woman sitting in the middle of the vessel. And he said: This is wickedness, and he threw her into the middle of the vessel, and he put a lead mass in her mouth. LXX: And the angel who spoke with me came out and said to me: Lift up your eyes and see what is coming out. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the measure that is coming out. And he said, This is their iniquity in all the land. And behold, a talent of lead was lifted up: and behold, a woman was sitting inside the measure,

and he said, This is wickedness, and he threw her into the midst of the measure, and he threw a lead stone into her mouth. The amphora, or measure, was being carried out and was seen in the air. And so that we would not doubt by what proper term it is called, the angel himself, who showed the amphora, or measure, gives it a name and says, according to the Septuagint, 'This is their wickedness in all the earth'; according to the Hebrews, 'This is the eye, that is, the manifestation of all sins.' And behold, a woman was sitting in the middle of the amphora, or measure, which is called 'Epha' by the Hebrews, and it is often translated by the Seventy as 'οφθαλμος'; and this very woman was called wickedness. When she saw these things, behold, a talent of lead, that is, a mass the size of a stone, was being carried either by its own force or by the command of the Lord, or it was being carried by another whose name remains unspoken. But this angel who was speaking through the prophet, and coming out of him, showed all these things, seized the woman who was called impiety, and threw her headlong into the middle of the amphora, which was previously being carried freely, and sitting on top of the amphora, he appeared to everyone. Acne forte rursum elevaret caput, et sua iniquitate et impietate gauderet, talentum plumbi in modum gravissimi lapidis mittit in os amphorae: ut impietatem in medio opprimat atque concludat, ne quoquo modo possit erumpere. Haec quasi umbras quasdam et lineas futurae imaginis duximus, ut quod reliquum est suis coloribus impleamus. Angelus qui loquebatur in propheta, egressus de eo, et quasi cominus loquens, praecipit illi ut levet oculos suos, et videat peccata populi Israel in mensuram coacervata perfectam, et impleta delicta cunctorum: et hanc esse oculum eorum, quod Hebraice dicitur Enam (), et scribitur per Ain, Jod, Nun, Mem: Sive iniquitatem eorum; quae si per Vau litteram scripta esset, recte legeretur Onam (), ut LXX putaverunt: et hic error in editione Vulgata frequenter inolevit, ut quia Vau et Jod litterae eadem forma, sed mensura diversae sunt, altera legatur pro altera. This amphora or measure, their eye is in the whole earth, that is, a display of sins, so that the vices of those scattered and hidden might be gathered together and exposed to the eyes of all, to show what kind of people Israel was and how it had been in its land. And behold, a talent of lead was carried. For the talent of lead, we read in the following passage a lead stone. Chachar is called a talent (); Aben a stone. He is, therefore, the lead stone, which we, expressing it more clearly, have interpreted as the mass or sphere of lead, from which the heaviest weight of sins is signified. And above this measure and vessel of all sins, impiety sat in the middle, which we can also call by another name, idolatry, and denial of God. Hence, the Savior said to the Jews: 'Fill up the measure of your fathers' (Matthew 23:32). This wickedness, which sat upon the sins of Israel and boasted in its own wickedness, is later cast into the midst of Babylon and pressed down by the bad of captivity. Or according to Theodotion, it throws itself and hides in the midst of a jar, and places upon itself the heaviest weight of lead, so that it may have its mouth sealed shut and cannot boast any longer. Or surely it is oppressed by the angel of God, so that what previously rejoiced in wickedness may be silenced in eternal silence. But the following reading teaches to what place and by whom it is brought to a close.

5:9-11

(Verse 9 and following) And I lifted up my eyes, and I saw, and behold, two women coming forth, and a spirit was on their wings, and they had wings like the wings of a kite, and they lifted up an amphora between the earth and the sky. And I said to the angel who spoke to me: Where are these taking the amphora? And he said to me: To build a house for it in the land of Shinar, and it will be established and placed there upon its base. LXX: And I lifted up my eyes, and I saw, and

behold, two women coming forth, and a spirit was on their wings, and they themselves had wings like the wings of a hoopoe. And they raised the measure between the earth and the sky. And I said to the angel who spoke in me: Where do they bring this measure? And he said to me: To build a house for him in the land of Babylon, and prepare it, and place it there on its foundation. Two women coming out, the Jews imagine the kingdom of the Medes and Macedonians, both of whom have afflicted the people of Babylon, and there their wickedness has established its seat. However, they craft this in such a way that what is said of themselves may not be understood as being about themselves. For indeed, the two women who depart, there is no doubt that they are to be received by the twelve tribes from the land of Judea: of whom one was taken captive by the Assyrians, the other by the Chaldeans. And in their wings was the spirit, that is, the power of the devil, of whom it is written in Ecclesiastes: If the spirit of the one who has power ascends over you, do not abandon your place (Eccl. X, 4). And in the Gospel, we read about an unclean spirit who, after being cast out from his home, wanders through desolate and dry places, and then comes back to his former home with seven other even more wicked spirits (Luke XI). Therefore, these women, carried away by this spirit as if by a gust of wind, were being borne swiftly, and they had wings; according to the Hebrew word 'Asida' (which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion translated as 'herodion'), only the LXX translated it as 'hoopoe.' The Hebrews consider 'Asida' to be the kite, a very rapacious bird that always attacks domestic birds; as for 'herodion', those who have written about the nature of birds assume three types: one white, another starry; the third black, which is both the most savage and bloodthirsty, and is fierce and unwilling to mate, to the point that blood bursts from their eyes. But the hoopoe, which we have taken from the similarity of the Greek name (for they themselves call it 'popam' from the fact that it examines human excrement), is said to be the most filthy bird, always dwelling in tombs, always in human dung: finally it is said to build its nest out of it, and to feed its young with decaying worms from the filth. Whatever you want to understand about this bird, it is fitting for those women of Judaea and Israel who, because of their sins of prostitution, were handed over to the power of demons and led into captivity by them. And they brought a jar or measure, in which impiety was enclosed, with a mass of lead placed on top so that it could not escape, and the heaviest weight of all sins between earth and heaven. The prophet, understanding this, did not ask (for it was clear to his prophetic spirit) who these women were, nor what they represented, about which he had been previously instructed; but rather to what do they portend. Finally, it follows: I said to the angel who was speaking with me: To what place are these women carrying the jar? He replied: 'To build a house for him in the land of Shinar.' For this reason, the Seventy translated it as 'in the land of Babylon.' Shinar is indeed the plain of the Chaldeans, where those who had moved their feet from the East and were unable to stand in the service of God, built a tower of pride (Gen. 11). Therefore, the city itself is called Babylon, which means confusion, because there the languages of all were confused and mixed. Therefore impiety is attributed to these women in Babylon, so that there his house may be built, and established, and placed upon its foundation, and find eternal rest. Truly, in Babylon there is a seat of impiety, according to both history and mystical understanding. If you are willing to consider two women, the peoples of heretics and Jews (both of whom turn away from the face of God, and are carried by an uncertain spirit, and have wings like eagles, herons, and hoopoes, while always seeking riches like partridges, not with judgement, and hastening to plunder the Church, and delighting in disputes and quarrels, and leading to destruction those whom they deceive, and rolling in the mire of perpetual lust and filthiness), these women relieve the weight of

the most serious impiety, and build their house in confusion, and serve the Babylonian king, so that the peoples of heretics and Jews may dwell there, where idolatry resides, serving wood and stone.

(Chap. VI.)

(Chapter VI) And I turned, and lifted up my eyes, and saw: And behold, four chariots coming out from the midst of two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses, in the second chariot were black horses, and in the third chariot were white horses, and in the fourth chariot were dappled and strong horses. And I answered and said to the angel who talked with me: What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said to me: These are the four winds of heaven, which go forth to stand before the Lord of all the earth. In which there were black horses, they went forth into the land of the North, and white ones went forth after them, and various ones went forth to the land of the South. But those who were the strongest, went out, and sought to go and roam through all the land. And he said: Go and walk through the land, and they walked through the land. And he called me, and spoke to me, saying: Behold, those who go forth into the land of the North, have made my spirit rest in the land of the North. LXX: And I turned and lifted up my eyes and saw: And behold, four chariots coming out from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. In the first chariot were red horses, and in the second chariot were black horses, and in the third chariot were white horses, and in the fourth chariot were dappled horses. And I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?' And the angel answered and said to me, 'These are the four winds of heaven, who go out to stand before the Lord of all the earth.' In which there were black horses coming forth upon the land of the north, and white horses came forth after them, and diverse coming forth upon the land of the south. And the sturnini went forth, and they were considering to go about the land. And he said: Go and go about the land. And they went about the land. And he cried, and spoke to me, saying: Behold they that go forth upon the land of the north, have quieted my spirit in the land of the north. And he spoke to me, and said: Have strength, O son of man, and thou shalt see, and thou shalt hear all that I shall speak to thee: for thou art brought hither for this purpose: therefore do thou declare to the house of Israel all that thou seest. For the ones whom he had previously called above myrtle-covered or shady and wooded mountains, he now calls bronze. In the first chariot, the horses were red, bloody, and bloodthirsty, terrifying with the cruelty of Babylon. In the second chariot, black horses, the kingdom of the Medes and Persians: while sitting and getting off the chariot, he announced the death of all the Jews with a sad message, according to the edict of King Ahasuerus. In the third chariot, white horses, the Macedonians, under whose king Antiochus we read about the victory of the Maccabees. In the fourth chariot, strong and various horses. For we know that the kings of the Romans, some were merciful towards the Jewish nation, such as Gaius Caesar, Augustus, and Claudius; others were persecutors and terrible, such as Gaius Caligula, Nero, Vespasian, and Hadrian. Instead of the brave ones, whom the Eagle (Aquila) transferred as strong (kraterous) and the Seventy (Septuaginta) as fishes (psarous) in Hebrew it is written as Amasim (). And some copies have mistakenly πρῶτοιοι, confusing the differences of colors and kingdoms, as πρῶτοιοι, that is, red, are called not Amasim, but Adamim (). Therefore, with the prophet seeking to understand what they wanted to signify, the angel who spoke in him responds and narrates that there are four winds of the sky, that is, the four corners of the world, which the Greeks call

'climates', which attend and obey the will of the Lord. For these four kingdoms, which we mentioned, have done nothing without the will of the Lord. In which there were black horses, he says, they went out into the land of the North. How beautifully the first chariot, in which there were red horses, is passed over, and what the second and third did and the fourth is described. For at that time, when the prophet was speaking, the Babylonian kingdom had already passed, and the Persian power possessed all of Asia: under whose king Darius, in his second year, in the eleventh month (or December), on the twenty-fourth day of the month, as it is called Sabat (the Sabbath), all the things that we have mentioned above took place. In which there were black horses, going out into the land of the north: so that the power of the Medes might destroy the kingdom of the Chaldeans. And it should be noted that κλ■ματα, that is, regions of the world and the earth, are called by the holy scriptures the location of Jerusalem and the temple. Also, there were white people who came after them, following the footsteps of the Medes and Persians, the kings of Macedon, to subjugate the Chaldeans and Babylon under their rule. The fourth group, that is, the sturninus and various, who are called by another name, the Amasim, that is, the strong and powerful, went to the southern region and swiftly traversed the entire land. And the angel who was speaking to the prophet cried out to the Roman Empire: Go, walk through the earth and circle the lands, and with your feet overthrow all the kingdoms. And turning to the prophet, he testifies with a clear voice: Behold, those who come to the land of the North have made my spirit rest in the land to which they have gone. It has been handed down to me by the Hebrews in a very difficult place, that Alexander and all the Macedonians, that is, the white horses who went out after the Medes and Persians, who themselves also traveled to the land of the North, have caused the prophetic spirit to rest in the land of the North, because they have fulfilled the will of the God against the Medes, and in a short time the dominion of the Medes and Persians has been wiped out by the Macedonians. For a great consolation it is to those who are oppressed, if they know that their enemies will quickly perish. As we were able, indeed as we have learned, we pass on to the students of our language following the truth of the history: not seeking the chariots of Pharaoh, and the Babylonian chariots, like the explanation of Egypt with tenacious memory; for it is not what is written, but how it is written that should be considered. According to the allegory, whatever we have said concerning the four horns and the four craftsmen, let us also understand in the present place. I read in a certain volume, four chariots, in which there are red, black, white, and various horses, and strong ones, representing the four Gospels and the Apostles, each possessing various graces by the diversity of colors: some are red in martyrdom, others are dark and black, understanding the mysteries of Christ, of whom it is said in the Psalms: Darkness is under His feet (Psalm 18:9). And: He made darkness His hiding place (ibid., 18:11). Others are white. By the virginal grace; others various and strong, having the grace of diverse healings and virtues. These four chariots or cars were sent into the four winds of the sky, that is, to the cardinal points of the world, and the whole circle of the earth, to fulfill the will of the Lord: to which it is afterwards inferred by an Angel: Go, and walk through the earth, and sow the Gospel in all the ends of the earth. Also, that which follows: Behold they that go towards the land of the north have caused My spirit to rest in the land of the north, He explained thus, as if He said that the spirit of the Lord, or the angels, had rested in the land of the north, when in the land of the north, the most harsh kingdoms of the devil were overthrown by the apostolic preaching, and these were the kingdoms which the devil, showing to the Lord the Savior on a high mountain, boasted that they were given to him (Matthew 4).

Book Two Book Two From the obscure to the more obscure, we pass, and with Moses we enter into the cloud and darkness. Abyss calls to abyss, in the voice of the cataracts of God; and the spirit goes in circles, and returns to its own circles. We suffer the errors of a labyrinth, and blindly guide the footsteps of Christ with a thread. The helmeted guardian of the book presses on us with this difficulty.

He who has begun has half done. . . . how much more should we who have already completed a third part of the journey strive in the same way in our remaining effort, lest we lose what is past and increase the reader's desire for an unfinished work! Therefore, my venerable Pope Exuperius, be present in spirit in these prayers, although absent in body, and obtain from the Lord that the veil of Zacharias, which was placed before (or hung over) the eyes of Moses (Exod. XXXI; II Cor. III), may be removed from my face, because the common people could not bear the brightness of his countenance: so that I too, with David, may be able to say: The Lord will give the word to those who preach the Gospel with great power (Ps. LXVII, 12). This is the beginning of the Explanation of the Second Book of Zechariah, which we are dictating with such speed that there is almost no time for correction: while Brother Sisinnius hastens to go to Egypt to also bring the fragrance of the good odor, which was sent by you to the brothers there; and so that the thirsty fields may be watered not by the river of Ethiopia, but by the abundant waters of Gaul.

6:9-15

(Verse 9 and following) And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Take from the exiles, from Holdai, from Tobiah, and from Idah, and come in that day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Sophaiah, who came from Babylon. And take silver and gold, and make crowns, and put them on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and say to him: Thus says the Lord of hosts, saying: Behold a man whose name is the Branch, and he shall grow up from his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. And he himself will build a temple for the Lord, and he himself will bear the glory, and he will sit and rule on his throne, and he will be a priest on his throne, and there will be counsel of peace between them both. And the crowns will be for Helem, Tobiah, and Idajah, and for Hen son of Zephaniah, a memorial in the temple of the Lord. And those who are far off will come and build in the temple of the Lord, and you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. And it will come to pass, if you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to me saying: Take what is from the captivity, from the princes and from their benefactors, and from those who know them: and you shall enter on that day into the house of Josiah the son of Sophonias that came from Babylon, and you shall take silver and gold, and shall make crowns, and shall set them on the head of Jesus the son of Josedec the high priest, and you shall say to him: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold a man, the Orient is his name, and under him shall he spring up, and shall build a temple to the Lord, and he shall take upon himself the glory, and shall sit, and shall rule upon his throne. And there shall be a priest at his right hand, and there shall be counsel of peace between the two: but the crown of expectation and of benefit to him, and to them that know her, and to the beloved son of Zephaniah, and to the psalm in the house of the Lord, to them that are far off, they shall come and build in the house of the Lord. And you shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me to you. And it shall come to pass, if hearing you will hear the voice of the Lord your God. Once I set forth the hidden doctrine of Hebrew learning, and the concealed discipline of the masters of the synagogue, namely, that which is agreeable to the holy Scriptures. To reveal in Latin. Therefore, it is

necessary for me to draw lines of history in the darkest places and thus bring forth what I have learned from ecclesiastical men, leaving it to the reader's discretion as to what they should follow more. And first, the order of the reading must be restored, so that what is said becomes clear according to the letter. Take, it says, from Holdai, and from Tobia, and from Idaja, who came from the Babylonian captivity, and you shall take from them gifts that are offered, silver and gold, and you shall enter the house of Josiah, son of Zephaniah; and there you shall make crowns, distinguished by the variety of gold and silver, not one crown, but either two or more: for Ataroth, namely, **στμματα**, signifies not one, but either dual or plural number. When you make the crowns, you shall set one of them on the head of Jesus, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the Lord."' And when he has built that, he himself will also receive glory, that is, another crown, which in Hebrew is called 'Hod', and in another language **πιδοξτης**, in another **επρπεια**, in another **ρετ**, in another **δξα**, which all mean illustrious, beauty, virtue, or glory. They think it refers to Zerubbabel, who, rising suddenly from a low and captive state, built the temple of the Lord, and sat on his throne, ruling with princely power. And the high priest, too, said he, Jesus the son of Josedech will sit on the priestly throne, and with united minds and councils, they will govern the people of God. And there will be peace between those two, that is, between the one who is of the royal tribe and the one who is descended from the Levite line, so that they may jointly rule the priesthood and the kingdom of God's people. And you shall consecrate the very crowns that you have made of gold and silver, after they have been placed on the head of Joshua, the son of Josedech, and on the head of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, with their names from whom they have been offered, in the temple, that is, Helem, and Tobiah, and Iddo, and Hen. The second and third names are the same as above. The first has been changed, and instead of Holdai he now uses Helem. The fourth, which was not mentioned above, is Hen, of whom we will speak in the following. And after having stored the crowns in the temple of the Lord, and consecrated them for everlasting memory, the nations from all the ends of the earth, scattered afar, will come and each one will build in my temple according to their own abilities. And then, at the end of events and with the prosperity of all, you will know that the Lord has sent me, and that I have foretold everything by His command. But all these things will be if you obey the commandments of the Lord and fulfill his commands. Holdai is interpreted as the prayer of the Lord, which in Greek is more significantly called the Litany of the Lord. Tobiah is a good man, known by the Lord. Instead of Holdai, Helem is now placed in the first place, which is interpreted as a dream; and in the fourth place, Hen is added, which means grace. The crowns of these four men will be with the son of Zephaniah, whom we read above Josiah, who is the guardian and custodian of the temple of the Lord, and there they will rest with eternal station. The Hebrews Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, who came from captivity, commemorate that they brought gold and silver as gifts to the temple, as well as the crowns of the high priest and the prince. They also mention that above, Hen, that is, favor, Daniel came with a gift. And for this reason, Helem is placed in place of Holdai, so that from the interpretation of the name which is called a dream, it may be shown that Daniel was placed in captivity, and that the three boys knew the mysteries of the royal dream. For when three boys were taken, Daniel prayed to the Lord and obtained the interpretation of the dream (Daniel II). According to history, this is an attempt to explain Circumcision. However, it is necessary for us to say what our ancestors said according to the Septuagint translators. Take from the captivity and

from the princes, and from her useful things, and from those who know her, gold and silver, and upon entering the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, who himself came from Babylon, make golden and silver crowns, which you will place upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest. The captivity of the Jews, that is, confessing the Lord of the people, is due to vices and sins: those who begin to do penance, and desire the former Jerusalem, that is, the Church of Christ, forsake and abandon it in Babylon, and are offered by the princes of the captives, and by their helpers, that is, those of the captivity (who themselves were handed over to the angel of Satan for their own utility, unto the perdition of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved (I Cor. V), and by those who know it, namely, the captivity, to be turned into a good part after punishment. But gold and silver are offered by those who both confess the Lord with understanding and speech, and from them, that is, from gold and silver, crowns are made in the house of Josiah, who is interpreted as saved, and he is the son of the visitation of the Lord, that is, the oversight of the Lord. For he is visited by the Lord who had previously been seriously ill. And rightly Josiah is called saved, because he himself also returned from Babylon. And crowns are placed upon Jesus, the son of Josedech the high priest, because as we progress and return to better things, the Lord is crowned by each of our virtues. Indeed, we are crowned with the virtue of repentance, and the Savior receives a crown in each of us, according to what Paul also says: Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the righteous judge, the Lord, shall give to me: and not to me only, but also to all who love the appearing of our Lord Savior Jesus Christ (I Tim. IV, 8). From where he received the name 'crown of justice' and 'Father of the Lord Savior'. For Josedec means Lord of justice, because he renders to each one according to his works. James also speaks of this crown in his Epistle: Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for when he is tried, he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him (James 2). And the prophet is commanded that after he has placed the crown, or crowns, upon the head of Jesus, the son of Josedec the high priest, he should speak to him, and say: Thus says the Lord: Behold, a man, his name is the Rising Sun: and beneath him will arise, and so on. We do not divide Jesus, nor can we make two persons into one person; but he himself who is called Jesus, because he saved the world, and is called the Orient, because in his days righteousness arose. And it is sung in the Psalm: Truth has arisen from the earth (Ps. LXXXIV, 12), because he, who was born from the virgin womb in the completion of the ages, has said: I am the truth (John XIV, 6), and the final hour has come, as it is written in the Epistle of John (I John II, 18): Little children, it is now the final hour, in which he has called the people standing and doing nothing from the Gentiles, and has sent them to the vineyard (Matt. XX). Moreover, if he becomes different according to the diversity of names, he will be another shepherd, another ram, another lamb, another gate, another stumbling block, and another rock of offense. Therefore, the one who is crowned with our virtues will arise and be called the East. To whom the Father spoke: You are my Son, today I have begotten you (Ps. 2:7): And beneath him a multitude of believers will arise, and he will build the house of the Lord, the Church, and he himself will receive power and beauty and progress, and the glory of each one, and he will sit and reign on his throne, on the throne of David, of whom it is also written in the Gospel: And there shall be a priest at his right hand (Luke 1), or according to the Hebrew, above his throne; for he is both king and high priest: and he will sit on both the royal and the priestly throne, and there will be peaceful counsel between the two, so that neither the royal summit may detract from the dignity of the priesthood, nor the dignity of the priesthood from the royal summit, but that both may agree in the glory of the Lord Jesus, the one and only. I read in a

certain book (Zech. 6:13): And peaceful counsel shall be between two, to be referred to the Father and to the Son: because it is not His own, but the Father's will that He came to do, and the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father (ibid., 14). But the crown, that is, the sign of victory, is promised also to those who await Him and understand the benefit of their former captivity and know all the mysteries of God, so that they may be in the grace of the son of Zephaniah, that is, in the visitation of the Lord. And those who were in Babylon said (Ps. CXXXVI, 1, 2): By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows in its midst we hung up our lyres, after they had returned to Jerusalem, let them receive a psalm and a timbrel, and let them sing in the church of the Lord. And those who were far from Judaea because of great sins, let them come with true confession, and let them rebuild the house of the Lord according to their individual progress, and then the entire congregation will know with one mind that the Almighty Lord has sent a prophet to them. But all the promises will be fulfilled if they are willing to listen to the Lord and, after repentance, remain in good works.

7:1-7

(Chapter 7, verses 1 onwards) In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Casleu. And they sent to the house of God Sarasar and Rogommelech, along with the men who were with him, to seek the face of the Lord and to speak to the priests of the house of the Lord of hosts and the prophets, saying: Should I weep in the fifth month and separate myself as I have done for many years? And the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying: Speak to all the people of the land and to the priests, saying: When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for these seventy years, did you really fast for me? And when you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and drink for yourselves? Are not these the words that the Lord spoke by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous, and her cities were around her, and the Negeb and the Shephelah were inhabited? LXX: And it came to pass in the fourth year under King Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Casleu. And he sent to Bethel Sarezzer and Regemmelech, and their men, to entreat the Lord, saying to the priests of the house of the Lord of hosts, and to the prophets, saying: Should I weep in the fifth month and fast as I have done for many years? And the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying: Speak to all the people of the land and to the priests, saying: When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month for seventy years, did you truly fast for me? And if you eat or drink, do you not eat and drink? Are these not my words, which the Lord spoke through the prophets, who were before when Jerusalem was inhabited, and it was prosperous, and its cities around it, and the mountains and fields were inhabited? In the fourth year of King Darius, in the ninth month, which is called Casleu, (), and on the fourth day of the same month, they sent to the house of God, that is, to the temple which had already been restored by Zerubbabel and Joshua, Sarsechim and Regemmelech and the other companions who were with them, whom the Hebrews considered to be the leaders of King Darius, fearing God: so that because they had already heard that the temple was constructed, they would inquire of the priests of the house of the Lord and the prophets, whether they should weep and fast according to the ancient custom, or change mourning into rejoicing. And the understanding of those inquiring is this: In the fifth month, called July among the Romans, Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. For this reason, because of the desolation of the temple, we have fasted and mourned up until now, and have comforted our

sorrow with weeping and fasting. Now because it is said that the temple has been rebuilt, and we see no reason for our sadness to continue, we ask for your response: should we continue to do this, or should we exchange our mourning for joy? And it must also be considered that weeping and fasting are called sanctification. Therefore, in Joel, it is commanded to the priests to sanctify fasting and preach healing (Joel 5). For fasting and abstinence heal the wounds of the sinner, and sanctify those who have been healed. After the Persian leaders had questioned those whom they had sent, and the legation had been completed by consulting the priests and prophets, the word of the Lord came to the prophet, commanding him to speak to the people and the priests about what they should respond to the envoys. When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month of the captivity in Jerusalem, and in the seventh month, when Gedaliah was killed by Ishmael, during the seventy years of desolation of the temple and the destruction of Jerusalem, did it benefit you that you fasted? And conversely, when you eat and drink, does it not satisfy your hunger and quench your thirst? For God is not pleased by these things, but by good works, and if we follow His commandments, for food does not commend us to God. And if we do not eat, we will be weak; and if we eat, we will be satisfied. Are these not my words, spoken to you while Jerusalem and the cities of Judah were still standing, which I spoke to you through my prophets, when Jerusalem and the cities of Judah were prosperous, and the mountainous and plain regions were abundant in crops, and enjoyed a secure peace? But these were the words of the Lord, as the following Scripture testifies, desiring to judge with truth and show mercy to one's neighbor, widow, orphan, stranger, and poor, and not to plan evil in one's heart. They, he says, did not want to do this, and with deaf ears they despised my commands. Therefore, great indignation came upon Jerusalem; and just as they did not want to listen to me, so I did not hear them. And now they seek with such scrupulousness when they should fast and mourn, when I had said before through Isaiah: I have not chosen such a fast, says the Lord, nor for a man to humble his soul; but to dissolve every bond of wickedness: dissolve the obligations of violent guarantors: give your bread from the heart to the hungry. If you see someone naked, clothe them; and bring the poor and the homeless into your tent. Then your temporary light will break forth, and your healing will quickly appear (Isaiah 58:5, seqq.). This is what is written in the Septuagint: Sarasar and Arabesser ((or Arbath Sager)) king of Bethel sent, none of us could explain: for neither can what is wrongly translated from Hebrew be explained in any way. Who is this Sarasar or Arabesser king? Who was the king of the province, or to which province did Bethel send a message? Or could the king of Bethel have been Arabian, which had previously been abandoned along with Judaea, and at that time was not called Bethel, which means house of God, but rather Bethaven, which means house of idols? Also, concerning what follows: In the fifth month, the consecration entered here, just as they had been doing for many years, they attempt to explain it as follows: the consecration entered, the temple vessels that had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar were restored at that time. However, they tried to refer to the days of the week for the fasts of the fifth and seventh days. But because it follows the fast of the tenth day, they were compelled to refer to months, and they completely ignored the fasts of the fifth, seventh, and thirteenth months. Therefore, we are satisfied with the earlier explanation, and we do not incline (or rather, we are not indignant) towards the false attempts of commentators that came from an error in interpretation.

7:8-14

(Verses 8 onwards) And the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the foreigner, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another. But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped their ears in order not to hear. They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great wrath came from the Lord of hosts. And it came to pass as he had spoken, and they did not hear: so shall they cry, and I will not hear, saith the Lord of hosts. And I scattered them throughout all the kingdoms which they did not know; and the land was desolate from them, because there was no one who passed by or returned; and they made the pleasant land a wilderness. LXX: And the word of the Lord came to Zacharias, saying: Thus saith the Lord Almighty, saying: Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassion every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, and the orphan, and the poor man: and let none of you devise evil against his brother in your hearts. And they were unwilling to pay attention, and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears that they might not hear. They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the Lord of hosts. As I called, and they would not hear, so they called, and I would not hear, says the Lord of hosts, and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and the pleasant land was made desolate. I wanted these things more, I sought those things that you, not doing, are handed over to captivity; and not the fasting of the fifth and seventh month of desolation and death. Judge a just judgment, so that you may not hear in the Psalms: How long will you judge unjustly, and show partiality to the wicked? Judge for the orphan and the widow; justify the humble and the poor (Psalm 81:2, 3), lest Isaiah also speak to you: Those who justify the wicked for bribes and take away the justice of the righteous (Isaiah 5:23); and because of you, let Habakkuk make a complaint to God on behalf of those who are oppressed: Judgment has been done against me, and the judge accepts bribes; therefore the law is useless and justice does not reach its end, because the wicked oppress the righteous (Habakkuk 1:3, 4). Nor should we consider this commandment of God to be something new; once upon a time, He had given these instructions through Moses: 'You shall judge great as small: you shall not show partiality to anyone, and you shall not have pity on the poor in judgment, for it is the judgment of God' (Deuteronomy 1:17). Each person shall also show mercy and compassion towards their brother. After the severity of judgment, let mercy follow for all, especially towards brothers, whom we perceive to be of the same blood or of the same faith as us. Also see the widow and orphan, of whom it was commanded to us: Be a father to the orphans and a husband to their mother; judge the orphan and justify the widow (Eccl. IV, 10). And do not slander the stranger and the poor, for one is made a foreigner by travel, the other is made lowly by poverty. And let not a man think evil of his brother in his heart, as it is said in the Septuagint: And let everyone not remember the wickedness of his brother in his heart (Luke X). But we must accept our brother and neighbor, or all kinds of people; because we are all generated from one parent, or those who are of the household of faith, according to the parable of the Gospel, which wants all people to be understood as neighbors, not just those who are blood relatives. And whatever anger should be resolved before the sun sets, and all the evil that we have suffered from others should be erased from memory, and we read this in many places, especially in Jeremiah, who speaks in the voice of

God: And let each one not remember the malice of his neighbor in your hearts. When I commanded them to do these things, they refused to pay attention and turned their back, despising my orders, disregarding the posture of my body. For we are accustomed, when we wrinkle our forehead and contract our nostrils, to show disdain, to turn our back, according to that which is written: They turned their back to me, and not their face (Jeremiah 2:27). And they have made their ears heavy, so they could not hear, like the deaf adder that stops its ears, which will not hear the voice of charmers, no matter how skillful they might be. For they have made their ears heavy, that they may not hear, and their heart they have turned away, that they may not understand the law of God. Hence, Isaiah, threatening them, says: The heart of this people is fat, and with their ears they have been heavily affected, and their eyes they have closed, lest perhaps they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. Moreover, what is said according to the Hebrew: And they have placed their heart as adamant (or as adamant), signifies the hardness of heart, and a stony heart, that they have not been willing to receive the words of God. For indeed, the diamond is the strongest stone, which in Hebrew is called Samir, so hard that it breaks all metals and it itself is not broken by any. Hence, it is called indomitable by the Greeks. Pharaoh's heart was hardened by this diamond, so that he would not let the people of God go (Exod. 7 et seq.). And because they had, or rather they set their hearts like a diamond, willingly taking on the hardness of heart, they did not listen to the words of the Lord, which he sent in his spirit, that is, in the Holy Spirit through the hand of the prophets of old, Isaiah, Hosea, and the others, who had clean hands, as it is evident from before the captivity: therefore, great anger was brought about by great sins, and the words of the Lord have been fulfilled, in accordance with the principle of like for like, that just as they walked towards him in wickedness, so he would walk towards them in wickedness, and he would not listen to the words of those calling out, because they too had disregarded the words of the Lord with a deaf ear. Therefore, he scattered them throughout all the kingdoms that they did not know, the kingdoms of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Medes, Persians, and other nations that were subject to these empires, and in whose lands they were scattered. And all of Judah became desolate, because it had no inhabitant, and there was no one passing through or returning. And the land, which was a honeycomb among all lands and flowed with milk and honey abundantly, they turned into a wilderness. Can we apply these things to those who, in the Church, as delinquents, were cast out from the land of confession, because they refused to hear the Lord, and turned their back on Him departing, and made heavy their ears, and hardened their heart like adamant. And the indignation of the Lord came upon them, and they were scattered throughout all the kingdoms of vices, and their land was deserted, either in soul or body, having no indwelling Lord, nor a returning spirit within themselves. And the once desirable land, which was the dwelling place of the Trinity, has been turned into a desert, the abode of dragons. Let us quickly pass over those things which are clear, so that there may be room for discussing obscure matters: for we are not writing lengthy and flourishing treatises in which eloquence plays a pleasing role, but rather we are writing commentaries, whose duty it is to pass over obvious things and discuss obscure matters.

8:1-3

(Chapter 8, Verses 1 onwards) And the word of the Lord of hosts came, saying: Thus saith the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with a great jealousy, and with a great indignation am I jealous

for her. Thus saith the Lord of hosts: I am returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain. LXX: And the word of the Lord Almighty came, saying: Thus saith the Lord Almighty: I am jealous for Jerusalem and Zion with a great jealousy, and with a great fury am I jealous for her. Thus says the Lord Almighty: I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called the true city, and the mountain of the Lord Almighty, the holy mountain. In the book of Ezekiel (Chapter 16), we learn in greater detail how the Lord took Jerusalem, that is, the Israelite people, when they were in the wilderness like a wife, covered in the blood of idolatry, and he covered them with his cloak and loved them with marital affection. Later, we learn that she ate fine flour, honey, and oil, adorned with the most beautiful garments, and had all the jewelry and ornaments given by her husband, but she committed adultery with the Assyrians and the Chaldeans, and the Lord said: As a wife despises her husband, so Israel has despised me in the house of Israel (Jeremiah 3). But when she was delivered into captivity and mocked by her lovers, and stripped of her former beauty, after she spread her legs to every passerby and was defiled up to her head, she laments the memory of her former happiness, saying: 'I will return to my former husband, for it was better for me then than it is now.' (Hosea 2:7). And he, taking her back in marriage, to whom he had previously said, 'I will not be angry with you, and my jealousy shall depart from you' (Ezekiel 16), now speaks: 'I am consumed with zeal for Zion, with great zeal and great indignation I am consumed for her.' I was very angry that she was defiled by many lovers and stained my marriage bed. Therefore, I handed her over to her lovers, not as an adulteress under her husband, but as a harlot and worthless slave, and she was prostituted in brothels. Now I have returned to her even more, because she has repented and built a temple for me to dwell in the midst of her. And she will be called the city of truth, which was previously called the city of lies, as written in Isaiah: Truth has slept (or dozed) in her; but now murderers. And there will be a mountain, the mountain of the Almighty Lord, a sanctified mountain, in which, with the temple restored, victims are sacrificed, and the order of ceremonies is observed. This is according to the history. However, there is no doubt that Zion and Jerusalem, the watchtower and vision of peace, are able to receive the souls of the faithful, to whom, when they have sinned, the angry Lord hands them over to captivity, so that they who have not sensed God through good and prosperous things may sense Him through evil and adverse things. And when they shall have repented, the Lord will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, which we understand as the one and the same city, in which before reigned the vices of sins and falsehoods; afterwards Christ will dwell, who is the truth. And the mountain of the Lord of hosts shall be called the holy mountain, of which it is said: They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion (Ps. 142:1). And: Great is the Lord and exceedingly praiseworthy, in the city of our God, in his holy mountain (Ps. 47:1). About which Isaiah and Micah cry out: In the last days, the mountain of the Lord will be prepared on the top of the mountains, and it will be exalted above the hills, and all peoples will flow to it, and many nations will hurry, and they shall say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob (Isaiah 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-2). Concerning this mountain and this city, and the Apostle Paul (if indeed in receiving the Epistle, he did not reject the Greek authority in the Latin language) disputing with sacred prayer says: You have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of angels, and the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:22).

8:4-5

(Verses 4, 5.) This is what the Lord of hosts says. Yet old men and old women will dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their many days. And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its streets. LXX: This is what the Lord Almighty says: Yet old men and old women will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their many days. And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its streets. So great, he says, will be the prosperity of all things and the peace and tranquility of war, with no enemy remaining, that old age in both sexes will reach the very last age, and trembling limbs will be supported by a ruling staff. The streets of the city will also be filled with playing boys and girls. However, this usually happens when there is security and deep peace in the cities, so that the joy of the cities may celebrate with games and dances the playful age. But if we refer to the Church, of which it is said: Glorious things have been spoken of you, O city of God (Psalm 87:3), and: The streams of the river make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling place of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved (Psalm 46:4-5), who can doubt that the streets of the Church are the virtues, in which wisdom acts confidently and is proclaimed on the heights of the walls? Therefore, the Psalmist cries out to the Lord: I hold your commandments in high esteem (Psalm 119:96). In the streets, seeking the Lord and Savior, the bride speaks in the Song of Songs: I will arise and go about the city in the streets and in its squares, until I find him whom my soul loves (Song of Songs 3:2). Therefore, the elderly men and women will dwell or sit, of whom it is written (if anyone is willing to receive the book): Honorable old age, not measured by time or numbered by years (Wisdom 4:8). But dogs are the wisdom of men, and old age is a blameless life: of which the Lord also speaks to Moses: Gather with you seventy elders, whom you know to be elders (Num. XI, 16); wherefore before Abraham no one was called old, of whom we read: Abraham died being old: nourished in good old age, old and full of days (Gen. XXV, 8). For the glory of old men is gray hair, of whom it is said: The gray hair of a man is his wisdom (Wis. IV, 8). They will hold rods and staffs in their hands because of the multitude of days, and they will say to the disciples: What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in the spirit of gentleness and meekness (1 Corinthians 4:21)? For he who speaks wisdom from his lips, the rod strikes the foolish man. And on the contrary: He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who diligently corrects him loves him (Proverbs 13:24). And not only old men, but old women will also sit in the streets of Jerusalem, which Paul describes with apostolic words: Honor, he says. See widows who are truly widows. And in another place: Let a widow be chosen not less than sixty years old, who was the wife of one husband, having testimony in good works: if she has brought up children, if she has received strangers, if she has washed the feet of the saints, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work (I Tim. V, 3, 9, 10). Such old men and old women will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, and they will hold staffs in their hands, and the streets of the city will be filled with playing boys and girls. These are the boys and girls, the old and young, whom the Psalmist exhorts to sing to the Lord, saying: Young men and maidens, old men and children, praise the name of the Lord (Ps. CXLVII, 12). And John the Evangelist and Apostle says: I write to you, young men, because your sins are forgiven you for the sake of the Savior's name: I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning (I John II, 12, 13). And of these things Solomon speaks in Proverbs: And He shall give subtlety to the innocent, and understanding to the young man. And again: Hear, O sons, the discipline of a father, and attend that you may know understanding (Prov. 1:4, 8). Concerning these boys, young men and girls, the forty-fourth psalm says, After her shall virgins be brought to the king. According to what is written:

The daughters of Judah rejoiced and were glad because of your judgments. Lord (Ps. XCVI, 8). When they have heard from the Apostle: Rejoice, again I say rejoice (Philip. IV, 4), they will indicate the joy of the mind with a gesture of the body, and with a leaping dance, they will say with David: I will leap and dance in the sight of the Lord (II Sam. VI, 22).

8:6

(Verse 6) Thus says the Lord of hosts: If it seems difficult in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be difficult in my eyes? says the Lord of hosts. LXX: Thus says the Lord Almighty: If it is impossible before the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be impossible before me? says the Lord Almighty. The prophet presents, word by word and sentence by sentence, the promises of prosperity to Israel and almost incredible things due to their magnitude. Thus says the Lord Almighty, speaking in another manner: Do not think that what I promise belongs to me, and do not believe me as you would believe a man. The promises I make are of God. As I said before, the old people and the elderly will sit in the streets and hold staffs in their hands for a long time. The streets will be made narrower due to the multitude of people, and boys and girls will lead processions as if it were a festival. Jerusalem will be rebuilt and restored to its former state of happiness. To those remaining people who had come out of captivity, this seemed unbelievable when they saw the city completely deserted, with walls in ruins and burnt walls, exhibiting the hand of Babylon. Therefore, he associates: If for those of you who are the remaining captives, what I promise seems difficult or impossible, that such happiness will be in those days when Jerusalem is being built, will it be difficult or impossible in the sight of the Lord who promises these things with my own mouth? For what is impossible for men is possible for God (Matthew 19:26). We have witnessed these things fulfilled during the time of persecution in the churches of Christ, when such a rage of cruelty was stirred up among the persecutors that they even destroyed our assemblies, burned divine books, filled all islands, mines, and prisons with chained flocks of confessors and martyrs. Who would have believed at that time that the very ones who had destroyed would be the ones to build up the churches again? Not because the same men were in power, but because the same royal authority, which previously lay in wait with the rich (Psalms 10), and sought to extinguish the name of Christ as if by a senatorial decree, now constructs basilicas at the expense of the republic of the Churches, and raises up the highest, so that it not only decorates the shining ceilings and roofs with gold, but also clothes the walls with different layers of marble, and venerates the divine books, which it previously handed over to the fire, now gilded and purpled, and distinguished by a variety of gems, in the custody of the Roman state.

8:7-8

(Verses 7, 8.) Thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the land of the East, and from the land of the setting sun. And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in justice. Likewise in the Septuagint. Others say that these things were fulfilled by the Jews after the rebuilding of the temple and the city walls by Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, and the restoration of the Jewish state by the Maccabees and various princes who ruled over Judea until King Herod. Others, in talking about the completion of the world under Christ, whom they vainly wait for, mention things that are yet to be fulfilled. But we, on the other hand, say that even at that time, that is, after Zerubbabel

and Nehemiah, it was partially completed and already foreshadowed in types and images when the people were brought back from captivity, dwelt in Jerusalem, and were called the people of God, and again the Lord was called their God: not in deceit and injustice, but in truth and righteousness. And now, most fully under the Lord and Savior in the Church, that is, in the true Jerusalem, the promise is being fulfilled, especially because it is said: Behold, I will save my people from the land of the East and from the land of the West, of whom the Lord also spoke in the Gospel: Many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. VIII, 11). And long before, the Psalmist had promised, saying: The Lord, the God of gods, has spoken and called the earth. From the rising of the sun to its setting, from Zion, the perfection of beauty, he comes. For from Zion shall come the one who delivers and turns away iniquities from Jacob, when, from the east and the west, incense is offered to the name of the Lord in every place, and a pure sacrifice, not of the victims of the old Testament, but of the sanctity of the gospel purity, of which incense and elsewhere we read: Let my prayer be directed as incense in your sight. And the following speech explains what this offering is: The lifting up of my hands is the evening sacrifice. For after the shoot from the stem of Jesse has blossomed forth, who was to rule the nations, in Him the nations were to hope (Rom. XV), and from the East and the West, as well the first people as the last have believed in the Lord, and there was made one flock: then all the nations were called to joy, and stirred up to gladness, as the Prophet says: Rejoice, O nations, with His people (Ps. XXI, 28). According to what is written elsewhere: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. And what follows: In truth and righteousness, this signifies that the shadow of the old Law departs and the truth of the Gospel comes, not in the righteousness of the Jews, but in Christian righteousness: for the Lord himself is truth and righteousness, of whom we read: Truth will spring up from the earth, and righteousness will look down from heaven (Psalm 85:11). And in the fourteenth Psalm, righteousness and truth are mentioned together: He who walks without blemish and practices righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart.

8:9

(Verse 9) Thus says the Lord of hosts: Let your hands be strong, you who in these days have been hearing through the mouth of the prophets the decrees that were made when the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid for the rebuilding of the temple. For there are seventy years for the Lord of hosts, the Almighty, and in like manner the rest were translated. When the temple was built under Zerubbabel and Jesus (for in the fourth year of King Darius, on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is called Chisleu, these things are said, when the temple had already been constructed), the same prophets Haggai and Zechariah, who had encouraged the leaders and the people to build it, now encourage them to conform their faith to what had been promised in the past and what is promised for the future, and to strengthen their hands, fearing neither the attack of the Medes nor the plots of the surrounding nations. And let them be comforted by the words of the prophets from the day the foundation of the temple was laid until the day it was completed, and let them hear what follows. Briefly, we explain the history of whatever is said about Jerusalem and the temple, referring it spiritually to the Church, in which hands are strengthened through good works, and houses are founded when the foundations of faith are laid, and a temple is built when the multitude of believers is strengthened, and thus lives so as to deserve to be the temple of God.

8:10

(Verse 10.) Indeed, before those days there was no wages for humans, nor wages for animals, nor peace to the one entering and leaving because of the affliction. And I will send forth all people against their neighbors. They have all been reported to the future time, but better to the past, as it is in Hebrew, and the truth of the exposition will approve. Before the house of the Lord was founded, and the temple of the Lord was built, all your labor was in vain. And both men and animals in agriculture, in trade, and in various works, were frustrated in their empty efforts: outside there were adversaries, at home sedition disturbed the peace, and everywhere there was injustice due to the frequency of wars and domestic plots, while brother did not show faith to brother, and every kinship was hostile. Understanding this meaning, the prophet Haggai says: And now set your hearts from this day and beyond: before the stone was placed upon the stone in the temple of the Lord. When you approached a heap of twenty measures, there were ten; and you entered the winepress to press out fifty jugs, and there were twenty. I struck you with blight, mildew, and hail in all the work of your hands, and there was no one among you who returned to me, says the Lord (Hag. 2:16-17): which we can also understand in the Church and in each of the believers. Indeed, before the house of God is laid as a foundation within us, and we are built up as a temple to God, and we hear from the Apostle; You are the temple of God: and the Holy Spirit dwells within you (II Cor. VI, 16), whatever good work we seemed to have, either rational, who are called humans, or simple, who are called beasts (for you will save humans and beasts, Lord (Ps. XXXV, 7)), it has no reward from God, and there are battles and conflicts within us, and everywhere there is tribulation without the peace of Christ, which he left with the apostles as he went to the Father (John XIV), and the Lord's saying is fulfilled in us: The enemies of a man are those of his own house (Micah VII, 6). For every brother supplants with supplanting; and every friend walks deceitfully, and a man mocks his brother, and does not speak the truth, their tongue has learned to speak lies. (Jeremiah IX, 4). But if we turn to Christ, and become his temple, immediately we will hear the Apostle proclaiming: Each one will receive their own reward according to their work. (I Corinthians III, 8).

8:11-12

(Verse 11, 12): But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, declares the Lord of hosts. For there shall be a sowing of peace. The vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its produce, and the heavens shall give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. LXX: And now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, declares the Almighty Lord; but I will show peace. The vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its produce, and the heavens shall give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of my people to possess all these things. Before the foundations of the house of God were laid and the temple was built, there was no merchandise of men, nor merchandise of livestock, nor was there peace for those entering and leaving, and all people were in hostile disagreement with one another. But now, because the foundations of the house of the Lord are already laid and the temple is built, I will not do as I did before to those who have returned from the captivity of Babylon; but there will be peace and joy everywhere, and the abundance of the former times will compensate for the drought and famine. For the vine shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall be filled with the produce of the harvest; the presses shall overflow with wine, and the land shall be adorned with bountiful crops. With abundant rain and nightly dew, all shall sprout and grow. I will fulfill all that I have spoken and the remnants of my people shall possess. For the foundations of the house of the Lord have been laid, and the temple has been built. These same

words were spoken by the prophet Haggai at the same time, who said: 'I struck you with scorching wind, mildew, and hail, destroying all the work of your hands, after the foundations of the temple were laid. Set it in your hearts from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month: from the day the foundations of the temple were laid, set it upon your hearts.' Is the seed already in the bud: and has the vineyard, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree not yet blossomed? From this day forward, I will bless you, and I will shake the heavens and the earth again (Haggai 2:18-19). Let us also say, following another explanation of the Church. Before anyone receives the faith of Christ, and the foundations of the Holy Spirit are laid in them, no one can hear, there is recompense for your work. Whether they are Jewish, or heretic, or pagan: whatever good works they do, if they do not do them in the name of Christ, they will not receive the reward of their good works. We see the virgins of the heretics, the strictness of the philosophers, the variety of observances among the Jews in regard to food; and yet, according to Haggai, we say that they eat, but are not satisfied; they drink, but are not intoxicated; they cover themselves, but are not warmed; and whoever gathers wages, puts them in a bag with holes (Haggai 1). But after they have received the faith of Christ, both those who were sinners outside the Church and those within, and have been handed over to the captivity of this world and burned by Babylonian fire, and have heard the Lord preaching: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me; to preach the Gospel to the poor He has sent me, to proclaim release to captives, and sight to the blind, to heal the broken-hearted" (Isaiah LXI, 2), and when in them is fulfilled what is said through Amos: "I will turn again the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the desolate cities, and I will plant them" (Amos IX, 14), then in those days righteousness and a multitude of peace shall arise (Psalm LXXI). The vine will produce its fruit, as it says in the Gospel: I am the vine, you are the branches. Every branch that remains in me, the Father cleanses, so that it may bear greater fruit (John 15:8). And when its branches, that is, the shoots and tendrils, have been cleansed, and with budding eyes begin to promise the hope of future fruit, then the flowering vines will give off their fragrance (Song of Solomon 2:13). At that time, the sun of righteousness will color the hanging clusters of grapes, as mentioned in the winepress psalms of the eighteenth and eighty-third, which are inscribed for the winepresses. The feet of the Lord, who ascends from Bosor, will crush them, in order to create the wine that gladdens the heart of man. The earth will also yield its produce, not dry and rocky and full of thorns; but good earth that gives a hundredfold and sixtyfold and thirtyfold fruit (Matt. 13): so that those who sow in tears may reap in joy (Psalm 126). And the heavens will also give their dew, of which it is written in Psalm 18: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands. About these heavens, it is said in the song of Deuteronomy: Rejoice, O heavens, with him (Deut. 32:43), that is, with the Lord and Savior, whom he foreknew and predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son (Rom. 8), who speaks with Moses: May my teaching come down like rain, my words fall like dew (Deut. 32:2). For those who were dead in sins will rise again, and those who lay in their graves will be raised up, those tombs that are full of the bones of the dead, and those who reside on the earth will rejoice. And the following statement explains the reason for their joy: For health is theirs from the dew of the rose that is from you. And all these things, namely peace and the fruit of the vineyards and the abundance of the lands, which thrive from the dew of the heavens, will be possessed by the remnants of my people, of whom Isaiah speaks: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah 1:9). For the elect's sake, the remains were saved by grace: not by works; otherwise grace would not be grace.

(Verse 13 and following) And it shall be, as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you and you shall be a blessing. Do not fear, let your hands be strong. For thus says the Lord of hosts: Just as I purposed to afflict you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, says the Lord, and I did not relent, so now I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear. LXX: And it shall be, as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you, and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, let your hands be strong.' For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'As I purposed to bring disaster to you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the LORD of hosts, so again have I purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; fear not. These things after the building of the temple promise to be in the future, that just as they were in all nations for a curse and for a hissing and for an example, the house of Judah and the house of Israel (namely, the two and ten tribes), so when they have been saved and returned to Judaea, they may be a blessing for all. Do not, he says, fear the rebellious adversaries: trust that what the Lord promises through me is true: strengthen your hands: fulfill the works that you have begun. For the cause of comfort, there is a promise of the Lord. For thus says the Almighty Lord, to whom nothing is impossible, who can fulfill what He promises: just as I have devised to afflict you and deliver you into captivity because your fathers provoked me to anger and I did not show mercy. And the Septuagint translated it as 'I did not repent', which is written in Hebrew as 'Ulo Naamathi'. But I did not show mercy in order to correct you with captivity and instruct you with all kinds of torments and afflictions. So now, at this present time, I have devised to do good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah. And it is to be noted that when he is angry, his curse is upon the nations of the house of Judah and the house of Israel, that is, all twelve tribes that were handed over to captivity. But when he plans to do good, he does not do so for Judah and Israel, that is, the two and ten tribes, namely Jerusalem and Samaria, Oollae and Oolibae; but leaving Israel in captivity, he does good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah: and he concludes by saying: Do not fear or be confident, in the sense that we have explained above. However, the Church and each individual believer can be understood in this way: that during times of persecution, they were a curse and an example to all the surrounding nations because they offended their Lord. And afterwards, they were a blessing when peace was restored. And all of this happened because the Lord, who was once angry, then had mercy on Jerusalem and on the Jews who confessed the faith of the Lord. Moreover, each of the believers who are expelled from the Church due to their sins and handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (I Cor. V), so that they may learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. I), when they have repented, they shall return to their former state and shall see the peace of God and possess the glory of their confession. The heretics falsely accuse God, saying that he is either cruel or changeable, if he either does not repent or does repent, because it is written: 'I have not shown mercy or had pity'. For if he repents, they say he is changeable; if he does not repent, they assert he is cruel. However, God regretted that he had anointed Saul as king (1 Samuel 15). And concerning the Ninevites, to whom he had proclaimed through the prophet: 'Yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown' (Jonah 3:4), it is said that he himself changed his mind when they repented, not due to a fault of his unwise mind, but due to the variation of their actions, whether good or evil. For if they have done wrong, He threatens; if they have repented of their former sins, He shows mercy. God, who is always the same and cannot be changed, does not change; but when they have turned from evil

to good works, He changes His own decree. He also speaks in Genesis: The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah has multiplied, and their sins are very great. Therefore I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me, and if not, I will know. What he said is this: If they remain in anger, punishment will not be lacking for sinners; if they cease from insanity, they will become most worthy of my knowledge. But the Lord knows those who are His (2 Tim. 2:19). And the Apostle writes to the Galatians: But then, not knowing God (Gal. 4:8). And since God knows all things, and nothing can escape Him, neither past nor present nor future, He says in the Gospel that the wicked do not know Him: Depart from me, workers of iniquity, I do not know you (Luke 13:27). Therefore let us understand both the knowledge, and the repentance, and the anger, and the indignation, and all the affections of God, not with the fault of human speech, but with the sense of divine majesty.

8:16-17

(Verse 16, 17) These are the words you shall do: Speak truth, each one with his neighbor. Give judgment of truth and peace in your gates. And let none of you think evil in your hearts against his neighbor. And love not a false oath. For all these are the things that I hate, says the Lord. LXX: These are the words you shall do: Speak truth, each one with his neighbor. Give judgment of peace and justice in your gates. And let none of you think evil against his neighbor in your hearts. And love not a false oath. For I hate all these things, says the Almighty Lord. I have promised that I will not abandon the remnants of the captive people and I will not act as I did in the past days. Just as I had planned to afflict them when their fathers provoked me to anger and I showed no mercy, now I have turned my thoughts to doing good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah. Therefore, in order to fulfill my purpose and not make my promises void, do these things that I command: Speak the truth with your neighbors. Let us embrace, as our nearest kin, the entire human race, for we are all descended from a single parent. Otherwise, whoever is the next closest relative should be considered, and one must lie to strangers and foreigners. The Apostle speaks of the same thing: 'Putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbour' (Ephesians IV, 25). 'Judge ye the truth and the judgment of peace in your gates.' In judgment let truth and justice come first, and then mercy follows. For this is the judgment of peace, that the judge has the intention to reconcile the discordant, according to that Gospel: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God (Matthew 5:9). And what follows 'In your gates' is in agreement with that prophetic passage: They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks the truth (Amos 5:10). And in another place: They shall not be put to shame when they speak with their enemies in the gate (Psalm 129:6). David also judged in the gates, when Absalom, promising the truth of judgment, laid snares for his father (2 Samuel 19). And it is asked why among the Jews in the city gates there was a place for judgment. So that farmers would not be forced to enter the cities and incur any expense, judges would reside in the city gates in order to hear both urban and rural people entering and leaving the city, and once the matter was finished, each person would immediately return to their own homes. And the evil, he says, do not contemplate against your friends in your hearts: Raah (רָאָה), which all voice consonant קָאָרָאָ, that is, malice, can be understood in two ways, both as affliction and as evil. Regarding affliction: If there is wickedness in a city that the Lord has not made (Amos III, 6). And: Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew VI, 34). Concerning evil, God speaks through the prophet Jonah: The outcry of their wickedness has come to me (Jonah I, 2). And in the Apostle, we read: They were filled with all

unrighteousness and wickedness (Romans I, 29). Therefore, in both ways, one who is holy does not afflict his friend nor does he think of bringing harm upon him in his heart. And he said, 'Do not love a false oath: according to the commandment of the Lord in the Gospel: 'But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool...' (Matt. V, 34). For whoever does not swear, will never be able to perjure. Let the one who swears, hear what is written: 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain' (Exod. XX, 7). These are all the things that I hate,' says the Lord, according to the words of Malachi: 'And you have done all the things that I hate' (Mal. II, 13; sec. LXX). In the precepts pertaining to life, which are clear, we should not seek allegory, lest, in accordance with the Comic, we seek a knot in a reed.

8:18-20

(Verse 18, 19,.) And the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth shall be to the house of Judah, joy and gladness, and great solemnities: only love ye truth and peace. LXX: And the word of the Lord Almighty came to me, saying: Thus says the Lord Almighty. The fast of the fourth, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth shall be to the house of Judah, joy and gladness, and good festivals (for this is the Hebrew word Tobim (), meaning good), and be happy, and love truth and peace. To the question that Sarasar and Rogommelech asked through messengers, whether they should fast and mourn in the fifth month and the seventh month, as it is written in the Septuagint, or whether they should end the fast and put away mourning after the completion of the temple, with many things being set forth in the midst of what they would do and what they would hope for, the Lord responded through the person of the prophet: the fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth month, and the fast of the seventh month, and the fast of the tenth month (for the month is understood) shall be turned into joy and gladness for the house of Judah and Jerusalem on the appointed feasts. God alone seeks the truth and peace. In this place, many of our people have said many different things, and there is disagreement among them. Some, professing obscurity, have passed over the deepest pit in their commentaries: thinking it better to say nothing at all than to say too little. Therefore, we are compelled to turn to the Hebrews and seek the truth of knowledge from the source rather than from the streams: especially since there is no prophecy about Christ, where they often twist and conceal the truth with lies; but rather the order of history is woven from what comes before and what follows. On the seventeenth day of the month of July, which is called Julius in Latin, it is believed to commemorate the moment when Moses came down from Mount Sinai and threw down and broke the tablets of the Law (Exodus 32), and when the walls of the city were first breached, according to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 52). In the fifth month, which is called Augustus in Latin, when a rebellion arose among the people because of the spies of the Holy Land, they were commanded not to ascend the mountain; but for forty years they wandered in the wilderness, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, until they all perished (Numbers 14). In this month, both by Nabuchodonosor (Jer. LII), and many centuries later by Titus and Vespasian, the temple in Jerusalem was burned and destroyed, the city of Bether was captured, to which many thousands of Jews had fled, the temple was plowed in disgrace by the Roman governor Turannius Rufus. In the seventh month, which is called October among us, as we have said above, Godolias was killed, and the tribes of Judah and the remains of Jerusalem were scattered (IV Reg. 25). We read Jeremiah (Chapters

XXXIX and XLI). In the tenth month, which is called January among us, because it is the door of the year and the beginning, Ezekiel, being in captivity, heard that the temple was destroyed in the fifth month, which we fully know from the same prophet. Therefore, this is all that is said: The days of mourning and fasting that you have had until now for sorrow, you shall know that I planned to do good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah, to turn them into joy and gladness and festive occasions, if only you love truth and peace. According to interpretation, because then we fast when the bridegroom is taken away from us (Luke 5), and we do not deserve to have his presence when the Lord returns to us and decides to bless us, all sorrow will turn into joy; and the previous hunger for the word of God, the presence of his teachings, and the satisfaction of heavenly bread, will be weighed.

8:21-22

(Verse 21, 22.) Thus says the Lord of hosts: How long will the people come and dwell in many cities, and the inhabitants go from one to another, saying: Let us go and entreat the face of the Lord, and let us seek the Lord of hosts. I myself will also go, and many peoples and strong nations will come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the face of the Lord. LXX: Thus says the Lord almighty: Yet many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will come; and those who dwell in cities will gather in one city, saying: Let us go to entreat the face of the Lord, and let us seek the presence of the Lord almighty. I will also go, and many peoples and numerous nations will come to seek the face of the Almighty Lord in Jerusalem, and to supplicate the face of the Lord. The fast of the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months will be changed into the best festivities, to the extent that the cities of Judah, which were previously deserted, will be celebrated with abundant inhabitants. And one city shall go to another, and they shall encourage one another and say: Because for seventy years the ways of Zion had been desolate, since there was no one to go to the feast, all its gates were deserted, and its priests were lamenting. Now that peace has been restored, let us go to Jerusalem, where it is commanded by law that we offer sacrifices, and let our every male appear before the Lord three times a year (Exod. XXIII). And one city will say to another: Let us go and supplicate the face of the Lord, and let us seek the Almighty Lord. The other city will reply: I will also go. At that time, many peoples and innumerable and powerful nations will come to offer sacrifices to the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to supplicate His face. For the Lord is near to those who do not test Him, and He reveals His face to those who are not unbelieving. Whoever sees the Son, sees the Father as well; and the Son is the image of the invisible God, not because the Son is visible and the Father invisible, but because when the Son is mentioned, the Father is felt. For the Father does not exist without the Son. Therefore, He Himself speaks in the Gospel: Father, I have manifested Your name to men. What we have said about Jerusalem and Zerubbabel, or after Zerubbabel, is more accurately and fully applied to Christ and Jerusalem, which is understood as the Church: and then concerning the whole world and peoples and nations coming together to offer sacrifices in the temple of the Lord. Also during the time of persecution, as we have mentioned before, the teachers and priests of the Church boldly promise to the captives and believers that the parishes will be rebuilt and peace will be restored, and the face of the Lord is to be sought in the Churches. We pass by in order to dwell in the more obscure things.

8:23

(Verse 23) Thus says the Lord of hosts: In those days, when ten men from all the languages of the nations take hold of the garment of a Jewish man, saying, 'We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.' LXX: Thus says the Lord Almighty: In those days, if ten men from all the languages of the nations take hold of the fringe of a Jewish man, saying, 'We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.' Certain Jews say that these things were completed under Zerubbabel, and after Zerubbabel. Others differ, expecting Christ to come in the future. But we understand more correctly and truly in the coming of the Lord and Savior, when He was born of the Virgin Mary. Finally, it is written: 'How long will the peoples come?' (Zech. VIII, 20) When it is said, 'How long,' it does not signify the present time in which Zerubbabel and Joshua were, but the future, when many peoples and strong nations will come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the face of the Lord. At that time, therefore, and in those days, ten men from all the languages of the nations will take hold of the edge of a man who is a Jew, saying: We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. And in Isaiah we read: Seven women will take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothing, only let your name be called upon us: take away our disgrace (Isaiah 4:1). Therefore, the seven women who are called there, that is, the Churches, whose number is also mentioned in the apostle Paul: for he writes to seven Churches, to the Romans, to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians. And in the Apocalypse of John, in the midst of the seven candlesticks (Apoc. I), that is, of the Churches, of the Ephesians, of the Smyrnians, of the Pergamenes, of the Thyatirians, of the Sardisians, of the Philadelphians, of the Laodiceans with variety (or truth), the Lord enters girded with the purest gold. Now in the prophet Zechariah, ten are mentioned, whom the Lord also inquired about, that if He found them in Sodom and Gomorrah, He would deliver them from destruction. For the letter Iota, from which the Savior's name begins, signifies not only the number ten among the Greeks, but also among the Hebrews. And by this mystical discourse it is shown that all those who are considered by the name of Christian, whom the Lord Himself says have left seven thousand in the time of the persecution of Jezebel and the flight of Elijah, who have not bent their knees before Baal (III Kings XIX), and who have come to the measure of a perfect man from all languages and nations, will grasp the fringe of the Jewish man, that is, of the Lord and Savior, about whom it is also said in the Psalms: 'Judah, my king' (Ps. LIX, 9). And: Judas, your brothers will praise you. And again: A ruler will not fail from Judah, and a leader from his loins, until the one to whom it belongs comes, and he will be the hope of the nations (Gen. XLIX, 8, 10): For he will be the offspring of Jesse, and the one who rises to rule the nations, in him the nations will hope (Isai. XI, 10). And when they take hold of him, they will desire to follow in his footsteps; for God is with him. Indeed, from all languages and nations, whoever believes will take hold of the Jewish man, the apostles who are from the Jews and they will say: Let us go with you, for we have heard through the prophets, and we have known by the voice of all the Scriptures, that the Son of God, Christ, is God and Lord with you. When the most manifest prophecy is fulfilled, and the coming of Christ and his apostles is preached, and the faith of all nations, we do not seek anything more. But what we said about the number seven thousand belonging to the name of Christians, calculate in Greek $\pi\tau\alpha\ \chi\lambda\iota\alpha\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\iota\alpha\nu\omicron\nu\varsigma$, and you will find the same number and sum, that is, one thousand nine hundred and forty-one. But also the parable of the ten virgins in the Gospel (Matt. XXV), which we interpret in the senses of the flesh and the spirit, if they have prepared oil of good works for their lamps, and have doubled the number five, so that they may be holy (according to the Apostle) in body and spirit, refer to the

sacrament of this number. He will also receive in the future ten cities, the best governed by those who have the most excellent control of their senses (Luke 16).

9:1

(Chapter 9, verse 1) The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Adrach, and Damascus shall be his rest: for the Lord hath an eye upon men, and upon all the tribes of Israel. LXX: The assumption of the word of the Lord in the land of Adrach (or Sedrach) and Damascus shall be his sacrifice, for the Lord regards men, and all the tribes of Israel. All this vision or burden of the word of the Lord, as Aquila interpreted it, pertains to the calling of the Gentiles and the rebuilding of the Church. And the order of the words is: Assumption of the word of the Lord, sharp towards sinners, gentle towards the righteous. Adrach (for this name is composed of two whole words: Ad, sharp, Rach, gentle and tender), and not as some read it incorrectly, Sedrach. Some refer Adrach to the Jewish people and Damascus to the calling of the Gentiles. Therefore, the people, or the assumption of the word of the Lord, takes place on the land of Adrach, on which the Lord exercised both severity and mercy (Isaiah XI, 10 in the Septuagint). Austerity towards those who refused to believe: mercy towards those who have returned with the Apostles. However, Damascus is for the rest of the Lord, according to what is written in Isaiah: And his rest shall be honor. For before the child knew how to choose good or evil, and call his father and mother, he received the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria (Isa. VIII, 4). Therefore, Damascus is translated into our language as 'drinking blood' or 'the blood of a hair shirt,' in order to signify the bloody people in the former interpretation; the second interpretation associates it with his cruelty and repentance. And what follows: Because the eye of man and of all the tribes of Israel belong to the Lord, thus they have said: Therefore the temple of God must be built by both peoples, that is, by the land of Adrach and by the rest of Damascus: because whoever looks upon God, and hopes in Him, is of the nations, and is of all the tribes of Israel: or, according to the Septuagint, because the Lord equally regards all men, and all the tribes of Israel. Let us speak in another way: in the land of Adrach, the burden of the word of the Lord is heavy and of great weight. But in Damascus, his victims and sacrifices, because the Lord regards the faith of the nations and the unfaithfulness of circumcision without any partiality, and he is equally the God of all: imposing the weight of his own judgment and resting in the seat of others. The Jews say that all these things are to be fulfilled in the coming of Christ, whom they expect in the last times, and that the land of Adrach, and Damascus, and Emath, and Tyre, and Sidon, and Ascalon, and Gaza, and even Accaron and Ashdod and the Philistines, will bow their necks to the most powerful king and serve him who dwells in Jerusalem, and no one shall dare to raise a hand against Israel after they have been pacified throughout the land. Which we spiritually comprehend in the coming of the Lord and in the events of his Church.

9:2-4

(Vers. 2 seqq.) Emath quoque in terminis ejus, et Tyrus et Sidon: assumpserunt quippe sibi sapientiam valde. Et aedificavit Tyrus munitionem suam, et coacervavit argentum quasi humum, et aurum ut lutum platearum. Ecce Dominus possidebit eam, et percutiet in mari fortitudinem ejus, et haec igne devorabitur. LXX: Emath in finibus ejus Tyrus et Sidon: quoniam sapientes fuerunt nimis, et aedificavit Tyrus munitionem suam, et congregavit argentum ut humum, et aurum ut lutum viarum. Therefore the Lord will possess it, and strike its strength in the sea, and it will be

consumed by fire. Emath, which is interpreted as 'wrath,' that is, indignation, is the one which received the name Epiphania from Antiochus Epiphanes, and now it is the city of Coele Syria. And thus, both Tyre and Sidon will be in the borders of Damascus, or in the borders of the land of Adrach, so that they may believe in the Lord Savior, to whom it was said by the Father: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession (Ps. 2:8). The daughters of this Tyre, that is, the souls of those who believe in Christ, will bring gifts to the king, so that what is written may be fulfilled: The daughters of Tyre will worship him with gifts (Psalm 44:13). And when the city of God, the Church, is built, of which the Psalmist sings: Glorious things are said of you, O city of God (Psalm 86:2), then the following will immediately come: Behold, foreigners, Tyre, and the people of Ethiopia, these were born there (ibid., 56:4). In two psalms it is said of aliens: Aliens serve me, or are subject to me. In the prophet Zephaniah we read about the Ethiopians: From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my worshipers, my dispersed ones, will bring me offerings (Zep. 3:10). And in the Psalm: Ethiopia will stretch out her hands to God (Ps. 68:31). But the Gospel speaks of Tyre: Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes (Matt. 11:21). That Canaanite woman from the territory of Tyre and Sidon, whose daughter was badly possessed by a demon, encountered the Lord and Savior (Mark VII); and she dedicated the first fruits of faith of the Tyrians and Sidonians, so that those who did not believe at the time of Christ because they had not yet seen signs and wonders, would later see them through the apostles and believe, and be partakers of that blessedness which the Lord promised, saying: Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed (John XX, 29). But Tyre and Sidon (of which one signifies 'narrowness', that is, constraint; the other 'hunting', that is, hunting, according to interpretation) took for themselves such great wisdom, that they proposed to Solomon, that is, the peaceful king, their enigmas, along with their sophisms and the nets of the dialecticians and the intricate web of the sophists, which the Scripture records as their fortifications. They amassed for themselves their silver, which is the brightness of eloquence, and their gold, which is cunning of the senses, gathered together like dust and mud in the streets and roads, in order to possess the kingdom of idolatry which they had fortified. But the Apostle speaks against these fortifications: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but powerful to God, for the destruction of fortifications: destroying thoughts and every height that exalts itself against the knowledge of God (II Cor. X, 4, 5). And in the persona of Nineveh, which is interpreted as adorned, or beautiful (for nothing is more adorned than the world), God speaks through the prophet against the people of the world: And you will be drunk and despised, and you will seek help from your enemy: all your fortifications, like figs with their clusters, if they are shaken, they will fall into the mouth of the eater. And so the Lord will possess both Tyre and Sidon, when he strikes down their strength in the most salty and bitter sea of this age, and nothing of their former wisdom remains, that is, their swelling foolishness, through which they acquired weak fortifications, and silver and gold similar to clay. He will burn them with fire and purify them completely, as the Savior speaks of in the Gospel: I have come to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled (Luke XII, 49), according to what is written in Mark: Everyone will be salted with fire (Mark IX, 48).

9:5-10

(Verse 5 onwards) Ascalon will see it and be afraid; Gaza will writhe in agony, and Ekron too, for her hope will wither. Gaza will lose her king and Ashkelon will be deserted. Foreigners will occupy

Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. I will take the blood from their mouths, the forbidden food from between their teeth. Those who are left will belong to our God and become a clan in Judah, and Ekron will be like the Jebusites. And I will surround my house with those who fight for me, going and returning, and no oppressor will pass over them anymore, for now I have seen with my own eyes. Ascalon will see and be afraid; Gaza will be very sorrowful; and Ekron, because her hope is confounded, and her king will perish from Gaza, and Ascalon will not be inhabited. Foreigners will dwell in Ashdod; and I will remove the injustice of the foreigners, and take away their blood from their mouths, and their abominations from the midst of their teeth. And they will be for our God, and they will be like a leader in Judah; and Ekron will be like the Jebusites. And I will make my house a place of honor, so that no one will pass through or return, and no oppressor or oppressor will come upon them, for now I have seen with my own eyes. Ascalon is interpreted as lowly fire, or weighed down: Gaza, strong, or empire: Accaron, barren, or uprooted: Azotus, which in Hebrew is called Esdod, fire generating, or uncle's fire, or breast's fire; Jebusaeus, it signifies trampled. We have expressed the etymologies of the names in order to briefly go through their meaning. Seeing that Ascalon and Gaza and Accaron, since Emath was in the borders of Damascus, and Tyre and Sidon, after they were struck from all sides, and all of their hay, wood, and straw burned in the fire, were possessed by the Lord, and they themselves, terrified by fear and grief and confusion, began to hope for better things. Finally, Ascalon, in which the devil had been earlier, a lowly fire, and had come to the measure and weight of sins, trembled with fear, because it had ceased to have inhabitants. And Gaza mourned greatly, repenting of its former crimes, which had once been strong and hard to tame, and had promised itself the kingdom of all, because its king and prince, contrary speech and the power of the enemy, had lost its own rule. Accaron also is barren because it had no children without the Law and knowledge of God, it was uprooted, so that it might hear that prophetic saying: Rejoice, barren one, who does not bear; burst forth and cry out, you who are not in labor; for more are the children of the desolate than of her who has a husband (Isai. LIV, I). And when Ascalon and Gaza and Accaron were terrified, and mourned, because they had no inhabitants, or had lost their king, or their former hope had been frustrated, strangers shall dwell in Azotus, where fire begets, which the Lord has sent upon the earth, and desires to burn (Luc. XII). For he will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matt. 3), where 'fratruelis' and 'patruus' are translated as 'brother-in-law' and 'paternal cousin', whom the bride desires in the Song of Songs: where there is the fire of the breast and the abundant udder, of which we read in the same Song: 'He will rest among my breasts' (Song of Songs 1:12). And in the Apostle: 'I gave you milk to drink, not solid food' (1 Cor. 3:2). Because, as we said according to the LXX: 'Aliens shall dwell in Ashdod', in Hebrew it is written, 'he shall dwell' or 'sit', the 'Mamzer' shall dwell in Ashdod, for which we have substituted 'separator' shall sit in Ashdod. Understand the Lord as the separator, who separates the grain from the chaff (Matthew 3 and 13), and the good fish from the bad fish, and discern silver and gold from dirt and slag. And when he has done this, he promises other things: I will destroy the injustice or the pride of the Philistines. For this, the 70 foreigners were brought in. Philistines are translated in our language as 'falling to the cup,' because they drank from the cup of Babylon and fell down drunk. Therefore, at the time of the calling of the Gentiles and the coming of Christ, they will not have pride, but they will follow Jesus with humility and meekness. And he will take from their mouth the blood, the blasphemy, and the abominations, the worship of idols, and the eating of things sacrificed to idols, from between their teeth. So that after these things have been removed, the Philistines themselves, that is, the

foreigners, will be abandoned to the Lord, and he will be the leader in Judah, that is, in the people confessing the Lord, so that the former people who were in the head, will be turned into the tail, and the last one who was in the tail, will pass into the head. And once barren Accaron, therefore, uprooted, will be as Jebus, that is, as Jerusalem. For this city is called by three names, Jebus, Salem, and Jerusalem. And I will surround, he says, my house, that is, the Church, with those who fight for me, that is, with those who serve me in various ministries and come and go at my command. Or: I will surround my house with the protection of angels, about whom it is also written elsewhere: The angel of the Lord will encamp around those who fear him, and he will deliver them (Ps. 34:7), so that there is no one who can attack and return, that is, who can plot against my people. Nor shall there pass over him any more the exactor, of whom Isaiah speaks: The exactor hath ceased (Isaiah 14:5), or surely one who drives out, that is, leading outwards, and dragging the bound captives into captivity: because with his own eyes, which we can understand as the prophets and all the saints, the Lord has seen the calling of the nations and the security of the Church.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. LXX: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; proclaim, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee, just, and a Saviour, he is meek, and riding upon a young ass, and he shall destroy the chariots out of Ephraim, and the horse out of Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be destroyed, and he shall speak peace to the Gentiles, and his dominion shall be from the sea to the rivers, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The Evangelists write that this prophecy was fulfilled when the Lord entered Jerusalem, sitting on a donkey and the foal of a donkey, and a crowd of children with palm branches came out to meet Him, shouting: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest (Matthew XXI); and when the Pharisees reproached Him for not rebuking the children who were shouting, He replied: Have you not read: Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have perfected praise (Psalm VIII, 3)? Therefore, Sion exults and Jerusalem rejoices, the same city (for Sion is the citadel of Jerusalem), because its king has come, who was promised by the prophecies of all the prophets: He himself is just, the Savior, that is, Jesus, as the angel interpreted, speaking to the Virgin: And he shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins (Mat. I, 21). Also, poor or, as the LXX translated, meek, who, though rich, became poor for us, and says in the Gospel: Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart (Mat. XI, 29). And, riding upon a domestic ass or a young foal, that is, the people of both Circumcision and Uncircumcision, of whom the former had borne the heavy yoke of the Law, as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles: Neither we, nor our fathers, were able to bear the heavy yoke of the Law (Acts 15). Therefore, Paul also writes to the Galatians who wanted to be circumcised: Stand fast, and do not be held again under the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1). But the new chick, a multitude of gentiles, having no reins of the Law, nor being straightened by anyone, but always falling into precipices and whirlpools of idolatry, has learned to walk and enter the straight path by the session of the Lord. And I will destroy, he says, the chariot of Ephraim. Moreover, it is said in the person of God the Father, that the chariot, or the chariot, of Ephraim may perish, and the horse from Jerusalem. And in the meantime, according to the letter, he speaks thus: There will be no battles, with the advent

and birth of Christ pacifying all. Furthermore, according to a higher understanding, Ephraim is referred to as a multitude of heresies, which is interpreted as bearing fruit, that is, abundance and plentiful crops. This is written in the seventy-seventh psalm: The children of Ephraim, being armed and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. About these chariots and charioteers, we read: Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God. They have bowed down and fallen, but we have risen and stand upright (Psalm 20:7-9). The horse that is lost from Jerusalem, that is whom we read about: A deceitful horse for salvation (Psalm 32:17), And in Jeremiah, those who indulged in luxury and lust, they hear: The horses have gone mad, they have become like females to me: each neighed after his neighbor's wife (Jeremiah 5:8). Hence they are called to repentance, as the Psalmist says: Do not be like a horse or a mule, which have no understanding (Psalm 32:9). When God has destroyed the chariots of Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem, which were freed from such horses and chariots; they will be brought into the service of the Lord, and will become cherubim, and it will be said of them: The chariots of God are ten thousandfold, thousands of rejoicing (Psalm 68:18). And: I have likened you, my beloved, to my horse in Pharaoh's chariots (Song of Solomon 1:8). And: Ride on horses, and let your riding be salvation (Habakkuk 3:8). The bow of war will be dispersed, so that no burning arrows may be launched, which could strike the hearts of the pleasure seekers. And he will speak peace to the nations, of whom it is written: He shall be the expectation of the nations (Gen. XLIX, 10). And again: The nations shall hope in him (Isai. XI). And: His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth (Ps. LXXI, 8). This is not to be weakened by allegory, but truly believed to be fulfilled, according to what we read: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession (Ps. II, 8). In the seventy-first psalm, under the person of Solomon and the true peacemaker, it is said: And he shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth (Verse 8).

9:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) You also, in the blood of your covenant, have sent forth your prisoners from the pit in which there is no water. Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope. Even today I declare that I will restore double to you. LXX: And you, by the blood of your covenant, have sent forth your prisoners from the pit that has no water. You shall sit in the stronghold, prisoners of the assembly, and for one day of your journey I will restore double to you. After the prophet's message, or rather God the Almighty Father Himself, has announced to Zion and Jerusalem that her king will come to them, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey, and his dominion will be from sea to sea and from the rivers to the ends of the earth, he addresses Christ Himself, of whom the prophecy is, and speaks: You also, in the blood of your covenant or pact, have sent forth your prisoners from the pit, in which there is no water. It is understood in this way: In the blood of your passion, you freed those who were held captive in the prison of hell, where there is no mercy, through your mercy. Finally, after the Lord rose, those who were held captive by the sins of Adam, or, as some would have it, the stains of error, and the chains of death, rose with him and appeared in the holy city. Concerning this blood of the covenant, he himself, indicating his coming passion, said to the disciples: Take and drink from this all of you: for this is the chalice of the new testament in my blood (Matthew 26:27-28). In this prefiguration, a lake that does not have water, Joseph was sent by his brothers into the lake (Gen. XXXVII): and Daniel (Dan. VI) and Jeremiah by the Chaldeans and the people of Judah: Benaiah also went down into the lake in the time of snow and

cold, to kill a lion there (II Sam. XXIII, 20). But Jeremiah was not thrown into the water of the lake; rather, he was thrown into the mire and mud of the lake, which could suffocate him more than refresh one who was thirsty (Jerem. XXXVII and XXXVIII). Where it is written in the psalm: I am stuck in the mire of the deep, and there is no substance (Ps. LXVIII). In this lake of hell, that once rich man with a purple robe dwelled, whose boastful tongue was consumed by the fires of punishment, and he had no refreshment of any waters to such an extent that he begged for the cooling of water from the tip of the poor man's finger dipped in water (Luke XVI). And again, a word is directed to those who were bound and in need of the mercy of Christ: Turn to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope. And the meaning is: You who are now bound and held in a cruel and terrible hell, who hope for the release of your chains in the coming of Christ, turn to the stronghold, whether you will sit in the stronghold, of which it is written: The stronghold of the holy is the fear of the Lord; so that you may learn: Be to me a protector God and a fortified place, that you may save me (Ps. LXX, 3), and let the prophet also mention you: Behold, a strong city will set our salvation as its wall and bulwark (Isai. XXVI, 1). But this fortress, to which God encourages those bound by hope or bound in hope to the Church, we should not understand as anything other than the dwelling place of paradise, into which the first thief entered with the Lord (Luke 23); and for this reason they are called to the fortress by Zechariah, because even then and from that time the Lord promised that, for a brief tribulation, they would receive eternal rewards. Or, as it is read in the LXX: for one day of your pilgrimage, I will repay you double. For in comparison with eternity, everything that we suffer in the world should be called one day, not of habitation, but of pilgrimage: because we are strangers and pilgrims, like all our fathers. For in the present momentary and light tribulation, an excessive weight of eternal glory works in us, not looking at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen (2 Corinthians 4). For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

9:13

(Verse 13) For I have bent Judah for Myself as My bow, I have filled Ephraim, and will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and will make you like the sword of a mighty man. LXX: For I have stretched Judah for Myself as My bow, I have filled Ephraim, and will stir up your sons, O Zion, against the sons of Greece, and will touch you as the sword of a warrior. This refers to the time of the Maccabees, when they defeated the Macedonians and cleansed the defiled temple of idolatry after a period of three and a half years. And what follows: 'I have filled Ephraim like a bow,' they think signifies those who came from the ten tribes which are called Israel, under Hezekiah, to whom Josiah is also mentioned as having reigned: provided that they interpret the testimony in a way different from the explanation we have given, and say: 'O Christ, whom we ((or, once upon a time, hoped to)) expected to come, and who were to reign over all the boundaries of the earth: in the blood of thy covenant, which thou didst find Jerusalem to be sprinkled with according to Ezekiel [16:6], and didst make a covenant with Abraham in the divisions of the calf, the ram, and the goat; thou didst send forth thy people Israel from captivity and the land of the Chaldeans, in which there was no mercy [Gen. 15:13].' Therefore, you also, O Israelites, who were bound and hoped in the Lord, return to the most beloved Jerusalem; for today you have the Lord promising you that, for the brief injury of captivity, you will receive a double recompense, as we read in the book of Job (Chapter XLII). According to allegory, this passage can be explained as follows: Judah is stretched out in the bow, when the Lord and Savior is sent from the Father into

this world, who himself is both the bow and the archer and the arrow. Arcus, as in the present place. Sagittarius, as in the forty-fourth Psalm: Your arrows sharp and mighty (Psalm 44:6), with which, when wounded, he says: I am wounded with love (Song of Solomon 2:5). But the arrow itself is the one who speaks through Isaiah: He has made me like a chosen arrow, and has hidden me in his quiver (Isaiah 49:2). The chosen arrow is the word of God; the quiver in which the arrow is hidden, is the dispensation of the assumed flesh. Thus Ephraim is fulfilled, that when he is armed and prepared for war, he himself is wounded by the arrows of the Lord, from whose tribe Jeroboam, who was received in the person of the heretics, first tore the people apart (III Kings 12). Hosea the prophet more fully explains this (Hosea 5 and 6), and what we have said above: The sons of Ephraim, aiming and shooting the bow, turned back on the day of battle (Psalm 77:9). For the Lord raises up the sons of Zion, that is, the sons of the Church, and the leaders of opposing doctrines, and all the assertions and arguments of the Gentiles are destroyed, because the Lord Himself is the sword of the mighty, of whom it is said: Gird your sword upon your thigh, O most mighty. Your beauty and splendor, understand, prosper and reign; because of truth, gentleness, and justice, and your right hand will lead you wondrously. (Ibid. XLIV, 4 et seqq.). The Ethiopians are wounded by this sword, of whom it is written: And you, Ethiopians, wounded by my sword you will be. (Soph. II, 12), those who, once wounded by Christ's sword, will cast off their dark color, and rejoicing they will say: The splendor of the Lord our God will be upon us. (Ps. LXXXIX, 17), which David also promises to himself after repentance: You will wash me, and I will be made whiter than snow. (Ibid., L, 9). This is the sword about which the Apostle writes: The living word of God, and effective, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the division of soul and spirit.

9:14

(Verse 14) And the Lord God will appear over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning, and the Lord God will sound the trumpet, and He will go in the whirlwind of the south. The Lord of hosts will protect them. LXX: And the Lord God will appear over them; and He will go forth like a lightning arrow: and the Lord God Almighty will sound the trumpet, and He will go in the commotion of His terror. The Lord Almighty will protect them. And this passage refers to the times of the Maccabees when, as they fought against and defeated Antiochus, the Lord's battle and victory was with them. He went forth strong to battle, and His power appeared like that of lightning, and He protected the people of Judah by scattering their enemies in the whirlwind of death. But we refer all things to the understanding of the Savior, concerning whom it was said above: 'I have stretched out Judah as my bow.' With this bow stretched out, and the heretics and gentiles from the sons of Zion being killed, the glory of the Lord will appear, and He will come forth like a lightning arrow, of which we read in Habakkuk: 'With light of your arrows they shall walk, in the brightness of your flashing spear' (Habakkuk 3:11). This lightning and brightness is also called by another name, a trumpet and a shout, so that when the holy shout resounds, let the one who was previously deaf say: 'The discipline of the Lord has opened my ears, and He has given me an ear to hear.' And what follows: And he will go in the whirlwind of the south wind, or he will go in the motion of his threat. Therefore he threatens, and says, that he will bring punishments, so that he may have mercy on the penitent. Finally, he joins and says: The Almighty Lord will protect those whom he previously terrified with his threat. Let us read the story of the Ninevites.

9:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) And they shall devour and subject to stones of slings: and drinking, they shall be intoxicated as with wine (Vulgate: with wine), and shall be filled like bowls and like the horns of the altar, and the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people, because holy stones shall be lifted up upon his land. LXX: And they shall consume them, and bury them in stones of slings, and they shall drink their blood like wine, and they shall be filled like the bowls of the altar, and the Lord shall save them on that day as his flock, because holy stones shall roll on his land. For what we have said, they will be exalted, and it is written in Hebrew, Methnosasoth (), can be interpreted as wandering or fleeing. With the children of Zion protected, and the Lord singing, and going in a whirlwind against their adversaries, the destruction of the Greeks will be so great that I will not say by swords, but they will be crushed by the throwing of stones and the rotations of catapults, so that they will be spoils and food for their enemies. Then they will be drunk as if with wine. Not those who have been killed, but they will be drunk with their own blood; but those who conquer will fight as if drunk with desperation, and they will please the Lord like the horns of the altar, and their libation. For this is understood in the bowls, in which the offerings are poured out on the altar. The Lord will also save them like sheep and the flock of his people: for he will not fight like an armed and trained army against the Macedonians; but he will come like a flock prepared for death, and with the help of the Lord, he will prevail. And the holy stones that were oppressed (for they are called stones, on account of the hardness of trials and the courage of the soul) shall be lifted up from their humility, and they shall be on the land of his glory. Otherwise: his holy stones of the priestly race fleeing in different directions, with him granting them victory, shall attain it, let us say, according to the anagoge, nay, let us explain the prophecy enveloped in many obscurities. The sons of Zion, protected by their Lord, shall devour their adversaries, whom we understand to be the sons of Greece. And they shall subject them to stones of slings, and menaces of Scriptures, making their adversaries subject and humble: for nothing strikes so much as an example from the holy Scriptures, and a testimony emitted by the rotation of the mouth. But what is said in the Septuagint: And they shall drink their blood like wine, we do not read thus in Hebrew; but they shall be drunken with wine, so that they may hear that from the Song of Songs: Drink, O friends, and be intoxicated (Song of Songs 5:1). And so their drunkenness will please them, like a sacrificial altar; and like the horns or angles of an altar. The Lord will also save them, like a flock of his people, for the holy stones will roll upon his land, which will be so light and shining that they will not wait for the hands of builders, but will themselves hasten to be placed upon the foundation of Christ, and to be held by the corner stone, of which even the Apostle Peter speaks: 'You yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.' (I Peter 2:5). These are the stones that will cry out if the people of Judah keep silent (Luke XIX), and they will roll as long as they are on earth, for earthly dwelling weighs down the senses that attend to many cares (Wisdom IX), and the Holy One, who is in the flesh, speaks: Who will give me wings like a dove? (Psalm LIV, 7) Whoever is able, strives and rolls; and is lifted up to the heights, but is held back by the frailty of the flesh. And that earth on which the stones roll is the one of which we read: Sing to the Lord, all the earth (Psalm XCV, 1). And let all the earth adore you and sing to you (Ps. 65:4).

9:17

(Verse 17.) For what is its good and what is its beauty, except for the chosen grain and the wine that brings forth virgins? LXX: For if there is anything best from it, and if there is anything good

from it, it is the grain for the youth and the wine with a good aroma for the virgins. Therefore, they say, the Maccabees, fleeing here and there with the help of the Lord, will prevail, so that, with the Macedonians expelled from the land of Israel, the temple may be purified, the precepts of the Law may be observed, and the instruction of the Scriptures may once again bring forth virgins, that is, the people of believers in one God, who were previously defiled by the worship of idols. In the chosen wheat, that is, the Bread, not young men, as the Seventy translated it, but they want it to be understood as chosen and learned men, who deserve to eat the Bread, that is, the Law of God. For wine, which in Hebrew is called Thiros, Aquila interpreted as 'oenoa', which can also refer to the abundance of the vineyard. This is what the Jews consider. But we understand the chosen wheat, whether of young men, and the wine producing virgins, or the wine of good odor for the virgins, to be the Lord and Savior, who speaks in the Gospel: Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit (John 12:24). From this wheat is made that bread which comes down from heaven and strengthens the heart of man (Ps. 103). Those who are strong in Christ eat this bread, to whom John the Evangelist speaks: 'I write to you, young men, because the word of God abides in you (Al. us) and you are strong, and have overcome the evil one' (1 John 2:14). He himself is both the grain of the chosen, or the young men, and the wine that gladdens the heart of man, and it is drunk by those virgins who are holy in body and spirit, that they, being intoxicated and rejoicing, may follow the Church, and it may be said of them: 'Virgins shall be brought after her to the king, her neighbors shall be brought to thee: they shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing' (Ps. 44:15, 16). For how will those who are not joyful have joy, those who are intoxicated by the drink of the Savior, generated in virgins, and dare to say: 'Bring me into the wine cellars, comfort me with ointments' (Song of Solomon II, 4)? This wine is of good odor, as it is said in the same song: 'You shall drink of the wine of the unguentary, of the rivers of your pomegranates' (Ibidem). Those who follow the Lamb of God wherever He goes are intoxicated by this wine, dressed in white garments; for they have not defiled themselves with women: they have remained virgins (Apocalypse XIV).

10:1-2

(Chapter X, Verses 1 onwards) Pray to the Lord for late rain, and the Lord will send snow and rain showers, and every one will have grass in the fields. For the idols spoke in vain, and the diviners saw falsehood, and the dreamers spoke in vain, offering false consolation. Therefore, they have been led astray like a flock without a shepherd. They will be afflicted because they have no shepherd. Pray to the Lord for timely, seasonal, and late rain. The Lord has made illusions and will give them winter rain and grass to each one in the field. The ones who spoke have labored in vain, and the diviners have spoken false visions and false dreams, offering empty consolation. Therefore, they have withered like sheep and have been afflicted because there was no one to heal them. So the happiness that was promised in the time of the Maccabees, when the holy stones were raised up from the earth, and the Israelite nation grew greater, to the point that your virgins once again fed on the wheat of the Law, and were intoxicated with the wine of the Holy Spirit, is promised in part. However, because now is the last time of the prophets, and the world is approaching its end, and all that has been prophesied is awaiting its fulfillment: Ask the Lord to give you late rain: so that Christ, who was promised, may come and bestow upon you dews and snows, for which it is written in Hebrew Azizim (). And I do not know what they wanted, but perhaps they wanted to describe the greatness of grace and the admiration of gifts by the name of

fantasy. Therefore, the Lord who makes snow and dryness for all the earth will be watered by the rain of the gospel preaching: He will give rain to the believers, and all things will be filled with abundance, so that after the nations have believed in Christ, they may understand that which they worshipped before is vain. Whether Israel itself understands, which once deceived, was held by the errors of idolatry, in vain it worshipped statues, and heard lies of the divine, and acquiesced in dreams, which Scripture commands not to believe (Deut. XIII). And for this reason they were led like a flock into captivity, and afflicted without the shepherd God, because they did not have knowledge of the Law. This whole passage is obscure and doubtful, and the reader must forgive us if in those things that are ambiguous, we proceed with a hesitant step. However, according to spiritual understanding, we can say that believers in Christ are encouraged by the Lord to ask for the latter rain at the end of the world, when the fullness of grace is to be given, and every herb will grow in its own field, so that they may say: The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall not want; he has set me in a place of pasture, he has nourished me on the waters of refreshment (Ps. 23:1-2). For all idols, both divine and dreamers, have spoken in vain and provided empty consolation. Those who speak about heretics, who do not understand the name Christian, nor about whom they speak, nor of whom they affirm, and they attend to erroneous spirits and the teachers of demons speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their conscience seared (I Tim. IV): so that they are not led astray by the consolations of those who promise empty things, and for this reason they are handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (I Cor. V), and taken captive by the king of Babylon, and afflicted, because they do not have Christ as their shepherd, whom they falsely promise to themselves under a fake name.

10:3-5

(Verse 3 and following) My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goats; for the Lord of hosts will visit his flock, the house of Judah, and make them like his majestic horse in battle. From him comes the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the bow of battle; from him every oppressor comes forth together, and they shall be like mighty warriors trampling the mud of the streets in battle. They will fight, for the Lord is with them. (Septuagint: My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the lambs; and the Lord God Almighty will visit his flock, the house of Judah, and make them like his majestic horse in battle. From him he looked upon, and from him he set, and from him the bow in wrath will come forth; from him every one who brings forth together, and they shall be like warriors trampling the mud of the streets in battle, and they shall be prepared, for the Lord is with them.) And in this place there are two explanations of the Jews. For some believe that everything will be accomplished in the coming of Christ: others believe that it has already been accomplished under the Maccabees. And this is the explanation of what the Lord promises: The Lord is angry with the shepherds, rulers, and priests, and with the goats, and he visited the people, according to what is written: My people have become lost sheep, the shepherds have driven them away (Jer. L, 6), so that the disciples would be punished for the fault of their masters: not by the injustice of the judge, who renders the sins of the fathers onto the children; but because, when they sinned, the people applauded them together: and at that time, the Lord visited his goats, or the fattest lambs, and made them, according to the Septuagint, dry with drought. But afterwards the Almighty Lord visited his flock, the house of Judah: for he raised up Judas Maccabaeus, and others with him, against the leaders of Antioch, and he set them up like horses of his glory in battle, that is, those who were born of his lineage: for they oppressed the

Macedonians for a long time. And what follows: From him comes the cornerstone, from him comes the peg, from him comes the bow of battle, from him comes every tax collector together, which metaphorically they understand, interpreting the cornerstone as royal power, because it encompasses the very walls. And from it, he says, comes the staff, that is, the priesthood. Read Isaiah, in which Eliakim is depicted in the temple of God as a staff (Isa. XXII). From it comes the bow of battle, the strong for war: from it also comes every exactor, which in Hebrew is written as Noges (), and Aquila interprets it as ε■σπρ■σσων: so that not only the strong and good, but also others unworthy of their own kind. For Judas Maccabeus and all who were leaders of his people from his lineage were angles; for they held the people in royal power, and they were the staffs themselves, and as bows of battle, because they were the strongest men, not only to arrange the army and battle line, but also to be the first to leap into battle. We can gather from this that: From him will come every exactor together (for whom the seventy were transferred): From him will come everyone who brings out together, and this means: There will be no dignity in the army that is not determined by his judgment. And there will be mighty men, trampling the Macedonians like mud on the roads in battle: they will indeed be mighty, and they will fight, because the Lord is with them. Our people refer these things to the time of persecution, because frequently even the people are handed over to the adversaries for the fault of the priests: and yet the Almighty Lord visits afterwards his flock, the house of Judah, who confesses God both in words and in heart: and he makes them like a horse of his glory in war, of which the saints say: Mount your horses, and your riding is salvation (Hab. 3:8). He himself will be both the bow and the fury of the Lord, of which it is said: I will make my arrows drunk with blood (Deut. XXXII, 42) . And again: My arrows will consume them. Concerning this bow and these arrows, we read in the seventh Psalm (Vers. 13, 14) : He stretched out his bow and prepared it; and in it he prepared vessels of death, he made his arrows burn like fire. And they will trample on their adversaries, crowned in martyrdom, and they will say: The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life, from whom shall I fear? When those who do me harm draw near to devour my flesh, my enemies who trouble me shall stumble and fall. Even if armies camp against me, my heart shall not fear. Even if battle arises against me, in this I will trust. (Psalm 27:1-3) When will this saying be fulfilled: one of you will chase a thousand, and two will put ten thousand to flight? (Deuteronomy 32)

10:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) And the riders on horses will be put to shame, and I will strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph. I will restore them because I have compassion on them, and they shall be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the Lord their God and I will answer them. They shall be like mighty warriors of Ephraim, and their hearts shall rejoice as with wine. Their children shall see it and be glad; their hearts shall exult in the Lord. LXX: And the riders on horses will be put to shame, and I will strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph. I will cause them to dwell, for I have loved them. And they shall be as when I had not cast them off, for I am the Lord their God, and I will hear them: and they shall be as valiant men in battle, and their heart shall rejoice as with wine, and their children shall see it and be glad, and their heart shall rejoice in the Lord. And they have expounded these things twice according to the higher sense, so as to either relate them as already done under the Maccabees, or as about to be transacted under Christ in the last age. And the sense is this: When Judas, who was set as a goodly horse in battle,

shall tread down the adversaries as mire, and with the Lord fighting with him shall overcome: then all the horsemen of Greece shall fall, and the house of Juda and the house of Israel shall be saved together, (for he calls that the house of Joseph, that is, of the ten tribes) and I will convert them out of their captivity, wherein they were, and they shall be as they were before, when I had not cast them off: for I am the Lord their God, and I will hear them calling upon me. And Ephraim, who are now held captive, will later be released, and they will come to such great joy that you would think they are drunk with wine. And their children will witness the triumphs of their fathers, and they will rejoice in the Lord, for it is through Him that they have achieved victory. Let us look for the history of when Judah and Israel fought together against the Greeks, or when Ephraim returned from captivity in Assyria, when, according to Ezekiel (Chapter 37), the two rods, that is, Judah and Ephraim, were joined together and united as one staff. Which can be explained according to the tropology. When the Almighty Lord visits his flock, the house of Judah, then the riders of the horses will be confounded, of whom it is written: Let us sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea (Exodus 15:1). It is also sung by the voice of the Psalmist: At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both rider and horse fell asleep (Psalm 76:7). And the choir of saints repeats: Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will call upon the name of our God. They are bound, and have fallen: but we are risen, and are set upright (Ps. XIX, 8, 9). The Egyptian king relied on this cavalry; and he was thrown into the sea, like lead immersed in the depths (Exod. XV), and by his example he learned that what is written is true: A deceitful horse leads to salvation (Ps. XXXII, 17). We have interpreted these chariots and charioteers as representing the four disturbances that, unless controlled by the good reins, the charioteers are led to precipices. But there is another charioteer, of whom Elisha speaks: 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its charioteer' (2 Kings 2:12). Then God says to strengthen the house of Judah and the house of Joseph (1 Kings 12:16), so that, just as they were divided during the reign of Jeroboam, they will be united under the rule of Christ, and there will be one shepherd and one flock. And Judas and Joseph are given different names because they both represent a single understanding of the Savior, since Joseph provided grain to the hungry people in Egypt (Gen. XLII seqq.): and the Lord satisfied the hunger of the world with his presence. And he will convert them and have mercy on them, and they will be one as they were before he cast them out. Take all of this as a lesson in persecution, when, with all hope lost, the Lord heard his servants. And they shall be like the strong ones of Ephraim, who at first were weak and feeble, but later became strong and worthy of their name. For Ephraim means abundance. And their hearts shall rejoice when they drink the wine that is pressed from the vine of Sorec. And their children, of whom the Apostle Paul speaks, my little children, for whom I am in labor again until Christ is formed in you (Galatians 4:19). And Peter, the chief of the apostles, says: As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former ways (1 Peter 1:14). And in the Psalm we read: Come, children, listen to me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord (Ps. 33:12). Therefore, these children will rejoice and be glad, and their heart will rejoice in the Lord.

10:8-10

(Verse 8 onwards) I will hiss for them and gather them, for I have redeemed them; and they shall be multiplied as they were multiplied before. And I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember me far off, and they shall live with their children and return. And I will bring them back from the land of Egypt, and I will gather them from Assyria, and I will bring them to the land of

Gilead and Lebanon, and no place shall be found for them. LXX: I will show them signs and receive them, for I will redeem them, and they shall be multiplied as they were many, and I will sow them among the peoples, and those who were far off shall remember me. I will nourish their children and they will return, and I will bring them back from the land of Egypt, and I will gather them from Assyria, and I will lead them to Gilead and Lebanon, and none of them will be missing. They will have a sign of their congregation, either under the Macedonians, or at the consummation of the world, as I said before. 'They will have my whistle,' says the Lord, 'so that I may gather them from my whistle and teach myself to be their shepherd. For I have redeemed them and delivered them from captivity with an outstretched arm. And I will multiply them, as I have multiplied before, so that the dispersion among the nations does not appear to be division, but rather the operation of sowing and the harvest of children and grandchildren multiplied, let them live with their sons. And they shall return not only from the land of Egypt, but also from Assyria, and from both sides of the world they shall return to Judah, and to the land of Gilead and Lebanon, which the tribes of Joseph and Ephraim used to possess, and the number of those who return will be so great that the land cannot contain them. According to the interpretation, the Lord signifies and calls to those who were held captive by sins before, and he speaks to them: Come to me, all who labor and are burdened, and you will find rest for your souls. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Matthew 11:29-30). What could be more merciful than this meaning and call, through which the scattered people are gathered? But they have congregated because the Lord has redeemed them: not with corruptible silver and gold, from their vain conversation; but with precious blood, like that of an unblemished lamb, the Lord Jesus (1 Pet. 1). Therefore, it says in the Psalm: Delight, deliver me from those surrounding me (Psal. XXXI, 7). And again: You have redeemed me, Lord, God of truth (Psal. XXX, 6). And he will multiply them as they were multiplied before, so that the promise made to Abraham may be fulfilled: I will multiply him, and I will bless him, and he will be blessed, so that he may become the father of many nations (Gen. XVII, 9). But we must not consider the sons of Abraham those to whom the Lord speaks: If you were the sons of Abraham, you would do the works of your father (John 8:39), but those of whom the Apostle says: All those who are of faith, they are the sons of Abraham (Rom. 8). Isaiah testifies to this multiplication in mystical language, saying: The little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation (Isaiah 60:22). However, we do not receive the multiplication and blessing of children in a carnal manner: otherwise Elijah and Elisha and Jeremiah and John the Baptist (who was greater than all born of women) (Matthew 11) would have been deprived of this blessing, but rather it is the one by which the multitudes of nations are called to faith. Finally, it follows: I will sow them among the peoples, and they will remember me from afar. They are sown among the peoples who have heard the word of the Lord: 'Go, teach all nations' (Matt. XXVIII, 19). And in another place: 'You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last' (John XV, 16). And when the apostles have been sown among the peoples, the nations and distant peoples will remember me, in accordance with this prophetic statement: 'All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord.' And all the families of the nations will worship in his presence. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he will rule over the nations (Ps. XXI, 28, 29). And what is said: From afar they will remember me, is similar to this: You who are far away, remember the Lord, and let Jerusalem rise in your heart (Jer. XXXI). The multitude of all the nations was far away, but they remembered God, because we are all born from one parent. And when the apostles were sown

among all the nations, the nations that were far away remembered God and will live with their children, so that those who were previously dead in unbelief may begin to live in faith. These are the children whom Paul nourished in the Gospel, writing to the Corinthians: I gave you milk to drink (1 Cor. 3:2). And Peter, in his letter to the dispersed faithful who had been reborn, writes: Not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible, through the living and enduring word of God, like newborn infants, so that they may desire the rational milk and grow in it for salvation (1 Pet. 1). The evangelist John also wrote to these children: Little children, guard yourselves from idols (1 John 5:21). And I will bring them out from the land of Egypt, saith he, and I will gather them out of the Assyrians. And I will bring them unto the land of Galaad, and Libanus, and place shall not be found for them. Galaad is translated into our language, a testimony of transmigration, when we transition from the carnal to the spiritual, we come from a part to the whole: we leave earthly things behind and migrate to heavenly things: but Lebanon is interpreted as 'whiteness', that is, whitening. Therefore, we are led out of the darkness of Egypt, so that after we have passed over and migrated from the world, we are whitened in the Lord, and it is said of us: 'Who is this that goes up whitened?' (Song of Solomon 8:6). Others, according to the ambiguity of the Greek language, whereby both the Phoenician mountain and the Lebanese cedar are called 'Libanus', now interpret 'thu' as 'Libanus', and believe it signifies God, so that after we have passed from the earth to heaven, the prayer of the Savior may be fulfilled in us: 'Father, grant that they may be one in us, as I and you are one' (John 17:22). Therefore, the bride in the Song of Songs says to the bridegroom: 'The fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon' (Song of Songs 4:11). And when he shall bring us into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, there shall be no place found unto us, that we may be not straitened by the narrowness of the land; but let us enjoy the breadth of the heavens.

10:11-12

(Verse 11, 12) And it shall pass through the sea strait, and strike the waves in the sea; and all the deep waters of the river shall be confounded, and the pride of Assyria shall be humbled, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart. I will strengthen them in the Lord; and they shall walk in His name, says the Lord. LXX: And they shall pass through the narrow sea, and strike the waves in the sea, and the deep waters of the rivers shall be dried up; and all the injury of the Assyrians shall be taken away, and the scepter of Egypt shall be lifted up. And I will strengthen them in the Lord their God, and they shall glory in His name, says the Lord. The Hebrews narrate that the captive people of the Jews, not only to the Medes and Persians, but also to the Bosphorus and the northern region, were transported by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, and afterwards partially restored by the mercy of God, when He turned them towards Himself; and this is what is now said: They shall pass over the narrow sea. The straits of Propontis, which divide Chalcedon and once Byzantium by a narrow channel. And the Lord, going before his people, will strike the waves of the sea, and all the deeps of rivers will be confounded, as it was done in the drying up of the Jordan (Joshua 3), and the people passed over the Red Sea in the desert (Exod. 24). And when he has been freed from the depths of captivity and the bitterness of evil, Assyria will be humbled, and the empire of Egypt will withdraw from them. And they will be strengthened in the Lord, and they will walk in the land of Israel in his name, says the Lord. These things, as they were handed down to us by the Hebrews, we have expressed to the people of our language, faithfully representing the words spoken to them by those from whom they were spoken. However, we who are called by the name of Christ,

leave behind the letter that kills, and follow the life-giving spirit, rather comparing spiritual things with spiritual things, not the Bosphorus and the dryness of the sea and the dry flow of the Jordan, which are like fables, but we seek the worthy mercy of God towards His servants, with Him leading the way and opening the path for us, we cross the sea channel, or rather the narrow sea, which is widest for sinners: For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction: and narrow is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life (Matthew 7:13). About this sea we read in the Psalms: Those who go down to the sea in ships, doing business in many waters, have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep (Psalm 107:23-24). In this sea of the world, in which the number of the saints is restricted, and they are in a state of tribulation, the apostles descended, and the Lord himself, in order to free us from the bitter waves (Mark 4). In this sea, the net of the Gospel is cast (Matthew 13), which is woven with the testimonies of the Scriptures, so that it may draw out many fish that are submerged in the depths of this world, into the free air, so that they may sing praises to God. There are those who go down to the sea and work many deeds in the ships of the Churches, and they behold the wonders of God in the deep of the riches of His wisdom and knowledge (1 Corinthians 2); and in the Holy Spirit who searches even the heights of God, to whom the Lord speaks: Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matthew 4:19). Concerning these fishermen who go down to the sea and are in ships, Isaiah also prophesies: They will fly in the ships of foreigners, and they will equally plunder the sea (Isaiah 11:14). For in the churches, the apostles flew throughout the whole world in order to plunder the sea and take the spoils of the dragon who ruled in the sea, of whom it is written: 'This great and wide sea, in which are creatures without number, both small and great creatures, and ships pass through it.' This dragon, which You made to play with (Psalm 103:25-26), is the vast and wide sea with small and great creatures, which interact with the dragon and are without number. But those who are on the sea and fly over the sea in ships, hear with the Savior: You rule the power of the sea: you calm the movement of its waves (Ps. LXXXVIII, 10). And when they have passed through the strait of the sea and have trampled its waves with their feet, all the deep waters, of which it is written: Who turns the sea into dry land, they shall pass through the river on foot (Psalm LXV, 6), so that the injury or arrogance of Assyria and Egypt may be humbled and depart from the holy and believing people, and those who are freed may be strengthened in the Lord and say: My strength and my praise is the Lord (Ps. CXVII, 14). And again: I will love you, O Lord, my strength (Psalm 17:1). And with Jeremiah: You are my strength, my help, and my refuge, O Lord my God (Jeremiah 16:19). Therefore, the Apostle, in whom Christ spoke, said: I can do all things through him who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13). And they will not only be strengthened in the Lord, but they will also glory in him and say: But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world (Galatians 6:14). And: Whoever boasts, let him boast in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:31). And in another place: Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, and let not the strong man boast in his strength, and let not the rich man boast in his riches; but let him who boasts boast in this: to understand and know the Lord, and to practice mercy and justice in the midst of the earth (Jeremiah 9:23-24). But because it is written in Hebrew: And they shall walk in His name, it is thus understood: that Christians should walk in the name of Christ, and let the new name be written on their hearts, and let them walk with the Lord in the dignity of such a great name, as Enoch walked and pleased God, and was translated (Genesis 5).

Book Three Book Three My brother Sisinius urgently requests that I send him the unfinished and unpolished work so that he may have not only the opportunity to correct it, but also the opportunity to not even have to reread it. He is busy with his own work, and we are making less progress on our own task while our learning is wasted; and whatever we understand, we are not allowed to embellish with polished language. Therefore, as inexperienced individuals, not by my fault but due to the diligence of the carrier, please accept the books: while he himself hurries to divide the sacred air, he does not allow us to count our own air for you. Although a polished and well-practiced talent may be elegant, and though speech may flow smoothly from long practice, nevertheless, unless it has been carefully edited and polished by the Author's hand, it carries the stench of negligence and either indulges in excessive elegance of words or suffers from gaps in vowels or roughness in consonants. Hence it is said of Virgil that he composed his books like bear cubs with his tongue and made them better by licking, so that they would endure in eternal memory and fulfill the necessity of meter with free speech. We pass to Lebanon, and to two rods, and three shepherds, who are cut down in one month, and to thirty pieces of silver, for which the potter's field was bought for the burial of strangers (Matt. 27), and to the foolish vessels of the shepherd, and so on to the end of the volume: which are interwoven with such great mysteries, that we need the mercy of God and your prayers, lest our course be hindered by any error, and lest there be just occasion for detractors to slander, who think that they only have tongues for the purpose of tearing apart their neighbors, and they console themselves with the rage of words on their worn-out, hardened forehead.

11:1

(Chapter 11, Verse 1) Open your gates, Lebanon, and let the fire devour your cedars. Howl, fir tree, for the cedar has fallen; the majestic trees are ruined. Wail, you oaks of Bashan, for the thick forest has been cut down. LXX: Open your gates, Lebanon, and let the fire devour your cedars. Let the pine tree wail, for the cedar has fallen; the nobles have been crushed. Wail, you oaks of Bashan, for the dense forest has been laid waste. Clearly, Lebanon, to which the prophetic discourse is directed, saying: Open, Lebanon, your gates, the temple of the Jews is understood, which was restored, rebuilt by Zerubbabel, again sung to be destroyed by Vespasian and Titus. And because he had metaphorically called Lebanon a temple, and he maintains the same translation in the rest, so that through cedars and firs and oaks of Bashan and a wooded grove, he signifies the leaders, priests, and people of the Jews. But Lebanon opens its gates so that the Roman army can enter, and its cedars are consumed by fire, so that everything is either devastated by the conflagration or its leaders and princes are consumed by enemy attack. The firs wail, because the cedar has fallen, and the priests and leaders mourn their people in return. And what he previously said obscurely, he now presents more clearly, because the magnificent ones have been laid waste. I desire to know which are the cedars of Lebanon that have been burned, which firs wail, and which pines have fallen; for, he says, the magnificent ones have been laid waste. Howl, O oak tree of Bazan, that is, of confusion and ignominy, for the well-fortified forest, which is called Besor in Hebrew and is translated by the LXX as wooded and cut down; for the temple, which had grown in impregnable strength and was built by various kings and princes, and later by Herod, was destroyed by the Romans' attack. Some people, not understanding this place, attribute the strength of the Lebanon, the cedars, the pines, and the oak of Bazan, along with the wooded and fortified forest, to opposing powers, about which it is said in Ezekiel under the name

of Assyria and Pharaoh: Behold, Assyria is a cypress tree in Lebanon, with fair branches and a dense shade, and tall in stature, and its top was among the clouds: it was nourished by water, and the abyss made it tall, and so on, which are said about both Assyria and Pharaoh, they are thought to be spoken of either opposing powers or proud rulers and princes, about whom we also read in the Psalm: The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; indeed, the Lord shatters the cedars of Lebanon. And in another place: Day of the Lord of hosts comes upon all the haughty and proud, and upon all that is exalted and lofty (Isaiah 22:12, 13). And a little later: And upon all the high cedars of Lebanon (or, the lofty ones), and upon all the trees of Bashan. And about this Lebanon it is prophesied: Lebanon with its lofty ones will fall. But let us follow the earlier interpretation, especially since what follows also agrees with this meaning.

11:3

(Verse 3) The voice of the shepherds howls, because their magnificence has been laid waste. The voice of the lions' roar, because the pride of the Jordan has been laid waste. LXX: The voice of the mourners of the shepherds, because their magnificence has become miserable. The voice of the roaring lions, because the roaring of the Jordan has been subdued. This is the upper part of the chapter, and it is contained in these verses. Those he had called cedars, spruce trees, pines, and oaks of Bashan, and explaining what these trees represented, he said: Because the magnificent ones have been laid waste, now in another figure of speech he says that the shepherds, that is, the leaders and teachers, and those who were first among the people, ought to weep and mourn, because their magnificence and beauty and glory have been laid waste and destroyed: namely, the temple in which they boasted. And the voice, he says, is the roaring of lions, whom he now calls the same lions, the lofty trees, and again the shepherds. And because he had mentioned lions, he preserves the translation that he may infer: For the pride of the Jordan is laid waste, or the roaring and sound of the flowing water, which is called Gaon in Hebrew. And just as he compared the height of the temple to the elevation of the land of Judea near the height of Lebanon (for nothing is higher in the land of promise than Lebanon, nor more wooded and dense), so he joined the roar of lions to the Jordan river, which is the largest in Judea, near which the lions dwell, because of their burning thirst, and because of the proximity and wideness of the vast desert, and the reeds, and the marshes. And through the prophet it is said: The lion has come up from the Jordan (Jer. IV, 7), desiring to show that Nebuchadnezzar had left his abode, like a lion coming out of its den, against Jerusalem. Alternatively: The voice of the roaring lions, for the pride of the Jordan is laid waste. The voice, he says, of the nobles, because the temple has been destroyed, from which they always hoped for help, and which once nourished righteous ones and warriors and the powerful lions.

11:4-5

(Vers. 4, 5.) Thus says the Lord my God: Feed the sheep of slaughter, which those who possessed them were slaughtering, and they did not grieve, and they were selling them saying: Blessed be the Lord, we have become rich, and their shepherds did not spare them. LXX: Thus says the Lord Almighty: Feed the sheep of slaughter, which those who possessed them were killing, and they did not repent, and those who were selling them, said: Blessed be the Lord, we have become rich, and their shepherds were not patient with them. Where a most clear prophecy is, and the true order of history is narrated through translation, the interpretation of tropes is

superfluous, such as when we say that some are good shepherds and others are bad, and this applies both to the old people as well as to the new, that is, both to the priests and rulers of the Jews as well as to the bishops and priests of the Christians, and to whoever the negligent shepherds may be, and if they scandalize one of the least of these, they themselves are the ones who slaughter the sheep and do not suffer anything on them, nor do they grieve, nor can they say with the Apostle: Who is scandalized and I am not burned (I Cor. XI)? And they sell the people entrusted to them, of whom it is written: 'Who devour my people like bread' (Ps. 52:5), and from the deaths of others they acquire riches, praising those who plunder the poor, and blessing the unjust. Let others interpret these things as they wish: let us hold the order of explanation that we once embraced. For Lebanon is laid open, and its cedars and firs are consumed by the burning flame, the howling of shepherds is heard, and the roaring of lions, for all the beauty and pride of the Jordan is laid waste and consumed. Therefore, the Lord my God spoke these words to me: 'O prophet Zechariah, this word is conveyed to you: Feed the flock of slaughter,' that is, for now let it be nurtured and grow, for it will later be killed by the enemy. These sheep and cattle, the princes of the Romans who possessed and maintained them by the right of victory, slaughtered and showed no mercy, or they sacrificed them and felt no pain, that is, they suffered no harm for so much cruelty, and they sold what they withheld not out of mercy, but for a price. We read old histories and traditions of the lamenting Jews, that in the tabernacle of Abraham (where now, every year, a very famous market is held) after the last destruction, which they endured from Adrian, many thousands of people were sold, and those who could not be sold were transported to Egypt and were cut off by shipwreck, famine, and the slaughter of nations. Therefore, these conquerors and avengers of the Lord who killed without remorse and sold cattle and said: Blessed be the Lord, we have become rich, had this belief. Because of their sins, we offended the Jews: therefore we oppressed them, and became rich from their price. It is not surprising, he says, that the enemies were killing the sheep of the conquered justly, and they did not grieve, they sold them, and they boasted in their own wickedness; since their shepherds and teachers themselves did not spare them, and because of their fault, the flock was handed over to wolves.

11:6-7

(Verse 6, 7) And I will no longer spare those who dwell on the earth, says the Lord. Behold, I will deliver each man into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king, and they shall strike the earth, and I will not deliver it from their hand. And I will feed the sheep of slaughter, O you poor of the flock. LXX: Therefore, I will no longer spare the inhabitants of the earth, says the Lord. And behold, I will deliver each man into the hands of his neighbor and into the hand of his king, and they shall strike the earth, and I will not deliver it from their hand, and I will feed the sheep of slaughter in Canaan. What the Seventy translated in the last chapter: 'And I will feed the sheep of slaughter in the land of Canaan', is not in Hebrew, and is not translated by any other interpreter. Therefore, since their shepherds did not spare them, but themselves devoured my first people, for this reason, I will no longer spare the inhabitants of the land of Judea, says the Lord. For he speaks of this land, of which the discourse was to him, and not of the world, as the Jews, interpreting poorly, want to distort the meaning of God into another part. For after the destruction of the temple (which happened to them because for forty-two years, from the time the Lord suffered, having received opportunity, they refused to repent), he says, 'I will send one against the other, and they will cut each other to pieces with mutual slaughter, whether in the very siege of the

temple, when the Roman army will surround Jerusalem, for there will be such wars and dissensions among the Jews that the people will be divided into three parts.' We read the seven books of the Jewish captivity, and we see that this prophecy has been fulfilled, confirmed by historical truth. 'And they will fall,' he says, 'the land, undoubtedly the Romans will destroy all the land and cities of the Jews. And I will not rescue them from their hand.' Listen, O Jews, who hold vain hopes for yourselves, and do not listen to the Lord who says and affirms: 'I will not rescue them from their hands,' that your future captivity among the Romans will be eternal. And I will feed the flock of slaughter, so that the Jews may always be nourished unto death; because this is God's decree: O you who are poor of the flock, that is, the righteous of Israel, who have believed in the Lord Jesus and have received the Son of God, listen to what is being said and learn the sacraments of the following chapter. And as we read in the Septuagint: And I will feed the sheep of slaughter in the land of Canaan, we can understand that the Lord will feed and nourish the Jewish people, who are destined for death and scattered throughout the whole world (that is, in the land of Canaan and among the Gentiles), for the purpose of sacrifice.

11:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) And I took for myself two staffs: one I called Beauty, and the other I called Cords (or Funicles); and I fed the flock. And I cut off three shepherds in one month, and my soul was grieved with them; for their soul also varied against me. And I said, I will not feed you; let it die, let it die; and let it be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another. LXX: And I will take for myself two staffs: one to be called Beauty, and the other I called Cords (or Funicles), and I will feed the sheep. And I will take away three shepherds in one month, and my soul will be embittered against them: for their soul also roared upon me. And I said, I will not feed you: that which is dying, let it die: and that which is cut off, let it be cut off: and let the rest devour every one the flesh of his neighbor. The Lord God had said: Feed the sheep of the slaughter, which their possessors have killed, and do not sin against them to glory, that a buyer may be found for them over them, and their possessors may say: Blessed be the Lord, for I am become rich: and their shepherds will have no pity for them. For I will no more have mercy on the inhabitants of the land, saith, the Lord. And this seemed to be said about one Jewish people, that having killed the prophets, they even laid hands on the Son of God and shouted with a rash voice: His blood be on us and on our children (Matthew 27:25)! Now the Creator of the universe and the Lord explains the mysteries of his world, and says that he had two staffs, one of which he called Beauty, the other Cords, and he fed the flock while being bound with these two staffs; he also cut down three shepherds in one month, and my soul was angry with them; undoubtedly the shepherds signify those whom he cut down in one month. And he explained the reason why he was so indignant with the shepherds that he killed them all in one month: 'Because,' he said, 'their souls changed towards me. And the meaning is this: They did not love me with their whole heart. The hireling shepherds loved the shepherd, not truly me. For the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (John 10:11)'. Therefore, I also expressed my indignation and spoke to the shepherds themselves, whom I had killed in my anger, or to the remaining flock after the shepherds were killed: 'I will not feed you; but let him who has chosen death die by his own will, and let them devour each other and tear each other apart with mutual slaughter.' We have said these things paraphrastically, in order to pave the way for future interpretation. The Creator and Shepherd, whose sheep know his voice and follow him, took for himself two staffs, or two rods, which in

Hebrew are called Macaloth, to demonstrate the appearance of a shepherd. He called one staff Beauty, that is, he protected all the human race with his blessing, from the time of Noah, when the world was restored and sin had not yet defiled it. And for this reason, the calling of all nations is called honorable and beautiful, because nothing is more just than to equally call the parent of the universe, those whom he generated with equal conditions. And another he called the boundaries; for when the Most High was dividing the nations, and dispersing the sons of Adam, he established the boundaries of the nations, according to the number of God's angels (Deut. XXXII). And the part of the Lord became his people Jacob; the boundaries of his inheritance, Israel. And he said, 'I pastured the flock, whether it was Israel itself or the entire human race with Israel.' And he said, 'I cut down three shepherds in one month.' I read in the commentaries of someone: 'The shepherds of the Lord who were cut down with indignation are understood to be the priests, false prophets, and kings of the Jews; because after the passion of Christ, all things were cut down at once, of which Jeremiah speaks: 'The priests did not say, 'Where is the Lord?' Those who hold onto my law did not know me.' And the shepherds have transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied in Baal, and they have followed idols (Jeremiah 2:8). Not satisfied with this explanation, he wants to interpret that the three shepherds who were cut off in one month refer to those who have sinned against the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for all heretics, they sin either against one, or two, or three persons simultaneously. Let him say what he wishes, for his interpretation must not be undermined. We have three shepherds who were killed in one month, Moses seems to be, and Aaron, and Mary (Num. 20); of whom Mary died in the first month, which is called Nisan (), in the desert of Sin, and in the same place because of the water of contradiction, and in the same month, Moses and Aaron were condemned, so that they would not enter the promised land. And so it happened, that out of the three shepherds, one was struck by immediate death, and the others by the sentence of future death. And my soul was contracted, he says, against them: specifically against the three shepherds whom I had placed over my flock. Because their soul also changed towards me, for they did not glorify me at the water of contradiction. But if we refer to the people, that the soul of the people has changed towards God, it must be explained in this way: Therefore, I was angry with them, because they themselves, being wavering between me and idols, fought against me in various ways. Therefore, being angry, I said to Moses: I will not feed you: leave me, and I will destroy them (Exod. XXXII, 10). However, when he says 'Forgive me' in anger, he incites to ask and shows that he can be held back by it. 'Let him die who is destined to die, and let him be cut off who is destined to be cut off; let all bodies be destroyed in solitude, and turned against each other in sedition, like animals tearing each other with mutual bites, and let no one enter the land of promise. Some understood the two callings of Jews and Gentiles, in the first Israel, and in the last by the name Christians. But they did not pay enough attention to how the Christian calling had been previously discarded, and how the Jews remained and were fed by God.

11:10-11

(Vers. 10, 11.) And I took my staff, which was called Beauty, and I cut it in two to break the covenant that I had made with all the peoples. And it was broken on that day, so the poor of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the Lord. LXX: And I will take my beautiful staff and throw it away, to break the covenant that I had made with all the peoples, and it will be broken on that day, and the Canaanites will know that the sheep, which are being watched, are the word of the Lord. After the calling of the Israelites and the assumption of the second rod,

which was called a cord, the Lord took the first rod, called "glory," and cut them off from his worship, because they worshipped idols, and all turned aside, becoming useless together (Psalm 14). And in order to make it more clear what this rod was, he added: "So that I might nullify my covenant which I made with all the people: For as soon as Israel was assumed, the multitude of the nations was cast aside: and as the daughter of the Archisynagogue was born, who is later narrated in the Gospel to be twelve years old, she began to bleed and suffer from a permanent illness (Mark 5; Matthew 9). And it was rendered null and void, he said, the covenant which I had made with all the nations. And the poor of the flock, that is, the people of Israel who keep my commandments, understood that the word of the Lord, that is, the will of the Lord, is to reject the nations that deny Him and to accept the Israelites in the line of Abraham. Because we have interpreted it, and the poor of the flock understood it thus, the Seventy translated it, and the Canaanites will know, the sheep that are entrusted to me, that some have explained: The people of the Jews will know, to whom it was said: The seed of Canaan, and not of Judah (Dan. XIII, 56); who now keep my ceremonies: whether because the Canaanites interpret it as being ready for humility, they will know those who were once ready to be humbled by the Lord and be left behind. But why they insulted us, poor people, for what we have interpreted, the reason is clear: among the Hebrews, thus, Chen () is said: Anie (), poor people; they connect those two words together, for what it is, thus poor people, that is, Chen Anie (), the name of the Canaanite people has been interpreted.

11:12-13

(Verse 12, 13.) And I said to them: If it is good in your eyes, give me my reward, and if not, stop; and they gave me my reward, thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me, Throw them (Vulgate: it) to the potter, a handsome price at which I was appraised by them: and I took the thirty pieces of silver, and threw them into the house of the Lord to the potter. LXX: And I will say to them: If it is good in your sight, give those who determine my reward, or refuse. And they set my wages at thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me: Put them in the melting pot, and see if they are proven, as I have been proven for them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and put them in the house of the Lord in the melting pot. To the poor shepherds of the Israelite flock, who keep my commandments, it is the word of the Lord that I spoke, and the truths that I said, he said to them, that is, to the poor shepherds, if it pleases you (for you are men and I created you with free will, to whom I also spoke in the wilderness: If you listen to me, you will eat the good things of the land (Isa. 1)) for this assumption, by which I rejected the whole human race, and chose you as my special flock, and desired to have a small cord, give me my wages, that is, keep my commandments. But if you do not want to give payment, and it is not pleasing in your eyes to be considered in my name, openly refuse, and do what you want. And those indeed responded to Moses: Whatever the Lord says, we will do (Exod. XXIV, 3). But in the end of times, because I chose them from among the nations, and I freed them from the iron furnace of Egypt, they paid my payment with thirty silver coins, giving them to the Jewish traitor for my blood (Matt. XXVI). And he said, as the prophet said, the Lord said to me, or rather, the Savior, whose words are before, that the Father spoke to him, testifying: Cast it to the sculptor: for which in Hebrew is read Joser (), that is, the sculptor, whom we can call the maker and potter. And the meaning is: Cast my price to the sculptor, who is the Creator and maker of all things. And he did not say, put down; but, cast, so that the payment of the Lord could be judged by the judgment of the sculptor and the potter. And

ironically, seeing his own worth, that is, the divine majesty, for thirty pieces of silver, and being betrayed for such a cheap price: 'This,' he says, 'is the price at which I am appraised by them; but it should be read more closely with the mockery and derision of the speaker: 'So much did my people, and the poor flock once chosen by me as children, judge me worthy of buying and selling. And I, says the Lord through the prophet, as it had been commanded to me by God, took thirty pieces of silver and did not keep them, but threw them into the house of the Lord to the potter: in the house of the Lord, I made them be given to the priests and Pharisees, the very ones who sold me, confessing: 'I have sinned, betraying innocent blood' (Matthew 27:4). But because they considered it the price of blood, they did not want to return it to the treasury, that is, the treasury; but they bought with it a potter's field as a burial place for strangers. For all of us who were foreigners and strangers to the Law have been redeemed by his precious blood, and we are buried and rest in the house of the potter and the Creator of all. For πλ■στη■ and fictore, I have once interpreted as a sculptor, forced by the ambiguity of the word, which signifies both a sculptor and a maker of statues. The Jews, interpreting this passage maliciously, mention thirty pieces of silver, and they mention thirty commandments of the Law, which they are commanded to do in the Law, and again thirty-six others which are prohibited in the Law, and they say that they should return the silver of the Lord's commandments to their own goldsmith and maker: but because they did not want to do this, they were rejected. I wanted to briefly indicate what they think, otherwise I am tired of going through their tedious explanation, so let's move on to the rest.

11:14

(Verse 14) And I cut off my second staff, called 'Favor,' in order to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. Septuagint: And I threw away my second staff, called 'Favor,' in order to annul the covenant that existed between Judah and Israel. And in this place, I came across a long explanation, or rather, intricate puzzles, that I read in the volume of Ezekiel, bringing together the two staffs into one community, and all the things that should be spiritually understood about the harmony between Judah and Ephraim, fitting in with this chapter. But let us follow the order of events. After the Lord was crucified by the Jews, being valued at thirty pieces of silver, and the price of his blood was thrown into the burial place of the Gentiles, who were strangers to the Law and the commandments of God, immediately the Lord, not delaying his judgment any longer, said, 'Cut off my second staff, which was properly mine, and which clung to me in such a way that in Jeremiah it is called a loincloth and a belt and a girdle, or, using the customary word, a hip-band: this second staff, once called a rope and my portion, has been cast away by me, in order that I might dissolve the covenant and brotherhood and harmony that existed between Judah and Israel, and separate brothers from one another.' That in numbering the apostles and those who repented, Judas was called again and confessed his God; but Israel and Ephraim and Joseph were called, who, remaining in the hardness of their hearts, said: We have no king but Caesar (John 19:15). Therefore, he did not introduce it to make void the covenant or testament, which I had with Judah and Israel (for even to this day he extends his hand to those who repent), but to divide believers and non-believers from one people among themselves, saying: Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes will be those of his own household. (Matthew 10:34-35).

11:15-17

(vv. 15 seqq.) And the Lord said to me: Take for yourself the vessels of a foolish shepherd. For behold, I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not visit those who are abandoned, he will not seek the scattered, and he will not heal the broken. And what stands, he will not nourish, and he will eat the flesh of the fat ones, and he will dissolve their hoofs. O shepherd, forsaking the flock and the idol: a sword will be upon his arm and upon his right eye, his arm will be dried up with dryness, and his right eye will be darkened with darkness. LXX: And the Lord said to me: Take yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For behold I will raise up a shepherd in the land, who shall not visit what is forsaken, nor seek what is scattered, nor heal what is broken, nor nourish that which standeth, and he shall eat the flesh of the fat ones, and break their hoofs. O shepherd, that feedest the sheep, woe to the idle shepherd that forsaketh the flock: the sword upon his arm and upon his right eye: his arm shall quite wither away, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened. When he says, 'Take for yourself the vessels of a foolish shepherd,' it signifies that he had taken for himself two staffs, one called Favor, and the other called Union. And because he had thrown them away due to his own fault and sin, and the unity between Judah and Israel had been broken, we have been grafted into the root of the good olive tree, and blindness has come upon the house of Israel in part, until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in (Rom. 11). Now it is said to the prophet, as a most weighty foolish shepherd, or unwise, to assume the prophecy. The foolish and ignorant shepherd is undoubtedly the Antichrist; who is said to come at the end of the world, and the manner in which he will come is indicated. So we must take the shepherd's vessels, his symbols and attire, a purse, a staff, a flute, and a whistle. Just as Isaiah, in order to demonstrate the captivity of the people, enters naked (Isa. 20); and Jeremiah goes to the house of the potter, to show the destruction of the vessel which was spinning on the wheel, and to demonstrate the destruction of Israel and the power of God (Jer. 18); and Ezekiel, in order to demonstrate the overthrow of Jerusalem and the escape of Zedekiah, and the burdens of the captives, not only speaks but also demonstrates through his attire, by digging through the wall and carrying it on his shoulders (Ezek. 12); so does Zechariah take on the attire of the foolish and ignorant shepherd, to proclaim the one who is to come (Zech. 11). This shepherd will rise in Israel, for the true shepherd had said: I will no longer feed you. He is also called by another name in the prophet Daniel (Ch. IX), and in the Gospel (Mark XIII), and in the letter of Paul to the Thessalonians (II Thess. II), the abomination of desolation, who will sit in the temple of the Lord and will make himself out to be God, the one who is also referred to as the great sense through Isaiah (Isa. XXXII). And he has come for this purpose, not to heal, but to destroy the flock of Israel. For the good shepherd visits the sick sheep, seeks out the scattered ones, brings back the ones that have been left behind, and sustains the tired ones. On the other hand, the bad shepherd acts against everything, devours the flesh of the fat ones, dissolves the hooves of the rams and sheep, and perverts them so that they do not enter with a straight foot. The Jews received this shepherd, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and render useless by the brightness of his coming, so that those who did not believe the truth may not be saved but believe in falsehood and be judged because they consented to wickedness. But describing the worst, foolish, and inexperienced shepherd, the prophetic discourse is directed to him, saying: O shepherd, and idol. So wicked is the shepherd that he is not called a worshiper of idols, but he himself is named an idol, while he calls himself God, and desires to be worshiped by all. He has abandoned the flock to be devoured by beasts, which the Lord had kept for so long. A sword is upon his arm, and strength, and upon his right eye, with which he proudly claimed to see the sacraments of God sharply, and to see more than all the

prophets who came before, to the extent that he called himself the Son of God. But that sword, of which we have spoken above, and of which we will now speak in part, is the one about which Isaiah also speaks: My sword has become intoxicated in the heavens (Isa. XXXIV, 5). Therefore, the sword of the Lord will be upon his arm and upon his right eye, so that its strength and all the boasting of his power may be dried up by aridity, and the knowledge which he falsely promised to himself may be obscured by eternal darkness.

12:1

(Chapter 12, Verse 1) The burden of the word of the Lord over Israel: says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, and Judah shall be in siege against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. LXX: The Assumption of the word of the Lord upon Israel, says the Lord, stretching out the heavens and founding the earth, and forming the spirit of man within it: Behold, I will bring Jerusalem to be a threshold that is moved in a circuit by all peoples, in Judah and around Jerusalem. And there will be a siege around Jerusalem, and it will be in that day, I will make Jerusalem a stone to be trampled upon by all nations: whoever tramples upon it will mock it, and I will gather all the nations of the earth against it. There are three interpretations of this passage, from the place where we read: Behold, I will place Jerusalem as a cup of intoxication to all the peoples around, until the place where it is written (Ch. XIII, v. 7): Stir up the sword against my shepherd, and against the man who stands beside me, says the Lord of hosts: Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered. Others among the Jews believe that this has already been partially fulfilled by Zerubbabel, up to C. Pompey, who was the first of the Romans to capture Judea and the temple, as Josephus writes. But others maintain that when Jerusalem has been rebuilt, it will be at the end of the world: which promise is made to the wretched Jewish people, along with their blinded shepherd, whom we read about above. But others, that is, we who are called by the name of Christ, in the Church until the end of the world, remember daily to be fulfilled and to fulfill. And lest we extend the length of the volume with details, we present it in the following way: These say this, others suspect this, we feel this way, and we have presented three opinions so that the diligent reader can understand what should be fittingly attributed to whom, based on the diversity of interpretation. Therefore, the Lord who stretched out the heavens like a skin, and solidified the earth with a high mass, and formed the spirit of man within it, is the same Creator of all souls, so that he might form one living being from two substances, the soul and the body. For the spirit is often understood as the soul, as it is said: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit (Luke 23:46). And: You will take away their spirit, and they will die and return to their dust (Psalm 104:29). Therefore, this Creator of the universe and Lord testifies that He will set Jerusalem as a threshold of stumbling for all the surrounding peoples, so that whoever touches its threshold will be intoxicated and fall, or if the threshold itself falls upon him from whom it is touched. But even Judas, besieged Jerusalem, is captured by the Gentiles, and in passing into their fellowship, he will be compelled to besiege his own metropolis. Moreover, not only will the Lord make Jerusalem a threshold of stumbling for all peoples, but He will also make it a stone of burden for all peoples, and whoever wants to lift it will be torn apart by laceration. For all the kingdoms of the earth will gather against Jerusalem. It is a custom in the cities of Palestine, and even to this day throughout

all Judaea, that in villages, towns, and fortresses, large stones of great weight are placed, for young men to exercise themselves and lift them according to their strength. Some lift them up to their knees, some up to their waist, some up to their shoulders and head, and some even above their heads, demonstrating the magnitude of their strength with straight and joined hands. In the citadel of the Athenians, near the statue of Minerva, I saw a bronze sphere of immense weight, which I could hardly move due to my own weakness. When I asked what it was for, I was told by the city's inhabitants that it was used to test the strength of athletes, and no one was allowed to participate in the games until their ability to lift the weight was determined. Therefore, the meaning is this: I will set Jerusalem as a heavy stone for all nations to lift. Indeed, they will lift it up, and, according to the variety of their strength, they will devastate it; but it is necessary that, while it is being lifted up, in the very exertion and elevation of the weight, the heaviest stone leaves some crack or scrape on the bodies that are lifting it. The Church can be interpreted in this way, that all persecutors who have fought against the house of the Lord will be intoxicated by the same cup with which Jeremiah offers to drink to all nations, so that they may drink, and be intoxicated, and fall, and vomit, and go mad (Jer. XXV). I know that in a time of persecution many of our people are being forced to fight against the Church; but whoever desires to lift this burden, will indeed lift it, and with his own hands will support it, for he will not go unpunished, with the sword of the Lord fighting against him. The stone of burden, which we have interpreted as best we could, the Seventy have translated as a stone trampled on by all nations. Whoever tramples on it (that is, Jerusalem) will be mocked. The meaning is clear, that Jerusalem is to be trampled upon and mocked by both enemy nations and persecutors as they please. But the higher meaning is better and truer. We will briefly explain each point, so that we may finally come to the conclusion, lest if we have written at length, the mind of the Reader be confused by the obscurity of events and the length of the discourse.

12:4

(Vers. 4.) On that day, says the Lord, I will strike every horse with dismay, and its rider with madness; but upon the house of Judah I will open my eyes, and all the horses of the peoples I will strike with blindness. LXX: On that day, says the Lord Almighty, I will strike every horse with astonishment, and its rider with madness; but upon the house of Judah I will open my eyes, and all the horses of the peoples I will strike with blindness. At that time (for that is what 'day' signifies) when Jerusalem is besieged, so that even Judas is compelled to besiege it, the Lord will strike down all the enemies' horses, both carnally and spiritually, causing them to be amazed, so that all who see them being struck down will be astonished, and their riders, under the weight of their misfortune, will be driven to madness. And the Lord will open His eyes upon the house of Judah, who were being forced to do something against their own city, so that He may have mercy on them and make them worthy by His gaze and enlighten them by the light of His eyes. But He will strike down all the horses of the peoples with eternal blindness. We have already mentioned who the spiritually understanding horses are: The deceitful horse leads to salvation (Ps. 32:17). And: Some trust in chariots and some in horses (Ps. 20:8), and similar things to these. We have also called their riders, either demons or false teachers, who will all be amazed and proven to be foolish, so that they are shown to know nothing. But palpable darkness shall overwhelm them, such as when the firstborn of the Egyptians were struck down (Exod. 11). But the house of Judah, that is, the people who confess God, appears to be among the number of persecutors, broken by

the anxieties of persecution and frightened by fear. The Lord will open His eyes to look upon many, saying to Himself: Look upon me and have mercy on me (Psalm 85:16), and may they deserve to hear: The Lord will be your eternal light (Isaiah 60). This is the crushing of a very heavy stone that the Lord threatens against His adversaries, who have attempted to raise up and trouble Jerusalem.

12:5

(Verse 5) And the leaders of Judah will say in their hearts: Let the inhabitants of Jerusalem be strengthened in the Lord their God. LXX: And the tribunes, that is, the commanders, will say in their hearts: Let us find for ourselves, those who dwell in Jerusalem, in the Almighty Lord their God. When the Lord opens His eyes upon Judah and strikes all the horses of the nations with blindness, the leaders of Judah, of whom it was said above, will be besieged against Jerusalem. They will make vows in their hearts, because they will not dare to speak freely, so that Jerusalem may overcome and Judah, defeated by the enemies, may conquer with its own citizens. For this reason, as we have said, let them be strengthened, and let them translate εἰς ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς as *inveniemus nobis* in Latin, as it is written in Hebrew Emsa LI (), which Aquila translated as καὶ ἡμεῖς, that is, comfort me, so that the meaning is: The chiliarchs, tribunes, and leaders of Judea will desire, and they will make their wishes in the secret place of the mind, that God may strengthen the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the Lord their God, and they may overcome their adversaries. According to the tropology, the apostles are the leaders and tribunes, and all the apostolic men and teachers who have been in charge of Christ's army, who would not find others for themselves except those who live in Jerusalem, in the vision of peace, and who live in the Lord Almighty their God. Among these leaders was the apostle Paul, who found Titus and Timothy, Luke and Silvanus: Peter also instructed Mark, the writer of the Gospel, and the other apostles who filled the whole world with their teaching and education, so that the inhabitants of Jerusalem would have disciples.

12:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) On that day, I will make the leaders of Judah like a fiery furnace among wood, and like a burning torch among hay. They will consume all the surrounding peoples to the right and to the left, and Jerusalem will be inhabited again in its own place, in Jerusalem. And the Lord will save the dwellings of Judah, just as in the beginning, so that the glory of the house of David and the pride of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be exalted over Judah. LXX: On that day, I will make the commanders of Judah like a flaming firepot among wood, and like a burning torch among straw, and they will devour all the peoples of the Lord around them, to the right and to the left, and Jerusalem will still be inhabited in its own place, and the Lord will save the dwellings of Judah, just as at the beginning, so that the glory of the house of David may not be magnified, and the pride of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be lifted up over Judah. When the leaders of Judah said in their hearts: Strengthen me, Lord, those who were oppressed in Jerusalem, so that those who were overcome by their own weakness may overcome with your help. Then I, the Lord Almighty their God, will make the leaders of Judah like a fiery furnace in wood, and like a torch in straw, to devour the adversaries with whom they were joined through feigned friendship. Let them devour from the right and from the left, and let them kill all the peoples around, so that Jerusalem may once again be inhabited in its place, and may not fear hostile attacks. Let the cities, towns,

villages, and hamlets of the three tribes of Judaea, which were plundered and devastated, be restored as they were before being ravaged. And let not the royal house, and the distinguished and magnificent tribe of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem boast against the tribe of Judah, for it is ruled by its own authority, governed by its own counsel; but let them know that victory belongs to the Lord in both. Whether these things are according to history or they are future events, leaving the faith of the affairs to the judgment of the Lord, and to those who have received the sacred spirit of wisdom and truth from him. We say that during the time of the Church's persecution, the leaders and officers bearing the name of Christians, about whom we have spoken above, when the Lord brings peace to Jerusalem and destroys the adversary by the breath of His mouth, will be like a blazing furnace in the wood, devouring fruitless trees, and like torches in the straw, consuming whatever grain it does not have, and carried by every wind of doctrine, they will be handed over to the fire. And the princes of Judah and the officers at their right and left will devour those who refuse to walk in the middle of the road and do not know. To be excessive in wickedness, from which the people of God refrain, we will not turn to the right or to the left, but we will walk the straight path (Numbers 20). The right path is called frugality, which the Greeks call φειδολία (sparsity); the left path is luxury; the middle path is rectitude and frugality. Therefore, all those on the right path, to whom it is said: Do not be overly righteous (Ecclesiastes 7:17): and on the left, those who hear: The ways that turn to the left are perverse (Proverbs 4:27), the devouring flame will consume, and with the enemies defeated and removed, Jerusalem, that is the Church, will regain its former glory and be in its proper state, and the tents of Judah will be saved, while the gatherings of Christians scattered throughout the world, which we desire to leave like tents and tabernacles for the house that is not made by human hands, and for the heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore, the dwellings of the common people and everyone who is called by the name Christian, and who are considered in the public eye, received the old peace when the princes of the Churches were besieged and turned to flight, so that the masters and teachers do not think that it was due to their own teaching and wisdom, but that peace was restored to the Churches by the help of the Lord.

12:8

(Verse 8.) On that day, the Lord will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and there will be those among them who stumble on that day, like David. The house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them. LXX: And on that day, the Lord will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and the one who is weak among them on that day will be like the house of David; and the house of David will be like the house of God, and the angel of the Lord before them. With Judah achieving victory, and the Lord restoring its tents as they were in the beginning, so that the royal house does not boast against the people, on that day and at that time, the Lord (whose help Judah will use to devour its adversaries on the right and on the left) will also protect the besieged Jerusalem; and things will change to such great happiness and blessedness, that the one who was considered lowly will be like a royal house; and the one who was from the royal house will be like a house of God, that is, like a messenger of the Lord and of angelic dignity before those who are saved at that time. According to the anagogy: The Lord will protect the inhabitants of the Church, with peace restored to the Churches after the most severe persecution, when it will also be adorned with the interpretation of its own name: for Jerusalem is expressed as the vision of peace. And blessed will be those who fought for the Church, and confessed the Lord in

persecution: so that even the least among them, who may have sinned and offended in some way, should be placed in the order of masters: and let the masters who have kept their rank be like the house of God, and like the angel of the Lord; for this is what we strive for with all our effort, placed on earth, and sweating with various labors, so that we may be transformed into angelic glory.

12:9

(Verse 9) And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications. LXX: And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem, and I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of mercy. In that day, when the Lord protects the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Lord will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. But He will crush not for destruction, but for correction, so that they may cease to wage war against Jerusalem and begin to be of Jerusalem. For if He created all things out of nothing, He did not create them in order to destroy what He created; but so that through His mercy, those things which were created may be saved. Hence, in the book of Wisdom, which is attributed to Solomon (if anyone, however, is pleased to receive the book), we find it written: He created all things that they might exist, and the generations of the world might be preserved; and there will be no deadly poison for them (Wisdom 1). For just as the Lord came to seek what was lost and saved the human race, so he also destroyed the nations, because the nations were adversaries. Therefore it follows: I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and mercy. Concerning this grace, Paul also writes: The love of God has been poured out into our hearts (or yours) through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us (Rom. V, 5). And in the aforementioned volume it is contained: Who shall explore the things that are in heaven, unless you have given wisdom, and sent your Holy Spirit from on high? And thus the paths of those who are on earth have been corrected, and men have been taught what pleases you (Wisdom 9:16). And in Isaiah God speaks: I have given my Spirit upon you (Isaiah 42:1). And again, the same Scripture mentions: I have given my Spirit upon him (ibid). However, the word effusion implies a sense of abundance or generosity, as is evident in what we have said: 'The love of God has been poured out into our hearts' (Romans 5:5). And in another place, speaking as if in the person of God, it is said: 'I will pour out my Spirit on all people' (Joel 2:28). The Apostle also speaks of the spirit of grace in his letter to the Hebrews: 'How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?' (Hebrews 10:29). And the Holy Spirit is said to have different graces. And the greeting of the Apostle: Grace (he says) be multiplied unto you, and peace (I Tim. I, 1): that after he hath forgiven us our sins, then peace may by mercy follow. These things the Jews partly already accomplished, and more fully commemorate in the consummation of the world. But we understand and approve that they are daily fulfilled after the advent of Christ.

12:10

(Vers. 10.) And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only son, and they shall grieve over him, as one grieves over a firstborn. LXX: And they shall look upon me, because they have insulted me; and they shall mourn over him with

mourning, as over a dearest one; and they shall grieve with sorrow, as over a firstborn. The Hebrew letters Daleth and Res, that is, D and R, are similar and are distinguished only by a small mark. From which it happens that the same word, when read by different people, is translated differently. Let us give one example for the sake of understanding: And the clothing, he says, was a Linen Ephod (I Sam. II, 18), that is, a linen garment, for linum is called 'linen': hence, Baddim are called 'linen garments'. In the Hebrew and Latin language, some read Ephod Bar wrongly: for Bar can mean either 'son', 'bundle of grain', 'chosen', or 'curly'. What happened there due to an error in interpretation, we have also detected here. For if it is read as Dacarū (), it is understood to mean 'they pierced or nailed', but if the order is reversed, with the letters transposed, it is understood to mean 'they danced', as Racadu (). And the error arose due to the similarity of the letters. However, the beloved disciple John, who drew wisdom from the heart of the Lord and was a Hebrew among the Hebrews (John 19), did not greatly care about what the Greek letters contained; but he translated word for word, as he had read it in Hebrew, and said that it was fulfilled at the time of the Lord's passion. But if someone does not accept it, let him bear witness, from whom John has brought forth these words in the place of the Holy Scriptures: and when he does not find, he will be forced to accept the truth with ingratitude. But the Jews will mourn as over an only begotten and firstborn, signifying the same in the Lord Savior, both only begotten and firstborn. He is called only begotten, because of the nature's property: Firstborn, according to the Apostle, of those who rise from the dead (Colossians 1). For the only-begotten, most beloved, the Septuagint translated, about whom we read in the Gospel: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17). Then they will grieve for having crucified Him when they see Him reigning in glory. The word καταρχήσαντο, among the Greeks, is composed not from illusion, but from dance, namely that they danced against the Lord as if in jest, when they said in jest and laughed: Ah! You who destroy the temple, and in three days rebuild it: save yourself, coming down from the cross (Matthew 15:29, 30). They were speaking these and other mocking words, and dancing with a certain madness and mockery.

12:11-12

(Verse 11, 12.) On that day there will be great lamentation in Jerusalem, like the lamentation of Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. And the land will mourn, family by family: the families of the house of David separately, and their women separately (for the Hebrew word Nese, that is, γυνή και, signifies both). The families of the house of Nathan separately, and their women separately. The families of the house of Levi separately, and their women separately. The families of the house of Shimei separately, and their women separately. All the remaining families, each family separately, and their women separately. LXX: In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning for a bitter fruit that is cut down in the field, and the land will mourn by tribes and tribes: the tribe of David separately, and their women separately; the tribe of the house of Judah separately, and their women separately; the tribe of the house of Nathan separately, and their women separately; the tribe of the house of Levi separately, and their women separately; the tribe of Simeon separately, and their women separately; all the remaining tribes separately, and their women separately. Adadremmon, for which LXX translated as Rhonon, is a city near Jerusalem, which was once called by this name and is now called Maximianopolis in the field of Megiddo, where Josiah, a just king, was wounded by Pharaoh Nechao (2 Kings 23:29). It is on this occasion that Jeremiah wrote Lamentations, which are read in the Church, and the book of

Chronicles testifies that he wrote them (2 Chronicles 35). Just as at that time, after wicked kings, all the people's hope was in Josiah, and when he was killed, a great mourning was stirred in the city, as we read in Hebrew: The spirit of our mouth, the Lord Christ, was taken captive in our sins, to whom we said: In your shadow we will live among the nations (Lamentations 4:20) (although others, according to spiritual understanding, relate this to the Lord Jesus). In the same way, with the crucified Savior, mourning will be renewed in Jerusalem, just as it once was in the city of Adadremmon, in the field of Megiddo. And what follows: Families and families, or tribes and tribes separately: the families of the house of David separately, and their wives or women separately. This signifies that in times of tribulation and mourning we should not be concerned with marriage and wedding ceremonies. Hence in Joel, when captivity was near, it is said to the Jews: Let the bridegroom come out of his chamber, and the bride out of her room (Joel 2:16). And with the flood approaching, Noah is commanded: Enter into the ark, you and your sons, and your wife, and the wives of your sons (Gen. VII, 1). And afterwards, when the flood had ended, it is said to him: Come out, you and your wife, and your sons, and their wives (Gen. VIII, 16), so that those who were separated in the ark during the impending danger could be restored to the world and serve the future generation and their children. And this not only happens in times of distress, but also in times of prayer: when we want to supplicate the Lord, as the Apostle says to the Corinthians: Do not defraud one another, unless perhaps by agreement for a limited time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer (I Cor. VII, 5). Therefore, now the three houses of David, and the three houses of Nathan, and the three houses of Levi, and the three houses of Semei, are separated from their wives: so that they may mourn the only-begotten and first-born Lord Jesus, of whom it was said: His blood be upon us, and upon our children (Matt. 27:25). In the royal house of David, the tribe of Judah is included. In the prophetic order, the house of Nathan is described. The house of Levi pertains to the priests, from whom the priesthood originated. In Semei, teachers are accepted: for from this tribe swarms of masters have sprung up. He is silent about the other tribes, which do not have any privilege of dignity. In that which he says, 'All the other tribes, each tribe separately, and their wives separately, he includes them all without naming them. Let us say, according to the Septuagint, it is called a grove, not one tree of pomegranates, that is, of the pomegranate tree, but a place planted with these trees, about which the Bridegroom says, according to the spiritual understanding, in the Song of Songs: I went down to see in the generative stream if the vineyard had blossomed, if the pomegranates had blossomed (Song of Songs 6:10).' For the Savior descended to the stream of this world and its troubled waters, from which even in the type of him Elias is said to have drunk (III Kings 17): so that after the flowers of the vineyard and the fruit of the pomegranate tree, he might receive both, and, inebriating his Church, be heard by her, saying: 'You will give me to drink the wine of aromatics, of pomegranates of my orchard.' (Song of Solomon 8:2). Such a potion not only drives away the heat of the stomach, but is also said to heal a corrupted bowel and benefit the other viscera. Nothing is more beautiful than this apple; in its redness, it signifies the modesty of the Church: in the order of its seeds, it represents the degrees and members of the whole body, distributed through individual functions. When the Savior did not find fruit on such a vineyard and on the apple tree, he will say: Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit (John 15:2). And in another place, John the Baptist proclaims: And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees (Matthew 3:10). Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire (Luke 3:9). In the gathering of

vices or evils, when on the day of judgment all the names of dignities will be set aside, and that which is written will be fulfilled: Behold the man and his works (Matthew 3, Luke 3); and the chaff separated from the wheat, there will be great mourning not in another place, but in Jerusalem. For indeed the plague and judgment will begin with the saints, and kings and priests and prophets and teachers will strike their chests with their hands when they see that the most beautiful evils have been cut down, and the one whom they had pierced reigning in the majesty of the Father and his own (1 Peter 4).

13:1

(Chapter 13, Verse 1) On that day there will be a flowing fountain for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for cleansing from sin and impurity. LXX: On that day there will be an open fountain for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for transformation and purification. Concerning this fountain, which is said to flow out from the house of David, it is written in the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 47) that the fountain shall burst forth in the house of the Lord and become a river, which is called the water of forgiveness and indulgence; and it shall flow to the desert and the sea, which is now called the Dead Sea, and it shall give life to all kinds of fish, and trees of various kinds shall grow on both banks, bearing abundant fruit every month. And so that we may know that the house, that is, the temple of God, is itself the house of David, which in Ezekiel is called the house of God, and in Zechariah is called the house of David: this fountain, coming forth from the house of God, is brought back to the Church and to the knowledge of the Scriptures, so that we may all be reborn in Christ, and in the water of baptism our sins may be forgiven to us. Nothing is more unclean than a menstruating woman, who makes whatever she touches unclean: and yet these impurities of Christ are washed away by baptism. For the ablution of sins and menstruation, the LXX translated it as transference and sprinkling: that we may go from the Law to the Gospel, from the letter to the spirit, from the shadow to the truth, that the future and eternal may succeed the brief and present. Moreover, sprinkling signifies the blood of the Lord, about which Peter the Apostle also speaks: Grace to you and peace be multiplied, in obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:2). And again: Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter, 18), with which whoever is sprinkled and redeemed, can say with the prophet: You shall sprinkle me, O Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: You shall wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow (Psalm 50, 9).

13:2

(V2.) And it shall be in that day, says the Lord of hosts, I will destroy the names of the idols from the land, and they shall be remembered no more; and I will also remove the false prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. LXX: And it shall be in that day, says the Lord of hosts, I will destroy the names of the idols from the land, and their memory shall no longer exist; and the false prophets and the unclean spirit I will remove from the land. On that day that is frequently mentioned, all idols will be removed from the land, including those idols of which the Psalmist says: The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands (Ps. 115:4), so that there may be no other religion except the name of the Christians, and concerning which it is written in the prophet: Wail, you sculptures, in Jerusalem and in Samaria. For as I have done to Samaria and its idols, so I will do to Jerusalem and its idols (Jer. XXX). Whether these idols, of

which the Apostle speaks: Now the Spirit manifestly saith: That in the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error and doctrines of devils, Speaking lies in hypocrisy and having their conscience seared (into idolatry) (I Tim. IV, 1, 2). For just as idols are made by the hand of the craftsman, so the perverse doctrine of heretics, whatever it may simulate, turns into an idol and causes Antichrist to be adored in place of Christ. For pseudo-prophets, in Hebrew the prophets are absolutely called prophets, that is, Nebim, which also means pseudo-prophets; but nevertheless even the priests of idols among the Gentiles are called prophets.

13:3

(Verse 3) And it will be, when someone prophesies further, his father and mother, who bore him, will say to him: You shall not live, because you have spoken falsehood in the name of the Lord. And his father and mother, who bore him, will pierce him when he prophesies. (Septuagint: If a man prophesies further, his father and mother, who bore him, will say to him: You shall not live, because you have spoken falsehood in the name of the Lord. And his father and mother, who bore him, will bind him when he prophesies.) With the names of the idols removed from the earth, and the false prophets, and the unclean spirit who spoke through them, if anyone should dare to go beyond and prophesy in the name of the Lord, immediately his father and mother will forget their parents, in order to hold onto the service of God, and they will pronounce a sentence of death against their own son. And the minds of all, so devoted to God, will be so pure that there will be no need for a public judgement; rather, let those who are such perish by the judgement of their relatives. Therefore, because we have said this, they will fight against him, which is the same word in Hebrew as above, Dacaru (). So in what way did the seventy interpreters use the word κατωρχ■σαντο there, that is, they insulted or mocked him, and to use the word word for word, jumped against him; and here they have translated the word συμποδιο■σιν, that is, they will hinder: when both Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotius have also translated it there and here in the same way, they have nailed it. But rightly the one who falsely prophesies is called a man, as the Apostle says: For while there are rivalries and contentions among you, are you not carnal and walking according to man (I Cor. III, 3)? And in the Psalms: But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes (Psalm 82:7). And those who are unworthy of the spirit of God shall deserve to hear: My spirit shall not remain in these men, because they are carnal (Genesis 6:3).

13:3-6

(Vers. 3 seqq.) And on that day, the prophets will be confused, each one from his own vision, when he prophesies, and they will not cover themselves with a sackcloth to deceive. Instead, they will say, 'I am not a prophet, I am a farmer, for Adam is my example from my youth.' And it will be said to him, 'What are these wounds in the middle of your hands?' And he will say, 'I have been wounded in the house of those who love me.' LXX: And on that day, the prophets will be confused, each one from his own vision, when he prophesies, and they will wear a hairy garment with which they have deceived, and they will say, 'I am not a prophet, because a man has begotten me from my youth,' and I will say to him, 'What are these wounds in the middle of your hands?' And he will say: To whom have I been struck in the house of the one who loves me? Whoever attempts to prophesy and is condemned by the judgment of his parents, and approves the falsehood of his prophecy by contrary outcomes, he will be confounded by his vision, and he will no longer be covered with a hairshirt in order to lie. For this was the attire of the prophets, that when they called

the people to repentance, they would be clothed in a hairshirt. Therefore, it is commanded to Isaiah to take the sackcloth from his loins, and to walk naked (Isa. XX): for it is not at all a time of repentance, but of imminent captivity. Therefore, this false prophet will by no means receive the prophet's garb, so as not to deceive the simple under a foreign guise and covering. Rather, he will find delight in tilling the earth and prove himself dedicated to agriculture, subjecting himself to the divine sentence that was spoken to Adam: 'Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread' (Gen. III, 17-18). And when he presents himself as born for this purpose, to eat his bread in the sweat of his face, another will ask him, and say: What do these wounds mean to you, and these wounds which are in the midst of your hands? And there is meaning: Why do you adhere to the gallows? Why are your hands pierced with nails? What have you committed, that you should submit to this punishment and torture? And he will answer, and say: I received these wounds and these lashes, condemned by the judgment of my parents, and of those who did not hate me, but loved me. And in the meantime, with falsehood dispelled, truth will prevail, so that even he who is punished for his own fault admits that he has suffered rightly. The Hebrews have explained this, which is written: 'They will not cover themselves with a sackcloth to lie,' saying that they will not be filled with the demonic spirit, whom we read in Isaiah as 'hairy,' so that by this occasion they may not lie about the deceptive appearance of God's words in themselves, or deny the Lord: For they lie and deny in their external appearance, as they interpret.

13:7-9

(Verse 7 and following) "I will raise up a spear against my shepherd, and against the man who is my associate," says the Lord of hosts. Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones. And they shall be in all the land, says the Lord, two parts in it shall be cut off and perish, and the third part shall be left. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will test them as gold is tested. He will call my name, and I will answer him: I will say, 'You are my people,' and he will say, 'The Lord is my God.' Zechariah: Sword, rise against my shepherd, and against the man who is my associate, says the Lord Almighty. Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will raise my hand against the shepherds. On that day, says the Lord, two-thirds will be cut off and perish, and one-third will be left. I will bring the one-third through the fire, and I will refine them as one refines silver, and I will test them as one tests gold. He himself will call upon my name, and I will answer him; I will say, 'This is my people,' and he will say, 'The Lord is my God.' Regarding the sword that the LXX translated as '■ομφα■α' in Hebrew as 'Areb,' we found that Aquila and Symmachus translated it as 'μ■χαίρα,' meaning sword or blade. And as for the phrase we translated as 'cohaerent mihi,' which means 'adhering to me,' Aquila interpreted it as 'contribulem meum,' meaning 'my fellow countryman,' and Symmachus translated it as 'populi mei,' meaning 'my people' in Hebrew 'Amithi.' The LXX translated it as 'civem ejus,' which means 'his fellow citizen,' and Theodotio translated it as 'proximum ejus,' meaning 'his neighbor.' At the end of the sentence, they read 'Jod' instead of 'Vau,' which are only different in size. If 'Jod' is read, it signifies 'my.' If 'Vau' is read, it signifies 'his.' But I marvel at certain individuals who wish to diminish this prophecy (which the evangelist Matthew related to the Lord and Savior after his disciples fled during his passion, and then he said it was fulfilled) with allegorical interpretations, and while they desire to appear to know more than

others, they do not hold to the rule of truth. For the evangelist Matthew reports: Then Jesus said to them: all of you will be offended because of me this night. For it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. And again: All this has happened so that the Scriptures of the Prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples, leaving him, fled (Matt. XXVI, 31 et seq.). Nor should it be thought that this testimony is taken from another place, because in the Gospel God says of himself that he is the shepherd who is struck, and in the present place, we read that it is commanded with sword and spear: Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered. This is a sword and this is a spear, and a javelin, from which in the twenty-first Psalm the Lord speaks to the Father: Deliver my soul from the sword; and my only one from the hand of the dog (Psalm 21:12). Of this javelin it is also written in the prophet Amos: They shall all die by the sword, the sinners of the land (Amos 9:10). Which cannot be taken literally: for many sinners perish in shipwreck, others by poison, these are suffocated by water, those consumed by fire. But with this sword and this spear, all sinners perish (or are punished), and the dark-skinned Ethiopians, of whom Zephaniah testifies with sacred mouth, saying: But you also, Ethiopians, will be killed by my sword (Zeph. 1:12). After the good shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep (John 10:15), who spoke to the Father: Those whom you struck, they pursued, and they added to the pain of my wounds (Ps. 68:27), he was struck by the will of the Father, and the man who is united with God who said: I am in the Father, and the Father is in me (John 13:10), hung on the gibbet, and said: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit (Luke 23:46): immediately the sheep were scattered, the whole multitude of believers in Christ. And the Lord stretched out his hand, as we read in the Septuagint, to the shepherds, whom many of the Jewish rulers interpret as evil. But as it is written in Hebrew, to the children, to whom the Lord said in the Gospel: Do not be afraid, little flock (Luke, XII). And in Isaiah: Behold, I and the children, or little ones, whom God has given me (Isaiah VIII, 18). And there were two parts in all the land of the Jews and the Gentiles, who perished and failed together: for in his suffering, the voice of the Psalmist is fulfilled, saying: Save me, O Lord, for the godly one is gone (Psalm XI, 1). And: All have turned aside; they have together become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one (Ps. XIII, 3). As the nations and the Jews were perishing, the third part of the world, that is, the third people of the Christians, suddenly increased. And it says beautifully: A third part shall be left in it, that is, on the earth: because among the Jews and the nations, those who have confessed the Lord are alone reserved for the life and habitation of the earth. Moreover, the third part, so as not to be delicate and secure in confession, is tested as silver and gold are tested by fire, which the Lord desires to burn in believers (Luke 12), and which Paul desires to fervently burn (Romans 12). And so the apostles, baptized in the fire of the Spirit of the Lord (Acts 2), speak in the psalm: For you have tested us, O God, you have tried us as silver is tried (Psalm 65:10, 11). And after a little while: We passed through fire and water, and you led us into refreshment. And in another place it is said to the believer: If you pass through fire, the flame will not burn you: because I am with you (Isaiah 43:2). But the fire does not consume, and the flame does not devour, because it is the voice of the Lord who cuts off the flame of fire (Psalm 29:7). When these little ones have been tested in this way, upon whom the Lord has turned his hand, and through their calling the whole multitude of nations has believed, then the people of believers will call Christ by his name, and with him saying: You are my people, the people will respond: You are the Lord my God. The Jews refer these things to Christ: and they contend that they will happen in the last time; but the difference between us and them is that we say that they have already been fulfilled,

while they mention things that are still to be fulfilled.

14:1-2

(Chapter 14, verses 1, 2.) Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when your spoils will be divided in your midst. And I will gather all nations to Jerusalem for battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women violated. And half of the city shall go into captivity, but the rest of the people shall not be removed from the city. LXX: Behold, the days of the Lord are coming, and your spoils will be divided within you. And I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women defiled. And half of the city shall go into captivity, but the rest of my people shall not perish from the city. Those whom the Lord threatens to come will divide the spoils of Jerusalem in its midst, and everything that is included in the prophetic discourse, these are the ones about whom we also read in Isaiah: The day of the Lord, the day of incurable fury and wrath, to make the whole earth a desolation and to remove sinners from it (Isaiah 13:9). But how necessary will it be for its spoils to be divided in its midst? This often happens, that what has been suddenly seized in the city is divided outside in the field or in the wilderness, lest perhaps the enemies come upon it. However, such a weight of evils will fall upon them, that the spoils will be divided among themselves as a means of securing victory. Not only will Jerusalem be captured, inciting all nations against it in battle, but the houses of those who dwell in Jerusalem will be laid waste, and the women violated, causing sorrow for their husbands and masters. They will be unable to protect their homes from pillage or their wives from the lust of the enemy, as is written elsewhere: 'Those who gather within you shall fall by the sword and your sons shall be dashed to pieces before your eyes; your homes shall be plundered and your wives violated' (Isaiah 13). Nothing can be found more cruel or wretched, where out of fear for their own lives they dare not defend the safety of their children or the modesty of their wives. This very thing, the prophet Amos, speaking against the impious priest Amaziah, says: Your wife will commit adultery in the city, and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword, and your land will be measured out with a measuring line (Amos 7:17). And all these things will happen to the people of Judah: Because the nations have raged, and the peoples have planned in vain. The kings of the earth have risen up, and the rulers have gathered together as one against the Lord and against His Christ (Psalm 2:1-2). He who mocked and scorned them, and in his fury troubled them, to the extent that even the Apostle, seeing that the years appointed for repentance had already passed, and yet they persisted in denial, they who killed the Lord and persecuted the prophets and apostles, said: 'Wrath has come upon them to the end.' (I Thess. II, 16). Josephus, who wrote the history of the Jews, recounts that they endured all of this and much greater things than what we read in the prophets. Cornelius Tacitus, who wrote the Lives of the Caesars in thirty volumes from the time of Augustus until the death of Domitian, also describes how the middle part of the city was captured, while the rest of the population remained in the city. At that time and at other times, it is confirmed that the northern and lower part of the city was captured, but the hill of the temple, and Zion, where the citadel was, remained intact. The Jews claim that these events will be fulfilled under Gog: some claim it happened during the time of the Macedonians and Egyptians, and from various other peoples. Let us explain the truth of the Lord's teachings, which have been written down, in our time.

14:3-4

(Verse 3, 4.) And the Lord shall go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And the mount of Olives shall be split in two, one part to the east and the other to the sea, by a very great abyss. We should understand worthy of God the things which are said in the holy Scriptures in a human and carnal way, and which are contained in them. Otherwise, when the Apostle speaks: Who is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). And again: To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God (1 Timothy 1:17). And it is written in the Gospel: No one has ever seen God: the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him (John 1:18). And again: Not that anyone has seen God, except the one who is from the Father (Ibid., 6): just as we understand his anger and repentance, and his soul, and his hands, and his feet, and his belly, and his eyes, and the other members of his body, according to the diversity of causes and interpretations of the senses: so we also understand this which is written, The Lord will come forth, and will fight, in accordance with what we read in Habakkuk: You went forth for the salvation of your people, for salvation with your anointed (Habakkuk 3:13). And in Micah: For behold, the Lord will come out of his place, and come down and tread upon the high places of the earth, and the mountains will melt under him, and the valleys will burst open (Micah 1:3-4). Also in Isaiah: The Lord of hosts will go out and fight against the nations, and stir up zeal, and cry out against his enemies with strength (Isaiah 42:13). Therefore, God will come out of his place when he is compelled to break his peace, meekness, and clemency for the sake of correcting sinners. Although he is naturally sweet, he becomes bitter due to our fault, that is, he becomes bitter not for himself, but for those who are suffering, for whom bitter torments are. He who speaks elsewhere through the prophet: I am God, and I do not change (Malachi III, 6). And it is said to him: But you are the same, and you remain (Psalm CI, 28). And in the letter of James: With whom there is no change (James I, 17): now he goes out and fights as in the day of battle, when he submerged Pharaoh in the Red Sea, and fought for the people of Israel (Exodus XIV). And his feet will stand on those whom he has shown mercy to, and they will not be moved at all, so that it can be said again of him: And the Lord will sound the trumpet; and he will walk with the threat of his anger (Zechariah IX). He will not walk, as the sun is already setting, and darkness comes after midday, which we read that Adam did (Gen. III). And when he stands, he will not stand in the valley and low places, but on a mountain, which does not have fruitless trees and a barren forest; but where olive groves are born, which nourish eternal light, and weaknesses are dissolved, and rest is given to the weary. And the Mount of Olives itself, on which the feet of the Lord stand, is opposite Jerusalem and to the East, where the sun of justice rises, and it is planted with those olive trees of which it is said: Your children are like young olive trees, around your table (Ps. CXXVII, 3). Whose middle part will be divided towards the east, in which there are trees planted by the nations, of which one speaks: But I am like a fruitful olive tree in the house of God (Ps. LI, 10). And the other middle part will be divided towards the west and the sea, with a very deep precipice, which is the circumcised people, to whom God speaks through the prophet: What has my beloved done in my house, committing abomination? Will vows and holy flesh take away evils from you (Jer. XI, 15); or will you escape in them? She, beloved in the house of God, committed abomination, that she might crucify the Son of God, and [said] that you, O Lord, were called the shady and wooded olive-tree, and that your branches were useless, which were broken

from the good root, that we might be grafted in their place. And consider the secrets of the Scriptures, when (rather, how) the middle part, which leans towards the west, is dashed upon by salt and bitter waves, not simply said to be in the sea, but in a steep abyss of the sea, which also Micah speaks of: 'I will uncover its stones in the valley' (undoubtedly Jerusalem), 'and will reveal its foundations' (Micah 1:6). These things, as we have said in very difficult and obscure places, due to the weakness of our strength. However, the Jews following the letter of the western alphabet, try to show that the Lord is standing on the Mount of Olives, and that the mountain itself is divided into two parts, so that at the beginning of one part there is a tear against the east, and the other part stretches towards the west: and in the middle of a very steep valley, one part is divided to the north, the other to the south.

14:5

(Verse 5) And the middle of the mountain will be separated to the north, and its middle to the south. And you will flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to the next, and you will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Oshea of Judah, and the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. LXX: And the middle part of the mountain will incline to the north, and its middle part to the south. And the valley of my mountains will be closed off, and the valley of the mountains will reach Asael. And it will be filled as it was filled from the face of the earthquake in the days of King Oshea of Judah, and the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. Therefore, as we have said, you will flee, which the seventy and the other interpreters have translated as 'will be blocked' or 'will be filled'. And as we have stated, because the valley of the mountains will be joined up to the next one; for the next one, the seventy translators have rendered it as Asael. Aquila put the Hebrew word Asel, using the letter 'e' instead of 'i'. Theodotion used the extended form, Azel. Only Symmachus translated it as 'the next one', whom we have also followed. Let us say in a paraphrastic manner how the things that are written can come to pass: When the mountain of Olivet has been broken by a large chasm, so that one part of the chasm looks towards the East and the other towards the West, suddenly, in the very chasm itself, high cliffs on both sides will break away, and another chasm will be formed towards the North and another towards the South, and a square cliff will be made, so that the chasm stretches in four directions, towards the East and the West, the North and the South. And you will flee, he says, to the valley that is between the temple and Zion. For these two mountains, the temple and Zion, are called God's mountains; because that valley of the Mount of Olives, which is surrounded by steep mountains on both sides, will extend to the mountain of the temple, which is holy. However, the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah, is mentioned from that time, when Uzziah, who is also called Azariah in another name, attempted to claim the priesthood for himself and was struck with leprosy on his forehead (2 Chronicles 26), which we read about in the beginning of Amos (Amos 1): The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake (Isaiah 1). Finally, after this wicked king died, at whose impiety the whole world was shaken, Isaiah saw a great vision, which he interwove into his book. Let us now turn to the spiritual interpretation. After the Mount of Olives has been separated by the calling of the Gentiles to the East and the rejection of the Jews, there will again be another division of the North and the South. The North will join the West, the South to the Eastern regions; Circumcision will stand to the left, the Christian people to

the right. The Church speaks of these two winds: 'Arise, O North wind, and come, O South wind' (Canticles 4:16), so that when the cold wind of the North, which represents the devil, retreats, the warm wind of the South, which the bride seeks, may come. She asks: 'Where do you feed, where do you rest at noon?' (Ibid. 1:16). Concerning this, Habakkuk speaks mystically: 'God will come from Teman' (Habakkuk 3:3), for which it is written in Hebrew: 'God from the South,' that is, from the fullest light. From which the Psalmist elsewhere exclaims: You illuminate wonderfully from the eternal mountains (Psalm 76). But when there is such a great division of two peoples in the whole world, that some are to the East and South, that is, to the right: others to the North and West, that is, to the left, then whoever is holy will flee to the valley of the mountains of God, of which we have spoken above, the temple and Zion, namely the two Testaments: because that whirlpool which before was of both mountains, extends up to Asael, that is, up to the house of God, which is near paradise, and heavenly Jerusalem, and the holy mountain, where the temple is situated. And just as at that time when under King Osias a violent earthquake terrified the hearts of mortals and scattered them in all directions, so the separation of the two peoples and again the society of believers in one faith will rest in a reconcilable place between two mountains: because both the old and the new Covenant are joined together. But what is said, 'up to Asael,' that is, 'up to the nearest,' signifies this, that indeed the two Instruments of the Law and the Gospel are joined together, but in such a way that they are more neighboring than united: for we have lost many things of the old Law, and have received the new grace. But when this has been accomplished by perfect reason, then the Lord my God will come, he says, and all the saints with him. But if we desire what we have said, you will flee, pursuing that which other interpreters have rendered, it will be closed off, or the valley of their mountains will be filled. We will say that the coming of the Savior Lord, separating two peoples, will close off and fill that chasm which divided the two peoples, so that they may walk on a level path towards each other.

14:6-7

(Vers. 6, 7.) And it shall come to pass in that day, there shall be no light, but cold and frost. And there shall be one day, which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, and in the evening time there shall be light. LXX: In that day there shall be no light, but cold and frost shall be one day, and that day shall be known to the Lord: neither day nor night, and in the evening there shall be light. Clearly it is preached about the second coming of the Savior, about whom even John speaks in his Apocalypse: Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him (Apoc. I, 7). And the Lord in the Gospel pronounces that the Son of Man will come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew XXIV). He will come with clouds, that is, with angels, who are ministers of the Spirit, and are sent for various tasks, and with prophets and apostles, of whom it is written: Your truth reaches to the clouds (Psalm XXXV, 6). And when the day of His coming shall be fulfilled, there will be no light, but cold and frost, with the love of all growing cold, and due to the multitude of evils that are to come, everyone will grow cold, and those who lose the warmth of their former faith. But after all the sinners have contracted their cold and frost, there will be one day and eternal: neither light nor darkness, day and night succeeding; but the Lord himself will be the light of all: of whom Isaiah says more clearly: There will be no sun for you in the light of day, nor will the rising of the moon illuminate you at night; but the Lord will be your eternal light, and your God will be your glory (Isaiah 60:19). He also shouts in another place to Jerusalem: Arise, shine, Jerusalem; for your light has come, and the glory of your God has risen

upon you. For behold, darkness and gloom shall cover the earth upon the peoples: but upon you the Lord shall arise, and his glory shall be seen upon you. And kings shall walk in the light of you, and nations in the splendor of you (Verse 1 and following). If darkness and gloom shall cover the earth upon the peoples, how then shall the nations walk again in the splendor of the Lord? But those nations shall be in darkness which frost and chill shall have contracted: and they shall walk in the light of the Lord, who have followed kings, apostles and prophets, of whom it is written: The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord (Prov. XXI, 1). Finally, at the time of evening, that is, the darkness and sadness of all sins, there will be light for the saints, and it will be a single and eternal day, which, if it will be known by the Lord (for He cannot be ignorant of what He created), it must be considered how He says in the Gospel that neither the angels nor the Son will know that day, except the Father alone (Matthew 24).

14:8

(Verse 8.) And it shall be in that day, living waters shall come out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea; in summer and in winter it shall be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth.\n\nLXX: In that day living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the first sea and half of them toward the last sea; in summer and in spring it shall be so; and the Lord shall be king over all the earth.\n\nAt that time (for this refers to the day that is known to the Lord alone, in which there will be no succession of light and darkness; but there will be perpetual light, as it is written in the Apocalypse: And the city shall have no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the Lord God giveth it light (Rev. 21:23))), living waters shall come forth from Jerusalem, of which we have discussed previously, presenting the testimony of Ezekiel, of which half shall go toward the eastern sea, which the Greek books call the Asphaltic Lake, commonly known as the Dead Sea, because nothing can live in its waters. And the middle part leads to the farthest sea, which leads to Egypt, and it makes the shores of Palestine. In summer, he says, and in winter it will be so, that these waters which flow out from Jerusalem will not be frozen by the winter's cold, nor will they be dried up by the excessive heat of summer: although they have changed the springtime of winter, which does not fit the distinction of summer. And when the life-giving waters have entered both seas, and have softened the bitter waters with a sweet river: then the Lord will be king over all the earth. The water that comes forth from Jerusalem, that is, from the Church, indicates the teaching of the Savior: For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3); according to what is written elsewhere: The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Ibid., 11:9). The middle part of these waters shall go to the Eastern Sea, to the people of the Circumcision, who were chosen in the apostles and through the apostles; and the middle part to the Western Sea, so that those who sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob may come from the East and the West. Certainly, let us understand the ancient Testament and the new Testament as the Eastern Sea and the Western Sea, which, unless it is sweetened by the river of the Savior and His spiritual understanding, is very bitter; with the letter dying, and the spirit giving life (Matthew 8). And what follows: In summer and in winter they shall be, is understood the living waters that come forth from Jerusalem, so that even in peace and in persecutions these living waters may not cease to flow. Whether because the Seventy translated it thus, or because in summer and in spring it will be as we say, during that time there will be no winter, but only spring and everlasting summer, when the voice of the turtledove will be heard in our land, and the fig tree will bring forth its

ripening fruit, and the vineyards will flourish, and winter will pass away, and the rain will cease, and it will leave for itself (Song of Songs 2). During that time, spring will be necessary, because the flowers will appear in our land so that we may celebrate Easter and Pentecost, during which we pass from earthly things to heavenly things, and offer all our fruits to God. In the winter, the end of the season is the beginning of spring; in Pentecost, the beginning of summer, when we offer the labors of our hands and the fruits to God. Concerning this summer and everlasting spring, the righteous speaks to the Lord: 'You have created the dawn and the sun, you have shaped the summer and the spring' (Psalm 73:16, 17). Then the Lord will be king over all the earth, when we say: 'The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice' (Psalm 97:1). And again: 'Tell it among the nations, the Lord reigns.' For indeed, He has established the course of the earth, which shall not be moved (Ps. XCV, 10). But the true understanding of the teaching of the Savior regarding the living water will be known by those who drink it and hear the Savior preaching: If anyone drinks of the water that I will give him, it shall become in him a fountain of living water, springing up unto eternal life (John IV, 14). And again: Whoever believes in Me (as the Scripture has said), out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water (John VII, 38). For just as one who drinks of his teaching will have within him a living fountain, so one who believes in him, according to what is contained in the words of Scripture, rivers of living water will flow out of his belly. Many refer the living waters to baptism, which are to be given to those thirsting in spring and summer, that is, in Easter and Pentecost, when what is written will be fulfilled: 'Be cleansed, become pure' (Isaiah 1:16).

14:9-11

(Verse 9 and following). In that day there will be one Lord, and his name will be one: and all the land will return to the desert from the hill of Remmon to the South of Jerusalem: and it will be exalted, and it will be inhabited in its place, from the Benjamin gate to the place of the former gate, to the corner gate: and from the Tower of Ananeel to the king's winepresses, and they will dwell in it, and there will no longer be a curse, but Jerusalem will sit securely. LXX: In that day there will be one Lord, and his name will be one: encircling all the land, and the desert from Gabaa to Remmon to the South of Jerusalem: But Rama will remain in place, from the Benjamin gate to the first gate, to the corner gate, and to the tower of Anamael, to the king's winepresses they will dwell in it, and there will no longer be a curse, and Jerusalem will dwell confidently. The destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and the flowing forth of the waters from its midst, which flow to both seas, the Jews and the Judaizing Christians promise to themselves in the last times, when circumcision will again be practiced, and victims will be sacrificed, and all the precepts of the Law will be observed, so that Christians become not Jews, but Jews become Christians. On that day, they say, when Christ will sit in Jerusalem, golden and adorned, reigning, there will be no idols nor diverse worship of divinity, but there will be one Lord, and all the earth will return to solitude, that is, to its ancient state. And he sets forth the names of the places from which place to which place Jerusalem is to be built: from the hill Remmon (for this is what Gabaa means, where the Maligranati tree is) to the southern region of Jerusalem. And what follows: However, Rama will remain in its place, which Aquila and others have better interpreted to mean, it will be exalted. For Rama means exaltation, according to that prophetic and gospel saying: A voice was heard in Rama, that is, it sounded on high (Matthew 2:18). Therefore, Jerusalem will be exalted and rebuilt in its original place, from the Gate of Benjamin to the Gate called the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Ananeel (not as the Greeks and Latins wrongly read it as Anamael) to the Winepresses of the King, which in Hebrew is

written Ammelech (or, according to some, Amalech). And it is said that they will dwell in it, that is, in Jerusalem, and there will no longer be any curse: no hostile attack, no fear; but Jerusalem will sit or be inhabited in eternal peace and rest. The Jews dream literally and our chiliasts, who desire to hear again: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth (Gen. 1:28), and for the sake of continence of this life and brief fasting, they promise themselves onions, and vulvas, and the birds of Phasis, and the attagen, not the Ionic, but the Jewish ones, concerning which the Lord can truly say: My spirit shall not remain in these men, because they are flesh (Gen. 6:3). For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh (Galatians. V, 17). And let not the book of Revelation (Chapter XX) be opposed to us, for it must also be interpreted spiritually. But we shall interpret the heavenly Jerusalem as the Church, which, though walking in the flesh, does not live according to the flesh, whose citizenship is in heaven (Philippians. III). For when the Lord Jesus shall reign over all the earth, of whom the Holy Spirit speaks to the Father through the Prophet: O God, give Your judgment to the king, and Your justice to the king's son (Psalm. LXXI, 1): then there will be one Lord, of whom it is written: Know that the Lord Himself is God (Deuteronomy. IV, 35): And His name will be one, with all false religion trampled underfoot, according to what the Prophet sings: O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is your name in all the earth (Psalm. VIII, 1)! And again: You have magnified your holy name above all (Psalm 137:3). And elsewhere: As is your name, O God, so is your praise unto the ends of the earth (Psalm 48:11); of which Habakkuk also speaks: The earth is full of his praise (Habakkuk 3:5). Of the glory of his name, God himself speaks: Apart from me, you will not know God, and besides my name, which is magnified above all (Isaiah 44:8). Then all the earth will return, in which the Jews dwelt up to the desert, that is, up to the people of the Gentiles, which was formerly deserted and did not have knowledge of the Law: from Geba to Rimmon, that is, from the hill to the high place, for we ascend from the earth and the desert to the hills, and from the hills to the mountains. And the bridegroom in the Song of Songs passes over the smaller hills and leaps upon the tall mountains (Song 1), of which it is written: He makes the mountains skip like deer (Psalm 104). But if we wish to understand the Remmon, which both words signify in Hebrew, let us say that the limits of the Church begin from the hills, so that the whole ecclesiastical order be constructed, as we have said above, when we interpreted the lament of the only-begotten, and the lament like Adadremmon. And the Church is not content with this end; but it will reach as far as the South in the fullest light, as we have previously explained. And now we remain silent about it, so as not to annoy the reader by repeating the same things often. And the Church which began from the hills will be exalted and will reach the South; and it will dwell in its place, as it is written: 'He has set me in a place of pasture' (Psalm 22:1). From the gate of Benjamin, which is interpreted as the Son of the right hand, and not the Son of days, as some suspect wrongly: for it is one thing if it ends with the letter Nun, another if it ends with the letter Mem. And it shall come to the place of the eastern and former gate, even to the gate of the corners. We begin with virtue, for this indeed signifies the right hand, and we arrive at the former gate, so that we may enter through it to the others. And immediately we encounter the gate of the corners, where the corner stone is, which the builders rejected and has become the head of the corner (Ps. CXVII, 22). This corner stone connects both walls and brings two peoples into one (Ephes. II), about which God speaks through Isaiah: Behold, I will place in Zion a corner stone, chosen and precious in its foundation; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (Isai. XXVIII, 16). Here the cornerstone and other cornerstones wanted to be built, so that the apostle Paul might freely say: Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself

being the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). These stones do not imitate the heretics, who do everything for the sake of glory and profit, and pray in the corners of the streets, leaving the straight path. For every corner breaks the straight line, and therefore the prostitute in Proverbs (Chapter 7), however we may understand her, whose feet do not rest at home, but wanders outside or lies in wait in all the corners of the streets, when she sees a foolish young man (for she does not invite one whom she perceives to be wise and mature in age, of whom it is written: The wisdom of an old man is his gray hair), she immediately seizes him, and kisses and flatters him, and leads him to the brothel, and invites him to have intercourse. Let us therefore leave behind false angles and pass on to the firm and robust angles of Christ, to which when we have arrived, we are immediately met by the Tower of Ananeel, which is interpreted as the favor of God. For what is more pleasing than the Tower of Solomon? of which it is said to the bride: 'Your neck is like the tower of David, which is built with bulwarks; a thousand shields hang upon it; all the spears of the mighty are upon it' (Song of Solomon 4:4). The Lord wants this tower to be built in the Gospel (Chapter XIV), with previous expenses and costs computed: and about which it is said to Jerusalem: Let there be peace within your walls, and abundance within your towers (Psalm 122:7), about which the saint also speaks to the Lord: You have led me, for you have become my hope: a tower of strength against the enemy (Psalm 60:4). From the Tower of Ananeel, we come to the king's wine press, for which three psalms also have a title. And the Lord says in Isaiah: I have trodden the winepress alone (Isa. LXIII, 3), so that our vineyard may abound in them, and we may press out the grapes, and in Christ's blood we may trample the reddened juice; so that we may drink the wine that gladdens the heart of man (Ps. CIII); and the bride desires the companions of the bridegroom, saying: Lead me into the wine cellar, set love upon me (Cant. II, 4). If we are made drunk by such winepresses, we will dwell in Jerusalem, where there will no longer be anathema, namely curse and abomination. And the Apostle says: If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed (I Cor. XVI, 2). And in another place: No one speaking in the Spirit of God says 'Jesus be accursed' (I Cor. XII). And for the sake of the salvation of his brothers, he desires to be accursed, imitating his Lord who, though he was not a curse, became a curse for us (Rom. IX). But when all the curse is removed, Jerusalem will dwell secure and confident, and she will fulfill that which is said of her: 'Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.' And: It is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in man (Ps. CXVII, 8): about this security and confidence the prophet Jeremiah also mentions: Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord (Jerem. XVII, 7).

14:12

(Verse 12) And this will be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the nations that have fought against Jerusalem. The flesh of each one standing on their feet will rot away, and their eyes will rot away in their sockets, and their tongue will rot away in their mouths (Septuagint: their mouths). The Scriptures testify to the nations that will suffer, those that will fight against the city of the Lord: 'They will stand,' it says, 'on their own feet, and their flesh will waste away and flow off, and their eyes will decay, and from their openings they will fall out; their arrogant tongue, which blasphemed against the people of God, will dissolve into pus, and within the fortification of their teeth it will decay. It is clear to everyone that the Romans who destroyed Jerusalem did not suffer these things, unless perhaps the Jews claim that those nations, which were to fight against the golden and jeweled Jerusalem, would suffer them.' But we will say that all the persecutors, who afflicted the Church of the Lord, received in the present age what they did, even if we remain silent about

future tortures. Let us read the Ecclesiastical histories, what Valerian, what Decius, what Diocletian, what Maximian, what the cruelest of all Maximinus, and recently Julian, suffered: and then we will prove by facts, even according to the letter, that the truth of the prophecies has been fulfilled, that their flesh has rotted away, and their eyes have decayed, and their tongue has dissolved into filth and pus. Moreover, if the cruelty of God towards heretics seems to be shown in this saying, let it be understood that all these things happen so that good things may increase as evil things decrease. For whoever stands in the Lord and with the Lord, his carnal things flow away so that spiritual things may arise, and the eyes that were seeing poorly fall from their sockets so that others may be put in their place, who can receive the Lord with the prophet saying: To you I lift up my eyes, you who dwell in the heavens (Ps. 122:1). And the blaspheming tongue will decay, so that another tongue may be born, which glorifies God, and can say: My tongue shall meditate on your righteousness, your praise all day long (Ps. LXX, 15). Therefore Simeon, receiving the Infant in his arms and foretelling the future, says: Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rise of many (Luke II, 34), so that the evil may fall, and the good may rise. Therefore the Lord also said: For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind (John IX, 39). The people of the Gentiles did not see, but after the faith of Christ, they began to behold the light of truth, which speaks through the prophet: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for which reason he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed (Isaiah 61:1-2), of which it is written: The wisdom of a man enlightens his face (Ecclesiastes 8:1). And in the Psalms we read: The Lord gives sight to the blind, or makes them wise (Psalm 146). For this signifies more the wise. The Jews saw; and because they did not want to receive the light, they were covered in eternal blindness.

14:13-14

In that day there will be a great tumult of the Lord among them: and a man will seize the hand of his neighbor, and his hand will be placed upon the hand of his neighbor. But Judah will fight against Jerusalem, and the riches of all the nations will be gathered around: gold, silver, and many garments. LXX: And in that day there will be a great astonishment of the Lord upon them: and each one will seize the hand of his neighbor, and his hand will cling to the hand of his neighbor: and Judah will be prepared in Jerusalem, and the strength of all the peoples will be gathered around: gold, silver, and many exceedingly garments. When these wonders have been completed, such as the flesh of the enemies flowing away, the eyes withering away, and the tongue in the mouth of blasphemers decaying: then there will be a great tumult, or astonishment in them; for this signifies the ecstasy which the LXX translated: And each one will seize the hand of his neighbor, and his hand will be compared with the hand of another, because of fear, and the weight of evils which will come upon them. Judas will also fight against the metropolis, of which we spoke above (Chapter XII), and will receive victory granted by the Lord: the wealth of all nations that have fought against Jerusalem will be gathered, gold and silver, and a multitude of clothing, which are most precious in things. This unfortunate Judas promises to himself, hoping to receive gold which he valued the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. But we, following the established order, let us refer all these things to the blessedness of the Church, so that all who are in it may admire the subjection of the enemies and their own happiness, and each one may take hold of the hand of his neighbor, so that they may join right hands and be connected by mutual faith and kinship. And what we read

in Hebrew, 'And Judas will fight against Jerusalem'; for this, the Septuagint translators rendered it as, 'And Judas will be prepared in Jerusalem'; let us accept it in both ways, that Judas, who once confessed the Lord's name, and being forced by persecutions, persecuted the people of Christ, may himself turn to joy. Certainly, Judas, being entirely repentant and faithful, should not fight against Jerusalem, but should prepare himself in Jerusalem to fight against the adversaries. And Judas himself will gather the riches of all nations around, gold, and silver, and very many garments. We have often said that gold and silver are understood in a metaphorical sense, and so too should we understand the garments, with which the Church of Christ is adorned, of which it is written: 'The queen stood at your right hand in golden robes, adorned with variety' (Psalm 45:10). The crowd of believers rejoices at seeing her dressed in these garments and says: I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation and covered me with the robe of righteousness (Isa. LXI, according to the LXX). For the Lord Himself has said to her: I clothed you with embroidered work and gave you sandals of badger skin (Ezek. XVI). Let us accept these garments made of embroidered work, which are so beautiful and delicate that they appear to be like hair. The Church gathers these garments so that she may have something to clothe her people with, to whom the true preacher has said: Let your garments always be white (Eccl. IX, 8).

14:15

(Verse 15) And so there will be the destruction of horses, and mules, and camels, and donkeys, and all the livestock that were in those camps, just like this destruction. LXX: And this will be the destruction of horses and mules, camels and donkeys, and all the livestock that were in those camps, in accordance with this destruction. And the Jews strive to fulfill this, according to their carnal interpretation. Truly, the strength of the Lord is great, so that the horses, mules, camels, and donkeys, and all their livestock fall in the enemy camps, just as the men had fallen (or will fall). Great triumph, glorious victory, beasts are defeated by God fighting. Let us therefore say, according to the beginning of tropology: so that all the evils that previously fought against the Church may fall, so that the goods may suddenly arise. Finally, he who was previously a horse neighing after the wife of his neighbor (Jeremiah 5), and was carried away by lust, and lay in the filth of pleasures: when he begins to follow chastity, it will be said to him: Rise, let us go from here (John 14, 31). And: Arise, come, my love (Song of Solomon 2:10). And in the Apostle: Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light (Ephesians 5:14). And when those horses rise up that have fallen before, and have offered their soft backs to the Lord to sit upon, they shall say to God: Mount upon thy horses, and thy riding is salvation (Habakkuk 3:8). According to this sense, let us consider mules, which are barren and do not produce offspring; but they indulge in pleasure: of whom the Psalmist speaks: Be not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding (Psalm 31:9). So just as those who are inclined to lust are called horses, so we shall rightly call those who are virgins in the flesh and not in the spirit, mules. And those who are castrated not for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, but for the pleasure of men. Therefore, when these mules and eunuchs have been turned into offspring and have begotten spiritual children, they will hear through Isaiah: 'And let not the eunuch say: Behold I am a dry tree.' For thus says the Lord to the eunuchs, who keep my Sabbaths and choose the things that please me and hold fast to my covenant: I will give them a place in my house and within my walls, a name better than sons and daughters; an everlasting name will I give them, that shall never be cut off (Isaiah

56:3-5). The kings of Israel, especially David, are said to have had many male and female donkeys, which is related to Christ (2 Kings 13 and 1 Kings 3). If we understand what the running and rising horses and donkeys are, let us move on to camels, a ruminant animal that does not have a divided hoof (Leviticus 11). And let us say that all the sinners of the earth are like camels, who are weighed down by the heavy burden of sins, and they seem to read the holy Scriptures to themselves, but they do not have a divided hoof, rumination the divine words and neglecting what is written. But a camel can more rightly be called the people of the Jews, who themselves meditate upon the Law of God, and chew it over and turn it in their hearts, but do not split the hoof, so that they may believe in the Father and in the Son; and in this they are unclean, because they never separate the letter from the spirit, the shadow from the truth, and they bear the burden of the Law, and they hear through the prophet: Woe, sinful nation, people full of offenses (Isaiah 1:4). Concerning this kind of camel who chews and does not split the hoof, it is said in Proverbs as if to a son: Whoever forsakes the discipline of his father will meditate on evil speeches (Proverbs 21). Let us cross over to the donkey, who once was carried unbridled and unclean, and had many masters, and slid down the steep slopes, so that he would rise up suddenly when falling, and carry the Lord Savior, and enter into holy Jerusalem, and be received by a crowd of believing children triumphantly (Matt. XXI and John XII). It is said that the Savior tied this donkey to the vine and the vineyard (Gen. XLIX, 11), of which it is written in the Psalms: You brought the vine out of Egypt, and drove out the nations, and planted it (Ps. LXXIX, 9). To which the vinedresser himself says: I planted you a fruitful vineyard, a wholly true (Jer. II, 21). Likewise, all the beasts and animals, which the prophet comprehends under one name, are to be interpreted according to the nature of each one, and this is more fitting for the Son of God than for those things which the foolish people of the Jews presume to prophesy.

14:16

(Verse 16.) And all who remain of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. LXX: And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. All, he said, who remain from the nations that came against Jerusalem, shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the feast of Tabernacles. The Jews also promise that this will happen in the empty hope of a thousand-year kingdom, the beginning of which is this solemnity: The people of Israel went forth from Egypt through a vast and terrible and broad wilderness, in which there was no house, village, town, or cave, and they made for themselves tabernacles and tents (which are now called tents from the likeness of a small bird's wing) in which they dwelt with their spouses and children, and took food, and avoided the heat of the sun by day, the dampness and cold and harm of the dew by night. And it was commanded that the feast of Tabernacles should be held on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. And when your son asks you tomorrow, saying, What do these tabernacles mean? You shall respond to him: For a long time we have been traveling in Egypt, from which the Lord brought us out into the wilderness, and therefore we set up tabernacles, so that we may remember the blessings of God at all times, when we began to dwell in cities (Deut. VI, 20, 21, and Lev. XXIII, 43). He also commanded them to make tabernacles from very beautiful wood, which the Jews call citron, and from the branches and leaves of very dense wood, and from willow and poplar. We

have laid the foundations of history, so that we may move from these to spiritual matters. As long as we are in progress and in the course and struggle, we dwell in tabernacles, striving in our whole mind, so that we may move from tabernacles to a firm and stable dwelling, that is, the house of God. Therefore, holy David says in the Psalm: Woe is me, that my dwelling is prolonged (Ps. 119:5)! And: I am a stranger and a sojourner as all my fathers were (Ps. 38:31). This is spoken by someone who is in Egypt, and still living in the world. But whoever leaves Egypt, which is called Moab in Hebrew, and interpreted as tribulation; and enters the desert of vices, takes his journey, and says in the psalm: I will go through to the place of the wonderful tent, even to the house of God (Ps. XLI, 5). For it is admirable not to dwell with the Egyptians; but with Pharaoh drowned, to desire to enter the land of promise (Exod. XIV). And elsewhere it is said: How lovely are your dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it even faints for the courts of the Lord (Ps. 84:1). And a little later: Blessed are those who dwell in your house, they will praise you forever and ever (ibid., 84:5). For we find written in Proverbs: The house of the righteous will stand firm, their dwelling places will endure for those who act rightly (Prov. 2:21). He promises about houses, that they remain; about tabernacles, that they have statutes. And in another place the holy man says: One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I will seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and see the delight of the Lord, and visit His temple (Psalm 27:4). The one who dwells in such tabernacles, and from tabernacles goes to courtyards, and from courtyards goes to the house, and from the house goes to the temple of the Lord, ought to celebrate the feasts of tabernacles in the most beautiful wood of wisdom, about which it is said in Proverbs: It is a tree of life to all who approach it, and those who lean on it, as on a firm house (Proverbs 3:18). And in the branches of the palm trees, in which the sign of victory and the reward of virtue are contained, and in the leaves of the densest tree which the Jews understand to be myrtle, because of the mortification of the flesh and desires. Hence, it is offered to the Lord and Savior by the Magi in the form of myrrh (Matt. II). And he says, in the branches of the willow and the poplar, which some call one tree; and the name of the wood itself, which is called in Greek **■γν■ς**, indicates chastity. Doctors say, and those who have written about the nature of trees and plants, that if anyone drinks a mixture of willow flower or poplar with water, all heat will cool in him, and the vein of desire will become dry, and he will not be able to produce children. Whoever is protected by the branches of such trees should observe the feast of tabernacles, passing through the sixth month which refers to the world, and celebrating the spiritual Sabbath on the seventh day of the same month, when the moon of the night is fullest, and all its darkness is resolved by bright light. We have said these things briefly, contemplating in our mind the magnitude of the books, so that we may move on to the remaining ones.

14:17

(Verse 17) And it shall be that those who do not go up from the families of the earth to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain on them. LXX: And it shall be that those who do not go up from the families of the earth to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, there will be consequences for them. Because the Seventy translated 'there will be consequences for them,' it is written in Hebrew, 'Ulo Alehem Eje Gesem,' which Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion also interpreted in a similar way, and there will be no rain on them. The Church of the Lord Jesus is called the heavenly Jerusalem, of which the Apostle writes: 'But the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all' (Galatians 4:26); and: 'But you have

come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem' (Hebrews 12:22). And this Jerusalem is not situated in lowly places, but on a high mountain, about which the Savior speaks: 'A city set on a hill cannot be hidden' (Matthew 5:14). Therefore those who wish to worship the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem must ascend the mountains. But those who are from the families and tribes of the land, and therefore cannot worship the Lord, no temporary or late rain will fall upon them, nor will the land be watered by the rains of the heavens. Or, as the Seventy translated, those who do not ascend from the families of the land to Jerusalem to worship the Lord Almighty King, when they are counted among those who fought against Jerusalem, their flesh will waste away, their eyes will melt, and their tongues will decay.

14:18-19

(Vers. 18, 19.) And if the family of Egypt does not ascend and does not come, there will be no plague on them, but there will be a punishment by which the Lord will strike all the nations that do not ascend to celebrate the feast of Tabernacles. This will be the sin of Egypt, and this will be the sin of all the nations that do not ascend to celebrate the feast of Tabernacles. LXX: But if the tribe of Egypt does not ascend and does not come there, there will be a punishment on them by which the Lord will strike all the nations that did not ascend to observe the feast of Booths. This will be the sin of Egypt, and the sin of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the feast of the tabernacles. Whoever is an Egyptian, and of other nations, as long as he remains an Egyptian and a foreigner, will not go up to Jerusalem; and because he cannot go up, nor raise himself to higher things, therefore the rain of the Lord's blessing will not be upon him. And this sin will be the greatest for the Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, if they do not desire to leave their lands and go up to Jerusalem, to pass through the tabernacles in Jerusalem, and find an eternal home, and if the people of other nations cease, and if they become Israelites in whom there is no deceit (John 7:24). All these things which we quickly discuss, O Jews, and our Judaizers, or rather not ours, because they are Judaizers, hope for future things bodily, certainly circumcision for themselves, and marriages promising in the reign of a thousand years, so that the curse which is written may not be fulfilled in them: Cursed is the barren one who does not bear seed in Israel; and: Blessed is he who has seed in Zion and household members in Jerusalem (Isa. XXXI, 9, sec. LXX). But if it is true, all the virgins that the thousand-year reign shall find shall be subject to eternal curses and sterility: or certainly they shall marry, to escape the curse.

14:20

(Verse 20) On that day, what is on the bridle of the horse will be holy to the Lord, and the pots in the house of the Lord will be like the bowls before the altar. And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be consecrated to the Lord of hosts. (Verse 21) On that day, what is on the bridle of the horse will be holy to the Lord God Almighty. And the pots in the house of the Lord will be like the bowls before the altar. And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the Lord God Almighty. The Hebrew word Mesuloth was translated by Aquila and Theodotion as 'profundum', that is, 'depth'. Symmachus translated it as 'incessum umbrosum', that is, 'shady walk'. The Septuagint alone translated it as 'frenum', that is, 'bridle'; and we have followed them in this place so as not to appear to introduce anything new in a well-known question. When I asked the Hebrew what it meant, he told me that we should not read Mesuloth, but Mesaloth, which means the trappings of

horses and military ornamentation, and he said that apart from this place, the word is not found at all in any volume of the holy Scriptures. But the Hebrew word for bridle is Resen, not Mesuloth, as translated by the Septuagint. And its meaning is: During the perpetual solemnity and reign of Jerusalem, when everything is peaceful and tranquil, there is no need for cavalry, which is the strongest type of warriors; but all the adornment and splendor of trappings should be dedicated to the worship of the Lord. This is what they said. As for us, let us interpret the deep and rhythmic movement of horses, ὄσκιον, as representing the mystical knowledge, which even David boasted of having, saying: You have revealed to me the uncertain and hidden aspects of your wisdom (Ps. 50, 8). And the Apostle says: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out (Rom. XI, 33) ! In this deep, the prophet cried out to the Lord, and he heard him. In these depths and darkness, God placed his hiding place (Ps. XVII): Moses entered into these darkneses and divine mysteries on Mount Sinai, in order to see God (Exod. XIX): of which David also spoke in another Psalm: The judgments of the Lord are a great abyss (Ps. XXXV, 9). These secrets and sacred mysteries are known to the Lord, which the evangelist John knew and dared to say, even though the angels may not have known: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1). And for this reason, it is loved by the Lord, because it had the greatest depth; and it rested on the chest of Jesus, from where it drew wisdom (John 21). But if we wish to accept the translation of the Septuagint, let us understand the bridle as the word of God, which restrains the wild horses of desire and the barren and lustful mules from vices, and restrains and does not allow them to go through dangerous paths, of which it is said: Do not be like horses and mules, who have no understanding. In freno et chamo maxillas eorum constringe, qui non approximant ad te (Ps. XXXI, 9, 10) . De hoc freno et Jacobus loquitur: In equorum ora mittimus frenos, et omne corpus eorum circumagimus (Jacob. III, 3) , ut scilicet recto gradientur itinere, et mollia ad sedendum Domino possint terga praeberere. Tale frenum et talis sermo auri et argenti varietate compositus, feros equos Salvatori praeparat ad sedendum; et sanctos facit, ac proprie illius cultui consecratos. I heard a thing, spoken in a pious sense, but ridiculous. The nails of the Lord's cross, from which Emperor Constantine made his horse's reins, were called holy of the Lord. Whether this should be understood in this way, I leave to the reader's discretion. Let us now turn to the basins that will be in the Lord's house, like the bowls of the altar. For every basin will be sanctified to the Almighty Lord in Jerusalem and in Judah. Let the bronze basins love the Egyptian pots, and meats, and melons, and garlic, and onions, and cucumbers (Numbers 11). Let us turn the Jewish cooking pots in which the meats of the victims were cooked into jars of spices before the altar of the Lord, about which the bride says to the bridegroom: My brother has gone down to my garden to the jars of spices, to feast in the gardens, and gather lilies (Song of Songs 6:1). The garden and the paradise to which the bridegroom descends to the bride is the holy reading of the Scriptures: from which he gathers lilies, and violets and roses and various fragrant spices, to fill the jars of the souls of the believers, and offer them as offerings to the Lord. When these wordplays have been turned into the vials of the Lord, and they have been able to say: 'We are the good odor of Christ' (2 Cor. 15), and because of the strength of their flesh, they have begun to bear various flowers of virtues, then they will be sanctified to Almighty God in Jerusalem and in Judea, about whom we have frequently said that Jerusalem represents the vision of peace, and Judea expresses the one who confesses.

14:21

(Verse 21.) And all the sacrificers shall come, and they shall take from them, and they shall cook in them: and there shall be no more a merchant in the house of the Lord of hosts in that day. LXX: And all who sacrifice shall come and take from them, and they shall cook in them, and there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of the Lord Almighty in that day. For the Canaanite, Aquila interpreted it as a merchant, whom we also have followed in this place. When the pots have been turned into bowls, all the nations shall come around, whether those who have been left of all the nations sacrificing, and they shall take the bowls and cook in them the flesh of the victims, so that they do not eat the raw flesh of the lamb, but with all the moisture of the flesh cooked away by fire, what has been prepared by the fire remains to be consumed. Which are the vessels before the altar of the Lord, in which the Israelite dishes are converted, as we have said above, and now we will say in part. The bride praises her bridegroom in the Song of Songs: His cheeks are like containers of spices (Song of Songs 5). In the cheeks, the word is received, which, coming forth from the Lord, produces various ointments, and the fragrance of such a good odor will be so great that the Lord will make for himself a whip out of testimonies from the texts of the Scriptures, and he will drive out those who are buying and selling from the temple, and he will say to them: It is written, My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of thieves (Matthew 21:13). Someone says that which is written in Daniel, although it is not read in Hebrew: 'The seed of Canaan, and not of Judah' (Dan. XIII, 56); and what is said by the prophet Hosea about Ephraim: 'Ephraim has become a partner with idols; he has set up stumbling blocks for himself, and has provoked the Canaanites to fornicate; they have committed fornication' (Hosea IV, 17-18). They apply this passage to the current situation and want every fornicator to be called a Canaanite and a foreigner, who they claim should be removed from the house of God.

Commentary on Zephaniah

Commentary on the Prophet Zephaniah by Saint Jerome of Stridon, a Presbyter, Book One.

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Prologue

Before I take on the book of Zephaniah, which is the ninth in the order of the twelve prophets, it seems necessary to respond to those who consider me worthy of ridicule, because I write to you first, O Paula and Eustochium, instead of men. If they knew that women like Deborah prophesied and judged, and that Judith and Esther, as types of the Church, killed their enemies and saved Israel from danger, while men remained silent, they would never raise a hand against me behind my back. I am silent about Anna and Elizabeth, and the other holy women, whose bright lights, like stars, hide the shining light of Mary. I will come to the pagan women, so that they may see, as even among the philosophers of the world, it is the differences of souls that are usually sought, not of bodies. Plato presents Aspasia arguing: Sappho is mentioned with Pindar and Alcaeus: Themista converses among the wisest of Greek philosophers: Cornelia, of the Gracchi, that is, yours, is admired by the entire crowd of the Roman city: Carneades, the most eloquent of philosophers, the keenest of rhetoricians, who was accustomed to arouse applause among consular men and in the Academy, did not hesitate to discuss philosophy in a private home, with a matron listening. What shall I say about Cato's daughter, Brutus' wife, whose virtue makes us marvel so much at the constancy of her father and husband? The history of female virtues is full of both Greek and Latin examples, and they demand entire books. But for now, because I have another task at hand, it suffices to say at the end of the prologue that the Lord first appeared to women when he rose again (Matthew 28 and Luke), and those women were apostles so that men would be ashamed not to seek what the more fragile sex had already found.

1:1

(Chapter I, Verse 1) The word of the Lord that came to Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah, the son of Ammon, king of Judah. The Septuagint similarly. The Hebrews report that the father or grandfather of any prophet is mentioned in the title, indicating that they themselves were also prophets. Therefore, Amos, one of the twelve prophets, who said, 'I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet, but I am a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit' (Amos 7:14), does not have his father's name mentioned in the title. If this is true, Sophonias the prophet, whom we are now attempting to explain, received a prophetic name, so to speak, and was born from the glorious lineage of his ancestors; for he had Chusi as his father, Godolias as his grandfather, Amarias as his great-grandfather, and Ezechias as his great-great-grandfather: and he himself completed such a team of horses as the last charioteer. Some have translated the name Sophonias as "watchtower," others as "hidden by the Lord." Therefore, whether it is interpreted as a watchtower or as hidden by the Lord, both meanings apply to the prophet. For it is said also to Ezekiel: Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel (Ezek. III, 17). And in another place: The Lord does nothing unless he reveals his secret to his servants, the prophets. And the title of the ninth psalm is interpreted as for the hidden things of the son. Therefore, this prophet, who was in the watchtower and stationed on high, and knew the mysteries of the Lord, was the son of Cush (which is interpreted as humility, or my Ethiopian, about whom we will discuss later), and he also had a grandfather named Godoliah, who is called the greatness of the Lord, and a great-grandfather named Amariah, who also turns into the word of the Lord: and a great-great-grandfather named Hezekiah, which means the strength of the Lord. About the strength of the Lord, the word of the Lord was born. And from the word of the Lord, the magnitude of the Lord was born. And from the magnitude of the Lord, humility was born, so that when

someone reaches perfection, they may say: I am not worthy to be called an apostle (I Corinthians 9). And that in the Psalms: Lord, my heart is not exalted, nor are my eyes lofty (Psalm 130:1). Up until now, we have stumbled like one in a downward slide, and running on level ground, in what Chusi, even my Ethiopian, interprets. For after so many virtues, how can the name of the Ethiopian sound in praise? And indeed, if the Scripture had said 'Chus', that is, Ethiopian, the question seemed unsolvable; for Chus was born of Cham. But in what he says, 'Chusi', that is, my Ethiopian, it seems to sound a mystery: that he who was once an Ethiopian, turned to repentance (according to what is said: 'Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God' (Ps. 68:32)). And in another place (Ps. 71, 9): Ethiopians shall fall before him. Let the bride say in the Song of Songs: I am black, but beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem (Song of Songs 1, 4). We also read in Jeremiah that Abdimelech, an Ethiopian eunuch, pleased God (Jer. 38). And in the Acts of the Apostles, we learn that the Ethiopian eunuch of the queen Candace had such a devotion to the Scriptures and the Law of God that he would read them in his chariot, and came to Jerusalem to worship the Lord in his temple (Acts 8, 9). Where such faith is crowned with fitting reward, and Philip the evangelist is sent to him, and immediately he is taught, believes, is baptized, and is saved. And not only is he a eunuch, but with the additional descriptor of man, he is an Ethiopian eunuch. For because he was a eunuch for Christ's sake, and had castrated himself for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, therefore he had not lost the label of man. And rightly also does Zephaniah, like the son of Cush, that is, the Ethiopian, in the later books write of the repentance of the Ethiopians: Through the rivers, he says, of Ethiopia, they shall bring my offerings from there. This is about the genealogy of Zephaniah, who prophesied in the days of Josiah. However, the days are also called of Elijah those who were enlightened by him: just as the days of Josiah, who had risen to the Lord (for Josiah means the lifting up of the Lord) and he was a righteous man. The history also writes about his praises, as well as the Chronicles and the Book of Kings (2 Kings 23 and 2 Chronicles 34). And he had a father named Ammon and a grandfather named Manasseh (2 Kings 21). We read that Manasseh, after many crimes and after the captivity in Babylon, repented and obtained the mercy of the Lord, who turned him to better things. And because of his faith, by which he believed in God, he called his son πνυμον, that is, Ammon: since Ammon () means faith. At the same time, consider that the ten tribes, that is, the kings of Israel, are not mentioned above, but only the kings of Judah. For indeed, the ten tribes had been taken into captivity by the Assyrians under King Hezekiah, the father of Manasseh (2 Kings 17). This is in the prologue and in the title of the book of Zephaniah, concerning the generation and time. Now let us see what the prophecy itself contains.

1:2-3

(Verse 2, 3.) Gathering I will gather all from the face of the earth, says the Lord, gathering man and beast, gathering the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea: and the ruins of the wicked will be, and I will destroy men from the face of the earth, says the Lord. LXX: They will fail from the face of the earth, says the Lord: man and beast will fail: the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea will fail ÷ and the wicked will be weakened, and I will remove the unjust from the face of the earth, says the Lord. What we have placed in the Septuagint, and the wicked will be weakened, was added from Theodotion's translation: for which Symmachus interpreted, and the stumbling blocks with the wicked, so that it is understood, will be gathered, or will fail. But the fifth edition, the weakness will fail with the wicked. Therefore, following our custom, we must first relate the history, and

afterwards debate about the higher things. For it is beyond doubt that the final kingdom of the two tribes, which were called Judah and Benjamin, was under Josiah. For, with him being killed, his sons who later reigned and his grandsons should not be believed to have ruled so much as to have been mocked by the Egyptian king and the Chaldeans and various captivities and tortures. Therefore, because the people were able to excuse themselves in the face of wicked kings and say, 'We want to serve God, but we are prohibited by the kings,' a just king is given, who zealously seeks the zeal of the Lord, and yet the people persist in the worship of idols. Thus, a just cause for anger is brought forth by the Lord, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of Judah and the victory of Nebuchadnezzar are prophesied. And the Lord said through the prophet: I will no longer show mercy; instead I will consume everything on the face of the earth: no man, no beast, no bird, no fish of the sea will remain. For even the animals feel the anger of the Lord; and with cities destroyed and people killed, a desolation and scarcity of beasts, birds, and fish also occurs, as witness is Illyricum, witness is Thrace, witness is where I was born, a land where everything, except the sky and the earth and the growing thorns, and the thickets of the forests, has perished. However, as the prophet says, this will happen because there was an excessive multitude of the wicked. Therefore, the wicked will fall and people will be scattered, and there will be desolation upon the face of the earth. But we can also understand this as referring to the end of the world: both humans, animals, birds, fish of the sea, and everything will fail and weaken, and the wicked will be weakened, and iniquity will be removed from the face of the earth. And if we want to understand something deeper (because it is also said in the Septuagint, 'Defection will fail from the face of the earth'), we can take the defection in a positive sense according to this: 'And Abraham died in a good old age, an old man and full of days, and was gathered to his people' (Genesis 25:8), and we see how those who are of the descendants of Isaac and Jacob fulfill this by defection from the world, in accordance with the command: 'For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Philippians 3:20). But if someone opposes this which we have accepted in a positive way, let him perish by defection from the face of the earth, that which is written about Ishmael: These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven, and he died in defection, and he was assigned to his own tribe (Gen. XXV, 17): we will first respond to him that Ishmael is the son of Abraham, and he received gifts and portions from his father, according to his measure: then, it is absolutely written, he died in defection, and it is not added (as it is written about Abraham) in a good old age, an old man and full of days, and he was assigned to his people. Concerning Isaac: Now the days of Isaac's life were one hundred and eighty-five years. And Isaac grew weak and died, and he was gathered to his people, an old man and full of days (Genesis 35:28-29). Also concerning Jacob: And Jacob ceased commanding his sons, and drawing up his feet onto the bed, he grew weak and was gathered to his people (Genesis 49:33). From this we understand that there is a difference between simply growing weak and having many virtues together with weakness. But what he had first said in a general way, let man fall away from the face of the earth; afterwards scripture divided it into parts, let man fall away, and let the beasts, let the birds of the sky fall away, and let the fish of the sea. There are four things which are commanded to fall away, first rational man, then the three things which are subject to man, the beasts, and the birds, and the fish which I think are also mentioned in the eighth psalm: Also the animals of the field, the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea, which travel the paths of the sea (Psalm VIII, 8). But that which he first said, he separated all the sheep and cattle, as if they were the principal of the livestock, and he did not want to count the

remaining livestock with them. Let man fail, let the livestock fail, let the birds of the sky fail, let the fish fail; and he did not say, let the beasts fail, let the reptiles of the earth fail. For these should not fail, but perish; but let those things fail which can have correction. How the feminine qualities of Sarah failed, and Abraham is commanded to listen to whatever Sarah commands. Who fails as a human, if he despises human things, and does not die anymore as a human, and listens: I said, you are gods. Another fails as an animal, who, when ascending to higher things, is not accused in prophetic speech: Man, when he was in honor, did not understand, he was compared to foolish animals, and became like them. He departs like the fleeting heaven, who makes wings for himself like an eagle, and returns to the house of his rich teacher, leaving all poverty behind (Prov. XXIII). He departs like a fish of the sea, who, caught in the nets of the Lord, is separated from the good fishes (Matt. XIII). When these things are done according to the commandment of the Lord, the wicked will be weakened, not having as much strength as before. And the unjust will be removed, not said to be killed, but removed, so that, having been converted to better things, from impiety and injustice, they may begin to be what they were not before: pious and just. This is according to allegory. For we must also include the interpretation of the Ancients. Now it will be in the reader's discretion whether they wish to convey severity or clemency in what has been said.

1:4-6

(Verse 4 and following) And I will stretch out my hand over Judah and over all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and I will destroy from this place the remnants of Baal, and the names of the idolatrous priests together with the priests, and those who worship on the rooftops the host of heaven, and those who worship and swear by the Lord, and swear by Melchom; and those who turn away from the Lord, and those who have not sought the Lord or inquired of him. LXX: And I will stretch out my hand over Judah, and over all who dwell in Jerusalem, and I will remove from this place the names of the Baals, and the names of the priests with the priests, and those who worship on the rooftops the host of heaven, and those who swear by the Lord, and swear by their king, and those who turn away from the Lord, and those who do not seek the Lord, and those who do not retain the Lord. After the downfall of the impious and the removal of the wicked from the face of the earth, consequently, regarding Judah and Jerusalem, it is said in the person of the Lord: 'And I will stretch out my hand over Judah and over all the inhabitants of Jerusalem' (for the stretching out of the hand indicates the gesture of striking); 'and I will destroy from this place the remnants of Baal' (not that the names of the Baals according to the Septuagint are to be completely eradicated, but rather that the worshippers of Baal, who remained few in number from the slaughter of the enemies in Judah and Jerusalem, are to be removed). The names of the priests, as well as the temple attendants, were also mentioned. Judas and Benjamin had fallen into such great impiety that they set up a statue of Baal in the Temple of the Lord, as Ezekiel writes and the fourth book of Kings shows. This statue, which the Lord calls the image of jealousy, and the idols in the same sanctuary were worshipped both by priests and the Lord (Ezekiel VIII). Hence, the priests of the idols were specifically called not priests, but 'temple attendants' or fanatics, which in Hebrew is called *Acchumarim* (4 Kings X and XVII). So the Lord will remove from Jerusalem the judges and priests who once served him, as well as those who worshiped the army of heaven—the sun and the moon and the stars—and those who swore allegiance to the Lord but also worshiped Molech, the detestable idol of the Ammonites. The Lord will sweep them away and erase even the memory of them from Israel. He will destroy the leftovers of Baal worship and the names of the pagan

priests. Those who worship on the rooftops, those who swear oaths by the Lord and also by Molech, those who turn back from following the Lord and neither seek nor ask for his guidance will be cut off as well. But the people of Israel turn their backs on the Lord, abandoning his worship and swearing by Melchom, and worshipping the host of heaven and bowing down to the idol of the Sidonians, Baal. So far the meaning of the story has been explained; now let us consider the moral sense. Because of the Lord who came from the tribe of Judah, and because of Jerusalem where Judas reigned, that is, the Lord and Savior, let us say that when wickedness has multiplied and the love of many has grown cold, and when the Lord comes, faith will be rare on earth to the extent that God's chosen ones will even be tested (Matthew 24, Luke 18). Then the Lord will stretch out his hand in punishment for sins upon Judas, who seems to confess the name of the Lord, and upon Jerusalem, the Church which has received its name from peace, and will remove the names of the Baals from the Church, which is interpreted in higher things. But the Lord will take away the names of empty glory and false admiration, which are found in the Church, in which, according to James, a golden ring is honored, and the poor is despised, when at the coming of the judge and senator, and in the common gathering of all the rich, the whole people rise up, and the holy poor is not even given a place to stand among the ranks of the powerful, and their privileges are not granted; but also the names of the priests with the priests who applaud themselves in vain in the name of bishop, and in the dignity of the presbytery, and not in work (James 2). Where he particularly says, that the works of the priests with other priests are not necessary, but only for show they assume false titles of dignity, and by evil works they destroy their own names, and those who worship the celestial host above the roofs, who rise up against the knowledge of God; and everything that is done in the world, they falsely claim to possess knowledge about, and they attribute it to the movements of the stars and the rising and setting, and they follow the errors of the mathematicians, and those who worship the Lord and Melchom, who think they can serve both the world and the Lord, and satisfy two masters, God and mammon: they, while claiming to be soldiers of Christ, bind themselves to worldly affairs, and offer the same image to God and Caesar, and although they claim to be priests of Christ, they consecrate their sons to Melchom, that is, to their king (2 Timothy 2). For they are right who have a king for a man, who have lost the Lord as their king, and who turn away from the Lord through wicked works, and do not seek him, holding onto their sins as they flee. But if anyone wishes to understand this according to the interpretation of the names of Judah and Jerusalem upon the soul of each person, he will not err, that the Lord may take away all that we have said, either at the consummation of the world, or at the departure of each individual, when they will hear: 'Fool, tonight your soul will be taken from you.' (Luke 12) And may He stretch out His hand upon him who does not confess the Lord, and upon him who boasts of having the sense of peace, so as to remove and destroy from such Jerusalem all pride, and false worship of God, and errors of doctrines, and servitude to God and the world alike, and through daily sins, turning away from the Lord and neglecting God.

1:7

(Verse 7.) Be silent before the face of the Lord God, for the day of the Lord is near, for the Lord has prepared a sacrifice; He has sanctified His called ones. LXX: Fear before the face of the Lord God, for the day of the Lord is near, for the Lord has prepared His victim; He has sanctified His called ones. Because the LXX translated 'fear,' and we have put 'be silent,' in Hebrew it is an interjection of commanding silence, which is often used by the Comedians; but it is also

commanded absolutely for all to be silent, because the day of the Lord is coming. But let us understand the day of the Lord as the day of captivity and vengeance upon the sinful people, and the destruction of Jerusalem, and the sanctification of those whom He has dedicated to be killed, according to what is said in Jeremiah: Sanctify them in the day of their slaughter (Jeremiah 12:3). And the meaning is: The predicted captivity will come upon the wicked people. It is now near. Under the reign of King Josiah, the prophecy is fulfilled: with him being killed, fear the face of the Lord God, for the day of the Lord is near, for the Lord has prepared His sacrifice, and sanctified His called ones. The whole devastation comes, from which also in Ezekiel: The end comes, he says, the end comes (Ezek. VII, 2), and so on. This sacrifice pleases me, these offerings I have sanctified. However, what he says can be understood as sanctifying his chosen ones, and even accepting those from Babylon whom he calls as his own servants for the vengeance of his people, avenging his injustice. I have called, he says, my servant Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. XXV, 9). And in the same volume, he not only calls him his servant, but also a dove: From the face of the sword a dove (Ibid., 30). Furthermore, according to the allegory, because the face of the Lord is upon those who do evil, to wipe their memory from the earth, and the day of judgment is near (for in comparison to eternity, the time of this world is brief), or the end of each individual: let everyone fear and be silent, lest the face of the Lord (of which the saint says (Ps. IV, 7): The light of your face, Lord, is shining upon us) consume the hay, straw, and wood of sins. For the Lord has prepared His sacrifice, the entire mystery of Leviticus, when through fire and the pouring out of blood, and the true offering, the saved ones will be made well and the called ones will be sanctified. Some of us understand the day of the Lord and His sacrifice, and the sanctification of the called ones, in the coming of the Savior, when the Lamb was sacrificed and the apostles and others who were called through them were sanctified in His blood.

1:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) And it shall come to pass on the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes and the king's sons, and all who are clothed with foreign apparel. And I will punish everyone who arrogantly enters over the threshold on that day, those who fill the house of the Lord their God with iniquity and deceit. LXX: And it shall come to pass on the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will avenge the princes and the king's household, and all who are clothed with foreign garments; and I will avenge openly all who are in the vestibules on that day, those who fill the house of the Lord their God with impiety and deceit. In the captivity of Judah, when the whole people were to be sacrificed, the Lord will visit, both upon the princes who drank wine in the morning, and upon the sons of the king, or upon all of the royal lineage, or certainly upon the sons of Josiah, whom we read were either killed or captured, and upon all who were clothed in foreign garments, that is, those who worshiped idols. And upon all who proudly enter over the threshold on that day, that is, against the arrogant, who with a certain arrogance and a brow of dignity ascend the steps of the temple and the threshold of the sanctuary. Moreover, because in that place where we have interpreted, above the threshold, can be understood according to the Hebrew, those who leap over the threshold; and this is to be understood historically, I will vindicate against those who, according to the first book of Kings, do not trample upon the threshold of idols, but serve superstitions, who have filled the house (or temple) of their Lord God not only with the worship of idols, but also with iniquity and wickedness and every kind of lie, so that, along with the error of religion, iniquity is also joined to deception, directed both at those who are subject and at

their neighbors. But because we have once explained it both literally and tropologically: The Lord will visit in the advent and passion of the Savior, that is, on the day of the offering of His Son above the high priests and priests of the Jewish people, and above the royal house. For until that time, the kings of Judah from the line of David persevered, according to the prophecy of Jacob: The ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor the leader from his thighs, until the one comes to whom it is reserved, and He shall be the expectation of the nations (Gen. XLIX, 10). For the host of the Lord has been taken away from the Jews. And above all, he says, those who are clothed in foreign garments, those who have departed from the protection and clothing of God, and who have covered themselves with their own error. And I will take vengeance upon all those who are clearly in the vestibules, that is, those who have left the temple of God: and although they should be inside, they have gone outside because of their sins, and have departed from the Church of God, filling His temple with impiety and deceit. This should be understood at the first coming of the Savior. However, since we have already explained about the end of the world and the day of judgment, which all interpret as the day of the Lord, we must know that during that time the Lord will visit the rulers and the shepherds who consume the milk of the sheep and shear the wool, but do not care about the flock's welfare. He will also visit the sons of the king who boast of being Christians and claim to be the children of Christ the King, and all those who are clothed in the garments of others. The clothing of the king's sons and princes, is Christ (or, We have received Christ), which we receive in baptism, according to that: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. XIII, 14). And: Put on the bowels of mercy, goodness, humility, meekness, patience (Col. III, 12), and so on. In which it is commanded that we put on the new heavenly man, according to our Creator, and cast off the clothing of the old man with his works (Ephes. IV). Therefore, when we should be clothed with such garments, we are clothed with cruelty instead of mercy; with impatience instead of patience; with injustice instead of justice. And, to say it once, with vices instead of virtues; that is, with Antichrist instead of Christ. Thus it is said of this kind of man: 'He has put on cursing as his garment' (Psalm 109:18). The Lord will also vindicate clearly in His coming, even over those who should be in the Church with good works, but have abandoned themselves to wicked behavior, and are given over to Satan in the vestibules, no, not even in the vestibules, but before the vestibules, which is more significantly said in Greek as 'on the porches.' And he will judge above all those who fill the Church with various injustices and sins, with impieties and lies, and mix blood with blood. And if we desire to accept this upon the souls of each individual, let us understand reasonings (Alexander adds 'and perceptions'), that is, thoughts and senses, and the soul itself, which should be the dwelling place of the king. And according to the previous explanation, let us also refer the foreign garments and everything that follows to each believer, who, although they should have been clothed with Christ and always dwell within, have covered themselves with the various garments of sins and, having departed from the Church, that is, the congregation of the saints, have filled the temple of their body with wickedness and deceit.

1:10

(Verse 10.) And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord, there shall be a voice of crying from the fish gate, and a wailing from the Second Quarter, and a great crashing from the hills. LXX: And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord, there shall be a voice of crying from the gate of the mourners, and a wailing from the Second Quarter, and a great crashing from the hills. In the day of the sacrifice of the Lord, when he stretches out his hand over Judah and over all the

inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the enemy army surrounds them, there shall be a voice of crying from the fish gate and a wailing from the Second Quarter, and a great crashing from the hills. They called it the Fish Gate, which leads to Diospolis and Joppa, and it was closer to the sea than all the roads to Jerusalem, as Ezra also relates: They built the Fish Gate, the sons of Assena, they covered it and set up doors, bolts, and bars (2 Nehemiah 3:3). But what he says, and the wailing from the second, signifies the gate of the second wall in the same region, as it is also written in the book of Kings: Then went Hilkiah the high priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah, to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe, who dwelt in Jerusalem in the second (2 Kings 22:14). But great contrition speaks from the hills of the mind of Zion and the higher part of the city: for when the higher and fortified parts of the city were occupied, it is easier to descend the slope. But if we want to accept that day which the Lord threatens, the day of judgment as mentioned above, at that time when the Ancient of Days will be seated, and the books will be opened, and the conscience of each person will be laid bare, then the voice of the cry of those repenting will be fulfilled from the gate (Dan. VII). For the first gate of the eyes will be the one through which sins will be presented before our eyes, and all the splendor and image of ancient crimes and vices and excesses will be brought forth into the open. Then that which is written will be true: Behold the man and his works before his face. Therefore, conscience will torment him, and after he has been struck with remorse and cried out at the first gate of the eyes, he will also howl at the second one, which we can understand with our ears. For through these very senses, by which vices had crept in, their punishment will be felt, when we see what we have done and, being instructed by words, listening to the entire order of sins, we will be compelled to wail, and in us whatever had been exalted will be crushed, and because of our blindness and deaf ears, it was unknown to us. Or certainly, when lofty words and erudition coming from on high crush and break us, and are fulfilled in action: I groaned with the groaning of my heart (Ps. 39:9), so that the sacrifice of a broken spirit may be pleasing to God (Ps. 50); in us, who are humans, and have not committed such great sins to be compared to mountains, the hills are broken. However, in the devil and his angels, the heights of the mountains will be crushed. Many believe, according to the history that we have recounted to the times of the Babylonians, that this should be understood as referring to the first coming of the Savior, when because of excessive sins and the clamor of the people: 'His blood be on us and on our children' (Matt. XXVII, 25), Jerusalem was surrounded by an army and consumed by a crowd of mocking children, namely Vespasian and Titus, the two bears (IV Kings II). Indeed, this understanding is more in line with our faith, but in such a way that we know it can also be consistent with the previous history, or at least be a type of the second and perfect destruction of Jerusalem. Moreover, it must also be noted (for the proverb () clearly means in Hebrew not the gate of those who wound, but the gate of the fish) allegorically, that the gate of the fish is in Jerusalem, through which good fish are brought in, having been separated from the bad, and they mourn while the others enter who remained outside. Certainly, at the end of the world and in the consummation, those who did not observe their baptism will mourn from the first gate of fishes; those who did not perform worthy penance will mourn from the second; there will be great sorrow over the hills, which were not bent down for sins to submit their necks and bewail their crimes. Through these two gates, the gate of baptism and the gate of penance, one enters or returns to Jerusalem, that is, to the Church of God.

(Verse 11.) Ululate, inhabitants of the ball: all the people of Canaan are silent. LXX: Mourn, you who inhabit the broken one: for all the people of Canaan are compared. The ball which is called *Machtes* in Hebrew, and is reversed by *Aquila*, ἐπιστάλμων, must be read with a long syllable first, not a short one, so that we do not think of a sphere, but of an elongated one, so that we know it is said about the ball in which grains are pounded, a concave vessel, suitable for the use of physicians, in which ptisanae are usually prepared. Someone may say that they understand what 'pila' means, but they want to know why it is mentioned in the present context. Because once there was a description of a captured city, and it is said: 'The voice of shouting comes from the Gate of Fish, and the howl from the Second, and great destruction from the hills.' Now the same order of description is maintained, and it is said about the howling of those who live in the Valley of Siloe. And Scripture beautifully did not say those who live in the valley, those who live in the gorge, but those who live in the pila, because indeed just as grains are crushed by a beam striking from above, so an army will rush out from the Gate of Fish, and the Second Gate, and the hills against you. But the people of Canaan he called the people of Judah, according to what we read in Daniel: The seed of Canaan and not of Judah (Dan. XIII, 56); and to Jerusalem: Your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite (Ezek. XVI, 3); and in another place: Canaan is in your hand, the scale of iniquity (Hosea XII, 7). And if we want to weave a moral interpretation according to both translations, those who dwell in the deepest depths of sin are rightly stirred to howling and lamentation, and those immersed in the lowest depths of their crimes say: I am stuck in the mud of the deep, and there is no substance, they say (Ps. LXVIII, 2). And it is added: you who dwell in the shattered, that is, a soul wounded by many iniquities, or the Church, which is torn by schisms and heresies, and laments over each wound and mourns the children who have been killed. But what it says: 'The whole population of Canaan has become silent, or rather their blasphemy has ceased on the day of judgment' signifies that their mouths, which they have raised up to the skies, and their tongues, which reach down to the earth, will be silenced for eternity. And because Jerusalem has sinned, and therefore has been thrown into turmoil, the people are called Canaan, which means 'commotion'. For it cannot be said: 'He has set my feet upon a rock' (Psalm 39:3), but instead he is uncertain and always in motion. Therefore, even the holy man Noah, after he awoke from his sleep, placed a curse on Canaan, saying: 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers' (Genesis 9:25). Not only are sinners likened to Canaan, but according to the quality and diversity of sin, one is likened to Pharaoh, another to the giant Nimrod. And conversely, through good works and virtues, since the paths of virtues are different, one person takes on the spirit of Abraham, another of Moses, another of Elijah; therefore, it is said by the Apostle: Be zealous for better gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31). But whoever is perfect, according to that perfection which human condition can attain, is marked by the likeness of God.

They all perished, wrapped in silver. LXX: They all perished, those who trusted in wealth. They said to themselves, 'We have such great riches that we consider ourselves wrapped up and protected by them.' Or at least according to the LXX, those who were lifted up in pride and despised the poor were destroyed by anger. Consider also that it does not say 'those who trusted in wealth will perish,' but rather, even now, before the day of punishment comes to them, in their very pride and constant thoughts of their treasures, they have already perished and fallen. But whoever understands this, I think he does not desire riches enough, in which they will not perish, but have perished who have been proud. Nor indeed should it be estimated that only those who have been proud of silver have perished, but according to this definition, he who boasts in the

nobility of his race will also perish. He who boasts in dignities will perish; he who is inflated will perish; he who boasts in the strength of his body will perish. He who is softened by the weakness of women, nourishes his hair, plucks his hairs, polishes his skin, and gazes at himself in the mirror, which is properly the passion and madness of women, will perish. But if anyone wants to be exalted and boast with holy pride, let them be exalted with the apostles, when they are worthy to suffer insult for the name of Jesus Christ, let them boast with the Apostle, who rejoiced in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces patience, and patience produces hope, and hope does not disappoint (Rom. 5).

1:12

(Verse 12.) And it will be in that time, I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will visit those who are fixed in their filth; those who say in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, nor will he do evil. LXX: And it will be on that day, I will search Jerusalem with a lamp, and I will avenge against those who despise their guards, and say in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, nor will he do evil. In the time and day of the captivity of Jerusalem by the Babylonians or by the Romans (because they have forsaken the law of the Lord, and acted impiously towards the Lord their Creator), the Lord will search with a lamp all the hidden things of Jerusalem, and he will not allow any to escape unpunished. We read Joseph's histories, and there we find written about sewers, and caves, and caverns, and tombs, where princes and kings and powerful men and priests had hidden themselves in fear of death. And I will visit, he says, upon those who trust in their bodies, and in their strengths, which he scornfully calls filth or sins, in which they have been completely immersed: those who, rejecting providence, have said that neither a good nor an evil God is the author: that is, that he does not render good to the good, nor evil to the evil: but that all things are ruled by chance and carried by uncertain fate. But in the consummation of the world, because it is understood as the day of the Lord, the Lord will search Jerusalem, that is, his Church, with a lamp: and he will avenge himself upon the contemptuous men, who did not want to keep their guard, that is, they despised the commandments of the Lord, and, moreover, by reasoning, they sinned, saying, they blasphemed in their hearts: that doing good would be of no avail, nor would doing evil be harmful, because God would neither reward the good works, nor punish the evil. But rightly so, Jerusalem, that is, the Church (which was previously called Jebus, which is said to be trampled), when it was trampled by the Gentiles and was a mockery of demons, was called Jebus, and after the peace of the Lord began to dwell in it, and it became a place of peace, it took the name Jerusalem. Therefore, in the last times, which we have often mentioned, with increased wickedness, love will grow cold, and the light of the sun will withdraw from Jerusalem, and there will be such devastation that even the chosen ones of God will have difficulty being saved (Matthew 24): then the Lord will scrutinize all vices in Jerusalem with the lantern of his word and reason, and he will bring them to light, and even idle words will be judged and avenged, not in sinners (for they could obtain forgiveness for their sin), but in the contemptuous, of whom it is said in Habakkuk: Look at the contemptuous and behold (Habakkuk 1:5); and in another place: Why do you not look at the contemptuous? And then: But the arrogant, contemptuous man, the proud man, and so on. Above all, there will be revenge upon those who have not kept the Lord's commandments, and they say in their hearts: The Lord will not do good, and he will not do evil: not because God does evil, but because punishment seems evil to those who suffer it. Likewise, a bad surgeon's scalpel will be, because it cuts wounds and amputates rotten flesh. And a bad father,

beating his son to correct him, and a bad teacher, admonishing his student to educate him: For every discipline at the present moment does not seem to be a joy, but a sorrow: afterwards, however, it will yield peaceful fruit to those who have been educated by it (Hebrews XII, 11).

1:13-14

(Verse 13, 14.) And their strength shall be for plunder, and their houses for desolation. And they shall build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink their wine. The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hastens quickly. LXX: And their strength shall be for robbery, and their houses shall be destroyed. And they shall build houses, but shall not live in them; and they shall plant vineyards, but shall not drink their wine, for the great day of the Lord is near; it is near and hastens quickly. It is evident that, according to both captivities, their entire army has been cut down and their houses have been destroyed, and the fields and vineyards have been laid waste: and no longer will God delay his patience towards them. But when they spoke to the prophets, they said, this will be in the time to come, and for many days, a great and exceedingly swift day of the Lord will come upon them. According to the interpretation, however, when the time of judgment comes, whether for the death of each individual or the departure from the world: then all their strength will be turned to ruin, so that what was once strong and lifted up against the Lord will become weak and broken, turned to something better. Just as if someone were to rob the strength of a bandit, a pirate, and a thief, and render them weak, their weakness benefits them: for their weakened limbs, which they were previously not using well, will cease from evil work. And that which follows: 'And their houses become a desert,' many in the Church are building Zion in blood, and Jerusalem in iniquity, to whom such houses being destroyed benefits. Let us read Leviticus, where it is commanded to destroy a leprous house (Lev. 14). And because leprosy remains and spreads, its stones and wood and all dust are commanded to be thrown outside the city into an unclean place. But also in the beginning of Jeremiah, something such is written, 'Behold, I have given my words in your mouth: behold, I have set you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms: to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to build, and to plant' (Jeremiah 1:9-10). The wicked construction is destroyed so that later a good construction may be built: the unjust plantation is uprooted so that a righteous plantation may be placed nearby. And in Solomon we read: It is better to dwell under the open sky than in a disputed house with iniquity, and in a new house (Prov. 21:9). As if God, therefore, brought ruin upon the homes of those who were fixed in their own filth and said in their hearts: The Lord will not do good, nor will he do evil. He does not allow them to dwell in leprous and impure houses, nor does he allow them to drink wine from the vines they have planted. For if they had planted the vine of Sorek and the chosen vineyard, they would have drunk their wine and become intoxicated with the patriarch Noah and Joseph at noon (Gen. 9 and 43). But because they said: The Lord will not do good, nor will he do evil (Deut. 32:32-33), and their vineyard was the vineyard of Sodom, and their offspring was from Gomorrah, their grapes were grapes of gall, and their clusters were bitter, their wine was the fury of dragons and the incurable madness of asps (Jer. 9:23), therefore they planted vineyards and will not drink their wine. And mystically it is said of Sodom and Gomorrah, that all their plantation perished. For if they had remained in what they had begun, so as to be as it were the paradise of God, and had not ended in evil, so as to be as it were the land of Egypt, their plantation would certainly have remained. Such a thing and that sounds above the Egyptians in the Psalms: He destroyed their vineyards with hail, and their mulberry trees with frost. (Ps. LXXVII, 47). Indeed, as

a most merciful God, He killed and overturned all the Egyptian plantation and little trees, which have blood-like fruits rooted in Egypt, so that those who planted evilly may not drink and eat from them. The day of the Lord is near and very swift, to which no one can resist: it is near either because of eternity, since nothing is long to it, or because of the magnitude of punishment, since to the one who endures, the punishment that is to be inflicted never seems far away. Whether near, as we have said, when we depart from the world, and the death of each person will bring about the end of the world; and not only near, but also very swift, as the speed of his coming is shown in the fact that it is added, very swift.

1:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) The voice of the day of the Lord is bitter: there the strong shall be troubled: the day of wrath, that day shall be a day of tribulation and distress, a day of calamity and wretchedness, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and whirlwinds, a day of the trumpet and the cry against fortified cities, and against the high corners. LXX: The voice of the day of the Lord is bitter and harshly appointed: there the strong shall be troubled: the day of wrath, that day shall be a day of tribulation and necessity, a day of wretchedness and perdition, a day of darkness and whirlwinds, a day of clouds and gloominess, a day of the trumpet and the cry against fortified cities, and against the high corners. According to the above, either take from the Babylonian captivity or from the extreme sufferings they endured from the Romans, over which the Lord wept for Jerusalem, saying: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to you (Matthew 23:37), and so on. Truly, a preferred vengeance has been sought from the blood of Abel the just to the blood of Zechariah, whom they killed between the temple and the altar (2 Chronicles 24); and finally, concerning the Son of God, saying: His blood be on us and on our children, they experienced a bitter day, because they had provoked the Lord to bitterness; a day appointed by the Lord, on which not just anyone, but the strongest men are humbled, and wrath will come upon them in the end. For often, indeed, they had endured the anger of the Lord before, but that anger had not been the consummation and end (Matthew 27:25). Why now is it necessary to describe the great calamities they endured in each captivity, and how those who rejected the light of the Lord were cast into darkness and gloom, and those who refused to listen to the trumpets of the solemn days heard the clamor (or clangor) of warriors? But as for the fortified cities and high corners of Judea, which have been completely destroyed, I think that it is a judgment of the eyes rather than the ears: especially for us who now live in this province, we can see, we can prove what has been written. We can hardly see small traces of ruins in once great cities. In Shiloh, where the tabernacle and the ark of the Lord's Covenant were, we can barely see the foundations of the altar. That city of Gibeah, Saul's city, is completely destroyed to its foundations (Joshua 18). Ramah and Bethoron and the other noble cities built by Solomon are now just small villages. Let us read Josephus and the prophecy of Zephaniah, and we will see his ((Al. we will see)) history: and this is not only about the captivity, but until the present day, the treacherous colonizers, after killing the servants and finally the Son of God, except for mourning, are prohibited from entering Jerusalem, and in order to be allowed to mourn the ruin of their city, they buy it at a price, those who once bought the blood of Christ now buy their own tears: and not even their weeping is free for them. Do you see on the day when Jerusalem was captured and demolished by the Romans, the mournful people coming together, the decrepit old women and men covered in rags and years, demonstrating the anger of the Lord in their bodies and appearance? The crowd

of miserable people gathers, and with the Lord's shining and radiant resurrection, with the flag of the cross also shining from the Mount of Olives, they lament the ruins of their temple, the miserable people, and yet it is not to be pitied: still there are tears on their cheeks, and livid arms, and scattered hair, and a soldier demands his reward, so that they may be allowed to weep more; and does anyone doubt, when they see these things, about the day of tribulation and distress, the day of calamity and misery, the day of darkness and gloom, the day of clouds and whirlwinds, the day of the trumpet and clangor? For they have trumpets even in mourning, and, according to the prophecy, the voice of solemnity has turned into lamentation. They wail over the ashes of the Sanctuary, and over the destroyed altar, and over once fortified cities, and over the lofty corners of the temple, from which they once cast James, the brother of the Lord. These things have been said about the captivity of the Jews. Furthermore, if we apply the day of the Lord, as mentioned above, to the end of the world or to the end of each person's life, the interpretation will be clear, that the voice of the day of the Lord is bitter, full of necessity and anger, and the strong will be troubled there, for even the holy ones will be saved, but as if through fire. That day will be a day of tribulation, distress, and calamity, a day of misery when they will declare: Woe to us, for we have become miserable. It will be a day of darkness: For everyone who does evil hates the light and does not come to the light (John 3:20); and it is necessary that those who hate the light will be enveloped in darkness. It will be a day of fog and whirlwind; for the storm of the Lord will come upon them, and the sound of the trumpet, as the Apostle indicates, saying: In the last trumpet (1 Corinthians 15:52). For there will be a day of trumpet and the sound of shouting over fortified cities, which they had built for themselves in the multitude of sins, just as Cain had. And over the high corners, wicked works and those deviating from the straight path of the Lord (or deviating from the straight path). Therefore, the hypocrites, the Pharisees, are also accused by the Savior, because they pray in the street corners (Matthew VI). For the straight and narrow path that leads to paradise is narrow and difficult, and it leads to life. But the path is narrow and crooked, wide, and spacious, which leads to death (Matt. VII). At the same time, amidst the words of the severity of the Lord, perceive His mercy, that for this reason the days are bitter, and the days of wrath, and the days of tribulation, and the days of trumpet and clamor, so that poorly fortified cities and perverse angles may be destroyed.

1:17-18

(Verse 17, 18.) And I will trouble the people, and they shall walk as blind, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their bodies like dung; but their silver and gold shall not be able to save them in the day of the Lord's wrath, and all the earth shall be devoured by the fire of his zeal: for he will make a speedy consumption of all the inhabitants of the earth. LXX: And I will trouble the people, and they shall walk as blind, because they have sinned against the Lord, and he shall pour out their blood like dust, and their flesh like the dung of oxen; and their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's anger, and all the earth shall be consumed by the fire of his zeal: for he will make a speedy and complete destruction upon all the inhabitants of the earth. It is not difficult to say, according to the previous meaning, that Jerusalem, which endured because of the cross of the Lord, has suffered: for the visitation of the Lord has departed from it, and all men in Judea have been troubled, and because of the greatness of the affliction they have walked like blind men, not knowing what to do. And they have suffered this because they have sinned against the Lord, that

is, against the Son of God. For because they have shed the blood of the prophets and the blood of Christ, their blood has been poured out like the earth in the whole region, and their bodies have remained unburied, like dung upon the face of the earth. Those who amassed great wealth through excessive greed, hoarding silver and gold, were unable to free themselves from the wrath of the Lord on the day of judgment. For the fire of the Lord's zeal burned against them and consumed the entire province. And there was no respite in their midst, for forty-two years after the crucifixion of the Lord, Jerusalem was surrounded by an army and its downfall came swiftly, not only for Jerusalem but also for all the inhabitants of the land of Judaea. But in the end, whether of the world or of each individual, all men who remained as men will be troubled, and the dead will be like men. And they will walk as blind, for they have lost the light of virtues, and they will not have a place for repentance: and they will suffer these things because they have sinned against the Lord. For if the Lord is justice, truth, holiness, and other virtues, whoever has acted unjustly, lied, and pursued vice and sins, has sinned against the Lord. But what follows, 'And their blood will be poured out like the earth, and their bodies like the dung of bulls,' seems absurd, that in the resurrection of the dead and in the consummation of the world and judgement, we should say that blood is poured out and bodies lie like dung. Therefore, what is said to Noah, 'And I will require the blood of your lives from the hand of every beast, and from the hand of man, and from the hand of his brother I will require the life of man, who sheds the blood of man: by man shall his blood be shed' (Gen. IX, 5, 6), it is ridiculous to believe this in the resurrection, and it cannot hold true in this life. For how many have shed blood, and their blood has not been shed? And others have killed a man with poison or hanging, and yet when the man is dead, no blood has been shed? Therefore, how is the Lord going to shed their blood in vengeance when the one who kills has not shed blood? Therefore, the blood of man, which is the vital principle by which he is nourished, sustained, and lives, must be understood: whoever sheds it, either through scandal or perverse doctrine, will be poured out by him on the day of judgment, that is, what he seemed to have as vital, he will be forced to lose. According to this kind of blood, and flesh is understood, of which Isaiah says: All flesh is grass (Isa. XL, 6). And in Genesis the Lord said: My spirit shall not remain in these men, because they are flesh (Gen. VI, 3). And the Apostle, speaking of both: Flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God: neither will corruption inherit incorruption of God (Al. God is silent) (I Cor. XV, 50). Therefore, on the day of consummation, whether general or specific, all blood that has been shed will cry out to the Lord, and it will appear in the midst, and the works of blood and earthly things will lie as dust and filth, and the rich, with their silver and gold, will not be able to free themselves on the day of wrath, with him who is dying hearing: Fool, this night your soul will be taken from you; and what you have prepared, whose will it be (Luke XII, 20)? Not that we deny that the rich can be saved from death by gold and silver; for the redemption of a man's soul is his own wealth (Prov. XIII, 8); but rather that they cannot be saved at that time when they must forsake their riches out of necessity. For all the earth and everything that is earthly will be devoured by the zeal of the Lord. And when he says 'zeal,' understand that he is still speaking of one who loves the Lord. For if he did not love the human soul, he would never be zealous for it; and, in the likeness of a husband, he would avenge the sin of his wife, whom he would not be angry with if he did not love her. And the Lord will do this with haste for all the inhabitants of the earth, those who have completely devoted themselves to the earth and are not strangers or foreigners, as the righteous one who speaks: I am a stranger in the land, and a foreigner like all my ancestors (Ps. XXXVIII, 13). And again, elsewhere, not wanting to dwell any longer in the tent

of the flesh, he testifies with tearful voice, saying: Woe is me, for my journey has been prolonged (Ps. CXIX, 5). For we who are in this body's tabernacle, groan and lament: Miserable wretch that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? (Rom. VII, 24)?

2:1-2

(Chapter 2, verses 1, 2.) Come together, gather, o unlovable nation: before the command gives birth, like passing dust, to the day: before the wrath of the fury of the Lord comes upon you, before the anger of the indignation of the Lord comes upon you. LXX: Gather and collect, o unlearned nation: before you become like a passing flower of the day: before the wrath of the Lord comes upon you: before the day of the anger of the fury of the Lord comes upon you. After the description of the evils that are to come on the Lord's day (according to the double exposition of captivity which we mentioned above), the people are called to repentance and it is said to them: Come together and gather, or as it is written in the Septuagint, be gathered, that is, be united by the bond of love (according to the Apostle): an unlovable people, who are unworthy of God's love, or an unlearned people, of whom it is said in Deuteronomy: A foolish and senseless people (Deut. XXXII, 6). And in Jeremiah: You have struck your children without cause; you have not received discipline (Jer. II, 30), before what has been prophesied comes to pass, before the prescribed command takes effect (which will come as easily as dust blown by), before the fury of the Lord is fulfilled upon you. At the same time, behold the mercy of God: it was enough for the wise to have described the onslaught of the impending evils; but because He does not want to impose punishment, but only to frighten those who will suffer, He himself prompts them to repentance, so that He does not do what He has threatened. But in general, the entire multitude of believers, and those who are called the people of God, gathers in the Church, and it is said to them: Come together in the Church, join us with love and peace, O uninstructed people, who do not want to receive God's discipline, nor have knowledge of His commandments; but you delight in the riches and physical well-being and beauty of this world, and also in the pleasures of the flesh, which pass away like a flower that withers in a single day. Therefore I say to you, come together, unite, so that when the time of judgment comes and all your glory has passed away, you may be willing to repent, when there is no longer a place for repentance, but only for punishment. Someone may ask, how can this be understood as each person passes from the world? Therefore, it is said to each individual: O you, who are occupied with the affairs of the world, running in different directions, return to the Church of the saints and join yourself to their life and community, which you see pleases God, and gather the scattered parts of your soul, which do not cohere with each other, into the unity of wisdom, and cling to its embrace, and listen in a mystic way: Take courage, weak hands; strengthen your feeble knees (Isaiah 40:7); do not boast in the good things of the flesh and its fleeting beauty; for all flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of the grass. The hay withers and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever. We can use this chapter for a time: if ever we see someone dedicated to worldly honors and amassing wealth, coming to the Church rarely or never, we can say to him, gather and join the people of God, you who do not hear the Lord's commandments, before your glory passes away, before the day of the Lord's wrath comes upon you.

2:3-4

(Verse 3, 4) Seek the Lord, all you meek of the earth, who have practiced His judgment; seek justice, seek meekness, perhaps you shall be hidden in the day of the Lord's fury. For Gaza shall be deserted, and Ashkelon shall become a desolation. Ashdod shall be driven out at noon, and Ekron shall be uprooted. LXX: Seek the Lord, all you lowly of the earth; do justice, seek righteousness, and answer it, that you may be protected in the day of the Lord's wrath. For Gaza shall be plundered, and Ashkelon shall become a desolation; and Ashdod shall be cast out at noon, and Ekron shall be uprooted. He is called humble of the earth, who, not by humility, which signifies virtue, but by sins, has been humiliated, and cannot say with Christ: Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart (Matt. XI, 29). For everyone who humbles himself will be exalted. And in another place, a sermon is directed to the saint: the greater you are, the more humble yourself, and you will find favor before God (Eccl. III). But he who is humiliated by sins, and burdened with the consciousness of offenses, and says: Like a heavy burden, burdens are upon me (Psalm XXXVII, 5), must hear: Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you (Matt. XI, 28). Let this saying be in the beginning according to the 70 interpreters. However, according to the Hebrew, there is another sense. For it is said to the saints: O you, who keep my commandments, who are placed in the land, and knowing that everyone who humbles himself will be exalted, you have imitated my meekness, and you have acted in judgment, seek the Lord in your meekness. And if you want to know who this Lord is, seek the just, seek the meek: For the Father has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22), who will judge justly. And since you are gentle, seek a gentle one, so that whatever is lacking in your gentleness may be fulfilled by the one who is the source of gentleness. But I say this to you: If you hide on the day of the Lord's fury, that is, if you are able to escape the wrath of the coming day and the captivity that is to be inflicted by either Nebuchadnezzar or the Romans on the people of Judah, because you have sought the Lord and have acted justly. But if they doubt (others say) who have made his judgments, saying (others say). If you wonder how you will hide on the day of the Lord's wrath, what will happen to the sinners? For such a great devastation will come to the land of Judah, and such a high-ranking Babylonian army will ascend here, that even the most powerful cities of the Philistines, which have always resisted you in fair combat, will be captured. Gaza will be destroyed, and Ascalon will be reduced to a wasteland, and Ashdod, not by theft but by war, that is, by open light and victory, will be taken captive; and Ekron, which means uprooting, will endure what it signifies in its name, that is, it will be uprooted. This is according to the literal and Hebrew truth. According to the Septuagint, however, it is commanded to the humble of the earth, of whom it was said above, that they should work for justice and seek righteousness, which I believe is none other than Christ. And because everyone who seeks will find (Mat. VII, 8), what they have found, let them respond to others, that is, let them teach others: for hidden wisdom and a treasure not appearing, what usefulness is there in both (Eccl. XX, 32)? And this, he says, I command you, that on the day of the Lord's wrath you may be protected, either at the end of the world or at the departure of each one from the world, for Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron will suffer different punishments: for Gaza means his strength. Therefore, all those who applaud themselves in bodily strength and worldly power, and say with the devil, by my own strength I will do it, will be plundered on the day of the Lord's wrath, and brought to nothing. Ascalon also, which is called weighted or murderous fire, when the day of the Lord's anger comes, will experience the measure of its wickedness, and by the same weight with which it operated, it will be depressed. And because it burned to shed blood, and scandalized many souls, and it was fulfilled in it: The Lord will abhor the bloodthirsty and deceitful

man (Psalm 5:7), it will not be plundered like Gaza, but reduced to solitude, it will be consumed by the fires of Gehenna until it turns to dust. And also Azotus, which in Hebrew is called Esdod, and in our language means the fire of generation, will be laid waste by bright light. For it burned with desire, and was consumed by the fire of generation. And because all who commit adultery are like an oven whose hearts are burning (Hosea VII), and are wounded by burning arrows, not in darkness, not in hidden judgment; but at noon, that is, when the saints receive full clarity, they will be cast into darkness, and will not have the fellowship of the saints. But Accaron, which is interpreted as sterility or eradication, because it has produced no fruit and by the perversity of its teaching has eradicated many, it itself will also be eradicated. But all these various things understand in the vices and sins of the souls, and because what each one's work is like will be tested by the fire of judgment on the day (I Cor. III).

2:5-7

(Verse 5-7.) Woe to those who dwell by the sea, the nation of the lost: the word of the Lord is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines; and I will destroy you so that there will be no inhabitant. And the sea coast shall be pastures, with shelters for shepherds and folds for flocks. And the remnant of the house of Judah shall possess it; they shall feed on it. In the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening; for the Lord their God will visit them and restore their fortunes. LXX: Woe to those who inhabit the edge of the sea, strangers from Crete! The word of the Lord is against you, O Canaan, land of the foreigners; and I will destroy you, and there will be a pasture for flocks in Crete, and a sheepfold for herds. And the edge of the sea shall belong to the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed their flocks in the houses of Ashkelon; in the afternoon they shall rest, for the Lord their God will visit them and turn back their captivity. As for the history, it is not difficult to interpret, because in the previous statements it was said: Gaza will be destroyed (or deserted), and Ascalon will be turned into a desert: Ashdod will be cast out to the south, and Ekron will be uprooted. With these four great cities of Palestine named, now it is evident that the Lord's discourse is directed towards the province itself, and a woe is pronounced on it: Woe to those who dwell by the sea, when the Babylonian comes; for even those who dwell near the sea will perish and be taken away. But it is doubted by no one that the land of the Palestinians is the land of Canaan. And I will destroy you, he says, so that there will be no inhabitant: and you will come to such a great devastation, that you rejoiced in the destruction of Judaea, so that all your well-fortified cities will become grazing grounds for shepherds. And after the Lord has visited his people, and has caused them to return under Zerubbabel and Joshua, and they have built the temple and rebuilt Jerusalem, you will be so uncultivated, and will be covered with thorns and nettles, that shepherds will rest from the remnants of the Jews in Ashkelon in the afternoon, and make their flocks lie down in the once noble city, and this will happen because the Lord will visit his people, and will turn away their captivity, whether it has happened or not, God will see. For our purpose now is not to weave a true history, but to communicate to our own people what we have learned from the Hebrews. However, the spiritual sense and translation of the LXX is difficult to understand, especially because there are discrepancies in interpretation. For where we have translated, nation of the lost, they said, strangers of the Cretans: and what is written in Hebrew as GoiChorethim (), they read as Goi, meaning nation, and Gar, meaning stranger: and for Chorethim, which means lost, they thought it was the name of the island of Crete. Finally, both Aquila and the fifth edition were translated, ■θνος ■λ■θριον: And Theodotio ■θνος ■λεθρ■ας:

Symmachus also ἄθροος λεθρευμενον, which all together with our interpretation make. Again, where we have said, And the cord of the sea will be the pasture of the shepherds, and all the interpreters agree with this translation, it is written in the LXX: And Crete will be the pasture of the flock, and the sheepfold. Therefore, comparing spiritual things to spiritual things, and holding onto the path once begun of the Vulgate edition, we search if we have read the name of Crete elsewhere in the Holy Scriptures. And, if I am not mistaken, it is quite clear: Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This testimony is true. (Tit. I, 12, 13). They are unstable and easily deceived, carried away by every wind of doctrine, by human trickery, by their cunning in deceitful scheming. Instead of living in the land of confession, which is Judea, they preferred to be foreigners, those Cretans who are constantly battered by the varying waves of the sea and resonate with the sound of the Cretan lyre. According to the Apostle, they are like a tinkling cymbal. (I Cor. XIII, 1). And because the Cretans are foreigners, therefore the word of God, that is, admonition, is directed towards them: and they are called the land of Canaan, always in agitation, always in motion, and the land of the Gentiles: for they are alienated from God, they are tossed to and fro in the cable of the sea, and are situated in the region of Crete. Therefore, the word of God is directed towards them, either at the consummation and end of the world, or daily by ecclesiastical men, and those who are able to say with the apostle: Do you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me? (2 Corinthians 13:3) So that they may be driven out of Crete, and perish from their former dwellings, and that region which previously contained a lost flock, may begin to be the sheepfold of Christ; and let Judas, that is, true confession, dwell in the ropes of the sea. And when the world has now begun to be evening, and out of many who are called, few are chosen, and those who are now called the remnant of the house of Judah, may feed those who were first fed in the sea, and in Crete, and in falsehood: they will turn aside into the houses of Ashkelon, that is, where previously the fire of the devil and the blood of the slain flowed: for Ashkelon is interpreted as the murderous fire. And this will happen because the Lord will visit His people, and those who were easily captured by the sophisms of heretics, like those coming out of captivity, will overcome their adversaries and dwell in their own tabernacles. However, what is read in the Septuagint, 'From the face of the sons of Judah,' we have marked with an obelus, for it is not found in the Hebrew or in any other interpreter, and it disturbs the context and meaning of the chapter: not that it would be difficult in some way to weave in the sentence even with this included; but once we have decided on the truth of the interpretation, we choose the judgement of a more learned reader rather than the opinion of the common people.

2:8-11

(Ver. 8 onwards) I have heard the reproach of Moab and the blasphemies of the sons of Ammon, who have reproached my people and magnified themselves against their borders. Therefore, as I live, says the Lord God (God remains silent), the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Moab shall be like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah, a land of thorns and salt pits, and a desolation forever. The remnant of my people shall plunder them; the survivors of my nation shall possess them. This will happen to them because of their pride, for they have blasphemed and exalted themselves above the people of the Lord of hosts. The Lord will be terrible against them; He will destroy all the gods of the earth, and men from their places will worship Him, even all the coastlands of the nations. I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the insults of the people of Ammon, with which they have reproached My people and exalted themselves against their

borders. Therefore, as I live, says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, surely Moab shall be like Sodom, and the people of Ammon like Gomorrah, a possession of nettles and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation. The remnant of My people shall plunder them, and the remainder of My nation shall possess them. This shall be their lot in return for their pride, because they have reproached and exalted themselves against the Lord of hosts. The Lord will be known to them; He will destroy all the gods of the nations on the earth, and men from their places will worship Him, even all the coastlands of the nations. Except for the prophet Daniel, who frequently sees visions of four kingdoms and explains their differences using various images (Dan. VIII), Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel also do this, so that after seeing the vision of Judah against the other nations surrounding it, they prophesy and proclaim what will happen to them according to the specific events, and they dwell on the description of these events for a longer time. Now the prophet Zephaniah does the same, although briefly, in the same manner. For against the Philistines, against whom the previous threat has been made, he says, 'Gaza shall be destroyed, and Ascalon shall be turned into a desert, Ashdod shall be driven away to the south, and Accaron shall be uprooted.' Now a prophecy is woven against Moab and the sons of Ammon, or as it has been added in the Septuagint, against Damascus, which is called Aram in Isaiah (Chapter 17), because they, who had offered aid to Nebuchadnezzar, devastated Judah, trampled on its sanctuary, and even destroyed the temple, and having subjugated the people of Israel, they blasphemed the Lord. Indeed, Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans, after destroying the cities of the Jews, oppressed other nations, and so it happened that those who had insulted the people of God were themselves pressed by the same distress of evils, and held captive Judah, whom they thought they had subjected. Therefore, before the captivity came under King Josiah, while Jerusalem and the temple were still standing, a prophecy is directed against the insolent, so that the evils that once afflicted the people of God would be alleviated by the evils of other nations. I heard, he said, the reproach of Moab, which is now called Areopolis, and the blasphemies of the sons of Ammon, which itself is also called the second city of Arabia after Bosra Philadelphia: in which they reproached my people, and having expelled the Jews, they extended their borders in their land. Therefore, because they blasphemed me and reproached my people, I, the Lord of hosts, who am able to fulfill what I threaten, and the God of Israel, who myself suffer injury among my people, will make Moab like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah. We find such visions in Isaiah and Jeremiah, and we will find the same things that we now read here. The dryness of thorns and heaps of salt, and a desert forever, for which I do not know why the Seventy translated Damascus as uprooted and abandoned, unless I am mistaken, deceived by the ambiguity of the word: for the dryness that is said in Hebrew Mamasac (), if the first letter Mem is changed and Dalath is taken, has the same remaining letters as Damascus, and can be read instead of the previous word Damasec. But it is asked how these cities, that is, Moab and the sons of Ammon, were reduced to Sodom and Gomorrah, and as dry as thorns and heaps of salt, they will not be built again forever? And indeed, there is no difficulty in explaining that they were laid waste like Sodom and Gomorrah. However, what follows: They will be deserted forever, we interpret either as the destruction of their kingdom (because they were later overthrown by the Chaldeans and lost their kingdom, and then were either attacked by the Antiochians or the Ptolemies, and finally submitted their necks to the Roman Empire), or certainly it must be taken exceedingly: for Lolam signifies both eternity and age: from which it can be understood as referring to one age, or for some time, or one generation. And those who remain from the people of Israel shall be devastated, and they shall possess the

blasphemous aid once of the Chaldeans. But this shall happen to them because of their pride, for they have blasphemed and magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of hosts, who will be terrible over them, and his terror will not destroy the proud. He will not shed the blood of blasphemers, but he will destroy and weaken all their idols, so that those who were previously held by error and did not feel the blessings of the Lord, pressed by the necessity of evils, may know that idols are of no use and may each worship him from his own place, all the islands of the nations. So far according to the Hebrew. Now let us turn to the Septuagint interpreters, and let us compel the Jews, who only follow the history, to explain to us when Moab and the sons of Ammon became like Sodom and Gomorrah, and like a heap of ruins, and deserted forever; they should show the sulphurous rains, the vineyards, the land turned into ashes and dust, the sea that once was a well of salt, now called the Dead Sea, flooded: when the Jews plundered them, when the remaining Israelite nations possessed them. But what is the indignation of the Lord against blasphemy and insults? Not against Moab and Ammon, but against the whole earth, so that every person from their own place may worship Him, all the islands of the nations? What is more, He grants more favor to those who blaspheme, so that they may turn from error to salvation. But if they wish to say that after the return from Babylon these nations were subject to the people of Israel, first we will demand the authority of the Scriptures, from which they can prove this: then, when they are unable to demonstrate it, we will grant them that it happened as they say: that it was the justice of God to blaspheme the ancestors and reproach the forefathers, and then repay it to the grandchildren. Since certainly that statement, which was previously said in the Law, that the sins of the fathers will be visited upon the children in the third and fourth generation (Exodus 20), is dissolved by Ezekiel: 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'this parable shall no longer be spoken; but the soul that sins, it shall die' (Ezekiel 18:20). And at the same time, observe that it is a parable that has been spoken, and it does not mean what the words on the surface suggest. But if it is unjust to impute to grandchildren the sins of their grandfather that they have committed, how much more unjust is it for the folly of the Jews to hope for this to happen at the end of the world, when it is not their Christ, as they suppose; but the Antichrist that is to come. For whenever they are pressed in history, so that they may teach that what has been said is completed, they immediately leap to future times of Christ, and they promise and say to themselves after many centuries all the things that they cannot explain, and that Moab, and the sons of Ammon, and Egypt, and the Philistines, and Edom, which now insult the Jews, will be punished at that time. Let us therefore ask them why God punishes these nations in particular, and not the entire world in which the Jews have been scattered far and wide. For if Moab deserves rebuke, insulting the Jews, and the sons of Ammon and the other nations around, why isn't Gaul rebuked? why doesn't he threaten Britain? why is Spain exempt from punishment? for what reason is nothing said about Italy? why is Africa silent? and to say it once, when the whole world holds the Jews captive, why do only the nations that are around it commit so much wickedness, to the point that they are particularly named? Now, as for what we said before, that Damascus is not named in Hebrew either by the Prophet, or by any of the other Prophets anywhere when predicting what will happen to the Gentiles, we will also prove from the very order of the Scripture. For in connection with the words: 'I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the blasphemies of the children of Ammon', he adds immediately afterwards: 'because Moab will be as Sodom, and the sons of Ammon as Gomorrah.' Therefore, what follows: 'And Damascus, deserted, like a heap of grain, should have sent something from Damascus, as he had said about two nations: Moab will be like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah,

whose sins he had already mentioned: thus he would have described the insults or blasphemies of the Damascenes, so that it would appear fitting to inflict punishment afterwards. But even this itself that is said: 'Like a heap of grain', which in Greek is said **■ζ θιμων■α ■λ■ζ**, we think were translated by the LXX as **■λ■ζ**, that is, of salt; but by the uneducated, who mistook **θιμων■αν**, that is, a heap of grain or produce, for **■λ■ζ**, adding the two letters **ω** and **ν**, as if to indicate the abundance of produce, **■λωνος**, that is, of a threshing floor, was used. It is said about the variety and error of interpretation, and about the difficulty of history. However, the learned man compares spiritual things with spiritual things, and does not seek the things that are below, but the things that are above, and with Christ rises from the underworld, and taking off the old man, puts on the new, he will bring accusations against the teachers of the contrary doctrines of the Church, who themselves also seem to be of the lineage of Abraham, and to have escaped the fire of Sodom and Gomorrah, and to dwell in the city of Segor. But because their generation is in darkness, and they cannot see the light of truth (for they have turned away from God the Father, which is interpreted from the names Lot and Moab), and they have ceased to be the sons of God (which is called my people), and they have stood still in a dark cave conceived from incestuous marriages: therefore, even to this day, insulting the simplicity of the children of Judah, they desire to magnify their possession beyond its boundaries, of which it is said in Proverbs: Do not move the everlasting boundaries, which your fathers have set (Prov. XXII, 28). See heretics in dialectics, applauding themselves in rhetoric and in all the dogmas of sophisms, despising the simplicity of the Church, and considering it unworthy of their mysteries, which they have imagined as idols for themselves, and mocking them as worthless. And you do not seek out what are the reproaches of Moab and the insults of the sons of Ammon, in which they reproached the people of God. Therefore, the Lord swore by Himself, saying: As I live, says the Lord. And beautifully to distinguish the dead gods, who are called idols, God of Israel speaks of Himself as living, that is, the God of the people who see Him: and thus these nations, that is, Moab and the sons of Ammon, of whom we have spoken above, are blaspheming. They will be like Sodom and Gomorrah, not because they come from Sodom and Gomorrah, but because they blaspheme the people of God and act against Israel. They will be reckoned as Sodom and Gomorrah, and they will be destroyed in the same way as those cities were destroyed before, having no trace of strength and life. It is no wonder if we understand this about heretics, since they are considered like Sodom and Gomorrah, as it is also said to the ecclesiastics who did not observe God's commandments and have departed from his precepts, through Isaiah: Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom, and give ear to the law of the Lord, you people of Gomorrah (Isaiah 1:10). And to the elders desiring to corrupt the chastity of the Church under the guise of Susanna, Daniel says: This is the judgment of God: the seed of Canaan, and not of Judah (Daniel 13). And so that you may know that whenever Sodom and Gomorrah and Egypt are mentioned, it is not about those provinces that we see with our eyes, but about other spiritual things that the prophetic discourse warns us about: read in the Apocalypse of John: The place in which the Lord was crucified is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt (Rev. XI, 8). Therefore, if Jerusalem, in which the Lord was crucified, is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, why should not, on the other hand, Egypt and Sodom and Gomorrah, if they have done the works of Jerusalem and the land of Judah, be transferred to the land of the Lord's inheritance? Finally, David was not of the priests, nor was he allowed to eat the showbread (I Sam. 21), but because his works were increasing one by one, and Saul's persecution was advancing his virtues, therefore in his flight he doesn't hesitate, suddenly he becomes a high

priest, and he receives the showbread, and he does not violate God's command. We have said all of this because Moab will be like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah. Damascus, which also means 'drinking blood' or 'blood shed,' will be abandoned by God's mercy, like a heap of salt. For since its ruler is King Aretha, and the people of Damascus want to kill Paul, and he is let down through the wall in a basket (Acts 9), it is not said to Damascus: You are the salt of the earth; nor is that called salt, which is always offered in sacrifices, but rather that which is tasteless and about which it is written in the Gospel: But if salt has lost its taste, with what shall it be salted? It is useless, neither for the earth, nor for the dung heap; but it is thrown out, so that it may be trampled underfoot by men (Matthew 5, 13). And so Moab, and Ammon, and Damascus, who prepared themselves against the knowledge of the Lord, and blasphemed the people of God, and said many insults against him, and wanted to extend their boundaries in the land of the Church, and possess the people of God, they will be deserted and destroyed, and the remaining people of God, that is, the men educated in the Holy Scriptures, will plunder them, and the remaining of the Lord's people will possess them, and this will be their disgrace, because they reproached and magnified themselves against the Almighty Lord. See the mercy, see the compassion of the Lord: His boundaries are insulted, He is blasphemed, His territories are plundered. And what does He do? He sends to the remnants of His people, of whom we have spoken, to divide those who blaspheme against Him, and to lead them into His possession. For it is much better for a fool to serve the wise, and for his foolishness to be corrected by the wisdom of the Lord, than for him to be abandoned to his own foolishness. Therefore, the almighty Lord will come, and He will be more clearly revealed to those who now do not know Him, whom they are ignorant of. And He will destroy all doctrines, that is, their gods, and the idols of the various nations, so that when the statues, which they had composed in their own understanding, are demolished, the nations may turn to the Lord, and each one may worship Him in his own place whom they did not know before.

2:12-15

(Verse 12 and following) But even you, Ethiopians, will be killed by my sword: and he will stretch out his hand over the North, and will destroy Assyria: and he will make a beautiful place desolate, and like a deserted wilderness. And flocks will lie down in the midst of it: all the beasts of the nations, and the pelican, and the hedgehog will dwell in its thresholds: the voice of the singer in the window, the raven on the top. For I will weaken its strength. This is the glorious city, dwelling in confidence, which said in her heart: I am, and there is no other besides me: how has she become a dwelling place of beasts in the wilderness? Everyone who passes by it will hiss and shake his hand. LXX: And you, Ethiopians, wounded by my sword will be; and I will stretch out my hand over the North and destroy Assyria, and make Nineveh a desolation, a dry and desolate land. And flocks will graze in its midst, and all the beasts of the earth; and chameleons and hedgehogs will lie down in its folds, and the beasts will cry out in their dens, and the ravens at its gates: for its height is like a cedar; this is the city devoted to evil, which dwells in hope and says in its heart: I am, and there is none after me; how has it become a pasture for beasts? Everyone who passes through it will hiss and shake their hands. The Jews interpret this whole chapter and the two preceding ones against the Philistines, Moab, and the sons of Ammon, referring to the coming of Christ, whom they believe will come at the end of the world to rebuild Jerusalem and deliver his people from the hand of the nations by which they are held captive. And this is what is meant by what is said: 'And men shall worship him, every man from his place, even all the isles of the

heathen.' But not only the nations mentioned above, but also the Ethiopians and Assyrians and the city of Nineveh at that time must be laid waste and become a habitation for all the beasts of the earth, or as it is written in Hebrew, 'all the beasts of the nations.' From this, they believe it is intended to signify all the nations that will overthrow Nineveh. And because Nineveh, which means 'beautiful,' in the present place is referred to as beautiful in relation to Babylon. And everything that follows: the pelican and the hedgehog will dwell in its thresholds, and so on, rather applies to Babylon, of which the same desolation is predicted in Isaiah. And on the contrary, others assert that it is clearly about Assyria, of which it was already said: It will stretch out its hand against the north, and it will destroy Assyria, and it will make Nineveh a desolation. According to Al. Post, the Assyrians are better understood as being associated with Nineveh rather than Babylon, which is a city of the Chaldeans. And when he says that the Onocrotalus and the Hedgehog are signs of solitude, it should be understood as signs of judgment. There are two kinds of Onocrotalus: one that is aquatic, and another that is associated with solitude. And when he says the singing voice in the window, it can be understood as either demons or the voices of various birds that are known to inhabit deserted cities. Furthermore, both we and the Seventy similarly translated: 'Corvus' is placed on the threshold in Hebrew, which, according to the differences in reading (), is understood either as drought, or sword, or raven. Therefore, the Eagle, others interpreted as sword or drought. And after its overthrow, as if mocking its ruin, the prophetic speech says: 'This is the glorious city, dwelling in confidence, which said in its heart: I am, and besides me there is no other; how has it become a dwelling place of beasts in the desert?' Anyone who passes by it will hiss and shake his hand. According to what we have said above, either true beasts will dwell in the deserted city, or the varied multitude of nations is certainly indicated under the form of beasts. But if anyone asks how this prophecy applies to the time of Nebuchadnezzar according to the history: let him read the histories about the Ethiopians and Assyrians, to whom the Medes and Persians did nothing, and he will see that the Assyrians and Ethiopians were also subject to the Medes, and that Cyrus had a kingdom, and the power of Cyrus, and everything that has followed thereafter. Let these words be said in Hebrew. However, if we observe in all the Scriptures that the Ethiopians are called those who are deeply sunk in vices, according to what we read in Jeremiah: 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin?' (Jer. XIII, 23). With the Ethiopians turned to better things, there will be hope for anyone who wishes to repent, that they will not be excluded from salvation. Hence, the previously defiled soul, and stained with the filth of sins, says: 'I am black' (Cant. I, 4). And afterwards, at the end of the Song of Songs, it is written about the same, now purified and washed through repentance: Who is she who ascends, all white? (Song of Songs 8:5); Moses also, that is, the Law of the Lord in a spiritual sense, took an Ethiopian woman from the nations as his wife (Exodus 2); and Mary, that is, the synagogue of the Jews, and Aaron, that is, the carnal priesthood, not according to the order of Melchizedek, murmured against the Law, but in vain. For immediately the synagogue is struck with leprosy, and cast out outside the camp, for the entire time, while Moses himself is praying, it is brought back into the camp. For the hand of Ethiopia had already reached God (Psalm 68). Therefore, the divine word now threatens those who cling to sins and forget the filth of their offenses, who do not want to turn to better things and wash away their dark color. And it threatens them with a sword, which I think is written about in Genesis: He placed Cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned to guard the way of the tree of life. And in Isaiah: He will bring forth a great and holy sword against the twisted serpent dragon, and he will kill him on that day (Isa. XXVII, 1, sec. LXX). And he says that they should be wounded or killed with a sword, so that,

fearing punishment, they may imitate Nineveh, and repent (Jonah III), and not endure what the Lord threatens. Indeed, this is also the prophecy of Jeremiah: I will speak, he says, concerning the nation and the kingdom, and I will remove and destroy them: and if they repent, then I will also repent of all the evils that I have spoken to do to them (Jer. XVIII, 7, 8). And so, in order that you may know, for this reason the Lord now threatens the Ethiopians with a sword, so that he may turn them to better things. He introduces this in a little while in this very book about the Ethiopians: Beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my dispersed sons will bring me an offering. (Below III, 10) Or, as it is found in the Septuagint: From the borders of the rivers of Ethiopia, I will receive my dispersed ones, and they will offer sacrifices to me. After this, the Lord does not speak as before; but the prophetic spirit speaks about him: And he will stretch out his hand over the north, and he will destroy Assyria. (Jer. I, 14). The North wind, of which Jeremiah wrote: 'Out of the north evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.' And of which Solomon speaks: 'The north wind bringeth forth rain; so doth a backbiting tongue, (Prov. 25:23). Therefore God stretches out His hand to inflict punishment, so that both the North wind may feel its penalties, and those who dwell in its land, to which the black horses hasten, concerning which it is said: 'There were (or, in which were) black horses, and they went into the north country' (Zech. 6:6). And beautifully, he who moves his feet and withdraws from the East, of whom the same prophet says, Behold a man, his name is the Orient (Ibid., 12), and he looks towards the West, immediately goes to the North, which is not on the right, but is called the right by name. And this is understood both literally, so that whoever stands in the East and turns towards the West, has the North on his right, which they call the right because those who are refreshed by its breath, which is only called the right by name, but in reality and in deed it is rather on the left. But after the Lord has extended His hand over the North, He will also destroy Assyria, which is interpreted as 'the one who directs', which many think means 'the one who directs', but it is false: for 'the one who directs' is said to be the one who accuses and convicts. And since the devil himself is an enemy and an avenger, and he himself suggests sins, and then accuses sinners of their sins, therefore he is called 'the one who directs'. I believe this to be the prince of the Assyrians, who dwells in the North, and has Nineveh as his capital, and he says in Isaiah: With strength I will act, and with wisdom I will remove the boundaries of nations, and I will plunder their powers (Isaiah 10, LXX). Moreover, what follows about the destruction of Nineveh seems to me to be understood according to what is written either in the prophet Jonah or in Nahum. In Jonah, indeed, we interpret Nineveh, that is, the beautiful city that repented at the preaching of Jonah, that is, the dove, as the Church gathered from the Gentiles. But indeed, we have ordered intelligence upon the world. And of the world, it is not difficult to interpret and say that when the Ethiopians have been wounded by the sword of the Lord and have stretched out their hand upon the north, and have destroyed the Assyrian prince of the world, then the world itself shall perish with its prince, and be reduced to the greatest solitude, and be miserable to no one, but all shall hiss and wave their hands at its ruin. But on first appearance the Church seems blasphemous because it is destined to become impassable and deserted, and beasts will inhabit it, and afterwards it is insultingly said to it: This is a city given over to evil, which dwelt in hope, which said in its heart: I am, and there is no other besides me, how is it made into a wilderness, a pasture for beasts? But anyone who considers that saying of the Apostle in which it is said: In the last times there will be times of great evil, and people will be lovers of themselves, greedy, arrogant, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, accusers, unrestrained, cruel, hating good, traitorous, rash, conceited,

lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God: having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power (2 Timothy 3:1, following). Moreover, this is also written in the Gospel, that because of the increase of wickedness, the love of many will grow cold, so much so that during that time it will be fulfilled: Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, do you think he will find faith on earth? (Matthew 24:12) It will not be surprising that the Church will be severely devastated at the end, when the Antichrist reigns, and will be reduced to desolation, handed over to beasts, and will suffer all the things that the prophet now describes. For if God spared not the natural branches on account of unbelief, perhaps He broke them off, and set rivers in the desert, and fountains in the thirsty land, turning fruitful land into salt, because of the wickedness of its inhabitants; why did He not on the contrary do the same to those concerning whom He had said: He turned the desert into pools of water, and the dry land into fountains of water, and made the hungry dwell there; and the rest, and those whom He had grafted from the wild olive tree into the good olive tree, if they, being forgetful of the benefit, have departed from their Creator and worshipped Assyria, may He overturn and lead them back to the same thirst in which they were before? Although it can generally be understood in the coming of the Antichrist, or in the end of the world: nevertheless, it can be understood daily in those who pretend to be of the Church of God, and deny it by their works, and are hearers of the law, and not doers, who vainly boast of being beautiful, while they dwell in them, namely, a multitude of vices, and brute animals serving the body, and all the beasts of the earth, which devour their hearts, and chameleons which do not have one color; but are changed by various sins, now by greed, now by luxury, now by cruelty, now by lust, now by sadness, now by joy, in moments. And in their mangers there will be hedgehogs, a spiky and thorny animal, and it will wound whatever it touches. And the animals will lie in their burrows, that is, in their hearts, and unclean birds will be in their gates, either in their mouths or in their ears, so that they may always speak or hear evil. After this it is brought forth and said: therefore the Church will suffer or has already suffered these things, because it has lifted itself up in pride and has raised its peak like a cedar, given over to wicked deeds, and yet promising itself future happiness, despising others in its heart, thinking that there is no one besides itself, and saying: I am, and there is no other besides me: so how has the pasture of the beasts become a wilderness? For where the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit formerly dwelt, and the angels presided over their ministries, then the beasts will dwell, of whom the prophet also laments, saying: Do not deliver the soul confessing to you to the beasts (Ps. LXXIII, 19). Everyone who passes through it will hiss and move their hands. But if we understand this about the angels, we will interpret it thus: when the angels pass through it, and do not remain in it as they used to do before, they will be amazed and astonished: and they will not support it, and they will not sustain it as it falls with their hand, but they will lift up their hands and pass through it. Certainly, when they raise their hands with a hiss, and they will crackle like mourners in the manner of lamenting. But if we want to understand this about the devil and his angels, who also devastated the vineyard that had been transferred from Egypt: we will say that, by the soul from which Christ has departed, which was previously the temple of God and has ceased to be, the serpent passes through it and hisses, and vomits the poison of malice; and not only does it do this, but it also moves its works, which are figuratively called hands. So that you do not think that we have named it 'snake' just for the sake of it, understand violently, as it were, the hands of the snake in the work. Take the testimony of Solomon: Death and life are in the hands of the tongue (Prov. XVIII, 21). We have said these things, serving as best we could the allegorical interpretation. But if someone finds something more plausible and reasonable than

what we have discussed, let the authority of that reader prevail.

3:1-7

(Chapter 3, verses 1 onwards) Woe to the provoking and redeemed city: the dove did not hear the voice and did not receive discipline. It did not trust in the Lord and did not approach its God. Its princes are in its midst, like roaring lions. Its judges are wolves of the evening, they do not leave anything for the morning. Its prophets are insane, unfaithful men. Its priests have defiled the holy, they have acted unjustly against the law. The Lord is righteous; he will not do injustice. Every morning he brings his justice to light; it does not fail. But the wicked know no shame. I have cut off nations; their battlements are in ruins. I laid waste their streets, so that no one walks in them; their cities have been made desolate, without a man, without an inhabitant. I said, 'Surely you will fear me; you will accept correction. Then your dwelling would not be cut off according to all that I have appointed against you.' But all the more they were eager to make all their deeds corrupt. However, rising at dawn, they corrupted all their thoughts. LXX: O illustrious and redeemed city, the dove did not hear a voice, nor receive discipline: it did not trust in the Lord, nor did it approach its Lord. Its princes in it are like roaring lions; its judges are like Arabian wolves, not leaving anything until morning; its prophets are men who carry the spirit, contemptible men; its priests defile the holy things and act impiously against the law: but the Lord is righteous in its midst, and will not do iniquity. In the morning, it will give its judgment in the light, and it is not hidden, and it does not know iniquity in its demands, nor eternal injustice: I have removed the proud, their corners are scattered: I have destroyed their paths so that they may not pass: their cities have failed, because no one remains, nor does anybody dwell. I have said, nevertheless you will fear me, and you will receive discipline, and you will not perish from my sight in all the ways in which I have taken vengeance upon her. Prepare, rise early in the morning: all their buds have been destroyed. Many people think that because of the context of the discourse, it is said against Nineveh, about which it was said above: And he will destroy Assyria, and make Nineveh a wasteland. But the Scripture never called Nineveh a dove: although in Jeremiah, some think that what was said about the doves fleeing from the face of the sword of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 15) can refer to Nineveh. But it should be known that others assert the opposite, that instead of dove, it could be understood as Greece, so that the meaning is, from the face of the sword of Jonah, that is, from the face of the sword of Greece: for Jonah signifies both a dove and Greece. And to this day the Greeks still call it the Ionian sea, and the Hebrews retain their ancient word. And even the Roman emperors, when dealing with foreign nations, retain the ancient title of Caesar. So all talk about Jerusalem is: Alas for that city which was once a dove, always sinning and handed over to captivity, but redeemed again by the Lord. Alas for that provocative city, which in Hebrew is more significantly called Mara, meaning 'bitterness', which we can interpret as making God bitter, that is, turning a sweet and merciful Lord into bitterness because of your fault, so that he who desires to show mercy is compelled to punish. She did not hear the command of the Lord, and she refused to accept discipline; she also trusted in the Lord her God in times of distress; she did not walk after His back; and when He said, 'I am the approaching Lord, not from afar' (Jer. XXIII, 23), she wanted to approach Him. Her princes, judges, prophets, and priests are also described, so that in the city we may consider them as the people, and in the names of these dignities that I have mentioned, we may take them as princes. Therefore, his princes were like lions always prowling in the prey and shedding the blood of their subjects. His judges were rapacious, not leaving anything for others to

plunder. His prophets raved or were stunned, which in Hebrew is called 'Phoezim', and Aquila translated it as 'astonishing'. They spoke as if from the mouth of the Lord, and they proclaimed everything against the Lord. The priests in the holy place committed sacrilege, and while acting against the law, they offered sacrifices according to the law. Therefore, because they acted unjustly, the Lord, who is just, will not do iniquity; but he will restore to the wicked city what it deserves. Morning, morning, that is, clearly and without any ambiguity, he will pass judgment on it, and there will be nothing that can be hidden from him. And the Lord will do this so that the reformed city may turn to better ways. But the wicked people of Israel did not recognize their own confusion, nor did they understand the punishments inflicted upon them, in order to repent. I have avenged you, he said afterwards, on the nations, and I have destroyed their empires, so that those who did not feel me through blows might at least recognize me through favors. Or certainly it should be understood thus: I have scattered all your cities, O Judah, and all the towns and tribes subject to you, and the diverse borders, and there was such a vast number of people that there was no one to dwell in your cities; and after I did this, I sent my prophets, rising early and calling for repentance, and I said: I have indeed done these things to you, O Jerusalem, but I have done it so that you might fear me and accept discipline, and so that your dwelling place, that is, the temple, might not perish because of all the crimes you have committed. On the contrary, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, provoked by me to repentance, intentionally and competitively rose early in the morning, so that they could fulfill all their thoughts and demonstrate in action what they had conceived in their minds. This is according to the Hebrew. Furthermore, the illustrious and redeemed city of Christ by blood is clearly understood as the Church, which is also called a dove, because of the simplicity of the multitude of believers in it. She did not hear the voice of the Lord, nor was she willing to receive discipline, nor did she trust in the Lord, because she did not want to draw near to her Lord God, in order to deserve forgiveness of sins. For in vain does anyone say that they hear the voice of their Lord God, and trust in the Lord, when they destroy faith with their actions, and are more joined to money than to their Lord God, and approach Him with a double heart, believing they can serve two masters, the world and God. The leaders of this [country] are like roaring lions. We have no doubt about the roar of the lions and the actions: when we see its leaders thundering against the subjected people, and crushing the commoners with tyrannical voices and raging insults, you would think they are barking like lions among little sheep. Its judges too, like Arabian wolves, prey in the evening and leave nothing in the morning: not looking towards the rising sun, but always lingering in darkness, and turning the possessions of the Church and the things that are contributed to God's gifts into their own profit, so that the poor have nothing to eat in the morning, who, like in the night and with no one watching, plunder everything; and like wolves, they snatched away everything, not even leaving small meals for the needy. Even the prophets, that is, the teachers who think they can teach the people and speak about the Scriptures, are carriers of the spirit, or spiritual (and this should be read ironically): they are men of contempt. For it is fitting for them to act in the Church, not to destroy words with deeds. However, when you teach someone else and you yourself do not do it, you are to be called not a teacher, but a despiser, as is written in Habakkuk: See, you scoffers, be astounded and perish (Habakkuk 1:5). Moreover, the priests who serve the Eucharist and distribute the blood of the Lord to his people act impiously against the law of Christ. They think that the words of the one who offers the Eucharist are more important than a virtuous life, and they believe that only a solemn prayer is necessary, not the merits of the priests. As it is said: 'And the priest who has a blemish shall not come near to

offer the oblations to the Lord' (Leviticus 21, according to the Septuagint). Despite the fact that the princes, judges, prophets, and priests of Jerusalem do these things, the Lord remains merciful and just. Clement, in that he does not depart from his Church: just, in that he renders to everyone what they deserve. For when the morning comes, and the night of this age passes away, he will give his judgement in the light, and he will not hide himself or his judgement. And when he begins to demand the money that he entrusted to each person, he will not be unjust, nor will he allow injustice to prevail forever; but he will remove the proud rulers, whom God opposes, from their thrones, and from the heights they held, and their angles, that is, their wicked desires, will be dispersed, and they will deviate from the right path, on which the Pharisees always used to pray, with the cornerstone rejected. But I think that it is advantageous for the proud to be detracted from their arrogance, and for their narrow and winding paths to be scattered, so that afterwards they may walk on a straight path. Finally, it follows: And I will make their ways deserted, because there is no one who will pass through them; according to what is written in the first psalm: And the way of the wicked will perish (Psalm 1:6). Likewise, in Hosea, where it is said about Jerusalem fornicating: Behold, I will close her paths with thorns, and obstruct her ways, and she will not find her path, and she will pursue her lovers, and will not apprehend them, and she will seek them, and will not find them; and she will say: I will go and return to my former husband, for it was better for me then than now (Hosea 2:6-7). Note that unless the roads had been closed, and the paths blocked, and unless the Lord had destroyed their ways, the adulterous soul would never have been able to say: I will go and return to my former husband. Therefore, let the paths of the proud be scattered and their corners, so that they do not walk in pride and wickedness, and their cities, which were built poorly in arrogance and pride, are destroyed, so that they do not remain and have the most wretched inhabitants. So that no one thinks that we are using force on the Scripture, let them learn from the following: But I have done these things, he says, so that I may say to them: Behold, the paths of evil have been destroyed, from now on fear me and learn ((or receive)) my teaching, lest my teaching perish and I find no fruit of conversion in you; and let everything be in vain through which I wanted to correct you, and that the word written in Jeremiah may be applied to you: I have struck your sons without cause, you have not received discipline (Jer. II, 30). Indeed, fear me and accept discipline, so that all things may not perish from the sight of Jerusalem, and so that they may not be completely led into desolation because of these evils in which I have threatened her. Let it not trouble anyone (as I have often said) that these things are interpreted as being against the Church, since it is known that Jerusalem always has a typological meaning for the Church in the holy Scriptures: from which whoever sins is either led into Babylon or, if they willingly desire to descend, is wounded by thieves in Jericho. For what Church is so illustrious, which is founded throughout the whole world, so redeemed by the blood of Christ and called together from the nations by the dove for the grace of the Holy Spirit? In it, there are many who claim to believe in Christ but have not heard His voice, have not received His teaching, and do not wish to be close to Him. But what is said: 'Its leaders in it are like roaring lions,' I know that this will offend many because they interpret it as referring to bishops and priests, when in fact there are wicked priests who desired to violate Susanna, but they do not condemn the other priests who have lived uprightly. And the evil princes, whom the prophetic discourse describes, are not an insult to good princes: For when a fool is flogged, he becomes wiser, as it is written: 'When the ignorant is punished, the fool becomes wiser' (Prov. XIX, 15); if the fool becomes wiser, how much more so the wise? But his judges and princes, accepting bribes and selling justice, are they

not rightly called 'Arabian wolves' or 'evening wolves', as Symmachus translated? For they do not deserve to be called 'Benjamin's wolves' who snatch in the morning and give food in the evening (Gen. XLIX); but 'evening wolves' who feed at night and leave nothing in the morning. But moving on to what follows: His prophets are spirit-bearers, that is, bearers of the spirit, men of contempt. Let it not bother us that, while interpreting the doctors, we also refer to them as prophets and men of contempt, since the Apostle also instructs us: Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30). And let David speak in the fiftieth psalm: Do not take away your Holy Spirit from me (Psalm 51:13). For if the Holy Spirit had not been grieved and accustomed to flee from a place first, and to leave his dwelling, never would Paul have commanded what I have said above; and David, after committing adultery, would not have been afraid of losing what he had received, about which it is also written to the Hebrews: How much do you think he deserves worse punishments, who has trampled on the Son of God, and has esteemed the blood of the testament as unclean, in which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace (Heb. X, 29)? But it is also written in the third book of Kings: 'The man of God, undoubtedly a prophet, who spoke at the altar in Samaria, saying: Altar, altar, thus says the Lord: Behold, a son shall be born to David' (3 Kings 13:2) and so on; because he despised the words of the Lord and ate with the false prophet (for this is how Josephus explained this passage), he was killed by a lion. And so that it would not be thought of as a chance occurrence and not the judgment of the Lord, the false prophet who deceived him predicted that this would happen, and the lion itself, punishing the despiser, spared the donkey. Therefore it is not surprising that the doctors who were filled with the Holy Spirit could become contemptuous, since among the negligent ones who do not keep their hearts with all diligence, this very cause often gives rise to pride in the Lord and contempt, because they have knowledge of God and know His great goodness, which He hides from those who fear Him, and they despise the riches of His goodness, treasuring up for themselves wrath on the day of wrath and revelation. The priests also (who give baptism and pray for the advent of the Lord at the Eucharist: make the oil of chrism: impose hands; instruct catechumens: appoint Levites and other priests) do not despise us as we explain and prophesy, but rather they pray to the Lord and diligently strive that those priests who violate the holy things of the Lord do not deserve to be. For it is not the dignity and the names of dignities, but the work of dignity, that is accustomed to save princes, judges, prophets, and priests: 'He who desires the episcopate,' it says, 'desires a good work' (1 Timothy 3). See what he said: a good work desires, but not dignity. However, if, despising the work, he only looks at dignity, the tower in Siloam quickly falls, and the tall cedars are struck by lightning, and the raised neck is broken, and the swan, with its neck stretched out and reaching high, is counted among unclean birds. Furthermore, what we have set forth according to the Hebrew: Nevertheless, rising at dawn, they corrupted all their thoughts, for which it is written in the Septuagint: prepare, rise at dawn, their foliage is scattered, because it deviates greatly from the Hebrew, and it seems to agree more with the subsequent versions, which we will explain in what follows.

3:8-9

(Verse 8, 9.) Therefore, wait for me, says the Lord, in the day of my resurrection in the future: because I will gather the nations and gather the kingdoms to judge them, and I will pour out my indignation, all the fury of my wrath, for in the fire of my zeal all the earth shall be consumed. For then I will restore to the peoples a pure speech, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord

and serve Him with one accord. LXX: Therefore wait for me, says the Lord, on the day of my resurrection as a testimony: for my judgment is in the gatherings of the nations, to receive kings, to pour out all my wrath upon them, the fury of my anger; for in the fire of my zeal all the earth will be consumed, for then I will turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, and serve him under one yoke. The Jews interpret these things as referring to the coming of Christ, whom they hope will come, and they say to all the gathered nations, with the Lord's fury poured out upon them, the earth will be devoured in the fire of his zeal. And just as before the building of the tower, when one language was spoken by all people, so now with all turned to the worship of the true God, speaking in Hebrew, the whole world will serve the Lord. But we, who do not follow the letter of the West, but the life-giving Spirit, and do not listen to Jewish fables, hear from the Lord: Prepare, rise early: all their clusters are scattered; and we, prepared, say: My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready (Ps. 56:8). And we hear in Proverbs the commandment: Prepare your work in the field (Prov. XXIV, 27). And that which is sacredly said in Leviticus (Chapter XVI), where on the seventh month, the tenth day of the month, Aaron offers a goat sent away, and living, and placing his hands upon its head, he curses upon it all the sins of the people of Israel, and delivers it into the hands of a prepared man, and sends it into the wilderness (we understand within ourselves), and preparing ourselves under the true command of the priest, we remove evil from the midst of the Church. And when we have done these things, the night passes, the day draws near, and as if walking properly in the day, we say: God, my God, I am awake to you from the light (Psalms 62:1). And immediately we conclude: In the morning, you will hear my prayer, in the morning I will stand by you, and I will see (Psalms 5:4, 5). For if we are not prepared, the sun of justice will not rise for us. But when the sun rises, all the clusters from the vineyard of the Sodomites are scattered and perish, so that not only the great bunches, but also what seemed small in us, may be dispersed by the shining lamp of Christ. And promising us a reward for all these things, God said: Expect me on the day of my resurrection as a testimony. For after our vices and sins, God will rise in us. And according to what He commands in another place: Be witnesses for me, and I am a witness, says the Lord God; and the boy whom I have chosen (Isai. XLIII, 10): the Father is a witness with the Son and the Holy Spirit, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established (Deut. XVII). And it seems to me that the opinion stands in this way, and truth is confirmed by these three witnesses, rather than according to the letter. For there were two witnesses against Susanna (Dan. XIII), and against the Lord Himself (Matt. XXVI), and yet their words did not stand in their mouths. Likewise, the whole city testified against Naboth, but the agreement of wicked witnesses did not have the strength of truth, but the conspiracy of crime (III Reg. XXI). For, he says, it is my judgment to gather the nations together, to assemble the kings in the place of their punishment, to pour out my anger on them, all the fury of my wrath. The one who is lesser quickly deserves forgiveness, and mercy is close at hand. But the powerful endure torments with power. (Wisdom 6:6) From where the peoples and the multitude of nations gather for judgment; but the kings, that is, the leaders of perverse doctrines, will be brought for punishment, that all the fury of the Lord's wrath may be poured out on them. And this is not done out of any cruelty, as the bloodthirsty Jews think, but out of mercy and the counsel of a healer. For it follows: For in the fire of my zeal will all the earth be consumed. For the nations, gathered for judgment, and the kings, for punishment, so that wrath may be poured out upon them, not in part, but in whole, and wrath combined with fury, so that whatever is earthly, whatever belongs to the works of the earth, that is, of the flesh, may be consumed, laying waste all

its brambles and thorny thickets, the fire of my zeal will devour it all. And then I will restore to the people their pure language, that every one may return to the ancient confession of the Lord, after having cast off error; and that in the name of Jesus, every knee may bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue may confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father. And having cast away the burdens and the bitumen which we had for stones and mud, with which we were building up the pride of our error against the Lord, let us receive the language which we formerly lost, and let us be under the yoke of Christ, who says: My yoke is sweet and my burden light. But it must be noted that in the place where we have translated, 'I will give peoples a chosen lip, for the chosen one,' the Septuagint said, 'in his generation, so that the earth may be understood.' And hence the error arose, because the Hebrew word 'Barura' which Aquila and Theodotion translated as 'chosen,' Symmachus interpreted as 'world.' The Septuagint read 'Badura,' thinking that the letter 'Resh' was a 'Daleth,' due to their strong similarity, which is distinguished by a small apex. Moreover, where we have been transferred to, on the day of my resurrection in the future, and all have interpreted, as a testimony. The Hebrew who instructed me in the Scriptures claimed that the word 'Laed' in the present context should be understood more as 'in the future' than as 'as a testimony.' For, what is written with the letters Ain and Dalet can be understood as 'future' and 'testimony.' We can also explain this passage in relation to the first coming of Christ, when all errors were removed, demons were defeated, and earthly works were destroyed, and the apostles spoke in all languages (Acts 2), and through the removal of the old error, one confession was restored. But even the kings who are destroyed and consumed by divine fire are regarded as leaders of perverse doctrines.

3:10-13

(Verse 10 onwards) Beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, there my scattered children, the offspring of my dispersed ones, will bring a gift to me. On that day you will no longer be ashamed of all your rebellious acts against me, for then I will remove from your midst those who proudly boast of their arrogance, and you will no longer exalt yourself on my holy mountain. I will leave in your midst a humble and oppressed people, and they will trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel will not commit injustice or speak falsehood, and no deceitful tongue will be found in their mouths. They will feed and lie down, and no one will make them afraid. LXX: Concerning the boundaries of the rivers of Ethiopia, I will gather my dispersed ones. They will bring sacrifices to me. On that day, you will not be ashamed of all your inventions, in which you have acted impiously towards me, for then I will remove from you the arrogance of your insults, and you will no longer exalt yourself upon my holy mountain. I will leave in you a gentle and humble people, and they will revere the name of the Lord, those who remain of Israel. They will not commit iniquity, nor speak falsehoods, nor will there be deceitful language found in their mouths, for they will be nourished and lie down, and no one will make them afraid. When the Lord returns the chosen lip to the people of the believers, and all invoke the name of the Lord, and bear his yoke, then even beyond the rivers of Ethiopia (where the queen of Sheba came to hear the wisdom of Solomon) they will bring offerings to the Lord. And Ethiopia will stretch out its hand to God. And truly, the Ethiopian woman, who the lawgiver struck Egypt with ten plagues, will marry, while the Hebrew synagogue looks on with envy. But what he says according to the Hebrew: From there my supplicants, the daughter of my scattered ones, will bring me a gift of this kind: O Israel, formerly the assembly of daughters, whom I dispersed throughout the whole world, although you may envy, although you may be tormented

by emulation, nevertheless from Ethiopia sacrifices will be brought to me, that is, from the Gentile people. In that day, that is, when the multitude of the Gentiles believes, even you will not be completely confounded above all your errors, by which you transgressed against me, choosing Barabbas and crucifying the Son of God (John 6). Then I will remove from your midst the scribes, and the priests, and the Pharisees, proud of your arrogance, and you will no longer boast on my holy mountain; but you will have a poor people, uneducated men, and fishermen, who will hope in the name of the Lord. The remnants of Israel, not the multitude that cried out, 'Crucify him, crucify him' (John 19:6): not the priests and the nobles; but the remnants will not commit iniquity, nor speak falsehood against Christ, believing in the truth: nor will deceitful language be found in their mouths, knowing that every lie is from the devil (John 8); for they themselves will be shepherded and will say: The Lord shepherds me, and I shall lack nothing; in the place of pasture, there he has placed me. He has led me beside still waters, he restores my soul (Psalm 23:1): and there will be no one to frighten, the pride of the persecutors being conquered by the faith of the believers. Let it be understood that this refers to the first coming of Christ, which the Jews promise to themselves in the end, and hope to dwell in Jerusalem, and to be satisfied and nourished with bodily gifts and Jewish resources like sheep, and with green herbs, and with all nations destroyed and subjected to themselves, so that no one can frighten them. But we, taking from this fable an opportunity for a true story, say that, by washing our stained and sinful souls, and by our lips being restored to their chosen and pure state (as Symmachus has explained), we have left behind us in the rivers of Ethiopia the masters of perverse doctrines, with whom we were once associated, and we will bear the gifts to Christ, the scattered Israel. On that day, in which the light of Christ rose for us, it will be said to each of us: you will not be ashamed of all your inventions, namely, the worst thoughts with which we acted impiously against the Lord, and all pride and contempt through which we exalted ourselves against the Lord and against His holy mountain, our Lord and Savior, and for proud and empty names there will be left in us a gentle and humble people, so that we may think of nothing arrogant, nothing boastful, nothing that displeases God. At the same time, consider that on the day of judgment and at the end of the world, all names of dignities will be taken away, and only one people will remain, and a flock under a good shepherd, who is meek and humble. Then even the people of Israel, as the fullness of the gentiles enters (For God has concluded them all in unbelief, that he may have mercy on all. - Romans 11:32), will fear the name of the Lord. And the remnant of Israel will no longer commit iniquity, having denied the Lord exceedingly, nor will they speak vanity, promising themselves foolish stories. And in their mouth, the tongue of deceit will not be found, while Christ, who is truth, speaks through them. For then they will feed, both themselves and in one flock, and they will recline in the Church, and they will not fear the true attacks of Nebuchadnezzar. Seeing and reading such great mysteries, let us cry out with the Apostle and say: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! (Rom. XI, 33). Which indeed the prophet, sensing and pondering within himself, suspects concerning the judgments of God. In the night, while I was meditating in my heart, and my spirit was tormented, I said: Is God going to cast off forever, or will he no longer show his mercy? Or will he keep his mercy locked up in his anger? And I said: Now I begin: this is the change of the right hand of the Most High (Psalm 76:7, following). And the meaning is this: I understood that what I thought, that the Lord would abandon sinners forever and hold back his mercy with anger succeeding, was done for this reason, so that by the change of his right hand, which is the right hand of the Most High, he would change everything and have mercy

on those whom he had previously cast away. And we, both ourselves and the rest of Israel, knowing that we shall render an account for every idle word (Matthew 12), and that the Lord will destroy all lips that speak falsehood, let us not speak vanity. For vanity of vanities, and all is vanity (Ecclesiastes 1:2). And also: All the vanity of every living man (Psalm 38). Let us not speak lies with our mouths; but having received the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy (Luke 10), let us fear no terror, neither let us dread the snares of wolves with Christ as our guardian. But let us say, 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?' (Psalm 27:1). And so forth, which are contained in the twenty-sixth psalm.

3:14-18

(Verse 14 and following) Praise, daughter of Zion, shout for joy, Israel, rejoice and exult with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord has taken away your judgment, he has turned away your enemies: the Lord, the King of Israel, is in your midst, you will no longer fear evil. On that day, it will be said, Jerusalem, do not be afraid: Zion, let your hands not be weak: the Lord your God, in your midst, is mighty he will save, he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will quiet you with his love: he will exult over you with praise. I will gather those who turned away from the law, because they were from you, so that you will no longer have reproach against them. Rejoice, daughter of Zion; proclaim, daughter of Jerusalem, rejoice and delight with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord has taken away your iniquities, he has redeemed you from the hand of your enemies, the Lord, the king of Israel, is in your midst: you will no longer see evil. In that time, says the Lord, Jerusalem, have confidence, Zion, let your hands not be weak: the Lord your God, who is mighty, will save you, he will bring joy upon you, and renew you in his love, and he will rejoice over you with delight, as on a solemn day: I will gather your broken ones. Woe to anyone who receives reproach upon it. It does not seem strange, as we have often said, that Hebrew chapters end differently from the Greek Septuagint and the Latin. For where there is a different sense of translation, there must necessarily be different beginnings or endings. The Jews, who expect Christ to come, promise themselves all these things, which we who have received Christ have already obtained with him. Therefore, if anyone, especially among the new wise men of the Christians, whose names I will not mention in order not to appear to harm anyone, thinks that prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, let him know that he falsely bears the name of Christ and has a Jewish soul, having only the circumcision of the body. For if these things have not yet been done, but are to come, we have believed in vain in the coming of the Savior. But in vain do we understand that the mystery, which has been kept secret from eternal times, is fulfilled in us who do not believe, and is now manifested through the prophetic Scriptures and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, let us consider the order of the reading, and we will see that it is said to pertain not to the Jews, but to the Church of Christ. For after that which went before (My judgement concerning the nations, that they might receive kings, even unto that place where it is said: They shall call upon the name of the Lord, and shall serve him under one yoke. And I will take of my dispersed into Ethiopia, and they shall offer to me victims. And in that day there shall be no more a Pharaoh in the land of Egypt: but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they would not be converted. And the remnant of the house of Israel, and they that shall escape of the house of Jacob, shall lean upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall be converted, the remnant, I say, of Jacob, to the mighty God. For if thy people, O Israel, shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant of them shall be converted. Consummation, and that determined, shall overflow

justice. Because the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, and an abridgment in the midst of all the land. The Holy Spirit, preaching about the general consummation of the world, speaks: Rejoice, daughter of Zion, proclaim, daughter of Jerusalem, be glad and delight with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem. For every soul of the Church, which is established on the watchtower and contemplates peace, rejoices and is glad that its iniquities have been removed and redeemed by Him who redeemed all with His precious blood. For Christ has become wisdom for us from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (I Cor. I, 30). And the king of Israel, who dwells among us, redeemed us, saying: I and my Father will come, and we will make our abode with him (John XIV, 23); and I will dwell and walk among them (Lev. XXVI, 12): and we will no longer see evil, but only think and do virtues. In that day, says the Lord, we will see peace, and placed on high, let not your hands be dissolved, who also said through Isaiah: Strengthen the weak hands, and let your works be strong (Isaiah XXXV, 3). For the Lord is strong, against whom no one can resist: your savior, he himself will restore to you the joy that you have lost, and after casting off the old man, he will make you walk in the new, and he will do all this out of his love: not because of your merit, but because of his mercy. And he will rejoice in you, and delight in you, receiving your salvation like a rich sacrifice of your solemnity; and he himself will say to you: I will gather your contrite ones; for a contrite and humble heart, God will not despise. (Psalm 50:19); and, a crushed reed he will not break. (Isaiah 42). But for now, if we want to understand the second coming of the Savior. Moreover, because the prophet Zechariah encourages Zion and Jerusalem to similar joy, and Matthew says that this same prophecy was fulfilled in the first coming of Christ (Matt. 21), we are compelled by necessity, or rather we are led by the very order of truth, which is said in Zephaniah, not to hope for what is to come, but for what has already happened. For it is written in Zechariah: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; proclaim, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your king comes to you, righteous and saving: he is humble and riding on a donkey (or a colt) (Zech. 9:9). These things are said according to the Septuagint. However, according to the Hebrew, the Church is commanded to praise and Israel is commanded to rejoice, perceiving God with understanding, and to exult and be joyful with their whole heart in the place of peace, to which it was said: Peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John 14:27). For in the end and consummation of the world, he took away his judgment, by no means judging or reproving it, but saving it; and he turned away his enemies, the hordes of demons. The Lord God of Israel will be in its midst: it will no longer fear evil. On that day it will be said to Jerusalem: O thou free city, thou shalt no longer serve with thy sons, but thou shalt be the mother of the saints (Galatians IV). Fear not, O Zion (for thou art indeed Jerusalem): none of thy works shall be destroyed, nor shalt thou mourn for the things which thou hast done (or, shalt thou lament, Isaiah 54:9). The Lord thy God, who will save thee, is strong and mighty: he himself will dwell in the midst of thee, he will rejoice over thee with gladness and joy, and he will silence thy sins with love (or, with peace), wherewith he hath loved thee: and he will exult over thee with praise, either because thou art praiseworthy, or because thou singest praises with thine own (people). Just as the Eagle, or, as it is interpreted, the Aquila, gathers those who have strayed from you, because they were from you, that is, those who had fled from your bosom through vice and sin, and had come under the power of demons, when the state of all things is restored, they will come to you, and you will no longer allow any reproach against your lost children. Let us know that what we have said is nonsense (), in Hebrew it is the same as the Latin language, and therefore it is placed by us as it was in Hebrew: so that we may know that the Hebrew language is the mother of all languages, which is

not for this time to discuss. But I marvel at Aquila and the Septuagint, because we translated them, in that place namely where we said: I will gather because they were from you: instead of, they were, they translated it as woe, or **וָאֵל**: which Aquila always puts not for lamenting, but for calling and crying out: Haja (**הָאֵל**), for the beginning of the word signifies 'they were,' the past tense in the plural number, either were or had been. I know that this will be bothersome to the reader, who, if he notices, will not accuse me of writing controversies and declamations, nor of rejoicing in commonplaces: but rather will criticize me for playing in the manner of rhetoricians, rather than blame me for dwelling in so great obscurities, as is worthy of one lingering.

3:19-20

Verse 19, 20: Behold, I will kill all those who have afflicted you at that time; and I will save the lame, and gather her who was cast out; and I will make them a praise and a name in all the earth's confusion. In the time when I bring you; and in the time when I gather you: for I will give you a name and a praise to all the peoples of the earth, when I turn your captivity before your eyes, says the Lord. LXX: Behold, I will do in you, for you, at that time, and I will save the oppressed, and I will receive the rejected, and I will place them in glory, and those who are named in all the earth. And they will be confounded at that time, when I have done well to you: and at the time when I have received you, for I will give you a name, and glory among all the peoples of the earth; when I turn your captivity before you, says the Lord. And this is the synagogue that does not limp, but is cut off on both feet, promising itself in the coming of its Christ, whom it hopes to come: and it thinks that all the nations that have afflicted Israel will be destroyed by the Lord, and the synagogue will be saved, and the one who had received the bill of divorce will be gathered, and they will be placed in praise, and in the name in all the land of their captivity, where they were previously confused. And this happened during the time when the captivity of Jerusalem had been reduced, and the temple had been rebuilt, and the remaining order of ceremonies had been observed. She promises this to herself, and therefore does not repent, and while she hopes for uncertain things, she loses certain salvation. I am not surprised that the synagogue says these things, which, because it does not receive Christ, it hurts its eyes, and when it winks, it is not loved by Jacob, and when Rachel succeeds, it is neglected (Gen. XXIX). I marvel at the Christians, or rather semi-Jews, who claim to be of the Church and profess those things which, if true, we believe in vain in Christ, and all our sacraments are taken away, and we are more miserable than all men, believing in him who did not come. But since our hope is certain and the vows of the Jews are empty, according to the earlier understanding, let us now weave the present and final chapter and let us bring forth the testimony of Jesus son of Sirach: He who casts a stone high, casts it upon his own head (Eccl. XXIII). For indeed, because Zion and Jerusalem are situated on high, whoever detracts from Zion and Jerusalem and hurls stones of contempt at them, casts them upon his own head; and their reproach will return upon his own head. And his pain and wickedness will descend upon his own head. How many today reproach the souls that seek God's mysteries, that desire to see His peace, and say: He is insane and drunk, and full of wine; he avoids the company of men; he spurns pleasure; he considers gold as mud; he loves only poverty. But those who are unbelievers even reproach the cross of Christ to Him, even though when they see Him in distress and temptation, they say: Where are Your mercies and the justice that You have wrought? What shall I say concerning unbelievers, when certain leaders of the Churches reproach such men and consider their lives folly, and do not praise their present conduct, but reproach their old sins? Nor

do they hear that it is commanded: Do not reproach a man who turns away from his sins (Eccl. VIII). Woe therefore to him who brought reproach and took it upon himself, and surrendered himself to such a duty, to slander Zion and the city of God. For by this injury, the Lord is the avenger of his own city, and he will say to Zion: Behold, I will do in you for your sake, that is, I will do your vengeance, and I will save the afflicted, or as it is said in Greek, the oppressed; so that the meaning may be: I will save her, who at present is like a grape and an olive, so pressed and afflicted by trials and troubles, as if she were crushed and pressed by a winepress and a beam, in order to make wine and oil, and Jesus would drink of the wine in the kingdom of his Father; but he would be anointed with the oil by his fellow partakers. I think that because of the expression of such wine and oil, Job suffered many things; but after he had made wine and oil, he heard from the Lord, 'Do you think that I have responded to you in any other way, except that you may appear just?' (Job 40:70). As if he were speaking to a grape and an olive; Do you think that I have pressed and afflicted and crushed you in any other way, except that I may extract wine and oil from you? It follows: And I will receive her who was rejected. It seems that God repels us when he allows temptation. Hence Job says, 'The visitation of the Lord has looked upon me' (Job 10:12). And not only do the just speak, saying, 'But now you have repelled and confounded us,' as it is written in the forty-third psalm, but the Lord and Savior himself, speaking in the person of the man he had assumed, says, 'But you have repelled and despised: you have delayed your Christ; you have overthrown the testament of your servant.' But the identity of the righteous person is confirmed in the 43rd psalm, which says: Now you have rejected and humiliated us, but all these things have come upon us, and we have not forgotten you, nor have we acted unjustly in your covenant; our heart has not turned back. Therefore, the Lord will receive her who appeared cast down in temptations, and he will place them in glory and make them renowned throughout the earth, namely, the children of the Church, who have been manifested and rejected. But who else can we understand as children of the Church, if not the apostles? Look at Peter and Paul and Matthew and John; and consider this that was promised to Abraham: I will magnify your name, accomplished in them by their works. Every day their names are mentioned in the Church, every day their names are magnified: not because it benefits them to be mentioned by us in the Church, but because by magnifying their names and reading what they wrote, we obtain salvation. In that time, he says, when the repulsed attack had been undertaken, and his sons had been placed in glory (for the Lord glorifies in his athletes, when he sees them crowned, just as he gloried against the devil concerning Job), so the Apostle, rejoicing in the progress of his disciples, says: Even through your glory, those who were your adversaries will be confounded, and they who had hurled reproach against you will see those whom they had considered miserable to be happy, and those whom they had regarded as poor and lowly to become powerful and glorious. Then they will see their captivity, by which they had been subjected to a harsh rule in this world, being brought back to heavenly Jerusalem; and they themselves rising to eternal shame and confusion. Grant us, Jesus Christ, who are expressed and afflicted and rejected in this world, that you may receive us and place us in glory: may confusion prevail in the time of his remaining, may his idle words cease, may his poisons become dull, and may his confusion lead to salvation. This according to the Septuagint. However, the Hebrew text does not require much explanation because, apart from the beginning that we mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, it does not differ significantly from their translation.

Hebrew Questions on Genesis

The Book of Hebrew Questions on Genesis by Saint Jerome of Stridon, a Presbyter.

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Preface

In the beginning of the books, I should have presented the arguments of the work to be followed, but I am forced to respond to insults first, defending Terence, who gave prologues to his comedies in defense of his scenes. For he was being urged by Lucius Lanuinus, similar to our Lucius, and he was accusing him of being a thief poet of the public treasury. The same thing happened to the poet Mantuanus by his rivals, when he translated some verses of Homer word for word, he was called a compiler of the ancients. To which he replied that it required great strength to wrest the club from Hercules' hand. But also Tullius, who stood on the pinnacle of Roman eloquence, the king of orators, and an illuminator of the Latin language, is accused by the Greeks of extortion. It is not surprising, therefore, if against me, a lowly little man, foul swine grunt and trample pearls

underfoot, when envy has flared up against the most learned men and those who should have surpassed envy with glory. But truly this happens deservedly to those whose eloquence resounded in the theaters, in the senate, in public assemblies, and from the speaker's platform. For courage always has rivals openly, and lightning strikes the highest mountains. But as for me, being far from cities, the forum, lawsuits, and crowds, envy found me even in hiding, just as Quintilian said. Therefore, I implore the reader...

... if anyone, however, will read these also, if anyone. Captivated by love, ...

...so that in the books of Hebrew Questions, which I have arranged to write on the whole Holy Scripture, he does not seek eloquence, nor the charm of orators, but rather he answers for us against our enemies himself, permission to grant to the new work. For just as we, being humble and poor, neither have riches, nor do we deign to accept those offered, so let them also know that they cannot possess a knowledge of the Scriptures, that is, the riches of Christ, along with the riches of the world. Therefore, our study will be to refute the errors of those who have various suspicions about Hebrew books, and to restore to their authority those things which seem lacking in Latin and Greek codices; also to explain the etymologies of things, names, and regions which do not resonate in our language, in the vernacular tongue. And so that the correction may be more easily understood, first we will present the testimonies themselves, as they are found among us, and from the comparison of what follows, we will indicate what is less, or more, or different in them. Nor do we point out the errors of the Seventy Interpreters, as the envious bark, nor do we consider our work as a criticism of theirs, since they did not want to reveal the mystical things in the Holy Scriptures to King Ptolemy of Alexandria, especially those things that promised the coming of Christ, so that they would not be seen as worshipping another God, which the Jews were accused of by the Platonists who were followers of the great Plato because they were said to worship one God. But both the Evangelists and our Lord and Savior, as well as the Apostle Paul, quote many things from the Old Testament that are not found in our codices. Moreover, in their respective places we shall discuss more fully the matter. From which it is clear that those examples are more true which are in agreement with the authority of the New Testament. Adding to this, Josephus, who includes ((or proposes)) the history of the Septuagint interpreters, mentions only five books of Moses translated by them: which we also confess to be in harmony with the Hebrew ones more than the others. But even those interpreters who came afterwards, I speak of Aquila, and Symmachus, and Theodotion, have a much different [version], than what we read. At the very end (which can also appease our detractors), foreign goods may only be traded by those who want to: balsam, pepper, and dates. But the country people do not buy them. But I stay silent about Adamantius (or Origen), whose name, if it is possible to compare small things with great, is more enviable than mine, because while in his homilies, which he speaks to the common people, he follows the common edition, in his volumes, that is, in his major disputation, having been overcome by Hebrew truth, and surrounded by his own troops, he sometimes seeks help from a foreign language. I say this one thing, that I wish to have not only the fame of his name, but also the knowledge of the Scriptures, disregarding the images and shadows of specters, which are said to be of some nature, in order to frighten small children and whisper in dark corners.

1:1

Chapter 1, Verse 1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Many people believe, as it is also written in the Altercation of Jason and Papiscus, and Tertullian in his book against Praxeas argues: and also Hilary in the exposition of a certain Psalm affirms, that it is found in Hebrew: 'In the son, God created the heavens and the earth', which is false, as the truth of the matter itself proves. For even the Seventy Interpreters, and Symmachus, and Theodotion translated it as 'In the beginning'. And it is written in Hebrew, *Bresith* (); which Aquila interprets, in the chapter: and not *Baben* (), which is called ((Al. interpreted)), in the son. Therefore, it can be understood more according to the meaning than according to the literal translation about Christ: who is approved both in the very beginning of Genesis, which is the head of all books, and also in the beginning of the Gospel of John, as the creator of heaven and earth. Hence, in the Psalms (Psalm 39:9), he says about himself: In the chapter ((Al. chapter)) of the book it is written about me, that is, in the beginning of Genesis. And in the Gospel: All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made (John 1:3). But it should also be known that among the Hebrews this book is called *B'reishit*: having the custom of giving names to their volumes from their beginnings.

1:2

(Verse 2.) And the spirit of God was moving over the waters. Because in our books it is written 'was moving', in Hebrew it has '*Merefeth*', which we can call 'hovering' or 'brooding', in the likeness of a bird, warming the eggs with the heat of life. From which we understand that it is not said to be the spirit of the world, as some suppose, but the Holy Spirit, who is also said to be the giver of life to all things from the beginning. And if a giver of life, then also a creator. But if You are the creator and God. For, He says, send forth Your Spirit, and they shall be created (Psalm 103, 30).

1:10

(10) And he called the gatherings of waters seas. It should be noted that every gathering of waters, whether they be salty or fresh, according to the language of the Hebrews, are called seas. Therefore, Porphyry falsely accuses the Evangelists of ignorance in performing a miracle, because the Lord walked on the sea, that he called the lake of Genesareth a sea, when every lake and gathering of waters are called seas.

2:2

(Chapter 2, Verse 2) And on the sixth day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. Therefore, we will refute the Jews, who boast of the rest of the Sabbath, because even then, at the beginning, the Sabbath was dissolved, since God works on the Sabbath, completing his work in it, and blessing the day itself: because in it he has completed everything.

2:8

(Verse 8.) And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east. Instead of paradise, in Hebrew it has the word '*hortum*' which means garden. And Eden is translated as '*deliciae*'. Symmachus translated it as a flourishing paradise. Also, what follows, 'in the east', in Hebrew it is written as '*Mecedem*', which Aquila translated as '*■π■ ■ρχ■ς*', and we can say 'from the beginning'. Symmachus, however, uses '*■κ πρ■της*', and Theodotion uses '*■ν πρ■τοις*', which also signifies

not the east, but the beginning. From this it is most clearly shown that before God made heaven and earth, He had already established paradise, as it is read in Hebrew: But the Lord God had planted a paradise in Eden from the beginning.

2:11

(Verse 11.) The name of one is Phison. They believe this to be the river Ganges in India.

(Verse 12.) Where (or There) is the carbuncle and the green stone. Some have translated carbuncle as βδέλλιον and the green stone as νύχα.

2:15

(Verse 15.) And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of delight. For delight, in Hebrew, it is called Eden. Therefore, the Seventy have interpreted it as delight. But Symmachus, who had just before translated it as flourishing paradise, here puts it as 'in the garden of the shore', which also signifies pleasantness and luxury.

2:17

(Verse 17) But on whatever day you eat from it, you shall surely die. Symmachus interpreted it better, saying, you shall be mortal.

2:21

(Ver. 21.) And the Lord God sent a trance upon Adam. For trance, that is, the departure of the mind, is called Thardema in Hebrew, which Aquila interprets as descent, and Symmachus as heavy and deep sleep. Finally, it follows: And he slept. The same word is used in Jonah (1:5) for a deep sleep.

2:23

(Verse 23.) Now this is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. It does not seem to sound in Greek and Latin why she is called Woman, because she was taken out of Man; but the etymology is preserved in the Hebrew language. For Man is called 'Is', and Woman is called 'Issa'. Therefore, she was rightly called Woman from Man. Hence, Symmachus also desired to preserve the etymology even in Greek, saying: She shall be called νδρς, because she was taken from νδρς, which we can say in Latin: She shall be called virago, because she was taken out of Man. Furthermore, Theodotus suspected another etymology, saying: This will be called 'assumptio' because it is taken from a man. Indeed, 'Issa' can be understood according to the variation of accent and assumption.

3:1

(Chapter 3, Verse 1) Now the serpent was more cunning than any other wild animal that was on the earth. In Hebrew, the word for cunning is Arom (אָרֹם), which Aquila and Theodotion translate as πανοργον. This means wicked and deceitful. Therefore, from this word, it is demonstrated more of a craftiness and cunningness than wisdom.

3:8

(Verse 8) And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in paradise at evening. In many Latin manuscripts, instead of 'at evening,' it has 'in the afternoon' because we cannot translate the Greek word 'δελτιν' word for word. In Hebrew it is written 'Larue Aiom,' which Aquila interpreted as 'in the wind of the day,' that is, in the wind of the day. But Symmachus interpreted it as 'through the spirit of the day.' Moreover, Theodotion clearly showed in the spirit the cooling of the day, so that after the heat of noon had passed, he displayed the refreshing breath of the breeze.

3:14

(Verse 14.) You shall tread upon your chest and your stomach. The Septuagint translators added the stomach, but in Hebrew it only has the chest, to reveal the cunning and cunning thoughts, that all his steps are wickedness and deceit. But also what follows: You shall eat dust. In Hebrew it is written 'Aphar,' which we can say is ashes and dust.

3:15

(Verse 15) He himself will keep your head, and you will keep his heel. It is better in Hebrew: He will crush your head, and you will crush his heel; for our steps are hindered by the serpent, and the Lord will quickly crush Satan under our feet.

3:16 (Verse 16) I will multiply your sorrows and your groanings. For sorrow and groaning, it has pains and conception in Hebrew. And for your conversion. Regarding the conversion of Aquila, the society: Symmachus transferred the desire or impulse.

3:17

(Verse 17.) Cursed is the ground because of your actions. The works here do not refer to cultivating the land, as many think, but rather sins are signified. As it is written in Hebrew: And Aquila does not disagree, saying: Cursed is the soil because of you. And Theodotion: Cursed is the earth because of your transgression.

3:20

(Verse 20) And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she is the mother of all living. Therefore, Eve, which means life, is called so, because she is the mother of all living. Eve indeed translates to life.

3:24

(Verse 24.) And Adam was cast out, and he made him dwell opposite the paradise of pleasure. And he established Cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned to guard the way to the tree of life. There is much more meaning in the Hebrew than is understood here. For it says: And Adam was cast out, no doubt by the Lord: And he made him dwell before the paradise of pleasure, Cherubim, and a flaming sword, which turned, and guarded the way to the tree of life. Not that Adam himself, whom God had cast out, was made to dwell opposite the paradise of pleasure; but that after his expulsion, before the doors of paradise, Cherubim and a flaming sword were placed to guard the entrance to paradise, so that no one could enter.

4:1

(Chapter 4, Verse 1) And she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and said, I have gained a man from God. Cain, meaning acquisition or possession, is interpreted as κτήσις in Greek, and expressing its etymology, it is said, Canithi, meaning possession of a man from God.

(Ver. 4.) And God looked upon Abel and upon his offerings: but upon Cain and his offerings he did not look. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So Cain knew that God had accepted his brother's offerings and rejected his own, unless that interpretation which Theodotion has given is true. And the Lord was angry with Abel and his offering: but with Cain and his offering he was not angry. But fire used to come from heaven to devour the sacrifice: and we read of it in the dedication of the temple under Solomon, and when Elijah built an altar on Mount Carmel (2 Chronicles 7:1; 1 Kings 18:38).

4:6

(Verse 6.) And the Lord said to Cain: Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it. We are compelled to linger longer on each individual. For even now the meaning is very different in the Hebrew than in the translators of the Septuagint. For the Lord said to Cain: Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it. And to you is his alliance: but you must rule over him more. But, he says: Why are you angry, and why are you tormented by envy towards your brother, with the bitterness of jealousy, you turn your face to the ground? If you do well, will not your sin be forgiven you? Or, as Theodotion says, will it be acceptable: that is, I will accept your offering, as I have accepted your brother's? But if you do evil, then sin will immediately sit before your doorstep, and you will be accompanied by such a guardian. But because you have free will, I advise you to not be conquered by sin, but to conquer sin. The mistake that the Septuagint interpreters made is this: that the word for sin, which is 'Attath' in Hebrew, is masculine gender, but in Greek it is feminine gender. And those who translated it, translated it with the masculine gender (as it was in Hebrew).

4:8

(Verse 8) And Cain said to his brother Abel. It is understood what the Lord said. Therefore, it is superfluous, what is found in the Samaritan and our volume, Let us go to the field.

4:15

(Verse 15.) Everyone who kills Cain will suffer sevenfold vengeance. Aquila interpreted it sevenfold. Symmachus, the seventh. Theodotion, by the week. On this chapter, our letter to Bishop Damasus exists.

4:16

(Verse 16.) And he dwelt in the land of Naid. Which the Septuagint translated as Naid, but in Hebrew it is called Nod, meaning 'shaking', that is, unstable and fluctuating, with an uncertain dwelling place. Therefore, it is not the land of Naid, as our common people think, but the divine sentence is fulfilled, that he wandered and fled here and there.

4:25

(Verse 25) And he called his name Seth. For God has provided me another offspring in place of Abel, whom Cain killed. Seth, properly θ■σις, that is, position, is called because God had set him in place of Abel. Finally, Aquila says: And he called his name Seth, saying: For God has placed another offspring for me.

4:26

(Verse 26) And he called his name Enos: this one hoped to invoke the name of the Lord God. Just as Adam () is interpreted as 'man': so also Enos () according to the variety of the Hebrew language is called 'man' or 'vir'. And it is beautiful because he had this word, it is written about him, 'Then was the beginning of invoking the name of the Lord God': although many Hebrews interpret it differently, that at that time idols were first made in the name of the Lord and in his likeness.

5:2

(Chapter 5 - Verse 2) He created them male and female, and blessed them. And he named them Adam, that is, man. The name man applies equally to both men and women.

5:3

(Verse 3.) Adam lived for two hundred and thirty years, and he begot in his own image and likeness, and he called his name Seth. It should be known that until the Flood, where it is said that somebody is said to have begotten two hundred and something years in our codices, in the Hebrew it has one hundred years and the rest that follow.

5:4

(Verse 4) Now the days of Adam after he fathered Seth were seven hundred years. And he fathered other sons and daughters. And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

5:25

(Verse 25.) And Methuselah lived for 167 years and begot Lamech. And Methuselah lived, after he begot Lamech, for 802 years, and he begot sons and daughters. And all the days of Methuselah, that he lived, were 969 years, and he died. The famous question, and the subject of dispute among all the churches, is that, according to careful calculation, Methuselah is said to have lived fourteen years after the flood. For when Methuselah was sixty-seven years old, he begot Lamech. And again, Lamech, when he was eighty-eight years old, begot Noah. And they lived together until the day of Noah's birth, which was three hundred and fifty-five years after Methuselah's birth. But in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, the flood occurred. And by this calculation, it is proven that the flood happened in the nine hundred and fifty-fifth year of Methuselah's life. However, since he is said to have lived for more than 969 years, there is no doubt that he lived for 14 years after the flood. And how is it true that only eight souls were saved in the ark? Therefore, it remains that just as there is an error in number in many things, there is also an error in this. For in both the Hebrew and Samaritan books, I found it written: And Methuselah lived 187 years and fathered Lamech. And Methuselah lived, after he begot Lamech, seven hundred eighty-two years and begot sons and daughters. And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty-nine years, and he died. And Lamech lived one hundred eighty-two years and begot Noah. From the day of the birth of

Methuselah to the day of the birth of Noah, there are three hundred sixty-nine years. Add to these six hundred years of Noah's life: because in the six hundredth year of his life the deluge occurred: and so it happens that in the nine hundred and sixty-ninth year of his life Methuselah died, in that year when the deluge began.

5:29

(Verse 29.) And he called his name Noah, saying: This one shall bring us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.

6:2

(Chapter VI - Verse 2) But the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair. The Hebrew word Elohim (), is of common gender: and both God and gods are called by this name. Hence, Aquila, in the plural number, dared to call them Sons of gods, understanding them to mean the Holy Ones or Angels. For God stands in the assembly of gods: but in the midst of them He judgeth gods. (Alternate reading: judgeth). (Psalm LXXXI, 1). Therefore, Symmachus, following a similar interpretation, says: The sons of the powerful saw the daughters of men, and so on.

6:3

(Version 3.) And the Lord God said: My spirit will not dwell in these men forever, because they are flesh. In Hebrew, it is written, My spirit will not judge these men forever, because they are flesh: that is, because the condition of man is fragile, I will not subject them to eternal torment; but here I will restore to them what they deserve. Therefore, it signifies not severity, as it is read in our codices, but rather the mercy of God, while the sinner is visited here for his crime. And an angry God speaks to some: I will not visit their daughters, when they have fornicated, and their wives, when they have committed adultery (Hosea IV, 14). And in another place: I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with scourges: nevertheless, I will not take away my mercy from them (Ps. LXXXVIII, 33). Furthermore, so that it does not appear cruel on His part for not giving a place of repentance to sinners, He added: But their days shall be one hundred and twenty years. This is, they will have 120 years to do penance. Therefore, human life, as many err, is not condensed into 120 years: but to that generation, 120 years were given for penance. For we find that after the flood, Abraham lived for 175 years, and others for over 200 and 300 years. But because they refused to do penance, God did not want to wait for the appointed time: but with 20 years cut off, He brought about the flood in the 100th year designated for doing penance.

6:4

(Version 4.) Now there were giants upon the earth in those days. For after the sons of God went in to the daughters of men, and they brought forth children, these are the mighty men of old, men of renown. For falling ones, or giants, Symmachus interpreted them as violent ones. And it is fitting for the name of falling ones to apply to angels and the children of the saints.

6:9

(Verse 9) Noah was a righteous and blameless man in his generation, pleasing to God. Specifically, it says 'in his generation' to show that his righteousness was not according to the perfected righteousness, but according to the righteousness of his generation. And this is what is

said in Hebrew: Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generations, he walked with God; that is, he followed in his footsteps.

6:14

(Verse 14) Make for yourself an ark of square wooden planks. For the square planks, we read it is coated with pitch in Hebrew.

6:16

(Verse 16.) Assembling, you shall make an ark, and you shall finish it with a cubit from above. As for the reason why it says, assembling, you shall make an ark, in Hebrew it has, 'you shall make the middle of the ark,' which Symmachus interpreted more clearly, saying 'transparent,' that is, making the ark clear, intending for a window to be understood.

8:2

(Chapter 8, Verse 2) And the water subsided, and the fountains of the deep were revealed, and the floodgates of heaven were opened. The interpreters have translated the phrase 'fountains of the deep were revealed' as 'the closed and sealed fountains were opened'. And regarding the following phrase: 'the water subsided from the earth', it is written that 'the waters returned from the earth, going and coming' (Ecclesiastes 1:7). Note, according to Ecclesiastes, that all waters and torrents return to the hidden veins of the abyss.

8:6

(Verse 6) After forty days, Noah opened the door of the ark which he had made, and released a raven, but it did not return to him until the waters had dried up from the earth. As for the dove, it is said differently: He released a raven, and it went out, going and coming back until the waters had dried up from the earth.

9:18

(Chapter 9, Verse 18) The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The Septuagint translators often struggled to render the letter Heth (ה), which has a double aspiration sound, into Greek. They added the Greek letter chi (χ) to instruct us to aspirate in such words. Therefore, in this passage, they translated Cham as Ham, because Ham is called "Ham" in the Hebrew language, and in Egyptian language, Egypt is called "Ham" until this day.

9:27

(Verse 27) May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem. From Shem come the Hebrews, and from Japheth, the people of the nations are born. Therefore, because the multitude of believers has been enlarged from the breadth, which is called Japheth, it has received the name "breadth". But what he says, "And may he dwell in the tents of Shem," is prophesying about us, who are engaged in the teaching and knowledge of the Scriptures, with Israel being cast out.

9:29

(Verse 29.) And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years. Behold, after the flood Noah lived three hundred and fifty years. From which it is clear that one hundred and twenty years were given to that generation, as we have said before, for repentance, and not for the establishment of mortal life.

10:2

(Chapter 10, Verse 2.) The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. Japheth, son of Noah, had seven sons who possessed the land in Asia from Mount Amanus and Mount Taurus to the mountains of Syria Coele and Cilicia, all the way to the River Tanais. In Europe, they journeyed as far as Gades, leaving names to places and tribes: many of these were later changed, but others remain as they were. Gomer became the Galatians, Magog became the Scythians, Madai became the Medes, Javan became the Ionians, also known as the Greeks, hence the Ionian Sea. Thubal the Iberians, who are also called Hispani, from whom the Celtiberi, although some suspect they are Italians. Mosoch, the Cappadocians, from whom the city is still called Mazaca among them. (Furthermore, the Septuagint interpreters consider the Cappadocians to be the Caphthorim.) Thiras, the Thracians, whose name has not been sufficiently changed. I know that someone named Gog and Magog, both from present location and from Ezekiel, recently related a story of the Goths who were recently reveling in our land, which is demonstrated to be true by the end of the battle itself. And certainly all the educated Goths, more accustomed to call the Getae than Gog and Magog. Therefore, these seven nations, which I mentioned came from the line of Japheth, inhabit the northern part.

10:3

(Verse 3) The sons of Gomer are Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The Greeks call Ashkenaz 'Reginos', Riphath is the ancestor of the Paphlagonians, and Togarmah is the ancestor of the Phrygians.

10:4

(Ver. 4.) The sons of Javan were Elisha and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim. From them were divided the islands of the nations in their lands, each according to its language, its kindred, and its people. From the Ionians, that is, the Greeks, were born the Aeolians, who are called Aeolians: hence the fifth language of Greece is called Aeolian, which they call 'the fifth dialect.' Josephus considers Tarshish to be Cilicia, stating that the letter θ was mistakenly corrupted by later generations into τ: hence their metropolis is called the city of Tarsus, glorious to the Apostle Paul. Cethim, they are the Cetians, from whom even today the city of Cyprus is also called Citium. Dodanim, the Rhodians: for so the Septuagint translators have rendered it. Let us read the books of Varro on Antiquities, and those of Sisinnius Capito, and the Greek Phlegon, and other most learned men: and we will see almost all the islands, and the shores of the whole world, and the lands near the sea, occupied by Greek settlers: who, as we have said, possess all the coastal areas from the mountains of Amanus and Taurus to the British Ocean.

10:6

(Verse 6) The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. Cush, even to this day, is called Ethiopia by the Hebrews; Egypt is called Mizraim, and Put is called Libya. From Put, the river of

Mauritania is called as such, and the entire region surrounding it is known as the Putian region. Many Greek and Latin writers attest to this. However, it is not the place or time to discuss why the ancient name of Libya has remained only in a certain part of the region, and the rest of the land is called Africa. Furthermore, Canaan obtained the land, which the Jews subsequently possessed, after driving out the Canaanites.

10:7 (Verse 7) The sons of Chus are Saba, Aevila, Sabatha, Regma, and Sabathaca. Saba is the progenitor of the Sabaei, of whom Virgil speaks (II Georgics). The golden wand is from the Sabaeans. And elsewhere (Book I of the Aeneid).

. . . . and a hundred altars warm with Sabeian incense. The Evili, Getulians, are connected in the more remote part of the desert of Africa. Sabatha, from which the Sabatheni, who are now called Astabari, are derived. However, Regma and Sabathaca gradually lost their ancient names, and what they now have in place of the old names is unknown.

10:7

(Verse 7.) The sons of Regma are Saba and Dadan. Saba is spelled with a Sin (ס), but above it with a Samech (ס), from which we said they are called Sabaeans. Now Saba is interpreted as Arabia, for in the seventy-first psalm, where we have, 'The kings of the Arabians and Saba will offer gifts,' it is written in Hebrew, 'The kings of Saba and Saba,' the first name with Sin, the second with Samech. Dadan is a nation of Ethiopia in the western region.

10:8

(Verse 8) And Cush begot Nimrod. He began to be powerful in the land. And after a little while:

10:10

(Verse 10.) And it was, he said, the head of his kingdom, Babel and Arach, and Achad, and Chalanne in the land of Sennaar. Nimrod, the son of Chus, first seized an unprecedented tyranny among the people, and he reigned in Babylon, which was named after him because the tower of the builders' confusion occurred there. For Babel means confusion. However, he also reigned in Arach, which is Edessa, and in Achad, which is now called Nisibis: and in Chalanne, which later, under a different name, was called Seleucia by King Seleucus, or certainly what is now called Ktesiphon.

10:11

(Verse 11) From that land came Assur, and he built Nineveh and the city of Rehoboth. From this land of the Assyrians, the empire sprouted, founded by Ninus, son of Belus, and it is a great city which the Hebrews call Nineveh. The entire prophecy of Jonah pertains to its destruction or repentance. And when it says 'Nineveh and the city of Rehoboth,' we should not think that there are two cities, but because Rehoboth means streets, it should be read as 'And he built Nineveh, and the streets of the city.'

10:13

(Verse 13) And Mesraim fathered Ludim, and Anamim, and Laabim, and Nephtuim, and Phetrosim, and Chasloim, from whom came the Philistines and the Caphtorim. Except for the

Laabim, who were later called Libyans, and the Chasloim, who were later called Philistines, whom we incorrectly call Palestinians, the other six nations are unknown to us, for they were destroyed in the Ethiopian war and their names have been forgotten. But they possessed the land from Gaza to the furthest boundaries of Egypt.

10:15

(Verse 15.) And Canaan begot his firstborn Sidon, and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, and the Girgashites, and the Hivites, and the Arkites, and the Sinites, and the Arvadites, and the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. From Canaan, Sidon was born, from whom the city of Sidon in Phoenicia is named. Then the Arkite, who founded Ark, a town situated opposite Tripolis at the roots of Mount Lebanon. Not far from there was another city named Sini, which, after various events of war, was destroyed and only retained its original name. There are Aradians, who possessed the island of Aradu, separated by a narrow strait from the Phoenician coast. The Samaritans, to whom Emesa, a noble city of Coele Syria, belongs. Amath, up until our time, is called by both the Syrians and the Hebrews, as it was called by the ancients. The Macedonians, who ruled in the East after Alexander, called it Epiphania. Some believe that Antioch was called by that name. Others, though not truly, yet consoling their opinion with a seemingly plausible word, think that the first dwelling of Emath, as they journeyed from Antioch, was called Edessa: and that it is the same as Emach, which was called by the ancients.

10:19

(Verse 19.) And the boundary of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as you come to Gerar, as far as Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboiim, to Lasha. These are the cities of Sidon and Gerar, and Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah and Zeboiim, which are known to all, but it is important to note that Lasha itself is now called Callirhoe, where the hot springs flow into the Dead Sea.

10:22

(Verse 22.) The sons of Shem, Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram. These hold the part of Asia from the Euphrates River to the Indian Ocean. Now Elam, from whom the Elamite princes of Persia descend. Concerning Asshur, it has already been said that he founded the city of Nineveh. Arphaxad, from whom the Chaldeans descend. Lud, from whom the Lydians descend. Aram, from whom the Syrians descend, with Damascus as their metropolis.

10:23

(Verse 23.) The sons of Aram were Us, Ul, Gether, and Mes. Us founded Trachonitis and Damascus, and he held the principality between Palestine and Coele-Syria. From him, the Seventy Interpreters translated the land of Us, the region of Ausitis, as if it were Usitis, in the Book of Job where it is written in Hebrew. Ul is the ancestor of the Armenians; Gether is the ancestor of the Acarnanians, or the Carians. And Mes, whom the Seventy Interpreters called Mosoch, are now called Maeones.

10:24

(Verse 24.) Arphaxad begot Shelah, and Shelah begot Eber. From Eber were born two sons: one was named Peleg, because in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan.

Eber, from whom the Hebrews are descended, gave his son Peleg the name which means 'division', because in his days the languages were divided in Babylon.

10:26

(Verse 26.) Jectan begat Helmodad, and Saleph, and Asermoth, and Jare, and Aduram, and Uzal, and Decla, Ebal, Abimael, Seba, Ophir, Evila, and Jobab. I could not find the names of the twelve other nations; but up to the present time, because they are far from us, or because they are called by different names, or because they have been changed, they are unknown. However, they possessed the whole region of India, which is called Hieria, from the river Cophene.

11:28

(Chapter 11, Verse 28) And Haran died before his father in the land of his birth, in the region of the Chaldeans. As we read, in the region of the Chaldeans, in Hebrew it is written, in Ur of the Chaldeans, that is, in the fire of the Chaldeans. However, the Hebrews relate a legend from this occasion: that Abraham was thrown into the fire because he refused to worship the fire that the Chaldeans worship, and with God's help, he was freed and escaped from the fire of idolatry. This is written in the following passages, that Terah went out with his family from the region of the Chaldeans, for which it is written in Hebrew, from the burning of the Chaldeans. And this is what is now said: Aran died before the sight of his father Thare in the land of his nativity, in the fire of the Chaldeans: namely, because he did not wish to adore the fire, he was consumed by the fire. But the Lord spoke afterwards to Abraham: I am the one who brought you out of the fire of the Chaldeans.

11:29

(Verse 29) And Abram and Nachor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nachor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran. The father of Milcah was also the father of Iscah. Haran fathered two daughters, Milcah and Iscah, who were both called by the same name. Of these, Milcah became the wife of Nachor, and Sarai became the wife of Abram. At that time, marriage between cousins and between siblings was not yet prohibited by law, as it later became among all people, even among brothers and sisters.

12:4

(Chapter 12, Verse 4) Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. There arises an unsolvable question: for if Terah, the father of Abram, when he was still in the land of the Chaldeans, at seventy years old begot Abram, and afterwards died in Haran at the age of two hundred and five: how is it now mentioned that Abram, after the death of Terah, when departing from Haran, was seventy-five years old? Since from the birth of Abram until the death of his father, it is said that one hundred and thirty-five years passed. Therefore, that tradition of the Hebrews, which we mentioned above, is true: that Thara went out with his sons from the fire of the Chaldeans, and that Abram, surrounded by the Babylonian fire, was liberated by the help of God because he refused to worship it; and from that time, the days of his life, and the reckoning of his age, are considered from when he confessed the Lord, rejecting the idols of the Chaldeans. However, it is possible that because the Scripture left it uncertain, a few years ago Thara set out from Chaldea and came to Haran, where he died. Certainly, after the persecution, he came to

Haran and stayed there for a longer time. Therefore, if anyone is opposed to this explanation, they will seek another solution and then rightfully reject what we have said.

12:9

(Verse 9) And Abram, setting out, went into the desert; and famine came upon the land. And in the present and in many other places, for desert, it is written in Hebrew. Therefore, we should take note of this.

12:15-16

(Vs. 15 and 16) And the princes of Pharaoh saw her, and they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was brought into Pharaoh's house. And Abram benefitted because of her, and he had sheep, and cattle, and donkeys, and male and female servants, and mules and camels. Although the body of holy women does not see blemish, but the will does, and Sarai can be excused because, in the time of famine, she could not resist being alone in foreign places, with her husband conniving; however, the ugly necessity can also be excused in another way: that according to the book of Esther, whatever pleased the king among the women, for six months she was anointed with myrtle oil, and for six months she was in various perfumes and women's treatments, and only then she entered the king's presence. And so it happened that Sarai, after pleasing the king, while she was being prepared for a year to enter the king's presence, and Pharaoh gave many gifts to Abraham, and Pharaoh later was struck by the Lord, she still remained untouched by his concubinage.

13:4

(Chapter 13, Verse 4) And Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the wilderness. Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel. It is said that Abram went up from Egypt in a splendid manner. But there is a contradiction to this idea in what follows: how could he have become very rich upon leaving Egypt? This is explained by the Hebrew word used, which means Abram was heavily burdened, that is, βαρὺς σφόδρα: for he was burdened by the weight of Egypt. And although they may seem to be riches of cattle, gold, and silver, yet if they are of Egypt, they are burdensome to a holy man. Finally, not as we read in the Septuagint, 'He went back from where he came into the desert unto Bethel,' but as it is written in Hebrew, 'He went on his journey by way of the south unto Bethel.' Therefore, he departed from Egypt not to enter the desert that he had left in Egypt, but to come by way of the south, which is opposite to the north, to the house of God, where his tabernacle had been in the midst of Bethel and Ai (also called Gai).

13:13

(Verse 13) And the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before God exceedingly. This addition, "before God," is superfluous in the Septuagint interpreters, since the inhabitants of Sodom were wicked and sinners among all people. However, a person is said to be a sinner before God, who can appear righteous among people, just as it is declared in the proclamation of Zachariah and Elizabeth that they were both righteous before God (Luke 1:6). And in the Psalter it is said: 'No living creature shall be justified in your sight.' (Ps. 142:2)

13:14-15

(Verse 14 and 15.) Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, towards the north, south, east, and west; for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring. He set the four regions of the world: east, west, north, and south. But what is read in all the Scriptures, let it suffice to say once, that the sea is always considered to be in the west: because the region of Palestine is situated in such a way that the sea is in the western part.

14:3

(Chapter 14, Verse 3) And the king of Bale, which is Segor. All these agreed in the valley of Salsam, which is the Dead Sea. Bale in the Hebrew language is called καταποσις, which means swallowing. Therefore, the Hebrews report that in another place in the Scriptures it is called Salisa, and again it is said to be μισχον τριετιζουσσαν, which means a three-year-old calf, because it was indeed swallowed up by the third movement of the earth (1 Samuel 9:4; Isaiah 15:5). And from that time, since Sodom and Gomorrah, Adama and Seboim were destroyed by divine fire, it is called that little one. Indeed, Segor is transferred to a small place called Zoara in the Syriac language. The Valley of Salt, as it is written in this same book, in which there were previously pits of bitumen, after the wrath of God and the rain of sulfur, was turned into the Dead Sea, which is called by the Greeks λμνη σφαλτις, that is, the lake of bitumen.

14:5

(Verse 5.) And the giants settled in Astaroth Carnaim, and strong nations along with them: and Ominaeos in the city of Save, before they came to Sodom. Four kings who came from Babylon killed the giants, that is, the strong ones of Arabia, and the Zozim in Hom, and the Emim in the city of Save, which is still called by that name today. But the Zuzim and the Emim are interpreted as terrifying and horrifying: for this reason, the Seventy [translators], conveying the sense rather than word for word, translated them as the strongest nations. Furthermore, Baem, for which they said, 'with them', they thought it was written with He (h), guided by the similarity of the elements, while it is written with Heth. Baem (h) is written with three letters: if it has the middle He, it is interpreted as 'in them'; but if it has Heth, as in the present case, it signifies a place, that is, 'in Hom (h)'.

14:7

(Verse 7) And they returned and came to the well of judgment, which is Kadesh. It is said by anticipation that it was afterwards so called. But it signifies the place at Petra, which is called the well of judgment because there God judged the people. And they struck all the region of the Amalekites and the Amorites who dwelt in Hazazon-tamar. This town is what is now called Engedi, fertile with balsam and palm trees. Moreover, Hazazon-tamar, in our language, means the city of palm trees. Tamar, indeed, is said to mean 'palm'. However, it is worth noting that shortly after it says: 'And they set their battle line against them in the valley of Salt, which is called in Hebrew, the valley of Seddim (h), which Aquila interprets as 'of the plains', and Theodotion as 'of the groves', signifying pleasant woods.'

14:11

(Verse 11.) And they took all the cavalry of Sodom and Gomorrah. For cavalry in Hebrew has Rachus (h), which means substance.

14:13

(Verse 13) And he who had fled, reported to Abram the passerby. And he himself was sitting by the oak of Mamre, the Amorite, the brother of Eschol, and the brother of Aner, who were allies of Abram. Concerning this, which we have set forth to the passerby, it is written in Hebrew as Ibri (), for this indeed signifies a passerby. But what he says: by the oak of Mamre, the Amorite, we read better in Hebrew as by the oak of Mamre, the Amorite, the brother of Eschol, and not the brother of Aner, as the Septuagint translated, but of Aner, so as to show that Mamre and Eschol, and Aner, were Amorites and brothers, allies of Abram.

14:14

(Verse 14) And he pursued them as far as Dan, to the city of the Phoenicians, which is now called Paneas. But Dan is one of the sources of the Jordan. For the other is also called Jor, which means 'stream'. Therefore, the Jordan is the name given to the two springs that, not far from each other, join to form a single stream.

14:18

(Verse 18.) And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him. Because our work, either the Hebrew Questions or the Collection of Traditions, is once for all, therefore let us infer what the Hebrews think of this. They say that he is the son of Shem, Noah's son; and by calculating the years of his life, they show that he lived until Isaac, and that all the firstborn of Noah, until Aaron assumed the priesthood, were priests. Furthermore, Jerusalem is called the king of Salem, which was previously called Salem. However, blessed Apostle to the Hebrews (VII, 3), mentioning one without a father or mother, refers to Christ, and through Christ to the Church of the Gentiles. For all the glory of the head is referred to the members, because he, having a foreskin, blessed the circumcised Abraham, and in Abraham the Levites, and through the Levites Aaron: from whom later the priesthood. From this he wants to gather that the priesthood of the Church, having a foreskin, blessed the synagogue with the circumcised priesthood. But as he says: You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. CIX, 4): our mystery is signified in the word of the order: not by offering irrational victims through Aaron, but by offering bread and wine: that is, the body and blood of the Lord Jesus.

15:2-3

(Chapter 15, Verses 2, 3.) Lord God, what will you give me? And I go without children: and the son of my household, this Damascus Eliezer. And Abram said: Behold to me you have not given seed: and the son of my household will be my heir. Whereby we have, and the son of my household: in Hebrew it is written, Uben Mesech Bethi: which Aquila translated, the son of the one who gives drink to my house: that is, the son who gives drink to my house. But Theodotius, and the son of my servant: that is, his son, who is in charge of my house. And as for what he says, this is it: I die without children, and the son of my steward, or overseer, who manages and distributes all the food of my household, is called Damascus Eliezer, and he will be my heir. Moreover, Eliezer means 'my God is my helper'. They say that Damascus was founded and named after him.

15:7

(Verse 7.) I am God, who brought you out from the land of the Chaldeans. This is what we said a little while ago is written in Hebrew: who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans, that is, from the fire of the Chaldeans.

15:10-11

(Verses 10, 11.) And he placed them opposite each other: but he did not separate the birds. However, birds descended upon the carcasses and the divisions thereof, and Abram drove them away. It does not pertain to the present work to explain the sacrament. We only say this, because the Hebrew version has for these words: And birds descended upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. For he deservedly often delivered Israel from narrow straits.

15:12

(Verse 12) But when the sun was setting, a deep sleep fell upon Abram. The word for deep sleep in Hebrew is Thardema (), which means a descending, and we translated it as a deep sleep.

15:16

(Verse 16) But in the fourth generation they will return here. There is no doubt that these will be the ones who are descended from Abraham. It is asked how it is written in Exodus: In the fifth generation the children of Israel went forth from the land of Egypt (Exodus 15:18). On this chapter, we have published a small volume.

16:2

(Chapter 16, Verse 2) Behold, the Lord has made me barren, so go in to my maidservant; perhaps I shall obtain children by her. Take careful note that the procreation of children is written in Hebrew as building. For it is read there: Go in to my maidservant, that I may perhaps build through her. And see, lest perhaps this is what is said in Exodus: God blessed the midwives, and they built houses for themselves (Exodus 1:20).

16:7

(Verse 7) And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the desert, by the fountain on the way to Shur. Then the Egyptian woman hurriedly went on the way to Shur, which leads through the desert to Egypt.

16:11

(Verse 11) And she called his name Ishmael; for God has heard my affliction. Ishmael means, God hears.

16:12

(Verse 12) This will be a rustic man. His hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand against him, and he will dwell against the face of all his brothers. In Hebrew, Phara () is written for rustic, which means onager. It signifies that his descendants will dwell in the wilderness, that is, the wandering Saracens, in uncertain lands, who attack and are attacked by all the nations to which the desert is adjacent.

17:3-14

(Chapter 17—Verse 3 and following) And the Lord spoke to him, saying: Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations, and your name shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of many nations. It should be noted that wherever we read Testament in Greek, in the Hebrew language it is the word covenant or pact, that is, Berith (). The Hebrews say that God, from his name, which is the Tetragrammaton among them, added the letter He to Abraham and Sarah: for he was first called Abram (), which means lofty father, and later he was called Abraham (), which means father of many: for what follows nations is not part of the name, but is understood. It is not surprising, therefore, that when it seems that the letter A has been added among the Greeks and us: we have called it the Hebrew letter He added; for the language of that tongue is to write with He (א), but to read with A (א): just as, on the contrary, the letter A is often pronounced as He.

17:15

(Verse 15) And God said to Abraham: You shall not call your wife Sarai, but her name shall be Sarah. Those who think that the first Sarah was written with one 'R' and then another 'R' was added to it are mistaken. And because 'R' is the hundredth number among the Greeks, they suspect many silly things about her name: when in fact, whatever way they want to understand the composite word, it should have a Hebrew, not Greek, origin, since the name itself is Hebrew. However, no one calling someone in another language takes the etymology of the word from the other language. Therefore, Sarai () was first called by Sin, Res, Iod: with Iod removed, that is, the I element, the letter He was added, which is read as A: and she was called Sara (). However, the reason for the change of name is that she was previously called 'my princess', the mother of the household of only one. For it follows: I will give you a son from her, and I will bless him, and he will be among the nations, and the kings of the peoples will come from him. And notably, not as we read in Greek: God said to Abraham. Your wife Sarai shall not be called by her name Sarai: in Hebrew it is said: you shall not call her name Sarai, that is, you shall not say to her, you are my princess: for she shall be the princess of all nations. Some suspect, mistakenly, that before she was called leprous, and afterwards princess: since leprosy is called Sarath in our language, which seems to have some similarity; but in Hebrew it is completely different. For it is written with Sade, and Res, and Ain, and Thau: which differs greatly from the previous three letters, that is, Sin, Res, and He, with which Sara is written, it is clear.

17:17

(Verse 17.) And Abraham fell upon his face and laughed. And he said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And after a little while: And thou shalt call his name Isaac. Different opinions, but there is one etymology why he is called Isaac. For Isaac is interpreted as laughter. Others say that Sarah laughed, therefore he was called laughter, which is false. Others indeed say that Abraham laughed, which we also approve. After Ishmael was born, Isaac was born, and then we read about Abraham and Sarah laughing. However, it should be known that in the Old Testament, four people were called by their names before they were born, without any disguise: Ishmael, Isaac, Solomon, and Josiah. Read the Scriptures.

18:6

(Chapter 18, Verse 6) And he said to him: Hurry, mix three measures of wheat flour. Because three measures are explicitly mentioned here, and the measure is uncertain: therefore I added that in Hebrew it has three sata, that is, three amphoras: so that we may understand the same mystery here and in the Gospel, where a woman is said to have fermented three measures of wheat flour (Matthew 13:33).

18:10

(Verse 10) However, he said, 'Returning, I will come to you at this time and in this hour, and Sarah will have a son.' For 'hour,' we read 'life' in Hebrew, so that the order or sense is: I will return to you in the time of life, as if he were saying, if I live, if life accompanies me. This, however, is anthropopathically expressed, like other things.

18:12

(Verse 12.) But Sarah laughed within herself, saying: After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure? It is much differently read in Hebrew: And Sarah laughed within herself, saying: After I have withered, shall I have pleasure? Also note that where we have translated as pleasure, it is written as delight in Hebrew. Symmachus translated this passage as: After I have grown old, shall I have youth?

18:32

(Verse 32) And he said, 'Is it, Lord, if I speak?' Which is written in Greek, μ■τι, Κ■ριε, ■■ν λαλ■σω. Secondly, Abraham spoke to the Lord, which does not seem to clearly indicate what he is saying. Therefore, in Hebrew it is written more explicitly: 'Please do not be angry, Lord, if I have spoken.' For since he seemed to be questioning, he qualifies what he seeks by beginning with a plea.

19:14

(Chapter 19, Verse 14) And he spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters. For afterward, it is said that the two daughters of Lot were virgins (about whom he himself had said long ago to the Sodomites: Behold, my two daughters, who have not known man), and now the Scripture mentions that he had sons-in-law; some think that those who had husbands remained in Sodom, and the ones who were virgins left with their father. And since the Scripture does not say, the Hebrew truth must be explained, in which it is written: Lot went out and spoke to the fiancés who were to receive his daughters. Therefore, the virgin daughters had not yet been joined in marriage.

(Verse 21) And he said to him: Behold, I am amazed by your face. In Hebrew it is: Behold, I have received your face: that is, I accept your prayers. Symmachus, interpreting according to the sense, says, 'I was displeased with the sight of your face.'

19:28

(Verse 28.) And behold, a flame was rising from the earth like the vapor of a furnace. Regarding this, we read in Hebrew: Behold, a rising (■ναθυμ■ασις) of the furnace, which we can call vapor,

smoke, or ashes.

19:30

(Verse 30.) And Lot went up from Segor and settled in the mountain, and his two daughters with him. For he was afraid to stay in Segor. It is asked why, when he first preferred the mountain of Segor for his escape, and wanted to be saved in it as his dwelling, he now flees from Segor back to the mountain? We will answer that the Hebrew conjecture about Segor is true, that it was frequently destroyed by earthquakes, first known as Bale, and later Salisa: and Lot feared, saying, If this place is often destroyed while the other cities still stand, how much more now, in a general destruction, will it not be able to be saved? And because of this occasion of unfaithfulness, they also gave rise to sexual relations with their daughters. For he who had seen other cities being destroyed and this one remaining, and himself being saved by the help of God, should not have doubted what he had heard granted to him. Therefore, the excuse that is given for the daughters, that they believed the human race had perished and therefore slept with their father, does not excuse the father. In fact, the Hebrews, as it follows:

19:35

(Verse 35.) And he did not know when she slept with him, and when he got up from her, they stabbed him from above, as if unbelievable, and something that nature cannot comprehend, to have intercourse with someone who is unaware.

19:36-11

(Versed. 36 seqq.) And the two daughters of Lot conceived by their father, and the firstborn son was born and she called his name Moab. He is the father of the Moabites to this day. And the younger, she also gave birth to a son, and she called his name Ammon, that is, son of my people. He is the father of the Ammonites. The name Moab means 'from the father' and has its etymology in it. But Ammon, whose name is given as if a cause, is derived as son of my race, or as it is better in Hebrew (אֲמוֹנִי), son of my people, so it is derived partly from the meaning of the name, partly from the language itself: Ammi, from whom the Ammonites are called, means my people.

20:12

(Chapter 20, verse 12.) Truly my sister is from my father, but not from my mother. That is, her father is Aran, not her mother. But because it says in Hebrew: truly my sister is the daughter of my father, and not the daughter of my mother: and it sounds more likely that she should be called Abraham's sister, we say this in her defense, that at that time such marriages were not yet prohibited by law.

21:9

(Chapter 21, Verse 9) And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she bore to Abraham, playing. What follows, with his son Isaac, is not present in the Hebrew. Therefore, this is interpreted in two ways by the Hebrews: either that she made idols out of play, according to what is written elsewhere: The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play (Exodus 32:6); or that she claimed the rights of the firstborn against Isaac, as if he were older, through play and jest. Indeed, Sara, upon hearing this, could not bear it; and this is confirmed by her own words, saying:

Cast out this bondwoman and her son. For the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with my son Isaac.

21:14

(Verse 14) And he took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. When Isaac was born, Ishmael was thirteen years old. And after he was weaned, he was expelled from the house with his mother. However, among the Hebrews, there are different opinions, with some claiming that the time for weaning is set at the fifth year, and others claiming the twelfth year. Therefore, to choose a shorter age, we have calculated that Ishmael was expelled with his mother after eighteen years, and it is no longer possible for him to have sat on his mother's lap as a young man. So it is true that the Hebrew language has the word 'infant' to refer to every child in relation to their parents. It is not surprising that a foreign language has its own peculiarities, since even today in Rome all children are called 'infants'. Therefore, Abraham placed bread and a skin of water on Hagar's shoulder and, having done this, he gave the child to his mother, that is, he handed him over to her, entrusted him to her care, and thus sent him out of the house. As for what follows:

21:15-16

(Verse 15, 16.) And she put the boy under a tree, and went and sat opposite him, as if shooting an arrow. She said, 'I will not see the death of my child.' And she sat opposite him. And immediately it happened: The boy cried out, and wept, and God heard the voice of the boy from the place where he was. And the Angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and so on, let no one move. In Hebrew, after what is written, 'I will not see the death of my child,' it is read that Hagar herself sat opposite the boy, and raised her voice, and wept, and God heard the voice of the child. For when the mother was weeping and waiting miserably for the death of her son, God heard the boy, of whom He had promised to Abraham, saying: 'But I will also make your slave woman's son into a great nation' (Gen. XVII, 20). Otherwise, the mother herself mourned not her own death, but that of her son. Therefore, God spared her, for whom there had been weeping. Finally, it is said in what follows: 'Rise up and take the boy, and hold his hand' (Gen. XVII, 18). From this it is clear that the one who is held is not a burden to his mother, but a companion. And when someone is held by the hand of a parent, their concerned affection is shown.

21:22

(Verse 22.) And Abimelech and Phicol, the commanders of his army, said to his servants, 'Except Abimelech and Phicol, the third name mentioned here is not found in the Hebrew text.'

21:30

(Verse 30) And he said, 'You shall take these seven ewes from me, that they may be a witness for me that I have dug this well.' Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because both of them swore an oath there. Where this is read, Beersheba, in Hebrew it is called Beersheba. But there are two reasons why it is so named: either because Abimelech received seven lambs from the hand of Abraham, for seven are called Sheba, or because they swore there, for an oath is also called Sheba in the same way. But if we read this name above this cause, we shall know that it has been said by prolepsis: just as Bethel and Galgala, which were certainly called by different

names until the time they were so named. But it should be noted both from the preceding and the present place, that Isaac was not born at the oak of Mamre, or in Aulon of Mamre, as it is stated in Hebrew: but in Gerar, where the town of Beersheba is still located today. This province, not long ago, was called Salutaris, after the division of the garrisons of Palestine. The Scripture is a witness of this matter, which says: And Abraham lived in the land of the Philistines (Gen. XXI, 34).

22:2

(Chapter 22, Verse 2.) And God said to him: Take your beloved son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the high land, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I will tell you. It is difficult to translate the Hebrew language into Latin. Where it is now said, go to the high land, in Hebrew it has Moriah, which Aquila translated as 'the visible', that is, clear, and Symmachus, 'the vision', that is, sight. Therefore the Hebrews say that this mountain is the one on which the temple was later built, in the area of Ornan the Jebusite, as it is also written in the Chronicles: 'And they began to build the temple in the second month, on the second day of the month, in the mountain of Moriah' (2 Chronicles 3:1). This is interpreted as "illuminating" and "shining" because there is the Dabir, that is, the oracle of God: both the Law and the Holy Spirit, who teaches people the truth and inspires prophecies.

22:3

(Verse 3) And he went to the place which God had told him about, on the third day. It should be noted that from Gerar to Mount Moriah, that is, the site of the temple, is a three-day journey, and consequently it is said that he arrived there on the third day. Therefore, some people mistakenly think that Abraham lived at the oak tree in Mamre during that time, when in fact the journey from there to Mount Moriah is barely a full day's journey.

22:13

(Verse 13.) And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and behold, behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. Eusebius has spoken a silly thing in this place: Sabech, he says, is called a goat, which with straight horns is raised high to pluck the leaves from a tree. Again Aquila has interpreted as a bush, which we can call a thicket or briar: and to interpret the force of the word, dense and intertwined twigs. And Symmachus also expresses the same opinion, saying, 'And it appeared that a ram, after this, was caught in a net by its horns.' However, some have interpreted it better in this particular place, namely the Septuagint and Theodotion, who translated the word as 'Sabech,' saying, 'In the thicket Sabech with its horns.' For σ■χνεων, that is, the net, which Aquila and Symmachus have used, is written with the letter 'Sin.' But here the letter 'Samech' is used. From this it is clear that the interpretation is not of thickened branches, and like the word 'Sabech' intertwined like a net with intertwined branches, but rather the name signifies a thicket, which is thus expressed in Hebrew. But in my diligent investigation, I frequently found that the letter σ■χνε■να is often written as Samech ().

22:14

(Verse 14) And Abraham called the name of that place, The Lord will see: so that they say to this day, In the mount the Lord will be seen. For because he hath seen in this place, in the Hebrew tongue it is said, He shall be seen. And this hath passed into a proverb with the Hebrews, so that

when they are in distress and desire the Lord's aid, they say, In the mount the Lord will be seen: that is, as He pitied Abraham, so will He have pity on us. Wherefore, even now, they are wont also to blow the horn for a sign when the ram is given.

22:20

(Verse 20) And they reported to Abraham, saying: Behold, Milcah has also borne children to your brother Nahor: Uz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Camuel the father of the Syrians, and Chesus. Uz was the firstborn of Nahor, brother of Abraham, by his wife Milcah, the daughter of Haran. From his descendants came Job, as it is written at the beginning of his book: There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. Therefore, some wrongly assume that Job is of the lineage of Esau, since that which is written at the end of his book, Because it was translated from the Syrian language, and he is the fourth generation from Esau, and the rest of what is contained there, is not found in the Hebrew volumes. Secundus was born to Melcha Buz, whom the Seventy wanted to translate as Bauz. And from this lineage comes Balaam the diviner (Numbers 24:3 et seq.; Joshua 13:22), as the Hebrews report, who is called Eliu in the book of Job: at first a holy man and prophet of God, but later, through disobedience and desire for gifts, while wanting to curse Israel, is called by the divine name. And it is said in the same book: And Eliu, the son of Barachiel the Buzite, was angry (Job 32:2), descending from this very Buzi lineage. Camuel is indeed the father of Damascus. For it is called Aran, which is written here for Syria: and it is read by the same name in Isaiah. Chesus is also the fourth, from whom the Chaldeans, that is, the Chaldeans, were later called.

32:2

(Chapter XXXII, Verse 2) And Sara died in the city of Arboc, which is in the valley: this is Chebron, in the land of Canaan. This that is placed here, which is in the valley, is not found in authentic codices. The name of the city Arboc has also gradually been corrupted by scribes and readers. For it should not be assumed that the Seventy Interpreters translated the name of the Hebrew city in a barbaric and corrupted manner, differently than it is said in its own language. Indeed, 'Arboc' signifies nothing at all. But it is said to be 'Arbee' (that is, four) because there Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were buried, and also the first of the human race, Adam, as will be more clearly demonstrated in the book of Jesus.

32:6

(Verse 6) Hear us, O Lord, you are our king from God, bury your dead in our chosen sepulcher. For a king is called a prince in Hebrew, or a leader. For a leader is called not a king, but a duke.

32:16

(Verse 16.) And Abraham heard Ephron, and Abraham weighed out to Ephron the silver, which he had spoken of in the hearing of the sons of Heth. In Hebrew, as we have written here, his first name is spelled Ephron and his second name is Ephran. For after he was overcome by the price, in order to sell the burial place for silver, even though Abraham was urging him, the letter vau, which is read as o by them, was removed from his name: and he was called Ephran instead of Ephron, with the Scripture signifying that he was not a man of consummate and perfect virtue who could sell the memories of the dead. Therefore, let it be known that those who sell graves, and are

not compelled to accept a price, but extort it even from those unwilling, should have their name changed and their deserved fate be undone, since even the one who unwillingly receives it is secretly condemned.

24:9

(Chapter 24, Verse 9) And the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore to him concerning this matter. The Hebrews say that he swore at his consecration, that is, at his circumcision. But we say that he swore by the seed of Abraham, that is, by Christ, who was to be born from him, according to the Gospel of Matthew, which says: The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1).

24:22

(Verse 22.) And the man took a gold earring, its weight was two drachmas. Bace (), which is written here instead of drachma, is half an ounce. Secel (), which is inaccurately called a shekel in Latin, has a weight of one ounce.

24:43

(Verse 43.) Behold, I stand by the fountain of water, and the daughters of the city will come out to draw water. And there will be a maiden, to whom I will say, 'Give me a little water to drink from your jar,' etc. In Hebrew it is written: Behold, I stand by the fountain of water, and there will be a young girl who will come out to draw water. And I will say to her, 'Give me a little water to drink from your jar,' and so on. For the young girl, which in Greek is called νεανίς, we also read Alma, which is found in Isaiah as well. For in that place where it is written in our books: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son (Isa. VII, 14), Aquila translated it as: Behold, a young maiden shall conceive, and bear. In Hebrew it is read: Behold, a young woman shall conceive, and bear. It should be noted that the word alma is never used except for a virgin, and it has an etymology, ἀπακρυφος, which means hidden. For it is written in Job: Where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? And it will be hidden from the eyes of all living (Job 28:21). When we say 'it will be hidden,' in Hebrew it is expressed differently due to the declension of the word, it is said 'Naalma.' To what is this similar? Even though it is declined in the masculine gender, it is written in the books of Kings, spoken by Elisha to Gehazi: 'And the Lord has hidden it from me' (2 Kings 4:27). Therefore, Alma, which means hidden, that is, virgin, seems to me to be of greater praise than a virgin who is guarded with excessive diligence. For a virgin according to the Apostle can be a virgin in body, but not in spirit. However, a hidden virgin has the addition of virginity, so that she is both a virgin and hidden. And she who is hidden, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language, is consequently also a virgin; but she who is a virgin does not immediately follow that she is hidden. This same word is also read in Exodus about Mary, the sister of Moses, as a virgin (Exodus II, 8). Therefore, the Jews show somewhere in the Scriptures where Alma is mentioned, which signifies only a young girl and not a virgin; and we concede to them that what is said among us in Isaiah: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, does not signify a hidden virgin, but rather a young girl already married.

24:59

(Verse 59.) And they sent away their sister Rebecca, and her belongings, and Abraham's servant, and the men who were with him. In Hebrew, it says: And they sent away their sister Rebecca, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. For it was fitting that a virgin setting off for marriage without her parents should be comforted by the consolation of her nurse.

24:62-63

(Verses 62 and 63.) And he himself dwelt in the land of the south: and Isaac went forth to meditate in the field towards evening. The land of the south signifies Gerar, to which he had once been led by his father to be sacrificed. But when it says, And he went forth to meditate in the field, which in Greek is called **■δολεσχ■σαι**, in Hebrew it is read: And Isaac went forth to speak in the field, the evening already declining. That signifies, according to what the Lord alone prayed on the mountain, even Isaac, who in the type of the Lord, as a just man going out of his house, offered spiritual victims to God either at the ninth hour or before sunset.

24:65

(Verse 65.) And he took a theristrum, and covered himself. Theristrum is called a cloak, also a type of Arabian garment, with which the women of that province are veiled.

25:1

(Chapter 25, Verse 1) And Abraham added and took another wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Ephher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah. And Abraham gave everything that he had to Isaac. But to the sons of the concubines whom Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and he sent them away from Isaac his son, while he was still alive, to the east, to the land of the east. Cetura is interpreted in the Hebrew language as 'joined' or 'bound'. For this reason, the Hebrews suspect that, with a changed name, she is the same as Hagar, who, after the death of Sara, went from being a concubine to a wife. And it seems that the advanced age of Abraham is now being excused, so that he is not accused of indulging in new marriages after the death of his old wife. Leaving aside what is uncertain, we say this: the sons of Abraham born from Cetura, according to Hebrew historians, occupied Troglodytis and Arabia, which is now called Idumea, up to the borders of the Red Sea. But it is said that one of the descendants of Abraham, who was called Apher, led an army against Libya, and there, after defeating the enemies, settled. And his descendants from the name of their ancestor were called Africa. This fact is testified by Alexander, who is called Polyhistor, and Cleodemus, nicknamed Malchus, who retell the barbarian history in Greek. And as for what he says, 'And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim': they think that Asshurim refers to merchants, Letushim to those who work with copper and iron, and Leummim to chiefs, meaning leaders of many tribes and peoples. Others claim that they are called Asurim, that they are Syrians, and that the regions of India have been occupied by most of the sons of Abraham from Keturah.

25:8

(v. 8) And Abraham died in good old age, an old man and full, and he was gathered to his people. A wrong addition is made by the Septuagint translators, that Abraham died lacking: for it is not fitting for Abraham to fail and diminish. Also, what we have proposed, an old man and full in good old age: in the Greek manuscripts it is written, full of days. While it seems to explain the meaning, because he has passed away full of light and the works of the day: nevertheless, it is more fitting for the spiritual interpretation if it is simply stated as full.

25:13

(Verse 13) And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations. The firstborn of Ishmael was Nebaioth, and Kedar, and the rest, up to the place where it is said: They lived from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt as you go towards Assyria. He fell in the sight of all his brothers. Twelve sons were born to Ishmael, and the firstborn was Nebaioth, from whom the whole region from the Euphrates to the Red Sea is called Nebaioth until this day, which is part of Arabia. For both their families, towns and villages, fortified castles, and three of them, Cedar in the desert, and Duma in another region, and Theman to the south, and Cedema to the east, are celebrated with this name. But what we read in the final section of this chapter, according to the Septuagint, is that he dwelt opposite the face of all his brothers (Gen. XIII, 18): it is more accurate to say what we have put, he died in the presence of all his brothers, that is, he died in the hands of all his children, with his surviving children, and with no one dying before him. But to be called brothers for the sons, Jacob also shows to Laban, saying: What is my sin, because you have persecuted me: and because you have searched all my vessels? What have you found of all the vessels of your house? Let it be placed before my brothers and your brothers: and let them judge between us (Ibid. 35). For we cannot believe, as Scripture recounts, that Jacob, apart from his children, had any brothers with him.

25:21

(Verse 21.) And Rebecca his wife conceived, and the sons within her were moved. Concerning this movement, the Seventy Interpreters rendered it as σκλῆρων, which means they were playing or kicking; which Aquila translated as they were breaking in the womb. But Symmachus rendered it as διπλεον, which means they were carried on the surface like a ship.

25:25

(Verse 25) And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was threescore years old when Rebekah bare them.

25:30

(Verse 30) And Esau said to Jacob: Give me a taste of that red stew, for I am famished. That is why he was called Edom. Red or tawny is called Edom in the Hebrew language. Therefore, from the fact that he sold his birthright for red food, he obtained the name Edom, which means tawny.

26:12

(Chapter 26, verse 12) And Isaac sowed in that land, and in that year he reaped a hundredfold. Although Isaac sowed in a foreign land, I do not think that such fertility of barley would have been

to him. Therefore, I think the Hebrew version is better, and even Aquila translated it: And he reaped in that year a hundredfold estimated, that is, **κατ'εκασμινον**. Although the same letters are used for both estimation and barley, the estimations are read as Saarim (), and the barleys as Sorim. But Scripture, however, seems to me to have shown in it the multiplication of all virtues, in that it has increased a hundredfold the type of fruits.

26:13

(Verse 13.) And the Lord blessed him, and he became a great man, and he walked, going forth, and he was greatly magnified, until he became exceedingly great. But the abundance of barley, I do not know if it can make anyone glorious.

26:17

(Verse 17.) And Isaac departed from there and came to the valley of Gerar, and he dwelt there. The valley has a stream in Hebrew. For Isaac could not dwell in the valley after he became great. However, he dwelt by the stream, of which it is written: He shall drink from the brook by the way (Psalm 110:7). Also, during the time of famine, Elijah drank from that stream. But because Elijah was not perfect like Christ, therefore that stream dried up for him (1 Kings 17:7). Our Lord, indeed, was also handed over in the river: consecrating our regeneration and the sacrament of Baptism.

26:19

(Verse 19) And the servants of Isaac dug in the valley of Gerar and found there a well of living water. And for this valley, a stream was written; for never is a well of living water found in the valley.

26:21

(Verse 21.) And they dug another well, and they quarreled over it. And he called its name Enmity. Concerning enmity, because Aquila and Symmachus translated it as **τὴν ἐντικειμένην**, and **ἐναντιώσιν**, which means opposing and contrary, in Hebrew it is Satana (). From which we understand Satana to be interpreted as the opposite.

26:22

(Verse 22.) And they dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it: so he called its name Broad Places; or, in Hebrew, Rehoboth, to prove what we have said above, that he himself built the city of Nineveh and its broad places (Genesis 10).

26:26

(Verse 26.) And Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his counselor, and Phicol the commander of his army. Regarding Ahuzzath his counselor, in Hebrew it means his group of friends: it signifies not so much a single person as a crowd of friends who came with the king, among whom was also Phicol the commander of his army.

26:32-33

(Verse 32 and 33.) And the servants of Isaac came and told him about the well that they had dug, and they said to him, 'We have found water.' So he called it Shebah. I don't know how it is

translated in the Septuagint: 'And the servants of Isaac came and told him about the well that they had dug, and they said to him, 'We have not found water.' So he called it Oath.' What is the etymology behind calling it Oath just because they did not find water? On the contrary, in Hebrew, which Aquila and Symmachus agree with in interpretation, this signifies that they found water, and therefore the well itself was called Saturation, and the city was called Beersheba, which means well of saturation (Gen. XXI): for although above we asserted that Beersheba was called so from the word of the oath, or from the number seven of the sheep, which is called Sabee, now because water was found, Isaac turned slightly the letter to the name of the city, which was thus called alluding, and instead of the harsh sound of the Hebrews Sin, from which Sabee begins, he placed the Greek sigma, which is the Hebrew Samech: otherwise, according to the law of allegory, after so many wells at the end of virtues, it does not at all agree that Isaac did not find water.

27:11

(Chapter XXVII, Verse 11) Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. Where it is written that he was hairy, in Hebrew it is written Seir (). Therefore, afterwards the mountains of Seir and the region in which he lived were called Seir: we have spoken of this before and above.

27:15

(Verse 15) And Rebecca took the garments of her elder son Esau, which were greatly desired by him at home. And in this place, the Hebrews tradition holds that the firstborns, who had fulfilled the duties of the priests, had a priestly garment, which they wore to offer sacrifices to God before Aaron was chosen for the priesthood.

27:36

(Verse 36.) And Esau said, rightly is his name called Jacob: for he hath supplanted me these two times. Jacob is interpreted supplanter. And therefore, because he had deceived his brother by art, he alluded to the name. Therefore, he was called Jacob before, because he had taken hold of his brother's heel in his birth.

27:40

(Verse 40.) And you shall serve your brother, and it shall come to pass when you shall have removed it, and shall have taken away his yoke from your neck. This signifies that the Edomites will serve the Jews, and that a time will come when they shall throw off the yoke of servitude from their neck and resist their dominion. However, according to the Seventy Interpreters, who said: 'But it shall come to pass when you shall have removed it, and shall have taken away his yoke from your neck,' it seems that the decision is uncertain and not yet complete.

28:19

(Chapter 28, verse 19) And he called the name of that place Bethel, but previously its name was Luz. From what he had said above: How awesome is this place, it is nothing but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven: now he gives the place a name, and he calls it Bethel, which means the house of God. The place was previously called Luz, which means nut or almond. Therefore, some foolishly think that the Hebrew word Ulam is the name of a city, when Ulam actually means

previously. Therefore, the order of the reading is as follows: And he called the name of that place Bethel, and before it was called Luz, a city. All the ancient scriptures are full of the word 'ulam', or 'Elam', which signifies nothing else but before, or previously, or threshold, or gateposts.

29:27

(Chapter 29, Verse 27) Complete therefore this week, and I will give you this also. After Jacob was deceived by Laban and took Rachel as his wife instead of Leah, it is said that Laban told him to fulfill seven days after the wedding of the first sister, and then he could have Rachel, for whom he would serve another seven years. Therefore, contrary to what some think, Rachel did not become Jacob's wife after another seven years, but after seven days from the wedding of the first wife. And afterward he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years. (Gen. XXIX, 30).

29:32 (Verse 32.) And she conceived and bore a son, and called his name Reuben. I desire to also mention the etymologies of the names of all the patriarchs for the sake of brevity in reading. And he called, he said, his name is Ruben, saying: Because the Lord has seen my humility. Ruben () is interpreted as the son of vision.

29:33

(Verse 33.) And she conceived, he said, another son and said: Because the Lord has heard me, since my husband hated me, and also gave me this one: and she called his name Simeon. From the fact that she was heard, she gave him the name Simeon. For Simeon indeed means hearing. But from the third, it follows:

29:34

(Verse 34) And she conceived again, and bore a son, and said: Now my husband will be with me, because I have borne him three sons: therefore she called his name Levi. When we read, 'My husband will be with me,' Aquila interpreted it as, 'My husband will be attached to me,' which is the Hebrew word (), Illave. And among the Hebrew doctors, it is translated differently, so that they say, 'My husband will follow me,' that is, I have no doubt about the love of my husband for me: he will be my companion in this life, and his affection will lead me to death, and he will follow me: for I have borne him three sons.

29:35

(Verse 35.) And she conceived and bore a son, and she said: Now I will confess to the Lord, and for this reason she called his name Judah. Judah means confession. Therefore, the name confession is derived from the confession. However, here confession is understood as thanksgiving or praise, as often in the Psalms and in the Gospel (Matthew 11:25): I will confess to you, Lord, Father of heaven and earth, that is, I thank you or glorify you.

30:5-6

(Chapter XXX.—Verses 5 and 6) And Bala conceived and bore a son to Jacob: and Rachel said: The Lord judged me, and heard my voice, and gave me a son: therefore she called his name Dan. She expressed the reason for the name, that because the Lord had judged her, a son of the

handmaid, she would give the name of judgment: Dan, indeed, is interpreted as judgment.

30:7-8

(Verse 7 and 8) And she conceived again, and bore a son. And Rachel said, God has judged me, and has also heard my voice, and has given me a son. Therefore she called his name Naphtali. The meaning of the name Naphtali is explained differently here than it is written in the Book of Hebrew Names. Hence also Aquila says, 'God has joined me, and I have joined together,' which in Hebrew is written Naphtule Elohim, Naphtalethi. From the conversion or from the comparison, since both signify conversion or comparison, he named the son Nephthalim. But what follows.

30:10-11

(Verse 10 and 11.) And Zilpah, the maid of Leah, bore Jacob a son, and Leah said, 'In fortunate circumstances,' and she called his name Gad. Where we have placed ourselves, in fortunate circumstances, and in Greek it is said ἐν τυχῇ, which can be translated as 'event.' In Hebrew, it is Bagad (ג), which Aquila interprets as 'girdle' or 'belt.' But we can say 'in readiness.' For Ba can sound like the preposition 'in,' and gad means 'coming.' Therefore, from the event or readiness, the son of Zilpah, Gad, was called. Sequitur:

30:12-13

(Verse 12 and 13.) And Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, gave birth to a second son for Jacob. And Leah said, 'I am blessed, for women will call me blessed.' And she called his name Asher, which means 'riches'. The riches are added with a play on words, that is, πλοῦτος. The etymology of the name Asher is explained by the authority of Scripture, which says, 'I am blessed, and women will call me blessed.' And because she is called blessed by people, she named her son blessed. Therefore, Asher is not called riches but blessed, only in this particular context. For in other cases, according to the ambiguity of the word, riches can be called thus.

30:17-18

(Verse 17 and 18.) And God heard Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob her fifth son, and she said, 'God has given me my wages because I gave my maid to my husband.' And she called his name Issachar. The Septuagint Interpreters have given the etymology of this name, it is wages. Not that, as many wrongly read with an added pronoun, it is to be understood as written, which is wages, but the whole name is interpreted, it is wages. For it is said that Sachar, the son of Ruben, bought the entrance which was owed to Rachel, for a price. It follows:

30:19-20

(Verse 19 and 20.) And Leah conceived again and gave birth to her sixth son for Jacob. And Leah said, 'God has endowed me with a good endowment. Now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons.' And she called his name Zebulun. Wherever we have settled, he will dwell with me.' And the Seventy translated it as 'he will love me.' In Hebrew, it is written as Jezbuleni. And the meaning is that I have borne Jacob six sons, so now I am secure, for my husband will dwell with me. Therefore, my son is called "Habitaculum". However, in the book of Numbers, Zabulon is translated as "fluxus noctis" (night's flow) wrongly and violently.

30:21

(Verse 21.) And after these things she gave birth to a daughter, and named her Dinah (). She is involved in a case, which the Greeks more significantly call δίκην. For there was a cause of contention in Shechem. After the sons, the names of the parents are to be given. Leah (), is interpreted as laboring. Rachel (), a sheep, whose son Joseph (), is called the addition because his mother had desired another to be added to her.

30:32-33

(Verse 32 and 33.) I will pass through all your flock today: separate from it all the variegated and discolored animals: and all the animals of one color will be lambs and the variegated and discolored ones will be goats, they will be my reward: and my justice will be answered to me the next day, when my reward comes before you: everything that is not variegated and discolored among the goats and lambs, will be considered as theft to me, and so on. The meaning of this passage has been greatly confused among the Septuagint Interpreters, and until today I have not been able to find any clear explanation from our scholars regarding what is meant in this passage. I will serve you, Jacob, he said, seven more years, do what I demand. Separate all the speckled and spotted, both the sheep and the goats, and give them into the hands of your sons. And from the entire flock, the white and the black animals, that is, of one color, give them to me. So if anything speckled or spotted, which are of one color, is born, it will be mine; but if anything of one color is born, it will be yours. I ask for a not difficult thing. Nature makes it so that white offspring are born from white animals, and black offspring are born from black ones: my justice will be with me, as long as God looks at my humility and labor. He eagerly seized the opportunity given by Laban, and, doing as Jacob requested, separated Jacob and his sons with a three-day journey, so that no deceitful child would be born from near the flock. Therefore, Jacob devised a new strategy and fought against the natural order of white and black livestock with his cunning. For he made three rods, of poplar, almond and pomegranate, even though the Seventy had storax, walnut and plane tree rods, partly stripping the bark, to create a variety of rod colors, so that wherever he left the bark on the rod, the ancient color would remain; but where he removed the bark, a bright color would be revealed. So Jacob observed that at the time when the flocks were mating, and after the heat of the day, when they were thirsty and eager to drink, he would place the discolored rods in the troughs. And as the rams and goats came to drink, driven by their intense desire, he would make them mate, so that from this double longing, as they eagerly drank and were mounted by the males, they would conceive offspring resembling the shadows of the rams and goats as they ascended from above in the mirror of the water. For when men and women have experienced those of varied color in the bedding, it is not surprising that this is the nature of women, that they give birth to offspring resembling those they have seen or imagined in the heat of extreme pleasure; this is said to also happen among herds of mares in Spain. And Quintilian, in a controversy where a matron was accused of giving birth to an Ethiopian, argues in defense of her that this is the nature of conceptions, as we have mentioned above. But when the kids were born, and various lambs of different colors from white and solid color herds, Jacob separated them and made them be far from the original flock. But if any were born of one color, that is, white or black, he would give them into the hands of Laban's sons, and he would place the peeled rods in the troughs where the water was poured out, and they would come to drink opposite the animals, so that they would conceive at the time when they came to drink.

30:41-42

(Ver. 41 and 42.) And the flocks conceived against the rods that Jacob had set before the flocks in the gutters, so that they conceived by the rods; but the sheep that were weak, he did not put the rods. And Laban's flocks were weak, but Jacob's were strong and healthy. This is not found in the Septuagint Interpreters, but instead of the weak and healthy ones, they translated something else, I don't know what, which does not make sense. But what the Scripture says is this: Jacob, wise and clever, observed justice and fairness even in a new way. For if all the ewes and goats were producing various offspring, there would be some suspicion of deceit, and openly Laban, envying this situation, would oppose it. Therefore, he managed everything in such a way that he himself would benefit from the result of his labor, and Laban would not be completely deprived. If ever the sheep and goats were bred in the early season, because the spring offspring is better, he would place rods in front of them so that diverse offspring would be born. But whatever sheep and goats were bred late and were seeking a male, he would not place objects in front of their eyes so that animals of a single color would be born. And whatever was first born belonged to him, because it was different and varied: whatever came after, belonged to Laban: for from one colored cattle, both black and white, were born. But in the place where it is written, that they conceive in rods: in Hebrew it has *Jeamena* (). I cannot express the force of the Hebrew word without going around it. *Jeamena* properly means the extreme heat in sexual intercourse, by which the whole body trembles, and is near the end of pleasurable satisfaction.

31:7-8 (Chapter XXXI, verses 7 and 8) And your father deceived me and changed my wages ten times, and God did not allow him to harm me. If he said, 'Your wages will be the spotted flock,' then every flock was born spotted. And if he said, 'Your wages will be the solid-colored flock,' then every flock was born solid-colored. Because of this, he changed my wages ten times. The Seventy Interpreters have stated, driven by some unknown opinion, that 'moni' in the Hebrew language means 'number' rather than 'lambs.' Finally, the meaning is further confirmed by the fact that Laban always changed the condition of each offspring. If he saw mixed livestock being born, he would say after the birth, 'I want mixed offspring in the future.' Again, when he saw single-colored animals being born (because Jacob had heard this, he did not place rods in the canals), he would say that the future offspring should be of a single color for him. And what more? Laban changed the condition of his flock or Jacob up to ten times. And whatever color he had intended to be born as, it turned into the opposite color. And so that no one may think that in ten years twenty births are incredible, read Virgil (Georg. II), in which it is said: The pregnant cattle twice. However, it is said that the nature of Italian and Mesopotamian sheep is the same.

31:19

(Verse 19) And Rachel stole her father's idols. Where we now read idols, it is written in Hebrew *Theraphim*, which Aquila interprets as *μορφῶματα*, that is, figures or images. This is done so that we may understand what the word *Theraphim* means in the Book of Judges (17:5).

31:21

(Verse 21) And he crossed the river and came to the mountain of Gilead. Not that at that time it was called Gilead; but in anticipation, as we have often said, it is called by that name by which it was later called.

31:41

(Verse 41.) And you changed my reward to ten lambs. The same mistake as above: The word 'numerus' should be read instead of 'agnis'.

31:46

(Verse 46.) And Jacob said to his brethren, 'Gather stones.' And they gathered stones and made a heap, and they ate there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. The heap is called Galeed in the Hebrew language and Jegar-sahadutha in the Syriac language, both meaning 'witness heap'. Jacob called the heap 'Galeed' in Hebrew, and Laban called it 'Jegar-sahadutha' in the language of his people. For he was a Syrian, and had changed the ancient language of his parents to the language of the province in which he dwelt.

32:1-2

(Chapter XXXII.—Verse 1 and 2.) And the angels of God met him, and when Jacob saw them, he said: These are the camps of God, and he called the name of that place Mahanaim. Where these camps were placed, in Hebrew it means Mahanaim (); so that we may know, if it is ever mentioned in another place without interpretation, what place it signifies. And beautifully, as he goes to meet his enemy brother, he is received by choirs of accompanying angels.

32:9-10

(Verse 9 and 10.) And Jacob said, O God of my father Isaac, Lord, who said to me, Return to your land and I will bless you: I am less than all your mercies, and all your truth, which you have shown to your servant. For because of what we have done, I am less, something else I do not know, which disturbs the meaning, is contained in the Greek and Latin codices.

32:27-28

(Verse 27 and 28.) And he said to him: What is your name? He said, Jacob. And he said to him: Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but your name shall be called Israel: for you have wrestled with God, and have prevailed with men. Josephus, in the first book of Antiquities, thinks that Israel was called so because he wrestled with an angel. I carefully examined this, but I could not find it at all in Hebrew. And why should I seek the opinions of individuals, when the one who gave the name explains the etymology himself? He said, 'Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel will be your name.' Why? Aquila interprets it as 'because you have begun with God,' Symmachus as 'because I will start towards God,' the Septuagint and Theodotio as 'because you have prevailed with God.' Sarith (which is derived from the word Israel) means 'prince.' Therefore, the meaning is: Your name will not be supplanter, that is, Jacob, but your name will be prince with God, that is, Israel. For just as I am a prince, so you, who were able to wrestle with me, shall be called a prince. But if you were able to wrestle with me, who am God or an angel (for many interpret it differently), how much more so with humans, that is, with Esau, whom you should not fear! However, that which is interpreted as 'Israel' in the book of Numbers, 'a man who sees God' or 'a mind that sees God', seems to me to have been interpreted not so truly, but rather forcefully, in the common speech. For here Israel, as it is written in these letters, is spelled Iod, Sin, Res, Aleph, Lamed, which means Prince of God, or Direct of God, that is, ἰσραηλ θεοῦ. But the word for "seeing" God is spelled Aleph, Iod, Sin, so that it is written with three letters and

pronounced Is (י), while "seeing" is spelled with three letters, Res, Aleph, He, and pronounced Raa (ר). And El (א) is formed by two letters, Aleph and Lamed, and it means God, or strong. Although, therefore, they are of great authority, and the shadow of their eloquence oppresses us, who have transformed the man, or rather the mind perceiving God, into the Israel: we are rather led by the authority of Scripture, and of the Angels, or of God, who called him Israel, than by any worldly eloquence. That which also follows afterwards:

32:29-30

(Verse 29 and 30.) And he blessed him there and called the name of that place Face of God: for I have seen God face to face, and my soul has been saved; in Hebrew it is called Phanuel (פנאל), so that we know that it is the same place, which in the other sacred volumes of Scripture, as it is written in Hebrew, is read as Phanuel in Greek.

33:1-2

(Chapter 33, verses 1 and 2.) And he divided the children over Leah and over Rachel, and over the two maidservants, and he placed the maidservants and their firstborn sons: but Leah and her youngest sons, and Rachel and Joseph the youngest. And he himself went before them. No, as most people think, he did not make three groups, but two. In conclusion, where we have it, he divided, Aquila placed, halved, that is, halved: so that he would make one group of maidservants with their little ones, and another of Leah and Rachel, who were free, with their sons: and he made the maidservants go first and the free women second: but he himself went before both groups, to meet his brother and pay homage.

33:17

(Verse 17) And Jacob built a house there for himself, and he built shelters for his livestock; therefore he called the name of that place Tabernacles. Where we have tents, it is read in Hebrew as Sochoth. Furthermore, until today, there is a city beyond the Jordan with this name in the region of Scythopolis, about which we have written in the book of Joshua.

33:18

(Verse 18) And Jacob came to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Mesopotamia of Syria. A confusion arises, as to how Shechem is called the city of Salem, when Jerusalem, where Melchizedek reigned, was previously called Salem. Therefore, it seems that both cities have the same name, which we can also find for various places in Judea: that the same name of the city and place is in different tribes; or certainly we can say that the Shechem which is now called Sichem, translates to "consummated" or "perfect" in our language, and that the one which was later called Jerusalem is transferred to "peaceful". For both meanings of the word, with a slight difference in accent, this word is used. The Hebrews say that it refers to the limp of Jacob's thigh, where he became weakened and was healed. Therefore, they consider this city the same as the one that received the name of the cured and perfected.

34:20

(Chapter 34, Verse 20) And Emor and his son Sichem came to the gate of their city, and they spoke to the men of the city, saying, these men are peaceful with us. Where now the Septuagint

translated it as 'peaceful', Aquila interpreted it as 'consummated' or 'perfected', for which in Hebrew it is read () Salamim. From this it is clear that what we said above about Salem is true.

34:25

(Verse 25) And they entered the city diligently, and they killed every male. Because it is read in Greek as σφਾਲῶς, which means diligently: it is written in Hebrew as Bete (), which means boldly and confidently.

35:6

(Chapter 35, Verse 6.) And Jacob came to Luz in the land of Canaan, which is Bethel. Here it is clearly confirmed that Bethel is not Ulammaus, as stated above, but Luz, that is, the almond tree mentioned before.

35:8

(Verse 8) And Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, died and was buried near Bethel. If the nurse of Rebekah named Deborah is dead, as the Septuagint interpreters also translated here, and the Hebrew word is Meneketh: we cannot know why they put 'substantiam' there, 'nutricem' here.

35:10

(Verse 10) And God said to him, Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name: and he called his name Israel. For a long time, his name was not given to him by an angel, but it was predicted that it would be given by God. Therefore, what is promised to happen there is taught to be fulfilled here.

35:16

(Verse 16.) And it came to pass, while he was approaching Chabratha in the land of Canaan, to come to Ephratha, Rachel gave birth to the Hebrew word () Chabratha, in the following, where Jacob speaks to Joseph: But when I came from Mesopotamia in Syria, your mother Rachel died in the land of Canaan, on the way to Hippodrome, to come to Ephrata (Gen. 48): I do not know what they wanted, the Septuagint interpreters translated Hippodrome: and immediately there, where it is said in Hebrew: And they buried her on the way to Ephrata, this is Bethlehem (Gen. 35:19), again the Septuagint put Hippodrome instead of Ephrata: since surely if Chabratha is Hippodrome, Ephrata cannot be Hippodrome. But Aquila translated it this way: And it came to pass καὶ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ τῆς γῆς, that is, in the journey of the earth, when he entered into Ephratah. But it is better if it is translated, in the chosen time of the earth, when he entered into Ephratha. Moreover, it signifies the springtime, when all things burst into flower, and the chosen time of the year: or when those passing by along the way pluck and choose from the nearby fields whatever comes to hand, enticed by various flowers. Indeed, Ephrata and Bethlehem are two names for the same city, with similar meanings. For they both translate to 'fruitful' and 'house of bread', respectively. This is because of the bread that is said to have come down from heaven (John 6).

35:18

(Verse 18.) And it came to pass, when her soul departed, for she died, that he called her name, 'The Son of my Sorrow'; but his father called his name Benjamin. In Hebrew, the similarity of the

name is echoed; for the son of my sorrow, which the dying mother gave him as a name, is called Benoni (). However, the son of the right hand, that is, of strength, which Jacob changed, is called Benjamin. Hence, those who think Benjamin () is interpreted as 'Son of Days' are mistaken. For when the right hand is called Jamin (), and it ends in the letter n: the days are indeed called Jamim (), but they end in the letter m.

35:21

(Verse 21.) And Israel advanced and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder. The Hebrews believe that this place is where the temple was later built, and the tower of Eder signifies the tower of the flock, that is, the congregation and assembly. This is also testified to by the prophet Micah, saying: And you, O cloudy tower of the flock, daughter of Zion (Micah 4:8), and so on. At that time, Jacob set up his tents across the place where the temple was later built. But if we follow the order of the way, there is a place near Bethlehem where the shepherds were, where even the King of the Angels sang at the birth of the Lord, or where Jacob fed his flock, giving the place its name, or what is more true, a certain prophecy was already then indicating the future mystery.

35:7

(Verse 7.) And Jacob came to his father Isaac in Mamre, the city of Arba, which is Hebron. Arba was formerly a great city with fields surrounding it, while Hebron itself is situated on a mountain. This city is also called Mamre, as it has been called since ancient times by Abraham's friend.

36:4

(Chapter 36, Verse 4) And Ada gave birth to Esau Eliphaz. This is Eliphaz, whose name is mentioned in the book of Job.

36:19

(Verse 19.) These are the sons of Esau, and these are their chiefs; he is Edom. And these are the sons of Seir. Esau and Edom and Seir are the names of one man; and the reason why they are called by different names has been explained above. And what follows:

36:20

(Verse 20.) And the inhabitants of Chorraea, and the rest. After he enumerated the sons of Esau, he goes on further and explains who were the princes from the race of the Chorraeans who were before Esau in the land of Edom, which in our language is interpreted as free. Let us read diligently Deuteronomy (II, 21), where it is written more clearly how the sons of Esau came and killed the Chorraeans, and possessed their land as inheritance.

36:22

(Verse 22.) And the sons of Lotan were Hori and Homam, and Lotan's sister was Timna. This is Timna, of whom it was said above. And Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau, and from her was born Amalek. Now it is worth noting that the Horites, because the firstborn sons of Esau took their concubines as wives. And as for the names that are mentioned, Teman and Kenaz and Amalek, and so on: we will learn later the regions of the Edomites from which these names were derived.

36:24

(Verse 24) He is Ana, who found Jamin in the desert, while feeding the donkeys of his father Zebeon. Much and varied is debated among the Hebrews about this chapter: for indeed, both the Greeks and our own are silent on this. Some believe that Ajamim () is a name for the seas. For the same letters are used to write seas as are used in the present discourse. And they say that he, while feeding the donkeys of his father in the desert, found gatherings of water, which are called seas in the Hebrew language: namely, that he discovered a lake, the discovery of which is difficult in the wilderness. Some people believe that hot springs near the border of the Punic language, which is adjacent to Hebrew, are signified by this word. There are those who think that wild donkeys have bred with female donkeys through this act, and thus the fastest offspring known as Jamim are born. Many believe that he himself was the first to ascend the herds of female horses with donkeys in the desert, so that new animals contrary to nature, mules, would be born from there. Eagle translated this passage as follows: He is Ana, who discovered it with the mimics. And Symmachus likewise translated the mimics, which signifies a plural number. However, the Seventy and Theodotion translated it equally, saying: the mimi, which indicates a singular number.

36:33

(Verse 33.) And Jobab, son of Zerah from Bozrah, reigned in his place. Some suspect that this is the same Job, as it is added at the end of his own book. However, the Hebrews assert that he was descended from Nahor, as has already been said.

37:3

(Chapter 37, Verse 3) And Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors. As for the coat of many colors, Aquila interprets it as a long-sleeved tunic, that is, a talar garment. Symmachus, a tunic with sleeves, or because it reached down to the ankles, and was distinguished by the wonderful variety of the craftsman's hands: or because it had sleeves: For the ancients used more often to wear woven garments.

37:28

(Verse 28) And the Ishmaelites sold Joseph for twenty silver coins. In Hebrew, silver coins are used instead of gold coins. For the Lord should not be sold for a lesser metal than Joseph.

37:36

(Verse 36.) Now the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, an eunuch of Pharaoh and the chief of the royal executioners. In many places the Scriptures mention the chief of the executioners as the chief of the cooks, for μαγειρεῖν in Greek means to cook. Therefore, Joseph was sold to the chief of the army and the warriors, not to Potiphar, as it is written in Latin, but to Potiphar the eunuch. The question arises, how he is later said to have a wife. The Hebrews report that Joseph was bought by this person because of his excessive beauty for a disgraceful service, and after the Lord's men were dried up, he was later chosen according to the custom of the Hierophants as the high priest of Heliopolis; and his daughter was Aseneth, whom Joseph later took as his wife.

38:5

(Chapter 38—Verse 5) And she added, and gave birth to a son, and called his name Shelah; but she was in Chezib when she gave birth to him. The Hebrew word here is used in place of a geographical name, which Aquila translated as a thing, saying: And she called his name Shelah. And it came to pass that she lied in childbirth after she gave birth to Shelah. For after she gave birth to Shelah, her childbirth ceased. Therefore, Chezib is called not a place name, but a deception. And elsewhere it is written: 'The work of the olive tree will fail, that is, it will not produce fruit.' (Habakkuk 3:17).

38:12

(Verse 12.) And Judas, having been comforted, went up to those who were shearing his sheep: himself, and his shepherd Hirah the Odollamite. For the shepherd is read as a friend. But the word is ambiguous, because with the same letters both names are written: but the friend Ree is read as the shepherd Roe.

38:14

(Verse 14) And he sat at the gate of Enaim, which is on the road to Thamna. The Hebrew phrase Enaim (), is translated as 'in the eyes.' Therefore, it is not a place name, but rather a description. He sat at a crossroads or a junction where a traveler must carefully look to choose the right path.

38:26

(Verse 26.) But Judas acknowledged and said: she is more righteous than I, because I did not give her to my son Selom. In Hebrew, it says, she has been justified by me: not that she was just, but that in comparison to her, I have done less evil, not seeking base immorality, but seeking children.

38:29

(Ver. 29.) And behold, his brother came out, and said, why is the wall divided because of you? And he called his name Phares. Concerning the wall, Aquila and Symmachus translated it as division, which in Hebrew is called Phares (). Therefore, he received the name of division because he divided the curtain of the second (also called placenta). Hence the Pharisees, who had separated themselves as if they were righteous from the people, were called the divided ones.

38:30

(Verse 30.) After this, his brother came out, who had the scarlet thread in his hand, and his name was called Zara. This name means 'east'. Therefore, either because he appeared first, or because many righteous people were born from him, as it is written in the book of Chronicles (1 Chronicles 2 and following), he was called Zara, that is, 'east'.

40:1

(Chapter 40, Verse 1) After these words, the chief of the king of Egypt's wine cellar sinned. Where we have placed 'chief of the wine cellar' in Hebrew it is written 'Masec', that word which we have recently read in the name of Abraham's servant, whom we can call the cupbearer according to the custom of the common people. Nor should this office be considered lowly, since it is of the utmost dignity even among barbarian kings to offer a cup to the king: Indeed, poets have written about Ganymede and Jove, that he entrusted his beloved to this very duty.

40:10

(Verse 10) And behold, a vine was before me, and in it there were three branches, and it was sprouting three shoots. The words in Hebrew, which are called Sarigim, signify three scourges and three branches or shoots.

40:16

(Verse 16.) And it seemed to me that I was carrying three baskets of wheat on my head. For the three baskets of wheat, he has three measures of flour in Hebrew.

41:2

(Chapter 41, Verse 2) And behold, seven cows were coming up from the river, attractive to look at, well-fed and well-built, and they were grazing in the meadow. In Genesis it is written as Achi (■χα), which is neither a Greek nor Latin word. Even in Hebrew it is corrupted: it is said to be Ahu (■■■■■), which means 'in the marsh'. But because the Hebrew letters Vau and Yod are similar and only differ in size, the Seventy Interpreters translated Ahu as Achi and, according to their custom of expressing double aspiration, they joined the Hebrew letter Heth with the Greek letter Chi (χ).

41:16

(Verse 16) And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying: Without God, salvation will not be given to Pharaoh. In Hebrew, it is different: Without me, God will answer peace to Pharaoh. Finally, Symmachus translated more openly in his own way: Not I, but God will answer peace to Pharaoh.

41:29

(Verse 29.) Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt. I wonder how the Hebrew word () Sabee, which we translated above as abundance or satiety, in reference to the well that the servants of Isaac dug, can now be translated most accurately as oath when we use the Seventy (Septuagint) translation. Both oath and seven and satiety and abundance can be understood as the context and order demand. But also in subsequent places, wherever abundance is mentioned, the same word is written in Hebrew.

41:43

(Verse 43.) And the herald cried out before him, and he set him over all the land of Egypt. Aquila translates it as: And he cried out in his presence with adgnition. Symmachus, interpreting the Hebrew speech, says: And he cried out before him 'Abrech' (). Therefore, it seems to me that the title 'herald' or the act of adgnition in greeting or adoring Joseph can be understood not so much as the Hebrews transmit it, saying 'tender father,' which is transferred in this speech; for 'Ab' means father, and 'Rech' means tender or most tender; and Scripture indicates that in wisdom indeed he was the father of all, but in age he was a young man and a boy.

41:45

(Verse 45) And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Saphaneth Phanee, and he gave him Aseneth, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of Heliopolis, as his wife. Although this name sounds like the revealer

of hidden things in Hebrew, because it is Egyptian, it must have its own meaning in that language. Therefore, it is interpreted in the Egyptian language as Saphaneth Phanee, or as the Seventy wished to translate it, Psomthom-Phanech, the Savior of the world, because he delivered the world from impending famine. It should be noted, however, that the Lord once took the daughter of His owner as a wife, who was the high priest of Heliopolis in that place. For it is not right for the priests of that idol to be without eunuchs, so that the suspicion regarding what we have already said may be confirmed.

41:50-10

(Verse 50 and following) And Joseph had two sons before the years of famine came, whom Aseneth, the daughter of Potipherah, the priest of On, bore to him. And Joseph called the name of his firstborn son Manasseh, for God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house. And the name of the second he called Ephraim, for God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction. Note, however, regarding the question that will be posed shortly about Joseph's sons, that before the time of famine, when Jacob entered Egypt, Joseph had only two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Manasse, calling him because he has forgotten his labors. For in Hebrew, forgetfulness is called oblivio. Ephraim, because God has made him fruitful. And from this word, the increase is transferred into our language.

43:11

(Chapter 43, Verse 11) And bring gifts to the man, some resin, and honey, incense, and resin, and turpentine, and nuts. Or, as Aquila and Symmachus translated, almonds. Therefore, we have included this chapter to know where in our codices the term 'incense' is found, in Hebrew it is 'Necotha' (), which Aquila translated as storax. From which the house of 'nechota,' which is read in Isaiah (39:21), is understood to be the most obvious cell for incense, or storax, as different fragrances are stored in it.

43:32

(Verse 32) And they drank, and were intoxicated with it. The idiom of the Hebrew language is to equate drunkenness with satiety, as it says there: 'He shall be satisfied with the abundance of rain, with the produce of his land he shall be intoxicated.' (Psalm 65:11) Undoubtedly, this refers to a land irrigated by rain.

44:2

(Chapter XLIV - Verse 2) And put the silver of each one in the mouth of the bag, and put my silver cup in the mouth of the youngest one's bag. For bag, it has a peronem or follem in Hebrew. For cup, which we also read in Isaiah (LI, 17), Aquila translated as scyphum, Symmachus as phialam.

(Chap. XLV.—Vers. 9 et 10.)

(Chapter 45, verses 9 and 10.) So come down to me, do not delay, and live in the land of Gesen in Arabia. This addition 'in Arabia' is not found in the Hebrew volumes. Hence the mistake has become widespread, that the land of Gesen is in Arabia. Furthermore, if, as is written in our codices, Gesem is spelled with a final 'm' (), which I strongly disagree with, it signifies the whole land; Gesemenim is translated as 'into a shower'.

45:17

(Verse 17.) But Pharaoh said to Joseph, tell your brothers to do this: load your vehicles and go to the land of Canaan. As for the vehicles, which were interpreted as 'carriages' by the Septuagint and Theodotio, the remaining animals transported them.

45:21

(v. 21) And he gave them food along the way. The word Seda, which here everyone with one voice translates as 'provisions' (πισιτισμ in Greek), is also found in the Psalter. For where our translation reads, 'I will abundantly bless her widow' (Ps. 132:15), (although in most manuscripts it is written as 'widow,' which is χρα in Greek, some read it as 'prey,' θραν), in Hebrew it has Seda, which means 'provisions.' Furthermore, the word 'θραν' can more often refer to hunting than to crops, although it is the custom of the Egyptians to also call crops 'θραν', which is now corrupted to 'atheran'.

46:26-27

(Chapter XLVI, Verse 26 and following) Therefore all the souls that entered Egypt with Jacob, and those that came out of his thighs, apart from the wives of Jacob's sons, were sixty-six souls; and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were nine souls. Therefore all the souls that entered Egypt with Jacob were seventy-five. It is without doubt that except for Joseph and his sons, sixty-six souls that came out of Jacob's thighs entered Egypt. For thus also, gradually through each calculated number, it is proven, and it is found in the Hebrew volumes. But what we read in the Septuagint: And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were nine souls: let us know that in Hebrew, instead of nine, there are two. For Ephraim and Manasseh were born to him before Jacob entered Egypt, and before the time of famine. They were born of Aseneth, the daughter of Potiphera, in Egypt. But also that which we read above: And the sons of Manasseh became, whom the Syrian concubine gave birth to him, Machir, and Machir gave birth to Gilead; and the sons of Ephraim, the brother of Manasseh, Suthalaam, and Thaam; and the sons of Suthalaam, Edem, it is added: indeed, what we read afterwards is described as if it had happened by anticipation. For at that time when Jacob entered Egypt, Ephraim and Manasseh were not old enough to be able to have children. From this it is evident that all the souls who entered Egypt from the loins of Jacob were seventy, but afterwards sixty-six entered, and they found (Al. gave birth to) three souls in Egypt, namely Joseph with his two sons, and the seventieth was Jacob himself. In order that we do not seem to speak against the authority of Scripture, even the Seventy Interpreters translated in Deuteronomy (X, 22) that Jacob (also called Israel) entered Egypt with seventy souls. Therefore, if anyone opposes our opinion, they will make Scripture contradict itself. For the Seventy Interpreters themselves, who said that seventy-five souls, including Joseph and his descendants, entered Egypt through πεληψις, only mentioned in Deuteronomy that seventy entered (some say 'entered'). But if the opposite is opposed to us, how is it said in the Acts of the Apostles (VII) , in the sermon of Stephen to the people, that seventy-five souls entered Egypt; the explanation is easy. For Saint Luke, who is the author of the history itself, should not have written anything contrary to that Scripture, which had already been made known to the Gentiles, when he published the volume of the Acts of the Apostles. And certainly, at that time, the authority of the Seventy Interpreters was considered greater than that of Luke, who was unknown, and despised, and not held in high esteem by the nations. However, it is generally observed that wherever the

holy Apostles or Apostolic men speak to the peoples, they often make use of testimonies that had already been spread among the nations: although many report that Luke the Evangelist, as a proselyte, was ignorant of the Hebrew letters.

46:28

(v. 28) But Judah was sent ahead of him to Joseph, to meet him in the city of Heroum in the land of Ramesse. In Hebrew, there is no city called Heroum, nor a land called Ramesse, but only Gesen. Some Jews assert that Gesen is now called Thebaid. And what follows afterwards: He gave them the best land in Egypt, in Ramesse, which they believe to be the village called Arsenoites in ancient times.

47:31

(Chapter 47, Verse 31) And he said to him, swear to me. And he swore to him: and Israel worshipped against the top of his staff. And in this place, some falsely simulate that Jacob worshipped the top of Joseph's scepter, because he honored his son and worshipped his power, when in Hebrew it is read very differently: And Israel worshipped, he said, at the head of the bed: which means, after his son had sworn to him confidently about the request he had made, he worshipped God against the head of his bed. Indeed, as a holy and devoted man dedicated to God, oppressed by old age, he had his bed positioned in such a way that he himself, in the posture of one lying down, was ready for prayer without any difficulty.

48:1

(Chapter 48, Verse 1) And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. And from this, what we said above is demonstrated, that Joseph had only two sons in that place, Ephraim and Manasseh. For if many years later, when Jacob his father died, he led only two sons for the blessing, surely at that time, when his sons were unable to beget children, being young and nursing infants, he could not have grandchildren from them at the entrance of his father and brothers.

48:2

(Version 2.) And Israel, strengthened, sat upon the bed. The reason why the Seventy Interpreters have rendered the same word differently, I do not know; but I boldly say this one thing, that the word itself, Meta, which they translated here as bed, in the place where we have said above that Jacob worshipped on it, they have rather called a rod than a bed.

48:5

(Verse 5.) And now behold, your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine, Ephraim and Manasseh, just as Reuben and Simeon shall be mine. But any children born to you after them shall be yours. They shall be called by the names of their brothers. If anyone doubted that seventy persons, the children of Israel, had entered Egypt, and that at the time when Jacob entered Joseph had not nine but only two sons, this is confirmed in the present chapter. Indeed, Jacob himself speaks, saying that he had two sons, not nine. And what he says, 'Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon,' that means, just as Reuben and Simeon were two tribes and were called by their own names, so Ephraim and

Manasseh shall be two tribes, and they shall produce two peoples, and thus they shall inherit the land of promise, just like my sons. But the remaining sons, he says, whom you will bear after my death, showing that they were not yet born at that time, shall be yours.

48:6

(Verse 6.) They will be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance. No, he said, they will not receive land separately, nor will they have their own possessive cords like the other tribes, but they will be mixed in with the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, like appendages of the people.

48:22

(Verse 22.) And I gave ((Or, do)) to you Sicima, the special one, over your brothers, which I received from the hands of the Amorites with my sword and arrow. Sicima, according to Greek and Latin custom, is declined. Otherwise, in Hebrew it is called Sichem, as John the Evangelist also testifies (IV, 5): although erroneously, it is read as Sichar, the error has prevailed: and now it is the city of Neapolis, the city of the Samaritans. Therefore, because Sichem () is translated into Hebrew as shoulder, he cleverly alluded to the name, saying: And I will give you one shoulder. For it is written specially, that is, in Hebrew. And what he says that he possessed it in a bow and sword: the bow here, and the sword, he calls righteousness, through which he deserved to be delivered from danger as a stranger and sojourner, by slaying Shechem and Hamor. For, as we read above, he feared lest the neighboring cities and castles should rise up against him for the destruction of the federal city (Gen. 34): and the Lord did not permit them to harm him. Certainly, you should understand it this way: I will give you Sichem, which I acquired with my own strength, that is, with money, which I earned with much labor and much sweat. And what he said, surpassing your brothers, shows that it was given to Joseph without any obligation. For indeed, Joseph is buried in the same place, and his tomb can still be seen there today.

49:3

(Chapter 49, verse 3) Reuben, my firstborn, you are my strength and the first of my sons, tough in bearing and tough in insolence and injury, like water that does not boil. You went up on your father's bed, then you defiled it when you went up. In Hebrew it is written: Reuben, my firstborn, you are my strength, and the first in power among my sons. Greater in carrying, and greater in strength. You are poured out like water, do not exceed. For you have ascended the bed of your father and defiled the couch in his ascent. The meaning here is: You are my firstborn, greater among the children, and you were supposed to receive, according to the order of your birth, the inheritance that was rightfully due to the firstborn, and to receive the priesthood and the kingdom. This is clearly demonstrated by the burden you carry and your mighty strength. However, because you have sinned, and like water that cannot be contained in a vessel, you have been poured out by the force of pleasure. Therefore, I command you not to sin further and to be among your brothers, enduring the punishment for the sin that you have committed, which is the loss of your status as the firstborn.

49:5-6

(Verses 5 and 6) Simeon and Levi, brothers, carried out the wickedness of their own invention. Let not my soul enter into their counsel, nor let my liver be involved in their assembly, because in their

anger they killed men, and in their self-will they hamstrung oxen. By necessity, we are compelled to go further and revisit those things which are in disagreement with the Hebrew truth. For it is written there: Simeon and Levi are brothers, weapons of injustice are their tools. In their secret they conspired against me, so that my soul should not come in: and in their meeting they have cast down my glory, I shall never be cast down. For in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they undermined a wall. (Gen. XXXIV). However, it signifies that it was not according to their own counsel that Sichem and Emor killed the allied men, but rather against the law of peace and friendship they shed innocent blood, and with a kind of madness and cruelty, they tore down the walls of the city where they were hosted. Where it follows and says:

49:7

(Verse 7) Cursed be their fury, for it is stubborn; and their anger, for it is harsh. I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel. For Levi did not receive his own inheritance, but had a few cities to dwell in among all the tribes. As for Simeon, it is written in the Book of Joshua (19) that he did not even receive a portion of land as his own, but received something from the tribe of Judah. And in the Chronicles (1, 4) it is more explicitly written that he multiplied and did not have a place of possession, so he went out into the wilderness. Certain people interpret the prophetically killed men, the Apostles, and the paralyzed bull by the Pharisees as Christ.

49:8

(Verse 8.) Judah, your brothers will praise you. Because Judah, confession or praise, is subsequently written: Judah, your brothers will confess to you: or, your brothers will praise you.

49:9

(Verse 9.) The sons of your father shall adore you. The lion's cub of Judah, my son, you have risen, bowing down like a lion and like a lion cub. Who will awaken him? Although there is a great mystery about Christ, it is prophesied according to the literal interpretation that kings from the lineage of David through Judah will be born and that all tribes will adore him. For it does not say, the sons of your mother, but the sons of your father. And what follows, you have risen from the lineage, my son, in Hebrew is, you have risen from captivity, my son, to show that he will lead captive peoples; and according to a more sacred interpretation, he has ascended on high and led captivity captive (Psalm 68). Or what I think is better, captivity signifies passion, ascent signifies resurrection.

49:11

(Verse 11.) He ties his young donkey to the vine, and the colt of the donkey to the choice vine. In Hebrew it says, He ties his young donkey to the vine, and in Sorec, his donkey's colt to the choice vine: which colt of the donkey, that is, the Gentile people whom Jesus has taken over, that is, the Apostles' vineyard, who are from the Jews, he has joined together. And in Sorec, that is, the chosen vine, he has tied the donkey, over whom he has taken control, the Church gathered from the nations. And what he says, my son, he addresses to Judas himself, because Christ will do all of this. But it should also be known that where we read: Alligating to its vine its foal, can be read as 'its foal' in Hebrew, its city, with the same meaning demonstrated by other words in the Church, of which it is written elsewhere: A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden (Matt. 5:15). And the

streams of the river make the city of God glad (Psalm 46:5).

(Vers. 14 et 15.)

(Verses 14 and 15.) Issachar desired good, resting among the lots, and seeing that rest is good, and the land is fertile. He placed his shoulder to the work and became a farmer. In Hebrew it is written: Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between the borders, and seeing that rest is good, and the land is beautiful. He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens, and became a servant under tribute. Because previously he had said about Zebulun, who would possess the shores of the great sea, that it also reached Sidon and the other cities of Phoenicia; now he returns to the inland province, and blesses Issachar, because he is going to possess the most beautiful region in Galilee, near Naphtali, as his inhabitant. But he calls him a bone-like donkey, and a shoulder fit for bearing, because he would labor greatly in tilling the land and in transporting the goods that were born in his borders to the sea, and also carrying tributes to the kings. The Hebrews say that by metaphor it is meant that, by meditating day and night on the holy Scriptures, one has devoted their effort to working, and therefore all tribes serve them as if carrying gifts to a master.

49:16-18

(Verses 16 and following.) And he shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Let Dan be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward: thy salvation, O Lord, I will wait for. Samson was a judge in Israel, from the tribe of Dan. This therefore he saith: Now seeing in the spirit Samson thy Nazarite nourish his hair, and triumph over his enemies being cut down; which in the likeness of a serpent and ruler obstructing the ways, he permitteth none to pass through the land of Israel: but also if anyone, presuming on his own strength, relying on the swiftness of a horse, shall wish to invade it like a spoiler, he shall not be able to escape. However, the whole thing is spoken metaphorically of a serpent and a knight. Therefore, seeing your mighty Nazarene, who himself died for the prostitute and, dying, killed our enemies, I thought, O God, that he was the Christ, your Son. But because he died and did not rise again, and was led captive to Israel, another Savior of the world must be awaited by me and my race, to whom the promise has been given, and he will be the expectation of the nations.

49:19

(Verse 19.) Gad the robber will rob him, and he himself will rob a plant. We are interpreted according to the Hebrew. But where we put the robber, it is written Gedud (), to allude to the name Gad, which can be more significantly expressed as ἐκζωογός, that is, girded or ready. But the whole story is that after fourteen years, when Reuben and half of the tribe of Manasseh had returned to the sons whom he had sent across the Jordan to take possession, he found a great war against the neighboring peoples, and after defeating the enemy, he fought bravely. Read the book of Joshua (Joshua 13) and Chronicles (1, 5). I am aware that there are more mysteries in the blessings of the patriarchs, but they are not relevant to the current work.

49:21

(Verse 21.) The tribe of Naphtali, a spreading vine, producing beauty in the next generation. In Hebrew it is written: Naphtali is a fruitful land, producing words of beauty, signifying that hot springs are born within the tribe itself, or that the region around the Sea of Galilee, watered by the

flow of the Jordan River, is fertile. However, the Hebrews interpret it as prophesying an irrigated land and the words of beauty referring to Tiberias, which was considered to have knowledge of the Law. Furthermore, when they placed the irrigated field and the seventy twigs, which is called a loose branch, in Hebrew it is read as Ajala Sluaa (), which can also be translated as a released stag, showing the abundance of temporary crops and the swiftness of fertile land. But it is better if we refer everything to the teaching of the Savior, especially what He taught there, as it is also written in the Gospel.

49:22-26

(Verse 22 and following) The son of Joseph grew up, the son of Joseph grown tall above the fountain of the daughter, walking with a composed stride on the wall. And they provoked him, and contended with him, and were angry against him, having arrows. He sat in the strength of his bow, and the chains of his hands were broken, from the hands of the mighty Jacob. From there will come the shepherd, the stone of Israel from the God of your father: and the rest. Because the Seventy Interpreters disagree in many places, we have expressed their interpretation as it is in Hebrew. And the meaning of the chapter is this: O Joseph, who is called thus because God has increased you for me, or because you will become greater among your brothers (for indeed Ephraim was the strongest of the tribe, as we read in the Books of Kings and Chronicles); O, I say, my son Joseph, who is so handsome that a crowd of Egyptian girls watches you from the walls, towers, and windows, your brothers envied you and provoked you to anger, wounded by arrows of envy and spears of jealousy. But you have set your bow and weapons of war in God, who is a mighty warrior; and your chains, with which your brothers bound you, have been loosed and broken by him, so that from your seed may be born Ephraim, strong and steadfast, like an unconquerable and unyielding stone, ruling over the ten tribes of Israel.

49:27

(Verse 27.) Benjamin the ravenous wolf, in the morning he will still eat, and in the evening he will give food.

How clear is the prophecy about the Apostle Paul, it is evident to all that in his youth he persecuted the Church, but in his old age he preached the Gospel. However, it is written in Hebrew as follows: Benjamin, a ravenous wolf, in the morning he will devour the prey, and in the evening he will divide the spoils. The Hebrews interpret this as referring to the altar where sacrifices were offered and the blood of the victims was poured out at its base, which was located in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin. They say, therefore, that this signifies that the priests in the morning sacrifice the victims, and in the evening divide those things which have been conferred upon them by the people according to the Law, placing the bloody wolf, the voracious wolf, as an interpretation upon the altar, and the division of spoils upon the priests, who serve the altar and live off the altar.

Homilies - homily_001

Homily 1, on Psalm 1 [Latin Source: Liber De Expositione Psalmorum, Patrologiae Cursus Completus. English Translation Sources: 1, 2, 3] The PSALTER is like a stately mansion that has only one key to the main entrance. Within the mansion, however, each separate chamber has its own key. Even though the great key to the grand entrance is the Holy Spirit, still each room without exception has its own smaller key. Should anyone accidentally confuse the keys and throw them out and then want to open one of the rooms, he could not do so until he found the right one. Similarly, the psalms are each like single cells, every one with its own proper key. The main entrance to the mansion of the Psalter is the first psalm which begins with the words: 'Happy the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked.'

Some commentators think that the key to this first psalm must be the person of Christ our Lord, interpreting 'the happy man' to be the man, Christ. They mean well, of course, but such an interpretation certainly shows a lack of experience and knowledge, for if that happy man is Christ, and Christ gave the law, how can the words: 'But delights in the law of the Lord,' apply to Christ? Besides, how can Christ be compared to a tree where it says: 'He is like a tree planted near running water'? For if Christ is compared to a tree, He is less than the tree since in comparison the thing compared is less than that to which it is compared; hence, the tree would be greater than the Lord who is compared to it. Do you see, then, that the psalm cannot refer to the person of the Lord, but rather refers in general to the just man? I grant that there are many who with some reason, I think, apply the words of the Psalm to Joseph; I mean Joseph of Arimathea, who did not follow the counsel of the Jews, who did not stand in the way of sinners, and who did not sit in the company of the Pharisees. Nevertheless, what others choose to interpret in a particular way as referring to Joseph, we shall take to apply in a general way to the just man.

'Happy the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked.' In Genesis, we read how Adam was cursed: 'Cursed be the ground because of you;' but the first malediction pronounced against man is absolved and replaced with a benediction. The Old Law lays down, as it were, only one condition of blessedness; the Gospel, on the other hand, announces simultaneously eight beatitudes. 'Happy the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked.' Happy the man, not any man, but the man who has reached the perfection of the manhood of Christ: 'Who follows not the counsel of the wicked.'

Here, Scripture describes the three usual ways of committing sin: we entertain sinful thoughts; we commit sin in act; or we teach what is sinful. First, we entertain a sinful thought; then, after we have reflected upon it, we convert that thought into action. When we commit sin, moreover, we multiply sin by teaching others to do what we have done. 'Happy the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked' - who thinks no evil; 'nor has stood in the way of sinners' - who does no evil; 'nor sits in the company of the insolent' - who has not taught others to sin. He has not consorted with the scornful, 'nor has stood in the way of sinners.'

It is difficult for one not to sin. John the Evangelist says, in fact, that anyone who denies that he has sinned is a liar. [1 John 1:8] If, therefore, we all sin, what do the words mean, 'nor has stood in the way of sinners'? If we all sin, no one is happy, except, of course, the one who has not sinned. But we all sin, every last one of us, and so no one is blessed.

Consider, however, just what the Scripture says: 'nor has stood in the way of sinners.' Scripture did not say happy the man who has not sinned, but rather, happy the man who has not persevered in sin. 'Nor has stood in the way of sinners.' Yesterday I committed sin. I am not happy. If, however, I do not remain in the state of sin, but withdraw from sin, I become happy once more. 'Nor sits in the company of the insolent.' Why does it say 'sits' in this verse and 'has stood' in the preceding one? For this reason: just as he who has not stood - persisted - in sin is happy, so he who has not sat - persisted - in evil doctrine is happy. What does that mean? You see yourselves that the three determinants of beatitude consist in not thinking evil, in not persevering in sin, and in not teaching evil. This is really what the Prophet Amos says: 'For three crimes and for four, I will not revoke my word, says the Lord.' [Amos 1:3] Moreover, he says this same thing eight times. Now, this is what he actually is saying: you have entertained sin, I have pardoned you; you have done evil, I have forgiven you; you have not repented of your sins, I have excused you: did you also have to teach evil? What the Scripture implies is this: For three sins and for four, I shall not be angered against you, says the Lord. [Isaiah 57:16]

'And meditates on his law day and night.' The psalmist has already mentioned three things one must not do: follow the Counsel of the wicked; stand in the way of sinners; sit in the company of the insolent. These three things we must not do, but there are also two things that we must do, for it will not be sufficient for us to shun evil unless we seek good. 'But delights in the law of the Lord.' The psalm does not say fears the law, but delights in the law. There are many who observe the law through fear, but fear as a motive for action is far from meritorious. 'But delights in the law of the Lord' - wholeheartedly he obeys the Lord's command.

'And meditates on his law day and night.' Mere words cannot express adequately what the mind conceives. 'But delights in the law of the Lord.' Some one may say: 'Look, I want to obey the law of God, and so because I want to obey, I am happy.' But consider the words that follow. It is not enough to want the law of God, but one must meditate on His law day and night. 'Meditate day and night.' Someone else may object: 'This is too much for human nature to endure, for one must walk, and drink, and eat, and sleep, and perform all the other necessities of life. How, then, meditate on the law of God day and night, and especially since the Apostle says: "Pray without ceasing"? [1 Thess 5:17] How can I be praying during the time that I am sleeping?'

Meditation on the law does not consist in reading, but in doing, just as the Apostle says in another place: 'Whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God. [1 Cor. 10:31] Even if I merely stretch forth my hand in alms giving, I am meditating on the law of God; if I visit the sick, my feet are meditating on the law of God; if I do what is prescribed, I am praying with my whole body what others are praying with their lips. The Jews, indeed, prayed with their lips, but our prayer is works. So there are three things we must not do; two things we must do. What reward does one merit who follows these injunctions?

'He is like a tree planted near running water, that yields its fruit in due season, and whose leaves never fade.' There are many who interpret these words very simply to mean that just as a tree, if

planted near water, will take root and grow and not wither away because it has enough moisture, so in like manner one who meditates on the law of God will derive strength and life from his meditation. This is their simple interpretation. But we shall combine spiritual things with spiritual things [1 Cor. 2:13] and read of the tree of life that was planted in Paradise, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This tree of life was planted in the Garden of Eden and in Eden there rose a river that separated into four branches [Genesis 2:9]... Likewise we read in Solomon - if one accepts that book as Solomon's, for he speaks there of wisdom (Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God [1 Cor. 1:24]) then, as I was saying, where Solomon says: 'She is a tree of life to those who grasp her,' [Proverbs 3:18] he is speaking of wisdom. Now, if wisdom is the tree of life, Wisdom itself, indeed, is Christ. You understand now that the man who is blessed and holy is compared to this tree, that is, he is compared to Wisdom. Consequently, you see, too, that the just man, that blessed man who has not followed in the counsel of the wicked - who has not done that but has done this - is like the tree that is planted near running water. He is, in other words, like Christ, inasmuch as He 'raised us up together, and seated us together in heaven.' [Eph. 2:6] You see, then, that we shall reign together with Christ in heaven; you see, too, that because this tree has been planted in the Garden of Eden, we have all been planted there together with Him.

'He is like a tree planted near running water.' Indeed, it is from that fountainhead that all rivers take their rise. 'That yields its fruit in due season.' This tree does not yield fruit in every season, but in the proper season. This is the tree that does not yield its fruit in the present day, but in the future, that is, on the day of judgment. This is the tree that bears blossoms now, that buds forth now, and promises fruits for the future. This tree bears twofold: it produces fruit and it produces foliage. The fruit that it bears contains the meaning of Scripture; the leaves, only the words. The fruit is in the meaning; the leaves are in the words. For that reason, whoever reads Sacred Scripture, if he reads merely as the Jews read, grasps only the words. If he reads with true spiritual insight, he gathers the fruit.

'And whose leaves never fade.' The leaves of this tree are by no means useless. Even if one understands Holy Writ only as history, he has something useful for his soul. We read in the Apocalypse of John (a book which, although rejected in these regions, we ought nevertheless to know, because it is accepted and held as canonical throughout the west, and in other Phoenician provinces, and in Egypt, for the ancient churchmen, including Irenaeus, Polycarp, Dionysius, and other Roman expounders of Sacred Scripture, among whom is holy Cyprian, accept and interpret it): 'Behold, I saw a throne set up, and one Lamb and a tree alongside a river, and on both sides of the river was that tree.' [Revelation 22:1-2] This means that the tree 'was both on this side and on that side of the river. 'And this tree,' he says, 'bore fruit and was yielding its twelve fruits for the year according to each month. And it had leaves, too, and the leaves for the healing of the nations.' [Revelation 22:2]

'I saw,' he says, 'a single throne set up.' We believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that is true, and that they are a Trinity; nevertheless the kingship is one. 'I saw a single throne set up, and I saw a single Lamb standing in the presence of the throne.' [Revelation 5:6] This refers to the Incarnation of the Savior. Scripture says: 'Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world' [John 1:29] 'And there was a fountain of water coming forth from beneath the middle of the throne' [Revelation 22:1] Notice that it is from the midst of the throne that there issues forth a

river of graces. That river does not issue forth from the throne unless the Lamb is standing before it, [Revelation 7:17] for unless we believe in the Incarnation of Christ, we do not receive those graces. A tree, he says, one lofty tree had been set up. He did not say trees, but only one tree. If there is but one tree how can it be on both sides of the river? If he had said, I saw trees, it would have been possible for some trees to be on one side of the river and other trees on the other side. Actually, one tree is said to be on both sides of the river. One river comes forth from the throne of God - the grace of the Holy Spirit - and this grace of the Holy Spirit is found in the river of the Sacred Scriptures. This river, moreover, has two banks, the Old Testament and the New Testament, and the tree planted on both sides is Christ. During the year, this tree yields twelve fruits, one for each month, but we are unable to receive the fruits except through the apostles. If one approaches the tree through the apostles, he must receive the fruit; he gathers the fruit from the Sacred Scriptures; he grasps the divine meaning abiding within the words. If, therefore, one comes to this tree through the apostles, he gathers its fruit just as we have said. If, indeed, he cannot pluck the fruit, it is because he is still too weak; he is not yet a disciple, but belongs to the throng; he is an outsider, a stranger from the nations. Because he cannot pluck the fruit, he plucks only words, the leaves for the healing of the nations, for it is written: 'and the leaves are for the healing of the nations.' One who belongs to the nations, who is not a disciple, who is as yet only one of the crowd, gathers only leaves from the tree; he receives from Scripture plain words for a healing remedy. Briefly, then, the Scripture says: 'and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations'; in other words, the leaves are medicine. Why have we digressed on the Apocalypse? Simply because of that tree 'that yields its fruit in due season, and whose leaves never fade. Whatever he does, prospers.'

We have discussed the happiness of the just man, We spoke of his reward. Because of the three things he did not do and the two things he did do, he was compared to the tree in the Garden of Eden, to Christ, who is "Wisdom". We have said all this about the holy man.

Now let us see what Scripture says about the sinner, the wicked man. 'Not so the wicked.' Those universal rewards the just man receives, the wicked man will not receive. 'Not so the wicked.' The psalmist did not say, not so the sinners, for if he had said 'sinners,' we would all then be excluded from reward. 'Not so the wicked.' There is a difference between the wicked and sinners. The wicked deny God altogether; the sinner acknowledges God and in spite of his acknowledgment commits sin. 'Not so the wicked.' In some manuscripts, the words, 'Not so,' are repeated, 'Not so the wicked, not so,' but in the Hebrew there is no such repetition.

We have spoken of the holy man and his likeness to the tree planted near running water, Now for the wicked man, it is exactly the opposite. As the just man is compared to the tree, the wicked man is compared to dust. He who is just is compared to a tree in the Garden of Eden; he who is wicked is compared to dust which the wind drives away. Dust may come from the soil but has ceased to be soil. The wicked are 'like dust which the wind drives away.' (Psalms 1:4). Holy Writ says the wicked man will be so unhappy that he is not even dust from the earth. Dust does not seem to have any substance, but it does, of course, have a kind of existence of its own. There is no body to it, yet what substance it does have is really by way of punishment. It is scattered here and there and is never in anyone place; wherever the wind sweeps it, there its whole force is spent. The same is true of the wicked man. Once he has denied God, he is led by delusion wherever the breath of the devil sends him.

Since we have already discussed at length the just man and his likeness to the tree, also the wicked man and his likeness, and have talked about the present world, it remains for us to meditate on the future life and on eternity. Therefore in judgment the wicked shall not stand, nor shall sinners, in the assembly of the just.' In the Gospel according to John, we read: 'He who believes in me is not judged; but he who does not believe in me is already judged.' [John 3:18] Who is left to be judged if both he who believes will not be judged and he who does not believe is already judged? Who will be judged on the day of judgment?

Let us reflect upon the one who stands between the believer and the non-believer, the one that is to be judged. He who believes will not be judged. Now he who believes does not sin; he who believes according to truth does not sin; he who has true faith does not sin. Actually, when we commit sin, it is because our mind is wavering in faith. When we are giving way to anger, when we are detracting from the reputation of another, when we are committing murder, when we are yielding to fornication, just where is our faith? Hence, the words: 'He who believes in me will not be judged'; there is no need to judge him, he is already blessed. Further, he who does not believe is already judged; he has already been judged unto punishment. Who, therefore, is to be judged? The one who indeed believes and yet yields to sin; he who has goodness, but has evil too; he who performs good acts at the time when he believes, but commits sin when his faith is weak.

Let us at this point consider the meaning of the words: 'Therefore in judgment the wicked shall not stand.' They shall not rise to be judged because they have already been judged, for 'he who does not believe in Me is already judged.' 'Nor shall sinners in the assembly of the just.' It does not say that sinners shall not rise again; but that they shall not stand in the assembly of the just; they do not deserve to stand with those who are not to be judged. If they believed in Me, says the Lord, they would rise up with those who do not have to be judged.

'For the Lord knows the way of the just, but the way of the wicked vanishes.' [Psalms 1:6] 'For the Lord knows the way of the just.' Why is it so extraordinary that the Lord knows the way of the just? The Scriptures also say that God knows those whom He deigns to know. [John 9:31] In regard to the wicked, it says: 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity.' [Mt 7:23, Lk 13:27] Moreover, the Apostle says: 'If anyone acknowledges the Lord, the Lord will acknowledge him.' 'For the Lord knows the way of the just.' The Lord does not know the sinner, but the just man He does know.

We read in Genesis that when Adam transgressed, when he paid heed to the serpent rather than to God, when he hid himself from the face of God, God came into the Garden and was walking about in the cool of day [Genesis 3:8]. Now listen to what the Scripture says. God sought out Adam, not at midday but in the evening. Adam had already lost the sunlight, for his highnoon was over. It was toward evening and God was walking about, for as far as the sinner is concerned, God is not standing, but is walking. He knew that Adam was in the Garden and He was well aware of what had happened, but because Adam had sinned, God knew him not. And God said: 'Adam, where are you?'

We have heard enough on how God does not know the sinner, so we ought to consider now how the just man is known by Him. God said to Abraham: 'Leave your country, your kinsfolk.' [Genesis 12:1] Abraham accordingly came into Palestine; he was in Abramiri; he sojourned a long time in Gerara. When his son Isaac was born, he had received the promise: 'In your descendants all the

nations of the earth shall be blessed.' [Genesis 22:18] He took Isaac and offered him to God, and a voice from heaven was heard to say: Spare thy son. Straightway, at the very moment that he offered his son, what does God say to Abraham? 'I know now that you fear the Lord, your God.' [Genesis 22:12] Have you just now known Abraham, Lord, with whom You have communicated for such a long time? Because Abraham had such great faith in sacrificing his own son, on that account God first began to know him. Why have we said all this? Because it is written: 'For the Lord knows the way of the just.' Let us put it another way: The way, the life, and the truth is Christ; [John 14:6] let us walk, therefore, in Christ and then God the Father will know our way.

'But the way of the wicked vanishes.' That does not mean that the wicked will perish. If they repent and do penance, they too will be saved. When the Apostle Paul was persecuting Christ and His Church, he was wicked. If the wicked perish, there is no chance for their repentance. It does not say that the wicked shall perish, but that the way of the wicked vanishes, that is, wickedness shall perish. Not the wicked, but wickedness itself; not the man who was wicked will perish, but while he is repenting, wickedness vanishes.

God vouchsafes to instruct us that there are three things we must not do, and two things that we must do. Let us be the just man compared to the tree of life; let us not be the wicked who are compared to dust; let us not be sinners, for sinners shall not stand in the assembly of the just. Let us take heed that the path of evil may vanish; and let us bless God to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Letters - letter_001

Letter 1. To Innocent. Not only the first of the letters but probably the earliest extant composition of Jerome (c. 370 a.d.). Innocent, to whom it is addressed, was one of the little band of enthusiasts whom Jerome gathered round him in Aquileia. He followed his friend to Syria, where he died in 374 a.d. (See Letter 3., 3.)

1. You have frequently asked me, dearest Innocent, not to pass over in silence the marvellous event which has happened in our own day. I have declined the task from modesty and, as I now feel, with justice, believing myself to be incapable of it, at once because bureau language is inadequate to the divine praise, and because inactivity, acting like rust upon the intellect, has dried up any little power of expression that I have ever had. You in reply urge that in the things of God we must look not at the work which we are able to accomplish, but at the spirit in which it is undertaken, and that he can never be at a loss for words who has believed on the Word.

2. What, then, must I do? The task is beyond me, and yet I dare not decline it. I am a mere unskilled passenger, and I find myself placed in charge of a freighted ship. I have not so much as handled a rowboat on a lake, and now I have to trust myself to the noise and turmoil of the Euxine. I see the shores sinking beneath the horizon, "sky and sea on every side";¹ darkness lowers over the water, the clouds are black as night, the waves only are white with foam. You urge me to hoist the swelling sails, to loosen the sheets, and to take the helm. At last I obey your commands, and as charity can do all things, I will trust in the Holy Ghost to guide my course, and I shall console myself, whatever the event. For, if our ship is wafted by the surf into the wished-for haven, I shall be content to be told that the pilotage was poor. But, if through my unpolished diction we run aground amid the rough cross-currents of language, you may blame my lack of power, but you will at least recognize my good intentions.

3. To begin, then: Vercellae is a Ligurian town, situated not far from the base of the Alps, once important, but now sparsely peopled and fallen into decay. When the consular² was holding his visitation there, a poor woman and her paramour were brought before him-the charge of adultery had been fastened upon them by the husband-and were both consigned to the penal horrors of a prison. Shortly after an attempt was made to elicit the truth by torture, and when the blood-stained hook smote the young man's livid flesh and tore furrows in his side, the unhappy wretch sought to avoid prolonged pain by a speedy death. Falsely accusing his own passions, he involved another in the charge; and it appeared that he was of all men the most miserable, and that his execution was just inasmuch as he had left to an innocent woman no means of self-defence. But the woman, stronger in virtue if weaker in sex, though her frame was stretched upon the rack, and though her hands, stained with the filth of the prison, were tied behind her, looked up to heaven with her eyes, which alone the torturer had been unable to bind, and while the tears rolled down her face, said: "Thou art witness, Lord Jesus, to whom nothing is hid, who triest the reins and the heart. [Ps. 7:9] Thou art witness that it is not to save my life that I deny this charge. I refuse to lie because to lie is sin. And as for you, unhappy man, if you are bent on hastening your death, why must you destroy

not one innocent person, but two? I also, myself, desire to die. I desire to put off this hated body, but not as an adulteress. I offer my neck; I welcome the shining sword without fear; yet I will take my innocence with me. He does not die who is slain while purposing so to live."

4. The consular, who had been feasting his eyes upon the bloody spectacle, now, like a wild beast, which after once tasting blood always thirsts for it, ordered the torture to be doubled, and cruelly gnashing his teeth, threatened the executioner with like punishment if he failed to extort from the weaker sex a confession which a man's strength had not been able to keep back.

5. Send help, Lord Jesus. For this one creature of Thine every species of torture is devised. She is bound by the hair to a stake, her whole body is fixed more firmly than ever on the rack; fire is brought and applied to her feet; her sides quiver beneath the executioner's probe; even her breasts do not escape. Still the woman remains unshaken; and, triumphing in spirit over the pain of the body, enjoys the happiness of a good conscience, round which the tortures rage in vain. [Text corrupt.] The cruel judge rises, overcome with passion. She still prays to God. Her limbs are wrenched from their sockets she only turns her eyes to heaven. Another confesses what is thought their common guilt. She, for the confessor's sake, denies the confession, and, in peril of her own life, clears one who is in peril of his.

6. Meantime she has but one thing to say "Beat me, burn me, tear me, if you will; I have not done it. If you will not believe my words, a day will come when this charge shall be carefully sifted. I have One who will judge me." Wearied out at last, the torturer sighed in response to her groans; nor could he find a spot on which to inflict a fresh wound. His cruelty overcome, he shuddered to see the body he had torn. Immediately the consular cried, in a fit of passion, "Why does it surprise you, bystanders, that a woman prefers torture to death? It takes two people, most assuredly, to commit adultery; and I think it more credible that a guilty woman should deny a sin than that an innocent young man should confess one."

7. Like sentence, accordingly, was passed on both, and the condemned pair were dragged to execution. The entire people poured out to see the sight; indeed, so closely were the gates thronged by the out-rushing crowd, that you might have fancied the city itself to be migrating. At the very first stroke of the sword the head of the hapless youth was cut off, and the headless trunk rolled over in its blood. Then came the woman's turn. She knelt down upon the ground, and the shining sword was lifted over her quivering neck. But though the headsman summoned all his strength into his bared arm, the moment it touched her flesh the fatal blade stopped short, and, lightly glancing over the skin, merely grazed it sufficiently to draw blood. The striker saw, with terror, his hand unnerved, and, amazed at his defeated skill and at his drooping sword, he whirled it aloft for another stroke. Again the blade fell forceless on the woman, sinking harmlessly on her neck, as though the steel feared to touch her. The enraged and panting officer, who had thrown open his cloak at the neck to give his full strength to the blow, shook to the ground the brooch which clasped the edges of his mantle, and not noticing this, began to poise his sword for a fresh stroke. "See," cried the woman, "a jewel has fallen from your shoulder. Pick up what you have earned by hard toil, that you may not lose it."

8. What, I ask, is the secret of such confidence as this? Death draws near, but it has no terrors for her. When smitten she exults, and the executioner turns pale. Her eyes see the brooch, they fail to see the sword. And, as if intrepidity in the presence of death were not enough, she confers a favor

upon her cruel foe. And now the mysterious Power of the Trinity rendered even a third blow vain. The terrified soldier, no longer trusting the blade, proceeded to apply the point to her throat, in the idea that though it might not cut, the pressure of his hand might plunge it into her flesh. Marvel unheard of through all the ages! The sword bent back to the hilt, and in its defeat looked to its master, as if confessing its inability to slay.

9. Let me call to my aid the example of the three children,³ who, amid the cool, encircling fire, sang hymns, [Song of the Three Holy Children] instead of weeping, and around whose turbans and holy hair the flames played harmlessly. Let me recall, too, the story of the blessed Daniel, [Dan. 6] in whose presence, though he was their natural prey, the lions crouched, with fawning tails and frightened mouths. Let Susannah also rise in the nobility of her faith before the thoughts of all; who, after she had been condemned by an unjust sentence, was saved through a youth [Daniel] inspired by the Holy Ghost. [Susannah 45] In both cases the Lord's mercy was alike shewn; for while Susannah was set free by the judge, so as not to die by the sword, this woman, though condemned by the judge, was acquitted by the sword.

10. Now at length the populace rise in arms to defend the woman. Men and women of every age join in driving away the executioner, shouting round him in a surging crowd. Hardly a man dares trust his own eyes. The disquieting news reaches the city close at hand, and the entire force of constables is mustered. The officer who is responsible for the execution of criminals bursts from among his men, and "Staining his hoary hair with soiling dust," ⁴ exclaims: "What! citizens, do you mean to seek my life? Do you intend to make me a substitute for her? However much your minds are set on mercy, and however much you wish to save a condemned woman, yet assuredly I-I who am innocent-ought not to perish." His tearful appeal tells upon the crowd, they are all benumbed by the influence of sorrow, and an extraordinary change of feeling is manifested. Before it had seemed a duty to plead for the woman's life, now it seemed a duty to allow her to be executed.

11. Accordingly a new sword is fetched, a new headsman appointed. The victim takes her place, once more strengthened only with the favor of Christ. The first blow makes her quiver, beneath the second she sways to and fro, by the third she falls wounded to the ground. Oh, majesty of the divine power highly to be extolled! She who previously had received four strokes without injury, now, a few moments later, seems to die that an innocent man may not perish in her stead.

12. Those of the clergy whose duty it is to wrap the blood-stained corpse in a winding-sheet, dig out the earth and, heaping together stones, form the customary tomb. The sunset comes on quickly, and by God's mercy the night of nature arrives more swiftly than is its wont. Suddenly the woman's bosom heaves, her eyes seek the light, her body is quickened into new life. A moment after she sighs, she looks round, she gets up and speaks. At last she is able to cry: "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do unto me?" [Ps. 118:6]

13. Meantime an aged woman, supported out of the funds of the church, gave back her spirit to heaven from which it came. [Cf. Eccles. 12:7] It seemed as if the course of events had been thus purposely ordered, for her body took the place of the other beneath the mound. In the gray dawn the devil comes on the scene in the form of a constable,⁵ asks for the corpse of her who had been slain, and desires to have her grave pointed out to him. Surprised that she could have died, he fancies her to be still alive. The clergy show him the fresh turf, and meet his demands by pointing

to the earth lately heaped up, taunting him with such words as these: "Yes, of course, tear up the bones which have been buried! Declare war anew against the tomb, and if even that does not satisfy you, pluck her limb from limb for birds and beasts to mangle! Mere dying is too good for one whom it took seven strokes to kill."

14. Before such opprobrious words the executioner retires in confusion, while the woman is secretly revived at home. Then, lest the frequency of the doctor's visits to the church might give occasion for suspicion, they cut her hair short and send her in the company of some virgins to a sequestered country house. There she changes her dress for that of a man, and scars form over her wounds. Yet even after the great miracles worked on her behalf, the laws still rage against her. So true is it that, where there is most law, there, there is also most injustice.⁶

15. But now see whither the progress of my story has brought me; we come upon the name of our friend Evagrius.⁷ So great have his exertions been in the cause of Christ that, were I to suppose it possible adequately to describe them, I should only show my own folly; and were I minded deliberately to pass them by, I still could not prevent my voice from breaking out into cries of joy. Who can fittingly praise the vigilance which enabled him to bury, if I may so say, before his death Auxentius⁸ of Milan, that curse brooding over the church? Or who can sufficiently extol the discretion with which he rescued the Roman bishop⁹ from the toils of the net in which he was fairly entangled, and showed him the means at once of overcoming his opponents and of sparing them in their discomfiture? But

"Such topics I must leave to other bards,

Shut out by envious straits of time and space." [Virg. G. 4:147, 148.]

I am satisfied now to record the conclusion of my tale. Evagrius seeks a special audience of the Emperor;¹⁰ importunes him with his entreaties, wins his favor by his services, and finally gains his cause through his earnestness. The Emperor restored to liberty the woman whom God had restored to life.

1:

Virg. A. iii. 193.

2:

I.e. the governor of the province.

3:

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

4:

Virg. A. xii. 611.

5: Lictor 6: An allusion to the well-known proverb, *summum jus, summa injuria*

7: A presbyter of Antioch and bishop, 388 a.d. He is mentioned again in Letters III., IV., V., XV. See Jerome De Vir. 3:125 8: The predecessor of Ambrose and an Arian. He was still living when

Jerome wrote, but died 374

9: Damasus, who having successfully made good his claim to the papacy, in 369 condemned Auxentius in a council held at Rome 10: Valentinian I

Letters - letter_002

Letter 2. To Theodosius and the Rest of the Anchorites.

Written from Antioch, 374 a.d., while Jerome was still in doubt as to his future course. Theodosius appears to have been the head of the solitaries in the Syrian Desert.

How I long to be a member of your company, and with uplifting of all my powers to embrace your admirable community! Though, indeed, these poor eyes are not worthy to look upon it. Oh! that I could behold the desert, lovelier to me than any city! Oh! that I could see those lonely spots made into a paradise by the saints that throng them! But since my sins prevent me from thrusting into your blessed company a head laden with every transgression, I adjure you (and I know that you can do it) by your prayers to deliver me from the darkness of this world. I spoke of this when I was with you, and now in writing to you I repeat anew the same request; for all the energy of my mind is devoted to this one object. It rests with you to give effect to my resolve. I have the will but not the power; this last can only come in answer to your prayers. For my part, I am like a sick sheep astray from the flock. Unless the good Shepherd shall place me on his shoulders and carry me back to the fold, [Luke 15:3-5] my steps will totter, and in the very effort of rising I shall find my feet give way. I am the prodigal son [Luke 15:11-32] who although I have squandered all the portion entrusted to me by my father, have not yet bowed the knee in submission to him; not yet have I commenced to put away from me the allurements of my former excesses. And because it is only a little while since I have begun not so much to abandon my vices as to desire to abandon them, the devil now ensnares me in new toils, he puts new stumbling-blocks in my path, he encompasses me on every side.

"The seas around, and all around the main." [Virg. A. 5:9]

I find myself in mid-ocean, unwilling to retreat and unable to advance. It only remains that your prayers should win for me the gale of the Holy Spirit to waft me to the haven upon the desired shore.

Letters - letter_003

Letter 3. To Rufinus the Monk.

Written from Antioch, 374 a.d., to Rufinus in Egypt. Jerome narrates his travels and the events which have taken place since his arrival in Syria, particularly the deaths of Innocent and Hylas (§3). He also describes the life of Bonosus, who was now a hermit on an island in the Adriatic (§4). The main object of the letter is to induce Rufinus to come to Syria.

1. That God gives more than we ask Him for, [Cf. Eph. 3:20] and that He often grants us things which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man," [1 Cor. 2:9] I knew indeed before from the mystic declaration of the sacred volumes; but now, dearest Rufinus, I have had proof of it in my own case. For I who fancied it too bold a wish to be allowed by an exchange of letters to counterfeit to myself your presence in the flesh, hear that you are penetrating the remotest parts of Egypt, visiting the monks and going round God's family upon earth. Oh, if only the Lord Jesus Christ would suddenly transport me to you as Philip was transported to the eunuch, [Acts, 8:26-30] and Habakkuk to Daniel, [Bel. 33-36] with what a close embrace would I clasp your neck, how fondly would I press kisses upon that mouth which has so often joined with me of old in error or in wisdom. But as I am unworthy (not that you should so come to me but) that I should so come to you, and because my poor body, weak even when well, has been shattered by frequent illnesses; I send this letter to meet you instead of coming myself, in the hope that it may bring you hither to me caught in the meshes of love's net.

2. My first joy at such unexpected good tidings was due to our brother, Heliodorus. I desired to be sure of it, but did not dare to feel sure, especially as he told me that he had only heard it from some one else, and as the strangeness of the news impaired the credit of the story. Once more my wishes hovered in uncertainty and my mind wavered, till an Alexandrian monk who had some time previously been sent over by the dutiful zeal of the people to the Egyptian confessors (in will already martyrs¹), impelled me by his presence to believe the tidings. Even then, I must admit I still hesitated. For on the one hand he knew nothing either of your name or country: yet on the other what he said seemed likely to be true, agreeing as it did with the hint which had already reached me. At last the truth broke upon me in all its fulness, for a constant stream of persons passing through brought the report: "Rufinus is at Nitria, and has reached the abode of the blessed Macarius."² At this point I cast away all that restrained my belief, and then first really grieved to find myself ill. Had it not been that my wasted and enfeebled frame fettered my movements, neither the summer heat nor the dangerous voyage should have had power to retard the rapid steps of affection. Believe me, brother, I look forward to seeing you more than the storm-tossed mariner looks for his haven, more than the thirsty fields long for the showers, more than the anxious mother sitting on the curving shore expects her son.

3. After that sudden whirlwind³ dragged me from your side, severing with its impious wrench the bonds of affection in which we were knit together, "The dark blue raincloud lowered o'er my head: On all sides were the seas, on all the sky." [Virg. A. 3:193, 194: 5:9]

I wandered about, uncertain where to go. Thrace, Pontus, Bithynia, the whole of Galatia and Cappadocia, Cilicia also with its burning heat, one after another shattered my energies. At last Syria presented itself to me as a most secure harbor to a shipwrecked man. Here, after undergoing every possible kind of sickness, I lost one of my two eyes; for Innocent,⁴ the half of my soul, [Hor. C. 1:3, 8] was taken away from me by a sudden attack of fever. The one eye which I now enjoy, and which is all in all to me, is our Evagrius,⁵ upon whom I with my constant infirmities have come as an additional burden. We had with us also Hylas,⁶ the servant of the holy Melanion,⁷ who by his stainless conduct had wiped out the taint of his previous servitude. His death opened afresh the wound which had not yet healed. But as the apostle's words forbid us to mourn for those who sleep, [1 Thess. 4:13] and as my excess of grief has been tempered by the joyful news that has since come to me, I recount this last, that, if you have not heard it, you may learn it; and that, if you know it already, you may rejoice over it with me.

4. Bonosus,⁸ your friend, or, to speak more truly, mine as well as yours, is now climbing the ladder foreshown in Jacob's dream. [Gen. 28:12] He is bearing his cross, neither taking thought for the morrow [Matt. 6:34] nor looking back at what he has left. [Luke 9:62] He is sowing in tears that he may reap in joy. [Ps. 126:5] As Moses in a type so he in reality is lifting up the serpent in the wilderness. [Nu. 21:9] This is a true story, and it may well put to shame the lying marvels described by Greek and Roman pens. For here you have a youth educated with us in the refining accomplishments of the world, with abundance of wealth, and in rank inferior to none of his associates; yet he forsakes his mother, his sisters, and his dearly loved brother, and settles like a new tiller of Eden on a dangerous island, with the sea roaring round its reefs; while its rough crags, bare rocks, and desolate aspect make it more terrible still. No peasant or monk is to be found there. Even the little Onesimus⁹ you know of, in whose kisses he used to rejoice as in those of a brother, in this tremendous solitude no longer remains at his side. Alone upon the island-or rather not alone, for Christ is with him-he sees the glory of God, which even the apostles saw not save in the desert. He beholds, it is true, no embattled towns, but he has enrolled his name in the new city.¹⁰ Garments of sackcloth disfigure his limbs, yet so clad he will be the sooner caught up to meet Christ in the clouds. [1 Thess. 4:17] No watercourse pleasant to the view supplies his wants, but from the Lord's side he drinks the water of life. [John. 4:14, John. 19:34] Place all this before your eyes, dear friend, and with all the faculties of your mind picture to yourself the scene. When you realize the effort of the fighter then you will be able to praise his victory. Round the entire island roars the frenzied sea, while the beetling crags along its winding shores resound as the billows beat against them. No grass makes the ground green; there are no shady copses and no fertile fields. Precipitous cliffs surround his dreadful abode as if it were a prison. But he, careless, fearless, and armed from head to foot with the apostle's armor, [Eph. 6:13-17] now listens to God by reading the Scriptures, now speaks to God as he prays to the Lord; and it may be that, while he lingers in the island, he sees some vision such as that once seen by John. [Rev. 1:9, Rev. 1:10]

5. What snares, think you, is the devil now weaving? What stratagems is he preparing? Perchance, mindful of his old trick, [Gen. 3:1-6: Matt. 4:1-4] he will try to tempt Bonosus with hunger. But he has been answered already: "Man shall not live by bread alone." [Matt. 4:4] Perchance he will lay before him wealth and fame. But it shall be said to him: "They that desire to be rich fall into a trap¹¹ and temptations," [1 Tim. 6:9] and "For me all glorying is in Christ." [1 Cor. 1:31] He will come, it may be, when the limbs are weary with fasting, and rack them with the pangs

of disease; but the cry of the apostle will repel him: "When I am weak, then am I strong," and "My strength is made perfect in weakness." [2 Cor. 12:10, 2 Cor. 12:9] He will hold out threats of death; but the reply will be: "I desire to depart and to be with Christ." [Philip. 1:23] He will brandish his fiery darts, but they will be received on the shield of faith. [Eph. 6:16] In a word, Satan will assail him, but Christ will defend. Thanks be to Thee, Lord Jesus, that in Thy day I have one able to pray to Thee for me. To Thee all hearts are open, Thou searchest the secrets of the heart, [Acts 1:24, Rev. 2:23] Thou seest the prophet shut up in the fish's belly in the midst of the sea. [Jon. 2:1, Jon. 2:2] Thou knowest then how he and I grew up together from tender infancy to vigorous manhood, how we were fostered in the bosoms of the same nurses, and carried in the arms of the same bearers; and how after studying together at Rome we lodged in the same house and shared the same food by the half savage banks of the Rhine. Thou knowest, too, that it was I who first began to seek to serve Thee. Remember, I beseech Thee, that this warrior of Thine was once a raw recruit with me. I have before me the declaration of Thy majesty: "Whosoever shall teach and not do shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." [Matt. 5:19] May he enjoy the crown of virtue, and in return for his daily martyrdoms may he follow the Lamb robed in white raiment! [Rev. 14:4] For "in my Father's house are many mansions," [John 14:2] and "one star differeth from another star in glory." [1 Cor. 15:41] Give me strength to raise my head to a level with the saints' heels!¹² I willed, but he performed. Do Thou therefore pardon me that I failed to keep my resolve, and reward him with the guerdon of his deserts.

I may perhaps have been tedious, and have said more than the short compass of a letter usually allows; but this, I find, is always the case with me when I have to say anything in praise of our dear Bonosus.

6. However, to return to the point from which I set out, I beseech you do not let me pass wholly out of sight and out of mind. A friend is long sought, hardly found, and with difficulty kept. Let those who will, allow gold to dazzle them and be borne along in splendor, their very baggage glittering with gold and silver. Love is not to be purchased, and affection has no price. The friendship which can cease has never been real. Farewell in Christ.

1:

Priests, monks, and others who, because they would not declare themselves Arians, were banished by order of Valens to Heliopolis in Phenicia

2:

There were two hermits of this name in Egypt, and it is not certain which is meant. One of them was a disciple of Antony

3:

The ascetic community at Aquileia, of which Jerome and Rufinus were the leaders, had been broken up, perhaps through the efforts of Lupicinus, the bishop of Stridon

4:

See Letter I

5: See Letter I 6: A freedman of Melanium

7:

A young Roman widow who had given up the world that she might adopt the ascetic life. She accompanied Rufinus to the East and settled with him on the Mount of Olives. She is mentioned again in Letters IV., XXXIX., XLV., and others

8: Jerome's foster-brother who had accompanied him on his first visit to Rome. He was now living as a hermit on a small island in the neighborhood of Aquileia. See Letter VII 9: Of this child nothing is known 10: I.e. the new Jerusalem. Rev. 21:2. Is. 4:3 11: Literally "mousetrap." This variant is peculiar to Cyprian and Jerome 12: Quoted from Tert. de C. F. 2:7

Letters - letter_004

Letter 4. To Florentius.

Sent to Florentius along with the preceding letter, which Jerome requests him to deliver to Rufinus. This Florentius was a rich Italian who had retired to Jerusalem to pursue the monastic life. Jerome subsequently speaks of him as "a distinguished monk so pitiful to the needy that he was generally known as the father of the poor." (Chron. ad a.d. 381.)

1. How much your name and sanctity are on the lips of the most different peoples you may gather from the fact that I commence to love you before I know you. For as, according to the apostle, "Some men's sins are evident going before unto judgment," [1 Tim. 5:24, R. V] so contrariwise the report of your charity is so widespread that it is considered not so much praiseworthy to love you as criminal to refuse to do so. I pass over the countless instances in which you have supported Christ, [Matt. 25:34-40] fed, clothed, and visited Him. The aid you rendered to our brother Heliodorus¹ in his need may well loose the utterance of the dumb. With what gratitude, with what commendation, does he speak of the kindness with which you smoothed a pilgrim's path. I am, it is true, the most sluggish of men, consumed by an unendurable sickness; yet keen affection and desire have winged my feet, and I have come forward to salute and embrace you. I wish you every good thing, and pray that the Lord may establish our nascent friendship.

2. Our brother, Rufinus, is said to have come from Egypt to Jerusalem with the devout lady, Melaniam. He is inseparably bound to me in brotherly love; and I beg you to oblige me by delivering to him the annexed letter. You must not, however, judge of me by the virtues that you find in him. For in him you will see the clearest tokens of holiness, whilst I am but dust and vile dirt, and even now, while still living, nothing but ashes. It is enough for me if my weak eyes can bear the brightness of his excellence. He has but now washed himself² and is clean, yea, is made white as snow; [Cf. Ps. 51:7] whilst I, stained with every sin, wait day and night with trembling to pay the uttermost farthing. [Matt. 5:26] But since "the Lord looseth the prisoners," [Ps. 146:7] and resteth upon him who is of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at His words, [Isa. 66:2] perchance he may say even to me who lie in the grave of sin: "Jerome, come forth." [John. 11:43] The reverend presbyter, Evagrius, warmly salutes you. We both with united respect salute the brother, Martinianus.³ I desire much to see him, but I am impeded by the chain of sickness. Farewell in Christ.

1: See introduction to Letter XIV 2: Rufinus had been baptized at Aquileia about three years previously (371 a.d.) 3: Acc. to Vallarsi a hermit, who at this time lived near Caesarea

Letters - letter_005

Letter 5. To Florentius.

Written a few months after the preceding (about the end of 374 a.d.) from the Syrian Desert. After dilating on his friendship for Florentius, and making a passing allusion to Rufinus, Jerome mentions certain books copies of which he desires to be sent to him. He also speaks of a runaway slave about whom Florentius had written to him.

1. Your letter, dear friend, finds me dwelling in that quarter of the desert which is nearest to Syria and the Saracens. And the reading of it rekindles in my mind so keen a desire to set out for Jerusalem that I am almost ready to violate my monastic vow in order to gratify my affection. Wishing to do the best I can, as I cannot come in person I send you a letter instead; and thus, though absent in the body, I come to you in love and in spirit. [Cf. Col. 2:5] For my earnest prayer is that our infant friendship, firmly cemented as it is in Christ, may never be rent asunder by time or distance. We ought rather to strengthen the bond by an interchange of letters. Let these pass between us, meet each other on the way, and converse with us. Affection will not lose much if it keeps up an intercourse of this kind.

2. You write that our brother, Rufinus, has not yet come to you. Even if he does come it will do little to satisfy my longing, for I shall not now be able to see him. He is too far away to come hither, and the conditions of the lonely life that I have adopted forbid me to go to him. For I am no longer free to follow my own wishes. I entreat you, therefore, to ask him to allow you to have the commentaries of the reverend Rhetitius,¹ bishop of Augustodunum,² copied, in which he has so eloquently explained the Song of Songs. A countryman of the aforesaid brother Rufinus, the old man Paul,³ writes that Rufinus has his copy of Tertullian, and urgently requests that this may be returned. Next I have to ask you to get written on paper by a copyist certain books which the subjoined list⁴ will show you that I do not possess. I beg also that you will send me the explanation of the Psalms of David, and the copious work on Synods of the reverend Hilary,⁵ which I copied for him⁶ at Trêves with my own hand. Such books, you know, must be the food of the Christian soul if it is to meditate in the law of the Lord day and night. [Ps. 1:2]

Others you welcome beneath your roof, you cherish and comfort, you help out of your own purse; but so far as I am concerned, you have given me everything when once you have granted my request. And since, through the Lord's bounty, I am rich in volumes of the sacred library,⁷ you may command me in turn. I will send you what you please; and do not suppose that an order from you will give me trouble. I have pupils devoted to the art of copying. Nor do I merely promise a favor because I am asking one. Our brother, Heliodorus,⁸ tells me that there are many parts of the Scriptures which you seek and cannot find. But even if you have them all, affection is sure to assert its rights and to seek for itself more than it already has.

3. As regards the present master of your slave-of whom you have done me the honor to write-I have no doubt but that he is his kidnapper. While I was still at Antioch the presbyter, Evagrius,

often reproved him in my presence. To whom he made this answer: "I have nothing to fear." He declares that his master has dismissed him. If you both want him, he is here; send him whither you will. I think I am not wrong in refusing to allow a runaway to stray farther. Here in the wilderness I cannot myself execute your orders; and therefore I have asked my dear friend Evagrius to push the affair vigorously, both for your sake and for mine. I desire your welfare in Christ.

1:

A man of some note, as he was one of the commissioners appointed by Constantine in 313 a.d. to settle the points of issue between the Catholics and the Donatists. Jerome criticises his commentary on the Song of Songs in Letter XXXVII

2: Autun 3: See the introd. to Letter X 4: This list has perished 5: I.e. Hilary of Poitiers

6: Rufinus 7: I.e. the Scriptures 8: See the introd. to Letter XIV

Letters - letter_006

Letter 6. To Julian, a Deacon of Antioch This letter, written in 374 a.d., is chiefly interesting for its mention of Jerome's sister. It would seem that she had fallen into sin and had been restored to a life of virtue by the deacon, Julian. Jerome speaks of her again in the next letter (§4).

It is an old saying, "Liars are disbelieved even when they speak the truth."¹ And from the way in which you reproach me for not having written, I perceive that this has been my lot with you. Shall I say, "I wrote often, but the bearers of my letters were negligent"? You will reply, "Your excuse is the old one of all who fail to write." Shall I say, "I could not find any one to take my letters"? You will say that numbers of persons have gone from my part of the world to yours. Shall I contend that I have actually given them letters? They not having delivered them, will deny that they have received them. Moreover, so great a distance separates us that it will be hard to come at the truth. What shall I do then? Though really not to blame, I ask your forgiveness, for I think it better to fall back and make overtures for peace than to keep my ground and offer battle. The truth is that constant sickness of body and vexation of mind have so weakened me that with death so close at hand I have not been as collected as usual. And lest you should account this plea a false one, now that I have stated my case, I shall, like a pleader, call witnesses to prove it. Our reverend brother, Heliodorus, has been here; but in spite of his wish to dwell in the desert with me, he has been frightened away by my crimes. But my present wordiness will atone for my past remissness; for, as Horace says in his satire:

"All singers have one fault among their friends:

They never sing when asked, unasked they never cease." [Hor. S. 1:3, 1-3]

Henceforth I shall overwhelm you with such bundles of letters that you will take the opposite line and beg me not to write.

I rejoice that my sister² -to you a daughter in Christ-remains steadfast in her purpose, a piece of news which I owe in the first instance to you. For here where I now am I am ignorant not only as to what goes on in my native land, but even as to its continued existence. Even though the Iberian viper³ shall rend me with his baneful fangs, I will not fear men's judgment, seeing that I shall have God to judge me. As one puts it:

"Shatter the world to fragments if you will:

'Twill fall upon a head which knows not fear." [Horace, C. 3:3, 7, 8]

Bear in mind, then, I pray you, the apostle's precept [1 Cor. 3:14] that we should make our work abiding; prepare for yourself a reward from the Lord in my sister's salvation; and by frequent letters increase my joy in that glory in Christ which we share together.

1: Aristotle is the author of this remark 2: Mentioned again in Letter VII.

3:

The person meant is uncertain. Probably it was Lupicinus, bishop of Stridon, for whom see the next letter

Letters - letter_007

Letter 7. To Chromatius, Jovinus, and Eusebius. This letter (written like the preceding in 374 a.d.) is addressed by Jerome to three of his former companions in the religious life. It commends Bonosus (§3), asks guidance for the writer's sister (§4), and attacks the conduct of Lupicinus, Bishop of Stridon (§5).

1. Those whom mutual affection has joined together, a written page ought not to sunder. I must not, therefore, distribute my words some to one and some to another. For so strong is the love that binds you together that affection unites all three of you in a bond no less close than that which naturally connects two of your number.¹ Indeed, if the conditions of writing would only admit of it, I should amalgamate your names and express them under a single symbol. The very letter which I have received from you challenges me in each of you to see all three, and in all three to recognize each. When the reverend Evagrius transmitted it to me in the corner of the desert which stretches between the Syrians and the Saracens, my joy was intense. It wholly surpassed the rejoicings felt at Rome when the defeat of Cannae was retrieved, and Marcellus at Nola cut to pieces the forces of Hannibal. Evagrius frequently comes to see me, and cherishes me in Christ as his own bowels.² Yet as he is separated from me by a long distance, his departure has generally left me as much regret as his arrival has brought me joy.

2. I converse with your letter, I embrace it, it talks to me; it alone of those here speaks Latin. For hereabout you must either learn a barbarous jargon or else hold your tongue. As often as the lines-traced in a well-known hand-bring back to me the faces which I hold so dear, either I am no longer here, or else you are here with me. If you will credit the sincerity of affection, I seem to see you all as I write this.

Now at the outset I should like to ask you one petulant question. Why is it that, when we are separated by so great an interval of land and sea, you have sent me so short a letter? Is it that I have deserved no better treatment, not having first written to you? I cannot believe that paper can have failed you while Egypt continues to supply its wares. Even if a Ptolemy had closed the seas, King Attalus would still have sent you parchments from Pergamum, and so by his skins you could have made up for the want of paper. The very name parchment is derived from a historical incident of the kind which occurred generations ago.³ What then? Am I to suppose the messenger to have been in haste? No matter how long a letter may be, it can be written in the course of a night. Or had you some business to attend to which prevented you from writing? No claim is prior to that of affection. Two suppositions remain, either that you felt disinclined to write or else that I did not deserve a letter. Of the two I prefer to charge you with sloth than to condemn myself as undeserving. For it is easier to mend neglect than to quicken love.

3. You tell me that Bonosus, like a true son of the Fish, has taken to the water.⁴ As for me who am still foul with my old stains, like the basilisk and the scorpion I haunt the dry places. [Deut. 8:15] Bonosus has his heel already on the serpent's head, whilst I am still as food to the same serpent which by divine appointment devours the earth. [Gen. 3:14] He can scale already that ladder of

which the psalms of degrees⁵ are a type; whilst I, still weeping on its first step, hardly know whether I shall ever be able to say: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." [Ps. 121:1] Amid the threatening billows of the world he is sitting in the safe shelter of his island,⁶ that is, of the church's pale, and it may be that even now, like John, he is being called to eat God's book; [Rev. 10:9, Rev. 10:10] whilst I, still lying in the sepulchre of my sins and bound with the chains of my iniquities, wait for the Lord's command in the Gospel: "Jerome, come forth." [John 11:43] But Bonosus has done more than this. Like the prophet [Jer. 13:4, Jer. 13:5] he has carried his girdle across the Euphrates (for all the devil's strength is in the loins⁷), and has hidden it there in a hole of the rock. Then, afterwards finding it rent, he has sung: "O Lord, thou hast possessed my reins. [Ps. 139:13] Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." [Ps. 116:14, Ps. 116:15, P.B.V] But as for me, Nebuchadnezzar has brought me in chains to Babylon, to the babel that is of a distracted mind. There he has laid upon me the yoke of captivity; there inserting in my nostrils a ring of iron, [Cf. 2 K. 19:28] he has commanded me to sing one of the songs of Zion. To whom I have said, "The Lord looseth the prisoners; the Lord openeth the eyes of the blind." [Pss. 137:3, Pss. 146:7, Pss. 146:8] To complete my contrast in a single sentence, whilst I pray for mercy Bonosus looks for a crown.

4. My sister's conversion is the fruit of the efforts of the saintly Julian. He has planted, it is for you to water, and the Lord will give the increase. [1 Cor. 3:6] Jesus Christ has given her to me to console me for the wound which the devil has inflicted on her. He has restored her from death to life. But in the words of the pagan poet, for her there is no safety that I do not fear. [Virg. A. 4:298]

You know yourselves how slippery is the path of youth—a path on which I have myself fallen,⁸ and which you are now traversing not without fear. She, as she enters upon it, must have the advice and the encouragement of all, she must be aided by frequent letters from you, my reverend brothers. And—for "charity endureth all things," [1 Cor. 13:7]—I beg you to get from Pope⁹ Valerian¹⁰ a letter to confirm her resolution. A girl's courage, as you know, is strengthened when she realizes that persons in high place are interested in her.

5. The fact is that my native land is a prey to barbarism, that in it men's only God is their belly, [Phi. 3:19] that they live only for the present, and that the richer a man is the holier he is held to be. Moreover, to use a well-worn proverb, the dish has a cover worthy of it; for Lupicinus is their priest.¹¹ Like lips like lettuce, as the saying goes—the only one, as Lucilius tells us, [Cic. de Fin. 5:30] at which Crassus ever laughed—the reference being to a donkey eating thistles. What I mean is that an unstable pilot steers a leaking ship, and that the blind is leading the blind straight to the pit. The ruler is like the ruled.

6. I salute your mother and mine with the respect which, as you know, I feel towards her. Associated with you as she is in a holy life, she has the start of you, her holy children, in that she is your mother. Her womb may thus be truly called golden. With her I salute your sisters, who ought all to be welcomed wherever they go, for they have triumphed over their sex and the world, and await the Bridegroom's coming, [Matt. 25:4] their lamps replenished with oil. O happy the house which is a home of a widowed Anna, of virgins that are prophetesses, and of twin Samuels bred in the Temple! [Luke 2:36, Acts 21:9, 1 Sam. 2:18] Fortunate the roof which shelters the martyr-mother of the Maccabees, with her sons around her, each and all wearing the martyr's crown!¹² For although you confess Christ every day by keeping His commandments, yet to this

private glory you have added the public one of an open confession; for it was through you that the poison of the Arian heresy was formerly banished from your city.

You are surprised perhaps at my thus making a fresh beginning quite at the close of my letter. But what am I to do? I cannot refuse expression to my feelings. The brief limits of a letter compel me to be silent; my affection for you urges me to speak. I write in haste, my language is confused and ill-arranged; but love knows nothing of order.

1:

Chromatius and Eusebius were brothers

2: Philem. 12 3: See Pliny, H. N. 13:21

4: The Greek word ΙΧΘΥΣ represented to the early Christians the sentence 'Ihsouj Xristoj Qeou Uwj Swthr. Hence the fish became a favorite emblem of Christ. Tertullian connects the symbol with the water of baptism, saying: "We little fishes are born by our Fish, Jesus Christ, in water and can thrive only by continuing in the water." The allusion in the text is to the baptism of Bonosus. See Schaff, "Ante-Nicene Christianity," p. 279 5: Viz., Pss. cxx.-cxxxiv 6: See Letter III 7: Job 40:16 (said of Behemoth); cf. Letter XXII 8: Jerome again refers to his own frailty in Letters XIV. XVIII. and XLVIII

9: Papa. The word "pope" was at this time used as a name of respect ("father in God") for bishops generally. Only by degrees did it come to be restricted to the bishop of Rome. Similarly the word "imperator," originally applied to any Roman general, came to be used of the Emperor alone 10: Bishop of Aquileia 11: Sacerdos. In the letters this word generally denotes a bishop. Lupicinus held the see of Stridon

12:

2 Macc. vii

Letters - letter_008

Letter 8. To Niceas, Sub-Deacon of Aquileia.

Niceas, the sub-deacon, had accompanied Jerome to the East but had now returned home. In after-years he became bishop of Aquileia in succession to Chromatius. The date of the letter is 374 a.d. The comic poet Turpilius¹ says of the exchange of letters that it alone makes the absent present. The remark, though occurring in a work of fiction, is not untrue. For what more real presence-if I may so speak-can there be between absent friends than speaking to those whom they love in letters, and in letters hearing their reply? Even those Italian savages, the Cascans of Ennius, who-as Cicero tells us in his books on rhetoric-hunted their food like beasts of prey, were wont, before paper and parchment came into use, to exchange letters written on tablets of wood roughly planed, or on strips of bark torn from the trees. For this reason men called letter-carriers tablet-bearers,² and letter-writers bark-users,³ because they used the bark of trees. How much more then are we, who live in a civilized age, bound not to omit a social duty performed by men who lived in a state of gross savagery, and were in some respects entirely ignorant of the refinements of life. The saintly Chromatius, look you, and the reverend Eusebius, brothers as much by compatibility of disposition as by the ties of nature, have challenged me to diligence by the letters which they have showered upon me. You, however, who have but just left me, have not merely unknit our new-made friendship; you have torn it asunder-a process which Laelius, in Cicero's treatise,⁴ wisely forbids. Can it be that the East is so hateful to you that you dread the thought of even your letters coming hither? Wake up, wake up, arouse yourself from sleep, give to affection at least one sheet of paper. Amid the pleasures of life at home sometimes heave a sigh over the journeys which we have made together. If you love me, write in answer to my prayer. If you are angry with me, though angry still write. I find my longing soul much comforted when I receive a letter from a friend, even though that friend be out of temper with me.

1: Turpilius, who appears to have been a dramatist of some note, died in 101 b.c. He is mentioned by Jerome in his edition of the Eusebian Chronicle 2: Tabellarii, from tabella, a small tablet 3: Librarii, from liber, bark 4: Cic. Laelius, 76

Letters - letter_009

Letter 9. To Chrysogonus, a Monk of Aquileia. A bantering letter to an indifferent correspondent. The date of the letter is 374 a.d.

Heliodorus,¹ who is so dear to us both, and who loves you with an affection no less deep than my own, may have given you a faithful account of my feelings towards you; how your name is always on my lips, and how in every conversation which I have with him I begin by recalling my pleasant intercourse with you, and go on to marvel at your lowliness, to extol your virtue, and to proclaim your holy love.

Lynxes, they say, when they look behind them, forget what they have just seen, and lose all thought of what their eyes have ceased to behold. And so it seems to be with you. For so entirely have you forgotten our joint attachment that you have not merely blurred but erased the writing of that epistle which, as the apostle tells us, [2 Cor. 3:2] is written in the hearts of Christians. The creatures that I have mentioned lurk on branches of leafy trees and pounce on fleet roes or frightened stags. In vain their victims fly, for they carry their tormentors with them, and these rend their flesh as they run. Lynxes, however, only hunt when an empty belly makes their mouths dry. When they have satisfied their thirst for blood, and have filled their stomachs with food, satiety induces forgetfulness, and they bestow no thought on future prey till hunger recalls them to a sense of their need.

Now in your case it cannot be that you have already had enough of me. Why then do you bring to a premature close a friendship which is but just begun? Why do you let slip what you have hardly as yet fully grasped? But as such remissness as yours is never at a loss for an excuse, you will perhaps declare that you had nothing to write. Had this been so, you should still have written to inform me of the fact.

1:

See introd. to Letter XIV

Letters - letter_010

Letter 10. To Paul, an Old Man of Concordia.

Jerome writes to Paul of Concordia, a centenarian (§2), and the owner of a good theological library (§, to lend him some commentaries. In return he sends him his life (newly written) of Paul the hermit. The date of the letter is 374 a.d.

1. The shortness of man's life is the punishment for man's sin; and the fact that even on the very threshold of the light death constantly overtakes the new-born child proves that the times are continually sinking into deeper depravity. For when the first tiller of paradise had been entangled by the serpent in his snaky coils, and had been forced in consequence to migrate earthwards, although his deathless state was changed for a mortal one, yet the sentence¹ of man's curse was put off for nine hundred years, or even more, a period so long that it may be called a second immortality. Afterwards sin gradually grew more and more virulent, till the ungodliness of the giants [Gen. 6:4] brought in its train the shipwreck of the whole world. Then when the world had been cleansed by the baptism-if I may so call it-of the deluge, human life was contracted to a short span. Yet even this we have almost altogether wasted, so continually do our iniquities fight against the divine purposes. For how few there are, either who go beyond their hundredth year, or who, going beyond it, do not regret that they have done so; according to that which the Scripture witnesses in the book of Psalms: "the days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow." [Ps. 90:10]

2. Why, say you, these opening reflections so remote and so far fetched that one might use against them the Horatian witticism:

"back to the eggs which leda laid for zeus,

the bard is fain to trace the war of troy?"²

Simply that I may describe in fitting terms your great age and hoary head as white as Christ's. [Rev. 1:14] For see, the hundredth circling year is already passing over you, and yet, always keeping the commandments of the Lord, amid the circumstances of your present life you think over the blessedness of that which is to come. Your eyes are bright and keen, your steps steady, your hearing good, your teeth are white, your voice musical, your flesh firm and full of sap; your ruddy cheeks belie your white hairs, your strength is not that of your age. Advancing years have not, as we too often see them do, impaired the tenacity of your memory; the coldness of your blood has not blunted an intellect at once warm and wary.³ Your face is not wrinkled nor your brow furrowed. Lastly, no tremors palsy your hand or cause it to travel in crooked pathways over the wax on which you write. The Lord shows us in you the bloom of the resurrection that is to be ours; so that whereas in others who die by inches whilst yet living, we recognize the results of sin, in your case we ascribe it to righteousness that you still simulate youth at an age to which it is foreign. And although we see the like haleness of body in many even of those who are sinners, in their case it is a grant of the devil to lead them into sin, whilst in yours it is a gift of God to make

you rejoice.

3. Tully in his brilliant speech on behalf of Flaccus⁴ describes the learning of the Greeks as "innate frivolity and accomplished vanity."

Certainly their ablest literary men used to receive money for pronouncing eulogies upon their kings or princes. Following their example, I set a price upon my praise. Nor must you suppose my demand a small one. You are asked to give me the pearl of the Gospel, [Matt. 13:46] "the words of the Lord," "pure words, even as the silver which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire," [Ps. 12:7, P. B. V] I mean the commentaries of Fortunatian⁵ and-for its account of the persecutors-the History of Aurelius Victor,⁶ and with these the Letters of Novatian;⁷ so that, learning the poison set forth by this schismatic, we may the more gladly drink of the antidote supplied by the holy martyr Cyprian. In the mean time I have sent to you, that is to say, to Paul the aged, a Paul that is older still.⁸ I have taken great pains to bring my language down to the level of the simpler sort. But, somehow or other, though you fill it with water, the jar retains the odor which it acquired when first used.⁹ If my little gift should please you, I have others also in store which (if the Holy Spirit shall breathe favorably), shall sail across the sea to you with all kinds of eastern merchandise.

1:

Elogium

2: Hor. A. P. 147. Zeus having visited Leda in the form of a swan, she produced two eggs, from one of which came Castor and Pollux, and from the other Helen, who was the cause of the Trojan war 3: A play on words: callidus, "wary," is indistinguishable in sound from calidus, "warm.

4: The words quoted do not occur in the extant portion of Cicero's speech 5: For some account of this writer see Jerome, De V. 3:c. xcvi 6: A Roman annalist some of whose works are still extant. He was contemporary with but probably older than Jerome 7: A puritan of the third century who seceded from the Roman church because of the laxity of its discipline 8: I.e. the life of Paul the Hermit, translated in this vol 9: Hor. Ep. I. 2:69; cf. T. Moore

Letters - letter_011

Letter 11. To the Virgins of Aemona.

Aemona was a Roman colony not far from Stridon, Jerome's birthplace. The virgins to whom the note is addressed had omitted to answer his letters, and he now writes to upbraid them for their remissness. The date of the letter is 374 a.d. This scanty sheet of paper shows in what a wilderness I live, and because of it I have to say much in few words. For, desirous though I am to speak to you more fully, this miserable scrap compels me to leave much unsaid. Still ingenuity makes up for lack of means, and by writing small I can say a great deal. Observe, I beseech you, how I love you, even in the midst of my difficulties, since even the want of materials does not stop me from writing to you.

Pardon, I beseech you, an aggrieved man: if I speak in tears and in anger it is because I have been injured. For in return for my regular letters you have not sent me a single syllable. Light, I know, has no communion with darkness, [2 Cor. 6:14] and God's handmaidens no fellowship with a sinner, yet a harlot was allowed to wash the Lord's feet with her tears, [Luke 7:37 sqq] and dogs are permitted to eat of their masters' crumbs. [Matt. 15:27] It was the Saviour's mission to call sinners and not the righteous; for, as He said Himself, "they that be whole need not a physician. [Matt. 9:12, Matt. 9:13] He wills the repentance of a sinner rather than his death, [Ezek. 33:11] and carries home the poor stray sheep on His own shoulders. [Luke 15:5] So, too, when the prodigal son returns, his father receives him with joy. [Luke 15:20] Nay more, the apostle says: "Judge nothing before the time." [1 Cor. 4:5] For "who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." [Rom. 14:4] And "let him that standeth take heed lest he fall." [1 Cor. 10:12] "Bear ye one another's burdens." [Gal. 6:2]

Dear sisters, man's envy judges in one way, Christ in another; and the whisper of a corner is not the same as the sentence of His tribunal. Many ways seem right to men which are afterwards found to be wrong. [Cf. Prov. 14:12] And a treasure is often stowed in earthen vessels. [2 Cor. 4:7] Peter thrice denied his Lord, yet his bitter tears restored him to his place. "To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much." [Luke 7:47] No word is said of the flock as a whole, yet the angels joy in heaven over the safety of one sick ewe. [Luke 15:7, Luke 15:10] And if any one demurs to this reasoning, the Lord Himself has said: "Friend, is thine eye evil because I am good?" [Matt. 20:15]

Letters - letter_012

Letter 12. To Antony, Monk. The subject of this letter is similar to that of the preceding. Of Antony nothing is known except that some mss. describe him as "of Aemona." The date of the letter is 374 a.d.

While the disciples were disputing concerning precedence our Lord, the teacher of humility, took a little child and said: "Except ye be converted and become as little children ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." [Matt. 18:3] And lest He should seem to preach more than he practised, He fulfilled His own precept in His life. For He washed His disciples' feet, [John. 13:5] he received the traitor with a kiss, [Luke 22:47] He conversed with the woman of Samaria, [John. 4:7] He spoke of the kingdom of heaven with Mary at His feet,¹ and when He rose again from the dead He showed Himself first to some poor women. [Matt. 28:1, Matt. 28:9] Pride is opposed to humility, and through it Satan lost his eminence as an archangel. The Jewish people perished in their pride, for while they claimed the chief seats and salutations in the market place, [Matt. 23:6, Matt. 23:7] they were superseded by the Gentiles, who had before been counted as "a drop of a bucket." [Isa. 40:15] Two poor fishermen, Peter and James, were sent to confute the sophists and the wise men of the world. As the Scripture says: "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." [1 Pet. 5:5] Think, brother, what a sin it must be which has God for its opponent. In the Gospel the Pharisee is rejected because of his pride, and the publican is accepted because of his humility. [Luke 18:9 sqq]

Now, unless I am mistaken, I have already sent you ten letters, affectionate and earnest, whilst you have not deigned to give me even a single line. The Lord speaks to His servants, but you, my brother servant, refuse to speak to me. Believe me, if reserve did not check my pen, I could show my annoyance in such invective that you would have to reply-even though it might be in anger. But since anger is human, and a Christian must not act injuriously, I fall back once more on entreaty, and beg you to love one who loves you, and to write to him as a servant should to his fellow-servant. Farewell in the Lord.

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Luke 7:40 sqq.: the heroine of this story is identified by Jerome with Mary Magdalene

Letters - letter_013

Letter 13. To Castorina, His Maternal Aunt. An interesting letter, as throwing some light on Jerome's family relations. Castorina, his maternal aunt, had, for some reason, become estranged from him, and he now writes to her to effect a reconciliation. Whether he succeeded in doing so, we do not know. The date of the letter is 374 a.d. The apostle and evangelist John rightly says, in his first epistle, that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." [1 John. 3:15] For, since murder often springs from hate, the hater, even though he has not yet slain his victim, is at heart a murderer. Why, you ask, do I begin in this style? Simply that you and I may both lay aside past ill feeling and cleanse our hearts to be a habitation for God. "Be ye angry," David says, "and sin not," or, as the apostle more fully expresses it, "let not the sun go down upon your wrath." [Ps. 4:4, LXX.: Eph. 4:26] What then shall we do in the day of judgment, upon whose wrath the sun has gone down not one day but many years? The Lord says in the Gospel: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." [Matt. 5:23, Matt. 5:24] Woe to me, wretch that I am; woe, I had almost said, to you also. This long time past we have either offered no gift at the altar or have offered it whilst cherishing anger "without a cause." How have we been able in our daily prayers to say "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," [Matt. 6:12] whilst our feelings have been at variance with our words, and our petition inconsistent with our conduct? Therefore I renew the prayer which I made a year ago in a previous letter,¹ that the Lord's legacy of peace [John 14:27] may be indeed ours, and that my desires and your feelings may find favor in His sight. Soon we shall stand before His judgment seat to receive the reward of harmony restored or to pay the penalty for harmony broken. In case you shall prove unwilling-I hope that it may not be so-to accept my advances, I for my part shall be free. For this letter, when it is read, will insure my acquittal.

1:

This is no longer extant

Letters - letter_014

Letter 14. To Heliodorus, Monk.

Heliodorus, originally a soldier, but now a presbyter of the Church, had accompanied Jerome to the East, but, not feeling called to the solitary life of the desert, had returned to Aquileia. Here he resumed his clerical duties, and in course of time was raised to the episcopate as bishop of Altinum. The letter was written in the first bitterness of separation and reproaches Heliodorus for having gone back from the perfect way of the ascetic life. The description given of this is highly colored and seems to have produced a great impression in the West. Fabiola was so much enchanted by it that she learned the letter by heart. [See Ep. 77:9] The date is 373 or 374 a.d.

1. So conscious are you of the affection which exists between us that you cannot but recognize the love and passion with which I strove to prolong our common sojourn in the desert. This very letter-blotted, as you see, with tears-gives evidence of the lamentation and weeping with which I accompanied your departure. With the pretty ways of a child you then softened your refusal by soothing words, and I, being off my guard, knew not what to do. Was I to hold my peace? I could not conceal my eagerness by a show of indifference. Or was I to entreat you yet more earnestly? You would have refused to listen, for your love was not like mine. Despised affection has taken the one course open to it. Unable to keep you when present, it goes in search of you when absent. You asked me yourself, when you were going away, to invite you to the desert when I took up my quarters there, and I for my part promised to do so. Accordingly I invite you now; come, and come quickly. Do not call to mind old ties; the desert is for those who have left all. Nor let the hardships of our former travels deter you. You believe in Christ, believe also in His words: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." [Matt. 6:33] Take neither scrip nor staff. He is rich enough who is poor-with Christ.

2. But what is this, and why do I foolishly importune you again? Away with entreaties, an end to coaxing words. Offended love does well to be angry. You have spurned my petition; perhaps you will listen to my remonstrance. What keeps you, effeminate soldier, in your father's house? Where are your ramparts and trenches? When have you spent a winter in the field? Lo, the trumpet sounds from heaven! Lo, the Leader comes with clouds! [Rev. 1:7] He is armed to subdue the world, and out of His mouth proceeds a two-edged sword [Rev. 1:16] to mow down all that encounters it. But as for you, what will you do? Pass straight from your chamber to the battle-field, and from the cool shade into the burning sun? Nay, a body used to a tunic cannot endure a buckler; a head that has worn a cap refuses a helmet; a hand made tender by disuse is galled by a sword-hilt.¹ Hear the proclamation of your King: "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." [Matt. 12:30] Remember the day on which you enlisted, when, buried with Christ in baptism, you swore fealty to Him, declaring that for His sake you would spare neither father nor mother. Lo, the enemy is striving to slay Christ in your breast. Lo, the ranks of the foe sigh over that bounty which you received when you entered His service. Should your little nephew² hang on your neck, pay no regard to him; should your mother with ashes on her hair and

garments rent show you the breasts at which she nursed you, heed her not; should your father prostrate himself on the threshold, trample him under foot and go your way. With dry eyes fly to the standard of the cross. In such cases cruelty is the only true affection.

3. Hereafter there shall come-yes, there shall come-a day when you will return a victor to your true country, and will walk through the heavenly Jerusalem crowned with the crown of valor. Then will you receive the citizenship thereof with Paul. [Phi. 3:20, R.V] Then will you seek the like privilege for your parents. Then will you intercede for me who have urged you forward on the path of victory.

I am not ignorant of the fetters which you may plead as hindrances. My breast is not of iron nor my heart of stone. I was not born of flint or suckled by a tigress. [Virg. A. 4:367] I have passed through troubles like yours myself. Now it is a widowed sister who throws her caressing arms around you. Now it is the slaves, your foster-brothers, who cry, "To what master are you leaving us?" Now it is a nurse bowed with age, and a body-servant loved only less than a father, who exclaim: "Only wait till we die and follow us to our graves." Perhaps, too, an aged mother, with sunken bosom and furrowed brow, recalling the lullaby [Pers. 3:18] with which she once soothed you, adds her entreaties to theirs. The learned may call you, if they please, "The sole support and pillar of your house." [Virg. A. 12:59] The love of God and the fear of hell will easily break such bonds.

Scripture, you will argue, bids us obey our parents. [Eph. 6:1] Yes, but whoso loves them more than Christ loses his own soul. [Matt. 10:37] The enemy takes sword in hand to slay me, and shall I think of a mother's tears? Or shall I desert the service of Christ for the sake of a father to whom, if I am Christ's servant, I owe no rites of burial, [Luke 9:59, Luke 9:60] albeit if I am Christ's true servant I owe these to all? Peter with his cowardly advice was an offence to the Lord on the eve of His passion; [Matt. 16:23] and to the brethren who strove to restrain him from going up to Jerusalem, Paul's one answer was: "What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." [Acts 21:13] The batteringram of natural affection which so often shatters faith must recoil powerless from the wall of the Gospel. "My mother and my brethren are these whosoever do the will of my Father which is in heaven." [Luke 8:21, Matt. 12:50] If they believe in Christ let them bid me God-speed, for I go to fight in His name. And if they do not believe, "let the dead bury their dead." [Matt. 8:22]

4. But all this, you argue, only touches the case of martyrs. Ah! my brother, you are mistaken, you are mistaken, if you suppose that there is ever a time when the Christian does not suffer persecution. Then are you most hardly beset when you know not that you are beset at all. "Our adversary as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour," [1 Pet. 5:8] and do you think of peace? "He sitteth in the lurking-places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent; his eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den; he lieth in wait to catch the poor;" [Ps. 10:8, Ps. 10:9] and do you slumber under a shady tree, so as to fall an easy prey? On one side self-indulgence presses me hard; on another covetousness strives to make an inroad; my belly wishes to be a God to me, in place of Christ, [Phi. 3:19] and lust would fain drive away the Holy Spirit that dwells in me and defile His temple. [1 Cor 3:17] I am pursued, I say, by an enemy

"Whose name is Legion and his wiles untold; [Virg. A. 7:337]

and, hapless wretch that I am, how shall I hold myself a victor when I am being led away a captive?"

5. My dear brother, weigh well the various forms of transgression, and think not that the sins which I have mentioned are less flagrant than that of idolatry. Nay, hear the apostle's view of the matter. "For this ye know," he writes, "that no whore-monger or unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." [Eph. 5:5] In a general way all that is of the devil savors of enmity to God, and what is of the devil is idolatry, since all idols are subject to him. Yet Paul elsewhere lays down the law in express and unmistakable terms, saying: "Mortify your members, which are upon the earth, laying aside fornication, uncleanness, evil concupiscence and covetousness, which are³ idolatry, for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh." [Col. 3:5, Col. 3:6]

Idolatry is not confined to casting incense upon an altar with finger and thumb, or to pouring libations of wine out of a cup into a bowl. Covetousness is idolatry, or else the selling of the Lord for thirty pieces of silver was a righteous act. [Matt. 26:15] Lust involves profanation, or else men may defile with common harlots⁴ those members of Christ which should be "a living sacrifice acceptable to God." [Rom. 12:1] Fraud is idolatry, or else they are worthy of imitation who, in the Acts of the Apostles, sold their inheritance, and because they kept back part of the price, perished by an instant doom. [Acts 5] Consider well, my brother; nothing is yours to keep. "Whosoever he be of you," the Lord says, "that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." [Luke 14:33] Why are you such a half-hearted Christian?

6. See how Peter left his net; [Matt. 4:18-20] see how the publican rose from the receipt of custom. [Matt. 9:9] In a moment he became an apostle. "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head," [Matt. 8:20] and do you plan wide porticos and spacious halls? If you look to inherit the good things of the world you can no longer be a joint-heir with Christ. [Rom. 8:17] You are called a monk, and has the name no meaning? What brings you, a solitary, into the throng of men? The advice that I give is that of no inexperienced mariner who has never lost either ship or cargo, and has never known a gale. Lately shipwrecked as I have been myself, my warnings to other voyagers spring from my own fears. On one side, like Charybdis, self-indulgence sucks into its vortex the soul's salvation. On the other, like Scylla, lust, with a smile on her girl's face, lures it on to wreck its chastity. The coast is savage, and the devil with a crew of pirates carries irons to fetter his captives. Be not credulous, be not over-confident. The sea may be as smooth and smiling as a pond, its quiet surface may be scarcely ruffled by a breath of air, yet sometimes its waves are as high as mountains. There is danger in its depths, the foe is lurking there. Ease your sheets, spread your sails, fasten the cross as an ensign on your prow. The calm that you speak of is itself a tempest. "Why so?" you will perhaps argue; "are not all my fellow-townsmen Christians?" Your case, I reply, is not that of others. Listen to the words of the Lord: "If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come and follow me." [Matt. 19:21] You have already promised to be perfect. For when you forsook the army and made yourself an eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake, [Matt. 19:12] you did so that you might follow the perfect life. Now the perfect servant of Christ has nothing beside Christ. Or if he have anything beside Christ he is not perfect. And if he be not perfect when he has promised God to be so, his profession is a lie. But "the mouth that lieth slayeth the soul." [Wisd. 1:11] To conclude, then, if you are perfect you will not set your heart on your father's goods; and if you are not perfect you have deceived the Lord.

The Gospel thunders forth its divine warning: "Ye cannot serve two masters," [Luke 16:13] and does any one dare to make Christ a liar by serving at once both God and Mammon? Repeatedly does He proclaim, "If any one will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." [Luke 9:23] If I load myself with gold can I think that I am following Christ? Surely not. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." [1 John. 2:6]

7. I know you will rejoin that you possess nothing. Why, then, if you are so well prepared for battle, do you not take the field? Perhaps you think that you can wage war in your own country, although the Lord could do no signs in His? [Matt. 13:58] Why not? you ask. Take the answer which comes to you with his authority: "No prophet is accepted in his own country." [Luke 4:24] But, you will say, I do not seek honor; the approval of my conscience is enough for me. Neither did the Lord seek it; for when the multitudes would have made Him a king he fled from them. [John. 6:15] But where there is no honor there is contempt; and where there is contempt there is frequent rudeness; and where there is rudeness there is vexation; and where there is vexation there is no rest; and where there is no rest the mind is apt to be diverted from its purpose. Again, where, through restlessness, earnestness loses any of its force, it is lessened by what it loses, and that which is lessened cannot be called perfect. The upshot of all which is that a monk cannot be perfect in his own country. Now, not to aim at perfection is itself a sin.

8. Driven from this line of defence you will appeal to the example of the clergy. These, you will say, remain in their cities, and yet they are surely above criticism. Far be it from me to censure the successors of the apostles, who with holy words consecrate the body of Christ, and who make us Christians.⁵ Having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, they judge men to some extent before the day of judgment, and guard the chastity of the bride of Christ. But, as I have before hinted, the case of monks is different from that of the clergy. The clergy feed Christ's sheep; I as a monk am fed by them. They live of the altar: [1 Cor. 9:13, 1 Cor. 9:14] I, if I bring no gift to it, have the axe laid to my root as to that of a barren tree. [Matt. 3:10] Nor can I plead poverty as an excuse, for the Lord in the gospel has praised an aged widow for casting into the treasury the last two coins that she had. [Luke 21:1-4] I may not sit in the presence of a presbyter;⁶ he, if I sin, may deliver me to Satan, "for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved." [1 Cor. 5:5] Under the old law he who disobeyed the priests was put outside the camp and stoned by the people, or else he was beheaded and expiated his contempt with his blood. [Deut. 17:5, Deut. 17:12] But now the disobedient person is cut down with the spiritual sword, or he is expelled from the church and torn to pieces by ravening demons. Should the entreaties of your brethren induce you to take orders, I shall rejoice that you are lifted up, and fear lest you may be cast down. You will say: "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." [1 Tim. 3:1] I know that; but you should add what follows: such an one "must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, chaste, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker but patient." [1 Tim. 3:2, 1 Tim. 3:3] After fully explaining the qualifications of a bishop the apostle speaks of ministers of the third degree with equal care. "Likewise must the deacons be grave," he writes, "not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then, let them minister, being found blameless." [1 Tim. 3:8-10] Woe to the man who goes in to the supper without a wedding garment. Nothing remains for him but the stern question, "Friend, how camest thou in hither?" And when he is speechless the order will be given, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him

into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." [Matt. 22:11-13] Woe to him who, when he has received a talent, has bound it in a napkin; and, whilst others make profits, only preserves what he has received. His angry lord shall rebuke him in a moment. "Thou wicked servant," he will say, "wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?" [Luke 19:23] That is to say, you should have laid before the altar what you were not able to bear. For whilst you, a slothful trader, keep a penny in your hands, you occupy the place of another who might double the money. Wherefore, as he who ministers well purchases to himself a good degree, [1 Tim. 3:13] so he who approaches the cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. [1 Cor. 11:27]

9. Not all bishops are bishops indeed. You consider Peter; mark Judas as well. You notice Stephen; look also on Nicolas, sentenced in the Apocalypse by the Lord's own lips, [Rev. 2:6] whose shameful imaginations gave rise to the heresy of the Nicolaitans. "Let a man examine himself and so let him come." [1 Cor. 11:28] For it is not ecclesiastical rank that makes a man a Christian. The centurion Cornelius was still a heathen when he was cleansed by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Daniel was but a child when he judged the elders.⁷ Amos was stripping mulberry bushes when, in a moment, he was made a prophet. [Amos 7:14] David was only a shepherd when he was chosen to be king. [1 Sam. 16:11-13] And the least of His disciples was the one whom Jesus loved the most. My brother, sit down in the lower room, that when one less honorable comes you may be bidden to go up higher. [Luke 14:10] Upon whom does the Lord rest but upon him that is lowly and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at His word? [Isa. 66:2] To whom God has committed much, of him He will ask the more. [Luke 12:48] "Mighty men shall be mightily tormented." [Wisd. 6:6] No man need pride himself in the day of judgment on merely physical chastity, for then shall men give account for every idle word, [Matt. 12:36] and the reviling of a brother shall be counted as the sin of murder. [Matt. 5:21, Matt. 5:22] Paul and Peter now reign with Christ, and it is not easy to take the place of the one or to hold the office of the other. There may come an angel to rend the veil of your temple, [Matt. 27:51] and to remove your candlestick out of its place. [Rev. 2:5] If you intend to build the tower, first count the cost. [Luke 14:28] Salt that has lost its savor is good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of swine. [Matt. 5:13] If a monk fall, a priest shall intercede for him; but who shall intercede for a fallen priest?

10. At last my discourse is clear of the reefs: at last this frail bark has passed from the breakers into deep water. I may now spread my sails to the breeze; and, as I leave the rocks of controversy astern, my epilogue will be like the joyful shout of mariners. O desert, bright with the flowers of Christ! O solitude whence come the stones of which, in the Apocalypse, the city of the great king is built! [Rev. 21:19, Rev. 21:20] O wilderness, gladdened with God's especial presence! What keeps you in the world, my brother, yon who are above the world?⁸ How long shall gloomy roofs oppress you? How long shall smoky cities immure you? Believe me, I have more light than you. Sweet it is to lay aside the weight of the body and to soar into the pure bright ether. Do you dread poverty? Christ calls the poor blessed. [Luke 6:20] Does toil frighten you? No athlete is crowned but in the sweat of his brow. Are you anxious as regards food? Faith fears no famine. Do you dread the bare ground for limbs wasted with fasting? The Lord lies there beside you. Do you recoil from an unwashed head and uncombed hair? Christ is your true head.⁹ Does the boundless solitude of the desert terrify you? In the spirit you may walk always in paradise. Do but turn your thoughts thither

and you will be no more in the desert. Is your skin rough and scaly because you no longer bathe? He that is once washed in Christ needeth not to wash again. [John. 13:10] To all your objections the apostle gives this one brief answer: "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory" which shall come after them, "which shall be revealed in us." [Rom. 8:18] You are too greedy of enjoyment, my brother, if you wish to rejoice with the world here, and to reign with Christ hereafter.

11. it shall come, it shall come, that day when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. [1 Cor. 15:53] Then shall that servant be blessed whom the Lord shall find watching. [Matt. 24:46] Then at the sound of the trumpet [1 Thess. 4:16] the earth and its peoples shall tremble, but you shall rejoice. The world shall howl at the Lord who comes to judge it, and the tribes of the earth shall smite the breast. Once mighty kings shall tremble in their nakedness. Venus shall be exposed, and her son too Jupiter with his fiery bolts will be brought to trial; and Plato, with his disciples, will be but a fool. Aristotle's arguments shall be of no avail. You may seem a poor man and country bred, but then you shall exult and laugh, and say: Behold my crucified Lord behold my judge. This is He who was once an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and crying in a manger. [Luke 2:7] This is He whose parents were a workingman and a working-woman.¹⁰ This is He, who, carried into Egypt in His mother's bosom, though He was God, fled before the face of man. This is He who was clothed in a scarlet robe and crowned with thorns. [Matt. 27:28, Matt. 27:29] This is He who was called a sorcerer and a man with a devil and a Samaritan. [John. 8:48] Jew, behold the hands which you nailed to the cross. Roman, behold the side which you pierced with the spear. See both of you whether it was this body that the disciples stole secretly and by night. [Matt. 27:64] For this you profess to believe. My brother, it is affection which has urged me to speak thus; that you who now find the Christian life so hard may have your reward in that day.

1: A reminiscence of Tertullian 2: Nepotian, afterwards famous as the recipient of Letter LII., and the subject of Letter LX 3: So Jerome, although the Vulg. has "is."

4: *Publicarum libidinum victimae*; words borrowed from Tertullian, de C. F. II. 12 5: In the sacrament of baptism 6: Cf. Letter CXLVI 7: Susannah 45 sqq 8: From Cyprian, Letter I. 14 (to Donatus) 9: From Cyprian, Letter LXXVII. 2 (to Nemesianus) 10: From Tertullian, de Spect. xxx

Letters - letter_015

Letter 15. To Pope Damasus. This letter, written in 376 or 377 a.d., illustrates Jerome's attitude towards the see of Rome at this time held by Damasus, afterwards his warm friend and admirer. Referring to Rome as the scene of his own baptism and as a church where the true faith has remained unimpaired (§1), and laying down the strict doctrine of salvation only within the pale of the church (§2), Jerome asks "the successor of the fisherman" two questions, viz.: (1) who is the true bishop of the three claimants of the see of Antioch, and (2) which is the correct terminology, to speak of three "hypostases" in the Godhead, or of one? On the latter question he expresses fully his own opinion.

1. Since the East, shattered as it is by the long-standing feuds, subsisting between its peoples, is bit by bit tearing into shreds the seamless vest of the Lord, "woven from the top throughout," [John. 19:23] since the foxes are destroying the vineyard of Christ, [Cant. 2:15] and since among the broken cisterns that hold no water it is hard to discover "the sealed fountain" and "the garden inclosed," [Cant. 4:12] I think it my duty to consult the chair of Peter, and to turn to a church whose faith has been praised by Paul. [Rom. 1:8] I appeal for spiritual food to the church whence I have received the garb of Christ.¹ The wide space of sea and land that lies between us cannot deter me from searching for "the pearl of great price." [Matt. 13:46] "Wheresoever the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together." [Matt. 24:28] Evil children have squandered their patrimony; you alone keep your heritage intact. The fruitful soil of Rome, when it receives the pure seed of the Lord, bears fruit an hundredfold; but here the seed corn is choked in the furrows and nothing grows but darnel or oats. [Matt. 13:22, Matt. 13:23] In the West the Sun of righteousness [Mal. 4:2] is even now rising; in the East, Lucifer, who fell from heaven, [Luke 10:18] has once more set his throne above the stars. [Isa. 14:12] "Ye are the light of the world," [Matt. 5:14] "ye are the salt of the earth," [Matt. 5:13] ye are "vessels of gold and of silver." Here are vessels of wood or of earth, [2 Tim. 2:20] which wait for the rod of iron, [Rev. 2:27] and eternal fire.

2. Yet, though your greatness terrifies me, your kindness attracts me. From the priest I demand the safe-keeping of the victim, from the shepherd the protection due to the sheep. Away with all that is overweening; let the state of Roman majesty withdraw. My words are spoken to the successor of the fisherman, to the disciple of the cross. As I follow no leader save Christ, so I communicate with none but your blessedness, that is with the chair of Peter. For this, I know, is the rock on which the church is built! [Matt. 16:18] This is the house where alone the paschal lamb can be rightly eaten. [Ex. 12:22] This is the ark of Noah, and he who is not found in it shall perish when the flood prevails. [Gen. 7:23] But since by reason of my sins I have betaken myself to this desert which lies between Syria and the uncivilized waste, I cannot, owing to the great distance between us, always ask of your sanctity the holy thing of the Lord.² Consequently I here follow the Egyptian confessors³ who share your faith, and anchor my frail craft under the shadow of their great argosies. I know nothing of Vitalis; I reject Meletius; I have nothing to do with Paulinus.⁴ He that gathers not with you scatters; [Matt. 12:30] he that is not of Christ is of Antichrist.

3. Just now, I am sorry to say, those Arians, the Campenses,⁵ are trying to extort from me, a Roman Christian, their unheard-of formula of three hypostases.⁶ And this, too, after the definition of Nicaea⁷ and the decree of Alexandria,⁸ in which the West has joined. Where, I should like to know, are the apostles of these doctrines? Where is their Paul, their new doctor of the Gentiles? I ask them what three hypostases are supposed to mean. They reply three persons subsisting. I rejoin that this is my belief. They are not satisfied with the meaning, they demand the term. Surely some secret venom lurks in the words. "If any man refuse," I cry, "to acknowledge three hypostases in the sense of three things hypostatized, that is three persons subsisting, let him be anathema." Yet, because I do not learn their words, I am counted a heretic. "But, if any one, understanding by hypostasis essence,⁹ deny that in the three persons there is one hypostasis, he has no part in Christ." Because this is my confession I, like you, am branded with the stigma of Sabellianism.¹⁰

4. If you think fit enact a decree; and then I shall not hesitate to speak of three hypostases. Order a new creed to supersede the Nicene; and then, whether we are Arians or orthodox, one confession will do for us all. In the whole range of secular learning hypostasis never means anything but essence. And can any one, I ask, be so profane as to speak of three essences or substances in the Godhead? There is one nature of God and one only; and this, and this alone, truly is. For absolute being is derived from no other source but is all its own. All things besides, that is all things created, although they appear to be, are not. For there was a time when they were not, and that which once was not may again cease to be. God alone who is eternal, that is to say, who has no beginning, really deserves to be called an essence. Therefore also He says to Moses from the bush, "I am that I am," and Moses says of Him, "I am hath sent me." [Ex. 3:14] As the angels, the sky, the earth, the seas, all existed at the time, it must have been as the absolute being that God claimed for himself that name of essence, which apparently was common to all. But because His nature alone is perfect, and because in the three persons there subsists but one Godhead, which truly is and is one nature; whosoever in the name of religion declares that there are in the Godhead three elements, three hypostases, that is, or essences, is striving really to predicate three natures of God. And if this is true, why are we severed by walls from Arius, when in dishonesty we are one with him? Let Ursicinus be made the colleague of your blessedness; let Auxentius be associated with Ambrose.¹¹ But may the faith of Rome never come to such a pass! May the devout hearts of your people never be infected with such unholy doctrines! Let us be satisfied to speak of one substance and of three subsisting persons-perfect, equal, coeternal. Let us keep to one hypostasis, if such be your pleasure, and say nothing of three. It is a bad sign when those who mean the same thing use different words. Let us be satisfied with the form of creed which we have hitherto used. Or, if you think it right that I should speak of three hypostases, explaining what I mean by them, I am ready to submit. But, believe me, there is poison hidden under their honey; the angel of Satan has transformed himself into an angel of light. [2 Cor. 11:14] They give a plausible explanation of the term hypostasis; yet when I profess to hold it in the same sense they count me a heretic. Why are they so tenacious of a word? Why do they shelter themselves under ambiguous language? If their belief corresponds to their explanation of it, I do not condemn them for keeping it. On the other hand, if my belief corresponds to their expressed opinions, they should allow me to set forth their meaning in my own words.

5. I implore your blessedness, therefore, by the crucified Saviour of the world, and by the consubstantial trinity, to authorize me by letter either to use or to refuse this formula of three hypostases. And lest the obscurity of my present abode may baffle the bearers of your letter, I pray you to address it to Evagrius, the presbyter, with whom you are well acquainted. I beg you also to signify with whom I am to communicate at Antioch. Not, I hope, with the Campenses;¹² for they-with their allies the heretics of Tarsus¹³ -only desire communion with you to preach with greater authority their traditional doctrine of three hypostases.

1:

I.e. holy baptism; cf. Gal. 3:27

2:

I.e. the bread of the Eucharist, at this time sent by one bishop to another in token of communion; or possibly the allusion is different, and what Jerome means to say is: "You are the oracle of God, but owing to my present situation I cannot consult you.

3: Certain bishops banished from their sees by Valens. See Letter III 4: The three rival claimants of the see of Antioch. See note on Letter XVI

5:

I.e. the field party. The Meletians were so called because, denied access to the churches of the city, they had to worship in the open air outside the walls

6: *upostasij*=*substantia*. It is the word used in Heb. 1:3, "The express image of his person [R. V. substance]." Except at Alexandria it was usual to speak of one hypostasis as of one *ousia* in the Divine Nature. But at Alexandria from Origen downwards three hypostases had been ascribed to the Deity. Two explanations are given of the latter formula: (1) That at Alexandria *upostasij* was taken in the sense of *proswpon*, so that by "three hypostases" was meant only "three persons." (2) That "three hypostases" was an inexact expression standing for "three hypostatic persons" or "a threefold hypostasis." This latter seems to be the true account of the matter. See an interesting note in Newman, *Arians of the Fourth Century*, Appendix IV 7: In the Nicene Creed the Son is declared to be "of one substance [*ousia*] with the Father.

8:

This decree allowed the formula of "three hypostases" to be susceptible of an orthodox interpretation. It did not, however, encourage its use

9:

ousia

10: *Cauterio unionis inurimur*. Sabellius recognized three "aspects" in the Godhead but denied "three persons," at least in the Catholic sense 11: Ursicinus, at this time anti-pope; Auxentius, Arian bishop of Milan

12: I.e. the followers of the orthodox Bishop Meletius, who, as they had no church in Antioch, were compelled to meet for worship outside the city 13: These appear to have been semi-Arians or

Macedonians. Silvanus of Tarsus was their recognized leader

Letters - letter_016

Letter 16. To Pope Damasus. This letter, written a few months after the preceding, is another appeal to Damasus to solve the writer's doubts. Jerome once more refers to his baptism at Rome, and declares that his one answer to the factions at Antioch is, "He who clings to the chair of Peter is accepted by me." Written from the desert in the year 377 or 378.

1. By her importunity the widow in the gospel at last gained a hearing, [Matt. 15:28] and by the same means one friend induced another to give him bread at midnight, when his door was shut and his servants were in bed. [Luke 11:7, Luke 11:8] The publican's prayers overcame God, [Luke 18:10-14] although God is invincible. Nineveh was saved by its tears from the impending ruin caused by its sin. [Jon. 3:5, Jon. 3:10] To what end, you ask, these far-fetched references? To this end, I make answer; that you in your greatness should look upon me in my littleness; that you, the rich shepherd, should not despise me, the ailing sheep. Christ Himself brought the robber from the cross to paradise, [Luke 23:43] and, to show that repentance is never too late, He turned a murderer's death into a martyrdom. Gladly does Christ embrace the prodigal son when he returns to Him; [Luke 15:20] and, leaving the ninety and nine, the good shepherd carries home on His shoulders the one poor sheep that is left. [Luke 15:5] From a persecutor Paul becomes a preacher. His bodily eyes are blinded to clear the eyes of his soul, [Acts 9:8] and he who once haled Christ's servants in chains before the council of the Jews, [Acts 8:3] lives afterwards to glory in the bonds of Christ. [2 Cor. 12:10]

2. As I have already written to you,¹ I, who have received Christ's garb in Rome, am now detained in the waste that borders Syria. No sentence of banishment, however, has been passed upon me; the punishment which I am undergoing is self-inflicted. But, as the heathen poet says:

"They change not mind but sky who cross the sea." [Hor. Epist. 1:11, 27] The untiring foe follows me closely, and the assaults that I suffer in the desert are severer than ever. For the Arian frenzy raves, and the powers of the world support it. The church is rent into three factions, and each of these is eager to seize me for its own. The influence of the monks is of long standing, and it is directed against me. I meantime keep crying: "He who clings to the chair of Peter is accepted by me." Meletius, Vitalis, and Paulinus² all profess to cleave to you, and I could believe the assertion if it were made by one of them only. As it is, either two of them or else all three are guilty of falsehood. Therefore I implore your blessedness, by our Lord's cross and passion, those necessary glories of our faith, as you hold an apostolic office, to give an apostolic decision. Only tell me by letter with whom I am to communicate in Syria, and I will pray for you that you may sit in judgment enthroned with the twelve; [Matt. 19:28] that when you grow old, like Peter, you may be girded not by yourself but by another, [John. 21:18] and that, like Paul, you may be made a citizen of the heavenly kingdom. [Phi. 3:20, R.V] Do not despise a soul for which Christ died.

1:

See Letter XV

2:

The three rival claimants of the see of Antioch. Paulinus and Meletius were both orthodox, but Meletius derived his orders from the Arians and was consequently not recognized in the West. In the East, however, he was so highly esteemed that some years after this he was chosen to preside over the Council of Constantinople (a.d. 391). Vitalis, the remaining claimant, a follower of Apollinaris, but much respected by the orthodox on account of his high character

Letters - letter_017

Letter 17. To the Presbyter Marcus. In this letter, addressed to one who seems to have had some pre-eminence among the monks of the Chalcidian desert, Jerome complains of the hard treatment meted out to him because of his refusal to take any part in the great theological dispute then raging in Syria. He protests his own orthodoxy, and begs permission to remain where he is until the return of spring, when he will retire from "the inhospitable desert," Written in a.d. 378 or 379.

1. I had made up my mind to use the words of the psalmist: "While the wicked was before me I was dumb with silence; I was humbled, and I held my peace even from good " [Ps. 39:1, 2 Vulg] and "I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not." [Ps. 38:13, Ps. 38:14] But charity overcomes all things, [Cf. 1 Cor. 13:7] and my regard for you defeats my determination. I am, indeed, less careful to retaliate upon my assailants than to comply with your request. For among Christians, as one has said,¹ not he who endures an outrage is unhappy, but he who commits it.

2. And first, before I speak to you of my belief (which you know full well), I am forced to cry out against the inhumanity of this country. A hackneyed quotation best expresses my meaning:

"What savages are these who will not grant

A rest to strangers, even on their sands!

They threaten war and drive us from their coasts." [Virg. A. 1:539-541]

I take this from a Gentile poet that one who disregards the peace of Christ may at least learn its meaning from a heathen. I am called a heretic, although I preach the consubstantial trinity. I am accused of the Sabellian impiety although I proclaim with unwearied voice that in the Godhead there are three distinct,² real, whole, and perfect persons. The Arians do right to accuse me, but the orthodox forfeit their orthodoxy when they assail a faith like mine. They may, if they like, condemn me as a heretic; but if they do they must also condemn Egypt and the West, Damasus and Peter.³ Why do they fasten the guilt on one and leave his companions uncensured? If there is but little water in the stream, it is the fault, not of the channel, but of the source. I blush to say it, but from the caves which serve us for cells we monks of the desert condemn the world. Rolling in sack-cloth and ashes,⁴ we pass sentence on bishops. What use is the robe of a penitent if it covers the pride of a king? Chains, squalor, and long hair are by right tokens of sorrow, and not ensigns of royalty. I merely ask leave to remain silent. Why do they torment a man who does not deserve their ill-will? I am a heretic, you say. What is it to you if I am? Stay quiet, and all is said. You are afraid, I suppose, that, with my fluent knowledge of Syriac and Greek, I shall make a tour of the churches, lead the people into error, and form a schism! I have robbed no man of anything; neither have I taken what I have not earned. With my own hand [1 Cor. 4:12] daily and in the sweat of my brow [Gen. 3:19] I labor for my food, knowing that it is written by the apostle: "If any will not work, neither shall he eat." [2 Thess. 3:10]

3. Reverend and holy father, Jesus is my witness with what groans and tears I have written all this. "I have kept silence, saith the Lord, but shall I always keep silence? Surely not." [Isa. 42:14, LXX] I cannot have so much as a corner of the desert. Every day I am asked for my confession of faith; as though when I was regenerated in baptism I had made none. I accept their formulas, but they are still dissatisfied. I sign my name to them, but they still refuse to believe me. One thing only will content them, that I should leave the country. I am on the point of departure. They have already torn away from me my dear brothers, who are a part of my very life. They are, as you see, anxious to depart-nay, they are actually departing; it is preferable, they say, to live among wild beasts rather than with Christians such as these. I myself, too, would be at this moment a fugitive were I not withheld by physical infirmity and by the severity of the winter. I ask to be allowed the shelter of the desert for a few months till spring returns; or if this seems too long a delay, I am ready to depart now. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." [Ps. 24:1] Let them climb up to heaven alone;⁵ for them alone Christ died; they possess all things and glory in all. Be it so. "But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." [Gal. 6:14]

4. As regards the questions which you have thought fit to put to me concerning the faith, I have given to the reverend Cyril⁶ a written confession which sufficiently answers them. He who does not so believe has no part in Christ. My faith is attested both by your ears and by those of your blessed brother, Zenobius, to whom, as well as to yourself, we all of us here send our best greeting.

1:

Cyprian, Letter LV. Cf. Cic. T. Q. 5: accipere quam facere praestat injuriam

2: Subsistenets 3: The contemporary bishops of Rome and Alexandria 4: Tert. Apol. 40, s. f

5:

Was Jerome thinking of Constantine's rebuke to the Novatian bishop at Nicaea, "Plant a ladder for thyself, Acesius, and mount alone to heaven"

6:

Who this was is unknown. The extant document purporting to contain this confession is not genuine

Letters - letter_018

Letter 18. To Pope Damasus This (written from Constantinople in a.d. 381) is the earliest of Jerome's expository letters. In it he explains at length the vision recorded in the sixth chapter of Isaiah, and enlarges upon its mystical meaning. "Some of my predecessors," he writes, "make 'the Lord sitting upon a throne' God the Father, and suppose the seraphim to represent the Son and the Holy Spirit. I do not agree with them, for John expressly tells us [John 12:41] that it was Christ and not the Father whom the prophet saw." And again, "The word seraphim means either 'glow' or 'beginning of speech,' and the two seraphim thus stand for the Old and New Testaments. 'Did not our heart burn within us,' said the disciples, 'while he opened to us the Scriptures?' [Luke 24:32] Moreover, the Old Testament is written in Hebrew, and this unquestionably was man's original language." Jerome then speaks of the unity of the sacred books. "Whatever," he asserts, "we read in the Old Testament we find also in the Gospel; and what we read in the Gospel is deduced from the Old Testament. There is no discord between them, no disagreement. In both Testaments the Trinity is preached." The letter is noticeable for the evidence it affords of the thoroughness of Jerome's studies. Not only does he cite the several Greek versions of Isaiah in support of his argument, but he also reverts to the Hebrew original. So far as the West was concerned he may be said to have discovered this anew. Even educated men like Augustine had ceased to look beyond the LXX., and were more or less aghast at the boldness with which Jerome rejected its time-honored renderings. The letter also shows that independence of judgment which always marked Jerome's work. At the time when he wrote it he was much under the sway of Origen. But great as was his admiration for the master, he was not afraid to discard his exegesis when, as in the case of the seraphim, he believed it to be erroneous. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text. The prophet explains the vision of the sixth chapter of Isaiah, and after some things about the history and death of King Uzziah, he expertly deals with the Seraphim and Trisagion according to his custom.

"And it came to pass in the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Isaiah 6:1). Before we speak of the vision, it seems necessary to discuss who Uzziah was, how long he reigned, and who were his contemporaries in other nations. As for his character, as we read in the books of Kings and Chronicles, he was a just man who did what was right in the sight of the Lord by building the Temple, constructing aqueducts, offering vessels, and defeating his adversaries, and the greatest testament of his piety was having many prophets in his kingdom. As long as the priest Zechariah, also known as Understanding, lived, he pleased God and entered his temple with great reverence. But after Zechariah died, Uzziah, desiring to offer gifts himself, usurped the priestly order not so much piously as audaciously. And when the other Levites and priests objected, saying, "Are you not Uzziah the king and not a priest?", he would not listen and was immediately covered in leprosy on his forehead, according to the word of the prophet, who said, "Fill their faces with shame, Lord" (Psalm 83:17). The part of the body that the priest covered with a gold plate, which the Lord commanded to be marked with the letter Tau in the book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 9), on which David

exults, saying, "The light of your countenance has shone upon us, Lord" (Psalm 4:7), where an insolent foreigner was killed by a sling stone. Uzziah reigned for fifty-two years (2 Kings 17), during which time Amulius ruled the Latins and Agamestor the Athenians. After Uzziah's death, the prophet Isaiah saw this vision, which we now try to explain, that is, in the year when Romulus, the founder of the Roman Empire, was born, as can be seen by those who wish to read the Book of Times, which we have translated into Latin from the Greek language. "And it came to pass in the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up" (Isaiah 6). The aforementioned history is followed by spiritual understanding, for which reason the history itself is repeated. While the leprous king, and as far as he himself was concerned, dissipated the priesthood, Isaiah could not see the vision. As long as he held the kingdom in Judah, the prophet did not lift up his eyes to the heavens (Isaiah 6). Heavenly things were not revealed to him, the Lord of hosts did not appear to him, nor was the holy name heard in the mystery of faith. But when he died, everything that the following discourse will reveal was manifested in the light. Something like this is also written in Exodus (Chapter 2), when Pharaoh lived, the Israelites, oppressed by mud, bricks, and straw, did not sigh unto the Lord, and as long as he reigned, no one sought the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But when he died, the children of Israel sighed, as the Scripture says, "And their cry went up to the Lord" (Exodus 2:23). They should have rejoiced more according to the history, and sighed less while he was alive. Likewise, when Ezekiel prophesied, "Phaltias the son of Banaia died, and after the wicked leader's death, 'I fell upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, 'Ah, Lord God, will you make a full end of the remnant of Israel?'" (Ezekiel 11:13). Therefore, if you understand in Uzziah, and Pharaoh, and Phaltia, and other such opposing powers, you will see how, while they lived, none of us saw and sighed, and repented. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14). While sin reigns, we build cities for the Egyptians; we are covered in ashes and dirt; we follow bandages for wheat, and mud works for solid rock.

3. It follows: I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne (Dan. 7). Even Daniel saw the Lord seated, but not on a high and lofty throne. Elsewhere, the divine voice promises, saying: 'I will come and sit in judgment on the people in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which means the Lord's judgment' (Joel 3:12). The sinner, who is like me, sees the Lord seated in the valley of Jehoshaphat, not on a hill or a mountain, but in the valley of judgment. But the righteous, like Isaiah, sees Him seated on a high and lofty throne. Moreover, when I consider with my mind how He reigns over Thrones, Dominations, Angels, and all other Virtues, I see His lofty throne. But when I consider how He governs the human race and often descends to earth for our salvation, I see His humble throne, near the earth.

4. It follows: I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne; and the house was full of his majesty, and seraphim stood around him (according to the Septuagint). Some, both Greeks and Latins, explaining this passage, say that the Lord sitting on the throne is God the Father; and the two seraphim, which are said to stand on either side, are interpreted as referring to our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. However, I do not agree with their authority, though they are very learned. For it is much better to speak the truth simply than to express falsehood eloquently, especially since in this same vision, John the Evangelist wrote that it was not God the Father who was seen, but Christ. For when he spoke of the unbelief of the Jews, he immediately explained the causes of their unbelief, saying, "Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said: 'You will

indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive.' For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn - and I would heal them" (Isaiah 6:9-10; John 12:40-41). Therefore, in the present volume of Isaiah, the one who sits on the throne commands that he should say, "You will indeed listen, but never understand." But as the Evangelist understands it, the one who commands this is Christ. From this it is now inferred that the seraphim cannot refer to Christ, since Christ is the one who sits. And although in the Acts of the Apostles, in opposition to the Jews who dispute among themselves, Paul says: "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying: 'Go to this people and say, You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn - and I would heal them'" (Acts 28:25 and following), for me, however, it does not raise any question of different persons, since I know that both Christ and the Holy Spirit are of one substance; nor are the words of the Spirit different from those of the Son, nor did the Son command anything different from the Spirit.

5. It follows: "And the house was filled with his majesty. The house of God, which is above, is seen in full glory; but as for this one which is below, I do not know whether it is full of glory unless, perhaps, according to the sense of the Psalmist who says: 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof' (Ps. 23:1). Let us also say that those who can say, 'We have all received from his fullness' (John 1:16), are full of glory on earth. Wise women build this house, and foolish ones tear it down with their own hands (Prov. 14). Isaiah also speaks of this house: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills' (Isa. 2:2). This is the house of which Paul testifies elsewhere with sacred words: 'But Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which were to be said. But Christ as the Son over his own house, which house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and glorying of hope firm unto the end' (Heb. 3:5-6). He also speaks of this house to Timothy: 'But these things I write to thee, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to comport thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God' (1 Tim. 3:14-15)."

6. It follows: And the seraphim stood round about him, each one had six wings: and with two they covered his face, and with two they covered his feet, and with two they flew, and they cried one to another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts, all the earth is full of his glory." We want to know what the seraphim are, standing in a circle around God, with six wings attached to one another; how with two wings they cover their face, with two their feet, and with two they fly, when they are said to be standing above God in a circle; or how they can stand in a circle when there are only two of them and they fly elsewhere. What is it that they shout to each other, repeating the name Holy three times? How can the house above be full of glory, and now the earth is said to be full of it?

It is necessary to pray for the interpretation of Scriptures. As they raise a considerable amount of dust and immediately present difficulties in interpretation, let us pray to the Lord that I will also be sent coal from the altar so that, cleansed of all filth of sin, I may first be able to see God's sacraments and then describe what I see. As we find in the interpretation of Hebrew names,

seraphim are interpreted as ardor, fire, or the beginning of their speech. We ask, what is this fire? The Savior says, 'I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled' (Luke 12:49). Two disciples, to whom the Lord had opened the Scriptures on the way, beginning with Moses and all the prophets, after their eyes were opened and they recognized him, said to each other, 'Was not our heart burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?' (Luke 24:32). In Deuteronomy (chapter 4), God himself is written as a consuming fire, and in Ezekiel (chapter 8), he is seen to be fiery from his kidneys to his feet; 'the words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times' (Psalm 12:6). And many other things that, if I wanted to repeat them about all of the Scriptures, it would be too long. Therefore, we ask where this saving fire can be found? There can be no doubt that it is in the sacred books, through the reading of which all human vices are purged. However, I am afraid that when we begin to say this, we may be seen not so much as interpreting but as imposing meaning on the Scriptures. The Hebrew language is the first and most common language. Victorinus the Latin author said, 'The beginning of speech and common language, and all the words we speak, were handed down by ancient times in the Hebrew language in which the Old Testament is written. But when the diversity of languages was attributed to the tower of Babel by offending God, the variety of speech was dispersed among all nations. Therefore, the beginning of speech and the fire are observed in two Testaments, which are not surprising since the Lord himself is learned through them. Six wings belong to one [cherubim], and six wings to the other. Our Victorinus interpreted the twelve apostles. We can also accept the twelve altar stones that have not touched iron, and the twelve gems from which the priest's insignia is constructed (Exodus 28:51), which Ezekiel (chapter 28) mentions and Revelation (chapter 21) does not hide the truth of, but God knows what is true. As for what is likely, we will explain in the following.

7. It follows: And two covered their face, and two covered their feet, and two flew. They covered not their own face or feet, but God's. For who can know His beginning, what was in eternity before He created this world, when He founded the Throne, the Dominions, the Powers, the Angels, and all the heavenly ministry? It follows: And two covered their feet, not their own, but God's. For who can know His end? What will happen after the end of the age, after the judgment of the human race, what will follow in life? Will another earth come again, and after the transition, will other elements or another world and sun be created? Tell me the past and the future, and I will say that you are gods, says Isaiah (chapter 41 verse 23), indicating that no one can declare what was before the world and what will happen after the world. And two flew. We only know what is revealed to us through the reading of the Scriptures, when the world was created, when man was formed, when the flood came, when the law was given: that from one man all the earth was populated: and in the end times, the Son of God took on flesh for our salvation. But these two Seraphim covered, that which we have said, over their faces and feet. And they cried out to one another. It is beautifully arranged, one to the other.

There is nothing discordant between the Old and New Testaments. For whatever we read in the Old Testament, we find the same thing in the Gospel. And what is read in the Gospel is derived from the authority of the Old Testament. There is nothing in them that is discordant, nothing different. And they said, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. The Trinity is preached in both Testaments. And what is said to be the Lord of Hosts and our Savior, take the example in the 23rd Psalm verse 52. The powers that minister to the Lord proclaim to other heavenly fortitudes to open

the door to the Lord returning. Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Again, those who see him clothed in flesh marvel at the new mystery and ask, Who is this king of glory (Psalm 23:9)? And they receive the answer, "The Lord of hosts is the king of glory," which is written in Hebrew as "The Lord Sabaoth." And it should be known that wherever the Seventy Interpreters express the Lord of Hosts and the Lord Almighty, it is written in Hebrew as "The Lord Sabaoth," which is interpreted by Aquila as "The Lord of armies." The Lord himself is also here with four letters, which are properly placed in God, Yod He, Yod He, which makes up the ineffable and glorious name of God. "The whole earth is full of his glory." This is still said by the Seraphim about the advent of the Lord Savior, how his preaching will spread throughout the earth, and the sound of the Apostles will penetrate the boundaries of the world.

8. It follows: "And the threshold shook at the voice of those who cried out." We read in the Old Testament that the Lord always spoke to Moses and Aaron at the door of the Tabernacle (Leviticus 1 and 4, Numbers 10), as if before the Gospel had not yet introduced them into the Holy of Holies: just as the Church of God was later introduced, saying, "The king has brought me into his chambers" (Song of Solomon 1:3). Therefore, when our Lord descended to the earth, that threshold, which was like an obstacle to those who wanted to enter, was lifted up, and the whole world was filled with smoke, that is, with the glory of God. And where in Latin we read "elevatum," in Greek it is "ἐπ' ἄρθῃ," which means removed. But since this ambiguity can be interpreted in either way, our interpreters have understood it to mean "removed" instead of "lifted up." "And the house was filled with smoke." God, as we have said above, is a fire. When He descended on Mount Sinai to Moses, at His coming, lamps appeared to run and the whole mountain was covered with smoke. Hence in the Psalms it is said: "Who touches the mountains and they smoke" (Psalm 103:32). Therefore, from the fire, since we cannot grasp its entire substance, a somewhat lighter and (so to speak) more rarefied nature of smoke is dispersed throughout the whole world, which, as we receive, we say: "We know in part and we prophesy in part" (1 Corinthians 13:9). And: "Now we see through a mirror in a dark manner" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

9. And the seraphim stood around him, each one with six wings: and with two they covered his face, and with two they covered his feet, and with two they flew. A certain Greek, highly learned in the Scriptures, explained that the seraphim are certain virtues in heaven who stand before the tribunal of God, praising Him, and are sent on different ministries, especially to those who need purification and deserve to be partly purified by punishment for their past sins. As for the lifting up of the threshold and the house being filled with smoke, it is a sign of the destruction of the Jewish temple and the burning of all Jerusalem, which we now see destroyed. However, some agree on the former points, but disagree on the latter. For they claim that the lifting of the threshold occurred when the veil of the temple was torn and the whole house of Israel was confused by a cloud of error (Matthew 17; Mark 15; Luke 23): and when Josephus reports that the priests heard a voice of heavenly virtues from the innermost part of the temple, saying, 'Let us depart from these seats.'

10. There is a man from whom I am glad to have learned many things, and who has mastered the Hebrew language to such an extent that he is considered a Chaldean among their scribes. He has taken a far different path; for he says that no prophet has seen Seraphim standing around God except for Isaiah, and that not even Seraphim are mentioned elsewhere. Then he says that the destruction and captivity of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar was a prefiguring sign. For there

were eleven kings from Uzziah, under whom he began to prophesy, to Zedekiah, who was the last to reign and who was led blindfolded to Babylon, and twelfth was Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had made ruler over the land, but who was killed by Ishmael son of Nethaniah in the midst of a feast, a parricide of the remnants of his country (4 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 36; and Jeremiah 41); and there are twelve wings, four of which cover their face, as is found in some versions, four cover their body, and four cover their feet. Of these twelve kings, only four were just: Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah, who, in each captivity, dared to glorify God, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts, with lofty words. The others, however, covered their faces because of their sins, and others who were led into captivity covered their footprints. Indeed, the removal of the lintel and the house filled with smoke, as we have said above, indicated the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple.

11. And since I have begun to relate his opinion, let us touch on those things which I have not yet mentioned. The forceps with which the coal from the altar was taken, and the lips purified, he claimed as an allusion to Isaiah's own suffering and death, when he was killed under King Manasseh, and then, with his lips truly purified, he said to the Lord: 'Here I am, send me', and I said, 'Woe is me, for I am cut off' (according to the LXX)! As long as Uzziah lived, Isaiah, you did not realize that you were miserable; you were not moved to contrition; but when he died, you recognized that your lips were not clean, and then you realized that you were unworthy to see God. But may I also be contrite, and after contrition become worthy to see God, even though I am human and have unclean lips, and even though I dwell among a people who also have unclean lips. Isaiah had only sinned with his speech, for he was just; that is why only his lips were unclean, not his conscience. But I, since I also look with my eyes to lust, and am scandalized by hand and foot, and sin in every part of my body, have all things unclean; and since I have been baptized with the spirit once, I need to be purified again by a second baptism, that is, by fire (Matt. 3:11).

12. In Scriptures, words are not simple. There is much hidden in them. One thing is meant by the letter, another by mystical speech. Behold, in the Gospel the Lord is girded with a towel, prepares a basin to wash the disciples' feet, and performs the service of a servant (John 13) to teach us humility and to minister to one another. I do not deny, I do not refuse. What does he say to Peter, who refuses: "Unless I wash your feet, you have no part with me"? And he answered, "Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head" (John 13:8-9). Therefore, when the Lord ascends into heaven (because the apostles, as earthly men, still had feet polluted by the filth of sin), he wants to free them completely from their sins so that the prophetic word may apply to them: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace" (Isaiah 52:7). And they may be able to imitate the words of the Church, saying, "I have washed my feet; how can I soil them?" (Song of Solomon 5:3). So that even if someone adheres to this dust after the resurrection, they may be driven out of the impious city as a testimony of their labor, which they have contended for the salvation of all, becoming Jews to Jews and Gentiles to Gentiles, so that they may have in part also polluted their own footsteps. Therefore, returning to the point, just as the apostles needed to have their feet cleansed, so Isaiah, who had sinned only in speech, had unclean lips. And as far as I can tell, because he did not rebuke Oziah when he entered the Temple, nor, following the example of Elijah, did he openly call out the wicked, he had unclean lips. I live in the midst of a people who have unclean lips. Isaiah, who is remorseful and testifies that he is wretched, becomes worthy of purification. But the people not only do not repent,

but they do not even know that they have unclean lips, and therefore do not deserve the remedy of purification. We must, therefore, take this example and not only be just ourselves but not dwell with sinners, because the Prophet leads us also in the part of sin and misery.¹³ How God is seen. The following follows: And I saw the Master, the Lord of hosts 56. The Jews say that Isaiah was killed by their elders because, whereas Moses saw the latter things of God, this man has written that he saw the Lord of hosts with his bodily eyes. On this point God says: "No man shall see my face and live." (Exodus 33:20) If they are asked how God in the Law and in other Prophets says that he showed himself in visions and dreams, but spoke to Moses face to face, and how this statement, "No man shall see my face and live," stands when He admits that he spoke to Moses face to face, they will answer that God appeared as a vision that was possible for man to see, not as He truly is, but as He wished to be seen. We say that Isaiah was seen in the same way, always provided that Moses saw God or did not see Him. If he saw God, then Isaiah also saw Him, and it was impious of you to slay him, since God can be seen. If he did not see Him, kill Moses and Isaiah both for lying when they said they saw Him who cannot be seen. Whatever interpretation they give of this passage concerning Moses, we also relate to Isaiah's vision.

13. How God is seen. — It follows: And I saw the Lord of hosts, the king. The Jews say that Isaiah was killed by their forefathers because, whereas Moses had seen the latter things of God, this man claimed that he had seen the Lord of hosts with his bodily eyes, in spite of the fact that God says: No one shall see My face and live. If we ask them how it is that God in the Law declares that He has appeared to other prophets in visions and dreams, but to Moses face to face, and how that saying, No one shall see My face and live, can be true when He admits to speaking to Moses face to face, they will answer, according to human possibility, that God was seen, not as He is, but as He wished to appear. And we say the same about Isaiah, leaving the question open whether Moses actually saw God or not. If he did, then Isaiah also saw Him when he claimed that he did, and was wrongly put to death by you, for God can be seen. But if he did not, then kill Moses as well as Isaiah, since he too is guilty of lying, claiming to have seen the One who cannot be seen. Whoever has understood the account of Moses in that passage must apply the same interpretation to Isaiah's vision.

14. It follows: And one of the Seraphim was sent to me, and in his hand he held a coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar, and he touched my mouth, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips, and your iniquities shall be taken away, and your sins shall be purged." According to all the editions that we have presented above, whether you wish to understand two Testaments, or some angels in heavenly powers acting as intermediaries, or in a sign of future captivity, a certain shadow prefigured by future truth, now receive the Seraphim. Because we follow the first sentence, we assert that the Gospel was sent to the Prophet: which having both in itself, that is, its own and the Old Testament, the fiery word of God, comprehends with a double edge of commandments; and having touched our lips, whatever ignorance there was, this, indeed, we interpret as unclean lips, it banished by the truth of its cleansing. Jacob saw this tong on a ladder (Gen. 28): this is the double-edged sword: this is the two mites that the widow woman gives as a gift to God (Mark 12): this is the stater having two coins, which are found in the fish's mouth, and are given for the Lord and for Peter. (Matthew 17); with this double tong which is held by the power of unity, the coal is sent to the Prophet, whom in the 119th Psalm, when the Prophet asked God, said: "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue," and after the question

of the Holy Ghost: "What shall be given to you or what shall be added to you for a deceitful tongue?" it is said: "Sharp arrows of the mighty with coals of desolation" (Ps. 119.2 ff.), we know that they belong to the Prophet. Truly, it is the desolating coal, which makes the pure tongue free from sin, that is the divine word, of which it is said in Isaiah: "You have coals of fire, sit upon them, they will be your help." (Isaiah 47.14, 15, according to the LXX).

15. It follows: And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me. And He said, Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving." The Prophet easily responds to the questioning of the Lord's words, not commanding whom to send and who will go for the people, saying: Here am I; send me. After the promise, he is ordered to say, Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving;" and the rest of what his prophecy contained. I heard in this place a not insignificant dispute among my Hebrew people, of which I will mention a few things so that you may understand the human perspective. He said, let us ask who did better between Moses and Isaiah. Did not Moses, who was sent by God to the people, say: "Please, Lord, I am not worthy; please, send someone else" (Exod. 4:13)? Or Isaiah, who, not having been chosen, offered himself, saying, "Here am I; send me." "I do not ignore," he said, "that it is dangerous to discuss the merits of the saints, and to want to say something more or less about the one whom the Lord has crowned; but because He Himself said, "Seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matth. 7 and Luke 11), we too, not to detract from anyone, but as those who understand the sense of Scripture, should inquire into what can raise the question. He who advocates for Moses, he says, preaches his humility and meekness, that he, considering himself unworthy of God's ministry, became greater: but Isaiah, who offered himself, began to prophesy, and began with curses: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving." Therefore, having suffered many evils from that, and having been considered insane by all the people, when the divine voice spoke to him again, "Cry out," knowing what he had endured by offering himself with previous ease, he did not say, "Here I am, send me," but he asked what he should cry out, and said, "What shall I cry?" Similar to that in Jeremiah: "Take the cup of wine from my hand and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. They will drink, vomit, go insane, and fall by the sword, which I will send among them" (Jeremiah 25:15-16). When the Prophet heard this, he did not refuse. He did not say, as Moses did: "Please, Lord, I am not worthy. Send someone else" (Exodus 4:13), but as a lover of his people, and thinking that the enemies of the people would be killed and destroyed by the cup of wine, he accepted the cup willingly, understanding that even Jerusalem was included among all the nations. Finally, among other nations: "So I took the cup from the Lord's hand and made all the nations drink to whom the Lord sent me, including Jerusalem, the towns of Judah, its kings and officials, to make them a ruin and a desolation, an object of scorn and cursing" (Jeremiah 25:17-18). Regarding this prophecy, although the order is reversed in most codices, listen to what he says in another place: "You have deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived; you seized me and prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me" (Jeremiah 20:7). And on the other hand, he who is an advocate for Isaiah (said) he will say this: the prophet, relying not so much on his own merit as on God's mercy, after he heard from the Seraphim, "Behold, this has touched your lips, and your iniquities shall be taken away, and your sins shall be cleansed," did not want to become idle, but voluntarily offered himself to God's ministry, as if freed from sins by zeal for the faith. But because Moses had been educated in secular disciplines and his conscience had been somewhat

sullied by the killing of the Egyptian (Exod. 2), and he knew that there would be a fierce struggle against the magicians and the wicked king Pharaoh, he excused himself, saying, "I pray thee, Lord, I am not worthy"; for which, in the Hebrew, it is written "I have uncircumcised lips," the Seventy Interpreters rendering the sense rather than the word for word. From which it can be clearly understood that Isaiah rightly offered himself for God's ministry after having his lips circumcised, whereas Moses, with still uncircumcised lips, refused such a great ministry.

16. You will hear but not understand; you will look but never see. The whole place, as the Savior says in the Gospel, refers to the time when he chose to descend to the earth and perform miracles for the Jews who did not understand. And since there follow many diverse explanations to the end of the Chapter; and we have already explained the receiver of the candles, let this suffice in this place. For a prayer, which is not polished by one's own hand, both when it is uncultivated in itself and when it is repeated at inordinate length, becomes much more wearisome, so that, tormented by the pain of my eyes, we may devote ourselves only to our ears and tongue.

17. Septuagint: And one of the Seraphim was sent to me; Aquila, and Theodotion, And one of the Seraphim flew to me; Symmachus, And one of the Seraphim flew to me. Every day a Seraphim is sent to us, and every day those who groan and say: Woe is me, for I am pricked, are purged, and when they have been freed from sins, they prepare themselves for the service of God. But as for the other interpreters, when they say 'was sent,' understand the speedy arrival of the divine word upon those who are judged worthy of his fellowship. There is also a difference in gender. Septuagint, Aquila, and Theodotion translated "Seraphim" in the neuter gender, while Symmachus used the masculine gender. And it should not be thought that there is gender in the Virtues of God, since even the Holy Spirit itself is presented in the Hebrew language properties as feminine gender, Ruha: in Greek, in the neuter gender, πνεῦμα; in Latin, in the masculine gender, Spiritus. From which it is to be understood that when discussing superior beings and something is presented in masculine or feminine gender, it signifies the language rather than sex. For God Himself, invisible and incorruptible, is presented in almost all languages in the masculine gender, although sex does not apply to Him. Those who dare to say in their prayers and offerings, "Who sits upon the Cherubim and Seraphim," should also be rebuked, even if they are pious. For it is written that God sits upon the Cherubim, as it says, "Thou that sittest upon the Cherubim, shine forth" (Psalm 80:1). However, Scripture does not mention anywhere that God sits upon the Seraphim, nor do we find any reference to the Seraphim standing around God, except in the present passage in all the Holy Scriptures.

18. Septuagint: "And he had in his hand a coal, which he had taken from the altar with tongs, and he touched my mouth." Aquila and Theodotion: "And in his hand was a stone in tongs, which he had taken from the altar, and he touched my mouth." Symmachus: "And in his hand was a stone in tongs, which he had taken from the altar, and he brought it to my mouth." As for the history, it seems that God is sitting in the Temple of Jerusalem, and before him a coal is brought from the altar, according to the Septuagint to Isaiah: but from the altar of incense or burnt offerings. But as for mystical understanding, that fire is sent to us, which Jeremiah could not bear: so when it penetrates the secrets of our souls, it dissolves us, so that we are cooked from the old man into the new, that we may be able to break out into that voice: "And I live, now not I; but Christ lives in me." (Galatians 2:20) Tongs, too, although they were always in the priestly equipment, according to the other Interpreters, we owe various graces, by which God spoke in many ways and in many

ways to our fathers in the prophets of old. Because in Hebrew the word for coal is read as "calculus," it seems to me that the divine speech is signified by the appellation of "stone". For just as a calculus is a type of stone, the hardest and roundest, and smoothest of all purity, so the word of God, which cannot yield to the contradictions of heretics or any adversaries, is called a calculus. Sephora circumcised her son with this stone, and Jesus purges the people of their sins, and in the Apocalypse the Lord promises to those who overcome that they shall receive a stone and on it a new name written. And it seems to me that the Septuagint, in translating it as ■νθράκx, meant the same thing as the others. For ■νθράξ, which we interpret as a carbuncle, is a type of shining and glittering stone, which we also find among the twelve stones. Therefore, whether we accept it as a calculus or a carbuncle stone, in the calculus of divine discourse there is truth and rigor, and in the shining carbuncle, doctrine is shown and revealed. "The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace on the earth, purified seven times" (Ps. 12:6). And elsewhere: "The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes" (Ps. 19:8). As for what is said, "He had a coal in his hand," we should understand the work of his hands, as in "In the hand of the tongue is death and life" (Prov. 18:21); and in the Psalm: "They will fall by the sword in their hands" (Ps. 63:10). Or indeed, a hand appeared truly, so that the Prophet would not be afraid, by the likeness of a human form, when he sees the hand reaching out: in the same way we have seen God himself and the Angels change into human forms, so that fear would be removed from those who saw them.

19. Septuagint: And he said, behold your lips have touched this, and your iniquities shall be taken away, and your sins shall be cleansed. Aquila: Behold, these lips have touched you, and your iniquity shall depart, and your sin shall be propitiated. Other translators agree with Aquila's words. First, it is necessary for our lips to be touched; then, when they have been touched, iniquity is driven away; and when iniquity has been driven away, the Lord will be propitiated, because there is forgiveness with Him, and according to the Apostle: He himself is the propitiation for our sins. But with our sins having been cleansed, we will hear the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send? And we will answer: Here I am, send me.

20. Septuagint: And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people? Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus: And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? and who will go for us? We have discussed elsewhere the comparison between Isaiah and Moses, how one refused the ministry and the other offered himself voluntarily and endured hardships. But lest we seem to have omitted anything from those which the Jews call the "second books" and in which they place all knowledge, we will briefly touch upon why it is written in Hebrew, "who will go for us?" For just as it is said in Genesis, "Let us make man in our image and likeness" (Gen. 1:26), so here, I think, it is said, "who will go for us?" But for whom else should we consider ourselves, if not for the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, to whom everyone goes who follows their will? And in this, in that the voice of one speaker is proposed, there is a unity of divinity. But in that which is said 'to us,' a diversity of persons is indicated. We read in the Song of Songs the voice of the bridegroom saying to the bride: Arise, come, my love, my fair one, my dove: for winter is now past, the rain is over and gone. (Cant. 5.2). For when the soul feels tranquility in thought, when it is founded upon a rock, and its faith is fixed with deep roots, all the waves of temptation pass over it, and do not pass over him who is tempted. Note, however, how the Prophet responded in part to what the Lord had said, "Whom shall I send, and

who will go for us?" Behold, I, send me," and was silent about the following, understanding that no man was worthy to go to God and make all his way his own, who sent him. The Lord, observing this humility, that he regarded himself as unworthy of the second place, commanded the following, saying: Go.

21. Septuagint: And he said, "Here I am, send me." Aquila and Theodotion: "Here I am, send me." Symmachus: Behold, send me. God, who calls those things that are not as though they were, and who said, "I am who I am"; and elsewhere, "He who is sent me" (Exodus 3.14), whoever he calls, he immediately causes to exist. This is sufficiently clear from the examples in the living Matthew the Evangelist and in Lazarus, who was dead for four days: as soon as they are called by the Lord, he left the tomb of greed, and the latter left his death (Mark 2, Luke 5, and John 11). For everything that is not with him is not. Wherefore, the Prophet, having been purged of faults, dared to say, "Behold, I am"; although in Latin codices, because of the variation of interpreters, "I am" is not added. Some think it should be noted to whom the speech of the sender or the sent is directed, which in Greek is called "Apostle." And they want this to be the difference: that whoever is sent is equally a Prophet and an Apostle; but those to whom the sender's speech is not given are only Prophets: which I think is superfluous. And because we once came to treat of this word, it should be known that Silas, a colleague of Paul, is called an Apostle in the Hebrew language, who writes some Epistles with him. And it is mistakenly read Silvanus for Silas, since we do not read Silvanus in the Acts of the Apostles.

Letters - letter_019

Letter 19. From Pope Damasus. A letter from Damasus to Jerome, in which he asks for an explanation of the word "Hosanna" (a.d. 383). The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

What does Hosanna signify among the Hebrews, he asks to be clearly explained to himself. To his most beloved son Hieronymus, Damasus the bishop wishes health in the Lord. When I read the commentaries of our orthodox men, in Greek or Latin, on the interpretation of the Gospel, and recently written on that which is read, Hosanna to the Son of David (Matth. 21. 9); they not only differ, but also contradict each other. It is your desire that with that fervent zeal of yours, with opinions cut off and ambiguities removed, you write with a living sense what is meant among the Hebrews; that, as well as many others, you may give thanks in Christ Jesus on our behalf.

Letters - letter_020

Letter 20. To Pope Damasus.

Jerome's reply to the foregoing. Exposing the error of Hilary of Poitiers, who supposed the expression to signify "redemption of the house of David," he goes on to show that in the gospels it is a quotation from cxviii. 25 and that its true meaning is "save now" (so A.V.). "Let us," he writes, "leave the streamlets of conjecture and return to the fountain-head. It is from the Hebrew writings that the truth is to be drawn." Written at Rome a.d. 383. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

What the voice of Hosanna signifies according to the Hebrew source, and why this Hebrew word, as it is among the Hebrews, has been left among all languages, it teaches.

1. Various interpretations.— Many have invented different meanings for this phrase, of which our Hilary in his Commentary on Matthew (c. 21. n. 3) stated as follows: Hosanna is expressed in Hebrew and means "redemption of the house of David." First, redemption in the Hebrew language is interpreted as Pheduth: then, the house of David has not been omitted in this place, as is clear to everyone. Others have thought that Hosanna signifies "glory." This glory is called Chabod; but some call it grace, since grace is called Thoda or Anna.

2. It is necessary to go back to the Hebrew source. Therefore, omitting the streams of opinions, we must return to the source from which the Evangelists took it. For, just as we cannot find this in any Greek or Latin codices: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets: He shall be called a Nazarene" (Matt. 2:23), and this: "Out of Egypt I have called My son" (Ibid. v. 15); so also now the truth must be expressed from the Hebrew codices, from which the common people and especially a concordance of children broke forth into this cry, as Matthew says: "And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying: Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest" (Matt. 21:9). But Mark put it thus: "And they cried out, saying: Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh: Hosanna in the highest" (Mark 11:9). But John agrees with the other two in the same voice: "And they cried out, saying: Hosanna: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel" (John 12:13). Only Luke did not use the word "Hosanna," but in the rest of the interpretation part he agrees: "Blessed be the king who cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory on high" (Luke 19:38). Therefore, as we have said, the very Hebrew words must be given, and the opinion of all interpreters must be set forth, so that the reader may find for himself, by the reconsideration of all, what he is to think concerning this matter.

3. The opinion of Hebrew interpreters of the text. In the 117th Psalm, where we read "O Lord save me, O Lord cause me to prosper", and "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord", in Hebrew it is read "Anna Adonai, Osianna, Anna Adonai Aslianna; Baruch Abba Basem Adonai". Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Fifth Edition express it thus, lest we appear to change

anything in Latin: "O Lord indeed, save me indeed, O Lord indeed, cause me to prosper indeed, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord". Only the Sixth Edition with the Septuagint interpreters agrees in such a way that where others have placed "O Lord indeed", they have written "O". And because "Osianna", which we incorrectly say as "Osanna" due to ignorance, is signified by all interpretation as saving or cause to be saved, now it is a concern what "Anna" alone signifies without the added "saving". And it should be known that in this place "Anna" is said three times; and the first and second are written with the same letters, Aleph, Nun, He, but the third is written He, Nun, He. Therefore Symmachus, who had agreed with all the interpretations in the 117th Psalm, in order to give us a clearer understanding, interpreted the 114th Psalm, where it says: "O Lord, deliver my soul," thus: "I beseech you, Lord, deliver my soul." But where the Seventy translated "O" and "he" as "I beseech you," and Aquila and other editions translate as "O indeed," in Hebrew it is written "Anna," but so that it has Aleph at the beginning, not He. From which we realize that if "Anna" is written from Aleph, it means "I beseech"; but if it is written from He, it means a conjunction or interjection which the Greeks put as "indeed" in "soston dè," whose Latin expression does not convey the meaning.

4. But since these minutiae and secrets of this kind of dispute, due to the barbarism of the language as well as the letters, give trouble to the reader, I come to a summary of the explanation, so as to speak of the one hundred and seventeenth Psalm, which manifestly prophesies of Christ and was most frequently read in the synagogues of the Jews, whence it was also better known to the peoples, that these verses are assumed: that he who was promised from the lineage of David, should come to save Israel, with David saying, 'The stone which the builders rejected, has become the head of the corner. It is from the Lord. This is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord has made; let us exult and be glad in it. O Lord, save me: O Lord, make me prosper well: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. We have blessed you from the house of the Lord: the Lord is God and he has shone upon us ' (Psal. 117. 22. etc.). Therefore, the Scripture of the Evangelists mentions the Pharisees and Scribes being moved by this indignation, that they would see the people understand the prophecy of the Psalm regarding Christ as fulfilled and crying out with Osianna, the son of David, and saying to him: "Do you hear what they are saying?" and Jesus replied to them: "Have you never read: 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?'" (Matthew 21, Luke 19, John 12) confirming the 117th Psalm with the testimony of the 8th Psalm. And as for that which could be easily expressed, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," the Scripture of all the Evangelists agrees. But as for the word "Osianna," since they could not translate it into Greek, as we see happened with "Alleluia" and "Amen," among others, they put the Hebrew word itself, saying "Osianna." Therefore, Luke, who was the most learned in the Greek language of them all, as he was a physician and who wrote his Gospel in Greek for the Greeks, since he saw that he could not convey the sense of the original, received the better course to keep silence on the matter, lest he should raise a question in the mind of the reader.

5. In summary, just as we have in the Latin language certain interjections, such as 'vah' for insulting, and 'heu' for grieving, and when we wish to impose silence, we restrain our breath with clenched teeth and produce only a hiss, sounding 'sith'; so the Hebrews have among other characteristics of their language an interjection, when they want to implore the Lord they put the verb expressing their emotional state and say 'Anna, Domine' which the Septuagint translated as

'o Lord'. Therefore, 'Osi' means 'save us'; 'Anna' is the interjection of the suppliant. If you want to make a compound word from these two, you will say 'Osianna', or as we say, 'Osanna', with the middle vowel letter removed; as we usually do in the verses of Virgil, when we climb up for a fallen attempt on the spirit and say 'men incoepto'. For Aleph, the first letter of the following word, coming after the final letter of the preceding word Ain, excludes it. Therefore, if we return to the question's origin, where we read in Latin, "O Lord, save me; O Lord, please me well: blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord", according to the Hebrew sense, we can read: "I pray, Lord, save me; I pray, Lord, prosper, I pray: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." Now "Save", it is said, so that we may understand your people Israel, or the world in general. Finally Matthew, who wrote the Gospel in Hebrew, put it thus, "Osanna Barrama", which means "Hosanna in the highest": which, when the Savior is born, salvation reaches up to heaven, that is, peace is made not only on earth but also in heaven, so that it may finally be said: "My sword has been drunk in heaven" (Isaiah 34.5).

6. I have briefly and succinctly described these things, in accordance with the mediocrity of my understanding. However, let your Grace know that no annoyance should arise in reading these types of discussions; for we could easily have made up something that would solve the question with one word, as we have shown others have done. Rather, it is more appropriate to labor for the sake of truth and to attune our ears to a foreign language, than to give a fictitious opinion from another language.

Letters - letter_021

Letter 21. To Damasus In this letter Jerome, at the request of Damasus, gives a minutely detailed explanation of the parable of the prodigal son. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. The questioning of your blessedness was a debate: and by asking questions, seeking the way was to give to the questions asked. Indeed, to the one who questions wisely, wisdom will be thought. You ask, "Who is this father in the Gospel who divides substance between two sons (Luke 15)? Who are the two sons? Who is older? Who is younger? How does the younger son waste the substance received with harlots? When he was hungry, he is appointed to the pigs and eats carob pods; he returns to his father: he receives a ring and a robe; and a fatted calf is sacrificed to him? Who the elder brother is, and how he envies his brother's acceptance? and other things which are more fully explained in the Gospel. You add moreover: I know that many have said different things on this reading: and have believed that the elder brother was a Jew and the younger brother a Gentile. But I ask, how can it be applied to the Jewish people: Behold, I have served you for so many years, and have never transgressed your commandment, and you have never given me a kid, that I might feast with my friends. And that: Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But, as you say, if we wish to make a parable about the just and the sinner, the just one cannot agree, that he would be saddened by the salvation of another, and especially of a brother. For if by the envy of the devil, death entered into the world; and those who are on his side imitate him, will the person of the just one be able to be adapted by such an enormous envy, that he stood outside, and obstinately resisted to the most merciful Father; and he alone, tormented by bitterness, did not want to participate in the joy of the house?

2. Therefore, just as in other parables which are not explained by the Savior, for what reason they were said, we are accustomed to inquire, so we must do in this one, why the Lord broke forth into words of this kind, and for what reason the likeness of an answer was offered. The scribes and the Pharisees murmured, saying, "Why does he receive sinners and eat with them?" (Luke 15:2) For the previous discourse had said, "Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus." Thus from this comes all their envy because the Lord did not avoid the company and banquet of those whom the precepts of the Law would condemn. And this is what Luke writes. Moreover, Matthew speaks thus: "While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples." (Matthew 9:10) When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Mark also agrees in the same words. Therefore, as we said, every question arose from the Law. For the Law, in fact, was tenacious of justice, but had no mercy: But whoever was an adulterer, a murderer, a fraudster, and, to briefly say, was held by a mortal crime, was not released from the crime, he was ordered to pay an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life (Exod. 21). Therefore, all had turned away, at the same time they became useless: there was

no one who did good, there was not even one (Psal. 13). "Where sin abounded, grace abounded even more." (Rom. 3:20). And, "God sent his son made of a woman" (Gal. 4:4), who, destroying the middle wall, made both one (Ephes. 2:2), and the severity of the Law was tempered by the grace of the Gospel. Hence Paul, writing to the Churches: "Grace to you," he said, "and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1): grace which was not recompensed according to merit, but granted by the giver. But peace, by which we are reconciled to God, having the propitiator, our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave us our debts; and he erased the handwriting of death, which was against us, affixing it to the cross; and made a show of the principalities and powers, triumphing over them on the wood. But what greater mercy can there be, than for the Son of God, the Son of Man to be born? that He should endure the annoyances of ten months, (that) He should expect His birth, be wrapped in swaddling-clothes, be subject to (His) parents, pass through all ages, (and) after reproaches of words and blows and lashes, should also be made a curse for us upon the cross, so that He might absolve us from the curse of the law; (that) having become obedient to the Father even to death, He might accomplish in His works, what He had before besought as mediator, saying: "Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me; that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me, because Thou hast loved Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). Therefore, because He had come to accomplish what was impossible to the Law, since no one was justified by it, (oh) unpseakable mercy!, He called publicans and sinners to repentance, even seeking their company, so that they would be taught in their company; as anyone can understand who reads the Gospels with a careful mind, how His food and drink, His walking and His actions in His body brought about the salvation of mankind. Seeing this, the Scribes and Pharisees accused Him of breaking the Law: "Behold, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners" (Matthew 11:19). For before this, they reprimanded Him as to why He cared about (the healing) on the Sabbath. Therefore, the Lord, in order to overcome their accusation with a merciful argument, proposed three parables, one of which, there were ninety-nine sheep that were left in the mountains, and one that was lost, was carried back on the shoulders of the shepherd; another, of a drachma, which a woman searched for with a lighted lamp, and having found it, she invited her neighbors to rejoice, saying: "Rejoice with me, for I have found the drachma which I had lost" (Luke 15:9). And the third, of the two sons, about which you ordered me to say a few words.

3. And indeed, concerning the sheep and the drachma, although they may be understood as referring to one thing, there is not a debate about this of the time; it suffices to say only this, that these parables were proposed because, just as the joy of the angels is in the recovery of the sheep and the drachma and those who live nearby, so in the repentance of the tax collectors and sinners, there ought to be joy for all those for whom repentance is not necessary. Hence, I greatly wonder about Tertullian in that book that he wrote against repentance titled "On Purity," and he dissolves an old opinion with a novel perspective, as if he wanted to mean that the tax collectors and sinners who dined with the Lord were gentiles, the Scripture stating, "There shall be no tribute taken from Israelites" (Deut. 23:18, according to the LXX). [He acts] as if Matthew was not himself a Jewish tax collector, and that the one who, while praying with the Pharisee in the temple, dared not raise his eyes to heaven, was not a Jewish tax collector. [He acts] as if Luke did not state, "And all the people hearing, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John" (Luke 7:29), or as if it could not be believed that he entered a gentile temple or had a banquet with gentiles, especially since that would have appeared to violate the law. Indeed, he first

went to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and he also answered a Canaanite woman praying for her daughter's health: "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." And elsewhere, he commanded his disciples not to enter into the way of the gentiles or into the cities of the Samaritans (Matthew 10:5). We are taught from all these that in publicans, not only of the Gentiles, but generally of all sins, that is, those who were both from the Gentiles and from the Jews, persons can be accepted. However, he who defended the insanity and blasphemy of his women, with that doctrine by which he would not receive repentant Christians, argued in vain that the publicans were not Jews, so that only the Gentile people could be understood in their person. Therefore, lest I make it long, I will present the words of the Gospel itself; and in the manner of a commentary, I will append to each individual thing what seems to me.

4. A certain man had two sons (Luke 15:11). That God is called man is approved by many testimonies, such as: "The testimony of two men is true. I testify about myself, and the Father who sent me testifies about me" (John 10:17-18). In one parable, he is called a shepherd, in another a head of a household; in another he leases a vineyard; in another he invites to a wedding feast, and by different similitudes, he signifies the same thing, to reprove the pride of the Jews and to approve the penance of all sinners, whether Gentiles or Israelites in common. The fact that he says, "two sons," nearly all the Scriptures are full of the sacraments of the calling of two peoples.

5. "And the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. " The substance of God is everything that we live, understand, think, and speak. God has equally given all of these things to all and in general, the Evangelist says: "There was a true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world" (John 1:9). This is the right eye, which must be observed against scandals: this is the lamp of the body: this is the talent that is not to be collected in a shroud, that is, handled delicately and idly; nor buried in the earth, that is, obscured by earthly thoughts.

6. He who divided their substance. In Greek it is read more significantly as 'divided life among them', that is, he gave them free will, gave them the freedom of their own minds, and so that each one might live not by the command of God but by his own obedience, that is, not by necessity, but by choice, that virtue might have a place, that we might differ from the other animals, and, as an example to us from God, we are permitted to do what we wish. Thus fair judgement is rendered on sinners, and just reward on the holy and just.

7. How are we with God, or depart from Him. - And not many days after, having gathered all things together, the younger son went abroad into a far country. If God holds the heavens in the palm, and the earth in a fist; and Jeremiah says, God is coming close: and not a God from afar (Jerem. 23): also through David, because no place exists without him, is proclaimed; how does a son go abroad and depart from his father? Therefore it must be understood, not by distance of places, but by affection, whether we are with God, or depart from Him. For even as He speaks to His disciples: Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matth. 28.20): so He says to those who prefer their own boasting and do not merit being with the Lord. Depart from me, I never knew you, who operate iniquity (Ibid. 7. 23).

8. Therefore, the younger son departed with all his substance from his father, and went abroad. And Cain, departing from the face of the Lord, dwelt in the land of Nod, which is interpreted as shaking. Whoever departs from God is immediately shaken by the waves of the world, and his feet

are moved. For after men from the east were moved and departed from the true light, then they, against God, built the tower of impiety; then they fabricated the arrogance of dogmas, desiring to penetrate the heights of heaven without lawful curiosity. And that place was called Babel, meaning confusion.

9. And there he squandered his wealth, living in luxury. Lust is hostile to God, hostile to virtues, it destroys all the substance of the father; and now gratifying the senses, it does not allow him to consider future poverty.

10. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country. He had received the faculties from his father that he might apprehend by the visible things the invisible things of God, and consequently apprehend the Creator by the beauty of creatures; but he who holds the truth captive in injustice and worships idols in place of the Creator consumed all those goods of nature: And when he had consumed all these things, he began to lack virtues, having abandoned the fountain of virtues. A severe famine arose in that region. Every place that we inhabit without our Father is a place of hunger, scarcity, and want. But this region in particular is characterized by extreme famine, of which the Prophet says: "You who dwell in the region of the shadow of death, a light shall shine upon you" (Isaiah 9:2). But there is another region, which we will possess if we live with a pure heart in the world, which Saint David desires, saying: "I believe I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living" (Psalm 26:13).

11. And he began to lack [necessities], and went away, and joined himself to one of the rulers of that region. Deserting the nurse, who at the first call had lavished all good things upon him, he joined the ruler of this world, that is, the Devil, the master of darkness. Whom Scripture now terms an enemy of men, now a judge of iniquity, now a dragon, now Satan, now a hammer, now a partridge, now Belial, now a roaring lion, now Leviathan, now Thannin, now Behemoth, and by many other names. But when it is said he joined himself to one of the rulers, it is to be understood that there are many, who fly through the air by his agency and bring human beings under their dominion through the vice he inspires in them.

12. Who sent him into his field to feed swine. The pigs are unclean animals, which delight in filth and dirt. Such is the multitude of demons, which is nourished through idols made by the blood of the cattle and victims; and at last, being fattened by some sort of offering, it is satiated by the death of a man himself. He sent him therefore into his possession, that is, he made him his servant, to feed swine, sacrificing his own soul to him.

13. And he desired to fill his stomach with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. In this, we see fulfilled what is said with reproach to Jerusalem in Ezekiel: And it is come to pass in thee, beyond the sins of thy youth, and beyond thy fornications which thou hast committed with the Egyptians, thou hast prostituted thyself to another, and wast not satisfied with this. In the parable of the prodigal son, he lost his substance in a far country and, after squandering his possessions, was sent to feed swine and fell into destitution. The food of demons is drunkenness, lust, fornication, and all vices. These are pleasing and sensual, and soothe the senses with pleasure; and as soon as they appear, they provoke the desire for them. Therefore, the lustful youth could not be satisfied, because pleasure always has hunger; and once it is fulfilled, it does not satisfy. And when Satan deceives someone by his cunning and imposes his own yoke upon him, he does not seek to increase the abundance of his vices, knowing that he is already dead,

just as we see many idolaters who are exhausted by misery and destitution. Here is where the prophetic saying is fulfilled: "All prostitutes receive payment, but you have given your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from everywhere for your sexual favors. So in your prostitution, you are the opposite of others; no one runs after you for your favors. You are the very opposite, for you give payment and none is given to you." (Ezekiel 16:33) But we can also interpret these things in another way. The food of demons is the poems of the poets, secular wisdom, the showy speech of rhetoricians. All these things delight with their own charm, and while the ears are captivated by versified sweetness, they also penetrate the soul and subdue the innermost heart. However, once they have been read with the utmost zeal and labor, they give their readers nothing other than empty sound and the noise of words. No satiety of truth is found there, no refreshment of righteousness. Those who study them persist in a hunger for truth and a dearth of virtues. This wisdom is portrayed in Deuteronomy under the image of a captive woman, who, if she is to become the wife of an Israelite, must have her hair shaved, her nails pared, and her clothes exchanged, and must mourn for her parents for a month, after which she belongs to the captor. If we understand these things according to the letter, are they not ridiculous? And so we also do, when we read the philosophers, when books of secular wisdom come into our hands, if we find anything useful in them, we convert it to our dogma: but if anything is superfluous, about idols, about love, about the care of secular things, we weed them out, we induce baldness from them, we treat them like we would our fingernails with a sharp iron. Whence also the Apostle prohibits that someone should recline at the table with idols, saying: "But take heed lest perhaps this your liberty become a stumbling block to the weak. For if a man see him that hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not his conscience, being weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols? And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ hath died." (1 Cor. 8: 9) Does it not seem to you to say in other words, do not read the philosophers, orators, poets; nor do we delight when we read what is written, if we do not believe it, since it wounds the conscience of others, and we are thought to approve of what we do not reject as we read it? Otherwise what will it be, that we may think that his Apostle, who ate in the idol's temple, approved his conscience, and called perfect the one who knew to eat of things immolated to idols? It is unlikely that a Christian mouth will utter, "Almighty Jupiter; and me, Hercules, and me, Castor," or any more monstrous thing than deity. But now we already see the priests of God, ignoring the Gospels and the Prophets, read comedies, sing the words of amorous Bucolics, embrace Virgil. And that which is a necessity in children, let it not become a source of pleasure and a sin in ourselves. Therefore, we must beware that, if we want to have a captive wife, we do not recline in the idol's temple; or if we are surely deceived by her love, we purify her and cleanse her of every error of filth, so that a brother for whom Christ died does not suffer scandal when he hears hymns composed in praise of idols being sung by a Christian mouth.

14. The hired workers - 'And he said, I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.' We understand the hired workers, according to another interpretation, to be the Jews who keep the precepts of the Law for only the sake of present blessings. These are just and merciful not because of justice itself or the very goodness of mercy, but to obtain from God earthly happiness and a long life. Whoever desires these things is deservedly compelled to obey precepts, lest by disregarding what is commanded, he be deprived of what he desires. Moreover, where there is fear, there is no love. Perfect love, indeed, casts out fear. For he who

loves obeys not because he is compelled by fear of punishment or by the desire for reward, but because what is commanded by God is itself the best. Therefore, the meaning is this: 'How many of the Jews do not depart from the service of God for only present blessings, and I am worn out by poverty.'

15. "Rising, I will go to my father." He said beautifully, rising: indeed, he had not remained with his father absent. To lie down is for sinners, to stand is for the righteous. It is said to Moses, "But you stand here with me" (Deut. 5:31). And in the hundred and thirty-third Psalm: "Behold, now bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord," the Prophet exhorts those standing for the blessing of the Lord in the house of the Lord.

16. "And I will say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, I am not worthy to be called thy son." He had sinned against heaven who had abandoned his heavenly mother Jerusalem. He had sinned before the Father who, in the desert where the Creator had been worshiped with wood, had shown reverence. He was not worthy to be called the Son of God who had preferred to be a servant of idols. "For every one that doth evil, hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reprov'd." (1 John 3:20)

17. Make me as one of your hired servants," he said. "Make me," he continued, "as one of the Jews, who revere you only for the sake of present things promised to them. Receive the repentant son, whom you have often spared, though he has sinned like your other hired servants.

18. "And he came to his own father." We come to the father, when we depart from the feeding of swine, according to: "As soon as you turn back and lament, you will be saved." (Ezekiel 18).

19. And when he was still far away, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. Before he returned to his old father with worthy deeds and true repentance, God, with whom all things are already done in the future, and who knows all future things, anticipates his coming with his Word, who took on flesh from the Virgin, and anticipates the return of his younger son.

20. "And he ran before and laid himself upon his neck." He came to the ground before he entered the house of confession. He laid himself upon his neck, that is, took on a human body. And just as John was reclining on the chest of Jesus (John 13), who was a partaker of his secrets, so he placed his light yoke, that is, his easy precepts of commandments, more by grace than by merit, upon the younger son.

21. "And he kissed him;" according to that which the Church prays for in the advent of the bridegroom in the Song of Songs: "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth" (Song of Solomon 1:1). I do not want, he says, that through Moses, I do not want him to speak through the prophets: let him take my body, let him kiss me in the flesh: so that we may also adhere to this idea which is written in Isaiah: "If you seek, seek: and come and dwell with me in the grove" (Isaiah 21:12, according to LXX). And there, indeed, the Church is commanded to cry out, weeping from Seir; for Seir is interpreted as shaggy and hairy: to represent the ancient horror of the Gentiles, with a like similitude answering: "I am black, but comely, ye daughters of Jerusalem" (Song of Solomon 1:4).

22. "But the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, I am not worthy to be called thy son." He says he is not worthy to be called a son, and yet from the voice of nature, from that substance which the father had once bestowed upon him, he bursts forth

trembling with the truth, saying, "Father, I have sinned against heaven." Therefore, some argue in vain that the name "Father" only applies to saints; for here he even calls God Father, who confesses himself unworthy of the name of son, unless, perchance, he dares to call him father because he is turned around in his mind.

23. But the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him; the robe, which Adam lost by sinning, the robe which in another parable is called the wedding garment (Matthew 22), that is, the clothing of the Holy Spirit, which he who does not have, cannot attend the banquet of the king.

24. "And give the ring in his hand; the signet-ring of the likeness of Christ, according to that: In whom believing, you were signed with the Holy Spirit of promise. (Ephes. 1: 13). And to the prince of Tyre, who had lost the likeness of the Creator, it is said: You are the signet-ring of likeness, and the crown of beauty, born in the delights of the paradise of God. (Ezech. 28. 12-13) . Isaiah also speaks of this signet-ring: Then they shall manifest who are signed. This signet-ring is given in hand when the Scripture signifies the works of justice. For there: The word of the Lord was made into the hand of the prophet Haggai, saying to Jerusalem: I adorned you, says he, with ornaments, and I put bracelets around your hands. (Ezech. 16. 11). Again, to him who is clothed in a field, another place of the signet-ring is shown: Walk through the midst of Jerusalem, and give the signet-ring on the foreheads of the men who groan and mourn over all the iniquities that are committed in the midst of them. (Ibid. 9. 4) . Why? So that they may then say: The light of thy face, Lord, is signed upon us." (Psal. 4. 7).

25. "And his footwear on his feet. For the bridegroom had lost his dignity, and he could not celebrate Easter without shoes on his bare feet. These are the shoes that the Lord speaks of: 'And I clothed you with embroidered work, and shod you with seal skin, ... and shod your feet with shoes of badgers' skin' (Ezek. 16:10). so that He could be prepared for the Gospel of peace, no longer walking according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. And the prophetic word would come true about him: 'How beautiful are the feet of those announcing good news, of those announcing peace.'" (Isaiah 52:7)

26. And bring a fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: Because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. The fatted calf which is sacrificed for the penitent's health is the very Savior Himself, whose flesh we feed on daily, and whose blood we drink. You will understand, O faithful reader, how in our very fullness we burst forth in praise, saying: 'My heart hath uttered a good word, I speak my works to the King' (Ps. xlv. 1); although some, with more superstition than truth, apply these words to the Father's person. Now when it is said, 'Let us eat and make merry, because this my son was dead,' etc., this is connected with the meaning of the above parable, where it is said: 'I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance.'

27. "And they began to feast." This banquet is celebrated daily, and every day the father receives his son; Christ is always offered to believers.

28. Moreover, the elder son was in the field. » Up to now, the debate has been concerning the younger son, whom, in accordance with the present parable, we should take to represent publicans and sinners who were called to repentance by the Lord; but, according to the mystical

meaning, the parable also prophesies of the calling of the Gentiles in the future. Now we pass to the elder son, whom many interpret simply as representing all the saints and others more specifically as referring to the Jews. The interpretation is not difficult regarding the saints in the statement, "Never have I disobeyed your command," although this seems to conflict with his unwillingness to welcome back his brother. However, in relation to the Jews, his envy over his brother's salvation conflicts with the statement, "I have never disobeyed your command." We shall try to explain what we think concerning the Jews in its proper place. "Moreover, the elder son was in the field," toiling in earthly works, far from the grace of the Holy Spirit, and banished from his father's counsel. This is the one who says, "I have purchased a field, and must needs go out and see it: I pray thee, have me excused" (Luke 14:18). This is the one who buys five yoke of oxen and, weighed down by the burden of the Law, is enjoying the pleasures of earthly desires. This is the one who, though married, cannot go to the wedding feast, and whose fleshly state cannot be one with the Spirit. In his person, the laborers in that parable also fit, wherein the ones who were called at the first, third, sixth, and ninth hours, that is, through various callings, are sent to the vineyard, and the ones called at the eleventh hour are indignant at being made equal to them.

29. "And when he came near to the house, he heard music and singing." This phrase which is written as the heading of one of the Psalms (Psalm 46), fits this meaning. For Meleth is said to mean chorus singing together. But some Latins mistakenly believe that symphony is a type of instrument, when in fact it signifies a harmonious agreement in the praises of God, expressed in the Latin word, "consonance".

30. "And he called one of the boys and asked what these things were." And now Israel asks why God rejoices in the assumption of the Gentiles, and in envy he cannot know the will of the Father.

31. And he said to him: 'Because thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe.' The cause of joy, that is sung in the praises of God throughout the whole world, is the salvation of the Gentiles, the salvation of sinners: the angels rejoice: every creature agrees in joy; and of Israel alone it is said:

32. However, he did not want to enter, being angry. He is angry that his brother was received in his absence, he is angry that the one whom he thought was dead is alive. And now Israel stands outside, and now while the disciples listen to the Gospel in the church, his mother and brothers stand outside seeking him (Matthew 12).

33. "But the father of him, having gone out, began to beg him." How kind and gentle the father is; he begs his son to become a partaker of the joy of the house: moreover, the father begs through the Apostles, he begs through the preachers of the Gospel. Among whom Paul says, "For Christ, we urge you to be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20). And elsewhere, "But because you have rejected it, and judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46).

34. But he answering, said to his father: Behold, for many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment, and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends. The suppliant father entreats for concord, but he who follows the justice which is in the law, is not subject to the justice of God, which is greater than to forgive the penitent, and to receive the returning son. "Behold, for many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy

commandment," as if it were not a transgression of the commandment to envy the salvation of another, to boast of justice before God, when no one is clean before Him. For who will rejoice in having a pure heart even if it is for only one day? David confesses: "Behold I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 50.7). And elsewhere: "If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand it?" (Ps. 129.3). And here he says that he has never transgressed the commandment, even though he had been delivered to captivity many times for idolatry. "Behold, for many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment." This is what the Apostle Paul speaks of: "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who followed not after justice, have attained to justice, even the justice that is of faith." But Israel, by pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works of the law. It can therefore be said of someone who, according to the same Apostle, has lived without censure in the righteousness that comes from the law; although it seems to me that the Jew boasts more than speaks the truth, following the example of the Pharisee who said, 'I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector' (Luke 18.11). Do you not think that what he said of the publican, this one says of his brother? This is the one who eats up all his living with prostitutes. But what he says, 'I have never disobeyed your commandment,' does not agree with what the father said. For he did not confirm as true what the son had said, but restrained him as a person who was angry in another way by saying, 'Son, you are always with me.' 'You are indeed with me,' he said, 'but have you really said all that is good and done all that I have ordered?' But you are with me always. You are with me in the law that you are bound by: you are with me, while you are taught to me both in captivity: you are with me not because you have fulfilled my precepts, but because I have not allowed you to go away into distant lands: you are with me until the very end, according to that which I spoke to David: "If his sons forsake My law, and they do not walk in my judgments; if they profane my justifications and do not keep my commandments, I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their unjust deeds with stripes. But my mercy will not take away from them" (Ps. 88:31 et seq.). By this testimony, and that in which the elder son boasts, is proven false, when he does not walk in the judgments of God and does not keep His commandments. And how can he not keep them, since he is always said to have been with the Father? While sinning, he is corrected with a rod, and mercy is not denied when he is corrected. Nor is it surprising that he dared to lie to his father, who could envy his brother, especially since on the day of judgment some will lie more shamelessly, saying: "Have we not eaten and drunk in your name, and done many wonderful works, and driven out demons?" (Matt. 7:22) What is proper and relevant to its place will be explained.

35. "And you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends." "So great," he says, "has been the shedding of Israel's blood, so many thousands of men have been slain, and not one of them has arisen to redeem us. Even Josiah, who pleased you--(2 Kings 22)--and, more recently, the Maccabees, who fought for your inheritance, were slain by the swords of our enemies, and no man's blood restores our freedom to us. Behold we are still subject to the Roman power: not Prophet, nor Priest, nor righteous man has been sacrificed for us. And for the prodigal son, that is, for the Gentiles, for sinners, the glorious blood of the whole creation has been shed. And when you have not given smaller blessings to those who have deserved them, You have bestowed greater ones undeservedly. 'And you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends.' Israel, you err; say rather, that I might make merry with thee. Or can you have any

enjoyment, unless your father celebrate the feast with you? At least learn from his present example. Upon receiving his younger son, both father and son are happy. "Let us eat and feast," he says, "Do not eat and feast." But with the same mind in which you envy your brother, in which you turn away from your father's sight, and are always in the field, even now you want to enter a banquet in his absence. "You never gave me a goat." His father never gives worse gifts: you have a fattened calf: come in, eat with your brother. Why do you seek a goat for which a lamb has been sent? And don't pretend not to know what has been sent, John showed you in the desert: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). And the father, as if merciful and giving penance, urges you to the calf, not sacrificing the goat that he knows to be standing to the left. But you in the end of the world, Antichrist himself will immolate you, and with your friends, unclean spirits, you will feast on his flesh, the prophecy fulfilled: "You have broken the head of the great dragon: you have given him food for the people of Ethiopia" (Psalm 73:14).

36. But when your son, who has devoured his substance with harlots, came, you killed the fatted calf for him." Now also Israel confesses that the calf that was slaughtered was fat; they understand that Christ has come, but they are tormented by envy and do not want to be saved after his death.

37. But he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.' The son was angry, though not wishing to go in. But how are all things of God the Jews'? Are the angels, thrones, dominations, and other powers? Therefore let us understand all of God's law, prophets, and divine words. These were given to them so that they would meditate on his law day and night, according to that canon which we have often expounded the Scriptures, that all things are not to be referred to the whole, but to the greatest part, as it is said: 'All have turned aside; together they have become worthless' (Ps.13). And elsewhere: 'All who came before me are thieves and robbers' (John 10:8). And Paul to the Corinthians says: 'I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some' (1 Cor. 9:22). And to the Philippians: 'For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ' (Philippians 2:21). Although we must believe that he never denied anything, who urges the eating of the calf.

38. We should feast and be glad, for this brother of yours was dead, and has come back to life. He was lost, and has been found.' So we too should confidently expect to live by repenting from our dead works, as it were, in the Parable of the Son himself, as well as in the earlier Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, all of which end with illustrations of the same kind. 'For this your brother,' it says, 'was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' We are to understand that under different figures, but with the same meaning, is marked the reception of sinners, whether considered as heathen or as Jews.

39. Let us see, however, how this parable can be understood in general about the super saint and the sinner. And it is not disputed that it pertains not only to the just, but also to the non-just. This is what worries the reader who is disturbed, why the just should envy the salvation of the sinner: and to the extent that he is filled with anger, he is not overcome by his brother's mercy, his father's prayers, or the joy of his whole house. To which we will answer briefly: all the justice of this world is not justice compared to God. For just as from the sins of Jerusalem, Sodom is justified, not because it is just, but because greater delinquencies become smaller delinquencies: so also the universal justice of all people is not justice compared to God. Finally, Paul who said, "Therefore, as many as are perfect, let us think this" (Philippians 3:15), confesses and cries out elsewhere: "O

the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways!" (Romans 11:33)? And elsewhere, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part"; and, "Now we see through a glass, in an obscure manner" (1 Corinthians 13:9 and 12). And to the Romans, "Miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24) From all of which we are taught that only God is perfect in justice, who causes His sun to rise on the just and the unjust: He gives rain equally to the deserving and the undeserving; who invites to the wedding guests from the byways, lanes, and plazas, and from them expels some who were seemingly safe; and seeks, finds, and brings back on His shoulders the sheep that could not or would not return itself after the example of the penitent son (Luke 15) for it had greatly erred.

40. But that we may be taught that envy may also fall upon the Saints and that pure godliness alone is left to God, let us consider the example of the sons of Zebedee: for when their mother moved by a feeling of piety, had made too lofty a request, the other ten disciples were indignant. And Jesus calling them, said: "You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that are the greater, exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister: and he that will be first among you, shall be your servant. Even as the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life for the redemption of many." (Matthew 20:25 and following). Let nothing be dangerous, let nothing seem blasphemous, what we said could have crept to the evil in the widow, even about the angels we think this is said. "For even the stars are not pure in his sight, and how much less man, who is but a maggot— a son of man, who is only a worm!" (Job 15:15, 25. 6) And in the Psalms it is said: "No living person will be justified in your presence." It does not say, "no person", but "living person", that is, not Evangelist, not Apostle, not a Prophet. As I ascend to greater things, not angels, thrones, dominions, powers and other virtues. Only God is, in whom sin does not fall: since they are of free will, according to which man is made in the image and likeness of God, they can turn their will in either direction. If you are not led by this sentence, at least be moved by its authority in the parable in which workers are sent to the vineyard throughout the day (Matthew 20); and in the first hour Adam, Abel, Seth are called upon; in the third, Noah; in the sixth, Abraham; in the ninth, Moses; and in the eleventh, the Gentile people to whom it is said: "Why do you stand here all day idle?" And they answered, "Because no one has hired us." But John the Apostle bears witness that the last hour of our Savior's coming is at hand, saying, 'Brethren, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that Antichrist cometh, even now there are become many Antichrists: whereby we know that it is the last hour' (1 John 2:18). If this interpretation is displeasing to you, I will follow wherever you lead, provided only that you acknowledge those who were called first to be just. And when I have obtained that point, I will bring forward what the just themselves have murmured against the householder, saying, 'These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us, who have borne the burden of the day and the heat.' They are, indeed, just in saying that they ought to receive equal wages with him who has labored from the first hour even to the end; and should also receive the same pay as he who has been engaged in toil for one hour only. But this very justice is engendered by envy, which repines at another's happiness. And the Lord rebukes the eye of envy, saying, 'Friend, is your eye evil because mine is good?' Hence, too, while all the angels are said to be just, and all are immortal and free from sin, yet the apostle speaks of One only as being Just and Immortal—not because the angels are unjust or mortal, but because He alone is immortal and just,

to whom, when we compare all justice, we find that iniquity itself is injustice.

41. But in this same parable that we have just presented, for you to understand the injustice of the hirelings, pay attention for a moment. He who was hired in the first hour deserves more from him who was sent to the vineyard in the third hour; again, the worker of the third hour precedes the worker of the sixth hour, and the worker of the sixth hour outdoes the worker of the ninth hour. How, then, do they all envy the last one and do not seek the same justice among themselves? You, who were hired in the ninth hour, why do you envy him who was sent into the vineyard in the eleventh hour? Whatever you answer, even if you assert that the work was different so that you may deserve a greater reward for a different work, you will still be subject to the same judgment as the one who worked the sixth hour. And you who were hired at the sixth hour, why do you envy the last? Why does he receive a denarius, that is, an equal salvation with you, even though the glory of salvation may differ for different labor? The same thing can be said of you by the third worker, and of the third by the first. But because of the unequal labor and different periods of calling, they willingly accept the same reward among themselves. Only in the case of the last worker, that is, in the salvation of the Gentiles, do they differ and show disrespect to the Lord, and they are convicted of envy in all the parables.

42. I do not doubt that my speech seems unpolished to you, due to the smallness of my abilities; but I have often given the excuse that words cannot be refined unless one's own hand has polished them. Therefore, forgive my pained eyes, that is, forgive the one dictating, especially since, in matters of the church, meaning is sought, not words; that is, life is to be sustained by bread, not by beanpods.

Letters - letter_022

Letter 22. To Eustochium.

Perhaps the most famous of all the letters. In it Jerome lays down at great length (1) the motives which ought to actuate those who devote themselves to a life of virginity, and (2) the rules by which they ought to regulate their daily conduct. The letter contains a vivid picture of Roman society as it then was—the luxury, profligacy, and hypocrisy prevalent among both men and women, besides some graphic autobiographical details (§§7, 30), and concludes with a full account of the three kinds of monasticism then practised in Egypt (§§34-36). Thirty years later Jerome wrote a similar letter to Demetrias (CXXX.), with which this ought to be compared. Written at Rome 384 a.d.

1. "Hear, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house, and the king shall desire thy beauty." [Ps. 45:10, Ps. 45:11] In this forty-fourth psalm God speaks to the human soul that, following the example of Abraham, [Gen. 11:31; Gen. 12:1] it should go out from its own land and from its kindred, and should leave the Chaldeans, that is the demons, and should dwell in the country of the living, for which elsewhere the prophet sighs: "I think to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living." [Ps. 27:13] But it is not enough for you to go out from your own land unless you forget your people and your father's house; unless you scorn the flesh and cling to the bridegroom in a close embrace. "Look not behind thee," he says, "neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed." [Gen. 19:17] He who has grasped the plough must not look behind him [Luke 9:62] or return home from the field, or having Christ's garment, descend from the roof to fetch other raiment. [Matt. 24:17, Matt. 24:18] Truly a marvellous thing, a father charges his daughter not to remember her father. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do." [John. 8:44, R.V.] So it was said to the Jews. And in another place, "He that committeth sin is of the devil." [1 John. 3:8] Born, in the first instance, of such parentage we are naturally black, and even when we have repented, so long as we have not scaled the heights of virtue, we may still say: "I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." [Cant. 1:5] But you will say to me, "I have left the home of my childhood; I have forgotten my father, I am born anew in Christ. What reward do I receive for this?" The context shows—"The king shall desire thy beauty." This, then, is the great mystery. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be" not as is there said, "of one flesh," [Eph. 5:31, Eph. 5:32] but "of one spirit." Your bridegroom is not haughty or disdainful; He has "married an Ethiopian woman." [Nu. 12:1] When once you desire the wisdom of the true Solomon and come to Him, He will avow all His knowledge to you; He will lead you into His chamber with His royal hand; [Cant. 1:4] He will miraculously change your complexion so that it shall be said of you, "Who is this that goeth up and hath been made white?" [Cant. 8:5, LXX]

2. I write to you thus, Lady Eustochium (I am bound to call my Lord's bride "lady"), to show you by my opening words that my object is not to praise the virginity which you follow, and of which you

have proved the value, or yet to recount the drawbacks of marriage, such as pregnancy, the crying of infants, the torture caused by a rival, the cares of household management, and all those fancied blessings which death at last cuts short. Not that married women are as such outside the pale; they have their own place, the marriage that is honorable and the bed undefiled. [Heb. 13:4] My purpose is to show you that you are fleeing from Sodom and should take warning by Lot's wife. [Gen. 19:26] There is no flattery, I can tell you, in these pages. A flatterer's words are fair, but for all that he is an enemy. You need expect no rhetorical flourishes setting you among the angels, and while they extol virginity as blessed, putting the world at your feet.

3. I would have you draw from your monastic vow not pride but fear. [Rom. 11:20] You walk laden with gold; you must keep out of the robber's way. To us men this life is a race-course we contend here, we are crowned elsewhere. No man can lay aside fear while serpents and scorpions beset his path. The Lord says: "My sword hath drunk its fill in heaven," [Isa. 34:5, R.V] and do you expect to find peace on the earth? No, the earth yields only thorns and thistles, and its dust is food for the serpent. [Gen. 3:14, Gen. 3:18] "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." [Eph. 6:12, R.V] We are hemmed in by hosts of foes, our enemies are upon every side. The weak flesh will soon be ashes: one against many, it fights against tremendous odds. Not till it has been dissolved, not till the Prince of this world has come and found no sin therein,² not till then may you safely listen to the prophet's words: "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the trouble which haunteth thee in darkness; nor for the demon and his attacks at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." [Ps. 91:5-7, Vulg] When the hosts of the enemy distress you, when your frame is fevered and your passions roused, when you say in your heart, "What shall I do?" Elisha's words shall give you your answer, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." [2 K. 6:16] He shall pray, "Lord, open the eyes of thine handmaid that she may see." And then when your eyes have been opened you shall see a fiery chariot like Elijah's waiting to carry you to heaven, [2 K. 2:11; 2 K. 6:17] and shall joyfully sing: "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken and we are escaped." [Ps. 124:7]

4. So long as we are held down by this frail body, so long as we have our treasure in earthen vessels; [2 Cor. 4:7] so long as the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, [Gal. 5:17] there can be no sure victory. "Our adversary the devil goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." [1 Pet. 5:8] "Thou makest darkness," David says, "and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God." [Ps. 104:20, Ps. 104:21] The devil looks not for unbelievers, for those who are without, whose flesh the Assyrian king roasted in the furnace. [Jer. 29:22] It is the church of Christ that he "makes haste to spoil."³ According to Habakkuk, "His food is of the choicest." [Hab. 1:16, LXX] A Job is the victim of his machinations, and after devouring Judas he seeks power to sift the [other] apostles. [Luke 22:31] The Saviour came not to send peace upon the earth but a sword. [Matt. 10:34] Lucifer fell, Lucifer who used to rise at dawn; [Isa. 14:12] and he who was bred up in a paradise of delight had the well-earned sentence passed upon him, "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord."⁴ For he had said in his heart, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God,"

and "I will be like the Most High." [Isa. 14:13, Isa. 14:14] Wherefore God says every day to the angels, as they descend the ladder that Jacob saw in his dream, [Gen. 28:12] "I have said ye are Gods and all of you are children of the Most High. But ye shall die like men and fall like one of the princes." [Ps. 82:6, Ps. 82:7] The devil fell first, and since "God standeth in the congregation of the Gods and judgeth among the Gods," [Ps. 82:1] the apostle writes to those who are ceasing to be Gods-"Whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal and walk as men?" [1 Cor. 3:3]

5. If, then, the apostle, who was a chosen vessel [Acts 9:15] separated unto the gospel of Christ, [Gal. 1:15] by reason of the pricks of the flesh and the allurements of vice keeps under his body and brings it into subjection, lest when he has preached to others he may himself be a castaway; [1 Cor. 9:27] and yet, for all that, sees another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin; [Rom. 7:23] if after nakedness, fasting, hunger, imprisonment, scourging and other torments, he turns back to himself and cries "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" [Rom. 7:24] do you fancy that you ought to lay aside apprehension? See to it that God say not some day of you: "The virgin of Israel is fallen and there is none to raise her up." [Am. 5:2] I will say it boldly, though God can do all things He cannot raise up a virgin when once she has fallen. He may indeed relieve one who is defiled from the penalty of her sin, but He will not give her a crown. Let us fear lest in us also the prophecy be fulfilled, "Good virgins shall faint." [Am. 8:13] Notice that it is good virgins who are spoken of, for there are bad ones as well. "Whosoever looketh on a woman," the Lord says, "to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." [Matt. 5:28] So that virginity may be lost even by a thought. Such are evil virgins, virgins in the flesh, not in the spirit; foolish virgins, who, having no oil, are shut out by the Bridegroom. [Matt. 25:3, Matt. 25:10]

6. But if even real virgins, when they have other failings, are not saved by their physical virginity, what shall become of those who have prostituted the members of Christ, and have changed the temple of the Holy Ghost into a brothel? Straightway shall they hear the words: "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground; there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstone and grind meal; uncover thy locks, make bare the legs, pass over the rivers; thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen." [Isa. 47:1-3] And shall she come to this after the bridal-chamber of God the Son, after the kisses of Him who is to her both kinsman and spouse? [Cant. 5:2, LXX] Yes, she of whom the prophetic utterance once sang, "Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold wrought about with divers colours," [Ps. 45:10, P.B.V] shall be made naked, and her skirts shall be discovered upon her face. [Jer. 13:26] She shall sit by the waters of loneliness, her pitcher laid aside; and shall open her feet to every one that passeth by, and shall be polluted to the crown of her head. [Ezek. 16:25] Better had it been for her to have submitted to the yoke of marriage, to have walked in level places, than thus, aspiring to loftier heights, to fall into the deep of hell. I pray you, let not Zion the faithful city become a harlot: [Isa. 1:21] let it not be that where the Trinity has been entertained, there demons shall dance and owls make their nests, and jackals build. [Isa. 34:15; Isa. 13:22, R.V] Let us not loose the belt that binds the breast. When lust tickles the sense mad the soft fire of sensual pleasure sheds over us its pleasing glow, let us immediately break forth and cry: "The Lord is on my side: I will not fear what the flesh can do unto me." [Pss. 118:6; Pss. 56:4] When the inner man shows signs for a time of

wavering between vice and virtue, say: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance and my God." [Ps. 42:11] You must never let suggestions of evil grow on you, or a babel of disorder win strength in your breast. Slay the enemy while he is small; and, that you may not have a crop of tares, nip the evil in the bud. Bear in mind the warning words of the Psalmist: "Hapless daughter of Babylon, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." [Ps. 137:9] Because natural heat inevitably kindles in a man sensual passion, he is praised and accounted happy who, when foul suggestions arise in his mind, gives them no quarter, but dashes them instantly against the rock. "Now the Rock is Christ." [1 Cor. 10:4]

7. How often, when I was living in the desert, in the vast solitude which gives to hermits a savage dwelling-place, parched by a burning sun, how often did I fancy myself among the pleasures of Rome! I used to sit alone because I was filled with bitterness. Sackcloth disfigured my unshapely limbs and my skin from long neglect had become as black as an Ethiopian's. Tears and groans were every day my portion; and if drowsiness chanced to overcome my struggles against it, my bare bones, which hardly held together, clashed against the ground. Of my food and drink I say nothing: for, even in sickness, the solitaries have nothing but cold water, and to eat one's food cooked is looked upon as self-indulgence. Now, although in my fear of hell I had consigned myself to this prison, where I had no companions but scorpions and wild beasts, I often found myself amid bebies of girls. My face was pale and my frame chilled with fasting; yet my mind was burning with desire, and the fires of lust kept bubbling up before me when my flesh was as good as dead. Helpless, I cast myself at the feet of Jesus, I watered them with my tears, I wiped them with my hair: and then I subdued my rebellious body with weeks of abstinence. I do not blush to avow my abject misery; rather I lament that I am not now what once I was. I remember how I often cried aloud all night till the break of day and ceased not from beating my breast till tranquillity returned at the chiding of the Lord. I used to dread my very cell as though it knew my thoughts; and, stern and angry with myself, I used to make my way alone into the desert. Wherever I saw hollow valleys, craggy mountains, steep cliffs, there I made my oratory, there the house of correction for my unhappy flesh. There, also-the Lord Himself is my witness-when I had shed copious tears and had strained my eyes towards heaven, I sometimes felt myself among angelic hosts, and for joy and gladness sang: "because of the savour of thy good ointments we will run after thee." [Cant. 1:3, Cant. 1:4]

8. Now, if such are the temptations of men who, since their bodies are emaciated with fasting, have only evil thoughts to fear, how must it fare with a girl whose surroundings are those of luxury and ease? Surely, to use the apostle's words, "She is dead while she liveth." [1 Tim. 5:6] Therefore, if experience gives me a right to advise, or clothes my words with credit, I would begin by urging you and warning you as Christ's spouse to avoid wine as you would avoid poison. For wine is the first weapon used by demons against the young. Greed does not shake, nor pride puff up, nor ambition infatuate so much as this. Other vices we easily escape, but this enemy is shut up within us, and wherever we go we carry him with us. Wine and youth between them kindle the fire of sensual pleasure. Why do we throw oil on the flame-why do we add fresh fuel to a miserable body which is already ablaze. Paul, it is true, says to Timothy "drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and for thine often infirmities." [1 Tim. 5:23] But notice the reasons for

which the permission is given, to cure an aching stomach and a frequent infirmity. And lest we should indulge ourselves too much on the score of our ailments, he commands that but little shall be taken; advising rather as a physician than as an apostle (though, indeed, an apostle is a spiritual physician). He evidently feared that Timothy might succumb to weakness, and might prove unequal to the constant moving to and fro involved in preaching the Gospel. Besides, he remembered that he had spoken of "wine wherein is excess," [Eph. 5:18] and had said, "it is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine." [Rom. 14:21] Noah drank wine and became intoxicated; but living as he did in the rude age after the flood, when the vine was first planted, perhaps he did not know its power of inebriation. And to let you see the hidden meaning of Scripture in all its fulness (for the word of God is a pearl and may be pierced on every side) after his drunkenness came the uncovering of his body; self-indulgence culminated in lust. [Gen. 9:20, Gen. 9:21] First the belly is crammed; then the other members are roused. Similarly, at a later period, "The people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play." [Ex. 32:6] Lot also, God's friend, whom He saved upon the mountain, who was the only one found righteous out of so many thousands, was intoxicated by his daughters. And, although they may have acted as they did more from a desire of offspring than from love of sinful pleasure-for the human race seemed in danger of extinction-yet they were well aware that the righteous man would not abet their design unless intoxicated. In fact he did not know what he was doing, and his sin was not wilful. Still his error was a grave one, for it made him the father of Moab and Ammon, [Gen. 19:30-38] Israel's enemies, of whom it is said: "Even to the fourteenth generation they shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord forever."⁵

9. When Elijah, in his flight from Jezebel, lay weary and desolate beneath the oak, there came an angel who raised him up and said, "Arise and eat." And he looked, and behold there was a cake and a cruse of water at his head. [1 K. 19:4-6] Had God willed it, might He not have sent His prophet spiced wines and dainty dishes and flesh basted into tenderness? When Elisha invited the sons of the prophets to dinner, he only gave them field-herbs to eat; and when all cried out with one voice: "There is death in the pot," the man of God did not storm at the cooks (for he was not used to very sumptuous fare), but caused meal to be brought, and casting it in, sweetened the bitter mess [2 K. 4:38-41] with spiritual strength as Moses had once sweetened the waters of Mara. [Exod. 15:23-25] Again, when men were sent to arrest the prophet, and were smitten with physical and mental blindness, that he might bring them without their own knowledge to Samaria, notice the food with which Elisha ordered them to be refreshed. "Set bread and water," he said, "before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master." [2 K. 6:18-23] And Daniel, who might have had rich food from the king's table, [Dan. 1:8] preferred the mower's breakfast, brought to him by Habakkuk,⁶ which must have been but country fare. He was called "a man of desires," [Dan. 9:23, A.V. marg] because he would not eat the bread of desire or drink the wine of concupiscence.

10. There are, in the Scriptures, countless divine answers condemning gluttony and approving simple food. But as fasting is not my present theme and an adequate discussion of it would require a treatise to itself, these few observations must suffice of the many which the subject suggests. By them you will understand why the first man, obeying his belly and not God, was cast down from paradise into this vale of tears; [Ps. 84:6, R.V] and why Satan used hunger to tempt the Lord Himself in the wilderness; [Matt. 4:2, Matt. 4:3] and why the apostle cries: "Meats for the belly and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them;" [1 Cor. 6:13] and why he speaks of the

self-indulgent as men "whose God is their belly." [Phil. 3:19] For men invariably worship what they like best. Care must be taken, therefore, that abstinence may bring back to Paradise those whom satiety once drove out.

11. You will tell me, perhaps, that, high-born as you are, reared in luxury and used to lie softly, you cannot do without wine and dainties, and would find a stricter rule of life unendurable. If so, I can only say: "Live, then, by your own rule, since God's rule is too hard for you." Not that the Creator and Lord of all takes pleasure in a rumbling and empty stomach, or in fevered lungs; but that these are indispensable as means to the preservation of chastity. Job was dear to God, perfect and upright before Him; [Job 2:3] yet hear what he says of the devil: "His strength is in the loins, and his force is in the navel." [Job 40:16, of behemoth] The terms are chosen for decency's sake, but the reproductive organs of the two sexes are meant. Thus, the descendant of David, who, according to the promise is to sit upon his throne, is said to come from his loins. [Ps. 132:11] And the seventy-five souls descended from Jacob who entered Egypt are said to come out of his thigh. [Gen. 46:26] So, also, when his thigh shrank after the Lord had wrestled with him, [Gen. 32:24, Gen. 32:25] he ceased to beget children. The Israelites, again, are told to celebrate the passover with loins girded and mortified. [Exod. 12:11] God says to Job: "Gird up thy loins as a man." [Job. 38:3] John wears a leathern girdle. [Matt. 3:4] The apostles must gird their loins to carry the lamps of the Gospel. [Luke 12:35] When Ezekiel tells us how Jerusalem is found in the plain of wandering, covered with blood, he uses the words: "Thy navel has not been cut." [Ezek. 16:4-6] In his assaults on men, therefore, the devil's strength is in the loins; in his attacks on women his force is in the navel.

12. Do you wish for proof of my assertions? Take examples. Sampson was braver than a lion and tougher than a rock; alone and unprotected he pursued a thousand armed men; and yet, in Delilah's embrace, his resolution melted away. David was a man after God's own heart, and his lips had often sung of the Holy One, the future Christ; and yet as he walked upon his housetop he was fascinated by Bathsheba's nudity, and added murder to adultery.⁷ Notice here how, even in his own house, a man cannot use his eyes without danger. Then repenting, he says to the Lord: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight." [Ps. 51:4] Being a king he feared no one else. So, too, with Solomon. Wisdom used him to sing her praise,⁸ and he treated of all plants "from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;" [1 K. 4:33] and yet he went back from God because he was a lover of women.⁹ And, as if to show that near relationship is no safeguard, Amnon burned with illicit passion for his sister Tamar.¹⁰

13. I cannot bring myself to speak of the many virgins who daily fall and are lost to the bosom of the church, their mother: stars over which the proud foe sets up his throne, [Isa. 14:13] and rocks hollowed by the serpent that he may dwell in their fissures. You may see many women widows before wedded, who try to conceal their miserable fall by a lying garb. Unless they are betrayed by swelling wombs or by the crying of their infants, they walk abroad with tripping feet and heads in the air. Some go so far as to take potions, that they may insure barrenness, and thus murder human beings almost before their conception. Some, when they find themselves with child through their sin, use drugs to procure abortion, and when (as often happens) they die with their offspring, they enter the lower world laden with the guilt not only of adultery against Christ but also of suicide and child murder. Yet it is these who say: "'Unto the pure all things are pure;" [Tit. 1:15] my

conscience is sufficient guide for me. A pure heart is what God looks for. Why should I abstain from meats which God has created to be received with thanksgiving?" [1 Tim. 4:3] And when they wish to appear agreeable and entertaining they first drench themselves with wine, and then joining the grossest profanity to intoxication, they say "Far be it from me to abstain from the blood of Christ." And when they see another pale or sad they call her "wretch" or "manichaeian;"¹¹ quite logically, indeed, for on their principles fasting involves heresy. When they go out they do their best to attract notice, and with nods and winks encourage troops of young fellows to follow them. Of each and all of these the prophet's words are true: "Thou hast a whore's forehead; thou refusest to be ashamed." [Jer. 3:3] Their robes have but a narrow purple stripe,¹² it is true; and their head-dress is somewhat loose, so as to leave the hair free. From their shoulders flutters the lilac mantle which they call "maforte;" they have their feet in cheap slippers and their arms tucked up tight-fitting sleeves. Add to these marks of their profession an easy gait, and you have all the virginity that they possess. Such may have eulogizers of their own, and may fetch a higher price in the market of perdition, merely because they are called virgins. But to such virgins as these I prefer to be displeasing.

14. I blush to speak of it, it is so shocking; yet though sad, it is true. How comes this plague of the agapetae¹³ to be in the church? Whence come these unwedded wives, these novel concubines, these harlots, so I will call them, though they cling to a single partner? One house holds them and one chamber. They often occupy the same bed, and yet they call us suspicious if we fancy anything amiss. A brother leaves his virgin sister; a virgin, slighting her unmarried brother, seeks a brother in a stranger. Both alike profess to have but one object, to find spiritual consolation from those not of their kin; but their real aim is to indulge in sexual intercourse. It is on such that Solomon in the book of proverbs heaps his scorn. "Can a man take fire in his bosom," he says, "and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals and his feet not be burned?" [Prov. 6:27, Prov. 6:28]

15. We cast out, then, and banish from our sight those who only wish to seem and not to be virgins. Henceforward I may bring all my speech to bear upon you who, as it is your lot to be the first virgin of noble birth in Rome, have to labor the more diligently not to lose good things to come, as well as those that are present. You have at least learned from a case in your own family the troubles of wedded life and the uncertainties of marriage. Your sister, Blaesilla, before you in age but behind you in declining the vow of virginity, has become a widow but seven months after she has taken a husband. Hapless plight of us mortals who know not what is before us! She has lost, at once, the crown of virginity and the pleasures of wedlock. And, although, as a widow, the second degree of chastity is hers, still can you not imagine the continual crosses which she has to bear, daily seeing in her sister what she has lost herself; and, while she finds it hard to go without the pleasures of wedlock, having a less reward for her present continence? Still she, too, may take heart and rejoice. The fruit which is an hundredfold and that which is sixtyfold both spring from one seed, and that seed is chastity. [Matt. 13:8]

16. Do not court the company of married ladies or visit the houses of the high-born. Do not look too often on the life which you despised to become a virgin. Women of the world, you know, plume themselves because their husbands are on the bench or in other high positions. And the wife of the emperor always has an eager throng of visitors at her door. Why do you, then, wrong your husband? Why do you, God's bride, hasten to visit the wife of a mere man? Learn in this respect a

holy pride; know that you are better than they. And not only must you avoid intercourse with those who are puffed up by their husbands' honors, who are hedged in with troops of eunuchs, and who wear robes inwrought with threads of gold. You must also shun those who are widows from necessity and not from choice. Not that they ought to have desired the death of their husbands; but that they have not welcomed the opportunity of continence when it has come. As it is, they only change their garb; their old self-seeking remains unchanged. To see them in their capacious litters, with red cloaks and plump bodies, a row of eunuchs walking in front of them, you would fancy them not to have lost husbands but to be seeking them. Their houses are filled with flatterers and with guests. The very clergy, who ought to inspire them with respect by their teaching and authority, kiss these ladies on the forehead, and putting forth their hands (so that, if you knew no better, you might suppose them in the act of blessing), take wages for their visits. They, meanwhile, seeing that priests cannot do without them, are lifted up into pride; and as, having had experience of both, they prefer the license of widowhood to the restraints of marriage, they call themselves chaste livers and nuns. After an immoderate supper they retire to rest to dream of the apostles.¹⁴

17. Let your companions be women pale and thin with fasting, and approved by their years and conduct; such as daily sing in their hearts: "Tell me where thou feedest thy flock, where thou makest it to rest at noon," [Cant. 1:7, R.V] and say, with true earnestness, "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ." [Phil. 1:23] Be subject to your parents, imitating the example of your spouse. [Luke 2:51] Rarely go abroad, and if you wish to seek, the aid of the martyrs seek it in your own chamber. For you will never need a pretext for going out if you always go out when there is need. Take food in moderation, and never overload your stomach. For many women, while temperate as regards wine, are intemperate in the use of food. When you rise at night to pray, let your breath be that of an empty and not that of an overfull stomach. Read often, learn all that you can. Let sleep overcome you, the roll still in your hands; when your head falls, let it be on the sacred page. Let your fasts be of daily occurrence and your refreshment such as avoids satiety. It is idle to carry an empty stomach if, in two or three days' time, the fast is to be made up for by repletion. When cloyed the mind immediately grows sluggish, and when the ground is watered it puts forth the thorns of lust. If ever you feel the outward man sighing for the flower of youth, and if, as you lie on your couch after a meal, you are excited by the alluring train of sensual desires; then seize the shield of faith, for it alone can quench the fiery darts of the devil. [Eph. 6:16] "They are all adulterers," says the prophet; "they have made ready their heart like an oven." [Hos. 7:4, Hos. 7:6, R.V] But do you keep close to the footsteps of Christ, and, intent upon His words, say: "Did not our heart burn within us by the way while Jesus opened to us the Scriptures?" [Luke 24:32] and again: "Thy word is tried to the uttermost, and thy servant loveth it." [Ps. 119:140, P.B.V] It is hard for the human soul to avoid loving something, and our mind must of necessity give way to affection of one kind or another. The love of the flesh is overcome by the love of the spirit. Desire is quenched by desire. What is taken from the one increases the other. Therefore, as you lie on your couch, say again and again: "By night have I sought Him whom my soul loveth." [Cant. 3:1] "Mortify, therefore," says the apostle, "your members which are upon the earth." [Col. 3:5] Because he himself did so, he could afterwards say with confidence: "I live, yet not I, but Christ, liveth in me." [Gal. 2:20] He who mortifies his members, and feels that he is walking in a vain show,¹⁵ is not afraid to say: "I am become like a bottle in the frost. [Ps. 119:83 Vulg] Whatever there was in me of the moisture of lust has been dried out of me." And again: "My knees are weak through fasting; I

forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin." [Ps. 109:24; 102:5]

18. Be like the grasshopper and make night musical. Nightly wash your bed and water your couch with your tears. [Ps. 6:6, P.B.V] Watch and be like the sparrow alone upon the housetop. [Ps. 102:7] Sing with the spirit, but sing with the understanding also. [1 Cor. 14:15] And let your song be that of the psalmist: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction." [Ps. 103:2-4] Can we, any of us, honestly make his words our own: "I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping?" [Ps. 102:9] Yet, should we not weep and groan when the serpent invites us, as he invited our first parents, to eat forbidden fruit, and when after expelling us from the paradise of virginity he desires to clothe us with mantles of skins such as that which Elijah, on his return to paradise, left behind him on earth? [2 K. 2:13] Say to yourself: "What have I to do with the pleasures of sense that so soon come to an end? What have I to do with the song of the sirens so sweet and so fatal to those who hear it?" I would not have you subject to that sentence whereby condemnation has been passed upon mankind. When God says to Eve, "In pain and in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children," say to yourself, "That is a law for a married woman, not for me." And when He continues, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband," [Gen. 3:16] say again: "Let her desire be to her husband who has not Christ for her spouse." And when, last of all, He says, "Thou shalt surely die," [Gen. 2:17] once more, say, "Marriage indeed must end in death; but the life on which I have resolved is independent of sex. Let those who are wives keep the place and the time that properly belong to them. For me, virginity is consecrated in the persons of Mary and of Christ."

19. Some one may say, "Do you dare detract from wedlock, which is a state blessed by God?" I do not detract from wedlock when I set virginity before it. No one compares a bad thing with a good. Wedded women may congratulate themselves that they come next to virgins. "Be fruitful," God says, "and multiply, and replenish the earth." [Gen. 1:28] He who desires to replenish the earth may increase and multiply if he will. But the train to which you belong is not on earth, but in heaven. The command to increase and multiply first finds fulfilment after the expulsion from paradise, after the nakedness and the fig-leaves which speak of sexual passion. Let them marry and be given in marriage who eat their bread in the sweat of their brow; whose land brings forth to them thorns and thistles, [Gen. 3:18, Gen. 3:19] and whose crops are choked with briars. My seed produces fruit a hundredfold.¹⁶ "All men cannot receive God's saying, but they to whom it is given."

Some people may be eunuchs from necessity; I am one of free will. [Matt. 19:11, Matt. 19:12] "There is a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing. There is a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together." [Eccles. 3:5] Now that out of the hard stones of the Gentiles God has raised up children unto Abraham, [Matt. 3:9] they begin to be "holy stones rolling upon the earth." [Zech. 9:16, LXX] They pass through the whirlwinds of the world, and roll on in God's chariot on rapid wheels. Let those stitch coats to themselves who have lost the coat woven from the top throughout; [John. 19:23] who delight in the cries of infants which, as soon as they see the light, lament that they are born. In paradise Eve was a virgin, and it was only after the coats of skins that she began her married life. Now paradise is your home too. Keep therefore your birthright and say: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." [Ps. 116:7] To show that virginity is natural while wedlock only follows guilt, what is born of wedlock is virgin flesh, and it gives back in fruit

what in root it has lost. "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a flower shall grow out of his roots." [Isa. 11:1, LXX] The rod¹⁷ is the mother of the Lord-simple, pure, unsullied; drawing no germ of life from without but fruitful in singleness like God Himself. The flower of the rod is Christ, who says of Himself: "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys." [Cant. 2:1] In another place He is foretold to be "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands," [Dan. 2:45] a figure by which the prophet signifies that He is to be born a virgin of a virgin. For the hands are here a figure of wedlock as in the passage: "His left hand is under my head and his right hand doth embrace me." [Cant. 2:6] It agrees, also, with this interpretation that the unclean animals are led into Noah's ark in pairs, while of the clean an uneven number is taken. [Gen. 7:2] Similarly, when Moses and Joshua were bidden to remove their shoes because the ground on which they stood was holy, [Ex. 3:5, Josh. 5:15] the command had a mystical meaning. So, too, when the disciples were appointed to preach the gospel they were told to take with them neither shoe nor shoe-latchet;¹⁸ and when the soldiers came to cast lots for the garments of Jesus [John. 19:23, John. 19:24] they found no boots that they could take away. For the Lord could not Himself possess what He had forbidden to His servants.

20. I praise wedlock, I praise marriage, but it is because they give me virgins. I gather the rose from the thorns, the gold from the earth, the pearl from the shell. "Doth the plowman plow all day to sow?" [Isa. 28:24] Shall he not also enjoy the fruit of his labor? Wedlock is the more honored, the more what is born of it is loved. Why, mother, do you grudge your daughter her virginity? She has been reared on your milk, she has come from your womb, she has grown up in your bosom. Your watchful affection has kept her a virgin. Are you angry with her because she chooses to be a king's wife and not a soldier's? She has conferred on you a high privilege; you are now the mother-in-law of God. "Concerning virgins," says the apostle, "I have no commandment of the Lord." [1 Cor. 7:25] Why was this? Because his own virginity was due, not to a command, but to his free choice. For they are not to be heard who feign him to have had a wife; for, when he is discussing continence and commending perpetual chastity, he uses the words, "I would that all men were even as I myself." And farther on, "I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I." [1 Cor. 7:7, 1 Cor. 7:8] And in another place, "have we not power to lead about wives even as the rest of the apostles?" [1 Cor. 9:5] Why then has he no commandment from the Lord concerning virginity? Because what is freely offered is worth more than what is extorted by force, and to command virginity would have been to abrogate wedlock. It would have been a hard enactment to compel opposition to nature and to extort from men the angelic life; and not only so, it would have been to condemn what is a divine ordinance.

21. The old law had a different ideal of blessedness, for therein it is said: "Blessed is he who hath seed in Zion and a family in Jerusalem:" [Isa. 31:9, LXX] and "Cursed is the barren who beareth not:" [Isa. 54:1, LXX. (?) and "Thy children shall be like olive-plants round about thy table." [Ps. 128:3] Riches too are promised to the faithful and we are told that "there was not one feeble person among their tribes." [Ps. 105:37] But now even to eunuchs it is said, "Say not, behold I am a dry tree," [Isa. 56:3] for instead of sons and daughters you have a place forever in heaven. Now the poor are blessed, now Lazarus is set before Dives in his purple. [Cf. Luke 16:19 sqq] Now he who is weak is counted strong. But in those days the world was still unpeopled: accordingly, to pass over instances of childlessness meant only to serve as types, those only were considered happy who could boast of children. It was for this reason that Abraham in his old age married

Keturah; [Gen. 25:1] that Leah hired Jacob with her son's mandrakes, [Gen. 30:14-16] and that fair Rachel-a type of the church-complained of the closing of her womb. [Gen. 30:1, Gen. 30:2] But gradually the crop grew up and then the reaper was sent forth with his sickle. Elijah lived a virgin life, so also did Elisha and many of the sons of the prophets. To Jeremiah the command came: "Thou shalt not take thee a wife." [Jer. 16:2] He had been sanctified in his mother's womb, [Jer. 1:5] and now he was forbidden to take a wife because the captivity was near. The apostle gives the same counsel in different words. "I think, therefore, that this is good by reason of the present distress, namely that it is good for a man to be as he is." [1 Cor. 7:26, R.V] What is this distress which does away with the joys of wedlock? The apostle tells us, in a later verse: "The time is short: it remaineth that those who have wives be as though they had none." [1 Cor. 7:29] Nebuchadnezzar is hard at hand. The lion is bestirring himself from his lair. What good will marriage be to me if it is to end in slavery to the haughtiest of kings? What good will little ones be to me if their lot is to be that which the prophet sadly describes: "The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst; the young children ask for bread and no man breaketh it unto them"? [Lam. 4:4] In those days, as I have said, the virtue of continence was found only in men: Eve still continued to travail with children. But now that a virgin has conceived [Isa. 7:14] in the womb and has borne to us a child of which the prophet says that "Government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called the mighty God, the everlasting Father," [Isa. 9:6] now the chain of the curse is broken. Death came through Eve, but life has come through Mary. And thus the gift of virginity has been bestowed most richly upon women, seeing that it has had its beginning from a woman. As soon as the Son of God set foot upon the earth, He formed for Himself a new household there; that, as He was adored by angels in heaven, angels might serve Him also on earth. Then chaste Judith once more cut off the head of Holofernes.¹⁹ Then Haman-whose name means iniquity-was once more burned in fire of his own kindling. [Esther 7:10] Then James and John forsook father and net and ship and followed the Saviour: neither kinship nor the world's ties, nor the care of their home could hold them back. Then were the words heard: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." [Mark 8:34] For no soldier goes with a wife to battle. Even when a disciple would have buried his father, the Lord forbade him, and said: "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." [Matt. 8:20-22] So you must not complain if you have but scanty house-room. In the same strain, the apostle writes: "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married careth for the things of the world how she may please her husband." [1 Cor. 7:32-34]

22. How great inconveniences are involved in wedlock and how many anxieties encompass it I have, I think, described shortly in my treatise-published against Helvidius²⁰ -on the perpetual virginity of the blessed Mary. It would be tedious to go over the same ground now; and any one who pleases may draw from that fountain. But lest I should seem wholly to have passed over the matter, I will just say now that the apostle bids us pray without ceasing, [1 Thess. 5:17] and that he who in the married state renders his wife her due [1 Cor. 7:3, R.V] cannot so pray. Either we pray always and are virgins, or we cease to pray that we may fulfil the claims of marriage. Still he says: "If a virgin marry she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh." [1 Cor.

7:28] At the outset I promised that I should say little or nothing of the embarrassments of wedlock, and now I give you notice to the same effect. If you want to know from how many vexations a virgin is free and by how many a wife is fettered you should read Tertullian "to a philosophic friend,"²¹ and his other treatises on virginity, the blessed Cyprian's noble volume, the writings of Pope Damasus²² in prose and verse, and the treatises recently written for his sister by our own Ambrose.²³ In these he has poured forth his soul with such a flood of eloquence that he has sought out, set forth, and put in order all that bears on the praise of virgins.

23. We must proceed by a different path, for our purpose is not the praise of virginity but its preservation. To know that it is a good thing is not enough: when we have chosen it we must guard it with jealous care. The first only requires judgment, and we share it with many; the second calls for toil, and few compete with us in it. "He that shall endure unto the end," the Lord says, "the same shall be saved," [Matt. 24:13] and "many are called but few are chosen." [Matt. 20:16; Matt. 22:14] Therefore I conjure you before God and Jesus Christ and His elect angels to guard that which you have received, not readily exposing to the public gaze the vessels of the Lord's temple (which only the priests are by right allowed to see), that no profane person may look upon God's sanctuary. Uzzah, when he touched the ark which it was not lawful to touch, was struck down suddenly by death. [2 Sam. 6:6, 2 Sam. 6:7] And assuredly no gold or silver vessel was ever so dear to God as is the temple of a virgin's body. The shadow went before, but now the reality is come. You indeed may speak in all simplicity, and from motives of amiability may treat with courtesy the veriest strangers, but unchaste eyes see nothing aright. They fail to appreciate the beauty of the soul, and only value that of the body. Hezekiah showed God's treasure to the Assyrians, [2 Kings 20:12, 2 Kings 20:13] who ought never to have seen what they were sure to covet. The consequence was that Judaea was torn by continual wars, and that the very first things carried away to Babylon were these vessels of the Lord. We find Belshazzar at his feast and among his concubines (vice always glories in defiling what is noble) drinking out of these sacred cups. [Dan. 5:1-3]

24. Never incline your ear to words of mischief. For men often say an improper word to make trial of a virgin's steadfastness, to see if she hears it with pleasure, and if she is ready to unbend at every silly jest. Such persons applaud whatever you affirm and deny whatever you deny; they speak of you as not only holy but accomplished, and say that in you there is no guile. "Behold," say they, "a true hand-maid of Christ; behold entire singleness of heart. How different from that rough, unsightly, countrified fright, who most likely never married because she could never find a husband." Our natural weakness induces us readily to listen to such flatterers; but, though we may blush and reply that such praise is more than our due, the soul within us rejoices to hear itself praised.

Like the ark of the covenant Christ's spouse should be overlaid with gold within and without; [Ex. 25:11] she should be the guardian of the law of the Lord. Just as the ark contained nothing but the tables of the covenant, [1 K. 8:9] so in you there should be no thought of anything that is outside. For it pleases the Lord to sit in your mind as He once sat on the mercy-seat and the cherubims. [Ex. 25:22] As He sent His disciples to loose Him the foal of an ass that he might ride on it, so He sends them to release you from the cares of the world, that leaving the bricks and straw of Egypt, you may follow Him, the true Moses, through the wilderness and may enter the land of promise. Let no one dare to forbid you, neither mother nor sister nor kinswoman nor brother: "The Lord hath

need of you." [Matt. 21:1-3] Should they seek to hinder you, let them fear the scourges that fell on Pharaoh, who, because he would not let God's people go that they might serve Him, [Ex. 7:16] suffered the plagues described in Scripture. Jesus entering into the temple cast out those things which belonged not to the temple. For God is jealous and will not allow the father's house to be made a den of robbers. [Matt. 21:12, Matt. 21:13, R.V.] Where money is counted, where doves are sold, where simplicity is stifled where, that is, a virgin's breast glows with cares of this world; straightway the veil of the temple is rent, [Matt. 27:51] the bridegroom rises in anger, he says: "Your house is left unto you desolate." [Matt. 23:38] Read the gospel and see how Mary sitting at the feet of the Lord is set before the zealous Martha. In her anxiety to be hospitable Martha was preparing a meal for the Lord and His disciples; yet Jesus said to her: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But few things are needful or one.²⁴ And Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." [Luke 10:41, Luke 10:42] Be then like Mary; prefer the food of the soul to that of the body. Leave it to your sisters to run to and fro and to seek how they may fitly welcome Christ. But do you, having once for all cast away the burden of the world, sit at the Lord's feet and say: "I have found him whom my soul loveth; I will hold him, I will not let him go." [Cant. 3:4] And He will answer: "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." [Cant. 6:9] Now the mother of whom this is said is the heavenly Jerusalem. [Gal. 4:26]

25. Ever let the privacy of your chamber guard you; ever let the Bridegroom sport with you within. [Cf. Gen. 26:8] Do you pray? You speak to the Bridegroom. Do you read? He speaks to you. When sleep overtakes you He will come behind and put His hand through the hole of the door, and your heart²⁵ shall be moved for Him; and you will awake and rise up and say: "I am sick of love." [Cant. 5:2, Cant. 5:4, Cant. 5:8] Then He will reply: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." [Cant. 4:12]

Go not from home nor visit the daughters of a strange land, though you have patriarchs for brothers and Israel for a father. Dinah went out and was seduced.²⁶ Do not seek the Bridegroom in the streets; do not go round the corners of the city. For though you may say: "I will rise now and go about the city: in the streets and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth," and though you may ask the watchmen: "Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?" [Cant. 3:2, Cant. 3:3] no one will deign to answer you. The Bridegroom cannot be found in the streets: "Strait and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life." [Matt. 7:14] So the Song goes on: "I sought him but I could not find him: I called him but he gave me no answer." [Cant. 3:2; Cant. 5:6] And would that failure to find Him were all. You will be wounded and stripped, you will lament and say: "The watchmen that went about the city found me: they smote me, they wounded me, they took away my veil from me." [Cant. 5:7] Now if one who could say: "I sleep but my heart waketh," [Cant. 5:2] and "A bundle of myrrh is my well beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts"; [Cant. 1:13] if one who could speak thus suffered so much because she went abroad, what shall become of us who are but young girls; of us who, when the bride goes in with the Bridegroom, still remain without? Jesus is jealous. He does not choose that your face should be seen of others. You may excuse yourself and say: "I have drawn close my veil, I have covered my face and I have sought Thee there and have said: 'Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest Thy flock, where Thou makest it to rest at noon. For why should I be as one that is veiled beside the flocks of Thy companions?'" [Cant. 1:7, R.V.] Yet in spite of your excuses He will be wroth, He will swell with

anger and say: "If thou know not thyself, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy goats beside the shepherd's tents." [Cant. 1:8, LXX] You may be fair, and of all faces yours may be the dearest to the Bridegroom; yet, unless you know yourself, and keep your heart with all diligence, [Prov. 4:23] unless also you avoid the eyes of the young men, you will be turned out of My bride-chamber to feed the goats, which shall be set on the left hand. [Matt. 25:33]

26. These things being so, my Eustochium, daughter, lady, fellow-servant, sister-these names refer the first to your age, the second to your rank, the third to your religious vocation, the last to the place which you hold in my affection-hear the words of Isaiah: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation" of the Lord "be overpast." [Isa. 26:20] Let foolish virgins stray abroad, but for your part stay at home with the Bridegroom; for if you shut your door, and, according to the precept of the Gospel, [Matt. 6:6] pray to your Father in secret, He will come and knock, saying: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man ...open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." [Rev. 3:20] Then straightway you will eagerly reply: "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." It is impossible that you should refuse, and say: "I have put off my coat how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" [Cant. 5:2, Cant. 5:3] Arise forthwith and open. Otherwise while you linger He may pass on and you may have mournfully to say: "I opened to my beloved, but my beloved was gone." [Cant. 5:6] Why need the doors of your heart be closed to the Bridegroom? Let them be open to Christ but closed to the devil according to the saying: "If the spirit of him who hath power rise up against thee, leave not thy place." 27 Daniel, in that upper story to which he withdrew when he could no longer continue below, had his windows open toward Jerusalem. [Dan. 6:10, LXX] Do you too keep your windows open, but only on the side where light may enter and whence you may see the eye of the Lord. Open not those other windows of which the prophet says: "Death is come up into our windows." [Jer. 9:21]

27. You must also be careful to avoid the snare of a passion for vainglory. "How," Jesus says, "can ye believe which receive glory one from another?" [John. 5:44, R.V.] What an evil that must be the victim of which cannot believe! Let us rather say: "Thou art my glorying," [Jer. 9:24] and "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," [1 Cor. 1:31] and "If I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ," [Gal. 1:10] and "Far be it from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world hath been crucified unto me and I unto the world;" [Gal. 6:14, R.V. marg] and once more: "In God we boast all the day long; my soul shall make her boast in the Lord." [Pss. 44:8; Pss. 34:2] When you do alms, let God alone see you. When you fast, be of a cheerful countenance. [Matt. 6:3, Matt. 6:16-18] Let your dress be neither too neat nor too slovenly; neither let it be so remarkable as to draw the attention of passers-by, and to make men point their fingers at you. Is a brother dead? Has the body of a sister to be carried to its burial? Take care lest in too often performing such offices you die yourself. Do not wish to seem very devout nor more humble than need be, lest you seek glory by shunning it. For many, who screen from all men's sight their poverty, charity, and fasting, desire to excite admiration by their very disdain of it, and strangely seek for praise while they profess to keep out of its way. From the other disturbing influences which make men rejoice, despond, hope, and fear I find many free; but this is a defect which few are without, and he is best whose character, like a fair skin, is disfigured by the

fewest blemishes. I do not think it necessary to warn you against boasting of your riches, or against priding yourself on your birth, or against setting yourself up as superior to others. I know your humility; I know that you can say with sincerity: "Lord, my heart is not haughty nor mine eyes lofty;" [Ps. 131:1] I know that in your breast as in that of your mother the pride through which the devil fell has no place. It would be time wasted to write to you about it; for there is no greater folly than to teach a pupil what he knows already. But now that you have despised the boastfulness of the world, do not let the fact inspire you with new boastfulness. Harbor not the secret thought that having ceased to court attention in garments of gold you may begin to do so in mean attire. And when you come into a room full of brothers and sisters, do not sit in too low a place or plead that you are unworthy of a footstool. Do not deliberately lower your voice as though worn out with fasting; nor, leaning on the shoulder of another, mimic the tottering gait of one who is faint. Some women, it is true, disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. [Matt. 6:16] As soon as they catch sight of any one they groan, they look down; they cover up their faces, all but one eye, which they keep free to see with. Their dress is sombre, their girdles are of sackcloth, their hands and feet are dirty; only their stomachs-which cannot be seen-are hot with food. Of these the psalm is sung daily: "The Lord will scatter the bones of them that please themselves."²⁸ Others change their garb and assume the mien of men, being ashamed of being what they were born to be-women. They cut off their hair and are not ashamed to look like eunuchs. Some clothe themselves in goat's hair, and, putting on hoods, think to become children again by making themselves look like so many owls.²⁹

28. But I will not speak only of women. Avoid men, also, when you see them loaded with chains and wearing their hair long like women, contrary to the apostle's precept, [1 Cor. 11:14] not to speak of beards like those of goats, black cloaks, and bare feet braving the cold. All these things are tokens of the devil. Such an one Rome groaned over some time back in Antimus; and Sophronius is a still more recent instance. Such persons, when they have once gained admission to the houses of the high-born, and have deceived "silly women laden with sins, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," [2 Tim. 3:6, 2 Tim. 3:7] feign a sad mien and pretend to make long fasts while at night they feast in secret. Shame forbids me to say more, for my language might appear more like invective than admonition. There are others-I speak of those of my own order-who seek the presbyterate and the diaconate simply that they may be able to see women with less restraint. Such men think of nothing but their dress; they use perfumes freely, and see that there are no creases in their leather shoes. Their curling hair shows traces of the tongs; their fingers glisten with rings; they walk on tiptoe across a damp road, not to splash their feet. When you see men acting in this way, think of them rather as bridegrooms than as clergymen. Certain persons have devoted the whole of their energies and life to the single object of knowing the names, houses, and characters of married ladies. I will here briefly describe the head of the profession, that from the master's likeness you may recognize the disciples. He rises and goes forth with the sun; he has the order of his visits duly arranged; he takes the shortest road; and, troublesome old man that he is, forces his way almost into the bedchambers of ladies yet asleep. If he sees a pillow that takes his fancy or an elegant table-cover-or indeed any article of household furniture-he praises it, looks admiringly at it, takes it into his hand, and, complaining that he has nothing of the kind, begs or rather extorts it from the owner. All the women, in fact, fear to cross the news-carrier of the town. Chastity and fasting are alike distasteful to him. What he likes is a savory breakfast-say off a plump young crane such as is commonly called a cheeper. In

speech he is rude and forward, and is always ready to bandy reproaches. Wherever you turn he is the first man that you see before you. Whatever news is noised abroad he is either the originator of the rumor or its magnifier. He changes his horses every hour; and they are so sleek and spirited that you would take him for a brother of the Thracian king.³⁰

29. Many are the stratagems which the wily enemy employs against us. "The serpent," we are told, "was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." [Gen. 3:1] And the apostle says: "We are not ignorant of his devices." [2 Cor. 2:11] Neither an affected shabbiness nor a stylish smartness becomes a Christian. If there is anything of which you are ignorant, if you have any doubt about Scripture, ask one whose life commends him, whose age puts him above suspicion, whose reputation does not belie him; one who may be able to say: "I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Or if there should be none such able to explain, it is better to avoid danger at the price of ignorance than to court it for the sake of learning. Remember that you walk in the midst of snares, and that many veteran virgins, of a chastity never called in question, have, on the very threshold of death, let their crowns fall from their hands.

If any of your handmaids share your vocation, do not lift up yourself against them or pride yourself because you are their mistress. You have all chosen one Bridegroom; you all sing the same psalms; together you receive the Body of Christ. Why then should your thoughts be different?³¹ You must try to win others, and that you may attract the more readily you must treat the virgins in your train with the greatest respect. If you find one of them weak in the faith, be attentive to her, comfort her, caress her, and make her chastity your treasure. But if a girl pretends to have a vocation simply because she desires to escape from service, read aloud to her the words of the apostle: "It is better to marry than to burn." [1 Cor. 7:9]

Idle persons and busybodies, whether virgins or widows; such as go from house to house calling on married women and displaying an unblushing effrontery greater than that of a stage parasite, cast from you as you would the plague. For "evil communications corrupt good manners," [1 Cor. 15:33] and women like these care for nothing but their lowest appetites. They will often urge you, saying, "My dear creature, make the best of your advantages, and live while life is yours," and "Surely you are not laying up money for your children." Given to wine and wantonness, they instill all manner of mischief into people's minds, and induce even the most austere to indulge in enervating pleasures. And "when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ they will marry, having condemnation because they have rejected their first faith." [1 Tim. 5:11, 1 Tim. 5:12] Do not seek to appear over-eloquent, nor trifle with verse, nor make yourself gay with lyric songs. And do not, out of affectation, follow the sickly taste [Persius 1:104] of married ladies who, now pressing their teeth together, now keeping their lips wide apart, speak with a lisp, and purposely clip their words, because they fancy that to pronounce them naturally is a mark of country breeding. Accordingly they find pleasure in what I may call an adultery of the tongue. For "what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" [2 Cor. 6:14, 2 Cor. 6:15] How can Horace go with the psalter, Virgil with the gospels, Cicero with the apostle?³² Is not a brother made to stumble if he sees you sitting at meat in an idol's temple? [1 Cor. 8:10] Although "unto the pure all things are pure," [Tit. 1:15] and "nothing is to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving," [1 Tim. 4:4] still we ought not to drink the cup of Christ, and, at the same time, the cup of devils. [1 Cor. 10:21] Let me relate to you the story of my own miserable experience.

30. Many years ago, when for the kingdom of heaven's sake I had cut myself off from home, parents, sister, relations, and-harder still-from the dainty food to which I had been accustomed; and when I was on my way to Jerusalem to wage my warfare, I still could not bring myself to forego the library which I had formed for myself at Rome with great care and toil. And so, miserable man that I was, I would fast only that I might afterwards read Cicero. After many nights spent in vigil, after floods of tears called from my inmost heart, after the recollection of my past sins, I would once more take up Plautus. And when at times I returned to my right mind, and began to read the prophets, their style seemed rude and repellent. I failed to see the light with my blinded eyes; but I attributed the fault not to them, but to the sun. While the old serpent was thus making me his plaything, about the middle of Lent a deep-seated fever fell upon my weakened body, and while it destroyed my rest completely-the story seems hardly credible-it so wasted my unhappy frame that scarcely anything was left of me but skin and bone. Meantime preparations for my funeral went on; my body grew gradually colder, and the warmth of life lingered only in my throbbing breast. Suddenly I was caught up in the spirit and dragged before the judgment seat of the Judge; and here the light was so bright, and those who stood around were so radiant, that I cast myself upon the ground and did not dare to look up. Asked who and what I was I replied: "I am a Christian." But He who presided said: "Thou liest, thou art a follower of Cicero and not of Christ. For 'where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.'" [Matt. 6:21] Instantly I became dumb, and amid the strokes of the lash-for He had ordered me to be scourged-I was tortured more severely still by the fire of conscience, considering with myself that verse, "In the grave who shall give thee thanks?" [Ps. 6:5] Yet for all that I began to cry and to bewail myself, saying: "Have mercy upon me, O Lord: have mercy upon me." Amid the sound of the scourges this cry still made itself heard. At last the bystanders, failing down before the knees of Him who presided, prayed that He would have pity on my youth, and that He would give me space to repent of my error. He might still, they urged, inflict torture on me, should I ever again read the works of the Gentiles. Under the stress of that awful moment I should have been ready to make even still larger promises than these. Accordingly I made oath and called upon His name, saying: "Lord, if ever again I possess worldly books, or if ever again I read such, I have denied Thee." Dismissed, then, on taking this oath, I returned to the upper world, and, to the surprise of all, I opened upon them eyes so drenched with tears that my distress served to convince even the incredulous. And that this was no sleep nor idle dream, such as those by which we are often mocked, I call to witness the tribunal before which I lay, and the terrible judgment which I feared. May it never, hereafter, be my lot to fall under such an inquisition! I profess that my shoulders were black and blue, that I felt the bruises long after I awoke from my sleep, and that thenceforth I read the books of God with a zeal greater than I had previously given to the books of men.

31. You must also avoid the sin of covetousness, and this not merely by refusing to seize upon what belongs to others, for that is punished by the laws of the state, but also by not keeping your own property, which has now become no longer yours. "If have not been faithful," the Lord says, "in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" [Luke 16:12] "That which is another man's" is a quantity of gold or of silver, while "that which is our own" is the spiritual heritage of which it is elsewhere said: "The ransom of a man's life is his riches." [Prov. 13:8, R.V] "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." [Matt. 6:24] Riches, that is; for in the heathen tongue of the Syrians riches are called mammon. The

"thorns" which choke our faith [Matt. 13:7, Matt. 13:22] are the taking thought for our life. [Matt. 6:25] Care for the things which the Gentiles seek after [Matt. 6:32] is the root of covetousness. But you will say: "I am a girl delicately reared, and I cannot labor with my hands. Suppose that I live to old age and then fall sick, who will take pity on me?" Hear Jesus speaking to the apostles: "Take no thought what ye shall eat; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." [Matt. 6:25, Matt. 6:26] Should clothing fail you, set the lilies before your eyes. Should hunger seize you, think of the words in which the poor and hungry are blessed. Should pain afflict you, read "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities," and "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." [2 Cor. 12:10, 2 Cor. 12:7] Rejoice in all God's judgments; for does not the psalmist say: "The daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O Lord"? [Ps. 97:8] Let the words be ever on your lips: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither;" [Job 1:21] and "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." [1 Tim. 6:7]

32. To-day you may see women cramming their wardrobes with dresses, changing their gowns from day to day, and for all that unable to vanquish the moths. Now and then one more scrupulous wears out a single dress; yet, while she appears in rags, her boxes are full. Parchments are dyed purple, gold is melted into lettering, manuscripts are decked with jewels, while Christ lies at the door naked and dying. When they hold out a hand to the needy they sound a trumpet; [Matt. 6:2] when they invite to a love-feast³³ they engage a crier. I lately saw the noblest lady in Rome-I suppress her name, for I am no satirist-with a band of eunuchs before her in the basilica of the blessed Peter. She was giving money to the poor, a coin apiece; and this with her own hand, that she might be accounted more religious. Hereupon a by no means uncommon incident occurred. An old woman, "full of years and rags,"³⁴ ran forward to get a second coin, but when her turn came she received not a penny but a blow hard enough to draw blood from her guilty veins.

"The love of money is the root of all evil," [1 Tim. 6:10] and the apostle speaks of covetousness as being idolatry. [Col. 3:5] "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." [Matt. 6:33] The Lord will never allow a righteous soul to perish of hunger. "I have been young," the psalmist says, "and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." [Ps. 37:25] Elijah is fed by ministering ravens. [1 Kings 17:4, 1 Kings 17:6] The widow of Zarephath, who with her sons expected to die the same night, went without food herself that she might feed the prophet. He who had come to be fed then turned feeder, for, by a miracle, he filled the empty barrel. [1 Kings 17:9-16] The apostle Peter says: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk." [Acts 3:6] But now many, while they do not say it in words, by their deeds declare: "Faith and pity have I none; but such as I have, silver and gold, these I will not give thee." "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content." [1 Tim. 6:8] Hear the prayer of Jacob: "If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God." [Gen. 28:20, Gen. 28:21] He prayed only for things necessary; yet, twenty years afterwards, he returned to the land of Canaan rich in substance. and richer still in children. [Gen. 32:5, Gen. 32:10] Numberless are the instances in Scripture which teach men to "Beware of covetousness." [Luke 12:15]

33. As I have been led to touch to the subject-it shall have a treatise to itself if Christ permit-I will relate what took place not very many years ago at Nitria. A brother, more thrifty than covetous, and ignorant that the Lord had been sold for thirty pieces of silver, [Matt. 26:15] left behind him at his death a hundred pieces of money which he had earned by weaving linen. As there were about five thousand monks in the neighborhood, living in as many separate cells, a council was held as to what should be done. Some said that the coins should be distributed among the poor; others that they should be given to the church, while others were for sending them back to the relatives of the deceased. However, Macarius, Pambo, Isidore and the rest of those called fathers, speaking by the Spirit, decided that they should be interred with their owner, with the words: "Thy money perish with thee." [Acts 8:20] Nor was this too harsh a decision; for so great fear has fallen upon all throughout Egypt, that it is now a crime to leave after one a single shilling.

34. As I have mentioned the monks, and know that you like to hear about holy things, lend an ear to me for a few moments. There are in Egypt three classes of monks. First, there are the coenobites,³⁵ called in their Gentile language Sauses,³⁶ or, as we should say, men living in a community.³⁷ Secondly, there are the anchorites,³⁸ who live in the desert, each man by himself, and are so called because they have withdrawn from human society. Thirdly, there is the class called Remoboth,³⁹ a very inferior and little regarded type, peculiar to my own province,⁴⁰ or, at least, originating there. These live together in twos and threes, but seldom in larger numbers, and are bound by no rule; but do exactly as they choose. A portion of their earnings they contribute to a common fund, out of which food is provided for all. In most cases they reside in cities and strongholds; and, as though it were their workmanship which is holy, and not their life, all that they sell is extremely dear. They often quarrel because they are unwilling, while supplying their own food, to be subordinate to others. It is true that they compete with each other in fasting; they make what should be a private concern an occasion for a triumph. In everything they study effect: their sleeves are loose, their boots bulge, their garb is of the coarsest. They are always sighing, or visiting virgins, or sneering at the clergy; yet when a holiday comes, they make themselves sick-they eat so much.

35. Having then rid ourselves of these as of so many plagues, let us come to that more numerous class who live together, and who are, as we have said, called Coenobites. Among these the first principle of union is to obey superiors and to do whatever they command. They are divided into bodies of ten and of a hundred, so that each tenth man has authority over nine others, while the hundredth has ten of these officers under him. They live apart from each other, in separate cells. According to their rule, no monk may visit another before the ninth hour;⁴¹ except the deans⁴² above mentioned, whose office is to comfort, with soothing words, those whose thoughts disquiet them. After the ninth hour they meet together to sing psalms and read the Scriptures according to usage. Then when the prayers have ended and all have sat down, one called the father stands up among them and begins to expound the portion of the day. While he is speaking the silence is profound; no man ventures to look at his neighbor or to clear his throat. The speaker's praise is in the weeping of his hearers.⁴³ Silent tears roll down their cheeks, but not a sob escapes from their lips. Yet when he begins to speak of Christ's kingdom, and of future bliss, and of the glory which is to come, every one may be noticed saying to himself, with a gentle sigh and uplifted eyes: "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away and be at rest." [Ps. 55:6] After this the meeting breaks up and each company of ten goes with its father to its own table. This they take in

turns to serve each for a week at a time. No noise is made over the food; no one talks while eating. Bread, pulse and greens form their fare, and the only seasoning that they use is salt. Wine is given only to the old, who with the children often have a special meal prepared for them to repair the ravages of age and to save the young from premature decay. When the meal is over they all rise together, and, after singing a hymn, return to their dwellings. There each one talks till evening with his comrade thus: "Have you noticed so-and-so? What grace he has How silent he is! How soberly he walks!" If any one is weak they comfort him; or if he is fervent in love to God, they encourage him to fresh earnestness. And because at night, besides the public prayers, each man keeps vigil in his own chamber, they go round all the cells one by one, and putting their ears to the doors, carefully ascertain what their occupants are doing. If they find a monk slothful, they do not scold him; but, dissembling what they know, they visit him more frequently, and at first exhort rather than compel him to pray more. Each day has its allotted task, and this being given in to the dean, is by him brought to the steward. This latter, once a month, gives a scrupulous account to their common father. He also tastes the dishes when they are cooked, and, as no one is allowed to say, "I am without a tunic or a cloak or a couch of rushes," he so arranges that no one need ask for or go without what he wants. In case a monk falls ill, he is moved to a more spacious chamber, and there so attentively nursed by the old men, that he misses neither the luxury of cities nor a mother's kindness. Every Lord's day they spend their whole time in prayer and reading; indeed, when they have finished their tasks, these are their usual occupations. Every day they learn by heart a portion of Scripture. They keep the same fasts all the year round, but in Lent they are allowed to live more strictly. After Whitsuntide they exchange their evening meal for a midday one; both to satisfy the tradition of the church and to avoid overloading their stomachs with a double supply of food. A similar description is given of the Essenes by Philo,⁴⁴ Plato's imitator; also by Josephus, [Josephus, The Jewish War, 2:8] the Greek Livy, in his narrative of the Jewish captivity.

36. As my present subject is virgins, I have said rather too much about monks. I will pass on, therefore, to the third class, called anchorites, who go from the monasteries into the deserts, with nothing but bread and salt. Paul⁴⁵ introduced this way of life; Antony made it famous, and-to go farther back still-John the Baptist set the first example of it. The prophet Jeremiah describes one such in the words: "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him, he is filled full with reproach. For the Lord will not east off forever."⁴⁶ The struggle of the anchorites and their life-in the flesh, yet not of the flesh-I will, if you wish, explain to you at some other time. I must now return to the subject of covetousness, which I left to speak of the monks. With them before your eyes you will despise, not only gold and silver in general, but earth itself and heaven. United to Christ, you will sing, "The Lord is my portion." [Lam. 3:24]

37. Farther, although the apostle bids us to "pray without ceasing," [1 Thess. 5:17] and although to the saints their very sleep is a supplication, we ought to have fixed hours of prayer, that if we are detained by work, the time may remind us of our duty. Prayers, as every one knows, ought to be said at the third, sixth and ninth hours, at dawn and at evening.⁴⁷ No meal should be begun without prayer, and before leaving table thanks should be returned to the Creator. We should rise two or three times in the night, and go over the parts of Scripture which we know by heart. When we leave the roof which shelters us, prayer should be our armor; and when we return from the street we should pray before we sit down, and not give the frail body rest until the soul is fed. In

every act we do, in every step we take, let our hand trace the Lord's cross. Speak against nobody, and do not slander your mother's son. [Ps. 50:20] "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? To his own lord he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be made to stand, for the Lord hath power to make him stand." [Rom. 14:4, R.V] If you have fasted two or three days, do not think yourself better than others who do not fast. You fast and are angry; another eats and wears a smiling face. You work off your irritation and hunger in quarrels. He uses food in moderation and gives God thanks. [Rom. 14:6, R.V] Daily Isaiah cries: "Is it such a fast that I have chosen, saith the Lord?" [Isa. 58:5] and again: "In the day of your fast ye find your own pleasure, and oppress all your laborers. Behold ye fast for strife and contention, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. How fast ye unto me?" [Isaiah 58:3, Isaiah 58:4, R.V. marg] What kind of fast can his be whose wrath is such that not only does the night go down upon it, but that even the moon's changes leave it unchanged?

38. Look to yourself and glory in your own success and not in others' failure. Some women care for the flesh and reckon up their income and daily expenditure: such are no fit models for you. Judas was a traitor, but the eleven apostles did not waver. Phygellus and Alexander made shipwreck; but the rest continued to run the race of faith. [1 Tim. 1:19, 1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 1:15] Say not: "So-and-so enjoys her own property, she is honored of men, her brothers and sisters come to see her. Has she then ceased to be a virgin?" In the first place, it is doubtful if she is a virgin. For "the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." [1 Sam. 16:7] Again, she may be a virgin in body and not in spirit. According to the apostle, a true virgin is "holy both in body and in spirit." [1 Cor. 7:34] Lastly, let her glory in her own way. Let her override Paul's opinion and live in the enjoyment of her good things But you and I must follow better examples.

Set before you the blessed Mary, whose surpassing purity made her meet to be the mother of the Lord. When the angel Gabriel came down to her, in the form of a man, and said: "Hail, thou that art highly favored; the Lord is with thee," [Luke 1:28] she was terror-stricken and unable to reply, for she had never been saluted by a man before. But, on learning who he was, she spoke, and one who had been afraid of a man conversed fearlessly with an angel. Now you, too, may be the Lord's mother. "Take thee a great roll and write in it with a man's pen Maher-shalal-hash-baz."⁴⁸ And when you have gone to the prophetess, and have conceived in the womb, and have brought forth a son,⁴⁹ say: "Lord, we have been with child by thy fear, we have been in pain, we have brought forth the spirit of thy salvation, which we have wrought upon the earth." [Isa. 26:18, Vulg] Then shall your Son reply: "Behold my mother and my brethren." [Matt. 12:49] And He whose name you have so recently inscribed upon the table of your heart, and have written with a pen upon its renewed surface [Prov. 7:3; Jer. 31:33] -He, after He has recovered the spoil from the enemy, and has spoiled principalities and powers, nailing them to His cross [Col. 2:14, Col. 2:15] -having been miraculously conceived, grows up to manhood; and, as He becomes older, regards you no longer as His mother, but as His bride. To be as the martyrs, or as the apostles, or as Christ, involves a hard struggle, but brings with it a great reward.

All such efforts are only of use when they are made within the church's pale;⁵⁰ we must celebrate the passover in the one house, [Exod. 12:46] we must enter the ark with Noah, [1 Peter 3:20, 1 Peter 3:21] we must take refuge from the fall of Jericho with the justified harlot, Rahab. [James 2:25] Such virgins as there are said to be among the heretics and among the followers of the

infamous Manes⁵¹ must be considered, not virgins, but prostitutes. For if-as they allege-the devil is the author of the body, how can they honor that which is fashioned by their foe? No; it is because they know that the name virgin brings glory with it, that they go about as wolves in sheep's clothing. [Matt. 7:15] As antichrist pretends to be Christ, such virgins assume an honorable name, that they may the better cloak a discreditable life. Rejoice, my sister; rejoice, my daughter; rejoice, my virgin; for you have resolved to be, in reality, that which others insincerely feign.

39. The things that I have here set forth will seem hard to her who loves not Christ. But one who has come to regard all the splendor of the world as off-scourings, and to hold all things under the sun as vain, that he may win Christ; [Phil. 3:8] one who has died with his Lord and risen again, and has crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts; [Rom. 6:4; Gal. 5:24] he will boldly cry out: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" and again: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." [Rom. 8:35, Rom. 8:38, Rom. 8:39] For our salvation the Son of God is made the Son of Man.⁵² Nine months He awaits His birth in the womb, undergoes the most revolting conditions,⁵³ and comes forth covered with blood, to be swathed in rags and covered with caresses. He who shuts up the world in His fist [Cp. Ps. 95:4, Ps. 95:5; Isa. 40:12] is contained in the narrow limits of a manger. I say nothing of the thirty years during which he lives in obscurity, satisfied with the poverty of his parents. [Luke 2:51, Luke 2:52] When He is scourged He holds His peace; when He is crucified, He prays for His crucifiers. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." [Ps. 116:12, Ps. 116:13, Ps. 116:15] The only fitting return that we can make to Him is to give blood for blood; and, as we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, gladly to lay down our lives for our Redeemer. What saint has ever won his crown without first contending for it? Righteous Abel is murdered. Abraham is in danger of losing his wife. And, as I must not enlarge my book unduly, seek for yourself: you will find that all holy men have suffered adversity. Solomon alone lived in luxury and perhaps it was for this reason that he fell. For "whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." [Heb. 12:6] Which is best-for a short time to do battle, to carry stakes for the palisades, to bear arms, to faint under heavy bucklers, that ever afterwards we may rejoice as victors? or to become slaves forever, just because we cannot endure for a single hour? [Cp. Matt. 26:40]

40. Love finds nothing hard; no task is difficult to the eager. Think of all that Jacob bore for Rachel, the wife who had been promised to him. "Jacob," the Scripture says, "served seven years for Rachel. And they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her." [Gen. 29:20] Afterwards he himself tells us what he had to undergo. "In the day the drought consumed me and the frost by night." [Gen. 31:40] So we must love Christ and always seek His embraces. Then everything difficult will seem easy; all things long we shall account short; and smitten with His arrows, [Ps. 38:2] we shall say every moment: "Woe is me that I have prolonged my pilgrimage." [Ps. 120:5, Vulg] For "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." [Rom. 8:18] For "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed." [Rom. 5:3-5] When your lot seems hard to bear read Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians: "In labors more abundant; in

stripes above measure; in prisons more frequent; in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." [2 Cor. 11:23-27] Which of us can claim the veriest fraction of the virtues here enumerated? Yet it was these which afterwards made him bold to say: "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." [2 Tim. 4:7, 2 Tim. 4:8] But we, if our food is less appetizing than usual, get sullen, and fancy that we do God a favor by drinking watered wine. And if the water brought to us is a trifle too warm, we break the cup and overturn the table and scourge the servant in fault until blood comes. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." [Matt. 11:12] Still, unless you use force you will never seize the kingdom of heaven. Unless you knock importunately you will never receive the sacramental bread. [Luke 11:5-8] Is it not truly violence, think you, when the flesh desires to be as God and ascends to the place whence angels have fallen [Is. 14:12, Is. 14:13] to judge angels?

41. Emerge, I pray you, for a while from your prison-house, and paint before your eyes the reward of your present toil, a reward which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man." [1 Cor. 2:9] What will be the glory of that day when Mary, the mother of the Lord, shall come to meet you, accompanied by her virgin choirs! When, the Red Sea past and Pharaoh drowned with his host, Miriam, Aaron's sister, her timbrel in her hand, shall chant to the answering women: "Sing ye unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." [Ex. 15:20, Ex. 15:21] Then shall Thecla⁵⁴ fly with joy to embrace you. Then shall your Spouse himself come forward and say: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." [Cant. 2:10, Cant. 2:11] Then shall the angels say with wonder: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun?" [Cant. 6:10] "The daughters shall see you and bless you; yea, the queens shall proclaim and the concubines shall praise you." [Cant. 6:9] And, after these, yet another company of chaste women will meet you. Sarah will come with the wedded; Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, with the widows. In the one band you will find your natural mother and in the other your spiritual.⁵⁵ The one will rejoice in having borne, the other will exult in having taught you. Then truly will the Lord ride upon his ass,⁵⁶ and thus enter the heavenly Jerusalem. Then the little ones (of whom, in Isaiah, the Saviour says: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me" [Isa. 8:18]) shall lift up palms of victory and shall sing with one voice: "Hosanna in the highest, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest." [Matt. 21:9] Then shall the "hundred and forty and four thousand" hold their harps before the throne and before the elders and shall sing the new song. And no man shall have power to learn that song save those for whom it is appointed. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." [Rev. 14:1-4] As often as this life's idle show tries to charm you; as often as you see in the world some vain pomp, transport yourself in mind to Paradise, essay to be now what you will be hereafter, and you will hear your Spouse say: "Set me as a sunshade in thine heart and as a seal upon thine arm."⁵⁷ And then, strengthened in body as well as in mind, you, too, will cry aloud and say: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the

floods drown it." [Cant. 8:7] 1: According to the Vulgate 2: John. 14:30. The variant is difficult to explain and may be only a slip 3: An allusion to "Maher-shalal-hash-baz," Isa. 8:1

4: Obad. 4 5: Deut. 23:3 - Jerome substitutes "fourteenth" for "tenth.

6:

Bel. 33-39

7: 2 Sam. xi 8: Solomon was the reputed author of the Book of Wisdom

9:

1 K. xi 1-4

10: 2 Sam. xiii 11: The Manichaeans believed evil to be inseparable from matter. Hence they inculcated a rigid asceticism 12: Plebeians wore a narrow stripe, patricians abroad one

13: Beloved ones, viz., women who lived with the unmarried clergy professedly as spiritual sisters, but really (in too many cases) as mistresses. The evil custom was widely prevalent and called forth many protests. The councils of Elvira, Ancyra, and Nicaea passed canons against it 14: Cena dubia. The allusion is to Terence, Phormio, 342 15: Ps. 39:6, Vulg. That is, who knows that the world is vanity 16: See Letter XLVIII. 3 17: In the Latin there is a play on words here between virga and virgo 18: Matt. 10:10. According to Letter XXIII. these typify dead works

19: Judith xiii 20: See the treatise Against Helvidius, in this volume 21: Not extant. Jerome alludes to it again in his treatise against Jovinian 22: See Migne's "Patrologia," xiii., col. 347-418 23: Ambrose de Virg. Migne's "Patrologia," xvi., col. 187

24:

R.V. marg

25:

R.V

26: Gen. xxxiv 27: Eccles. 10:4, A.V., "the spirit of the ruler.

28: Ps. 53:5, according to the Roman Psalter 29: Cucullis fabrefactis, ut ad infantiam redeant, imitantur noctuas et bubones 30: Diomede. See Lucretius, 5:31, and Virgil, A. 1:752 31: Cur mens diversa sit. The ordinary text has "menda.

32: Viz., the epistles of St. Paul. In like manner the Psalter was often called David 33: Terence, Eun. 236

34: "The eucharist was at first preceded, but at a later date was more usually followed, by the agape or love-feast. The materials of this were contributed by the members of the congregation, all of whatever station sat down to it as equals, and the meal was concluded with psalmody and prayer." (Robertson, C. H., 1:p. 235.) Scandals arose in connection with the practice, and it gradually fell into disuse, though even at a later date allusions to it are not infrequent 35: From koinoj bioj (koinos bios), a common life 36: Apparently an Egyptian word. It does not occur

elsewhere 37: In commune viventes 38: From anaxwrein (anachorein), to withdraw

39:

These were monks who lived under no settled rule, but collected in little groups of two and three, generally in some populous place. They seem to have practised all the arts whereby a reputation for sanctity may be won, while they disparaged those who led more regular lives. Cassian (Collat. 18:7) draws an unfavorable picture of them. See Bingham, Antiquities, 7:ii. 4, and Dict. Xt. Ant., s. 5: Sarabaitae

40: Pannonia 41: I.e. three o'clock 42: Decani, "leaders of ten.

43: Cf. Letter LII 44: See Letter LXX. De Vir. LII. xi 45: I.e. the hermit of that name. See his Life in vol. 3: of this series 46: Lam. 3:27, Lam. 3:28, Lam. 3:30, Lam. 3:31

47: In Jerome's time the seven canonical hours of prayer had not yet been finally fixed. He mentions, however, six which correspond to the later, Mattins, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Nocturns. Cp. Letters CVII. CVIII. and CXXX 48: Isaiah 8:1, i.e. "the spoil speedeth, the prey hasteth;" or, in Jerome's rendering, "quickly carry away the spoils.

49: Isa. 8:3. Jerome should have substituted "prophet" for "prophetess." As it stands the quotation is meaningless 50: Cp. the maxim of Cyprian: Extra ecclesiam nulla salus, "Outside the church there is no salvation.

51: Founder of the widely prevalent sect of Manichaeans, which at one time numbered Augustine among its adherents. One of its leading tenets was that matter as such was essentially evil 52: An echo of the Nicene Creed 53: Cp. Virgil, Ecl. 4:61 54: A legendary virgin of Iconium said to have been converted by Paul 55: Viz. Paula, for whom see Letter CVIII., and Marcella, for whom see Letter CXXVII 56: Matt. 21:1-9, literally "she-ass.

57:

Cant. 8:6; the variant is peculiar to Jerome

Letters - letter_023

Letter 23. To Marcella.

Jerome writes to Marcella to console her for the loss of a friend who, like herself, was the head of a religious society at Rome. The news of Lea's death had first reached Marcella when she was engaged with Jerome in the study of the 73d psalm. Later in the day he writes this letter in which, after extolling Lea, he contrasts her end with that of the consul-elect, Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, a man of great ability and integrity, whom he declares to be now "in Tartarus." Written at Rome in 384 a.d.

1. To-day, about the third hour, just as I was beginning to read with you the seventy-second psalm¹ -the first, that is, of the third books-and to explain that its title belonged partly to the second book and partly to the third-the previous book, I mean, concluding with the words "the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended," [Ps. 72:20] and the next commencing with the words "a psalm of Asaph"² -and just as I had come on the passage in which the righteous man declares: "If I say, I will speak thus; behold I should offend against the generation of thy children," [Ps. 73:15] a verse which is differently rendered in our Latin version:³ -suddenly the news came that our most saintly friend Lea had departed from the body. As was only natural, you turned deadly pale; for there are few persons, if any, who do not burst into tears when the earthen vessel breaks. [2 Cor. 4:7] But if you wept it was not from doubt as to her future lot, but only because you had not rendered to her the last sad offices which are due to the dead. Finally, as we were still conversing together, a second message informed us that her remains had been already conveyed to Ostia.

2. You may ask what is the use of repeating all this. I will reply in the apostle's words, "much every way."⁴ is now in Tartarus.⁵ Who can sufficiently eulogize our dear Lea's mode of living? So complete was her conversion to the Lord that, becoming the head of a monastery, she showed herself a true mother⁶ to the virgins in it, wore coarse sackcloth instead of soft raiment, passed sleepless nights in prayer, and instructed her companions even more by example than by precept. So great was her humility that she, who had once been the mistress of many, was accounted the servant of all; and certainly, the less she was reckoned an earthly mistress the more she became a servant of Christ. She was careless of her dress, neglected her hair, and ate only the coarsest food. Still, in all that she did, she avoided ostentation that she might not have her reward in this world. [Cf. Matt. 6:2]

3. Now, therefore, in return for her short toil, Lea enjoys everlasting felicity; she is welcomed into the choirs of the angels; she is comforted in Abraham's bosom. And, as once the beggar Lazarus saw the rich man, for all his purple, lying in torment, so does Lea see the consul, not now in his triumphal robe but clothed in mourning, and asking for a drop of water from her little finger. [Luke 16:19-24] How great a change have we here! A few days ago the highest dignitaries of the city walked before him as he ascended the ramparts of the capitol like a general celebrating a triumph; the Roman people leapt up to welcome and applaud him, and at the news of his death the whole city was moved. Now he is desolate and naked, a prisoner in the foulest darkness, and not, as his

unhappy wife⁷ falsely asserts, set in the royal abode of the milky way.⁸ On the other hand Lea, who was always shut up in her one closet, who seemed poor and of little worth, and whose life was accounted madness, [Wisd. 5:4] now follows Christ and sings, "Like as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our God." [Ps. 48:8]

4. And now for the moral of all this, which, with tears and groans, I conjure you to remember. While we run the way of this world, we must not clothe ourselves with two coats, that is, with a twofold faith, or burthen ourselves with leathern shoes, that is, with dead works; we must not allow scrips filled with money to weigh us down, or lean upon the staff of worldly power. [Matt. 10:10] We must not seek to possess both Christ and the world. No; things eternal must take the place of things transitory; [2 Cor. 4:18] and since, physically speaking, we daily anticipate death, if we wish for immortality we must realize that we are but mortal.

1:

In the English Version Ps. lxxiii

2: Ps. 73:title 3: I.e. the Old Latin Version superseded by Jerome's Vulgate 4: De suis saeculis detrahentem. The text is clearly corrupt, and no satisfactory emendation has yet been suggested 5: So the author of II. Peter speaks of God "tartartizing the angels that sinned" (ii. 4) 6: I.e. her conduct justified her official title 7: Paulina, chief priestess of Ceres 8: In the Roman mythology the abode of gods and heroes. Cf. Ovid, M. 1:175, 176

Letters - letter_024

Letter 24. To Marcella.

Concerning the virgin Asella. Dedicated to God before her birth, Marcella's sister had been made a church-virgin at the age of ten. From that time she had lived a life of the severest asceticism, first as a member and then as the head of Marcella's community upon the Aventine. Jerome, who subsequently wrote her a letter (XLV) on his departure from Rome, now holds her up as a model to be admired and imitated. Written at Rome a.d. 384.

1. Let no one blame my letters for the eulogies and censures which are contained in them. To arraign sinners is to admonish those in like case, and to praise the virtuous is to quicken the zeal of those who wish to do right. The day before yesterday I spoke to you concerning Lea of blessed memory,¹ and I had hardly done so, when I was pricked in my conscience. It would be wrong for me, I thought, to ignore a virgin after speaking of one who, as a widow, held a lower place. Accordingly, in my present letter, I mean to give you a brief sketch of the life of our dear Asella. Please do not read it to her; for she is sure to be displeased with eulogies of which she is herself the object. Show it rather to the young girls of your acquaintance, that they may guide themselves by her example, and may take her behavior as the pattern of a perfect life.

2. I pass over the facts that, before her birth, she was blessed while still in her mother's womb, and that, virgin-like, she was delivered to her father in a dream in a bowl of shining glass brighter than a mirror. And I say nothing of her consecration to the blessed life of virginity, a ceremony which took place when she was hardly more than ten years old, a mere babe still wrapped in swaddling clothes. For all that comes before works should be counted of grace; [Rom. 11:6] although, doubtless, God foreknew the future when He sanctified Jeremiah as yet unborn, [Jer. 1:5] when He made John to leap in his mother's womb, [Luke 1:41] and when, before the foundation of the world, He set apart Paul to preach the gospel of His son. [Eph. 1:4]

3. I come now to the life which after her twelfth year she, by her own exertion, chose, laid hold of, held fast to, entered upon, and fulfilled. Shut up in her narrow cell she roamed through paradise. Fasting was her recreation and hunger her refreshment. If she took food it was not from love of eating, but because of bodily exhaustion; and the bread and salt and cold water to which she restricted herself sharpened her appetite more than they appeased it. But I have almost forgotten to mention that of which I should have spoken first. When her resolution was still fresh she took her gold necklace made in the lamprey pattern (so called because bars of metal are linked together so as to form a flexible chain), and sold it without her parents' knowledge. Then putting on a dark dress such as her mother had never been willing that she should wear, she concluded her pious enterprise by consecrating herself forthwith to the Lord. She thus showed her relatives that they need hope to wring no farther concessions from one who, by her very dress, had condemned the world.

4. To go on with my story, her ways were quiet and she lived in great privacy. In fact, she rarely went abroad or spoke to a man. More wonderful still, much as she loved her virgin sister,² she did not care to see her. She worked with her own hands, for she knew that it was written: "If any will not work neither shall he eat." [2 Thess. 3:10] To the Bridegroom she spoke constantly in prayer and psalmody. She hurried to the martyrs' shrines unnoticed. Such visits gave her pleasure, and the more so because she was never recognized. All the year round she observed a continual fast, remaining without food for two or three days! at a time; but when Lent came she hoisted-if I may so speak-every stitch of canvas and fasted well-nigh from week's end to week's end with "a cheerful countenance." [Matt. 6:17] What would perhaps be incredible, were it not that "with God all things are possible," [Matt. 19:26] is that she lived this life until her fiftieth year without weakening her digestion or bringing on herself the pain of colic. Lying on the dry ground did not affect her limbs, and the rough sackcloth that she wore failed to make her skin either foul or rough. With a sound body and a still sounder soul [Cf. Juvenal, Sat. 10:356] she sought all her delight in solitude, and found for herself a monkish hermitage in the centre of busy Rome.

5. You are better acquainted with all this than I am, and the few details that I have given I have learned from you. So intimate are you with Asella that you have seen, with your own eyes, her holy knees hardened like those of a camel from the frequency of her prayers. I merely set forth what I can glean from you. She is alike pleasant in her serious moods and serious in her pleasant ones: her manner, while winning, is always grave, and while grave is always winning. Her pale face indicates continence but does not betoken ostentation. Her speech is silent and her silence is speech. Her pace is neither too fast nor too slow. Her demeanor is always the same. She disregards refinement and is careless about her dress. When she does attend to it it is without attending. So entirely consistent has her life been that here in Rome. the centre of vain shows, wanton license, and idle pleasure, where to be humble is to be held spiritless, the good praise her conduct and the bad do not venture to impugn it. Let widows and virgins imitate her, let wedded wives make much of her, let sinful women fear her, and let bishops³ look up to her.

1: Vide the preceding Letter 2: Probably Marcella before she was married

3:

Sacerdotes

Letters - letter_025

Letter 25. To Marcella. An explanation of the ten names given to God in the Hebrew Scriptures. The ten names are El, Elohim, Sabaoth, Elion, Asher yeheyeh (Ex. iii. 14), Adonai, Jah, the tetragram Jhvh, and Shaddai. Written at Rome 384 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

Ten names by which God is called among the Hebrews, explained by Marcella when asked by her.

Reading the ninetyeth Psalm, in the place where it is written: "He who dwells in the aid of the Most High, in the protection of the God of heaven will abide", I said among the Hebrews that it is attributed to the God of heaven, the Almighty, which is interpreted by Aquila as "sufficient", which we can accept as robust and sufficient for achieving all things: and he is one of the ten Names by which God is called among the Hebrews. Immediately you eagerly requested that I arrange for you all the names with their interpretations. I will do what you asked. The first name of God is El, which in the Septuagint is expressed by the word God, and Aquila as ■τυμολογ[■]αν, expressing ■σχυρ[■]ν, that is, strong.

Then Eloim and Eloie, which is also called God Himself. The fourth Sabaoth, which is translated in the Septuagint as the mighty, and Aquilas as the hosts, carried. The fifth Elion, which we call high. The sixth Eser Ieje, which is read in Exodus: "I AM has sent me."

Seventh Lord (Adonai), whom we generally call Lord. The eighth Ia, which is only used in God: and in Alleluia, the last syllable also sounds. The ninth ■τετρα[■]γραμματον, which is ■νεκρ[■]νητον, that is unspeakable, is written with these letters, Jod, He, Vav, He. Which some, not understanding because of the similarity of the letters, have been accustomed to read as ΙΙΙΙΙ when they found it in Greek books. The tenth, which was stated above, is Saddai, and it is not interpreted in Ezekiel. However, we ought to know that Elohim is of common number, so that one God is thus also called many, like heaven also is called the heavens, that is, Sanaim. Therefore, interpreters often differ, of which we have an example in our language: Athens, Thebes, Salonas.

Letters - letter_026

Letter 26. To Marcella. An explanation of certain Hebrew words which have been left untranslated in the versions. The words are Alleluia, Amen, Maran atha. Written at Rome 384 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. Recently when we were together, not through a letter as you used to do before, but you asked me in person, what those words mean in their own language which we do not have translated into Latin from Hebrew; and why they are put down without being interpreted, as is the case with Alleluia, Amen, Maran atha, Ephod, and others that you mentioned scattered throughout the Scriptures.
2. To which we briefly respond, because we are limited by the narrowness of dictation, that either the Seventy Interpreters or the Apostles took care that, since the first Church had been gathered from the Jews, they would not introduce anything new to the scandal of believers: but they would pass on what they had imbibed from the beginning. Later, when the preaching of the Gospel had spread to all nations, what had been once received could not be changed. Although even this, as Origen calls them in his explanatory books, cannot be pronounced among others as it was spoken among one's own people, because of the vernacular of each language, and that it is much better to leave it untranslated than to diminish their power through interpretation.
3. Therefore, Alleluia is expressed, "Praise the Lord," since it is one of the ten names of God amongst the Hebrews. And in that psalm, where we read, "Praise the Lord, for a psalm is good" (Ps. 146:1), it is read among the Hebrews, "Alleluia, Chi Tob Zammer."
4. But Amen, Aquila renders $\pi\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\omega\mu\epsilon\kappa\alpha\iota\ \nu\omicron\varsigma$, that which we, faithfully, can say, the adverb comes from the name of faith Amen of the Septuagint, that is, let it be done. Therefore, at the end of the books (since the Psalter is divided into five volumes among the Hebrews), they have translated it as "let it be done." In Hebrew, it is read as "Amen Amen," to confirm what has been said above. Hence, Paul asserts that no one can say "Amen" (i.e., confirm what has been preached) unless they understand the preaching. Maranatha is more Syriac than Hebrew, although it sounds somewhat Hebrew and is interpreted as "Our Lord has come"; the sense is, "If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema" (1 Cor. 16:22), and with that accomplished, it follows: "Our Lord has come," which is unnecessary to argue against those who are stubbornly hostile, given that it is already clear that He has come.
5. I would like to write something to you about the Diapsalm, which is written among the Hebrews as Sela: and about the Ephod, and about that which is said in the title of a certain Psalm: For Aieleth, and other similar things; if I did not exceed the style of an epistle, and did not cause you to have an even greater desire for extended inquiries. For it is a well-known proverb: To think that rewards are self-obtained. Therefore, we intentionally keep silent about such things to make you more eager to hear what is not spoken.

Letters - letter_027

Letter 27. To Marcella. In this letter Jerome defends himself against the charge of having altered the text of Scripture, and shows that he has merely brought the Latin Version of the N.T. into agreement with the Greek original. Written at Rome 384 a.d.

1. After I had written my former letter,¹ containing a few remarks on some Hebrew words, a report suddenly reached me that certain contemptible creatures were deliberately assailing me with the charge that I had endeavored to correct passages in the gospels, against the authority of the ancients and the opinion of the whole world. Now, though I might-as far as strict right goes-treat these persons with contempt (it is idle to play the lyre for an ass²), yet, lest they should follow their usual habit and reproach me with superciliousness, let them take my answer as follows: I am not so dull-witted nor so coarsely ignorant (qualities which they take for holiness, calling themselves the disciples of fishermen as if men were made holy by knowing nothing)-I am not, I repeat, so ignorant as to suppose that any of the Lord's words is either in need of correction or is not divinely inspired; but the Latin manuscripts of the Scriptures are proved to be faulty by the variations which all of them exhibit, and my object has been to restore them to the form of the Greek original, from which my detractors do not deny that they have been translated. If they dislike water drawn from the clear spring, let them drink of the muddy streamlet, and when they come to read the Scriptures. let them lay aside³ the keen eye which they turn on woods frequented by game-birds and waters abounding in shellfish. Easily satisfied in this instance alone, let them, if they will, regard the words of Christ as rude sayings, albeit that over these so many great intellects have labored for so many ages rather to divine than to expound the meaning of each single word. Let them charge the great apostle with want of literary skill, although it is said of him that much learning made him mad. [Acts 26:24]

2. I know that as you read these words you will knit your brows, and fear that my freedom of speech is sowing the seeds of fresh quarrels; and that, if you could, you would gladly put your finger on my mouth to prevent me from even speaking of things which others do not blush to do. But, I ask you, wherein have I used too great license? Have I ever embellished my dinner plates with engravings of idols? Have I ever, at a Christian banquet, set before the eyes of virgins the polluting spectacle of Satyrs embracing bacchanals? or have I ever assailed any one in too bitter terms? Have I ever complained of beggars turned millionaires? Have I ever censured heirs for the funerals which they have given to their benefactors?⁴ The one thing that I have unfortunately said has been that virgins ought to live more in the company of women than of men,⁵ and by this I have made the whole city look scandalized and caused every one to point at me the finger of scorn. "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head," [Ps. 69:4] and I am become "a proverb to them." [Ps. 69:11] Do you suppose after this that I will now say anything rash?

3. But "when I set the wheel rolling I began to form a wine flagon; how comes it that a waterpot is the result?"⁶ Lest Horace laugh at me I come back to my two-legged asses, and din into their ears,

not the music of the lute, but the blare of the trumpet.⁷ They may say if they will, "rejoicing in hope; serving the time," but we will say "rejoicing in hope; serving the Lord."⁸ They may see fit to receive an accusation against a presbyter unconditionally; but we will say in the words of Scripture, "Against an elder⁹ receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all." [1 Tim. 5:19, 1 Tim. 5:20] They may choose to read, "It is a man's saying, and worthy of all acceptance;" we are content to err with the Greeks, that is to say with the apostle himself, who spoke Greek. Our version, therefore, is, it is "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance." [1 Tim. 1:15] Lastly, let them take as much pleasure as they please in their Gallican "geldings;"¹⁰ we will be satisfied with the simple "ass" of Zechariah, loosed from its halter and made ready for the Saviour's service, which received the Lord on its back, and so fulfilled Isaiah's prediction: "Blessed is he that soweth beside all waters, where the ox and the ass tread under foot." [Isa. 32:20, LXX]

1: XXVI 2: #Onw lura was a Greek proverb 3: Reading nec diligentiam instead of et 4: Haereditarias sepulturas 5: The reference is to Letter XXII 6: Hor. A. P. 21, 22

7:

Perhaps an allusion to the Greek proverb, *onoj luraj hkouse kai salpiggoj uj*. "The ass listened to the lyre, and the pig to the trumpet.

8: Rom. 12:11, Rom. 12:12. The reading *kuriw* "Lord" is probably correct. The R.V. says, "Some ancient authorities read the opportunity," (*kairw*) 9: I.e. a "presbyter.

10:

Jerome's detractors suggested this word instead of the simpler "ass" in Zech. 9:9 and Matt. 21:2-5. The phrase "Gallican geldings" appears to be a quotation from Plaut. Aul. 3:5, 21

Letters - letter_028

Letter 28. To Marcella. An explanation of the Hebrew word Selah (or Diapsalma). This word, rendered by the LXX "διψαλμα" and by Aquila "ε", was as much a crux in Jerome's day as it is in ours. "Some," he writes, "make it a 'change of metre,' others 'a pause for breath,' others 'the beginning of a new subject.' According to yet others it has something to do with rhythm or marks a burst of instrumental music." Jerome himself inclines to follow Aquila and Origen, who make the word mean "forever," and suggests that it betokens completion, like the "explicit" or "feliciter" in contemporary Latin mss. Written at Rome a.d. 384.

Jerome sets down in Latin word for word Origen's letter so that Marcella may more fully know what he meant on the proposed question. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. What you have received must be returned with interest, and a strong delay gives birth to usury. You asked for our opinion on the Diapsalmata; we have made the excuse of the brevity of the letter, and said that the matter cannot be explained in writing. But what good does it do for my hardworking self? Your desire is stimulated further by silence. Therefore, not to prolong things further, consider a few things as many.

2. Some have said that Diapsalma is a change of meter; others a pause of breath; some the beginning of another meaning. There are those who consider it a distinction of rhythm; and because the Psalms were then sung with joined voice to the organ of that certain musical variety, they consider it a silence. None of this seems to us; since the eagle, who is the most diligent expounder of Hebrew words, always renders "Sela," that is, "Diapsalma," which is written from Samech, Lamed, He: and we find "Diapsalma" placed at the end of the Psalms also, as it is in the third: "You have broken the teeth of sinners: salvation is from the Lord, and thy blessing is upon thy people, sela," that is, "always:" And in the twenty-third: "Who is this king of glory? The Lord of hosts himself is the king of glory, always." On the contrary, it is nowhere to be found in many verses of psalms, to wit, in the thirty-sixth, and seventy-seventh, and one hundred and eighteenth. Again the ninth Psalm is distinguished by a Diapsalmatic Song: for certainly if, as seems to some, the Diapsalma is the beginning of silence, it cannot be a Song of silence.

3. From which we observe that this word connects things both superior and inferior, or at least it teaches that things which have been said are eternal, as in the third (book): "Many say to my soul, there is no salvation for him in his God, forever." And again: "With my voice I cried to the Lord, and he heard me from his holy mountain, ever." And in the fourth: "Why do you love vanity and seek lies? forever." And again, "What you say in your hearts, and you are pricked in your beds, forever." And in Habakkuk: "God will come from the south, and the Holy One from mount Pharan, forever." And below: "Thou hast spoken oaths to the tribes, forever." [Hab. 3]

4. However, we should know that among the Hebrews, at the end of the books, it is customary for one of three things to be added, namely, Amen or Sela or Salom, which expresses peace. Hence

Solomon is called pacific. Therefore, just as we usually insert 'Explicit' or 'Feliciter' or something of this kind after completing a small work, for the purpose of marking the distinction with the following matter, so the Hebrews, in order to confirm what has been written, are accustomed to say Amen, or to signify that what is to be written is to be remembered for all time and put down Sela, or when they testify that something has been brought to a happy conclusion, they add peace at the end.

5. We have drawn these things from the depths of the Hebrew source, not pursuing streams of opinions, nor being frightened by the variety of errors with which the whole world is filled; but desiring both to know and to teach what is true. And if this does not seem burdensome to you, I will interpret the words of Origen on the Diapsalm in the very words themselves, so that if you disdain new wine, you may at least be led by the authority of old wine.

6. Often seeking reasons why in some Psalms a Diapsalm is interposed, I observed most diligently in Hebrew, and compared it with the Greek, and I found that where the Hebrew language has the word 'Sela', but the Greek always, or something of this kind, there the Seventy, and Theodotion, and Symmachus translated a Diapsalm. Nor does it hurt to affirm what we say with examples. In the seventy-fourth Psalm, whose beginning is: "We will confess to thee, O God, we will confess, and we will invoke thy name; after it," I confirmed his columns, "with Seventy and Theodotion, and Symmachus is Diapsalma; for which, with Aquila, "I weighed his columns always." In the Fifth Edition: "I am the one who prepared his columns, always." But in the Sixth: "I confirmed his columns continually." Moreover, in Hebrew, after Amuda, which is, his columns, Selah. And again in the seventy-fifth [psalm], the beginning of which is: "God is known in Judah; in Israel his name is great," we find according to the Septuagint and Theodotion, after "shield and sword, and war," [a musical term] "A Psalm." According to Symmachus, after "shield and sword and war" [the same musical term]. This is rendered by Aquila as "shield and sword and war forever." In the Fifth [Revised Greek] Edition, after "shield and javelin and war forever." In the Sixth, after "shield and sword and war to the end." And again in the Hebrew [original] after "Do not destroy," which is "A psalm" [follows]. And in the same psalm after that place, 'that he may make safe the meek of the earth,' a Diapsalm: the same at Symmachus' [version] Diapsalm; and always at the eagle's [version]; also at Quinta's [version]. But in the sixth [Psalm], to the end. And in the Hebrew [version], after "Anie Ares", which means "meek of the earth," is "Sela." And so when we came upon the opinion of each edition, we annotated this. However, I leave it to your judgment whether they meant some kind of musical chant or a change in rhythm, which they translated as Diapsalm.

7. Up to now Origen, whom we preferred to follow in this debate through ignorance rather than to be considered unwise by not following him.

Letters - letter_029

Letter 29. To Marcella. An explanation of the Hebrew words Ephod bad (1 Sam. 2:18) and Teraphim (Judges 17:5). Written at Rome to Marcella, also at Rome a.d. 384. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. The office of letter writing is to write about family matters or daily conversations, and in a way become present to each other while announcing what they want or what has been done: although sometimes such a conversation is seasoned with the salt of learning. But while you are entirely occupied with treatises, you write nothing to me except what torments me and compels me to read the Scriptures. Finally, yesterday you proposed a very famous question and demanded that I immediately write back what I thought. As if I hold the chair of the Pharisees, so that every time there is a dispute about Hebrew words, I am appointed as an arbiter and the sequestrator of the dispute. These are not pleasant letters which do not smell of cake, which Apicius does not preserve, in which there is nothing about the law of the masters of this time. But because our messenger and intermediary of our conversation is hurrying to return, I will say a great thing more quickly than I have it: When disputing about the Holy Scriptures, words are not as necessary as meaning. But if you seek (or we seek) eloquence, Demosthenes must be read, or Tully; if divine Sacraments, our codices are to be looked at, which do not resonate well from Hebrew into Latin.

2. In front of your letter you had placed 'What does it mean?' which is written in the first book of Kings. 'And Samuel was serving before the face of the Lord, girt with a linen ephod, and he had a little coat: and his mother made him a doublet, which she brought to him on the days of her going up with her husband to offer the solemn sacrifice.' And if a garment, how is it to be fastened? And why is a clasp added to the ephod itself? You also write that you have read in the following passages: 'A man of God came to Eli and said to him, "This is what the Lord says: I revealed myself to your father's family when they were in Egypt, subject to Pharaoh's house. I chose your father's family out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priests, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod."' (Ibid. 27-28). And following the order of the entire book, you have also taken an example from that place where Doeg the Edomite killed the priests at the command of the king. And turning, the Scripture says, Doec the Syrian himself killed the priests of the Lord: and he killed three hundred and five men on that day (ibid. c. 22. v. 18 and 19), or (as it is read in Hebrew) eighty-five, all who carried the ephod. And he killed the city of the priests of Nob with the edge of the sword, from man to woman, from infant to nursing child, and also the ox, and the donkey, and the sheep, all with the edge of the sword. And one son of Abimelech son of Achitob was saved; and his name was Abiathar, and he fled after David.

I do not hold myself back from expecting to anticipate the order of the problem in my response, where we read now, 'And all the bearers of the Ephod' (1 Kings 22): in Hebrew, it has 'bearers of the bad Ephod.' You will learn why I say this in what follows. You also added what follows: 'And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Abimelech fled to David, he went down with David to Keilah, having the Ephod in his hand: and it was told to Saul, that David came to Keilah' (Ibid. c.

23.6. and following): where when they feared the arrival of the king and the siege of the city, David said to Abiathar: 'Bring the Ephod of the Lord.' These are the things which, presenting the excerpts from the book of Kingdoms, you have surpassed into the volume of Judges, where it is written that Micha of Mount Ephraim returned one thousand, one hundred silver shekels to his mother, which she had vowed; and she made a sculpture and a cast from it. "And you add to this, after a short time, that it was called the Ephod and Teraphim—though, of course, if it were a girdle or a type of garment, it could not have been sculpted or molded. I recognize the error of nearly all Latins who believe that the Ephod and Teraphim, which are mentioned afterwards, were made of the silver that Micah had given to his mother; whereas Scripture records, 'And his mother took the money,' and it is clear that Micha gave the money to the skillful worker and had a graven and a molten image made, and it was in the house of Micah, and Micah and his house served God, and he made an Ephod and Teraphim, and filled the hand of one of his sons and made him a priest." (Judges 17:4-5) But if you think that the things which were previously called a carved and cast image, Ephod, and Teraphim are thereafter named, know that they are not the same. For after the idol of his mother, which is called a carved and cast image, Micha made the Ephod and Teraphim, as is proved by the following. "And the five men who went to explore the land answered and said to their brothers." "Behold, you know that there is an ephod and theraphim and an idol and a molten image in these houses" (Ibid. c. 18. 14. et seqq.). And after many things which thou hast passed over, "And five men went up," said he, "and rushed in thither, and took the idol and the molten image, the ephod and the theraphim. And six hundred men, all girt with weapons of war, entered into the house of Michas, and took away the idol and the molten image, the ephod also and the theraphim." Therefore he convicts the opinion of those who thought that the ephod was silver, by briefly observing that it is never mentioned except in connection with the priesthood. For Samuel who is referred to as girded with it, was a Levite, and the priests of Nob carried this distinctive badge of their office. And (which is not in Latin codices) when David, fleeing from Saul, came to Abimelech, and asked for a sword, saying: 'See if there is a spear or sword at hand, for I did not bring my sword or my other weapons with me', the priest replied, 'Here is the sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you slew in the valley of Terebinth, and it is wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod; if you will take that, take it, for there is no other here'. (1 Samuel 21:8–9). Evidently the ephod was kept hidden. This also, which we have now set forth, where "graven" and "molten" is read, although it be an idol, yet because it was supposed, through error of religion, to be for veneration, an ornament is made of it, as it were for the service (or mystery) of God, Ephod and Theraphim.

4. We will now proceed to explain what Theraphim is, if there is time for dictation. Meanwhile, we must explain about the Ephod, as we have begun. In Exodus, where Moses is commanded to make priestly garments, it is written: "And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle" (Exod. 28: 4). But where we have put "epohod," the Septuagint interpreters translated "■πωμιδα" in Greek, meaning that such a garment would come over the shoulders. Then it is added: "And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work." To put it briefly, the entire book of Exodus is filled with this kind of garment. For at the end of the same volume it is written: 'And every wise man made in the works the tunics of the saints, which are those of Aaron the priest, as the Lord commanded Moses. And they made a shoulder-piece of gold, and hyacinth,

and purple, and scarlet, and fine twisted linen.' (Exodus 39:1-2). But because in Exodus this type of garment is only commanded to be made, and later it is reported as being made, however Aaron is not dressed in it, in Leviticus how he was dressed in priestly vestments is explained: 'And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water, and he put on him the tunic, and girded him with a girdle, and clothed him with a robe', which we can interpret as the undershirt, or tunic, with which he was dressed underneath. "And he put upon him the tunic, and girded him with the girdle, and put on him the robe, and also the rational, and put the mitre upon his head: and fastened the ephod upon him" (Lev. 8:6-7). You see, therefore, Aaron is girded with an ephod, just as for some reason Samuel was girded with a bad ephod. But lest I take you further, have this understanding. Wherever in the Seventy Interpreters, that is, in our books the 'epomis,' that is, the ephod, is read, in the Hebrew it is written ephod. Why they wanted to interpret this elsewhere and leave it uninterpreted elsewhere is not my judgement, since they have done this in several places: as they had expressed differently elsewhere, they exhausted the variety of translation by finally placing the very Hebrew words. But Aquila has said that which those others said as "subligaculum" and "superhumeralis," that is, vestment and garment. That the "vestment," which in Hebrew is called "mail," means the under-tunic; but the "garment," that is, ephod, which is called in Hebrew Ephod, indicates the superior cloak, by which the whole priestly ambit is covered.

5. You may ask, perhaps, if the priestly Ephod is a "pallium", why is it sometimes called "bar"? When I hear the word "bar", I cannot help laughing. For when it is said among the Hebrews "bad", it is also clear that the Seventy Interpreters have so translated it that instead of "bad" it was written "bar", an error having arisen. But "bad" in the Hebrew language means linen, although "phesta" more significantly expresses linen. Finally, where we read, "And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness from the loins even unto the thighs" (Exodus 28:42): in the Hebrew the word for linen is "bad". In what appearance that man who is shown to Daniel was dressed. "And I lifted up my eyes, and saw: and behold a man clothed in linen" (Dan. 10.5), for which plural number, linen garments are now called. Therefore, Samuel and eighty-five priestly men are said to have carried a linen Ephod, because the high priest alone had the right to dress in an Ephod that was not made of linen; but (as Scripture recalls) it was woven with gold, hyacinth, purple, scarlet, and fine linen. The others had an Ephod, not distinguished by that variety, and not decorated by twelve stones, which resided on each shoulder, but linen and simple, and pure with all whiteness.

6. However, because I promised earlier that if there was time for dictate, I would also briefly discuss the Theraphim: and no one interrupted in the meantime: know that Theraphim is interpreted as "shapes" or "figurations" by Aquila. For in that place, when Saul sent messengers to take David, and they responded that he was severely troubled, he sent again saying: "Bring him to me in bed, so that I may kill him." And the messengers came, and behold, the Theraphim were on the bed (1 Kings 19:15). Instead of cenotaphs, Theraphim is used in Hebrew, that is, "shapes" or "figurations". And they were not goat's livers as our codices have it, but a small pillow made from goat's skin, which, with shaved hairs and a head covered, deceived one into thinking it was a person in the bed. But, in order to equally explain the truth of each way of speaking, God threatens in Hosea to take away all grace from the fornicating people, saying that 'for many days the children of Israel will sit without a king, and prince, without sacrifice, without altar, and without priesthood, and revelations' (Hosea 3:4). Regarding priesthood and revelations, in Hebrew it is 'without ephod

and without household gods,' as Theodotion and Symmachus translated. From this we understand that in the Ephod, according to the Septuagint as well, priestly offices are interpreted as meaning senses rather than words, but in the Theraphim, that is, in various works called Theraphim, they are understood as figures or images. For in Exodus and other places where feathered garments are described, Cherubim work, that is, varied and depicted, is described: yet with the letter Vau not having Cherubims, because wherever it is written with this letter, it signifies animals rather than works. Therefore, according to this interpretation, it is shown that Micha made the rest of the priestly ornaments through the Theraphim with the priestly robe.

7. I wish I could now explain to you the entire priestly habit, and through each type of clothing, reveal divine mysteries. But because we have exceeded the brevity of this letter itself, and Josephus and Philo, most learned men of the Jews, and many of our own have widely discussed this matter, whose voice, as they say, you will hear me: whatever else you want, ask now as an inquirer present, so that if we happen not to know something, without a witness, without a judge, we may die believing it in the hearing of a faithful ear. If the common mother is well, I am glad, and I pray the Lord that she may be well. We, as you know, detained by the reading of the Hebrews, have covered ourselves in the rust of the Latin language, to such an extent that even a certain non-Latin creaking occurs to us when we speak. Therefore, forgive our dryness: and if I am unskilled in speech, says the Apostle, but not in knowledge. Both were not lacking to him, and he humbly refused one. We lack both, since we have lost what we had as children, and we have not obtained the knowledge we wanted, according to Aesop's fable of the dog, while pursuing great things, losing even the smaller ones.

Letters - letter_030

Letter 30. To Paula

Some account of the so-called alphabetical psalms (XXXVII., CXI., CXII., CXIX., CXLV.). After explaining the mystical meaning of the alphabet, Jerome goes on thus: "What honey is sweeter than to know the wisdom of God? no others, if they will, may possess riches, drink from a jewelled cup, shine in silks, and try in vain to exhaust their wealth in the most varied pleasures. Our riches are to meditate in the law of the Lord day and night, [Ps. 1:2] to knock at the closed door, [Matt. 7:7] to receive the 'three loaves' of the Trinity, [Luke 11:5-8] and, when the Lord goes before us, to walk upon the water of the world." [Matt. 14:25-33] Written at Rome a.d. 384. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. On the third day, when I was trying to suggest to you the hundred and eighteenth Psalm and saying that every moral aspect was comprehended therein, and just as philosophers divide their discussions into natural philosophy, ethics, and logic, divine or nature discussions would also be divided, as in Genesis and Ecclesiastes, or about morals, as in Proverbs and all the scattered books, or about logic, which our Theorist claims for himself, as in Song of Solomon and in the Gospels (although the Apostle often sets out, assumes, confirms and concludes what properly belongs to the art of dialectic), you eagerly sought out what Hebrew letters, which seemed to be inserted in the Psalm we were reading, meant.

2. I replied according to the order of the letters that it was composed in such a way that, namely, from the first letter, which they call Aleph, eight verses would begin. Again from the following Beth they would take as many verses for the beginning; and afterwards the same number would be completed from Gemel; and thus, up to Thau, which is the last letter, the Psalm was written: and from each and every element, according to their interpretations, what would follow should be understood. Time and again you asked me to reveal the meanings of the individual letters. I admit that all we said slips from the memory because of the barbarity of the language. You want a little commentary made so that if ever you waver in any respect, reading it will console your forgetfulness.

3. The Alphabetical Psalms. - And before I discuss each one, you should know that the four Psalms begin with the one hundred tenth, one hundred eleventh, the one we are writing about now, and the one hundred forty-fourth elements in accordance with the Hebrew order. But you should know in the earlier Psalms, individual verses are joined to each letter, which consists of iambic trimeter. The lower ones, however, consist of iambic tetrameter, as is written in the Canticle of Deuteronomy. In the hundred eighteenth Psalm, eight verses follow each letter. In the hundred forty-fourth, twin verses are assigned to each letter. There are some who think to begin with others in this order, but their opinion is false. You also have in the Lamentations of Jeremiah four Alphabets, of which the first two are written in a Sapphic meter: the Heroic comma concludes because three verses connected to each other begin with only one letter. The third Alphabet, however, is written in trimeter, and three verses begin with the same three letters. The fourth

Alphabet is similar to the first and second. Proverbs too closes the Alphabet, which is calculated in iambic tetrameter, from the point where it says: "Who shall find a valiant woman?" (Prov. 31:10).

4. But just as in these our letters no one can proceed to reading and composing words without first beginning from the elements, so in divine Scripture we cannot know the greater things unless we have had the beginning of Ethics, according to what the Prophet says: 'From your commandments I understood (Ps. 118:104)', that is, that one began to have knowledge of secrets after works. But now what you requested is to be fulfilled, that the interpretation of the meaning of each element be attached.

5. Aleph means doctrine. Beth, house. Gemel, fullness. Deleth, tablets. He, this. Vau, and Zai, these. Heth, life. Tet, good. Iod, beginning. Kaph, hand. Lamed, discipline or heart. Mem, from them. Nun, eternal. Samech, help. Ain, fountain or eye. Phe, mouth, understand that it is said from the mouth, not from the bone, lest you be deceived by the ambiguity of letters. Sade, justice. Koph, vocation. Resh, heads. Shin, teeth. Thau, signs.

6. After the interpretation of the elements of intelligence, the order must be said to be Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Daleth, the first connection is doctrine, house, fullness, tablets; namely that the doctrine of the Church, which is the house of God, should be found in the fullness of divine books.

7. The second connection is, He, Vau, Zai, Heth, this, and this, life. For what other life can there be without the knowledge of the Scriptures, through which even Christ himself is recognized, who is the life of believers?

8. The third connection has Tet, Iod, a good beginning: because although we now know all that is written, we only partly understand and partly prophesy, and now we see through a glass in an obscure manner. But when we are worthy to be with Christ and are made like unto the angels, then doctrine of books shall cease, and we shall see face to face the good beginning as it is.

9. The fourth connection is Caph, Lamed, hand, disciplines, or heart. The hands are understood in work. The heart and discipline are interpreted in meaning: because we can do nothing unless we first know what must be done.

10. The fifth connection is Mem, Nun, Samech themselves, eternal help. This needs no explanation but is made more manifest in every light, from the eternal supports supplied by the Scriptures.

11. The sixth combination has Ain, Phe, and Sade, a spring or fountain, the eye or mouth, and justice, according to what we explained in the third number.

12. The seventh connection is also the last, because it is a mystic understanding in the seven itself: Coph, Res, Sen, Thau, vocation, head, teeth, signs. By the articulated voice (that is) formed by the teeth, and through these signs reaches Christ, who is the head of all, through whom one comes to everlasting Kingdom.

13. I beg you, what is more sacred than this sacrament? What is more pleasant than this pleasure? What food or honey is sweeter than the knowledge of God's wisdom, and to enter into His secrets, and to inspect the intelligence of the Creator, and to learn the spiritual wisdom-filled sayings of the Lord your God, which are ridiculed by the wise men of this world? Let others have

their riches if they wish, drink from their jewels, shine in silk, delight the crowds with applause; and through various pleasures they cannot conquer their wealth. Our wealth is to meditate on the law of the Lord day and night, to knock on the door that does not open, to receive the Bread of the Trinity, and to trample the waves of the world with the Lord leading the way.

14. Greet Blaesilla and our young Eustochium. Greet Feliciana, truly happy in both her flesh and her spirit's virginity. Greet the remaining choir of chastity and your household Church, which I fear for even in safe times lest an enemy oversow tares while the master of the house sleeps: even though they might dare to say, "I am a city unassailable, a city at peace" (Isaiah 27:3, LXX). No one is safe from an enemy besieging army. No one, as blessed Cyprian says, is safe enough, when in close proximity to danger. Send a copy of this letter to our most diligent Marcella if she wishes to receive it. And I beseech you, remember me, and that our Lord Jesus Christ may swiftly tread Satan under our feet.

Letters - letter_031

Letter 31. To Eustochium.

Jerome writes to thank Eustochium for some presents sent to him by her on the festival of St. Peter. He also moralizes on the mystical meaning of the articles sent. The letter should be compared with Letter 44., of which the theme is similar. Written at Rome in 384 a.d. (on St. Peter's Day).

1. Doves, bracelets, and a letter are outwardly but small gifts to receive from a virgin, but the action which has prompted them enhances their value. And since honey may not be offered in sacrifice to God, [Lev. 2:11] you have shown skill in taking off their overmuch sweetness and making them pungent-if I may so say-with a dash of pepper. For nothing that is simply pleasurable or merely sweet can please God. Everything must have in it a sharp seasoning of truth. Christ's passover must be eaten with bitter herbs. [Ex. 12:8]

2. It is true that a festival such as the birthday¹ of Saint Peter should be seasoned with more gladness than usual; still our merriment must not forget the limit set by Scripture, and we must not stray too far from the boundary of our wrestling-ground. Your presents, indeed, remind me of the sacred volume, for in it Ezekiel decks Jerusalem with bracelets, [Ezek. 16:11] Baruch receives letters from Jeremiah,² and the Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove at the baptism of Christ. [Matt. 3:16] But to give you, too, a sprinkling of pepper and to remind you of my former letter,³ I send you to-day this three-fold warning. Cease not to adorn yourself with good works-the true bracelets of a Christian woman. [Tim. 2:10] Rend not the letter written on your heart [2 Cor. 3:2] as the profane king cut with his penknife that delivered to him by Baruch. [Jeremiah 36:23] Let not Hosea say to you as to Ephraim, "Thou art like a silly dove." [Hosea 7:11] My words are too harsh, you will say, and hardly suitable to a festival like the present. If so, you have provoked me to it by the nature of your own gifts. So long as you put bitter with sweet, you must expect the same from me, sharp words that is, as well as praise.

3. However, I do not wish to make light of your gifts, least of all the basket of fine cherries, blushing with such a virgin modesty that I can fancy them freshly gathered by Lucullus⁴ himself. For it was he who first introduced the fruit at Rome after his conquest of Pontus and Armenia; and the cherry tree is so called because he brought it from Cerasus. Now as the Scriptures do not mention cherries, but do speak of a basket of figs, [Jer. 24:1-3] I will use these instead to point my moral. May you be made of fruits such as those which grow before God's temple and of which He says, "Behold they are good, very good." [Jer. 24:3] The Saviour likes nothing that is half and half, and, while he welcomes the hot and does not shun the cold, he tells us in the Apocalypse that he will spew the lukewarm out of his mouth. [Rev. 3:15, Rev. 3:16] Wherefore we must be careful to celebrate our holy day not so much with abundance of food as with exultation of spirit. For it is altogether unreasonable to wish to honor a martyr by excess who himself, as you know, pleased God by fasting. When you take food always recollect that eating should be followed by reading, and also by prayer. And if, by taking this course, you displease some, repeat to yourself the words of

the Apostle: "If I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ" [Gal. 1:10] 1: I.e. the day of his martyrdom, his heavenly nativity 2: Jer. xxxvi.; Baruch vi

3: Letter XXII 4: Celebrated for his campaigns against Mithridates, and also as a prince of epicures

Letters - letter_032

Letter 32. To Marcella.

Jerome writes that he is busy collating Aquila's Greek version of the Old Testament with the Hebrew, inquires after Marcella's mother, and forwards the two preceding letters (XXX., XXXI.). Written at Rome in 384 a.d.

1. There are two reasons for the shortness of this letter, one that its bearer is impatient to start, and the other that I am too busy to waste time on trifles. You ask what business can be so urgent as to stop me from a chat on paper. Let me tell you, then, that for some time past I have been comparing Aquila's version¹ of the Old Testament with the scrolls of the Hebrew, to see if from hatred to Christ the synagogue has changed the text; and-to speak frankly to a friend-I have found several variations which confirm our faith. After having exactly revised the prophets, Solomon,² the psalter, and the books of Kings, I am now engaged on Exodus (called by the Jews, from its opening words, Eleh shemôth [Exod. 1:1, twmy hl]), and when I have finished this I shall go on to Leviticus. Now you see why I can let no claim for a letter withdraw me from my work. However, as I do not wish my friend Currentius³ to run altogether in vain, I have tacked on to this little talk two letters⁴ which I am sending to your sister Paula, and to her dear child Eustochium. Read these, and if you find them instructive or pleasant, take what I have said to them as meant for you also.

2. I hope that Albina, your mother and mine, is well. In bodily health, I mean, for I doubt not of her spiritual welfare. Pray salute her for me, and cherish her with double affection, both as a Christian and as a mother.

1: This version, made in the reign of Hadrian by a Jewish proselyte who is said by some to have been a renegade Christian, was marked by an exaggerated literalism and a close following of the Hebrew original. By the Church it was regarded with suspicion as being designedly anti-Christian. Jerome, however, here acquits Aquila of the charge brought against him 2: I.e. all the sapiential books, viz. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom 3: The name means runner. Hence the allusion to Gal. 2:2

4:

XXX., XXXI

Letters - letter_033

The below is the partial translation from NPNF. A fuller translation can be found in _v2 of this file.

Letter 33. To Paula. A fragment of a letter in which Jerome institutes a comparison between the industry as writers of M. T. Varro and Origen. It is noteworthy as passing an unqualified eulogium upon Origen, which contrasts strongly with the tone adopted by the writer in subsequent years (see, e.g., Letter 84.). Its date is probably 384 a.d.

1. Antiquity marvels at Marcus Terentius Varro,¹ because of the countless books which he wrote for Latin readers; and Greek writers are extravagant in their praise of their man of brass,² because he has written more works than one of us could so much as copy. But since Latin ears would find a list of Greek writings tiresome, I shall confine myself to the Latin Varro. I shall try to show that we of to-day are sleeping the sleep of Epimenides,³ and devoting to the amassing of riches the energy which our predecessors gave to sound, if secular, learning.

2. Varro's writings include forty-five books of antiquities, four concerning the life of the Roman people.

3. But why, you ask me, have I thus mentioned Varro and the man of brass? Simply to bring to your notice our Christian man of brass, or, rather, man of adamant⁴ -Origen, I mean-whose zeal for the study of Scripture has fairly earned for him this latter name. Would you learn what monuments of his genius he has left us? The following list exhibits them. His writings comprise thirteen books on Genesis, two books of Mystical Homilies, notes on Exodus, notes on Leviticus, * * * also single books,⁵ four books on First Principles, two books on the Resurrection, two dialogues on the same subject.⁶

4. So, you see, the labors of this one man have surpassed those of all previous writers, Greek and Latin. Who has ever managed to read all that he has written? Yet what reward have his exertions brought him? He stands condemned by his bishop, Demetrius,⁷ only the bishops of Palestine, Arabia, Phenicia, and Achaia dissenting. Imperial Rome consents to his condemnation, and even convenes a senate to censure him,⁸ not-as the rabid hounds who now pursue him cry-because of the novelty or heterodoxy of his doctrines, but because men could not tolerate the incomparable eloquence and knowledge which, when once he opened his lips, made others seem dumb.

5. I have written the above quickly and incautiously, by the light of a poor lantern. You will see why, if you think of those who to-day represent Epicurus and Aristippus.⁹

1:

Of the 490 books composed by this voluminous writer only two are extant, a treatise on husbandry and an essay on the Latin language

2: The epithet xalkenteroj, "heart of brass," is applied by Suidas to the grammarian Didymus, who, according to Athenaeus, wrote 3,500 books. Of these not one is extant 3: Which lasted 57 years 4:

'Adamantioj-Origen is so called by Eusebius (H. E. 6:14, 10). It appears to have been his proper name 5: "They may have been detached essays on particular subjects."-Westcott

6:

All the works mentioned have perished except the treatise on First Principles, and this in its completeness is extant only in the Latin version of Rufinus. The version made by Jerome has perished

7:

Origen left Alexandria for good in 231 a.d., and it was in that or the following year that Demetrius convoked the synod which condemned not so much his writings as his conduct. He appears to have been excommunicated as a heretic

8:

For Origen's condemnation in a synod held at Rome this passage is the principal authority. It is more than doubtful whether such a synod ever met; if it did it must have been when Pontianus was pope, in 231 or 232 a.d. Jerome may only mean that the great men of Rome all agreed in this condemnation

9:

Both these philosophers were hedonists, and the latter was a sensualist as well. Jerome is probably satirizing the worldly clergy of Rome, just as in after-years he nicknames his opponent Jovinian "the Christian Epicurus.

Letters - letter_033_v2

The below is Roger Pearse's version from: roger-pearse.com

30. TO PAULA.

1. Antiquity marvels at Marcus Terentius Varro, because of the countless books which he wrote for Latin readers; and Greek writers are extravagant in their praise of their man of brass, because he has written more works than one of us could so much as copy. But since Latin ears would find a list of Greek writings tiresome, I shall confine myself to the Latin Varro. I shall try to show that we of today are sleeping the sleep of Epimenides, and devoting to the amassing of riches the energy which our predecessors gave to sound, if secular, learning.

2. Varro's writings include:

45 books of antiquities, 4 concerning the life of the Roman people, 15 on Images, 76 "Logistorikwn", 15 on the Latin Language, 9 of disciplines, 5 on Latin speech, 5 of Plautine questions, 3 of Annals, 3 on the origin of the Latin language, 3 of poetry, 3 on the origins of the stage, 3 on the actions of the stage, 3 on the acts on the stage, 3 on descriptions, 3 on the propriety of writers, 3 on libraries, 3 on readings, 3 on the similarity of words, 3 on embassies, 3 of "suasiones", 3 on Pompey, 10 "singulares", 3 on persons, 15 on the civil law, an epitome in 9 books from the 42 books of antiquities, an epitome in 4 books from the 15 books on Images, an epitome in 9 books from the 15 books on the Latin language, 9 books on the principles of numbers, 3 books on rustic matters, 1 book on preventative health, 3 books on his own life, 3 books on the form of philosophy, 3 books on urban matters, 150 books of Menippean satires, 10 books of poetry, 22 books of orations, 6 books of pseudo-tragedies, 4 books of satires and many others, which it would be wearisome to enumerate. I have barely listed half of the index, and it is overwhelming to the readers.

3. But by contrast our age has learned men, and they know in which waters fish were born, and on what shore an oyster grew. We have no doubts concerning the flavour of thrushes, Paxamus and Apicius are ever in our hands, our eyes on our possessions, our senses on the plates, and, if one of the philosophers or Christians, who are the true philosophers, with worn cloak and grubby tunic fails to pay attention to the reading, he is thrown out with a jeer as if mad.

4. But why, you ask me, have I thus mentioned Varro and the man of brass? Simply to bring to your notice our Christian man of brass, or, rather, man of adamant — Origen, I mean— whose zeal for the study of Scripture has fairly earned for him this latter name. Would you learn what monuments of his genius he has left us? The following list exhibits them. His writings comprise:

13 books on Genesis, 2 books of mystical homilies, excerpta[2] Exodus, excerpta on Leviticus, 10 books of "Stromata", 36 books on Isaiah, likewise excerpta on Isaiah, 1 book on Hosea concerning Ephraim, commentary on Hosea, 2 books on Joel, 6 books on Amos, 1 book on Jonah, 3 books on Micaiah, 2 books on Nahum, 3 books on Habakuk, 2 books on Wisdom, 1 book on Haggai, 2

books on the beginning of Zechariah, 2 books on Malachi, 28 books on Ezekiel, excerpta on the Psalms from the start to [Psalm] 15, again 1 book on Psalm 1, 1 book on Psalm 2, 1 book on Psalm 3, 1 book on Psalm 4, 1 book on Psalm 5, 1 book on Psalm 6, 1 book on Psalm 7, 1 book on Psalm 8, 1 book on Psalm 9, 1 book on Psalm 10, 1 book on Psalm 11, 1 book on Psalm 12, 1 book on Psalm 13, 1 book on Psalm 14, 1 book on Psalm 15, 1 book on Psalm 16, 1 book on Psalm 20, 1 book on Psalm 24, 1 book on Psalm 29, 1 book on Psalm 38, 1 book on Psalm 40, 2 books on Psalm 43, 3 books on Psalm 44, 1 book on Psalm 45, 1 book on Psalm 46, 2 books on Psalm 50, 1 book on Psalm 51, 1 book on Psalm 52, 1 book on Psalm 53, 1 book on Psalm 57, 1 book on Psalm 58, 1 book on Psalm 59, 1 book on Psalm 62, 1 book on Psalm 63, 1 book on Psalm 64, 1 book on Psalm 65, 1 book on Psalm 68, 1 book on Psalm 70, 1 book on Psalm 71, 1 book on the beginning of Psalm 70 part 2 (?), 2 books on Psalm 103. 3 books on Proverbs, excerpta on Ecclesiastes. 10 books on the Song of Songs, and 2 other books (tomos), which he wrote on this in his youth, 5 books (tomos) on the Lamentations of Jeremiah, likewise 4 books "Monobibia, Periarchon", 2 books on the resurrection and two other dialogues on the resurrection, 1 book on various questions on Proverbs, dialogue against Candidus the Valentinian, a book on martyrdom. On the New Testament: 25 books on Matthew, 32 books on John, 1 book of excerpta on various parts of John, 15 books on Luke, 15 books on the letter of the apostle Paul to the Romans, 25 books on the letter to the Galatians, 3 books on the letter to the Ephesians, 1 book on the letter to the Philippians, 2 books on the letter to the Colossians, 3 books on the 1st letter to the Thessalonians, 1 book on the 2nd letter to the Thessalonians, 1 book on the letter to Titus, 1 book on the letter to Philemon.

Again homilies on the Old Testament: 17 homilies on Genesis, 8 homilies on Exodus, 11 homilies on Leviticus, 28 homilies on Numbers, 13 homilies on Deuteronomy, 26 homilies on Joshua son of Nun, 9 homilies on the book of Judges, 8 homilies on the passover [=Easter?], 4 homilies on the 1st book of Kings, 22 homilies on Job, 7 homilies on Parables, 8 homilies on Ecclesiastes, 2 homilies on the Song of Songs, 32 homilies on Isaiah, 14 homilies on Jeremiah, 12 homilies on Ezekiel. On the Psalms: 1 homily on Psalm 3, 1 homily on Psalm 4, 1 homily on Psalm 8, 1 homily on Psalm 12, 3 homilies on Psalm 15, 1 homily on Psalm 16, 1 homily on Psalm 18, 1 homily on Psalm 22, 1 homily on Psalm 23, 1 homily on Psalm 24, 1 homily on Psalm 25, 1 homily on Psalm 26, 1 homily on Psalm 27, 5 homilies on Psalm 36, 2 homilies on Psalm 37, 2 homilies on Psalm 38, 2 homilies on Psalm 39, 1 homily on Psalm 49, 1 homily on Psalm 51, 2 homilies on Psalm 52, 1 homily on Psalm 54, 7 homilies on Psalm 67, 2 homilies on Psalm 71, 3 homilies on Psalm 72, 3 homilies on Psalm 73, 1 homily on Psalm 74, 1 homily on Psalm 75, 3 homilies on Psalm 76, 9 homilies on Psalm 77, 4 homilies on Psalm 79, 2 homilies on Psalm 80, 1 homily on Psalm 81, 3 homilies on Psalm 82, 1 homily on Psalm 83, 2 homilies on Psalm 84, 1 homily on Psalm 85, 1 homily on Psalm 87, 1 homily on Psalm 108, 1 homily on Psalm 110, 3 homilies on Psalm 118, 1 homily on Psalm 120, 2 homilies on Psalm 121, 2 homilies on Psalm 122, 2 homilies on Psalm 123, 2 homilies on Psalm 124, 1 homily on Psalm 125, 1 homily on Psalm 127, 1 homily on Psalm 128, 1 homily on Psalm 129, 1 homily on Psalm 131, 2 homilies on Psalm 132, 2 homilies on Psalm 133, 2 homilies on Psalm 134, 4 homilies on Psalm 135, 2 homilies on Psalm 137, 4 homilies on Psalm 138, 2 homilies on Psalm 139, 3 homilies on Psalm 144, 1 homily on Psalm 145, 1 homily on Psalm 146, 1 homily on Psalm 147, 1 homily on Psalm 148, excerpta on the whole psalter.

Homilies on the New Testament: 25 homilies on the gospel “kata Matqaion”, 39 homilies on the gospel “kata Loukan”, 17 homilies on the Acts of the Apostles, 11 homilies on the 2nd letter to the Corinthians, 2 homilies on the letter to the Thessalonians, 7 homilies on the letter to the Galatians, 1 homily on the letter to Titus, 18 homilies on the letter to the Hebrews.

1 homily on peace, an exhortation to Pionia, [a homily] on fasting, 2 homilies on monogamy and trigamy, 2 homilies on Tarsus, by Origen, Firmianus and Gregory, likewise 2 books of excerpts of letters by Origen and by others to him — the letter of Hesiphodorus on the case of Origen in 2 books — 9 books of his letters to various people, 2 books of other letters, likewise a letter in 2 books as an apologia for his works.

5. So, you see, the labors of this one man have surpassed those of all previous writers, Greek and Latin. Who has ever managed to read all that he has written? Yet what reward have his exertions brought him? He stands condemned by his bishop, Demetrius, only the bishops of Palestine, Arabia, Phenicia, and Achaia dissenting. Imperial Rome consents to his condemnation, and even convenes a senate to censure him, not— as the rabid hounds who now pursue him cry— because of the novelty or heterodoxy of his doctrines, but because men could not tolerate the incomparable eloquence and knowledge which, when once he opened his lips, made others seem dumb.

6. I have written the above quickly and incautiously, by the light of a poor lantern. You will see why, if you think of those who today represent Epicurus and Aristippus.

Letters - letter_034

Letter 34. To Marcella. In reply to a request from Marcella for information concerning two phrases in Ps. cxxvii. ("bread of sorrow," v. 2, and "children of the shaken off," A.V. "of the youth," v. 4). Jerome, after lamenting that Origen's notes on the psalm are no longer extant, gives the following explanations: The Hebrew phrase "bread of sorrow" is rendered by the LXX. "bread of idols"; by Aquila, "bread of troubles"; by Symmachus, "bread of misery." Theodotion follows the LXX. So does Origen's Fifth Version, The Sixth renders "bread of error." In support of the LXX. the word used here is in Ps. cxv. 4, translated "idols." Either the troubles of life are meant or else the tenets of heresy. With the second phrase he deals at greater length. After showing that Hilary of Poitiers's view (viz. that the persons meant are the apostles, who were told to shake the dust off their feet, Matt. x. 14) is untenable and would require "shakers off" to be substituted for "shaken off," Jerome reverts to the Hebrew as before and declares that the true rendering is that of Symmachus and Theodotion, viz. "children of youth." He points out that the LXX. (by whom the Latin translators had been misled) fall into the same mistake at Neh. iv. 16. Finally he corrects a slip of Hilary as to Ps. cxxviii. 2, where, through a misunderstanding of the LXX., the latter had substituted "the labors of thy fruits" for "the labors of thy hands." He speaks throughout with high respect of Hilary, and says that it was not the bishop's fault that he was ignorant of Hebrew. The date of the letter is probably a.d. 384. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. Blessed Martyr Pamphilus, whose life Eusebius of Caesarea, a bishop, explained in almost three volumes, when he wanted to equal Demetrius of Phalerum, and Pisistratus in sacred library studies, and peruse the images of minds which are true, and the eternal monuments, throughout the whole world, especially pursuing the books of Origen more fully, gave them to the Church of Caesarea: which Acacius and Euzoius, priests of the same Church, attempted to restore but it was partly corrupt. When he had found many things and left us an index of his discoveries, he confessed that he did not find the commentary on the 126th Psalm and the treatise on the letter Phe, because they were not labeled. Not because such a great man (whom we call 'Adamantius') left anything unexplored, but because the carelessness of later generations did not last to our memory. I said this to you because you asked me about the same Psalm, what was the bread of affliction, in the words: 'It is vain for you rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows;' to show that I do not have Origen's comments on the same.

2. Returning to Hebrew, I found, for the bread of sorrow, a writing: Leem Aasabim, which Aquila has translated as ἄρτον των διαπονημάτων; Symmachus as ἄρτον κακοπαθόμενον; the Fifth Edition and Theodotion, who follow the Septuagint in other things, as 'bread of idols'; the Sixth πλάνης, that is, of error. It is not surprising that Aquila puts διαπονηματα for idols, since they are the works of human hands, and prophetic people are accused of rising up in vain to the temple at daybreak, and hastening to the sanctuary after rest, when idols are honored instead of God. According to what Ezekiel wrote in the temple itself, priests sacrifice to idols. But so that you may be more fully persuaded, for idolatry in Hebrew, this same word, that is, Asabim, is also written in the one hundred and thirteenth Psalm, and the Septuagint also translated idols. For in that place

where it is written, 'the idols of the gentiles, silver, and gold, the work of men's hands,' in Hebrew it is called 'Asareem,' which Aquila interprets as 'their elaborations.' Therefore, since truth presents itself in this way, certain individuals do not mistakenly understand the bread of sorrow as the sacraments of heretics, or interpret the toil of this miserable and afflicted life: among whom we eat our bread in the sweat of our faces, and amid thorns and thistles the sustenance of a brief life is born.

3. Also, you deemed it worthy to ask about the same Psalm: Who are the sons of those shaken off? I wonder why you did not read in the commentaries of Hilary that the sons of those shaken off are interpreted as the believing peoples, for the Apostles were believed to be called by that name, to whom it was commanded in the Gospels, that wherever they enter a city, and they were not received, they should shake off the dust from their feet as a testimony against the unbelieving (Matthew 10; and Mark 6). Although you may cleverly object, the apostles cannot be understood under the name of "excussorum," since "excussientes" means "those who shake out," while "excussi" means "those who are shaken out by others." Therefore, it would be inappropriate to accept that the apostles had been shaken out, as they should rather be called "shakers out." What then shall I do? I do not dare to criticize a man of such great influence and eloquence in his time, who was praised everywhere for his confession, hard work, and clarity of speech wherever the Roman name was known. However, it is not his fault that he was ignorant of the Hebrew language and had a certain knowledge of Greek literature, which he could understand only through his familiarity with Heliodorus the Presbyter, who sought to explain what he could not understand, such as what was said by Origen. He, because he was not able to find in this Psalm a Commentary of Origen, wanted to insinuate his own opinion more than he wanted to confess his ignorance. That view, which he took up, he discussed with clear language, and he expressed alien error more eloquently.

4. Therefore, it remains for us to return to the source of speech again, the Hebrew, and see how it is written. Where we have, "like sons of the shaken", there it is read, "Chen Bne Annaurim", which Aquila interpreted as "like sons of puberty". Symmachus and Theodotion, as "like sons of youth". Sexta ■κ■νεος νο■, which we can say means "sharp senses". From which it is clear that Christian people of adolescence are understood, according to that example, in which God is said to extend his holy ones like bows and arrows; as in the prophet Zachariah: "for I have bent Judah for me as a bow" (Zach. 9. 13). And the Savior from himself: 'I have set myself as an elect arrow. And he hid me in his quiver' (Isaiah 49:2). Finally, in the following verse, except for the Septuagint, who translated differently, it is found in Hebrew and in all editions: 'Blessed is the man who filled his quiver from them'; that because he had once taken the metaphor from arrows, the translation would also be preserved in the quiver. But the custom of human speech calls the vigorous, robust, and agile excussus; and the Seventy Interpreters themselves translated juveniles into Ezra's book, in which it is thus written: 'And it came to pass from that day forward, that half of the excussus did the work, and half of them held spears and shields and bows and coats of mail; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.' (Neh. 4. 16). From which we understand that, in the present passage, excussi are placed for adolescents and young men; not, as he thought, for the apostles, who are said to be shaken off from their feet. I have read in a certain book, and found an elegant sense in it, that the Jews expelled from the temple, the law, and the grace of the Lord, are called excussi because they are reprobates; and that the apostles who are born from their seed belong to

them and are contained in the likeness of the arrows in the hand of the Lord.

5. In the following Psalm, Heliodorus erred more than our Hilary, who, having had various opinions about the place where it is written: "You will eat the fruit of your labors," asserted that the sentence would stand better if it were written: to eat some fruit of one's labors, and not labors of fruit: whence a spiritual understanding ought to be sought. And, taking advantage of this opportunity, he entered into a long discussion with such carefulness and industry, that he was desirous of being understood, as falsehood always needs to be, in order to appear as truth: whereas in this place the Latin translators, being misled by an ambiguity in the Greek word, have rendered καρπο■ς by "fruits", instead of "hands"; whereas καρπο■, also, signify "hands", thus corresponding with the Hebrew word, Chaphach. Symmachus and the Fifth Version have translated it "of thy hands", in order to avoid the ambiguity of the former translation.

6. When my quick hand, dictating my writing to a stealthy task, noted down these things for my bedtime reading, and I had many things I wished to say, already the fourth hour of the night had nearly passed, and suddenly, goaded by some pangs of my wretched stomach, I was forced to break off my speech, so that at least during the remaining hours, I might foil the weakness creeping on me by slipping into sleep unawares.

Letters - letter_035

Letter 35. From Pope Damasus.

Damasus addresses live questions to Jerome with a request for information concerning them. They are:

1. What is the meaning of the words "Whosoever slayeth Cain vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold"? (Gen. iv. 5.)
 2. If God has made all things good, how comes it that He gives charge to Noah concerning unclean animals, and says to Peter, "What God hath cleansed that call not thou common"? (Acts x. 15.)
 3. How is Gen. xv. 16, "in the fourth generation they shall come hither again," to be reconciled with Ex. xiii. 18, Ex. xiii LXX, "in the fifth generation the children of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt"?
 4. Why did Abraham receive circumcision as a seal of his faith? (Rom. iv. 11.)
 5. Why was Isaac, a righteous man and dear God, allowed by God to become the dupe of Jacob? (Gen. xxvii.)
- Written at Rome 384 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text. To his dearest son Hieronymus Damasus.

I intended to wake you, who are sleeping and reading, for a long time rather than writing, with the questions sent to you: not that you should not read, for this (reading) is fed and fattened, like our daily food, to the speech. But this is the benefit of reading if you write. Therefore, since yesterday you told the messenger sent to me that you have no letters except for those that you dictated in the desert, which I read and transcribed with complete eagerness. You offered to dictate a few (letters) yourself with secret nocturnal work, if I wanted to; I willingly accept from the one who offered what I had even wished to ask you to do even if you had refused. And truly, I think that there is no discussion more worthy of our conversation than if we talk among ourselves about the Scriptures: that is, I ask, you answer. In this life, I think nothing is more enjoyable than this nourishment for our souls, which surpasses all honey.» How sweet, says the Prophet, are your words to my throat, more than honey to my mouth (Ps. 118. 103). «For since, as a renowned speaker says, we differ from beasts in that we can speak: who is worthy of praise, who surpasses others in the manner in which men surpass beasts?

Therefore, prepare yourself, and discuss with me what is presented, maintaining moderation on both sides, so that the proposed may not desire a solution, nor the letter brevity. For indeed I confess to you, that I am not fond of reading the books of Lactantius which you gave me a long time ago, because many of his letters extend even to a thousand line-spaces, and they seldom have any discussion relating to our own teachings. This causes tedium to the reader due to length, and if there are any brief ones, they are more suitable for scholars than for us, discussing as they do things concerning meters, regions and philosophers.

1. "What does it mean that it is written in Genesis: 'Every one that findeth me shall slay me?'" (Genesis 4:15)
2. "If God made all things very good, why did he command Noah to take the unclean animals along with the clean, since no unclean thing can be good? And in the New Testament, after the vision which was shown to Peter, who said: 'Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean,' a voice responded from heaven: 'What God has cleansed, do not call common?'" (Acts 10:14-15)
3. Why God speaks to Abraham that the fourth generation of the sons of Israel would return from Egypt, and later Moses writes: But the fifth generation the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt." (Exodus 13:18 according to the Septuagint) "Which seems contradictory unless explained.
4. Why did Abraham receive the sign of faith in circumcision?
5. Why did the just and dear to God Isaac, deceived by error, bless the one he did not want to but the one he did not want?

Letters - letter_036

Letter 36. To Pope Damasus.

Jerome's reply to the foregoing. For the second and fourth questions he refers Damasus to the writings of Tertullian, Novatian, and Origen. The remaining three he deals with in detail.

Gen. iv. 15, he understands to mean "the slayer of Cain shall complete the sevenfold vengeance which is to be wreaked upon him." Exodus xiii. is, he proposes to reconcile with Gen. xv. 16, by supposing that in the one place the tribe of Levi is referred to, in the other the tribe of Judah. He suggests, however, that the words rendered by the LXX. "in the fifth generation" more probably mean "harnessed" (so A.V.) or "laden." In reply to the question about Isaac he says: "No man save Him who for our salvation has deigned to put on flesh has full knowledge and a complete grasp of the truth. Paul, Samuel, David, Elisha, all make mistakes, and holy men only know what God reveals to them." He then goes on to give a mystical interpretation of the passage suggested by the martyr Hippolytus. Written the day after the previous letter. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

Blessed Pope Damasus, Jerome.

1. After I received the letter from Your Holiness, I immediately summoned a notary to record it. As he was preparing to perform his duties, I was already imagining what I was going to say. At that moment, the notary and I were both preparing to speak when suddenly a Hebrew man interrupted us, carrying several volumes that he had apparently received from the Synagogue to read. 'Here you have what you requested,' he said. This surprised me and I didn't know what to do, so he scared me and I forgot everything else and immediately started writing. And that's what I've been doing ever since. Yesterday, since you sent a message to me as a deacon, stating that you were expecting commentary from me on the Epistle, as I understand it, and desiring a brief response to individual matters that necessitate the length of large volumes, I have outlined these things for you, leaving aside only two questions: not because I could not respond to them, but because they have been written in the Latin language by the most eloquent men, namely our Tertullian and Novatian; and if we want to introduce new material, there will be a broader discussion. Certainly, I am awaiting what you would prefer: whether you would like the thoughts to be sorted out in a brief letter, or whether you would like to prepare the books of individuals. For both Origen in his Commentary on the Fourth Epistle to the Romans discussed circumcision with great care, and treated of the clean and unclean animals under the Levitical law at length; so that even if I myself had been unable to find anything, I could still have borrowed from his sources. Moreover, to speak more truly, I have in my possession Didymus's book on the Holy Spirit, which I wish to dedicate to you in a translated form, lest you think that I am only sleeping, who find reading without writing to be a cure for sleeplessness. Therefore, having premised what you had proposed by way of inquiry, I will tell you what I think, asking your pardon for the tardiness and haste of my reply; for haste, because I have wished to write you an answer at one sitting, which is the work of many days; for tardiness, because being detained by other work, I have not immediately answered your

questions.

2. What does it mean that it is written in Genesis: 'Everyone who kills Cain will pay sevenfold'?

Before we speak of the question, it seems right to arrange editions of individual interpreters, comparing them with the Hebrew language in order that the meaning of the scriptures can be more easily understood. Vaimor Lo Adonai Lochen Chol Orec Cain Sobathaim Joccoamo. Aquila. 'And the Lord said to him, Therefore, whoever kills Cain shall be avenged sevenfold.' Symmachus: 'And the Lord said to him: Not so, but whoever kills Cain shall be avenged seven times, or the seventh time.' Septuagint and Theodotion: And the Lord said to him: 'Not so, but whoever kills Cain shall pay seven vengeance.' After Cain had killed his brother, when asked by the Lord, 'Where is your brother Abel?' he insolently replied, 'I do not know: am I my brother's keeper?' Therefore, cursed with a groaning and trembling existence on earth, he was not willing to beg for forgiveness, but multiplying sin on sin, he thought it was such a great offense that it could not be pardoned by the Lord. Finally, he replied to the Lord, 'My cause is greater than to be forgiven,' that is, 'I have sinned more than I deserve to be absolved.' Behold, thou dost cast me forth this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hidden, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth: every one, therefore, that findeth me, shall kill me. And Cain said to the Lord: My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon. Behold thou dost cast me out this day from the face of the earth, and I shall be hidden from thy face, and I shall be a vagabond and a fugitive on the earth, and whosoever shall find me, shall kill me.

"Not so," that is, not as you perceive, will you die, and you will receive death as a remedy: rather you will live until the seventh generation, and you will be tormented by the fire of your conscience, so that whoever kills you, according to double understanding, will either free you in the seventh generation, or the seventh will free you from torture. It is not because Cain himself who killed will be subjected to seven revenge: but because the killer who killed him who had been left to punishment will pay seven revenges that ran for such a long time in Cain.

3. But in order that what we say may become more clear, let us set forth an example of daily custom. Let the servant speak amidst the beatings to his master: I have burned down your house and dissipated all your wealth, kill me. And let the master respond: Not as you wish, but you shall die and end in the punishment of death; instead, you shall be kept alive for a long time, and shall live so unhappily in this life that whoever kills you will provide a favor for the killed one, in freeing you from so many tortures. And according to the Septuagint version, this seems to be the sense to us.

4. But concerning what Aquila set forth, in sevenfold manner: And so the opinion of our elders is that Symmachus, the seventh or seventh generation, will avenge it, because they believe that in the seventh generation from Lamech Cain was killed. For Adam begot Cain, Cain begot Enoch, Enoch begot Irad, Irad begot Mehujael, Mehujael begot Methuselah, Methuselah begot Lamech, who was the seventh from Adam, and he did not kill Cain voluntarily (as it is written in a certain Hebrew book), as he himself confesses later on, "For I have slain a man to my wounding, and a youth to my hurt: for revenge is appointed sevenfold to Cain; but for Lamech seventy times sevenfold" (Gen. 4:23–24). Indeed, nothing obscure, of Cain, who in the seventh generation from Lamech was murdered, and according to another account, suffered the punishment of his crime, and he lived on the earth, groaning and trembling for so many generations.

5. Payment of 77 vengeancees to be made on Lamech. - Now that which you had not asked crept upon you while we were discussing something else. What are the seventy-seven vengeancees which are to be paid on Lamech? They say, from Adam to Christ there are 77 generations. Read Luke the Evangelist, and you will find it to be so, as we say. Therefore, just as in the seventh generation Cain's sin was obliterated, for God will not twice exact vengeance for the same thing, and whoever has once received afflictions in this life will not suffer the same torments after death, which they have suffered in life, so also should Lamech's sin, that is, the sin of the whole world and blood that was shed, be dissolved by Christ's coming, who has taken away the sins of the world, who has washed his garments in the blood of the grape, and who has trodden the winepress alone, who has ascended from Edom, red in his garments, (Isaiah 63.1-3); who performed a miracle to the angels crying out: "Lift up your gates, O princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of glory shall come in" (Psalm 24:7), and so on. A certain Hebrew was telling me that in the apocryphal books seventy-seven souls from the offspring of Lamech were found to have been destroyed by the deluge: and that in this number was made the vengeance on Lamech, in that his race persevered until the catastrophe.

6. Cain committed seven sins. Others suspect various revenges as the seven of Cain. The first they claim was a sin, that he did not divide correctly. The second, that he envied his brother. The third, that he acted deceitfully, saying: "Let us go into the field". Fourth, that he killed. Fifth, that he shamelessly denied, saying: "I know not, am I my brother's keeper?" (v. 9)? Sixth, that he condemned himself, saying: "Greater is my fault than to be forgiven" (v. 13). Seventh, because neither the condemned have repented, like Nineveh and King Hezekiah of Judah, that they lifted up tears for impending death, not to perish, but by doing penance, they obtained the mercy of God. For they say that god is merciful, therefore, he prolonged it to the seventh generation, until, compelled by his own misery and longevity of sorrow, he would do penance and deserved to be absolved at least from those evils themselves.

7. Some interpret the number seven as full and perfect, gathering testimonies from many places in the Scriptures, and this being the meaning which we have explained above, that whoever kills Cain shall be freed by a great affliction, passing through all punishments.

8. But there are also those who ask of the Gospel concerning the question from Peter: 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.' And they think that death and sin were sanctified on the seventh generation of the Sabbath when Enoch was taken, 'and he was not found because God had translated him' (Gen. 5:24). But on the seventy and seven, they follow this explanation: in the coming of Christ, the sting of death and sin was broken.

9. I will give another opinion, lest I should seem to have passed over something. Some interpret the seventh year of remission, the fiftieth of Jubilee, and the four hundred and ninetieth, which they would have to mean seventy-sevenfold, in many ways: asserting that for this reason the numbers fifty and five hundred were placed in the Gospel for the debtor; and the fiftieth Psalm of penitence; which is completed in seven weeks, and breaks forth at the beginning of the octad. But let our discussion not proceed farther: suffice it to say that we have spoken thus far on this subject, because from the things we have sprinkled, you can yourself make an entire forest of debate: knowing that Origen has spoken of this Question only in his twelfth and thirteenth book of Genesis.

10. Why did God speak to Abraham that in the fourth generation his descendants would return from Egypt, and yet Moses later writes that in the fifth generation the Israelites left Egypt? Unless this is explained, it appears to contradict. But when I read this problem, I began to boil silently within myself, and running through Genesis and Exodus step by step, I found places where things seem to be a matter of doubt. And at first I thought, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, that they were indissoluble, as are many other things. For it is written that Methuselah lived only fourteen years after the flood, yet he did not enter the ark with Noah. And although God Himself spoke to Abraham, saying, "Know for a certainty that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years" (Gen. xv. 13), yet Moses writes later in Exodus: "And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt" (Exod. xii. 41). Moreover, Agar also carried Ishmael, as if he were a nursing and tender child on her shoulders, when he was almost eighteen years old; and it was ridiculous for such a great youth to have sat on his mother's neck. Now Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, began his reign in the forty-first year of his age, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, while his father, starting to reign in his twelfth year, had reigned for forty-one years and had not been able to generate a son for eleven years.

11. "While I was turning over these and many such things, disturbed within me, he opened the door for me which is opened by the key of David, and entered with me into his chamber, and there placed me on the couch on which he himself was reclining" (St. Augustine, Confessions, Book VII, Chapter XVII, 27). For even though the Scripture may seem to contradict itself, both are true, since it is different. The sons of Israel went out of the land of Egypt in the fourth generation: Replicate the genealogy of Levi. Levi begot Caath, Caath begot Amram, Amram begot Aaron, Aaron begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Finees. Caath entered Egypt with his father Levi. Again Eleazar, with his father Aaron, went out of Egypt. From Caath to Eleazar, four generations are counted: although some want to start from Amram and reach Finees, as we did in Eleazar. But if you want to show an uneven number, how the sons of Israel went out of the land of Egypt in the fifth generation according to Exodus, let it be counted for you by the tribe of Judah and the order. Judah begot Perez, Perez begot Hezron, Hezron begot Aram, Aram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salmon. Count from Perez to Nahshon, you will find five generations: although some (as we show in the tribe of Levi) make a beginning in Hezron and come down to Salmon.

12. I think the difficulty has been resolved: but if this is not satisfactory, I will come to the point and say in Hebrew that it does not make a difference. Aquila, who interpreted the text more diligently, as some think, rather than contentiously, translated the passage where the Septuagint had: 'Now the children of Israel went up, harnessed, out of the land of Egypt, in the fifth generation' (Exodus 13:18) as follows: Καὶ ἔνοπλισμένοι ἐβήσαν οὗτοι ἐκ τῆς γῆς Αἰγύπτου,' which means, 'And the children of Israel, having equipped themselves marched forth from the land of Egypt.' Although, according to the ambiguity of the Greek language, for the term 'having equipped themselves' which we used, it might be understood as 'having provided themselves with household goods, which they had taken from the Egyptians.'

13. To one who thinks curiosity has limits, a greater desire to seek arises: and I am dissolved on all sides, as Jeremiah (Jeremiah 20) [said]: why did the Seventy, and Aquila translate "armored"

as a fifth generation? I repeat the Hebrew volume, which Paul calls "a palm tree" according to some, and examining the characters themselves carefully, I find it written: Vamusim Alu Bne Israel Mearez Mesraim. In the remaining part the interpretations do not differ: the entire battle is over the word "Amusim," which is written with these letters, Heth, Mem, Sin, Jod, Mem, whether it means "five" or "fortified. And indeed we cannot deny that this is said in fivefold number, not the fifth as some interpret it, in singular: but the word Dor, which in Hebrew means generation, is not found in it. So if it were the fifth generation, it would have been read in their language as Amesa Dor. But now the word Amusim, that is to say, five or rather the fifth, is written only so that it might mean: "And the children of Israel ascended the fifth time from the land of Egypt," which seemed less understood, and so the word generation was added. But in this place especially, all Judea proclaims that the eagle properly translated everything else, and the entire seating of the synagogues agrees with it, namely that the same language, written with the same letters, has different sounds and meanings among them. We present one example for the sake of clarity: the words "pastors" and "lovers" are written with the same letters, Res, Ain, Jod, Mem, but "pastors" are read as Roim and "lovers" are read as Reim. This is why, when Jerusalem in the Prophets is accused of the crime of fornication with its lovers, in our own codices, the name of the shepherds is substituted for that of the lovers.

14. I know that these things are vexatious to the reader, but one who discusses Hebrew letters should not seek Aristotle's arguments, nor should he who seeks to be eloquent be led by the Tullian river, nor should Quintilian's ears be soothed by flowers and school declamation. A simple and everyday speech, similar to that of ordinary people and smelling of no lucubration, is necessary, one that explains the matter, teaches the meaning, reveals the obscure, not one that flourishes with verbal composition. Let others be eloquent, let them be praised, they may pour out words from their inflated mouths, but for me it is sufficient to speak in such a way that I am understood, imitating the simplicity of the Scriptures themselves when discussing them.

15. "Why did the just man and beloved of God, Isaac, bless not him whom he wanted, but whom he did not want, deceived by error?" (Genesis 17)

I delay a little on the topic, and I pass over those things which our elders have interpreted about this place, not because I do not agree with their opinion, but because you only seek this: why did a just man not know something and act against his will? To which a concise answer is: No man, except for him who deigned to put on flesh for our salvation, had full knowledge and the most certain truth. Finally, Paul knows in part and prophesies in part (1 Corinthians 13:9) and now sees through a mirror in a riddle and says that we do not know how to pray as we ought (Romans 8:26) because when the perfect comes, then what is in part will be destroyed (1 Corinthians 13:10). The Prophet Samuel, consecrated to Moses in the Psalter, was sent to anoint the king. When he saw Eliab, one of Jesse's eldest sons, he said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at what man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." Samuel continued to search until he found David. Elisha, who was glorified in two spirits and whose bones gave life to a dead man, is also described as not understanding everything until he was visited by the Shunamite woman who fell weeping at his feet. When Gehazi tried to send her away, Elisha said, "Let her go, she is in bitter distress, and the Lord has hidden things from me and has not told me." There are many things that we ought not to teach from examples, holy men

who are beloved by God knowing only those things which have been revealed to them by the Lord: to have been ignorant of those things which have not been revealed to them: and to question the angel at every vision, Zacharias and Daniel, and to implore him, that he may explain to him what those things are which they see. From whence it is no wonder, and to his own greatest usefulness, that Isaac did not know what he was doing, when he erred more at that time that he wanted to bring out his son dedicated to bloody pleasure, and he who could afterwards kill his brother, having passed over him who innocently dwelt at home, and wanted to do his own will more than God's. I think it was a divine dispensation, that he should be blinded in his eyes, and yet when he himself said, 'The voice indeed is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau' (Gen. 27. 22): he did not understand that the younger son, who had stood by, had stolen his brother's blessing.

16. The mystical interpretation of the martyr Hippolytus. But since we have promised to add what it signifies in figure, let us include the words of the martyr Hippolytus, about which our Victorinus does not differ much: not that he has accomplished everything more fully, but that he may give the reader an occasion for a more comprehensive understanding. "Isaac bears the image of God the Father, Rebecca of the Holy Spirit, Esau of the former people and the devil. Jacob [bears the image] of the Church or of Christ. Isaac's age symbolizes the completion of the world: his blindness indicates that faith in the world has perished and the light of religion has been neglected before him." That the elder son is called, is a Jewish legal custom. That his father loves his food and his catch, saves men from error, whom every righteous person hunts through doctrine. The word of God is a promise of blessing and hope of the future kingdom in which the saints will reign with Christ, and celebrate the true Sabbath. Rebecca, full of the Holy Spirit, knowing what she had heard before she gave birth, because the elder will serve the younger» (Gen. 25, 23); rather, it is the form of the Holy Spirit, which knew the future in Christ, that meditates beforehand in Jacob: he speaks to his younger son: Go to the flock, and bring me from there two goats» (Gen. 27. 9); "foreshadowing the coming of the fleshly Savior, in which he would especially liberate those who were held in bondage by sin: for in all the Scriptures, goats are taken for sinners. But the fact that he is ordered to bring two, signifies the adoption of two peoples: the tender and good, docile and innocent souls. The robe or clothing of Esau are the faith and Scriptures of the Hebrews, with which the people of the Gentiles are clothed. The skins that are wrapped around his arms are the sins of both peoples, which Christ affixed to the cross together with him in the extension of his hands. What Isaac asks of Jacob and why he came so quickly, marvels at the rapid faith of believers. The fact that delicious food is offered is a pleasing sacrifice to God, the salvation of sinners. After eating, a blessing follows, and one delights in its fragrance, announcing the power of the resurrection and the kingdom with an open voice: how his brothers should also adore him and serve him, believing from Israel. "Therefore, since injustice is an enemy of justice, Esau is stirred up to discord, and deceit devises death, saying in his heart: 'The days of my father's passion are approaching, and I will kill my brother Jacob.'" (Gen. 27:41) "Thus the devil, who premeditated fratricide in Cain, confesses it most clearly in Esau, also indicating the time of the murder: 'The days of my father's passion are approaching, so that I may kill my brother.' Therefore, Rebecca, that is, patience, informed her husband of the plot against her brother-in-law, and he called Jacob and instructed him to go to Mesopotamia and take a wife of the stock of Laban the Syrian, his mother's brother. So, fleeing his brother's trickery, Jacob went to Mesopotamia (Gen. 28); in the same way, Christ, compelled by the unbelief of the Jews, went to Galilee, from which he would

take the Church for himself as a bride from the Gentiles.” These things were said by the man mentioned above.

17. But we say that the Lord did not come except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, nor did he desire to accept bread from the children and give it to the dogs, and that he brought the first blessing to the people of Judah, to whom the words of God (Romans 3:2) and the promise and legislation and completion of the Testament (Romans 9:4) were entrusted; but because they did not want to believe, the blessing was transferred to the lesser Jacobite people. Nor, however, was the elder son utterly despised, because when the fullness of the gentiles entered, then all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:25 and 26).

Letters - letter_037

Letter 37. To Marcella.

Marcella had asked Jerome to lend her a copy of a commentary by Rhetitius, bishop of Augustodunum (Autun), on the Song of Songs. He now refuses to do so on the ground that the work abounds with errors, of which the two following are samples: (1) Rhetitius identifies Tharshish with Tarsus, and (2) he supposes that Uphaz (in the phrase "gold of Uphaz") is the same as Cephas. Written at Rome a.d. 384. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. Recently, when I had read through the commentary on the Song of Songs by Rheticius, the Bishop of Augustodunum, who was once sent to Rome by the Emperor Constantine, under Bishop Sylvester, on account of the Montanists, I was greatly surprised that an eloquent man should, among senseless interpretations of others, have thought that Tharsis was the city where the Apostle Paul was born, and that Ophaz referred to Peter, because Cephas is the same as Peter in the Gospel. He had of course encountered the same word in Ezekiel, where it is written of the four beasts, "And the appearance of the wheels was like the appearance of Tharsis," and in Daniel, where it is said of the Lord, "And his body was like that of Tharsis." That which the eagle and the chrysolite, and Symmachus the hyacinth, do mean. And in the Psalm: 'Thou shalt break the ships of Tharsis with a violent wind' (Ps. 47.8). And among the stones which were carved with the names of the tribes for the ornament of the high priest's ephod, the name of the same stone is included, and nearly the whole of Scripture is full of this name. But what shall I say of Ophaz, when the prophet Daniel aforesaid, in the third year of Cyrus, king of the Persians, after three weeks of fasting and mourning, saith: 'I lifted up my eyes, and behold a man clothed in linen, and his loins were girded with the finest gold of Ophaz' (Dan. 10.5)? For there are many kinds of gold among the Hebrews. Hence, for distinction, Ophaz is mentioned, lest any one should suppose that Zaab is meant, which is spoken of in Genesis as a precious stone (Gen. 2.12).

2. You ask whether the stone of Tharsis is a chrysolite or a hyacinth, as different interpreters want it, to whose color the image of God is written, why Jonah the prophet is said to want to go to Tharsis (Jonah 1), and Solomon and Jehoshaphat had ships in the books of the kingdoms, which were accustomed to engage in commerce from Tharsis (2 Kings 10). The easy answer is that the word is synonymous, which is so called both the region of India and the sea itself, because it is blue and often struck by the rays of the sun, it takes the color from the aforementioned stones and takes its name from the color. Although Josephus, with the letter tau changed, thinks that the Greeks called Tarsus instead of Tharsis.

3. Countless things seemed base to me in his commentaries. It is certainly a finished style, and flowing in the Gallican mode: but what of the interpreter, whose profession it is not that he himself should appear eloquent, but that he should facilitate understanding for the reader as to how the writer himself understood it. I ask, had he not possessed the ten volumes of Origen? not other interpreters? certainly not some Hebrews who were necessary so that he might either interrogate

them or read what he did not understand? But he seems to have formed such a poor opinion of posterity, that no one could judge his mistakes.

4. Therefore, it is in vain that you demand commentaries from me about that man, because in them I find many things which displease me, rather than please me. And if you should say, 'Why then did you give them to others?' I should answer that I did not give them to all, but only to those who seemed to be able to understand them and to derive some benefit from reading them. Jesus fed many people in the desert with barley loaves, but fewer with wheat loaves. And the Corinthians, among whom was the sort of fornication that is not even named among the Gentiles, were as yet only able to receive milk, and not solid meat, i.e., a more advanced instruction. But the Ephesians, among whom there was no crime of this sort, but who lived in peace, were fed with heavenly Bread and received the Sacrament of the Lord. But you should not be guided by the age, or authority, or learning of the persons who have given you books to read, such as Daniel, who judged the elders, and Amos, who was a herdsman and not a chief priest.

Letters - letter_038

Letter 38. To Marcella.

Blaesilla, the daughter of Paula and sister of Eustochium, had lost her husband seven months after her marriage, A dangerous illness had then led to her conversion, and she was now famous throughout Rome for the length to which she carried her austerities. Many censured her for what they deemed her fanaticism, and Jerome, as her spiritual adviser, came in for some of the blame. In the present letter he defends her conduct, and declares that persons who cavil at lives like hers have no claim to be considered Christians. Written at Rome in 385 a.d.

1. When Abraham is tempted to slay his son the trial only serves to strengthen his faith.¹ When Joseph is sold into Egypt, his sojourn there enables him to support his father and his brothers.² When Hezekiah is panic-stricken at the near approach of death, his tears and prayers obtain for him a respite of fifteen years,³ If the faith of the apostle, Peter, is shaken by his Lord's passion, it is that, weeping bitterly, he may hear the soothing words: "Feed my sheep." [Luke 22:54-62; John. 21:16] If Paul, that ravening wolf, [Gen. 49:27] that little Benjamin, [Ps. 68:27] is blinded in a trance, it is that he may receive his sight, and may be led, by the sudden horror of surrounding darkness, to call Him Lord Whom before he persecuted as man. [Acts 9:3-18]

2. So is it now, my dear Marcella, with our beloved Blaesilla. The burning fever from which we have seen her suffering unceasingly for nearly thirty days has been sent to teach her to renounce her over-great attention to that body which the worms must shortly devour. The Lord Jesus has come to her in her sickness, and has taken her by the hand, and behold, she arises and ministers unto Him. [Cf. Mark 1:30, Mark 1:31] Formerly her life savored somewhat Of carelessness; and, fast bound in the bands of wealth, she lay as one dead in the tomb of the world. But Jesus was moved with indignation, [John 11:38, R.V. marg] and was troubled in spirit, and cried aloud and said, Blaesilla, come forth. [John. 11:38-44] She, at His call, has arisen and has come forth, and sits at meat with the Lord. [John. 12:2] The Jews, if they will, may threaten her in their wrath; they may seek to slay her, because Christ has raised her up. [John. 12:10] It is enough that the apostles give God the glory. Blaesilla knows that her life is due to Him who has given it back to her. She knows that now she can clasp the feet of Him whom but a little while ago she dreaded as her judge. [Luke 7:38] Then life had all but forsaken her body, and the approach of death made her gasp and shiver. What succour did she obtain in that hour from her kinsfolk? What comfort was there in their words lighter than smoke? She owes no debt to you, ye unkindly kindred, now that she is dead to the world and alive unto Christ. [Rom. 6:11] The Christian must rejoice that it is so, and he that is vexed must admit that he has no claim to be called a Christian.

3. A widow who is "loosed from the law of her husband" [Rom. 7:2] has, for her one duty, to continue a widow. But, you will say, a sombre dress vexes the world. In that case, John the Baptist would vex it, too; and yet, among those that are born of women, there has not been a greater than he. [Luke 7:28] He was called an angel;⁴ he baptized the Lord Himself, and yet he was clothed in raiment of camel's hair, and girded with a leathern girdle. [Matt. 3:4] Is the world displeased

because a widow's food is coarse? Nothing can be coarser than locusts, and yet these were the food of John. The women who ought to scandalize Christians are those who paint their eyes and lips with rouge and cosmetics; whose chalked faces, unnaturally white, are like those of idols; upon whose cheeks every chance tear leaves a furrow; who fail to realize that years make them old; who heap their heads with hair not their own; who smooth their faces, and rub out the wrinkles of age; and who, in the presence of their grandsons, behave like trembling school-girls. A Christian woman should blush to do violence to nature, or to stimulate desire by bestowing care upon the flesh. "They that are in the flesh," the apostle tells us, "cannot please God." [Rom. 8:8]

4. In days gone by our dear widow was extremely fastidious in her dress, and spent whole days before her mirror to correct its deficiencies. Now she boldly says: "We all with unveiled face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." [2 Cor. 3:18, R.V] In those days maids arranged her hair, and her head, which had done no harm, was forced into a waving head-dress. Now she leaves her hair alone, and her only head-dress is a veil. In those days the softest feather-bed seemed hard to her, and she could scarcely find rest on a pile of mattresses. Now she rises eager for prayer, her shrill voice cries Alleluia before every other, she is the first to praise her Lord. She kneels upon the bare ground, and with frequent tears cleanses a face once defiled with white lead. After prayer comes the singing of psalms, and it is only when her neck aches and her knees totter, and her eyes begin to close with weariness, that she gives them leave reluctantly to rest. As her dress is dark, lying on the ground does not soil it. Cheap shoes permit her to give to the poor the price of gilded ones. No gold and jewels adorn her girdle; it is made of wool, plain and scrupulously clean. It is intended to keep her clothes right, and not to cut her waist in two. Therefore, if the scorpion looks askance upon her purpose, and with alluring words tempts her once more to eat of the forbidden tree, she must crush him beneath her feet with a curse, and say, as he lies dying in his allotted dust: [Gen. 3:14] "Get thee behind me, Satan." [Matt. 16:23] Satan means adversary, [1 Pet. 5:8] and one who dislikes Christ's commandments, is more than Christ's adversary; he is anti-christ.

5. But what, I ask you, have we ever done that men should be offended at us? Have we ever imitated the apostles? We are told of the first disciples that they forsook their boat and their nets, and even their aged father. [Matt. 4:18-22] The publican stood up from the receipt of custom and followed the Saviour once for all. [Matt. 9:9] And when a disciple wished to return home, that he might take leave of his kinsfolk, the Master's voice refused consent. [Luke 9:61, Luke 9:62] A son was even forbidden to bury his father, [Matt. 8:21] as if to show that it is sometimes a religious duty to be undutiful for the Lord's sake. [Luke 14:26] With us it is different. We are held to be monks if we refuse to dress in silk. We are called sour and severe if we keep sober and refrain from excessive laughter. The mob salutes us as Greeks and impostors⁵ if our tunics are fresh and clean. They may deal in still severer witticisms if they please; they may parade every fat paunch⁶ they can lay hold of, to turn us into ridicule. Our Blaesilla will laugh at their efforts, and will bear with patience the taunts of all such croaking frogs, for she will remember that men called her Lord, Beelzebub. [Matt. 10:25]

1: Gen. xxii 2: Gen. xxxvii., Gen. xlvi 3: 2 K xx.; Isa. xxxviii 4: Luke 7:27. The word "angel" means "messenger."

5: Cf. Letter LIV 6: Pinguis aqualiculus-Pers. 1:57

Letters - letter_039

Letter 39. To Paula.

Blaesilla died within three months of her conversion, and Jerome now writes to Paula to offer her his sympathy and, if possible, to moderate her grief. He asks her to remember that Blaesilla is now in paradise, and so far to control herself as to prevent enemies of the faith from cavilling at her conduct. Then he concludes with the prophecy (since more than fulfilled) that in his writings Blaesilla's name shall never die. Written at Rome in 389 a.d.

1. "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears: that I might weep," not as Jeremiah says, "For the slain of my people," [Jer. 9:1] nor as Jesus, for the miserable fate of Jerusalem, [Luke 19:41] but for holiness, mercy, innocence, chastity, and all the virtues, for all are gone now that Blaesilla is dead. For her sake I do not grieve, but for myself I must; my loss is too great to be borne with resignation. Who can recall with dry eyes the glowing faith which induced a girl of twenty to raise the standard of the Cross, and to mourn the loss of her virginity more than the death of her husband? Who can recall without a sigh the earnestness of her prayers, the brilliancy of her conversation, the tenacity of her memory, and the quickness of her intellect? Had you heard her speak Greek you would have deemed her ignorant of Latin; yet when she used the tongue of Rome her words were free from a foreign accent. She even rivalled the great Origen in those acquirements which won for him the admiration of Greece. For in a few months, or rather days, she so completely mastered the difficulties of Hebrew as to emulate her mother's zeal in learning and singing the psalms. Her attire was plain, but this plainness was not, as it often is, a mark of pride. Indeed, her self-abasement was so perfect that she dressed no better than her maids, and was only distinguished from them by the greater ease of her walk. Her steps tottered with weakness, her face was pale and quivering, her slender neck scarcely upheld her head. Still she always had in her hand a prophet or a gospel. As I think of her my eyes fill with tears, sobs impede my voice, and such is my emotion that my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth. As she lay there dying, her poor frame parched with burning fever, and her relatives gathered round her bed, her last words were: "Pray to the Lord Jesus, that He may pardon me, because what I would have done I have not been able to do." Be at peace, dear Blaesilla, in full assurance that your garments are always white. [Eccles. 9:8] For yours is the purity of an everlasting virginity. I feel confident that my words are true: conversion can never be too late. The words to the dying robber are a pledge of this: "Verily I say unto thee, today shall thou be with me in paradise." [Luke 23:43] When at last her spirit was delivered from the burden of the flesh, and had returned to Him who gave it; [Cf. Eccles. 12:7] when, too, after her long pilgrimage, she had ascended up into her ancient heritage, her obsequies were celebrated with customary splendor. People of rank headed the procession, a pail made of cloth of gold covered her bier. But I seemed to hear a voice from heaven, saying: "I do not recognize these trappings; such is not the garb I used to wear; this magnificence is strange to me."

2. But what is this? I wish to check a mother's weeping, and I groan myself. I make no secret of my feelings; this entire letter is written in tears. Even Jesus wept for Lazarus because He loved him. [John 11:35, John 11:36] But he is a poor comforter who is overcome by his own sighs, and from whose afflicted heart tears are wrung as well as words. Dear Paula, my agony is as great as yours. Jesus knows it, whom Blaesilla now follows; the holy angels know it, whose company she now enjoys. I was her father in the spirit, her foster-father in affection. Sometimes I say: "Let the day perish wherein I was born," [Job 3:3, cf. Jer. 20:14] and again, "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth." [Jer. 15:10] I cry: "Righteous art thou, O Lord ...yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" [Jer. 12:1] and "as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked, and I said: How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most high? Behold these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." [Ps. 73:2, 3, 11, 12, Vulg] But again I recall other words, "If I say I will speak thus, behold I should offend against the generation of thy children." [Ps. 73:15] Do not great waves of doubt surge up over my soul as over yours? How comes it, I ask, that godless men live to old age in the enjoyment of this world's riches? How comes it that untutored youth and innocent childhood are cut down while still in the bud? Why is it that children three years old or two, and even unweaned infants, are possessed with devils, covered with leprosy, and eaten up with jaundice, while godless men and profane, adulterers and murderers, have health and strength to blaspheme God? Are we not told that the unrighteousness of the father does not fall upon the son, [Ezek. 18:20] and that "the soul that sinneth it shall die?" [Ezek. 18:4] Or if the old doctrine holds good that the sins of the fathers must be visited upon the children, [Ex. 20:5] an old man's countless sins cannot fairly be avenged upon a harmless infant. And I have said: "Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued." [Ps. 73:13, Ps. 73:14] Yet when I have thought of these things, like the prophet I have learned to say: "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." [Ps. 73:16, Ps. 73:17] Truly the judgments of the Lord are a great deep. [Ps. 36:6] "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" [Rom. 11:33] God is good, and all that He does must be good also. Does He decree that I must lose my husband? I mourn my loss, but because it is His will I bear it with resignation. Is an only son snatched from me? The blow is hard, yet it can be borne, for He who has taken away is He who gave. [Job 1:21] If I become blind a friend's reading will console me. If I become deaf I shall escape from sinful words, and my thoughts shall be of God alone. And if, besides such trials as these, poverty, cold, sickness, and nakedness oppress me, I shall wait for death, and regard them as passing evils, soon to give way to a better issue. Let us reflect on the words of the sapiential psalm: "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments." [Ps. 119:137] Only he can speak thus who in all his troubles magnifies the Lord, and, putting down his sufferings to his sins, thanks God for his clemency. The daughters of Judah, we are told, rejoiced, because of all the judgments of the Lord. [Ps. 97:8] Therefore, since Judah means confession, and since every believing soul confesses its faith, [Rom. 10:10] he who claims to believe in Christ must rejoice in all Christ's judgments. Am I in health? I thank my Creator. Am I sick? In this case, too, I praise God's will. For "when I am weak, then am I strong;" and the strength of the spirit is made perfect in the weakness of the flesh. Even an apostle must bear what he dislikes, that ailment for the removal of which he besought the Lord

thrice. God's reply was: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." [2 Cor. 12:8, 2 Cor. 12:9, 2 Cor. 12:10] Lest he should be unduly elated by his revelations, a reminder of his human weakness was given to him, just as in the triumphal car of the victorious general there was always a slave to whisper constantly, amid the cheerings of the multitude, "Remember that thou art but man."¹

3. But why should that be hard to bear which we must one day ourselves endure? And why do we grieve for the dead? We are not born to live forever. Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah, Peter, James, and John, Paul, the "chosen vessel," [Acts 9:15] and even the Son of God Himself have all died; and are we vexed when a soul leaves its earthly tenement? Perhaps he is taken away, "lest that wickedness should alter his understanding ...for his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hastened he to take him away from the people" [Wisd. 4:11, Wisd. 4:14] -lest in life's long journey he should lose his way in some trackless maze. We should indeed mourn for the dead, but only for him whom Gehenna receives, whom Tartarus devours, and for whose punishment the eternal fire burns. But we who, in departing, are accompanied by an escort of angels, and met by Christ Himself, should rather grieve that we have to tarry yet longer in this tabernacle of death. [2 Cor. 5:4] For "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." [2 Cor. 5:6] Our one longing should be that expressed by the psalmist: "Woe is me that my pilgrimage is prolonged, that I have dwelt with them that dwell in Kedar, that my soul hath made a far pilgrimage." [Ps. 120:5, 6, Vulg] Kedar means darkness, and darkness stands for this present world (for, we are told, "the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not" [John. 1:5]). Therefore we should congratulate our dear Blaesilla that she has passed from darkness to light, [Eph. 5:8] and has in the first flush of her dawning faith received the crown of her completed work. Had she been cut off (as I pray that none may be) while her thoughts were full of worldly desires and passing pleasures, then mourning would indeed have been her due, and no tears shed for her would have been too many. As it is, by the mercy of Christ she, four months ago, renewed her baptism in her vow of widowhood, and for the rest of her days spurned the world, and thought only of the religious life. Have you no fear, then, lest the Saviour may say to you: "Are you angry, Paula, that your daughter has become my daughter? Are you vexed at my decree, and do you, with rebellious tears, grudge me the possession of Blaesilla? You ought to know what my purpose is both for you and for yours. You deny yourself food, not to fast but to gratify your grief; and such abstinence is displeasing to me. Such fasts are my enemies. I receive no soul which forsakes the body against my will. A foolish philosophy may boast of martyrs of this kind; it may boast of a Zeno² a Cleombrotus,³ or a Cato.⁴ My spirit rests only upon him "that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word. [Isa. 66:2] Is this the meaning of your vow to me that you would lead a religious life? Is it for this that you dress yourself differently from other matrons, and array yourself in the garb of a nun? Mourning is for those who wear silk dresses. In the midst of your tears the call will come, and you, too, must die; yet you flee from me as from a cruel judge, and fancy that you can avoid falling into my hands. Jonah, that headstrong prophet, once fled from me, yet in the depths of the sea he was still mine. [Jon. 2:2-7] If you really believed your daughter to be alive, you would not grieve that she had passed to a better world. This is the commandment that I have given you through my apostle, that you sorrow not for them that sleep, even as the Gentiles, which have no hope. [1 Thess. 4:13] Blush, for you are put to shame by the example of a heathen. The devil's handmaid⁵ is better than mine. For, while she imagines that her unbelieving husband has been translated to heaven, you either do not or will not believe that your daughter is at rest with me."

4. Why should I not mourn, you say? Jacob lint on sackcloth for Joseph, and when all his family gathered round him, refused to be comforted. "I will go down," he said, "into the grave unto my son mourning." [Gen. 37:35] David also mourned for Absalom, covering his face, and crying: "O my son, Absalom ...my son, Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son!" [2 Sam. 18:33] Moses, [Deut. 34:8] too, and Aaron, [Nu. 20:29] and the rest of the saints were mourned for with a solemn mourning. The answer to your reasoning issimple. Jacob, it is true, mourned for Joseph, whom he fancied slain, and thought tomeet only in the grave (his words were: "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning"), but he only did so because Christ had not yet broken open the door of paradise, nor quenched with his blood the flaming sword and the whirling of the guardian cherubim.⁶ (Hence in the story of Dives and Lazarus, Abraham and the beggar, though really in a place of refreshment, are described as being in hell. [Apud inferos-Luke 16:23]) And David, who, after interceding in vain for the life of his infant child, refused to weep for it, knowing that it had not sinned, did well to weep for a son who had been a parricide-in will, if not in deed. [2 Sam. 17:1-4] And when we read that, for Moses and Aaron, lamentation was made after ancient custom, this ought not to surprise us, for even in the Acts of the Apostles, in the full blaze of the gospel, we see that the brethren at Jerusalem made great lamentation for Stephen. [Acts 8:2] This great lamentation, however, refers not to the mourners, but to the funeral procession and to the crowds which accompanied it. This is what the Scripture says of Jacob: "Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph and his brethren"; and a few lines farther on: "And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a great company." Finally, "they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation." [Gen. 1:7-10] This solemn lamentation does not impose prolonged weeping upon the Egyptians, but simply describes the funeral ceremony. In like manner, when we read of weeping made for Moses and Aaron, [Nu. 20:29; Deut. 34:6-8] this is all that is meant.

I cannot adequately extol the mysteries of Scripture, nor sufficiently admire the spiritual meaning conveyed in its most simple words. We are told, for instance, that lamentation was made for Moses; yet when the funeral of Joshua is described [Josh. 24:30] no mention at all is made of weeping. The reason, of course, is that under Moses-that is under the old Law-all men were bound by the sentence passed on Adam's sin, and when they descended into hell⁷ were rightly accompanied with tears. For, as the apostle says, "death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned." [Rom. 5:14] But under Jesus,⁸ that is, under the Gospel of Christ, who has unlocked for us the gate of paradise, death is accompanied, not with sorrow, but with joy. The Jews go on weeping to this day; they make bare their feet, they crouch in sackcloth, they roll in ashes. And to make their superstition complete, they follow a foolish custom of the Pharisees, and eat lentils,⁹ to show, it would seem, for what poor fare they have lost their birthright. [Gen. 25:34] Of course they are right to weep, for as they do not believe in the Lord's resurrection they are being made ready for the advent of antichrist. But we who have put on Christ [Gal. 3:27] and according to the apostle are a royal and priestly race, [1 Pet. 2:9] we ought not to grieve for the dead. "Moses," the Scripture tells us, "said unto Aaron and unto Eleazar, and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left: Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people." [Lev. 10:6, Lev. 10:12] Rend not your clothes, he says, neither mourn as pagans, lest you die. For, for us sin is death. In this same book, Leviticus, there is a provision which may perhaps strike some as cruel, yet is necessary to faith: the high priest is forbidden to

approach the dead bodies of his father and mother, of his brothers and of his children; [Lev. 21:10-12] to the end, that no grief may distract a soul engaged in offering sacrifice to God, and wholly devoted to the Divine mysteries. Are we not taught the same lesson in the Gospel in other words? Is not the disciple forbidden to say farewell to his home or to bury his dead father? [Luke 9:59-62] Of the high priest, again, it is said: "He shall not go out of the sanctuary, and the sanctification of his God shall not be contaminated, for the anointing oil of his God is upon him." [Lev. 21:12, Vulg] Certainly, now that we have believed in Christ, and bear Him within us, by reason of the oil of His anointing which we have received, [1 John. 2:27] we ought not to depart from His temple-that is, from our Christian profession-we ought not to go forth to mingle with the unbelieving Gentiles, but always to remain within, as servants obedient to the will of the Lord.

5. I have spoken plainly, lest you might ignorantly suppose that Scripture sanctions your grief; and that, if you err, you have reason on your side. And, so far, my words have been addressed to the average Christian woman. But now it will not be so. For in your case, as I well know, renunciation of the world has been complete; you have rejected and trampled on the delights of life, and you give yourself daily to fasting, to reading, and to prayer. Like Abraham, [Gen. 12:1-4] you desire to leave your country and kindred, to forsake Mesopotamia and the Chaldaeans, to enter into the promised land. Dead to the world before your death, you have spent all your mere worldly substance upon the poor, or have bestowed it upon your children. I am the more surprised, therefore, that you should act in a manner which in others would justly call for reprehension. You call to mind Blaesilla's companionship, her conversation, and her endearing ways; and you cannot endure the thought that you have lost them all. I pardon you the tears of a mother, but I ask you to restrain your grief. When I think of the parent I cannot blame you for weeping: but when I think of the Christian and the recluse, the mother disappears from my view. Your wound is still fresh, and ant touch of mine, however gentle, is more likely to inflame than to heal it. Yet why do you not try to overcome by reason a grief which time must inevitably assuage? Naomi, fleeing because of famine to the land of Moab, there lost her husband and her sons. Yet when she was thus deprived of her natural protectors, Ruth, a stranger, never left her side. [Ruth 1] And see what a great thing it is to comfort a lonely woman Ruth, for her reward, is made an ancestress of Christ. [Matt. 1:5] Consider the great trials which Job endured, and you will see that you are over-delicate. Amid the ruins of his house, the pains of his sores, his countless bereavements, and, last of all, the snares laid for him by his wife, he still lifted up his eyes to heaven, and maintained his patience unbroken. I know what you are going to say "All this befell him as a righteous man, to try his righteousness." Well, choose which alternative you please. Either you are holy, in which case God is putting your holiness to the proof; or else you are a sinner, in which case you have no right to complain. For if so, you endure far less than your deserts.

Why should I repeat old stories? Listen to a modern instance. The holy Melaniam, ¹⁰ eminent among Christians for her true nobility (may the Lord grant that you and I may have part with her in His day!), while the dead body of her husband was still unburied, still warm, had the misfortune to lose at one stroke two of her sons. The sequel seems incredible, but Christ is my witness that my words are true. Would you not suppose that in her frenzy she would have unbound her hair, and rent her clothes, and torn her breast? Yet not a tear fell from her eyes. Motionless she stood there; then casting herself at the feet of Christ, she smiled, as though she held Him with her hands. "Henceforth, Lord," she said, "I will serve Thee more readily, for Thou hast freed me from a great

burden." But perhaps her remaining children overcame her determination. No, indeed; she set so little store by them that she gave up all that she had to her only son, and then, in spite of the approaching winter, took ship for Jerusalem.

6. Spare yourself, I beseech you, spare Blaesilla, who now reigns with Christ; at least spare Eustochium, whose tender years and inexperience depend on you for guidance and instruction. Now does the devil rage and complain that he is set at naught, because he sees one of your children exalted in triumph. The victory which he failed to win over her that is gone he hopes to obtain over her who still remains. Too great affection towards one's children is disaffection towards God. Abraham gladly prepares to slay his only son, and do you complain if one child out of several has received her crown? I cannot say what I am going to say without a groan. When you were carried fainting out of the funeral procession, whispers such as these were audible in the crowd. "Is not this what we have often said. She weeps for her daughter, killed with fasting. She wanted her to marry again, that she might have grandchildren. How long must we refrain from driving these detestable monks out of Rome? Why do we not stone them or hurl them into the Tiber? They have misled this unhappy lady; that she is not a nun from choice is clear. No heathen mother ever wept for her children as she does for Blaesilla." What sorrow, think you, must not Christ have endured when He listened to such words as these! And how triumphantly must Satan have exulted, eager as he is to snatch your soul! Luring you with the claims of a grief which seems natural and right, and always keeping before you the image of Blaesilla, his aim is to slay the mother of the victress, and then to fall upon her forsaken sister. I do not speak thus to terrify you. The Lord is my witness that I address you now as though I were standing at His judgment seat. Tears which have no meaning are an object of abhorrence. Yours are detestable tears, sacrilegious tears, unbelieving tears; for they know no limits, and bring you to the verge of death. You shriek and cry out as though on fire within, and do your best to put an end to yourself. But to you and others like you Jesus comes in His mercy and says: "Why weepest thou? the damsel is not dead but sleepeth." [Mark 5:39] The bystanders may laugh him to scorn; such unbelief is worthy of the Jews. If you prostrate yourself in grief at your daughter's tomb you too will hear the chiding of the angel, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" [Luke 24:5] It was because Mary Magdalene had done this that when she recognized the Lord's voice calling her and fell at His feet, He said to her: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;" [John. 20:17] that is to say, you are not worthy to touch, as risen, one whom you suppose still in the tomb.

7. What crosses and tortures, think you, must not our Blaesilla endure to see Christ angry with you, though it be but a little! At this moment she cries to you as you weep: "If ever you loved me, mother, if I was nourished at your breast, if I was taught by your precepts, do not grudge me my exaltation, do not so act that we shall be separated forever. Do you fancy that I am alone? In place of you I now have Mary the mother of the Lord. Here I see many whom before I have not known. My companions are infinitely better than any that I had on earth. Here I have the company of Anna, the prophetess of the Gospel; [Luke 2:36, Luke 2:37] and-what should kindle in you more fervent joy-I have gained in three short months what cost her the labor of many years to win. Both of us widows indeed, we have been both rewarded with the palm of chastity. Do you pity me because I have left the world behind me? It is I who should, and do, pity you who, still immured in its prison, daily fight with. anger, with covetousness, with lust, with this or that temptation leading the soul to ruin. If you wish to be indeed my mother, you must please Christ. She is not my mother

who displeases my Lord." Many other things does she say which here I pass over; she prays also to God for you. For me, too, I feel sure, she makes intercession and asks God to pardon my sins in return for the warnings and advice that I bestowed on her, when to secure her salvation I braved the ill will of her family.

8. Therefore, so long as breath animates my body, so long as I continue in the enjoyment of life, I engage, declare, and promise that Blaesilla's name shall be forever on my tongue, that my labors shall be dedicated to her honor, and that my talents shall be devoted to her praise. No page will I write in which Blaesilla's name shall not occur Wherever the records of my utterance shall find their way, thither she, too, will travel with my poor writings. Virgins, widows, monks and priests, as they read, will see how deeply her image is impressed upon my mind. Everlasting remembrance will make up for the shortness of her life. Living as she does with Christ in heaven, she will live also on the lips of men. The present will soon pass away and give place to the future, and that future will judge her without partiality and without prejudice. As a childless widow she will occupy a middle place between Paula, the mother of children, and Eustochium the virgin. In my writings she will never die. She will hear me conversing of her always, either with her sister or with her mother.

1: Cf. Tertullian, Apol. 33 2: A famous stoic who committed suicide in extreme old age. See Diogenes Laertius (vii. 1) for an account of his death 3: An academic philosopher of Ambracia, who is said to have killed himself after reading the Phaedo of Plato

4: Cato of Utica, who, after the battle of Thapsus (46 b.c.), committed suicide to avoid falling into the hands of Caesar 5: Viz. Paulina, wife of Praetextatus and priestess of Ceres. See Letter XXIII

6: Gen. 3:24, cf. Ezek. 1:15-20. Here as in his Comm. on Eccles. 3:16-22, Jerome follows Origen, who, in his homily de Engastrimytho, lays down that until Christ came to set them free the patriarchs, prophets, and saints of the Old Testament were all in hell 7: Ad inferos. Hades is meant, not Gehenna 8: The Greek form of Joshua. Cf. Acts 7:45, A. V

9:

I learn from Dr. Neubauer, of Oxford, that this is still a practice during mourning among the Jews of the East. He refers to Tur Joreh Deah. §378

10:

Or Melania. She went with Rufinus to the East, and settled with him on the Mt. of Olives; and incurred Jerome's resentment as Rufinus' friend. See Ep. 133:3. "She whose name of blackness attests the darkness of her perfidy.

Letters - letter_040

Letter 40. To Marcella.

Onasus, of Segesta, the subject of this letter, was among Jerome's Roman opponents. He is here held up to ridicule in a manner which reflects little credit on the writer's urbanity. The date of the letter is 385 a.d.

1. The medical men called surgeons pass for being cruel, but really deserve pity. For is it not pitiful to cut away the dead flesh of another man with merciless knives without being moved by his pangs? Is it not pitiful that the man who is curing the patient is callous to his sufferings, and has to appear as his enemy? Yet such is the order of nature. While truth is always bitter, pleasantness waits upon evil-doing. Isaiah goes naked without blushing as a type of captivity to come. [Isa. 20:2] Jeremiah is sent from Jerusalem to the Euphrates (a river in Mesopotamia), and leaves his girdle to be marred in the Chaldaean camp, among the Assyrians hostile to his people. [Jer. 13:6, Jer. 13:7] Ezekiel is told to eat bread made of mingled seeds and sprinkled with the dung of men and cattle. [Ezek. 4:9-16] He has to see his wife die without shedding a tear. [Ezek. 24:15-18] Amos is driven from Samaria. [Amos 7:12, Amos 7:13] Why is he driven from it? Surely in this case as in the others, because he was a spiritual surgeon, who cut away the parts diseased by sin and urged men to repentance. The apostle Paul says: "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" [Gal. 4:16] And so the Saviour Himself found it, from whom many of the disciples went back because His sayings seemed hard. [John 6:60, John 6:66]

2. It is not surprising, then, that by exposing their faults I have offended many. I have arranged to operate on a cancerous nose;¹ let him who suffers from wens tremble. I wish to rebuke a chattering daw; let the crow realize that she is offensive.² Yet, after all, is there but one person in Rome

"Whose nostrils are disfigured by a scar?" [Virg. A. 6:497] Is Onasus of Segesta alone in puffing out his cheeks like bladders and balancing hollow phrases on his tongue?

I say that certain persons have, by crime, perjury, and false pretences, attained to this or that high position. How does it hurt you who know that the charge does not touch you? I laugh at a pleader who has no clients, and sneer at a penny-a-liner's eloquence. What does it matter to you who are such a refined speaker? It is my whim to inveigh against mercenary priests. You are rich already, why should you be angry? I wish to shut up Vulcan and burn him in his own flames. Are you his guest or his neighbor that you try to save an idol's shrine from the fire? I choose to make merry over ghosts and owls and monsters of the Nile; and whatever I say, you take it as aimed at you. At whatever fault I point my pen, you cry out that you are meant. You collar me and drag me into court and absurdly charge me with writing satires when I only write plain prose! So you really think yourself a pretty fellow just because you have a lucky name!³ Why it does not follow at all. A brake is called a brake just because the light does not break through it.⁴ The Fates are called "sparers,"⁵ just because they never spare. The Furies are spoken of as gracious,⁶ because they show no

grace. And in common speech Ethiopians go by the name of silverlings. Still, if the showing up of faults always angers you, I will soothe you now with the words of Persius: "May you be a catch for my lord and lady's daughter! May the pretty ladies scramble for you! May the ground you walk on turn to a rose-bed!" [Pers. 2:37, 38]

3. All the same, I will give you a hint what features to hide if you want to look your best. Show no nose upon your face and keep your mouth shut. You will then stand some chance of being counted both handsome and eloquent.

1: Nasus. A play on the name Onasus 2: Cf. Persius, 50:33 3: Onasus means "lucky" or "profitable;" it is another form of Onesimus 4: Quoted from Quintilian 1:6, 34 (lucus a non lucendo) 5: Parcae, from parcere, to spare 6: Eumenides, the Greek name for the Furies

Letters - letter_041

Letter 41. To Marcella. An effort having been made to convert Marcella to Montanism, Jerome here summarizes for her its leading doctrines, which he contrasts with those of the Church. Written at Rome in 385 a.d.

1. As regards the passages brought together from the gospel of John with which a certain votary of Montanus has assailed you, passages in which our Saviour promises that He will go to the Father, and that He will send the Paraclete [John. 14:28; John. 15:26] -as regards these, the Acts of the Apostles inform us both for what time the promises were made, and at what time they were actually fulfilled. Ten days had elapsed, we are told, from the Lord's ascension and fifty from His resurrection, when the Holy Spirit came down, and the tongues of the believers were cloven, so that each spoke every language. Then it was that, when certain persons of those who as yet believed not declared that the disciples were drunk with new wine, Peter standing in the midst of the apostles, and of all the concourse said: "Ye men of Judaea and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you and hearken to my words: for these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants, and on my handmaidens will pour out ...of my spirit." [Acts 2:14-18]

2. If, then, the apostle Peter, upon whom the Lord has founded the Church, [Matt. 16:18] has expressly said that the prophecy and promise of the Lord were then and there fulfilled, how can we claim another fulfilment for ourselves? if the Montanists reply that Philip's four daughters prophesied [Acts 21:9] at a later date, and that a prophet is mentioned named Agabus, [Acts 11:28; Acts 21:10, Acts 21:11] and that in the partition of the spirit, prophets are spoken of as well as apostles, teachers and others, [1 Cor. 12:28; cf. Eph. 4:11] and that Paul himself prophesied many things concerning heresies still future, and the end of the world; we tell them that we do not so much reject prophecy-for this is attested by the passion of the Lord-as refuse to receive prophets whose utterances fail to accord with the Scriptures old and new.

3. In the first place we differ from the Montanists regarding the rule of faith. We distinguish the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as three persons, but unite them as one substance. They, on the other hand, following the doctrine of Sabellius,¹ force the Trinity into the narrow limits of a single personality. We, while we do not encourage them, yet allow second marriages, since Paul bids the younger widows to marry. [1 Tim. 5:14] They suppose a repetition of marriage a sin so awful that he who has committed it is to be regarded as an adulterer. We, according to the apostolic tradition (in which the whole world is at one with us), fast through one Lent yearly; whereas they keep three in the year as though three saviours had suffered. I do not mean, of course, that it is unlawful to fast at other times through the year-always excepting Pentecost² -only that while in Lent it is a duty of obligation, at other seasons it is a matter of choice. With us, again,

the bishops occupy the place of the apostles, but with them a bishop ranks not first but third. For while they put first the patriarchs of Pepusa³ in Phrygia, and place next to these the ministers called stewards,⁴ the bishops are relegated to the third or almost the lowest rank. No doubt their object is to make their religion more pretentious by putting that last which we put first. Again they close the doors of the Church to almost every fault, whilst we read daily, "I desire the repentance of a sinner rather than his death," [Ezek. 18:23] and "Shall they fall and not arise, saith the Lord," [Jer. 8:4] and once more "Return ye backsliding children and I will heal your backslidings." [Jer. 3:22] Their strictness does not prevent them from themselves committing grave sins, far from it; but there is this difference between us and them, that, whereas they in their self-righteousness blush to confess their faults, we do penance for ours, and so more readily gain pardon for them.

4. I pass over their sacraments⁵ of sin, made up as they are said to be, of sucking children subjected to a triumphant martyrdom.⁶ I prefer, I say, not to credit these; accusations of blood-shedding may well be false. But I must confute the open blasphemy of men who say that God first determined in the Old Testament to save the world by Moses and the prophets, but that finding Himself unable to fulfil His purpose He took to Himself a body of the Virgin, and preaching under the form of the Son in Christ, underwent death for our salvation. Moreover that, when by these two steps He was unable to save the world, He last of all descended by the Holy Spirit upon Montanus and those demented women Prisca and Maximilia; and that thus the mutilated and emasculate⁷ Montanus possessed a fulness of knowledge such as was never claimed by Paul; for he was content to say, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," and again, "Now we see through a glass darkly." [1 Cor. 13:9, 1 Cor. 13:12]

These are statements which require no refutation. To expose the infidelity of the Montanists is to triumph over it. Nor is it necessary that in so short a letter as this I should overthrow the several absurdities which they bring forward. You are well acquainted with the Scriptures; and, as I take it, you have written, not because you have been disturbed by their cavils, but only to learn my opinion about them.

1: A presbyter of the Libyan Pentapolis who taught at Rome in the early years of the third century. He "confounded the persons" of the Trinity and was subsequently accounted a heretic. Cf. Letter XV 2: Viz. the period between Easter Day and Whitsunday 3: Called by the Montanists the New Jerusalem 4: Oeconomus-according to a probable emendation. The text has cenonas

5: Mysteria 6: Victuro martyre confarrata. The precise meaning of the words is obscure 7: Some suppose him to have been a priest of Cybele, but it would be a mistake to lay too much stress on Jerome's words

Letters - letter_042

Letter 42. To Marcella. At Marcella's request Jerome explains to her what is "the sin against the Holy Ghost" spoken of by Christ, and shows Novatian's explanation of it to be untenable. Written at Rome in 385 a.d.

1. The question you send is short and the answer is clear. There is this passage in the gospel: "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world nor in the world to come." [Matt. 12:32] Now if Novatian affirms that none but Christian renegades can sin against the Holy Ghost, it is plain that the Jews who blasphemed Christ were not guilty of this sin. Yet they were wicked husbandmen, they had slain the prophets, they were then compassing the death of the Lord; [Matt. 21:33] and so utterly lost were they that the Son of God told them that it was they whom he had come to save. [Matt. 18:11] It must be proved to Novatian, therefore, that the sin which shall never be forgiven is not the blasphemy of men disembowelled by torture who in their agony deny their Lord, but is the captious clamor of those who, while they see that God's works are the fruit of virtue, ascribe the virtue to a demon and declare the signs wrought to belong not to the divine excellence but to the devil. And this is the whole gist of our Saviour's argument, when He teaches that Satan cannot be cast out by Satan, and that his kingdom is not divided against itself. [Matt. 12:25, Matt. 12:26] If it is the devil's object to injure God's creation, how can he wish to cure the sick and to expel himself from the bodies possessed by him? Let Novatian prove that of those who have been compelled to sacrifice before a judge's tribunal any has declared of the things written in the gospel that they were wrought not by the Son of God but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils; [Matt. 12:24] and then he will be able to make good his contention that this¹ is the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which shall never be forgiven.

2. But to put a more searching question still: let Novatian tell us how he distinguishes speaking against the Son of Man from blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. For I maintain that on his principles men who have denied Christ under persecution have only spoken against the Son of Man, and have not blasphemed the Holy Ghost. For when a man is asked if he is a Christian, and declares that he is not; obviously in denying Christ, that is the Son of Man, he does no despite to the Holy Ghost. But if his denial of Christ involves a denial of the Holy Ghost, this heretic can perhaps tell us how the Son of Man can be denied without sinning against the Holy Ghost. If he thinks that we are here intended by the term Holy Ghost to understand the Father, no mention at all of the Father is made by the denier in his denial. When the apostle Peter, taken aback by a maid's question, denied the Lord, did he sin against the Son of Man or against the Holy Ghost? If Novatian absurdly twists Peter's words, "I know not the man," [Matt. 26:74] to mean a denial not of Christ's Messiahship but of His humanity, he will make the Saviour a liar, for He foretold [Matt. 26:33-35; John. 13:38] that He Himself, that is His divine Sonship, must be denied. Now, when Peter denied the Son of God, he wept bitterly and effaced his threefold denial by a threefold confession. [John. 21:15-17] His sin, therefore, was not the sin against the Holy Ghost which can never be forgiven. It is obvious, then, that this sin involves blasphemy, calling one Beelzebub for

his actions, whose virtues prove him to be God. If Novatian can bring an instance of a renegade who has called Christ Beelzebub, I will at once give up my position and admit that after such a fall the denier can win no forgiveness. To give way under torture and to deny oneself to be a Christian is one thing, to say that Christ is the devil is another. And this you will yourself see if you read the passage [Viz. Matt. 12:32, quoted above] attentively.

3. I ought to have discussed the matter more fully, but some friends have visited my humble abode, and I cannot refuse to give myself up to them. Still, as it might seem arrogant not to answer you at once, I have compressed a wide subject into a few words, and have sent you not a letter but an explanatory note.² 1: Viz. denial of Christ by Christians 2: Commentariolum

Letters - letter_043

Letter 43. To Marcella.

Jerome draws a contrast between his daily life and that of Origen, and sorrowfully admits his own shortcomings. He then suggests to Marcella the advantages which life in the country offers over life in town, and hints that he is himself disposed to make trial of it. Written at Rome in 385 a.d.

1. Ambrose who supplied Origen, true man of adamant and of brass,¹ with money, materials and amanuenses to bring out his countless books-Ambrose, in a letter to his friend from Athens, states that they never took a meal together without something being read, and never went to bed till some portion of Scripture had been brought home to them by a brother's voice. Night and day, in fact, were so ordered that prayer only gave place to reading-and reading to prayer.

2. Have we, brute beasts that we are, ever hone the like? Why, we yawn if we read for over an hour; we rub our foreheads and vainly try to suppress our languor. And then, after this great feat, we plunge for relief into worldly business once more.

I say nothing of the meals with which we dull our faculties, and I would rather not estimate the time that we spend in paying and receiving visits. Next we fall into conversation; we waste our words, we attack people behind their backs, we detail their way of living, we carp at them and are carped at by them in turn. Such is the fare that engages our attention at dinner and afterwards. Then, when our guests have retired, we make up our accounts, and these are sure to cause us either anger or anxiety. The first makes us like raging lions, and the second seeks vainly to make provision for years to come. We do not recollect the words of the Gospel: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" [Luke 12:20] The clothing which we buy is designed not merely for use but for display. Where there is a chance of saving money we quicken our pace, speak promptly, and keep our ears open. If we hear of household losses-such as often occur-our looks become dejected and gloomy. The gain of a penny² fills us with joy; the loss of a half-penny³ plunges us into sorrow. One man is of so many minds that the prophet's prayer is: "Lord, in thy city scatter their image." [Ps. 73:20, Vulg] For created as we are in the image of God and after His likeness, [Gen. 1:26] it is our own wickedness which makes us assume masks.⁴ Just as on the stage the same actor now figures as a brawny Hercules, now softens into a tender Venus, now shivers in the role of Cybele; so we-who, if we were not of the world, would be hated by the world [John. 15:19] -for every sin that we commit have a corresponding mask.

3. Wherefore, seeing that we have journeyed for much of our life through a troubled sea, and that our vessel has been in turn shaken by raging blasts and shattered upon treacherous reefs, let us, as soon as may be, make for the haven of rural quietude. There such country dainties as milk and household bread, and greens watered by our own hands, will supply us with coarse but harmless fare. So living, sleep will not call us away from prayer, nor satiety from reading. In summer the shade of a tree will afford us privacy. In autumn the quality of the air and the leaves strewn under

foot will invite us to stop and rest. In springtime the fields will be bright with flowers, and our psalms will sound the sweeter for the twittering of the birds. When winter comes with its frost and snow, I shall not have to buy fuel, and, whether I sleep or keep vigil, shall be warmer than in town. At least, so far as I know, I shall keep off the cold at less expense. Let Rome keep to itself its noise and bustle, let the cruel shows of the arena go on, let the crowd rave at the circus, let the playgoers revel in the theatres and-for I must not altogether pass over our Christian friends-let the House of Ladies [Ps. 73:28] hold its daily sittings. It is good for us to cleave to the Lord,⁵ and to put our hope in the Lord God, so that when we have exchanged our present poverty for the kingdom of heaven, we may be able to exclaim: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." [Ps. 73:25] Surely if we can find such blessedness in heaven we may well grieve to have sought after pleasures poor and passing here upon earth. Farewell.

1: For the meaning of these epithets as applied to Origen see Letter XXXIII 2: Nummus. Sc. Sestertius = 4 cents = 2 pence 3: Obolus = 3 1-2 cents = 1 penny 3 farthings 4: These were worn by both Greek and Roman actors 5: Senatus Matronarum. Comp. Letter XXXIII. 4: "Rome calls together its senate to condemn him.

Letters - letter_044

Letter 44. To Marcella.

Marcella had sent some small articles as a present (probably to Paula and Eustochium) and Jerome now writes in their name to thank her for them. He notices the appropriateness of the gifts, not only to the ladies, but also to himself. Written at Rome in 385 a.d. When absent in body we are wont to converse together in spirit. [Cf. Col. 2:5] Each of us does what he or she can. You send us gifts, we send you back letters of thanks. And as we are virgins who have taken the veil,¹ it is our duty to show that hidden meanings lurk under your nice presents. Sackcloth, then, is a token of prayer and fasting, the chairs remind us that a virgin should never stir abroad, and the wax tapers that we should look for the bridegroom's coming with our lights burning. [Matt. 25:1] The cups also warn us to mortify the flesh and always to be ready for martyrdom. "How bright," says the psalmist, "is the cup of the Lord, intoxicating them that drink it!"² Moreover, when you offer to matrons little fly-flaps to brush away mosquitoes, it is a charming way of hinting that they should at once check voluptuous feelings, for "dying flies," we are told, "spoil sweet ointment." [Eccles. 10:1, Vulg] In such presents, then, as these, virgins can find a model, and matrons a pattern. To me, too, your gifts convey a lesson, although one of an opposite kind. For chairs suit idlers, sackcloth does for penitents, and cups are wanted for the thirsty. And I shall be glad to light your tapers, if only to banish the terrors of the night and the fears of an evil conscience.

1: Cf. Letter CXXX 2: Ps. 23:5, according to the Gallican psalter

Letters - letter_045

Letter 45. To Asella.

After leaving Rome for the East, Jerome writes to Asella to refute the calumnies by which he had been assailed, especially as regards his intimacy with Paula and Eustochium. Written on board ship at Ostia, in August, 385 a.d.

1. Were I to think myself able to requite your kindness I should be foolish. God is able in my stead to reward a soul which is consecrated to Him. So unworthy, indeed, am I of your regard that I have never ventured to estimate its value or even to wish that it might be given me for Christ's sake. Some consider me a wicked man, laden with iniquity; and such language is more than justified by my actual sins. Yet in dealing with the bad you do well to account them good. It is dangerous to judge another man's servant; [Rom. 14:4] and to speak evil of the righteous is a sin not easily pardoned. The day will surely come when you and I shall mourn for others; for not a few will be in the flames

2. I am said to be an infamous turncoat, a slippery knave, one who lies and deceives others by Satanic arts. Which is the safer course, I should like to know, to invent or credit these charges against innocent persons, or to refuse to believe them, even of the guilty? Some kissed my hands, yet attacked me with the tongues of vipers; sympathy was on their lips, but malignant joy in their hearts. The Lord saw them and had them in derision, [Ps. 2:4] reserving my poor self and them for judgment to come. One would attack my gait or my way of laughing; another would find something amiss in my looks; another would suspect the simplicity of my manner. Such is the company in which I have lived for almost three years.

It often happened that I found myself surrounded with virgins, and to some of these I expounded the divine books as best I could. Our studies brought about constant intercourse, this soon ripened into intimacy, and this, in turn, produced mutual confidence. If they have ever seen anything in my conduct unbecoming a Christian let them say so. Have I taken any one's money? Have I not disdained all gifts, whether small or great? Has the chink of any one's coin been heard in my hand? [Cf. 1 Sam. 12:3] Has my language been equivocal, or my eye wanton? No; my sex is my one crime, and even on this score I am not assailed, save when there is a talk of Paula going to Jerusalem. Very well, then. They believed my accuser when he lied; why do they not believe him when he retracts? He is the same man now that he was then, and yet he who before declared me guilty now confesses that I am innocent. Surely a man's words under torture are more trustworthy than in moments of gayety, except, indeed, that people are prone to believe falsehoods designed to gratify their ears, or, worse still, stories which, till then uninvented, they have urged others to invent.

3. Before I became acquainted with the family of the saintly Paula, all Rome resounded with my praises. Almost every one concurred in judging me worthy of the episcopate. Damasus, of blessed memory, spoke no words but mine.¹ Men called me holy, humble, eloquent. Did I ever cross the

threshold of a light woman? Was I ever fascinated by silk dresses, or glowing gems, or rouged faces, or display of gold? Of all the ladies in Rome but one had power to subdue me, and that one was Paula. She mourned and fasted, she was squalid with dirt, her eyes were dim from weeping. For whole nights she would pray to the Lord for mercy, and often the rising sun found her still at her prayers. The psalms were her only songs, the Gospel her whole speech, continence her one indulgence, fasting the staple of her life. The only woman who took my fancy was one whom I had not so much as seen at table. But when I began to revere, respect, and venerate her as her conspicuous chastity deserved, all my former virtues forsook me on the spot.

4. Oh! envy, that dost begin by tearing thyself! Oh! cunning malignity of Satan, that dost always persecute things holy! Of all the ladies in Rome, the only ones that caused scandal were Paula and Melanium, who, despising their wealth and deserting their children, uplifted the cross of the Lord as a standard of religion. Had they frequented the baths, or chosen to use perfumes, or taken advantage of their wealth and position as widows to enjoy life and to be independent, they would have been saluted as ladies of high rank and saintliness. As it is, of course, it is in order to appear beautiful that they put on sackcloth and ashes, and they endure fasting and filth merely to go down into the Gehenna of fire! As if they could not perish with the crowd whom the mob applauds! If it were Gentiles or Jews who thus assailed their mode of life, they would at least have the consolation of failing to please only those whom Christ Himself has failed to please. But, shameful to say, it is Christians who thus neglect the care of their own households, and, disregarding the beams in their own eyes, look for motes in those of their neighbors. [Matt. 7:3] They pull to pieces every profession of religion, and think that they have found a remedy for their own doom, if they can disprove the holiness of others, if they can detract from every one, if they can show that those who perish are many, and sinners, a great multitude.

5. You bathe daily; another regards such over-niceness as defilement. You surfeit yourself on wild fowl and pride yourself on eating sturgeon; I, on the contrary, fill my belly with beans. You find pleasure in troops of laughing girls; I prefer Paula and Melanium who weep. You covet what belongs to others; they disdain what is their own. You like wines flavored with honey; they drink cold water, more delicious still. You count as lost what you cannot have, eat up, and devour on the moment; they believe in the Scriptures, and look for good things to come. And if they are wrong, and if the resurrection of the body on which they rely is a foolish delusion, what does it matter to you? We, on our side, look with disfavor on such a life as yours. You can fatten yourself on your good things as much as you please; I for my part prefer paleness and emaciation. You suppose that men like me are unhappy; we regard you as more unhappy still. Thus we reciprocate each other's thoughts, and appear to each other mutually insane.

6. I write this in haste, dear Lady Asella, as I go on board, overwhelmed with grief and tears; yet I thank my God that I am counted worthy of the world's hatred. [John. 15:18] Pray for me that, after Babylon, I may see Jerusalem once more; that Joshua, the son of Josedech, may have dominion over me, [Haggai 1:1] and not Nebuchadnezzar, that Ezra, whose name means helper, may come and restore me to my own country. I was a fool in wishing to sing the Lord's song in a strange land, [Ps. 137:4] and in leaving Mount Sinai, to seek the help of Egypt. I forgot that the Gospel warns us [Luke 10:30-35] that he who goes down from Jerusalem immediately falls among robbers, is spoiled, is wounded, is left for dead. But, although priest and Levite may disregard me, there is still the good Samaritan who, when men said to him, "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil," [John.

8:48] disclaimed having a devil, but did not disclaim being a Samaritan, [John. 8:49] this being the Hebrew equivalent for our word guardian. Men call me a mischief-maker, and I take the title as a recognition of my faith. For I am but a servant, and the Jews still call my master a magician. The apostle, [i.e. Paul. See 2. Cor. 6:9] likewise, is spoken of as a deceiver. There hath no temptation taken me but such as is common to man. [1 Cor. 10:13] How few distresses have I endured, I who am yet a soldier of the cross! Men have laid to my charge a crime of which I am not guilty;³ but I know that I must enter the kingdom of heaven through evil report as well as through good. [2 Cor. 6:8]

7. Salute Paula and Eustochium, who, whatever the world may think, are always mine in Christ. Salute Albina, your mother, and Marcella, your sister; Marcellina also, and the holy Felicitas; and say to them all: "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, [Rom. 14:10] and there shall be revealed the principle by which each has lived." And now, illustrious model of chastity and virginity, remember me, I beseech you, in your prayers, and by your intercessions calm the waves of the sea.

1:

Damasus meus sermo erat, or "spoke of none but me.

2: Ironical 3: He means the sin of incontinence

Letters - letter_046

Letter 46. Paula and Eustochium to Marcella.

Jerome writes to Marcella in the name of Paula and Eustochium, describing the charms of the Holy Land. and urging her to leave Rome and to join her old companions at Bethlehem. Much of the letter is devoted to disposing of the objection that since the Passion of Christ the Holy Land has been under a curse. The date of the letter is a.d. 386. It is written from Bethlehem, which now becomes Jerome's home for the remainder of his life.

1. Love cannot be measured, impatience knows no bounds, and eagerness can brook no delay. Wherefore we, oblivious of our weakness, and relying more on our will than our capacity, desire-pupils though we be-to instruct our mistress. We are like the sow in the proverb,¹ which sets up to teach the goddess of invention. You were the first to set our tinder alight; the first, by precept and example, to urge us to adopt our present life. As a hen gathers her chickens, so did you take us under your wing. [2 Esdras. 1:30; Matt. 23:37] And will you now let us fly about at random with no mother near us? Will you leave us to dread the swoop of the hawk and the shadow of each passing bird of prey? Separated from you, we do what we can: we utter our mournful plaint, and more by sobs than by tears we adjure you to give back to us the Marcella whom we love. She is mild, she is suave, she is sweeter than the sweetest honey. She must not, therefore, be stern and morose to us, whom her winning ways have roused to adopt a life like her own.

2. Assuming that what we ask is for the best, our eagerness to obtain it is nothing to be ashamed of. And if all the Scriptures agree with our view, we are not too bold in urging you to a course to which you have yourself often urged us.

What are God's first words to Abraham? "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred unto a land that I will show thee." [Gen. 12:1] The patriarch-the first to receive a promise of Christ-is here told to leave the Chaldees, to leave the city of confusion [i.e. Babel-Gen. 11:9] and its rehovoth [Gen. 10:11] or broad places; to leave also the plain of Shinar, where the tower of pride had been raised to heaven. [Gen. 11:2, Gen. 11:4] He has to pass through the waves of this world, and to ford its rivers; those by which the saints sat down and wept when they remembered Zion, [Ps. 137:1] and Chebar's flood, whence Ezekiel was carried to Jerusalem by the hair of his head. [Ezek. 8:3] All this Abraham undergoes that he may dwell in a land of promise watered from above, and not like Egypt, from below, [Deut. 11:10] no producer of herbs for the weak and ailing, [Rom. 14:2] but a land that looks for the early and the latter rain from heaven. [Deut. 11:14] It is a land of hills and valleys, [Dt. 11:11] and stands high above the sea. The attractions of the world it entirely wants, but its spiritual attractions are for this all the greater. Mary, the mother of the Lord, left the lowlands and made her way to the hill country, when, after receiving the angel's message, she realized that she bore within her womb the Son of God. [Luke 1:26-31, Luke 1:39] When of old the Philistines had been overcome, when their devilish audacity had been smitten, when their champion had fallen on his face to the earth, [1 Sam. 17:49] it was from this city that there went forth a procession of jubilant souls, a harmonious choir to sing our David's victory over tens of

thousands. [1 Sam. 18:6, 1 Sam. 18:7] Here, too, it was that the angel grasped his sword, and while he laid waste the whole of the ungodly city, marked out the temple of the Lord in the threshing floor of Ornan, king of the Jebusites. [1 Chron. 21:15, 1 Chron. 21:18; 2 Chron. 3:1] Thus early was it made plain that Christ's church would grow up, not in Israel, but among the Gentiles. Turn back to Genesis, [Gen. 14:18] and you will find that this was the city over which Melchizedek held sway, that king of Salem who, as a type of Christ, offered to Abraham bread and wine, and even then consecrated the mystery which Christians consecrate in the body and blood of the Saviour.²

3. Perhaps you will tacitly reprove us for deserting the order of Scripture, and letting our confused account ramble this way and that, as one thing or another strikes us. If so, we say once more what we said at the outset: love has no logic, and impatience knows no rule. In the Song of Songs the precept is given as a hard one: "Regulate your love towards me." [Cant. 2:4 b, Vulg. Hebrew = A.V] And so we plead that, if we err, we do so not from ignorance but from feeling.

Well, then, to bring forward something still more out of place, we must go back to yet remoter times. Tradition has it that in this city, nay, more, on this very spot, Adam lived and died. The place where our Lord was crucified is called Calvary,³ because the skull of the primitive man was buried there. So it came to pass that the second Adam, that is the blood⁴ of Christ, as it dropped from the cross, washed away the sins of the buried protoplast,⁵ the first Adam, and thus the words of the apostle were fulfilled: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." [Eph. 5:14]

It would be tedious to enumerate all the prophets and holy men who have been sent forth from this place. All that is strange and mysterious to us is familiar and natural to this city and country. By its very names, three in number, it proves the doctrine of the trinity. For it is called first Jebus, then Salem, then Jerusalem: names of which the first means "down-trodden," the second "peace," and the third "vision of peace."⁶ For it is only by slow stages that we reach our goal; it is only after we have been trodden down that we are lifted up to see the vision of peace. Because of this peace Solomon,⁷ the man of peace, was born there, and "in peace was his place made." [Ps. 76:2, LXX] King of kings, and lord of lords, his name and that of the city show him to be a type of Christ. Need we speak of David and his descendants, all of whom reigned here? As Judaea is exalted above all other provinces, so is this city exalted above all Judaea. To speak more tersely, the glory of the province is derived from its capital; and whatever fame the members possess is in every case due to the head.

4. You have long been anxious to break forth into speech; the very letters we have formed perceive it, and our paper already understands the question you are going to put. You will reply to us by saying: it was so of old, when "the Lord loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob," and when her foundations were in the holy mountains. [Ps. 87:1, Ps. 87:2] Even these verses, however, are susceptible of a deeper interpretation. But things are changed since then. The risen Lord has proclaimed intones of thunder: "Your house is left unto you desolate." With tears He has prophesied its downfall: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate." [Matt. 23:37, Matt. 23:38] The veil of the temple has been rent; [Matt.

27:51] an army has encompassed Jerusalem, it has been stained by the blood of the Lord. Now, therefore, its guardian angels have forsaken it and the grace of Christ has been withdrawn. Josephus, himself a Jewish writer, asserts [Bellum Judaicum, 6:5] that at the Lord's crucifixion there broke from the temple voices of heavenly powers, saying: "Let us depart hence." These and other considerations show that where grace abounded there did sin much more abound. [Rom. 5:20] Again, when the apostles received the command: "Go ye and teach all nations," [Matt. 28:19] and when they said themselves: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you ...lo we turn to the Gentiles," [Acts 13:46] then all the spiritual importance⁸ of Judaea and its old intimacy with God were transferred by the apostles to the nations.

5. The difficulty is strongly stated, and may well puzzle even those proficient in Scripture; but for all that, it admits of an easy solution. The Lord wept for the fall of Jerusalem, [Luke 19:41] and He would not have done so if He did not love it. He wept for Lazarus because He loved him. [John. 11:35, John. 11:36] The truth is that it was the people who sinned and not the place. The capture of a city is involved in the slaying of its inhabitants. If Jerusalem was destroyed, it was that its people might be punished; if the temple was overthrown, it was that its figurative sacrifices might be abolished. As regards its site, lapse of time has but invested it with fresh grandeur. The Jews of old revered the Holy of Holies, because of the things contained in it-the cherubim, the mercy-seat, the ark of the covenant, the manna, Aaron's rod, and the golden altar. [Heb. 9:3-5] Does the Lord's sepulchre seem less worthy of veneration? As often as we enter it we see the Saviour in His grave clothes, and if we linger we see again the angel sitting at His feet, and the napkin folded at His head. [John 20:6, John 20:7, John 20:12] Long before this sepulchre was hewn out by Joseph,⁹ its glory was foretold in Isaiah's prediction, "his rest shall be glorious," [Isa. 11:10] meaning that the place of the Lord's burial should be held in universal honor.

6. How, then, you will say, do we read in the apocalypse written by John: "The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall ...kill them [that is, obviously, the prophets], and their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified?" [Rev. 11:7, Rev. 11:8, R.V] If the great city where the Lord was crucified is Jerusalem, and if the place of His crucifixion is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt; then as the Lord was crucified at Jerusalem, Jerusalem must be Sodom and Egypt. Holy Scripture, I reply first of all, cannot contradict itself. One book cannot invalidate the drift of the whole. A single verse cannot annul the meaning of a book. Ten lines earlier in the apocalypse it is written: "Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." [Rev. 11:2] The apocalypse was written by John long after the Lord's passion, yet in it he speaks of Jerusalem as the holy city. But if so, how can he spiritually call it Sodom and Egypt? It is no answer to say that the Jerusalem which is called holy is the heavenly one which is to be, while that which is called Sodom is the earthly one tottering to its downfall. For it is the Jerusalem to come that is referred to in the description of the beast, "which shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and shall make war against the two prophets, and shall overcome them and kill them, and their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city." [Rev. 11:7, Rev. 11:8] At the close of the book it is farther described thus: "And the city lieth four-square, and the length of it and the breadth are the same as the height; and he measured the

city with the golden reed twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the walls thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold" [Rev. 21:16-18] -and so on. Now where there is a square there can be neither length nor breadth. And what kind of measurement is that which makes length and breadth equal to height? And how can there be walls of jasper, or a whole city of pure gold; its foundations and its streets of precious stones, and its twelve gates each glowing with pearls?

7. Evidently this description cannot be taken literally (in fact, it is absurd to suppose a city the length, breadth and height of which are all twelve thousand furlongs), and therefore the details of it must be mystically understood. The great city which Cain first built and called after his son [Gen. 4:17] must be taken to represent this world, which the devil, that accuser of his brethren, that fratricide who is doomed to perish, has built of vice cemented with crime, and filled with iniquity. Therefore it is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. Thus it is written, "Sodom shall return to her former estate," [Ezek. 16:55] that is to say, the world must be restored as it has been before. For we cannot believe that Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim [Deut. 29:23] are to be built again: they must be left to lie in ashes forever. We never read of Egypt as put for Jerusalem: it always stands for this world. To collect from Scripture the countless proofs of this would be tedious: I shall adduce but one passage, a passage in which this world is most clearly called Egypt. The apostle Jude, the brother of James, writes thus in his catholic epistle: "I will, therefore, put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this how that Jesus,¹⁰ having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." [Jude 5] And, lest you should fancy Joshua the son of Nun to be meant, the passage goes on thus: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." [Jude 6] Moreover, to convince you that in every place where Egypt, Sodom and Gomorrah are named together it is not these spots, but the present world, which is meant, he mentions them immediately in this sense. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah," he writes, "and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." [Jude 7] But what need is there to collect more proofs when, after the passion and the resurrection of the Lord, the evangelist Matthew tells us: "The rocks rent, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many"? [Matt. 27:51, Matt. 27:53] We must not interpret this passage straight off, as many people¹¹ absurdly do, of the heavenly Jerusalem: the apparition there of the bodies of the saints could be no sign to men of the Lord's rising. Since, therefore, the evangelists and all the Scriptures speak of Jerusalem as the holy city, and since the psalmist commands us to worship the Lord "at his footstool;" [Ps. 132:7] allow no one to call it Sodom and Egypt, for by it the Lord forbids men to swear because "it is the city of the great king." [Matt. 5:35]

8. The land is accursed, you say, because it has drunk in the blood of the Lord. On what grounds, then, do men regard as blessed those spots where Peter and Paul, the leaders of the Christian host, have shed their blood for Christ? If the confession of men and servants is glorious, must there not be glory likewise in the confession of their Lord and God? Everywhere we venerate the tombs of the martyrs; we apply their holy ashes to our eyes; we even touch them, if we may, with

our lips. And yet some think that we should neglect the tomb in which the Lord Himself is buried. If we refuse to believe human testimony, let us at least credit the devil and his angels. [Matt. 25:41] For when in front of the Holy Sepulchre they are driven out of those bodies which they have possessed, they moan and tremble as if they stood before Christ's judgment-seat, and grieve, too late that they have crucified Him in whose presence they now cower. If-as a wicked theory maintains-this holy place has, since the Lord's passion, become an abomination, why was Paul in such haste to reach Jerusalem to keep Pentecost in it? [Acts 20:16] Yet to those who held him back he said: "What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus." [Acts 21:13] Need I speak of those other holy and illustrious men who, after the preaching of Christ, brought their votive gifts and offerings to the brethren who were at Jerusalem?

9. Time forbids me to survey the period which has passed since the Lord's ascension, or to recount the bishops, the martyrs, the divines, who have come to Jerusalem from a feeling that their devotion and knowledge would be incomplete and their virtue without the finishing touch, unless they adored Christ in the very spot where the gospel first flashed from the gibbet. If a famous orator¹² blames a man for having learned Greek at Lilybaeum instead of at Athens, and Latin in Sicily instead of at Rome (on the ground, obviously, that each province has its own characteristics), can we suppose a Christian's education complete who has not visited the Christian Athens?

10. In speaking thus we do not mean to deny that the kingdom of God is within us, [Luke 17:21] or to say that there are no holy men elsewhere; we merely assert in the strongest manner that those who stand first throughout the world are here gathered side by side. We ourselves are among the last, not the first; yet we have come hither to see the first of all nations. Of all the ornaments of the Church our company of monks and virgins is one of the finest; it is like a fair flower or a priceless gem. Every man of note in Gaul hastens hither. The Briton, "sundered from our world,"¹³ no sooner makes progress in religion than he leaves the setting sun in quest of a spot of which he knows only through Scripture and common report. Need we recall the Armenians, the Persians, the peoples of India and Arabia? Or those of our neighbor, Egypt, so rich in monks; of Pontus and Cappadocia; of Caele-Syria and Mesopotamia and the teeming east? In fulfilment of the Saviour's words, "Wherever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together," [Luke 17:37] they all assemble here and exhibit in this one city the most varied virtues. Differing in speech, they are one in religion, and almost every nation has a choir of its own. Yet amid this great concourse there is no arrogance, no disdain of self-restraint; all strive after humility, that greatest of Christian virtues. Whosoever is last is here regarded as first. [Cf. Matt. 19:30] Their dress neither provokes remark nor calls for admiration. In whatever guise a man shows himself he is neither censured nor flattered. Long fasts help no one here. Starvation wins no deference, and the taking of food in moderation is not condemned. "To his own master" each one "standeth or falleth." [Rom. 14:4] No man judges another lest he be judged of the Lord. [Matt. 7:1] Backbiting, so common in other parts, is wholly unknown here. Sensuality and excess are far removed from us. And in the city there are so many places of prayer that a day would not be sufficient to go round them all.

11. But, as every one praises most what is within his reach, let us pass now to the cottage-inn which sheltered Christ and Mary. [Luke 2:7] With what expressions and what language can we set before you the cave of the Saviour? The stall where he cried as a babe can be best honored by

silence; for words are inadequate to speak its praise. Where are the spacious porticoes? Where are the gilded ceilings? Where are the mansions furnished by the miserable toil of doomed wretches? Where are the costly halls raised by untitled opulence for man's vile body to walk in? Where are the roofs that intercept the sky, as if anything could be finer than the expanse of heaven? Behold, in this poor crevice of the earth the Creator of the heavens was born; here He was wrapped in swaddling clothes; here He was seen by the shepherds; here He was pointed out by the star; here He was adored by the wise men. This spot is holier, me-thinks, than that Tarpeian rock¹⁴ which has shown itself displeasing to God by the frequency with which it has been struck by lightning.

12. Read the apocalypse of John, and consider what is sung therein of the woman arrayed in purple, and of the blasphemy written upon her brow, of the seven mountains, of the many waters, and of the end of Babylon.¹⁵ "Come out of her, my people," so the Lord says, "that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." [Rev. 18:4] Turn back also to Jeremiah and pay heed to what he has written of like import: "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul." [Jer. 51:6] For "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit." [Rev. 18:2] It is true that Rome has a holy church, trophies of apostles and martyrs, a true confession of Christ. The faith has been preached there by an apostle, heathenism has been trodden down, the name of Christian is daily exalted higher and higher. But the display, power, and size of the city, the seeing and the being seen, the paying and the receiving of visits, the alternate flattery and detraction, talking and listening, as well as the necessity of facing so great a throng even when one is least in the mood to do so—all these things are alike foreign to the principles and fatal to the repose of the monastic life. For when people come in our way we either see them coming and are compelled to speak, or we do not see them and lay ourselves open to the charge of haughtiness. Sometimes, also, in returning visits we are obliged to pass through proud portals and gilded doors and to face the clamor of carping lackeys. But, as we have said above, in the cottage of Christ all is simple and rustic: and except for the chanting of psalms there is complete silence. Wherever one turns the laborer at his plough sings alleluia, the toiling mower cheers himself with psalms, and the vine-dresser while he prunes his vine sings one of the lays of David. These are the songs of the country; these, in popular phrase, its love ditties: these the shepherd whistles; these the tiller uses to aid his toil.

13. But what are we doing? Forgetting what is required of us, we are taken up with what we wish. Will the time never come when a breathless messenger shall bring the news that our dear Marcella has reached the shores of Palestine, and when every band of monks and every troop of virgins shall unite in a song of welcome? In our excitement we are already hurrying to meet you: without waiting for a vehicle, we hasten off at once on foot. We shall clasp you by the hand, we shall look upon your face; and when, after long waiting, we at last embrace you, we shall find it hard to tear ourselves away. Will the day never come when we shall together enter the Saviour's cave, and together weep in the sepulchre of the Lord with His sister and with His mother? [John. 19:25] Then shall we touch with our lips the wood of the cross, and rise in prayer and resolve upon the Mount of Olives with the ascending Lord. [Acts 1:9, Acts 1:12] We shall see Lazarus come forth bound with grave clothes, [John. 11:43, John. 11:44] we shall look upon the waters of Jordan purified for the washing of the Lord. [Matt. 3:13] Thence we shall pass to the folds of the shepherds, [Luke 2:8] we shall pray together in the mausoleum of David. [1 K. 2:10] We shall see

the prophet, Amos,¹⁶ upon his crag blowing his shepherd's horn. We shall hasten, if not to the tents, to the monuments of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and of their three illustrious wives.¹⁷ We shall see the fountain in which the eunuch was immersed by Philip. [Acts 8:36] We shall make a pilgrimage to Samaria, and side by side venerate the ashes of John the Baptist, of Elisha, [2 K. 13:21] and of Obadiah. We shall enter the very caves where in the time of persecution and famine the companies of the prophets were fed. [1 K. 18:3, 1 K. 18:4] If only you will come, we shall go to see Nazareth, as its name denotes, the flower¹⁸ of Galilee. Not far off Cana will be visible, where the water was turned into wine. [John. 2:1-11] We shall make our way to Tabor, [Matt. 17:1-9] and see the tabernacles there which the Saviour shares, not, as Peter once wished, with Moses and Elijah, but with the Father and with the Holy Ghost. Thence we shall come to the Sea of Gennesaret, and when there we shall see the spots where the five thousand were filled with five loaves, [Matt. 14:15, sqq] and the font thousand with seven. [Matt. 15:32, sqq] The town of Nain will meet our eyes, at the gate of which the widow's son was raised to life. [Luke 7:11, sqq] Hermon too will be visible, and the torrent of Endor, at which Sisera was vanquished. [Ps. 83:9, Ps. 83:10] Our eyes will look also on Capernaum, the scene of so many of our Lord's signs-yes, and on all Galilee besides. And when, accompanied by Christ, we shall have made our way back to our cave through Shiloh and Bethel, and those other places where churches are set up like standards to commemorate the Lord's victories, then we shall sing heartily, we shall weep copiously, we shall pray unceasingly. Wounded with the Saviour's shaft, we shall say one to another: "I have found Him whom my soul loveth; I will hold Him and will not let Him go." [Cant. 3:4, Vulg]

1: Sus Minervam 2: *Mysterium christianum in salvatoris sanguine et corpore dedicavit* 3: I.e. the place of a skull (Latin, Calvaria) 4: One of Jerome's fanciful ideas. Haddam sr 5: o prwtoplastoj = "the first-formed." The word is applied to Adam in Wisd. 7:1 6: Cf. Hymns Ancient and Modern, No. 235. "Truly Jerusalem name we that shore Vision of peace that brings joy evermore.

7:

Hebrew, Shelomoh, connected with shalem, peace

8: Sacramentum 9: I.e. Joseph of Arimathea.-John. 19:38 sqq 10: A.V. "the Lord."

11: E.g. Origen in his commentary on the passage 12: Cicero of Caecilius (in Q. Caec. xii.) 13: Virgil, E. 1:67

14: Otherwise called the capitol. Here stood the great temple of Jupiter, which was to the religion of Rome what the Parthenon was to that of Athens 15: Rev. 17:4, Rev. 17:5, Rev. 17:9; Rev. 1:15; Rev. xvii.; Rev. xviii 16: "Who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa"-Am. 1:1 17: Sarah, Rebekah, Leah-Gen. 49:31 18: Lit. "sprout." In Isa. 11:1 it is rendered by A.V. "branch.

Letters - letter_047

Letter 47. To Desiderius.

Jerome invites two of his old friends at Rome, Desiderius and his sister (or wife) Serenilla, to join him at Bethlehem. It is possible but not probable that this Desiderius is the same with Desiderius of Aquitaine, who afterwards induced Jerome to write against Vigilantius. An interval of seven years separates this letter (of which the date is 393 a.d.) from the preceding, and all the letters written during this period have wholly perished.

1. Surprised as I have been, my excellent friend, to read the language which your kindness has prompted you to hold concerning me, I have rejoiced that I possess the testimony of one both eloquent and sincere; but when I turn from you to myself I feel vexed that, owing to my unworthiness, your words of praise and eulogy rather weigh me down than lift me up. You know, of course, that I make it a principle to raise the standard of humility, and to prepare for scaling the heights by walking for the present in the lowest places. For what am I or what is my significance that I should have the voice of learning raised to bear witness of me, or that the palm of eloquence should be laid at my feet by one whose style is so charming that it has almost deterred me from writing a letter at all? I must, however, make the attempt in order that charity which seeks not her own [1 Cor. 13:5] but always her neighbor's good, may at least return a compliment, since it cannot convey a lesson.

2. I offer my congratulations to you and to your holy and revered sister, [i.e. his wife. Cf. 1 Cor. 9:5] Serenilla, who, true to her name,¹ has trodden down the troubled waves of the world, and has passed to Christ's calm haven: a happiness which-if we may trust the augury of your name-is in store for you also. For we read that the holy Daniel was called "a man of desires,"² and the friend of God, because he desired to know His mysteries. Therefore, I do with pleasure what the revered Paula has asked of me. I urge and implore you both by the charity of the Lord that you will give your presence to us, and that a visit to the holy places may induce you to enrich us with this great gift. Even supposing that you do not care for our society, it is still your duty as believers to worship on the spot where the Lord's feet once stood and to see for yourselves the still fresh traces of His birth, His cross, and His passion.

3. Several of my little pieces have flown away out of their nest, and have rashly sought for themselves the honor of publication. I have not sent you any lest I should send works which you already have. But if you care to borrow copies of them, you can do so either from our holy sister, Marcella, who has her abode upon the Aventine, or from that holy man, Domnio, who is the Lot of our times. [Cf. 2 Peter 2:7, 2 Peter 2:8] Meantime, I look for your arrival, and will give you all I have when you once come; or, if any hindrances prevent you from joining us, I will gladly send you such treatises as you shall desire. Following the example of Tranquillus³ and of Apollonius the Greek,⁴ I have written a book concerning illustrious men from the apostles [Cf. 1 Cor. 15:8, 1 Cor. 15:9] time to our own; and after enumerating a great number I have put myself down on the last page as one born out of due time, and the least of all Christians.⁵ Here I have found it necessary to give a

short account of my writings down to the fourteenth year⁶ of the Emperor Theodosius. If you find, on procuring this treatise from the persons mentioned above, that there are any pieces mentioned which you have not already got, I will have them copied for you by degrees, if you wish it.

1:

Serenilla, "calm.

2:

Dan. 9:23, A.V. marg. Desiderius means "one who is an object of desire.

3: I.e. the historian Suetonius 4: Probably Apollonius of Tyre, who appears to have written an account of the principal philosophers who followed Zeno

5:

a.d. 392-3

6:

Marcus Antonius, a Roman orator spoken of by Cicero. Orator 100:5, De Oratore 1:100:21, 47, 48. His treatise "De ratione dicendi" is lost. See Quintil 3:1, 192

Letters - letter_048

Letter 48. To Pammachius. An "apology" for the two books "against Jovinian" which Jerome had written a short time previously, and of which he had sent copies to Rome. These Pammachius and his other friends had withheld from publication, thinking that Jerome had unduly exalted virginity at the expense of marriage. He now writes to make good his position, and to do this makes copious extracts from the obnoxious treatise. The date of the letter is 393 or 394 a.d.

1. Your own silence is my reason for not having written hitherto. For I feared that, if I were to write to you without first hearing from you, you would consider me not so much a conscientious as a troublesome correspondent. But, now that I have been challenged by your most delightful letter, a letter which calls upon me to defend my views by an appeal to first principles, I receive my old fellow-learner, companion, and friend with open arms, as the saying goes; and I look forward to having in you a champion of my poor writings; if, that is to say, I can first conciliate your judgment to give sentence in my favor, and can instruct my advocate in all those points on which I am assailed. For both your favorite, Cicero, and before him-in his one short treatise-Antonius,¹ write to this effect, that the chief requisite for victory is to acquaint one's self carefully with the case which one has to plead.

2. Certain persons find fault with me because in the books which I have written against Jovinian I have been excessive (so they say) in praise of virginity and in depreciation of marriage; and they affirm that to preach up chastity till no comparison is left between a wife and a virgin is equivalent to a condemnation of matrimony. If I remember aright the point of the dispute, the question at issue between myself and Jovinian is that he puts marriage on a level with virginity, while I make it inferior; he declares that there is little or no difference between the two states, I assert that there is a great deal. Finally-a result due under God to your agency-he has been condemned because he has dared to set matrimony on an equality with perpetual chastity. Or, if a virgin and a wife are to be looked on as the same, how comes it that Rome has refused to listen to this impious doctrine? A virgin owes her being to a man, but a man does not owe his to a virgin. There can be no middle course. Either my view of the matter must be embraced, or else that of Jovinian. If I am blamed for putting wedlock below virginity, he must be praised for putting the two states on a level. If, on the other hand, he is condemned for supposing them equal, his condemnation must be taken as testimony in favor of my treatise. If men of the world chafe under the notion that they occupy a position inferior to that of virgins, I wonder that clergymen and monks-who both live celibate lives-refrain from praising what they consistently practise. They cut themselves off from their wives to imitate the chastity of virgins, and yet they will have it that married women are as good as these. They should either be joined again to their wives whom they have renounced, or, if they persist in living apart from them, they will have to confess-by their lives if not by their words-that, in preferring virginity to marriage, they have chosen the better course, Am I then a mere novice in the Scriptures, reading the sacred volumes for the first time? And is the line there drawn between virginity and marriage so fine that I have been unable to observe it? I could know nothing, forsooth, of the saying, "Be not righteous overmuch!" [Eccl. 7:16, see Ag. Jov. 1:14] Thus, while I try to

protect myself on one side, I am wounded on the other; to speak more plainly still, while I close with Jovinian in hand-to-hand combat, Manichaeus stabs me in the back. Have I not, I would ask, in the very forefront of my work set the following preface: [Against Jov. 1:3] "We are no disciples of Marcion² or of Manichaeus,³ to detract from marriage. Nor are we deceived by the error of Tatian,⁴ the chief of the Encratites,⁵ into supposing all cohabitation unclean. For he condemns and reprobates not marriage only, but foods also which God has created for us to enjoy. [1 Tim. 4:3] We know that in a large house there are vessels not only of silver and of gold, but of wood also and of earth. [2 Tim. 2:20] We know, too, that on the foundation of Christ which Paul the master builder has laid, some build up gold, silver, and precious stones; others, on the contrary, hay, wood, and stubble. [1 Cor. 3:10-12] We are not ignorant that 'marriage is honorable ...and the bed undefiled.' [Heb. 13:4] We have read the first decree of God: 'Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.' [Gen. 1:28] But while we allow marriage, we prefer the virginity which springs from it. Gold is more precious than silver, but is silver on that account the less silver? Is it an insult to a tree to prefer its apples to its roots or its leaves? Is it an injury to corn to put the ear before the stalk and the blade? As apples come from the tree and grain from the straw, so virginity comes from wedlock. Yields of one hundredfold, of sixtyfold, and of thirtyfold [Matt. 13:8] may all come from one soil and from one sowing, yet they will differ widely in quantity. The yield thirtyfold signifies wedlock, for the joining together of the fingers to express that number, suggestive as it is of a loving gentle kiss or embracing, aptly represents the relation of husband and wife. The yield sixtyfold refers to widows who are placed in a position of distress and tribulation. Accordingly, they are typified by that finger which is placed under the other to express the number sixty; for, as it is extremely trying when one has once tasted pleasure to abstain from its enticements, so the reward of doing this is proportionately great. Moreover, a hundred-I ask the reader to give me his best attention-necessitates a change from the left hand to the right; but while the hand is different the fingers are the same as those which on the left hand signify married women and widows; only in this instance the circle formed by them indicates the crown of virginity."⁶

3. Does a man who speaks thus, I would ask you, condemn marriage? If I have called virginity gold, I have spoken of marriage as silver. I have set forth that the yields an hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold-all spring from one soil and from one sowing, although in amount they differ widely. Will any of my readers be so unfair as to judge me, not by my words, but by his own opinion? At any rate, I have dealt much more gently with marriage than most Latin and Greek writers;⁷ who, by referring the hundredfold yield to martyrs, the sixtyfold to virgins, and the thirtyfold to widows, show that in their opinion married persons are excluded from the good ground and from the seed of the great Father.⁸ But, lest it might be supposed that, though cautious at the outset, I was imprudent in the remainder of my work, have I not, after marking out the divisions of it, on coming to the actual questions immediately introduced the following: [Ag. Jov. 1:4] "I ask all of you of both sexes, at once those who are virgins and continent and those who are married or twice married, to aid my efforts with your prayers." Jovinian is the foe of all indiscriminately, but can I condemn as Manichaean heretics persons whose prayers I need and whose assistance I entreat to help me in my work?

4. As the brief compass of a letter does not suffer us to delay too long on a single point, let us now pass to those which remain. In explaining the testimony of the apostle, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise, also, the husband hath not power of his own body,

but the wife," [1 Cor. 7:4] we have subjoined the following: [Ag. Jov. 1:7] "The entire question relates to those who are living in wedlock, whether it is lawful for them to put away their wives, a thing which the Lord also has forbidden in the Gospel. [Matt. 19:9] Hence, also, the apostle says: 'It is good for a man not to touch' a wife or 'a woman,' [1 Cor. 7:1] as if there were danger in the contact which he who should so touch one could not escape. Accordingly, when the Egyptian woman desired to touch Joseph he flung away his cloak and fled from her hands. [Gen. 39:12, Gen. 39:13] But as he who has once married a wife cannot, except by consent, abstain from intercourse with her or repudiate her, so long as she does not sin, he must render unto his wife her due, [1 Cor. 7:3, R.V] because he has of his own free will bound himself to render it under compulsion." Can one who declares that it is a precept of the Lord that wives should not be put away, and that what God has joined together man must not, without consent, put asunder [Matt. 19:6] -can such an one be said to condemn marriage? Again, in the verses which follow, the apostle says: "But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." [1 Cor. 7:7] In explanation of this saying we made the following remarks: [Ag. Jov. 1:8] "What I myself would wish, he says, is clear. But since there are diversities of gifts in the church, [1 Cor. 12:4] I allow marriage as well, that I may not appear to condemn nature. Reflect, too, that the gift of virginity is one thing, that of marriage another. For had there been one reward for married women and for virgins he would never, after giving the counsel of continence, have gone on to say: 'But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that.' Where each class has its proper gift, there must be some distinction between the classes. I allow that marriage, as well as virginity, is the gift of God, but there is a great difference between gift and gift. Finally, the apostle himself says of one who had lived in incest and afterwards repented: 'Contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him,' [2 Cor. 2:7] and 'To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also.' [2 Cor. 2:10] And, lest we might suppose a man's gift to be but a small thing, he has added: 'For if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the sight⁹ of Christ.' [2 Cor. 2:10] The gifts of Christ are different. Hence Joseph as a type of Him had a coat of many colors. [Gen. 37:23] So in the forty-fourth psalm¹⁰ we read of the Church: 'Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colors.' [Ps. 45:10, P.B.V] The apostle Peter, too, speaks (of husbands and wives) 'as being heirs together of the manifold grace of God.' [1 Pet. 3:7; 1 Pet. 4:10] In Greek the expression is still more striking, the word used being "ποικίλη", that is, 'many-colored.'"

5. I ask, then, what is the meaning of men's obstinate determination to shut their eyes and to refuse to look on what is as clear as day? I have said that there are diversities of gifts in the Church, and that virginity is one gift and wedlock another. And shortly after I have used the words: "I allow marriage also to be a gift of God, but there is a great difference between gift and gift." Can it be said that I condemn that which in the clearest terms I declare to be the gift of God? Moreover, if Joseph is taken as a type of the Lord, his coat of many colors is a type of virgins and widows, celibates and wedded. Can any one who has any part in Christ's tunic be regarded as an alien? Have we not spoken of the very queen herself-that is, the Church of the Saviour-as wearing a vesture of gold wrought about with divers colors? Moreover, when I came to discuss marriage in connection with the following verses, [1 Cor. 7:8-10] I still adhered to the same view. [Ag. Jov. 1:10] "This passage," I said, "has indeed no relation to the present controversy; for, following the decision of the Lord, the apostle teaches that a wife must not be put away saving for fornication, and that, if she has been put away, she cannot during the lifetime of her husband marry another

man, or, at any rate, that she ought, if possible, to be reconciled to her husband. In another verse he speaks to the same effect: 'The wife is bound ...as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband; [Rom. 7:2] she is at liberty to be married to, whom she will; only in the Lord,' [1 Cor. 7:39] that is to a Christian. Thus the apostle, while he allows a second or a third marriage in the Lord, forbids even a first with a heathen."

6. I ask my detractors to open their ears and to realize the fact that I have allowed second and third marriages "in the Lord." If, then, I have not condemned second and third marriages, how can I have proscribed a first? Moreover, in the passage where I interpret the words of the apostle, "Is any man called being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised" [1 Cor. 7:18] (a passage, it is true, which some most careful interpreters of Scripture refer to the circumcision and slavery of the Law), do I not in the clearest terms stand up for the marriage-tie? My words are these: [Ag. Jov. 1:11] "'If any man is called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised.' You had a wife, the apostle says, when you believed. Do not fancy your faith in Christ to be a reason for parting from her. For 'God hath called us in peace.' [1 Cor. 7:15, R.V] 'Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing but the keeping of the commandments of God.' [1 Cor. 7:19] Neither celibacy nor wedlock is of the slightest use without works, since even faith, the distinguishing mark of Christians, if it have not works, is said to be dead, [Jas. 2:17] and on such terms as these the virgins of Vesta or of Juno, who was constant to one¹¹ husband, might claim to be numbered among the saints. And a little further on he says: 'Art thou called being a servant, care not for it; but, if thou mayest be made free, use it rather;' [1 Cor. 7:21] that is to say, if you have a wife, and are bound to her, and render her her due, and have not power of your own body-or, to speak yet more plainly-if you are the slave of a wife, do not allow this to cause you sorrow, do not sigh over the loss of your virginity. Even if you can find pretexts for parting from her to enjoy the freedom of chastity, do not seek your own welfare at the price of another's ruin. Keep your wife for a little, and do not try too hastily to overcome her reluctance. Wait till she follows your example. If you only have patience, your wife will some day become your sister."

7. In another passage we have discussed the reasons which led Paul to say: "Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." [1 Cor. 7:25] Here also, while we have ex-tolled virginity, we have been careful to give marriage its due. [Ag. Jov. 1:12] "Had the Lord commanded virginity," we said, "He would have seemed to condemn marriage and to do away with that seed-plot of humanity from which virginity itself springs. Had He cut away the root how could He have looked for fruit? Unless He had first laid the foundations, how could He have built the edifice or crowned it with a roof made to cover its whole extent?" If we have spoken of marriage as the root whose fruit is virginity, and if we have made wedlock the foundation on which the building or the roof of perpetual chastity is raised, which of my detractors can be so captious or so blind as to ignore the foundation on which the fabric and its roof are built, while he has before his eyes both the fabric and the roof themselves? Once more, in another place, we have brought forward the testimony of the apostle to this effect: "Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife." [1 Cor. 7:21] To this we have appended the following remarks: [Ag. Jov. 1:12] "Each of us has his own sphere allotted to him. Let me have mine, and do you keep yours. If you are bound to a wife, do not put her away. If I am loosed from a wife, let me not seek a wife."

Just as I do not loose marriage-ties when they are once made, so do you refrain from binding together what at present is loosed from such ties." Yet another passage bears unmistakable testimony to the view which we have taken of virginity and of wedlock: [Ag. Jov. 1:13] "The apostle casts no snare upon us, [1 Cor. 7:35] nor does he compel us to be what we do not wish. He only urges us to what is honorable and seemly, inciting us earnestly to serve the Lord, to be anxious always to please Him, and to took for His will which He has prepared for us to do. We are to be like alert and armed soldiers, who immediately execute the orders given to them and perform them without that travail of mind¹² which, according to the preacher, is given to the men of this world 'to be exercised therewith.'" [Eccles. 1:13; Eccles. 3:10] At the end, also, of our comparison of virgins and married women we have summed up the discussion thus: [Ag. Jov. 1:13] "When one thing is good and another thing is better; when that which is good has a different reward from that which is better; and when there are more rewards than one, then, obviously, there exists a diversity of gifts. The difference between marriage and virginity is as great as that between not doing evil and doing good-or, to speak more favorably still, as that between what is good and what is still better."

8. In the sequel we go on to Speak thus: [Ag. Jov. 1:14] "The apostle, in concluding his discussion of marriage and of virginity, is careful to observe a mean course in discriminating between them, and, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, he keeps to the King's highway, [Nu. 20:17] and thus fulfils the injunction, 'Be not righteous overmuch.' [Eccles. 7:16] Moreover, when he goes on to compare monogamy with digamy, he puts digamy after monogamy, just as before he subordinated marriage to virginity." Do we not clearly show by this language what is typified in the Holy Scriptures by the terms right and left, and also what we take to be the meaning of the words "Be not righteous overmuch"? We turn to the left if, following the lust of Jews and Gentiles, we burn for sexual intercourse; we turn to the right if, following the error of the Manichaeans, we under a pretence of chastity entangle ourselves in the meshes of unchastity. But we keep to the King's highway if we aspire to virginity yet refrain from condemning marriage. Can any one, moreover, be so unfair in his criticism of my poor treatise as to allege that I condemn first marriages, when he reads my opinion on second ones as follows: [Ag. Jov. 1:14] "The apostle, it is true, allows second marriages, but only to such women as are bent upon them, to such as cannot contain, [1 Cor. 7:9] lest 'when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ they marry, having condemnation because they have rejected their first faith,' [1 Tim. 5:11, 1 Tim. 5:12, R.V] and he makes this concession because many 'are turned aside after Satan.' [1 Tim. 5:15] But they will be happier if they abide as widows. To this he immediately adds his apostolical authority, 'after my judgment.' Moreover, lest any should consider that authority, being human, to be of small weight, he goes on to say, 'and I think also that I have the spirit of God.' [1 Cor. 7:40] Thus, where he urges men to continence he appeals not to human authority, but to the Spirit of God; but when he gives them permission to marry he does not mention the Spirit of God, but allows prudential considerations to turn the balance, relaxing the strictness of his code in favor of individuals according to their several needs." Having thus brought forward proofs that second marriages are allowed by the apostle, we at once added the remarks which follow: [Ag. Jov. 1:14] "As marriage is permitted to virgins by reason of the danger of fornication, and as what in itself is not desirable is thus made excusable, so by reason of the same danger widows are permitted to marry a second time. For it is better that a woman should know one man (though he should be a second husband or a third) than that she should know several. In other words, it is preferable that she should prostitute herself to one rather than to many." Calumny may do its worst. We have spoken here not of a first marriage, but of a

second, of a third, or (if you like) of a fourth. But lest any one should apply my words (that it is better for a woman to prostitute herself to one man than to several) to a first marriage when my whole argument dealt with digamy and trigamy, I marked my own view of these practices with the words: [Ag. Jov. 1:15] "'All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient.' [1 Cor. 6:12] I do not condemn digamists nor yet trigamists, nor even, to put an extreme, case, octogamists. I will make a still greater concession: I am ready to receive even a whore-monger, if penitent. In every case where fairness is possible, fair consideration must be shown."

9. My calumniator should blush at his assertion that I condemn first marriages when he reads my words just now quoted: "I do not condemn digamists or trigamists, or even, to put an extreme case, octogamists." Not to condemn is one thing, to commend is another. I may concede a practice as allowable and yet not praise it as meritorious. But if I seem severe in saying, "In every case where fairness is possible, fair consideration must be shown," no one, I fancy, will judge me either cruel or stern who reads that the places prepared for virgins and for wedded persons are different from those prepared for trigamists, octogamists, and penitents. That Christ Himself, although in the flesh a virgin, was in the spirit a monogamist, having one wife, even the Church, [Eph. 5:23, Eph. 5:24] I have shown in the latter part of my argument. [Ag. Jov. 1:9] And yet I am supposed to condemn marriage! I am said to condemn it, although I use such words as these: [Ag. Jov. 1:23] "It is an undoubted fact that the levitical priests were descended from the stock of Aaron, Eleazar, and Phinehas; and, as all these were married men, we might well be confronted with them if, led away by the error of the Encratites, we were to contend that marriage is in itself deserving of condemnation." Here I blame Tatian, the chief of the Encratites, for his rejection of marriage, and yet I myself am said to condemn it! Once more, when I contrast virgins with widows, my own words show what my view is concerning wedlock, and set forth the threefold gradation which I propose of virgins, widows-whether in practice or in fact¹³ -and wedded wives. "I do not deny"-these are my words [Ag. Jov. 1:33] -"the blessedness of widows who continue such after their baptism, nor do I undervalue the merit of wives who live in chastity with their husbands; but, just as widows receive a greater reward from God than wives obedient to their husbands, they, too, must be content to see virgins preferred before themselves."

10. Again, when explaining the witness of the apostle to the Galatians, "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," I have spoken to the following effect: "Marriages also are works of the law. And for this reason there is a curse upon such as do not produce offspring. They are permitted, it is true, even under the Gospel; but it is one thing to concede an indulgence to what is a weakness and quite another to promise a reward to what is a virtue." See my express declaration that marriage is allowed in the Gospel, yet that those who are married cannot receive the rewards of chastity so long as they render their due one to another. If married men feel indignant at this statement, let them vent their anger not on me but on the Holy Scriptures; nay, more, upon all bishops, presbyters, and deacons, and the whole company of priests and levites, who know that they cannot offer sacrifices if they fulfil the obligations of marriage. Again, when I adduce evidence from the Apocalypse, [Ag. Jov. 1:40] is it not clear what view I take concerning virgins, widows, and wives? "These are they who sing a new song [Rev. 14:3] which no man can sing except he be a virgin. These are 'the first fruits unto God and unto the Lamb,' [Rev. 14:4] and they are without spot. If virgins are the first fruits unto God, then widows and wives who live in continence must come after the first fruits-that is to say, in the second place and in the third." We

place widows, then, and wives in the second place and in the third, and for this we are charged by the frenzy of a heretic with condemning marriage altogether.

11. Throughout the book I have made many remarks in a tone of great moderation on virginity, widowhood, and marriage. But for the sake of brevity, I will here adduce but one passage, and that of such a kind that no one, I think, will be found to gainsay it save some one who wishes to prove himself malicious or mad. In describing our Lord's visit to the marriage at Cana in Galilee, [John. 2:1, John. 2:2] after some other remarks I have added these: [Ag. Jov. 1:40] "He who went but once to a marriage has taught us that a woman should marry but once; and this fact might tell against virginity if we failed to give marriage its due place-after virginity that is, and chaste widowhood. But, as it is only heretics who condemn marriage and tread under foot the ordinance of God, we listen with gladness to every word said by our Lord in praise of marriage. For the Church does not condemn marriage, but only subordinates it. It does not reject it altogether, but regulates it, knowing (as I have said above) that 'in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man, therefore, purge himself ...he shall be a vessel unto honor meet ...and prepared unto every good work.'" [2 Tim. 2:20, 2 Tim. 2:21] I listen with gladness, I say here, to every word said by the apostle in praise of marriage. Do I listen with gladness to the praise of marriage, and do I yet condemn marriage? The Church, I say, does not condemn wedlock, but subordinates it. Whether you like it or not, marriage is subordinated to virginity and widowhood. Even when marriage continues to fulfil its function, the Church does not condemn it, but only subordinates it; it does not reject it, but only regulates it. It is in your power, if you will, to mount the second step of chastity.¹⁴ Why are you angry if, standing on the third and lowest step, you will not make haste to go up higher?

12. Since, then, I have so often reminded my reader of my views; and since I have picked my way like a prudent traveller over every inch of the road, stating repeatedly that, while I receive marriage as a thing in itself admissible, I yet prefer continence, widowhood, and virginity, the wise and generous reader ought to have judged what seemed hard sayings by my general drift, and not to have charged me with putting forward inconsistent opinions in one and the same book. For who is so dull or so inexperienced in writing as to praise and to condemn one and the same object, as to destroy what he has built up, and to build up what he has destroyed; and when he has vanquished his opponent, to turn his sword, last of all against himself? Were my detractors country bred or unacquainted with the arts of rhetoric or of logic, I should pardon their want of insight; nor should I censure them for accusing me if I saw that their ignorance was in fault and not their will. As it is men of intellect who have enjoyed a liberal education make it their object less to understand me than to wound me, and for such I have this short answer, that they should correct my faults and not merely censure me for them. The lists are open, I cry; your enemy has marshalled his forces, his position is plain, and (if I may quote Virgil [Virg. A. 11:374, 5])- "The foeman calls you: meet him face to face."

Such men should answer their opponent. They ought to keep within the limits of debate, and not to wield the schoolmaster's rod. Their books should aim at showing in what my statements have fallen short of the truth, and in what they have exceeded it. For, although I will not listen to fault-finders, I will follow the advice of teachers. To direct the fighter how to fight when you yourself occupy a post of vantage on the wall is a kind of teaching that does not commend itself; and when

you are yourself bathed in perfumes, it is unworthy to charge a bleeding soldier with cowardice. Nor in saying this do I lay myself open to a charge of boasting that while others have slept I only have entered the lists. My meaning simply is that men who have seen me wounded in this warfare may possibly be a little too cautious in their methods of fighting. I would not have you engage in an encounter in which you will have nothing to do but to protect yourself, your right hand remaining motionless while your left manages your shield. You must either strike or fall. I cannot account you a victor unless I see your opponent put to the sword.

13. You are, no doubt, men of vast acquirements; but we too have studied in the schools, and, like you, we have learned from the precepts of Aristotle-or, rather, from those which he has derived from Gorgias-that there are different ways of speaking; and we know, among other things, that he who writes for display uses one style, and he who writes to convince, another.¹⁵ In the former case the debate is desultory; to confute the opposer, now this argument is adduced and now that. One argues as one pleases, saying one thing while one means another. To quote the proverb, "With one hand one offers bread, in the other one holds a stone." [Plaut. Aul. 2:2, 18] In the latter case a certain frankness and openness of countenance are necessary. For it is one thing to start a problem and another to expound what is already proved. The first calls for a disputant, the second for a teacher. I stand in the thick of the fray, my life in constant danger: you who profess to teach me are a man of books. "Do not," you say, "attack unexpectedly or wound by a side-thrust. Strike straight at your opponent. You should be ashamed to resort to feints instead of force." As if it were not the perfection of fighting to menace one part and to strike another. Read, I beg of you, Demosthenes or Cicero, or (if you do not care for pleaders whose aim is to speak plausibly rather than truly) read Plato, Theophrastus, Xenophon, Aristotle, and the rest of those who draw their respective rills of wisdom from the Socratic fountain-head. Do they show any openness? Are they devoid of artifice? Is not every word they say filled with meaning? And does not this meaning always make for victory? Origen, Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinaris¹⁶ write at great length against Celsus and Porphyry.¹⁷ Consider how subtle are the arguments, how insidious the engines with which they overthrow what the spirit of the devil has wrought. Sometimes, it is true, they are compelled to say not what they think but what is needful; and for this reason they employ against their opponents the assertions of the Gentiles themselves. I say nothing of the Latin authors, of Tertullian, Cyprian, Minutius, Victorinus, Lactantius, Hilary, lest I should appear not so much to be defending myself as to be assailing others. I will only mention the Apostle Paul, whose words seem to me, as often as I hear them, to be not words, but peals of thunder. Read his epistles, and especially those addressed to the Romans, to the Galatians, and to the Ephesians, in all of which he stands in the thick of the battle, and you will see how skilful and how careful he is in the proofs which he draws from the Old Testament, and how warily he cloaks the object which he has in view. His words seem simplicity itself: the expressions of a guileless and unsophisticated person-one who has no skill either to plan a dilemma or to avoid it. Still, whichever way you look, they are thunderbolts. His pleading halts, yet he carries every point which he takes up. He turns his back upon his foe only to overcome him; he simulates flight, but only that he may slay. He, then, if any one, ought to be calumniated; we should speak thus to him: "The proofs which you have used against the Jews or against other heretics bear a different meaning in their own contexts to that which they bear in your epistles. We see passages taken captive by your pen and pressed into service to win you a victory which in the volumes from which they are taken have no controversial bearing at all." May he not reply to us in the words of the Saviour: "I have one mode

of speech for those that are without and another for those that are within; the crowds hear my parables, but their interpretation is for my disciples alone"? [Matt. 13:10-17] The Lord puts questions to the Pharisees, but does not elucidate them. To teach a disciple is one thing; to vanquish an opponent, another. "My mystery is for me," says the prophet; "my mystery is for me and for them that are mine." [Isa. 24:16, Vulg]

14. You are indignant with me because I have merely silenced Jovinian and not instructed him. You, do I say? Nay, rather, they who grieve to hear him anathematized, and who impeach their own pretended orthodoxy by eulogizing in another the heresy which they hold themselves. I should have asked him, forsooth, to surrender peaceably! I had no right to disregard his struggles and to drag him against his will into the bonds of truth! I might use such language had the desire of victory induced me to say anything counter to the rule laid down in Scripture, and had I taken the line-so often adopted by strong men in controversy-of justifying the means by the result. As it is, however, I have been an exponent of the apostle rather than a dogmatist on my own account; and my function has been simply that of a commentator. Anything, therefore, which seems a hard saying should be imputed to the writer expounded by me rather than to me the expounder; unless, indeed, he spoke otherwise than he is represented to have done, and I have by an unfair interpretation wrested the plain meaning of his words. If any one charges me with this disingenuousness let him prove his charge from the Scriptures themselves.

I have said in my book, [Ag. Jov. 1:7] "If 'it is good for a man not to touch a woman,' then it is bad for him to touch one, for bad, and bad only, is the opposite of good. But, if though bad it is made venial, then it is allowed to prevent something which would be worse than bad," and so on down to the commencement of the next chapter. The above is my comment upon the apostle's words: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." [1 Cor. 7:1, 1 Cor. 7:2] In what way does my meaning differ from that intended by the apostle? Except that where he speaks decidedly I do so with hesitation. He defines a dogma, I hazard an inquiry. He openly says: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." I timidly ask if it is good for a man not to touch one. If I thus waver, I cannot be said to speak positively. He says: "It is good not to touch." I add what is a possible antithesis to "good." And immediately afterwards I speak thus: [Ag. Jov. 1:7] "Notice the apostle's carefulness. He does not say: 'It is good for a man not to have a wife,' but, 'It is good for a man not to touch a woman'; as if there is danger in the very touching of one-danger which he who touches cannot escape." You see, therefore, that I am not expounding the law as to husbands and wives, but simply discussing the general question of sexual intercourse-how in comparison with chastity and virginity, the life of angels, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman."

"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "all is vanity." [Eccles. 1:2] But if all created things are good, [Gen. 1:31; 1 Tim. 4:4] as being the handiwork of a good Creator, how comes it that all things are vanity? If the earth is vanity, are the heavens vanity too?-and the angels, the thrones, the dominations, the powers, and the rest of the virtues?18 No; if things which are good in themselves as being the handiwork of a good Creator are called vanity, it is because they are compared with things which are better still. For example, compared with a lamp, a lantern is good for nothing; compared with a star, a lamp does not shine at all; the brightest star pales before the moon; put the moon beside the sun, and it no longer looks bright; compare the sun with Christ, and it is darkness. "I am that I am," God says; [Ex. 3:14] and if you compare all created things with

Him they have no existence. "Give not thy sceptre," says Esther, "unto them that be nothing" [Esth. 14:11] -that is to say, to idols and demons. And certainly they were idols and demons to whom she prayed that she and hers might not be given over. In Job also we read how Bildad says of the wicked man: "His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and destruction as a king shall trample upon him. The companions also of him who is not shall abide in his tabernacle." [Job 18:14, 15 Vulg] This evidently relates to the devil, who must be in existence, otherwise he could not be said to have companions. Still, because he is lost to God, he is said not to be.

Now it was in a similar sense that I declared it to be a bad thing to touch a woman-I did not say a wife-because it is a good thing not to touch one. And I added: [Ag. Jov. 1:7] "I call virginity fine corn, wedlock barley, and fornication cow-dung." Surely both corn and barley are creatures of God. But of the two multitudes miraculously supplied in the Gospel the larger was fed upon barley loaves, and the smaller on corn bread.¹⁹ "Thou, Lord," says the psalmist, "shalt save both man and beast." [Ps. 36:7, P.B.V] I have myself said the same thing in other words, when I have spoken of virginity as gold and of wedlock as silver. [Ag. Jov. 1:3] Again, in discussing [Ag. Jov. 1:40] the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed virgins who were not defiled with women, [Rev. 14:1, Rev. 14:4] I have tried to show that all who have not remained virgins are reckoned as defiled when compared with the perfect chastity of the angels and of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if any one thinks it hard or reprehensible that I have placed the same interval between virginity and wedlock as there is between fine corn and barley, let him read the book of the holy Ambrose "On Widows," and he will find, among other statements concerning virginity and marriage, the following:²⁰ "The apostle has not expressed his preference for marriage so unreservedly as to quench in men the aspiration after virginity; he commences with a recommendation of continence, and it is only subsequently that he stoops to mention the remedies for its opposite. And although to the strong he has pointed out the prize of their high calling, [Phil. 3:14] yet he suffers none to faint by the way; [Matt. 15:32] whilst he applauds those who lead the van, he does, not despise those who bring up the rear. For he had himself learned that the Lord Jesus gave to some barley bread, lest they should faint by the way, but offered to others His own body, that they should strive to attain His kingdom;" [Matt. 26:26, Matt. 26:29] and immediately afterwards: "The nuptial tie, then, is not to be avoided as a crime, but to be refused as a hard burden. For the law binds the wife to bring forth children in labor and in sorrow. Her desire is to be to her husband that he should rule over her. [Gen. 3:16] It is not the widow, then, but the bride, who is handed over to labor and sorrow in childbearing. It is not the virgin, but the married woman, who is subjected to the sway of a husband." And in another place, "Ye are bought," says the apostle, "with a price; [1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Cor. 7:23] be not therefore the servants of men." [Cf. Eph. 6:6] You see how clearly he defines the servitude which attends the married state. And a little farther on: "If, then, even a good marriage is servitude, what must a bad one be, in which husband and wife cannot sanctify, but only mutually destroy each other?" What I have said about virginity and marriage diffusely, Ambrose has stated tersely and pointedly, compressing much meaning into a few words. Virginity is described by him as a means of recommending continence, marriage as a remedy for incontinence. And when he descends from broad principles to particular details, he significantly holds out to virgins the prize of the high calling, yet comforts the married, that they may not faint by the way. While eulogizing the one class, he does not despise the other. Marriage he compares to the barley bread set before the multitude, virginity to the body of Christ given to the disciples. There is much less difference, it seems to me, between barley and fine corn than between barley and the body of Christ. Finally, he

speaks of marriage as a hard burden, to be avoided if possible, and as a badge of the most unmistakable servitude. He makes, also, many other statements, which he has followed up at length in his three books "On Virgins."

15. From all which considerations it is clear that I have said nothing at all new concerning virginity and marriage, but have followed in all respects the judgment of older writers-of Ambrose, that is to say, and others who have discussed the doctrines of the Church. "And I would sooner follow them in their faults than copy the dull pedantry of the writers of to-day."²¹ Let married men, if they please, swell with rage because I have said, [Ag. Jov. 1:7] "I ask you, what kind of good thing is that which forbids a man to pray, and which prevents him from receiving the body of Christ?" When I do my duty as a husband, I cannot fulfil the requirements of continence. The same apostle, in another place, commands us to pray always. [1 Th. 5:17] "But if we are always to pray we must never yield to the claims of wedlock for, as often as I render her due to my wife, I incapacitate myself for prayer." When I spoke thus it is clear that I relied on the words of the apostle: "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to ...prayer." [1 Cor. 7:5] The Apostle Paul tells us that when we have intercourse with our wives we cannot pray. If, then, sexual intercourse prevents what is less important-that is, prayer-how much more does it prevent what is more important-that is, the reception of the body of Christ? Peter, too, exhorts us to continence, that our "prayers be not hindered." [1 Pet. 3:7] How, I should like to know, have I sinned in all this? What have I done? How have I been in fault? If the waters of a stream are thick and muddy, it is not the river-bed which is to blame, but the source. Am I attacked because I have ventured to add to the words of the apostle these words of my own: "What kind of good thing is that which prevents a man from receiving the body of Christ?" If so, I will make answer briefly thus: Which is the more important, to pray or to receive Christ's body? Surely to receive Christ's body. If, then, sexual intercourse hinders the less important thing, much more does it hinder that which is the more important.

I have said in the same treatise [Ag. Jov. 1:20] that David and they that were with him could not have lawfully eaten the shew-bread had they not made answer that for three days they had not been defiled with women [1 Sam. 21:4, 1 Sam. 21:5] -not, of course, with harlots, intercourse with whom was forbidden by the law, but with their own wives, to whom they were lawfully united. Moreover, when the people were about to receive the law on Mount Sinai they were commanded to keep away from their wives for three days. [Ex. 19:15] I know that at Rome it is customary for the faithful always to receive the body of Christ, a custom which I neither censure nor indorse. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." [Rom. 14:5] But I appeal to the consciences of those persons who after indulging in sexual intercourse on the same day receive the communion-having first, as Persius puts it, "washed off the night in a flowing stream," [Pers. 2:16] and I ask such why they do not presume to approach the martyrs or to enter the churches.²² Is Christ of one mind abroad and of another at home? What is unlawful in church cannot be lawful at home. Nothing is hidden from God. "The night shineth as the day" before Him. [Ps. 139:11, Ps. 139:12] Let each man examine himself, and so let him approach the body of Christ. [Cf. 1 Cor. 11:28] Not, of course, that the deferring of communion for one day or for two makes a Christian any the holier or that what I have not deserved to-day I shall deserve to-morrow or the day after. But if I grieve that I have not shared in Christ's body it does help me to avoid for a little while my wife's embraces, and to prefer to wedded love the love of Christ. A hard discipline, you will say,

and one not to be borne. What man of the world could bear it? He that can bear it, I reply, let him bear it; [Cf. Matt. 19:12] he that cannot must look to himself. it is my business to say, not what each man can do or will do, but what the Scriptures inculcate.

16. Again, objection has been taken to my comments on the apostle in the following passage: [Against Jov. 1:8] "But lest any should suppose from the context of the words before quoted (namely, 'that ye may give yourselves ...to prayer and come together again') that the apostle desires this consummation, and does not merely concede it to obviate a worse downfall, he immediately adds, 'that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.' [1 Cor. 7:5] 'And come together again.' What a noble indulgence the words convey! One which he blushes to speak of in plainer words, which he prefers only to Satan's temptation, and which has its root in incontinence. Do we labor to expound this as a dark saying when the writer has himself explained his meaning? "I speak this," he says, 'by way of permission, and not as a command.' [1 Cor. 7:6, Vulg] Do we still hesitate to speak of wedlock as a thing permitted instead of as a thing enjoined? or are we afraid that such permission will exclude second or third marriages or some other case?' What have I said here which the apostle has not said? The phrase, I suppose, "which he blushes to speak of in plainer words." I imagine that when he says "come together," and does not mention for what, he takes a modest way of indicating what he does not like to name openly-that is, sexual intercourse. Or is the objection to the words which follow-"which he prefers only to Satan's temptation, and which has its root in incontinence"? Are they not the very words of the apostle, only differently arranged-"that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"? Or do people cavil because I said, "Do we still hesitate to speak of wedlock as a thing permitted instead of as a thing enjoined?" If this seems a hard saying, it should be ascribed to the apostle, who says, "But I speak this by way of permission, and not as a command," and not to me, who, except that I have rearranged their order, have changed neither the words nor their meaning.

17. The shortness of a letter compels me to hasten on. I pass, accordingly, to the points which remain. "I say," remarks the apostle, "to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn." [1 Cor. 7:8, 1 Cor. 7:9] This section I have interpreted thus: [Ag. Jov. 1:9] "When he has granted to those who are married the use of wedlock, and has made clear his own wishes and concessions, he passes on to those who are unmarried or widows, and sets before them his own example. He calls them happy if they abide even as he, [1 Cor. 7:8] but he goes on, 'if they cannot contain, let them marry.' He thus repeats his former language, 'but only to avoid fornication,' and 'that Satan tempt you not for your incontinence.' And when he says, 'If they cannot contain, let them marry,' he gives as a reason for his words that 'it is better to marry than to burn.' It is only good to marry, because it is bad to burn. But take away the fire of lust, and he will not say 'it is better to marry.' For a thing is said to be better in antithesis to something which is worse, and not simply in contrast with what is admittedly good. It is as though he said, 'It is better to have one eye than none.'" Shortly afterwards, apostrophizing the apostle, I spoke thus: [Ag. Jov. 1:9] "If marriage is good in itself, do not compare it with a conflagration, but simply say, 'It is good to marry.' I must suspect the goodness of a thing which only becomes a lesser evil in the presence of a greater one. I, for my part, would have it not a lighter evil but a downright good." The apostle wishes unmarried women and widows to abstain from sexual intercourse, incites them to follow his own example, and calls them happy if they abide even as he. But if they cannot contain, and are tempted to

quench the fire of lust by fornication rather than by continence, it is better, he tells them, to marry than to burn. Upon which precept I have made this comment: "It is good to marry, simply because it is bad to burn," not putting forward a view of my own, but only explaining the apostle's precept, "It is better to marry than to burn;" that is, it is better to take a husband than to commit fornication. If, then, you teach that burning or fornication is good, the good will still be surpassed by what is still better.²³ But if marriage is only a degree better than the evil to which it is preferred, it cannot be of that unblemished perfection and blessedness which suggest a comparison with the life of angels. Suppose I say, "It is better to be a virgin than a married woman;" in this case I have preferred to what is good what is still better. But suppose I go a step further and say, "It is better to marry than to commit fornication;" in that case I have preferred, not a better thing to a good thing, but a good thing to a bad one. There is a wide difference between the two cases; for, while virginity is related to marriage as better is to good, marriage is related to fornication as good is to bad. How, I should like to know, have I sinned in this explanation? My fixed purpose was not to bend the Scriptures to my own wishes, but simply to say what I took to be their meaning. A commentator has no business to dilate on his own views; his duty is to make plain the meaning of the author whom he professes to interpret. For, if he contradicts the writer whom he is trying to expound, he will prove to be his opponent rather than his interpreter. When I am freely expressing my own opinion, and not commenting upon the Scriptures, then any one that pleases may charge me with having spoken hardly of marriage. But if he can find no ground for such a charge, he should attribute such passages in my commentaries as appear severe or harsh to the author commented on, and not to me, who am only his interpreter.

18. Another charge brought against me is simply intolerable! It is urged that in explaining the apostle's words concerning husbands and wives, "Such shall have trouble in the flesh," I have said: [Ag. Jov. 1:13] "We in our ignorance had supposed that in the flesh at least wedlock would have rejoicing. But if married persons are to have trouble in the flesh, the only thing in which they seemed likely to have pleasure, what motive will be left to make women marry? for, besides having trouble in spirit and soul, they will also have it even in the flesh." [1 Th. 5:23] Do I condemn marriage if I enumerate its troubles, such as the crying of infants, the death of children the chance of abortion, domestic losses, and so forth? Whilst Damasus of holy memory was still living, I wrote a book against Helvidius "On the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary," in which, duly to extol the bliss of virginity, I was forced to say much of the troubles of marriage. Did that excellent man-versed in Scripture as he was, and a virgin doctor of the virgin Church-find anything to censure in my discourse? Moreover, in the treatise which I addressed to Eustochium²⁴ I used much harsher language regarding marriage, and yet no one was offended at it. Nay, every lover of chastity strained his ears to catch my eulogy of continence. Read Tertullian, read Cyprian, read Ambrose, and either accuse me with them or acquit me with them. My critics resemble the characters of Plautus. Their only wit lies in detraction; and they try to make themselves out men of learning by assailing all parties in turn. Thus they bestow their censure impartially upon myself and upon my opponent, and maintain that we are both beaten, although one or other of us must have succeeded.

Moreover, when in discussing digamy and trigamy I have said, [Ag. Jov. 1:14] "It is better for a woman to know one man, even though he be a second husband or a third, than several; it is more tolerable for her to prostitute herself to one man than to many," have I not immediately subjoined

my reason for so saying? "The Samaritan woman in the Gospel, when she declares that her present husband is her sixth, is rebuked by the Lord on the ground that he is not her husband."²⁵ For my own part, I now once more freely proclaim that digamy is not condemned in the Church-no, nor yet trigamy-and that a woman may marry a fifth husband, or a sixth, or a greater number still just as lawfully as she may marry a second; but that, while such marriages are not condemned, neither are they commended. They are meant as alleviations of an unhappy lot, and in no way redound to the glory of continence. I have spoken to the same effect elsewhere. [Ag. Jov. 1:15] "When a woman marries more than once-whether she does so twice or three times matters little-she ceases to be a monogamist. 'All things are lawful ...but all things are not expedient.' [1 Cor. 6:12] I do not condemn digamists or trigamists, or even, to put an impossible case, octogamists. Let a woman have an eighth husband if she must; only let her cease to prostitute herself."

19. I will come now to the passage in which I am accused of saying that-at least according to the true Hebrew text-the words "God saw that it was good" [Gen. 1:10] are not inserted after the second day of the creation, as they are after the first, third, and remaining ones, and of adding immediately the following comment: [Ag. Jov. 1:16] "We are meant to understand that there is something not good in the number two, separating us as it does from unity, and prefiguring the marriage-tie. Just as in the account of Noah's ark all the animals that enter by twos are unclean, but those of which an uneven number is taken are clean." [Gen. 7:2] In this statement a passing objection is made to what I have said concerning the second day, whether on the ground that the words mentioned really occur in the passage, although I say that they do not occur, or because, assuming them to occur, I have understood them in a sense different from that which the context evidently requires. As regards the non-occurrence of the words in question (viz., "God saw that it was good"), let them take not my evidence, but that of all the Jewish and other translators-Aquila²⁶ namely, Symmachus,²⁷ and Theodotion.²⁸ But if the words, although occurring in the account of the other days, do not occur in the account of this, either let them give a more plausible reason than I have done for their non-occurrence, or, failing such, let them, whether they like it or not, accept the suggestion which I have made. Furthermore, if in Noah's ark all the animals that enter by twos are unclean, whilst those of which an uneven number is taken are clean, and if there is no dispute about the accuracy of the text, let them explain if they can why it is so written. But if they cannot explain it, then, whether they will or not, they must embrace my explanation of the matter. Either produce better fare and ask me to be your guest, or else rest content with the meal that I offer you, however poor it may be. [Cf. Hor. Ep. 1:6, 67, 68]

I must now mention the ecclesiastical writers who have dealt with this question of the odd number. They are, among the Greeks, Clement, Hippolytus, Origen, Dionysius, Eusebius, Didymus; and, among ourselves, Tertullian, Cyprian, Victorinus, Lactantius, Hilary. What Cyprian said to Fortunatus about the number seven is clear from the letter which he sent to him.²⁹ Or perhaps I ought to bring forward the reasonings of Pythagoras, Archytas of Tarentum, and Publius Scipio in (Cicero's) sixth book "Concerning the Common Weal." If my detractors will not listen to any of these I will make the grammar schools shout in their ears the words of Virgil:

Uneven numbers are the joy of God. [Virg. E. 8:75]

20. To say, as I have done, that virginity is cleaner than wedlock, that the even numbers must give way to the odd, that the types of the Old Testament establish the truth of the Gospel: this, it appears, is a great sin subversive of the churches and intolerable to the world. The remaining points which are censured in my treatise are, I take it, of less importance, or else resolve themselves into this. I have, therefore, refrained from answering them, both that I may not exceed the limit at my disposal, and that I may not seem to distrust your intelligence, knowing as I do that you are ready to be my champion even before I ask you. With my last breath, then, I protest that neither now nor at any former time have I condemned marriage. I have merely answered an opponent without any fear that they of my own party would lay snares for me. I extol virginity to the skies, not because I myself possess it, but because, not possessing it, I admire it all the more. Surely it is a modest and ingenuous confession to praise in others that which you lack yourself. The weight of my body keeps me fixed to the ground, but do I fail to admire the flying birds or to praise the dove because, in the words of Virgil, [Virg. A. 5:217] it "Glides on its liquid path with motionless swift wings?"

Let no man deceive himself, let no man, giving ear to the voice of flattery, rush upon ruin. The first virginity man derives from his birth, the second from his second birth.³⁰ The words are not mine; it is an old saying, "No man can serve two masters;" [Matt. 6:24] that is, the flesh and the spirit. For "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other," so that we cannot do the things that we would. [Gal. 5:17] When, then, anything in my little work seems to you harsh, have regard not to my words, but to the Scripture, whence they are taken.

21. Christ Himself is a virgin; [Ag. Jov. 1:31] and His mother is also a virgin; yea, though she is His mother, she is a virgin still. For Jesus has entered in through the closed doors, [John. 20:19] and in His sepulchre—a new one hewn out of the hardest rock—no man is laid either before Him or after Him. [John. 19:41] Mary is "a garden enclosed ...a fountain sealed," [Cant. 4:12] and from that fountain flows, according to Joel,³¹ the river which waters the torrent bed either³² of cords or of thorns;³³ of cords being those of the sins by which we were beforetime bound, [Cf. Prov. 5:22] the thorns those which choked the seed the goodman of the house had sown. [Matt. 13:7] She is the east gate, spoken of by the prophet Ezekiel, [Ezek. 44:2, Ezek. 44:3] always shut and always shining, and either concealing or revealing the Holy of Holies; and through her "the Sun of Righteousness," [Mal. 4:2] our "high priest after the order of Melchizedek," [Heb. 5:10] goes in and out. Let my critics explain to me how Jesus can have entered in through closed doors when He allowed His hands and His side to be handled, and showed that He had bones and flesh, [John. 20:19, John. 20:27] thus proving that His was a true body and no mere phantom of one, and I will explain how the holy Mary can be at once a mother and a virgin. A mother before she was wedded, she remained a virgin after bearing her son. Therefore, as I was going to say, the virgin Christ and the virgin Mary have dedicated in themselves the first fruits of virginity for both sexes.³⁴ The apostles have either been virgins or, though married, have lived celibate lives. Those persons who are chosen to be bishops, priests, and deacons are either virgins or widowers; or at least when once they have received the priesthood, are vowed to perpetual chastity. Why do we delude ourselves and feel vexed if while we are continually straining after sexual indulgence, we find the palm of chastity denied to us? We wish to fare sumptuously, and to enjoy the embraces of our wives, yet at the same time we desire to reign with Christ among virgins and widows. Shall there

be but one reward, then, for hunger and for excess, for filth and for finery, for sackcloth and for silk? Lazarus, [Luke 16:19-25] in his lifetime, received evil things, and the rich man, clothed in purple, fat and sleek, while he lived enjoyed the good things of the flesh but, now that they are dead, they occupy different positions. Misery has given place to satisfaction, and satisfaction to misery. And it rests with us whether we will follow Lazarus or the rich man.

1: Marcus Antonius, a Roman orator spoken of by Cicero. Orator 100:5, De Oratore 1:100:21, 47, 48. His treatise "De ratione dicendi" is lost. See Quintal 3:1, 192 2: A Gnostic presbyter of the second century who rejected the Old Testament 3: An Eastern teacher of the third century, a.d., the main feature of whose system was its uncompromising dualism

4: A Syrian rhetorician converted to Christianity by Justin Martyr. He wrote a harmony of the Gospels called Diatessaron 5: I.e. "the abstainers," or "the continent," a Gnostic sect in the second century

6: From this passage compared with Ep. 123:9, and Bede De Temporum Ratlone, 100:1. (De Loquetâ Digitorum), it appears that the number thirty was indicated by joining the tips of the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, sixty was indicated by curling up the forefinger of the same hand and then doubling the thumb over it, while one hundred was expressed by joining the tips of the thumb and forefinger of the right hand. See Prof. Mayor's learned note on Juv. 10:249 7: E.g. Cyprian and Origen (Hom. 1:in Jos.) 8: Paterfamilias. Vide Cypr. de Hab. Virg. 21

9: A.V. marg 10: Acc. to the Vulgate. In A.V. it is the 45th

11: Univira 12: Jerome here explains the word aperispastwj (A.V. "without distraction") in 1 Cor. 7:35.

13: Viduitas vel continentia 14: I.e. continence in marriage

15:

Aliud esse gymnastikwj scribere, aliud dogmatikwj. The words do not appear to be used in this sense in the extant works of Aristotle

16:

The reply of Origen to Celsus is still extant; those of Methodius, Eusebius and Apollinaris to Porphyry have perished. Cf. Letter LXX

17: Two philosophic opponents of Christianity who flourished, the first in the second, the second in the third, century of our era 18: Col. 1:16. Cf. Milton, P. L. 5:601 19: Matt. 14:15-21; Matt. 15:32-38. Cf. John. 6:5-13 20: Ambrose, On Widowhood, 13:79; 13:81; 11:69 21: Ter. Andria Prol. 20, 21

22: That what is now known as reservation of the elements was practised in the early church there is abundant evidence to show. Justin Martyr (Apol. I. 65) writes: "The deacons communicate each of those present and carry away to the absent of the blest bread and wine and water." And those to whom the eucharist was thus taken were not bound to consume it immediately, or all at once, but might reserve a part or all for future occasions. According to Basil (Ep. 93), "in Egypt the laity for the most part had every one the communion in their own houses"-and "all those who dwell

alone in the desert, when there is no priest, keep the communion at home and receive it at their own hands." So Jerome speaks (Letter CXXV. 20) of Exuperius as "carrying the Lord's body in a wicker basket, His blood in a vessel of glass." See the article Reservation in Smith and Cheetham's Dict. of Christian Antiquities 23: Fornication must still be subordinated to marriage

24: Letter XXII 25: John. 4:16-18. Jerome's version of the story is inaccurate 26: The author of a literal Greek version of the O. T. made in the second century 27: An ebionitic translator, free, not literal, in style

28: A careful reviser of the LXX. whose work was welcomed by the Church. His version of Daniel completely superseded the older one 29: Cyprian, Letter to Fortunatus, 13:11 30: Tert. de Exh. Cast. I 31: Joel, 3:18; according to the LXX. and Hebrew. A.V. has "vale of Shittim" (thorns)

32:

LXX

33: Hebrew 34: Cf. Letter XXII

Letters - letter_049

Letter 49. To Pammachius.

Jerome encloses the preceding letter, thanks Pammachius for his efforts to suppress his treatise "against Jovinian," but declares these to be useless, and exhorts him, if he still has any hesitation in his mind, to turn to the Scriptures and the commentaries made upon them by Origen and others. Written at the same time as the preceding letter.

1. Christian modesty sometimes requires us to be silent even to our friends, and to nurse our humility in peace, where the renewal of an old friendship would expose us to the charge of self-seeking. Thus, when you have kept silence I have kept silence too, and have not cared to remonstrate with you, lest I should be thought more anxious to conciliate a person of influence than to cultivate a friend. But, now that it has become a duty to reply to your letter, I will endeavor always to be beforehand with you, and not so much to answer your queries as to write independently of them. Thus, if I have shown my modesty hitherto by silence, I will henceforth show it still more by coming forward to speak.

2. I quite recognize the kindness and forethought which have induced you to withdraw from circulation some copies of my work against Jovinian. Your diligence, however, has been of no avail, for several people coming from the city have repeatedly read aloud to me passages which they have come across in Rome. In this province, also, the books have already been circulated; and, as you have read yourself in Horace, "Words once uttered cannot be recalled."¹ I am not so fortunate as are most of the writers of the day-able, that is, to correct my trifles whenever I like. When once I have written anything, either my admirers or my ill-wishers-from different motives, but with equal zeal-sow my work broadcast among the public; and their language, whether it is that of eulogy or of criticism, is apt to run to excess.² They are guided not by the merits of the piece, but by their own angry feelings. Accordingly, I have done what I could. I have dedicated to you a defence of the work in question, feeling sure that when you have read it you will yourself satisfy the doubts of others on my behalf; or else, if you too turn up your nose at the task, you will have to explain in some new manner that section of the apostle³ in which he discusses virginity and marriage.

3. I do not speak thus that I may provoke you to write on the subject yourself-although I know your zeal in the study of the sacred writings to be greater than my own-but that you may compel my tormentors to do so. They are educated; in their own eyes no mean scholars; competent not merely to censure but to instruct me. If they write on the subject, my view will be the sooner neglected when it is compared with theirs. Read, I pray you, and diligently consider the words of the apostle, and you will then see that-with a view to avoid misrepresentation-I have been much more gentle towards married persons than he was disposed to be. Origen, Dionysius, Pierius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Didymus, Apollinaris, have used great latitude in the interpretation of this epistle.⁴ When Pierius, sifting and expounding the apostle's meaning, comes to the words, "I would that all men were even as I myself," [1 Cor. 7:7] he makes this comment upon them: "In

saying this Paul plainly preaches abstinence from marriage." Is the fault here mine, or am I responsible for harshness? Compared with this sentence of Pierius,⁵ all that I have ever written is mild indeed. Consult the commentaries of the above-named writers and take advantage of the Church libraries; you will then more speedily finish as you would wish the enterprise which you have so happily begun.⁶

4. I hear that the hopes of the entire city are centred in you, and that bishop⁷ and people are, agreed in wishing for your exaltation. To be a bishop⁸ is much, to deserve to be one is more.

If you read the books of the sixteen prophets⁹ which I have rendered into Latin from the Hebrew; and if, when you have done so, you express satisfaction with my labors, the news will encourage me to take out of my desk some other works now shut up in it. I have lately translated Job into our mother tongue: you will be able to borrow a copy of it from your cousin, the saintly Marcella. Read it both in Greek and in Latin, and compare the old version with my rendering. You will then clearly see that the difference between them is that between truth and falsehood. Some of my commentaries upon the twelve prophets I have sent to the reverend father Domnio, also the four books of Kings-that is, the two called Samuel and the two called Malâchim.¹⁰ If you care to read these you will learn for yourself how difficult it is to understand the Holy Scriptures, and particularly the prophets; and how through the fault of the translators passages which for the Jews flow clearly on for us abound with mistakes. Once more, you must not in my small writings look for any such eloquence as that which for Christ's sake you disregard in Cicero. A version made for the use of the Church, even though it may possess a literary charm, ought to disguise and avoid it as far as possible; in order that it may not speak to the idle schools and few disciples of the philosophers, but may address itself rather to the entire human race.

1: Hor. AP. 390 2: See the Preface to Jerome's Comm. on Daniel

3: 1 Cor. vii 4: 1 Corinthians

5: Master of the catechetical school of Alexandria, 265 a.d. His writings have perished. His name occurs again in Letter LXX 6: Ad optata caepaque pervenies

7:

Pontifex

8: Sacerdos 9: Thus including Daniel 10: The Hebrew word for "Kings.

Letters - letter_050

Letter 50. To Domnio.

Domnio, a Roman (called in Letter 45. "the Lot of our time"), had written to Jerome to tell him that an ignorant monk had been traducing his books "against Jovinian." Jerome, in reply, sharply rebukes the folly of his critic and comments on the want of straightforwardness in his conduct. He concludes the letter with an emphatic restatement of his original position. Written in 394 a.d.

1. Your letter is full at once of affection and of complaining. The affection is your own, which prompts you unceasingly to warn me of impending danger, and which makes you on my behalf "Of safest things distrustful and afraid." [Virg. A. 4:298] The complaining is of those who have no love for me, and seek an occasion against me in my sins. They speak against their brother, they slander their own mother's son. [Ps. 50:20] You write to me of these-nay, of one in particular-a loungee who is to be seen in the streets, at crossings, and in public places; a monk who is a noisy news-monger, clever only in detraction, and eager, in spite of the beam in his own eye, to remove the mote in his neighbor's. [Matt. 7:3-5] And you tell me that he preaches publicly against me, gnawing, rending, and tearing asunder with his fangs the books that I have written against Jovinian. You inform me, moreover, that this home-grown dialectician, this mainstay of the Plautine company, has read neither the "Categories" of Aristotle nor his treatise "On Interpretation," nor his "Analytics," nor yet the "Topics" of Cicero, but that, moving as he does only in uneducated circles, and frequenting no society but that of weak women, he ventures to construct illogical syllogisms and to unravel by subtle arguments what he is pleased to call my sophisms. How foolish I have been to suppose that without philosophy there can be no knowledge of these subjects; and to account it a more important part of composition to erase than to write! In vain have I perused the commentaries of Alexander; to no purpose has a skilled teacher used the "Introduction" of Porphyry to instruct me in logic; and-to make light of human learning-I have gained nothing at all by having Gregory of Nazianzum and Didymus as my catechists in the Holy Scriptures. My acquisition of Hebrew has been wasted labor; and so also has been the daily study which from my youth I have bestowed upon the Law and the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostles.

2. Here we have a man who has reached perfection without a teacher, so as to be a vehicle of the spirit and a self-taught genius. He surpasses Cicero in eloquence, Aristotle in argument, Plato in discretion, Aristarchus in learning, Didymus, that man of brass, in the number of his books; and not only Didymus, but all the writers of his time in his knowledge of the Scriptures. It is reported that you have only to give him a theme and he is always ready-like Carneades¹ -to argue on this side or on that, for justice or against it. The world escaped a great danger, and civil actions and suits concerning succession were saved from a yawning gulf on the day when, despising the bar, he transferred himself to the Church. For, had he been unwilling, who could ever have been proved innocent? And, if he once began to reckon the points of the case upon his fingers, and to spread his syllogistic nets, what criminal would his pleading have failed to save? Had he but stamped his

foot, or fixed his eyes, or knitted his brow, or moved his hand, or twirled his beard, he would at once have thrown dust in the eyes of the jury. No wonder that such a complete Latinist and so profound a master of eloquence overcomes poor me, who-as I have been some time² away (from Rome), and without opportunities for speaking Latin-am half a Greek if not altogether a barbarian. No wonder, I say, that he overcomes me when his eloquence has crushed Jovinian in person. Good Jesus! what! even Jovinian that great and clever man! So clever, indeed, that no one can understand his writings, and that when he sings it is only for himself-and for the muses!

3. Pray, my dear father, warn this man not to hold language contrary to his profession, and not to undo with his words the chastity which he professes by his garb. Whether he elects to be a virgin or a married celibate-and the choice must rest with himself-he must not compare wives with virgins, for that would be to have striven in vain against Jovinian's eloquence. He likes, I am told, to visit the cells of widows and virgins, and to lecture them with his brows knit on sacred literature. What is it that he teaches these poor women in the privacy of their own chambers? Is it to feel assured that virgins are no better than wives? Is it to make the most of the flower of their age, to eat and drink, to frequent the baths, to live in luxury, and not to disdain the use of perfumes? Or does he preach to them chastity, fasting, and neglect of their persons? No doubt the precepts that he inculcates are full of virtue. But if so, let him admit publicly what he says privately. Or, if his private teaching is the same as his public, he should keep aloof altogether from the society of girls. He is a young man-a monk, and in his own eyes an eloquent one (do not pearls fall from his lips, and are not his elegant phrases sprinkled with comic salt and humor?)-I am surprised, therefore, that he can without a blush frequent noblemen's houses, pay constant visits to married ladies, make our religion a subject of contention, distort the faith of Christ by misapplying words, and-in addition to all this-detract from one who is his brother in the Lord. He may, however, have supposed me to be in error (for "in many things we offend all," and "if any man offend not in word he is a perfect man" [Jas. 3:2]). In that case he should have written to convict me or to question me, the course taken by Pammachius, a man of high attainments and position. To this latter I defended myself as best I could, and in a lengthy letter explained the exact sense of my words. He might at least have copied the diffidence which led you to extract and arrange such passages as seemed to give offence; asking me for corrections or explanations, and not supposing me so mad that in one and the same book I should write for marriage and against it.

4. Let him spare himself, let him spare me, let him spare the Christian name. Let him realize his position as a monk, not by talking and arguing, but by holding his peace and sitting still. Let him read the words of Jeremiah: "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him." [Lam. 3:27, Lam. 3:28] Or if he has really the right to apply the censor's rod to all writers, and fancies himself a man of learning because he alone understands Jovinian (you know the proverb: Balbus best knows what Balbus means); yet, as Atilius³ reminds us, "we are not all writers." Jovinian himself-an unlettered man of letters if ever there was one-will with most justice proclaim the fact to him. "That the bishops condemn me," he says, "is not reason but treason. I want no answers from nobodies, who, while they have authority to put me down, have not the wit to teach me. Let one write against me who has a tongue that I can understand, and whom to vanquish will be to vanquish all.

"I know full well: believe me, I have felt

The hero's force when rising o'er his shield

He hurls his whizzing spear." [Virgil, Aen. 11:283, 284]

He is strong in argument, intricate and tenacious, one to fight with his head down. Often has he cried out against me in the streets from late one night till early the next. He is a well-built man, and his thews are those of an athlete. Secretly I believe him to be a follower of my teaching. He never blushes or stops to weigh his words: his only aim is to speak as loud as possible. So famous is he for his eloquence that his sayings are held up as models to our curly-headed youngsters. [Persius 1:29] How often, when I have met him at meetings, has he aroused my wrath and put me into a passion! How often has he spat upon me, and then departed spat upon! But these are vulgar methods, and any of my followers can use them. I appeal to books, to those memorials which must be handed down to posterity. Let us speak by our writings, that the silent reader may judge between us; and that, as I have a flock of disciples, he may have one also-flatterers and parasites worthy of the Gnatho and Phormio⁴ who is their master."

5. It is no difficult matter, my dear Domnio, to chatter at street corners or in apothecaries' shops and to pass judgment on the world. "So-and-so has made a good speech, so-and-so a bad one; this man knows the Scriptures, that one is crazy; this man talks glibly, that never says a word at all." But who considers him worthy thus to judge every one? To make an outcry against a man in every street, and to heap, not definite charges, but vague imputations, on his head, is nothing. Any buffoon or litigiously disposed person can do as much. Let him put forth his hand, put pen to paper, and bestir himself; let him write books and prove in them all he can. Let him give me a chance of replying to his eloquence. I can return bite for bite, if I like; when hurt myself, I can fix my teeth in my opponent. I too have had a liberal education. As Juvenal says, "I also have often withdrawn my hand from the ferule." [Juv. 1:15] Of me, too, it may be said in the words of Horace, "Flee from him; he has hay on his horn."⁵ But I prefer to be a disciple of Him who says, "I gave my back to the smiters ...I hid not my face from shame and spitting." [Isa. 50:6] When He was reviled He reviled not again. [1 Pet. 2:23] After the buffeting, the cross, the scourge, the blasphemies, at the very last He prayed for His crucifiers, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." [Luke 23:34] I, too, pardon the error of a brother. He has been deceived, I feel sure, by the art of the devil. Among the women he was held clever and eloquent; but, when my poor writings reached Rome, dreading me as a rival, he tried to rob me of my laurels. No man on earth, he resolved, should please his eloquent self, unless such as commanded respect rather than sought it, and showed themselves men to be feared more than favored. A man of consummate address, he desired, like an old soldier, with one stroke of the sword to strike down both his enemies,⁶ and to make clear to every one that, whatever view he might take, Scripture was always with him. Well, he must condescend to send me his account of the matter, and to correct my indiscreet language, not by censure but by instruction. If he tries to do this, he will find that what seems forcible on a lounge is not equally forcible in court; and that it is one thing to discuss the doctrines of the divine law amid the spindles and work-baskets of girls and another to argue concerning them among men of education. As it is, without hesitation or shame, he raises again and again the noisy shout, "Jerome condemns marriage," and, whilst he constantly moves among women with child, crying infants, and marriage-beds, he suppresses the words of the apostle just to cover me-poor me-with odium. However, when he comes by and by to write books and to grapple with me at close quarters, then he will feel it, then he will stick fast; Epicurus and

Aristippus⁷ will not be near him then; the swineherds⁸ will not come to his aid; the prolific sow⁹ will not so much as grunt. For I also may say, with Turnus:

"Father, I too can launch a forceful spear, And when I strike blood follows from the wound." [Virg. A. 12:50, 51] But if he refuses to write, and fancies that abuse is as effective as criticism, then, in spite of all the lands and seas and peoples which lie between us, he must hear at least the echo of my cry, "I do not condemn marriage," "I do not condemn wedlock." Indeed-and this I say to make my meaning quite clear to him-I should like every one to take a wife who, because they get frightened in the night, cannot manage to sleep alone.¹⁰ 1: A philosopher of the Academy noted for his opposition to stoicism

2:

Eight years

3: An early Roman dramatist of whose works only a few fragments remain. He is said to have translated the Electra of Sophocles, but for the most part to have preferred comedy to tragedy 4: Characters in the Eunuchus and Phormio of Terence 5: Hor. S. 1:iv. 34 6: Viz. Jerome and Jovinian 7: According to both these philosophers pleasure is the highest good 8: The followers of Jovinian 9: Jovinian himself 10: Cic. pro Caelio xv

Letters - letter_051

Letter 51. From Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, to John, Bishop of Jerusalem. A coolness had arisen between these two bishops in connection with the Origenistic controversy, which at this time was at its height. Epiphanius had openly charged John with being an Origenist, and had also uncanonically conferred priests' orders on Jerome's brother Paulinian, in order that the monastery at Bethlehem might henceforth be entirely independent of John. Naturally, John resented this conduct and showed his resentment. The present letter is a kind of half-apology made by Epiphanius for what he had done, and like all such, it only seems to have made matters worse. The controversy is fully detailed in the treatise "Against John of Jerusalem" in this volume, esp. §11-14. An interesting paragraph (§9) narrates how Epiphanius destroyed at Anablatha a church-curtain on which was depicted "a likeness of Christ or of some saint"-an early instance of the iconoclastic spirit.

Originally written in Greek, the letter was (by the writer's request) rendered into Latin by Jerome. Its date is 394 a.d. To the lord bishop and dearly beloved brother, John, Epiphanius sends greeting.

1. It surely becomes us, dearly beloved, not to abuse our rank as clergy, so as to make it an occasion of pride, but by diligently keeping and observing God's commandments, to be in reality what in name we profess to be. For, if the Holy Scriptures say, "Their lots shall not profit them," [Jer. 12:13, LXX] what pride in our clerical position¹ will be able to avail us who sin not only in thought and feeling, but in speech? I have heard, of course, that you are incensed against me, that you are angry, and that you threaten to write about me-not merely to particular places and provinces, but to the uttermost ends of the earth. Where is that fear of God which should make us tremble with the trembling spoken of by the Lord-"Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment"? [Matt. 5:22] Not that I greatly care for your writing what you please. For Isaiah tells us [Isa. 18:2, LXX] of letters written on papyrus and cast upon the waters-missives soon carried away by time and tide. I have done you no harm, I have inflicted no injury upon you, I have extorted nothing from you by violence. My action concerned a monastery whose inmates were foreigners in no way subject to your provincial jurisdiction. Moreover their regard for my insignificance and for the letters which I frequently addressed to them had commenced to produce a feeling of dislike to communion with you. Feeling, therefore, that too great strictness or scrupulosity on my part might have the effect of alienating them from the Church with its ancient faith, I ordained one of the brothers deacon, and after he had ministered as such, admitted him to the priesthood. You should, I think, have been grateful to me for this, knowing, as you surely must, that it is the fear of God which has compelled me to act in this way, and particularly when you recollect that God's priesthood is everywhere the same, and that I have simply made provision for the wants of the Church. For, although each individual bishop of the Church has under him churches which are placed in his charge, and although no man may stretch himself beyond his measure, [Cf. 2 Cor. 10:14] yet the love of Christ, which is without dissimulation, [Rom. 12:9] is set up as an example to us all; and we must consider not so much the

thing done as the time and place, the mode and motive, of doing it. I saw that the monastery contained a large number of reverend brothers, and that the reverend presbyters, Jerome and Vincent, through modesty and humility, were unwilling to offer the sacrifices permitted to their rank, and to labor in that part of their calling which ministers more than any other to the salvation of Christians. I knew, moreover, that you could not find or lay hands on this servant of God² who had several times fled from you simply because he was reluctant to undertake the onerous duties of the priesthood, and that no other bishop could easily find him. Accordingly, I was a good deal surprised when, by the ordering of God, he came to me with the deacons of the monastery and others of the brethren, to make satisfaction to me for some grievance or other which I had against them. While, therefore, the Collect³ was being celebrated in the church of the villa which adjoins our monastery-he being quite ignorant and wholly unsuspecting of my purpose-I gave orders to a number of deacons to seize him and to stop his mouth, lest in his eagerness to free himself he might adjure me in the name of Christ. First of all, then, I ordained him deacon, setting before him the fear of God, and forcing him to minister; for he made a hard struggle against it, crying out that he was unworthy, and protesting that this heavy burden was beyond his strength. It was with difficulty, then, that I overcame his reluctance, persuading him as well as I could with passages from Scripture, and setting before him the commandments of God. And when he had ministered in the offering of the holy sacrifices, once more with great difficulty I closed his mouth and ordained him presbyter. Then, using the same arguments as before, I induced him to sit in the place set apart for the presbyters. After this I wrote to the reverend presbyters and other brothers of the monastery, chiding them for not having written to me about him. For a year before I had heard many of them complain that they had no one to celebrate for them the sacraments of the Lord. All then agreed in asking him to undertake the duty, pointing out how great his usefulness would be to the community of the monastery. I blamed them for omitting to write to me and to propose that I should ordain him, when the opportunity was given to them to do so.

2. All this I have done, as I said just now, relying on that Christian love which you, I feel sure, cherish towards my insignificance; not to mention the fact that I held the ordination in a monastery, and not within the limits of your jurisdiction. How truly blessed is the mildness and complacency of the bishops of (my own) Cyprus, as well as their simplicity, though to your refinement and discrimination it appears deserving only of God's pity! For many bishops in communion with me have ordained presbyters in my province whom I had been unable to capture, and have sent to me deacons and subdeacons⁴ whom I have been glad to receive. I myself, too, have urged the bishop Philo of blessed memory, and the reverend Theoprepus, to make provision for the Church of Christ by ordaining presbyters in those churches of Cyprus which, although they were accounted to belong to my see, happened to be close to them, and this for the reason that my province was large and straggling. But for my part I have never ordained deaconesses nor sent them into the provinces of others,⁵ nor have I done anything to rend the Church. Why, then, have you thought fit to be so angry and indignant with me for that work of God which I have wrought for the edification of the brethren, and not for their destruction? [2 Cor. 10:8] Moreover, I have been much surprised at the assertion which you have made to my clergy, that you sent me a message by that reverend presbyter, the abbot Gregory, that I was to ordain no one, and that I promised to comply, saying, "Am I a stripling, or do I not know the canons?" By God's word I am telling you the truth when I say that I know and have heard nothing of all this, and that I have not the slightest recollection of using any language of the sort. As, however, I have had misgivings, lest possibly, being only a man, I

may have forgotten this among so many other matters, I have made inquiry of the reverend Gregory, and of the presbyter Zeno, who is with him. Of these, the abbot Gregory replies that he knows nothing whatever about the matter, while Zeno says that the presbyter Rufinus, in the course of some desultory remarks, spoke these words. "Will the reverend bishop, think you, venture to ordain any persons?" but that the conversation went no further. I, Epiphanius, however, have never either received the message or answered it. Do not, then, dearly beloved, allow your anger to overcome you or your indignation to get the better of you, lest, you should disquiet yourself in vain; and lest you should be thought to be putting forward this grievance only to get scope for tendencies of another kind,⁶ and thus to have sought out an occasion of sinning. It is to avoid this that the prophet prays to the Lord, saying: "Turn not aside my heart to words of wickedness, to making excuses for my sins." [Ps. 141:4, acc. to the Gallican Psalter]

3. This also I have been surprised to hear, that certain persons who are in the habit of carrying tales backwards and forwards, and of always adding something fresh to what they have heard, to stir up grievances and disputes between brothers, have succeeded in disquieting you by saying that, when I offer sacrifices to God, I am wont to say this prayer on your behalf: "Grant, O Lord, to John grace to believe aright." Do not suppose me so untutored as to be capable of saying this so openly. To tell you the simple truth, my dearest brother, although I continually use this prayer mentally, I have never confided it to the ears of others, lest I should seem to dishonor you. But when I repeat the prayers required by the ritual of the mysteries, then I say on behalf of all and of you as well as others, "Guard him, that he may preach the truth," or at least this, "Do Thou, O Lord, grant him Thine aid, and guard him, that he may preach the word of truth," as occasion offers itself for the words, and as the turn comes for the particular prayer. Wherefore I beseech you, dearly beloved, and, casting myself down at your feet, I entreat you to grant to me and to yourself this one prayer, that you would save yourself, as it is written, "from an untoward generation." [Acts 2:40] Withdraw, dearly beloved, from the heresy of Origen and from all heresies. For I see that all your indignation has been roused against me simply because I have told you that you ought not to eulogize one who is the spiritual father of Arius, and the root and parent of all heresies. And when I appealed to you not to go astray, and warned you of the consequences, you traversed my words, and reduced me to tears and sadness; and not me only, but many other Catholics who were present.⁷ This I take to be the origin of your indignation and of your passion on the present occasion. On this account you threaten to send out letters against me, and to circulate your version of the matter in all directions;⁸ and thus, while with a view to defending your heresy you kindle men's passions against me, you break through the charity which I have shown towards you, and act with so little discretion that you make me regret that I have held communion with you, and that I have by so doing upheld the erroneous opinions of Origen.

4. I speak plainly. To use the language of Scripture, I do not spare to pluck out my own eye if it cause me to offend, nor to cut off my hand and my foot if they cause me to do so. [Matt. 18:8, Matt. 18:9] And you must be treated in the same way whether you are my eyes, or my hands, or my feet. For what Catholic, what Christian who adorns his faith with good works, can hear with calmness Origen's teaching and counsel, or believe in his extraordinary preaching? "The Son," he tells us, "cannot see the Father, and the Holy Spirit cannot see the Son." These words occur in his book "On First Principles;" thus we read, and thus Origen has spoken. "For as it is unsuitable to say that the Son can see the Father, it is consequently unsuitable to suppose that the Spirit can see the

Son." [First Principles, 1:1; 2:4] Can any one, moreover, brook Origen's assertion that men's souls were once angels in heaven, and that having sinned in the upper world, they have been cast down into this, and have been confined in bodies as in barrows or tombs, to pay the penalty for their former sins; and that the bodies of believers are not temples of Christ, [1 Cor. 6:15, 1 Cor. 6:19] but prisons of the condemned? Again, he tampers with the true meaning of the narrative by a false use of allegory, multiplying words without limit; and undermines the faith of the simple by the most varied arguments. Now he maintains that souls, in Greek the "cool things," from a word meaning to be cool,⁹ are so called because in coming down from the heavenly places to the lower world they have lost their former heat; [First Principles 2:8] and now, that our bodies are called by the Greeks chains, from a word meaning chain,¹⁰ or else (on the analogy of our own Latin word) "things fallen,"¹¹ because our souls have fallen from heaven; and that the other word for body which the abundance of the Greek idiom supplies¹² is by many taken to mean a funeral monument,¹³ because the soul is shut up within it in the same way as the corpses of the dead are shut up in tombs and barrows. If this doctrine is true what becomes of our faith? Where is the preaching of the resurrection? Where is the teaching of the apostles, which lasts on to this day in the churches of Christ? Where is the blessing to Adam, and to his seed, and to Noah and his sons? "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." [Gen. 1:28; Gen. 9:7] According to Origen, these words must be a curse and not a blessing; for he turns angels into human souls, compelling them to leave the place of highest rank and to come down lower, as though God were unable through the action of His blessing to grant souls to the human race, had the angels not sinned, and as though for every birth on earth there must be a fall in heaven. We are to give up, then, the teaching of apostles and prophets, of the law, and of our Lord and Saviour Himself, in spite of His language loud as thunder in the gospel. Origen, on the other hand, commands and urges-not to say binds-his disciples not to pray to ascend into heaven, lest sinning once more worse than they had sinned on earth they should be hurled down into the world again. Such foolish and insane notions he generally confirms by distorting the sense of the Scriptures and making them mean what they do not mean at all. He quotes this passage from the Psalms: "Before thou didst humble me by reason of my wickedness, I went wrong;"¹⁴ and this, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul;" [Ps. 116:7] this also, "Bring my soul out of prison;" [Ps. 142:7] and this, "I will make confession unto the Lord in the land of the living,"¹⁵ although there can be no doubt that the meaning of the divine Scripture is different from the interpretation by which he unfairly wrests it to the support of his own heresy. This way of acting is common to the Manichaeans, the Gnostics, the Ebionites, the Marcionites, and the votaries of the other eighty heresies,¹⁶ all of whom draw their proofs from the pure well of the Scriptures, not, however, interpreting it in the sense in which it is written, but trying to make the simple language of the Church's writers accord with their own wishes.

5. Of one position which he strives to maintain I hardly know whether it calls for my tears or my laughter. This wonderful doctor presumes to teach that the devil will once more be what he at one time was, that he will return to his former dignity and rise again to the kingdom of heaven. Oh horror! that a man should be so frantic and foolish as to hold that John the Baptist, Peter, the apostle and evangelist John, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest of the prophets, are made co-heirs of the devil in the kingdom of heaven! I pass over his idle explanation of the coats of skins, [In his note on Gen. 3:21] and say nothing of the efforts and arguments he has used to induce us to believe that these coats of skins represent human bodies. Among many other things, he says this: "Was God a tanner or a saddler, that He should prepare the hides of animals, and should stitch

from them coats of skins for Adam and Eve?" "It is clear," he goes on, "that he is speaking of human bodies." If this is so, how is it that before the coats of skins, and the disobedience, and the fall from paradise, Adam speaks not in an allegory, but literally, thus: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;" [Gen. 2:23] or what is the ground of the divine narrative, "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman" [Gen. 2:21, Gen. 2:22] for him? Or what bodies can Adam and Eve have covered with fig-leaves after eating of the forbidden tree? [Gen. 3:7] Who can patiently listen to the perilous arguments of Origen when he denies the resurrection of this flesh, as he most clearly does in his book of explanations of the first psalm and in many other places? Or who can tolerate him when he gives us a paradise in the third heaven, and transfers that which the Scripture mentions from earth to the heavenly places, and when he explains allegorically all the trees which are mentioned in Genesis, saying in effect that the trees are angelic potencies, a sense which the true drift of the passage does not admit? For the divine Scripture has not said, "God put down Adam and Eve upon the earth," but "He drove them out of the paradise, and made them dwell over against the paradise." [Gen. 3:23, LXX] He does not say "under the paradise." "He placed ...cherubims and a flaming sword ...to keep the way of¹⁷ the tree of life." [Gen. 3:24] He says nothing about an ascent to it. "And a river went out of Eden." [Gen. 2:10] He does not say "went down from Eden." "It was parted and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison ...and the name of the second is Gihon." [Gen. 2:10, Gen. 2:11, Gen. 2:13] I myself have seen the waters of Gihon, have seen them with my bodily eyes. It is this Gihon to which Jeremiah points when he says, "What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt to drink the muddy water of Gihon?" [Jer. 2:18, LXX. and Vulg] I have drunk also from the great river Euphrates, not spiritual but actual water, such as you can touch with your hand and imbibe with your mouth. But where there are rivers which admit of being seen and of being drunk, it follows that there also there will be fig-trees and other trees; and it is of these that the Lord says, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." [Gen. 2:16] They are like other trees and timber, just as the rivers are like other rivers and waters. But if the water is visible and real, then the fig-tree and the rest of the timber must be real also, and Adam and Eve must have been originally formed with real and not phantasmal bodies, and not, as Origen would have us believe, have afterwards received them on account of their sin. But, you say, "we read that Saint Paul was caught up to the third heaven, into paradise."¹⁸ You explain the words rightly: "When he mentions the third heaven, and then adds the word paradise, he shows that heaven is in one place and paradise in another." Must not every one reject and despise such special pleading as that by which Origen says of the waters that are above the firmament [In his note on Gen. 1:7] that they are not waters, but heroic beings of angelic power,¹⁹ and again of the waters that are over the earth-that is, below the firmament-that they are potencies²⁰ of the contrary sort-that is, demons? If so, why do we read in the account of the deluge that the windows of heaven were opened, and that the waters of the deluge prevailed? in consequence of which the fountains of the deep were opened, and the whole earth was covered with the waters. [Gen. 7:11]

6. Oh! the madness and folly of those who have forsaken the teaching of the book of Proverbs, "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother," [Prov. 6:20] and have turned to error, and say to the fool that he shall be their leader, and do not despise the foolish things which are said by the foolish man, even as the scripture bears witness, "The foolish man speaketh foolishly, and his heart understandeth vanity." [Isa. 32:6, Vulg] I beseech you, dearly

beloved, and by the love which I feel towards you, I implore you-as though it were my own members on which I would have pity²¹ -by word and letter to fulfil that which is written, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?" [Ps. 139:21] Origen's words are the words of an enemy, hateful and repugnant to God and to His saints; and not only those which I have quoted, but countless others. For it is not now my intention to argue against all his opinions. Origen has not lived in my day, nor has he robbed me. I have not conceived a dislike to him nor quarrelled with him because of an inheritance or of any worldly matter; but-to speak plainly-I grieve, and grieve bitterly, to see numbers of my brothers, and of those in particular who show the most promise, and have reached the highest rank in the sacred ministry,²² deceived by his persuasive arguments, and made by his most perverse teaching the food of the devil, whereby the saying is fulfilled: "He derides every stronghold, and his fare is choice, and he hath gathered captives as the sand." [Hab. 1:10, 16, 9, LXX] But may God free you, my brother, and the holy people of Christ which is intrusted to you, and all the brothers who are with you, and especially the presbyter Rufinus, from the heresy of Origen, and other heresies, and from the perdition to which they lead. For, if for one word or for two opposed to the faith many heresies have been rejected by the Church, how much more shall he be held a heretic who has contrived such perverse interpretations and such mischievous doctrines to destroy the faith, and has in fact declared himself the enemy of the Church! For, among other wicked things, he has presumed to say this, too, that Adam lost the image of God, although Scripture nowhere declares that he did. Were it so, never would all the creatures in the world be subject to Adam's seed-that is, to the entire human race; yet, in the words of the apostle, everything "is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind." [Jas. 3:7] For never would all things be subjected to men if men had not-together with their authority over all-the image of God. But the divine Scripture conjoins and associates with this the grace of the blessing which was conferred upon Adam and upon the generations which descended from him. No one can by twisting the meaning of words presume to say that this grace of God was given to one only, and that he alone was made in the image of God (he and his wife, that is, for while he was formed of clay she was made of one of his ribs), but that those who were subsequently conceived in the womb and not born as was Adam did not possess God's image, for the Scripture immediately subjoins the following statement: "And Adam lived two hundred and thirty years,²³ and knew Eve his wife, and she bare him a son in his image and after his likeness, and called his name Seth."²⁴ And again, in the tenth generation, two thousand two hundred and forty-two years afterwards,²⁵ God, to vindicate His own image and to show that the grace which He had given to men still continued in them, gives the following commandment: "Flesh ...with the blood thereof shall ye not eat. And surely your blood will I require at the hand of every man that sheddeth it; for in the image of God have I made man."²⁶ From Noah to Abraham ten generations passed away, [Gen. 11:10-26] and from Abraham's time to David's, fourteen more, [Matt. 1:17] and these twenty-four generations make up, taken together, two thousand one hundred and seventeen years.²⁷ Yet the Holy Spirit in the thirty-ninth²⁸ psalm, while lamenting that all men walk in a vain show, and that they are subject to sins, speaks thus: "For all that every man walk eth in the image."²⁹ Also after David's time, in the reign of Solomon his son, we read a somewhat similar reference to the divine likeness. For in the book of Wisdom, which is inscribed with his name, Solomon says: "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity." [Wisd. 2:23] And again, about eleven hundred and eleven years afterwards, we read in the New Testament that men have not lost the image of God. For James, an apostle and

brother of the Lord, whom I have mentioned above-that we may not be entangled in the snares of Origen-teaches us that man does possess God's image and likeness. For, after a somewhat discursive account of the human tongue, he has gone on to say of it: "It is an unruly evil ...therewith bless we God, even the Father and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." [Jas. 3:8, 9] Paul, too, the "chosen vessel," [Acts. 9:15] who in his preaching has fully maintained the doctrine of the gospel, instructs us that man is made in the image and after the likeness of God. "A man," he says, "ought not to wear long hair, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." [1 Cor. 11:7] He speaks of "the image" simply, but explains the nature of the likeness by the word "glory."

7. Instead of the three proofs from Holy Scripture which you said would satisfy you if I could produce them, behold I have given you seven. Who, then, will put up with the follies of Origen? I will not use a severer word and so make myself like him or his followers, who presume at the peril of their soul to assert dogmatically whatever first comes into their head, and to dictate to God, whereas they ought either to pray to Him or to learn the truth from Him. For some of them say that the image of God which Adam had previously received was lost when he sinned. Others surmise that the body which the Son of God was destined to take of Mary was the image of the Creator. Some identify this image with the soul, others with sensation, others with virtue. These make it baptism, those assert that it is in virtue of God's image that man exercises universal sway. Like drunkards in their cups, they ejaculate now this, now that, when they ought rather to have avoided so serious a risk, and to have obtained salvation by simple faith, not denying the words of God. To God they ought to have left the sure and exact knowledge of His own gift, and of the particular way in which He has created men in His image and after His likeness. Forsaking this course, they have involved themselves in many subtle questions, and through these they have been plunged into the mire of sin. But we, dearly beloved, believe the words of the Lord, and know that God's image remains in all men, and we leave it to Him to know in what respect man is created in His image. And let no one be deceived by that passage in the epistle of John, which some readers fail to understand, where he says: "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall See Him as He is." [1 John. 3:2] For this refers to the glory which is then to be revealed [1 Pet. 5:1] to His saints; just as also in another place we read the words "from glory to glory," [2 Cor. 3:18] of which glory the saints have even in this world received an earnest and a small portion. At their head stands Moses, whose face shone exceedingly, and was bright with the brightness of the sun. [Exod. 34:29 sqq.; 2 Cor. 3:7] Next to him comes Elijah, who was caught up into heaven in a chariot of fire, [2 Kings 2:11] and did not feel the effects of the flame. Stephen, too, when he was being stoned, had the face of an angel visible to all. [Acts 6:15] And this which we have verified in a few cases is to be understood of all, that what is written may be fulfilled. "Every one that sanctifieth himself shall be numbered among the blessed." For, "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." [Matt. 5:8]

8. These things being so, dearly beloved, keep watch over your own soul and cease to murmur against me. For the divine Scripture says: "Neither murmur ye [one against another³⁰] as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of serpents." [1 Cor. 10:10] Rather give way to the truth and love me who love both you and the truth. And may the God of peace, according to His mercy, grant to us that Satan may be bruised under the feet of Christians, [Rom. 16:20] and that every

occasion of evil may be shunned, so that the bond of love and peace may not be rent asunder between us, or the preaching of the right faith be anywise hindered.

9. Moreover, I have heard that certain persons have this grievance against me: When I accompanied you to the holy place called Bethel, there to join you in celebrating the Collect,³¹ after the use of the Church, I came to a villa called Anablatha and, as I was passing, saw a lamp burning there. Asking what place it was, and learning it to be a church, I went in to pray, and found there a curtain hanging on the doors of the said church, dyed and embroidered.³² It bore an image either of Christ or of one of the saints; I do not rightly remember whose the image was. Seeing this, and being loth that an image of a man should be hung up in Christ's church contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures, I tore it asunder and advised the custodians of the place to use it as a winding sheet for some poor person. They, however, murmured, and said that if I made up my mind to tear it, it was only fair that I should give them another curtain in its place. As soon as I heard this, I promised that I would give one, and said that I would send it at once. Since then there has been some little delay, due to the fact that I have been seeking a curtain of the best quality to give to them instead of the former one, and thought it right to send to Cyprus for one. I have now sent the best that I could find, and I beg that you will order the presbyter of the place to take the curtain which I have sent from the hands of the Reader, and that you will afterwards give directions that curtains of the other sort-opposed as they are to our religion-shall not be hung up in any church of Christ. A than of your uprightness should be careful to remove an occasion of offence³³ unworthy alike of the Church of Christ and of those Christians who are committed to your charge. Beware of Palladius of Galatia-a man once dear to me, but who now sorely needs God's pity-for he preaches and teaches the heresy of Origen; and see to it that he does not seduce any of those who are intrusted to your keeping into the perverse ways of his erroneous doctrine. I pray that you may fare well in the Lord.

1:

A play on words. Clericatus ("clerical position") is a derivative of clerus (klhroj), the word used in the LXX. for "lot.

2:

Paulinian, Jerome's brother, at this time about 28 years of age

3:

I.e. the short service which preceded the eucharist. The words might, however, be rendered, "When the congregation was gathered together.

4: Subdeacons cannot be traced back earlier than the third century. At first their province seems to have been to keep the church doors during divine service 5: It seems to be implied that John had done so 6: That is, Origenistic heresies

7:

Epiphanius, on a visit to Jerusalem, had preached against Origenism in the presence of John. See "Ag. John of Jerus.," §11

8:

John actually did write to Theophilus of Alexandria giving a full account of the controversy from his (John's) point of view. (Ag. J. of Jerus., §37.

9: yuxai apo tou yuxesqai. The etymology is right, but the explanation of it wrong 10: demaj as if from dew, "I bind.

11:

ptwma, from piptein: cadaver, from cado

12:

swma

13: shma 14: Ps. 119:67. From memory, or perhaps from the old Latin version 15: Ps. 116:9. This form of the verse is peculiar to Jerome 16: Epiphanius had written a book "against all the heresies.

17: Introitus 18: 2 Cor. xii 2, 2 Cor. xii 4 19: Fortitudines angelicae potestatis

20: Virtues 21: Cf. Philem. 12

22: Sacerdotium 23: LXX. The Heb. text which A.V. follows gives "an hundred and thirty years.

24: Gen. 4:25; Gen. 5:3; Gen. 1:26 25: According to the LXX. The chronology of the Hebrew text gives a period of 1656 years (Gen. v.) 26: Gen. 9:4-6; substantially as in A.V 27: This calculation appears to be based on the LXX 28: Acc. to the Vulg., which Jerome here follows, the thirty-eighth 29: Ps. 39, 6. "In a vain show," R.V 30: Words added by this writer 31: See note on above 32: Velum ...tinctum atque depictum 33: Scrupulositas

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Letter 52. To Nepotian.

Nepotian, the nephew of Heliodorus (for whom see Letter 14.), had, like his uncle, abandoned the military for the clerical calling, and was now a presbyter at Altinum, where Heliodorus was bishop. The letter is a systematic treatise on the duties of the clergy and on the rule of life which they ought to adopt. It had a great vogue, and called forth much indignation against Jerome. Its date is 394 a.d.

1. Again and again you ask me, my dear Nepotian, in your letters from over the sea, to draw for you a few rules of life, showing how one who has renounced the service of the world to become a monk or a clergyman may keep the straight path of Christ, and not be drawn aside into the haunts of vice. As a young man, or rather as a boy, and while I was curbing by the hard life of the desert the first onslaughts of youthful passion, I sent a letter of remonstrance¹ to your reverend uncle, Heliodorus, which, by the tears and complainings with which it was filled, showed him the feelings of the friend whom he had deserted. In it I acted the part suited to my age, and as I was still aglow with the methods and maxims of the rhetoricians, I decked it out a good deal with the flourishes of the schools. Now, however, my head is gray, my brow is furrowed, a dewlap like that of an ox hangs from my chin, and, as Virgil says, "The chilly blood stands still around my heart."² Elsewhere he sings:

"Old age bears all, even the mind, away." And a little further on:

"So many of my songs are gone from me,

And even my very voice has left me now." [Virgil, Ec. 9:51, 54, 55]

2. But that I may not seem to quote only profane literature, listen to the mystical teaching of the sacred writings. Once David had been a man of war, but at seventy age had chilled him so that nothing would make him warm. A girl is accordingly sought from the coasts of Israel—Abishag the Shunamite—to sleep with the king and warm his aged frame. [1 K. 1:1-4] Does it not seem to you—if you keep to the letter that killeth [2 Cor. 3:6]—like some farcical story or some broad jest from an Atellan play?³ A chilly old man is wrapped up in blankets, and only grows warm in a girl's embrace. Bathsheba was still living, Abigail was still left, and the remainder of those wives and concubines whose names the Scripture mentions. Yet they are all rejected as cold, and only in the one young girl's embrace does the old man become warm. Abraham was far older than David; still, so long as Sarah lived he sought no other wife. Isaac counted twice the years of David, yet never felt cold with Rebekah, old though she was. I say nothing of the antediluvians, who, although after nine hundred years their limbs must have been not old merely, but decayed with age, had no recourse to girls' embraces. Moses, the leader of the Israelites, counted one hundred and twenty years, yet sought no change from Zipporah.

3. Who, then, is this Shunamite, this wife and maid, so glowing as to warm the cold, yet so holy as not to arouse passion in him whom she warmed? [1 K. 1:4] Let Solomon, wisest of men, tell us of his father's favorite; let the man of peace⁴ recount to us the embraces of the man of war. [1 Chr. 28:3] "Get wisdom," he writes, "get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not and she shall preserve thee: love her and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her and she shall promote thee. She shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee." [Prov. 4:5-9]

Almost all bodily excellences alter with age, and while wisdom alone increases all things else decay. Fasts and vigils and almsdeeds become harder. So also do sleeping on the ground, moving from place to place, hospitality to travellers, pleading for the poor, earnestness and steadfastness in prayer, the visitation of the sick, manual labor to supply money for alms-giving. All acts, in short, of which the body is the medium decrease with its decay.

Now, there are young men still full of life and vigor who, by toil and burning zeal, as well as by holiness of life and constant prayer to the Lord Jesus, have obtained knowledge. I do not speak of these, or say that in them the love of wisdom is cold, for this withers in many of the old by reason of age. What I mean is that youth, as such, has to cope with the assaults of passion, and amid the allurements of vice and the tinglings of the flesh is stifled like a fire among green boughs, and cannot develop its proper brightness. But when men have employed their youth in commendable pursuits and have meditated on the law of the Lord day and night, [Ps. 1:2] they learn with the lapse of time, fresh experience and wisdom come as the years go by, and so from the pursuits of the past their old age reaps a harvest of delight. Hence that wise man of Greece, Themistocles,⁵ perceiving, after the expiration of one hundred and seven years, that he was on the verge of the grave, is reported to have said that he regretted extremely having to leave life just when he was beginning to grow wise. Plato died in his eighty-first year, his pen still in his hand. Isocrates completed ninety years and nine in the midst of literary and scholastic work.⁶ I say nothing of other philosophers, such as Pythagoras, Democritus, Xenocrates, Zeno, and Cleanthes, who in extreme old age displayed the vigor of youth in the pursuit of wisdom. I pass on to the poets, Homer, Hesiod, Simonides, Stesichorus, who all lived to a great age, yet at the approach of death sang each of them a swan song sweeter than their wont.⁷ Sophocles, when charged by his sons with dotage on account of his advanced years and his neglect of his property, read out to his judges his recently composed play of Oedipus, and made so great a display of wisdom-in spite of the inroads of time-that he changed the decorous silence of the law court into the applause of the theatre.⁸ And no wonder, when Cato the censor, that most eloquent of Romans, in his old age neither blushed at the thought of learning Greek nor despaired of succeeding.⁹ Homer, for his part, relates that from the tongue of Nestor, even when quite aged and helpless, there flowed speech sweeter than honey.¹⁰

Even the very name Abishag in its mystic meaning points to the greater wisdom of old men. For the translation of it is, "My father is over and above," or "my father's roaring." The term "over and above" is obscure, but in this passage is indicative of excellence, and implies that the old have a larger stock of wisdom, and that it even overflows by reason of its abundance. In another passage "over and above" forms an antithesis to "necessary." Moreover, Abishag, that is, "roaring," is properly used of the sound which the waves make, and of the murmur which we hear coming from

the sea. From which it is plain that the thunder of the divine voice dwells in old men's ears with a volume of sound beyond the voices of men. Again, in our tongue Shunamite means "scarlet," a hint that the love of wisdom becomes warm and glowing through religious study. For though the color may point to the mystery of the Lord's blood, it also sets forth the warm glow of wisdom. Hence it is a scarlet thread that in Genesis the midwife binds upon the hand of Pharez-Pharez "the divider," so called because he divided the partition which had before separated two peoples. [Gen. 38:28, Gen. 38:29] So, too, with a mystic reference to the shedding of blood, it was a scarlet cord which the harlot Rahab (a type of the church) hung in her window to preserve her house in the destruction of Jericho. [Josh. 2:18] Hence, in another place Scripture says of holy men: "These are they which came from the warmth of the house of the father of Rechab." [1 Chron. 2:55, Vulg] And in the gospel the Lord says: "I am come to cast fire upon the earth, and fain am I to see it kindled." [Luke 12:49] This was the fire which, when it was kindled in the disciples' hearts, constrained them to say: "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" [Luke 24:32]

4. To what end, you ask, these recondite references? To show that you need not expect from me boyish declamation, flowery sentiments, a meretricious style, and at the close of every paragraph the terse and pointed aphorisms which call forth approving shouts from those who hear them. Let Wisdom alone embrace me; let her nestle in my bosom, my Abishag who grows not old. Undeified truly is she, and a virgin forever for although she daily conceives and unceasingly brings to the birth, like Mary she remains undeflowered. When the apostle says "be fervent in spirit," [Rom. 12:11] he means "be true to wisdom." And when our Lord in the gospel declares that in the end of the world-when the shepherd shall grow foolish, according to the prophecy of Zechariah [Zech. 11:15] -"the love of many shall wax cold," [Matt. 24:12] He means that wisdom shall decay. Hear, therefore-to quote the sainted Cyprian-"words forcible rather than elegant."¹¹ Hear one who, though he is your brother in orders, is in years your father; who can conduct you from the cradle of faith to spiritual manhood; and who, while he builds up stage by stage the rules of holy living, can instruct others in instructing you. I know, of course, that from your reverend uncle, Heliodorus, now a bishop of Christ, you have learned and are daily learning all that is holy; and that in him you have before you a rule of life and a pattern of virtue. Take, then, my suggestions for what they are worth, and compare my precepts with his. He will teach you the perfection of a monk, and I shall show you the whole duty of a clergyman.

5. A clergyman, then, as he serves Christ's church, must first understand what his name means; and then, when he realizes this, must endeavor to be that which he is called. For since the Greek word "κληρονομία" means "lot," or "inheritance," the clergy are so called either because they are the lot of the Lord, or else because the Lord Himself is their lot and portion. Now, he who in his own person is the Lord's portion, or has the Lord for his portion, must so bear himself as to possess the Lord and to be possessed by Him. He who possesses the Lord, and who says with the prophet, "The Lord is my portion," [Pss. 16:5; Pss. 73:26] can hold to nothing beside the Lord. For if he hold to something beside the Lord, the Lord will not be his portion. Suppose, for instance, that he holds to gold or silver, or possessions or inlaid furniture; with such portions as these the Lord will not deign to be his portion. I, if I am the portion of the Lord, and the line of His heritage, [Ps. 16:5, Ps. 16:6] receive no portion among the remaining tribes; but, like the Priest and the Levite, I live on the tithe, [Nu. 18:24] and serving the altar, am supported by its offerings. [1 Cor. 9:13] Having food

and raiment, I shall be content with these, [1 Tim. 6:8] and as a disciple of the Cross shall share its poverty. I beseech you, therefore, and "Again and yet again admonish you;"¹² do not look to your military experience for a standard of clerical obligation. Under Christ's banner seek for no worldly gain, lest having more than when you first became a clergyman, you hear men say, to your shame, "Their portion shall not profit them."¹³ Welcome poor men and strangers to your homely board, that with them Christ may be your guest. A clergyman who engages in business, and who rises from poverty to wealth, and from obscurity to a high position, avoid as you would the plague. For "evil communications corrupt good manners." [1 Cor. 15:33] You despise gold; he loves it. You spurn wealth; he eagerly pursues it. You love silence, meekness, privacy; he takes delight in talking and effrontery, in squares, and streets, and apothecaries' shops. What unity of feeling can there be where there is so wide a divergency of manners? A woman's foot should seldom, if ever, cross the threshold of your home. To all who are Christ's virgins show the same regard or the same disregard. Do not linger under the same roof with them, and do not rely on your past continence. You cannot be holier than David or wiser than Solomon. Always bear in mind that it was a woman who expelled the tiller of paradise from his heritage.¹⁴ In case you are sick one of the brethren may attend you; your sister also or your mother or some woman whose faith is approved with all. But if you have no persons so connected with you or so marked out by chaste behaviour, the Church maintains many elderly women who by their ministrations may oblige you and benefit themselves so that even your sickness may bear fruit in the shape of almsdeeds. I know of cases where the recovery of the body has but precluded the sickness of the soul. There is danger for you in the service of one for whose face you constantly watch. If in the course of your clerical duty you have to visit a widow or a virgin, never enter the house alone. Let your companions be persons association with whom will not disgrace you. If you take a reader with you or an acolyte or a psalm-singer, let their character not their garb be their adornment; let them use no tongs to curl their hair; rather let their mien be an index of their chastity. You must not sit alone with a woman or see one without witnesses. If she has anything confidential to disclose, she is sure to have some nurse or housekeeper,¹⁵ some virgin, some widow, some married woman. She cannot be so friendless as to have none save you to whom she can venture to confide her secret. Beware of all that gives occasion for suspicion; and, to avoid scandal, shun every act that may give colour to it. Frequent gifts of handkerchiefs and garters, of face-cloths and dishes first tasted by the giver—to say nothing of notes full of fond expressions—of such things as these a holy love knows nothing. Such endearing and alluring expressions as 'my honey' and 'my darling,' 'you who are all my charm and my delight' the ridiculous courtesies of lovers and their foolish doings, we blush for on the stage and abhor in men of the world. How much more do we loathe them in monks and clergymen who adorn the priesthood by their vows¹⁶ while their vows are adorned by the priesthood. I speak thus not because I dread such evils for you or for men of saintly life, but because in all ranks and callings and among both men and women there are found both good and bad and in condemning the bad I commend the good.

6. Shameful to say, idol-priests, play-actors, jockeys, and prostitutes can inherit property: clergymen and monks alone lie under a legal disability, a disability enacted not by persecutors but by Christian emperors.¹⁷ I do not complain of the law, but I grieve that we have deserved a statute so harsh. Cauterizing is a good thing, no doubt; but how is it that I have a wound which makes me need it? The law is strict and far-seeing, yet even so rapacity goes on unchecked. By a fiction of trusteeship we set the statute at defiance; and, as if imperial decrees outweigh the mandates of

Christ, we fear the laws and despise the Gospels. If heir there must be, the mother has first claim upon her children, the Church upon her flock-the members of which she has borne and reared and nourished. Why do we thrust ourselves in between mother and children?

It is the glory of a bishop to make provision for the wants of the poor; but it is the shame of all priests to amass private fortunes. I who was born (suppose) in a poor man's house, in a country cottage, and who could scarcely get of common millet and household bread enough to fill an empty stomach, am now come to disdain the finest wheat flour and honey. I know the several kinds of fish by name. I can tell unerringly on what coast a mussel has been picked. I can distinguish by the flavour the province from which a bird comes. Dainty dishes delight me because their ingredients are scarce and I end by finding pleasure in their ruinous cost.

I hear also of servile attention shewn by some towards old men and women when these are childless. They fetch the basin, beset the bed and perform with their own hands the most revolting offices. They anxiously await the advent of the doctor and with trembling lips they ask whether the patient is better. If for a little while the old fellow shews signs of returning vigour, they are in agonies. They pretend to be delighted, but their covetous hearts undergo secret torture. For they are afraid that their labours may go for nothing and compare an old man with a clinging to life to the patriarch Methuselah. How great a reward might they have with God if their hearts were not set on a temporal prize! With what great exertions do they pursue an empty heritage! Less labour might have purchased for them the pearl of Christ.

7. Read the divine scriptures constantly; never, indeed, let the sacred volume be out of your hand. Learn what you have to teach. "Hold fast the faithful word as you have been taught that you may be able by sound doctrine to exhort and convince the gainsayers. Continue thou in the things that thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;" [Titus, 1:9; 2 Tim. 3:14] and "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope and faith that are in you." [1 Pet. 3:15] Do not let your deeds belie your words; lest when you speak in church someone may mentally reply "Why do you not practise what you profess? Here is a lover of dainties turned censor! his stomach is full and he reads us a homily on fasting. As well might a robber accuse others of covetousness." In a priest of Christ mouth mind, and hand should be at one. Be obedient to your bishop and welcome him as the parent of your soul. Sons love their fathers and slaves fear their masters. "If I be a father," He says, "where is mine honour? And if I am a master where is my fear?" [Mal. 1:6] in your case the bishop combines in himself many titles to your respect. He is at once a monk, a prelate, and an uncle who has before now instructed you in all holy things. This also I say that the bishops should know themselves to be priests not lords. Let them render to the clergy the honour which is their due that the clergy may offer to them the respect which belongs to bishops. There is a witty saying of the orator Domitius which is here to the point: "Why am I to recognize you as leader of the Senate when you will not recognize my rights as a private member?" [Cicero, de Orat. 3:1] We should realize that a bishop and his presbyters are like Aaron and his sons. As there is but one Lord and one Temple; so also should there be but one ministry. Let us ever bear in mind the charge which the apostle Peter gives to priests: "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint but willingly as God would have you;18 not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage but being ensamples to the flock," and that gladly; that "when the chief-shepherd shall appear ye may receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." [1 Pet. 5:4] It is

a bad custom which prevails in certain churches for presbyters to be silent when bishops are present on the ground that they would be jealous or impatient hearers. "If anything," writes the apostle Paul, "be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be comforted; and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace." [1 Cor. 14:30-33] "A wise son maketh a glad father;" [Prov. 10:1] and a bishop should rejoice in the discrimination which has led him to choose such for the priests of Christ.

8. When teaching in church seek to call forth not plaudits but groans. Let the tears of your hearers be your glory. A presbyter's words ought to be seasoned by his reading of scripture. Be not a declaimer or a ranter, one who gabbles without rhyme or reason; but shew yourself skilled in the deep things and versed in the mysteries of God. To mouth your words and by your quickness of utterance astonish the unlettered crowd is a mark of ignorance. Assurance often explains that of which it knows nothing; and when it has convinced others imposes on itself. My teacher, Gregory of Nazianzus, when I once asked him to explain Luke's phrase "σ■ββατον δευτερ■πρωτον", that is "the second-first Sabbath," playfully evaded my request saying: "I will tell you about it in church, and there, when all the people applaud me, you will be forced against your will to know what you do not know at all. For, if you alone remain silent, every one will put you down for a fool." There is nothing so easy as by sheer volubility to deceive a common crowd or an uneducated congregation: such most admire what they fail to understand. Hear Marcus Tullius, the subject of that noble eulogy: "You would have been the first of orators but for Demosthenes: he would have been the only one but for you." Hear what in his speech for Quintus Gallius¹⁹ he has to say about unskilled speakers and popular applause and then you will not be the sport of such illusions. "What I am telling you," said he, "is a recent experience of my own. One who has the name of a poet and a man of culture has written a book entitled Conversations of Poets and Philosophers. In this he represents Euripides as conversing with Menander and Socrates with Epicurus-men whose lives we know to be separated not by years but by centuries. Nevertheless he calls forth limitless applause and endless acclamations. For the theatre contains many who belong to the same school as he: like him they have never learned letters."

9. In dress avoid sombre colours as much as bright ones. Showiness and slovenliness are alike to be shunned; for the one savours of vanity and the other of pride. To go about without a linen scarf on is nothing: what is praiseworthy is to be without money to buy one. It is disgraceful and absurd to boast of having neither napkin nor handkerchief and let to carry a well-filled purse.

Some bestow a trifle on the poor to receive a larger sum themselves and under the cloak of almsgiving do but seek for riches. Such are almshunters rather than almsgivers. Their methods are those by which birds, beasts, and fishes are taken. A morsel of bait is put on the hook-to land a married lady's purse! The church is committed to the bishop; let him take heed whom he appoints to be his almoner. It is better for me to have no money to give away than shamelessly to beg what I mean to hoard. It is arrogance too to wish to seem more liberal than he who is Christ's bishop. "All things are not open to us all."²⁰ In the church one is the eye, another is the tongue, another the hand, another the foot, others ears, belly, and so on. Read Paul's epistle to the Corinthians and learn how the one body is made up of different members. [1 Cor. 12:12-27] The rude and simple brother must not suppose himself a saint just because he knows nothing; and he who is educated and eloquent must not measure his saintliness merely by his fluency. Of two imperfect

things holy rusticity is better than sinful eloquence.

10. Many build churches nowadays; their walls and pillars of glowing marble, their ceilings glittering with gold, their altars studded with jewels. Yet to the choice of Christ's ministers no heed is paid, And let no one allege against me the wealth of the temple in Judaea, its table, its lamps, its censers, its dishes, its cups, its spoons, [Mortariola. See Nu. 7:24, Vulg] and the rest of its golden vessels. If these were approved by the Lord it was at a time when the priests had to offer victims and when the blood of sheep was the redemption of sins. They were figures typifying things still future and were "written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." [1 Cor. 10:11] But now our Lord by His poverty has consecrated the poverty of His house. Let us, therefore, think of His cross and count riches to be but dirt. Why do we admire what Christ calls "the mammon of unrighteousness"? [Luke 16:9] Why do we cherish and love what it is Peter's boast not to possess? [Acts 3:6] Or if we insist on keeping to the letter and find the mention of gold and wealth so pleasing, let us keep to everything else as well as the gold. Let the bishops of Christ be bound to marry wives, who must be virgins. [Levit. 21:14] Let the best-intentioned priest be deprived of his office if he bear a scar and be disfigured. [Levit. 21:17-23] Let bodily leprosy be counted worse than spots upon the soul. Let us be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, [Gen. 1:28] but let us slay no lamb and celebrate no mystic passover, for where there is no temple, [Deut. 16:5] the law forbids these acts. Let us pitch tents in the seventh month [Levit. 23:40-42] and noise abroad a solemn fast with the sound of a horn. [Joel 2:15] But if we compare all these things as spiritual with things which are spiritual; [1 Cor. 2:13] and if we allow with Paul that "the Law is spiritual" [Rom. 7:14] and call to mind David's words: "open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law;" [Ps. 119:18] and if on these grounds we interpret it as our Lord interprets it-He has explained the Sabbath in this way: [Matt. 12:1-9] then, rejecting the superstitions of the Jews, we must also reject the gold; or, approving the gold, we must approve the Jews as well. For we must either accept them with the gold or condemn them with it.

11. Avoid entertaining men of the world, especially those whose honours make them swell with pride. You are the priest of Christ-one poor and crucified who lived on the bread of strangers. It is a disgrace to you if the consul's lictors or soldiers keep watch before your door, and if the Judge of the province has a better dinner with you than in his own palace. If you plead as an excuse your wish to intercede for the unhappy and the oppressed, I reply that a worldly judge will defer more to a clergyman who is self-denying than to one who is rich; he will pay more regard to your holiness than to your wealth. Or if he is a man who will not hear the clergy on behalf of the distressed except over the bowl, I will readily forego his aid and will appeal to Christ who can help more effectively and speedily than any judge. Truly "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." [Ps. 118:8, Ps. 118:9]

Let your breath never smell of wine lest the philosopher's words be said to you: "instead of offering me a kiss you are giving me a taste of wine." Priests given to wine are both condemned by the apostle [1 Tim. 3:3] and forbidden by the old Law. Those who serve the altar, we are told, must drink neither wine nor shechar.²¹ Now every intoxicating drink is in Hebrew called shechar whether it is made of corn or of the juice of apples, whether you distil from the honeycomb a rude kind of mead or make a liquor by squeezing dates or strain a thick syrup from a decoction of corn. Whatever intoxicates and disturbs the balance of the mind avoid as you would wine. I do not say that we are to condemn what is a creature of God. The Lord Himself was called a "wine-bibber"

and wine in moderation was allowed to Timothy because of his weak stomach. I only require that drinkers should observe that limit which their age, their health, or their constitution requires. But if without drinking wine at all I am aglow with youth and am inflamed by the heat of my blood and am of a strong and lusty habit of body, I will readily forego the cup in which I cannot but suspect poison. The Greeks have an excellent saying which will perhaps bear translation, Fat bellies have no sentiments refined.²²

12. Lay upon yourself only as much fasting as you can bear, and let your fasts be pure, chaste, simple, moderate, and not superstitious. What good is it to use no oil if you seek after the most troublesome and out-of-the-way kinds of food, dried figs, pepper, nuts, dates, fine flour, honey, pistachios? All the resources of gardening are strained to save us from eating household bread; and to pursue dainties we turn our backs on the kingdom of heaven. There are some, I am told, who reverse the laws of nature and the race; for they neither eat bread nor drink water but imbibe thin decoctions of crushed herbs and beet-juice-not from a cup but from a shell. Shame on us that we have no blushes for such follies and that we feel no disgust at such superstition! To crown all, in the midst of our dainties we seek a reputation for abstinence. The strictest fast is bread and water. But because it brings with it no glory and because we all of us live on bread and water, it is reckoned no fast at all but an ordinary and common matter.

13. Do not angle for compliments, lest, while you win the popular applause, you do despite to God. "If I yet pleased men," says the apostle, "I should not be the servant of Christ." [Gal. 1:10] He ceased to please men when he became Christ's servant Christ's soldier marches on through good report and evil report, [2 Cor. 6:8] the one on the right hand and the other on the left. No praise elates him, no reproaches crush him. He is not puffed up by riches, nor does he shrink into himself because of poverty. Joy and sorrow he alike despises. The sun does not burn him by day nor the moon by night. [Ps. 121:6] Do not pray at the corners of the streets, [Matt. 6:5] lest the applause of men interrupt the straight course of your prayers. Do not broaden your fringes and for show wear phylacteries, [Matt. 23:5] or, despite of conscience, wrap yourself in the self-seeking of the Pharisee.²³ Would you know what mode of apparel the Lord requires? Have prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude.²⁴ Let these be the four quarters of your horizon, let them be a four-horse team to bear you, Christ's charioteer, at full speed to your goal. No necklace can be more precious than these; no gems can form a brighter galaxy. By them you are decorated, you are girt about, you are protected on every side. They are your defence as well as your glory; for every gem is turned into a shield.

14. Beware also of a blabbing tongue and of itching ears. Neither detract from others nor listen to detractors. "Thou sittest," says the psalmist, "and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done and I kept silence; thou thoughtest wickedly that I was such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee and set them²⁵ in order before thine eyes." [Ps. 50:20, Ps. 50:21] Keep your tongue from cavilling and watch over your words. Know that in judging others you are passing sentence on yourself and that you are yourself guilty of the faults which you blame in them. It is no excuse to say: "if others tell me things I cannot be rude to them." No one cares to speak to an unwilling listener. An arrow never lodges in a stone: often it recoils upon the shooter of it. Let the detractor learn from your unwillingness to listen not to be so ready to detract. Solomon says:-"meddle not with them that are given to detraction: for their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the destruction of them both?" [Prov. 24:21, 22,

Vulg] -of the detractor, that is, and of the person who lends an ear to his detraction.

15. It is your duty to visit the sick, to know the homes and children of ladies who are married, and to guard the secrets of noblemen. Make it your object, therefore, to keep your tongue chaste as well as your eyes. Never discuss a woman's figure nor let one house know what is going on in another. Hippocrates,²⁶ before he will teach his pupils, makes them take an oath and compels them to swear fealty to him. He binds them over to silence, and prescribes for them their language, their gait, their dress, their manners. How much more reason have we to whom the medicine of the soul has been committed to love the houses of all Christians as our own homes. Let them know us as comforters in sorrow rather than as guests in time of mirth. That clergyman soon becomes an object of contempt who being often asked out to dinner never refuses to go.

16. Let us never seek for presents and rarely accept them when we are asked to do so. For "it is more blessed to give than to receive." [Acts 20:35] Somehow or other the very man who begs leave to offer you a gift holds you the cheaper for your acceptance of it; while, if you refuse it, it is wonderful how much more he will come to respect you. The preacher of continence must not be a maker of marriages. Why does he who reads the apostle's words "it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none" [1 Cor. 7:29] -why does he press a virgin to marry? Why does a priest, who must be a monogamist, [1 Tim. 3:2] urge a widow to marry again? How can the clergy be managers and stewards of other men's households, when they are bidden to disregard even their own interests? To wrest a thing from a friend is theft but to cheat the Church is sacrilege. When you have received money to be doled out to the poor, to be cautious or to hesitate while crowds are starving is to be worse than a robber; and to subtract a portion for yourself is to commit a crime of the deepest dye. I am tortured with hunger and are you to judge what will satisfy my cravings? Either divide immediately what you have received, or, if you are a timid almoner, send the donor to distribute his own gifts. Your purse ought not to remain full while I am in need. No one can look after what is mine better than I can. He is the best almoner who keeps nothing for himself.

17. You have compelled me, my dear Nepotian, in spite of the castigation which my treatise on Virginity has had to endure-the one which I wrote for the saintly Eustochium at Rome:²⁷ -you have compelled me after ten years have passed once more to open my mouth at Bethlehem and to expose myself to the stabs of every tongue. For I could only escape from criticism by writing nothing-a course made impossible by your request; and I knew when I took up my pen that the shafts of all gainsayers would be launched against me. I beg such to hold their peace and to desist from gainsaying: for I have written to them not as to opponents but as to friends. I have not inveighed against those who sin: I have but warned them to sin no more. My judgment of myself has been as strict as my judgment of them. When I have wished to remove the mote from my neighbour's eye, I have first cast out the beam in my own. [Matt. 7:3-5] I have calumniated no one. Not a name has been hinted at. My words have not been aimed at individuals and my criticism of shortcomings has been quite general. If any one wishes to be angry with me he will have first to own that he himself suits my description.

1: Letter XIV. 9 v 2: Virgil, G. 2:484 3: So called because first devised in the Oscan town of Atella
4: The name Solomon means "man of peace."

5: A slip of the pen for Theophrastus 6: Cicero, de Sen. v 7: Cicero, de Sen. vii

8: Id. ibid 9: Cic. de Sen. viii 10: Homer, Il. 1:249; Cic. de Sen. x 11: Cyprian, Ep. ad Donatum 12: Virgil, Aen. 3:436 13: Jer. 12:13, LXX. There is a play on the word klhroj, which means (1) portion, (2) clergy 14: Another allusion to the word klhroj

15: Major domus 16: The vow of celibacy is probably intended 17: The disability alluded to was enacted by Valentinian 18: So the Vulgate 19: This is not extant 20: Virgil, Ec. 8:63 21: Levit. 10:9; the word shechar occurs in the Greek text of Luke 1:15 22: Cf. Shakespere:

23: Some irrelevant sentences are found here in the ordinary text which are obviously an interpolation 24: Wisd. 8:7, the cardinal virtues of Greek philosophy 25: Viz. thy misdeeds 26: The principal physician of this name flourished in the fifth century, b.c 27: Viz. Letter XXII

Letters - letter_053

Letter 53. To Paulinus.

Jerome urges Paulinus, bishop of Nola, (for whom see Letter 58.) to make a diligent study of the Scriptures and to this end reminds him of the zeal for learning displayed not only by the wisest of the pagans but also by the apostle Paul. Then going through the two Testaments in detail he describes the contents of the several books and the lessons which may be learned from them. He concludes with an appeal to Paulinus to divest himself wholly of his earthly wealth and to devote himself altogether to God. Written in 394 a.d.

1. Our brother Ambrose along with your little gifts has delivered to me a most charming letter which, though it comes at the beginning of our friendship, gives assurance of tried fidelity and of long continued attachment. A true intimacy cemented by Christ Himself is not one which depends upon material considerations, or upon the presence of the persons, or upon an insincere and exaggerated flattery; but one such as ours, wrought by a common fear of God and a joint study of the divine scriptures.

We read in old tales that men traversed provinces, crossed seas, and visited strange peoples, simply to see face to face persons whom they only knew from books. Thus Pythagoras visited the prophets of Memphis; and Plato, besides visiting Egypt and Archytas of Tarentum, most carefully explored that part of the coast of Italy which was formerly called Great Greece. In this way the influential Athenian master with whose lessons the schools¹ of the Academy resounded became at once a pilgrim and a pupil choosing modestly to learn what others had to teach rather than over confidently to propound views of his own. Indeed his pursuit of learning-which seemed to fly before him all the world over-finally led to his capture by pirates who sold him into slavery to a cruel tyrant.² Thus he became a prisoner, a bond-man, and a slave; yet, as he was always a philosopher, he was greater still than the man who purchased him. Again we read that certain noblemen journeyed from the most remote parts of Spain and Gaul to visit Titus Livius, [Cf. Quint. X. 1:32] and listen to his eloquence which flowed like a fountain of milk. Thus the fame of an individual had more power to draw men to Rome than the attractions of the city itself; and the age displayed an unheard of and noteworthy portent in the shape of men who, entering the great city, bestowed their attention not upon it but upon something else. Apollonius³ too was a traveller-the one I mean who is called the sorcerer⁴ by ordinary people and the philosopher by such as follow Pythagoras. He entered Persia, traversed the Caucasus and made his way through the Albanians, the Scythians, the Massagetae, and the richest districts of India. At last, after crossing that wide river the Pison, [Gen. 2:11] he came to the Brahmans. There he saw Hiarcas [Philostratus 3:7] sitting upon his golden throne and drinking from his Tantalus-fountain, and heard him instructing a few disciples upon the nature, motions, and orbits of the heavenly bodies. After this he travelled among the Elamites, the Babylonians, the Chaldeans, the Medes, the Assyrians, the Parthians, the Syrians, the Phenicians, the Arabians, and the Philistines.⁵ Then returning to Alexandria he made his way to Ethiopia to see the gymnosophists and the famous table of the sun spread in the

sands of the desert. [Herod. 3:17, 18] Everywhere he found something to learn, and as he was always going to new places, he became constantly wiser and better. Philostratus has written the story of his life at length in eight books.

2. But why should I confine my allusions to the men of this world, when the Apostle Paul, the chosen vessel [Acts 9:15] the doctor⁶ of the Gentiles, who could boldly say: "Do ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me?" [2 Cor. 13:3] knowing that he really had within him that greatest of guests-when even he after visiting Damascus and Arabia "went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him fifteen days." [Gal. 1:17, Gal. 1:18] For he who was to be a preacher to the Gentiles had to be instructed in the mystical numbers seven and eight. And again fourteen years after he took Barnabas and Titus and communicated his gospel to the apostles lest by any means he should have run or had run in vain. [Gal. 2:1, Gal. 2:2] Spoken words possess an indefinable hidden power, and teaching that passed directly from the mouth of the speaker into the ears of the disciples is more impressive than any other. When the speech of Demosthenes against Aeschines was recited before the latter during his exile at Rhodes, amid all the admiration and applause he sighed "if you could but have heard the brute deliver his own periods!"⁷

3. I do not adduce these instances because I have anything in me from which you either can or will learn a lesson, but to show you that your zeal and eagerness to learn-even though you cannot rely on help from me-are in themselves worthy of praise. A mind willing to learn deserves commendation even when it has no teacher. What is of importance to me is not what you find but what you seek to find. Wax is soft and easy to mould even where the hands of craftsman and modeller are wanting to work it. It is already potentially all that it can be made. The apostle Paul learned the Law of Moses and the prophets at the feet of Gamaliel and was glad that he had done so, for armed with this spiritual armour, he was able to say boldly "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;" armed with these we war "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and being in a readiness to revenge all disobedience." [2 Cor. 10:4-6] He writes to Timothy who had been trained in the holy writings from a child exhorting him to study them diligently [2 Tim. 3:14, 2 Tim. 3:15] and not to neglect the gift which was given him with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. [1 Tim. 4:14] To Titus he gives commandment that among a bishop's other virtues (which he briefly describes) he should be careful to seek a knowledge of the scriptures: A bishop, he says, must hold fast "the faithful word as he hath been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." [Tit. 1:9] In fact want of education in a clergyman⁸ prevents him from doing good to any one but himself and much as the virtue of his life may build up Christ's church, he does it an injury as great by failing to resist those who are trying to pull it down. The prophet Haggai says-or rather the Lord says it by the mouth of Haggai-"Ask now the priests concerning the law." [Hag. 2:11] For such is the important function of the priesthood to give answers to those who question them concerning the law. And in Deuteronomy we read "Ask thy father and he will shew thee; thy elders and they will tell thee." [Deut. 32:7] Also in the one hundred and nineteenth psalm "thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." David too, in the description of the righteous man whom he compares to the tree of life in paradise, amongst his other excellences speaks of this, "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." [Ps. 1:2] In the close of his most solemn vision Daniel declares that "the righteous shall shine as

the stars; and the wise, that is the learned, as the firmament." [Dan. 12:3] You can see, therefore, how great is the difference between righteous ignorance and instructed righteousness. Those who have the first are compared with the stars, those who have the second with the heavens. Yet, according to the exact sense of the Hebrew, both statements may be understood of the learned, for it is to be read in this way:—"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Why is the apostle Paul called a chosen vessel? [Acts 9:15] Assuredly because he is a repertory of the Law and of the holy scriptures. The learned teaching of our Lord strikes the Pharisees dumb with amazement, and they are filled with astonishment to find that Peter and John know the Law although they have not learned letters. For to these the Holy Ghost immediately suggested what comes to others by daily study and meditation; and, as it is written, [1 Thess. 4:9] they were "taught of God." The Saviour had only accomplished his twelfth year when the scene in the temple took place; [Luke 2:46] but when he interrogated the elders concerning the Law His wise questions conveyed rather than sought information.

4. But perhaps we ought to call Peter and John ignorant, both of whom could say of themselves, "though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge." [2 Cor. 11:6] Was John a mere fisherman, rude and untaught? If so, whence did he get the words "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God." [John. 1:1] Logos in Greek has many meanings. It signifies word and reason and reckoning and the cause of individual things by which those which are subsist. All of which things we rightly predicate of Christ. This truth Plato with all his learning did not know, of this Demosthenes with all his eloquence was ignorant. "I will destroy," it is said, "the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." [1 Cor. 1:19] The true wisdom must destroy the false, and, although the foolishness of preaching [1 Cor. 1:21] is inseparable from the Cross, Paul speaks "wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought," but he speaks "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world." [1 Cor. 2:6, 1 Cor. 2:7] God's wisdom is Christ, for Christ, we are told, is "the power of God and the wisdom of God." [1 Cor. 1:24] He is the wisdom which is hidden in a mystery, of which also we read in the heading of the ninth psalm "for the hidden things of the son."9 In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He also who was hidden in a mystery is the same that was foreordained before the world. Now it was in the Law and in the Prophets that he was foreordained and prefigured. For this reason too the prophets were called seers, [1 Sam. 9:9] because they saw Him whom others did not see. Abraham saw His day and was glad. [John. 8:56] The heavens which were sealed to a rebellious people were opened to Ezekiel. "Open thou mine eyes," saith David, "that I may behold wonderful things out of thy Law." [Ps. 119:18] For "the law is spiritual" [Rom. 7:14] and a revelation is needed to enable us to comprehend it and, when God uncovers His face, to behold His glory.

5. In the apocalypse a book is shewn sealed with seven seals, [Rev. 5:1] which if you deliver to one that is learned saying, Read this, he will answer you, I cannot, for it is sealed. [Isa. 29:11] How many there are to-day who fancy themselves learned, yet the scriptures are a sealed book to them, and one which they cannot open save through Him who has the key of David, "he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth." [Rev. 3:7] In the Acts of the Apostles the holy eunuch (or rather "man" for so the scripture calls him [Acts 8:27]) when reading

Isaiah he is asked by Philip "Understandest thou what thou readest?", makes answer:-"How can I except some man should guide me?" [Acts 8:30, Acts 8:31] To digress for a moment to myself, I am neither holier nor more diligent than this eunuch, who came from Ethiopia, that is from the ends of the world, to the Temple leaving behind him a queen's palace, and was so great a lover of the Law and of divine knowledge that he read the holy scriptures even in his chariot. Yet although he had the book in his hand and took into his mind the words of the Lord, nay even had them on his tongue and uttered them with his lips, he still knew not Him, whom-not knowing-he worshipped in the book. Then Philip came and shewed him Jesus, who was concealed beneath the letter. Wondrous excellence of the teacher! In the same hour the eunuch believed and was baptized; he became one of the faithful and a saint. He was no longer a pupil but a master; and he found more in the church's font there in the wilderness than he had ever done in the gilded temple of the synagogue.

6. These instances have been just touched upon by me (the limits of a letter forbid a more discursive treatment of them) to convince you that in the holy scriptures you can make no progress unless you have a guide to shew you the way. I say nothing of the knowledge of grammarians, rhetoricians, philosophers, geometers, logicians, musicians, astronomers, astrologers, physicians, whose several kinds of skill are most useful to mankind, and may be ranged under the three heads of teaching, method, and proficiency. I will pass to the less important crafts which require manual dexterity more than mental ability. Husbandmen, masons, carpenters, workers in wood and metal, wool-dressers and fullers, as well as those artisans who make furniture and cheap utensils, cannot attain the ends they seek without instruction from qualified persons. As Horace says¹⁰ "Doctors alone profess the healing art And none but joiners ever try to join."

7. The art of interpreting the scriptures is the only one of which all men everywhere claim to be masters. To quote Horace again "Taught or untaught we all write poetry." [Hor. Ep. II. 1:117] The chatty old woman, the doting old man, and the wordy sophist, one and all take in hand the Scriptures, rend them in pieces and teach them before they have learned them. Some with brows knit and bombastic words, balanced one against the other philosophize concerning the sacred writings among weak women. Others-I blush to say it-learn of women what they are to teach men; and as if even this were not enough, they boldly explain to others what they themselves by no means understand. I say nothing of persons who, like myself have been familiar with secular literature before they have come to the study of the holy scriptures. Such men when they charm the popular ear by the finish of their style suppose every word they say to be a law of God. They do not deign to notice what Prophets and apostles have intended but they adapt conflicting passages to suit their own meaning, as if it were a grand way of teaching-and not rather the faultiest of all-to misrepresent a writer's views and to force the scriptures reluctantly to do their will. They forget that we have read centos from Homer and Virgil; but we never think of calling the Christless Maro¹¹ a Christian because of his lines:- Now comes the Virgin back and Saturn's reign, "Now from high heaven comes a Child newborn." [Virg. E. 4:6, 7] Another line might be addressed by the Father to the Son:- "Hail, only Son, my Might and Majesty." [Virg. A. 1:664] And yet another might follow the Saviour's words on the cross:- "Such words he spake and there transfixed remained." [Virg. A. 2:650] But all this is puerile, and resembles the sleight-of-hand of a mountebank. It is idle to try to teach what you do not know, and-if I may speak with some warmth-is worse still to be ignorant of your ignorance.

8. Genesis, we shall be told, needs no explanation; its topics are too simple-the birth of the world, the origin of the human race,¹² the division of the earth,¹³ the confusion of tongues,¹⁴ and the descent of the Hebrews into Egypt!¹⁵ Exodus, no doubt, is equally plain, containing as it does merely an account of the ten plagues,¹⁶ the decalogue,¹⁷ and sundry mysterious and divine precepts! The meaning of Leviticus is of course self-evident, although every sacrifice that it describes, nay more every word that it contains, the description of Aaron's vestments,¹⁸ and all the regulations connected with the Levites are symbols of things heavenly! The book of Numbers too-are not its very figures,¹⁹ and Balaam's prophecy,²⁰ and the forty-two camping places in the wilderness²¹ so many mysteries? Deuteronomy also, that is the second law or the foreshadowing of the law of the gospel,-does it not, while exhibiting things known before, put old truths in a new light? So far the 'five words' of the Pentateuch, with which the apostle boasts his wish to speak in the Church. [1 Cor. 14:19] Then, as for Job,²² that pattern of patience, what mysteries are there not contained in his discourses? Commencing in prose the book soon glides into verse and at the end once more reverts to prose. By the way in which it lays down propositions, assumes postulates, adduces proofs, and draws inferences, it illustrates all the laws of logic. Single words occurring in the book are full of meaning. To say nothing of other topics, it prophesies the resurrection of men's bodies at once with more clearness and with more caution than any one has yet shewn. "I know," Job says, "that my redeemer liveth, and that at the last day I shall rise again from the earth; and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. This my hope is stored up in my own bosom." [Job 19:25-27, Vulg] I will pass on to Jesus the son of Nave²³ -a type of the Lord in name as well as in deed-who crossed over Jordan, subdued hostile kingdoms, divided the land among the conquering people and who, in every city, village, mountain, river, hill-torrent, and boundary which he dealt with, marked out the spiritual realms of the heavenly Jerusalem, that is, of the church. [Gal. 4:26] In the book of Judges every one of the popular leaders is a type. Ruth the Moabitess fulfils the prophecy of Isaiah:-"Send thou a lamb, O Lord, as ruler of the land from the rock of the wilderness to the mount of the daughter of Zion."²⁴ Under the figures of Eli's death and the slaying of Saul Samuel shews the abolition of the old law. Again in Zadok and in David he bears witness to the mysteries of the new priesthood and of the new royalty. The third and fourth books of Kings called in Hebrew Malachim give the history of the kingdom of Judah from Solomon to Jeconiah,²⁵ and of that of Israel from Jeroboam the son of Nebat to Hoshea who was carried away into Assyria. If you merely regard the narrative, the words are simple enough, but if you look beneath the surface at the hidden meaning of it, you find a description of the small numbers of the church and of the wars which the heretics wage against it. The twelve prophets whose writings are compressed within the narrow limits of a single volume,²⁶ have typical meanings far different from their literal ones. Hosea speaks many times of Ephraim, of Samaria, of Joseph, of Jezreel, of a wife of whoredoms and of children of whoredoms, [Hos. 1:2] of an adulteress shut up within the chamber of her husband, sitting for a long time in widowhood and in the garb of mourning, awaiting the time when her husband will return to her. [Hos. 3:1, 3, 4] Joel the son of Pethuel describes the land of the twelve tribes as spoiled and devastated by the palmerworm the canker-worm, the locust, and the blight, [Joel 1:4] and predicts that after the overthrow of the former people the Holy Spirit shall be poured out upon God's servants and handmaids; [Joel 2:29] the same spirit, that is, which was to be poured out in the upper chamber at Zion upon the one hundred and twenty believers. [Acts 1:13, Acts 1:15] These believers rising by gradual and regular

gradations from one to fifteen form the steps to which there is a mystical allusion in the "psalms of degrees."²⁷ Amos, although he is only "an herdman" from the country, "a gatherer of sycomore fruit," [Amos 7:14] cannot be explained in a few words. For who can adequately speak of the three transgressions and the four of Damascus, of Gaza, of Tyre, of Idumaea, of Moab, of the children of Ammon, and in the seventh and eighth place of Judah and of Israel? He speaks to the fat kine that are in the mountain of Samaria, [Amos 4:1] and bears witness that the great house and the little house shall fall. [Amos 6:11] He sees now the maker of the grasshopper, [Amos 7:1] now the Lord, standing upon a wall [Amos 7:7] daubed²⁸ or made of adamant,²⁹ now a basket of apples [Amos 8:1] that brings doom to the transgressors, and now a famine upon the earth "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." [Amos 8:11] Obadiah, whose name means the servant of God, thunders against Edom red with blood and against the creature born of earth.³⁰ He smites him with the spear of the spirit because of his continual rivalry with his brother Jacob. Jonah, fairest of doves, whose shipwreck shews in a figure the passion of the Lord, recalls the world to penitence, and while he preaches to Nineveh, announces salvation to all the heathen. Micah the Morasthite a joint heir with Christ³¹ announces the spoiling of the daughter of the robber and lays siege against her, because she has smitten the jawbone of the judge of Israel. [Mic. 5:1, Vulg] Nahum, the consoler of the world, rebukes "the bloody city" [i.e., Nineveh-Nahum 3:1] and when it is overthrown cries: "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." [Nahum 1:15] Habakkuk, like a strong and unyielding wrestler,³² stands upon his watch and sets his foot upon the tower [Hab. 2:1] that he may contemplate Christ upon the cross and say "His glory covered the heavens and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power." [Hab. 3:3, Hab. 3:4] Zephaniah, that is the bodyguard and knower of the secrets of the Lord,³³ hears "a cry from the fishgate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills." [Zeph. 1:10] He proclaims "howling to the inhabitants of the mortar;³⁴ for all the people of Canaan are undone; all they that were laden with silver are cut off." [Zeph. 1:11, RV] Haggai, that is he who is glad or joyful, who has sown in tears to reap in joy, [Ps. 126:5] is occupied with the rebuilding of the temple. He represents the Lord(the Father, that is) as saying "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations and he who is desired³⁵ of all nations shall come" [Hag. 2:6, Hag. 2:7] Zechariah, he that is mindful of his Lord,³⁶ gives us many prophecies. He sees Jesus,³⁷ "clothed with filthy garments," [Zech. 3:3] a stone with seven eyes, [Zech. 3:9] a candle-stick all of gold with lamps as many as the eyes, and two olivetrees on the right side of the bowl [Zech. 4:2, Zech. 4:3] and on the left. After he has described the horses, red, black, white, and grisled, [Zech. 6:1-3] and the cutting off of the chariot from Ephraim and of the horse from Jerusalem [Zech. 9:10] he goes on to prophesy and predict a king who shall be a poor man and who shall sit "upon a colt the foal of an ass." [Zech. 9:9] Malachi, the last of all the prophets, speaks openly of the rejection of Israel and the calling of the nations. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name is great among the Gentiles: and in every place incense³⁸ is offered unto my name, and a pure offering." [Mal. 1:10, Mal. 1:11, RV] As for Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, who can fully understand or adequately explain them? The first of them seems to compose not a prophecy but a gospel. The second speaks of a rod of an almond tree [Jer. 1:11] and of a seething pot with its face toward the north, [Jer. 1:13] and of a leopard which has changed its spots. [Jer. 13:23] He

also goes four times through the alphabet in different metres.³⁹ The beginning and ending of Ezekiel, the third of the four, are involved in so great obscurity that like the commencement of Genesis they are not studied by the Hebrews until they are thirty years old. Daniel, the fourth and last of the four prophets, having knowledge of the times and being interested in the whole world, in clear language proclaims the stone cut out of the mountain without hands that overthrows all kingdoms. [Dan. 2:45] David, who is our Simonides, Pindar, and Alcaeus, our Horace, our Catullus, and our Serenus all in one, sings of Christ to his lyre; and on a psaltery with ten strings calls him from the lower world to rise again. Solomon, a lover of peace⁴⁰ and of the Lord, corrects morals, teaches nature, unites Christ and the church, and sings a sweet marriage song⁴¹ to celebrate that holy bridal. Esther, a type of the church, frees her people from danger and, after having slain Haman whose name means iniquity, hands down to posterity a memorable day and a great feast.⁴² The book of things omitted⁴³ or epitome of the old dispensation⁴⁴ is of such importance and value that without it any one who should claim to himself a knowledge of the scriptures would make himself a laughing stock in his own eyes. Every name used in it, nay even the conjunction of the words, serves to throw light on narratives passed over in the books of Kings and upon questions suggested by the gospel. Ezra and Nehemiah, that is the Lord's helper and His consoler, are united in a single book. They restore the Temple and build up the walls of the city. In their pages we see the throng of the Israelites returning to their native land, we read of priests and Levites, of Israel proper and of proselytes; and we are even told the several families to which the task of building the walls and towers was assigned. These references convey one meaning upon the surface, but another below it.

9. [In Migne, 8.] You see how, carried away by my love of the scriptures, I have exceeded the limits of a letter yet have not fully accomplished my object. We have heard only what it is that we ought to know and to desire, so that we too may be able to say with the psalmist: "My soul breaketh out for the very fervent desire that it hath alway unto thy judgments." [Ps. 119:20, PBV] But the saying of Socrates about himself- "this only I know that I know nothing"⁴⁵ -is fulfilled in our case also. The New Testament I will briefly deal with. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the Lord's team of four,⁴⁶ the true cherubim or store of knowledge.⁴⁷ With them the whole body is full of eyes, [Ezek. 1:18, Vulg] they glitter as sparks, [Ezek. 1:7] they run and return like lightning, [Ezek. 1:14] their feet are straight feet, [Ezek. 1:7] and lifted up, their backs also are winged, ready to fly in all directions. They hold together each by each and are interwoven one with another: [Ezek. 1:11] like wheels within wheels they roll along [Ezek. 1:16] and go whithersoever the breath of the Holy Spirit wafts them. [Ezek. 1:20] The apostle Paul writes to seven churches⁴⁸ (for the eighth epistle- that to the Hebrews- is not generally counted in with the others). He instructs Timothy and Titus; he intercedes with Philemon for his runaway slave.⁴⁹ Of him I think it better to say nothing than to write inadequately. The Acts of the Apostles seem to relate a mere unvarnished narrative descriptive of the infancy of the newly born church; but when once we realize that their author is Luke the physician whose praise is in the gospel, [Col. 4:14; 2 Cor. 8:18] we shall see that all his words are medicine for the sick soul. The apostles James, Peter, John, and Jude, have published seven epistles at once spiritual and to the point, short and long, short that is in words but lengthy in substance so that there are few indeed who do not find themselves in the dark when they read them. The apocalypse of John has as many mysteries as words. In saying this I have said less than the book deserves. All praise of it is inadequate; manifold meanings lie hid in its every word.

10. [In Migne, 9.] I beg of you, my dear brother, to live among these books, to meditate upon them, to know nothing else, to seek nothing else. Does not such a life seem to you a foretaste of heaven here on earth? Let not the simplicity of the scripture or the poorness of its vocabulary offend you; for these are due either to the faults of translators or else to deliberate purpose: for in this way it is better fitted for the instruction of an unlettered congregation as the educated person can take one meaning and the uneducated another from one and the same sentence. I am not so dull or so forward as to profess that I myself know it, or that I can pluck upon the earth the fruit which has its root in heaven, but I confess that I should like to do so. I put myself before the man who sits idle and, while I lay no claim to be a master, I readily pledge myself to be a fellow-student. "Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." [Matt. 7:8] Let us learn upon earth that knowledge which will continue with us in heaven.

11. [In Migne, 10.] I will receive you with open hands and-if I may boast and speak foolishly like Hermagoras⁵⁰ -I will strive to learn with you whatever you desire to study. Eusebius who is here regards you with the affection of a brother; he⁵¹ has made your letter twice as precious by telling me of your sincerity of character, your contempt for the world, your constancy in friendship, and your love to Christ. The letter bears on its face (without any aid from him) your prudence and the charm of your style. Make haste then, I beseech you, and cut instead of loosing the hawser which prevents your vessel from moving in the sea. The man who sells his goods because he despises them and means to renounce the world can have no desire to sell them dear. Count as money gained the sum that you must expend upon your outfit. There is an old saying that a miser lacks as much what he has as what he has not. The believer has a whole world of wealth; the unbeliever has not a single farthing. Let us always live "as having nothing and yet possessing all things." [2 Cor. 6:10] Food and raiment, these are the Christian's wealth. [1 Tim. 6:8] If your property is in your own power, [Cf. Acts 5:4] sell it: if not, cast it from you. "If any man... will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also." [Matt. 5:40] You are all for delay, you wish to defer action: unless-so you argue-unless I sell my goods piecemeal and with caution, Christ will be at a loss to feed his poor. Nay, he who has offered himself to God, has given Him everything once for all. The apostles did but forsake ships and nets. [Matt. 4:18-22] The widow cast but two brass coins into the treasury [Mark 12:41-44] and yet she shall be preferred before Croesus⁵² with all his wealth. He readily despises all things who reflects always that he must die.

1: Gymnasia 2: Dionysius of Syracuse 3: Apollonius of Tyana, whose strange life and adventures have been written for us by Philostratus

4: Magus 5: i.e. dwellers in Palestine 6: A favourite title for theologians in the Middle Ages 7: Cic. de Orat. 3:56, the word 'brute 0' is inserted by Jerome 8: Sancta rusticitas 9: "Upon Muthlabben" AV. See Perowne on the words 10: Hor. Ep. II. 1. 115, 116 11: Virgil's full name was Publius Vergilius Maro

12:

Cc. 1-2

13:

C. x

14:

C. xi

15:

C. xlvi

16:

Cc. vii-xii

17:

C. xx

18:

C. viii

19: C. xxvi 20: Cc. xxiii., xxiv 21: C. 33: See Letter lxxviii

22: The mention of Job at this point is curious: it would seem that in Jerome's opinion he was coeval with or very little later than Moses 23: i.e., Joshua the son of Nun whose name is so rendered by the LXX. Cf. Ecclus. 46:1, AV 24: Isa. 16:1, Vulg. 'the rock of the wilderness'=Moab 25: Also called Coniah and Jehoiachin 26: They are reckoned as forming one book in the Hebrew Bible 27: The allusion is to Psalms cxx.-cxxxiv. One hundred and twenty is the sum of the numerals one to fifteen 28: So the Vulgate

29: So the LXX 30: 'Edom 0' means 'red 0' and is connected with 'Adâmâh 0'='the earth. 0 31: Jerome interprets the Hebrew word 'Morasthite 0' to mean 'my possession. 0 32: The name strictly means 'embrace.' 33: Strictly 'the Lord guards' or 'hides.' 34: So RV. marg. Probably a place in Jerusalem 35: So Vulg. 'the desire' AV 36: Strictly 'the Lord is mindful.' 37: i.e., Joshua the High Priest 38: This word is not in the Vulg 39: Lamentations 200:I.-IV., each verse in which begins with a different letter of the alphabet 40: See note on LII. 3, p 41: The Song of Songs 42: i.e. the feast of Purim-Esth. 9:20-32 43: Paraleipomena, the name given in the LXX. to the books of Chronicles 44: Veteris instrumenti 'epitome' 45: Plato, Ap. Soc. 21, 22 46: Quadriga. cf Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III. 2:8 47: Clement of Alexandria, following Philo, makes cherub mean wisdom 48: i.e. those of Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, Thessalonica

49: Onesimus 50: A verbose rhetorician mentioned by Cic. de Inv. 1:6

51: Eusebius of Cremona, who for the next five years remained with Jerome, and afterwards corresponded with him from Italy. See Letter LVII. Rufinus, Apol. 1:19. Jerome, Apol. 3:4, 5, etc

52: The last king of Lydia, celebrated for his riches

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Letter 54. To Furia. A letter of guidance to a widow on the best means of preserving her widowhood (according to Jerome 'the second of the three degrees of chastity'). Furia had at one time thought of marrying again but eventually abandoned her intention and devoted herself to the care of her young children and her aged father. Jerome draws a vivid picture of the dangers to which she is exposed at Rome, lays down rules of conduct for her guidance, and commends her to the care of the presbyter Exuperius (afterwards bishop of Toulouse). The date of the letter is 394 a.d.

1. You beg and implore me in your letter to write to you-or rather write back to you-what mode of life you ought to adopt to preserve the crown of widowhood and to keep your reputation for chastity unsullied. My mind rejoices, my reins exult, and my heart is glad that you desire to be after marriage what your mother Titiana of holy memory was for a long time in marriage.¹ Her prayers and supplications are heard. She has succeeded in winning afresh in her only daughter that which she herself when living possessed. It is a high privilege of your family that from the time of Camillus² few or none of your house are described as contracting second marriages. Therefore it will not redound so much to your praise if you continue a widow as to your shame if being a Christian you fail to keep what heathen women have jealously guarded for so many centuries.

2. I say nothing of Paula and Eustochium, the fairest flowers of your stock; for, as my object is to exhort you, I do not wish it to appear that I am praising them. Blaesilla too I pass over who following her husband-your brother-to the grave, fulfilled in a short time of life a long time of virtue. [Wisdom 4:13] Would that men would imitate the laudable examples of women, and that wrinkled old age would pay at last what youth gladly offers at first! In saying this I am putting my hand into the fire deliberately and with my eyes open. Men will knit their brows and shake their clenched fists at me;

"In swelling tones will angry Chremes rave."³ The leaders will rise as one man against my epistle; the mob of patricians will thunder at me. They will cry out that I am a sorcerer and a seducer; and that I should be transported to the ends of the earth. They may add, if they will, the title of Samaritan; for in it I shall but recognize a name given to my Lord. But one thing is certain. I do not sever the daughter from the mother, I do not use the words of the gospel: "let the dead bury their dead." [Matt. 8:22] For whosoever believes. in Christ is alive; and he who believes in Him "ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." [1 John. 2:6]

3. A truce to the calumnies which the malice of backbiters continually fastens upon all who call themselves Christians to keep them through fear of shame from aspiring to virtue. Except by letter we have no knowledge of each other; and where there is no knowledge after the flesh, there can be no motive for intercourse save a religious one. "Honour thy father," [Ex. 20:12] the commandment says, but only if he does not separate you from your true Father. Recognize the tie of blood but only so long as your parent recognizes his Creator. Should he fail to do so, David will sing to you: "hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own

people and thy father's house. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord." [Ps. 45:10, Ps. 45:11] Great is the prize offered for the forgetting of a parent, "the king shall desire thy beauty." You have heard, you have considered, you have inclined your ear, you have forgotten your people and your father's house; therefore the king shall desire your beauty and shall say to you: - "thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." [Cant. 4:7] What can be fairer than a soul which is called the daughter of God, [Ps. 45:10] and which seeks for herself no outward adorning. [Cf. 1 Pet. 3:3] She believes in Christ, and, dowered with this hope of greatness⁴ makes her way to her spouse; for Christ is at once her bridegroom and her Lord.

4. What troubles matrimony involves you have learned in the marriage state itself; you have been surfeited with quails' flesh [Numb. 11:20, Numb. 11:31-4] even to loathing; your mouth has been filled with the gall of bitterness; you have expelled the indigestible and unwholesome food; you have relieved a heaving stomach. Why will you again swallow what has disagreed with you? "The dog is turned to his own vomit again and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." [Pet. 2:22] Even brute beasts and flying birds do not fall into the same snares twice. Do you fear extinction for the line of Camillus if you do not present your father with some little fellow to crawl upon his breast and slobber his neck? As if all who marry have children! and as if when they do come, they always resemble their forefathers! Did Cicero's son exhibit his father's eloquence? Had your own Cornelia,⁵ pattern at once of chastity and of fruitfulness, cause to rejoice that she was mother of her Gracchi? It is ridiculous to expect as certain the offspring which many, as you can see, have not got, while others who have had it have lost it again. To whom then are you to leave your great riches? To Christ who cannot die. Whom shall you make your heir? The same who is already your Lord. Your father will be sorry but Christ will be glad; your family will grieve but the angels will rejoice with you. Let your father do what he likes with what is his own. You are not his to whom you have been born, but His to whom you have been born again, and who has purchased you at a great price with His own blood. [Acts 20:28]

5. Beware of nurses and waiting maids and similar venomous creatures who try to satisfy their greed by sucking your blood. They advise you to do not what is best for you but what is best for them. They are for ever dinning into your ears Virgil's lines:- "Will you waste all your youth in lonely grief And children sweet, the gifts of love, forswear?" [Virg. A. 4:32.]

Wherever there is holy chastity, there is also frugal living; and wherever there is frugal living, servants lose by it. What they do not get is in their minds so much taken from them. The actual sum received is what they look to, and not its relative amount. The moment they see a Christian they at once repeat the hackneyed saying:-"The Greek! The impostor!"⁶ They spread the most scandalous reports and, when any such emanates from themselves, they pretend that they have heard it from others, managing thus at once to originate the story and to exaggerate it. A lying rumour goes forth; and this, when it has reached the married ladies and has been fanned by their tongues, spreads through the provinces. You may see numbers of these-their faces painted, their eyes like those of vipers, their teeth rubbed with pumice-stone-raving and carping at Christians with insane fury. One of these ladies,

"A violet mantle round her shoulders thrown,

Drawls out some mawkish stuff, speaks through her nose,

And minces half her words with tripping tongue." [Persius 1:32 sqq]

Hereupon the rest chime in and every bench expresses hoarse approval. They are backed up by men of my own order who, finding themselves assailed, assail others. Always fluent in attacking me, they are dumb in their own defence; just as though they were not monks themselves, and as though every word said against monks did not tell also against their spiritual progenitors the clergy. Harm done to the flock brings discredit on the shepherd. On the other hand we cannot but praise the life of a monk who holds up to veneration the priests of Christ and refuses to detract from that order to which he owes it that he is a Christian.

6. I have spoken thus, my daughter in Christ, not because I doubt that you will be faithful to your vows,⁷ (you would never have asked for a letter of advice had you been uncertain as to the blessedness of monogamy): but that you may realize the wickedness of servants who merely wish to sell you for their own advantage, the snares which relations may set for you and the well meant but mistaken suggestions of a father. While I allow that this latter feels love toward you, I cannot admit that it is love according to knowledge. I must say with the apostle: "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." [Rom. 10:2] Imitate rather-I cannot say it too often-your holy mother⁸ whose zeal for Christ comes into my mind as often as I remember her, and not her zeal only but the paleness induced in her by fasting, the alms given by her to the poor, the courtesy shewn by her to the servants of God, the lowliness of her garb and heart, and the constant moderation of her language. Of your father too I speak with respect, not because he is a patrician and of consular rank but because he is a Christian. Let him be true to his profession as such. Let him rejoice that he has begotten a daughter for Christ and not for the world. Nay rather let him grieve that you have in vain lost your virginity as the fruits of matrimony have not been yours. Where is the husband whom he gave to you? Even had he been lovable and good, death would still have snatched all away, and his decease would have terminated the fleshly bond between you. Seize the opportunity, I beg of you, and make a virtue of necessity. In the lives of Christians we look not to the beginnings but to the endings. Paul began badly but ended well. The start of Judas wins praise; his end is condemned because of his treachery. Read Ezekiel, "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; as for the wickedness of the wicked he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness." [Ezek. 33:12] The Christian life is the true Jacob's ladder on which the angels ascend and descend, [Gen. 28:12] while the Lord stands above it holding out His hand to those who slip and sustaining by the vision of Himself the weary steps of those who ascend. But while He does not wish the death of a sinner, but only that he should be converted and live, He hates the lukewarm [Rev. 3:16] and they quickly cause him loathing. To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much. [Luke 7:47]

7. In the gospel a harlot wins salvation. How? She is baptized in her tears and wipes the Lord's feet with that same hair with which she had before deceived many. She does not wear a waving headdress or creaking boots, she does not darken her eyes with antimony. Yet in her squalor she is lovelier than ever. What place have rouge and white lead on the face of a Christian woman? The one simulates the natural red of the cheeks and of the lips; the other the whiteness of the face and of the neck. They serve only to inflame young men's passions, to stimulate lust, and to indicate an unchaste mind. How can a woman weep for her sins whose tears lay bare her true complexion and mark furrows on her cheeks? Such adorning is not of the Lord; a mask of this kind belongs to

Antichrist. With what confidence can a woman raise features to heaven which her Creator must fail to recognize? It is idle to allege in excuse for such practices girlishness and youthful vanity. A widow who has ceased to have a husband to please, and who in the apostle's language a widow indeed, [1 Tim. 5:5] needs nothing more but perseverance only. She is mindful of past enjoyments, she knows what gave her pleasure and what she has now lost. By rigid fast and vigil she must quench the fiery darts of the devil. [Eph. 6:16] If we are widows, we must either speak as we are dressed, or else dress as we speak. Why do we profess one thing, and practise another? The tongue talks of chastity, but the rest of the body reveals incontinence.

8. So much for dress and adornment. But a widow "that liveth in pleasure"-the words are not mine but those of the apostle-"is dead while she liveth." [1 Tim. 5:6] What does that mean-"is dead while she liveth"? To those who know no better she seems to be alive and not, as she is, dead in sin; yes, and in another sense dead to Christ, from whom no secrets are hid. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." [Ezek. 18:20] "Some men's sins are open ...going before to judgment: and some they follow after. Likewise also good works are manifest, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. [1 Tim. 5:24, 1 Tim. 5:25] The words mean this:-Certain persons sin so deliberately and flagrantly that you no sooner see them than you know them at once to be sinners. But the defects of others are so cunningly concealed that we only learn them from subsequent information. Similarly the good deeds of some people are public property, while those of others we come to know only through long intimacy with them. Why then must we needs boast of our chastity, a thing which cannot prove itself to be genuine without its companions and attendants, continence and plain living? The apostle macerates his body and brings it into subjection to the soul lest what he has preached to others he should himself fail to keep; [1 Cor. 9:27] and can a mere girl whose passions are kindled by abundance of food, can a mere girl afford to be confident of her own chastity?

9. In saying this, I do not of course condemn food which God created to be enjoyed with thanksgiving, [1 Tim. 4:4] but I seek to remove from youths and girls what are incentives to sensual pleasure. Neither the fiery Etna nor the country of Vulcan,⁹ nor Vesuvius, nor Olympus, burns with such violent heat as the youthful marrow of those who are flushed with wine and filled with food. Many trample covetousness under foot, and lay it down as readily as they lay down their purse. An enforced silence serves to make amends for a railing tongue. The outward appearance and the mode of dress can be changed in a single hour. All other sins are external, and what is external can easily be cast away. Desire alone, implanted in men by God to lead them to procreate children, is internal; and this, if it once oversteps its own bounds, becomes a sin, and by a law of nature cries out for sexual intercourse. It is therefore a work of great merit, and one which requires unremitting diligence to overcome that which is innate in you; while living in the flesh not to live after the flesh; to strive with yourself day by day and to watch the foe shut up within you with the hundred eyes of the fabled Argus.¹⁰ This is what the apostle says in other words: "Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." [1 Cor. 6:18] Physicians and others who have written on the nature of the human body, and particularly Galen in his books entitled On matters of health, say that the bodies of boys and of young men and of full grown men and women glow with an interior heat and consequently that for persons of these ages all food is injurious which tends to promote this heat: while on the other hand it is highly conducive to health in eating and in drinking to take things cold and cooling.

Contrariwise they tell us that warm food and old wine are good for the old who suffer from humours and from chilliness. Hence it is that the Saviour says "Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life." [Luke 21:34] So too speaks the apostle: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess." [Eph. 5:18] No wonder that the potter spoke thus of the vessel which He had made when even the comic poet whose only object is to know and to describe the ways of men tells us that Where Ceres fails and Liber, Venus droops. [Ter. Enn. 4:5, 6]

10. In the first place then, till you have passed the years of early womanhood, take only water to drink, for this is by nature of all drinks the most cooling. This, if your stomach is strong enough to bear it; but if your digestion is weak, hear what the apostle says to Timothy: "use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." [1 Tim. 5:23] Then as regards your food you must avoid all heating dishes. I do not speak of flesh dishes only (although of these the chosen vessel declares his mind thus: "it is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine" [Rom. 14:21]) but of vegetables as well. Everything provocative or indigestible is to be refused. Be assured that nothing is so good for young Christians as the eating of herbs. Accordingly in another place he says: "another who is weak eateth herbs." [Rom. 14:2] Thus the heat of the body must be tempered with cold food. Daniel and the three children lived on pulse. [Dan. 1:16] They were still boys and had not come yet to that frying-pan on which the King of Babylon fried the elders¹¹ who were judges. Moreover, by an express privilege of God's own giving their bodily condition was improved by their regimen. We do not expect that it will be so with us, but we look for increased vigour of soul which becomes stronger as the flesh grows weaker. Some persons who aspire to the life of chastity fall midway in their journey from supposing that they need only abstain from flesh. They load their stomachs with vegetables which are only harmless when taken sparingly and in moderation. If I am to say what I think, there is nothing which so much heats the body and inflames the passions as undigested food and breathing broken with hiccoughs. As for you, my daughter, I would rather wound your modesty than endanger my case by understatement. Regard everything as poison which bears within it the seeds of sensual pleasure. A meagre diet which leaves the appetite always unsatisfied is to be preferred to fasts three days long. It is much better to take a little every day than some days to abstain wholly and on others to surfeit oneself. That rain is best which falls slowly to the ground. Showers that come down suddenly and with violence wash away the soil.

11. When you eat your meals, reflect that you must immediately afterwards pray and read. Have a fixed number of lines of holy scripture, and render it as your task to your Lord. On no account resign yourself to sleep until you have filled the basket of your breast with a woof of this weaving. After the holy scriptures you should read the writings of learned men; of those at any rate whose faith is well known. You need not go into the mire to seek for gold; you have many pearls, buy the one pearl with these. [Matt. 13:45, Matt. 13:46] Stand, as Jeremiah says, in more ways than one that so you may come on the true way that leads to the Father. [Jer. 6:16] Exchange your love of necklaces and of gems and of silk dresses for earnestness in studying the scriptures. Enter the land of promise that flows with milk and honey. [Ex. 33:3] Eat fine flour and oil. Let your clothing be, like Joseph's, of many colors. [Gen. 37:23] Let your ears like those of Jerusalem [Ezek. 16:12] be pierced by the word of God that the precious grains of new corn may hang from them. In that reverend man Exuperius¹² you have a man of tried years and faith ready to give you constant support with his advice.

12. Make to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that they may receive you into everlasting habitations. [Luke 16:9] Give your riches not to those who feed on pheasants but to those who have none but common bread to eat, such as stays hunger while it does not stimulate lust. Consider the poor and needy. [Ps. 41:1] Give to everyone that asks of you, [Matt. 5:42] but especially unto them who are of the household of faith. [Gal. 6:10] Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, visit the sick. [Cf. Matt. 25:35, Matt. 25:36] Every time that you hold out your hand, think of Christ. See to it that you do not, when the Lord your God asks an alms of you, increase riches which are none of His.

13. Avoid the company of young men. Let long baited youths dandified and wanton never be seen under your roof. Repel a singer as you would some bane. Hurry from your house women who live by playing and singing, the devil's choir whose songs are the fatal ones of sirens. Do not arrogate to yourself a widow's license and appear in public preceded by a host of eunuchs. It is a most mischievous thing for those who are weak owing to their sex and youth to misuse their own discretion and to suppose that things are lawful because they are pleasant. "All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient." [1 Cor. 6:12] No frizzled steward nor shapely foster brother nor fair and ruddy footman must dangle at your heels. Sometimes the tone of the mistress is inferred from the dress of the maid. Seek the society of holy virgins and widows; and, if need arises for holding converse with men, do not shun having witnesses, and let your conversation be marked with such confidence that the entry of a third person shall neither startle you nor make you blush. The face is the mirror of the mind and a woman's eyes without a word betray the secrets of her heart. I have lately seen a most miserable scandal traverse the entire East. The lady's age and style, her dress and mien, the indiscriminate company she kept, her dainty table and her regal appointments bespoke her the bride of a Nero or of a Sardanapallus. The scars of others should teach us caution. 'When he that causeth trouble is scourged the fool will be wiser.' [Prov. 19:25, Vulg] A holy love knows no impatience. A false rumor is quickly crushed and the after life passes judgment on that which has gone before. It is not indeed possible that any one should come to the end of life's race without suffering from calumny; the wicked find it a consolation to carp at the good, supposing the guilt of sin to be less, in proportion as the number of those who commit it is greater. Still a fire of straw quickly dies out and a spreading flame soon expires if fuel to it be wanting. Whether the report which prevailed a year ago was true or false, when once the sin ceases, the scandal also will cease. I do not say this because I fear anything wrong in your case but because, owing to my deep affection for you, there is no safety that I do not fear. [Cf. Virg. A. 4:298] Oh! that you could see your sister¹³ and that it might be yours to hear the eloquence of her holy lips and to behold the mighty spirit which animates her diminutive frame. You might hear the whole contents of the old and new testaments come bubbling up out of her heart. Fasting is her sport, and prayer she makes her pastime. Like Miriam after the drowning Pharaoh she takes up her timbrel and sings to the virgin choir, "Let us sing to the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." [Ex. 15:21] She teaches her companions to be music girls but music girls for Christ, to be luteplayers but luteplayers for the Saviour. In this occupation she passes both day and night and with oil ready to put in the lamps she waits the coming of the Bridegroom. [Matt. 25:4] Do you therefore imitate your kinswoman. Let Rome have in you what a grander city than Rome, I mean Bethlehem, has in her.

14. You have wealth and can easily therefore supply food to those who want it. Let virtue consume what was provided for self-indulgence; one who means to despise matrimony need fear no degree of want. Have about you troops of virgins whom you may lead into the king's chamber. Support widows that you may mingle them as a kind of violets with the virgins' lilies and the martyrs' roses. Such are the garlands you must weave for Christ in place of that crown of thorns [Matt. 27:29] in which he bore the sins of the world. Let your most noble father thus find in you his joy and support, let him learn from his daughter the lessons he used to learn from his wife. His hair is already gray, his knees tremble, his teeth fall out, his brow is furrowed through years, death is nigh even at the doors, the pyre is all but laid out hard by. Whether we like it or not, we grow old. Let him provide for himself the provision which is needful for his long journey. Let him take with him what otherwise he must unwillingly leave behind, nay let him send before him to heaven what if he declines it, will be appropriated by earth.

15. Young widows, of whom some "are already turned aside after Satan, when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ " [1 Tim. 5:15, 1 Tim. 5:11] and wish to marry, generally make such excuses as these. "My little patrimony is daily decreasing, the property which I have inherited is being squandered, a servant has spoken insultingly to me, a maid has neglected my orders. Who will appear for me before the authorities? Who will be responsible for the rents of my estates? Who will see to the education of my children, and to the bringing up of my slaves?" Thus, shameful to say, they put that forward as a reason for marrying again, which alone should deter them from doing so. For by marrying again a mother places over her sons not a guardian but a foe, not a father but a tyrant. Inflamed by her passions she forgets the fruit of her womb, and among the children who know nothing of their sad fate the lately weeping widow dresses herself once more as a bride. Why these excuses about your property and the insolence of slaves? Confess the shameful truth. No woman marries to avoid cohabiting with a husband. At least, if passion is not your motive, it is mere madness to play the harlot just to increase wealth. You do but purchase a paltry and passing gain at the price of a grace which is precious and eternal! If you have children already, why do you want to marry? If you have none, why do you not fear a recurrence of your former sterility? Why do you put an uncertain gain before a certain loss of self-respect? A marriage-settlement is made in your favour to-day but in a short time you will be constrained to make your will. Your husband will feign sickness and will do for you what he wants you to do for him. Yet he is sure to live and you are sure to die. Or if it happens that you have sons by the second husband, domestic strife is certain to result and intestine disputes. You will not be allowed to love your first children, nor to look kindly on those to whom you have yourself given birth. You will have to give them their food secretly; yet even so your present husband will bear a grudge against your previous one and, unless you hate your sons, he will think that you still love their father. But your husband have may issue by a former wife. If so when he takes you to his home, though you should be the kindest person in the world, all the commonplaces of rhetoricians and declamations of comic poets and writers of mimes will be hurled at you as a cruel stepmother. If your stepson fall sick or have a headache you will be calumniated as a poisoner. If you refuse him food, you will be cruel, while if you give it, you will be held to have bewitched him. I ask you what benefit has a second marriage to confer great enough to compensate for these evils?

16. Do we wish to know what widows ought to be? Let us read the gospel according to Luke. "There was one Anna," he says, "a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Aser."

[Luke 2:36] The meaning of the name Anna is grace. Phanuel is in our tongue the face of God. Aser may be translated either as blessedness or as wealth. From her youth up to the age of fourscore and four years she had borne the burden of widowhood, not departing from the temple and giving herself to fastings and prayers night and day; therefore she earned spiritual grace, received the title 'daughter of the face of God,'¹⁵ and obtained a share in the 'blessedness and wealth'¹⁶ which belonged to her ancestry. Let us recall to mind the widow of Zarephath [1 K. 17] who thought more of satisfying Elijah's hunger than of preserving her own life and that of her son. Though she believed that she and he must die that very night unless they had food, she determined that her guest should survive. She preferred to sacrifice her life rather than to neglect the duty of almsgiving. In her handful of meal she found the seed from which she was to reap a harvest sent her by the Lord. She sows her meal and lo! a cruse of oil comes from it. In the land of Judah grain was scarce for the corn of wheat had died there; [John. 12:24] but in the house of a heathen widow oil flowed in streams. In the book of Judith-if any one is of opinion that it should be received as canonical-we read of a widow wasted with fasting and wearing the sombre garb of a mourner, whose outward squalor indicated not so much the regret which she felt for her dead husband as the temper¹⁷ in which she looked forward to the coming of the Bridegroom. I see her hand armed with the sword and stained with blood. I recognize the head of Holofernes which she has carried away from the camp of the enemy. Here a woman vanquishes men, and chastity beheads lust. Quickly changing her garb, she puts on once more in the hour of victory her own mean dress finer than all the splendours of the world. [Judith 13]

17. Some from a misapprehension number Deborah among the widows, and suppose that Barak the leader of the army is her son, though the scripture tells a different story. I will mention her here because she was a prophetess and is reckoned among the judges, and again because she might have said with the psalmist:-"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea sweeter than honey to my mouth." [Ps. 119:103] Well was she called the bee¹⁸ for she fed on the flowers of scripture, was enveloped with the fragrance of the Holy Spirit, and gathered into one with prophetic lips the sweet juices of the nectar. Then there is Naomi, in Greek "παράκλημα■νη"¹⁹ or she who is consoled, who, when her husband and her children died abroad, carried her chastity back home and, being supported on the road by its aid, kept with her her Moabitish daughter-in-law, that in her the prophecy of Isaiah²⁰ might find a fulfilment. "Send out the lamb, O Lord, to rule over the land from the rock of the desert to the mount of the daughter of Zion."²¹ I pass on to the widow in the gospel who, though she was but a poor widow was yet richer than all the people of Israel. [Mark 12:43] She had but a grain of mustard seed, but she put her leaven in three measures of flour; and, combining her confession of the Father and of the Son with the grace of the Holy Spirit, she cast her two mites into the treasury. All the substance that she had, her entire possessions, she offered in the two testaments of her faith. These are the two seraphim which glorify the Trinity with threefold song²² and are stored among the treasures of the church. They also form the legs of the tongs by which the live coal is caught up to purge the sinner's lips. [Isa. 6:6]

18. But why should I recall instances from history and bring from books types of saintly women, when in your own city you have many before your eyes whose example you may well imitate? I shall not recount their merits here lest I should seem to flatter them. It will suffice to mention the saintly Marcella²³ who, while she is true to the claims of her birth and station, has set before us a life which is worthy of the gospel. Anna "lived with an husband seven years from her virginity";

[Luke 2:36] Marcella lived with one for seven months. Anna looked for the coming of Christ; Marcella holds fast the Lord whom Anna received in her arms. Anna sang His praise when He was still a wailing infant; Marcella proclaims His glory now that He has won His triumph. Anna spoke of Him to all those who waited for the redemption of Israel; Marcella cries out with the nations of the redeemed: "A brother redeemeth not, yet a man shall redeem," [Ps. 49:7. Vulg] and from another psalm: "A man was born in her, and the Highest Himself hath established her." [Ps. 87:5]

About two years ago, as I well remember, I published a book against Jovinian in which by the authority of scripture I crushed the objections raised on the other side on account of the apostle's concession of second marriages. It is unnecessary that I should repeat my arguments afresh here, as you can find them all in this treatise. That I may not exceed the limits of a letter, I will only give you this one last piece of advice. Think every day that you must die, and you will then never think of marrying again.

1: i.e. a celibate 2: Lucius Furius Camillus, the hero who conquered Veii and freed Rome from the Gauls 3: Horace, A. P. 94: the allusion is to a scene in the *Heauton Timorumenus* of Terence 4: *Hac ambitione ditata* 5: Furia's sister-in-law Blaesilla was through her mother Paula descended from the Gracchi. See Letter CVIII 6: See Letter 38 7: *Propositum*. The word was passing from the meaning of a purpose into that of a formal vow

8: Titiana 9: The island of Lemnos in the Aegean Sea 10: The hundred-eyed son of Inachus appointed by Hera to be the guardian of Io

11: i.e. Ahab and Zedekiah whose fate is recorded Jer. 29:20-23. According to Jerome tradition identified them with the elders who tempted Susannah. although these latter are said to have been stoned and not burned 12: Afterwards Bishop of Tolosa (Toulouse). He is mentioned again in Letters CXXIII. and CXXV 13: Her cousin Eustochium seems to be meant 14: *Agrorum tributa* 15: Penuel (AV. Phanuel) means 'face of God' cf. Gen. 32:30 16: Asher = 'blessedness or wealth.' 17: i.e., that of penitence 18: The meaning of Deborah 19: Jerome appears to have read ymt 20: Made long afterwards 21: Isa. 16:1 Vulg. 'the rock of the desert' is a poetical name for Moab 22: Isa. 6:2, Isa. 6:3. See Letter, 18 ante 23: See Letters 23, 77, etc

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Letter 55. To Amandus. A very interesting letter. Amandus a presbyter of Burdigala (Bordeaux) had written to Jerome for an explanation of three passages of scripture, viz. Matt. vi. 34, 1 Cor. vi. 18, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, and had in the same letter on behalf of a 'sister' (supposed by Thierry to have been Fabiola) put the following question: 'Can a woman who has divorced her first husband on account of his vices and who has during his lifetime under compulsion married again, communicate with the Church without first doing penance? Jerome in his reply gives the explanations asked for but answers the farther question, that concerning the 'sister,' with an emphatic negative. Written about the year 394 a.d.

1. A short letter does not admit of long explanations; compressing much matter into a small space it can only give a few words to topics which suggest many thoughts. You ask me what is the meaning of the passage in the gospel according to Matthew, "take no thought for the morrow. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." [Matt. 6:34] In the holy scriptures "the morrow" signifies the time to come. Thus in Genesis Jacob says: "So shall my righteousness answer for me to-morrow." [Gen. 30:33, AV. marg] Again when the two tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had built an altar and when all Israel had sent to them an embassy, they made answer to Phinehas the high priest that they had built the altar lest "to-morrow" it might be said to their children, "ye have no part in the Lord."¹ You may find many similar passages in the old instrument.² While then Christ forbids us to take thought for things future, He has allowed us to do so for things present, knowing as He does the frailty of our mortal condition. His remaining words "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" are to be understood as meaning that it is sufficient for us to think of the present troubles of this life. Why need we extend our thoughts to contingencies, to objects which we either cannot obtain or else having obtained must soon relinquish? The Greek word "κακία" rendered in the Latin version "wickedness" has two distinct meanings, wickedness and tribulation, which latter the Greek call "κακωσις" and in this passage "tribulation" would be a better rendering than "wickedness." But if any one demurs to this and insists that the word "κακία" must mean "wickedness" and not "tribulation" or "trouble," the meaning must be the same as in the words "the whole world lieth in wickedness"³ and as in the Lord's prayer in the clause, "deliver us from evil:" [Matt. 6:13. *apo tou ponhrou*] the purport of the passage will then be that our present conflict with the wickedness of this world should be enough for us.

2. Secondly, you ask me concerning the passage in the first epistle of the blessed apostle Paul to the Corinthians where he says: 'every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.' [1 Cor. 6:18] Let us go back a little farther and read on until we come to these words, for we must not seek to learn the whole meaning of the section, from the concluding parts of it, or, if I may so say, from the tail of the chapter.⁴ "The body is not for fornication but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord and will also raise up us [with Him] by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What! Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two,

saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body," [1 Cor. 6:13-18] and so on. The holy apostle has been arguing against excess and has just before said "meats for the belly and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them." [1 Cor. 6:13] Now he comes to treat of fornication. For excess in eating is the mother of lust; a belly that is distended with food and saturated with draughts of wine is sure to lead to sensual passion. As has been elsewhere said "the arrangement of man's organs suggests the course of his vices."⁵ Accordingly all such sins as theft, manslaughter, pillage, perjury, and the like can be repented of after they have been committed; and, however much interest may tempt him, conscience always smites the offender. It is only lust and sensual pleasure that in the very hour of penitence undergo once more the temptations of the past, the itch of the flesh, and the allurements of sin; so that the very thought which we bestow on the correction of such transgressions becomes in itself a new source of sin. Or to put the matter in a different light: other sins are outside of us; and whatever we do we do against others. But fornication defiles the fornicator both in conscience and body; and in accordance with the words of the Lord, "for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh," [Matt. 19:5; 1 Cor. 6:16] he too becomes one body with a harlot and sins against his own body by making what is the temple of Christ the body of a harlot. Not to pass over any suggestion of the Greek commentators, I shall give you one more explanation. It is one thing, they say, to sin with the body, and another to sin in the body. Theft, manslaughter, and all other sins except fornication we commit with our hands outside ourselves. Fornication alone we commit inside ourselves in our bodies and not with our bodies upon others. The preposition 'with' denotes the instrument used in sinning, while the preposition 'in' signifies the sphere of the passion is ourselves. Some again give this explanation that according to the scripture a man's body is his wife and that when a man commits fornication he is said to sin against his own body that is against his wife inasmuch as he defiles her by his own fornication and causes her though herself free from sin to become a sinner through her intercourse with him.

3. I find joined to your letter of inquiries a short paper containing the following words: "ask him,(that is me,) whether a woman who has left her husband on the ground that he is an adulterer and sodomite and has found herself compelled to take another may in the lifetime of him whom she first left be in communion with the church without doing penance for her fault." As I read the case put I recall the verse "they make excuses for their sins." [Ps. 161:4 Vulg] We are all the and a indulgent to our own faults; and what our own will leads us to do we attribute to a necessity of nature. It is as though a young man were to say, "I am over-borne by my body, the glow of nature kindles my passions, the structure of my frame and its reproductive organs call for sexual intercourse." Or again a murderer might say, "I was in want, I stood in need of food, I had nothing to cover me. If i shed the blood of another, it was to save myself from dying of cold and hunger." Tell the sister, therefore, who thus enquires of me concerning her condition, not my sentence but that of the apostle. "Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress." [Rom. 7:1-3] And in another place: "the wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will;

only in the Lord." [1 Cor. 7:39] The apostle has thus cut away every plea and has clearly declared that, if a woman marries again while her husband is living, she is an adulteress. You must not speak to me of the violence of a ravisher, a mother's pleading, a father's bidding, the influence of relatives, the insolence and the intrigues of servants, household losses. A husband may be an adulterer or a sodomite, he may be stained with every crime and may have been left by his wife because of his sins; yet he is still her husband and, so long as he lives, she may not marry another. The apostle does not promulgate this decree on his own authority but on that of Christ who speaks in him. For he has followed the words of Christ in the gospel: "whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery." [Matt. 5:32] Mark what he says: "whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Whether she has put away her husband or her husband her, the man who marries her is still an adulterer. Wherefore the apostles seeing how heavy the yoke of marriage was thus made said to Him: "if the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry," and the Lord replied, "he that is able to receive it, let him receive it." And immediately by the instance of the three eunuchs he shows the blessedness of virginity which is bound by no carnal tie. [Matt. 19:10-12]

4. I have not been able quite to determine what it is that she means by the words "has found herself compelled" to marry again. What is this compulsion of which she speaks? Was she overborne by a crowd and ravished against her will? If so, why has she not, thus victimized, subsequently put away her ravisher? Let her read the books of Moses and she will find that if violence is offered to a betrothed virgin in a city and she does not cry out, she is punished as an adulteress: but if she is forced in the field, she is innocent of sin and her ravisher alone is amenable to the laws. [Deut. 22:23-27] Therefore if your sister, who, as she says, has been forced into a second union, wishes to receive the body of Christ and not to be accounted an adulteress, let her do penance; so far at least as from the time she begins to repent to have no farther intercourse with that second husband who ought to be called not a husband but an adulterer. If this seems hard to her and if she cannot leave one whom she has once loved and will not prefer the Lord to sensual pleasure, let her hear the declaration of the apostle: "ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils," [1 Cor. 10:21] and in another place: "what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?" [2 Cor. 6:14, 2 Cor. 6:15] What I am about to say may sound novel but after all it is not new but old for it is supported by the witness of the old testament. If she leaves her second husband and desires to be reconciled with her first, she cannot be so now; for it is written in Deuteronomy: "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die which took her to be his wife; her former husband, which sent her away may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the Lord: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance." [Deut. 24:1-4] Wherefore, I beseech you, do your best to comfort her and to urge her to seek salvation. Diseased flesh calls for the knife and the searing-iron. The wound is to blame and not the healing art, if with a cruelty that is really kindness a physician to spare does not spare,

and to be merciful is cruel.⁶

5. Your third and last question relates to the passage in the same epistle where the apostle in discussing the resurrection, comes to the words: "for he must reign, till he hath put all things under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him that God may be all in all." [1 Cor. 15:25-28] I am surprised that you have resolved to question me about this passage when that reverend man, Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, has occupied the eleventh book of his treatise against the Arians with a full examination and explanation of it. Yet I may at least say a few words. The chief stumbling-block in the passage is that the Son is said to be subject to the Father. Now which is the more shameful and humiliating, to be subject to the Father (often a mark of loving devotion as in the psalm "truly my soul is subject unto God" [Ps. 62:1, Vulg]) or to be crucified and made the curse of the cross? For "cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." [Gal. 3:13] If Christ then for our sakes was made a curse that He might deliver us from the curse of the law, are you surprised that He is also for our sakes subject to the Father to make us too subject to Him as He says in the gospel: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," [John. 14:6] and "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." [John. 12:32] Christ then is subject to the Father in the faithful; for all believers, nay the whole human race, are accounted members of His body. But in unbelievers, that is in Jews, heathens, and heretics, He is said to be not subject; for these members of His body are not subject to the faith. But in the end of the world when all His members shall see Christ, that is their own body, reigning, they also shall be made subject to Christ, that is to their own body, that the whole of Christ's body may be subject unto God and the Father, and that God may be all in all. He does not say "that the Father may be all in all" but that "God" may be, a title which properly belongs to the Trinity and may be referred not only to the Father but also to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. His meaning therefore is "that humanity may be subject to the Godhead." By humanity we here intend not that gentleness and kindness which the Greeks call philanthropy but the whole human race. Moreover when he says "that God may be all in all," it is to be taken in this sense. At present our Lord and Saviour is not all in all, but only a part in each of us. For instance He is wisdom in Solomon, generosity in David, patience in Job, knowledge of things to come in Daniel faith in Peter, zeal in Phinehas and Paul, virginity in John, and other virtues in others. But when the end of all things shall come, then shall He be all in all, for then the saints shall severally possess all the virtues and all will possess Christ in His entirety.

1:

Josh. 22:27, AV. and RV. have "in time to come.

2: Instrumentum-a legal term introduced by Tertullian. He uses it both of the Christian dispensation and of its written record 3: 1 John. 5:19. Where, however, the word is entwined

4: Capitulum, "Passage." The present division of the Bible into chapters did not exist in Jerome's time. It is ascribed by some to Abp. Stephen Langton and by others to Card. Hugh de St. Cher 5: Tertullian, on Fasting, I 6: Cf. Letter XL

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Letter 56. From Augustine

Augustine's first letter to Jerome: through a series of accidents it was not delivered until nine years after it had been written. In it Augustine comments on Jerome's new Latin version of the O. T. and advises him in his future labours to adhere more closely to the text of the LXX. He also discusses Jerome's account (in his commentary on the epistle to the Galatians) of the quarrel between Paul and Peter at Antioch. This according to Jerome was not a real misunderstanding but only one artificially 'got up' to put clearly before the Church the mischief of Christians conforming to the now obsolete Mosaic Law. Augustine strongly controverts this view and maintains that it is fatal to the veracity and authority claimed for scripture. Written from Hippo about the year 394 a.d. In collections labeled Augustine's Letter 28, or Jerome's Letter 56. To Jerome, His Most Beloved Lord, and Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Worthy of Being Honoured and Embraced with the Sincerest Affectionate Devotion, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Never was the face of any one more familiar to another, than the peaceful, happy, and truly noble diligence of your studies in the Lord has become to me. For although I long greatly to be acquainted with you, I feel that already my knowledge of you is deficient in respect of nothing but a very small part of you, -namely, your personal appearance; and even as to this, I cannot deny that since my most blessed brother Alypius (now invested with the office of bishop, of which he was then truly worthy) has seen you, and has on his return been seen by me, it has been almost completely imprinted on my mind by his report of you; nay, I may say that before his return, when he saw you there, I was seeing you myself with his eyes. For any one who knows us may say of him and me, that in body only, and not in mind, we are two, so great is the union of heart, so firm the intimate friendship subsisting between us; though in merit we are not alike, for his is far above mine. Seeing, therefore, that you love me, both of old through the communion of spirit by which we are knit to each other, and more recently through what you know of me from the mouth of my friend, I feel that it is not presumptuous in me (as it would be in one wholly unknown to you) to recommend to your brotherly esteem the brother Profuturus, in whom we trust that the happy omen of his name (Good-speed) may be fulfilled through our efforts furthered after this by your aid; although, perhaps, it may be presumptuous on this ground, that he is so great a man, that it would be much more fitting that I should be commended to you by him, than he by me. I ought perhaps to write no more, if I were willing to content myself with the style of a formal letter of introduction; but my mind overflows into conference with you, concerning the studies with which we are occupied in Christ Jesus our Lord, who is pleased to furnish us largely through your love with many benefits, and some helps by the way, in the path which He has pointed out to His followers.

2. We therefore, and with us all that are devoted to study in the African churches, beseech you not to refuse to devote care and labour to the translation of the books of those who have written in the Greek language most able commentaries on our Scriptures. You may thus put us also in possession of these men, and especially of that one whose name you seem to have singular

pleasure in sounding forth in your writings [Origen]. But I beseech you not to devote your labour to the work of translating into Latin the sacred canonical books, unless you follow the method in which you have translated Job, viz. with the addition of notes, to let it be seen plainly what differences there are between this version of yours and that of the LXX., whose authority is worthy of highest esteem. For my own part, I cannot sufficiently express my wonder that anything should at this date be found in the Hebrew Mss. which escaped so many translators perfectly acquainted with the language. I say nothing of the LXX., regarding whose harmony in mind and spirit, surpassing that which is found in even one man, I dare not in any way pronounce a decided opinion, except that in my judgment, beyond question, very high authority must in this work of translation be conceded to them. I am more perplexed by those translators who, though enjoying the advantage of labouring after the LXX. had completed their work, and although well acquainted, as it is reported, with the force of Hebrew words and phrases, and with Hebrew syntax, have not only failed to agree among themselves, but have left many things which, even after so long a time, still remain to be discovered and brought to light. Now these things were either obscure or plain: if they were obscure, it is believed that you are as likely to have been mistaken as the others; if they were plain, it is not believed that they [the LXX.] could possibly have been mistaken. Having stated the grounds of my perplexity, I appeal to your kindness to give me an answer regarding this matter.

3. I have been reading also some writings, ascribed to you, on the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. In reading your exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians, that passage came to my hand in which the Apostle Peter is called back from a course of dangerous dissimulation. To find there the defence of falsehood undertaken, whether by you, a man of such weight, or by any author (if it is the writing of another), causes me, I must confess, great sorrow, until at least those things which decide my opinion in the matter are refuted, if indeed they admit of refutation. For it seems to me that most disastrous consequences must follow upon our believing that anything false is found in the sacred books: that is to say, that the men by whom the Scripture has been given to us, and committed to writing, did put down in these books anything false. It is one question whether it may be at any time the duty of a good man to deceive; but it is another question whether it can have been the duty of a writer of Holy Scripture to deceive: nay, it is not another question-it is no question at all. For if you once admit into such a high sanctuary of authority one false statement as made in the way of duty,¹ there will not be left a single sentence of those books which, if appearing to any one difficult in practice or hard to believe, may not by the same fatal rule be explained away, as a statement in which, intentionally, and under a sense of duty, the author declared what was not true.

4. For if the Apostle Paul did not speak the truth when, finding fault with the Apostle Peter, he said: "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"-if, indeed, Peter seemed to him to be doing what was right, and if, notwithstanding, he, in order to soothe troublesome opponents, both said and wrote that Peter did what was wrong; [Gal. 2:11-14] -if we say thus, what then shall be our answer when perverse men such as he himself prophetically described arise, forbidding marriage, [1 Tim. 4:3] if they defend themselves by saying that, in all which the same apostle wrote in confirmation of the lawfulness of marriage, [Cor. 7:10-16] he was, on account of men who, through love for their wives, might become troublesome opponents, declaring what was false,-saying these things,

forsooth, not because he believed them, but because their opposition might thus be averted? It is unnecessary to quote many parallel examples. For even things which pertain to the praises of God might be represented as piously intended falsehoods, written in order that love for Him might be enkindled in men who were slow of heart; and thus nowhere in the sacred books shall the authority of pure truth stand sure. Do we not observe the great care with which the same apostle commends the truth to us, when he says: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our: preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: yea, I and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." [1 Cor. 15:14-15] If any one said to him, "Why are you so shocked by this falsehood, when the thing which you have said, even if it were false, tends very greatly to the glory of God?" would he not, abhorring the madness of such a man, with every word and sign which could express his feelings, open clearly the secret depths of his own heart, protesting that to speak well of a falsehood uttered on behalf of God, was a crime not less, perhaps even greater, than to speak ill of the truth concerning Him? We must therefore be careful to secure, in order to our knowledge of the divine Scriptures, the guidance only of such a man as is imbued with a high reverence for the sacred books, and a profound persuasion of their truth, preventing him from flattering himself in any part of them with the hypothesis of a statement being made not because it was true, but because it was expedient, and making him rather pass by what he does not understand, than set up his own feelings above that truth. For, truly, when he pronounces anything to be untrue, he demands that he be believed in preference, and endeavours to shake our confidence in the authority of the divine Scriptures.

5. For my part, I would devote all the strength which the Lord grants me, to show that every one of those texts which are wont to be quoted in defence of the expediency of falsehood ought to be otherwise understood, in order that everywhere the sure truth of these passages themselves may be consistently maintained. For as statements adduced in evidence must not be false, neither ought they to favour falsehood. This, however, I leave to your own judgment. For if you apply more thorough attention to the passage, perhaps you will see it much more readily than I have done. To this more careful study that piety will move you, by which you discern that the authority of the divine Scriptures becomes unsettled (so that every one may believe what he wishes, and reject what he does not wish) if this be once admitted, that the men by whom these things have been delivered unto us, could in their writings state some things which were not true, from considerations of duty;² unless, perchance, you propose to furnish us with certain rules by which we may know when a falsehood might or might not become a duty. If this can be done, I beg you to set forth these rules with reasonings which may be neither equivocal nor precarious; and I beseech you by our Lord, in whom Truth was incarnate, not to consider me burdensome or presumptuous in making this request. For a mistake of mine which is in the interest of truth cannot deserve great blame, if indeed it deserves blame at all, when it is possible for you to use truth in the interest of falsehood without doing wrong.

6. Of many other things I would wish to discourse with your most ingenuous heart, and to take counsel with you concerning Christian studies; but this desire could not be satisfied within the limits of any letter. I may do this more fully by means of the brother bearing this letter, whom I rejoice in sending to share and profit by your sweet and useful conversation. Nevertheless, although I do not reckon myself superior in any respect to him, even he may take less from you than I would desire; and he will excuse my saying so, for I confess myself to have, more room for

receiving from you than he has. I see his mind to be already more fully stored, in which unquestionably he excels me. Therefore, when he returns, as I trust he may happily do by God's blessing, and when I become a sharer in all with which his heart has been richly furnished by you, there will still be a consciousness of void unsatisfied in me, and a longing for personal fellowship with you. Hence of the two I shall be the poorer, and he the richer, then as now. This brother carries with him some of my writings, which if you condescend to read, I implore you to review them with candid and brotherly strictness. For the words of Scripture, "The righteous shall correct me in compassion, and reprove me; but the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head," [Ps. 141:5, Septuagint] I understand to mean that he is the truer friend who by his censure heals me, than the one who by flattery anoints my head. I find the greatest difficulty in exercising a right judgment when I read over what I have written, being either too cautious or too rash. For I sometimes see my own faults, but I prefer to hear them reproved by those who are better able to judge than I am; lest after I have, perhaps justly, charged myself with error, I begin again to flatter myself, and think that my censure has arisen from an undue mistrust of my own judgment.

1:

Officiiosum mendacium.

2:

Aliquaa officiose mentiri.

Letters - letter_057

Letter 57. To Pammachius on the Best Method of Translating.

Written to Pammachius (for whom see Letter 66.) in a.d. 395. In the previous year Jerome had rendered into Latin Letter 51. (from Epiphanius to John of Jerusalem) under circumstances which he here describes (§2). His version soon became public and incurred severe criticism from Some person not named by Jerome but supposed by him to have been instigated by Rufinus (§12). Charged with having falsified his original he now repudiates the charge and defends his method of translation ("to give sense for sense and not word for word" §5) by an appeal to the practice of classical (§5), ecclesiastical (§6), and N. T. (§§7-10) writers. When at a subsequent period Rufinus gave to the world what was in Jerome's opinion a misleading version of Origen's First Principles, he appealed to this letter as giving him ample warranty for what he had done. See Letters LXXX, and LXXXI, and Rufinus' Preface to the peei !Aecwn in Vol. iii. of this series.

1. The apostle Paul when he appeared before King Agrippa to answer the charges, which were brought against him, wishing to use language intelligible to his hearers and confident of the success of his cause, began by congratulating himself in these words: "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused by the Jews: especially because thou art expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews." [Acts 26:2, Acts 26:3] He had read the saying of Jesus:1 "Well is him that speaketh in the ears of them that will hear;" [Ecclus. 25:9] and he knew that a pleader only succeeds in proportion as he impresses his judge. On this occasion I too think myself happy that learned ears will hear my defence. For a rash tongue charges me with ignorance or falsehood; it alleges that in translating another man's letter I have made mistakes through incapacity or carelessness; it convicts me of either an involuntary error or a deliberate offence. And test it should happen that my accuser-encouraged by a volubility which stops at nothing and by an impunity which arrogates to itself an unlimited license-should accuse me as he has already done our father (Pope) Epiphanius; I send this letter to inform you-and through yon others who think me worthy of their regard-of the true order of the facts.

2. About two years ago the aforesaid Pope Epiphanius sent a letter² to Bishop John, first finding fault with him as regarded some of his opinions and then mildly calling him to penitence. Such was the repute of the writer or else the elegance of the letter that all Palestine fought for copies of it. Now there was in our monastery a man of no small estimation in his country, Eusebius of Cremona, who, when he found that this letter was in everybody's mouth and that the ignorant and the educated alike admired it for its teaching and for the purity of its style, set to work to beg me to translate it for him into Latin and at the same time to simplify tile argument so that he might more readily understand it; for he was himself altogether unacquainted with the Greek language. I consented to his request and calling to my aid a secretary speedily dictated my version, briefly marking on the side of the page the contents of the several chapters. The fact is that he asked me to do this merely for himself, and I requested of him in return to keep his copy private and not too

readily to circulate it. A year and six months went by, and then the aforesaid translation found its way by a novel stratagem from his desk to Jerusalem. For a pretended monk-either bribed as there is much reason to believe or actuated by malice of his own as his tempter vainly tries to convince us-shewed himself a second Judas by robbing Eusebius of his literary property and gave to the adversary an occasion of railing³ against me. They tell the unlearned that I have falsified the original, that I have not rendered word for word, that I have put 'dear friend' in place of 'honourable sir,' and more shameful still! that I have cut down my translation by omitting the words "α■δεσιμ■τατε Π■ππα".⁴ These and similar trifles form the substance of the charges brought against me.

3. At the outset before I defend my version I wish to ask those persons who confound wisdom with cunning, some few questions. Where did you get your copy of the letter? Who gave it to you? How have you the effrontery to bring forward what you have procured by fraud? What place of safety will be left us if we cannot conceal our secrets even within our own walls and our own writing-desks? Were I to press such a charge against you before a legal tribunal, I could make you amenable to the laws which even in fiscal cases appoint penalties for meddlesome informers and condemn the traitor even while they accept his treachery. For though they welcome the profit which the information gives them, they disapprove the motive which actuates the informer. A little while ago a man of consular rank named Hesychius (against whom the patriarch Gamaliel waged an implacable war) was condemned to death by the emperor Theodosius simply because he had laid hold of imperial papers through a secretary whom he had tempted. We read also in old histories [Livy 5:27] that the schoolmaster who betrayed the children of the Faliscans was sent back to his boys and handed over to them in bonds, the Roman people refusing to accept a dishonourable victory. When Pyrrhus king of Epirus was lying in his camp ill from the effects of a wound, his physician offered to poison him, but Fabricius thinking it shame that the king should die by treachery sent the traitor back in chains to his master, refusing to sanction crime even when its victim was an enemy.⁵ A principle which the laws uphold, which is maintained by enemies, which warfare and the sword fail to violate, has hitherto been held unquestioned among the monks and priests of Christ. And can any one of them presume now, knitting his brow and snapping his fingers,⁶ to spend his breath in saving: "What if he did use bribes or other inducements! he did what suited his purpose." A strange plea truly to defend a fraud as though robbers, thieves, and pirates did not do the same. Certainly, when Annas and Caiaphas led hapless Judas astray, they only did what they believed to be expedient for themselves.

4. Suppose that I wish to write down in my note books this or that silly trifle, or to make comments upon the scriptures, to retort upon my calumniators, to digest my wrath, to practise myself in the use of commonplaces and to stow away sharp shafts for the day of battle. So long as I do not publish my thoughts, they are only unkind words not matter for a charge of libel; in fact they are not even unkind words for the public ear never hears them. You⁷ may bribe my slaves and tamper with my clients. You may, as the fable has it, penetrate by means of your gold to the chamber of Danaë;⁸ and then, dissembling what you have done, you may call me a falsifier; but, if you do so, you will have to plead guilty yourself to a worse charge than any that you can bring against me. One man inveighs against you as a heretic, another as a perverter of doctrine. You are silent yourself; you do not venture to answer; you assail the translator; you cavil about syllables and you fancy your defence complete if your calumnies provoke no reply. Suppose that I have made a

mistake or an omission in my rendering. Your whole case turns upon this; this is the defence which you offer to your accusers. Are you no heretic because I am a bad translator? Mind, I do not say that I know you to be a heretic; I leave such knowledge to your accuser, to him who wrote the letter:⁹ what I do say is that it is the height of folly for you when you are accused by one man to attack another, and when you are covered with wounds yourself to seek comfort by wounding one who is still quiescent and unaggressive.

5. In the above remarks I have assumed that I have made alterations in the letter and that a simple translation may contain errors though not wilful ones. As, however the letter itself shews that no changes have been made in the sense, that nothing has been added, and that no doctrine has been foisted into it, "obviously their object is understanding to understand nothing;"¹⁰ and while they desire to arraign another's want of skill, they betray their own. For I myself not only admit but freely proclaim that in translating from the Greek (except in the case of the holy scriptures where even the order of the words is a mystery) I render sense for sense and not word for word. For this course I have the authority of Tully who has so translated the Protagoras of Plato, the Oeconomicus of Xenophon, and the two beautiful orations¹¹ which Aeschines and Demosthenes delivered one against the other. What omissions, additions, and alterations he has made substituting the idioms of his own for those of another tongue, this is not the time to say. I am satisfied to quote the authority of the translator who has spoken as follows in a prologue¹² prefixed to the orations. "I have thought it right to embrace a labour which though not necessary for myself will prove useful to those who study. I have translated the noblest speeches of the two most eloquent of the Attic orators, the speeches which Aeschines and Demosthenes delivered one against the other; but I have rendered them not as a translator but as an orator, keeping the sense but altering the form by adapting both the metaphors and the words to suit our own idiom. I have not deemed it necessary to render word for word but I have reproduced the general style and emphasis. I have not supposed myself bound to pay the words out one by one to the reader but only to give him an equivalent in value." Again at the close of his task he says, "I shall be well satisfied if my rendering is found, as I trust it will be, true to this standard. In making it I have utilized all the excellences of the originals, I mean the sentiments, the forms of expression and the arrangement of the topics, while I have followed the actual wording only so far as I could do so without offending our notions of taste. If all that I have written is not to be found in the Greek, I have at any rate striven to make it correspond with it." Horace too, an acute and learned writer, in his Art of Poetry gives the same advice to the skilled translator:- "And care not thou with over anxious thought To render word for word."¹³

Terence has translated Menander; Plautus and Caecilius the old comic poets.¹⁴ Do they ever stick at words? Do they not rather in their versions think first of preserving the beauty and charm of their originals? What men like you call fidelity in transcription, the learned term pestilent minuteness.¹⁵ Such were my teachers about twenty years ago; and even then¹⁶ I was the victim of a similar error to that which is now imputed to me, though indeed I never imagined that you would charge me with it. In translating the Chronicle of Eusebius of Caesarea into Latin, I made among others the following prefatory observations: "It is difficult in following lines laid down by others not sometimes to diverge from them, and it is hard to preserve in a translation the charm of expressions which in another language are most felicitous Each particular word conveys a meaning of its own, and possibly I have no equivalent by which to render it, and I make a circuit to

reach my goal, I have to go many miles to cover a short distance.¹⁷ To these difficulties must be added the windings of hyperbata, differences in the use of cases, divergencies of metaphor; and last of all the peculiar and if I may so call it, inbred character of the language. If I render word for word, the result will sound uncouth, and if compelled by necessity I alter anything in the order or wording, I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator."¹⁸ And after a long discussion which it would be tedious to follow out here, I added what follows: "If any one imagines that translation does not impair the charm of style, let him render Homer word for word into Latin, nay I will go farther still and say, let him render it into Latin prose, and the result will be that the order of the words will seem ridiculous and the most eloquent of poets scarcely articulate."¹⁹

6. In quoting my own writings my only object has been to prove that from my youth up I at least have always aimed at rendering sense not words, but if such authority as they supply is deemed insufficient, read and consider the short preface dealing with this matter which occurs in a book narrating the life of the blessed Antony.²⁰ "A literal translation from one language into another obscures the sense; the exuberance of the growth lessens the yield. For while one's diction is enslaved to cases and metaphors, it has to explain by tedious circumlocutions what a few words would otherwise have sufficed to make plain. I have tried to avoid this error in the translation which at your request I have made of the story of the blessed Antony. My version always preserves the sense although it does not invariably keep the words of the original. Leave others to catch at syllables and letters, do you for your part look for the meaning." Time would fail me were I to unfold the testimonies of all who have translated only according to the sense. It is sufficient for the present to name Hilary the confessor²¹ who has turned some homilies on Job and several treatises on the Psalms from Greek into Latin; yet has not bound himself to the drowsiness of the letter or fettered himself by the stale literalism of inadequate culture. Like a conqueror he has led away captive into his own tongue the meaning of his originals.

7. That secular and church writers should have adopted this line need not surprise us when we consider that the translators of the Septuagint,²² the evangelists, and the apostles, have done the same in dealing with the sacred writings. We read in Mark [Mark 5:41] of the Lord saying Talitha cumi and it is immediately added "which is interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." The evangelist may be charged with falsehood for having added the words "I say unto thee" for the Hebrew is only "Damsel arise." To emphasize this and to give the impression of one calling and commanding he has added "I say unto thee." Again in Matthew [Matthew 27:9, Matthew 27:10] when the thirty pieces of silver are returned by the traitor Judas and the potter's field is purchased with them, it is written: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken of by Jeremy the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver the price of him that was valued which²³ they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." This passage is not found in Jeremiah at all but in Zechariah, in quite different words and an altogether different order. In fact the Vulgate renders it as follows: "And I will say unto them, If it is good in your sight, give ye me a price or refuse it: So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Put them into the melting furnace and consider if it is tried as I have been tried by them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them into the house of the Lord." [Zech. 11:12, 13, Vulg] It is evident that the rendering of the Septuagint differs widely from the quotation of the evangelist. In the Hebrew also, though the sense is the same, the words are quite different and differently arranged. It says: "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my

price; and, if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter;²⁴ a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." [Zech. 11:12, Zech. 11:13, AV] They may accuse the apostle of falsifying his version seeing that it agrees neither with the Hebrew nor with the translators of the Septuagint: and worse than this, they may say that he has mistaken the author's name putting down Jeremiah when it should be Zechariah. Far be it from us to speak thus of a follower²⁵ of Christ, who made it his care to formulate dogmas rather than to hunt for words and syllables. To take another instance from Zechariah, the evangelist John quotes from the Hebrew, "They shall look on him whom they pierced," [John. 19:37, Zech. 12:10] for which we read in the Septuagint, "And they shall look upon me because they have mocked me," and in the Latin version, "And they shall look upon me for the things which they have mocked or insulted." Here the evangelist, the Septuagint, and our own version²⁶ all differ; yet the divergence of language is atoned by oneness of spirit. In Matthew again we read of the Lord preaching flight to the apostles and confirming His counsel with a passage from Zechariah. "It is written," he says, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." [Matt. 26:31, Zech. 13:7] But in the Septuagint and in the Hebrew it reads differently, for it is not God who speaks, as the evangelist makes out, but the prophet who appeals to God the Father saying:—"Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." In this instance according to my judgment—and I have some careful critics with me—the evangelist is guilty of a fault in presuming to ascribe to God what are the words of the prophet. Again the same evangelist writes that at the warning of an angel Joseph took the young child and his mother and went into Egypt and remained there till the death of Herod; "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." [Matt. 2:13-15] The Latin manuscripts do not so give the passage, but in Hosea [Hos. 11:1] the true Hebrew text has the following:—"When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Which the Septuagint renders thus:—"When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called his sons out of Egypt." Are they²⁷ altogether to be rejected because they have given another turn to a passage which refers primarily to the mystery of Christ? Or should we not rather pardon the shortcomings of the translators on the score of their human frailty according to the saying of James, "In many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word the same is a perfect man and able also to bridle the whole body." [James 3:2] Once more it is written in the pages of the same evangelist, "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene." [Matt. 2:23] Let these word fanciers and nice critics of all composition tell us where they have read the words; and if they cannot, let me tell them that they are in Isaiah. [Isa. 11:1] For in the place where we read and translate, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots,"²⁸ in the Hebrew idiom it is written thus, "There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse and a Nazarene shall grow from his root." How can the Septuagint leave out the word 'Nazarene,' if it is unlawful to substitute one word for another? It is sacrilege either to conceal or to set at naught a mystery.

8. Let us pass on to other passages, for the brief limits of a letter do not suffer us to dwell too long on any one point. The same Matthew says:—"Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel." [Matt. 1:22, Matt. 1:23, Isa. 7:14] The rendering of the Septuagint is, "Behold a virgin shall receive seed and shall bring forth a son, and

ye shall call his name Emmanuel." If people cavil at words, obviously 'to receive seed' is not the exact equivalent of 'to be with child,' and 'ye shall call' differs from 'they shall call.' Moreover in the Hebrew we read thus, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel."²⁹ Ahaz shall not call him so for he was convicted of want of faith, nor the Jews for they were destined to deny him, but she who is to conceive him, and bear him, the virgin herself. In the same evangelist we read that Herod was troubled at the coming of the Magi and that gathering together the scribes and the priests he demanded of them where Christ should be born and that they answered him, "In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet; And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a governour that shall rule my people Israel." [Matt. 2:5, Matt. 2:6] In the Vulgate³⁰ this passage appears as follows:—"And thou Bethlehem, the house of Ephratah, art small to be among the thousands of Judah, yet one shall come out of thee for me to be a prince in Israel." You will be more surprised still at the difference in words and order between Matthew and the Septuagint if you look at the Hebrew which runs thus:—"But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel." [Mic. 5:2] Consider one by one the words of the evangelist:—"And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah." For "the land of Judah" the Hebrew has "Ephratah" while the Septuagint gives "the house of Ephratah." The evangelist writes, "art not the least among the princes of Judah." In the Septuagint this is, "art small to be among the thousands of Judah," while the Hebrew gives, "though thou be little among the thousands of Judah." There is a contradiction here-and that not merely verbal-between the evangelist and the prophet; for in this place at any rate both Septuagint and Hebrew agree. The evangelist says that he is not little among the princes of Judah, while the passage from which he queries says exactly the opposite of this, "Thou art small indeed and little; but yet out of thee, small and little as thou art, there shall come forth for me a leader in Israel," a sentiment in harmony with that of the apostle, "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." [1 Cor. 1:27] Moreover the last clause "to rule" or "to feed my people Israel" clearly runs differently in the original.

9. I refer to these passages, not to convict the evangelists of falsification-a charge worthy only of impious men like Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian-but to bring home to my critics their own want of knowledge, and to gain from them such consideration that they may concede to me in the case of a simple letter what, whether they like it or not, they will have to concede to the Apostles in the Holy Scriptures. Mark, the disciple of Peter, begins his gospel thus:—"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah: Behold I send my messenger before thy face which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." [Mark 1:1-3; see RV] This quotation is made up from two prophets, Malachi that is to say and Isaiah. For the first part: "Behold I send my messenger before thy face which shall prepare thy way before thee," occurs at the close of Malachi. [Mal. 3:1] But the second part: "The voice of one crying, etc.," we read in Isaiah. [Isa. 40:3] On what grounds then has Mark in the very beginning of his book set the words: "As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, Behold I send my messenger," when, as we have said, it is not written in Isaiah at all, but in Malachi the last of the twelve prophets? Let ignorant presumption solve this nice question if it can, and I will ask pardon for being in the wrong. The same Mark brings before us the Saviour thus addressing the Pharisees: "Have ye never read what David did when he had need and was an hungred, he and they that were with him, how he went into the house of God in the days of

Abiathar the highpriest, and did eat the shew-bread which is not lawful to eat but for the priests?" [Mark 2:25, Mark 2:26] Now let us turn to the books of Samuel, or, as they are commonly called, of Kings, and we shall find there that the highpriest's name was not Abiathar but Ahimelech, [1 Sam. 21:1] the same that was afterwards put to death with the rest of the priests by Doeg at the command of Saul. [1 Sam. 22:16-18] Let us pass on now to the apostle Paul who writes thus to the Corinthians: "For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." [1 Cor. 2:8, 1 Cor. 2:9] Some writers on this passage betake themselves to the ravings of the apocryphal books and assert that the quotation comes from the Revelation of Elijah;³¹ whereas the truth is that it is found in Isaiah according to the Hebrew text: "Since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee what thou hast prepared for them that wait for thee."³² The Septuagint has rendered the words quite differently: "Since the beginning of the world we have not heard, neither have our eyes seen any God beside thee and thy true works, and thou wilt shew mercy to them that wait for thee." We see then from what place the quotation is taken and yet the apostle has not rendered his original word for word, but, using a paraphrase, he has given the sense in different terms. In his epistle to the Romans the same apostle quotes these words from Isaiah: "Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence," [Rom. 9:33] a rendering which is at variance with the Greek version³³ yet agrees with the original Hebrew. The Septuagint gives an opposite meaning, "that you fall not on a stumblingstone nor on a rock of offence." The apostle Peter agrees with Paul and the Hebrew, writing: "but to them that do not believe, a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." [1 Pet. 2:8. AV. is different] From all these passages it is clear that the apostles and evangelists in translating the old testament scriptures have sought to give the meaning rather than the words, and that they have not greatly cared to preserve forms or constructions, so long as they could make clear the subject to the understanding.

10. Luke the evangelist and companion of apostles describes Christ's first martyr Stephen as relating what follows in a Jewish assembly. "With threescore and fifteen souls Jacob went down into Egypt, and died himself, and our fathers were carried over³⁴ into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor³⁵ the father of Sychem." [Acts 7:15-16] In Genesis this passage is quite differently given, for it is Abraham that buys of Ephron the Hittite, the son of Zohar, near Hebron, for four hundred shekels³⁶ of silver, a double cave,³⁷ and the field that is about it, and that buries in it Sarah his wife. And in the same book we read that, after his return from Mesopotamia with his wives and his sons, Jacob pitched his tent before Salem, a city of Shechem which is in the land of Canaan, and that he dwelt there and "bought a parcel of a field where he had spread his tent at the band of Hamor, the father of Sychem, for an hundred lambs,"³⁸ and that "he erected there an altar and called there upon the God of Israel."³⁹ Abraham does not buy the cave from Hamor the father of Sychem, but from Ephron the son of Zohar, and he is not buried in Sychem but in Hebron which is corruptly called Arboch. Whereas the twelve patriarchs are not buried in Arboch but in Sychem, in the field purchased not by Abraham but by Jacob. I postpone the solution of this delicate problem to enable those who cavil at me to search and see that in dealing with the scriptures it is the sense we have to look to and not the words. In the Hebrew the twenty-second psalm begins with the exact words which the Lord uttered on the cross: Eli Eli lama azabthani, which means, "My God, my God, why

hast thou forsaken me?" [Ps. 22:1] Let my critics tell me why the Septuagint introduces here the words "look thou upon me." For its rendering is as follows: "My God, my God, look thou upon me, why hast thou forsaken me?" They will answer no doubt that no harm is done to the sense by the addition of a couple of words. Let them acknowledge then that, if in the haste of dictation I have omitted a few, I have not by so doing endangered the position of the churches.

11. It would be tedious now to enumerate, what great additions and omissions the Septuagint has made, and all the passages which in church-copies are marked with daggers and asterisks. The Jews generally laugh when they hear our version of this passage of Isaiah, "Blessed is he that hath seed in Zion and servants in Jerusalem." [Isa. 31:9, LXX] In Amos also⁴⁰ after a description of self-indulgence [Amos 6:4-6] there come these words: "They have thought of these things as halting and not likely to fly," a very rhetorical sentence quite worthy of Tully. But how shall we deal with the Hebrew originals in which these passages and others like them are omitted, passages so numerous that to reproduce them all would require books without number? The number of the omissions is shown alike by the asterisks mentioned above and by my own version when compared by a careful reader with the old translation.⁴¹ Yet the Septuagint has rightly kept its place in the churches, either because it is the first of all the versions in time, made before the coming of Christ, or else because it has been used by the apostles (only however in places where it does not disagree with the Hebrews⁴²). On the other hand we do right to reject Aquila, the proselyte and controversial translator, who has striven to translate not words only but their etymologies as well. Who could accept as renderings of "corn and wine and oil" [Cf. Deut. 7:13] such words as "χε■μα ■πωρισμ■ς στιλπν■της", or, as we might say, 'pouring,' and 'fruitgathering,' and 'shining'? or, because Hebrew has in addition to the article other prefixes⁴³ as well, he must with an unhappy pedantry translate syllable by syllable and letter, by letter thus: "σ■ν τ■ν ■υραν■ν κα■ σ■ν τ■ν γ■ν", a construction which neither Greek nor Latin admits of,⁴⁴ as many passages in our own writers shew. How many are the phrases charming in Greek which, if rendered word for word, do not sound well in Latin, and again how many there are that are pleasing to us in Latin, but which-assuming the order of the words not to be altered-would not please in Greek.

12. But to pass by this limitless field of discussion and to shew you, most Christian of nobles, and most noble of Christians, what is the kind of falsification which is censured in my translation, I will set before you the opening words of the letter in the Greek original and as rendered by me, that from one count in the indictment you may form an opinion of all. The letter begins "Εδει ■μ■ς, ■γαπητε, μ■ τ■ ο■·σει τ■ν κλ■ρων φ■ρεσθαι" which I remember to have rendered as follows: "Dearly beloved, we ought not to misuse our position as ministers to gratify our pride." See there, they cry, what a number of falsehoods in a single line! In the first place "■γαπητ■ς" means 'loved,' not 'dearly beloved.' Then "ο■ησις" means 'estimate,' not 'pride,' for this and not "ο■δημα" is the word used. "Οιδ■μα" signifies 'a swelling' but "ο■-σις" means 'judgment.' All the rest, say they: "not to misuse our position to gratify our pride" is your own. What is this you are saying, O pillar of learning⁴⁵ and latter day Aristarchus,⁴⁶ who are so ready to pass judgment upon all writers? It is all for nothing then that I have studied so long; that, as Juvenal says, [Juv. 1:15] "I have so often withdrawn my hand from the ferule." The moment I leave the harbour I run aground. Well, to err is human and to confess one's error wise. Do you therefore, who are so ready to criticise and to instruct me, set me right and give me a word for word rendering of the passage. You tell me I

should have said: "Beloved, we ought not to be carried away by the estimation of the clergy." Here, indeed we have eloquence worthy of Plautus, here we have Attic grace, the true style of the Muses. The common proverb is true of me: "He who trains an ox for athletics loses both oil and money."⁴⁷ Still he is not to blame who merely puts on the mask and plays the tragedy for another: his teachers⁴⁸ are the real culprits; since they for a great price have taught him-to know nothing. I do not think the worse of any Christian because he lacks skill to express himself; and I heartily wish that we could all say with Socrates "I know that I know nothing;"⁴⁹ and carry out the precept of another wise man, "Know thyself."⁵⁰ I have always held in esteem a holy simplicity but not a wordy rudeness. He who declares that he imitates the style of apostles should first imitate the virtue of their lives; the great holiness of which made up for much plainness of speech. They confuted the syllogisms of Aristotle and the perverse ingenuities of Chrysippus by raising the dead. Still it would be absurd for one of us-living as we do amid the riches of Croesus and the luxuries of Sardanapalus-to make his boast of mere ignorance. We might as well say that all robbers and criminals would be men of culture if they were to hide their blood-stained swords in books of philosophy and not ill trunks of trees.

13. I have exceeded the limits of a letter, but I have not exceeded in the expression of my chagrin. For, though I am called a falsifier, and have my reputation torn to shreds, wherever there are shuttles and looms and women to work them; I am content to repudiate the charge without retaliating in kind. I leave everything to your discretion. You can read the letter of Epiphanius both in Greek and in Latin; and, if you do so, you will see at once the value of my accusers' lamentations and insulting complaints. For the rest, I am satisfied to have instructed one of my dearest friends and am content simply to stay quiet in my cell and to wait for the day of judgment. If it may be so, and if my enemies allow it, I hope to write for you, not philippics like those of Demosthenes or Tully, but commentaries upon the scriptures.

1: i.e., the son of Sirach 2: Letter LI. to John Bp. of Jerusalem

3:

Cf. Jude 9

4: i.e., 'most reverend pope. 0' This title at first given to all bishops was in Jerome's time becoming restricted to metropolitans and patriarchs. Jerome, however, still uses it in the wider sense. The omission of the title here may well have seemed deliberate, as Jerome was known to entertain very bitter feelings towards John of Jerusalem 5: Plutarch, Life of Pyrrhus 6: Jerome constantly speaks of Rufinus in this way. See Letter CXXV. 18 and Apol. 100:Ruf. I. 13, 32 7: Rufinus is meant

8:

Danaë, the daughter of Acrisius, was confined by her father in a brazen tower to which Zeus obtained access in the shape of a shower of gold

9: Epiphanius 10: Ter. And. prol. 17 11: The two speeches on the Crown 12: Only a small part of this is extant 13: Hor. A. P. 133 14: i.e the poets of the so called New Comedy

15: kakozhlian 16: That is, five years later. Jerome translated the Chronicle of Eusebius at Constantinople in 381-2 17: Vix brevis viae spatia consummo 18: Preface, translated in this

Volume

19:

Preface §2

20: This life long supposed to have been the work of Athanasius was originally composed in Greek but had been rendered into Latin by Evagrius bishop of Antioch 21: i.e., Hilary of Poitiers 22: Lit. the seventy translators 23: Quod. AV. has `whom. 0

24:

Statuarius

25: Pedissequus 26: i.e., the Italic, for the Vulgate, which was not then published, accurately represents the Hebrew 27: i.e., the Septuagint and Vulgate versions 28: So AV. the Vulg. varies slightly

29: AV 30: i.e. the Versio Itala which was vulgata or `commonly used 0' at this time as Jerome's Version was afterwards 31: This book is no longer extant. It belonged to the same class as the Book of Enoch 32: Isa. 64:4, 70:AV. has `what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. 0 33: Lit. `with the old version. 0 34: So the Vulg.: AV. punctuates differently

35:

i.e. Hamor

36: Drachmae 37: Spelunca duplex

38: AV. marg 39: Gen. 33:18-20. AV. varies slightly 40: According to the LXX

41: Jerome's Vulgate version supplied from the Hebrew the omissions and removed the redundancies of the old Latin version. These were due to the uncertain text of the LXX., on which alone the old Latin version was founded 42: This statement is not borne out by the facts

43:

proarqra

44: Lit. `with the heaven and with the earth 0' (Gen. 1:1). In Hebrew the preposition `with 0' is identical in form with the sign of the accus. Hence Aquila's rendering 45: Jerome apostrophises his critic 46: The famous grammarian and critic of Homer 47: Oleum perdit et impensas qui bovem mittit ad ceroma

48: Rufinus and Melania, who were believed by Jerome to have instigated the theft. Their names are inserted in some copies 49: Plato, Apol. Soc. 21, 22 50: This saying is variously attributed to Chilon and others of the seven wise men of Greece

Letters - letter_058

Letter 58. To Paulinus. In this his second letter to Paulinus of Nola Jerome dissuades him from making a pilgrimage to the Holy Places, and describes Jerusalem not as it ought to be but as it is. He then gives his friend counsels for his life similar to those which he has previously addressed to Nepotian, praises Paulinus for his Panegyric (now no longer extant) on the Emperor Theodosius, compares his style with those of the great writers of the Latin Church, and concludes with a commendation of his messenger, that Vigilantius who was soon to become the object of his bitterest contempt. Written about the year 395 a.d.

I. "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things," [Matt. 12:35] and "every tree is known by his fruit." [Luke 6:44] You measure me by the scale of your own virtues and because of your own greatness magnify my littleness. You take the lowest room at the banquet that the goodman of the house may bid you to go up higher. [Luke 14:10] For what is there in me or what qualities do I possess that I should merit praise from a man of learning? that I, small and lowly as I am, should be eulogized by lips which have pleaded on behalf of our most religious sovereign? Do not, my dearest brother, estimate my worth by the number of my years. Gray hairs are not wisdom; it is wisdom which is as good as gray hairs. At least that is what Solomon says: "wisdom is the gray hair unto men." [Wisd. 4:9] Moses too in choosing the seventy elders is told to take those whom he knows to be elders indeed, and to select them not for their years but for their discretion. [Nu. 11:16] And, as a boy, Daniel judges old men and in the flower of youth condemns the incontinence of age.¹ Do not, I repeat, weigh faith by years, nor suppose me better than yourself merely because I have enlisted under Christ's banner earlier than you. The apostle Paul, that chosen vessel framed out of a persecutor, [Acts 9:15] though last in the apostolic order is first in merit. For though last he has laboured more than they all. [1 Cor. 15:10] To Judas it was once said: "thou art a man who didst take sweet food with me, my guide and mine acquaintance; we walked in the house of God with company:"² yet the Saviour accuses him of betraying his friend and master. A line of Virgil well describes his end:

"From a high beam he knots a hideous death."³ The dying robber, on the contrary, exchanges the cross for paradise and turns to martyrdom the penalty of murder. How many there are nowadays who have lived so long that they bear corpses rather than bodies and are like whited sepulchres filled with dead men's bones! [Matt. 23:27] A newly kindled heat is more effective than a long continued lukewarmness.

2. As for you, when you hear the Saviour's counsel: "if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come follow me," [Matt. 19:21] you translate his words into action; and baring yourself to follow the bare cross⁴ you mount Jacob's ladder the easier for carrying nothing. Your dress changes with the change in your convictions, and you aim at no showy shabbiness which leaves your purse as full as before. No, with pure hands and a clear conscience you make it your glory that you are poor both in spirit and in deed. There is nothing great in wearing a sad or a disfigured face, in simulating and in showing off fasts, or in wearing a cheap

cloak while you retain a large income. When Crates the Theban-a millionaire of days gone by-was on his way to Athens to study philosophy, he cast away untold gold in the belief that wealth could not be compatible with virtue. What a contrast he offers to us, the disciples of a poor Christ, who cram our pockets with gold and cling under pretext of almsgiving to our old riches. How can we faithfully distribute what belongs to another when we thus timidly keep back what is our own? [Cf. Luke 16:12] When the stomach is full, it is easy to talk of fasting. What is praiseworthy is not to have been at Jerusalem but to have lived a good life while there.⁵ The city which we are to praise and to seek is not that which has slain the prophets [Matt. 23:37] and shed the blood of Christ, but that which is made glad by the streams of the river, [Ps. 46:4] which is set upon a mountain and so cannot be hid, [Matt. 5:14] which the apostle declares to be a mother of the saints, [Gal. 4:26] and in which he rejoices to have his citizenship with the righteous. [Phil. 3:20., RV]

3. In speaking thus I am not laying myself open to a charge of inconsistency or condemning the course which I have myself taken. It is not, I believe, for nothing that I, like Abraham, have left my home and people. But I do not presume to limit God's omnipotence or to restrict to a narrow strip of earth Him whom the heaven cannot contain. Each believer is judged not by his residence in this place or in that but according to the deserts of his faith. The true worshippers worship the Father neither at Jerusalem nor on mount Gerizim; for "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." [John. 4:24] "Now the spirit bloweth where it listeth," [John. 3:8, RV. marg] and "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." [Ps. 24:1] When the fleece of Judaea was made dry although the whole world was wet with the dew of heaven, [Judg. 6:36-40] and when many came from the East and from the West [Luke 13:29] and sat in Abraham's bosom: [Luke 16:22] then God ceased to be known in Judah only and His name to be great in Israel alone; [Ps. 76:1] the sound of the apostles went out into all the earth and their words into the ends of the world. [Ps. 19:4] The Saviour Himself speaking to His disciples in the temple⁶ said: "arise, let us go hence," [John. 14:31] and to the Jews: "your house is left unto you desolate." [Matt. 23:38] If heaven and earth must pass away, [Luke 21:33] obviously all things that are earthly must pass away also. Therefore the spots which witnessed the crucifixion and the resurrection profit those only who bear their several crosses, who day by day rise again with Christ, and who thus shew themselves worthy of an abode so holy. Those who say "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord," [Jer. 7:4] should give ear to the words of the apostle: "ye are the temple of the Lord," [2 Cor. 6:16] and the Holy Ghost "dwelleth in you." [Rom. 8:11] Access to the courts of heaven is as easy from Britain as it is from Jerusalem; for "the kingdom of God is within you." [Luke 17:21] Antony and the hosts of monks who are in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and Armenia, have never seen Jerusalem: and the door of Paradise is opened for them at a distance from it. The blessed Hilarion, though a native of and a dweller in Palestine, only set eyes on Jerusalem for a single day, not wishing on the one hand when he was so near to neglect the holy places, nor yet on the other to appear to confine God within local limits. From the time of Hadrian to the reign of Constantine-a period of about one hundred and eighty years⁷ -the spot which had witnessed the resurrection was occupied by a figure of Jupiter; while on the rock where the cross had stood, a marble statue of Venus was set up by the heathen and became an object of worship. The original persecutors, indeed, supposed that by polluting our holy places they would deprive us of our faith in the passion and in the resurrection. Even my own Bethlehem, as it now is, that most venerable spot in the whole world of which the psalmist sings: "the truth hath sprung out of the earth," [Ps. 85:11, Vulg] was overshadowed by a grove of Tammuz, [Ezek. 8:14] that is of Adonis; and in the

very cave⁸ where the infant Christ had uttered His earliest cry lamentation was made for the paramour of Venus.⁹

4. Why, you will say, do I make these remote allusions? To assure you that nothing is lacking to your faith although you have not seen Jerusalem and that I am none the better for living where I do. Be assured that, whether you dwell here or elsewhere, a like recompense is in store for your good works with our Lord. Indeed, if I am frankly to express my own feelings, when I take into consideration your vows and the earnestness with which you have renounced the world, I hold that as long as you live in the country one place is as good as another. Forsake cities and their crowds, live on a small patch of ground, seek Christ in solitude, pray on the mount alone with Jesus,¹⁰ keep near to holy places: keep out of cities, I say, and you will never lose your vocation. My advice concerns not bishops, presbyters, or the clergy, for these have a different duty. I am speaking only to a monk who having been a man of note in the world has laid the price of his possessions at the apostles' feet, [Acts 4:37] to shew men that they must trample on their money, and has resolved to live a life of loneliness and seclusion and always to continue to reject what he has once rejected. Had the scenes of the Passion and of the Resurrection been elsewhere than in a populous city with court and garrison, with prostitutes, playactors, and buffoons, and with the medley of persons usually found in such centres; or had the crowds which thronged it been composed of monks; then a city would be a desirable abode for those who have embraced the monastic life. But, as things are, it would be the height of folly first to renounce the world, to forswear one's country, to forsake cities, to profess one's self a monk; and then to live among still greater numbers the same kind of life that you would have lived in your own country. Men rush here from all quarters of the world, the city is filled with people of every race, and so great is the throng of men and women that here you will have to tolerate in its full dimensions an evil from which you desired to flee when you found it partially developed elsewhere.

5. Since you ask me as a brother in what path you should walk, I will be open with you. If you wish to take duty as a presbyter, and are attracted by the work or dignity which falls to the lot of a bishop, live in cities and walled towns,¹¹ and by so doing turn the salvation of others into the profit of your own soul. But if you desire to be in deed what you are in name-a monk,¹² that is, one who lives alone, what have you to do with cities which are the homes not of solitaries but of crowds? Every mode of life has its own exponents. For instance, let Roman generals imitate men like Camillus, Fabricius, Regulus, and Scipio. Let philosophers take for models Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Let poets strive to rival Homer, Virgil, Menander, and Terence. Let writers of history follow Thucydides, Sallust, Herodotus and Livy. Let orators find masters in Lysias, the Gracchi, Demosthenes, and Tully. And, to come to our own case, let bishops and presbyters take for their examples the apostles or their companions; and as they hold the rank which these once held, let them endeavour to exhibit the same excellence. And last of all let us monks take as the patterns which we are to follow the lives of Paul, of Antony, of Julian, of Hilarion, of the Macarii. And to go back to the authority of scripture, we have our masters in Elijah and Elisha, and our leaders in the sons of the prophets; who lived in fields and solitary places and made themselves tents by the waters of Jordan. [2 Kings 6:1, 2 Kings 6:2] The sons of Rechab too are of the number who drank neither wine nor strong drink and who abode in tents; men whom God's voice praises through Jeremiah,¹³ and to whom a promise is made that there shall never be wanting a man of their stock to stand before God. [Jer. 35:19] This is probably what is meant by the title of the

seventy-first psalm: "of the sons of Jonadab and of those who were first led into captivity."¹⁴ The person intended is Jonadab the son of Rechab who is described in the book of Kings [2 Kings, 10:15, 2 Kings, 10:16] as having gone up into the chariot of Jehu. His sons having always lived in tents until at last (owing to the inroads made by the Chaldean army) they were forced to come into Jerusalem, are described [Jer. 35:11] as being the first to undergo captivity; because after the freedom of their lonely life they found confinement in a city as bad as imprisonment.

6. Since you are not wholly independent but are bound to a wife who is your sister in the Lord, I entreat you-whether here or there-that you will avoid large gatherings, visits official and complimentary, and social parties, indulgences all of which tend to enchain the soul. Let your food be coarse-say cabbage and pulse-and do not take it until evening. Sometimes as a great delicacy you may have some small fish. He who longs for Christ and feeds upon the true bread cares little for dainties which must be transmuted into ordure. Food that you cannot taste when once it has passed your gullet might as well be-so far as you are concerned-bread and pulse. You have my books against Jovinian which speak yet more largely of despising the appetite and the palate. Let some holy volume be ever in your hand. Pray constantly, and bowing down your body lift up your mind to the Lord. Keep frequent vigils and sleep often on an empty stomach. Avoid tittle-tattle and all self-laudation. Flee from wheedling flatterers as from open enemies. Distribute with your own hand provisions to alleviate the miseries of the poor and of the brethren. With your own hands, I say, for good faith is rare among men. You do not believe what I say? Think of Judas and his bag. Seek not a lowly garb for a swelling soul. Avoid the society of men of the world, especially if they are in power. Why need you look again on things contempt for which has made you a monk? Above all let your sister¹⁵ hold aloof from married ladies. And, if women round her wear silk dresses and gems while she is meanly attired, let her neither fret nor congratulate herself. For by so doing she will either regret her resolution or sow the seeds of pride. If you are already famed as a faithful steward of your own substance, do not take other people's money to give away. You understand What I mean, for the Lord has given you understanding in all things. Be simple as a dove and lay snares for no man: but be cunning as a serpent and let no man lay snares for you. [Matt. 10:16] For a Christian who allows others to deceive him is almost at much at fault as one who tries to deceive others. If a man talks to you always or nearly always about money (except it be about alms-giving, a topic which is open to all) treat him as a broker rather than a monk. Besides food and clothing and things manifestly necessary give no man anything; for dogs must not eat the children's bread. [Matt. 15:26]

7. The true temple of Christ is the believer's soul; adorn this, clothe it, offer gifts to it, welcome Christ in it. What use are walls blazing with jewels when Christ in His poor [Matt. 25:40] is in danger of perishing from hunger? Your possessions are no longer your own but a stewardship is entrusted to you. Remember Ananias and Sapphira who from fear of the future kept what was their own, and be careful for your part not rashly to squander what is Christ's. Do not, that is, by an error of judgment give the property of the poor to those who are not poor; lest, as a wise man has told us,¹⁶ charity prove the death of charity. Look not upon "Gay trappings or a Cato's empty name."¹⁷ In the words of Persius, God says:- "I know thy thoughts and read thine inmost soul."¹⁸ To be a Christian is the great thing, not merely to seem one. And somehow or other those please the world most who please Christ least. In speaking thus I am not like the sow lecturing Minerva; but, as a friend warns a friend, so I warn you before you embark on your new course. I would rather fail in

ability than in will to serve you; for my wish is that where I have fallen you may keep your footing.

8. It is with much pleasure that I have read the book which you have sent to me containing your wise and eloquent defence of the emperor Theodosius; and your arrangement of the subject has particularly pleased me. While in the earlier chapters you surpass others, in the latter you surpass yourself. Your style is terse and neat; it has all the purity of Tully, and yet it is packed with meaning. For, as someone has said,¹⁹ that speech is a failure of which men only praise the diction. You have been successful in preserving both sequence of subjects and logical connexion. Whatever sentence one takes, it is always a conclusion to what goes before or an introduction to what follows. Theodosius is fortunate in having a Christian orator like you to plead his cause. You have made his purple illustrious and have consecrated for future ages his useful laws. Go on and prosper, for, if such be your first ventures in the field, what will you not do when you become a trained soldier? Oh! that it were mine to conduct a genius like you, not (as the poets sing) through the Aonian mountains and the peaks of Helicon but through Zion and Tabor and the high places of Sinai. If I might teach you what I have learned myself and might pass on to you the mystic rolls of the prophets, then might we give birth to something such as Greece with all her learning could not shew.

9. Hear me, therefore, my fellow-servant, my friend, my brother; give ear for a moment that I may tell you how you are to walk in the holy scriptures. All that we read in the divine books, while glistening and shining without, is yet far sweeter within. "He who desires to eat the kernel must first break the nut." [Plautus, Curc. I. 1:55] "Open thou mine eyes," says David, "that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." [Ps. 119:18] Now, if so great a prophet confesses that he is in the darkness of ignorance; how deep, think you, must be the night of misapprehension with which we, mere babes and unweaned infants, are enveloped! Now this veil rests not only on the face of Moses, [2 Cor. 3:14, 2 Cor. 3:15] but on the evangelists and the apostles as well.²⁰ To the multitudes the Saviour spoke only in parables and, to make it clear that His words had a mystical meaning, said: "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear." [Luke 8:8, Luke 8:10] Unless all things that are written are opened by Him "who hath the key of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth," [Rev. 3:7] no one can undo the lock or set them before you. If only you had the foundation which He alone can give; nay, if even His fingers were but passed over your work; there would be nothing finer than your volumes, nothing more learned, nothing more attractive, nothing more Latin.

10. Tertullian is packed with meaning but his style is rugged and uncouth. The blessed Cyprian like a fountain of pure water flows softly and sweetly but, as he is taken up with exhortations to virtue and with the troubles consequent on persecution, he has nowhere discussed the divine scriptures. Victorinus, although he has the glory of a martyr's crown, yet cannot express what he knows. Lactantius has a flow of eloquence worthy of Tully: would that he had been as ready to teach our doctrines as he was to pull down those of others! Arnobius is lengthy and unequal, and often confused from not making a proper division of his subject. That reverend man Hilary gains in height from his Gallic buskin; yet, adorned as he is with the flowers of Greek rhetoric, he sometimes entangles himself in long periods and offers by no means easy reading to the less learned brethren. I say nothing of other writers whether dead or living; others will hereafter judge them both for good and for evil.²¹

11. I will come to yourself, my fellow-mystic, my companion, and my friend; my friend, I say, though not yet personally known: and I will ask you not to suspect a flatterer in one so intimate. Better that you should think me mistaken or led astray by affection than that you should hold me capable of fawning on a friend. You have a great intellect and an inexhaustible store of language, your diction is fluent and pure, your fluency and purity are mingled with wisdom. Your head is clear and all your senses keen. Were you to add to this wisdom and eloquence a careful study and knowledge of scripture, I should soon see you holding our citadel against all comers; you would go up with Joab upon the roof of Zion, [1 Chron. 11:5, 1 Chron. 11:6] and sing upon the housetops what you had learned in the secret chambers. [Cf. Luke 12:3] Gird up, I pray you, gird up your loins. As Horace says:- "Life hath no gifts for men except they toil." [Horace, Sat. I. 9:59, 60]

Shew yourself as much a man of note in the church, as you were before in the senate. Provide for yourself riches which you may spend daily yet they will not fail. Provide them while you are still strong and while as yet your head has no gray hairs: before, in the words of Virgil, Diseases creep on you, and gloomy age, "And pain, and cruel death's inclemency." [Virgil, Georg. 3:67, 68] I am not content with mediocrity for you: I desire all that you do to be of the highest excellence.

How heartily I have welcomed the reverend presbyter Vigilantius,²² his own lips will tell you better than this letter. Why he has so soon left us and started afresh I cannot say; and, indeed, I do not wish to hurt anyone's feelings.²³ Still, mere passer-by as he was, in haste to continue his journey, I managed to keep him back until I had given him a taste of my friendship for you. Thus you can learn from him what you want to know about me. Kindly salute your reverend sister²⁴ and fellow-servant, who with you fights the good fight in the Lord.

1: Story of Susannah 2: Ps. 55:13 - Consessu substituted for consensu of the Vulgate 3: Virgil, Aen. 12:603 4: Compare Letter LII 5: Cicero, pro Murena, V 6: Only the second sentence was spoken in the temple: the first was uttered in the chamber of the last supper 7: Hadrian died in 138 a.d.; Constantine became Emperor in 306 a.d 8: For the tradition that Christ was born in a cave Justin Martyr is the earliest authority (dial. 100:Try. 78)

9: Adonis, killed by a boar and spending half his time in the upper, half in the lower world, is a type of summer overcoming and overcome by winter 10: Cf. Luke, vi

11:

Castella

12:

Monachus, lit. "a solitary." Men frequently at this time made vows, especially those of celibacy, without entering a monastery

13: Jer. xxxv 14: This title occurs only in the LXX 15: Therasia, the wife of Paulinus is meant 16: Cicero, de Off. 11. xv 17: Probably a quotation from memory incorrectly made up from Lucan's 'Nomina vana Catonis O' (i. 313) 18: Persius, 3:30 19: Quintilian, Inst. Or. 8:Procm 20: i.e., the new testament as well as the old may have its true meaning concealed from some 21: Cf. Letter LXX. 5 22: Afterwards noted as an assailant of Jerome's ascetic doctrines. See the introduction to Letter LXI

23:

The allusion seems to be to the behaviour of Vigilantius during an earthquake which occurred when he was at Bethlehem. His fright on the occasion exposed him to the ridicule of the community there. (Against Vig., 1:11.

24:

As before, Therasia, the wife of Paulinus is meant

Letters - letter_059

Letter 59. To Marcella. An answer to five questions put to Jerome by Marcella in a letter not preserved. The questions are as follows.

(1) What are the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard (1 Cor. ii. 9)? Jerome answers that they are spiritual things which as such can only be spiritually discerned.

(2) Is it not a mistake to identify the sheep and the goats of Christ's parable (Matt. xxv. 31 sqq.) with Christians and heathens? Are they not rather the good and the bad? For an answer to this question Jerome refers Marcella to his treatise against Jovinian (II. §§18-23).

(3) Paul says that some shall be "alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord;" and that they shall be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 15, 17). Are we to suppose this assumption to be corporeal and that those assumed will escape death? Yes, Jerome answers, but their bodies will be glorified.

(4) How is John xx. 17, "touch me not," to be reconciled with Matt. xxviii. 9, "they came and held him by the feet"? In the one case, Jerome replies, Mary Magdalen failed to recognize the divinity of Jesus; in the other the women recognized it. Accordingly they were admitted to a privilege which was denied to her.

(5) Was the risen Christ before His ascension present only with the disciples, or was He in heaven and elsewhere as well? The latter according to Jerome is the true doctrine. "The Divine Nature," he writes, "exists everywhere in its entirety. Christ, therefore, was at one and the same time with the apostles and with the angels; in the Father and in the uttermost parts of the sea. So afterwards he was with Thomas in India, with Peter at Rome, with Paul in Illyricum, with Titus in Crete, with Andrew in Achaia." The date of the letter is a.d. 395 or a.d. 396.

Letters - letter_060

Letter 60. To Heliodorus

One of Jerome's finest letters, written to console his old friend, Heliodorus, now Bp. of Altinum, for the loss of his nephew Nepotian who had died of fever a short time previously. Jerome tries to soothe his friend's grief (1) by contrasting pagan despair or resignation with Christian hope, (2) by an eulogy of the departed both as man and presbyter, and (3) by a review of the evils which then beset the Empire and from which, as he contended, Nepotian had been removed. The letter is marked throughout with deep and sincere feeling. Its date is 396 a.d.

1. Small wits cannot grapple large themes but venturing beyond their strength fail in the very attempt; and, the greater a subject is, the more completely is he overwhelmed who cannot find words to unfold its grandeur. Nepotian who was mine and yours and ours-or rather who was Christ's and because Christ's all the more ours-has forsaken us his elders so that we are smitten with pangs of regret and overcome with a grief which is past bearing. We supposed him our heir, yet now his corpse is all that is ours. For whom shall my intellect now labour? Whom shall my poor letters desire to please? Where is he, the impeller of my work, whose voice was sweeter than a swan's last song? My mind is dazed my hand trembles, a mist covers my eyes, stammering seizes my tongue. Whatever my words, they seem as good as unspoken seeing that he no longer hears them. My very pen seems to feel his loss, my very wax tablet looks dull and sad; the one is covered with rust, the other with mould. As often as I try to express myself in words and to scatter the flowers of this encomium upon his tomb, my eyes fill with tears, my grief returns, and I can think of nothing but his death. It was a custom in former days for children over the dead bodies of their parents publicly to proclaim their praises and (as when pathetic songs are sung) to draw tears from the eyes and sighs from the breasts of those who heard them. But in our case, behold, the order of things is changed: to deal us this blow nature has forfeited her rights. For the respect which the young man should have paid to his elders, we his elders are paying to him.

2. What shall I do then? Shall I join my tears to yours? The apostle forbids me for he speaks of dead Christians as "them which are asleep." [1 Thess. 4:13] So too in the gospel the Lord says, "the damsel is not dead but sleepeth," [Mark 5:39] and Lazarus when he is raised from the dead is said to have been asleep. [John. 11:11] No, I will be glad and rejoice that "speedily he was taken away lest that wickedness should alter his understanding" for "his soul pleased the Lord." [Wisd. 4:11, Wisd. 4:14] But though I am loth to give way and combat my feelings, tears flow down my cheeks, and in spite of the teachings of virtue and the hope of the resurrection a passion of regret crushes my too yielding mind. O death that dividest brothers knit together in love, how cruel, how ruthless thou art so to sunder them! "The Lord hath fetched a burning wind that cometh up from the wilderness: which hath dried thy veins and hath made thy well spring desolate." [Hos. 13:15, LXX] Thou didst swallow up our Jonah, but even in thy belly He still lived. Thou didst carry Him as one dead, that the world's storm might be stilled and our Nineveh saved by His preaching. He, yes He, conquered thee, He slew thee, that fugitive prophet who left His home, gave up His

inheritance and surrendered his dear life into the hands of those who sought it. He it was who of old threatened thee in Hoses: "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." [Hos. 13:14] By His death thou art dead; by His death we live. Thou hast swallowed up and thou art swallowed up. Whilst thou art smitten with a longing for the body assumed by Him, and whilst thy greedy jaws fancy it a prey, thy inward parts are wounded with hooked fangs.

3. To Thee, O Saviour Christ, do we Thy creatures offer thanks that, when Thou wast slain, Thou didst slay our mighty adversary. Before Thy coming was there any being more miserable than man who cowering at the dread prospect of eternal death did but receive life that he might perish! For "death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." [Rom. 5:14] If Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob be in hell, who can be in the kingdom of heaven? If Thy friends-even those who had not sinned themselves-were yet for the sins of another liable to the punishment of offending Adam, what must we think of those who have said in their hearts "There is no God;" who "are corrupt and abominable" [Ps. 14:1] in their self-will, and of whom it is said "they are gone out of the way, they are become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one"? [Rom. 3:12] Even if Lazarus is seen in Abraham's bosom and in a place of refreshment, still the lower regions cannot be compared with the kingdom of heaven. Before Christ's coming Abraham is in the lower regions: after Christ's coming the robber is in paradise. And therefore at His rising again "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and were seen in the heavenly Jerusalem." [Matt. 27:52, Matt. 27:53] Then was fulfilled the saying: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." [Eph. 5:14] John the Baptist cries in the desert: "repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." [Matt. 3:2] For "from the days of John the Baptist the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." [Matt. 11:12] The flaming sword that keeps the way of paradise and the cherubim that are stationed at its doors [Gen. 3:24] are alike quenched and unloosed by the blood of Christ.¹ It is not surprising that this should be promised us in the resurrection: for as many of us as living in the flesh do not live after the flesh,² have our citizenship in heaven, [Phi. 3:20] and while we are still here on earth we are told that "the kingdom of heaven is within us." [Luke 17:21]

4. Moreover before the resurrection of Christ God was "known in Judah" only and "His name was great in Israel" alone. [Ps. 76:1] And they who knew Him were despite their knowledge dragged down to hell. Where in those days were the inhabitants of the globe from India to Britain, from the frozen zone of the North to the burning heat of the Atlantic ocean? Where were the countless peoples of the world? Where the great multitudes?

"Unlike in tongue, unlike in dress and arms?" [Virg. A. 8:723]

They were crushed like fishes and locusts, like flies and gnats. For apart from knowledge of his Creator every man is but a brute. But now the voices and writings of all nations proclaim the passion and the resurrection of Christ. I say nothing of the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans, peoples which the Lord has dedicated to His faith by the title written on His cross. [Luke 23:38] The immortality of the soul and its continuance after the dissolution of the body-truths of which Pythagoras dreamed, which Democritus refused to believe, and which Socrates discussed in prison to console himself for the sentence passed upon him-are now the familiar themes of Indian and of Persian, of Goth and of Egyptian. The fierce Bessians³ and the throng of skinclad savages who used to offer human sacrifices in honour of the dead have broken out of their harsh discord

into the sweet music of the cross and Christ is the one cry of the whole world.

5. What can we do, my soul? Whither must we turn? What must we take up first? What must we pass over? Have you forgotten the precepts of the rhetoricians? Are you so preoccupied with grief, so overcome with tears, so hindered with sobs, that you forget all logical sequence? Where are the studies you have pursued from your childhood? Where is that saying of Anaxagoras and Telamon (which you have always commended) "I knew myself to have begotten a mortal"?⁴ I have read the books of Crantor which he wrote to soothe his grief and which Cicero has imitated.⁵ I have read the consolatory writings of Plato, Diogenes, Clitomachus, Carneades, Posidonius, who at different times strove by book or letter to lessen the grief of various persons. Consequently, were my own wit to dry up, it could be watered anew from the fountains which these have opened. They set before us examples without number; and particularly those of Pericles and of Socrates's pupil Xenophon. The former of these after the loss of his two sons put on a garland and delivered a harangue; [Val. Max. 5:10] while the latter, on hearing when he was offering sacrifice that his son had been slain in war, is said to have laid down his garland; and then, on learning that he had fallen fighting bravely, is said to have put it on his head again. What shall I say of those Roman generals whose heroic virtues glitter like stars on the pages of Latin history? Pulvillus was dedicating the capitol⁶ when receiving the news of his son's sudden death, he gave orders that the funeral should take place without him. Lucius Paullus⁷ entered the city in triumph in the week which intervened between the funerals of his two sons. I pass over the Maximi, the Catos, the Galli, the Pisos, the Bruti, the Scaevolus, the Metelli, the Scauri, the Marii, the Crassi, the Marcelli, the Aufidii, men who shewed equal fortitude in sorrow and war, and whose bereavements Tully has set forth in his book *Of consolation*. I pass them over lest I should seem to have chosen the words and woes of others in preference to my own. Yet even these instances may suffice to ensure us mortification if our faith fails to surpass the achievements of unbelief.

6. Let me come then to my proper subject. I will not beat my breast with Jacob and with David for sons dying in the Law, but I will receive them rising again with Christ in the Gospel. The Jew's mourning is the Christian's joy. "Weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning." [Ps. 30:5] "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." [Rom. 13:12] Accordingly when Moses dies, mourning is made for him, [Deut. 34:8] but when Joshua is buried, it is without tears or funeral pomp. [Josh. 24:30] All that can be drawn from scripture on the subject of lamentation I have briefly set forth in the letter of consolation which I addressed to Paula at Rome.⁸ Now I must take another path to arrive at the same goal. Otherwise I shall seem to be walking anew in a track once beaten but now long disused.

7. We know indeed that our Nepotian is with Christ and that he has joined the choirs of the saints. What here with us he groped after on earth afar off and sought for to the best of his judgment, there he sees nigh at hand, so that he can say: "as we have heard so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God." [Ps. 48:8] Still we cannot bear the feeling of his absence, and grieve, if not for him, for ourselves. The greater the happiness which he enjoys, the deeper the sorrow in which the loss of a blessing so great plunges us. The sisters of Lazarus could not help weeping for him, although they knew that he would rise again. And the Saviour himself-to shew that he possessed true human feeling-mourned for him whom He was about to raise. [John. 11:35] His apostle also, though he says: "I desire to depart and to be with Christ," [Phi. 1:23] and elsewhere "to me to live is Christ and to die is gain," [Phi. 1:21] thanks God that Epaphras⁹ (who

had been "sick nigh unto death") has been given back to him that he might not have sorrow upon sorrow. [Phi. 2:27] Words prompted not by the fear that springs of unbelief but by the passionate regret that comes of true affection. How much more deeply must you who were to Nepotian both uncle and bishop, (that is, a father both in the flesh and in the spirit), deplore the loss of one so dear, as though your heart were torn from you. Set a limit, I pray you, to your sorrow and remember the saying "in nothing overmuch."¹⁰ Bind up for a little while your wound and listen to the praises of one in whose virtue you have always delighted. Do not grieve that you have lost such a paragon: rejoice rather that he has once been yours. As on a small tablet men depict the configuration of the earth, so in this little scroll of mine you may see his virtues if not fully depicted at least sketched in outline. I beg that you will take the will for the performance.

8. The advice of the rhetoricians in such cases is that you should first search out the remote ancestors of the person to be eulogized and recount their exploits, and then come gradually to your hero; so as to make him more illustrious by the virtues of his forefathers, and to show either that he is a worthy successor of good men, or that he has conferred lustre upon a lineage in itself obscure. But as my duty is to sing the praises of the soul, I will not dwell upon those fleshly advantages which Nepotian for his part always despised. Nor will I boast of his family, that is of the good points belonging not to him but to others; for even those holy men Abraham and Isaac had for sons the sinners Ishmael and Esau. And on the other hand Jephthah who is reckoned by the apostle in the roll of the righteous [Heb. 11:32] is the son of a harlot. [Judg. 11:1] It is said "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." [Ezek. 18:4] The soul therefore that has not sinned shall live. Neither the virtues nor the vices of parents are imputed to their children. God takes account of us only from the time when we are born anew in Christ. Paul, the persecutor of the church, who is in the morning the ravening wolf of Benjamin, [Gen. 49:27] in the evening "gave food,"¹¹ that is yields himself up to the sheep Ananias. [Acts 9:17. (Cf. Letter LXIX.)] Let us likewise reckon our Nepotian a crying babe and an untutored child who has been born to us in a moment fresh from the waters of Jordan.

9. Another would perhaps describe how for his salvation you left the east and the desert and how you soothed me your dearest comrade by holding out hopes of a return: and all this that you might save, if possible, both your sister, then a widow with one little child, or, should she reject your counsels, at any rate your sweet little nephew. It was of him that I once used the prophetic words: "though your little nephew cling to your neck."¹² Another, I say, would relate how while Nepotian was still in the service of the court, beneath his uniform and his brilliantly white linen,¹³ his skin was chafed with sackcloth; how, while standing before the powers of this world, his lips were discoloured with fasting; how still in the uniform of one master he served another; and how he wore the sword-belt only that he might succour widows and wards, the afflicted and the unhappy. For my part I dislike men to delay the complete dedication of themselves to God. When I read of the centurion Cornelius¹⁴ that he was a just man I immediately hear of his baptism.

10. Still we may approve these things as the swathing bands of an infant faith. He who has been a loyal soldier under a strange banner is sure to deserve the laurel when he comes to serve his own king. When Nepotian laid aside his baldrick and changed his dress, he bestowed upon the poor all the pay that he had received. For he had read the words: "if thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor and follow me," [Matt. 19:21] and again: "ye cannot serve two masters, God and Mammon." [Matt. 6:24] He kept nothing for himself but a common tunic and cloak to cover him

and to keep out the cold. Made in the fashion of his province his attire was not remarkable either for elegance or for squalor. He burned daily to make his way to the monasteries of Egypt, or to visit the communities of Mesopotamia, or at least to live a lonely life in the Dalmatian islands,¹⁵ separated from the mainland only by the strait of Altinum. But he had not the heart to forsake his episcopal uncle in whom he beheld a pattern of many virtues and from whom he could take lessons without going abroad. In one and the same person he both found a monk to imitate and a bishop to revere. What so often happens did not happen here. Constant intimacy did not produce familiarity, nor did familiarity breed contempt. He revered him as a father and every day admired him for some new virtue. To be brief, he became a clergyman, and after passing through the usual stages was ordained a presbyter. Good Jesus! how he sighed and groaned! how he fasted and fled the eyes of all! For the first and only time he was angry with his uncle, complaining that the burthen laid upon him was too heavy for him and that his youth unfitted him for the priesthood. But the more he struggled against it, the more he drew to himself the hearts of all: his refusal did but prove him worthy of an office which he was reluctant to assume, and all the more worthy because he declared himself unworthy. We too in our day have our Timothy; we too have seen that wisdom which is as good as gray hairs; [Wisd. 4:9] our Moses has chosen an elder whom he has known to be an elder indeed.¹⁶ Nepotian regarded the clerical state less as an honour than a burthen. He made it his first care to silence envy by humility, and his next to give no cause for scandal that such as assailed his youth might marvel at his continence. He helped the poor, visited the sick, stirred men up to hospitality, soothed them with soft words, rejoiced with those who rejoiced and wept with those who wept. [Rom. 12:15] He was a staff to the blind, food to the hungry, hope to the dejected, consolation to the bereaved. Each single virtue was as conspicuous in him as if he possessed no other. Among his fellow-presbyters while ever foremost in work, he was ever satisfied with the lowest place. Any good that he did he ascribed to his uncle: but if the result did not correspond to his expectations, he would say that his uncle knew nothing of it, that it was his own mistake. In public he recognized him as a bishop; at home he looked upon him as a father. The seriousness of his disposition was mitigated by a cheerful expression. But while his laughter was joyous it was never loud. Christ's virgins and widows he honoured as mothers and exhorted as sisters "with all purity." [1 Tim. 5:2] When he returned home he used to leave the clergyman outside and to give himself over to the hard rule of a monk. Frequent in supplication and watchful in prayer he would offer his tears not to man but to God. His fasts he regulated-as a driver does the pace of his horses-according to the weariness or vigour of his body. When at his uncle's table he would just taste what was set before him, so as to avoid superstition and yet to preserve self-control. In conversing at entertainments his habit was to propose some topic from scripture, to listen modestly, to answer diffidently, to support the right, to refute the wrong, but both without bitterness; to instruct his opponent rather than to vanquish him. Such was the ingenuous modesty which adorned his youth that he would frankly confess from what sources his several arguments came; and in this way, while disclaiming a reputation for learning, he came to be held most learned. This he would say is the opinion of Tertullian, that of Cyprian; this of Lactantius, that of Hilary; to this effect speaks Minucius Felix, thus Victorinus, after this manner Arnobius. Myself too he would sometimes quote, for he loved me because of my intimacy with his uncle. Indeed by constant reading and long-continued meditation he had made his breast a library of Christ.

11. How often in letters from beyond the sea he urged me to write something to him! How often he reminded me of the man in the gospel who sought help by night [Luke 11:5, Luke 11:8] and of the

widow who importuned the cruel judge! [Luke 18:1, Luke 18:5] And when I silently ignored his request and made my petitioner blush by blushing to reply, he put forward his uncle to enforce his suit, knowing that as the boon was for another he would more readily ask it, and that as I held his episcopal office in respect he would more easily obtain it. Accordingly I did what he wished and in a brief essay¹⁷ dedicated our mutual friendship to everlasting remembrance. On receiving this Nepotian boasted that he was richer than Croesus and wealthier than Darius. He held it in his hands, devoured it with his eyes, kept it in his bosom, repeated it with his lips. And often when he unrolled it upon his couch, he fell asleep with the cherished page upon his breast. When a stranger came or a friend, he rejoiced to let them know my witness to him. The deficiencies of my little book he made good by careful punctuation and varied emphasis, so that when it was read aloud it was always he not I who seemed to please or to displease. Whence came such zeal, if not from the love of God? Whence came such untiring study of Christ's law, if not from a yearning for Him who gave it? Let others add coin to coin till their purses are chock-full; let others demean themselves to sponge on married ladies; let them be richer as monks than they were as men of the world; let them possess wealth in the service of a poor Christ such as they never had in the service of a rich devil; let the church lose breath at the opulence of men who in the world were beggars. Our Nepotian spurns gold and begs only for written books. But while he despises himself in the flesh and walks abroad more splendid than ever in his poverty, he still seeks out everything that may adorn the church.

12. In comparison with what has gone before what I am now about to say may appear trivial, but even in trifles the same spirit makes itself manifest. For as we admire the Creator not only as the framer of heaven and earth, of sun and ocean, of elephants, camels, horses, oxen, pards, bears, and lions; but also as the maker of the most tiny creatures, ants, gnats, flies, worms, and the like, whose shapes we know better than their names, and as in all alike we revere the same creative skill; so the mind that is given to Christ shews the same earnestness in things of small as of great importance, knowing that it must render an account of every idle word. [Matt. 12:36] Nepotian took pains to keep the altar bright, the church walls free from soot and the pavement duly swept. He saw that the doorkeeper was constantly at his post, that the doorhangings were in their places, the sanctuary clean and the vessels shining. The careful reverence that he shewed to every rite led him to neglect no duty small or great. Whenever you looked for him in church you found him there. In Quintus Fabius¹⁸ antiquity admired a nobleman and the author of a history of Rome, yet his paintings gained him more renown than his writings. Our own Bezaleel [Ex. 31:2, Ex. 31:3] also and Hiram, the son of a Tyrian woman,¹⁹ are spoken of in scripture as filled with wisdom and the spirit of God because they framed, the one the furniture of the tabernacle, the other that of the temple. For, as it is with fertile tillage-fields and rich plough-lands which at times go out into redundant growths of stalk or ear, so is it with distinguished talents and a mind filled with virtue. They are sure to overflow into elegant and varied accomplishments. Accordingly among the Greeks we hear of a philosopher²⁰ who used to boast that everything he wore down to his cloak and ring was made by himself. We may pass the same eulogy on our friend, for he adorned both the basilicas of the church and the halls²¹ of the martyrs with sketches of flowers, foliage, and vine-tendrils, so that everything attractive in the church, whether made so by its position or by its appearance, bore witness to the labour and zeal of the presbyter set over it.

13. Go on blessed in thy goodness! What kind of ending should we expect after such a beginning! Ah! hapless plight of mortal men and vanity of all life that is not lived in Christ! Why, O my words, do you shrink back? Why do you shift and turn? I fear to come to the end, as if I could put off his death or make his life longer. "All flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." [1 Pet. 1:24] Where now are that handsome face and dignified figure with which as with a fair garment his beautiful soul was clothed? The lily began to wither, alas! when the south wind blew, and the purple violet slowly faded into paleness. Yet while he burned with fever and while the fire of sickness was drying up the fountains of his veins, gasping and weary he still tried to comfort his sorrowing uncle. His countenance shone with gladness, and while all around him wept he and he only smiled. He flung aside his cloak, put out his hand, saw what others failed to see, and even tried to rise that he might welcome new comers. You would have thought that he was starting on a journey instead of dying and that in place of leaving all his friends behind him he was merely passing from some to others.²² Tears roll down my cheeks and, however much I steel my mind, I cannot disguise the grief that I feel. Who could suppose that at such an hour he would remember his intimacy with me, and that while he struggled for life he would recall the sweetness of study? Yet grasping his uncle's hand he said to him: "Send this tunic that I wore in the service of Christ to my dear friend, my father in age, but my brother in office, and transfer the affection hitherto claimed by your nephew to one who is as dear to you as he is to me." With these words he passed away holding his uncle's hand and with my name upon his lips.

14. I know how unwilling you were to prove the affection of your people at such a cost, and that you would have preferred to win your countrymen's love while retaining your happiness. Such expressions of feeling, pleasant as they are when all goes well, are doubly welcome in time of sorrow. All Altinum, all Italy mourned Nepotian. The earth received his body; his soul was given back to Christ. You lost a nephew, the church a priest. He who should have followed you went before you. To the office which you held, he in the judgment of all deserved to succeed. And so one family has had the honour of producing two bishops, the first to be congratulated because he has held the office, the second to be lamented because he has been taken away too soon to hold it. Plato thinks that a wise man's whole life ought to be a meditation of death;²³ and philosophers praise the sentiment and extol it to the skies. But much more full of power are the words of the apostle: "I die daily through your glory." [1 Cor. 15:31, Vulgate] For to have an ideal is one thing, to realize it another. It is one thing to live so as to die, another to die so as to live. The sage and Christian must both of them die: but the one always dies out of his glory, the other into it. Therefore we also should consider beforehand the end which must one day overtake us and which, whether we wish it or not, cannot be very far distant. For though we should live nine hundred years or more, as men did before the deluge, and though the days of Methuselah [Gen. 5:27] should be granted us, yet that long space of time, when once it should have passed away and come to an end, would be as nothing. For to the man who has lived ten years and to him who has lived a thousand, when once the end of life comes and death's inexorable doom, all the past whether long or short is just the same; except that the older a man is, the heavier is the load of sin that he has to take with him.

"First hapless mortals lose from out their life The fairest days: disease and age come next; And lastly cruel death doth claim his prey." [Virg. G. 3:66-68] The poet Naevius too says that "Mortals must many woes perforce endure."

Accordingly antiquity has feigned that Niobe because of her much weeping was turned to stone and that other women were metamorphosed into beasts. Hesiod also bewails men's birthdays and rejoices in their deaths, and Ennius wisely says:

"The mob has one advantage o'er its king:

For it may weep while tears for him are shame."

If a king may not weep, neither may a bishop; indeed a bishop has still less license than a king. For the king rules over unwilling subjects, the bishop over willing ones. The king compels submission by terror; the bishop exercises lordship by becoming a servant. The king guards men's bodies till they die; the bishop saves their souls for life eternal. The eyes of all are turned upon you. Your house is set on a watchtower; your life fixes for others the limits of their self-control. Whatever you do, all think that they may do the same. Do not so commit yourself that those who seek ground for cavil may be thought to have rightly assailed you, or that those who are eager to imitate you may be forced to do wrong. Overcome as much as you can-nay even more than you can-the sensitiveness of your mind and check the copious flow of your tears. Else your deep affection for your nephew may be construed by unbelievers as indicating despair of God. You must regeth him not as dead but as absent. You must seem lobe looking for him rather than have lost him.

15. But why do I try to heal a sorrow which has already, I suppose, been assuaged by time and reason? Why do I not rather unfold to you-they are not far to seek-the miseries of our rulers and the calamities of our time? He who has lost the light of life is not so much to be pitied as he is to be congratulated who has escaped from such great evils. Constantius,²⁴ the patron of the Arian heresy, was hurrying to do battle with his enemy²⁵ when he died at the village of Mopsus and to his great vexation left the empire to his foe. Julian²⁶, the betrayer of his own soul, the murderer of a Christian army, felt in Media the hand of the Christ whom he had previously denied in Gaul. Desiring to annex new territories to Rome, he did but lose annexations previously made. Jovian²⁷ had but just tasted the sweets of sovereignty when a coal-fire suffocated him: a good instance of the transitoriness of human power. Valentinian²⁸ died of a broken blood vessel, the land of his birth laid waste, and his country un-avenged. His brother Valens²⁹ defeated in Thrace by the Goths, was buried where he died. Gratian, betrayed by his army and refused admittance by the cities on his line of march, became the laughing-stock of his foe; and your walls, Lyons, still bear the marks of that bloody hand.³⁰ Valentinian was yet a youth-I may say, a mere boy-when, after flight and exile and the recovery of his power by bloodshed, he was put to death³¹ not far from the city which had witnessed his brother's end. And not only so but his lifeless body was gibbeted to do him shame. What shall I say of Procopius, of Maximus, of Eugenius,³² who while they held sovereign sway were a terror to the nations, yet stood one and all as prisoners in the presence of their conquerors, and- cruellest wound of all to the great and powerful - felt the pang of an ignominious slavery before they fell by the edge of the sword.

16. Some one may say: such is the lot of kings: The lightning ever smites the mountain-tops. [Hor. C. II. 10:11, 12]

I will come therefore to persons of private position, and in speaking of these I will not go farther back than the last two years. In fact I will content myself-omitting all others-with recounting the

respective fates of three recent consulars. Abundantius is a beggared exile at Pityus.³³ The head of Rufinus has been carried on a pike to Constantinople, and his severed hand has begged alms from door to door to shame his insatiable greed.³⁴ Timasius,³⁵ hurled suddenly from a position of the highest rank thinks it an escape that he is allowed to live in obscurity at Assa. I am describing not the misfortunes of an unhappy few but the thread upon which human fortunes as a whole depend. I shudder when I think of the catastrophes of our time. For twenty years and more the blood of Romans has been shed daily between Constantinople and the Julian Alps. Scythia, Thrace, Macedonia, Dardania, Dacia, Thessaly, Achaia, Epirus, Dalmatia, the Pannonias—each and all of these have been sacked and pillaged and plundered by Goths and Sarmatians, Quades and Alans, Huns and Vandals and Marchmen. How many of God's matrons and virgins, Virtuous and noble ladies, have been made the sport of these brutes! Bishops have been made captive, priests and those in minor orders have been put to death. Churches have been overthrown, horses have been stalled by the altars of Christ, the relics of martyrs have been dug up.

"Mourning and fear abound on every side And death appears in countless shapes and forms." [Virg. A. 2:369] The Roman world is falling: yet we hold up our heads instead of bowing them. What courage, think you, have the Corinthians now, or the Athenians or the Lacedaemonians or the Arcadians, or any of the Greeks over whom the barbarians bear sway? I have mentioned only a few cities, but these once the capitals of no mean states. The East, it is true, seemed to be safe from all such evils: and if men were panic-stricken here, it was only because of bad news from other parts. But lo! in the year just gone by the wolves (no longer of Arabia but of the whole North³⁶) were let loose upon us from the remotest fastnesses of Caucasus and in a short time overran these great provinces. What a number of monasteries they captured! What many rivers they caused to run red with blood! They laid siege to Antioch and invested other cities on the Halys, the Cydnus, the Orontes, and the Euphrates. They carried off troops of captives. Arabia, Phenicia, Palestine and Egypt, in their terror fancied themselves already enslaved.

"Had I a hundred tongues, a hundred lips, A throat of iron and a chest of brass, I could not tell men's countless sufferings." [Virg. A. 6:625-7] And indeed it is not my purpose to write a history: I only wish to shed a few tears over your sorrows and mine. For the rest, to treat such themes as they deserve, Thucydides and Sallust would be as good as dumb.

17. Nepotian is happy who neither sees these things nor hears them. We are unhappy, for either we suffer ourselves or we see our brethren suffer. Yet we desire to live, and regard those beyond the reach of these evils as miserable rather than blessed. We have long felt that God is angry, yet we do not try to appease Him. It is our sins which make the barbarians strong, it is our vices which vanquish Rome's soldiers: and, as if there were here too little material for carnage, civil wars have made almost greater havoc among us than the swords of foreign foes. Miserable must those Israelites have been compared with whom Nebuchadnezzar was called God's servant. [Jer. 27:6] Unhappy too are we who are so displeasing to God that He uses the fury of the barbarians to execute His wrath against us. Still when Hezekiah repented, one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians were destroyed in one night by a single angel. [2 K. 19:35] When Jehosaphat sang the praises of the Lord, the Lord gave His worshipper the victory. [2 Chr. 20:5-25] Again when Moses fought against Amalek, it was not with the sword but with prayer that he prevailed. [Ex. 17:11] Therefore, if we wish to be lifted up, we must first prostrate ourselves. Alas! for our shame and folly reaching even to unbelief! Rome's army, once victor and lord of the world, now

trembles with terror at the sight of the foe and accepts defeat from men who cannot walk afoot and fancy themselves dead if once they are unhorsed.³⁷ We do not understand the prophet's words: "One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one." [Isa. 30:17] We do not cut away the causes of the disease, as we must do to remove the disease itself. Else we should soon see the enemies' arrows give way to our javelins, their caps to our helmets, their palfreys to our chargers.

18. But I have gone beyond the office of a consoler, and while forbidding you to weep for one dead man I have myself mourned the dead of the whole world. Xerxes the mighty king who rased mountains and filled up seas, looking from high ground upon the untold host, the countless army before him, is said³⁸ to have wept at the thought that in a hundred years not one of those whom he then saw would be alive. Oh! if we could but get up into a watch-tower so high that from it we might behold the whole earth spread out under our feet, then I would shew you the wreck of a world, nation warring against nation and kingdom in collision with kingdom; some men tortured, others put to the sword, others swallowed up by the waves, some dragged away into slavery; here a wedding, there a funeral; men born here, men dying there; some living in affluence, others begging their bread; and not the army of Xerxes, great as that was, but all the inhabitants of the world alive now but destined soon to pass away. Language is inadequate to a theme so vast and all that I can say must fall short of the reality.

19. Let us return then to ourselves and coming down from the skies let us look for a few moments upon what more nearly concerns us. Are you conscious, I would ask, of the stages of your growth? Can you fix the time when you became a babe, a boy, a youth, an adult, an old man? Every day we are changing, every day we are dying, and yet we fancy ourselves eternal. The very moments that I spend in dictation, in writing, in reading over what I write, and in correcting it, are so much taken from my life. Every dot that my secretary makes is so much gone from my allotted time. We write letters and reply to those of others, our missives cross the sea, and, as the vessel ploughs its furrow through wave after wave, the moments which we have to live vanish one by one. Our only gain is that we are thus knit together in the love of Christ. "Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." [1 Cor. 13:4, 1 Cor. 13:7, 1 Cor. 13:8] It lives always in the heart, and thus our Nepotian though absent is still present, and widely sundered though we are has a hand to offer to each. Yes, in him we have a hostage for mutual charity. Let us then be joined together in spirit, let us bind ourselves each to each in affection and let us who have lost a son shew the same fortitude with which the blessed pope Chromatius³⁹ bore the loss of a brother. Let every page that we write echo his name, let all our letters ring with it. If we can no longer clasp him to our hearts, let us hold him fast in memory; and if we can no longer speak with him, let us never cease to speak of him.

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Cf. Letter XXXIX

2: 2 Cor. x 3 3: A Thracian tribe

4: The words are quoted by Cicero (T. Q. 3:13) apparently from the Telamon of Ennius. They are ascribed to Anaxagoras by Diog. Laert 5: In his De consolatione of which only a few fragments remain 6: In the first year of the Republic. Acc. to Livy (ii. 8) his son was not really dead 7: The

conqueror of Macedonia. He celebrated his triumph 167 b.c

8: Letter XXXIX 9: i.e. Epaphroditus 10: mhden agan, ne quid nimis. A saying of one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, 6th cent. b.c. See Grote 4:127

11:

Dedit escam. This is the reading of the LXX. The Vulgate, like the A.V., has "shall divide the spoil." Compare Letter LXIX 6

12: Letter XIV 13: For other allusions to a Roman officer's uniform see Letters LXXIX. and CXVIII

14: Acts x 15: Like Bonosus (Letter III. 4) 16: Nu. 11:16. Presbyterum. This name (afterwards contracted into Priest) is taken from that of the Elders of Israel

17: Letter LII 18: Jerome here confounds two distinct persons: C. Fabius Pictor was the painter; his grandson Q. Fabius the historian 19: 1 K. 7:14. A mistake of Jerome. It was Hiram's father who was a Tyrian 20: Hippias of Elis. See Cic. Or. 3:32 21: Conciliabula 22: A similar phrase occurs in Letter CXVIII 23: Plato, Phaedo 12:Cic. T. Q. 1. 31 24: Died 361 a.d

25: Julian 26: Died 363 a.d 27: Died 364 a.d 28: Died 375 a.d 29: Burned to death in a hut after the battle of Adrianople, 378 a.d 30: Died 383 a.d. by the hand of Andragathius 31: Strangled by Arbogastes at Vienne, 392 a.d 32: Aspirants to the purple who were put to death, the first by Valens, the second and third by Theodosius 33: Banished by Eutropius who had owed his advancement to him

34: The prime minister of Theodosius I. Shortly after the accession of Arcadius Gainas the Goth procured his assassination 35: One of the generals of Theodosius I., banished to the Oasis at the instigation of Eutropius 36: i.e. the Huns have taken the place of the Chaldaeans described in Hab. 1:8, LXX 37: Jornandes corroborates the account of the Huns here given by Jerome 38: Herod. 7:cc. 45, 46 39: Bishop of Aquileia. His brother Eusebius was also a bishop

Letters - letter_061

Letter 61. To Vigilantius.

Vigilantius on his return to the West after his visit to Jerusalem (whither he had gone as the bearer of letters from Paulinus of Nola-see Letter 58.) had openly accused Jerome of a leaning to the heresy of Origen. Jerome now writes to him in the most severe tone repudiating the charge of Origenism and fastening upon his opponent those of ignorance and blasphemy. He singles out for especial reprobation Vigilantius's explanation of 'the stone cut out without hands' in Daniel and urges him to repent of his sins in which case he will have as much chance of forgiveness as the devil has according to Origen! The letter is often referred to as showing Jerome's way of dealing with Origen's works. Jerome subsequently wrote a refutation of Vigilantius's work, of all his controversial writings the most violent and the least reasonable. See the translation of it in this volume. See also Letter 109. The date of this letter is 396 a.d.

1. Since you have refused to believe your own ears, I might justly decline to satisfy you by a letter; for, if you have failed to credit the living voice, it is not likely that you will give way to a written paper. But, since Christ has shown us in Himself a pattern of perfect humility, bestowing a kiss upon His betrayer and receiving the robber's repentance upon the cross, I tell you now when absent as I have told you already when present, that I read and have read Origen only as I read Apollinaris, or other writers whose books in some things the Church does not receive. I by no means say that everything contained in such books is to be condemned, but I admit that there are things in them deserving of censure. Still, as it is my task and study by reading many authors to cull different flowers from as large a number as possible, not so much making it an object to prove all things as to choose what are good. I take up many writers that froth the many I may learn many things; according to that which is written "reading all things, holding fast those that are good." [1 Th. 5:21] Hence I am much surprised that you have tried to fasten upon me the doctrines of Origen, of whose mistaken teaching on many points you are up to the present altogether unaware. Am I a heretic? Why pray then do heretics dislike me so? And are you orthodox, you who either against your convictions and the words of your own mouth signed¹ unwillingly and are consequently a prevaricator, or else signed deliberately and are consequently a heretic? You have taken no account of Egypt; you have relinquished all those provinces where numbers plead freely and openly for your sect; and you have singled out me for assault, me whom not only censure but publicly condemn all doctrines that are contrary to the church.

2. Origen is a heretic, true; but what does that take from me who do not deny that on very many points he is heretical? He has erred concerning the resurrection of the body, he has erred concerning the condition of souls, he has erred by supposing it possible that the devil may repent, and-an error more important than these-he has declared in his commentary upon Isaiah that the Seraphim mentioned by the prophet [Isa. 6:2. See Letter XVIII] are the divine Son and the Holy Ghost. If I did not allow that he has erred or if I did not daily anathematize his errors I should be partaker of his fault. For while we receive what is good in his writings we must on no account bind

ourselves to accept also what is evil. Still in many passages he has interpreted the scriptures well, has explained obscure places in the prophets, and has brought to light very great mysteries, both in the old and in the new testament. If then I have taken over what is good in him and have either cut away or altered or ignored what is evil, am I to be regarded as guilty on the score that through my agency those who read Latin receive the good in his writings without knowing anything of the bad? If this be a crime the confessor Hilary must be convicted; for he has rendered from Greek into Latin Origen's Explanation of the Psalms and his Homilies on Job. Eusebius of Vercellae, who witnessed a like confession, must also be held in fault; for he has translated into our tongue the Commentaries upon all the Psalms of his heretical namesake, omitting however the unsound portions and rendering only those parts which are profitable. I say nothing of Victorinus of Petavium and others who have merely followed and expanded Origen in their explanation of the scriptures. Were I to do so, I might seem less anxious to defend myself than to find for myself companions in guilt. I will come to your own case: Why do you keep copies of his treatises on Job? In these, while arguing against the devil and concerning the stars and heavens, he has said certain things which the Church does not receive. Is it for you alone, with that very wise head of yours, to pass sentence upon all writers Greek and Latin, with a wave of your censor's wand to eject some from our libraries and to admit others, and as the whim takes you to pronounce me either a Catholic or a heretic? And am I to be forbidden to reject things which are wrong and to condemn what I have often condemned already? Read what I have written upon the epistle to the Ephesians, read my other works, particularly my commentary upon Ecclesiastes, and you will clearly see that from my youth up I have never been terrified by any man's influence into acquiescence in heretical pravity.

3. It is no small gain to know your own ignorance. It is a man's wisdom to know his own measure, that he may not be led away at the instigation of the devil to make the whole world a witness of his incapacity. You are bent, I suppose, on magnifying yourself and boast in your own country that I found myself unable to answer your eloquence and that I dreaded in you the sharp satire of a Chrysippus.² Christian modesty holds me back and I do not wish to lay open the retirement of my poor cell with biting words. Otherwise I should soon shew up all your bravery and your parade of triumph.³ But these I leave to others either to talk of or to laugh at; while for my own part as a Christian speaking to a Christian I beseech you my brother not to pretend to know more than you do, lest your pen may proclaim your innocence and simplicity, or at any rate those qualities of which I say nothing but which, though you do not see them in yourself others see in you. For then you will give everyone reason to laugh at your folly. From your earliest childhood you have been taught other lessons and have been used to a different kind of schooling. One and the same person can hardly be a tester both of gold coins on the counter and also of the scriptures, or be a connoisseur of wines and an adept in expounding prophets or apostles.⁴ As for me, you tear me limb from limb, our reverend brother Oceanus you charge with heresy, you dislike the judgment of the presbyters Vincent and Paulinian, and our brother Eusebius also displeases you. You alone are to be our Cato, the most eloquent of the Roman race, and you wish us to accept what you say as the words of prudence herself. Pray call to mind the day when I preached on the resurrection and on the reality of the risen body, and when you jumped up beside me and clapped your hands and stamped your feet and applauded my orthodoxy. Now, however, that you have taken to sea travelling the stench of the bilge water has affected your head, and you have called me to mind only as a heretic. What can I do for you? I believed the letters of the reverend presbyter Paulinus,

and it did not occur to me that his judgment concerning you could be wrong. And although, the moment that you handed me the letter, I noticed a certain incoherency in your language, yet I fancied this due to want of culture and knowledge in you and not to an unsettled brain. I do not censure the reverend writer who preferred, no doubt, in writing to me to keep back what he knew rather than to accuse in his missive one who was both under his patronage and entrusted with his letter; but I find fault with myself that I have rested in another's judgment rather than my own, and that, while my eyes saw one thing, I believed on the evidence of a scrap of paper something else than what I saw.

4. Wherefore cease to worry me and to overwhelm me with your scrolls. Spare at least your money with which you hire secretaries and copyists, employing the same persons to write for you and to applaud you. Possibly their praise is due to the fact that they make a profit out of writing for you. If you wish to exercise your mind, hand yourself over to the teachers of grammar and rhetoric, learn logic, have yourself instructed in the schools of the philosophers; and when you have learned all these things you will perhaps begin to hold your tongue. And yet I am acting foolishly in seeking teachers for one who is competent to teach everyone, and in trying to limit the utterance of one who does not know how to speak yet cannot remain silent. The old Greek proverb is quite true "A lyre is of no use to an ass."⁵ For my part I imagine that even your name was given you out of contrariety.⁶ For your whole mind slumbers and you actually snore, so profound is the sleep-or rather the lethargy-in which you are plunged. In fact amongst the other blasphemies which with sacrilegious lips you have uttered you have dared to say that the mountain in Daniel [Dan. 2:34, Dan. 2:45] out of which the stone was cut without hands is the devil, and that the stone is Christ, who having taken a body from Adam (whose sins had before connected him with the devil) is born of a virgin to separate mankind from the mountain, that is, from the devil. Your tongue deserves to be cut out and torn into fragments. Can any true Christian explain this image of the devil instead of referring it to God the Father Almighty, or defile the ears of the whole world with so frightful an enormity? If your explanation has ever been accepted by any-I will not say Catholic but-heretic or heathen, let your words be regarded as pious. If on the other hand the Church of Christ has never yet heard of such an impiety, and if yours has been the first mouth through which he who once said "I will be like the Most High" [Isa. 14:14] has declared that he is the mountain spoken of by Daniel, then repent, put on sackcloth and ashes, and with fast-flowing tears wash away your awful guilt; if so be that this impiety may be forgiven you, and, supposing Origen's heresy to be true, that you may obtain pardon when the devil himself shall obtain it, the devil who has never been convicted of greater blasphemy than that which he has uttered through you. Your insult offered to myself I bear with patience: your impiety towards God I cannot bear. Accordingly I may seem to have been somewhat more acrid in this latter part of my letter than I declared I would be at the outset. Yet having once before repented and asked pardon of me, it is extremely foolish in you again to commit a sin for which you must anew do penance. May Christ give you grace to hear and to hold your peace, to understand and so to speak.

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Probably Aterbius (for whom see Jerome Apol. 3:33, and note on Letter LXXXVI.) had brought with him some test-formula of orthodoxy which he called upon all anti-Origenists to sign

2: A disciple of Cleanthes and Zeno, and after them the leading teacher of the Stoic school at Athens. He was born in 280 a.d 3: This expression is given in Greek 4: The father of Vigilantius is said by Jerome to have been an inn-keeper

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onw lur

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Jerome subsequently (Letter CIX.) nicknamed his opponent Dormitantius ('the Sleepy One'), his own name Vigilantius meaning 'the Wakeful. 0

Letters - letter_062

Letter 62. To Tranquillinus.

Tranquillinus, one of Jerome's Roman friends, had written (1) to tell him of the stand that Oceanus was making against the Origenists at Rome, and (2) to ask whether any parts of Origen's works might be studied with safety and profit. Jerome welcomes the tidings about Oceanus and answers the question of Tranquillinus in the affirmative. He classes Origen with Tertullian, Apollinaris and others whose works continued to be read in spite of their heresies. Written in 396 or 397 a.d.

I. Though I formerly doubted the fact, I have now proved that the links which bind spirit to spirit are stronger than any physical bond. For you, my reverend friend, cling to me with all your soul, and I am united to you by the love of Christ. I speak simply and sincerely to your spotless heart: the very paper on which you write, the very letters which you have formed-voiceless though they are-in-spire in me a sense of your affection.

2. You tell me that many have been deceived by the mistaken teaching of Origen, and that that saintly man, my son Oceanus, is doing battle with their madness. I grieve to think that simple folk have been thrown off their balance, but I am rejoiced to know that one so learned as Oceanus is doing his best to set them right again. Moreover you ask me, insignificant though I am, for an opinion as to the advisability of reading Origen's works. Are we, you say, to reject him altogether with our brother Faustinus, or are we, as others tell us, to read him in part? My opinion is that we should sometimes read him for his learning just as we read Tertullian, Novatus, Arnobius, Apollinarius and some other church writers both Greek and Latin, and that we should select what is good and avoid what is bad in their writings according to the words of the Apostle, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good" [1 Th. 5:21] Those, however, who are led by some perversity in their dispositions to conceive for him too much fondness or toomuch aversion seem to me to lie under the curse of the Prophet:-"Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" [Is. 5:20] For while the ability of his teaching must not lead us to embrace his wrong opinions, the wrongness of his opinions should not cause us altogether to reject the useful commentaries which he has published on the holy scriptures. But if his admirers and his detractors are bent on having a tug of war one against the other, and if, seeking no mean and observing no moderation, they must either approve or disapprove his works indiscriminately, I would choose rather to be a pious boor than a learned blasphemer. Our reverend brother, Tatian the deacon, heartily salutes you.

Letters - letter_063

Letter 63. To Theophilus. When the dispute arose between Jerome and Epiphanius on the one side and Rufinus and John of Jerusalem on the other (see Letter 51.), Theophilus bishop of Alexandria, being appealed to by the latter sent the presbyter Isidore to report to him on the matter. Isidore reported against Jerome and consequently Theophilus refused to answer several of his letters. Finally he wrote counselling him to obey the canons of the church. Jerome replies that to do this has always been his first object. He then remonstrates with Theophilus on his too great leniency towards the Origenists and declares it to be productive of the worst results. The date of the letter is probably 397 a.d.

Jerome to the most blessed pope Theophilus.

I. Your holiness will remember that at the time when you kept silence towards me, I never ceased to do my duty by writing to you, not taking so much into account what you in the exercise of your discretion were then doing as what it became me to do. And now that I have received a letter from your grace, I see that my reading of the gospel has not been without fruit. For if the frequent prayers of a woman changed the determination of an unyielding judge, [Luke 18:2-5] how much more must my constant appeals have softened a fatherly heart Auks yours?

2. I thank you for your reminder concerning the canons of the Church. Truly, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." [Heb. 12:6] Still I would assure you that nothing is more my aim than to maintain the rights of Christ, to keep to the lines laid down by the fathers, and always to remember the faith of Rome; that faith which is praised by the lips of an apostle, [Rom. 1:8] and of which the Alexandrian church boasts to be a sharer.

3. Many religious persons are displeased that you are so long-suffering in regard to that shocking heresy,¹ and that you suppose yourself able by such lenity to amend those who are attacking the Church's vitals. They believe that, while you are waiting for the penitence of a few, your action is fostering the boldness of abandoned men and making their party stronger. Farewell in Christ.

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That of the Origenists

Letters - letter_064

Letter 64. To Fabiola.

Fabiola's visit to Bethlehem had been shortened by the threatened invasion of the Huns which compelled Jerome and his friends to take refuge for a time on the seaboard of Palestine. Fabiola here took leave of her companions and set sail for Italy, but not until Jerome had completed this letter for her use (§22). It contains a mystical account of the vestments of the High Priest worked out with Jerome's usual ingenuity and learning. Similar treatises are ascribed to Tertullian and to Hosius bishop of Cordova, but these have long since perished. Its date is 396 or 397 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. Until this day, when Moses is read, the veil is over their heart. But when they will be converted to the Lord, the veil will be taken away. For the letter kills, but the spirit quickens. Now the Lord is a Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:15-18). For neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth: but God that giveth the increase (1 Cor. 3:7). Doth God take care for oxen? Much more from the liver of an ox, ram, and goat, and from the right arm, breast, and belly, in which the dung is digested; two of which are taken by the priests for eating: the third Phinehas deserves as a reward. Of the salvific victims, the fat with which the breast is covered, and the wings of the liver are offered upon the altar, but the breast itself and the right arm are given to Aaron and his sons as a legitimate and permanent portion by the children of Israel (Leviticus 7). The sense is in the heart, the dwelling-place of the heart in the breast. It is asked where the principal of the soul may be. Plato says, "In the brain"; Christ shows it in the heart: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And from the heart proceed wicked thoughts. "And what evil thoughts do you have in your hearts?" (Matthew 5:8 and 15:18 and 9:4). Pleasure and desire, according to those who argue about physics, reside in the liver. The priests offer its wing fluttering in various directions and bursting out through the windows of the eyes to God: so that after they have said to God, "let your burnt offering be fat," in Psalm 19, they may merit to receive the reward of a pure heart and arm. In the heart, there are clean thoughts, knowledge of the law, and truth of dogma: in the arm, good works and a fight against the devil with an armed hand: so that what they have conceived in their mind, they may prove by their example. For Jesus 'began to do and to teach' (Acts 1). Also, this small chest is called an ■π■θεμῶ, that is, an addition, or a principal and excellent one, for this term sounds better. From this we understand, according to Malachi: 'The lips of a priest guard knowledge, and they seek instruction from his mouth' (Malachi 1:7): that the priests should possess knowledge of the law and doctrine as their principal duty, and, by an addition of spiritual grace, should be established as men who can resist those who contradict them (Titus 1), and have nothing in their work to lead them to Tartarus, but have a right arm and are separate, so that, compared to the virtues of the priest's work, all other men are separated.

2. Moreover, three other parts, except for the first fruits of the sacrifices, and those from private individuals, and from the public butcher's stall where the motive is not religion, but necessity of food, are given to the priests: the arm, the jaw, and the stomach. We have already spoken of the arm. The jaw indicates an eloquent and learned speaker, so that we may express with the mouth what we conceive in our heart. The stomach is the receptacle of food, and pierced by the sacred priestly point in the belly of a Madianitish harlot (Num. 25), it condemns all the labours of men and the fleeting pleasures of gluttony to be rejected as dung; and it shows to those who are consecrated in mind to God that all we care for and all we eat ought to be thrown aside in the privacy of meditation. Hence the Apostle says: "Food for the stomach, and the stomach for food; but God will destroy both this and them" (1 Cor. 6:13), while he speaks of the luxurious as follows: "Whose belly is their god, and their glory in their shame" (Phil. 3:19). The people accepted the dust of calves which Israel had adored, into a drink of contemptuous superstition, that they might learn to despise what they saw cast into seclusion. It is commanded to the priests that they drink no wine or cider while ministering in the temple, lest their hearts be weighed down by drunkenness, excess, and the cares of this life: nor have any share in the land, except God alone (Leviticus 10); that they may be distinguished by no weakness: nor by cut-off ears, injured eyes, flattened noses, lame feet, or changed skin color, all of which are referred to the vices of the soul. The will indeed, not nature, is condemned in man. If someone among the priests has an issue of semen, he is prohibited from approaching the priestly table; and on the contrary the widow, whose feminine impulses died with Sarah, is received into the father's house on account of her self-control and chastity: and is supported from the temple treasury. And if she has children, they are required to take care of their parents, so that they may minister to them "who are truly widows" (1 Tim. 5. 3): and so that she who is sustained on priestly food is subject to no one else's love. Neighbors and hired laborers are excluded from the banquet of the priests, and the remains of the servants' food are granted. At that time, Phygelus and Hermogenes were rejected, and Onesiphorus was received. The first fruits of food and all kinds of fruits are offered to the Antistes: so that, having food and clothing, he may serve the Lord secure and free from any hindrance. The priests receive the firstborn of the animals of the world: the price of the unclean. Also the firstborn of men are redeemed, and because the condition of birth is the same, the price is offered equally moderate and light: so that neither the rich swells, nor the thin is burdened. The temple servants and janitors receive tithes: and in turn they offer tithes of tithes to the priests (Num. 18 and 35): as much less to them as they are greater than the people. Forty-eight cities are set apart for the Levites and priests to dwell in: six cities of fugitives are chosen beyond Jordan and within Jordan: and the end of the exile is the death of the High Priest. All that the hasty word portrays and which I merely touched upon, and did not reveal the mysteries of, belong to all priests: but I will briefly explain how great are the privileges of the High Priest.

3. "My head," he says, "I will not cover" (Lev. 21). He wears a turban and carries the name of God on his forehead. He is adorned with a royal diadem, he has come to the perfect age of Christ, he is always to be protected by his glory, and his garments he will not tear because they are white, pure and follow the Lamb, and made from the wool of slaughtered sheep. Tamar, having lost her modesty, tore her tunic (Gen. 38). Caiphas having lost his priesthood, tore his garments openly (Matt. 26). "He shall not enter upon any soul that is dead" (Lev. 21:11). Wherever there is sin, and in sin there is death, the Priest does not approach. «The soul that sins shall die» (Ezek. 18). Although he may be rich, although he may be powerful, and offer a multitude of victims, if he is

dead, he is not touched by the Priest, he is not seen. But if he rises again, and goes forth from the tomb at the voice of the Savior, and walks with the bonds of sin loosed (Jn. 11:12), the Priest will enter to him: and there he will make a dwelling place, and will dine with the risen.

4. "He will not be defiled by his father or mother" (Leviticus 21:11). Our emotions drive us to do many things, and when we focus on physical closeness, we offend the Creator of the body and soul. Anyone who loves their father or mother more than Christ is not worthy of Him (Luke 9). When a disciple desires to go bury his father, he is prohibited by the Savior's command. How many monks have lost their souls by feeling sorry for their father and mother! We cannot defile ourselves with regards to our father, mother, brother, sisters, cousins, family or slaves. We are of royalty and a priestly species. Let us look to him, our father, who never dies, or who dies for us: and who, in living, died so that he could give life to us who are dead. If we have anything from Egypt that the prince of the world can recognize, let us leave it to the one who holds Egypt with his cloak (Gen. 39). A young man, covered with a cloth, followed the bound Lord (Mark 14): he would have fallen into the snares if he had not, freed and naked, dodged the attack of his persecutors. Let us repay to our parents what belongs to our parents, if they are still alive: if they serve the Lord, let them boast that their sons are preferred to them.

5. "And from the holy he shall not go out, nor shall he defile the sanctuary of his God" (Leviticus 21:12). We will also give an account for every idle word we speak: "And all that doth not edify, proveth hearing." If I do or say anything worthy of blame, I would be departing from the path of the holy, and defiling the name of Christ, which I ought to love all the more. How much more so the Pontiff and Bishop, who must be without blame (Titus 1:7), abound in virtues, and always reside among the saints; ever ready to offer sacrifices for their people, bridging the gap between God and humanity, enshrining Christ's lamb, saying, "For the holy oil of Christ his God is upon him"; he shall never stray from that which is holy, lest he defile the garments with which he is clothed. For as many as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ (Gal. 3). Let us keep the tunic which we received, let us guard the holy [robe] in holiness. That inhabitant of the mountain, who was coming down from Jerusalem to Jericho, was not wounded before being stripped. A gentle healing balm is poured into him, tempered by mercy, and because he should have felt the pain of neglect, he is stung by the harshness of wine (Luke 10): so that he may be provoked to repentance by the oil, and may feel the severity of the judge through the wine.

6. "He shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow or one divorced or defiled by prostitution, he shall not marry; but he shall take as his wife a virgin of his own people, so that he shall not profane his offspring among his people. For I am the Lord who sanctifies him." (Lev. 21:14) I know that the high priest is understood by many to mean Christ, to whom these commands are now given, and that what is said, "he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people" is expounded of the virginal birth of Mary, and it is far easier to understand it of the Lord, who hears in the Psalm: "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Ps. 110:4) And in Zechariah: "Hear, O Jesus, great priest." (Zech. 3:8) and to whom the filthy garments of our sins are taken away, that they may receive the glory He had with the Father before the world was.

7. But lest anyone think that I am doing violence to the Scriptures, and thus loving Christ, so as to take away the truth of history, I will interpret in the members what is related to the head: I will understand the servants as being fulfilled in the Lord. Although the glory of the Lord is the glory of

the servants, and wherever the opportunity of the place may have led, I will so argue from the true light, that it may be derived to those to whom Christ has given that they may be a light. This high priest, whom the Mosaic text describes, does not take a widow who has been put away and a harlot for a wife. A widow is one whose husband is dead. A woman is put away who has been cast off by her living husband. A prostitute, who is open to the lust of many. But he will receive, he says, a virgin wife of his own kind, not a foreigner, so that in a bad land the grain of noble seed may not degenerate. Not a prostitute, who has been exposed to many lovers. Not an outcast, who was unworthy of her first marriage. Not a widow, lest she remember her former pleasures: but rather that soul which has no blemish, nor wrinkle, which, being reborn with Christ, is renewed from day to day, of which the Apostle speaks: For I have espoused you to one man, to present a chaste virgin to Christ (1 Corinthians 11:2). I do not want the disciple to be considered as the spouse of the Pontiff when anything is concerned with the old man. If we have risen with Christ, let us seek those things which are above. Forgetting the past, desiring the future. Unhappy Simon, because after baptism he thought of the old marriage, and did not come to the purity of the virgin, he was unworthy of the fellowship of Peter.

8. You compelled me, Fabiola, through your letters, to write to you about Aaron's priesthood and garments. I have offered more, in constructing a little preface, concerning the foods and firstfruits of the priests and the observance of the High Priest. Leaving Sodom, and hastening to the mountains, you do not want to live in the small city of Segor. Beyond the proselytes, passing by the Israelites, leaving behind the Levitical order, and flying like a bird, you arrive at the priest. But while you carefully inspect his clothing and the breastplate on his chest, our companionship displeases you. And indeed, you enjoy the desired leisure: and perhaps you long for the countryside near Bethlehem, next to Babylon. We, in Ephrata, finally restored to peace, hear the wailing child from the manger: and we want his lamentations and crying to reach your ears.

9. We read in Exodus, the tabernacle, table, candlestick, altar, pillars, tents, scarlet, linen, hyacinth, purple of gold, silver, and brass vessels, the tabernacle divided into three, twelve loaves placed on the table each week, seven lamps on the candlestick, the altar exposed to burnt offerings and sacrifices, cups, bowls, censers, basins, small mortars, skin bottles, and goat hair pillows, and incorruptible wood. So great and such things are presented in the tabernacle of God that no one despairs of salvation. One exhibits the gold of sense, another the silver of speech, another the voice of air. The whole world is described in the mystery of the tabernacle. The first and second vestibule was open to all, for water and earth have been given to all mortals. But in the holy of holies, as if to the sky and heaven, the entrance and flight of a few is. The twelve loaves signify the twelve months in a circle. The seven lamps demonstrate the wandering stars. And not to make it long (for it is not my purpose now to write about the tabernacle), I come to the priestly garments: and before I examine their mystical significance according to the Jewish custom, I will explain briefly what is written. So after you have seen the priest's clothing and have viewed all its ornamentation with your eyes, then we will investigate the meaning of each detail.

10. Let us first learn about the common vestments of priests and pontiffs. The genitalia are covered by the femoral lines, which reach the knees and the calves, and the upper part is tightly cinched below the navel: so that if they need to sacrifice victims, they can drag bulls and rams, carry loads, and serve in their office, even if they have stumbled and have revealed their thighs, what is covered up is not exposed. Hence, the steps of the altar are not allowed to be made, lest

the lower people see the genitalia of those ascending: and this kind of garment is called Machnase in the Hebrew language, in Greek περισκελ■, in our language feminalia, or breeches that reach the knees. Josephus reports (for in his time the temple was still standing, and Jerusalem had not yet been destroyed by Vespasian and Titus, and he himself was of priestly stock; and what is seen with the eyes is understood more easily than what is perceived by the ears) that these female garments used to be woven with byssus and then turned back for strength, and after they had been cut, sewn with a needle. For it is impossible to weave such things in a loom.

11. The second tunic made of linen is the ποδ■ρης, that is, the talaris, made of double sindon, which Josephus himself calls byssinam, and is called Chotonath, that is, χετ■ν, which in Hebrew is translated into linen. This clings to the body and is so tight and strict with sleeves, that there is not a single wrinkle in the garment: and it descends to the ankles. For the convenience of the reader, I want to use the common language. Soldiers usually have linen tunics, which they call camisias, that are fitted to the limbs and tight to the bodies, so that they are unencumbered either when running or in battle, directing a spear, holding a shield, wielding a sword, and wherever necessity leads them. Therefore, even the priests prepared for the service of God, use this tunic, so that having the beauty of clothes, they may run quickly while naked.

12. The third kind of garment is called by them the Abanet, we can say belt or girdle, or zone. The Babylonians call it by a new word, Hemian. We use different words so that no one will make a mistake in the name. This belt is woven into a circular shape like the skin of a snake, which sloughs off its old age: it is so woven that you would think it is longer than it is wide. But it is a fabric of scarlet, purple, hyacinth, and fine linen, artfully woven and embroidered, appearing like a piece of work consisting of various flowers and settings of precious stones. This tunic is held together at the waist by a belt, four fingers in width, and extending down to the feet, with the exception of the left upper arm, thus forming a loop, when it is needed for the purpose of sacrificing or military expeditions.

13. The fourth type of clothing is the round cap, which we see painted on Ulysses, as if a sphere were divided in the middle and one part placed on the head: this the Greeks and our people call a "tiara," some call it a "galerum," the Hebrews call it "Misnefeth": it has no point at the top and does not cover the whole head down to the hair, but leaves the front third uncovered; and so it is bound on the back by a ribbon, so that it does not easily slip off the head. It is made of linen so skillfully woven that no seam appears on the outside.

14. These four are the vestments, that is, the breeches, the linen tunic, the belt, which is covered with purple, scarlet, byssus, and hyacinth, and the cap, of which we have just spoken, which both priests and pontiffs use. The remaining four belong properly to the pontiffs, of which the first is the Mail, that is, the ankle-length tunic, entirely hyacinth, having sleeves sewn from the same color on the sides, and in the upper part, where it is worn around the neck, open, which is commonly called the "capitium", with the strongest borders woven from itself, so that they may not easily break. At the very end, that is, at the feet, there are seventy-two bells and as many pomegranates, woven with the same colors as the belt above. Among two bells there is a pomegranate; among two pomegranates there is a bell, so that each is in the middle of the others, and the reason is given. Therefore, the bells are placed on the garment, so that when the High Priest enters the Holy of Holies, he walks entirely vocally, immediately dying if he does not do this.

15. The sixth garment is called the Ephod in Hebrew language. The Septuagint calls it **■πωμ■δα**, that is, "superhumerales." Aquila calls it **■π■νδομα**, but we use the name Ephod. And wherever the term superhumerales is mentioned in Exodus or Leviticus, we know that it is called the Ephod in Hebrew. This is the garment of the High Priest and in a certain Epistle (to Marcellinus, xxix), as I remember writing, and all of Scripture testifies that it is a sacred item, and suitable for High Priests alone. Moreover, it is not immediately apparent that Samuel, who was a Levite, is written in the first book of Kings, to have worn a linen ephod when he was still a boy, just as it is reported that David also wore the same before the ark of the Lord. For one thing is to have been woven of the four above-mentioned colors, namely hyacinth, white linen, scarlet, and purple, and of gold; something simpler and of linen, like the robes of the priests. Leaves of gold, that is, thin sheets, are stretched out with incredible thinness, from which fibers are twisted, with an undergarment of three colors, hyacinth, scarlet, and purple, and with a linen warp; and a garment of marvelous beauty is created, dazzling the eyes like a garment of Caracalla's but without a hood. Nothing is woven opposite the chest, and that place is left for the future breastplate. He has on each shoulder single stones enclosed and bound in gold; they are called in Hebrew Soom, according to Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, onyx gems according to the Septuagint. Josephus calls them sardonyxes, in agreement with the Hebrew and Aquila, whether to indicate the color of the stones or their place of origin. And on each of the stones are engraved the names of six Patriarchs by which the Israelite people are divided. On the right shoulder are written the names of the elder sons of Jacob, on the left the names of the younger, so that when the High Priest enters the Holy of Holies he bears on his shoulders the names of the people for whom he is to pray to the Lord.

16. The seventh garment is a small measure, but more sacred than all those mentioned above. Pay attention, please, so that you may understand what is being said. It is called "Hosen" in Hebrew, but in Greek, **λ■γιον**, and we can call it Rationale, so that from the name itself you may know that what is being said is mystical. It is a short cloth made of gold and four woven colors, that is, the same ones as the Superhumerales, having a size of a hand per square; and it is double, so that it does not easily break. Twelve stones of amazing size and value are woven into it in four rows: so that in each verse, three stones are placed. In the first order, sardius, topazius, and smaragdus are placed. Symmachus dissents in the smaragdus, transferring it for ceraunium. In the second order, carbunculus, sapphirus, and jaspis. In the third order, ligurius, achates, and amethystus. In the fourth order, chrysolithus, onychinus, and berillus. And I wonder that the precious stone, hyacinthus, is not included in their number; unless perhaps it is otherwise called a ligurius. In each of the stones, according to the twelve ages of the tribes, names are sculpted. We read about these stones in the diadem of the prince of Tyre and in John's Apocalypse, from which the heavenly Jerusalem is constructed (Ezek. 28; Rev. 21): and under their names and appearances, the power, order, or diversity is indicated. Through the four Rational angles, there are four golden rings, having other four opposite to them on the Superhumeral, so that when the **λ■γιον** is placed in the place which we have called vacant in the Ephod, the ring comes against the ring, and they are joined together with hyacinthine ribbons. Furthermore, so that the size and weight of the stones would not break the woven threads, they were bound and enclosed with gold. This was not enough for the firmness, unless also chains of gold were made, which were covered for beauty with golden tubes, and had above two larger rings on the Rational, which were connected with golden hooks of the Superhumerales, and beneath two others: for behind, on the Superhumerales, against the chest and stomach, there were golden rings on both sides, which

were joined to the chains with the lower rings of the Rational: and so it happened, that both the Rational Superhumere and the Superhumere Rational were tightened, so that it would appear to the viewers as one woven texture.

17. [This number is missing from the Latin source]

18. The eighth plate is golden, that is, Sis Zaab, in which the name of God is written in Hebrew with four letters, Yod, He, Vav, He, which among them is called ineffable. This is added to the linen headdress common to all priests, and more so in the high priest, so that it is bound around the hyacinth forehead and crowned with the name of God, protecting the entire beauty of the high priest.

19. We have learned, both what is common to the priests and what are the special vestments of the high priest: and if there was so much difficulty in earthenware vessels, what majesty will be in the treasure that lies hidden within? Let us therefore first say what we have received from the Hebrews: and afterwards, according to our custom, we will unfold the veils of spiritual understanding. Four colors and four elements are referred to, from which all things subsist. Fine linen is assigned to the earth, because it is produced from the earth. Purple is assigned to the sea, because it is dyed with its shells. "Hyacinthus" means "hyacinth" in English, due to the similarity in color. "Coccus" means both "scarlet" and "purple" and is referred to as "Sani" in Hebrew. The word "Tholath" meaning "worm" is sometimes used to describe the red color in Latin. It is proper to remember that the Creator's Pontiff (Jewish High Priest) not only prays for Israel but also for the whole world, as the world consists of earth, water, air, and fire, which are the elements of all. Whereas the first linen garment represents the earth, the second hyacinthine [garment] shows the color of the air (or shows the air itself): for from earthly things we are gradually raised up to heights. And the garment itself, which reaches from the head down to the ankles, indicates that the air is diffused from heaven to earth. But the evil pomegranates and bells placed in lower positions show lightning and thunder: whether it is the harmony of earth and water and all the elements between them: and so everything is perplexed, so that everything is found in each one. But what is interwoven above with gold threads: they want to signify that the vital heat and providence of divine perception permeate everything. A shoulder garment and two stones, either emerald or onyx, which are on top and cover each shoulder, are interpreted as two hemispheres: one of which is above the earth, the other is below the earth, namely the sun and the moon, which shine from above. They interpret the ocean as that belt, by which the priest's chest is tightened, and the line of the tunic, namely, the earth, is enclosed. They have placed the earth, which is in the middle like a point, though it contains all things, nevertheless encompassed by all elements. Twelve stones, or the zodiac circle is interpreted, or twelve months, and each verse assigns individual times, and they appoint three months to them. And let no one seem that the explanation is to the pagans. For if the heavenly and God's arrangement, they have defamed with idols' names, therefore the providence of God must not be denied, which runs and is carried according to a certain law and governs all things. For in Job, we read the names of Arcturus and Orion, and the Mazuroth, that is, the zodiac circle and the names of the other stars (Job. 9 and 39). Not because the same words are used by the Hebrews, but because we cannot understand what is said unless familiar words are used. But the very thing which is in the midst is called the Rational; for everything is full of reason, and earthly things are attached to heavenly things: indeed, the reasoning of earthly things and times, of heat and cold, and the double temperance between both, descends from the course

and reasoning of heaven. Wherefore the Rational is more strongly bound with the Ephod. Moreover, what is said to be in the Rational itself is a declaration and truth, that is, a manifestation, and doctrine, or truth, which signifies that there is never falsehood in the reasoning of God, but the truth itself is shown to men by many signs and arguments, and comes even to mortal beings. From that which it was made, so that we might understand the reckoning of the sun and the moon, the year and the months and the times and the hours, and also the storms, calmness and winds, and knowledge of all things, taking inborn wisdom from God, both the inhabitant and the teacher, the knowledge of His dwelling and His construction showing to us. Above all, the sky shows a starry crown and a hyacinth ribbon: and the golden plate which is on the forehead of the Pontiff, with the name of God inscribed, indicates that everything which is underneath is governed by the will of God. By the same token, I think that it is represented under other names and in the figures of the Cherubim and the four Animals, which are so mixed and blended with each other that they are found in one another, and the rest: and that they proceed steadfastly, and go before them, and do not return. For time flows on, leaving past events behind, and hastening towards the future. But what is always in motion signifies that which, as philosophers suspect, runs the world with its own order, and is never-ending, twisted like a wheel on its axis: hence the wheel is on the wheel, that is, time in time, and the year revolves in itself: and the wheels themselves are raised up to the heaven, and above the crystal the throne is of sapphire, and above the throne a likeness of one sitting: the lower parts of whom are fiery, the upper parts are of amber; so as to show that those things which are below need fire and purification, and those that are above persist in the purity of their own condition. And just as here in the clothing of the priest, there is a golden plate from above, so in Ezekiel electrum is placed on the chest and on the head (Ezek. 1.8). It was therefore right (as we have said in part above) that the High Priest of God, carrying in his vestments the type of all creatures, should show that all things require the mercy of God. And when he sacrificed to him, the universal condition would be expiated, so that he would pray not only for children, parents, and relatives, but for all creatures, with voice and clothing.

20. We have touched the Hebrew exposition and having reserved an infinite forest of meanings for another time, we have laid the foundations of some future house. Concerning the female line, they are accustomed to say this: "Reason belongs to seed and generation pertaining to the flesh, the earth is appointed through it." Thus God also speaks to Adam, "Dust you are, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3. 19). And the reasons for this, how such beauty arises from a small seed and the most foul beginnings, neither is it clear, nor does it reveal itself to human eyes. We read in Leviticus (Lev. 8), according to the command of God, that Moses washed Aaron and his sons: already then the sacraments of Baptism signified the purification of the world, and the holiness of all things. They do not receive garments unless they have first washed off the dirt, neither are they adorned for the sacred rites unless they are reborn in Christ as new men. For new wine is put into new wineskins. But what Moses washes, this is a mark of the law. Let them heed Moses and the Prophets. And from Adam to Moses, all have sinned. "We are commanded by God to wash, and when we are prepared for the clothing of Christ, we shall put off our hairy tunics and be clothed with the linen garment, having nothing of death in itself but wholly white: so that when we rise from baptism, we may gird ourselves in truth, and all the sordidness of our former sins may be covered. Hence also David [says], 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered'" (Psalm 32:1).

21. After wearing the feminalia and linen tunic, we put on this hyacinth-colored garment and begin to ascend from earthly things to high things. This same hyacinthine tunic, called subucula by the Septuagint, is properly the Priest's and signifies that the reason for sublime things is not open to everyone, but to the greater and perfect ones. Moses and Aaron, the Prophets, and all those to whom it is said, "Ascend to a high mountain, you who bring good news to Zion" (Isaiah 40.9) had this. Nor is it enough for us to have the washing away of sins from the past, the grace of baptism, and secret doctrine, unless we also have works. Hence the ephod, that is, the Superhumale, is joined to it, which is coupled with the Rational garment: so that it is not loose, nor dissolute, but clings to each other and is of assistance. For both reason and works need each other: so that we may carry out by action what we perceive by mind. And two stones in the Superhumeral signify either Christ and the Church, the names of the twelve Apostles who were sent out to preach, or the letter and the spirit, in which all the mysteries of the law are contained. In the right is the spirit, in the left is the letter. Through letters we descend to words, through words we come to understanding. What a beautiful order, and from this very habit demonstrating the sacraments. In the shoulders are the works, in the breast is the reason. Hence priests also eat a small breast. But this is a twofold Rational thing, open and hidden, simple and mystical, having within itself twelve stones and four orders, which four I think are virtues, Prudence, Fortitude, Justice, and Temperance, which cling to each other; and while they are mixed together, they make the number twelve; or the four Gospels, which in the Apocalypse are described as full of eyes (Apoc. 14:6) and radiant with the light of the Lord, they illuminate the world. In one [there are] four, and in four [there are] each one. Therefore, the manifestation, and the truth, that is, the doctrine and truth, are in the heart of the priest. For when someone is dressed in multiple garments, it follows that he speaks the truth that he holds in his heart, and therefore in the Rational [mind] there is truth, that is, knowledge, so that he may know what is to be taught, and there is manifestation and teaching, so that he may instruct others what he has conceived in his mind. Where are those who say that innocence can suffice for a priest? The old law agrees with the new: what Moses did, so did the Apostle. He [Moses] adorns the priest's knowledge in his garments, and he [the Apostle] instructs Timothy and Titus in disciplines. But the order of garments also has its importance. Let us read Leviticus. Not first the Rational, and then the Superhumale, but first the Superhumale, and afterwards the Rational (Leviticus 8). "From your commands," he says, "I have gained understanding" (Psalm 118:104): let us first do, and then teach, so that the authority of teaching may not be undermined by lack of action. This is what we read in the Prophet: "Sow with righteousness, and reap the fruits of life; illuminate yourselves with the light of knowledge" (Hosea 10:12). First sow in righteousness, and harvest the fruits of eternal life, then seek knowledge. Yet absolute perfection is not immediate even if someone possesses the Superhumale and the Rational: unless these are firmly united to one another and interconnected: so that operation attaches to reason, and reason to action: and following these, there may be doctrine and truth.

22. The four elements about which we have spoken above, and the two stones, either onychinos or emerald, and twelve gems, which are placed in the Biblical breastplate, if there were time for me to discuss them, I would explain to you the nature and causes of each one, and what each one is worth, and how they are compared to each other in terms of virtues, having carefully investigated them, and having demonstrated it more fully. It is sufficient that even the Holy Pope Epiphanius has published an excellent book on this topic, and if you read it, you will acquire the fullest knowledge. I already understand that I am exceeding the limit of a letter, and I see that the wax of

the recipient is full. Therefore, I move on to the rest, so that the speech may finally be concluded. The golden plate gleams on the forehead: for knowledge of all things is of no use to us, unless we are crowned with the knowledge of God. We are clothed in lines, adorned with hyacinths, girded with a sacred belt, works are given to us, the Rationale is placed in our hearts: we receive truth, the word brings doctrine: all things are imperfect, unless a worthy charioteer is sought for such a beautiful chariot, and the Creator himself, standing on his creatures, governs those things he created. What was once shown on a plate is now shown in the sign of the Cross. The gold of the law, the blood of the Gospel is more precious. Then, a mark was made on the foreheads of those moaning, according to the voice of Ezekiel (Ezek. 9:4): now, carrying the cross, we say 'The light of your face, Lord, has been marked upon us' (Ps. 4:7). Twice in Exodus (Ex. 28 and 29), we read of the eight kinds of clothing for the High Priest, as commanded by the Lord and carried out by Moses. In Leviticus about seven (.....) are written (Lev. 8), and refer to how Moses clothed his brother Aaron. About female garments, nothing is said, for, as I believe, the law does not lay a hand on our genitalia and private parts. We must instead cover and veil these secret and shame-worthy parts and reserve the purity and conscience of women for the judgment of God. Of the other virtues, for example, wisdom, fortitude, justice, temperance, humility, meekness, generosity, others can judge; only conscience knows purity, and human eyes cannot be certain judges of this thing, without those who are exposed everywhere, like the animals' lust. Hence the apostle says: 'Concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord', as though Moses said: 'I do not clothe women, nor do I impose a necessity on anyone; whoever wants to be a priest, let him clothe himself.' Oh how many maidens, and how great purity hoped for will be dishonored on the day of judgment; how great infamy of others' purity will be crowned by God the judge. Therefore, let us ourselves assume the female dress, let us cover our privates; let us not seek the eyes of others. Let the genitals be covered so that they are not exposed to anyone's eyes: otherwise, if any indecency is seen when we enter the Holy of Holies, let us die.

23. Now my speech is ending, and I withdraw to higher things. The knowledge and learning of the Pontiff of God must be so great that even his steps and movements and all his vocal expressions should be knowledgeable. He must comprehend truth in his mind and it should echo and adorn his entire being, so that everything he does and says may be the teaching of the people. Without bells and different colors, and gems and flowers of virtues, she cannot enter the Holy Church nor possess the name of Bishop. When this short composition was being hurriedly dictated to the shore, as the rope was already being loosed, and the sailors were calling out for it more frequently, I quickly dictated with the language that I was able to remember and what I had gathered by reading continually in the Reasoning of my heart: aware enough that I flowed more from the impetus of speaking, rather than from the judgment of a writer, and that I was producing a tumultuous speech in the manner of a raging torrent. There is said to be a book of Tertullian about Aaron's vestments in the index, which as of today has not been found by me. If it has been found by you on account of the city's fame, I ask that my little drop not be compared to the river. For I am to be valued by my own abilities, not by those of great men.

Letters - letter_065

Letter 65. To Principia. A commentary on Ps. XLV. addressed to Marcella's friend and companion Principia (see Letter 127.). Jerome prefaces what he has to say by a defence of his practice of writing for women, a practice which had exposed him to many foolish sneers. He deals with the same subject in his dedication of the Commentary of Sophronius. The date of the letter is 397 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. I know that I, Principia, in Christ am a daughter, and am criticized by many for sometimes writing to women and preferring the weaker sex to men. And therefore I must first respond to my detractors, and thus come to the debate you requested. If men were to inquire about the Scriptures, I would not speak to women. If Barak wished to go to battle, Deborah would not have triumphed over the defeated enemies (Jude. 5). Jeremiah is imprisoned (Jer. 36), and because Israel, about to perish, did not receive the prophet who was a man, a woman named Huldah was raised up for them (2 Kings 22). The priests and Pharisees crucify the Son of God (Matthew 27), and Mary Magdalene weeps at the cross, prepares ointments, searches in the tomb (Mark 16), asks the gardener, recognizes the Lord (John 2), goes to the apostles, and tells them what she has found. They doubt, but she trusts. Truly a tower, truly a tower of brightness and Lebanon, which looks out on the face of Damascus (Song of Solomon 7), namely the blood of the Savior calling for repentance. Sara's womanliness had failed, and therefore Abraham was subject to her and it was said to him: Everything that Sara says to you, listen to her voice (Genesis 18). Their womanliness had failed, but you have never experienced womanliness. Gender is devoured by a virgin, she carries Christ in her body. She already possesses what is to come. Rebecca goes to inquire of God and hears proper replies to her questions: "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided" (Gen. 25: 23). She gives birth to two who are at odds with each other; you daily conceive, give birth, and generate one who is fruitful in union, multiple in majesty, and harmonious in Trinity. Mary, the sister of Moses, sings the Lord's victories (Exod. 15), and Rachel marks our Bethlehem and Ephratha through the line of her name in her descendants (Gen. 35). The daughters of Salphaad deserve to receive the inheritance among brothers (Num. 27). Ruth, Esther, and Judith are of such great glory that they have been given names in sacred volumes. The Prophetess Anna gives birth to a son, Levite, Prophet, Judge, venerable with sacred hair, and offers him in the tabernacle of God (I. Reg. 1. 2). Thecuities woman concludes the questioning of King David, teaches in riddles, and, by the example of God, mitigates. We read of another wise woman, who when her city was besieged and the army commander Joab was attacking the walls with a ram because of one traitor, spoke to the people with her wisdom, and by her feminine authority calmed the danger of the large crowd (3 Kings 10). What shall I say of the queen of Sheba, who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and by the testimony of the Lord condemned all the men of Jerusalem? Elizabeth prophesies by her womb and voice (Matt 2). Anna, daughter of Phanuel, in the temple, becomes a temple of God, and by daily fasting finds heavenly bread (Luke 1). Women follow the Savior and minister to him of their substance. He who fed five thousand men with five loaves, not counting women and children, does

not refuse the food of holy women. When talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, and satisfied with her conversion, he neglects the food that had been bought. Apollo, a male apostle and most learned in the law, is instructed and taught by Aquila and Priscilla on the way of the Lord. If it was not shameful for the Apostle to be taught by a woman, then why should it be shameful for me to teach both men and women?

2. I have briefly touched on matters such as these, most noble daughter, so that neither should you be ashamed of your sex, nor should men arrogate to themselves their own name, to the condemnation of whom the lives of women are praised in Holy Scripture. I am rejoicing and my soul is lifted up with exultation when I read of Daniel, Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, found in Babylon. How many elderly men and judges of Israel were stewed in the Babylonian kitchen! How many Susannas, which means lilies, there are, who with the purity of their chastity make their spouses happy, and who exchange the crown of thorns for the glory of triumph. You have Marcella and Asella there in the study of the Scriptures, and in the sanctity of mind and body: one of whom may lead you through green meadows and various flowers of divine Volumes to him who says in the Song of Solomon, "I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valley." (Song of Solomon 2:1); the other herself may deserve to hear the flower of the Lord with you: "As a lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters." (ibid. 2) And since we have begun to speak of flowers and lilies, and virginity is always compared to flowers, it seems appropriate to me, writing about the flower of Christ, to discuss many flowers.

3. Reading Psalm 44 in the title, I found: For the end, to them that shall be changed, for the sons of Core, a canticle for the beloved. It is written in Hebrew, Lamanasse Al Sosannim Labne Core Meschil Sir Ididoth: which we translate into Latin as; A victory for the lilies of the sons of Core, a loving song of instruction. Symmachus, in his own way, interpreted more manifestly triumph for flowers. So Sosannim, whether for those who are to be exchanged, or for those who are to be changed into lilies and flowers, means Meschil as well as instruction and extremely learned music; sir, it is an ancient hymn of Solomon, named from another sense as peaceful. However, four Psalms, though they differ in the latter part of the titles, are noted by this beginning, the forty-fourth, fifty-ninth, sixty-eighth, and seventy-ninth, of which the two middle ones are inscribed, David; the first and last, of both the Sons of Core and Asaph. It is not possible in the time of which we have begun to explain all.

4. "Rightly, those who at the end of the ages are to be changed, of whom the Apostle speaks: We will all sleep, but we will not all be changed (1 Cor. 15:51), are referred to the end. And this mystery itself prepares the reader for spiritual understanding. For where the sense is simple and clear, what is the need to forewarn the listener of understanding, and to say to him, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear' (Matth. 13)? A song is also sung for the most beloved and beloved, because through him the promised change will come to the saints." Which can indeed be understood in this life, when we strip off the old man, and put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge according to the image of the Creator, and contemplating the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image as if from glory to glory. There is no time when the Holy One does not change, forgetting the past and extending into the future, as our inner person is renewed from day to day. And the unchanging God who speaks through the prophet: I am God, and I do not change (Malachi 5:6), because of us he changed his face, took on the form of a servant, and transmigrated from Judea to the Philistines, who interpret as those falling by the cup (for they had

been intoxicated by the golden cup of Babylon), he was first ridiculed because of the foolishness of the cross, then accepted because of the glory of triumphs. But that one is most beloved, of whom Isaiah sings: I will sing a song to my beloved about his vineyard (Isaiah 5:1); and the Gospel: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, listen to him (Matthew 17:5). To whom not one prophet, but the whole choir of the sons of Core, now sing praises. And who the sons of Core are, that is, of Calvary, is more fittingly discussed in the forty-first psalm. And so that we may know that the title of the Song is fitting, he speaks of a change from one thing to another, as if the daughter is commanded to forget her ancient parent and submit herself to the embraces of the king. But he is the victor who says, "Have confidence, I have conquered the world" (John 16:33); and the one to whom this young man's prayer is addressed: "From You comes victory, wisdom, glory; and I am your servant" (3 Ezra 4:59), certainly knows who, with the Lord conquering, has conquered, and is a sharer in His triumphs, and who has woven an incorruptible crown of glory from the brightness of good deeds and the variety of virtues for the Savior.

5. "My heart has brought forth a good word." Symmachus interpreted it as "My heart was stirred by a good word," indicating that the heart of the speaker was moved by the discourse of another, and that, as the Holy Spirit revealed the future sacraments of Christ, this person also spoke clearly, so that, just as others spoke about His coming, this person spoke. "Eructavit," however, properly signifies the digestion of food and the expulsion of digested food into the wind. For just as belching rises from the stomach according to the quality of the food, a sign of good or bad odor, so do the thoughts of the inner man bring forth words, and the mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart (Matthew 12). The righteous one, having filled himself with food, fills his soul, and when he is satisfied with holy doctrines, he brings forth from the treasure of his good heart words that are good, and when he speaks with the Apostle: "Do you seek a proof of Him who speaks in me Christ?" (2 Cor. 13. 3) Some understand it to be said in the person of the Father, that from the lowest vital parts and secret places of the heart, he uttered His Word which was always in Him, according to the prophecy of another Psalm: "Before Lucifer, I have begotten you from the womb" (Ps. 109. 3). Just as the word "womb" does not mean a womb (for God is not divided into limbs), but shows the same substance of the Father and the Son, so too, the heart and the word which is brought forth from the heart reveal the Father and the Son. And what follows: "I will tell of my works to the king" (Ps. 32:9), they fit to the intelligence: "He said and they were made, he commanded and they were created" (John. 14): when the Father says it, the Son operates. For everything that the Father does, the Son does similarly, with the Father working through the Son in everything.

6. "I declare my works to the king." The prophetic choir of Christ and the Church, about to speak of sacred mysteries, lest it seem unworthy in song, and on account of the conscience of sinners, says to him: "Why do you declare my justice and take my testament in your mouth?" (Ps. 49:16). He confesses his works to the king, whom he will praise, so that either he may accept them if they are good, or he may cleanse them if they are bad; and he does what he is commanded: "Declare your iniquities that you may be justified" (Isaiah 43:26). And, 'The just accuser of himself is at the beginning of the discourse' (Prov. 18.17). However, this language is not only of the Hebrew but also of the Latin tongue, in order to declare treatises and writings. Therefore, even he who is about to sing praises to the Lord devotes his poem and work to Him, and for the sake of the Muses of the Gentiles, he invokes at the beginning the very one whom he is about to praise.

7. "My tongue is the pen of a quick writing scribe." This is what we have interpreted: "My tongue is the pen of a swift scribe." It is from the last part of the prologue, and connect with what follows: "My heart hath uttered a good word; I speak of my works to the king." Therefore, I must also prepare my tongue as a pen and stylus, so that the Holy Spirit may write through it in the hearts and ears of listeners. For my role is to provide an instrument in my tongue, so that it may sound like through an instrument what is its own. The pen writes on wax: a reed either on paper or on parchment, or on whatever material is suitable for writing. But my tongue, like a swift writer, whom we can understand as a notary, by a certain compendium of signs, has engraved in the tables of the carnal heart the concise and strict message of the Gospel. For if the Law was written by the finger of God, through the hand of the Mediator, and that which was destroyed was glorified, by how much more will the Gospel, which will endure, be written through my tongue by the Holy Spirit, so that the praises of Him of whom it is said in Isaiah, 'Take spoils quickly, plunder swiftly' (Isaiah 8:1), let the speech of believers be swift in the heart.

8. "Beautiful in appearance among the sons of men." In Hebrew: "You are more beautiful than the sons of men." The introduction being finished, the beginning of the narrative is approached, and an address is made to the beloved, and the king, to whom the words spoken are consecrated. But it is asked how he is more beautiful than all the sons of men we read about in Isaiah: "We saw him, and he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not." (Isaiah 53:2-3) Nor does the writing seem immediately discordant: for there the lowliness of the body is recorded on account of the lashes and spitting and slaps and nails, and the injustices of the gibbet: here the loveliness of virtues is in the sacred and venerable body. Not that the divinity of Christ is more beautiful than men; for She has no comparison: but without the passions of the cross, it is more beautiful than all. Virgin of a virgin, who was born not from the will of man, but from God. For if he had not had something in his countenance and eyes like stars, the Apostles would not have followed him immediately, nor would those who came to apprehend him have fallen (John 18). And finally, in the present testimony, in which it says "a man stricken and knowing how to endure infirmity," he gives the reasons why he has suffered these things. "Because he turned his face away," that is, with a little of his divinity removed, he abandoned his body to injury. Some connect this verse with the previous ones, so that "fairer in form than the children of men" refers not to Christ, but to the pen.

9. "Grace has been poured out on your lips, therefore God has blessed you forever. " In the Vulgate edition, we read "he blessed" instead of "he anointed." But it should be known that the error of the Septuagint translators should not be blamed, as they agree with the Hebrew truth in this place. Reading it, "Jesus increased in age and wisdom and grace with God and men" (Luke 2:52): and in another place: "They were amazed at the words of his grace that came out of his mouth" (Matthew 7:16): And that "He had the power of speech" (Mark 6:7) we can understand in what sense it was said: "Grace has been poured out on your lips." Noah found grace before the Lord in his days, and Moses, and the remaining prophets. But the entire multitude of grace was poured forth on the lips of the Savior, which in a short time filled the whole world. And he himself, as a bridegroom, proceeded from his chamber. 'His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit even to the end thereof' (Psalm 18). For even holy Mary, because she had conceived him in

whom all the fullness of divinity dwells bodily, is greeted full of grace (Luke 1). And the Apostle, knowing that his preaching, not in secular eloquence, but in the power of God, had surpassed all the teachings of the world, says: 'And my speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in shewing of the Spirit and power; That our faith might not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God' (1 Thessalonians 1:5). Rebuking himself for saying "I have laboured more than they all", he immediately added, "Yet not I, but the grace of God with me." And again, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10). The word "effusion" historically pertains to the Savior as a sign of the abundance of grace according to the saying, "I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh" (Joel 2:28). And, "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts" (Rom. 5:5). Note that understanding of all this should be referred to the person who was born of Mary and may be said to be eternally blessed by reason of the grace of his lips. It is this that the Apostle likewise preaches: "He humbled himself becoming obedient unto death, even to death on a cross." "Therefore God exalted him and gave him a name above all names" (Philippians 2:8). For just as the form of a servant is a disgrace to his passion, and the exaltation and gift of a name return to the Father, so too the pouring forth of grace and blessings here must be referred to him who can be humbled and grow.

10. "Gird your sword upon your thigh, most mighty one, with your beauty and your splendor." In Hebrew: "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O most mighty one, with your glory and your majesty." I believe you understand this passage very well, [it speaks of] being girded with the sword of Christ to fight. But so that you always know that virginity has the sword of chastity by which it cuts off the works of the flesh and overcomes pleasures; even the pagan error imagined armed virgin goddesses. Peter also girded his loins and had a burning lamp in his hands. But in what manner the thigh signifies the work of weddings, you will be taught briefly by these examples. When Abraham sent his servant to seek a wife for his son Isaac, he said to the chief servant of his household, "Put your hand under my thigh, and I will make you swear by the Lord God of heaven" (Gen. 24:2). No doubt through him who was to be born from his seed. After Jacob wrestled with a man who appeared to him at the Jaboc stream, leaving Mesopotamia and entering the land of the Promise, he did not obtain the name Israel until the nerve of his thigh was withered. And to his son: "The prince shall not fail from Juda, nor the ruler from his thigh" (Genesis 49:50). And again he, Joseph about to die, adjures him in his thigh not to bury him in Egypt. In the Book of Judges we also read: "Gedeon had seventy sons, who came out of his loins" (Judges 8:30). In Canticles, it is said, "Behold the bed of Solomon, sixty valiant men round about it, of the valiant of Israel. All holding swords, and most expert in war: every man's sword upon his thigh, because of fears in the night" (Canticles 3:7-8). Therefore, he mortified the works of the flesh by his glory and beauty, or the appearance and beauty of his divinity; and he who was born of a virgin was the prince of virginity for future virgins.

11. And attend with success, proceed and reign. For truth, meekness, and justice; and your right hand will lead you wonderfully. In Hebrew: "Ascend prosperously in your beauty; for the sake of truth, meekness of justice, and your right hand will lead you wonderfully." Secondly it is written among the Hebrews, in your beauty, in order to avoid anyone thinking that it was repeated by the error of copyists. And it is a figure that among rhetoricians is called repetition. Therefore, the panegyrist encourage the armed ones whom they extol with their speeches to fight: that having once seized the wars they do not abandon them, and that, striding victoriously over the ruins of the

enemy, they prepare a kingdom for themselves in those whom, having snatched from the power of the devil, they have joined to their own rule; and let them say: "But as for me, I have been established king by him over his holy Sion mount" (Psalm 2:6). And there is no doubt that Christ is called the Truth, Modesty, and Justice, who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). And, "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matthew 11:29). And, "He has become for us the righteousness and redemption and sanctification from God" (1 Corinthians 1:36). But all these things are said in the body so that they may be demanded in the members. The victory of the Lord is a triumph for his servants. The education of masters is the progress of students. And what follows, Your right hand will guide you in a wondrous way, either from the signs you committed in the Gospel, or tropically from the slaughter you exercised on your enemies, must be felt. The heart of the wise is on the right, and the heart of the fool is on the left. Christ is entirely on the right: Antichrist is in the left. The Hebrew interpretation differs in words, not in meaning.

12. Your arrows are sharp, most powerful. Peoples will fall under you into the hearts of the enemies of the king. In Hebrew, everything else is similarly without the most powerful. And this verse is particularly suited to you, who were wounded by the dart of the Lord, When the Bride in the Song sings, "I am wounded by love". No wonder your husband has many arrows, of which the 119th Psalm says, "The sharp arrows of the mighty with coals that lay waste", since he, Himself, is the arrow, and speaks through Isaiah, "He made me like a chosen arrow, he hid me in his quiver". (Isai. 49. 2). With these arrows, Cleopas on the journey, having been wounded with another, said, "Was not our heart burning within us while He spoke on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:39) And in another place, we read: "As arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are the children of them that have been shaken" (Psalm 126:4). With these arrows, the whole world was wounded and captured. Paul was the arrow of the Lord, who, after being sent by the Lord's bow from Jerusalem to Illyricum, flew here and there and hastened to go to Spain, so that, like a swift arrow under the feet of his Lord, he might overthrow the east and the west. And since there are many powerful enemies of the king who have been wounded by the burning arrows of the devil and are like deer struck by a spear in the liver; The arrows of the Lord are sent with blazing coals of desolation, so that whatever vice is in the heart of the king's enemies, may be burned away and the saving fire may cast out the destroyer.

13. "Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of your kingdom is a sceptre of uprightness. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows." In Hebrew: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." Understand two persons, he who is anointed of God, and He who anoints. And from where also the Hebrew word for God, Eagle of God, is not interpreted in the nominative case but in the vocative, saying, 'O God,' and we have put it for the understanding of God, which the Latin language does not accept; lest anyone wrongly think that God is named twice Father, beloved and loving and King. For although the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father, and both are a dwelling and throne for themselves, yet in this place, the word is directed to the King, who is God, and it is said to him that his kingdom (for this is what I understand by throne, according to what is written, 'I will place on your throne the fruit of your womb' (Ps. 131:11)) shall have no end. Indeed, the angel also announced to Mary: 'The Lord God will give her the throne of

David her father, and she will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and her kingdom will not end.' (Luke 1:32). Nor should we think this is contrary to what the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians, saying that the Son will deliver the kingdom to God the Father, and subject all things to the One who has subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15). For the Apostle did not say that the Son would deliver the kingdom to the Father, as if to seem to separate the Son, but that He would deliver it to God, that is, to God dwelling in assumption of the body, so that God may be all in all, and Christ, who was previously in each through a few virtues, may dwell through all in each. But the scepter and staff are symbols of the ruling power, as the Prophet himself indicates when he says, 'The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness' (Isaiah 11:1). Those who cite the testimony of Isaiah about the man who is taken from the root of Jesse, and from whose root a flower will arise, understand that he is the one to whom power is given and who is said to reign for the sake of beloved justice and against wickedness, being anointed with oil of rejoicing over his fellows, as if he were about to receive the reward of love and hatred of wickedness in his unction. But we are taught that both the seeds of love and hate are within us, since he himself who raised up the firstfruits of our bodies to heaven, loved justice and hated iniquity. Hence David said, 'Do not I hate them, O lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred.' (Ps. 138: 21.) Which is followed by, 'God hath anointed thee, thy God.' The first name of God must be understood in the vocative case, the following in the nominative. It is surprising to me that Aquila did not interpret it in the vocative case like he did in the first verse, but in the nominative, naming God who anointed the aforesaid God. Photinus is suppressed in this place, but Arrius lifts his head, giving testimony about the Gospel: "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." (John 20:17). But when he hears his beloved, girded with a sword on his thigh, will reign for the sake of truth and meekness, he is anointed because of beloved righteousness and hated iniquity, and anointed among his companions, about whom it is written: "We have become Christ's partners if we hold on to our original conviction firmly to the end." (Hebrews 3:14). I wonder why he calls only God of God to slander, as if everything that was said was suitable for the divinity of the Word and not for the humility of man. Let the Acts of the Apostles be heard: "Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 10:38). Let the Gospel be heard: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy offspring to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Let them feel the Lord himself thundering: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me" (Isaiah 61:1). But this signifies the Apostles and the believers who, having believed, were given the name of the anointed, that is, Christians, from Christ who was anointed.

14. "Myrrha and droplets and cassia from your clothing of ivory houses, from which the daughters of kings delighted in your honor." In Hebrew, "Myrrha and stacte and cassia in all your clothing from ivory houses, which made the daughters of kings rejoice in your honor." The preface itself taught you, therefore I wished to explain this Psalm to you, writing for a virgin, because I found the title for lilies and flowers. Therefore, I will relate these verses to you subsequently, to whom this book is written. You have mortified your members upon earth, and daily you offer myrrh to Christ. You are a good scent of Christ, and therefore you exhibit gum, that is, a drop or teardrop to the Lord. Those who know the powers of spices also tell that gum is the flower of myrrh. But what follows, cassia, is the plant which is called σμύκη by others, that is, a pipe, vocal in the praises of God, and cooking all phlegm and mucus with its heat of pleasures. Where it is written in our books,

"drop" or "teardrop," it is read "Maloth" in Hebrew. Therefore, Nicodemus prepared a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes to bury the Lord. And the bridegroom speaks to the bride: Myrrh and aloes with all the finest ointments. And she responds: My hands dripped myrrh; my hands were filled with myrrh. Cast away the works of death you do. Buried with Christ in baptism, may you be dead to this world and think only of heavenly things, speaking to your spouse: My hands dripped myrrh; my hands were filled with myrrh. We also read of the priestly ointment, which is mentioned by David: It is like the precious oil on the head, which ran down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, which ran down to the collar of his robes. In which when mixed with other aromatics and storax, the Magi offer myrrh. And in this place, the beginning of Christ's garments is to take on his death, and to demonstrate it in his flesh. Prepare these garments for your spouse: let him walk adorned in these clothes by you. And when you have woven such garments for him, you yourself will become the temple of God, and you will make him joyful with houses of ivory, or as it is better written in Hebrew, with a temple of teeth; and you will sing praises to the Lord, imitating the choirs of the Angels of the whole world, dead though they are. For ivory and teeth are marks of death, and the very nature of the names of things bears witness to this. And consequently it is added: 'From these things the daughters of kings delighted; in your honor.' Your spouse is the King of kings and Lord of lords. These kings who are under such a king are your fathers, who bore you by the Gospel doctrine. You, their daughter, are adorned with all kinds of clothing and good scents, and in the ivory temple you are the one of whom it was said: 'Grace has been poured upon your lips'; and, 'Gird your sword upon your thigh, O most mighty, with your arrows sharp'; and, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.' Because we have translated to ivory buildings, since in Greek it is written "■π■ βαρ■ων ■λεφαντ■νων," some Latin speakers, due to the ambiguity of the word, interpreted it as "gravibus," when "β■ρις" is a local word of Palestine: and even today, houses completely enclosed on all sides and built in the manner of public towers and walls are called "β■ρεις."

15. "Your queen stands at your right hand, arrayed in a robe of gold"; and what follows: "arrayed in variety", except in the Vulgate edition, none of the interpreters have translated. In Hebrew, "Your mate stood at your right hand, wearing a crown of gold." Where we translate mate, she is called Segal among the Hebrews. For which Aquila has translated σ■γκοιτον, i.e., concubine; Symmachus and the Fifth Version have translated παλλακ■ν, i.e., mistress; the Septuagint, Theodotion, and the Sixth Version have translated queen. Then, where I placed it, Symmachus transferred it to a golden diadem, in the first gold: The Eagle, Fifth and Sixth Editions, in pigment, or in Ophir gold. Which are the daughters of kings, and are prepared for the embrace of the bridegroom, through myrrh and drops and cassia and ivory houses they delight, whose throne is forever and ever. But the Catholic church, which is now established on a firm rock in Christ, stands as one dove, perfect and next to him on the right, and has nothing on its left. It stands in golden robes, passing from the words of Scriptures into meaning, and full of all virtues: or as we have translated, in a golden diadem. For it is queen and reigns with the king: whose daughters we can understand to be both the souls of the faithful in common and the choirs of virgins in particular. Ophir is a type of gold, from a place in India or from a color given that name. For indeed there are seven words for gold in Hebrew. Let us also understand wife and concubine from the Song of Solomon, who cannot sleep without her spouse or husband.

16. "Listen, daughter, and see, and incline your ear, and forget your people and your father's house, and the king will desire your beauty, because he is the Lord your God, and they will adore him." In Hebrew, "Listen, daughter, and see, and incline your ear, and forget your people and your father's house, and the king will desire your beauty; for he is your Lord, and adore him." Thus through the prophet's language, which the Holy Spirit speaks, comparing it quickly to the writer's pen, he speaks to the king himself, and warrior, and God, addressing him as the bridegroom. Here the person of the Father speaking to the bride of his Son is introduced, and encourages her to first pay attention to what is said, with contempt for the errors of old gentility and idolatry, and for the reason why she is named daughter of a foreigner; then to see either the things that are said themselves, or the whole situation, understanding the invisible from visible things, and sensing the Creator from the created things, and to incline her ear diligently so that she may remember what is said. And when she hears, sees, and inclines her ear, surrendering herself entirely to the teaching and understanding what is said, let her forget her own people at first: and like Abraham leaving Chaldea, let her leave the land of her birth and her relatives. No one doubts that our father, before we were adopted by God, was the devil, from whom the Savior says: "You are born of the father of the devil" (John 8. 44). Therefore, he says, when you have forgotten the father of old, and have shown yourself to be such, laying aside your former filth, so that you may ascend adorned over your brother, and my Son may love you, then the king will desire your beauty. And lest you think you are one of the crowd, from whom you are to be loved, he is your King and Lord. But since sometimes, those who are kings and lords, are indeed kings and lords by power, still of the same nature, to whom they rule and reign; I tell you that he is your God, and you ought to worship Him. The seventy translators did not say "you shall worship him," but rather "they shall worship him," to make sense: He who will love you and treasure your beauty is God, and to be worshiped by all. Let each person refer to himself what we have explained about the Church gathered from the nations, and the soul of the believer, left behind by previous vices, should be adopted as a daughter; let him incline his ear and forget his old way of life. And, following the Apostle, let him lay his dead father to rest and present himself as one who is loved by the king. For he is the Lord of him who should bow the knee, and, having set aside pride, he should assume the yoke of humility.

17. Let us ask the Jews who this daughter is to whom God speaks. I have no doubt that they will respond the Synagogue. And how is it said to the Synagogue and the Jewish people, 'Leave your people and the house of your father'? Will he leave the Hebrew nation and Abraham, the ancient father? If they say that Abraham, who left the Chaldeans, is meant by the calling, who is this king who will love the splendor of Abraham? Certainly, there is another who speaks: 'Hear daughter,' and another of whom it is said: 'The king will desire your beauty.' This other is not only a king, but also the Lord and God, who is to be adored.

18. Daughter of Tyre, the rich people of the crowd will implore your face in gifts. In Hebrew it is: 'Oh daughter of the strongest, in gifts the rich people of the population will implore your face.' The Hebrew word Sor, which we read in Ezekiel according to the Septuagint, can be interpreted as Tyre, tribulation, strongest, or strongest, and Flint, that is, the hardest stone. Hence the error arose in the present location: for Aquila, Septuagint, Theodotion, and the Fifth Edition have interpreted Tyre. On the sixth day Symmachus interpreted the Hebrew word as κραται■ν, meaning, "strongest." We apply this to God, and as the woman [in the biblical passage] had said, "Listen daughter, and see, the daughter is called strongest." Or, she indeed is the strongest, because she

had imitated a powerful Father, whose face will be invoked by the wealthy people of the crowd in various gifts. Wealthy in all good works and knowledge; either those who are considered wealthy in this century, who are wise in this world and educated in the disciplines of philosophers; or, better yet, those who had been rich before, who held the speeches of God, and the Covenants, and the Prophets, that is, from the people of Israel. For just as, before the coming of the Savior, those from Tyre, that is from the people of the Gentiles, who wished to become proselytes, prayed to the rich people of Israel and through them were introduced into the Temple; so after the coming of the Lord, whoever from Israel wish to believe (once rich in the intimacy and protection of God), they will come to the daughter of Tyre and, offering various gifts of virtues and confession in Christ, pray to her that they may find the salvation they have lost in Judea among the Gentiles.

19. "All the glory of the daughter of the king is from within, adorned with various golden fringes." In Hebrew: "All the glory of the daughter of the king is within, dressed in golden bands." Because it is written in the Septuagint as "inside," and we have interpreted it as "within"; in some copies, "Esebon" is found, which means "thoughts." From which is demonstrated every glory of the Church, of which it is said above, "Hear, daughter, and see," and "O daughter of Tyre," and now she is called the daughter of the king, to be intrinsic, and in thoughts, that is, in the interior man, and in an unmanufactured circumcision, but in the spirit; having confidence of conscience before God and all beauty placed more in the name of the senses than in the flower of words. However, just as in the warp from which the fringes hang, the undergarment is woven, and all the power of the garment is in the warp, so in various senses of the Scriptures, in which the whole garment of the Church is woven, some things are mixed of nature and manners, and this is also signified by the garment of Aaron woven from gold, purple, scarlet, fine linen, and hyacinth (Exodus 28:39), which the women made, to whom God gave wisdom for weaving. And so that we can understand all the adornment of the king's daughter within, she speaks in the Song: 'The king brought me into his chamber' (Song of Solomon 1:15, Matthew 6:9) in which, with the door of our lips closed, we are commanded to pray to God the Father. The title of the ninth Psalm is also inscribed, 'For hidden things of the Son.' Joseph also had a diverse coat (Gen 37) which the mother Church wove for him. Of these fringes, the woman with the issue of blood touched one of the Savior's and was healed (Matt 9, Mark 5, Luke 8). And what is written in Hebrew, 'she was clothed in golden fringes,' means the same as what was said above: 'All the glory of the king's daughter is within;' with the fringes of divine senses, the inner members of the Church are wrapped and the whole uterus of pride is covered. The bride cannot forget these fringes, according to Jeremiah (ch. 2), which bind the breasts and protect the chest, where the thoughts are.

20. "Virgins will be brought to the king after her, her neighbors will be brought to you. They will be brought with joy and exultation, they will be led into the temple of the king." The prior verse in the Septuagint still sings about the decoration of the daughter; the following is directed to the groom and king himself. Furthermore, according to the Hebrew, everything is said to the bride up to the point where it is written: "You will set them as leaders throughout the land." And it is read; "In embroidered garments she is led to the king, her virgin companions following her. Those brought in her train are led to you. They are brought in with gladness and rejoicing; they enter the palace of the king." The difference in souls of believers in Christ is shown to be great in the Song of Songs, in which it is written: "Sixty queens there may be, and eighty concubines, and virgins beyond number." She is my dove, my perfect one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the darling of

her who bore her. The young women saw her and called her blessed; the queens and concubines also, and they praised her. (Song of Solomon 6:7 and following verses). Therefore, she was worthy to be called perfect and holy in body and spirit, and to be called a dove and a companion. This is the daughter, of whom it was said above, 'There is the queen, standing in her gold attire.' But those who have passed beyond the six days of the world and yearn for future kingdoms are called queens. And if any has circumcision on the eighth day but has not yet come to the marriage, she is called a concubine. But the diverse multitude of believers, who are not yet able to be united in the embrace of the bridegroom, nor to bear children from him, are called adolescentula. I think of those virgins who follow the Church, and are placed in the first rank, and of you and all those who persevere in the virginity of body and soul. But the next and intimate ones should be widows and remain continent in marriage: all of whom are led with joy and exultation to the temple and into the chamber of the king. In the temple, as priests of God: in the chamber, as the bride and groom's spouses. This temple John saw in the Apocalypse (Rev. 21), and the prophet desired it. 'I have asked one thing from the Lord; this I will seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life' (Ps. 26:4). And again: 'O Lord, I have loved the beauty of your house, and the place of dwelling of your glory' (Ps. 25:8). And in another place: 'For I shall pass over into the place of tabernacle of admirable, even to the house of God; With the voice of joy and praise; the noise of one feasting' (Ps. 41:5). But the shields, with which the queen is adorned as she is united to her spouse, are the same as we read in the Septuagint 'arrayed in a variety of colors.'

21. "For your fathers have begotten thee sons, thou shalt make them princes over all the earth." In Hebrew: "For thy fathers have begotten thee sons, thou shalt set them princes over the whole earth." And from the person of the Father it is certainly not spoken of the daughter, but again, the discourse can be understood as referring to the daughter; and from the Holy Spirit, and from the sons of Korah. If, therefore, the discourse is directed to the daughter as a bride, but the bride is gathered from the nations, of whom it is said above: "Forget thy people and thy father's house," we must know the bride's fathers, in order that we may consequently know the sons also. For your ancestors, about whom you spoke in Jeremiah: 'How falsely our fathers possessed idols, and there is no rain in them' (Jeremiah 14. 22 and 16. 19). For Plato, and for other teachers of diverse dogmas and errors, sons were born to you, whom you made your rulers, and you made them teachers among the people. Or rather, O Church, your sons whom you have begotten will turn into fathers, when you have made disciples into teachers, and placed them in the priestly rank as a testimony of all. But if we understand the Fathers of the Church to be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the Patriarchs; let us understand the Apostles as their sons, who were born to them in honor of their fathers and who were sent by the Lord to preach to the ends of the earth, and to baptize believers in the name of the Trinity. But it is asked how the Church could have fathers from among the gentiles, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, when it is said of them: "Forget your people and your father's house." Let us read the Gospel: "Do not say that we have Abraham as our father: God is able from these stones," that is, from the hard hearts of the Gentiles, "to raise up children to Abraham" (Matthew 2:9). And elsewhere: "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39). And in Genesis, God himself speaks to Abraham, "All nations will be blessed in your offspring" (Gen. 12:3). For just as he was justified by faith in circumcision, so we will also be justified in the same faith, if we have the faith and works of our Father Abraham. This can be said of the Savior himself, or by the Father, or by the prophetic choir and Holy Spirit. For your fathers, namely the Jews who rejected and denied you, you have begotten sons, the

Apostles, and believers from the nations whom you have established as leaders in all the earth.

22. I will remember your name in every generation and generation. Therefore, peoples will confess to you forever, and into the age of ages." In Hebrew: "I will remember your name in every generation and generation. Therefore peoples will praise you forever and ever. "What we have interpreted as 'they will praise you', Symmachus translated as 'they will commend you.' The queen, who stood at the right hand of the king in a robe of gold, and had been ordered to forget her people and her father's house; and again it had been said to her: 'For your fathers, sons were born to you, you shall make them princes over all the earth,' understanding how great was the glory to be adorned and with what rewards to be lifted up, turns her voice to her bridegroom and promises to always remember the name of her spouse, in every generation. What he promised, we see fulfilled. Christian herself imposed on us all the name of Christians: a new name, in which "all families of the nations will be blessed". But she remembers not in one generation, but in all: signifying either all nations, or two generations, of Jews and Gentiles. And because this is not enough if the name of the Lord is remembered in two generations, therefore the peoples who have been in the Church will confess and praise the Lord forever and ever. When you too, O daughter of the Princes, are led amidst the choir of saints, and delight your spouse in your ivory palace, remember me, who by the revelation of the Lord have given you an understanding of this Psalm and say, 'I will be mindful of your name,' so that if life accompanies you, you may understand the whole Canticle of Canticles.

Letters - letter_066

Letter 66. To Pammachius.

Pammachius a Roman senator, had lost his wife Paulina one of Paula's daughters, while she was still in the flower of her youth. It was not till two years had elapsed that Jerome ventured to write to him; and when he did so he dwelt but little on the life and virtues of Paulina. Probably there was but little to tell. The greater part of the letter is taken up with commendation of Pammachius himself who, in spite of his high rank and position, had become a monk and was now living a life of severe self-denial. Jerome speaks approvingly of the Hospice for Strangers which, in conjunction with Fabiola, Pammachius had set up at Portus, and describes his own somewhat similar institutions at Bethlehem. He also mentions Paula, Eustochium, and the dead Blaesilla, all in terms of the highest praise. The date of the letter is 397 a.d.

I. Supposing a wound to be healed and a scar to have been formed upon the skin, any course of treatment designed to remove the mark must in its effort to improve the appearance renew the smart of the original wound. After two years of inopportune silence my condolence now comes rather late; yet even so I am afraid that my present speech may be still more inopportune. I fear lest in touching the sore spot in your heart I may by my words inflame afresh a wound which time and reflection have availed to cure. For who can have ears so dull or hearts so flinty as to hear the name of your Paulina without weeping? Even though reared on the milk of Hyrcanian tigresses¹ they must still shed tears. Who can with dry eyes see thus untimely cut down and withered an opening rose, an undeveloped bud,² which has not yet formed itself into a cup nor spread forth the proud display of its crimson petals? In her a most priceless pearl is broken. In her a vivid emerald is shattered. Sickness alone shews us the blessedness of health. We realize better what we have had when we cease to have it.

2. The good ground of which we read in the parable brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold. [Matt. 13:8] In this threefold yield I recognize an emblem of the three different rewards of Christ which have fallen to three women³ closely united in blood and moral excellence. Eustochium culls the flowers of virginity. Paula sweeps the toilsome threshing floor of widowhood. Paulina keeps the bed undefiled of marriage. A mother with such daughters wins for herself on earth all that Christ has promised to give in heaven. Then to complete the team-if I may so call it-of four saints turned out by a single family, and to match the women's virtues by those of a man, the three have a fit companion in Pammachius who is a cherub such as Ezekiel describes, [Ezek. 10:8-22] brother-in-law to the first. son-in-law to the second, husband to the third. Husband did I say? Nay, rather a most devoted brother; for the language of marriage is inadequate to describe the holy bonds of the Spirit. Of this team Jesus holds the reins, and it is of steeds like these that Habakkuk sings: "ride upon thy horses and let thy riding be salvation." [Hab. 3:8, LXX] With like resolve if with unlike speed they strain after the victor's palm. Their colours are different; their object is the same. They are harnessed in one yoke, they obey one driver, not waiting for the lash but answering the call of his voice with fresh efforts.

3. Let me use for a moment the language of philosophy. According to the Stoics there are four virtues so closely related and mutually coherent that he who lacks one lacks all. They are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. [Cf. Wisdom, 8:7] While all of you possess the four, yet each is remarkable for one. You have prudence, your mother has justice, your virgin sister has fortitude, your wedded wife has temperance. I speak of you as wise, for who can be wiser than one who, despising the folly of the world, has followed Christ "the power of God and the wisdom of God"? [1 Cor. 1:24] Or what better instance can there be of justice than your mother, who having divided her substance among her offspring has taught them by her own contempt of riches the true object on which to fix their affections? Who has set a better example of courage than Eustochium, who by resolving to be a virgin has breached the gates of the nobility and broken down the pride of a consular house? The first of Roman ladies, she has brought under the yoke the first of Roman families. Has there ever been temperance greater than that of Paulina, who, reading the words of the apostle: "marriage is honourable in all and the bed unde filed," [Heb. 13:4] and not presuming to aspire to the happiness of her virgin sister or the continence of her widowed mother, has preferred to keep to the safe track of a lower path rather than treading on air to lose herself in the clouds? When once she had entered upon the married state, her one thought day and night was that, as soon as her union should be blessed with offspring, she would live thenceforth in the second degree of chastity,⁴ and "Though woman, foremost in the high emprise," [Virg. A. 1:494] would induce her husband to follow a like course. She would not forsake him but looked for the day when he would become a companion in salvation. Finding by several miscarriages that her womb was not barren, she could not give up all hope of having children and had to allow her own reluctance to give way to the eagerness of her mother-in-law and the chagrin of her husband. Thus she suffered much as Rachel suffered, [Gen. 35:16] although instead of bringing forth like her a son of pangs and of the right hand,⁵ the heir she had longed for was no other than her husband. I have learned on good authority that her wish in submitting herself to her husband was not to take advantage of God's primitive command "Be faithful and multiply and replenish the earth" [Gen. 1:28] but that she only desired children that she might bring forth virgins to Christ.

4. We read that the wife of Phinehas the priest, on hearing that the ark of the Lord had been taken, was seized suddenly with the pains of travail and that she brought forth a son Ichabod and died a mother in the hands of the women who nursed her. [1 Sam. 4:19-22] Rachel's son is called Benjamin, that is 'son of excellence' Or 'of the right hand'; but the son of the other, afterwards to be a distinguished priest of God, derives his name from the ark.⁶ The same thing has come to pass in our own day, for since Paulina fell asleep the Church has posthumously borne the monk Pammachius, a patrician by his parentage and marriage, rich in alms, and lofty in lowliness. The apostle writes to the Corinthians, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men, not many noble are called." [1 Cor. 1:26] The conditions of the nascent church required this to be so that the grain of mustard seed might grow up little by little into a tree, [Matt. 13:31] and that the leaven of the gospel might gradually raise more and more the whole lump of the church. [Matt. 13:33] In our day Rome possesses what the world in days gone by knew not of. Then few of the wise or mighty or noble were Christians; now many wise powerful and noble are not Christians only but even monks. And among them all my Pammachius is the wisest, the mightiest, and the noblest; great among the great, a leader among leaders, he is the commander in chief of all monks. He and others like him are the offspring which Paulina desired to have in her life time and which she has given us in her death. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into

singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child"; [Isa. 54:1] for in a moment thou hast brought forth as many sons as there are poor men in Rome.

5. The glowing gems which in old days adorned the neck and face of Paulina now purchase food for the needy. Her silk dresses and gold brocades are exchanged for soft woollen garments intended to keep out the cold and not to expose the body to vain admiration. All that formerly ministered to luxury is now at the service of virtue. That blind man holding out his hand, and often crying aloud when there is none to hear, is the heir of Paulina, is co-heir with Pammachius. That poor cripple who can scarcely drag himself along, owes his support to the help of a tender girl. Those doors which of old poured forth crowds of visitors, are now beset only by the wretched. One suffers from a dropsy, big with death; another mute and without the means of begging, begs the more appealingly because he cannot beg; another maimed from his childhood implores an alms which he may not himself enjoy. Still another has his limbs rotted with jaundice and lives on after his body has become a corpse. To use the language of Virgil:

"Had I a hundred tongues, a hundred lips,

I could not tell men's countless sufferings." [Virg. A. 6:625, 627]

Such is the bodyguard which accompanies Pammachius wherever he walks; in the persons of such he ministers to Christ Himself; and their squalor serves to whiten his soul. Thus he speeds on his way to heaven, beneficent as a giver of games to the poor, and kind as a provider of shows for the needy. Other husbands scatter on the graves of their wives violets, roses, lilies, and purple flowers; and assuage the grief of their hearts by fulfilling this tender duty. Our dear Pammachius also waters the holy ashes and the revered bones of Paulina, but it is with the balm of almsgiving. These are the confections and the perfumes with which he cherishes the dead embers of his wife knowing that it is written: "Water will quench a flaming fire; and alms maketh an atonement for sins." [Ecclus. 3:30] What great power compassion has and what high rewards it is destined to win, the blessed Cyprian sets forth in an extensive work.⁷ It is proved also by the counsel of Daniel who desired the most impious of kings-had he been willing to hear him-to be saved by shewing mercy to the poor. [Dan. 4:27] Paulina's mother may well be glad of Paulina's heir. She cannot regret that her daughter's wealth has passed into new hands when she sees it still spent upon the objects she had at heart. Nay, rather she must congratulate herself that without any exertion of her own her wishes are being carried out. The sum available for distribution is the same as before: only the distributor is changed.

6. Who can credit the fact that one, who is the glory of the Furian stock and whose grandfathers and great grandfathers have been consuls, moves amid the senators in their purple clothed in sombre garb, and that, so far from blushing when he meets the eyes of his companions, he actually derides those who deride him! "There is a shame that leadeth to death and there is a shame that leadeth to life."⁸ It is a monk's first virtue to despise the judgments of men and always to remember the apostle's words:-"If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." [Gal. 1:10] In the same sense the Lord says to the prophets that He has made their face a brazen city and a stone of adamant and an iron pillar, [Cf. Jer. 1:18. Ezek. 3:8, Ezek. 3:9] to the end that they shall not be afraid of the insults of the people but shall by the sternness of their looks discompose the effrontery of those who sneered at them. A finely strung mind is more readily overcome by contumely than by terror. And men whom no tortures can overawe are sometimes prevailed over

by the fear of shame. Surely it is no small thing for a man of birth, eloquence, and wealth to avoid the company of the powerful in the streets, to mingle with the crowd, to cleave to the poor, to associate on equal terms with the untaught, to cease to be a leader and to become one of the people. The more he humbles himself, the more he is exalted. [Cf. Luke 14:11]

7. A pearl will shine in the midst of squalor and a gem of the first water will sparkle in the mire. This is what the Lord promised when He said: "Them that honour me I will honour." [1 S. 2:30] Others may understand this of the future when sorrow shall be turned into joy and when, although the world shall pass away, the saints shall receive a crown which shall never pass. But I for my part see that the promises made to the saints are fulfilled even in this present life. Before he began to serve Christ with his whole heart, Pammachius was a well known person in the senate. Still there were many other senators who wore the badges of proconsular rank. The whole world is filled with similar decorations. He was in the first rank it is true, but there were others in it besides him. Whilst he took precedence of some, others took precedence of him. The most distinguished privilege loses its prestige when lavished on a crowd, and dignities themselves become less dignified in the eyes of good men when held by persons who have no dignity. Thus Tully finely says of Caesar, when he wished to advance some of his adherents, "he did not so much honour them as dishonour the honourable positions in which he placed them."⁹ To-day all the churches of Christ are talking of Pammachius. The whole world admires as a poor man one whom heretofore it ignored as rich. Can anything be more splendid than the consulate? Yet the honour lasts only for a year and when another has succeeded to the post its former occupant gives way. Each man's laurels are lost in the crowd and sometimes triumphs themselves are marred by the shortcomings of those who celebrate them. An office which was once handed down from patrician to patrician, which only men of noble birth could hold, of which the consul Marius-victor though he was over Numidia and the Teutons and the Cimbri-was held unworthy on account of the obscurity of his family, and which Scipio won before his time as the reward of valour,-this great office is now obtained by merely belonging to the army; and the shining robe of victory¹⁰ now envelops men who a little while ago were country boors. Thus we have received more than we have given. The things we have renounced are small; the things we possess are great. All that Christ promises is duly performed and for what we have given up we have received an hundredfold. [Cf. Matt. 19:29] This was the ground in which Isaac sowed his seed, [Gen. 26:12] Isaac who in his readiness to die [Gen. 22] bore the cross of the Gospel before the Gospel came.

8. "If thou wilt be perfect," the Lord says, "go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor.... and come and follow me." [Matt. 19:21] If thou wilt be perfect. Great enterprises are always left to the free choice of those who hear of them. Thus the apostle refrains from making virginity a positive duty, because the Lord in speaking of eunuchs who had made themselves such for the kingdom of heaven's sake finally said: "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." [Matt. 19:12] For, to quote the apostle, "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." [Rom. 9:1] If thou wilt be perfect. There is no compulsion laid upon you: if you are to win the prize it must be by the exercise of your own free will. If therefore you will to be perfect and desire to be as the prophets, as the apostles, as Christ Himself, sell not a part of your substance (lest the fear of want become an occasion of unfaithfulness, and so you perish with Ananias and Sapphira [Acts v]) but all that you have. And when you have sold all, give the proceeds not to the wealthy or to the high-minded but to the poor. Give each man enough for his immediate need but

do not give money to swell what a man has already. "Thou shall not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn," [1 Cor. 9:9] and "the labourer is worthy of his reward." [1 Tim. 5:18] Again "they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar." [1 Cor. 9:13] Remember also these words: "having, food and raiment let us be therewith content." [1 Tim. 6:8] Where you see smoking dishes, steaming pheasants, massive silver plate, spirited nags, long-haired boy-slaves, expensive clothing, and embroidered hangings, give nothing there. For he to whom you would give is richer than you the giver. It is moreover a kind of sacrilege to give what belongs to the poor to those who are not poor. Yet to be a perfect and complete Christian it is not enough to despise wealth or to squander and fling away one's money, a thing which can be lost and found in a single moment. Crates the Theban¹¹ did this, so did Antisthenes and several others, whose lives shew them to have had many faults. The disciple of Christ must do more for the attainment of spiritual glory than the philosopher of the world, than the venal slave of flying rumours and of the people's breath. It is not enough for you to despise wealth unless you follow Christ as well. And only he follows Christ who forsakes his sins and walks hand in hand with virtue. We know that Christ is wisdom. He is the treasure which in the scriptures a man finds in his field. [Matt. 13:44] He is the peerless gem which is bought by selling many pearls. [Matt. 13:45] But if you love a captive woman, that is, worldly wisdom, and if no beauty but hers attracts you, make her bald and cut off her alluring hair, that is to say, the graces of style, and pare away her dead nails. [Cf. Dt. 21:11, Dt. 21:12] Wash her with the nitre of which the prophet speaks, [Jer. 2:22] and then take your ease with her and say "Her left hand is under my head, and her right hand doth embrace me." [Cant. 2:6] Then shall the captive bring to you many children; from a Moabitess¹² she shall become an Israelitish woman. Christ is that sanctification without which no man shall see the face of God. Christ is our redemption, for He is at once our Redeemer and our Ransom. [1 Cor. 1:30, Heb. 12:14] Christ is all, that he who has left all for Christ may find One in place of all, and may be able to proclaim freely. "The Lord is my portion." [Ps. 73:26]

9, I see clearly that you have a warm affection for divine learning and that far from trying-like some rash persons-to teach that of which you are yourself ignorant you make it your first object to learn what you are going to teach. Your letters in their simplicity are redolent of the prophets and savour strongly of the apostles. You do not affect a stilted eloquence, nor boylike balance shallow sentences in clauses neatly-turned. The quickly frothing foam disappears with equal quickness; and a tumour though it enlarges the size of the body is injurious to health. It is moreover a shrewd maxim, this of Cato, "Fast enough if well enough." Long ago it is true in the days of our youth we laughed outright at this dictum when the finished orator¹³ used it in his exordium. I fancy you remember the mistake¹⁴ shared by the speaker in our Athenaeum and how the whole room resounded with the cry taken up by the students "Fast enough if well enough." According to Fabius¹⁵ crafts would be sure to prosper if none but craftsmen were allowed to criticise them. No man can adequately estimate a poet unless he is competent himself to write verse No man can comprehend philosophers, unless he is acquainted with the various theories that they have held. Material and visible products are best appraised by those who make them. To what a cruel lot we men of letters are exposed you may gather from the fact that we are forced to rely on the judgment of the public; and many a man is in company a formidable opponent who would certainly be despised could he be seen alone. I have touched on this in passing to make you content, if possible, with the ear of the learned. Disregard the remarks which uneducated persons make concerning your ability; but day by day imbibe the marrow of the prophets, that you may know the

mystery of Christ and share this mystery with the patriarchs.

10. Whether you read or write, whether you wake or sleep, let the herdsman's horn of Amos¹⁶ always ring in your ears. Let the sound of the clarion arouse your soul, let the divine love carry you out of yourself; and then seek upon your bed him whom your soul loveth, [Cant. 3:1] and boldly say: "I sleep, but my heart waketh." [Cant. 5:2] And when you have found him and taken hold of him, let him not go. And if you fall asleep for a moment and He escapes from your hands, do not forthwith despair. Go out into the streets and charge the daughters of Jerusalem: then shall you find him lying clown in the noontide weary and drunk with passion, or wet with the dew of night by the flocks of his companions, or fragrant with many kinds of spices, amid the apples of the garden. [Cf. Cant. 1:7, Cant. 2:5, Cant. 5:2] There give to him your breasts, let him suck your learned bosom, let him rest in the midst of his heritage, [Ps. 68:13] his feathers as those of a dove overlaid with silver and his inward parts with the brightness of gold. This young child, this mere boy, who is fed on butter and honey, [Isa. 7:14, Isa. 7:15] and who is reared among curdled mountains,¹⁷ quickly grows up to manhood, speedily spoils all¹⁸ that is opposed to him in you, and when the time is ripe plunders [the spiritual] Damascus and puts in chains the king of [the spiritual] Assyria.

11. I hear that you have erected a hospice for strangers at Portus and that you have planted a twig from the tree of Abraham¹⁹ upon the Ausonian shore. Like neas you are tracing the outlines of a new encampment; only that, whereas he, when he reached the waters of the Tiber, under pressure of want had to eat the square flat cakes which formed the tables spoken of by the oracle, [Virg. Aen. 7:112-129] you are able to build a house of bread to rival this little village of Bethlehem²⁰ wherein I am staying; and here after their long privations you propose to satisfy travellers with sudden plenty. Well done. You have surpassed my poor beginning.²¹ You have reached the highest point. You have made your way from the root to the top of the tree. You are the first of monks in the first city of the world: you do right therefore to follow the first of the patriarchs. Let Lot, whose name means 'one who turns aside' choose the plain [Gen. 13:5-11] and let him follow the left and easy branch of the famous letter of Pythagoras.²² But do you make ready for yourself a monument like Sarah's [Gen. 23:19] on steep and rocky heights. Let the City of Books be near;²³ and when you have destroyed the giants, the sons of Anak, [Cf. Jos. 15:14] make over your heritage to joy and merriment.²⁴ Abraham was rich in gold and silver and cattle, in substance and in raiment: his household was so large that on an emergency he could bring a picked body of young men into the field, and could pursue as far as Dan and then slay four kings who had already put five kings to flight. [Gen. 14:13-16] Frequently exercising hospitality and never turning any man away from his door, he was accounted worthy at last to entertain God himself. He was not satisfied with giving orders to his servants and hand-maids to attend to his guests, nor did he lessen the favour he conferred by leaving others to care for them; but as though he had found a prize, he and Sarah his wife gave themselves to the duties of hospitality. With his own hands he washed the feet of his guests, upon his own shoulders he brought home a fat calf from the herd. While the strangers dined he stood by to serve them, and set before them the dishes cooked by Sarah's hands-though meaning to fast himself.

12. The regard which I feel for you, my dear brother, makes me remind you of these things; for you must offer to Christ not only your money but yourself, to be a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service," [Rom. 12:1] and you must imitate the son of man who "came not to be ministered unto but to minister." [Matt. 20:28] What the patriarch did for strangers

that our Lord and Master did for His servants and disciples. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But," says the devil, "touch his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face." [Job 2:4, Job 2:5] The old enemy knows that the battle with impurity is a harder one than that with covetousness. It is easy to cast off whatclings to us from without, but a war within our borders involves far greater peril. We have to unfasten things joined together, we have to sunder things firmly united. Zacchus was rich while the apostles were poor. He restored fourfold all that he had taken and gave to the poor the half of his remaining substance. He welcomed Christ as his guest, and salvation came unto his house. [Luke 19:2-9] And yet because he was little of stature and could not reach the apostolic standard of height, he was not numbered with the twelve apostles. Now as regards wealth the apostles gave up nothing at all, but as regards will they one and all gave up the whole world. If we offer to Christ our souls as well as our riches, he will gladly receive our offering. But if we give to God only those things which are without while we give to the devil those things which are within, the division is not fair, and the divine voice says: "Hast thou not sinned in offering aright, and yet not dividing aright?" [Gen. 4:7, LXX]

13. That you, the leader of the patrician order, first set the example of turning monk should not be to you an occasion of boasting but rather one of humility, knowing as you do that the Son of God became the Son of man. However low you may abase yourself, you cannot be more lowly than Christ. Even supposing that you walk barefooted, that you dress in sombre garb, that you rank yourself with the poor, that you condescend to enter the tenements of the needy, that you are eyes to the blind, hands to the weak, feet to the lame, that you carry water and hew wood and make fires-even supposing that you do all this, where are the chains, the buffets, the spittings, the scourgings, the gibbet, the death which the Lord endured? And even when you have done all the things I have mentioned, you are still surpassed by your sister Eustochium as well as by Paula: for considering the weakness of their sex they have done more work relatively if less absolutely, than you. I myself was not at Rome but in the desert-would that I had continued there-at the time when your father-in-law Toxotius was still alive and his daughters were still given up to the world. But I have heard that they were too dainty to walk in the muddy streets, that they were carried about in the arms of eunuchs, that they disliked crossing uneven ground, that they found a silk dress a burthen and felt sunshine too scorching. But now, squalid and sombre in their dress, they are positive heroines in comparison with what they used to be. They trim lamps, light fires, sweep floors, clean vegetables, put heads of cabbage in the pot to boil, lay tables, hand cups, help dishes and run to and fro to wait on others. And yet there is no lack of virgins under the same roof with them. Is it then that they have no servants upon whom they can lay these duties? Surely not. They are unwilling that others should surpass them in physical toil whom they themselves surpass in rigour of mind. I say all this not because I doubt your mental ardour but that I may quicken the pace at which you are running, and in the heat of battle may add warmth to your warmth.

14. I for my part am building in this province a monastery and a hospice close by; so that, if Joseph and Mary chance to come to Bethlehem, they may not fail to find shelter and welcome. Indeed, the number of monks who flock here from all quarters of the world is so overwhelming that I can neither desist from my enterprise nor bear so great a burthen. The warning of the gospel has been all but fulfilled in me, for I did not sufficiently count the cost of the tower I was about to build; [Luke 14:28] accordingly I have been constrained to send my brother Paulinian²⁵ to Italy to sell some ruinous villas which have escaped the hands of the barbarians, and also the property inherited

from our common parents. For I am loth, now that I have begun it, to give up ministering to the saints, lest I incur the ridicule of carping and envious persons.

15. Now that I have come to the conclusion of my letter I recall my metaphor of the four-horse team, and recollect that Baesilla would have made a fifth had she been spared to share your resolve. I had almost forgotten to mention her, the first of you all to go to meet the Lord. You who once were five I now see to be two and three. Baesilla and her sister Paulina rest in sweet sleep: you with the two others on either side of you will fly upward to Christ more easily.

1: Virgil, Aen. 4:367 2: Quoted from a poet in the Latin Anthology 3: Paula and her two daughters, Paulina and Eustochium 4: i.e., continence in marriage 5: The respective meanings of Benoni and Benjamin 6: Ichabod means 'there is no glory'; glory being (apparently) a synonym for the ark 7: Viz. the treatise entitled Of Work and Alms

8: Eccclus. 4:25. Est confusio adducens peccatum: et est confusio adducens gloriam et gratiam, Vulg. Jerome probably quotes from memory. AV. follows the Greek and the Vulg 9: Cf. the remark of Aeneas Silvius that "men should be given to places not places, to men.

10: Palma, i.e. tunica palmata 11: Cf. Letter LVIII 12: Jerome is thinking of Ruth

13: Quintilian 14: What was the mistake? Did the orator say, "Well enough if fast enough"? The text seems obscure 15: Fabius Pietor 16: Cf. Letter XLVI

17: Ps. 68:14, Vulg. (acc. to some mss.). Intermedios cleros-the lot or inheritance-with an allusion perhaps to the word clergy formed from clerus 18: Perhaps an allusion to Isa. 8:1. Mahershalal-hash-baz 'Spoil speedeth, prey hasteth. O 19: i.e. the oak of Mature under which he entertained the three angels (Gen. 18:1-8) 20: Beth-lehem means 'house of bread. O 21: v. §14 below 22: The letter Y. Cf. Pers. 3:56, 57 and Conington's note 23: i.e. Kirjathsepher close to Hebron (Josh. 15:13-15) where Sarah was buried 24: An allusion to the name of Abraham's heir, Isaac or 'laughter O' (Gen. 21:3, Gen. 21:6) 25: See Letter 60

Letters - letter_067

Letter 67. From Augustine.

Jerome having written him a short letter (no longer extant) Augustine now replies. He speaks with approval of Jerome's treatise *On Famous Men*, incorrectly called the *Epitaph* (see Letter 112). He also repeats his objections to Jerome's account of the quarrel between Paul and Peter at Antioch and then concludes with a request that he will draw up a short notice of the principal heresies condemned by the Church.

Like the preceding letter of Augustine (Letter 56.) this also failed to reach Jerome. It was however published in the West, but without Augustine's knowledge and by degrees its contents found their way to Bethlehem where they caused much annoyance and pain. The date of the letter is 397 a.d. In collections labeled Augustine's Letter 40, or Jerome's Letter 67. To My Lord Much Beloved, and Brother Worthy of Being Honoured and Embraced with the Most Sincere Devotion of Charity, My Fellow-Presbyter Jerome, Augustine Sends Greeting.

1. I thank you that, instead of a mere formal salutation, you wrote me a letter, though it was much shorter than I would desire to have from you; since nothing that comes from you is tedious, however much time it may demand. Wherefore, although I am beset with great anxieties about the affairs of others, and that, too, in regard to secular matters, I would find it difficult to pardon the brevity of your letter, were it not that I consider that it was written in reply to a yet shorter letter of my own. Address yourself, therefore, I entreat you, to that exchange of letters by which we may have fellowship, and may not permit the distance which separates us to keep us wholly apart from each other; though we are in the Lord bound together by the unity of the Spirit, even when our pens rest and we are silent. The books in which you have laboured to bring treasures from the Lord's storehouse give me almost a complete knowledge of you. For if I may not say, "I know you," because I have not seen your face, it may with equal truth be said that you do not know yourself, for you cannot see your own face. If, however, it is this alone which constitutes your acquaintance with yourself, that you know your own mind, we also have no small knowledge of it through your writings, in studying which we bless God that to yourself, to us, to all who read your works, He has given you as you are.

2. It is not long since, among other things, a certain book of yours came into my hands, the name of which I do not yet know, for the manuscript itself had not the title written, as is customary, on the first page. The brother with whom it was found said that its title is *Epitaphium*, a name which we might believe you to have approved, if we found in the work a notice of the lives or writings of those only who are deceased. Inasmuch, however, as mention is there made of the works of some who were at the time when it was written, or are even now, alive, we wonder why you either gave this title to it, or permitted others to believe that you had done so. The book itself has our complete approval as a useful work.

3. In your exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians I have found one thing which causes me much concern. For if it be the case that statements untrue in themselves, but made, as it were, out of a sense of duty in the interest of religion,¹ have been admitted into the Holy Scriptures, what authority will be left to them? If this be conceded, what sentence can be produced from these Scriptures, by the weight of which the wicked obstinacy of error can be broken down? For as soon as you have produced it, if it be disliked by him who contends with you, he will reply that, in the passage alleged, the writer was uttering a falsehood under the pressure of some honourable sense of duty. And where will any one find this way of escape impossible, if it be possible for men to say and believe that, after introducing his narrative with these words, "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not," [Gal. 1:20] the apostle lied when he said of Peter and Barnabas, "I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel"? [Gal. 2:14] For if they did walk uprightly, Paul wrote what was false; and if he wrote what was false here, when did he say what was true? Shall he be supposed to say what is true when his teaching corresponds with the predilection, of his reader, and shall everything which runs counter to the impressions of the reader be! reckoned a falsehood uttered by him under a sense of duty? It will be impossible to prevent men from finding reasons for thinking that he not only might have uttered a falsehood, but was bound to do so, if we admit this canon of interpretation. There is no need for many words in pursuing this argument, especially in writing to you, for whose wisdom and prudence enough has already been said. I would by no means be so arrogant as to attempt to enrich by my small coppers² your mind, which by the divine gift is golden; and none is more able than yourself to revise and correct that work to which I have referred.

4. You do not require me to teach you in what sense the apostle says, "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews," [1 Cor. 9:20] and other such things in the same passage, which are to be ascribed to the compassion of pitying love, not the artifices of intentional deceit. For he that ministers to the sick becomes as if he were sick himself; not, indeed, falsely pretending to be under the fever, but considering, with the mind of one truly sympathizing, what he would wish done for himself if he were in the sick man's place. Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even although he was an apostle of Christ, he took observing these; but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers; provided only that they did riot build on these their hope of salvation, since the salvation which was foreshadowed in these has now been brought in by the Lord Jesus. For the same reason, he judged that these ceremonies should by no means be made binding on the Gentile converts, because, by imposing a heavy and superfluous burden, they might turn aside from the faith those who were unaccustomed to them.

5. The thing, therefore, which he rebuked in Peter was not his observing the customs handed down from his fathers-which Peter, if he wished, might do without being chargeable with deceit or inconsistency, for, though now superfluous, these customs were not hurtful to one who had been accustomed to them-but his compelling the Gentiles to observe Jewish ceremonies, [Gal. 2:14] which he could not do otherwise than by so acting in regard to them as if their observance was, even after the Lord's coming, still necessary to salvation, against which truth protested through the apostolic office of Paul. Nor was the Apostle Peter ignorant of this, but he did it through fear of

those who were of the circumcision. Manifestly, therefore, Peter was truly corrected, and Paul has given a true narrative of the event, unless, by the admission of a falsehood here, the authority of the Holy Scriptures given for the faith of all coming generations is to be made wholly uncertain and wavering. For it is neither possible nor suitable to state within the compass of a letter how great and how unutterably evil must be the consequences of such a concession. It might, however, be shown seasonably, and with less hazard, if we were conversing together.

6. Paul had forsaken everything peculiar to the Jews that was evil, especially this: "That, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they had not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." [Rom. 10:3] In this, moreover, he differed from them: that after the passion and resurrection of Christ, in whom had been given and made manifest the mystery of grace, according to the order of Melchizedek, they still considered it binding on them to celebrate, not out of mere reverence for old customs, but as necessary to salvation, the sacraments of the old economy, which were indeed at one time necessary, else had it been unprofitable and vain for the Maccabees to suffer martyrdom, as they did, for their adherence to them. [2 Macc. 7:1] Lastly, in this also Paul differed from the Jews: that they persecuted the Christian preachers of grace as enemies of the law. These and all similar errors and sins he declares that he "counted but loss and dung that he might win Christ;" [Phil. 3:8] but he does not, in so saying, disparage the ceremonies of the Jewish law, if only they were observed after the custom of their fathers, in the way in which he himself observed them, without regarding them as necessary to salvation, and not in the way in which the Jews affirmed that they must be observed, nor in the exercise of deceptive dissimulation such as he had rebuked in Peter. For if Paul observed these sacraments in order, by pretending to be a Jew, to gain the Jews, why did he not also take part with the Gentiles in heathen sacrifices, when to them that were without law he became as without law, that he might gain them also? The explanation is found in this, that he took part in the Jewish sacrifices, as being himself by birth a Jew; and that when he said all this which I have quoted, he meant, not that he pretended to be what he was not, but that he felt with true compassion that he must bring such help to them as would be needful for himself if he were involved in their error. Herein he exercised not the subtlety of a deceiver, but the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer. In the same passage the apostle has stated the principle more generally: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some," [1 Cor. 9:22] - the latter clause of which guides us to understand the former as meaning that he showed himself one who pitied the weakness of another as much as if it had been his own. For when he said, "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" [2 Cor. 11:29] he did not wish it to be supposed that he pretended to suffer the infirmity of another, but rather that he showed it by sympathy.

7. Wherefore I beseech you, apply to the correction and emendation of that book a frank and truly Christian severity, and chant what the Greeks call *palinw/dia*. For incomparably more lovely than the Grecian Helen is Christian truth: In her defence, our martyrs have fought against Sodom with more courage than the heroes of Greece displayed against Troy for Helen's sake. I do not say this in order that you may recover the faculty of spiritual sight,³ -far be it from me to say that you have lost it!-but that, having eyes both clear and quick in discernment, you may turn them towards that from which, in unaccountable dissimulation, you have turned them away, refusing to see the calamitous consequences which would follow on our once admitting that a writer of the divine

books could in any part of his work honourably and piously utter a falsehood.

8. I had written some time ago a letter to you on this subject,⁴ which was not delivered to you, because the bearer to whom it was entrusted did not finish his journey to you. From it I may quote a thought which occurred to me while I was dictating it, and which I ought not to omit in this letter, in order that, if your opinion is still different from mine, and is better, you may readily forgive the anxiety which has moved me to write. It is this: If your opinion is different, and is according to truth (for only in that case can it be better than mine), you will grant that "a mistake of mine, which is in the interest of truth, cannot deserve great blame, if indeed it deserves blame at all, when it is possible for you to use truth in the interest of falsehood without doing wrong."⁵

9. As to the reply which you were pleased to give me concerning Origen, I did not need to be told that we should, not only in ecclesiastical writers, but in all others, approve and commend what we find right and true, but reject and condemn what we find false and mischievous. What I craved from your wisdom and learning (and I still crave it), was that you should acquaint us definitely with the points in which that remarkable man is proved to have departed from the belief of the truth. Moreover, in that book in which you have mentioned all the ecclesiastical writers whom you could remember, and their works, it would, I think, be a more convenient arrangement if, after naming those whom you know to be heretics (since you have chosen not to pass them without notice), you would add in what respect their doctrine is to be avoided. Some of these heretics also you have omitted, and I would fain know on what grounds. If, however, perchance it has been from a desire not to enlarge that volume unduly that you refrained from adding to a notice of heretics, the statement of the things in which the Catholic Church has authoritatively condemned them, I beg you not to grudge bestowing on this subject, to which with humility and brotherly love I direct your attention, a portion of that literary labour by which already, by the grace of the Lord our God, you have in no small measure stimulated and assisted the saints in the study of the Latin tongue, and publish in one small book (if your other occupations permit you) a digest of the perverse dogmas of all the heretics who up to this time have, through arrogance, or ignorance, or self-will, attempted to subvert the simplicity of the Christian faith; a work most necessary for the information of those who are prevented, either by lack of leisure or by their not knowing the Greek language, from reading and understanding so many things. I would urge my request at greater length, were it not that this is commonly a sign of misgivings as to the benevolence of the party from whom a favour is sought. Meanwhile I cordially recommend to your goodwill in Christ our brother Paulus, to whose high standing in these regions I bear before God willing testimony.

1: [Velut officiosa mendacia.] 2: [Obolis meis.]

3:

The reference here is to the story of the poet Stesichorus, who, having lost his sight as a judgment for writing an attack on Helen, was miraculously healed when he wrote a poem in retractation.

4: [Epist. 28.] 5: See Letter 28. sec. 5.

Letters - letter_068

Letter 68. To Castrutius.

Castrutius, a blind man of Pannonia, had set out for Bethlehem to visit Jerome. However, on reaching Cissa (whether that in Thrace or that on the Adriatic is uncertain) he was induced by his friends to turn back. Jerome writes to thank him for his intention and to console him for his inability to carry it out. He then tries to comfort him in his blindness (1) by referring to Christ's words concerning the man born blind (Joh. ix. 3) and (2) by telling him the story of Antony and Didymus. The date of the letter is 397 a.d.

1. My reverend son Heraclius the deacon has reported to me that in your eagerness to see me you came as far as Cissa, and that, though a Pannonian and consequently a land animal, you did not quail before the surges of the Adriatic and the dangers of the Aegean and Ionian seas. He tells me that you would have actually accomplished your purpose, had not our brethren with affectionate care held you back. I thank you all the same and regard it as a kindness shewn. For in the case of friends one must accept the will for the deed. Enemies often give us the latter, but only sincere attachment can bring us the former. And now that I am writing to you I beseech you do not regard the bodily affliction which has befallen you as due to sin. When the Apostles speculated concerning the man that was born blind from the womb and asked our Lord and Saviour: "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" they were told "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." [John. 9:2, John. 9:3] Do we not see numbers of heathens, Jews, heretics and men of various opinions rolling in the mire of lust, bathed in blood, surpassing wolves in ferocity and kites in rapacity, and for all this the plague does not come nigh their dwellings? [Ps. 91:10] They are not smitten as other men, and accordingly they wax insolent against God and lift up their faces even to heaven. We know on the other hand that holy men are afflicted with sicknesses, miseries, and want, and perhaps they are tempted to say "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." Yet immediately they go on to reprove themselves, "If I say, I will speak thus; behold I should offend against the generation of thy children." [Ps. 73:13, Ps. 73:15] If you suppose that your blindness is caused by sin, and that a disease which physicians are often able to cure is an evidence of God's anger, you will think Isaac a sinner because he was so wholly sightless that he was deceived into blessing one whom he did not mean to bless. [Gen. 27] You will charge Jacob with sin, whose vision became so dim that he could not see Ephraim and Manasseh, [Gen. 48:10] although with the inner eye and the prophetic spirit he could foresee the distant future and the Christ that was to come of his royal line. [Gen. 49:10] Were any of the kings holier than Josiah? Yet he was slain by the sword of the Egyptians. [2 K. 23:29] Were there ever loftier saints than Peter and Paul? Yet their blood stained the blade of Nero. And to say no more of men, did not the Son of God endure the shame of the cross? And yet you fancy those blessed who enjoy in this world happiness and pleasure? God's hottest anger against sinners is when he shews no anger. Wherefore in Ezekiel he says to Jerusalem: "My jealousy will depart from thee and i will be quiet and will be no more angry." [Ezek. 16:42] For "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom

He receiveth." [Heb. 12:6] The father does not instruct his son unless he loves him. The master does not correct his disciple unless he sees in him signs of promise. When once the doctor gives over caring for the patient, it is a sign that he despairs. You should answer thus: "as Lazarus in his lifetime [Luke 16:25] received evil things so will I now gladly suffer torments that future glory may be laid up for me." For "affliction shall not rise up the second time." [Nahum 1:9] If Job, a man holy and spotless and righteous in his generation, suffered terrible afflictions, his own book explains the reason why.

2. That I may not make myself tedious or exceed the due limits of a letter by repeating old stories, I will briefly relate to you an incident which happened in my childhood. The saintly Athanasius bishop of Alexandria had summoned the blessed Antony to that city to confute the heretics there. Hereupon Didymus, a man of great learning who had lost his eyes, came to visit the hermit and, the conversation turning upon the holy scriptures, Antony could not help admiring his ability and eulogizing his insight. At last he said: You do not regret, do you, the loss of your eyes? At first Didymus was ashamed to answer, but when the question had been repeated a second time and a third, he frankly confessed that his blindness was a great grief to him. Whereupon Antony said: "I am surprised that a wise man should grieve at the loss of a faculty which he shares with ants and flies and gnats, and not rejoice rather in having one of which only saints and apostles have been thought worthy." From this story you may perceive how much better it is to have spiritual than carnal vision and to possess eyes into which the mote of sin cannot fall. [Luke 6:42]

Though you have failed to come this year, I do not yet despair of your coming. If the reverend deacon¹ who is the bearer of this letter is again caught in the toils of your affection, and if you come hither in his company I shall be delighted to welcome you and shall readily acknowledge that the delay in payment is made up for by the largeness of the interest.

1:

Heraclius, a deacon of Pannonia, who had been sent to Bethlehem by his bishop Amabilis to procure from Jerome a long promised commentary on the Visions of Isaiah. This, which Jerome subsequently incorporated as book V. in his complete work on the prophet, Heraclius succeeded in obtaining from him. See the Preface to the Commentary

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Letter 69. To Oceanus.

Oceanus, a Roman nobleman zealous for the faith, had asked Jerome to back him in a protest against Carterius a Spanish bishop who contrary to the apostolic rule that a bishop is to be "the husband of one wife" had married a second time. Jerome refuses to take the line suggested on the ground that Carterius's first marriage having preceded his baptism cannot be taken into account. He therefore advises Oceanus to let the matter drop. The date of the letter is 397 a.d.

1. I never supposed, son Oceanus, that the clemency of the Emperor would be assailed by criminals, or that persons just released from prison would after their own experience of its filth and fetters complain of relaxations allowed to others. In the gospel he who envies another's salvation is thus addressed: "Friend, is thine eye evil because I am good?" [Matt. 20:15] "God hath concluded them all in sin¹ that he might have mercy upon all." [Rom. 11:32] "When sin abounded grace did much more abound." [Rom. 5:20] The first born of Egypt are slain and not even a beast belonging to Israel is left behind in Egypt. [Ex. 12:29, Ex. 12:30, Ex. 12:38] The heresy of the Cainites rises before me and the once slain viper lifts up its shattered head, destroying not partially as most often hitherto but altogether the mystery of Christ.² This heresy declares that there are some sins which Christ cannot cleanse with His blood, and that the scars left by old transgressions on the body and the soul are sometimes so deep that they cannot be effaced by the remedy which He supplies. What else is this but to say that Christ has died in vain? He has indeed died in vain if there are any whom He cannot make alive. When John the Baptist points to Christ and says: "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sins³ of the world" [John. 1:29] he utters a falsehood if after all there are persons living whose sins Christ has not taken away. For either it must be shewn that they are not of the world whom the grace of Christ thus ignores: or, if it be admitted that they are of the world, we have to choose between the horns of a dilemma. Either they have been delivered from their sins, in which case the power of Christ to save all men is proved; or they remain undelivered and as it were still under the charge of misdoing, in which case Christ is proved to be powerless. But far be it from us to believe of the Almighty that He is powerless in aught. For "what things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." [John. 5:19] To ascribe weakness to the Son is to ascribe it to the Father also. The shepherd carries the whole sheep and not only this or that part of it: all the epistles of the apostle⁴ speak continually of the grace of Christ. And, lest a single announcement of this grace might seem a little thing, Peter says: "Grace unto you and peace be multiplied." [1 Pet. 1:2] The Scripture promises abundance; yet we affirm scarcity.

2. To what does all this tend, you ask. I reply; you remember the question that you proposed. It was this. A Spanish bishop named Carterius, old in years and in the priesthood has married two wives, one before he was baptized, and, she having died, another since he has passed through the laver; and you are of opinion that he has violated the precept of the apostle, who in his list of episcopal qualifications commands that a bishop shall be "the husband of one wife." [1 Tim. 3:2] I

am surprised that you have pilloried an individual when the whole world is filled with persons ordained in similar circumstances; I do not mean presbyters or clergy of lower rank, but speak only of bishops of whom if I were to enumerate them all one by one I should gather a sufficient number to surpass the crowd which attended the synod of Ariminum.⁵ Still it does not become me to defend one by incriminating many; nor if reason condemns a sin, to make the number of those who commit it an excuse for it. At Rome an eloquent pleader caught me, as the phrase goes, between the horns of a dilemma: whichever way I turned I was held fast. Is it sinful, said he, to marry a wife, or is it not sinful? I in my simplicity, not being wary enough to avoid the snare laid for me, replied that it was not sinful. Then he propounded another question: Is it good deeds which are done away with in baptism or is it evil? Here again my simplicity induced me to say that it was sins which were forgiven. At this point, just as I began to fancy myself secure, the horns of the dilemma commenced to close in on me from this side and from that and their points hidden before began to shew themselves. If, said he, to marry a wife is not sinful, and if baptism forgives sins, all that is not done away with is held over. On the instant a dark mist rose before my eyes as though I had been struck by a strong boxer. Yet recalling the sophism attributed to Chrysippus:⁶ "Whether you lie or whether you speak the truth, in either case you lie," I came to myself again and turned upon my opponent with a dilemma of my own. Pray tell me, I said, does baptism make a new man or does it not? He grudgingly admitted that it did. I pursued my advantage by saying. Does it make him wholly new or only partially so? He replied, Wholly. Then I asked, Is there nothing then of the old man held over in baptism? He assented. Hereupon I propounded the argument; If baptism makes a man new and creates a wholly new being, and if there is nothing of the old man held over in the new, that which once was in the old cannot be imputed to the new. At first my thorny friend held his tongue; afterwards however, making Piso's mistake,⁷ though he had nothing to say he could not remain silent. Sweat stood upon Iris brow, his cheeks turned pale, his lips trembled, his tongue clove to his mouth, his throat became dry; and fear (not age) made him cower. At last he broke out in these words, Have you not read how the apostle permits none to be ordained priest save the husband of one wife, and that what he lays stress upon is the fact of the marriage and not the time at which it is contracted? Now as the fellow had challenged me with syllogisms, and as I saw that he was feeling his way towards some intricate and awkward questions, I proceeded to turn his own weapons against him. I said therefore, Whom did the apostle select for the episcopate, baptized persons or catechumens? He refused to reply. I however made a fresh onslaught repeating my question a second time and a third. You would have taken him for Niobe changed to stone by excessive weeping. I turned to the audience and said: It is all the same to me, good people, whether I bind my opponent awake or sleeping; but it is easier to fetter a man who offers no resistance. If those whom the apostle admits into the ranks of the clergy are not catechumens but the faithful, and if he who is ordained bishop is always one of the faithful, being one of the faithful he cannot have the faults of a catechumen imputed to him. Such were the darts I hurled at my paralysed opponent. Such the quivering spears I cast at him. At last his mouth opened and he vomited forth the contents of his mind. Certainly, he blurted out, that is the doctrine of the apostle Paul.

3. Accordingly I bring out two epistles of the apostle, the first to Timothy, and the second to Titus. In the first is the following passage: "If a man desire the office of a bishop he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker ...but patient, not a brawler, not

covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." [1 Tim. 3:1-7] While immediately at the commencement of the epistle to Titus the following behests are laid down: "For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." [Tit. 1:5-9] In both epistles commandment is given that only monogamists should, be chosen for the clerical office whether as bishops or as presbyters.⁸ Indeed with the ancients these names were synonymous, one alluding to the office, the other to the age of the clergy. No one at any rate can doubt that the apostle is speaking only of those who have been baptized. If therefore it in no wise prejudices the case of one who is to be ordained bishop that before his baptism he has not possessed all the requisite qualifications (for it is asked what he is and not what he has been), why should a previous marriage—the one thing which is in itself not sinful—prove a hindrance to his ordination? You argue that as his marriage was not a sin it was not done away with at his baptism. This is news to me indeed, that what in itself was not a sin is to be reckoned as such. All fornication and contamination with open vice, impiety towards God, parricide and incest, the change of the natural use of the sexes into that which is against nature [Cf. Rom. 1:26, Rom. 1:27] and all extraordinary lusts are washed away in the fountain of Christ. Can it be possible that the stains of marriage are indelible, and that harlotry is judged more leniently than honourable wedlock? I do not, Carterius might say, hold you to blame for the hosts of mistresses and the troops of favourites⁹ that you have kept; I do not charge you with your bloodshedding and sow-like wallowings in the mire of uncleanness: yet you are ready to drag from her grave for my confusion my poor wife, who has been dead long years, and whom I married that I might be kept from those sins into which you have fallen. Tell this to the heathen who form the church's harvest with which she stores her granaries; tell this to the catechumens who seek admission to the number of the faithful; tell them, I say, not to contract marriages before their baptism, not to enter upon honourable wedlock, but like the Scots and the Atacotti¹⁰ and the people of Plato's republic¹¹ to have community of wives and no discrimination of children, nay more, to beware of any semblance even of matrimony; lest, after they have come to believe in Christ, He shall tell them that those whom they have had have not been concubines or mistresses but wedded wives.

4. Let every man examine his own conscience and let him deplore the violence he has done to it at every period of his life; and then when he has brought himself to deliver a true judgment on his own former misdeeds, let him give ear to the chiding of Jesus: "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shall thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." [Matt. 7:5] Truly like the scribes and pharisees we strain out the gnat and swallow the camel, we pay tithe of mint and anise, and we omit the just judgment which God requires. [Matt. 23:23, Matt. 23:24, RV] What parallel can be drawn between a wife and a prostitute? Is it fair to make a marriage now dissolved by death a ground of accusation, while dissolute living wins for itself a

garland of praise? He, had his former wife lived, would not have married another; but as for you, how can you defend the bestial unions you indiscriminately make? Perhaps indeed you will say that you feared to contract marriage lest by so doing you might disqualify yourself for ordination. He took a wife that he might have children by her; you by taking a harlot have lost the hope of children. He withdrew into the privacy of his own chamber when he sought to obey nature and to win God's blessing: "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." [Gen. 1:28] You on the contrary outraged public decency in the hot eagerness of your lust. He covered a lawful indulgence beneath a veil of modesty; you pursued an unlawful one shamelessly before the eyes of all. For him it is written "Marriage is honourable and the bed undefiled." while to you the words are read, "but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," [Heb. 13:4] and "if any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy." [1 Cor. 3:17, RV] All iniquities, we are told, are forgiven us at our baptism, and when once we have received God's mercy we need not afterwards dread from Him the severity of a judge. The apostle says: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." [1 Cor. 6:11] All sins then are forgiven; it is an honest and faithful saying. But I ask you, how comes it that, while your uncleanness is washed away, my cleanness is made unclean? You reply, "No, it is not made unclean, it remains just what it was. Had it been uncleanness, it would have been washed away like mine." I want to know what you mean by this shuffling. Your remarks seem to have no more point in them than the round end of a pestle. Is a thing sin because it is not sin? or is a thing unclean because it is not unclean? The Lord, you say, has not forgiven because He had nothing to forgive; yet because He has not forgiven, that which has not been forgiven still remains.

5. What the true effect of baptism is, and what is the real grace conveyed by water hallowed in Christ, I will presently tell you; meantime I will deal with this argument as it deserves. 'An ill knot,' says the common proverb, 'requires but an ill wedge to split it.' The text quoted by the objector, "a bishop must be the husband of one wife," admits of quite another explanation. The apostle came of the Jews and the primitive Christian church was gathered out of the remnants of Israel. Paul knew that the Law allowed men to have children by several wives, [Ex. 21:10] and was aware that the example of the patriarchs had made polygamy familiar to the people. Even the very priests might at their own discretion enjoy the same license. [Lev. 21:7, Lev. 21:13] He gave commandment therefore that the priests of the church should not claim this liberty, that they should not take two wives or three together, but that they should each have but one wife at one time. Perhaps you may say that this explanation which I have given is disputed; in that case listen to another. You must not have a monopoly of bending the Law to suit your will instead of bending your will to suit the Law. Some by a strained interpretation say that wives are in this passage to be taken for churches and husbands for their bishops. A decree was made by the fathers assembled at the council of Nicaea¹² that no bishop should be translated from one church to another, lest scorning the society of a poor yet virgin see he should seek the embraces of a wealthy and adulterous one. For as the word "λογισμῶν", that is, "disputings," refers to the fault and misdoing of sons in the faith, [Cf. Ph. 2:14, Ph. 2:15] and as the precept concerning the management of a house refers to the right direction of body and of soul, [1 Tim. 3:4] so by the wives of the bishops we are to understand their churches. Concerning whom it is written in Isaiah, "Make haste ye women and come from the show, for it is a people of no understanding." [Isa. 27:11, LXX. AV. follows the Hebrew] And again "Rise up, ye women that are wealthy,¹³ and hear my voice." [Isa. 32:9] And in the Book of

Proverbs, "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her." [Prov. 31:10, Prov. 31:11] In the same book too it is written, "Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands." [Prov. 14:1] Nor does this, say they, derogate from the dignity of the episcopate; for the same figure is used in relation to God. Jeremiah writes: "As a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel." [Jer. 3:20] And the apostle employs the same comparison: "I have espoused you," he says to his converts, "to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." [2 Cor. 11:2] The word woman is in the Greek ambiguous and should in all these places be understood as meaning wife. You will say that this interpretation is harsh and does violence to the sense. In that case give back to the scripture its simple meaning and save me from the necessity of fighting you on your own ground.¹⁴ I will ask you the following question, Can a man who before his baptism has kept a concubine, and after her death has received baptism and has taken a wife, become a clergyman or not? You will answer me that he can, because his first partner was a concubine and not a wife. What the apostle condemns then, it would seem, is not mere sexual intercourse but marriage contracts and conjugal rights. Many persons, we see, because of narrow circumstances refuse to take upon them the burthen of matrimony. Instead of taking wives they live with their maid-servants and bring up as their own the children which these bear to them. Thus, if through the bounty of the Emperor they gain for their mistresses the right of wearing a matron's robes,¹⁵ they will at once come beneath the yoke of the apostle and sorely against their will will have to receive their partners as their wedded wives. But, if their poverty prevents them from obtaining an imperial rescript such as I have mentioned, the decrees of the Church will vary with the laws of Rome. Be careful therefore not to interpret the words "the husband of one wife," that is, of one woman, as approving indiscriminate intercourse and condemning only contracts of marriage.

I bring forward all these explanations not for the purpose of resisting the true and simple sense of the words in question but to shew you that you must take the holy scriptures as they are written, and that you must not empty of its efficacy the baptismal rite ordained by the Saviour, or render vain the whole mystery of the cross.

6. Let me now fulfil the promise I made a little while ago and with all the skill of a rhetorician sing the praises of water and of baptism. In the beginning the earth was without form and void, there was no dazzling sun or pale moon, there were no glittering stars. There was nothing but matter inorganic and invisible, and even this was lost in abysmal depths and shrouded in a distorting gloom. The Spirit of God above moved, as a charioteer, over the face of the waters, [Gen. 1:2] and produced from them the infant world, a type of the Christian child that is drawn from the laver of baptism. A firmament is constructed between heaven and earth, and to this is allotted the name heaven,-in the Hebrew Shamayim or 'what comes out of the waters,'¹⁶ and the waters which are above the heavens are parted from the others to the praise of God. Wherefore also in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel there is seen above the cherubim a crystal stretched forth, [Ezek. 1:22] that is, the compressed and denser waters. The first living beings come out of the waters; and believers soar out of the layer with wings to heaven. Man is formed out of clay [Gen. 2:7] and God holds the mystic waters in the hollow of his hand.¹⁷ In Eden a garden¹⁸ is planted, and a fountain in the midst of it parts into four heads. [Gen. 2:8, Gen. 2:10] This is the same fountain which Ezekiel later on describes as issuing out of the temple and flowing towards the rising of the sun, until it heals

the bitter waters and quickens those that are dead. [Ezek. 47:1, Ezek. 47:8] When the world falls into sin nothing but a flood of waters can cleanse it again. But as soon as the foul bird of wickedness is driven away, the dove of the Holy Spirit comes to Noah [Gen. 8:8, Gen. 8:11] as it came afterwards to Christ in the Jordan, [Matt. 3:16] and, carrying ill its beak a branch betokening restoration and light, brings tidings of peace to the whole world. Pharaoh and his host, loth to allow God's people to leave Egypt, are overwhelmed in the Red Sea figuring thereby our baptism. His destruction is thus described in the book of Psalms: "Thou didst endow the sea with virtue through thy power: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters: thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces." [Ps. 74:13, 14 LXX] For this reason adders and scorpions haunt dry places [Deut. 8:15] and whenever they come near water behave as if rabid or insane.¹⁹ As wood sweetens Marah so that seventy palm-trees are watered by its streams, so the cross makes the waters of the law lifegiving to the seventy who are Christ's apostles. [Exod. 15:23-27; Luke 10:i] It is Abraham and Isaac who dig wells, the Philistines who try to prevent them. [Gen. 26:15, Gen. 26:18] Beersheba too, the city of the oath, [Gen. 21:31] and [Gihon], the scene of Solomon's coronation, [1 Kings 1:38; 2 Chron. 32:30] derive their names from springs. It is beside a well that Eliezer finds Rebekah. [Gen. 24:15, Gen. 24:16] Rachel too is a drawer of water and wins a kiss thereby [Gen. 29:10, Gen. 29:11] from the supplanter [Gen. 27:36] Jacob. When the daughters of the priests of Midian are in a strait to reach the well, Moses opens a way for them and delivers them from outrage. [Exod. 2:16, Exod. 2:17] The Lord's forerunner at Salem (a name which means peace or perfection) makes ready the people for Christ with spring-water. [John. 3:23] The Saviour Himself does not preach the kingdom of heaven until by His baptismal immersion He has cleansed the Jordan. [Matt. 3:13, Matt. 3:17] Water is the matter of His first miracle²⁰ and it is from a well that the Samaritan woman is bidden to slake her thirst. [John. 4:13, John. 4:14] To Nicodemus He secretly says: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." [John. 3:5] As His earthly course began with water, so it ended with it. His side is pierced by the spear, and blood and water flow forth, twin emblems of baptism and of martyrdom.²¹ After His resurrection also, when sending His apostles to the Gentiles, He commands them to baptize these in the mystery of the Trinity. [Matt. 28:19] The Jewish people repenting of their misdoing are sent forthwith by Peter to be baptized. [Acts 2:38] Before Sion travails she brings forth children, and a nation is born at once. [Isa. 66:7, Isa. 66:8] Paul the persecutor of the church, that ravening wolf out of Benjamin, [Gen. 49:27] bows his head before Ananias one of Christ's sheep, and only recovers his sight when he applies the remedy of baptism.²² By the reading of the prophet the eunuch of Candace the queen of Ethiopia is made ready for the baptism of Christ. [Acts 8:27-38] Though it is against nature the Ethiopian does change his skin and the leopard his spots. [Jer. 13:23] Those who have received only John's baptism and have no knowledge of the Holy Spirit are baptized again, lest any should suppose that water unsanctified thereby could suffice for the salvation of either Jew or Gentile. [Acts 19:1-7] "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters ...The Lord is upon many waters ...the Lord maketh the flood to inhabit it." [Ps. 29:3, Ps. 29:10] His "teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn which came up from the washing; whereof everyone bear twins, and none is barren among them." [Cant. 4:2] If none is barren among them, all of them must have udders filled with milk and be able to say with the apostle: "Ye are my little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you;" [Gal. 4:19] and "I have fed you with milk and not with meat." [1 Cor. 3:2] And it is to the grace of baptism that the prophecy of Micah refers: "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us: he will subdue our iniquities, and will cast all

our sins²³ into the depths of the sea." [Mic. 7:19]

7. How then can you say that all sins are drowned in the baptismal layer if a man's wife is still to swim on the surface as evidence against him? The psalmist says: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." [Ps. 32:1-2] It would seem that we must add something to this song and say "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not a wife." Let us hear also the declaration which Ezekiel the so called "son of man" [Ezek. 2:1] makes concerning the virtue of him who is to be the true son of man, the Christian: "I will take you," he says, "from among the heathen ... then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit."²⁴ "From all your filthiness" he says, "will I cleanse you." If all is taken away nothing can be left. If filthiness is cleansed, how much more is cleanness kept from defilement. "A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit." Yes, for "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but a new nature." [Gal. 6:15] Wherefore the song also which we sing is a new song, [Rev. 14:3] and putting off the old man [Eph. 4:22] we walk not in the oldness of the letter but in the newness of the spirit. [Rom. 7:6] This is the new stone wherein the new name is written, "which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." [Rev. 2:17] "Know ye not," says the apostle, "that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." [Rom. 6:3, Rom. 6:4] Do we read so often of newness and of making new and yet can no renewing efface the stain which the word wife brings with it? We are buried with Christ by baptism and we have risen again by faith in the working of God who hath called Him from the dead. And "when we were dead in our sins and in the uncircumcision of our flesh, God hath quickened us together with Him, having forgiven us all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way nailing it to His cross." [Col. 2:13, Col. 2:14] Can it be that when our whole being is dead with Christ and when all the sins noted down in the old "handwriting" are blotted out, the one word "wife" alone lives on? Time would fail me were I to try to lay before you in order all the passages in the Holy Scriptures which relate to the efficacy of baptism or to explain the mysterious doctrine of that second birth which though it is our second is yet our first in Christ.

8. Before I make an end of dictating (for I perceive that I have already exceeded the just limits of a letter) I wish to give a brief explanation of the previous verses of the epistle in which the apostle describes the life of him that is to be made a bishop. We shall thus recognize him as Doctor of the Nations²⁵ not only for his praise of monogamy but also for all his precepts. At the same time I beg that no one will suppose that in what I write my design is to blacken the priests of the present day. My one object is to promote the interest of the church. Just as orators and philosophers in giving their notions of the perfect orator and the perfect philosopher do not detract from Demosthenes and Plato but merely set forth abstract ideals; so, when I describe a bishop and explain the qualifications laid down for the episcopate, I am but supplying a mirror for priests. Every man's conscience will tell him that it rests with himself what image he will see reflected there, whether one that will grieve him by its deformity or one that will gladden him by its beauty. I turn now to the passage in question. [1 Tim. 3:1-7] "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good, work." Work, you see, not rank; toil not pleasure; work that he may increase in lowliness, not grow

proud by reason of elevation. "A bishop then must be blameless." The same thing that he says to Titus, "if any be blameless." [Tit. 1:6] All the virtues are comprehended in this one word; thus he seems to require an impossible perfection. For if every sin, even every idle word, is deserving of blame, who is there in this world that is sinless and blameless? Still he who is chosen to be shepherd of the church must be one compared with whom other men are rightly regarded as but a flock of sheep. Rhetoricians define an orator as a good man able to speak. To be worthy of so high an honour he must be blameless in life and lip. For a teacher loses all his influence whose words are rendered null by his deeds. "The husband of one wife." Concerning this requirement I have spoken above. I will now only warn you that If monogamy is insisted on before baptism the other conditions laid down must be insisted on before baptism too. For it is impossible to regard the remaining obligations as binding only on the baptized and this alone as binding also on the unbaptized. "Vigilant (or "temperate" for "νηφάλιος" means both) wise,²⁶ of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach." The priests who minister in God's temple are forbidden to drink wine and strong drink, [Lev. 10:9] to keep their wits from being stupefied with drunkenness and to enable their understanding to do its duty in God's service. By the word 'wise' those are excluded who plead simplicity as an excuse for a priest's folly. For if the brain be not sound, all the members will be amiss. The phrase "of good behaviour" is an extension of the previous epithet "blameless." One who has no faults is called "blameless;" one who is rich in virtues is said to be "of good behaviour." Or the words may be differently explained in accord with Tully's maxim,²⁷ 'the main thing is that what you do you should do gracefully.' For some persons are so ignorant of their own measure [Cf. 2 Cor. 10:14] and so stupid and foolish that they make themselves laughing stocks to those who see them because of their gesture or gait or dress or conversation. Fancying that they knew what is and what is not good taste they deck themselves out with finery and bodily adornments and give banquets which profess to be elegant: but all such attempts at dress and display are nastier than a beggar's rags. As regards the obligation of priests to be teachers we have the precepts of the old Law [Cf. Dt. 17:9-11] and the fuller instructions given on the subject to Titus. [Tit. 1:9-14] For an innocent and unobtrusive conversation does as much harm by its silence as it does good by its example. If the ravaging wolves are to be frightened away it must be by the barking of dogs and by the staff of the shepherd. "Not given to wine, no striker." With the virtues they are to aim at he contrasts the vices they are to avoid.

9. We have learned what we ought to be: let us now learn what priests ought not to be Indulgence in wine is the fault of diners out and revellers. When the body is heated with drink it soon boils over with lust. Wine drinking means self-indulgence, self-indulgence means sensual gratification, sensual gratification means a breach of chastity. He that lives in pleasure is dead while he lives, [Cf. 1 Tim. 5:6] and he that drinks himself drunk is not only dead but buried. One hour's debauch makes Noah uncover his nakedness which through sixty years of sobriety he had kept covered. [Gen. 9:20, Gen. 9:21] Lot in a fit of intoxication unwittingly adds incest to incontinence, and wine overcomes the man whom Sodom failed to conquer. [Gen. 19:30-38] A bishop that is a striker is condemned by Him who gave His back to the smiters, [Isa. 50:6] and when He was reviled reviled not again. [1 Pet. 2:23] "But moderate";²⁸ one good thing is set over against two evil things. Drunkenness and passion are to be held in check by moderation. "Not a brawler, not covetous." Nothing is more overweening than the assurance of the ignorant who fancy that incessant chatter will carry conviction with it and are always ready for a dispute that they may thunder with turgid eloquence against the flock committed to their charge. That a priest must avoid covetousness

even Samuel teaches when he proves before all the people that he has taken nothing from any man. [1 Sam. 12:3-5] And the same lesson is taught by the poverty of the apostles who used to receive sustenance and refreshment from their brethren and to boast that they neither had nor wished to have anything besides food and raiment. [Cf. 1 Tim. 6:8] What the epistle to Timothy calls covetousness, that to Titus openly censures as the desire for filthy lucre. [Tit. 1:7] "One that ruleth well his own house." Not by increasing riches, not by providing regal banquets, not by having a pile of finely-wrought plates, not by slowly steaming pheasants so that the heat may reach the bones without melting the flesh upon them; no, but by first requiring of his own household the conduct which he has to inculcate in others. "Having his children in subjection with all gravity." They must not, that is, follow the example of the sons of Eli who lay with the women in the vestibule of the Temple and, supposing religion to consist in plunder, diverted to the gratification of their own appetites all the best parts of the victims. [1 Sam. 2:12-17, 1 Sam. 2:22] "Not a novice lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." I cannot sufficiently express my amazement at the great blindness which makes men discuss such questions as that of marriage before baptism and causes them to charge people with a transaction which is dead in baptism, nay even quickened into a new life with Christ, while no one regards a commandment so clear and unmistakable as this about bishops not being novices. One who was yesterday a catechumen is to-day a bishop²⁹; one who was yesterday in the amphitheatre is to-day in the church; one who spent the evening in the circus stands in the morning at the altar: one who a little while ago was a patron of actors is now a dedicator of virgins. Was the apostle ignorant of our shifts and subterfuges? did he know nothing of our foolish arguments? He not only says that a bishop must be the husband of one wife, but he has given commandment that he must be blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, moderate,³⁰ not given to wine, no striker, not a brawler, not covetous, not a novice. Yet to all these requirements we shut our eyes and notice nothing but the wives of the aspirants. Who cannot give instances to shew the need of the warning: "lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil?" A priest³¹ who is made such in a moment knows nothing of the lowliness and meekness which mark the meanest of the faithful, he knows nothing of Christian courtesy, he is not wise enough to think little of himself. He passes from one dignity to another, yet he has not fasted, he has not wept, he has not taken himself to task for his life, he has not striven by constant meditation to amend it, he has not given his substance to the poor. Yet he is moved from one see³² to another, he passes, that is, from pride to pride. There can be no doubt that arrogance is what the Apostle means when he speaks of the condemnation and downfall of the devil. And all men fall into this who are in a moment made masters, actually before they are disciples. "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without." The last requirement is like the first. One who is really "blameless" obtains the unanimous approval not only of his own household but of outsiders as well. By aliens and persons outside the church we are to understand Jews, heretics and Gentiles. A Christian bishop then must be such that they who cavil at his religion may not venture to cavil at his life. At present however we see but too many bishops who are willing, like the charioteers in the horse races, to bid money for the popular applause; while there are some so universally hated that they can wring no money from their people, a feat which clowns accomplish by means of a few gestures.

10. Such are the conditions, son Oceanus, which the master-teachers of the church ought with anxiety and fear to require of others and to observe themselves. Such too are the canons which

they should follow in the choice of persons for the priesthood; for they must not interpret the law of Christ to suit private animosities and feuds or to gratify ill-feeling which is sure to recoil on the man who cherishes it. Consider how unimpeachable is the character of Carterius in whose life his ill-wishers can find nothing to censure except a marriage contracted before baptism. "He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. If we commit no adultery yet if we kill, we are become transgressors of the law." [Jas. 2:11] "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." [Jas. 2:10] Accordingly when they cast in our teeth a marriage entered into before baptism, we must require of them compliance with all the precepts which are given to the baptized. For they pass over much that is not allowable while they censure much that is allowed.

1: AV. `unbelief. 0 2: The Cainites appear to have denied the efficacy of the atonement

3:

AV. `sin. 0

4:

i.e. Paul

5:

This synod held in 359 a.d. was attended by about 450 bishops. It put forth an Arian formula which caused general consternation. "The whole world," says Jerome, "groaned and was astonished to find itself Arian.

6: See note on Letter 61. 3 7: Cf. Cic. In Pis. 1 8: Rendered `elders 0' in AV

9: Exoleti 10: A Scottish tribe, cannibals according to Jerome (Against Jov. 2:7.

11:

Bk. 5. 457

12: Canon 15 13: AV. that are at ease 14: i.e. that of strained interpretations 15: V. Dict. Ant. s. 5:stola and cf. Cic. Phil. 2:18, 44 16: It is hardly necessary to remark that this derivation is purely fanciful and has no foundation in fact 17: Query a reference to Isa. 40:12, the Latin is obscure

18: Paradisus 19: udrofobouj et lymphaticos faciunt 20: The turning of the water into wine at Cana (John. 2:1, John. 2:11) 21: John. 19:34 - Jerome here follows Tertullian and Cyril of Jerusalem 22: Acts 9:17, Acts 9:18. Comp. Letter LX. 8 23: AV. "though wilt cast all their sins.

24: Ezek. 36:24-26. AV. punctuates differently 25: Doctor Gentium 26: AV. `sober. 0 27: Cic. de Or. i 29 28: AV. `patient. 0 29: The case of Ambrose 30: AV. `patient. 0 31: Sacerdos: as usual a bishop is meant 32: Lit. `chair. 0

Letters - letter_070

Letter 70. Tomagnus an Orator of Rome.

Jerome thanks Magnus. a Roman orator, for his services in bringing a young man named Sebesius to apologize to him for some fault that he had committed. He then replies to a criticism of Magnus on his fondness, for making quotations from profane writers, a practice which he defends by the example of the fathers of the church and of the inspired penmen of scripture. He ends by hinting that the objection really comes not from Magnus himself but from Rufinus (here nicknamed Calpurnius Lanarius). The date of the letter is 397 a.d.

1. That our friend Sebesius has profited by your advice I have learned less from your letter than from his own penitence. And strange to say the pleasure which he has given me since his rebuke is greater than the pain he caused me from his previous waywardness. There has been indeed a conflict between indulgence in the father, and affection in the son; while the former is anxious to forget the past, the latter is eager to promise dutiful behaviour in the future. Accordingly you and I must equally rejoice, you because you have successfully put a pupil to the test, I because I have received a son again.

2. You ask me at the close of your letter why it is that sometimes in my writings I quote examples from secular literature and thus defile the whiteness of the church with the foulness of heathenism. I will now briefly answer your question. You would never have asked it, had not your mind been wholly taken up with Tully; you would never have asked it had you made it a practice instead of studying Volcatius¹ to read the holy scriptures and the commentators upon them. For who is there who does not know that both in Moses and in the prophets there are passages cited from Gentile books and that Solomon proposed questions to the philosophers of Tyre and answered others put to him by them.² In the commencement of the book of Proverbs he charges us to understand prudent maxims and shrewd adages, parables and obscure discourse, the words of the wise and their dark sayings; [Prov. 1:1-6] all of which belong by right to the sphere of the dialectician and the philosopher. The Apostle Paul also, in writing to Titus, has used a line of the poet Epimenides: "The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." [Tit. 1:12] Half of which line was afterwards adopted by Callimachus. It is not surprising that a literal rendering of the words into Latin should fail to preserve the metre, seeing that Homer when translated into the same language is scarcely intelligible even in prose. In another epistle Paul quotes a line of Menander: "Evil communications corrupt good manners." [1 Cor. 15:33] And when he is arguing with the Athenians upon the Areopagus he calls Aratus as a witness citing from him the words "For we are also his offspring;" [Acts 17:28] in Greek "το■ γ■ρ κα■ γ■νος ■σμεν", the close of a heroic verse. And as if this were not enough, that leader of the Christian army, that unvanquished pleader for the cause of Christ, skilfully turns a chance inscription into a proof of the faith. [Acts 17:22] For he had learned from the true David to wrench the sword of the enemy out of his hand and with his own blade to cut off the head of the arrogant Goliath. [Cf. 1 Sam. 17:50, 1 Sam. 17:51] He had read in Deuteronomy the command given by the voice of the Lord that when a captive woman had had

her head shaved, her eyebrows and all her hair cut off, and her nails pared, she might then be taken to wife. [Deut. 21:10-13] Is it surprising that I too, admiring the fairness of her form and the grace of her eloquence, desire to make that secular wisdom which is my captive and my handmaid, a matron of the true Israel? Or that shaving off and cutting away all in her that is dead whether this be idolatry, pleasure, error, or lust, I take her to myself clean and pure and beget by her servants for the Lord of Sabaoth? My efforts promote the advantage of Christ's family, my so-called defilement with an alien increases the number of my fellow-servants. Hosea took a wife of whoredoms, Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and this harlot bore him a son called Jezreel or the seed of God. [Hos. 1:2-4] Isaiah speaks of a sharp razor which shaves "the head of sinners and the hair of their feet;" [Isa. 7:20] and Ezekiel shaves his head as a type of that Jerusalem which has been an harlot, [Ezek. 5:1-5] in sign that whatever in her is devoid of sense and life must be removed.

3. Cyprian, a man renowned both for his eloquence and for his martyr's death, was as-sailed-so Firmian tells us³ -for having used in his treatise against Demetrius passages from the Prophets and the Apostles which the latter declared to be fabricated and made up, instead of passages from the philosophers and poets whose authority he, as a heathen, could not well gainsay. Celsus⁴ and Porphyry⁵ have written against us and have been ably answered, the former by Origen, the latter by Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinaris.⁶ Origen wrote a treatise in eight books, the work of Methodius⁷ extended to ten thousand lines while Eusebius⁸ and Apollinaris⁹ composed twenty-five and thirty volumes respectively. Read these and you will find that compared with them I am a mere tyro in learning, and that, as my wits have long lain fallow, I can barely recall as in a dream what I have learned as a boy. The emperor Julian¹⁰ found time during his Parthian campaign to vomit forth seven books against Christ and, as so often happens in poetic legends, only wounded himself with his own sword. Were I to try to confute him with the doctrines of philosophers and stoics you would doubtless forbid me to strike a mad dog with the club of Hercules. It is true that he presently felt in battle the hand of our Nazarene or, as he used to call him, the Galilaean,¹¹ and that a spear-thrust in the vitals paid him due recompense for his foul calumnies. To prove the antiquity of the Jewish people Josephus¹² has written two books against Appio a grammarian of Alexandria; and in these he brings forward so many quotations from secular writers as to make me marvel how a Hebrew brought up from his childhood to read the sacred scriptures could also have perused the whole library of the Greeks. Need I speak of Philo¹³ whom critics call the second or the Jewish Plato?

4. Let me now run through the list of our own writers. Did not Quadratus¹⁴ a disciple of the apostles and bishop of the Athenian church deliver to the Emperor Hadrian (on the occasion of his visit to the Eleusinian mysteries) a treatise in defence of our religion. And so great was the admiration caused in everyone by his eminent ability that it stilled a most severe persecution. The philosopher Aristides,¹⁵ a man of great eloquence, presented to the same Emperor an apology for the Christians composed of extracts from philosophic writers. His example was afterwards followed by Justin¹⁶ another philosopher who delivered to Antoninus Plus and his sons¹⁷ and to the senate a treatise Against the Gentiles, in which he defended the ignominy of the cross and preached the resurrection of Christ with all freedom. Need I speak of Melito¹⁸ bishop of Sardis, of Apollinaris¹⁹ chief-priest of the Church of Hierapolis, of Dionysius²⁰ bishop of the Corinthians, of Tatian,²¹ of Bardesanes,²² of Irenaeus²³ successor to the martyr Pothinus;²⁴ all of whom have

in many volumes explained the uprisings of the several heresies and tracked them back, each to the philosophic source from which it flows. Pantaenus,²⁵ a philosopher of the Stoic school, was on account of his great reputation for learning sent by Demetrius bishop of Alexandria to India, to preach Christ to the Brahmans and philosophers there. Clement,²⁶ a presbyter of Alexandria, in my judgment the most learned of men, wrote eight books of Miscellanies²⁷ and as many of Outline Sketches,²⁸ a treatise against the Gentiles, and three volumes called the Pedagogue. Is there any want of learning in these, or are they not rather drawn from the very heart of philosophy? Imitating his example Origen²⁹ wrote ten books of Miscellanies, in which he compares together the opinions held respectively by Christians and by philosophers, and confirms all the dogmas of our religion by quotations from Plato and Aristotle, from Numenius³⁰ and Cornutus.³¹ Miltiades³² also wrote an excellent treatise against the Gentiles. Moreover Hippolytus³³ and a Roman senator named Apollonius³⁴ have each compiled apologetic works. The books of Julius Africanus³⁵ who wrote a history of his own times are still extant, as also are those of Theodore who was afterwards called Gregory,³⁶ a man endowed with apostolic miracles as well as with apostolic virtues. We still have the works of Dionysius³⁷ bishop of Alexandria, of Anatolius³⁸ chief priest of the church of Laodicea, of the presbyters Pamphilus,³⁹ Pierius,⁴⁰ Lucian,⁴¹ Malchion;⁴² of Eusebius⁴³ bishop of Caesarea, Eustathius⁴⁴ of Antioch and Athanasius⁴⁵ of Alexandria; of Eusebius⁴⁶ of Emesa, of Triphyllius⁴⁷ of Cyprus, of Asterius⁴⁸ of Scythopolis, of the confessor Serapion,⁴⁹ of Titus⁵⁰ bishop of Bostra; and of the Cappadocians Basil,⁵¹ Gregory,⁵² and Amphilochius.⁵³ All these writers so frequently interweave in their books the doctrines and maxims of the philosophers that you might easily be at a loss which to admire most, their secular erudition or their knowledge of the scriptures.

5. I will pass on to Latin writers. Can anything be more learned or more pointed than the style of Tertullian?⁵⁴ His Apology and his books Against the Gentiles contain all the wisdom of the world. Minucius Felix⁵⁵ a pleader in the Roman courts has ransacked all heathen literature to adorn the pages of his Octavius and of his treatise Against the astrologers (unless indeed this latter is falsely ascribed to him). Arnobius⁵⁶ has published seven books against the Gentiles, and his pupil Lactantius⁵⁷ as many, besides two volumes, one on Anger and the other on the creative activity of God. If you read any of these you will find in them an epitome of Cicero's dialogues. The Martyr Victorinus⁵⁸ though as a writer deficient in learning is not deficient in the wish to use what learning he has. Then there is Cyprian.⁵⁹ With what terseness, with what knowledge of all history, with what splendid rhetoric and argument has he touched the theme that idols are no Gods! Hilary⁶⁰ too, a confessor and bishop of my own day, has imitated Quintilian's twelvebooks both in number and in style, and has also shewn his ability as a writer in his short treatise against Dioscorus the physician. In the reign of Constantine the presbyter Juvenius⁶¹ set forth in verse the story of our Lord and Saviour, and did not shrink from forcing into metre the majestic phrases of the Gospel. Of other writers dead and living I say nothing. Their aim and their ability are evident to all who read them.⁶²

6. You must not adopt the mistaken opinion, that while in dealing with the Gentiles one may appeal to their literature in all other discussions one ought to ignore it; for almost all the books of all these writers-except those who like Epicurus⁶³ are no scholars-are extremely full of erudition and philosophy. I incline indeed to fancy-the thought comes into my head as I dictate-that you yourself know quite well what has always been the practice of the learned in this matter. I believe that in

putting this question to me you are only the mouthpiece of another who by reason of his love for the histories of Sallust might well be called Calpurnius Lanarius.⁶⁴ Please beg of him not to envy eaters their teeth because he is toothless himself, and not to make light of the eyes of gazelles because he is himself a mole. Here as you see there is abundant material for discussion, but I have already filled the limits at my disposal.

1: Either a teacher of civil law mentioned by Pliny (viii. 40), or else one of the writers of the Augustan History 2: The authority for this is Josephus 3: i.e. Lactantius, vide Inst. 5:4

4: The author of a polemical treatise against Christianity, fragments of which still persuaded in Origen's reply. He was a Platonist 5: A neoplatonist writer who flourished in the third century 6: See note on Letter 48 7: Contemporary with Eusebius the historian. His Symposium still extant proves him to have been a warm admirer of Plato

8: The learned bishop of Caesarea (a.d. 260-340). His Church History and other works are translated or described in Vol. 1: of this series 9: Probably the learned Bishop of Laodicea, whose views were condemned at Constantinople in 381

10: Julian was emperor from a.d. 261 to a.d. 263. He reverted from Christianity to paganism and did all in his power to harass the Church 11: According to Theodoret (H. E. 3:25) Julian's last words were "Though hast conquered, O Galilaean.

12: A Jew born at Jerusalem a.d. 37. His historical works, still extant, are of great value 13: See note on Letter 22

14:

The author of an apology for the Christians presented to the Emperor Hadrian. Only small fragments of the work are now extant. See for him and Aristides Jerome's Book on Famous Men, in Vol. 3: of this series, 100:xix. xx

15:

Another Athenian apologist contemporary with Quadratus. His Apology has lately been published. Cambridge, Eng., 1891

16: Commonly called Justin Martyr. Born in Samaria of Greek parents, he is said to have undergone martyrdom at Rome. Fl. a.d. 140-150 17: Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus 18: Fl. a.d. 170. He composed an Apology addressed to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius

19: A highly esteemed writer, from 171 a.d. onwards, who wrote many treatises, amongst which were an apology addressed to Marcus Aurelius, and several works against Montanism 20: Fl. a.d. 171, the writer of several pastoral letters to other churches famous in their day but no longer extant 21: See note on Letter XLVIII

22:

Born at Edessa 100:155 a.d. died 223 a.d. A mystical theologian of a gnostic type who held a high position at the court of the Abgars. His writings have perished

23: Bishop of Lyons in the latter half of the second century. He was a native of Asia Minor and his younger days had known Polycarp 24: Bishop of Lyons, suffered martyrdom under Marcus Aurelius

25: A convert from stoicism to Christianity in the latter part of the second century who as the head of the catechetical school at Alexandria was the instructor of Clement 26: Head of the catechetical school at Alexandria a.d. 190-203

27:

strwmateij

28:

upotupwseij

29: See Letter 33. Of Origen's Miscellanies only a few fragments remain. `They appear to have discussed various topics in the light of ancient philosophy and scripture. O'-Westcott 30: A neoplatonic and neopythagorean philosopher who flourished in the age of the Antonines

31: A Stoic philosopher, the friend and teacher of the poet Persius. Having criticised Nero's literary style too freely he was banished by that emperor 32: An active Christian writer of the reign of Commodus 33: Fl. a.d. 200-225, the first antipope. His Refutation of All Heresies is of great interest and value 34: Fl. a.d. 186. accused of being a Christian, he delivered in the senate an apology for the faith

35:

A writer of the third century who compiled a Chronicle of the world's history from the creation to his own day. It has long since perished

36: Surnamed Thaumaturgus or Wonderworker. One of Origen's pupils, he wrote a Panegyric (extant) on his master. Fl. 233-270 37: Head of the catechetical school, and afterwards bishop, of Alexandria. He died a.d. 265 38: Trained in the school of Alexandria and praised by Eusebius for his great learning 39: The intimate friend of Eusebius of Caesarea and founder of the famous library in that city 40: See note on Letter 48 41: A presbyter of Antioch and apparently a pupil of Malchion. He suffered martyrdom at Nicomedia a.d. 311 42: A presbyter of Antioch in the reign of Aurelian. He took part in the proceedings against Paul of Samosata 43: See note on above 44: Bishop of Antioch at the time of the Nicene Council. One of the earliest and most vigorous opponents of Arianism

45:

Bishop of Alexandria from a.d. 326 to a.d. 373. The great champion of the diversity of Christ against Arius and the followers

46: Flor. a.d. 341-359. After studying at Alexandria he lived for some time at Antioch where he took part in an Arian council 47: A famous lawyer of Berytus converted to Christianity by Spyridon a bishop in Cyprus 48: Bishop of Amasea in Pontus, a constant student of Demosthenes and himself no mean orator 49: An Egyptian bishop the friend of Antony and Athanasius. Some of his

writings are still extant 50: This bishop is best known through the Emperor Julian's vain attempt to expel him from his see 51: a.d. 329-379. Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia and a strenuous champion of orthodoxy. His works are still extant 52: Gregory of Nazianzus. Bishop of Sasima and for a short time of Constantinople (a.d. 379-381) 53: Flor. a.d. 350-400. Archbishop of Iconium. A friend of Basil and of Gregory Nazianzen 54: An African writer who in his last days became a Montanist. Flor. a.d. 175-225 55: A Roman lawyer of the second century. His Apology-a Dialogue entitled Octavius-is extant

56: Fl. a.d. 300. A professor of rhetoric at Sicca in Africa and a heathen. He composed his apology to prove the reality of his conversion 57: An African rhetorician and apologist of the fourth century. His works are extant

58: A celebrated man of letters at Rome in the middle of the fourth century, the story of whose conversion is told in Augustine's Confessions (viii. 2-5) 59: Bishop of Carthage. He suffered martyrdom a.d. 358. His works are extant 60: Bishop of Poitiers (died a.d. 368). A champion of the orthodox faith against Arianism

61:

A Spanish Christian of the fourth century. His "Story of the Gospels," a life of Christ in hexameter verse, still exists

62: For most of the writers mentioned in this section see also Jerome's Book of Famous Men translated in Vol. 3: of this series 63: For an account of Epicurus see Letter V. note. He professed to have read but little

64:

That Rufinus is the person meant is plain from a reference made to this passage in Apol. adv. Rufinum, 1:30 and also from Letter CII. Jerome is however mistaken in connecting this Calpurnius with Sallust. He is mentioned by Plutarch as a treacherous friend. Sallust does mention a certain Calpurinus Bestia, and Jerome has probably confounded the two

Letters - letter_071

Letter 71. To Lucinius.

Lucinius was a wealthy Spaniard of Btica who in conformity with the ascetic ideas of his time had made a vow of continence with his wife Theodora. Being much interested in the study of scripture he proposed to visit Bethlehem, and in a.d. 397 sent several scribes thither to transcribe for him Jerome's principal writings. To these on their return home Jerome now entrusts the following letter. In it he encourages Lucinius to fulfil his purpose of coming to Bethlehem, describes the books Which he is sending to him, and answers two questions relating to ecclesiastical usage. He also sends him some trilling presents.

Shortly after receiving the letter (written in 398 a.d.) Lucinius died and Jerome wrote to Theodora to console her for her loss (letter LXXV.

1. Your letter which has suddenly arrived was not expected by me, and coming in an unlooked for way it has helped to rouse me from my torpor by the glad tidings which it conveys. I hasten to embrace with the arms of love one whom my eyes have never seen, and silently say to myself:—"oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I flee away and be at rest." [Ps. 55:6. PBV] Then would I find him "whom my soul loveth." [Cant. 3:1] In you the Lord's words are now truly fulfilled: "many shall come from the east and west and shall sit down with Abraham." [Matt. 8:11] In those days the faith of my Lucinius was foreshadowed in Cornelius, "centurion of the band called the Italian band." [Acts 10:1] And when the apostle Paul writes to the Romans: "whensoever I take my journey into Spain I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you;" [Rom. 15:24] he shews by the tale of his previous successes what he looked to gain from that province.¹ Laying in a short time the foundation of the gospel "from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum," [Rom. 15:19] he enters Rome in bonds, that he may free those who are in the bonds of error and superstition. Two years he dwells in his own hired house [Acts 28:30] that he may give to us the house eternal which is spoken of in both the testaments.² The apostle, the fisher of men, [Matt. 4:19] has cast forth his net, and, among countless kinds of fish, has landed you like a magnificent gilt-bream. You have left behind you the bitter waves, the salt tides, the mountain-fissures; you have despised Leviathan who reigns in the waters. [Cf. Ps. 104:26] Your aim is to seek the wilderness with Jesus and to sing the prophet's song: "my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." [Ps. 63:1, Ps. 63:2] or, as he sings in another place, "lo, then would I wander far off and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." [Ps. 55:7, Ps. 55:8] Since you have left Sodom and are hastening to the mountains, I beseech you with a father's affection not to look behind you. Your hands have grasped the handle of the plough, [Luke 9:62] the hem of the Saviour's garment, [Matt. 9:20] and His locks wet with the dew of night; [Cant. 5:2] do not let them go. Do not come down from the housetop of virtue to seek for the clothes which you wore of old, nor return home from the field. [Matt. 24:17, Matt. 24:18] Do not like Lot set your heart on the plain

or upon the pleasant gardens; [Gen. 13:10] for these are watered not, as the holy land, from heaven but by Jordan's muddy stream made salt by contact with the Dead Sea.

2. Many begin but few persevere to the end. "They which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the crown."³ But of us on the other hand it is said: "So run that ye may obtain." [1 Cor. 9:24] Our master of the games is not grudging; he does not give the palm to one and disgrace another. His wish is that all his athletes may alike win garlands. My soul rejoices, yet the very greatness of my joy makes me feel sad. Like Ruth [Ruth 1:14] when I try to speak I burst into tears. Zacchus, the convert of an hour, is accounted worthy to receive the Saviour as his guest. [Luke 19:5] Martha and Mary make ready a feast and then welcome the Lord to it. [John. 12:2] A harlot washes His feet with her tears and against His burial anoints His body with the ointment of good works. [Mark 14:8] Simon the leper invites the Master with His disciples and is not refused. [Matt. 26:6] To Abraham it is said: "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." [Gen. 12:1] He leaves Chaldaea, he leaves Mesopotamia; he seeks what he knows not, not to lose Him whom he has found. He does not deem it possible to keep both his country and his Lord; even at that early day he is already fulfilling the prophet David's words: "I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." [Ps. 39:12] He is called "a Hebrew," in Greek "περπατης", a passer-over, for not content with present excellence but forgetting those things which are behind he reaches forth to that which is before. [Phil. 3:13] He makes his own the words of the psalmist: "they shall go from strength to strength." [Ps. 84:7] Thus his name has a mystic meaning and he has opened for you a way to seek not your own things but those of another. You too must leave your home as he did, and must take for your parents, brothers, and relations only those who are linked to you in Christ. "Whosoever," He says, "shall do the will of my father ...the same is my brother and sister and mother." [Matt. 12:50]

3. You have with you one who was once your partner in the flesh but is now your partner in the spirit; once your wife but now your sister; once a woman but now a man; once an inferior but now an equal.⁴ Under the same yoke as you she hastens toward the same heavenly kingdom. A too careful management of one's income, a too near calculation of one's expenses-these are habits not easily laid aside. Yet to escape the Egyptian woman Joseph had to leave his garment with her. [Gen. 39:12] And the young man who followed Jesus having a linen cloth cast about him, when he was assailed by the servants had to throw away his earthly covering and to flee naked. [Mark 14:51, Mark 14:52] Elijah also when he was carried up in a chariot of fire to heaven left his mantle of sheepskin on earth. [2 Kings 2:11, 2 Kings 2:13] Elisha used for sacrifice the oxen and the yokes which hitherto he had employed in his work. [1 Kings 19:21] We read in Ecclesiasticus: "he that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith." [Ecclus. 13:1] As long as we are occupied with the things of the world, as long as our soul is fettered with possessions and revenues, we cannot think freely of God. "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" [2 Cor. 6:14, 2 Cor. 6:15] "Ye cannot," the Lord says, "serve God and Mammon." [Matt. 6:24] Now the laying aside of money is for those who are beginners in the way, not for those who are made perfect. Heathens like Antisthenes⁵ and Crates⁶ the Theban have done as much before now. But to offer one's self to God, this is the mark of Christians and apostles. These like the widow out of their penury cast their two mites into the treasury, and giving all that they have to the Lord are counted worthy to hear his words: "ye also shall sit upon twelve

thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." [Matt. 19:28]

4. You can see for yourself why I mention these things; without expressly saying it I am inviting you to take up your abode at the holy places. Your abundance has supported the want of many that some day their riches may abound to supply your want; [2 Cor. 8:14] you have made to yourself "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that they may receive you into everlasting habitations." [Luke 16:9] Such conduct deserves praise and merits to be compared with the virtue of apostolic times. Then, as you know, believers sold their possessions and brought the prices of them and laid them down at the apostles' feet: [Acts 4:34, Acts 4:35] a symbolic act designed to shew that men must trample on covetousness. But the Lord yearns for believers' souls more than for their riches. We read in the Proverbs: "the ransom of a man's soul are his own riches." [Prov. 13:8, LXX] We may, indeed, take a man's own riches to be those which do not come from some one else, or from plunder; according to the precept: "honour God with thy just labours." [Prov. 3:9, LXX] But the sense is better if we understand a man's "own riches" to be those hidden treasures which no thief can steal and no robber wrest from him. [Cf. Matt. 6:20]

5. As for my poor works which from no merits of theirs but simply from your own kindness you say that you desire to have; I have given them to your servants to transcribe, I have seen the paper-copies made by them, and I have repeatedly ordered them to correct them by a diligent comparison with the originals. For so many are the pilgrims passing to and fro that I have been unable to read so many volumes. They have found me also troubled by a long illness from which this Lent I am slowly recovering as they are leaving me. If then you find errors or omissions which interfere with the sense, these you must impute not to me but to your own servants; they are due to the ignorance or carelessness of the copyists, who write down not what they find but what they take to be the meaning, and do but expose their own mistakes when they try to correct those of others. It is a false rumour which has reached you to the effect that I have translated the books of Josephus⁷ and the volumes of the holy men Papias⁸ and Polycarp.⁹ I have neither the leisure nor the ability to preserve the charm of these masterpieces in another tongue. Of Origen¹⁰ and Didymus¹¹ I have translated a few things, to set before my countrymen some specimens of Greek teaching. The canon of the Hebrew verity¹² -except the octateuch¹³ which I have at present in hand-I have placed at the disposal of your slaves and copyists. Doubtless you already possess the version from the septuagint¹⁴ which many years ago I diligently revised for the use of students. The new testament I have restored to the authoritative form of the Greek original.¹⁵ For as the true text of the old testament can only be tested by a reference to the Hebrew, so the true text of the new requires for its decision an appeal to the Greek.

6. You ask me whether you ought to fast on the Sabbath¹⁶ and to receive the eucharist daily according to the custom-as currently reported-of the churches of Rome and Spain.¹⁷ Both these points have been treated by the eloquent Hippolytus,¹⁸ and several writers have collected passages from different authors bearing upon them. The best advice that I can give you is this. Church-traditions-especially when they do not run counter to the faith-are to be observed in the form in which previous generations have handed them down; and the use of one church is not to be annulled because it is contrary to that of another.¹⁹ As regards fasting, I wish that we could practise it without intermission as-according to the Acts of the Apostles²⁰ -Paul did and the believers with him even in the season of Pentecost and on the Lord's Day. They are not to be accused of manichism, for carnal food ought not to be preferred before spiritual. As regards the

holy eucharist you may receive it at all times²¹ without qualm of conscience or disapproval from me. You may listen to the psalmist's words: "O taste and see that the Lord is good;" [Ps. 34:8] you may sing as he does: "my heart poureth forth a good word." [Ps. 45:1, Vulg] But do not mistake my meaning. You are not to fast on feast-days, neither are you to abstain on the week days in Pentecost.²² In such matters each province may follow its own inclinations, and the traditions which have been handed down should be regarded as apostolic laws.

7. You send me two small cloaks and a sheepskin mantle from your wardrobe and ask me to wear them myself or to give them to the poor. In return I send to you and your sister²³ in the Lord four small haircloths suitable to your religious profession and to your daily needs, for they are the mark of poverty and the outward witness of a continual penitence. To these I have added a manuscript containing Isaiah's ten most obscure visions which I have lately elucidated with a critical commentary. When you look upon these trifles call to mind the friend in whom you delight and hasten the voyage which you have for a time deferred. And because "the way of man is not in himself" but it is the Lord that "directeth his steps;" [Jer. 10:23] if any hindrance should interfere-I hope none may-to prevent you from coming, I pray that distance may not sever those united in affection and that I may find my Lucinius present in absence through an interchange of letters.

1:

Italy

2: Utriusque instrumenti aeternam domum. The 'twofold record 0' is that of the old and new testaments both of which speak of the church under the figure of a house. For the term "instrument" see note on Lette 3: Jerome quoting from memory substitutes 'crown 0' for 'prize. 0 4: His wife Theodora 5: A disciple of Socrates, subsequently the founder of the Cynic School. Fl. 366 b.c 6: See note on Letter 66 7: See note on Letter 22

8:

A writer of the sub-apostolic age who had been a disciple of the apostle John. He was bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia

9: Another sub-apostolic writer who was also a disciple of John. He became bishop of Smyrna and underwent martyrdom at the age of 86 10: See note on Letter 33 11: The blind theologian of Alexandria by whose teaching Jerome had himself profited. See Letter 34 12: The old testament as translated direct from the Hebrew 13: The first eight books 14: This work Jerome accomplished between the years 383 and 390 a.d. Only the Psalter and Job are extant 15: This task he undertook at the request of pope Damasus in 383 a.d. See Letter 27 16: i.e. on Saturday

17:

At this time the communion was celebrated daily at Constantinople, in Africa, and in Spain. At Rome it was celebrated on every day of the week except Saturday (the Sabbath). See Socrates, H.E. 5:22

18: A leading Roman churchman, bishop of Portus, in the early part of the third century, the rival and enemy of pope Callistus and author of many theological treatises, one of which-the Refutation of all Heresies-has recently become famous 19: Compare the similar advice given by Gregory the

Great to Augustine of Canterbury (Bede, H. E. 1. 27) 20: Nothing in the book of Acts bears out this statement. Fasting at the times mentioned was forbidden in Jerome's day 21: Daily if you will and on fast days as well as on feast days 22: i.e. the period of fifty days between Easterday and Whitsunday. See Letter XLI 23: i.e. his wife Theodora

Letters - letter_072

Letter 72. To Vitalis.

Vitalis had asked Jerome "Is Scripture credible when it tells us that Solomon and Ahaz became fathers at the age of eleven?" The difficulty had previously occurred to Jerome himself (Letter 36. 10, whence perhaps Vitalis took it) and in this letter he suggests several ways in which it may be met. He is quite prepared, if necessary, to accept the alleged fact on the grounds that "there are many things in Scripture which sound incredible and yet are true" and that "nature cannot resist the Lord of nature" (§2). He is disposed, however, to regard the question as trivial and of no importance. The date of the letter is 398 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. Zenon the sailor, through whom you say letters of your sanctity were transmitted to me, delivered only a short and brief letter from the blessed Pope Amabilis, containing the usual gifts. And I am quite surprised as to what could be the reason that, although he had been faithful in conveying your blessings as well as those of the Pope, he is found to be negligent in delivering the letter. For, I do not think that you can be deceived, a disciple of truth, unless perhaps the Latin language has strayed among the Greek man's papers. Therefore, I am replying to the second letter, which was brought to me by my holy son, Heraclius the deacon, in which, among other things, you beg me to explain to you the reasons why Solomon and Ahaz, being only eleven years old, are said to have begotten sons. For if Solomon received the empire over Israel in the twelfth year, and reigned in Jerusalem forty years; and his son Roboam, when he was in the fortieth year of his age, succeeded him in the kingdom, it is clear that Solomon was either eleven or ten years old, because his mother claims that she carried him in her womb for ten months from conception to birth. Again, when Ahaz, the son of Joathan, was twenty years old, he was made king over two tribes, that is, Judah and Benjamin (4 Kings 16), and he reigned sixteen years (2 Chronicles 28): upon his death, when Ezechias was in the twenty-fifth year of his age, he succeeded his father in the kingdom (4 Kings 18). Whence it is understood that Achaz also begot Ezechias in his eleventh or tenth year.

2. And indeed, if in the histories, the Septuagint interpreters had something different from the Hebrew truth, we could resort to the usual defenses: and to hold fast to the fortress of the vernacular tongue: but now, there is difficulty not in the Scripture, but in the sense, as the true one itself and the other interpreters agree with equal authority. For who would believe that a boy of eleven years could generate a son? Many other things are said in the Scriptures which seem incredible, and yet are true. Nor does nature prevail against the Lord of nature: nor can a vessel say to the potter: Why have you made me thus, or thus? Although what is done for a miracle, as a sign and wonder, cannot make a law of nature. Is it because in our age a two-headed, four-handed, one-bellied, and two-legged man was born at Lydda, that it is necessary for all men to be born in the same way? Let us read the old histories, especially the Greek and Latin ones, and we shall find, cleansed by expiatory offerings, according to the error of the ancients,

portentous offspring in both human beings, and in cattle and beasts. I have heard, and I do not lie according to the testimony of the Lord, that a certain little woman, when she nursed the exposed infant and fed it, and performed the duties of a nursemaid, and slept with the little boy who had already reached the age of ten years, it happened that she indulged in more than chastity, and being excited by passion, she led the child to sexual intercourse with obscene movements. The first drunkenness of another night and subsequently made a habit of the rest. Not yet two months had passed, and behold the woman's uterus swelled. What more? By God's dispensation, it was done so that what was being abused against nature with the simplicity of a little child in contempt of God, should be produced by the Lord of nature, the word being fulfilled which says: nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest (Matthew 10).

3. Meanwhile we consider that the Scripture accuses both Solomon and Achaz of pleasure and impiety secretly. For both, because they were of the lineage of David, turned away from the Lord: and one so much followed after voluptuousness, that he had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, and they withdrew his heart. And Solomon's wives turned away his heart. For when he was old, his heart was not right with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father. And he had idols built, through the wickedness of his wives, and he worshipped all the idols which his wives made. And Joas made an alliance with the king of the Assyrians, when he saw him to be powerful, and he went to Damascus and took captive the same as his fathers had done. He increased his contempt towards the Lord in the time of his affliction, and sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that saved him; and he set up against God the gods of the people of Damascus, and he built altars in their cities, and burnt incense to idols. And he committed a grievous crime and destroyed the vessels of the house of the Lord, which were for the service of the house of the Lord. Since it is clear that people who are devoted to lust from a young age are shown to have immaturity of offspring, and they begin to sin even at a time when nature does not allow it.

4. At the sum of it, it can be said that in the kingdom of David, Solomon obtained the throne at twelve years old, and afterwards, because the Scripture left it uncertain, David lived for a few years while his son was already reigning, which were attributed to him and not to Solomon. Moreover, after the father had died, the son reigns for forty years, which he reigned without a parent. Thus, the beginning of Solomon's reign and the time when he himself reigned alone were demonstrated by history. However, not all the fifty years of his life were contained within the circles of fifty-two years. But if you doubt that, while their sons are reigning and their fathers are still alive, the time of their rule is attributed not to the sons but to the parents, read the volume of the Kingdom itself, and you will find that after King Uzziah of Judah was struck with leprosy, he lived in a separate house, and his son Jotham ruled the empire and judged the people of the land until the day of his father's death (4 Kings 5). And yet, after his death, at the age of twenty-five, he is said to have reigned sixteen years, which he alone governed. What we have understood about Solomon should also be understood about Ahaz, who was the father of Hezekiah, Jotham's son (2 Chronicles 27:28). I have heard the story told by the Jews in this way, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, which I recently interpreted among ten visions: that when Ahaz died, the Philistines rejoiced, and the Scripture afterwards warns and states: 'Do not rejoice, all Philistia: For the rod of him who struck you is broken. For out of the serpent's root will come forth a king, and his offspring will devour the bird.'" (Isaiah 14): this means that from Ahaz would come forth King Hezekiah. From this it is understood that his son was not immediately placed in power after the death of his

father, but that his kingdom was delayed by popular uprisings, certain interregna, or certainly pressing evils, and wars arising from all sides.

5. In obscure matters we hold diverse opinions, so that we seem to be speaking before you rather than writing. Otherwise, in forbidding endless genealogies and Jewish fables, the Apostle seems to me to be prohibiting such questions. For what profit is it to adhere to a letter, and either to blame the mistake of the writer, or the series of years, when it is most clearly written: The letter kills, but the spirit gives life? (2 Cor. 3) Read over all the books of both the Old and New Testaments, and you will find so great a difference among the years, and the number between Judah and Israel, that to dwell on questions of this kind seems to belong not so much to a studious as to a idle person. I have willingly received the gifts sent by you, and I pray that you may continue to persist until the end in the love which you have begun to pursue. For it is not the beginning, but the remaining which is the fruit of virtue. Receive, in turn, the gifts which we have sent through Desiderius (Put Aquitanian Presbyter).

Letters - letter_073

Letter 73. To Evangelus.

Evangelus had sent Jerome an anonymous treatise in which Melchisedek was indentified with the Holy Ghost, and had asked him what he thought of the theory. Jerome in his reply repudiates the idea as absurd and insists that Melchisedek was a real man, possibly, as the Jews said, Shem the eldest son of Noah. The date of the letter is 398 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. You sent me the volume **■ν■νυμον ■δ■οσποτον**, anonymous and authorless, and I do not know whether you have removed the author's name from the title, or whether the writer himself, to avoid the danger of controversy, did not want to confess his authorship. When I read it, I realized that the most famous question about High Priest Melchizedek had been discussed there with many arguments, in an attempt to teach that he who blessed the great Patriarch was of a more divine nature and should not be considered among men. And in the end, he dared to say that the Holy Spirit appeared to Abraham, and that he was the one who appeared in the form of a man. However, the Holy Spirit, when he brought forth bread and wine, and received the tithes of the spoils that Abraham had brought back from the victory over four kings, did not want to touch them at all: and you ask me to respond to what seems to me, either about the writer or about the question. I confess that I wanted to conceal my opinion, nor to mix myself in dangerous and contentious discourse, in which I would have had reprovers whatever I had said. But again, when I read the letter and found myself adjured with remarkable entreaties in the last little page not to spurn the petitioner, I searched through the books of the Ancients to see what each one said, and I answered you, as it were, with the counsel of many.

2. And immediately on the first page of Genesis I found an exegesis by Origen concerning Melchizedek, in which he discusses the matter in many words and comes to the conclusion that he was an angel. With almost the same arguments your author has employed on the Holy Spirit, he speaks on the heavenly powers. I went on to his follower Didymus, and came to a like result. I turned to Hippolytus, Irenaeus, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Emisenus, Apollinaris also, and our Eustathius, who first sang the war trumpet against Arius as the Bishop of Antioch's Church: and I found that all of their opinions, with different arguments and byways, had arrived at one intersection, to say that Melchizedek was a Canaanite man, the king of the city of Jerusalem, which was first called Salem, then Jebus, and finally Jerusalem. It is not surprising if a priest of the most high God is described without circumcision and legal ceremonies, and without being of the family of Aaron, since Abel, Enoch, and Noah also pleased God and offered sacrifices, and in the book of Job we read that he himself was an offerer of gifts and a priest, and daily sacrificed offerings for his sons (Job. 1). And they say that Job himself was not from the tribe of Levi, but from the lineage of Esau: although the Hebrews think otherwise.

3. But how Noah, being intoxicated in his house and stripped and ridiculed by his middle son, offered a figure of the Savior and of the synagogue of the Jews; and Samson also, the lover of the

harlot and poor Delilah, killed many more of his enemies after he was dead than when alive, to represent the passion of Christ; and nearly all the holy patriarchs and prophets expressed a figure of the Savior in some way. So also Melchizedek, because he was a Canaanite and not of the Jewish race, offered a type of the priesthood of the Son of God, of whom it is said in the 109th Psalm: You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek. However, his order is interpreted in many ways, in that he alone was king and priest, and served as a priest before circumcision: so that not the Gentiles from the Jews, but the Jews from the Gentiles received the priesthood; Nor was he anointed with priestly oil, as the precepts of Moses set forth (Lev. 8: 1): but with the oil of exultation, and by the purity of faith; nor did he sacrifice the flesh and blood of victims, and take in the entrails of brute animals: but, he dedicated the sacrament of Christ with bread and wine, a simple and pure sacrifice; and many other things which brevity of an epistle does not contain.

4. Furthermore (perhaps overlooking) it is treated more thoroughly in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chapter 7), which all Greeks receive, and some Latins, that this Melchizedek, that is, the righteous king, was the king of Salem, that is, the king of peace, without father, without mother, and how this is to be understood, summed up in one word ἄγονε ἀλφειας, not that he was without a father and mother, since Christ also had both a father and a mother according to both natures, but that he suddenly appears in Genesis as Abraham returns from the slaughter of the enemy; and not before. And his name shall not be mentioned afterwards. But the Apostle affirms that Aaron had the priesthood, that is, the people of the Jews, both as its beginning and end, whereas Melchizedek, that is, of Christ and the Church, is eternal, having no author, and that with the change of the priesthood, there is also a change of the law, so that the word of God may not go forth from Hagar the handmaid and Mount Sinai, but from Sarah the free woman and the citadel of Zion, and the law of God from Jerusalem. And he exaggerates the difficulty of the matter at first, saying: On which there is much talk amongst us, and it is ininterpretable (Hebrews 5:11): not because the Apostle could not interpret it, but because it was not the time for it. For he was persuading the Hebrews, that is, the Jews, not anymore the Faithful, among whom the sacrament was everywhere evident. Nevertheless, if the vessel of election is struck by the mystery and confesses the ineffable concerning what it is discussing; how much more do we worms and fleas need to confess only the knowledge of ignorance and to show the most ample house through a small opening: so that we may say, "Two priesthoods have been compared to each other by the Apostle, that of the former people and that of the latter?" And he accomplishes this by his whole discussion so that Melchizedek, a priest from among the Gentiles, would be prior to Levi and Aaron, whose merit is so great that he blessed Abraham in his loins before the future priests of the Jews. And everything that follows in praise of Melchizedek is referred to the type of Christ, of whom the sacraments of the Church are the progress.

5. I have read these things in the books of the Greeks. And since the vast extent of the world cannot be compressed within brief limits, I have wished to show, in a shortened sketch, these points beyond the field of ordinary knowledge... However, since you ask kindly, and because everything that I have learned must be poured into faithful ears, I will also give the opinion of the Hebrews. And lest you should miss anything in your eagerness for knowledge, I will add the Hebrew words themselves: 'And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of the most

high God, possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed be the most high God, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." (Genesis, 14:18-20). Which is translated into Latin in this way: And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine; and he was a priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram to God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tenth of all. And they say that this was Shem, the first son of Noah, and at the time when Abram was born, he was 390 years old, reckoning them thus. After the flood, in the second year, Shem, having lived for 100 years, begot Arphaxad; And after Arphaxad was born, he lived for 500 years, that is, a total of 600 years. And when Arphaxad was thirty-five years old, he begot Salah, who also thirty years old, begot Eber, and we read that Eber begot Peleg at the age of 34. Again, Phaleg, having completed thirty years, begot Rehu: who himself, after his thirty-second year from his birth, begot Serug: of whom, when he had arrived at his thirtieth year, was born Nachor: who, when he was twenty-nine years old, begot Thare: whom we read, at the age of seventy, to have begotten Abram, and Nachor, and Aran. Calculate the number of years through each age, and you will find from the birth of Shem to the generation of Abram, three hundred and ninety years. Now Abraham died in the hundred and seventy-fifth year of his age. By calculation, it is found that Shem, his tenth-degree grandson, survived Abraham by thirty-five years.

6. At the same time they relate this, that until the priesthood of Aaron, all the firstborn of the race of Noah, whose series and order are described, were priests, and offered victims to God: and that these were the firstborn, which Esau sold to his brother Jacob (Gen. 27). It is not surprising if Melchizedek went out to meet the victorious Abram and brought out bread and wine for refreshment, for himself as well as his fighters, and blessed him, since he owed this right to his great-nephew: and received tithes of the spoils and victory from him: either because it is uncertain, he gave him tithes of his substance, and showed avuncular generosity to his nephew. For both indeed can be understood, both according to the Hebrews and according to the Septuagint interpreters, that he himself also received tithes of spoils, and gave tithes of his substance to Abraham: although the Apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews (Ch. 7) most clearly defines that not Abraham had received tithes of his riches from Melchizedek, but had received a part of the spoils of the enemies from the High Priest.

7. But Salem, as Josephus and all of us think, is not Jerusalem, but a name composed of Greek and Hebrew, which shows it to be absurd, a mixture of foreign languages: it is a town next to Scythopolis, which until today is called Salem, and the palace of Melchizedek is shown there, showing the magnificence of the old work from the ruins' size: about which it is also written in the later part of Genesis. Jacob came to Socoth, that is, to the tents, and made houses and tents for himself there, and went to Salem, a city in the region of Sichem, which is in the land of Canaan. (Genesis 33:17-18)

8. "Also to be taken into consideration is the fact that, when Abraham returned from fighting against the enemy whom he pursued as far as Dan (Gen. 14), which today is called Paneas (Pameas), he was not off the route to Jerusalem but was in the city of Sichem, a metropolis; and in the Gospel we also read: 'Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salem, because there was an abundance of water there'" (John 3). It doesn't matter whether it is called Salem or Salim, since the Hebrews rarely use vowels in the middle of words and the same words can be pronounced differently in different regions, depending on the reader's preference and accent.

9. These things we have learned from the most learned of that nation, who hold that the Holy Spirit or Angel was Melchizedek, so they even attribute the most certain human name to him.

And truly it is foolish, what is said in typology: because the priesthood of Christ has no end; and he himself has given us both king and priest, so that we may be a royal and priestly lineage (1 Peter 2:9), and as if an angular stone (Isaiah) has joined both walls, and the good shepherd of the two flocks has made one flock (Ephesians 2:16); thus some refer to the **■ναγωγην**, so that they may take away the truth from the stories, and say that there was not a king, but an image of a man demonstrated by an angel: since the Hebrews so try to show Melchizedek, the king of Salem, the son of Noah, Sem, that they refer to it like this before this scripture: Now the king of Sodom went out to meet him (no doubt, Abraham) after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and the kings who were with him in the valley of Save: this is the valley of the king; immediately followed by: And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine (Genesis 14), and so forth. Therefore, if this is the city of the king, and the valley of the king, or as the Septuagint translated it, the plain, which is called Aulon of the Philistines today, it is clear that there was a man who ruled (or had ruled) in both the earthly valley and the city.

10. You have what I have heard, what I have read about Melchizedek. It was my responsibility to cite (or repeat) witnesses; it is your responsibility to judge the credibility of the witness. But if you should reject all of them, you certainly will not receive that spiritual interpreter who, without eloquence or profound knowledge, pronounced with such arrogance and authority that Melchizedek had the Holy Spirit, in order to support that most true statement sung among the Greeks, "Ignorance creates confidence; knowledge creates fear." After a long illness, I could hardly be without fever during the forty days of Lent, and when I prepared for another task, I spent the few remaining days in an exposition of Matthew: and I resumed my studies with such avidity that what had benefited my language practice was harmful to the health of my body.

Letters - letter_074

Letter 74. To Rufinus of Rome.

Rufinus, a Roman Presbyter (to be carefully distinguished from Rufinus of Aquileia and Rufinus the Syrian), had written to Jerome for an explanation of the judgment of Solomon (1 Kings 3:16-28). This Jerome gives at length, treating the narrative as a parable and making the false and true mothers types of the Synagogue and the Church. The date of the letter is 398 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. Rumor frequently lies much in both directions, and, in false reports, proclaims both bad things about good people, and good things about bad people. Hence, indeed, I rejoice concerning the testimony of your holiness toward me, and the love of Saint Presbyter Eusebius; nor do I doubt that you will publicly proclaim me, but I fear the silent judgment of your prudence. Therefore, I beseech you, to remember me more, and to make worthy your praise. That which you prompted me first to do, and the second part of writing was given to me, came not from neglect of friends, but from ignorance; for if I had known, I would have anticipated your conversation.

2. The interpretation of Solomon's judgment on the quarrel of two harlot women (1 Kings 3) is clear as far as the simple history is concerned: that a boy of twelve years judged with an affection beyond his age for the depths of human nature. Hence, he was both admired and feared by all Israel, because he would not miss what was so skillfully concealed. But regarding typical understanding, as the Apostle says: All these things were written to happen to them by way of example, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1 Corinthians 10:11) Some Greeks hold that this should be understood in reference to the Synagogue and the Church, and that all things should be referred to that time when, after the crucifixion and resurrection, the true Solomon, that is, the peaceful one, began to reign both in Israel and among the Gentile people. But that adulteresses and prostitutes are called Synagogue and Church in the Scriptures, there is no doubt.

3. And this seems blasphemous at first glance; but if we turn to the Prophets, to Hosea namely, who took a prostitute as his wife and begot sons of fornication (Hos. 1), and then took an adulteress; and to Ezekiel, who accuses Jerusalem of being like a harlot because she followed her lovers and spread her legs for everyone who passed by, and built a brothel in a prominent place (Ezek. 16); we will note that Christ came in order to give marriage to prostitutes, and to make one flock out of two flocks, and by destroying the middle wall (Ephes. 2), to gather into the same sheep-pens the sheep that had previously been sick. These are the two rods which are joined in Ezekiel (chapter 37), and of which the Lord speaks through Zachariah: And I took two rods to myself, one I called Beauty, and the other I called Cord, and I fed the flock (Zach. 11.8) . Also that harlot woman in the Gospel, who washes the feet of Jesus with tears, wipes them with her hair, and to whom all sins are forgiven, clearly depicts the Church gathered from the Gentiles (Luc. 7) . I repeated this on the first page so that no one may find it incongruous if the synagogue and the church are called prostitutes, of which one has been given possession by the judgment of

Solomon's son. A wise listener would ask how the church could be like a prostitute, which has neither blemish nor wrinkle? (Ephesians 5) We do not say that the Church has remained a prostitute, but that it was. For even in the house of Simon the leper, the Savior is written to have entered a feast (Matthew 26), not because he was a leper at the time when he had the Savior as a guest, but because he had been a leper before. Matthew also says in the list of the Apostles that he was called a publican, not because he remained a publican after his apostolic dignity, but because he had been one before, so that where sin abounded, grace superabounded.

4. And at the same time consider what the Church says against the slanderous Synagogue: "I and this woman lived in one house" (3 Kings 3:17). For after the resurrection of the Lord and Savior, one Church was gathered from both peoples, and how beautifully: "I gave birth to her in the chamber." For the Church from the Gentiles, which previously had neither the Law nor the Prophets, gave birth in the house of the Synagogue; nor did she come out of the chamber, but enter it. Where it says in the Song of Songs: The king has brought me into his chamber (Cant. 1:3). And again: Indeed, I will not reject you. I will take you up and bring you to my mother's house, the chamber of the one who gave birth to me (Cant. 3:4). On the third day, however, she gave birth to a child after I had given birth. If you consider Pilate washing his hands and saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person' (Matth. 27.24), if [you consider] the Centurion confessing in front of the gallows, 'Truly this was the Son of God' (Mark 15.39), if [you consider] those who before the Passion desired to see the Lord through Philip, you will not hesitate to say that [they were] the first fruits of the Church, and thereafter the Jewish people, for whom the Lord prayed, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do' (Luke 23.34). And one day three thousand believed: and the next day about five thousand (Acts 2 and 4). And we were together (for the assembly of believers was of one heart and soul) and no one else was in our midst, except the two of us: those who did not blaspheme against the Jews, and those who did not serve idols of the Gentiles. But the son of this woman died tonight. For while he followed the observance of the law and coupled the yoke of the grace of the Gospel with the doctrine of Moses, he was covered by the error of darkness. And his sleeping mother oppressed him, who could not say: I sleep, and my heart is awake (Song of Solomon 5: 2). Rising in the middle of the night, she took the son from the side (of the Church) sleeping, and placed him in her own bosom. Reread the entire Epistle of the Apostle to the Galatians, and you will see how the Synagogue is eager to make its own children, and the Apostle says: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you (Gal. 4. 19) . She bore a living child, not that she might possess it, but that she might kill it. For she did not do this out of love for her son, but out of jealous hatred, and she placed her own dead child in the bosom of the Church by the ceremonies of the Law.

5. It would be long if I wanted to go through each point; as the church understood through the Apostle Paul, and the men of the Church, the one who was held under the Law was not their son, and in the light he was known whom they could not see in the darkness. Hence an argument arose, in the presence of the king, one saying 'Your son is dead, while mine lives,' the other responding, 'You lie, for my son lives and yours is dead,' and in this way they argued in front of the king. Then King Solomon, who is clearly understood as the Savior (according to Psalm 71, which is inscribed with the title of Solomon; where there is no doubt that everything that is said, does not belong to Solomon who is dead, but rather to the majesty of Christ) feigned ignorance, and lied about human emotions for the dispensation of the flesh, just as in another place: Where have you

put Lazarus? (John 11:34) and to the woman with the issue of blood, Who touched me? (Matthew 9) He demands a sword, about which he had said: Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. (Matthew 10) And the Lord tries the nature of nature, and wishes to divide the living son into Law and Grace according to the will of each, not that He may approve, but that He may say this for the purpose of reproofing the calumny of the Synagogue. She, who did not want the son of the Church to live in grace, nor to be set free through baptism, is happy to have the child divided: not to possess him, but to kill him. The Church, which knows him to be her own, willingly grants him to the rival, if only he may live with her adversary, lest he be struck by the sword of the Savior, divided between the Law and Grace. Hence the Apostle says: Behold, I Paul say to you, that if you observe the Law, Christ will profit you nothing (Gal. 5).

6. These things have been said under the cover of a metaphorical cloud. Furthermore, your wisdom knows very well that the same rules do not apply in the shadows of the tropic figures as apply in the truth of history. And if, in any place, we stumble and it seems trivial to the discerning reader what we have written, let them place the blame on the author. For even these things we, lying in bed and worn out by drawn-out illness, with difficulty dictated to the notary quickly: not to fulfill a subject, but so that we might not appear to refuse you anything at the beginning of our friendship. Pray for our safety from the Lord, so that after twelve months, in which I have been weakened by constant illness, I may be able to write something worthy of your desire, and forgive me if my speech, which is usually fluent, does not flow. For we do not dictate with the same elegance as we write: because in one we often sharpen the style, again writing what is worthy of reading; in the other, we roll forward anything that comes to our tongue with quick speech. I saw Caninius willingly, who can tell you how difficult and dangerous it has been for my right hand, up to the present day, when I dictated this.

Letters - letter_075

Letter 75. To Theodora.

Theodora the wife of the learned Spaniard Lucinius (for whom see Letter 71.) had recently lost her husband, a bereavement which suggested the present letter. In it Jerome recounts the many virtues of Lucinius and especially his zeal in resisting the gnostic heresy of Marcus which during his life was prevalent in Spain. The date of the letter is 399 a.d.

1. So overpowered am I by the sad intelligence of the falling asleep of the holy and by me deeply revered Lucinius that I am scarcely able to dictate even a short letter. I do not, it is true, lament his fate, for I know that he has passed to better things: like Moses he can say: "I will now turn aside and see this great sight." [Exod. 3:3] but I am tormented with regret that I was not allowed to look upon the face of one, who was likely, as I believed, in a short time to come hither. True indeed is the prophetic warning concerning the doom of death that it divides brothers,¹ and with harsh and cruel hand sunders those whose names are linked together in the bonds of love. But we have this consolation that it is slain by the word of the Lord. For it is said: "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction," and in the next verse: "An east wind shall come, the wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up." [Hos. 13:14, Hos. 13:15] For, as Isaiah says, "there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots": [Isa. 11:1, Vulg] and He says Himself in the Song of Songs, "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley." [Cant. 2:1] Our rose is the destruction of death, and died that death itself might die in His dying. But, when it is said that He is to be brought "from the wilderness," the virgin's womb is indicated, which without sexual intercourse or impregnation has given to us God in the form of an infant able to quench by the glow of the Holy Spirit the fountains of lust and to sing in the words of the psalm: "as in a dry and pathless and waterless land, so have I appeared unto thee in the sanctuary." [Ps. 63:1, 2, Vulg] Thus when we have to face the hard and cruel necessity of death, we are upheld by this consolation, that we shall shortly see again those whose absence we now mourn. For their end is not called death but a slumber and a falling asleep. Wherefore also the blessed apostle forbids us to sorrow concerning them which are asleep, [1 Thess. 4:13] telling us to believe that those whom we know to sleep now may hereafter be roused from their sleep, and when their slumber is ended may watch once more with the saints and sing with the angels: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men of good will." [Luke 2:14, Vulg] In heaven where there is no sin, there is glory and perpetual praise and unwearied singing; but on earth where sedition reigns, and war and discord hold sway, peace must be gained by prayer, and it is to be found not among all but only among men of good will, who pay heed to the apostolic salutation: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." [Rom. 1:7] For "His abode is in peace and His dwelling place is in Zion,"² that is, on a watch-tower,³ on a height of doctrines and of virtues, in the soul of the believer; for the angel of this latter daily beholds the face of God, [Matt. 18:10] and contemplates with unveiled face the glory of God.

2. Wherefore, though you are already running in the way, I urge a willing horse, as the saying goes, and implore you, while you regret in your Lucinius a true brother, to rejoice as well that he now reigns with Christ. For, as it is written in the book of Wisdom, he was "taken away lest that wickedness should alter his understanding ...for his soul pleased the Lord ...and he ...in a short time fulfilled a long time." [Wisd. 4:11-14] We may with more right weep for ourselves that we stand daily in conflict with our sins, that we are stained with vices, that we receive wounds, and that we must give account for every idle word. [Matt. 12:36] Victorious now and free from care he looks down upon you from on high and supports you in your struggle, nay more, he prepares for you a place near to himself; for his love and affection towards you are still the same as when, disregarding his claim on you as a husband, he resolved to treat you even on earth as a sister, or indeed I may say as a brother, for difference of sex while essential to marriage is not so to a continent tie. And since even in the flesh, if we are born again in Christ, we are no longer Greek and Barbarian, bond and free, male and female, but are all one in Him, [Gal. 3:28] how much more true will this be when this corruptible has put on incorruption and when this mortal has put on immortality. [1 Cor. 15:53] "In the resurrection," the Lord tells us, "they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are as the angels ...in heaven." [Matt. 22:30] Now when it is said that they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are as the angels in heaven, there is no taking away of a natural and real body but only an indication of the greatness of the glory to come. For the words are not "they shall be angels" but "they shall be as the angels": thus while likeness to the angels is promised identity with them is refused. "They shall be," Christ tells us, "as the angels," that is like the angels; therefore they will not cease to be human. Glorious indeed they shall be, and graced with angelic splendour, but they will still be human; the apostle Paul will still be Paul, Mary will still be Mary. Then shall confusion overtake that heresy⁴ which holds out great but vague promises only that it may take away hopes which are at once modest and certain.

3. And now that I have once mentioned the word "heresy," where can I find a trumpet loud enough to proclaim the eloquence of our dear Lucinius, who, when the filthy heresy of Basilides⁵ raged in Spain and like a pestilence ravaged the provinces between the Pyrenees and the ocean, upheld in all its purity the faith of the church and altogether refused to embrace Armagil, Barbelon, Abraxas, Balsamum, and the absurd Leusibora. Such are the portentous names which, to excite the minds of unlearned men and weak women, they pretend to draw from Hebrew sources, terrifying the simple by barbarous combinations which they admire the more the less they understand them.⁶ The growth of this heresy is described for us by Irenaeus, bishop of the church of Lyons, a man of the apostolic times, who was a disciple of Papias the hearer of the evangelist John. He informs us that a certain Mark,⁷ of the stock of the gnostic Basilides, came in the first instance to Gaul, that he contaminated with his teaching those parts of the country which are watered by the Rhone and the Garonne, and that in particular he misled by his errors high-born women; to whom he promised certain secret mysteries and whose affection he enlisted by magic arts and hidden indulgence in unlawful intercourse. Irenaeus goes on to say that subsequently Mark crossed the Pyrenees and occupied Spain, making it his object to seek out the houses of the wealthy, and in these especially the women, concerning whom we are told that they are "led away with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." [2 Tim. 3:6, 2 Tim. 3:7] All this he wrote about three hundred years ago⁸ in the extremely learned and eloquent books which he composed under the title Against all heresies.

4. From these facts you in your wisdom will realize how worthy of praise our dear Lucinius shewed himself when he shut his ears that he might not have to hear the judgement passed upon blood shedders,⁹ and dispersed all his substance and gave to the poor that his righteousness might endure for ever. [Ps. 112:9] And not satisfied with bestowing his bounty upon his own country, he sent to the churches of Jerusalem and Alexandria gold enough to alleviate the want of large numbers. But while many will admire and extol in him this liberality, I for my part will rather praise him for his zeal and diligence in the study of the scriptures. With what eagerness he asked for my poor works! He actually sent six copyists (for in this province there is a dearth of scribes who understand Latin) to copy for him all that I have ever dictated from my youth until the present time. The honour was not of course paid to me who am but a little child, the least of all Christians, living in the rocks near Bethlehem because I know myself a sinner; but to Christ who is honoured in his servants [Luke 9:48] and who makes this promise to them, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." [Matt. 10:40]

5. Therefore, my beloved daughter, regard this letter as the epitaph which love prompts me to write upon your husband, and if there is any spiritual work of which you think me to be capable, boldly command me to undertake it: that so ages to come may know that He who says of Himself in Isaiah, "He hath made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me," [Isa. 49:2] has with His sharp arrow so wounded two men severed by an immense interval of sea and land, that, although they know each other not in the flesh, they are knit together in love in the spirit. May you be kept holy both in body and spirit by the Samaritan—that is, saviour and keeper-of whom it is said in the psalm, "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." [Ps. 121:4] May the watcher and the holy one who came down to Daniel¹⁰ come also to you, that you too may be able to say, "I sleep but my heart waketh." [Cant. 5:2] 1: Hos. 13:15, Vulg. Quia ipse inter fratres dividet. AV. follows the Hebrew 2: Ps. 76:2. "Salem" (A.V.), the Hebrew word for peace 3: See Jerome's Book of Hebrew Names Cf. also Letter CVIII

4: Origenism 5: Probably as revived by Priscillian, who was put to death 385. See Jerome On Illustrious Men, 100:121

6:

These terms, the meanings of which are very uncertain, are either the names of aeons or magical formulae used by the Marcosians in the celebration of their mysteries

7: A gnostic of the school of Valentinus, who taught in the middle of the second century. Jerome is in error when he describes him as a disciple of Basilides 8: An error for two hundred years ago. 0

9: Is. 33:15. Jerome's allusion may be to the execution of Priscillian in 385. Lucinius may have shared the views of Ambrose and Martin against the shedding of blood 10: Dan. 4:13. Lit. May Hir, that is the watcher, Hir being the Hebrew word

Letters - letter_076

Letter 76. To Abigaus.

Abigaus the recipient of this letter was a blind presbyter of Baetica in Spain. He had asked the help of Jerome's prayers in his struggles with evil and Jerome now writes to cheer and to console him. He concludes his remarks by commending to his especial care the widow Theodora. The letter should be compared with that addressed to Castrutius (LXVIII.). It was written at the same time with the preceding.

1. Although I am conscious of many sins and every day pray on bended knees, "Remember not the sins of my youth nor my transgressions, [Ps. 25:7] yet because I know that it has been said by the Apostle "let a man not be lifted up with pride lest he fall into the condemnation of the devil," [1 Tim. 3:6. AV. adapted] and that it is written in another passage, "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble," [James 4:6] there is nothing I have striven so much to avoid from my boyhood up as a swelling mind and a stiff neck, [Cf. Ps. 75:5] things which always provoke against themselves the wrath of God. For I know that my master and Lord and God has said in the lowliness of His flesh: "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart," [Matt. 11:29] and that before this He has sung by the mouth of David: "Lord, remember David and all his gentleness.¹ Again we read in another passage, "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty; and before honour is humility." [Prov. 18:12] Do not, then, I implore you, suppose that I have received your letter and have passed it over in silence. Do not, I beseech you, lay to my charge the dishonesty and negligence of which others have been guilty. For why should I, when called on to respond to your kind advances, continue dumb and repel by my silence the friendship which you offer? I who am always forward to seek intimate relations with the good and even to thrust myself upon their affection. "Two," we read, "are better than one.... for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow.... a three fold cord is not quickly broken, and a brother that helps his brother shall be exalted."² Write to me, therefore, boldly, and overcome the effect of absence by frequent colloquies.

2. You should not grieve that you are destitute of those bodily eyes which ants, flies, and creeping things have as well as men; rather you should rejoice that you possess that eye of which it is said in the Song of Songs, "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes." [Cant. 4:9] This is the eye with which God is seen and to which Moses refers when he says:-"I will now turn aside and see this great sight." [Ex. 3:3] We even read of some philosophers of this world³ that they have plucked out their eyes in order to turn all their thoughts upon the pure depths of the mind. And a prophet has said "Death has entered through your windows." [Jer. 9:21. LXX] Our Lord too tells the Apostles: "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." [Matt. 5:28] Consequently they are commanded to lift up their eyes and to look on the fields, for these are white and ready for harvest. [John. 4:35]

3. You request me by my exhortations to slay in you Nebuchadnezzar and Rabshakeh and Nebuzar-adan and Holofernes.⁴ Were they alive in you, you would never have sought my aid. No,

they are dead within you, and you have begun to build up the ruins of Jerusalem with the help of Zerubbabel and of Joshua the son of Josedech the high priest, of Ezra and of Nehemiah. You do not put your wages into a bag with holes, [Hagg. 1:6] but you lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, [Matt. 6:20] and if you seek my friendship, it is because you believe me to be a servant of Christ.

I commend to you-although she needs no commendation but her own-my holy daughter Theodora, formerly the wife or rather the sister of Lucinius of blessed memory. Tell her that she must not grow weary of the path upon which she has entered, and that she can only reach the Holy Land by toiling through the wilderness. Warn her against supposing that the work of virtue is perfected when she has made her exodus from Egypt. Remind her that she must pass through snares innumerable to arrive at mount Nebo and the River Jordan, [Nu. 33:47, Nu. 33:48] that she must receive circumcision anew at Gilgal, [Josh. 5:2, Josh. 5:9] that Jericho must fall before her, overthrown by the blasts of priestly trumpets, [Josh. 6:20] that Adoni-zedec must be slain, [Josh. 10:1, Josh. 10:26] that Ai and Hazor, once fairest of cities, must both fall. [Josh. 8:10, Josh. 11:10] The brothers who are with me in the monastery salute you, and I through you earnestly salute those reverend persons who deign to bestow upon me their regard.

1: Ps. 132:1, Vulg. AV. has `afflictions. 0 2: Eccl. 4:9-12. The last clause is Jerome's own 3: Cicero ascribes this piece of fanaticism to Democritus and Metrodorus 4: The legendary oppressor of the Jews, whose fate is described in the Book of Judith

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Letter 77. To Oceanus. The eulogy of Fabiola whose restless life had come to an end in 399 a.d. Jerome tells the story of her sin and of her penitence (for which see Letter 55.), of the hospital established by her at Portus, of her visit to Bethlehem, and of her earnestness in the study of scripture. He relates how he wrote for her his account of the vestments of the high priest (Letter 64.) and how at the time of her death he was at her request engaged upon a commentary on the forty-two halting-places of the Israelites in the wilderness (Letter 79.). This last he now sends along with this letter to Oceanus. Jerome also bestows praise upon Pammachius as the companion of all Fabiola's labours. The date of the letter is 399 a.d.

1. Several years since I consoled the venerated Paula, whilst her affliction was still recent for the falling asleep of Blaesilla.¹ Four summers ago I wrote for the bishop Heliodorus the epitaph of Nepotian, and expended what ability I possessed in giving expression to my grief at his loss.² Only two years have elapsed since I sent a brief letter to my dear Pammachius on the sudden flitting of his Paulina.³ I blushed to say more to one so learned or to give him back his own thoughts: lest I should seem less the consoler of a friend than the officious instructor of one already perfect. But now, Oceanus my son, the duty that you lay upon me is one that I gladly accept and would even seek unasked. For when new virtues have to be dealt with, an old subject itself becomes new. In previous cases I have had to soften and restrain a mother's affection, an uncle's grief, and a husband's yearning; according to the different requirements of each I have had to apply from scripture different remedies.

2. To-day you give me as my theme Fabiola, the praise of the Christians, the marvel of the gentiles, the sorrow of the poor, and the consolation of the monks. Whatever point in her character I choose to treat of first, pales into insignificance compared with those which follow after. Shall I praise her fasts? Her alms are greater still. Shall I commend her lowliness? The glow of her faith is yet brighter. Shall I mention her studied plainness in dress, her voluntary choice of plebeian costume and the garb of a slave that she might put to shame silken robes? To change one's disposition is a greater achievement than to change one's dress. It is harder for us to part with arrogance than with gold and gems. For, even though we throw away these, we plume ourselves sometimes on a meanness that is really ostentatious, and we make a bid with a saleable poverty for the popular applause. But a virtue that seeks concealment and is cherished in the inner consciousness appeals to no judgement but that of God. Thus the eulogies which I have to bestow upon Fabiola will be altogether new: I must neglect the order of the rhetoricians and begin all I have to say only from the cradle of her conversion and of her penitence. Another writer, mindful of the school, would perhaps bring forward Quintus Maximus, "the man who by delaying rescued Rome,"⁴ and the whole Fabian family; he would describe their struggles and battles and would exult that Fabiola had come to us through a line so noble, shewing that qualities not apparent in the branch still existed in the root. But as I am a lover of the inn at Bethlehem and of the Lord's stable in which the virgin travailed with and gave birth to an infant God, I shall deduce the lineage of Christ's handmaid not from a stock famous in history but from the lowliness of the church.

3. And because at the very outset there is a rock in the path and she is overwhelmed by a storm of censure, for having forsaken her first husband and having taken a second, I will not praise her for her conversion till I have first cleared her of this charge. So terrible then were the faults imputed to her former husband that not even a prostitute or a common slave could have put up with them. If I were to recount them, I should undo the heroism of the wife who chose to bear the blame of a separation rather than to blacken the character and expose the stains of him who was one body with her. I will only urge this one plea which is sufficient to exonerate a chaste matron and a Christian woman. The Lord has given commandment that a wife must not be put away "except it be for fornication, and that, if put away, she must remain unmarried." [Matt. 19:9. 1 Cor. 7:11] Now a commandment which is given to men logically applies to women also. For it cannot be that, while an adulterous wife is to be put away, an incontinent husband is to be retained. The apostle says: "he which is joined to an harlot is one body." [1 Cor. 6:16] Therefore she also who is joined to a whoremonger and unchaste person is made one body with him. The laws of Caesar are different, it is true, from the laws of Christ: Papinianus⁵ commands one thing; our own Paul another. Earthly laws give a free rein to the unchastity of men, merely condemning seduction and adultery; lust is allowed to range unrestrained among brothels and slave girls, as if the guilt were constituted by the rank of the person assailed and not by the purpose of the assailant. But with us Christians what is unlawful for women is equally unlawful for men, and as both serve the same God both are bound by the same obligations. Fabiola then has put away-they are quite right-a husband that was a sinner, guilty of this and that crime, sins-I have almost mentioned their names-with which the whole neighbourhood resounded but which the wife alone refused to disclose. If however it is made a charge against her that after repudiating her husband she did not continue unmarried, I readily admit this to have been a fault, but at the same time declare that it may have been a case of necessity. "It is better," the apostle tells us, "to marry than to burn." [1 Cor. 7:9] She was quite a young woman, she was not able to continue in widowhood. In the words of the apostle she saw another law in her members warring against the law of her mind; [Rom. 7:23] she felt herself dragged in chains as a captive towards the indulgences of wedlock. Therefore she thought it better openly to confess her weakness and to accept the semblance of an unhappy marriage than, with the flame of a monogamist, to ply the trade of a courtesan. The same apostle wills that the younger widows should marry, bear children, and give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. [1 Tim. 5:14] And he at once goes on to explain his wish: "for some are already turned aside after Satan." [1 Tim. 5:15] Fabiola therefore was fully persuaded in her own mind: she thought she had acted legitimately in putting away her husband, and that when she had done so she was free to marry again. She did not know that the rigour of the gospel takes away from women all pretexts for re-marriage so long as their former husbands are alive; and not knowing this, though she contrived to evade other assaults of the devil, she at this point unwittingly exposed herself to a wound from him.

4. But why do I linger over old and forgotten matters, seeking to excuse a fault for which Fabiola has herself confessed her penitence? Who would believe that, after the death of her second husband at a time when most widows, having shaken off the yoke of servitude, grow careless and allow themselves more liberty than ever, frequenting the baths, flitting through the streets, shewing their harlot faces everywhere; that at this time Fabiola came to herself? Yet it was then that she put on sackcloth to make public confession of her error. It was then that in the presence of all Rome (in the basilica which formerly belonged to that Lateranus who perished by the sword of

Caesar⁶) she stood in the ranks of the penitents and exposed before bishop, presbyters, and people-all of whom wept when they saw her weep-her dishevelled hair, pale features, soiled hands and unwashed neck. What sins would such a penance fail to purge away? What ingrained stains would such tears be unable to wash out? By a threefold confession Peter blotted out his threefold denial. [John. 18:15-27: John. 21:15-17] If Aaron committed sacrilege by fashioning molten gold into the head of a calf, his brother's prayers made amends for his transgressions. [Ex. 32:30-35] If holy David, meekest of men, committed the double sin of murder and adultery, he atoned for it by a fast of seven days. He lay upon the earth, he rolled in the ashes, he forgot his royal power, he sought for light in the darkness. [2 Sam. 12:16] And then, turning his eyes to that God whom he had so deeply offended, he cried with a lamentable voice: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," and "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free spirit." [Ps. 51:4, Ps. 51:12] He who by his virtues teaches me how to stand and not to fall, by his penitence teaches me how, if I fall, I may rise again. Among the kings do we read of any so wicked as Ahab, of whom the scripture says: "there was none like unto Ahab which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord"? [1 Kings 21:25] For shedding Naboth's blood Elijah rebuked him, and the prophet denounced God's wrath against him: "Hast thou killed and also taken possession? ...behold I will bring evil upon thee and will take away thy posterity" [1 K. 21:19, 1 K. 21:21] and so on. Yet when Ahab heard these words "he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted ...in sackcloth, and went softly." [1 K. 21:27] Then came the word of God to Elijah the Tishbite saying: "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days." [1 K. 21:28, 1 K. 21:29] O happy penitence which has drawn down upon itself the eyes of God, and which has by confessing its error changed the sentence of God's anger! The same conduct is in the Chronicles [2 Chr. 33:12, 2 Chr. 33:13] attributed to Manasseh, and in the book of the prophet Jonah [Jon. 3:5-10] to Nineveh, and in the gospel to the publican. [Luke 18:13] The first of these not only was allowed to obtain forgiveness but also recovered his kingdom, the second broke the force of God's impending wrath, while the third, smiting his breast with his hands, "would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven." Yet for all that the publican with his humble confession of his faults went back justified far more than the Pharisee with his arrogant boasting of his virtues. This is not however the place to preach penitence, neither am I writing against Montanus and Novatus.⁷ Else would I say of it that it is "a sacrifice ...well pleasing to God," [Ph. 4:18] I would cite the words of the psalmist: "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit," [Ps. 51:17] and those of Ezekiel "I prefer the repentance of a sinner rather than his death," [Cf. Ezek. 18:23] and those of Baruch, "Arise, arise, O Jerusalem," [Bar. 5:5, cf. Isa. 60:1] and many other proclamations made by the trumpets of the prophets.

5. But this one thing I will say, for it is at once useful to my readers and pertinent to my present theme. As Fabiola was not ashamed of the Lord on earth, so He shall not be ashamed of her in heaven. [Luke 9:26] She laid bare her wound to the gaze of all, and Rome beheld with tears the disfiguring scar which marred her beauty. She uncovered her limbs, bared her head, and closed her mouth. She no longer entered the church of God but, like Miriam the sister of Moses, [Nu. 12:14] she sat apart without the camp, till the priest who had cast her out should himself call her back. She came down like the daughter of Babylon from the throne of her daintiness, she took the millstones and ground meal, she passed barefooted through rivers of tears. [Isa. 47:1, Isa. 47:2] She sat upon the coals of fire, and these became her aid. [Isa. 47:14, Vulg] That face by which she had once pleased her second husband she now smote with blows; she hated jewels, shunned

ornaments and could not bear to look upon fine linen.⁸ In fact she bewailed the sin she had committed as bitterly as if it had been adultery, and went to the expense of many remedies in her eagerness to cure her one wound.

6. Having found myself aground in the shallows of Fabiola's sin, I have dwelt thus long upon her penitence in order that I might open up a larger and quite unimpeded space for the description of her praises. Restored to communion before the eyes of the whole church, what did she do? In the day of prosperity she was not forgetful of affliction; [Ecclus. 11:25] and, having once suffered shipwreck she was unwilling again to face the risks of the sea. Instead therefore of re-embarking on her old life, she broke up⁹ and sold all that she could lay hands on of her property (it was large and suitable to her rank), and turning it into money she laid out this for the benefit of the poor. She was the first person to found a hospital, into which she might gather sufferers out of the streets, and where she might nurse the unfortunate victims of sickness and want. Need I now recount the various ailments of human beings? Need I speak of noses slit, eyes put out, feet half burnt, hands covered with sores? Or of limbs dropsical and atrophied? Or of diseased flesh alive with worms? Often did she carry on her own shoulders persons infected with jaundice or with filth. Often too did she wash away the matter discharged from wounds which others, even though men, could not bear to look at. She gave food to her patients with her own hand, and moistened the scarce breathing lips of the dying with sips of liquid. I know of many wealthy and devout persons who, unable to overcome their natural repugnance to such sights, perform this work of mercy by the agency of others, giving money instead of personal aid. I do not blame them and am far from construing their weakness of resolution into a want of faith. While however I pardon such squeamishness, I extol to the skies the enthusiastic zeal of a mind that is above it. A great faith makes little of such trifles. But I know how terrible was the retribution which fell upon the proud mind of the rich man clothed in purple for not having helped Lazarus. [Luke 16:19-24] The poor wretch whom we despise, whom we cannot so much as look at, and the very sight of whom turns our stomachs, is human like ourselves, is made of the same clay as we are, is formed out of the same elements. All that he suffers we too may suffer. Let us then regard his wounds as though they were our own, and then all our insensibility to another's suffering will give way before our pity for ourselves. Not with a hundred tongues or throat of bronze Could I exhaust the forms of fell disease" [Virg. Aen. 6:625-627.] which Fabiola so wonderfully alleviated in the suffering poor that many of the healthy fell to envying the sick. However she showed the same liberality towards the clergy and monks and virgins. Was there a monastery which was not supported by Fabiola's wealth? Was there a naked or bedridden person who was not clothed with garments supplied by her? Were there ever any in want to whom she failed to give a quick and unhesitating supply? Even Rome was not wide enough for her pity. Either in her own person or else through the agency of reverend and trustworthy men she went from island to island and carried her bounty not only round the Etruscan Sea, but throughout the district of the Volscians, as it stands along those secluded and winding shores where communities of monks are to be found.

7. Suddenly she made up her mind, against the advice of all her friends, to take ship and to come to Jerusalem. Here she was welcomed by a large concourse of people and for a short time took advantage of my hospitality. Indeed, when I call to mind our meeting, I seem to see her here now instead of in the past. Blessed Jesus, what zeal, what earnestness she bestowed upon the sacred volumes! In her eagerness to satisfy what was a veritable craving she would run through Prophets,

Gospels, and Psalms: she would suggest questions and treasure up the answers in the desk of her own bosom. And yet this eagerness to hear did not bring with it any feeling of satiety: increasing her knowledge she also increased her sorrow, [Eccl. 1:18] and by casting oil upon the flame she did but supply fuel for a still more burning zeal. One day we had before us the book of Numbers written by Moses, and she modestly questioned me as to the meaning of the great mass of names there to be found. Why was it, she inquired, that single tribes were differently associated in this passage and in that, how came it that the soothsayer Balaam in prophesying of the future mysteries of Christ [Nu. 24:15-19] spoke more plainly of Him than almost any other prophet? I replied as best I could and tried to satisfy her enquiries. Then unrolling the book still farther she came to the passage¹⁰ in which is given the list of all the halting-places by which the people after leaving Egypt made its way to the waters of Jordan. And when she asked me the meaning and reason of each of these, I spoke doubtfully about some, dealt with others in a tone of assurance, and in several instances simply confessed my ignorance. Hereupon she began to press me harder still, expostulating with me as though it were a thing unallowable that I should be ignorant of what I did not know, yet at the same time affirming her own unworthiness to understand mysteries so deep. In a word I was ashamed to refuse her request and allowed her to extort from me a promise that I would devote a special work to this subject for her use. Till the present time I have had to defer the fulfilment of my promise: as I now perceive, by the Will of God in order that it should be consecrated to her memory. As in a previous work¹¹ I clothed her with the priestly vestments, so in the pages of the present¹² she may rejoice that she has passed through the wilderness of this world and has come at last to the land of promise.

8. But let me continue the task which I have begun. Whilst I was in search of a suitable dwelling for so great a lady, whose only conception of the solitary life included a place of resort like Mary's inn; suddenly messengers flew this way and that and the whole East was terror-struck. For news came that the hordes of the Huns had poured forth all the way from Maeotis¹³ (they had their haunts between the icy Tanais¹⁴ and the rude Massagetae¹⁵ where the gates of Alexander keep back the wild peoples behind the Caucasus); and that, speeding hither and thither on their nimble-footed horses, they were filling all the world with panic and bloodshed. The Roman army was absent at the time, being detained in Italy on account of the civil wars. Of these Huns Herodotus [Hdt. 1:106, (of the Scythians)] tells us that under Darius King of the Medes they held the East in bondage for twenty years and that from the Egyptians and Ethiopians they exacted a yearly tribute. May Jesus avert from the Roman world the farther assaults of these wild beasts! Everywhere their approach was unexpected, they outstripped rumour in speed, and, when they came, they spared neither religion nor rank nor age, even for wailing infants they had no pity. Children were forced to die before it could be said that they had begun to live; and little ones not realizing their miserable fate might be seen smiling in the hands and at the weapons of their enemies. It was generally agreed that the goal of the invaders was Jerusalem and that it was their excessive desire for gold which made them hasten to this particular city. Its walls uncared for in time of peace were accordingly put in repair. Antioch was in a state of siege. Tyre, desirous of cutting itself off from the land, sought once more its ancient island. We too were compelled to marl our ships and to lie off the shore as a precaution against the arrival of our foes. No matter how hard the winds might blow, we could not but dread the barbarians more than shipwreck. It was not, however, so much for our own safety that we were anxious as for the chastity of the virgins who were with us. Just at that time also there was dissension among us,¹⁶ and our intestine struggles

threw into the shade our battle with the barbarians. I myself clung to my long-settled abode in the East and gave way to my deep-seated love for the holy places. Fabiola, used as she was to moving from city to city and having no other property but what her baggage contained, returned to her native land; to live in poverty where she had once been rich, to lodge in the house of another, she who in old days had lodged many guests in her own, and-not unduly to prolong my account-to bestow upon the poor before the eyes of Rome the proceeds of that property which Rome knew her to have sold.

9. This only do I lament that in her the holy places lost a necklace of the loveliest. Rome recovered what it had previously parted with, and the wanton and slanderous tongues of the heathen were confuted by the testimony of their own eyes. Others may commend her pity, her humility, her faith: I will rather praise her ardour of soul. The letter¹⁷ in which as a young man I once urged Heliodorus to the life of a hermit she knew by heart, and whenever she looked upon the walls of Rome she complained that she was in a prison. Forgetful of her sex, unmindful of her frailty, and only desiring to be alone she was in fact there¹⁸ where her soul lingered. The counsels of her friends could not hold her back; so eager was she to burst from the city as from a place of bondage. Nor did she leave the distribution of her alms to others; she distributed them herself. Her wish was that, after equitably dispensing her money to the poor, she might herself find support from others for the sake of Christ. In such haste was she and so impatient of delay that you would fancy her on the eve of her departure. As she was always ready, death could not find her unprepared.

10. As I pen her praises, my dear Pammachius seems suddenly to rise before me. His wife Paulina sleeps that he may keep vigil; she has gone before her husband that he remaining behind may be Christ's servant. Although he was his wife's heir, others-I mean the poor-are now in possession of his inheritance. He and Fabiola contended for the privilege of setting up a tent like that of Abraham¹⁹ at Portus. The contest which arose between them was for the supremacy in shewing kindness. Each conquered and each was overcome. Both admitted themselves to be at once victors and vanquished for what each had desired to effect alone both accomplished together. They united their resources and combined their plans that harmony might forward what rivalry must have brought to nought. No sooner was the scheme broached than it was carried out. A house was purchased to serve as a shelter, and a crowd flocked into it. "There was no more travail in Jacob nor distress in Israel." [Num. 23:21. LXX] The seas carried voyagers to find a welcome here on landing. Travellers left Rome in haste to take advantage of the mild coast before setting sail. What Publius once did in the island of Malta for one apostle and-not to leave room for gainsaying-for a single ship's crew, [Acts 28:7] Fabiola and Pammachius have done over and over again for large numbers; and not only have they supplied the wants of the destitute, but so universal has been their munificence that they have provided additional means for those who have something already. The whole world knows that a home for strangers has been established at Portus; and Britain has learned in the summer what Egypt and Parthia knew in the spring.

11. In the death of this noble lady we have seen a fulfilment of the apostle's words:-"All things work together for good to them that fear God."²⁰ Having a presentiment of what would happen, she had written to several monks to come and release her from the burthen under which she laboured;²¹ for she wished to make to herself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that they might receive her into everlasting habitations. [Luke 16:9] They came to her and she made them her

friends; she fell asleep in the way that she had wished, and having at last laid aside her burthen she soared more lightly up to heaven. How great a marvel Fabiola had been to Rome while she lived came out in the behaviour of the people now that she was dead. Hardly had she breathed her last breath, hardly had she given back her soul to Christ whose it was when "Flying Rumour heralding the woe" [Virg. A. 11:139] gathered the entire city to attend her obsequies. Psalms were chaunted and the gilded ceilings of the temples were shaken with uplifted shouts of Alleluia.

"The choirs of young and old extolled her deeds And sang the praises of her holy soul." [Virg. A. 8:287, 288] Her triumph was more glorious far than those won by Furius over the Gauls, by Papirius over the Samnites, by Scipio over Numantia, by Pompey over Pontus. They had conquered physical force, she had mastered spiritual iniquities. [Eph. 6:12] I seem to hear even now the squadrons which led the van of the procession, and the sound of the feet of the multitude which thronged in thousands to attend her funeral. The streets, porches, and roofs from which a view could be obtained were inadequate to accommodate the spectators. On that day Rome saw all her peoples gathered together in one, and each person present flattered himself that he had some part in the glory of her penitence. No wonder indeed that men should thus exult in the salvation of one at whose conversion there was joy among the angels in heaven. [Luke 15:7, Luke 15:10]

12. I give you this, Fabiola,²² the best gift of my aged powers, to be as it were a funeral offering. Oftentimes have I praised virgins and widows and married women who have kept their garments always white [Eccl. 9:8; Rev. 3:4] and who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. [Rev. 14:4] Happy indeed is she in her encomium who throughout her life has been stained by no defilement. But let envy depart and censoriousness be silent. If the father of the house is good why should our eye be evil? [Matt. 20:15] The soul which fell among thieves has been carried home upon the shoulders of Christ. [Luke 10:30; Luke 15:5] In our father's house are many mansions. [John. 14:2] Where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded. [Rom. 5:20] To whom more is forgiven the same loveth more. [Luke 7:47]

1:

Letter XXXIX

2:

Letter LX

3:

Letter LXVI

4:

Ennius

5:

A Roman jurist of great renown who held high legal office first under Marcus Aurelius and afterwards under Severus. He was put to death by Caracalla

6: A senator who having conspired against Nero was by that emperor put to death. His palace on the Aelian Hill was long afterwards bestowed by Constantine upon pope Silvester who made it a church which it has ever since remained 7: Rigourists who denied the power of the Church to absolve persons who had fallen into sin

8: Linteamina 9: Dilapidare, vendre pierre à pierre-Goelzer

10:

Nu. xxxiii

11: Letter LXIV 12: Letter LXXVIII. on the Mansions or Halting-places of Israel in the Desert 13: The Sea of Azov

14: The Don 15: An Asiatic tribe to the East of the Caspian Sea

16:

The Origenistic controversy in which Jerome, Paula and Epiphanius took one side, John bishop of Jerusalem, Rufinus, and Melania the other

17: Letter XIV 18: i.e. in the desert where many women lived as solitaries 19: Like that in which Abraham entertained the angels. See Letter LXVI. 11 20: Rom. 8:28 - note that Jerome substitutes 'fear O' for 'love. O 21: The remnant of her fortune 22: i.e. Letter LXXVIII. q. v

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Letter 78. To Fabiola. A treatise on the Forty-two Mansions or Halting-places of the Israelites, originally intended for Fabiola but not completed until after her death. Sent to Oceanus along with the preceding letter. These Mansions are made an emblem of the Christian's pilgrimage, the true Hebrew hastening to pass from earth to heaven. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. In the seventy-seventh Psalm, which we believe was spoken by the Lord's person according to the Evangelist Matthew (Chapter 13, verse 35), the story is narrated of the ten plagues in Egypt and the departure of Israel into the wilderness. And since it is certain that what has been written has been done, as if one letter sounds one thing, while the closed spirit holds another: 'I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter propositions from the beginning. What we have heard and seen, the same we have received and our fathers have told us' (Psalm 77, 2 and 3). And so the Apostle in the same words, because of the same spirit: "Now all these things happened to them in figure, and they are written for our correction, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11); and "For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all in Moses were baptized, in the cloud, and in the sea: And all did eat the same spiritual food, And all drank the same spiritual drink; (and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.)" (I Corinthians 10:1 et seqq.). Therefore, if a part of the history of the journey from Egypt is understood spiritually, and the other things which were omitted by the Apostle due to the shortage of time are understood to be of the same meaning. For the same Prophet who said in another place, "I have dwelt with the inhabitants of Cedar: My soul has been too long a sojourner" (Psalm 119:5): not being able to bear the absence of the Holy Land, he laments most bitterly and says: "I remembered these things, and poured out my soul within me, that I might pass into the place of the wondrous tabernacle, even to the house of God: With the voice of joy and praise, of the multitude keeping holiday" (Psalm 41:5). And in another Psalm: "Open my eyes, and I will consider the wonders of your law" (Psalm 118:18). Paul also said, "The law is spiritual" (Rom. 7:14). And the Lord himself said, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me" (John 5:47). And the Gospel according to Luke: "Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). Therefore, let Jewish children and those who cannot swallow solid food, but are still nourished by milk in infancy (1 Cor. 3), read about Pharaoh's flesh and the Red Sea, through which one sails to India: and the manna like coriander: and let them hear all that is written, the leprosy of houses and of skin, and of fabric; the ox that kills and the animal guilty of adultery; and the Hebrews who, because they desire to serve a wife and children, have their ears pierced with a bodkin. But we, abandoning Capernaum, once a beautiful land, and going with Jesus into the wilderness, are fed by his loaves (Matthew 14; and Mark 6): if we are foolish and like beasts, [we eat] barley; but if rational animals, [we eat] wheat, and [bread] made from the corn. The [grain], when it falls to the ground and dies, brings forth many fruits. Egypt was struck by nine plagues, and Pharaoh was broken, so that he might dismiss the people

of God. At last the firstborn were destroyed so that the firstborn of Israel might be consecrated to the Lord. Those who before desired to possess them, instantly expelled them. The exterminator passes by, and he does not dare to touch the land of Goshen, the pastoral land that had been watered by rains; for their doorposts were marked with the blood of the lamb, and they spoke by their deeds: "The light of Your countenance, O Lord, is marked upon us" (Ps. 4:7). Hence it is that the feast itself is called the Passover, which we can also call the passage, because, advancing from worse to better things, we leave dark Egypt. But now the time has come for us to fulfill the promises and follow the order of the Israelite dwellings.

2. It is written in the last part of the book of Numbers (Chapter 33), which is called Vaydabber among the Hebrews: 'These are the encampments of the children of Israel, who came out of the land of Egypt by their troops in the hand of Moses and Aaron'; which the Greeks call ■π■ρσεις, we, because of the property of the language, more significantly turned to 'mansions,' or because it is said of the army, we translate 'camps.' However, there is a list of Mansions from the first to the last; and altogether forty-two are numbered, of which Matthew speaks: "From Abraham to David there were fourteen generations, and from David to the exile to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the exile to Babylon to Christ fourteen generations, that is, altogether forty-two generations" (Matthew 1.17). Through these, the true Hebrew runs, who hastens to pass from earth to heaven: and having forsaken the world of Egypt, he enters the land of promise. It is not surprising if we arrive at the kingdom of heaven by means of the sacrament of numbers in that [sacrament], under which the Lord and Savior came from the first Patriarch to the Virgin, as if to the Jordan, which, flowing in a full stream, was overflowing with the graces of the Holy Spirit. What is written as having come forth from the hand of Moses and Aaron, understand as the law and the priesthood, the works, and the worship of God; one needs the other. For exercising virtues is useless, if you do not know the Creator; and the worship of God does not benefit salvation, if you do not fulfill the precepts of the Creator. With these two hands, as if with two Seraphim, we burst forth in confession of the Holy Trinity, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts.

Letters - letter_079

Letter 79. To Salvina. A letter of consolation addressed by Jerome to Salvina (a lady of the imperial court) on the death of her husband Nebridius. After excusing his temerity in addressing a complete stranger Jerome eulogizes the virtues of Nebridius, particularly his chastity and his bounty to the poor. He next warns Salvina (in no courtier-like terms) of the dangers that will beset her as a widow and recommends her to devote all her energies to the careful training of the son and daughter who are now her principal charge. The tone of the letter is somewhat arrogant and it can hardly be regarded as one of Jerome's happiest efforts. Salvina, however, consecrated her life to deeds of piety, and became one of Chrysostom's deaconesses. Its date is 400 a.d.

1. My desire to do my duty may, I fear, expose me to a charge of self-seeking; and although I do but follow the example of Him who said: "learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart," [Matt. 11:29] the course that I am taking may be attributed to a desire for notoriety. Men may say that I am not so much trying to console a widow in affliction as endeavouring to creep into the imperial court; and that, while I make a pretext of offering comfort, I am really seeking the friendship of the great. Clearly this will not be the opinion of any one who knows the commandment: "thou shalt not respect the person of the poor," [Lev. 19:15] a precept given lest under pretext of shewing pity we should judge unjust judgment. For each individual is to be judged not by his personal importance but by the merits of his case. His wealth need not stand in the way of the rich man, if he makes a good use of it; and poverty can be no recommendation to the poor if in the midst of squalor and want he fails to keep clear of wrong doing. Proofs of these things are not wanting either in scriptural times or our own; for Abraham, in spite of his immense wealth, was "the friend of God" [Isa. 41:8; Jas. 2:23] and poor men are daily arrested and punished for their crimes by law. She whom I now address is both rich and poor so that she cannot say what she actually has. For it is not of her purse that I am speaking but of the purity of her soul. I do not know her face but I am well acquainted with her virtues; for report speaks well of her and her youth makes her chastity all the more commendable. By her grief for her young husband she has set an example to all wives; and by her resignation she has proved that she believes him not lost but gone before. The greatness of her bereavement has brought out the reality of her religion. For while she forgets her lost Nebridius, she knows that in Christ he is with her still. But why do I write to one who is a stranger to me? For three reasons. First, because (as a priest is bound to do) I love all Christians as my children and find my glory in promoting their welfare. Secondly because the father of Nebridius was bound to me by the closest ties.¹ Lastly-and this is a stronger reason than the others-because I have failed to say no to my son Avitus.² With an importunacy surpassing that of the widow towards the unjust judge [Luke 18:1-5] he wrote to me so frequently and put before me so many instances in which I had previously dealt with a similar theme, that he overcame my modest reluctance and made the resolve to do not what would best become me but what would most nearly meet his wishes.

2. As the mother of Nebridius was sister to the empress³ and as he was brought up in the bosom of his aunt, another might perhaps praise him for having so much endeared himself to the

unvanquished emperor. Theodosius, indeed, procured him from Africa a wife of the highest rank,⁴ who, as her native land at this time was distracted by civil wars, became a kind of hostage for its loyalty. I ought to say at the very outset that Nebridius seems to have had a presentiment that he would die early. For amid the splendour of the palace and in the high positions to which his rank and not his years entitled him he lived always as one who believed that he must soon go to meet Christ. Of Cornelius, the centurion of the Italian band, the sacred narrative tells us that God so fully accepted him as to send to him an angel; and that this angel told him that to his merit was due the mystery whereby Peter from the narrow limits of the circumcision was conveyed to the wide field of the uncircumcision. He was the first Gentile baptized by the apostle, and in him the Gentiles were set apart to salvation. Now of this man it is written: "there was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." [Acts 10:1, Acts 10:2] All this that is said of him I claim-with a change of name only-for my dear Nebridius. So "devout" was this latter and so enamoured of chastity that at his marriage he was still pure. So truly did he "fear God with all his house" that forgetting his high position he spent all his time with monks and clergymen. So profuse were the alms which he gave to the people that his doors were continually beset with swarms of sick and poor. And assuredly he "prayed to God alway" that what was for the best might happen to him. Therefore "speedily was he taken away lest that wickedness should alter his understanding ...for his soul pleased the Lord." [Wisdom 4:11, Wisdom 4:14] Thus I may truthfully apply to him the apostle's words: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." [Acts 10:34, Acts 10:35] As a soldier Nebridius took no harm from his cloak and sword-belt and troops of orderlies; for while he wore the uniform of the emperor he was enlisted in the service of God. On the other hand nothing is gained by men who while they affect coarse mantles, sombre tunics, dirt, and poverty, belie by their deeds their lofty pretensions. Of another centurion we find in the gospel this testimony from our Lord: "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel." [Matt. 8:10] And, to go back to earlier times, we read of Joseph who gave proof of his integrity both when he was in want and when he was rich, and who inculcated freedom of soul both as slave and as lord. He was made next to Pharaoh and invested with the emblems of royalty; [Gen. 41:42-44] yet so dear was he to God that, alone of all the patriarchs, he became the father of two tribes. [Gen. 41:50-52] Daniel and the three children were set over the affairs of Babylon and were numbered among the princes of the state; yet although they wore the dress of Nebuchadnezzar, in their hearts they served God. Mordecai also and Esther amid purple and silk and jewels overcame pride with humility; and although captives were so highly esteemed as to be able to impose commands upon their conquerors.

3. These remarks are intended to shew that the youth of whom I speak used his kinship to the royal family, his abundant wealth, and the outward tokens of power, as helps to virtue. For, as the preacher says, "wisdom is a defence and money is a defence" [Eccl. 7:12] also. We must not hastily conclude that this statement conflicts with that of the Lord: "verily I say unto you that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven; and again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." [Matt. 19:23, Matt. 19:24] Were it so, the salvation of Zacchaeus the publican, described in scripture as a man of great wealth, would contradict the Lord's declaration. But that what is impossible with men is possible with God [Mark 10:27] we are taught by the counsel of the apostle

who thus writes to Timothy:-"charge them that are rich in this world that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute. willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on the true life."⁵ We have learned how a camel can pass through a needle's eye, how an animal with a hump on its back,⁶ when it has laid down its packs, can take to itself the wings of a dove [Ps. 55:6] and rest in the branches of the tree which has grown from a grain of mustard seed. [Matt. 13:31, Matt. 13:32] In Isaiah we read of camels, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah and Sheba, which carry gold and incense to the city of the Lord. [Isa. 60:6] On like typical camels the Ishmaelitic merchantmen [Gen. 37:25] bring down to the Egyptians perfume and incense and balm (of the kind that grows in Gilead good for the healing of wounds [Jer. 8:22]); and so fortunate are they that in the purchase and sale of Joseph they have for their merchandise the Saviour of the world.⁷ And Aesop's fable tells us of a mouse which after eating its fill can no longer creep out as before it crept in. [Horace, Epist. I. 7:30, 31]

4. Daily did my dear Nebridius revolve the words: "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare" of the devil "and into many lusts." [1 Tim. 6:9] All the money that the Emperor's bounty gave him or that his badges of office procured him he laid out for the benefit of the poor. For he knew the commandment of the Lord: "If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come and follow me." [Matt. 19:21] And because he could not literally fulfil these directions, having a wife and little children and a large household, he made to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that they might receive him into everlasting habitations. [Luke 16:9] He did not once for all cast away his brethren, as did the apostles who forsook father and nets and ship, [Matt. 4:18-22] but by an equality he ministered to the want of others out of his own abundance that afterwards their wealth might be a supply for his own want. [2 Cor. 8:14] The lady to whom this letter is addressed knows that what I narrate is only known to me by hearsay, but she is aware also that I am no Greek writer repaying with flattery some benefit conferred upon me. Far be such an imputation from all Christians. Having food and raiment we are therewith content. [1 Tim. 6:8] Where there is cheap cabbage and household bread, a sufficiency to eat and a sufficiency to drink, these riches are superfluous and no place is left for flattery with its sordid calculations. You may conclude therefore that, where there is no motive to tell a falsehood, the testimony given is true.

5. It must not, however, be supposed that I praise Nebridius only for his liberality in alms-giving, although we are taught the great importance of this in the words: "water will quench a flaming fire; and alms maketh an atonement for sins." [Ecclus. 3:30] I will pass on now to his other virtues each one of which is to be found but in few men. Who ever entered the furnace of the King of Babylon without being burned? [Cf. Dan. 3:25] Was there ever a young man whose garment his Egyptian mistress did not seize? [Gen. 39:12] Was there ever a eunuch's⁸ wife contented with a childless marriage bed? Is there any man who is not appalled by the struggle of which the apostle says: "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members?" [Rom. 7:23] But wonderful to say Nebridius, though bred up in a palace as a companion and fellow pupil of the Augusti⁹ (whose table is supplied by the whole world and ministered to by land and sea); Nebridius, I say, though in the midst of abundance and in the flower of his age, shewed himself more modest than a girl and never gave

occasion, even the slightest, for scandalous rumours. Again though he was the friend, companion, and cousin of princes and had been educated along with them—a thing which makes even strangers intimate—he did not allow pride to inflate him or frown with contempt upon others who were less fortunate than he: no, he was kind to all, and while he loved the princes as brothers he revered them as sovereigns. He used to avow that his own health and safety were dependent upon theirs. Their attendants and all those officers of the palace who by their numbers add to the grandeur of the imperial court he had so well conciliated by shewing his regard for them, that men who were in reality inferior to him were led by his attention to believe themselves his peers. It is no easy task to throw one's rank into the shade by one's virtue, or to gain the affection of men who are forced to yield you precedence. What widow was not supported by his help? What ward did not find in him a father? To him the bishops of the entire East used to bring the prayers of the unfortunate and the petitions of the distressed. Whenever he asked the Emperor for a boon, he sought either alms for the poor or ransom for captives or clemency for the afflicted. Accordingly the princes also used gladly to accede to his requests, for they knew well that their bounty would benefit not one man but many.

6. Why do I farther postpone the end? "All flesh is grass and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." [Isa. 40:6] The dust has returned to the dust. [Gen. 3:19] He has fallen asleep in the Lord and has been laid with his fathers, full of days and of light and fostered in a good old age. For "wisdom is the grey hair unto men." [Wisd. 4:9] "In a short time he" has "fulfilled a long time." [Wisd. 4:13] In his place we now have his charming children. His wife is the heir of his chastity. To those who miss his father the tiny Nebridius shews him once more, for "Such were the eyes and hands and looks he bore." [Virg. A. 3:490] A spark of the parent's excellence shines in the son: the child's face betrays like a mirror a resemblance in character.

"That narrow frame contains a hero's heart." [Virg. G. 4:82] And with him there is his sister, a basket of roses and lilies, a mixture of ivory and purple. Her face though it takes after that of her father inclines to be still more attractive; and, while her complexion is that of her mother, she is so like both her parents that the lineaments of each are reflected in her features. So sweet and honied is she that she is the pride of all her kinsfolk. The Emperor¹⁰ does not disdain to hold her in his arms, and the Empress¹¹ likes nothing better than to nurse her on her lap. Everyone runs to be the first to catch her up. Now she clings to the neck of one, and now she is fondled in the arms of another. She prattles and stammers, and is all the sweeter for her faltering tongue.

7. You have, therefore, Salvina, those to nurse who may well represent to you your absent husband: "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward." [Ps. 127:3] In the place of one husband you have received two children, and thus your affection has more objects than before. All that was due to him you can give to them. Temper grief with love, for if he is gone they are still with you. It is no small merit in God's eyes to bring up children well. Hear the apostle's counsel: "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." [1 Tim. 5:9, 1 Tim. 5:10] Here you learn the roll of the virtues which God requires of you, what is due to the name of widow which you bear, and by what good deeds you can attain to that second degree of chastity¹² which is still open to you. Do not be disturbed because the apostle allows none to be chosen as a widow under threescore

years old, neither suppose that he intends to reject those who are still young. Believe that you are indeed chosen by him who said to his disciple, "Let no man despise thy youth," [1 Tim. 4:12] your want of age that is, not your want of continence. If this be not his meaning, all who become widows under threescore years will have to take husbands. He is training a church still untaught in Christ, and making provision for people of all stations but especially for the poor, the charge of whom had been committed to himself and Barnabas. [Gal. 2:9, Gal. 2:10] Thus he wishes only those to be supported by the exertions of the church who cannot labour with their own hands, and who are widows indeed, [Cf. 1 Tim. 5:3] approved by their years and by their lives. The faults of his children made Eli the priest an offence to God. On the other hand He is appeased by the virtues of such as "continue in faith and charity and holiness with chastity."¹³ "O Timothy," cries the apostle, "keep thyself pure." [1 Tim. 5:22] Far be it from me to suspect you capable of doing anything wrong; still it is only a kindness to admonish one whose youth and opulence lead her into temptation. You must take what I am going to say as addressed not to you but to your girlish years. A widow "that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." [1 Tim. 5:6] So speaks the "chosen vessel" [Acts 9:15] and the words are brought out from his treasure who could boldly say: "Do ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me?" [2 Cor. 13:3, Vulg] Yet they are the words of one who in his own person admitted the weakness of the human body, saying: "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do." [Rom. 7:19] And again: Therefore "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway." [1 Cor. 9:27] If Paul is afraid, which of us can venture to be confident? If David the friend of God and Solomon who loved God [1 K. 3:3] were overcome like other men, if their fall is meant to warn us and their penitence to lead us to salvation, who in this slippery life can be sure of not falling? Never let pheasants be seen upon your table, or plump turtledoves or black cock from Ionia, or any of those birds so expensive that they fly away with the largest properties. And do not fancy that you eschew meat diet when you reject pork, hare, and venison and the savoury flesh of other quadrupeds.¹⁴ It is not the number of feet that makes the difference but delicacy of flavour. I know that the apostle has said: "every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving." [1 Tim. 4:4] But the same apostle says: "it is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine," [Rom. 14:21] and in another place: "be not drunk with wine wherein is excess." [Eph. 5:18] "Every creature of God is good"-the precept is intended for those who are careful how they may please their husbands. [1 Cor. 7:34] Let those feed on flesh who serve the flesh, whose bodies boil with desire, who are tied to husbands, and who set their hearts on having offspring. Let those whose wombs are burthened cram their stomachs with flesh. But you have buried every indulgence in your husband's tomb: over his bier you have cleansed with tears a face stained with rouge and whitelead; you have exchanged a white robe and gilded buskins for a sombre tunic and black shoes; and only one thing more is needed, perseverance in fasting. Let paleness and squalor be henceforth your jewels. Do not pamper your youthful limbs with a bed of down or kindle your young blood with hot baths. Hear what words a heathen poet [Virgil, Aen. 4:28, 29] puts into the mouth of a chaste widow:¹⁵ "He, my first spouse, has robbed me of my loves. So be it: let him keep them in the tomb."

If common glass is worth so much, what must be the value of a pearl of price?¹⁶ If in deference to a law of nature a Gentile widow can condemn all sensual indulgence, what must we expect from a Christian widow who owes her chastity not to one who is dead but to one with whom she shall reign in heaven?

8. Do not, I pray you, regard these general remarks-applying as they do to all young women-as intended to insult you or to take you to task. I write in a spirit of apprehension, yet pray that you may never know the nature of my fears. A woman's reputation is a tender plant; it is like a fair flower which withers at the slightest blast and fades away at the first breath of wind. Especially is this so when she is of an age to fall into temptation and the authority of a husband is wanting to her. For the very shadow of a husband is a wife's safeguard. What has a widow to do with a large household or with troops of retainers? As servants, it is true, she must not despise them, but as men she ought to blush before them. If a grand establishment requires such domestics, let her at least set over them an old man of spotless morals whose dignity may guard the honour of his mistress. I know of many widows who, although they live with closed doors, have not escaped the imputation of too great intimacy with their servants. These latter become objects of suspicion when they dress above their degree, or when they are stout and sleek, or when they are of an age inclined to passion, or when knowledge of the favour in which they are secretly held betrays itself in a too confident demeanour. For such pride, however carefully concealed, is sure to break out in a contempt for fellow-servants as servants. I make these seemingly superfluous remarks that you may keep your heart with all diligence [Prov. 4:23] and guard against every scandal that may be broached concerning you.

9. Take no well-curved steward to walk with you, no effeminate actor, no devilish singer of poisoned sweetness, no spruce and smooth-shorn youth. Let no theatrical compliments, no obsequious adulation be associated with you. Keep with you bands of widows and virgins; and let your consolers be of your own sex. The character of the mistress is judged by that of the maid. So long as you have with you a holy mother, so long as an aunt vowed to virginity is at your side, you ought not to neglect them and at your own risk to seek the company of strangers. Let the divine scripture be always in your hands, and give yourself so frequently to prayer that such shafts of evil thoughts as ever assail the young may thereby find a shield to repel them. It is difficult, nay more it is impossible, to escape the beginnings of those internal motions which the Greeks with much significance call "προπαιθεῖαι" that is 'predispositions to passion.' The fact is that suggestions of sin tickle all our minds, and the decision rests with our own hearts either to admit or to reject the thoughts which come. The Lord of nature Himself says in the gospel: "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." [Matt. 15:19] It is clear from the testimony of another book that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," [Gen. 8:21] and that the soul wavers between the works of the flesh and of the spirit enumerated by the apostle, [Gal. 5:19-23] desiring now the former and now the latter. For "From faults no mortal man is wholly free; The best is he who has but few of them." [Horace, Sat. I 3:68, 69] And, to quote the same poet, "At moles men cavil when they mark fair skins." [Horace, Sat. I. 6:66] To the same effect in different words the prophet says: "I am so troubled that I cannot speak," [Ps. 77:4] and in the same book, "Be ye angry and sin not." [Ps. 4:4, LXX. Quoted Eph. 4:26] So Archytas of Tarentum¹⁷ once said to a careless steward: "I should have flogged you to death had I not been in a passion." For "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." [Jas. 1:20] Now what is here said of one form of perturbation may be applied to all. Just as anger is human and the repression of it Christian, so it is with other passions. The flesh always lusts after the things of the flesh, and by its allurements draws the soul to partake of deadly pleasures; but it is for us Christians to restrain the desire for sensual indulgence by an intenser love for Christ. It is for us to break in the mettlesome brute within us by fasting, in order that it may desire not lust but

food and amble easily and steadily forward having for its rider the Holy Spirit.

10. Why do I write thus? To shew you that you are but human and subject, unless you guard against them, to human passions. We are all of us made of the same clay and formed of the same elements. Whether we wear silk or rags we are all at the mercy of the same desire. It does not fear the royal purple; it does not disdain the squalor of the mendicant. It is better then to suffer in stomach than in soul to rule the body than to serve it, to lose one's balance than to lose one's chastity. Let us not lull ourselves with the delusion that we can always fall back on penitence. For this is at best but a remedy for misery. Let us shrink from incurring a wound which must be painful to cure. For it is one thing to enter the haven of salvation with ship safe and merchandise uninjured, and another to cling naked to a plank and, as the waves toss you this way and that, to be dashed again and again on the sharp rocks. A widow should be ignorant that second marriage is permitted; she should know nothing of the apostle's words: "It is better to marry than to burn." [1 Cor. 7:9] Remove what is said to be worse, the risk of burning, and marriage will cease to be regarded as good. Of course I repudiate the slanders of the heretics; I know that "marriage is honourable ...and the bed undefiled." [Heb. 13:4] Yet Adam even after he was expelled from paradise had but one wife. The accursed and blood-stained Lamech, descended from the stock of Cain, was the first to make out of one rib two wives; and the seedling of digamy then planted was altogether destroyed by the doom of the deluge. It is true that in writing to Timothy the apostle from fear of fornication is forced to countenance second marriage. His words are these: "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." But he immediately adds as a reason for this concession; "for some are already turned aside after Satan." [1 Tim. 5:14, 1 Tim. 5:15] Thus we see that he is offering not a crown to those who stand but a helping hand to those who are down. What must a second marriage be if it is looked on merely as an alternative to the brothel! "For some," he writes, "are already turned aside after Satan." The upshot of the whole matter is that, if a young widow cannot or will not contain herself, she had better take a husband to her bed than the devil. A noble alternative truly which is only to be embraced in preference to Satan! In old days even Jerusalem went a-whoring and opened her feet to every one that passed by. [Ezek. 16:25] It was in Egypt that she was first deflowered and there that her teats were bruised. [Ezek. 23:3] And afterwards when she had come to the wilderness and, impatient of the delays of her leader Moses, had said when maddened by the stings of lust: "these be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," [Exod. 32:4] she received statutes that were not good and commandments that were altogether evil whereby she should not live [Ezek. 20:25] but should be punished through them. Is it surprising then that when the apostle had said in another place of young widows: "when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ they will marry, having damnation because they have cast off their first faith," [1 Tim. 5:11, 1 Tim. 5:12] he granted to such as should wax wanton statutes of digamy that were not good and commandments that were altogether evil? For the reason which he gives for allowing a second husband would justify a woman in marrying a third or even, if she liked, a twentieth. He evidently wished to shew them that he was not so much anxious that they should take husbands as that they should avoid paramours. These things, dearest daughter in Christ, I impress upon you and frequently repeat, that you may forget those things which are behind and reach forth unto those things which are before. [Phil. 3:13] You have widows like yourself worthy to be your models, Judith renowned in Hebrew story and Anna the daughter of Phanuel famous in the gospel. Both these lived day and night in the temple and preserved the

treasure of their chastity by prayer and by fasting. One was a type of the Church which cuts off the head of the devil¹⁸ and the other first received in her arms the saviour of the world and had revealed to her the holy mysteries which were to come. [Luke 2:36-38] In conclusion I beg you to attribute the shortness of my letter not to want of language or scarcity of matter but to a deep sense of modesty which makes me fear to force myself too long upon the ears of a stranger, and causes me to dread the secret verdict of those who read my words.

1: Also named Nebridius, Prefect of Gaul, then of the East 2: See letter CXXIV 3: Aelia Flaccilla, the wife of Theodosius who is here called "the unvanquished emperor.

4: Salvina was the daughter of Gildo who at the time was tributary king of Mauritania 5: 1 Tim. 6:17-19: AV. has "eternal life" in the last verse 6: Animal tortuosum. The epithet recurs in Letter CVII 7: So the Vulgate renders Zaphnath-Paaneah the name given to Joseph by Pharaoh. (Gen. 41:45) 8: The allusion is to the word "officer" in Gen. 37:36. See AV. margin 9: Arcadius and Honorius

10:

Arcadius

11: Eudoxia 12: The three degrees of chastity are those of a virgin, a widow, and a wife 13: 1 Tim. 2:15. AV. has `sobriety 0' for `chastity. 0

14: Many drew a distinction between the flesh of quadrupeds and that of birds, abstaining from the former but using the latter 15: Dido, queen of Carthage 16: Quoted from Tertullian (ad Mart. IV.). The same words recur in Letters CVII. and CXXX 17: A pythagorean philosopher, mathematician, general, and statesman. He was a contemporary of Plato 18: As Judith cut off the head of Holofernes (Judith xiii.)

Letters - letter_080

Letter 80. From Rufinus to Macarius.

Rufinus on his return from Bethlehem to Rome published a Latin version of Origen's treatise "περί Ἀρχῆς", On First Principles. To this he prefixed the preface which is here printed among Jerome's letters. Professing to take as his model Jerome's own translations of Origen's commentaries which he greatly praises, he declares that, following his example, he has paraphrased the obscure passages of the treatise and has paraphrased the obscure passages of the treatise and has omitted as due to interpolators such parts as seem heretical. This preface with its insincere praise of Jerome (whose name, however, is not mentioned) and its avowed manipulation of Origen's text caused much perplexity at Rome (see Letters LXXXI., LXXXIII., and LXXXIV.), and gave rise to the controversy between Rufinus and Jerome described in the Prolegomena, and given at length in vol. iii. of this Series. The date is 398 a.d.

1. Large numbers of the brethren have, I know, in their zeal for the knowledge of the scriptures begged learned men skilled in Greek literature to make Origen a Roman by bringing home his teaching to Latin ears. One of these scholars, a dear brother and associate,¹ at the request of bishop Damasus translated from Greek into Latin his two homilies on the Song of Songs and prefaced the work with an eloquent and eulogistic introduction such as could not fail to arouse in all an ardent desire to read and to study Origen. To the soul of that just man-so he declared-the words of the Song were applicable: "the king hath brought me into his chambers;"² and he went on to speak thus: "while in his other books Origen surpasses all former writers, in dealing with the Song of Songs he surpasses himself." In his preface he pledges himself to give to Roman ears these homilies of Origen and as many of his other works as he can. His style is certainly attractive but I can see that he aims at a more ambitious task than that of a mere translator. Not content with rendering the words of Origen he desires to be himself the teacher.³ I for my part do but follow up an enterprise which he has sanctioned and commenced, but I lack his vigorous eloquence with which to adorn the sayings of this great man. I am even afraid lest my deficiencies and inadequate command of Latin may detract seriously from the reputation of one whom this writer has deservedly termed second only to the apostles as a teacher of the Church in knowledge and in wisdom.

2. Often turning this over in my mind I held my peace and refused to listen to the brethren when-as frequently happened-they urged me to undertake the work. But your persistence, most faithful brother Macarius, is so great that even want of ability cannot resist it. Thus, to escape the constant importunings to which you subject me, I have given way contrary to my resolution; yet only on these terms that, so far as is possible, I am to be free to follow the rules of translation laid down by my predecessors, and particularly those acted upon by the writer whom I have just mentioned. He has rendered into Latin more than seventy of Origen's homiletical treatises and a few also of his commentaries upon the apostle;⁴ and in these wherever the Greek text presents a stumbling block, he has smoothed it down in his version and has so emended the language used that a Latin

writer can find no word that is at variance with our faith. In his steps, therefore, I propose to walk, if not displaying the same vigorous eloquence at least observing the same rules. I shall not reproduce passages in Origen's books which disagree with or contradict his own statements elsewhere. The reason of these inconsistencies I have put more fully before you in the defence of Origen's writings composed by Pamphilianus⁵ which I have supplemented by a short treatise of my own. I have given what I consider plain proofs that his books have been corrupted in numbers of places by heretics and ill-disposed persons, and particularly those which you now urge me to translate. The books "περὶ Ἀρχῶν", that is of Principles or of Powers, are in fact in other respects extremely obscure and difficult. For they treat of subjects on which the philosophers have spent all their days and yet have been able to discover nothing. In dealing with these themes Origen has done his best to make belief in a Creator and a rational account of things created subservient to religion and not, as with the philosophers, to irreligion. Wherever then in his books I have found a statement concerning the Trinity contrary to those which in other places he has faithfully made on the same subject, I have either omitted the passage as garbled and misleading or have substituted that view of the matter which I find him to have frequently asserted. Again, wherever-in haste to get on with his theme-he is brief or obscure relying on the skill and intelligence of his readers, I, to make the passage clearer, have sought to explain it by adding any plainer statements that I have read on the point in his other books. But I have added nothing of my own. The words used may be found in other parts of his writings: they are his, not mine. I mention this here to take from cavillers all pretext for once more⁶ finding fault. But let such perverse and contentious persons look well to what they are themselves doing.

3. Meantime I have taken up this great task-if so be that God will grant your prayers-not to stop the mouths of slanderers (an impossible feat except perhaps to God) but to give to those who desire it the means of making progress in knowledge. In the sight of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,⁷ I adjure and require everyone who shall either read or copy these books of mine, by his belief in a kingdom to come, by the mystery of the resurrection from the dead, by the eternal fire which is "prepared for the devil and his angels;" [Matt. 25:41] as he hopes not to inherit eternally that place where "there is weeping and gnashing of teeth," [Matt. 22:13] and where "their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," [Mark 9:44] let him add nothing to what is written, let him subtract nothing, let him insert nothing, let him alter nothing, but let him compare his transcript with the copies from which it is made, let him correct it to the letter, and let him punctuate it aright. Every manuscript that is not properly corrected and punctuated he must reject: for otherwise the difficulties in the text arising from the want of punctuation will make obscure arguments still more obscure to those who read them.

1: i.e. Jerome 2: Cant. 1:4. See the Preface to Origen on the Canticles translated in this volume 3: Rem maioris gloriae sequitur ut pater verbi sit potius quam interpres 4: i.e. St. Paul

5:

Or Pamphilus

6: See this treatise in vol. 3: of this series. Rufinus with John of Jerusalem had been already accused of Origenism. See Letter LI. 6 7: For this adjuration comp. Rev. 22:18, Rev. 22:19, and Stieren's Irenaeus 1:821

Letters - letter_081

Letter 81. To Rufinus. A friendly letter of remonstrance written by Jerome to Rufinus on receipt of his version of the "περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς" (see the preceding letter). Being sent in the first instance to Pammachius this latter treacherously suppressed it and thus put an end to all hope of the reconciliation of the two friends. The date of the letter is 399 a.d.

1. That you have lingered some time at Rome your own language shews. Yet I feel sure that a yearning to see your spiritual parents¹ would have drawn you to your native country,² had not grief for your mother deterred you lest a sorrow scarce bearable away might have proved unbearable at home. As to your complaint that men listen only to the dictates of passion and refuse to acquiesce in your judgement and mine; the Lord is witness to my conscience that since our reconciliation I have harboured no rancour in my breast to injure anyone; on the contrary I have taken the utmost pains to prevent any chance occurrence being set down to ill-will. But what can I do so long as everyone supposes that he has a right to do as he does and thinks that in publishing a slander he is requiting not originating a calumny? True friendship ought never to conceal what it thinks. The short preface to the books "περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς" which has been sent to me I recognize as yours by the style. You know best with what intention it was written; but even a fool can see how it must necessarily be understood. Covertly or rather openly I am the person aimed at. I have often myself reigned a controversy to practise declamation.³ Thus I might now recall this well-worn artifice and praise you in your own method.⁴ But far be it from me to imitate what I blame in you. In fact I have so far restrained my feelings that I make no charge against you, and, although injured, decline for my part to injure a friend. But another time, if you wish to follow any one, pray be satisfied with your own judgement. The objects which we seek are either good or bad. If they are good, they need no help from another; and if they are bad, the fact that many sin together is no excuse. I prefer thus to expostulate with you as a friend rather than to give public vent to my indignation at the wrong I have suffered. I want you to see that when I am reconciled to anyone I become his sincere friend and do not-to borrow a figure from Plautus [Plautus, Aul. 2:2, 18] -while offering him bread with one hand, hold a stone in the other.

2. My brother Paulinian has not yet returned from home and I fancy that you will see him at Aquileia at the house of the reverend pope Chromatius.⁵ I am also sending the reverend presbyter Rufinus⁶ on business to Milan by way of Rome, and have requested him to communicate to you my feelings and respects. I am sending the same message to the rest of my friends; lest, as the apostle says, ye bite and devour one another, ye be consumed one of another. [Gal. 5:15] It only remains for you and your friends to shew your moderation by giving no offence to those who are disinclined to put up with it. For you will hardly find everyone like me. There are few who can be pleased with pretended eulogies.

1: Chromatius and Eusebius of Aquileia 2: Concordia, near Aquileia 3: See the introduction to Letter CXVII 4: i.e. insincerely

5:

Paulinian (of whose ordination an account is given in Letter LI.) had been sent to Italy by Jerome in a.d. 398 partly to counteract the proceedings of Rufinus and partly to sell the family property at Stridon (see Letter LXVI

6:

Rufinus the Syrian, to be carefully distinguished from his more famous namesake (to whom this letter is addressed) of Aquileia. He was a monk in Jerome's monastery at Bethlehem

Letters - letter_082

Letter 82. To Theophilus Bishop of Alexandria.

Two years after his former attempt (see Letter 63.) Theophilus again wrote to Jerome urging him to be reconciled with John of Jerusalem. Jerome replies that there is nothing he desires more earnestly than peace but that this must be real and not a hollow truce. He speaks very bitterly of John who has, he alleges, intrigued to procure his banishment from Palestine. He also deals with the ordination of his brother Paulinian (for which see Letter 51.) and defends himself for having translated Origen's commentaries by adducing the example of Hilary of Poitiers. This letter should be compared with the Treatise "Against John of Jerusalem" in this volume. Its date is 399 a.d.

1. Your letter shews you to possess that heritage of the Lord of which when going to the Father he said to the apostles, "peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," [John. 14:27] and to own the happiness described in the words, "blessed are the peace-makers." [Matt. 5:9] You coax as a father, you teach as a master, you enjoin as a bishop. You come to me not with a rod and severity but in a spirit of kindness, gentleness, and meekness. [1 Cor. 4:21] Your opening words echo the humility of Christ who saved men not with thunder and lightning [Cf. Heb. 12:18] but as a wailing babe in the manger and as a silent sufferer upon the cross. You have read the prediction made in one who was a type of Him, "Lord, remember David and all his meekness," [Ps. 132:1, LXX] and you know how it was fulfilled afterwards in Himself. "Learn of me," He said, "for I am meek and lowly in heart."¹ You have quoted many passages from the sacred books in praise of peace, you have flitted like a bee over the flowery fields of scripture, you have culled with cunning eloquence all that is sweet and conducive to concord. I was already running after peace, but you have made me quicken my pace: my sails were set for the voyage but your exhortation has filled them with a stronger breeze. I drink in the sweet streams of peace not reluctantly and with aversion but eagerly and with open mouth.

2. But what can I do, I who can only wish for peace and have no power to bring it about? Even though the wish may win its recompense with God, its futility must still sadden him who cherishes it. When the apostle said, "as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," [Rom. 12:18] he knew quite well that the realisation of peace depends upon the consent of two parties. The prophet truly cries "They say Peace, peace: and yet there is no peace." [Jer. 11:14, LXX] To overthrow peace by actions while professing it in words is not hard. To point out its advantages is one thing and to strive for it another. Men's speeches may be all for unity but their actions may enforce bondage. I wish for peace as much as others; and not only do I wish for it, I ask for it. But the peace which I want is the peace of Christ; a true peace, a peace without rancour, a peace which does not involve war, a peace which will not reduce opponents but will unite friends. How can I term domination peace? I must call things by their right names. Where there is hatred there let men talk of feuds; and where there is mutual esteem, there only let peace be spoken of. For my part I neither rend the church nor separate myself from the communion of the fathers. From my very cradle, I may say, I have been reared on Catholic milk; and no one can be a better

churchman than one who has never been a heretic. But I know nothing of a peace that is without love or of a communion that is without peace. In the gospel I read:—"if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." [Matt. 5:23, Matt. 5:24] If then we may not offer gifts that are our own unless we are at peace with our brothers; how much less can we receive the body of Christ if we cherish enmity in our hearts? How can I conscientiously approach Christ's eucharist and answer the Amen² if I doubt the charity of him who ministers it?

3. Hear me, I beg you with patience and do not take truthfulness for flattery. Is any man reluctant to communicate with you? Does any turn his face away when you hold out your hand? Does any at the holy banquet offer you the kiss of Judas?³ At your approach the monks instead of trembling rejoice. They race to meet you and leaving their dens in the desert are fain to master you by their humility. What compels them to come forth? Is it not their love for you? What draws together the scattered dwellers in the desert? Is it not the esteem in which they hold you? A parent ought to love his children; and not only a parent but a bishop ought to be loved by his children. Neither ought to be feared. There is an old saying:⁴ "whom a man fears he hates; and whom he hates, he would fain see dead." Accordingly, while for the young the holy scripture makes fear the beginning of knowledge,⁵ it also tells us that "perfect love casteth out fear." [1 John. 4:18] You exact no obedience from them; therefore the monks obey you. You offer them a kiss; therefore they bow the neck. You shew yourself a common soldier; therefore they make you their general. Thus from being one among many you become one above many. Freedom is easily roused if attempts are made to crush it. No one gets more from a free man than he who does not force him to be a slave. I know the canons of the church; I know what rank her ministers hold; and from men and books I have daily up to the present learned and gathered many things. The kingdom of the mild David was quickly dismembered by one who chastised his people with scorpions and fancied that his fingers were thicker than his father's loins. [1 K. 12:10] The Roman people refused to brook insolence even in a king.⁶ Moses was leader of the host of Israel; he brought ten plagues upon Egypt; sky, earth, and sea alike obeyed his commands: yet he is spoken of as "very meek above all the men which were" at that time "upon the face of the earth." [Nu. 12:3] He maintained his forty-years' supremacy because he tempered the insolence of office with gentleness and meekness. When he was being stoned by the people he made intercession for them; [Exod. 17:4] nay more he wished to be blotted out of God's book sooner than that the flock committed to him should perish. [Exod. 32:31, Exod. 32:32] He sought to imitate the Shepherd who would, he knew, carry on his shoulders even the wandering sheep. "The good Shepherd"—they are the Lord's own words—"layeth down his life for the sheep." [John. 10:11, RV.; Luke 15:4, Luke 15:5] One of his disciples can wish to be anathema from Christ for his brethren's sake, his kinsmen according to the flesh who were Israelites. [Rom. 9:3, Rom. 9:4, RV] If then Paul can desire to perish that the lost may not be lost, how much should good parents not provoke their children to wrath [Eph. 6:4] or by too great severity embitter those who are naturally mild.

4. The limits of a letter compel me to restrain myself; otherwise, indignation would make me diffuse. In an epistle which its writer regards as conciliatory but which to me appears full of malice my opponent⁷ admits that I have never calumniated him or accused him of heresy. Why then does he calumniate me by spreading a rumour that I am infected with that awful malady and am in revolt

against the Church? Why is he so ready to spare his real assailants and so eager to injure me who have done nothing to injure him? Before my brother's ordination he said nothing of any dogmatic difference between himself and pope Epiphanius. What then can have "forced" him-I use his own word-publicly to argue a point which no one had yet raised? One so full of wisdom as you knows well the danger of such discussions and that silence is in such cases the safest course; except, indeed, on some occasion which renders it imperative to deal with great matters. What ability and eloquence it must have needed to compress into a single sermon-as he boasts to have done⁸-all the topics which the most learned writers have treated in detail in voluminous treatises! But this is nothing to me: it is for the hearers of the sermon to notice and for the writer of the letter to realize. But as for me he ought of his own accord to acquit me of bringing the charge against him. I was not present and did not hear the sermon. I was only one of the many, indeed hardly one of them; for while others were crying out I held my peace. Let us confront the accused and the accuser, and let us give credit to him whose services, life, and doctrine are seen to be the best.

5. You see, do you not, that I shut my eyes to many things and touch upon others only in the most cursory manner, hinting at what I suppose rather than saying out what I think.

I understand and approve your manoeuvres;⁹ how in the interests of the peace of the Church you stop your ears when you come within range of the Sirens. Moreover, trained as you have been from childhood in sacred studies, you know exactly what is meant by each expression which you use. You knowingly employ ambiguous terms and carefully balanced sentences so as not to condemn others¹⁰ or repudiate us.¹¹ But it is not a pure faith and a frank confession which look for quibbles or circumlocutions. What is simply believed must be professed with equal simplicity. For my part I could cry out-though it were amid the swords and fires of Babylon, "why does the answer evade the question? why is there no frank, straightforward declaration?" From beginning to end all is shrinking, compromise, ambiguity: as though he were trying to walk on spikes of corn. His blood boils with eagerness for peace; yet he will not give a straightforward answer! others are free to insult him; for, when he is insulted, he does not venture to retaliate. I meantime hold my peace: for the present I shall let it be thought that I am too busy, or ignorant, or afraid; for how would he treat me were I to accuse him, if when I praise him-as he admits himself that I do-he secretly traduces me?

6. His whole letter is less an exposition of his faith than a mass of calumnies aimed at myself. Without any of those mutual courtesies which men may use towards each other without flattery, he takes up my name again and again, flouts it, and bandies it about as though I were blotted out of the book of the living. He thinks that he has beaten me black and blue with his letter; and that I live for the trifles at which he aims, I who from my boyhood have been shut up in a monastic cell, and have always made it my aim to be rather than to seem a good man. Some of us, it is true, he mentions with respect, but only that he may afterwards wound us more deeply. As if, forsooth, we too have no open secrets to reveal! One of his charges is that we have allowed a slave to be ordained. Yet he himself has clergymen of the same class, and he must have read of Onesimus who, being made regenerate by Paul in prison,¹² from a slave became a deacon. Then he throws out that the slave in question was a common informer; and, lest he should be compelled to prove the charge, declares he has it from hearsay only! Why, if I had chosen to repeat the talk of the crowd and to listen to scandal-mongers, he would have learned before now that I too know what all the world knows and have heard the same stories as other people. He declares farther that

ordination has been given to this slave as a reward for a slander spread abroad by him. Does not such cunning and subtlety appal one? And is there any answer to eloquence so overwhelming? Which is best, to spread a calumny or to suffer from one? To accuse a man whose love you may afterwards wish for, or to pardon a sinner? And is it more tolerable that a common informer should be made a consul than that he should be made an aedile?¹³ He knows what I pass over in silence and what I say; what I myself have heard and what-from the fear of Christ-I perhaps refuse to believe.

7. He charges me with having translated Origen into Latin. In this I do not stand alone for the confessor Hilary has done the same, and we are both at one in this that while we have rendered all that is useful, we have cut away all that was harmful. Let him read our versions for himself, if he knows how (and as he constantly converses and daily associates with Italians,¹⁴ I think he cannot be ignorant of Latin); or else, if he cannot quite take it in, let him use his interpreters and then he will come to know that I deserve nothing but praise for the work on which he grounds a charge against me. For, while I have always allowed to Origen his great merit as an interpreter and critic of the scriptures, I have invariably denied the truth of his doctrines. Is it I then that let him loose upon the crowd? Is it I that act sponsor to other preachers like him? No, for I know that a difference must be made between the apostles and all other preachers. The former always speak the truth; but the latter being men sometimes go astray. It would be a strange defence of Origen surely to admit his faults and then to excuse them by saying that other men have been guilty of similar ones! As if, when you cannot venture to defend a man openly, you may hope to shield him by imputing his mistake to a number of others! As for the six thousand volumes of Origen of which he speaks, it is impossible that any one should have read books which have never been written: and I for my part find it easier to suppose that this falsehood is due to the man who professes to have heard it rather than to him who is said to have told it.¹⁵

8. Again he avers that my brother¹⁶ is the cause of the disagreement which has arisen, a man who is content to stay in a monastic cell and who regards the clerical office as onerous rather than honourable. And although up to this very day he has spoon-fed us with insincere protestations of peace, he has caused commotion in the minds of the western bishops¹⁷ by telling them that a mere youth, hardly more than a boy, has been ordained¹⁸ presbyter of Bethlehem in his own diocese. If this is the truth, all the bishops of Palestine must be aware of it. For the monastery of the reverend pope Epiphanius-called the old monastery-where my brother was ordained presbyter is situated in the district of Eleutheropolis¹⁹ and not in that of Aelia.²⁰ Furthermore his age is well known to your Holiness; and as he has now attained to thirty years I apprehend that no blame can attach to him on that score. Indeed this particular age is stamped as full and complete by the mystery of Christ's assumed manhood. Let him call to mind the ancient law, and he will see that after his twenty-fifth year a Levite might be chosen to the priesthood; [Nu. 4:3, LXX. AV. follows the Hebrew] or if in this passage he prefers to follow the Hebrew he will find that candidates for the priesthood must be thirty years old. And that he may not venture to say that "old things are passed away; and, behold, all things are become new," [2 Cor. 5:17] let him hear the apostle's words to Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth." [1 Tim. 4:12] Certainly when my opponent was himself ordained bishop, he was not much older than my brother is now. And if he argues that youth is no hindrance to a bishop but that it is to a presbyter because a young elder²¹ is a contradiction in terms, I ask him this question: Why has he himself ordained a presbyter of this age or younger still,

and that too to minister in another man's church? But if he cannot be at peace with my brother unless he consents to submit and to renounce the bishop who has ordained him, he shews plainly that his object is not peace but revenge, and that he will not rest satisfied with the quietude of repose and peace unless he is able to inflict to the full every penalty that he now threatens. Had he himself ordained my brother, it would have made no difference to this latter. So dearly does he love seclusion that he would even then have continued to live quietly and would not have exercised his office. And should the bishop have seen fit to rend the church on that score, he would then have owed him nothing save the respect which is due to all who offer sacrifice.²²

9. So much for his prolix defence of himself or I should rather say his attack on me. In this letter I have only answered him briefly and cursorily that from what I have said he may perceive what I do not say, and may know that as I am a human being I am a rational animal and well able to understand his shrewdness, and that I am not so obtuse or brutish as to catch only the sound of his words and not their meaning. I now ask of you to pardon my chagrin and to allow that if it is arrogant to answer back, it is yet more arrogant to bring baseless charges. Yet my answer has indicated what I might have said rather than has actually said it. Why do men look for peace at a distance? and why do they wish to have it enforced by word of command? Let them shew themselves peacemakers, and peace will follow at once. Why do they use the name of your holiness to terrorize us, when your letter-contrast to their harsh and menacing words-breathes only peace and meekness? For that the letter which Isidore the presbyter has brought for me from you does make for peace and harmony I know by this, that these insincere professors of a wish for peace have refused to deliver it to me. Let them choose whichever alternative they please. Either I am a good man or I am a bad one. If I am a good one let them leave me in quiet: if I am a bad one, why do they desire to be in bad company? Surely my opponent has learnt by experience the value of humility. He who now tears asunder things which, formerly separate, he of his own will put together, proves that in severing now what he then joined, he is acting at the instigation of another.²³

10. Recently he sought and obtained a decree of exile against me, and I only wish that he had been able to carry it out,²⁴ so that, as the will is imputed to him for the deed, so I too not in will only but in deed might wear the crown of exile. The church of Christ has been founded by shedding its own blood not that of others, by enduring outrage not by inflicting it. Persecutions have made it grow; martyrdoms have crowned it. Or if the Christians among whom I live are unique in their love of severity and know only how to persecute and not how to undergo persecution, there are Jews here, there are heretics professing various false doctrines, and in particular the foulest of all, I mean, Manichaeism. Why is it that they do not venture to say a word against them? Why am I the only person they wish to drive into exile? Am I who communicate with the church the only person of whom it can be said that he rends the church? I put it to you, is it not a fair demand either that they should expel these others as well as myself, or that, if they keep them, they should keep me too? All the same they honour men by sending them into exile, for by so doing they separate them from the company of heretics. It is a monk,²⁵ shame to say, who menaces monks and obtains decrees of exile against them; and that too a monk who boasts that he holds an apostolic chair. But the monastic tribe does not succumb to terrorism: it prefers to expose its neck to the impending sword rather than to allow its hands to be tied. Is not every monk an exile from his country? Is he not an exile from the whole world? Where is the need for the public

authority, the cost of a rescript, the journeyings up and down the earth to obtain one? Let him but touch me with his little finger, and I will go into exile of myself. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." [Ps. 24:1] Christ is not shut up in any one spot.

11. Moreover when he writes that, though I seem to be separated from communion with him, I in reality hold communion with him through you and through the church of Rome: he need not go so far afield, for I am connected with him in the same way also here in Palestine. And lest even this should appear distant, in this village of Bethlehem I hold communion with his presbyters as much as I can. Thus it is clear that a private chagrin is not to be taken for the cause of the church, and that one man's choler, or even that of several stirred up by him, ought not to be styled the displeasure of the church. Accordingly I now repeat what I said at the beginning of my letter that I for my part am desirous of Christ's peace, that I pray for harmony, and that I request you to admonish him not to exact peace but to purpose it. Let him be satisfied with the pain which he has caused by the insults that he has inflicted upon me in the past. Let him efface old wounds by a little new charity. Let him shew himself what he was before, when of his own choice he bestowed upon me his esteem. Let his words no longer be tinged with a gall that flows from the heart of another. Let him do what he wishes himself, and not what others force him to wish. Either as a pontiff, let him exercise authority over all alike, or as a follower of the apostle, let him serve all for the salvation of all. [Cf. 1 Cor. 9:19] If he will shew himself such, I am ready freely to yield and to hold out my arms; he will find me a friend and a kinsman, and will perceive that in Christ I am submissive to him as to all the saints. "Charity," writes the apostle, "suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; ...is not puffed up ...beareth all things, believeth all things." [1 Cor. 13:4-7] Charity is the mother of all virtues, and the apostle's words about faith hope and charity [1 Cor. 13:13] are like that threefold cord which is not quickly broken. [Eccl. 4:12] We believe we hope, and through our faith and hope we are joined together in the bond of charity. [Cf. Col. 3:14] It is for these virtues that I and others have left our homes, it is for these that we would live peaceably without any contention in the fields and alone; paying all due veneration to Christ's pontiffs-so long as they preach the right faith-not because we fear them as lords but because we honour them as fathers deferring also to bishops as bishops, but refusing to serve under compulsion, beneath the shadow of episcopal authority, men whom we do not choose to obey. I am not so much puffed up in mind as not to know what is due to the priests of Christ. For he who receives them, receives not them but Him, whose bishops they are. [Cf. John. 13:20] But let them be content with the honour which is theirs. Let them know that they are fathers and not lords, especially in relation to those who scorn the ambitions of the world and count peace and repose the best of all things. And may Christ who is Almighty God grant to your prayers that I and my opponent may be united not in a feigned and hollow peace but in true and sincere mutual esteem, lest biting and devouring one another we be consumed one of another. [Gal. 5:15]

1: Matt. xi 29 2: 1 Cor. 14:16, where in the Greek `giving of thanks 0' is `eucharist. 0

3: Matt. 26:48, Matt. 26:49 - the kiss of peace formed an integral part of the eucharistic office from primitive till mediaeval times 4: Attributed by Cicero to Ennius

5: Prov. 1. 7 6: Tarquin the Proud the last king of Rome was driven into exile because of his many acts of tyranny

7:

John, Bishop of Jerusalem, who had accused Jerome of Origenism, a charge which was brought against himself by Epiphanius (see Letter LI.)

8: Jerome represents John as saying that he took advantage of a verse in the lesson "to preach on faith and all the dogmas of the Church (c. Joh. Jer. ii.) 9: Jerome now addresses John of Jerusalem 10: The Origenists 11: The orthodox 12: Philemon, 10

13: The highest and lowest offices in the Roman magistracy. Jerome insinuates that if the ordained slave was a common informer so also was John of Jerusalem 14: A hit at Rufinus

15: The statement that he had read 6000 volumes of Origen was attributed to Epiphanius by Rufinus and John of Jerusalem. Cf. Apol. 100:Ruf. 2:100:13 16: Paulinian, who had been ordained by Epiphanius 17: Sacerdotes; lit. `sacrificing priests. 0 18: Not by himself but by Epiphanius 19: Otherwise Lydda, a town in the south of Judah at this time the seat of a bishopric 20: Aelia Capitolina was the name given by Hadrian to the colony established by him on the site of Jerusalem 21: The word `presbyter 0' means elder 22: Here as frequently in Jerome the word `sacerdos 0' is used to denote a bishop

23: Probably Isidore, who had taken a view hostile to Jerome, and who at this time fell under the displeasure of Theophilus 24: The execution of the decree was stopped by the sudden death of the imperial minister Rufinus 25: John of Jerusalem

Letters - letter_083

Letter 83. From Pammachius and Oceanus. A letter from Pammachius and Oceanus in which they express the, perplexity into which they have been thrown by Rufinus's version of Origen's treatise, On First Principles (see Letter 80.) and request Jerome to make for them a literal translation of the work. Written in 399 or 400 a.d.

1. Pammachius and Oceanus to the presbyter Jerome, health. A reverend brother has brought to us sheets containing a certain person's translation into Latin of a treatise by Origen-entitled "περὶ
■ρχ■v". These contain many things which disturb our poor wits and which appear to us to be uncatholic. We suspect also that with a view of clearing the author many passages of his books have been removed which had they been left would have plainly proved the irreligious character of his teaching. We therefore request your excellency to be so good as to bestow upon this particular matter an attention which will benefit not only ourselves but all who reside in the city; we ask you to publish in your own language the abovementioned book of Origen exactly as it was brought out by the author himself; and we desire you to make evident the interpolations which his defender has introduced. You will also confute and overthrow all statements in the sheets which we have sent to your holiness that are ignorantly made or contradict the Catholic faith. The writer in the preface to his work has, with much subtlety but without mentioning your holiness's name, implied that he has done no more than complete a work which you had yourself promised, thus indirectly suggesting that you agree with him. Remove then the suspicions men cannot help feeling and confute your assailant; for, if you ignore his implications, people will say that you admit their truth.

Letters - letter_084

Letter 84. To Pammachius and Oceanus. A calm letter in which Jerome defines and justifies his own attitude towards Origen, but unduly minimizes his early enthusiasm for him. He admires him in the same way that Cyprian admired Tertullian but does not in any way adopt his errors. He then describes his own studies and recounts his obligations to Apollinaris, Didymus, and a Jew named Bar-anina. The rest of the letter deals with the errors of Origen, the state of the text of his writings, and the eulogy of him composed by the martyr Pamphilus (the authenticity of which Jerome assails without any sufficient reason). The date of the letter is 400 a.d.

Jerome to the brothers Pammachius and Oceanus, with all good wishes.

1. The sheets that you send me¹ cover me at once with compliments and confusion; for, while they praise my ability, they take away my sincerity in the faith. But as both at Alexandria and at Rome and, I may say, throughout the whole world good men have made it a habit to take the same liberties with my name, esteeming me only so far that they cannot bear to be heretics without having me of the number, I will leave aside personalities and only answer specific charges. For it is of no benefit to a cause to encounter railing with railing and to retaliate for attacks upon oneself by attacks upon one's opponents. We are commanded not to return evil for evil [1 Thess. 5:15] but to overcome evil with good, [Rom. 12:21] to take our fill of insults, and to turn the other cheek to the smiter. [Matt. 5:39]

2. It is charged against me that I have sometimes praised Origen. If I am not mistaken I have only done so in two places, in the short preface (addressed to Damasus) to his homilies on the Song of Songs and in the prologue to my book of Hebrew Names. In these passages do the dogmas of the church come into question? Is anything said of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? or of the resurrection of the flesh? or of the condition and material of the soul? I have merely praised the simplicity of his rendering and commentary and neither the faith nor the dogmas of the Church come in at all. Ethics only are dealt with and the mist of allegory is dispelled by a clear explanation. I have praised the commentator but not the theologian, the man of intellect but not the believer, the philosopher but not the apostle. But if men wish to know my real judgement upon Origen; let them read my commentaries upon Ecclesiastes, let them go through my three books upon the epistle to the Ephesians: they will then see that I have always opposed his doctrines. How foolish it would be to eulogize a system so far as to endorse its blasphemy! The blessed Cyprian takes Tertullian for his master, as his writings prove; yet, delighted as he is with the ability of this learned and zealous writer he does not join him in following Montanus and Maximilla.² Apollinaris is the author of a most weighty book against Porphyry, and Eusebius has composed a fine history of the Church; yet of these the former has mutilated Christ's incarnate humanity,³ while the latter is the most open champion of the Arian impiety.⁴ "Woe," says Isaiah, "unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." [Isa. 5:20] We must not detract from the virtues of our opponents-if they have any praiseworthy qualities-but neither must we praise the defects of our friends. Each several case must be judged on its own merits and not by a reference to the persons

concerned. While Lucilius is rightly assailed by Horace [Hor. S. 1. 10:1-4] for the unevenness of his verses, he is equally rightly praised for his wit and his charming style.

3. In my younger days I was carried away with a great passion for learning, yet I was not like some presumptuous enough to teach myself. At Antioch I frequently listened to Apollinaris of Laodicea, and attended his lectures; yet, although he instructed me in the holy scriptures, I never embraced his disputable doctrine as to their meaning. At length my head became sprinkled with gray hairs so that I looked more like a master than a disciple. Yet I went on to Alexandria and heard Didymus.⁵ And I have much to thank him for: for what I did not know I learned from him, and what I knew already I did not forget. So excellent was his teaching. Men fancied that I had now made an end of learning. Yet once more I came to Jerusalem and to Bethlehem. What trouble and expense it cost me to get Baraninas⁶ to teach me under cover of night. For by his fear of the Jews he presented to me in his own person a second edition of Nicodemus. [John. 3:2] Of all of these I have frequently made mention in my works. The doctrines of Apollinaris and of Didymus are mutually contradictory. The squadrons of the two leaders must drag me in different directions, for I acknowledge both as my masters. If it is expedient to hate any men and to loath any race, I have a strange dislike to those of the circumcision. For up to the present day they persecute our Lord Jesus Christ in the synagogues of Satan. [Cf. Rev. 2:9] Yet can anyone find fault with me for having had a Jew as a teacher? Does a certain person dare to bring forward against me the letter I wrote to Didymus calling him my master? It is a great crime, it would seem, for me a disciple to give to one both old and learned the name of master. And yet when I ask leave to look at the letter which has been held over so long to discredit me at last, there is nothing in it but courteous language and a few words of greeting. Such charges are both foolish and frivolous. It would be more to the point to exhibit a passage in which I have defended heresy or praised some wicked doctrine of Origen. In the portion of Isaiah which describes the crying of the two seraphim [Isa. 6:2] he explains these to be the Son and the Holy Ghost; but have not I altered this hateful explanation into a reference to the two testaments?⁷ I have the book in my hand as it was published twenty years ago. In numbers of my works and especially in my commentaries I have, as occasion has offered, mangled this heathen school. And if my opponents allege that I have done more than anyone else to form a collection of Origen's books, I answer that I only wish I could have the works of all theological writers that by diligent study of them, I might make up for the slowness of my own wits. I have made a collection of his books, I admit; but because I know everything that he has written I do not follow his errors. I speak as a Christian to Christians: believe one who has tried him. His doctrines are poisonous, they are unknown to the Holy Scriptures, nay more, they do them violence. I have read Origen, I repeat, I have read him; and if it is a crime to read him, I admit my guilt: indeed, these Alexandrian writings have emptied my purse. If you will believe me, I have never been an Origenist: if you will not believe me, I have now ceased to be one. But if even this fails to convince you, you will compel me in self-defence to write against your favourite, so that, if you will not believe me when I disclaim him, you will have to believe me when I attack him. But I find readier credence when I go wrong than when I shew amendment. And this is not surprising, for my would-be friends suppose me a fellow-disciple with them in the arcana of their system. I am loath, they fancy, to profess esoteric doctrines before persons who according to them are brute-like and made of clay. For it is an axiom with them that pearls ought not to be lightly cast before swine, nor that which is holy given to the dogs. [Matt. 7:6] They agree with David when he says: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee;" [Ps. 119:11] and when

in another place he describes the righteous man as one "who speaketh truth with his neighbour," [Ps. 15:2, Ps. 15:3 from memory] that is with those who "are of the household of faith." [Gal. 6:10] From these passages they conclude that those of us who as yet are uninitiated ought to be told falsehoods, lest, being still unweaned babes, we should be choked by too solid food. Now that perjury and lying enter into their mysteries and form a bond between them appears most clearly from the sixth book of Origen's Miscellanies,⁸ in which he harmonizes the Christian doctrine⁹ with the conceptions of Plato.

4. What must I do then? deny that I am of Origen's opinion? They will not believe me. Swear that I am not? They will laugh and say that I deal in lies. I will do the one thing which they dread. I will bring forward their sacred rites and mysteries, and will expose the cunning whereby they delude simple folk like myself. Perhaps, although they refuse credence to my voice when I deny, they may believe my pen when I accuse. Of one thing they are particularly apprehensive, and that is that their writings may some day be taken as evidence against their master. They are ready to make statements on oath and to disclaim them afterwards with an oath as false as the first. When asked for their signatures they use shifts and seek excuses. One says: "I cannot condemn what no one else has condemned." Another says: "No decision was arrived at on the point by the Fathers."¹⁰ It is thus that they appeal to the judgment of the world to put off the necessity of assenting to a condemnation. Another says with yet more assurance: "how am I to condemn men whom the council of Nicaea has left untouched? For the council which condemned Arius would surely have condemned Origen too, had it disapproved of his doctrines." They were bound in other words to cure all the diseases of the church at once and with one remedy; and by parity of reasoning we must deny the majesty of the Holy Ghost because nothing was said of his nature in that council. But the question was of Arius, not of Origen; of the Son, not of the Holy Ghost. The bishops at the council proclaimed their adherence to a dogma which was at the time denied; they said nothing about a difficulty which no one had raised. And yet they covertly struck at Origen as the source of the Arian heresy: for, in condemning those who deny the Son to be of the substance of the Father, they have condemned Origen as much as Arius. On the ground taken by these persons we have no right to condemn Valentine,¹¹ Marcion,¹² or the Cataphrygians,¹³ or Manichaeus, none of whom are named by the council of Nicaea, and yet there is no doubt that in time they were prior to it. But when they find themselves pressed either to subscribe or to leave the Church, you may see some strange twisting. They qualify their words, they arrange them anew, they use vague expressions; so as, if possible, to, hold both our confession and that of our opponents, to be called indifferently heretics and Catholics. As if it were not in the same spirit that the Delphian Apollo (or, as he is sometimes called, Loxias) gave his oracles to Croesus and to Pyrrhus; cheating with a similar device two men widely separated in time.¹⁴ To make my meaning clear I will give a few examples.

5. We believe, say they, in the resurrection of the body. This confession, if only it be sincere, is free from objection. But as there are bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial [1 Cor. 15:40] and as thin air and the aether are both according to their natures Called bodies, they use the word body instead of the word flesh in order that an orthodox person hearing them say body may take them to mean flesh while a heretic will understand that they mean spirit. This is their first piece of craft, and if this is found out, they devise fresh wiles, and, pretending innocence themselves, accuse us of malice. As though they were frank believers they say, "We believe in the resurrection of the

flesh." Now when they have said this, the ignorant crowd thinks it ought to be satisfied, particularly because these exact words are found in the creed.¹⁵ If you go on to question them farther, a buzz of disapproval is heard in the ring and their backers cry out: "You have heard them say that they believe in the resurrection of the flesh; what more do you want?" the popular favour is transferred from our side to theirs, and while they are called honest, we are looked on as false accusers. But if you set your face steadily and keeping a firm hold of their admission about the flesh, proceed to press them as to whether they assert the resurrection of that flesh which is visible and tangible, which walks and speaks, they first laugh and then signify their assent. And when we inquire whether the resurrection will exhibit anew the hair and the teeth, the chest and the stomach, the hands and the feet, and all the other members of the body, then no longer able to contain their mirth they burst out laughing and tell us that in that case we shall need barbers, and cakes, and doctors, and cobblers. Do we, they ask us in turn, believe that after the resurrection men's cheeks will still be rough and those of women smooth, and that sex will differentiate their bodies as it does at present? Then if we admit this, they at once deduce from our admission conclusions involving the grossest materialism. Thus, while they maintain the resurrection of the body as a whole, they deny the resurrection of its separate members.

6. The present is not a time to speak rhetorically against a perverse doctrine. Neither the rich vocabulary of Cicero nor the fervid eloquence of Demosthenes could adequately convey the warmth of my feeling, were I to attempt to expose the quibbles by which these heretics, while verbally professing a belief in the resurrection, in their hearts deny it. For their women finger their breasts, slap their chests, pinch their legs and arms, and say, "What will a resurrection profit us if these frail bodies are to rise again? No, if we are to be like angels, [Cf. Matt. 22:30] we shall have the bodies of angels." That is to say they scorn to rise again with the flesh and bones wherewith even Christ rose. [Cf. Luke 24:39] Now suppose for a moment that in my youth I went astray and that, trained as I was in the schools of heathen philosophy, I was ignorant, in the beginning of my faith, of the dogmas of Christianity, and fancied that what I had read in Pythagoras and Plato and Empedocles was also contained in the writings of the apostle: Supposing, I say, that I believed all this, why do you yet follow the error of a mere babe and sucking child in Christ? Why do you learn irreligion of one who as yet knew not religion? After shipwreck one has still a plank to cling to;¹⁶ and one may atone for sin by a frank confession. You have followed me when I have gone astray; follow me also now that I have been brought back. In youth we have wandered; now that we are old let us mend our ways. Let us unite our tears and our groans; let us weep together, and return to the Lord our Maker. [Ps. 95:6, Vulg] Let us not wait for the repentance of the devil; for this is a vain anticipation and one that will drag us into the deep of hell. Life must be sought or lost here. If I have never followed Origen, it is in vain that you seek to discredit me: if I have been his disciple, imitate my penitence. You have believed my confession; credit also my denial.

7. But it will be said, "If you knew these things, why did you praise him in your works?" I should praise him today but that you and men like you praise his errors. I should still find his talent attractive, but that some people have been attracted by his impiety. "Read¹⁷ all things," says the apostle, "hold fast that which is good." [1 Thess. 5:21] Lactantius in his books and particularly in his letters to Demetrian altogether denies the subsistence of the Holy Spirit, and following the error of the Jews says that the passages in which he is spoken of refer to the Father or to the Son and that the words 'holy spirit' merely prove the holiness of these two persons in the Godhead. But who

can forbid me to read his Institutes-in which he has written against the Gentiles with much ability-simply because this opinion of his is to be abhorred? Apollinaris¹⁸ has written excellent treatises against Porphyry, and I approve of his labours, although I despise his doctrine in many points because of its foolishness. If you too for your parts will but admit that Origen errs in certain things I will not say another syllable. Acknowledge that he thought amiss concerning the Son, and still more amiss concerning the Holy Spirit, point out the impiety of which he has been guilty in speaking of men's souls as having fallen from heaven, and shew that, while in word he asserts the resurrection of the flesh, he destroys the force of this language by other assertions. As, for instance, that, after many ages and one "restitution of all things," [Acts 3:21] it will be the same for Gabriel as for the devil, for Paul as for Caiaphas, for virgins as for prostitutes. When once you have rejected these misstatements and have parted them with your censor's wand from the faith of the Church, I may read what left with safety, and having first taken the antidote need no longer dread the poison. For instance it will do me no harm to say as I have said, "Whereas in his other books Origen has surpassed all other writers, in commenting on the Song of Songs he has surpassed himself"; nor will I fear to face the words with which formerly in my younger days I spoke of him as a doctor of the churches.¹⁹ Will it be pretended, that I was bound to accuse a man whose works was translating by special request? that I was bound to say in my preface, "This writer whose books I translate is a heretic: beware of him, reader, read him not, flee from the viper: or, if you are bent on reading him, know that the treatises which I have translated have been garbled by heretics and wicked men; yet you need not fear, for have corrected all the places which they have corrupted," that in other words I ought to have said: "the writer that I translate is a heretic, but I, his translator, am a Catholic." The fact is that you and your party in your anxiety to be straightforward, ingenuous, and honest, have paid too little regard to the precepts of rhetoric and to the devices of oratory. For in admitting that his books On First Principles are heretical and in trying to lay the blame of this upon others, you raise difficulties for your readers; you induce them to examine the whole life of the author and to form a judgment on the question from the remainder of his writings. I on the other hand have been wise enough to emend silently what I wished to emend: thus by ignoring the crime I have averted prejudice from the criminal. Doctors tell us that serious maladies ought not to be subjected to treatment, but should be left to nature, lest the remedies applied should intensify the disease. It is now almost one hundred and fifty years since Origen died at Tyre.²⁰ Yet what Latin writer has ever ventured to translate his books On the Resurrection and On First Principles, his Miscellanies²¹ and his Commentaries or as he himself calls them his Tomes?²² Who has ever cared by so infamous a work to cover himself with infamy? I am not more eloquent than Hilary or truer to the faith than Victorinus who both have rendered his Homilies²³ not in exact versions but in independent paraphrases. Recently also Ambrose appropriated his Six Days' Work,²⁴ but in such a way that it expressed the views of Hippolytus and Basil rather than of Origen. You profess to take me for your model, and blind as moles in relation to others you scan me with the eyes of gazelles. Well, had I been ill-disposed towards Origen, I might have translated these very books so as to make his worst writings known to Latin readers; but this I have never done; and, though many have asked me, I have always refused. For it has never been my habit to crow over the mistakes of men whose talents I admire. Origen himself, were he still alive, would soon fall out with you his would-be patrons and would say with Jacob: "Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land." [Gen. 34:30]

8. Does any one wish to praise Origen? Let him praise him as I do. From his childhood he was a great man, and truly a martyr's son.²⁵ At Alexandria he presided over the school of the church, succeeding a man of great learning the presbyter Clement. So greatly did he abhor sensuality that, out of a zeal for God but yet one not according to knowledge, [Rom. 10:2] he castrated himself with a knife. Covetousness he trampled under foot. He knew the scriptures by heart and laboured hard day and night to explain their meaning. He delivered in church more than a thousand sermons, and published innumerable commentaries which he called tomes. These I now pass over, for it is not my purpose to catalogue his writings. Which of us can read all that he has written? and who can fail to admire is enthusiasm for the scriptures? If some one in the spirit of Judas the Zealot²⁶ brings up to me his mistakes, he shall have his answer in the words of Horace:

"Tis true that sometimes Homer sleeps, but then

He's not without excuse:

The fault is venial, for his work is long."²⁷

Let us not imitate the faults of one whose virtues we cannot equal. Other men have erred concerning the faith, both Greeks and Latins, but I must not mention their names lest I should be supposed to defend Origen not by his own merits but by the errors of others. This, you will say, is to accuse them and not to excuse him. You would be right, if I had declared him not to have erred, or if I had professed a belief that the apostle Paul or an angel from heaven [Cf. Gal. 1:8] ought to be listened to in a depravation of the faith. But as it is seeing I frankly admit him to be wrong, I may read him on the same terms as I read others, because if he is wrong so also are they. But you may say, If error is common to many, why do you assail him alone? I answer, because he alone is praised by you as an apostle. Take away your exaggerated love for him, and I am ready to take away the greatness of my dislike. While you gather other men's faulty statements out of their books merely to defend Origen in his error, you extol this latter to the sky and will not allow that he has erred at all. Whosoever you are who are thus preaching new doctrines, I beseech you, spare the ears of the Romans, spare the faith of a church which an apostle has praised. [Rom. 1:8] Why after four hundred years do you try to teach us Romans doctrines of which until now we have known nothing? Why do you publicly proclaim opinions which Peter and Paul²⁸ refused to profess? Until now no such teaching has been heard of, and yet the world has become christian. For my part I will hold fast in my old age the faith wherein I was born again in my boyhood.²⁹ They speak of us as claytowners,³⁰ made out of dirt, brutish and carnal, because, say they, we refuse to receive the things of the spirit; but of course they themselves are citizens of Jerusalem and their mother is in heaven. [Gal. 4:26] I do not despise the flesh in which Christ was born and rose again, or scorn the mud which, baked into a clean vessel, reigns in heaven. And yet I wonder why they who detract from the flesh live after the flesh,³¹ and cherish and delicately nurture that which is their enemy. Perhaps indeed they wish to fulfil the words of scripture: "love your enemies and bless them that persecute you." [Matthew 5:44 from memory] I love the flesh, but I love it only when it is chaste, when it is virginal, when it is mortified by fasting: I love not its works but itself, that flesh which knows that it must be judged, and therefore dies as a martyr for Christ, which is scourged and torn asunder and burned with fire.

9. The folly also of their contention that certain heretics and ill-disposed persons have tampered with Origen's writings may be shewn thus. Could any person be more wise, more learned, or more

eloquent than were Eusebius and Didymus, Origen's supporters? Of these the former in the six volumes of his Apology³² asserts that Origen is of the same mind with himself; while the latter, though he tries to excuse his errors, admits that he has made them. Not being able to deny what he finds written, he endeavours to explain it away. It is one thing to say that additions have been made by heretics, but another to maintain that heretical statements are commendable. Origen's case would be unique if his writings were falsified all over the world and if in one day by an edict like that of Mithridates³³ all the truth were shorn from his volumes. Even supposing that some one treatise of his has been tampered with, can it be possible that all his works, published as they were at different times and places, have been corrupted? Origen himself in a letter written to Fabian, bishop of Rome,³⁴ expresses penitence for having made erroneous statements, and charges Ambrose³⁵ with over haste in making public what was meant only for private circulation. And yet to this day his disciples search for shifts to prove that all that excites disapprobation in his writings is due not to him but to others.

10. Moreover, when they speak of Pamphilus as one who praised Origen, I am personally much obliged to them for accounting me worthy to be calumniated with that martyr. For if, sirs, you tell me that Origen's books have been tampered with by his enemies to bring them into discredit; why may not I in my turn allege that his friends and followers have attributed to Pamphilus a volume composed by themselves to vindicate their master from disrepute by the testimony of a martyr? Lo and behold, you yourselves correct in Origen's books passages which (according to you) he never wrote: and yet you are surprised if a man is said to have published a book which as a matter of fact he did not publish. But while your statements can easily be brought to the test by an appeal to Origen's published works; as Pamphilus has published nothing else, it is easier for calumny to fix a book upon him. For shew me any other work of Pamphilus; you will nowhere find any, this is his only one. How then can I know that it is by Pamphilus? You will tell me, that the style and tone ought to inform me. Well, I shall never believe that a man so learned has dedicated the first fruits of his talent to defend doubtful and discredited positions. The very name of an apology which the treatise bears implies a previous charge made; for nothing is defended that is not first attacked. I will now bring forward but a single argument, one, however, the force of which only folly and effrontery can deny. The treatise attributed to Pamphilus contains nearly the first thousand lines of Eusebius's sixth book in defence of Origen.³⁶ Yet in the remaining parts of his work the writer brings forward passages by which he seeks to prove that Origen was a Catholic. Now Eusebius and Pamphilus were in such thorough harmony with each other that they seemed to have but one soul between them, and one even went so far as to adopt the other's name.³⁷ How then could they have disagreed so fundamentally on this point, Eusebius in all his works proving Origen to be an Arian, and Pamphilus describing him as a supporter of the Nicene council, which had not yet been held? It is evident from this consideration that the book belongs not to Pamphilus but to Didymus or somebody else, who having cut off the head of Eusebius's sixth book supplied the other members himself. But I am willing to be generous and to allow that the book is written by Pamphilus, only by Pamphilus not yet a martyr. For he must have written the book before he underwent martyrdom. And why, you will say, was he accounted worthy of martyrdom? Surely that he might efface his error by a martyr's death, and wash away his one fault by shedding his blood. How many martyrs there have been all the world over who before their deaths have been the slaves of sins! Are we then to palliate the sins because those who committed them have afterwards become martyrs?

11. This reply to your letter, my most loving brothers, I have dictated in all haste; and, overcoming my scruples, I have taken up my pen against a man whose ability I once eulogized. I would sooner, indeed, risk my reputation than my faith. My friends have placed me in the awkward dilemma that if I say nothing I shall be held guilty, and if I offer a defence I shall be accounted an enemy. Both alternatives are hard; but of the two I will choose that which is the least so. A quarrel can be made up, but blasphemy can find no forgiveness. I leave to your judgment to discover how much labour I have expended in translating the books *On First Principles*; for on the one hand if one alters anything from the Greek the work becomes less a version than a perversion; and on the other hand a literal adherence to the original by no means tends to preserve the charm of its eloquence.

1:

i.e. Rufinus's version of Origen's treatise, *On First Principles*, with the Preface, translated in vol. 3: of this series. See also Letters LXXX. and LXXXI

2:

Of these the two founders of Montanism the first was a Phrygian of the second century who professed to be the special organ of the Holy Ghost while the second was a female disciple who claimed to exercise the gift of prophecy in furtherance of his aims

3:

Dimidiatam Christi introduxit oeconomiam. Apollinaris taught that in Christ the divine personality supplied the place of a human soul. In his view, therefore, Christ ceased to be "very man."

4:

Eusebius, although he sided with the Arians, always claimed to be orthodox. However, as Newman says, "his acts are his confession."

5:

See Letter L

6: From this Jew Jerome took lessons in Hebrew during the earlier years of his life at Bethlehem. From time to time he also consulted other Jewish scholars 7: Cf. Letter XVIII 8: *strwmateij*, lit. = 'tapestries.' 9: See note on Letter LXX.

9: The doctrine alluded to is probably that of the Trinity 10: i.e. the Bishops present at Nicaea 11: The founder of a Gnostic sect in the second century. He taught first in Egypt and afterwards in Rome 12: See note on Letter XLVIII 13: The Montanists were so called because the headquarters of their sect were at Pepuza a small village in Phrygia

14:

Croesus when he asked whether he should resist Cyrus was told that, if he did so, he would overthrow a mighty kingdom, a prophecy fulfilled in his own destruction; while Pyrrhus long afterwards received an equally evasive answer in the words, "Pyrrhus the Sons of Rome may well defeat."

15: Article XI. of the Apostles' Creed speaks in the original forms of the resurrection not of "the body" but of "the flesh:" and it is still found in this shape in the Anglican office for the visitation of the sick 16: A favourite metaphor with Jerome to describe the nature of Christian penitence 17: AV. `prove. 0 18: See note on above

19: See Jerome's preface to his version of Origen's Homilies on Ezekiel: and his preface to his own Treatise on Hebrew Names. See also Letter XXXIII 20: Origen died at Tyre about the year 255 a.d 21: See note on Letter LXX

22:

tomoi

23: Tractatus 24: Hexaëmeron: an account of the creation is meant 25: His father Leonides suffered martyrdom in the persecution of Severus 26: i.e. Judas the Gaulonite whose fanatical rising against the Romans is mentioned in Acts 5:37 27: Hor. A. P. 359, 360 28: The (traditional) founders of the Roman Church 29: Jerome was baptized at Rome about the year 367 a.d 30: Pelusiotae, men of Pelusium, supposed to be derived from phloj, "clay." See Jerome's Comm. on Jer. 29:14-20 31: See the description of Rufinus in Letter CXXV. 18

32:

This treatise the joint work of Eusebius and his friend Pamphilus has perished. Part of the Latin version of Rufinus still remains. Jerome at this time erroneously supposed that the two friends had written separate works in defence of Origen. (See De VV. III. 100:75, 81, in vol. 3: of this series.

33: In accordance with this edict (promulgated in 88 b.c.) all the Romans in Pontus were massacred in one day 34: This letter is no longer extant 35: A wealthy Alexandrian, who employed shorthand writers to take down Origen's lectures. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. B. 6:c. 23

36: If the text is sound here Jerome is again misled by supposing that Eusebius and Pamphilus had written separate books in defence of Origen 37: Eusebius calls himself Eusebius Pamphili, that is, `the friend of Pamphilus. 0

Letters - letter_085

Letter 85. To Paulinus.

Paulinus had asked Jerome two questions,(1) how can certain passages of scripture (Exod. vii. 13: Rom. ix. 16) be reconciled with Free Will? and (2) Why are the children of believers said to be holy (1 Cor. vii. 14) apart from baptismal grace? For the first of these questions Jerome refers Paulinus to his version (newly made) of Origen's treatise, On First Principles. For the second he quotes the explanation of Tertullian. Written in 400 a.d.

1. Your words urge me to write to you but your eloquence deters me from doing so. For as a letter-writer you are almost as good as Tully. You complain that my letters are short and unpolished: this is not due to carelessness but to fear of you, lest writing to you at greater length I should but send you more sentences to find fault with. Moreover, to make a clean breast of it to a good man like you, just about the time the vessels sail for the west, so many letters are demanded of me at once that, if I were to reply to all my correspondents, I should be unable to accomplish my task. Hence it happens that, neglecting the niceties of composition and not revising the work of my secretaries, I dictate whatever first comes into my head. Thus when I write to you I regard you as a friend and not as a critic.

2. Your letter propounds two questions, the first, why God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and why the apostle said: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;" [Rom. 9:16] and other things which appear to do away with free will: the second, how those are holy who are born of believing, that is, of baptized parents, [1 Cor. 7:14] seeing that without the gift of grace afterwards received and kept they cannot be saved.

3. Your first question is most ably answered by Origen in his treatise on First Principles which, at the request of my friend Pammachius, I have recently translated. This task has occupied me so fully that I am unable to keep my word with you and must again postpone the sending my commentary on Daniel. Indeed, distinguished and devoted to me as Pammachius is, had he been alone in his request, I should have deferred it to another time, but, as it was, almost all our brothers at Rome urged the same demand declaring that many persons were in danger, and that some even accepted Origen's heretical teaching. I have found myself forced therefore to translate a book in which there is more of bad than of good, and to keep to this rule that I should neither add nor subtract but should preserve in Latin in its integrity the true sense of the Greek. You will be able to borrow a copy of my version from the aforesaid brother, though in your case the Greek will serve quite as well neither should you, who can drink from the fountain head, turn to the muddy streamlets supplied by my poor wits.

4. Moreover, as I am speaking to an educated man, well versed both in the sacred scriptures and in secular literature, I desire to give your excellency this note of warning. Do not suppose that I am a clumsy buffoon [Cf. Hor. S. II. 8:21] who condemn everything that Origen has written,-as his injudicious friends falsely assert-or that I have changed my mind as suddenly as the philosopher

Dionysius.¹ The fact is that I repudiate merely his objectionable dogmas. For I know that one curse hangs over those who call evil good and over those who call good evil, over those who put bitter for sweet, and over those who put sweet for bitter. [Isa. 5:20] Who would go so far in praise of another man's teaching as to acquiesce in blasphemy?

5. Your second question is discussed by Tertullian in his books on Monogamy [Ad. Ux. 2:2] where he declares that the children of believers are called holy because they are as it were candidates for the faith and have suffered no pollution from idolatry. Consider also that the vessels of which we read in the tabernacle are called holy and everything else required for the ceremonial worship: although in strictness of speech there can be nothing holy except creatures which know of and worship God. But it is a scriptural usage sometimes to give the name of holy to those who are clean, or who have been purified, or who have made expiation. For instance, it is written of Bathsheba that she was made holy² from her uncleanness, [2 Sam. 11:4] and the temple itself is called the holy place.

6. I beg that you will not silently in your mind accuse me either of vanity or of insincerity. God bears me witness in my conscience that the unavoidable circumstances mentioned above drew me back when I was just going to grapple with my commentary; and you know that what is done when the mind is pre-occupied is never well done. I gladly accept the cap that you have sent me, a mark, though small, of no small affection and just the thing to keep an old man's head warm. I am delighted alike with the gift and with the giver.

1: Dionysius of Heraclea called the renegade because he abandoned the Stoic for the Cyrenaic school 2: AV. `purified. 0

Letters - letter_086

Letter 86. To Theophilus.

Jerome congratulates Theophilus on the success of his crusade against Origenism, and speaks of the good work done in Palestine by his emissaries Priscus and Eubulus. He then (by a singular change in his sentiments) asks Theophilus to forgive John of Jerusalem for having unwittingly received an excommunicated Egyptian. The date of the Letter is 400 a.d.

Jerome to the most blessed Pope Theophilus. I have recently received despatches from your blessedness setting right your long silence and summoning me to return to my duty. So, though the reverend brothers Priscus and Eubulus have been slow in bringing me your letters, yet, as they are now hastening in the ardour of faith from end to end of Palestine and scattering and driving into their holes the basilisks of heresy, I write a few lines to congratulate you on your success. The whole world glories in your victories. An exultant crowd of all nations gazes on the standard of the cross raised by you at Alexandria and upon the shining trophies which mark your triumph over heresy. Blessings on your courage! blessings on your zeal! You have shewn that your long silence has been due to policy and not to inclination. I speak quite openly to your reverence. I grieved to find you too forbearing, and, knowing nothing of the course shaped by the pilot, I yearned for the destruction of those abandoned men. But, as I now see, you have had your hand raised and, if you have delayed to strike, it has only been that you might strike harder. As regards the welcome given to a certain person,¹ you have no reason to be vexed with the prelate of this city;² for as you gave no instructions on the point in your letter, it would have been rash in him to decide a case of which he knew nothing. Still I think that he would neither wish nor venture to annoy you in any way.

1:

Doubtless some Egyptian monk or ecclesiastic placed under ban by Theophilus on account of Origenism

2:

John of Jerusalem. He had probably, like Rufinus, been reconciled to Jerome, and seems to have taken no part in the subsequent quarrel between Jerome and Rufinus

Letters - letter_087

Letter 87. From the Ophilus to Jerome.

Theophilus informs Jerome that he has expelled the Origenists from the monasteries of Nitria, and urges him to shew his zeal for the faith by writing against the prevalent heresy. The date of the letter is 400 a.d.

Theophilus, bishop, to the well-beloved and most loving brother, the presbyter Jerome. The reverend bishop Agatho with the well-beloved deacon Athanasius is accredited to you with tidings relating to the church. When you learn their import I feel no doubt but that you will approve my resolution and will exult in the church's victory. For we have cut down with the prophet's sickle [Joel 3:13] certain wicked fanatics who were eager to sow broadcast in the monasteries of Nitria the heresy of Origen. We have remembered the warning words of the apostle, "rebuke with all authority." [Tit. 2:15] Do you therefore on your part, as you hope to receive a share in this reward, make haste to bring back with scriptural discourses those who have been deceived. It is our desire, if possible, to guard in our days not only the Catholic faith and the rules of the church, but the people committed to our charge, and to give a quietus to all strange doctrines.

Letters - letter_088

Letter 88. To Theophilus.

Replying to the preceding letter Jerome again congratulates Theophilus on the success of his efforts to put down Origenism, and informs him that they have already borne fruit as far west as Italy. He then asks him for the decrees of his council (held recently at Alexandria). The date of the letter is 400 a.d.

Jerome to the most blessed pope Theophilus. The letter of your holiness has given me a twofold pleasure, partly because it has had for its bearers those reverend and estimable men, the bishop Agatho and the deacon Athanasius, and partly because it has shewn your zeal for the faith against a most wicked heresy. The voice of your holiness has rung throughout the world, and to the joy of all Christ's churches the poisonous suggestions of the devil have been silenced. The old serpent [Rev. 12:9] hisses no longer, but, writhing and disembowelled, lurks in dark caverns unable to bear the shining of the sun. I have already, before the writing of your letter, sent missives to the West pointing out to those of my own language some of the quibbles employed by the heretics. I hold it due to the special providence of God that you should have written to the pope Anastasius¹ at the same time as myself, and should thus without knowing it have been the means of confirming my testimony. Now that you have directly urged me to do so, I shall shew myself more zealous than ever to recall from their error simple souls both near and far. Nor shall I hesitate, if needful, to incur odium with some, for we ought to please God rather than men: [Acts 5:29] although indeed they have been much more forward to defend their heresy than I and others have been to attack it. At the same time I beg that if you have any synodical decrees bearing upon the subject you will forward them to me, that, strengthened with the authority of so great a prelate, I may open my mouth for Christ with more freedom and confidence. The presbyter Vincent has arrived from Rome two days ago and humbly salutes you. He tells me again and again that Rome and almost the whole of Italy owe their deliverance after Christ to your letters. Shew diligence therefore, most loving and most blessed pope, and whenever opportunity offers write to the bishops of the West not to hesitate-in your own words² -to cut down with a sharp sickle the sprouts of evil.

1: Bishop of Rome, a.d. 398-402 2: See the preceding letter

Letters - letter_089

Letter 89. From Theophilus to Jerome. This letter (probably earlier in date than the three preceding) commends to Jerome the monk Theodore, who, having come from Rome to declare the condemnation of Origenism by the church there, had visited the monasteries of Nitria now purged of heresy, and wished before returning to the West to see the Holy Places as well. The date of the letter is 400 a.d.

Theophilus, bishop, to the well-beloved lord and most loving brother the presbyter Jerome. I have learned the project of the monk Theodore-which will be known also to your holiness-and I approve of it. Having to leave us on a voyage for Rome, he has been unwilling to set out without first visiting and embracing as his own flesh and blood you and the reverend brothers who are with you in the monastery. You will, I am sure, rejoice in the news with which he will meet your welcome, that quiet has been restored to the church here. He has seen all the monasteries of Nitria and can tell you of the continence and meekness of the monks in them; as also how the Origenists have been put down and scattered, how peace has been restored to the church, and how the discipline of the Lord is being upheld. How gladly would I see the mask of hypocrisy laid aside by those also who near you are said to be undermining the truth. I feel obliged to write thus because the brothers in your neighbourhood¹ are mistaken concerning them. Wherefore take heed to yourselves and shun men of this type; even as it is written:-"if any man bring not to you the faith of the church, bid him not God speed."² It may, indeed, be superfluous to write thus to you who can recall the erring from their error, yet no harm is done when those careful for the faith admonish even the wise and learned. Kindly salute in my name all the brothers who are with you.

1: The bishops of Palestine are meant. See Letter XCII 2: 2 John 10, inexactly quoted

Letters - letter_090

Letter 90. From Theophilus to Epiphanius.

Theophilus writes to Epiphanius to convoke a council in Cyprus for the condemnation of Origenism and asks him to transmit to Constantinople by a trustworthy messenger a copy of its decrees together with the synodical letter of Theophilus himself. His anxiety about this last point is caused by the news that certain of the excommunicated monks have set sail for Constantinople to lay their case before the bishop, John Chrysostom. The date of the letter is 400 a.d.

Theophilus to his well-beloved lord, brother, and fellow-bishop Epiphanius. The Lord has said to his prophet "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms to root out and to pull down and to destroy and...to build and to plant." [Jer. 1:10] In every age he bestows the same grace upon his church, that His Body [Eph. 1:23] may be preserved intact and that the poison of heretical opinions may nowhere prevail over it. And now also do we see the words fulfilled. For the church of Christ "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" [Eph. 5:27] has with the sword of the gospel cut down the Origenist serpents crawling out of their caves, and has delivered from their deadly contagion the fruitful host of the monks of Nitria. I have compressed a short account of my proceedings (it was all that time would allow) into the general letter¹ which I have addressed indiscriminately to all. As your excellency has often fought in contests of the kind before me, it is your present duty to strengthen the hands of those who are in the field and to gather together to this end the bishops of your entire island.² A synodical letter should be sent to myself and the bishop of Constantinople³ and to I any others whom you think fit; that by universal consent Origen himself may be expressly condemned and also the infamous heresy of which he was the author. I have learned that certain calumniators of the true faith, named Ammonius, Eusebius, and Euthymius, filled with a fresh access of enthusiasm in behalf of the heresy, have taken ship for Constantinople, to ensnare with their deceits as many new converts as they can and to confer anew with the old companions of their impiety. Let it be your care, therefore, to set forth the course of the matter to all the bishops throughout Isauria and Pamphylia and the rest of the neighbouring provinces: moreover, if you think fit, you can add my letter, so that all of us gathered together in one spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ may deliver these men unto Satan for the destruction of the impiety which possesses them. [Cf. 1 Cor. 5:4, 1 Cor. 5:5] And to ensure the speedy arrival of my despatches at Constantinople, send a diligent messenger, one of the clergy (as I send fathers from the monasteries of Nitria with others also of the monks, learned men and continent) that when they arrive they may be able themselves to relate what has been done. Above all I beg of you to offer up earnest prayers to the Lord that we may be able in this contest also to gain the victory; for no small joy has filled the hearts of the people both in Alexandria and throughout all Egypt, because a few men have been expelled from the Church that the body of it might be kept pure. Salute the brothers who are with you. The people⁴ with us salute you in the Lord.

1:

Letter XCII

2: Cyprus 3: i.e. John Chrysostom who had been raised to the patriarchate in 398 a.d

4:

Plebs

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Letter 91. From Epiphanius to Jerome. An exultant letter from Epiphanius in which he describes the success of his council (convened at the suggestion of Theophilus), sends Jerome a copy of its synodical letter. and urges him to go on with his work of translating into Latin documents beating on the Origenistic controversy. Written in 400 a.d. To his most loving lord, son, and brother, the presbyter Jerome, Epiphanius sends greeting in the Lord. The general epistle written¹ to all Catholics belongs particularly to you; for you, having a zeal for the faith against all heresies, particularly oppose the disciples of Origen and of Apollinaris whose poisoned roots and deeply planted impiety almighty God has dragged forth into our midst, that having been unearthed at Alexandria they might wither throughout the world. For know, my beloved son, that Amalek has been destroyed root and branch and that the trophy of the cross has been set up on the hill of Rephidim. [Cf. Exod. 17:8-14] For as when the hands of Moses were held up on high Israel prevailed, so the Lord has strengthened His servant Theophilus to plant His standard against Origen on the altar of the church of Alexandria; that in him might be fulfilled the words: "Write this for a memorial, for I will utterly put out Origen's heresy from under heaven together with that Amalek himself." And that I may not appear to be repeating the same things over and over and thus to be making my letter tedious, I send you the actual missive written to me that you may know what Theophilus has said to me, and what a great blessing the Lord has granted to my last days in approving the principles which I have always proclaimed by the testimony of so great a prelate. I fancy that by this time you also have published something and that, as I suggested in my former letter to you on this subject, you have elaborated a treatise for readers of your own language. For I hear that certain of those who have made shipwreck [1 Tim. 1:19] have come also to the West, and that, not content with their own destruction, they desire to involve others in death with them; as if they thought that the multitude of sinners lessens the guilt of sin and the flames of Gehenna do not grow in size in proportion as more logs are heaped upon them. With you and by you we send our best greetings to the reverend brothers who are with you in the monastery serving God.

1:

By Theophilus

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Letter 92. The Synodical Letter of Theophilus to the Bishops of Palestine and of Cyprus. The synodical letter of the council held at Alexandria in 400 a.d. to condemn Origenism. Written originally in Greek it was translated into Latin by Jerome. This letter has been sent in identical terms to the Bishops of Palestine and to those of Cyprus. We reproduce the headings of both copies. That to the Bishops of Palestine commences thus: To the well-beloved lords, brothers, and fellow-bishops, Eulogius, John, Zebianus, Auxentius, Dionysius, Gennadius, Zeno, Theodosius, Dictorius, Porphyry, Saturninus, Alan, Paul, Ammonius, Helianus, Eusebius, the other Paul, and to all the Catholic bishops gathered together at the dedication festival of Aelid,¹ Theophilus [sends] greeting in the Lord. The Cyprians he addresses thus: To the well-be-loved lords, brothers, and fellow-bishops, Epiphanius, Marcianus, Agapetus, Boethius, Helpidius, Entasius, Norbanus, Macedonius. Aristo, Zeno, Asiaticus, Heraclides, the other Zeno, Cyriacus, and Aphroditus, Theophilus [sends] greeting in the Lord. The scope of the letter is as follows:

We have personally visited the monasteries of Nitria and find that the Origenistic heresy has made great ravages among them. It is accompanied by a strange fanaticism: men even maim themselves or cut out their tongues² to show how they despise the body. I find that some men of this kind have gone from Egypt into Syria and other countries³ where they speak against us and the truth. The books of Origen have been read before a council of bishops and unanimously condemned. The following are his chief errors, mainly found in the "περὶ Ἀρχῆς".

1. The Son compared with us is truth, but compared with the Father he is falsehood. 2. Christ's kingdom will one day come to an end. 3. We ought to pray to the Father alone, not to the Song of Solomon. 4. Our bodies after the resurrection will be corruptible and mortal. 5. There is nothing perfect even in heaven; the angels themselves are faulty, and some of them feed on the Jewish sacrifices. 6. The stars are conscious of their own movements, and the demons know the future by their courses. 7. Magic, if real, is not evil. 8. Christ suffered once for men; he will suffer again for the demons. The Origenists have tried to coerce me; they have even stirred up the heathen by denouncing the destruction of the Serapeum; and have sought to withdraw from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction two persons accused of grave crimes. One of these is the woman⁴ who was wrongly placed on the list of widows by Isidore, the other Isidore himself. He is the standard-bearer of the heretical faction, and his wealth supplies them with unbounded resources for their violent enterprises. They have tried to murder me; they seized the monastery church at Nitria, and for a time prevented the bishops from entering and the offices from being performed. Now, like Zebul (Beelzebub) they go to and fro on the earth.

I have done them no harm; I have even protected them. But I would not let an old friendship (with Isidore) impair our faith and discipline. I implore you to oppose them wherever they come, and to prevent them from unsettling the brethren committed to you.

1: In Aeliae encaeniis. Aelia was the name given by the emperor Hadrian to the Roman colony founded by him on the site of Jerusalem 2: The monk Ammonius is said to have done this and

similar things

3:

Some fifty, led by Ammonius and his three brothers (called the Long or Tall Monks) went first to Syria and then to Constantinople

4:

This woman is said to have brought a charge of immorality against Isidore and then suppressed it on being placed by him on the list of widows who received the church's bounty. Isidore was now eighty years old, and there were many causes for the quarrel. Palladius, Socrates and Sozomen intimate that the real cause of Theophilus' enmity to his old confidant Isidore was that Isidore knew secrets unfavorable to Theophilus. He afterwards went with the Long Monks to Constantinople, where Chrysostom by his reception of them incurred the hatred of Theophilus. See Jerome Letter CXIII

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Letter 93. From the Bishops of Palestine to Theophilus. The synodical letter of the council of Jerusalem sent to Theophilus in reply to the preceding. The translation as before is due to Jerome. The following is an epitome: We have done all that you wished, and Palestine is almost wholly free from the taint of heresy. We wish that not only the Origenists, but Jews, Samaritans and heathen also, could be put down. Origenism does not exit among us. The doctrines you describe are never heard here. We anathematize those who hold such doctrines, and also those of Apollinaris, and shall not receive anyone whom you excommunicate.

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Letter 94. From Dionysius to Theophilus. In this letter (translated into Latin by Jerome) Dionysius, bishop of Lydda, praises Theophilus for his signal victories over Origenism and urges him to continue his efforts against that heresy. Written in 400 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

Bishop Dionysius of Lidda to the most blessed Lord Theophilus.

1. Our God is good, who is glorified in the assemblies of the saints (Ps. 88.2), and prepares friends and prophets for Himself in each successive age. If you consider the order of our generation, O most blessed brother, the Lord raised you up as an imitator of correct faith, so that you might crush heretical superstition flowing from the source of the Gentiles with Apostolic rigor, and restore the human race, which is dragged down by many errors, and the dispersed flock of Christ to their Shepherd; who, at the time of his passion, gave his life for all, so that we might now say with faith, 'Truly God is among us' (1 Cor. 14.25). For who is either so foolish or impious, that they would not confess that you have given the greatest gift to the world, by wiping out the most wicked blasphemers of Origen's disciples, so that the Church of Christ may not be polluted by them? Their cancer and incurable leprosy have spread so widely through the hearts of many, that even those who feign penitence join heresy with perjury; and they do not cease to force us, who are compelled to remain silent, to hate.

2. Therefore, be strengthened and act manfully (1 Chronicles 22:13) then, servant of God, and pursue Origen's fictions to the end, so that the minds of the simple may not be caught with its alluring shadows of wisdom, and a division may not be made in the body of Christ. For all who are wise profess your father, your hope and the crown of the alacrity of faith, that you have impaled Arius, the master and his disciple, with the sword of the Gospel. The brothers of my cell greet you very warmly, as well as the brothers who are with you.

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Letter 95. From Pope Anastasius to Simplicianus. At the request of Theophilus Anastasius, bishop of Rome, writes to Simplicianus, bishop of Milan, to inform him that he, like Theophilus, has condemned Origen whose blasphemies have been brought under his notice by Eusebius of Cremona. This latter had shown him a copy of the version by Rufinus of the treatise On First Principles. The date of the letter is 400 a.d. To his lord and brother Simplicianus, Anastasius.

1. It is felt right that a shepherd should bestow great care and watchfulness upon his flock. In like manner too from his lofty tower the careful watchman keeps a lookout day and night on behalf of the city. So also in the hour of tempest when the sea is dangerous the shipmaster suffers keen anxiety¹ lest the gale and the violence of the waves shall dash his vessel upon the rocks. It is with similar feelings that the reverend and honourable Theophilus our brother and fellow-bishop, ceases not to watch over the things that make for salvation, that God's people in the different churches may not by reading Origen run into awful blasphemies.

2. Being informed, then, by a letter of the aforesaid bishop, we inform your holiness that we in like manner who are set in the city of Rome in which the prince of the apostles, the glorious Peter, first founded the church and then by his faith strengthened it; to the end that no man may contrary to the commandment read these books which we have mentioned, have condemned the same; and have with earnest prayers urged the strict observance of the precepts which God and Christ have inspired the evangelists to teach. We have charged men to remember the words of the venerable apostle Paul, prophetic and full of warning: "if any than preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." [Gal. 1:8] Holding fast, therefore, this precept, we have intimated that everything written in days gone by Origen that is contrary to our faith is even by us rejected and condemned.

3. I send this letter to your holiness by the hand of the presbyter Eusebius,² a man filled with a glowing faith and love for the Lord. He has shewn to me some blasphemous chapters which made me shudder as I passed judgement on them. If Origen has put forth any other writings, you are to know that they and their author are alike condemned by me. The Lord have you in safe keeping, my lord and brother deservedly held in honour.

1: Magister hactenus navis hora tempestatis `quoris et periculo magnam patitur animi jactationem

2: See the account of the meeting of Eusebius with Rufinus in the presence of Simplicianus. Ruf. Apol. 1:19

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Letter 96. From Theophilus. A translation by Jerome of Theophilus's paschal letter for the year 401 a.d. In it Theophilus refutes at length the heresies of Apollinaris and Origen. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

Letter 96. Or Paschal of Alexandria Bishop Theophilus' Easter Year 401 to All the Bishops of Egypt, Rendered into Latin by Saint Jerome. The divinity of Christ is especially affirmed against Apollinarius, then most of Origen's errors are discussed in detail and refuted; finally, the love for one's neighbors is praised as the main virtue for celebrating the Lord's Pascha.

1. Let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, beloved brethren, with one voice again, and worship Him eagerly, and fulfill the words of the prophets, who says, "Sing a new hymn to the Lord" (Psalm 149); as many as of us who are partners of the Kingdom of Heaven by leading a faithful life, let us receive the coming of the holy solemnity and celebrate the upcoming festivals with the celebration of the whole world; one of the wise men has proclaimed: "Come, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart: because thy works please God" (Ecclesiastes 9:7). For those who are of good works, and after being left the milk of infancy, receive the nourishment of more solid food, they contemplate divine senses more deeply, and when satisfied with spiritual food, they have God as both their praiser and witness of their life; and to guests such as these the preacher speaks: "At all times let your garments be white, and let no oil be lacking on your head" (Ecclesiastes 9). Let us, clothed in the garment of virtues, imitate the brightness of the sun, and let everyone infuse oil to his own understanding by daily reading of the Holy Scriptures, and prepare a lamp for his mind, which, according to the precept of the Gospel, may shine before all who are in the house (Matthew 5).

2. Therefore, let us join together with such guests who celebrate so the Lord's Passion, eager to say with the Saints: "I will praise the Lord in my life; I will sing psalms to my God while I live." (Ps 103) And let us hasten to the metropolis of the Angels, which is free and is not stained with any impurity of evil; where there is neither division nor downfall and the passage from one place to another; where every temptation of pleasure is trodden underfoot and the surging billows of lust are stilled, so that we may be mingled with the celestial choirs and, already translated in mind to that place and seeing what is there, may become what is to be our future. The Jews have made themselves unworthy of blessedness, who, forsaking the riches of Holy Scripture and acquiescing to the understanding of the poor teachers, today hear: They always err with their hearts (Psalm 94); and when Christ is present, they do not want to say: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord (Psalm 117). Especially since with every voice they testify that the works are clearer than God himself, and not to say: Thus says the Lord, but I say to you: by which he shows himself to be the bearer of laws and the true Lord God, and not one of the prophets.

3. For the assumption of the form of a slave was not capable of obscuring his divine nature, which is not constrained by the limits of any place, nor of limiting the ineffable power of his majesty within the confines of a human body, which the greatness of God's works demonstrated in the son of

God. For when he had calmed the raging waves and the swelling height of the sea that looked like mountains, and given it a sudden calm, when the apostles' boat was delivered from shipwreck, and they had felt the power of the Lord's presence in the depths of the waters, and when the winds had ceased and the waves were subdued on every side by the Lord's command, they said together, as if moved by divine inspiration: "Truly, you are the Son of God" (Matthew 14), not doubting about his divinity which his works proclaimed. For truly there is prophetic vision: You rule the strength of the sea, and you calm the movement of its waves (Psalm 88). And the prophet himself indicates the significance of the song, so that not only in word but also in the power of the true God, who was seen, it might be believed, with the excellence of his works revealing what lay hidden. God, perfect by his own will, assuming everything of human nature and condition, is born sinless and without malice, adored as Emmanuel, visited by the Magi from the East, confessed as the Son of God with bended knee; who, and at the time of his passion, while hanging on the cross, obscured the rays of the sun, expressing the magnitude of his divinity with a new and unheard of miracle. And undivided and inseparable, not separated into two saviors by some error. Hence he spoke to the disciples: Do not call anyone on earth your father; for one is your Father, who is in heaven (Matt. 23:9). For when he said this to the apostles, he did not separate the excellence of the divinity from the body that was visible. And when he bore witness to the one Christ, the Son of God, he did not divide soul and flesh: not one separately and the other separately, but both subsisting as one and the same, both God and man, while he seems a servant and is worshipped as Lord. For he concealed the ineffable Godhead in the frailty of his human body, and again in his divine works exceeded the weakness of the flesh. And lest any one of the holy ones be believed (as it is by many) to be only one, he whom Paul seeks to show, writes: One God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. And again, There is one mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus; because there is one Son of the Father, and our mediator, who did not lose his equality with the Father, nor was separated from our company: invisible God, and visible man: hidden in the form of a servant, and confirmed in the confession of believers as Lord of glory.

4. For the Father did not deprive him of his own nature, after he became a man and poor for us, nor did he call him by another name when he was baptized in the Jordan River, but his only begotten son: You are my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased (Luke 2). And our similitude has not been changed into the nature of divinity, nor has divinity been turned into the similitude of our nature; but the Word of God, remaining what it was from the beginning, and glorifying us in Himself, He did not come, according to Jeremiah, to say, 'Woe is me, that you have begotten me a man, a judge of strife and a cause of division to the whole earth. I have not profited, nor has he that sent me.' Neither did He cry out according to Isaiah, 'Woe is me, because I am a man, and have unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people having unclean lips, and I have seen the Lord, the King of hosts, with my eyes.' For he was the king of glory, as it is written in the 23rd Psalm: Being a conqueror on the cross and restraining hostile wars, so that he might make a man fashioned from the soil into a dweller of heaven and present him with the sharing of his triumph.

5. So, though those who believe he was changed into someone else may not want this, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8), and will never have an end to his reign. According to the wicked error of Origen, he may be deprived of his eternal kingdom when his reign ends, but he speaks before all and states, 'I am in the Father and the Father is in

me' (John 11:34). And wanting to teach us that the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father, he commands all creatures, and proving this, he adds, 'I and the Father are one' (John 14:11), so that no one divides his unity in himself and the Father's kingdom on account of human flesh. "But if Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, were ever, according to Origen's insanity, to lose his kingdom, would he not, when speaking to the Apostles, have said, 'I and the Father are two,' instead of 'I and the Father are one,' meaning that he would not afterward possess sole rule, but that he would share it with another? For he has his glory here, which he will lay aside there; and where will that be which is ever both in the Father and the Son, if the kingdom of the Son is not assured? But those who contend that this is so, if they do not repent, should perish, and to those moved by zeal for faith and piety Moses should say, 'Cursed be you in the city, and cursed be you in the field' (Deut 28); and the Psalmist likewise rebuking: 'Let sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more.'" (Psalm 104)

6. Indeed, I cannot understand with what rashness Origen so boldly invented so many things, not following the authority of Scripture, but his own errors; he dared to bring everything harmful into the open, and he never thought that anyone would contradict his assertions if he mixed the arguments of philosophers with his own interpretations, and if he went from an evil beginning to some fables and delusions, turning Christian doctrine into a game and a jest, not relying on the truth of divine teaching but on the discretion of the human mind, swelling up with such great pride as to not imitate the humility of Paul, who, full of the Holy Spirit, compared the gospel with the first apostles, so that perhaps he would not run in vain or run too hard (Gal. 2:2): he did not know that he was instigated by a demonic spirit to follow the sophisms of human minds and to consider something divine beyond the authority of Scripture. Let those, who dream of the end of Christ's kingdom and desire to be parasites of Origen's verbosity, rest quietly and not pretend to walk with the faithful in faith they do not possess. Rather, let them learn that all deceit and fraudulence is one thing and shows another: so that it may strive to conceal vices under the guise of virtue. For even though Christ did not lose the glory of being the Lord in the ignominy of the cross which He suffered for us, according to the blessed Apostle, when those who were shouting against the Jews said: "You who tear down the temple and build it up in three days, save yourself: if you are the son of God, descend from the cross" (Matthew 27), and suffering in the flesh, and hanging on the gibbet, he showed the strength of his own majesty, causing the sun to cease from his course, and extorting from the thief by the magnitude of his signs a voice full of faith: Remember me, Lord, when you come into your kingdom (Luke 23). Never will he lose the kingdom after the glory of the resurrection, although Origen may throw countless stones of blasphemy against him. Or, whose is the consequence, to promise the disciples the perpetuity of the kingdom, and to say: Come, you blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25): and to lack the very thing that he attributes to others? Or how can it be understood that the kingdom of Christ, which Paul writes to the Corinthians, 'You reign without us, and I wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you' (1 Cor. 4), might be terminated after many ages, especially when John cries out: 'He that cometh from above is above all' (John 3:31): And the Apostle writes, 'Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.' (Romans 9:5).

7. Therefore, there is no doubt that whoever remains as God forever, both has a kingdom and is called a perpetual king, having the appropriate dominion of divinity, with nothing rough or new in

himself except the assumption of human frailty. For if, according to Origen's madness, Christ's kingdom is to end after many circles of centuries, it is consequent to his impiety to say that God will also stop being God someday; and he who sets limits to the kingdom is forced to feel the same thing about divinity that naturally possesses the perpetuity of the empire. If the Word of God (Λόγος Θεοῦ Verbum Dei) reigns, then God truly exists, and is discerned in this way: whoever tries to impose an end on his reign falls into that, compelled to believe in Christ and to cease being God. But a foolish teacher talks this way with impious followers. Let us believe in Christ's eternal reign, and on the solemn day let us sing with the Angel, and say: His reign shall be without end (Luke 1.33). For if He is one with the Father, then He will never cease to be one with Him, and the unity of the Father and the Son will never be divided into parts, lest the truth that they are one may eventually cease to be.

8. Therefore, let the most foolish of mortals make haste and descend living into hell (Psalm. 54.16), as the psalmist testifies, and seeing their teacher of impiety there, let them cry, "And you have been taken as we have; you have been reckoned among us; your glory has descended into hell," and so on. Such a shepherd of the soft flock bruises Christ everywhere with his slights, and exalts the devil with honor, while he claims that he, having been cleansed of faults and sins, will finally receive his former glory and withdraw from ruling, to be brought down with the devil under the authority of the Father; so much that he exclaims in wonder not so much like the prophecies of the Jews, but rather like the blasphemies of Origen: "The heavens were astounded at this and shuddered greatly," says the Lord, "because he has done two evils." (Jeremiah 2:12) Origen, asserting that Christ will cease to rule and that the devil will ascend to the heights from which he fell, digs such a deep pit of his sin, that cannot contain its own waters: He as far as he can makes the Son of God equal to the devil, while he detracts the eternal glory of the kingdom and subjects him with the demons under the Father's authority. But the voice of such a wicked one is being prevailed upon, so that we may know that the kingdom of Christ is perpetual, he himself speaking to his disciples: 'You have persevered with me in my trials, and I establish for you an eternal covenant, that you may always drink and eat at my table in my kingdom.' (Luke 22:28-29). For how can this, which is said to be always, be fulfilled unless it be an everlasting kingdom, and with no end? The Magi, understanding this, turned to penitence, and questioned more diligently: 'Where is he who is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.' (Matthew 2:22). The Magi confess Christ as king, and Origen denies this, saying he will not reign forever, and does not realize that he is similar to the blasphemies of the Jews.

9. We read in the Gospel that when the Lord and Savior, showing an outstanding example of his strength and patience, mounted the cross, Pilate inscribed a title and placed it over his head. It was written: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews (John 19:19). This title many of the Jews read, for it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'He said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate responded: "What I have written, I have written." (John 19:22). Therefore, since Pilate was unable to be swayed to remove the title of the Christ as king by either sedition or pleas, let Origen know that he ought not to consider the kingdom of Christ as terminable without any need to do so, such as the Jews did. And while the Jews denied a king who was present on the earth, Pilate here tries to detract from one who reigns in heaven as much as he can, so that he may have an accuser for his crime. Let the prophetic word enter into the midst and let it proclaim the kingdom of Christ in total

liberty: Rejoice daughter of Zion, proclaim daughter of Jerusalem, be glad and exult with your whole heart, daughter of Jerusalem ((or Israel)); The Lord has taken away your iniquities, he has redeemed you from the hand of your enemies, the king of Israel is in your midst, you will no longer see evil ((Soph. 3, 14. from the Greek.)). For those who once saved will not again be thrown from heaven, and will not be persuaded by the deliriums and fables of Origen, so as to fall again from the heights. And this which is said, "You will not see (alternatively, you will see) further evil," is a sign of eternal security, that those who have once been liberated and enjoyed the possession of the kingdom of heaven may by no means be dragged down by vices to the earth, nor deprived of the help of God, who according to the prophetic word will set a wall and a circumvallation around them by his own power. Hence the Psalmist sings: "He who dwells in Jerusalem will not be moved forever" (Psalm 124). And the Lord testifies: "I will not leave you or forsake you." And it is in vain to dream of ascending souls to heaven, and descending, and now making progress, now sliding down to lower things, so that they often die by countless ruins, and the passion of Christ is made void. For he who died for us once, gave us the eternal joy of his victory, which is not diminished by any weight of vices. And no one dies more frequently among men than what Origen dared to write, seeking to establish the most impious doctrine of the Stoics by the authority of the divine Scriptures.

10. Christ will suffer for the demons. - But why do we remember this? When such madness has broken out, nay, madness, that they implicate another crime to the Savior, saying that he should be affixed to the cross for demons and spiritual wickednesses before the gods. Nor does he understand into what a deep abyss of impiety he falls. For if Christ suffered for men and became man, as the testimonies of the Scriptures bear witness, it will follow that Origen says, "And if he was to suffer for demons, he would become a demon; for he will be forced to infer this out of necessity, lest he appear to disagree with what he has begun." This is to imitate the blasphemies of the Jews, whom he always imitates; for they also spoke to Christ in a similar manner: "You have a demon," and "By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, you cast out demons" (Luke 11:15). But it is far from the truth that Christ should suffer for demons, lest he himself become a demon. And those who believe this crucify him again and hold him up to ridicule as the Son of God (Hebrews 6:6), who, as he did not take hold of the seed of Abraham, will not also assume the nature of demons, so that he may be crucified for them as well. Neither do the demons seeing God in suffering, will cry out with the Prophet: He carried our sins and suffers for us. Neither will they say as Isaiah does: By his bruises we are healed (Isaiah 53:4). Neither for the demons, as for the human race, will Christ be led like a sheep to the victim; nor will it be said for their salvation: He did not spare his own Son (Jeremiah 11); because neither will the demons cry out: He was handed over for our sins, and rose again for our justification (1 Corinthians 11). Paul writes: "For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15): he cites them in testimony and wishes to confirm the doubtful by their authority;" but Origen, without any testimony of the divine voice, tries to force the truth and find it with an extinguished lamp.

11. Supporter of demons and not humans, he attacks with frequent calumnies the Son of God, and crucifies him anew, not understanding into what a deep and horrible abyss of impiety he is dragged. For it follows that whoever undertakes the former, accepts the latter as well: and whoever says that Christ was crucified for the demons, must also accept the following: "Take and

eat: this is my body." And: "Take and drink: this is my blood" (Matthew. 26.26). For if he is crucified also for the demons, as an assertor of new doctrines affirms, what privilege will there be or what reason that only human beings should share in his body and blood, and not also demons, for whom he shed his blood in his passion? But the demons will not hear, "Take and eat," and, "Take and drink." Nor will the Lord dissolve his own precepts who says to his disciples, "Do not give the holy thing to dogs, nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn and tear you in pieces (Matthew 7)." For the apostle also writes, "I do not want you to become partners with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons: you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons (1 Corinthians 10)." Through these things he shows that it is impossible for demons to drink from the cup of the Lord and to partake of his table. The food of the devil are the deniers of God, with Habakkuk speaking: Their chosen food (Habakkuk 1); however, the food of all the impious is execrable, the devil himself, as prophesied by the Prophet: You have given him as food for the people of Ethiopia (Psalm 73.14). From all of these it is proven that Christ cannot be crucified for the demons, lest they become partakers of his Body and Blood.

12. So when the Apostle also indicates regarding the Savior: For He did this once, offering Himself (Heb. 7:27); and Origen contradicts that sentiment with such confidence, it is time to infer this: Earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord, write this man rejected (Jer. 22). For who can receive these evils in hell? Who can think of such things in Tartarus? What madness of the giants stood so rebellious and built the tower of impiety? What the lewd desire, and the insatiable desire of the demons, thus divided the legs of her mind, passing through the whole doctrine? Who drinks so much from the vineyards of Sodom that, drunken with the wine of their fury, he falls with all his heart? Who, irrigated by the streams of the Babylonians, left alive the sources of Israel? Who, departing from Jerusalem and imitating Jeroboam son of Nebat, has made so many errors of altars and lit profane incense? Why do Dathan and Abiron, who sinned less, not come before the judgment of Christ and condemn themselves by comparison to him, who outside the Church of the Savior has filled various censers with diabolical fire of doctrines? For the Lord who speaks through the Prophet says: I have multiplied visions and I have been made like a Prophet's hands (Hosea 12:10 according to LXX), He taught him to bring forth adulterous doctrines, neither those who saw him from the beginning and were ministers of the Word of God, nor the chorus of Prophets, who were once called the Seers, taught him this themselves: but he himself, by the choice of his own mind, serving the frenzy of demons and deceived by the flattery of his own thoughts, has sent throughout the whole world, to the minds of the unlearned, a flock and, so to speak, a swarm of perverse dogmas. This is the one who opened his mouth to the Assyrians and Babylonians rivers, who tried to cover with waves a ship full of the Church's good merchandise of salutary doctrine; while he is lifted up by the praise of the unskilled, and boasting about the sense of Holy Scripture, he teaches in his confusion otherwise than reality. For, who has written so many and so voluble, and so full of both verbosity and ignorance books, and has connected them day and night with tireless zeal, that forsaking the monuments of error, he might be worthy of hearing: 'Have you been deceived by your many trips?' For he has used as a guide the worst of people, the popular breeze, and very many books of false knowledge, and fighting with a mind in rebellion against God, he blended a certain pus and the stench of his own fetor with the ointment of heavenly teachings, so that it would again be said to his soul: 'Filthy, infamous, and excessive in iniquities.' For he did not wish to listen to the prophet admonishing: "Why do you love vanity and seek after

lies?" (Psalm 4:3). He who crucifies Christ on behalf of demons, in order that he might be a mediator not only between God and men but also for demons. But far be it from us to believe such a monstrous blasphemy about our Savior, that he would lose the temple of his body, which he deigned to raise up for us, and affix to himself another temple of a demoniacal condition, so that by receiving their likeness, he might also suffer the cross for them.

13. I ask, dear brothers, that you forgive my grief, resisting impious teachings; for while we strive to push back the audacity of his followers, we have exposed the framework of his armor, and the deceitful tricks of his venomous heart, so that what was also said of him might be fulfilled: I shall reveal your shame, and show it to your lovers (Ezek. 16:36). For among other things, he so corrupts and violates even the resurrection from the dead, which is the hope of our salvation, by daring to say that our bodies will indeed be raised up, but only so that they may fall again into corruption and death once more. Answer me, O head of impiety, how, according to the Apostle Paul, did Christ conquer him who had power over death, that is, the devil, if corruptible and mortal bodies will rise again? What profit is Christ's passion to us if death and corruption will again possess our bodies? Or what does the Apostle mean when writing, 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive' (1 Cor. 15), if, when we rise again, cruel death will still rule over us? Or how can those who believe this sincerely say, 'Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God' (1 Cor. 1.24), desiring to be stronger than death, which will destroy the bodies raised by him and cannot be completely overcome? But our Lord Christ triumphed over even Origen, who resisted impiously, and over death as well as the devil, who had dominion over death, he destroyed by his own power, having prepared for us in heaven the triumph of his victories. Nor will he raise those bodies only to destroy them again; rather, he has wholly abolished death and corruption for their sakes.

14. Therefore freed from all evils, let us celebrate the feast of the Lord's Passion and, according to the parable of the Gospel (Matth. 22), while we behold wisdom sacrificing bulls and birds, let us feed upon stronger and more nourishing foods, and richer in the doctrine of truth, that we may leave the milk of infancy and obtain solid nourishment, and so flee from all the causes of evil, especially from ignorance, which, binding the feet with many diverse heresies, has made Origen its chief patron, he who dared to say among other things that we should not pray either to the Son or to the Father with the Son; and after many ages he revived the blasphemy of Pharaoh, saying: "Who is the Lord, that I should hear His voice? I know not the Lord, nor will I let Israel go" (Exod. 5. 2). There is nothing else to say, I don't know the Lord, other than what Origen says, that the Son should not be prayed to, whom he certainly confesses as Lord. And although he has burst into such open blasphemy, he must still be prayed to, of whom the Prophet testifies, saying: And they shall adore thee, and shall pray to thee, because God is in thee, and there is no other God besides thee (Isai. 4. 5. 14). And again, Whoever shall invoke the name of the Lord shall be saved (Rom. 10. 13). And Paul reasoning: How, he says, shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed (Ibid. v. 14)? It is necessary first to believe that the Son of God exists, so that his invocation is correct and consequent. And just as he who is not God is not to be prayed to, so on the contrary, whoever is found to be God is to be adored and prayed to. Therefore Stephen, kneeling down, prayed for them that were killing him, saying: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep in the Lord. And Saul was consenting to his death. (Acts 7) But that which is said, 'The knee shall be bent,' is a sign of anxious and humble supplication. Therefore,

Origen does not believe in the Son of God who he thinks should not be prayed to, and he tears him apart with insults. And even though he flatters himself with the memory of the Scriptures and thinks he understands them, he does not hear Moses speaking against himself: 'The man who blasphemes against God shall have sinned, and who speaks the name of the Lord shall die by death.' All the multitude shall stone him to death (Leviticus 24:16). But who would so insult Christ with such insults, as this one who has dared to say that He should not be prayed to, indulging only in the empty and useless name of divinity?

15. But what is the use of lingering among such impious statements? Let us pass on to another error of his. He asserts that the bodies which rise again will at last, after many ages, be dispersed into nothingness and never again have any existence, except when souls, after sinking down from the heavenly realms, need new ones to be made for them, which will again in their turn be destroyed, the former ones being entirely blotted out. Who that hears this would not quiver in mind and body? For if after the resurrection bodies are reduced to nothingness, the second death will be more powerful than the first; for it will entirely destroy the substantial character of the body. Why does Paul thus write: "Death shall no longer have dominion over him; for the dead, it is true, are dead unto sin once for all" (Rm 6:10)? If the bodies are to be utterly destroyed, how can it be true that "once for all" that which is dead is dead unto sin? In what sense then has he added: "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption: it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power: it is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory: it is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body" (1 Cor 15)? For if corruption reduces into nothingness, it would be consequent to say that they are reserved in perpetuity for corruption, and that corruption is stronger than the incorruptible. But may it be far from Paul to write the opposite to himself, that incorruption and corruption have the same nature. And so, if, as Origen falsely believes, not only the corruptible but also the mortal body is to be raised up, then corruption and incorruption, death and life, will be said to be one and the same, and they will have the same power in resurrected bodies, and not in things, but only in names corruption and incorruption, death and life will be separated. But if the corruptible and mortal body is to rise again, it would follow that the apostle was speaking of the following: It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption: it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body. If then it takes away corruption, and weakness, and disgrace from the bodies which are to be raised up, and says that, on the contrary, they are to be clothed with incorruption, and strength, and glory, and that the animal body is to be transformed into a spiritual body, then death will be destroyed, and in the bodies thus raised there will be nothing of death and corruption remaining. For the body itself, too, will become immortal and incorruptible, in order that it may be joined together with the soul for all eternity. Therefore, since the Savior, in the resurrection of his body, bestowed a pledge of salvation upon our bodies, he cannot be believed to be subject to death any longer, in agreement with the Apostle in this statement: Christ rising from the dead, dies now no more, death shall have no more dominion over him. (Romans 6:9). Unless it had ruled him, it will not rule over us.

16. A not evil magical art. Origen is confused among other types of wickedness, giving support to magic arts: for in his treatises, he speaks these words: "The magical art does not seem to me to be the name of any subsisting thing, and even if it were, it is not the work of evil," lest anyone should hold it in contempt. Thus speaking, he shows himself to be a supporter of the magician of Elyma, who resisted the Apostles, and of Jamne and Mambre, who withstood Moses' magical arts.

"But the power of Origen will have no support, because Christ destroyed the tricks of the Magi by his coming. Let the advocate of the new impiety respond, better yet, let him clearly hear: If magical art is not evil, then idolatry, which relies on the powers of magical art, will not be evil. But if idolatry is evil, then magical art, from which idolatry arises, will also be evil. And since idolatry has been destroyed by the majesty of Christ, it is clear that magical art, its parent, has been dissolved with it, the Prophet proclaiming about this: Stand now with thy enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, which thou hast learned from thy youth, if so be thou shalt be able to profit." (Isaiah 47:12) Therefore when these prophecies in writing testify, and no one has ever dared to disclose the names, among the best of the magicians' arts, even public laws punish magicians and sorcerers, I cannot understand in what way Origen, who boasts himself a Christian, being an imitator of the pseudo-prophet Sedechiah, made iron horns for himself, with which he walks around armed against the doctrines of truth, nor does he know anything about the heavenly Jerusalem, nor does he imitate Moses, and Daniel, and Peter, and other saints, who fought against magicians and enchanters, as if standing in battle in unceasing contest. Let us lead the choirs of festive days with those, having avoided the poisons of Origen through dangers by traveling through the middle of Babylon, and having obeyed the words of the Prophet commanding, 'Go forth from Babylon, ye that flee from the land of the Chaldeans' (Jer. 50. 8), so that we may enter into Jerusalem, where the preaching of truth is.

17. Although resisting with lies, we suffered something of the three boys, who conquered the nature of the flames of a burning fire in the furnace, nevertheless the Babylonian fire did not prevail against us, nor were our hair burned (Dan. 3:94), namely the extreme dogmas of ecclesiastical truth; neither were the saraballs changed, which the Holy Scriptures wove for us in testimony for the protection of souls, nor is the scent of fire within us, the flame of a perverse science racing about. For we have not acquiesced to his teaching, who suspects that bodies were made because of the downfall of rational creatures; and he says, according to the etymology of the Greek language, that souls are named thus, because they have lost the warmth of their mind, and their most fervent love for God, and have received their name from coldness, lest we feel that the soul of our Savior is subject to the same ignorance. We do not assert that the course of the sun, moon, and stars, and the most beautiful harmony in the diversity of the whole world, happened because of the preceding causes, various sins, and vices of souls, nor did God wait a long time to exhibit His goodness, so that He would not make visible creatures unless the invisible ones had sinned. Nor do we call substantial materiality vanity, as that person thinks, agreeing with the teachings of Manichaeus in different words, lest Christ's body fall under vanity, of which, having been satiated with its food, we daily chew the words spoken, saying: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you" (John 13). For if bodily nature is empty and futile, according to Origen's error, why did Christ rise from the dead? why will he raise our bodies? what does Paul mean when he writes: if the dead do not rise again, neither has Christ risen; but if Christ has not risen, our faith is in vain (1 Cor. 13).

18. From which it is clear that the nature of bodies is not empty, but those who do not believe that it will rise again and exist perpetually are foolish. Let him also despise honorable marriages, denying that bodies can exist unless souls have first sinned in heaven, so that they may be precipitated from there and bound in the prisons of the body. And let him feel as he wishes, speak as he does not fear; let him hear us shouting in his ears with Paul: Honorable marriage and an

undefiled bed (Hebrews 13: 4). "And how can [the soul be] immaculate, if it is surrounded by flesh stained with faults? And Anna, the wife of Helcana, subject to faults, asking for semen of a male, for the desire of a woman, [puts] the souls in danger in the heavens, and one of them, heavy with sin, falls onto the earth and deserts its previous blessedness. Neither does Moses cursing and saying: "May the Lord your God multiply you, and behold, you are today as the stars of the heaven in multitude. The Lord God of your fathers add to you as you are, a thousand times, and bless as he had spoken" (Deuteronomy 1:10 and following): he asked for it so that clouds of souls, of the sinning Israeli people, could form a nation in heaven. What is different, is very clear, as he who prayed for the offense of the people said: If you forgive this people's sin, forgive; but if not, blot me out of the book which you have written (Exod. 32. 32 according to the Greek), if he asks for the multiplication of the sons of Israel, whom, if he knew to grow in the ruins of souls, he would not pray for the opposite, lest he be considered inferior in nature for the vices of a better substance. Why does David pray in Psalm: "May the Lord bless you from Zion, that you may see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of your life and see your children's children" (Psalm 127:5) if the number of righteous people increases with the rejection and destruction of souls? And he dares to say: "Behold, in this way man will be blessed, who fears the Lord" (Ibid. 4): when he knows that the souls of delinquents are bound in the chains of their bodies, and in such a prison, the judgment of God must pay the penalty for sins? How does God speak through the Prophet: "If you had heard my commandments, then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea, and your seed like the sand, and the offspring of your womb like the dust of the earth" (Isaiah 48:18-19, from the Greek)? For those who keep God's commandments, they should not receive as a reward the ruins of souls from heaven, which, bound to their bodies, multiply the offspring of them. But if they wish to learn what are the beginnings of the human race, let them hear Moses saying: God took earth and formed man, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul (Gen. 2.7), that is, immortal. God also, blessing Adam and Eve, said: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth (Gen. 9.1.7).

19. If souls are sent to earth after sin, to be born in bodies, Adam and Eve were not blessed with reason, since the cause of sin deserved rather to be cursed. In fact, after He created them, God blessed them with words of blessing: but later, when they sinned of their own will, He struck them with a curse. From which it can be gathered that nature did not change its course on account of the sin of souls replacing bodies. Let them hear again the saying: I have made the earth, and man on it (Jer. 27. 5). And David: The heaven of heavens is the Lord's: but the earth he gave to the children of men (Psal. 113). And let them cease to follow the errors of their thoughts, and rather be led by the authority of the Scriptures. For just as those who have been weakened by pleasures, and in whose hearts desire rules, upon contemplating the beauty of bodies, do not seek the beauty of morals, but of limbs; and their senses, burdened with filth, do not look upon anything higher: thus those who are led by the arranged composition of words, and captivated by the sound of eloquence, do not perceive the truth of doctrines, they blush to confess their former error, and, blinded by the arrogance of pride, do not wish to be disciples, lest they seem to have made mistakes before they were corrected.

20. Therefore, with Origen's evils being rejected, and the Scriptures, which are called apocrypha (also apocrypha and hidden), that is, hidden, and the disciples being omitted: "For I did not speak in secret" (John 18:20), says the Lord. Again and again, I implore you, beloved brothers, let us

celebrate the feast of the Lord's Passion by enhancing our faith with our conduct, let us imitate God in his mercy towards the poor, to whom no form of bodily nature is similar. Let us have the image of His goodness in all things, let us correct our mistakes with repentance, let us pray for our enemies, let us plead with our detractors, emulating Moses, who prayed away his sister's accusations against him. Let us wash away the filth of sinners with the oil of alms-giving: let us seem to bind the chains of prisoners, and let us pray to God that He may be propitious to them. Let us support in our daily kindness those who are shut up in prison, and those whose bodily members are consumed by continuous decay on account of the heavenly reward that is laid up for them; and let us minister to them with earnest diligence. And if at any time power of judgment be given to us, and the cause of contending brethren be brought before us, let there be no respect of persons, but let the case be decided on its merits; and if any are falling, or in distress, let us also be carried away with a feeling of their pain. Let the laws hold the standard of truth. Let charity be ready for mercy, not insulting sinners, but condoling, for it is easy to fall into vices, and the frailty of human nature must dread whatever it sees in another. And if someone else has been corrected for error, his correction shall be our caution, and above all, like the pinnacle and crown of virtues, piety towards God shall be observed with fear of the whole heart, and let us confess the indiscreet substance, wherein we were baptized and received eternal life, cursing the number of gods and acknowledging the One and undivided substance of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And if the mercy of God shall grant it, we shall merit to celebrate the Lord's Passover with the angels, beginning the season of Lent on the eighth day of the month called Phamenoth by the Egyptians; and thus shall we fast, receiving strength from Him who giveth strength, on the fourth day of the week [Wednesday], and on the Preparation-day we shall arrange the foundation of the holy week of the Paschal festival, that haply we may receive the joy of the resurrection in Christ Jesus our Lord, through Whom to Him be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen. And on the second day, which is the symbol of the Lord's Resurrection, that is, on the nineteenth of the same month, let us celebrate the true Pasch, adding to this [day] the remaining seven weeks in which the festival of Pentecost is woven, and making ourselves worthy by communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. For thus shall we deserve to receive the kingdoms of heaven in Christ Jesus our Lord, by whom, and with whom, to God the Father be glory and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, now and always, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

21. Greet one another with a holy kiss. Those who are with me send their greetings, brothers.

Letters - letter_097

Letter 97. To Pammachius and Marcella. With this letter Jerome sends to Pammachius and Marcella a translation of the paschal letter issued by Theophilus for the year 402 a.d. together with the Greek original. He takes the precaution of sending this latter because in the preceding year complaints have been made that his translation was not accurate. Written in 402 a.d.

1. Once more with the return of spring I enrich you with the wares of the east and send the treasures of Alexandria to Rome: as it is written, "God shall come from the south and the Holy One from Mount Paran, even a thick shadow." [Hab. 3:3, LXX] (Hence in the Song of Songs the joyous cry of the bride: "I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste." [Cant. 2:3]) Now truly is Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled: "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the land of Egypt." [Isa. 19:19] "Where sin hath abounded, grace doth much more abound." [Rom. 5:20] They who fostered the infant Christ now with glowing faith defend Him in His manhood; and they who once saved Him from the hands of Herod are ready to save Him again from this blasphemer and heretic. Demetrius expelled Origen from the city of Alexander; but he is now thanks to Theophilus outlawed from the whole world. Like him to whom Luke has dedicated the Acts of the Apostles [Acts 1:1] this bishop derives his name from his love to God. Where now is the wriggling serpent?¹ In what plight does the venomous viper find himself? His is A human face with wolfish body joined. [Virg. A. 3:426] Where now is that heresy which crawled hissing through the world and boasted that both the bishop Theophilus and I were partisans of its errors? Where now is the yelping of those shameless hounds who, to win over the simple minded, falsely proclaimed our adherence to their cause? Crushed by the authority and eloquence of Theophilus they are now like demon-spirits only able to mutter and that from out of the earth. [Cf. I. Sam. 28:13] For they know nothing of Him who, as He comes from above, [John. 8:23] speaks only of the things that are above.

2. Would that this generation of vipers [Matt. 3:7] would either honestly accept our doctrines, or else consistently defend its own; that we might know whom we are to esteem and whom we are to shun. As it is they have invented a new kind of penitence, hating us as enemies though they dare not deny our faith. What, I ask, is this chagrin of theirs which neither time nor reason seems able to cure? When swords flash in battle and men fall and blood flows in streams, hostile hands are often clasped in amity and the fury of war is exchanged for an unexpected peace. The partisans of this heresy alone can make no terms with churchmen; for they repudiate mentally the verbal assent that is extorted from them. When their open blasphemy is made plain to the public ear, and when they perceive their hearers clamouring against them; then they assume an air of simplicity, declaring that they hear such doctrines for the first time and that they have no previous knowledge of them as taught by their master. And when you hold their writings in your hand, they deny with their lips what their hands have written. Why, sirs, need you beset the Propontis,² shift your abode, wander through different countries, and rend with foaming mouths a distinguished prelate of Christ and his followers? If your recantations are sincere, you should replace your former zeal for error with an equal zeal for the faith. Why do you patch together from this quarter and from that

these rags of cursing? And why do you rail at the lives of men whose faith you cannot resist? Do you cease to be heretics because according to you sundry persons believe us to be sinners? And does impiety cease to disfigure your lips because you can point to scars on our ears? So long as you have a leopard's spots and an Ethiopian's skin, [Jer. 13:23] how can it help your perfidy to know that I too am marked by moles? See, Pope Theophilus is freely allowed to prove Origen a heretic; and the disciples do not defend the master's words. They merely pretend that they have been altered by heretics and tampered with, like the works of many other writers. Thus they seek to maintain his cause not by their own belief but by other people's errors. So much I would say against heretics who in the fury of their unjust hostility to us betray the secret feelings of their minds and prove the incurable nature of the wound that rankles in their breasts.

3. But you are Christians and the lights of the senate: accept therefore from me the letter which I append.³ This year I send it both in Greek and Latin that the heretics may not again lyingly assert that I have made many changes in and additions to the original. I have laboured hard, I must confess, to preserve the charm of the diction by a like elegance in my version: and keeping within fixed lines and never allowing myself to deviate from these I have done my best to maintain the smooth flow of the writer's eloquence and to render his remarks in the tone in which they are made. Whether I have succeeded in these two objects or not I must leave to your judgement to determine. As for the letter itself you are to know that it is divided into four parts. In the first Theophilus exhorts believers to celebrate the Lord's passover; in the second he slays Apollinarius; in the third he demolishes Origen; while in the fourth and last he exhorts the heretics to penitence. If the polemic against Origen should seem to you to be inadequate, you are to remember that Origenism was fully treated in last year's letter;⁴ and that this which I have just translated, as it aims at brevity, was not bound to dwell farther upon the subject. Besides, its terse and clear confession of faith directed against Apollinarius is not lacking in dialectical subtlety. Theophilus first wrests the dagger from his opponent's hand, and then stabs him to the heart.

4. Entreat the Lord, therefore, that a composition which has won favour in Greek may not fail to win it also in Latin, and that what the whole East admires and praises Rome may gladly take to her heart. And may the chair of the apostle Peter by its preaching confirm the preaching of the chair of the evangelist Mark. Popular rumour, indeed, has it that the blessed pope Anastasius is of like zeal and spirit with Theophilus and that he has pursued the heretics even to the dens in which they lurk. Moreover his own letters inform us that he condemns in the West what is already condemned in the East. May he live for many years⁵ so that the reviving sprouts of heresy may in course of time by his efforts be made to wither and to die.

1:

The allusion is to Rufinus

2: Many of the Egyptian Origenists had fled to Constantinople and thrown themselves on the kindness of the patriarch John Chrysostom 3: Letter XCVIII

4: Letter XCVI 5: He was already dead when these words were written

Letters - letter_098

Letter 98. From Theophilus. A translation by Jerome of Theophilus's paschal letter for the year 402 a.d. Like that of the previous year (Letter 96) it deals mainly with the heresies of Apollinarius and Origen.

First, he encourages believers to celebrate Easter to the Lord. Secondly, he refutes and slaughters the errors of Apollinaris, thirdly, those of Origen, finally, he urges heretics to repentance. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. First, the divine discourse of August solemnity shines from the regions of the heavens, surpassing the brilliance of the sun with its radiance, and pours the brightest light into the souls longing for it. And when they have withstood the rays of its full gaze, he attracts them to the very innermost chambers of heavenly Jerusalem, and, so to speak, to the Holy of Holies. So, if we wish to be participants in salvation and to be attached to the pursuit of virtues, let us purify the faults of our souls and wash away whatever filth there is within us through constant study of the Scriptures; as if, gazing upon the open knowledge of doctrines, we should hasten to celebrate the festivals of heavenly joy and to join the choirs of angels, where there are crowns and rewards, and certain victory is attained, and the desired palm is set before the triumphant. Nor let us delay, now that we have been freed from the surging waves of the flesh and are caught amid the diverse shipwrecks of pleasures on either side, but let us grasp the rudder of virtues and, after the great dangers of the sea, make for the most secure harbor of heaven.

2. Therefore, both those whom the empty concern of this life disturbs, and those surrounding depths of disturbance like raging waves, as if arousing them from a heavy sleep, let us call to the profit of wisdom: let us show them the true riches of divine perception, and the joys inspired by holy celebration; and let all the labor of the present be assumed, so that both those who are a little careless and ourselves may prepare for eternal glory. Therefore, in the Book of Proverbs, Wisdom, inviting the senseless to her feast, cries out: "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine I have mixed" (Prov. 9). For not in this way is the heaven which we see illuminated by the choruses of stars, nor do the sun and moon, those two brightest eyes of the world, which by their course make a year revolve and by their changing produce the seasons, pour forth their light so brightly upon the earth that our festival of virtues shines and sparkles. Those who seek its treasures and riches sing with David in harmony: "Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest?" (Ps. 54). And rejoicing, and being filled with inexplicable joy, and according to what is written, they cry out again: We do not have a lasting city here, but we seek one that is future (Hebrews 13.14), of which God is the craftsman and fabricator. For they (Christians) know that this (hope) is what is stored up for all their labors in this world of struggle and running, and that this (hope) is established for the future, for which they (Christians) without fear of any danger guide the course of their (Christian) lives, avoiding the heretics and especially their snares by which the blind lead the blind into the pit, and like some old and most filthy rot, they defile the hearts of the deceived; nor satisfied with this lime, they drink of the innermost marrow of the

Scriptures, condemning as an erroneous doctrine the knowledge of the false name.

3. That understanding patriarch Jacob sees the ladder in his dreams, the top of which reaches to heaven, through which one ascends to the heights with different degrees of virtue, and men are challenged, abandoning earthly lowliness, as the primitive Church celebrates the festivals of the Lord's passion. This is nothing else, he said, but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven (Genesis 28). "Which, David examining more sharply, and inquiring with all the desire of his mind, and dealing with the reasons of this journey in his thoughts, and as if grinding and crushing precious pigments more strongly, so that the fragrances of the sweetest scent might be scattered, he calls forth those hastening to the solemnity, saying: Open to me the gates of justice; I will enter into them, and give praise to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the just shall enter into it." (Psalm 117) Therefore, there is no celebration among the heretics; nor can those deceived by error rejoice in its communion. For it is written, 'If the beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned' (Heb. 12:20). Neither can those who contradict the divine dogmas of the Church receive the sacraments of the heavenly words. Therefore, purifying our souls with all our strength from every contamination, let us prepare them worthy for the approaching celebration, so that we may sing with the saints: 'God is the Lord, and He appeared to us' (Ps. 117). About which another Prophet, conscious of the future, witnesses with mystical voice: 'The Lord will appear in them, and will destroy all the gods of the Gentiles' (Zeph. 2:11). When words have been put into action, and the truth of things, which is often obscured from sight, is demonstrated to doubting eyes, so that by the effectiveness of what has been spoken, the truth of the words may be confirmed, we ourselves, by the grace of God, shall be partakers in His victory, so that we may share fellowship with the holy and celebrate the praises of His glorious advent. For, whereas once the whole earth had been corrupted by the seductive attraction of various vices, reckoning virtues among vices and, conversely, vices among virtues, and deeming custom a law of nature as time went on, wicked and tyrannical pride had become established and lies had gained strength, fathers and teachers came to be regarded as the guardians of truth. This is how it came about that men's errors multiplied and, ignorant of the truths which are of real advantage, they despised the true shepherd, the Lord.

And, seized by fury, they worshipped tyrants and rulers as if they were gods, consecrating their own weakness among men of the same nature. Through this, it happened that they escaped present danger of death and won over those whose mercy was more cruel than their cruelty.

4. Therefore, with all being lead astray by error, the living word of God came to our aid to lands that were ignorant of the worship of God and sustained the loneliness of truth. The witness of which thing is he who speaks: "All have sinned, becoming useless together" (Romans 3). And the prophets of Christ praying for aid: "Lord, incline your heavens and descend" (Psalm 143). Not to change the places where all things were, but in order to take on the flesh of human weakness for our salvation, as Paul sings the same: When he was rich, for our sake he became poor, so that by his poverty we might become rich (1 Corinthians 8). And he came into the world, and from the virginal womb, which he sanctified, came forth as a man, confirming by his dispensation the interpretation of his name, Emmanuel, that is, God with us, and he began to be marvelously what we are, and he did not cease to be what he was: thus assuming human nature, so that he himself might not lose what he was. Although John writes "The Word was made flesh" (John 1), that is to say, "Man", nevertheless it is not turned into flesh because God never ceased to be. To whom

David also speaks: "But You are the same" (Psalms 101). And the Father from heaven testifies, saying: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Luke 2). So that it may be said that He who was before man was made, remains through our confession having become man, Paul himself preaching with the same voice as ours: "Jesus Christ, yesterday and today, and the same forever (Hebrews 13)." For in that which he says, 'He,' he shows that he did not change his original nature, nor diminish the wealth of his divinity, who, for our sake, became poor, and assumed the full likeness of our condition. He assumed man from among so many and such beings, solely without sin; from what sort and quality of beings we are all created, not in part, but wholly, the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus (I. Tim. 2. 5), and he had nothing which is found in our resemblance, except only sin, which has no substance; for he had not lifeless flesh, and in that flesh, as God's Word, he himself was rational soul, just as the drowsy scholars of Apollinaris suspect. And saying that in the Gospel: "Now my soul is troubled" (Matthew 26:38), [he] testifies (some say "it is testified") that his divinity was subject to perturbation, which is a consequent claim of those who argue that divinity was in his body for his soul; nor again by joining only a soul together, [he] filled it up being undertaken by man, lest he be deemed to have completed the act of mediation by [merely] sharing in flesh, and in the dissimilarity of souls. Being like us in flesh, and having the soul of irrational animals - if according to their [the rationalists'] understanding the Savior's soul is irrational and without reason and feeling, [it] is impious to believe this, and far from the ecclesiastical faith, lest it be immediately struck by that praise with which the Prophet rebukes the offender, saying: Ephraim is like a senseless dove without a heart (Hosea 7:11). And if he hears like one who is irrational: he has been compared to foolish beasts, and he has become like them. For it is beyond doubt that an irrational and mindless soul is compared to irrational beasts; hence Moses also writes: you shall not muzzle the ox when it treads out the grain. And Paul in expounding the passage says: Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake?

5. Therefore, for our sake, the man became a Savior, not for brute and irrational animals, so that he might assume the likeness of the souls of animals without sense and reason. But neither does the Church accept (the opinion) which the followers of the same heresy cavil and gossip (about), that the soul of the Savior should be called the prudence of the flesh, since the Apostle plainly calls the prudence of the flesh an enemy to God, and death (Rom. 8.7): which it is sacrilege to say about the Lord, that His soul is death, and is believed to be an enemy to God. For if he commands us: Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; (Matt. 10. 28), they will be forced to undertake their foolish disputation, that it is better for our souls to have the soul of the Saviour, while that wisdom of the flesh is asserted which is death, and an enemy to God, but our soul cannot die. This must not be understood in any such sense, most beloved brethren, since even the wisdom of the soul cannot be called the soul, and they differ very much from each other: for though the wisdom of the soul be in that, whose wisdom it is; yet one has it, the other is possessed by it; and the former is the soul, the latter is engaged in the soul. If the prudence of the soul is not the soul, how much less can the prudence of the flesh be called soul? Let them spread their nets of syllogisms and their deceiving sophisms as much as they wish, let them entangle themselves in their own snares without even realizing it, those who boast of a vain knowledge: and let them learn from us, whom they force to embark in such arguments for free, that what tastes good is one thing, wisdom is another, and that which is tasted is yet another. And these not only disagree with each other in words, but also in meaning: for that which has wisdom, the rational

soul is wise; moreover, that which is from it, and of itself, and not that which it has wisdom, is called wisdom: but that which is understood, is the thing which is referred to, and is produced from the wisdom of the wise, and not from the wise person himself, nor from wisdom itself. And at length let the arts of dialectic cease from perverting the simple decrees of the ecclesiastical faith with their sophistries, as when they call the prudence of the flesh the wisdom of the Saviour, which the Apostle asserts to be death and enmity to God.

6. But it seems to be argued against them in this way as well. It is written about the Word of God: All things were made by him (John 1:3). Is it credible that the wisdom or prudence of the flesh, which they understand to be the soul of the Savior, was created by the Word of God so that the very operator of death and enmity against God might exist and that, what is wicked to say, that he was joined to those things? But if it is wicked to believe this, and the soul of the Savior possesses all virtues, then his prudence of the flesh will not be his soul, lest he be believed to have joined death and enmity against God. Let the disciples of Apollinaris cease to defend those things which he has spoken against the rules of the Church, for although he has written against the Arians and Eunomians, and overturned Origen and other heretics by his argument, nevertheless, whoever remembers that precept: You shall not show partiality in judgment (Leviticus 19:15; and Deuteronomy 1:17): he must always love the truth, not the persons; and he must know that in the dispensation of man, which the only-begotten Son of God has deigned to assume for our salvation, he who understood and wrote perversely upon his soul, may not be free from guilt. For as the Apostle says, 'If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.' (1 Corinthians 13) And so, be it this one, about whom we are speaking now, or Origen and other heretics, even if they wrote some things that do not contradict the ecclesiastical faith, they will nevertheless not be without fault, and on those things which are important and relevant to the salvation of believers, they contradict the ecclesiastical faith. For our Lord and Savior did not assume a soul without intellect and senses nor did he assume the middle or two parts of three, or the third part, to save imperfect humanity incompletely, since neither the middle nor the remaining parts can receive the name of perfection. And just as the perfect thing lacks the defect of the imperfect, so what is imperfect cannot be called perfect. And if he had imperfectly received our likeness, or partly, as it was spoken in the Gospel: No one takes my life from me: I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it up? (John 10:18) But what is taken away and put down cannot be said to be irrational or without mind and intelligence, but rather rational and intelligible, having a mind and feeling.

7. And in this way the order of the discussion proved that nothing imperfect had been undertaken by the Lord, but rather that man had been fully and perfectly saved by Him. For there is no doubt that the souls of irrational beasts are not set forth and taken up again, but when they perish with the bodies, they are dissolved into dust. Further, the Savior, taking up his soul and separating it from his body at the time of his passion, received it again in the resurrection. And long before he did this, he spoke in the Psalm: "You will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will you let your Holy One see corruption" (Psalm 15). And it is not believable that His flesh descended to hell, or that the prudence of the flesh, which is called the soul, appeared in hell; but rather that His body was placed in a tomb, and Himself did not say anything about either the flesh or wisdom of the flesh, nor about His divinity, "You will not abandon my soul to hell", but truly He showed that the soul of our nature, as perfect and rational, and intelligible and sensible, descended to hell. We urge those

who understand such matters, to abandon the errors of heretics and to assent to the truth of the Church, and not to make the feast of the Lord's Passion incomplete, lest they deny the principal and greater part of man in the Savior, asserting that his body exists without a soul and mind. For if it were so, who was speaking when he said: "The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep" (John 10)? And if he had assumed only human flesh, why did he say during the passion, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26)?

Therefore it is to be known that the sacrament of human condition exhibits temperance in every way, having taken on a perfect likeness of our condition; it neither took on only flesh, nor an irrational soul, and without sensation, but uniting its whole body and whole soul, it demonstrated a perfect man in itself, so that it could offer salvation to all men in and of itself; also, having fellowship with us, who were made of earth, it did not bring down flesh from heaven, nor coupled with its body the soul which had existed before and had been created before His flesh, as the disciples of Origen endeavor to teach. For if the soul of the Savior, before He took on human flesh, had dwelt in the heavenly regions, and was not yet the soul of the Lord, it is most impious to say that it was there before the Lord's body, doing something and meriting praise, and later transformed into His soul. Another thing is, if they can teach from the Scriptures that before being born of Mary, the Word of God had this soul, and before the assumption of the flesh, that soul was named. But if they are compelled by the authority of the Scriptures and reason itself to accept it, they are clearly convinced that Christ did not have a soul before being born of Mary (for in the assumption of man, his soul was also taken). But let those who are frenzied by the impiety of new doctrines cease. Following the rule of the Scriptures, we boldly proclaim with all our heart that neither his flesh nor his soul existed before he was born of Mary. Nor was the soul dwelling in heaven before it was united to God after: for nothing of our condition that comes from heaven did the Lord bring away with him. Therefore, cutting off with the Gospel scythe whatever is contrary to the truth, it says: Every plant that my heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted (Matthew 15:13). The word by action, completing its threat in its end, and by fulfilling the power of its words with the fulfillment of things, so that the truth of actions might exhibit whatever promise had been made by speech.

9. Origen is attacked. Therefore let those who follow Origen, like someone who tells tales of the legends of the poets, know that they cannot celebrate the Lord's Passion with us. They boast that they have Origen as their master and leader of every heresy and error. Though he wrote countless books and even bequeathed to the world an inheritance of destructive loquacity, we know that the law forbids us to appoint a foreigner over us, for he is not our brother (Deuteronomy 17:15). For whoever has strayed from the regulations of the apostles along a different path, he is thrown out of the solemnity of Christ, as unworthy and profane to the choir of Christ and the fellowship of His mysteries: he is driven far away by the fathers and elders who founded the Church of the Savior because he has tried to sew old and worn out rags of philosophers onto a new and firm garment of the Church, and to mix falsehood with the truth so that his weakness may be made stronger by their presence, and this beauty may be defiled.

10. The principal heresies of Origen. - For what reason led him to lift the truth through the shadows of allegories and the empty images of the Scriptures, and what order of discussions led him? Who taught the Prophet to feel that God was compelled to create bodies because of the ruin and fall of souls from heaven? Who, according to the blessed Luke (chap. 1, v. 2), gave this to teach for

negligence and motion and flow from higher rational creatures to provoke God to make the diversity of this world? Although Moses, explaining its creation, did not indicate (alternatively, judge) the sensible things of rational beings, invisible things of visible things, or worse things due to some previous causes, which Origen clearly preaches. For he says that the world began on account of the sins of intelligent creatures; unwilling to celebrate Easter with the saints, nor to say with Paul: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1); nor to rave like the Prophet: "I have considered thy works and wondered." For the beauty of the world could not have subsisted otherwise, unless it were filled with the various adornments of creatures. Finally, the sun and the moon, those two great lights, and the other stars, before they existed in what their daily course witnesses them created, were not without bodies, nor did they leave behind their pristine simplicity for any reasons, but were surrounded by bodies, like someone who might dream up doctrines contrary to the faith. Neither did souls sin in the regions of heaven, and therefore they were not relegated to bodies. For if this were so, the Savior should not have taken on his body, and he ought to have freed the souls from the bodies at the time he forgave sins in baptism; he should immediately have freed the baptized from the bonds of the body, which remembers the condemnation of sin caused by sins. But it promises the resurrection of the body to no purpose if the souls fly away lightly to heaven without the weight of the body. He himself also, when he rose again, ought not to have raised his flesh, but only to have united his soul to the divinity, if it is better to live without bodies than with bodies.

11. About bodies. But what does it mean to often preach about souls being bound to bodies, divided from them, and to bring us many deaths? Ignorant that Christ came for this reason: not to release souls from bodies after resurrection, or to once again clothe them in other bodies, and as they descended from the regions of the sky, to clothe them in blood and flesh; but to grant bodies once resurrected with incorruption and eternity. For just as Christ, having died, will never die again, nor will death have dominion over him; so also, the bodies raised up after the resurrection will not die again or perish frequently, nor will death have dominion over them, nor will they be dissolved into nothing; for the coming of Christ has saved (past tense) the whole person.

12. About Angels. - But the fact that Origen does not attribute the Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Thrones, and Dominions to being created from the beginning, but rather that they were made worthy of some honor after their creation, and having fallen to lower things with their brethren due to negligence, they were named by distinguished names: so (according to his error) God did not create them as Principalities and Powers, and the rest: but the sins of others gave them the opportunity for glory. And just as the Apostle Paul writes: "All things were created in Christ, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created through Him and in Him, and He is before all things (Colossians 1);" if he understood the power of the word by which it is said: "All things were created," he would certainly know that they were created so from the beginning, and not that they fell by the laziness of others, and that their downfall provided God with an occasion for naming those Principalities, and Powers, and other Virtues: especially since the beauty of creatures consists in the order of dignities. For just as it is written of the sun and the moon, and the stars: "God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; and the stars; and He placed them in the firmament of the heaven, to shine upon the earth" (Gen. 1), nor do we believe

that Principalities and Powers, which are established in the regions of the heavens, have made progress after they were created by good works, but rather they were created that way from the beginning; nor do we imitate the error of Origen and his disciples, who think that the Principalities and Powers, the Virtues and the Thrones, and the Dominions, assumed these names and offices of their own will, after their creation, by doing something good, so that they, who had fallen to lower things, might be raised up to high things, and be distinguished by these names, having afterwards what they had not had before. Those who speak do not understand, Paul is speaking of the opposite, created in Christ are principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions. However, it is not doubted that they were created from the beginning, and did not receive such titles later on.

13. On the Holy Spirit.- But let it suffice to have briefly stated these views. Let us pass on to another impious assertion which he vomits forth out of the deepest gulf of impiety, and which has left upon the world the most infamous of all memories of himself. He says that the Holy Spirit does not work upon inanimate objects or descend to irrational creatures. And yet he does not reflect that by this assertion he denies that the mystical waters of baptism are consecrated by the advent of the Holy Spirit, and that the bread of the Lord, namely, that which shows forth the body of the Savior, and which we break for the sanctification of ourselves, and that also the sacred cup, although they are entirely inanimate and placed upon the table of the Church, are sanctified by the invocation and the advent of the Holy Spirit. If the strength of the Holy Spirit does not reach irrational and soulless things, why does David sing: Where shall I go from your Spirit? (Ps. 1. 38.8)? By saying this, he shows that everything is contained in the Holy Spirit and surrounded by his majesty: if everything is in everything, surely even irrational and soulless things are. And where we read: the Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world (Wis. 1. 7). That which Scripture never mentioned, except irrational and inanimate things, and were filled with its divine will. But he is not content with the end of blasphemy, but, like lunatics who demonstrate their madness with the grinding of their teeth and the spitting of their saliva, he again belches forth and says that the Son of God, that is, reason (the Word), and his speech, and power, arrive only at those things which are rational. Upon hearing this, I wonder where he got it from or how he does not know how to read: All things were made through Him (John 1) : from which it is approved, to attain all the strength of the Word of God. Perhaps he forgot the story of Lazarus, raised by the power of Christ, whose body at that time, when it rose from death to life, lacked reason, just as it lacked the soul. He was ignorant also of that (story) in which five loaves fed five thousand men, besides women and children, and there remained 12 baskets of fragments (Matthew 14). This truly was the work of Christ's power. I believe he did not remember that miracle of his, when he, treading with divine foot upon the irrational waves of the sea, restored calm to the sailors. This miracle was wrought by the power of Christ Himself, and by no other's command. Therefore, how does he not tremble with his entire heart and mind and body, saying that the strength of the Word of God cannot reach irrational creatures? And he who boasts of himself in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and thinks that he has read as much as no man has read, let him know that the scripture says that the sick were carried on beds and laid in the streets and alleys, that Peter's shadow might fall on them and heal them (Acts 5), which the sacred Acts of the Apostles attest, which show the folly of Origen, by which he is convicted of saying that the Apostles made their shadow do it, which he testifies that the Son of God, the Word of God, could not do.

14. Concerning the Providence of God. - Being deceived by a similar mistake and not knowing what he was talking about, he is of those who do not want to admit that the providence of God extends to all creatures and descends to the lower levels of the world, but only dwells in the regions of the heavens, so that what the strength of the Savior could not accomplish was done by the shade of Peter. But let us also come to this: For the Apostle, clearly proclaiming about the firstborn Son of God, says, "Let each one understand this in us, what is also in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not account equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Phil. 2): he dared to say that the soul of the Savior emptied itself and took on the form of a servant, so that John may be believed to have lied when he said, "And the Word became flesh" (John 1), attributing our Savior to a condition like ours, when it is not he who emptied himself and took on the form of a servant, but it was his soul; and by his impiety dissolving the faith, which is established by the confession of all. For if the soul of the Savior is what was in the form of God, and equal to God, according to the insanity of Origen, but the Son of God is equal to God, and what is equal to God is shown to be of the same substance, the order of our debate leads us to believe that the soul and God are of one nature. And when he says this, it follows that he contends that our souls are not of a nature separate from God (and it is without doubt that our souls and the soul of the Savior are of the same substance), so that they are now the product and creation of one nature. And how, if the souls of men are of the same substance as the Creator, were all things created in Christ? But it is not so, brethren, neither is the soul of the Savior of the same substance, for the Son of God, when He was in the form of God and equal to God, emptied Himself, taking on the form of a servant. But Origen, sunk into the depths of impiety, does not understand that he is a partaker with the Gentiles, who worship idols as God: "For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man" (Rom. 1.); and falling into the same error, he is deceived in like manner; for by affirming that the soul of the Savior is in the form and equality of God, he is equal to the impiety of the heathen, as has been stated above. For just as they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man's image, saying that there were gods who were not; so also this one changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of his form and claimed that the Savior's soul, which was created, was of equal status; and he emptied it out and did not come to earthly things as the authority of the Apostles affirms, unlike the Word of God.

15. He is not abashed, being forgetful of himself from much speaking, and he calls the soul of man not so much from the beginning of its condition, but because it has taken on the coldness of neglect and unfaithfulness from what it was before, mind and senses. This etymology is more suitable to the Greek rather than the Latin language. But if the Savior asserts that the soul is equal to God and is in His form, then it has received the name by adoption of love and it has lost the dignity of its previous name. For it is a general discussion that the souls of men are called such because they have lost the heat of their former fervor. Therefore, if all souls, having regained their coolness, are called forth, and if one confesses that one has had a Savior of the soul, it follows that one must say of one's mind and intellect that they have migrated to this type of term. Although it is not spoken of in everyday conversation and the wicked can repress their insanity, the statement itself is compelled by necessity, which ties the following to what has already been said in order. For either he must deny that the Savior had a soul, to come most plainly against the authority of the Gospels, or if he cannot speak contrary to himself, he will also confess that this

thing, called a soul, is from the coldness of charity taken in mind and understanding; for all souls who have departed from God and have lost the warmth of divine love are reckoned cold. Who would not believe that he is satisfied with this end of sacrilege?

16. Another time he connects a calumny against the Son of God, and speaks these words. As the Father and the Son are one, so the soul which the Son assumed, and the Son of God Himself, are one. Nor does he understand that the Father and the Son are one in essence and the same divinity, but that the Son of God and his soul are of different and widely-distant natures. For if as the Father and the Son are one, so the soul of the Son and the Son Himself are one, the Father will be one with the soul of the Saviour, and He Himself may say: He that sees me, sees the Father also. (John 14:9) But this is not so: let this be far from the ecclesiastical faith. For the Son and the Father are one, because there is not a different nature between them; however, the soul and the Son of God differ in nature and substance from each other, and because it was also created by the Son, it is of our condition and nature. For if, just as the Father and the Son are one, so is the soul of the Son of God and the Son himself, there will be one, as we have already said, the soul and God the Father; and it will be believed that the soul of the Savior is the splendor of His glory and the form of His substance. But to say this is impious and blasphemous. Therefore, it is an act of impiety to say that the Son and his soul are one, and to deny that the Father and the Son are one. Moreover, speaking against himself, he says: "The soul which is troubled and saddened" (Mark 14:34), was not himself the only-begotten and first-born of every creature, nor the Word of God, which transcends the condition of the soul, and truly speaks of the Son of God in the Gospel: "I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it again" (John 10:18). Therefore, if the Son of God is better and more powerful than his soul, which is beyond doubt, how could his soul be in the form of God and equal to God when he says that he emptied himself and took on the form of a servant; he thus surpasses all heretics in the magnitude of his blasphemy. For if the Word of God is in the form of God and equal to God, and if the soul of the Savior is in the form of God and equal to him, how can one be greater and the other lesser among equals? Indeed, those things which belong to a lower nature testify to a higher nature and substance by their own degradation.

17. This blasphemy is not enough for him, but he runs his chariot of foolishness across the rivers of Ethiopia, and again, raging, boasts that God created as many reasonable creatures as he was able to govern, so that he might compare the power of God to the weakness of man and the other things which He created. For in the human body, his strength sustains and rules as many limbs as he is able to infuse with life, and he bestows upon us that moderation which he is able by his presence to rule, and he supports it by so much virtue as the limbs of man are able to bear. But God, who created these things, is greater, since in creation he provided a measure greater than what the order of things demanded, and he is more able than what has been created can contain. But he, the pillar of truth, affirms that the strength of God is limitable, and less than the arts of humans. For builders of stones, and those who excel in the knowledge of constructing buildings, can build greater things than they have built, provided that they are able to support the foundations on which these structures will be built; and the creation of thought is not the end of the arts. And when they have accomplished works as great as the necessity of things demanded, and they have a measure beyond which, if anything had been built, it would be found unbecoming and useless, the art itself contains more in the mind than it has shown in the work: nor is there any end of things

imposed upon science; yet, if, as I have said, whatever the mind has conceived and thought on the grandeur of the works has expanded, the things that are subject to it can bear it. And how impious is it not to impose an end on human art, nor to compare the knowledge of artisans to their works; and to say that God has made as great things as rational creatures, as much as he was able? Let the impious, therefore, hear and learn: The power of God is not so great as is said to have made rational creatures, but imposing a measure on the works beyond what they could be, and determining the number of things by his own art of disposition, himself is not held by measure and number. From which it clearly appears that he did not do as much as he could, but rather only as much virtue as the necessity of circumstances required. Let us assume an example to make what we say more manifest. If a wealthy father of the family wishes to invite guests to supper, and to offer them a feast so lavish as to satisfy their appetites, the wealthy host could not have as much food as they might eat or as much as had been prepared for them; but he offered them what was demanded by the dignity of the occasion. Thus also the Almighty God, surpassing the example of comparison, did not create creatures as great as He could, but those as great as it was right to create. But he weaves a germ of verboseness and responds, saying: God has made as much as He could comprehend, and He has subjected it to Himself and governs it by His providence. Does he not hear the Prophet saying, "Behold the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are counted as the dust on the scales; behold He takes up the coastlands like fine dust...To whom then will you liken God?" (Isaiah 40:15, 18); Again: "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?" (Isaiah 40:12) If the water is measured with a hand, and the heavens with a span, and all the earth in a measure, by comparison with the strength of God ■■(which, however, are said metaphorically, so that the baseness of what was done is proven by the magnificence of the Maker, for God was not composed of diverse members), how can it be said that He has made as much as He could by His own power?

18. We should strive to complete what we have begun and more fully explain our meaning. 'If all nations were considered as though from a bucket and as though from the balance they were weighed and as saliva they were reckoned:' by means of these words the cheapness and insignificance of all creatures is demonstrated so that the incomparable sublimity of God appears; therefore His power also is reckoned as if from a bucket and as if from the balance and as if from the saliva of a man, if, according to Origen, He made things as great as His own power could comprehend; and necessity demands that the power of God equals the number and measure of the things He created, if God could not make greater things than those He made. But I do not believe anyone, I do not say man but even the demons, would dare to imagine these things about God which Origen both perceived and wrote, that God made as much matter as He could adorn and divide into forms of things. The one who perceives this should learn from us again that God did not make things as great as he was able to; rather, God fashioned things in accordance with the measure that the order of things required, possessing much greater skill and power than what has been made in number and measure. And let him know that this can be confirmed by the testimonies of the prophets, from which one says: 'His strength covered the heavens,' and another cries out: 'But he made the earth as nothing.' They preach that the power of God in what has been made is greater. Furthermore, what he said: "he made the earth as if it were nothing" the Apostle, interpreting from all creatures speaks: Who calls things that are not as though they are (Rom. 4). So that we may learn from these words, the strength of God is greater than those things that were

made by him. And he is not ashamed against the strength of God to dispute, saying that God can only do as much as the material he is given to work with! And he does not understand that there is a different nature of the created things, and a different nature of God, the creator; nor that the material from which something is made is not as powerful as the one who shapes it: for the power and condition of diverse substances are diverse.

19. Therefore, if they want to celebrate the Lord's Pascha with the Church, those who prefer the delusions of Origen to the authority of the Scriptures should listen to God crying out: And I did not show that to you so that you would walk after it: And the Prophet tearfully reminding them: O flee from the land of the north, says the Lord, for I will gather you from the four winds, and you will be saved in Zion, you who dwell as the daughter of Babylon (Zech. 2.). Let those leaving the darkness of error and the cold of ignorance, join with the studies of the wise, and turn to the rising sun of justice, and those dwelling in the warmest region of heaven, which is felt in the fervor of the Scriptures, may seek out the pastors of the church, despising the madness of Origen, and say: Where is he who is born king of the Jews (Matth. 2. 2)? When they have found him lying in the manger, with humble language of the Scriptures, let them offer him gold, and frankincense, and myrrh: that is, proven faith and shining with every splendor of truth, the fragrance of good conversation and continence, drying up the indulgence of pleasure and the incentive of fleshly pursuits. For those who, after frequent warnings, contradict the ecclesiastical faith, are held back by a twofold weakness, wickedness and incompetence, and turned entirely to earthly things like serpents, adhering to the ground and preferring evil to good, they do not know the difference between vices and virtues, and they disdain and reject remedies for their correction and healing found in the Holy Scriptures, enduring the aversion to truth like pregnant women who reject their usual food and pursue harmful things, nor are they able to direct the clear light of the soul to the rays of truth, despising ecclesiastical discipline and rolling like pigs in the mire, and they reject precious ointments. But it is just, that at least from the examples which we infer they may receive health. For just as eye-offending speck causes blearyness, and fever depopulates the whole body, so too rust gradually consumes brass and iron, in the same way the noxious contagion of perverse doctrines violates the beauty of souls neglectful of truth, and dyes it with the pallor of lies. I beg you, brothers, to forgive me for causing you pain, by bringing wicked doctrines into the light. Although we have passed through the rivers of Babylon, to persuade the captives residing there to go to the celebration in Jerusalem, we ourselves were not affected by captivity, spreading the sails of the Scriptures with favourable winds. Neither did the swelling whirlpools of heretical doctrines overwhelm us, nor did the storm of lies frighten us, nor did the torrents of wickedness drag us away in the midst of their sea, where, as the Psalmist sings, "there are reptiles without number" (Ps. 103:25) and the devil Dragon lives, an animal most venomous, yielding itself to the sport of saints; nor, to sum up everything briefly, could the blasts of winds rising from every quarter have overthrown the ecclesiastical ship or covered over with a savage whirlwind the oar of our studies. And with the Savior Lord, like his disciples, we sailed across, and entering the port of rest, we embrace the most beautiful shore of divine writings; gathering various flowers of knowledge, and fixing with eager kisses the limbs of wisdom, we cling to her embrace, and if the Lord permits, living with her, and persevering in her love, we will sing: I was a lover of her beauty (Wisdom 8). For as many as diligently read the Holy Scriptures, and roam through the heavenly meadows of painted words, enjoy this blessing. But those who, leaving behind the strength of the Lord's solemnity, cross over to desert places, endure the hostile attacks of demons according to the

manner of cities without walls.

20. Therefore, celebrating the upcoming festivals, let us understand ourselves and all that belongs to us; and let us embrace knowledge and our rational soul, as a mother, with all zeal, having the root of speech, and the notion of knowledge and reason, but speech, so to speak, as a vestibule of the work. Furthermore, the work of speech and knowledge is a perfect roofed building, and the firmest pinnacle of the house is placed. For speech, reason, knowledge, and faith without work are empty and unstable. And so that we might seem to take something from that doctrine for the benefit of those who are trained in the arts of dialectic; just as if we connect a word to a name, a perfect sense is made, and if there is only a word, or a name without a word, there is absolutely nothing that is said; and so knowledge without action, and action without faith, are weak and perishable; and, on the contrary, knowledge coupled with action is the indication of perfect virtue. For unspoken thought of the mind is its secret, which, when brought forth by outwardly resonant language, expresses the sentiment of the mind. And when the word has been brought to completion, an end is imposed upon our knowledge and thought. Moreover, we shall give an account of our thought, word, and deed at the judgment, with our thoughts accusing or defending themselves, on the day when God shall judge the hidden things of humanity through Jesus Christ, as Paul the Apostle writes.

21. As it is, with the approaching feast of the Lord, let us say to those whom the error of Origen involves and holds captive by deception: Flee from the midst of Babylon, and save each one his own soul. (Jeremiah 51) For although according to the prophecy of the prophet, Babylon is said to be a golden cup, and it surpasses the beauty of truth in composition and charm of words, and transforms itself into an Angel of light: nevertheless it must be known that whoever drinks of its wine is moved and falls, and is worthy of mourning in contrition. But we, resisting deadly disturbances, hold our soul within the wall of discipline, and we protect its freedom by the daily exercise of virtues. For just as bought slaves who are called both servants and whip-bearers of those who paid the price for them, so those who have sold their souls to diverse desires are called slaves of those to whom they have surrendered, and they obey them as if they were cruel masters. When even the correctors of their error, with rigid brow, disdain and defend folly by their rashness, they are ignorant that audacity is nothing other, as it appears to me, than sentiment without sense and thought, fleeing far from itself the governing mind of disturbances. And when such a soul has been deprived of a safeguard, it is carried headlong into the abyss of impiety, and, as if by some bitter flow, it darkens the light of the mind and surrounds its eye with the impenetrable darkness of night.

22. Those who delight in the errors of Origen should not hope for the shouts of Easter, nor seek ointments, gold, and pearls in the mud, nor tear their mother, the Church, who bore and nourished them, into small pieces in great cities, those who sometimes surpass us with hatred because of him and his disciples among the Gentiles and heap curses on us in their love for them, and besiege the gates of the rich, nor are they afraid to listen with the Jews: I have begotten and exalted children, but they have despised me (Isaiah 1). They who seem to me to be ignorant of every word of truth, not having a foundation, though for a time they may attract a listener, so that he may suppose to be true what is not true, will gradually dissolve and be reduced to nothing; and the entire sentiment, which is brought forth in the manner of a torrent from the worst mind, will overwhelm its author, and the letters and syllables with which it was composed will be lost, without

meaning or sound, and left with no image, and will strike the bearer like the most deadly serpent, and will immediately retract its head and, as if decaying and coming to nothing, consume him in the depths of his mind. For the end of lies is destruction. Those who used to boast of themselves as lovers of solitude, at least build a small room to conceal their curses, above the lips of their frenzy, not with the holy stones of Jerusalem, but with the rough stones of Babylon, which, unsupported, and uneven, are going to collapse and support the walls of the house. Although they are commended by their hatred of the Gentiles with effeminate ears, and they criticize us for the discipline of the Church, and they abuse our patience, as if it were a kind of rashness, nevertheless, let them sometimes be silent and rest, and let them hear the Prophet saying: Refrain your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit (Psalm 34:13). And let them desire to understand those things which are worthy of a holy life, and not grieve the leader and ruler of the Church, God.

23. But I beseech you, brethren, that we jointly pray for them, and say with a prophetic voice: Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes? And I will weep day and night for the wounds of the daughter of my people (Jeremiah 9): beseeching the mercy of God, that he may free them from the error in which they are bound; and that they may exchange hatred, with which they madly rage against us, for love. Therefore we, forgetting the injuries inflicted on us, desire most indulgently to receive them in our embrace, and we consider their health and conversion to God as our own health and glory. And if they cannot be cured otherwise, unless by our humility, we shall voluntarily satisfy them; we have inflicted no injuries upon them, we have harmed no one, although they are angry and raging against the remedies of the Church, which restore health to the wounded. We speak what we know and what we have learned; praying that those who despise the rules of the Church may receive the pattern of truth, and not lose the benefit of repentance because of the confusion of men, by which they are often difficult to correct. And now we say, and we have said before, and we frequently urge the same, that we do not want them to wander or to stray through foreign provinces, but we shout with the Prophet to those who are outsiders and raving, and we say: Save yourselves from the earth, and return, and do not stand: remember those who are far from the Lord, and let Jerusalem rise up over your heart. (Jeremiah 51:50)

24. Perhaps hearing this, the love of the church congregation may occur and they may remember the communal joy of brotherhood and the hymns, which they sang with others to the Lord, and change the cold of hatred into the warmth of love, and understand that we are doctors, not enemies, the most indulgent fathers, not swelling with hostile pride. For it cannot happen that whom we wish to be saved, we desire to perish, and that the ecclesiastical rod not be turned into a staff for them: if indeed they will want to abandon error and follow the truth, and abandon the recklessness of lewd boys. But if they reject her, and despising ecclesiastical discipline, lift up their horn against her rules, and spurning salutary counsels, throw themselves backward, let them hear the Lord threatening: The man who acts with pride, so as not to listen to the priest who stands to minister in the name of your God, or to the judge, whoever he may be in those days, will die, and you will take away evil from Israel, and all the people hearing will fear, and they will no longer act impiously. (Deuteronomy 17:12) But lest we be preoccupied with the care of the wounded, and forgetful of our own selves, and neglectful of them, and accordingly as it is written, "Preaching to others, we ourselves shall be reprobates" (1 Cor. 9), let us remind those who are standing, to

beware lest, while they reach forth a helping hand to the fallen, they themselves fall, and let them be careful to observe the ecclesiastical discipline, lest they should be afraid of the judgment to come.

25. Therefore, celebrating the Lord's Passover, let us purify ourselves with the holy speech of the Scriptures and, looking towards the trophies of the Savior, let us remove all obstacles by which the course of our life is delayed. Avoiding avarice as the worst usurer, let us strangle the desire for vain glory like an insatiable beast, and with a cautious mind let us avoid the flattering and slippery serpent of fornication. If ever a prosperous breeze of circumstances has come to us, let us mitigate the swelling of the soul with humility and meekness. If adverse winds blow, we will raise up our discouraged and fallen spirit with strength, and we will be accusers of our own sins: so that, knowing ourselves, we may correct ourselves, and, by constant meditation, recover the freedom of the soul's virtues, which has been oppressed by vices. Therefore, being placed in the struggle and sweat and labor of the present, preparing for ourselves the future glory of the heavenly celebration, before we stand before the tribunal of Christ, let us correct our past sins with repentance: with present weeping, let us redeem future joys, and let us repel the harmful bees of sins, like stingers of conscience, reserving full hives with wax and honey. Let us cure the wounds of various vices and curb the plundering of the rich, which especially captivates this race of people, with frequent admonitions. And thus we will be able to begin the journey of imminent fasting. The days of Lent begin on the thirtieth day of the month of Mechir. And a holy week of Easter we shall celebrate on the fifth day of the month of Pharmuthi, ending the fast according to Gospel traditions on the evening of the Sabbath of the tenth day of Pharmuthi. And as soon as it dawns to the Lord's day, let us celebrate the feast day on the eleventh day of the same month, joining together the other seven weeks of holy Pentecost. So that we, who confess the one divinity of the Trinity, may receive rewards in heaven with Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom and with whom, to God the Father be glory and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, forever and ever, Amen.

26. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All who are with me greet you. And we write this by necessity so that you may know that those Bishops who have fallen asleep in the Lord, and were ordained in Lemnos for Hero, in Erythrum for Sabbatius, in Omboes for Sylvanus, are counted among the saints and the blessed. Therefore, write to them and receive from them peaceful letters, according to ecclesiastical customs.

Letters - letter_099

Letter 99. To Theophilus.

Jerome forwards to Theophilus a translation of the latter's paschal letter for 404 a.d. and apologizes for his delay in sending it, on the ground that ill-health and grief for the death of Paula have prevented him from doing literary work. The date of the letter is 404 a.d. To the most blessed pope Theophilus, Jerome.

1. From the time that I received the letters of your holiness together with the paschal treatise¹ until the present day I have been so harassed with sorrow and mourning, with anxiety, and with the different reports which have come from all quarters concerning the condition of the church, that I have hardly been able to turn your volume into Latin. You know the truth of the old saying, grief chokes utterance; and it is more than ever true when to sickness of the mind is added sickness of the body. I have now been five days in bed in a burning fever: consequently it is only by using the greatest haste that I can dictate this very letter. But I wish to shew your holiness in a few words what pains I have taken, in translating your treatise, to transfer the charm of diction which marks every sentence in the original, and to make the style of the Latin correspond in some degree with that of the Greek.

2. At the outset you use the language of philosophy; and, without appearing to particularize, you slay one² while you instruct all. In the remaining sections—a task most difficult of accomplishment—you combine philosophy and rhetoric and draw together for us Demosthenes and Plato. What diatribes you have launched against self-indulgence! What eulogies you have bestowed upon the virtue of continence! With what secret stores of wisdom you have spoken of the interchange of day and night, the course of the moon, the laws of the sun, the nature of our world; always appealing to the authority of scripture lest in a paschal treatise you should appear to have borrowed anything from secular sources! To be brief, I am afraid to praise you for these things lest I should be charged with offering flattery. The book is excellent both in the philosophical portions and where, without making personal attacks, you plead the cause which you have espoused. Wherefore, I beseech you, pardon me my backwardness: I have been so completely overcome by the falling asleep of the holy and venerable Paula³ that except my translation of this book I have hitherto written nothing bearing on sacred subjects. As you yourself know, I have suddenly lost the comforter whom I have led about with me, not—the Lord is my witness—to minister to my own needs, but for the relief and refreshment of the saints upon whom she has waited with all diligence. Your holy and estimable daughter Eustochium (who refuses to be comforted for the loss of her mother), and with her all the brotherhood humbly salute you. Kindly send me the books which you say that you have lately written that I may translate them or, if not that, at least read them. Farewell in Christ.

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Letter C

2: Origen 3: See Letter CVIII

Letters - letter_100

Letter 100. From Theophilus. A translation by Jerome of Theophilus's paschal letter for 404 a.d. In it Theophilus inculcates penitence for sinners, recommends the practice of fasting and condemns the errors of Origen.

Overview: You must cease from sins, having initiated a routine of virtues, by which the mind is prepared for celebrating Easter. The observance of Lent is holy, both for the sake of fasting and for the sake of a true faith in God. We must also reject the errors of Origen before Easter Sunday, and suppress avarice while joining together in love for God and our neighbors. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. Now also the living wisdom of God calls us to celebrate the holy Easter, desiring all of us to be participants therein: wherefore I hasten running at that with a step, fasting and continence, and every affliction of the body contending against the industry of the adversaries of virtues, let us reduce our pleasures to nothing, supported by the help of the Savior: and we, confessing our sins simply to God, who can heal, fear the true judgement of conscience, that with David clamoring and saying: remember not the sins of my youth and my ignorance: be mindful of me according to your mercy (Ps 27.7); we will consume with terror of eternal fire, the growing vices: of which the end is, to do nothing beyond them, and the beginning of salvation, the forgetting of our past. For just as the beginning of a good life's way (of life), is to do just things, thus the beginning of those who have ceased sinning is to restrain their impulses, while they are checked either by reason or by fear so that they don't fall into headlong destruction. And whenever the recollection of the law has been brought to mind, they immediately flee and halting no longer, they come to the camp of triumphant virtues, gradually retracing their steps and turning towards the judgment of the wise, they dissolve away like smoke into nothingness. Difficult are the cures for afflictions which have not immediately been suppressed as they began to grow: the eradication of such maladies is easy, when those who recently sinned are converted by penitence to prudence, and who have found profit in repenting at the end of their sins. For we cannot suppress the incentives of vices, unless we have started to make virtues, or the old ones will cease before they are excluded from the new works. And just as if we firmly resist the coming pleasures, past sins are erased, so if we persevere in forgetting the past, future sins will no longer be able to grow beyond. Indeed, the operators of the evils, as if bringing into their domain those who can prohibit them but do not, are wholly insane indulging in sin, and dragging silence into sense, they strive to fulfill whatever desire suggests to the mind. The liberty of present vices breeds future vices: and if you have neglected the past, it is the source and seedbed of the future.

2. Sins must be prohibited. Since it is so, those who can prohibit sin and hide from work and remain silent become accomplices to the increase of evil, even as they are in the right judgment of those who are authors of wickedness and who will pay the penalty of sloth. They have preferred irrational leisure, culpable quiet, to severities that cut off vice in the sweat of their brow. For, if we turn away from vices, they will completely perish, and their fraudulent sweetness will dry up. Every

impulse of pleasure, so to speak, will become torpid: for our mind will be a seat of virtue. The remembrance of the law does not allow sins to be generated, nor does it permit them to grow; and when they have thought of the future judgment seat and the fearsome day of judgment, then it will prohibit the beginning, middle, and end of sin, and it will dry up the bitter waves and swelling whirlpools all the way to the source, and it will dry up the veins; virtue accompanied by the law will crush the seeds of vices, and it will raise the mind from humble things to lofty ones. On the contrary, vices, unless they are restrained, flourish, and when they become obedient to themselves, they drag themselves down to hell; and once they have taken possession of souls, they oppress them with the allurements of pleasures and do not allow them to look up to heaven, or to stand erect like human bodies, but like beasts, they lean towards earthly things. Of whom the Psalmist testifies, saying, "They have called their names in their lands" (Psalm 48).

3. Those who must get rid of vices. Let someone say, what must those do who, feeling that they have sinned, desire to change their sins for virtues, and scorn worse things in love of better things? Let them hear Moses speaking in this manner: Have you sinned? Stop, subverting previous sins with the cessation of vices, and correcting vices with the most powerful remedy; turn away the sweet allurements of wicked living and the enticing pleasures of the body, as if they were harmful poisons. Do not enter the slippery and soft path of pleasure; for fasting and continence seize a celebration, and we can barely change bad things with good things, laboring and sweating, and suppressing opposing pleasures. There are few who keep the way of truth, while wickedness uses innumerable ways to harm and cannot be conquered unless we are supported from above by the help of wisdom, calling out to us and saying: Do not be afraid, for I am with you (Gen. 26,24). It is the destruction of evil to not commit further wrongs: the root of vices is to despise the learned precepts of the law. As negligence bears the fruit of sins, so solicitude produces virtues. A guarded law drives away disgrace, but one neglected gives birth to punishment; and however, if it is despised, it imitates the ferocity of the strict judge, so much it exhibits the gentleness of the kindest father if it is preserved. Therefore, the cessation of sin is the beginning of virtue. The study of past, present, and future defects in the law is an unwearied medicine: when it has obtained security for its possessor, it is free from all disturbances. For wisdom works good in us: after we have given her a dwelling place in our hearts and turned our thoughts into deeds. And there is no doubt that in either direction, whether to do or not to do good, we have the free capacity, and when the wicked are oppressed, the right things are born: then the chorus of virtues sings together, when there is solitude of vices in the souls. For just as self-restraint holding domination in our bodies, prevents the birth of weaknesses, and neither weakens nor kills its lovers, restoring past illnesses into their original health, and expelling that which is against nature, it restores that which is congruous with nature, so that the rational order of this life might be preserved with an equal balance: so the soul, preserving the orders of the laws, as much as human nature is capable of receiving, is separated from the contagion of evils, and, being worried in every part and inspecting itself, allows nothing to come in that is contrary to brilliant thoughts. Instead indeed, he who has turned to the temple of God, continually delights in the heavenly solemnity, having riches, observing the law, which raises up those who are lying down, punishing the wicked, correcting others, and always crying out: Will he who has fallen not rise again? Or he who is turned away, will he not return? [Jeremiah 8] He bestows hope of salvation to the repentant: while he advises, so that it may be of benefit: he rebukes, so that he may correct: and by casting the shame of former sins upon the sinner, he compels them to seek better things: which no one can desire unless they have first condemned

the wounds of their conscience.

4. However, because the law aims to bring back those who are neglecting themselves and sinking in the best of plans into a better way of life, as a standard of wicked works, it does not allow them to be without reward or to be oppressed by eternal tribulations who obey it; as many of us as celebrate holy Easter let us make the bringer of the Law our friend through continence and fasts, the Prophet promising these things to those who celebrate Easter: You will be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a diadem of the kingdom in the hand of your God (Isai. 62.3). Let us seek a rich banquet of virtues, adorning ourselves with knowledge of Scripture, as if with festive garments. Let us prepare holy kisses, rejoicing with the Angels in Heaven, fleeing all negligence, and breaking delay, so that we may go eagerly with disciples to our Saviour, and say to Him, "Where will You have us prepare the Passover for You?" (Matthew 26) And ((al. ut.)) situated (there) in the heavenly chamber, and making the mystical Passover, we will be able to sing: "How lovely are your dwelling places, O Lord of hosts!" (Psalm 84:1) For there we shall find the choirs of Angels, and celebrating feasts with them, we will have them as companions in the mysteries of God, and we will rejoice with indescribable joy, learning the sacraments of wisdom with them, where there is no deception of fraud, where he who does not have the wedding garment is forbidden to enter the feast, although he may boast of being just in the present world. "All things there are full of the wisdom of the aging and advanced: and according to the Prophet, no immature wisdom will be found there. For, he says, a youth of 100 years shall be there, showing the magnitude of perfect knowledge. Therefore, brothers and sisters, sharing in the holy and heavenly calling, let us hear the Savior crying out through the Prophet: 'I will gather all peoples together, and they will come and see my glory, and I will set upon them the sign of the world.'" (Isaiah 65:20, 66)

5. Therefore, let us hurry to the celebration and say: But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 6). He will give joy to those who labor for him. He will bless those who fast and repent, and they will find their joy in the Lord. Love truth and peace. These are the feasts of the Lord. So, let us not live in darkness, but get rid of our evil deeds and put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in sleeping and impurities, not in contention and rivalry; but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not make provision for the flesh in its lusts (Rom. 13:12). It is just that all those purified by fear of the Lord should observe a worthy solemnity, redeeming chastity by abstinence and fasting, and arousing wakeful faith in dormant senses, and to imitate the wisest Daniel, of whom it is written: There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father knowledge and wisdom were found in him (Dan. 5. 11). For they who take care of themselves in order to make progress toward better things, having the law as their strongest guide, obey its commands and overturn the sins that come against them, illuminating the splendor of the Easter festival with their works and anticipating victory with a secure conscience, neglecting the darts of disturbance with hope. But those who are imitators of these, before entering the fray, seize the palm of victory of desire for valor and possess the crown of triumphs in heavenly things, contemplating with an unveiled face in their minds; they will be clamorous and say: Lord God, my strength, and he shall place my feet in the consummation, establishing me on high places, that I may overcome in his song.

6. And beloved brothers, let us not think the struggle is perpetual, so that we may become weary; but let us know that the end of this [struggle] is the crown of justice, which no age of centuries

corrupts. The study of this life and struggle is temporary, but those who have run with unhindered pace and have come to the end of the rewards, will find new mansions, demonstrating victory with songs. Therefore, celebrating fasts properly, since the grace of the Lord promises triumphs over the most wicked demons, let us also participate properly in the solemnity. Not at all during the days of Lent, as is the habit of luxurious rich men, let us gasp for a cup of wine, nor delight ourselves in the consumption of meats in preparing for battle, when labor and sweat is necessary. For indeed, gluttony and drunkenness, and the other allurements of this life drain the wealthiest treasure of souls, and stifle the most abundant seed of knowledge and learning with their admixture. Therefore, the Lord and Savior, calling his disciples to the rigor of continence, spoke: Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth. (Luke 21:34-35) Arise; let us go hence. (John 14:31), those who, because of their negligence, will immediately suffer punishment. But those who keep the precepts of the law, avoid drinking wine during fasting, reject eating meat, and restrain insatiable greed out of fear of God. Therefore scripture daily cries out to the temperate: "They shall not drink wine nor strong drink" (Judges 13:4,7,14). And on the other hand, the Jews hear a rebuke for their fault: "You made the prophets drink wine" (Amos 2:12). They are unable to accept correction, who are caught up in the pleasure of luxury, nor can they control the greed of their bellies with reason and advice, due to their love of gluttony and quickly perishing pleasure, they shame the pursuit of virtue, not blushing to drink wine secretly, and avoiding those who would be judges with greedy mouths, drinking mead in their bedrooms, so that they exchange hunger and fasting, which they should seek for voluntarily, for luxury and drunkenness during the time of fasting: not knowing that, even if they flee the conscience of men and eat flesh behind closed walls, and tear apart birds during Lent and approaching Easter with unclean hands, promising fasting outside with sad face, that the Lord will rebuke those with such wickedness, saying: 'These people commit great iniquities' in order to keep away from my holy ones. It is not appropriate for those fasting during times of struggle and battle to eat meat, as Scripture warns: "You shall afflict your souls" (Leviticus 16:29). Nor should you seek out fatted birds with anxious toil, and stuff their fat into your greedy throat. Do not inquire after cooks who, through skillful art, can satisfy the cravings of gluttonous stomachs by preparing meats in various tastes and flavors, with smoking dishes and the aroma of their wares tempting even the most restrained person, as different colored and flavored wines are sought after to the detriment of self-control.

7. The story of Saint Daniel teaches us, and the virtue of the three youths, to desire and honor fasting, who, to explain briefly a lengthy speech, changed their servitude to freedom, and when they should have desired the pleasures of captivity, they despised Babylonian feasts and preferred simple food to the royal table. For King Nebuchadnezzar had commanded the chief eunuch to bring into the palace from the sons of the captivity of Israel and the royal seed, boys in whom there was no blemish, handsome in body and fit to learn wisdom, to be in the king's court, to learn the scriptures and the Chaldean language, and to live on the remains of his table, and to drink his wine (Dan. 1:4-5). Therefore, from the tribe of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were chosen, who were of one mind and faith, whose nobility slavery could not change. Among them Daniel, as Scripture testifies, resolved in his heart not to be defiled by the king's table. (Ibid. 7). "Three boys also associated not only by kinship but also by religion, receive the council of men, and approve of wisdom, at the same time beseeching the prince of the eunuchs, by the merciful

help of God, they obtain what they desire, and preserve the nobility of their lineage in the land of captivity: for fearing the superintendent, lest he should attach more severe punishment to the heads of other boys, they soothe him with reason and counsel, speaking these words: Try your servants for ten days, and let us be given from the seeds, and we will eat, and we will drink water, and our faces will appear before thee, and the faces of the boys that eat of the king's table; and as thou shalt see, so do with thy servants." [Daniel 1:12] For by the mercy of God he saw even the desire for virtue sustained, and that continent and strong bodies were preserved, and faith conquered all deformity, and no wasting impaired beauty's radiance.

8. We have repeated this, most beloved brothers, in order that, knowing the words of Paul the Apostle preaching about the virtues of the saints, in which he says: Considering the end of their conversation, imitate their faith (Heb. 13.7), we may encourage those who take delight in eating meat during the time of fasting, to imitate the continence of the saints, who were not able to be overcome by force, so as to lose the rigour of virtue, who, fearing the empires of the Babylonians, showed that they despised captive pleasure, but remained free, and overcame with reason the desires of the belly, and conquered the titillating pleasures of the throat, and left us examples of their fortitude, dwelling in Babylon in their bodies, but with sense and faith dwelling with the Angels in heavenly Jerusalem, so that they may teach us throughout all ages that during the time of fasting we must abstain from wine and meat, take seeds from the earth, and drink water, with which companions chastity abounds.

9. What should I mention the remarkable victories of the Maccabees (2 Maccabees 7)? They, in order to not consume illegal meats and to avoid touching common foods, offered their bodies to torments: and are praised throughout the churches of Christ in the entire world, stronger in punishments, more passionate than the fires with which they were burned. All the ingenuities of cruelty were conquered in them, and the fortitude of those suffering overcame whatever the anger of the persecutor had come up with. Amid more fatherly punishments of the law than of the memories of pain: their entrails were torn apart, their bodies dissolved by pus and passion yet their sentence remained immobile: their spirits were free, and in hope the evil presence of the future was despised. The torturers were tired, but faith was not tired: bones were broken, and every connection of nerves and limbs was dissolved by the whirling wheel, and fires breathing death rose up to the sky; pans filled with fervent oil were there, and with incredible terror they sounded for frying the bodies of the saints; and yet, amidst all these things, they walked mentally in paradise, not feeling what they suffered, but what they eagerly desired to see. For the mind fortified by the fear of God overcomes flames, scorns various pains of torment. And once it has dedicated itself to virtue, it tramples and despises whatever adversities happen. This is how Paul was, writing: In all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him who loved us (Rom. 8:37). For what the weakness of our flesh cannot endure, the soul overcomes through natural frailty, talking to God in faith.

10. So those who fast, that is, who imitate the angelic conversation on earth, should remember the saying: 'The kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness, and joy, and peace, and gladness' (Rom. 14). Through continence, these people gain great and eternal rewards with brief and small effort, and they receive much more than they offer. They mitigate the present difficulties with the glory of the future time, as in this race for virtue, there will be an end to the struggle. For those who engage in battle against vices and dedicate their souls to the disciplines of wisdom, as

much as human nature allows, they seek knowledge of future things, perceiving the kingdoms of heaven through a mirror and image, sense and faith, and they will attain eternal rewards, which will never be closed by any end of time. Days and nights follow each other in certain intervals, gradually decreasing, what they lose, they receive, and what they receive, they give: convening twice a year in the same measure, nor do they remain in the same state, but they distinguish the moments of time by the brevity and length of hours, in order to make the diversity of seasons useful for the world. For the day borrows from its order and circle its times of night, and night again receives what it has given out; and while they each give and receive in turn, and receive back little by little what they had lost in their waning, they gradually grow full again; and so the wisdom of the Creator is interpreted. And from this reciprocal interchange of spaces of time either the month's circle of the moon is completed, or the year returns as the sun moves through its own footsteps, while always-changing and yet always-the-same times are renewed. And so the moon, created by the all-wise artifice of God, changing its forms to reach fullness and hastening to diminution, whatever it has acquired while growing, it loses when it decreases. Nor does it remain in the same state, but ascending and descending by certain degrees, it proceeds from poverty to riches and, from riches, returns to poverty, demonstrating that it is changeable and mutable by the diversity of its forms. Who, indeed, could express with fitting words the course of the sun, and the year's circle corresponding to the monthly computation or the moon's, while it revolves through the four seasons and continually returns upon itself, and ascends and descends by the same measure, and glides away by an eternal order, so that the space which the moon fills up in thirty days and nights, the course of the sun restores by the spaces of the revolving year. And when he (the sun) has reached equality of day and night, and stood for a little while on the balance of justice, he hastens toward inequality, leaving behind what he had come to. I think Ecclesiastes says this in his own book, so that we do not draw from others' wells: The spirit goes around, and returns to its own circle (Eccl. 1), signifying the annual course of the sun. For the wheel of time returns in itself, returning to where it had started.

11. But the holy and heavenly solemnity emitting the rays of its own splendor is not limited by any spaces: and when the struggles of the saints and the toil of the present age have been brought to an end, perpetual joy and eternal festival will follow. Hence, perfect men, separating their souls from every darkness of error, now proclaim their feasts: Let us enter into his gates with praise, into his courts with hymns (Psalm 94), sounding the Advent of the Savior with happy voices. For when wickedness was reigning throughout the whole world, and demons had filled human eyes with darkness, and no one could give them any help, according to what is written: "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered, and there was none to uphold" (Ps. 89), in order that impiety should at last have an end, and the fraud of idolatry destroyed, the living Word of God, leaving nothing of our likeness untouched except sin alone, which has no real existence, has been made incarnate in a new way, and, uniting Himself to us, has been made man, that He might become the Son of Man, and that, while remaining Son of God, He might make us the Sons of God. His birth of the Virgin was, indeed, believed by those of dull sight to be according to the flesh, but by the spiritual minded it was understood to be according to the Spirit. But in the works and the magnitude of the signs, the invisible God was perceived by the wise, both with the human appearance displayed, with the virtues signifying God, covered by the cheapness of servile form. Although the Jews handed him over and with impious voices shouted to have him crucified, blaspheming the Lord in the slaughter of his body, indeed by the killing of the Lord's flesh, they

became impious servants. Yet, he approached fearless towards death, in order to provide an example of virtue for us, the Lord of glory was shown in the passion itself, remaining in the majesty of impassible divinity and passable in flesh, just as Blessed Peter spoke, and therefore suffering for us, he did not flee from death, so that we would not lose victory in battling with the property of his death. For if he had feared the cross, bearing the opposite of what he had taught, who of his disciples would willingly have fought for religion? Therefore, he is ridiculed by the foolish and unbelieving who subjected the world to his own faith and bestowed the dignity of the Christian name upon the saints. And even though the greatness of his virtues shines forth, they do not cease to blaspheme. But indeed God, who is mocked, has been demonstrated by his works to overthrow the temples of demons, in order to rebuke the impiousness of the Origenists. Whose founder, Origen, so deceived the ears of the simple and the light-hearted with his own persuasiveness, that they are accustomed to be dashed against the shores by waves coming from the open sea, and to be broken up into swirling masses in themselves.

12. Therefore, we speak with zeal of faith to him who has dared to write that the ruin of reasonable creatures is the body's fabric, that if this kind of impiety pleases you, how does the Apostle Paul write, "I desire young women to marry and bear children" (Tim. 5)? Did he command marriage so that, as bodies are born from women, the souls falling from heaven may be turned towards appropriately prepared prisons? Or is it so that he, serving God's teachings regarding marriage, may preserve the human race? For if he wishes young women to marry and bear children from which human bodies are born, but errant souls are united with bodies only through punishment and torment, there can be no doubt that young women are united with bonds for the sake of souls' punishment rather than for the order of procreation in marriage. But heaven forbid that we should believe that the marriage union of husband and wife is joined together not for blessing but for sin. Neither did God create Adam and Eve, in order to bring together by a blessing those spirits who fell from heaven and from rational creatures, saying, 'increase and multiply, and fill the earth.' For if souls were sent down from heaven to earth because of prior sins, so that they might be bound to bodies, then Paul is lying when he writes: 'Marriage is honorable, and the bed undefiled.' [Heb. 12] But he certainly does not lie. Therefore, bodies are not made for the destruction of souls, but so that the world may compensate for the losses of those being born and dying through perpetual succession, and overcome the brevity of human life. For if those who are falling and united with bodies are blessed by God, they will be of a better condition after they have received the bodies. If they are said to receive bodies for the sake of punishing sinners, how are they blessed in bodies, into which they came because of sins? For one of two things will be true: either they were blessed before their fall, or, after their fall and union with bodies, they cannot be blessed. For if blessing follows this life, it renounces that (life); if it is transferred to that (life), it is not found to have been in this (life). But if before they fell and before they were clothed in human bodies, they were in blessing, and when they fell and had bodies, they were blessed again, their prior lives will be similar to their subsequent lives in the condition of the blessing; and this is by no means subsequent, because the sinners merit punishment, while not sinners merit blessing. Whatever truth there may be in either of the two (lives), it will be culpable if they do not wish to observe the rule of ecclesiastical doctrine. For whether it is on account of sins that souls falling from heaven are bound like prisoners, attached to bodies with chains, let them answer how Adam and Eve, male and female, alive in their bodies, were blessed. For according to their madness, they are not called naked souls, but rather bodies which distinguish both sexes. Whether, indeed,

they (i.e. the just) dwelt before in the heavenly abodes, and were then blessed, and worthily held converse without their bodies; in what manner were they blessed either before their fall, or after they became corrupted, and inhabited ruinous bodies for their punishment, and then again became blessed? For surely blessing and punishment are not the same; they are kept far apart, both in name and in effect, and cannot possibly be joined, since they are so utterly antagonistic. And in what sense is a great offspring promised as a blessing to the just, as when the prophet says, 'The least among you shall become a thousand, and the smallest a great nation?'

13. Therefore, those who want to celebrate the Lord's feasts, should also despise the images of Origen and overcome the obscenity of his teachings by reason. For just as the impious error and custom of the Ethnics preferred falsehood, manufacturing idols in the likeness of men and blaspheming the invisible God, while they fashioned for themselves their form and their limbs and their genital organs: now professing a man, now a woman, and changing the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man (Rom. 1.23), of various forms: so Origen, with the facility and impiety of believers, dropped shrines of idols, as it were, in his treatises, which undermine us by the authority of the Scriptures and the zeal of faith, let us use this simile: For just as builders wanting to build a house with square corners measure equal walls all around, and directing them by rule and plumb-line, build with works in accord with their plan, and join the four sides of the square with angles upward and downward, preserving the equal beginning and gradually augmenting it, so that the beauty of the design join the diversity of the material of the task, and the craftsman's structure preserves the angular lines; thus the teachers of the Church, having the testimonies of the Scriptures, firmly establish the foundations of their teaching, and persist fearlessly, offering their works to Christ and saying: Confirm me in your words (Ps. 118.28). For he, of whom it is written: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner (Matthew 21), has united us and those who are above with one solemnity, to which, sailing with swift course, we do not at all fear the rage of the heretical waves to be rapidly dissipated.

14. For just as the helmsmen of great ships, when they see an immense whirling wave coming from the deep, like hunters, they undertake the foaming waves and sustain them by the projection of the prow, turning the rudder in different directions and tightening or loosening the ropes, and when the wave subsides, they release the struggling chains on both sides of the ship so that they may be prepared for the approaching swell of water. And when the wave comes again, they tighten the heads of the chains and expand the palms so that the labor of either side may be equalized by the cleft blasts from all directions, and what could not be borne together may be borne separately with more ease. They who are concerned with themselves, follow the example of this comparison and, using the helm like a divine dispensation of words, rush to meet the storm and waves of heretics, retaining the law of God for their skill, that they may raise up those who have fallen. Let those who stand persevere firmly and let them all be kept safe in the common support of the teaching. For as the helm is to the helmsman, so is the law of God to the soul: in which, making the Lord's Passover, we may prefer nothing else to the love of God and our neighbor in the world, nor change our opinion with the variation of human circumstances which turn hither and thither, so that, having already served with dishonorable flattery those for whose power we once labored, if the winds should turn and riches be changed to poverty, high birth to humility, glory to ignominy, we should suddenly become their enemies, resisting in their face those

whom we formerly deemed worthy of respect, considering not their faith but their times of need. On the contrary, they demonstrate hidden enmities in a time of necessity and proceed out of their dens in the likeness of serpents, so that not only are we ungrateful towards those whose benefits we enjoyed, rejoicing if we possess the names of clients, but as if we were traitors we persecute them even unto blood: trampling on them when they are cast down and prostrate, whom not long since we regarded as wealthy; we denounce them as the worst of all men, and extol their power, defaming their misfortunes; we honor or despise some not for their nature, but for the variety of accidents, so that those whom we previously called masters and patrons, we now name mere bullies and very wicked slaves. In every way, it is clear that our injustice is manifested, while we praise the unworthy and with criticism, pursue the worthy, imitating that which was spoken reproachfully against the blessed Job, "For your sins, you have suffered a few things, you have been beaten." (Job 11: 7).

15. Therefore, let us cherish the most steadfast courage, not uncertain wealth: let poverty not humiliate us by its harshness, nor riches elevate us, which have been accustomed to depress and elevate the most foolish of men; but let us restrain both for the sake of honesty, and enduring both sorrowful and joyful things with an equal mind. The care of riches interrupts the sweetest slumbers, brings forth harmless slanders, and when it has gathered infinite resources, prepares the material for eternal fires. But after insatiable greed has clung to the sought-after wealth, greed is not satisfied, but despises laws, and holds the flames of hell in contempt, regarding the future judgment seat as useless. Nor do adversaries fight against their enemies as much as riches fight against virtues, unless reason and mercy towards those close by temper them. These (riches) are preferred over nobility in the cities, these (riches) give an ancient family to new people. The desire for wealth can never be satisfied with any amount of wealth. He who is greedy always lacks, not knowing moderation, as much as he lacks what he has. Hell is not filled with the dead, but the more it receives, the more it desires. Therefore, greed imitates him, and cannot be satisfied, but whatever he has, he will demand more: he thinks all that he possesses to be less than what he desires; always immense, always immoderate, not restraining the ardor of sinners by the magnitude of wealth, in feasts he devours not foods, but injustice: in judgments he mixes wrangling, and discord, he brings forth envy, through which he arrives at homicide: he is not in control of his mind, but rather he is like one who is drunkenly fluctuating, having one measure, he always seeks beyond measure. The sea is enclosed by shores, and harbours either constructed or naturally very strong, prevent the incoming waves from the deep and the violence of raging whirlpools; but the desire for riches, unless controlled by reason, neither respects counsel nor is it mitigated by law, nor can any abundance satisfy it. Covetousness does not blush, nor is it afraid of future judgment, but, in its desire for more, as those addicted to luxury are wont to do, it strives to embrace all pleasures and to be mad with lust, so it fills cities, villages, villas, islands, seas, lands, shores, roads, and passageways with calumnies and dissensions; avarice possesses islands, seas, lands, shores, roads, studies, while, in its desire for more, it exchanges goods back and forth by means of trade and lays the insatiable foundation of riches by means of frauds and perjuries.

16. Therefore, despising such rage, let us seek riches in the worship of God, and the steadfast possessions of chastity and holiness, worshipping the one divinity of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; believing the resurrection of the dead to be incorruptible, and everlasting. For it is impossible that death should prevail over that which is confirmed by the passion of Christ,

raising up the incorruptible and eternal temple of his body. Let us pray for the most pious Emperors; and by observance of the law of God, let us adorn the fasts: for virtue keeps its followers without any necessity, and elevates the mind, which fluctuates on various thoughts from earthly things to lofty things, contemplating not at all the beauty of bodies, but rather the order of conversation and morals, showing to the person the choirs of angels rejoicing in heaven, and teaching the flashes of shining disciplines, so that in this present age, he may endure the wounds inflicted on him as the strongest athlete, and prepare for himself future glory: not subject to vice, but lifting up the inner man with the desire for eternal things; and restraining all the impulses of pleasure by reason, he considers that which is to come, and withdraws from the solicitude of worldly things, preferring spiritual things to bodily things, so that he may also despise the body itself, and, by persuading himself to embrace a life that is harder but better than the present pleasures, he who was once a slave to passion may serve chastity with good liberty, and being removed from the precipices, receive the gentle reins of fasting. For if the nature of the body is weak and without a ruler and master, nor does it want to obey a commanding mind, it provokes infinite shipwrecks for itself and the ruler and drags them into the most shameful lusts and the abyss of pleasures, so that it does not consider what is honorable, but fleeing from good things, it dwells in filth and squalor. But when virtue has governed the soul like a charioteer, and standing as if in a chariot, has restrained its impulse and various desires with the reins of teaching, it lifts it up from humble things to lofty ones, revealing to it invisible and eternal things for visible ones, preparing a dwelling in the heavens for it, and making for it friends who, serving the ministry of God, enjoy spiritual delights - so that what it saw here in an image, it may perceive there in truth and see greater clarity with the rays of the sun that descend for us in part, so that we may tend from lesser things to greater things and make progress as if by letters and syllables for reading: for both those things need these and these those. "When we have been joined to the company of the blessed there, we will hear: Well done, good and faithful servant; because you have been faithful over a few things, I will place you over many. Enter into the joy of your Lord." (Matthew 25:21, 23)

17. On the eleventh day of the month of Phamenoth, the holy Lenten fast begins, and on the sixteenth day of the month of Pharmuthi, we have the week of Passion. And we will end the fast on the twenty-first day of the same month of Pharmuthi, and we shall celebrate Easter on the twenty-second day of the same month. After which we will join (or let us join) the seven weeks of Holy Pentecost: remembering the poor, loving both God and neighbor, praying for enemies, pleasing persecutors, lifting up the ruins of the weak with consolation and mercy. So that our tongue always resounds in the praises of God, so that the just judgments of the Church are never destroyed by irrational clemency, nor that the laws of God be preferred to those of men. If we desire its friendships, we will obtain heavenly glory in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom, and with whom, to God the Father be glory and power with the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

18. Greet one another with a holy kiss. The brothers who are with us greet you. And you should know this: For deceased bishops, each has a place assigned. In the city of Nichium for Theopemptus, Theodosius; in Terenuthide for Arsinthius; in the town of Geras for Eudemon Pyrrhus; in Achaeis for Apollinus Museus; in Athrividis for Isidore Athanasius; in Cleopatrida for Offellus; and in the town of Laton for Timothy Apelles. Therefore, write to them and, according to custom, accept the ecclesiastical letters from them.

Letters - letter_101

Letter 101. From Augustine. A letter from Augustine in which he denies that he has written a book against Jerome and sent it to Rome but confesses that he has criticized him although without giving details. Written in 402 a.d. In collections labeled Augustine's Letter 40, or Jerome's Letter 67. To My Lord Most Beloved and Longed For, My Honoured Brother in Christ, and Fellow-Presbyter, Jerome, Augustine Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I have heard that my letter has come to your hand. I have not yet received a reply, but I do not on this account question your affection; doubtless something has hitherto prevented you. Wherefore I know and avow that my prayer should be, that God would put it in your power to forward your reply, for He has already given you power to prepare it, seeing that you can do so with the utmost ease if you feel disposed.

2. I have hesitated whether to give credence or not to a certain report which has reached me; but I felt that I ought not to hesitate as to writing a few lines to you regarding the matter. To be brief, I have heard that some brethren have told your Charity that I have written a book against you and have sent it to Rome. Be assured that this is false: I call God to witness that I have not done this. But if perchance there be some things in some of my writings in which I am found to have been of a different opinion from you, I think you ought to know, or if it cannot be certainly known, at least to believe, that such things have been written not with a view of contradicting you, but only of stating my own views. In saying this, however, let me assure you that not only am I most ready to hear in a brotherly spirit the objections which you may entertain to anything in my writings which has displeased you, but I entreat, nay implore you, to acquaint me with them; and thus I shall be made glad either by the correction of my mistake, or at least by the expression of your goodwill.

3. Oh that it were in my power, by our living near each other, if not under the same roof, to enjoy frequent and sweet conference with you in the Lord! Since, however, this is not granted, I beg you to take pains that this one way in which we can be together in the Lord be kept up; nay more, improved and perfected. Do not refuse to write me in return, however seldom.

Greet with my respects our holy brother Paulinianus, and all the brethren who with you, and because of you, rejoice in the Lord. May you, remembering us, be heard by the Lord in regard to all your holy desires, my lord most beloved and longed for, my honoured brother in Christ.

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Letter 102. To Augustine.

Jerome's reply to the foregoing in which, it has been said, friendship struggles with suspicion and resentment. He warns Augustine not to provoke him, lest old as he is he may prove a dangerous opponent; and encloses part of his reply to the apology of Rufinus. Written in 402 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine Letter 68. To Augustine, My Lord, Truly Holy and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

1. When my kinsman, our holy son Asterius, subdeacon, was just on the point of beginning his journey, the letter of your Grace arrived, in which you clear yourself of the charge of having sent to Rome a book written against your humble servant. I had not heard that charge; but by our brother Sysinnius, deacon, copies of a letter addressed by some one apparently to me have come hither. In the said letter I am exhorted to sing the *παλινωδία*, confessing mistake in regard to a paragraph of the apostle's writing, and to imitate Stesichorus, who, vacillating between disparagement and praises of Helen, recovered, by praising her, the eyesight which he had forfeited by speaking against her. Although the style and the method of argument appeared to be yours, I must frankly confess to your Excellency that I did not think it right to assume without examination the authenticity of a letter of which I had only seen copies, lest perchance, if offended by my reply, you should with justice complain that it was my duty first to have made sure that you were the author, and only after that was ascertained, to address you in reply. Another reason for my delay was the protracted illness of the pious and venerable Paula. For, while occupied long in attending upon her in severe illness, I had almost forgotten your letter, or more correctly, the letter written in your name, remembering the verse, "Like music in the day of mourning is an unseasonable discourse." [Sirach 22:6] Therefore, if it is your letter, write me frankly that it is so, or send me a more accurate copy, in order that without any passionate rancour we may devote ourselves to discuss scriptural truth; and I may either correct my own mistake, or show that another has without good reason found fault with me.

2. Far be it from me to presume to attack anything which your Grace has written. For it is enough for me to prove my own views without controverting what others hold. But it is well known to one of your wisdom, that every one is satisfied with his own opinion, and that it is puerile self-sufficiency to seek, as young men have of old been wont to do, to gain glory to one's own name by assailing men who have become renowned. I am not so foolish as to think myself insulted by the fact that you give an explanation different from mine; since you, on the other hand, are not wronged by my views being contrary to those which you maintain. But that is the kind of reproof by which friends may truly benefit each other, when each, not seeing his own bag of faults, observes, as Persius has it, the wallet borne by the other. Let me say further, love one who loves you, and do not because you are young challenge a veteran in the field of Scripture. I have had my time, and have run my course to the utmost of my strength. It is but fair that I should rest, while you in your turn run and accomplish great distances; at the same time (with your leave, and without intending any

disrespect), lest it should seem that to quote from the poets is a thing which you alone can do, let me remind you of the encounter between Dares and Entellus, and of the proverb, "The tired ox treads with a firmer step." With sorrow I have dictated these words. Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning!

3. With his usual effrontery, Calphurnius, surnamed Lanarius, has sent me his execrable writings, which I understand that he has been at pains to disseminate in Africa also. To these I have replied in past, and shortly; and I have sent you a copy of my treatise, intending by the first opportunity to send you a larger work, when I have leisure to prepare it. In this treatise I have been careful not to offend Christian feeling in any, but only to confute the lies and hallucinations arising from his ignorance and madness.

Remember me, holy and venerable father. See how sincerely I love you, in that I am unwilling, even when challenged, to reply, and refuse to believe you to be the author of that which in another I would sharply rebuke. Our brother Communis sends his respectful salutation.

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Letter 103. To Augustine. A letter of introduction in which Jerome commends the deacon Praesidius to the kind offices of Augustine. Written in 403 a.d. See Augustine, vol. i., Letter 39. To My Lord Augustine, a Father Truly Holy and Most Blessed, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

1. Last year I sent by the hand of our brother, the subdeacon Asterius, a letter conveying to your Excellency a salutation due to you, and readily rendered by me; and I think that my letter was delivered to you. I now write again, by my holy brother the deacon Præsidius, begging you in the first place not to forget me, and in the second place to receive the bearer of this letter, whom I commend to you with the request that you recognise him as one very near and dear to me, and that you encourage and help him in whatever way his circumstances may demand; not that he is in need of anything (for Christ has amply endowed him), but that he is most eagerly desiring the friendship of good men, and thinks that in securing this he obtains the most valuable blessing. His design in travelling to the West you may learn from his own lips.

2. As for us, established here in our monastery, we feel the shock of waves on every side, and are burdened with the cares of our lot as pilgrims. But we believe in Him who has said, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," [John 16:33] and are confident that by His grace and guidance we shall prevail against our adversary the devil.

I beseech you to give my respectful salutation to the holy and venerable brother, our father Alypius. The brethren who, with me, devote themselves to serve the Lord in this monastery, salute you warmly. May Christ our Almighty God guard you from harm, and keep you mindful of me, my lord and father truly holy and venerable.

Letters - letter_104

Letter 104. From Augustine. In this letter Augustine (1) commends to Jerome the deacon Cyprian, (2) explains how it is that his first letter (Letter 56.) has miscarried, and (3) urges Jerome to base his scriptural labours not on the Hebrew text but on the version of the LXX. The date of the letter is 403 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine Letter 71. To My Venerable Lord Jerome, My Esteemed and Holy Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Augustine Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Never since I began to write to you, and to long for your writing in return, have I met with a better opportunity for our exchanging communications than now, when my letter is to be carried to you by a most faithful servant and minister of God, who is also a very dear friend of mine, namely, our son Cyprian, deacon. Through him I expect to receive a letter from you with all the certainty which is in a matter of this kind possible. For the son whom I have named will not be found wanting in respect of zeal in asking, or persuasive influence in obtaining a reply from you; nor will he fail in diligently keeping, promptly bearing, and faithfully delivering the same. I only pray that if I be in any way worthy of this, the Lord may give His help and favour to your heart and to my desire, so that no higher will may hinder that which your brotherly goodwill inclines you to do.

2. As I have sent you two letters already to which I have received no reply, I have resolved to send you at this time copies of both of them, for I suppose that they never reached you. If they did reach you, and your replies have failed, as may be the case, to reach me, send me a second time the same as you sent before, if you have copies of them preserved: if you have not, dictate again what I may read, and do not refuse to send to these former letters the answer for which I have been waiting so long. My first letter to you, which I had prepared while I was a presbyter, was to be delivered to you by a brother of ours, Profuturus, who afterwards became my colleague in the episcopate, and has since then departed from this life; but he could not then bear it to you in person, because at the very time when he intended to begin his journey, he was prevented by his ordination to the weighty office of bishop, and shortly afterwards he died. This letter I have resolved also to send at this time, that you may know how long I have cherished a burning desire for conversation with you, and with what reluctance I submit to the remote separation which prevents my mind from having access to yours through our bodily senses, my brother, most amiable and honoured among the members of the Lord.

3. In this letter I have further to say, that I have since heard that you have translated Job out of the original Hebrew, although in your own translation of the same prophet from the Greek tongue we had already a version of that book. In that earlier version you marked with asterisks the words found in the Hebrew but wanting in the Greek, and with obelisks the words found in the Greek but wanting in the Hebrew; and this was done with such astonishing exactness, that in some places we have every word distinguished by a separate asterisk, as a sign that these words are in the Hebrew, but not in the Greek. Now, however, in this more recent version from the Hebrew, there is not the same scrupulous fidelity as to the words; and it perplexes any thoughtful reader to understand either what was the reason for marking the asterisks in the former version with so

much care that they indicate the absence from the Greek version of even the smallest grammatical particles which have not been rendered from the Hebrew, or what is the reason for so much less care having been taken in this recent version from the Hebrew to secure that these same particles be found in their own places. I would have put down here an extract or two in illustration of this criticism; but at present I have not access to the manuscript of the translation from the Hebrew. Since, however, your quick discernment anticipates and goes beyond not only what I have said, but also what I meant to say, you already understand, I think, enough to be able, by giving the reason for the plan which you have adopted, to explain what perplexes me.

4. For my part, I would much rather that you would furnish us with a translation of the Greek version of the canonical Scriptures known as the work of the Seventy translators. For if your translation begins to be more generally read in many churches, it will be a grievous thing that, in the reading of Scripture, differences must arise between the Latin Churches and the Greek Churches, especially seeing that the discrepancy is easily condemned in a Latin version by the production of the original in Greek, which is a language very widely known; whereas, if any one has been disturbed by the occurrence of something to which he was not accustomed in the translation taken from the Hebrew, and alleges that the new translation is wrong, it will be found difficult, if not impossible, to get at the Hebrew documents by which the version to which exception is taken may be defended. And when they are obtained, who will submit to have so many Latin and Greek authorities pronounced to be in the wrong? Besides all this, Jews, if consulted as to the meaning of the Hebrew text, may give a different opinion from yours: in which case it will seem as if your presence were indispensable, as being the only one who could refute their view; and it would be a miracle if one could be found capable of acting as arbiter between you and them.

5. A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so many generations in the church. [Jonah 4:6] Thereupon arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew manuscripts were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a congregation — a calamity which he narrowly escaped. From this case we also are led to think that you may be occasionally mistaken. You will also observe how great must have been the difficulty if this had occurred in those writings which cannot be explained by comparing the testimony of languages now in use.

6. At the same time, we are in no small measure thankful to God for the work in which you have translated the Gospels from the original Greek, because in almost every passage we have found nothing to object to, when we compared it with the Greek Scriptures. By this work, any disputant who supports an old false translation is either convinced or confuted with the utmost ease by the production and collation of manuscripts. And if, as indeed very rarely happens, something be found to which exception may be taken, who would be so unreasonable as not to excuse it readily in a work so useful that it cannot be too highly praised? I wish you would have the kindness to

open up to me what you think to be the reason of the frequent discrepancies between the text supported by the Hebrew codices and the Greek Septuagint version. For the latter has no mean authority, seeing that it has obtained so wide circulation, and was the one which the apostles used, as is not only proved by looking to the text itself, but has also been, as I remember, affirmed by yourself. You would therefore confer upon us a much greater boon if you gave an exact Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint version: for the variations found in the different codices of the Latin text are intolerably numerous; and it is so justly open to suspicion as possibly different from what is to be found in the Greek, that one has no confidence in either quoting it or proving anything by its help.

I thought that this letter was to be a short one, but it has somehow been as pleasant to me to go on with it as if I were talking with you. I conclude with entreating you by the Lord kindly to send me a full reply, and thus give me, so far as is in your power, the pleasure of your presence.

Letters - letter_105

Letter 105. To Augustine.

Jerome's answer to the foregoing. He complains that even now he has not received Augustine's letter and asks him to Send him a copy of it. Popular rumour, he declares, credits Augustine with a deliberate suppression of the letter in order that he may seem to win an easy victory over his opponent. Jerome next deals with Augustine's denial of having made a written attack upon him and concludes by refusing for the present all discussion of points of criticism. Sometimes numbered as Augustine Letter 72. To Augustine, My Lord Truly Holy, and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. You are sending me letter upon letter, and often urging me to answer a certain letter of yours, a copy of which, without your signature, had reached me through our brother Sysinnius, deacon, as I have already written, which letter you tell me that you entrusted first to our brother Profuturus, and afterwards to some one else; but that Profuturus was prevented from finishing his intended journey, and having been ordained a bishop, was removed by sudden death; and the second messenger, whose name you do not give, was afraid of the perils of the sea, and gave up the voyage which he had intended. These things being so, I am at a loss to express my surprise that the same letter is reported to be in the possession of most of the Christians in Rome, and throughout Italy, and has come to every one but myself, to whom alone it was ostensibly sent. I wonder at this all the more, because the brother Sysinnius aforesaid tells me that he found it among the rest of your published works, not in Africa, not in your possession, but in an island of the Adriatic some five years ago.

2. True friendship can harbour no suspicion; a friend must speak to his friend as freely as to his second self. Some of my acquaintances, vessels of Christ, of whom there is a very large number in Jerusalem and in the holy places, suggested to me that this had not been done by you in a guileless spirit, but through desire for praise and celebrity, and éclat in the eyes of the people, intending to become famous at my expense; that many might know that you challenged me, and I feared to meet you; that you had written as a man of learning, and I had by silence confessed my ignorance, and had at last found one who knew how to stop my garrulous tongue. I, however, let me say it frankly, refused at first to answer your Excellency, because I did not believe that the letter, or as I may call it (using a proverbial expression), the honeyed sword, was sent from you. Moreover, I was cautious lest I should seem to answer uncourteously a bishop of my own communion, and to censure anything in the letter of one who censured me, especially as I judged some of its statements to be tainted with heresy. Lastly, I was afraid lest you should have reason to remonstrate with me, saying, "What! Had you seen the letter to be mine — had you discovered in the signature attached to it the autograph of a hand well known to you, when you so carelessly wounded the feelings of your friend, and reproached me with that which the malice of another had conceived?"

3. Wherefore, as I have already written, either send me the identical letter in question subscribed with your own hand, or desist from annoying an old man, who seeks retirement in his monastic cell. If you wish to exercise or display your learning, choose as your antagonists, young, eloquent, and illustrious men, of whom it is said that many are found in Rome, who may be neither unable nor afraid to meet you, and to enter the lists with a bishop in debates concerning the Sacred Scriptures. As for me, a soldier once, but a retired veteran now, it becomes me rather to applaud the victories won by you and others, than with my worn-out body to take part in the conflict; beware lest, if you persist in demanding a reply, I call to mind the history of the way in which Quintus Maximus by his patience defeated Hannibal, who was, in the pride of youth, confident of success.

"Omnia fert ætas, animum quoque. Sæpe ego longos Cantando puerum memini me condere soles; Nunc oblita mihi tot carmina: vox quoque Mœrin Jam fugit ipsa." Or rather, to quote an instance from Scripture: Barzillai of Gilead, when he declined in favour of his youthful son the kindnesses of King David and all the charms of his court, taught us that old age ought neither to desire these things, nor to accept them when offered.

4. As to your calling God to witness that you had not written a book against me, and of course had not sent to Rome what you had never written, adding that, if perchance some things were found in your works in which a different opinion from mine was advanced, no wrong had thereby been done to me, because you had, without any intention of offending me, written only what you believed to be right; I beg you to hear me with patience. You never wrote a book against me: how then has there been brought to me a copy, written by another hand, of a treatise containing a rebuke administered to me by you? How comes Italy to possess a treatise of yours which you did not write? Nay, how can you reasonably ask me to reply to that which you solemnly assure me was never written by you? Nor am I so foolish as to think that I am insulted by you, if in anything your opinion differs from mine. But if, challenging me as it were to single combat, you take exception to my views, and demand a reason for what I have written, and insist upon my correcting what you judge to be an error, and call upon me to recant it in a humble *παλιν* *ἵδι'*α, and speak of your curing me of blindness; in this I maintain that friendship is wounded, and the laws of brotherly union are set at nought. Let not the world see us quarrelling like children, and giving material for angry contention between those who may become our respective supporters or adversaries. I write what I have now written, because I desire to cherish towards you pure and Christian love, and not to hide in my heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of my lips. For it does not become me, who have spent my life from youth until now, sharing the arduous labours of pious brethren in an obscure monastery, to presume to write anything against a bishop of my own communion, especially against one whom I had begun to love before I knew him, who also sought my friendship before I sought his, and whom I rejoiced to see rising as a successor to myself in the careful study of the Scriptures. Wherefore either disown that book, if you are not its author, and give over urging me to reply to that which you never wrote; or if the book is yours, admit it frankly; so that if I write anything in self-defense, the responsibility may lie on you who gave, not on me who am forced to accept, the challenge.

5. You say also, that if there be anything in your writings which has displeased me, and which I would wish to correct, you are ready to receive my criticism as a brother; and you not only assure me that you would rejoice in such proof of my goodwill toward you, but you earnestly ask me to do

this. I tell you again, without reserve, what I feel: you are challenging an old man, disturbing the peace of one who asks only to be allowed to be silent, and you seem to desire to display your learning. It is not for one of my years to give the impression of enviously disparaging one whom I ought rather to encourage by approbation. And if the ingenuity of perverse men finds something which they may plausibly censure in the writings even of evangelists and prophets, are you amazed if, in your books, especially in your exposition of passages in Scripture which are exceedingly difficult of interpretation, some things be found which are not perfectly correct? This I say, however, not because I can at this time pronounce anything in your works to merit censure. For, in the first place, I have never read them with attention; and in the second place, we have not beside us a supply of copies of what you have written, excepting the books of Soliloquies and Commentaries on some of the Psalms; which, if I were disposed to criticise them, I could prove to be at variance, I shall not say with my own opinion, for I am nobody, but with the interpretations of the older Greek commentators.

Farewell, my very dear friend, my son in years, my father in ecclesiastical dignity; and to this I most particularly request your attention, that henceforth you make sure that I be the first to receive whatever you may write to me.

Letters - letter_106

Letter 106. To Sunnias and Fretela. A long letter in which Jerome answers a number of questions put to him by two sojourners in Getica, Sunnias and Fretela. Diligent students of scripture, these men were at a loss to understand the frequent differences between Jerome's Latin psalter of 383 a.d. (the so-called Roman psalter) and the LXX, and accordingly sent him a long list of passages with a request for explanation. Jerome in his reply deals fully with all these and points out to his correspondents that they have been misled by their edition of the LXX. (the "common" edition) which differs widely from the critical text of Origen as given in the Hexapla and used by himself. He also expresses his joy to find that even among the Getae the scriptures are now diligently studied. The date of the letter is about 403 a.d. Translated by Michael Metlen. With parallel Latin. To My Beloved Brethren Sunja and Frithila and All Those Who with You are Serving the Lord, Hieronymus.

1. Certainly these apostolic and prophetic words have been fulfilled in you: Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world?² Who would believe that the barbarous language of the Goths would try to compete with the Hebrew in establishing the true text of the Scriptures, and that, while the Greeks are indolent and contentious, even Germany³ would scrutinize the words of the Holy Spirit? Truly I have found out that God is no respecter of persons, but that among every nation he who feareth him and cloth what is right will be acceptable to him.⁴ Already the hands callous from wielding the sword, and the fingers fitter to handle the bow are getting accustomed to using the pen, and the men hardened in warfare are learning Christian gentleness. Now we see the prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled indeed: They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation will not lift up the sword against nation, neither will they learn war any more.⁵ And again in the same: The wolf will eat with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the bull will feed together, and a little child will lead them; and the cow and the bear will eat together, and their young ones will be friends, and the lion and the ox will eat straw,⁶ not in order that meekness shall become ferocious, but that ferocity shall learn meekness.

2. You are requesting of me a difficult thing and one beset with trouble, a matter which does not require so much of ingenuity as rather learning, exposing me, as it does, while trying to judge about others, to public criticism. You wish namely, according to your letter, that I indicate to you, wherever there is in the Psalter a discrepancy between the Latin and Greek texts, which of the readings in question expresses the corresponding Hebrew text more faithfully. In connection with this let me advise you at the outset briefly that there is one edition which Origines and Eusebius of Caesarea and all Greek writers call the κοινὴ, ⁷ that is, the common or vulgar text, and which now goes mostly by the name of Lukian, the other is the Septuagint, which is also to be found in the Hexapla⁸ and has been translated by me faithfully into Latin, and is used at Jerusalem and in the oriental churches. About this matter also my holy son Avitus has inquired often, and since our brother, the presbyter Firmus, who brought me your letter, affords me a chance, I am going to answer it jointly, thus acquitting myself of a duty of friendship which cannot be exaggerated. And

as, in dealing with the New Testament, whenever among the Latin writers a doubt arises, and there occurs a discrepancy between individual copies, we have recourse to the original Greek, in which the New Testament was written, so also in the Old Testament, if there are discrepancies between the Greek and Latin texts, we go back to the Hebrew, in order that we may trace to their origins the individual variant readings. The κοιν■ that is the common edition, however, is the same as the Septuagint, but with the difference that the κοιν■ is the old edition, which became corrupted through the whims of the individual writers and the accidents of the times and of the places [where the copies were made],⁹ whereas the one which is contained in the Hexapla and which I have translated is the pure and unadulterated version of the Septuagint, as it is found in the texts of learned scholars. There is no doubt that whatever differs from this differs also from the Hebrew text.¹⁰

3. Your first question concerns the place in the 5th Psalm: Neque habitabit juxta te malignus which reads in the Greek: ο■τε παροικ■σαι σοι πονηρ■ς, which reading the vulgar¹¹ edition contains; and you are wondering why the Latin translator has not rendered the word παροικ■αν by "incolatum," and why he has used instead the word "habitationem," which is in the Greek κατοικ■α. He has done the same in another place, viz. in: Heu mihi, quia incolatus meus prolongatus est. And in the 14th Psalm he uses again "habitationem" for "incolatu": Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo ? It is to be noted that if we want to say: "Domine, quis incolet tabernaculum tuum ?"," or in the 5th Psalm, "Neque incolet juxta te malignus," it won't sound right and, while translating literally, the rendering will not be correct. It should, therefore, be the rule of a good translator to express the idioms of a foreign language by the corresponding idioms of his own tongue. This also Tullius has done in Plato's Protagora and in the Ο■κονομικ■ of Xenophon and in the Oration of Demosthenes against Aeschines, as well as the very learned men Plautus, Terence, and Caelius in their translations of Greek comedies. Nobody should, however, on that account consider the Latin language not flexible enough because it cannot translate literally [and idiomatically at one and the same time],⁹ since the Greeks, too, mostly translate our works idiomatically and take care also not to render the Hebrew literally, but idiomatically.

4. In the same Psalm: Dirige in conspectu meo viam tuam. For this the Greek has: κατε■θυνον ■ν■πιον σου τ■ν ■δ■ν μου, that is: "Dirige in conspectu tuo viam meam"; the former version neither the Septuagint has, nor Aquila, nor Symmachus, nor Theodotion, but only the κοιν■ edition. Finally, I have found also in the Hebrew this reading: oser laphanoi darchach, which all [not mentioned]⁹ have translated the same way: "Dirige in conspectu meo viam tuam," according to what is said also in the Lord's Prayer: Pater noster, qui es in cælis, sanctificetur nomen tuum. This does not mean that by our prayers should be hallowed what is holy in itself, but it means that we are praying that that which is sacred in virtue of its own nature be also hallowed in us. In the same way the prophet is now also asking that the way of the Lord, which is right in itself, be made likewise right for him.

5. In Psalm 6: Erubescant et conturbentur vehementer omnes inimici mei. You say that "vehementer" is not found in the Greek. I know it, but the Vulgate¹¹ has it. Besides, there is in the Hebrew the word mod, which means "vehementer," and all have translated σφ■δρα similarly.

6. In Psalm 7: Judica me, domine, secundum justitiam meam, for which the Greek has κατ■ τ■ν δικαιοσ■νην σου, that is, "juxta justitiam tuam." But that is wrong, for the Hebrew has sedechi,

which is “justitia mea,” and not “sedecach,” which means “justitiam tuam.” But all translators have likewise rendered “justitiam meam.” And nobody should think it foolish that the Psalmist asks to be judged according to his own justice, since the following verse means the same thing: Et secundum innocentiam meam super me, while also the 16th Psalm starts this way: Exaudi, domine, justitiam meam, and the 17th has this: Retribuet mihi dominus secundum justitiam meam et secundum puritatem manuum mearum reddet mihi. Furthermore, we find also in the 25th Psalm this reading: Proba me, domine, et tempta me; ure renes meos et cor meum, and in the 4th: Quum invocarem, exaudivit me Deus justitiæ meæ, and in the 85th: Custodi animam meam, quoniam sanctus sum. Jacob also says in Genesis: Exaudiet me cras justitia mea.

7. In Psalm 8: Quoniam videbo cælos tuos. You say that the Greek does not have “tuos.” That is true, but in the Hebrew we find samacha, which means “cælos tuos,” and which has been added in the Septuagint from Theodotion’s text under an asterisk. Here I shall briefly explain this matter. Whenever there occurs in the Greek an omission, which the Hebrew has, Origenes added such omission from Theodotion’s translation, putting an asterisk — that is a star — in order that it should light up and make clear that which was previously obscure. On the other hand, whenever something is found in the Greek texts which is not in the Hebrew, he placed an obelus in front of it, that is, a horizontal line, which we may call in Latin a dart [in English an arrow]⁹ to indicate that that which is not found in the authentic texts should be extirpated. These signs are also found in Greek and Latin poems.

8. Psalm 14: Oculi tui videant æquitates. [You say that in the Greek]¹² you have read: οφθαλμοι μου, that is, “oculi mei.” But it is more correct to say “oculi tui” because the prophet had said before: De vultu tuo judicium meum prodeat, in order that God’s eyes should not see in the work of the prophet the wrong but the right things. In the same: Custodi me ut pupillam oculi. You say that your Greek version is: Custodi me, Domine. This is found, however, neither in the Hebrew, nor in any translator. In the same: Exurge, Domine, præveni eum et supplantata eum. For this you say the Greek has πρὸφθασον αὐτόν, that is, “Præveni eos et supplantata eos.” The singular number is here better, however, if the statement is made concerning the evil one, to whom applies also what immediately follows: Præveni eum et supplantata eum ; eripe animam meam ab impio. There is no doubt that this refers to the devil.

9. Psalm 17: Grando et carbones ignis, and you ask why in the Greek text not two other verses are inserted before the repetition of this one. It is to be noted, however, that this one has been added, in the Septuagint, under an asterisk from the Hebrew and the text of Theodotion. In the same: Qui perfecit pedes meos tamquam cervorum. For this you say the Greek has: σε λήφου, that is, “tamquam cervi,” using the singular number for the plural. But in the Hebrew the plural “chaialoth” is used, and all translators have used the plural here. In the same: Et dedisti mihi protectionem salutis tuæ. For this you say you have read in the Greek: τὴν σωτηρίαν μου, that is, “salutis meæ.” But in the Hebrew “iesacha” means “salutis tuæ” and not “meæ.” And all translators have this reading. In the same: Supplantasti insurgentes in me subtus me. For this you say you have found in the Greek: Omnes insurgentes . However, “omnes” has been added. In the same: Vivit Dominus et benedictus Deus meus. You say that in the Greek “meus” is lacking. This has not been added under an asterisk, but has been translated from the Hebrew by the very translators of the Septuagint, and all translators agree in this particular. In the same: Liberator meus de gentibus iracundis. For this you say you have found in the Greek: “Ab inimicis meis fortibus,” or

“potentibus.” But since we are interested in the truth, let me say that if anything has been changed owing to the hurry of the translator or the fault of the transcriber, we simply have to admit it and correct the wrong form. The Hebrew has nothing else but: “Liberator meus ab inimicis meis.” The translators of the Septuagint, however, have added “iracundis.” And for “gentibus” the Greek text and all translators have “inimici.” I wonder how the form “gentes” has slipped in for “inimicis.”

10. Psalm 18: Exultavit ut gigas ad currendam viam suam. You say that in the Greek “suam” does not occur. But we find this word added here under an arrow, and it is apparent that it does not occur in the Hebrew.

11. Psalm 19: Tribuat tibi secundum cor tuum. You say that you have found that in the Greek the name of the Lord is added in this verse. This is superfluous because it is understood from the context of the preceding words {πακοσαι σου Κριος} with which the Psalm begins: “Exaudiat te Dominus in die tribulationis,” so that the Psalmist continues here in the same vein: Tribuat tibi secundum cor tuum, which statement refers to the Lord himself who has been mentioned before. In the same: Et exaudi nos in die, qua invocaverimus te. For this you say you have read: “in quocumque die.” But the former reading agrees with the Hebrew, where we find *biom*, which means “in die.”

12. Psalm 21: Tu autem, Domine, ne elongaveris auxilium tuum a me. For this you say you have found “meum.” This is true and should be corrected accordingly. In short: If anything has been changed through an error of the transcribers, it would be foolish to defend such error. In the same: Universum semen Jacob, magnificate eum. For this you say the Greek has: δοξασατε ατν, that is: “glorificate eum.” But it is to be noted that wherever the Greek has “glorificate,” the Latin translator has rendered this by “magnificate,” on the basis of what is said in Exodus: Cantemus Domino; gloriose enim magnificatus est, for which in the Greek “glorificatus est” is written. This, however, sounds awkward in the Latin translation, so that I, when revising the Psalter, did not want to deviate from the practice of the old translators, provided no change of sense was involved, in order not to disturb the reader by too many innovations.

13. Psalm 22: Calix meus inebrians quam præclarus est. For this you say you have read in the Greek: “calix tuus.” But in the κοιν version this reading is a mistake. Besides, the Septuagint, the Hebrew and all translators have calix meus, which means in the Hebrew *chosi*; for calix tuus would be *chosach*.

14. Psalm 24: Confundantur omnes iniqua agentes. You say that “omnes” does not occur in the Greek. That’s right, for it does not occur in the Hebrew either, and it is added in the Septuagint under an arrow. In the same: Innocentes et recti adhæserunt mihi, quia sustinui te, and you say that you have found “Domine” in the Greek. This, however, is superfluous.

15. Psalm 26: Et nunc ecce exaltavit caput meum. But “ecce” is superfluous. In the same: Exquisivit facies mea, for which you say the Greek has: Quaesivit te facies mea. The former reading is the better one, however.

16. Psalm 27: Exaudi vocem deprecationis meæ, for which you say you have found: Exaudi, Domine. But “Domine” also has been added.

17. Psalm 28: Et in templo ejus omnis dicet gloriam. For this you say the Greek contains π[ο]ς τ[ο]ς. But if we should want to translate verbatim “omnis quis,” the result would be a mere transliteration and an absurd rendering. In the same: Dominus diluvium inhabitare facit, for which you say you have read: Dominus diluvium inhabitat. The former rendering refers to the blessings of the faithful, the latter to the dwelling place of him in whom they believe. However, since iasaph is an ambiguous word which may mean either of two things — for it signifies both “sessio” and “habitatio” and refers in the Psalm in question to the grace of Baptism: Vox Domini super aquas ; Dominus super aquas multas; and Vox Domini præparantis cervos et revelabit condensa, et in templo ejus omnis dicet gloriam —, I prefer to understand it of those who glorify the Lord, and have thus translated it, Dominus diluvium inhabitare facit.

18. Psalm 30: Quoniam tu es protector meus. Again in this place the Lord’s name has been added. Let me say once for all that you should not forget that the name of our Lord and God is often added, and that you should observe the corrections I have made on the basis of the Hebrew and the Septuagint. In the same: Ego autem dixi in excessu mentis meæ. For this the Latin texts had: in pavore meo, and I translated according to the Greek: ἐν τῷ ἁκισμῷ μου, that is, “in excessu mentis meæ.” For the Latin cannot express ἁκισμῷ except by “mentis excessum.” I know that I have read in the Hebrew the differing version: “in stupore et in admiratione mea.”

19. Psalm 31: Nec est in spiritu ejus dolus. For this you say you have read in the Greek: ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ, that is, “in ore ejus,” which Symmachus alone has. On the other hand, the Septuagint, Theodotion, the Fifth and Sixth editions,¹³ Aquila, and the Hebrew itself have “in spiritu ejus,” which is in the Hebrew brucho. If the meaning were, however, “in ore ejus,” baffio would be written in the Hebrew. In the same: Conversus sum in ærumna mea. You say that the Hebrew does not have “mea,” which has been added under an asterisk from the Hebrew and Theodotion’s translation, and which in the Hebrew reads lasaddi; lasaddi . . . [there is a gap here].⁹

20. Psalm 34: Omnia ossa mea dicent: « Domine... ». Here, you say, you have found in the Greek the word “Domine” twice. It is to be noted, however, that there are many Hebrew copies which have the word “Dominum” not even once.

21. Psalm 36: Et viam ejus volet. You say that you have read in the Greek “volet nimis.” But “nimis” has been added and is not found in any one of the translators.

22. Psalm 38: Verumtamen vane conturbatur omnis homo. You say that you have not found in the Greek the word “conturbatur.” But this also has been added in the Septuagint under an arrow, and from this you and most of the rest have incurred an error because everything is mixed up through the negligence of the scribes in omitting the arrows and asterisks.

23. Psalm 39: Et legem tuam in medio cordis mei. For this you say you have found in the Greek: “in medio ventris mei,” which also in the Hebrew occurs in batthoch meai. This, however, has in the Latin texts euphemistically been changed to “in corde.” However, we should not change the meaning of anything. In the same: “Domine, in adjutorium meum respice.” For this you say you have found in the Greek: σπεῖσον, that is, “festina.” In the Septuagint, however, πρῶτος, that is “respice,” is written.

24. Psalm 40: Et si ingrediebatur, ut videret, and you say that “si” does not occur in the Greek, although it is very clearly written in the Hebrew and has been rendered by all translators. The Septuagint, too, renders it thus: κα■ ε■ ε■σεπορε■ετο το■ ιδε■ν.

25. Psalm 41: Salutare vultus mei, Deus meus. For this you say you have found: “et Deus meus.” But it is to be noted that this [viz. “deus meus”]9 is found twice in that Psalm, and that in the first place “salutare vultus mei, deus meus” is written, while in the second place, viz., at the end of the Psalm, “salutare vultus mei et Deus meus” is used, but so that the conjunction “et” has been added under an asterisk from the Hebrew and Theodotion. In the same: Exprobraverunt mihi, qui tribulant me. For this you say you have found: ο■ χθρο■ μου, that is, “inimici mei,” while the Septuagint has: ο■ θλ■βοντ■ς με, and the Hebrew sorarai, that is, “hostes mei.” In the same: Spera in deo, quoniam adhuc confitebor illi. You say that “adhuc” is not found in the Greek. But it has been added under an asterisk. In the Hebrew likewise we find written chi od, which means ■τι ■τι and is rendered in Latin by “quoniam adhuc.” The same applies to Psalm 42.

26. Psalm 43: Et non egredieris in virtutibus nostris . For this you say you have found in the Greek: “Et non egredieris, Deus.” But “Deus” is superfluous. In the same: “Posuisti nos in similitudinem gentibus,” for which you say the Greek has: ■ν το■ς ■θνεσιν. However, if we should say in Latin: “in similitudinem in gentibus,” it would sound badly, and on that account a proper rendering has been maintained without damage to the sense. On the other hand, I have found in the Hebrew text: “Posuisti nos proverbium in gentibus.” In the same: Exurge, adjuva nos. To this, as usually, the Lord’s name has been added in the Greek.

27. Psalm 44: Sagittae tuae acutæ. For this you say you have read in the Greek: “acutæ, potentissime.” But this is wrong, as “potentissime” has been added from a preceding verse in which we read: “Accingere gladio tuo super femur tuum, potentissime.”

28. Psalm 47: Quoniam ecce reges congregati sunt. For this you say you have found in the Greek: “quoniam ecce reges ejus congregati sunt.” The context of the reading itself shows that “ejus” is wrong. The old Latin texts had here “reges terræ,” which I omitted because it is found neither in the Hebrew nor in the Septuagint. In the same: “sicut audivimus, sic vidimus.” For this you say you have found in the Greek: “sic et vidimus.” This is wrong, for the Hebrew has here chen rainu, which is translated by ο■τως ■ιδομεν, that is, “sic vidimus.” In the same: Suscepimus, Deus, misericordiam tuam in medio templi tui. For the expression which I have translated, in accordance with the Hebrew and the Septuagint, by “templi tui,” you say you have read in the Greek “populi tui,” which is wrong, for in the Hebrew echalach is written, which means το■ νχο■ σου, that is, “templi tui,” and not ammach, which signifies “populum tuum.”

29. Psalm 48: Homo, quum in honore esset. For this you say you have found in the Greek: “Et homo, in honore quum esset.” But it is to be noted that the verse in question occurs twice in this Psalm, and that in the first place the conjunction “et” is added, but in the second not. In the same: “et dominabuntur eorum justi.” For “justis” you say you have read in the Greek ε■θε■ς, which means “rectos.” However, “justi” has been substituted in the Latin on account of the context. Besides, also in that place in which we find the expression: “in libro ε■θε■ς,” we understand “justorum libro.” Hence, we should not translate so literally that, while splitting hairs about syllables, we lose sight of the sense. In the same: “De manu inferni quum liberaverit me.” For this you say you have read in the Greek: “quum acceperit me.” This I also have translated that way

from the Septuagint, and I am wondering who has changed it in your text.

30. Psalm 49: Sedens adversus fratrem tuum loquebaris. For this you say you have found in the Greek: κατ[] το[] []δελφο[] σου κατελ[]λεις, and you think that it is not translated well because I said: “adversus fratrem tuum loquebaris,” and that I should have said: “adversus fratrem tuum detrahebas.” But even a fool realizes that that is wrong and not idiomatic in our language. Neither am I ignorant of the fact that καταλαλ[]α means “detractio.” However, if we want to use that, we cannot say: “adversus fratrem tuum detrahebas,” but we must say: “de fratre tuo detrahebas.” However, if we do so, some hairsplitter of words will inquire again why we do not say: κατ[] το[] []δελφο[] σου, that is, “adversus fratrem tuum.” All that, however, is nonsense, and we should not embark upon a useless quibbling about words, as long as the meaning remains one and the same, because every language, as I said before, has its own idiomatic way of expressing itself. In the same: “Ne quando rapiat, et sit qui eripiat.” You say that you have found in the Greek: “Et non sit qui eripiat,” which I also have translated thus and is to be found that way in my texts. Hence I wonder why you blame the translator for the negligence of a drowsy transcriber, unless the reading is perchance: “Ne quando rapiat, nec sit qui eripiat,” so that the copyist wrote “et” for “nec.” In the same: “Sacrificium laudis honorificabit me,” for which the Greek has: δοξ[]σει με, that is, “glorificabit me,” which I explained already a little while ago. In the Gospel we read in the Latin “Pater, clarifica me,” in the place where the Greek has: Π[]τερ, δ[]ξασ[]ν με τ[] δ[]ξ[] [] ε[]χον παρ[] σοι πρ[] το[] τ[]ν κ[]σμον γεν[]σθαι. Thus I did not want to change a time-honored reading because there was no difference of meaning.

31. Psalm 54: Exspectabam eum qui salvum me fecit, and you say that you have found in the Greek: “Exspectabam Deum,” but “Deum” has been added. In the same: “A pusillanimitate spiritus,” and you say you have found in the Greek: []π[] []λιγοψυχ[]ας, which in effect means “pusillanimitas.” It is to be noted, however, that for []λιγοψυχ[]α Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion and the Fifth Edition have the rendering []π[] πνε[]ματος, that is, “a spiritu,” that the Hebrew has merucha, and that the complete sense is, in the texts referred to: Festinabo, ut salver a spiritu tempestatis et turbidinis. In the same: “Quoniam si inimicus maledixisset.” In the Greek we have []νε[]δισεν, that is, “exprobrasset.” But there is no difference in meaning between “maledicta” and “opprobria.”

32. Psalm 55: Quoniam multi bellantes adversum me, ab altitudine diei timebo. You say that you have found in the Greek: non timebo. Here “non” has been added. The sense is: “quoniam multi dimicant adversum me, idcirco ego ab altitudine diei timebo,” that is: “non bellantes adversum me, sed tuum excelsum timebo lumen.” In the same: “In ira populos confringes.” For this the Greek has: []ν []ργ[] λαο[]ς κατ[]ξεις [that is “dejicies,” and not κατε[]ξεις],¹² that is, “confringes.” In Latin a bad error has crept in here, viz. “confringes,” that is κατε[]ξεις, for κατ[]ξεις, which means “dejicies.” For the Hebrew has here hored, meaning καταβ[]βασον, which we may translate by “depone,” and which Symmachus has translated by κατ[]γαγε.

33. Psalm 58: Quia deus susceptor meus, for which the Greek has: Susceptor meus es tu. But it is to be noted that the Hebrew has neither “es” nor “tu,” and that these words appear only in the Septuagint. In the same: “Deus meus, voluntas ejus praeveniet me.” For this the Greek has: τ[] []λεος α[]το[], that is, “misericordia ejus,” which is more correct. The Hebrew, on the other hand, has: “Misericordia mea praeveniet me.” In the same: “Deus ostendit mihi inter inimicos meos,” for

which the Greek has: "Deus meus." But "meus" has been added. In the same: "Ne occidas eos, ne quando obliviscantur populi tui," for which the Greek has: "legis tuæ." But in the Septuagint and in the Hebrew, "populi tui" does not occur, but populi mei, and I have translated it thus. In the same: "Et scient, quia Deus dominator Jacob finium terræ." For this the Greek has: "Et finium terræ." The conjunction "et" has been added, however. The sense is: "Scient quia Deus Jacob dominator finium terræ."

34. Psalm 59: Quis deducet me usque in Idumaeam ? For this the Greek has: aut quis deducet me ?, which is wrong.

35. Psalm 60: Quoniam tu, Deus meus, exaudisti orationem meam, for which you say your Greek text has: Quia tu, Deus, exaudisti me. This reading does not occur either in the Hebrew or in the Septuagint, but only in the Latin. In the same: "Psallam nomini tuo in sæculum sæculi, for which you say your Greek text has: "in sæculum." The Hebrew has once laed, that is, "in æternum," and not lolam, which means "in sæculum."

36. Psalm 61: Quia Deus adjutor noster in æternum, for which the Greek has: "Deus adjutor noster." Hence "in æternum" is to be omitted.

37. Psalm 62: Sitivit tibi anima mea, for which you say your Greek text has: Sitivit in te anima mea. The Hebrew, however, has not attha, which means "te," but lach, which means "tibi." All translators have rendered accordingly. Hence it has been translated properly into the Latin.

38. Psalm 63: Sagittae parvulorum factæ sunt plagæ eorum, for which your Greek text has: Sagitta parvulorum. But if we say: "Sagitta parvulorum factæ sunt plagæ eorum," the rendering is wrong from the standpoint of Latin. Instead, the Hebrew version, "Percutiet eos Deus jaculo repentino et inferentur plagæ eorum," is better.

39. Psalm 64: Qui conturbas profundum maris, sonum fluctuum ejus. You say your Greek text has the addition: "Quis sustinebit ?" This is wrong, for the sense is: "qui conturbas profundum maris et conturbas sonum fluctuum ejus." In the same: Parasti cibum illorum, quoniam ita est præparatio ejus, and you say that your Greek text does not have "ejus," although in the Hebrew the china clearly means "præparationem ejus," viz. "ejus terræ," of which the Psalmist had earlier said: "Visitasti terram et inebriasti eam."

40. Psalm 65: Holocausta medullata offeram tibi cum incenso arietum, for which you say you have found: Cum incensu et arietibus. But that is wrong, for the Hebrew has: em catoroth helim, which means μετὰ θυμιαματος κριόν, that is, "cum incenso arietum." In the same: Propterea exaudivit Deus, for which you say you have found in the Greek: Exaudivit me Deus. Here, "me" is superfluous.

41. Psalm 67: Et exsultent in conspectu ejus, for which you say you have found in the Greek: Et exsultate in conspectu ejus. This I, too, have translated that way, but I cannot know who has tampered with it in your text. In the same: Etenim non credunt inhabitare Dominum, for which you say you have read in the Greek: καὶ γὰρ πειθοῦντες τοὺς κατασκηνοῦντας. Both of these versions are wrong, for I translated: Etenim non credentes inhabitare Dominum, which is the correct meaning depending upon the preceding: "Ascendisti in altum, cepisti captivitatem, accepisti dona in hominibus (et eos qui non credebant Dominum inhabitare posse mortalibus)." In

the same: Deus benedictus Dominus die cottidie, for which you say you have found in the Greek: Dominus benedictus Deus, benedictus Dominus die cottidie. But the former reading is better and truer. In the same: Viderunt ingressus tui, Deus, for which you say your Greek has: Visi sunt ingressus tui, Deus. The Hebrew has the following: rachua alichatach, which Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion and the Fifth and Sixth editions have translated: Viderunt itinera tua, Deus, and what follows: Itinera Dei mei regis, qui est in sancto. Hence we should read thus: Viderunt ingressus tuos, Deus, and not imitate the mistake of the transcriber who put the nominative for the accusative, although in the Septuagint and in the Hexapla I have found: θεωρῶσαν αὐτοῦ, θεῷ, and for θεωρῶσαν, that is, “viderunt,” in many texts θεωρῶθησαν is found, which reading custom has maintained. In the same: Ingressus Dei mei, regis mei, qui est in sancto, the meaning of which is: “Viderunt ingressus Dei mei, regis mei.” But your statement that “mei” is not added in the Greek after “rege” is clearly erroneous; for both “Dei mei” and “regis mei” are used here pleonastically by way of affection to express the fervent desire that he who is God and king of all should in a special sense be the prophet’s God and king because of his condition as a servant of God. Finally, the Hebrew text has heli melchi, which means “Deum meum et regem meum.” In the same: Regna terræ, cantate Deo, psallite Domino, and you say that “Psallite Domino” does not occur in that verse because there follows immediately: Diapsalma. Psallite Deo, qui ascendit super cælum cæli ad orientem, whereas that verse should rather read according to the Hebrew: Cantate Deo, psallite Domino, and what follows at the beginning of the other verse, viz., “Psallite Deo,” does not occur in the authentic texts, but has an arrow in front of it. Thus you, too, should adhere to the true version lest, while adopting a spurious reading, you lose sight of what the prophet has written.

42. Psalm 68: Laudabo nomen Dei cum cantico. For this you say you have found in your Greek text: “Dei mei.” But “mei” is superfluous.

43. Psalm 70: Deus, ne elongeris a me. You say that your Greek text reads: Deus meus, but “meus” is superfluous. In the same: Deus, docuiste me e juventute mea. Also here “meus” after “Deus,” which you say you have found in the Greek, is superfluous. In the same: Donec annuntiem brachium tuum. You say you have found in the Greek: mirabilia tua. This, however, is from the preceding verse: Et usque nunc pronuntiabo mirabilia tua. The word “brachium” is hence correct here.

44. Psalm 71: Et adorabunt eum omnes reges. You say that you have found in your Greek text: “reges terræ, but “terræ” is superfluous. In the same: Benedictus Dominus Deus, Deus Israël. You say that in your Greek text “Deus” does not occur twice, although it is in the Hebrew, and the threefold occurrence in the Septuagint of the name of our Lord and God very clearly indicates the mystery of the Holy Trinity.¹⁴ In the same: Et benedictum nomen majestatis ejus in æternum. You say that you have found in the Greek: In æternum et in sæculum sæculi. But please remember that the additional words have redundantly been added by the Greeks, as they occur neither in the Hebrew nor in the Septuagint.

45. Psalm 72: prodiet quasi ex adipe, and you say that you have found in the Greek: ξελεσονται, that is, “prodient,” which is wrong; for also the Septuagint has this: ξελεσεται ὁ κύριος ὁ δίκαιος. In the same: Quomodo scit Deus. You say that the Greek does not have the word “Deum,” although the Septuagint has: Πῶς γινώκει, and all translators

have rendered it similarly from the Hebrew. In the same: Intellegam in novissimis eorum, for which you say have read in the Greek: Et intellegam. However, here the conjunction “et” is superfluous. In the same: Defecit caro mea et cor meum, for which some have changed the word-order in an awkward way, thus: Defecit cor meum et caro mea. In the same: Ut annuntiem omnes prædicationes tuas, for which you say you have read in the Greek: τὰς ἀνσεις σου, that is, “laudes tuas.” It is to be noted, however, that the Hebrew has malochothach, which Aquila has translated by γγελας σου, that is, “nuntios tuos,” the Septuagint by τὰς παγγελας σου, that is, “prædicationes” or “promissa,” although “laus” and “prædicatio” mean one and the same thing.

46. Psalm 73: Ut quid, Deus, reppulisti in finem ?, for which the Greek with an awkward word-order says: Ut quid reppulisti, Deus ? In the same: Quanta malignatus est inimicus in sancto ! I wonder who has corrected a mistake into your copy by substituting “sanctis” for “sancto,” since also my copy has the form “in sancto.” In the same: Incendamus omnes dies festos Dei a terra, for which the Greek has καταπασωμεν, and I translated thus: Quiescere faciamus omnes dies festos Dei a terra. I wonder why some rash fellow has thought that the note: “the correct form is not καταπασωμεν, as some think, but κατακασωμεν, that is, incendamus,” which was placed by me for the guidance of the reader into the margin, should be put into the body of the text. And since the holy presbyter Firmus, who was in charge of this work, has told me that this question has been discussed by many, I am going to explain it somewhat more in detail. The Hebrew text reads: sarphu chol moedahu hel baares, which Aquila and Symmachus have rendered: νεπρισαν πσας τς συνταγς το Θεο, that is, incenderunt omnes solemnitates Dei in terra. The Fifth Edition renders: κατκασσαν, that is, combusserunt, the Sixth: κατακασωμεν, that is, comburamus, which also the Septuagint evidently translates according to the copies [by καταπασωμεν].⁹ Also Theodotion renders: νεπρσωμεν, that is, succendimus [= perfect tense]. From this it is clear that my rendering should be used, although sight should not be lost of the true Hebrew version. For the reading of the Septuagint should be used in the churches, because of its antiquity, whereas the scholars should, for the sake of the accuracy of the Scriptures, not forget the true version. Thus, whenever anything has been added in the margin for the sake of taking note of, this should not be put into the body of the text, in order not to corrupt the original translation according to the whim of the transcribers. In the same: Contribulasti capita draconum in aquis ; tu confregisti capita draconis. This is the correct form of the reading; hence “tu” should not occur in the first verse, but in the second, and “aquæ” should be in the plural, instead of in the singular, the same as Aquila has translated the Hebrew word ammaim by τῶν δῶν, that is, “aquarum.” In the same: Ne obliviscaris voces inimicorum tuorum, for which you say the Greek has τὸν κετὸν σου, that is, “deprecantium te.” In the Hebrew sorarach is used, which Aquila has translated by “hostium tuorum,” Symmachus by “bellantium contra te,” the Septuagint and the Sixth Edition by “inimicorum tuorum.” The meaning is clear from the preceding: Memor esto improperiorum tuorum, eorum, quæ ab insipiente sunt tota die ; ne obliviscaris voces inimicorum tuorum (that is, the voices which blaspheme you and disparage against you amongst your people). Whereupon follows: Superbia eorum, qui te oderunt, ascendit semper, that is: “while you are deferring the punishment, they increase their blasphemies.”

47. Psalm 74: Narrabimus mirabilia tua. For this the Greek has the wrong reading: Narrabo omnia mirabilia tua.

48. Psalm 75: Omnes viri divitiarum manibus suis, and not, as you have read in the text spoiled by, God knows, whom: in manibus suis. In the same: Terribili et ei qui aufert spiritus principum. You say that “ei” is not in the Greek. That’s true, but unless we add “ei,” the Latin is not complete. For we cannot say correctly: “Terribili et qui aufert spiritus principum.”

49. Psalm 76: Et meditatus sum node cum corde meo et exercitabar et scopebam spiritum meum. For this we read in the Hebrew: Recordabar Psalmorum meorum in nocte ; cum corde meo loquebar, et scopebam spiritum meum. For “exercitatione” the Septuagint translates **δολεσχ**αν, meaning some sort of “decantationem” and “meditationem,” and for what we call “scopebam,” it puts **σκαλλον**, which Symmachus has translated by **νηρε**ων, that is, “perscrutabar,” or “quærebam.” The Fifth Edition uses a similar form. **σκαλισμ**ς, however, refers in agriculture properly to the hoeing of the soil for the purpose of destroying the weeds. And as there the weeds which are to be destroyed are loosened with a hoe, so here the Psalmist uses this figure in connection with the imperfect state of his mind. But it is to be noted that **σκαλλον** {aorist tense} refers to one, **σκαλλον** {imperfect tense} to a repeated occurrence. In the same: A generatione in generationem. You say that this is followed in the Greek by: consummavit verbum. But that would be an error in the Latin text, and no translator has it.

50. Psalm 77: Et narrabunt filiis suis. For this the Greek has **ναγγελο**σιν, which means “annuntiabunt.” It is to be noted, however, that the Hebrew has iasaphpheru, which Aquila and Symmachus have translated by “narrabunt.” In the same: Et occidit pingues eorum. This reading also the Hebrew has, viz. bamasmnehem, which Aquila translated by **ν λιπαρο**ς **α**τν, Symmachus by **το**ς λιπαρωτ**ρου**ς **α**τν, the Septuagint, Theodotion and the Fifth Edition by **ν το**ς **π**οσιν **α**τν. Some ignorant fellows, however, have supposed that **πλε**οσιν was written for **π**οσιν. In the same: Dilexerunt eum in ore suo et lingua sua mentiti sunt ei. The Hebrew likewise has the same reading, viz. icazbulo, and all have translated similarly: **ψε**σαντο **α**τ, that is, “mentiti sunt ei.” Who, however, should want to put for “ei,” “eum”? I shall, forsooth, not be a party to adulterating the Scriptures. In the same: Et propitius fiet peccatis eorum et non disperdet eos. You say that “eos” does not occur in the Greek, which is true. I, however, in order to avoid a loose construction, have completed the statement according to Latin usage. If anyone, however, should think that **διαφθε** does not mean “perditionem,” but “corruptionem,” let him remember the place which reads: **ε**ς **τ** **τ**λος **μ** **διαφθε**ρ**ς**, that is, “in finem ne disperdas,” and not, as most have translated erroneously, “ne corrumpas.” In the same: Et induxit eos in montem sanctificationis suæ, montem quem acquisivit dextera ejus. For this the Septuagint has the reading: **ρος το**το, **κ**τ**σα**το **δεξ**α **α**το — and not, as you write, **κ**τ**σα**το [= “founded” or “created”]⁹ —, that is, quem acquisivit dextera ejus. Thus Symmachus has translated correctly according to the Hebrew: montem quem acquisivit dextera ejus. In the same: Et averterunt se et non servaverunt pactum, quemadmodum patres eorum. I know that the word “pactum” does not occur in the Hebrew, but since all have translated in a similar way **συνθ**ησαν, and since the Greek form **συνθ**ηκη means “pactum,” the meaning of the whole [i.e. **συνθ**ησαν]⁹ is “non servaverunt pactum,” although the Septuagint has **θ**ησαν. In the same: In terra quam fundavit in sæcula, for which you say you have found: In terra fundavit eam in sæcula. The Hebrew has the following version, which also Symmachus renders the same way: **ε**ς **τ**ν **γ**ν **ν** **θεμελ**ωσεν **ε**ς **τ**ν **α**να. If the statement, however, does not mean that the earth has been created, but something else which is supposed to have been founded on earth,

let those who think so prove from the context what the meaning is, as I do not know what which is not expressed should be founded on earth. If they think, however, that a sanctuary has been founded upon the earth, the version should be: in terra fundavit illud in sæcula. In the same: Et in intellectibus manuum suarum deduxit eos. The singular **ἐν τῇ συνείδει** is not used here, as you say, but **ἐν ταῖς συνείδεσιν**, which means “intelligentias.” This idea is contained also in the Hebrew bathabunoth, which means “intellectibus.”

51. Psalm 78: Posuerunt Hierusalem in pomorum custodiam, which in the Greek means **ἐν πωροφυλάκτιον** and cannot be translated differently from the way I have rendered it. The word indicates a watchtower or lookout, such as the wardens of the fields and orchards were accustomed to have, so that of the extensive city hardly a cottage was left [which was not under their watchful eye].⁹ This is the sense according to the Greek. Besides, in the Hebrew lichin is written, which Aquila translated by **λίθαριον**, that is a pile of stones which the farmers are wont to pick from their vineyards and fields.

52. Psalm 79: Et plantasti radices ejus hinc. You say that “hinc” does not occur in the Greek. That’s all right, for it does not occur in my texts either, so that I am wondering which dunce has altered your copies.

53. Psalm 82: « Hereditate possideamus sanctuarium Dei ! », and you say that the Greek has « **Κληρονομήσωμεν αὐτόν !** », that is, “possideamus nobis.” This is a useless question, for when we say “possideamus,” “nobis” is likewise included.

54. Psalm 83: Cor meum et caro mea exsultavit in deum vivum. For this you say the Greek has exsultaverunt. There is no contradiction in this, for when we read “exsultavit,” the meaning is: “cor meum exsultavit et caro mea exsultavit.” If, on the other hand, the form “exsultaverunt” is used, two exult at one and the same time, viz. the heart and the flesh. Let me request you to avoid this type of nonsense and useless questions where there is no difference in the sense. In the same: Beatus vir, cujus est auxilium abs te. You say that you have found in the Greek: cui est auxilium ejus abs te, and I am criticized, as you say, for having avoided this rendering in my Latin translation. However, who does not understand that if we should say “cui est auxilium ejus,” this would be a manifest error, and that if “cui” precedes, “ejus” cannot follow, unless I am criticized for having avoided a mistake. In the same: In valle lacrimarum, for which you say the Greek has **κλαυθμύνης**, that is, “plorationis.” However, it makes no difference whether we say “ploratum” or “planctum” or “fletum” or “lacrimas”; the meaning remains one and the same, so that I follow the rule that, where there is no change of sense, I write as it sounds best in Latin.

55. Psalm 84: Benedixisti, domine, terram tuam. You say that for “benedixisti” you have found in the Greek **Εὐδίκησας**, and you ask how that word should be expressed in Latin. If we want to quibble about words and syllables, we may say: “Bene placuit, Domine, terra tua” and, while translating words, we lose sight of the sense. At any rate, something should be added to give a proper meaning, and we might say: “Complacuit tibi, Domine, terra tua.” However, if we do this, some one might ask again why we have added “tibi,” since it is found neither in the Greek, nor in the Hebrew. However, we should always follow the rule which I have repeated so often, viz., that where there is no difference in the sense, we should translate idiomatically and use a polished language. In the same: Misericordia et veritas obviaverunt sibi. You say that “sibi” is not in the Greek. However, it is neither in the Hebrew and is given in the Septuagint under an arrow. When

these signs [viz. arrow and asterisk]⁹ are omitted as superfluous, as it were, through the carelessness of most transcribers, the reader is badly led astray. If “sibi” were not added, it would be thought that pity and truth had not met each other, but someone else, nor that justice and peace had given a kiss to each other, but to somebody else.

56. Psalm 85: Et non proposuerunt te in conspectu suo. You say that “te” is not in your text. Add “te” and thus, while correcting the blunder of the transcriber, you will correct at the same time your own error. In the same: Et tu, Domine Deus, miserator et misericors. You say that you have found in the Greek: Et tu, Domine Deus meus. But “meus” is superfluous here, as it is neither in the Hebrew nor in the Septuagint.

57. Psalm 88: Magnus et horrendus, for which you say you have found in the Greek φοβερός, which means “terribilis,” “timendus,” “formidandus.” I think it means, in the above expression, just “horrendum” (not, however, as the common people think, “despiciendum” and “squalidum”), according to the following: Mihi frigidus horror, Membra quatit (Virgil. *Æneid* 3:29-30). and: Horror ubique animo, simul ipsa silentia terrent (Virgil. *Æneid* 2:755) and: Monstrum horrendum, ingens (Virgil. *Æneid* 3:658) as well as in many similar places. In the same: Tunc locutus es in visione sanctis tuis, for which you say you have found in the Greek filiis tuis. It is to be noted, however, that the Hebrew has here laasidach, which all have translated by τοῖς ἁγίοις σου, that is, “sanctis tuis,” except the Sixth Edition, which translates prophetis tuis, expressing the sense rather than the words. In the κοινῇ only, however, I have found “filios” for “sanctis.” In the same: Tu vero reppulisti et respexisti, for which you say you have found in the Greek ἐξουδένωσας. How big an error has resulted here from the change of one letter! — for I did not translate “respexisti,” but “despexisti et pro nihilo duxisti” — unless perchance you think that ἐξουδένωσας should not be rendered by “despexisti” but, according to the most learned translator of those times, by “annihilasti,” or “annullasti,” or “nullificasti,” or by any other word-monster which the inexpert may invent.

58. Psalm 89: A sæculo et usque in sæculum tu es, Deus, and you say that the word “Deus” is not contained in the Greek. It is clear that it is missing there, since it is in the Hebrew. Besides, all other translators and the Septuagint have the corresponding rendering: πάλαι τοῦ αἰῶνος, καὶ ἄχρι τοῦ αἰῶνος σὺ εἶ, Ὁ Θεός, which means in the Hebrew: meolam ad olam atah el. In the same: Quoniam superuenit mansuetudo, et corripiemur. You say that you have found in the Greek: Mansuetudo super nos. But “super nos” is superfluous.

59. Psalm 90: Dicet Domino, « Susceptor meus es tu », and you say that in the Greek text “es” does not occur. But let me reply to you that in the Hebrew neither “es” occurs nor “tu,” but that the Septuagint and the Latin texts use these words idiomatically.

60. Psalm 93: Beatus homo quem tu erudieris, Domine. You say that in the Greek “tu” does not occur, which is true. The Latin texts, however, use it idiomatically. For if we say: “Beatus homo quem erudieris, Domine,” the rendering does not sound so well. And when we say “Domine,” addressing the Lord, the sense is not perverted by the addition of “tu.” In the same: Et in malitia eorum disperdet eos. You say that the preposition “in” is absent from the Greek, and that the reading is: Malitiam eorum disperdet. It is to be noted, however, that both the Hebrew and all the translators have: In malitia eorum disperdet eos. But if we should want to read “Malitiam eorum disperdet,” then the word “eos,” which follows in the Septuagint at the end of the verse, would be

superfluous and wrong.

61. Psalm 97: Recordatus est misericordiæ suæ, for which you say you have found in the Greek: Misericordiæ suæ Jacob. However, the name “Jacob” is superfluous here.

62. Psalm 100: Oculi mei ad fideles terræ, ut sederent mecum, for which you say you have found in the Greek: το σὺγκαθῆσθαι αὐτὸς μετ’ ἐμοῦ. Who, however, would not avoid such a translation that, rendering verbatim, he would say: “Ut consederent ipsi mecum ?”

63. Psalm 101: Vigilavi et factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto. You say you have found in the Greek π δμᾱτι, which the ancient Latin texts have rendered by in ædificio. Δμᾱ has in the regions of the Orient the same meaning as “tectum” in Latin; for in Palestine and Egypt, where the Divine Books were either written or translated, the roofs have no tops but δμᾱτα, which at Rome are called either “solaria” or “Mæniana,” that is, flat roofs which are supported by transverse beams. Further, when Peter in the Acts of the Apostles ascended unto the δμᾱ, he is to be believed to have ascended to the roof of the building, and when we are told to put a “coronam” on our δμᾱτι, it means that we should place a railing around it in order to avoid falling down. Likewise in the Gospel the statement, Quæ, says he, auditis in aure, dicite super δμᾱτα, means on the roof. The same in Isaiah: Quid vobis est, quod omnes ascendistis in tecta vana ? ; and in many other similar places. In the same: Factus sum sicut νυκτικῶραξ in domicilio, which is expressed in the same way in the Greek, and you ask what the word νυκτικῶραξ means in Latin. In the Hebrew the word “bos” is written for “nycticorace.” This Aquila, the Septuagint, Theodotion and the Fifth Edition have translated by “nycticoracem,” Symmachus “upupam,” the Sixth Edition by “noctuam,” which I, too, rather follow. Further, where in the Latin and Greek the reading: Factus sum sicut νυκτικῶραξ in domicilio, occurs, the Hebrew says: Factus sum sicut noctua in ruinosi. The majority think the word “bubonem” to have an ambiguous meaning. In the same: A facie iræ et indignationis tuæ. For this you say you have found in the Greek: A facie iræ tuæ, although it is clear that both the Hebrew and the Septuagint have the following version: π προσπὸν τῶ ργῶ σου καὶ τὸ θυμὸ σου. In the same: Quoniam placuerunt servis tuis lapides ejus, et terræ ejus miserebuntur. For “terra” the word afar is used in the Hebrew, which all have translated by χον, and which may mean either “pulvis” or “humus,” that is, “terra.”

64. Psalm 102: Non in perpetuo irascetur, for which you say you have found in the Greek: Non in finem. However, the Hebrew word nese may mean either “perpetuum” or “finis” or “victoria,” depending upon the context.

65. Psalm 103: Qui facis angelos tuos spiritus, for which you say you have found in the Greek: ποιῶν τοὺς ἁγγέλους αὐτόν, that is, Qui facit angelos suos. In this connection examine why, since God is being addressed, the prophet suddenly changes, as though talking to some one else, especially as he begins thus: Domine, Deus meus, magnificatus es vehementer. Confessionem et decorem induisti, and: Qui tegis in aquis superiora ejus — that is to say, of the sky — Qui ponis nubem ascensum tuum, qui ambulas super pennas ventorum ; and then immediately continues: Qui facis angelos tuos spiritus, et ministros tuos ignem urentem. Qui fundasti terram super stabilitatem suam; and a little further: Ab increpatione tua fugient ; a voce tonitru tui formidabunt; and: In loco quem fundasti eis. Qui emittis fontes in convallibus; and then: Ut educas panem de terra. If, thus, all this is addressed to the Second Person — that is, to God —, why is in one verse the Third Person suddenly and without connection introduced? In the same: A voce tonitru tui

formidabunt. The Hebrew, too, has here *tonitru tui*, so that I am wondering how it has been omitted in the Latin texts through an error of the transcribers. In the same: *Hoc mare magnum et spatiosum manibus*. You say that in the Greek the word “manibus” is lacking. I know it, but it has been added in the Septuagint under an asterisk from the Hebrew and Theodotion’s edition. Furthermore, the Hebrew also has this reading: *ze haïam gadol uarab idaim*, which Aquila has translated thus: ἀλλὰ καὶ πλατεῖα χερσίν, while all translators say, according to the Hebrew text, metaphorically: ἀτὴ θάλασσα μεγάλη καὶ ἐρηχὼρος χερσίν, as though the sea with outstretched hands were taking everything unto itself. In the same: *Ut educas panem de terra*, for which you say you have found: *Ut educat*. However, one thing cannot be addressed to God, and the other said about him. The prophet either addresses everything to God, or he says it to some one else about him. Since, however, the larger part is addressed to God, also the doubtful portions are to be addressed to his person. In the same: *Herodii domus dux est eorum*. For “herodio” [“heron”],⁹ which in the Hebrew is *asida*, Symmachus uses κτηνᾶ, that is, “milvum” [“kite”].⁹ I, too, have translated thus into the Latin: *Ibi aves nidificabunt ; milvi abies domus est, viz.,* because it is accustomed to build its nest always in high and inaccessible trees. Hence the Sixth Edition translates with greater clarity yet: *Milvo cupressi ad nidificandum*. The Hebrew, however, uses for “abietibus” and “cupressis” *barusim*, which means “abietes” rather than κυπαρίσσους. In the same: *Petra refugium erinaciis* [“hedgehogs”],⁹ for which the Hebrew has *sphannim*, and all have used the similar form τοῖς χοιρογρυλλοῖς [“porcupines”],⁹ excepting the Septuagint, which uses “lepores” [“hares,” “rabbits”].⁹ It is to be noted, however, that reference is had to an animal not larger than the hedgehog, which has characteristics of both the mouse and the bear, for which reason it is called in Palestine ῥκτμς [“marmot”].⁹ These animals are very abundant in those regions and are wont to live in recesses of rocks or in holes in the ground.

66. Psalm 104: *Dedit terra eorum ranas*, for which you say you have read in the Greek ἐξήρπεν, which may be translated thus: “*Ebullivit terra eorum ranas*.” However, in this there is no difference of meaning either, so that I, following the ancient version, did not want to change what was not wrong. In the same: *Et contrivit lignum finium eorum*, for which you say you have found in the Greek: *omne lignum*. But here “omne” has been added and is superfluous. In the same: *Quoniam memor fuit verbi sancti sui, quod habuit ad Abraham, puerum suum*, for which you say you have found in the Greek ἐν διέθετο, that is, *quod disposuit*. The Hebrew and the Septuagint, however, have the following reading: μνησθη τοῦ λόγου τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ αὐτοῦ, τοῦ πατρὸς βράμ τὸν δόλον αὐτοῦ. Hence the Greek words ἐν διέθετο are wrong in this place and should be erased.

67. Psalm 105: *Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus*, for which you say you have found in the Greek: *Quoniam χρηστς*, that is, *suavis*. It is to be noted, however, that *χρηστς* may be translated either by “bonum” or by “suave.” Furthermore, the Hebrew also has the reading: *chi tob*, which all have translated similarly: *quia bonus*, from which it is clear that also *χρηστς* is meant to stand for “bonus.” In the same: *Non fuerunt memores multitudinis misericordiae tuæ*. You say that you have found in the Greek: *Et non fuerunt memores*. But the conjunction “et” is superfluous. In the same: *Et irritaverunt ascendentes in mare, Mare Rubrum*, for which you say you have found in the Greek: καὶ παραπικράναν, and you think that the expression has to be translated literally: “*et amaricaverunt*.” But this rendering is similar to “annullationi” or “annihilationi.”¹⁵ Read Ezechiel and you will find that παραπικράσµς always stands for “*irritationem et exacerbationem*” where

the expression οίκος παραπικρῶν, that is, domus exasperans, occurs. In the same: Et vidit, quum tribularentur, et audivit orationem eorum. What you say you have found in the Greek besides this is superfluous.

68. Psalm 106: Et statuit procellam ejus in auram et siluerunt fluctus ejus. What you say you have found in the Greek for this, viz.: καὶ πέτμησεν τὴν καταιγίδι αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐστη ἐξ αὐρᾶν, is wrong. In the same: Et deduxit eos in portum voluntatis eorum. For this you say you have found: In portum voluntatis suæ. However, the Hebrew does not have ephsau, which means “voluntatis suæ,” but ephsam, which stands for “voluntatis eorum.”

69. Psalm 107: Exsurge, gloria mea. What you say does not occur in the Latin is rightly not in this Psalm, because it is neither found in the Hebrew, nor in any translation, but is contained in the 56th Psalm, and it seems to me that somebody has transferred it from that place to this. In the same: Mihi alienigenæ amici facti sunt. For this you say you have found in the Greek πετγησαν, that is, “subditi sunt.” This, however, occurs in the 59th Psalm. In the present Psalm, however, we find in all translations the reading: μοῖς ἄλλοφυλοι φίλασαν, which means: amici facti sunt, and is expressed in the Hebrew by ethrohe.

70. Psalm 109: Virgam virtutis tuæ emittet Dominus e Sion. You say that “virtutis tuæ” does not occur in your Greek texts. It occurs, however, evidently in the Hebrew and in the Septuagint. In the same: Dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum. You say that the Greek has: et dominare. But the conjunction “et” is neither in the Hebrew nor in the Septuagint and is superfluous.

71. Psalm 110: Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde. In the Greek you say you have found: in toto corde meo. But “meo,” too, is here superfluous.

72. Psalm 113: Deus autem noster in cælo, for which you say you have read in the Greek: in cælo et in terra. But the addition “et in terra” is superfluous.

73. Psalm 114: Et in diebus meis invocabo te. You say that “te” is not in the Greek, and that’s all right. Hence it should be erased from your copies. In the same: Placebo Domino in regione vivorum, for which you say you have read in the Greek: Placebo in conspectu Domini. But this is wrong.

74. Psalm 117: Et in nomine Domini, quia ultus sum in eos. You say that “quia” is not found in the Greek texts. It should be added, however, in the Latin copies under an asterisk.

75. Psalm 118: Et meditabar in mandatis tuis quæ dilexi. You say that in the Greek the word vehementer is added. But this is superfluous. In the same: Levavi manus meas ad mandata tua quæ dilexi. You say that you have read in the Greek, “ad mandata tua quæ dilexi [vehementer]”¹²; but “vehementer” is superfluous. In the same: Cogitavi vias meas. You say that you have read in the Greek, “[juxta]¹² vias tuas,” but “juxta” is superfluous and “meas” is more correct. In the same: Et verti pedes meos in testimonia tua. You say you have read in the Greek, “et averti”; but the prefix is superfluous. In the same: Ego autem in toto corde scrutabor mandata tua. You say that you have read in the Greek, “in toto corde meo”; but “meo” is superfluous here. In the same: anima mea in manibus meis semper ; et legem tuam non sum oblitus. For this you say you have read in the Greek, “Anima mea in manibus tuis semper.” It is to be noted, however, that the Hebrew the Septuagint and all other translators have here “in manibus meis,” and not “in manibus tuis,” which

is in the Hebrew bachaffi. All ecclesiastical writers among the Greeks interpret this place that way, and its sense is briefly the following: “I am daily in danger and hold my life, as it were, in my very hands, and yet I do not forget your law.” In the same: Exitus aquarum deduxerunt oculi mei, quia non custodierunt legem tuam. For this you say you have read in the Greek, “quia non custodivi legem tuam.” But this is wrong because also the Hebrew text has: Rivi aquarum fluebant de oculis meis, quia non custodierunt legem tuam. In the same: Pronuntiabit lingua mea eloquium tuum. You say that you have read in the Greek for “pronuntiabit” φησὶ γέται, which word means either “pronuntiabit,” “effabitur,” or “loquetur,” as these are synonymous. Finally, from the Hebrew I have also translated thus: Loquetur lingua mea sermonem tuum.

76. Psalm 119: Domine, libera animam meam a labiis iniquis, a lingua dolosa. You say you have read in the Greek, “et a lingua dolosa”; but “et” is superfluous.

77. Psalm 126: Beatus vir qui implebit desiderium suum ex ipsis. You say that in your Greek text the word “vir” does not occur. It is, however, clearly expressed in both the Hebrew and the Septuagint.

78. Psalm 129: Propter legem tuam sustinui te, Domine. You say that you have found in the Greek: Propter nomen tuum. I confess that a number of texts have that reading. But since we are investigating the truth, we simply must adhere to what we find in the Hebrew. And there we find for “nomine” or “lege” the word thira, which Aquila translates by φόβον, that is, “timorem,” Symmachus and Theodotion by νόμον, that is “legem,” thinking, as they did, that the Hebrew had the word thora on account of the similarity between jod { ה } and waw { ו }, which differ only in size. The Fifth Edition has “terrorem,” the Sixth “verbum.”

79. Psalm 131: Sicut juravit Domino, votum vovit Deo Jacob. You say that you have found in the Greek, for my rendering “votum vovit,” the form ηξάτο, and you think that I should have translated “oravit”! This, however, is wrong, for εχ means either “orationem” or “votum,” according to the context, as in: Redde Deo vota tua, that is: τες εχς σου.

80. Psalm 135: Qui fecit luminaria magna. You say that you have found in the Greek: magna solus. But “solus” has been added from a preceding verse, where we read: Qui fecit mirabilia magna solus. Hence you should insert it there and omit it here as superfluous.

81. Psalm 137: Quoniam magnificasti super omne, nomen sanctum tuum. You say that you have found in the Greek: super omnes. The Septuagint, however, has: τι μεγαλυνας π πν τ νομα τ γν σου, as I, too, have translated into the Latin. Besides, remember that the Hebrew has this reading: Quia magnificasti super omne nomen tuum, Verbum tuum. According to the Latin version, however, the meaning is: “Quoniam magnificasti super omne nomen” — that is, above everything that may be called holy in Heaven and on earth — “filium tuum.”

82. Psalm 138: Quia non est sermo in lingua mea. For this you say you have read in the Greek: Quia non est dolus in lingua mea. But only the Sixth Edition has this reading. Besides, both the Septuagint and all translators and the very Hebrew text have either λαλι or λγον, that is, “eloquium” and “verbum.” The Hebrew word in question is mala.

83. Psalm 139: Funes extenderunt in laqueum. For this you say the Greek has: Funes extenderunt laqueum pedibus meis. But that is wrong in this place. In the same: You say that you have found in

the Greek, for “Habitabunt recti cum vultu tuo,” the reading: Et habitabunt. But the conjunction “et” is superfluous here.

84. Psalm 140: Dissipata sunt ossa nostra secus infernum, for which you say you have read in the Greek: ossa eorum. That reading, however, is wrong, too.

85. Psalm 146: Nec in tibiis viri beneplacitum erit ei. You say that for “ei” you have read “Domino,” which does not occur.

86. And since you are asking at the end of your missive, and my holy son Avitus likewise has requested me often, how certain Greek words should be translated, I shall note these briefly. Νεομηνια is the beginning of the month, which in Latin we may properly call “kalendas.” However, since the Hebrews calculate the month on the basis of the revolution of the moon around the earth, and since the Greeks call the moon μνη, νεομηνια means, as it were, “new moon”; ερημος means “desertum” or “solitudinem”; θρονος signifies “sedem” or “solium,” νυκτικραξ, as I have said already,¹⁶ “noctuam”; κυνμυα is wrongly written with the Greek letter υ and consequently translated by the Latins as “musca canina,” whereas it should be written, according to the Hebrew, with the diphthong οι, so that the form becomes κοινμυα, which means “omne muscarum genus”; this Aquila translated by πανμικτον, that is, “omnimodam muscam.” Finally, the word λαξευτηριον, which has been rendered into the Latin by “asciam,” I consider a type of tool with which stone is worked. Thus, translating from the Hebrew, I said: Et nunc sculpturas ejus pariter bipenne et dolatoriis deraserunt. Hence λαξευτηριον may be rendered by “dolatorium.”

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Letter 107. To Laeta.

Laeta, the daughter-in-law of Paula, having written from Rome to ask Jerome how she ought to bring up her infant daughter (also called Paula) as a virgin consecrated to Christ, Jerome now instructs her in detail as to the child's training and education. Feeling some doubt, however, as to whether the scheme proposed by him will be practicable at Rome, he advises Laeta in case of difficulty to send Paula to Bethlehem where she will be under the care of her grandmother and aunt, the eider Paula and Eustochium. Laeta subsequently accepted Jerome's advice and sent the child to Bethlehem where she eventually succeeded Eustochium as head of the nunnery rounded by her grandmother. The date of the letter is 403 a.d.

1. The apostle Paul writing to the Corinthians and instructing in sacred discipline a church still untaught in Christ has among other commandments laid down also this: "The woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband; else were your children unclean but now are they holy."¹ Should any person have supposed hitherto that the bonds of discipline are too far relaxed and that too great indulgence is conceded by the teacher, let him look at the house of your father, a man of the highest distinction and learning, but one still walking in darkness; and he will perceive as the result of the apostle's counsel sweet fruit growing from a bitter stock and precious balsams exhaled from common canes. You yourself are the offspring of a mixed marriage; but the parents of Paula-you and my friend Toxotius-are both Christians. Who could have believed that to the heathen pontiff Albinus should be born-in answer to a mother's vows-a Christian granddaughter; that a delighted grandfather should hear from the little one's faltering lips Christ's Alleluia, and that in his old age he should nurse in his bosom one of God's own virgins? Our expectations have been fully gratified. The one unbeliever is sanctified by his holy and believing family. For, when a man is surrounded by a believing crowd of children and grandchildren, he is as good as a candidate for the faith. I for my part think that, had he possessed so many Christian kinsfolk when he was a young man, he might then have been brought to believe in Christ. For though he may spit upon my letter and laugh at it, and though he may call me a fool or a madman, his son-in-law did the same before he came to believe. Christians are not born but made. For all its gilding the Capitol is beginning to look dingy. Every temple in Rome is covered with soot and cobwebs. The city is stirred to its depths and the people pour past their half-ruined shrines to visit the tombs of the martyrs. The belief which has not been accorded to conviction may come to be extorted by very shame.

2. I speak thus to you, Laeta my most devout daughter in Christ, to teach you not to despair of your father's salvation. My hope is that the same faith which has gained you your daughter may win your father too, and that so you may be able to rejoice over blessings bestowed upon your entire family. You know the Lord's promise: "The things which are impossible with men are

possible with God." [Luke 18:27] It is never too late to mend. The robber passed even from the cross to paradise. [Cf. Luke 23:42, Luke 23:43] Nebuchadnezzar also, the king of Babylon, recovered his reason, even after he had been made like the beasts in body and in heart and had been compelled to live with the brutes in the wilderness. [Dan. 4:33-37] And to pass over such old stories which to unbelievers may well seem incredible, did not your own kinsman Gracchus whose name betokens his patrician origin, when a few years back he held the prefecture of the City, overthrow, break in pieces, and shake to pieces the grotto of Mithras² and all the dreadful images therein? Those I mean by which the worshippers were initiated as Raven, Bridegroom, Soldier, Lion, Perseus, Sun, Crab, and Father? Did he not, I repeat, destroy these and then, sending them before him as hostages, obtain for himself Christian baptism?

Even in Rome itself paganism is left in solitude. They who once were the gods of the nations remain under their lonely roofs with horned-owls and birds of night. The standards of the military are emblazoned with the sign of the Cross. The emperor's robes of purple and his diadem sparkling with jewels are ornamented with representations of the shameful yet saving gibbet. Already the Egyptian Serapis has been made a Christian;³ while at Gaza Marnas⁴ mourns in confinement and every moment expects to see his temple overturned. From India, from Persia, from Ethiopia we daily welcome monks in crowds. The Armenian bowman has laid aside his quiver, the Huns learn the psalter, the chilly Scythians are warmed with the glow of the faith. The Getae,⁵ ruddy and yellow-haired, carry tent-churches about with their armies: and perhaps their success in fighting against us may be due to the fact that they believe in the same religion.

3. I have nearly wandered into a new subject, and while I have kept my wheel going, my hands have been moulding a flagon when it has been my object to frame an ewer.⁶ For, in answer to your prayers and those of the saintly Marcella, I wish to address you as a mother and to instruct you how to bring up our dear Paula, who has been consecrated to Christ before her birth and vowed to His service before her conception. Thus in our own day we have seen repeated the story told us in the Prophets,⁷ of Hannah, who though at first barren afterwards became fruitful. You have exchanged a fertility bound up with sorrow for offspring which shall never die. For I am confident that having given to the Lord your first-born you will be the mother of sons. It is the first-born that is offered under the Law. [Ex. 13:2] Samuel and Samson are both instances of this, as is also John the Baptist who when Mary came in leaped for joy. [Luke 1:41] For he heard the Lord speaking by the mouth of the Virgin and desired to break from his mother's womb to meet Him. As then Paula has been born in answer to a promise, her parents should give her a training suitable to her birth. Samuel, as you know, was nurtured in the Temple, and John was trained in the wilderness. The first as a Nazarite wore his hair long, drank neither wine nor strong drink, and even in his childhood talked with God. The second shunned cities, wore a leathern girdle, and had for his meat locusts and wild honey. [Matt. 3:4] Moreover, to typify that penitence which he was to preach, he was clothed in the spoils of the hump-backed camel.⁸

4. Thus must a soul be educated which is to be a temple of God. It must learn to hear nothing and to say nothing but what belongs to the fear of God. It must have no understanding of unclean words, and no knowledge of the world's songs. Its tongue must be steeped while still tender in the sweetness of the psalms. Boys with their wanton thoughts must be kept from Paula: even her maids and female attendants must be separated from worldly associates. For if they have learned some mischief they may teach more. Get for her a set of letters made of boxwood or of ivory and

called each by its proper name. Let her play with these, so that even her play may teach her something. And not only make her grasp the right order of the letters and see that she forms their names into a rhyme, but constantly disarrange their order and put the last letters in the middle and the middle ones at the beginning that she may know them all by sight as well as by sound. Moreover, so soon as she begins to use the style upon the wax, and her hand is still faltering, either guide her soft fingers by laying your hand upon hers, or else have simple copies cut upon a tablet; so that her efforts confined within these limits may keep to the lines traced out for her and not stray outside of these. Offer prizes for good spelling and draw her onwards with little gifts such as children of her age delight in. And let her have companions in her lessons to excite emulation in her, that she may be stimulated when she sees them praised. You must not scold her if she is slow to learn but must employ praise to excite her mind, so that she may be glad when she excels others and sorry when she is excelled by them. Above all you must take care not to make her lessons distasteful to her lest a dislike for them conceived in childhood may continue into her maturer years. The very words which she tries bit by bit to put together and to pronounce ought not to be chance ones, but names specially fixed upon and heaped together for the purpose, those for example of the prophets or the apostles or the list of patriarchs from Adam downwards as it is given by Matthew and Luke. In this way while her tongue will be well-trained, her memory will be likewise developed. Again, you must choose for her a master of approved years, life, and learning. A man of culture will not, I think, blush to do for a kinswoman or a highborn virgin what Aristotle did for Philip's son when, descending to the level of an usher, he consented to teach him his letters.⁹ Things must not be despised as of small account in the absence of which great results cannot be achieved. The very rudiments and first beginnings of knowledge sound differently in the mouth of an educated man and of an uneducated. Accordingly you must see that the child is not led away by the silly coaxing of women to form a habit of shortening long words or of decking herself with gold and purple. Of these habits one will spoil her conversation and the other her character. She must not therefore learn as a child what afterwards she will have to unlearn. The eloquence of the Gracchi is said to have been largely due to the way in which from their earliest years their mother spoke to them.¹⁰ Hortensius¹¹ became an orator while still on his father's lap. Early impressions are hard to eradicate from the mind. When once wool has been dyed purple who can restore it to its previous whiteness? An unused jar long retains the taste and smell of that with which it is first filled. [Horace, Epist. I. 2:69] Grecian history tells us that the imperious Alexander who was lord of the whole world could not rid himself of the tricks of manner and gait which in his childhood he had caught from his governor Leonides.¹² We are always ready to imitate what is evil; and faults are quickly copied where virtues appear inattainable. Paula's nurse must not be intemperate, or loose, or given to gossip. Her bearer must be respectable, and her foster-father of grave demeanour. When she sees her grandfather, she must leap upon his breast, put her arms round his neck, and, whether he likes it or not, sing Alleluia in his ears. She may be fondled by her grandmother, may smile at her father to shew that she recognizes him, and may so endear herself to everyone, as to make the whole family rejoice in the possession of such a rosebud. She should be told at once whom she has for her other grandmother and whom for her aunt; and she ought also to learn in what army it is that she is enrolled as a recruit, and what Captain it is under whose banner she is called to serve. Let her long to be with the absent ones and encourage her to make playful threats of leaving you for them.

5. Let her very dress and garb remind her to Whom she is promised. Do not pierce her ears or paint her face consecrated to Christ with white lead or rouge. Do not hang gold or pearls about her neck or load her head with jewels, or by reddening her hair make it suggest the fires of gehenna. Let her pearls be of another kind and such that she may sell them hereafter and buy in their place the pearl that is "of great price." [Matt. 13:46] In days gone by a lady of rank, Praetextata by name, at the bidding of her husband Hymettius, the uncle of Eustochium, altered that virgin's dress and appearance and arranged her neglected hair after the manner of the world, desiring to overcome the resolution of the virgin herself and the expressed wishes of her mother. But lo in the same night it befell her that an angel came to her in her dreams. With terrible looks he menaced punishment and broke silence with these words, 'Have you presumed to put your husband's commands before those of Christ? Have you presumed to lay sacrilegious hands upon the head of one who is God's virgin? Those hands shall forthwith wither that you may know by torment what you have done, and at the end of five months you shall be carried off to hell.¹³ And farther, if you persist still in your wickedness, you shall be bereaved both of your husband and of your children.' All of which came to pass in due time, a speedy death marking the penitence too long delayed of the unhappy woman. So terribly does Christ punish those who violate His temple, [Cf. 1 Cor. 3:17] and so jealously does He defend His precious jewels. I have related this story here not from any desire to exult over the misfortunes of the unhappy, but to warn you that you must with much fear and carefulness keep the vow which you have made to God.

6. We read of Eli the priest that he became displeasing to God on account of the sins of his children; [1 Sam. 2:27-36] and we are told that a man may not be made a bishop if his sons are loose and disorderly. [1 Tim. 3:4] On the other hand it is written of the woman that "she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with chastity."¹⁴ If then parents are responsible for their children when these are of ripe age and independent; how much more must they be responsible for them when, still unweaned and weak, they cannot, in the Lord's words, "discern between their right hand and their left:" [Jon. 4:11] -when, that is to say, they cannot yet distinguish good from evil? If you take precautions to save your daughter from the bite of a viper, why are you not equally careful to shield her from "the hammer of the whole earth"?¹⁵ to prevent her from drinking of the golden cup of Babylon? to keep her from going out with Dinah to see the daughters of a strange land?¹⁶ to save her from the tripping dance and from the trailing robe? No one administers drugs till he has rubbed the rim of the cup with honey;¹⁷ so, the better to deceive us, vice puts on the mien and the semblance of virtue. Why then, you will say, do we read:-"the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son," but "the soul that sinneth it shall die"? [Ezek. 18:20] The passage, I answer, refers to those who have discretion, such as he of whom his parents said in the gospel:-"he is of age ...he shall speak for himself." [John 9:21] While the son is a child and thinks as a child and until he comes to years of discretion to choose between the two roads to which the letter of Pythagoras points,¹⁸ his parents are responsible for his actions whether these be good or bad. But perhaps you imagine that, if they are not baptized, the children of Christians are liable for their own sins; and that no guilt attaches to parents who withhold from baptism those who by reason of their tender age can offer no objection to it. The truth is that, as baptism ensures the salvation of the child, this in turn brings advantage to the parents. Whether you would offer your child or not lay within your choice, but now that you have offered her, you neglect her at your peril. I speak generally for in your case you have no discretion, having offered your child even before her

conception. He who offers a victim that is lame or maimed or marked with any blemish is held guilty of sacrilege. [Deut. 15:21] How much more then shall she be punished who makes ready for the embraces of the king a portion of her own body and the purity of a stainless soul, and then proves negligent of this her offering?

7. When Paula comes to be a little older and to increase like her Spouse in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man, [Luke 2:52] let her go with her parents to the temple of her true Father but let her not come out of the temple with them. Let them seek her upon the world's highway amid the crowds and the throng of their kinsfolk, and let them find her nowhere but in the shrine of the scriptures, [Cf. Luke 2:43-46] questioning the prophets and the apostles on the meaning of that spiritual marriage to which she is vowed. Let her imitate the retirement of Mary whom Gabriel found alone in her chamber and who was frightened, [Luke 1:29] it would appear, by seeing a man there. Let the child emulate her of whom it is written that "the king's daughter is all glorious within." [Ps. 45:13] Wounded with love's arrow let her say to her beloved, "the king hath brought me into his chambers." [Cant. 1:4] At no time let her go abroad, lest the watchmen find her that go about the city, and lest they smite and wound her and take away from her the veil of her chastity, [Cant. 5:7] and leave her naked in her blood. [Cf. Ezek. 16:1-10] Nay rather when one knocketh at her door [Cant. 5:2] let her say: "I am a wall and my breasts like towers. [Cant. 8:10] I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" [Cant. 5:3]

8. Let her not take her food with others, that is, at her parents' table; test she see dishes she may long for. Some, I know, hold it a greater virtue to disdain a pleasure which is actually before them, but I think it a safer self-restraint to shun what must needs attract you. Once as a boy at school I met the words: 'It is ill blaming what you allow to become a habit.'¹⁹ Let her learn even now not to drink wine "wherein is excess." [Eph. 5:18] But as, before children come to a robust age, abstinence is dangerous and trying to their tender frames, let her have baths if she require them, and let her take a little wine for her stomach's sake. [1 Tim. 5:23] Let her also be supported on a flesh diet, lest her feet fail her before they commence to run their course. But I say this by way of concession not by way of command; because I fear to weaken her, not because I wish to teach her self-indulgence. Besides why should not a Christian virgin do wholly what others do in part? The superstitious Jews reject certain animals and products as articles of food, while among the Indians the Brahmans and among the Egyptians the Gymnosophists subsist altogether on porridge, rice, and apples. If mere glass repays so much labour, must not a pearl be worth more labour still?²⁰ Paula has been born in response to a vow. Let her life be as the lives of those who were born under the same conditions. If the grace accorded is in both cases the same, the pains bestowed ought to be so too. Let her be deaf to the sound of the organ, and not know even the uses of the pipe, the lyre, and the cithern.

9. And let it be her task daily to bring to you the flowers which she has culled from scripture. Let her learn by heart so many verses in the Greek, but let her be instructed in the Latin also. For, if the tender lips are not from the first shaped to this, the tongue is spoiled by a foreign accent and its native speech debased by alien elements. You must yourself be her mistress, a model on which she may form her childish conduct. Never either in you nor in her father let her see what she cannot imitate without sin. Remember both of you that you are the parents of a consecrated virgin, and that your example will teach her more than your precepts. Flowers are quick to fade and a baleful wind soon withers the violet, the lily, and the crocus. Let her never appear in public unless

accompanied by you. Let her never visit a church or a martyr's shrine unless with her mother. Let no young man greet her with smiles; no dandy with curled hair pay compliments to her. If our little virgin goes to keep solemn eves and all-night vigils, let her not stir a hair's breadth from her mother's side. She must not single out one of her maids to make her a special favourite or a confidante. What she says to one all ought to know. Let her choose for a companion not a handsome well-dressed girl, able to warble a song with liquid notes but one pale and serious, sombrely attired and with the hue of melancholy. Let her take as her model some aged virgin of approved faith, character, and chastity, apt to instruct her by word and by example. She ought to rise at night to recite prayers and psalms; to sing hymns in the morning; at the third, sixth, and ninth hours to take her place in the line to do battle for Christ; and, lastly, to kindle her lamp and to offer her evening sacrifice.²¹ In these occupations let her pass the day, and when night comes let it find her still engaged in them. Let reading follow prayer with her, and prayer again succeed to reading. Time will seem short when employed on tasks so many and so varied.

10. Let her learn too how to spin wool, to hold the distaff, to put the basket in her lap, to turn the spinning wheel and to shape the yarn with her thumb. Let her put away with disdain silken fabrics, Chinese fleeces,²² and gold brocades: the clothing which she makes for herself should keep out the cold and not expose the body which it professes to cover. Let her food be herbs and wheaten bread²³ with now and then one or two small fishes. And that I may not waste more time in giving precepts for the regulation of appetite (a subject I have treated more at length elsewhere)²⁴ let her meals always leave her hungry and able on the moment to begin reading or chanting. I strongly disapprove-especially for those of tender years-of long and immoderate fasts in which week is added to week and even oil and apples are forbidden as food. I have learned by experience that the ass toiling along the high way makes for an inn when it is weary.²⁵ Our abstinence may turn to gluttony, like that of the worshippers of Isis and of Cybele who gobble up pheasants and turtle-doves piping hot that their teeth may not violate the gifts of Ceres.²⁶ If perpetual fasting is allowed, it must be so regulated that those who have a long journey before them may hold out all through; and we must take care that we do not, after starting well, fall halfway. However in Lent, as I have written before now, those who practise self-denial should spread every stitch of canvas, and the charioteer should for once slacken the reins and increase the speed of his horses. Yet there will be one rule for those who live in the world and another for virgins and monks. The layman in Lent consumes the coats of his stomach, and living like a snail on his own juices makes ready a paunch for rich foods and feasting to come. But with the virgin and the monk the case is different; for, when these give the rein to their steeds, they have to remember that for them the race knows of no intermission. An effort made only for a limited time may well be severe, but one that has no such limit must be more moderate. For whereas in the first case we can recover our breath when the race is over, in the last we have to go on continually and without stopping.

11. When you go a short way into the country, do not leave your daughter behind you. Leave her no power or capacity of living without you, and let her feel frightened when she is left to herself. Let her not converse with people of the world or associate with virgins indifferent to their vows. Let her not be present at the weddings of your slaves and let her take no part in the noisy games of the household. As regards the use of the bath, I know that some are content with saying that a Christian virgin should not bathe along with eunuchs or with married women, with the former because they are still men. at all events in mind, and with the latter because women with child

offer a revolting spectacle. For myself, however, I wholly disapprove of baths for a virgin of full age. Such an one should blush and feel overcome at the idea of seeing herself undressed. By vigils and fasts she mortifies her body and brings it into subjection. By a cold chastity she seeks to put out the flame of lust and to quench the hot desires of youth. And by a deliberate squalor she makes haste to spoil her natural good looks. Why, then, should she add fuel to a sleeping fire by taking baths?

12. Let her treasures be not silks or gems but manuscripts of the holy scriptures; and in these let her think less of gilding, and Babylonian parchment, and arabesque patterns,²⁷ than of correctness and accurate punctuation. Let her begin by learning the psalter, and then let her gather rules of life out of the proverbs of Solomon. From the Preacher let her gain the habit of despising the world and its vanities.²⁸ Let her follow the example set in Job of virtue and of patience. Then let her pass on to the gospels never to be laid aside when once they have been taken in hand. Let her also drink in with a willing heart the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. As soon as she has enriched the storehouse of her mind with these treasures, let her commit to memory the prophets, the heptateuch,²⁹ the books of Kings and of Chronicles, the rolls also of Ezra and Esther. When she has done all these she may safely read the Song of Songs but not before: for, were she to read it at the beginning, she would fail to perceive that, though it is written in fleshly words, it is a marriage song of a spiritual bridal. And not understanding this she would suffer hurt from it. Let her avoid all apocryphal writings, and if she is led to read such not by the truth of the doctrines which they contain but out of respect for the miracles contained in them; let her understand that they are not really written by those to whom they are ascribed, that many faulty elements have been introduced into them, and that it requires infinite discretion to look for gold in the midst of dirt. Cyprian's writings let her have always in her hands. The letters of Athanasius³⁰ and the treatises of Hilary³¹ she may go through without fear of stumbling. Let her take pleasure in the works and wits of all in whose books a due regard for the faith is not neglected. But if she reads the works of others let it be rather to judge them than to follow them.

13. You will answer, 'How shall I, a woman of the world, living at Rome, surrounded by a crowd, be able to observe all these injunctions?' In that case do not undertake a burthen to which you are not equal. When you have weaned Paula as Isaac was weaned and when you have clothed her as Samuel was clothed, send her to her grandmother and aunt; give up this most precious of gems, to be placed in Mary's chamber and to rest in the cradle where the infant Jesus cried. Let her be brought up in a monastery, let her be one amid companies of virgins, let her learn to avoid swearing, let her regard lying as sacrilege, let her be ignorant of the world, let her live the angelic life, while in the flesh let her be without the flesh, and let her suppose that all human beings are like herself. To say nothing of its other advantages this course will free you from the difficult task of minding her, and from the responsibility of guardianship. It is better to regret her absence than to be for ever trembling for her. For you cannot but tremble as you watch what she says and to whom she says it, to whom she bows and whom she likes best to see. Hand her over to Eustochium while she is still but an infant and her every cry is a prayer for you. She will thus become her companion in holiness now as well as her successor hereafter. Let her gaze upon and love, let her "from her earliest years admire"³² one whose language and gait and dress are an education in virtue. [Comp. Ecclus. 19:30] Let her sit in the lap of her grandmother, and let this latter repeat to her granddaughter the lessons that she once bestowed upon her own child. Long experience has

shewn Paula how to rear, to preserve, and to instruct virgins; and daily inwoven in her crown is the mystic century which betokens the highest chastity.³³ O happy virgin! happy Paula, daughter of Toxotius, who through the virtues of her grandmother and aunt is nobler in holiness than she is in lineage! Yes, Laeta: were it possible for you with your own eyes to see your mother-in-law and your sister, and to realize the mighty souls which animate their small bodies; such is your innate thirst for chastity that I cannot doubt but that you would go to them even before your daughter, and would emancipate yourself from God's first decree of the Law [Gen. 1:28] to put yourself under His second dispensation of the Gospel. [1 Cor. 7:1] You would count as nothing your desire for other offspring and would offer up yourself to the service of God. But because "there is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing," [Eccl. 3:5] and because "the wife hath not power of her own body," [1 Cor. 7:4] and because the apostle says "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" [1 Cor. 7:20] in the Lord, and because he that is under the yoke ought so to run as not to leave his companion in the mire, I counsel you to pay back to the full in your offspring what meantime you defer paying in your own person. When Hannah had once offered in the tabernacle the son whom she had vowed to God she never took him back; for she thought it unbecoming that one who was to be a prophet should grow up in the same house with her who still desired to have other children. Accordingly after she had conceived him and given him birth, she did not venture to come to the temple alone or to appear before the Lord empty, but first paid to Him what she owed; and then, when she had offered up that great sacrifice, she returned home and because she had borne her firstborn for God, she was given five children for herself. [1 Sam. 2:21] Do you marvel at the happiness of that holy woman? Imitate her faith. Moreover, if you will only send Paula, I promise to be myself both a tutor and a foster father to her. Old as I am I will carry her on my shoulders and train her stammering lips; and my charge will be a far grander one than that of the worldly philosopher;³⁴ for while he only taught a King of Macedon who was one day to die of Babylonian poison, I shall instruct the handmaid and spouse of Christ who must one day be offered to her Lord in heaven.

1:

1 Cor. 7:13, 1 Cor. 7:14, the word `believing 0' is twice inserted by Jerome

2:

The Persian sun-god, at this time one of the most popular deities of the Roman pantheon. Gracchus appears to have done this as Urban Praetor, A. C. 378

3: In the year 389 a.d. the temple of Serapis at Alexandria had been pulled down and a Christian church built upon its site 4: Elsewhere (Life of Hilarion §20) Jerome relates an extraordinary story about the discomfiture of this `demon. 0 5: A well-known Thracian tribe not to be confounded with the Goths 6: Cf. Hor. A.P., 21, 22. Amphora caepit Institui: currente rots cur urceus exit 7: The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings are called in the Hebrew Bible the Former Prophets

8: Cf. Letter LXXIX. Apparently Jerome means that the difficulty of penitence is as great as that of the camel passing through the eye of a needle. John, he implies, by wearing the camel's hair shows that he has surmounted this 9: Quintilian, Inst. I. 1 10: Quint. Inst. I. 1 11: The contemporary and rival of Cicero 12: Quint. Inst. I. 1

13: Inferna 14: Tim. 2:15 A.V. has `sobriety 0' for `chastity 0' but Jerome deliberately prefers the latter word 15: Babylon, the world-power. Jer. 50:23

16: Gen. xxxiv 17: Lucretius, I. 936, sqq 18: The letter Y used by Pythagoras to symbolize the diverging paths of good and evil. Cf. Persius. 3:56 19: Again quoted in Letter CXXVIII 20: Cp. Letter LXXIX, The heathen sage is glass, the Christian virgin the pearl 21: See note on Letter XXII 22: A Virgilian expression, 9, II., 121

23: Simila, but as elsewhere (L. 52, 6) this is spoken of as a luxury, perhaps we should read similia = `and such like. 0 24: Jerome refers to his second book against Jovinian 25: Cf. the dying words of S. Francis (which have a similar reference) `I have sinned against my brother the ass. 0 26: i.e. having vowed to abstain from bread, they indemnify themselves with flesh 27: Vermiculata pictura 28: Jerome tells us that he read the book with Blaesilla for this purpose 29: i.e. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges

30: Of these a large number are still extant. Over twenty of them are "festal epistles" announcing to the churches the correct day on which to celebrate Easter 31: These include commentaries on many parts of Scripture and a work on the Trinity 32: Virgil, A. 8:507 33: The number 100 denotes virginity to which in her own person Paula could have no claim. See note on Letter XLVIII 34: The allusion is to Aristotle who was tutor to Alexander, King of Macedon

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Letter 108. To Eustochium.

This, one of the longest of Jerome's letters, was written to console Eustochium for the loss of her mother who had recently died. Jerome relates the story of Paula in detail; speaking first of her high birth, marriage, and social success at Rome, and then narrating her conversion and subsequent life as a Christian ascetic. Much space is devoted to an account of her journey to the East which included a visit to Egypt and to the monasteries of Nitria as well as a tour of the most sacred spots in the Holy Land. The remainder of the letter describes her daily routine and studies at Bethlehem, and recounts the many virtues for which she was distinguished. It then concludes with a touching description of her death and burial and gives the epitaph placed upon her grave. The date of the letter is 404 a.d.

1. If all the members of my body were to be converted into tongues, and if each of my limbs were to be gifted with a human voice, I could still do no justice to the virtues of the holy and venerable Paula. Noble in family, she was nobler still in holiness; rich formerly in this world's goods, she is now more distinguished by the poverty that she has embraced for Christ. Of the stock of the Gracchi and descended from the Scipios, the heir and representative of that Paulus whose name she bore, the true and legitimate daughter of that Martia Papyria who was mother to Africanus, she yet preferred Bethlehem to Rome, and left her palace glittering with gold to dwell in a mud cabin. We do not grieve that we have lost this perfect woman; rather we thank God that we have had her, nay that we have her still. For "all live unto" God, [Luke 20:38] and they who return unto the Lord are still to be reckoned members of his family. We have lost her, it is true, but the heavenly mansions have gained her; for as long as she was in the body she was absent from the Lord [2 Cor. 5:6] and would constantly complain with tears: "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar; my soul hath been this long time a pilgrim." It was no wonder that she sobbed out that even she was in darkness (for this is the meaning of the word Kedar) seeing that, according to the apostle, "the world lieth in the evil one;" [1 John. 5:19] and that, "as its darkness is, so is its light;" [Ps. 139:12, A.V. marg] and that "the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." [John. 1:5] She would frequently exclaim: "I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner as all my fathers were," [Ps. 39:12] and again, I desire "to depart and to be with Christ." [Phil. 1:23] As often too as she was troubled with bodily weakness (brought on by incredible abstinence and by redoubled fastings), she would be heard to say: "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway;" [1 Cor. 9:27] and "It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine;" [Rom. 14:21] and "I humbled my soul with fasting;" [Ps. 35:13] and "thou wilt make all" my "bed in" my "sickness;" [Ps. 41:3] and "Thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer." [Ps. 32:4] And when the pain which she bore with such wonderful patience darted through her, as if she saw the heavens opened [Cf. Acts 7:56] she would say "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest." [Ps. 55:6]

2. I call Jesus and his saints, yes and the particular angel who was the guardian and the companion of this admirable woman to bear witness that these are no words of adulation and flattery but sworn testimony every one of them borne to her character. They are, indeed, inadequate to the virtues of one whose praises are sung by the whole world, who is admired by bishops,² regretted by bands of virgins, and wept for by crowds of monks and poor. Would you know all her virtues, reader, in short? She has left those dependent on her poor, but not so poor as she was herself. In dealing thus with her relatives and the men and women of her small household-her brothers and sisters rather than her servants-she has done nothing strange; for she has left her daughter Eustochium-a virgin consecrated to Christ for whose comfort this sketch is made-far from her noble family and rich only in faith and grace.

3. Let me then begin my narrative. Others may go back a long way even to Paula's cradle and, if I may say so, to her swaddling-clothes, and may speak of her mother Blaesilla and her father Rogatus. Of these the former was a descendant of the Scipios and the Gracchi; whilst the latter came of a line distinguished in Greece down to the present day. He was said, indeed, to have in his veins the blood of Agamemnon who destroyed Troy after a ten years siege. But I shall praise only what belongs to herself, what wells forth from the pure spring of her holy mind. When in the gospel the apostles ask their Lord and Saviour what He will give to those who have left all for His sake, He tells them that they shall receive an hundredfold now in this time and in the world to come eternal life. [Mark 10:28-30] From which we see that it is not the possession of riches that is praiseworthy but the rejection of them for Christ's sake; that, instead of glorying in our privileges, we should make them of small account as compared with God's faith. Truly the Saviour has now in this present time made good His promise to His servants and handmaidens. For one who despised the glory of a single city is to-day famous throughout the world; and one who while she lived at Rome was known by no one outside it has by hiding herself at Bethlehem become the admiration of all lands Roman and barbarian. For what race of men is there which does not send pilgrims to the holy places? And who could there find a greater marvel than Paula? As among many jewels the most precious shines most brightly, and as the sun with its beams obscures and puts out the paler fires of the stars; so by her lowliness she surpassed all others in virtue and influence and, while she was least among all, was greater than all. The more she cast herself down, the more she was lifted up by Christ. She was hidden and yet she was not hidden. By shunning glory she earned glory; for glory follows virtue as its shadow; and deserting those who seek it, it seeks those who despise it. But I must not neglect to proceed with my narrative or dwell too long on a single point forgetful of the rules of writing.

4. Being then of such parentage, Paula married Toxotius in whose veins ran the noble blood of neas and the Julii. Accordingly his daughter, Christ's virgin Eustochium, is called Julia, as he Julius. A name from great lulus handed down. [Virg. A. 1:292.]

I speak of these things not as of importance to those who have them, but as worthy of remark in those who despise them, Men of the world look up to persons who are rich in such privileges. We on the other hand praise those who for the Saviour's sake despise them; and strangely depreciating all who keep them, we eulogize those who are unwilling to do so. Thus nobly born, Paula through her fruitfulness and her chastity won approval from all, from her husband first, then from her relatives, and lastly from the whole city. She bore five children; Blaesilla, for whose death I consoled her while at Rome;³ Paulina, who has left the reverend and admirable Pammachius to

inherit both her vows⁴ and property, to whom also I addressed a little book on her death; Eustochium, who is now in the holy places, a precious necklace of virginity and of the church; Rufina, whose untimely end overcame the affectionate heart of her mother; and Toxotius, after whom she had no more children. You can thus see that it was not her wish to fulfil a wife's duty, but that she only complied with her husband's longing to have male offspring.

5. When he died, her grief was so great that she nearly died herself: yet so completely did she then give herself to the service of the Lord, that it might have seemed that she had desired his death. In what terms shall I speak of her distinguished, and noble, and formerly wealthy house; all the riches of which she spent upon the poor? How can I describe the great consideration she shewed to all and her far reaching kindness even to those whom she had never seen? What poor man, as he lay dying, was not wrapped in blankets given by her? What bedridden person was not supported with money from her purse? She would seek out such with the greatest diligence throughout the city, and would think it a misfortune were any hungry or sick person to be supported by another's food. So lavish was her charity that she robbed her children; and, when her relatives remonstrated with her for doing so, she declared that she was leaving to them a better inheritance in the mercy of Christ.

6. Nor was she long able to endure the visits and crowded receptions, which her high position in the world and her exalted family entailed upon her. She received the homage paid to her sadly, and made all the speed she could to shun and to escape those who wished to pay her compliments. It so happened that at that time⁵ the bishops of the East and West had been summoned to Rome by letter from the emperors⁶ to deal with certain dissensions between the churches, and in this way she saw two most admirable men and Christian prelates, Paulinus bishop of Antioch and Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis or, as it is now called, Constantia, in Cyprus. Epiphanius, indeed, she received as her guest; and, although Paulinus was staying in another person's house, in the warmth of her heart she treated him as if he too were lodged with her. Inflamed by their virtues she thought more and more each moment of forsaking her home. Disregarding her house, her children, her servants, her property, and in a word everything connected with the world, she was eager-alone and unaccompanied (if ever it could be said that she was so)-to go to the desert made famous by its Paula and by its Antonies. And at last when the winter was over and the sea was open, and when the bishops were returning to their churches, she also sailed with them in her prayers and desires. Not to prolong the story, she went down to Portus accompanied by her brother, her kinsfolk and above all her own children eager by their demonstrations of affection to overcome their loving mother. At last the sails were set and the strokes of the rowers carried the vessel into the deep. On the shore the little Toxotius stretched forth his hands in entreaty, while Rufina, now grown up, with silent sobs besought her mother to wait till she should be married. But still Paula's eyes were dry as she turned them heaven wards; and she overcame her love for her children by her love for God. She knew herself no more as a mother, that she might approve herself a handmaid of Christ. Yet her heart was rent within her, and she wrestled with her grief, as though she were being forcibly separated from parts of herself. The greatness of the affection she had to overcome made all admire her victory the more. Among the cruel hardships which attend prisoners of war in the hands of their enemies, there is none severer than the separation of parents from their children. Though it is against the laws of nature, she endured this trial with unabated faith; nay more she sought it with a joyful heart: and

overcoming her love for her children by her greater love for God, she concentrated herself quietly upon Eustochium alone, the partner alike of her vows and of her voyage. Meantime the vessel ploughed onwards and all her fellow-passengers looked back to the shore. But she turned away her eyes that she might not see what she could not behold without agony. No mother, it must be confessed, ever loved her children so dearly. Before setting out she gave them all that she had, disinheriting herself upon earth that she might find an inheritance in heaven.

7. The vessel touched at the island of Pontia ennobled long since as the place of exile of the illustrious lady Flavia Domitilla who under the Emperor Domitian was banished because she confessed herself a Christian;⁷ and Paula, when she saw the cells in which this lady passed the period of her long martyrdom, taking to herself the wings of faith, more than ever desired to see Jerusalem and the holy places. The strongest winds seemed weak and the greatest speed slow. After passing between Scylla and Charybdis⁸ she committed herself to the Adriatic sea and had a calm passage to Methone.⁹ Stopping here for a short time to recruit her wearied frame

"She stretched her dripping limbs upon the shore:

Then sailed past Malea and Cythera's isle,

The scattered Cyclades, and all the lands

That narrow in the seas on every side." [Virg. A. 3:126-8]

Then leaving Rhodes and Lycia behind her, she at last came in sight of Cyprus, where failing at the feet of the holy and venerable Epiphanius, she was by him detained ten days; though this was not, as he supposed, to restore her strength but, as the facts prove, that she might do God's work. For she visited all the monasteries in the island, and left, so far as her means allowed, substantial relief for the brothers in them whom love of the holy man had brought thither from all parts of the world. Then crossing the narrow sea she landed at Seleucia, and going up thence to Antioch allowed herself to be detained for a little time by the affection of the reverend confessor Paulinus.¹⁰ Then, such was the ardour of her faith that she, a noble lady who had always previously been carried by eunuchs, went her way-and that in midwinter-riding upon an ass.

8. I say nothing of her journey through Coele-Syria and Phoenicia (for it is not my purpose to give you a complete itinerary of her wanderings); I shall only name such places as are mentioned in the sacred books. After leaving the Roman colony of Berytus and the ancient city of Zidon she entered Elijah's town on the shore at Zarephath and therein adored her Lord and Saviour. Next passing over the sands of Tyre on which Paul had once knelt [Acts 21:5] she came to Acco or, as it is now called, Ptolemais rode over the plains of Megiddo which had once witnessed the slaying of Josiah, [2 K. 23:29] and entered the land of the Philistines. Here she could not fail to admire the ruins of Dor, once a most powerful city; and Struto's Tower, which though at one time insignificant was rebuilt by Herod king of Judaea and named Caesarea in honour of Caesar Augustus.¹¹ Here she saw the house of Cornelius now turned into a Christian church; and the humble abode of Philip; and the chambers of his daughters the four virgins "which did prophesy." [Acts 21:8, Acts 21:9] She arrived next at Antipatris, a small town half in ruins, named by Herod after his father Anti-pater, and at Lydda, now become Diospolis, a place made famous by the raising again of Dorcas [Acts 9:36-41] and the restoration to health of Aeneas. [Acts 9:32-34] Not far from this are Arimathaea, the village of Joseph who buried the Lord, [John 19:38] and Nob, once a city of

priests but now the tomb in which their slain bodies rest. [1 Sam. 22:17-19] Joppa too is hard by, the port of Jonah's flight; [Jon. 1:3] which also-if I may introduce a poetic fable-saw Andromeda bound to the rock.¹² Again resuming her journey, she came to Nicopolis, once called Emmaus, where the Lord became known in the breaking of bread; [Luke 24:13, Luke 24:28-31] an action by which He dedicated the house of Cleopas as a church. Starting thence she made her way up lower and higher Bethhoron, cities founded by Solomon [2 Chr. 8:5] but subsequently destroyed by several devastating wars; seeing on her right Ajalon and Gibeon where Joshua the son of Nun when fighting against the five kings gave commandments to the sun and moon, [Josh. 10:12-14] where also he condemned the Gibeonites(who by a crafty stratagem had obtained a treaty) to be hewers of wood and drawers of water.¹³ At Gibeah also, now a complete ruin, she stopped for a little while remembering its sin, and the cutting of the concubine into pieces, and how in spite of all this three hundred men of the tribe of Benjamin were saved¹⁴ that in after days Paul might be called a Benjamite.

9. To make a long story short, leaving on her left the mausoleum of Helena queen of Adiabene¹⁵ who in time of famine had sent corn to the Jewish people, Paula entered Jerusalem, Jebus, or Salem, that city of three names which after it had sunk to ashes and decay was by Aelius Hadrianus restored once more as Aelia.¹⁶ And although the proconsul of Palestine, who was an intimate friend of her house, sent forward his apparitors and gave orders to have his official residence¹⁷ placed at her disposal, she chose a humble cell in preference to it. Moreover, in visiting the holy places so great was the passion and the enthusiasm she exhibited for each, that she could never have torn herself away from one had she not been eager to visit the rest. Before the Cross she threw herself down in adoration as though she beheld the Lord hanging upon it: and when she entered the tomb which was the scene of the Resurrection she kissed the stone which the angel had rolled away from the door of the sepulchre. [Matt. 28:2] Indeed so ardent was her faith that she even licked with her mouth the very spot on which the Lord's body had lain, like one athirst for the river which he has longed for. What tears she shed there, what groans she uttered, and what grief she poured forth, all Jerusalem knows; the Lord also to whom she prayed knows. Going out thence she made the ascent of Zion; a name which signifies either "citadel" or "watch-tower." This formed the city which David formerly stormed and afterwards rebuilt. [2 Sam. 5:7, 2 Sam. 5:9] Of its storming it is written, "Woe to Ariel, to Ariel"-that is, God's lion, (and indeed in those days it was extremely strong)-"the city which David stormed:" [Isa. 29:1. Vulg] and of its rebuilding it is said, "His foundation is in the holy mountains: the Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." [Ps. 87:1, Ps. 87:2] He does not mean the gates which we see to-day in dust and ashes; the gates he means are those against which hell prevails not [Matt. 16:18] and through which the multitude of those who believe in Christ enter in. [Rev. 22:14] There was shewn to her upholding the portico of a church the bloodstained column to which our Lord is said to have been bound when He suffered His scourging. There was shewn to her also the spot where the Holy Spirit came down upon the souls of the one hundred and twenty believers, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Joel. [Acts 2:16-21]

10. Then, after distributing money to the poor and her fellow-servants so far as her means allowed, she proceeded to Bethlehem stopping only on the right side of the road to visit Rachel's tomb. (Here it was that she gave birth to her son destined to be not what his dying mother called him, Benoni, that is the "Son of my pangs" but as his father in the spirit prophetically named him

Benjamin, that is "the Son of the right hand)." [Gen. 35:18, Gen. 35:19] After this she came to Bethlehem and entered into the cave where the Saviour was born.¹⁸ Here, when she looked upon the inn made sacred by the virgin and the stall where the ox knew his owner and the ass his master's crib, [Isa. 1:3] and where the words of the same prophet had been fulfilled "Blessed is he that soweth beside the waters where the ox and the ass trample the seed under their feet:" [Isa. 32:20, LXX] when she looked upon these things I say, she protested in my hearing that she could behold with the eyes of faith the infant Lord wrapped in swaddling clothes and crying in the manger, the wise men worshipping Him, the star shining overhead, the virgin mother, the attentive foster-father, the shepherds coming by night to see "the word that was come to pass" [Luke 2:15, rhma] and thus even then to consecrate those opening phrases of the evangelist John "In the beginning was the word" and "the word was made flesh."¹⁹ She declared that she could see the slaughtered innocents, the raging Herod, Joseph and Mary fleeing into Egypt; and with a mixture of tears and joy she cried: 'Hail Bethlehem, house of bread,²⁰ wherein was born that Bread that came down from heaven. [John. 6:51] Hail Ephratah, land of fruitfulness²¹ and of fertility, whose fruit is the Lord Himself. Concerning thee has Micah prophesied of old, "Thou Bethlehem Ephratah art not²² the least among the thousands of Judah, for out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore wilt thou [Mic. 5:2, Mic. 5:3, Cf. Matt. 2:6] give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." [Ps. 110:3, Vulg] For in thee was born the prince begotten before Lucifer. [Acts 13:46] Whose birth from the Father is before all time: and the cradle of David's race continued in thee, until the virgin brought forth her son and the remnant of the people that believed in Christ returned unto the children of Israel and preached freely to them in words like these: "It Was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." [Matt. 15:24] For the Lord hath said: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."²³ At that time also the words of Jacob were fulfilled concerning Him, "A prince shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until He come for whom it is laid up, [Gen. 49:10, LXX] and He shall be for the expectation of the nations."²⁴ Well did David swear, well did he make a vow saying: "Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house nor go up into my bed: I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, or rest to the temples of my head, [Ps. 132:2-5] until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the . .

God of Jacob." [Ps. 132:6, Vulg] And immediately he explained the object of his desire, seeing with prophetic eyes that He would come whom we now believe to have come. "Lo we heard of Him at Ephratah: we found Him in the fields of the wood."²⁵ The Hebrew word Zo as have learned from your lessons [Ps. 132:7] means not her, that is Mary the Lord's mother, but him that is the Lord Himself. Therefore he says boldly: "We will go into His tabernacle: we will worship at His footstool." [Ps. 132:14] I too, miserable sinner though I am, have been accounted worthy to kiss the manger in which the Lord cried as a babe, and to pray in the cave in which the travelling virgin gave birth to the infant Lord. "This is my rest" for it is my Lord's native place; "here will I dwell" [Ps. 132:17, Vulg] for this spot has my Saviour chosen. "I have prepared a lamp for my Christ" [Ps. 22:29, 30, LXX] "My soul shall live unto Him and my seed shall serve Him." [Gen. 35:21, Mic. 4:8]

After this Paul, went a short distance down the hill to the tower of Edar, [Luke 2:14] that is 'of the flock,' [Jude. 6:37] near which Jacob fed his flocks, and where the shepherds keeping watch by night were privileged to hear the words: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." [Ex. 12:21-23] While they were keeping their sheep they found the Lamb of God; whose fleece bright and clean was made wet with the dew of heaven when it was dry upon all the earth beside, [John. 1:29] and whose blood when sprinkled on the doorposts drove off the destroyer of Egypt [Jer. 13:23] and took away the sins of the world. [Acts 8:27-39]

11. Then immediately quickening her pace she began to move along the old road which leads to Gaza, that is to the 'power' or 'wealth' of God, silently meditating on that type of the Gentiles, the Ethiopian eunuch, who in spite of the prophet changed his skin²⁶ and whilst he read the old testament found the fountain of the gospel. [Nu. 13:23, Nu. 13:24] Next turning to the right she passed from Bethzur [Isa. 63:3] to Eshcol which means "a cluster of grapes." It was hence that the spies brought back that marvellous cluster which was the proof of the fertility of the land²⁷ and a type of Him who says of Himself: "I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the people there was none with me." [John. 8:56, cf. Gen. 18:1, R.V.-q.v] Shortly afterwards she entered the home²⁸ of Sarah and beheld the birthplace of Isaac and the traces of Abraham's oak under which he saw Christ's day and was glad. [Cor. 3:6] And rising up from thence she went up to Hebron, that is Kirjath-Arba, or the City of the Four Men. These are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the great Adam whom the Hebrews suppose (from the book of Joshua the son of Nun) to be buried there. [Jude. 1:13-15] But many are of opinion that Caleb is the fourth and a monument at one side is pointed out as his. After seeing these places she did not care to go on to Kirjath-sepher, that is "the village of letters;" because despising the letter that killeth she had found the spirit that giveth life.²⁹ She admired more the upper springs and the nether springs which Othniel the son of Kenaz the son of Jephunneh received in place of a south land and a waterless possession, [Gen. 18:23-33] and by the conducting of which he watered the dry fields of the old covenant. For thus did he typify the redemption which the sinner finds for his old sins in the waters of baptism. On the next day soon after sunrise she stood upon the brow of Capharbarucha, [Isa. 15:5] that is, "the house of blessing," the point to which Abraham pursued the Lord when he made intercession with Him. [Gen. 14:2] And here, as she looked down upon the wide solitude and upon the country once belonging to Sodom and Gomorrah, to Admah and Zeboim, she beheld the balsam vines of Engedi and Zoar. By Zoar I mean that "heifer of three years old" [Eph. 5:18] which was formerly called Bela [Gen. 19:30-38] and in Syriac is rendered Zoar that is 'little.' She called to mind the cave in which Lot found refuge, and with tears in her eyes warned the virgins her companions to beware of "wine wherein is excess;" [Cant. 1:7] for it was to this that the Moabites and Ammonites owe their origin. [Gen. 43:16]

12. I linger long in the land of the midday sun for it was there and then that the spouse found her bridegroom at rest [Amos 1:1] and Joseph drank wine with his brothers once more. [Luke 24:50, Luke 24:51, Acts 1:9-12] I will return to Jerusalem and, passing through Tekoa the home of Amos, [Nu. 19:1-10] I will look upon the glistening cross of Mount Olivet from which the Saviour made His ascension to the Father. [Ezek. 10:18, Ezek. 10:19] Here year by year a red heifer was burned as a holocaust to the Lord and its ashes were used to purify the children of Israel.³⁰ Here also according to Ezekiel the Cherubim after leaving the temple founded the church of the Lord. [Matt. 21:1-7]

After this Paula visited the tomb of Lazarus and beheld the hospitable roof of Mary and Martha, as well as Bethphage, 'the town of the priestly jaws.'³¹ Here it was that a restive foal typical of the Gentiles received the bridle of God, and covered with the garments of the apostles [Luke 10:30-35] offered its lowly back³² for Him to sit on. From this she went straight on down the hill to Jericho thinking of the wounded man in the gospel, of the savagery of the priests and Levites who passed him by, and of the kindness of the Samaritan, that is, the guardian, who placed the half-dead man upon his own beast and brought him down to the inn of the church. [Luke 19:4] She noticed the place called Adomim [Matt. 20:30-34] or the Place of Blood, so-called because much blood was shed there in the frequent incursions of marauders. She beheld also the sycamore tree³³ of Zacchaeus, by which is signified the good works of repentance whereby he trod under foot his former sins of bloodshed and rapine, and from which he saw the Most High as from a pinnacle of virtue. She was shewn too the spot by the wayside where the blind men sat who, receiving their sight from the Lord, [1 Kings 16:34] became types of the two peoples [Josh. 5:3] who should believe upon Him. Then entering Jericho she saw the city which Hiel founded in Abiram his firstborn and of which he set up the gates in his youngest son Segub. [Rom. 2:28, Rom. 2:29] She looked upon the camp of Gilgal and the hill of the foreskins [Josh. 4:3, Josh. 4:20] suggestive of the mystery of the second circumcision: [Rev. 21:14] and she gazed at the twelve stones brought thither out of the bed of Jordan³⁴ to be symbols of those twelve foundations on which are written the names of the twelve apostles. [Mal. 4:2] She saw also that fountain of the Law most bitter and barren which the true Elisha healed by his wisdom changing it into a well sweet and fertilising. [Josh. 3:17] Scarcely had the night passed away when burning with eagerness she hastened to the Jordan, stood by the brink of the river, and as the sun rose recalled to mind the rising of the sun of righteousness; [Josh. 7:24-26] how the priest's feet stood firm in the middle of the river-bed; [Zech. 3:9] how afterwards at the command of Elijah and Elisha the waters were divided hither and thither and made way for them to pass; and again how the Lord had cleansed by His baptism waters which the deluge had polluted and the destruction of mankind had defiled.

13. It would be tedious were I tell of the valley of Achor, that is, of 'trouble and crowds,' where theft and covetousness were condemned; [Isa. 28:16] and of Bethel, 'the house of God,' where Jacob poor and destitute slept upon the bare ground. Here it was that, having set beneath his head a stone which in Zechariah is described as having seven eyes [Gen. 28:12, Gen. 28:13] and in Isaiah is spoken of as a corner-stone, [Josh. 24:30] he beheld a ladder reaching up to heaven; yes, and the Lord standing high above it [Josh. 24:33] holding out His hand to such as were ascending and hurling from on high such as were careless. Also when she was in Mount Ephraim she made pilgrimages to the tombs of Joshua the son of Nun and of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, exactly opposite the one to the other; that of Joshua being built at Timnath-serah "on the north side of the hill of Gaash," [Cf. 1 Sam. 1:3] and that of Eleazar "in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son." [Judg. 21:19-23: cf. Liv. 1:9] She was somewhat surprised to find that he who had had the distribution of the land in his own hands had selected for himself portions uneven and rocky. What shall I say about Shiloh where a ruined altar [From John. 4:5] is still shewn to-day, and where the tribe of Benjamin anticipated Romulus in the rape of the Sabine women?³⁵ Passing by Shechem (not Sychar as many wrongly read [Luke 7:28]) or as it is now called Neapols, she entered the church built upon the side of Mount Gerizim around Jacob's well; that well where the Lord was sitting when hungry and thirsty He was refreshed by the faith of the woman of Samaria. Forsaking her five husbands by whom are intended the five books of Moses, and that sixth not a

husband of whom she boasted, to wit the false teacher Dositheus,³⁶ she found the true Messiah and the true Saviour. Turning away thence Paula saw the tombs of the twelve patriarchs, and Samaria which in honour of Augustus Herod renamed Augusta or in Greek Sebaste. There lie the prophets Elisha and Obadiah and John the Baptist than whom there is not a greater among those that are born of women. [1 Kings 18:4] And here she was filled with terror by the marvels she beheld; for she saw demons screaming under different tortures before the tombs of the saints, and men howling like wolves, baying like dogs, roaring like lions, hissing like serpents and bellowing like bulls. They twisted their heads and bent them backwards until they touched the ground; women too were suspended head downward and their clothes did not fall off. [Matt. 14:13-21] Paula pitied them all, and shedding tears over them prayed Christ to have mercy on them. And weak as she was she climbed the mountain on foot; for in two of its caves Obadiah in a time of persecution and famine had fed a hundred prophets with bread and water.³⁷ Then she passed quickly through Nazareth the nursery of the Lord; Cana and Capernaum familiar with the signs wrought by Him; the lake of Tiberias sanctified by His voyages upon it; the wilderness where countless Gentiles were satisfied with a few loaves while the twelve baskets of the tribes of Israel were filled with the fragments left by them that had eaten.³⁸ She made the ascent of mount Tabor whereon the Lord was transfigured. [Jude. 5:21, Vulg] In the distance she beheld the range of Hermon; [Luke 7:11-15] and the wide stretching plains of Galilee where Sisera and all his host had once been overcome by Barak; and the torrent [Jude. 15:17-19, R.V] Kishon separating the level ground into two parts. Hard by also the town of Nain was pointed out to her, where the widow's son was raised. [Micah 1:1, Micah 1:14] Time would fail me sooner than speech were I to recount all the places to which the revered Paula was carried by her incredible faith.

14. I will now pass on to Egypt, pausing for a while on the way at Socoh, and at Samson's well which he clave in the hollow place that was in the jaw. [Jer. 2:18] Here I will lave my parched lips and refresh myself before visiting Moresheth; in old days famed for the tomb of the prophet Micah, [Isa. 19:18] and now for its church. Then skirting the country of the Horites and Gittites, Mareshah, Edom, and Lachish, and traversing the lonely wastes of the desert where the tracks of the traveller are lost in the yielding sand, I will come to the river of Egypt called Sihor, [Ps. 78:12] that is "the muddy river," and go through the five cities of Egypt which speak the language of Canaan,³⁹ and through the land of Goshen and the plains of Zoan⁴⁰ on which God wrought his marvellous works. And I will visit the city of No, which has since become Alexandria;⁴¹ and Nitria, the town of the Lord, where day by day the filth of multitudes is washed away with the pure nitre of virtue. No sooner did Paula come in sight of it than there came to meet her the reverend and estimable bishop, the confessor Isidore, accompanied by countless multitudes of monks many of whom were of priestly or of Levitical rank. [Ps. 6:6] On seeing these Paula rejoiced to behold the Lord's glory manifested in them; but protested that she had no claim to be received with such honour. Need I speak of the Macarii, Arsenius, Serapion,⁴² or other pillars of Christ! Was there any cell that she did not enter? Or any man at whose feet she did not throw herself? In each of His saints she believed that she saw Christ Himself; and whatever she bestowed upon them she rejoiced to feel that she had bestowed it upon the Lord. Her enthusiasm was wonderful and her endurance scarcely credible in a woman. Forgetful of her sex and of her weakness she even desired to make her abode, together with the girls who accompanied her, among these thousands of monks. And, as they were all willing to welcome her, she might perhaps have sought and obtained permission to do so; had she not been drawn away by a still greater passion for the holy places. Coming by

sea from Pelusium to Maioma on account of the great heat, she returned so rapidly that you would have thought her a bird. Not long afterwards, making up her mind to dwell permanently in holy Bethlehem, she took up her abode for three years? a miserable hostelry; till she could build the requisite cells and monastic buildings, to say nothing of a guest house for passing travellers where they might find the welcome which Mary and Joseph had missed. At this point I conclude my narrative of the journeys that she made accompanied by Eustochium and many other virgins.

15. I am now free to describe at greater length the virtue which was her peculiar charm; and in setting forth this I call God to witness that I am no flatterer. I add nothing. I exaggerate nothing. On the contrary I tone down much that I may not appear to relate incredibilities. My carping critics must not insinuate that I am drawing on my imagination or decking Paula, like sop's crow, with the fine feathers of other birds. Humility is the first of Christian graces, and hers was so pronounced that one who had never seen her, and who on account of her celebrity had desired to see her, would have believed that he saw not her but the lowest of her maids. When she was surrounded by companies of virgins she was always the least remarkable in dress, in speech, in gesture, and in gait. From the time that her husband died until she fell asleep herself she never sat at meat with a man, even though she might know him to stand upon the pinnacle of the episcopate. She never entered a bath except when dangerously ill. Even in the severest fever she rested not on an ordinary bed but on the hard ground covered only with a mat of goat's hair; if that can be called rest which made day and night alike a time of almost unbroken prayer. Well did she fulfil the words of the psalter: "All the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tear"! [2 Cor. 8:13, 2 Cor. 8:14] Her tears welled forth as it were from fountains, and she lamented her slightest faults as if they were sins of the deepest dye. Constantly did I warn her to spare her eyes and to keep them for the reading of the gospel; but she only said: 'I must disfigure that face which contrary to God's commandment I have painted with rouge, white lead, and antimony. I must mortify that body which has been given up to many pleasures. I must make up for my long laughter by constant weeping. I must exchange my soft linen and costly silks for rough goat's hair. I who have pleased my husband and the world in the past, desire now to please Christ.' Were I among her great and signal virtues to select her chastity as a subject of praise, my words would seem superfluous; for, even when she was still in the world, she set an example to all the matrons of Rome, and bore herself so admirably that the most slanderous never ventured to couple scandal with her name.⁴³ No mind could be more considerate than hers, or none kinder towards the lowly. She did not court the powerful; at the same time, if the proud and the vainglorious sought her, she did not turn from them with disdain. If she saw a poor man, she supported him: and if she saw a rich one, she urged him to do good. Her liberality alone knew no bounds. Indeed, so anxious was she to turn no needy person away that she borrowed money at interest and often contracted new loans to pay off old ones. I was wrong, I admit; but when I saw her so profuse in giving, I reproved her alleging the apostle's words: "I mean not that other men be eased and ye burthened; but by an equality that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want." [Matt. 5:7] I quoted from the gospel the Saviour's words: "he that hath two coats, let him impart one of them to him that hath none"; [Ecclus. 3:30] and I warned her that she might not always have means to do as she would wish. Other arguments I adduced to the same purpose; but with admirable modesty and brevity she overruled them all. "God is my witness," she said, "that what I do I do for His sake. My prayer is that I may die a beggar not leaving a penny to my daughter and indebted to strangers for my winding sheet." She then concluded with these

words: "I, if I beg, shall find many to give to me; but if this beggar does not obtain help from me who by borrowing can give it to him, he will die; and if he dies, of whom will his soul be required?" I wished her to be more careful in managing her concerns, but she with a faith more glowing than mine clave to the Saviour with her whole heart and poor in spirit followed the Lord in His poverty, giving back to Him what she had received and becoming poor for His sake. She obtained her wish at last and died leaving her daughter overwhelmed with a mass of debt. This Eustochium still owes and indeed cannot hope to pay off by her own exertions; only the mercy of Christ can free her from it.

16. Many married ladies make it a habit to confer gifts upon their own trumpeters, and while they are extremely profuse to a few, withhold all help from the many. From this fault Paula was altogether free. She gave her money to each according as each had need, not ministering to self-indulgence but relieving want. No poor person went away from her empty handed. And all this she was enabled to do not by the greatness of her wealth but by her careful management of it. She constantly had on her lips such phrases as these: "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy;" [Luke 16:9] and "water will quench a flaming fire; and alms maketh an atonement for sins;" [Luke 11:41] and "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that ...they may receive you into everlasting habitations;" [Dan. 4:27, LXX] and "give alms ...and behold all things are clean unto you;" [Zech. 9:16, LXX] and Daniel's words to King Nebuchadnezzar in which he admonished him to redeem his sins by almsgiving. [Rev. 21:14] She wished to spend her money not upon these stones, that shall pass away with the earth and the world, but upon those living stones, which roll over the earth; [Rev. 21:19-21] of which in the apocalypse of John the city of the great king is built; [Job 2:4, Job 2:5] of which also the scripture tells us that they shall be changed into sapphire and emerald and jasper and other gems. [Matt. 23:27]

17. But these qualities she may well share with a few others and the devil knows that it is not in these that the highest virtue consists. For, when Job has lost his substance and when his house and children have been destroyed, Satan says to the Lord: "Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath, will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face."⁴⁴ We know that many persons while they have given alms have yet given nothing which touches their bodily comfort; and while they have held out a helping hand to those in need are themselves overcome with sensual indulgences; they whitewash the outside but within they are "full of dead men's bones." [Wisd. 2:24] Paula was not one of these. Her self-restraint was so great as to be almost immoderate; and her fasts and labours were so severe as almost to weaken her constitution. Except on feast days she would scarcely ever take oil with her food; a fact from which may be judged what she thought of wine, sauce, fish, honey, milk, eggs, and other things agreeable to the palate. Some persons believe that in taking these they are extremely frugal; and, even if they surfeit themselves with them, they still fancy their chastity safe.

18. Envy always follows in the track of virtue: as Horace says, it is ever the mountain top that is smitten by the lightning.⁴⁵ It is not surprising that I declare this of men and women, when the jealousy of the Pharisees succeeded in crucifying our Lord Himself. All the saints have had illwishers, and even Paradise was not free from the serpent through whose malice death came into the world. [2 Cor. 12:7] So the Lord stirred up against Paula Hadad the Edomite [Gen. 27:41-46: Gen. 28:1-5] to buffet her that she might not be exalted, and warned her frequently by the thorn in her flesh [1 Sam. 21:10] not to be elated by the greatness of her own virtues or to fancy that,

compared with other women, she had attained the summit of perfection. For my part I used to say that it was best to give in to rancour and to retire before passion. So Jacob dealt with his brother Esau; so David met the unrelenting persecution of Saul. I reminded her how the first of these fled into Mesopotamia; [Matt. 5:39] and how the second surrendered himself to the Philistines, [Rom. 12:21] and chose to submit to foreign foes rather than to enemies at home. She however replied as follows:- 'Your suggestion would be a wise one if the devil did not everywhere fight against God's servants and handmaidens, and did he not always precede the fugitives to their chosen refuges. Moreover, I am deterred from accepting it by my love for the holy places; and I cannot find another Bethlehem elsewhere. Why may I not by my patience conquer this ill will? Why may I not by my humility break down this pride, and when I am smitten on the one cheek offer to the smiter the other? [Phil. 2:7, Phil. 2:8] Surely the apostle Paul says "Overcome evil with good." [Job 40:8, LXX] Did not the apostles glory when they suffered reproach for the Lord's sake? Did not even the Saviour humble Himself, taking the form of a servant and being made obedient to the Father unto death, even the death of the cross, [Matt. 5:10] that He might save us by His passion? If Job had not fought the battle and won the victory, he would never have received the crown of righteousness, or have heard the Lord say: "Thinkest thou that I have spoken unto thee for aught else than this, that thou mightest appear righteous."⁴⁶ In the gospel those only are said to be blessed who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake. [Ps. 38:13] My conscience is at rest, and I know that it is not from any fault of mine that I am suffering; moreover affliction in this world is a ground for expecting a reward hereafter.' When the enemy was more than usually forward and ventured to reproach her to her face, she used to chant the words of the psalter: "While the wicked was before me, I was dumb with silence; I held my peace even from good:" [Ps. 38:14] and again, "I as a deaf man heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth:" [Deut. 13:3] and "I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs." [Isa. 28:9-11, LXX] When she felt herself tempted, she dwelt upon the words in Deuteronomy: "The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." [Rom. 5:3-5] In tribulations and afflictions she turned to the splendid language of Isaiah: "Ye that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, look for tribulation upon tribulation, for hope also upon hope: yet a little while must these things be by reason of the malice of the lips and by reason of a spiteful tongue." This passage of scripture she explained for her own consolation as meaning that the weaned, that is, those who have come to full age, must endure tribulation upon tribulation that they may be accounted worthy to receive hope upon hope. She recalled to mind also the words of the apostle, "we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed" [2 Cor. 4:16] and "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day":⁴⁷ and "our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh in us [2 Cor. 4:17, 2 Cor. 4:18] an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal. [Isa. 49:8] She used to say that, although to human impatience the time might seem slow in coming, yet that it would not be long but that presently help would come from God who says: "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee." [Isa. 51:7, Isa. 51:8] We ought not, she declared, to dread the deceitful lips and tongues of the wicked, for we rejoice in the aid of the Lord who warns us by His prophet: "fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings; for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like

wool": [Luke 21:19, R.V] and she quoted His own words, "In your patience ye shall win your souls": [Rom. 8:18] as well as those of the apostle, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed? us": [1 Th. 3:4, R.V] and in another place, "we are to suffer affliction" [Prov. 14:29] that we may be patient in all things that befall us, for "he that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." [2 Cor. 12:10]

19. In her frequent sicknesses and infirmities she used to say, "when I am weak, then am I strong:" [2 Cor. 4:7] "we have our treasure in earthen vessels" [1 Cor. 15:54] until "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality" [2 Cor. 1:5] and again "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ:" [2 Cor. 1:7] and then as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation. [Ps. 42:11] In sorrow she used to sing: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God." [Luke 9:23] In the hour of danger she used to say: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me:" [Luke 9:24] and again "whosoever will save his life shall lose it," and "whosoever will lose his life for my sake the same shall save it." [Matt. 16:26] When the exhaustion of her substance and the ruin of her property were announced to her she only said: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul:" [Job 1:21] and "naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord:" [1 John. 2:15-17] and Saint John's words, "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof." [Ps. 77:4, Vulg] I know that when word was sent to her of the serious illnesses of her children and particularly of Toxotius whom she dearly loved, she first by her self-control fulfilled the saying: "I was troubled and I did not speak," [Matt. 10:37] and then cried out in the words of scripture, "He that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." [Ps. 79:11, LXX] And she prayed to the Lord and said: Lord "preserve thou the children of those that are appointed to die," [1 Cor. 4:9] that is, of those who for thy sake every day die bodily. I am aware that a talebearer-a class of persons who do a great deal of harm-once told her as a kindness that owing to her great fervour in virtue some people thought her mad and declared that something should be done for her head. She replied in the words of the apostle, "we are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and to men," [1 Cor. 4:10] and "we are fools for Christ's sake" [1 Cor. 1:25] but "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." [Ps. 69:5] It is for this reason she said that even the Saviour says to the Father, "Thou knowest my foolishness," [Ps. 71:7] and again "I am as a wonder unto many, but thou art my strong refuge." [Ps. 73:22, Ps. 73:23] "I was as a beast before thee; nevertheless I am continually with thee." [Mark 3:21] In the gospel we read that even His kinsfolk desired to bind Him as one of weak mind. [John. 8:48] His opponents also reviled him saying "thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil," [Luke 11:15] and another time "he casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils." [2 Cor. 1:12] But let us, she continued, listen to the exhortation of the apostle, "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity and sincerity ...by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world." [John. 15:19] And let us hear the Lord when He says to His apostles, "If ye were of the world the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world ...therefore the world hateth you." [Cf. Ps. 44:21] And then she turned to the Lord Himself, saying, "Thou knowest the secrets of the heart,"

[Ps. 44:17, Ps. 44:18] and "all this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant; our heart is not turned back." [Ps. 44:22] "Yea for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." [Ps. 118:6, P.B.V] But "the Lord is on my side: I will not fear what man doeth unto me." [Prov. 7:2, LXX] She had read the words of Solomon, "My son, honour the Lord and thou shalt be made strong; and beside the Lord fear thou no man." [Cf. 1 Cor. 9:11] These passages and others like them she used as God's armour against the assaults of wickedness, and particularly to defend herself against the furious onslaughts of envy; and thus by patiently enduring wrongs she soothed the violence of the most savage breasts. Down to the very day of her death two things were conspicuous in her life, one her great patience and the other the jealousy which was manifested towards her. Now jealousy gnaws the heart of him who harbours it: and while it strives to injure its rival raves with all the force of its fury against itself.

20. I shall now describe the order of her monastery and the method by which she turned the continence of saintly souls to her own profit. She sowed carnal things that she might reap spiritual things;⁴⁸ she gave earthly things that she might receive heavenly things; she forewent things temporal that she might in their stead obtain things eternal. Besides establishing a monastery for men, the charge of which she left to men, she divided into three companies and monasteries the numerous virgins whom she had gathered out of different provinces, some of whom are of noble birth while others belonged to the middle or lower classes. But, although they worked and had their meals separately from each other, these three companies met together for psalm-singing and prayer. After the chanting of the Alleluia-the signal by which they were summoned to the Collect⁴⁹-no one was permitted to remain behind. But either first or among the first Paula used to await the arrival of the rest, urging them to diligence rather by her own modest example than by motives of fear. At dawn, at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, at evening, and at midnight they recited the psalter each in turn. [1 Cor. 4:21] No sister was allowed to be ignorant of the psalms, and all had every day to learn a certain portion of the holy scriptures. On the Lord's day only they proceeded to the church beside which they lived, each company following its own mother-superior. Returning home in the same order, they then devoted themselves to their allotted tasks, and made garments either for themselves or else for others. If a virgin was of noble birth, she was not allowed to have an attendant belonging to her own household lest her maid having her mind full of the doings of old days and of the license of childhood might by constant converse open old wounds and renew former errors. All the sisters were clothed alike. Linen was not used except for drying the hands. So strictly did Paula separate them from men that she would not allow even eunuchs to approach them; lest she should give occasion to slanderous tongues (always ready to cavil at the religious) to console themselves for their own misdoing. When a sister was backward in coming to the recitation of the psalms or shewed herself remiss in her work, Paula used to approach her in different ways. Was she quick-tempered? Paula coaxed her. Was she phlegmatic? Paula chid her, copying the example of the apostle who said: "What will ye? Shall I come to you with a rod or in love and in the spirit of meekness?" [1 Tim. 6:8] Apart from food and raiment she allowed no one to have anything she could call her own, for Paul had said, "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content."⁵⁰ She was afraid lest the custom of having more should breed covetousness in them; an appetite which no wealth can satisfy, for the more it has the more it requires, and neither opulence nor indigence is able to diminish it. [Ecclus. 13:2] When the sisters quarrelled one with another she reconciled them with soothing words. If the younger ones were troubled with

fleshly desires, she broke their force by imposing redoubled fasts; for she wished her virgins to be ill in body rather than to suffer in soul. If she chanced to notice any sister too attentive to her dress, she reprov'd her for her error with knitted brows and severe looks, saying; "a clean body and a clean dress mean an unclean soul. A virgin's lips should never utter an improper or an impure word, for such indicate a lascivious mind and by the outward man the faults of the inward are made manifest." When she saw a sister verbose and talkative or forward and taking pleasure in quarrels, and when she found after frequent admonitions that the offender shewed no signs of improvement; she placed her among the lowest of the sisters and outside their society, ordering her to pray at the door of the refectory instead of with the rest, and commanding her to take her food by herself, in the hope that where rebuke had failed shame might bring about a reformation. The sin of theft she loathed as if it were sacrilege; and that which among men of the world is counted little or nothing she declared to be in a monastery a crime of the deepest dye. How shall I describe her kindness and attention towards the sick or the wonderful care and devotion with which she nursed them? Yet, although when others were sick she freely gave them every indulgence, and even allowed them to eat meat; when she fell ill herself, she made no concessions to her own weakness, and seemed unfairly to change in her own case to harshness the kindness which she was always ready to shew to others.

21. No young girl of sound and vigorous constitution could have delivered herself up to a regimen so rigid as that imposed upon herself by Paula whose physical powers age had impaired and enfeebled. I admit that in this she was too determined, refusing to spare herself or to listen to advice. I will relate what I know to be a fact. In the extreme heat of the month of July she was once attacked by a violent fever and we despaired of her life. However by God's mercy she rallied, and the doctors urged upon her the necessity of taking a little light wine to accelerate her recovery; saying that if she continued to drink water they feared that she might become dropsical. I on my side secretly appealed to the blessed pope Epiphanius to admonish, nay even to compel her, to take the wine. But she with her usual sagacity and quickness at once perceived the stratagem, and with a smile let him see that the advice he was giving her was after all not his but mine. Not to waste more words, the blessed prelate after many exhortations left her chamber; and, when I asked him what he had accomplished, replied, "Only this that old as I am I have been almost persuaded to drink no more wine." I relate this story not because I approve of persons rashly taking upon themselves burthens beyond their strength (for does not the scripture say: "Burden not thyself above thy power"? [Ps. 63:1]) but because I wish from this quality of perseverance in her to shew the passion of her mind and the yearning of her believing soul; both of which made her sing in David's words, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth after thee." [e.g. Aristotle, E.N. 2:6] Difficult as it is always to avoid extremes, the philosophers⁵¹ are quite right in their opinion that virtue is a mean and vice an excess, or as we may express it in one short sentence "In nothing too much." [Rom. 7:24] While thus unyielding in her contempt for food Paula was easily moved to sorrow and felt crushed by the deaths of her kinsfolk, especially those of her children. When one after another her husband and her daughters fell asleep, on each occasion the shock of their loss endangered her life. And although she signed her mouth and her breast with the sign of the cross, and endeavoured thus to alleviate a mother's grief; her feelings overpowered her and her maternal instincts were too much for her confiding mind. Thus while her intellect retained its mastery she was overcome by sheer physical weakness. On one occasion a sickness seized her and clung to her so long that it brought anxiety to us and danger to herself. Yet even then she was

full of joy and repeated every moment the apostle's words: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" [2 Tim. 4:7, 2 Tim. 4:8] The careful reader may say that my words are an invective rather than an eulogy. I call that Jesus whom she served and whom I desire to serve to be my witness that so far from unduly eulogizing her or depreciating her I tell the truth about her as one Christian writing of another; that I am writing a memoir and not a panegyric, and that what were faults in her might well be virtues in others less saintly. I speak thus of her faults to satisfy my own feelings and the passionate regret of us her brothers and sisters, who all of us love her still and all of us deplore her loss.

22. However, she has finished her course, she has kept the faith, and now she enjoys the crown of righteousness. [Rev. 14:4] She follows the Lamb whithersoever he goes. [Cf. Luke 6:21] She is filled now because once she was hungry. [Ps. 48:8] With joy does she sing: "as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God." [Jer. 2:13] O blessed change! Once she wept but now laughs for evermore. Once she despised the broken cisterns of which the prophet speaks; [John. 4:14] but now she has found in the Lord a fountain of life. [Ps. 30:11] Once she wore haircloth but now she is clothed in white raiment, and can say: "thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness." [Ps. 102:9] Once she ate ashes like bread and mingled her drink with weeping; [Ps. 42:3] saying "my tears have been my meat day and night;" [Cf. Ps. 78:25] but now for all time she eats the bread of angels [Ps. 34:8] and sings: "O taste and see that the Lord is good;" [Ps. 45:1, R.V] and "my heart is overflowing with a goodly matter; I speak the things which I have made touching the king." [Isa. 65:13, Isa. 65:14] She now sees fulfilled Isaiah's words, or rather those of the Lord speaking through Isaiah: "Behold, my servants shall eat but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit." [Ps. 42:1, Ps. 42:2] I have said that she always shunned the broken cisterns: she did so that she might find in the Lord a fountain of life, and that she might rejoice and sing: "as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. When shall I come and appear before God?" [Wisd. 9:15]

23. I must briefly mention the manner in which she avoided the foul cisterns of the heretics whom she regarded as no better than heathen. A certain cunning knave, in his own estimation both learned and clever, began without my knowledge to put to her such questions as these: What sin has an infant committed that it should be seized by the devil? Shall we be young or old when we rise again? If we die young and rise young, we shall after the resurrection require to have nurses. If however we die young and rise old, the dead will not rise again at all: they will be transformed into new beings. Will there be a distinction of sexes in the next world? Or will there be no such distinction? If the distinction continues, there will be wedlock and sexual intercourse and procreation of children. If however it does not continue, the bodies that rise again will not be the same. For, he argued, "the earthy tabernacle weigheth down the mind that miseth upon many things," [1 Cor. 15:44] but the bodies that we shall have in heaven will be subtle and spiritual according to the words of the apostle: "it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body." [Ps. 74:19, R.V] From all of which considerations he sought to prove that rational creatures have been for their faults and previous sins subjected to bodily conditions; and that according to the nature and guilt of their transgression they are born in this or that state of life. Some, he said, rejoice in sound bodies and wealthy and noble parents; others have for their portion diseased frames and

poverty stricken homes; and by imprisonment in the present world and in bodies pay the penalty of their former sins. Paula listened and reported what she heard to me, at the same time pointing out the man. Thus upon me was laid the task of opposing this most noxious viper and deadly pest. It is of such that the Psalmist speaks when he writes: "deliver not the soul of thy turtle dove unto the wild beast," [Ps. 68:30, R.V] and "Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds;" [Matt. 22:29, Matt. 22:30] creatures who write iniquity and speak lies against the Lord and lift up their mouths against the Most High. As the fellow had tried to deceive Paula, I at her request went to him, and by asking him a few questions involved him in a dilemma. Do you believe, said I, that there will be a resurrection of the dead or do you disbelieve? He replied, I believe. I went on: Will the bodies that rise again be the same or different? He said, The same. Then I asked: What of their sex? Will that remain unaltered or will it be changed? At this question he became silent and swayed his head this way and that as a serpent does to avoid being struck. Accordingly I continued, As you have nothing to say I will answer for you and will draw the conclusion from your premises. If the woman shall not rise again as a woman nor the man as a man, there will be no resurrection of the dead. For the body is made up of sex and members. But if there shall be no sex and no members what will become of the resurrection of the body, which cannot exist without sex and members? And if there shall be no resurrection of the body, there can be no resurrection of the dead. But as to your objection taken from marriage, that, if the members shall remain the same, marriage must inevitably be allowed; it is disposed of by the Saviour's words: "ye do err not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are as the angels."⁵² When it is said that they neither marry nor are given in marriage, the distinction of sex is shewn to persist. For no one says of things which have no capacity for marriage such as a stick or a stone that they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but this may well be said of those who while they can marry yet abstain from doing so by their own virtue and by the grace of Christ. But if you cavil at this and say, how shall we in that case be like the angels with whom there is neither male nor female, hear my answer in brief as follows. What the Lord promises to us is not the nature of angels but their mode of life and their bliss. And therefore John the Baptist is called an angel [John. 20:26-28] even before he is beheaded, and all God's holy men and virgins manifest in themselves even in this world the life of angels. When it is said "ye shall be like the angels," likeness only is promised and not a change of nature.

24. And now do you in your turn answer me these questions. How do you explain the fact that Thomas felt the hands of the risen Lord and beheld His side pierced by the spear? [Job. 21:4] And the fact that Peter saw the Lord standing on the shore [Luke 24:42, Luke 24:43] and eating a piece of a roasted fish and a honeycomb. [Mark 5:43] If He stood, He must certainly have had feet. If He pointed to His wounded side He must have also had chest and belly for to these the sides are attached and without them they cannot be. If He spoke, He must have used a tongue and palate and teeth. For as the bow strikes the strings, so to produce vocal sound does the tongue come in contact with the teeth. If His hands were felt, it follows that He must have had arms as well. Since therefore it is admitted that He had all the members which go to make up the body, He must have also had the whole body formed of them, and that not a woman's but a man's; that is to say, He rose again in the sex in which He died. And if you cavil farther and say: We shall eat then, I suppose, after the resurrection; or How can a solid and material body enter in contrary to its nature through closed doors? you shall receive from me this reply. Do not for this matter of food find fault with belief in the resurrection: for our Lord after raising the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue

commanded food to be given her. [John. 12:2] And Lazarus who had been dead four days is described as sitting at meat with Him, [John. 20:19] the object in both cases being to shew that the resurrection was real and not merely apparent. And if from our Lord's entering in through closed doors [Matt. 14:25] you strive to prove that His body was spiritual and aerial, He must have had this spiritual body even before He suffered; since-contrary to the nature of heavy bodies-He was able to walk upon the sea. [Matt. 14:29] The apostle Peter also must be believed to have had a spiritual body for he also walked upon the waters with buoyant step. [Matt. 14:31] The true explanation is that when anything is done against nature, it is a manifestation of God's might and power. And to shew plainly that in these great signs our attention is asked not to a change in nature but to the almighty power of God, he who by faith had walked on water began to sink for the want of it and would have done so had not the Lord lifted him up with the reproving words, "O thou of little faith wherefore didst thou doubt?" [John. 20:27] I wonder that you can display such effrontery when the Lord Himself said, "reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless but believing." [Luke 24:39, Luke 24:40] and in another place, "behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken he shewed them his hands and his feet."⁵³ You hear Him speak of bones and flesh, of feet and hands; and yet you want to palm off on me the bubbles and airy nothings of which the stoics rave! [Ps. 36:6]

25. Moreover, if you ask how it is that a mere infant which has never sinned is seized by the devil, or at what age we shall rise again seeing that we die at different ages; my only answer-an unwelcome one, I fancy-will be in the words of scripture: "The judgments of God are a great deep," [Rom. 11:33, Rom. 11:34] and "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"⁵⁴ No difference of age can affect the reality of the body. Although our frames are in a perpetual flux and lose or gain daily, these changes do not make us different individuals. I was not one person at ten years old, another at thirty and another at fifty; nor am I another now when all my head is gray. [Eph. 4:13] According to the traditions of the church and the teaching of the apostle Paul, the answer must be this; that we shall rise as perfect men in the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. [Jas. 1:19] At this age the Jews suppose Adam to have been created and at this age we read that the Lord and Saviour rose again. Many other arguments did I adduce from both testaments to stifle the outcry of this heretic.

26. From that day forward so profoundly did Paula commence to loathe the man-and all who agreed with him in his doctrines-that she publicly proclaimed them as enemies of the Lord. I have related this incident less with the design of confuting in a few words a heresy which would require volumes to confute it, than with the object of shewing the great faith of this saintly woman who preferred to subject herself to perpetual hostility from men rather than by friendships hurtful to herself to provoke or to offend God.

27. To revert then to that description of her character which I began a little time ago; no mind was ever more docile than was hers. She was slow to speak and swift to hear, [Deut. 27:9, R.V] remembering the precept, "Keep silence and hearken, O Israel."⁵⁵ The holy scriptures she knew by heart, and said of the history contained in them that it was the foundation of the truth; but, though she loved even this, she still preferred to seek for the underlying spiritual meaning and made this the keystone of the spiritual building raised within her soul. She asked leave that she

and her daughter might read over the old and new testaments⁵⁶ under my guidance. Out of modesty I at first refused compliance, but as she persisted in her demand and frequently urged me to consent to it, I at last did so and taught her what I had learned not from myself-for self-confidence is the worst of teachers-but from the church's most famous writers. Wherever I stuck fast and honestly confessed myself at fault she would by no means rest content but would force me by fresh questions to point out to her which of many different solutions seemed to me the most probable. I will mention here another fact which to those who are envious may well seem incredible. While I myself beginning as a young man have with much toil and effort partially acquired the Hebrew tongue and study it now unceasingly lest if I leave it, it also may leave me; Paula, on making up her mind that she too would learn it, succeeded so well that she could chant the psalms in Hebrew and could speak the language without a trace of the pronunciation peculiar to Latin. The same accomplishment can be seen to this day in her daughter Eustochium, who always kept close to her mother's side, obeyed all her commands, never slept apart from her, never walked abroad or took a meal without her never had a penny that she could call her own, rejoiced when her mother gave to the poor her little patrimony, and fully believed that in filial affection she had the best heritage and the truest riches. I must not pass over in silence the joy which Paula felt when she heard her little granddaughter and namesake, the child of Laeta and Toxotius-who was born and I may even say conceived in answer to a vow of her parents dedicating her to virginity-when, I say, she heard the little one in her cradle sing "alleluia" and falter out the words "grandmother" and "aunt." One wish alone made her long to see her native land again; that she might know her son and his wife and child [Matt. 8:25, Luke 8:24] to have renounced the world and to be serving Christ. And it has been granted to her in part. For while her granddaughter is destined to take the veil, her daughter-in-law has vowed herself to perpetual chastity, and by faith and alms emulates the example that her mother has set her. She strives to exhibit at Rome the virtues which Paula set forth in all their fulness at Jerusalem.

28. What ails thee, my soul? Why dost thou shudder to approach her death? I have made my letter longer than it should be already; dreading to come to the end and vainly supposing that by saying nothing of it and by occupying myself with her praises I could postpone the evil day. Hitherto the wind has been all in my favour and my keel has smoothly ploughed through the heaving waves. But now my speech is running upon the rocks, the billows are mountains high, and imminent shipwreck awaits both you and me. We must needs cry out: "Master; save us we perish:" [Ps. 44:23] and "awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?" [Eccles. 9:2] For who could tell the tale of Paula's dying with dry eyes? She fell into a most serious illness and thus gained what she most desired, power to leave us and to be joined more fully to the Lord. Eustochium's affection for her mother, always true and tried, in this time of sickness approved itself still more to all. She sat by Paula's bedside, she fanned her, she supported her head, she arranged her pillows, she chafed her feet, she rubbed her stomach, she smoothed down the bedclothes, she heated hot water, she brought towels. In fact she anticipated the servants in all their duties, and when one of them did anything she regarded it as so much taken away from her own gain. How unceasingly she prayed, how copiously she wept, how constantly she ran to and fro between her prostrate mother and the cave of the Lord! imploring God that she might not be deprived of a companion so dear, that if Paula was to die she might herself no longer live, and that one bier might carry to burial her and her mother. Alas for the frailty and perishableness of human nature! Except that our belief in Christ raises us up to heaven and promises eternity to our souls, the physical conditions of life are the

same for us as for the brutes. "There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the evil; to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good so is the sinner; and he that sweareth as he that feareth an oath." [Ps. 26:8] Man and beast alike are dissolved into dust and ashes.

29. Why do I still linger, and prolong my suffering by postponing it? Paula's intelligence shewed her that her death was near. Her body and limbs grew cold and only in her holy breast did the warm beat of the living soul continue. Yet, as though she were leaving strangers to go home to her own people, she whispered the verses of the psalmist: "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house and the place where thine honour dwelleth," [Ps. 84:1, Ps. 84:2] and "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord," [Ps. 84:10, Vulg] and "I had rather be an outcast in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."⁵⁷ When I asked her why she remained silent refusing to answer my call,⁵⁸ and whether she was in pain, she replied in Greek that she had no suffering and that all things were to her eyes calm and tranquil. After this she said no more but closed her eyes as though she already despised all mortal things, and kept repeating the verses just quoted down to the moment in which she breathed out her soul, but in a tone so low that we could scarcely hear what she said. Raising her finger also to her mouth she made the sign of the cross upon her lips. Then her breath failed her and she gasped for death; yet even when her soul was eager to break free, she turned the death-rattle (which comes at last to all) into the praise of the Lord. The bishop of Jerusalem and some from other cities were present, also a great number of the inferior clergy, both priests and levites. [Cant. 2:10-12, Vulg] The entire monastery was filled with bodies of virgins and monks. As soon as Paula heard the bridegroom saying: "Rise up my love my fair one, my dove, and come away: for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone," she answered joyfully "the flowers appear on the earth; the time to cut them has come" [Ps. 27:13] and "I believe that I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living." [Acts 9:39]

30. No weeping or lamentation followed her death, such as are the custom of the world; but all present united in chanting the psalms in their several tongues. The bishops lifted up the dead woman with their own hands, placed her upon a bier, and carrying her on their shoulders to the church in the cave of the Saviour, laid her down in the centre of it. Other bishops meantime carried torches and tapers in the procession, and yet others led the singing of the choirs. The whole population of the cities of Palestine came to her funeral. Not a single monk lurked in the desert or lingered in his cell. Not a single virgin remained shut up in the seclusion of her chamber. To each and all it would have seemed sacrilege to have withheld the last tokens of respect from a woman so saintly. As in the case of Dorcas, [Ps. 131:2] the widows and the poor shewed the garments Paula had given them; while the destitute cried aloud that they had lost in her a mother and a nurse. Strange to say, the paleness of death had not altered her expression; only a certain solemnity and seriousness had overspread her features. You would have thought her not dead but asleep.

One after another they chanted the psalms, now in Greek, now in Latin, now in Syriac; and this not merely for the three days which elapsed before she was buried beneath the church and close to the cave of the Lord, but throughout the remainder of the week. All who were assembled felt that it was their own funeral at which they were assisting, and shed tears as if they themselves had died. Paula's daughter, the revered virgin Eustochium, "as a child that is weaned of his mother,"

[Corbona. See Matt. 27:6, Vulg] could not be torn away from her parent. She kissed her eyes, pressed her lips upon her brow, embraced her frame, and wished for nothing better than to be buried with her.

31. Jesus is witness that Paula has left not a single penny to her daughter but, as I said before, on the contrary a large mass of debt; and, worse even than this, a crowd of brothers and sisters whom it is hard for her to support but whom it would be undutiful to cast off. Could there be a more splendid instance of self-renunciation than that of this noble lady who in the fervour of her faith gave away so much of her wealth that She reduced herself to the last degree of poverty? Others may boast, if they will, of money spent in charity, of large sums heaped up in God's treasury, [1 Cor. 2:9] of votive offerings hung up with cords of gold. None of them has given more to the poor than Paula, for Paula has kept nothing for herself. But now she enjoys the true riches and those good things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man. [Cant. 5:10] If we mourn, it is for ourselves and not for her; yet even so, if we persist in weeping for one who reigns with Christ, we shall seem to envy her her glory.

32. Be not fearful, Eustochium: you are endowed with a splendid heritage. The Lord is your portion; and, to increase your joy, your mother has now after a long martyrdom won her crown. It is not only the shedding of blood that is accounted a confession: the spotless service of a devout mind is itself a daily martyrdom. Both alike are crowned; with roses and violets in the one case, with lilies in the other. Thus in the Song of Songs it is written: "my beloved is white and ruddy;" [Gen. 12:1] for, whether the victory be won in peace or in war, God gives the same guerdon to those who win it. Like Abraham your mother heard the words: "get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, unto a land that I will shew thee;" [Jer. 51:6] and not only that but the Lord's command given through Jeremiah: "flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul." [Ruth 1:16] To the day of her death she never returned to Chaldea, or regretted the fleshpots of Egypt or its strong-smelling meats. Accompanied by her virgin bands she became a fellow-citizen of the Saviour; and now that she has ascended from her little Bethlehem to the heavenly realms she can say to the true Naomi: "thy people shall be my people and thy God my God."59

33. I have spent the labour of two nights in dictating for you this treatise; and in doing so I have felt a grief as deep as your own. I say in 'dictating' for I have not been able to write it myself. As often as I have taken up my pen [Horace, C. III. 30:1] and have tried to fulfil my promise; my fingers have stiffened, my hand has fallen, and my power over it has vanished. The rudeness of the diction, devoid as it is of all elegance or charm, bears witness to the feeling of the writer.

34. And now, Paula, farewell, and aid with your prayers the old age of your votary. Your faith and your works unite you to Christ; thus standing in His presence you will the more readily gain what you ask. In this letter "I have built" to your memory "a monument more lasting than bronze," [2 Cor. 3:6] which no lapse of time will be able to destroy. And I have cut an inscription on your tomb, which I here subjoin; that, wherever my narrative may go, the reader may learn that you are buried at Bethlehem and not uncommemorated there.

"The Inscription On Paula's Tomb. Within this tomb a child of Scipio lies, A daughter of the farfamed Pauline house, A scion of the Gracchi, of the stock Of Agamemnon's self, illustrious: Here rests the lady Paula, well-beloved Of both her parents, with Eustochium For daughter; she

the first of Roman dames Who hardship chose and Bethlehem for Christ." In front of the cavern there is another inscription as follows:-

"Seest thou here hollowed in the rock a grave,
'Tis Paula's tomb; high heaven has her soul.
Who Rome and friends, riches and home forsook
Here in this lonely spot to find her rest.
For here Christ's manger was, and here the kings
To Him, both God and man, their offerings made."

35. The holy and blessed Paula fell asleep on the seventh day before the Kalends of February, on the third day of the week, after the sun had set. She was buried on the fifth day before the same Kalends, in the sixth consulship of the Emperor Honorius and the first of Aristnetus. She lived in the vows of religion five years at Rome and twenty years at Bethlehem. The whole duration of her life was fifty-six years eight months and twenty-one days.

1:

Ps. 120:5, Ps. 120:6 acc. to Jerome's latest version

2: Sacerdotes 3: See Letter XXXIX 4: Of continence. See Letter LXVI. 3

5: a.d. 382 6: Theodosius and Valentinian 7: Wife of Flavius Clemens, believed to have been a Christian martyr 8: i.e. the straits of Messina 9: A port on the S.W. coast of the Peloponnese 10: At this time one of the three bishops who claimed the see of Antioch. See Ep. 15:2

11:

A maritime city of Palestine which subsequently to its restoration by Herod became first the civil, and then the ecclesiastical, capital of Palestine

12:

Andromeda had been chained to a rock by her father to assuage the wrath of Poseidon who had sent a sea monster to ravage the country. Here she was found by Perseus who slew the monster and effected her rescue. See Josephus B. J. 3:ix. 3

13: Josh. ix 14: Judges 19:Judges 20:According to Judges 20:47 the number of Benjamites who escaped was six hundred 15: Josephus, A.J. 20:ii. 6 16: Or more fully Aelia Capitolina, a Roman colony from which all Jews were expelled 17: Praetorium. The word occurs in John 18:28 18: This legend of the cave dates back to Justin Martyr 19: John. 1:1, John. 1:14 logoj the Vulg. has `verbum 0' both here and in Luke 20: The name means this in Hebrew 21: The word `not 0' is inserted by Paula from Matt. 2:6 22: `Will he 0' A.V. following the Hebrew 23: LXX. acc. to one reading 24: This clause comes from the LXX 25: Jerome taught Paula Hebrew 26: This town played an important part in the wars of the Maccabees 27: Cellulae, lit. `little cells. 0 28: Josh. 14:15. In Hebrew `Adam 0' and `man 0' are the same word. Hence the mistake 29: Perhaps identical with "the valley of Berachah" mentioned in 2 Chr. 20:26 30: The jaw was the priest's

portion and hence the epithet 'priestly O': or else Bethphage belonged to the priests

31: Humilia 32: Strictly Damim 33: i.e. the Jews and the Gentiles 34: 2 K. 2:19-22, type and antitype are, as often, here confounded 35: The founder of a Samaritan sect akin to the Essenes 36: Other authorities for these strange phenomena are Hilary, Sulpicius, and Paulinus 37: According to the common tradition, but Hermon is more likely to have been the place 38: In the original 'Hermon and the Hermons O'; an allusion to the Hebrew text of Ps. 42:6 39: A mistake: No is Thebes 40: i.e. presbyters and deacons. Cf. §29, infra 41: At that time the most famous of the Egyptian hermits

42:

Jerome's own name had been coupled with Paula's when they both lived at Rome, but he was able to shew that his relations with her were wholly innocent

43: Luke 3:11. The word alteram, one of two (therefore, Jerome means, retaining the second) is found in the Syriac Version of Cureton. It is not found in the Vulgate 44: Hor. C. 2:x. ii 45: The enemy of Solomon-1 K. 11:14. Who Paula's enemy may have been we do not know 46: Ps. 39:1, Ps. 39:2, acc. to the Gallican psalter

47:

Vulg

48:

The Gathering; perhaps used, like the Greek sunodoj, for the Communion. The opening prayer came thus to be called The Collect. See note on Letter LI.

49: For the canonical hours see note on Letter XXII 50: Cf. Sall. Cat. xi 51: Ne quid nimis, in Greek Mhden agan 52: Luke 7:27. 'Angel O' is a Greek word and means 'messenger. O 53: Globos stoicorum atque aëria quaedam deliramenta 54: Jerome was at this time about 60 years old 55: Vetus et novum instrumentum 56: Toxotius, Laeta, the younger Paula. Comp. Letter CVII 57: For the technical meaning of inclamatio vide Virg. A. 1. 219, with Conington's note 58: i.e. presbyters and deacons-see above

59:

Stilus

Letters - letter_109

Letter 109. To Riparius.

Riparius, a presbyter of Aquitaine had written to inform Jerome that Vigilantius (for whom see Letter 61.) was preaching in southern Gaul against the worship of relics and the keeping of night vigils; and this apparently with the consent of his bishop. Jerome now replies in a letter more noteworthy for its bitterness than for its logic. Nevertheless he offers to write a full confutation of Vigilantius if Riparius will send him the book containing his heresies. This Riparius subsequently did and then Jerome wrote his treatise Against Vigilantius, the most extreme and least convincing of all his works. The date of the letter is 404 a.d.

1. Now that I have received a letter from you, if I do not answer it I shall be guilty of pride, and if I do I shall be guilty of rashness. For the matters concerning which you ask my opinion are such that they cannot either be spoken of or listened to without profanity. You tell me that Vigilantius (whose very name Wakeful is a contradiction: he ought rather to be described as Sleepy) has again opened his fetid lips and is pouring forth a torrent of filthy venom upon the relics of the holy martyrs; and that he calls us who cherish them ashmongers and idolaters who pay homage to dead men's bones. Unhappy wretch! to be wept over by all Christian men, who sees not that in speaking thus he makes himself one with the Samaritans and the Jews who hold dead bodies unclean and regard as defiled even vessels which have been in the same house with them, following the letter that killeth and not the spirit that giveth life. [Eph. 1:21] We, it is true, refuse to worship or adore, I say not the relics of the martyrs, but even the sun and moon, the angels and archangels, the Cherubim and Seraphim and "every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come." [Rom. 1:25] For we may not serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. [Matt. 10:40] Still we honour the relics of the martyrs, that we may adore Him whose martyrs they are. We honour the servants that their honour may be reflected upon their Lord who Himself says: "he that receiveth you receiveth me." [Deut. 34:6] I ask Vigilantius, Are the relics of Peter and of Paul unclean? Was the body of Moses unclean, of which we are told (according to the correct Hebrew text) that it was buried by the Lord Himself? And do we, every time that we enter the basilicas of apostles and prophets and martyrs, pay homage to the shrines of idols? Are the tapers which burn before their tombs only the tokens of idolatry? I will go farther still and ask a question which will make this theory recoil upon the head of its inventor and which will either kill or cure that frenzied brain of his, so that simple souls shall be no more subverted by his sacrilegious reasonings. Let him answer me this, Was the Lord's body unclean when it was placed in the sepulchre? And did the angels clothed in white raiment merely watch over a corpse dead and defiled, that ages afterwards this sleepy fellow might indulge in dreams and vomit forth his filthy surfeit, so as, like the persecutor Julian, either to destroy the basilicas of the saints or to convert them into heathen temples?

2. I am surprised that the reverend bishop [Ps. 2:9] in whose diocese he is said to be a presbyter acquiesces in this his mad preaching, and that he does not rather with apostolic rod, nay with a

rod of iron, shatter this useless vessel [1 Cor. 5:5] and deliver him for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved. [Ps. 50:18] He should remember the words that are said: "When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst unto him; and hast been partaker with adulterers;" [Ps. 101:8] and in another place, "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord;" and again "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred." [Ps. 139:21, Ps. 139:22] If the relics of the martyrs are not worthy of honour, how comes it that we read "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints?" [Ps. 116:15] If dead men's bones defile those that touch them, how came it that the dead Elisha raised another man also dead, and that life came to this latter from the body of the prophet which according to Vigilantius must have been unclean? In that case every encampment of the host of Israel and the people of God was unclean; for they carried the bodies of Joseph and of the patriarchs with them in the wilderness, and carried their unclean ashes even into the holy land. In that case Joseph, who was a type of our Lord and Saviour, was a wicked man; for he carried up Jacob's bones with great pomp to Hebron merely to put his unclean father beside his unclean grandfather and great grandfather, that is, one dead body along with others. The wretch's tongue should be cut out, or he should be put under treatment for insanity. As he does not know how to speak, he should learn to be silent. I have myself before now seen the monster, and have done my best to bind the maniac with texts of scripture, as Hippocrates binds his patients with chains; but "he went away, he departed, he escaped, he broke out," [Cic. Cat. 2:1, of Catiline] and taking refuge between the Adriatic and the Alps of King Cotius² declaimed in his turn against me. For all that a fool says must be regarded as mere noise and mouthing.

3. You may perhaps in your secret thoughts find fault with me for thus assailing a man behind his back. I will frankly admit that my indignation overpowers me; I cannot listen with patience to such sacrilegious opinions. I have read of the javelin of Phinehas, [Nu. 25:7, Nu. 25:8] of the harshness of Elijah, [1 K. 18:40] of the jealous anger of Simon the zealot,³ of the severity of Peter in putting to death Ananias and Sapphir, [Acts 5:1-10] and of the firmness of Paul who, when Elymas the sorcerer withstood the ways of the Lord, doomed him to lifelong blindness. [Acts 13:8-11] There is no cruelty in regard for God's honour. Wherefore also in the Law it is said: "If thy brother or thy friend or the wife of thy bosom entice thee from the truth, thine hand shall be upon them and thou shalt shed their blood, [Deut. 13:6-9] and so shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of Israel." [Deut. 13:5] Once more I ask, Are the relics of the martyrs unclean? If so, why did the apostles allow themselves to walk in that funeral procession before the body-the unclean body-of Stephen? Why did they make great lamentation over him, [Acts 8:2] that their grief might be turned into our joy?

You tell me farther that Vigilantius execrates vigils. In this surely he goes contrary to his name. The Wakeful one wishes to sleep and will not hearken to the Saviour's words, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak." [Matt. 26:40, Matt. 26:41] And in another place a prophet sings: "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments." [Ps. 119:62] We read also in the gospel how the Lord spent whole nights in prayer [Luke 6:12] and how the apostles when they were shut up in prison kept vigil all night long, singing their psalms until the earth quaked, and the keeper of the prison believed, and the magistrates and citizens were filled

with terror. [Acts 16:25-38] Paul says: "continue in prayer and watch in the same," [Col. 4:2] and in another place he speaks of himself as "in watchings often." [2 Cor. 11:27] Vigilantius may sleep if he pleases and may choke in his sleep, destroyed by the destroyer of Egypt and of the Egyptians. But let us say with David: "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." [Ps. 121:4] So will the Holy One and the Watcher come to us.⁴ And if ever by reason of our sins He fall asleep, let us say to Him: "Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord;" [Ps. 44:23] and when our ship is tossed by the waves let us rouse Him and say, "Master, save us: we perish." [Matt. 8:25, Luke 8:24]

4. I would dictate more were it not that the limits of a letter impose upon me a modest silence. I might have gone on, had you sent me the books which contain this man's rhapsodies, for in that case I should have known what points I had to refute. As it is I am only beating the air [Cf. 1 Cor. 9:26.] and revealing not so much his infidelity-for this is patent to all-as my own faith. But if you wish me to write against him at greater length, send me those wretched dronings of his and in my answer he shall hear an echo of John the Baptist's words "Now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." [Matt. 3:10] 1: Probably Exuperius of Toulouse.

2: A contemporary and ally of Augustus 3: Luke 6:15 - so called probably because he came from the most fanatical party among the Pharisees 4: Dan. 4:13. Jerome gives the Hebrew word for watcher, viz. ry

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Letter 110. From Augustine.

Augustine's answer to Letter 102. He now tries to soothe Jerome's wounded feelings. begs him to overlook the offence that he has committed, and implores him not to break off the friendly relations hitherto maintained between them. He touches on the quarrel between Jerome and Rufinus and sincerely hopes that no such breach may ever separate Jerome from himself. The tone of the letter is throughout conciliatory and is marked in places with deep feeling. More than once Augustine dwells on Jerome's words ("would that I could embrace you and that by mutual converse we might learn one from the other," Letter 102.§2) and speaks of the comfort which they have brought to him. The date of the letter is 404 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 73. To Jerome, My Venerable and Most Esteemed Brother and Fellow-Presbyter Augustine Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Although I suppose that, before this reaches you, you have received through our son the deacon Cyprian, a servant of God, the letter which I sent by him, from which you would be apprised with certainty that I wrote the letter of which you mentioned that a copy had been brought to you; in consequence of which I suppose that I have begun already, like the rash Dares, to be beaten and belaboured by the missiles and the merciless fists of a second Entellus in the reply which you have written; nevertheless I answer in the meantime the letter which you have deigned to send me by our holy son Asterius, in which I have found many proofs of your most kind goodwill to me, and at the same time some signs of your having in some measure felt agrieved by me. In reading it, therefore, I was no sooner soothed by one sentence than I was buffeted in another; my wonder being especially called forth by this, that after alleging, as your reason for not rashly accepting as authentic the letter from me of which you had a copy, the fact that, offended by your reply, I might justly remonstrate with you, because you ought first to have ascertained that it was mine before answering it, you go on to command me to acknowledge the letter frankly if it is mine, or send a more reliable copy of it, in order that we may, without any bitterness of feeling, address ourselves to the discussion of scriptural doctrine. For how can we engage in such discussion without bitterness of feeling, if you have made up your mind to offend me? Or, if your mind is not made up to this, what reason could I have had, when you did not offend me, for justly complaining as having been offended by you, that you ought first to have made sure that the letter was mine, and only then to have replied, that is to say, only then to have offended me? For if there had been nothing to offend me in your reply, I could have had no just ground of complaint. Accordingly, when you write such a reply to that letter as must offend me, what hope is left of our engaging without any bitterness in the discussion of scriptural doctrine? Far be it from me to take offense if you are willing and able to prove, by incontrovertible argument, that you have apprehended more correctly than I have the meaning of that passage in Paul's Epistle [to the Galatians], or of any other text in Holy Scripture: nay, more, far be it from me to count it anything else than gain to myself, and cause of thankfulness to you, if in anything I am either informed by your teaching or set right by your correction.

2. But, my very dear brother, you could not think that I could be offended by your reply, had you not thought that you were offended by what I had written. For I could never have entertained concerning you the idea that you had not felt yourself offended by me if you so framed your reply as to offend me in return. If, on the other hand, I have been supposed by you to be capable of such preposterous folly as to take offense when you had not written in such a way as to give me occasion, you have in this already wronged me, that you have entertained such an opinion of me. But surely you who are so cautious, that although you recognised my style in the letter of which you had a copy, you refused to believe its authenticity, would not without consideration believe me to be so different from what your experience has proved me to be. For if you had good reason for seeing that I might justly complain had you hastily concluded that a letter not written by me was mine, how much more reasonably may I complain if you form, without consideration, such an estimate of myself as is contradicted by your own experience! You would not therefore go so far astray in your judgment as to believe, when you had written nothing by which I could be offended, that I would nevertheless be so foolish as to be capable of being offended by such a reply.

3. There can therefore be no doubt that you were prepared to reply in such a way as would offend me, if you had only indisputable evidence that the letter was mine. Accordingly, since I do not believe that you would think it right to offend me unless you had just cause, it remains for me to confess, as I now do, my fault as having been the first to offend by writing that letter which I cannot deny to be mine. Why should I strive to swim against the current, and not rather ask pardon? I therefore entreat you by the mercy of Christ to forgive me wherein I have injured you, and not to render evil for evil by injuring me in return. For it will be an injury to me if you pass over in silence anything which you find wrong in either word or action of mine. If, indeed, you rebuke in me that which merits no rebuke, you do wrong to yourself, not to me; for far be it from one of your life and holy vows to rebuke merely from a desire to give offense, using the tongue of malice to condemn in me that which by the truth-revealing light of reason you know to deserve no blame. Therefore either rebuke kindly him whom, though he is free from fault, you think to merit rebuke; or with a father's kindness soothe him whom you cannot bring to agree with you. For it is possible that your opinion may be at variance with the truth, while notwithstanding your actions are in harmony with Christian charity: for I also shall most thankfully receive your rebuke as a most friendly action, even though the thing censured be capable of defense, and therefore ought not to have been censured; or else I shall acknowledge both your kindness and my fault, and shall be found, so far as the Lord enables me, grateful for the one, and corrected in regard to the other.

4. Why, then, shall I fear your words, hard, perhaps, like the boxing-gloves of Entellus, but certainly fitted to do me good? The blows of Entellus were intended not to heal, but to harm, and therefore his antagonist was conquered, not cured. But I, if I receive your correction calmly as a necessary medicine, shall not be pained by it. If, however, through weakness, either common to human nature or peculiar to myself, I cannot help feeling some pain from rebuke, even when I am justly reprov'd, it is far better to have a tumour in one's head cured, though the lance cause pain, than to escape the pain by letting the disease go on. This was clearly seen by him who said that, for the most part, our enemies who expose our faults are more useful than friends who are afraid to reprove us. For the former, in their angry recriminations, sometimes charge us with what we indeed require to correct; but the latter, through fear of destroying the sweetness of friendship, show less boldness on behalf of right than they ought. Since, therefore, you are, to quote your own

comparison, an ox worn out, perhaps, as to your bodily strength by reason of years, but unimpaired in mental vigour, and toiling still assiduously and with profit in the Lord's threshing-floor; here am I, and in whatever I have spoken amiss, tread firmly on me: the weight of your venerable age should not be grievous to me, if the chaff of my fault be so bruised under foot as to be separated from me.

5. Let me further say, that it is with the utmost affectionate yearning that I read or recollect the words at the end of your letter, "Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning." For my part, I say — Would that we were even dwelling in parts of the earth less widely separated; so that if we could not meet for converse, we might at least have a more frequent exchange of letters. For as it is, so great is the distance by which we are prevented from any kind of access to each other through the eye and ear, that I remember writing to your Holiness regarding these words in the Epistle to the Galatians when I was young; and behold I am now advanced in age, and have not yet received a reply, and a copy of my letter has reached you by some strange accident earlier than the letter itself, about the transmission of which I took no small pains. For the man to whom I entrusted it neither delivered it to you nor returned it to me. So great in my esteem is the value of those of your writings which we have been able to procure, that I should prefer to all other studies the privilege, if it were attainable by me, of sitting by your side and learning from you. Since I cannot do this myself, I propose to send to you one of my sons in the Lord, that he may for my benefit be instructed by you, in the event of my receiving from you a favourable reply in regard to the matter. For I have not now, and I can never hope to have, such knowledge of the Divine Scriptures as I see you possess. Whatever abilities I may have for such study, I devote entirely to the instruction of the people whom God has entrusted to me; and I am wholly precluded by my ecclesiastical occupations from having leisure for any further prosecution of my studies than is necessary for my duty in public teaching.

6. I am not acquainted with the writings speaking injuriously of you, which you tell me have come into Africa. I have, however, received the reply to these which you have been pleased to send. After reading it, let me say frankly, I have been exceedingly grieved that the mischief of such painful discord has arisen between persons once so loving and intimate, and formerly united by the bond of a friendship which was well known in almost all the Churches. In that treatise of yours, any one may see how you are keeping yourself under restraint, and holding back the stinging keenness of your indignation, lest you should render railing for railing. If, however, even in reading this reply of yours, I fainted with grief and shuddered with fear, what would be the effect produced in me by the things which he has written against you, if they should come into my possession! "Woe unto the world because of offenses!" [Matthew 18:7] Behold the complete fulfilment of which He who is Truth foretold: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." [Matthew 24:12] For what trusting hearts can now pour themselves forth with any assurance of their confidence being reciprocated? Into whose breast may confiding love now throw itself without reserve? In short, where is the friend who may not be feared as possibly a future enemy, if the breach that we deplore could arise between Jerome and Rufinus? Oh, sad and pitiable is our portion! Who can rely upon the affection of his friends because of what he knows them to be now, when he has no foreknowledge of what they shall afterwards become? But why should I reckon it cause for sorrow, that one man is thus ignorant of what another may become, when no man knows even what he himself is afterwards to be? The utmost that he knows, and that he knows but

imperfectly, is his present condition; of what he shall hereafter become he has no knowledge.

7. Do the holy and blessed angels possess not only this knowledge of their actual character, but also a foreknowledge of what they shall afterward become? If they do, I cannot see how it was possible for Satan ever to have been happy, even while he was still a good angel, knowing, as in this case he must have known, his future transgression and eternal punishment. I would wish to hear what you think as to this question, if indeed it be one which it would be profitable for us to be able to answer. But mark here what I suffer from the lands and seas which keep us, so far as the body is concerned, distant from each other. If I were myself the letter which you are now reading, you might have told me already what I have just asked; but now, when will you write me a reply? When will you get it sent away? When will it come here? When shall I receive it? And yet, would that I were sure that it would come at last, though meanwhile I must summon all the patience which I can command to endure the unwelcome but unavoidable delay! Wherefore I come back to those most delightful words of your letter, filled with your holy longing, and I in turn appropriate them as my own: "Would that I might receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning,"— if indeed there be any sense in which I could possibly impart instruction to you.

8. When by these words, now mine not less than yours, I am gladdened and refreshed, and when I am comforted not a little by the fact that in both of us a desire for mutual fellowship exists, though meanwhile unsatisfied, it is not long before I am pierced through by darts of keenest sorrow when I consider Rufinus and you, to whom God had granted in fullest measure and for a length of time that which both of us have longed for, so that in most close and endearing fellowship you feasted together on the honey of the Holy Scriptures, and think how between you the blight of such exceeding bitterness has found its way, constraining us to ask when, where, and in whom the same calamity may not be reasonably feared; seeing that it has befallen you at the very time when, unencumbered, having cast away secular burdens, you were following the Lord and were living together in that very land which was trodden by the feet of our Lord, when He said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you;" [John 14:27] being, moreover, men of mature age, whose life was devoted to the study of the word of God. Truly "man's life on earth is a period of trial." If I could anywhere meet you both together — which, alas, I cannot hope to do — so strong are my agitation, grief, and fear, that I think I would cast myself at your feet, and there weeping till I could weep no more, would, with all the eloquence of love, appeal first to each of you for his own sake, then to both for each other's sake, and for the sake of those, especially the weak, "for whom Christ died," [1 Corinthians 8:11] whose salvation is in peril, as they look on you who occupy a place so conspicuous on the stage of time; imploring you not to write and scatter abroad these hard words against each other, which, if at any time you who are now at variance were reconciled, you could not destroy, and which you could not then venture to read lest strife should be kindled anew.

9. But I say to your Charity, that nothing has made me tremble more than your estrangement from Rufinus, when I read in your letter some of the indications of your being displeased with me. I refer not so much to what you say of Entellus and of the wearied ox, in which you appear to me to use genial pleasantry rather than angry threat, but to that which you have evidently written in earnest, of which I have already spoken perhaps more than was fitting, but not more than my fears compelled me to do — namely, the words, "lest perchance, being offended, you should have

reason to remonstrate with me." If it be possible for us to examine and discuss anything by which our hearts may be nourished, without any bitterness of discord I entreat you let us address ourselves to this. But if it is not possible for either of us to point out what he may judge to demand correction in the other's writings, without being suspected of envy and regarded as wounding friendship, let us, having regard to our spiritual life and health, leave such conference alone. Let us content ourselves with smaller attainments in that [knowledge] which puffs up, if we can thereby preserve unharmed that [charity] which edifies. [1 Corinthians 8:1] I feel that I come far short of that perfection of which it is written, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man;" [James 3:2] but through God's mercy I truly believe myself able to ask your forgiveness for that in which I have offended you: and this you ought to make plain to me, that through my hearing you, you may gain your brother. [Matthew 18:18] Nor should you make it a reason for leaving me in error, that the distance between us on the earth's surface makes it impossible for us to meet face to face. As concerns the subjects into which we inquire, if I know, or believe, or think that I have got hold of the truth in a matter in which your opinion is different from mine, I shall by all means endeavour, as the Lord may enable me, to maintain my view without injuring you. And as to any offense which I may give to you, so soon as I perceive your displeasure, I shall unreservedly beg your forgiveness.

10. I think, moreover, that your reason for being displeased with me can only be, that I have either said what I ought not, or have not expressed myself in the manner in which I ought: for I do not wonder that we are less thoroughly known to each other than we are to our most close and intimate friends. Upon the love of such friends I readily cast myself without reservation, especially when chafed and wearied by the scandals of this world; and in their love I rest without any disturbing care: for I perceive that God is there, on whom I confidently cast myself, and in whom I confidently rest. Nor in this confidence am I disturbed by any fear of that uncertainty as to the morrow which must be present when we lean upon human weakness, and which I have in a former paragraph bewailed. For when I perceive that a man is burning with Christian love, and feel that thereby he has been made a faithful friend to me, whatever plans or thoughts of mine I entrust to him I regard as entrusted not to the man, but to Him in whom his character makes it evident that he dwells: for "God is love, and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him;" [1 John 4:16] and if he cease to dwell in love, his forsaking it cannot but cause as much pain as his abiding in it caused joy. Nevertheless, in such a case, when one who was an intimate friend has become an enemy, it is better that he should search out what ingenuity may help him to fabricate to our prejudice, than that he should find what anger may provoke him to reveal. This every one most easily secures, not by concealing what he does, but by doing nothing which he would wish to conceal. And this the mercy of God grants to good and pious men: they go out and in among their friends in liberty and without fear, whatever these friends may afterwards become: the sins which may have been committed by others within their knowledge they do not reveal, and they themselves avoid doing what they would fear to see revealed. For when any false charge is fabricated by a slanderer, either it is disbelieved, or, if it is believed, our reputation alone is injured, our spiritual wellbeing is not affected. But when, any sinful action is committed, that action becomes a secret enemy, even though it be not revealed by the thoughtless or malicious talk of one acquainted with our secrets. Wherefore any person of discernment may see in your own example how, by the comfort of a good conscience, you bear what would otherwise be insupportable — the incredible enmity of one who was formerly your most intimate and beloved

friend; and how even what he utters against you, even what may to your disadvantage be believed by some, you turn to good account as the armour of righteousness on the left hand, which is not less useful than armour on the right hand [2 Corinthians 6:7] in our warfare with the devil. But truly I would rather see him less bitter in his accusations, than see you thus more fully armed by them. This is a great and a lamentable wonder, that you should have passed from such amity to such enmity: it would be a joyful and a much greater event, should you come back from such enmity to the friendship of former days.

Letters - letter_111

Letter 111. From Augustine to Prsidius.

Augustine asks Prsidius to forward the preceding letter to Jerome and also to write himself to urge him to forgive Augustine. Sometimes numbered as Augustine Letter 74. To My Lord Præsidius, Most Blessed, My Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, Truly Esteemed, Augustine Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I write to remind you of the request which I made to you as a sincere friend when you were here, that you would not refuse to send a letter of mine to our holy brother and fellow presbyter Jerome; in order, moreover, to let your Charity know in what terms you ought to write to him on my behalf. I have sent a copy of my letter to him, and of his to me, by reading which your pious wisdom may easily see both the moderation of tone which I have been careful to preserve, and the vehemence on his part by which I have been not unreasonably filled with fear. If, however, I have written anything which I ought not to have written, or have expressed myself in an unbecoming way, let it not be to him, but to myself, in brotherly love, that you send your opinion of what I have done, in order that, if I am convinced of my fault by your rebuke, I may ask his forgiveness.

Letters - letter_112

Letter 112. To Augustine. On receiving Letter 104 together with duly authenticated copies of Letters 56 and 67, Jerome in three days completes an exhaustive reply to all the questions which Augustine had raised. He explains what is the true title of his book *On Illustrious Men*, deals at great length with the dispute between Paul and Peter, expounds his views with regard to the Septuagint, and shews by the story of "the gourd" how close and accurate his translations are. His language throughout is kind but rather patronising: indeed in this whole correspondence Jerome seldom sufficiently recognizes the greatness of Augustine. The date of the letter is 404 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 75.

Jerome's answer to Augustine's Letters 28, 40 and 71. To Augustine, My Lord Truly Holy, and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

1. I have received by Cyprian, deacon, three letters, or rather three little books, at the same time, from your Excellency, containing what you call sundry questions, but what I feel to be animadversions on opinions which I have published, to answer which, if I were disposed to do it, would require a pretty large volume. Nevertheless I shall attempt to reply without exceeding the limits of a moderately long letter, and without causing delay to our brother, now in haste to depart, who only three days before the time fixed for his journey asked earnestly for a letter to take with him, in consequence of which I am compelled to pour out these sentences, such as they are, almost without premeditation, answering you in a rambling effusion, prepared not in the leisure of deliberate composition, but in the hurry of extemporaneous dictation, which usually produces a discourse that is more the offspring of chance than the parent of instruction; just as unexpected attacks throw into confusion even the bravest soldiers, and they are compelled to take to flight before they can gird on their armour.

2. But our armour is Christ; it is that which the Apostle Paul prescribes when, writing to the Ephesians, he says, "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day;" and again, "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." [Ephesians 6:13-17] Armed with these weapons, King David went forth in his day to battle; and taking from the torrent's bed five smooth rounded stones, he proved that, even amidst all the eddying currents of the world, his feelings were free both from roughness and from defilement; drinking of the brook by the way, and therefore lifted up in spirit, he cut off the head of Goliath, using the proud enemy's own sword as the fittest instrument of death, smiting the profane boaster on the forehead and wounding him in the same place in which Uzziah was smitten with leprosy when he presumed to usurp the priestly office; [2 Chronicles 16:19] the same also in which shines the glory that makes the saints rejoice in the Lord, saying, "The light of Your countenance is sealed upon us, O Lord." Let us therefore also say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I

will sing and give praise: awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early;" that in us may be fulfilled that word, "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it;" and, "The Lord shall give the word with great power to them that publish it." I am well assured that your prayer as well as mine is, that in our contentings the victory may remain with the truth. For you seek Christ's glory, not your own: if you are victorious, I also gain a victory if I discover my error. On the other hand, if I win the day, the gain is yours; for "the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." [2 Corinthians 12:14] We read, moreover, in Chronicles, that the children of Israel went to battle with their minds set upon peace, [1 Chronicles 12:17-18] seeking even amid swords and bloodshed and the prostrate slain a victory not for themselves, but for peace. Let me therefore, if it be the will of Christ, give an answer to all that you have written, and attempt in a short dissertation to solve your numerous questions. I pass by the conciliatory phrases in your courteous salutation: I say nothing of the compliments by which you attempt to take the edge off your censure: let me come at once to the matters in debate.

3. You say that you received from some brother a book of mine, in which I have given a list of ecclesiastical writers, both Greek and Latin, but which had no title; and that when you asked the brother aforesaid (I quote your own statement) why the title-page had no inscription, or what was the name by which the book was known, he answered that it was called "Epitaphium," i.e. "Obituary Notices:" upon which you display your reasoning powers, by remarking that the name Epitaphium would have been properly given to the book if the reader had found in it an account of the lives and writings of deceased authors, but that inasmuch as mention is made of the works of many who were living when the book was written, and are at this day still living, you wonder why I should have given the book a title so inappropriate. I think that it must be obvious to your own common sense, that you might have discovered the title of that book from its contents, without any other help. For you have read both Greek and Latin biographies of eminent men, and you know that they do not give to works of this kind the title Epitaphium, but simply "Illustrious Men," e.g. "Illustrious Generals," or "philosophers, orators, historians, poets," etc., as the case may be. An Epitaphium is a work written concerning the dead; such as I remember having composed long ago after the decease of the presbyter Nepotianus, of blessed memory. The book, therefore, of which you speak ought to be entitled, "Concerning Illustrious Men," or properly, "Concerning Ecclesiastical Writers," although it is said that by many who were not qualified to make any correction of the title, it has been called "Concerning Authors."

4. You ask, in the second place, my reason for saying, in my commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, that Paul could not have rebuked Peter for that which he himself had done, [Galatians 2:14] and could not have censured in another the dissimulation of which he was himself confessedly guilty; and you affirm that that rebuke of the apostle was not a manœuvre of pious policy, but real; and you say that I ought not to teach falsehood, but that all things in Scripture are to be received literally as they stand. To this I answer, in the first place, that your wisdom ought to have suggested the remembrance of the short preface to my commentaries, saying of my own person, What then? Am I so foolish and bold as to promise that which he could not accomplish? By no means; but I have rather, as it seems to me, with more reserve and hesitation, because feeling the deficiency of my strength, followed the commentaries of Origen in this matter. For that illustrious man wrote five volumes on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, and has occupied the tenth volume of his Stromata with a short treatise upon his explanation of the epistle. He also

composed several treatises and fragmentary pieces upon it, which, if they even had stood alone, would have sufficed. I pass over my revered instructor Didymus (blind, it is true, but quick-sighted in the discernment of spiritual things), and the bishop of Laodicea, who has recently left the Church, and the early heretic Alexander, as well as Eusebius of Emesa and Theodorus of Heraclea, who have also left some brief disquisitions upon this subject. From these works if I were to extract even a few passages, a work which could not be altogether despised would be produced. Let me therefore frankly say that I have read all these; and storing up in my mind very many things which they contain, I have dictated to my amanuensis sometimes what was borrowed from other writers, sometimes what was my own, without distinctly remembering the method, or the words, or the opinions which belonged to each. I look now to the Lord in His mercy to grant that my want of skill and experience may not cause the things which others have well spoken to be lost, or to fail of finding among foreign readers the acceptance with which they have met in the language in which they were first written. If, therefore, anything in my explanation has seemed to you to demand correction, it would have been seemly for one of your learning to inquire first whether what I had written was found in the Greek writers to whom I have referred; and if they had not advanced the opinion which you censured, you could then with propriety condemn me for what I gave as my own view, especially seeing that I have in the preface openly acknowledged that I had followed the commentaries of Origen, and had dictated sometimes the view of others, sometimes my own, and have written at the end of the chapter with which you find fault: "If any one be dissatisfied with the interpretation here given, by which it is shown that neither did Peter sin, nor did Paul rebuke presumptuously a greater than himself, he is bound to show how Paul could consistently blame in another what he himself did." By which I have made it manifest that I did not adopt finally and irrevocably that which I had read in these Greek authors, but had propounded what I had read, leaving to the reader's own judgment whether it should be rejected or approved.

5. You, however, in order to avoid doing what I had asked, have devised a new argument against the view proposed; maintaining that the Gentiles who had believed in Christ were free from the burden of the ceremonial law, but that the Jewish converts were under the law, and that Paul, as the teacher of the Gentiles, rightly rebuked those who kept the law; whereas Peter, who was the chief of the "circumcision," [Galatians 2:8] was justly rebuked for commanding the Gentile converts to do that which the converts from among the Jews were alone under obligation to observe. If this is your opinion, or rather since it is your opinion, that all from among the Jews who believe are debtors to do the whole law, you ought, as being a bishop of great fame in the whole world, to publish your doctrine, and labour to persuade all other bishops to agree with you. As for me in my humble cell, along with the monks my fellow-sinners, I do not presume to dogmatize in regard to things of great moment; I only confess frankly that I read the writings of the Fathers, and, complying with universal usage, put down in my commentaries a variety of explanations, that each may adopt from the number given the one which pleases him. This method, I think, you have found in your reading, and have approved in connection with both secular literature and the Divine Scriptures.

6. Moreover, as to this explanation which Origen first advanced, and which all the other commentators after him have adopted, they bring forward, chiefly for the purpose of answering, the blasphemies of Porphyry, who accuses Paul of presumption because he dared to reprove

Peter and rebuke him to his face, and by reasoning convict him of having done wrong; that is to say, of being in the very fault which he himself, who blamed another for transgressing, had committed. What shall I say also of John, who has long governed the Church of Constantinople, and holding pontifical rank, who has composed a very large book upon this paragraph, and has followed the opinion of Origen and of the old expositors? If, therefore, you censure me as in the wrong, suffer me, I pray you, to be mistaken in company with such men; and when you perceive that I have so many companions in my error, you will require to produce at least one partisan in defense of your truth. So much on the interpretation of one paragraph of the Epistle to the Galatians.

7. Lest, however, I should seem to rest my answer to your reasoning wholly on the number of witnesses who are on my side, and to use the names of illustrious men as a means of escaping from the truth, not daring to meet you in argument, I shall briefly bring forward some examples from the Scriptures. In the Acts of the Apostles, a voice was heard by Peter, saying unto him, "Rise, Peter, slay and eat," when all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and birds of the air, were presented before him; by which saying it is proved that no man is by nature [ceremonially] unclean, but that all men are equally welcome to the gospel of Christ. To which Peter answered, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." And the voice spoke unto him again the second time, "What God has cleansed, call not common." Therefore he went to Cæsarea, and having entered the house of Cornelius, "he opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that fears Him and works righteousness is accepted with Him." Thereafter "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word; and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." [Acts 10:13-48] "And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter had come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, You went in to men uncircumcised, and ate with them." To whom he gave a full explanation of the reasons of his conduct, and concluded with these words: "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." [Acts 11:1-18] Again, when, long after this, Paul and Barnabas had come to Antioch, and "having gathered the Church together, rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles, certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Unless you are circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. And when they had come to Jerusalem, there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, with his wonted readiness, "and said, Men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knows the hearts, bare them witness,

giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why do you tempt God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they. Then all the multitude kept silence;" and to his opinion the Apostle James, and all the elders together, gave consent.

8. These quotations should not be tedious to the reader, but useful both to him and to me, as proving that, even before the Apostle Paul, Peter had come to know that the law was not to be in force after the gospel was given; nay more, that Peter was the prime mover in issuing the decree by which this was affirmed. Moreover, Peter was of so great authority, that Paul has recorded in his epistle: "Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days." [Galatians 1:18] In the following context, again, he adds: "Then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles;" proving that he had not had confidence in his preaching of the gospel if he had not been confirmed by the consent of Peter and those who were with him. The next words are, "but privately to them that were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." Why did he this privately rather than in public? Lest offense should be given to the faith of those who from among the Jews had believed, since they thought that the law was still in force, and that they ought to join observance of the law with faith in the Lord as their Saviour. Therefore also, when at that time Peter had come to Antioch (although the Acts of the Apostles do not mention this, but we must believe Paul's statement), Paul affirms that he "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For, before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they had come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw," he says, "that they walked not up-rightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, If you, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" etc. No one can doubt, therefore, that the Apostle Peter was himself the author of that rule with deviation from which he is charged. The cause of that deviation, moreover, is seen to be fear of the Jews. For the Scripture says, that "at first he did eat with the Gentiles, but that when certain had come from James he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision." Now he feared the Jews, to whom he had been appointed apostle, lest by occasion of the Gentiles they should go back from the faith in Christ; imitating the Good Shepherd in his concern lest he should lose the flock committed to him.

9. As I have shown, therefore, that Peter was thoroughly aware of the abrogation of the law of Moses, but was compelled by fear to pretend to observe it, let us now see whether Paul, who accuses another, ever did anything of the same kind himself. We read in the same book: "Paul passed through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek." O blessed Apostle Paul, who had rebuked Peter for dissimulation, because

he withdrew himself from the Gentiles through fear of the Jews who came from James, why are you, notwithstanding your own doctrine, compelled to circumcise Timothy, the son of a Gentile, nay more, a Gentile himself (for he was not a Jew, having not been circumcised)? You will answer, "Because of the Jews which are in these quarters?" If, then, you forgive yourself the circumcision of a disciple coming from the Gentiles, forgive Peter also, who has precedence above you, his doing some things of the same kind through fear of the believing Jews. Again, it is written: "Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow." [Acts 18:18] Be it granted that he was compelled through fear of the Jews in the other case to do what he was unwilling to do; wherefore did he let his hair grow in accordance with a vow of his own making, and afterwards, when in Cenchrea, shave his head according to the law, as the Nazarites, who had given themselves by vow to God, were wont to do, according to the law of Moses?

10. But these things are small when compared with what follows. The sacred historian Luke further relates: "And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly;" and the day following, James, and all the elders who were with him, having expressed their approbation of his gospel, said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that you have come. Do therefore this that we say to you: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify yourself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning you, are nothing; but that you yourself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until an offering should be offered for every one of them." [Acts 21:17-26] O Paul, here again let me question you: Why did you shave your head, why did you walk barefoot according to Jewish ceremonial law, why did you offer sacrifices, why were victims slain for you according to the law? You will answer, doubtless, "To avoid giving offense to those of the Jews who had believed." To gain the Jews, you pretended to be a Jew; and James and all the other elders taught you this dissimulation. But you did not succeed in escaping, after all. For when you were on the point of being killed in a tumult which had arisen, you were rescued by the chief captain of the band, and was sent by him to Cæsarea, guarded by a careful escort of soldiers, lest the Jews should kill you as a dissembler, and a destroyer of the law; and from Cæsarea coming to Rome, you did, in your own hired house, preach Christ to both Jews and Gentiles, and your testimony was sealed under Nero's sword.

11. We have learned, therefore, that through fear of the Jews both Peter and Paul alike pretended that they observed the precepts of the law. How could Paul have the assurance and effrontery to reprove in another what he had done himself? I at least, or, I should rather say, others before me, have given such explanation of the matter as they deemed best, not defending the use of falsehood in the interest of religion, as you charge them with doing, but teaching the honourable exercise of a wise discretion; seeking both to show the wisdom of the apostles, and to restrain the shameless blasphemies of Porphyry, who says that Peter and Paul quarrelled with each other in childish rivalry, and affirms that Paul had been inflamed with envy on account of the excellences of

Peter, and had written boastfully of things which he either had not done, or, if he did them, had done with inexcusable presumption, reproving in another that which he himself had done. They, in answering him, gave the best interpretation of the passage which they could find; what interpretation have you to propound? Surely you must intend to say something better than they have said, since you have rejected the opinion of the ancient commentators.

12. You say in your letter: "You do not require me to teach you in what sense the apostle says, 'To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews;' [1 Corinthians 9:20] and other such things in the same passage, which are to be ascribed to the compassion of pitying love, not to the artifices of intentional deceit. For he that ministers to the sick becomes as if he were sick himself, not indeed falsely pretending to be under the fever, but considering with the mind of one truly sympathizing what he would wish done for himself if he were in the sick man's place. Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even when he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these, but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers; provided only that they did not build on these their hope of salvation, since the salvation which was fore-shadowed in these has now been brought in by the Lord Jesus." The sum of your whole argument, which you have expanded into a most prolix dissertation, is this, that Peter did not err in supposing that the law was binding on those who from among the Jews had believed, but departed from the right course in this, that he compelled the Gentile converts to conform to Jewish observances. Now, if he compelled them, it was not by use of authority as a teacher, but by the example of his own practice. And Paul, according to your view, did not protest against what Peter had done personally, but asked wherefore Peter would compel those who were from among the Gentiles to conform to Jewish observances.

13. The matter in debate, therefore, or I should rather say your opinion regarding it, is summed up in this: that since the preaching of the gospel of Christ, the believing Jews do well in observing the precepts of the law, i.e. in offering sacrifices as Paul did, in circumcising their children, as Paul did in the case of Timothy, and keeping the Jewish Sabbath, as all the Jews have been accustomed to do. If this be true, we fall into the heresy of Cerinthus and Ebion, who, though believing in Christ, were anathematized by the fathers for this one error, that they mixed up the ceremonies of the law with the gospel of Christ, and professed their faith in that which was new, without letting go what was old. Why do I speak of the Ebionites, who make pretensions to the name of Christian? In our own day there exists a sect among the Jews throughout all the synagogues of the East, which is called the sect of the Minei, and is even now condemned by the Pharisees. The adherents to this sect are known commonly as Nazarenes; they believe in Christ the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary; and they say that He who suffered under Pontius Pilate and rose again, is the same as the one in whom we believe. But while they desire to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither the one nor the other. I therefore beseech you, who think that you are called upon to heal my slight wound, which is no more, so to speak, than a prick or scratch from a needle, to devote your skill in the healing art to this grievous wound, which has been opened by a spear driven home with the impetus of a javelin. For there is surely no proportion between the culpability of him who exhibits the various opinions held by the fathers in a commentary on Scripture, and the guilt of him who

reintroduces within the Church a most pestilential heresy. If, however, there is for us no alternative but to receive the Jews into the Church, along with the usages prescribed by their law; if, in short, it shall be declared lawful for them to continue in the Churches of Christ what they have been accustomed to practise in the synagogues of Satan, I will tell you my opinion of the matter: they will not become Christians, but they will make us Jews.

14. For what Christian will submit to hear what is said in your letter? "Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even when he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these; but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers." Now I implore you to hear patiently my complaint. Paul, even when he was an apostle of Christ, observed Jewish ceremonies; and you affirm that they are in no wise hurtful to those who wish to retain them as they had received them from their fathers by the law. I, on the contrary, shall maintain, and, though the world were to protest against my view, I may boldly declare that the Jewish ceremonies are to Christians both hurtful and fatal; and that whoever observes them, whether he be Jew or Gentile originally, is cast into the pit of perdition. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes," [Romans 10:4] that is, to both Jew and Gentile; for if the Jew be excepted, He is not the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. Moreover, we read in the Gospel, "The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist." Also, in another place: "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God." [John 5:18] Again: "Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace; for the law was given Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." [John 1:16-17] Instead of the grace of the law which has passed away, we have received the grace of the gospel which is abiding; and instead of the shadows and types of the old dispensation, the truth has come by Jesus Christ. Jeremiah also prophesied thus in God's name: "Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt." [Jeremiah 31:31-32] Observe what the prophet says, not to Gentiles, who had not been partakers in any former covenant, but to the Jewish nation. He who has given them the law by Moses, promises in place of it the new covenant of the gospel, that they might no longer live in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. Paul himself, moreover, in connection with whom the discussion of this question has arisen, delivers such sentiments as these frequently, of which I subjoin only a few, as I desire to be brief: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Again: "Christ has become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace." Again: "If you be led of the Spirit, you are not under the law." From which it is evident that he has not the Holy Spirit who submits to the law, not, as our fathers affirmed the apostles to have done, feignedly, under the promptings of a wise discretion, but, as you suppose to have been the case, sincerely. As to the quality of these legal precepts, let us learn from God's own teaching: "I gave them," He says, "statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live." [Ezekiel 20:25] I say these things, not that I may, like Manichæus and Marcion, destroy the law, which I know on the testimony of the apostle to be both holy and spiritual; but because when "faith came," and the fullness of times, "God sent

forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," [Galatians 4:4] and might live no longer under the law as our schoolmaster, but under the Heir, who has now attained to full age, and is Lord.

15. It is further said in your letter: "The thing, therefore, which he rebuked in Peter was not his observing the customs handed down from his fathers, which Peter, if he wished, might do without being chargeable with deceit or inconsistency." Again I say: Since you are a bishop, a teacher in the Churches of Christ, if you would prove what you assert, receive any Jew who, after having become a Christian, circumcises any son that may be born to him, observes the Jewish Sabbath, abstains from meats which God has created to be used with thanksgiving, and on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month slays a paschal lamb; and when you have done this, or rather, have refused to do it (for I know that you are a Christian, and will not be guilty of a profane action), you will be constrained, whether willingly or unwillingly, to renounce your opinion; and then you will know that it is a more difficult work to reject the opinion of others than to establish your own. Moreover, lest perhaps we should not believe your statement, or, I should rather say, understand it (for it is often the case that a discourse unduly extended is not intelligible, and is less censured by the unskilled in discussion because its weakness is not so easily perceived), you inculcate your opinion by reiterating the statement in these words: "Paul had forsaken everything peculiar to the Jews that was evil, especially this, that 'being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they had not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.' [Romans 10:3] In this, moreover, he differed from them, that after the passion and resurrection of Christ, in whom had been given and made manifest the mystery of grace, according to the order of Melchizedek, they still considered it binding on them to celebrate, not out of mere reverence for old customs, but as necessary to salvation, the sacraments of the old dispensation; which were indeed at one time necessary, else had it been unprofitable and vain for the Maccabees to suffer martyrdom as they did for their adherence to them. [2 Maccabees 7:1] Lastly, in this also Paul differed from the Jews, that they persecuted the Christian preachers of grace as enemies of the law. These, and all similar errors and sins, he declares that he counted but loss and dung, that he might win Christ."

16. We have learned from you what evil things peculiar to the Jews Paul had abandoned; let us now learn from your teaching what good things which were Jewish he retained. You will reply: "The ceremonial observances in which they continued to follow the practice of their fathers, in the way in which these were complied with by Paul himself, without believing them to be at all necessary to salvation." I do not fully understand what you mean by the words, "without believing them to be at all necessary to salvation." For if they do not contribute to salvation, why are they observed? And if they must be observed, they by all means contribute to salvation; especially seeing that, because of observing them, some have been made martyrs: for they would not be observed unless they contributed to salvation. For they are not things indifferent — neither good nor bad, as philosophers say. Self-control is good, self-indulgence is bad: between these, and indifferent, as having no moral quality, are such things as walking, blowing one's nose, expectorating phlegm, etc. Such an action is neither good nor bad; for whether you do it or leave it undone, it does not affect your standing as righteous or unrighteous. But the observance of legal ceremonies is not a thing indifferent; it is either good or bad. You say it is good. I affirm it to be bad, and bad not only when done by Gentile converts, but also when done by Jews who have

believed. In this passage you fall, if I am not mistaken, into one error while avoiding another. For while you guard yourself against the blasphemies of Porphyry, you become entangled in the snares of Ebion; pronouncing that the law is binding on those who from among the Jews have believed. Perceiving, again, that what you have said is a dangerous doctrine, you attempt to qualify it by words which are only superfluous: viz., "The law must be observed not from any belief, such as prompted the Jews to keep it, that this is necessary to salvation, and not in any misleading dissimulation such as Paul reproved in Peter."

17. Peter therefore pretended to keep the law; but this censor of Peter boldly observed the things prescribed by the law. The next words of your letter are these: "For if Paul observed these sacraments in order, by pretending to be a Jew, to gain the Jews, why did he not also take part with the Gentiles in heathen sacrifices, when to them that were without law he became as without law, that he might gain them also? The explanation is found in this, that he took part in the Jewish rites as being himself a Jew; and that when he said all this which I have quoted, he meant not that he pretended to be what he was not, but that he felt with true compassion that he must bring such help to them as would be needful for himself if he were involved in their error. Herein he exercised not the subtlety of a deceiver, but the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer." A triumphant vindication of Paul! You prove that he did not pretend to share the error of the Jews, but was actually involved in it; and that he refused to imitate Peter in a course of deception, dissembling through fear of the Jews what he really was, but without reserve freely avowed himself to be a Jew. Oh, unheard of compassion of the apostle! In seeking to make the Jews Christians, he himself became a Jew! For he could not have persuaded the luxurious to become temperate if he had not himself become luxurious like them; and could not have brought help, in his compassion, as you say, to the wretched, otherwise than by experiencing in his own person their wretchedness! Truly wretched, and worthy of most compassionate lamentation, are those who, carried away by vehemence of disputation, and by love for the law which has been abolished, have made Christ's apostle to be a Jew. Nor is there, after all, a great difference between my opinion and yours: for I say that both Peter and Paul, through fear of the believing Jews, practised, or rather pretended to practise, the precepts of the Jewish law; whereas you maintain that they did this out of pity, "not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer." But by both this is equally admitted, that (whether from fear or from pity) they pretended to be what they were not. As to your argument against our view, that he ought to have become to the Gentiles a Gentile, if to the Jews he became a Jew, this favours our opinion rather than yours: for as he did not actually become a Jew, so he did not actually become a heathen; and as he did not actually become a heathen, so he did not actually become a Jew. His conformity to the Gentiles consisted in this, that he received as Christians the uncircumcised who believed in Christ, and left them free to use without scruple meats which the Jewish law prohibited; but not, as you suppose, in taking part in their worship of idols. For "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but the keeping of the commandments of God."

18. I ask you, therefore, and with all urgency press the request, that you forgive me this humble attempt at a discussion of the matter; and wherein I have transgressed, lay the blame upon yourself who compelled me to write in reply, and who made me out to be as blind as Stesichorus. And do not bring the reproach of teaching the practice of lying upon me who am a follower of Christ, who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." [John 14:6] It is impossible for me, who

am a worshipper of the Truth, to bow under the yoke of falsehood. Moreover, refrain from stirring up against me the unlearned crowd who esteem you as their bishop, and regard with the respect due the priestly office the orations which you deliver in the church, but who esteem lightly an old decrepit man like me, courting the retirement of a monastery far from the busy haunts of men; and seek others who may be more fitly instructed or corrected by you. For the sound of your voice can scarcely reach me, who am so far separated from you by sea and land. And if you happen to write me a letter, Italy and Rome are sure to be acquainted with its contents long before it is brought to me, to whom alone it ought to be sent.

19. In another letter you ask why a former translation which I made of some of the canonical books was carefully marked with asterisks and obelisks, whereas I afterwards published a translation without these. You must pardon my saying that you seem to me not to understand the matter: for the former translation is from the Septuagint; and wherever obelisks are placed, they are designed to indicate that the Seventy have said more than is found in the Hebrew. But the asterisks indicate what has been added by Origen from the version of Theodotion. In that version I was translating from the Greek: but in the later version, translating from the Hebrew itself, I have expressed what I understood it to mean, being careful to preserve rather the exact sense than the order of the words. I am surprised that you do not read the books of the Seventy translators in the genuine form in which they were originally given to the world, but as they have been corrected, or rather corrupted, by Origen, with his obelisks and asterisks; and that you refuse to follow the translation, however feeble, which has been given by a Christian man, especially seeing that Origen borrowed the things which he has added from the edition of a man who, after the passion of Christ, was a Jew and a blasphemer. Do you wish to be a true admirer and partisan of the Seventy translators? Then do not read what you find under the asterisks; rather erase them from the volumes, that you may approve yourself indeed a follower of the ancients. If, however, you do this, you will be compelled to find fault with all the libraries of the Churches; for you will scarcely find more than one manuscript here and there which has not these interpolations.

20. A few words now as to your remark that I ought not to have given a translation, after this had been already done by the ancients; and the novel syllogism which you use: "The passages of which the Seventy have given an interpretation were either obscure or plain. If they were obscure, it is believed that you are as likely to have been mistaken as the others; if they were plain, it is not believed that the Seventy could have been mistaken."

All the commentators who have been our predecessors in the Lord in the work of expounding the Scriptures, have expounded either what was obscure or what was plain. If some passages were obscure, how could you, after them, presume to discuss that which they were not able to explain? If the passages were plain, it was a waste of time for you to have undertaken to treat of that which could not possibly have escaped them. This syllogism applies with peculiar force to the book of Psalms, in the interpretation of which Greek commentators have written many volumes: viz. 1 st, Origen; 2 d, Eusebius of Cæsarea; 3 d, Theodorus of Heraclea; 4 th, Asterius of Scythopolis; 5 th, Apollinaris of Laodicea; and, 6 th, Didymus of Alexandria. There are said to be minor works on selections from the Psalms, but I speak at present of the whole book. Moreover, among Latin writers the bishops Hilary of Poitiers, and Eusebius of Vercell, have translated Origen and Eusebius of Cæsarea, the former of whom has in some things been followed by our own Ambrose. Now, I put it to your wisdom to answer why you, after all the labours of so many and so competent

interpreters, differ from them in your exposition of some passages? If the Psalms are obscure, it must be believed that you are as likely to be mistaken as others; if they are plain, it is incredible that these others could have fallen into mistake. In either case, your exposition has been, by your own showing, an unnecessary labour; and on the same principle, no one would ever venture to speak on any subject after others have pronounced their opinion, and no one would be at liberty to write anything regarding that which another has once handled, however important the matter might be.

It is, however, more in keeping with your enlightened judgment, to grant to all others the liberty which you tolerate in yourself for in my attempt to translate into Latin, for the benefit of those who speak the same language with myself, the corrected Greek version of the Scriptures, I have laboured not to supersede what has been long esteemed, but only to bring prominently forward those things which have been either omitted or tampered with by the Jews, in order that Latin readers might know what is found in the original Hebrew. If any one is averse to reading it, none compels him against his will. Let him drink with satisfaction the old wine, and despise my new wine, i.e. the sentences which I have published in explanation of former writers, with the design of making more obvious by my remarks what in them seemed to me to be obscure. As to the principles which ought to be followed in the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures, they are stated in the book which I have written, and in all the introductions to the divine books which I have in my edition prefixed to each; and to these I think it sufficient to refer the prudent reader. And since you approve of my labours in revising the translation of the New Testament, as you say — giving me at the same time this as your reason, that very many are acquainted with the Greek language, and are therefore competent judges of my work — it would have been but fair to have given me credit for the same fidelity in the Old Testament; for I have not followed my own imagination, but have rendered the divine words as I found them understood by those who speak the Hebrew language. If you have any doubt of this in any passage, ask the Jews what is the meaning of the original.

21. Perhaps you will say, "What if the Jews decline to answer, or choose to impose upon us?" Is it conceivable that the whole multitude of Jews will agree together to be silent if asked about my translation, and that none shall be found that has any knowledge of the Hebrew language? Or will they all imitate those Jews whom you mention as having, in some little town, conspired to injure my reputation? For in your letter you put together the following story:— "A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the Church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so many generations in the Church. Thereupon arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew manuscripts were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a congregation — a calamity which he narrowly escaped. From this case we also are led to think that you may be occasionally mistaken."

22. You tell me that I have given a wrong translation of some word in Jonah, and that a worthy bishop narrowly escaped losing his charge through the clamorous tumult of his people, which was caused by the different rendering of this one word. At the same time, you withhold from me what the word was which I have mistranslated; thus taking away the possibility of my saying anything in my own vindication, lest my reply should be fatal to your objection. Perhaps it is the old dispute about the gourd which has been revived, after slumbering for many long years since the illustrious man, who in that day combined in his own person the ancestral honours of the Cornelii and of Asinius Pollio, brought against me the charge of giving in my translation the word "ivy" instead of "gourd." I have already given a sufficient answer to this in my commentary on Jonah. At present, I deem it enough to say that in that passage, where the Septuagint has "gourd," and Aquila and the others have rendered the word "ivy" (κ■σσος), the Hebrew manuscript has "ciceion," which is in the Syriac tongue, as now spoken, "ciceia." It is a kind of shrub having large leaves like a vine, and when planted it quickly springs up to the size of a small tree, standing upright by its own stem, without requiring any support of canes or poles, as both gourds and ivy do. If, therefore, in translating word for word, I had put the word "ciceia," no one would know what it meant; if I had used the word "gourd," I would have said what is not found in the Hebrew. I therefore put down "ivy," that I might not differ from all other translators. But if your Jews said, either through malice or ignorance, as you yourself suggest, that the word is in the Hebrew text which is found in the Greek and Latin versions, it is evident that they were either unacquainted with Hebrew, or have been pleased to say what was not true, in order to make sport of the gourd-planters. In closing this letter, I beseech you to have some consideration for a soldier who is now old and has long retired from active service, and not to force him to take the field and again expose his life to the chances of war. Do you, who are young, and who have been appointed to the conspicuous seat of pontifical dignity, give yourself to teaching the people, and enrich Rome with new stores from fertile Africa. I am contented to make but little noise in an obscure corner of a monastery, with one to hear me or read to me.

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Letter 113. From Theophilus to Jerome.

Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, had compiled an invective against John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople who was nosy (largely through his efforts) an exile from his see. This he now sends to Jerome with a request that the latter will render it into Latin for dissemination in the West. The invective (of which only a few fragments remain) is of the most violent kind. Nevertheless Jerome translated it along with this letter, the date of which is 405 a.d. The latter part of the letter has perished. To the well-beloved and most loving brother Jerome, Theophilus sends greeting in the Lord.

1. At the outset the verdict which is in accordance with the truth satisfies but few. But the Lord speaking by the prophet says: "my judgment goeth forth as the light?" [Hos. 6:5, LXX] and they who are surrounded with a horror of darkness and do not with clear comprehension perceive the nature of things, are covered with eternal shame and know by the issues of their acts that their efforts have been in vain. Wherefore we also have always desired for John who has for a time ruled the church of Constantinople grace that he might please God, and we have been slow to attribute to him the rash acts which have caused his downfall. But, not to speak of his other misdeeds, he has taken the Origenists into his confidence, has advanced many of them to the priesthood, and by committing this crime has saddened with no slight grief that man of God, Epiphanius of blessed memory, who has shone throughout all the world a bright star among bishops. And therefore he has rightly come to hear the words of doom: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." [Isa. 21:9]

2. Knowing then that the Saviour has said: "judge not according to the appearance but judge righteous judgment." [John. 7:24.] ...

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Letter 114. To Theophilus.

Jerome writes to Theophilus to apologize for his delay in sending Latin versions of the latter's letter (CXIII.) and invective against John Chrysostom. Possibly, however, the allusion may be not to these but to some other work of Theophilus (e.g. a paschal letter.) This delay he attributes to the disturbed state of Palestine, the severity of the winter, the prevalent famine, and his own ill-health. He now sends the translations that he has made and, while he deprecates criticism on his own work, praises that of Theophilus, quoting with particular approval the directions given by this latter for the reverent care of the vessels used in celebrating the holy communion. The date of the letter is 405 a.d. To the most blessed pope Theophilus, Jerome.

1. My delay in sending back to your holiness your treatise translated into Latin is accounted for by the many interruptions and obstacles that I have met with. There has been a sudden raid of the Isaurians; Phoenicia and Galilee have been laid waste; Palestine has been panic-stricken, and particularly Jerusalem; we have all been engaged in making not books but walls. There has also been a severe winter and an almost unbearable famine; and these have told heavily upon me who have the charge of many brothers. Amid these difficulties the work of translation went on by night, as I could save or snatch time to give to it. At last I got it done and by Lent nothing remained but to collate the fair copy with the original. However, just then a severe illness seized me and I was brought to the threshold of death, from which I have only been saved by God's mercy and your prayers; perhaps for this very purpose that I might fulfil your behest and render with its writer's elegance the charming volume which you have adorned with the scripture's fairest flowers. But bodily weakness and sorrow of heart have, I need hardly say, dulled the edge of my intellect and obstructed the free flow of my language.

2. I admire in your work its practical aim, designed as it is to instruct by the authority of scripture ignorant persons in all the churches concerning the reverence with which they must handle holy things and minister at Christ's altar; and to impress upon them that the sacred chalices, veils,¹ and other accessories used in the celebration of the Lord's passion are not mere lifeless and senseless objects devoid of holiness, but that rather, from their association with the body and blood of the Lord, they are to be venerated with the same awe as the body and the blood themselves.

3. Take back then your book, nay mine or better still ours; for when you flatter me you will but flatter yourself. It is for you that my brain has toiled; it is for you that I have striven with the poor resources of the Latin tongue to find an equivalent for the eloquence of the Greek. I have not indeed given a word-for-word rendering, as skilled translators do, nor have I counted out the money you have given to me coin by coin; but I have given you full weight. Some words may be missing but none of the sense is lost. Moreover I have translated into Latin and prefixed to this volume the letter that you sent to me, so that all who read it may know that I have acted under the commands of your holiness, and have not rashly and over-confidently undertaken a task that is beyond my powers. Whether I have succeeded in it I must leave to your judgment. Even though

you may blame my weakness, you will at least give me credit for my good intention.

1:

So the embroidered cloths used in Catholic Churches to cover the sacramental elements are still called.

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Letter 115. To Augustine. A short but most friendly letter in which Jerome excuses himself for the freedom with which he has dealt with Augustine's questions (the allusion is to Letter 112.) and hopes that henceforth they may be able to avoid controversy and to labour like brothers in the field of scripture. Written probably in 405 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 81. To Augustine, My Lord Truly Holy, and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Having anxiously inquired of our holy brother Firmus regarding your state, I was glad to hear that you are well. I expected him to bring, or, I should rather say, I insisted upon his giving me, a letter from you; upon which he told me that he had set out from Africa without communicating to you his intention. I therefore send to you my respectful salutations through this brother, who clings to you with a singular warmth of affection; and at the same time, in regard to my last letter, I beg you to forgive the modesty which made it impossible for me to refuse you, when you had so long required me to write you in reply. That letter, moreover, was not an answer from me to you, but a confronting of my arguments with yours. And if it was a fault in me to send a reply (I beseech you hear me patiently), the fault of him who insisted upon it was still greater. But let us be done with such quarrelling; let there be sincere brotherliness between us; and henceforth let us exchange letters, not of controversy, but of mutual charity. The holy brethren who with me serve the Lord send you cordial salutations. Salute from us the holy brethren who with you bear Christ's easy yoke; especially I beseech you to convey my respectful salutation to the holy father Alypius, worthy of all esteem. May Christ, our almighty God, preserve you safe, and not unmindful of me, my lord truly holy, and most blessed father. If you have read my commentary on Jonah, I think you will not recur to the ridiculous gourd-debate. If, moreover, the friend who first assaulted me with his sword has been driven back by my pen, I rely upon your good feeling and equity to lay blame on the one who brought, and not on the one who repelled, the accusation. Let us, if you please, exercise ourselves in the field of Scripture without wounding each other.

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Letter 116. From Augustine. A long letter in which Augustine for the third time (see Letters 56, 67) restates his opinion about Jerome's theory of the dispute between Peter and Paul at Antioch. In doing so, however, he disclaims all desire to hurt Jerome's feelings, apologizes for the tone of his previous letters, and again explains that it is not his fault that they have failed so long to reach Jerome. Written shortly after the preceding. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 82. A reply to Augustine letters 72, 75 and 81. To Jerome, My Lord Beloved and Honoured in the Bowels of Christ, My Holy Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Augustine Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Long ago I sent to your Charity a long letter in reply to the one which you remember sending to me by your holy son Asterius, who is now not only my brother, but also my colleague. Whether that reply reached you or not I do not know, unless I am to infer this from the words in your letter brought to me by our most sincere friend Firmus, that if the one who first assaulted you with his sword has been driven back by your pen, you rely upon my good feeling and equity to lay blame on the one who brought, not on the one who repelled, the accusation. From this one indication, though very slight, I infer that you have read my letter. In that letter I expressed indeed my sorrow that so great discord had arisen between you and Rufinus, over the strength of whose former friendship brotherly love was wont to rejoice in all parts to which the fame of it had come; but I did not in this intend to rebuke you, my brother, whom I dare not say that I have found blameable in that matter. I only lamented the sad lot of men in this world, in whose friendships, depending as they do on the continuance of mutual regard, there is no stability, however great that regard may sometimes be. I would rather, however, have been informed by your letter whether you have granted me the pardon which I begged, of which I now desire you to give me more explicit assurance; although the more genial and cheerful tone of your letter seems to signify that I have obtained what I asked in mine, if indeed it was dispatched after mine had been read by you, which is, as I have said, not clearly indicated.

2. You ask, or rather you give a command with the confiding boldness of charity, that we should amuse ourselves in the field of Scripture without wounding each other. For my part, I am by all means disposed to exercise myself in earnest much rather than in mere amusement on such themes. If, however, you have chosen this word because of its suggesting easy exercise, let me frankly say that I desire something more from one who has, as you have, great talents under the control of a benignant disposition, together with wisdom enlightened by erudition, and whose application to study, hindered by no other distractions, is year after year impelled by enthusiasm and guided by genius: the Holy Spirit not only giving you all these advantages, but expressly charging you to come with help to those who are engaged in great and difficult investigations; not as if, in studying Scripture, they were amusing themselves on a level plain, but as men punting and toiling up a steep ascent. If, however, perchance, you selected the expression "ludamus" [let us amuse ourselves] because of the genial kindliness which befits discussion between loving friends, whether the matter debated be obvious and easy, or intricate and difficult, I beseech you to teach me how I may succeed in securing this; so that when I am dissatisfied with anything

which, not through want of careful attention, but perhaps through my slowness of apprehension, has not been demonstrated to me, if I should, in attempting to make good an opposite opinion, express myself with a measure of unguarded frankness, I may not fall under the suspicion of childish conceit and forwardness, as if I sought to bring my own name into renown by assailing illustrious men; and that if, when something harsh has been demanded by the exigencies of argument, I attempt to make it less hard to bear by stating it in mild and courteous phrases, I may not be pronounced guilty of wielding a "honeyed sword." The only way which I can see for avoiding both these faults, or the suspicion of either of them, is to consent that when I am thus arguing with a friend more learned than myself, I must approve of everything which he says, and may not, even for the sake of more accurate information, hesitate before accepting his decisions.

3. On such terms we might amuse ourselves without fear of offending each other in the field of Scripture, but I might well wonder if the amusement was not at my expense. For I confess to your Charity that I have learned to yield this respect and honour only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error. And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the manuscript is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it. As to all other writings, in reading them, however great the superiority of the authors to myself in sanctity and learning, I do not accept their teaching as true on the mere ground of the opinion being held by them; but only because they have succeeded in convincing my judgment of its truth either by means of these canonical writings themselves, or by arguments addressed to my reason. I believe, my brother, that this is your own opinion as well as mine. I do not need to say that I do not suppose you to wish your books to be read like those of prophets or of apostles, concerning which it would be wrong to doubt that they are free from error. Far be such arrogance from that humble piety and just estimate of yourself which I know you to have, and without which assuredly you would not have said, "Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning!"

4. Now if, knowing as I do your life and conversation, I do not believe in regard to you that you have spoken anything with an intention of dissimulation and deceit, how much more reasonable is it for me to believe, in regard to the Apostle Paul, that he did not think one thing and affirm another when he wrote of Peter and Barnabas: "When I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, 'If you, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as to the Jews, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?'" [Galatians 2:14] For whom can I confide in, as assuredly not deceiving me by spoken or written statements, if the apostle deceived his own "children," for whom he "travailed in birth again until Christ (who is the Truth) were formed in them"? [Galatians 4:19] After having previously said to them, "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not," could he in writing to these same persons state what was not true, and deceive them by a fraud which was in some way sanctioned by expediency, when he said that he had seen Peter and Barnabas not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and that he had withstood Peter to the face because of this, that he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews?

5. But you will say it is better to believe that the Apostle Paul wrote what was not true, than to believe that the Apostle Peter did what was not right. On this principle, we must say (which far be it

from us to say), that it is better to believe that the gospel history is false, than to believe that Christ was denied by Peter; [Matthew 26:75] and better to charge the book of Kings [second book of Samuel] with false statements, than believe that so great a prophet, and one so signally chosen by the Lord God as David was, committed adultery in lusting after and taking away the wife of another, and committed such detestable homicide in procuring the death of her husband. [2 Samuel 11:4, 17] Better far that I should read with certainty and persuasion of its truth the Holy Scripture, placed on the highest (even the heavenly) pinnacle of authority, and should, without questioning the trustworthiness of its statements, learn from it that men have been either commended, or corrected, or condemned, than that, through fear of believing that by men, who, though of most praiseworthy excellence, were no more than men, actions deserving rebuke might sometimes be done, I should admit suspicions affecting the trustworthiness of the whole "oracles of God."

6. The Manichæans maintain that the greater part of the Divine Scripture, by which their wicked error is in the most explicit terms confuted, is not worthy of credit, because they cannot pervert its language so as to support their opinions; yet they lay the blame of the alleged mistake not upon the apostles who originally wrote the words, but upon some unknown corrupters of the manuscripts. Forasmuch, however, as they have never succeeded in proving this by more numerous and by earlier manuscripts, or by appealing to the original language from which the Latin translations have been drawn, they retire from the arena of debate, vanquished and confounded by truth which is well known to all. Does not your holy prudence discern how great scope is given to their malice against the truth, if we say not (as they do) that the apostolic writings have been tampered with by others, but that the apostles themselves wrote what they knew to be untrue?

7. You say that it is incredible that Paul should have rebuked in Peter that which Paul himself had done. I am not at present inquiring about what Paul did, but about what he wrote. This is most pertinent to the matter which I have in hand — namely, the confirmation of the universal and unquestionable truth of the Divine Scriptures, which have been delivered to us for our edification in the faith, not by unknown men, but by the apostles, and have on this account been received as the authoritative canonical standard. For if Peter did on that occasion what he ought to have done, Paul falsely affirmed that he saw him walking not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel. For whoever does what he ought to do, walks uprightly. He therefore is guilty of falsehood who, knowing that another has done what he ought to have done, says that he has not done uprightly. If, then, Paul wrote what was true, it is true that Peter was not then walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel. He was therefore doing what he ought not to have done; and if Paul had himself already done something of the same kind, I would prefer to believe that, having been himself corrected, he could not omit the correction of his brother apostle, than to believe that he put down any false statement in his epistle; and if in any epistle of Paul this would be strange, how much more in the one in the preface of which he says, "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not"!

8. For my part, I believe that Peter so acted on this occasion as to compel the Gentiles to live as Jews: because I read that Paul wrote this, and I do not believe that he lied. And therefore Peter was not acting uprightly. For it was contrary to the truth of the gospel, that those who believed in Christ should think that without those ancient ceremonies they could not be saved. This was the

position maintained at Antioch by those of the circumcision who had believed; against whom Paul protested constantly and vehemently. As to Paul's circumcising of Timothy, [Acts 16:3] performing a vow at Cenchrea, [Acts 18:18] and undertaking on the suggestion of James at Jerusalem to share the performance of the appointed rites with some who had made a vow, [Acts 21:26] it is manifest that Paul's design in these things was not to give to others the impression that he thought that by these observances salvation is given under the Christian dispensation, but to prevent men from believing that he condemned as no better than heathen idolatrous worship, those rites which God had appointed in the former dispensation as suitable to it, and as shadows of things to come. For this is what James said to him, that the report had gone abroad concerning him that he taught men "to forsake Moses." [Acts 21:21] This would be by all means wrong for those who believe in Christ, to forsake him who prophesied of Christ, as if they detested and condemned the teaching of him of whom Christ said, "Had ye believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me."

9. For mark, I beseech you, the words of James: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that you have come. Do therefore this that we say to you: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify yourself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning you, are nothing; but that you yourself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which have believed, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." [Acts 21:20-25] It is, in my opinion, very clear that the reason why James gave this advice was, that the falsity of what they had heard concerning him might be known to those Jews, who, though they had believed in Christ, were jealous for the honour of the law, and would not have it thought that the institutions which had been given by Moses to their fathers were condemned by the doctrine of Christ as if they were profane, and had not been originally given by divine authority. For the men who had brought this reproach against Paul were not those who understood the right spirit in which observance of these ceremonies should be practised under the Christian dispensation by believing Jews — namely, as a way of declaring the divine authority of these rites, and their holy use in the prophetic dispensation, and not as a means of obtaining salvation, which was to them already revealed in Christ and ministered by baptism. On the contrary, the men who had spread abroad this report against the apostle were those who would have these rites observed, as if without their observance there could be no salvation to those who believed the gospel. For these false teachers had found him to be a most zealous preacher of free grace, and a most decided opponent of their views, teaching as he did that men are not justified by these things, but by the grace of Jesus Christ, which these ceremonies of the law were appointed to foreshadow. This party, therefore, endeavouring to raise odium and persecution against him, charged him with being an enemy of the law and of the divine institutions; and there was no more fitting way in which he could turn aside the odium caused by this false accusation, than by himself celebrating those rites which he was supposed to condemn as profane, and thus showing that, on the one hand, the Jews were not to be debarred from them as if they were unlawful, and on the other hand, that the

Gentiles were not to be compelled to observe them as if they were necessary.

10. For if he did in truth condemn these things in the way in which he was reported to have done, and undertook to perform these rites in order that he might, by dissembling, disguise his real sentiments, James would not have said to him, "and all shall know," but, "all shall think that those things whereof they were informed concerning you are nothing;" [Acts 21:24] especially seeing that in Jerusalem itself the apostles had already decreed that no one should compel the Gentiles to adopt Jewish ceremonies, but had not decreed that no one should then prevent the Jews from living according to their customs, although upon them also Christian doctrine imposed no such obligation. Wherefore, if it was after the apostle's decree that Peter's dissimulation at Antioch took place, whereby he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews, which he himself was not compelled to do, although he was not forbidden to use Jewish rites in order to declare the honour of the oracles of God which were committed to the Jews — if this, I say, were the case, was it strange that Paul should exhort him to declare freely that decree which he remembered to have framed in conjunction with the other apostles at Jerusalem?

11. If, however, as I am more inclined to think, Peter did this before the meeting of that council at Jerusalem, in that case also it is not strange that Paul wished him not to conceal timidly, but to declare boldly, a rule of practice in regard to which he already knew that they were both of the same mind; whether he was aware of this from having conferred with him as to the gospel which both preached, or from having heard that, at the calling of the centurion Cornelius, Peter had been divinely instructed in regard to this matter, or from having seen him eating with Gentile converts before those whom he feared to offend had come to Antioch. For we do not deny that Peter was already of the same opinion in regard to this question as Paul himself was. Paul, therefore, was not teaching Peter what was the truth concerning that matter, but was reproofing his dissimulation as a thing by which the Gentiles were compelled to act as Jews did; for no other reason than this, that the tendency of all such dissembling was to convey or confirm the impression that they taught the truth who held that believers could not be saved without circumcision and other ceremonies, which were shadows of things to come.

12. For this reason also he circumcised Timothy, lest to the Jews, and especially to his relations by the mother's side, it should seem that the Gentiles who had believed in Christ abhorred circumcision as they abhorred the worship of idols; whereas the former was appointed by God, and the latter invented by Satan. Again, he did not circumcise Titus, lest he should give occasion to those who said that believers could not be saved without circumcision, and who, in order to deceive the Gentiles, openly declared that this was the view held by Paul. This is plainly enough intimated by himself, when he says: "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." [Galatians 2:3-5] Here we see plainly what he perceived them to be eagerly watching for, and why it was that he did not do in the case of Titus as he had done in the case of Timothy, and as he might otherwise have done in the exercise of that liberty, by which he had shown that these observances were neither to be demanded as necessary to salvation, nor denounced as unlawful.

13. You say, however, that in this discussion we must beware of affirming, with the philosophers, that some of the actions of men lie in a region between right and wrong, and are to be reckoned, accordingly, neither among good actions nor among the opposite; and it is urged in your argument that the observance of legal ceremonies cannot be a thing indifferent, but either good or bad; so that if I affirm it to be good, I acknowledge that we also are bound to observe these ceremonies; but if I affirm it to be bad, I am bound to believe that the apostles observed them not sincerely, but in a way of dissimulation. I, for my part, would not be so much afraid of defending the apostles by the authority of philosophers, since these teach some measure of truth in their dissertations, as of pleading on their behalf the practice of advocates at the bar, in sometimes serving their clients' interests at the expense of truth. If, as is stated in your exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians, this practice of barristers may be in your opinion with propriety quoted as resembling and justifying dissimulation on the part of Peter and Paul, why should I fear to allege to you the authority of philosophers whose teaching we account worthless, not because everything which they say is false, but because they are in most things mistaken, and wherein they are found affirming truth, are notwithstanding strangers to the grace of Christ, who is the Truth?

14. But why may I not say regarding these institutions of the old economy, that they are neither good nor bad: not good, since men are not by them justified, they having been only shadows predicting the grace by which we are justified; and not bad, since they were divinely appointed as suitable both to the time and to the people? Why may I not say this, when I am supported by that saying of the prophet, that God gave unto His people "statutes that were not good"? [Ezekiel 20:25] For we have in this perhaps the reason of his not calling them "bad," but calling them "not good," i.e. not such that either by them men could be made good, or that without them men could not possibly become good. I would esteem it a favour to be informed by your Sincerity, whether any saint, coming from the East to Rome, would be guilty of dissimulation if he fasted on the seventh day of each week, excepting the Saturday before Easter. For if we say that it is wrong to fast on the seventh day, we shall condemn not only the Church of Rome, but also many other churches, both neighbouring and more remote, in which the same custom continues to be observed. If, on the other hand, we pronounce it wrong not to fast on the seventh day, how great is our presumption in censuring so many churches in the East, and by far the greater part of the Christian world! Or do you prefer to say of this practice, that it is a thing indifferent in itself, but commendable in him who conforms with it, not as a dissembler, but from a seemly desire for the fellowship and deference for the feelings of others? No precept, however, concerning this practice is given to Christians in the canonical books. How much more, then, may I shrink from pronouncing that to be bad which I cannot deny to be of divine institution!— this fact being admitted by me in the exercise of the same faith by which I know that not through these observances, but by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, I am justified.

15. I maintain, therefore, that circumcision, and other things of this kind, were, by means of what is called the Old Testament, given to the Jews with divine authority, as signs of future things which were to be fulfilled in Christ; and that now, when these things have been fulfilled, the laws concerning these rights remained only to be read by Christians in order to their understanding the prophecies which had been given before, but not to be of necessity practised by them, as if the coming of that revelation of faith which they prefigured was still future. Although, however, these rites were not to be imposed upon the Gentiles, the compliance with them, to which the Jews had

been accustomed, was not to be prohibited in such a way as to give the impression that it was worthy of abhorrence and condemnation. Therefore slowly, and by degrees, all this observance of these types was to vanish away through the power of the sound preaching of the truth of the grace of Christ, to which alone believers would be taught to ascribe their justification and salvation, and not to those types and shadows of things which till then had been future, but which were now newly come and present, as at the time of the calling of those Jews whom the personal coming of our Lord and the apostolic times had found accustomed to the observance of these ceremonial institutions. The toleration, for the time, of their continuing to observe these was enough to declare their excellence as things which, though they were to be given up, were not, like the worship of idols, worthy of abhorrence; but they were not to be imposed upon others, lest they should be thought necessary, either as means or as conditions of salvation. This was the opinion of those heretics who, while anxious to be both Jews and Christians, could not be either the one or the other. Against this opinion you have most benevolently condescended to warn me, although I never entertained it. This also was the opinion with which, through fear, Peter fell into the fault of pretending to yield concurrence, though in reality he did not agree with it; for which reason Paul wrote most truly of him, that he saw him not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and most truly said of him that he was compelling the Gentiles to live as did the Jews. Paul did not impose this burden on the Gentiles through his sincerely complying, when it was needful, with these ceremonies, with the design of proving that they were not to be utterly condemned (as idol-worship ought to be); for he nevertheless constantly preached that not by these things, but by the grace revealed to faith, believers obtain salvation, lest he should lead any one to take up these Jewish observances as necessary to salvation. Thus, therefore, I believe that the Apostle Paul did all these things honestly, and without dissimulation; and yet if any one now leave Judaism and become a Christian, I neither compel nor permit him to imitate Paul's example, and go on with the sincere observance of Jewish rites, any more than you, who think that Paul dissembled when he practised these rites, would compel or permit such an one to follow the apostle in that dissimulation.

16. Shall I also sum up "the matter in debate, or rather your opinion concerning it" (to quote your own expression)? It seems to me to be this: that after the gospel of Christ has been published, the Jews who believe do rightly if they offer sacrifices as Paul did, if they circumcise their children as Paul circumcised Timothy, and if they observe the "seventh day of the week, as the Jews have always done, provided only that they do all this as dissemblers and deceivers." If this is your doctrine, we are now precipitated, not into the heresy of Ebion, or of those who are commonly called Nazarenes, or any other known heresy, but into some new error, which is all the more pernicious because it originates not in mistake, but in deliberate and designed endeavour to deceive. If, in order to clear yourself from the charge of entertaining such sentiments, you answer that the apostles were to be commended for dissimulation in these instances, their purpose being to avoid giving offense to the many weak Jewish believers who did not yet understand that these things were to be rejected, but that now, when the doctrine of Christ's grace has been firmly established throughout so many nations, and when, by the reading of the Law and the Prophets throughout all the churches of Christ, it is well known that these are not read for our observance, but for our instruction, any man who should propose to feign compliance with these rites would be regarded as a madman. What objection can there be to my affirming that the Apostle Paul, and other sound and faithful Christians, were bound sincerely to declare the worth of these old

observances by occasionally honouring them, lest it should be thought that these institutions, originally full of prophetic significance, and cherished sacredly by their most pious forefathers, were to be abhorred by their posterity as profane inventions of the devil? For now, when the faith had come, which, previously foreshadowed by these ceremonies, was revealed after the death and resurrection of the Lord, they became, so far as their office was concerned, defunct. But just as it is seemly that the bodies of the deceased be carried honourably to the grave by their kindred, so was it fitting that these rites should be removed in a manner worthy of their origin and history, and this not with pretence of respect, but as a religious duty, instead of being forsaken at once, or cast forth to be torn in pieces by the reproaches of their enemies, as by the teeth of dogs. To carry the illustration further, if now any Christian (though he may have been converted from Judaism) were proposing to imitate the apostles in the observance of these ceremonies, like one who disturbs the ashes of those who rest, he would be not piously performing his part in the obsequies, but impiously violating the sepulchre.

17. I acknowledge that in the statement contained in my letter, to the effect that the reason why Paul undertook (although he was an apostle of Christ) to perform certain rites, was that he might show that these ceremonies were not pernicious to those who desired to continue that which they had received by the Law from their fathers, I have not explicitly enough qualified the statement, by adding that this was the case only in that time in which the grace of faith was at first revealed; for at that time this was not pernicious. These observances were to be given up by all Christians step by step, as time advanced; not all at once, lest, if this were done, men should not perceive the difference between what God by Moses appointed to His ancient people, and the rites which the unclean spirit taught men to practise in the temples of heathen deities. I grant, therefore, that in this your censure is justifiable, and my omission deserved rebuke. Nevertheless, long before the time of my receiving your letter, when I wrote a treatise against Faustus the Manichæan, I did not omit to insert the qualifying clause which I have just stated, in a short exposition which I gave of the same passage, as you may see for yourself if you kindly condescend to read that treatise; or you may be satisfied in any other way that you please by the bearer of this letter, that I had long ago published this restriction of the general affirmation. And I now, as speaking in the sight of God, beseech you by the law of charity to believe me when I say with my whole heart, that it never was my opinion that in our time, Jews who become Christians were either required or at liberty to observe in any manner, or from any motive whatever, the ceremonies of the ancient dispensation; although I have always held, in regard to the Apostle Paul, the opinion which you call in question, from the time that I became acquainted with his writings. Nor can these two things appear incompatible to you; for you do not think it is the duty of any one in our day to feign compliance with these Jewish observances, although you believe that the apostles did this.

18. Accordingly, as you in opposing me affirm, and, to quote your own words, "though the world were to protest against it, boldly declare that the Jewish ceremonies are to Christians both hurtful and fatal, and that whoever observes them, whether he was originally Jew or Gentile, is on his way to the pit of perdition," I entirely endorse that statement, and add to it, "Whoever observes these ceremonies, whether he was originally Jew or Gentile, is on his way to the pit of perdition, not only if he is sincerely observing them, but also if he is observing them with dissimulation." What more do you ask? But as you draw a distinction between the dissimulation which you hold to have been practised by the apostles, and the rule of conduct befitting the present time, I do the same

between the course which Paul, as I think, sincerely followed in all these examples then, and the matter of observing in our day these Jewish ceremonies, although it were done, as by him, without any dissimulation, since it was then to be approved, but is now to be abhorred. Thus, although we read that "the law and the prophets were until John," [Luke 16:16] and that "therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God," [John 5:18] and that "we have received grace for grace for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;" [John 1:16-17] and although it was promised by Jeremiah that God would make a new covenant with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant which He made with their fathers; [Jeremiah 31:31] nevertheless I do not think that the Circumcision of our Lord by His parents was an act of dissimulation. If any one object that He did not forbid this because He was but an infant, I go on to say that I do not think that it was with intention to deceive that He said to the leper, "Offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them," [Mark 1:44] — thereby adding His own precept to the authority of the law of Moses regarding that ceremonial usage. Nor was there dissimulation in His going up to the feast, [John 7:10] as there was also no desire to be seen of men; for He went up, not openly, but secretly.

19. But the words of the apostle himself may be quoted against me: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." [Galatians 5:2] It follows from this that he deceived Timothy, and made Christ profit him nothing, for he circumcised Timothy. Do you answer that this circumcision did Timothy no harm, because it was done with an intention to deceive? I reply that the apostle has not made any such exception. He does not say, If you be circumcised without dissimulation, any more than, If you be circumcised with dissimulation. He says unreservedly, "If you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." As, therefore, you insist upon finding room for your interpretation, by proposing to supply the words, "unless it be done as an act of dissimulation," I make no unreasonable demand in asking you to permit me to understand the words, "if you be circumcised," to be in that passage addressed to those who demanded circumcision, for this reason, that they thought it impossible for them to be otherwise saved by Christ. Whoever was then circumcised because of such persuasion and desire, and with this design, Christ assuredly profited him nothing, as the apostle elsewhere expressly affirms, If righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain. [Galatians 2:21] The same is affirmed in words which you have quoted: "Christ has become of no effect to you, whosoever of you is justified by the law; you are fallen from grace." [Galatians 5:4] His rebuke, therefore, was addressed to those who believed that they were to be justified by the law, — not to those who, knowing well the design with which the legal ceremonies were instituted as foreshadowing truth, and the time for which they were destined to be in force, observed them in order to honour Him who appointed them at first. Wherefore also he says elsewhere, "If you be led of the Spirit, you are not under the law," [Galatians 5:18] — a passage from which you infer, that evidently "he has not the Holy Spirit who submits to the Law, not, as our fathers affirmed the apostles to have done, feignedly under the promptings of a wise discretion, but"— as I suppose to have been the case — "sincerely."

20. It seems to me important to ascertain precisely what is that submission to the law which the apostle here condemns; for I do not think that he speaks here of circumcision merely, or of the sacrifices then offered by our fathers, but now not offered by Christians, and other observances of

the same nature. I rather hold that he includes also that precept of the law, "You shall not covet," which we confess that Christians are unquestionably bound to obey, and which we find most fully proclaimed by the light which the Gospel has shed upon it. "The law," he says, "is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good;" and then adds, "Was, then, that which is good made death unto me? God forbid." "But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good; that sin, by the commandment, might become exceeding sinful." [Romans 7:13] As he says here, "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful," so elsewhere, "The law entered that the offense might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." [Romans 5:20] Again, in another place, after affirming, when speaking of the dispensation of grace, that grace alone justifies, he asks, "Wherefore then serves the law?" and answers immediately, "It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom the promises were made." [Galatians 3:19] The persons, therefore, whose submission to the law the apostle here pronounces to be the cause of their own condemnation, are those whom the law brings in guilty, as not fulfilling its requirements, and who, not understanding the efficacy of free grace, rely with self-satisfied presumption on their own strength to enable them to keep the law of God; for "love is the fulfilling of the law." [Romans 13:10] Now "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts," not by our own power, but "by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." [Romans 5:5] The satisfactory discussion of this, however, would require too long a digression, if not a separate volume. If, then, that precept of the law, "You shall not covet," holds under it as guilty the man whose human weakness is not assisted by the grace of God, and instead of acquitting the sinner, condemns him as a transgressor, how much more was it impossible for those ordinances which were merely typical, circumcision and the rest, which were destined to be abolished when the revelation of grace became more widely known, to be the means of justifying any man! Nevertheless they were not on this ground to be immediately shunned with abhorrence, like the diabolical impieties of heathenism, from the first beginning of the revelation of the grace which had been by these shadows prefigured; but to be for a little while tolerated, especially among those who joined the Christian Church from that nation to whom these ordinances had been given. When, however, they had been, as it were, honourably buried, they were thenceforward to be finally abandoned by all Christians.

21. Now, as to the words which you use, "non dispensative, ut nostri voluere majores," — "not in a way justifiable by expediency, the ground on which our fathers were disposed to explain the conduct of the apostles," — pray what do these words mean? Surely nothing else than that which I call "officiosum mendacium," the liberty granted by expediency being equivalent to a call of duty to utter a falsehood with pious intention. I at least can see no other explanation, unless, of course, the mere addition of the words "permitted by expediency" be enough to make a lie cease to be a lie; and if this be absurd, why do you not openly say that a lie spoken in the way of duty is to be defended? Perhaps the name offends you, because the word "officium" is not common in ecclesiastical books; but this did not deter our Ambrose from its use, for he has chosen the title "De Officiis" for some of his books that are full of useful rules. Do you mean to say, that whoever utters a lie from a sense of duty is to be blamed, and whoever does the same on the ground of expediency is to be approved? I beseech you, consider that the man who thinks this may lie whenever he thinks fit, because this involves the whole important question whether to say what is false be at any time the duty of a good man, especially of a Christian man, to whom it has been said, "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation," [James 5:12;

Matthew 5:37] and who believes the Psalmist's word, "You will destroy all them that speak lies."

22. This, however, is, as I have said, another and a weighty question; I leave him who is of this opinion to judge for himself the circumstances in which he is at liberty to utter a lie: provided, however, that it be most assuredly believed and maintained that this way of lying is far removed from the authors who were employed to write holy writings, especially the canonical Scriptures; lest those who are the stewards of Christ, of whom it is said, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," [1 Corinthians 4:2] should seem to have proved their fidelity by learning as an important lesson to speak what is false when this is expedient for the truth's sake, although the word fidelity itself, in the Latin tongue, is said to signify originally a real correspondence between what is said and what is done. Now, where that which is spoken is actually done, there is assuredly no room for falsehood. Paul therefore, as a "faithful steward" doubtless is to be regarded as approving his fidelity in his writings; for he was a steward of truth, not of falsehood. Therefore he wrote the truth when he wrote that he had seen Peter walking not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and that he had withstood him to the face because he was compelling the Gentiles to live as the Jews did. And Peter himself received, with the holy and loving humility which became him, the rebuke which Paul, in the interests of truth, and with the boldness of love, administered. Therein Peter left to those that came after him an example, that, if at any time they deviated from the right path, they should not think it beneath them to accept correction from those who were their juniors — an example more rare, and requiring greater piety, than that which Paul's conduct on the same occasion left us, that those who are younger should have courage even to withstand their seniors if the defense of evangelical truth required it, yet in such a way as to preserve unbroken brotherly love. For while it is better for one to succeed in perfectly keeping the right path, it is a thing much more worthy of admiration and praise to receive admonition meekly, than to admonish a transgressor boldly. On that occasion, therefore, Paul was to be praised for upright courage, Peter was to be praised for holy humility; and so far as my judgment enables me to form an opinion, this ought rather to have been asserted in answer to the calumnies of Porphyry, than further occasion given to him for finding fault, by putting it in his power to bring against Christians this much more damaging accusation, that either in writing their letters or in complying with the ordinances of God they practised deceit.

23. You call upon me to bring forward the name of even one whose opinion I have followed in this matter, and at the same time you have quoted the names of many who have held before you the opinion which you defend. You also say that if I censure you for an error in this, you beg to be allowed to remain in error in company with such great men. I have not read their writings; but although they are only six or seven in all, you have yourself impugned the authority of four of them. For as to the Laodicean author, whose name you do not give, you say that he has lately forsaken the Church; Alexander you describe as a heretic of old standing; and as to Origen and Didymus, I read in some of your more recent works, censure passed on their opinions, and that in no measured terms, nor in regard to insignificant questions, although formerly you gave Origen marvellous praise. I suppose, therefore, that you would not even yourself be contented to be in error with these men; although the language which I refer to is equivalent to an assertion that in this matter they have not erred. For who is there that would consent to be knowingly mistaken, with whatever company he might share his errors? Three of the seven therefore alone remain, Eusebius of Emesa, Theodorus of Heraclea, and John, whom you afterwards mention, who

formerly presided as pontiff over the Church of Constantinople.

24. However, if you inquire or recall to memory the opinion of our Ambrose, and also of our Cyprian, on the point in question, you will perhaps find that I also have not been without some whose footsteps I follow in that which I have maintained. At the same time, as I have said already, it is to the canonical Scriptures alone that I am bound to yield such implicit subjection as to follow their teaching, without admitting the slightest suspicion that in them any mistake or any statement intended to mislead could find a place. Wherefore, when I look round for a third name that I may oppose three on my side to your three, I might indeed easily find one, I believe, if my reading had been extensive; but one occurs to me whose name is as good as all these others, nay, of greater authority — I mean the Apostle Paul himself. To him I betake myself; to himself I appeal from the verdict of all those commentators on his writings who advance an opinion different from mine. I interrogate him, and demand from himself to know whether he wrote what was true, or under some plea of expediency wrote what he knew to be false, when he wrote that he saw Peter not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and withstood him to his face because by that dissimulation he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews. And I hear him in reply proclaiming with a solemn oath in an earlier part of the epistle, where he began this narration, "The things that I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." [Galatians 1:20]

25. Let those who think otherwise, however great their names, excuse my differing from them. The testimony of so great an apostle using, in his own writings, an oath as a confirmation of their truth, is of more weight with me than the opinion of any man, however learned, who is discussing the writings of another. Nor am I afraid lest men should say that, in vindicating Paul from the charge of pretending to conform to the errors of Jewish prejudice, I affirm him to have actually so conformed. For as, on the one hand, he was not guilty of pretending conformity to error when, with the liberty of an apostle, such as was suitable to that period of transition, he did, by practising those ancient holy ordinances, when it was necessary to declare their original excellence as appointed not by the wiles of Satan to deceive men, but by the wisdom of God for the purpose of typically foretelling things to come; so, on the other hand, he was not guilty of real conformity to the errors of Judaism, seeing that he not only knew, but also preached constantly and vehemently, that those were in error who thought that these ceremonies were to be imposed upon the Gentile converts, or were necessary to the justification of any who believed.

26. Moreover, as to my saying that to the Jews he became as a Jew, and to the Gentiles as a Gentile, not with the subtlety of intentional deceit, but with the compassion of pitying love, it seems to me that you have not sufficiently considered my meaning in the words; or rather, perhaps, I have not succeeded in making it plain. For I did not mean by this that I supposed him to have practised in either case a feigned conformity; but I said it because his conformity was sincere, not less in the things in which he became to the Jews as a Jew, than in those in which he became to the Gentiles as a Gentile — a parallel which you yourself suggested, and by which I thankfully acknowledge that you have materially assisted my argument. For when I had in my letter asked you to explain how it could be supposed that Paul's becoming to the Jews as a Jew involved the supposition that he must have acted deceitfully in conforming to the Jewish observances, seeing that no such deceptive conformity to heathen customs was involved in his becoming as a Gentile to the Gentiles; your answer was, that his becoming to the Gentiles as a Gentile meant no more than his receiving the uncircumcised, and permitting the free use of those meats which were

pronounced unclean by Jewish law. If, then, when I ask whether in this also he practised dissimulation, such an idea is repudiated as palpably most absurd and false: it is an obvious inference, that in his performing those things in which he became as a Jew to the Jews, he was using a wise liberty, not yielding to a degrading compulsion, nor doing what would be still more unworthy of him, viz. stooping from integrity to fraud out of a regard to expediency.

27. For to believers, and to those who know the truth, as the apostle testifies (unless here too, perhaps, he is deceiving his readers), "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." [1 Timothy 4:4] Therefore to Paul himself, not only as a man, but as a steward eminently faithful, not only as knowing, but also as a teacher of the truth, every creature of God which is used for food was not feignedly but truly good. If, then, to the Gentiles he became as a Gentile, by holding and teaching the truth concerning meats and circumcision although he feigned no conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the Gentiles, why say that it was impossible for him to become as a Jew to the Jews, unless he practised dissimulation in performing the rites of their religion? Why did he maintain the true faithfulness of a steward towards the wild olive branch that was engrafted, and yet hold up a strange veil of dissimulation, on the plea of expediency, before those who were the natural and original branches of the olive tree? Why was it that, in becoming as a Gentile to the Gentiles, his teaching and his conduct are in harmony with his real sentiments; but that, in becoming as a Jew to the Jews, he shuts up one thing in his heart, and declares something wholly different in his words, deeds, and writings? But far be it from us to entertain such thoughts of him. To both Jews and Gentiles he owed "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned;" [1 Timothy 1:5] and therefore he became all things to all men, that he might gain all, [1 Corinthians 9:19-22] not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one filled with compassion; that is to say, not by pretending himself to do all the evil things which other men did, but by using the utmost pains to minister with all compassion the remedies required by the evils under which other men laboured, as if their case had been his own.

28. When, therefore, he did not refuse to practise some of these Old Testament observances, he was not led by his compassion for Jews to feign this conformity, but unquestionably was acting sincerely; and by this course of action declaring his respect for those things which in the former dispensation had been for a time enjoined by God, he distinguished between them and the impious rites of heathenism. At that time, moreover, not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one moved by compassion, he became to the Jews as a Jew, when, seeing them to be in error, which either made them unwilling to believe in Christ, or made them think that by these old sacrifices and ceremonial observances they could be cleansed from sin and made partakers of salvation, he desired so to deliver them from that error as if he saw not them, but himself, entangled in it; thus truly loving his neighbour as himself, and doing to others as he would have others do to him if he required their help — a duty to the statement of which our Lord added these words, "This is the law and the prophets." [Matthew 7:12]

29. This compassionate affection Paul recommends in the same Epistle to the Galatians, saying: "If a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted." [Galatians 6:2] See whether he has not said, "Make yourself as he is, that you may gain him." Not, indeed, that one should commit or pretend to have committed the same fault as the one who has been overtaken, but that in the fault

of that other he should consider what might happen to himself, and so compassionately render assistance to that other, as he would wish that other to do to him if the case were his; that is, not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one filled with compassion. Thus, whatever the error or fault in which Jew or Gentile or any man was found by Paul, to all men he became all things — not by feigning what was not true, but by feeling, because the case might have been his own, the compassion of one who put himself in the other's place — that he might gain all.

30. I beseech you to look, if you please, for a little into your own heart — I mean, into your own heart as it stands affected towards myself — and recall, or if you have it in writing beside you, read again, your own words in that letter (only too brief) which you sent to me by Cyprian our brother, now my colleague. Read with what sincere brotherly and loving earnestness you have added to a serious complaint of what I had done to you these words: "In this friendship is wounded, and the laws of brotherly union are set at nought. Let not the world see us quarrelling like children, and giving material for angry contention between those who may become our respective supporters or adversaries." These words I perceive to be spoken by you from the heart, and from a heart kindly seeking to give me good advice. Then you add, what would have been obvious to me even without your stating it: "I write what I have now written, because I desire to cherish towards you pure and Christian love, and not to hide in my heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of my lips." O pious man, beloved by me, as God who sees my soul is witness, with a true heart I believe your statement; and just as I do not question the sincerity of the profession which you have thus made in a letter to me, so do I by all means believe the Apostle Paul when he makes the very same profession in his letter, addressed not to any one individual, but to Jews and Greeks, and all those Gentiles who were his children in the gospel, for whose spiritual birth he travailed, and after them to so many thousands of believers in Christ, for whose sake that letter has been preserved. I believe, I say, that he did not "hide in his heart anything which did not agree with the utterance of his lips."

31. You have indeed yourself done towards me this very thing — becoming to me as I am — "not with the subtlety of deception, but with the love of compassion," when you thought that it behooved you to take as much pains to prevent me from being left in a mistake, in which you believed me to be, as you would have wished another to take for your deliverance if the case had been your own. Wherefore, gratefully acknowledging this evidence of your goodwill towards me, I also claim that you also be not displeased with me, if, when anything in your treatises disquieted me, I acquainted you with my distress, desiring the same course to be followed by all towards me as I have followed towards you, that whatever they think worthy of censure in my writings, they would neither flatter me with deceitful commendation nor blame me before others for that of which they are silent towards myself; thereby, as it seems to me, more seriously "wounding friendship and setting at nought the laws of brotherly union." For I would hesitate to give the name of Christian to those friendships in which the common proverb, "Flattery makes friends, and truth makes enemies," is of more authority than the scriptural proverb, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." [Proverbs 27:6]

32. Wherefore let us rather do our utmost to set before our beloved friends, who most cordially wish us well in our labours, such an example that they may know that it is possible for the most intimate friends to differ so much in opinion, that the views of the one may be contradicted by the other without any diminution of their mutual affection, and without hatred being kindled by that truth

which is due to genuine friendship, whether the contradiction be in itself in accordance with truth, or at least, whatever its intrinsic value is, be spoken from a sincere heart by one who is resolved not "to hide in his heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of his lips." Let therefore our brethren, your friends, of whom you bear testimony that they are vessels of Christ, believe me when I say that it was wholly against my will that my letter came into the hands of many others before it reached your own, and that my heart is filled with no small sorrow for this mistake. How it happened would take long to tell, and this is now, if I am not mistaken, unnecessary; since, if my word is to be taken at all in regard to this, it suffices for me to say that it was not done by me with the sinister intention which is supposed by some, and that it was not by my wish, or arrangement, or consent, or design that this has taken place. If they do not believe this, which I affirm in the sight of God, I can do no more to satisfy them. Far be it, however, from me to believe that they made this suggestion to your Holiness with the malicious desire to kindle enmity between you and me, from which may God in His mercy defend us! Doubtless, without any intention of doing me wrong, they readily suspected me, as a man, to be capable of failings common to human nature. For it is right for me to believe this concerning them, if they be vessels of Christ appointed not to dishonour, but to honour, and made meet by God for every good work in His great house. [2 Timothy 2:20-21] If, however, this my solemn protestation come to their knowledge, and they still persist in the same opinion of my conduct, you will yourself see that in this they will do wrong.

33. As to my having written that I had never sent to Rome a book against you, I wrote this because, in the first place, I did not regard the name "book" as applicable to my letter, and therefore was under the impression that you had heard of something else entirely different from it; in the second place, I had not sent the letter in question to Rome, but to you; and in the third place, I did not consider it to be against you, because I knew that I had been prompted by the sincerity of friendship, which should give liberty for the exchange of suggestions and corrections between us. Leaving out of sight for a little while your friends of whom I have spoken, I implore yourself, by the grace whereby we have been redeemed, not to suppose that I have been guilty of artful flattery in anything which I have said in my letters concerning the good gifts which have been by the Lord's goodness bestowed on you. If, however, I have in anything wronged you, forgive me. As to that incident in the life of some forgotten bard, which, with perhaps more pedantry than good taste, I quoted from classic literature, I beg you not to carry the application of it to yourself further than my words warranted for I immediately added: "I do not say this in order that you may recover the faculty of spiritual sight — far be it from me to say that you have lost it! — but that, having eyes both clear and quick in discernment, you may turn them to this matter." I thought a reference to that incident suitable exclusively in connection with the *παλινοδία*, in which we ought all to imitate Stesichorus if we have written anything which it becomes our duty to correct in a writing of later date, and not at all in connection with the blindness of Stesichorus, which I neither ascribed to your mind, nor feared as likely to befall you. And again, I beseech you to correct boldly whatever you see needful to censure in my writings. For although, so far as the titles of honour which prevail in the Church are concerned, a bishop's rank is above that of a presbyter, nevertheless in many things Augustine is inferior to Jerome; albeit correction is not to be refused nor despised, even when it comes from one who in all respects may be an inferior.

34. As to your translation, you have now convinced me of the benefits to be secured by your proposal to translate the Scriptures from the original Hebrew, in order that you may bring to light

those things which have been either omitted or perverted by the Jews. But I beg you to be so good as state by what Jews this has been done, whether by those who before the Lord's advent translated the Old Testament— and if so, by what one or more of them — or by the Jews of later times, who may be supposed to have mutilated or corrupted the Greek manuscripts, in order to prevent themselves from being unable to answer the evidence given by these concerning the Christian faith. I cannot find any reason which should have prompted the earlier Jewish translators to such unfaithfulness. I beg of you, moreover, to send us your translation of the Septuagint, which I did not know that you had published. I am also longing to read that book of yours which you named *De optimo genere interpretandi*, and to know from it how to adjust the balance between the product of the translator's acquaintance with the original language, and the conjectures of those who are able commentators on the Scripture, who, notwithstanding their common loyalty to the one true faith, must often bring forward various opinions on account of the obscurity of many passages; although this difference of interpretation by no means involves departure from the unity of the faith; just as one commentator may himself give, in harmony with the faith which he holds, two different interpretations of the same passage, because the obscurity of the passage makes both equally admissible.

35. I desire, moreover, your translation of the Septuagint, in order that we may be delivered, so far as is possible, from the consequences of the notable incompetency of those who, whether qualified or not, have attempted a Latin translation; and in order that those who think that I look with jealousy on your useful labours, may at length, if it be possible, perceive that my only reason for objecting to the public reading of your translation from the Hebrew in our churches was, lest, bringing forward anything which was, as it were, new and opposed to the authority of the Septuagint version, we should trouble by serious cause of offense the flocks of Christ, whose ears and hearts have become accustomed to listen to that version to which the seal of approbation was given by the apostles themselves. Wherefore, as to that shrub in the book of Jonah, if in the Hebrew it is neither "gourd" nor "ivy," but something else which stands erect, supported by its own stem without other props, I would prefer to call it "gourd" in all our Latin versions; for I do not think that the Seventy would have rendered it thus at random, had they not known that the plant was something like a gourd.

36. I think I have now given a sufficient answer (perhaps more than sufficient) to your three letters; of which I received two by Cyprian, and one by Firmus. In replying, send whatever you think likely to be of use in instructing me and others. And I shall take more care, as the Lord may help me, that any letter which I may write to you shall reach yourself before it falls into the hand of any other, by whom its contents may be published abroad; for I confess that I would not like any letter of yours to me to meet with the fate of which you justly complain as having befallen my letter to you. Let us, however, resolve to maintain between ourselves the liberty as well as the love of friends; so that in the letters which we exchange, neither of us shall be restrained from frankly stating to the other whatever seems to him open to correction, provided always that this be done in the spirit which does not, as inconsistent with brotherly love, displease God. If, however, you do not think that this can be done between us without endangering that brotherly love, let us not do it: for the love which I should like to see maintained between us is assuredly the greater love which would make this mutual freedom possible; but the smaller measure of it is better than none at all.

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Letter 117. To a Mother and Daughter Living in Gaul. A monk of Gaul had during a visit to Bethlehem asked Jerome for advice under the following circumstances. His mother was a church-widow and his sister a religious virgin but the two could not agree. They were accordingly living apart but neither by herself. For each had taken into her house a monk ostensibly to act as steward but really to be a paramour. At the request of his visitor Jerome now writes to both mother and daughter urging them to dismiss their companions; or at any rate to live together: and pointing out the grave scandal that must otherwise be caused. From the treatise against Vigilantius (§3) we learn that ill-natured critics maintained that the persons and circumstances described in the letter were alike fictitious and that Jerome in writing it was but exercising his ingenuity on a congenial theme. The date is a.d. 405.

Introduction.

1. A certain brother from Gaul has told me that his virgin-sister and widowed mother, though living in the same city, have separate abodes and have taken to themselves clerical protectors either as guests or stewards; and that by thus associating with strangers they have caused more scandal than by living apart. When I groaned and expressed what I felt more by silence than words; "I beseech you," said he, "rebuke them in a letter and recall them to mutual harmony; make them once more mother and daughter." To whom I replied, "a nice task this that you lay upon me, for me a stranger to reconcile two women whom you, a son and brother, have failed to influence. You speak as though I occupied the chair of a bishop instead of being shut up? a monastic cell where, far removed from the world's turmoil, I lament the sins of the past and try to avoid the temptations of the present. Moreover, it is surely inconsistent, while one buries oneself out of sight, to allow one's tongue free course through the world." "You are too fearful," he replied; "where is that old hardihood of yours which made you 'scour the world with copious salt,' as Horace says of Lucilius?" [Hor. Sat. I. 10:3, 4] "It is this," I rejoined, "that makes me shy and forbids me to open my lips. For through accusing crime I have been myself made out a criminal. Men have disputed and denied my assertions until, as the proverb goes, I hardly know whether I have ears or feeling left. The very walls have resounded with curses levelled at me, and 'I was the song of drunkards.'¹ Under the compulsion of an unhappy experience I have learned to be silent, thinking it better to set a watch before my mouth and to keep the door of my lips than to incline my heart to any evil thing, [Ps. 141:3, Ps. 141:4] or, while censuring the faults of others, myself to fall into that of detraction." In answer to this he said: "Speaking the truth is not detraction. Nor will you lecture the world by administering a particular rebuke; for there are few persons, if any, open to this special charge. I beg of you, therefore, as I have put myself to the trouble of this long journey, that you will not suffer me to have come for nothing. The Lord knows that, after the sight of the holy places, my principal object in coming has been to heal by a letter from you the division between my sister and my mother." "Well," I replied, "I will do as you wish, for after all the letters will be to persons beyond the sea and words written with reference to definite persons can seldom offend other people. But I must ask you to keep what I say secret. You will take my advice with you to encourage you by the

way; if it is listened to, I will rejoice as much as you; while if, as I rather think, it is rejected, I shall have wasted my words and you will have made a long journey for nothing." The Letter.

2. In the first place my sister and my daughter, I wish you to know that I am not writing to you because I suspect anything evil of you. On the contrary I implore you to live in harmony, so as to give no ground for any such suspicions. Moreover had I supposed you fast bound in sin-far be this from you-I should never have written, for I should have known that my words would be addressed to deaf ears. Again, if I write to you somewhat sharply, I beg of you to ascribe this not to any harshness on my part but to the nature of the ailment which I attempt to treat. Caution and the knife are the only remedies when mortification has once set in; poison is the only antidote known for poison; great pain can only be relieved by inflicting greater pain. Lastly I must say this that even if your own consciences acquit you of misdoing, yet the very rumour of such brings disgrace upon you. Mother and daughter are names of affection; they imply natural ties and reciprocal duties; they form the closest of human relations after that which binds the soul to God. If you love each other, your conduct calls for no praise: but if you hate each other, you have committed a crime. The Lord Jesus was subject to His parents. [Luke 2:51] He revered that mother of whom He was Himself the parent; He respected the foster-father whom He had Himself fostered; for He remembered that He had been carried in the womb of the one and in the arms of the other. Wherefore also when He hung upon the cross He commended to His disciple [John. 19:26, John. 19:27] the mother whom He had never before His passion parted from Himself.

3. Well, I shall say no more to the mother, for perhaps age, weakness, and loneliness make sufficient excuses for her; but to you the daughter I say: "Is a mother's house too small for you whose womb was not too small? When you have lived with her for ten months in the one, can you not bear to live with her for one day in the other? or are you unable to meet her gaze? Can it be that one who has borne you and reared you, who has brought you up and knows you, is dreaded by you as a witness of your homelife? If you are a true virgin, why do you fear her careful guardianship; and, if you have fallen, why do you not openly marry? Wedlock is like a plank offered to a shipwrecked man and by its means you may remedy what previously you have done amiss. I do not mean that you are not to repent of your sin or that you are to continue in evil courses; but, when a tie of the kind has been formed, I despair of breaking it altogether. However, a return to your mother will make it easier for you to bewail the virginity which you have lost through leaving her. Or if you are still unspotted and have not lost your chastity, be careful of it for you may lose it. Why must you live in a house where you must daily struggle for life and death? Can any one sleep soundly with a viper near him? No; for, though it may not attack him it is sure to frighten him. It is better to be where there is no danger, than to be in danger and to escape. In the one case we have a calm; in the other careful steering is necessary. In the one case we are filled with joy; in the other we do but avoid sorrow.

4. But you will perhaps reply: "my mother is not well-behaved, she desires the things of the world, she loves riches, she disregards fasting, she stains her eyes with antimony, she likes to walk abroad in gay attire, she hinders me from the monastic vow, and so I cannot live with her." But first of all, even though she is as you say, you will have the greater reward for refusing to forsake her with all her faults. She has carried you in her womb, she has reared you; with gentle affection she has borne with the troublesome ways of your childhood. She has washed your linen, she has tended you when sick, and the sickness of maternity was not only borne for you but caused by

you. She has brought you up to womanhood, she has taught you to love Christ. You ought not to be displeased with the behaviour of a mother who has consecrated you as a virgin to the service of your spouse. Still if you cannot put up with her dainty ways and feel obliged to shun them, and if your mother really is, as people so often say, a woman of the world, you have others, virgins like yourself, the holy company of chastity. Why, when you forsake your mother, do you choose for companion a man who perhaps has left behind him a sister and mother of his own? You tell me that she is hard to get on with and that he is easy; that she is quarrelsome and that he is amiable. I will ask you one question: Did you go straight from your home to the man, or did you fall in with him afterwards? If you went straight to him, the reason why you left your mother is plain. If you fell in with him afterwards, you shew by your choice what you missed under your mother's roof.² The pain that I inflict is severe and I feel the knife as much as you. "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely." [Prov. 10:9] Only that my conscience would smite me, I should keep silence and be slow to blame others where I am not guiltless myself. Having a beam in my own eye I should be reluctant to see the mote in my neighbour's. But as it is I live far away among Christian brothers; my life with them is honourable as eyewitnesses of it can testify; I rarely see, or am seen by, others. It is most shameless, therefore, in you to refuse to copy me in respect of self-restraint, when you profess to take me as your model. If you say: "my conscience is enough for me too. God is my judge who is witness of my life. I care not what men may say;" let me urge upon you the apostle's words: "provide things honest" not only in the sight of God but also "in the sight of all men." [Rom. 12:17] If any one carps at you for being a Christian and a virgin, mind it not; you have left your mother it may be said to live in a monastery among virgins, but censure on this score is your glory. When men blame a maid of God not for self-indulgence but only for insensibility to affection, what they condemn as callous disregard of a parent is really a lively devotion towards God. For you prefer to your mother Him whom you are bidden to prefer to your own soul. [Luke 14:26] And if the day ever comes that she also shall so prefer Him, she will find in you not a daughter only but a sister as well.

5. "What then?" you will say, "is it a crime to have a man of religion in the house with me?" You seize me by the collar and drag me into court either to sanction what I disapprove or else to incur the dislike of many. A man of religion never separates a daughter from her mother. He welcomes both and respects both. A daughter may be as religious as she pleases; still a mother who is a widow is a guaranty for her chastity. If this person whoever he is is of the same age with yourself, he should honour your mother as though she were his own; and, if he is older, he should love you as a daughter and subject you to a mother's discipline. It is not good either for your reputation or for his that he should like you more than your mother; for his affection might appear to be less for you than for your youth. This is what I should say if a monk were not your brother and if you had no relatives able to protect you. But what excuse has a stranger for thrusting himself in where there are both a mother and a brother, the one a widow and the other a monk? It is good for you to feel that you are a daughter and a sister. However, if you cannot manage both, and if your mother is too hard a morsel to swallow, your brother at any rate should satisfy you. Or, if he is too harsh, she that bore you may prove more gentle. Why do you turn pale? Why do you get excited? Why do you blush, and with trembling lips betray the restlessness of your mind? One thing only can surpass a woman's love for her mother and brother; and that is her passion for her husband.

6. I am told, moreover, that you frequent suburban villas and their pleasant gardens in the company of relatives and intimate friends. I have no doubt that it is some female cousin or connexion who for her own satisfaction carries you about with her as a novel kind of attendant. Far be it from me to suspect that you would desire men's society; even though they should be those of your own family. But pray, maiden, answer me this; do you appear alone in your kinsfolk's society? or do you bring your favourite with you? Shameless as you may be, you will hardly venture to flaunt him in the eyes of the world. If you ever do so, your whole circle will cry out about both you and him; every one's finger will be pointed at you; and your cousins who in your presence to please you call him a monk and a man of religion, will laugh at you behind your back for having such an unnatural husband. If on the other hand you go out alone-which I rather suppose to be the case-you will find yourself clothed in sober garb among slave youths, women married or soon to be so, wanton girls, and dandies with long hair and tight-fitting vests.³ Some bearded fop will offer you his hand he will hold you up if you feel tired, and the pressure of his fingers will either be a temptation to you, or will shew that you are a temptation to him. Again when you sit down to table with married men and women, you will have to see kisses in which you have no part, and dishes partaken of which are not for you. Moreover it cannot but do you harm to see other women attired in silk dresses and gold brocades. At table also whether you like it or not, you will be forced to eat flesh and that of different kinds. To make you drink wine they will praise it as a creature of God. To induce you to take baths they will speak of dirt with disgust; and, when on second thoughts you do as you are bid, they will with one voice salute you as spotless and open, a thorough lady. Meantime some singer will give to the company a selection of softly flowing airs; and as he will not venture to look at other men's wives, he will constantly fix his eyes on you who have no protector. He will speak by nods and convey by his tone what he is afraid to put into words. Amid inducements to sensuality so marked as these, even iron wills are apt to be overcome with desire; an appetite which is the more imperious in virgins because they suppose. that sweetest of which they have no experience. Heathen legends tell us that sailors actually ran their ships on the rocks that they might listen to the songs of the Sirens; and that the lyre of Orpheus had power to draw to itself trees and animals and to soften flints. In the banquet-hall chastity is hard to keep. A shining skin shews a sin-stained soul.

7. As a schoolboy I have read of one-and have seen his effigy true to the life in the streets-who continued to cherish an unlawful passion even when his flesh scarcely clung to his bones, and whose malady remained uncured until death cured it. What then will become of you a young girl physically sound, dainty, stout, and ruddy, if you allow yourself free range among flesh-dishes, wines, and baths, not to mention married men and bachelors? Even if when solicited you refuse to consent, you will take the fact of your being asked as evidence that you are considered handsome. A sensual mind pursues dishonourable objects with greater zest than honourable ones; and when a thing is forbidden hankers after it with greater pleasure. Your very dress, cheap and sombre as it is, is an index of your secret feelings. For it has no creases and trails along the ground to make you appear taller than you are. Your vest is purposely ripped asunder to shew what is beneath and while hiding what is repulsive, to reveal what is fair. As you walk, the very creaking of your black and shiny shoes attracts the notice of the young men. You wear stays to keep your breasts in place, and a heaving girdle closely confines your chest. Your hair covers either your forehead or your ears. Sometimes too you let your shawl drop so as to lay bare your white shoulders; and, as if unwilling that they should be seen, you quickly conceal what you have purposely disclosed. And

when in public you for modesty's sake cover your face, like a practised harlot you only shew what is likely to please.

8. You will exclaim "How do you know what I am like, or how, when you are so far away, can you see what I am doing?" Your own brother's tears and sobs have told me, his frequent and scarcely endurable bursts of grief. Would that he had lied or that his words had been words of apprehension only and not of accusation. But, believe me, liars do not shed tears. He is indignant that you prefer to himself a young man, not it is true clothed in silk or wearing his hair long but muscular and dainty in the midst of his squalor; and that this fellow holds the purse-strings, looks after the weaving, allots the servants their tasks, rules the household, and buys from the market all that is needed. He is at once steward and master, and, as he anticipates the slaves in their duties,⁴ he is carped at by all the domestics. Everything that their mistress has not given them they declare that he has stolen from them. Servants as a class are full of complaints; and no matter what you give them, it is always too little. For they do not consider how much you have but only how much you give; and they make up for their chagrin in the only way they can, that is, by grumbling. One calls him a parasite, another an impostor, another a money-seeker, another by some novel appellation that hits his fancy. They noise it abroad that he is constantly at your bed-side, that when you are sick he runs to fetch nurses, that he holds basins, airs sheets, and folds bandages for you. The world is only too ready to believe scandal, and stories invented at home soon get afloat abroad. Nor need you be surprised if your servantmen and servantmaids get up such tales about you, when even your mother and your brother complain of your conduct.

9. Do, therefore, what I advise you and entreat you to do: if possible, be reconciled with your mother; or, if this may not be, at least come to terms with your brother. Or if you are filled with an implacable hatred of relationships usually so dear, separate at all events from the man, whom you are said to prefer to your own flesh and blood, and, if even this is impossible for you, (for, if you could leave him, you would certainly return to your own) pay more regard to appearances in harbouring him as your companion. Live in a separate building and take your meals apart; for if you remain under one roof with him slanderers will say that you share with him your bed. You may thus easily get help from him when you feel you need it, and yet to a considerable degree escape public discredit. Yet you must take care not to contract the stain of which Jeremiah tells us that no nitre or fuller's soap can wash it out. [Jer. 2:22] When you wish him to come to see you, always have witnesses present; either friends, or freedmen, or slaves. A good conscience is afraid of no man's eyes. Let him come in unembarrassed and go out at his ease. Let his silent looks, his unspoken words and his whole carriage, though at times they may imply embarrassment, yet indicate peace of mind. Pray, open your ears and listen to the outcry of the whole city. You have already both of you lost your own names and are known each by that of the other. You are spoken of as his, and he is said to be yours. Your mother and your brother have heard this and are ready to take you in between them. They implore you to consent to this arrangement, so that the scandal of your intimacy with this man which is confined to yourself may give place to a glory common to all. You can live with your mother and he with your brother. You can more boldly shew your regard for one who is your brother's comrade; and your mother will more properly esteem one who is the friend of her son and not of her daughter. But if you frown and refuse to accept my advice, this letter will openly expostulate with you. 'Why,' it will say, 'do you beset another man's servant? Why do you make Christ's minister your slave? Look at the people and scan each face as it comes

under your view. When he reads in the church all eyes are fixed upon you; and you, using the licence of a wife, glory in your shame. Secret infamy no longer contents you; you call boldness freedom; "you have a whore's forehead and refuse to be ashamed." [From Jer. 3:3]

10. Once more you exclaim that I am over-suspicious, a thinker of evil, too ready to follow rumours. What? I suspicious? I ill-natured? I, who as I said in the beginning have taken up my pen because I have no suspicions? Or is it you that are careless, loose, disdainful? You who at the age of twenty-five have netted in your embrace a youth whose beard has scarcely grown? An excellent instructor he must be, able no doubt by his severe looks both to warn and frighten you! No age is safe from lust, yet gray hairs are some security for decent conduct. A day will surely come (for time glides by imperceptibly) when your handsome young favourite will find a wealthier or more youthful mistress. For women soon age and particularly if they live with men. You will be sorry for your decision and regret your obstinacy in a day when your means and reputation shall be alike gone, and when this unhappy intimacy shall be happily broken off. But perhaps you feel sure of your ground and see no reason to fear a breach where affection has had so long a time to develop and grow.

11. To you also, her mother, I must say a word. Your years put you beyond the reach of scandal; do not take advantage of this to indulge in sin. It is more fitting that your daughter should learn from you how to part from a companion than that you should learn from her how to give up a paramour. You have a son, a daughter, and a son-in-law, or at least one who is your daughter's partner.⁵ Why then should you seek other society than theirs, or wish to kindle anew expiring flames? It would be more becoming in you to screen your daughter's fault than to make it an excuse for your own misdoing. Your son is a monk, and, if he were to live with you, he would strengthen you in your religious profession and in your vow of widowhood. Why should you take in a complete stranger, especially in a house not large enough to hold a son and a daughter? You are old enough to have grand-children. Invite the pair home then. Your daughter went away by herself; let her return with this man. I say 'man' and not 'husband' that none may cavil. The word describes his sex and not his relation to her. Or if she blushes to accept your offer or finds the house in which she was born too narrow for her, then move both of you to her abode. However limited may be its accommodation, it can take in a mother and a brother better than a stranger. In fact, if she lives in the same house and occupies the same room with a man, she cannot long preserve her chastity. It is different when two women and two men live together. If the third person concerned -he, I mean, who fosters your old age-will not make one of the party and causes only dissension and confusion, the pair of you⁶ can do without him. But if the three of you remain together, then your brother and son⁷ will offer him a sister and a mother. Others may speak of the two strangers as step-father and son-in-law; but your son must speak of them as his foster-father and his brother.

Note.

12. Working quickly I have completed this letter in a single night anxious alike to gratify a friend and to try my hand on a rhetorical theme. Then early in the morning he has knocked at my door on the point of starting. I wish also to shew my detractors that like them I too can say the first thing that comes into my head. I have, therefore, introduced few quotations from the scriptures and have not, as in most of my books, interwoven its flowers in my discourse. The letter has been, in fact,

dictated off-hand and poured forth by lamp-light so fast that my tongue has outstripped my secretaries' pens and that my volubility has baffled the expedients of shorthand. I have said this much that those who make no allowances for want of ability may make some for want of time.

1: Ps. lxxix 12 2: Viz. men's society 3: Lineatos juvenes. The linea appears to have been a close-fitting jerkin 4: To ingratiate himself with their mistress. Cf. 108 5: Contubernalis 6: Viz. the mother and daughter 7: Viz. the monk who was son of the widow and brother of the virgin

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Letter 118. To Julian.

Jerome writes to Julian, a wealthy nobleman apparently of Dalmatia (§5), to console him for the loss of his wife and two daughters all of whom had recently died. He reminds Julian of the trials of Job and recommends him to imitate the patience of the patriarch. He also urges him to follow the example set by Pammachius and Paulinus, that is, to give up his riches and to become a monk for the sake of Christ. The date of the letter is 406 a.d.

I. At the very instant of his departure Ausonius, a son to me as he is a brother to you, gave me a late glimpse of himself but quickly hurried away again, saying good-morning and good-bye together. Yet he thought that he would return empty-handed unless he could bring you some trifle from me however hastily written. Clothed in scarlet as befitted his rank, he had already strapped on his sword-belt¹ and sent down a requisition to have a stage-horse saddled. Still he made me send for my secretary and dictate a letter to him. This I did with such rapidity that his nimble hand could hardly keep pace with my words or manage to put down my hurried sentences. Thus hasty dictation has taken the place of careful writing; and, if I break my long silence, it is but to offer you an expression of good will. This is an impromptu letter without logical order or charm of style. You must look on me for once as a friend only; you will find, I assure you, nothing of the orator here. Bear in mind that it has been dashed off on the spur of the moment and given as a provision for the way to one in a hurry to depart.

Holy scripture says: "a tale out of season is as musick in mourning." [Ecclus. 22:6] Accordingly I have disdained the graces of rhetoric and those charms of eloquence which boys find so captivating, and have fallen back on the serious tone of the sacred writings. For in these are to be found true medicines for wounds and sure remedies for sorrow. In these a mother receives back her only son even on the bier. [Luke 7:11-15] In these a crowd of mourners hears the words: "the maid is not dead but sleepeth." [Matt. 9:24] In these one that is four days dead comes forth bound at the call of the Lord. [John. 11:39, John. 11:43, John. 11:44]

2. I hear that in a short space of time you have suffered. several bereavements, that you have buried in quick succession two young unmarried daughters, and that Faustina, most chaste and loyal of wives, your sister in the fervour of her faith and your one comfort in the loss of your children, has suddenly fallen asleep and been taken from you. You have been like a shipwrecked man, who has no sooner reached the shore than he falls into the hands of brigands, or in the eloquent language of the prophet like one "who did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him." [Amos 5:19] Pecuniary losses have followed your bereavements; the entire province has been overrun by a barbarian enemy, and in the general devastation your private property has been destroyed, your flocks and herds have been driven off, and your poor slaves either made prisoners or else slain. To crown all, your only daughter, made all the more dear to you by the loss of the others, has for her husband a young nobleman who, to say nothing worse of him, has given you more occasion for sorrow than

for rejoicing. Such is the list of the trials that have been laid upon you; such is the conflict waged by the old enemy against Julian a raw recruit to Christ's standard. If you look only to yourself your troubles are indeed great but if you look to the strong Warrior, [Cf. Rev. 19:11-16] they are but child's play and the conflict is only the semblance of one. After untold trials a wicked wife was still left to the blessed Job, the devil hoping that he might learn from her to blaspheme God. You on the other hand have been deprived of an excellent one that you might learn to go without consolation in the hour of misfortune. Yet it is far harder to put up with a wife whom you dislike than it is to mourn for one whom you dearly love. Moreover when Job's children died they found a common tomb beneath the ruins of his house, and all he could do to shew his parental affection was to rend his garments to fall upon the ground and to worship, saying: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: it has been as the Lord pleased: blessed be the name of the Lord." [Job 1:20, 21, LXX] But you, to put the matter briefly, have been allowed to perform the obsequies of your dear ones; and those obsequies have been attended by many respectful kinsmen and comforting friends. Again Job lost all his wealth at once; and, as, one after another, the messengers of woe unfolded new calamities, he flinched as little as the sage of whom Horace writes: [Horace, C. III. 3:7, 8] - "Shatter the world to atoms if you will. Fearless will be the man on whom it falls." But with you the case is different. The greater part of your substance has been left to you, and your trials have not been greater than you can bear. For you have not yet attained to such perfection that the devil has to marshal all his forces against you.

3. Long ago this wealthy proprietor and still wealthier father was made by a sudden stroke destitute and bereaved. But as, in spite of all that befel him, he had not sinned before God or spoken foolishly, the Lord-exulting in the victory of his servant and regarding Job's patience as His own triumph-said to the devil: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity?" [Job 2:3] He finely adds the last clause because it is difficult for innocence to refrain from murmuring when it is overborne by misfortune; and to avoid making a shipwreck of faith when it sees that its sufferings are unjustly inflicted. The devil answered the Lord and said: "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." [Job 2:4, Job 2:5] See how crafty the adversary is, and how hardened in sin his evil days have made him! He knows the difference between things external and internal. He knows that even the philosophers of the world call the former "■ δι■φορα" that is indifferent, and that the perfection of virtue does not consist in losing or disdaining them. It is the latter, those that are internal and objects of preference,² the loss of which inevitably causes chagrin. Wherefore he boldly contradicts what God has said and declares that Job deserves no praise at all; since he has yielded up no part of himself but only what is outside himself, since he has given for his own skin the skins of his children, and since he has but laid down his purse to secure the health of his body. From this your sagacity may perceive that your trials have so far only reached the point at which you give hide for hide, skin for skin, and are ready to give all that you have for your life. The Lord has not yet stretched forth His hand upon you, or touched your flesh, or broken your bones. Yet it is when such afflictions as these are laid upon you that it is Bard not to groan and not to 'bless' God to His face, that is to curse Him. The word 'bless' is used in the same way in the books of Kings where it is said of Naboth that he 'blessed' God and the king and was therefore stoned by the people. [1 K. 21:10, Vulg.] But the

Lord knew His champion and felt sure that this great hero would even in this last and severest conflict prove unconquerable. Therefore He said: "Behold he is in thine hand; but save his life." [Job 2:6] The holy man's flesh is placed at the devil's disposal, but his vital powers are withheld. For if the devil had smitten that on which sensation and mental judgment depend, the guilt arising from a misuse of these faculties I would have lain at the door not of him who committed the sin but of him who had overthrown the balance of his mind.

4. Others may praise you if they will, and celebrate your victories over the devil. They may eulogize you for the smiling face with which you bore the loss of your daughters, or for the resolution with which, forty days after they fell asleep, you exchanged your mourning for a white robe to attend the dedication of a martyr's bones; unconcerned for a bereavement which was the concern of the whole city, and anxious only to share in a martyr's triumph. Nay, say they, when you bore your wife to burial, it was not as one dead but as one setting forth on a journey. But I shall not deceive you with flattering words or take the ground froth under your feet with slippery praises. Rather will I say what it is good for you to hear: "My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation," [Ecclus. 2:1] and "when thou shalt have done all those things which are commanded thee, say, I am an unprofitable servant; I have done that which was my duty to do." [Luke 17:10 (adapted)] Say to God: "the children that thou hast taken from me were Thine own gift. The hand-maiden that Thou hast taken to Thyself Thou also didst lend to me for a season to be my solace. I am not aggrieved that Thou hast taken her back, but thankful rather that Thou hast previously given her to me."

Once upon a time a rich young man boasted that he had fulfilled all the requirements of the law, but the Lord said to him (as we read in the gospel): "One thing thou lackest: if thou wilt be perfect, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor; and come and follow me." [Mark 10:21] He who declared that he had done all things gave way at the first onset to the power of riches. Wherefore they who are rich find it hard to enter the kingdom of heaven, a kingdom which desires for its citizens souls that soar aloft free from all ties and hindrances. "Go thy way," the Lord says, "and sell" not a part of thy substance but "all that thou hast, and give to the poor;" not to thy friends or kinsfolk or relatives, not to thy wife or to thy children. I will even go farther and say: keep back nothing for yourself because you fear to be some day poor, lest by so doing you share the condemnation of Ananias and Sapphira; [Acts 5:1-10] but give everything to the poor and make to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that they may receive you into everlasting habitations. [Luke 16:9] Obey the Master's injunction "follow me," [Matt. 9:9] and take the Lord of the world for your possession; that you may be able to sing with the prophet, "The Lord is my portion," [Ps. 16:5] and like a true Levite [Nu. 18:20-24] may possess no earthly inheritance. I cannot but advise you thus if you wish to be perfect, if you desire to attain the pinnacle of the apostles' glory, if you wish to take up your cross and to follow Christ. When once you have put your hand to the plough you must not look back; [Luke 9:62] when once you stand on the housetop you must think no more of your clothes within; to escape your Egyptian mistress [Gen. 39:12] you must abandon the cloak that belongs to this world. Even Elijah, in his quick translation to heaven could not take his mantle with him, but left in the world the garments of the world. [2 K. 2:11, 2 K. 2:13] Such conduct, you will object, is for him who would emulate the apostles, for the man who aspires to be perfect. But why should not you aspire to be perfect? Why should not you who hold a foremost place in the world hold a foremost place also in Christ's household? Is it

because you have been married? Peter was married too, but when he forsook his ship and his nets he forsook his wife also. [But see 1 Cor. 9:5] The Lord who wills that all men shall be saved and prefers the repentance of a sinner to his death [1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9] has, in His almighty providence, removed from you this excuse. Your wife can no longer draw you earthwards, but you can follow her as she draws you heavenwards. Provide good things for your children who have gone home before you to the Lord. Do not let their portions go to swell their sister's fortune, but use them to ransom your own soul and to give sustenance to the needy. These are the necklaces your daughters expect from you; these are the jewels they wish to see sparkle on their foreheads. The money which they would have wasted in buying silks may well be considered saved when it provides cheap clothing for the poor. They ask you for their portions. Now that they are united to their spouse they are loth to appear poor and undistinguished: they desire to have the ornaments that befit their rank.

5. Nor may you excuse yourself on the score of your noble station and the responsibilities of wealth. Look at Pammachius and at Paulinus that presbyter of glowing faith both of whom have offered to the Lord not only their riches but themselves. In spite of the devil and his shuffling they have by no means given skin for skin, but have consecrated their own flesh and bones, yea and their very souls unto the Lord. Surely these may lead you to higher things both by their example and by their preaching, that is, by their deeds and words. You are of noble birth, so are they: but in Christ they are made nobler still. You are rich and held in repute, so once were they: but now instead of being rich and held in repute they are poor and obscure, yet, because it is for Christ's sake, they are really richer and more famous than ever. You too, it is true, shew yourself beneficent, you are said to minister to the wants of the saints, to entertain monks, and to present large sums of money to churches. This however is only the a b c of your soldiership. You despise money; the world's philosophers have done the same. One of these³ -to say nothing of the rest- cast the price of many possessions into the sea, saying as he did so "To the bottom with you, ye provokers of evil lusts. I shall drown you in the sea that you may never drown me in sin." If then a philosopher-a creature of vanity whom popular applause can buy and sell-laid down all his burthen at once, how can you think that you have reached virtue's crowning height when you have yielded up but a portion of yours? It is you yourself that the Lord wishes for, "a living sacrifice ...acceptable unto God." [Rom. 12:1] Yourself, I say, and not what you have. And therefore, as he trained Israel by subjecting it to many plagues and afflictions, so does He now admonish you by sending you trials of different kinds. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." [Heb. 12:6] The poor widow did but cast two mites into the treasury; yet because she cast in all that she had it is said of her that she surpassed all the rich in offering gifts to God. [Mark 12:43, Mark 12:44] Such gifts are valued not by their weight but by the good-will with which they are made. You may have spent your substance upon numbers of people, and a portion of your fellows may have reason to rejoice in your bounty; yet those who have received nothing at your hands are still more numerous. Neither the wealth of Darius nor the riches of Croesus would suffice to satisfy the wants of the world's poor. But if you once give yourself to the Lord and resolve to follow the Saviour in the perfection of apostolic virtue, then you will come to see what your place has hitherto been, and how you have lagged in the rear of Christ's army. Hardly had you begun to mourn for your dead daughters when the fear of Christ dried the tears of paternal affection upon your cheeks. It was a great triumph of faith, true. But how much greater was that won by Abraham who was content to slay his only son, of whom he had been told that he

was to inherit the world, yet did not cease to hope that after death Isaac would live again. [Cf. Heb. 11:17-19] Jephthah too offered up his virgin daughter, and for this is placed by the apostle in the roll of the saints. [Judg. 11:34-40; Heb. 11:32] I would not therefore have you offer to the Lord only what a thief may steal from you or an enemy fall upon, or a proscription confiscate, what is liable to fluctuations in value now going up and now down, what belongs to a succession of masters who follow each other as fast as in the sea wave follows wave, and-to say everything in a word-what, whether you like it or not, you must leave behind you when you die. Rather offer to God that which no enemy can carry off and no tyrant take from you, which will go down with you into the grave, nay on to the kingdom of heaven and the enchantments of paradise. You already build monasteries and support in the various islands of Dalmatia a large number of holy men. But you would do better still if you were to live among these holy men *usa* holy man yourself. "Be ye holy, saith the Lord, for I am holy." [Lev. 19:2; 1 Pet. 1:16] The apostles boasted that they had left all things and had followed the Saviour." [Luke 18:28] We do not read that they left anything except their ship and their nets; yet they were crowned with the approval of Him who was to be their judge. Why? Because in offering up themselves they had indeed left all that they had.

6. I say all this not in disparagement of your good works or because I wish to under rate your generosity in almsgiving, but because I do not wish you to be a monk among men of the world and a man of the world among monks. I shall require every sacrifice of you for I hear that your mind is devoted to the service of God. If some friend, or follower, or kinsman tries to combat this counsel of mine and to recall you to the pleasures of a handsome table, be sure that he is thinking less of your soul than of his own belly, and remember that death in a moment terminates both elegant entertainments and all other pleasures provided by wealth. Within the short space of twenty days you have lost two daughters, the one eight years old and the other six; and do you suppose that one so old as you are yourself can live much longer? David tells you how long a time you can look for: "the days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow." [Ps. 90:10] Happy is he and to be held worthy of the highest bliss whom old age shall find a servant of Christ and whom the last day shall discover fighting for the Saviour's cause. "He shall not be ashamed when he speaketh with his enemies in the gate." [Ps. 127:5] On his entrance into paradise it shall be said to him: "thou in thy lifetime receivedst evil things but nowhere thou art comforted." [Luke 16:25 (adapted)] The Lord will not avenge the same sin twice. Lazarus, formerly poor and full of ulcers, whose sores the dogs licked and who barely managed to live, poor wretch, on the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, is now welcomed into Abraham's bosom and has the joy of finding a father in the great patriarch. It is difficult nay impossible for a man to enjoy both the good things of the present and those of the future, to satisfy his belly here and his mind yonder, to pass from the pleasures of this life to the pleasures of that, to be first in both worlds, and to be held in honour both on earth and in heaven.

7. And if in your secret thoughts you are troubled because I who give you this advice am not myself what I desire you to be, and because you have seen some after beginning well fall midway on their journey; I shall briefly plead in reply that the words which I speak are not mine but those of the Lord and Saviour, and that I urge upon you not the standard which is possible to myself but the ideal which every true servant of Christ must wish for and realize. Athletes as a rule are stronger than their backers; yet the weaker presses the stronger to put forth all his efforts Look not upon

Judas denying his Lord but upon Paul confessing Him. Jacob's father was a man of great wealth; yet, when Jacob went to Mesopotamia, he went alone and destitute leaning upon his staff. When he felt weary he had to lie down by the wayside and, delicately nurtured as he had been by his mother Rebekah, was forced to content himself with a stone for a pillow. Yet it was then⁴ that he saw the ladder set up from earth to heaven, and the angels ascending and descending on it, and the Lord above it holding out a helping hand to such as fall and encouraging the climbers to fresh efforts by the vision of Himself. Therefore is the spot called Bethel or the house of God; for there day by day there is ascending and descending. When they are careless, even holy men lose their footing; and sinners, if they wash away their stains with tears regain their place. I say this not that those coming down may frighten you but that those going up may stimulate you. For evil can never supply a model and even in worldly affairs incentives to virtue come always from the brighter side. But I have forgotten my purpose and the limits set to my letter. I should have liked to say a great deal more. Indeed all that I can say is inadequate alike to satisfy the seriousness of the subject and the claims of your rank. But here is our Ausonius beginning to be impatient for the sheets, hurrying the secretaries, and in his impatience at the neighing of his horse, accusing my poor wits of slowness. Remember me, then, and prosper in Christ. And one thing more; follow the example set you at home by the holy Vera,⁵ who like a true follower of Christ does not fear to endure the hardships of pilgrimage. Find in a woman your 'leader in this high emprise.'⁶ 1: Cf. Letter LX 2: He alludes to the progmenae of the Stoics 3: Crates the Theban 4: Gen. 28:12, Gen. 28:13. Cp. Letters CVIII. and CXXIII 5: Of this lady nothing is known 6: Words of Virg. A. 1. 364, relating to Dido

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Letter 119. To Minervius and Alexander.

Minervius and Alexander two monks of Toulouse had written to Jerome asking him to explain for them a large number of passages in scripture. Jerome in his reply postpones most of these to a future time but deals with two in detail viz. (I) "we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed," 1 Cor. 15:51; and (1) "we shall be caught up in the clouds," 1 Th. 4:17. With regard to (1) Jerome prefers the reading "we shall all sleep but we shall not all be changed," and with regard to (2) he looks upon the language as metaphorical and interprets it to mean that believers will be 'assumed' into the company of the apostles and prophets. The date of the letter is 406 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. At the very moment of the departure of our holy brother Sisinnius, who had brought me your writings, I am compelled to dictate these words, whatever they may be, and I cannot conceal your prudence, but I beg you not to report this statement for glory, but rather for the sake of full friendship, as I am speaking to you as if speaking to myself. Many questions from your province have been brought to me by many holy brothers and sisters, which I thought to answer within a large space of time until the day of the Epiphany. And while dictating to many by the secret watch of night, and having finished the others, I reserved myself for yours, as if it were most difficult. Suddenly he came, saying that he was about to leave immediately. And when I asked him to delay his journey, he began to insist on the hunger of Libya to me, the needs of the Egyptian monasteries, the Nile's low water levels, the hunger of many, and that he was almost offended at the Lord, wanting to keep him longer. And so under the cover of the warp and weft, and threads, which I had prepared for your tunic, I sent them to you whole, so that whatever is missing in me, may be woven by your eloquence. You are wise and educated, and with your flow of words, like Appius said, you have migrated to Christ's eloquence. I do not need much work from you; they tell the story of a certain philosopher who had endured a rustic in persuading. 'I had hardly said half,' said he, 'when he understood me.' And so, being limited by time, I have presented to you the opinions of those who have left commentaries on the Holy Scriptures, and have interpreted many things word for word; so that I may free myself from questioning, and you may receive the authority of the ancient authors who, in reading and approving, may acquiesce not to my will, but to your judgment.

2. You ask in what sense it was said, and how it should be read in the first letter of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:5). Or according to some examples: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all indeed be changed," for both are found in Greek manuscripts. Concerning this, Theodore Heracleotes, who was from the city once called Perinthus, spoke in the Apostle's little commentaries: "We shall all indeed not sleep, but we shall all be changed." For Enoch and Elijah, having overcome the necessity of death, were translated from earthly conversation to heavenly kingdoms as they were in their bodies. Thus, also, the holy ones who are to be found in their bodies on the day of

consummation and judgment, together with the other saints who are to rise again from the dead, shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and shall not die; and they shall ever be with the Lord, the bitter necessity of death overcome. Hence the Apostle says: "In fact, we will not all sleep, but all will be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet." For there will be such a quick resurrection of the dead, that living people who are present at the time of the consummation in their own bodies, will not be able to anticipate the dead who rise again from the underworld. For Paul, plainly interpreting the matter, says: "For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise incorruptible, and we will be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:52), that it may be able to remain permanently in either punishment or in the kingdom of heaven.

3. Bishop Diodorus of Tarsus, passing over this chapter, briefly noted in the following: in that which is written, 'And the dead shall rise incorruptible. And we shall be changed.' 'If,' he says, 'the dead shall rise incorruptible, it is beyond doubt that they too shall have been changed for the better: what was the need to say, 'And we shall be changed'? Did he wish to imply that incorruption is common to all, but change is peculiar to the just? since they follow not only incorruption and immortality, but also glory.

4. Apollinarius, though in different words, asserts the same as Theodore: that some will not die, but will be taken from this present life into the future, so that with changed and glorified bodies, they may be with Christ. This we now believe regarding Enoch and Elijah.

5. Didymus walks the opposite way, not in steps, but in words, departing from the opinion of Origen. Behold, I speak a mystery to you: We shall all indeed sleep, but we will not all be changed. He spoke thus: "If the resurrection needed no interpreter, nor were it obscure in concept, Paul would not have said after much he spoke of resurrection, 'Behold, I speak a mystery to you: We shall all indeed sleep,' that is, die, 'but we will not all be changed,' except the holy alone." I know that in some codices it is written: Not everyone will sleep, but everyone will be changed. But it must be considered whether that which is premised, everyone will be changed, can be reconciled with what follows: The dead will rise incorruptible, and we will be changed. For if everyone will be changed, and this is common to all, it was pointless to say, and we will be changed. Therefore, it should be read as follows: All indeed will sleep, but not all will be changed. For if in Adam all die, and in death there is sleep; therefore, we will all sleep or die. But sleep, according to the idiom of the Scriptures, refers to those who have died in the hope of future resurrection. Everyone who sleeps will certainly wake up, unless sudden death has overtaken him and death has been associated with sleep. And when all have slept according to the law of nature, only the saints will be changed for the better both in body and soul, so that the resurrection of all may be incorruptible; but the glory and transformation will belong exclusively to the saints. And what follows in Greek, 'in an atom, in a twinkling, or in a flicker of an eye' (for both are read) and our interpreters have translated it, 'in a moment and in a sudden,' or, in the movement of the eye: Didymus explained it in the same way: 'Together with the resurrection of everyone, they will be snatched up to meet Christ: but those whom death has dissolved, which the present speech indicates.' For when He speaks of the resurrection of all, at a certain moment in time, in the twinkling of an eye or in a moment, He excludes all the fables of the first and second resurrection, so that some will be believed to be resurrected first, and others last. But an atom is a point in time that cannot be cut or divided. Hence Epicurus built the world and shaped everything from his

atoms. And the movement of the eye or of the things which is called **■ορ■** by the Greeks runs so quickly that it almost eludes the senses of the beholder. But because in most manuscripts instead of "rop■," that is, "blow" or "movement," "ripe" is read, we must understand that just as a light feather, or a piece of straw, or a thin dry leaf is carried away by the wind and transported from the ground to the air, so at the blink of an eye and at God's command, all the bodies of the dead will be moved, prepared for the coming of the judge. And he who joins together and says: On the last trumpet: for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality, has a twofold understanding; so that the sound of the trumpet or voice may indicate its greatness, according to what is written: As the trumpet exalts your voice (Isaiah 58); or the open resurrection of all, according to what we read in the Gospel: But when you give alms, do not sound the trumpet before you (Matthew 6:2), that is, do your charity secretly, so as not to appear to boast of another's misery. But we ask why he wrote that the dead will rise at the last trumpet. When the last trumpet is sounded, certainly others have gone before. In the Apocalypse of John, seven angels are described with trumpets, and each one sounding, namely the first, second and third, fourth, fifth and sixth, is indicated what was done through each (Apocalypse 8 and 9). But in the last, that is the seventh, with a clear blast of the trumpet sounding, the dead are raised: their bodies, which before were corruptible, receiving incorruption. Therefore, after the last trumpet, the Apostle explains what follows: For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise incorruptible, and we will be changed. When he says "us," "another himself," and "those with him," he means those who are alive, besides the dead. To understand this, there are some who say that the dead, who will rise incorruptible, are the bodies of the dead, those who are said to be changed, however, should have their souls received when converted into greater glory, and arrive at a perfect man, at the measure of the fullness of Christ's age. Others, on the other hand, assert that the dead should be understood as sinners who will rise without corruption so that they can endure eternal punishment: those who are changed, however, should be understood as saints who are transferred from virtue to virtue and from glory to glory. Wherefore also he introduced incorruption of the dead: For it behoveth this corruptible to put on incorruption. But when this mortal hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

6. Acacius of Caesarea, previously called the tower of Strato, after Eusebius, the bishop of Pamphili, in the fourth book of miscellaneous questions, discussed more broadly a question proposed to him, in which, accepting both (views) which seem to be incompatible, after the beginning which we omitted, he spoke thus: 'Let us first speak of what is found more in many codices: Behold I tell you a mystery: we shall indeed all sleep, but we shall not all be changed.' He said "mystery" so as to draw the attention of the listeners, and then to speak more fully about the resurrection. But this sleep, which is common to all, signifies death; wherefore he rightly puts it that we shall all sleep, that is, die; as he said before, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Therefore, since we all shall die, hear the sacraments which I speak. All indeed shall die, but not all shall be changed. For the trumpet shall sound, no doubt the seventh angel; and the dead shall rise again incorruptible. But if the dead shall rise again incorruptible, how shall they not be changed, when incorruption itself is a change? But by this change, whereby Paul and the saints

shall be changed, glorification is understood. But corruption is common to all, because in it sinners will be more miserable, so that they may be eternal in torments, and not dissolved by a mortal and corruptible body. In the same epistle, we read the Holy diversity of the resurrection, not in the nature of bodies, but in the variety of glory: while others rise again to everlasting punishment, others to everlasting glory. For there is one kind of flesh of birds, another of fish, another of land animals, and celestial bodies differ from terrestrial ones. "Thus, he says, there will also be the resurrection of the dead. The Church agrees with this opinion so that we all may die a common death, and not all be changed into glory, according to what Daniel writes: Many of those who are asleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace." (1 Corinthians 15:39-42 and Daniel 12:2) For those who rise again to shame and everlasting confusion, do not rise again to eternal glory, into which Paul and those with him will be transformed. Therefore, as these things stand, and have been thus understood by us, only those who rise again in glory are to undergo a change; but it is to be said that sinners and unbelievers, who are called dead, and rise again incorruptible, have no change, but rather everlasting punishment.

7. Let us move to the second reading, which is reported in most manuscripts. Not all of us indeed shall sleep, but all shall be changed. Hence some have said that many alive persons will be found in bodies, and if not all sleep, not all will die; but if not all die, not all will rise. For he is properly said to rise again who first fell by dying. Hence Paul also wishes to write in the first letter to the Thessalonians: We who live, who remain, will not be taken up before those who have fallen asleep: because the Lord himself will descend from heaven at the command, and with the voice of the Archangel and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who live, who are left, will be taken up together with them into the clouds to meet Christ in the air: and so we will always be with the Lord. [1 Thess. 4:14 and following] And from these words they attempt to prove that the Apostle Paul, and those who were writing the Epistle with him, thought that they were not going to die, but would be found on the day of consummation in the body. And if this is true, Paul erred, and was deceived by human estimation, to think that he would be found in the body; which the outcome of things proved to be false. And the Thessalonians themselves had understood this, not knowing the mysteries of mystical speech, and were fluctuating with various conjectures, saying: if Paul is to be found in the body, the judgment day is near. Therefore he corrects them, writing a second Epistle: We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him, that you be not soon moved from your mind, nor be terrified, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as sent from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God. Remember you not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (2 Thess. 2:1 et seq.). With these words, he does this in order to recall them from their mistakes, that they do not think the day of judgment is approaching, and what he wrote: We who live, who remain, will not precede those who have fallen asleep at the coming of the Lord, to understand it in a different way than he himself intended who wrote it. For it cannot be that he who wrote to Timothy: For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come (2 Tim. 4:6), should think that he was to be immortal in the flesh and never to die; and that he was to be instantly transferred from life on earth to the heavenly kingdom: especially since, writing to the Romans, he

said the same thing, Who will deliver me from this body of death? (Rom. 7. 24). And to the Corinthians, while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5. 6-8). He who said these things certainly knew that he was to die. It is better, therefore, to spiritually understand what is written, to accept sleep in the present place, not death, through which the soul is separated from the body; but sin after faith and offense against God, and sleep after baptism, about which even to the Corinthians he was speaking: And therefore among you many are weak and sickly, and many sleep (1 Cor. 11:30). And in another place: So also they that sleep in Christ, shall die (Ibid. 15:1): who, though they are dead, are not about to perish by eternal death, since they are not contained in mortal sin, but in light and minor sin. The one who also desired to avoid sin, spoke: Lest I should sleep in death (Ps. 12. 4). For the sleep of sin is what leads to death, and there is another kind of sleep of transgressions, which is not bound by death. Therefore, whoever lives a life that says, "I am the life" (John. 14. 6) (for our life is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians. 3. 3)) and has never been separated from it, nor sinned up to death, is said to be among the living, and will always be living; of whom also the Savior testifies in the Gospel of John's mystical discourse: "He who believes in me shall not die. And every one who lives and believes in me shall not die for all eternity" (John. 11. 25. 26). Hence, the Apostle, following in the footsteps of his Lord, taught the disciples what he learned from his master. Therefore, we shall all not sleep. For he who keeps his heart under all care, and watches over Christ's commandments and remembers His words, saying, "Watch, for you know not the hour when the thief will come" (Matthew. 24. 42), and in another place, "Do not give sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids" (Proverbs. 6. 4) so that you may become safe: like a deer freed from its bonds, and like a bird from its snare, such a one shall not sleep. So when certain persons who always live in Christ do not sleep and keep watch, it follows that not all sleep, and conversely all are changed; not by the change of glory, which properly belongs to the Saints, but by that change whereby this corruptible is made incorruptible; so that he may receive eternal rewards or punishments. And even if one sleeps in Christ and falls asleep through negligence, he should hear what is written. Shall he not awaken who sleeps? (Psalms 40:9) But he who does not sleep, but watches and always lives in Christ, will pass from life to life, or will be taken up in the clouds, so that he may always be with the Lord. Lazarus was one of these sleeping ones, of whom the Lord said, 'Lazarus, our friend, sleeps.' And while he was sleeping, he spoke of Martha, "He who believes in me, even if he is dead, shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall not die forever" (John 11: 25-26). For whoever trusts in Christ with their whole heart, even if they fall as a man in sin, lives forever by their faith. Otherwise, this common death is owed equally to believers and non-believers; and all will rise together, some to eternal confusion, others to eternal life by their belief. And so it can be said that whoever believes in Christ shall not die; and even if they die, they shall live forever. However, it is clear, except for Enoch and Elijah, that this has not happened according to physical death. (Genesis 5; and 4 Kings 2) But those who always live in Christ by the greatness of faith, neither sleep nor die: but they will be imitators of the Apostolic life, who lived without any fault in the law of justice; and passing over to the faith of the Lord, and believing in Him, who is called life and resurrection, they never sleep nor are they dead. For the soul that sins, it shall die (Ezek. 18, 4), therefore just as the soul that sins is dead, while the body is alive: and on the same day on which it sinned, it sleeps in death; Ecclesiastes says: He who sins, dies from that time; so the soul that keeps Christ's commandments, even if the body has died, will live forever.

This, however, must be understood, which is more agreeable to the truth, to read thus: All indeed shall sleep, but not all shall be changed; especially since it follows, The dead shall rise again incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For if all are to be changed, according to the other reading, how afterwards is it said, as if something special and private, and properly belonging to the apostles, And we shall be changed? But when he says we, he includes also the saints.

8. You ask how that which is written in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians should be understood: For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them who are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. However, it must be said what seems to others, namely to Theodore, Apollinarius, and Diodorus, who follow one opinion: of whom Diodorus wrote this. "Paul the Apostle calls them remaining and living; not that it is intended to be understood that he and others will be found in the body at the time of the resurrection, but he said of what is, the just; of whom I am also counted. For they themselves will run to meet Christ, and not sinners. But by the figure of speech, we accept living saints, who have not died because of sin but all whom Christ finds coming in the body. And what follows: We should not refer 'we shall not precede those who have fallen asleep' to the sinners at all. For sinners will not be caught up with the just to meet Christ, but those whom death dissolves." But why do I seek such things, and make false accusations against the Apostles' words, when he himself clearly writes: who will remain at the coming of the Lord? And who the remaining ones are, we learn from the words of the Savior: As in the days of Noah they led wives and husbands, and they married; and suddenly the flood came, and took them all away: so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man (Matt. 24; and Luke 17). With these words it is approved, that at the end of the world many will be alive and still found in their bodies. Following this: At the command and voice of the Archangel, the dead shall rise first. And once again the Savior speaks of this in the Gospel: But at midnight there was a cry, 'Look, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' (Matt. 25:6); for he will certainly catch those who are living in their bodies when two are in one bed: one will be taken and the other will be left behind: and two women grinding together, one will be taken and the other will be left behind (Luke 17). From these words it is shown that at midnight, when all is calm, the end of the world will come.

9. Origen in the third volume of the "Explanations of the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians," after discussing various matters with skillful and varied reasoning, introduced the following words: "Concerning which there is no doubt that Acacius has also spread much of it. What then do Paul and Silas and Timothy write to the Thessalonians in the Word of God: 'We who are alive, who remain, will not precede those who have fallen asleep in the coming of the Lord?' Who are these living ones who say such things! Certainly Paul is not an apostle from men, neither through men." (Galatians 1) And not only he, but whoever is like Paul in knowledge and conduct can say: We who live; whose body is dead because of sin; but the spirit lives because of righteousness: and whose members have been mortified upon the earth; so that the flesh does not lust against the spirit. For if flesh still desires, it lives; and because it lives, it desires; and its members are not mortified upon the earth. But if they are mortified, it does not lust against the spirit, which through mortification has lost such a desire. Therefore, just as those who have lost present life and have

been translated to better things, live more, taking off the body of death and all encouragements of evils, so those who carry about the dying of Jesus in their body do not at all live according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. They live in him who is life and Christ lives in them, about whom it is written: The word of God is living and efficacious, and more piercing than any two-edged sword; and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit, of the joints also and the marrow, and is a discerner of thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4. 12). For they live in whom the power of God lives, all human frailty being laid aside; and in whom wisdom lives, which is hidden in God; and in whom righteousness lives and operates. For Christ was made for us not only righteousness from God, but also wisdom, and anything that is virtue. And if indeed in this place they would separate themselves from those who are sleeping and dead in Christ, who are writing this letter, it seems ((alternatively seems)) to be a superfluous annotation, and a testimony taken from one place would not be valid. But now, in the same sense, because of the same spirit, he speaks in the first Corinthians, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet." For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This saying is indeed written in this place: In a trumpet of God, it will descend from heaven; compare it to what is said to the Corinthians: In the last trumpet, for the trumpet shall sound. But to them, what is read to the Thessalonians: And the dead in Christ shall rise first. This what is written to the Corinthians: And the dead shall rise incorruptible. Now what follows is, Then we who are alive, who remain, answers it: And we shall be changed, both of which can be understood thus. We who live, we who remain until the coming of the Lord, and we who will be changed and are not among those who are called dead, but we live: therefore, we await the presence of the Lord not in death, but in life, because we are from the Israelite race, and the elect are from us, of whom the Lord once spoke. I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bent the knee to Baal (3 Kings 19:18). In John's Gospel, too, a double order of the living and the dead is described. Everyone who believes in me, even though he dies, shall live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die." (John 11:25-26) If we understand "living" in this way, as we have already said, let us believe that those who have died and are asleep in Christ, but who wish to live in Christ, have died because of sin. But if the remains and the chosen according to grace are called "living," who neither believe thus, nor are born of Israelite nobility, then they will be called asleep and dead in Christ.

10. There are those who have spoken of this place in this way. They are called "alive," who have never died to sin, but those who have sinned, and died in that sin, are named dead, but they have turned to repentance, they cleanse their past offenses, they are called dead because they have sinned, but in Christ they are dead, because they are fully converted to God. Furthermore, those who are alive and have the testimony of faith and have not yet received the promise of God, God has thought something better for them and are not without those who are righteous, that they may be crowned in it, they have the beatitude of enjoying a good conscience while living, and are left in the advent of the Lord and Savior. But because God is merciful, and offers salvation even to those who sleep, who died in Christ, they will not be prevented, nor alone will they be carried away in the clouds: but according to the example of the Gospel parable (Matthew 20), the workers of the eleventh hour will receive the same reward as those of the first hour who were sent into the vineyard. Nor should this seem unjust to anyone, that unequal labor should receive the same reward. For there is a great difference between those who have been healed after wounds, and those who have never seen the terror of death. Concerning them, I think it has been said: What

man is there that lives and shall not see death? He shall deliver his soul from the hand of death (Ps. 88.45). Nor is it, as some think, that he is accepted for nothing: but almost as if to say, who do you think, according to what is written: Who is wise, and understands these things? (Hosea 14.10). And in another place: Lord, who shall dwell in your tabernacle? (Ps. 14.1). And again: Who has known the mind of the Lord? (Rom. 11. 31) Therefore, there will be few remaining from the believers who will see the coming of the Lord, according to what God's Word is, not in the lowliness of flesh, but in the glory of triumph. And it must be considered how he first called those sleeping: then those dead in Christ, whom they could not precede while alive. For whoever does not keep what is written: Do not give sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids; so that you may be safe, like a roebuck from the bonds, and like a bird from the snare (Prov. 6. 4), he will sleep and will be numb with guilty sleep, and when he has slept, he will pass into death. For just as he who is awake moves, so he who sleeps lies motionless, and he is numb with the likeness of death. But it will be taught to us by the first Epistle to the Corinthians that death follows sleep, in which it is written thus: And now Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. For by a man came death, and by a man the resurrection of the dead. And after a little: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Therefore, when these things are said about sleep and death and we read in the Apostle that it is said, Rise thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee, let us swear to the Lord, and let us make a vow to the God of Jacob, each one saying in his heart: If I shall go up into my bed, if I shall give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the Lord: doubtless, he hath prepared in his soul a tabernacle for the God of Jacob; that God may rest eternally in him. He proceeds: For the Lord himself commandeth it, and so on. For he who was sent from the Father will descend, not by diversity of power, but by judgment of dispensation; the Word of God, and wisdom, and truth, and justice, will descend to those who are on the lower parts. And although they are dead to whom he deigns to descend, yet they are not alienated from him. For they are called dead in Christ. But they who live have this privilege, that they are chosen out of many. Yet both bands, both of the dead who are in Christ, and of the living, shall be caught up together in clouds to meet Christ in the air, so that they wait not until he shall come upon the earth, but may enjoy His Presence and His companionship in the heights. And what great mercy of Christ, that He should not only stoop to be made flesh for our salvation, but that He should descend even to the dead, and in His very death should give the pledge of life! For water and blood issued from His side. (John 19). Therefore, the divine word came down with the voice of the Archangel going before and preparing the way for Him in those who can bear His presence. For us to understand this, let us come to know the mysteries of His first coming. It is written of John, who was His precursor, that he said in the wilderness: "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, and so on." What did the voice cry out in the wilderness? "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths" (Matt. 3:3; Luke 3:4; Mark 1:3; John 1:23). For what reward or payment? "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall become straight and the rough ways plain; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Isaiah 40:3-4). But this [was done] because the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And now there shall be no more voice of a prophet in the wilderness: for the angel himself shall prepare the way before the Lord. Not in the humility of carne [i. e. flesh] is he come, but speaking truth, the

Word of God, who is with the Father. And then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country about Jordan: And were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them: Ye brood of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come? (Matt. 3. 7) Now, in the voice of the Archangel going before the Lord descending from heaven, and in the most clear trumpet, each one of the believers is summoned, either to battle, or to the priestly office we read in the Book of Numbers (ch. 10, v.3), of the holy trumpets which sounded at the door. But if the voice of an angel and the trumpet of an archangel is great, how much greater will be the trumpet of God, which prepares the ways of the first asleep and dead in Christ; then of those who live and remain and await the coming of the word of God? Perhaps the simple blast of a trumpet is necessary for those who sleep and are dead in Christ, but the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God, are reserved for those who live and are in the presence of God. Let us see what can be understood, and that which follows: Together with them we shall be taken. With this word, I think I have shown a sudden transition to better things so as to say that he wanted to be carried away, so that the speed of the passing, exceeded the sense of the one thinking. Which he signified in another place with the same property of the word: 'I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—and he heard things that cannot be told, which man cannot utter.' (2 Cor. 12. 2, et seqq.) For some others who were making progress and (so to speak) advancing to greater things, until they became in accordance with that which is written Great exceedingly: and we read that some have been assumed into heaven. But Paul, the chosen vessel, was caught up into the third heaven: and therefore he heard unspeakable words. However, it is more diligently to be contemplated how those who are caught up in the clouds are caught up to meet Christ. We know that the clouds are the prophets to whom God commanded that they should not rain rain upon Israel when they had filled up the measure of their fathers, and the Law and the Prophets were until John the Baptist (Matthew 11:13). And because God put the apostles first in the Church, second the prophets (Ephesians 4:11), not only the prophets but also the apostles are to be understood as clouds. Therefore, if anyone is drawn towards Christ, they ascend above the clouds of the Law and the Gospel, above the Prophets and the Apostles; and having taken the wings of a dove, with their teachings, they are raised to the heights. They meet, not below but in the air, and with a spiritual understanding of Scripture. And he who meets in spiritual matters, leaving behind earthly affairs, whether he sleeps or dies in Christ, or lives on, having been reserved for His presence, will always be with Him, and will enjoy the Word of God, wisdom, truth, and justice.

11. I have spoken these things with swift speech, presenting to your wisdom what the learned men thought of each place, and with which arguments they wished to approve their opinions, for my own small and insignificant authority is not so great that I, who am nothing and am only exposed to the bites of the envious, am equal to those who have gone before us in the Lord. Nor is it like the prejudiced opinion of the disciples of Pythagoras, but rather the reason of the teaching must be weighed. But if anyone of the opposing faction grumbles because I read the explanations of those whose teachings I do not accept, let him know that I am pleased to follow the advice of the Apostle: "Test everything, hold fast to what is good" (1 Thess. 5:21), and of the Savior himself who said: "Be proven money-changers, so that if anyone is a counterfeit coin, and does not have the likeness of Caesar, and is not stamped with the public image, let him be rejected." But he who

prefers the face of Christ, shining with a clear light, let him be placed into the bag of our hearts. For if I wish to know dialect, or the dogmas of philosophers, and in order to return to our own knowledge of scripture; I ought not to question the simple men of the Church, whose merit lies elsewhere; and each person abounds in his own sense (especially as it is said that in a large house there are many vessels of different kinds (2 Tim. 2:20)); but those who have learned the skill from the craftsman and meditate on the Law of the Lord day and night. I myself, both in youth and in extreme old age, maintain that Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea were most learned men, but erred in the truth of dogmas. What we can say about Theodore, Acacius, and Apollinaris on the contrary, all left a memory of their studies in the explanations of the Scriptures. In the earth, gold is sought, and from the beds of rivers, shining sand is brought out: and one can find the sands of Pactolus richer in mud than in the stream. Why do my friends tear me to pieces, and, having turned against me, bark like foolish dogs? The whole of their zeal is, in fact, an eyebrow of knowledge, to criticize the work of others and to defend the treachery of the ancient fathers, so that they may lose their faith. It is my intention to read the ancients, proof every point, retain what is good, and not depart from the faith of the Catholic Church.

12. I, wanting to reply to other questions, and to dictate immediately either my own or someone else's, was admonished by Brother Sisinnio to write letters both to you and to the other holy brothers who are worthy of our love. I will therefore restrain my pace, and if life is a companion to me, I will reserve myself for the future task, so that I may obey you in sections and so that the fruit and old body may be able to bear a moderate load. But this I briefly remind at the end, that which is read in Latin codices: We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed, is not contained in Greek volumes; but either, We shall all sleep, but we shall not all be changed; or, We shall not all sleep, we shall all be changed; of which we have explained the meaning above.

Letters - letter_120

Letter 120. To Hedibia. At the request of Hedibia, a lady of Gaul much interested in the study of scripture, Jerome deals with the following twelve questions. It will be noticed that several of them belong to the historical criticism of our own day.

- (1) How can anyone be perfect? and How ought a widow without children to live to God?
- (2) What is the meaning of Matt. xxvi. 29?
- (3) How are the discrepancies in the evangelical narratives to be accounted for? How can Matt. xxviii. 1 be reconciled with Mark xvi. 1, Mark xvi. 2 (4) How can Matt. xxviii. 9 (Saturday evening) be reconciled with John xx. 1-18 (Sunday morning)?
- (5) How can Matt. xxviii. 9 be reconciled with John xx. 17?
- (6) How was it that, if there was a guard of soldiers at the sepulchre, Peter and John were allowed to go in freely? (Matt. xxvii. 66: John xx. 1-8.)
- (7) How is the statement of Matthew and Mark that the apostles were ordered to go into Galilee to see Jesus there to be reconciled with that of Luke and John who make Him appear to them in Jerusalem?
- (8) What is the meaning of Matt. xxvii. 50, Matt. xxviii. 51?
- (9) How is the statement of John xx. 22 that Jesus breathed on his apostles the Holy Ghost to be reconciled with that of Luke (Luke xxiv. 49: Acts i. 4) that He would send it to them after His ascension?
- (10) What is the meaning of the passage, Rom. ix. 14-29?
- (11) What is the meaning of 2 Cor. ii. 16?
- (12) What is the meaning of 1 Th. v. 23? The date of the letter is 406 or 407 a.d. The below translation sourced from tertullian.org, with the following note:

English translation by James Snapp, Jr. via Google Translate

Having found, side-by-side at <http://remacle.org/bloodwolf/eglise/jerome/hedibia.htm> , the Latin text of Jerome's Epistle 120 — To Hedibia, I used the online Google Translate tool to render the French text into a mechanical sort of English. I then took my best guesses about what the text meant. In the Preface and in the first three questions, I consulted the English translation already made by Roger Pearse, and Burgon's rendering of part of the text, found on pages 53-54 of his 1871 *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*.

What you read here should not be considered completely reliable as far as details are concerned, and here and there I suspect that I completely obscured the actual meaning of Jerome's

statements. Nevertheless, this rough English text has some value because it is, as far as I know, currently the only complete English translation of Jerome's Epistle 120. Also, by comparing this material to James Kelhoffer's English translation of Ad Marinum, anyone can see that Jerome, as he dictated this letter, depended heavily and extensively upon Ad Marinum. For example, in the first paragraph of Jerome's reply to Question #4; he seeks to resolve a perceived discrepancy by asserting that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, and that an interpreter is responsible for changing a precise and harmonious Hebrew expression into a less appropriate term. This is exactly what Eusebius does in his reply to the second question of Marinus (cf. Kelhoffer, *The Witness of Eusebius' ad Marinum*, p. 88).

Gratitude is expressed to the creators of the Remacle website, Roger Pearse for announcing the existence of this material at the Remacle website, and to Stephen Carlson, who told Roger about the site.

Yours in Christ, James Snapp, Jr.

PREFACE Although I have never had the honor of seeing your face, I know very well the reputation that you have gained in the world by your ardent faith. So, from far-off Gaul you have written to me, coming to seek me in my solitary repose in the wilderness near Bethlehem, so that I may respond to some little questions on Holy Scripture. And you come on the recommendation of the man of God, my son Apodemius, as if there was not anyone in your province suitably knowledgeable about God's law who could instruct you to see the way through your doubts. But perhaps, instead of seeking to be instructed yourself, you seek me in order to test my ability, and after having consulted others on the difficulties that have caused you to hesitate, you still want to know what I think. Your ancestors Paterus and Delphidus — the first of whom taught rhetoric at Rome before I was born, and the second of whom, during my youth, was illustrious among all the Gauls due to the power of his prose and poetry — both now dead, may not validly chasten me for the liberty I take by instructing a member of their family. They excelled, I admit, in eloquence and in the literature of the humanities, but I daresay, without fear of stealing their glory, that they were less knowledgeable about God's law, in which no one can be instructed except by the Father of lights, who enlightens every man coming into this world, and who is found in the midst of the faithful who are gathered in his name. So I declare, without fear of being accused of vanity, that in this letter I will not use any pompous words, which belong to the human wisdom that God must destroy one day, but instead the language of faith, treating spiritually spiritual things. Thus the deep of the Old Testament calls to the deep of the gospel with the noise of the waterfall, that is, the prophets and the apostles, and the truth of the Lord shall rise up to the clouds, which He has forbidden to shed rain upon the unbelieving Jews, but rather to water the lands of the Gentiles, and to soften the torrent of thorns, and to sooth the waters of the Dead Sea. So pray that the true Elijah will invigorate the dead and sterile waters within me, and season the meats that I present to you with the salt of the apostles, to whom He said, "You are the salt of the earth." For nothing can be offered to God that is not seasoned with salt. Do not look here for the thunder of that worldly eloquence that Jesus Christ saw fall from heaven like lightning; instead cast your eyes upon this man acquainted with sorrow, who had neither beauty nor attraction, who understands infirmity. And believe that as I respond to your questions, I do not depend on my own training and ability, but on the promise of Him who said, "Open your mouth and I will fill it."

QUESTION #1

You ask me how a person can become perfect, and how a childless widow should manage her life.

Such a question was put to Jesus Christ by a doctor of the law: "Master," he said to him, "what is it that I do to gain eternal life?" The Lord replied, "Do you know the commandments?" "Which commandments?" replied the doctor. Jesus said, "Do not kill, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, honor your father and your mother, and love your neighbor as yourself." This doctor answered him, "I kept all these commandments since my youth." Jesus Christ said, "You still lack one thing: if you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor; then come and follow me."

So, madam, in response to the question you pose, I will employ the words of Jesus: if you want to be perfect, carry your cross, follow the Savior, emulating Saint Peter, who said, "You see, Lord, that we have left everything to follow you." Go, sell everything you have, give to the poor and follow the Savior.

Christ does not say, "Give it to your children, your brothers, your parents," for by this standard, even if you had such, the Lord must have first preference: "Give it to the poor," or rather, to Christ, whom you assist in the person of the poor. He, being rich, became poor due to love of us — He who said in the thirty-ninth Psalm, "As for me, I was poor and needy, and the Lord took care of me." And, at the beginning of the following psalm, "Blessed is he who is attentive to the needs of the poor and the needy."

Indeed attentiveness is needed to discern the poor from the many people who live in their sins as much as in squalor and poverty; what is meant is those of the sort of whom the apostle Paul spoke when he says, "They only asked us not to forget the poor." It was for the relief of these poor people that Paul and Barnabas carefully collected alms on the first day of the week in the congregations of the Gentile converts to the faith, and they disciplined themselves, not sending others, to bring it to those who had been stripped of their property for Jesus Christ — those who suffered persecution, and who told their father and their mother, their wives and their children, "We do not know you." These are the authentic poor, who have performed the will of the heavenly Father, and of the Savior who said, "These are my mother and my brothers: those who carry out the will of My Father." In saying this, I do not mean that to prevent alms-giving to Jews, to Gentiles, and to all other poor people of any nation whatsoever. But we must always prefer the Christian to the unbeliever, and among the Christians themselves, we must make a great distinction between a poor man whose life is pure and innocent and one whose life is corrupt and disorderly. For this reason the Apostle Paul, who in many places in his epistles urges the faithful to exercise charity toward the poor, recommends that they do so primarily to fellow believers — to one with whom we are united in the same religion, and who is not separated from the brotherhood by disruptive and corruptive immorality. Inasmuch as Saint Paul commands us to give food to our enemies when they are hungry, and to give them something to drink when thirsty, and thereby to pour coals of fire upon their head, how much more ought we to do so for those who are not our enemies, and who profess a holy Christian life?

It is necessary to take in a beneficial way, and not in a bad sense, what is said by the apostle: "Thereby you pour coals of fire on his head." He meant that in doing good to our enemies, we

overcome their malice and hatred with our expressions of goodness, and thus we will soften their adamancy; we banish the bitterness and fury to make room for friendship and affection. Thus we pour upon their heads those coals about which it is written, "A mighty hand launches sharp arrows with devouring coals." For, just as the seraph of whom Isaiah speaks purified the prophet's lips with a fiery coal which he had taken from the altar, we shall purify the sins of our enemies, overcoming evil with good, blessing those who curse us, and imitating our Father in heaven, who "makes his sun rise on the good and the evil, and sends rain on the just and the sinners."

Since you have no little children, "use the wealth from swindling to make more friends for yourself, that you may be received in the eternal dwelling-places." It is not for no reason that the Gospel refers to the earthly riches of wealth as unjust, because they have no source other than the injustice of men, and one cannot gain unless someone else loses. So I consider the axiom to be true, that those with much property are either swindlers, or the heirs of swindlers. This doctor of the law, being told by Jesus Christ that to be perfect we should renounce all the wealth we possess, could not resolve to do so, because he was rich. Then the Savior, turning to His disciples, said, "How difficult it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven!" He does not say it is impossible, but it is difficult, although the example that He gives shows an absolute impossibility: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." But this is impossible rather than difficult, for it will never be possible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle; therefore a rich man can never enter the kingdom of heaven. But the camel is a terribly hunchbacked animal, and it usually carries heavy burdens. And when we wander off the path that Jesus Christ blazed, and follow bad paths that lead to sin, we are loaded with the burden of riches or the weight of our sins, and it is impossible for us to enter the kingdom of God. But if we unload this oppressive weight, and put on the wings of a dove, then we will fly away ourselves; we will find rest, and we will say, "When you can sleep in the middle of the campfires, you will become like the dove, whose wings are silver, and whose back is as bright as gold." With our back, which was deformed by the heavy burden that was crushing us, covered with this bright gold, representing the spiritual sense of the divine Scriptures, and with these "silver wings," which signify the literal sense, we will be able to enter into the kingdom of God. The apostles, saying that they had abandoned all their possessions, boldly sought from Jesus Christ a proper reward for this virtue, and the Lord replied, "Whoever, for My name, shall abandon his house, or his brothers, or his sisters, or his father or mother, or wife, or children, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life." What blessedness to have Jesus Christ himself as your debtor, and to receive much in return for little things — the eternal in exchange for the temporary, and durable and strong goods in exchange for our fragile and perishable wealth.

So, if a widow has children, especially if her family is upper-class, she must not leave them in poverty. Let her love them equally, and have regard for her soul, treating it like one of her own children. She must apportion the property together with them, and not abandon everything to them; rather, she must make Christ a fellow-heir. You could perhaps say that this is difficult, and revolting, and that such treatment of children opposes your tender instincts. But you will hear the Lord reply: "The one who is able to perform such a thing, let him do so," "If you want to be perfect, go, sell all that you possess," etc. In saying, "If you want to be perfect," He does not make this burden a requirement, but allows freedom to pursue either course regarding children. Do you want to be perfect and raise yourself to the highest level of virtue? Imitate the apostles, sell everything

you have, give to the poor, and follow the Lord. Separated from all creatures and stripped of everything that you own in the world, follow Him bare, with only a cross. Or, are you content not to be perfect, and to remain in the second-highest level of virtue? Then abandon everything you have, and give it to your children and parents. No one will rebuke you, if you follow this lesser way, provided that you also agree that it is fair that you defer to one whose way tends toward perfection.

You will want to tell me that such sublime virtue is for the men and apostles, but it is impossible for a refined woman, who needs a thousand things to maintain her way of life. Hear therefore what the apostle Paul says: "I do not mean that others are helped and that you are overburdened, but that, to relieve inequality, your abundance compensates for their poverty, so that your poverty is also relieved by their abundance." That is why the Lord says in the Gospel, "Whoever has two coats, let him give to him who has none."

Now, if we lived among the ice of Scythia and the snow of the Alps, where not only two and three coats, but even the animal-skins are scarcely sufficient protection from the harsh cold climate, would we be obliged to strip ourselves to clothe others? We must understand "coat" to mean all that is necessary to clothe us and provide what is naturally required, since we are born naked. And by "the provisions of a single day" is meant, whatever is necessary to feed ourselves. In this sense we fathom the commandment in the Gospel, "Do not worry about tomorrow," that is, about the future, and the apostle's statement, "While we have food and covering, we must be content."

If you have more than you need, give to the poor, and know that you are thus paying a debt. Ananias and Sapphira deserved to be condemned by the apostle Saint Peter, because they had quietly set aside part of their property. Is it a crime, you might ask, not to donate everything one has? No, but the apostle punished them with the death penalty because they had lied to the Holy Spirit, for while reserving for themselves what they needed to live, they pretended to surrender completely all earthly things — thus seeking, in vain, only the approval and esteem of men. Notwithstanding that we are free to give or not to give, he who renounces all his goods in order to be perfect must expect that one day in the future his poverty will be rewarded with property.

Regarding the life that a widow must lead, the apostle sets the rules in a few words, when he says, "The widow who lives in luxury is dead, although she seems alive." I have dealt with this matter thoroughly in the two books that I have dedicated to Furia and Salvina.

QUESTION #2 How shall we understand what the Savior said in Saint Matthew: "And I tell you that henceforth I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink with you again in the kingdom of My Father"? This passage has caused some authors to invent a certain fable, claiming that Christ will reign in the flesh for a thousand years, and will drink the wine which He has not drunk from that time until the end of the world. But as for us, we believe about the bread, which the Lord broke and gave to His disciples, is nothing but the body of our Lord and Savior, as He Himself said to them, "Take, eat, this is my body." And the cup is the one about which He said, "Drink of this, all of you, for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many." This is the cup of which we read in the prophet, "I take the cup of salvation," and elsewhere, "How admirable is your cup which overwhelms me!" So, inasmuch as "the bread which came down from heaven" is the body of the Lord, and if the wine He gave to His disciples is his blood, "the blood of the new covenant, which was poured out for many for the remission of sins," let us reject the Jewish fables, and assemble with the Lord in this great upper room, furnished and prepared, in which He kept the

Passover with His apostles, and there, receiving from His hand the cup of the new covenant, and celebrating Easter with Him, let us become intoxicated with that wine of sobriety. For the kingdom of God is not drink and food, but justice, and joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit.

It was not Moses, but our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave us the true bread — He who is both the diner and the dinner, the eater and that which is to be eaten. It is His blood we drink, and we cannot drink it without Him. Every day in His sacrifices, we press the grapes of the true vine, and of the vine of Sorek, which means "Chosen," and we drink in this wine of the kingdom of the Father, not according to the letter, but in the newness of the spirit, singing a new song which no one can sing except in the kingdom of the church, which is the kingdom of the Father. The patriarch Jacob desired to eat this bread, saying, "If the Lord God is with me, and gives me bread to eat and clothes to wear," and so forth. "For when we are baptized into Jesus Christ, we are protected by Christ. We eat the bread of angels, and we heard the Lord telling us, "My food is to do the will of my Father who sent Me, and to accomplish His work." Let us therefore also do the will of the Father who sent us, and carry out His work, and Christ will drink His blood in the kingdom of the church with us.

QUESTION #3

Why do the evangelists speak differently about the resurrection of our Lord, and how He appeared to His apostles?

Here you first ask why Matthew says that our Lord rose "on the evening of the Sabbath, when the first day of the following week was just beginning to shine," and Saint Mark, on the contrary, said that He arose in the morning, "Jesus arising on the first day of the week in the morning appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had expelled seven demons. And she, departing, told those who were His companions, as they mourned and wept. And these, hearing that He was alive, and that she had seen Him, did not believe in Him." This problem has a twofold solution. Either we do not accept the testimony of Mark, because this final portion is not contained in most of the Gospels that bear his name — almost all the Greek codices lacking it — or else must affirm that Matthew and Mark have both told the truth, that our Lord rose on the evening of the Sabbath, and that He was seen by Mary Magdalene in the morning of the first day of the following week. So this is how this passage of Saint Mark should be read: "Jesus arising," place a little pause here, then add, "on the first day of the week in the morning appeared to Mary Magdalene," so that, being raised, according to Saint Matthew, in the evening of the last day of the week, He appeared to Mary Magdalene, according to Saint Mark, "the morning of the first day of the week," which is how John also represents the events, stating that He was seen on the morning of the next day.

[Hort, Notes, p. 32, describing the parallel to Question #4 in Eusebius' Ad Marinum: "Strangely enough, the answer given by Eusebius to the next question, relating to a supposed contradiction between Mt xxviii 1 and Jo xx 1, is, taken by itself, inconsistent with his former answer: it implicitly excludes that interpretation of οψε σαββατου in Mt which had been there assumed as a standard for correcting the construction of Mc xvi 9. This second answer, evidently founded on the Epistle of Dionysius of Alexandria to Basilides, is however in effect, though not in form, a third alternative to the first difficulty. It thus merely affords an additional demonstration of the indecision often displayed by Eusebius, especially in presence of a conflict of traditional authorities."]

QUESTION #4 How can what Saint Matthew says — that Mary Magdalene saw Jesus Christ "on the evening of the last day of the week" — agree with what John said, that "the morning of the first day of the week," she wept at the tomb? By "the first day of the week" is meant Sunday, because the Jews concluded the week on the Sabbath, and pagans marked the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth days of the week with the names of idols and planets. So the apostle Paul instructs the believers in Corinth to collect, on "the first day of the week," the alms they designated for the relief of the poor. So do not imagine that Saint Matthew and Saint John do not agree together: they supply different names for only one hour, which is midnight and the singing of the rooster. For Saint Matthew said that our Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene "on the evening of the last day of the week," that is, when it was already late and the night was not only underway, but even far advanced, almost gone. And he adds, in further explanation, that the first day of the week was already approaching. As for John, he does not only say, "The first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came early in the morning to the tomb," but adds, "When it was still unclear." So they both agree about the time, which is the rooster-song and midnight; one of which marked the beginning and the other marked the end. It seems to me that the text of Saint Matthew, who wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, is, "When it was already late," and not "evening," which the interpreter, who was not aware of the true meaning of this word, translated as "evening" instead of saying, "When it was already late." In the ordinary use of the Latin language, the word means "elgonza," late [sero], and we can use it when, for example, we say to someone, "You came too late," meaning that a prearranged meeting-time has passed long ago.

Now we meet the objection, "How can Mary Magdalene, after seeing the risen Lord, come again to the tomb, as the Gospel says, weeping?" We must answer, according to a keen sense of perception, that in accordance with all the gifts that Christ had given, she ran several times to his tomb, either alone or in the company of other women, and that sometimes she gazed adoringly at what she saw, and sometimes she wept as she waited.

Some believe, however, that there were two Mary Magdalenes, both natives of the village of Magdelon, and the one who met the risen Christ, according to Saint Matthew, is different from the one which, according to Saint John, appeared so forlorn. What is certain is that the Gospel makes mention of four women called Mary: the first is the mother of our Lord, and the second is Mary, wife of Cleophas and aunt of Jesus Christ, being His mother's sister, and the third is Mary, mother of James and Joses, and the fourth is Mary Magdalene. Some, however, confused the mother of James and Joses with the aunt of Jesus Christ.

Others, to get rid of this difficulty, say that the true reading speaks of Saint Mary, and that he did not include the name of Magdalene, but the scribes have added it inappropriately. As for me, it seems to me that we can meet this challenge in a simpler and less embarrassing way, by saying that these holy women, unable to bear the absence of Jesus Christ, were in transit all night, and went to observe His grave not only once and twice, but constantly, especially as their sleep was disturbed and interrupted by the earthquake, by the sound of splitting stones, by the eclipse of the sun, by all sorts of confusion and inconvenience, and especially by the desire they had to see the Savior.

QUESTION #5

How can we reconcile what Saint Matthew says, that on the evening of the last day of the week, Mary Magdalene, along with another Mary, bowed at the feet of the Savior, and what we read in John, that Jesus said, "Do not touch me, for I am not yet ascended to my Father?"

Mary Magdalene, with the other one, had already seen the risen Christ Jesus, and had fallen prostrate at His feet, but the concern that she felt due to the absence of the Savior did not permit her to remain quiet in her house. She returned to the tomb during the night and, seeing that the stone had been removed which was previously used to close the tomb, she ran to tell Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus dearly loved that they had taken the Lord's body, and she did not know where he was laid. The woman was simultaneously subject to her piety and her error: her piety, as she sought with such eagerness to seek after the King, and her error, as she said that they had removed the Lord.

Saint Peter and Saint John then went into the tomb, and having seen on one side the body-wrappings, and the other on the shroud that had enveloped the head of the Savior, they were convinced of the resurrection of their divine master, whose body was no longer in the tomb. But Mary stood outside, near the tomb weeping, and bending down to look inside, she saw two angels dressed in white, seated in the place where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the feet, so that she might observe that it was impossible that men had been capable of removing a body that angels had been guarding, and thus she should have been overjoyed to see these famous and powerful protectors.

These angels, when she saw them, said, "Woman, why do you weep?", as Jesus Christ had once said to his mother, "Woman, what is common between you and me? My time is not yet come." They address her as "Woman," and in saying, "Why do you weep?" they point out the uselessness of her tears. But the Magdalene was so beside herself, not knowing what to believe, and full of awe at the wonders she saw — wrapped in a cloud, as it were, which was so thick that without realizing that she was speaking to angels, she replied, "I weep because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they laid him." O Mary, if you are convinced he is the Lord, and your Lord in particular, how can you believe they have removed Him? You do not know, you say, where they have gone? How can you ignore what you gaze at, this very moment? She sees angels without realizing it, caught up in fear and amazement, and occupied only by the desire to see the Lord; she turns her head and casts her eyes all around.

Finally, having looked behind her, she saw Jesus standing, without realizing, however, that it was Him. Not that Jesus Christ, as some claim — Manes and other heretics — had changed his figure so as to appear when he wanted in different forms, but rather, the Magdalene, surprised and amazed at all the wonders, thought she was seeing a gardener, such was her anxiety and eagerness. Jesus therefore said to her, as the angels had said, "Woman, why do you weep?" And He added, "Who are you looking for?" Mary replied, "Lord, if you have removed Him, tell me where you put Him and I will take Him thence." It is an expression of a truly humble faith when she calls to the Savior, "Lord," an address which would require a gardener to respond with respect and honesty. But notice, please, the extent of her error and her blindness: she imagines that the gardener was able to remove only the body of Jesus Christ, which was guarded by a company of soldiers, whose tomb was under the protection of angels, and forgetting her inherent weakness, she is persuaded that, alone and frightened as she is, she nevertheless has enough strength to

transport the body of a man of full age, and who, never mind the rest, had been embalmed with a hundred pounds of myrrh. Jesus having called by name, so that she knew at least the voice of Him whose face she did not perceive, the woman, still occupied her mistake, said not "Lord," but "Rabboni," that is to say, "Teacher." What reversal of mind! What a way of thinking! She bestows upon a gardener the title of "Lord," and calls Jesus Christ as "Teacher."

After she had sought among the dead for a man full of life, and she and the other one had run away, without her weakness, her wandering imagination guided her to seek for the dead body of Him whom she had seen alive, whose feet she had fallen before, worshiping Him. So the Lord said to her, "Do not touch me, because I am not yet ascended to my Father." That is, since you are seeking a dead man, you do not deserve to touch my life. If you believe that I am not yet ascended to my Father, and that men came stealthily to remove my body, you are unworthy to touch me." Jesus told her this, not to cool her zeal or to prevent the confirmation which she sought, but to show her that this fragile and mortal body which He had occupied was surrounded by all the glory and all the radiance of divinity, and that she would not have wished to see the Lord in a tangible and material body, if her faith had been better cultivated, and if she had learned that He would now be with His Father. Indeed, the faith of the apostles seems much more lively and more vibrant, because, unlike the Magdalene, without having seen the angels or the Savior, they merely found the contents of the tomb where His body had been, and they immediately thought that he was truly resurrected.

Some believe that Mary Magdalene, as reported by Saint John, first came to the tomb and saw that the stone which had closed its entrance had been removed, and then, after going back to tell Saint Peter and Saint John, she remained alone, and they see this as a lack of faith, which justly attracted the Lord's rebuke. After they had returned to their homes, she returned again to the tomb with the other Mary, with whom she met the angel who told her that Jesus had risen. Then she left the place of His burial, and bowed at His feet in adoration, as it says, "You will be given salvation." "They came to the Savior," says the Gospel, "and held His feet and worshiped Him." At this time their faith became so strong and so ardent that they were considered worthy to go to the apostles and tell them this happy and pleasant news: Jesus said first, "Do not be afraid," and then, "God tell my brethren that they are to go into Galilee, where they will see Me."

QUESTION #6

How could Saint Peter and Saint John have so easily entered the tomb, which was guarded by a company of soldiers, without any of these guards attempting to defend against their entry?

Here is the reason that Saint Matthew gives us: "The Sabbath being past," he says, "and the first day of the next week just beginning to shine, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, and an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came to turn the stone which closed the tomb, and sat on it. His face was shining like lightning and his clothing was white as snow, and the guards were so seized with fear that they turned dead-like.

Consider these soldiers, consumed by a fear so great that they seemed dead: we ought to believe that they left the tomb, or that they were so stunned and mortified that they did not dare to object. I do not say their non-objection was against men, but to the women who wanted to enter. For this

very large stone that had been removed from the tomb's entrance to the tomb, and the earthquake that seemed to threaten the universe with a general upheaval, and the angel who had descended from heaven, and whose face was so bright that it did not resemble the artificial torches that men are accustomed to turn to their uses, but was like a flash of light that spreads its brightness everywhere — with all these frightening objects, they could easily see through the night, and their souls had been thrown into fear and dread. Thus Saint Peter and Saint John came easily and without hindrance into the tomb. In fact Mary Magdalene, who had learned the news of the Savior's resurrection, had already noticed that His body was removed from the tomb, and that the stone which had closed the entrance was removed. Moreover we must not imagine that the angel descended from heaven expressly to remove the stone and open the tomb for Jesus Christ, but the Lord had arisen when He wanted to, without any man knowing, and this heavenly spirit came to teach the faithful what had happened, and to show the evidence, the stone was overthrown; the body of Jesus was no longer in the tomb, and this could be easily discovered through the bright light coming out of his face, removing all the horror of the darkness of the night.

QUESTION #7

How should we understand what we read in Saint Matthew and Saint Mark, that the women who went to the tomb were ordered to tell the apostles that they had to go to Galilee, and there they saw the Lord, along with what is said by Saint Luke and Saint John, that He was seen in Jerusalem?

There are many differences in the ways in which the Savior appeared to the eleven apostles. When, out of fear of the Jews' forcefulness, they remained in hiding, He entered the place where they were, the doors being closed, and "He showed them the wounds of his hands and his side" to convince them that it was not a spirit as they imagined, and besides, He showed Himself alive to them when He saw fit, as Luke said, "by overwhelming evidence that He was alive, being seen for forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God," and, "Eating with them, He ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father." For in this way, by appearing and conversing with His disciples and eating the same normal food that they ate, He was consoling His apostles and dispelling their fear, anticipating that He would shortly disappear suddenly from before their eyes. That is why the Apostle Paul says that Jesus Christ appeared at the same time to more than five hundred of His followers. We also read in John that as the apostles were fishing, He appeared on the shore and ate "a piece of roasted fish and a honeycomb," so that He was seen by them to have truly risen in a physical form. And can we not see that He did something similar in Jerusalem?

[Latin text of the last two sentences: "And in Joanne legimus, quod piscantibus apostolis, in steterit littorea and assi partem pisces, favumque comederit resurrectionis indicia quae vera sunt. In Jerusalem autem nihil horum fecisse narratur."]

QUESTION #8

How should we account for these words of Saint Matthew: "Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, yielded up His spirit, and at the same time the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, the earth shook, the rocks were split, the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints who were in the sleep of death revived, and exiting out of their tombs after His resurrection, they came

to the holy city, and were seen by many people"?

I have already explained this passage in my comments on Saint Matthew. It should be noted first that God is the only one who can stop and start living a physical life as He pleases. For this reason the centurion, when he saw that Jesus, after saying, "Father, I commend my soul into Your hands," had immediately given up the spirit, was touched by this great miracle, and he said, "This man was really the son of God." This phrase, "The veil of the temple was torn in two," verifies what was told to Joseph, that the angels guarding the temple said, "Go out of here." The Gospel that Saint Matthew wrote in Hebrew does not say that the veil was torn, but that the top of the portal, which was of prodigious size, was completely reversed. "The earth shook," because it could not support the weight attached to its God on the cross. "The stones split," to see how far was the hardness of the Jews who refused to recognize the Son of God they saw with their eyes. "The tombs were opened," to signify that we must be resurrected one day. "And many bodies of saints out of their tombs, came to the holy city, and were seen by several people." By this "holy city" Jerusalem is meant, and it must not be confused with all the other cities where people adored idols, because in that city alone the people had a temple dedicated the Lord, and where true religion was professed, in which God alone is worshipped. These saints, who "came out of their tombs," did not appear indiscriminately to everyone, but only to numerous people who were committed to Jesus Christ. Now to explain this place in a spiritual sense: "Jesus Christ died, with a loud cry, and at the same time the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom." This was so that all nations could see uncovered all the mysteries of the law, before they were hidden. The veil is torn "in two," to tell us that everything is bound up in the Old and New Testaments. It is torn "from the top down," to make manifest what has happened since the beginning of the world and the creation of man, and the sacred history we reported, and all that will be until the consummation of the world. But we must consider whether it is the first veil, on the outside, or the veil inside, that was torn at the death of the Savior.² To me, it seems to me that whoever was within the temple at the entrance of the tabernacle, is at what is called the outer veil, because "now we can see and do things very imperfectly, but when we are in a perfect state," then the outer veil tears, and all the mysteries of the house of God, which are now hidden, will be revealed to us. And we will know what is signified by these two cherubim, the oracle, and the golden vase that contained the manna. "We now see as though in a mirror, darkly." Indeed, the veil there, which hid from us the stories of Scripture, is torn, and we can enter the courtyard of the tabernacle of the Lord. But all the secrets and mysteries of the heavenly Jerusalem are always veiled, and we cannot enter there. The earth shook at the death of the Savior, and we saw the fulfillment of what the prophet Haggai: "A little time and I will shake heaven and earth, and all desired nations will come," so that "many come from east and west and take their place in the kingdom of heaven with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." "The stones split," that is, that the death of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles pierced and broke the hardness of their hearts. For these "stones" can still hear the prophets, which as well as the apostles carried this name in relation to Jesus Christ, who is the true "stone." These stones are "split," so that the saints may unlock, release, and discover all the prophecies that had been obscured from them by the thick veil of the law. These "tombs" are like those about which Jesus spoke in the Gospel, "You are like whitewashed tombs on the outside, but inside are full of dead bones." "These graves," I said, "opened," so that those who had died earlier in their infidelity, "leaving their tombs," and being given a new life with Christ, arise and enter into the heavenly Jerusalem, to be citizens of heaven rather than of earth, and thus the man who died in an earthly

manner is raised in a heavenly manner.

Moreover, to return to the literal meaning of this passage, we must not be surprised that after the death of the Savior, Jerusalem is called "the holy city," since, until its complete collapse, the apostles are shown to have had no apprehension about entering the temple, and even observe the ceremonies of the law for fear of scandalizing those of Jews who had embraced the faith of Jesus Christ. We even see that the Savior loved this city so much that the misfortunes which threatened it elicited tears from His eyes; when He was crucified, He said to His Father, "Forgive them, Father, because they do not know what they do." His prayer was answered, for shortly after His death the Jews believed in Him by thousands, and God gave to this unfortunate city forty-two years to do penance. But finally its citizens, having failed to benefit, and still persisting in their wickedness — Vespasian and Titus together formed an anti-type of what is mentioned in our Scriptures, when they came out of the woods and killed and mauled these "children," because of their blasphemous insults to the real Elisha when ascending to the house of God (for that is what "Bethel" means in Hebrew).³

Since that time, Jerusalem has been called "the holy city," but having lost the holiness implied by the name she bore before, it has been called in a spiritual sense "Egypt" and "Sodom," and in its place we have built a new city, "a river delighted by the abundance of its waters," and the center of which releases a spring that has purified the bitterness of the waters of all the earth, so that the unfortunate Jews, stripped of their former glories, are reduced to whining on the ruins of their temple, while Christians have the pleasure of seeing new churches being built every day, and they say to the people of Zion, "The place where I am is too narrow." In this we see the fulfillment of the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah: "His grave will be glorious."

QUESTION #9

How is it that Saint John reports that the Savior gave that Holy Spirit to His apostles by blowing on them, which according to Luke, He promised to send to them after His ascension?

One can easily solve this problem if one considers, as Saint Paul says, that the Holy Spirit gives us many kinds of grace. "There are a variety of spiritual gifts," says the apostle in his first epistle to the faithful of Corinth, "but they have the same Spirit. There are diversities of ministries, but there is a single Lord. There are diversities of supernatural works, but there is only one God who works all in all. But the gifts which testify to the Holy Spirit are given out to everyone for the profit of the Church. One receives from the Holy Spirit the gift of speaking with exalted wisdom; another, by the same Spirit, is given the gift of speaking with knowledge; another receives faith by the same Spirit; another, through the same Spirit, has the gift of healing disease, and another the gift of working miracles, another the gift of prophecy, another the discernment of spirits, and another the gift of speaking different languages, another the interpretation of languages. Yet it is one and the same Spirit at work in all these things, distributing these gifts to each individual as He pleases." For this reason the Lord, as reported in Luke's Gospel, said to His apostles after His resurrection, "I will send you the promised gift from My Father, but continue living in the city until you are protected by the power from on high." And in Acts of the Apostles, according to the same evangelist, "He ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to 'Wait until the promise of the Father, which,' He said, 'you have heard of from My mouth. For John baptized in water, but in a few days you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit.'" Saint John also reported in the end of his Gospel, about the day when

Jesus Christ rose, that is, on Sunday, He entered into the place where the apostles were, the doors being closed, and that they have it said to them for the second time, "Peace be with you." He said, "As my Father sent me, so I send you also." "After which He breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit; the sins of those whom you forgive are forgiven, and they are retained of those whose you retain.'" On the first day, therefore, when the Savior was resurrected, the apostles received the grace of the Holy Spirit to forgive sins, to baptize, to make men into children of God, and to share with the faithful the spirit of adoption, even as Jesus Christ himself had said, "The sins are forgiven to those whom you forgive, and the sins of those whose sins you retain, they shall be retained." But on the day of Pentecost, the Savior promised more excellent gifts excellent, so that they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit and bear the power from above to preach the gospel to all nations, as we read at the sixty-seventh Psalm: "The Lord will give his heralds the floor of his glory so they will proclaim with great power." Thus they would then receive the gift of healing diseases, performing miracles, and speaking different languages, for they were destined to preach the gospel to many nations, and in this way the people could listen to what each of the apostles was proclaiming about the truth of the gospel. Hence the Apostle Paul, who brought the Gospel in this vast tract of country which is from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and who was to go through Rome to go to Spain, thanked God because he had received the gift of tongues more than all the other apostles, because in order to preach the gospel to many nations, he should also speak multiple languages.

However, it was on the tenth day after His ascension, as Luke relates, that the Savior fulfilled the promise He made to His apostles to send them the Holy Spirit. "When the days of Pentecost were accomplished," says the sacred historian, "the disciples were all together in one place, and we suddenly heard a loud noise like a violent and impetuous wind that came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. At the same time they saw what looked like divided tongues of fire, standing on each one. Immediately they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak different languages, as the Holy Spirit put words in their mouths." And then we saw the fulfillment of what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "In the end-times," says the Lord, "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh: your son and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." This word, "I will pour out," involves an abundance of graces, and goes back to what the Lord had promised His apostles: that in a few days they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Indeed this baptism was so abundant that it filled all the house where the disciples were sitting, and He provided the fire of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, in accordance with His designs, and sent them the gift of tongues, and their lips were purified to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in all its purity, as a seraph had purified those of Isaiah, who complained of having unclean and dirty lips.

We read in the prophet about the shouts of two seraphim who were around the throne of God, and about the posts of the temple door being shaken, "and the whole house was filled with smoke," that is, with the error of darkness and ignorance. But at the beginning of the gospel, and therefore the birth of Christianity, the Holy Spirit fills the whole Church, to purify its fervor and by His grace to purge away all the sins of the faithful by fire, even by the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ had promised to His apostles, by whose lips His name has been carried and shared throughout the world.

Although John said that the Savior gave the Holy Spirit to His apostles on the first day of his resurrection, and Saint Luke said that He was sent to them fifty days later, we should not imagine that these two evangelists are at odds: they only desired to make distinctions between degrees of the grace that Jesus Christ communicated to His apostles, who, having first received the power to forgive sins, then received the power to perform miracles, and all other gifts detailed by Saint Paul, of which we spoke about above — but particularly to speak various languages, which was even more necessary than others so that, in the ministry which they were expected to announce the gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations of the earth, they would not need to use an interpreter. Because of this the Lycaonians, after hearing Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas speak their language, considered them gods bearing a human form. With regard to this virtue from on high that Jesus Christ had promised to bestow upon His disciples, this is nothing more than the grace of the Holy Spirit, who, having taken possession of the hearts of the apostles, inspired both their strength and courage; they feared neither the courts, nor judges, nor the purple of kings. That is what the Savior had promised before his passion, saying, "When you are delivered into the hands of men, do not worry about how or what you shall say, because what you need to say will be given at that very time, for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of Your Father who speaks in you." For me, I am not afraid to say that since the apostles had believed in Jesus Christ, they always had the Holy Spirit, for without this the gift they could never have done all the miracles they did; but those deeds were the expressions and results of this gift. That is why Jesus Christ said aloud in the temple, "'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink, and if someone believes in me, rivers of living water will come out of his heart,' as Scripture says. He meant by this the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were yet to receive," and the evangelist adds in the same place, "For the Holy Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." This is not to say there was no Holy Spirit, for the Savior Himself said, "If I cast out demons by speaking through the Holy Spirit," but what is meant is that this Holy Spirit who was in the Son of God had not yet entirely filled the hearts of the apostles. For from their hearts there came the fear with which they were seized at the Passion of the Savior, and on account of this was that renunciation with an oath against knowing Him at all. But after being baptized in the Holy Spirit, they were filled with grace that was prevalent in their hearts; they boldly tell the rulers of the Jews, "We must obey God rather than men." So they can resurrect the dead, triumph in the midst of turmoil, spread their blood for Jesus Christ, and be crowned via their own torments. So the apostles had the Holy Spirit; yet spiritual graces were not flowing from their heart, because the Lord was not yet glorified. And what is the glory that He expected? He explains himself in the Gospel, when He says, "My Father, glorify me with the glory I had with you before the world was." The glory of the Savior is the cross where He triumphed; there He was crucified as a man, and is glorified as God. Do you want proof of His glory? Observe that there the sun disappears, the moon changes to blood, the earth is shaken by an extraordinary earthquake; the graves are opened, the dead walk; the rocks split. This glory of Jesus Christ is what was foretold through the mouth of the prophet-king when he says, "Arise, my glory; awaken, my lute and my harp," and the glory, that is, the holy humanity, replied: "I will adjourn the morning," to thus verify the title of the twenty-first Psalm, which reads, "For the relief of the morning." When I say this, I do not separate Jesus Christ into two different people, one divine and one human, as the new heretics falsely accuse us. There is in Jesus Christ one and the same person, who is both Son of God and Son of Man, but in all that has been said about the divine Savior, there are some who recorded His divine glory, and others who did not guard their own

salvation. It is to us that it was written: "He did not believe it was for Him a theft be equal to God, but He has nevertheless humbled Himself, and taking up the form and nature of a servant, He became obedient, to the point of death, even the death of the cross," and to us it is said that "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

Therefore the Lord told his disciples, "I am departing, and I will send you another Comforter." Luke also records that this assuring promise was given by Jesus Christ to the apostles. I am surprised that Montanus and the two crazy women⁴ accompanying his sect and his errors, who are only failed prophets, argue that this promise of the Savior was not fulfilled until them, long after it was given, because it was to the apostles that the Savior said, "I will send you the promised gift of my Father. But live in the city until you are clothed with the power from on high." It was upon the apostles, not Montanus, Prisca, and Maxilla, that Jesus Christ has breathed, thus giving them the Holy Spirit. To the apostles it is said, "The sins of those whom you forgive are forgiven, and they will be retained of those whose you retain." It is the apostles that He ordered not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of His Father, a promise that Luke allows us to see being fulfilled, when he said, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak different languages, as the Holy Spirit put their words in their mouths," because The Holy Spirit "blows where He wills." When Jesus Christ promised His apostles that He would send to send them "another Comforter," it was already satisfying to know that He was himself the consolation of his apostles, and to know the apostle Paul's concept of God the Father, when he calls Him the "God of mercy and all comfort." But if the Father is "Comforter," if the Son is "Comforter," if the Holy Spirit is "Comforter," and if we baptize the faithful in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who are only one God, it follows that, having the same name of God, even "Consolation," they also have a similar nature.

Besides, the prophets received the Holy Spirit as well as the apostles. This is why David said, "Do not remove me from your Holy Spirit." We also read in Scripture that Daniel was animated by the Spirit of God, and that it was through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that David said, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool." Only by the illumination of the Holy Spirit could the prophets have predicted things to come. "By the word of the Lord," said the Psalmist, "the heavens were consolidated, and by the breath of His mouth all their virtue was founded." All the substance possessed by the Father and the Son is also the substance of the Holy Spirit. When He is sent, it is the Father and Son who send Him. The Scripture calls Him in a thousand places "the Spirit of God the Father" and "the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Hence, as was reported in the Acts of the Apostles, that those who had received the baptism of John, and who believed in God the Father and Jesus Christ, but who did not even know there was a Holy Spirit, were baptized again, and we can say that this was the occasion when they truly baptized, because without the Holy Spirit the Trinity cannot exist. We read again in the same place, where Saint Peter said to Ananias and Sapphira, who had lied to the Holy Spirit, that it was to God and not to men that they had lied.

QUESTION #10 How do we understand what the Apostle Paul says to the Romans, from the place, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid that we have this thought!" To the place, "If the Lord of hosts had not left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom and Gomorrah"? The entire epistle to the Romans needs careful explanation, because it is full of obscure difficulties that cannot be understood without the help of the Holy Spirit who has

Himself guided the mouth of the apostle. But the most difficult and most embarrassing passage is the one you have asked about. Some, to maintain whole the righteousness of God, claim that if Jacob was selected and Esau was rejected when they were still in the Rebecca's womb, this could only be for reasons that have preceded their birth. Similarly He also chose Jeremiah and John the Baptist from the wombs of their mothers, and the Apostle Paul was chosen before he was born, to preach the Gospel. For me, I can only agree with what is received by all the faithful, and what I teach, I can teach publicly without fear in the church, without fear of falling into the illusions and dreams of Pythagoras, Plato, and those disciples who wished to mold the opinions of the pagans into the dogmas of religion, saying that souls are fallen from heaven, and that their individual merits have been expressed together in their bodies so as to compensate for their past sins. I think it is much better to forthrightly admit our ignorance, and to categorize this passage of Saint Paul among the deep mysteries which we cannot fathom. This admission is preferable to the option, taken under the pretext of justifying the conduct of God, of embracing the heresy of Basilides and Manès, teaching monstrous opinions asserted by a certain Egyptian, and the chimerical visions with which he has misled the Spaniards.[5] Therefore I shall explain this passage the best I can, and objectively follow Saint Paul's footprints as far as I can, objectively. This apostle, having taken even the Holy Spirit as a witness to the sincere pain which penetrated his heart, first lamented about the blindness of his brothers and his parents according to the flesh, that is, the Israelites who had failed and rejected the Son of God, to whom belonged the adoption, his glory, his covenant, his law, his worship, and his promises, and which Jesus Christ Himself received, coming forth in the flesh, being born of Mary. And the pressure of the pain he feels is so strong that he desired for himself to become anathema, and to be separated from Christ, that is, to die alone, if it would in any way prevent Israel from perishing. Here the objecting reader could not fail to tell him, "What is this? Are all the Israelites lost? Have not you yourself recognized Jesus Christ as the Son of God? Have not the other apostles and an infinite number of Jewish people also recognized this?" And here is his response to this objection. The Scripture depicts two different concepts of Israel, expressed under the figure of two children, one of which is in the flesh and the other in the spirit and promise. Abraham had two children, Ishmael and Isaac. The one who was born there according to the flesh did not share the legacy of his father, but the one who was born of Sarah, as promised, is the child called by God, according to what Scripture says: "This is Isaac, which will be called your son." That is, those that are "children in the flesh" are not therefore God's children, but those are the "children of promise" who are considered to be children of Abraham. This truth seems to apply not only to Ishmael and Isaac, but also to the two children who were within Rebecca, Esau and Jacob: of whom God chose one, and rejected the other. Saint Paul claims to see than in the elder members of these pairs of brothers, Ishmael and Esau, is the representation of the reprobation of the Jewish people, and that in the younger of the pairs, Isaac and Jacob, we see a representation of the favorable choice that God has made, and those Jews who have believed in Jesus Christ. But in order to make his meaning clear, he used the example of two twin brothers, Esau and Jacob, of which it is written, "The older will be subject to the younger," and taking what was said by the prophet Malachi, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau I hated," he adapted it to counter the objection, and having addressed it in this way, he refuted it.

If it is true, says the apostle, that Jacob received election and Esau disapproval, "not yet being born, nor having done good nor evil," and the reception of the kindness or the wrath of God is not an effect of their own merits, but it depends on the will of the One who chose one and rejected the

other, "What shall we say then? Is it that God is unfair?" According to what He Himself said to Moses, "I will have upon whom I bestow mercy, and I will pity whoever it pleases Me to pity." If we believe that God does whatever He wants, and chooses one and rejects the other without any regard to their merit and their works, "it is not of those who desire, or of those running, but of God who shows mercy," as indeed appears to be the true sense of these words that the same God says, in Scripture, to Pharaoh: "For I have prepared you to display My power in you, and to make My name famous throughout the world." But if this is so, and if God, as He pleases, shows mercy to Israel and hardens Pharaoh, is it not therefore wrong when, pointing out errors, He blames us for not doing well, or for doing evil? For without regard either to our good or our evil deeds, He can, when He pleases, choose one and condemn others, especially the man was too weak to oppose His will. But this is what the apostle Paul responds to this argument, though it was intrinsically very strong and, being supported on the authority of Scripture, seemed almost invincible: "O man, who are you to challenge with God?" That is, since you do not agree with God, you rise up against Him, and consult the holy Scriptures to find authoritative evidence to condemn His conduct. But by acting on this sinful desire to accuse God, it is manifest that you have free will, and that you can do whatever you want, and it is in your power to keep silent or to talk when you please. If you are convinced that God has acted in the same way as a potter who makes a vase of clay, and you can not resist his will, reflect that a vase of clay does not tell the one who made it, "Why did you make me this way?" because the potter has the power to make the same lump or mass of clay, into a clay vase for to honorable use, and another for uses vile and shameful." But God made all men of the same nature and in the same condition: He gave them, via their training, the freedom to do what they please, and to freely take their stand for good or evil, and this freedom is so full and so complete that they are displaying their impiety by challenging their Creator and examining the reasons for His conduct.

"Who can complain," continues the apostle, "if God, desiring to show His wrath and to make known His power, tolerated with extreme patience vessels of wrath destined for destruction, in order to make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy He has destined for His glory — on those whom He called, even us, not of Jews only but also of the Gentiles? As He Himself said through the mouth of the prophet Hosea, 'I will call them My people who were not My people, "My beloved" one I had not loved, and the time shall come in the same place where I had once said, "You are not My people," they shall be called children of the living God,"' and so on. Inasmuch as the patience of God, says Saint Paul, served only to harden the heart of Pharaoh, and since the Lord delayed so long to punish the Israelites, you thus have a sound justification to conclude that His toleration of those impious people was not infinite; He tolerated their impiety, and in His extreme patience did not condemn those who were so condemnable, so that even those who were lost He might make use of to display His anointed kindness and His mercies.

Consider that the sun's heat is always the same, but it produces different effects depending on the nature of different subjects upon which it acts: some are softened, others besides these are firmed up, being tightened; the wax is melted and the mud is hardened, although the heat never changes its nature. The same is true of God, for by His goodness and mercy He hardens vases of wrath, that is, those who are lost among the people of Israel, but concerning vessels of mercy, He has called us to His glory, that is, us, whom He called not only of Jews but also from the Gentiles. He does not save without reason and without equitable discernment; His reasons for acting this way

consist of what has happened; some have rejected the Son of God and others were willing to receive Him.

However, by "these vessels of mercy" is meant not only the Gentiles but also those of Jews who wanted to believe in Jesus Christ, and being joined together with them, they are to be one faithful people, which shows that God does not choose nationalities, but according to the wills of men. And this was the essence of the performance of what the prophet Hosea said: "I will call them My people who were not My people," namely, the Gentiles, "and those to whom I once said, 'You are not My people,' will now be called the children of the living God." And we apprehend that this prediction does not apply exclusively to the Gentiles, for Saint Paul also called "vessels of election and mercy" those Jews who believed in Jesus Christ, because, "When it comes to Israel," says the apostle, "Isaiah cries out, 'Although the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, there will be a small remnant saved,'" that is, although all the children of Israel do not believe in Jesus Christ, there are yet a few, very few, who believe in Him, "For God in His justice will make an end and cut off His people," having saved by the incarnation and humiliation of Jesus Christ those who wanted to believe in Him. That is why the prophet Isaiah says in another place: "If the Lord of hosts had not preserved a few of our race, we would have become like Sodom and Gomorrah."

Saint Paul, continuing in this passage of Scripture which describes what the prophets have predicted about the dual vocation of the Gentiles and Jews, goes on to say that Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have nevertheless embraced it, because they believed in Jesus Christ without the vanity of their works, while, contrary to this, most Israelites were lost because they "stumbled at that stumbling-stone," and, "Not knowing the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own justice, they have not submitted to the righteousness of God," that is, Jesus Christ, who has been given to us by God to be our righteousness.

I have read the comments of a certain author who was claiming that he was rather embarrassed by Saint Paul's response, because this issue was not explained, where, after having proposed the objection, "What shall we say then? Is there injustice in God?", and after having said, "It does not depend on any who desire or upon those running, but of God who shows mercy," and "God will have mercy upon him whom He favors, and He hardens whom he pleases," and again, "Who can resist his will?", "Here," says the author, is what the apostle says: "O man, who are only earth and ash, how dare you question God? Do you want to rebel against that which you did, you who are also a fragile clay vase? Can a vase of earth say to those who made it, 'Why did you do me this way?' Does not the potter have the power to make of one part of the same mass of clay a vessel intended for honorable use, and another for uses vile and shameful?" Therefore remain in eternal silence; acknowledge your own weakness, and put an end to asking God to account for His actions, because by dealing mercifully with one and in severity with others, He did what He wanted to do.

QUESTION #11 What is the meaning of these words of the Apostle Paul, in his second epistle to the faithful of Corinth: "We are to the one, the smell of death that causes them to die, and to the other, the smell of life, which leads to life. And who is capable of these things"? The full passage from which these words are taken should be cited here, so that by considering their context, and their relationship with what precedes and what follows, we can better understand what is the true

meaning. "Being come to Troas," says the Apostle, "to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, although the Lord had given me great opportunities to successfully fulfill my ministry, I had no peace of mind, because I had not found my brother Titus, but having taken leave of them, I went into Macedonia. But I thank God that we always triumph in Christ, who through us spreads everywhere the aroma of the knowledge of His name. For we are before God the aroma of Jesus Christ, among those who are being saved, or to those who are lost: to some, the smell of death that causes them to die, and to the other, the smells of life that gives life. And who is capable of such things? For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God, but we preach with complete sincerity, as from God, in God's presence, and in the name of Jesus Christ."

Saint Paul instructed the faithful of Corinth about everything he did and everything he has suffered, and how he always gave thanks to God in any situation he found himself in, leading them by his ample resolve to contend for the interests of faith. "I came," he says, "to Troas," which previously was called Troy, "to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in Asia, but although the Lord had given me great openings to fulfill my ministry successfully," — that is, although many people were believing in miracles and wonders that God works by my administration, and had believed in Jesus Christ, and I had every reason to hope to see the faith of these people rise and increase by the grace of the Lord, nevertheless "I had no rest in my spirit," that is, I could not enjoy the consolation that I hoped to find, because I did not meet my brother Titus, as I was expecting, having heard that he was there, or that he himself had promised to go and rendezvous there. But what great consolation and rest of mind could Saint Paul receive from the presence of Titus, and why did his absence force him to depart from the inhabitants of Troas to go into Macedonia? I have noted on occasion that the apostle Paul was very wise, having been educated "at the feet of Gamaliel," who, according to the Acts of the Apostles, said in the council of the Jews, "Why not keep away from these people? For if what they preach is the work of God, you cannot destroy it, and if it is the work of man, it will fall by itself." Now, Saint Paul had a perfect knowledge of the holy Scriptures, he was naturally eloquent, and he possessed the gift of speaking in tongues, as he prides himself in the Lord, saying, "I praise my God that I speak through the gift of tongues more than all of you." Nevertheless he could not speak Greek in a manner worthy of the majesty and grandeur of our mysteries. Therefore Titus served as an interpreter, as Saint Mark used to serve Saint Peter, with whom he wrote his Gospel. Also we see that the two epistles attributed to Saint Peter have different styles and turn phrases differently, by which it is discerned that it was sometimes necessary for him to use different interpreters.

Saint Paul, therefore, sorry that he had not met at Troas the one by whose mouth he was to preach the gospel, took the party to go to Macedonia, the place from which a Macedonian had appeared during the night, inviting him to go, saying, "Go to Macedonia and help us successfully." He also hoped to find Titus, and indeed he had planned to visit the brethren or face the persecution of unbelievers, for that is what he means by these words: "But I thank God that we always triumph in Christ, who spreads by us everywhere the odor of the knowledge of His name." "We always triumph," that is, "He triumphs in us," or, "He triumphs by us," as the apostle says in another place, "God made us a spectacle to the world, to angels and men." This is why he says the following: "Coming from Macedonia, we had no relief for our bodies, but we were constantly suffering, with conflicts on the outside and fears within. But God, who consoles the humble and the afflicted, consoled us by the arrival of Titus, and not only by his arrival, but by the consolation that

he himself received from you."

Having thus taken leave of the inhabitants of Troy or Troas, he went to Macedonia in the hope of finding Titus, and to use him in the functions of his ministry, but it is easy to discern that they did not meet there, and that Titus arrived there only after Saint Paul had suffered many punishments and persecution. And because he suffered so much before the arrival of Titus, he gives thanks to God in the name of Jesus Christ that he preached to the nations, because He desired to use him for the triumph of His Son.

Indeed, the martyrs' endurance of torments, the blood that is spilt for the name of Jesus Christ, the joy that they display in the midst of the cruelest tortures — all this is a triumph for God. When the martyrs' strength and consistency are seen, as they undergo the horror and cruelty of the most horrific torment, and express all their joy in light of the fact that they are suffering under torment, the smell of the knowledge of God is spreading among the Gentiles, who feel persuaded by the testimony of their own conscience that if the gospel was not true, no one would desire to shed his blood for his defense. For it is not in the midst of the delights and pleasures of the world — including the concern to amass wealth — or in the midst of a soft and undisturbed life, that we confess the name of Jesus Christ; it is in prisons, in wounds, in persecutions, in nakedness, in hunger and thirst. That is the triumph of God and the victory of the apostles. But one might post this objection to Saint Paul: How, with all that he had done, can there still be those who did not believe in Jesus Christ? The apostle, according to his custom, prevents disputes about this matter. It is true that we are, to God, the aroma of the name of Jesus Christ, and the gospel that we preach, like a pleasant scent, is spreading on all sides. But God has allowed men to use their free will so that, doing good voluntarily and not by necessity, He may reward the faithful and punish the unbelieving. Therefore sometimes the smell that we spread, though intrinsically good, provides either life or death, depending on the good or bad dispositions of those who receive or reject the gospel. Thus those who believe in Jesus Christ, He saves, and those who do not believe in Him will not ever come into contact with Him. Moreover it is not surprising that the preaching of the apostle Paul produced such diverse effects among the people, since the gospel says about Jesus Christ Himself, "This child shall be for the fall and resurrection of many in Israel, and shall be spoken against by men."

Every location, whether clean or dirty, receives direct sunlight, and this star, without concern for the purity of its light, shines indiscriminately upon flowers and manure alike. The same is true of the aroma of Jesus Christ: it is not likely to change or to cease to be what it is; however, it becomes for the faithful a principle of life, and for the unbelievers a principle of death. This is not referring to the death of this physical body, which is common with the animals, but to spiritual death, about which it is written: "The soul who sins, it will die." And when the faithful, who benefit from the aroma of Jesus Christ, hear this, they must not think of this physical breath that animates us, and which is the force behind all our actions and movements, but instead think of the life referred to by the prophet-king when he says, "I firmly believe that I shall behold the Lord in the land of the living," (because God is the God of the living and not dead) and about which Saint Paul said, "Our life is hidden with God in Jesus Christ, but when Christ, who is our life, appears, then we will be partakers with Him in glory." The apostle instructs the Corinthians not to let it bother them — for it is not our main concern — that some receive the truth that we preach and others reject it; the many die a real death, and a few experience the life of which it is said, "I am the life."

For if we did not announce the gospel, the unbelievers would still die, and none would have the life of the faithful. It is not easy to find a man worthy to proclaim the wonders of Jesus Christ; yet, the minister's glory does not emanate from the minister, but from what he preaches. When Saint Paul said he does not conduct himself like so many who peddle the word of God, it shows that there are many who imagine that their godliness serves as a way to get gain; these individuals have a shameful agenda in everything they do; they are those "who devour widows' houses." But the one who preaches the gospel "with full sincerity, as from God," and in the presence of Him who sent him, not preaching this Jesus Christ and that Jesus Christ, will exercise his ministry in order to overcome through Jesus Christ, and to obtain his glory. It should be noted that here we bring this chapter in the Apostle to a close, mentioning the mystery of the Holy Trinity and saying, "We preach the gospel from God, in the Holy Spirit, in the presence of God the Father, and in the name of Jesus Christ."

We said that Saint Paul went to Macedonia from Troas; here is the evidence from the Acts of the Apostles: "Having passed by Mysia, they went down to Troas, where during the night Paul had this vision: a man of Macedonia appeared to him and told him this request: 'Go to Macedonia and succeed in helping us.' As soon as he had this vision, we sought to go to Macedonia, persuaded that God had indeed called us to preach the gospel."

QUESTION #12

How should we understand these words of the apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Thessalonians: "May the God of peace Himself sanctify you in all ways, so that everything that is in you, the spirit, the soul and body, may be kept spotless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"?

Although this question is very famous, it must be explained in few words. Saint Paul said a little earlier: "Do not quench the spirit." If we understand the true meaning of these words, we understand together the nature of the spirit that we must keep unsullied with the soul and body for the day of the Lord's coming. For who would imagine that the Holy Spirit may be extinguished like a flame, which when extinguished ceases to be what it was? Who could imagine that someone would destroy the Holy Spirit — who in the old law, speaking by the mouth of Isaiah, Jeremiah and other prophets, "Here is what the Lord says," and who said, in the new, by the prophet Agabus, "These things says the Holy Spirit."

"There are many kinds of spiritual gifts, but there is only one Spirit; there are numerous kinds of ministries, but there is only one Lord; there are several kinds of supernatural acts, but there is only one God who works all in all. But the gifts which make the Holy Spirit manifest are distributed to everyone for the good of the Church: one receives the gift of speaking wisdom by the Holy Spirit, while another received, through the same Spirit, a gift of speaking with knowledge; another, by the same Spirit, receives faith; another, the gift of working miracles; another received, through the same Spirit, the gift of healing disease; another the gift of prophecy; another the discernment of spirits. Yet one and the same Spirit is producing all these things, distributing gifts to these people as He pleases." In regard to this Spirit, David, when he realized his isolation, said to God, "Do not remove from me Your Holy Spirit." When God withdraws the Spirit, He does not diminish His substance, but extinguishes Him for the souls that deprive themselves of His light. For me, I believe that by these words, "Do not quench the spirit," the apostle means the same thing by

these, "Keep yourselves in the fervor of the spirit" because the Spirit is never extinguished, except in a soul whose fervor has slowed to a stop by indulgence in crime, or in a love, once warm, which has grown cold and languid.

Now to this phrase, "May the God of peace sanctify you in all ways," or "in all things," or, if we flex the Greek text, "give you a full and perfect holiness;" He is called "God of peace," because we were reconciled to him through Jesus Christ, "who is our peace, who has made the two peoples one," and, as the apostle said in another place, is "the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, that keeps the hearts and minds of the saints." But he who was sanctified and is perfect in all things, "keeps his spirit, his soul, and his body without blemish for the day of the coming of the Lord," and uses his bodily members for the purposes for which they exist: his hands to work, his feet to walk, his eyes to see, his ears to hear, his teeth to eat, his stomach to digest meat, his bowels to order to avoid what is naturally leftover. Thus it is when all members of one's body are whole and perfect. But is it credible that Paul, in making this blessing-vow to heaven, expects Jesus Christ, on judgment day, to find the faithful individual's body entirely intact? Does not death reduce everything to dust? Or if there are still a few, as some authors claim, that are still alive and kicking, do they not invariably have some defect? Consider especially the bodies of martyrs, even those whose eyes, or nose, or hands have been torn or cut off, for the sake of Christ. Therefore what the apostle meant by a "whole body" is, as I have said elsewhere, that which remains attached to the head, verily, the leader from whom all parts of the body are united and bound together, according to the effective increase of the body of Jesus Christ. But this body is none other than the Church, and anyone who has a close union with the head of this body must also assist in the maintenance of all other members in the whole body, as far as human frailty can afford. And to do that, they must maintain the integrity of the soul, so as to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who heals all your infirmities," and it is written, "He sent his word and He healed." We also maintain the integrity of the mind when we live according to spiritual things; we live by the Spirit, and thus we follow with docility the guidance and impressions from the Spirit, so that we may mortify by the mind the works of the flesh, and so that we produce the fruits of the Spirit, by which I mean love, joy, peace, and so forth.

Here is another explanation that we can give to the words of the Apostle Paul. As Solomon set forth a proverb by describing things in three ways, so our teachings and applications, conducted thoughtfully and carefully, may be set forth to expound the truth for those who question us. We can describe the three ways by which the instructions and regulations of Scripture are set forth in our hearts. First there is the literal and historical sense. Second, there is the moral sense. And, finally, it may be taken in the spiritual sense. In the literal sense, we are dealing simply with the facts of the story as we follow a sequence of events being narrated. In the moral sense, we leave the literal meaning and consider larger and nobler ideas that are expressed for the regulation of our morals, and for our edification, though grounded in physical matters pertaining to the Jewish people. In the spiritual sense our objective is something even more sublime; we abandon all the earthly things, and simply look for what is said about the heavenly things, and the joy that is prepared for us; looking at all the good things in life is like a shadow in comparison to the adamant happiness that is ours in that day. Jesus Christ, by His peace, will sanctify and perfect those who are happy in this situation, that is, those whose sole occupation is to take care to preserve the integrity of their body, their soul and their spirit, and to acquire a perfect knowledge of

truth, and the triple-knowledge of which Solomon speaks.

Many, focusing simply on the letter, understand as pertaining to the resurrection what the Apostle Paul says, that we must keep our mind, our soul, and our body spotless for the day of the coming of the Lord. Some of them have claimed that this passage proves that man is composed of three kinds of substances: a spirit, which is the principle of their feelings and their thoughts, a soul, which is the source of his life, and of a body, which serves as an instrument for all external actions. There are others who claim that man is composed of a core and a body, and that the "spirit" that we add is not a substance but a principle which, according the different effects it produces, is sometimes called spirit, or feeling, or thought, because there is no man in so many different substances that give them different names. And when they encounter the passage of Scripture, "Spirits and souls of the righteous, bless the Lord," they reject it by saying that these words are not found in the Hebrew text. For me, as I said earlier, I think that the "spirit" which remains blameless with soul and body, must not be interpreted by us to mean the Holy Spirit, whose substance is imperishable, but rather His gifts and graces, which lights are capable of being extinguished in us, if we make a poor, rather than good, use of them.

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Letter 121. To Algasia.

Jerome writes to a lady of Gaul named Algasia to answer eleven questions which she had submitted to him. They were as follows:- (1) How is Luke 7:18, Luke 7:19, to be reconciled with John 1:36?

(2) What is the meaning of Matt. 12:20?

(3) And of Matt. 16:24?

(4) And of Matt. 24:19, Matt. 24:20?

(5) And of Luke 9:53?

(6) What is the meaning of the parable of the unjust steward?

(7) What is the meaning of Rom. 5:7?

(8) And of Rom. 7:8?

(9) And of Rom. 9:3?

(10) And of Col. 2:18?

(11) And of 2 Th. 2:3? The date of the letter is 406 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

Preface

My son Apodemius, who marked the interpretation of his name coming a long way to us by navigation, and sought for Bethlehem from the shores of the Ocean and the farthest boundaries of Gaul, and after passing through Rome, so that finding in it the heavenly bread, he might be satisfied and break forth in the Lord and say: " My heart hath uttered a good word ; I speak of my works for the King " (Ps. 44:1), has brought me great questions in a small scroll, which he said were given by you, and which he instructed me to communicate to him. While reading these I understood that the interest of the Queen of Sheba in you had been fulfilled, who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon (1 Kings 10:4; Matt. 12:42). Not indeed I, Solomon, who is preferred to all men for wisdom before and after himself; but you are to be called the Queen of Sheba—in whose mortal body sin does not reign—and who, turned towards the Lord with your whole mind, will hear from Him: "Turn, turn, O Shulamite" (Song of Solomon 6:12), for "Sheba" in our language means "conversion." And at the same time, I perceived that your questions proposed concerning the Gospel alone and the Apostle indicate that you either do not read enough of the Old Testament, or do not understand it sufficiently, which is covered with such great obscurities and types of future events that it needs interpretation for everything; and the eastern gate, from which true light rises and through which the High Priest enters and goes out, is

always closed (Ezekiel 43:1-2 and 44:1), and is only opened for Christ (Revelation 5), who has the key of David, who opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens, so that with Him opening, you may enter into His chamber, and say, "The king has brought me to his chambers" (Song of Solomon 1:4). Furthermore, I am quite amazed, why having left the nearby extremely pure source, you search for the flows of our stream so far away, and having abandoned the waters of Siloam, which move silently (Isaiah 8), you desire the waters of Sihor, which are made filthy by the vices of this troubled world. Here you have Alethius, a holy priest, who, as they say, with a living voice and wise and eloquent speech, can answer what you ask, unless perhaps you desire foreign merchandise, and for the variety of tastes, the delicacies of our seasonings also delight you. Some are pleased with sweet things, some are pleased with bitter things, the sour restore the stomachs of the latter, the salty ones sustain the former. I have seen nausea and dizziness often cured with the remedy called "βίηρ", and according to Hippocrates, opposing cures are remedies for opposing things. Therefore, having cured our bitterness with that honeyed nectar, put the wood of the cross into Mara, and restrain the aged phlegm with youthful austerity, so that you may sing joyfully: "How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psalm 119:103).

Chapter 1

Why does John send his disciples to the Lord to ask him: Are you the one who is coming, or should we expect another? (Matthew 11:3 and Luke 7:20) When he had previously said about the same person: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. (John 1:29) We have spoken more fully on this question in the Commentaries of Matthew. Therefore, it is clear that you do not have these books yourself, since you ask such questions. However, we must briefly summarize so as not to seem completely silent. John sent his disciples while he was in prison, seeking to learn from them, and about to be beheaded, to teach them to follow the one whom he acknowledged as the master of all through his questioning. For he could not be unaware of him whom he had shown to those who were unaware, and of whom he had said, "He who has a bride is the bridegroom" (John 3:29); and "I am not worthy to bear his sandals" (Matthew 3:11); and "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 1:27). And he heard the Father thundering out: This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased (Ibid. 3:30). But what he says: Art Thou He that shall come, or look we for another? (Matth. 3: 17). This utterance too may have this meaning: I know that Thou art He Who hast come to take away the sins of the world; but because I am to descend into hell, I ask this also of Thee, whether Thou too wilt descend thither, or is it impious to believe this of the Son of God, and wilt Thou send another thither? This, however, I wish to know, that I who have proclaimed Thee among men on earth, may also in hell proclaim Thee, if Thou art perchance coming. For Thou it is Who hast come to loose the captives, and to set free them that were bound. The Lord, understanding the purport of his inquiry, answered rather through works than by word, and bade John be told that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, and (what is greater than these) the poor have the Gospel preached to them (Matth. 11; Luc. 7). The poor, however, are distinguished either by humility or by riches so that no difference in salvation exists between the poor man and the rich man, but all are called equally. And it is inferred: "Blessed is he who is not scandalized in me" (Matthew 11:6), he who strikes not John but his disciples who had first come to him, saying: "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?" (Mark 18; and Luke 5:33). And to John:

"Master, you bear witness concerning him near Jordan. Behold, his disciples baptize, and many come to him" (John 3:26). With these words, he indicates jealousy about the size of the signs which comes from biting envy why should the one who was baptized by John dare to baptize? and a much larger crowd gathers to him than had previously come to John. And lest the people, unknowingly, think that John is being blackened because of what was said, he delivers a speech in his praise and begins to speak to the surrounding crowds about John: What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out into the wilderness to see? A man clothed in soft clothing (Matthew 11:7-8; Luke 7:24-25)? and so on. The sense of this statement is as follows: Did you come out into the wilderness to see a man, like a reed shaken by the wind, being bent in various directions? Let him doubt now about whom he had previously praised, and concerning whom he had previously said, Behold the Lamb of God, let him now ask whether he is the one himself, or whether another one will come or is coming. And because every false preaching seeks profit and strives for human glory, so that gains may be born through glory: he affirms, wearing clothing made of camel's hair, that no one can yield to flattery; and he who feeds on locusts and wild honey (Matt. 3: 4), does not seek riches or other earthly pleasures, avoids the rigid and austere life of the palace, which those who are clothed with purple and fine linen and silk and soft feathers seek. And he says that he is not only a prophet who is accustomed to predicting the future, but he is more than a prophet, because the one whom they had said would come, he has shown has come, saying: Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29) : especially since he has attained the privilege of the prophetic summit of John; that he who had said, I ought to be baptized by you (Matthew 3:14), himself has baptized him: not by the presumption of being greater, but by the obedience of the disciple and the fear of the servant. And although he affirms that among those born of women, no one greater has arisen than John (Matthew 11:11), he mentions himself, who was born of a virgin, as being greater: or he precedes all men on earth before every angel in heaven, who is least. For we progress into angels; and not angels into us, just as some snoring heavily dream. Nor is this enough in the praises of John, unless he who preached the baptism of repentance, is first reported to have said: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 3:1) . From the days of his preaching, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence (Ibid. 11.12); such as that man is born. He desires to be an angel; and an earthly animal seeks a heavenly abode. For the Law and the Prophets prophesied up to John (Ibid. 13): not that John is the end of the Prophets and the Law, but he who was preached by the testimony of John. But according to the mystery which is written in Malachy (chapter 4, verse 5), John is Elijah who is coming (Matthew 11:14): not that the same soul (as the heretics suspect) was in Elijah and in John, but that he had the same grace of the Holy Spirit, girded with a belt like Elijah, living in the desert like Elijah, suffering persecution from Herodias as he endured from Jezebel: just as Elijah was the precursor of the second coming, so John welcomed the Lord Savior who was coming in the flesh, not only in the wilderness but even in his mother's womb, and announced it with the joy of his body.

Chapter 2

What does it mean that it is written in Matthew: 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench' (Matthew 12:20). For the explanation of this passage, the whole testimony that Matthew takes from the Prophet Isaiah must be set forth, even the words of Isaiah (Isaiah 42): according to the Septuagint interpreters and the Hebrew itself, to which Theodotus,

Aquila, and Symmachus agree. Thus of the four Evangelists, only Matthew relates: "And Jesus knowing it, retired from thence: and many followed him, and he healed them all. And he charged them that they should not make him known. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaias the prophet, saying: Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul hath been well pleased. I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles." (Chapter 12, verses 15-18) He will not strive, nor cry out, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and smoking flax he will not extinguish, until he brings forth judgment unto victory. And in his name the Gentiles will hope" (Matthew 12:15 and following). For which in Isaiah, according to the Septuagint interpreters, it is thus written: "Jacob my servant, I will uplift him. My chosen one, my soul has received him. I have given my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor have respect to person, neither shall his voice be heard abroad. The bruised reed he shall not break: and smoking flax he shall not extinguish: but he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall shine, and shall not be broken, until he set judgment in the earth: and the countries shall wait for his law." However, we translate it from Hebrew like this, "Behold my servant, I will uphold him; my chosen, my soul has delighted in him. I have given my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. "He will not cry out, nor raise his voice, nor make it heard in the street. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In truth he will bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice on the earth; and the islands will put their hope in his law." This shows that the Gospel writer Matthew, not bound by authority of the old interpretation, dismissed the Hebrew truth and brought forth to the nations, educated in the Law of the Lord, the things he had read in Hebrew as if he were a Hebrew among Hebrews. For if it is to be taken thus, as the Seventy Interpreters have given it: Jacob is my servant, I will receive him; Israel is my chosen, my soul has received him, how do we understand that it has been fulfilled in Jesus, what has been written concerning Jacob and Israel? We read that Blessed Matthew did this not only in this testimony, but also in another place: Out of Egypt I called my son (Hosea 11:2): for which the Seventy translated: Out of Egypt I called his sons. Certainly, if we do not follow the Hebrew truth, it is evident that it does not pertain to the Lord and Savior. For it follows: but they sacrificed to Baalim. And that which is less in the assumed testimony in the Gospel: it shall shine and not be shaken, until he shall place judgment upon the earth, seems to have happened by the error of the first writer who, reading the higher sentence to be finished in the word judgment, thought that the final word of the lower sentence was judgment, and he omitted a few words which were in the middle, that is, between judgment and judgment. And again, that which is read among the Hebrews: And in his law shall the islands hope, Matthew, interpreting the sense rather than the words, put for law and islands, a name and nations. And not only in the present place, but wherever the testimonies of the Evangelists and Apostles from the old Instrument have been brought forth, it should be observed more diligently: not that they followed words, but the sense: and where they differ from the Hebrew in the Septuagint, they expressed the Hebrew sense in their own words. Therefore, the Child of the almighty God, according to the dispensation of assumed flesh, which is sent to us, is called the Savior. To whom and in another place the Father says: It is great for you to be called my child, to gather the tribes of Jacob (Isai. 49.3). This is the vineyard of Sorec, which is interpreted as chosen. This is the beloved son, in whom the soul of God is pleased; not because God has a soul, but because every affection of God is shown in the soul. And it is not surprising if the soul is named in God, when all the members of the human body,

according to the laws of tropology, and various intelligences, are said to have it. He also placed his spirit upon him: the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Strength, the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety, and the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11): He who descends upon him in the form of a dove, about whom John the Baptist narrates having heard from God the Father: "The One upon whom you see the Holy Spirit descending and remaining upon, He is" (John 1:33). And He will announce judgment to the Gentiles; concerning whom it is also written in the Psalms: "Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the son of a king" (Psalm 71:1). He Himself speaks about it in the Gospel: "For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22). He will not contend: like a lamb led to the slaughter: He will not argue in the hearing. Nor will he cry out, in accordance with what the Apostle Paul writes: Let all clamor, and anger, and bitterness be taken away from you (Ephesians 4:31). He will not cry out: because Israel did not do justice, but cry out. Nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets or outdoors. For all the glory of the daughter of the king is within (Psalm 44:14): And, Narrow, and cramped is the way that leads to life (Matthew 7:14). Therefore his voice is not heard in the streets, where wisdom confidently acts, not entering a broad and spacious way, but accusing and condemning. And so he spoke to those who were outside, not in his own voice, but in parables: 'The reed, he said, shaken does not break; or, as the Septuagint translated, the broken reed not to be crushed. The broken reed that was once vocal, and sang in praise of the Lord, is called Israel, who, because he stumbled on a corner stone and fell on it, was broken in it; therefore it is said of him: Rebuke, O Lord, the beasts of the reed (Ps. 67. 31): and in the volume of Jesus he is called the torrent of the cane, that is, of the reed; who has turbid waters, which Israel chose, despising the purest streams of the Jordan: and turning his mind back to Egypt, and desiring the marshy and swampy region, and pumpkins, and onions, and garlic, and cucumbers, and the pots of Egyptian flesh, is rightly called a broken reed by Isaiah: he who wants to lean on which, his hand will be pierced. For whoever, after the advent of the Lord and Savior and leaving behind the spirit of interpreting the Gospel, rests in the death of Jewish literature, all the works of that person are harmed. Even smoking linen will not extinguish a people gathered from the nations who, with the ardor of natural law extinguished, are wrapped in the bitter smoke, which is hurtful to the eyes, and enveloped in the darkness of errors. He who not only did not restrain and reduce to ashes, but on the contrary, from a small spark, and almost dying, raised the greatest fire; so that the whole world burned with the fire of the Lord and Savior, whom he came to send upon the earth, and in all desires to burn (Luke 12:49). According to the tropology, what we see in this place, we have briefly noted in the Commentaries of Matthew. But he who has not broken the bruised reed, and has not extinguished the smoking flax, has also brought judgment unto victory (Isai. 42:3), whose judgments are true, justified in themselves (Psalm 18), so that he may be justified in his words and may overcome in judgment (Psalm 50), and so that the light of his preaching may shine in the world, not be crushed by anyone, and may overcome all snares, until he establishes judgment on earth and that which is written may be fulfilled: 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10). And, in his name shall the Gentiles hope (Isaiah 11:10); or the islands shall hope in his law (Ibid. 42:4). For just as the islands are struck by the blast and rush of winds and frequently buffeted by storms, but they are not overturned, as an example of the Gospel house built on a sturdy foundation of rock (Matthew 7; and Luke 6), so the Churches, which hope in the law and in the name of the Lord and Savior, speak through Isaiah: I am a strong city, a city that cannot be taken (Isaiah 27:3, LXX).

Chapter 3

Whose sense what is written in the Gospel of Matthew: If anyone wants to come after me, let him deny himself (Matt. 16:24). What is self-denial? or how does one who follows the Savior deny himself? On this matter I have spoken briefly in the third book of his commentary on Matthew: He who lays down the old man with his works denies himself, saying: And yet I live, but not me, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20) and takes up his cross and is crucified to the world. But who has crucified the world, follows the crucified Lord. "To whom we can now add: after he showed the disciples that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the priests and scribes, and the chief priests, and to be killed; Peter, taking him aside, began to rebuke him, saying: Lord, may this never happen to you. But he turned and said to Peter: Get behind me, Satan, you are a stumbling block to me; for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men." (Matthew 16:21-23) For, indeed, being terrified by human fear, he was afraid of the passion of the Lord. And just as, hearing he must suffer and be killed, he was afraid, so hearing, also, that he must rise again on the third day, he ought to have rejoiced, and the sadness of the passion mitigated by the glory of the resurrection. So, when this thought had seized him through fear, he spoke to all the disciples, or, according to Mark, he called the crowd with his disciples, or according to Luke, he spoke to all: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself; and let him take up his cross, and follow me." The meaning of this exhortation is: Confession is not delicate and secure in God. Whoever believes in me should shed his own blood. Whoever shall have lost his life in this world, shall save it in the next. Believing in Christ every day, one takes up their cross and denies themselves. Whoever was impure, turns towards chastity, temperance denying luxury. Whoever was fearful and timid, assumes the strength of courage, not knowing who they were. If the unjust follow justice, they deny injustice. If foolish, confessing Christ as God's power and wisdom, they deny foolishness (1 Corinthians 1). Knowing this, we deny ourselves what we were before not only in times of persecution and the necessity of martyrdom, but in every conversation, action, thought, and speech; and we confess that we are reborn in Christ. For this reason, the Lord was crucified so that we, who believe in him and have died to sin, are crucified with him, and we say what the Apostle Paul taught: I am crucified with Christ. (Galatians 2:19). And: But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world (Galatians 6:14). And he that is crucified with Christ, shall spoil principalities and powers; and he shall triumph over them in himself. Wherefore, in the Gospel according to Matthew, Simon of Cyrene bore the cross after him, as a type of those who were to believe in him, and to be crucified with him; which cross, according to the others, he bore himself at first.

Chapter 4

What is meant by the fact that it is written in the same Matthew, Woe to those who are pregnant and those who nurse in those days. And: Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath (Matthew 24:19-20). This is clearly dependent on the earlier statements. For when the Gospel of Christ has been preached to all nations and the end has come, and they see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy place (Mark 13): then those who are in Judea are commanded to flee to the mountains; and those who are on the housetop, not to come down and take anything from their house; and those who are in the field, not to turn back and take their cloak. We have spoken more fully on these matters in the

Commentaries of the same Matthew. And at once it is joined: Woe to the pregnant and nursing women in those days. In which days? when the abomination of desolation stands in the holy place. Indeed, it is not doubtful that this is preached according to the letter concerning the advent of Antichrist: when the magnitude of persecution compels them to flee, and heavy wombs, and nursing infants impede flight. Although some want it to mean the siege and battle against the Jews, and especially Jerusalem, by Titus and Vespasian. Winter and Sabbaths are also interpreted thus so as not to compel flight at that time when the severity of the cold in the fields and in desert places does not allow refugees to hide: and the observance of the Sabbath either makes deserters if they flee, or exposes them to the swords of the enemy if they keep Sabbath rest and commandments. But let us, hearing the Lord and Savior, flee to the mountains with those who are in Judea; let us also raise our eyes to the mountains, of which it is written: "I lift up my eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help" (Psalm 120:1). And in another place: "His foundation is in the holy mountains" (Psalm 87:1). And, "The mountains are around him and the Lord is around his people" (Psalm 124). And, "A city set on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14). Let us also, taking off the skin of letters, and going up the mountain with bare feet with Moses, say: "I will go over and see this great sight" (Exodus 3:3); so that we may understand the pregnant souls, which conceived the beginnings of faith from the seed of doctrine and the Word of God, and say with Isaiah, "By your fear, O Lord, we have conceived, and have been in pain, and have brought forth the spirit of your salvation, which you have placed upon the earth" (Isaiah 26:14). For just as seeds are gradually formed in the womb, and a person is not considered or thought to be formed until the confused elements receive their shapes and members, so a sense concept conceived by reason, unless it breaks forth into works, is still retained in the womb; and it quickly perishes as an abortion, when it has seen the abomination of desolation standing in the Church (Dan. 9. 27, Mat. 24. 15, Mark. 13. 14) and Satan being transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11.14). Of such fetuses Paul speaks when he says: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth until Christ be formed in you" (Galatians 4. 10). So I consider that women are akin to the mystical understanding, about whom the same Apostle writes: The woman was seduced and became a transgressor. But she will be saved by childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and sanctity with prudence (1 Tim. 2:14-15). For if she ever gives birth to anything related to divine teaching, it is necessary for what is born to grow; and to receive first the milk of infancy, until they reach solid food, and mature age in the fullness of Christ (1 Cor. 3:2; Eph. 4:13). For every one that is fed with milk, is unskillful in the word of justice: for he is a little child. Therefore, those souls which have not yet brought forth, or which, having brought forth, have not yet suckled them, seeing a heretical discourse standing in the Church, are presently scandalized and destroyed; they can't endure in times of trials and persecutions, especially if they have had leisure to perform good works and have not walked in the way that is Christ's (John 14:6). The Apostle said of this abomination of heretical and perverse doctrine that the man of iniquity and the adversary raises himself up against everything called God and religion, so that he dares to stand in the Temple of God, and show himself as if he were God (2 Thess. 2:4); whose coming is according to the working of Satan; and he destroys what is conceived by abortion; and what is born cannot reach childhood and perfect age. Therefore we must pray to the Lord, lest in the beginning of faith and growing age there arise a winter, of which it is written: Winter has passed, the rain is over and gone (Song of Solomon 2.11); lest we become sluggish in idleness, but with shipwreck imminent, let us awaken the sleeping Lord and say: Master, save us, we perish (Matthew 8.25).

Chapter 5

What is the meaning of what is written in the Gospel according to Luke: "And they did not receive him: because his face was going to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:53). Hastening, the Lord went to Jerusalem to fulfill the days of his assumption and to celebrate the Passover, about which he had said: "With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you, before I suffer" (Ibid. 22:15), and drink the cup, of which he said: "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11). He confirmed all his doctrine on the gallows, according to what is written: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself." (Ibid. 12:32). He set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. For it is necessary to have steadfastness and strength for one who is hurrying spontaneously toward passion. Hence to Ezekiel, to whom God had said: Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of scorpions, and art not afraid of them: I have made thy face strong against their face (Ezekiel 2:6 and 3:9); so that if perchance the hammer of the whole earth had risen up against him, he would be like a most enduring anvil and crush the hammer, of which it is written: "How is the hammer of the whole earth broken and shattered!" (Jeremiah 50:23) And he sent messengers, that is, Angels, before his sight (Luke 9:52). For it was fitting that the Angels should minister to the Son of God. Whether he calls the Apostles Angels, because even John, the precursor of the Lord, was called an Angel (Malachi 3:1; Matthew 11:10). And when they entered a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him, they did not receive him, because his face was going toward Jerusalem. The Samaritans and Jews are at odds with each other in enmity, and while all nations hate them, they are raging against each other with their own fury, while both contend for possession of the Law, and they persecute one another so much that after the Jews returned from Babylon, the Samaritans always obstructed the building of the Temple. And when even they wanted to build the Temple with them, the Jews replied: It is not lawful for us and you to build the Lord's house (1 Esdr. 4). Finally, for a great injury, the Pharisees reproached the Lord: Do you not have a demon, and are you not a Samaritan? (John 8.48). And in the parable of Jerusalem descending to Jericho, the Samaritan is placed as a sign and a miracle that he did good (Luke 10): and it is written to the Samaritan woman at the well: For Samaritans do not count themselves among the Jews (John 4.9). Therefore, the Samaritans seeing the Lord go towards Jerusalem, that is, to his enemies, as they had heard from his disciples who had come to prepare lodging, recognized him to be a Jew: and, as a Jew and a stranger, and one going to his enemies, they did not want to receive him. Although, with other understanding being submitted to us, it was the will of the Lord not to be received by the Samaritans, because he hastened to go to Jerusalem, where he was to suffer and shed his blood, so that, occupied with Samaritan hospitality and the teaching of that nation, he might not delay the day of suffering to which he had come. Hence he says in another place: "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24). And he commanded the Apostles: "Do not enter the city of Samaria" (Ibid. 10:5), wishing to remove all occasion of Jewish persecution, so that they might not afterwards say, "We have crucified him," because he had joined himself to our enemies and adversaries. Therefore his face was set towards Jerusalem. And accordingly, by another interpretation, the Samaritans did not receive him: for he was hastening to enter Jerusalem. But that they did not receive him, was of the Lord's will. Finally, the Apostles, versed in the Law, in which they knew only justice- an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth- seek to avenge the injury, and to imitate Elijah, at whose word two captains of fifty soldiers were consumed by fire: and they say to the Lord: Wilt thou, we say, that fire should come down from heaven, and consume them? (Luke 9:51). Beautifully, they say, Wilt

thou, we say: for even Elijah had said: If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven upon thee (2 Kings 1:10). Therefore, for the effectiveness of the speech of the Apostles, it is the will of the Lord. For if He had not commanded it, the Apostles would speak in vain, asking that fire descend upon them, and in other ways. If fire descended from heaven to the injury of Elijah's servants, and consumed the Jews and not the Samaritans, how much more should the flame rage against the impious Samaritans, to the contempt of the Son of God? The Lord, who had come not to judge but to save, not in power but in humility, not in the glory of the Father but in the lowliness of man, rebukes them because they have not remembered His doctrine and the goodness of the Gospel, in which He said: 'If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also' (Matt. 5:39) and 'Love your enemies' (Luke 6:35).

Chapter 6

You proposed a little question about the Gospel of Luke (Chapter 16, verse 1 and following): Who is the steward of iniquity who is praised by the voice of the Lord? When I wanted to know the reason for this and from which source it came, I examined the volume of the Gospel, and I found among other things that, as the tax collectors and sinners approached the Saviour to hear him, the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, "Why does this one receive sinners and eat with them?" (Luke 15:2). He spoke to them the parable of one hundred sheep, and one that was lost, which was found and carried back on the shoulders of the shepherd. And when it was proposed, he immediately said: "I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need for repentance." He also proposed another parable about ten drachmas lost and found, and he completed it with a similar ending. So I tell you, there will be joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one sinner repenting. He also proposed a third parable about a man who had two sons, and who divided his wealth between them. And when the younger son had lost his faculties and began to eat the pods that the pigs ate, he returned to his father, who accepted him. The envious elder brother, too, was rebuked by his father's voice, and he should have rejoiced because his brother was dead and had come back to life; he was lost, and he has been found. He spoke three parables against the Pharisees and Scribes who did not want to receive the repentance of sinners and the salvation of Publicans. He said also, he said to his disciples (Ibid. 16:1), without doubt, that he used a parable, just as before to the Scribes and Pharisees: by which parable he would exhort the disciples to mercy and would say in other words: Forgive and you shall be forgiven (Luke 6:7), so that you may ask boldly in the Lord's Prayer, Forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors (Matthew 6:12). Therefore, what is the parable that urges the disciples towards mercy? There was a certain rich man who had a steward (Luke 16:1), or a manager, for this is what οἰκονομος means. The steward is properly the governor of the estate, from which he is also called a steward. The οἰκονομος, however, is a dispenser of both money and fruits and all that the master possesses. Therefore, the most beautiful book of Xenophon's Oeconomica is not about the management of the estate but the management of the entire household (interpreted by Cicero). Therefore, this steward was accused before his master because he was squandering his master's property. When he was called, [the master] said: "What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, for you can no longer be steward." What did he say to himself? "What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg." I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses."

He called each one of his master's debtors to him and said to the first, "How much do you owe my master?" He said, "A hundred measures of oil. He said to him: take your bill, and sitting down quickly, write fifty. Then he said to another: And how much do you owe? Who answered: A hundred quarters of wheat. He said to him: take your bill, and write eighty. And the lord commended the unjust steward, forasmuch as he had done wisely: for the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. And I say to you: make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity; that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater: and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater. If then you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon, who will trust you with that which is the true? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's; who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Now all these things were heard by the Pharisees, who were greedy, and they ridiculed him. I have put the entire text of this parable so that we do not seek understanding from elsewhere and strive to find certain persons in the parable, but we should interpret it as a parable, that is, a comparison, which is called "parable" because it is "thrown beside" or compared, and is like the shadow of the pre-existent truth. Therefore, if the steward of unjust mammon is praised by the voice of the Lord because he has prepared justice for himself from an unjust matter, and the Lord, having suffered losses, praises the prudence of the steward, when he has acted fraudulently towards the Lord but wisely for himself, how much more will Christ, who cannot suffer any loss and is inclined to mercy, praise his disciples if they are merciful towards those who will believe ((or have believed)) in them? Finally, after the parable, he said: And I tell you, make friends for yourselves with unjust mammon. Mammon, however, in the language of the Syriacs, not the Hebrews, means wealth, because it has been collected unjustly. If, therefore, well-dispensed iniquity turns into justice: how much more will divine speech, in which there is no iniquity, and which is entrusted to the apostles, if it is well-dispensed, raise its dispensers to heaven? Therefore it follows: "He who is faithful in the least, that is, in earthly things, will also be faithful in many, that is, in spiritual things. But whoever is unjust in small things, so as not to give to his brothers for their use what has been created by God for all, he will also be unjust in dividing spiritual wealth, so that he may divide the doctrine of the Lord not for necessity, but for persons." But if, he says, you do not manage well the perishable riches of the flesh, who will trust you with the true and eternal riches of the doctrine of God? And if you have been unfaithful in what belongs to someone else (but everything that belongs to this age is someone else's), who will give you what is yours? That is why he criticizes avarice and says that those who love money cannot love God. Therefore, even the Apostles, if they wish to love God, must hold money in contempt. So the scribes and Pharisees, who were greedy, understanding that the parable was directed at themselves, mocked Him, preferring the carnal things, which are certain and present, to the spiritual and future things, which are uncertain. Theophilus, the seventh Bishop of the Church of Antioch after the Apostle Peter, who compiled the sayings of the four Evangelists into one work, has spoken about this parable in his Commentaries. 'The rich man who had a steward, or manager, is Almighty God, who is richer than anything else. His steward is Paul, who learned the sacred Scriptures at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts. 22. 3), and had received the Law of God to be dispensed.' When he had begun to persecute the believers in Christ, to bind them, to kill them, and to plunder all the substance of his Lord, he was rebuked by the Lord: Saul, Saul, why are you

persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the pricks. (Acts 9:4-5). And he thought to himself: What should I do? Since I, who was a teacher and a steward, must become a disciple and a worker. I cannot dig. For I see that all the commandments of the Law, which were on the earth, are destroyed; and that the Law and the Prophets were fulfilled up to John the Baptist. I am ashamed to beg, that I, who was a teacher of the Jews, should be compelled to beg for instruction from a gentile and from the disciple Ananias. Therefore, I will do what I think is useful to me: so that after I am dismissed from my position, Christians will receive me into their homes. And those who formerly practiced the law, but had now believed in Christ, began to teach that the law was abolished, and that the prophets had foretold these things. And they taught that what had been done by those who kept the law, was worthy of nothing but contempt (Philippians 3:8). Then he called two of his debtors. The first owed him one hundred measures of oil, that is, those who had been gathered from the Gentiles and were in great need of God's mercy; and he made them write fifty in the document instead of one hundred, which was a special number for those who repented, and based on the Jubilee, and that parable in the Gospel in which one is forgiven five hundred denarii, and another fifty. However, he called the people of the Jews who were nourished on the wheat of God's commandments, and who owed him a hundred denarii, and he forced them to make eighty out of a hundred, that is, to believe in the resurrection of the Lord, which is contained in the number of the eighth day, and is completed in eight decades, so that he might pass from the Sabbath of the Law to the first Sabbath. For this reason, it is preached by the Lord that he did well, and that he was changed from the severity of the Law to the mercy of the Gospel for his salvation. And if you ask why he is called the steward of iniquity in the Law, which is from God, he was an unjust steward who indeed offered well, but did not divide well, believing in the Father, but persecuting the Son; having almighty God, but denying the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Apostle Paul was wiser in transgressing the Law than the once children of light who, engaged in the observation of the Law, lost Christ who is the true light of God the Father. You can read what Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, thought about this place in his comments. I could not find an explanation of this parable in Origen and Didymus, and I am uncertain whether it has been abolished by the antiquity of the times or whether they did not write it themselves. To me, it seems according to my previous interpretation, that we ought to make friends for ourselves from the unjust mammon, not just any poor person, but those who can receive us into their homes and eternal dwellings, so that when we offer them small things, we may receive great things from them, and giving them what belongs to others, we may receive what belongs to us, and sow in blessing, so that we may reap blessings. For he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly.

Chapter 7

In what sense should we take what we read in the Epistle to the Romans: for scarcely for a righteous man will one die; for peradventure for the good man some would even dare to die. (Rom. 5:7) For two heretics, because they do not understand this testimony, being in different errors indeed, but with equal impiety, blaspheme. For Marcion, who makes God the righteous, the Creator of the Law, and of the Prophets; but the good [God] of the Gospel and of the Apostle, and would make Him the Christ, introduces two gods - the one righteous, the other good. And he asserts that for the righteous [God] none, or few, suffered death. However, for Christ's sake, countless martyrs have existed. Moreover, Arius refers to Christ as just, of whom it was said: Give the king thy judgment, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son (Psalm 72:1); And in the

Gospel he himself says of himself: For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son (John 5:22); And, I judge as I hear (ibid. 30). But goodness belongs to God the Father, of whom the Son himself confesses: Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments (Luke 18:19). And since up to this point his blasphemies were able to find crooked paths, he stumbles and falls in the following [paths]. For who dares to die for the Father, and scarcely does anyone die for the Son, when on account of the name of Christ so much blood of martyrs has been shed? Therefore, whoever simply expounds this passage can say that in the old Law, in which there is justice, scarcely a few people were found who shed their own blood. But in the new Testament, in which there is goodness and mercy, innumerable martyrs have existed. But from that which he established, it is possible that someone may even dare to die, and with a measured step balanced the sentence, it should be understood that some who dare to die for the Gospel can be found not to be received in this way; but the meaning of this place should be handled from the higher and lower parts. For Paul said he boasted in tribulations: because tribulation works patience; and patience, probation; and probation, hope; and hope is not confounded (Rom. 5.4-5), which has a certain promise from him because the love of God is poured forth in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit who is given to us (Ibid.): according to what God had said through the Prophet: I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh (Joel 1.28); he marvels at the goodness of Christ, that he wanted to die for the ungodly, weak, and sinners, and to die at an opportune time, about which he says: In a time accepted I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee (Isaias 49.8). And again: Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). When everyone had sinned, they became useless together, there was no one who did good, not even one (Psalm 13.1). Therefore, his incredible goodness and unheard-of mercy, to die for the ungodly, for it is scarcely that someone would die for the just or the good, and he poured out his own blood, with fear of death terrifying all. For it can sometimes be found that someone dares to die for a just and good cause. But the love of God, which he has for us, is most proven by this, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us, and his life was taken from the earth. And he was led to death for the iniquities of the people; he carried our sins, and his soul was handed over to death, and he was reckoned with the wicked (Isaiah 53); so that he might make us, the ungodly, infirm, and sinners, pious, robust, and just. Some interpret it thus. If he died for us who are impious and sinners, how much more confidently should we not hesitate to lay down our lives for a just and good Christ? Moreover, we do not think that what is just and good is something different or signifies any particular person; but rather a thing which is absolutely just and good, for the sake of which some may find difficulty but at times it can be found, to shed their own blood.

Chapter 8

What does the Apostle mean when he writes to the Romans: "For sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me" (Romans 7:11)? Let us examine the whole passage and, with the help of Christ, try to understand its meaning. We do not wish to impose upon you our interpretation, but only to explain briefly what seems to us to be the true sense of the words. So what shall we say? Is the Law sin? Certainly not! Yet, I would not have known sin except through the Law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the Law had said, "You shall not covet." But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once:

but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But in order for sin to appear sin, it worked death to me through what is good, so that sin by the commandment might become utterly sinful. For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. So I find the law, that when I want to do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! How can medicine not be a cause of death, if it reveals deadly poisons, although evil people abuse them for death, either by killing themselves or lying in wait for their enemies: thus the Law was given, to show the poisons of sins; and to hold back the man who abuses his freedom, who before was thoughtless and stumbled dangerously, with the reins of the law, and to teach him to walk by rules so that we may serve in the newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, that is, we live by the command which we previously called in the manner of brute animals; Let's eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (1 Cor. 15:32). But if, under the influence of the Law (which teaches us what we ought to do and prohibits what we ought not to do), we are carried away by our fault and incontinence against legal precepts, it seems that the Law causes sin: since while prohibiting desire, it is known to kindle it in a certain manner. The secular opinion among the Greeks is: Whatever is allowed is desired less. Therefore, on the contrary, whatever is not allowed receives the fuel of desire. Hence, Tullius also denies having written about the punishments of the parricides in Athens by Solon, so that he may not seem to prohibit so much as to admonish. Therefore, the law, disregarded by lawbreakers and those trampling on its precepts, seems to be the occasion for offenses: by forbidding what they do not wish to be done, it binds them with the chains of commandments; whereas, prior to sinning without law, they were not held guilty. We have said these things, understanding the Law which was given through Moses. But because it is written in the subsequent writings: the Law of God and the law of the flesh and members, which fights against the Law of our mind and leads us captive in the Law of sin, and that four laws, contending against each other, are known to be written in one place, I consider it not irrelevant if I inquire how many kinds of law are remembered in the Holy Scriptures. It is said that the Law, which was given through Moses, is cursed according to what is written to the Galatians: For all who are of the works of the Law are under a curse. For it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law, to perform them" (Gal. 3:10). And again in the same epistle: The Law was established for transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise was made, having been arranged through angels by the hand of a mediator (Galatians 3:19). And again: Therefore the Law was our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all

sons of God through faith which is in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:24, etc.). Also, the history which does not contain orders, but reports what has been done, is called the Law by the Apostle. "Tell me," he said, "you who want to be under the Law, have you not read the Law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and the other by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, but the son of the free woman was born by promise (Ibid. 4:22-23). And the Psalms are also called Law: May the word written in their Law be fulfilled: They hated me without reason (Ps. 68:5). Isaiah's prophecy, the Apostle calls the Law: In the Law it is written: "With other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; and they will not even hear me, saith the Lord." (Isai. 21). This is the same passage which I find written in Hebrew in the book of Isaiah; and the Law also is styled the mystical intelligence of the Scriptures: "For we know that the Law is spiritual." (Rom. 7. 14). Besides all this, the Apostle tells us that the natural law is written on our hearts: For when the Gentiles that have not the Law do by nature the things that are of the Law, they are a Law to themselves, who show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them. (Rom. 2. 14 et 15). This law which is written in the heart contains all nations: and there is no human who does not know this law. Therefore, the just judgment of God is upon the human race; "What you do not want to happen to yourself, do not do to others." For who is unaware that murder, adultery, theft, and every form of desire are evil, because he would not want them to be done to himself? For if he were unaware that they were evil, he would not be pained by them being inflicted upon himself. Through this natural law, Cain also knew his sin, saying: "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Adam and Eve also knew their sin, and therefore they hid under the tree of life. Pharaoh before the law was given through Moses, confessed his sins, and said: The Lord is just, but I and my people are wicked. This law is unknown in childhood, ignored in infancy, and sinning without command, one is not held by the law of sin. He curses his father and mother, and beats his parents, and because he has not yet received the law of wisdom, sin is dead within him. But when the command comes, that is, the time when one seeks good and avoids evil, then sin begins to revive, and he dies, guilty of sin. And so it happens, that the time of understanding, in which we know the commandments of God, that we might attain to life, works death in us: if we act more negligently, and occasion seduces and supplants us with wisdom, and leads us to death. Not that understanding is sin (for the Law of Understanding is holy and just and good), but through understanding of sins and virtues, sin is born in me, which before I understood, I did not know it was sin. And thus it has become, that what was given to me for good, is changed through my fault into evil; and that I may use a new word to explain my meaning: sin, which before I had understanding, was without sin, by the transgression of the commandment, becomes more sinful to me. Before, let us ask what this desire is, of which the Law says: Thou shalt not covet. Some think that the command in the Decalogue "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods" (Deut. 5:21) means. But we consider all disturbances of the soul, by which we grieve and rejoice, fear and desire, to be covetousness. And this Apostle, vessel of election, whose body was the temple of the Holy Spirit, and who said, "Do you seek proof of the Christ who speaks in me?" (1 Cor. 13:3)? And in another place: "Christ redeemed us" (Gal. 3:13). And again: "But I now live, not I, but Christ lives in me" (Ibid. 2:20), he speaks not of himself but of Him who wills to do penance after sins, and, under his own person, describes the frailty of the human condition, which perpetuates the wars between two men, who are internal and external, and fighting with each other. The inner man agrees with both written and natural law, that it is good, and holy, and just, and spiritual. The outer [man], I say, is carnal, sold under sin. For I do not

know what I am working, and I do not do what I will, but what I hate (Rom. 7. 14). But if the outer [man] does what he does not want, and works what he hates, he shows that the commandment is good, and that he does not do what is evil; but sin dwells in his flesh: this is the vices of the body, and the desire for pleasure, which is implanted in human bodies for descendants and offspring; and if it goes beyond its limits, it turns into sin. Let every person consider and accuse themselves, and manage the incentives to their vices: how often they speak, think, and suffer in the heat of the body what they do not want; I do not want to say that they should do it, lest I seem to accuse holy men, of whom it is written: "This man was true and unblemished, a worshipper of God, shunning every evil work" (Job 1.1). And of Zacharias and Elizabeth: "They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1.6). And it was commanded to the Apostles: Be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:46). But He never would have commanded it unless He knew man was capable of being perfect. Unless perhaps we should say that departing from all evil means improvement and transition from the errors of childhood and the vices of a licentious age to correction and virtues; and that righteousness, as preached in Zacharias and Elizabeth, is external; and that the concupiscence that is said to dwell in our members now abides within us. But it is not only to boys, but already to those of robust age, that the apostles are commanded to take on the perfection which we ourselves confess to be in perfect age. Nor saying this, do we flatter vices; but we follow the authority of the scriptures, which says no man is without sin, but that God has included all under sin; that He may have mercy on all. (Gal. 3.22): except Him alone, who has not sinned, nor has deceit been found in His mouth. (Isaiah 53). From there, it is also said by Solomon, 'that the tracks of the serpents are not found in the rock.' (Prov. 30) And the Lord further said of himself, "Behold, the ruler of this world is coming, and there is nothing in me that he can use (John 14:30)," that is, of his own work and his own trace. For this reason, we are commanded not to reproach those who turn away from their sins and not to despise the Egyptians for they themselves were once in Egypt, and we built cities out of mud and bricks for the Pharaoh (Deut. 23). And we were taken captive to Babylon because of the law of sin that resided in our bodies. And when it seemed that there was extreme despair, indeed an open confession, that every man was ensnared by the snares of the devil, the Apostle, rather the man under whose person the Apostle speaks, turns to give thanks to the Savior, that he was redeemed by his blood, and that he has shed the filth in baptism, and that he has taken up the new garment of Christ, and having put to death the old man, a new man was born who says: Miserable man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? (Rom. 7. 24) I give thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, who has freed me from this body of death. If anyone does not see that the Apostle is speaking about others in his own person, let him explain how Daniel, whom we know to have been just, speaks as if of himself when he pleads for others: We have sinned, we have acted unjustly, we have done wickedly, we have departed and have gone away from thy commandments and thy judgments; and we have not listened to thy servants the prophets, who spoke in thy name to our kings, to our princes, to our fathers, and to all the people of the land. To thee, O Lord, belongs justice, but to us confusion (Dan. 3:29 et seqq.). Also, what is said in the thirty-first Psalm: I have made known to you my sin, and I have not hidden my iniquity. I said: I will confess my injustice to the Lord, and you forgave the impiety of my sin. For this let every holy one pray to you in an opportune time (Psalm 31:5) - not David, or a just man, or (to speak plainly) a Prophet, whose words are narrated, but it fits with the sinner. And when the righteous man, under the guise of a penitent, has uttered such

utterances, he deserves to hear from God: I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. (Ibid. 8) In the thirty-seventh Psalm also, the title of which is In Remembrance, that we may be taught to be always mindful of our sins, and to repent of them, we read as follows: There is no peace for my bones, because of my sins. "Since my iniquities have risen above my head, like a heavy burden they weigh upon me. My wounds have become corrupt and have festered because of my foolishness. I am troubled and bowed down to the end." (Psalms 38:5-6 in the Vulgate) This whole passage of the Apostle, both in the preceding and in the following, nay, his whole Epistle to the Romans, is wrapped in too many obscurities, and if I wished to discuss everything, it would not be one book for me, but large, and there would be many volumes to be written.

Chapter 9

Why the Apostle Paul writes in the same Epistle to the Romans: I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites, to whom the adoption belongs, and the glory, and the testament, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all things, God blessed for ever. Amen. (Romans 9:3 et seqq.) Indeed, a valid question, how can the Apostle who said above: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? (Romans 8:35) And again: But I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39), now confirm under oath and say: I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost: That I have great sadness, and continual sorrow in my heart. For I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh. And so on. For if someone's love for God is so strong that he cannot be separated from His love, by neither the fear of death, nor the hope of life, nor persecution, nor hunger, nor nudity, nor danger, nor sword; and if Angels also, and Powers, both present and future, and all the Forces of heaven, and both the high and the deep, and every creature at once were to assail him, which cannot possibly be done: yet he would not be separated from the love of God, which he has in Christ Jesus: what is this great change, rather unheard-of prudence, that for the love of Christ, he would not want to have Christ? And lest we do not believe him, he swears and confirms in Christ, and calls his conscience as a witness, the Holy Spirit, that he has sadness, not light or casual, but great and unbelievable, and has sorrow in his heart, which does not sting for an hour and pass, but which continually remains in his heart. Where does this sadness lead? What profit is there in unceasing pain? Is it wished to be anathema from Christ, and to perish, so that others may be saved? But if we consider the voice of Moses asking God for the people of the Jews, and saying, "If thou wilt forgive them their sin, forgive; but if not, blot me out of thy book, which thou hast written" (Exod. 32. 31. 32), we will see the same feelings in Moses and Paul towards the flock entrusted to them. For a good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. But a hireling, who is not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and flees. And to say this same thing: I wished to be cursed by Christ; and erase me from your book which you have written. For those who are erased from the book of the living, and are not written with the just, are made anathema by the Lord. At the same time, see how great is the love of the Apostle for Christ, that

he desires to die for him, and to perish alone, provided that the whole human race believes in him. To perish, however, not forever, but for the present. For whoever shall lose his life for Christ, shall save it (Matt. 10:39). Hence, he takes as an example the Forty-Third Psalm: For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter (Ps. 43:22). Therefore, the Apostle wishes to die in the flesh, so that others may be saved in the spirit; to pour out his blood so that many souls may be preserved. However, that anathema sometimes signifies slaying can be proved by many testimonies of the Old Testament. And lest we think the grief to be slight, and the cause of sorrow small, he joins it and says: For my brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh. When he calls them kinsmen and brethren according to the flesh, he shows that they are strangers to him in spirit. Whose adoption," he says, "is signified more significantly in Greek as ■ιοθεσ■α; these things were spoken of by the Lord: 'You are my firstborn son, Israel,' and 'I have begotten sons and exalted them' (Isaiah 1:2), but now he says, 'Alien sons have lied to me' (Psalm 17:46). And their glory is that they were chosen from all nations to be a special people of God, and their covenants, one in the letter and the other in the spirit, meant that those who once served ceremonies of the abolished Law in the flesh would afterwards serve in the spirit the commands of the eternal Gospel. And the law addresses both the new and the old Testament. And worship, that is, true religion. And promises; to fulfill whatever was promised to the fathers in their descendants. And (which is greater than all) from whom Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. And in order that we might know who this Christ is, he embraces the causes of his pain in one speech, who is blessed above all God forever, amen. And this great and such, is not received from those from whom he was born. And nevertheless, he praises the truth of judgement, so that the sentence of God may not seem displeasing to his kindred and brothers, and be either austere or excessive. In which, therefore, such great goods were present, he laments why so many evils are present now.

Chapter 10

What is meant is the same as the Apostle writes to the Colossians: Let no man seduce you, willing in humility, and religion of angels, walking in the things which he hath not seen, in vain puffed up by the sense of his flesh, And not holding the head, from which the whole body, by joints and bands being supplied with nourishment and compacted, groweth unto the increase of God (Colossians 2:18-19). We approve that which we frequently say: And if I should be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge (2 Corinthians 11:6), this, we now declare, is what Paul said, not concerning humility, but of the truth of conscience. For language does not explain profound and hidden feelings. And although he feels himself what he says, he cannot express in words, pure enough for the ears of others, what those feelings are. When he tries to interpret himself, who had been very eloquent in his native language (for he was a Hebrew, born from Hebrews and educated at the feet of Gamaliel, the most learned of men in the law), he becomes entangled. However, if this happens to him in the Greek language, which he had imbibed from his childhood while being raised in Tarsus of Cilicia, what should be said of the Latins who, attempting to express word for word, make his thoughts more obscure, and like weeds growing, stifle the abundance of fruits? Therefore, we will try to unfold the meaning in a paraphrased way, and bring back the tricks of the involved language to their order and connection, so that the threads of words run on a simple warp: and under a plain cover, the texture of the Apostolic speech may grow. Let no one surpass you, that is, let no one take the prize from you: this is said in Greek, καταβραβευ■τω when someone who is in the contest, due to the unfairness of the judge or the tricks of the masters,

loses the prize and the palm that is due to him. There are many words that the Apostle uses in a more familiar manner according to the custom of his city and province. From these (for example) a few should be mentioned. But to me it is a small thing to be judged by (1 Cor. 1), that is, **π** **ν**θρ **ω** **π** **ν**ης **μ** **ρ**ας: And, I speak in a human sense (Rom. 6), that is, **ν**θρ **π**ινον **λ** **γ**ω: And, I did not burden you (2 Cor. 12): and what is now said, **μ**ηδε **ς** **μ** **ς** **κ**αταβραβε **τ**ω that is, no one take the prize from you. They use these and many other words up until today, the Cilicians. We should not be amazed by this in regard to the Apostle if he uses the customs of his language, in which he was born and raised, since Virgil, the other Homer among us, following the customs of his homeland, called the wicked chill (Georgics 2). So let no one surpass and conquer you, willing to follow the humility of the letter, and the religion and culture of the angels; so that you do not serve spiritual intelligence, but rather the examples of the future, which he, who wants to surpass you, has neither seen nor perceives (for both are held in Greek), especially when he walks arrogantly, and walks puffed up, and exhibits the pride of his own spirit in the gesture of his body, for this is what **μ**βατε **ων** signifies. But in vain, he is inflated and swells with the sense of his own flesh, understanding everything carnally, and seeking the delirium of Jewish traditions, and not holding the head of all the Scriptures, that which is written: The head of the man is Christ (1 Cor. 2, 3; Eph. 1, and 4 and 5; Coloss. 1). But the head and beginning of the whole body, and of those who believe, and of all spiritual understanding. From which head the body of the Church takes the vital juice of heavenly doctrine through its connections and joints, so that all its parts may gradually be enlivened, and through the secret channels of its veins, the exhausted blood of foods is founded, ministered, and increased; indeed, so that temperance of the body may be maintained, so that the members, watered from the source of the head, may grow into the perfection of God, and the prayer of the Savior may be fulfilled: "Father, I will that they may be one as we also are one" (John 17:21), so that when Christ has delivered us to the Father, God may be all things to all men (1 Cor. 15:28). He writes such things, both in words and in meanings, and in the style of speech most obscurely to the Ephesians. But speaking truth in love, let us grow in all things into him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body is joined together, and connected by every joint of supply, according to the working in its measure of each individual part. It makes increase of the body for the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:25, 16). And we have said more fully about this subject even in his Commentaries on the same Epistle. But he speaks throughout against those who, believing in Christ the Savior, desired to observe Jewish ceremonies. About this matter, a not insignificant controversy was raised, not even in the Acts of the Apostles (chapter 15). Whence Paul also says above, concerning those who boast that they are teachers of the Law: Let no one judge you in food and drink (Colossians 2:16), as if some were clean and some unclean; or with respect to a part of a festival day, as if some days were festivals and others not. For us who believe in the risen Christ, there is a judgment and an eternal festival. Or in the part of the new moon, that is, of the calendar, and of the new month, when the waning moon ends, and is covered by the shadows of the night. For the light of Christians is eternal, and is always illuminated by the rays of the Sun of righteousness. Or on a part of the sabbaths, so that they do not do servile work and do not bear burdens, because we have been given the liberty of Christ, and we have ceased to bear the burdens of sins. All these things," he said, "are shadows of things to come, and images of future happiness, in which the Jews hold fast to the letter and are bound to the earth; but we, according to the spirit, shall pass over to Christ who is now called the body in contrast to the shadows. For just as in the body truth is and in the body's shadow there is falsehood, so in

spiritual understanding all food and drink and all festivities and perpetual calendars and eternal rest are to be expected. We seek to know what he meant by this, either in the humility and religion of the angels or in what sense. "From where the Lord spoke to the disciples: Rise, let us go hence (John 14:31): And, Your house shall be left desolate to you (Matthew 23:38): And, The place where the Lord was crucified, is spiritually called Egypt and Sodom (Apocalypse 11:8), all the customs of the Jews are destroyed and whatever they offer in sacrifices, they offer not to God, but to fleeing angels and unclean spirits. Nor is it surprising if they do this after the passion of the Lord, since it is also said to them by the Prophet Amos: Have you offered me victims and sacrifices, O house of Israel, forty years in the desert, and have you taken up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Rempham, figures which you have made to adore them (Amos 5:25-26)?" Moreover, Stephen the martyr expounding more fully in the Jewish congregation and reviewing the old history, spoke thus: And in those days they made a calf, and offered sacrifices to the idol, and were rejoicing in their works. But God turned, and delivered them up, to serve the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets. (Acts 7:41-42) But the host of heaven is not only called the sun, and the moon, and the stars that glow; but also includes all the angelic multitude and their armies who are called in Hebrew Sabaoth, meaning powers or armies. As we also read in the Gospel according to Luke: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will. (Luke 2:13-14) For God makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flaming fire. (Psalm 103:4) And in order that we may know that they who worshiped idols, although they seemed to offer sacrifices to God in the temple, did not offer them to God, but to angels, more fully we learn by Ezekiel: I gave them bad precepts and judgments (Ezek. 20. 25). For God does not seek the blood of goats or of bulls; but a contrite spirit, a contrite and humble heart O God you will not despise (Psalm 50). And therefore, they who made the calf in Horeb, and worshiped the idol of Rempham, of which we shall speak more fully in the prophet Amos, worshiped the images which they had made; and God delivered them up to the service of the host of heaven, which is now called the religion of angels by the Apostle. For humility is read in Greek as ταπεινοφροσύνη, that is, humility of mind or sense. For truly humble sense, and pitiable superstition it is, to believe that God delights in the blood of goats and bulls and the smell of incense, which we often shun. But what follows: If you have died with Christ from the elements of the world, why do you still decree as if living in the world? Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle: all which things are unto destruction by the very use, according to the precepts and doctrines of men, having indeed a show of wisdom in superstition, and humility, and not sparing the body; not in any honor for the satisfying of the flesh (Colossians 2:20 and following). It seems to us that this is the meaning. Let us run through all things and, with Christ disclosing, reveal the darkness of perceptions and words. If you have been baptized in Christ and buried with Christ in baptism, dead to the elements of this world, why do you not say to me, but far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world (Galatians 6:14)? And have you not heard the Lord saying to the Father: They are not of the world: just as I am not of the world, and the world hates them because they are not of the world; just as I am not of the world (John 17:16 and 15:19). But on the contrary, as if living in the world, you decide [to] not touch [the] body of a dead man, nor [their] clothing, nor bench on which [a] menstruating woman has sat, nor taste pork, hare, cuttlefish, squid, moray, eel, and all fish which do not have scales and fins. All these, by their use, are corrupted and pass into decay and waste material. For food is for the belly,

and the belly for foods; and God will destroy both it and them. But the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. And, "Every one," says He, "shall give account of himself before God" (Rom. 14. 12) . "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And the Lord rebukes the Pharisees, saying: You have made void the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition. For Moses said: Honor thy father and thy mother; and He that shall curse father or mother, let him die the death. But you say, if a man shall say to his father or mother, Corban, (which is a gift,) whatsoever is from me, shall profit thee. And further you suffer him not to do anything for his father or mother, Making the word of God of no effect through your tradition." (Matthew 15:8-9, Mark 7:4-6) I cannot unroll how many traditions of the Pharisees there are, which today they call 'δευτερ■σεις,' and how many old wives' tales; for the bulkiness of the books does not allow it, and most of them are so disgraceful that I am ashamed to say. However, I will say one thing to the dishonor of the hostile nation. They put in charge of the synagogues whichever wise men they select and delegate unsavory work to them, like proving (or tasting beforehand) whether the blood of a virgin, whether menstruating or not, is clean, or unclean, if they cannot tell by sight. Furthermore, because it has been ordered that on the Sabbath each person should sit in his own house and not go out (Exod. 16. 29), or walk from where he lives; if we ever find it necessary to restrain them according to the letter, so that they do not lie down, do not walk, do not stand, but only sit, if they want to observe the precepts, they are accustomed to reply and say: Barachibas, Simeon, and Hallel our masters taught us that we should walk two thousand feet on the Sabbath, and other such doctrines, preferring the teachings of men to the doctrine of God. Not that we say that we must always sit on the Sabbath and not leave the place where one was occupied; but that that which is impossible in the Law, in which it is weakened by the flesh, must be fulfilled by spiritual observation.

It follows: Which things indeed have the reasoning of wisdom. In this place, indeed, the conjunction is superfluous: which we find the apostle to have done in most places because of his lack of skill in the art of grammar. For it does not follow but, or another conjunction, which is accustomed to respond to the preposition wherever it may be placed. Therefore, Jewish observations seem to have an image of reason and human wisdom among the unskilled and vulgar population. Hence, their teachers are called σοφο■, that is, wise. And if at certain times they expose their traditions, they are accustomed to say to their disciples "ο■ σοφο■ δευτερ■σιν", that is, wise men teach the traditions. "Superstition" is derived from the Greek "■θελοθησκε■α" and means false religion, and for "humility" or "ταπεινοφροσ■νε", which usually sounds like virtue rather than vice, it must be understood as feeling lowly and earthly. On the other hand, "■φειδ■α" regarding the body, whose Latin name the language does not explain, is called in our language not sparing one's body. The Jews do not spare their bodies in taking food, sometimes despising what they have and seeking what they do not have, from which sometimes they become weak and contract diseases. And they do not honor themselves, when all things are clean for the clean (Tit. 1.15), and nothing can be polluted, which is received with thanksgiving, and therefore created by the Lord, to nourish and sustain human limbs with satiety and fullness of flesh. But the elements of the world, by which, or rather by which we are dead, the Law of Moses and every old Instrument must be understood: with which, as if with elements, and beginnings of religion, we learn about God. For just as the elements are called letters by which we combine syllables and words, and proceed with long meditation to weave a speech: so music also has its elements, and Geometry begins with the elements of lines, and Dialectic and Medicine have their introductions: thus with

the elements of the Old Testament, that it might come to the fullness of the Gospel, the holy infant is educated by learned men. Whence the one hundred eighteenth Psalm, and all the others that are marked with letters, lead us from Ethics to Theory, and cause us to pass from the elements of the western letters, which are destroyed, to the vivifying spirit. Therefore, those of us who are dead to the world and its elements, should not observe those things which are of the world, because in one there is a beginning, in the other there is perfection.

Chapter 11 What the same Apostle writes to the Thessalonians: Unless the apostasy shall come first, and the man of sin be revealed (2 Thess. 2:3), and so forth. In his first Epistle to the Thessalonians he wrote: But of the times and moments, brethren, you need not, that we should write to you. For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord shall so come, as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, peace and security; then shall sudden destruction come upon them, as the pains upon her that is with child, and they shall not escape. (1 Thess. 5:1 seq.) For he had written to them above: we say this to you in the word of the Lord, that we who live, who survive, will not precede those who have died in the advent of the Lord. For the Lord himself at the command of the Archangel's voice and the trumpet of God will descend from heaven, and the dead who are in Christ will rise first. Then we who live, who are left behind, will be carried together with them in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort each other with these words (Ibid. 4:14 et seq.). When the Macedonians heard this, they did not understand whom the Apostle calls those who are to be swept in the clouds to meet the Lord, together with whom he calls the "surviving" ones; but they thought that Christ, in his majesty, would come before they were dead, while they were still in their bodies. When the Apostle heard this, he begs and adjures them by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they be not soon shaken in mind, nor be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand. And that there are two advents of the Lord and that all the books of the prophets teach this and the faith of the Gospels. His first coming in humility and His next coming in glory which the Lord Himself testifies to what shall happen before the end of the world and how the Antichrist shall come. When He spoke to His Apostles, "When you shall see the abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not," let him that readeth understand. Then let them that are in Judea flee to the mountains: And let him that is on the housetop, not go down into the house, nor enter therein to take any thing out of the house. And again: If any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; do not believe him. (Matthew 24:15-16, 23). For false Christ's and false prophets will arise, and they will doubt great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. Therefore, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness!' do not go out; 'Look, he is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. (Matthew 24:24-31) And he speaks again about Antichrist to the Jews: 'I came in the name of my Father, and you did not believe me. If another comes in his own name, you will accept him' (John 7:43). So, some Thessalonians were stirred by an error in their minds, whether it was because they did not understand an epistle, or because of a fictitious revelation that deceived them while they were sleeping, or because of the interpretations of Isaiah, Daniel, and the words of the Gospels predicting Antichrist at that time,

which disturbed them and caused them to hope that Christ would come in his majesty then. The apostle corrects this error and explains what they should expect before the coming of Christ, so that when those things happen, then they will know that Antichrist, that is, the man of sin and the son of perdition who opposes and exalts himself above everything called God or that is worshipped, will sit in the temple of God. Unless the apostasy comes first, which is called the **■ποστασ■α** in Greek, so that all nations subject to the Roman Empire may depart from them, and he, the man of sin, may be revealed, in whom the fountain of all sins is; and the son of perdition, that is, the devil; for he is the destruction of all, who is opposed to Christ, and therefore called the Antichrist: and he is exalted above all that is called God, so that he may tread with his foot upon all the gods of nations, or approve every religion chosen, and true to him; and he may sit in the Temple of God, or in Jerusalem (as some believe), or in the Church (as we believe more truly), showing himself as if he were Christ himself, and the Son of God. Unless," he says, "the Roman kingdom exists before it is laid waste and Antichrist has already preceded, Christ will not come: who is therefore coming in such a way to destroy Antichrist. You remember, he says, that I was telling you all this in the present conversation when I was among you, and I was saying to you that Christ would not come unless the Antichrist had preceded. And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time: that is, you know very well what is the reason why Antichrist is not coming at this time. Nor does he want to openly say that the Roman empire must be destroyed, which those who rule it regard as eternal. Therefore, according to the Apocalypse of John, on the forehead of the purple-clad prostitute, the name of blasphemy is written, that is, the eternal Rome. For if he had openly and boldly said that the Antichrist would not come unless the Roman empire was first destroyed, it would have seemed like a just cause for persecution to then arise against the Church in the east. And that which follows: For now the mystery of iniquity operates only that he who now holds, holds until he is taken out of the way, and then the wicked one shall be revealed, whose arrival is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of iniquity, in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. And because of his unknown influence he shall prevail, until the advent of the predestined period and the end of the world. And just as the darkness of the sun is dispelled by its coming: so by the illustration of His coming, the Lord will destroy and wipe him out. Whose works are the works of Satan. And just as in Christ the fullness of divinity was embodied, so in Antichrist all will be strength, and signs, and wonders, but all of them lies. For just as the Magi were able to resist the signs of God which Moses worked through their false arts, and the rod of Moses devoured their rods; so the truth of Christ will devour the lies of Antichrist. But those who are prepared for destruction will be led astray by his lies. And since a silent question could be raised, why did God allow him to have all power, signs and wonders, through which, if possible, even the chosen ones of God could be deceived, he provided the answer before the question was asked, and he absolved what could be opposed, before it was made. He says that none of these things would be done by his own power, but by the permission of God, for the sake of the Jews, who did not want to receive the charity of the truth, that is, the Spirit of God through Christ, because the love of God is poured into the hearts of believers (Romans 5:5) : And he himself says: I am the truth (John 14:6) : Of whom it is written in the Psalms: Truth has emerged from the earth (Psalms 84:12). Therefore, those who have not received charity and truth, in order

to be saved by having received the Saviour, God will send them not an operator, but the operation itself, that is, the source of error, so that they may believe the lie. For he himself is a liar and his father. And if Antichrist had been born of a virgin and had come first into the world, the Jews could have an excuse, and say that they had believed the truth and therefore received a lie for the truth. But now they are to be judged, or rather without doubt condemned: because, having rejected the truth of Christ, they will afterwards receive the lie, that is, Antichrist.

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Letter 122. To Rusticus.

Rusticus and Artemia his wife having made a vow of continence broke it. Artemia proceeded to Palestine to do penance for her sin and Rusticus promised to follow her. However he failed to do so, and Jerome was asked to write this letter in the hope that it might induce him to fulfil his promise. The date is about 408 a.d.

I. I am induced to write to you, a stranger to a stranger, by the entreaties of that holy servant of Christ Hedibia¹ and of my daughter in the faith Artemia, once your wife but now no longer your wife but your sister and fellow-servant. Not content with assuring her own salvation she has sought yours also, in former days at home and now in the holy places. She is anxious to emulate the thoughtfulness of the apostles Andrew and Philip; who after Christ had found them, desired in their turn to find, the one his brother Simon and the other his friend Nathanael. [John. 1:41, John. 1:45] To the former of these it was said "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas which is by interpretation a stone;" [John. 1:42] while the latter, whose name Nathanael means the gift of God, was comforted by Christ's witness to him: "behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." [John. 1:47] So of old Lot [Gen. 19:15-26] desired to rescue his wife as well as his two daughters, and refusing to leave blazing Sodom and Gomorrah until he was himself half-on-fire, tried to lead forth one who was tied and bound by her past sins. But in her despair she lost her composure, and looking back became a monument of an unbelieving soul. [Cf. Wisdom, 10:7] Yet, as if to make up for the loss of a single woman, Lot's glowing faith set free the whole city of Zoar. In fact when he left the dark valleys in which Sodom lay and came to the mountains, the sun rose upon him as he entered Zoar or the little City; so-called because the little faith that Lot possessed, though unable to save greater places, was at least able to preserve smaller ones. For one who had gone so far astray as to live in Gomorrah could not all at once reach the noonland where Abraham, the friend of God, [Jas. 2:23] entertained God and His angels. [Gen. 18:1] (For it was in Egypt that Joseph fed his brothers, and when the bride speaks to the Bridegroom her cry is: "tell me where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon." [Cant. 1:7]) Good men have always sorrowed for the sins of others. Samuel of old lamented for Saul [1 Sam. 15:35] because he neglected to treat the ulcers of pride with the balm of penitence. And Paul wept for the Corinthians [2 Cor. 2:4] who refused to wash out with their tears the stains of fornication. For the same reason Ezekiel swallowed the book where were written within and without song, and lamentation and woe; [Ezek. 2:10, LXX] the song in praise of the righteous, the lamentation over the penitent, and the woe for those of whom it is written, "When the wicked man falleth into the depths of evil, then is he filled with scorn." [Prov. 18:3, LXX] It is to these that Isaiah alludes when he says: "in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping and to mourning and to baldness and to girding with sackcloth: and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen; and killing sheep, eating flesh" and saying, "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." [Isa. 22:12, Isa. 22:13] Yet of such persons Ezekiel is bidden to speak thus: "O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how

should we then live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live," and again, "turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" [Ezek. 33:10, Ezek. 33:11] Nothing makes God so angry as when men from despair of better things cleave to those which are worse; and indeed this despair in itself is a sign of unbelief. One who despairs of salvation can have no expectation of a judgment to come. For if he dreaded such, he would by doing good works prepare to meet his Judge. Let us hear what God says through Jeremiah, "withhold thy foot from a rough way and thy throat from thirst" [Jer. 2:25, LXX] and again "shall they fall, and not arise? Shall he turn away, and not return?" [Jer. 8:4] Let us hear also what God says by Isaiah: "When thou shalt turn and bewail thyself, then shall thou be saved, and then shalt thou know where thou hast hitherto been." [Isa. 30:15, LXX] We do not realize the miseries of sickness till returning health reveals them to us. So sins serve as a foil to the blessedness of virtue; and light shines more brightly when it is relieved against darkness. Ezekiel uses language like that of the other prophets because he is animated by a similar spirit. "Repent," he cries, "and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord." [Ezek. 18:30-32] Wherefore in a subsequent passage he says: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked: but that the wicked turn from his way and live." [Ezek. 33:11] These words shew us that the mind must not through disbelief in the promised blessings give way to despair; and that the soul once marked out for perdition must not refuse to apply remedies on the ground that its wounds are past curing. Ezekiel describes God as swearing, that if we refuse to believe His promise in regard to our salvation we may at least believe His oath. It is with full confidence that the righteous man prays and says, "Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease," [Ps. 85:4] and again, "Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled." [Ps. 30:7] He means to say, "when I forsook the foulness of my faults for the beauty of virtue, God strengthened my weakness with His grace." Lo, I hear. His promise: "I will pursue mine enemies and overtake them: neither will I turn again till they are consumed," [Ps. 18:37, R.V] so that I who was once thine enemy and a fugitive from thee, shall be laid hold of by thine hand. Cease not from pursuing me till my wickedness is consumed, and I return to my old husband who will give me my wool and my flax, my oil and my fine flour and will feed me with the richest foods. [Hos. 2:7-9] He it was who hedged up and enclosed my evil ways [Hos. 2:6] that I might find Him the true way who says in the gospel, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." [John. 14:6] Hear the words of the prophet: "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." [Ps. 126:5, Ps. 126:6] Say also with him: "All the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears" [Ps. 6:6] : and again, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night," [Ps. 42:1-3] and in another place, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and weary land where no water is. So have I looked upon thee in the sanctuary." [Ps. 63:1-3 R.V] For although my soul has thirsted after thee, yet much more have I sought thee by the labour of my flesh and have not been able to look upon thee in thy sanctuary; not at any rate till I have first dwelt in a land barren of sin,

where the weary wayfarer is no more assailed by the adversary, and where there are no pools or rivers of lust. The Saviour also wept over the city of Jerusalem because its inhabitants had not repented; [Luke 19:41] and Peter washed out his triple denial with bitter tears, [Luke 22:62] thus fulfilling the words of the prophet: "rivers of waters run down mine eyes." [Ps. 119:136] Jeremiah too laments over his impenitent people, saying: "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for ...my people!" [Jer. 9:1] And farther on he gives a reason for his lamentation: "weep ye not for the dead," he writes, "neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more." [Jer. 22:10] The Jew and the Gentile therefore are not to be bemoaned, for they have never been in the Church and have died once for all (it is of these that the Saviour says: "let the dead bury their dead" [Matt. 8:22]); weep rather for those who by reason of their crimes and sins go away from the Church, and who suffering condemnation for their faults shall no more return to it. It is in this sense that the prophet speaks to ministers of the Church, calling them its walls and towers, and saying to each in turn, "O wall, let tears run down." [Lam. 2:18] In this way, it is prophetically implied, you will fulfil the apostolic precept: "rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep," [Rom. 12:15] and by your tears you will melt the hard hearts of sinners till they too weep; whereas, if they persist in evil doing they will find these words applied to them, "I ...planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" [Jer. 2:21] and again "saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face." [Jer. 2:27] He means, they would not turn towards God in penitence; but in the hardness of their hearts turned their backs upon Him to insult Him. Wherefore also the Lord says to Jeremiah: "hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said after she" had played the harlot and "had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not." [Jer. 3:6, Jer. 3:7]

2. How hard hearted we are and how merciful God is! who even after our many sins urges us to seek salvation. Yet not even so are we willing to turn to better things. Hear the words of the Lord: "If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's and shall afterwards desire to return to him, will he at all receive her? Will he not loathe her rather? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers: yet return again to me, saith the Lord." In place of the last clause the true Hebrew text (which is not preserved in the Greek and Latin versions) gives the following: "thou hast forsaken me, yet return, and I will receive thee, saith the Lord."² Isaiah also speaking in the same sense uses almost the same words: "Return," he cries, "O children of Israel, ye who think deep counsel and wicked. [Isa. 31:6, LXX] Return thou unto me and I will redeem thee. I am God, and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. [Isa. 45:21, Isa. 45:22] Remember this and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Return in heart and remember the former things of old: for I am God and there is none else." [Isa. 46:8, 9, LXX] Joel also writes: "turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning: and rend your heart and not your garments and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful...and repenteth him of the evil." [Joel 2:12, Joel 2:13] How great His mercy is and how excessive-if I may so say-and unspeakable is His pitifulness, the prophet Hosea tells us when he speaks in the Lord's name: "how shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is

turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger.' [Hos. 11:8, Hos. 11:9] David also says in a psalm: "in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" [Ps. 6:5] and in another place: "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." [Ps. 32:5, Ps. 32:6]

3. Think how great that weeping must be which deserves to be compared to a flood of waters. Whosoever so weeps and says with the prophet Jeremiah "let not the apple of mine eye cease" [Lam. 2:18] shall straightway find the words fulfilled of him: "mercy and truth are met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other;" [Ps. 85:10] so that, if righteousness and truth terrify him, mercy and peace may encourage him to seek salvation. The whole repentance of a sinner is exhibited to us in the fifty-first³ psalm written by David after he had gone in unto Bathsheba the wife of Uriah the Hittite,⁴ and when, to the rebuke of the prophet Nathan he had replied, "I have sinned." Immediately that he confessed his fault he was comforted by the words: "the Lord also hath put away thy sin." [2 Sam. 12:13] He had added murder to adultery; yet bursting into tears he says: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." [Ps. 51:1] A sin so great needed to find great mercy. Accordingly he goes on to say: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned"-as a king he had no one to fear but Gods-"and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest." [Ps. 51:2-4] For "God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." [Rom. 11:32] And such was the progress that David made that he who had once been a sinner and a penitent afterwards became a master able to say: "I will teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." [Ps. 51:13] For as "confession and beauty are before God," [Ps. 96:6, Vulg] so a sinner who confesses his sins and says: "my wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness" [Ps. 38:5] loses his foul wounds and is made whole and clean. But "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper." [Prov. 28:13] The ungodly king Ahab, who shed the blood of Naboth to gain his vineyard, was with Jezebel, the partner less of his bed than of his cruelty, severely rebuked by Elijah. "Thus saith the Lord, hast thou killed and also taken possession?" and again, "in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine;" and "the dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." [1 Kings 21:19, 1 Kings 21:23] "And it came to pass"-the passage goes on-"when Ahab heard those words that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth...and the word of the Lord came to Elijah saying, Because Ahab humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days." [1 Kings 21:27-29] Ahab's sin and Jezebel's were the same; yet because Ahab repented, his punishment was postponed so as to fall upon his sons, while Jezebel persisting in her wickedness met her doom then and there.

Moreover the Lord tells us in the gospel, "the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas;" [Matt. 12:41] and again He says "I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." [Matt. 9:13] The lost piece of silver is sought for until it is found in the mire. [Luke 15:8-10] So also the ninety and

nine sheep are left in the wilderness, while the shepherd carries home on his shoulders the one sheep which has gone astray. [Luke 15:4, Luke 15:5] Wherefore also "there is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth." [Luke 15:10] What a blessed thought it is that heavenly beings rejoice in our salvation! For it is of us that the words are said: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." [Matt. 3:2] Death and life are contrary the one to the other; there is no middle term. Yet penitence can knit death to life. The prodigal son, we are told, wasted all his substance, and in the far country away from his father "would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat." Yet, when he comes back to his father, the fatted calf is killed, a robe and a ring are given to him. [Luke 15:11-24] That is to say, he receives again Christ's robe which he had before defiled, and hears to his comfort the injunction: "let thy garments be always white." [Eccles. 9:8] He receives the signet of God and cries to the Lord: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee;" and receiving the kiss of reconciliation, he says to Him: "Now is the light of thy countenance sealed upon us, O Lord."5

Hear the words of Ezekiel: "as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth." [Ezek. 33:12] The Lord judges every man according as he finds him. It is not the past that He looks upon but the present. Bygone sins there may be, but renewal and conversion remove them. "A just man," we read "falleth seven times and riseth up again." [Prov. 24:16] If he falls, how is he just? and if he is just, how does he fall? The answer is that a sinner does not lose the name of just if he always repents of his sins and rises again. If a sinner repents, his sins are forgiven him not only till seven times but till seventy times seven. [Cf. Matt. 18:21, Matt. 18:22] To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much. [Cf. Luke 7:47] The harlot washed with her tears the Saviour's feet and wiped them with her hair; and to her, as a type of the Church gathered from the nations, was the declaration made: "Thy sins are forgiven." [Luke 7:48] The self-righteous Pharisee perished in his pride, while the humble publican was saved by his confession. [Cf. Luke 18:14]

God makes asseveration by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up to pull down and to destroy it: if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." And immediately he adds: "Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. And they said, there is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart." [Jer. 18:7-12] The righteous Simeon says in the gospel: "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many," [Luke 2:34] for the fall, that is, of sinners and for the rising again of the penitent. So the apostle writes to the Corinthians: "it is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up and have not rather mourned that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you." [1 Cor. 5:1, 1 Cor. 5:2] And in his second epistle to the same, "lest such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow," [2 Cor. 2:7] he calls him back, and begs them to confirm their love towards him, so that he who had been destroyed by incest might be saved by

penitence.

"There is no man clean from sin; even though he has lived but for one day." [Job 14:4, 5, LXX] And the years of man's life are many in number. "The stars are not pure in his sight, [Job 25:5] and his angels he charged with folly." [Job 4:18] If there is sin in heaven, how much more must there be sin on earth? If they are stained with guilt who have no bodily temptations, how much more must we be, enveloped as we are in frail flesh and forced to cry each one of us with the apostle: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? [Rom. 7:24] For in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing." [Rom. 7:18] For we do not what we would but what we would not; the soul desires to do one thing, the flesh is compelled to do another. If any persons are called righteous in scripture, and not only righteous but righteous in the sight of God, they are called righteous according to that righteousness mentioned in the passage I have quoted: "A just man falleth seven times and riseth up again," [Prov. 24:16] and on the principle laid down that the wickedness of the wicked shall not hurt him in the day that he turns to repentance. [Cf. Ezek. 33:12] In fact Zachariah the father of John who is described as a righteous man sinned in disbelieving the message sent to him and was at once punished with dumbness. [Luke 1:20-22] Even Job, who at the outset of his history is spoken of as perfect and upright and uncomplaining, is afterwards proved to be a sinner both by God's words and by his own confession. If Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets also and the apostles were by no means free from sin and if the finest wheat had chaff mixed with it, what can be said of us of whom it is written: "What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?" [Jer. 23:28] Yet the chaff is reserved for future burning; as also are the tares which at present are mingled with the growing corn. For one shall come whose fan is in His hand, and shall purge His floor, and shall gather His wheat into the garner, and shall burn the chaff in the fire of hell. [Matt. 3:12]

4. Roaming thus through the fairest fields of scripture I have culled its loveliest flowers to weave for your brows a garland of penitence; for my aim is that, flying on the wings of a dove, you may find rest [Ps. 55:6] and make your peace with the Father of mercy. Your former wife, who is now your sister and fellow-servant, has told me that, acting on the apostolic precept, [1 Cor. 7:5] you and she lived apart by consent that you might give yourselves to prayer; but that after a time your feet sank beneath you as if resting on water and indeed-to speak plainly-gave way altogether. For her part she heard the Lord saying to her as to Moses: "as for thee stand thou here by me;" [Deut. 5:31] and with the psalmist she said of Him: "He hath set my feet upon a rock." [Ps. 40:2] But your house-she went on-having no sure foundation of faith fell before a whirlwind of the devil. [Cf. Matt. 7:24-27] Hers however still stands in the Lord, and does not refuse its shelter to you; you can still be joined in spirit to her to whom you were once joined in body. For, as the apostle says, "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" with him. [1 Cor. 6:17] Moreover, when the fury of the barbarians and the risk of captivity separated you again, you promised with a solemn oath that, if she made her way to the holy places, you would follow her either immediately or later, and that you would try to save your soul now that by your carelessness you had seemed to lose it. Perform, now, the vow which you then made in the presence of God. Human life is uncertain. Therefore, lest you may be snatched away before you have fulfilled your promise, imitate her whose teacher you ought to have been. For shame! the weaker vessel overcomes the world, and yet the stronger is overcome by it!

"A woman leadeth in the high emprise;" 6 and yet you will not follow her when her salvation leads you to the threshold of the faith! Perhaps, however, you desire to save the remnants of your property and to see the last of your friends and fellow-citizens and of their cities and villas. If so, amid the horrors of captivity, in the presence of exulting foes. and in the shipwreck of the province, at least hold fast to the plank of penitence;⁷ and remember your fellow-servant⁸ who daily sighs for your salvation and never despairs of it. While you are wandering about your own country (though, indeed, you no longer have a country; that which you once had, you have lost) she is interceding for you in the venerable spots which witnessed the nativity, crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, and in the first of which He uttered His infant-cry. She draws you to her by her prayers that you may be saved, if not by your own exertions, at any rate by her faith. Of old one lay upon his bed sick of the palsy, so powerless in all his joints that he could neither move his feet to walk nor his hands to pray; yet when he was carried to our Lord by others, he was by Him so completely restored to health as to carry the bed which a little before had carried him. [Matt. 9:1-7] You too-absent in the body but present to her faith-your fellow-servant offers to her Lord and Saviour; and with the Canaanite woman she says of you: "my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." [Matt. 15:22] Souls are of no sex; therefore I may fairly call your soul the daughter of hers. For as a mother coaxes her unweaned child which is as yet unable to take solid food; so does she call you to the milk suitable for babes and offer to you the sustenance that a nursing mother gives. Thus shall you be able to say with the prophet: "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments." [Ps. 119:176] 1: This lady lived in Gaul and was a diligent student of scripture. Letter CXX. is address to her

2: Jer. 3:1, Vulg. The Hebrew contains nothing corresponding to the words "and I will receive thee." The Latin Version mentioned in the text is of course the old Latin 3: In the Vulg. the fiftieth 4: Cf. the heading of the psalm in A.V

5: Ps. 4:6, acc. to the Gallican and Roman psalters. The allusions throughout are to the ritual practised in Jerome's day in connection with the reception of penitents 6: Virgil, Aeneid, 1:364 7: A favourite phrase with Jerome. See Letter CXVII

8:

Viz. Artemia

Letters - letter_123

Letter 123. To Ageruchia. An appeal to the widow Ageruchia, highborn lady of Gaul, not to marry again. It should be compared with the letters to Furia (LIV.) and to Salvina (LXXIX.) The allusion to Stilicho's treaty with Alaric fixes the date to 409 a.d.

1. I must look for a new track on the old road and devise a natural treatment, the same yet not the same, for a hackneyed and well-worn theme.¹ It is true that there is but one road; yet one can often reach one's goal by striking across country. I have several times written letters to widows² in which for their instruction I have sought out examples from scripture, weaving its varied flowers into a single garland of chastity. On the present occasion I address myself to Ageruchia; whose very name³ (allotted to her by the divine guidance) has proved a prophecy of her after-life. Around her stand her grandmother, her mother, and her aunt; a noble band of tried Christian women. Her grandmother, Metronia, now a widow for forty years, reminds us of Anna the daughter of Phanuel in the gospel. [Luke 2:36, Luke 2:37] Her mother, Benigna, now in the fourteenth year of her widowhood, is surrounded by virgins whose chastity bears fruit a hundredfold.⁴ The sister of Celerinus, Ageruchia's father, has nursed her niece from infancy and indeed took her into her lap the moment that she was born. Deprived of the solace of her husband she has for twenty years trained her brother's child, teaching her the lessons which she has learned from her own mother.

2. I make these brief remarks to shew my young friend that in resolving not to marry again she does but perform a duty to her family; and that, while she will deserve no praise for fulfilling it, she will be justly blamed if she fails to do so. The more so that she has a posthumous son named after his father Simplicius and thus cannot plead loneliness or the want of an heir. For the lust of many shelters itself under such excuses as though the promptings of incontinence were only a desire for offspring. But why do I speak as to one who wavers when I hear that Ageruchia seeks the church's protection against the many suitors whom she meets in the palace? For the devil inflames men to vie with one another in proving the chastity of our beloved widow; and rank and beauty, youth and riches cause her to be sought after by all. But the greater the assaults that are made upon her continence, the greater will be the rewards that will follow her victory.

3. But no sooner do I clear the harbour than I find my way to the sea barred by a rock.⁵ I am confronted with the authority of the apostle Paul who in writing to Timothy thus speaks concerning widows: "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan." [1 Tim. 5:14, 1 Tim. 5:15] I must accordingly begin by considering the meaning of this pronouncement and examining the context of the whole passage. I must then plant my feet in the steps of the apostle and, as the saying goes, not deviate a hair's breadth from them either to this side or to that. He had previously described his idea widow as one who had been the wife of one man, who had brought up children, who was well reported of for good works, who had relieved the afflicted with her substance, [1 Tim. 5:9, 1 Tim. 5:10] whose trust had been in God, and who had continued in prayer day and night. [1 Tim. 5:5] With her he contrasted her opposite, saying: "She

that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." And that he might warn his disciple Timothy with all needful admonition, he immediately added these words: "the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ they will marry; having damnation because they have cast off their first faith." [1 Tim. 5:11, 1 Tim. 5:12] It is then for these who have outraged Christ their Spouse by committing fornication against Him (for this is the sense of the Greek word "καταστρηνισωσι")-it is for these that the apostle wishes a second marriage, thinking digamy preferable to fornication; but this second marriage is a concession and not a command.

4. We must also take the passage clause by clause. "I will," he says, "that the younger women marry." Why, pray? because I would not have young women commit fornication. "That they bear children;" [1 Tim. 5:14, 1 Tim. 5:15] for what reason? That they may not be induced by fear of the consequences to kill children whom they have conceived in adultery. "That they be the heads of households."⁶ Wherefore, pray? Because it is much more tolerable that a woman should marry again than that she should be a prostitute, and better that she should have a second husband than several paramours. The first alternative brings relief in a miserable plight, but the second involves a sin and its punishment. He continues: "that they give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully," a brief and comprehensive precept in which many admonitions are summed up. As for instance these: that a woman must not bring discredit upon her profession of widowhood by too great attention to her dress, that she must not draw troops of young men after her by gay smiles or expressive glances, that she must not profess one thing by her words and another by her behaviour, that she must give no ground for the application to herself of the well known line:

She gave a meaning look and slyly smiled. [Ovid, Am. 3:2, 83] Lastly, that Paul may compress into a few words all the reasons for such marriages, he shews the motive of his command by saying: "for some are already turned aside after Satan." Thus he allows to the incontinent a second marriage, or in case of need a third, simply that he may rescue them from Satan, preferring that a woman should be joined to the worst of husbands rather than to the devil. To the Corinthians he uses somewhat similar language: "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." [1 Cor. 7:8, 1 Cor. 7:9] Why, O apostle, is it better to marry? He answers immediately: because it is worse to burn.⁷

5. Apart from these considerations, that which is absolutely good and not merely relatively so is to be as the apostle, that is loose, not bound; free, not enslaved; caring for the things of God, not for the things of a wife. Immediately afterwards he adds: "The wife is bound by the law to her husband as long as her husband liveth, but if her husband be fallen asleep,⁸ she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the spirit of God." [1 Cor. 7:39, 1 Cor. 7:40, cf. Rom. 7:2] This passage corresponds with the former in meaning, because the spirit of the two is the same. For though the epistles are different, they are the work of one author. While her husband lives the woman is bound, and when he is dead, she is loosed. Marriage then is a bond, and widowhood is the loosing of it. The wife is bound to the husband and the husband to the wife; and so close is the tie that they have no power over their own bodies, but each stands indebted to the other. They who are under the yoke of wedlock have not the option of choosing continence. When the apostle adds the words "only in the Lord," he excludes heathen marriages of which he had spoken in another place thus: "be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness

with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" [2 Cor. 6:14-16] We must not plough with an ox and an ass together; [Dt. 22:10] nor weave our wedding garment of different colours. He at once takes back the concession he made, and, as if repenting of his opinion, withdraws it by saying: "She is happier if she so abide," that is, unmarried; and declares that in his judgment this course is preferable. And that this may not be made light of as a merely human utterance, he claims for it the authority of the Holy Spirit, so that we are listening not to a fellowman making concessions to the weakness of the flesh but to the Holy Spirit using the apostle for his mouthpiece.

6. Again, no widow of youthful age must quiet her qualms of conscience by the plea that he gives commandment that no widow is to be taken into the number under three-score years old. [1 Tim. 5:9] He does not by this arrangement urge unmarried girls or youthful widows to marry, seeing that even of the married he says: "the time is short: it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none." [1 Cor. 7:29] No, he is speaking of widows who have relations able to support them, who have sons and grandsons to be responsible for their maintenance. The apostle commands these latter to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents and to relieve them adequately; that the church may not be charged, but may be free to relieve those that are widows indeed. "Honour widows," he writes, "that are widows indeed," that is, such as are desolate and have no relations to help them, who cannot labour with their hands, who are weakened by poverty and overcome by years, whose trust is in God and their only work prayer. [1 Tim. 5:3-5, 1 Tim. 5:16] From which it is easy to infer that the younger widows, unless they are excused by ill health, are either left to their own exertions or else are consigned to the care of their children or relations. The word 'honour' in this passage implies either alms or a gift, as also in the verse immediately following: "Let the elders ...be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." [1 Tim. 5:17] So also in the gospel when the Lord discusses that commandment of the Law which says: "Honour thy father and thy mother," [Ex. 20:12] He declares that it is to be interpreted not of mere words which while offering an empty shew of regard may still leave a parent's wants unrelieved, but of the actual provision of the necessities of life. The Lord commanded that poor parents should be supported by their children and that these should pay them back when old those benefits which they had themselves received in their childhood. The scribes and pharisees on the other hand taught the children to answer their parents by saying: "It is Corban, that is to say, a gift [Mark 7:11] which I have promised to the altar and engaged to present to the temple: it will relieve you as much there, as if I were to give it you directly to buy food."9 So it frequently happened that while father and mother were destitute their children were offering sacrifices for the priests and scribes to consume. If then the apostle compels poor widows-yet only those who are young and not broken down by sickness-to labour with their hands that the church, not charged with their maintenance, may be able to support such widows as are old, what plea can be urged by one who has abundance of this world's goods, both for her own wants and those of others, and who can make to herself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness able to receive her into everlasting habitations? [Cf. Luke 16:9]

Consider too that no one is to be elected a widow, except she has been the wife of one husband. We sometimes fancy it to be the distinctive mark of the priesthood that none but monogamists shall be admitted to the altar. But not only are the twice-married excluded from the priestly office,

they are debarred from receiving the alms of the church. A woman who has resorted to a second marriage is held unworthy to be supported by the faithful. And even the layman is bound by the law of the priest, for his conduct must be such as to admit of his election to the priesthood. If he has been twice married, he cannot be so elected. Therefore, as priests are chosen from the ranks of laymen, the layman also is bound by the commandment, fulfilment of which is indispensable for the attainment of the priesthood.¹⁰

7. We must distinguish between what the apostle himself desires and what he is compelled to acquiesce in. If he allows me to marry again, this is due to my own incontinence and not to his wish. For he wishes all men to be as he is, and to think the things of God, and when once they are loosed no more to seek to be bound. But when he sees unstable men in danger through their incontinence of falling into the abyss of lust, he extends to them the offer of a second marriage; that, if they must wallow in the mire, it may be with one and not with many. The husband of a second wife must not consider this a harsh saying or one that conflicts with the rule laid down by the apostle. The apostle is of two minds: first, he proclaims a command, "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I." Next, he makes a concession, "But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." [1 Cor. 7:8, 1 Cor. 7:9] He first shews what he himself desires, then that in which he is forced to acquiesce. He wishes us-after one marriage-to abide even as he, that is, unmarried, and sets before us in his own apostolic example an instance of the blessedness of which he speaks. If however he finds that we are unwilling to do as he wishes, he makes a concession to our incontinence. Which then of the two alternatives do we choose for ourselves? The one which he prefers and which is in itself good? Or the one which in comparison with evil is tolerable, yet as it is only a substitute for evil is not altogether good? Suppose that we choose that course which the apostle does not wish but to which he only consents against his will, allowing those who seek lower ends to have their own way; in this case we carry out not the apostle's wish but our own. We read in the old testament that the daughters of the priests who have been married once and have become widows are to eat of the priests' food and that when they die they are to be buried with the same ceremonies as their father and mother.¹¹ If on the other hand they take other husbands they are to be kept apart both from their father and from the sacrifices and are to be counted as strangers. [Lev. 22:12, Lev. 22:13]

8. These restraints on marriage are observed even among the heathen; and it is our condemnation if the true faith cannot do for Christ what false ones do for the devil, who has substituted for the saving chastity of the gospel a damning chastity of his own.¹² The Athenian hierophant disowns his manhood and weakens his passions by a perpetual restraint.¹³ The holy office of the flamen is limited to those who have been once married, and the attendants of the flamens' wives must also have had but one husband.¹⁴ Only monogamists are allowed to share in the sacred rites connected with the Egyptian bull.¹⁵ I need say nothing of the vestal virgins and those of Apollo, the Achivan Juno, Diana, and Minerva, all of whom waste away in the perpetual virginity required by their vocation. I will just glance at the queen of Carthage¹⁶ who was willing to burn herself rather than marry king Iarbas; at the wife of Hasdrubal¹⁷ who taking her two children one in each hand cast, herself into the flames beneath her rather than surrender her honour; and at Lucretia [See Livy, I. 200:57, 58] who having lost the prize of her chastity refused to survive the defilement of her soul. I will not lengthen my letter by quoting the many instances of the like virtue which you

can read to your profit in my first book against Jovinian. [Against Jov. 1:20] I will merely relate one which took place in your own country and which will shew you that chastity is held in high honour even among wild and barbarous and cruel peoples. Once the Teutons who came from the remote shores of the German Ocean overran all parts of Gaul, and it was only when they had cut to pieces several Roman armies that Marius at last defeated them in an encounter at Aquae Sextiae.¹⁸ By the conditions of the surrender three hundred of their married women were to be handed over to the Romans. When the Teuton matrons heard of this stipulation they first begged the consul that they might be set apart to minister in the temples of Ceres and Venus;¹⁹ and then when they failed to obtain their request and were removed by the lictors, they slew their little children and next morning were all found dead in each other's arms having strangled themselves in the night. [Val. Max. 6:1]

9. Shall then a highborn lady do what these barbarian women refused to do even as prisoners of war? After losing a first husband, good or bad as the case may be, shall she make trial of a second, and thus run counter to the judgment of God? And in case that she immediately loses this second, shall she take a third? And if he too is called to his rest, shall she go on to a fourth and a fifth, and by so doing identify herself with the harlots? No, a widow must take every precaution not to overstep by an inch the bounds of chastity. For if she once oversteps them and breaks through the modesty which becomes a matron, she will soon riot in every kind of excess; so much so that the prophet's words shall be true of her "Thou hast a whore's forehead, thou refusest to be ashamed." [Jer. 3:3]

What then? do I condemn second marriages? not at all; but I commend first ones. Do I expel twice-married persons from the church? Far from it; but I urge those who have been once married to lives of continence. The Ark of Noah contained unclean animals as well as clean. It contained both creeping things and human beings, In a great house there are vessels of different kinds, some to honour and some to dishonour. [2 Tim. 2:20] In the gospel parable the seed sown in the good ground brings forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.²⁰ The hundredfold which comes first betokens the crown of virginity; the sixtyfold which comes next refers to the work of widows; while the thirtyfold-indicated by joining together the points of the thumb and forefinger²¹ -denotes the marriage-tie. What room is left for double marriages? None. They are not counted. Such weeds do not grow in good ground but among briars and thorns, the favourite haunts of those foxes to whom the Lord compares the impious Herod. [Luke 13:32] A woman who marries more than once fancies herself worthy of praise because she is not so bad as the prostitutes, because she compares favourably with these victims of indiscriminate lust by surrendering herself to one alone and not to a number.

10. The story which I am about to relate is an incredible one; yet it is vouched for by many witnesses. A great many years ago when I was helping Damasus bishop of Rome with his ecclesiastical correspondence, and writing his answers to the questions referred to him by the councils of the east and west, I saw a married couple, both of whom were sprung from the very dregs of the people. The man had already buried twenty wives, and the woman had had twenty-two husbands. Now they were united to each other as each believed for the last time. The greatest curiosity prevailed both among men and women to see which of these two veterans would live to bury the other. The husband triumphed and walked before the bier of his often-married wife, amid a great concourse of people from all quarters, with garland and palm-branch, scattering spelt

as he went along among an approving crowd. What shall we say to such a woman as that? Surely just what the Lord said to the woman of Samaria: "Thou hast had twenty-two husbands, and he by whom you are now buried is not your husband." [Cf. John. 4:18]

11. I beseech you therefore, my devout daughter in Christ, not to dwell on those passages which offer succour to the incontinent and the unhappy but rather to read those in which chastity is crowned. It is enough for you that you have lost the first and highest kind, that of virginity, and that you have passed through the third to the second; that is to say, having formerly fulfilled the obligations of a wife, that you now live in continence as a widow. Think not of the lowest grade, nay of that which does not count at all, I mean, second marriage; and do not seek for far fetched precedents to justify you in marrying again. You cannot too closely imitate your grandmother, your mother, and your aunt; whose teaching and advice as to life will form for you a rule of virtue. For if many wives in the lifetime of their husbands come to realize the truth of the apostle's words: "all things are lawful unto me but all things are not expedient," [1 Cor. 6:12] and make eunuchs of themselves for the kingdom of heaven's sake [Matt. 19:12] either by consent after their regeneration through the baptismal laver, or else in the ardour of their faith immediately after their marriage; why should not a widow, who by God's decree has ceased to have a husband, joyfully cry again and again with Job: "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away," [Job 1:21] and seize the opportunity offered to her of having power over her own body instead of again becoming the servant of a man. Assuredly it is much harder to abstain from enjoying what you have than it is to regret what you have lost. Virginity is the easier because virgins know nothing of the promptings of the flesh, and widowhood is the harder because widows cannot help thinking of the license they have enjoyed in the past. And it is harder still if they suppose their husbands to be lost and not gone before; for while the former alternative brings pain, the latter causes joy.

12. The creation of the first man should teach us to reject more marriages than one. There was but one Adam and but one Eve; in fact the woman was fashioned from a rib of Adam. [Gen. 2:21, Gen. 2:22] Thus divided they were subsequently joined together in marriage; in the words of scripture "the twain shall be one flesh," not two or three. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." [Gen. 2:24, LXX] Certainly it is not said "to his wives." Paul in explaining the passage refers it to Christ and the church; [Eph. 5:31, Eph. 5:32] making the first Adam a monogamist in the flesh and the second a monogamist in the spirit. As there is one Eve who is "the mother of all living," [Gen. 3:20] so is there one church which is the parent of all Christians. And as the accursed Lamech made of the first Eve two separate wives, [Gen. 4:19] so also the heretics sever the second into several churches which, according to the apocalypse of John, ought rather to be called synagogues of the devil than congregations of Christ. [Rev. 2:9] In the Book of Songs we read as follows:—"there are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." [Cant. 6:8, Cant. 6:9] It is to this choice one that the same John addresses an epistle in these words, "the elder unto the elect lady and her children." [2 Pet. 3:20, 1 Pet. 3:21] Noah brings in for his three sons one wife apiece and not two. [Gen. 7:13] Likewise of the unclean animals pairs only are taken, male and female, to shew that digamy has no place even among brutes, creeping things, crocodiles and lizards. And if of the clean animals there are seven taken of each kind, [Gen. 7:2] that is, an uneven number; this points to the palm

which awaits virginal chastity. For on leaving the ark Noah sacrificed victims to God [Gen. 8:20] not of course of the animals taken by twos for these were kept to multiply their species, but of those taken by sevens some of which had been set apart for sacrifice.

13. It is true that the patriarchs had each of them more wives than one and that they had numerous concubines besides. And as if their example was not enough, David had many wives and Solomon a countless number. Judah went in to Tamar thinking her to be a harlot; [Gen. 38:12-18] and according to the letter that killeth the prophet Hosea married not only a whore but an adulteress. [Hos. 1:2, Hos. 1:3] If these instances are to justify us let us neigh after every woman that we meet; [Cf Jer. 5:8] like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah let us be found by the last day buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage; [Luke 17:27-29] and let us only end our marrying with the close of our lives. And if both before and after the deluge the maxim held good: "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth;" [Gen. 1:28, Gen. 9:7] what has that to do with us upon whom the ends of the ages are come,²³ unto whom it is said, "the time is short," [1 Cor. 7:29] and "now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees;" [Matt. 3:10] that is to say, the forests of marriage and of the law must be cut down by the chastity of the gospel. There is "a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracin." [Eccles. 3:5] Owing to the near approach of the captivity Jeremiah is forbidden to take a wife. [Jer. 16:2] In Babylon Ezekiel says: "my wife is dead and my mouth is opened."²⁴ Neither he who wished to marry nor he who had married could in wedlock prophesy freely. In days gone by men rejoiced to hear it said of them: "thy children shall be like olive plants round about thy table," and "thou shalt seethy children's children." [Ps. 128:3, Ps. 128:6] But now it is said of those who live in continence: "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit;" [1 Cor. 6:17] and "my soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me." [Ps. 63:8] Then it was said "an eye for an eye;" now the commandment is "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." [Matt. 5:38, Matt. 5:39] In those days men said to the warrior: "gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty;" [Ps. 45:3] now it is said to Peter: "put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." [Matt. 26:52] In speaking thus I do not mean to sever the law from the gospel, as Marcion²⁵ falsely does. No, I receive one and the same God in both who, as the time and the object vary, is both the Beginning and the End, who sows that He may reap, who plants that He may have somewhat to cut down, and who lays the foundation that in the fulness of time He may crown the edifice. Besides, if we are to deal with symbols and types of things to come, we must judge of them not by our own opinions but in the light of the apostle's explanations. Hagar and Sarah, or Sinai and Zion, are typical of the two testaments. [Gal. 4:22-26] Leah who was tender-eyed and Rachel whom Jacob loved [Gen. 29:17, Gen. 29:18] signify the synagogue and the church. So likewise do Hannah and Peninnah of whom the former, at first barren, afterwards exceeded the latter in fruitfulness. In Isaac and Rebekah we see an early example of monogamy: it was only to Rebekah that the Lord revealed Himself in the hour of childbirth and she alone went of herself to enquire of the Lord. [Gen. 25:22, Gen. 25:23] What shall I say of Tamar who bore twin sons, Pharez and Zarah? [Gen. 38:27-30] At their birth was broken down that middle wall of partition which typified the division existing between the two peoples; [Eph. 2:14] while the binding of Zarah's hand with the scarlet thread even then marked the conscience of the Jews with the stain of Christ's blood. And how shall I speak of the whore married by the prophet²⁶ who is a figure either of the church as gathered in from the Gentiles or-an interpretation which better suits the passage-of the synagogue? First adopted from among the idolaters by Abraham and Moses, this has now denied

the Saviour and proved unfaithful to Him. Therefore it has long been deprived of its altar, priests, and prophets and has to abide many days for its first husband. [Hos. 2:7, Hos. 3:3] For when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in, all Israel shall be saved. [Rom. 11:25, Rom. 11:26]

14. I have tried to compress a great deal into a limited space as a draughtsman does when he delineates a large country in a small map. For I wish to deal with other questions, the first of which I shall give in Anna's words to her sister Dido:

"Why waste your youth alone in ceaseless grief Unblest with offspring, sweetest gift of love? Think you the buried dead require this?" To whom the sufferer thus briefly replies:

"Twas you, my sister, you, who were the first

To plunge my frenzied soul into this woe.

Why could I not have lived a virgin life

Like some wild creature innocent of care?

Alas! I pledged my soul unto the dead:"

I vowed a vow and I have broken it.²⁷ You set before me the joys of wedlock. I for my part will remind you of Dido's sword and pyre and funeral flames. In marriage there is not so much good to be hoped for as there is evil which may happen and must be feared. Passion when indulged always brings repentance with it; it is never satisfied, and once quenched it is soon kindled anew. Its growth or decay is a matter of habit; led like a captive by impulse it refuses to obey reason. But you will argue, 'the management of wealth and property requires the superintendence of a husband.' Do you mean to say that the affairs of those who live single are ruined; and that, unless you make yourself as much a slave as your own servants, you will not be able to govern your household? Do not your grandmother, your mother and your aunt enjoy even more than their old influence and respect, looked up to as they are by the whole province and by the leaders of the churches? Do not soldiers and travellers manage their domestic affairs and give entertainments to one another with no wives to help them?²⁸ Why can you not have grave and elderly servants or freed-men, such as those who have nursed you in your childhood, to preside over your house, to answer public calls, to pay taxes; men who will look up to you as a patroness, who will love you as a nursling, who will revere you as a saint? "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." [Matt. 6:33] If you are careful for raiment the gospel bids you "consider the lilies;" and, if for food, to go back to the fowls which "sow not neither do they reap; yet your heavenly father feedeth them." [Matt. 6:26, Matt. 6:28.] How many virgins and widows there are who have looked after their property for themselves without thereby incurring any stain of scandal!

15. Do not associate with young women or cleave to them, for it is on account of such that the apostle makes his concession of second marriage, and so you may be shipwrecked in what appears to be calm water. If Paul can say to Timothy, "the younger widows refuse," [1 Tim. 5:11] and again "love the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity,"²⁹ what plea can you urge for refusing to hear my admonitions? Avoid all persons to whom a suspicion of evil living may attach itself, and do not content yourself with the trite answer. 'my own conscience is enough for me; I do not care what people say of me.' That was not the principle on which the apostle acted. He provided things honest not only in the sight of God but in the sight of all men;

[Rom. 12:17, cf. Letter cxvii] that the name of God might not be blasphemed among the Gentiles. [Rom. 2:24] Though he had power to lead about a sister, a wife, [1 Cor. 9:5] he would not do so, for he did not wish to be judged by an unbeliever's conscience. [1 Cor. 10:29] And, though he might have lived by the gospel, [1 Cor. 9:14] he laboured day and night with his own hands, that he might not be burdensome to the believers. [1 Cor. 4:12, 1 Thess. 2:9, 2 Cor. 12:14] "If meat," he says, "make my brother to offend. I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." [1 Cor. 8:13] Let us then say, if a sister or a brother causes not one or two but the whole church to offend, 'I will not see that sister or that brother.' It is better to lose a portion of one's substance than to imperil the salvation of one's soul. It is better to lose that which some day, whether we like it or not, must be lost to us and to give it up freely, than to lose that for which we should sacrifice all that we have. Which of us can add-I will not say a cubit for that would be an immense addition-but the tenth part of a single inch to his stature? Why are we careful what we shall eat or what we shall drink? Let us "take no thought for the morrow: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." [Matt. 6:25, Matt. 6:27, Matt. 6:34]

Jacob in his flight from his brother left behind in his father's house great riches and made his way with nothing into Mesopotamia. Moreover, to prove to us his powers of endurance, he took a stone for his pillow. Yet as he lay there he beheld ladder set up on the earth reaching to heaven and behold the Lord stood above it, and the angels ascended and descended on it; [Gen. 28:11-13] the lesson being thus taught that the sinner must not despair of salvation nor the righteous man rest secure in his virtue.³⁰ To pass over much of the story (for there is no time to explain all the points in the narrative) after twenty years he who before had passed over Jordan with his staff returned into his native land with three droves of cattle, rich in flocks and herds and richer still in children. [Gen. 32:7, Gen. 32:10] The apostles likewise travelled throughout the world without either money in their purses, or staves in their hands, or shoes on their feet; [Matt. 10:9, Matt. 10:10] and yet they could speak of themselves as "having nothing and yet possessing all things." [2 Cor. 6:10] "Silver and gold," say they, "have we none, but such as we have give we thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." [Acts 3:6] For they were not weighed down with the burthen of riches. Therefore they could stand, as Elijah, in the crevice of the rock, they could pass through the needle's eye, and behold the back parts of the Lord.³¹ But as for us we burn with covetousness and, even while we declaim against the love of money, we hold out our skirts to catch gold and never have enough. [Cf. Juv. 1:88] There is a common saying about the Megarians which may rightly be applied to all who suffer from this passion: "They build as if they are to live forever; they live as if they are to die to-morrow." We do the same, for we do not believe the Lord's words. When we attain the age which all desire we forget the nearness of that death which as human beings we owe to nature and with futile hope promise to ourselves a long length of years. No old man is so weak and decrepit as to suppose that he will not live for one year more. A forgetfulness of his true condition gradually creeps upon him; so that earthly creature that he is and close to dissolution as he stands-he is lifted up into pride, and in imagination seats himself in heaven.

16. But what am I doing? Whilst I talk about the cargo, the vessel itself founders. He that letteth³² is taken out of the way, and yet we do not realize that Antichrist is near. Yes, Antichrist is near whom the Lord Jesus Christ "shall consume with the spirit of his mouth." [2 Thess. 2:7, 2 Thess. 2:8] "Woe unto them," he cries, "that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days."

[Matt. 24:19] Now these things are both the fruits of marriage.

I shall now say a few words of our present miseries. A few of us have hitherto survived them, but this is due not to anything we have done ourselves but to the mercy of the Lord. Savage tribes in countless numbers have overrun all parts of Gaul. The whole country between the Alps and the Pyrenees, between the Rhine and the Ocean, has been laid waste by hordes of Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alans, Gepids, Herules, Saxons, Burgundians, Allemanni and-alas! for the commonweal!-even Pannonians. For "Assur also is joined with them." [Ps. 83:8] The once noble city of Moguntiacum³³ has been captured and destroyed. In its church many thousands have been massacred. The people of Vangium³⁴ after standing a long siege have been extirpated. The powerful city of Rheims, the Ambiani, the Altrebatae,³⁵ the Belgians on the skirts of the world, Tournay, Spire, and Strasburg have fallen to Germany: while the provinces of Aquitaine and of the Nine Nations, of Lyons and of Narbonne are with the exception of a few cities one universal scene of desolation. And those which the sword spares without, famine ravages within. I cannot speak without tears of Toulouse which has been kept from falling hitherto by the merits of its reverend bishop Exuperius.³⁶ Even the Spains are on the brink of ruin and tremble daily as they recall the invasion of the Cymry; and, while others suffer misfortunes once in actual fact, they suffer them continually in anticipation.

17. I say nothing of other places that I may not seem to despair of God's mercy. All that is ours now from the Pontic Sea to the Julian Alps in days gone by once ceased to be ours. For thirty years the barbarians burst the barrier of the Danube and fought in the heart of the Roman Empire. Long use dried our tears. For all but a few old people had been born either in captivity or during a blockade, and consequently they did not miss a liberty which they had never known. Yet who will hereafter credit the fact or what histories will seriously discuss it, that Rome has to fight within her own borders not for glory but for bare life; and that she does not even fight but buys the right to exist by giving gold and sacrificing all her substance? This humiliation has been brought upon her not by the fault of her Emperors³⁷ who are both most religious men, but by the crime of a half-barbarian traitor³⁸ who with our money has armed our foes against us.³⁹ Of old the Roman Empire was branded with eternal shame because after ravaging the country and routing the Romans at the Allia, Brennus with his Gauls entered, Rome itself.⁴⁰ Nor could this ancient stain be wiped out until Gaul, the birth-place of the Gauls, and Gaulish Greece,⁴¹ wherein they had settled after triumphing over East and West, were subjugated to her sway. Even Hannibal⁴² who swept like a devastating storm from Spain into Italy, although he came within sight of the city, did not dare to lay siege to it. Even Pyrrhus⁴³ was so completely bound by the spell of the Roman name that destroying everything that came in his way, he yet withdrew from its vicinity and, victor though he was, did not presume to gaze upon what he had learned to be a city of kings. Yet in return for such insults-not to say such haughty pride-as theirs which ended thus happily for Rome, one⁴⁴ banished from all the world found death at last by poison in Bithynia; while the other⁴⁵ returning to his native land was slain in his own dominions. The countries of both became tributary to the Roman people. But now, even if complete success attends our arms, we can wrest nothing from our vanquished foes but what we have already lost to them. The poet Lucan describing the power of the city in a glowing passage says:⁴⁶ "If Rome be weak, where shall we look for strength?" we may vary his words and say:

"If Rome be lost, where shall we look for help" or quote the language of Virgil:

"Had I a hundred tongues and throat of bronze The woes of captives I could not relate" Or ev'n recount the names of all the slain. [Virg. A. 6:625-627] Even what I have said is fraught with danger both to me who say it and to all who hear it; for we are no longer free even to lament our fate. and are unwilling, nay, I may even say, afraid to weep for our sufferings.

Dearest daughter in Christ, answer me this question: will you marry amid such scenes as these? Tell me, what kind of husband will you take? One that will run or one that will fight? In either case you know what the result will be. Instead of the Fescennine song,⁴⁷ the hoarse blare of the terrible trumpet will deafen your ears and your very brideswomen may be turned into mourners. In what pleasures can you hope to revel now that you have lost the proceeds of all your possessions, now that you see your small retinue under close blockade and a prey to the inroads of pestilence and famine? But far be it from me to think so meanly of you or to harbour any suspicions of one who has dedicated her soul to the Lord. Though nominally addressed to you my words are really meant for others such as are idle, inquisitive and given to gossip. These wander from house to house and from one married lady to another, [1 Tim. 5:13] their god is their belly and their glory is in their shame, [Phil. 3:19] of the scriptures they know nothing except the texts which favour second marriages, but they love to quote the example of others to justify their own self-indulgence, and flatter themselves that they are no worse than their fellow-sinners. When you have confounded the shameless proposals of such women by explaining the true drift of the apostle's meaning; then to show you by what mode of life you can best preserve your widowhood, you may read with advantage what I have written. I mean my treatise on the preservation of virginity addressed to Eustochium⁴⁸ and my two letters to Furia⁴⁹ and Salvina.⁵⁰ Of these two latter you may like to know that the first is daughter-in-law to Probus some time consul, and the second daughter to Gildo formerly governour of Africa. This tract on monogamy I shall call by your name.

1: Cf. Letter LX 2: Letters LIV., LXXV., LXXIX., and others 3: Ageruchia = Greatheart 4: See Letter XLVIII., also infra 5: Cf. Letter LXXVII

6: So Vulg 7: Cf. Letters XLVIII. and LXXIX.

8: So R.V. marg 9: Text corrupt: probably 'quasi 0' should be substituted for 'si. 0 10: A reminiscence of Tert. de Exh. Cast. vii 11: Jerome seems to be here relying on tradition 12: From Tert. de Exh. Cast. xiii 13: Julian, Orat. v 14: See Dict. Antiq. s.v. flamen 15: The sacred bull of Memphis, generally called Apis

16: Dido 17: Who refused to survive the fall of Carthage. The story is told by Polybius 18: The battle of Aix was fought in 102 b.c 19: The priestesses in these temples seem to have been vowed to chastity 20: Matt. 13:8 - for this explanation of the parable see Letter XLVIII 21: See Letter XLVIII. and note there 22: 2 Joh. 1: In Latin 'choice 0' and 'elect 0' are one word 23: 1 Cor. 10:ii, R.V 24: Cf. Ezek. 24:16-18, Ezek. 24:27 25: A gnostic of the second century who rejected the whole of the old testament as incompatible with the new 26: Gomer the wife of Hosea 27: Virg. A. 4:32-34: 548, 552 28: From Tert. de Exh. Cast. xii 29: 1 Tim. 5:2. Jerome substitutes 'love 0' for 'rebuke. 0 30: Cf. Letters 108: and cxviii 31: 1 K. 19:11-13, cf. Exod. 33:21-23

32:

Jerome follows Tertullian, Irenaeus, and the majority of the fathers in supposing the apostle to allude to the Roman Empire. See Letter CXXI. Comm. in Hierem. 25:26, Comm. in Dan. vii, 7, 8

33:

Now Maintz

34: Now Worms 35: Tribes whose memories linger in the names Amiens and Arras 36: See note on Letter LIV 37: Arcadius and Honorius 38: Stilicho who induced the senate to grant a subsidy to the Gothic King Alaric. See Gibbon, C. xxx

39: This, one of Jerome's few criticisms on the public policy of his day, shows him to have taken a narrow and inadequate view of the issues involved 40: In the year 390 § 41: i.e. Galatia 42: The great Carthaginian general in the second Punic war 43: King of Epirus who invaded Italy in the years 280, 279, 276, 275 b.c

44:

Hannibal

45: Pyrrhus 46: Lucan, Phars. 5:274 47: See note on Letter CXXX

48:

Letter XXII

49: Letter LIV 50: Letter LXXIX

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Letter 124. To Avitus.

Avitus to whom this letter is addressed is probably the same person who induced Jerome to write to Salvina (see Letter 79., §I, ante). The occasion of writing is as follows. Ten years previously (that is to say in a.d. 399 or 400) Pammachius had asked Jerome to supply him with a correct version of Origen's First Principles to enable him to detect the variations introduced by Rufinus into his rendering. This Jerome willingly did (see Letters LXXXIII. and LXXXIV.) but when the work in its integrity was perused by Pammachius he thought it so erroneous in doctrine that he determined not to circulate it. However, "a certain brother" induced him to lend the ms. to him for a short time; and then, when he had got it into his hands, had a hasty and incorrect transcript made, which he forthwith published much to the chagrin of Pammachius. Falling into the hands of Avitus a copy of this much perplexed him and he seems to have appealed to Jerome for an explanation. This the latter now gives forwarding at the same time an authentic edition of his version of the First Principles. The date of the letter is a.d. 409 or 410.

1. About ten years ago that saintly man Pammachius sent me a copy of a certain person's rendering,¹ or rather misrendering, of Origen's First Principles; with a request that in a Latin version I should give the true sense of the Greek and should set down the writer's words for good or for evil without bias in either direction.² When I did as he wished and sent him the book,³ he was shocked to read it and locked it up in his desk lest being circulated it might wound the souls of many. However, a certain brother, who had "a zeal for God but not according to knowledge," [Rom. 10:2, R.V] asked for a loan of the manuscript that he might read it; and, as he promised to return it without delay, Pammachius, thinking no harm could happen in so short a time, unsuspectingly consented. Hereupon he who had borrowed the book to read, with the aid of scribes copied the whole of it and gave it back much sooner than he had promised. Then with the same rashness or-to use a less severe term-thoughtlessness he made bad worse by confiding to others what he had thus stolen. Moreover, since a bulky treatise on an abstruse subject is difficult to reproduce with accuracy, especially if it has to be taken down surreptitiously and in a hurry, order and sense were sacrificed in several passages. Whence it comes, my dear Avitus, that you ask me to send you a copy of my version as made for Pammachius and not for the public, a garbled edition of which has. been published by the aforesaid brother.

2. Take then what you have asked for; but know that there are countless things in the book to be abhorred, and that, as the Lord says, you will have to walk among scorpions and serpents. [Cf. Luke 10:19, Ezek. 2:6] It begins by saying that Christ was made God's son not born;⁴ that God the Father, as He is by nature invisible, is invisible even to the Son;⁵ that the Son, who is the likeness of the invisible Father, compared with the Father is not the truth but compared with us who cannot receive the truth of the almighty Father seems a figure of the truth so that we perceive the majesty and magnitude of tire greater in the less, the Father's glory limited in the Son;⁶ that God the Father is a light incomprehensible and that Christ compared with him is but a minute brightness, although

by reason of our incapacity to us he appears a great one.⁷ The Father and the Son are compared to two statues, a larger one and a small; the first filling the world and being somehow invisible through its size, the second cognisable by the eyes of men.⁸ God the Father omnipotent the writer terms good and of perfect goodness; but of the Son he says: "He is not good but an emanation and likeness of goodness; not good absolutely but only with a qualification, as 'the good shepherd' and the like."⁹ The Holy Spirit he places after the Father and the Son as third in dignity and honour. And while he declares that he does not know whether the Holy Spirit is created or uncreated,¹⁰ he has later on given his own opinion that except God the Father alone there is nothing uncreated. "The Son," he states, "is inferior to the Father, inasmuch as He is second and the Father first; and the Holy Spirit which dwells in all the saints is inferior to the Son. In the same way the power of the Father is greater than that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Likewise the power of the Son is greater than that of the Holy Spirit, and as a consequence the Holy Spirit in its turn has greater virtue than other things called holy."¹¹

3. Then, when he comes to deal with rational creatures and to describe their lapse into earthly bodies as due to their own negligence, he goes on to say: "Surely it argues great negligence and sloth for a soul so far to empty itself as to fall into sin and allow itself to be tied to the material body of an unreasoning brute;" and in a subsequent passage: "These reasonings induce me to suppose that it is by their own free act that some are numbered with God's saints and servants, and that it was through their own fault that others fell from holiness into such negligence that they were changed into forces of an opposite kind."¹² He maintains that after every end a fresh beginning springs forth and an end from each beginning, and that wholesale variation is possible; so that one who is now a human being may in another world become a demon, while one who by reason of his negligence is now a demon may hereafter be placed in a more material body and thus become a human being.¹³ So far does he carry this transforming process that on his theory an archangel may become the devil and the devil in turn be changed back into an archangel. "Such as have wavered or faltered but have not altogether fallen shall be made subject, for rule and government and guidance, to better things-to principalities and powers, to thrones and dominations"; and of these perhaps another human race will be formed, when in the words of Isaiah there shall be "new heavens and a new earth." [Isa. 65:17] But such as have not deserved to return through humanity to their former estate shall become the devil and his angels, demons of the worst sort; and according to what they have done shall have special duties assigned to them in particular worlds." Moreover, the very demons and rulers of darkness in any world or worlds, if they are willing to turn to better things, may become human beings and so come back to their first beginning. That is to say, after they have borne the discipline of punishment and torture for a longer or a shorter time in human bodies, they may again reach the angelic pinnacles from which they have fallen. Hence it may be shewn that we men may change into any other reasonable beings, and that not once only or on emergency but time after time; we and angels shall become demons if we neglect our duty; and demons, if they will take to themselves virtues, may attain to the rank of angels.

4. Bodily substances too are to pass away utterly or else at the end of all things will become highly rarified like the sky and aether and other subtle bodies. It is clear that these principles must affect the writer's view of the resurrection. The sun also and the moon and the rest of the constellations are alive. Nay more; as we men by reason of our sins are enveloped in bodies material and sluggish; so the lights of heaven have for like reasons received bodies more or less luminous, and

demons have been for more serious faults clothed with starry frames. This, he argues, is the view of the apostle who writes: "the creation has been subjected to vanity and shall be delivered for the revealing of the sons of God." [Rom. 8:19-21, R.V] That it may not be supposed that I am imputing to him ideas of my own I shall give his actual words. "At the end and consummation of the world," he writes, "when souls and beings endowed with reason shall be released from prison by the Lord, they will move slowly or fly quickly according as they have previously been slothful or energetic. And as all of them have free will and are free to choose virtue or vice, those who choose the latter will be much worse off than they now are. But those who choose the former will improve their condition. Their movements and decisions in this direction or in that will determine their various futures; whether, that is, angels are to become men or demons, and whether demons are to become men or angels." Then after adducing various arguments in support of his thesis and maintaining that while not incapable of virtue the devil has yet not chosen to be virtuous, he has finally reasoned with much diffuseness that an angel, a human soul, and a demon—all according to him of one nature but of different wills—may in punishment for great negligence or folly be transformed into brutes. Moreover, to avoid the agony of punishment and the burning flame the more sensitive may choose to become low organisms, to dwell in water, to assume the shape of this or that animal; so that we have reason to fear a metamorphosis not only into four-footed things but even into fishes. Then, lest he should be held guilty of maintaining with Pythagoras the transmigration of souls, he winds up the wicked reasoning with which he has wounded his reader by saying: "I must not be taken to make dogmas of these things; they are only thrown out as conjectures to shew that they are not altogether overlooked."

5. In his second book he maintains a plurality of worlds; not, however, as Epicurus taught, many like ones existing at once, but a new one beginning each time that the old comes to an end. There was a world before this world of ours, and after it there will be first one and then another and so on in regular succession. He is in doubt whether one world shall be so completely similar to another as to leave no room for any difference between them, or whether one world shall never wholly be indistinguishable from another. And again a little farther on he writes: "if, as the course of the discussion makes necessary, all things can live without body, all bodily existence shall be swallowed up and that which once has been made out of nothing shall again be reduced to nothing. And yet a time will come when its use will be once more necessary." And in the same context: "but if, as reason and the authority of scripture shew, this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality, death shall be swallowed up in victory and corruption in incorruption. [1 Cor. 15:53, 1 Cor. 15:54] And it may be that all bodily existence shall be removed, for it is only in this that death can operate." And a little farther on: "if these things are not contrary to the faith, it may be that we shall some day live in a disembodied state. Moreover, if only he is fully subject to Christ who is disembodied, and if all must be made subject to Him, we too shall lose our bodies when we become fully subject to Him." And in the same passage: "if all are to be made subject to God, all shall lay aside their bodies; and then all bodily existence shall be brought to nought. But if through the fall of reasonable beings it is a second time required it will reappear. For God has left souls to strive and struggle, to teach them that full and complete victory is to be attained not by their own efforts but by His grace. And so to my mind worlds vary with the sins which cause them, and those are exploded theories which maintain that all worlds are alike." And again: "three conjectures occur to me with regard to the end; it is for the reader to determine which is nearest to the truth. For either we shall be bodiless when being made subject to Christ we

shall be made subject to God and He shall be all in all; or as things made subject to Christ shall be with Christ Himself made subject to God and brought under one law, so all substance shall be refined into its most perfect form and rarified into aether which is a pure and uncompounded essence; or else the sphere which I have called motionless and all that it contains will be dissolved into nothing, and the sphere in which the antizone¹⁴ itself is contained shall be called 'good ground,' [Matt. 13:8] and that other sphere which in its revolution surrounds the earth and goes by the name of heaven shall be reserved for the abode of the saints."

6. In speaking thus does he not most clearly follow the error of the heathen and foist upon the simple faith of Christians the ravings of philosophy? In the same book he writes: "it remains that God is invisible. But if He is by nature invisible, He must beso even to the Saviour." And lower down: "no soul which has descended into a human body has borne upon it so true an impress of its previous character as Christ's soul of which He says: 'no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.'" [John. 10:18] And in another place: "we must carefully consider whether souls, when they have won salvation and have attained to the blessed life, may not cease to be souls. For as the Lord and Saviour came to seek and to save that which was lost [Luke 19:10] that it might cease to be lost; so the lost soul which the Lord came to save, when saved, will cease to be a soul. We must ask ourselves whether, as the lost was not lost once and again will not be, the soul likewise may have been and again may be not a soul."¹⁵ And after a good many remarks upon the soul he brings in the following, "vo■ς or" intelligence by falling becomes a soul; and by acquiring virtue this will become intelligence again. This at least is a fair inference from the case of Esau who for his old sins is condemned to lead a lower life. And concerning the heavenly bodies we must make a similar acknowledgment. The soul of the sun-or whatever else you like to call it-does not date its existence from the creation of the world; it already existed before it entered its shining and glowing body. So also with the moon and stars. From antecedent causes they have been made subject to vanity not willingly but for future reward, [Rom. 8:20] and are forced to do not their own will but the creator's who has assigned to them their several spheres."

7. Hellfire, moreover, and the torments with which holy scripture threatens sinners he explains not as external punishments but as the pangs of guilty consciences when by God's power the memory of our transgressions is set before our eyes. "The whole crop of our sins grows up afresh from seeds which remain in the soul, and all our dishonourable and undutiful acts are again pictured before our gaze. Thus it is the fire of conscience and the stings of remorse which torture the mind as it looks back on former self-indulgence." And again: "but perhaps this coarse and earthly body ought to be described as mist and darkness; for at the end of this world and when it becomes necessary to pass into another, the like darkness will lead to the like physical birth." In speaking thus he clearly pleads for the transmigration of souls as taught by Pythagoras and Plato.¹⁶ And at the end of the second book in dealing with our perfection he has said: "when we shall have made such progress as not only to cease to be flesh or body but perhaps also to cease to be souls our perfect intelligence and perception, undimmed with any mist of passion, will discern reasonable and intelligible substances face to face."

8. In the third book the following faulty statements are contained. "If we once admit that, when one vessel is made to honour and another to dishonour, [2 Tim. 2:20] this is due to antecedent causes; why may we not revert to the mystery of the soul and allow that it is loved in one and hated in another because of its past actions, before in Jacob it becomes a supplanter and before in Esau it

is supplanted?" [Mal. 1:2, Mal. 1:3] And again: "the fact that souls are made some to honour and some to dishonour is to be explained by their previous history." And in the same place: "on this hypothesis of mine a vessel made to honour which fails to fulfil its object will in another world become a vessel made to dishonour; and contrariwise a vessel which has from a previous fault been condemned to dishonour will, if it accepts correction in this present life, become in the new creation a vessel 'sanctified and meet for the Master's use and prepared unto every good work.'" [2 Tim. 2:21] And he immediately goes on to say: "I believe that men who begin with small faults may become so hardened in wickedness that, if they do not repent and turn to better things, they must become inhuman energies;¹⁷ and contrariwise that hostile and demonic beings may in course of time so far heal their wounds and cheek the current of their former sins that they may attain to the abode of the perfect. As I have often said, in those countless and unceasing worlds in which the soul lives and has its being some grow worse and worse until they reach the lowest depths of degradation; while others in those lowest depths grow better and better until they reach the perfection of virtue." Thus he tries to shew that men, or rather their souls, may become demons; and that demons in turn may be restored to the rank of angels. In the same book he writes: "this too must be considered; why the human soul is diversely acted upon now by influences of one kind and now by influences of another." And he surmises that this is due to conduct which has preceded birth. It is for this, he argues, that John leaps in his mother's womb when at Mary's salutation Elizabeth declares herself unworthy of her notice. [Luke 1:41] And he immediately subjoins: "on the other hand infants that are hardly weaned are possessed with evil spirits and become diviners and soothsayers; [Cf. Acts 16:16, A.V. margin] indeed, some are indwelt from their earliest years with the spirit of a python. Now as they have done nothing to bring upon themselves these visitations, one who holds that nothing happens without God's permission, and that all things are governed by His justice, cannot suppose that God's providence has abandoned them without good reason.

9. Again, of the world he writes thus: "The belief commends itself to me that there was a world before this world and that after it there will be another. Do you wish to know that after the decay of this world there will be a new one? Hear the words of Isaiah: 'the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me.' [Isa. 66:22] Do you wish to know that before the making of this world there have previously been others? Listen to the Preacher who says: 'the thing which hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.' [Eccles. 1:9, Eccles. 1:10] A passage which proves not only that other worlds have been but that other worlds shall be; not, however, simultaneously and side by side but one after another." And he immediately adds: "I hold that heaven is the abode of the deity, the true place of rest; and that it was there that reasonable creatures enjoyed their ancient bliss, before coming down to a lower plane and exchanging the invisible for the visible, they fell to the earth and came to need material bodies. Now that they have fallen, God the creator has made for them bodies suitable to their surroundings; and has fashioned this visible world, and has sent into it ministers to ensure the salvation and correction of the fallen. Of these ministers some have held assigned positions and have been subject to the world's necessary laws; while others have intelligently performed duties laid upon them in times and seasons determined by God's plan. To the former class belong the sun, moon, and stars called by the apostle 'the creation;' and these have had allotted to them the heights of heaven. Now the creation is

subjected to vanity [Rom. 8:20, R.V] because it is encased in material bodies and visible to the eye. And yet it is 'made subject to vanity not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.' Others again of the second class, at particular places and times known to their Maker only, we believe to be His angels sent to steer the world." A little farther on he says: "the affairs of the world are so ordered by Providence that while some angels fall from heaven others freely glide down to earth. The former are hurled down against their will; the latter descend from choice alone. The former are forced to continue in a distasteful service for a fixed period; the latter spontaneously embrace the task of lending a hand to those who fall." Again he writes: "whence it follows that these different movements result in the creation of different worlds; and that this world of ours will be succeeded by one quite unlike it. Now, as regards this falling and rising, this rewarding of virtue and punishment of vice, whether they take place in the past, present, or future, God, the creator, can alone apportion desert and make all things converge to one end. For He only knows why He allows some to follow their own inclination and to descend from the higher planes to the lowest; and why He visits others and giving them His hand draws them back to their former state and places them once more in heaven."

10. In discussing the end of the world he has made use of the following language. "Since, as I have often said, a new beginning springs from the end, it may be asked whether bodies will then continue to exist, or whether, when they have been annihilated, we shall live without bodies and be incorporeal as we know God to be. Now there can be no doubt but that, if bodies or, as the apostle calls them, visible things, belong only to our sensible world, the life of the disembodied will be incorporeal." And a little farther on: "when the apostle writes, 'the creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God,' [Rom. 8:21, R.V] I explain his words thus. Reasonable and incorporeal beings are the highest of God's creatures, for not being clothed with bodies they are not the slaves of corruption. Since where there are bodies, there corruption is sure to be found. But hereafter 'the creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption,' and then men shall receive the glory of the children of God and God shall be all in all." And in the same passage he writes: "that the final state will be an incorporeal one is rendered credible by the words of our Saviour's prayer: 'as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' [John. 17:21] For we ought to realize what God is and what the Saviour will finally be, and how the likeness to the Father and the Son here promised to the Saints consists in this that as They are one in Themselves so we shall be one in Them. For if in the end the life of the Saints is to be assimilated to the life of God, we must either admit that the Lord of the universe is clothed with a body and that he is enveloped in matter as we are in flesh; or, if it is unbecoming to suppose this, especially in persons who have but small clues from which to infer God's majesty and to guess at the glory of His innate and transcendent nature, we are reduced to the following dilemma. Either we shall always have bodies and in that case must despair of ever being like God; or, if the blessedness of the life of God is really promised to us, the conditions of His life must be the conditions of ours."

11. These passages prove what his view is regarding the resurrection. For he evidently maintains that all bodies will perish and that we shall be incorporeal as according to him we were before we received our present bodies. Again when he comes to argue for a variety of worlds and to maintain that angels will become demons, demons either angels or men, and men in their turn demons; in a word that everything will be turned into something else, he thus sums up his own opinion: "no

doubt, after an interval matter will exist afresh and bodies will be formed and a different world will be created to meet the varying wills of reasonable beings who, having forfeited the perfect bliss which continues to the end, have gradually fallen into so great wickedness as to change their nature and refuse to keep their first estate of unalloyed blessedness. Many reasonable beings, it is right to say, keep it until a second, a third, and a fourth world, and give God no ground for changing their condition. Others deteriorate so little that they seem to have lost hardly anything, and others again have to be hurled headlong into the abyss. God who orders all things alone knows how to use each class according to its deserts in a suitable sphere; for He only understands opportunities and motives and the course in which the world must be steered. Thus one who has borne away the palm for wickedness and has sunk into the lowest degradation will in the world which is hereafter to be fashioned be made a devil, a kind of first fruits of the Lord's handiwork, to be a laughing stock to the angels who have lost their first virtue." What is this but to argue that the sinful men of this world may become a devil and demons in another; and contrariwise that those who are now demons may hereafter become either men or angels? And after a lengthy discussion in which he maintains that all corporeal creatures must exchange their material for subtle and spiritual bodies and that all substance must become one pure and inconceivably bright body, of which the human mind can at present form no conception, he winds up thus:—"God shall be all in all;" that is to say, all bodily existence shall be made as perfect as possible; it shall be brought into the divine essence, than which there is none better."

12. In the fourth and last book of his work the following passages deserve the church's condemnation. "It may be that as, when men die in this world by the separation of soul and body, they are allotted different positions in hell according to the difference in their works; so when angels die, out of the system of the heavenly Jerusalem, they come down to this world as a hell and are placed on earth according to their deserts." And again: "as we have compared the souls which pass from this world to hell with those which as they come from heaven to us are in a manner dead; so we must carefully inquire whether this is true of all souls without exception. For in that case souls born on earth when they desire better things rise out of hell and assume human bodies or when they desire worse things come down to us from better worlds; and in the firmament above us likewise there are souls on their way from our world to higher ones, and others who, while they have fallen from heaven, have not sinned so grievously as to be thrust down to earth." He thus tries to prove that the firmament, that is the sky, is hell compared with heaven; and that this earth is hell compared with the firmament; and again that our world is heaven to hell. Or in other words what is hell to some is heaven to others. And not content with saying this he goes on: "at the end of all things when we shall return to the heavenly Jerusalem the hostile powers shall declare war¹⁸ against the people of God to breathe and exercise their valour and strengthen their resolve. For this they cannot have until they have faced and foiled their foes; of whom we read in the book of Numbers¹⁹ that they are overcome by reason, discipline, and tactical skill."

13. After saying that according to the apocalypse of John "the everlasting gospel" which shall be revealed in heaven [Rev. 14:6] as much surpasses our gospel as Christ's preaching does the sacraments²⁰ of the ancient law, he has asserted what it is sacrilegious even to think; that Christ will once more suffer in the sky for the salvation of demons. And although he has not expressly said it, it is yet implied in his words that as for men God became man to set men free, so for the salvation of demons when He comes to deliver them He will become a demon. To shew that this is

no gloss of mine, I must give his own words: "As Christ," he writes, "has fulfilled the shadow of the law by the shadow of the gospel, and as all law is a pattern and shadow of things done in heaven, we must inquire whether we are justified in supposing that even the heavenly law and the rites of the celestial worship are still incomplete and need the true gospel which in the apocalypse of John is called everlasting to distinguish it from ours which is only temporal, set forth in a world that shall pass away. Now if we extend our inquiry to the passion of our Lord and Saviour, it may indeed be overbold to suppose that He will suffer in heaven; yet if there is spiritual wickedness in heavenly places [Eph. 6:12] and if we confess without a blush that the Lord has once been crucified to destroy those things which He has destroyed by His passion; why need we fear to imagine a like occurrence in the upper world? the fulness of time, so that the nations of all realms shall be saved by a passion of Christ?"

14. Here is another blasphemy which he has spoken of the Son. "Assuming that the Son knows the Father, it would seem that by this knowledge He can comprehend Him as much as a craftsman can comprehend the rules of his art. And, doubtless, if the Father is in the Son, He is also comprehended by Him in whom He is. But if we mean by comprehension not merely that the knower takes a thing in by perception and insight but that he contains it within himself by virtue of a special faculty; in this sense we cannot say that the Son comprehends the Father. For the Father comprehends all things, and of these the Son is one; therefore, He comprehends the Son." And to shew us reasons why, while the Father comprehends the Son, the Son cannot comprehend the Father, he adds: "the curious reader may inquire whether the Father knows Himself in the same way that the Son knows Him. But if he recalls the words: 'the Father who sent me is greater than I,' [John. 14:28] he will allow that they must be universally true and will admit that, in knowledge as in everything else, the Father is greater than the Son, and knows Himself more perfectly and immediately than the Son can do."

15. The following passage is a convincing proof that he holds the transmigration of souls and annihilation of bodies. "If it can be shewn that an incorporeal and reasonable being has life in itself independently of the body and that it is worse off in the body than out of it; then beyond a doubt bodies are only of secondary importance and arise from time to time to meet the varying conditions of reasonable creatures. Those who require bodies are clothed with them, and contrariwise, when fallen souls have lifted themselves up to better things, their bodies are once more annihilated. They are thus ever vanishing and ever reappearing." And to prevent us from minimizing the impiety of his previous utterances he ends his work by maintaining that all reasonable beings, that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, angels, powers, dominations, and virtues, and even man by right of his soul's dignity, are of one and the same essence. "God," he writes, "and His only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit are conscious of an intellectual and reasonable nature. But so also are the angels, the powers, and the virtues, as well as the inward man who is created in the image and after the likeness of God. [2 Cor. 4:16, Gen. 1:27] From which I conclude that God and they are in some sort of one essence." He adds "in some sort" to escape the charge of blasphemy; and while in another place he will not allow the Son and the Holy Spirit to be of one substance with the Father lest by so doing he should appear to make the divine essence divisible, he here bestows the nature of God almighty upon angels and men.

16. This being the nature of Origen's book. is it anything short of madness to change a few blasphemous passages regarding the Son and the Holy Spirit and then to publish the rest

unchanged with an unprincipled eulogy when the parts unaltered as well as the parts altered flow from the same fountain head of gross impiety? This is not the time to confute all the statements made in detail; and indeed those who have written against Arius, Eunomius, Manichaeus, and various other heretics must be supposed to have answered these blasphemies as well. If anyone, therefore, wishes to read the work let him walk with his feet shod towards the land of promise; let him guard against the jaws of the serpent and the crooked jaws of the scorpion; let him read this treatise first and before he enters upon the path let him know the dangers which he will have to avoid.

1: The 'certain person O' is of course Rufinus 2: See Letter LXXXIII 3: See Letter LXXXIV

4: This statement is not borne out by the existing fragments of the treatise. In fact Origen declares Christ's divinity in unambiguous language. "Being God he was made man" First Principles, I. Preface 5: F. P., I. 1, 8 6: F. P., I. 2, 6 7: F. P., I. 2, 7 8: F. P., I. 2, 8 9: F. P., I. 2, 9, 13. The last words are omitted by Rufinus 10: F. P., I. Preface, 4 11: F. P., I. 3, 5. The words are omitted by Rufinus 12: F. P., I. 5, 5 13: F. P., I. 6, 2 14: This word is doubtful

15: The paralogism in this reasoning-so obvious to modern minds-is due to the confusion of the copula with the verb substantive 16: Phaedo, 70-77

17: i.e. demons 18: Reading adversariorum fortitudinum ...bella consurgere

19:

Passim

20:

This term had not in Jerome's time become restricted to its later sense. Anything mysterious or sacred was called a sacrament. Here it refers to the mystic teaching of the O.T

Letters - letter_125

Letter 125. To Rustics.

Rustics, a young monk of Toulouse, (to be carefully distinguished from the recipient of Letter 122.) is advised by Jerome not to become an anchorite but to continue in a community. Rules are suggested for the monastic life and a vivid picture is drawn of the difference between a good monk and a bad. Incidentally Jerome indulges his spleen against his dead opponent Rufinus (§18). The date of the letter is 411 a.d.

1. No man is happier than the Christian, for to him is promised the kingdom of heaven. No man struggles harder than he, for he goes daily in danger of his life. No man is stronger, for he overcomes the Devil. No man is weaker, for he is overcome by the flesh. Both pairs of statements can be proved by many examples. For instance, the robber believes upon the cross and immediately hears the assuring words: "verily I say unto thee, To-day shall thou be with me in paradise:" [Luke 23:43] while Judas falls from the pinnacle of the apostolate into the abyss of perdition. Neither the close intercourse of the banquet nor the dipping of the sop [John. 13:26] nor the Lord's gracious kiss [Matt. 26:49] can save him from betraying as man Him whom he had known as the Son of God. Could any one have been viler than the woman of Samaria? Yet not only did she herself believe, and after her six husbands find one Lord, not only did she recognize that Messiah by the well, whom the Jews failed to recognize in the temple; she brought salvation to many and, while the apostles were away buying food, refreshed the Saviour's hunger and relieved His weariness.¹ Was ever man wiser than Solomon? Yet love for women made even him foolish. Salt is good, and every offering must be sprinkled with it. [Lev. 2:13] Wherefore also the apostle has given commandment: "let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt." [Col. 4:6] But "if the salt have lost his savour," it is cast out. [Matt. 5:13] And so utterly does it lose its value that it is not even fit for the dunghill, [Luke 14:35] whence believers fetch manure to enrich the barren soil of their souls.

I begin thus, Rusticus my son, to teach you the greatness of your enterprise and the loftiness of your ideal; and to shew you that only by trampling under foot youthful lusts can you hope to climb the heights of true maturity. For the path along which you walk is a slippery one and the glory of success is less than the shame of failure.

2. I need not now conduct the stream of my discourse through the meadows of virtue, nor exert myself to shew to you the beauty of its several flowers. I need not dilate on the purity of the lily, the modest blush of the rose the royal purple of the violet, or the promise of glowing gems which their various colours hold out. For through the mercy of God you have already put your hand to the plough; [Luke 9:62] you have already gone up upon the housetop like the apostle Peter. [Acts 10:3-16] Who when he became hungry among the Jews had his hunger satisfied by the faith of Cornelius, and stilled the craving caused by their unbelief through the conversion of the centurion and other Gentiles. By the vessel let down from heaven to earth, the four corners of which typified the four gospels, he was taught that all men can be saved. Once more, this fair white sheet which

in his vision was taken up again was a symbol of the church which carries believers from earth to heaven, an assurance that the Lord's promise should be fulfilled: "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." [Matt. 5:8]

All this means that I take you by the hand and do my best to impress certain facts upon your mind; that, like a skilled sailor who has been through many shipwrecks, I am anxious to caution an inexperienced passenger of the risks before him. For on one side is the Charybdis of covetousness, "the root of all evil;" [1 Tim. 6:10] and on the other lurks the Scylla of detraction girt with the railing hounds of which the apostle says: "if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." [Gal. 5:15] Sometimes, you must know, the quicksands of vice² suck us down as we sail at ease through the calm water; and the desert of this world is not untenanted by venomous reptiles.

3. Those who navigate the Red Sea-where we must pray that the true Pharaoh may be drowned with all his host-have to encounter many difficulties and dangers before they reach the city of Auxuma.³ Nomad savages and ferocious wild beasts haunt the shores on either side. Thus travellers must be always armed and on the alert, and they must carry with them a whole year's provisions. Moreover, so full are the waters of hidden reefs and impassable shoals that a look-out has constantly to be kept from the masthead to direct the helmsman how to shape his course. They may count themselves fortunate if after six months they make the port of the above-mentioned city. At this point the ocean begins, to cross which a whole year hardly suffices. Then India is reached and the river Ganges-called in holy scripture Pison-"which compasseth the whole land of Havilah" [Gen. 2:11] and is said to carry down with it-from its source in paradise-various dyes and pigments. Here are found rubies and emeralds, glowing pearls and gems of the first water, such as high born ladies passionately desire. There are also mountains of gold which however men cannot approach by reason of the griffins, dragons, and huge monsters which haunt them; for such are the guardians which avarice needs for its treasures.

4. What, you ask, is the drift of all this? Surely it is clear enough. For if the merchants of the world undergo such hardships to win a doubtful and passing gain, and if after seeking it through many dangers they only keep it at risk of their lives; what should Christ's merchant do who "selles all that he hath" that he may acquire the "one pearl of great price;" who with his whole substance buys a field that he may find therein a treasure which neither thief can dig up nor robber carry away? [Matt. 13:45-46: Matt. 6:19, Matt. 6:20]

5. I know that I must offend large numbers who will be angry with my criticisms as aimed at their own deficiencies. Yet such anger does but shew an uneasy conscience and they will pass a far severer sentence on themselves than on me. For I shall not mention names; or copy the licence of the old comedy⁴ which criticized individuals. Wise men and wise women will try to hide or rather to correct whatever they perceive to be amiss in them; they will be more angry with themselves than with me, and will not be disposed to heap curses upon the head of their monitor. For he, although he is liable to the same charges, is certainly superior in this that he is discontented with his own faults.

6. I am told that your mother is a religious woman, a widow of many years' standing; and that when you were a child she reared and taught you herself. Afterwards when you had spent some time in the flourishing schools of Gaul she sent you to Rome, sparing no expense and consoling herself

for your absence by the thought of the future that lay before you. She hoped to see the exuberance and glitter of your Gallic eloquence toned down by Roman sobriety, for she saw that you required the rein more than the spur. So we are told of the greatest orators of Greece that they seasoned the bombast of Asia with the salt of Athens and pruned their vines when they grew too fast. For they wished to fill the wine-press of eloquence not with the tendrils of mere words but with the rich grape-juice of good sense. Your mother has done the same thing for you; you should, therefore, look up to her as a parent, love her as a tender nurse, and venerate her as a saint. You must not imitate those who leave their own relations and pay court to strange women. Their infamy is apparent to all, for what they aim at under the pretence of pure affection⁵ is simply illicit intercourse. I know some women of riper years, indeed a good many, who, finding pleasure in their young freedmen, make them their spiritual children and thus, pretending to be mothers to them, gradually overcome their own sense of shame and allow themselves in the licence of marriage. Other women desert their maiden sisters and unite themselves to strange widows. There are some who hate their parents and have no affection for their kin. Their state of mind is indicated by a restlessness which disdains excuses; they rend the veil of chastity and put it aside like a cobweb. Such are the ways of women; not, indeed, that men are any better. For there are persons to be seen who (for all their girded loins, sombre garb, and long beards) are inseparable from women, live under one roof with them, dine in their company, have young girls to wait upon them, and, save that they do not claim to be called husbands, are as good as married. Still it is no fault of Christianity that a hypocrite falls into sin; rather, it is the confusion of the Gentiles that the churches condemn what is condemned by all good men.

7. But if for your part you desire to be a monk and not merely to seem one, be more careful of your soul than of your property; for in adopting a religious profession you have renounced this once for all. Let your garments be squalid to shew that your mind is white; and your tunic coarse to prove that you despise the world. But give not way to pride lest your dress and language be found at variance. Baths stimulate the senses and must, therefore, be avoided; for to quench natural heat is the aim of chilling fasts. Yet even these must be moderate, for, if they are carried to excess, they weaken the stomach and by making more food necessary to it promote indigestion, that fruitful parent of unclean desires. A frugal and temperate diet is good for both body and soul.

See your mother as often as you please but not with other women, for their faces may dwell in your thoughts and so A secret wound may fester in your breast.⁶ The maidservants who attend upon her you must regard as so many snares laid to entrap you; for the lower their condition is the more easy is it for you to effect their ruin. John the Baptist had a religious mother and his father was a priest.⁷ Yet neither his mother's affection nor his father's wealth could induce him to live in his parents' house at the risk of his chastity. He lived in the desert, and seeking Christ with his eyes refused to look at anything else. His rough garb, his girdle made of skins, his diet of locusts and wild honey [Mark 1:6] were all alike designed to encourage virtue and continence. The sons of the prophets, who were the monks of the Old Testament, built for themselves huts by the waters of Jordan and forsaking the crowded cities lived in these on pottage and wild herbs.⁸ As long as you are at home make your cell your paradise,⁹ gather there the varied fruits of scripture, let this be your favourite companion, and take its precepts to your heart. If your eye offend you or your foot or your hand, cast them from you. [Matt. 18:8, Matt. 18:9] To spare your soul spare nothing else. The Lord says: "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her

already in his heart." [Matt. 5:28] "Who can say," writes the wise man, "I have made my heart clean?" [Prov. 20:9] The stars are not pure in the Lord's sight; how much less men whose whole life is one long temptation. [Job 25:5, Job 25:6] Woe be to us who commit fornication every time that we cherish lust. "My sword," God says, "hath drunk its fill in heaven;" [Isa. 34:5, R.V.] much more then upon the earth with its crop of thorns and thistles. [Gen. 3:18] The chosen vessel [Acts 9:15] who had Christ's name ever on his lips kept under his body and brought it into subjection. [1 Cor. 9:27] Yet even he was hindered by carnal desire and had to do what he would not. As one suffering violence he cries: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" [Rom. 7:24] Is it likely then that you can pass without fall or wound, unless you keep your heart with all diligence, [Prov. 4:23] and say with the Saviour: "my mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it." [Luke 8:21] This may seem cruelty, but it is really affection. What greater proof, indeed, can there be of affection than to guard for a holy mother a holy son? She too desired your eternal welfare and is content to forego seeing you for a time that she may see you for ever with Christ. She is like Hannah who brought forth Samuel not for her own solace but for the service of the tabernacle. [1 Sam. 1:27, 1 Sam. 1:28] The sons of Jonadab, we are told, drank neither wine nor strong drink and dwelt in tents pitched wherever night overtook them. [Jer. 35:6, Jer. 35:7] According to the psalter they were the first to undergo captivity; for, when the Chaldaeans began to ravage Judah they were compelled to take refuge in cities.¹⁰

8. Others may think what they like and follow each his own bent. But to me a town is a prison and solitude paradise. Why do we long for the bustle of cities, we whose very name speaks of loneliness?¹¹ To fit him for the leadership of the Jewish people Moses was trained for forty years in the wilderness; [Acts 7:29, Acts 7:30] and it was not till after these that the shepherd of sheep became a shepherd of men. The apostles were fishers on lake Gennesaret before they became "fishers of men." [Matt. 4:19] But at the Lord's call they forsook all that they had, father, net, and ship, and bore their cross daily without so much as a rod in their hands.

I say these things that, in case you desire to enter the ranks of the clergy, you may learn what you must afterwards teach, that you may offer a reasonable sacrifice [Rom. 12:1] to Christ, that you may not think yourself a finished soldier while still a raw recruit, or suppose yourself a master while you are as yet only a learner. It does not become one of my humble abilities to pass judgment upon the clergy or to speak to the discredit of those who are ministers in the churches. They have their own rank and station and must keep it. If ever you become one of them my published letter to Nepotian¹² will teach you the mode of life suitable to you in that vocation. At present I am dealing with the forming and training of a monk; of one too who has put the yoke of Christ upon his neck after receiving a liberal education in his younger days.

9. The first point to be considered is whether you ought to live by yourself or in a monastery with others.¹³ For my part I should like you to have the society of holy men so as not to be thrown altogether on your resources. For if you set out upon a road that is new to you without a guide, you are sure to turn aside immediately either to the right or to the left, to lay yourself open to the assaults of error, to go too far or else not far enough, to weary yourself with running too fast or to loiter by the way and to fall asleep. In loneliness pride quickly creeps upon a man: if he has fasted for a little while and has seen no one, he fancies himself a person of some note; forgetting who he is, whence he comes, and whither he goes, he lets his thoughts riot within and outwardly indulges in rash speech. Contrary to the apostle's wish he judges another man's servants, [Rom. 14:4] puts

forth his hand to grasp whatever his appetite desires, sleeps as long he pleases, fears nobody, does what he likes, fancies everyone inferior to himself, spends more of his time in cities than in his cell, and, while with the brothers he affects to be retiring, rubs shoulders with the crowd in the streets. What then, you will say? Do I condemn a solitary life? By no means: in fact I have often commended it. But I wish to see the monastic schools turn out soldiers who have no fear of the rough training of the desert, who have exhibited the spectacle of a holy life for a considerable time, who have made themselves last that they might be first, who have not been overcome by hunger or satiety, whose joy is in poverty, who teach virtue by their garb and mien, and who are too conscientious to invent-as some silly men do-monstrous stories of struggles with demons, designed to magnify their heroes in the eyes of the crowd and before all to extort money from it.

10. Quite recently we have seen to our sorrow a fortune worthy of Croesus brought to light by a monk's death, and a city's alms, collected for the poor, left by will to his sons and successors. After sinking to the bottom the iron has once more floated upon the surface, [2 K. 6:5, 2 K. 6:6] and men have again seen among the palm-trees the bitter waters of Marah. [Ex. 15:23, Ex. 15:27] In this there is, however, nothing strange, for the man had for his companion and teacher one who turned the hunger of the needy into a source of wealth for himself and kept back sums left to the miserable to his own subsequent misery. Yet their cry came up to heaven and entering God's ears overcame His patience. Wherefore, He sent an angel of woe to say to this new Carmelite, this second Nabal, [1 Sam. 25:38] "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" [Luke 12:20]

11. If I wish you then not to live with your mother, it is for the reasons given above, and above all for the two following. If she offers you delicacies to eat, you will grieve her by refusing them; and if you take them, you will add fuel to the flame that already burns within you. Again in a house where there are so many girls you will see in the daytime sights that will tempt you at night. Never take your hand or your eyes off your book; learn the psalms word for word, pray without ceasing, [1 Thess. 5:17] be always on the alert, and let no vain thoughts lay hold upon you. Direct both body and mind to the Lord, overcome wrath by patience, love the knowledge of scripture, and you will no longer love the sins of the flesh. Do not let your mind become a prey to excitement, for if this effects a lodgment in your breast it will have dominion over you and will lead you into the great transgression. [Ps. 19:13] Always have some work on hand, that the devil may find you busy. If apostles who had the right to live of the Gospel [1 Cor. 9:14] laboured with their own hands that they might be chargeable to no man, [1 Thess. 2:9.: 1 Cor. 4:12] and bestowed relief upon others whose carnal things they had a claim to reap as having sown unto them spiritual things; [1 Cor. 9:11] why do you not provide a supply to meet your needs? Make creels of reeds or weave baskets out of pliant osiers. Hoe your ground; mark out your garden into even plots; and when you have sown your cabbages or set your plants convey water to them in conduits; that you may see with your own eyes the lovely vision of the poet:

"Art draws fresh water from the hilltop near

Till the stream plashing down among the rocks

Cools the parched meadows and allays their thirst."14

Graft unfruitful stocks with buds and slips that you may shortly be rewarded for your toil by plucking sweet apples from them. Construct also hives for bees, for to these the proverbs of Solomon send you, [Prov. 6:8, LXX] and you may learn from the tiny creatures how to order a monastery and to discipline a kingdom. Twist lines too for catching fish, and copy books; that your hand may earn your food and your mind may be satisfied with reading. For "every one that is idle is a prey to vain desires." [Prov. 13:4, LXX] In Egypt the monasteries make it a rule to receive none who are not willing to work; for they regard labour as necessary not only for the support of the body but also for the salvation of the soul. Do not let your mind stray into harmful thoughts, or, like Jerusalem in her whoredoms, open its feet to every chance comer. [Ezek. 16:2]

12. In my youth when the desert walled me in with its solitude I was still unable to endure the promptings of sin and the natural heat of my blood; and, although I tried by frequent fasts to break the force of both, my mind still surged with [evil] thoughts.¹⁵ To subdue its turbulence I betook myself to a brother¹⁶ who before his conversion had been a Jew and asked him to teach me Hebrew. Thus, after having familiarised myself with the pointedness of Quintilian, the fluency of Cicero, the seriousness of Fronto and the gentleness of Pliny, I began to learn my letters anew and to study to pronounce words both harsh and guttural. What labour I spent upon this task, what difficulties I went through, how often I despaired, how often I gave over and then in my eagerness to learn commenced again, can be attested both by myself the subject of this misery and by those who then lived with me. But I thank the Lord that from this seed of learning sown in bitterness I now cull sweet fruits.

13. I will recount also another thing that I saw in Egypt. There was in a community a young Greek the flame of whose desire neither continual fasting nor the severest labour could avail to quench. He was in great danger of falling, when the father of the monastery saved him by the following device. He gave orders to one of the older brothers to pursue him with objurgations and reproaches, and then after having thus wronged him to be beforehand with him in laying a complaint against him. When witnesses were called they spoke always on behalf of the aggressor. On hearing such falsehoods he used to weep that no one gave credit to the truth; the father alone used cleverly to put in a word for him that he might not be "swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." [2 Cor. 2:7] To make the story short, a year passed in this way and at the expiration of it the young man was asked concerning his former evil thoughts and whether they still troubled him. "Good gracious," he replied, "how can I find pleasure in fornication when I am not allowed so much as to live?" Had he been a solitary hermit, by whose aid could he have overcome the temptations that assailed him?

14. The world's philosophers drive out an old passion by instilling a new one; they hammer out one nail by hammering in another.¹⁷ It was on this principle that the seven princes of Persia acted towards king Ahasuerus, for they subdued his regret for queen Vashti by inducing him to love other maidens. [Esth. 2:1-4] But whereas they cured one fault by another fault and one sin by another sin, we must overcome our faults by learning to love the opposite virtues. "Depart from evil," says the psalmist, "and do good; seek peace and pursue it." [Ps. 34:14] For if we do not hate evil we cannot love good. Nay more, we must do good if we are to depart from evil. We must seek peace if we are to avoid war. And it is not enough merely to seek it; when we have found it and when it flees before us we must pursue it with all our energies. For "it passeth all understanding;" [Phil. 4:7] it is the habitation of God. As the psalmist says, "in peace also is his habitation." [Ps.

76:2, LXX] The pursuing of peace is a fine metaphor and may be compared with the apostle's words, "pursuing hospitality." [Rom. 12:13, R.V. marg] It is not enough, he means, for us to invite guests with our lips; we should be as eager to detain them as though they were robbers carrying off our savings.

15. No art is ever learned without a master. Even dumb animals and wild herds follow leaders of their own. Bees have princes, and cranes fly after one of their number in the shape of a Y.¹⁸ There is but one emperor and each province has but one judge. Rome was founded by two brothers,¹⁹ but, as it could not have two kings at once, was inaugurated by an act of fratricide. So too Esau and Jacob strove in Rebekah's womb. [Gen. 25:22] Each church has a single bishop, a single archpresbyter, a single archdeacon;²⁰ and every ecclesiastical order is subjected to its own rulers. A ship has but one pilot, a house but one master, and the largest army moves at the command of one man. That I may not tire you by heaping up instances, my drift is simply this. Do not rely on your own discretion, but live in a monastery. For there, while you will be under the control of one father, you will have many companions; and these will teach you, one humility, another patience, a third silence, and a fourth meekness. You will do as others wish; you will eat what you are told to eat; you will wear what clothes are given you; you will perform the task allotted to you; you will obey one whom you do not like, you will come to bed tired out; you will go to sleep on your feet and you will be forced to rise before you have had sufficient rest. When your turn comes, you will recite the psalms, a task which requires not a well modulated voice but genuine emotion. The apostle says: "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also," [1 Cor. 14:15] and to the Ephesians, "make melody in your hearts to the Lord." [Eph. 5:19] For he had read the precept of the psalmist: "Sing ye praises with understanding." [Ps. 47:7] You will serve the brothers, you will wash the guests' feet; if you suffer wrong you will bear it in silence; the superior of the community you will fear as a master and love as a father. Whatever he may order you to do you will believe to be wholesome for you. You will not pass judgment upon those who are placed over you, for your duty will be to obey them and to do what you are told, according to the words spoken by Moses: "keep silence and hearken, O Israel." [Deut. 27:9, R.V.] You will have so many tasks to occupy you that you will have no time for [evil] thoughts; and while you pass from one thing to another and fresh work follows work done, you will only be able to think of what you have it in charge at the moment to do.

16. But I myself have seen monks of quite a different stamp from this, men whose renunciation of the world has consisted in a change of clothes and a verbal profession, while their real life and their former habits have remained unchanged. Their property has increased rather than diminished. They still have the same servants and keep the same table. Out of cheap glasses and common earthenware they swallow gold. With servants about them in swarms they claim for themselves the name of hermits. Others who though poor think themselves discerning, walk as solemnly as pageants²¹ through the streets and do nothing but snarl²² at every one whom they meet. Others shrug their shoulders and croak out what is best known to themselves. While they keep their eyes fixed upon the earth, they balance swelling words upon their tongues. [See also Lactantius, 6:18] Only a crier is wanted to persuade you that it is his excellency the prefect who is coming along. Some too there are who from the dampness of their cells and from the severity of their fasts, from their weariness of solitude and from excessive study have a singing in their ears day and night and turn melancholy mad so as to need the poultices of Hippocrates²³ more than

exhortations from me. Great numbers are unable to break free from the crafts and trades they have previously practised. They no longer call themselves dealers but they carry on the same traffic as before; seeking for themselves not "food and raiment" [1 Tim. 6:8] as the apostle directs, but money-profits and these greater than are looked for by men of the world. In former days the greed of sellers was kept within bounds by the action of the Aediles or as the Greeks call them market-inspectors,²⁴ and men could not then cheat with impunity. But now persons who profess religion are not ashamed to seek unjust profits and the good name of Christianity is more often a cloak for fraud than a victim to it. I am ashamed to say it, yet it must be said-we are at least bound to blush for our infamy-while in public we hold out our hands for alms we conceal gold beneath our rags; and to the amazement of every one after living as poor men we die rich and with our purses well-filled. But you, since you will not be alone but one of a community, will have no temptation to act thus. Things at first compulsory will become habitual. You will set to work unbidden and will find pleasure in your toil. You will forget things which are behind and will reach forth to those which are before. [Phil. 3:13] You will think less of the evil that others do than of the good you ought to do.

17. Be not led by the multitude of those who sin, neither let the host of those who perish tempt you to say secretly: "What? must all be lost who live in cities? Behold, they continue to enjoy their property, they serve churches, they frequent baths, they do not disdain cosmetics, and yet they are universally well-spoken of." To this kind of remark I have before replied and now shortly reply again that the object of this little work is not to discuss the clergy but to lay down rules for a monk. The clergy are holy men and their lives are always worthy of praise. Rouse yourself then and so live in your monastery that you may deserve to be a clergyman, that you may preserve your youth from defilement, that you may go to Christ's altar as a virgin out of her chamber. See that you are well-reported of without and that women are familiar with your reputation but not with your appearance. When you come to mature years, if, that is, you live so long, and when you have been chosen into the ranks of the clergy either by the people of the city or by its bishop, act in a way that befits a clergyman, and choose for your models the best of your brothers. For in every rank and condition of life the bad are mingled with the good.

18. Do not be carried away by some mad caprice and rush into authorship. Learn long and carefully what you propose to teach. Do not credit all that flatterers say to you, or, I should rather say, do not lend too ready an ear to those who mean to mock you. They will fawn upon you with fulsome praise and do their best to blind your judgment; yet if you suddenly look behind you, you will find that they are making gestures of derision with their hands, either a stork's neck or the flapping ears of a donkey or a thirsty dog's protruding tongue.²⁵

Never speak evil of anyone or suppose that you make yourself better by assailing the reputations of others. The charges we bring against them often come home to ourselves; we inveigh against faults which are as much ours as theirs; and so our eloquence ends by telling against ourselves. It is as though dumb persons were to criticize orators. When the grunter²⁶ wished to speak he used to come forward at a snail's pace²⁷ and to utter a word now and again with such long pauses between that he seemed less making a speech than gasping for breath. Then, when he had placed his table and arranged on it his pile of books, he used to knit his brow, to draw in his nostrils, to wrinkle his forehead and to snap his fingers, signs meant to engage the attention of his pupils. Then he would pour forth a torrent of nonsense and declaim so vehemently against every

one that you would take him for a critic like Longinus²⁸ or fancy him a second Cato the Censor²⁹ passing judgment on Roman eloquence and excluding whom he pleased from the senate of the learned. As he had plenty of money he made himself still more popular by giving entertainments. Numbers of persons shared in his hospitality; and thus it was not surprising that when he went out he was surrounded always by a buzzing throng. At home he was a monster like Nero, abroad a paragon like Cato. Made up of different and opposing natures, as a whole he baffled description. You would say that he was formed of jarring elements like that unnatural and unheard of monster of which the poet tells us that it was 'in front a lion, behind a dragon, in the middle the goat whose name it bears.'³⁰

19. Men such as these you must never look at or associate with. Nor must you turn aside your heart unto words of evil [Ps. 141:4, Vulg] lest the psalmist say to you: "Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son," [Ps. 50:20] and lest you become as "the sons of men whose teeth are spears and arrows," [Ps. 57:4] and as the man whose "words were softer than oil yet were they drawn swords." [Ps. 55:21] The Preacher expresses this more clearly still when he says: "Surely the serpent will bite where there is no enchantment, and the slanderer is no better." [Eccl. 10:11, R.V. marg] But you will say, 'I am not given to detraction, but how can I check others who are?' If we put forward such a plea as this it can only be that we may "practise wicked works with men that work iniquity." [Ps. 141:4] Yet Christ is not deceived by this device. It is not I but an apostle who says: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." [Gal. 6:7] "Man looketh upon the outward appearance but the Lord looketh upon the heart." [1 Sam. 16:7] And in the proverbs Solomon tells us that as "the north wind driveth away rain, so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue." [Prov. 25:23] It sometimes happens that an arrow when it is aimed at a hard object rebounds upon the bowman, wounding the would-be wounder, and thus, the words are fulfilled, "they were turned aside like a deceitful bow," [Ps. 78:57] and in another passage: "whoso casteth a stone on high casteth it on his own head." [Ecclus. 27:25] So when a slanderer sees anger in the countenance of his hearer who will not hear him but stops his ears that he may not hear of blood, [Isa. 33:15] he becomes silent on the moment, his face turns pale, his lips stick fast, his mouth becomes parched. Wherefore the same wise man says: "meddle not with them that are given to detraction: for their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?" [Prov. 24:21, Prov. 24:22 Vulg] of him who speaks, that is, and of him who hears. Truth does not love corners or seek whisperers. To Timothy it is said, "Against an elder receive not an accusation suddenly; but him that sinneth rebuke before all, that others also may fear." [1 Tim. 5:19, 1 Tim. 5:20 (inexact)] When a man is advanced in years you must not be too ready to believe evil of him; his past life is itself a defence, and so also is his rank as an elder. Still, since we are but human and sometimes in spite of the ripeness of our years fall into the sins of youth, if I do wrong and you wish to correct me, accuse me openly of my fault: do not backbite me secretly. "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner enrich my head." [Ps. 141:5. LXX] For what says the apostle? "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." [Heb. 12:6] By the mouth of Isaiah the Lord speaks thus: "O my people, they who call you happy cause you to err and destroy the way of your paths." [Isa. 3:12. LXX] How do you help me by telling my misdeeds to others? You may, without my knowing of it, wound some one else by the narration of my sins or rather of those which you slanderously attribute to me; and while you are eager to spread the news in all quarters, you may pretend to confide in each individual as though you had spoken to no one else. Such a course

has for its object not my correction but the indulgence of your own failing. The Lord gives commandment that those who sin against us are to be arraigned privately or else in the presence of a witness, and that if they refuse to hear reason, the matter is to be laid before the church, and those who persist in their wickedness are to be regarded as heathen men and publicans. [Matt. 18:15-17]

20. I lay great emphasis on these points that I may deliver a young man who is dear to me from the itching both of the tongue and of the ears: that, since he has been born again in Christ, I may present him without spot or wrinkle [Eph. 5:27] as a chaste virgin, [2 Cor. 11:2] chaste in mind as well as in body; that the virginity of which he boasts may be more than nominal and that he may not be shut out by the bridegroom because being unprovided with the oil of good works his lamp has gone out. [Matt. 25:1-10] In Proculus you have a reverend and most learned pre-late,³¹ able by the sound of his voice to do more for you than I with my written sheets and sure to direct you on your path by daily homilies. He will not suffer you to turn to the right hand or to the left or to leave the king's highway; for to this Israel pledges itself to keep in its hasty passage to the land of promise. [Num. 20:17] May God hear the voice of the church's supplication. "Lord, ordain peace for us, for thou hast also wrought all our works for us."³² May our renunciation of the world be made freely and not under compulsion! May we seek poverty gladly to win its glory and not suffer anguish because others lay it upon us! For the rest amid our present miseries with the sword making havoc around us, he is rich enough who has bread sufficient for his need, and he is abundantly powerful who is not reduced to be a slave. Exuperius³³ the reverend bishop of Toulouse, imitating the widow of Zarephath, [1 Kings 17:8-16] feeds others though hungry himself. His face is pale with fasting, yet it is the cravings of others that torment him most. In fact he has bestowed his whole substance to meet the needs of Christ's poor. Yet none is richer than he, for his wicker basket contains the body of the Lord, and his plain glass-cup the precious blood. Like his Master he has banished greed out of the temple; and without either scourge or cords or words of chiding he has overthrown the chairs of them that sell doves, that is, the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He has upset the tables of Mammon and has scattered the money of the money-changers; zealous that the house of God may be called a house of prayer and not a den of robbers. [John 2:14-16: Matt. 21:12, Matt. 21:13] In his steps follow closely and in those of others like him in virtue, whom the priesthood makes poor men and more than ever humble. Or if you will be perfect, go out with Abraham from your country and from your kindred, and go whither you know not. [Gen. 12:1, Heb. 11:8] If you have substance, sell it and give to the poor. If you have none, then are you free from a great burthen. Destitute yourself, follow a destitute Christ. The task is a hard one, it is great and difficult; but the reward is also great.

1: Joh. iv 2: Lybicae Syrtes 3: An important city of Abyssinia in Jerome's day, 120 miles from the Red Sea. It is now in ruins 4: The Old Comedy at Athens ridiculed citizens by name. Most of the extant plays of Aristophanes belong to it

5: Pietas 6: Virgil, Aen. 4:67

7: Pontifex 8: 2 Kings 4:38, 2 Kings 4:39, 2 Kings 6:1, 2 Kings 6:2 9: i. e. `garden. 0 10: See Letter LVIII. and note there 11: An allusion to the word `monachus, 0' `solitary 0' or `monk. 0

12: Letter LII 13: Cf. Letter CXXX 14: Virg., G. 1:108-10 15: Cf. Letter XXII

16: In Letter XVIII. Jerome speaks of his teacher as one so learned in the Hebrew language that the very scribes regarded him as a Chaldaean (i.e., as a graduate of the Babylonian school of Rabbinic learning) 17: Cic., T. Q. 4:35 18: Pliny, N. H. 10:32 19: Romulus and Remus, the first of whom slew the second

20:

When Jerome wrote, these terms had but recently come into use in the West i no doubt, however, the offices described by them were of older date. Archpresbyters seem to have been the forerunners of those who are now called "rural deans.

21: Cic., Off. 1. 36 22: Caninam exercent facundiam. The phrase recurs in Letter CXXXIV 23: The most celebrated physician of antiquity

24:

'agoranmoi.

25:

Imitated from Persius (l. 58-60)

26: i.e., Rufinus who was now dead. The nickname is taken from a burlesque very popular in Jerome's day entitled "The Porker's Last Will and Testament." In this the testator's full name is set down as Marcus Grunnius Corocotta, i.e., Mark Grunter Hog. In the beginning of the twelfth book of his commentary on Isaiah Jerome mentions the "Testament" as being then a popular school book 27: Plautus, Aulularia, l. 1. 10

28:

A Platonist of the third century after Christ, much celebrated for his learning and critical skill. "To judge like Longinus" became a synonym for accurate discrimination

29: A martinet of the old school, who did his utmost to oppose what he considered the luxury of his age. He was censor in 184 b.c 30: Lucr. V. 905, Munro. The words come first from Homer, Il. 6:181 31: He was bishop of Massilia (Marseilles) 32: Isa. xxvi, 12. LXX 33: Bishop of Toulouse. See Letter LIV. 11, and Pref. to Comm. on Zech

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Letter 126. To Marcellinus and Anapsychia.

Marcellinus, a Roman official of high rank, and Anapsychia his wife had written to Jerome from Africa to ask him his opinion on the vexed question of the origin of the soul. Jerome in his reply briefly enumerates the several views that have been held on the subject. For fuller information he refers his questioners to his treatise against Rufinus and also to their bishop Augustin who will, he says, explain the matter to them by word of mouth. Although it hardly appears in this letter Jerome is a decided creationist (see his Comm. on Eccles. xii. 7=rec 12:7). But, though he vehemently condemns Rufinus (Ap. ii. 10) for professing ignorance on the subject, he assents (Letter 134.) to Augustin (Letter 131.) who similarly professes ignorance but seems to lean to traducianism. The date of writing is a.d. 412. To his truly holy lord and lady, his children worthy of the highest respect and affection, Marcellinus and Anapsychia, Jerome sends greeting.

1. I have at last received from Africa your joint letter and no longer regret the effrontery which led me, in spite of your silence to ply you both with so many missives. I hoped, indeed, by so doing to gain a reply and to learn of your welfare not indirectly from others but directly from yourselves. I well remember your little problem about the nature of the soul; although I ought not to call it little, seeing that it is one of the greatest with which the church has to deal. You ask whether it has fallen from heaven, as Pythagoras, all Platonists, and Origen suppose; or whether it is part of God's essence as the Stoics, Manes, and the Spanish Priscillianists hint. Whether souls created long since are kept in God's storehouse as some ecclesiastical writers¹ foolishly imagine; or whether they are formed by God and introduced into bodies day by day according to that saying in the Gospel: "my Father worketh hitherto and I work;" [John 5:17] or whether, lastly, they are transmitted by propagation. This is the view of Tertullian, Apollinaris, and most western writers who hold that soul is derived from soul as body is from body and that the conditions of life are the same for men and brutes. I have given my opinion on the matter in my reply to the treatise which Rufinus presented to Anastasius, bishop of Rome, of holy memory. He strives in this by an evasive and crafty but sufficiently foolish confession to play with the simplicity of his hearers, but only succeeds in playing with his own faith or rather want of it. My book,² which has been published a good while, contains an answer to the calumnies which in his various writings Rufinus has directed against me. Your reverend father Oceanus³ has, I think, a copy of it. But if you cannot procure it your bishop Augustine is both learned and holy. He will teach you by word of mouth and will give you his opinion, or rather mine, in his own words.

2. I have long wished to attack the prophecies of Ezekiel and to make good the promises which I have so often given to curious readers. When, however, I began to dictate I was so confounded by the havoc wrought in the West and above all by the sack of Rome that, as the common saying has it, I forgot even my own name. Long did I remain silent knowing that it was a time to weep. [Eccl. 3:4] This year I began again and had written three books of commentary when a sudden incursion of those barbarians of whom your Virgil speaks⁴ as the "far-wandering men of Barce" (and to

whom may be applied what holy scripture says of Ishmael: "he shall dwell over against all his brethren" [Gen. 16:12. R.V. marg]) overran the borders of Egypt, Palestine, Phenicia, and Syria, and like a raging torrent carried everything before them. It was with difficulty and only through Christ's mercy that we were able to escape from their hands. But if, as the great orator says, "amid the clash of arms law ceases to be heard;"⁵ how much more truly may it be said that war puts an end to the study of holy scripture. For this requires plenty of books and silence and careful copyists and above all freedom from alarm and a sense of security. I have accordingly only been able to complete two books and these I have sent to my daughter, Fabiola,⁶ from whom you can if you like borrow them. For want of time I have not been able as yet to transcribe the rest. But when you have read these you will have seen the ante-chamber and will easily form from this a notion of the whole edifice. I trust in God's mercy and believe that, as he has helped me in the difficult opening chapters of the prophecy, so he will help me in the chapters towards the close. These describe the wars of Gog and Magog, and set forth the mode of building, the plan, and the dimensions of the holy and mysterious temple.

3. Our reverend brother Oceanus to whom you desire an introduction is a great and good man and so learned in the law of the Lord that no words of mine are needed to make him able and willing to instruct you both and to explain to you in conformity with the rules which govern our common studies, my opinion and his on all questions arising out of the scriptures. In conclusion, my truly holy lord and lady, may Christ our God by his almighty power have you in his safekeeping and cause you to live long and happily.

1: The allusion is probably to Clement of Alexandria 2: Against Rufinus, 2:§§8-10; 3:§30; in neither place, however, does Jerome clearly state his own view

3: See Letter LXIX, introduction. It is doubtful whether Oceanus was in holy orders although the title 'father O' seems to imply it 4: Virg., A. 4:43. It does not appear who these barbarians were. Barce is near Cyrene in Africa 5: Cicero, pro Milon. 4

6:

This Fabiola (who must be carefully distinguished from the lady so often mentioned by Jerome) is probably the person to whom Augustine addressed a letter on communion with the spiritual world

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Letter 127. To Principia. This letter is really a memoir of Marcella (for whom see note on Letter 23.) addressed to her greatest friend. After describing her history, character, and favourite studies, Jerome goes on to recount her eminent services in the cause of orthodoxy at a time when, through the efforts of Rufinus, it seemed likely that Origenism would prevail at Rome (§9, 10). He briefly relates the fall of the city and the horrors consequent upon it (§12, 13) which appear to have been the immediate cause of Marcella's death (§14). The date of the letter is 412 a.d.

1. You have besought me often and earnestly, Principia,¹ virgin of Christ, to dedicate a letter to the memory of that holy woman Marcella,² and to set forth the goodness long enjoyed by us for others to know and to imitate. I am so anxious myself to do justice to her merits that it grieves me that you should spur me on and fancy that your entreaties are needed when I do not yield even to you in love of her. In putting upon record her signal virtues I shall receive far more benefit myself than I can possibly confer upon others. If I have hitherto remained silent and have allowed two years to go over without making any sign, this has not been owing to a wish to ignore her as you wrongly suppose, but to an incredible sorrow which so overcame my mind that I judged it better to remain silent for a while than to praise her virtues in inadequate language. Neither will I now follow the rules of rhetoric in eulogizing one so dear to both of us and to all the saints, Marcella the glory of her native Rome. I will not set forth her illustrious family and lofty lineage, nor will I trace her pedigree through a line of consuls and praetorian prefects. I will praise her for nothing but the virtue which is her own and which is the more noble, because forsaking both wealth and rank she has sought the true nobility of poverty and lowliness.

2. Her father's death left her an orphan, and she had been married less than seven months when her husband was taken from her. Then as she was young, and highborn, as well as distinguished for her beauty-always an attraction to men-and her self-control, an illustrious consular named Cerealis paid court to her with great assiduity. Being an old man he offered to make over to her his fortune so that she might consider herself less his wife than his daughter. Her mother Albina went out of her way to secure for the young widow so exalted a protector. But Marcella answered: "had I a wish to marry and not rather to dedicate myself to perpetual chastity, I should look for a husband and not for an inheritance;" and when her suitor argued that sometimes old men live long while young men die early, she cleverly retorted: "a young man may indeed die early, but an old man cannot live long." This decided rejection of Cerealis convinced others that they had no hope of winning her hand. In the gospel according to Luke we read the following passage: "there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." [Luke 2:36, Luke 2:37] It was no marvel that she won the vision of the Saviour, whom she sought so earnestly. Let us then compare her case with that of Marcella and we shall see that the latter has every way the advantage. Anna lived with her husband seven years; Marcella seven months. Anna only hoped for Christ; Marcella held Him fast. Anna confessed him at His birth;

Marcella believed in Him crucified. Anna did not deny the Child; Marcella rejoiced in the Man as king. I do not wish to draw distinctions between holy women on the score of their merits, as some persons have made it a custom to do as regards holy men and leaders of churches; the conclusion at which I aim is that, as both have one task, so both have one reward.

3. In a slander-loving community such as Rome, filled as it formerly was with people from all parts and bearing the palm for wickedness of all kinds, detraction assailed the upright and strove to defile even the pure and the clean. In such an atmosphere it is hard to escape from the breath of calumny. A stainless reputation is difficult nay almost impossible to attain; the prophet yearns for it but hardly hopes to win it: "Blessed," he says, "are the undefiled in the way who walk in the law of the Lord." [Ps. 119:1] The undefiled in the way of this world are those whose fair fame no breath of scandal has ever sullied, and who have earned no reproach at the hands of their neighbours. It is this which makes the Saviour say in the gospel: "agree with," or be complaisant to, "thine adversary whilst thou art in the way with him." [Matt. 5:25] Who ever heard a slander of Marcella that deserved the least credit? Or who ever credited such without making himself guilty of malice and defamation? No; she put the Gentiles to confusion by shewing them the nature of that Christian widowhood which her conscience and mien alike set forth. For women of the world are wont to paint their faces with rouge and white-lead, to wear robes of shining silk, to adorn themselves with jewels, to put gold chains round their necks, to pierce their ears and hang in them the costliest pearls of the Red Sea,³ and to scent themselves with musk. While they mourn for the husbands they have lost they rejoice at their own deliverance and freedom to choose fresh partners-not, as God wills, to obey these [Eph. 5:22] but to rule over them. With this object in view they select for their partners poor men who contented with the mere name of husbands are the more ready to put up with rivals as they know that, if they so much as murmur, they will be cast off at once. Our widow's clothing was meant to keep out the cold and not to shew her figure. Of gold she would not wear so much as a seal-ring, choosing to store her money in the stomachs of the poor rather than to keep it at her own disposal. She went nowhere without her mother, and would never see without witnesses such monks and clergy as the needs of a large house required her to interview. Her train was always composed of virgins and widows, and these women serious and staid; for, as she well knew, the levity of the maids speaks ill for the mistress and a woman's character is shewn by her choice of companions.⁴

4. Her delight in the divine scriptures was incredible. She was for ever singing, "Thy words have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee," [Ps. 119:11] as well as the words which describe the perfect man, "his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." [Ps. 1:2] This meditation in the law she understood not of a review of the written words as among the Jews the Pharisees think, but of action according to that saying of the apostle, "whether, therefore, ye eat or drink or what soever ye do, do all to the glory of God." [1 Cor. 10:31] She remembered also the prophet's words, "through thy precepts I get understanding," [Ps. 119:104] and felt sure that only when she had fulfilled these would she be permitted to understand the scriptures. In this sense we read elsewhere that "Jesus began both to do and teach." [Acts 1:1] For teaching is put to the blush when a man's conscience rebukes him; and it is in vain that his tongue preaches poverty or teaches alms-giving if he is rolling in the riches of Croesus and if, in spite of his threadbare cloak, he has silken robes at home to save from the moth.

Marcella practised fasting, but in moderation. She abstained from eating flesh, and she knew rather the scent of wine than its taste; touching it only for her stomach's sake and for her often infirmities. [1 Tim. 5:23] She seldom appeared in public and took care to avoid the houses of great ladies, that she might not be forced to look upon what she had once for all renounced. She frequented the basilicas of apostles and martyrs that she might escape from the throng and give herself to private prayer. So obedient was she to her mother that for her sake she did things of which she herself disapproved. For example, when her mother, careless of her own offspring, was for transferring all her property from her children and grandchildren to her brother's family, Marcella wished the money to be given to the poor instead, and yet could not bring herself to thwart her parent. Therefore she made over her ornaments and other effects to persons already rich, content to throw away her money rather than to sadden her mother's heart.

5. In those days no highborn lady at Rome had made profession of the monastic life, or had ventured-so strange and ignominious and degrading did it then seem-publicly to call herself a nun. It was from some priests of Alexandria, and from pope Athanasius, and subsequently from Peter,⁵ who, to escape the persecution of the Arian heretics, had all fled for refuge to Rome as the safest haven in which they could find communion-it was from these that Marcella heard of the life of the blessed Antony, then still alive, and of the monasteries in the Thebaid founded by Pachomius, and of the discipline laid down for virgins and for widows. Nor was she ashamed to profess a life which she had thus learned to be pleasing to Christ. Many years after her example was followed first by Sophronia and then by others, of whom it may be well said in the words of Ennius:⁶ "Would that ne'er in Pelion's woods Had the axe these pinetrees felled." My revered friend Paula was blessed with Marcella's friendship, and it was in Marcella's cell that Eustochium, that paragon of virgins, was gradually trained. Thus it is easy to see of what type the mistress was who found such pupils. The unbelieving reader may perhaps laugh at me for dwelling so long on the praises of mere women; yet if he will but remember how holy women followed our Lord and Saviour and ministered to Him of their substance, and how the three Marys stood before the cross and especially how Mary Magdalen-called the tower⁷ from the earnestness and glow of her faith-was privileged to see the rising Christ first of all before the very apostles, he will convict himself of pride sooner than me of folly. For we judge of people's virtue not by their sex but by their character, and hold those to be worthy of the highest glory who have renounced both rank and wealth. It was for this reason that Jesus loved the evangelist John more than the other disciples. For John was of noble birth⁸ and known to the high priest, yet was so little appalled by the plottings of the Jews that he introduced Peter into his court, [John. 18:15, John. 18:16, R.V] and was the only one of the apostles bold enough to take his stand before the cross. For it was he who took the Saviour's parent to his own home; [John. 19:26, John. 19:27] it was the virgin son⁹ who received the virgin mother as a legacy from the Lord.

6. Marcella then lived the ascetic life for many years, and found herself old before she bethought herself that she had once been young. She often quoted with approval Plato's saying that philosophy consists in meditating on death.¹⁰ A truth which our own apostle indorses when he says: "for your salvation I die daily."¹¹ Indeed according to the old copies our Lord himself says: "whosoever doth not bear His cross daily and come after me cannot be my disciple." [Luke 14:27, cf. Luke 9:23] Ages before, the Holy Spirit had said by the prophet: "for thy sake are we killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." [Ps. 44:22] Many generations afterwards

the words were spoken: "remember the end and thou shalt never do amiss," [Ecclus. 7:36] as well as that precept of the eloquent satirist: "live with death in your mind; time flies; this say of mine is so much taken from it." [Pers. 5:153 Corvington] Well then, as I was saying, she passed her days and lived always in the thought that she must die. Her very clothing was such as to remind her of the tomb, and she presented herself as a living sacrifice, reasonable and acceptable, unto God. [Rom. 12:1]

7. When the needs of the Church at length brought me to Rome¹² in company with the reverend pontiffs, Paulinus and Epiphanius-the first of whom ruled the church of the Syrian Antioch while the second presided over that of Salamis in Cyprus,-I in my modesty was for avoiding the eyes of highborn ladies, yet she pleaded so earnestly, "both in season and out of season" [2 Tim. 4:2] as the apostle says, that at last her perseverance overcame my reluctance. And, as in those days my name was held in some renown as that of a student of the scriptures, she never came to see me that she did not ask me some question concerning them, nor would she at once acquiesce in my explanations but on the contrary would dispute them; not, however, for argument's sake but to learn the answers to those objections which might, as she saw, be made to my statements. How much virtue and ability, how much holiness and purity I found in her I am afraid to say; both lest I may exceed the bounds of men's belief and lest I may increase your sorrow by reminding you of the blessings that you have lost. This much only will I say, that whatever in me was the fruit of long study and as such made by constant meditation a part of my nature, this she tasted, this she learned and made her own. Consequently after my departure from Rome, in case of a dispute arising as to the testimony of scripture on any subject, recourse was had to her to settle it. And so wise was she and so well did she understand what philosophers call "τὸ πρῶτον", that is, the becoming, in what she did, that when she answered questions she gave her own opinion not as her own but as from me or some one else, thus admitting that what she taught she had herself learned from others. For she knew that the apostle had said: "I suffer not a woman to teach," [1 Tim. 2:12] and she would not seem to inflict a wrong upon the male sex many of whom (including sometimes priests) questioned her concerning obscure and doubtful points.

8. I am told that my place with her was immediately taken by you, that you attached yourself to her, and that, as the saying goes, you never let even a hair's-breadth¹³ come between her and you. You both lived in the same house and occupied the same room so that every one in the city knew for certain that you had found a mother in her and she a daughter in you. In the suburbs you found for yourselves a monastic seclusion, and chose the country instead of the town because of its loneliness. For a long time you lived together, and as many ladies shaped their conduct by your examples, I had the joy of seeing Rome transformed into another Jerusalem. Monastic establishments for virgins became numerous, and of hermits there were countless numbers. In fact so many were the servants of God that monasticism which had before been a term of reproach became subsequently one of honour. Meantime we consoled each other for our separation by words of mutual encouragement, and discharged in the spirit the debt which in the flesh we could not pay. We always went to meet each other's letters, tried to outdo each other in attentions, and anticipated each other in courteous inquiries. Not much was lost by a separation thus effectually bridged by a constant correspondence.

9. While Marcella was thus serving the Lord in holy tranquillity, there arose in these provinces a tornado of heresy which threw everything into confusion; indeed so great was the fury into which it

lashed itself that it spared neither itself nor anything that was good. And as if it were too little to have disturbed everything here, it introduced a ship¹⁴ freighted with blasphemies into the port of Rome itself. The dish soon found itself a cover;¹⁵ and the muddy feet of heretics fouled the clear waters [Cf. Ezek. 34:18] of the faith of Rome. No wonder that in the streets and in the market places a soothsayer can strike fools on the back or, Catching up his cudgel, shatter the teeth of such as carp at him; when such venomous and filthy teaching as this has found at Rome dupes whom it can lead astray. Next came the scandalous version¹⁶ of Origen's book On First Principles, and that 'fortunate' disciple¹⁷ who would have been indeed fortunate had he never fallen in with such a master. Next followed the confutation set forth by my supporters, which destroyed the case of the Pharisees¹⁸ and threw them into confusion. It was then that the holy Marcella, who had long held back lest she should be thought to act from party motives, threw herself into the breach. Conscious that the faith of Rome-once praised by an apostle [Rom. 1:8] -was now in danger, and that this new heresy was drawing to itself not only priests and monks but also many of the laity besides imposing on the bishop¹⁹ who fancied others as guileless as he was himself, she publicly withstood its teachers choosing to please God rather than men.

10. In the gospel the Saviour commends the unjust steward because, although he defrauded his master, he acted wisely for his own interests. [Luke 16:8] The heretics in this instance pursued the same course; for, seeing how great a matter a little fire had kindled, [James 3:5] and that the flames applied by them to the foundations had by this time reached the housetops, and that the deception practised on many could no longer be hid, they asked for and obtained letters of commendation from the church,²⁰ so that it might appear that till the day of their departure they had continued in full communion with it. Shortly afterwards²¹ the distinguished Anastasius succeeded to the pontificate; but he was soon taken away, for it was not fitting that the head of the world should be struck off²² during the episcopate of one so great. He was removed, no doubt, that he might not seek to turn away by his prayers the sentence of God passed once for all. For the words of the Lord to Jeremiah concerning Israel applied equally to Rome: "pray not for this people for their good. When they fast I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword and by the famine and by the pestilence." [Jer. 14:11, Jer. 14:12] You will say, what has this to do with the praises of Marcella? I reply, She it was who originated the condemnation of the heretics. She it was who furnished witnesses first taught by them and then carried away by their heretical teaching. She it was who showed how large a number they had deceived and who brought up against them the impious books brOn First Principles, books which were passing from hand to hand after being 'improved' by the hand of the scorpion.²³ She it was lastly who called on the heretics in letter after letter to appear in their own defence. They did not indeed venture to come, for they were so conscience-stricken that they let the case go against them by default rather than face their accusers and be convicted by them. This glorious victory originated with Marcella, she was the source and cause of this great blessing. You who shared the honour with her know that I speak the truth. You know too that out of many incidents I only mention a few, not to tire out the reader by a wearisome recapitulation. Were I to say more, ill natured persons might fancy me, under pretext of commending a woman's virtues, to be giving vent to my own rancour. I will pass now to the remainder of my story.

11. The whirlwind²⁴ passed from the West into the East and threatened in its passage to shipwreck many a noble craft. Then were the words of Jesus fulfilled: "when the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" [Luke 18:8] The love of many waxed cold. [Matt. 24:12] Yet the few who still loved the true faith rallied to my side. Men openly sought to take their lives and every expedient was employed against them. So hotly indeed did the persecution rage that "Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation;"²⁵ nay more he committed murder, if not in actual violence at least in will. Then behold God blew and the tempest passed away; so that the prediction of the prophet was fulfilled, "thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. [Ps. 104:29] In that very day his thoughts perish," [Ps. 146:4] as also the gospel-saying, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" [Luke 12:20]

12. Whilst these things were happening in Jebus²⁶ a dreadful rumour came from the West. Rome had been besieged²⁷ and its citizens had been forced to buy their lives with gold. Then thus despoiled they had been besieged again so as to lose not their substance only but their lives. My voice sticks in my throat; and, as I dictate, sobs choke my utterance. The City which had taken the whole world was itself taken;²⁸ nay more famine was beforehand with the sword and but few citizens were left to be made captives. In their frenzy the starving people had recourse to hideous food; and tore each other limb from limb that they might have flesh to eat. Even the mother did not spare the babe at her breast. In the night was Moab taken, in the night did her wall fall down. [Isa. 15:1] "O God, the heathen have come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have made Jerusalem an orchard. [Ps. 79:1. LXX] The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them." [Ps. 79:1-3]

"Who can set forth the carnage of that night? What tears are equal to its agony? Of ancient date a sovran city falls; And lifeless in its streets and houses lie Unnumbered bodies of its citizens." In many a ghastly shape doth death appear. [Virg. A. 2:361]

13. Meantime, as was natural in a scene of such confusion, one of the bloodstained victors found his way into Marcella's house. Now be it mine to say what I have heard, [Virg. A. 6:266] to relate what holy men have seen; for there were some such present and they say that you too were with her in the hour of danger. When the soldiers entered she is said to have received them without any look of alarm; and when they asked her for gold she pointed to her coarse dress to shew them that she had no buried treasure. However they would not believe in her self-chosen poverty, but scourged her and beat her with cudgels. She is said to have felt no pain but to have thrown herself at their feet and to have pleaded with tears for you, that you might not be taken from her, or owing to your youth have to endure what she as an old woman had no occasion to fear. Christ softened their hard hearts and even among bloodstained swords natural affection asserted its rights. The barbarians conveyed both you and her to the basilica of the apostle Paul, that you might find there either a place of safety or, if not that, at least a tomb. Hereupon Marcella is said to have burst into great joy and to have thanked God for having kept you unharmed in answer to her prayer. She said she was thankful too that the taking of the city had found her poor, not made her so, that she was now in want of daily bread, that Christ satisfied her needs so that she no longer felt hunger, that she was able to say in word and in deed: "naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked

shall I return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."29

14. After a few days she fell asleep in the Lord; but to the last her powers remained unimpaired. You she made the heir of her poverty, or rather the poor through you. When she closed her eyes, it was in your arms; when she breathed her last breath, your lips received it; you shed tears but she smiled conscious of having led a good life and hoping for her reward hereafter. In one short night I have dictated this letter in honour of you, revered Marcella, and of you, my daughter Principia; not to shew off my own eloquence but to express my heartfelt gratitude to you both; my one desire has been to please both God and my readers.

1: This Roman lady, like her friend Marcella, took a great interest in the study of scripture. In Letter LXV. Jerome gives her an explanation of the 45th Psalm 2: See Letter XXIII 3: i.e. the Indian Ocean 4: Cf. Letter LXXIX 5: The successor of Athanasius in the see of Alexandria

6: A fragment from the Medea of Ennius relating to the unlucky ship Argo which had brought Jason to Colchis. Here however the words seem altogether out of place. Unless, indeed, they are supposed to be spoken by pagans 7: Magdala means 'tower. 0

8: So Ewald 9: Tertullian goes so far as to call him 'Christ's eunuch 0' (de Monog. 100:xvii.)

10: Tota philosophorum vita commentatio mortis est-Cicero, T. Q. 1:30, 74 (summarizing Plato's doctrine as given in his Phaedo, p. 64) 11: 1 Cor. 15:31 (apparently quoted from memory)

12: In 382 a.d 13: Literally "thickness of a nail.

14: The movement connected with Rufinus' translation of Origen's Peri 'Arxwn. His coming was likened, in the dream of his friend Macarius (Ruf. Apol. 1:11), to that of a ship laden with Eastern wares 15: The same proverb occurs in Letter VII 16: i.e. That published by Rufinus. See Letter LXXX

17: olbioj, i.e. Macarius, a Roman Christian who wrote a book on the providence of God. To him Rufinus dedicated his version of Origen's treatise 18: Apparently the Roman clergy who sided with Rufinus 19: Siricius, the successor of Damasus. He died a.d. 398 20: Rufinus obtained such letters from Pope Siricius when he left Rome for Aquileia. See Jer. Apol. 3:21

21: 398 a.d 22: The allusion is to the capture of Rome by Alaric in 410 a.d

23: Emendata manu scorpii. The scorpion is Rufinus whom Jerome accused of suppressing the worst statements of Origen so that the subtler heresy might be accepted 24: i.e. the Origenistic heresy 25: Gal. 2:13. The allusion is perhaps to John of Jerusalem; possibly to Chrysostom 26: The Canaanite name for Jerusalem 27: By Alaric the Goth, 408 a.d 28: By Alaric, 410 a.d 29: Job 1. 21, LXX

Letters - letter_128

Letter 128. To Gaudentius.

Gaudentius had written from Rome to ask Jerome's advice as to the bringing up of his infant daughter; whom after the religious fashion of the day he had dedicated to a life of virginity. Jerome's reply may be compared with his advice to Laeta (Letter 107.) which it closely resembles. It is noticeable also for the vivid account which it gives of the sack of Rome by Alaric in a.d. 410. The date of the letter is a.d. 413.

I. It is hard to write to a little girl who cannot understand what you say, of whose mind you know nothing, and of whose inclinations it would be rash to prophesy. In the words of a famous orator "she is to be praised more for what she will be than for what she is."¹ For how can you speak of self-control to a child who is eager for cakes, who babbles on her mother's knee, and to whom honey is sweeter than any words? Will she hear the deep things of the apostle when all her delight is in nursery tales? Will she heed the dark sayings of the prophets when her nurse can frighten her by a frowning face? Or will she comprehend the majesty of the gospel, when its splendour dazzles the keenest intellect? Shall I urge her to obey her parents when with her chubby hand she beats her smiling mother? For such reasons as these my dear Pacatula must read some other time the letter that I send her now. Meanwhile let her learn the alphabet, spelling, grammar, and syntax. To induce her to repeat her lessons with her little shrill voice, hold out to her as rewards cakes and mead and sweetmeats. [cf. Hor. 1 S. 1:25, 26] She will make haste to perform her task if she hopes afterwards to get some bright bunch of flowers, some glittering bauble, some enchanting doll. She must also learn to spin, shaping the yarn with her tender thumb; for, even if she constantly breaks the threads, a day will come when she will no longer break them. Then when she has finished her lessons she ought to have some recreation. At such times she may hang round her mother's neck, or snatch kisses from her relations. Reward her for singing psalms that she may love what she has to learn. Her task will then become a pleasure to her and no compulsion will be necessary.

2. Some mothers when they have vowed a daughter to virginity clothe her in sombre garments, wrap her up in a dark cloak, and let her have neither linen nor gold ornaments. They wisely refuse to accustom her to what she will afterwards have to lay aside. Others act on the opposite principle. "What is the use," say they, "of keeping such things from her? Will she not see them with others? Women are fond of finery and many whose chastity is beyond question dress not for men but for themselves Give her what she asks for, but shew her that those are most praised who ask for nothing. It is better that she should enjoy things to the full and so learn to despise them than that from not having them she should wish to have them." "This," they continue, "was the plan which the Lord adopted with the children of Israel. When they longed for the fleshpots of Egypt He sent them flights of quails and allowed them to gorge themselves until they were sick. [Numb. 11:4, Numb. 11:20, Numb. 11:31] Those who have once lived worldly lives more readily forego the pleasures of sense than such as from their youth up have known nothing of desire." For while the

former-so they argue-trample on what they know, the latter are attracted by what is to them unknown. While the former penitently shun the insidious advances which pleasure makes, the latter coquet with the allurements of sense and fancying them to be as sweet as honey find them to be deadly poison. They quote the passage which says that "the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb;" [Prov. 5:3] which is sweet indeed in the eater's mouth but is afterwards found more bitter than gall. [Rev. 10:9. Rev. 10:10] This they argue, is the reason that neither honey nor wax is offered in the sacrifices of the Lord, [Lev. 2:11] and that oil the product of the bitter olive is burned in His temple. [Ex. 27:20] Moreover it is with bitter herbs that the passover is eaten, [Ex. 12:8] and "with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." [1 Cor. 5:8] He that receives these shall suffer persecution in the world. Wherefore the prophet symbolically sings: "I sat alone because I was filled with bitterness." [Jer. 15:17, LXX]

3. What then, I reply? Is youth to run riot that self-indulgence may afterwards be more resolutely rejected? Far from it, they rejoin: "let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide. [1 Cor. 7:24] Is any called being circumcised,"- that is, as a virgin?-"let him not become uncircumcised" [1 Cor. 7:18] -that is, let him not seek the coat of marriage given to Adam on his expulsion from the paradise of virginity. [Gen. 3:21] "Is any called in uncircumcision,"-that is, having a wife and enveloped in the skin of matrimony? let him not seek the nakedness of virginity [Gen. 3:25] and of that eternal chastity which he has lost once for all. No, let him "possess his vessel in sanctification and honour," [Thess. 4:4] let him drink of his own wells not out of the dissolute cisterns [Jer. 2:13, Cisternas dissipates] of the harlots which cannot hold within them the pure waters of chastity. [Prov. 5:15] The same Paul also in the same chapter, when discussing the subjects of virginity and marriage, calls those who are married slaves of the flesh, but those not under the yoke of wedlock freemen who serve the Lord in all freedom. [1 Cor. 7:21, 1 Cor. 7:22]

What I say I do not say as universally applicable; my treatment of the subject is only partial. I speak of some only, not of all. However my words are addressed to those of both sexes, and not only to "the weaker vessel." [1 Pet. 3:7] Are you a virgin? Why then do you find pleasure in the society of a woman? Why do you commit to the high seas your frail patched boat, why do you so confidently face the great peril of a dangerous voyage? You know not what you desire, and yet you cling to her as though you had either desired her before or, to put it as leniently as possible, as though you would hereafter desire her. Women, you will say, make better servants than men. In that case choose a misshapen old woman, choose one whose continence is approved in the Lord. Why should you find pleasure in a young girl, pretty, and voluptuous? You frequent the baths, walk abroad sleek and ruddy, eat flesh, abound in riches, and wear the most expensive clothes; and yet you fancy that you can sleep safely beside a death-dealing serpent. You tell me perhaps that you do not live in the same house with her. This is only true at night. But you spend whole days in conversing with her. Why do you sit alone with her? Why do you dispense with witnesses? By so doing if you do not actually sin you appear to do so, and (so important is your influence) you embolden unhappy men by your example to do what is wrong. You too, whether virgin or widow, why do you allow a man to detain you in conversation so long? Why are you not afraid to be left alone with him? At least go out of doors to satisfy the wants of nature, and for this at any rate leave the man with whom you have given yourself more liberty than you would with your brother, and have behaved more immodestly than you would with your husband. You have some question, you say, to ask concerning the holy scriptures. If so, ask it publicly; let your maids and your attendants

hear it. "Everything that is made manifest is light." [Eph. 5:13, R. V] He who says only what he ought does not look for a corner to say it in; he is glad to have hearers for he likes to be praised. He must be a fine teacher, on the other hand, who thinks little of men, does not care for the brothers, and labours in secret merely to instruct just one weak woman!

3a. I have wandered for a little from my immediate subject to discuss the procedure of others in such a case as yours; and while it is my object to train, nay rather to nurse, the infant Pacatula, I have in a moment drawn upon myself the hostility of many women who are by no means daughters of peace.² But I shall now return to my proper theme. A girl should associate only with girls, she should know nothing of boys and should dread even playing with them. She should never hear an unclean word, and if amid the bustle of the household she should chance to hear one, she should not understand it. Her mother's nod should be to her as much a command as a spoken injunction. She should love her as her parent, obey her as her mistress, and reverence her as her teacher. She is now a child without teeth and without ideas, but, as soon as she is seven years old, a blushing girl knowing what she ought not to say and hesitating as to what she ought, she should until she is grown up commit to memory the psalter and the books of Solomon; the gospels, the apostles and the prophets should be the treasure of her heart. She should not appear in public too freely or too frequently attend crowded churches. All her pleasure should be in her chamber. She must never look at young men or turn her eyes upon curled fops; and the wanton songs of sweet voiced girls which wound the soul through the ears must be kept from her. The more freedom of access such persons possess, the harder is it to avoid them when they come; and what they have once learned themselves they will secretly teach her and will thus contaminate our secluded Danaë by the talk of the crowd. Give her for guardian and companion a mistress and a governess, one not given to much wine or in the apostle's words idle and a tattler, but sober, grave, industrious in spinning wool³ and one whose words will form her childish mind to the practice of virtue. For, as water follows a finger drawn through the sand, so one of soft and tender years is pliable for good or evil; she can be drawn in whatever direction you choose to guide her. Moreover spruce and gay young men often seek access for themselves by paying court to nurses or dependants or even by bribing them, and when they have thus gently effected their approach they blow up the first spark of passion until it bursts into flame and little by little advance to the most shameless requests. And it is quite impossible to check them then, for the verse is proved true in their case: "It is ill rebuking what you have once allowed to become ingrained."⁴ I am ashamed to say it and yet I must; high born ladies who have rejected more high born suitors cohabit with men of the lowest grade and even with slaves. Sometimes in the name of religion and under the cloak of a desire for celibacy they actually desert their husbands in favour of such paramours. You may often see a Helen following her Paris without the smallest dread of Menelaus. Such persons we see and mourn for but we cannot punish, for the multitude of sinners procures tolerance for the sin.

4. The world sinks into ruin: yes! but shameful to say our sins still live and flourish. The renowned city, the capital of the Roman Empire, is swallowed up in one tremendous fire; and there is no part of the earth where Romans are not in exile. Churches once held sacred are now but heaps of dust and ashes; and yet we have our minds set on the desire of gain. We live as though we are going to die tomorrow; yet we build as though we are going to live always in this world.⁵ Our walls shine with gold, our ceilings also and the capitals of our pillars; yet Christ dies before our doors naked

and hungry in the persons of His poor. The pontiff Aaron, we read, faced the raging flames, and by putting fire in his censer checked the wrath of God. The High Priest stood between the dead and the living, and the fire dared not pass his feet. [Nu. 16:46-48, Vulg] On another occasion God said to Moses, "Let me alone.... that I may consume this people," [Ex. 32:10] shewing by the words "let me alone" that he can be withheld from doing what he threatens. The prayers of His servant hindered His power. Who, think you, is there now under heaven able to stay God's wrath, to face the flame of His judgment, and to say with the apostle, "I could wish that I myself were accursed for my brethren"? [Rom. 9:3] Flocks and shepherds perish together, because as it is with the people, so is it with the priest. [Isa. 24:2] Of old it was not so. Then Moses spoke in a passion of pity, "yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin-; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book." [Ex. 32:32] He is not satisfied to secure his own salvation, he desires to perish with those that perish. And he is right, for "in the multitude of people is the king's honour." [Prov. 14:28]

Such are the times in which our little Pacatula is born. Such are the swaddling clothes in which she draws her first breath; she is destined to know of tears before laughter and to feel sorrow sooner than joy. And hardly does she come upon the stage when she is called on to make her exit. Let her then suppose that the world has always been what it is now. Let her know nothing of the past, let her shun the present, and let her long for the future.

These thoughts of mine are but hastily mustered. For my grief for lost friends has known no intermission and only recently have I recovered sufficient composure to write an old man's letter to a little child. My affection for you, brother Gaudentius, has induced me to make the attempt and I have thought it better to say a few words than to say nothing at all. The grief that paralyses my will will excuse my brevity; whereas, were I to say nothing, the sincerity of my friendship might well be doubted.

1: *Spes in ea magis laudanda est quam res.* Cic. de Rep. Jerome again quotes the words in Letter CXXX 2: *Male pacatae*, a pun on Pacatula, which means 'Little Peaceful. 0 3: *Lanifica*. Cf. the well-known epitaph on a Roman matron: "She stayed at home and spun wool.

4: Already quoted in Letter CVII 5: cf. Letter CXXIII. 15

Letters - letter_129

Letter 129. To Dardanus. In answer to a question put by Dardanus, prefect of Gaul, Jerome writes concerning the Promised Land which he identifies not with Canaan but with heaven. He then points out that the present sufferings of the Jews are due altogether to the crime of which they have been guilty in the crucifixion of Christ. The date of the letter is 414 a.d. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. You ask, most noble Dardanus, of the Christians and most Christian nobles, what is the land of promise which the Jews, returning from Egypt, possessed, though it had already been possessed by their ancestors, and therefore was not promised but restored! For these words you use at the end of your letter. Asking this, you seem to hold that sentiment which pleases most of us, that another land of promise should be sought, of which David speaks in the psalm: I believe I shall see the good things of the Lord, in the land of the living. (Psalm 26.13) And the Lord in the Gospel: Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land (Matthew 5:4). Certainly David, when he sang these things in the Spirit, was in the land of promise, and not only was he dwelling near the borders of Judaea, but he had also become the conqueror of many nations roundabout, which were extended from the river of Egypt, which is the Rhinocorura, even unto the river Euphrates; saying in another place: Into Idumea will I stretch out my shoe: the foreign tribes shall serve me (Psalm 59:49). How then did he think to receive as a gift that which he already possessed through his victory? And lest he should leave uncertain to the readers among the Jews what land it was that he desired to see, he shows by his very words what it was, saying: I will believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. Therefore, the land of Judea, which was under that rule, is not the land of the living, that is, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, about whom the Lord says in the question of the Resurrection: God is not of the dead, but of the living (Matthew 22:32): truly the land and the region of the dead, of which Ezekiel speaks: The soul that sins, it shall die (Ezek. 18: 4). And: The dead shall not praise thee, O Lord, neither shall any that go down into hell. But we that live bless the Lord: from this time forth for evermore (Psalms 115:17-18): who will also meet the Lord and Savior in the resurrection, as the Apostle says: For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep (1 Thessalonians 4:14): of whom Jeremiah also speaks: They that depart from thee shall be written in the earth (Jer. 17:13). And what David promises: I believe to see the good things of the Lord, draws us clearly to a spiritual understanding. For what other good things did the king seek, or what did he need, who was of such great power that Solomon, his son (than whom no one on earth was richer) was content with his father's resources through him? But he sought those good things in the land of the living, which neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, which God has prepared for those who love him. But what is said in the Gospel: Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land (Matthew 5:4); seems contrary to the literal sense. For the possession of the earth belongs not to the meek and gentle, who often lose even that which was left by their parents through their mildness, but to strong and violent men, who are most ready for wars. Finally, in the forty-fourth Psalm, which is referred to as having

been made by Solomon, concerning the sacrament of Christ and His Church, it is written: "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty, with thy glory and thy beauty. Set out, proceed prosperously, and reign". For the sake of meekness and justice and truth thy right hand will conduct thee wonderfully. This is the one who spoke in another psalm: Remember, O Lord, David, and all his meekness (Psalm 131:1). And again: The Lord takes up the meek (Psalm 146:6). And more explicitly in the Gospel: Learn from me, for I am meek and gentle in heart (Matthew 11:29). And in whose likeness Moses, the meekest of all men who were on the earth, is written (Numbers 12:3).

2. This is, as we have said, the land of the living, in which the goods of the Lord are prepared for holy and gentle men, which before the coming in the flesh of the Lord and Savior, neither Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob, nor the prophets, and other righteous men were able to obtain. Finally, Abraham, even though in different places, seems with Lazarus in Hell (Luke 16): and the just man Jacob says: I will go down mourning and weeping to Hell (Gen. 37:35). The blood of Christ is the key to paradise, saying to the thief: Today you will be with me in paradise (Luke 23:42). This is, as we have said, the land of the living, the land of the riches and the goods of God, which the first Adam lost, and the second Adam found: indeed, he restored what had been lost, as the Apostle says: Death reigned from Adam to Moses (under whose persona the law is understood) in likeness of Adam's transgression, who is the form of future things (Rom. 5. 14) . We wish to know more clearly what this land is, let us read in Malachi: All shall call you blessed, saith the Lord: for you shall be a pleasant land (Malach. 3. 12) ((alt. voluptaria)), which signifies more significantly in Greek, than what the Saints desire, or what is pleasing to God. Isaiah also agrees in these words, saying: And a man shall hide his words, and he shall appear in the land of Zion, as a glorious river in a thirsty land (Isai. 32. 2, sec. LXX). What is the land of Zion, in which a glorious river will appear? That [land], of course, of which David sings in another psalm: Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God. And again: The Lord loveth the gates of Zion above all the tabernacles of Jacob (Psalm 86:3). Does God love these gates, which we see have been turned into ashes and embers? This cannot be persuaded, not by the wise, but not even by the foolish. I believe that [this refers to] that which we read in the 64th Psalm: Thou hast visited the earth, and hast plentifully watered it; thou hast many ways enriched it. The river of God is filled with water, thou hast prepared their food: for so is its preparation. Fill up plentifully the streams thereof, multiply its fruits; it shall spring up and rejoice in its showers: to which sense this may agree. For every day this land is visited by God and is inebriated and it is full of wealth for everyone. Out of this land, a river of God flows, about which it is written: The streams of the river give joy to the city of God (Psalm 45:5), which is also told in the mystical language in the description of Ezekiel's temple (Ezekiel 47): on its banks there are trees, on either side, each month bearing new fruit abundantly. About this land, in Proverbs, the wisest man wrote: He who tills his land will have plenty of bread (Proverbs 12:11). But if someone thinks this applies to the earth which we see and which is more possessed by sinners, of which it is written: "Cursed is the ground in your works" (Gen. 3.17), let him answer how this sentence can stand: "He who works his land will be filled with bread." For how many work the land and cultivate it with the plow, and yet are overwhelmed by many impeding causes, and are consumed by want and poverty? But it must be considered what Scripture says: "He who works his land, which is properly his own, from which he can never be cast out; according to which meaning even that is written: "The redemption of a man's soul, his own riches" (Prov. 13.8). And this cannot be taken literally. For how much money, indeed, are the

friendships of strangers and friends bought? The cultivators and farmers of this land are apostles, of whom it is said, 'You are the salt of the earth' (Matt. 3:13). And in another place, 'In your patience you shall possess your souls' (Luke 21:19): one of whom, as a chosen vessel, spoke with the utmost confidence? For we are God's co-workers, God's cultivation, God's building (1 Cor. 3:9); and many other [things], which I do not repeat for this reason, lest I seem to dull the reader's understanding and distrust his memory.

3. Also, let us consider with an anxious mind, and the authority of the Scriptures may teach us, that the saints of this earth, which the Jews assume to be the land of promise, are not inhabitants but sojourners and strangers. We read from the person of a just man: "I am a stranger and a sojourner, as all my fathers were" (Psalm 38:13). And although he dwelt long in the darkness of this land, he mournfully sighs and says, "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged! I have dwelt with the inhabitants of Cedar, my soul hath been long a sojourner" (Psalm 119:5). But wherever an inhabitant of the earth is read, and whether we treat of the first, or middle, or last, it can be clearly proved by the rule of the Scriptures that the inhabitants of the earth are always called sinners, of whom that example is in the Apocalypse of John: Woe to the inhabitants of the earth (Apoc. 8.13). Abraham, to whom the promise was first made, as the Lord said, I will give you this land and to your seed (Gen. 12.7), according to the discourse of Stephen, the first martyr in Christ, is said not to have even taken a step of this land. For so it is written: Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran, and from there, after his father died, he moved to this land where you now dwell. He gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But he promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him (Acts 7:4-5). And lest the silent reflection of the reader lead him to that understanding, that what is not given to a parent is returned to his posterity, the vessel of election speaks to the Hebrews: By faith, called Abraham, obeying went forth into a place which he was to receive as an inheritance, and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, co-heirs of the same promise. For he looked for a city having foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:8-10). And again, when he had spoken of Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Sarah, he added: 'By faith all these died, although they had not received what had been promised; they only saw it and welcomed it from a distance, and they acknowledged themselves to be foreigners and nomads here on earth. People who use such terms about themselves make it quite plain that they are in search of their real homeland. They can hardly have meant the country they came from, since they had the opportunity to go back to it; but in fact they were longing for a better homeland, their heavenly homeland. (Hebrews 11:13-16) And after recalling many saints, he concluded, All these, therefore, who have had faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better, so that they would not, without us, be made perfect. (Hebrews 11:39-40) For we have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect. And I am aware that the perfidy of the Jews does not acknowledge these testimonies, which are certainly confirmed by the authority of the Old Testament. It must be said by us, however, that this letter which is entitled to the Hebrews, was not only received by the churches of the Orient but by all the earlier writers of ecclesiastical Greek, as being the one received by Paul the Apostle, even though most people believe that it belongs either to Barnabas or to Clement; and it matters nothing whose it is, since it belongs to a man of the Church and is

celebrated daily in the reading of churches. But even if the custom of the Latins does not include it among the canonical Scriptures, neither indeed do the Greek churches receive the Apocalypse of John with the same freedom; yet we receive them both, following not the custom of this time, but the authority of the ancient writers who frequently use both testimonies, not as they sometimes do regarding the apocrypha, since they very rarely use examples from pagan literature, but as if they were canonical and ecclesiastical.

4. Let them answer me, who think this land, which now by Christ's passion and resurrection has become the land of promise for us, has been possessed by the people of the Jews, after he returned from Egypt, as much as he possessed; certainly from Dan to Beersheba, which stretches for almost a hundred and sixty thousand in length. For the Scripture testifies that neither David nor Solomon, the most powerful kings, except those whom they received into friendship after victory, held more (2 King 17). And to this I say, not to mention the five Palestinian cities: Gaza, Ascalon, Geth, Accaron, and Azotus; the Idumeans also, separated from Jerusalem by barely seventy-five thousand from the southern flank, and the Arabs and Agarenes, whom they now call Saracens, in the vicinity of the city of Jerusalem. I am ashamed to say the width of the Promised Land, lest we seem to have given the heathens an opportunity to blaspheme. From Joppa to our village of Bethlehem there are forty-six thousand, succeeded by the vastest wilderness, full of fierce barbarians, of whom it is said, "And he shall dwell in the face of all his brethren" (Genesis 16:12); and of whom the most eloquent Poet makes mention. And wandering far and wide, the Barcaeans, from the town of Barca, which is situated in a solitude; whom now, with corrupted speech, the Africans call Baricians. These are the ones who, by the quality of the places, are called by different names; and they stretch from Mauritania through Africa and Egypt, Palestine and Phoenicia, Colen Syria and Osrhoene, Mesopotamia, and Persia towards India. This is, Judea, the length and breadth of your lands; in these you boast, over these, through diverse provinces, you are tossed about ignorant. To the people (you may have) decorations, I know you inside and out. (Persius' Satire 3).

5. But if you object that the land of promise is spoken of, which is contained in the Book of Numbers (Chapter 34), from the southern sea of the Salt Pools by the way of Sina and Cades-Barne, even to the river of Egypt, which runs by Rhinocorura into the great sea; and from the west, the very sea itself which extendeth to the borders of Palestine, Phoenicia, and the coasts of Cilicia; and also to mount Taurus and Zephyrium, unto the utmost bounds of Cilicia; and on the north side to the mountain which is called Libanus, and towards the east to Antioch, and to the great lake of Cenereth, and to the river Euphrates, and it reacheth to the sea of Azareth; Then on the side over against the east part, which is over against the suburbs of the same city Tyre, and extendeth to the region of Damascus, and to the coast of the land of the children of Edom, and to the desert of Arabia, bordering upon Egypt even to the great river Euphrates. And I confess to you that these things were promised to you, not given: if you had observed the commandments of God, and walked in His precepts; if you had not worshipped Beelphegor and Baalim, Beelzebub and Chamos as Almighty God, whom you have preferred over God, then you have lost all that was promised to you. And in the Gospel, the kingdoms of heaven are promised to me, which the old instrument does not name. But if I do not do what is commanded, the blame will not be on the one who promises, but on me who did not deserve to receive the promise. For when a choice is put forward to choose, whoever refuses to work, wishes in vain for what has been promised. Read the

book of Joshua and Judges and you will understand how cramped you are in terms of possessions. Why should I mention the foreigners of diverse cities, whom the people of the Jews were not able to expel from their cities and abodes, when your own metropolis, first called Jebus, then Salem, thirdly Jerusalem, and now Aelia, was not able to expel the Jebusites; but stayed with them as a scandal and example for their neighbors - so much so that your temple was established where the Jebusite threshing floor of Ornan had been, and the temple itself was constructed from seventy thousand cubits of hewn stone and eighty thousand cubits of timber, that is, one hundred fifty thousand cubits, not counting the overseers of the work, and it was built by the heathens because of the multitude of those uncircumcised living with you.

6. And I do not say this as a reproach to the land of Judaea, as the heretical liar does; or so that I may take away from the truth of history, which is the foundation of spiritual understanding, but so that I may shake the eyebrows of the Jews who prefer the narrow passages of the synagogue to the breadth of the Church. For if they only follow the letter of the law, and do not enliven the spirit, they will show the land of promise flowing with milk and honey. But if they think it is said by trope for the abundance of all things, then we may prefer "the land of confession and life" to the land of thorns (as the Lord said to Moses, speaking of the rejection of Israel and the assumption of the Gentiles, "Let me alone, that I may destroy this people, and make thee a great nation," Exod. 32. 10) and with the same Father speaking to the Son, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps. 2. 8). And more clearly through Isaiah, It is too little for you to be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to recover the remnant of Israel. I have given you as a light to the Gentiles, that you may be my salvation to the end of the earth (Isaiah 49:6). Clearly demonstrated from this, all of that people has prefigured, and represented in shadow, what was written for us, upon whom the ends of ages have come.

7. You, Judeans, have committed many crimes, and have served all the nations around you. For what reason? Certainly because of idolatry. And when you served frequently, God took pity on you and sent Judges and saviors who freed you from the bondage of the Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines and various other nations. Lastly, under the reign of kings, you offended God, and your whole province was destroyed by the Babylonian people. For seventy years the temple remained deserted. The captivity was lifted by King Cyrus of Persia. Ezra and Nehemiah clearly reported this. A temple was built under the rule of Darius, king of the Persians and Medes, by Zerubbabel son of Salathiel, and Joshua son of Jehozadak the high priest. I will not enumerate all the sufferings you have experienced at the hands of the Medes, Egyptians, and Macedonians. Nor will I remind you of the cruelest of all tyrants, Antiochus Epiphanes, nor repeat the names of Gn. Pompey, Gabinius, Scaurus, Varus, Cassius, and Sosius, who insulted your cities, especially Jerusalem. Finally, under Vespasian and Titus, the city was captured and the temple destroyed. Then debris remained in the city up to the time of the emperor Hadrian. After the destruction of the Temple, for a little less than four hundred years the devastation of the city and Temple persisted. For what reason such a crime? Surely, you do not worship idols, but also serve the Persians and the Romans, and burdened with captivity's yoke, you are ignorant of foreign gods. How does the Most Merciful God, who has never forgotten you: not bring you through so great a space of time by your miseries, that He might release your captivity, and, to speak more truly, send Antichrist, awaited by you? For what reason, I say, does He turn His eyes from you for such an execrable

crime? Are you ignorant? Remember the voice of your parents, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matth. 27. 25). "And come, let us kill him, and our inheritance will be his" (Genesis 37:20). "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). You have chosen what lasts until the end of the world, you will serve Caesar until the fullness of nations enters and thus all Israel will be saved, as he who was once at the head is turned into the tail.

8. This [letter] I have dictated to you, most eloquent man, in a brief and hurried composition, in honor of you now in Christ, after the double honor of the Praetorship, lest I should appear to be entirely silent. For at the same time, indeed on the same day for me, both your letter was written and mine was sought, so that either [I] would have to remain silent or to reply in unpolished language-- of which one [option] pertains to modesty, the other to affection.

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Letter 130. To Demetrias.

Jerome writes to Demetrias, a highborn lady of Rome who had recently embraced the vocation of a virgin. After narrating her life's history first at Rome and then in Africa, he goes on to lay down rules and principles to guide her in her new life. These which cover the whole field of ascetic practice and include the duties of study, of prayer, of fasting, of obedience, of giving up money for Christ, and of constant industry, are in substance similar to those which thirty years before Jerome had suggested to Eustochium (Letter 22.). The tone of the letter is however milder and less fanatical; the asceticism recommended is not so severe; there is less of rhapsody and more of common sense. This letter should also be compared with the letter addressed to Demetrias by Pelagius, which is given in Vol. xi. of Jerome's works (Migne's Patr. Lat. xxx. ed.). The date is 414 a.d.

I. Of all the subjects that I have treated from my youth up until now, either with my own pen or that of my secretaries I have dealt with none more difficult than that which now occupies me. I am going to write to Demetrias a virgin of Christ and a lady whose birth and riches make her second to none in the Roman world. If, therefore, I employ language adequate to describe her virtue, I shall be thought to flatter her; and if I suppress some details on the score that they might appear incredible, my reserve will not do justice to her undoubted merits. What am I to do then? I am unequal to the task before me, yet I cannot venture to decline it. Her grandmother and her mother are both women of mark, and they have alike authority to command, faith to seek and perseverance to obtain that which they require. It is not indeed anything very new or special that they ask of me; my wits have often been exercised upon similar themes. What they wish for is that I should raise my voice and bear witness as strongly as I can to the virtues of one who in the words of the famous orator¹ is to be praised less for what she is than for what she gives promise of being. Yet, girl though she is, she has a glowing faith beyond her years, and has started from a point at which others think it a mark of signal virtue to leave off.

2. Let detraction stand aloof and envy give way; let no charge of self seeking be brought against me. I write as a stranger to a stranger, at least so far as the personal appearance is concerned. For the inner man finds itself well known by that knowledge whereby the apostle Paul knew the Colossians and many other believers whom he had never seen. How high an esteem I entertain for this virgin, nay more what a miracle of virtue I think her, you may judge by the fact that being occupied in the explanation of Ezekiel's description of the temple-the hardest piece in the whole range of scripture-and finding myself in that part of the sacred edifice wherein is the Holy of Holies and the altar of incense, I have chosen by way of a brief rest to pass from that altar to this, that upon it I might consecrate to eternal chastity a living offering acceptable to God [Rom. 12:1] and free from all stain. I am aware that the bishop² has with words of prayer covered her holy head with the virgin's bridal-veil, reciting the while the solemn sentence of the apostle: "I wish to present you all as a chaste virgin to Christ." [2 Cor. 11:2] She stood as a queen at his right hand, her

clothing of wrought gold and her raiment of needlework. [Ps. 45:9, Ps. 45:13, Ps. 45:14] Such was the coat of many colours, that is, formed of many different virtues, which Joseph wore; and similar ones were of old the ordinary dress of king's daughters. Thereupon³ the bride herself rejoices and says: "the king hath brought me into his chambers," [Cant. 1:4] and the choir of her companions responds: "the king's daughter is all glorious within." [Ps. 45:13] Thus she is a professed virgin. Still these words of mine will not be without their use. The speed of racehorses is quickened by the applause of spectators; prize fighters are urged to greater efforts by the cries of their backers; and when armies are drawn up for battle and swords are drawn, the general's speech does much to fire his soldiers' valour. So also is it on the present occasion. The grandmother and the mother have planted, but it is I that water and the Lord that giveth the increase. [1 Cor. 3:6]

3. It is the practice of the rhetoricians to exalt him who is the subject of their praises by referring to his forefathers and the past nobility of his race, so that a fertile root may make up for barren branches and that you may admire in the stem what you have not got in the fruit. Thus I ought now to recall the distinguished names of the Probi and of the Olybrii, and that illustrious Anician house, the representatives of which have seldom or never been unworthy of the consulship. Or I ought to bring forward Olybrius our virgin's father, whose untimely loss Rome has had to mourn. I fear to say more of him, lest I should intensify the pain of your saintly mother, and lest the commemoration of his virtues should become a renewing of her grief. He was a dutiful son, a loveable husband, a kind master, a popular citizen. He was made consul while still a boy;⁴ but the goodness of his character made him more illustrious as a senator. He was happy in his death⁵ for it saved him from seeing the ruin of his country; and happier still in his offspring, for the distinguished name of his great grandmother Demetrias has become yet more distinguished now that his daughter Demetrias has vowed herself to perpetual chastity.

4. But what am I doing? Forgetful of my purpose and filled with admiration for this young man, I have spoken in terms of praise of mere worldly advantages; whereas I should rather have commended our virgin for having rejected all these, and for having determined to regard herself not as a wealthy or a high born lady, but simply as a woman like other women. Her strength of mind almost passes belief. Though she had silks and jewels freely at her disposal, and though she was surrounded by crowds of eunuchs and serving-women, a bustling household of flattering and attentive domestics, and though the daintiest feasts that the abundance of a large house could supply were daily set before her; she preferred to all these severe fasting, rough clothing, and frugal living. For she had read the words of the Lord: "they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." [Matt. 11:8] She was filled with admiration for the manner of life followed by Elijah and by John the Baptist; both of whom confined and mortified their loins with girdles of skin, [2 Kings 1:8, Matt. 3:4] while the second of them is said to have come in the spirit and power of Elijah as the forerunner of the Lord. [Matt. 11:14, Luke 1:17] As such he prophesied while still in his mother's womb, [Luke 1:41] and before the day of judgment won the commendation of the Judge.⁶ She admired also the zeal of Anna the daughter of Phanuel, who continued even to extreme old age to serve the Lord in the temple with prayers and fastings. [Luke 2:36, Luke 2:37] When she thought of the four virgins who were the daughters of Philip, [Acts 21:9] she longed to join their band and to be numbered with those who by their virginal purity have attained the grace of prophecy. With these and similar meditations she fed her mind, dreading nothing so much as to offend her grandmother and her mother. Although she was encouraged by their example, she was

discouraged by their expressed wish and desire; not indeed that they disapproved of her holy purpose, but that the prize was so great that they did not venture to hope for it, or to aspire to it. Thus this poor novice in Christ's service was sorely perplexed. She came to hate all her fine apparel and cried like Esther to the Lord: "Thou knowest that I abhor the sign of my high estate"-that is to say, the diadem which she wore as queen-"and that I abhor it as a menstruous rag." [Esther 14:16] Among the holy and highborn ladies who have seen and known her some have been driven by the tempest which has swept over Africa, from the shores of Gaul to a refuge in the holy places. These tell me that secretly night after night, though no one knew of it but the virgins dedicated to God in her mother's and grandmother's retinue, Demetrias, refusing sheets of linen and beds of down, spread a rug of goat's hair upon the ground and watered her face with ceaseless tears. Night after night she cast herself in thought at the Saviour's knees and implored him to accept her choice, to fulfil her aspiration, and to soften the hearts of her grandmother and of her mother.

5. Why do I still delay to relate the sequel? When her wedding day was now close at hand and when a marriage chamber was being got ready for the bride and bridegroom; secretly without any witnesses and with only the night to comfort her, she is said to have nerved herself with such considerations as these: "What ails you, Demetrias? Why are you so fearful of defending your chastity? What you need is freedom and courage. If you are so panic-stricken in time of peace, what would you do if you were called on to undergo martyrdom? If you cannot bear so much as a frown from your own, how would you steel yourself to face the tribunals of persecutors? If men's examples leave you unmoved, at least gather courage and confidence from the blessed martyr Agnes⁷ who vanquished the temptations both of youth and of a despot and by her martyrdom hallowed the very name of chastity. Unhappy girl! you know not, you know not to whom your virginity is due. It is not long since you have trembled in the hands of the barbarians and clung to your grandmother and your mother cowering under their cloaks for safety. You have seen yourself a prisoner⁸ and your chastity not in your own power. You have shuddered at the fierce looks of your enemies; you have seen with secret agony the virgins of God ravished. Your city, once the capital of the world, is now the grave of the Roman people; and will you on the shores of Libya, yourself an exile, accept an exile for a husband? Where will you find a matron to be present at your bridal?⁹ Whom will you get to escort you home? No tongue but a harsh Punic one will sing for you the wanton Fescennine verses.¹⁰ Away with all hesitations! 'Perfect love' of God 'casteth out fear.' [1 John 4:18] Take to yourself the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, [Eph. 6:14-17] and sally forth to battle. The preservation of your chastity involves a martyrdom of its own. Why do you fear your grandmother? Why do you dread your mother? Perhaps they may themselves wish for you a course which they do not think you wish for yourself." When by these and other arguments she had wrought herself to the necessary pitch of resolution, she cast from her as so many hindrances all her ornaments and worldly attire. Her precious necklaces, costly pearls, and glowing gems she put back in their cases. Then dressing herself in a coarse tunic and throwing over herself a still courser cloak she came in at an unlooked for moment, threw herself down suddenly at her grandmother's knees, and with tears and sobs shewed her what she really was. That staid and holy woman was amazed when she beheld her granddaughter in so strange a dress. Her mother was completely overcome for joy. Both women could hardly believe that true which they had longed to be true. Their voices stuck in their throats,¹¹ and, what with blushing and turning pale, with fright and with joy, they were a prey to

many conflicting emotions.

6. I must needs give way here and not attempt to describe what defies description. In the effort to explain the greatness of that joy past all belief, the flow of Tully's eloquence would run dry and the bolts poised and hurled by Demosthenes would become spent and fall short. Whatever mind can conceive or speech can interpret of human gladness was seen then. Mother and child, grandmother and granddaughter kissed each other again and again. The two elder women wept copiously for joy, they raised the prostrate girl, they embraced her trembling form. In her purpose they recognized their own mind, and congratulated each other that now a virgin was to make a noble house more noble still by her virginity. She had found they said, a way to benefit her family and to lessen the calamity of the ruin of Rome Good Jesus! What exultation there was all through the house! Many virgins sprouted out at once as shoots from a fruitful stem, and the example set by their patroness and lady was followed by a host both of clients and servants. Virginity was warmly espoused in every house and although those who made profession of it were as regards the flesh of lower rank than Demetrius they sought one reward with her, the reward of chastity. My words are too weak. Every church in Africa danced for joy. The news reached not only the cities, towns, and villages but even the scattered huts. Every island between Africa and Italy was full of it, the glad tidings ran far and wide, disliked by none. Then Italy put off her mourning and the ruined walls of Rome resumed in part their olden splendour; for they believed the full conversion of their fosterchild to be a sign of God's favour towards them. You would fancy that the Goths had been annihilated and that that concourse of deserters and slaves had fallen by a thunderbolt from the Lord on high. There was less elation in Rome when Marcellus won his first success at Nola¹² after thousands of Romans had fallen at the Trebia, Lake Thrasymenus, and Cannae. There was less joy among the nobles cooped up in the capitol, on whom the future of Rome depended, when after buying their lives with gold they heard that the Gauls had at length been routed.¹³ The news penetrated to the coasts of the East, and this triumph of Christian glory was heard of in the remote cities of the interior. What Christian virgin was not proud to have Demetrius as a companion? What mother did not call Juliana's womb blessed? Unbelievers may scoff at the doubtfulness of rewards to come. Meantime, in becoming a virgin you have gained more than you have sacrificed. Had you become a man's bride but one province would have known of you; while as a Christian virgin you are known to the whole world. Mothers who have but little faith in Christ are unhappily wont to dedicate to virginity only deformed and crippled daughters for whom they can find no suitable husbands. Glass beads, as the saying goes, are thought equal to pearls.¹⁴ Men who pride themselves on their religion give to their virgin daughters sums scarcely sufficient for their maintenance, and bestow the bulk of their property upon sons and daughters living in the world. Quite recently in this city a rich presbyter left two of his daughters who were professed virgins with a mere pittance, while he provided his other children with ample means for self-indulgence and pleasure. The same thing has been done, I am sorry to say, by many women who have adopted the ascetic life. Would that such instances were rare, but unfortunately they are not. Yet the more frequent they are the more blessed are those who refuse to follow an example which is set them by so many.

7. All Christians are loud in their praises of Christ's holy yokefellows,¹⁵ because they gave to Demetrius when she professed herself a virgin the money which had been set apart as a dowry for her marriage. They would not wrong her heavenly bridegroom; in fact they wished her to come to

Him with all her previous riches, that these might not be wasted on the things of the world, but might relieve the distress of God's servants. Who would believe it? That Proba, who of all persons of high rank and birth in the Roman world bears the most illustrious name, whose holy life and universal charity have won for her esteem even among the barbarians, who has made nothing of the regular consulships enjoyed by her three sons, Probinus, Olybrius, and Probus,- that Proba, I say, now that Rome has been taken and its contents burned or carried off, is said to be selling what property she has and to be making for herself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that these may receive her into everlasting habitations! [Luke 16:9] Well may the church's ministers, whatever their degree, and those monks who are only monks in name, blush for shame that they are buying estates, when this noble lady is selling them.

Hardly had she escaped from the hands of the barbarians, hardly had she ceased weeping for the virgins whom they had torn from her arms, when she was overwhelmed by a sudden and unbearable bereavement, one too which she had had no cause to fear, the death of her loving son.¹⁶ Yet as one who was to be grandmother to a Christian virgin, she bore up against this death-dealing stroke, strong in hope of the future and proving true of herself the words of the lyric:

"Should the round world in fragments burst, its fall

May strike the just, may slay, but not appal." [Horace, Carm. 3:3. 7, 8]

We read in the book of Job how, while the first messenger of evil was yet speaking, there came also another;¹⁷ and in the same book it is written: "is there not a temptation"-or as the Hebrew better gives it-"a warfare to man upon earth?" [Job 7:1] It is for this end that we labour, it is for this end that we risk our lives in the warfare of this world, that we may be crowned in the world to come. That we should believe this to be true of men is nothing wonderful, for even the Lord Himself was tempted, [Matt. 4:1, sqq] and of Abraham the scripture bears witness that God tempted him. [Gen. 22:1] It is for this reason also that the apostle says: "we glory in tribulations.... knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed;" [Rom. 5:3-5] and in another passage: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." [Rom. 8:35, Rom. 8:36] The prophet Isaiah comforts those in like case in these words: "ye that are weaned from the milk, ye that are drawn from the breasts, look for tribulation upon tribulation, but also for hope upon hope." [Isa. 28:9, 10, LXX] For, as the apostle puts it "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." [Rom. 8:18] Why I have here brought together all these passages the sequel will make plain.

Proba who had seen from the sea the smoke of her native city and had committed her own safety and that of those dear to her to a fragile boat, found the shores of Africa even more cruel than those which she had left. For one¹⁸ lay in wait for her of whom it would be hard to say whether he was more covetous or heartless, one who cared for nothing but wine and money, one who under pretence of serving the mildest of emperors¹⁹ stood forth as the most savage of all despots. If I may be allowed to quote a fable of the poets, he was like Orcus²⁰ in Tartarus. Like him too he had with him a Cerberus,²¹ not three headed but many headed, ready to seize and rend everything within his reach. He tore betrothed daughters from their mothers' arms²² and sold high-born

maidens in marriage to those greediest of men, the merchants of Syria. No plea of poverty induced him to spare either ward or widow or virgin dedicated to Christ. Indeed he looked more at the hands than at the faces of those who appealed to him. Such was the dread Charybdis and such the hound-girt Scylla which this lady encountered in fleeing from the barbarians; monsters who neither spared the shipwrecked nor heeded the cry of those made captive. Cruel wretch!²³ at least imitate the enemy of the Roman Empire. The Brennus of our day²⁴ took only what he found, but you seek what you cannot find.

Virtue, indeed, is always exposed to envy, and cavillers may marvel at the secret agreement by which Proba purchased the chastity of her numerous companions. They may allege that the count who could have taken all would not have been satisfied²⁵ with a part; and that she could not have questioned his claim since in spite of her rank she was but a slave in his despotic hands. I perceive also that I am laying myself open to the attacks of enemies and that I may seem to be flattering a lady of the highest birth and distinction. Yet these men will not be able to accuse me when they learn that hitherto I have said nothing about her. I have never either in the lifetime of her husband or since his decease praised her for the antiquity of her family or for the extent of her wealth and power, subjects which others might perhaps have improved in mercenary speeches. My purpose is to praise the grandmother of my virgin in a style befitting the church, and to thank her for having aided with her goodwill the desire which Demetrias has formed. For the rest my cell, my food and clothing, my advanced years, and my narrow circumstances sufficiently refute the charge of flattery. In What remains of my letter I shall direct all my words to Demetrias herself, whose holiness ennobles her as much as her rank, and of whom it may be said that the higher she climbs the more terrible will be her fall.

"For the rest

This one thing, child of God, I lay on thee;

Yea before all, and urge it many times:"²⁶

Love to occupy your mind with the reading of scripture. Do not in the good ground of your breast gather only a crop of dandelion and wild oats. Do not let an enemy sow tares among the wheat when the householder is asleep [Matt. 13:25] (that is when the mind which ever cleaves to God is off its guard); but say always with the bride in the song of songs: "By night I sought him whom my soul loveth. Tell me where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon;" [Cant. 3:1, Cant. 1:7] and with the psalmist: "my soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me;" [Ps. 63:8] and with Jeremiah: "I have not found it hard.... to follow thee," [Jer. 17:16, LXX] for "there is no grief in Jacob neither is there travail in Israel." [Nu. 23:21, LXX] When you were in the world you loved the things of the world. You rubbed your cheeks with rouge and used whitelead to improve your complexion. You dressed your hair and built up a tower on your head with tresses not your own. I shall say nothing of your costly earrings, your glistening pearls from the depths of the Red Sea,²⁷ your bright green emeralds, your flashing onyxes, your liquid sapphires, tones which turn the heads of matrons, and make them eager to possess the like. For you have relinquished the world and besides your baptismal vow have taken a new one; you have entered into a compact with your adversary and have said: "I renounce thee, O devil, and thy world and thy pomp and thy works." Observe, therefore, the treaty that you have made, and keep terms with your adversary while you are in the way of this world. Otherwise he may some day deliver you to

the judge and prove that you have taken what is his; and then the judge will deliver you to the officer-at once your foe and your avenger-and you will be cast into prison; into that outer darkness [Matt. 8:12] which surrounds us with the greater horror as it severs us from Christ the one true light. [John. 8:12] And you shall by no means come out thence till you have paid the uttermost farthing, [Matt. 5:25, Matt. 5:26] that is, till you have expiated your most trifling sins; for we shall give account of every idle word in the day of judgment. [Matt. 12:36]

8. In speaking thus I do not wish to utter an ill-omened prophecy against you but only to warn you as an apprehensive and prudent monitor who in your case fears even what is safe. What says the scripture? "If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place."²⁸ We must always stand under arms and in battle array, ready to engage the foe. When he tries to dislodge us from our position and to make us fall back, we must plant our feet firmly down, and say with the psalmist, "he hath set my feet upon a rock" [Ps. 40:2] and "the rocks are a refuge for the conies." [Ps. 104:18] In this latter passage for 'conies' many read 'hedgehogs.' Now the hedgehog is a small animal, very shy, and covered over with thorny bristles. When Jesus was crowned with thorns and bore our sins and suffered for us, it was to make the roses of virginity and the lilies of chastity grow for us out of the brambles and briars which have formed the lot of women since the day when it was said to Eve, "in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee." [Gen. 3:16] We are told that the bridegroom feeds among the lilies, [Cant. 2:16] that is, among those who have not defiled their garments, for they have remained virgins [Rev. 14:4] and have hearkened to the precept of the Preacher: "let thy garments be always white." [Eccles. 9:8] As the author and prince of virginity He says boldly of Himself: "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys." [Cant. 2:1] "The rocks" then "are a refuge for the tonics" who when they are persecuted in one city flee into another [Matt. 10:23] and have no fear that the prophetic words "refuge failed me" [Ps. 142:4] will be fulfilled in their case. "The high hills are a refuge for the wildgoats," [Ps. 104:18] and their food are the serpents which a little child draws out of their holes. Meanwhile the leopard lies down with the kid and the lion eats straw like the ox; [Isa. 11:6-8] not of course that the ox may learn ferocity from the lion but that the lion may learn docility from the OX. But let us turn back to the passage first quoted, "If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place," a sentence which is followed by these words: "for yielding pacifieth great offences." [Eccles. 10:4] The meaning is, that if the serpent finds his way into your thoughts you must "keep your heart with all diligence" [Prov. 4:23] and sing with David, "cleanse thou me from secret faults keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins," and come not to "the great transgression" [Ps. 19:12-14] which is sin in act. Rather slay the allurements to vice while they are still only thoughts; and dash the little ones of the daughter of Babylon against the stones [Ps. 137:9] where the serpent can leave no trail. Be wary and vow a vow unto the Lord: "let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." [Ps. 19:13] For elsewhere also the scripture testifies, "I will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." [Nu. 14:18] That is to say, God will not punish us at once for our thoughts and resolves but will send retribution upon their offspring, that is, upon the evil deeds and habits of sin which arise out of them. As He says by the mouth of Amos: "for three transgressions of such and such a city and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof." [Amos 1:3]

9. I cull these few flowers in passing from the fair field of the holy scriptures. They will suffice to warn you that you must shut the door of your breast and fortify your brow by often making the sign of the cross. Thus alone will the destroyer of Egypt find no place to attack you; thus alone will the first-born of your soul escape the fate of the first-born of the Egyptians; [Exod. 12:23, Exod. 12:20] thus alone will you be able with the prophet to say: "my heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp." [Ps. 57:7, Ps. 57:8] For, sin stricken as she is, even Tyre is bidden to take up her harp [Isa. 23:15, Isa. 23:16] and to do penance; like Peter she is told to wash away the stains of her former foulness with bitter tears. Howbeit, let us know nothing of penitence, lest the thought of it lead us into sin. It is a plank for those who have had the misfortune to be shipwrecked;²⁹ but an inviolate virgin may hope to save the ship itself. For it is one thing to look for what you have cast away, and another to keep what you have never lost. Even the apostle kept under his body and brought it into subjection, lest having preached to others he might himself become a castaway. [1 Cor. 9:27] Heated with the violence of sensual passion he made himself the spokesman of the human race: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and again, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do;" [Rom. 7:24, Rom. 7:18, Rom. 7:19] and once more: "they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you." [Rom. 8:8, Rom. 8:9]

10. After you have paid the most careful attention to your thoughts, you must then put on the armour of fasting and sing with David: "I chastened my soul with fasting," [Ps. 69:10] and "I have eaten ashes like bread," [Ps. 102:9] and "as for me when they troubled me my clothing was sackcloth." [Ps. 35:13, Vulg] Eve was expelled from paradise because she had eaten of the forbidden fruit. Elijah on the other hand after forty days of fasting was carried in a fiery chariot into heaven. For forty days and forty nights Moses lived by the intimate converse which he had with God, thus proving in his own case the complete truth of the saying, "man doth not live by bread only but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." [Deut. 8:3] The Saviour of the world, who in His virtues and His mode of life has left us an example to follow, [John. 13:15, 1 Pet. 2:21] was, immediately after His baptism, taken up by the spirit that He might contend with the devil, [Matt. 4:1] and after crushing him and overthrowing him might deliver him to his disciples to trample under foot. For what says the apostle? "God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." [Rom. 16:20] And yet after the Saviour had fasted forty days, it was through food that the old enemy laid a snare for him, saying, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." [Matt. 4:3] Under the law, in the seventh month after the blowing of trumpets and on the tenth day of the month, a fast was proclaimed for the whole Jewish people, and that soul was cut off from among his people which on that day preferred self-indulgence to self-denial. [Lev. 23:27, Lev. 23:29] In Job it is written of behemoth that "his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly." [Job 40:16. Cf. Letter XXII] Our foe uses the heat of youthful passion to tempt young men and maidens and "sets on fire the wheel of our birth." [Jas. 3:6, R.V. marg] He thus fulfils the words of Hosea, "they are all adulterers, their heart is like an oven;" [Hos. 7:4, Vulg] an oven which only God's mercy and severe fasting can extinguish. These are "the fiery darts" [Eph. 6:16] with which the devil wounds men and sets them on fire, and it was these which the king of Babylon used against the three children. But when he made his fire forty-nine cubits high³⁰ he

did but turn to his own ruin [Dan. 4:16, Dan. 4:25, Dan. 4:32] the seven weeks which the Lord had appointed for a time of salvation. [Lev. 25:8] And as then a fourth bearing a form like the son of God slackened the terrible heat [Dan. 3:25] and cooled the flames of the blazing fiery furnace, until, menacing as they looked, they became quite harmless, so is it now with the virgin soul. The dew of heaven and severe fasting quench in a girl the flame of passion and enable her soul even in its earthly tenement to live the angelic life. Therefore the chosen vessel [Acts 9:15] declares that concerning virgins he has no commandment of the Lord. [1 Cor. 7:25] For you must act against nature or rather above nature if you are to forswear your natural function, to cut off your own root, to cull no fruit but that of virginity, to abjure the marriage-bed, to shun intercourse with men, and while in the body to live as though out of it.

11. I do not, however, lay on you as an obligation any extreme fasting or abnormal abstinence from food. Such practices soon break down weak constitutions and cause bodily sickness before they lay the foundations of a holy life. It is a maxim of the philosophers that virtues are means, and that all extremes are of the nature of vice;³¹ and it is in this sense that one of the seven wise men propounds the famous saw quoted in the comedy, "In nothing too much."³² You must not go on fasting until your heart begins to throb and your breath to fail and you have to be supported or carried by others. No; while curbing the desires of the flesh, you must keep sufficient strength to read scripture, to sing psalms, and to observe vigils. For fasting is not a complete virtue in itself but only a foundation on which other virtues may be built. The same may be said of sanctification and of that chastity without which no man shall see the Lord. [Heb. 12:14, R.V] Each of these is a step on the upward way, yet none of them by itself will avail to win the virgin's crown. The gospel teaches us this in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins; the former of whom enter into the bridechamber of the bridegroom, while the latter are shut out from it because not having the oil of good works³³ they allow their lamps to fail. [Matt. 25:1-12] This subject of fasting opens up a wide field in which I have often wandered myself,³⁴ and many writers have devoted treatises to the subject. I must refer you to these if you wish to learn the advantages of self-restraint and on the other hand the evils of over-feeding.

12. Follow the example of your Spouse: [Luke 2:51] be subject to your grandmother and to your mother. Never look upon a man, especially upon a young man, except in their company. Never know a man whom they do not know. It is a maxim of the world that the only sure friendship is one based on an identity of likes and dislikes. [Sall. Cat. 1:20] You have been taught by their example as well as instructed by the holy life of your home to aspire to virginity, to recognize the commandments of Christ, to know what is expedient for you and what course you ought to choose. But do not regard what is your own as absolutely your own. Remember that part of it belongs to those who have communicated their chastity to you and from whose honourable marriages and beds undefiled [Heb. 13:4] you have sprung up like a choice flower. For you are destined to produce perfect fruit if only you will humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, [1 Pet. 5:6] always remembering that it is written: "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." [1 Pet. 5:5] Now where there is grace, this is not given in return for works but is the free gift of the giver, so that the apostles' words are fulfilled: "it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." [Rom. 9:16] And yet it is ours to will and not to will; and all the while the very liberty that is ours is only ours by the mercy of God.

13. Again in selecting for yourself eunuchs and maids and servingmen look rather to their characters than to their good looks; for, whatever their age or sex, and even if mutilation ensures in them a compulsory chastity, you must take account of their dispositions, for these cannot be operated on save by the fear of Christ. When you are present buffoonery and loose talk must find no place. You should never hear an improper word; if you do hear one, you must not be carried away by it. Abandoned men often make use of a single light expression to try the gates of chastity.³⁵ Leave to worldlings the privileges of laughing and being laughed at. One who is in your position ought to be serious. Cato the Censor, in old time a leading man in your city, (the same who in his last days turned his attention to Greek literature without either blushing for himself as censor or despairing of success on account of his age) is said by Lucilius³⁶ to have laughed only once in his life, and the same remark is made about Marcus Crassus. These men may have affected this austere mien to gain for themselves reputation and notoriety. For so long as we dwell in the tabernacle of this body and are enveloped with this fragile flesh, we can but restrain and regulate our affections and passions; we cannot wholly extirpate them. Knowing this the psalmist says: "be ye angry and sin not;" [Ps. 4:4, LXX] which the apostle explains thus: "let not the sun go down upon your wrath." [Eph. 4:26] For, if to be angry is human, to put an end to one's anger is Christian.

14. I think it unnecessary to warn you against covetousness since it is the way of your family both to have riches and to despise them. The apostle too tells us that covetousness is idolatry, [Eph. 5:5] and to one who asked the Lord the question: "Good Master what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" He thus replied: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." [Matt. 19:16, Matt. 19:21] Such is the climax of complete and apostolic virtue-to sell all that one has and to distribute to the poor, [Luke 18:22. Cf. Letter CXIX] and thus freed from all earthly encumbrance to fly up to the heavenly realms with Christ. To us, or I should rather say to you, a careful stewardship is entrusted, although in such matters full freedom of choice is left to every individual, whether old or young. Christ's words are "if thou wilt be perfect." I do not compel you, He seems to say, I do not command you, but I set the palm before you, I shew you the prize; it is for you to choose whether you will enter the arena and win the crown. Let us consider how wisely Wisdom has spoken. "Sell that thou hast." To whom is the command given? Why, to him to whom it was said, "if thou wilt be perfect." Sell not a part of thy goods but "all that thou hast." And when you have sold them, what then? "Give to the poor." Not to the rich, not to your kinsfolk, not to minister to self indulgence; but to relieve need. It does not matter whether a man is a priest or a relation or a connexion, you must think of nothing but his poverty. Let your praises come from the stomachs of the hungry and not from the rich banquets of the overfed. We read in the Acts of the Apostles how, while the blood of the Lord was still warm and believers were in the fervour of their first faith, they all sold their possessions and laid the price of them at the apostles' feet (to shew that money ought to be trampled underfoot) and "distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." [Acts 4:34, Acts 4:35] But Ananias and Sapphira proved timid stewards, and what is more, deceitful ones; therefore they brought on themselves condemnation. For having made a vow they offered their money to God as if it were their own and not His to whom they had vowed it; and keeping back for their own use a part of that which belonged to another, through fear of famine which true faith never fears, they drew down on themselves suddenly the avenging stroke, which was meant not in cruelty towards them but as a warning to others. [Acts 5:1-10] In fact the apostle Peter by no

means called down death upon them as Porphyry³⁷ foolishly says. He merely announced God's judgment by the spirit of prophecy, that the doom of two persons might be a lesson to many. From the time of your dedication to perpetual virginity your property is yours no longer; or rather is now first truly yours because it has come to be Christ's. Yet while your grandmother and mother are living you must deal with it according to their wishes. If, however, they die and rest in the sleep of the saints (and I know that they desire that you should survive them); when your years are riper, and your will steadier, and your resolution stronger, you will do with your money what seems best to you, or rather what the Lord shall command, knowing as you will that hereafter you will have nothing save that which you have here spent on good works. Others may build churches, may adorn their walls when built with marbles, may procure massive columns, may deck the unconscious capitals with gold and precious ornaments, may cover church doors with silver and adorn the altars with gold and gems. I do not blame those who do these things; I do not repudiate them.³⁸ Everyone must follow his own judgment. And it is better to spend one's money thus than to hoard it up and brood over it. However your duty is of a different kind. It is yours to clothe Christ in the poor, to visit Him in the sick, to feed Him in the hungry, to shelter Him in the homeless, particularly such as are of the household of faith, [Gal. 6:10] to support communities of virgins, to take care of God's servants, of those who are poor in spirit, who serve the same Lord as you day and night, who while they are on earth live the angelic life and speak only of the praises of God. Having food and raiment they rejoice and count themselves rich. They seek for nothing more, contented if only they can persevere in their design. For as soon as they begin to seek more they are shewn to be undeserving even of those things that are needful. The preceding counsels have been addressed to a virgin who is wealthy and a lady of rank.

15. But what I am now going to say will be addressed to the virgin alone. I shall take into consideration, that is, not your circumstances but yourself. In addition to the rule of psalmody and prayer which you must always observe at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, at evening, at midnight, and at dawn,³⁹ you should determine how much time you will bind yourself to give to the learning and reading of scripture, aiming to please and instruct the soul rather than to lay a burthen upon it. When you have spent your allotted time in these studies, often kneeling down to pray as care for your soul will impel you to do; have some wool always at hand, shape the threads into yarn with your thumb, attach them to the shuttle, and then throw this to weave a web, or roll up the yarn which others have spun or lay it out for the weavers. Examine their work when it is done, find fault with its defects, and arrange how much they are to do. If you busy yourself with these numerous occupations, you will never find your days long; however late the summer sun may be in setting, a day will always seem too short on which something remains undone. By observing such rules as these you will save yourself and others, you will set a good example as a mistress, and you will place to your credit the chastity of many. For the scripture says: "the soul of every idler is filled with desires." [Prov. 13:4, LXX. comp. Letter CXXV] Nor may you excuse yourself from toil on the plea that God's bounty has left you in want of nothing. No; you must labour with the rest, that being always busy you may think only of the service of the Lord. I shall speak quite plainly. Even supposing that you give all your property to the poor, Christ will value nothing more highly than what you have wrought with your own hands. You may work for yourself or to set an example to your virgins; or you may make presents to your mother and grandmother to draw from them larger sums for the relief of the poor.

16. I have all but passed over the most important point of all. While you were still quite small, bishop Anastasius of holy and blessed memory ruled the Roman church.⁴⁰ In his days a terrible storm of heresy⁴¹ came from the East and strove first to corrupt and then to undermine that simple faith which an apostle has praised. [Rom. 1:8] However the bishop, rich in poverty and as careful of his flock as an apostle, at once smote the noxious thing on the head, and stayed the hydra's hissing. Now I have reason to fear-in fact a report has reached me to this effect-that the poisonous germs of this heresy still live and sprout in the minds of some to this day. I think, therefore, that I ought to warn you, in all kindness and affection, to hold fast the faith of the saintly Innocent, the spiritual son of Anastasius and his successor in the apostolic see; and not to receive any foreign doctrine, however wise and discerning you may take yourself to be. Men of this type whisper in corners and pretend to inquire into the justice of God. Why, they ask, was a particular soul born in a particular province? What is the reason that some are born of Christian parents, others among wild beasts and savage tribes who have no knowledge of God? Wherever they can strike the simple with their scorpion-sting and form an ulcer fitted to their purpose, there they diffuse their venom. "Is it for nothing, think you,"-thus they argue-"that a little child scarcely able to recognize its mother by a laugh or a look of joy, [Virg. Ecl. 4:60] which has done nothing either good or evil, is seized by a devil or overwhelmed with jaundice or doomed to bear afflictions which godless men escape, while God's servants have to bear them?" Now if God's judgments, they say, are "true and righteous altogether," [Ps. 19:9] and if "there is no unrighteousness in Him," [Ps. 92:15] we are compelled by reason to believe that our souls have pre-existed in heaven, that they are condemned to and, if I may so say, buried in human bodies because of some ancient sins, and that we are punished in this valley of weeping [Ps. 84:6, R.V] for old misdeeds. This according to them is the prophet's reason for saying: "Before I was afflicted I went astray," [Ps. 119:67] and again, "Bring my soul out of prison." [Ps. 142:7] They explain in the same way the question of the disciples in the gospel: "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" [John 9:2] and other similar passages. This godless and wicked teaching was formerly ripe in Egypt and the East; and now it lurks secretly like a viper in its hole among many persons in those parts, defiling the purity of the faith and gradually creeping on like an inherited disease till it assails a large number. But I am sure that if you hear it you will not accept it. For you have preceptresses under God whose faith is a rule of sound doctrine. You will understand what I mean, for God will give you understanding in all things. You must not ask me on the spot to give you a refutation of this dreadful heresy and of others worse still; for were I to do so I should "criticize where I ought to forbid,"⁴² and my present object is not to refute heretics but to instruct a virgin. However, I have defeated their wiles and counterworked their efforts to undermine the truth in a treatise⁴³ which by God's help I have written; and if you desire to have this, I shall send it to you promptly and with pleasure. I say, if you desire to have it, for as the proverb says, wares proffered unasked are little esteemed, and a plentiful supply brings down prices, which are always highest where scarcity prevails.

17. Men often discuss the comparative merits of life in solitude and life in a community; and the preference is usually given to the first over the second. Still even for men there is always the risk that, being withdrawn from the society of their fellows, they may become exposed to unclean and godless imaginations, and in the fulness of their arrogance and disdain may look down upon everyone but themselves, and may arm their tongues to detract from the clergy or from those who like themselves are bound by the vows of a solitary life.⁴⁴ Of such it is well said by the psalmist,

"as for the children of men their teeth are spears and arrows and their tongue a sharp sword." [Ps. 57:4] Now if all this is true of men, how much more does it apply to women whose fickle and vacillating minds, if left to their own devices, soon degenerate. I am myself acquainted with anchorites of both sexes who by excessive fasting have so impaired their faculties that they do not know what to do or where to turn, when to speak or when to be silent. Most frequently those who have been so affected have lived in solitary cells, cold and damp. Moreover if persons untrained in secular learning read the works of able church writers, they only acquire from them a wordy fluency and not, as they might do, a fuller knowledge of the scriptures. The old saying is found true of them, although they have not the wit to speak, they cannot remain silent. They teach to others the scriptures that they do not understand themselves; and if they are fortunate enough to convince them, they take upon themselves airs as men of learning.⁴⁵ In fact, they set up as instructors of the ignorant before they have gone to school themselves. It is a good thing therefore to defer to one's betters, to obey those set over one, to learn not only from the scriptures but from the example of others how one ought to order one's life, and not to follow that worst of teachers, one's own self-confidence. Of women who are thus presumptuous the apostle says that they "are carried about with every wind of doctrine, [Eph. 4:14] ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." [2 Tim. 3:7]

18. Avoid the company of married women who are devoted to their husbands and to the world, that your mind may not become unsettled by hearing what a husband says to his wife, or a wife to her husband. Such conversations are filled with deadly venom. To express his condemnation of them the apostle has taken a verse of a profane writer and has pressed it into the service of the church. It may be literally rendered at the expense of the metre: "evil communications corrupt good manners."⁴⁶ No; you should choose for your companions staid and serious women, particularly widows and virgins, persons of approved conversation, of few words, and of a holy modesty. Shun gay and thoughtless girls, who deck their heads and wear their hair in fringes, who use cosmetics to improve their skins and affect tight sleeves, dresses without a crease, and dainty buskins; and by pretending to be virgins more easily sell themselves into destruction. Moreover, the character and tastes of a mistress are often inferred from the behaviour of her attendants. Regard as fair and lovable and a fitting companion one who is unconscious of her good looks and careless of her appearance; who does not expose her breast out of doors or throw back her cloak to reveal her neck; who veils all of her face except her eyes, and only uses these to find her way.

19. I hesitate about what I am going to say but, as often happens, whether I like it or not, it must be said; not that I have reason to fear anything of the kind in your case, for probably you know nothing of such things and have never even heard of them, but that in advising you I may warn others. A virgin should avoid as so many plagues and banes of chastity all ringletted youths who curl their hair and scent themselves with musk; to whom may well be applied the words of Petronius Arbitr, "too much perfume makes an ill perfume."⁴⁷ I need not speak of those who by their pertinacious visits to virgins bring discredit both on themselves and on these; for, even if nothing wrong is done by them, no wrong can be imagined greater than to find oneself exposed to the calumnies and attacks of the heathen. I do not here speak of all, but only of those whom the church itself rebukes, whom sometimes it expels, and against whom the censure of bishops and presbyters is not seldom directed. For, as it is, it is almost more dangerous for giddy girls to shew themselves in the abodes of religion than even to walk abroad. Virgins who live in communities and of whom large

numbers are assembled together, should never go out by themselves or unaccompanied by their mother.⁴⁸ A hawk often singles out one of a flight of doves, pounces on it and tears it open till it is gorged with its flesh and blood. Sick sheep stray from the flock and fall into the jaws of wolves. I know some saintly virgins who on holy days keep at home to avoid the crowds and refuse to go out when they must either take a strong escort, or altogether avoid all public places.

It is about thirty years since I published a treatise on the preservation of virginity,⁴⁹ in which I felt constrained to oppose certain vices and to lay bare the wiles of the devil for the instruction of the virgin to whom it was addressed. My language then gave offence to a great many, for everyone applied what I said to himself and instead of welcoming my admonitions turned away from me as an accuser of his deeds. Was it any use, do you ask, thus to arm a host of remonstrants and to show by my complaints the wounds which my conscience received? Yes, I answer, for, while they have passed away, my book still remains. I have also written short exhortations to several virgins and widows, and in these smaller works I have gathered together all that there is to be said on the subject. So that I am reduced to the alternative of repeating exhortations which seem superfluous or of omitting them to the serious injury of this treatise. The blessed Cyprian has left a noble work on virginity;⁵⁰ and many other writers, both Greek and Latin, have done the same. Indeed the virginal life has been praised both with tongue and pen among all nations and particularly among the churches. Most, however, of those who have written on the subject have addressed themselves to such as have not yet chosen virginity, and who need help to enable them to choose aright. But I and those to whom I write have made our choice; and our one object is to remain constant to it. Therefore, as our way lies among scorpions and adders, among snares and banes, let us go forward staff in hand, our loins girded and our feet shod; [Exod. 12:11] that so we may come to the sweet waters of the true Jordan, and enter the land of promise and go up to the house of God. Then shall we sing with the prophet: "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house and the place where thine honour dwelleth;" [Ps. 26:8] and again: "one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." [Ps. 27:4]

Happy is the soul, happy is the virgin in whose heart there is room for no other love than the love of Christ. For in Himself He is wisdom and chastity, patience and justice and every other virtue. Happy too is she who can recall a man's face without the least sigh of regret, and who has no desire to set eyes on one whom, after she has seen him, she may find herself unwilling to give up. Some there are, however, who by their ill-behaviour bring discredit on the holy profession of virginity and upon the glory of the heavenly and angelic company who have made it. These must be frankly told either to marry if they cannot contain, or to contain if they will not marry. It is also a matter for laughter or rather for tears, that when mistresses walk abroad they are preceded by maids better dressed than themselves; indeed so usual has this become that, if of two women you see one less neat than the other, you take her for the mistress as a matter of course. And yet these maids are professed virgins. Again not a few virgins choose sequestered dwellings where they will not be under the eyes of others, in order that they may live more freely than they otherwise could do. They take baths, do what they please, and try as much as they can to escape notice. We see these things and yet we put up with them; in fact, if we catch sight of the glitter of gold, we are ready to account of them as good works.

20. I end as I began, not content to have given you but a single warning. Love the holy scriptures, and wisdom will love you. Love wisdom, and it will keep you safe. Honour wisdom, and it will

embrace you round about.⁵¹ Let the jewels on your breast and in your ears be the gems of wisdom. Let your tongue know no theme but Christ, let no sound pass your lips that is not holy, and let your words always reproduce that sweetness of which your grandmother and your mother set you the example. Imitate them, for they are models of virtue.

1:

Cicero in his Dialogue on the Republic. Cf. Or. xxx

2: Pontifex 3: i.e. After receiving the veil 4: In the year 395 a.d 5: Which took place before the fall of Rome in 410 a.d 6: Matt. 11:7-14. Jerome here borrows a phrase from Cyprian, de Op. et El. xv

7: A virgin 13 years old beheaded at Rome under Diocletian after vain efforts first made to overcome her faith by subjecting her to assault and outrage 8: See §7 for the cruelties of the Count Heraclian 9: Quam habitura pronubam

10: Wedding songs so called from the place of their origin, Fescennia in Etruria. See Catullus LXI. for the several customs here mentioned 11: Virg., A. 2:774 12: Over Hannibal, b.c. 216. Jerome is quoting from Cicero, Brutus, III 13: The reference is to the siege of the Capitol by Brennus and the Gauls, b.c. 390 14: See note on Letter LXXIX 15: i.e. Juliana and Proba, the mother and grandmother of Demetrias 16: i.e. Olybrius, the father of Demetrias

17: Job 1. 16 18: Heraclian, Count of Africa

19: Honorius 20: i.e. Pluto, king of the lower world 21: Sabinus, the son-in-law of Heraclian 22: Virg., A. 10:79 23: Jerome here apostrophizes Heraclian 24: Alaric the Goth 25: Reading *dedignatus* for *dignatus* 26: Virg., A. 3:435 27: i.e. The Indian Ocean 28: Eccles. 10:4. Jerome takes 'the ruler of' to be the devil 29: See Letter CXXII 30: Song of the Three Holy Children, 24 31: See Letter CVIII 32: Mithras 'agan quoted by Terence (*Andria*, 61) 33: See Jerome's commentary on the parable 34: See Letters XXII., LII., etc 35: Cf. Letter XXII

36:

The fragment of Lucilius (preserved by Cic. de Fin. V. 30) says nothing of Cato: possibly therefore the text is here corrupt. See for Cato Letter LII

37: A philosopher of the Neoplatonic school (fl. 232-300 a.d.). Of his books against Christianity only small fragments remain 38: But see Letter LII 39: See note on Letter XXII 40: Anastasius was pope from 398 to 402 a.d 41: That of the Origenists 42: A phrase borrowed from Cicero (p. Sext. Rosc.) 43: Apparently Letter CXXIV. concerning Origen's book on First Principles 44: Cf. Letter CXXV 45: Cf. Letters LIII. and LXVI 46: 1 Cor. 15:33; the words are quoted from a lost comedy of Menander 47: The words are not extant in Petronius but occur in Martial 2:12. 4 48: i.e. the head of the community 49: Letter XXII. to Eustochium 50: See Letter XXII. ante 51: Cf. Letter LII

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Letter 131. From Augustine. At the suggestion of Jerome, Marcellinus (for whom see Letter 126.) had consulted Augustine on the difficult question of the origin of the soul but had failed to get any definite opinion from this latter. Augustine now writes to Jerome confessing his inability to decide the question and asking for advice upon it. He begins by reciting-and justifying-his own belief that the soul is immortal and incorporeal and that its fall into sin is due not to God but to its own free choice. He then goes on to say that he is quite ready to accept creationism as a solution of the difficulty if Jerome will shew him how this theory is reconcilable with the church's condemnation of Pelagius and its assertion of the doctrine of original sin. The damnation of unbaptized infants is assumed throughout. The date of the letter is 415 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 166. A Treatise on the Origin of the Human Soul, Addressed to Jerome. 1. Unto our God, who has called us unto His kingdom and glory, [1 Thessalonians 2:12] I have prayed, and pray now, that what I write to you, holy brother Jerome, asking your opinion in regard to things of which I am ignorant, may by His good pleasure be profitable to us both. For although in addressing you I consult one much older than myself, nevertheless I also am becoming old; but I cannot think that it is at anytime of life too late to learn what we need to know, because, although it is more fitting that old men should be teachers than learners, it is nevertheless more fitting for them to learn than to continue ignorant of that which they should teach to others. I assure you that, amid the many disadvantages which I have to submit to in studying very difficult questions, there is none which grieves me more than the circumstance of separation from your Charity by a distance so great that I can scarcely send a letter to you, and scarcely receive one from you, even at intervals, not of days nor of months, but of several years; whereas my desire would be, if it were possible, to have you daily beside me, as one with whom I could converse on any theme. Nevertheless, although I have not been able to do all that I wished, I am not the less bound to do all that I can.

2. Behold, a religious young man has come to me, by name Orosius, who is in the bond of Catholic peace a brother, in point of age a son, and in honour a fellow presbyter — a man, of quick understanding, ready speech, and burning zeal, desiring to be in the Lord's house a vessel rendering useful service in refuting those false and pernicious doctrines, through which the souls of men in Spain have suffered much more grievous wounds than have been inflicted on their bodies by the sword of barbarians. For from the remote western coast of Spain he has come with eager haste to us, having been prompted to do this by the report that from me he could learn whatever he wished on the subjects on which he desired information. Nor has his coming been altogether in vain. In the first place, he has learned not to believe all that report affirmed of me: in the next place, I have taught him all that I could, and, as for the things in which I could not teach him, I have told him from whom he may learn them, and have exhorted him to go on to you. As he received this counsel or rather injunction of mine with pleasure, and with intention to comply with it, I asked him to visit us on his way home to his own country when he comes from you. On receiving his promise to this effect, I believed that the Lord had granted me an opportunity of writing to you regarding certain things which I wish through you to learn. For I was seeking some one whom I

might send to you, and it was not easy to fall in with one qualified both by trustworthiness in performing and by alacrity in undertaking the work, as well as by experience in travelling. Therefore, when I became acquainted with this young man, I could not doubt that he was exactly such a person as I was asking from the Lord.

3. Allow me, therefore, to bring before you a subject which I beseech you not to refuse to open up and discuss with me. Many are perplexed by questions concerning the soul, and I confess that I myself am of this number. I shall in this letter, in the first place, state explicitly the things regarding the soul which I most assuredly believe, and shall, in the next place, bring forward the things regarding which I am still desirous of explanation. The soul of man is in a sense proper to itself immortal. It is not absolutely immortal, as God is, of whom it is written that He "alone has immortality," [1 Timothy 6:16] for Holy Scripture makes mention of deaths to which the soul is liable — as in the saying, "Let the dead bury their dead;" [Matthew 8:22] but because when alienated from the life of God it so dies as not wholly to cease from living in its own nature, it is found to be from a certain cause mortal, yet so as to be not without reason called at the same time immortal. The soul is not a part of God. For if it were, it would be absolutely immutable and incorruptible, in which case it could neither go downward to be worse, nor go onward to be better; nor could it either begin to have anything in itself which it had not before, or cease to have anything which it had within the sphere of its own experience. But how different the actual facts of the case are is a point requiring no evidence from without, it is acknowledged by every one who consults his own consciousness. In vain, moreover, is it pleaded by those who affirm that the soul is a part of God, that the corruption and baseness which we see in the worst of men, and the weakness and blemishes which we see in all men, come to it not from the soul itself, but from the body; for what matters it whence the infirmity originates in that which, if it were indeed immutable, could not, from any quarter whatever, be made infirm? For that which is truly immutable and incorruptible is not liable to mutation or corruption by any influence whatever from without, else the invulnerability which the fable ascribed to the flesh of Achilles would be nothing peculiar to him, but the property of every man, so long as no accident befell him. That which is liable to be changed in any manner, by any cause, or in any part whatever, is therefore not by nature immutable; but it were impiety to think of God as otherwise than truly and supremely immutable: therefore the soul is not a part of God.

4. That the soul is immaterial is a fact of which I avow myself to be fully persuaded, although men of slow understanding are hard to be convinced that it is so. To secure myself, however, from either unnecessarily causing to others or unreasonably bringing upon myself a controversy about an expression, let me say that, since the thing itself is beyond question, it is needless to contend about mere terms. If matter be used as a term denoting everything which in any form has a separate existence, whether it be called an essence, or a substance, or by another name, the soul is material. Again, if you choose to apply the epithet immaterial only to that nature which is supremely immutable and is everywhere present in its entirety, the soul is material, for it is not at all endowed with such qualities. But if matter be used to designate nothing but that which, whether at rest or in motion, has some length, breadth, and height, so that with a greater part of itself it occupies a greater part of space, and with a smaller part a smaller space, and is in every part of it less than the whole, then the soul is not material. For it pervades the whole body which it animates, not by a local distribution of parts, but by a certain vital influence, being at the same

moment present in its entirety in all parts of the body, and not less in smaller parts and greater in larger parts, but here with more energy and there with less energy, it is in its entirety present both in the whole body and in every part of it. For even that which the mind perceives in only a part of the body is nevertheless not otherwise perceived than by the whole mind; for when any part of the living flesh is touched by a fine pointed instrument, although the place affected is not only not the whole body, but scarcely discernible in its surface, the contact does not escape the entire mind, and yet the contact is felt not over the whole body, but only at the one point where it takes place. How comes it, then, that what takes place in only a part of the body is immediately known to the whole mind, unless the whole mind is present at that part, and at the same time not deserting all the other parts of the body in order to be present in its entirety at this one? For all the other parts of the body in which no such contact takes place are still living by the soul being present with them. And if a similar contact takes place in the other parts, and the contact occur in both parts simultaneously, it would in both cases alike be known at the same moment, to the whole mind. Now this presence of the mind in all parts of the body at the same moment, so that in every part of the body the whole mind is at the same moment present, would be impossible if it were distributed over these parts in the same way as we see matter distributed in space, occupying less space with a smaller portion of itself, and greater space with a greater portion. If, therefore, mind is to be called material, it is not material in the same sense as earth, water, air, and ether are material. For all things composed of these elements are larger in larger places, or smaller in smaller places, and none of them is in its entirety present at any part of itself, but the dimensions of the material substances are according to the dimensions of the space occupied. Whence it is perceived that the soul, whether it be termed material or immaterial, has a certain nature of its own, created from a substance superior to the elements of this world — a substance which cannot be truly conceived of by any representation of the material images perceived by the bodily senses, but which is apprehended by the understanding and discovered to our consciousness by its living energy. These things I am stating, not with the view of teaching you what you already know, but in order that I may declare explicitly what I hold as indisputably certain concerning the soul, lest any one should think, when I come to state the questions to which I desire answers, that I hold none of the doctrines which we have learned from science or from revelation concerning the soul.

5. I am, moreover, fully persuaded that the soul has fallen into sin, not through the fault of God, nor through any necessity either in the divine nature or in its own, but by its own free will; and that it can be delivered from the body of this death neither by the strength of its own will, as if that were in itself sufficient to achieve this, nor by the death of the body itself, but only by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; [Romans 7:24-25] and that there is not one soul in the human family to whose salvation the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is not absolutely necessary. Every soul, moreover, which may at any age whatsoever depart from this life without the grace of the Mediator and the sacrament of this grace, departs to future punishment, and shall receive again its own body at the last judgment as a partner in punishment. But if the soul after its natural generation, which was derived from Adam, be regenerated in Christ, it belongs to His fellowship, and shall not only have rest after the death of the body, but also receive again its own body as a partner in glory. These are truths concerning the soul which I hold most firmly.

6. Permit me now, therefore, to bring before you the question which I desire to have solved, and do not reject me; so may He not reject you who condescended to be rejected for our sakes!

I ask where can the soul, even of an infant snatched away by death, have contracted the guilt which, unless the grace of Christ has come to the rescue by that sacrament of baptism which is administered even to infants, involves it in condemnation? I know you are not one of those who have begun of late to utter certain new and absurd opinions, alleging that there is no guilt derived from Adam which is removed by baptism in the case of infants. If I knew that you held this view, or, rather, if I did not know that you reject it, I would certainly neither address this question to you, nor think that it ought to be put to you at all. Since, however, we hold on this subject the opinion consonant with the immoveable Catholic faith, which you have yourself expressed when, refuting the absurd sayings of Jovinian, you have quoted this sentence from the book of Job: "In your sight, no one is clean, not even the infant, whose time of life on earth is a single day," adding, "for we are held guilty in the similitude of Adam's transgression," — an opinion which your book on Jonah's prophecy declares in a notable and lucid manner, where you affirm that the little children of Nineveh were justly compelled to fast along with the people, because merely of their original sin, — it is not unsuitable that I should address to you the question — where has the soul contracted the guilt from which, even at that age, it must be delivered by the sacrament of Christian grace?

7. Some years ago, when I wrote certain books concerning Free Will, which have gone forth into the hands of many, and are now in the possession of very many readers, after referring to these four opinions as to the manner of the soul's incarnation — (1) that all other souls are derived from the one which was given to the first man; (2) that for each individual a new soul is made; (3) that souls already in existence somewhere are sent by divine act into the bodies; or (4) glide into them of their own accord, I thought that it was necessary to treat them in such a way that, whichever of them might be true, the decision should not hinder the object which I had in view when contending with all my might against those who attempt to lay upon God the blame of a nature endowed with its own principle of evil, namely, the Manichæans; for at that time I had not heard of the Priscillianists, who utter blasphemies not very dissimilar to these. As to the fifth opinion, namely, that the soul is a part of God — an opinion which, in order to omit none, you have mentioned along with the rest in your letter to Marcellinus (a man of pious memory and very dear to us in the grace of Christ), who had consulted you on this question, — I did not add it to the others for two reasons, first — because, in examining this opinion, we discuss not the incarnation of the soul, but its nature; secondly, because this is the view held by those against whom I was arguing, and the main design of my argument was to prove that the blameless and inviolable nature of the Creator has nothing to do with the faults and blemishes of the creature, while they, on their part, maintained that the substance of the good God itself is, in so far as it is led captive, corrupted and oppressed and brought under a necessity of sinning by the substance of evil, to which they ascribe a proper dominion and principalities. Leaving, therefore, out of the question this heretical error, I desire to know which of the other four opinions we ought to choose. For whichever of them may justly claim our preference, far be it from us to assail this article of faith, about which we have no uncertainty, that every soul, even the soul of an infant, requires to be delivered from the binding guilt of sin, and that there is no deliverance except through Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

8. To avoid prolixity, therefore, let me refer to the opinion which you, I believe, entertain, viz. that God even now makes each soul for each individual at the time of birth. To meet the objection to

this view which might be taken from the fact that God finished the whole work of creation on the sixth day and rested on the seventh day, you quote the testimony of the words in the gospel, "My Father works hitherto, and I work." [John 5:17] This you have written in your letter to Marcellinus, in which letter, moreover, you have most kindly condescended to mention my name, saying that he had me here in Africa, who could more easily explain to him the opinion held by you. But had I been able to do this, he would not have applied for instruction to you, who were so remote from him, though perhaps he did not write from Africa to you. For I know not when he wrote it; I only know that he knew well my hesitation to embrace any definite view on this subject, for which reason he preferred to write to you without consulting me. Yet, even if he had consulted me, I would rather have encouraged him to write to you, and would have expressed my gratitude for the benefit which might have been conferred on us all, had you not preferred to send a brief note, instead of a full reply, doing this, I suppose, to save yourself from unnecessary expenditure of effort in a place where I, whom you supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with the subject of his inquiries, was at hand. Behold, I am willing that the opinion which you hold should be also mine; but I assure you that as yet I have not embraced it.

9. You have sent to me scholars, to whom you wish me to impart what I have not yet learned myself. Teach me, therefore, what I am to teach them; for many urge me vehemently to be a teacher on this subject, and to them I confess that of this, as well as of many other things, I am ignorant, and perhaps, though they maintain a respectful demeanour in my presence, they say among themselves: "Are you a master in Israel, and know not these things?" [John 3:10] a rebuke which the Lord gave to one who belonged to the class of men who delighted in being called Rabbi; which was also the reason of his coming by night to the true Teacher, because perchance he, who had been accustomed to teach, blushed to take the learner's place. But, for my own part, it gives me much more pleasure to hear instruction from another, than to be myself listened to as a teacher. For I remember what He said to those whom, above all men, He had chosen: "But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ." [Matthew 23:8] Nor was it any other teacher who taught Moses by Jethro, [Exodus 18:14-25] Cornelius by Peter the earlier apostle, [Acts 10:25-48] and Peter himself by Paul the later apostle; [Galatians 2:11-21] for by whomsoever truth is spoken, it is spoken by the gift of Him who is the Truth. What if the reason of our still being ignorant of these things, and of our having failed to discover them, even after praying, reading, thinking, and reasoning, be this: that full proof may be made not only of the love with which we give instruction to the ignorant, but also of the humility with which we receive instruction from the learned?

10. Teach me, therefore, I beseech you, what I may teach to others; teach me what I ought to hold as my own opinion; and tell me this: if souls are from day to day made for each individual separately at birth, where, in the case of infant children, is sin committed by these souls, so that they require the remission of sin in the sacrament of Christ, because of sinning in Adam from whom the sinful flesh has been derived? Or if they do not sin, how is it compatible with the justice of the Creator, that, because of their being united to mortal members derived from another, they are so brought under the bond of the sin of that other, that unless they be rescued by the Church, perdition overtakes them, although it is not in their own power to secure that they be rescued by the grace of baptism? Where, therefore, is the justice of the condemnation of so many thousands of souls, which in the deaths of infant children leave this world without the benefit of the Christian

sacrament, if being newly created they have, not through any preceding sin of their own, but by the will of the Creator, become severally united to the individual bodies to animate which they were created and bestowed by Him, who certainly knew that every one of them was destined, not through any fault of its own, to leave the body without receiving the baptism of Christ? Seeing, therefore, that we may not say concerning God either that He compels them to become sinners, or that He punishes innocent souls and seeing that, on the other hand, it is not lawful for us to deny that nothing else than perdition is the doom of the souls, even of little children, which have departed from the body without the sacrament of Christ, tell me, I implore you, where anything can be found to support the opinion that souls are not all derived from that one soul of the first man, but are each created separately for each individual, as Adam's soul was made for him.

11. As for some other objections which are advanced against this opinion, I think that I could easily dispose of them. For example, some think that they urge a conclusive argument against this opinion when they ask, how God finished all His works on the sixth day and rested on the seventh day, [Genesis 2:2] if He is still creating new souls. If we meet them with the quotation from the gospel (given by you in the letter to Marcellinus already mentioned), "My Father works hitherto," they answer that He "works" in maintaining those natures which He has created, not in creating new natures; otherwise, this statement would contradict the words of Scripture in Genesis, where it is most plainly declared that God finished all His works. Moreover, the words of Scripture, that He rested, are unquestionably to be understood of His resting from creating new creatures, not from governing those which He had created; for at that time He made things which previously did not exist, and from making these He rested because He had finished all the creatures which before they existed He saw necessary to be created, so that thenceforward He did not create and make things which previously did not exist, but made and fashioned out of things already existing whatever He did make. Thus the statements, "He rested from His works," and, "He works hitherto," are both true, for the gospel could not contradict Genesis.

12. When, however, these things are brought forward by persons who advance them as conclusive against the opinion that God now creates new souls as He created the soul of the first man, and who hold either that He forms them from that one soul which existed before He rested from creation, or that He now sends them forth into bodies from some reservoir or storehouse of souls which He then created, it is easy to turn aside their argument by answering, that even in the six days God formed many things out of those natures which He had already created, as, for example, the birds and fishes were formed from the waters, and the trees, the grass, and the animals from the earth, and yet it is undeniable that He was then making things which did not exist before. For there existed previously no bird, no fish, no tree, no animal, and it is clearly understood that He rested from creating those things which previously were not, and were then created, that is to say, He ceased in this sense, that, after that, nothing was made by Him which did not already exist. But if, rejecting the opinions of all who believe either that God sends forth into men souls existing already in some incomprehensible reservoir, or that He makes souls emanate like drops of dew from Himself as particles of His own substance, or that He brings them forth from that one soul of the first man, or that He binds them in the fetters of the bodily members because of sins committed in a prior state of existence, if, I say, rejecting these, we affirm that for each individual He creates separately a new soul when he is born, we do not herein affirm that He makes anything which he had not already made. For He had already made man after His own image on the sixth

day; and this work of His is unquestionably to be understood with reference to the rational soul of man. The same work He still does, not in creating what did not exist, but in multiplying what already existed. Wherefore it is true, on the one hand, that He rested from creating things which previously did not exist, and equally true, on the other hand, that He continues still to work, not only in governing what He has made, but also in making (not anything which did not previously exist, but) a larger number of those creatures which He had already made. Wherefore, either by such an explanation, or by any other which may seem better, we escape from the objection advanced by those who would make the fact that God rested from His works a conclusive argument against our believing that new souls are still being daily created, not from the first soul, but in the same manner as it was made.

13. Again, as for another objection, stated in the question, "Wherefore does He create souls for those whom He knows to be destined to an early death?" we may reply, that by the death of the children the sins of the parents are either reproved or chastised. We may, moreover, with all propriety, leave these things to the disposal of the Lord of all, for we know that he appoints to the succession of events in time, and therefore to the births and deaths of living creatures as included in these, a course which is consummate in beauty and perfect in the arrangement of all its parts; whereas we are not capable of perceiving those things by the perception of which, if it were attainable, we should be soothed with an ineffable, tranquil joy. For not in vain has the prophet, taught by divine inspiration, declared concerning God, "He brings forth in measured harmonies the course of time." For which reason music, the science or capacity of correct harmony, has been given also by the kindness of God to mortals having reasonable souls, with a view to keep them in mind of this great truth. For if a man, when composing a song which is to suit a particular melody, knows how to distribute the length of time allowed to each word so as to make the song flow and pass on in most beautiful adaptation to the ever-changing notes of the melody, how much more shall God, whose wisdom is to be esteemed as infinitely transcending human arts, make infallible provision that not one of the spaces of time allotted to natures that are born and die — spaces which are like the words and syllables of the successive epochs of the course of time — shall have, in what we may call the sublime psalm of the vicissitudes of this world, a duration either more brief or more protracted than the foreknown and predetermined harmony requires! For when I may speak thus with reference even to the leaves of every tree, and the number of the hairs upon our heads, how much more may I say it regarding the birth and death of men, seeing that every man's life on earth continues for a time, which is neither longer nor shorter than God knows to be in harmony with the plan according to which He rules the universe.

14. As to the assertion that everything which has begun to exist in time is incapable of immortality, because all things which are born die, and all things which have grown decay through age, and the opinion which they affirm to follow necessarily from this, viz. that the soul of man must owe its immortality to its having been created before time began, this does not disturb my faith; for, passing over other examples, which conclusively dispose of this assertion, I need only refer to the body of Christ, which now "dies no more; death shall have no more dominion over it." [Romans 6:9]

15. Moreover, as to your remark in your book against Ruffinus, that some bring forward as against this opinion that souls are created for each individual separately at birth the objection that it seems worthy of God that He should give souls to the offspring of adulterers, and who accordingly

attempt to build on this a theory that souls may possibly be incarcerated, as it were, in such bodies, to suffer for the deeds of a life spent in some prior state of being, — this objection does not disturb me, as many things by which it may be answered occur to me when I consider it. The answer which you yourself have given, saying, that in the case of stolen wheat, there is no fault in the grain, but only in him who stole it, and that the earth is not under obligation to refuse to cherish the seed because the sower may have cast it in with a hand defiled by dishonesty, is a most felicitous illustration. But even before I had read it, I felt that to me the objection drawn from the offspring of adulterers caused no serious difficulty when I took a general view of the fact that God brings many good things to light, even out of our evils and our sins. Now, the creation of any living creature compels every one who considers it with piety and wisdom to give to the Creator praise which words cannot express; and if this praise is called forth by the creation of any living creature whatsoever, how much more is it called forth by the creation of a man! If, therefore, the cause of any act of creative power be sought for, no shorter or better reply can be given than that every creature of God is good. And [so far from such an act being unworthy of God] what is more worthy of Him than that He, being good, should make those good things which, no one else than God alone can make?

16. These things, and others which I can advance, I am accustomed to state, as well as I can, against those who attempt to overthrow by such objections the opinion that souls are made for each individual, as the first man's soul was made for him. But when we come to the penal sufferings of infants, I am embarrassed, believe me, by great difficulties, and am wholly at a loss to find an answer by which they are solved; and I speak here not only of those punishments in the life to come, which are involved in that perdition to which they must be drawn down if they depart from the body without the sacrament of Christian grace, but also of the sufferings which are to our sorrow endured by them before our eyes in this present life, and which are so various, that time rather than examples would fail me if I were to attempt to enumerate them. They are liable to wasting disease, to racking pain, to the agonies of thirst and hunger, to feebleness of limbs, to privation of bodily senses, and to vexing assaults of unclean spirits. Surely it is incumbent on us to show how it is compatible with justice that infants suffer all these things without any evil of their own as the procuring cause. For it would be impious to say, either that these things take place without God's knowledge, or that He cannot resist those who cause them, or that He unrighteously does these things, or permits them to be done. We are warranted in saying that irrational animals are given by God to serve creatures possessing a higher nature, even though they be wicked, as we see most plainly in the gospel that the swine of the Gadarenes were given to the legion of devils at their request; but could we ever be warranted in saying this of men? Certainly not. Man is, indeed, an animal, but an animal endowed with reason, though mortal. In his members dwells a reasonable soul, which in these severe afflictions is enduring a penalty. Now God is good, God is just, God is omnipotent— none but a madman would doubt that he is so; let the great sufferings, therefore, which infant children experience be accounted for by some reason compatible with justice. When older people suffer such trials, we are accustomed, certainly, to say, either that their worth is being proved, as in Job's case, or that their wickedness is being punished, as in Herod's; and from some examples, which it has pleased God to make perfectly clear, men are enabled to conjecture the nature of others which are more obscure; but this is in regard to persons of mature age. Tell me, therefore, what we must answer in regard to infant children; is it true that, although they suffer so great punishments, there are no sins in them deserving to be punished? For, of

course, there is not in them at that age any righteousness requiring to be put to the proof.

17. What shall I say, moreover, as to the [difficulty which besets the theory of the creation of each soul separately at the birth of the individual in connection with the] diversity of talent in different souls, and especially the absolute privation of reason in some? This is, indeed, not apparent in the first stages of infancy, but being developed continuously from the beginning of life, it becomes manifest in children, of whom some are so slow and defective in memory that they cannot learn even the letters of the alphabet, and some (commonly called idiots) so imbecile that they differ very little from the beasts of the field. Perhaps I am told, in answer to this, that the bodies are the cause of these imperfections. But surely the opinion which we wish to see vindicated from objection does not require us to affirm that the soul chose for itself the body which so impairs it, and, being deceived in the choice, committed a blunder; or that the soul, when it was compelled, as a necessary consequence of being born, to enter into some body, was hindered from finding another by crowds of souls occupying the other bodies before it came, so that, like a man who takes whatever seat may remain vacant for him in a theatre, the soul was guided in taking possession of the imperfect body not by its choice, but by its circumstances. We, of course, cannot say and ought not to believe such things. Tell us, therefore, what we ought to believe and to say in order to vindicate from this difficulty the theory that for each individual body a new soul is specially created.

18. In my books on Free Will, already referred to, I have said something, not in regard to the variety of capacities in different souls, but, at least, in regard to the pains which infant children suffer in this life. The nature of the opinion which I there expressed, and the reason why it is insufficient for the purposes of our present inquiry, I will now submit to you, and will put into this letter a copy of the passage in the third book to which I refer. It is as follows:— "In connection with the bodily sufferings experienced by the little children who, by reason of their tender age, have no sins— if the souls which animate them did not exist before they were born into the human family— a more grievous and, as it were, compassionate complaint is very commonly made in the remark, 'What evil have they done that they should suffer these things?' as if there could be a meritorious innocence in any one before the time at which it is possible for him to do anything wrong! Moreover, if God accomplishes, in any measure, the correction of the parents when they are chastised by the sufferings or by the death of the children that are dear to them, is there any reason why these things should not take place, seeing that, after they are passed, they will be, to those who experienced them, as if they had never been, while the persons on whose account they were inflicted will either become better, being moved by the rod of temporal afflictions to choose a better mode of life, or be left without excuse under the punishment awarded at the coming judgment, if, notwithstanding the sorrows of this life, they have refused to turn their desires towards eternal life? Moreover, who knows what may be given to the little children by means of whose sufferings the parents have their obdurate hearts subdued, or their faith exercised, or their compassion proved? Who knows what good recompense God may, in the secret of his judgments, reserve for these little ones? For although they have done no righteous action, nevertheless, being free from any transgression of their own, they have suffered these trials. It is certainly not without reason that the Church exalts to the honourable rank of martyrs those children who were slain when Herod sought our Lord Jesus Christ to put Him to death."

19. These things I wrote at that time when I was endeavouring to defend the opinion which is now under discussion. For, as I mentioned shortly before, I was labouring to prove that whichever of these four opinions regarding the soul's incarnation may be found true, the substance of the Creator is absolutely free from blame, and is completely removed from all share in our sins. And, therefore, whichever of these opinions might come to be established or demolished by the truth, this had no bearing on the object aimed at in the work which I was then attempting, seeing that whichever opinion might win the victory over all the rest, after they had been examined in a more thorough discussion, this would take place without causing me any disquietude, because my object then was to prove that, even admitting all these opinions, the doctrine maintained by me remained unshaken. But now my object is, by the force of sound reasoning, to select, if possible, one opinion out of the four; and, therefore, when I carefully consider the words now quoted from that book, I do not see that the arguments there used in defending the opinion which we are now discussing are valid and conclusive.

20. For what may be called the chief prop of my defense is in the sentence, "Moreover, who knows what may be given to the little children, by means of whose sufferings the parents have their obdurate hearts subdued, or their faith exercised, or their compassion proved? Who knows what good recompense God may, in the secret of His judgments, reserve for these little ones?" I see that this is not an unwarranted conjecture in the case of infants who, in any way, suffer (though they know it not) for the sake of Christ and in the cause of true religion, and of infants who have already been made partakers of the sacrament of Christ; because, apart from union to the one Mediator, they cannot be delivered from condemnation, and so put in a position in which it is even possible that a recompense could be made to them for the evils which, in diverse afflictions, they have endured in this world. But since the question cannot be fully solved, unless the answer include also the case of those who, without having received the sacrament of Christian fellowship, die in infancy after enduring the most painful sufferings, what recompense can be conceived of in their case, seeing that, besides all that they suffer in this life, perdition awaits them in the life to come? As to the baptism of infants, I have, in the same book, given an answer, not, indeed, fully, but so far as seemed necessary for the work which then occupied me, proving that it profits children, even though they do not know what it is, and have, as yet, no faith of their own; but on the subject of the perdition of those infants who depart from this life without baptism, I did not think it necessary to say anything then, because the question under discussion was different from that with which we are now engaged.

21. If, however, we pass over and make no account of those sufferings which are of brief continuance, and which, when endured, are not to be repeated, we certainly cannot, in like manner, make no account of the fact that "by one man death came, and by one man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." [1 Corinthians 15:21-22] For, according to this apostolic, divine, and perspicuous declaration, it is sufficiently plain that no one goes to death otherwise than through Adam, and that no one goes to life eternal otherwise than through Christ. For this is the force of all in the two parts of the sentence; as all men, by their first, that is, their natural birth, belong to Adam, even so all men, whoever they be, who come to Christ come to the second, that is, the spiritual birth. For this reason, therefore, the word all is used in both clauses, because as all who die do not die otherwise than in Adam, so all who shall be made alive shall not be made alive otherwise than in Christ.

Wherefore whosoever tells us that any man can be made alive in the resurrection of the dead otherwise than in Christ, he is to be detested as a pestilent enemy to the common faith. Likewise, whosoever says that those children who depart out of this life without partaking of that sacrament shall be made alive in Christ, certainly contradicts the apostolic declaration, and condemns the universal Church, in which it is the practice to lose no time and run in haste to administer baptism to infant children, because it is believed, as an indubitable truth, that otherwise they cannot be made alive in Christ. Now he that is not made alive in Christ must necessarily remain under the condemnation, of which the apostle says, that "by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." [Romans 5:18] That infants are born under the guilt of this offense is believed by the whole Church. It is also a doctrine which you have most faithfully set forth, both in your treatise against Jovinian and your exposition of Jonah, as I mentioned above, and, if I am not mistaken, in other parts of your works which I have not read or have at present forgotten. I therefore ask, what is the ground of this condemnation of unbaptized infants? For if new souls are made for men, individually, at their birth, I do not see, on the one hand, that they could have any sin while yet in infancy, nor do I believe, on the other hand, that God condemns any soul which He sees to have no sin.

22. Are we perchance to say, in answer to this, that in the infant the body alone is the cause of sin; but that for each body a new soul is made, and that if this soul live according to the precepts of God, by the help of the grace of Christ, the reward of being made incorruptible may be secured for the body itself, when subdued and kept under the yoke; and that inasmuch as the soul of an infant cannot yet do this, unless it receive the sacrament of Christ, that which could not yet be obtained for the body by the holiness of the soul is obtained for it by the grace of this sacrament; but if the soul of an infant depart without the sacrament, it shall itself dwell in life eternal, from which it could not be separated, as it had no sin, while, however, the body which it occupied shall not rise again in Christ, because the sacrament had not been received before its death?

23. This opinion I have never heard or read anywhere. I have, however, certainly heard and believed the statement which led me to speak thus, namely, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life,"— the resurrection, namely, of which it is said that "by one man came the resurrection of the dead," and in which "all shall be made alive in Christ,"— "and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." [John 5:29] Now, what is to be understood regarding infants which, before they could do good or evil, have quitted the body without baptism? Nothing is said here concerning them. But if the bodies of these infants shall not rise again, because they have never done either good or evil, the bodies of the infants that have died after receiving the grace of baptism shall also have no resurrection, because they also were not in this life able to do good or evil. If, however, these are to rise among the saints, i.e. among those who have done good, among whom shall the others rise again but among those who have done evil— unless we are to believe that some human souls shall not receive, either in the resurrection of life, or in the resurrection of damnation, the bodies which they lost in death? This opinion, however, is condemned, even before it is formally refuted, by its absolute novelty; and besides this, who could bear to think that those who run with their infant children to have them baptized, are prompted to do so by a regard for their bodies, not for their souls? The blessed Cyprian, indeed, said, in order to correct those who thought that an infant should not be baptized before the eighth day, that it

was not the body but the soul which behooved to be saved from perdition — in which statement he was not inventing any new doctrine, but preserving the firmly established faith of the Church; and he, along with some of his colleagues in the episcopal office, held that a child may be properly baptized immediately after its birth.

24. Let every man, however, believe anything which commends itself to his own judgment, even though it run counter to some opinion of Cyprian, who may not have seen in the matter what should have been seen. But let no man believe anything which runs counter to the perfectly unambiguous apostolic declaration, that by the offense of one all are brought into condemnation, and that from this condemnation nothing sets men free but the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone life is given to all who are made alive. And let no man believe anything which runs counter to the firmly grounded practice of the Church, in which, if the sole reason for hastening the administration of baptism were to save the children, the dead as well as the living would be brought to be baptized.

25. These things being so, it is necessary still to investigate and to make known the reason why, if souls are created new for every individual at his birth, those who die in infancy without the sacrament of Christ are doomed to perdition; for that they are doomed to this if they so depart from the body is testified both by Holy Scripture and by the holy Church. Wherefore, as to that opinion of yours concerning the creation of new souls, if it does not contradict this firmly grounded article of faith, let it be mine also; but if it does, let it be no longer yours.

26. Let it not be said to me that we ought to receive as supporting this opinion the words of Scripture in Zechariah, "He forms the spirit of man within him," [Zechariah 12:1] and in the book of Psalms, "He forms their hearts severally." We must seek for the strongest and most indisputable proof, that we may not be compelled to believe that God is a judge who condemns any soul which has no fault. For to create signifies either as much or, probably, more than to form [ingere]; nevertheless it is written, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," and yet it cannot be supposed that a soul here expresses a desire to be made before it has begun to exist. Therefore, as it is a soul already existing which is created by being renewed in righteousness, so it is a soul already existing which is formed by the moulding power of doctrine. Nor is your opinion, which I would willingly make my own, supported by that sentence in Ecclesiastes, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." [Ecclesiastes 12:7] Nay, it rather favours those who think that all souls are derived from one; for they say that, as the dust returns to the earth as it was, and yet the body of which this is said returns not to the man from whom it was derived, but to the earth from which the first man was made, the spirit in like manner, though derived from the spirit of the first man, does not return to him but to the Lord, by whom it was given to our first parent. Since, however, the testimony of this passage in their favour is not so decisive as to make it appear altogether opposed to the opinion which I shall gladly see vindicated, I thought proper to submit these remarks on it to your judgment, to prevent you from endeavouring to deliver me from my perplexities by quoting passages such as these. For although no man's wishes can make that true which is not true, nevertheless, were this possible, I would wish that this opinion should be true, as I do wish that, if it is true, it should be most clearly and unanswerably vindicated by you.

27. The same difficulty attends those also who hold that souls already existing elsewhere, and prepared from the beginning of the works of God, are sent by Him into bodies. For to these persons also the same question may be put: If these souls, being without any fault, go obediently to the bodies to which they are sent, why are they subjected to punishment in the case of infants, if they come without being baptized to the end of this life? The same difficulty unquestionably attaches to both opinions. Those who affirm that each soul is, according to the deserts of its actions in an earlier state of being, united to the body allotted to it in this life, imagine that they escape more easily from this difficulty. For they think that to "die in Adam" means to suffer punishment in that flesh which is derived from Adam, from which condition of guilt the grace of Christ, they say, delivers the young as well as the old. So far, indeed, they teach what is right, and true, and excellent, when they say that the grace of Christ delivers the young as well as the old from the guilt of sins. But that souls sin in another earlier life, and that for their sins in that state of being they are cast down into bodies as prisons, I do not believe: I reject and protest against such an opinion. I do this, in the first place, because they affirm that this is accomplished by means of some incomprehensible revolutions, so that after I know not how many cycles the soul must return again to the same burden of corruptible flesh and to the endurance of punishment — than which opinion I do not know that anything more horrible could be conceived. In the next place, who is the righteous man gone from the earth about whom we should not (if what they say is true) feel afraid lest, sinning in Abraham's bosom, he should be cast down into the flames which tormented the rich man in the parable? [Luke 16:22-23] For why may the soul not sin after leaving the body, if it can sin before entering it? Finally, to have sinned in Adam (in regard to which the apostle says that in him all have sinned) is one thing, but it is a wholly different thing to have sinned, I know not where, outside of Adam, and then because of this to be thrust into Adam — that is, into the body, which is derived from Adam, as into a prison-house. As to the other opinion mentioned above, that all souls are derived from one, I will not begin to discuss it unless I am under necessity to do so; and my desire is, that if the opinion which we are now discussing is true, it may be so vindicated by you that there shall be no longer any necessity for examining the other.

28. Although, however, I desire and ask, and with fervent prayers wish and hope, that by you the Lord may remove my ignorance on this subject, if, after all, I am found unworthy to obtain this, I will beg the grace of patience from the Lord our God, in whom we have such faith, that even if there be some things which He does not open to us when we knock, we know it would be wrong to murmur in the least against Him. I remember what He said to the apostles themselves: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now." [John 16:12] Among these things, so far at least as I am concerned, let me still reckon this, and let me guard against being angry that I am deemed unworthy to possess this knowledge, lest by such anger I be all the more clearly proved to be unworthy. I am equally ignorant of many other things, yea, of more than I could name or even number; and of this I would be more patiently ignorant, were it not that I fear lest some one of these opinions, involving the contradiction of truth which we most assuredly believe, should insinuate itself into the minds of the unwary. Meanwhile, though I do not yet know which of these opinions is to be preferred, this one thing I profess as my deliberate conviction, that the opinion which is true does not conflict with that most firm and well grounded article in the faith of the Church of Christ, that infant children, even when they are newly born, can be delivered from perdition in no other way than through the grace of Christ's name, which He has given in His sacraments.

Letters - letter_132

Letter 132. From Augustine. In this letter Augustine deals with the statement of James 2:10 ("whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all") and explains it by saying that every breach of the law is a breach of love. He also takes occasion to criticise two doctrines of the schools then prevalent, (1) that all sins are equal and (2) that he who has one virtue has all and that all virtues are wanting to him who lacks one. The date of the letter is 415 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 167.

1. My brother Jerome, esteemed worthy to be honoured in Christ by me, when I wrote to you propounding this question concerning the human soul — if a new soul be now created for each individual at birth, whence do souls contract the bond of guilt which we assuredly believe to be removed by the sacrament of the grace of Christ, when administered even to new-born children?— as the letter on that subject grew to the size of a considerable volume, I was unwilling to impose the burden of any other question at that time; but there is a subject which has a much stronger claim on my attention, as it presses more seriously on my mind. I therefore ask you, and in God's name beseech you, to do something which will, I believe, be of great service to many, namely, to explain to me (or to direct me to any work in which you or any other commentator has already expounded) the sense in which we are to understand these words in the Epistle of James, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." [James 2:10] This subject is of such importance that I very greatly regret that I did not write to you in regard to it long ago.

2. For whereas in the question which I thought it necessary to submit to you concerning the soul, our inquiries were engaged with the investigation of a life wholly past and sunk out of sight in oblivion, in this question we study this present life, and how it must be spent if we would attain to eternal life. As an apt illustration of this remark let me quote an entertaining anecdote. A man had fallen into a well where the quantity of water was sufficient to break his fall and save him from death, but not deep enough to cover his mouth and deprive him of speech. Another man approached, and on seeing him cries out in surprise: "How did you fall in here?" He answers: "I beseech you to plan how you can get me out of this, rather than ask how I fell in." So, since we admit and hold as an article of the Catholic faith, that the soul of even a little infant requires to be delivered out of the guilt of sin, as out of a pit, by the grace of Christ, it is sufficient for the soul of such a one that we know the way in which it is saved, even though we should never know the way in which it came into that wretched condition. But I thought it our duty to inquire into this subject, lest we should incautiously hold any one of those opinions concerning the manner of the soul's becoming united with the body which might contradict the doctrine that the souls of little children require to be delivered, by denying that they are subject to the bond of guilt. This, then, being very firmly held by us, that the soul of every infant needs to be freed from the guilt of sin, and can be freed in no other way except by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, if we can ascertain the cause and origin of the evil itself, we are better prepared and equipped for resisting adversaries whose empty talk I call not reasoning but quibbling; if, however, we cannot ascertain

the cause, the fact that the origin of this misery is hid from us is no reason for our being slothful in the work which compassion demands from us. In our conflict, however, with those who appear to themselves to know what they do not know, we have an additional strength and safety in not being ignorant of our ignorance on this subject. For there are some things which it is evil not to know; there are other things which cannot be known, or are not necessary to be known, or have no bearing on the life which we seek to obtain; but the question which I now submit to you from the writings of the Apostle James is intimately connected with the course of conduct in which we live, and in which, with a view to life eternal, we endeavour to please God.

3. How, then, I beseech you, are we to understand the words: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all"? Does this affirm that the person who shall have committed theft, nay, who even shall have said to the rich man, "Sit here" and to the poor man, "Stand there," is guilty of homicide, and adultery, and sacrilege? And if he is not so, how can it be said that a person who has offended in one point has become guilty of all? Or are the things which the apostle said concerning the rich man and the poor man not to be reckoned among those things in one of which if any man offend he becomes guilty of all? But we must remember whence that sentence is taken, and what goes before it, and in what connection it occurs. "My brethren," he says, "have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons. For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and you have respect to him that wears the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand there, or sit here under my footstool; are you not then partial in yourselves, and have become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him? But you have despised the poor," [James 2:1-6] — inasmuch as you have said to the poor man, "Stand there," when you would have said to a man with a gold ring, "Sit here in a good place." And then there follows a passage explaining and enlarging upon that same conclusion: "Do not rich men oppress you by their power, and draw you before the judgment-seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which you are called? If you fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, You shall love your neighbour as yourself, you do well: but if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." [James 2:6-9] See how the apostle calls those transgressors of the law who say to the rich man, "Sit here," and to the poor, "Stand there." See how, lest they should think it a trifling sin to transgress the law in this one thing, he goes on to add: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you do not kill, yet, if you commit adultery, you have become a transgressor of the law," according to that which he had said: "You are convinced of the law as transgressors." Since these things are so, it seems to follow, unless it can be shown that we are to understand it in some other way, that he who says to the rich man, "Sit here," and to the poor, "Stand there," not treating the one with the same respect as the other, is to be judged guilty as an idolater, and a blasphemer, and an adulterer, and a murderer — in short — not to enumerate all, which would be tedious — as guilty of all crimes, since, offending in one, he is guilty of all.

4. But has he who has one virtue all virtues? And has he no virtues who lacks one? If this be true, the sentence of the apostle is thereby confirmed. But what I desire is to have the sentence explained, not confirmed, since of itself it stands more sure in our esteem than all the authority of

philosophers could make it. And even if what has just been said concerning virtues and vices were true, it would not follow that therefore all sins are equal. For as to the inseparable co-existence of the virtues, this is a doctrine in regard to which, if I remember rightly, what, indeed, I have almost forgotten (though perhaps I am mistaken), all philosophers who affirm that virtues are essential to the right conduct of life are agreed. The doctrine of the equality of sins, however, the Stoics alone dared to maintain in opposition to the unanimous sentiments of mankind: an absurd tenet, which in writing against Jovinianus (a Stoic in this opinion, but an Epicurean in following after and defending pleasure) you have most clearly refuted from the Holy Scriptures. In that most delightful and noble dissertation you have made it abundantly plain that it has not been the doctrine of our authors, or rather of the Truth Himself, who has spoken through them, that all sins are equal. I shall now do my utmost in endeavouring, with the help of God, to show how it can be that, although the doctrine of philosophers concerning virtues is true, we are nevertheless not compelled to admit the Stoics' doctrine that all sins are equal. If I succeed, I will look for your approbation, and in whatever respect I come short, I beg you to supply my deficiencies.

5. Those who maintain that he who has one virtue has all, and that he who lacks one lacks all, reason correctly from the fact that prudence cannot be cowardly, nor unjust, nor intemperate; for if it were any of these it would no longer be prudence. Moreover, if it be prudence only when it is brave, and just, and temperate, assuredly wherever it exists it must have the other virtues along with it. In like manner, also, courage cannot be imprudent, or intemperate, or unjust; temperance must of necessity be prudent, brave, and just; and justice does not exist unless it be prudent, brave, and temperate. Thus, wherever any one of these virtues truly exists, the others likewise exist; and where some are absent, that which may appear in some measure to resemble virtue is not really present.

6. There are, as you know, some vices opposed to virtues by a palpable contrast, as imprudence is the opposite of prudence. But there are some vices opposed to virtues simply because they are vices which, nevertheless, by a deceitful appearance resemble virtues; as, for example, in the relation, not of imprudence, but of craftiness to the said virtue of prudence. I speak here of that craftiness which is wont to be understood and spoken of in connection with the evilly disposed, not in the sense in which the word is usually employed in our Scriptures, where it is often used in a good sense, as, "Be crafty as serpents," [Matthew 10:16] and again, to give craftiness to the simple. [Proverbs 1:4] It is true that among heathen writers one of the most accomplished of Latin authors, speaking of Catiline, has said: "Nor was there lacking on his part craftiness to guard against danger," using "craftiness" (*astutia*) in a good sense; but the use of the word in this sense is among them very rare, among us very common. So also in regard to the virtues classed under temperance. Extravagance is most manifestly opposite to the virtue of frugality; but that which the common people are wont to call niggardliness is indeed a vice, yet one which, not in its nature, but by a very deceitful similarity of appearance, usurps the name of frugality. In the same manner injustice is by a palpable contrast opposed to justice; but the desire of avenging oneself is wont often to be a counterfeit of justice, but it is a vice. There is an obvious contrariety between courage and cowardice; but hardihood, though differing from courage in nature, deceives us by its resemblance to that virtue. Firmness is a part of virtue; fickleness is a vice far removed from and undoubtedly opposed to it; but obstinacy lays claim to the name of firmness, yet is wholly different, because firmness is a virtue, and obstinacy is a vice.

7. To avoid the necessity of again going over the same ground, let us take one case as an example, from which all others may be understood. Catiline, as those who have written concerning him had means of knowing, was capable of enduring cold, thirst, hunger, and patient in fastings, cold, and watchings beyond what any one could believe, and thus he appeared, both to himself and to his followers, a man endowed with great courage. But this courage was not prudent, for he chose the evil instead of the good; was not temperate, for his life was disgraced by the lowest dissipation; was not just, for he conspired against his country; and therefore it was not courage, but hardihood usurping the name of courage to deceive fools; for if it had been courage, it would not have been a vice but a virtue, and if it had been a virtue, it would never have been abandoned by the other virtues, its inseparable companions.

8. On this account, when it is asked also concerning vices, whether where one exists all in like manner exist, or where one does not exist none exist, it would be a difficult matter to show this, because two vices are wont to be opposed to one virtue, one that is evidently opposed, and another that bears an apparent likeness. Hence the hardihood of Catiline is the more easily seen not to have been courage, since it had not along with it other virtues; but it may be difficult to convince men that his hardihood was cowardice, since he was in the habit of enduring and patiently submitting to the severest hardships to a degree almost incredible. But perhaps, on examining the matter more closely, this hardihood itself is seen to be cowardice, because he shrunk from the toil of those liberal studies by which true courage is acquired. Nevertheless, as there are rash men who are not guilty of cowardice, and there are cowardly men who are not guilty of rashness, and since in both there is vice, for the truly brave man neither ventures rashly nor fears without reason, we are forced to admit that vices are more numerous than virtues.

9. Accordingly, it happens sometimes that one vice is supplanted by another, as the love of money by the love of praise. Occasionally, one vice quits the field that more may take its place, as in the case of the drunkard, who, after becoming temperate in the use of drink, may come under the power of niggardliness and ambition. It is possible, therefore, that vices may give place to vices, not to virtues, as their successors, and thus they are more numerous. When one virtue, however, has entered, there will infallibly be (since it brings all the other virtues along with it) a retreat of all vices whatsoever that were in the man; for all vices were not in him, but at one time so many, at another a greater or smaller number might occupy their place.

10. We must inquire more carefully whether these things are so; for the statement that "he who has one virtue has all, and that all virtues are awaiting to him who lacks one," is not given by inspiration, but is the view held by many men, ingenious, indeed, and studious, but still men. But I must avow that, in the case — I shall not say of one of those from whose name the word virtue is said to be derived, but even of a woman who is faithful to her husband, and who is so from a regard to the commandments and promises of God, and, first of all, is faithful to Him, I do not know how I could say of her that she is unchaste, or that chastity is no virtue or a trifling one. I should feel the same in regard to a husband who is faithful to his wife; and yet there are many such, none of whom I could affirm to be without any sins, and doubtless the sin which is in them, whatever it be, proceeds from some vice. Whence it follows that though conjugal fidelity in religious men and women is undoubtedly a virtue, for it is neither a nonentity nor a vice, yet it does not bring along with it all virtues, for if all virtues were there, there would be no vice, and if there were no vice, there would be no sin; but where is the man who is altogether without sin? Where, therefore, is the

man who is without any vice, that is, fuel or root, as it were, of sin, when he who reclined on the breast of the Lord says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"? [1 John 1:8] It is not necessary for us to urge this at greater length in writing to you, but I make the statement for the sake of others who perhaps shall read this. For you, indeed, in that same splendid work against Jovinianus, have carefully proved this from the Holy Scriptures; in which work also you have quoted the words, "in many things we all offend," [James 3:2] from this very epistle in which occur the words whose meaning we are now investigating. For though it is an apostle of Christ who is speaking, he does not say, "ye offend," but, "we offend;" and although in the passage under consideration he says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," [James 2:10] in the words just quoted he affirms that we offend not in one thing but in many, and not that some offend but that we all offend.

11. Far be it, however, from any believer to think that so many thousands of the servants of Christ, who, lest they should deceive themselves, and the truth should not be in them, sincerely confess themselves to have sin, are altogether without virtue! For wisdom is a great virtue, and wisdom herself has said to man, "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." Far be it from us, then, to say that so many and so great believing and pious men have not the fear of the Lord, which the Greeks call εὐσέβεια, or more literally and fully, θεοσεβεία. And what is the fear of the Lord but His worship? And whence is He truly worshipped except from love? Love, then, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, is the great and true virtue, because it is "the end of the commandment." [1 Timothy 1:5] Deservedly is love said to be "strong as death," [Song of Songs 8:6] because, like death, it is vanquished by none; or because the measure of love in this life is even unto death, as the Lord says, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" [John 15:13] or, rather, because, as death forcibly separates the soul from the senses of the body, so love separates it from fleshly lusts. Knowledge, when it is of the right kind, is the handmaid to love, for without love "knowledge puffs up," [1 Corinthians 8:1] but where love, by edifying, has filled the heart, there knowledge will find nothing empty which it can puff up. Moreover, Job has shown, what is that useful knowledge by defining it where, after saying, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom" he adds "and to depart from evil, that is understanding." [Job 28:28] Why do we not then say that the man who has this virtue has all virtues, since "love is the fulfilling of the law?" [Romans 13:10] Is it not true that, the more love exists in a man the more he is endowed with virtue, and the less love he has the less virtue is in him, for love is itself virtue; and the less virtue there is in a man so much the more vice will there be in him? Therefore, where love is full and perfect, no vice will remain.

12. The Stoics, therefore, appear to me to be mistaken in refusing to admit that a man who is advancing in wisdom has any wisdom at all, and in affirming that he alone has it who has become altogether perfect in wisdom. They do not, indeed, deny that he has made progress, but they say that he is in no degree entitled to be called wise, unless, by emerging, so to speak, from the depths, he suddenly springs forth into the free air of wisdom. For, as it matters not when a man is drowning whether the depth of water above him be many stadia or only the breadth of a hand or finger, so they say in regard to the progress of those who are advancing towards wisdom, that they are like men rising from the bottom of a whirlpool towards the air, but that unless they by their progress, so escape as to emerge wholly from folly as from an overwhelming flood, they have not virtue and are not wise; but that, when they have so escaped, they immediately have wisdom in

perfection, and not a vestige of folly whence any sin could be originated remains.

13. This simile, in which folly is compared to water and wisdom to air, so that the mind emerging, as it were, from the stifling influence of folly breathes suddenly the free air of wisdom, does not appear to me to harmonize sufficiently with the authoritative statement of our Scriptures; a better simile, so far, at least, as illustration of spiritual things can be borrowed from material things, is that which compares vice or folly to darkness, and virtue or wisdom to light. The way to wisdom is therefore not like that of a man rising from the water into the air, in which, in the moment of rising above the surface of the water, he suddenly breathes freely, but, like that of a man proceeding from darkness into light, on whom more light gradually shines as he advances. So long, therefore, as this is not fully accomplished, we speak of the man as of one going from the dark recesses of a vast cavern towards its entrance, who is more and more influenced by the proximity of the light as he comes nearer to the entrance of the cavern; so that whatever light he has proceeds from the light to which he is advancing, and whatever darkness still remains in him proceeds from the darkness out of which he is emerging. Therefore it is true that in the sight of God "shall no man living be justified," and yet that "the just shall live by his faith." [Habakkuk 2:4] On the one hand, "the saints are clothed with righteousness," [Job 29:14] one more, another less; on the other hand, no one lives here wholly without sin— one sins more, another less, and the best is the man who sins least.

14. But why have I, as if forgetting to whom I address myself, assumed the tone of a teacher in stating the question regarding which I wish to be instructed by you? Nevertheless, as I had resolved to submit to your examination my opinion regarding the equality of sins (a subject involving a question closely bearing on the matter on which I was writing), let me now at last bring my statement to a conclusion. Even though it were true that he who has one virtue has all virtues, and that he who lacks one virtue has none, this would not involve the consequence that all sins are equal; for although it is true that where there is no virtue there is nothing right, it by no means follows that among bad actions one cannot be worse than another, or that divergence from that which is right does not admit of degrees. I think, however, that it is more agreeable to truth and consistent with the Holy Scriptures to say, that what is true of the members of the body is true of the different dispositions of the soul (which, though not seen occupying different places, are by their distinctive workings perceived as plainly as the members of the body), namely, that as in the same body one member is more fully shone upon by the light, another is less shone upon, and a third is altogether without light, and remains in the dark under some impervious covering, something similar takes place in regard to the various dispositions of the soul. If this be so, then according to the manner in which every man is shone upon by the light of holy love, he may be said to have one virtue and to lack another virtue, or to have one virtue in larger and another in smaller measure. For in reference to that love which is the fear of God, we may correctly say both that it is greater in one man than in another, and that there is some of it in one man, and none of it in another; we may also correctly say as to an individual that he has greater chastity than patience, and that he has either virtue in a higher degree than he had yesterday, if he is making progress, or that he still lacks self-control, but possesses, at the same time, a large measure of compassion.

15. To sum up generally and briefly the view which, so far as relates to holy living, I entertain concerning virtue —virtue is the love with which that which ought to be loved is loved. This is in some greater, in others less, and there are men in whom it does not exist at all; but in the absolute

fullness which admits of no increase, it exists in no man while living on this earth; so long, however, as it admits of being increased there can be no doubt that, in so far as it is less than it ought to be, the shortcoming proceeds from vice. Because of this vice there is "not a just man upon earth that does good and sins not;" [Ecclesiastes 5:7] because of this vice, "in God's sight shall no man living be justified." On account of this vice, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." [1 John 1:8] On account of this also, whatever progress we may have made, we must say, "Forgive us our debts," [Matthew 6:12] although all debts in word, deed, and thought were washed away in baptism. He, then, who sees aright, sees whence, and when, and where he must hope for that perfection to which nothing can be added. Moreover, if there had been no commandments, there would have been no means whereby a man might certainly examine himself and see from what things he ought to turn aside, whither he should aspire, and in what things he should find occasion for thanksgiving or for prayer. Great, therefore, is the benefit of commandments, if to free will so much liberty be granted that the grace of God may be more abundantly honoured.

16. If these things be so, how shall a man who shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, be guilty of all? May it not be, that since the fulfilling of the law is that love wherewith we love God and our neighbour, on which commandments of love "hang all the law and the prophets," [Matthew 22:40] he is justly held to be guilty of all who violates that on which all hang? Now, no one sins without violating this love; "for this, you shall not commit adultery; you shall do no murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, You shall love your neighbour as yourself. Love works no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." [Romans 13:9-10] No one, however, loves his neighbour who does not out of his love to God do all in his power to bring his neighbour also, whom he loves as himself, to love God, whom if he does not love, he neither loves himself nor his neighbour. Hence it is true that if a man shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he becomes guilty of all, because he does what is contrary to the love on which hangs the whole law. A man, therefore, becomes guilty of all by doing what is contrary to that on which all hang.

17. Why, then, may not all sins be said to be equal? May not the reason be, that the transgression of the law of love is greater in him who commits a more grievous sin, and is less in him who commits a less grievous sin? And in the mere fact of his committing any sin whatever, he becomes guilty of all; but in committing a more grievous sin, or in sinning in more respects than one, he becomes more guilty; committing a less grievous sin, or sinning in fewer respects, he becomes less guilty — his guilt being thus so much the greater the more he has sinned, the less the less he has sinned. Nevertheless, even though it be only in one point that he offend, he is guilty of all, because he violates that love on which all hang. If these things be true, an explanation is by this means found, clearing up that saying of the man of apostolic grace, "In many things we offend all." [James 3:2] For we all offend, but one more grievously, another more slightly, according as each may have committed a more grievous or a less grievous sin; every one being great in the practice of sin in proportion as he is deficient in loving God and his neighbour, and, on the other hand, decreasing in the practice of sin in proportion as he increases in the love of God and of his neighbour. The more, therefore, that a man is deficient in love, the more is he full of sin. And perfection in love is reached when nothing of sinful infirmity remains in us.

18. Nor, indeed, in my opinion, are we to esteem it a trifling sin "to have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons," if we take the difference between sitting and standing, of which mention is made in the context, to refer to ecclesiastical honours; for who can bear to see a rich man chosen to a place of honour in the Church, while a poor man, of superior qualifications and of greater holiness, is despised? If, however, the apostle speaks there of our daily assemblies, who does not offend in the matter? At the same time, only those really offend here who cherish in their hearts the opinion that a man's worth is to be estimated according to his wealth; for this seems to be the meaning of the expression, "Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and have become judges of evil thoughts?"

19. The law of liberty, therefore, the law of love, is that of which he says: If you fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, You shall love your neighbour as yourself, you do well: but if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. [James 2:8-9] And then (after the difficult sentence, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," concerning which I have with sufficient fullness stated my opinion), making mention of the same law of liberty, he says: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." And as he knew by experience what he had said a little before, "in many things we offend all," he suggests a sovereign remedy, to be applied, as it were day by day, to those less serious but real wounds which the soul suffers day by day, for he says: "He shall have judgment without mercy that has showed no mercy." [James 2:13] For with the same purpose the Lord says: "Forgive, and you shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you." [Luke 6:37-38] After which the apostle says: "But mercy rejoices over judgment:" it is not said that mercy prevails over judgment, for it is not an adversary of judgment, but it "rejoices" over judgment, because a greater number are gathered in by mercy; but they are those who have shown mercy, for, "Blessed are the merciful, for God shall have mercy on them." [Matthew 5:7]

20. It is, therefore, by all means just that they be forgiven, because they have forgiven others, and that what they need be given to them, because they have given to others. For God uses mercy when He judges, and uses judgment when He shows mercy. Hence the Psalmist says: "I will sing of mercy and of judgment unto You, O Lord." For if any man, thinking himself too righteous to require mercy, presumes, as if he had no reason for anxiety, to wait for judgment without mercy, he provokes that most righteous indignation through fear of which the Psalmist said: "Enter not into judgment with Your servant." For this reason the Lord says to a disobedient people: Wherefore will you contend with me in judgment? For when the righteous King shall sit upon His throne, who shall boast that he has a pure heart, or who shall boast that he is clean from sin? What hope is there then unless mercy shall "rejoice over" judgment? But this it will do only in the case of those who have showed mercy, saying with sincerity, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," and who have given without murmuring, for "the Lord loves a cheerful giver." [2 Corinthians 9:7] To conclude, St. James is led to speak thus concerning works of mercy in this passage, in order that he may console those whom the statements immediately foregoing might have greatly alarmed, his purpose being to admonish us how those daily sins from which our life is never free here below may also be expiated by daily remedies; lest any man, becoming guilty of all when he offends in even one point, be brought, by offending in many points (since "in many things we all offend"), to appear before the bar of the Supreme Judge under the enormous amount of guilt which has accumulated by degrees, and find at that tribunal no mercy, because he showed

no mercy to others, instead of rather meriting the forgiveness of his own sins, and the enjoyment of the gifts promised in Scripture, by his extending forgiveness and bounty to others.

21. I have written at great length, which may perhaps have been tedious to you, as you, although approving of the statements now made, do not expect to be addressed as if you were but learning truths which you have been accustomed to teach to others. If, however, there be anything in these statements — not in the style of language in which they are expounded, for I am not much concerned as to mere phrases, but in the substance of the statements — which your erudite judgment condemns, I beseech you to point this out to me in your reply, and do not hesitate to correct my error. For I pity the man who, in view of the unwearied labour and sacred character of your studies, does not on account of them both render to you the honour which you deserve, and give thanks unto our Lord God by whose grace you are what you are. Wherefore, since I ought to be more willing to learn from any teacher the things of which to my disadvantage I am ignorant, than prompt to teach any others what I know, with how much greater reason do I claim the payment of this debt of love from you, by whose learning ecclesiastical literature in the Latin tongue has been, in the Lord's name, and by His help, advanced to an extent which had been previously unattainable. Especially, however, I ask attention to the sentence: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and offend in one point, is guilty of all." If you know any better way, my beloved brother, in which it can be explained, I beseech you by the Lord to favour us by communicating to us your exposition.

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Letter 133. To Ctesiphon.

Ctesiphon had written to Jerome for his opinion on two points in the teaching of Pelagius, (1) his quietism and (2) his denial of original sin. Jerome now refutes these two doctrines and points out that Pelagius has drawn them partly from the philosophers and partly from the heretics. He censures Rufinus, who had died 5 years before, for attributing to Sixtus bishop of Rome a book which is really the work of Xystus a Pythagorean, and for passing off as the composition of the martyr Pamphilus a panegyric of Origen really due to his friend Eusebius. In both these assertions, however, Jerome is more wrong than right. (See Prolegomena to the works of Rufinus.) The letter concludes with a promise to deal more fully with the heresy of Pelagius at some future time, a promise afterwards redeemed by the publication of a 'dialogue against the Pelagians.' The date of the letter is 415 a.d.

I. In acquainting me with the new controversy which has taken the place of the old you are wrong in thinking that you have acted rashly, for your conduct has been prompted by zeal and friendship. Already before the arrival of your letter many in the East have been deceived into a pride which apes humility and have said with the devil: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will be like the Most High." [Isa. 14:13, Isa. 14:14] Can there be greater presumption than to claim not likeness to God but equality with Him, and so to compress into a few words the poisonous doctrines of all the heretics which in their turn flow from the statements of the philosophers, particularly of Pythagoras and Zeno the founder of the Stoic school? For those states of feeling which the Greeks call "πάθη" and which we may describe as "passions," relating to the present or the future such as vexation and gladness, hope and fear, -these, they tell us, it is possible to root out of our minds; in fact all vice may be destroyed root and branch in man by meditation on virtue and constant practice of it. The position which they thus take up is vehemently assailed by the Peripatetics who trace themselves to Aristotle, and by the new Academics of whom Cicero is a disciple; and these overthrow not the facts of their opponents-for they have no facts-but the shadows and wishes which do duty for them. To maintain such a doctrine is to take man's nature from him, to forget that he is constituted of body as well as soul, to substitute mere wishes for sound teaching. For the apostle says:- "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" [Rom. 7:24] But as I cannot say all that I wish in a short letter I will briefly touch on the points that you must avoid. Virgil writes:-

"Thus mortals fear and hope, rejoice and grieve, And shut in darkness have no sight of heaven." [Virgil. aeneid. 6:733, 734] For who can escape these feelings? Must we not all clap our hands when we are joyful, and shrink at the approach of sorrow? Must not hope always animate us and fear put us in terror? So in one of his Satires the poet Horace, whose words are so weighty, writes:

"From faults no mortal is completely free;

He that has fewest is the perfect man." [Horace, Sat. I. 3:68, 69]

2. Well does one of our own writers² say: "the philosophers are the patriarchs of the heretics." It is they who have stained with their perverse doctrine the spotlessness of the Church, not knowing that of human weakness it is said: "Why is earth and ashes proud?" [Ecclus. 10:9] So likewise the apostle: "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity"; [Rom. 7:23] and again, "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do." [Rom. 7:19] Now if Paul does what he wills not, what becomes of the assertion that a man may be without sin if he will? Given the will, how is it to have its way when the apostle tells us that he has no power to do what he wishes? Moreover if we ask them who the persons are whom they regard as sinless they seek to veil the truth by a new subterfuge. They do not, they say, profess that men are or have been without sin; all that they maintain is that it is possible for them to be so. Remarkable teachers truly, who maintain that a thing may be which on their own shewing, never has been; whereas the scripture says:—"The thing which shall be, it is that which hath been already of old time."³

I need not go through the lives of the saints or call attention to the moles and spots which mark the fairest skins. Many of our writers, it is true, unwisely, take this course; however, a few sentences of scripture will dispose alike of the heretics and the philosophers. What says the chosen vessel? "God had concluded all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all; [Rom. 11:32] and in another place, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."⁴ The preacher also who is the mouthpiece of the Divine Wisdom freely protests and says: "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not:" [Eccles. 7:20] and again, "if thy people sin against thee, for there is no man that sinneth not:" [1 K. 8:46] and "who can say, I have made my heart clean?" [Prov. 20:9] and "none is clean from stain, not even if his life on earth has been but for one day. David insists on the same thing when he says: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me;" [Ps. 51:5] and in another psalm, "in thy sight shall no man living be justified." [Ps. 143:2] This last passage they try to explain away from motives of reverence, arguing that the meaning is that no man is perfect in comparison with God. Yet the scripture does not say: "in comparison with thee shall no man living be justified" but "in thy sight shall no man living be justified." And when it says "in thy sight" it means that those who seem holy to men to God in his fuller knowledge are by no means holy. For "man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." [1 S. 16:7] But if in the sight of God who sees all things and to whom the secrets of the heart lie open [Ps. 44:21, Heb. 4:13] no man is just; then these heretics instead of adding to man's dignity, clearly take away from God's power. I might bring together many other passages of scripture of the same import; but were I to do so, I should exceed the limits I will not say of a letter but of a volume.

3. It is with no new doctrines that in their self-applauding perfidy they deceive the simple and untaught. They cannot, however, deceive theologians who meditate in the law of the Lord day and night. [Ps. 1:2] Let those blush then for their leaders and companions who say that a man may be "without sin" if he will, or, as the Greeks term it "ἀνὰμ■ρτητος", "sinless." As such a statement sounds intolerable to the Eastern churches, they profess indeed only to say that a man may be "without sin" and do not presume to allege that he may be "sinless" as well. As if, forsooth, "sinless" and "without sin" had different meanings; whereas the only difference between them is that Latin requires two words to express what Greek gives in one. If you adopt "without sin" and reject "sinless," then condemn the preachers of sinlessness. But this you cannot do. You know⁵

very well what it is that you teach your pupils in private; and that while you say one thing with your lips you engrave another on your heart. To us, ignorant outsiders you speak in parables; but to your own followers you avow your secret meaning. And for this you claim the authority of scripture which says: "to the multitudes Jesus spake in parables;" but to his own disciples He said: "it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." [Matt. 13:3, Matt. 13:11] But to return; I will shortly set forth the names of your leaders and companions to shew you who those are of whose fellowship you make your boast. Manichaeus says of his elect-whom he places among Plato's orbits in heaven-that they are free from all sin, and cannot sin even if they will. To so great heights have they attained in virtue that they laugh at the works of the flesh. Then there is Priscillian in Spain whose infamy makes him as bad as Manichaeus, and whose disciples profess a high esteem for you. These are rash enough to claim for themselves the twofold credit of perfection and wisdom. Yet they shut themselves up alone with women and justify their sinful embraces by quoting the lines:

"The almighty father takes the earth to wife;

Pouring upon her fertilizing rain,

That from her womb new harvest he may reap."⁶

These heretics have affinities with Gnosticism which may be traced to the impious teaching of Basilides.⁷ It is from him that you derive the assertion that without knowledge of the law it is impossible to avoid sin. But why do I speak of Priscillian who has been condemned by the whole world and put to death by the secular sword?⁸ Evagrius⁹ of Ibera in Pontus who sends letters to virgins and monks and among others to her whose name bears witness to the blackness of her perfidy,¹⁰ has published a book of maxims on apathy, or, as we should say, impassivity or imperturbability; a state in which the mind ceases to be agitated and-to speak simply-becomes either a stone or a God. His work is widely read, in the East in Greek and in the West in a Latin translation made by his disciple Rufinus.¹¹ He has also written a book which professes to be about monks and includes in it many not monks at all whom he declares to have been Origenists, and who have certainly been condemned by the bishops. I mean Ammonius, Eusebius, Euthymius,¹² Evagrius himself, Horus,¹³ Isidorus,¹⁴ and many others whom it would be tedious to enumerate. He is careful, however, to do as the physicians, of whom Lucretius says: [Lucretius, 1:935-937] "To children bitter wormwood still they give In cups with juice of sweetest honey smeared." That is to say, he has set in the forefront of his book John,¹⁵ an undoubted Catholic and saint, by his means to introduce to the church the heretics mentioned farther on. But who can adequately characterize the rashness or madness which has led him to ascribe a book of the Pythagorean philosopher Xystus,¹⁶ a heathen who knew nothing of Christ, to Sixtus¹⁷ a martyr and bishop of the Roman church? In this work the subject of perfection is discussed at length in the light of the Pythagorean doctrine which makes man equal with God and of one substance with Him. Thus many not knowing that its author was a philosopher and supposing that they are reading the words of a martyr, drink of the golden cup of Babylon. Moreover in its pages there is no mention of prophets, patriarchs, apostles, or of Christ; so that according to Rufinus¹⁸ there has been a bishop and a martyr who had nothing to do with Christ. Such is the book from which you and your followers quote passages against the church. In the same way he played fast and loose with the name of the holy martyr Pamphilus ascribing to him the first of the six books in defence of

Origen written by Eusebius of Caesarea¹⁹ who is admitted by every body to have been an Arian. His object in doing so was of course to commend to Latin ears Origen's four wonderful books about First Principles. Would you have me name another of your masters in heresy? Much of your teaching is traceable to Origen. For, to give one instance only, when he comments on the psalmist's words: "My reins also instruct me in the night season,"²⁰ he maintains that when a holy man like yourself has reached perfection, he is free even at night from human infirmity and is not tempted by evil thoughts. You need not blush to avow yourself a follower of these men; it is of no use to disclaim their names when you adopt their blasphemies. Moreover, your teaching corresponds to Jovinian's second position.²¹ You must, therefore, take the answer which I have given to him as equally applicable to yourself. Where men's opinions are the same their destinies can hardly be different.

4. Such being the state of the case, what object is served by "silly women laden with sins, carried about with every wind of doctrine, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth?" [Eph. 4:14; 2 Tim. 3:6, 2 Tim. 3:7] Or how is the cause helped by the men who dance attendance upon these, men with itching ears [2 Tim. 4:3] who know neither how to hear nor how to speak? They confound old mire with new cement and, as Ezekiel says, daub a wall with untempered mortar; so that, when the truth comes in a shower, they are brought to nought. [Ezek. 13:10-16] It was with the help of the harlot Helena that Simon Magus founded his sect.²² Bands of women accompanied Nicolas of Antioch that deviser of all uncleanness.²³ Marcion sent a woman before him to Rome to prepare men's minds to fall into his snares.²⁴ Apelles possessed in Philumena an associate in his false doctrines.²⁵ Montanus, that mouthpiece of an unclean spirit, used two rich and high born ladies Prisca and Maximilla first to bribe and then to pervert many churches.²⁶ Leaving ancient history I will pass to times nearer to our own. Arius intent on leading the world astray began by misleading the Emperor's sister.²⁷ The resources of Lucilla helped Donatus to defile with his polluting baptism many unhappy persons throughout Africa.²⁸ In Spain the blind woman Agape led the blind man Elpidius into the ditch.²⁹ He was followed by Priscillian, an enthusiastic votary of Zoroaster and a magian before he became a bishop. A woman named Galla seconded his efforts and left a gadabout sister to perpetuate a second heresy of a kindred form.³⁰ Now also the mystery of iniquity is working. [2 Th. 2:7] Men and women in turn lay snares for each other till we cannot but recall the prophet's words: "the partridge hath cried aloud, she hath gathered young which she hath not brought forth, she getteth riches and not by right; in the midst of her days she shall leave them, and at her end she shall be a fool." [Jer. 17:11, Vulg]

5. The better to deceive men they have added to the maxim given above³¹ the saving clause "but not without the grace of God;" and this may at the first blush take in some readers. However, when it is carefully sifted and considered, it can deceive nobody. For while they acknowledge the grace of God, they tell us that our acts do not depend upon His help. Rather, they understand by the grace of God free will and the commandments of the Law. They quote Isaiah's words: "God hath given the law to aid men," [Isa. 8:20, LXX] and say that we ought to thank Him for having created us such that of our own free will we can choose the good and avoid the evil. Nor do they see that in alleging this the devil uses their lips to hiss out an intolerable blasphemy. For if God's grace is limited to this that He has formed us with wills of our own, and if we are to rest content with free will, not seeking the divine aid lest this should be impaired, we should cease to pray; for we cannot entreat God's mercy to give us daily what is already in our hands having been given to us once for

all. Those who think thus make prayer impossible and boast that free will makes them not merely controllers of themselves but as powerful as God. For they need no external help. Away with fasting, away with every form of self-restraint! For why need I strive to win by toil what has once for all been placed within my reach? The argument that I am using is not mine; it is that put forward by a disciple of Pelagius, or rather one who is the teacher and commander of his whole army.³² This man, who is the opposite of Paul for he is a vessel of perdition, roams through thickets-not, as his partisans say, of syllogisms, but of solecisms, and theorizes thus: "If I do nothing without the help of God and if all that I do is His act, I cease to labour and the crown that I shall win will belong not to me but to the grace of God. It is idle for Him to have given me the power of choice if I cannot use it without His constant help. For will that requires external support ceases to be will. God has given me freedom of choice, but what becomes of this if I cannot do as I wish?" Accordingly he propounds the following dilemma: "Either once for all I use the power which is given to me, and so preserve the freedom of my will; or I need the help of another, in which case the freedom of my will is wholly abrogated."

6. Surely the man who says this is no ordinary blasphemer; the poison of his heresy is no common poison. Since our wills are free, they argue, we are no longer dependent upon God; and they forget the Apostle's words "what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" [1 Cor. 4:7] A nice return, truly, does a man make to God when to assert the freedom of his will he rebels against Him! For our parts we gladly embrace this freedom, but we never forget to thank the Giver; knowing that we are powerless unless He continually preserves in us His own gift. As the apostle says, "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." [Rom. 9:16] To will and to run are mine, but they will cease to be mine unless God brings me His continual aid. For the same apostle says "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do." [Phil. 2:13] And in the Gospel the Saviour says: "my Father worketh hitherto and I work." [John 5:17] He is always a giver, always a bestower. It is not enough for me that he has given me grace once; He must give it me always. I seek that I may obtain, and when I have obtained I seek again. I am covetous of God's bounty; and as He is never slack in giving, so I am never weary in receiving. The more I drink, the more I thirst. For I have read the song of the psalmist: "O taste and see that the Lord is good." [Ps. 34:8] Every good thing that we have is a tasting of the Lord. When I fancy myself to have finished the book of virtue, I shall then only be at the beginning. For "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," [Ps. 111:10] and this fear is in its turn cast out by love. [1 John. 4:18] Men are only perfect so far as they know themselves to be imperfect. "So likewise ye," Christ says, "when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." [Luke 17:10] If he is unprofitable who has done all, what must we say of him who has failed to do so? This is why the Apostle declares that he has attained in part and apprehended in part, that he is not yet perfect, and that forgetting those things which are behind he reaches forth unto those things which are before. [Phil. 3:12, Phil. 3:13] Now he who always forgets the past and longs for the future shews that he is not content with the present.

They are for ever objecting to us that we destroy free will. Nay, we reply, it is you who destroy it; for you use it amiss and disown the bounty of its Giver. Which really destroys freedom? the man who thanks God always and traces back his own tiny rill to its source in Him? or the man who says: "come not near to me, for I am holy; [Isa. 65:5, LXX] I have no need of Thee. Thou hast

given me once for all freedom of choice to do as I wish. Why then dost Thou interfere again to prevent me from doing anything unless Thou Thyself first makest Thy gifts effective in me?" To such an one I would say: "your profession of belief in God's grace is insincere. For you explain this of the state in which man has been created and you do not look for God to help him in his actions. To do this, you argue, would be to surrender human freedom. Thus disdaining the aid of God you have to look to men for help."

7. Listen, only listen, to the blasphemer. "Suppose," he avers, "that I want to bend my finger or to move my hand, to sit, to stand, to walk, to run to and fro, to spit or to blow my nose, to perform the offices of nature; must the help of God be always indispensable to me?" Thankless, nay blasphemous wretch, hear the apostle's declaration: "whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." [1 Cor. 10:31] Hear also the words of James: "go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain. Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings; all such rejoicing is evil." [Jas. 4:13-16] You fancy that a wrong is inflicted on you and your freedom of choice is destroyed if you are forced to fall back on God as the moving cause of all your actions, if you are made dependent on His Will, and if you have to echo the psalmist's words: "mine eyes are ever toward the Lord: for it is he that shall pluck my feet out of the net." [Ps. 25:15] And so you presume rashly to maintain that each individual is governed by his own choice. But if he is governed by his own choice, what becomes of God's help? If he does not need Christ to rule him, why does Jeremiah write: "the way of man is not in himself" [Jer. 10:23] and "the Lord directeth his steps." [Prov. 16:9]

You say that the commandments of God are easy, and yet you cannot produce any one who has fulfilled them all. Answer me this: are they easy or are they difficult? If they are easy, then produce some one who has fulfilled them all. Explain also the words of the psalmist: "thou dost cause toil by thy law," [Ps. 94:20, LXX and Vulg] and "because of the words of thy lips I have kept hard ways." [Ps. 17:4, LXX] And make plain our Lord's sayings in the gospel: "enter ye in at the strait gate;" [Matt. 7:13] and "love your enemies;" and "pray for them which persecute you." [Matt. 5:44] If on the other hand the commandments are difficult and if no man has kept them all, how have you presumed to say that they are easy? Do not you see that you contradict yourself? For either they are easy and countless numbers have kept them; or they are difficult and you have been too hasty in calling them easy.

8. It is a common argument with your party to say that God's commandments are either possible or impossible. So far as they are the former you admit that they are rightly laid upon us; but so far as they are the latter you allege that blame attaches not to us who have received them but to God who has imposed them on us. What! has God commanded me to be what He is,³³ to put no difference between myself and my creator, to be greater than the greatest of the angels, to have a power which no angels possess? Sinlessness is made a characteristic of Christ, "who did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth." [1 Pet. 2:22] But if I am sinless as well as He, how is sinlessness any longer His distinguishing mark? for if this distinction exists, your theory becomes fatal to itself.

You assert that a man may be without sin if he will; and then, as though awakening from a deep sleep, you try to deceive the unwary by adding the saving clause "yet not without the grace of God." For if by his own efforts a man can keep himself without sin, what need has he of God's grace? If on the other hand he can do nothing without this, what is the use of saying that he can do what he cannot do? It is argued that a man may be without sin and perfect if he only wills it. What Christian is there who does not wish to be sinless or who would reject perfection if, as you say, it is to be had for the wishing, and if the will is sure to be followed by the power? There is no Christian who does not wish to be sinless; wishing to be so, therefore, they all will be so. Whether you like it or not you will be caught in this dilemma, that you can produce nobody or hardly anybody who is without sin, yet have to admit that everybody may be sinless if he likes. God's commandments, it is argued, are possible to keep. Who denies it? But how this truth is to be understood the chosen vessel thus most clearly explains: "what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;" [Rom. 8:3] and again: "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." [Rom. 3:20] And to shew that it is not only the law of Moses that is meant or all those precepts which collectively are termed the law, the same apostle writes: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am: who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord."³⁴ Other words of his further explain his meaning: "we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know³⁵ not: for what I would that do I not, but what I hate that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it: but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing. For to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." [Rom. 7:14-20]

9. But you will demur to this and say that I follow the teaching³⁶ of the Manichaeans and others who make war against the church's doctrine in the interest of their belief that there are two natures diverse from one another and that there is an evil nature which can in no wise be changed. But it is not against me that you must make this imputation but against the apostle who knows well that God is one thing and man another, that the flesh is weak and the spirit strong. [cf. Matt. 26:41] "The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." [Gal. 5:17] But from me you will never hear that any nature is essentially evil. Let us learn then from him who tells us so in what sense the flesh is weak. Ask him why he has said: "the good that I would, I do not; the evil which I would not, that I do." [Rom. 7:19] What necessity fetters his will? What compulsion commands him to do what he dislikes? And why must he do not what he wishes but what he dislikes and does not wish? He will answer you thus: "nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?" [Rom. 9:20, Rom. 9:21] Bring a yet graver charge against God and ask Him why, when Esau and Jacob were still in the womb, He said: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." [Mal. 1:2, Mal. 1:3. Rom. 9:13] Accuse Him of injustice because, when Achan the son of Carmi stole part of the spoil of Jericho, He butchered so many thousands for the fault of one.³⁷ Ask Him why for the sin of the

sons of Eli the people were well-nigh annihilated and the ark captured.³⁸ And why, when David sinned by numbering the people, so many thousands lost their lives.³⁹ Or lastly make your own the favorite cavil of your associate Porphyry, and ask how God can be described as pitiful and of great mercy when from Adam to Moses and from Moses to the coming of Christ He has suffered all nations to die in ignorance of the Law and of His commandments.⁴⁰ For Britain, that province so fertile in despots, the Scottish tribes, and all the barbarians round about as far as the ocean were alike without knowledge of Moses and the prophets. Why should Christ's coming have been delayed to the last times? Why should He not have come before so vast a number had perished? Of this last question the blessed apostle in writing to the Romans most wisely disposes by admitting that he does not know and that only God does. Do you too, then, condescend to remain ignorant of that into which you inquire. Leave to God His power over what is His own; He does not need you to justify His actions. I am the hapless being against whom you ought to direct your insults, I who am for ever reading the words: "by grace ye are saved," [Eph. 2:5] and "blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." [Ps. 32:1] Yet, to lay bare my own weakness, I know that I wish to do many things which I ought to do and yet cannot. For while my spirit is strong and leads me to life my flesh is weak and draws me to death. And I have the warning of the Lord in my ears: "watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." [Matt. 26:41]

10. It is in vain that you misrepresent me and try to convince the ignorant that I condemn free will. Let him who condemns it be himself condemned. We have been created endowed with free will; still it is not this which distinguishes us from the brutes. For human free will, as I have said before, depends upon the help of God and needs His aid moment by moment, a thing which you and yours do not choose to admit. Your position is that, if a man once has free will, he no longer needs the help of God. It is true that freedom of the will brings with it freedom of decision. Still man does not act immediately on his free will, but requires God's aid who Himself needs no aid. You yourself boast that a man's righteousness may be perfect and equal to God's; yet you confess that you are a sinner. Answer me this, then; do you or do you not wish to be free from sin? If you do, why on your principle do you not carry out your desire? And if you do not, do you not prove yourself a despiser of God's commandments? If you are a despiser, then you are a sinner. And if you are a sinner, then the scripture says: "unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." [Ps. 50:16, Ps. 50:17] So long as you are unwilling to do what God commands, so long do you cast His words behind you. And yet like a new apostle you lay down for the world what to do and what not to do. However, your words and your thoughts by no means correspond. For when you say that you are a sinner-yet that a man may be without sin if he will, you wish it to be understood that you are a saint and free from all sin. It is only out of humility⁴¹ that you call yourself a sinner; to give you a chance of praising others while you depreciate yourself.

11. Another of your arguments is also intolerable, one which runs thus: "To be sinless is one thing, to be able to be so is another. The first is not in our power, the second generally is. For though none ever has been sinless, yet, if a man wills to be so, he can be so." What sort of reasoning, I ask, is this? that a man can be what a man never has been! that a thing is possible which according to your own admission, no man has yet achieved! You are predicating of man a quality

which, for aught you know, he may never possess! and you are assigning to any chance person a grace which you cannot shew to have marked patriarchs, prophets, or apostles. Listen to the Church's words, plain as they may seem to you or crude or ignorant. And speak what you think; preach publicly what secretly you tell your disciples. You profess to have freedom of choice; why do you not speak your thoughts freely? Your secret chambers hear one doctrine, the crowd around the platform hear another. The uneducated throng, I suppose, is not able to digest your esoteric teaching. Satisfied with the milk-diet of an infant it cannot take solid food. [cf. 1 Cor. 3:2]

I have written nothing yet, and still you menace me with the thunders of a reply; hoping, I suppose, that I may be scared by your terrors and may not venture to open my mouth. You fail to see that my purpose in writing is to force you to answer and to commit yourself plainly to doctrines which at present you maintain or ignore, as time, place, and person require. One kind of freedom I must deny to you, the freedom to deny what you have once written. An open avowal on your part of the opinions that you hold will be a victory for the church. For either the language of your reply will correspond to mine, in which case I shall count you no longer as opponents but as friends; or else you will gainsay my doctrine, in which case the making known of your opinion to all the churches will be a triumph for me. To have brought your tenets to light is to have overcome them. Blasphemy is written on the face of them, and a doctrine, which in its very statement is blasphemous, needs no refutation. You threaten me with a reply, but this nobody can escape except the man who does not write at all. How do you know what I am going to say that you talk of a reply? Perhaps I shall take your view and then you will have sharpened your wits to no purpose. Eunomians, Arians, Macedonians-all these, unlike in name, alike in impiety, give me no trouble. For they say what they think. Yours is the only heresy which blushes openly to maintain what secretly it does not fear to teach. But the frenzy of the disciples exposes the silence of the masters; for what they have heard from them in the closet they preach upon the housetop. If their auditors like what they say, their masters get the credit; and if they dislike it, only the disciples are blamed, the masters go free. In this way your heresy has grown and you have deceived many; especially those who cleave to women and are assured that they cannot sin. You are always teaching, you are always denying; you deserve to have the prophet's words applied to you: "give to them glory, O Lord, when they are in travail and in the throes of labour. Give them, O Lord; what wilt thou give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts."⁴² My temper rises and I cannot check my words. The limits of a letter do not admit of a lengthy discussion. I assail nobody by name here. It is only against the teacher of perverse doctrine that I have spoken. If resentment shall induce him to reply, he will but betray himself like a mouse which always leaves traces of its presence; and, when it comes to blows in earnest, will receive more serious wounds.

12. From my youth up until now I have spent many years in writing various works and have always tried to teach my hearers the doctrine that I have been taught publicly in church. I have not followed the philosophers in their discussions but have preferred to acquiesce in the plain words of the apostles. For I have known that it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent,"⁴³ and "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." [1 Cor. 1:25] This being the case, I challenge my opponents thoroughly to sift all my past writings and, if they can find anything that is faulty in them, to bring it to light. One of two things must happen. Either my works will be found edifying and I shall confute the false charges brought against me; or they will be found blameworthy and I shall confess my error. For I would sooner

correct an error than persevere in an opinion proved to be wrong. And as for you, illustrious doctor, go you and do likewise: either defend the statements that you have made, and support your clever theories with corresponding eloquence, and do not when the whim takes you disown your own words; or if, as a man may do, you have made a mistake, confess it frankly and restore harmony where there has been disagreement. Recall to mind how even the soldiers did not rend the coat of the Saviour. [John. 19:23, John. 19:24] When you see brothers at strife you laugh; and are glad that some are called by your name and others by that of Christ. Better would it be to imitate Jonah and say: "If it is for my sake that this great tempest is upon you, take me up and cast me forth into the sea." [Jon. 1:12] He in his humility was thrown into the deep that he might rise again in glory to be a type of the Lord. [Matt. 12:39, Matt. 12:40] But you are lifted up in your pride to the stars, only that of you too Jesus may say: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." [Luke, 10:18]

13. It is true that in the holy scriptures many are called righteous, as Zacharias and Elizabeth, Job, Jehosaphat, Josiah, and many others who are mentioned in the sacred writings. Of this fact I shall, if God gives me grace, give a full explanation in the work which I have promised⁴⁴; in this letter it must suffice to say that they are called righteous, not because they are faultless but because their faults are eclipsed by their virtues.⁴⁵ In fact Zacharias is punished with dumbness, [Luke 1:20-22] Job is condemned out of his own mouth, [Job 42:6] and Jehoshaphat and Josiah who are beyond a doubt described as righteous are narrated to have done things displeasing to the Lord. The first leagued himself with the ungodly Ahab and brought upon himself the rebuke of Micaiah; [1 Kings 22:19] and the second though forbidden by the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah-went against Pharaoh-Nechoh, king of Egypt, and was slain by him. [2 Chr. 35:20-24] Yet they are both called righteous. Of the rest this is not the time to write; for you have asked me not for a treatise but for a letter. For a complete refutation I require leisure and then I hope to destroy all their cavils by the help of Christ. For this purpose I shall rely on the holy scriptures in which God every day speaks to those who believe. And this is the warning which I would give through you to all who are assembled within your holy and illustrious house, that they should not allow one or at the most three mannikins to taint them with the dregs of so many heresies and with the infamy-to say the least-attaching to them. A place once famous for virtue and holiness must not be defiled by the presumption of the devil and by unclean associations. And let those who supply money to such men know that they are adding to the ranks of the heretics, raising up enemies to Christ and fostering his avowed opponents. It is idle for them to profess one thing with their lips when by their actions they are proved to think another.

1: Cf. Letter LXXIX 2: Tertullian, against Hemogenes, 100:ix 3: Eccles. 1:9. Jerome inverts the words of the Preacher

4: Rom. iii, 23 5: Jerome here addresses Pelagius 6: Virgil, Georg. 2:325-327 7: See note on Letter LXXV

8:

He was condemned by a council at Saragossa in 380-381 a.d. and was put to death by Maximus at Treves in 385 a.d. at the instigation of the Spanish bishops. Martin of Tours tried to save his life in vain

9:

According to Sozomen (H. E. 6:c. 30) Evagrius was in his youth befriended by Gregory of Nyssa, who left him in Constantinople to assist Nectarius in dealing with theological questions. Being in danger, both as to his chastity and as to his personal safety on account, of an acquaintance he had formed with a lady of rank, he withdrew to Jerusalem, where he was nursed through a severe illness by Melanion. The rest of his life he spent as an ascetic in the Egyptian desert. See also Pallad. Hist. Laus., §lxxxvi

10: Viz., Melanion, who having sided with Rufinus in his controversy with Jerome, incurred the latter's displeasure. The name means `black. 0' See Letter IV 11: Viz., Rufinus of Aquileia, Jerome's former friend

12: These three were known as `the long brothers. 0' Their expulsion from Egypt by Theophilus was one of the causes which led to the downfall of John of Chrysostom 13: A contemporary Egyptian monk of great celebrity 14: See Letter XCII. and note

15:

Viz., John of Lycopolis, an Egyptian hermit of the latter half of the fourth century. His reputation for sanctity was only second to that of Antony. The book about monks here spoken of does not occur in the list of the writings of Evagrius in the Dict. of Chr. Biog., taken from Socrates, Gennadius and Palladius. Rufinus' History of the Monks bears a close affinity to the Historia Lausiaca of Palladius, who was closely allied to Evagrius; and it is possible that Jerome may have attributed Palladius' work to Evagrius. See Prolegomena to Rufinus, and comp. Ruf. Hist. Mon. 1:with Pall. Hist. Laus., xliii

16:

In his references (here and in his comm. on Jeremiah, book iv., ch. 22) to the Gnones of Sixtus or Xystus, Jerome is both inaccurate and unfair. For Rufinus merely states that the author was traditionally identified with Sixtus, bishop of Rome and martyr; and he does not endorse the statement. In its present form the book is so strongly Christian in tone and language that it is strange to find it described as Christless and heathen. Of its origin nothing certain is known, but probably it is "the production of an early Christian philosopher working up heathen material with a leaven of the Gospel" (Dict. Chr. Biog. s. 5:Xystus)

17:

It is not clear which Sixtus is meant. Sixtus I. is not known to have been a martyr and Sixtus II. can hardly be intended. For though his claim to the title is undisputed he can scarcely have written what Origen already quotes as well known

18:

Jerome elsewhere twits Rufinus with the same mistake (see Comm. on Jer., book iv., ch. 22). He was not, however, alone in making it, for even Augustine was for a time similarly deceived (see his Retractations, 2:42)

19: Cf. Against Rufinus, 1:8, 9. There is now no doubt that Jerome was wrong and Rufinus right as to the authorship of the book. See the article entitled Eusebius in the Dict. of Christian Biog. and

the prolegomena to his works as issued in this series 20: Ps. 16:7 and Origen's Comm. ad loc

21:

See Against Jovinian, book 2:1. His second position is that "persons baptized with water and the spirit cannot be tempted of the devil.

22: This legendary companion and disciple of Simon Magus is said to have been identified by him with Helen of Troy. According to Justin Martyr she had been a prostitute at Tyre 23: Cf. Epiphanius, Adv. Haer. lib. 1:tom. ii, p. 76, ed. Migne

24:

Jerome is alone in speaking of this emissary. It has been suggested that he may have had in mind the gnostic Marcellina, who came to Rome during the episcopate of Anicetus

25: Apelles, the most famous of the disciples of Marcion, lived and taught mainly at Rome. Philumena was a clairvoyante whose revelations he regarded as inspired 26: See Letter XLI 27: Constantia, sister of Constantine the Great

28:

Lucilla, a wealthy lady of Carthage, having been condemned by its bishop Caecilianus, is said to have procured his deposition by bribing his fellow-bishops

29: Agape, a Spanish lady, was a disciple of the gnostic Marcus of Memphis (cf. Letter LXXV.). She was thus one of the links between the gnosticism of the East and the Priscillianism of Spain. Elpidius was a rhetorician who spread in Spain the Zoroastrian opinions which culminated in Priscillianism 30: Of these sisters nothing further is known

31: Viz., "A man may be without sin." See for this and the other statements of Pelagius, Aug. de Gestis Pelagii, esp. 100:2 and 6. Jerome's Anti-Pelagian Dialogue takes these words as containing the essence of Pelagianism 32: Celestius is meant, after Pelagius the principal champion of free will 33: autarkhj, self-determined 34: Rom. 7:22-25. In the Latin as in the Greek one word does duty for `grace 0' and `thanks. 0

35:

R. V

36:

This is the well known dualism of Manes (Manichaeus), who held that the physical world and the human body are essentially evil

37:

Josh. vii

38:

1 Sam. iv

39: 2 Sam. xxiv 40: This objection is dealt with at lengths by Augustine (Letter CXI. See Vol. I. Series I. of this Library) 41: Or rather, mock humility 42: Hos. 9:11, Hos. 9:14, partly after the LXX., partly from memory 43: Isa. 29:14, as quoted by Paul, 1 Cor. 1:19 44: The Anti-Pelagian Dialogue, to which this letter is a kind of prelude 45: Cf. Letter CXXIII

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Letter 134. To Augustine.

Jerome acknowledges the receipt of Letters 131 and 132 and excuses himself from answering the questions raised in them on the twofold ground (1) that the times are evil and (2) that it is inexpedient that he should be supposed to differ from Augustine. He prays for the speedy extinction of Pelagianism, regrets that he cannot send Augustine a critical Latin text of the O.T., and concludes with a number of salutations from himself and those with him. The date of the letter is 416 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 172. To Augustine, My Truly Pious Lord and Father, Worthy of My Utmost Affection and Veneration, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

1. That honourable man, my brother, and your Excellency's son, the presbyter Orosius, I have, both on his own account and in obedience to your request, made welcome. But a most trying time has come upon us, in which I have found it better for me to hold my peace than to speak, so that our studies have ceased, lest what Appius calls "the eloquence of dogs" should be provoked into exercise. For this reason I have not been able at the present time to give to those two books dedicated to my name — books of profound erudition, and brilliant with every charm of splendid eloquence — the answer which I would otherwise have given; not that I think anything said in them demands correction, but because I am mindful of the words of the blessed apostle in regard to the variety of men's judgments, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Certainly, whatever can be said on the topics there discussed, and whatever can be drawn by commanding genius from the fountain of sacred Scripture regarding them, has been in these letters stated in your positions, and illustrated by your arguments. But I beg your Reverence to allow me for a little to praise your genius. For in any discussion between us, the object aimed at by both of us is advancement in learning. But our rivals, and especially heretics, if they see different opinions maintained by us, will assail us with the calumny that our differences are due to mutual jealousy. For my part, however, I am resolved to love you, to look up to you, to reverence and admire you, and to defend your opinions as my own. I have also in a dialogue, which I recently published, made allusion to your Blessedness in suitable terms. Be it ours, therefore, rather to rid the Church of that most pernicious heresy which always feigns repentance, in order that it may have liberty to teach in our churches, and may not be expelled and extinguished, as it would be if it disclosed its real character in the light of day.

2. Your pious and venerable daughters, Eustochium and Paula, continue to walk worthy of their own birth and of your counsels, and they send special salutations to your Blessedness: in which they are joined by the whole brotherhood of those who with us labour to serve the Lord our Saviour. As for the holy presbyter Firmus, we sent him last year to go on business of Eustochium and Paula, first to Ravenna, and afterwards to Africa and Sicily, and we suppose that he is now detained somewhere in Africa. I beseech you to present my respectful salutations to the saints who are associated with you. I have also sent to your care a letter from me to the holy presbyter Firmus; if it reaches you, I beg you to take the trouble of forwarding it to him. May Christ the Lord

keep you in safety, and mindful of me, my truly pious lord and most blessed father.

[Postscript] We suffer in this province from a grievous scarcity of clerks acquainted with the Latin language; this is the reason why we are not able to comply with your instructions, especially in regard to that version of the Septuagint which is furnished with distinctive asterisks and obelisks; for we have lost, through some one's dishonesty, the most of the results of our earlier labour.

Letters - letter_135

Letter 135. From Pope Innocent to Aurelius.

Shortly after the synod of Diospolis the Pelagians exulting in their success made an attack upon Jerome's monasteries at Bethlehem which they pillaged and partially burned. This gained for him the sympathy of Innocent who now (a.d. 417) asks Aurelius to transmit to him the letter which follows this.

Innocent to his most esteemed friend and brother Aurelius.¹ Our fellow-presbyter Jerome has informed us of your most dutiful desire to come to see us. We suffer with him as with a member of our own flock. We have been swift also to take such measures as have appeared to us expedient and practicable. As you count yourself one of us, most dear brother, make haste to transmit the following letter² to the aforesaid Jerome.

1: At this time bishop of Carthage and a friend of Augustine 2: Letter CXXXVI

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Letter 136. From Pope Innocent to Jerome

Innocent expresses his sympathy with Jerome and promises to take strong measures to punish his opponents if he will bring specific charges against them. The date of the letter is a.d. 417.

Innocent to his most esteemed son, the presbyter Jerome. The apostle [Tit. 3:10, Tit. 3:11] bears witness that contention has never done good in the church; and for this reason he gives direction that heretics should be admonished once or twice in the beginning of their heresy and not subjected to a long series of rebukes. Where this rule is negligently observed, the evil to be guarded against so far from being evaded is rather intensified. Your grief and lamentation have so affected us that we can neither act nor advise. To begin however, we commend you for the constancy of your faith. To quote your own words spoken many times in the ears of many, a man will gladly face misrepresentation or even personal danger on behalf of the truth; if he is looking for the blessedness that is to come. We remind you of what you have yourself preached although we are sure that you need no reminder. The spectacle of these terrible evils has so thoroughly roused us that we have hastened to put forth the authority of the apostolic see to repress the plague in all its manifestations; but as your letters name no individuals and bring no specific charges, there is no one at present against whom we can proceed. But we do all that we can; we sympathize deeply with you. And if you will lay a clear and unambiguous accusation against any persons in particular we will appoint suitable judges to try their cases; or if you, our highly esteemed son, think that it is needful for us to take yet graver and more urgent action, we shall not be slow to do so. Meantime we have written to our brother bishop John¹ advising him to act more considerately, so that nothing may occur in the church committed to him which it is his duty to foresee and to prevent, and that nothing may happen which may subsequently prove a source of trouble to him.

1:

i.e. John of Jerusalem. See the next letter

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Letter 137. From Pope Innocent to John, Bishop of Jerusalem

Innocent censures John for having allowed the Pelagians to effuse the disturbance at Bethlehem mentioned in the two preceding letters and exhorts him to be more watchful over his diocese in future. The date of the letter is a.d. 417. This was the year of the death of both John and Innocent, and it is probable that John never received the letter.

Innocent to his most highly esteemed brother John. The holy virgins Eustochium and Paula¹ have deplored to me the ravages, murders, fires and outrages of all kinds, which they say that the devil has perpetrated in the district belonging to their church; for with wonderful clemency and generosity they have left untold the name and motive of his human agent. Now although there can be no doubt as to who is the guilty person;² yet you, my brother, ought to have taken precautions and to have been more careful of your flock so that no disturbance of the kind might arise; for others suffer by your negligence, and you encourage men by it to make havoc of the Lord's flock till His tender lambs, fleeced and weakened by fire, sword and persecution, their relations murdered and dead, are, as we are informed, themselves scarce alive. Does it not touch your sacred responsibility as a priest³ that the devil has shewn himself so powerful against you and yours? Against you, I say; for surely it speaks ill of your capacity as a priest that a crime so terrible should have been committed in the pale of your church. Where were your precautions? Where, after the blow had been struck, were your attempts at relief? Where too were your words of comfort? These ladies tell me that up to the present they have been in a state of too great apprehension to complain of what they have already suffered. I should judge more gravely of the matter had they spoken to me concerning it more freely than they have. Beware then, brother, of the wiles of the old enemy, and in the spirit of a good ruler be vigilant either to correct or to repress such evils. For they have reached my ears in the shape of rumours rather than as specific accusations. If nothing is done, the law of the Church on the subject of injuries may compel the person who has failed to defend his flock to shew cause for his negligence.

1: i.e. Paula the younger, Eustochium's niece, concerning whose education Jerome had written to her mother Laeta (Letter CVII.) 2: The attack was supposed to have been instigated by Pelagius 3: In Jerome's writings this title is often given to bishops. Presbyters are by him rarely so called

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Letter 138. To Riparius.

Jerome praises Riparius for his zeal on behalf of the Catholic faith and for his efforts to put down the Pelagians. He then describes the attack made by these heretics upon the monasteries of Bethlehem. Now, he is glad to say, they have at last been driven from Palestine. Most of them, that is, for some still linger at Joppa including one of their chief leaders. The date is a.d. 417. That you fight Christ's battles against the enemies of the Catholic Faith your own letters have informed me as well as the reports of many persons, but I am told that you find the winds contrary and that those who ought to have been the world's champions have backed the cause of perdition to each other's ruin. You are to know that in this part of the world, without any human help and merely by the decree of Christ, Catiline¹ has been driven not only from the capital but from the borders of Palestine. Lentulus, however, and many of his fellow-conspirators still linger to our sorrow in Joppa. I myself have thought it better to change my abode than to surrender the true faith; and have chosen to leave my pleasant home rather than to suffer contamination from heresy. For I could not communicate with men who would either have insisted on my instant submission or would else have summoned me to support my opinions by the sword. A good many, I dare say, have told you the story of my sufferings and of the vengeance which Christ's uplifted hand has on my behalf taken upon my enemies. I would beg of you, therefore, to complete the task which you have taken up and not, while you are in it, to leave Christ's church without a defender. Every one knows the weapons that must be used in this warfare; and you, I feel sure will ask for no others. You must contend with all your might against the foe; but it must be not with physical force but with that spiritual charity which is never overcome. The reverend brothers who are with me, unworthy as I am, salute you warmly. The reverend brother, the deacon Alentius, is sure to give you, my worshipful friend, a faithful narrative of all the facts. May Christ our Lord, of His almighty power, keep you safe and mindful of me, truly reverend sir and esteemed brother.

1:

Pelagius would naturally be understood by Catiline, and Celestius by Lentulus, who was Catiline's lieutenant. But it is known that, after the Synod of Diospolis which acquitted them, Celestius went to Africa, Ephesus, Constantinople, and Rome, while Pelagius apparently remained in Palestine, where he died

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Letter 139. To Apronius. Of Apronius nothing is known; but from the mention of Innocent (for whom see Letter 143.) it seems a fair inference that he lived in the West. Jerome here congratulates him on his steadfastness in the faith and exhorts him to come to Bethlehem. He then touches on the mischief done by Pelagius and complains that his own monastery has been destroyed by him or by his partisans. The date of the letter is a.d. 417.

I know not by what wiles of the devil it has come to pass that all your toil and the efforts of the reverend presbyter Innocent¹ and my own prayers and wishes seem for the moment to produce no effect. God be thanked that you are well and that the fire of faith glows in you even when you are in the midst of the devil's wiles. My greatest joy is to hear that my spiritual sons are fighting in the cause of Christ; and assuredly He in whom we believe will so quicken this zeal of ours that we shall be glad freely to shed our blood in defence of His faith.

I grieve to hear that a noble family has been subverted,² for what reason I cannot learn; for the bearer of the letter could give me no information. We may well grieve over the loss of our common friends and ask Christ the only potentate and Lord [1 Tim. 6:15] to have mercy upon them. At the same time we have deserved to receive punishment at God's hand for we³ have harboured the enemies of the Lord. The best course you can take is to leave everything and to come to the East, before all to the holy places; for everything is now quiet here. The heretics have not, it is true, purged the venom from their breasts, but they do not venture to open their impious mouths. They are "like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear." [Ps. 58:4] Salute your reverend brothers on my behalf. As for our house,⁴ so far as fleshly wealth is concerned, it has been completely destroyed by the onslaughts of the heretics; but by the mercy of Christ it is still filled with spiritual riches. To live on bread is better than to lose the faith.

1:

At this time in Palestine whither he had come as the bearer of letters from Augustine to Jerome and others

2: The family meant is probably the one warned by Jerome in his letter to Ctesiphon (CXXXIII, In that case the troubler of its peace is of course Pelagius 3: It would seem as if Jerome, like Augustine, had at first thought favourably of Pelagius 4: i.e. the monastic establishment under Jerome's guidance at Bethlehem. See Letters CXXXV.-CXXXVII

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Letter 140. To Cyprian the Presbyter.

Cyprian had visited Jerome at Bethlehem and had asked him to write an exposition of Psalm XC. in simple language such as might be readily understood. With this request Jerome now complies, giving a very full account of the psalm, verse by verse, and bringing the treasures of his learning and especially his knowledge of Hebrew to bear upon it. He asserts its Mosaic authorship but is careful to add that "the man of God" may have spoken not for himself but in the name of the Jewish people. He speaks of the five books into which the psalter is divisible and says that it is a mistake to ascribe all the psalms to David. An allusion to the doctrine of Pelagius shows that the letter must belong to Jerome's last years, and Vallarsi is probably right in assigning it to a.d. 418. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. First, Cyrianus, most studious of the priests, concerning their number, about whom Moses heard: Choose Presbyters, whom you know to be Presbyters (Exod. 12), as much as I have learned from letters, and the word gained by blessed men, who meditate in the Law of God day and night (Psal. 1). Now, however, since knowledge of the outer man has also been made known to us, and after greetings and sweet embraces, by which friendship is joined, you ask me immediately to expound to you the most difficult Psalm, which is numbered eighty-ninth among the Greeks and Latins, not with a composed diction and popular applause which usually deceives and fools the ears of the unlearned, but with simple speech and truth of Ecclesiastic eloquence: so that our interpretation does not need another interpreter, since it often happens with very eloquent speakers that understanding what they explain is more difficult than what they are attempting to explain. I will undertake the most difficult task, and supported by the aid of your holy prayers, I will remember that verse: The Lord shall give the word to them that preach with much power (Psalms 67:12).

2. And first it must be known that the title of this Psalm according to the Hebrew is "A Prayer of Moses, the man of God"; according to the Septuagint, "A Prayer of Moses, the man of God". But the Holy Scripture teaches us the difference between man and man of God. A fifty-year-old man speaks to Elijah: "Man of God, the king calls you." To which he replied, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men" (4 Kings 1:9-10). To Timothy also the Apostle writes: But thou, O man of God, fly these things. Moreover, concerning a man of God, the same Apostle instructs: But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ: and the head of the woman is the man: and the head of Christ is God. This man is he who ought not to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man. For the man was not created for the woman; but the woman for the man (1 Corinthians 11:3-9). And elsewhere: But we all, beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18). And in another place: Until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of

the age of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). Therefore, whether the appellation of man or of a holy man is ascribed to him who saw God face to face, and whose soul was saved, by his mouth we have learned the nature of the world's creation, of those matters, at least, which are visible, and the condition of man, and all the true history that goes back from our own times. He has left us not only five books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, but also eleven Psalms from the 89th, which begins, "O Lord, Thou hast been our refuge," to the 99th which is entitled, "A psalm of thanksgiving." However, Psalm 98 is not titled "A Psalm of David" in Hebrew, although it is in most manuscripts; this is because the Holy Scripture has a practice of assigning these titles to all the Psalms whose authors are not explicitly identified in the text, while those whose names are given in early Psalms have no titles assigned.

3. However, there are four Psalms that have the title of prayer: The sixteenth, which is titled Prayer of David and begins with "Hear my just cause, O Lord"; And the eighty-fifth: Incline your ear, O Lord; And the eighty-ninth, which is now in our hands: Lord, you have become our refuge; And the one hundred and first, which has the title, a prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed and pours out his complaint before the Lord. David and the poor man, who although he was rich, became poor for us, refers to Christ, who sat on the foal of a donkey, according to Zechariah (Chapter 9, verse 9), poor and gentle. But Moses, through whom the Lord gave the law, whose mouth we heard speaking with God, "Let us make man in our image and likeness" (Gen. 1:26): and immediately entered, "And God created the man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them," from the beginning of man's condition to his death and resurrection, explains everything, how he was created, how long he lives, what he does in the world, what the fruit of life is, why he toils, and where he strives to go. And since he who writes these things is a human being himself, he bears witness through his own person to the condition of the entire human race. Some, however, refer this Psalm, or Prayer, to the people of Israel: how they offended God in the wilderness and fell, and were deemed unworthy to enter the promised land; how the sons entered in place of their fathers, and again await God's favor, which is fulfilled in the coming of Christ.

4. A discourse about scripture. - Discourse, according to grammarians, is the speech of those who express the meaning of words, and whose etymology they thus explain: Discourse is the expression of the mouth. In the Holy Scriptures, however, we find it difficult to read Discourse in this sense, but rather that which pertains to prayers and supplications. The Hebrews say that the book of Psalms contains five books; from the first to the fortieth; from the forty-first to the seventy-first; from the seventy-second to the eighty-eighth; then from the beginning of the fourth book, which is the eighty-ninth, and which we are now discussing, to the hundred and fifth. At the end of all which a twofold amen is placed, which the Septuagint translate, "So be it, so be it," and from the 106th to the end it is like the Twelve Prophets; whose books we find are joined in one volume, and which are also treated by one church in a uniform order, which begins at Hosea and ends with Malachi; but in another Ezra and Nehemiah are counted as one book. But what I nearly forgot, asserting among the eleven psalms of Moses, that the 98th also belongs to him, where it is written, "O magnify the Lord our God and worship his footstool; for it is holy", the opinion of some people seems to be opposed to ours, because Moses is believed to have mentioned Samuel, whom we know to have lived long after his time. The solution of which question is easy; the prophetic name is Samuel's, who was of such great merit that he was mentioned with Moses in

Jeremiah; if Moses and Samuel shall stand (Jer. 15. 1): according to that example, when the man of God speaks in Samaria: altar, altar, thus says the Lord: behold a son shall be born to the house of David, Josias his name (5th Kings 13. 2). We also know that those who think all the Psalms were written by David are mistaken, and not those whose names they bear. Therefore, they also want this Psalm to be composed by David under the name of Moses, because the Lawgiver describes the common offense and calamity of the human race, and then the expectation of salvation, with a sacred mouth.

5. Lord, you have become our dwelling place in every generation. In the Septuagint: "Lord, you have been made our refuge, in every generation." In Hebrew, Maon is used for dwelling and refuge, but it sounds more like a dwelling place than a refuge. The narrator is going to tell a sad story and deplore the human race, but begins with praising God, so that whatever misfortunes may happen to man, they may not be seen as the harshness of the Creator, but rather as the fault of the one who was created. Whoever endures the storm, seeks refuge in either rocks or shelter. He who is pursued by an enemy flees to the walls of cities. The weary traveler seeks comfort in the shade, from both the sun and the dust. If a savage beast thirsts for human blood, it desires and strives, in whatever way it can, to avoid immediate danger. And so man, from the beginning of his existence, makes use of God as his helper; and since he owes his creation to that grace and his subsistence and life to that mercy, he can perform no good work without Him who granted him free will in such a way that He would not deny His grace for each individual act. So that free will might not result in an injury to the Creator nor in his obstinacy for which reason man was made free, to know that he has nothing except God. Moreover, when he says "In generation, and generation," he means all times both before the Law, and under the Law, and under grace of the Gospel. Therefore, the Apostle says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God," and all his Epistles in their salutations say not first "Peace," but "Grace unto you," so that we may obtain the peace of the Lord by the remission of our sins.

6. "Before the mountains were born, and the earth and world brought forth, from eternity to eternity, You are God." (Psalm 90:2) "Before the mountains were settled, before the earth and world were created, from eternity to eternity, You are God." (Septuagint) Some people distort this passage through wicked interpretation, especially those who want to posit the souls as prior to humans being made on the sixth day. They read and interpret it as follows: "Lord, You have been a refuge for us from generation to generation, before the mountains were settled, before the earth and world were created," so that what follows will make sense: "from eternity to eternity, You are God." This is how they wrongly teach it. If the Lord, before the mountains were established, and the earth and the orb of the earth were formed, was the refuge of men; therefore there were souls in heaven, before human bodies were formed. But we, as we have proposed, should distinguish reading thus: Before the mountains were established and the earth and the orb of the earth were formed, from age to age you are God; so our refuge was not before the creation of the world, who we were not yet; but that God always be God from eternity to eternity. For he whom the Latin interpreter has placed, from age to age, and in Hebrew it is Olam, we will interpret more correctly, from everlasting to everlasting. Something similar is read also in Proverbs from the persona of wisdom, which is Christ: The Lord created me at the beginning of his ways, in his works, before the ages he established me, before he made the earth and the abysses, before the fountains of waters came forth, before the mountains were settled, before all hills he generated me (Prov. 8.

22. et seqq.). But no word of creation should be moved since in Hebrew there is no creation that is called Bara; but possession. For it is written: Adonai Canani Bresith Dercho, which is expressed in our language: The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his ways. However, there is much diversity between possession and creation. Possession means that the Son has always been in the Father, and the Father in the Son. However, the creation of him who did not exist before is the beginning of a condition. According to the laws of tropology, the words "Before the mountains were established, before the earth was formed and the world was made," mean that before sublime dogmas were established in our soul, and the earth of our body was formed or stabilized by God, and the world, which in Hebrew is called Thebel and more significantly in Greek oukoumen[■] and can be translated as "inhabited," was established or stabilized, God has always been our refuge. However, an inhabited soul deserves to have God as a guest, not deserted, as the Savior says: "I and the Father will come and dwell with him" (John 14:23). Moreover, that which is also Hebrew, and all other interpreters: "Before the mountains were born, and the earth was brought forth," is clearly brought forth to us for tropology. For neither mountains nor earth receive birth and parturition, but condition. From which it is clearly demonstrated that even the holy and lofty virtues are always born of God's mercy.

7. You will turn man to contrition, and say, "Return, sons of Adam." According to the Seventy: "Do not turn man into humility," you said, "return, sons of men." According to the Hebrew that is said, it means: "Oh God, who created man, and from the beginning of him is refuge and habitation, you will turn him to contrition; you made him and molded him to be shattered in death, and your vessel at the end of his life will be broken; when this condition hangs over him, so that he may perish in his rise, and no matter how long he may have lived, he will dissolve in the end; you speak to him daily through the prophets: Return, sons of Adam, who by your fault offended God and became mortal from immortality." For you did not wish to hear the command: Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat. For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death. (Gen. 2.17). Moreover that which the Seventy have translated: Do not turn man to humility, and you said: Be converted, O sons of men, has this sense: I ask that you do not humiliate the man whom you have created in your image and likeness and have deemed worthy to call a son from a servant; do not make him forever captive to sin, lest the old sentence prevail over him: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3.19). For you have promised us repentance, saying: I desire not the death of the sinner, but that he should be converted and live (Ezekiel 18:23); You have said, by the voice of all your saints: "Turn ye, turn ye, O ye sons of men, unto the most gracious God, who meets those who come and offers the sign which they had lost through their own fault, and gives anew the old robe of incorruption."

8. Because a thousand years are in your sight like yesterday, which passed, or like a watch in the night. You who always provoke us to repentance through the prophets, saying, "Return, O sons of men," we ask (as I have already said) that you do not keep man in everlasting humility. For we do not think that what you promise is far off, giving us salvation after many ages. For compared to eternity, the length of all time is short. For a thousand years in your sight are like one day. And he immediately rebuked himself. "I misspoke," he said, "I should have said that one day, and the length of a single day is equivalent to a thousand years in your sight, when I ought rather to have said that the space of a single watch stands for a protracted period of a thousand years. The night is divided into four watches, each of which is reckoned as comprising three hours. Hence the Lord

came to the Apostles who were sailing in the fourth watch (Matt. 14:25; and Mark vi. 48). Therefore, just as a single watch of the night speedily slips by, especially for those who are wearied by watching, so too do living spaces of a thousand years pass with you, who are always to be, and always are, and always have been, for an incredibly short time." And further, as yesterday's day, which has passed, in accordance with the opinion of the Apostle who writes to the Hebrews, let us feel that Jesus Christ yesterday and today, the same and forever (Heb. 13:8). Therefore, I believe that from this place, and from the Epistle which is inscribed in the name of Peter the Apostle, a thousand years are accustomed to be called one day: so that because the world was made in six days, only six thousand years are believed to subsist: and afterwards the sevenfold number comes, and the octonary, in which the true Sabbath is exercised, and the purity of circumcision is restored. Therefore, also, the rewards of good works are promised by eight beatitudes. However, Peter writes this way: "One thing, beloved, should not escape your notice: with the Lord, a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day." The Lord does not delay in His promise, as some think. (2 Peter 3:8-9)

9. Upon striking them, they will be like a dream, passing away like a herb in the morning. It flourishes in the morning and fades away, and by evening it is worn out and dried up. As for those things which are considered worthless, their years shall be as many: passing away like a herb in the morning, flourishing in the morning and passing away, falling in the evening, becoming hardened and withered. According to the Hebrew, the meaning here is: Our conversion and salvation have greatly benefited from the fact that all the lives of mortals, like a dream, are contracted by a swift death: which, like flowers and hay, dries up and fades almost at the same time. Striking you," he said, "that is to say, men; and with that speech complete: 'You fool, this night your soul will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' (Luke 12:20) Every human condition is compared to a dream. For just as in the morning the green grass, and blooming with its own flowers, pleases the eyes of those who behold it, and gradually withering, loses its beauty, and turns into hay that must be crushed: so every kind of person blossoms in childhood, flourishes in youth, thrives in the men of full age: and suddenly, not knowing it, their hair turns white, their faces wrinkled, their once stretched skin contracts; and at the very end, that which is called evening here, that is, old age, can hardly move: so that one is not recognized as the same person who existed before, but is almost transformed into another. What shall we say of the times from infancy to extreme and decrepit old age, when sickness causes this as well as sadness from starvation, so that the previously most beautiful faces of women pass into such foulness, that love is replaced by hatred? About this condition of mortals, Isaiah also speaks: All flesh is grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls (Isaiah 40:6). It must be explained similarly according to the Septuagint. Everything that seems long in the world, God, is brief for you. For the days and years in which human life is contracted, if compared to eternity, will be considered as nothing. For, just as the grass grew in the morning, flourished, and dried up, at evening, it withered and died; so will be all human beauty.

10. For we have been consumed in your anger, and are troubled in your indignation. Seventy: For we have failed in your anger, and we are troubled in your fury. Symmachus and Aquila translated it as "we have been disturbed" because of what we said, we are troubled. However, it signifies the brevity of human life. And what Intro brought: in your anger and in your fury, the sentence of God showed perseverance, to which all men are subject. Namely this: you are dust, and unto dust you

shall return. But, beautifully, not as in the Septuagint, we are troubled, but according to the Hebrew, we are said to hasten; so, although the age of men may appear long, yet in comparison with eternity it is short. This also is testified by the illustrious Poet, who says: But meanwhile it flees, time flees irretrievably. (Georgics, book 3.) Et iterum . . . Rhoëbe for a long time (if any thing lasts long for mortals) We have lived. (Aeneid. 10.)

11. "You have set our iniquities before you; our hidden sins are in the light of your face" (Psalm 90:8). In the Septuagint, it reads: "You have set our iniquities before you, our age in the light of your face." Where we have translated "our hidden sins" instead of "our age" as the Septuagint did. In the Hebrew script, it is written as "Alomenu," which the fifth edition interprets as "youth"; Aquila translates it as "oversights," and we can also translate it into our language as "errors" or "ignorances." Whence, he said in another place: The sins of my youth and my ignorances remember not (Psalm 24:7). And again: Who understandeth sins? And: Cleanse me from my secret faults, O Lord: and from those of others spare thy servant (Psalms 18: 13-14). For the faults that we commit, which we often do by will, sometimes by ignorance or error, are foreign to us; and yet, when there is no will in the crime, error is the fault. But I wonder why the seventy wanted to call the age, neglects, and errors, or ignorances, the world: unless perhaps because vices are committed in the world and in the time of this life. And what he meant by "in illuminatione" or "in the light of your face" is this: none of our sins have escaped your notice, O sinner, and your eye has even seen our secrets, according to what is written: "Darkness shall not hide from you" (Psalm 139:12), and "God searches the heart and the reins" (Psalm 7:9). And again, "As his darkness, so also his light" (Psalm 139:12). For man sees only what is on the surface, but God sees into the heart.

12. For all our days have passed away in Thy wrath: we have consumed our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years in them are threescore and ten years. But if in the strong they be fourscore years: and what is beyond these is labour and sorrow. For it is passed away in thy anger and we shall be troubled. The years of our life are threescore and ten, or fourscore, if with more strength: and in them is labour and sorrow. For it is come to an end, and we are gone. Who knoweth the power of thy anger, and for thy fear can number thy wrath? However, we have often said that the wrath and anger of God is not that God takes revenge when angry, but that He seems to be angry at those who endure punishments. For what comes upon us from our own perturbation is derived from God's justice. Regarding the speech of the speaker, the Seventy translated "meditationem araneae." For just as the words of a speaker fly by, so too the work of a spider is woven in futility. This refers to the person of heretics as it was written in Isaiah: "They weave the web of a spider" (Isaiah 59:5); which can catch small and light animals such as flies, mosquitoes, and others of this sort; but are broken by stronger animals. It is similar in the Church with the simple-minded who are deceived by errors, as they are incapable of contending with the stronger men in faith and truth.

13. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow" (Psalm 90:10). In the Septuagint, it reads: "The days of our years in them are threescore years and ten. But if in power they be fourscore years, and what is more of them is labor and sorrow." For what we have translated as "in them," the Hebrew has "Baem," and Symmachus translated it more significantly as "whole," which we can translate more for sense than for word as "entire." Therefore, whatever we live, and in which

mortal life is pleasant, is encompassed by a span of seventy years. But if, as Symmachus interpreted it, contrary to opinion, they are eighty years; whatever is above, is spent in illnesses and infirmity, which are companions of old age, with dimming eyes, aching, or falling out of the hardest teeth first, which the divine word more fully describes in Ecclesiastes: The days of evil shall come, and when we shall say that we have no pleasure in them. When the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars; and the clouds return after the rain; In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall stagger: and the grinders shall be idle in a small number, and they that look through the holes shall be darkened: And the doors shall be shut in the street, when the grinder's voice shall be low, and they shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; And they shall fear high things, and they shall be afraid in the way: the almond tree shall flourish, and the locust shall be made fat, and the caper tree shall be destroyed. For man shall depart into his eternal home: and they that mourn shall go about the streets: Until the silver cord be broken, and the golden fillet shrink back, and the pitcher be crushed at the fountain, and the wheel be broken upon the cistern, and the dust return into its earth, from whence it was, and the spirit return to God, who gave it. Vanity of vanities, said Ecclesiastes, and all is vanity. All these things are contained in the miseries of human life, and especially of old age: and we have spoken of the sense they have in their place. They are those who interpret this place allegorically, referring to the mystery of the Sabbath and circumcision: that we first rest in the Law, and afterward the sacraments of true circumcision in the Gospel hold us, admonishing that also: Give a portion to seven, and also to eight. And multitudes of seventy thousand and eighty thousand men, from whom the temple was built under Solomon. But what is this to the present place, which a simple and pure explanation suffices for, one that seeks not the glory of doctrine in the multiplication of words, but should seek the understanding of the reader?

14. "For we have passed quickly and flown away. Septuagint: For meekness has come upon us and we shall be corrected. For which in Greek it is written παιδευθησόμεθα, which is an ambiguous word; and it signifies both correction and education and doctrine. For whom the Lord loveth, he corrects and teaches, and whips every son whom he receives. Symmachus translated this passage as follows: For we fall suddenly and fly away. The Fifth Edition in this way: For we have passed quickly and dissolved." And there is meaning. After seventy years, and, as is often the case, eighty, which is how long human life lasts, when the soul is separated from the body, we fly away like the wind; either because it compares man to the green grass and beautiful flowers, which wither in the evening, now for the dryness of the evening, it sets forth the cutting down of the flowers. And when we have passed through everything we lived for, we are dissolved by a sudden death. What the Seventy have said, 'For meekness will come upon us, and we shall be taken away,' has this meaning. After seventy and eighty years, when the meekness of the Lord will come, and the day of our death will approach, we will not be judged according to merit, but according to mercy: and what is thought to be correction, will be teaching and doctrine. And we are quite amazed as to why the Hebrew word Ais, the Septuagint, Theodotion, and the Sixth Edition transferred meekness, when Aquila, Symmachus and the Fifth Edition translated hurry and suddenly quickly.

15. Who knows the strength of your anger, and according to your fear, your indignation? Seventy: Who knows the power of your anger, and can count your rage because of fear? There is a different distinction between Hebrew and the Septuagint. For the Septuagint connect the

enumeration of the fear and rage of the Lord. Moreover, in the following verse the Hebrew is adapted, so that it follows: Show us, Lord, the length of our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. This should be briefly explained to us. Who can know how long your anger, from which fear is born for the human race, will last, unless you teach us, who are God? Therefore, I beg that you may reveal to us the time of our life, so that we may prepare ourselves with a wise heart according to your judgment. But what he said: "Who knows the strength or power of your anger; and according to your fear, your indignation?" shows that it is difficult to know the secret of God's anger, fear, and indignation, and the reason why. Hence, the Prophet begs tearfully: "Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor chastise me in your wrath" (Ps. 6.1). For He does not inflict pain to destroy, but to correct and amend. Therefore, in Hosea (Ch. 4:14), even to the people of Judea, whom He is very angry with, He says that He is by no means angry nor will He visit their transgressions upon their children, when they commit adultery. And through Ezekiel He speaks to Jerusalem: 'I do not mean to vent My wrath on you' and 'My menace shall withdraw far from you. (Ezek. 16:42).' And in the Chronicles when Israel is going out against the enemy for battle, his heart is peaceful.

16. Show us the number of our days, and we will come with a wise heart. Seventy: Make your right hand known, and those learned in wisdom. This is how Aquila, Symmachus, and Quinta Editio translated it: Show us our days so that we may come with a wise heart. The obvious mistake for why they said "right hand" instead of "days" is because the word yameinu is a compound word meaning our days. When it is written in the singular form, the last letter (called Nun) represents the right hand, as in the name Benjamin, which means son of the right hand. But if Mem has it, it means (indicates) a day or days. Moreover, the meaning is: Show us the number of our years and days, which you decreed for us to live in this world, so that we may prepare for your advent; and despising the error of mortals, hasten to go to you with a wise heart, and desire your presence and hasten to you. For nothing deceives the human race so much as while they are ignorant of the spaces of their own lives, they promise themselves a longer possession of this world. Hence, that excellent saying: There is no one so old and so decrepit in age that he does not suspect he will live one more year. It is also related to this meaning that which is said: Remember thy own death, and thou shalt not sin (Eccl. 7. 40). For he who recalls that he is going to die every day, despises the present, and hurries towards the future. This is what David prays of in another place, saying, "Take me not away in the midst of my days": before I go hence, and be no more seen'. This passage is thus explained: 'Do not let me die at a time when I think that I am still going to live, so that I may be able to correct my sins by penitence. For, if Thou doest this, I shall have ceased to be found making progress in my misdoings.' This is not that he denies any hope of resurrection, but that he declares himself unable to stand before One, in Whose sight all who continue in their sins are considered as nothing. Where we have translated 'those who are learned in heart', others have translated 'those who are bound', being deceived by the ambiguity of the word. For, if you say πεπεδημ■νοϋς it means 'those who are bound'.

17. Return, O Lord, how long? And be gracious to your servants. Likewise Psalm 70. For we repent, and knowing the brevity of our life, we desire to come to you with a wise heart; and you, Lord, return to us. For we have strayed far from our sins and you have forgiven us, so that we may walk according to our will and thoughts. But as he carries it farther, how long, he has that understanding which we read in the twelfth Psalm: How long, o Lord, wilt thou forget me unto the

end? For he who is in distress, the help of God seems slow; and therefore he prays more earnestly that he may soon feel the aid of the Lord God, and not judge him angry, but appeased.

18. Fill us with your morning mercy, and we will praise and rejoice in all our days. The Seventy: We are filled in the morning with your mercy, and we rejoiced and were delighted in all our days. In almost all places, the Seventy have this custom, that what is presented (or even placed) in the future by the Hebrews, they refer to as already done and past. So here, not as they desired, they say that they have been filled with the morning mercy of God, and are glad; otherwise, if this had not been done, why do they afterwards pray and say, "Look upon thy servants and upon thy works?" But they pray for the whole of what they ask, in order that they may deserve His morning mercy, which when they shall have obtained, they may praise God and be glad in all the days of their life. But they seem to me to pray for the rewards of eternal life in the hope of resurrection, saying: 'Fill us with your morning mercy.' Indeed, this is the title of the twenty-first Psalm, which pertains properly to the mystery of the Lord and his resurrection, and is inscribed as: 'For the morning assumption.'

19. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Seventy: We were glad for the days in which Thou didst humble us, for the years in which we saw evils. And Lazarus, who had received evils in his life, rests in the bosom of Abraham in eternal joy (Luke 16). But he does not call evils such things as are contrary to good, but he puts them for affliction and distress. With what evils both Sarah and Hagar afflicted her handmaid, and of which it is written in the Gospel: Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof (Matthew 6:34). How much therefore in this world, by persecutions, poverty, the power of enemies, or the tortures of illness we have been afflicted; so much after the resurrection in the future we will obtain greater rewards. For beautifully he did not say, we have endured evils; but we have seen. For who is the man who lives and does not see death? (Psalm 88:49) Which is not so much to be referred to the dissolution of the body as to the multitude of sins, according to which it is said: The soul that sins, it shall die (Ezekiel 18).

20. Let your work appear to your servants, and your glory over their children. Seventy: Look upon your servants, and upon your works, and direct their children. Therefore, the Lord himself works his work in his servants. Nor is he who seeks his own salvation content, but seeks the glory of his children, that is, the servants of God. But we ought to receive as sons, not so much those who are born from their line, as their disciples; of whom also Paul spoke: My little children, of whom I am in labor again. (Gal. 4. 19). Hence, John the Apostle, according to the merits of his children and the progress of their individual works, writes to little children, to young men, and to fathers.

21. "And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." (Psalm 90:17) In the Septuagint, it reads: "And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us; and direct Thou the works of our hands over us: yea, the work of our hands, direct Thou it." Where are those who, applauding their power of free will, think that they have obtained the grace of God if they have the power to do good or evil, or not to do so? Now here blessed Moses, after the resurrection that he had asked for, saying: 'Fulfill us with your morning mercy, and we will praise and be glad in all our days', was not happy to have only risen again and obtained eternal life; but he asks that the glory of the Lord his God be over those who have risen, and that it shine in the souls and hearts of the saints. He

Himself guides the works of their hands and make them eternal, and confirms everything that seems good in the holy ones. For as the humility of the suppliant earns rewards, so the pride of the one who despises or is confident in the help of God will be abandoned.

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Letter 141. To Augustine A short note in which Jerome praises Augustine for the determined stand which he has made against heresy and speaks of him as "the restorer of the ancient faith." The allusion seems to be to his action in the Pelagian controversy. If so, the date is probably 418 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 195. To His Holy Lord and Most Blessed Father, Augustine, Jerome Sends Greeting. At all times I have esteemed your Blessedness with becoming reverence and honour, and have loved the Lord and Saviour dwelling in you. But now we add, if possible, something to that which has already reached a climax, and we heap up what was already full, so that we do not suffer a single hour to pass without the mention of your name, because you have, with the ardour of unshaken faith, stood your ground against opposing storms, and preferred, so far as this was in your power, to be delivered from Sodom, though you should come forth alone, rather than linger behind with those who are doomed to perish. Your wisdom apprehends what I mean to say. Go on and prosper! You are renowned throughout the whole world; Catholics revere and look up to you as the restorer of the ancient faith, and - which is a token of yet more illustrious glory - all heretics abhor you. They persecute me also with equal hatred, seeking by imprecation to take away the life which they cannot reach with the sword. May the mercy of Christ the Lord preserve you in safety and mindful of me, my venerable lord and most blessed father.

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Letter 142. To Augustine.

There is good ground for supposing this to form part of the previous letter. If so, Jerome speaks in a figure of the success gained by Pelagianism in Palestine. "Jerusalem," he says, "is in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and will not heed the voice of Jeremiah," that is, as the context shews, Jerome himself. Date uncertain, possibly 410 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 123.

[From Jerome to Augustine.]

There are many who go halting upon both feet, and refuse to bend their heads even when their necks are broken, persisting in adherence to their former errors, even though they have not their former liberty of proclaiming them.

Respectful salutations are sent to you by the holy brethren who are with your humble servant, and especially by your pious and venerable daughters. I beg your Excellency to salute in my name your brethren my lord Alypius and my lord Evodius. Jerusalem is held captive by Nebuchadnezzar, and refuses to listen to the counsels of Jeremiah, preferring to look wistfully towards Egypt, that it may die in Tahpanhes, and perish there in eternal bondage.

Letters - letter_143

Letter 143. To Alypius and Augustine. In this letter Jerome congratulates Alypius and Augustine on their success in strangling the heresy of Caelestius, the co-adjutor of Pelagius, and states that, if he can find time and secretaries, he hopes to write a refutation of the absurd errors of the Pelagian pseudodeacon Annianus. The date is 419 a.d. Sometimes numbered as Augustine letter 202. To the Bishops Alypius and Augustine, My Lords Truly Holy, and Deservedly Loved and Reverenced, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

1. The holy presbyter Innocentius, who is the bearer of this letter, did not last year take with him a letter from me to your Eminences, as he had no expectation of returning to Africa. We thank God, however, that it so happened, as it afforded you an opportunity of overcoming [evil with good in requiting] our silence by your letter. Every opportunity of writing to you, revered fathers, is most acceptable to me. I call God to witness that, if it were possible, I would take the wings of a dove and fly to be folded in your embrace. Loving you, indeed, as I have always done, from a deep sense of your worth, but now especially because your co-operation and your leadership have succeeded in strangling the heresy of Celestius, a heresy which has so poisoned the hearts of many, that, though they felt they were vanquished and condemned, yet they did not lay aside their venomous sentiments, and, as the only thing that remained in their power, hated us by whom they imagined that they had lost the liberty of teaching heretical doctrines.

2. As to your inquiry whether I have written in opposition to the books of Annianus, this pretended deacon of Celedæ, who is amply provided for in order that he may furnish frivolous accounts of the blasphemies of others, know that I received these books, sent in loose sheets by our holy brother, the presbyter Eusebius, not long ago. Since then I have suffered so much through the attacks of disease, and through the falling asleep of your distinguished and holy daughter Eustochium, that I almost thought of passing over these writings with silent contempt. For he flounders from beginning to end in the same mud, and, with the exception of some jingling phrases which are not original, says nothing he had not said before. Nevertheless, I have gained much in the fact, that in attempting to answer my letter he has declared his opinions with less reserve, and has published to all men his blasphemies; for every error which he disowned in the wretched synod of Diospolis he in this treatise openly avows. It is indeed no great thing to answer his superlatively silly puerilities, but if the Lord spare me, and I have a sufficient staff of amanuenses, I will in a few brief lucubrations answer him, not to refute a defunct heresy, but to silence his ignorance and blasphemy by arguments: and this your Holiness could do better than I, as you would relieve me from the necessity of praising my own works in writing to the heretic. Our holy daughters Albina and Melania, and our son Pinianus, salute you cordially. I give to our holy presbyter Innocentius this short letter to convey to you from the holy place Bethlehem. Your niece Paula piteously entreats you to remember her, and salutes you warmly. May the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve you safe and mindful of me, my lords truly holy, and fathers deservedly loved and reverenced.

Letters - letter_144

Letter 144. From Augustine to Optatus

Augustine writes to Optatus, bishop of Milevis, to say that he cannot send him a copy of his letter to Jerome on the origin of the soul (Letter 131.) as it is incomplete without Jerome's reply which he has not yet received. He then criticises the arguments with which Optatus combats traducianism and points out that his reasoning is inconclusive. The date of the letter is a.d. 420. The letter has been somewhat compressed in translation: the involved sentences of the original have been simplified and its redundancies curtailed. To the blessed lord and brother, sincerely loved and longed-for, his fellow-bishop Optatus, Augustine [sends] greeting in the Lord.

1. By the hand of the reverend presbyter Saturninus I have received a letter from you, venerable sir, in which you earnestly ask me for what I have not yet got. You thus shew clearly your belief that I have already had a reply to my question on the subject. Would that I had! Knowing the eagerness of your expectation, I should never have dreamed of keeping back from you your share in the gift; but if you will believe me, dear brother, it is not so. Although five years have elapsed since I despatched to the East my letter (which was one of inquiry, not of assertion), I have so far received no reply, and am consequently unable to untie the knot as you wish me to do. Had I had both¹ letters, I should gladly have sent you both; but I think it better not to circulate mine² by itself lest he to whom it is addressed and who may still answer me as I desire should prove displeased. If I were to publish so elaborate a treatise as mine without his reply to it, he might be justly indignant, and suppose me more intent on displaying my talents than on promoting some useful end. It would look as if I were bent on starting problems too hard for him to solve. It is better to wait for the answer which he probably means to send. For I am well aware that he has other subjects to occupy him which are more serious and urgent than this question of mine. Your holiness will readily understand this if you read what he wrote to me a year later when my messenger was returning. The following is an extract from his letter:³

"A most trying time has come upon us⁴ in which I have found it better to hold my peace than to speak. Consequently my studies have ceased, that I may not give occasion to what Appius calls 'the eloquence of dogs.'⁵ For this reason I have not been able to send any answer to your two learned and brilliant letters. Not, indeed, that I think anything in them needs correction, but that I recall the Apostle's words: 'One judges in this way, another in that; let every man give full expression to his own opinion.' [Suo sensu abundet. Rom. 14:5, Vulg] All that a lofty intellect can draw from the well of holy scripture has been drawn by you. So much your reverence must allow me to say in praise of your ability. But though in any discussion between us our joint object is the advancement of learning, our rivals and especially the heretics will ascribe any difference of opinion between us to mutual jealousy. For my part, however, I am resolved to love you, to look up to you, to reverence and admire you, and to defend your opinions as my own. I have also in a dialogue which I have recently brought out made allusion to your holiness in suitable terms. Let us, rather, then, strain every nerve to banish from the churches that most pernicious heresy,⁶ which

feigns repentance that it may have liberty to teach in our churches. For were it to come out into the light of day, it would be expelled and die."

2. You can see, worshipful brother, from this reply that my friend does not refuse to answer my inquiry; he postpones it because he is condemned to give his time to more urgent matters. Moreover, that he is well disposed towards me is clear from his friendly warning that a controversy between us begun in all charity and in the interests of learning may be misconstrued by jealous and heretical persons as due to mutual illfeeling. No; it will be better for the public to have both together, his explanation as well as my inquiry. For, as I shall have to thank him for instructing me if he is able to explain the matter, the discussion will be of no small advantage when it comes to the knowledge of the world. Those who come after us will not only know what view they ought to take of a subject thus fully argued but will also learn how under the divine mercy brothers in affection may dispute a difficult question and yet preserve each other's esteem.

3. On the other hand, if I were to publish the letter in which I raise this obscure point without the reply in which it may be set at rest, it might circulate widely and reach men who "comparing themselves," as the Apostle says, "with themselves," [2 Cor. 10:12] would misconstrue a motive which they could not understand, and would explain my feeling towards one whom I love and esteem for his immense services not as it would appear to them (for it would be invisible to them) but as their own fancy and malice would dictate. Now this is a danger which, so far as in me lies, I am bound to guard against. But if a document which I am unwilling to publish is published without my consent and placed in hands from which I would withhold it, then I shall have to resign myself to the will of God. Indeed, had I wished to keep my words permanently undivulged I should never have sent them to any one. For if (though I hope it may not be so) chance or necessity shall prevent any reply being ever given me, my letter of inquiry is still bound sooner or later to come to light. Nor will it be useless to those who read it; for, although they will not find what they seek, they will learn how much better it is, when one is uninformed, to put questions than to make assertions; and in the meantime those whom they consult⁷ will work out the points raised by me, laying aside contention and in the interests of learning and charity trying to obtain sound opinions about them. Thus they will either arrive at the solutions they desire, or their faculties will be quickened and they will learn from the investigation that farther inquiry is useless. At present, however, as I have no reason to despair of an answer from my friend I have decided not to publish the letter I have sent him, and I trust, my dear comrade, that this decision may commend itself to you. It should do so, for you have not asked for my letter so much as for the answer to it; and this I would gladly send you if I had it to send. It is true that in your epistle you speak of "the lucid demonstration of my wisdom which in virtue of my life the Giver of light has bestowed upon me"; and if by this you mean not the way in which I have stated the problem but a solution which I have obtained of the point in question, I should like to gratify your wish. But I must admit that I have so far failed to discover how the soul can derive its sin from Adam (a truth which it is unlawful to question) and yet not itself be derived from Adam. At present I think it better to sift the matter farther than to dogmatize rashly.

4. Your letter speaks of "many old men and persons educated by learned priests whom you have failed to recall to your modest way of thinking, and to a statement of the case which is truth itself." You do not, however, explain what this mode of expression is. If your old men hold fast what they have received from learned priests, how comes it that you are troubled by a boorish mob of unlettered clerics? On the other hand, if the old men and the unlettered clerics have wickedly

departed from the priests' teachings, surely these latter are the persons to correct them and restrain them from controversial excesses. Again when you say that "you as a new-fledged and inexperienced teacher have been afraid to tamper with the doctrines handed down by great and famous bishops, and that you have been loth to draw men into a better path lest you should cast discredit on the dead," do you not imply that in refusing to agree with you the objects of your solicitude are but preferring the tradition of great and famous bishops to the views of a new-fledged and inexperienced teacher? Of their conduct in the matter I say nothing, but I am most anxious to learn that "mode of expression which is truth itself," not the thing expressed, but the mode of expression.

5. For you have made it sufficiently plain to me that you disapprove of those who assert that men's souls are derived from that of the protoplast⁸ and propagated from one generation to another; but as your letter does not inform me, I have no means of knowing on what grounds and from what passages of scripture you have shewn this view to be false. What does commend itself to you is not clear either from your letter to the brothers at Caesarea or from that which you have lately addressed to me. Only I see that you believe and write that "God has been, is, and will be the maker of men, and that there is nothing either in heaven or on earth which does not owe its existence wholly to Him." This is of course a truism which nobody can call in question. But as you affirm that souls are not propagated, you ought to explain out of what God makes them. Is it out of some pre-existing material, or is it out of nothing? For it is impossible that you should hold the opinion of Origen, Priscillian, and other heretics that it is for deeds done in a former life that souls are confined in earthly and mortal bodies. This opinion is, indeed, flatly contradicted by the apostle who says of Jacob and Esau that before they were born they had done neither good nor evil. [Rom. 9:11] Your view of the matter, then, is known to me though only partially, but of your reasons for supposing it to be true I know nothing. This was why in a former letter I asked you to send me your confession of faith, the one which you were vexed to find that one of your presbyters had signed dishonestly. I now again ask you for this, as well as for any passages of scripture which you have brought to bear on the question. For you say in your letter to the brothers at Caesarea that you "have resolved to have all definitions of dogma reviewed by lay judges, sitting by general invitation, and investigating all points touching the faith." And you continue: "the divine mercy has made it possible for them to put forward their views in a positive and definite form, which your modest ability has reinforced with a great weight of evidence." Now it is this "great weight of evidence" which I am so anxious to obtain. For, so far as I can see, your one aim has been to refute your opponents when they deny that our souls are the handiwork of God. If they hold such a view, you are right in thinking that it should be condemned. Were they to say the same thing of our bodies, they would be forced to retract it, or else be held up to execration. For what Christian can deny that every single human body is the work of God? Yet when we admit that they are of divine origin we do not mean to deny that they are humanly engendered. When therefore it is asserted that our souls are procreated from a kind of immaterial seed, and that they, like our bodies, come to us from our parents, yet are made souls by the working of God, it is not by human guesses that the assertion is to be refuted, but by the witness of divine scripture. Numbers of passages may indeed be quoted from the sacred books which have canonical authority, to prove that our souls are God's handiwork. But such passages only refute those who deny that each several human soul is made by God; not at all those who while they admit this contend that, like our bodies, they are formed by divine agency through the instrumentality of parents. To refute

these you must look for unmistakable texts; or, if you have already discovered such, shew your affection by communicating them to me. For though I seek them most diligently I fail to find them. As stated shortly by yourself (at the end of your letter to the brothers at Caesarea) your dilemma is as follows: "inasmuch as I am your son and disciple and have but recently by God's help come to consider these mysteries, I beg you with your priestly wisdom to teach me which of two opposite views I ought to hold. Am I to maintain that souls are transmitted by generation, and that they are derived in some mysterious way from Adam our first-formed father? [Wisdom 10:1] Or am I with your brothers and the priests who are here to hold that God has been, is, and will be the author and maker of all things and all men?"

6. Of the two alternatives which you thus put forward you wish to be urged to choose one or other; and this would be the course of wisdom if your alternatives were so contrary that the choice of one would involve the rejection of the other. But as it is, instead of selecting one of them a man may say that they are both true. He may maintain that the souls of all mankind are derived from Adam our first-formed father, and yet believe and assert that God has been, is, and will be the author and maker of all things and all men. How on your principles is such a man to be confuted? Shall we say: "If they are transmitted by generation God is not their author, for He does not make them?" In that case he will reply: "Bodies too are engendered and not made by God; on your shewing, then He is not their author." Will any one maintain that God is the maker of no bodies but Adam's which He made out of the dust and Eve's which He formed out of Adam's side; and that other bodies are not made by Him because they are engendered by human parents?

7. If your opponents go so far in maintaining the derivation of souls as to deny that they are made and formed by God, you may use this argument as a weapon to confute them so far as God's help enables you. But if, while they assert that the soul's beginnings come from Adam first and then from a man's parents, they at the same time hold that the soul in every man is created and formed by God the author of all things, they can only be confuted out of scripture. Search therefore till you find a passage that is neither obscure nor capable of a double meaning; or if you have already found one, hand it on to me as I have begged you to do. But if, like myself, you have so far failed to discover any such passage, you must still strain every nerve to confute those who say that souls are in no sense God's handiwork. This seems to be your opponents position, for in your first letter you write that "they have secretly whispered scandalous doctrines and have forsaken your communion and the obedience of the church on account of this foolish, nay impious opinion." Against such men defend and uphold by every possible expedient the doctrine you have laid down in the same letter, that God has been, is, and will be the maker of souls; and that everything in heaven and on earth owes its existence wholly to Him. For this is true of every creature; and as such is to be believed, asserted, defended, and proved. God has been, is, and will be the author and maker of all things and all men as you have told your fellow-bishops of the province of Caesarea, exhorting them to adopt the doctrine by the example of your brothers and fellow-priests. But there are two quite distinct dilemmas: (1) Is God the author and maker of all souls and bodies (the true view), or is there something in nature which He has not made (a view which is wholly erroneous)? If souls are undoubtedly God's handiwork, does He make them directly, or indirectly by propagation? It is in dealing with this second dilemma that I would have you to be sober and vigilant. Else in refuting the propagation-theory you may fall incautiously into the heresy of Pelagius. Everybody knows that human bodies are propagated by generation; yet if we are right in

saying that all human souls-and not only those of Adam and Eve-are created by God, it is clear that to assert their transmission by generation is not to deny their divine origin. For in this view God makes the soul as He makes the body, indirectly by a process of generation. If the truth condemns this as an error, some fresh argument must be sought to confute it. No persons could better advise you on the point (if only they were within reach) than those dead worthies whom you feared to discredit by drawing men away from them into a better path. They were, you said, great and famous bishops while you were a new-fledged and inexperienced teacher; thus you were loth to tamper with their doctrines. Would that I could know on what passages these great men rested their opinion that souls are transmitted! For in your letter to the brothers at Caesarea, you speak of their view with a total disregard of their authority, as a new invention, an unheard-of doctrine; though we all know that, error as it may be, it is no novelty but old and of ancient date.

8. Now when we have reason to be doubtful about a point, we need not doubt that we are right in doubting. There is no doubt but that we ought to doubt things that are doubtful. For instance, the Apostle has no doubt about doubting whether he was in the body or out of the body when he was carried up into the third heaven. [2 Cor. 12:4] Whether it was thus or thus, he says, I know not; God knows. Why may not I, then, so long as I have no light, doubt whether my soul comes to me by generation or unengendered? Why may I not be doubtful about this, so long as I do not doubt that in either case it is the work of God most high? Why may I not say; "I know that my soul owes its existence to God and is altogether His handiwork; but whether it comes by generation, as the body does, or unengendered, as was Adam's soul, I know not; God knows." You wish me to assert positively one view or the other. I might do so if I knew which was right. You may have some light on the point, and if so you will find me keener to learn what I know not than to teach what I know. But if, like myself, you are in the dark, you should pray, as I do, that either through one of His servants, or with His own lips, He would teach us who said to His disciples: "Be not ye called masters; for one is your master, even Christ." [Matt. 23:10] Yet such knowledge is only expedient for us when He knows it to be expedient who knows both what He has to teach and what we ought to learn. Nevertheless, to you, my dear friend, I confess my eagerness. Still much as I desire to know this after which you seek, I would sooner know when the desire of all nations shall come and when the kingdom of the saints will be set up, than how my soul has come to its earthly abode. But when His disciples (who are our apostles) put this question to the all-knowing Christ, they were told: "It is not yours to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." [Acts 1:7] What if Christ, who knows what is expedient for us, knows this knowledge not to be expedient? Through Him I know that it is not ours to know the times which God has placed in His own power; but concerning the origin of souls, I am ignorant whether it is or is not ours to know. If I could be sure that such knowledge is not for us, I should cease not only to dogmatize, but even to inquire. As it is, though the subject is so deep and dark that my fear of becoming a rash teacher is almost greater than my eagerness to learn the truth, I still wish to know it if I can do so. It may be that the knowledge for which the psalmist prays: "Lord, make me to know mine end," [Ps. 39:4] is much more necessary; yet I would that my beginning also might be revealed to me.

9. But even as touching this I must not be ungrateful to my Master. I know that the human soul is spiritual not corporeal, that it is endowed with reason and intelligence, and that it is not of God's essence but a thing created. It is both mortal and immortal: the first because it is subject to corruption and separable from the life of God in which it is alone blessed, the second because its

consciousness must ever continue and form the source of its happiness or woe. It does not, it is true, owe its immersion in the flesh to acts done before the flesh; yet in man it is never without sin, not even when "its life has been but for one day." [Job 14:5, LXX] Of those engendered of the seed of Adam no man is born without sin, and it is necessary even for babes to be born anew in Christ by the grace of regeneration. All this I know concerning the soul, and it is much; the greater part of it, indeed, is not only knowledge but matter of faith as well. I rejoice to have learned it all and I can truly say that I know it. If there are things of which I am still ignorant (as whether God creates souls by generation or apart from it-for that He does create them I have no doubt) I would sooner know the truth than be ignorant of it. But so long as I cannot know it I had rather suspend my judgment than assert what is plainly contrary to an indisputable truth.

10. You, my brother, ask me to decide for you whether men's souls as made by the Creator come like their bodies by generation from Adam, or whether like his soul they are made without generation and separately for each individual. For in one way or the other we both admit that they are God's handiwork. Suffer me then in turn to ask you a question. Can a soul derive original sin from a source from which it is not itself derived? For unless we are to fall into the detestable heresy of Pelagius, we must both of us allow that all souls do derive original sin from Adam. And if you cannot answer my question, pray give me leave to confess my ignorance alike of your question and of my own. But if you already know what I ask, teach me and then I will teach you what you wish to know. Pray do not be displeased with me for taking this line, for though I have given you no positive answer to your question, I have shewn you how you ought to put it. When once you are clear about that, you may be quite positive where you have been doubtful.⁹ This much I have thought it right to write to your holiness seeing that you are so sure that the transmission of souls is a doctrine to be rejected. Had I been writing to maintainers of the doctrine I might perhaps have shewn how ignorant they are of what they fancy they know and how cautious they should be not to make rash assertions.

It may perhaps perplex you that in my friend's answer as I have quoted it in this letter he mentions two letters of mine to which he has no time to reply. Only one of these deals with the problem of the soul;¹⁰ in the other I have asked light on another difficulty.¹¹ Again when he urges me to take more pains for the removal from the church of a most pernicious heresy, he alludes to the error of the Pelagians which I earnestly beg you, my brother, at all hazards to avoid. In speculating or arguing on the origin of the soul you must never give place to this heresy with its insidious suggestions. For there is no soul, save that of the one Mediator, which does not derive original sin from Adam. Original sin is that which is fastened on the soul at its birth and from which it can only be freed by being born again.

1: That is Augustine's to Jerome and the expected answer 2: In Jerome's Letters, No. CXXXI.; in Augustine's, No. CLXVI 3: In Jerome's Letters, No. CXXXIV.; in Augustine's, No. CLXXII 4: After the Council of Diospolis Jerome suffered much from the violence of the Pelagians. See Letters CXXXVI.-CXXXIX

5: i.e. railing 6: i.e. Pelagianism 7: At this point the text is obscure 8: i. e. Adam, "our first-formed father." (Wisd. 10:1.

9: i.e. you may be quite sure that souls are created by God 10: Letter CXXXI., ante 11: Letter CXXXII., ante

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Letter 145. To Exuperantius.

Jerome advises Exuperantius, a Roman soldier, to come to Bethlehem and with his brother Quintilian to become a monk. According to Palladius (H. L. c. lxxx.) Exuperantius came to Jerome but went away again 'unable to endure his violence and ill-will.' The date of the letter is unknown.

Among all the favours that my friendship with the reverend brother Quintilian has conferred upon me the greatest is this that he has introduced me in the spirit to you whom I do not know personally. Who can fail to love a man who, while he wears the cloak and uniform of a soldier does the work of a prophet, and while his outer man gives promise of quite a different character, overcomes this by the inner man which is formed after the image of the creator. I come forward therefore to challenge you to an interchange of letters and beg that you will often give me occasion to reply to you that I may for the future feel less constraint in writing. For the present I will content myself by suggesting to your discretion that you should bear in mind the apostle's words: "Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife;" [1 Cor. 7:27] that is, seek not that binding which is contrary to loosing. He who has contracted the obligations of marriage, is bound, and he who is bound is a slave; on the other hand he who is loosed is free. Since therefore you rejoice in the freedom of Christ, since your life is better than your profession, since you are all but on the housetop of which the Saviour speaks; you ought not to come down to take your clothes, [Matt. 24:17, Matt. 24:18] you ought not to look behind you, you ought not having put your hand to the plough, then to let it go. [Luke 9:62] Rather, if you can, imitate Joseph and leave your garment in the hand of your Egyptian mistress, [Gen. 39:12] that naked you may follow your Lord and Saviour. For in the gospel He says: "Whosoever doth not leave all that he hath and bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple." [Luke 14:26, Luke 14:27] Cast from you the burthen of the things of this world, and seek not those riches which in the gospel are compared to the humps¹ of camels. Naked and unencumbered fly up to heaven; masses of gold will but impede the wings of your virtue. I do not speak thus because I know you to be covetous, but because I have a notion that your object in remaining so long in the army is to fill that purse which the Lord has commanded you to empty. For they who have possessions and riches are bidden to sell all that they have and to give to the poor and then to follow the Saviour. [Matt. 19:21] Thus if your worship is rich already you ought to fulfil the command and sell your riches; or if you are still poor you ought not to amass what you will have to pay away. Christ accepts the sacrifices made for him [2 Cor. 8:12] according as he who makes them has a willing mind. Never were any men poorer than the apostles; yet never any left more for the Lord than they. The poor widow in the gospel who cast but two mites into the treasury was set before all the men of wealth because she gave all that she had. [Luke 21:1-4] So it should be with you. Seek not for wealth which you will have to pay away; but rather give up that which you have already acquired that Christ may know his new recruit to be brave and resolute, and then when you are a great way off His Father will run with joy to meet you. He will give you a robe, will put a ring upon your finger. and will kill for you the fatted calf. [Luke 15:20-23] Then when you are freed from all

encumbrances God will soon make a way for you to cross the sea to me with your reverend brother Quintilian. I have now knocked at the door of friendship: if you open it to me you will find me a frequent visitor.

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Pravitates, deformities. Matt. 19:24

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Letter 146. To Evangelus.

Jerome refutes the opinion of those who make deacons equal to presbyters, but in doing so himself makes presbyters equal to bishops. The date of the letter is unknown.

1. We read in Isaiah the words, "the fool will speak folly," [Isa. 32:6, RV] and I am told that some one has been mad enough to put deacons before presbyters, that is, before bishops. For when the apostle clearly teaches that presbyters are the same as bishops, must not a mere server of tables and of widows [Acts 6:1, Acts 6:2] be insane to set himself up arrogantly over men through whose prayers the body and blood of Christ are produced?1 Do you ask for proof of what I say? Listen to this passage: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons." [Ph. 1:1] Do you wish for another instance? In the Acts of the Apostles Paul thus speaks to the priests2 of a single church: "Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, to feed the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." [Acts 20:28, RV] And lest any should in a spirit of contention argue that there must then have been more bishops than one in a single church, there is the following passage which clearly proves a bishop and a presbyter to be the same. Writing to Titus the apostle says: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain presbyters3 in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God." [Tit. 1:5-7] And to Timothy he says: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." [Tim. 4:14] Peter also says in his first epistle: "The presbyters which are among you I exhort, who am your fellow-presbyter and a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of Christ4 ...taking the oversight thereof not by constraint but willingly, according unto God."5 In the Greek the meaning is still plainer, for the word used is "episkopountej", that is to say, overseeing, and this is the origin of the name overseer or bishop.6 But perhaps the testimony of these great men seems to you insufficient. If so, then listen to the blast of the gospel trumpet, that son of thunder, [Mark 3:17] the disciple whom Jesus loved [John. 13:23] and who reclining on the Saviour's breast drank in the waters of sound doctrine. One of his letters begins thus: "The presbyter unto the elect lady and her children whom I love in the truth;"7 and another thus: "The presbyter unto the well-beloved Gains whom I love in the truth."8 When subsequently one presbyter was chosen to preside over the rest, this was done to remedy schism and to prevent each individual from rending the church of Christ by drawing it to himself. For even at Alexandria from the time of Mark the Evangelist until the episcopates of Heraclas and Dionysius the presbyters always named as bishop one of their own number chosen by themselves and set in a more exalted position, just as an army elects a general, or as deacons appoint one of themselves whom they know to be diligent and call him archdeacon. For what function, excepting ordination, belongs to a bishop that does not also belong to a presbyter? It is not the case that there is one church at Rome and another in all the

world beside. Gaul and Britain, Africa and Persia, India and the East worship one Christ and observe one rule of truth. If you ask for authority, the world outweighs its capital.⁹ Wherever there is a bishop, whether it be at Rome or at Engubium, whether it be at Constantinople or at Rhegium, whether it be at Alexandria or at Zoan, his dignity is one and his priesthood is one. Neither the command of wealth nor the lowliness of poverty makes him more a bishop or less a bishop. All alike are successors of the apostles.¹⁰ 1: Ad quorum preces Christi corpus sanguisque conficitur. Cp. Letter XIV

2: Sacerdotes 3: A.V. `elders. 0 4: AV. `of God. 0 5: 1 Pet. 5:1, 1 Pet. 5:2. The last clause from RV

6:

episkopoj

7:

2 John. 1

8: 3 John. 1 9: Orbis major est urbe

10:

In this passage Jerome does his best to minimize the distinction between bishops and presbyters. Elsewhere also he stands up for the rights of the latter (see Letter LII

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Letter 147. To Sabinianus

Jerome writes in severe but moderate language to Sabinianus, a deacon, calling on him to repent of his sins. Of these he recounts at length the two most serious, an act of adultery at Rome and an attempt to seduce a nun at Bethlehem. The date of the letter is uncertain.

1. Of old, when it had repented the Lord that he had anointed Saul to be king over Israel, [1 Sam. 15:11, 1 Sam. 15:17] we are told that Samuel mourned for him; and again, when Paul heard that there was fornication among the Corinthians and such fornication as was not so much as named among the gentiles, [1 Cor. 5:1] he besought them to repent with these tearful words: "lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed." [2 Cor. 12:21] If an apostle or a prophet, themselves immaculate, could speak thus with a clemency embracing all, how much more earnestly should a sinner like me plead with a sinner like you. You have fallen and refuse to rise; you do not so much as lift your eyes to heaven; having wasted your father's substance you take pleasure in the husks that the swine eat; [Luke 16:13, Luke 16:16] and climbing the precipice of pride you fall headlong into the deep. You make your belly your God instead of Christ; you are a slave to lust; your glory is in your shame; [Phil. 3:19] you fatten yourself like a victim for the slaughter, and imitate the lives of the wicked, careless of their doom. "Thou knowest not that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. But after thy hardness and impenitent heart thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath." [Rom. 2:4, Rom. 2:5] Or is it that your heart is hardened, as Pharaoh's was, because your punishment is deferred and you are not smitten at the moment? The ten plagues were sent upon Pharaoh not as by an angry God but as by a warning father, and his day of grace was prolonged until he repented of his repentance. Yet doom overtook him when he pursued through the wilderness the people whom he had previously let go and presumed to enter the very sea in the eagerness of his pursuit. For only in this one way could he learn the lesson that He is to be dreaded whom even the elements obey. He had said: "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go;" [Ex. 5:2] and you imitate him when you say: "The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off." [Ezek. 12:27, Ezek. 12:28] Yet the same prophet confutes you with these words: "Thus saith the Lord God, There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done." David too says of the godless (and of godlessness you have proved yourself not a slight but an eminent example), that in this world they rejoice in good fortune and say: "How doth God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High? Behold these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." [Ps. 73:11, Ps. 73:12] Then almost losing his footing and staggering where he stands he complains, saying "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." [Ps. 73:13] For he had previously said: "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For they have no regard for death,¹ but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men are; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about

as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth." [Ps. 73:3-9]

2. Does not this whole psalm seem to you to be written of yourself? Certainly you are hale and strong; and like a new apostle of Antichrist, when you are found out in one city, you pass to another. [Cf. Matt. 10:23] You are in no need of money, no crushing blow strikes you down, neither are you plagued as other men who are not like you mere brute beasts. Therefore you are lifted up into pride, and lust covers you as a garment. Out of your fat and bloated carcass you breathe out words fraught with death. You never consider that you must some day die, nor feel the slightest repentance when you have satisfied your lust. You have more than heart can wish; and, not to be alone in your wrongdoing, you invent scandals concerning those who are God's servants. Though you know it not, it is against the most High that you are speaking iniquity and against the heavens that you are setting your mouth. It is no wonder that God's servants small and great are blasphemed by you, when your fathers did not scruple to call even the master of the house Beelzebub. "The disciple is not above his master nor the servant above his lord." [Matt. 10:24, Matt. 10:25] If they did this with the green tree, what will you do with me, the dry? [Luke 23:31] Much in the same way also the offended believers in the book of Malachi gave expression to feelings like yours; for they said, "It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." Yet the Lord afterwards threatens them with a day of judgment; and announcing beforehand the distinction that shall then be made between the righteous and the unrighteous, speaks to them thus: "Return ye,² and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." [Mal. 3:14, Mal. 3:15, Mal. 3:18]

3. All this may perhaps seem to you matter for jesting, seeing that you take so much pleasure in comedies and lyrics and mimes like those of Lentulus;³ although so blunted is your wit that I am not disposed to allow that you can understand even language so simple. You may treat the words of prophets with contempt, but Amos will still make answer to you: "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions and for four shall I not turn away from him?" [Am. 1:3, LXX] For inasmuch as Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, the Ammonites and the Moabites, the Jews also and the children of Israel, although God had often prophesied to them to turn and to repent, had refused to hear His voice, the Lord wishing to shew that He had most just cause for the wrath that he was going to bring upon them used the words already quoted, "For three transgressions and for four shall I not turn away from them?" It is wicked, God says, to harbour evil thoughts; yet I have allowed them to do so. It is still more wicked to carry them out; yet in My mercy and kindness I have permitted even this. But should the sinful thought have become the sinful deed? Should men in their pride have trampled thus on my tenderness? Nevertheless "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live;" [Ezek. 33:11] and as it is not they that are whole who need a physician but they that are sick, [Luke 5:31] even after his sin I hold out a hand to the prostrate sinner and exhort him, polluted as he is in his own blood, [Cf. Ezek. 16:6] to wash away his stains with tears of penitence. But if even then he shews himself unwilling to repent, and if, after he has suffered shipwreck, he refuses to clutch the plank which alone can save him, I am

compelled at last to say: "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions and for four shall I not turn away from him?" For this "turning away" God accounts a punishment, inasmuch as the sinner is left to his own devices. It is thus that he visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation; [Ex. 20:5] not punishing those who sin immediately but pardoning their first offences and only passing sentence on them for their last. For if it were otherwise and if God were to stand forth on the moment as the avenger of iniquity, the church would lose many of its saints; and certainly would be deprived of the apostle Paul. The prophet Ezekiel, from whom we have quoted above, repeating God's words spoken to himself speaks thus: "Open thy mouth and eat what I shall give thee. And behold," he says, "an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and a song, and woe." [Ezek. 3:1, Ezek. 2:9, 10, Vulg] The first of these three belongs to you if you prove willing, as a sinner, to repent of your sins. The second belongs to those who are holy, who are called upon to sing praises to God; for praise does not become a sinner's mouth. And the third belongs to persons like you who in despair have given themselves over to uncleanness, to fornication, to the belly, and to the lowest lusts; men who suppose that death ends all and that there is nothing beyond it; who say: "When the overflowing scourge shall pass through it shall not come unto us." [Is. 28:15] The book which the prophet eats is the whole series of the Scriptures, which in turn bewail the penitent, celebrate the righteous, and curse the desperate. For nothing is so displeasing to God as an impenitent heart. Impenitence is the one sin for which there is no forgiveness. For if one who ceases to sin is pardoned even after he has sinned, and if prayer has power to bend the judge; it follows that every impenitent sinner must provoke his judge to wrath. Thus despair is the one sin for which there is no remedy. By obstinate rejection of God's grace men turn His mercy into sternness and severity. Yet, that you may know that God does every day call sinners to repentance, hear Isaiah's Words: "In that day," he says, "did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and to mourning and to baldness and to girding with sackcloth: and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die." After these words filled with the recklessness of despair the Scripture goes on to say: "And it was revealed in my ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die." [Isa. 22:12-14] Only when they become dead to sin, will their sin be forgiven them. For, so long as they live in sin, it cannot be put away.

4. Have mercy I beseech you upon your soul. Consider that God's judgment will one day overtake you. Remember by what a bishop you were ordained. The holy man was mistaken in his choice; but this he might well be. For even God repented that he had anointed Saul to be king. [1 Sam. 15:11] Even among the twelve apostles Judas was found a traitor. And Nicolas of Antioch-a deacon like yourself [Acts 6:5] -disseminated the Nicolaitan heresy and all manner of uncleanness. [Rev. 2:6, Rev. 2:15] I do not now bring up to you the many virgins whom you are said to have seduced, or the noble matrons who have suffered death⁴ because violated by you, or the greedy profligacy with which you have hied through dens of sin. For grave and serious as such sins are in themselves, they are trivial indeed when compared with those which I have now to narrate. How great must be the sin beside which seduction and adultery are insignificant? Miserable wretch that you are! when you enter the cave wherein the Son of God was born, where truth sprang out of the earth and the land did yield her increase, [Ps. 85:11, Ps. 85:12] it is to make an assignation. Have you no fear that the babe will cry from the manger, that the newly delivered virgin will see you, that

the mother of the Lord will behold you? The angels cry aloud, the shepherds run, the star shines down from heaven, the wise men worship, Herod is terrified, Jerusalem is in confusion, and meantime you creep into a virgin's cell to seduce the virgin to whom it belongs. I am filled with consternation and a shiver runs through me, soul and body, when I try to set before your eyes the deed that you have done. The whole church was keeping vigil by night and proclaiming Christ as its Lord;? one spirit though in different tongues the praises of God were being sung. Yet you were squeezing your love-notes into the openings of what is now the altar, as it was once the manger, of the Lord, choosing this place in order that your unhappy victim might find and read them when she came to kneel and worship there. Then you took your place among the singers, and with impudent nods communicated your passion to her.

5. Oh! crying shame! I can go no farther. For sobs anticipate my words, and indignation and grief choke me in the act of utterance. Oh! for the sea of Tully's eloquence! Oh! for the impetuous current of the invective of Demosthenes! Yet in this case I am sure you would both be dumb; your eloquence would fail you. A deed has been disclosed which no rhetoric can explain; a crime has been discovered which no mime can represent, nor jester play, nor comedian describe.⁵

It is usual in the monasteries of Egypt and Syria for virgins and widows who have vowed themselves to God and have renounced the world and have trodden under foot its pleasures, to ask the mothers of their communities to cut their hair; not that afterwards they go about with heads uncovered in defiance of the apostle's command, [1 Cor. 11:5, 1 Cor. 11:6] for they wear a close-fitting cap and a veil. No one knows of this in any single case except the shearers and the shorn, but as the practice is universal, it is almost universally known. The custom has in fact become a second nature. It is designed to save those who take no baths and whose heads and faces are strangers to all unguents, from accumulated dirt and from the tiny creatures which are sometimes generated about the roots of the hair.

6. Let us see then, my good friend, how you acted in these surroundings. You promised to marry your unhappy victim; and then in that venerable cave you took from her, either as securities for her fidelity or as a pledge of the engagement, some locks of hair, some handkerchiefs, and a girdle, swearing at the same time that you would never love another as you loved her. Then you ran to the place where the shepherds were watching their flocks when they heard the angels singing overhead, and there again you plighted your troth. I say no more; I do not accuse you of kissing her or of embracing her. Although I believe that there is nothing of which you are not capable, still the sacred character of stable and field forbids me to suppose you guilty except in will and determination. Unhappy man! When you first stood beside the virgin in the cave, surely a mist must have dimmed your eyes, your tongue must have been paralysed, your arms must have fallen to your sides, your chest must have heaved, your gait must have become unsteady. She had assumed the bridal-veil of Christ in the basilica of the apostle Peter and had vowed to live henceforth in the monastery, in the spots consecrated by the Lord's Cross, His Resurrection, and His Ascension; and yet after all this you dared to accept that hair, which at Christ's command she had cut off in the cave of His birth, as a token of her readiness to sleep with you. Again you used to sit beneath her window from the evening till the morning; and because owing to its height you could not come to close quarters with her, you conveyed things to her and she in her turn to you by the aid of a cord. How careful the lady superior must have been is shewn by the fact that you never saw the virgin except in church; and that, although both of you had the same inclination, you

could find no means of conversing with each other except at a window under cover of night. As I was afterwards told you used to be quite sorry when the sun rose. Your face looked bloodless, shrunken, and pale; and to remove all suspicion, you used to be for ever reading Christ's gospel as if you were a deacon indeed.⁶ I and others used to attribute your paleness to fasting, and to admire your bloodless lips-so unlike the brilliant colour which they generally shewed-in the belief that they were caused by frequent vigils. You were already preparing ladders to fetch the unhappy virgin from her cell; you had already arranged your route, ordered vessels, settled a day, and thought out the details of your flight, when, behold, the angel who kept the door of Mary's chamber, who watched over the cradle of the Lord and who bore in his arms the infant Christ, in whose presence you had committed these great sins, himself and none other, betrayed you.

7. Oh! my unlucky eyes! Oh! day worthy of the most solemn curse, on which with utter consternation I read your letters, the contents of which I am forced to remember still! What obscenities they contained! What blandishments! What exultant triumph in the prospect of the virgin's dishonour. A deacon should not have even known such things, much less should he have spoken of them. Unhappy man! where can you have learned them, you who used to boast that you had been reared in the church. It is true, however, that in these letters you swear that you have never led a chaste life and that you are not really a deacon. If you try to disown them your own handwriting will convict you, and the very letters will cry out against you. But meantime you may make what you can of your sin, for what you have written is so foul that I cannot bring it up as evidence against you.

8. You threw yourself down at my knees, you prostrated yourself, you begged me-I use your own words-to spare "your half-pint of blood." Oh! miserable wretch! you thought nothing of God's judgment, and feared no vengeance but mine. I forgave you, I admit; what else being a Christian could I do? I urged you to repent, to wear sackcloth, to roll in ashes, to seek seclusion, to live in a monastery, to implore God's mercy with constant tears. You however showed yourself a pillar of confidence, and excited as you were by the viper's sting you became to me a deceitful bow; you shot at me arrows of reviling. I am become your enemy because I tell you the truth. [Gal. 4:16] I do not complain of your calumnies; everyone knows that you only praise men as infamous as yourself. What I lament is that you do not lament yourself, that you do not realize that you are dead, that, like a gladiator ready for Libitina,⁷ you deck yourself out for your own funeral. You wear not sackcloth but linen, you load your fingers with rings, you use toothpowder for your teeth, you arrange the stray hairs on your brown skull to the best advantage. Your bull's neck bulges out with fat and droops no whit because it has given way to lust. Moreover you are redolent of perfume, you go from one bath to another, you wage war⁸ against the hair that grows in spite of you, you walk through the forum and the streets a spruce and smooth-faced rake. Your face has become the face of a harlot: you know not how to blush. [Jer. 3:3] Return, unhappy man, to the Lord, and He will return to you. [Mal. 3:7] Repent, and He will repent of the evil that He has purposed to bring upon you.

9. Why is it that you disregard your own scars and try to defame others? Why is it that when I give you the best advice you attack me like a madman? It may be that I am as infamous as you publicly proclaim; in that case you can at least repent as heartily as I do. It may be that I am as great a sinner as you make me out; if so, you can at least imitate a sinner's tears. Are my sins your virtues? Or does it alleviate your misery that many are in the same plight as yourself? Let a few

tears fall on the silk and fine linen which make you so resplendent. Realize that you: are naked, torn, unclean, a beggar. [Rev. 3:17] It is never too late to repent.⁹ You may have gone down from Jerusalem and may have been wounded on the way; yet the Samaritan will set you upon his beast, and will bring you to the inn and will take care of you. [Luke 10:30-34] Even if you are lying in your grave, the Lord will raise you though your flesh may stink. [John. 11:39, John. 11:44] At least imitate those blind men for whose sake the Saviour left His home and heritage and came to Jericho. They were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death when the light shone upon them. [Luke 1:79] For when they learned that it was the Lord who was passing by they began to cry out saying: "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us." [Matt. 9:27, cf. Luke 18:35-38] You too will have your sight restored; if you cry to Him, and cast away your filthy garments at His call. [Mark 10:50] "When thou shalt turn and bewail thyself then shalt thou be saved, and then shalt thou know where thou hast hitherto been." [Isa. 30:15, LXX] Let Him but touch your scars and pass his hands over your eyeballs; and although you may have been born blind from the womb and although your mother may have conceived you in sin, he will purge you with hyssop and you shall be clean, he will wash you and you shall be whiter than snow. [Ps. 51:5, Ps. 51:7] Why is it that you are bowed together and bent down to the ground, why is it that you are still prostrate in the mire? She whom Satan had bound for eighteen years came to the Saviour; and being cured by Him was made straight so that she could once more look up towards heaven. [Luke 13:11-13] God says to you what He said to Cain: "Thou hast sinned: hold thy peace." [Gen. 4:7, LXX] Why do you flee from the face of God and dwell in the land of Nod? Why do you struggle in the waves¹⁰ when you can plant your feet upon the rock? See to it that Phinehas does not thrust you through with his spear while you are committing fornication with the Midianitish woman. [Num. 25:6-8] Amnon did not spare Tamar, [2 Sam. 13:14] and you her brother and kinsman in the faith have had no mercy upon this virgin. But why is it that when you have defiled her you change into an Absalom and desire to kill a David who mourns over your rebellion and spiritual death? The blood of Naboth [1 Kings 21:13] cries out against you. The vineyard also of Jezreel, that is, of God'sseed, demands due vengeance upon you, seeing that you have turned it into a garden of pleasures and made it a seed-bed of lust. God sends you an Elijah to tell you of torment and of death. Bow yourself down therefore and put on sackcloth for a little while; then perhaps the Lord will say of you what He said of Ahab: "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, [1 Kings 21:29] I will not bring the evil in his days."

10. But possibly you flatter yourself that since the bishop who has made you a deacon is a holy man, his merits will atone for your transgressions. I have already told you that the father is not punished for the son nor the son for the father. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." [Ezek. 18:4] Samuel too had sons who forsook the fear of the Lord and "turned aside after lucre" and iniquity. [1 Sam. 8:3] Eli also was a holy priest, but he had sons of whom we read in the Hebrew that they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of God, and that like you they shamelessly claimed for themselves the right to minister in His sanctuary. [1 Sam. 2:12-17, 1 Sam. 2:22] Wherefore the tabernacle itself was overthrown and the holy place made desolate by reason of the sins of those who were God's priests. And even Eli himself offended God by shewing too great leniency to his sons; therefore, so far from the righteousness of your bishop being able to deliver you, it is rather to be feared that your wickedness may hurl him from his seat and that falling on his back like Eli he may perish irretrievably. [1 Sam. 4:18] If the Levite Uzzah was smitten merely because he tried to hold up from falling the ark which it was his special province to

carry; [2 Sam. 6:6, 2 Sam. 6:7] what punishment, think you, will be inflicted upon you who have tried to overthrow the Lord's ark when standing firm? The more estimable the bishop is who ordained you, the more detestable are you who have disappointed the expectations of so good a man. His long ignorance of your misdoings is indeed easy to account for; as it generally happens that we are the last to know the scandals which affect our homes, and are ignorant of the sins of our children and wives even when our neighbors talk of nothing else. At all events all Italy was aware of your evil life; and it was everywhere a subject of lamentation that you should still stand before the altar of Christ. For you had neither the cunning nor the forethought to conceal your vices. So hot were you, so lecherous, and so wanton, so entirely under the sway of this and that caprice of self-indulgence, that, not content with satisfying your passions, you gloried in each intrigue as a triumph and emerged from it bearing palms of victory.

11. Once more the fire of unchastity seized you, this time among savage swords and in the quarters of a married barbarian of great influence and power. You were not afraid to commit adultery in a house where the injured husband might have punished you without calling in a judge's aid. You found yourself attracted and drawn to suburban parks and gardens; and, in the husband's absence behaved as boldly and madly as if you supposed your companion to be not your paramour but your wife. She was at last captured, but you escaped through an underground passage and secretly made your way to Rome. There you hid yourself among some Samnite robbers; and on the first hint that the aggrieved husband was coming down from the Alps like a new Hannibal in search of you, you did not think yourself safe till you had taken refuge on shipboard. So hasty indeed was your flight that you chose to face a tempest at sea rather than take the consequences of remaining on shore. Somehow or other you reached Syria, and on arriving there professed a wish to go on to Jerusalem and there to serve the Lord. Who could refuse to welcome one who declared himself to be a monk; especially if he were ignorant of your tragical career and had read the letters of commendation which your bishop had addressed to other prelates?¹¹ Unhappy man! you transformed yourself into an angel of light; [2 Cor. 11:14, 2 Cor. 11:15] and while you were in reality a minister of Satan, you pretended to be a minister of righteousness. You were only a wolf in sheep's clothing; [Matt. 7:15] and having played the adulterer once towards the wife of a man, you desired now to play the adulterer to the spouse of Christ.¹²

12. My design in recounting these events has been to sketch for you the picture of your evil life and to set your misdeeds plainly before your eyes. I have wished to prevent you from making God's mercy and His abundant tenderness an excuse for committing new sins and to save you from crucifying to yourself the son of God afresh and putting Him to an open shame. For you may do these things if you do not read the words which follow the passage to which I have alluded. They are these: "The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessings from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." [Heb. 6:6, Heb. 6:7-8] 1: So the Vulgate, from which Jerome quotes

2: So the Latin 3: A writer and actor of mimes, probably in the first century of the Empire 4: Women guilty of adultery were legally punishable with death until the time of Justinian 5: Mimus, scurra, atellanus

6:

At the Eucharistic service the gospel was commonly though not exclusively read by a deacon. (See Const. Apost. II. 57, 5, and Sozomen, H. C. VII. 19.

7: The goddess who in the Roman pantheon presided over funerals. The gladiators meant are the so-called *bustuarii* who were engaged to fight at the funeral pile (*bustum*) in honour of the dead 8: i. e. by the use of depilatories 9: Cf. Cyprian, Epist. ad Demet. xxv 10: An etymological allusion. Nod = `ebb and flow. 0 11: Sacerdotes, lit. priests 12: i.e. to the church at large represented by individual virgins

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Letter 148. To the Matron Celantia. This is an interesting letter addressed to a lady of rank, on the principles and methods of a holy life. It is not, however, the work of Jerome, of whose style it shews few traces. It has been ascribed in turn to Paulinus of Nola and Sulpicius Severus.

It teaches the noble matron Celantia how to lead her life in a holy and religious way, among the honors of the world, wealth, and burdens of marriage. It first urges her to read the Divine Scriptures, then teaches her not to be proud of noble lineage, and shows where true nobility lies; Finally, it sharply rebukes that a few years ago she had proposed to herself to observe continence without the agreement and consent of her husband, and shows what she owes to her husband. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. The celebrated old saying of the scriptures is that there is shame by which glory and grace may be found; and there is shame again, which is accustomed to bring forth sin. Although the truth of this saying shines vividly enough by its own light to the understanding of all, yet it is strange how, in the present case, it has become clearer to me personally. For when challenged by your letter to write (which begged me with urgent pleas), I confess I long hesitated about my reply; silence demanded it of me through modesty. However, your faithful ambition overpowered me and forced the strength of your entreaties. Humility begged insistently, fighting fiercely with my hesitation, with a certain great violence of faith beating upon the barriers of my mouth. And when my mind, wavering between these things, weighed one thing against the other, I was almost ashamed to carry out my duty. But that sentence which I have set down above, uttered by the wise man, nerved me to repel this unprofitable shame and to cast off that ruinous silence, especially since I saw that the very reason for writing was so honorable, so noble, that I ought to think myself guilty of a sin if I kept silent. And in my mind recalling that saying from Scripture: "A time to keep silence and a time to speak (Eccles. 3:7)," and again, "Be not wanting in comforting them that weep (Sir. 7:34)," and St. Peter's words: "Be ready always to satisfy every man that asks you a reason of that hope which is in you (1 Pet. 3:15)."

2. For you request eagerly and forcefully that we define for you a certain rule from the holy Scriptures, that you may order the course of your life according to the will of the Lord, so that, having come to know it, you may esteem furniture of morals more than the honors of the world and the allurements of wealth, and so that you may be able, having entered into marriage, not only to please your spouse, but also the one who granted it to you. To not satisfy such a holy request and such a pious desire, what else is it but to not love the progress of another? Therefore, I will obey your prayers, and I will strive to spur you on to carrying out the will of the Lord, using His own teachings. For He is the true Lord and Master of all, who commands us to please Him and shows us how we can please Him. Therefore, let Him inform you, let Him teach you, who, when asked in the Gospel by a young man what he should do to merit eternal life, immediately sets forth divine commandments, thus showing us that we must do the will of Him from whom we hope for and expect the rewards. And therefore, He testifies in another place: "Not every one who says to Me,

'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 7:21) By this it is manifestly shown that we do not merit the magnitude of so great a reward by confession of God alone unless it be united with acts of faith and justice.

3. For what kind of confession is that which believes in God in such a way that it considers His command as nothing? Or how can we truly from the heart say "Lord, Lord," if we despise the precepts of Him we confess as Lord? From where he himself says in the Gospel: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord; and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). And again: "This people honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me" (Matthew 15:8; Isaiah 29:13). And he speaks again through the prophet: "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?" (Malachi 1:6) And if I am a father, where is my honor? and if I am a master, where is my fear? (Malachi 1:6) From this it appears that neither the Lord is honored by them nor feared who do not do his commandments. And more explicitly to David it is said, who had committed a sin: 'And thou hast despised the Lord for that thing' (2 Samuel 12:10); and to Eli the word of the Lord came: 'For them that honor me, I will honor; but they that despise me shall be despised' (1 Samuel 2:30).

4. And we are secure and in good spirit, who by each and every precept, dishonoring the most merciful God and provoking him to anger, and by contemptuously disobeying his command, go so far as to commit such great injustice against so great a majesty? For what can ever be so proud, or indeed so ungrateful, as to live in opposition to the will of him, from whom you have received life itself? How can we despise his commandments, who commands only to have reasons to reward? For God does not need our obedience, but we need his command. His commandments are more desirable than gold and precious stones, and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb: for in keeping them there is great reward (Psalm 19:11-12). And therefore, we provoke his anger, and offend the immense goodness of God even more, because we despise it for the sake of such great reward. We consider not only his commands, but also his promises as worthless. Hence, the sentence of the Lord must always be remembered by us: 'If you want to come to life, keep the commandments' (Matthew 19:17). For this is the whole law that is with us; this is what the Prophets and Apostles teach; this is what the voice of Christ and his blood demand from us. He died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them (2 Corinthians 5:15). But for them, living is nothing but to observe His precepts, which He, as a certain token of His love, commanded us to keep. 'If you love me,' He said, 'keep my commandments' (John 14:15). And he who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me. And again: 'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our dwelling with him.' Whoever does not love me does not keep my words (John 14:24). True love has great power. And the one who is perfectly loved claims the entire will of the one who loves. Nothing is more powerful than love. If we truly love Christ, if we remember that we have been redeemed by His blood, we should want nothing more, and we should do nothing at all, except what we know He wants.

5. However, there are two types of commands in which all justice is contained. One is to prohibit, the other to command. For just as evil things are prohibited, so also are good things commanded. There, leisure is commanded, here study. There, the mind is restrained, here it is incited. There, to have done something is culpable, while here, to have not done something is culpable. Hence the

Prophet says: "Who is the man who wants life and desires to see good days? Prohibit your tongue from evil, and let not your lips speak deceit. Turn away from evil, and do good" (Psalm 33: 13-14 and 15). And the blessed Apostle. Hating evil, clinging to good (Rom. 12:9). Therefore, this dual and different commandment, namely to forbid and to command, has been commanded with equal right to all. Neither a virgin, nor a widow, nor a wife is exempt from this command. In any matter, in any degree, it is an equal sin either to admit what is forbidden or not to do what is commanded. Nor let the error of those deceive you who choose by their own judgment which of God's commandments they should do most carefully, or who despise those which seem worthless and small, nor do they fear, lest in despising the smallest things according to the divine decision, they may gradually fall. (Eccl. 19.1).

6. Indeed, it is of the Stoics to remove the difference between sins and to judge all offenses as equal: and not make any distinction between crime and error. But we, although we believe that there is a great difference between sins, because we also read: nevertheless, we say that it is enough to be cautious and to beware of the smallest things in order to take care of the greatest things. For we abstain more easily from any offense, the more we fear it. He who fears even small things does not progress quickly to greater things. And truly, I do not know whether we can call any sin small which is committed in contempt of God. And he is most wise who considers not so much what is commanded, as he who has commanded it; and he thinks not of the quantity of power, but of the dignity of the one who commands.

7. Therefore, to you who are building a spiritual house, let the foundation be laid not on the sand of levity, but on the solid rock of innocence, on which you may more easily raise the high structure of justice. For he has filled a great part of justice who has harmed no one; and blessed is he who can say with the holy Job: 'I have not caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or blessed any one that was to perish. I have not eaten my morsel alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof from my birth' (Job 31:16-18). So he spoke boldly and confidently to the Lord: 'Who is he that will plead against me?' (Job 13:19), that is, 'Who shall have the boldness to accuse me before thee, that I may be proved to have wronged him?' It is the voice of a pure conscience to sing with the Prophet: 'I have walked in the innocence of my heart; in the midst of my house I have learned justice' (Psalm 100:2). Therefore, the Christian soul drives away malice, hatred and envy, which are either very great or the only seeds of harm: it guards innocence not only with hand or tongue, but also with the heart, and fears to harm not only in deeds, but also in desires. For as far as the purpose of sin is concerned, he who intended to harm has already done harm. Many of us define an innocent person absolutely and completely as one who does not harm anyone by abandoning what is beneficial to them. If it is true, then rejoice in your conscience of innocence, if you are able to help, never stop; but if they are separated and distinct from each other: one thing is not to harm, which you can always do, another is to benefit when you can, another is not to do evil, and another is to do good. That should come back to you again: a Christian is not sufficient if he fulfills only one part of justice, both of which are commanded to him.

8. For we should not look to the example of the multitude: which, following no discipline of morals, holding no order of life, is led not so much by reason as by a certain impetus. Nor should we imitate those who lead a pagan life under the name of Christian, and declare one thing by profession, and another by behavior: and, as the Apostle says, they confess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him (Tit. 1.13). Among a Christian and a pagan, not only faith, but also life

should distinguish: and reveal different religions through different deeds. "Do not, says the Apostle, be yoked with infidels. For what participation has justice with iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has the believer with the unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?" (2 Corinthians 6:14 et seqq.)

9. Therefore, there is a great separation between us and them. There is a certain distinction between error and truth. They savor earthly things, who do not have the promise of heavenly things. They involve themselves completely in this short life, who do not know of eternal life. They do not fear to sin, who believe in the impunity of sinners. They serve vice, who do not hope for the future rewards of virtue. But we, who confess a pure faith, must manifest every man before the tribunal of Christ, so that each person may receive what is due for the things done while in the body, whether good or evil (2 Cor. 5:10) : we ought to be far from vices, as the Apostle says: For those who belong to Christ have crucified their own flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:24) . Nor should they follow the wandering crowd, who claim to be disciples of truth.

10. Certainly, the Savior shows two ways of life and distinct paths of living in the Gospel. "How spacious is the way that leads to death, and many there are who enter it. And again: How narrow and restricted is the way that leads to life, and few there are who find it" (Matt. 7:13-14). See how great the separation is between these paths, and how much the difference. The former leads to death, the latter tends toward life. The former is traveled and worn by many, the latter is hardly found by a few. For indeed that [the way of vice] through the habit of vice, as if it were steeper and softer, and as though it easily draws to itself the multitude of those who come, with some pleasant flowers of pleasures: but this [the way of virtue], on the other hand, is sadder and rougher to those unaccustomed to it in matters of virtue: it is chosen only by those, for whom the delight of the journey is not so dear to their heart, as the advantage of the final destination. For the excessive habit of vices makes the rough and unpleasant way of virtues for us, which if transferred to the other side, will be found, as the Scripture says, a smooth path of justice. (Proverbs 2:20 according to LXX). Therefore, let us now consider the reason of our life, and with the testimony of conscience learn through which path we walk. For everything we do, everything we say, is either of the broad or of the narrow path. If with a few we find a narrow and delicate path, we tend towards life. But if we follow the path of many, according to the judgement of the Lord, we go towards death.

11. If we are possessed with hatred and envy, if we give way to cupidity and avarice, if we seek to enjoy the present without thought of the future: we are being led along a broad, easy road that leads to death. There is a large band of people who go with us, under the influence of similar passions, and many others drawn to them by pleasure, profit, or other motives. Their course lies side by side with ours. But, if we wish to be saved, we must fight valiantly and, aided by the grace of God, come out victorious. On the contrary, if we are strangers to all these vices, if we exhibit a pure and free mind, and all our passion has been stamped out, and we strive to be rich only in virtues, we will exert ourselves along a narrow path. Indeed, such a way of life is shared by only a few. And it is very rare and difficult to find suitable companions for this journey. There are many who pretend to make this journey and who, by way of various byroads of error, return to the crowded path. Therefore, we should fear that whom we believe to be leaders of the straight path, we actually have as companions in error.

12. Therefore, if examples are found that lead us along this path and keep to the straight path of the Gospel, they must be followed. But if they are lacking, or are thought to be lacking, the pattern of the Apostles has been set before everyone. Paul, the vessel of election, cries out and calls us to this narrow way, saying: Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). Certainly, above all else, the example of the Lord himself shines forth, who says in the Gospel: Come to me all of you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart (Matthew 11:28-29). If it is dangerous to imitate those about whom you doubt whether they should be imitated, then it is certainly safest to imitate him and follow in his footsteps who said: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). For he never errs, who follows the truth. Whence also the Apostle John says: He who says he remains in Christ, ought to walk just as He walked, and to walk in Him (1 John 2:6). And blessed Peter says: Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps, who did not sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth. When He was insulted, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness (1 Peter 2:21 and following).

15. Let all excuses for errors cease; let the foul solaces of sinning be taken away. We do absolutely nothing when we defend ourselves through the examples of the multitude, and, for our consolation, we often count the faults of others as if we lack the ones we should follow. We are sent after his example, whom we all confess to be imitated. And therefore let your special care be to know divine law: by which you can, as it were, see the present examples of the saints: learn by his counsel ((or teachings)) what must be done or avoided. For the greatest help for justice is to fill the mind with divine teachings, and to always meditate with the heart on what you desire to execute in action. To the still-unlearned people, and to men unaccustomed to obedience, it was commanded through Moses by the Lord that, as a sign of remembrance, the fringes of their garments should have insignia of hyacinthine color with crimson, so that, even when their eyes glanced inadvertently hither and thither, the memory of heavenly precepts might be awakened. Concerning these fringes the Pharisees are rebuked by the Lord (Matthew 23:5) because, by a perverse use of them, they began to wear them not for the admonition of God's precepts, but for the sake of ostentation, so that they might be considered holy by the people, as though from greater diligence in observing them.

14. But to you who are observant, not only must the precepts of the letters be adhered to, but the spirit, the memory of divine commandments must be spiritually cultivated. May those precepts of the Lord not be remembered so much as they are always considered. Therefore, may divine scriptures always be in your hands, and may they be constantly turned over in your mind. Do not think that it is sufficient for you to keep the commands of God in your memory and forget them in your deeds. But understand them, so that you may do whatever you have learned to do. For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified (Romans 2:31). Indeed, a wide and immense field of divine law stretches out. It feeds and refreshes the mind of the reader, blooming like celestial flowers with various testimonies of truth and amazing delight. Knowing and reflecting on all these things is a great benefit for maintaining justice. But as a brief reminder, the sentence from the Gospel to be chosen and inscribed on your heart, which is brought forth by the Lord's mouth as a summary of all justice, is this: "Therefore, whatever you

want men to do to you, do also to them." For this is the law and the prophets (Matthew 7:12). For there are infinite aspects and parts of justice: which is not only difficult to pursue in writing, but also to grasp in thought. All of which are encompassed in one short sentence, and either absolves or condemns the hidden conscience of people with a secret judgement of the heart.

15. Therefore, for every action, every word, and every thought, this sentiment should be reconsidered: which, like a certain mirror prepared for you and always within reach, may show you the quality of your will, and may even reprove you for an unjust work or fill you with joy for a just one. For every time you have such a disposition towards another as you wish them to have towards you, you follow the path of justice. But whenever you act towards others in a manner that you wish no one to act towards you, you have abandoned the path of justice. Behold, the whole of that divine law--all of it is difficult and arduous. And for what reason we cry out against harsh commands to the Lord, and say that we are either pressed by difficulty or impossibility of the commandments. It is not enough that we do not obey orders, unless we also pronounce the commanding one as unjust, while we complain that the author of justice, not only has commanded harsh and difficult things, but even impossible ones. "All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them." He wishes us to be united and connected by mutual acts of charity. And all people are joined together by mutual love, so that each one, in preference to himself, endeavors to benefit another, what he himself wishes to receive from all: that is, the whole of justice, and the precept of God that the common benefit of all men. And, O wonderful mercy of the Lord! O ineffable kindness of God! A reward is promised to us if we love one another, that is, if we offer to each other the things we depend on for each other. And we resist his will with a proud and ungrateful spirit, whose commandment is also a benefit.

16. Never completely detract from anyone, nor desire to be praiseworthy by means of the criticism of others; rather, learn to adorn your own life than to carp at another's. And always remember the Scripture saying: Do not love to detract lest you be rooted out (Prov. 20.13. according to the LXX). Very few are those who renounce this vice, and you will rarely find those who wish to exhibit their own life as irreproachable, so that they may not willingly criticize others. Such great desire for this bad habit has invaded the minds of men, that even those who have moved away from other vices, fall into this one, as if into the last trap of the devil. But you must avoid this evil in such a way that you not only do not detract itself, but you also refrain from believing anyone who detracts from others. Do not give authority to detractors by consent; do not nourish their vice by agreeing. Do not, says Scripture, be in agreement with those who diminish their neighbor, and you will not receive sin upon yourself. And elsewhere: Stop your ears with thorns, and do not listen to an evil tongue (Eccli. 28. 28). Hence, even blessed David, counting various forms of innocence and justice, did not remain silent about this virtue, saying: And he did not accept reproach against his neighbors (Ps. 14. 4): because he not only opposed, but also persecuted the detractor. For he says: I will persecute him who secretly slanders his neighbor (Ps. 100. 5). Truly, this vice should be extinguished above all, and entirely excluded by those who want to live a holy life. For nothing disturbs the mind so much, nothing makes the mind so fickle and light, as to easily believe everything and to follow the words of detractors with reckless mental assent. And hence frequent disagreements arise, and unjust hatred. This is what often makes even the closest friends enemies, while it brings together those who are harmonious but separates trusting souls with malicious speech. On the other hand, great peace of mind and great seriousness of character is

not to rashly hear anything sinister about anyone. And blessed is he who has fortified himself against this fault, so that no one dares to slander in his presence. But if we were diligent in this matter, we would stop believing slanderers indiscriminately, and all would fear to slander lest they make themselves cheap, not so much as others. But this is a well-known evil, and therefore this defect rages in many people because it is almost gladly listened to by all.

17. Also, beware of the flattery of flatterers, and the harmful deceptions of compliments, like some plagues of the soul. There is nothing that corrupts the minds of men so easily, nothing that wounds the soul with so sweet and soft a pain. Hence a certain wise man says: The words of flatterers are soft, but they in reality wound the intestines (Prov. 26. 22). And the Lord speaks through the Prophet: My people, who bless you, lead you astray and destroy the paths of your feet (Isaiah 3. 12, LXX). In many ways, especially at this time, this vice reigns, which is the most serious, and takes the place of humility and kindness. It happens that he who does not know how to flatter, is considered either envious or proud. Truly, it is a great and subtle art, to praise another in commendation of oneself, and by deceiving, to bind the deceived mind to oneself: and what is done especially by this fault, to sell false praises for a certain price. What is this great levity of mind, what is this great vanity, to abandon one's own conscience, to follow someone else's opinion, and indeed a false and simulated one? To be carried away by the wind of false praise, to rejoice at one's own deceit, and to accept illusion as a benefit? Therefore, if you truly desire to be praiseworthy, do not seek the praise of men. And prepare your conscience for him who will both illuminate the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts. And then there will be praise for you from God (1 Corinthians 4:5).

18. Therefore, let your mind be attentive and vigilant, and your soul always armed against sins. Let your speech be moderate and sparing in all things, and indicate more the necessity of speaking than the willingness to do so. Adorn prudence with modesty, and let shame excel all virtues in you, which has always been the chief virtue among women. Consider for a long time beforehand what is to be said, and still, being silent, take care lest anything be regretted having been said. Let your thought weigh your words, and let the balance of the soul dispense the duty of the tongue. Wherefore, the Scripture saith: "Melt your silver and gold, and make a balance with your words, and make straight your reins and take heed lest you fall by the tongue" (Eccl. 28). Let no evil word proceed out of your mouth: but that which is good, to the edification of faith, that it may administer grace to the hearers. Be ye merciful, modest, humble, and patient: bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another: even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do you also. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father that is in heaven, forgive you your sins (1 Pet. 3:8-11).

19. To lie and to swear, your tongue completely ignores, and such love of truth may exist in you that whatever you say, you think it is an oath. About this, the Savior says to the disciples: 'But I say to you, do not swear at all.' And shortly after: 'Let your word be yes, yes: no, no: but what is more than these, is from evil' (Matthew 5: 34, 37). Therefore, in every word and deed, let a calm and peaceful mind be kept: and let the presence of God always occur to your thoughts. Let your spirit be humble, meek, and raised against nothing but vice alone. May pride, greed, or anger never exalt or bend him. For nothing should be quieter, purer, or finally more beautiful than that mind that is being prepared for the dwelling place of God, whom shining temples of gold and altars distinguished by gems do not delight, but rather an adorned soul with virtues. Therefore, the

temple of God is also said to be the hearts of the saints, as the Apostle affirms, saying: If anyone violates the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which you are (1 Cor. 3:17).

20. You have nothing more excellent than humility and nothing more lovable. For this is the principal preserver and, as it were, guardian of all virtues; and there is nothing that makes us so acceptable to both men and God as being great in merit of life and lowly in humility. Wherefore Scripture says: "The greater you are, humble yourself the more, and you will find grace before God" (Ecclesiastes 3:20). And the Lord speaks through the Prophet: On whom shall I rest, if not on the humble, and quiet, and trembling with my words? (Isai. 66. 2) But you, follow this humility: not that which is shown and pretended with the gesture of the body, or with the broken voice of words, but that which is expressed with the pure affection of the heart. For it is one thing to have virtue, and quite another to have the likeness of virtue; one thing is to follow the shadow of things, another is to follow the truth. Indeed, it is much uglier that pride which lies hidden under certain signs of humility. For I do not know how much more disgusting are the vices that are concealed by the appearance of virtues.

21. Do not ever consider yourself superior because of your noble ancestry, nor should you look down on those born in obscurity or lowly places as being beneath you. Our faith does not judge by social status, but by the character of individuals. It declares who is a slave or noble based on their morals alone. True freedom can be found only in serving no sins. True nobility in the eyes of God is shown through exemplary virtue. Who among men is nobler in the eyes of God than Peter, a fisherman, and a poor man? Who among women is more illustrious than blessed Mary, a carpenter's wife? Yet, Christ gave the keys to heaven to that fisherman and to the poor, and made that carpenter's wife the mother of the same one who received those keys. "For God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;" (1 Corinthians 1:27). God chose the lowly and despised things of the world to more easily bring the powerful and noble to humility. For in vain does someone boast of their noble birth, since everyone is of equal honor and value before God, having been redeemed by the same blood of Christ. It doesn't matter in what condition one was born, since we are all reborn equally in Christ. And if we forget that we are all born of the same origin, we should always remember that we are all regenerated by the same one.

22. Beware lest, if you begin to fast or abstain, you imagine that you are already holy. For this virtue is an aid, not the perfection of sanctity. Rather, caution must be taken not to allow this to make you think of illicit things with a sense of security, while disregarding lawful things. Whatever is offered to God beyond justice should not hinder justice, but rather assist it. However, what good is fulfilled by the body's being weakened by abstinence, if the spirit is swollen with pride? What praise shall we deserve for the pallor of fasting, if we are envious with greenness? What virtue is there in not drinking wine, and yet being intoxicated with anger and hatred? Then, I say, abstinence is excellent, then the chastisement of the body is beautiful and great, when the mind is free from vices. Those who hold the virtue of abstinence probably and knowingly afflict their own flesh, that they may break the pride of their soul and, as it were, descend from a certain height of self-contempt and arrogance to carry out the will of the Lord, which is most perfectly attained in humility. Therefore, they withdraw their minds from various desires for food, so that they may occupy all their energy in the desire for virtue. And already, the flesh feels less the burden of

fasting and abstinence, while the soul hungers for justice. For Paul, also, the vessel of election, while he chastises his body and reduces it to servitude, lest in preaching to others he himself should become a castaway (1 Cor. 9:27), does not practice chastity for this end alone, as some unwise people think, but abstinence is of assistance not only to this virtue, but to all virtues whatsoever. Nor is the glory of the Apostles great or entire for avoiding fornication; but rather the soul is trained by the punishment of the body, and as it desires nothing from pleasures, it is able to think more about virtues; lest as a master of perfection, something imperfect be shown in oneself; lest as an imitator of Christ, anything outside of Christ's command or will be done; and may he not teach less by example than by word, and when he has preached to others, may he not be reprobate himself; and let him hear with the Pharisees: For they say and do not (Matthew 23:3).

23. However, it is both the command and the example of the apostles that we should be mindful not only of our conscience, but also of our reputation (Romans 12:17). This master of the nations teaches nothing superfluous or unfruitful, for he desires that even non-believers should be helped toward the faith through the good deeds of Christians, so that the discipline of religion may be commended by the example of religion itself. And therefore he bids us shine like lights in the midst of a wicked and perverse nation (Philippians 2:15), among whom we should appear as providers of the light, so that through our good deeds, the unbelievers themselves may be able to discern the light of truth amid the darkness of ignorance. Therefore, he himself also says to the Romans: "Providing good not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men" (Rom. 12.17). And elsewhere: "Be without offence to the Jews, and to the Gentiles, and to the Church of God, as I also in all things please all men, not seeking that which is profitable to myself, but to many" (1 Cor. 10.32-33). Blessed is he who so holily and seriously has disposed of his life, that not even a malicious word can be formed against him, while the greatness of his merit fights against the desires of detractors, whom no one thinks worthy of belief. And if achieving this is difficult and too lofty, let us at least employ diligence in our own lives, so that evil-minded people may not find occasion to slander us. Let no spark proceed from us, by which the flame of sinister reputation might be fanned against us. Otherwise, we angrily blame our detractors in vain if we provide them with material to detract from us. However, if we provide diligently and carefully for everything that is noble and prioritize the fear of God in all our actions, they will still rave nonetheless. Our conscience will console us, which is then most secure when it has not even given them occasion to speak ill of it. Woe is promised to those by the Prophet who say that good is evil, who call light darkness, and what is sweet, bitter. Let us, therefore, heed the words of the Savior: Blessed are you when men revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely. Let us conduct ourselves, so that no one can speak ill of us with falsehood.

24. Thus hold your family concerns, so as to grant some respite for your soul. Choose for yourself a suitable setting, somewhat removed from the noise of family, to which you might withdraw, as into a harbour from the storms of many worries, and, with the excitement outside of your thoughts stilled, arrange things in tranquility. May study of the divine word be so frequent there, so frequent the occasions of prayer, so firm and deep your meditation upon the future, that with ease by means of this calling you find time for all other activities. And we do not say this to withdraw you from your affairs; indeed, it is our objective that in that place you learn, and there meditate, what sort of example you ought to be to yours.

25. Rule and nurture your household so that you desire to be seen more as the mother of your people than as their mistress, from whom you should demand respect rather than severity, out of kindness. Obsequiousness that comes from love is always more faithful and grateful than that which comes from fear. Especially in holy and blameless wedlock, the order of the Apostolic rule should be upheld.

26. Let his authority be preserved first of all, and let the whole household learn from you how much honor is owed to him. Show him obedience, demonstrate your great humility to him, and you will become as honored as he is, and you will have honored him even more. For, as the Apostle says, the head of the woman is the man (Eph. 5:23): and nothing else decorates the rest of the body as much as the dignity of the head. Hence he says elsewhere: Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord (Colossians 3:18). But Blessed Apostle Peter also says: Likewise, wives, be subject to your husbands, so that even if some do not believe the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives (1 Peter 3:1). If, therefore, honor is owed to pagan husbands by the right of marriage, how much more to Christians.

27. And to show by what adornments even men ought to be decorated by women joined to them, he says: Of whom the ornament is not outward, in the plaiting of the hair, or in the wearing of gold, or in the putting on of dress: but the man is hidden in the incorruptibility of a quiet and modest spirit, which is rich in the sight of God. For after this manner heretofore the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. But commanding these (things), (she) does not order (them) to be filthy in filth, and to be covered with bristly rags, but she forbids immoderate dress and overly choice adornment, and commends simple decoration and dress. Of which (things) he also says about the vessel of election: Likewise also women (should be) in adorned dress, with shamefacedness and sobriety: not with twisted hair, or gold, or pearls, or precious garments, but (which) befits women, promising chastity through good works (1 Tim. 2:9-10).

28. But I have found that you, inflamed with a wonderful ardor of faith, proposed to be continent some years ago and have consecrated the remaining time of your life to chastity. This is a sign of great courage and an indication of complete virtue to suddenly renounce enjoyment which has been experienced, to flee the well-known pleasures of the flesh, and to extinguish the flames of warm youth with love (or ardor) for faith. But I have also learned at the same time, which greatly troubles and stimulates me, that you have begun to preserve this only good without the consent and agreement of your husband, whereas this Apostolic authority altogether prohibits it, which in this matter only subjects the wife to the husband, but also the husband to the power of the wife. "The wife," he says, "does not have power over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife does" (1 Corinthians 7:4). However, you, as if having forgotten the pledge of marriage and this agreement and being unaware of the law, vowed chastity to the Lord without consulting your husband. But it is dangerous to promise what is still in the power of the other. And I do not know how pleasing a gift it is, if one person offers what belongs to two. We have already heard and seen many things done out of such ignorance, and couples torn apart, and, what it is unpleasant to remember, adultery committed under the pretext of chastity. For while one side is also abstaining from what is lawful, the other has fallen into what is unlawful. And I do not know who should be accused more in such a case, who should be blamed more, whether the one who is rejected by his spouse and commits

fornication, or the one who, by rejecting her husband, somehow exposes him to fornication. And as concerning this matter, in order that you may know what the truth is, a few things must be set forth by me concerning divine authority. The rule of apostolic doctrine does not equate the virtue of continence with the duties of marriage, nor does it condemn marriage as the Manichees do. Therefore, the vessel of election and teacher of the Gentiles [i.e. the Apostle Paul] moves between the two and is moderate, so as to indulge incontinence with a remedy and provoke continence with a reward. And his entire purpose in this matter is to propose chastity from the opinion of each one, or at least that the common obligation be fulfilled by either.

29. But let us cite the words themselves of the Apostle and retract this whole case to its beginning. For he speaks to the Corinthians: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (1 Cor. 7:1). And although he has praised chastity here, yet in order not to seem to prohibit marriages to some people, he adds: "But for fear of fornication, let each have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband pay what he owes to his wife, and also the wife to her husband. But the wife does not have power over her own body, but the husband does." And the man does not have power over his own body, but the woman. Do not defraud one another (Ibid. and seq.). And again, lest by saying too much for the sake of marriage, he seem to exclude chastity, he adds: Except perhaps by agreement for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer. But then he immediately as it were withdraws what he has said about a time, lest he should seem to be teaching a continence not continuous but temporary and brief. For he says: on account of your incontinence. But this I say by way of concession, not by way of commandment. Therefore, what he said for a time teaches that meditation must be made of chastity, so that through certain intervals of time, as if their powers of continence have been examined, they may promise without danger to each side that which must always be observed by both. But what he absolutely wills, he says plainly: Moreover, I want all men to be like myself, that is, to live in constant and perpetual chastity.

30. Do you not see how cautiously, how carefully, without any opportunity for scandal, the teacher has established a view of chastity, not wishing that the good be shaken by one person's rashness, which the consensus of both should bind and confirm? And in truth, what is firmer and safer than chastity which is maintained in common by the decision commenced by two people and supported by each one? Nor is one part alone concerned with itself, but they stir themselves mutually to a persevering virtue. For this, as for other good things, it is praiseworthy not only to have started, but also to have completed it. For quite some time, as you understand, speech is held in a difficult and dangerous place and dares not to lean towards either direction, for it fears each one equally, but from our difficulty, recognize your distinction; for we have chosen to sadden you, perhaps by saying true things, rather than deceive with false praise. As you see, the double evil, equal and dangerous risk, presses in from both sides; you are constricted by both. To completely despise and loathe a man is openly against the Apostle's advice; but to waste such an amount of time and not give back to God what you promised, that is to be feared and trembled for. As the saying goes, it is easy to make an enemy out of a friend whom you do not fulfill your promises. For so it is written: "If you make a vow to the Lord your God, do not delay in fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will surely demand an accounting from you, and you will be guilty of sin." (Deut. 23:21 and Eccl. 5:3). Therefore, he says: Give the man his due honor, that through both can you pay to the Lord the due vow you promised. We do not doubt his conscience, if you would wait a little: not that we

draw you back from the good of chastity, but we strongly encourage your spirit to the oracle of chastity; so that he may offer a voluntary sacrifice to God, for a sweet smell: that the mind may be stripped of all worldly entanglements and bodily pleasures: that you may be able to more fully adhere to the precepts of the Lord. However, so that you do not think that anything was said carelessly by us, we have taught with testimonies from the divine Scriptures, just as the Apostle says: And they shall be two in one flesh (1 Cor. 6. 16. 17); no longer one flesh (Matt. 19. 6), but one spirit (1 Cor. 6. 17).

31. This is a great sacrament, and the journey to chastity is difficult, but the rewards are great. The Lord calls us in the Gospel saying: 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world' (Matthew 25:34). The same Lord says: 'Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light'. For the Lord himself says to those who are at his left: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels; (Matth. 25. 41): I know not any of you, ye workers of iniquity. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. They, indeed, shall all mourn, they shall lament, who thus wrap themselves up in cares for the present life, that they forget the future; whom the coming of the Lord, with a certain sleep of ignorance and bad security oppressed with waves, shall overtake: whence he himself says in the gospel: Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life; and that day come upon you suddenly; for as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth (Luc. 21. 34. 35). And again: Watch ye therefore, and pray, for ye know not when the time is (Matth. 24. 42. and 25. 13).

32. Blessed are those who await and eagerly anticipate that day and who prepare themselves for it daily, who are not deluded by past righteousness but who are daily renewed in virtue according to the apostle. For the righteousness of the righteous will not help him if he stops being righteous. And likewise, the wickedness of the wicked will not harm him if he turns away from wickedness. Nor should the holy man therefore be secure, as long as he is engaged in the struggle of this life; nor should the sinner despair, who, according to the aforementioned sentence of the Prophet, can make himself just in one day; but the whole space of your life is to seek justice; nor trusting in past justice, become more lax; but as the Apostle says, Forgetting the things that are behind, but stretching forth myself to those that are before, I press towards the prize, to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, knowing that God is the inspector of the heart (Phil. 3.15 and Prov. 24.12). And therefore he strives, so that he may have a clean soul from sin. For this reason it is written, Keep thy heart with all diligence (Prov. 4.23). And again: The Lord loves those with clean hearts. All the immaculate have been accepted by Him (Prov. 11. 20. according to LXX) . Therefore, spend the remaining time of your life without offense, so that you can sing confidently with the Prophet: I will walk with innocence of my heart in the midst of my house (Psal. 100. 2) . And again: I will go in to the altar of God, to God who gives joy to my youth (Psal. 42. 4) . For it is not enough to have begun; one must also strive to perfect justice.

Letters - letter_149

Letter 149. On the Jewish Festivals. The theme of this letter is the abrogation of the Jewish festivals by the evangelical law (He explains the Jewish holidays, and teaches that they should by no means be observed after the Gospel). It has no claim to be considered a work of Jerome. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

1. We, compelled by the command of your charity, are about to speak of the festivals and sabbaths and new moons which the Lord ordained to be observed in the Law, and what must be spiritually observed rather than what is to be condemned according to the letter of Scripture. First, we are forced to answer the friends of the letter and the adversaries of truth; and since I may do so rightfully, I desire to address them in a kindly fashion and bring them to a recognition of the truth, so that, when they desire to chew upon the bitter rind of the roots, they may expel the fruit and marveling at the dust of gold, may despise the formed metals. Although they strive to observe everything according to the letter of the Law, yet they are not able to be enlightened by the light of the spirit of truth, with the veil placed over the face of Moses, [and] although they have not agreed to the truth, yet as emissaries in the manner of goats, [they are] prepared to satisfy with respect to faith which is in us, [and] ready to go to the wilderness of their own perdition, and afterwards to wash their clothes, lest they remain polluted by the contagion of heretical sensibility. However, we intend, following the example of Jeremiah at the beginning of this little work, first to uproot, then to destroy [and] afterwards to plant and to build.

2. Desiring to show concerning the Scriptures first, how these feast days of the Lord, which are commanded to be observed, are celebrated not in shadow, but in spiritual observance. And let those who wish to disregard our authority due to our weakness, listen to the Prophets, who, providing for these reprobations with wise protection, openly predicted during the time of the Gospel. Indeed, with the Lord speaking in them: "My soul hears your festival days, and new moons, and Sabbaths," and it is said that the Lord did not enjoin these, although it is plain that he did prescribe them in the Law. In these words, what else is shown, that when the end of the law came with Christ, it was not commanded to be kept according to the letter? But he speaks of sacrifices through another Prophet. I will not accuse you about your sacrifices. Your burnt offerings are always before me, nor will I drink the blood of your goats, and the rest. With these words, the Apostle, filled with the same spirit, fittingly says: Let no one deceive you about food or drink, or about part of a festive day, or New Moon festivals, or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of future things and the rest. By these very words he most clearly declares that, whether in these days, which are temporal, or in the observance of carnal meats, nothing else can be found but the most vain shadow and the sedition of error; and the Lord Jesus Christ declared in the Gospel to loosen the Sabbath when he commanded the paralytic to take up his bed, which was, as is well known, forbidden by the law to be carried on the Sabbath. He also loosed the ceremony of the Feast of Tabernacles when he said, "I will not go up to this feast day", as if he had said, "In this observance of this festival of mine, my glory shall not ascend".

3. But concerning Easter as the greatest sacrament of our salvation, wishing to say something a little more extensive, although not to discuss everything of this time, I want to first show by what, or by how much reason the keeping of the Lord's Passover is advised. It is commanded that in the first month, on the tenth day of the month, a one-year-old unblemished lamb is to be separated and kept up to the thirteenth and fourteenth day, and that it should be sacrificed by Moses himself, ordered by the Lord, away from the gathering of the children of Israel at dusk. When the true Lamb Himself was coming toward the evening of the Passover feast, willing that some reasons continue to be kept, and wanting that some not be preserved, He changed them. And He, as having deemed worthy to be sacrificed according to the decree of the law, in the first month, and on the thirteenth. He did not allow to anticipate his own time of suffering in any way. However, the Gospel recounts that he did something contrary to the norm, because when he was being handed over by Judas to the Jews, he was arrested on the eleventh day of the first month. And when He deigned to give sacraments of His own body and blood during His life, and to His disciples, this is shown to be contrary to the norm. Therefore, when that lamb, in the imitation of Christ, was commanded to be killed at Passover, roasted with fire with his head and feet, and was commanded to have his innards consumed by the people after his killing. But this, as it seems to me, the Lord did for two reasonable causes; that He might be known to have united sacrifice to the oblation of the Paschal supper with His disciples when He said, THIS IS MY BODY, as is related by Matthew at chapter 26 verse 26. That this union of sacrifice and oblation was thereafter to be observed is also believed. But the second cause, in my opinion, was this: that before His Passion they might see the Lord's body whole and containing its own blood, and by this believe that they themselves would be spiritually refreshed through this body and that we also ought now to believe this. And we must also observe that Christ did not suffer on the fourteenth day, the typical day of the Passover. On the evening of that day, as the law requires, that lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, was sacrificed, and Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed (2 Cor. 5); but on the fifteenth day, on which it was clear that the Jewish festival day with its sacrifice had been dissolved by the Lord. But what should we understand in this, that at first he prefigures eating the flesh of the lamb and then Christ feeds our apostles with his own body as food, and afterwards Christ, the typical Passover of the Jews, was sacrificed? This, I think, was not so that the truth should prefigure the figure, but so that the figure should precede the truth, since first what was of the animal, then what was of the spiritual was chosen, and the universal Church, the beloved bride of Christ, anathematizes those who celebrate the fourteenth day of the Passover with the Jews. They determine to be celebrated, both Sabbaths, and the other observances of this shadowy institution, and He has deigned to observe only this, that the Lord, just before the feast in the first month after the fourteenth day of the Passover, has decided that a Sabbath, without any ambiguity, should be celebrated, even though the truth of the Church arose from it: some believing that it was sufficient not to celebrate the Passover with the Jews on the fourteenth day, while others observe this very cautiously, lest they should dare to celebrate the immolation of the true lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world before the fourteenth day according to that legal precept, which the Lord, coming to His passion, did not in the least despise, you shall observe it until the fourteenth (Exod. 13:6); which the Church now especially observes following the authority of the Apostolic See. But leaving these things, because it is not of this time to inquire into each one, we turn to the spiritual understanding, the sharpness of the mind, in which it is prescribed that on the fourteenth day of the new month of Easter we eat the flesh of the Lamb, so that, born to us the fruit of good

works, when the words of the Decalogue are completed by us, consisting in the perfection of the Gospel in a number of four, we shall eat the flesh of our Lamb in the evening of the world, in which the end of the ages has come, not with darkened hearts, but with the Holy Spirit illuminating our night.

4. On the Sabbath and on the six days one is commanded to work, but on the seventh, the Sabbath, we are prohibited from all servile work. And through the number six, the perfection of works is designated, because the Lord made heaven and earth in six days. But on the Sabbath, all servile work, that is, sin, is prohibited, because whoever commits sin is a servant of sin (Jn. 8:34), so that when we have completed the perfection of our works in the present age, we may deserve to reach the true rest, which was denied to the disobedient. Thus, David says: "If they shall enter into my rest" (Ps. 49:11). About the fiftieth day from the seventh Sabbath day. We are commanded to count full weeks for ourselves until the second day of the completion of the seventh week, that is, the fiftieth day on which the first fruits are offered, which I think signifies a complete reckoning through the sevenfold number and fifty-five and ten times five, so that through the fifty (which contains remission within itself), through charity (which has been poured out into our hearts through the sevenfold spirit of grace), and through the five senses of our body subjected to God's law, we may have them. The words which contain the Ten Commandments within themselves, and through charity, as I have said, charity covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8), and so we offer a new sacrifice to the Lord from all our dwelling places for the use of our Priest, giving our peaceful victims, if we make peace with the Lord, offering spiritual acceptable offerings to God through Jesus Christ, who, although he ate the fermented bread of the first fruits of our land, nevertheless consecrated it for himself as the High Priest who, by penetrating heaven, can share in our weaknesses and, when we have an advocate before the Father, with the works that have been fermented with the yeast of our weakness, offered by the hand of this Priest in prayer, they pass through the bowels of mercy, which offer an odor of sweetness to God, but demand more indulgence.

5. On Booths, and at the end of the solar year among the Hebrews the same in the seventh month, when fruits are gathered into barns, or into storage houses, then it is commanded by law to celebrate festivities, namely on the first day of Trumpets X. days from fulfillment ought to be celebrated Sabbaths, and XV. day through seven days, until they are finished, VIII. of the tabernacles, feasts are commanded. However, this perhaps can mean that, because we are consecrated to the sacrament of the triple invocation at the end of the age, preaching the faith of the Gospel and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, in whom true propitiation is found, we do not cease to speak, and by gathering the fruits of good works, we may merit to arrive at the number of the eighth beatitude, sustained by the grace of the sevenfold Spirit, free from all evil works through persecution. Yet this is without a doubt accomplished through the labor of fasting and prayer, because it is commanded that souls be afflicted by the law.

6. About the New Moon: On the New Moon, it is ordered to sound the trumpet, that is, the new moon, because whoever is illuminated by the light of knowledge must preach to others; as Paul did not despise observing the light of Christ's knowledge, preaching in synagogues. I decided to say a few things, which, since they contain in themselves a figure of the true Priest's offering, must also be offered spiritually to the Lord by us. For through the calf there is our labor, through the lamb there is innocence, through the goat there is the destruction of sinful pleasure, through the

goat that is fed on high there is the life of contemplation, through the ram there is the preaching that generates the lambs for the good shepherd, through the virtue of chaste thoughts united with no one but Christ, through the dove there is the insight of the sacraments, through the bread there is the strength of commandments, through the flour there is the sincerity of life, through the wine and salt there is the truth of preaching, through the oil there is the promotion of charity. All these things, whether festivals or sacrifices are to be celebrated and offered in one place. The law commands this, because then all these things are beneficial, when they are carried out in the unity of the Church without any error of schism. Speaking briefly on many precepts of the law in the deep, I did not fear to offer this small sip to the rich poor, the stranger to the citizen. Perfect love drives out fear. Believing also in this, O venerable Pope, that obedience with faith is more powerful than the abilities of human genius. These words are requested by you and spoken by me for those who, although they appear to be Christians, do not hesitate to tear apart the body of Christ's Church with their schisms through a senseless Judaism. We have gone through these briefly, which if we were to treat in full, would demand a large volume, which this time's leisure cannot allow. Pray for me, venerable Pope.

Letters - letter_150

Letter 150. From Procopius to Jerome. This letter is extant also among those of Procopius of Gaza, to whose works it properly belongs. As this Procopius flourished a century later than Jerome, the letter cannot be addressed to him. The below translation made by ChatGPT 3.5 from this Latin text.

Again Egypt and luxury, and we poor to you, and no account of those absent. That is nothing, just laugh at the Nile flowing with gold. Even if you lift your eyebrows more, we will endure contempt altogether. For there will be a time when you will see Elusa again, and you will weep for the sand scattered by the winds and destroying the vine down to the roots. Some foreign nymphs and Jupiter coming from the sea are there, but no rain. Then indeed I shall laugh and mock fortune myself. But you, now you will think me worthless, then fortunate. However, while the Nile permits you to live in delights, write only, and you call us minute and like those crawling on the ground. For thus we shall enjoy you writing, and I will bear your arrogance more gently with the expectation of the future.

Lives of Illustrious Men

Jerome-Lives of Illustrious Men.

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Jerome-Lives of Illustrious Men.

Preface

You have urged me, Dexter,¹ to follow the example of Tranquillus² in giving a systematic account of ecclesiastical writers, and to do for our writers what he did for the illustrious men of letters among the Gentiles, namely, to briefly set before you all those who have published³ any

memorable writing on the Holy Scriptures, from the time of our Lord's passion until the fourteenth year of the Emperor Theodosius.⁴ A similar work has been done by Hermippus⁵ the peripatetic, Antigonus Carystius,⁶ the learned Satyrus,⁷ and most learned of all, Aristoxenus the Musician,⁸ among the Greeks, and among the Latins by Varro,⁹ Santra,¹⁰ Nepos,¹¹ Hyginus,¹² and by him through whose example you seek to stimulate¹³ us, -Tranquillus. But their situation and mine is not the same, for they, opening the old histories and chronicles could as if gathering from some great meadow, weave some¹⁴ small crown at least for their work. As for me, what shall I do, who, having no predecessor, have, as the saying is, the worst possible master, namely myself, and yet I must acknowledge that Eusebius Pamphilus in the ten books of his Church History has been of the utmost assistance, and the works of various among those of whom we are to write, often testify to the dates of their authors. And so I pray the Lord Jesus,¹⁵ that what your Cicero, who stood at the summit of Roman eloquence, did not scorn to do, compiling in his Brutus, a catalogue of Latin orators, this I too may accomplish in the enumeration of ecclesiastical writers, and accomplish in a fashion worthy of the exhortation which you made. But if, perchance any of those who are yet writing have been overlooked by me in his volume, they ought to ascribe it to themselves, rather than to me, for among those whom I have not read, I could not, in the first place, know those who concealed their own writings, and, in the second place, what is perhaps well known to others, would be quite unknown to me in this out of the way corner of the earth.¹⁶ But surely when they are distinguished by their Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian learn, rabid as they are against Christ, let their followers, they who think the church has had no philosophers or orators or men of learning, learn how many and what sort of men founded, built and adorned it, and cease to accuse our faith of such rustic simplicity, and recognize rather their own ignorance. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, farewell.¹⁷ List of Writers.

1. Simon Peter.
2. James, the brother of our Lord.
3. Matthew, surnamed Levi.
4. Jude, the brother of James.
5. Paul, formerly called Saul.
6. Barnabas, surnamed Joseph.
7. Luke, the evangelist.
8. Mark, the evangelist.
9. John, the apostle and evangelist.
10. Hermas.
11. Philo Judaeus.
12. Lucius Annaeus Seneca.
13. Josephus, son of Matthias.
14. Justus of Tiberias.

15. Clemens the bishop.
16. Ignatius the bishop.
17. Polycarp the bishop.
18. Papias the bishop.
19. Quadratus the bishop.
20. Aristides the philosopher.
21. Agrippa Castor.
22. Hegesippus the historian.
23. Justin the philosopher.
24. Melito the bishop.
25. Theophilus the bishop.
26. Apollinaris the bishop.
27. Dionysius the bishop.
27. Pinytus the bishop.
29. Tatian the heresiarch.
30. Phillip the bishop.
31. Musanus.
32. Modestus.
33. Bardesanes the heresiarch.
34. Victor the bishop.
35. Iranaeus the bishop.
36. Pantaenus the philosopher.
37. Rhodo, the disciple of Tatian.
38. Clemens the presbyter.
39. Miltiades.
40. Apollonius.
41. Serapion the bishop.
42. Apollonius the senator.
43. Theophilus another bishop.

44. Baccylus the bishop.
45. Polycrates the bishop.
46. Heraclitus.
47. Maximus.
48. Candidus.
49. Appion.
50. Sextus.
51. Arabianus.
52. Judas.
53. Tertullian the presbyter.
54. Origen, surnamed Adamantius.
55. Ammonius.
56. Ambrose the deacon.
57. Trypho the pupil of Origen.
58. Minucius Felix.
59. Gaius.
60. Berillus the bishop.
61. Hippolytus the bishop.
62. Alexander the bishop.
63. Julius the African.
64. Gemimus the presbyter.
65. Theodorus, surnamed Gregory the bishop.
66. Cornelius the bishop.
67. Cyprian the bishop.
68. Pontius the deacon.
69. Dionysius the bishop.
70. Novatianus the heresiarch.
71. Malchion the presbyter.
72. Archelaus the bishop.

73. Anatolius the bishop.
74. Victorinus the bishop.
75. Pamphilus the presbyter.
76. Pierius the presbyter.
77. Lucianus the presbyter.
78. Phileas the bishop.
79. Arnobius the rhetorician.
80. Firmianus the rhetorician, surnamed Lactantius.
81. Eusebius the bishop.
82. Reticius the bishop.
83. Methodius the bishop.
84. Juvencus the presbyter.
85. Eustathius the bishop.
86. Marcellus the bishop.
87. Athanasius the bishop.
88. Antonius the monk.
89. Basilus the bishop.
90. Theodorus the bishop.
91. Eusebius another bishop.
92. Triphylius the bishop.
93. Donatus the heresiarch.
94. Asterius the philosopher.
95. Lucifer the bishop.
96. Eusebius another bishop.
97. Fortunatianus the bishop.
98. Acacius the bishop.
99. Serapion the bishop.
100. Hilary the bishop.
101. Victorinus the rhetorician.

102. Titus the bishop.
103. Damasus the bishop.
104. Apollinarius the bishop.
105. Gregory the bishop.
106. Pacianus the bishop.
107. Photinus the heresiarch.
108. Phoebadius the bishop.
109. idymus the Blind.
110. Optatus the bishop.
111. Acilius Severus the senator.
112. Cyril the bishop.
113. Euzoius the bishop.
114. Epiphanius the bishop.
115. Ephrem the deacon.
116. Basil another bishop.
117. Gregory another bishop.
118. Lucius the bishop.
119. Diodorus the bishop.
120. Eunomius the heresiarch.
121. Priscillianus the bishop.
122. Latronianus.
123. Tiberianus.
124. Ambrose the bishop.
125. Evagrius the bishop.
126. Ambrose the disciple of Didymus.
127. Maximus, first philosopher, then bishop.
128. Another Gregory, also a bishop.
129. John the presbyter.
130. Gelasius the bishop.

131. Theotimus the bishop.

132. Dexter, son of Pacianus, now praetorian prefect.

133. Amphilochius the bishop.

134. Sophronius.

135. Jerome the presbyter.

Chapter I.

Simon Peter¹⁸ the son of John, from the village of Bethsaida in the province of Galilee, brother of Andrew the apostle, and himself chief of the apostles, after having been bishop of the church of Antioch and having preached to the Dispersion¹⁹ -the believers in circumcision,²⁰ in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia-pushed on to Rome in the second year of Claudius to over-throw Simon Magus,²¹ and held the sacerdotal chair there for twenty-five years until the last, that is the fourteenth, year of Nero. At his hands he received the crown of martyrdom being nailed to the cross with his head towards the ground and his feet raised on high, asserting that he was unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord. He wrote two epistles which are called Catholic, the second of which, on account of its difference from the first in style, is considered by many not to be by him. Then too the Gospel according to Mark, who was his disciple and interpreter, is ascribed to him. On the other hand, the books, of which one is entitled his Acts, another his Gospel, a third his Preaching, a fourth his Revelation, a fifth his "Judgment" are rejected as apocryphal.²² Buried at Rome in the Vatican near the triumphal way he is venerated by the whole world.²³

Chapter II.

James,²⁴ who is called the brother of the Lord,²⁵ surnamed the Just, the son of Joseph by another wife, as some think, but, as appears to me, the son of Mary sister of the mother of our Lord of whom John makes mention in his book,²⁶ after our Lord's passion at once ordained by the apostles bishop of Jerusalem, wrote a single epistle, which is reckoned among the seven Catholic Epistles and even this is claimed by some to have been published by some one else under his name, and gradually, as time went on, to have gained authority. Hegesippus who lived near the apostolic age, in the fifth book of his Commentaries, writing of James. says "After the apostles, James the brother of the Lord surnamed the Just was made head of the Church at Jerusalem. Many indeed are called James. This one was holy from his mother's womb. He drank neither wine nor strong drink, ate no flesh, never shaved or anointed himself with ointment or bathed. He alone had the privilege of entering the Holy of Holies, since indeed he did not use woolen vestments but linen and went alone into the temple and prayed in behalf of the people, insomuch that his knees were reputed to have acquired the hardness of camels' knees." He says also many other things, too numerous to mention. Josephus also in the 20th book of his Antiquities, and Clement in the 7th of his Outlines mention that on the death of Fetus who reigned over Judea, Albinus was sent by Nero as his successor. Before he had reached his province, Ananias the high priest, the youthful son of Ananus of the priestly class taking advantage of the state of anarchy, assembled a council and publicly tried to force James to deny that Christ is the son of God. When he refused Ananias ordered him to be stoned. Cast down from a pinnacle of the temple, his legs broken, but still half

alive, raising his hands to heaven he said, "Lord forgive them for they know not what they do." Then struck on the head by the club of a fuller such a club as fullers are accustomed to wring out garments²⁷ with-he died. This same Josephus records the tradition that this James was of so great sanctity and reputation among the people that the downfall of Jerusalem was believed to be on account of his death. He it is of whom the apostle Paul writes to the Galatians that "No one else of the apostles did I see except James the brother of the Lord," and shortly after the event the Acts of the apostles bear witness to the matter. The Gospel also which is called the Gospel according to the Hebrews,²⁸ and which I have recently translated into Greek and Latin and which also Origen²⁹ often makes use of, after the account of the resurrection of the Saviour says, "but the Lord, after he had given his grave clothes to the servant of the priest, appeared to James(for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he drank the cup of the Lord until he should see him rising again from among those that sleep)" and again, a little later, it says "'Bring a table and bread,' said the Lord." And immediately it is added, "He brought bread and blessed and brake and gave to James the Just and said to him, 'my brother eat thy bread, for the son of man is risen from among those that sleep.'" And so he ruled the church of Jerusalem thirty years, that is until the seventh year of Nero, and was buried near the temple from which he had been cast down. His tombstone with its inscription was well known until the siege of Titus and the end of Hadrian's reign. Some of our writers think he was buried in Mount Olivet, but they are mistaken.

Chapter III.

Matthew,³⁰ also called Levi, apostle and aforesaid publican, composed a gospel of Christ at first published in Judea in Hebrew³¹ for the sake of those of the circumcision who believed, but this was afterwards translated into Greek though by what author is uncertain. The Hebrew itself has been preserved until the present day in the library at Caesarea which Pamphilus so diligently gathered. I have also had the opportunity of having the volume described to me by the Nazarenes³² of Beroea,³³ a city of Syria, who use it. In this it is to be noted that wherever the Evangelist, whether on his own account or in the person of our Lord the Saviour quotes the testimony of the Old Testament he does not follow the authority of the translators of the Septuagint but the Hebrew. Wherefore these two forms exist "Out of Egypt have I called my son," and "for he shall be called a Nazarene."

Chapter IV.

Jude³⁴ the brother of James, left a short epistle which is reckoned among the seven catholic epistles, and because in it³⁵ he quotes from the apocryphal book of Enoch it is rejected by many. Nevertheless by age and use it has gained authority and is reckoned among the Holy Scriptures.

Chapter V.

Paul,³⁶ formerly called Saul, an apostle outside the number of the twelve apostles, was of the tribe of Benjamin and the town of Giscalis³⁷ in Judea. When this was taken by the Romans he removed with his parents to Tarsus in Cilicia. Sent by them to Jerusalem to study law he was educated by Gamaliel a most learned man whom Luke mentions. But after he had been present at the death of the martyr Stephen and had received letters from the high priest of the temple for the persecution of those who believed in Christ, he proceeded to Damascus, where constrained to

faith by a revelation, as it is written in the Acts of the apostles, he was transformed from a persecutor into an elect vessel. As Sergius Paulus Proconsul of Cyprus was the first to believe on his preaching, he took his name from him because he had subdued him to faith in Christ, and having been joined by Barnabas, after traversing many cities, he returned to Jerusalem and was ordained apostle to the Gentiles by Peter, James and John. And because a full account of his life is given in the Acts of the Apostles, I only say this, that the twenty-fifth year after our Lord's passion, that is the second of Nero, at the time when Fetus Procurator of Judea succeeded Felix, he was sent bound to Rome, and remaining for two years in free custody, disputed daily with the Jews concerning the advent of Christ. It ought to be said that at the first defence, the power of Nero having not yet been confirmed, nor his wickedness broken forth to such a degree as the histories relate concerning him, Paul was dismissed by Nero, that the gospel of Christ might be preached also in the West. As he himself writes in the second epistle to Timothy, at the time when he was about to be put to death dictating his epistle as he did while in chains; "At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by³⁸ me and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion"³⁹ -clearly indicating Nero as lion on account of his cruelty. And directly following he says "The Lord delivered me from the month of the lion" and again shortly "The Lord delivered me⁴⁰ from every evil work and saved me unto his heavenly kingdom,"⁴¹ for indeed he felt within himself that his martyrdom was near at hand, for in the same epistle he announced "for I am already being offered and the time of my departure is at hand."⁴² He then, in the fourteenth year of Nero on the same day with Peter, was beheaded at Rome for Christ's sake and was buried in the Ostian way, the twenty-seventh year after our Lord's passion. He wrote nine epistles to seven churches: To the Romans one, To the Corinthians two, To the Galatians one, To the Ephesians one, To the Philippians one, To the Colossians one, To the Thessalonians two; and besides these to his disciples, To Timothy two, To Titus one, To Philemon one. The epistle which is called the Epistle to the Hebrews is not considered his, on account of its difference from the others in style and language, but it is reckoned, either according to Tertullian to be the work of Barnabas, or according to others, to be by Luke the Evangelist or Clement afterwards bishop of the church at Rome, who, they say, arranged and adorned the ideas of Paul in his own language, though to be sure, since Paul was writing to Hebrews and was indisrepute among them he may have omitted his name from the salvation on this account. He being a Hebrew wrote Hebrew, that is his own tongue and most fluently while the things which were eloquently written in Hebrew were more eloquently turned into Greek⁴³ and this is the reason why it seems to differ from other epistles of Paul. Some read one also to⁴⁴ the Laodiceans but it is rejected by everyone.

Chapter VI.

Barnabas⁴⁵ the Cyprian, also called Joseph the Levite, ordained apostle to the Gentiles with Paul, wrote one Epistle, valuable for the edification of the church, which is reckoned among the apocryphal writings. He afterwards separated from Paul on account of John, a disciple also called Mark,⁴⁶ none the less exercised the work laid upon him of preaching the Gospel.

Chapter VII.

Luke⁴⁷ a physician of Antioch as his writings gas indicate was not unskilled in the Greek language. An adherent of the apostle Paul, and companion of all his journeying, he wrote a Gospel, concerning which the same Paul says, "We send with him a brother whose praise in the gospel is among all the churches"⁴⁸ and to the Colossians "Luke the beloved physician salutes you,"⁴⁹ and to Timothy "Luke only is with me."⁵⁰ He also wrote another excellent volume to which he prefixed the title Acts of the Apostles, a history which extends to the second year of Paul's sojourn at Rome, that is to the fourth⁵¹ year of Nero, from which we learn that the book was composed in that same city. Therefore the Acts of Paul and Thecla⁵² and all the fable about the lion baptized by him we reckon among the apocryphal writings,⁵³ for how is it possible that the inseparable companion of the apostle in his other affairs, alone should have been ignorant of this thing. Moreover Tertullian who lived near those times, mentions a certain presbyter in Asia, an adherent of the apostle Paul,⁵⁴ who was convicted by John of having been the author of the book, and who, confessing that he did this for love of Paul, resigned his office of presbyter. Some suppose that whenever Paul in his epistle says "according to my gospel" he means the book of Luke and that Luke not only was taught the gospel history by the apostle Paul who was not with the Lord in the flesh, but also by other apostles. This he too at the beginning of his work declares, saying "Even as they delivered unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word." So he wrote the gospel as he had heard it, but composed the Acts of the apostles as he himself had seen. He was buried at Constantinople to which city, in the twentieth year of Constantius, his bones together with the remains of Andrew the apostle were transferred.

Chapter VIII.

Mark⁵⁵ the disciple and interpreter of Peter wrote a short gospel at the request of the brethren at Rome embodying what he had heard Peter tell. When Peter had heard this, he approved it and published it to the churches to be read by his authority as Clemens in the sixth book of his Hypotyposes and Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, record. Peter also mentions this Mark in his first epistle, figuratively indicating Rome under the name of Babylon "She who⁵⁶ is in Babylon elect together with you saluteth you⁵⁷ and so doth Mark my son." So, taking the gospel which he himself composed, he went to Egypt and first preaching Christ at Alexandria he formed a church so admirable in doctrine and continence of living that he constrained all followers of Christ to his example. Philo most learned of the Jews seeing the first church at Alexandria still Jewish in a degree, wrote a book⁵⁸ on their manner of life as something creditable to his nation telling how, as Luke says, the believers had all things in common⁵⁹ at Jerusalem, so he recorded that he saw⁶⁰ was done at Alexandria, under the learned Mark. He died in the eighth year of Nero and was buried at Alexandria, Annianus succeeding him.⁶¹

Chapter IX.

John,⁶² the apostle whom Jesus most loved, the son of Zebedee and brother of James, the apostle whom Herod, after our Lord's passion, beheaded, most recently of all the evangelists wrote a Gospel, at the request of the bishops of Asia, against Cerinthus and other heretics and especially against the then growing dogma of the Ebionites, who assert that Christ did not exist before Mary. On this account he was compelled to maintain His divine nativity. But there is said to be yet another reason for this work, in that when he had read Matthew, Mark, and Luke, he approved indeed the substance of the history and declared that the things they said were true, but

that they had given the history of only one year, the one, that is, which follows the imprisonment of John and in which he was put to death. So passing by this year the events of which had been set forth by these, he related the events of the earlier period before John was shut up in prison, so that it might be manifest to those who should diligently read the volumes of the four Evangelists. This also takes away the discrepancy which there seems to be between John and the others. He wrote also one Epistle which begins as follows "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes and our hands handled concerning the word of life" which is esteemed of by all men who are interested in the church or in learning. The other two of which the first is "The elder to the elect lady and her children" and the other "The elder unto Gaius⁶³ the beloved whom I love in truth," are said to be the work of John the presbyter to the memory of whom another sepulchre is shown at Ephesus to the present day, though some think that there are two memorials of this same John the evangelist. We shall treat of this matter in its turn⁶⁴ when we come to Papias his disciple. In the fourteenth year then after Nero⁶⁵ Domitian having raised a second persecution he was banished to the island of Patmos, and wrote the Apocalypse, on which Justin Martyr and Irenaeus afterwards wrote commentaries. But Domitian having been put to death and his acts, on account of his excessive cruelty, having been annulled by the senate, he returned to Ephesus under Pertinax⁶⁶ and continuing there until the tithe of the emperor Trajan, founded and built churches throughout all Asia, and, worn out by old age, died in the sixty-eighth year after our Lord's passion and was buried near the same city.

Chapter X.

Hermas⁶⁷ ⁶⁸ whom the apostle Paul mentions in writing to the Romans "Salute⁶⁹ Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas⁷⁰ and the brethren that are with them"⁷¹ is reputed to be the author of the book which is called Pastor and which is also read publicly in some churches of Greece. It is in fact a useful book and many of the ancient writers quote from it as authority, but among the Latins it is almost unknown.

Chapter XI.

Philo⁷² the Jew, an Alexandrian of the priestly class, is placed by us among the ecclesiastical writers on the ground that, writing a book concerning the first church of Mark the evangelist at Alexandria, he writes to our praise, declaring not only that they were there, but also that they were in many provinces and calling their habitations monasteries. From this⁷³ it appears that the church of those that believed in Christ at first, was such as now the monks desire to imitate,⁷⁴ that is, such that nothing is the peculiar property of any one of them, none of them rich, none poor, that patrimonies are divided among the needy, that they have leisure for prayer and psalms, for doctrine also and ascetic practice, that they were in fact as Lake declares believers were at first at Jerusalem. They say that under Caius⁷⁵ Caligula he ventured to Rome, whither he had been sent as legate of his nation, and that when a second time he had come to Claudius, he spoke in the same city with the apostle Peter and enjoyed his friendship, and for this reason also adorned the adherents of Mark, Peter's disciple at Alexandria, with his praises. There are distinguished and innumerable works by this man: On the five books of Moses, one book Concerning the confusion oftongues, one book On nature and invention, one book On the things which our senses desire and we detest, one book On learning, one book On the heir of divine things, one book On the division of equals and contraries, one book On the three virtues, one book On why in Scripture the

names of many persons are changed, two books On covenants, one book On the life of a wiseman, one book Concerning giants, five books That dreams are sent by God, five books of Questions and answers on Exodus, four books On the tabernacle and the Decalogue, as well as books On victims and promises or curses, On Providence, On the Jews, On the manner of one's life,, On Alexander, and That dumb beasts have right reason, and That every fool should be a slave, and On the lives of the Christians, of which we spoke above, that is, lives of apostolic men, which also he entitled, On those who practice the divine life, because in truth they contemplate divine things and ever pray to God, also trader other categories, two On agriculture, two On drunkenness. There are other monuments of his genius which have not come to our hands. Concerning him there is a proverb among the Greeks "Either Plato philonized, or Philo platonized," that is, either Plato followed Philo, or Philo, Plato, so great is the similarity of ideas and language.

Chapter XII.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca⁷⁶ of Cordova disciple of the Stoic Sotion⁷⁷ and uncle of Lucan the Poet, was a man of most continent life, whom I should not place in the category of saints were it not that those Epistles of Paul to Seneca and Seneca⁷⁸ to Paul, which are read by many, provoke me. In these, written when he was tutor of Nero and the most powerful man of that time, he says that he would like to hold such a place among his countrymen as Paul held among Christians. He was put to death by Nero two years before Peter and Paul were crowned with martyrdom.

Chapter XIII.

Josephus,⁷⁹ the son of Matthias, priest of Jerusalem, taken prisoner by Vespasian and his son Titus, was banished. Coming to Rome he presented to the emperors, father and son, seven books On the captivity of the Jews, which were deposited in the public library and, on account of his genius, was found worthy of a statue at Rome. He wrote also twenty books of Antiquities, from the beginning of the world until the fourteenth year of Domitian Caesar, and two of Antiquities against Appion, the grammarian of Alexandria who, under Caligula, sent as legate on the part of the Gentiles against Philo, wrote also a book containing a vituperation of the Jewish nation. Another book of his entitled, On all ruling wisdom, in which the martyr deaths of the Maccabeans are related is highly esteemed. In the eighth book of his Antiquities he most openly acknowledges that Christ was slain by the Pharisees on account of the greatness of his miracles, that John the Baptist was truly a prophet, and that Jerusalem was destroyed because of the murder of James the apostle. He wrote also concerning the Lord after this fashion: "In this same time was Jesus, a wise man, if indeed it be lawful to call him man. For he was a worker of wonderful miracles, and a teacher of those who freely receive the truth. He had very many adherents also, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles, and was believed to be Christ, and when through the envy of our chief men Pilate had crucified him, nevertheless those who had loved him at first continued to the end, for he appeared to them the third day alive. Many things, both these and other wonderful things are in the songs of the prophets who prophesied concerning him and the sect of Christians, so named from Him, exists to the present day."

Chapter XIV.

Justus⁸⁰ 81 of Tiberias of the province Galilee, also attempted to write a History of Jewish affairs and certain brief Commentaries on the Scriptures but Josephus convicts him of falsehood. It is

known that he wrote at the same time as Josephus himself.

Chapter XV.

Clement,⁸² of whom the apostle Paul writing to the Philippians says "With Clement and others of my fellow-workers whose names are written in the book of life,"⁸³ the fourth bishop of Rome after Peter, if indeed the second was Linus and the third Anacletus,⁸⁴ although most of the Latins think that Clement was second after the apostle.⁸⁵ He wrote, on the part of the church of Rome, an especially valuable Letter to the church of the Corinthians, which in some places is publicly read, and which seems to me to agree in style with the epistle to the Hebrews which passes under the name of Paul but it differs from this same epistle, not only in many of its ideas, but also in respect of the order of words, and its likeness in either respect is not very great. There is also a second Epistle under his name which is rejected by earlier writers, and a Disputation between Peter and Appion written out at length, which Eusebius in the third book of his Church history rejects. He died in the third year of Trajan and a church built at Rome preserves the memory of his name unto this day.

Chapter XVI.

Ignatius,⁸⁶ third bishop of the church of Antioch after Peter the apostle, condemned to the wild beasts during the persecution of Trajan, was sent bound to Rome, and when he had come on his voyage as far as Smyrna, where Polycarp the pupil of John was bishop@ he wrote one epistle To the Ephesians, another To the Magnesians a third To the Trallians a fourth To the Romans, and going thence, he wrote To the Philadelphians and To the Smyrneans and especially To Polycarp, commending to him the church at Antioch. In this last⁸⁷ he bore witness to the Gospel which I have recently translated, in respect of the person of Christ saying, "I indeed saw him in the flesh after the resurrection and I believe that he is," and when he came to Peter and those who were with Peter, he said to them "Behold! touch me and see me bow that I am not an incorporeal spirit" and straightway they touched him and believed. Moreover it seems worth while inasmuch as we have made mention of such a man and of the Epistle which he wrote to the Romans, to give a few "quotations"⁸⁸ : "From Syria even unto Rome I fight with wild beasts, by land and by sea, by night and by day, being bound amidst ten leopards, that is to say soldiers who guard me and who only become worse when they are well treated. Their wrong doing, however is my schoolmaster, but I am not thereby justified. May I have joy of the beasts that are prepared for me; and I pray that I may find them ready; I will even coax them to devour me quickly that they may not treat me as they have some whom they have refused to touch through fear. And if they are unwilling, I will compel them to devour me. Forgive me my children, I know what is expedient for me. Now do I begin to be a disciple, and desire none of the things visible that I may attain unto Jesus Christ. Let fire and cross and attacks of wild beasts, let wrenching of bones, cutting apart of limbs, crushing of the whole body, tortures⁸⁹ of the devil,-let all these come upon me if only I may attain unto the joy which is in Christ." When he had been condemned to the wild beasts and with zeal for martyrdom heard the lions roaring, he said "I am the grain of Christ. I am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts that I may be found the bread of the world." He was put to death the eleventh year of Trajan and the remains of his body lie in Antioch outside the Daphnitic gate in the cemetery.

Chapter XVII.

Polycarp⁹⁰ disciple of the apostle John and by him ordained bishop of Smyrna was chief of all Asia, where he saw and had as teachers some of the apostles and of those who had seen the Lord. He, on account of certain questions concerning the day of the Passover, went to Rome in the time of the emperor Antoninus Pius while Anicetus ruled the church in that city. There he led back to the faith many of the believers who had been deceived through the persuasion of Marcion and Valentinus, and when Marcion met him by chance and said "Do you know us" he replied, "I know the firstborn of the devil." Afterwards during the reign of Marcus Antoninus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus in the fourth persecution after Nero, in the presence of the proconsul holding court at Smyrna and all the people crying out against him in the Amphitheater, he was burned. He wrote a very valuable Epistle to the Philippians which is read to the present day in the meetings in Asia.

Chapter XVIII.

Papias,⁹¹ the pupil of John, bishop of Hierapolis in Asia, wrote only five volumes, which he entitled Exposition of the words of our Lord, in which, when he had asserted in his preface that he did not follow various opinions but had the apostles for authority, he said "I considered what Andrew and Peter said, what Philip, what Thomas, what James, what John,⁹² what Matthew or any one else among the disciples of our Lord, what also Aristion and the elder John, disciples of the Lord had said, not so much that I have their books to read, as that their living voice is heard until the present day in the authors themselves." It appears through this catalogue of names that the John who is placed among the disciples is not the same as the elder John whom he places after Aristion in his enumeration. This we say moreover because of the opinion mentioned above, where we record that it is declared by many that the last two epistles of John are the work not of the apostle but of the presbyter.

He is said to have published a Second coming of Our Lord or Millennium. Irenaeus and Apollinaris and others who say that after the resurrection the Lord will reign in the flesh with the saints, follow him. Tertullian also in his work On the hope of the faithful, Victorinus of Petau and Lactantius follow this view.

Chapter XIX.

Quadratus,⁹³ disciple of the apostles, after Publius bishop of Athens had been crowned with martyrdom on account of his faith in Christ, was substituted in his place, and by his faith and industry gathered the church scattered by reason of its great fear. And when Hadrian passed the winter at Athens to witness the Eleusinian mysteries and was initiated into almost all the sacred mysteries of Greece, those who hated the Christians took opportunity without instructions from the Emperor to harass the believers. At this time he presented to Hadrian a work composed in behalf of our religion, indispensable, full of sound argument and faith and worthy of the apostolic teaching. In which, illustrating the antiquity of his period, he says that he has seen many who, oppressed by various ills, were healed by the Lord in Judea as well as some who had been raised from the dead.

Chapter XX.

Aristides⁹⁴ a most eloquent Athenian philosopher, and a disciple of Christ while yet retaining his philosopher's garb, presented a work to Hadrian at the same time that Quadratus presented his. The work contained a systematic statement of our doctrine, that is, an Apology for the Christians,

which is still extant and is regarded by philologists as a monument to his genius.

Chapter XXI.

Agrippa⁹⁵ surnamed Castor, a man of great learning, wrote a strong refutation of the twenty-four volumes which Basilides the heretic had written against the Gospel, disclosing all his mysteries and enumerating the prophets Barcabbas and Barchob⁹⁶ and all the other barbarous names which terrify the hearers, and his most high God Abraxas. whose name was supposed to contain the year according to the reckoning⁹⁷ of the Greeks. Basilides died at Alexandria in the reign of Hadrian, and from him the Gnostic sects arose. In this tempestuous time also, Cochebas leader of the Jewish faction put Christians to death with various tortures.

Chapter XXII.

Hegesippus⁹⁸ who lived at a period not far from the Apostolic age, writing a History of all ecclesiastical events from the passion of our Lord, down to his own period, and gathering many things useful to the reader, composed five volumes in simple style, trying to represent the style of speaking of those whose lives he treated. He says that he went to Rome in the time of Anicetus, the tenth bishop after Peter, and continued there till the time of Eleutherius, bishop of the same city, who had been formerly deacon under Anicetus. Moreover, arguing against idols, he wrote a history, showing from what error they had first arisen, and this work indicates in what age he flourished.⁹⁹ He says, "They built monuments and temples to their dead as we see up to the present day,¹⁰⁰ such as the one to Antinous, servant to the Emperor Hadrian, in whose honour also games were celebrated, and a city founded bearing his name, and a temple with priests established." The Emperor Hadrian is said to have been enamoured of Antinous.

Chapter XXIII.

Justin,¹⁰¹ a philosopher, and wearing the garb of philosopher, a citizen of Neapolis, a city of Palestine, and the son of Priscus Bacchius, laboured strenuously in behalf of the religion of Christ, insomuch that he delivered to Antoninus Pius and his sons and the senate, a work written Against the nations, and did not shun the ignominy of the cross. He addressed another book also to the successors of this Antoninus, Marcus Antoninus Verus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus. Another volume of his Against the nations, is also extant, where he discusses the nature of demons, and a fourth against the nations which he entitled, Refutation and yet another On the sovereignty of God, and another book which he entitled, Psaltes, and another On the Soul, the Dialogue against the Jews, which he held against Trypho, the leader of the Jews, and also notable volumes Against Marcion, which Irenaeus also mentions in the fourth book¹⁰² Against heresies, also another book Against all heresies which he mentions in the Apology which is addressed to Antoninus Pius. He, when he had held diatribes in the city of Rome, and had convicted Crescens the cynic, who said many blasphemous things against the Christians, of gluttony and fear of death, and had proved him devoted to luxury and lusts, at last, accused of being a Christian, through the efforts and wiles of Crescens, he shed his blood for Christ.

Chapter XXIV.

Melito¹⁰³ of Asia, bishop of Sardis, addressed a book to the emperor Marcus Antoninus Verus, a disciple of Fronto the orator, in behalf of the Christian doctrine. He wrote other things also, among

which are the following: On the passover, two books, one book On the lives of the prophets, one book On the church,¹⁰⁴ one book On the Lord's day one book On faith, one book On the psalms (?) one On the senses, one On the soul and body, one On baptism, one On truth. one On the generation of Christ, On His prophecy¹⁰⁵ one On hospitality and another which is called the Key-one On the devil, one On the Apocalypse of John, one On the corporeality of God, and six books of Eclogues. Of his fine oratorical genius, Tertullian, in the seven books which he wrote against the church on behalf of Montanus, satirically says that he was considered a prophet by many of us.

Chapter XXV.

Theophilus,¹⁰⁶ sixth bishop of the church of Antioch, in the reign of the emperor Marcus Antoninus Verus composed a book Against Marcion, which is still extant, also three volumes To Autolycus and one Against the heresy of Hermogenes and other short and elegant treatises, well fitted for the edification of the church. I have read, under his name, commentaries On the Gospel and On the proverbs of Solomon which do not appear to me to correspond in style and language with the elegance and expressiveness of the above works.

Chapter XXVI.

Apollinaris,¹⁰⁷ bishop of Hierapolis in Asia, flourished in the reign of Marcus Antoninus Verus, to whom he addressed a notable volume in behalf of the faith of the Christians. There are extant also five other books of his Against the Nations, two On truth and Against the Cataphrygians written at the time when Montanus was making a beginning with Prisca and Maximilla.

Chapter XXVII.

Dionysius,¹⁰⁸ bishop of the church of Corinth, was of so great eloquence and industry that he taught not only the people of his own city and province but also those of other provinces and cities by his letters. Of these one is To the Lacedaemonians, another To the Athenians, a third To the Nicomedians, a fourth To the Cretans, a fifth To the church at Amastrina and to the other churches of Pontus, a sixth To the Gnosians and to Pinytus bishop of the same city, a seventh To the Romans, addressed to Sorer their bishop, an eighth To Chrysophora a holy woman. He flourished in the reign of Marcus Antoninus Verus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus.

Chapter XXVIII.

Pinytus¹⁰⁹ of Crete, bishop of the city of Gnosus, wrote to Dionysius bishop of the Corinthians, an exceedingly elegant letter in which he teaches that the people are not to be forever fed on milk, lest by chance they be overtaken by the last day while yet infants, but that they ought to be fed also on solid food, that they may go on to a spiritual old age. He flourished under Marcus Antoninus Verus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus.¹¹⁰

Chapter XXIX.

Tatian¹¹¹ who, while teaching oratory, won not a little glory in the rhetorical art, was a follower of Justin Martyr and was distinguished so long as he did not leave his master's side. But afterwards, inflated¹¹² by a swelling of eloquence, he rounded a new heresy which is called that of the Encratites, the heresy which Severus afterwards augmented in such wise that heretics of this party

are called Severians to the present day. Tatian wrote besides innumerable volumes, one of which, a most successful book Against the nations, is extant, and this is considered the most significant of all his works. He flourished in the reign of Marcus Antoninus Verus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus.

Chapter XXX.

Philip¹¹³ bishop of Crete, that is of the city of Gortina, whom Dionysius mentions in the epistle which he wrote to the church of the same city, published a remarkable book Against Marcion and flourished in the time of Marcus Antoninus Verus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus.

Chapter XXXI.

Musanus,¹¹⁴ not inconsiderable among those who have written on ecclesiastical doctrine, in the reign of Marcus Antoninus Verus wrote a book to certain brethren who had turned aside from the church to the heresy of the Encratites.

Chapter XXXII.

Modes¹¹⁵ also in the reign of Marcus Antoninus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus wrote a book Against Marcion which is still extant. Some other compositions pass under his name but are regarded by scholars as spurious.

Chapter XXXIII.

Bardesanes¹¹⁶ of Mesopotamia is reckoned among the distinguished men. He was at first a follower of Valentinus and afterwards his opponent and himself founded a new heresy. He has the reputation among the Syrians of having been a brilliant genius and vehement in argument. He wrote a multitude of works against almost all heresies which had come into existence in his time. Among these a most remarkable and strong work is the one which he addressed to Marcus Antoninus On fate, and many other volumes On persecution which his followers translated from the Syriac language into Greek. If indeed so much force and brilliancy appears in the translation, how great it must have been in the original.

Chapter XXXIV.

Victor,¹¹⁷ thirteenth bishop of Rome, wrote, On the Paschal Controversy and some other small works. He ruled the church for ten years in the reign of the Emperor Severus.

Chapter XXXV.

Irenaeus,¹¹⁸ a presbyter trader Pothinus the bishop who ruled the church of Lyons in Gaul, being sent to Rome as legate by the martyrs of Ibis place, on account of certain ecclesiastical questions, presented to Bishop Eleutherius certain letters under his own name which are worthy of honour. Afterwards when Pothinus, nearly ninety years of age, received the crown of martyrdom for Christ, he was put in his place. It is certain too that he was a disciple of Poly-carp, the priest and martyr, whom we mentioned above. He wrote five books Against heresies and a short volume, Against the nations and another On discipline, a letter to Marcianus his brother On apostolical preaching, a book of Various treatises; also to Blastus, On schism,¹¹⁹ to Florinus On monarchy or That God is not the author of evil, also an excellent Commentary on the Ogdoad at the end of which indicating

that he was near the apostolic period he wrote "I adjure thee whosoever shall transcribe this book, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by his glorious advent at which He shall judge the quick and the dead, that you diligently compare, after you have transcribed, and amend it according to the copy from which you have transcribed it and also that you shall similarly transcribe this adjuration as you find it in your pattern." Other works of his are in circulation to wit: to Victor the Roman bishop On the Paschal controversy in which he warns him not lightly to break the unity of the fraternity, if indeed Victor believed that the many bishops of Asia and the East, who with the Jews celebrated the passover, on the fourteenth day of the new moon, were to be condemned. But even those who differed from them did not support Victor in his opinion. He flourished chiefly in the reign of the Emperor Commodus, who succeeded Marcus Antoninus Verus in power.

Chapter XXXVI.

Pantaenus,¹²⁰ a philosopher of the stoic school, according to some old Alexandrian custom, where, from the time of¹²¹ Mark the evangelist the ecclesiastics were always doctors, was of so great prudence and erudition both in scripture and secular literature that, on the request of the legates of that nation, he was sent to India by Demetrius bishop of Alexandria, where he found that Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, had preached the advent of the Lord Jesus according to the gospel of Matthew, and on his return to Alexandria he brought this with him written in Hebrew characters. Many of his commentaries on Holy Scripture are indeed extant, but his living voice was of still greater benefit to the churches. He taught in the reigns of the emperor Severus and Antoninus surnamed Caracalla.

Chapter XXXVII.

Rhodo,¹²² a native of Asia, instructed in the Scriptures at Rome by Tatian whom we mentioned above, published many things especially a work Against Marcion in which he tells how the Marcionites differ from one another as well as from the church and says that the aged Apelles, another heretic, was once engaged in a discussion with him, and that he, Rhodo, held Apelles up to ridicule because he declared that he did not know the God whom he worshipped. He mentioned in the same book, which he wrote to Callistion, that he had been a pupil of Tatian at Rome. He also composed elegant treatises On the six days of creation and a notable work against the Phrygians.¹²³ He flourished in the reigns of Commodus and Severus.

Chapter XXXVIII.

Clemens,¹²⁴ presbyter of the Alexandrian church, and a pupil of the Pantaenus mentioned above, led the theological school at Alexandria after the death of his master and was teacher of the Catechetes. He is the author of notable volumes, full of eloquence and learning, both in sacred Scripture and in secular literature; among these are the Stromata, eight books, Hypotyposes eight books, Against the nations one book, On pedagogy¹²⁵ three books, On the Passover, Disquisition on fasting and another book entitled, What rich man is saved? one book On Calumny, On ecclesiastical canons and against those who follow the error of the Jews one book which he addressed to Alexander bishop of Jerusalem. He also mentions in his volumes of Stromata the work of Tatian Against the nations which we mentioned above and a Chronography of one Cassianus, a work which I have not been able to find. He also mentioned certain Jewish writers against the nations, one Aristobulus and Demetrius and Eupolemus who after the example of

Josephus asserted the primacy of Moses and the Jewish people. There is a letter of Alexander the bishop of Jerusalem who afterwards ruled the church with Narcissus, on the ordination of Asclepiades the confessor, addressed to the Antiochians congratulating them, at the end of which he says "these writings honoured¹²⁶ brethren I have sent to you by the blessed presbyter Clement, a man illustrious and approved, whom you also know and with whom now you will become better acquainted a man who, when he had come hither by the special providence of God. strengthened and enlarged the church of God." Origen is known to have been his disciple. He flourished moreover during the reigns of Severus and his son Antoninus.

Chapter XXXIX.

Miltiades¹²⁷ of whom Rhodo gives an account in the work which he wrote against Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla, wrote a considerable volume against these same persons, and other books Against the nations and the Jews and addressed an Apology to the then ruling emperors. He flourished in the reign of Marcus Antoninus and Commodus.

Chapter XL.

Apollonius,¹²⁸ an exceedingly talented man, wrote against Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla a notable and lengthy volume, in which he asserts that Montanus and his mad prophetesses died by hanging, and many other things, among which are the following concerning Prisca and Maximilla, "if they denied that they have accepted gifts, let them confess that those who do accept are not prophets and I will prove by a thousand witnesses that they have received gifts, for it is by other fruits that prophets are shown to be prophets indeed. Tell me, does a prophet dye his hair? Does a prophet stain her eyelids with antimony? Is a prophet adorned with fine garments and precious stones? Does a prophet play with dice and tables? Does he accept usury? Let them respond whether this ought to be permitted or not, it will be my task to prove that they do these things." He says in the same book, that the time when he wrote the work was the fortieth year after the beginning of the heresy of the Cataphrygians. Tertullian added to the six volumes which he wrote On ecstasy against the church a seventh, directed especially against Apollonius, in which he attempts to defend all which Apollonius refuted. Apollonius flourished in the reigns of Commodus and Severus.

Chapter XLI.

Serapion,¹²⁹ ordained bishop of Antioch in the eleventh year of the emperor Commodus, wrote a letter to Caricus and Pontius¹³⁰ on the heresy of Montanus, in which he said "that you may know moreover that the madness of this false doctrine, that is the doctrine of a new prophecy, is reprobated by all the world, I have sent to you the letters of the most holy Apollinaris bishop of Hierapolis in Asia." He wrote a volume also to Domnus, who in time of persecution went over to the Jews, and another work on the gospel which passes under the name of Peter, a work to the church of the Rhosenses in Cilicia who by the reading of this book had turned aside to heresy. There are here and there short letters of his, harmonious in character with the ascetic life of their author.

Chapter XLII.

Apollonius,¹³¹ a Roman senator under the emperor Commodus, having been denounced by a slave as a Christian, gained permission to give a reason for his faith and wrote a remarkable volume which he read in the senate, yet none the less, by the will of the senate, he was beheaded for Christ by virtue of an ancient law among them, that Christians who had once been brought before their judgment seat should not be dismissed unless they recanted.

Chapter XLIII.

Theophilus,¹³² bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, the city formerly called Turris Stratonis, in the reign of the emperor Severus wrote, in conjunction with other bishops, a synodical letter of great utility against those who celebrated the passover with the Jews on the fourteenth day of the month.

Chapter XLIV.

Bacchylus,¹³³ bishop of Corinth, was held in renown under the same emperor Severus, and wrote, as representative of all the bishops who were in Achaia, an elegant work On the passover.

Chapter XLV.

Polycrates¹³⁴ bishop of the Ephesians with other bishops of Asia who in accordance with some ancient custom celebrated the passover with the Jews on the fourteenth of the month, wrote a synodical letter against Victor bishop of Rome in which he says that he follows the authority of the apostle John and of the ancients. From this we make the following brief quotations, "We therefore celebrate the day according to usage, inviolably, neither adding anything to nor taking anything from it, for in Asia lie the remains of the greatest saints of those who shall rise again on the day of the Lord, when he shall come in majesty from heaven and shall quicken all the saints, I mean Philip one of the twelve apostles who sleeps at Hierapolis and his two daughters who were virgins until their death and another daughter of his who died at Ephesus full of the Holy Spirit. And John too, who lay on Our Lord's breast and was his high priest carrying the golden frontlet on his forehead, both martyr and doctor, fell asleep at Ephesus and Polycarp bishop and martyr died at Smyrna. Thraseas of Eumenia also, bishop and martyr, rests in the same Smyrna. What need is there of mentioning Sagaris, bishop and martyr, who sleeps in Laodicea and the blessed Papyrus and Melito, eunuch in the Holy Spirit, who, ever serving the Lord, was laid to rest in Sardis and there awaits his resurrection at Christ's advent. These all observed the day of the passover on the fourteenth of the month, in nowise departing from the evangelical tradition and following the ecclesiastical canon. I also, Polycrates, the least of all your servants, according to the doctrine of my relatives which I also have followed (for there were seven of my relatives bishops indeed and I the eighth) have always celebrated the passover when the Jewish people celebrated the putting away of the leaven. And so brethren being sixty-five years old in the Lord and instructed by many brethren from all parts of the world, and having searched all the Scriptures, I will not fear those who threaten us, for my predecessors said "It is fitting to obey God rather than men." I quote this to show through a small example the genius and authority of the man. He flourished in the reign of the emperor Severus in the same period as Narcissus of Jerusalem.

Chapter XLVI.

Heraclitus¹³⁵ in the reign of Commodus and Severus wrote commentaries on the Acts and Epistles.

Chapter XLVII.

Maximus,¹³⁶ under the same emperors pro-pounded in a remarkable volume the famous questions, What is the origin of evil? and Whether matter is made by God.

Chapter XLVIII.

Candidus¹³⁷ under the above mentioned emperors published most admirable treatises On the six days of creation.

Chapter XLIX.

Appion¹³⁸ under the emperor Severus likewise wrote treatises On the six days of creation.

Chapter L.

Sextus¹³⁹ in the reign of the emperor Severus wrote a book On the resurrection.

Chapter LI.

Arabianus¹⁴⁰ under the same emperor published certain small works relating to christian doctrine.

Chapter LII.

Judas,¹⁴¹ discussed at length the seventy weeks mentioned in Daniel and wrote a Chronography of former times which he brought up to the tenth year of Severus. He is convicted of error in respect of this work in that he prophesied that the advent of Anti-Christ would be about his period, but this was because the greatness of the persecutions seemed to forebode the end of the world.

Chapter LIII.

Tertullian¹⁴² the presbyter, now regarded as chief of the Latin writers after Victor and Apollonius, was from the city of Carthage in the province of Africa, and was the son of a proconsul or Centurion, a man of keen and vigorous character, he flourished chiefly in the reign of the emperor Severus and Antoninus Caracalla and wrote many volumes which we pass by because they are well known to most. I myself have seen a certain Paul an old man of Concordia, a town of Italy, who, while he himself was a very young man had been secretary to the blessed Cyprian who was already advanced in age. He said that he himself had seen how Cyprian was accustomed never to pass a day without reading Tertullian, and that he frequently said to him, "Give me the master," meaning by this, Tertullian. He was presbyter of the church until middle life, afterwards driven by the envy and abuse of the clergy of the Roman church, he lapsed to the doctrine of Montanus, and mentions the new prophecy in many of his books.

He composed, moreover, directly against the church, volumes: On modesty, On persecution, On fasts, On monogamy, six books On ecstasy, and a seventh which he wrote Against Apollonius. He is said to have lived to a decrepit old age, and to have composed many small works, which are not extant.

Chapter LIV.

Origen,¹⁴³ surnamed Adamantius, a persecution having been raised against the Christians in the tenth year of Severus Pertinax, and his father Leonidas having received the crown of martyrdom for Christ, was left at the age of about seventeen, with his six brothers and widowed mother, in poverty, for their property had been confiscated because of confessing Christ. When only eighteen years old, he undertook the work of instructing the Catechetes in the scattered churches of Alexandria. Afterwards appointed by Demetrius, bishop of this city, successor to the presbyter Clement, he flourished many years. When he had already reached middle life, on account of the churches of Achaia, which were torn with many heresies, he was journeying to Athens, by way of Palestine, under the authority of an ecclesiastical letter, and having been ordained presbyter by Theoctistus and Alexander, bishops of Caesarea and Jerusalem, he offended Demetrius, who was so wildly enraged at him that he wrote everywhere to injure his reputation. It is known that before he went to Caesarea, he had been at Rome, trader bishop Zephyrinus. Immediately on his return to Alexandria he made Heraclas the presbyter, who continued to wear his philosopher's garb, his assistant in the school for catechetes. Heraclas became bishop of the church of Alexandria, after Demetrius. How great the glory of Origen was, appears from the fact that Firmilianus, bishop of Caesarea, with all the Cappadocian bishops, sought a visit from him, and entertained him for a long while. Sometime afterwards, going to Palestine to visit the holy places, he came to Caesarea¹⁴⁴ and was instructed at length by Origen in the Holy Scriptures. It appears also from the fact that he went to Antioch, on the request of Mammaea, mother of the Emperor Alexander, and a woman religiously disposed, and was there held in great honour, and sent letters to the Emperor Philip, who was the first among the Roman rulers, to become a christian, and to his mother, letters which are still extant. Who is there, who does not also know that he was so assiduous in the study of Holy Scriptures, that contrary to the spirit of his time, and of his people, he learned the Hebrew language, and taking the Septuagint translation, he gathered the other translations also in a single work, namely, that of Aquila, of Ponticus the Proselyte, and Theodotian the Ebonite, and Symmachus an adherent of the same sect who wrote commentaries also on the gospel according to Matthew, from which he tried to establish his doctrine. And besides these, a fifth, sixth, and seventh translation, which we also have from his library, he sought out with great diligence, and compared with other editions. And since I have given a list of his works, in the volumes of letters which I have written to Paula, in a letter which I wrote against the works of Varro, I pass this by now, not failing however, to make mention of his immortal genius, how that he understood dialectics, as well as geometry, arithmetic, music, grammar, and rhetoric, and taught all the schools of philosophers, in such wise that he had also diligent students in secular literature, and lectured to them daily, and the crowds which flocked to him were marvellous. These, he received in the hope that through the instrumentality of this secular literature, he might establish them in the faith of Christ.

It is unnecessary to speak of the cruelty of that persecution which was raised against the Christians and under Decius, who was mad against the religion of Philip, whom he had slain, - the persecution in which Fabianus, bishop of the Roman church, perished at Rome, and Alexander and Babylas, Pontiffs of the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch, were imprisoned for their confession of Christ. If any one wishes to know what was done in regard to the position of Origen, he can clearly learn, first indeed from his own epistles, which after the persecution, were sent to different ones, and secondly, from the sixth book of the church history of Eusebius of Caesarea, and from his six volumes in behalf of the same Origen.

He lived until the time of Gallus and Volusianus, that is, until his sixty-ninth year, and died at Tyre, in which city he also was buried.

Chapter LV.

Ammonius,¹⁴⁵ a talented man of great philosophical learning, was distinguished at Alexandria, at the same time. Among many and distinguished monuments of his genius, is the elaborate work which he composed On the harmony of Moses and Jesus, and the Gospel canons, which he worked out, and which Eusebius of Caesarea, afterwards followed. Porphyry falsely accused him of having become a heathen again, after being a Christian, but it is certain that he continued a Christian until the very end of his life.

Chapter LVI.

Ambrosius,¹⁴⁶ at first a Marcionite but afterwards set right by Origen, was deacon in the church, and gloriously distinguished as confessor of the Lord. To him, together with Protocletus the presbyter, the book of Origen, On martyrdom was written. Aided¹⁴⁷ by his industry, funds, and perseverance, Origen dictated a great number of volumes. He himself, as befits a man of noble nature, was of no mean literary talent, as his letters to Origen indicate. He died moreover, before the death of Origen, and is condemned by many, in that being a man of wealth, he did not at death, remember in his will, his old and needy friend.

Chapter LVII.

Trypho,¹⁴⁸ pupil of Origen, to whom some of his extant letters are addressed, was very learned in the Scriptures, and this many of his works show here and there, but especially the book which he composed On the red heifer¹⁴⁹ in Deuteronomy, and On the halves, which with the pigeon and the turtledoves were offered by Abraham as recorded in Genesis.¹⁵⁰

Chapter LVIII.

Minucius¹⁵¹ Felix, a distinguished advocate of Rome, wrote a dialogue representing a discussion between a Christian and a Gentile, which is entitled Octavius, and still another work passes current in his name, On fate, or Against the mathematicians, but this although it is the work of a talented man, does not seem to me to correspond in style with the above mentioned work. Lactantius also mentions this Minucius in his works.

Chapter LIX.

Gaius,¹⁵² bishop of Rome, in the time of Zephyrinus, that is, in the reign of Antoninus, the son of Severus, delivered a very notable disputation Against Proculus, the follower of Montanus, convicting him of temerity in his defence of the new prophecy, and in the same volume also enumerating only thirteen epistles of Paul, says that the fourteenth, which is now called, To the Hebrews, is not by him, and is not considered among the Romans to the present day as being by the apostle Paul.

Chapter LX.

Beryllus,¹⁵³ bishop of Bostra in Arabia, after he had ruled the church gloriously¹⁵⁴ for a little while, finally lapsed into the heresy which denies that Christ existed before the incarnation. Set

right by Origen, he wrote various short works, especially letters, in which he thanks Origen. The letters of Origen to him, are also extant, and a dialogue between Origen and Beryllus as well, in which heresies are discussed. He was distinguished during the reign of Alexander, son of Mammaea, and Maximinus and Gordianus, who succeeded him in power.

Chapter LXI.

Hippolytus,¹⁵⁵ bishop of some church (the name of the city I have not been able to learn) wrote A reckoning of the Paschal feast and chronological tables which he worked out up to the first year of the Emperor Alexander. He also discussed the cycle of sixteen years, which the Greeks called *e0kkaidekaethri/da* and gave the cue to Eusebius, who composed on the same Paschal feast a cycle of nineteen years, that is *e0nneakaidekaethri/da*. He wrote Some commentaries on the Scriptures, among which are the following: On the six days of creation, On Exodus, On the Song of Songs, On Genesis, On Zechariah, On the Psalms, On Isaiah, On Daniel, On the Apocalypse, On the Proverbs, On Ecclesiastes, On Saul, On the Pythonissa, On the Antichrist, On the resurrection, Against Marcion, On the Passover, Against all heresies, and an exhortation On the praise of our Lord and Saviour. in which he indicates that he is speaking in the church in the presence of Origen. Ambrosius, who we have said was converted by Origen from the heresy of Marcion, to the true faith. urged Origen to write, in emulation of Hippolytus, commentaries on the Scriptures, offering him seven, and even more secretaries, and their expenses, and an equal number of copyists, and what is still more, with incredible zeal. daily exacting work from him, on which account Origen, in one of his epistles, calls him his "Taskmaster."

Chapter LXII.

Alexander,¹⁵⁶ bishop of Cappadocia, desiring to visit the Holy Land, came to Jerusalem, at the time when Narcissus, bishop of this city, already an old man, ruled the church. It was revealed to Narcissus and many of his clergy, that on the morning of the next day, a bishop would enter the city, who should be assistant on the sacerdotal throne. And so it came to pass, as it was predicted, and all the bishops of Palestine being gathered together, Narcissus himself being especially urgent, Alexander took with him the helm of the church of Jerusalem. At the end of one of his epistles, written to the Antinoites On the peace of the church. He says "Narcissus, who held the bishopric here before me, and now with me exercises his office by his prayers, being about a hundred and sixteen years old, salutes you, and with me begs you to become of one mind." He wrote another also To the Antiocheans, by the hand of Clement, the presbyter of Alexandria, of whom we spoke above, another also To Origen, and In behalf of Origen against Demetrius, called forth by the fact that, according to the testimony of Demetrius, he had made Origen presbyter. There are other epistles of his to different persons. In the seventh persecution under Decius, at the time when Babylas of Antioch was put to death, brought to Caesarea and shut up in prison, he received the crown of martyrdom for confessing Christ.

Chapter LXIII.

Julius Africanus,¹⁵⁷ whose five volumes On Chronology, are yet extant, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, who succeeded Macrinus, received a commission to restore the city of Emmaus, which afterwards was called Nicopolis. There is an epistle of his to Origen, On the question of Susanna, where it is contended that this story is not contained in the Hebrew, and is

not consistent with the Hebrew etymology in respect of the play on "prinos and prisai," "schinos and schisai." In reply to this, Origen wrote a learned epistle. There is extant another letter of his, To Aristides, in which he discusses at length the discrepancies, which appear in the genealogy of our Saviour, as recorded by Matthew and Luke.

Chapter LXIV.

Geminus,¹⁵⁸ presbyter of the church at Antioch, composed a few monuments of his genius, flourishing in the time of the Emperor Alexander and Zebennus, bishop of his city, especially at the time at which Heraclas was ordained Pontiff of the church at Alexandria.

Chapter LXV.

Theodorus,¹⁵⁹ afterwards called Gregory, bishop of Neocaesarea in Pontus, while yet a very young man, in company with his brother Athenodorus, went from Cappadocia to Berytus, and thence to Caesarea in Palestine, to study Greek and Latin literature. When Origen had seen the remarkable natural ability of these men, he urged them to study philosophy, in the teaching of which he gradually introduced the matter of faith in Christ, and made them also his followers. So, instructed by him for five years, they were sent back by him to their mother. Theodorus, on his departure, wrote a panegyric of thanks to Origen, and delivered it before a large assembly. Origen himself being present. This panegyric is extant at the present day.

He wrote also a short, but very valuable, paraphrase On Ecclesiastes, and current report speaks of other epistles of his, but more especially of the signs and wonders. which as bishop, he performed to the great glory of the churches.

Chapter LXVI.

Cornelius,¹⁶⁰ bishop of Rome, to whom eight letters of Cyprian are extant, wrote a letter to Fabius,¹⁶¹ bishop of the church at Antioch, On the Roman, Italian, and African councils, and another On Novatian and those who had fallen from the faith, a third On the acts of the council, and a fourth very prolix one to the same Fabius, containing the causes of the Novatian heresy and an anathema of it. He ruled the church for two years under Gallus and Volusianus. He received the crown of martyrdom for Christ, and was succeeded by Lucius.

Chapter LXVII.

Cyprian¹⁶² of Africa, at first was famous as a teacher of rhetoric, and afterwards on, the persuasion of the presbyter Caecilius, from whom he received his surname, he became a Christian, and gave all his substance to the poor. Not long after he was inducted into the presbytery, and was also made bishop of Carthage. It is unnecessary to make a catalogue of the works of his genius, since they are more conspicuous than the sun.

He was put to death under the Emperors Valerian and Gallienus, in the eighth persecution, on the same day that Cornelius was put to death at Rome, but not in the same year.

Chapter LXVIII.

Pontius,¹⁶³ deacon of Cyprian, sharing his exile until the day of his death, left a notable volume On the life and death of Cyprian.

Chapter LXIX.

Dionysius,¹⁶⁴ bishop of Alexandria, as presbyter had charge of the catechetical school under Heraclas, and was the most distinguished pupil of Origen. Consenting to the doctrine of Cyprian and the African synod, on the rebaptizing¹⁶⁵ of heretics, he sent many letters to different people, which are yet extant; He wrote one to Fabius, bishop of the church at Antioch, On penitence, another To the Romans, by the hand of Hippolytus, two letters To Xystus, who had succeeded Stephen, two also To Philemon and Dionysius, presbyters of the church at Rome, and another To the same Dionysius, afterwards bishop of Rome; and To Novatian, treating of their claim that Novatian had been ordained bishop of Rome, against his will. The beginning of this epistle is as follows: "Dionysius to Novatian, his brother greeting. If you have been ordained unwillingly, as you say, you will prove it, when you shall willingly retire."

There is another epistle of his also To Dionysius and Didymus, and many Festal epistles on the passover, written in a declamatory style, also one to the church of Alexandria On exile, one To Hierax,¹⁶⁶ bishop in Egypt, and yet others On mortality, On the Sabbath, and On the gymnasium, also one To Hermammon and others On the persecution of Decius, and two books Against Nepos the bishop, who asserted in his writings a thousand years reign in the body. Among other things he diligently discussed the Apocalypse of John, and wrote Against Sabellius and To Ammon, bishop of Bernice, and To Telesphorus, also To Euphranor, also four books To Dionysius, bishop of Rome, to the Laodiceans On penitence, to Origen On martyrdom, to the Armenians On penitence,¹⁶⁷ also On the order of transgression, to Timothy On nature, to Euphranor On temptation, many letters also To Basilides, in one of which he asserts that he also began to write commentaries on Ecclesiastes. The notable epistle which he wrote against Paul of Samosta, a few days before his death is also current. He died in the twelfth year of Gallienus.

Chapter LXX.

Novatianus,¹⁶⁸ presbyter of Rome, attempted to usurp the sacerdotal chair occupied by Cornelius, and established the dogma of the Novatians, or as they are called in Greek, the Cathari, by refusing to receive penitent apostates. Novatus, author of this doctrine, was a presbyter of Cyprian. He wrote, On the passover, On the Sabbath, On circumcision, On the priesthood, On prayer,¹⁶⁹ On the food of the Jews On zeal, On Attalus, and many others, especially, a great volume On the Trinity, a sort of epitome of the work of Tertullian, which many mistakenly ascribe to Cyprian.

Chapter LXXI.

Malchion,¹⁷⁰ the highly gifted presbyter of the church at Antioch, who had most successfully taught rhetoric in the same city, held a discussion with Paul of Samosata, who as bishop of the church at Antioch, had introduced the doctrine of Artemon, and this was taken down by shorthand writers. This dialogue is still extant, and yet another extended epistle written by him, in behalf of the council, is addressed to Dionysius and Maximus, bishops of Rome and Alexandria. He flourished under Claudius and Aurelianus.

Chapter LXXII.

Archelaus,¹⁷¹ bishop of Mesopotamia, composed in the Syriac language, a book of the discussion which he held with Manichaeus, when he came from Persia. This book, which is translated into Greek, is possessed by many.

He flourished under the Emperor Probus, who succeeded Aurelianus and Tacitus.

Chapter LXXIII.

Anatolius¹⁷² of Alexandria, bishop of Laodicea in Syria, who flourished under the emperors Probus and Carus, was a man of wonderful learning in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. We can get an idea of the greatness of his genius from the volume which he wrote On the passover and his ten books On the institutes of arithmetic.

Chapter LXXIV.

Victorinus,¹⁷³ bishop of Pettau, was not equally familiar with Latin and Greek. On this account his works though noble in thought, are inferior in style. They are the following: Commentaries On Genesis, On Exodus, On Leviticus, On Isaiah, On Ezekiel. On Habakkuk, On Ecclesiastes, On the Song of Songs, On the Apocalypse of John, Against all heresies and many others. At the last he received the crown of martyrdom.

Chapter LXXV.

Pamphilus¹⁷⁴ the presbyter, patron of Eusebius bishop of Caesarea, was so inflamed with love of sacred literature, that he transcribed the greater part of the works of Origen with his own hand and these are still preserved in the library at Caesarea. I have twenty-five volumes¹⁷⁵ of Commentaries of Origen, written in his hand, On the twelve prophets which I hug and guard with such joy, that I deem myself to have the wealth of Croesus. And if it is such joy to have one epistle of a martyr how much more to have so many thousand lines which seem to me to be traced in his blood. He wrote an Apology for Origen before Eusebius had written his and was put to death at Caesarea in Palestine in the persecution of Maximinus.

Chapter LXXVI.

Pierius,¹⁷⁶ presbyter of the church at Alexandria in the reign of Carus and Diocletian, at the time when Theonas ruled as bishop in the same church, taught the people with great success and attained such elegance of language and published so many treatises on all sorts of subjects (which are still extant) that he was called Origen Junior. He was remarkable for his self-discipline, devoted to voluntary poverty, and thoroughly acquainted with the dialectic art. After the persecution, he passed the rest of his life at Rome. There is extant a long treatise of his. On the prophet Hosea which from internal evidence appears to have been delivered on the vigil of Passover.

Chapter LXXVII.

Lucianus,¹⁷⁷ a man of great talent, presbyter of the church at Antioch, was so diligent in the study of the Scriptures, that even now certain copies of the Scriptures bear the name of Lucian. Works of his, On faith, and short Epistles to various people are extant. He was put to death at Nicomedia for his confession of Christ in the persecution of Maximinus, and was buried at Helenopolis in

Bithynia.

Chapter LXXVIII.

Phileas¹⁷⁸ a resident of that Egyptian city which is called Thmuis, of noble family, and no small wealth, having become bishop, composed a finely written work in praise of martyrs and arguing against the judge who tried to compel him to offer sacrifices, was beheaded for Christ during the same persecution in which Lucianus was put to death at Nicomedia.

Chapter LXXIX.

Arnobius¹⁷⁹ a was a most successful teacher of rhetoric at Sicca in Africa during the reign of Diocletian, and wrote volumes Against the nations which may be found everywhere.

Chapter LXXX.

Firmianus,¹⁸⁰ known also as Lactantius, a disciple of Arnobius, during the reign of Diocletian summoned to Nicomedia with Flavius the Grammarian whose poem On medicine is still extant, taught rhetoric there and on account of his lack of pupils (since it was a Greek city) he betook himself to writing. We have a Banquet of his which he wrote as a young man in Africa and an Itinerary of a journey from Africa to Nicomedia written in hexameters, and another book which is called The Grammarian and a most beautiful one On the wrath of God, and Divine institutes against the nations, seven books, and an Epitome of the same work in one volume, without a title,¹⁸¹ also two books To Asclepiades, one book On persecution, four books of Epistles to Probus, two books of Epistles to Severus, two books of Epistles to his pupil Demetrius¹⁸² and one book to the same On the work of God or the creation of man. In his extreme old age he was tutor to Crispus Caesar a son of Constantine in Gaul, the same one who was afterwards put to death by his father.

Chapter LXXXI.

Eusebius¹⁸³ bishop of Caesarea in Palestine was diligent in the study of Divine Scriptures and with Pamphilus the martyr a most diligent investigator of the Holy Bible. He published a great number of volumes among which are the following: Demonstrations of the Gospel twenty books Preparations for the Gospel fifteen books, Theophany¹⁸⁴ five books, Church history ten books, Chronicle of Universal history and an Epitome of this last. Also On discrepancies between the Gospels, On Isaiah, ten books, also Against Porphyry, who was writing at that same time in Sicily as some think, twenty-five books, also one book of Topics, six books of Apology for Origen, three books On the life of Pamphilus, other brief works On the martyrs, exceedingly learned Commentaries on one hundred and fifty Psalms, and many others. He flourished chiefly in the reigns of Constantine the Great and Constantius. His surname Pamphilus arose from his friendship for Pamphilus the martyr.

Chapter LXXXII.

Reticius¹⁸⁵ bishop of Autun, among the Aedui, had a great reputation in Gaul in the reign of Constantine. I have read his commentaries On the Song of Songs and another great volume Against Novatian but besides these, I have found no works of his.

Chapter LXXXIII.

Methodius,¹⁸⁶ bishop of Olympus in Lycia and afterwards of Tyre, composed books Against Porphyry written in polished and logical style also a Banquet of the ten virgins, an excellent work On the resurrection, against Origen and On the Pythonissa and On free will, also against Origen. He also wrote commentaries On Genesis and On the Song of Songs and many others which are widely read. At the end of the recent persecution or, as others affirm, in the reign of Decius and Valerianus, he was crowned with martyrdom at Chalcis in Greece.

Chapter LXXXIV.

Juvencus,¹⁸⁷ a Spaniard of noble family and presbyter, translating the four gospels almost verbally in hexameter verses, composed four books. He wrote some other things in the same metre relating to the order of the sacraments. He flourished in the reign of Constantinus.

Chapter LXXXV.

Eustathius,¹⁸⁸ a Pamphilian from Side, bishop¹⁸⁹ first of Beroea in Syria and then of Antioch, ruled the church and, composing many things against the doctrine of the Arians, was driven into exile under the emperor Constantius¹⁹⁰ into Trajanopolis in Thrace where he is until this day. Works of his are extant On the soul, On ventriloquism Against Origen and Letters too numerous to mention.

Chapter LXXXVI.

Marcellus,¹⁹¹ bishop of Ancyra, flourished in the reign of Constantinus and Constantius anti wrote many volumes of various Propositions and especially against the Arians. Works of Asterius and Apollinarius against him are current, which accuse him of Sabellianism. Hilary too, in the seventh book of his work Against the Arians, mentions him as a heretic, but he defends himself against the charge through the fact that Julius and Athanasius bishops of Rome and Alexandria communed with him.

Chapter LXXXVII.

Athanasius¹⁹² bishop of Alexandria, hard pressed by the wiles of the Arians, fled to Constans emperor of Gaul. Returning thence with letters and, after the death of the emperor, again taking refuge in flight, he kept in hiding until the accession of Jovian, when he returned to the church and died in the reign of Valens. Various works by him are in circulation; two book Against the nations one Against Valens and Ursacius, On virginity, very many On the persecutions of the Arians, also On the titles of the Psalms and Life of Anthony the monk, also Festal epistles and other works too numerous to mention.

Chapter LXXXVIII.

Anthony¹⁹³ the monk, whose life Athanasius bishop of Alexandria wrote a long work upon, sent seven letters in Coptic to various monasteries, letters truly apostolic in idea and language, and which have been translated into Greek. The chief of these is To the Arsenoites. He flourished during the reign of Constantinus and his sons.

Chapter LXXXIX.

Basil¹⁹⁴ bishop of Ancyra, [a doctor of]¹⁹⁵ medicine, wrote a book Against Marcellus and on virginity and some other things-and in the reign of Constantius was, with Eustathius of Sebaste, primate of Macedonia.

Chapter XC.

Theodorus,¹⁹⁶ bishop of Heraclea in Thrace, published in the reign of the emperor Constantius commentaries On Matthew and John, On the Epistles and On the Psalter. These are written in a polished and clear style and show an excellent historical sense.

Chapter XCI.

Eusebius¹⁹⁷ of Emesa, who had fine rhetorical talent, composed innumerable works suited to win popular applause and writing historically he is most diligently read by those who practise public speaking. Among these the chief are, Against Jews, Gentiles and Novatians and Homilies on the Gospels, brief but numerous. He flourished in the reign of the emperor Constantius in whose reign he died, and was buried at Antioch.

Chapter XCII.

Triphylius, bishop of Ledra or Leucotheon,¹⁹⁸ in Cyprus, was the most eloquent man of his age, and was distinguished during the reign of Constantius. I have read his Commentary on the Song of Songs. He is said to have written many other works, none of which have come to our hand.

Chapter XCIII.

Donatus,¹⁹⁹ from whom the Donatians arose in Africa in the reigns of the emperors Constantinus and Constantius, asserted that the scriptures were given up to the heathen by the orthodox during the persecution, and deceived almost all Africa, and especially Numidia by his persuasiveness. Many of his works, which relate to his heresy, are extant, including On the Holy Spirit, a work which is Arian in doctrine.

Chapter XCIV.

Asterius,²⁰⁰ a philosopher of the Arian party, wrote, during the reign of Constantius, commentaries On the Epistle to the Romans, On the Gospels and On the Psalms, also many other works which are diligently read by those of his party.

Chapter XCV.

Lucifer,²⁰¹ bishop of Cagliari, was sent by Liberius the bishop, with Pancratius and Hilary, clergy of the Roman church, to the emperor Constantius, as legates for the faith. When he would not condemn the Nicene faith as represented by Athanasius, sent again to Palestine, with wonderful constancy and willingness to meet martyrdom, he wrote a book against the emperor Constantius and sent it to be read by him, and not long after he returned to Cagliari in the reign of the emperor Julian and died in the reign of Valentinian.

Chapter XCVI.

Eusebius,²⁰² a native of Sardinia, at first a lector at Rome and afterwards bishop of Vercelli, sent by the emperor Constantius to Scythopolis, and afterwards to Cappadocia, on account of his

confession of the faith, returned to the church under the emperor Julian and published the Commentaries of Eusebius of Caesarea on the Psalms, which he had translated from Greek into Latin, and died during the reign of Valentinian and Valens.

Chapter XCVII

Fortunatianus,²⁰³ an African by birth, bishop of Aquilia during the reign of Constantius, composed brief Commentaries on the gospels arranged by chapters, written in a rustic style, and is held in detestation because, when Liberius bishop of Rome was driven into exile for the faith, he was induced by the urgency of Fortunatianus to subscribe to heresy.

Chapter XCVIII.

Acacius,²⁰⁴ who, because he was blind in one eye, they nicknamed "the one-eyed," bishop of the church of Caesarea in Palestine, wrote seventeen volumes On Ecclesiastes and six of Miscellaneous questions, and many treatises besides on various subjects. He was so influential in the reign of the emperor Constantius that he made Felix bishop of Rome in the place of Liberius.

Chapter XCIX.

Serapion,²⁰⁵ bishop of Thmuis, who on account of his cultivated genius was found worthy of the surname of Scholasticus, was the intimate friend of Anthony the monk, and published an excellent book Against the Manichaeans, also another On the titles of the Psalms, and valuable Epistles to different people. In the reign of the emperor Constantius he was renowned as a confessor.

Chapter C.

Hilary,²⁰⁶ a bishop of Poitiers in Aquitania, was a member of the party of Saturninus bishop of Arles. Banished into Phrygia by the Synod of Beziers he composed twelve books Against the Arians and another book On Councils written to the Gallican bishops, and Commentaries on the Psalms that is on the first and second, from the fifty-first to the sixty-second, and from the one hundred and eighteenth to the end of the book. In this work he imitated Origen, but added also some original matter. There is a little book of his To Constantius which he presented to the emperor while he was living in Constantinople, and another On Constantius which he wrote after his death and a book Against Valens and Ursacius, containing a history of the Ariminian and Selucian Councils and To Sallust the prefect or Against Dioscurus, also a book of Hymns and mysteries, a commentary On Matthew and treatises On Job, which he translated freely from the Greek of Origen, and another elegant little work Against Auxentius and Epistles to different persons. They say he has written On the Song of Songs but this work is not known to us. He died at Poitiers during the reign of Valentinianus and Valens.

Chapter CI.

Victorinus,²⁰⁷ an African by birth, taught rhetoric at Rome under the emperor Constantius and in extreme old age, yielding himself to faith in Christ wrote books against Arius, written in dialectic style and very obscure language, books which can only be understood by the learned. He also wrote Commentaries on the Epistles.

Chapter CII.

Titus²⁰⁸ bishop of Bostra, in the reign of the emperors Julian and Jovinian wrote vigorous works against the Manichaeans and some other things. He died under Valens.

Chapter CIII.

Damasus,²⁰⁹ bishop of Rome, had a fine talent for making verses and published many brief works in heroic metre. He died in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius at the age of almost eighty.

Chapter CIV.

Apollinaris,²¹⁰ bishop of Laodicea, in Syria, the son of a presbyter, applied himself in his youth to the diligent study of grammar, and afterwards, writing innumerable volumes on the Holy Scriptures, died in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius. There are extant thirty books by him Against Porphyry, which are generally considered as among the best of his works.²¹¹

Chapter CV.

Gregory,²¹² bishop of Elvira,²¹³ in Baetica, writing even to extreme old age, composed various treatises in mediocre language, and an elegant work On Faith. He is said to be still living.

Chapter CVI.

Pacianus,²¹⁴ bishop of Barcelona, in the Pyrenees Mountains, a man of chaste eloquence, and as distinguished by his life as by his speech, wrote various short works, among which are The Deer,²¹⁵ and Against the Novatians, and died in the reign of Emperor Theodosian, in extreme old age.

Chapter CVII.

Photinus,²¹⁶ of Gallograecia, a disciple of Marcellus, and ordained bishop of Sirmium, attempted to introduce the Ebionite heresy, and afterwards having been expelled from the church by the Emperor Valentinianus, wrote many volumes, among which the most distinguished are Against the nations, and To Valentinianus.

Chapter CVIII.

Phoebadius,²¹⁷ bishop of Agen, in Gaul, published a book Against the Arians. There are said to be other works by him, which I have not yet read. He is still living, infirm with age.

Chapter CIX.

Didymus,²¹⁸ of Alexandria, becoming blind while very young, and therefore ignorant of the rudiments of learning, displayed such a miracle of intelligence as to learn perfectly dialectics and even geometry, sciences which especially require sight. He wrote many admirable works: Commentaries on all the Psalms, Commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew and John, On the doctrines, also two books Against the Arians, and one book On the Holy Spirit, which I translated in Latin, eighteen volumes On Isaiah, three books of commentaries On Hosea, addressed to me, and five books On Zechariah, written at my request, also commentaries On Job, and many other things, to give an account of which would be a work of itself.²¹⁹ He is still living, and has already passed his eighty-third year.

Chapter CX.

Optatus²²⁰ the African, bishop of Milevis,²²¹ during the reign of the Emperors Valentinianus and Valens, wrote in behalf of the Catholic party six books against the calumny of the Donatian party, in which he asserts that the crime of the Donatists is falsely charged upon the catholic party.

Chapter CXI.

Acilius Severus²²² of Spain, of the family of that Severus to whom Lactantius' two books of Epistles are addressed, composed a volume of mingled poetry and prose which is a sort of guide book to his whole life. This he called Calamity or Trial.²²³ He died in the reign of Valentinianus.

Chapter CXII.

Cyril,²²⁴ bishop of Jerusalem often expelled by the church, and at last received, held the episcopate for eight consecutive years, in the reign of Theodosius. Certain Catachetical lectures of his, composed while he was a young man, are extant.

Chapter CXIII.

Euzoius,²²⁵ as a young man, together with Gregory, bishop of Nazianzan, was educated by Thespesius the rhetorician at Caesarea, and afterwards when bishop of the same city, with great pains attempted to restore the library, collected by Origen and Pamphilus, which had already suffered injury. At last, in the reign of the Emperor Theodosian, he was expelled from the church. Many and various treatises of his, are in circulation, and one may easily become acquainted with them.

Chapter CXIV.

Epiphanius,²²⁶ bishop of Salamina in Cyprus, wrote books Against all heresies and many others which are eagerly read by the learned, on account of their subject matter, and also by the plain people, on account of their language. He is still living, and in his extreme old age composes various brief works.

Chapter CXV.

Ephraim,²²⁷ deacon of the church at Edessa, composed many works in the Syriac language, and became so distinguished that his writings are repeated publicly in some churches, after the reading of the Scriptures.

I once read in Greek a volume by him On the Holy Spirit, which some one had translated from the Syriac, and recognized even in translation, the incisive power of lofty genius. He died in the reign of Valens.

Chapter CXVI.

Basil,²²⁸ bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, the city formerly called Mazaca, composed admirable carefully written books Against Eunomius, a volume On the Holy Spirit, and nine homilies On the six days of creation, also a work On asceticism and short treatises on various subjects. He died in the reign of Gratianus.

Chapter CXVII.

Gregory,²²⁹ bishop of Nazianzen, a most eloquent man, and my instructor in the Scriptures, composed works, amounting in all to thirty thousand lines, among which are On the death of his brother Caesarius, On charity, In praise of the Maccabees, In praise of Cyprian. In praise of Athanasius, In praise of Maximus the philosopher after he had returned from exile. This latter however, some superscribe with the pseudonym of Herona, since there is another work by Gregory, upbraiding this same Maximus, as if one might not praise and upbraid the same person at one time or another as the occasion may demand. Other works of his are a book in hexameter, containing, A discussion between virginity and marriage, two books Against Eunomius, one book On the Holy Spirit, and one Against the Emperor Julian. He was a follower of Polemon in his style of speaking. Having ordained his successor in the bishopric, during his own life time, he retired to the country where he lived the life of a monk and died, three years or more ago, in the reign of Theodosius.

Chapter CXVIII.

Lucius,²³⁰ bishop of the Arian party after Athanasius, held the bishopric of the church at Alexandria, until the time of the Emperor Theodosius, by whom he was deposed. Certain festal epistles of his, On the passover are extant, and a few short works of Miscellaneous propositions.

Chapter CXIX.

Diodorus,²³¹ bishop of Tarsus enjoyed a great reputation while he was still presbyter of Antioch. Commentaries of his On the epistles are extant, as well as many other works in the manner of Eusebius the great of Emesa, whose meaning he has followed, but whose eloquence he could not imitate on account of his ignorance of secular literature.

Chapter CXX.

Eunomius,²³² bishop of Cyzicus and member of the Arian party, fell into such open blasphemy in his heresy, as to proclaim publicly what the others concealed. He is said to be still living in Cappadocia, and to write much against the church. Replies to him have been made by Apollinarius, Didymus, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory Nazianzen, and Gregory of Nyssa.

Chapter. CXXI.

Priscillianus,²³³ bishop of Abila, belonged to the party of Hydatius and Ithacius, and was put to death at Trèves by the tyrant Maximus. He published many short writings, some of which have reached us. He is still accused by some, of being tainted with Gnosticism, that is, with the heresy of Basilides or Mark, of whom Irenaeus writes. while his defenders maintain that he was not at all of this way of thinking.

Chapter CXXII.

Latronianus,²³⁴ of Spain, a man of great learning, and in the matter of versification worthy to be compared with the poets of ancient time, was also put to death at Trèves with Priscillianus, Felicissimus, Julianus, and Euchrotia, coörganizers with him of schism. Various fruits of his genius written in different metres are extant.

Chapter CXXIII.

Tiberianus,²³⁵ the Baetican, in answer to an insinuation that he shared the heresy of Priscillian, wrote an apology in pompous and mongrel language. But after the death of his friends, overcome by the tediousness of exile, he changed his mind, as it is written in Holy Scripture "the dog returned to his vomit," and married a nun, a virgin dedicated to Christ.

Chapter CXXIV.

Ambrose²³⁶ a bishop of Milan, at the present time is still writing. I withhold my judgment of him, because he is still alive, fearing either to praise or blame lest in the one event, I should be blamed for adulation, and in the other for speaking the truth.

Chapter CXXV.

Evagrius,²³⁷ bishop of Antioch, a man of remarkably keen mind, while he was yet presbyter read me various treatises on various topics, which he had not yet published. He translated also the Life of the blessed Anthony from the Greek of Athanasius into our language.

Chapter CXXVI.

Ambrose²³⁸ of Alexandria, pupil of Didymus, wrote a long work On doctrines against Apollinaris, and as some one has lately informed me, Commentaries on Job. He is still living.

Chapter CXXVII.

Maximus²³⁹ the philosopher, born at Alexandria, ordained bishop at Constantinople and deposed, wrote a remarkable work On faith against the Arians and gave it to the Emperor Gratianus, at Milan.

Chapter CXXVIII.

Gregory²⁴⁰ bishop of Nyssa, the brother of Basil of Caesarea, a few years since read to Gregory Nazianzan and myself a work against Eunomius. He is said to have also written many other works, and to be still writing.

Chapter CXXIX.

John,²⁴¹ presbyter of the church at Antioch, a follower of Eusebius of Emesa and Diodorus, is said to have composed many books, but of these I have only read his On the priesthood.

Chapter CXXX.

Gelasius,²⁴² bishop of Caesarea in Palestine after Euzoius, is said to write more or less in carefully polished style, but not to publish his works.

Chapter CXXXI.

Theotimus,²⁴³ bishop of Tomi, in Scythia, has published brief and epigrammatical treatises, in the form of dialogues, and in olden style. I hear that he is now writing other works.

Chapter CXXXII.

Dexter,²⁴⁴ son of Pacianus whom I mentioned above, distinguished in his generation and devoted to the Christian faith, has, I am told, written a Universal History, which I have not yet read.

Chapter CXXXIII.

Amphilochius,²⁴⁵ bishop of Iconium, recently read to me a book On the Holy Spirit, arguing that He is God, that He is to be worshipped, and that He is omnipotent.

Chapter CXXXIV.

Sophronius,²⁴⁶ a man of superlative learning, wrote while yet a lad, In praise of Bethlehem and recently a notable volume, On the overthrow of Serapis, and also to Eustachius, On virginity, and a Life of Hilarion the monk. He rendered short works of mine into Greek in a very finished style, the Psalter also, and the Prophets, which I translated from Hebrew into Latin.

Chapter CXXXV.

I, Jerome,²⁴⁷ son of Eusebius, of the city of Strido, which is on the border of Dalmatia and Pannonia and was overthrown by the Goths, up to the present year, that is, the fourteenth of the Emperor Theodosius, have written the following: Life of Paul the monk, one book of Letters to different persons, an Exhortation to Heliodorus, Controversy of Luciferianus and Orthodoxus, Chronicle of universal history, 28 homilies of Origen on Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which I translated from Greek into Latin, i On the Seraphim, On Osanna, On the prudent and the prodigal sons, On three questions of the ancient law, Homilies on the Song of Songs two, Against Helvidius, On the perpetual virginity of Mary, To Eustochius, On maintaining virginity, one book of Epistles to Marcella, a consolatory letter to Paula On the death of a daughter, three books of Commentaries on the epistle of Paul to the Galatians, likewise three books of Commentaries on the epistle to the Ephesians, On the epistle to Titus one book, On the epistle to Philemon one, Commentaries on Ecclesiastes, one book of Hebrew questions on Genesis, one book On places in Judea, one book of Hebrew names, Didymus on the Holy Spirit, which I² translated into Latin one book, 39 homilies on Luke²⁴⁸ On Psalms 10 to 16, seven books, On the captive Monk, The Life of the blessed Hilarion. I translated the New Testament from the Greek, and the Old Testament from the Hebrew,²⁴⁹ and how many Letters I have written To Paula and Eustochius I do not know, for I write daily. I wrote moreover, two books of Explanations on Micah, one book On Nahum, two books On Habakkuk, one On Zephaniah, one On Haggai, and many others On the prophets, which are not yet finished, and which I am still at work upon.²⁵⁰

1: Dexter. Compare chapters 132 and 106.

2: Tranquillus. C. Suetonius Tranquillus (about a.d. 100). De illustribus grammaticis; De claris rhetoribus.

3: Published or handed down "Prodiderunt." Some mss. read "tradiderunt," and Jerome usually employs "Edo" for publish.

4: Fourteenth year of the Emperor Theodosius. a.d. 492.

5: Hermippus of Smyrna. (3rd century b.c.) Lives of distinguished men.

6: Antigonus. Antigonus of Carystus (Reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus?).

- 7: Satyrus. A Peripatetic (Reign of Ptolemy Philopator) "wrote a collection of biographies."
- 8: Aristoxenus the musician. A Peripatetic, pupil of Aristotle, wrote lives of various Philosophers.
- 9: Varro. M. Terentius Varro the "most learned of the Romans" (died b.c. 28) published among other things a series of "portraits of seven hundred remarkable personages" (Ramsay in Smith's Dictionary).
- 10: Santra. Santra the Grammarian?
- 11: Nepos. Cornelius Nepos friend of Cicero wrote Lives of Illustrious men.
- 12: Hyginus. Caius Julius Hyginus, freedman of Augustus and friend of Ovid.
- 13: Seek to stimulate 30 31 a [H e 21] and the mass of mss. also Fabricius; stimulate. A.T. Migne. Her.
- 14: Some A H 25 31 e 21. Fabricius; No T a? Migne Her.
- 15: The Lord Jesus A H T 25 31 e; The Lord Jesus Christ a; Our Lord Jesus Christ Bamb. Bern; My Lord Jesus Christ Norimb.
- 16: Out of the way corner of the earth i.e., Bethlehem.
- 17: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ farewell T 25 31 a 21; do. omitting Christ A; omit all H e.
- 18: Died 65-6 or 67.
- 19: Dispersion. The technical "Dispersion"-the Jews out of Judea. Cf. Peter 1. 1. See Westcott in Smith's Dict. of Bible.
- 20: Circumcision a paraphrase for "Hebrews" in Eusebius and Rufinus.
- 21: Simon Magus. That Peter met Simon Magus in Rome is a post-apostolic legend. Compare the Clementine literature.
- 22: Apocryphal. For literature on apocryphal works see Ante-Nic. Fath. ed. Coxe (N. Y. Chr. Lit. Co.,) vol. 9 pp. 95 sq. The Acts, Gospel, Preaching and Revelation are mentioned by Eusebius. The Judgment was added by Jerome.
- 23: The textual variations on the chapter are numerous enough but none of them are sustained by the better mss. e.g. "First Simon Peter" "Simon Peter the Apostle" "Peter the Apostle" ... "Called canonical" ... "are considered apocryphal" ... "the whole city."
- 24: Died 62 or 63 (according to Josephus and Jerome) or 69 (Hegesippus).
- 25: Brother of the Lord. Gal. 1, 19.
- 26: in his book John. 19, 25.
- 27: garments A H 25 30 e 21; wet garments T e 29.
- 28: Gospel according to the Hebrews. Compare Lipsius Gospels apocr, in Smith and Wace, Dict. v. 2 pp. 709-12.

29: Origen. H 31 a e 1021; Adamantius A T 25.

30: Died after 62.

31: Gospel ... in Hebrew. Jerome seems to regard the Gospel according to the Hebrews mentioned by him above as the original Hebrew Text of Matthew. cf. Lightfoot, Ignatius v. 2. p. 295.

32: Nazarenes =Nasaraei. See Smith and Wace s.v.

33: Beroea some mss. read Veria and so Herding. The modern Aleppo.

34: Died after 62.

35: in it H 31 a e 10 21; omit A T 25 30.

36: Died 67?, probably after 64 at least.

37: Giscalis, supposed thus to have originated at Giscalis and to have gone from there to Tarsus, but this is not generally accepted.

38: The Lord stood by all mss. and eds; God. Her.

39: lion. 2 Tim. 4. 16-17.

40: from the mouth of the lion, and again shortly "The Lord delivered me" (substantially) A H 25 30 31 a e etc.; omit T. Her. There are slight variations; God H 21 Bamb Bern. Norimb.; I was delivered Val. Cypr. Tam. Par 1512 etc.

41: The Lord ... kingdom 2 Tim. 4. 18.

42: for I ... at hand 2 Tim. 4. 6.

43: into H 31 a e. and many others; in A T 25 30.

44: also to A H T 25 30 a e Norimb, Bamb.; also 3l; omit, Her. who seems to have omitted on some evidence possibly Bern.

45: Died in Salamis 53 (Ceillier Papebroch), 56 (Braunsberger), 61 (Breviarum romanum), 76 (Nirschl). The discussion of the date of his death is a good deal mixed up with the question of the authenticity of the work.

46: Mark Acts 15, 37.

47: Died 83-4?.

48: we send ... churches 2 Cor. 8. 18.

49: Luke ... salutes you Col. 4. 14.

50: Luke ... with me 2 Tim. 4. 11.

51: fourth A T H 25 30 31 Val. etc.; fourteenth. Her. Sigbert. S. Crucis.

52: Acts of Paul and Thecla (Acts = Journeyings) Cf. Acts of Paul and Thecla, tr. in Ante Nic. Fath. v. 8 pp. 487-92.

53: apocryphal writings A H 31 e a Bamb Norimb. Val. etc.; apocrypha Her. T 25 30.

54: apostle Paul A H e a etc. Val; omit Paul T 25 30 31 Her.

55: Flourished 45 to 55?.

56: She who A H T 25 30 31 a e Val etc; the church which. Her. and one mentioned by Vallarsi, also in Munich mss. 14370.

57: She who ... saluteth you 1. Pet. 5. 13.

58: a book A H 31 a e etc; and Her.; omit T 25 30. This work entitled On a contemplative life is still extant but is generally regarded as not by Philo.

59: had all things in common Acts 2. 44.

60: so ... saw A H a e 31? Val.; so he saw and recorded. T 25 30 Her.

61: Annianus succeeding him A H T 25 30 a e Val etc.; omit Her. 31.

62: Exiled to Patmos 94-95.

63: Gaius A H 25 30 31 a e; Caius Her. T.

64: in its turn A H T 31 a e Val. etc; omit T. 25 30.

65: after Nero A H 30 31 a e. Bamb. Norimb. Cypr. Val.; omit T 25.

66: Pertinax A H T 25 30 31 a e Norimb. Cypr. etc; Nerva Pertinax Bamb. Ambros. Her.; Nerva princeps. Val.

67: The date of Hermas depends on what Hermas is supposed to be the author. He is supposed to be 1 the Hermas of the New Testament, or 2 the brother of Pius I (139-54) or 3 a still later Hermas. All these views have distinguished advocates, but this view of Jerome taken from Origen through Eusebius is not much accepted.

68: Hermas A T 25 30 e; Herman Her. Val. a 31; Hermas H Cypr.

69: Salute (omitting Asyncritus) A H T 25 30 31 a e etc. Cypr.; add Asyncritus Val. Her. Greek from the New Testament.

70: Hermes Patrobas Hermas A H T 25 30 a e Val. Gr. etc.; omit Hermes. A Her.

71: Salute ... them Rom. 15, 14.

72: Visited Rome a.d. 40, and must have lived (Edersheim) ten or fifteen years after his return.

73: From this etc. Acts 2, 4; Acts 4, 32.

74: desire to imitate the mss.; strive to be Cypr. Fabr. Val., on account of the difficult construction with imitate.

- 75: Caius Cypr. Fabr. Val.; Gaius all the mss.; omit Her.
- 76: Died 65.
- 77: Sotion Cypr. Val. Her.; Phothion fotion, fotinus Socion or Sozonis, the mss.
- 78: and Seneca A H e a 21 10 Fabr. Val. etc.; or Seneca T 25 30 31 Her.
- 79: Born a.d. 37, died after 97.
- 80: Flourished 100.
- 81: Justus a 21 10 Fabr. Val.; Justinus others.
- 82: Bishop 91 or 2-101. Died 110 (Euseb. Ch. Hist.) It is by no means certain that Clemens Romanus is the Clemens mentioned in the New Testament. Compare discussions by Salmon in Smith and Wace, and M'Giffert in his translation of Eusebius.
- 83: With Clement ... life Phil. 4, 3.
- 84: Anacletus Val. Fabr. Her.; Anencletus, Anincletus, Anenclitus, H 25 31 e; Cletus (or Elitus). T 30 31; Anicletus, 10; Aneclitus, A; Aneclitus, a.
- 85: apostle A H 25 30 31 a e; apostle Peter T Fabr. Val. Her.
- 86: Bishop about 70, died about 107.
- 87: In this last etc. Eusebius from whom he quotes says Smyrneans. Lightfoot maintains that Jerome had never seen the Epistles of Ignatius.
- 88: quotations etc. This is taken bodily from Eusebius. The translation is M'Giffert's adapted to the Latin of Jerome.
- 89: tortures A H T 25 30 31 e; all the tortures a. Fabr. Val. Her.
- 90: Bishop 106 or 7-157-168 (?); 154 sq (Lipsius) Authorities differ as to dates of his death from 147-175. Bishop certainly (Salmon) 110.
- 91: 130 (Salmon).
- 92: what John A H 25 30 31 a e; omit T Her.
- 93: Flourished 126 (125)? Not the Athenian bishop (Salmon). Work not extant.
- 94: Flourished 125, apology presented about 133.
- 95: Flourished about 130 or 135.
- 96: Various readings are Barcobus, Barcobeth, Barcho et, Bascobus et.
- 97: reckoning all but T and Her. which have nomenclature.
- 98: Died 180. Wrote his history in part before 167, and published after 175.
- 99: He flourished T H a e 25 30 Val. Fabr.; They flourished Her.

- 100: up to the present day A H 31 e a; to day T 25 30.
- 101: Born about 104 (100?), Christian 133 (before 132 Holland) wrote apology about 150, died 167.
- 102: fourth book A T 25 30 Val. Her.; fifth H 31 a e Fabr. and early editions; The right reference is probably Bk. 4 ch. 10 but he himself is mentioned in book 5 and it is likely Jerome wrote 5.
- 103: Bishop about 150, died between 171 and 180.
- 104: On the church A 25 30 e a; omit T 3l e a [H].
- 105: On truth ... prophecy A H 25 30 31 e a Val. etc; omit T Her.
- 106: Bishop in 168, died after 181 (some 176-86).
- 107: Claudius Apollinaris died before 180.
- 108: Bishop about 170, died about 180.
- 109: Died about 180.
- 110: That they may go on ... Commodus A 25 30 31 e a Fabr. Val; omit T H? Her.
- 111: Born about 130, died after 172.
- 112: inflated A H 30 31 a e Val etc.; elated T 25 Her.
- 113: Bishop about 160, died about 180.
- 114: Flourished 204?.
- 115: Flourished 180-190.
- 116: Flourished about 172.
- 117: Bishop about 190 (or 185 according to others) died 202 or 197.
- 118: Born between 140 and 145, died 202 or later.
- 119: schism H A 31 a e Val. Eusebius etc: chrism A T 25 30.
- 120: At Alexandria about 179, died about 216.
- 121: T reads following the example of and makes a more manageable text.
- 122: Flourished 186.
- 123: Phrygians A 31 a e with Eusebius; Cataphrygians T 25 30 "according to the usage of the Latins" (cf. M'Giffert).
- 124: Born about 160, died about 217.
- 125: On pedagogy = "The Instructor."
- 126: honoured literally "lordly" perhaps like the conventional formula "Lords and brethren."

127: Flourished 180-190.

128: Bishop about 196, flourished 210.

129: Bishop 199, died 211.

130: Caricus and Pontius. So Valesius and others with Eusebius but mss. except "a" have Carinus and it is interesting to note that the same ms. reads Ponticus with most mss. of Eusebius.

131: Died about 185.

132: Died about 190.

133: Bishop about 190-200.

134: Bishop about 196.

135: Flourished about 193.

136: Bishop of Jerusalem 185.

137: Flourished about 196.

138: Flourished about 196.

139: Flourished about 196.

140: Flourished about 196.

141: 202.

142: Born about 160, christian 195, apology 198, died about 245.

143: Born at Alexandria 185, died at Tyre 253.

144: Caesarea. Caesarea in Palestine.

145: Flourished 220.

146: Died about 250.

147: aided a T e Val. Her.; "and to him" A H 25 30; "and to this time" a 31.

148: Flourished about 240.

149: red heifer Numb. 19, 2. (?) or Deut. Ch. 21.

150: Genesis 15, 9-10.

151: Flourished 196?

152: Died about 217.

153: Flourished about 230.

154: gloriously A 31 e a 10 21 Bamb. Norimb. Val.; omit T 25 30 H Her.

- 155: Bishop 217-8, died 229-38.
- 156: Bishop at Jerusalem 212, died 250.
- 157: ... 221.
- 158: Presbyter at Antioch about 232.
- 159: Gregory of Neocesarea, born 210-15, bishop 240, died about 270.
- 160: Bishop 251, died 252.
- 161: Fabius. Some mss. Fabianus.
- 162: Born about 200, bishop 248, died at Carthage 258.
- 163: Died about 260.
- 164: Presbyter 232, exiled 250 and 257, died 265.
- 165: rebaptizing a e Val. Her.; baptizing A? H T 25 30 31.
- 166: Hierax e Euseb. Val. Her. Heraclas A H T 25 30 31.
- 167: penitence A T 25 30 a Her.; penitence likewise Canon on penitence H 31 e 10 21 Val.
- 168: Flourished about 250 sq.
- 169: Prayer A H 25 30 31 21; Ordination e T Her.
- 170: Flourished 272.
- 171: Flourished about 278.
- 172: Born about 230, bishop 270, died about 283.
- 173: Bishop of Pettau 303, died 304.
- 174: Died 309.
- 175: volumes A H 31 a e 10 21 Val.; omit T 25 30 Her.
- 176: Flourished before 299.
- 177: Died 312.
- 178: Died after 306.
- 179: Flourished 295.
- 180: Died 325.
- 181: without a title "that is a compendium of the last three books only" as Cave explains it. Ffoulkes in Smith and W. But no.
- 182: two books ... Severus ... Demetrius e a H 10 21 Val.; omit T 25 30 31 Her.

183: Born 267, bishop about 315, died about 338.

184: Theophany T 31 Val. Her.; omit A H 25 30 a? e.

185: Bishop 313, died 334.

186: Died 311 or 312.

187: Flourished 330.

188: Died 337, (or according to others 370-82.) Jerome in this chapter seems, unless the usual modern view is confused, to have mixed up Eustathius of Antioch with Eusebius of Sebaste.

189: Bishop A H T 25 30 Her; omit 31 32 a e Val.

190: Constantius this is supposed to be an evident slip for Constantinus (Compare Venables in Smith and Wace Dict. v. 2, p. 383) but if there is confusion with Eustathius of Sebaste as suggested above possibly the latter's deposition by Constantius is referred to. But the difficulty remains almost as great.

191: Died 372, or 374 (Ffoulkes.) 192: Born about 296. died 373.

193: Born 251, died 356.

194: Bishop of Ancyra 336-344, 353-60, 361-3.

195: A doctor of So T? and some editions. Most mss. omit (gnarus) but it needs to be supplied in translation.

196: Bishop 335, died 355?

197: Died before 359.

198: Leucotheon = Leuteon.

199: Bishop 313, -355.

200: Asterius of Cappadocia, died about 330.

201: Bishop 353, died 370.

202: Born about 315, Bishop about 340, exiled 355-62, died 371-5.

203: Flourished 343-355.

204: Bishop about 338, died 365-6.

205: Serapion the scholastic, died about 358.

206: Bishop 350-5, exiled 356-60, died at Poitiers 367-8.

207: Caius or Fabius Marius Victorinus, died about 370.

208: Ordained 361, died 371.

209: Pope Damasus, died 380.

- 210: Apollinaris the younger, Bishop 362, died about 390.
- 211: Works "generally recognized as authentic" Matougues.
- 212: Gregory Baeticus Bishop of Elvira 359-392.
- 213: Elvira, Eliberi or Grenada.
- 214: Bishop about 360, died about 390.
- 215: Deer, This title has given rise to a good deal of conjecture. Fabricius's conjecture that it referred to certain games held on the Kalends of January is doubted by Vallarsi, but appears to have been really acute, from the fact that two mss. read "The deer [Cervulus] on the Kalends of January and against other pagan games."
- 216: Bishop about 347, deposed 351, died about 376.
- 217: Bishop 358, died about 392.
- 218: Born about 311, flourished about 315, died 396.
- 219: itself "The titles of which are well known." Matougues.
- 220: Flourished about 370.
- 221: Milevis or Mileum = Milah "a town of Numidia 25 miles north-west of Cirta." Phillott.
- 222: Died before 376. Fabricius and Migne read Aquilus, Honorius has Achilius but the mss. read as above. This is the only source of information and the work is lost.
- 223: Trial "Vicissitudes or proofs." Matougues.
- 224: Cyril of Jerusalem, born about 315, Bishop 350-7, 359-60, 362-7, 378 to his death in 386.
- 225: Deposed about 379.
- 226: Born about 310, bishop about 368-9, died 403.
- 227: Ephrem of Nisibis = Ephrem Syrus died 378.
- 228: Basil the Great, born 329, bishop 370 died 379.
- 229: Gregory Nazianzan born about 325, Bishop 373, died 389.
- 230: Lucius bishop of Samosata, at Alexandria 373, deposed 378.
- 231: Died before 394.
- 232: Bishop 360, died before 396.
- 233: Flourished 379, condemned 380, died 385.
- 234: Died 385.
- 235: End of 4th Century.

236: Born about 340, baptized 374, died 397.

237: Bishop of Antioch, 388, died 393.

238: Died after 392.

239: A Cynic. Bishop 379.

240: Born 339-2, bishop 372, deposed 376, restored 378, died after 394.

241: John Chrysostom born at Antioch about 347, at Constantinople 398, deposed 403, died 407.

242: Bishop 379, died 394-5.

243: Bishop of Tmes? 392-403.

244: Flavius Lucius Dexter flourished 395.

245: Amphilochius of Cappadocia, bishop 375, died about 400.

246: Flourished 392. Author also of Greek translation of Jerome's *Illustrious Men*?

247: Born 331, died 420.

248: 39 homilies, T 25 30 Her.; 39 homilies of Origen A H 31 e a etc.

249: The Old Testament from the Hebrew A H 30 31 a e; omit T 25 Her.

250: There are many brief additions to the chapter on Jerome himself, the most common one (b.c. D I S V W X Y Z 1 2 4 5 6 7 9 11 12 14 15 17 19 20 21 26 27 28 33 42 m o p r t u v y z) being "Two books Against Jovinian and an Apology addressed to Pammachus." Some add also "and an Epitaphium. " A and k give a long additional account of Jerome.

On Hebrew Names

Book on Hebrew Names English translation of Preface from public domain NICENE AND POST-NICENE FATHERS, Second Series, VOLUMES I–VII, THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF ST. JEROME. The remaining text is based off the Latin Text from public domain Migne Editors, Patrologiae Cursus Completus, which is translated into English using ChatGPT. The translations below are often comically bad (ChatGPT works far, far better with full sentences). Still... keeping it, as it's better than nothing. Feel free to submit pull requests with improvements!

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Preface

[The origin and scope of this book is described in the Preface itself. It was written in the year 388, two years after Jerome had settled at Bethlehem. He had, immediately on arriving in Palestine, three years previously, set to work to improve his knowledge of Hebrew, with a view to his translation of the Old Testament, which was begun in 391. This book, therefore, and the two which follow, may be taken as records of studies preparatory to the Vulgate.]

Philo, the most erudite man among the Jews, is declared by Origen to have done what I am now doing; he set forth a book of Hebrew Names, classing them under their initial letters, and placing the etymology of each at the side. This work I originally proposed to translate into Latin. It is well known in the Greek world, and is to be found in all libraries. But I found that the copies were so discordant to one another, and the order so confused, that I judged it to be better to say nothing, rather than to write what would justly be condemned. A work of this kind, however, appeared likely to be of use; and my friends Lupulianus and Valerianus¹ urged me to attempt it, because, as they

thought, I had made some progress in the knowledge of Hebrew. I, therefore, went through all the books of Scripture in order, and in the restoration which I have now made of the ancient fabric, I think that I have produced a work which may be found valuable by Greeks as well as Latins.

I here in the Preface beg the reader to take notice that, if he finds anything omitted in this work, it is reserved for mention in another. I have at this moment on hand a book of Hebrew Questions, an undertaking of a new kind such as has never until now been heard of amongst either the Greeks or the Latins. I say this, not with a view of arrogantly puffing up my own work, but because I know how much labour I have spent on it, and wish to provoke those whose knowledge is deficient to read it. I recommend all those who wish to possess both that work and the present one, and also the book of Hebrew Places, which I am about to publish, to make no account of the Jews and all their ebullitions of vexation. Moreover, I have added the meaning of the words and names in the New Testament, so that the fabric might receive its last touch and might stand complete. I wished also in this to imitate Origen, whom all but the ignorant acknowledge as the greatest teacher of the Churches next to the Apostles; for in this work, which stands among the noblest monuments of his genius, he endeavoured as a Christian to supply what Philo, as a Jew, had omitted.

1:

Nothing is known of these men. It is very improbable that this Valerianus was the bishop of Apuleia, who must, however, have been known to Jerome.

Here begins the book

It is not always to be assumed that wherever a letter A, which in Hebrew is called Aleph, is placed in a name, it is itself that which is put; for there are several other letters, which, though not written, are understood to be consonants, and are pronounced before or after a given vowel; as, for example, the Ain, the He, and the Heth, which letters have the power of modifying aspirates and of changing the sound of consonants with which they are combined. It may therefore be observed, that different letters are used in commencing words by the Hebrews in Genesis and the other books of the law, according to the divers classes of beings previously spoken of; but in our tongue we have not such a variety of sounds, and are therefore contented with a simple pronunciation. Hence it arises that the same words, which are differently written by them, appear to us to have different meanings.

Old Testament On Genesis A.

Aethiopiam: Darkness or obscurity is interpreted by the Latin language.

Assyriorum: Directors/Leaders.

Adam: Man, whether earthly, native, or red earth.

Abel: Grief, or vanity, or vapor, or miserable.

Ada: Testimony.

Ararat: Armenia, or the tickling mountain.

Aschenez: The fire splashing.

Aevila: Grieving or giving birth.

Archab: ambushes.

Assur: directing, or blessed, or walking.

Anamim: Responding waters.

Amorrhæum: Bitter, or talkative.

Aruchæum: Surrounding me.

Asennæum: Lift me up.

Aradium: My sufficient harvester.

Amethi: My anger.

Adama: Soil, or earth, or earthly.

Arphaxad: Healing the devastation.

Aram: High, elevated, sublime.

Asarmoth: Courtyard of death.

Adoram: High generation.

Aizel: (Uzal) setting out.

Abimael: My father is from God.

Abram: High Father.

Arram: Risk, chest, or box.

Aegyptus: Affliction constraining.

Aggai (Hai): Question, or celebration.

Amrafel: He said that he would fall.

Arioch: Drunk, or drunkenness.

Astaroth: They make sheep, or they make scouts.

Amalec: The people are licking or licking up.

Agar: Stranger, or newcomer.

Abraam: father seeing the people.

Ammon: The son of my people, or the people of mourning.

Abimelech: My father is a king.

Azia (Azau): Seeing.

Arbee: Fourth, or four.

Assurim: Forest.

Apher: Soil, or dust.

Abidahe: My father, knowing.

Ader: Flock.

Aser: Happiness or blessed.

Ana: Answer or responding.

Aluam: Looking down.

Ahie (Aja): umbrella.

Amada (Hamdan): desirable.

Acan: Necessity or their effort.

Aran: Either wrathful, or beautiful.

Adad: Chief or cousin.

Avith: unjust.

Achobor: Mice.

Adollamitem: Witnessing, or testimony of water.

Aunan (Aner) moeror eorum: Or work.

Aseneth: ruin.

Aod (Ahod): Famous/glorious.

Amul: Sparing.

Aggi: My celebration.

Acheri: declining.

Aroedi: Sufficient grape harvester.

Arieli: The lion of my God.

Achi (In LXX Genesis 41:18): my brother.

Arad: descending.

Asom: We hurry, hurrying.

Atad: Testimony, or buckthorn.

B.

Babylon: Causing confusion.

Bethel: House of God.

Bara: In wickedness, whether it be a creature.

Balac (Bale): Precipitating or devouring.

Barad: Hail.

Buz: Looking down upon, or despising.

Bathuel: Virgin of God.

Beri: My well, or my wells.

Basemoth: In names, whether offending, coming, or placed.

Bala: Inveterate.

Balaam: Without the people, either without their substance, or in them.

Benjamin: Son of the right hand.

Beor: On the skin.

Bosora: in trouble or distress.

Badad: excellent, outstanding, distinguished, especial Balaanan: having grace.

Basan: Fat.

Baria: In his outcry.

Bochor: The firstborn, either in the saddle, or the lamb has entered.

C Cain: Possession or Lamentation.

Cainan: Lamentation or possession of them.

Cithii (Κ■τιοι): Mad or amazed.

Carnaim: Horns.

Cades: Holy, whether changed.

Cinaei: possessing.

Cenezaei: Jealousy or its possession.

Cedmonaei: Ancient sadness, or eastern.

Camuel: The resurrection of God, or the station of God.

Cedar: Darkness, or sadness.

Cedma: Eastern, or preceding.

Caath: Molars, teeth, or patience.

Hucusque per simplicem C litteram lecta sint nomina: exin aspiratione addita: That is, for those who read Greek.

Cherubin: Multiplying knowledge, as if there were many.

Cham: Hot. But it should be known that in Hebrew, there is no letter "chi": instead, it is written with heth, which is pronounced with a double aspiration.

Chethim: Broken.

Chus: Ethiopian.

Chanaan: Turmoil, that is the movement of them, either the merchant, or the humble.

Chalanne: Future consummation, or all of us.

Chalech: As if green.

Chaseluim: Their region is covered.

Chaphthoriim: The hand of the scouts, or of the turtledoves, but better that of the Cappadoces.

Chethaeus: Mental departure, or fixation, or severance. But this name in Hebrew does not begin with a consonant letter, but with heth, about which we have already spoken above.

Chaldaei: Like demons, or like udders, or fierce ones.

Charran: Apertures, either of anger, or digging them. But even this name begins with the Hebraic letter Heth.

Chebron: Marriage, or spells, or an eternal vision, and this is what Heth has from the beginning.

Chodorlagomer: Like a generation of a troop, 8, or like a beautiful troop.

Chorraei: Of the holes, which they call Troglodytes.

Chobal (Hoba): condemnation.

Chased: They are like plundering people. However, they are Chaldeans.

Cheth: striking.

Chettura: Offering incense, either single, or bound together.

Choadad (Hadad): Outstanding.

Chabrath: As if chosen, or heavy.

Chorri: Whether Chorraeus, flour, or made into flour, whether after me or through my hole.

Chazib (Apud LXX: (Genesis 38:5) deception/lies.

Charmi: My vineyard, or my knowledge.

Chabor: Conjunction or enchanter: but this is also written with the letter Heth.

D.

Dan: judgment, or judging.

Dedan: Solitary, or their brother.

Dasem (Resen): Bridle or restraint.

Decla: Subtle, or palmate.

Damascus: Drinking blood, or a kiss with blood, or the blood of the bag.

Dadan: Judging.

Duma: Silent.

Dina: That judgment.

Debbora: Bee or eloquence.

Deson: A strong nipple, whether it be trampled will be said in Syriac, but in Hebrew, it means fatness or ashes, that is, the ashes of burnt offerings.

Desan: Likewise, as above: although some may interpret the elephant as strong.

Dennaba: Bringing judgment.

Dothain: Their food is green or insufficient.

E.

Eden: Pleasure, or delight, or ornament.

Evila: Suffering, or giving birth.

Euphrates: Fruit-bearing, or growing.

Eva: Disaster, or woe, or life.

Enoch: Dedication.

Enos: Man, either desperate or violent.

Evaeum: Wild, or worst.

Eber: traveler.

Elmodad: To his mother, the foremost, or the measure of God.

Ellasar: The decline of God, or rather separating him.

Esrom: The darts of the flock.

Eschol: Cluster, or all-consuming fire.

Ephron: Dust of sorrow, or useless dust, or their dust.

Eldea: To knowledge, or about knowledge.

Ethaeus: Terrified or stunned.

Edom: Red or earthly.

Emor: Donkey.

Ephrata: Abundance, or dusty.

Eser: Fiction or creation.

Esban: Fire in them.

Efraim: Fruitful or growing.

Esrom: I am seeing an arrow.

Esbel: False fire, or old.

Hucusque per brevem litteram E: Now the principles are to be read through the list of names.

Elisa. Deus meus: Either his safety, or to the island, or the salvation of my God.

Elam: of the century, or of the world.

Emim: horrible.

Eliezer: God's help.

Epha: Loose, or measure.

Esau: A receipt, either made of oak, or a pile of stones, or empty or in vain.

Elon: A region of fields, either oak or of oakwood.

Eliphaz: My God's gold. Time flies.

Emam: Their warmth.

Ebal: Old valley or heap of stones.

Ela: Terbinth tree.

Er: Watchful, or a covering, or a rising up, or an outpouring.

Enaim: Eyes or fountains.

Eroon, (in LXX: Herod), (in Vulgate: Gessen), meaning Eroum, in their sight, or the watchings of pains.

F.

Fison: The mouth of a doll, or change of appearance.

Fut: Libya, or "the descent of the coast."

Fetrusim: Dissolving the measure.

Felestim: Falling, whether by the ruin of a cup or by a falling drink.

Farao: Scattering, or uncovering him.

Faleg. dividens.: Caveat emptor Ferezaei: Separating, or disseminated, or fruitful.

Faran: Their ferocity.

Fichol: The mouth of all: from the mouth, not from the bone.

Filistiim: Dual collapse.

Faldas: The ruin of poverty, or falling offspring.

Fau: Nothing, or suddenly.

Fiennon: Either their mouth or their mouth bound.

Futifar: Bent towards dissecting.

Farez: division.

Fetrefe: Libyan calf, or uncovering, or certainly division, or turning aside the mouth.

Fallu: Wonderful.

Fua: Here, adverb of place: either red.

Fanuel: The face of God.

G.

Geon: Chest, or precipitous.

Gomer: Assumption, or consumption, or perfection.

Gergesaeus: Driving out a settler, or a approaching stranger.

Gerara: He saw rumination, or a wall. But it must be known that Gerara means habitation, while Gedera means wall or fence.

Gaza: His courage/strength.

Gomorrha: The fear of people or sedition. It should be known that Hebrew does not have the letter "G" but is written with the vowel "Ain."

Gether: Seeing the press, or neighbor of the exploration.

Gebal: Steep, or an old valley.

Geraris: Foreigners approaching, or their horses.

Gaam (Al. Gadim): Valley heat.

Gad: Temptation, or a game of dice, or luck.

Galaad: Heap of testimony, or migration of testimony. We have spoken more fully about this in the books of Hebrew Questions.

Gatham: Touching, he laughed.

Gesen: approaching their palpation, or proximity.

Gerson: Stranger there, or their expulsion.

Gera: Reflection or habitation.

Gani: My pride, or my garden.

I.

Jobel: Departing, or changed, or flowing away.

Jobal: Carried, or letting go.

Jared: Descending, or strengthening.

Japhet: breadth, width.

Javan: It is and it is not, whether a dove: but it is a Syrian.

Jebusaeum: Trampled, or their manger.

Jectan: small/little.

Jaree: Moon.

Johab: Whether from a magician father or from distillation.

Jescha: Tent, or its anointing.

Ismael: Hearing of God.

Isaac: Laughter or joy.

Jedlaph: Raising the hand, or putting the hand to the mouth.

Jexan: Hard, or harshness.

Jesboc: It is ash, or a touch.

Jetur: Either opposed or arranged.

Judith: Praising, either confessing, or (it is) Judaea.

Jacob: Usurper.

Juda: Praise, or confession.

Issachar: It is payment.

Joseph: Increase.

Jordanis: Their descent.

Jor: stream, brook.

Jaboch: Arena, or struggle.

Jeus: Sparing, doing, or moved.

Jeglam (Jhelon): Looking down.

Jethran: Their excess.

Jetheth: giving.

Irad: The descent of the city.

Iram: Their city.

Iiras: He saw my brother, or the vision of my brother.

Jamuel: His day is God.

Jamin: Right hand:

Jachin: preparing.

Job: Magician.

Joalel: Life of God, or the beginning of God, or waiting for God.

Jemna: Marine, or numeral.

Jesua: The plain, either my desire, or certainly savior.

Jessul (Jessui): It is to suffer.

Jasael (Jasiel): Half of God.

Jesar: Illusion or trouble.

L.

Lamech: Whether humbling, striking, or having been struck.

Ludiim: Born, whether they are of great use.

Laabim: burning or flaming.

Lasa: To health.

Lud: Useful.

Lot: Bound or decline.

Laban: White.

Latusim: Hammerers.

Loommin: Three, or mothers.

Lia: It means "hardworking" in English.

Levi: Added or assumed.

Lotan: Their bond, or he himself, confined.

M.

Mahuiael: Who is the Lord God? Or life from God.

Mathusale: The emission of death, or he is dead, and he asked.

Maleleel: Praising God.

Magog: That which is called 'δ■μα,' that is roof, or 'domus,' that is house.

Medai: Measurement, or whatever is sufficient.

Mesech (μοσ■χ): Extension, or deficiency, or certainly compressed.

Mesraim: Their enemies, or measure. But it should be known that Mesraim is called Egypt.

Mesa: Rare water or elevation.

Melcha: His queen.

Mamre: On view, or clear.

Masec: giving a drink, or offering a drink.

Maacha: breaking, or broken.

Maedan: measuring, or answering.

Madian: Of justice, or of a cause.

Massan: About pleasures.

Masmae: he/she/it listened attentively.

Massa: lifting, or weight, or burden.

Meleth: Chorus, whether from the beginning.

Meza: I exist.

Manath: Resting, or giving.

Masreca: Useless tax, whether hissing or dragging.

Mettabel: How good God.

Matraid: Persecution, or a descending rod.

Mezaab: Water of gold or flowing water.

Mabsar munita.: Ad astra per aspera.

Magdiel: Concerning the promise of God, that is, the tower of God, or God magnifies me.

Madianaei: judicantes means "judging".

Manasse: Death or necessity.

Merari: Bitter, or bitternesses.

Melchiel: My king is God.

Machir: selling.

Melchisedec: Righteous king.

Memphin: From their mouth.

N.

Naid ((Apud LXX tantum: (Genesis 41:16)), motion, or agitation.

Noemma: Beauty, or pleasure, or faith.

Noe: Rest.

Nemrod: Tyrant, or fugitive, or transgressor.

Nineve: Beautiful, or an offspring of beauty.

Nephthuin: Scaling or opening.

Nachor: Rest in light, either with the resting light or with the final supplication.

Nabeoth: prophesying.

Nabdeel (Abdeel): Serving God, or God's bear.

Naphes: Refreshment, or soul.

Nephthali: He saved me, or prolonged me, or certainly involved me.

Naeth: Resting.

Neman: Faithful, or their movements.

O.

Orech: Length.

Ochozad: Holding.

Olibama: My tabernacle is somewhere, or the height of the tabernacle.

Odollamites: Opposing someone, or testimony in water.

Ophim: Bed chambers.

Until now, when we read the letter 'O' briefly: afterwards we pronounce the vowel extensively.

Ophir: Or Uphir, which is written with the letter Aleph, is interpreted as null or herbless.

Ox: Willing.

Omar: People, or bitter.

Onan: Their sorrow.

R.

Ripheth: Seeing a small bread roll, or seeing good things.

Rhodii: Which in Hebrew is called Rodim or Rodanim (in Hebrew, Dodanim), are interpreted as descendants, or a judging uncle, or a vision of judgment.

Raama (Rhegma): Thunder, or heights.

Rhooboth: Inclination, or plates.

Ragau: Sick or grazing.

Raphaim: giants.

Rebecca: Much patience (or endurance), or much acceptance, or patience.

Remma: Either the lowlands, seeing something, or the heights.

Rachel: Sheep, or seeing the beginning, or seeing wickedness, or seeing God. However, there is a difference in meaning based on the accent and letters, so that the same words can be changed into opposite meanings.

Ruben: Seeing the son, or seeing in the midst.

Raguel: Shepherd of God, or food of God.

Ros: Head.

Ramesse: Food, or moth, or mischief from moth.

What we said at the beginning should be observed in regards to the vowels: because sometimes there is only one letter among us, and among the Hebrews it is pronounced in different ways: this should also now be understood with the letter S. Indeed, there are three S letters among the Hebrews: one which is called Samech and is simply read like our S letter; another Sin, in which a certain noise is heard that is not found in our language; a third Sade, which our ears completely avoid. Therefore, wherever it occurs, that the same names are interpreted differently, it is because they are written in different letters. But what we said in Genesis should also be observed in all books in the same way.

S.

Sela: His/Her shadow.

Seht: Position, or placed, or cup, or grass, or seed, or resurrection.

Sem: Name or named.

Saba: Captivity, or certainly converting.

Sabatha: Moving in a circle or revolving.

Sabathacha: Going around you, either your surroundings or your seat.

Sennaar: Extraction of teeth, or their bad odor.

Sidona: Hunt of sorrow.

Samaraeum: My wool, or rather my connection, but better, my guardian.

Sodoma: Cattle, silent, either blindness or their likeness.

Seboim: Of goats, or deer, whether it be a stopping place of the sea, or a stopping place on the sea.

Sala: mass.

Sophera: Narration, or book.

Serug: Leather strap, or perfect.

Sarai: My princess.

Sichem: Shoulder or labor.

Soor: small or southern.

Sennaab: Father's tooth, or father's odor.

Semebad: Name of destruction, or there destruction.

Segor, small: it is itself (the thing) which is above Soor. But it must be known, because it does not have the letter G in the middle, and it is written among the Hebrews with the vowel Ain.

Sau: Whether salvation or dignity or elevation.

Seir: Hairy or shaggy.

Sara: leader.

Sur: A wall, either direct or containing.

Saba: Conversion, or net.

Sue: Speaking, or song.

Simeon: Hearing, or name of a dwelling.

Salem: Peace, or returning.

Sichimorum: Shoulder: it is that which is both Sichem. But it is translated to the Latin and Greek sound.

Sebeon: Standing in injustice.

Sophar: His lookout, or horn.

Samma: destruction.

Sobal: Vain old age, or old vessels for carrying.

Saphon (Sephion): Watcher/Observer.

Salama: Clothing, or peaceable.

Saul: sought after.

Sava: Eloquence or shouting.

Sela: As to him, either his dismissal, or his request.

Somthonphanech, it is said corruptly: for in Hebrew we read; saphneth phanee, which is interpreted, discoverer of hidden things. Moreover, we learn from the Egyptians, which resonates in their language, savior of the world.

Semron: Seeing the name, or the guardian.

Sarad: So that he might go down.

Sephion: The mouth of sadness has come out.

Soni: My pupil or my second.

Sare: Malicious or hissing.

Syria: High, or moist.

Staulam: Rooted.

T.

Tabee: West, that is, killing.

Tachos: silent.

Talam: Dew.

Until now we have read the letter T in a simple way, now with aspiration added, it must be read.

Thobel: Either Thubal, led to mourning, or turned around, or all together.

Thiras: Fearing, either returning, or excess.

Thogorma: Someone living there, or an interpreter.

Tharsis: Scouts of joy, or happiness.

Thara: Explorers of scent, or exploration of ascent, or feeding.

Thargal (Thadal): Knowing the yoke, or a scout.

Thamar: Palm, or bitterness, or changing.

Theman: South wind, or Africus.

Thamna: forbidding, or failing.

Thamath: The perfect part, or the given completion.

Tholae: Worm or scarlet.

Thesbon (Esebon): Hasten to understand.

U.

Us: Counselor.

Ul: Sorrowful or giving birth.

Usam: Their haste.

Z.

Zemram: Their song, or showing the time.

Zelphan: Walking mouth: from the mouth, not from the bone or flowing mouth.

Zabulon: Their dwelling, or his oath, or the dwelling of fortitude, or the ebb of the night.

Zara: rising, or rising sun.

Zavan: Movement, or fluctuation of them.

Zozommim: Prepared in battle line: or what is this water? On Exodus A.

Aaron: Mountain of strength, or strong mountain.

Aser: Blessed/happy.

Aheberim: Of the Hebrews, or of those passing through.

Afferezaei: Separated, or without walls.

Anacim: Vain humility, whether humble vainglory, or humble rising up, or empty response, or necklace of the neck.

Aod: Glorious.

Amram: High people.

Aminadab: My people are willing.

Abiu: My father is, or indeed the father himself.

Asir: Bound/captive.

Abiasaph: collection of my father.

Amalec: The caterpillar people, or the licking people.

Abiud: The strength of a father, or their own father.

Accherubim: Know and understand, whether it be a multitude of knowledge.

Achisamech: Strengthening my brother.

B.

Beseleel: In the shadow of God.

Beelsephon: Having a mirror.

C.

Caath: Patience, or grinding teeth, whether hurting or arranging.

Cades: Holy.

Chanani: Merchants, whether poor, prepared, or humble.

Charmi: My vineyard, or knowledge of water.

Cherubim: The multitude of knowledge, or knowledge, and understanding.

D.

Dan: Judgment, or judging.

E.

Ebraeorum: Of those passing by.

Ebrioth: transit.

Etthi: They feared or were astonished.

Emori: Mother is my light.

Evi: Deadly, or ferocious.

Enoch: He/She/It dedicated.

Emorraeum: speaking, or bittering.

Esrom: Seeing an arrow, whether it symbolizes a hall of sadness or strength.

Ebron: Participation of sadness or fortitude, or eternal increase.

Eleazar: My God is my helper, or the help of God.

Edom: Red.

Until now, we have read the letter E briefly, from now on let us read through the extended element.

Elisaphan: The lookout of my God, or my concealing God.

Elisabeth: The fullness of my God, or the oath of my God, or the seventh day of my God.

Elcana: God's possession.

Etham: Finished, or undertaking a voyage.

Elim: Ram.

Epha: measure.

Eliezer: My God, my helper.

Eliab: My God, Father.

F.

Farao: He dispersed, or uncovered him.

Fithom: Mouths of the abyss, or suddenly.

Foa: Here, an adverb of place, or I will appear, but better, red.

Fallu: Wonderful.

Fotiel: Here declining God, an adverb of place, not a pronoun, either declining God, or the declension of the mouth of God.

Finees: Either he spared, or he rested his mouth, or he interpreted an omen from his mouth.

Felistim: Two have fallen.

Fasee: Transgression or crossing over.

G.

Gad: Temptation, or armed, or robber.

Gersam: A stranger is there.

Gersoni: Their expulsion, either stranger there, or stranger's ward.

Gadiel: My girding is God.

Gadi. hoedus: or my temptation.

Gamaliel: God has given back to me.

Goel: Relative or redeemer.

Galaad: Heap of witnesses. We have spoken more fully on this in the books of Hebrew Questions.

Goni: Gardens, or my arrogance.

Gabaa: height, elevation Gomor: The measure of the Athenians, three choenix.

I.

Israel: It is to see God, either as a man, or as a mind seeing God. And we spoke more fully on this in the books of Hebrew Questions.

Jethro: Excess of this.

Jebusi: Shod, or my manger.

Jamuel: God is his day.

Jamin: right hand.

Jachin: Preparing.

Jessaar: It is noon, or meridian, or my anointing, or metaphorically, oil.

Jochabed: Where is glory, whether it is weighty or the glory of the Lord.

Ithamar: Where bitter, or where palm, or is bitter, whether island palm.

Jesus: Savior.

In: Measurement of flowing material.

L.

Levi: added.

Labeni: To my son, or my heart, or purity.

M.

Mesraim: Mesraim was their enemy, or Egypt.

Moses: Touching, or feeling, or taken from water, or absorption.

Madian: concerning judgment.

Merari: Bitter, or bitternesses.

Mooli: Concerning weakness, either my choir, or from the beginning.

Musi: Toucher, or my feeler.

Misael: Have you been touched by God, or who has asked?

Magdola: Who is great? Or a tower.

Moab: from father.

Mariam: My illuminator, or illuminating them, or sea myrrh, or star of the sea.

Merra: Bitterness.

Marath: Bitter.

Man: What?

N.

Nephthali: Width.

Nephec: Plum, or coal, or 22 deception.

Neesson: Augur, or strong augur.

Nadab: Spontaneous.

Nave: Seed, bud, or beauty.

O.

Oziel: My strength is God.

Omer (Gomor): Crispans, or handful.

Oliab: My father is my protection.

Oephi: Measure of three bushels.

Nomina quatuor: The following things must be read by means of an extensive letter.

Oreb: Heat, or drought, or a raven, or solitude.

Ori: My light.

On: Work, or pain.

Or: Anger.

R.

Ruben: Seeing the son, or see the son.

Ramesses: He thundered joyfully, whether out of wickedness or because of the moth.

Raguel: Feeding of God, or friend of God.

Raphidim: Loose hands, sound judgement, or a sufficient vision.

S.

Simeon: Heard sadness, or the name of a dwelling.

Sephra: It clung, or pleased.

Sephora: His bird, or his beauty, or his pleasing.

Sor: Meridian.

Suriel (Soar): Narrowing God, or sturdy God.

Salu: Looking back at temptation.

Saul: Sought after, or abusing.

Semei: Listen, or hear my plea.

Sethri: My tax collector, or my hiding place.

Sechoth: tents.

Sur: Wall, either strong or narrow.

Sin: Jar, or temptation, or bramble.

Sinai: My jar, or my measure, or my command.

Sabbatha: Rest.

Settim: Thorns.

T.

Themana (read only in Hebrew Exodus): South wind.

Thelame: Streams of water, or a water bank.

Tholae: Little worm, or little scarlet.

Theeth: Under.

U.

Ur: Fire, or light.

Z.

Zebulon: Dwelling of strength.

Zechri: My memory. On Leviticus Melcho (Moloch): to the king.

Salumith: Recompense, or peace.

Fath: climate, that is, a quarter: for example, when we say, the north quarter, or the south. On the Book of Numbers A Ammiod: My famous people.

Abidan: My father is a judge.

Aggelaoni (Gedeoni): He/She announces my iniquity.

Ahiezer: My brother is a helper.

Ammisedai: My people are sufficient.

Achran: It disturbed them.

Ahree: My brother's friend.

Anan: clouds.

Abia: This is my father, or the abundance of my father.

Aseroth: Atrium of Narrowness, or Beatitude.

Ammiel: My people of God.

Amath (Emath): Indignation, or which.

Achiman: Who is my brother?

Anacim (Enac): A necklace on a raised neck.

Aetthi: astonishing, or terrifying.

Abiram (Abiron): My father is high.

Aunan (Onan): It is not, or useless.

Arrad: He raised up by descending, or he raised up the descent.

Atharim: scouts.

Aei: It means "which the Greeks call lithology."

Aranon: Pile of sorrow, or praise.

Ar: Raised, or watchfulness.

Ammon: The people of grief.

Agag: Roof, that is, a covering.

Assur: Happiness or a step.

Aggi: Celebration, or solemn.

Arodi: Sufficient curse, or cursed.

Arieli: My God is a lion.

Ammon: He spared.

Asareel (Asriel): Blessed God.

Aphar (Hepher): He digs, or the earth.

Agla (Hegla): This ritual, whether a calf.

Ahiram: The greatness of my brother.

Arad: I descended.

Aber (Heber): He has committed, or entered the contest, or is a participant.

Araboth: humble, flat, and open.

Abarim: During transit: which is more significantly expressed in Greek as $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\nu$.

Ataroth: Crowns.

Aroer: lifting, or emptiness, by watchings, or by tamarisk.

Ahirot (Phihahiroth): Carved.

Alas (Alus): Mix or blend, which in Greek is called " $\phi\mu\rho\alpha\sigma\sigma\omicron\nu$."

Arada: He was amazed, he marveled.

Asmona: Hurry, whether in a hurry, or count.

Aggedgad (Gadgad): Declare, whether prepared, or a bandit.

Achiam: Umbrella, or precipice.

Alamon: Over the multitude, or contempt.

Abelsettim: The mourning of the shores, or banks.

Acrabbim: scorpions, or appropriately.

Adar: Lofty, or cloak.

Asemona: Their mouth, from the bone, not from the mouth.

Asmo: his last.

Arebla (Rebla): Deceiver.

Ain: spring, fountain.

Azan (Ozan): Their strength.

Achidod: The glory of my brother.

B.

Benjamin: Son of the right hand.

Bamoth: in death, whether it be high.

Basan: Bruchus, or fatness. For what is commonly interpreted as ignominy or confusion, is called busa.

Balac: Cleaning, or cutting off, or wrapping around.

Balaam: Empty people, either hurrying them or without people.

Beor: on skin Baal: Having, whether man.

Balfeor: Having a fur coat.

Bacher: In the pen, a lamb has entered.

Bale: He fell headlong or was swallowed up.

Baria (Brie): In bad things, or in its change.

Beelsephon: Holding the north wind, or a watchtower.

Baon: in iniquitate means "in injustice".

Barnee: Chosen disturbance.

Bethanamra: The house of leopards, or the house of bitterness.

Beelsephon: Ascent of the watchtower.

Betharan: House of the ark, or of mountains or lowly ascents.

Baalmeon: Having a dwelling.

Benacan (Benejacan): Son of necessity.

Bacci: Grief, whether in vomiting or old age.

C.

Cades: Changed, or holy.

Ceni: My treasury, or my nest, or possession.

Citus (Cethim): To those standing in amazement or wonder.

Canath: Rivalry, or jealousy.

Calaatha: The church comes, or voices.

Cadesbarnee: Changed chosen, or changeable.

Cariathaim: The villa or town of them.

Core: Baldness.

Camuel: The resurrection of God, or God will stand.

Until now, we have read with the simple letter C: from now on, with the addition of an aspiration, the beginnings of words are to be read.

Chanaan: He returned, or rather as if responding, or as if moving.

Chaleb: As if a heart, or all the heart, or a dog.

Chamos: It is ruled, or as if touched.

Chazbi: Cup in me, or sacrifice to me.

Chenneroeth: Sign of the lyres, or as it were, lamps.

Chaslon: Wicked sadness, or protection.

Cherubim: As if many, or a worm-like picture, or a multitude of knowledge.

D.

Deuel: Let them acknowledge God.

Dathan: Their gift, a sufficient gift.

Dibon: Sufficient for understanding, or understanding abundantly.

Debongad: Sufficiently understanding the temptation.

Dafeca: It clings, or forgiveness.

Debelathan: Bricks or masses, which are usually made from fresh figs, which the Hebrews call Debelath and the Greeks call palathas. Therefore, in the present place, the name we propose, translates to their palathas.

E.

Efraim: Growing, or fruitful.

Elaad (Eldad): To the ground, or to solitude, or to one.

Erma: Curse be upon him.

Esebon: Thought, or a belt of mourning.

Edraim: Descension of the shepherds.

Elcan: Their part or their testimony.

Esbel: Old or vain fire.

Evi: I have desired.

Elale: To ascent.

Ebruna: Crossing, or transgression.

Eniel: My grace, God.

Ephod: Outer garment, or shoulder cover.

Escol: Cluster, or all-consuming fire. So far we have read through the letter E briefly; from there we have read through the element at length.

Elisar: My father is strong (Elisur, my strong God), or my father is oppressive.

Eliab: My God, Father, or God the Father.

Elon: the strength of the army.

Elisame: My God has heard me.

Elisama: My God listening.

Elisaphat (Elisaphan vel Eliasaph): God has gathered, or my God is protection, or hiding.

Enan: clouds.

Edrai: Flood will feed me.

Er: Watching, rising, or deceiving.

Elon: Oak or aulon: about which we have spoken more fully in the Book of Places.

Eran: He/she/it emptied.

Etthan: brave/strong/powerful.

Esaon (Asion Gaber): Will of sorrow, or of fortitude.

Enon (Enan): Fountain of sorrow.

Elidad: My God cousin, or my God uncle.

F.

Fodasur: Strong redemption, or fortified.

Fagiel: Meet me, God, or the meeting with God.

Faran: Wild of them, or fruitful.

Faletti (Phalti): My savior.

Feleth: Fall or downfall.

Fesga: Cut off, or whittled, or much bone, from the mouth, not from the bone.

Fethora: Mouth exploration, or a small piece of light, or the voice of a turtledove.

Fagur (Phogor): The skin of the mouth, or yawned.

Finees: He slept, be quiet, or spared his mouth.

Farez: Division.

Finoni: The bones of my grandchildren.

Farnach: Fattened calf, or my departure.

G.

Gedeoni: Temptation of wickedness, or temptation of humility.

Garizim: Division or precision.

I.

Ifanne: Hinting, or indicating.

Jegal: Relative, or redeemer.

Jesu: Savior.

Jazer: Helper.

Jarden: Their descent, or see judgment.

Jassa: Half or a fulfilled commandment.

Jacob: Struggle, or dust.

Jerio (Jericho): its scent, or the moon.

Jasub: Conversion.

Jalel: He waited for God.

Jamna: The sea, or its right-hand.

Jesevi: What I desired, or my equal.

Jaasael (Jesiel): God halved it.

Jeser: He created, that is formed, or fashioned.

Jair: illuminating.

Jetebatha: Goodness, whether it declines or comes.

Isimoth: It will bring death.

Jegali: Redeem me, or my next of kin.

L.

Lael: Into God, or for God.

Lomna: White or bright.

M.

Manasse: Forgetful or that which has been forgotten.

Madiani: Contradiction, or response.

Medad: It was measured.

Michael: Who is like God?

Machi: What because?

Matthana: gift.

Medaba: High waters.

Machir: Restore, or sold, or due to illness.

Maala: Chorus or weakness.

Melcha: His king.

Malchiel: My God is my king.

Maceloth: churches.

Mathca: Sweetness or fullness.

Moseroth: Exclusions or chains, or discipline, or successions, which are read in our Maseroth codes.

N.

Nathanael: My God, or gift of God.

Naabi: They have hidden or rested in me.

Nephe: blowing, or breathing.

Namuel: God slept, or so they say God.

Noa: Movement: which the Greeks call σκλον more significantly.

Neeman: Glory, whether in their movements.

Namra: Leopard, or bitternesses.

Nabau: We will come, or in conclusion.

Nobe: barking.

Naason: Serpent-like or an omen.

O.

Othotam (Etham): Their sign.

Ozni: My ear.

Opham (Hupham): Their maritime (territories), or their chambers.

Opher: Shame. But among the Hebrews, it is written with the letter Heth. So far we have read through the short O: now let us read through the lengthy element.

Obab: Beloved, whether embraced, or separated.

Ori: Cooking, or excluding me, or taking hold of me.

Osee salvator: Or saving.

Onam: Pain or sadness of them, or mumbling, or murmuring.

Or: Light.

Obath: Wizard or pythoness, which the Greeks call an "engastrimyth."

Og: Accumulating, or hidden.

Oni: My pain.

R.

Raphao (Raphu): healing, or curing.

Roob: Streets, or width.

Recem: Variety, or pictures.

Rebe: Four: but it is written with the letter "Ain".

Rathma: The vision is complete, either juniper or sound.

Remmonpharez: A division of the maligranates, or division of the sublime.

Reesa: Bridle.

S.

Saddesor (Sedeur): The light of them is abundant, or the light of abundance.

Salomiel: God recompensing me, or my peace God.

Surisadai: Containing my breasts, or my Lord of strength.

Suriel: God sustains me, or my strong God.

Soar: small.

Samoe (Samua): Listening.

Saphat: He/she/it judged.

Sodi: My secret, or he has excluded me.

Susi: My horse.

Sethur: hidden, or distracting.

Sisai: My old age.

Soon: Tanis, a city of Egypt.

Seon: A non-existent seed, or a useless seed, or speech, or heat, or an irritating temptation.

Seffor: Bird.

Settim: Thorns.

Satan: Opposite.

Seth: position, or placed.

Seir: Hairy, or a goat.

Salu: looking at the temptation - but better ε■παθ■ς, whom we may call fortunate or fortunate.

Sefion (Sephon): Hidden, or go out of the mouth of sorrow, or their watchtower.

Soni: Coccus, or my pupil. Selah, request, or petitioner.

Semron: Either he saw the name, or its guardian.

Sichem: Upper arm bone.

Semidae: My name is knowledge.

Salphaad: Shadow of fear, or shadow in itself, that is alike.

Suthale: A mixed cup, either with a green thorn, or wet.

Sfufan: Polishing, or to the shade of the 32 beaks, which in Hebrew is called Saphaphim.

Sophar: trumpet.

Sarahe: A covering, or the chief of a brother.

Sicher (σικερα): Drunkenness.

Salem (Sellem): Return.

Sabama: Some transformation, either ease in them, or remove the height.

Saphan (Saphar): Lip, or hedgehog, or hare.

Sochoth: Tabernacles.

Salmona: The shadow of a share, or he counted the shadow, or its image.

Sin: Thirsty.

Senna: Will, or his command.

Sedada: From his side.

Sophan: Lip, or the upper lip beard, which the Greeks call "μυστακα".

Saphatam (Sephtan): judging the people.

Samuel: His name is God.

Salomi: My peace.

T.

Tholae: little worm or scarlet.

Thersa: Pleased with itself, because it is better said in Greek as "eudokousa."

Thena: Camp, or a gift.

Theeth (Tehen): Below.

Thare (Thahath): Exploration, or pasture, or wickedness.

Haec omnia: What we have put from the letter "T" must be read with aspiration in its beginnings.

V.

Vaphsi: And my end.

Z.

Zachur: Remember.

Zorad (Zared): Stranger, or descent.

Zoob: Gold.

Zemer (Zambri): That is provoking or making bitter.

Zare: He/she/it was born.

Zeferuna: You have seen this: from the mouth, not from the bone.

Zamri: Psalm or song. On Deuteronomy A.

Astaroth: Enclosures, stables, sheepfolds, or courtyards.

Aza: His strength.

Araba: West or evening.

Argob: Cursed highness.

Avi (Hevaeus): Strike.

Avothiir: Glory of light, or life of light: however, it should be pronounced Authjair.

Acan: Necessity.

Aseroth: Atriums, or entrances: if, however, it is written through the letter Heth and Samekh. But if through Aleph and Sin, it sounds like "blessings."

Amora (Gomorrha): The enlightenment of the people, or its people.

Adama: Earth/ground.

B.

Baalfeor: Having a skin for a mouth, or a skin on top of the mouth.

Basar: Narrowness, or being in narrowness, or infancy.

Bosor: In distress.

Beroth: Wells.

Barne: Son of change.

Balaam: Empty people, or a drinking up.

C.

Cademoth: At the beginning of death, or the principle of death.

Tria nomina haec: The following things must be read from C with aspiration.

Chorraeus: Angry, or about the hole, which the Greeks call τρωγλήτην.

Chapthorim: Hands of turtle doves or scouts.

Chapthor (Cappadoces): Cappadocia.

E.

Edraim: Flood of evils, or birth of the worst, or descent of shepherds.

Erma (Horma) anathema.: Ad astra per aspera.

Evim (Hevaei): Unjust.

Ermon: Curse of sadness.

Esdoth: Effusion.

Emmim: The people.

Quatuor nomina: What follows must be read with a long (extended) vowel.

Esau: A heap of stones, or a collection of stones, which in Greek is called a λιθολόγιον, or fragments, or a creation, that is ποιήσις.

Elath: Terebinth or bagpipes.

Emim: Terrible.

Ebal: Old abyss.

F.

Fasga: Cut off, or chiseled, or the mouth of the offense.

Faran: Growing or increasing.

Fennador (Dor): Conversion of generations.

G.

Gaza: Strength. But it should be known that among the Hebrews, it does not have a consonant letter at the beginning: rather it starts with a vowel 'ayin, and it is pronounced Aza.

Gesuri: Next to the light, or in the vicinity of the light.

Golam: Their migration or their pleasure.

Gergesaeum: Apply the column.

Gaulon: Its rotation.

Garizim: Division, or stranger.

Galgal: Wheel, or revelation.

Gai: abyss.

Gebal: Old abyss, or stone collection.

I have skipped the letter 'I' and 'L', because the same words are translated in other books, and it is pointless to repeat what has been said or needs to be said. However, 'H' is considered an aspiration by most, not a letter. As for 'K', it is unnecessary to mention it, as it is considered superfluous even among Latin speakers, except for the Kalends. Therefore, it should be noted that the same words that have been skipped here or elsewhere can be found in other books.

M.

Misor: Direct, which in Greek is called εἰθεῖα, or flat and open.

Maachathi: They have broken me, or my belly is struck.

Mosera: Education or his discipline.

Mamoazer (Mamzer): From afar, or alienated.

O.

Oraim: Conception or comprehension.

R.

Raphaim: Physicians, or giants.

Rabath: A multitude, or a great one.

Rubeni: Vision, my son, or see between me.

Ramoth: High sign, whether it sees death or high things.

S.

Sidon: The hunt of sorrow, or uselessness.

Sareon: Prince of sorrow.

Sanir: lift up the novelty, or the tooth of the lamp.

Salacha (Selcha): Lifting have come, or carrying has come.

Settim: Thorns.

Seboim: Goats, or deer, or its station is by the sea.

Sames: Humble commandment.

Sina: Temptation, or a bramble, if written with the letter "samech".

T.

Thophel: Foolishness.

Z.

Zozomim: These are the thoughts, whether it is this water, or prepared for battle. On the Book of Joshua A.

Ain: question.

Adonibezec: My Lord shining, or Lord of contemptible vanity. But if it is written with a wise letter, it can be interpreted as 'My Just Lord'.

Azeca: Strength, or deceit.

Ailon: The one above Aulon whom we spoke of: which if we wanted to read aeglon, it is translated as "their cow."

Asor: Arrow of light.

Axaf: Medication: If we want to read Axa, it is interpreted as insane.

Araboth: low, level, and open.

Alac (Halchath): My part, or the slippery one.

Aermon: Anathema of grief.

Anaba (Anab): Grape, or my humility.

Asdod (Azotus): Dissolution, or discharge, or fire.

Arnon: Their light, or their curse.

Aroer: Digging of the night, or waking up at night: but better myrtle.

Adar (Eder): Flock.

Adaglam: Their congregation.

Apheo: It means "continence, or self-control."

Adraim: Flood of the wicked.

Accaron: Learning of sadness or sterility.

Amas: (Amma): Indignation or rage.

Asoth: That is Asdodius, the fire of my uncle, or fires.

Ascalon: weighed, or infamous fire.

Assahar: Morning, dawn.

Acrabbim: Scorpions.

Addar: Magnificent or a cloak.

Asamona: His mouth: from bone, not from the mouth.

Achor: Disturbance or commotion.

Adommim: red.

Anacam (Enacim): humble, rising up.

Ahiman: His brother.

Achsa: Limping, or creation, that is, ποιησις (poetry).

Athoniel: His time is God's, or the answer of God.

Adada: Until the testimony.

Asergadda: The vestibule of his ignition.

Asmona: Count quickly.

Avim: A heap of stones, that is, lithology.

Ain: Fountain or eye.

Aengannim: A spring, or the eye of gardens.

Adollamim: Their congregation.

Adasa: new.

Athar: Deprecation.

Achazib: Lie, or foolishness.

Ani: Poor.

Arab: ambush.

Ammeta: bed.

Accen (Accam): Nest.

Alala: Laxity.

Arabba (Rabba): Many.

Ataroth: crown.

Asrael (Esriel): Blessed God.

Agla: His festival.

Aser: Blessed, if written with the letters Aleph and Sin; but if with Heth and Sade, it is interpreted as a courtyard.

Amathim (Emath): Indignation, that is their anger, Anem: Circles, or crowns, or projecting.

Aerim (Iim): A heap of stones, that is a stone collection.

Affara: Calf, or bull.

Afara: His ground: it is indeed written in another script.

Ammona: Its people.

Aphani (Ophni): I am flying.

Aalef (Eleph): Thousand.

Asarsualim (Hasarsual): Court of foxes.

Asom: Bone of bone, not of mouth.

Asan: smoke.

Apharim (Hapharaim): Digging the sea.

Ammes: Robust.

Amad (Amosa): The people still.

Acharan: They disturb them.

Ammon: People.

Amma: Its people.

Anneceb (Neceb): Fame.

Aser: Atrium, or vestibule.

Adame (Adam): Blood or gore: plural in number.

Ajalon: Fields, or birdcatchers.

Anathoth: obeying, or responding to a signal.

Abdo (Abdon): His servant.

Ammador (Hammothdor): People of the generation.

Alal: Slackness, which the Greeks call χαλκωσιν, or lightness, through the extended first syllable.

Astarthen: Excessive production, that is, superfluous creation.

Astaroth: An invoice, that is, the creation of explorers.

B.

Bethaun: useless house.

Babylon: Confusion.

Betharan: House of wrath, or house of mountains.

Baalgad: He had a girded man, either a girded man, or a pirate, or a fortunate man.

Bethaisimoth: Deserted house, or house leading to death.

Bamoth: High.

Baal: Having.

Baalmeon: Having a dwelling.

Bethpheor: house of skin of the mouth.

Begunim: Masons' workshop.

Betharam: House of the high ones, or of the mountains.

Bethanamra: House of leopards, or of bitterness.

Bethaglam: >The house of their festivity.

Betharaba: A humble home, or evening.

Boon (Boen): Thumb, or in the middle.

Baala: Having it, or above.

Bala: Having her, or her husband, or both come.

Baaloth (Baalath): In ascent, or ascents: plural number.

Bethaphaleth: House of health.

Bazeotha (Baziothia): Contempt or contempt for him.

Baal: antiquity.

Basecoth (Bascath): Fat or defecation.

Bethdagon: House of wheat.

Beththaphue: The house of an apple: not from malice, but to be understood from the tree.

Bethsur: The house of the strong.

Bethanoth: House of the rulers.

Betharraba: Many houses, or large ones.

Benennam: Among them, or in their midst.

Bethagla: The house of his festivity.

Beroth: Wells.

Bethula (Bethul): Virgin.

Bethmarchaboth: House of chariots.

Bethlabaoth: House of the coming ones.

Balath: Habit: from having, not from appearance, that is, by the style of dress.

Beram (Beerramath): Well of depth.

Bethphesse: House of the flourishing mouth.

Bethsemus: House of the sun.

Beten: Stomach.

Bethemec: Valley house.

Banael (Jebneel): The building of God.

Bethanath: House of humility, or responding house.

Balathaba: habita, of the feminine gender, is a participle, not an imperative verb, from habere.

Banebarac: Son of lightning.

Balac: Cutting off.

C.

Cariathiarim: City, or forest villa.

Cadesbarne: Switched elect, or holy elect.

Cades: Holiness, or holy, or changed.

Cariatham: Their city, or perfect calling.

Caina (Cyna): Lamentation.

Ceila: Thrown to the ground, either raising it up or taking it for oneself.

Carmelus: Soft, or knowledge of circumcision.

Cariathbaal: He had a city, or a city was had.

Cana: Calamus. It should be noted that the Latin word Canna is taken from the Hebrew language.

Casim (Casis): Summit or beginning.

Catthath: Either Caath, bites, or congregated.

Caseon (Cesion): By hardiness, courage.

Cabasam: Their congregation.

Cartham: He/She completed the calling.

Cedemoth: Previously, or Eastern. Up until now we have read it with the simple letter C, henceforth it must be read with aspiration added.

Chidon: Shield, or buckler.

Chiphara (Caphira): His puppy, or his scattered hand, or his atonement. But what we said about a puppy signifies a lion which the Greeks call "skymnon".

Chermel: Soft, or tender, or knowledge, of circumcision. But better if interpreted, it means a tender lamb.

Cheslon: Revelation of them.

Chesil: Robust.

Chabon: As if understanding.

Chereloth: You have seen the sign.

Chesiloth: The sign of foolishness.

Chabol: Like a bud or shoot.

D.

Debir: Speaking, or speech, or fearing a bear.

Dor: Generation.

Debon: Abundantly, or sufficiently understanding.

Dabira: Speaking, either with eloquence, or fearing the bear.

Dimonia: counting enough, or sublimity.

Dalani: Needy poor.

Daleam: Their poverty.

Dana: Cause or judgment of it.

Duma (Ruma): Silence, or joy.

Dabbath (Dabereth): Buttocks.

Dabrath: Speech.

Dedara: Its generation.

Domna (Dimona): Silence.

E.

Eglon: Calf of grief, or their festival.

Esdad: (Asedoth), pouring, or fire, or cousin's fire.

Evaeus: Collecting stones, which in Greek is called lithologist.

Evi: Longing, whether it is.

Esron: Angry, or an arrow of sight.

Eneam (Enaim): Behold those, or behold they are.

Emmam (Amam): Their mother.

Eltholed: To the birth.

Ermom: Anathema or condemnation.

Esthaol: Fire of childbirth.

Esna: "Determination," which we can say comes second, whether in fire or exposition.

Esthamma (Esthemo): Thought.

Esaan: I lean upon, or I confirm.

Elthecem: He/she/it has carried/brought forth.

Emec: Valley.

Elec (Helec): portion.

Emeccasis: Valley of tears (literally "of incision" or "of cutting").

Erma: His/Her curse.

Ennathon: Giving thanks.

Enarath: Behold, she has conceived.

Elchath: portiuncula.

Elammelech (Elmelech): To the king.

Estmoe: Woman of the belly.

Elthaci: not desiring it at all. So far we have read through the short letter E, now let us read through the rest of the alphabet.

Elo: His army. For indeed, either troops of soldiers or wealth are always described in Hebrew.

Engaddi: Fountain of the Kid.

Endor: Source of generation.

Engannim: Fountain of gardens.

Enadda (Enhadda): Sharp spring.

Edroi: Flood feeding me.

Eram (Horem): Sublime life.

F.

Fesga: Carved, or cut off, or having many edges.

Faletti (Jephleti): saving me.

G.

Gazer: Cutting or dividing.

Gosnam (Gosen): Next to her, or nearby.

Gaza: Strong: beginning with the letter A, not the consonant Gimel.

Geth: Wine press.

Gessori: applying light, or applying guidance.

Galiloth: Revelations or transmigration.

Gazao: Robusto means "strong" or "robust" in English.

Geththaeo: To press or squeeze.

Gadera: His fence.

Gaderoth: The wall, or hedge.

Gabaoth: hills.

Gabaon: hill of sorrow.

Geththaapher: His winepress on the ground, or pit.

Gabathon: Their sublimity, or the hill of sorrow.

Gethremmon: A wine press of the highest quality, or a wine press of lofty heights.

Golam (Gilo): Their migration.

Galim: Swampy places or heaps.

Galgalis: You will roll.

Gabaad (Gabaath): Paternal hill.

I.

Jerimoth: Fearing death or the heights of death.

Jafie: This is: from the mouth, not from the bone.

Jabin: Understanding, or intelligence.

Jecnam: He/She possessed the people.

Jazer: Help.

Jarim: Forests or woods.

Jebneel: Building of God.

Jagur: Farmer, or stranger.

Jetan (Jeta): Wages.

Jectael (Jecthel): The honesty of God.

Jephte (Jephta): opened, or open.

Janum: Sleeping.

Jetta: They have stretched out.

Jezrael: Seed of God.

Jecdom (Jucadam): The people fell.

Janua (Janoe): Rest.

Jeblaam: The people are foolish.

Jerfel (Jarephel): God has left.

Jecnam: Possession of the people.

Jafie: Disclosure, or the act of showing, or a surface.

Jepheel (Jephtahel): God will open.

Jedala: Hand, curse.

Jaiel (Nehiel): Rest of God.

Jeraon (Jeron): They will fear.

Jeracon (Jercon): Aurugo: which the Greeks call ■ κτερον.

Jefonne: Naked.

Jetta: inclination.

Jezer: Courage or help.

L.

Lachis: He is interested, or for himself a man.

Lobna (Labana): Whiteness, or bricks.

Labo: Entering, or those who come.

Laamas (Leheman): To injustice.

Luza: Almond - although some interpret it as "chain", namely the torments of the damned, which they commonly call Bo'ia. However, it can also be interpreted as meaning the almond itself.

Labec: Acceptable.

Lacum: to stand up.

Lesem: To the name.

Lesemdan: Judgment of the name.

M.

Maceda: Burning, or eastern.

Madon: Contradiction, or dwelling.

Maspha: Mirror, or about a mirror.

Masefa: Watchtower.

Marom: Lofty, or from on high.

Masarphoth: Fires, or about the distress of beaks.

Maachati: My stomach is cut, or it is broken for me.

Marom: Otherwise, bitter sadness.

Mageddo: Its orchards, or its upper rooms.

Medab (Medaba): Thirst.

Mephaath: The force of the water, or by their times.

Manaim: camp.

Maabeel (Cabseel): The congregation of God.

Molada: Birth.

Medabena (Medemena): about burdens.

Magdalgad: Tower of pirates or tower of the girded.

Maresa: From the head.

Maon: dwelling.

Maaroth (Mareth): Caves.

Meddin: Judgment.

Mahala: Chorus.

Malcha: Queen.

Messa: Quarrel, or unleavened.

Marala: Bitter ascent.

Maalaph: About a thousand, or about learning.

Magdaniel: My tower, O God.

Masadda: demanding or holding back.

Misor: Direct, whether from the plain or from tribulation.

N.

Napheddor (Dor): Conversion of the generation.

Nephthoe: Dissolution, or deception.

Nasib: Title or station.

Nabsan: dried up.

Naal: Ascent.

Noa: movement, or motion.

Nahalal: They praise.

O.

Oziph (Ziph): Germination.

Orchiataroth: Length of the crown.

Oli (Holon): Weakness.

Ozanoth (Azanoth): As a sign, or perhaps a sign.

Up until now, we have read through a brief letter, but now it must be read in full.

Oham vae populo: Either raging or crazy.

Oram (Horam): Woe to the proud, or to anger.

Osa (Hosa): Hope.

Oceo: Caring, or searching thoroughly.

Oga (Hucuca): Famous or glorious.

Ono (Beth. Anoth): His/Her pain. No language except Latin has the letter Q, which is not found in the sounds of the Greeks or the Hebrews, and thus it has been entirely omitted by us here.

R.

Rahab: Width, or hunger, or impetus.

Recem: Variety or emptiness.

Rebe: fourth, or orderly.

Ramoth: Vision of death.

Ragal (Rogel): Foot, or bearing downward.

Raphaim: Giants.

Remmon: sublimitas -> elevation, loftiness

Rama: High.

Rabboth: many.

Ramath: These are lofty.

Roob: Recently.

Raccath: Jaws, or cheeks.

S.

Sarathan: Their affliction.

Semro: His guardian or name he saw.

Salacha: They took it for themselves, or the temptation of the journey.

Saron: Prince of sadness.

Semronmaron: The guardian of beloved sorrow.

Sabama: lift up on high, or a certain turning.

Sarth: A bond, or its tightness.

Sin: Leaving.

Sechrona: Drunken, or taverns.

Sisai: longevity.

Seme (Sama): Hearing.

Suhalim: fox.

Siceleg: Straining the voice, or he poured out a pint.

Senesanna (Sensenna): Taking red, or temptations.

Saloim (Selim): emissions.

Saraa: Charcoal, or narrowness of evils.

Socha (Socho): Tent or shade.

Saharim: Gates.

Sanan: Abundant, or their departure.

Samer: guarded.

Sihor: Small, or turbulent.

Sebacha (Sotheba): net.

Selom (Selim): Tearing away, or dismissal, or where he himself is.

Semdae (Semida): Knowledge of the name.

Samari: My wool.

Selam: Side: from beside, not from width.

Sabe: Seven, or seven times.

Sarid: Remains.

Sonim (Sunem): scarlet dye.

Seon: His seed.

Sahasim (Sehesima): He lay down as he went out.

Sala: Taking or removing.

Semes: Sun.

Salabim (Selebin): Weighing down the mind.

T.

Talam (Telem): Their dewy roses, or watered.

Tyrus: Which is said in Hebrew 'Sor' and interpreted as tribulation, or distress, or strength.

Hucusque per simplicem litteram legerimus: Then the inhalation must be added, it must be read.

Thaffee (Thaphua) malum: ab arbore: Not to be understood from malice, whether an open drum.

Thaanac: Responding, or humility.

Thersa: Approval; which is more significantly known in Greek as εἰδοκία.

Thalme: A furrow, or drooping.

Thamna: Number, or faithful, or numbered, or their completion.

Thenac: Fig.

Therela: You saw the terebinth.

Thabor: Coming light.

Thalla: His field, or measurement.

Thamnatsare: The number of a new operation.

U.

Ur (Hur): Airy, or provocative to anger.

Z.

Zebdi: My dowry.

Zabdi: A violent or abundant flow.

Zanoe: He was repulsed, or he rested. On the Book of Judges A.

Adonibezec: Lord of thunder, or lord of vain contempt.

Ahiman: Who is my brother?

Axa: limping, or angry.

Athaniel: My time is for God.

Arad: The resurrection of descent, or the descending witness.

Accho: Until now, either the hook or his humility.

Alab: Milk, or milky.

Acrabbim: scorpions.

Astaroth: Sheepfolds, or the act of making them, that is the work of explorers.

Anatha: answer.

Arasth (Harad): artisan (or artist).

Abinaam: The glory of my father.

Abel: Grief, or committing.

Abelmeola: The sorrow of a woman in labor.

Ares: sun.

Abed: Servant.

Armon: Anathema of grief, or an image of sadness.

Avoth: Stay, or seat, or village, or cradle, which is called ■παυλις in Greek.

Abgam (Abesan): Father of filth.

Abdon: Servant of sorrow.

Allel (Illel): Praise.

Aminadab: My people are spontaneous.

B.

Bezec: lightning, or empty contempt, or shining.

Baalmesar: Having, or a man of noble birth.

Barac: Lightning.

Bachal: yoke.

Bara: Creature, or bed.

Baracinnim: Creature of nests, or thorns.

Baalberith: Having an agreement.

Bera: well.

Berith: Agreement.

Baalthamar: Having a palm.

Booz: In strength, or in which there is virtue.

C.

Cenez: Contemptible possession.

Cetrum (Cetron): Their darkness, or incense.

Cison: They were struck, either by their harshness or joy.

Carcar (Apud LXX: Eighth, 10th), investigation.

Camon: Resurrection is useless.

Quatuor nomina: The following things are to be read with the letter "h" added from Gaius.

Chettim (Hetthim): Whether raving, or frightened, or marked.

Chusam: Their Ethiopia.

Chamos: As if touching, or gathering.

Chelion: Completion, or all pain, from the beginning.

D.

Debbora: Bee, or talkative.

Dabla: poor little one, or bucket.

Dagon: Fish of sadness.

E.

Enac: Rising humble.

Eloi: God.

Ezri: My help.

Ephod: Superindumentum, which the Greeks call **■π■νδυμα**, or **■πωμ■δα**.

Ephratha (Ephra): Fruit-bearing, or coming from ashes, or dusty. And moreover what seems to us about this, we have explained more fully in the books of Hebrew Questions.

Euphrathites: Dirt, or their dust, or productive soil.

Duo nomina: Let us read the following in detail.

Eud (Aod): Receiving glory.

Etam: Their bird.

F.

Fura (Phara): Small flagon, or fruitful.

Fanuel: The face of God.

Foa (Phua): Worker, or sound, or clear.

Farez: Dividing, or violent, or division.

G.

Gaasar (Gazer): Disturbance.

Gera: Rumination.

Gedeon: Going around, or the temptation of their iniquity.

Gabatha: hill, or high.

Garizim: Neighbor or foreigner thereof.

Gaola (Gaal): Rejecting, or revelation.

Gaza: His strength.

Gadam: temptation, or girding of the people.

I.

Jezbaam (Jebalaam): The people are flowing away or becoming foolish.

Jabin: Intelligent or wise.

Jael: A deer, or deer-mating, or beginning.

Joas: Hoping, whether it is temporal or the strength of the Lord.

Jerobaal: Let Baal judge, or let him who has power judge, whether superior or having a dispute.

Jecbaze: the wolf's press.

Jecba: Winepress.

Jotham: It is perfect.

Jair: Enlightening.

Jonathan: The gift of a dove, or he/she gave a dove, or the gift of the Lord.

Jabes: Dried, or drought.

L.

Laffidoth: A lamp or, as it were, the mouth of a knife: from the mouth, not from the bone.

Lais: A lion, or rather a man for himself.

M.

Meroz: Water of the sacraments.

Maoz: robust, strong.

Mere (Merome): clear, or illuminating, or open.

Mello: Full.

Manne (Manue): Rest.

Micha: Who is here, an adverb of place, or who is that?

N.

Neellel: Praise, hymn.

Nabe (Nobe): Barking.

Three names, which we add from O, must be read by extending the letter.

O.

Obed: Servant.

Obab (Hobab): Love.

Oreb: Raven, or drought.

R.

Rechab: ascension, or climbing up.

Resathaim: Their impiety.

S.

Sasai: Long-lived, or elderly.

Sepheth: Watchtower.

Salabbim: Health of hearts.

Syria: Sublimity.

Sairath: Goat.

Semegar: Name of a newcomer, or a settler there.

Sisara gaudii exclusio: Either lifting up the departing one, or the vision of a horse.

Setta (Bethsetta): Thorns.

Saratha (Saraa): Binding comes, whether tribulation.

Suroreb: the rock of the raven.

Salmane: The shadow of prohibition, or the shadow of disturbance.

Samir: Thorns, or uncultivated land.

Seon: Burning temptation, or a seed that is not (there).

Semanoth: Humile name.

Samson: Their sun, or the strength of the sun.

Sorec: Chosen, the best.

Salma (Salmana): Feeling, either perfect or peaceful.

T.

Tabath (Tebbath): Good.

Excepto hoc nomine: The rest, which follows this letter, must be read with an aspiration.

Thalmai: Suspension or groove.

Thamnathares (Thamnathsare): Enumeration of the sun.

Thanach: Humility, or it will answer you.

Thebes: Conversion or making eggs.

Z.

Zib: Wolf.

Zebul: habitation.

Zabulonites: His dwelling. On Ruth Booz: in fortitudine = in strength/power Elimelech: My God the king.

Jesse insulae libamen.: Festina lente.

Maalon: From the window whether from the beginning or end.

Noemi: Beautiful.

Orpha: Her neck.

Ruth: Seeing, or hurrying, or failing. On Kingdoms Book 1. A.

Anna: His favor.

Aphec: New madness, or continuously.

Aminadab (Abinadab): My father is spontaneous, or urbane.

Abia: Father Lord, or father was.

Abiel: My father is God.

Ammoni: Squeezing, or narrowing me.

Asor: Arrow of light.

Ahias: Another brother, or his brother.

Ahitob: My brother is a burden.

Ahinaam: Brother's ornament.

Abenner: My father is a lamp, or the father of a lamp.

Agag: roof, that is, covering.

Armathaim (Ramathaim): Their height.

Azeca: Fortitude, or deceit.

Adreel: flocks of God.

Azel: Going, proceeding.

Achis: But truly a man, whether my brother, or husband.

Abimelech: My brother the king.

Avilath (Hevila): Suffering, or giving birth.

Arth (Haret): Delay.

Abiathar: Excessive father.

Achela (Hachila): Looking at her.

Abigal: Father of rejoicing, or father of dew.

Abisa: The burning of my father, or sacrifice.

Aendor: Eye, or source of creation.

Abigail: The joy of my father.

Asan: Smoking.

Athach: In your time.

B.

Baalim: Having, either ascending, or superior.

Bethahar: House of recognition or house of the lamb.

Bochorach (Bocorath): Your firstborn.

Bezec: neediness/ poverty/ want.

Badan: Alone, or in judgment.

Boses: It flourished in him, or by excision.

Bama: In which.

Baritha: Pythoness, whom the Greeks call ■γγαστρ■μυθον.

Bosori (Besor): Annunciation, or flesh.

Bersabee: Well of satisfaction, or well number seven.

C.

Cariathjarim: City of the forests.

Ciis: Harsh, or the vomit of a man, or a vomiting man.

Quae sequuntur: With the addition of aspiration, they must be read.

Cherubim: Multitude of knowledge.

Chetti: Mad, or with me.

Cheretti (Cerethi): "Killing" or "destroying completely," which is more accurately expressed in Greek as ■ξολοθρε■οντες.

Chaleb: As if heart, or all heart, or dog.

D.

David: Strong in hand, or desirable.

Damaim (Dommim): Blood.

Doec (Doeg): Movement, or anxiety: which in Greek is called ■γωνι■ν.

E.

Eleazar: To help, or the help of God.

Escabod (Ichabod): Glory has fallen, or woe to glory. And regarding this, what seems to us, has been fully debated in the books of Hebrew Questions.

Evilath: In the beginning.

Ebraei: Passersby.

Etthi: with me.

Esthamoe: thinking.

Tria nomina: The following things must be brought forth in full detail.

Elcana: Possession of God.

Eliu: This is my God.

Eliab: My God, Father.

F.

Finees: The bone is at rest, whether it is mute or silent.

Fenenna: Conversion.

Falti: To my savior.

G.

Gabaa: hill.

Galgala: Rotation or revelation.

Goliath: Revealed, or transmigrating.

Gallim: Transmigrating, or revealed.

Gesuri: Beside my light, or applying the light to me.

Garizim: Cuttings.

Gelboe: Rotation, or descent, or raining heap.

Gedori: applying, or approaching.

J.

Jeroboam (Jeroham): Merciful.

Josue: Savior.

Jechonia: Preparation of God.

Joel: Beginning, or was of God.

Jabes: Dried.

Jerobaal: Judgment of Baal, whether it be the quarrel of the superior, or of one who has.

Jesavi (Jessui): That is what I desired.

Jessai: Islands sacrifice, or incense.

Joab: Enemy, or he is a father.

Jerameeli: The mercy of my God.

M.

Malari (Metri): Rain, or fill me up.

Machmas: Humility, whether touched.

Mageddon (Magron): Trying.

Melchisue: My king is my salvation, or my king is my tyrant.

Merob: About the multitude.

Michoi: All water, or from all.

Meolati: From the one giving birth to me, or from the one suffering.

Maon: Living quarters.

Maoch: Eviratus: whom the Greeks call θαλασσαν.

N.

Ner: Lantern.

Nuath (Najoth): Beauty.

Nobe: barking.

Nabal: Foolish, if you wish to read Nebel, it is the name of a measure, or a Psalter.

O.

Ophni: Barefoot, or the madness of conversion.

Odollam: Their testimony.

R.

Ramathaim: Their heights.

Rachal: Business/Commerce.

Rachel, on the other hand, is interpreted as sheep, or seeing God

S.

Sophim: Mirror, or rock/cliff.

Saupha: Scout or overflowingly pouring out.

Sabaoth: Armies, or virtues.

Samuel: His name is God.

Semsi: My sun.

Saror: pressing tight, whether clothed.

Saul: Request.

Salisa: Third.

Salim: fox: but it is better if it is read by Sualim.

Suph: Mirror, or pouring out.

Seua: Be it by lifting, or by constraint, or by force.

Soba: A commandment about it.

Sur: straight.

Sama: There, or listening.

Soccoth (Socho): Branch, or humility.

Sechui: Foolish.

Sarvia: Captive, or narrowness.

Sonaim (Sunam): Scarlet, or staying with them.

Sephemoth: Lip of death.

T.

Thou: Mad, or wandering.

Z.

Ziphaei: Sprouting or blooming. On Kingdoms Book 2 A.

Asuri (Gessuri): My atrium.

Abisa: Father's fire, or sacrifice, or burnt offering: which is more significantly called κέρωμα in Greek.

Asae (Asad): An invoice, that is, a creation.

Amman: Elbow, measurement, not arm.

Ammon: Mother's weeping.

Abessalom: Father of Peace.

Adoaia: Lord the ruler.

Aggia (Haggith): Festive or solemn.

Abital: My father is a rose.

Agla: Young woman or calf.

Aia: vulture.

Adrazer: Decent help.

Acchereth: Scattering, or dissipating.

Ammiel: My people of God.

Amon: Giving.

Abisei: Father of sacrifice.

Ammiod: My glorious people.

Abitophel: My brother falling, whether attacking, or my brother thinking, or handling.

Arachi (Arachites): My length.

Amessa (Amasa) populum tulit.: Ad astra per aspera.

Aphelethi: Wonderful.

Adoniram: The Lord is high.

Adoram: High generation.

Ahilothe (Ahilud): Famous brother.

Armoni: Enlighten me, or curse, whether my cellar or my house.

Adino: Delicate or tender.

Ahesani (Ibid.): Of my own free will, or by design.

Ahoi: Of thorns.

Aga (Age): Meditating, or speaking.

Ararites: Mountainous.

Adollam: Their assembly.

Ariel: Lion of God.

Asael: The workmanship of God, that is the poem.

Aradius (Harodi): Being stunned, or amazed.

Aras (Ira): Proud.

Alab: Milk.

Abiezri (Abiezer): The help of my God.

Anathothithes: Responding with a sign.

Adai (Heddai): Robust or sufficient.

Abialbon: My father is highly intelligent.

Azmath (Azmaveth): Strong in death.

Ahiem (Aian): Mother's brother.

Aserai (Hesdrai): My atrium.

Arunas (Areuna): Illuminated/Enlightened Ones.

B.

Beurim: Chosen.

Baana: He came responding.

Berothi: Wells.

Bega: High.

Banaia: Mason, that is, builder of the Lord's house.

Bethroob: House of streets.

Bethsabbee: Daughter of satiety: but in such a way that the first syllable is corrected, otherwise where it is produced, it is always interpreted as "home".

Balazor: Having an arrow of light, or the ascent of the atrium.

Bethchar: The house of the lamb.

Baurim: Chosen, as above: or young men.

Benzellai: My iron.

Bchori: My firstborn.

Bethmacha: Simple house, market, or tribute.

Baana (Ms. Baara): He came responding.

Bareumi (Beromi): Someone chased him.

Bethoron: House of anger.

C.

Casir, harvest.

Cabsel: The congregation of God.

Tria nomina: The following things must be read with added breath.

Chalamac: All strength.

Chusi: Ethiopia.

Choretthi (Cerethi): Scattering, or dispersing.

E.

Eliaba: Not at all hidden.

Excepto hoc nomine: All the rest which follows from the letter must be read through the extended first syllable.

Elisue: The salvation of my God.

Elisame: My God, hear me.

Elidahe (Elioda): My God knows.

Eliphaleth: My God, the Savior.

Eliam: The people of my God.

Elianam: The Lord reigning.

F.

Feletthe: Wonderful, or excluding.

Faraothoni: flying away from my sadness.

Faarai: Hi before me.

G.

Gio: Struggle, or to wrestle.

Gelo: Depart, or to one who is migrating.

Gera: Ruminating.

Gom (Gob): Pit.

Gaas: Moved/disturbed.

Gelonites: Transmigrated.

Garab: Scabious.

H.

Hiram: Living high.

Histob: Good man.

Hiras: Watching.

Hisboseth: force of confusion.

Therefore, we have written these names with aspiration, because they are written with a diphthong both in Greek and Hebrew.

J.

Jezrael: God sowed.

Jethraam: Excessive population.

Jebgar (Jebahar): He/she/it chose.

Japhie: It illuminates or shows.

Joram: Who is high, or the hands of the lofty.

Jeroboseth: Judging is confusion, that is dishonor.

Ididia: Beloved of the Lord.

Jonadb: Lord's spontaneous.

Joadah: knowing himself.

Josaphat: He judges.

Jodasse: Knowing or realizing.

Jesbi (Jesbibenob): It is in me.

Jaare: Forest.

Jojadahe: Knowledge of the Lord, or the Lord Himself as the Knower.

Jasan (Jassen): old.

Jagaal: Relative.

Jaaxaer: It will help.

Jaan: Responding.

L.

Lodabar: The word itself.

Lasabi: He/she/it hoped in me.

M.

Manaim: Consolation, or rest.

Maacha: Striving, or broken.

Memfiboste: About the disgraceful mouth.

Maana: rest.

Maaria (Maharai): My house, whether bitter or from a dream.

Maachaii: Subjugated, that is, my soft one.

N.

Nephec (Nepheg): Applicans ori, vel ligyrium: the name of the stone.

Naas: Serpent.

Nethophathi: Enclosed.

Neele: Ladder or stream.

Naalia: streams.

O.

Orchathi: My estimation/ My value.

Odsi: My month.

Tria nomina: The following things must be set forth in full detail.

Obedadam: Serving the ground.

Obiada: He/she knows.

Oren (Areuna): Anger.

R.

Resphab: Paved with stones.

Racha: Four-horse chariot race.

Roboam: The width of the people.

Ragat (Rogel): Sad, or downwards.

Ragalim (Rogelim): feet.

Rapha (Arapha): Health.

Ribai: Judging.

S.

Saphatia: Judging me.

Sion: Watchtower, or lookout, or cliff.

Samoe (Samua): Hearing.

Sobab: turning.

Sobi: A sect is named from cutting, not from following.

Susacim: Joy of the cilice.

Siba: He came out.

Sarava: The ruler Lord.

Sobach: Turning yourself.

Sunem: Scarlet, or uplifting.

Sabe: Satiety.

Sadoc: Righteous.

Subi: Convert me.

Sia (Sira): Needy or sleeping.

Subochai: Condensed, or fruit orchard.

Et super hoc: We have spoken more fully about what seems to us in the books of Hebrew questions.

Samar: There for me, whether hearing.

Salmon: The shadow of virtue.

Sarai: My prince.

Salech (Selech): Departing.

T.

Thebes: They were in it, or my deeds.

Thalme (Tholmai): furrows.

Thecue: A noise, or a trumpet, or a percussion.

Thecutes: The trumpet sounding, or a horn blower.

Theethim: Lower or underneath.

These names, which we have placed under the letter T, should be read with aspiration added.

U.

Uria: My light is God.

Usi: hurrying.

Urchi: My length.

Usathi: Hastening me. On Kingdoms Book 3. A.

Abisai (Abisag): My father is superfluous, or the roar of my father.

Accherethi (Cerethi): Killing, or scattering, or demolishing.

Amasa: Raising or lifting the people.

Asor: Atrium, hall, entrance hall.

Azaria: Help of the Lord.

Ahia: His brother: Or where is this?

Ahisar: My brother is a prince.

Adoniram: My Lord is most high.

Ahda: His servant.

Arobboth (Aruboth): waterfall.

Aser (Epher): Suffocated.

Ahilod: My famous brother.

Avoth: Glory, or a mansion.

Argob: Cursed lofty height.

Adoniram: Lord most high.

Aelam: Before the doors, or the entrance hall.

Adadezer (Adarezer): Proper help.

Adorram: Noble generation, or the beauty of the lofty.

Ano: Their pain.

Asa: Lifting up or raising up.

Avan: It subverts them, whether by moving them or by a source.

Anacim: He/she/it is not innocent.

Anani: gratified to me, or given to me Ahab: Uncle (literally, "brother of the father") Azuba: Left behind, or deserted.

B.

Bethsabees: The daughter of an oath; it must be read with the short first syllable.

Benur: Son of the air, or son of fire.

Bethsames: House of the Sun.

Bethanan: House of grace or gift.

Basamath, offending.

Baaloth: ascending.

Bul: Of buds/growth.

Booz: in strength.

Barasa (Baasa): in poverty, whether they come to work or to draw resources.

C.

Cave (Coa): Patience, or the sound of the trumpet.

Carmelus: Tender, or soft, or knowledge of circumcision.

Up until now we have read through the letter C without any aspiration, from now on it must be read with aspiration added.

Chalacad (Chalcol): Feeding, or nourishing.

Chamos: gathering, or as if touching or feeling.

Charith: Division or knowledge.

Chanaan: Blushing, or businessman.

D.

Dachar: Regretting.

Dardahe (Dorda): Generation of knowledge.

Dabir: oracle.

Dui: Beauty.

Damascus: Drinking or sipping blood.

E.

Esda: Mercy.

Ezraeli (Ezraita): Seed of God.

Emori (Amorrhaei): Of one who loves or speaks.

Esrai: unworthy, or eastern.

Ezaion (Hezion): Vision.

Until now, through the short letter E; henceforth let us read through the long one.

Eli: My God, or climbing.

Elioreph: God's winter.

Eri: My watch.

Elon: Aulon, of which we have spoken more fully in the volume of Places.

Ethan: Robust, or ascent.

Eman: Taking, or fear of them.

Ethanim: Of the sturdy.

Esiongaber: The will or the plan of strengthened sadness, or of youth.

Ela: Cursed, even themselves.

Esaion: Will, or counsel, of sorrow.

Elia: God the Lord.

Elisae (Eliseus): My God's salvation.

F Felethi: Wonderfully.

Fadaia: Redemption of the Lord.

G.

Gaber: Man, either young, or strong, or manfully.

Goneabath: The theft of a daughter.

Gonath (Gmeth): Your arrogance, or your garden.

Geezi (Gazer): Seeing a rugged path or a valley view.

Gir (Gera): Division or cutting off.

Gozan: Their haircut, or their strength.

Gabe: hill.

Godolia: Magnificent Lord.

I.

Izabel: Cohabitatrix, or a useless flow.

Jacomam (Jecman): He/She/It avenges the people.

Jair: It illuminated.

Jachon (Jachin): Preparation.

Jeroboam: Judging the people, or judging against us.

Jessai: Islands of sacrifice, or holocaust.

Josia: Whose is the sacrifice of the Lord, or the health of the Lord, or the strength of the Lord.

Jen: He himself is or it is.

Joram: Who is high.

Josaphat: Judgment of the Lord.

Jemla: Fullness, or circumcision.

L Leben: Construction, or candid.

M.

Mageddo: His upper rooms.

Maacha: Striking, or struck.

Maces de fine.: Ad astra per aspera.

Maol: Chorus, or fullness.

Merab: about a multitude.

Malathra: scorn or division.

Mechonoth: fulera: which the Greeks call β■σεις, that is, ■ποθ■ματα.

Melloth: Fullness, or fulfilled.

Machaia (Michaeas): What is here? Adverb of place, or who will rule.

Mosae: Savior, or from the savior.

N.

Nephaddor: Scattered generation.

Neena: image.

Neisoht: Station.

Nabaoth: Prominent, or session, or exclusion.

Nadab: willingly.

Naama: Decoration.

Naamani: The beauty of my gift.

Nesib: Standing.

Namsi: Touching, feeling, or handling.

O.

Omri (Amri): My sheaf, or my bundle.

Oza (Osa): The strength of the Lord.

Olda: Destruction, or diversion.

Tria nomina: The following things must be set forth in full detail.

Og: Gathering.

Ophir: strengthening.

Obedia (Abdias): serving the Lord.

R.

Rei: My shepherd.

Ramoth: Vision of death.

Razon: Mystical or sacred.

Rabaam: The enthusiasm of the people, or the extent of the people of Rehoboam.

S.

Sunamith: Whoever dies, whether killed or deadened.

Sisa: Temptation, or flour-based.

Saalabim: Burdening the intellect.

Soca (Socho): Branch.

Sartham (Sarhana): Their distress, whether due to being overthrown, or straitened.

Sion: Watchtower, or command, or pathless road.

Saba: captive.

Sathan: Opponent, or adversary.

Suba: Set on fire, or turning.

Sadada (Sareda): His side: from the flank, not from the width.

Sarua: leprosy.

Sesae: Fine linen of Cilicia, or the joy of Cilicia.

Sichima: Upper arm.

Semeia: Hearing the Lord.

Somer: keeper.

Sali (Salai): Mass.

Sophar: To scatter, to divide.

Sigub: To lift up high.

Sareptha: Fire, or the trouble of bread.

Sidonia: Useless hunt.

Saphat: judging.

Sedecia: The Lord is just.

T.

Taphat: A little one comes.

Tabremmon: Good for seeing, whether it be the good height, or the good sight of them.

Up until now, we have read through the simple letter T: from now on, it must be read with aspiration added.

Thanach: He/She/It answers/ replies.

Thermad (Ms. A.: IX, 18, Θερμ■θ), exploration of redemption.

Thalisa: Limping, or the relaxation of life.

Thedor: Mushroom.

Themor: Smyrna.

Tharsis: Exploration of joy.

Thaphnes: The covered sign, which is more significantly called σ■σημον (in) Greek.

Thersa: Pleasing.

Thebni: My chaff.

Thesbi: Captivating or converting.

Z.

Zoeleth: Drawn out or prolonged.

Zabud: Flowing tower, which commonly called a spark.

Zamri (Zambri): This one provokes, or vexes: for its name is properly formed from bitterness.

Zava: Injustice.

Zabadia: Endowed by the Lord. On Kingdoms Book 4. A.

Ahiel (Ahia): Living for God, or seeing God.

Abiram: To the lofty father.

Azael: Seen by God.

Adad: uncle, or cousin on the father's side, or witness.

Aazia (Ochosias): Grasping God, or the strength of the Lord, or his strength.

Abana: His stones.

Athalia: Time of the Lord, or time of Him, or temporal time of the Lord.

Aramaththai (Amathi) dejiciens (Ms. dejicies) eum.: Sic itur ad astra.

Arnon: Their light, or the ark of mourning.

Ammessia (Amasias): Robust of the Lord, or a lofty people.

Aphec: It will contain or grasp.

Amia: The strength of the Lord, or the people of the Lord.

Amathi: My truth.

Azaria: The Lord is my helper.

Assith: Liberty.

Argob: Cursing the high one.

Ariel (Arie): Lion of God.

Asor: Arrow of light.

Aaz: Containing, or comprising.

Ala: Weakness (Infinite).

Abur (Habor): A bruise, or a wound.

Asama: Crime.

Adramelech: The robe of the king, or the decoration of the king.

Anamelech: to the responding king.

Abisa: My will is in it.

Asaph: Gathering.

Arphad: Healing, or healed.

Anei (Ana): Is he/she/it moved?

Amos: Robust.

Ararat: Armenia, or the shaken mountain.

Asaradan: Conquering or being sharpened.

Arus: Engraved, or gold.

Adaia: The testimony of the Lord.

Ahicam: My brother is getting up.

Asaia: To the doer Lord.

Achbor: Mouse.

Aars: sun.

Amutal: Heated dew.

Avil (Evil): Stupid, foolish.

B.

Baalzebub: Devouring a fly.

Baalsalisa: Having a third.

Badacar: He comes to be compacted.

Bethagan: House of the garden.

Bethacon: House of sculpture.

Basan: Confusion, or fatness, or drought.

Bedec: Restoration.

Banada (Benadad): handsome son.

Baladan: He came, judging himself or vanity for himself.

Basecath: Fat.

Bethim: Houses.

C.

Cabalaam: He/she/it hastened/fell headlong.

Cadesim: Changed, or weakened.

Caree: Bald.

Hucusque per C simplicem litteram legerimus: Then, with added aspiration, it must be pronounced.

Chabratha: Election: On this, a more complete debate is found in the books of Hebrew questions.

Charith: Cutting.

Charan: Anger, or a hole.

Chomarim: Caretaker(s).

E.

Ezer: Separated, sanctified.

Elchiau: Part of the Lord.

Ephsiba: My wish is in it.

Eselia: close to the Lord.

Ennam: Behold, these are (it).

Eennathan (Elnathan): To the giver, or God willing.

Quatuor nomina: Let us set forth in full detail the things that follow.

Eloth: The sign of Aries, or Ram sign.

Elam (Ela): People of God, or in place of doors.

Elia: Lord God.

Eliacim: The resurrection of God.

Esaia: The health/safety of the Lord.

F.

Farfar: Digging, or dispersing, or moles.

Ful: Fall, or falling down.

Faceia: Opening of the Lord, or assumption of the mouth.

Falasar: Falling prince, or falling leader.

Farurim: Torn.

Fasee: Crossed over, or passed beyond.

Fadai (Fadaia): Redemption of the Lord.

I.

Jeblaam: It swallows.

Josabe: Where is fullness? Or the fullness of the Lord.

Jodae (Joiada) Domini cognitio.: Nulla dies sine linea.

Jozachar: The memory of the Lord, or he who is remembering.

Jozabad: Lord of lords, or he who is endowed.

Joaaz: Where is the retaining? Or retention of the Lord.

Joadina (Joadan): Delicate of the Lord, or that which is delicate or tender.

Jactel (Jectehel): Assembly of God, or Help of God.

Jona: Pigeon, or where is Donatus? Whether sorrowful.

Jachalia: The strength of the Lord.

Joatham: Consummated or perfect.

Jezecia: grasping the Lord, or the strength of the Lord.

Joah: Where is the brother, either the brother of the Lord, or the making of a brother.

Jothaba: Sinners in it.

Ididia: Beloved of the Lord, or beloved of him.

Jeremiahn: The Lord is sublime.

Jezania (Jezonias): Listening, or heeding the Lord.

Joachim: The resurrection of the Lord, or the awakening of the Lord, or of the one who rises.

M.

Masaa (Messa): burden or assumption.

Matthan: Gift, or giver.

Manem: Consoling.

Manaa: consolation, or gift, or sacrifice.

Medon: Their water.

Mocchota (Chuta): his wounds.

Mochoth: Plagues.

Marodach: Bitter arrogance, or contention.

Messalem (Messulam): Blushing, or blushed.

Masena. secunda.: Per ardua ad astra.

Mazaroth: To the animals, which the mathematicians assert are twelve signs.

Moloch: king.

Mesthi: Variety.

Mageddo: About temptation.

Mathania: Gift of God.

Mechonoth: Supports: which we can call bases or foundations.

Massephath: Observation or contemplation.

Merodach: Sending bitterness.

Mamzamaroth: Tridents, or small three-pronged forks, which the Greeks call **■ναλ■μπτηρας**.

N.

Naboe: Prophet or prophesying.

Naaman: Honour or disturbance of them.

Nergal: The lamp of the heap.

Nabaaz: He prophesied then, or the beginning of a session.

Noesthan: Their bronze.

Ninive: Either cheese, or a germ of beauty, or beautiful.

Nesrach: A young runaway, or a tender temptation.

Nechota: its myrrh or spices.

Necho: I struck.

Nabuchodonosor: The prophecy of a narrow jar, or prophesying of this kind, a sign, or sitting in the recognition of anguish.

Noostha: His bronze.

Nabuzardan prophetavit palas: Which are commonly called vents, or the prophecy of the alien judgment.

Nathania: To give or dedicate to the Lord.

R.

Rechab: Ascension, or high.

Ramalia excelsus Domini.: Semper fidelis.

Raason (Rasin): Course, or pleasure, or satisfaction, which the Greeks significantly call **ε■δοκ■αυ**.

Rabsaris: Princeps eunuchus, whether teacher or chief eunuch.

Rabsace: The prince kissing, or many kisses.

Raphes: Birds, or the course of the mouth.

Rablai: Much, whether many.

Ruma: high.

Reblath: That much, or the multitude.

S.

Sunem: Teeth, or scarlet, or variety.

Samariam: guarded Sabbath: Rest, or interruption.

Sir: cauldron or hall, which is commonly called a pot.

Saderoth: Enclosures, walls, or public porticoes.

Sabia: Goat, or damages.

Sela: always.

Semath: hearing Saalum: blushing.

Salmanasar: Perfect for binding or for conquering.

Sapharvaim: books, or letters.

Sechchothbanoth (Al. Sochothanoth): Tents or shades of daughters.

Sennacherib: Taking up, or lifting up, deserted things.

Sobnas: Sitting, or returning.

Saesda: Pestilent air - which the Greeks more significantly call **νεμοφθορον**.

Sarasar: prince of trouble.

Saphan (Saphan): His lip.

Sademoth: Fields or regions.

Saraia: Bound.

Saphania: The Lord is my hiding place, or the protection of the Lord.

All names which are subjected to the letter T must be pronounced with added aspiration.

T.

Thaphse: Indignantly, or the seat of offense.

Theglath: Migrating - to be understood by its active meaning, which in Greek is called **ποικιζων**, that is, transferring others.

Tharthach: Subversion - which the Greeks better call "**αντροπην**" (anatropen).

Thartan: He gave a turtle, either superfluous or lengthening.

Thalasar: The chief hanged.

Thaasar: Riches.

Thecum (Thecue): patience.

Therach (Tharaca): Elongatus: or to put it in a proper name, Proculus.

Thoph (Topheth): Protection of the mouth, or hell.

Theraphim: Fires - but better yet, images or figures, which the Greeks call "μορφματά".

Thanameth (Thanehumeth): Comforter. On Psalter. A.

Abessalon: Father of peace.

Asaph: Gathering.

Aleph: A thousand, or learning.

Ain: Fountain, or eye.

B.

Baalpheor: Having a hawk or having a skin mouth, or a skin pouch.

Beth: house.

Babylon: Confusion.

C.

Cades: Unchanged, or sacred.

Coph: Calling or bird - but it is better to shake, which the Greeks call κκρουμα (Ms. κκρομοι).

Cedar: Darkness, or grief.

Chusi: African/Black person.

Caph: Hand, palm, or fly.

D.

Daleth: Poor, either a board or a door.

E.

Ezraites: Seed of God.

Ermon: Curse be upon him, or curse of sorrow.

Ephrata: Fruit-bearing, or indeed you see.

He: Herself, or that, or undertaking.

Heth: Life, or liveliness.

F.

Fe: Mouth: from the mouth, not from the bone: whether it be a noose or a decoy.

G.

Gebal: defining, or determining.

Gimel: Recompense or fullness.

I.

Jemini: my right hand.

Idithun: Jumping over them, or hopping over them.

Jod: Beginning, or knowledge, or ruler.

L.

Lamed: Teachings or discipline.

M.

Mem: From which, or from them themselves, or from water.

N.

Nun: Child, or fish, or eternal.

R.

Res: Head.

S.

Salmoë: Shadow of offense, or feeling, or image of strength.

Samech: The Firmament: though some might think it means "erecting," or "assistance," or "support."

Sade: Country, whether justice, or hunting.

Sin: Teeth.

T.

Teth: Good. The remaining four, which follow, should be pronounced with an added breath.

Thabor: Coming light, or let light come.

Thau: sign, or underneath.

Thalasar: He hangs the prince.

Thobel: offer.

V.

Vau: And he himself.

Z.

Zebee: Victim or sacrifice.

Zain: Olives, or fornication, or this.

About the Hebrew Alphabet, I believe that I have discussed it thoroughly in the letter that I wrote to Saint Paula concerning Psalm 118. On Isaiah the Prophet. A.

Aith (Ajat): condemnation.

Aelamitae: Despising, or compared.

Asaph: gathering.

Arran: Anger, or being angry.

Ane: Is he agitated?

Ava (Ana): Injustice.

Adramelech: A proper kingdom, or a proper king.

Aserdan: Bond of the skin, whether by judgment or execution.

Achor: Disturbance, or tumult, or perversion.

B.

Barachia: Blessed be the Lord Bosra: in tribulation/trouble/distress.

Baladan: Coming to judge her.

Bel: Age, or without.

C.

Citiorum (Cethim): Of the cutters, or of the completion of wounds.

Carthaginis: Investigation.

Cyro: To the heir.

Two names, which follow, must be read with aspiration.

Chalane: all.

Chelciau: My part is the Lord's.

D.

Dimaon (Dibon): enough for them to mourn.

Deseth: Stepping or anointing.

Dodanim: Cousins.

E.

Emmanuel: God is with us.

Eleale: To ascent, or climb up.

Eglaim: Calves, or young heifers.

Ezaon: vision.

Tria nomina: What follows must be drawn out through an extensive letter.

Elamitae: Their lithology, whether compared or despised.

Elim: Ram, or falling short.

Epha: Resolved, or pouring out.

F.

Facee: opening.

Fud: Put on/ Dress.

G.

Gebim: Ditches.

Gozam: Their nut.

I.

Returning to Jas.

Jaas (Jassa): Half, or it was.

Joach: Whose brother it is: but better confessing, or glorifying.

Jerusalem: Vision of peace.

L.

Laisa: lion.

LuuH: Jawbones or cheeks.

Lud: useful, or declining, or would that.

M.

Madian: Injustice.

Magro: To the throat or from the throat.

Machmas: taxes on estates, or on touch.

Madabena: From his pasture.

Memphis: From the mouth.

Marodach: Bitter regret, or impudence.

Mosoch: seizing.

N.

Nabao: Prophecy, or the coming ones.

Nemrim: Of leopards or apostates.

Nineve: Pregnant, or the seed of beauty, or beautiful.

Nasarach: Soft sprout, or you of death.

Nabo: Session, or arrival.

O.

Ozia: Strength of the Lord.

Oronim: Hole of sorrow.

R.

Ramelia: High of the Lord.

Reseph: λιθόστρωτον.

Rabba: Many, or a multitude.

S.

Sorec: The best, or chosen.

Sicera: Drunkenness.

Seraphim: burning or setting on fire.

Siloa: Sent.

Sion: watchtower.

Sabaoth: Of armies, or virtues, or military matters.

Samariam: I will keep watch over them.

Suphir: Void.

Sabama: Taking altitude.

Sargan: First of the garden.

Sobnam: sitting, or returning.

Sisaim (Sabaim): Going out.

Saroa: Ruler of sorrow, or singing sadness.

Sarusar: Prince of affliction, whether elation.

Sabaim: captives.

Sabe: captivity.

T.

Tabeel: Good God.

Tanis: Commanding humble things.

Z.

Zacharia: Memory of the Lord. On Hosea the Prophet. B.

Beer: My well, or in the light.

Baalim: in high places, or having, or men.

D.

Dehelaim: palate.

I.

Jotham: The consummation, or perfection, of the Lord.

Jezrael: Seed of God.

Jarib (Jarim): Judging or avenging.

Jerebeel: Judgment of God or deciding judge above.

M.

Maamad: Desirable.

O.

Osee: saving, or saved.

On: Uselessness, or pain, or injustice.

S.

Salmana: Consummated or perfect.

Saboim: station, or those standing. On Amos. A.

Amos: Strong, or robust, or tearing people away.

Accareu: Pastures of the flock, whether in pastures, which in Greek is called ποιμαίνουσιν.

Amesia fortis Domini: or lifting the people.

G.

Gaza: His strength.

Gog: roof, that is, a covering.

M.

Malchon: Our king.

R.

Rephan: Your bill or your rest.

S.

Sarphath: Fire.

T.

Theman: south wind.

Thecue: trumpet, or horn, or percussion: which the Greeks call κρουσμήν. On Micah. A.

Achaz: You understand, or holding.

Anacim: Refusing humility or Rejecting humility.

M.

Micha: Who is here?

Morasthi: My heir.

N.

Nemrod: Apostate. On Joel. F and I Fetuel: Width of God, or God opening.

Joel: Beginning, or is of God. On Obadiah. Abdia: Servant of the Lord. On Jonah. A and I Amathi: My truth, or my faithful one.

Jona: Dove, or grieving.

Joppe: Beauty. On Nahum. E, N and S Elcesaei: lawyers.

Ninive (Ninere): Beautiful.

Nahum (Al. Naum): Comforter.

Senam: Abundance.

Saraphad: fire. On Habakkuk. Ambacuc: Hugging. On Zephaniah. A, G and S Amaria: With the Lord speaking.

Godalia: Magnified is the Lord, or magnificent.

Sophonia: Hiding him. On Haggai. A, I, S and Z.

Aggaeus: Festive, or solemn.

Josedec: The Lord is righteous, whether justified or not.

Salathiel: Seeking the Lord, or request of the Lord.

Zorobabel: Leader or master of Babylon, either a foreign translation or of Babylonian origin. On Zechariah. A, C, R and S.

Addo: Servant, or his witness, or his strength.

Asael: The act of God.

Ananeel: Grace of God.

Chaseleu: His hope.

Ragom: Winter, or a great wrongdoing.

Rama: lofty/tall/high.

Sabat (Al. Sabbath): Scepter or rod.

Sedrach (Hadrach): My handsome. On Malachi. E, M and T.

Elia: God the Lord.

Malachi: My angel.

Thesbites: Captivating. On Jeremiah the Prophet. A.

Anatoth: Response, or responding sign, or obedience.

Amon: Faithful, or nourishing, or a burden.

Achbor: mouse.

Anania: Grace dissipated, or grace of God.

Azor: Assisted.

Amasia: The work of God.

Anameel: To whom God has given.

Asedemoth: Fields or suburbs.

Ananeel: Grace of God.

Azecha: Closed with a bolt or sturdy.

Abania: By the grace of the father.

Ania: Grace of the Lord, or giving Lord.

Abdiel: Serving God.

Abdemelech: Servant of the king.

Asa: Invoice.

Aphrec: Madness from outside, or a dissolute and chaotic life.

Azan (Esai): His strength.

Aroer: Drowned, but better off than the mice.

Alasa: Triple, or persevering.

Ahi (Hai): The question, or the valley, or he/she/it lives.

Arphath: healing.

Aschenez: Fire thus sprinkled.

Amuthal: Heated dew.

Avil (Evilmerodach): Foolish, senseless.

B.

Buz: Despised, or contempt.

Baruch: Blessed.

Baalis. (Baalim): Having a man.

Baasa: The coming act.

Bosor (Bosra): Tribulation.

Bel: Antiquity.

C.

Cariathiarim: City of forests, or woods.

Colaia (Colias): A voice was made.

Cedron: Sadness, mourning, or pain.

Cariatham: Their city or town.

Carioth: Encounter of the sign. So far, we have read it with the letter C alone; from now on, it must be pronounced with aspiration added.

Chelcia (Helcia): Part of the Lord.

Chabonim: A hand, or a pile of thorns; but better preparations, although most Hebrews think it means a loaf or a cake.

Chamoam: Similar to them.

Charmamos (Charchamis): A gathered lamb, or knowledge, like a shoot.

Chamos: gathered.

D.

Dedan: This judgment, or such a judgment.

Dalaia: Drawing from the Lord, or the poor man of the Lord.

Dibon: Understanding enough.

Deblathaim: Their palaces.

Enom: Behold these things, whether they are.

Elnathan: to the giver, or the one adding, or the gift of God.

Elasa: To be done.

Ezriel: Helped by God.

Esebon: Thought of sorrow.

Until now we have read through the short letter "E"; from now on, let's read through the entire alphabet.

Elam: Opposed, or rejected, or composed.

Elisama: My God, hear me.

Efai: My defection.

Elisamae: With the lord listening.

Elom (Helon): Army of strength.

F.

Fesor: Bone of darkness.

Fathures: Deceived, trodden down, or a confirmed crumb.

Farao necho: prepared dissipating.

G.

Gamaria: The Lord rewards, or he finishes.

Garab: scabies, or many dwellings.

Gamuel (Beth-Gamul): Recompense.

I.

Jeremia: High of the Lord.

Jechonia: Preparation of the Lord, or thus made.

Jezonia: Listening to the Lord.

Jegdalian (Jegedelias): Magnificent Lord.

Joachal: Strong and brave.

Jeraia: Fearing the Lord.

Jonathan: The Lord gave the gift or the dove.

Juchal potens.: Carpe diem.

Joanam: He was giving, or a gift of the Lord.

Jazer: Helped.

M.

Mesaia: The deed of the Lord.

Morethi (Morasthi): My heir.

Moloch: king.

Matthanna (Matthan): Gift and present.

Melchia: My king.

Masepha: Speculation, or contemplation.

Magdalo: Magnificence or tower.

Mephaath: The rush of water.

Maon (Beth-Maon): dwelling.

Melcham: Their king.

Marodach: Bitter regret or shamelessness.

Medon: measuring.

N.

Neeleamites: An inheritance of someone.

Neria: The light of the Lord.

Nathania: The gift of the Lord, or the Lord has given.

Nergel: The light of the heap.

Nabusabaru (Nabusezban): trampled time.

Nechao: Prepared is he.

O.

Omre (Emmer): Word. Except for this name, the next four must be read with a long vowel.

Ophaz: obrizum. However, it is a type of gold which the Greeks call κτ■■■v.

Ojadae (Jojada): His knowledge, whether he himself knows it, or by the Lord's knowledge.

Osai: It will save me.

Oronaim: Hole of grief.

R.

Rechab: Four-horse chariot, or rising.

Rabsaris: chief eunuch.

Rabmag: Leader of food.

Rablatha: Many of these, or much of that.

S.

Sedecia: The justice of the Lord.

Sior: A new or troubled firmament.

Sor: Strong, or rock, or Tyre.

Sesac: Fine linen bag or bag's handle.

Selom: Translated, or restoring.

Samaia: Hearing the Lord.

Saphane: His lip.

Salom: rewarding, whether peaceful.

Sephela: Lowly or rural.

Selemia: Returning to the Lord.

Saraia: He was the leader.

Saphatia: The Lord judges.

Sarasar: Prince of tribulation.

Samagar (Semegarnabu): Name of a stranger.

Sarsachim: Leader of the corpse, or ruin.

Saphan: Grasshopper, hare, or hedgehog, or their lips.

Sabama: Raising high.

Segon (Seon): Useless talk.

T.

Taphnas: Mad mouth of a serpent, or a hidden symbol. The two names that follow the letter T should be read with an added aspiration.

Thoph (Thopheth): Gehenna, or danger of the mouth.

Thaamath (Thanehumeth): He gave indignation, or anger. On Daniel. A.

Asfanez: Tamer of horses.

Anania: Grace of God.

Abdenago: The servant is silent.

Amalar: The leader said.

Arioch: Reducing to solitude.

Assuerus: His courtyard or happiness.

Astiage: Will or plan of festivity.

Ambacum: Embracing them, or taking them up.

Artaxerxes: Seeking light in silence.

B.

Balthasar: Hair of the head.

Bari: In exchange, whether in a well or in the stomach.

Bel: Age.

D.

Dura: speaking.

E.

Elam: Secular or eternal.

F.

Forthommim: The perfect division of a glorious people. And about this, what seems to us, we have spoken more fully in the books of Hebrew Questions.

I.

Joachim: Whose is the preparation, or the Lord's preparation.

Jezechiel: Strong of God, or grasp God.

Jezania: His ear, or listening to the Lord.

Jobad: Enemy, even if he is a father.

Isimoth: He will bring about death.

Isar: Unchanged, or small.

Jezael: It is a journey.

In: It was, or measurement.

M.

Misael: What is the salvation of the Lord?

Misac: Who is laughing? Perhaps out of joy.

Mane: He counted.

Michael: Who is like God?

P.

Persae: Attempting.

S.

Susanna: A lily, or its grace.

Sennaar: Pulling out teeth.

Sidrach: My graceful/decorous one.

Susis: Riding, or returning.

V.

Ulai: Mire, from a marsh, not from a stake: either a pain of the thigh, or of the eyes. On Ezekiel. A.

Azur: Assisted/helped.

Accherethi (Cheretim): Killing, or demolishing.

Assurim: Fire of illuminations.

Aran: (Haran), anger, or angry.

Aun: Useless, or an idol.

Ainagallim: Fountain, or the calf's eye.

Azara: Foundation/ground.

Auran: Anger or Wrath.

Ariel: Lion of God.

Aser: Happiness.

Asemel: The silence of circumcision.

Achal: Everything.

Aradii: Depositions.

Aelamitae: placed, or brought together, or presented.

B.

Buzi: Despised or contempt.

Banaia: The building of the Lord.

Berotha: His wells.

Baalmeon: humble descent.

Bagazin: Despised on high.

Bubastus: Bone, or the lip of experience.

Beth: Daughter, or measurement.

C.

Cariathim: Their city.

Cedar: Sad, or darkness.

Cades: Changed.

Cur: Frost.

Until now we have read through the letter C simply; from now on it must be pronounced with aspiration added.

Chobar: Weight, or gravity, or according to the chosen.

Chodehod (ms. Chodoch): Carthaginians.

Channa (Chene): Estate, or preparation.

Chalamad: He completed, or he measured.

Chaldaei: Like udders, or like wild beasts, or like demons.

Cherethim: arranging: for which they have better διατιθεμενοι in Greek.

Chennor: Recognition of light, or lyre.

Cherchoro: Known removal.

Chelbon: Of milk.

Chalamar: All bitterness.

Chomor: lacerations.

D.

Deblatha: Palaces.

Diospolis (Alexandria): Refusing - but better in Greek, the city of Zeus.

E.

Esemel: Electrum. (It means "amber" or "alloy of gold and silver".) Elisa: To the island, or God the savior.

Elbon: Strong with fortitude, or the strength of God.

Ethalon: Beginnings of grief.

Ezer (Azur): Strength or help.

Emmer: Speech, or word.

Eschani (Chene vel Chanaan): Dwelling in contempt.

Elisee: This belongs to God, or it belongs to the salvation of God. So far, we have read through brief letters; from here on, let us read through the extensive elements.

Enaggalim: Spring, or eye of the calves.

Elam: Eternal, or age, or their stone.

Epha: measure.

Engaddi: Eye, or the spring of a goat.

Enom: Fountain of strength.

F.

Felethia: The safety of the Lord.

Fut: Libya.

Fennag nutus.: Fide, sed cui vide.

Fares: scattering.

Facud: Visited, or visiting.

G.

Gazae: treasury, or its strength.

Gog: roof.

Gomor: Completion, or perfection, or sale.

Galati: rolling.

Galilaea: rolling, or having transmigrated.

I.

Jezechiel: The strength of God.

Jezoma: His ear.

In: measurement.

Job: Idle/Inactive.

Ir: watchful.

L.

Lydi: born.

M.

Maalmeon (Beelmaon): They have had a dwelling, or about a dwelling.

Mesecin (Mosoch): Madmen, or those who are dragging.

Magog: What roof? Or about the roof.

Megia: Scorn.

Machalaim: Their completion.

Magdol: magnitude, or tower.

Magalim: Transmigrations, or colonies.

Manaim: From rest.

N.

Noe: Rest.

O.

Oola: tent.

Ooliba: My tent is in it.

Oepha: heat or tide. So far we have read through the short letter O, from now on we must read through the lengthy one.

Ozan: He/she/it went away.

Oram. (Haran) irati.: Salve, mundo!

Ophar: Flying.

Osia: The health of the Lord.

On: Pain, or sorrow.

R.

Rabbath: multitude.

Raama: Thunder.

Rodii: Vision of judgment.

Ramoth: Vision of death.

Regma: Some malice.

S.

Semel: an idol. And it should be noted that the Latin word in the Hebrew volumes is from similitude, whence they are also called simulacra.

Saphan: It means "hedgehog, or hare, or its lip."

Sela: His umbrella/shade.

Semoth: Names.

Sanir: Take the novelty, or the tooth of the lamp.

Soene (Syenes): Its circuit, or experienced.

Seim: Going out.

Sodada: His side: to be understood from the flank, not from the width.

Sabaarim: To go around the mountains.

Saffirus: Beautiful, excellent.

Sua: Savior.

Sais: Temptation.

Safarim: Books, or historical.

Sonam: Their livestock, or their teeth.

T.

Tanis: Humble command.

Taphnas: The gaping mouth of a serpent: it should be understood as from the mouth, not from the bone. Except for these two words, the others should be pronounced with an aspiration.

Thelabim: Scattered. And about this, in the books of Hebrew Questions, we have said more fully what seems to us.

Thammuz: Consummating, or contemptuous, and furthermore it is fully stated in the same books.

Theraphim: Figures.

Thubal: Carrying, or will be carried, or having been carried.

Thogorma: Pulling, or the habitation of someone.

Thaphnes: Hidden sign.

Thicon: middle.

Thav: consummation.

Thasoph: Watchtower.

Thobel: All, or vanity.

Themora: Consummation of bitterness.

Z.

Zarda: alienated greatly. On Job. A.

Ausitidi: To the mediator. And moreover, regarding this matter, we have said in the books of Hebrew Questions.

Asom: silent or bone-like.

Adad (Ibid): Cousin or witness.

B.

Baldad: Age alone.

Barachel: Blessing of God.

Buzites: Contemptible.

Barad (Ibid.): Hail.

Barachel: He blessed God.

Buzi: He/she/it despised me.

D.

Dennaba (Ibid.): making a judgment.

Eliphaz: Contempt of God.

Elio: My God, this one, or God the Lord.

G.

Gabis: The height of confusion, or stone-throwers.

Gethan: They approached them.

I.

Job: Sorrowful.

L.

Leviathan: Their addition.

M.

Mazuroth: Zodiac, that is, the signs of the horoscope.

N.

Naamathites: Moving death.

Naamathi: Beauty.

O.

Oophar: flying.

Ophir: Weakness.

R.

Raam: Vision, or much.

Raphaim: giants, or doctors.

Rathamim: Juniper.

Ram: high.

S.

Saucacorum (Σαυχακων): Songs.

Sophar: The destruction of the spying, or the one destroying the spy, or I will see the spy.

Saba: Conversion or captivity.

Sechui (Suhites): Variety.

Satan: Adversary.

Sui: Speaking.

Senech: cymbal.

T.

Topazium: good.

New Testament On Matthew A.

Abraham: Father seeing the people.

Aminadab: My people are willing.

Abia: Father Lord.

Asa: lifting, or raising.

Aazia (Ozias): Seizing the Lord, or the strength of the Lord, or His fortitude.

Aaz (Achaz): Take hold.

Amon: Faithful or nourishing; but if it begins with the letter Aleph: and if it is written with Ain, it is interpreted as loaded.

Abiu: That is my father, or he is my father.

Azur: Assisted.

Archelaus: Recognizing lion.

Amen: Truly, or faithfully.

Andreas: Graceful, or responding to food.

Alphaeus: Fugitive, but better as a soldier, or learned.

Amora: Wise people, or enlightenment of the people.

Abel: Vapor, either grief, or vanity.

Acheldama: Field of blood. It's Syriac, not Hebrew.

B.

Booz: Where lies strength, whether in the thing itself or in strength alone: but better in strength.

Bartholomaeus: Son of the water bearer, or son of the one who hangs me. It is a Syrian name, not Hebrew.

Bethsaida: House of fruits, or house of hunters.

Barjona: son of a dove. Syrian mother and Hebrew father. For he is called "son" in the Syriac language and "dove" in both languages.

Bethphage: The house of the valleys, or the house of the cheek. It is Syrian, not Hebrew. Some people think it is called the house of the jaws.

Bethania: The house of affliction, or the house of obedience.

Barachia: Either blessed be the Lord, or the blessing of the Lord.

Barabban: The son of our master. He is Syrian, not Hebrew.

C.

Caiphas: Investigator, or astute, but better at spewing forth words.

Codrantes: Fog, or darkness. Which we call through the letter Q the quadrant.

Corbana: Oblation.

Cananaeus: Possession, or ownership.

Hitherto, names have been written using the simple letter C, which the Greeks render by K; henceforth, an added aspirate is to be read with it, which they call the letter CIII.

Chanani: A negotiator, or easily moved, or even poor itself.

Chorazain: This is my mystery.

Chananaei: Traders.

D.

Diabolus: falling down - but in Greek it's called an accuser.

David: desirable - or strong by hand.

Daniel: Judgment of God, or God judges me.

E.

Esrom: He saw an arrow, or their hall.

Essai (Jesse): Islands for libation, but better, for incense. So far we have read through the short letter E; now let us read through the longer element.

Eliacim: The resurrection of God, or God resurrecting, or God will resurrect.

Eliu: This is my God, or of this my God.

Eliezer: My God, my helper.

Elia: God the Lord.

Eli Eli lama azabthani: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

F.

Fares: Division, or He/She divided.

Farisaei: Dividing, or divided.

G.

Gennesar: Rising of the princes.

Gehennam: They are from the valley, or a free valley.

Getsemani: Valley of Fatness.

Golgotha: Calvaria. It is Syrian, not Hebrew.

I.

Jesus: Savior, or about to save. In order to preserve the order of the letters, we have omitted the second aspiration in most: although grammarians do not think it should be placed as a letter.

Isaac: Laughter or joy.

Jacob: Supplanter, or one who supplants.

Judas: Confessing or praising.

Josaphat: He who is judging, but better, the Lord will judge.

Joram: Where is the lofty one, or who is the lofty one, but he will be uplifted better.

Jotham: Completed, or perfect.

Jezecia: The Lord is strong, or the Lord will strengthen.

Josia: Where is the incense of the Lord, or in what is the incense of the Lord, or the salvation of the Lord: the power and strength of the Lord can be called.

Jechonias: Preparing, or preparation of the Lord.

Joiachim: Where is the preparation? Or the preparation of the Lord.

Jojacim: The resurrection of the Lord, or the Lord who raises up.

Joseph: He placed, or placing beside.

Jerusalem: The vision of peace, or he shall fear perfectly.

Jeremias: The height of the Lord.

Joannan: To whom is grace, even the grace of the Lord.

Isaia: The salvation of the Lord.

Isarioth: The memorial of the Lord: but if we want to read Issacharoth, it is translated, he/she/it is his/her/its reward. It can also be said as the memory of death.

Jericho: The smell of it, whether of the moon.

We have the letter K as redundant, and apart from the Kalends, we express everything with C, hence it is consequently omitted here.

L.

Lebbaeus: The figurative name from the heart, which we can call the diminutive "little heart".

M.

Manasse: Forgetful.

Matthan: Gift, or given.

Mariam: Most people consider it to be interpreted, these enlighten me, or illuminators, or the myrrh of the sea, but it does not seem to me at all. It is better, however, to say that she sounds like the

star of the sea, or the sea of bitterness: and it should be known that Mary, in Syrian language, is called lady Matthaëus: once given.

Magedda: His apples, or his message.

Magdalene: Tower, but better so that someone from a mountain is called mountainous, so someone from a tower should be called turrensis.

N.

Naason: Some people think that the sound of nest must be interpreted, but it is better, predicting, that it is a serpent of theirs.

Nazareth: Flower, or its twigs, either cleanness, or apartness, or guarded. It is written not with the letter Z, but with the Hebrew letter Sade, which does not sound like either S or Z.

Nazoreus: world.

Nephthali: Discrete, or separate or wrap me.

O.

Obed: Servant.

Osanna: "Salvifica," which is said in Greek, means "save us indeed." Both names, however, are to be read with the letter "O" extended.

R.

Raama: Lofty, or exalted.

Rachel: Sheep, or seeing God.

Raab: Broad, or expanded.

Rachab: Ascending, or roused, or seeing.

Ruth: Hastening.

Raabam: The momentum of the people.

Raca: Empty.

Rabbi: My teacher. He is Syrian.

Ramatham: High for them, or lofty to them.

S.

Salman: Perceptible or sensation.

Salomon: He will be peaceful or pacified.

Salathiel: My request to God.

These three names are written with "Sin": the other two have "Sade" at the beginning.

Sadoc: Justified, or just.

Sidona: Hunt.

T.

Thamar: Palm, or bitter.

Thomas: Abyss, or twin: hence also called in Greek Didymus. Thare, feeding or pasture.

Z.

Zare: The east, or it has risen.

Zorobabel: The master of Babylon himself, that is, of confusion.

Zabulon: Dwelling: it can also be called the substance of a dwelling.

Zebedaeus: Endowed, or flowing this.

Zacharia: Memory of the Lord, or remembrance of the Lord.

Zachaeus: Justified, or just, or to be justified, is Syrian, not Hebrew.

Mark

A and I.

Arrimathaeus: His height, or he himself, is exalted.

Abba: Father. He is a Syrian, not a Hebrew.

Idumaea: Red or earthly.

Israel: A man seeing God: but better: upright of the Lord.

C and S.

Cenna: Zelotes: Hence in another place [he] is called a Cananaean, in another a Zealot.

Salome: peaceful.

T.

Tyro: Distress. Indeed, in the Hebrew language, tyrus is called sor, which is translated into our language, distress.

Tiberius: His vision, or his goodness.

Talitha cumi: Girl, get up. It is morning.

Tracontidis: business of sorrow.

Luke

A.

Aepheta: To open.

Augusti: Standing solemnly, or adding solemnity.

Abilenes: mourning.

Abia: Father Lord.

Aaron: Their Mountain.

Anna: His grace.

Aser: Blessed, or he will be blessed.

Amos: It was burdening, or it burdened.

Agge (Nagge): Celebration.

Addai (Addi): Robust: a violently formed name from what is said, Saddai.

Arfaxad: Healing the devastation.

Adam: Man, whether earthly or native.

Ammaus: The people are abject.

C.

Caesar: Main possession.

Cyreniu: Heir - which is better expressed by us, and more truly with the letter Q, so that it is said Quirinus.

Cosam: divining.

Cainam: Grief or mourning.

Capharnaum: Field, or country house of consolation.

E.

Eseli (Hesli): My neighbor.

Eber: Transit.

Enoch: Dedication.

Enos: man.

Thus far we have read briefly through the letter E; henceforth let us read through the element at length.

Erodes: Glorious fur garment.

Elisabe: The fullness of my God, or the oath of my God, or the seventh.

Eli: Ascending.

Elmadadi (Elmadan): The measure of my God.

Er: Watching, or a watch.

Enam: Their eyes.

Elisae: The salvation of my God.

F.

Fanuel: The face of God.

Fasee: Passover, which we celebrate, is a passing over or a transgression.

Falec: Sharing, or divided.

Filippus: The mouth of a lamp, or the mouth of hands.

G.

Gabriel: God comforted me, or the strength of God, or my man.

Galilaea: Either changeable, or a completed transmigration, or a wheel.

Gerasenorum: Suburban or colonists in the same place.

I.

Itureae: Mountains. It is a serum.

Jordanis: Their descent, or their capture, or observing judgment.

Joni (Jona): My dove.

Jannai (Janne): Prepared.

Jojarim: The Lord is exalting, or He is exalting.

Jared: Descending, or containing, which in Greek is said ■π■κρατον.

Jona: Dove.

Joanna: The Lord is gracious, or the Lord is merciful.

Jairus: Illuminating, or illuminated.

L.

Lisania: The birth of temptation; but too violently.

Levi: Apposite.

Lamech: Lowly; some think that both the striker and the struck can resonate.

Lazarus: Assisted.

Lot: Bound, or declining, or empty.

M.

Moses: Assumption, or touching, or handling, or pressing, but better, from water.

Matthathia: gift of God, or sometimes.

Melchi: My king.

Matusala: He died, and sent.

Maallalel: Praised be God, or praising God.

Martha: Irritating, provoking: however, in Syriac speech, it is translated as lady, or ruling.

N.

Naasson: augur.

Naum: Consolation, or comforter.

Neri: My light.

Nathan: Gave, or givers.

Nahor: The light has rested.

Noe: he/she rests.

Naa (Naama) pulchra.: Ad astra per aspera.

Ninevitae: The birth of beauty, or of grace.

P.

Petrus: Recognizing.

Pontius: Declining plan.

Pilatus: The bones of a hammerman. But it must be known that the letter P is not found among the Hebrews, nor is there any name that corresponds to this letter. Therefore, it should be understood as being replaced by the letter F.

R.

Ros (Resa): Head.

Ram (Aram): Sublime.

Reu: He has grazed or has been fed.

S.

Sicera: Drunkenness. For everything that can cause intoxication is called "Sicera" among the Hebrews.

Simeon: Hearing, or heard sadness.

Sedi: From my side.

Semi: Listening.

Salathiel: My request to God.

Salman: Peace.

Seruch: A strap, whether a correction, or hanging, or perfection.

Salem: He/She/It sent.

Sem: name.

Seth: placing, or placing, or placed, or cup, or germ, or resurrection.

Seraphtha: Set on fire, or the tightness of bread. The name composed of Hebrew and Syriac.

Simon: Put on mourning, or listen to sadness.

Sosanna: Lily, or its grace: but it is better if the feminine name is formed from 'lily'.

Samaritae: guards.

Sodoma: Silent grazing, or their decline, or yellowish.

Satan: Adversary, or transgressor.

Saba: captivity.

Sadducaei: justified. On John A.

Aenon: Eye, or source of their being.

Anani: He/She/It gave to me.

B.

Banereem: Sons of thunder, which unrighteously Boanerges obtained.

Barsemia: A blind son, which some also read corruptly as Bartimaeus.

Beelzebub: Having flies, either consuming flies, or a man of flies. In the end, therefore, the letter B should be read, not L. For the fly is called Beelzebub.

Barabba: Son of the father.

C.

Cephas: Peter is a Syrian.

Cana: Possession, whether possessed.

E.

Ephraim: Fertile or abundant; whom we cannot call anything but Augentius from augmenting.

M and N.

Messia: Anointed, that is, Christ.

Manna: What is it?

Nazareth: cleanliness.

S.

Saalim: fists, or armlets, or fountains of water, which is briefly called in Greek βραχίοντα.

Sichar: Conclusion or branch. However, corrupted in place of Shechem, which is transferred over the shoulders, so that it might be read as Sychar, the usage prevailed.

Siloe: Sent. On the Acts of the Apostles A.

Andreas: Lying in wait, or responding to food, but this is violent. It is better, however, that according to Greek etymology it be called virile, that is, from a man.

Alphaeus: Thousandth, or over the mouth, not from the bone.

Acheldama: Field of blood. It is a syrup.

Aegyptus: Darkness, or tribulations.

Arabes: Lowly, or rural.

Annas: giving.

Alexander: Taking away the distress of darkness; but even this is violent.

Ananias: Grace of the Lord.

Amos: Powerful or strong: however, if it begins with the letter aleph and ends in sade; but if it starts with ain and ends in nun, it is transferred to a people that will tear apart.

Azotus: It is called "esdod" in Hebrew, and according to its original etymology, it means "fire of the father's brother."

Ascalon: Mad fire, or ignoble fire.

Aeneas: Responding, either poor, or in misery.

Agabus: Announcement, or announcement of trouble; but even this is violent.

Attalia: His time, a better decline of the lord.

Amphipolis: The people falling prostrate with their mouths.

Apollonia: Their discipline or synagogue; but even this is violent.

Athenienses: Scouts, or responders, or humble, or overwhelmed by time; but this also is violent.

Arios pagos: The first solemnity: but this is also violent; since it bears the name of the Athenian court, which took its name from Mars.

Aquila: Suffering, or giving birth.

Achaia: Working sister.

Apelles: Gathering them. Violent.

Artemis: That is, Diana, causing sicknesses. Violent.

Aristarchus: Raising a crown.

Antipatridem: Praise of the giver. Violent.

Agrippa: Suddenly assembling.

Adrumetina: Dividing loftily. Violent.

Adrias: Containing bad things, or a place of bad things. Violent.

Appii forum: Free or strong richness. Violent.

B.

Bartholomaeus: The son of the one hanging water, or as above.

Barsaban: A returning son or a son of rest: a name composed of Syriac and Hebrew.

Barnabas: Son of a prophet, or son of one coming, or as most think, son of consolation.

Blastum: Having profit/gain.

Berieu: Witchcraft, or in evil. Some read corruptly in Bari.

Bithynia: Beautiful daughter, whether useless.

Beroea: His son. He is a Syrian.

Berenice: Elegantly, either stirred or chosen, or innocent son: composed of Syrian and Hebrew.

C.

Cappadocia: By hand redeemed to the Lord. Violent.

Cirenae: heir.

Creta: Of vocation, or of the called. Between the Syrian and the Hebrew.

Caiphas: Investigator, or keen-scented, or vomiting with the mouth.

Cyprius: Sadness, or grief.

Cyrenenses: heirs.

Cilicia: Gathering, or mourning, or assumption, or vomiting of it.

Caesarea: possession of the prince.

Candacis: Changed.

Cornelius: Understanding circumcision.

Claudius: Hope of tranquility.

Cis: A man who vomits, or is hard.

Coloniā: Their revelation, or their voice.

Corinthum: Their conversation, when Greeks call it more significantly "politeia", means "the administration of the state."

Crispus: knowing, or recognizing.

Cenchreas: possessing followers.

Co (Chius): Excuse or waiting.

Cnidos (Gnidus): Departure of the mind.

Cauden (Cauda): Return, or detention, or sound. With few exceptions, almost everything has been forcefully interpreted from the letter C.

D.

David: Desirable, or strong by hand.

Damascus: Cup of blood.

Derben: The son of his generation, or the one who speaks.

Dionysius: judged, or vigorously fleeing.

Damaris: Silent head.

Demetrius: Strongly threatening or pursuing too much.

Derbaeus: Loquax, or as above.

Drusilla: Peaceful race/species.

Dioscuri: Beautiful for covering. However, they are the twin Castor.

E.

Elaeonis (■λαϊ■νος): That is, the Mount of Olives, which interprets as divinity, or those laboring.

Elamitae: Objected, opposed, or despised.

Ebraei: Passersby.

Emor: An ass, if spelled with an h, but if with an aleph, it is called loquacious.

Elimas: To transgression, or making to transgress.

Ermes: Anathema of grief.

Erastus: My brother, seeing: a sufficiently absurd metaphorical term.

Ellada: To knowledge, or ascent, or the knowledge of God. But in the Syrian language it is said above this.

Ellenon: That is, of the Greeks, to the ascendants, or the knowledge of God.

Ephesum: My will is in it, or their end.

Eutyches: Mad. Furthermore, in Greek it is said fortunate.

Ebraice: transiently.

Eurietion: Mixing, or leading downward. The following two names must be read with the extended letter E.

Erodes: Skin is glory.

Esaias: The health of the Lord: but in Hebrew, it takes its beginning from the letter I.

F.

Filippus: Mouths of lamps.

Frigia: the cutting of the chest.

Farisaei: Divided.

Farao: stripping him, or scattering him Foenicis: They nodded, or gave a signal.

Fisidiam: They make that sound because, as I said above, they don't have the letter P - that's why they say Pisidia with an F.

Felicem: Making ruin, or fear of it. It's a Latin name.

Festum: By the mouth of many: and this Latin name is violently depicted in Hebrew.

G.

Galilaei: Rolling or revolving.

Gamaliel: Retribution of God.

Gaza: His strength: The letter G has been added: Indeed, it is written in Hebrew with an Ayin.

Gallionis: transporting.

Galatiam: magnificent, or translated.

Gaium: Stirred up, but better Vallesian.

I.

Jerosolyma: Vision of peace.

Joannes: In it is grace, or the grace of the Lord.

Joseph: Increased.

Justus: Either sparing, or raised up himself.

Joel: From the beginning, there is God, or He is God.

Jonatha: Giving dove, or coming dove.

Joppe: beauty.

Italica: Departure of the mind.

Jesar (Jesse): Offering of islands.

Jasonis: Of one who desires, or who has given a mandate.

Julium: beginning.

Iconium: Preparation or consolation.

L.

Libyam: coming, or entrance: in plural number.

Levites: Added.

Libertinorum: Making chaff.

Lydda: Utility.

Lucius: He himself raising up.

Lycaonia: To stir up.

Lystra: Generating decorum.

Lydia: As for what we can say, it means destroyed. Furthermore, it is better called **■φελθε■σα** in Greek.

Lysias: generated.

Lyciae: Weeping.

Laissa: To health.

Almost all the words with the letter L have been violently appropriated.

M.

Matthaeum: Given.

Maria: Illuminated, or as above.

Medi: Measuring, or measured.

Mesopotamia: With a certain lofty calling: but it has a better etymology from the Greek, in that it is surrounded by two rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris.

Madian: in court, or outside of court.

Moloch: Your king: whom they are accustomed to call both Melchom.

Marcus: Exalted by command.

Manaem: fortress.

Mysia: Touching, or feeling.

Macedo: We can call him "Eastern," a figurative name from what is read in Hebrew, Meccedem.

Mitylene: Declining, or migrating.

Miletum: generating.

Mnasonem: consoling, or at rest.

Myrrha: Bitter.

Militine: Concerning weakness, or the mandate of humility.

N.

Nazoraem: World, holy, or separate.

Nicanorem: standing lamp.

Nicolaum: The folly of a languishing church.

Niger: Ascending.

Neapolim: A wonderful disturbance.

Nasson: foreseeing or predicting.

P.

Petrus: Knowing, or dissolving.

Parthi: dividing perfectly.

Pontus: Inclining.

Pamphylia: Converted from ruin, or falling division.

Pontius: Declining the plan.

Pilatus: The bones of a hammerman.

Procorum: Collecting fruit.

Parmenam: Dividing fullness.

Pascha: Transcended, or surpassed.

Paphum: falling redemption.

Parion: uncovering.

Perge: abyss.

Phytone: Mouth of the Abyss.

Priscilla: Recognizing.

Pyrrhus: Dissolving.

Patara: Separating.

Ptolemais: Bringing to measure.

Portium: dividing their hardness.

Publius: His tent.

Puteoli: Declining.

All of these names, whether Greek or Latin, violently translated according to the Hebrew language, I consider clear to the reader.

R.

Romani: Lofty, or thunderous.

Rapham (Rempham): Your invoices, or their laxity.

Rhode: Seeing, or strong.

Rhodum: A vision, or a descent.

Regium: Their pasture.

Romam: high, or thunder.

S.

Samaria: guardian or keeper.

Simonis: Obeying, or taking away sadness, or listening to mourning.

Salomon: Peaceful.

Samuel: His name is God.

Sadducaei: justified.

Saffiram: Speaking, or written, or in a book: certainly beautiful in Syriac language.

Stephanum: Your rule, or your aim, to which the spear and javelin are directed.

Sichem: Shoulders.

Sinai: Whether Sinii, or it is interpreted secondly, or as a command, and its measure, or certainly a temptation.

Saulus: The temptation of looking or satiety.

Sarona: Singing sadness.

Sidonii: Hunters.

Seleuciam: Lifting oneself up, either as an experiment of journeying or departing for a vocation.

Salaminam: The shadow of a commotion, or wave, or greeting of judgment.

Sergio: To the ruler of the valley, or garden.

Saul: Desired, or request.

Silam: Sent.

Syria: sublime according to Hebrew etymology: for in Hebrew Syria is called Aram.

Samothracia: The hearing of revelation, or response.

Sosthenes: Save them, give me joy either way.

Scaeva: Little fox crying or speaking.

Sopater: Narrating.

Secundus: lifting up.

Samus: heard.

Sicariorum: of drunkards.

Sebaste: I revolve, or am revolving; yet so that the letter Samech has the beginning.

Samonem: Name of a dwelling.

Syrtim: Narrowness, or tribulation: but Sallustius says that the name was imposed from the terrain.

Syracusae: Wall, or partition of happiness.

T.

Timonem: Counting thirst, or fatness.

Tabita: Losses or a goat.

Tyrii: Coangustati, as we said above, is declined from the Hebrew name Sor.

Troadem: rest.

Tyranni: Containing them or strengthening them.

Tertullus: Pleasing in the filth, or heap of them.

Tabernae: Their vision, or good vision.

Until now they were to be read in simple letter tau (τ), now they are to be read in Greek letter theta (θ).

Theophile: Lifting upward, or turning around; but better is the Greek etymology, from the fact that he was loved by God.

Thomas: Didymus, that is, twin, or abyss.

Theudas: Praise, or capture, or sign.

Tharsensis: Explorer of joy.

Thyatira: enlightened.

Thessalonicensium: To strengthen or to confirm the shadow of those in a hurry. On the Canonical Epistles James Abraham: The father sees a multitude.

Elia: God of the Lord.

Esaia: Health of the Lord.

Job: Magician.

Junia: Beginning.

Jason: Made on command.

Raab: expanded, enlarged Sabaoth: Of virtues, or of armies.

1 Peter

Asia: lifting up.

Bithynia: Little virgin, or daughter of the Lord.

Babylon: Confusion, or translation.

Cappadocia: Redeemed hands to the Lord.

Galatia: Transmigrating, or transferred.

Marcus: Sublime command.

Pontium: declining.

Sara: Prince or Ruler

Silvanus: Sent.

2 Peter

Balaam: Empty people, or their consumption.

Bosor: In tribulation, either fleshly or furry.

Cappadocia: Hand, redeeming the Lord.

Electe: ascending.

Galatia: Transmigrated.

Gomorrha: The fear of the people or blindness. G is added in the beginning, otherwise it is written as 'ain'.

Lot: Declining, or bound.

Marcus: Sublime in command, either polished or bitter.

Noe: Rest.

Pontus: Declining.

Paulus: Wonderful.

Sara: leader.

Simon: Hearing.

Sodomis: Yellow or silent.

Silvanus: Sent.

1 John

Cain: possession.

2 John

Diotrephes: Fair but foolish, or ornament gone mad.

Demetrius: Strong to pursue, or strong to throw down with a rod.

Gaius: Movable.

Jude

Aegyptus: Darkness, or tribulation.

Adam: Man.

Balaam: Empty people.

Cain: Possession.

Core: Baldness, or ice.

Diabolo: Flowing down, or locked up in prison (or prisons).

Enoch: Dedication.

Gomorrha: The fear of the people or blindness.

Michael: Who is like God?

Moses: Touching, or soothing.

Sodoma: The silent cattle. The Letters of the Apostle Paul To the Romans A.

Abraham: Father seeing the people.

Adam: Man, or earth-born.

Abba: Father. It is Syrian.

Achaia: Which brother? Either his brother, or the Lord's brother, or my Lord's brother.

Aquila: Sorrowful, or in childbirth.

Asia: Raised, or walking.

Andronicus: Suitable for standing (or to stand), either responding, or thinking about passion.

Ampliatius: The people (are) hammerers.

Apelles: Gathering them.

Aristobulus: Raising up offspring with sorrow.

Asyncritum: Directing the censer.

B.

Benjamin: Son of the right hand.

Baal: Holding, or devouring.

C.

Cencris: Holding followers.

D.

David: Desirable.

E.

Epineton: Worn over.

Ermen: Cursing sorrow.

Erman: Taking away or our curse.

Erastus: My brother seeing, or keeping watch.

Three names that follow are to be read with the letter H.

Hesaias: Greetings of the Lord.

Helias: God the Lord, or strong Lord.

Herodionem: fear.

F.

Farao: Uncovering him.

Foeben: Either the builder of a prayer or the son of an utterance.

Flegon: Cutting or dividing.

Filologum: Mouth foremost, or my mouth in the garden.

G.

Gomorrha: The fear of the people, or blindness.

Gaius: Mobile, or of the valley.

I.

Juda: Confessing, or glorifying.

Jesu: Savior.

Israel: A man seeing God.

Isaac: Laughter.

Jesse: Islands' offering.

Illyricus: Stranger, or perhaps an element: or certainly according to direction.

Jerusalem: Vision of peace.

L.

Lucius: He himself lifts up, or rising up.

M.

Mose: Touching or soothing.

Macedonia: eastern.

Maria: Illuminating or illuminated.

N.

Narcissus: The ascent of joy, whether dividing light or gathering.

Nereus: The lamp of the Lord.

O.

Osee: Savior.

Olympam: a birthing room.

P.

Paulus: Wonderful, or chosen.

Priscus: Recognizing.

Persidam: Trying, or failing, to break their sides.

Patrobam: Whether dissolving him or seeing him.

Q.

Quartus: Making too much noise.

R.

Rebecca: Much patience, or that which has received much.

Rufum: Healing us, or restoring us.

S.

Sara: Leader/Chief.

Sabaoth: of virtues or armies.

Sodoma: A silent herd, whether tawny or sterile.

Sion: Watchtower.

Spania: Expedition, or preparation: but more correctly it is written as Hispania.

Stachyn: making songs.

Satanas: offender, or opponent.

Sosipatrus: Saving the scattered.

T.

Triphenam: Indicating or returning.

Trifossam: Clearly.

Timotheus: beneficent.

Tertius: Joining, that is, attaching oneself.

U.

Urbanus: Rejoicing in the light.

1 Corinthians

A.

Apollo: A miracle, or gathering them.

Achaia: Some brother of mine, or my Lord brother.

Aquila: in labor or in pain.

B.

Barnabas: Son of comfort.

C.

Corinthum: citizens, or their decurions.

Cephas: Peter. He is a Syrian.

Crispum: knowing.

Chloes: Investigating, whether all [things], but better conclusion, whether perfection.

D.

Damascus: Drinking of blood.

E.

Epheso: My will is in it, or my soul is in it.

Eva: Life or misfortune.

Ebraei: Passers-by.

G.

Gaium: Agitated.

Galatia: Magnificent, or translation.

I.

Judaeis: To those confessing or praising.

Jacobo: Supplanters.

Jerusalem: Vision of peace.

M.

Moses: Touching, or soothing.

Macedonia: Eastern.

Maranatha: Our lord has come. It is Syrian.

P.

Prisca: knowing.

S.

Sosthenes: Saving in time.

Stephana: Your rule, or your lookout, or your judge.

Silvanus: Sent.

Satanas: adversary.

Sabbathum: Rest.

2 Corinthians

A.

Asia: Taking away, or going forth.

Abraham: Father seeing the multitude.

Areta: Astonishment or descent.

B.

Beliar: Blind distress or blind light, or son of transgression: but more correctly called Belial.

D.

Damascus: Drinking of blood.

E.

Eva: Disaster, or life.

Ebraei: Travelers.

I.

Israelitae: Men seeing God.

S.

Silvanus: Sent.

Satanas: Transgressor, or adversary.

T.

Troadem: rest, or wideness.

Titum: Seeking, indeed good: but better, struggling. To the Galatians A.

Arabiam: Lowly, or western.

Antiochiam: The silence of poverty.

Abraham: Father seeing the crowd.

Abba: Father. It's Syrian.

Agar: Stranger, or convert.

C.

Cilicia: Assumption, or lamentable calling.

D.

Damascus: Drinking of blood.

I.

Judaismum: confession / acknowledgement / avowal Jerosolyma: vision of peace.

Jacobo: Supplanters.

Joannes: By the grace of God, or to whom it is given.

Isaac: laughter.

Israel: A man seeing God.

P.

Petrus: dissolving, or removing calcareous matter.

S.

Syria: sublime.

Sina: His measure, whether it be trial. To the Ephesians, and to the Philippians B.

Benjamin: Son of the right hand.

C.

Clemens: Ecclesiastes, or Preacher.

E.

Epaphroditum: Fruit-bearing.

Ebraeus: Passerby.

Evodiam: Seizing the Lord.

P.

Philippenses: Mouth of lamps.

Pharisaeus: Divided.

Philippus: Bones of hands, or of lamps.

S.

Syntichen: Speech, or ■δολεσχ■α (adulescentia) as we may call it, is like a song.

T.

Thessalonicam: Hastening (or Celebration) to set up a shade. To the Colossians A.

Aristarchus: Mountain of unnecessary expenses.

Archippus: The length of the work, or the trap of the mouth, or the trap of the wide-mouthed.

B.

Barnabas: Son of consolation.

C.

Colossis: Voices made.

D.

Demas: silent.

E.

Epaphra: Fruit-bearer, or indeed a seer.

I.

Jesus: Savior.

Justus: Sparing, or himself being uplifted.

Jerapoli: To a higher judgment.

L.

Laodicia: Three things loved by the Lord, but the birth is awaited better.

Lucas: He himself rising up, or he himself lifting up.

M.

Marcus: Sublime by command, or bitter: or certainly worn out and polished.

N.

Nympham: Fastened to their mouths.

O.

Onesimo: Adorn or responding.

T.

Tychicus: Silent. To the Thessalonians A.

Achaia: My brother, whoever that may be, whether my brother or the Lord.

Athenae: at a time of dispersion.

S.

Silvanus: Sent.

Satanas: Adversary, or transgressor. To the Hebrews Abraham: The father saw the crowd.

Aegyptus: Darkness, or distress.

Aaron: Mountain of strength.

Abel: Grief.

B.

Barach: Flashing.

C.

Cain: possession.

D.

David: Desirable, whether strong in hand.

E.

Enoch: Dedication.

Esau: Red, or a heap of stones.

Ebraeus: Passerby.

F.

Farao: He revealed him, or he scattered him.

Fase: transcensus, which is interpreted as pascha.

G.

Gedeon: Experiment of injustice.

I.

Jesus: Health, or savior.

Juda: Confessing, or praising.

Isaac: Laughter.

Jacob: Supplanter.

Joseph: adding, or increase.

Jericho: The moon, or its smell.

Jepthe: He opened, or opening.

L.

Levi: Added.

M.

Moses: Touching or soothing.

Melchisedech: Righteous king.

Manna: What is that?

N.

Noe: Rest, or resting.

R.

Raab: If written through the middle letter "ain", it signifies hunger; if through "he", attack; if through "heth", width.

S.

Sabbatha: rest

Salem: Peace.

Sara: Leader/First Citizen.

Samson: Their sun.

Samuel: His name is God.

Sion: Lookout tower. On 1 Timothy A.

Alexander: Raising the distress of darkness.

Adam: man.

G.

Galatia: Translation.

Gallia: carrying.

D.

Diabolum: Flowing away, or enclosed in quarries.

E.

Ephesum: His will.

Eva: Calamity, or life, or woe.

I.

Jamnes: Marinus, or where is the sign.

Jambres: The leather sea, or the sea on the head.

O.

Onesiphorus: Responding to the narrative.

P.

Pontius: Inclining the plan/decision.

Pilatus: Mallet mouth, or crushing mouth.

S.

Satanas: Adversary.

Y Ymenaeus: Sleeping. On 2 Timothy A.

Asia: Elevation.

Archippus: The length of the work.

Aristarchus: Mountain of Excessive Billing.

Antiochia: The silence of poverty.

Aquila: Suffering or giving birth.

C.

Crescens: dark.

Carpum: Clearly knowing.

Corinthus: He arises himself.

Claudia: Hope of tranquillity.

D.

David: Desirable, or strong by hand.

Demas: Silent, whether earthly or bloody.

Dalmatiam: Great poverty.

E.

Eunice: adorning.

Evodiam: Seizing the Lord.

Ermogenes: Vomiting them in the valley: but better, searching the mountain.

Epheso: His will.

Erastus: Brother seeing.

Eubulus: Roommate.

F.

Fygelus: Meeting, or opposite.

Filonem (φελωνην vel φενλην): the face of God.

Filethus: Declining, or my mouth.

G.

Galatia: Great, or translation.

I.

Iconium: I have been called, or hard: but where is the pen?

L.

Loidi: "Having been helped," that is, that which has achieved usefulness.

Lystris: The usefulness of narrowness or tribulation.

Lucas: He himself rising up, or lifting up.

Linus: White, or musician.

M and P.

Moses: Feeling or touching.

Membranas: Open, or manifest.

Mileto: To produce, or who is his?

Priscam: Recognizing.

Pudens: Clothed with prudence.

R and T.

Roma: High, or thunderous.

Troadi: To the servant.

Trophimum: dissolving chambers. To Titus A and C.

Arteman: Cursing or disturbing.

Apollo: Wonderful.

Cretam: Consummated calling.

N and Z.

Nicopoli: The sprout of my protection.

Zenam: His disturbance, whether by moving him, or by resting himself. To Philemon A and D.

Apphia: Containing, or containment, or free.

Archippo: To the length of the work/undertaking.

Demas: Silent.

E and F.

Epaphran: We can say that it increases, or growth.

Filemoni: A wonderful gift, or certainly their bread.

O.

Onesimum: respondentem - "responding" or "answering" On Apocalypse of John A.

Asia: Elation.

Amen: Truly, whether faithfully.

Aser: Happiness, or blessed.

Aegyptus: Trouble/distress.

Armageddon: Raising the roof, or the raising up of old things; but better, a mountain out of thieves, or a rounded mountain.

Alleluia: Praise the Lord.

B.

Balaam: Empty people.

Balac: Cutting off.

Benjamin: Son of the right hand.

Babylon: Confusion, or translation.

D.

Diabolus: Flowing downward.

David: Desirable.

E and F.

Ephesum: My will, or my plan.

Euphrate: fruit-bearing.

Filadelphia: Saving the one clinging to the Lord.

G.

Gad: Temptation.

Gog: The roof; that is, the covering.

I.

Jezabel: The flow of blood, or flowing with blood; but better, where is the dung heap?

Issachar: It is the reward.

Joseph: Increasing.

Jesus: Savior.

L.

Laodicia: Three lovable things of the Lord, whether they were in vomit.

Levi: Added.

Labbadon: Losing because he is a killer; but better off alone among them.

M.

Manna: What is this?

Manasse: Forgetful or amazed.

Michael: Who is like God?

Magog: About the roof or rather, what is δ■μα?

N.

Nicolaitarum: Effusion (also outflux), or the languishing Church, or the folly of the languishing Church.

Nephthali: of the person living.

P and R.

Paulo (Apollyon): Whether the mouth of them, or the mouth of the trumpet.

Pergamo: Dividing their horns, or cleaving the valley.

Ruben: See the son, or see him in the middle.

S and Z.

Smyrnae: Their song.

Sardis: Prince of beauty.

Satanae: To the transgressor or adversary.

Simeon: They listen to sorrows.

Sodoma: To the silent cattle.

Zabulon: A dwelling of beauty. On the Epistle of Barnabas A and D.

Abraham: The father seeing the people.

Adam: Man.

Amalec: A people that licks, or a people of weevils.

David: Desirable.

E and M.

Eva: Disaster, or woe, or certainly life.

Ephraim: fruitful, or abundance.

Manasse: Forgotten.

N and R.

Naum: bud, sprout.

Rebecca: Patience.

S.

Sabbatha: Rest.

Sion: watchtower.

Sina: measurement, command, or temptation.

Satan: Adversary, or deceiver.

Prefaces On The Commentaries

The Commentaries.

Matthew.

Preface to Translation of Origen on St. Luke.

Galatians.

Ephesians.

Philemon.

Titus.

Isaiah.

Jeremiah.

Ezekiel.

Daniel.

Prefaces to the Commentaries on the Minor Prophets.

Hosea.

Joel.

Amos.

Obadiah.

Jonah.

Micah.

Nahum.

Habakkuk.

Zephaniah.

Haggai.

Zechariah.

Malachi. The Commentaries. The extant commentaries by Jerome on the books of Holy Scripture may be arranged thus, chronological sequence being observed as far as possible: a. New Testament: The Epistles to Philemon, Galatians, Ephesians, Titus. a.d. 387. Origen on St. Luke. a.d. 389. St. Matthew. a.d. 398. b. Old Testament: Ecclesiastes. a.d. 388.

1. The Twelve Minor Prophets: Nahum. Michah, Zephaniah, Haggai, Habakkuk. a.d. 392. Jonah. Begun three years after the foregoing (Preface). Finished between a.d. 395 and a.d. 397. Obadiah. a.d. 403. Zechariah, Malachi, Hoses, Joel, Amos. Finished by a.d. 406.

2. The Four Greater Prophets: Daniel. a.d. 407. Isaiah. a.d. 408-410. Ezekiel. a.d. 410-414. Jeremiah. Commenced after the death of Eustochium in a.d. 418. The commentary on this book, which stops short at chapter xxxii., was therefore written in a.d. 419, the year which intervened between Eustochium's death and Jerome's own.

We have thought it best to give the Prefaces, as in those to the Vulgate, in the order of the books as they stand in our Bible, not in the order in which they were written.

Matthew. The Preface, addressed to Eusebius of Cremona, was written a.d. 398. Eusebius was at this time starting for Rome, and he was charged to give a copy of this Commentary to Principia, the friend of Marcella, for whom he had been unable through sickness to write on the Song of Songs as he had wished. Jerome begins by distinguishing the Canonical from the Apocryphal Gospels, quoting the words of St. Luke, that many had taken in hand to write the life of Christ. He gives his view of the origin of the Gospels as follows: The first evangelist is Matthew, the publican, who was surnamed Levi. He published his Gospel in Judaea in the Hebrew language, chiefly for the sake of Jewish believers in Christ, who adhered in vain to the shadow of the law, although the substance of the Gospel had come. The second is Mark, the amanuensis of the Apostle Peter, and first bishop of the Church of Alexandria. He did not himself see our Lord and Saviour, but he related the matter of his Master's preaching with more regard to minute detail than to historical sequence. The third is Luke, the physician, by birth a native of Antioch, in Syria, whose praise is in the Gospel. He was himself a disciple of the Apostle Paul, and composed his book in Achaia and Boeotia. He thoroughly investigates certain particulars and, as he himself confesses in the preface, describes what he had heard rather than what he had seen. The last is John, the Apostle and Evangelist, whom Jesus loved most, who, reclining on the Lord's bosom, drank the purest streams of doctrine, and was the only one thought worthy of the words from the cross, "Behold ! thy mother." When he was in Asia, at the time when the seeds of heresy were springing up (I refer to Cerinthus, Ebion, and the rest who say that Christ has not come in the flesh, whom he in his own epistle calls Antichrists, and whom the Apostle Paul frequently assails), he was urged by almost all the bishops of Asia then living, and by deputations from many Churches, to write more profoundly concerning the divinity of the Saviour, and to break through all obstacles so as to attain to the very Word of God (if I may so speak) with a boldness as successful as it appears audacious. Ecclesiastical history relates that, when he was urged by the brethren to write, he replied that he would do so if a general fast were proclaimed and all would offer up prayer to God; and when the fast was over, the narrative goes on to say, being filled with revelation, he burst into the heaven-sent Preface: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: this was in the beginning with God."

Jerome then applies the four symbolical figures of Ezekiel to the Gospels: the Man is Matthew, the Lion, Mark, the Calf, Luke, "because he began with Zacharias the priest," and the Eagle, John. He then describes the works of his predecessors: Origen with his twenty-five volumes, Theophilus of Antioch, Hippolytus the martyr, Theodorus of Heraclea, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Didymus of Alexandria, and of the Latins. Hilary, Victorinus, and Fortunatianus; from these last, he says, he

had gained but little. He continues as follows: But you urge me to finish the composition in a fortnight, when Easter is now rapidly approaching, and the spring breezes are blowing; you do not consider when the shorthand writers are to take notes, when the sheets are to be written, when corrected, how long it takes to make a really accurate copy; and this is the more surprising, since you know that for the last three months I have been so ill that I am now hardly beginning to walk; and I could not adequately perform so great a task in so short a time. Therefore, neglecting the authority of ancient writers, since I have no opportunity of reading or following them, I have confined myself to the brief exposition and translation of the narrative which you particularly requested; and I have sometimes thrown in a few of the flowers of the² spiritual interpretation, while I reserve the perfect work for a future day.

Preface to Translation of Origen on St. Luke.

Addressed to Paula and Eustochium, a.d. 388. A few days ago you told me that you had read some commentaries on Matthew and Luke, of which one was equally dull in perception and expression, the other frivolous in expression, sleepy in sense. Accordingly you requested me to translate, without regarding such rubbish, our Adamantius' thirty-nine "homilies" on Luke, just as they are found in the original Greek; I replied that it was an irksome task and a mental torment to write, as Cicero phrases it, with another man's heart³ not one's own; but yet I will undertake it, as your requests reach no higher than this. The demand which the sainted Blesilla once made, at Rome, that I should translate into our language his twenty-five volumes on Matthew, five on Luke, and thirty-two on John is beyond my powers, my leisure, and my energy. You see what weight your influence and wishes have with me. I have laid aside for a time my books on Hebrew Questions because you think my labour will not be in vain, and turn to the translation of these commentaries, which, good or bad, are his work and not mine. I do this all the more readily because I hear on the left of me the raven-that ominous bird-croaking and mocking in all extraordinary way at the colours of all the other birds, though he himself is nothing if not a bird of gloom. And so, before he change his note, I confess that in these treatises Origen is like a boy amusing himself with the dice-box; there is a wide difference between his mature efforts and the serious studies of his old age. If my proposal meet with your approbation, if I am still able to undertake the task, and if the Lord grant me opportunity to translate them into Latin after completing the work I have now deferred, you will then be able to see-aye, and all who speak Latin will learn through you-how much good they knew not, and how much they have now begun to know. Besides this, I have arranged to send you shortly the Commentaries of Hilary, that master of eloquence, and of the blessed martyr Victorinus, on the Gospel of Matthew. Their style is different, but the grace of the Spirit which wrought in them is one. These will give you some idea of the study which our Latins also have, in former days, bestowed upon the Holy Scriptures.

Galatians. The Commentary is in three books, with full Prefaces.

Book I., Ch. i. 1-iii. 9.

Addressed to Paula and Eustochium, a.d. 387. The Preface to this book begins with a striking description of the noble Roman lady Albina, which is as follows:

Only a few days have elapsed since, having finished my exposition of the Epistle of Paul to Philemon, I had passed to Galatians, turning my course backwards and passing over many

intervening subjects. But all at once letters unexpectedly arrived from Rome with the news that the venerable Albina has been recalled to the presence of the Lord, and that the saintly Marcella, bereft of the company of her mother, demands more than ever such solace as you can give, my dear Paula and Eustochium. This for the present is impossible on account of the great distance to be traversed by sea and land, and I could, therefore, wish to apply to the wound so suddenly inflicted at least the healing virtue of Scripture. I know full well her zeal and faith; I know how brightly the fire burns in her bosom, how she rises superior to her sex, and soars so far above human nature itself, that she crosses the Red Sea of this world, sounding the loud timbrel of the inspired volumes. Certainly, when I was at Rome, she never saw me for ever so short a time without putting some question to me respecting the Scriptures, and she did not, like the Pythagoreans, accept the "Ipse dixit" of her teacher, nor did authority, unsupported by the verdict of reason, influence her; but she tested all things, and weighed the whole matter so sagaciously that I perceived I had not a disciple so much as a judge. And so, believing that my labours would be most acceptable to her who is at a distance, and profitable for you who are with me here, I will approach a work unattempted by any writers in our language before me, and which scarcely any of the Greeks themselves have handled in a manner worthy of the dignity of the subject.

Jerome then speaks of Victorinus, who had published a commentary on St. Paul, but "was busily engaged with secular literature and knew nothing of the Scriptures," and of the great Greek writers, Origen,⁴ Didymus, and⁵ Appolinaris. Eusebius of Caesarea, and Theodorus of Heraclea, and says he has plucked flowers out of their gardens, so that the Commentary is more theirs than his. The expository part of the Preface is chiefly remarkable as giving the view of St. Paul's rebuke of St. Peter in Galatians ii., which occasioned the controversy between Jerome and Augustin. Jerome says:

Paul does not go straight to the point, but is like a man walking in secret passages: his object is to exhibit Peter as doing what was expedient for the people of the circumcision committed to him, since, if a too sudden revolt took place from their ancient mode of life, they might be offended and not believe in the Cross; he wished, moreover, to show, inasmuch as the evangelisation of the Gentiles had been entrusted to himself that he had justice on his side in defending as true that which another only pretended was a dispensation. That wretch Porphyry⁶ Bataneotes by no means understood this, and, therefore, in the first book of the work which he wrote against us, he raised the objection that Peter was rebuked by Paul for not walking uprightly as an evangelical teacher. His desire was to brand the former with error and the latter with impudence, and to bring against us as a body the charge of erroneous notions and false doctrine, on the ground that the leaders of the Churches are at variance among themselves. In the Preface to Book II. Jerome describes the origin of the Galatians as a Gaulish tribe settled in Asia; but he takes them as slow of understanding, and says that the Gauls still preserve this character, just as the Roman Church preserves the character for which it was praised by St. Paul, for it still has crowds frequenting its churches and the tombs of its martyrs, and "nowhere else does the Amen resound so loudly, like spiritual thunder, and shake the temples of the idols"; and similarly the traits of the churches of Corinth and Thessalonica are still preserved; in the first, the looseness of behaviour and of doctrine, and the conceit of worldly knowledge; in the second, the love of the brethren side by side with the disorderly conduct of busybodies. And he speaks of the condition of Galatia in his own day as follows:

Any one who has seen by how many schisms Ancyra, the metropolis of Galatia, is rent and torn, and by how many differences and false doctrines the place is debauched, knows this as well as I do. I say nothing of⁷ Cataphrygians,⁸ Ophites, Borborites, and Manichaens; for these are familiar names of human woe. Who ever heard of Passaloryncitae, and⁹ Ascodrobi, and¹⁰ Artotyritae, and other portents-I can hardly call them names-in any part of the Roman Empire? The traces of the ancient foolishness remain to this day. One remark I must make, and so fulfil the promise with which I started. While the Galatians, in common with the whole East, speak Greek, their own language is almost identical with that of the¹¹ Treviri; and if through contact with the Greek they have acquired a few corruptions, it is a matter of no moment. The Africans have to some extent changed the Phenician language, and Latin itself is daily undergoing changes through differences of place and time. The Preface to Book III. opens with the following passage. describing, in contrast with his own simple exposition, the arts of the preachers of his day.

We are now busily occupied with our third book on Galatians, and, my friends, Paula and Eustochium, we are well aware of our weakness, and are conscious that our slender ability flows in but a small stream and makes little roar and rattle. For these are the qualities (to such a pass have we come) which are now expected even in the Churches; the simplicity and purity of apostolic language is neglected; we meet as if we were in the¹² Athenaeum, or the lecture rooms, to kindle the applause of the bystanders; what is now required is a discourse painted and tricked out with spurious rhetorical skill, and which, like a strumpet in the streets, does not aim at instructing the public, but at winning their favour; like a psaltery or a sweet-sounding lute, it must soothe the ears of the audience; and the passage of the prophet Ezekiel is suitable for our times, where the Lord says to him, "Thou art become unto them as the sound of a pleasant lute which is well made, for they hear thy words but do them not."

Jerome then speaks of the composition of his commentaries as follows:

How far I have profited by my unflagging study of Hebrew I leave to others to decide; what I have lost in my own language, I can tell. In addition to this, on account of the weakness of my eyes and bodily infirmity generally, I do not write with my own hand; and I cannot make up for my slowness of utterance by greater pains and diligence, as is said to have been the case with Virgil, of whom it is related that he treated his books as a bear treats her cubs, and licked them into shape. I must summon a secretary, and either say whatever comes uppermost; or, if I wish to think a little and hope to produce something superior, my helper silently reproves me, clenches his fist, wrinkles his brow, and plainly declares by his whole bearing that he has come for nothing.

He then points out how the Scriptures have dispossessed the great writers of the pre-Christian world.

How few there are who now read Aristotle. How many are there who know the books, or even the name of Plato? You may find here and there a few old men, who have nothing else to do, who study them in a corner.¹³ But the whole world speaks the language of our Christian peasants and fishermen, the whole world re-echoes their words. And so their simple words must be set forth with simplicity of style; for the word simple applies to their words, not their meaning. But if, in response to your prayers, I could, in expounding their epistles, have the same spirit which they had when they dictated them, you would then see in the Apostles as much majesty and breadth of true wisdom as there is arrogance and vanity in the learned men of the world. To make a brief

confession of the secrets of my heart, I should not like any one who wished to understand the Apostle to find a difficulty in understanding my writings, and so be compelled to find some one to interpret the interpreter.

Ephesians. This Commentary was specially prized by Jerome as exhibiting his true views (Letter LXXXIV. 2), and they became in consequence one of the chief subjects of controversy between him and Rufinus, who traced in them, not unjustly, the influence of Origen. It was written immediately after that on the Epistle to the Galatians, in a.d. 387, and, like that, addressed to Paula and Eustochium. In the Preface to Book i. Jerome defends himself against various accusations. He declares that he has been, in the main, his own instructor, but yet that he has constantly consulted others as to Scriptural difficulties, and that he had, not long before, been to Alexandria to consult, Didymus. "I questioned him about everything which was not clear to me in the whole range of Scripture." As to his indebtedness to Origen, he speaks as follows, certainly not blaming his doctrines: "I remark in the Prefaces, for your information. that Origen composed three volumes on this Epistle, and I have partly followed him. Apollinaris and Didymus also published some commentaries, and, though we have gleaned a few things from them, we have added or omitted such as we thought fit. The studious reader will, therefore, understand at the outset that this work is partly my own, and that I am in part indebted to others." The Preface to Books ii. and iii. is short. It speaks in praise of Marcella, who had invited him to his task, and declares that he in his monastery could not accomplish as much as that noble woman amidst the cares of her household. "I beseech you," he says, "to bear in mind that the language of this publication has not been long thought over or highly polished. In revealing the mysteries of Scripture I use almost the language of the street, and sometimes get through a thousand lines a day, in order that the explanation of the Apostle which I have begun may be completed with the aid of the prayers of Paul himself, whose Epistles I am endeavouring to explain."

Philemon.

Written for Paula and Eustochium, a.d. 387. The Preface is a defence of the genuineness of the Epistle against those who thought its subject beneath the dignity of inspiration. "There are many degrees of inspiration," Jerome says, "though in Christ alone it is seen in its fulness." Many of the other Epistles touch upon small affairs of life, like the cloak left at Troas. To suppose that common life is separate from God is Manichaeism. Jerome mentions that Marcion, who altered many of the Epistles, did not touch that to Philemon; and brevity in a document which has in it so much of the beauty of the Gospel is a mark of its inspiration.

Titus.

Addressed to Paula and Eustochium, a.d. 387. The Preface speaks of the rejection of the Epistle by Marcion and Basilides, its acceptance by Tatius, but without assigning reasons. It ought, Jerome says, to be of special interest to Paula and Eustochium, as being written from Nicopolis, near Actium, where their property lay.

Isaiah. The Commentary in eighteen books, each with its Preface. It was written in the years 404-410, and addressed to Eustochium alone, her mother Paula having died in 404. The Preface to Book i. touches generally upon the character and contents of Isaiah, asserting that many of the prophecies are directly applicable to Christ, and that the nations who are dealt with have a spiritual

meaning. Those to the following books mostly give a short statement of the contents of the chapters commented on, and entreat the prayers of Eustochium for the work. The Fifth Book (or chapters xiii. to xxiii.) had been published before by itself, at the instance of a bishop named Amabilis, but he says he must add the metaphorical and spiritual meaning of the Visions of the various nations, which is done in Books vi. and vii. The Preface to Book x. contains a bitter allusion to Rufinus, "the Scorpion, a dumb and poisonous brute, still grumbling over my former reply," and speaks of Pammachius as joining in the request for the continuation of the Commentaries. The Preface to Book xi. intimates that his commentary upon Daniel, which expounded the statue with feet of iron and clay as the Roman Empire, and announced its fall, had been known at the court and resented by Stilicho, but that all danger from that source had been removed by the judgment of God, that is, through the death of Stilicho by the command of his son-in-law Honorius. The Preface to Book xiii. records a severe illness which had stopped his work, though he was restored to health suddenly; and that to Book xiv. thanks Eustochium for her kind offices during this illness. The remaining Prefaces, though they have occasionally some interest in the history of the interpretation of Scripture, need not delay us.

Jeremiah. The Commentary on Jeremiah is in six books; but Jerome did not live to finish it. It was written between the years 317 and 319, but only extends to chapter xxxii. It was dedicated to Eusebius of Cremona. The Prefaces, which are full of vigour, contain many allusions to the events and controversies of the last years of Jerome's life. In the Preface to Book i., after speaking of the Book of Daniel and the apocryphal Letter of Jeremiah as not belonging to the prophet's writings, he continues:

I pay little heed to the ravings of disparaging critics who revile not only my words, but the very syllables of my words, and suppose they give evidence of some little knowledge if they discredit another man's work, as was exemplified in that¹⁴ ignorant traducer who lately broke out, and thought it worth his while to censure my commentaries on Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. He does not understand the rules of commenting (for he is more asleep than awake and seems utterly dazed), and is not aware that in our books we give the opinions of many different writers, the authors' names being either expressed or understood, so that it is open to the reader to decide which he may prefer to adopt; although I must add that, in my Preface to the First Book of that work, I gave fair notice that my remarks would be partly my own, partly those of other commentators, and that thus the commentary would be the work conjointly of the ancient writers and of myself.¹⁵ Grunnius, his precursor, overlooked the same fact, and once upon a time did his best to cavil. I replied to him in two books, and there I cleared away the objections which he adduced in his own name, though the real traducer was some one else; to say nothing of my treatises against Jovinianus where, you may remember, I show that he (Jovinianus) laments that virginity is preferred to marriage, single marriage to digamy, digamy to polygamy. The stupid fool,¹⁶ labouring under his load of Scotch porridge, does not recollect that we said, in that very work, "I do not condemn the twice married, nor the thrice married, and, if it so be, the eight times married; I will go a step farther, and say that I welcome even a penitent whoremonger; for things equally lawful must be weighed in an even balance." Let him read the Apology¹⁷ for the same work which was directed against his¹⁸ master, and was received by Rome with acclamation many years ago. He will then observe that his revilings are but the echoes of other men's voices, and that his ignorance is so deep that even his abuse is not his own, but that he employs against us

the ravings of foes long since dead and buried. The Preface to Book ii. is short and contains nothing of special importance. In that to Book iii. Jerome declares that he will, like Ulysses with the Sirens, close his ears to the adversary. The devil, who once spoke through Jovinianus, "now barks through the hound of Albion (Pelagius), who is like a mountain of fat, and whose fury is more in his heels than in his teeth; for his offspring is among the Scots, in the neighbourhood of Britain; and, according to the fables of the poet, he must, like Cerberus, be smitten to death with a spiritual club, that, in company with his master Pluto, he may forever hold his peace." In the Preface to Book iv. Jerome says he has been hindered in his work by the harassing of the Pelagian controversy. He regards Pelagius as reproducing the doctrines of impassibility and sinlessness taught by Pythagoras and Zeno, and revived by Origen, Rufinus, Evagrius Ponticus, and Jovinian. Their doctrines, he says, were promulgated chiefly in Sicily, Rhodes, and other islands; they were propagated secretly, and denied in public. They were full of malice, but were but dumb dogs, and were refuted in "certain writings," probably those of Augustin; but he declares his intention of writing against them, which he did in his anti-Pelagian Dialogue. The Prefaces to Books v. and vi. contain nothing noteworthy.

Ezekiel. The Commentary on Ezekiel is in fourteen Books. It was dedicated to Eustochium, and was written between the years 410 and 414. The Prefaces gain a special interest from their descriptions of the sack of Rome by Alaric and the consequent immigration into Palestine. We give several passages. In Preface to Book i.

Having completed the eighteen books of the exposition of Isaiah, I was very desirous, Eustochium, Christ's virgin, to go on to Ezekiel, in accordance with my frequent promises to you and your mother Paula, of saintly memory, and thus, as the saying is, put the finishing touches to the work on the prophets; but alas! intelligence was suddenly brought me of the death of Pammachius and¹⁹ Marcella,²⁰ the siege of Rome, and the falling asleep of many of my brethren and sisters. I was so stupefied and dismayed that day and night I could think of nothing but the welfare of the community; it seemed as though I was sharing the captivity of the saints, and I could not open my lips until I knew something more definite; and all the while, full of anxiety, I was wavering between hope and despair, and was torturing myself with the misfortunes of other people. But when the bright light of all the world was put out, or, rather, when the Roman Empire was decapitated, and, to speak more correctly, the whole world perished in one city,²¹ "I became dumb and humbled myself, and kept silence from good words, but my grief broke out afresh, my heart glowed within me, and while I meditated the fire was kindled;" and I thought I ought not to disregard the saying,²² "An untimely story is like music in a time of grief." But seeing that you persist in making this request, and a wound, though deep, heals by degrees; and²³ the scorpion lies beneath the ground with²⁴ Enceladus and Porphyron, and the many-headed Hydra has at length ceased to hiss at us; and since opportunity has been given me which I ought to use, not for replying to insidious heretics, but for devoting myself to the exposition of Scripture, I will resume my work upon the prophet Ezekiel.

Book ii. has, instead of a Preface, merely a line calling the attention of Eustochium to its opening words. The Preface to Book iii. has a noteworthy passage on the sack of Rome and its results. Who would believe that Rome, built up by the conquest of the whole world, had collapsed, that the mother of nations had become also their tomb; that the shores of the whole East, of Egypt, of Africa, which once belonged to the imperial city, were filled with the hosts of her men-servants and

maid-servants, that we should every day be receiving in this holy Bethlehem men and women who once were noble and abounding in every kind of wealth but are now reduced to poverty? We cannot relieve these sufferers: all we can do is to sympathise with them, and unite our tears with theirs. The burden of this holy work was as much as we could carry; the sight of the wanderers, coming in crowds, caused us deep pain; and we therefore abandoned the exposition of Ezekiel, and almost all study, and were filled with a longing to turn the words of Scripture into action, and not to say holy things but to do them. Now, however, in response to your admonition, Eustochium, Christ's virgin, we resume the interrupted labour, and approach our third Book. The Prefaces to Books iv., v., and vi. contain nothing remarkable. The following is the important part of the Preface to Book vii.

There is not a single hour, nor a single moment, in which we are not relieving crowds of brethren, and the quiet of the monastery has been changed into the bustle of a guest house. And so much is this the case that we must either close our doors, or abandon the study of the Scriptures on which we depend for keeping the doors open. And so, turning to profit, or rather stealing the hours of the nights, which, now that winter is approaching, begin to lengthen somewhat, I am endeavouring by the light of the lamp to dictate these comments, whatever they maybe worth, and am trying to mitigate with exposition the weariness of a mind which is a stranger to rest. I am not boasting, as some perhaps suspect, of the welcome given to the brethren, but I am simply confessing the causes of the delay. Who could boast when the flight of the people of the West, and the holy places, crowded as they are with penniless fugitives, naked and wounded, plainly reveal the ravages of the Barbarians? We cannot see what has occurred, without tears and moans. Who would have believed that mighty Rome, with its careless security of wealth, would be reduced to such extremities as to need shelter, food, and clothing? And yet, some are so hard-hearted and cruel that, instead of showing compassion, they break up the rags and bundles of the captives, and expect to find gold about those who are nothing than prisoners. In addition to this hindrance to my dictating, my eyes are growing dim with age and to some extent I share the suffering of the saintly Isaac: I am quite unable to go through the Hebrew books with such light as I have at night, for even in the full light of day they are hidden from my eyes owing to the smallness of the letters. In fact, it is only the voice of the brethren which enables me to master the commentaries of Greek writers. The Prefaces to Books viii. to xiv. contain nothing of special interest.

Daniel. The Commentary on Daniel was dedicated to Pammachius and Marcella in the year 407. It is in a single book, and is aimed at the criticisms of Porphyry. who, like most modern critics, took the predictions in the Book of Daniel as relating to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees, and written near that date. The Preface is very similar to that prefixed to the Vulgate translation of Daniel.

Prefaces to the Commentaries on the Minor Prophets. For the order and date of writing of these Commentaries see the Preface to Amos, Book iii., and the note there.

Hosea. This Commentary was dedicated to Pammachius, a.d. 406 (sixth consulate of Arcadius-Preface to Amos, Book iii. The Preface to Book i. is chiefly taken up with a discussion on Hosea's "wife of whoredoms." He takes the story as allegorical; it cannot be literal, for "God commands nothing but what is honourable, nor does he, by bidding men do disgraceful things, make that conduct honourable which is disgraceful." Jerome then describes, as in former

Prefaces, the chief Greek commentators, of whom Apollinaris and Origen had written very shortly on Hosea, Pierius at great length, but to little purpose; and says that he had himself obtained from Didymus of Alexandria that he should complete the Commentary of Origen. He had himself often judged independently, though with little knowledge of Hebrew, but he had been in earnest, while most scholars were "more concerned for their bellies than their hearts, and thought themselves learned if in the doctors' waiting rooms they could disparage other men's works." In the Preface to Book ii. Jerome complains of his detractors, and appeals from the present favour of high-placed men to the posthumous authority of sound ability. In Book iii. he claims Pammachius as his defender, though he fears the judgment of his great learning.

Joel. This Commentary also is addressed to Pammachius, a.d. 406. It is in one hook. It gives the order of the Twelve Prophets adopted by the LXX. and the Hebrew respectively, the Hebrew order being that now in use. It also gives the etymological meaning of their names.

Amos. In three books, addressed also to Pammachius, a.d. 406 (Preface to Amos, Book iii.). The Preface to Book i. merely gives a description of Tekoa, Amos' birthplace. That to Book ii. speaks of old age, with its advantages for self-control and its trials in various infirmities, such as phlegm, dim eyesight, loosened teeth, colic, and gout. That to Book iii. contains the passage several times referred to for the order of these Commentaries, which is as follows:

We have not discussed them in regular sequence from the first to the ninth, as they are read, but as we have been able, and in accordance with requests made to us. Nahum, Micah, Zephaniah, Haggai,²⁵ I first addressed to Paula and Eustochium, her daughter, who are never weary; I next dedicated two books on Habakkuk to Chromatius, bishop of Aquileia; I then proceeded to explain, at your command, Pammachius, and after a long interval of silence, Obadiah and Jonah.²⁶ In the²⁷ present year, which bears in the calendar the name of the sixth consulate of Arcadius Augustus and Anitius Probus, I interpreted Malachi for Exsuperius, bishop of Toulouse, and Minervius and Alexander, monks of that city. Unable to refuse your request I immediately went back to the beginning of the volume, and expounded Hosea, Joel, and Amos. A severe sickness followed, and I showed my rashness in resuming the dictation of this work too hastily; and, whereas others hesitate to write and frequently correct their work, I entrusted mine to the fortune which attends those who employ a secretary, and hazarded my reputation for ability and orthodoxy; for, as I have often testified, I cannot endure the toil of writing with my own hand; and, in expounding the Holy Scriptures, what we want is not a polished style and oratorical flourishes, but learning and simple truth.

Obadiah.

Addressed to Pammachius a.d. 403. The Preface records how in early youth (some thirty years before), he had attempted an allegorical commentary of Obadiah, of which he was now ashamed, though it has lately been praised by a youth of similar years.

Jonah. This was addressed to Chromatius, but belongs to the year 395. It is said in the Preface to be three years after the commentary on Micah, Nahum, etc. The Preface merely touches on the various places of Scripture in which Jonah is named.

Micah.

Addressed to Paula and Eustochium. a.d. 392. It is in two books. In the Preface to Book ii., Jerome vindicates himself against the charge of making mere compilations from Origen. He confesses, however, his great admiration for him. "What they consider a reproach," he says, "I regard as the highest praise. since I desire to imitate him who, I doubt not, is acceptable to all wise men, and to you."

Nahum.

Also to Paula and Eustochium, a.d. 392. The Preface contains little of importance. Jerome mentions that the village of Elkosh, Nahum's birthplace, was pointed out to him by a guide in Galilee.

Habakkuk.

Addressed to Chromatius, a.d. 392. The commentary is in two books. The Preface to Book i. is long, but merely describes the contents of the book. That to Book ii. mentions among his adversaries, "The Serpent, and Sardanapalus, whose character is worse than his name"-expressions which have been referred to Rufinus; but the enmity between Jerome and Rufinus had not broken out in 392.

Zephaniah.

Addressed to Paula and Eustochium, a.d. 392. In the Preface Jerome defends himself for writing for women, bringing many examples from Scripture and from classical writers to show the capacity of women.

Haggai.

Also to Paula and Eustochium, a.d. 392. The preface merely describes the occasion of the book, but says that Haggai's prophecy was contemporary with the reign of Tarquinius Superbus (b.c. 535-510).

Zechariah.

Addressed to Exsuperius, bishop of Toulouse, a.d. 406, in three books, and sent, "in the closing days of autumn, by the monk, Sisinnius, who had been sent with presents for the poor saints at Jerusalem, and was hastening to Egypt on a similar errand." The Prefaces to the three books mention these facts, but have nothing in them of note which has not been said before.

Malachi.

Addressed, a.d. 406, to Minervius and Alexander, presbyters of the diocese of Toulouse. The Jews, the Preface says, believe Malachi to be a name for Ezra. Origen and his followers believe that (according to his name) he was an angel. But we reject this view altogether, lest we be compelled to accept the doctrine of the fall of souls from heaven.parpapar

1: Interpres.

2: That is, the allegorical or mystical sense.

3: Alieno stomacho.

4: Didymus, the blind teacher of Alexandria.

5: He became bishop of Laodicea about 362. About 376 his followers became a sect, and about the same time he set up bishops of his own at Antioch and elsewhere.

6: Probably from Batanea, the ancient Bashan, where Porphyry is said to have been born.

7: "The patriarch (of the Montanists) resided at Pepuza, a small town or village in Phrygia, to which the sectaries gave the mystical name of Jerusalem, as believing that it would be the seat of the Millennial Kingdom, which was the chief subject of their hopes. Hence they derived the names of Pepuzians and Cataphrygians."-Robertson, Ch. Hist., vol. i. p. 76.

8: The Ophites, who took their name from ofij

9: The Ben. editor prefers the form Tascodrogi, and states that it is the Phrygian or Galatian equivalent for Passaloryncitae. The sect is said to have been so called from their habit of putting the finger to the nose when praying.

10: Heretics who made offerings of bread and cheese (arto-turoj 11: The people who lived between the Moselle and the Forest of Ardennes in and about the modern Treves.

12: The Athenaeum was the name specially given to a school founded by the Emperor Hadrian at Rome, about a.d. 133, for the promotion of literary and scientific studies. The word denoted in general any place consecrated to the goddess Athena.

13: Angulis. So. Cic. Rep. i. 2.

14: Pelagius.

15: That is. Rufinus. See Preface to Book xii. of Isaiah, where Ruffnus is called Grunnius Corocotta Porcellus, and Preface to Book iv. of Jeremiah.

16: Scotorum pultibus praegravatus. The words have been translated "made fat with Scotch flummery" (Stillingfleet). Another rendering is, "having his belly filled and his head bedulled with Scotch porridge" (Wall on Infant Baptism, pt. i.c. 19, §3). Some think the words refer to Celestius, Pelagius' Supporter.

17: The letter to Pammachius (Jer. Letter XLVIII.) in defence of the book against Jovinianus.

18: Jovinian was condemned in a Synod at Rome about 390. Thirty years had thus passed since the events occurred to which Jerome refers. See Preface to the treatise against Jovinian.

19: Under whose care Eustochium had been trained.

20: By the Goths under Alaric. The city was taken in a.d. 410.

21: Ps. xxxix. 3, Ps. xxxix. 4.

22: Ecclus. xxii. 6.

23: Rufinus who died a.d. 410, in Sicily, on his way to the Holy Land from Aquileia and Rome, whence he had been driven by the troubles in Italy.

24: The giants who bore those names. See Hor. III. od. 4.

25: These four and Habakkuk are mentioned in the De Vir. III. (a.d. 492), and were written about that date, Jonah three years after, but Obadiah probably not till 403. The rest are fixed to the Sixth Consulate of Arcadius, 406.

26: But see Preface to Jonah, which is addressed to Chromatius.

27: The year a.d. 406.

Prefaces On Translations from the Septuagint and Chaldee

Translations from the Septuagint and Chaldee.

Chronicles.

Book of Job. The Psalms.

Books of Solomon.

Tobit and Judith.

Translations from the Septuagint and Chaldee.

There are three stages of Jerome's work of Scripture Translation. The first is during his stay at Rome, a.d. 382-385, when he translated only from the Greek-the New Testament from the Greek mss., and the Book of Psalms from the LXX. The second is the period immediately after his settlement at Bethlehem, when he translated still from the LXX., but marked with obeli and asterisks the passages in which that version differed from the Hebrew: the third from a.d. 390-404, in which he translated directly from the Hebrew. The work of the second period is that which is now before us. The whole of the Old Testament was translated from the LXX. (see his Apology, book ii. c. 24), but most of it was lost during his lifetime (see Letters CXXXIV. (end) and CXVI. 34 (in Augustin Letter, 62)). What remains is the Book of Job, the Psalms, Chronicles, the Books of Solomon, and Tobit and Judith.

Chronicles. This book was dedicated to¹ Domnion and Rogatianus, about a.d. 388. Jerome points out the advantages he enjoyed, in living in Palestine, for obtaining correct information on matters illustrative of Scripture, especially the names of places. The mss. of the LXX. on such points were so corrupt that occasionally three names were run into one, and "you would think that you had before you, not a heap of Hebrew names, but those of some foreign and Sarmatian tribe." Jerome had sent for a Jew, highly esteemed among his brethren, from Tiberias, and, after "examining him from top to toe," had, by his aid, emended the text and made the translation. But he had not the critical knowledge to guard him against supposing that the Books of Chronicles are "the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah," referred to in the Books of Kings.

Book of Job. This translation was dedicated to Paula and Eustochium, about the year 388. He complains that even the revision he was now making was the subject of many cavils. Men prefer ancient faults to new truths, and would rather have handsome copies than correct ones; but he boasts that "the blessed Job, who, as far as the Latins are concerned, was till now lying amidst filth and swarming with the worms of error, is now whole and free from stain." The Psalms.

Jerome first undertook a revision of the Psalter with the help of the Septuagint about the year 383. when living at Rome. This revision, which obtained the name of the Roman Psalter "probably because it was made for the use of the Roman Church at the request of Damasus," was retained until the pontificate of Plus V. (a.d. 1566). Before long "the old error prevailed over the new

correction," the faults of the old version crept in again through the negligence of copyists; and at the request of Paula and Eustochium, Jerome commenced a new and more thorough revision. The exact date is not known; the work was in all probability done at Bethlehem in the years 387 and 388. This edition, which soon became popular, was introduced by Gregory of Tours into the services of the Church of France, and thus obtained the name of the Gallican Psalter. In 1566 it superseded the Roman in all churches except those of the Vatican, Milan, and St. Mark's, Venice.

Long ago, when I was living at Rome, I revised the Psalter, and corrected it in a great measure, though but cursorily, in accordance with the Septuagint version. You now find it, Paula and Eustochium, again corrupted through the fault of copyists, and realise the fact that ancient error is more powerful than modern correction; and you therefore urge me, as it were, to cross-plough the land which has already been broken up, and, by means of the transverse furrows, to root out the thorns which are beginning to spring again; it is only right, you say, that rank and noxious growths should be cut down as often as they appear. And so I issue my custom. ary admonition by way of preface both to you, for whom it happens that I am undertaking the labour, and to those persons who desire to have copies such as I describe. Pray see that what I have carefully revised be transcribed with similar painstaking care. Every reader can observe for himself where there is placed either a horizontal line or mark issuing from the centre, that is, either an obelus () or an asterisk (*). And wherever he sees the former, he is to understand that between this mark and the two stops (:) which I have introduced, the Septuagint translation contains superfluous matter. But where he sees the asterisk (*), an addition to the Hebrew books is indicated, which also goes as far as the two stops.

Books of Solomon. This is addressed to Paula and Eustochium. Jerome describes the numerous emendations he has had to make in what was then the received Latin text, but says he has not found the same necessity in dealing with Ecclesiasticus. He adds, "All I aim at is to give you a revised edition of the Canonical Scriptures, and to employ my Latin on what is certain rather than on what is doubtful."

Tobit and Judith. The Preface is to Chromatius and Heliodorus. It recognizes that the books are apocryphal. After his usual complaints of "the Pharisees" who impugned his translations, he says: "Inasmuch as the Chaldee is closely allied to the Hebrew, I procured the help of the most skilful speaker of both languages I could find, and gave to the subject one day's hasty labour, my method being to explain in Latin, with the aid of a secretary, whatever an interpreter expressed to me in Hebrew words." As to Judith, he notes that the Council of Nicaea had, contrary to the Hebrew tradition, included it in the Canon of Scripture, and this, with his friends' requests, had induced him to undertake the labour of emendation and translation.

1: See Preface to Ezra (Vulgate).

Prefaces to Jerome's Early Works

Prefaces to Jerome's Early Works.

Preface to the Chronicle of Eusebius.

Preface to the Translation of Origen's Two Homilies on the Song of Songs.

Preface to the Book on Hebrew Names.

Preface to the Book on the Sites and Names of Hebrew Places.

Preface to the Book of Hebrew Questions.

Preface to the Commentary on Ecclesiastes.

Prefaces to Jerome's Early Works.

Preface to the Chronicle of Eusebius. The "Chronicle" is a book of universal history, giving the dates from the call of Abraham, and the Olympiads. For an account of it the reader is referred to the article of Dr. Salmon in the "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities." It was translated by Jerome in the years 381-82, at Constantinople, where he was staying for the Council. This Preface shows that Jerome was already becoming aware of the difficulties arising from the various versions of the Old Testament, and of the necessity of going back to the Hebrew.

Jerome to his friends¹ Vincentius and Gallienus, Greeting:

1. It has long been the practice of learned men to exercise their minds by rendering into Latin the works of Greek writers, and, what is more difficult, to translate the poems of illustrious authors though trammelled by the farther requirements of verse. It was thus that our Tully literally translated whole books of Plato; and after publishing an edition of² Aratus (who may now be considered a Roman) in hexameter verse, he amused himself with the economics of Xenophon. In this latter work the golden river of eloquence again and again meets with obstacles, around which its waters break and foam to such an extent that persons unacquainted with the original would not believe they were reading Cicero's words. And no wonder! It is hard to follow another man's lines and everywhere keep within bounds. It is an arduous task to preserve felicity and grace unimpaired in a translation. Some word has forcibly expressed a given thought; I have no word of my own to convey the meaning; and while I am seeking to satisfy the sense I may go a long way round and accomplish but a small distance of my journey. Then we must take into account the ins and outs of transposition, the variations in cases, the diversity of figures, and, lastly, the peculiar, and, so to speak, the native idiom of the language. A literal translation sounds absurd; if, on the other hand, I am obliged to change either the order or the words themselves, I shall appear to have forsaken the duty of a translator.

2. So, my dear Vincentius, and you, Gallienus, whom I love as my own soul, I beseech you, whatever may be the value of this hurried piece of work, to read it with the feelings of a friend

rather than with those of a critic. And I ask this all the more earnestly because, as you know, I dictated with great rapidity to my amanuensis; and how difficult the task is, the sacred records testify; for the old flavour is not preserved in the Greek version by the Seventy. It was this that stimulated Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion; and the result of their labors was to impart a totally different character to one and the same work; one strove to give word for word, another the general meaning, while the third desired to avoid any great divergency from the ancients. A fifth, sixth, and seventh edition, though no one knows to what authors they are to be attributed, exhibit so pleasing a variety of their own that, in spite of their being anonymous, they have won an authoritative position. Hence, some go so far as to consider the sacred writings somewhat harsh and grating to the ear; which arises from the fact that the persons of whom I speak are not aware that the writings in question are a translation from the Hebrew, and therefore, looking at the surface not at the substance, they shudder at the squalid dress before they discover the fair body which the language clothes. In fact, what can be more musical than the Psalter? Like the writings of our own³ Flaccus and the Grecian Pindar it now trips along in iambics, now flows in sonorous alcaics, now swells into sapphics, now⁴ marches in half-foot metre. What can be more lovely than the strains of Deuteronomy and Isaiah? What more grave than Solomon's words? What more finished than Job? All these, as Josephus and Origen tell us, were composed in hexameters and pentameters, and so circulated amongst their own people. When we read these in Greek they have some meaning; when in Latin they are utterly incoherent. But if any one thinks that the grace of language does not suffer through translation, let him render Homer word for word into Latin. I will go farther and say that, if he will translate this author into the prose of his own language, the order of the words will seem ridiculous, and the most eloquent of poets almost dumb.

3. What is the drift of all this? I would not have you think it strange if here and there we stumble; if the language lag; if it bristle with consonants or present gaping chasms of vowels; or be cramped by condensation of the narrative. The most learned among men have toiled at the same task; and in addition to the difficulty which all experience, and which we have alleged to attend all translation, it must not be forgotten that a peculiar difficulty besets us, inasmuch as the history is manifold, is full of barbarous names, circumstances of which the Latins know nothing, dates which are tangled knots, critical marks blended alike with the events and the numbers, so that it is almost harder to discern the sequence of the words than to come to a knowledge of what is related.

[Here follows a long passage showing an arrange merit according to which the dates are distinguished by certain colours as belonging to one or another of the kingdoms, the history of which is dealt with. This passage seems unintelligible in the absence of the coloured figures, and would be of no use unless the book with its original arrangement were being studied.]

I am well aware that there will be many who, with their customary fondness for universal detraction (from which the only escape is by writing nothing at all), will drive their fangs into this volume. They will cavil at the dates, change the order, impugn the accuracy of events, winnow the syllables, and, as is very frequently the case, will impute the negligence of copyists to the authors. I should be within my right if I were to rebut them by saying that they need not read unless they choose; but I would rather send them away in a calm state of mind, so that they may attribute to the Greek author the credit which is his due, and may recognize that any insertions for which we are responsible have been taken from other men of the highest repute. The truth is that I have partly discharged the office of a translator and partly that of a writer. I have with the utmost fidelity

rendered the Greek portion, and at the same time have added certain things which appeared to me to have been allowed to slip, particularly in the Roman history, which Eusebius, the author of this book, as it seems to me, only glanced at; not so much because of ignorance, for he was a learned man, as because, writing in Greek, he thought them of slight importance to his countrymen. So again from Ninus and Abraham, right up to the captivity of Troy, the translation is from the Greek only. From Troy to the twentieth year of Constantine there is much, at one time separately added, at another intermingled, which I have gleaned with great diligence from Tranquillus and other famous historians. Moreover, the portion from the aforesaid year of Constantine to the sixth consulship of the Emperor Valens and the second of Valentinianus is entirely my own. Content to end here, I have reserved the remaining period, that of Gratianus and Theodosius, for a wider historical survey; not that I am afraid to discuss the living freely and truthfully, for the fear of God banishes the fear of man; but because while our country is still exposed to the fury of the barbarians everything is in confusion.

Preface to the Translation of Origen's Two Homilies on the Song of Songs.

Written at Rome, a.d. 383.

Jerome to the most holy Pope Damasus:

Origen, whilst in his other books he has surpassed all others, has in the Song of Songs surpassed himself. He wrote ten volumes upon it, which amount to almost twenty thousand lines, and in these he discussed, first the version of the Seventy Translators, then those of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and lastly, a fifth version which he states that he found on the coast of Atrium, with such magnificence and fulness, that he appears to me to have realized what is said in the poem: "The king brought the into his chamber." I have left that work on one side, since it would require almost boundless leisure and labour and money to translate so great a work into Latin, even if it could be worthily done; and I have translated these two short treatises, which he composed in the form of daily lectures for those who were still like babes and sucklings, and I have studied faithfulness rather than elegance. You can conceive how great a value the larger work possesses, when the smaller gives you such satisfaction.

Preface to the Book on Hebrew Names. The origin and scope of this book is described in the Preface itself. It was written in the year 388, two years after Jerome had settled at Bethlehem. He had, immediately on arriving in Palestine, three years previously, set to work to improve his knowledge of Hebrew, with a view to his translation of the Old Testament, which was begun in 391. This book, therefore, and the two which follow, may be taken as records of studies preparatory to the Vulgate.

Philo, the most erudite man among the Jews, is declared by Origen to have done what I am now doing; he set forth a book of Hebrew Names, classing them under their initial letters, and placing the etymology of each at the side. This work I originally proposed to translate into Latin. It is well known in the Greek world, and is to be found in all libraries. But I found that the copies were so discordant to one another, and the order so confused, that I judged it to be better to say nothing, rather than to write what would justly be condemned. A work of this kind, however, appeared likely to be of use; and my friends Lupulianus and Valerianus⁵ urged me to attempt it, because, as they thought, I had made some progress in the knowledge of Hebrew. I, therefore, went through all the books of Scripture in order, and in the restoration which I have now made of the ancient fabric, I

think that I have produced a work which may be found valuable by Greeks as well as Latins.

I here in the Preface beg the reader to take notice that, if he finds anything omitted in this work, it is reserved for mention in another. I have at this moment on hand a book of Hebrew Questions, an undertaking of a new kind such as has never until now been heard of amongst either the Greeks or the Latins. I say this, not with a view of arrogantly puffing up my own work, but because I know how much labour I have spent on it, and wish to provoke those whose knowledge is deficient to read it. I recommend all those who wish to possess both that work and the present one, and also the book of Hebrew Places, which I am about to publish, to make no account of the Jews and all their ebullitions of vexation. Moreover, I have added the meaning of the words and names in the New Testament, so that the fabric might receive its last touch and might stand complete. I wished also in this to imitate Origen, whom all but the ignorant acknowledge as the greatest teacher of the Churches next to the Apostles; for in this work, which stands among the noblest monuments of his genius, he endeavoured as a Christian to supply what Philo, as a Jew, had omitted.

Preface to the Book on the Sites and Names of Hebrew Places. For the scope and value of this book see Prolegomena. It was written a.d. 388.

Eusebius, who took his second name from the blessed Martyr Pamphilus, after he had written the ten books of his "Ecclesiastical History," the Chronicle of Dates, of which I published a Latin version, the book in which he set forth the names of the different nations and those given to them of old by the Jews and by those of the present day, the topography of the land of Judaea and the portions allotted to the tribes, together with a representation of Jerusalem itself and its temple, which he accompanied with a very short explanation, bestowed his about at the end of his life upon this little work, of which the design is to gather for us out of the Holy Scriptures the names of almost all the cities, mountains, rivers, hamlets, and other places, whether they remain the same or have since been changed or in some degree corrupted. I have taken up the work of this admirable man, and have translated it, following the arrangement of the Greeks, and taking the words in the order of their initial letters, but leaving out those names which did not seem worthy of mention, and making a considerable number of alterations. I have explained my method once for all in the Preface to my translation of the Chronicle, where I said that I might be called at once a translator and the composer of a new work; but I repeat this especially because one who had hardly the first tincture of letters has ventured upon a translation of this very book into Latin, though his language is hardly to be called Latin. His lack of scholarship will be seen by the observant reader as soon as he compares it with my translation. I do not pretend to a style which soars to the skies; but I hope that I can rise above one which grovels on the earth.

Preface to the Book of Hebrew Questions.

Written a.d. 388. For the scope and character of this work, see Prolegomena. The object of the Preface to a book is to set forth the argument of the work which follows; but I am compelled to begin by answering what has been said against me. My case is somewhat like that of Terence, who turned the scenic prologues of his plays into a defence of himself. We have a Lucius Lanuvinus, like the one who worried him, and who brought charges against the poet as if he had been a plunderer of the treasury. The bard of Mantua suffered in the same way; he had translated a few verses of Homer very exactly, and they said that he was nothing but a plagiarist from the ancients. But he answered them that it was no small proof of strength to wrest the club of Hercules

from his hands. Why, even Tully, who stands on the pinnacle of Roman eloquence, that king of orators and glory of the Latin tongue, has actions for embezzlement⁷ brought against him by the Greeks. I cannot, therefore, be surprised if a poor little fellow like me is exposed to the gruntings of vile swine who trample our pearls under their feet, when some of the most learned of men, men whose glory ought to have hushed the voice of ill will, have felt the flames of envy. It is true, this happened by a kind of justice to men whose eloquence had filled with its resonance the theatres and the senate, the public assembly and the rostra; hardihood always courts detraction, and (as Horace says):

"The⁸ highest peaks invoke The lightning's stroke." But I am in a corner, remote from the city and the forum, and the wranglings of crowded courts; yet, even so (as Quintilian says) ill-will has sought me out. Therefore, I beseech the reader, "If⁹ one there be, if one, Who, rapt by strong desire, these lines shall read," not to expect eloquence or oratorical grace in those Books of Hebrew Questions, which I propose to write on all the sacred books; but rather, that he should himself answer my detractors for me, and tell them that a work of a new kind can claim some indulgence. I am poor and of low estate; I neither possess riches nor do I think it right to accept them if they are offered me; and, similarly, let me tell them that it is impossible for them to have the riches of Christ, that is, the knowledge of the Scriptures, and the world's riches as well. It will be my simple aim, therefore, first, to point out the mistakes of those who suspect some fault in the Hebrew Scriptures, and, secondly, to correct the faults, which evidently teem in the Greek and Latin copies, by a reference to the original authority; and, further, to explain the etymology of things, names, and countries, when it is not apparent from the sound of the Latin words, by giving a paraphrase in the vulgar tongue. To enable the student more easily to take note of these emendations, I propose, in the first place, to set out the true¹⁰ reading itself, as I am now able to do, and then, by bringing the later readings into comparison with it, to¹¹ indicate what has been omitted or added or altered. It is not my purpose, as snarling ill-will pretends, to convict the LXX. of error, nor do I look upon my own labour as a disparagement of theirs. The fact is that they, since their work was undertaken for King Ptolemy of Alexandria, did not choose to bring to light all the mysteries which the sacred writings contain, and especially those which give the promise of the advent of Christ, for fear that he who held the Jews in esteem because they were believed to worship one God, would come to think that they worshipped a second. But we find that the Evangelists, and even our Lord and Saviour, and the Apostle Paul, also, bring forward many citations as coming from the Old Testament which are not contained in our copies; and on these I shall dilate more fully in their proper places. But it is clear from this fact that those are the best mss. which most correspond with the authoritative words of the New Testament. Add to this that Josephus, who gives the story of the Seventy Translators, reports them as translating only the five books of Moses; and we also acknowledge that these are more in harmony with the Hebrew than the rest. And, further, those who afterward came into the field as translators-I mean Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion-give a version very different from that which we use.¹² I have but one word more to say, and it may calm my detractors. Foreign goods are to be imported only to the regions where there is a demand for them. Country people are not obliged to buy balsam, pepper, and dates. As to Origen, I say nothing. His name (if I may compare small things with great) is even more than my own the object of ill-will, because, though following the common version in his Homilies, which were spoken to common people, yet, in his Tomes,¹³ that is, in his fuller discussion of Scripture, he yields to the Hebrew as the truth, and, though surrounded by his

own forces, occasionally seeks the foreign tongue as his ally. I will only say this about him: that I should gladly have his knowledge of the Scriptures, even if accompanied with all the ill-will which clings to his name, and that I do not care a straw for these shades and spectral ghosts, whose nature is said to be to chatter in dark corners and be a terror to babies.

Preface to the Commentary on Ecclesiastes.

Addressed to Paula and Eustochium, Bethlehem, a.d. 388.

I remember that, about five years ago, when I was still living at Rome, I read Ecclesiastes to the saintly Blesilla,¹⁴ so that I might provoke her to the contempt of this earthly scene, and to count as nothing all that she saw in the world; and that she asked me to throw my remarks upon all the more obscure passages into the form of a short commentary, so that, when I was absent, she might still understand what she read. She was withdrawn from us by her sudden death, while girding herself for our work; we were not counted worthy to have such an one as the partner of our life; and, therefore, Paula and Eustochium, I kept silence under the stroke of such a wound. But now, living as I do in the smaller community of Bethlehem, I pay what I owe to her memory and to you. I would only point out this, that I have followed no one's authority. I have translated direct from the Hebrew, adapting my words as much as possible to the form of the Septuagint, but only in those places in which they did not diverge far from the Hebrew. I have occasionally referred also to the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, but so as not to alarm the zealous student by too many novelties, nor yet to let my commentary follow the side streams of opinion, turning aside, against my conscientious conviction, from the fountainhead of truth.

1: Vincentius appears to have attached himself to Jerome at Constantinople and remained with him till the end of the century. (Jerome, *Against John of Jerusalem*, 41; *Apol.*, iii. 22; Letter LXXXVIII.) Nothing is known of Gallienus.

2: Flourished b.c. 270.

3: That is, Horace.

4: *Sublimia debent ingredi*.-Quint, 9, 4 fin.

5: Nothing is known of these men. It is very improbable that this Valerianus was the bishop of Apuleia, who must, however, have been known to Jerome.

6: Terence's rival, to whom he makes allusions in the *Prologi* to the *Eunuchus*, *Heoutontimoroumenos* and *Phormio*.

7: *Repetundarum*. Properly an action to compel one who has left office to restore public money which he had embezzled.

8: Hor. *Odes* II., x. 19, 20.

9: Virgil, *Ec.*, vi. 10.

10: *Ipsa testimonia*. This is what he calls in other places *Hebraica veritas*. Jerome was right in the main in correcting the LXX, and other Greek versions by the Hebrew. He was not aware (as has been since made clear) that there are various readings in the Hebrew itself, and that these may

sometimes be corrected by the LXX., which was made from older mss.

11: That is, by the obeli (⏏), to show what has been left out, and the asterisk (*), to show what has been inserted.

12: That is, from the copies of the LXX. commonly used in the fourth century.

13: Larger Commentaries.

14: Daughter of Paula. See Letter XXXIX.

Prefaces to the Books of the Vulgate Version of the Old Testament

Prefaces to the Books of the Vulgate Version of the Old Testament.

Preface to Genesis.

Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. The Books of Samuel and Kings.

Chronicles.

Ezra and Nehemiah.

Esther.

Job.

Psalms.

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs.

Isaiah.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Daniel. The Twelve Minor Prophets.

Prefaces to the Books of the Vulgate Version of the Old Testament. This version was not undertaken with ecclesiastical sanction as was the case with the Gospels, but at the request of private friends, or from Jerome's "own sense of the imperious necessity of the work." It was wholly made at Bethlehem, and was begun about a.d. 391, and finished about a.d. 404. The approximate dates of the several books are given before each Preface in the following pages.

Preface to Genesis. This Preface was addressed to Desiderius, but which of the three correspondents of Jerome who bore this name is uncertain (See Article Desiderius in Smith and Wace's "Dictionary of Christian Biography"). We do not give it because it has been given at length as a specimen of the rest, in Jerome's "Apology," book ii., vol. iii. of this series, pp. 515-516). Jerome in it complains that he is accused of forging a new version. He justifies his undertaking by showing that in the versions then current many passages were left out (though they exist in our copies of the LXX.), such as "Out of Egypt" (Hos. xi. 1); "They shall look on him whom they pierced" (Zech. xii. 10), etc., which are quoted in the New Testament and are found in the Hebrew. He accounts for these omissions by the suggestion that the LXX. were afraid of offending Ptolemy Lagus for whom they worked, and who was a Platonist. He rejects the fable of the LXX. being shut up in separate cells and producing an identical version, and protests against the notion that they were inspired, and he urges his calumniators, by applying to those who knew Hebrew, to test the correctness of his version.

There is no Preface to the other books of the Pentateuch. From the allusion to the work on the Pentateuch as lately finished, in the Preface to Joshua, which was published in 404, it is presumed that the date of the translation of the Pentateuch is 403.

Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. The Preface to these books was written a.d. 404; Jerome speaks of the death of Paula, which took place in that year, and the work is addressed to Eustochium alone. The Preface is chiefly occupied with a defence of his translation. He tells those who carp at it that they are not bound to read it, and mentions that the Church had given no final sanction to the LXX., but read the book of Daniel in Theodotion's version. The books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, were probably the last of the Vulgate translation; the Preface declares Jerome's intention of devoting himself henceforward to the Commentaries on the Prophets, a work which took up the remainder of his life. The Books of Samuel and Kings. This Preface was the first in order of publication. It was set forth as an exposition of the principles adopted by Jerome in all his translations from the Hebrew—the "Helmeted Preface," as he calls it in the beginning of the last paragraph, with which he was prepared to do battle against all who impugn his design and methods. It was addressed to Paula and Eustochium, and published about a.d. 391. That the Hebrews have twenty-two letters is testified by the Syrian and Chaldaean languages which are nearly related to the Hebrew, for they have twenty-two elementary sounds which are pronounced the same way, but are differently written. The Samaritans also employ just the same number of letters in their copies of the Pentateuch of Moses, and differ only in the shape and outline of the letters. And it is certain that Esdras, the scribe and teacher of the law, after the capture of Jerusalem and the restoration of the temple by Zerubbabel, invented¹ other letters which we now use, although up to that time the Samaritan and Hebrew characters were the same. In the² book of Numbers, also, where we have the census of the Levites and priests, the mystic teaching of Scripture conducts us to the same result. And we find the four-lettered name of the Lord in certain Greek books written to this day in the ancient characters. The thirty-seventh Psalm, moreover, the one hundred and eleventh, the one hundred and twelfth, the one hundred and nineteenth, and the one hundred and forty-fifth, although they are written in different metres, have for their³ acrostic framework an alphabet of the same number of letters. The Lamentations of Jeremiah, and his Prayer, the Proverbs of Solomon also, towards the end, from the place where we read "Who will find a brave woman?" are instances of the same number of letters forming the division into sections. And, again, five are double letters, viz., Caph, Mem, Nun, Phe, Sade, for at the beginning and in the middle of words they are written one way, and at the end another way. Whence it happens that, by most people, five of the books are reckoned as double, viz., Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Jeremiah, with Kinoth, i.e., his Lamentations. As, then, there are twenty-two elementary characters by means of which we write in Hebrew all we say, and the compass of the human voice is contained within their limits, so we reckon twenty-two books, by which, as by the alphabet of the doctrine of God, a righteous man is instructed in tender infancy, and, as it were, while still at the breast. The first of these books is called Bresith, to which we give the name Genesis. The second, Elle Smoth, which bears the name Exodus; the third, Vaiecrea, that is Leviticus; the fourth, Vaiedabber, which we call Numbers; the fifth, Elle Addabarim, which is entitled Deuteronomy. These are the five books of Moses, which they properly call⁴ Thorath, that is law. The second class is composed of the Prophets, and they begin with Jesus the son of Nave, who among them is called Joshua the son of Nun. Next in the series is Sophtim, that is the book of Judges; and in the same book they include Ruth, because the events narrated occurred in the

days of the Judges. Then comes Samuel, which we call First and Second Kings. The fourth is Malachim, that is, Kings, which is contained in the third and fourth volumes of Kings. And it is far better to say Malachim, that is Kings, than Malachoth, that is Kingdoms. For the author does not describe the Kingdoms of many nations, but that of one people, the people of Israel, which is comprised in the twelve tribes. The fifth is Isaiah, the sixth, Jeremiah, the seventh, Ezekiel, the eighth is the book of the Twelve Prophets, which is called among the Jews⁵ Thare Asra. To the third class belong the Hagiographa, of which the first book begins with Job, the second with David, whose writings they divide into five parts and comprise in one volume of Psalms; the third is Solomon, in three books, Proverbs, which they call Parables, that is Masaloth, Ecclesiastes, that is Coeleth, the Song of Songs, which they denote by the title Sir Assirim; the sixth is Daniel; the seventh, Dabre Aiamim, that is, Words of Days, which we may more expressively call a chronicle of the whole of the sacred history, the book that amongst us is called First and Second⁶ Chronicles; the eighth, Ezra, which itself is likewise divided amongst Greeks and Latins into⁷ two books; the ninth is Esther. And so there are also twenty-two books of the Old Testament; that is, five of Moses, eight of the prophets, nine of the Hagiographa, though some include Ruth and Kinoth (Lamentations) amongst the Hagiographa, and think that these books ought to be reckoned separately; we should thus have twenty-four books of the old law. And these the Apocalypse of John represents by the twenty-four elders, who adore the Lamb, and with downcast looks offer their crowns, while in their presence stand the four living creatures with eyes before and behind, that is, looking to the past and the future, and with unwearied voice crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast, and art, and art to come. This preface to the Scriptures may serve as a "helmeted" introduction to all the books which we turn from Hebrew into Latin, so that we may be assured that what is not found in our list must be placed amongst the Apocryphal writings. Wisdom, therefore, which generally bears the name of Solomon, and the book of Jesus, the Son of Sirach, and Judith, and Tobias, and the Shepherd are not in the canon. The first book of Maccabees I have found to be Hebrew, the second is Greek, as can be proved from the very style. Seeing that all this is so, I beseech you, my reader, not to think that my labours are in any sense intended to disparage the old translators. For the service of the tabernacle of God each one offers what he can; some gold and silver and precious stones, others linen and blue and purple and scarlet; we shall do well if we offer skins and goats' hair. And yet the Apostle pronounces our more contemptible parts more necessary than others. Accordingly, the beauty of the tabernacle as a whole and in its several kinds (and the ornaments of the church present and future) was covered with skins and goats'-hair cloths, and the heat of the sun and the injurious rain were warded off by those things which are of less account. First read, then, my Samuel and Kings; mine, I say, mine. For whatever by diligent translation and by anxious emendation we have learnt and made our own, is ours. And when you understand that whereof you were before ignorant, either, if you are grateful, reckon me a translator, or, if ungrateful, a para-phraser, albeit I am not in the least conscious of having deviated from the Hebrew original. At all events, if you are incredulous, read the Greek and Latin manuscripts and compare them with these poor efforts of mine, and wherever you see they disagree, ask some Hebrew (though you ought rather to place confidence in me), and if he confirm our view, I suppose you will not think him a soothsayer and suppose that he and I have, in rendering the same passage, divined alike. But I ask you also, the⁸ handmaidens of Christ, who anoint the head of your reclining Lord with the most precious ointment of faith, who by no means seek the Saviour in the tomb, for whom Christ has long since ascended to the Father-I

beg you to confront with the shields of your prayers the mad dogs who bark and rage against me, and go about the city, and think themselves learned if they disparage others. I, knowing my lowliness, will always remember what we are told.⁹ "I said, I will take heed to my ways that I offend not in my tongue. I have set a guard upon my mouth while the sinner standeth against me. I became dumb, and was humbled, and kept silence from good words."

Chronicles. This Preface is almost wholly a repetition of the arguments adduced in the Preface to Genesis. It is addressed to Chromatius, bishop of Aquileia, who took great interest in the work and provided funds for its continuance. The date is a.d. 395.

Ezra and Nehemiah. This Preface is addressed to Domnio (a Roman presbyter. See Letters L., and XLVII. 3, Paulinus, Ep. 3) and Rogatianus, of whom nothing is known. It was written a.d. 394. It is a repetition of his constant ground of self-defence, and contains a noble expression of his determination to carry the work through. "The serpent may hiss, and

"'Victorious Sinon hurl his brand of fire,' but never shall my mouth be closed. Cut off my tongue; it will still stammer out something.

Esther. To Paula and Eustochium, early in 404. Merely assures them that he is acting as a faithful translator, adding nothing of his own; whereas in the version then in common use (vulgata), "the book is drawn out into all kinds of perplexing entanglements of language."

Job. This was put into circulation about the same time as the sixteen prophets, that is, about the year 393. It was written in 392. It has no dedication, but is full of personal interest, and shows the deplorable state in which the text of many parts of Scripture was before his time, thus justifying his boast, "I have rescued Job from the dunghill."

I am compelled at every step in my treatment of the books of Holy Scripture to reply to the abuse of my opponents, who charge my translation with being a censure of the Seventy; as though Aquila among Greek authors, and Symmachus and Theodotion, had not rendered word for word, or paraphrased, or combined the two methods in a sort of translation which is neither the one nor the other; and as though Origen had not marked all the books of the Old Testament with obeli and asterisks, which he either introduced or adopted from Theodotion, and inserted in the old translation, thus showing that what he added was deficient in the older version. My detractors must therefore learn either to receive altogether what they have in part admitted, or they must erase my translation and at the same time their own asterisks. For they must allow that those translators who it is clear have left out numerous details, have erred in some points; especially in the book of Job, where, if you withdraw such passages as have been added and marked with asterisks, the greater part of the book will be cut away. This, at all events, will be so in Greek. On the other hand, previous to the publication of our recent translation with asterisks and obeli, about seven or eight hundred lines were missing in the Latin, so that the book, mutilated, torn, and disintegrated, exhibits its deformity to those who publicly read it. The present translation follows no ancient translator, but will be found to reproduce now the exact words, now the meaning, now both together of the original Hebrew, Arabic, and occasionally the Syriac. For an indirectness and a slipperiness attaches to the whole book, even in the Hebrew; and, as orators say in Greek, it¹⁰ is tricked out with figures of speech, and while it says one thing, it does another; just as if you close your hand to hold an eel or a little¹¹ muraena, the more you squeeze it, the sooner it escapes. I

remember that in order to understand this volume, I paid a not inconsiderable sum for the services of a teacher, a native of Lydda, who was amongst the Hebrews reckoned to be in the front rank; whether I profited at all by his teaching, I do not know; of this one thing I am sure, that I could translate only that which I previously understood. Well, then, from the beginning of the book to the words of Job, the Hebrew version is in prose. Further, from the words of Job where he says,¹² "May the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, a man-child is conceived," to the place where before the close of the book it is written¹³ "Therefore I blame myself and repent in dust and ashes," we have hexameter verses running in dactyl and spondee: and owing to the idiom of the language other feet are frequently introduced not containing the same number of syllables, but the same quantities. Sometimes, also, a sweet and musical rhythm is produced by the breaking up of the verses in accordance with the laws of metre, a fact better known to prosodists than to the ordinary reader. But from the aforesaid verse to the end of the book the small remaining section is a prose composition. And if it seem incredible to any one that the Hebrews really have metres, and that, whether we consider the Psalter or the Lamentations of Jeremiah, or almost all the songs of Scripture, they bear a resemblance to our Flaccus, and the Greek Pindar, and Alcaeus, and Sappho, let him read Philo, Josephus, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, and with the aid of their testimony he will find that I speak the truth. Wherefore, let my barking critics listen as I tell them that my motive in toiling at this book was not to censure the ancient translation, but that those passages in it which are obscure, or those which have been omitted, or at all events, through the fault of copyists have been corrupted, might have light thrown upon them by our translation; for we have some slight knowledge of Hebrew, and, as regards Latin, my life, almost from the cradle, has been spent in the company of grammarians, rhetoricians, and philosophers. But if, since the version of the Seventy was published, and even now, when the Gospel of Christ is beaming forth, the Jewish Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, judaising heretics, have been welcomed amongst the Greeks -heretics, who, by their deceitful translation, have concealed many mysteries of salvation, and yet, in the Hexapla are found in the Churches and are expounded by churchmen; ought not I, a Christian, born of Christian parents, and who carry the standard of the cross on my brow, and am zealous to recover what is lost, to correct what is corrupt, and to disclose in pure and faithful language the mysteries of the Church, ought not I, let me, ask, much more to escape the reprobation of fastidious or malicious readers? Let those who will keep the old books with their gold and silver letters on purple skins, or, to follow the ordinary phrase, in "uncial characters," loads of writing rather than manuscripts, if only they will leave for me and mine, our poor pages and copies which are less remarkable for beauty than for accuracy. I have toiled to translate both the Greek versions of the Seventy, and the Hebrew which is the basis of my own, into Latin. Let every one choose which he likes, and¹⁴ he will find out that what he objects to in me, is the result of sound learning, not of malice.

Psalms.

Dedicated to Sophronius about the year 392. Jerome had, while at Rome, made a translation of the Psalms from the LXX., which he had afterwards corrected by collation with the Hebrew text (see the Preface addressed to Paula and Eustochium, *infra*). His friend Sophronius, in quoting the Psalms to the Jews, was constantly met with the reply, "It does not so stand in the Hebrew." He, therefore, urged Jerome to translate them direct from the original. Jerome, in presenting the translation to his friend, records the intention which he had expressed of translating the new Latin

version into Greek. This we know was done by Sophronius, not only for the Psalms, but also for the rest of the Vulgate, and was valued by the Greeks (Apol. ii. 24, vol. iii. of this series, p. 515).

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs.

Dedicated to Chromatius and Heliodorus, a.d. 393. The Preface is important as showing the help given to Jerome by his friends, the rapidity of his work, and his view of the Apocrypha. We give the two chief passages.

It is well that my letter should couple those who are coupled in the episcopate; and that I should not separate on paper those who are bound in one by the law of Christ. I would have written the commentaries on Hosea, Amos, Zechariah, and the Kings, which you ask of me, if I had not been prevented by illness. You give me comfort by the supplies you send me; you support my secretaries and copyists, so that the efforts of all my powers may be given to you. And then all at once comes a thick crowd of people with all sorts of demands, as if it was just that I should neglect your hunger and work for others, or as if, in the matter of giving and receiving, I had a debt to any one but you. And so, though I am broken by a long illness, yet, not to be altogether silent and dumb amongst you this year, I have dedicated to you three days' work, that is to say, the translation of the three books of Solomon.

After speaking of the books of the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus, which were sent at the same time, the Preface continues:

As, then, the Church reads Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees, but does not admit them among the canonical Scriptures, so let it read these two volumes for the edification of the people, not to give authority to doctrines of the Church. If any one is better pleased with the edition of the Seventy, there it is, long since corrected by me. For it is not our aim in producing the new to destroy the old. And yet if our friend reads carefully, he will find that our version is the more intelligible, for it has not turned sour by being poured three times over into different vessels, but has been drawn straight from the press, and stored in a clean jar, and has thus preserved its own flavour.

Isaiah.

Addressed to Paula and Eustochium, about a.d. 393. This Preface speaks of Isaiah as using the polished diction natural to a man of rank and refinement, as an Evangelist more than a prophet, and a poet rather than a prose writer. He then reiterates his defence of his translation, saying that now, "The Jews can no longer scoff at our Churches because of the falsity of our Scriptures."

Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Short Prefaces without dedication, but probably addressed to Paula and Eustochium, about a.d. 393.

Daniel. The Preface is interesting as showing the difficulties caused by the incorporation of apocryphal matter into this book, the fact that Theodotion's version, not the LXX., was read in the Churches, and that the book was reckoned by the Jews not among the prophets but among the Hagiographa. It was addressed to Paula and Eustochium about a.d. 392. The Septuagint version of Daniel the prophet is not read by the Churches of our Lord and Saviour. They use Theodotion's

version, but how this came to pass I cannot tell. Whether it be that the language is Chaldee, which differs in certain peculiarities from our speech, and the Seventy were unwilling to follow those deviations in a translation; or that the book was published in the name of the Seventy, by some one or other not familiar with Chaldee, or if there be some other reason, I know not; this one thing I can affirm—that it differs widely from the original, and is rightly rejected. For we must bear in mind that Daniel and Ezra, the former especially, were written in Hebrew letters, but in the Chaldee language, as was¹⁵ one section of Jeremiah; and, further, that Job has much affinity with Arabic. As for myself, when, in lily youth, after reading the flowery rhetoric of Quintilian and Tully, I entered on the vigorous study of this language, the expenditure of much time and energy barely enabled me to utter the puffing and hissing words; I seemed to be walking in a sort of underground chamber with a few scattered rays of light shining down upon me; and when at last I met with Daniel, such a sense of weariness came over me that, in a fit of despair, I could have counted all my former toil as useless. But there was a certain Hebrew who encouraged me, and was for ever quoting for my benefit the saying that "Persistent labour conquers all things"; and so, conscious that among Hebrews I was only a smatterer, I once more began to study Chaldee. And, to confess the truth, to this day I can read and understand Chaldee better than I can pronounce it. I say this to show you how hard it is to master the book of Daniel, which in Hebrew contains neither the history of Susanna, nor the hymn of the three youths, nor the fables of Bel and the Dragon; because, however, they are to be found everywhere, we have formed them into an appendix, prefixing to them an obelus, and thus making an end of them, so as not to seem to the uninformed to have cut off a large portion of the volume. I heard a certain Jewish teacher, when mocking at the history of Susanna, and saying that it was the fiction of some Greek or other, raise the same objection which Africanus brought against Origen—that these etymologies of¹⁶ sxisai from¹⁷ sxinoj, and¹⁸ prisai from¹⁹ prinoj, are to be traced to the Greek. To make the point clear to Latin readers: It is as if he were to say, playing upon the word ilex, illico pereas; or upon lentiscus, may the angel make a lentil of you, or may you perish nan lente, or may you lentus (that is pliant or compliant) be led to death, or anything else suiting the name of the tree. Then he would captiously maintain that the three youths in the furnace of raging fire had leisure enough to amuse themselves with making poetry, and to summon all the elements in turn to praise God. Or what was there miraculous, he would say, or what indication of divine inspiration, in the slaying of the dragon with a lump of pitch, or in frustrating the schemes of the priests of Bel? Such deeds were more the results of an able man's forethought than of a prophetic spirit. But when he came to²⁰ Habakkuk and read that he was carried from Judaea into Chaldaea to bring a dish of food to Daniel, he asked where we found an instance in the whole of the Old Testament of any saint with an ordinary body flying through the air, and in a quarter of an hour traversing vast tracts of country. And when one of us who was rather too ready to speak adduced the instance of Ezekiel, and said that he was transported from Chaldaea into Judaea, he derided the man and proved from the book itself that Ezekiel, in spirit, saw himself carried over. And he argued that even our own Apostle, being an accomplished man and one who had been taught the law by Hebrews, had not dared to affirm that he was bodily rapt away, but had said:²¹ "Whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth." By these and similar arguments he used to refute the apocryphal fables in the Church's book. Leaving this for the reader to pronounce upon as he may think fit, I give warning that Daniel in Hebrew is not found among the prophets, but amongst the writers of the Hagiographa; for all Scripture is by them divided into three parts: the law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa, which have respectively

five, eight, and eleven books, a point which we cannot now discuss. But as to the objections which²² Porphyry raises against this prophet, or rather brings against the book,²³ Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinaris may be cited as witnesses, for they replied to his folly in many thousand lines of writing, whether with satisfaction to the curious reader I know not. Therefore, I beseech you, Paula and Eustochium, to pour out your supplications for me to the Lord, that so long as I am in this poor body, I may write something pleasing to you, useful to the Church, worthy of posterity. As for my contemporaries, I am indifferent to their opinions, for they pass from side to side as they are moved by love or hatred. The Twelve Minor Prophets. This Preface, dedicated to Paula and Eustochium in a.d. 392, contains nothing of importance, merely mentioning the dates of a few of the prophets. and the fact that the Twelve Prophets were counted by the Hebrews as forming a single book.

1: That is, the square character which was of Assyrian origin. As to how far the tradition is true, see Davidson's "Biblical Criticisms" (1854), p. 22, and the authorities there referred to.

2: iii. 39. All the males from a month old and upwards are said to have been twenty-two thousand.

3: These are the alphabetical Psalms which, being mainly didactic, were written acrostically to assist the memory. Others partially acrostic are ix., x., xxv., xxxiv., to make the alphabet complete in xxxvii. (4: More correctly Torah.

5: The laws or instructions of Ezra. By many of the Jews Ezra was regarded as the author of the Twelve Prophets.

6: Jerome has in the text the Greek equivalent *paraleipomenon* .

7: That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

8: Paula and Eustochium.

9: Ps. xxxix. 2 sq.

10: *esxhmatismenoi* .

11: A small fish well known to the ancients, but apparently not identified with any species known to us.

12: Job iii. 3.

13: xlii. 6.

14: Reading *studiosum me magis quam malevolum probet*. Substituting *se* for *me*, according to some manuscripts, we must translate "and thus show that he is actuated more by a love of learning than by malice."

15: x. 11.

16: To split. The word has no sort of etymological connection with *sxinoi* . Susanna, 54, 55, 58, 59. When the first elder says the crime was committed under a mastich tree (*schinos*), Daniel answers, "God shall cut thee in two" (*schisei*).

17: The mastich tree.

18: To saw.

19: The holm-oak.

20: In the LXX. the story of Bel and the Dragon bears a special heading as "part of the prophecy of Habakkuk."-Westcott. The angel is said to have carried Habakkuk with a dish of food in his hand for Daniel from Judaea to Babylon.

21: Cor. xii. 2.

22: The bitter enemy of the Christian faith. Born at Tyre 223. Died at Rome about 304.

23: Bishop of Patara in Lycia, and afterwards of Tyre. Suffered martyrdom 302 or 303.

Prefaces to the Vulgate Version of the New Testament

Prefaces to the Vulgate Version of the New Testament. The Four Gospels.

Prefaces to the Vulgate Version of the New Testament. This version was made at Rome between the years 382 and 385. The only Preface remaining is that to the translation of the Gospels, but Jerome speaks of, and quotes from, his version of the other parts also. The work was undertaken at the request and under the sanction of Pope Damasus, who had consulted Jerome in a.d. 383 on certain points of Scriptural criticism, and apparently in the same year urged him to revise the current Latin version by help of the Greek original. It is to be observed that Jerome's aim was "to revise the old Latin, and not to make a new version. When Augustin expressed to him his gratitude for 'his translation of the Gospels,' he tacitly corrected him by substituting for this phrase 'the correction of the New Testament.' Yet, although he proposed to himself this limited object, the various forms of corruption which had been introduced were, as he describes, so numerous that the difference of the old and revised (Hieronymian) text is throughout clear and striking." See article by Westcott in "Dictionary of Bible," on the Vulgate, and Fremantle's article on Jerome in "Dictionary of Christian Biography." The Four Gospels.

Addressed to Pope1 Damasus, a.d. 383.

You urge me to revise the old Latin version, and, as it were, to sit in judgment on the copies of the Scriptures which are now scattered throughout the whole world; and, inasmuch as they differ from one another, you would have me decide which of them agree with the Greek original. The labour is one of love, but at the same time both perilous and presumptuous; for in judging others I must be content to be judged by all; and how can I dare to change the language of the world in its hoary old age, and carry it back to the early days of its infancy? Is there a man, learned or unlearned, who will not, when he takes the volume into his hands, and perceives that what he reads does not suit his settled tastes, break out immediately into violent language, and call me a forger and a profane person for having the audacity to add anything to the ancient books, or to make any changes or corrections therein? Now there are two consoling reflections which enable me to bear the odium-in the first place, the command is given by you who are the supreme bishop; and secondly, even on the showing of those who revile us, readings at variance with the early copies cannot be right. For if we are to pin our faith to the Latin texts, it is for our opponents to tell us which; for there are almost as many forms of texts as there are copies. If, on the other hand, we are to glean the truth from a comparison of many, why not go back to the original Greek and correct the mistakes introduced by inaccurate translators, and the blundering alterations of confident but ignorant critics, and, further, all that has been inserted or changed by copyists more asleep than awake? I am not discussing the Old Testament, which was turned into Greek by the Seventy elders, and2 has reached us by a descent of three steps. I do not ask what3 Aquila and4 Symmachus think, or why5 Theodotion takes a middle course between theancients and the moderns. I am willing to let that be the true translation which had apostolic approval. I am now speaking of the New Testament. This was undoubtedly composed in Greek, with the exception of the work of Matthew

the Apostle, who was the first to commit to writing the Gospel of Christ, and who published his work in Judaea in Hebrew characters. We must confess that as we have it in our language it is marked by discrepancies, and now that the stream is distributed into different channels we must go back to the fountainhead. I pass over those manuscripts which are associated with the names of Lucian and Hesychius, and the authority of which is perversely maintained by a handful of disputatious persons. It is obvious that these writers could not amend anything in the Old Testament after the labours of the Seventy; and it was useless to correct the New, for versions of Scripture which already exist in the languages of many nations show that their additions are false. I therefore promise in this short Preface the four Gospels only, which are to be taken in the following order, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, as they have been revised by a comparison of the Greek manuscripts. Only early ones have been used. But to avoid any great divergences from the Latin which we are accustomed to read, I have used my pen with some restraint, and while I have corrected only such passages as seemed to convey a different meaning, I have allowed the rest to remain as they are. The Preface concludes with a description of lists of words made by Eusebius and translated by Jerome, designed to show what passages occur in two or more of the Gospels.

1: Made pope 366, died 384. Jerome had been his secretary at the Council held at Rome in 382, and continued his literary services till the pope's death, in 385.

2: That is, after being translated from Hebrew into Greek, and from Greek into Latin.

3: Aquila belonged to the second century, but whether to the first half, or to the early part of the second half, cannot be determined. He was a Jewish proselyte, of Sinope in Pontus, and is supposed to have translated the books of the Old Testament into Greek in order to assist the Hellenistic Jews in their controversies with Christians. Jerome's estimate of him varied from time to time. In his commentary on Hos. ii., Is. xlix., and Letter XXVIII., etc., he treats him as worthy of credit. On the other hand, in the letter to Pammachius. *De Opt. Gen. Interp.* (LVII. 11), he describes him as contentiosus; but in Letter XXXVI. 12, he denies that he is such. In the preface to Job he speaks of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion as "Judaizing heretics, who by their deceitful translation have concealed many mysteries of salvation." The second edition of Aquila's version, which was extremely literal, was highly esteemed by the Jews, and was called by them the Hebrew verity. See Davidson's "Biblical Criticism," p. 215, etc.

4: Symmachus was the author of the third Greek version. He is said to have been a Samaritan by birth. The date of his version cannot be accurately fixed; but, apparently, it appeared after Theodotion's. "He does not adhere to the text so closely as to render it verbatim into Greek; but chooses to express the same in perspicuous and intelligible language."-Davidson.

5: Theodotion, the author of the second Greek version, was a native of Ephesus. His version is thought to have been made before 160. "The mode of translation adopted by him holds an intermediate place between the scrupulous literality of Aquila and the free interpretation of Symmachus," and his work was more highly valued by Christians than that of either Aquila or Symmachus. Daniel was read in his version in the churches (Pref. to Joshua).

6: Lucian in Syria and Hesychius in Egypt attempted their recensions about the middle of the third century, the time when Origen also began to labour in the same direction. Lucian's recension, also called the Constantinopolitan, and to which the Slavonian and Gothic versions belong, spread over

Asia Minor and Thrace. See the Preface to the Chronicles. It was decreed by a council held under Pope Gelasius, a.d. 494, that "the Gospels which Lucian and Hesychius falsified are apocryphal."

The Dialogue Against the Luciferians

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Introduction. The Dialogue Against the Luciferians

Introduction. This Dialogue was written about 379, seven years after the death of Lucifer, and very soon after Jerome's return from his hermit life in the desert of Chalcis. Though he received ordination from Paulinus, who had been consecrated by Lucifer, he had no sympathy with Lucifer's narrower views, as he shows plainly in this Dialogue. Lucifer, who was bishop of Cagliari in Sardinia, first came into prominent notice about a.d. 354, when great efforts were being made to procure a condemnation of S. Athanasius by the Western bishops. He energetically took up the cause of the saint, and at his own request was sent by Liberius, bishop of Rome, in company with the priest Pancratius and the deacon Hilarius, on a mission to the Emperor Constantius. The emperor granted a Council, which met at Milan in a.d. 354. Lucifer distinguished himself by resisting a proposition to condemn Athanasius, and did not hesitate to oppose the emperor with much violence. In consequence of this he was sent into exile from a.d. 355 to a.d. 361, the greater portion of which time was spent at Eleutheropolis in Palestine, though he afterwards removed to the Thebaid. It was at this time that his polemical writings appeared, the tone and temper of which is indicated by the mere titles *De Regibus Apostaticis* (of Apostate Kings), *De non Conveniendo cum Haereticis*, etc. (of not holding communion with heretics). On the death of Constantius in 361, Julian permitted the exiled bishops to return; but Lucifer instead of going to Alexandria where a Council was to be held under the presidency of Athanasius for the healing of a schism in the Catholic party at Antioch (some of which held to Meletius, while others followed Eustathius), preferred to go straight to Antioch. There he ordained Paulinus, the leader of the latter section, as bishop of the Church. Eusebius of Vercellae soon arrived with the synodal letters of the Council of Alexandria, but, finding himself thus anticipated, and shrinking from a collision with his friend, he retired immediately. Lucifer stayed, and "declared that he would not hold communion with Eusebius or any who adopted the moderate policy of the Alexandrian Council. By this Council it had been determined that actual Arians, if they renounced their heresy, should be pardoned, but not invested with ecclesiastical functions; and that those bishops who had merely consented to Arianism should remain undisturbed. It was this latter concession which offended Lucifer, and he became henceforth the champion of the principle that no one who had yielded to any compromise whatever with Arianism should be allowed to hold an ecclesiastical office." He was thus brought into antagonism with Athanasius himself, who, it has been seen, presided at Alexandria. Eventually he returned to his see in Sardinia where, according to Jerome's Chronicle, he died in 371. Luciferianism became extinct in the beginning of the following century, if not earlier. It hardly appears to have been formed into a separate organization, though an appeal was made to the emperor by some Luciferian presbyters about the year 384, and both Ambrose and Augustine speak of him as having fallen into the schism. The argument of the Dialogue may be thus stated. It has been pointed out above that Lucifer of Cagliari, who had been banished from his see in the reign of Constantius because of his adherence to the cause of Athanasius, had, on the

announcement of toleration at the accession of Julian (361), gone to Antioch and consecrated Paulinus a bishop. There were then three bishops of Antioch, Dorotheus the Arian (who had succeeded Euzoius in 376), Meletius who, though an Athanasian in opinion, had been consecrated by Arians or Semi-Arians, and Paulinus; besides Vitalis, bishop of a congregation of Apollinarians. Lucifer, in the earnestness of his anti-Arian opinion, refused to acknowledge as bishops those who had come over from Arianism, though he accepted the laymen who had been baptized by Arian bishops. This opinion led to the Luciferian schism, and forms the subject of the Dialogue. The point urged by Orthodoxus throughout is that, since the Luciferian accepts as valid the baptism conferred by Arian bishops, it is inconsistent in him not to acknowledge the bishops who have repented of their Arian opinions. The Luciferian at first (2) in his eagerness, declares the Arians to be no better than heathen; but he sees that he has gone too far, and retracts this opinion. Still it is one thing, he says, (3) to admit a penitent neophyte, another to admit a man to be bishop and celebrate the Eucharist. We do not wish, he says (4) to preclude individuals who have fallen from repentance. And we, replies Orthodoxus, by admitting the bishops save not them only but their flocks also. "The salt," says the Luciferian (5), "which has lost its savour cannot be salted," and, "What communion has Christ with Belial?" But this, it is answered (6), would prove that Arians could not confer baptism at all. Yes, says the objector, they are like John the Baptist, whose baptism needed to be followed by that of Christ. But, it is replied, the bishop gives Christ's baptism and confers the Holy Spirit. The confirmation which follows (9) is rather a custom of the churches than the necessary means of grace. The argument is felt to be approaching to a philosophical logomachy(10, 11), but it is resumed by the Luciferian. There is a real difference, he says (12), between the man who in his simplicity accepts baptism from an Arian bishop, and the bishop himself who understands the heresy. Yet both, it is replied (13), when they are penitent, should be received. At this point (14) the Luciferian yields. But he wishes to be assured that what Orthodoxus recommends has been really the practice of the Church. This leads to a valuable chapter of Church history. Orthodoxus recalls the victories of the Church, which the Luciferians speak of as corrupt (15). The shame is that, though they have the true creed, they have too little faith. He then describes(17, 18) how the orthodox bishops were beguiled into accepting the creed of Ariminum, but afterwards saw their error (19). "The world groaned to find itself Arian." They did all that was possible to set things right. Why should they not be received, as all but the authors of heresy had been received at Nicaea? (20) Lucifer who was a good shepherd, and Hilary the Deacon, in separating their own small body into a sect have left the rest a prey to the wolf(20, 21). The wheat and tares must grow together (22). This has been the principle of the Church (23). as shown by Scripture (24) and Apostolic custom, and even Cyprian, when he wished penitent heretics to be re-baptized (25), could not prevail. Even Hilary by receiving baptism from the Church which always has re-admitted heretics in repentance(26, 27) acknowledges this principle. In that Church and its divisions and practice it is our duty to abide.

1. It happened not long ago that a follower of Lucifer had a dispute with a son of the Church. His loquacity was odious and the language he employed most abusive. For he declared that the world belonged to the devil, and, as is commonly said by them at the present day, that the Church was turned into a brothel. His opponent on the other hand, with reason indeed, but without due regard to time and place, urged that Christ did not die in vain, and that it was for something more than a

Sardinian cloak of skins¹ that the Son of God came down from heaven. To be brief, the dispute was not settled when night interrupted the debate, and the lighting of the street-lamps gave the signal for the assembly to disperse. The combatants therefore withdrew, almost spitting in each other's faces, an arrangement having been previously made by the audience for a meeting in a quiet porch at daybreak. Thither, accordingly, they all came, and it was resolved that the words of both speakers should be taken down by reporters.

2. When all were seated, Helladius the Luciferian said, I want an answer first to my question. Are the Arians Christians or not?

Orthodoxus. I answer with another question, Are all heretics Christians?

L. If you call a man a heretic you deny that he is a Christian.

O. No heretics, then, are Christians.

L. I told you so before.

O. If they are not Christ's, they belong to the devil.

L. No one doubts that.

O. But if they belong to the devil, it makes no difference whether they are heretics or heathen.

L. I do not dispute the point.

O. We are then agreed that we must speak of a heretic as we would of a heathen.

L. Just so.

O. Now it is decided that heretics are heathen, put any question you please.

L. What I wanted to elicit by my question has been expressly stated, namely, that heretics are not Christians. Now comes the inference. If the Arians are heretics, and all heretics are heathen, the Arians are heathen too. But if the Arians are heathen and it is beyond dispute that the church has no communion with the Arians, that is with the heathen, it is clear that your church which welcomes bishops from the Arians, that is from the heathen, receives priests of the Capitol² rather than bishops, and accordingly it ought more correctly to be called the synagogue of AntiChrist than the Church of Christ.

O. Lo! what the prophet said is fulfilled:³ "They have digged a pit before me, they have fallen into the midst thereof themselves."

L. How so?

O. If the Arians are, as you say, heathen, and the assemblies of the Arians are the devil's camp, how is it that you receive a person who has been baptized in the devil's camp?

L. I do receive him, but as a penitent.

O. The fact is you don't know what you are saying. Does any one receive a penitent heathen?

L. In my simplicity I replied when we began that all heretics are heathen. But the question was a captious one, and you shall have the full credit of victory in the first point. I will now proceed to the second and maintain that a layman coming from the Arians ought to be received if penitent, but not a cleric.

O. And yet, if you concede me the first point, the second is mine too.

L. Show me how it comes to be yours.

O. Don't you know that the clergy and laity have only one Christ, and that there is not one God of converts and another of bishops? Why then should not he who receives laymen receive clerics also?

L. There is a difference between shedding tears for sin, and handling the body of Christ; there is a difference between lying prostrate at the feet of the brethren, and from the high altar administering the Eucharist to the people. It is one thing to lament over the past, another to abandon sin and live the glorified life in the Church. You who yesterday im-piously declared the Son of God to be a creature, you who every day, worse than a Jew, were wont to cast the stones of blasphemy at Christ, you whose hands are full of blood, whose pen was a soldier's spear, do you, the convert of a single hour, come into the Church as an adulterer might come to a virgin? If you repent of your sin, abandon your priestly functions: if you are shameless in your sin, remain what you were.

O. You are quite a rhetorician, and fly from the thicket of controversy to the open fields of declamation. But, I entreat you, refrain from common-places, and return to the ground and the lines marked out; afterwards, if you like, we will take a wider range.

L. There is no declamation in the case; my indignation is more than I can bear. Make what statements you please, argue as you please, you will never convince me that a penitent bishop should be treated like a penitent layman.

O. Since you put the whole thing in a nutshell and obstinately cling to your position, that the case of the bishop is different from that of the layman, I will do what you wish, and I shall not be sorry to avail myself of the opportunity you offer and come to close quarters. Explain why you receive a layman coming from the Arians, but do not receive a bishop.

L. I receive a layman who confesses that he has erred; and the Lord willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent.

O. Receive then also a bishop who, as well as the layman, confesses that he has erred, and it still holds good that the Lord willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent.

L. If he confesses his error why does he continue a bishop? Let him lay aside his⁴ episcopal functions, and I grant pardon to the penitent.

O. I will answer you in your own words. If a layman confesses his error, how is it he continues a layman? Let him lay aside his lay-priesthood, that is, his baptism, and I grant pardon to the penitent. For it is written⁵ "He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father." And again,⁶ "A holy nation, a royal priesthood, an elect race." Everything which is forbidden to a Christian, is forbidden to both bishop and layman. He who does penance condemns his former life.

If a penitent bishop may not continue what he was, neither may a penitent layman remain in that state on account of which he confesses himself a penitent.

L. We receive the laity, because no one will be induced to change, if he knows he must be baptized again. And then, if they are rejected, we become the cause of their destruction.

O. By receiving a layman you save a single soul: and I in receiving a bishop unite to the Church, I will not say the people of one city, but the whole⁷ province of which he is the head; if I drive him away, he will drag down many with him to ruin. Wherefore I beseech you to apply the same reason which you think you have for receiving the few to the salvation of the whole world. But if you are not satisfied with this, if you are so hard, or rather so unreasonably unmerciful as to think him who gave baptism an enemy of Christ, though you account him who received it a son, we do not so contradict ourselves: we either receive a bishop as well as the people which is constituted as a Christian people by him, or if we do not receive a bishop, we know that we must also reject his people.

5. L. Pray, have you not read what is said concerning the bishops,⁸ "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of man." And then there is the fact that the priest⁹ intercedes with God for the sinful people, while there is no one to entreat for the priest. Now these two passages of Scripture tend to the same conclusion. For as salt seasons all food and nothing is so pleasant as to please the palate without it: so the bishop is the seasoning of the whole world and of his own Church, and if he lose his savour through the denial of truth, or through heresy, or lust, or, to comprehend all in one word, through sin of any kind, by what other can he be seasoned, when he was the seasoning of all? The priest, we know, offers his oblation for the layman, lays his hand upon him when submissive, invokes the return of the Holy Spirit, and thus, after inviting the prayers of the people, reconciles to the altar him who had been delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit might he saved; nor does the restore one member to health until all the members have wept together with him. For a father easily pardons his son, when the mother entreats for her offspring. If then it is by the priestly order that a penitent layman is restored to the Church, and pardon follows where sorrow has gone before, it is clear that a priest who has been removed from his order cannot be restored to the place he has forfeited, because either he will be a penitent and then he cannot be a priest, or if he continues to hold office he cannot be brought back to the Church by penitential discipline. Will you dare to spoil the savour of the Church with the salt which has lost its savour? Will you replace at the altar the man who having been cast out ought to lie in the mire and be trodden under foot by all men? What then will become of the Apostle's command,¹⁰ "The bishop must be blameless as God's steward"? And again,¹¹ "But let a man prove himself, and so let him come." What becomes of our Lord's intimation,¹² "Neither cast your pearls before the swine"? But if you understand the words as a general admonition, how much more must care be exercised in the case of priests when so much precaution is taken where the laity are concerned?¹³ "Depart, I pray you," says the Lord by Moses, "from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins." And again in the Minor Prophets,¹⁴ "Their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted." And in the Gospel the Lord says,¹⁵ "The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." For when the bishop preaches the true faith the darkness is scattered from the hearts of all. And he gives the reason,¹⁶ "Neither

do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house." That is, God's motive for lighting the fire of His knowledge in the bishop is that he may not shine for himself only, but for the common benefit. And in the next sentence¹⁷ "If," says he, "thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!" And rightly; for since the bishop is appointed in the Church that he may restrain the people from error, how great will the error of the people be when he himself who teaches errs. How can he remit sins, who is himself a sinner? How can an impious man make a man holy? How shall the light enter into me, when my eye is blind? O misery! Antichrist's disciple governs the Church of Christ. And what are we to think of the words,¹⁸ "No man can serve two masters"? And that too¹⁹ "What communion hath light and darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" In the old testament we read,²⁰ "No man that hath a blemish shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord." And again,²¹ "Let the priests who come nigh to the Lord their God be clean, lest haply the Lord forsake them." And in the same place,²² "And when they draw nigh to minister in holy things, let them not bring sin upon themselves, lest they die." And there are many other passages which it would be an endless task to detail, and which I omit for the sake of brevity. For it is not the number of proofs that avails, but their weight. And all this proves that you with a little leaven have corrupted the whole lump of the Church, and receive the Eucharist to-day from the hand of one whom yesterday you loathed like an idol.

6. O. Your memory has served you, and you have certainly given us at great length many quotations from the sacred books: but after going all round the wood, you are caught in my hunting-nets. Let the case be as you would have it, that an Arian bishop is the enemy of Christ, let him be the salt that has lost its savour, let him be a lamp without flame, let him be an eye without a pupil: no doubt your argument will take you thus far-that he cannot salt another who himself has no salt: a blind man cannot enlighten others, nor set them on fire when his own light has gone out. But why, when you swallow food which he has seasoned, do you reproach the seasoned with being saltless? Your Church is bright with his flame, and do you accuse his lamp of being extinguished? He gives you eyes, and are you blind? Wherefore, I pray you, either give him the power of sacrificing since you approve his baptism, or reject his baptism if you do not think him a priest. For it is impossible that he who is holy in baptism should be a sinner at the altar.

L. But when I receive a lay penitent, it is with laying on of hands, and invocation of the Holy Spirit, for I know that the Holy Spirit cannot be given by heretics.

O. All the paths of your propositions lead to the same meeting-point, and it is with you as with the frightened deer-while you fly from the feathers fluttering in the wind, you become entangled in the strongest of nets. For seeing that a man, baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, becomes a temple of the Lord, and that while the old abode is destroyed a new shrine is built for the Trinity, how can you say that sins can be remitted among the Arians without the coming of the Holy Ghost? How is a soul purged from its former stains which has not the Holy Ghost? For it is not mere water which washes the soul, but it is itself first purified by the Spirit that it may be able to spiritually wash the souls of men.²³ "The Spirit of the Lord," says Moses, "moved upon the face of the waters," from which it appears that there is no baptism without the Holy Ghost. Bethesda, the pool in Judea, could not cure the limbs of those who suffered from bodily weakness without the advent of an angel,²⁴ and do you venture to bring me a soul washed with simple water, as though it had just come from the bath? Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, of whom it

is less correct to say that He was cleansed by washing than that by the washing of Himself He cleansed all waters, no sooner raised His head from the stream than He received the Holy Ghost. Not that He ever was without the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as He was born in the flesh through the Holy Ghost; but in order to prove that to be the true baptism by which the Holy Ghost comes. So then if an Arian cannot give the Holy Spirit, he cannot even baptize, because there is no baptism of the Church without the Holy Spirit. And you, when you receive a person baptized by an Arian and afterwards invoke the Holy Ghost, ought either to baptize him, because without the Holy Ghost he could not be baptized, or, if he was baptized in the Spirit, you must not invoke the Holy Ghost for your convert who received Him at the time of baptism.

7. L. Pray tell me, have you not read²⁵ in the Acts of the Apostles that those who had already been baptized by John, on their saying in reply to the Apostles question that they had not even heard what the Holy Ghost was, afterwards obtained the Holy Ghost? Whence it is clear that it is possible to be baptized, and yet not to have the Holy Ghost.

O. I do not think that those who form our audience are so ignorant of the sacred books that many words are needed to settle this little question. But before I say anything in support of my assertion, listen while I point out what confusion, upon your view, is introduced into Scripture. What do we mean by saying that John in his baptism could not give the Holy Spirit to others, yet gave him to Christ? And who is that John?²⁶ "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." He who used to say,²⁷ "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world": I say too little, he who from his mother's womb cried out,²⁸ "And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come unto me," did he not give the Holy Ghost? And did²⁹ Ananias give him to Paul? It perhaps looks like boldness in me to prefer him to all other men. Hear then the words of our Lord,³⁰ "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." For no prophet had the good fortune both to announce the coming of Christ, and to point Him out with the finger. And what necessity is there for me to dwell upon the praises of so illustrious a man when God the Father even calls him an angel?³¹ "Behold, I send my messenger (angel) before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." He must have been an angel who after lodging in his mother's womb at once began to frequent the desert wilds, and while still an infant played with serpents; who, when his eyes had once gazed on Christ thought nothing else worth looking at; who exercised his voice, worthy of a messenger of God, in the words of the Lord, which are sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. And, to delay my question no further, thus it behooved³² the Forerunner of the Lord to grow up. Now is it possible that a man of such character and renown did not give the Holy Ghost, while Cornelius the centurion received Him before baptism? Tell me, pray, why could he not give Him? You don't know? Then listen to the teaching of Scripture: the baptism of John did not so much consist in the forgiveness of sins as in being a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, that is, for a future remission, which was to follow through the sanctification of Christ. For it is written,³³ "John came, who baptized in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." And soon after,³⁴ "And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." For as he himself preceded Christ as His forerunner, so also his baptism was the prelude to the Lord's baptism.³⁵ "He that is of the earth," he said, "speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all." And again,³⁶ "I indeed baptize you with water, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." But if John, as he himself confessed, did not baptize with the

Spirit, it follows that he did not forgive sins either, for no man has his sins remitted without the Holy Ghost. Or if you contentiously argue that, because the baptism of John was from heaven, therefore sins were forgiven by it, show me what more there is for us to get in Christ's baptism. Because it forgives sins, it releases from Gehenna. Because it releases from Gehenna, it is perfect. But no baptism can be called perfect except that which depends on the cross and resurrection of Christ. Thus, although John himself said,³⁷ "He must increase, but I must decrease," in your perverse scrupulosity you give more than is due to the baptism of the servant, and destroy that of the master to which you leave no more than to the other. What is the drift of your assertion? Just this-it does not strike you as strange that those who had been baptized by John, should afterwards by the laying on of hands receive the Holy Ghost, although it is evident that they did not obtain even remission of sins apart from the faith which was to follow. But you who receive a person baptized by the Arians and allow him to have perfect baptism, after that admission do you invoke the Holy Ghost as if this were still some slight defect, whereas there is no baptism of Christ without the Holy Ghost? But I have wandered too far, and when I might have met my opponent face to face and repelled his attack, I have only thrown a few light darts from a distance. The baptism of John was so imperfect that it is plain they who had been baptized by him were afterwards baptized with the baptism of Christ. For thus the history relates³⁸ "And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus: And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, immediately the Holy Ghost fell on them." If then they were baptized with the true and lawful baptism of the Church, and thus received the Holy Ghost: do you follow the apostles and baptize those who have not had Christian baptism, and you will be able to invoke the Holy Ghost.

8. L. Thirsty men in their dreams eagerly gulp down the water of the stream, and the more they drink the thirstier they are. In the same way you appear to me to have searched everywhere for arguments against the point I raised, and yet to be as far as ever from being satisfied. Don't you know that the laying on of hands after baptism and then the invocation of the Holy Spirit is a custom of the Churches? Do you demand Scripture proof? You may find it in the Acts of the Apostles. And even if it did not rest on the authority of Scripture the consensus of the whole world in this respect would have the force of a command. For many other observances of the Churches, which are due to tradition, have acquired the authority of the written law, as for instance³⁹ the practice of dipping the head three times in the water, and then, after leaving the water, of⁴⁰ tasting mingled milk and honey in representation of infancy;⁴¹ and, again, the practices of standing up in worship on the Lord's day, and ceasing from fasting every Pentecost; and there are many other unwritten practices which have won their place through reason and custom. So you see we follow the practice of the Church, although it may be clear that a person was baptized before the Spirit was invoked.

9. O. I do not deny that it is the practice of the Churches in the case of those who living far from the greater towns have been baptized by presbyters and deacons, for the bishop to visit them, and by

the laying on of hands to invoke the Holy Ghost upon them. But how shall I describe your habit of applying the laws of the Church to heretics, and of exposing the virgin entrusted to you in the brothels of harlots? If a bishop lays his hands on men he lays them on those who have been baptized in the right faith, and who have believed that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three persons, but one essence. But an Arian has no faith but this (close your ears, my hearers, that you may not be defiled by words so grossly impious), that the Father alone is very God, and that Jesus Christ our Saviour is a⁴² creature, and⁴³ the Holy Ghost the Servant of both. How can he then receive the Holy Ghost from the Church, who has not yet obtained remission of sins? For the Holy Ghost must have a clean abode: nor will He become a dweller in that temple which has not for its chief priest the true faith. But if you now ask how it is that a person baptized in the Church does not receive the Holy Ghost, Whom we declare to be given in true baptism, except by the hands of the bishop, let me tell you that our authority for the rule is the fact that after our Lord's ascension the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles. And in many places we find it the practice, more by way of honouring the⁴⁴ episcopate than from any compulsory law. Otherwise, if the Holy Ghost descends only at the bishop's prayer, they are greatly to be pitied who in isolated houses, or in forts, or retired places, after being baptized by the presbyters and deacons have fallen asleep before the bishop's visitation. The well-being of a Church depends upon the dignity of its chief-priest, and unless some extraordinary and unique functions be assigned to him, we shall have as many schisms in the Churches as there are priests. Hence it is that without ordination and the bishop's license neither presbyter nor deacon has the power to baptize. And yet, if necessity so be, we know that even laymen may, and frequently do, baptize. For as a man receives, so too he can give; for it will hardly be said that we must believe that the eunuch whom Philip⁴⁵ baptized lacked the Holy Spirit. The Scripture thus speaks concerning him, "And they both went down into the water; and Philip baptized him." And on leaving the water, "The Holy Spirit fell upon the eunuch." You may perhaps think that we ought to set against this the passage in which we read, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost: for as yet he was fallen upon none of them." But why this was, the context tells us, "Only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." And if you here say that you do the same, because the heretics have not baptized into the Holy Spirit, I must remind you that Philip was not separated from the Apostles, but belonged to the same Church and preached the same Lord Jesus Christ: that he was without question a deacon of those who afterwards laid their hands on his converts. But when you say that the Arians have not a Church, but a synagogue, and that their clergy do not worship God but creatures and idols, how can you maintain that you ought to act upon the same principle in cases so totally different?

L. You repel my attack in front with vigour and firmness: but you are smitten in the rear and leave your back exposed to the darts. Let us even grant that the Arians have no baptism, and therefore that the Holy Ghost cannot be given by them, because they themselves have not yet received remission of sins; this altogether makes for victory on my side, and all your argumentative wrestling is but laborious toil to give me the conqueror's palm. An Arian has no baptism; how is it then that he has the episcopate? There is not even a layman among them, how can there be a bishop? I may not receive a beggar, do you receive a king? You surrender your camp to the enemy, and are we to reject one of their deserters?

11. O. If you remember what has been said you would know that you have been already answered; but in yielding to the love of contradiction you have wandered from the subject, like those persons who are talkative rather than eloquent, and who, when they cannot argue, still continue to wrangle. On the present occasion it is not my aim to either accuse or defend the Arians, but rather to get safely past the turning-post of the race, and to main-lain that we receive a bishop for the same reason that you receive a layman. If you grant forgiveness to the erring, I too pardon the penitent. If he that baptizes a person into our belief has had no injurious effect upon the person baptized, it follows that he who consecrates a bishop in the same faith causes no defilement to the person consecrated. Heresy is subtle, and therefore the simple-minded are easily deceived. To be deceived is the common lot of both layman and bishop. But you say, a bishop could not have been mistaken. The truth is, men are elected to the episcopate who come from the bosom of Plato and Aristophanes. How many can you find among them who are not fully instructed in these writers? Indeed all, whoever they may be, that are ordained at the present day from among the literate class make it their study not how to seek out the marrow of Scripture, but how to tickle the ears of the people with the flowers of rhetoric. We must further add that the Arian heresy goes hand in hand with the wisdom of the world, and⁴⁶ borrows its streams of argument from the fountains of Aristotle. And so we will act like children when they try to outdo one another-whatever you say I will say: what you assert, I will assert: whatever you deny, I will deny. We allow that an Arian may baptize; then he must be a bishop.⁴⁷ If we agree that Arian baptism is invalid, you must reject the layman, and I must not accept the bishop. I will follow you wherever you go; we shall either stick in the mud together, or shall get out together.

12. L. We pardon a layman because, when he was baptized, he had a sincere impression that he was joining the Church. He believed and was baptized in accordance with his faith.

O. That is something new for a man to be made a Christian by one who is not a Christian. When he joined the Arians into what faith was he baptized? Of course into that which the Arians held. If on the other hand we are to suppose that his own faith was correct, but that he was knowingly baptized by heretics, he does not deserve the indulgence we grant to the erring. But it is quite absurd to imagine that, going as a pupil to the master, he understands his art before he has been taught. Can you suppose that a man who has just turned from worshipping idols knows Christ better than his teacher does? If you say, he sincerely believed in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and therefore obtained baptism, what, let me ask, is the meaning of being sincerely ignorant of what one believes? He sincerely believed. What did he believe? Surely when he heard the three names, he believed in three Gods, and was an idolater; or by the three titles he was led to believe in a God with three names, and so fell into the⁴⁸ Sabellian heresy. Or he was perhaps trained by the Arians to believe that there is one true God, the Father, but that the Son and the Holy Spirit are creatures. What else he may have believed, I know not: for we can hardly think that a man brought up in the Capitol would have learnt the doctrine of the co-essential Trinity. He would have known in that case that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not divided in nature, but in person. He would have known also that the name of Son was implied in that of Father and the name of Father in that of Son. It is ridiculous to assert that any one can dispute concerning the faith before he believes it; that he understands a mystery before he has been initiated; that the baptizer and the baptized hold different views respecting God. Besides, it is the custom at baptism to ask, after the confession of faith in the Trinity, do you believe in Holy Church? Do you believe in

the remission of sins? What Church do you say he believed in? The Church of the Arians? But they have no Church. In ours? But the man was not baptized into it: he could not believe in that whereof he was ignorant.

L. I see that you can prattle cleverly about each point that I raise; and when we let fly a dart you elude it by a harangue which serves you for a shield; I will therefore hurl a single spear which will be strong enough to pierce your defences and the hail-storm of your words. I won't allow strength any longer to be overcome by artifice. Even a layman baptized without the Church, if he be baptized according to the faith, is received only as a penitent: but a bishop either does no penance and remains a bishop, or, if he does penance he ceases to be a bishop. Wherefore we do right both in welcoming the penitent layman, and in rejecting the bishop, if he wishes to continue in his office.

O. An arrow which is discharged from the tight-drawn bow is not easy to avoid, for it reaches him at whom it was aimed before the shield can be raised to stop it. On the other hand your propositions are pointless and therefore cannot pierce an opponent. The spear then which you have hurled with all your might and about which you speak such threatening words, I turn aside, as the saying is, with my little finger. The point in dispute is not merely whether a bishop is incapable of penitence and a layman capable, but whether a heretic has received valid baptism. If he has not (and this follows from your position), how can he be a penitent, before he is a Christian? Show me that a layman coming from the Arians has valid baptism, and then I will not deny him penitence. But if he is not a Christian, if he had no priest to make him a Christian, how can he do penance when he is not yet a believer?

14. L. I beseech you lay aside the methods of the philosophers and let us talk with Christian simplicity; that is, if you are willing to follow not the logicians, but the Galilean fishermen. Does it seem right to you that an Arian should be a bishop?

O. You prove him a bishop because you receive those he has baptized. And it is here that you are to blame:-Why are there walls of separation between us when we are at one in faith and in receiving Arians?

L. I asked you before not to talk like a philosopher, but like a Christian.

O. Do you wish to learn, or to argue?

L. Of course I argue because I want to know the reason for what you do.

O. If you argue, you have already had an answer. I receive an Arian bishop for the same reason that you receive a person who is only baptized. If you wish to learn, come over to my side: for an opponent must be overcome, it is only a disciple who can be taught.

L. Before I can be a disciple, I must hear one preach whom I feel to be my master.

O. You are not dealing quite fairly: you wish me to be your teacher on the terms that you may treat me as an opponent whenever you please. I will teach you therefore in the same spirit. We agree in faith, we agree in receiving heretics, let us also be at one in our terms of communion.

L. That is not teaching, but arguing.

O. As you ask for peace with a shield in your hand, I also must carry my olive branch with a sword grafted in it.

L. I drop my hands in token of submission. You are conqueror. But in laying down my arms, I ask the meaning of the oath you force me to take.

O. Certainly, but first I congratulate you, and thank Christ my God for your good dispositions which have made you turn from the unsavoury teaching of the⁴⁹ Sardinians to that which the whole world approves as true; and no longer say as some do,⁵⁰ "Help, Lord; for the godly man teaseth." By their impious words they make of none effect the cross of Christ, subject the Son of God to the devil, and would have us now understand the Lord's lamentation over sinners to apply to all men,⁵¹ "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?" But God forbid that our Lord should have died in vain.⁵² The strong man is bound, and his goods are spoiled. What the Father says is fulfilled,⁵³ "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."⁵⁴ "Then the channels of water appeared, and the foundations of the world were laid bare."⁵⁵ "In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." The Psalmist fully possessed by God sings,⁵⁶ "The swords of the enemy are come to an end, and the cities which thou hast overthrown."

15. And what is the position, I should like to know, of those excessively scrupulous, or rather excessively profane persons, who assert that there are more synagogues than Churches? How is it that the devil's kingdoms have been destroyed, and now at last in the consummation of the ages, the idols have fallen? If Christ has no Church, or if he has one only, in Sardinia, he has grown very poor. And if Satan owns Britain, Gaul, the East, the races of India, barbarous nations, and the whole world at the same time, how is it that the trophies of the cross have been collected in a mere corner of the earth? Christ's powerful opponent, forsooth, gave over to him the⁵⁷ serpent of Spain: he disdained to own a poor province and its half-starved inhabitants. If they flatter themselves that they have on their side that verse of the gospel,⁵⁸ "Howbeit when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" let me remind them that the faith in question is that of which the Lord himself said,⁵⁹ "Thy faith hath made thee whole." And elsewhere, of the centurion,⁶⁰ "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." And again, to the Apostles,⁶¹ "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" In another place also,⁶² "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove." For neither the centurion nor that poor woman who for twelve years was wasting away with a bloody flux, had believed in the mysteries of the Trinity, for these were revealed to the Apostles after the resurrection of Christ; so that the faith of such as believe in the mystery of the Trinity might have its due preeminence: but it was her singleness of mind and her devotion to her God that met with our Lord's approval:⁶³ "For she said within herself, If I do but touch his garment, I shall be made whole." This is the faith which our Lord said was seldom found. This is the faith which even in the case of those who believe aright is hard to find in perfection.⁶⁴ "According to your faith, be it done unto you," says God. I do not, indeed, like the sound of those words. For if it be done unto me according to my faith, I shall perish. And yet I certainly believe in God the Father, I believe in God the Son, and I believe in God the Holy Ghost. I believe in one God; nevertheless, I would not have it done unto me according to my faith. For the enemy often comes, and sows tares in the Lord's harvest. I do not mean to imply that anything is greater than the purity of heart which believes that mystery; but undoubted faith towards God it is hard indeed to find. To make my meaning plain, let us suppose a case:-I stand to

pray; I could not pray, if I did not believe; but if I really believed, I should cleanse that heart of mine with which God is seen, I should beat my hands upon my breast, the tears would stream down my cheeks, my body would shudder, my face grow pale, I should lie at my Lord's feet, weep over them, and wipe them with my hair, I should cling to the cross and not let go my hold until I obtained mercy. But, as it is, frequently in my prayers I am either walking in the arcades, or calculating my interest, or am carried away by base thoughts, so as to be occupied with things the mere mention of which makes me blush. Where is our faith? Are we to suppose that it was thus that Jonah prayed? or the three youths? or Daniel in the lion's den? or the robber on the cross? I have given these illustrations that you may understand my meaning. But let every one commune with his own heart, and he will find throughout the whole of life how rare a thing it is to find a soul so faithful that it does nothing through the love of glory, nothing on account of the petty gossip of men. For he who fasts does not as an immediate consequence fast unto God, nor he who holds out his hand to a poor man, lend to the Lord. Vice is next-door neighbour to virtue. It is hard to rest content with God alone for judge.

16. L. I was reserving that passage until last, and you have anticipated my question about it. Almost all our party, or rather not mine any more, use it as a sort of controversial battering ram: as such I am exceedingly glad to see it broken to pieces and pulverized. But will you be so good as to fully explain to me, not in the character of an opponent but of a disciple, why it is that the Church receives those who come from the Arians? The truth is I am unable to answer you a word, but I do not yet give a hearty assent to what you say.

17. O. When Constantius was on the throne and Eusebius and Hypatius were Consuls, there was composed, under the pretext of unity and faith,⁶⁵ an unfaithful creed, as it is now acknowledged to have been. For at that time, nothing seemed so characteristic of piety, nothing so befitting a servant of God, as to follow after unity, and to shun separation from communion with the rest of the world. And all the more because the current profession of faith no longer exhibited on the face of it anything profane. "We believe," said they, "in one true God, the Father Almighty. This we also confess: We believe in the only begotten Son of God, who, before all worlds, and before all their origins,⁶⁶ was born of God. The only-begotten Son, moreover, we believe to be born alone of the Father alone, God of God, like to his Father who begot Him, according to the Scriptures; whose birth no one knows, but the Father alone who begot Him." Do we find any such words inserted here as⁶⁷ "There was a time, when he was not?" Or, "The Son of God is a creature though not made of things which exist." No. This is surely the perfection of faith to say we believe Him to be God of God. Moreover, they called Him the only begotten, "born alone of the Father." What is the meaning of born? Surely, not made. His birth removed all suspicion of His being a creature. They added further, "Who came down from heaven, was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified by Pontius Pilate, rose again the third day from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, who will come to judge the quick and the dead." There was the ring of piety in the words, and no one thought that poison was mingled with the honey of such a proclamation.

18. As regards the term⁶⁸ Usia, it was not rejected without a show of reason for so doing.⁶⁹ "Because it is not found in the Scriptures," they said, "and its novelty is a stumbling-block to many, we have thought it best to dispense with it." The bishops were not anxious about the name, so long as that which it implied was secured. Lastly, at the very time when rumour was rife that there

had been some insincerity in the statement of the faith, Valens, bishop of Mursa, who had drawn it up, in the presence of Taurus the pretorian prefect who attended the Synod by imperial command, declared that he was not an Arian, and that he utterly abhorred their blasphemies. However, the thing had been done in secret, and it had not extinguished the general feeling. So on another day, when crowds of bishops and laymen came together in the Church at Ariminum, Muzonius, bishop of the province of Byzacena, to whom by reason of seniority the first rank was assigned by all, spoke as follows: "One of our number has been authorized to read to you, reverend fathers, what reports are being spread and have reached us, so that the evil opinions which ought to grate upon our ears and be banished from our hearts may be condemned with one voice by us all." The whole body of bishops replied, Agreed. And so when Claudius, bishop of the province of Picenum, at the request of all present, began to read the blasphemies attributed to Valens, Valens denied they were his and cried aloud, "If anyone denies Christ our Lord, the Son of God, begotten of the Father before the worlds, let him be anathema." There was a general chorus of approval, "Let him be anathema."⁷⁰ "If anyone denies that the Son is like the Father according to the Scriptures, let him be anathema." All replied, "Let him be anathema." "If anyone does not say that the Son of God is co-eternal with the Father, let him be anathema." There was again a chorus of approval, "Let him be anathema." "If anyone says that the Son of God is a creature, like other creatures, let him be anathema." The answer was the same, "Let him be anathema." "If anyone says that the Son was of no existing things, yet not of God the Father, let him be anathema." All shouted together, "Let him be anathema." "If anyone says, There was a time when the Son was not, let him be anathema." At this point all the bishops and the whole Church together received the words of Valens with clapping of hands and stamping of feet. And if anyone thinks we have invented the story let him examine the public records. At all events the muniment-boxes of the Churches are full of it, and the circumstance is fresh in men's memory. Some of those who took part in the Synod are still alive, and the Arians themselves (a fact which may put the truth beyond dispute) do not deny the accuracy of our account. When, therefore, all extolled Valens to the sky and penitently condemned themselves for having suspected him, the same Claudius who before had begun to read, said "There are still a few points which have escaped the notice of my lord and brother Valens; if it seem good to you, let us, in order to remove all scruples, pass a general vote of censure upon them. If anyone says that the Son of God was indeed before all worlds but was by no means before all time, so that he puts some thing before Him, let him be anathema." And many other things which had a suspicious look were condemned by Valens when Claudius recited them. If anyone wishes to learn more about them he will find the account in the acts of the Synod of Ariminum, the source from which I have myself drawn them.

19. After these proceedings the Council was dissolved. All returned in gladness to their own provinces. For the Emperor and all good men had one and the same aim, that the East and West should be knit together by the bond of fellowship. But wickedness does not long lie hid, and the sore that is healed superficially before the bad humour has been worked off breaks out again. Valens and⁷¹ Ursacius and others associated with them in their wickedness, eminent Christian bishops of course, began to wave their palms, and to say they had not denied that He was a creature, but that He was like other creatures. At that moment the term *Usia* was abolished: the Nicene Faith stood condemned by acclamation. The whole world groaned, and was astonished to find itself Arian. Some, therefore, remained in their own communion, others began to send letters to those Confessors who as adherents of Athanasius were in exile; several despairingly bewailed

the better relations into which they had entered. But a few, true to human nature, defended their mistake as an exhibition of wisdom. The ship of the Apostles was in peril, she was driven by the wind, her sides beaten with the waves: no hope was now left. But the Lord awoke and bade the tempest cease; the⁷² beast died, and there was a calm once again. To speak more plainly, all the bishops who had been banished from their sees, by the clemency of the new⁷³ emperor returned to their Churches. Then Egypt welcomed the⁷⁴ triumphant Athanasius; then⁷⁵ Hilary returned from the battle to the embrace of the Church of Gaul; then⁷⁶ Eusebius returned and Italy laid aside her mourning weeds. The bishops who had been caught in the snare at Ariminum and had unwittingly come to be reported of as heretics, began to assemble, while they called the Body of our Lord and all that is holy in the Church to witness that they had not a suspicion of anything faulty in their own faith. We thought, said they, the words were to be taken in their natural meaning, and we had no suspicion that in the Church of God, the very home of simplicity and sincerity in the confession of truth, one thing could be kept secret in the heart, another uttered by the lips. We thought too well of bad men and were deceived. We did not suppose that the bishops of Christ were fighting against Christ. There was much besides which they said with tears, but I pass it over for brevity's sake. They were ready to condemn their⁷⁷ former subscription as well as all the blasphemies of the Arians. Here I ask our excessively scrupulous friends what they think ought to have been done with those who made this Confession? Deprive the old bishops, they will say, and ordain new ones. The plan was tried. But how many whose conscience does not condemn them will allow themselves to be deprived. Particularly when all the people who loved their bishops flocked together, ready to stone and slay those who attempted to deprive them. The bishops should, it may be said, have kept to themselves within their own communion. That is to say, with senseless cruelty they would have surrendered the whole world to the devil. Why condemn those who were not Arians? Why rend the Church when it was continuing in the harmony of the faith? Lastly, were they by obstinacy to make Arians of orthodox believers? We know that at the Council of Nica, which was assembled on account of the Arian perfidy, eight Arian bishops were welcomed, and there is not a bishop in the world at the present day whose ordination is not dependent on that Council. This being so, how could they act in opposition to it, when their loyalty to it had cost them the pain of exile?

20. L. Were Arians really then received after all? Pray tell me who they were.

O.⁷⁸ Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia,⁷⁹ Theognis, bishop of Nica, Saras, at the time presbyter of Libya,⁸⁰ Eusebius, bishop of Csarea in Palestine, and others whom it would be tedious to enumerate; Arius also the presbyter, the original source of all the trouble; Euzoius the deacon,⁸¹ who succeeded Eudoxius as bishop of Antioch, and Achillas, the reader. These three who were clerics of the Church of Alexandria were the originators of the heresy.

L. Suppose a person were to deny that they were welcomed back, how is he to be refuted?

O. There are men still living who took part in that Council. And if that is not enough, because owing to the time that has elapsed they are but few, and it is impossible for witnesses to be everywhere, if we read the acts and names of the bishops of the Council of Nica, we find that those who we saw just now were welcomed back, did subscribe the homoousion along with the rest.

L. Will you point out how, after the Council of Nica, they relapsed into their unfaithfulness?

O. A good suggestion, for unbelievers are in the habit of shutting their eyes and denying that things which they dislike ever happened. But how could they afterwards do anything but relapse, when it was owing to them that the Council was convened, and their letters and impious treatises which were published before the Council, remain even to the present day? Seeing, therefore, that at that time three hundred bishops or more welcomed a few men whom they might have rejected without injury to the Church, I am surprised that certain persons, who are certainly upholders of the faith of Nicaea, are so harsh as to think that⁸² three Confessors returning from exile were not bound in the interests of the world's salvation to do what so many illustrious men did of their own accord. But, to go back to our starting point, on the return of the Confessors it was determined, in a synod afterwards⁸³ held at Alexandria, that, the authors of the heresy excepted (who could not be excused on the ground of error), penitents should be admitted to communion with the Church: not that they who had been heretics could be bishops, but because it was clear that those who were received had not been heretics. The West assented to this decision, and it was through this conclusion, which the necessities of the times demanded, that the world was snatched from the jaws of Satan. I have reached a very difficult subject, where I am compelled against my wishes and my purpose, to think somewhat otherwise of that saintly man Lucifer than his merits demand, and my own courtesy requires. But what am I to do? Truth opens my mouth and urges my reluctant tongue to utter the thoughts of my heart. At such a crisis of the Church, when the wolves were wildly raging, he separated off a few sheep and abandoned the remnant of the flock. He himself was a good shepherd, but he was leaving a vast spoil to the beasts of prey. I take no notice of reports originating with certain evil speakers, though maintained by them to be authenticated facts; such as that he acted thus through the love of glory, and the desire of handing down his name to posterity; or again that he was influenced by the grudge he bore against Eusebius on account of the⁸⁴ quarrel at Antioch. I believe none of these reports in the case of such a man; and this I will constantly affirm even now-that the difference between us and him is one of words, not of things, if he really does receive those who have been baptized by the Arians.

21. L. The account I used before to hear given of these things was widely different, and, as I now think, better calculated to promote error than hope. But I thank Christ my God for pouring into my heart the light of truth, that I might no longer profanely call the Church, which is His Virgin, the harlot of the devil. There is one other point I should like you to explain. What are we to say about⁸⁵ Hilary who does not receive even those who have been baptized by the Arians?

O. Since Hilary when he left the Church was only a deacon, and since the Church is to him, though to him alone, a mere worldly multitude, he can neither duly celebrate the Eucharist, for he has no bishops or priests, nor can he give baptism without the Eucharist. And since the man is now dead, inasmuch as he was a deacon and could ordain no one to follow him, his sect died with him. For there is no such thing as a Church without bishops. But passing over a few very insignificant persons who are in their own esteem both laymen and bishops, let me point out to you what views we should hold respecting the Church at large.

L. You have settled a great question in three words, as the saying is, and indeed while you speak, I feel that I am on your side. But when you stop, some old misgivings arise as to why we receive those who have been baptized by heretics.

O. That is just what I had in mind when I said I would point out what views we ought to hold concerning the Church at large. For many are exercised by the misgivings you speak of. I shall perhaps be tedious in my explanation, but it is worth while if the truth gains.

22. Noah's ark was a type of the Church, as the Apostle Peter says-86 "In Noah's ark few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save us, even baptism." As in the ark there were all kinds of animals, so also in the Church there are men of all races and characters. As in the one there was the leopard with the kids, the wolf with the lambs, so in the other there are found the righteous and sinners, that is,87 vessels of gold and silver with those of wood and of earth. The ark had its rooms: the Church has many mansions. Eight souls were saved in Noah's ark. And88 Ecclesiastes bids us "give a portion to seven yea, even unto eight," that is to believe both Testaments. This is why some psalms bear the inscription89 for the octave, and why the one hundred and nineteenth psalm is divided into portions of eight verses each beginning with its own letter for the instruction of the righteous. The beatitudes which our Lord spoke to his disciples on the mountain, thereby delineating the Church, are eight. And Ezekiel for the building of the temple employs the number eight. And you will find many other things expressed in the same way in the Scriptures. The raven also is sent forth from the ark but does not return, and afterwards the dove announces peace to the earth. So also in the Church's baptism, that most unclean bird the devil is expelled, and the dove of the Holy Spirit announces peace to our earth. The construction of the ark was such that it began with being thirty cubits broad and gradually narrowed to one. Similarly the Church, consisting of many grades, ends in deacons, presbyters, and bishops. The ark was in peril in the flood, the Church is in peril in the world. When Noah left the ark he planted a vineyard, drank thereof, and was drunken. Christ also, born in the flesh, planted the Church and suffered. The elder son made sport of his father's nakedness, the younger covered it: and the Jews mocked God crucified, the Gentiles honoured Him. The daylight would fail me if I were to explain all the mysteries of the ark and compare them with the Church. Who are the eagles amongst us? Who the doves and lions, who the stags, who the worms and serpents? So far as our subject requires I will briefly show you. It is not the sheep only who abide in the Church, nor do clean birds only fly to and fro there; but amid the grain other seed is sown,90 "amidst the neat corn-fields burrs and caltrops and barren oats lord it in the land." What is the husbandman to do? Root up the darnel? In that case the whole harvest is destroyed along with it. Every day the farmer diligently drives the birds away with strange noises, or frightens them with scarecrows: here he cracks a whip, there he spreads out some other object to terrify them. Nevertheless he suffers from the raids of nimble roes or the wantonness of the wild asses; here the mice convey the corn to their garners underground, there the ants crowd thickly in and ravage the corn-field. Thus the case stands. No one who has land is free from care.91 While the householder slept the enemy sowed tares among the wheat, and when the servants proposed to go and root them up the master forbade them, reserving for himself the separation of the chaff and the grain.92 There are vessels of wrath and of mercy which the Apostle speaks of in the house of God. The day then will come when the storehouses of the Church shall be opened and the Lord will bring forth the vessels of wrath; and, as they depart, the saints will say,93 "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." No one can take to himself the prerogative of Christ, no one before the day of judgment can pass judgment upon men. If the Church is already cleansed, what shall we reserve for the Lord?94 "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." When

our judgment is so prone to error, upon whose opinion can we rely?

23. Cyprian of blessed memory tried to avoid broken cisterns and not to drink of strange waters: and therefore, rejecting heretical baptism, he summoned his⁹⁵ African synod in opposition to Stephen,⁹⁶ who was the blessed Peter's twenty-second successor in the see of Rome. They met to discuss this matter; but the attempt failed. At last those very bishops who had together with him determined that heretics must be re-baptized, reverted to the old custom and published a fresh decree. Do you ask what course we must pursue? What we do our forefathers handed down to us as their forefathers to them. But why speak of later times? When the blood of Christ was but lately shed and the apostles were still in Judaea, the Lord's body was asserted to be a phantom; the Galatians had been led away to the observance of the law, and the Apostle was a second time in travail with them; the Corinthians did not believe the resurrection of the flesh, and he endeavoured by many arguments to bring them back to the right path. Then came⁹⁷ Simon Magus and his disciple Menander. They asserted themselves to be⁹⁸ powers of God. Then⁹⁹ Basilides invented the most high god Abraxas and the three hundred and sixty-five manifestations of him. Then¹⁰⁰ Nicolas, one of the seven Deacons, and one whose lechery knew no rest by night or day, indulged in his filthy dreams. I say nothing of the Jewish heretics who before the coming of Christ destroyed the law delivered to them: of¹⁰¹ Dositheus, the leader of the Samaritans who rejected the prophets: of the Sadducees who sprang from his root and denied even the resurrection of the flesh: of the Pharisees who separated themselves from the Jews¹⁰² on account of certain superfluous observances, and took their name from the fact of their dissent: of the Herodians who accepted Herod as the Christ. I come to those heretics who have mangled the Gospels,¹⁰³ Saturninus, and the¹⁰⁴ Ophites,¹⁰⁵ the Cainites and¹⁰⁶ Sethites, and¹⁰⁷ Carpocrates, and¹⁰⁸ Cerinthus, and his successor¹⁰⁹ Ebion, and the other pests, the most of which broke out while the apostle John was still alive, and yet we do not read that any of these men were re-baptized.

24. As we have made mention of that distinguished saint, let us show also from his Apocalypse that repentance unaccompanied by baptism ought to be allowed valid in the case of heretics. It is imputed (Rev. ii. 4) to the angel of Ephesus that he has forsaken his first love. In the angel of the Church of Pergamum the eating of idol-sacrifices is censured (Rev. ii. 14), and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (ib. 15). Likewise the angel of Thyatira is rebuked (ib. 20) on account of Jezebel the prophetess, and the idol meats, and fornication. And yet the Lord encourages all these to repent, and adds a threat, moreover, of future punishment if they do not turn. Now he would not urge them to repent unless he intended to grant pardon to the penitents. Is there any indication of his having said, Let them be re-baptized who have been baptized in the faith of the Nicolaitans? or let hands be laid upon those of the people of Pergamum who at that time believed, having held the doctrine of Balaam? Nay, rather, "Repent therefore,"¹¹⁰ he says, "or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth."

25. If, however, those men who were ordained by Hilary, and who have lately become sheep without a shepherd, are disposed to allege Scripture in support of what the blessed Cyprian¹¹¹ left in his letters advocating the re-baptization of heretics, I beg them to remember that he did not anathematize those who refused to follow him. At all events, he remained in communion with such as opposed his views. He was content with exhorting them, on account of¹¹² Novatus and the numerous other heretics then springing up, to receive no one who did not condemn his previous error. In fact, he thus concludes the discussion of the subject with Stephen, the Roman Pontiff:

"These things, dearest brother, I have brought to your knowledge on account of our mutual respect and love unfeigned, believing, as I do, that from the sincerity of your piety and your faith you will approve such things as are alike consonant with piety and true in themselves. But I know that some persons are unwilling to abandon views which they have once entertained, and are averse to a change of purpose; they would rather, without breaking the bond of peace and concord between colleagues, adhere to their own plans, when once they have been adopted. This is a matter in which we do not force anyone, or lay down a law for anyone; let each follow his own free choice in the administration of the Church: let each be ruler in his own sphere since he must give account of his action to the Lord." In the letter also to Jubaianus on the re-baptization of heretics, towards the end, he says this: "I have written these few remarks, my dearest brother, to the best of my poor ability, without dictating to anyone, or prejudicing the case of anyone: I would not hinder a single bishop from doing what he thinks right with the full exercise of his own judgment. So far as is possible, we avoid disputes with colleagues and fellow-bishops about the heretics, and maintain with them a divine harmony and the Lord's peace, particularly since the Apostle says:¹¹³ 'But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.' With patience and gentleness we preserve charity at heart, the honour of our order, the bond of faith, the harmony of the episcopate."

26. There is another argument which I shall adduce, and against that not even Hilary,¹¹⁴ the modern Deucalion, will venture to mutter a syllable. If heretics are not baptized and must be re-baptized because they were not in the Church, Hilary himself also is not a Christian. For he was baptized in that Church which always allowed heretical baptism. Before the Synod of Ariminum was held, before Lucifer went into exile, Hilary when a deacon of the Roman Church welcomed those who came over from the heretics on account of the baptism which they had previously received. It can hardly be that Arians are the only heretics, and that we are to accept all but those whom they have baptized. You were a deacon, Hilary (the Church may say), and received those whom the Manichaeans had baptized. You were a deacon, and acknowledged Ebion's baptism. All at once after Arius arose you began to be quite out of conceit with yourself. You and your household separated from us, and opened a new layer of your own. If some angel or apostle has re-baptized you, I will not disparage your procedure. But since you who raise your sword against me are the son of my womb, and nourished on the milk of my breasts, return to me what I gave you, and be, if you can, a Christian in some other way. Suppose I am a harlot, still I am your mother. You say, I do not keep the marriage bed undefiled: still what I am now I was when you were conceived. If I commit adultery with Arius, I did the same before with Praxias, with Ebion, with Cerinthus, and Novatus. You think much of them and welcome them, adulterers as they are, to your mother's home. I don't know why one adulterer more than others should offend you.

27. But if anyone thinks it open to question whether heretics were always welcomed by our ancestors, let him read the letters of the blessed Cyprian in which he applies the lash to Stephen, bishop of Rome, and his errors which had grown inveterate by usage.¹¹⁵ Let him also read the pamphlets of Hilary on the re-baptization of heretics which he published against us, and he will there find Hilary himself confessing that¹¹⁶ Julius, Marcus, Sylvester, and the other bishops of old alike welcomed all heretics to repentance; and, further, to shew that he could not justly claim possession of the true custom; the Council of Nicaea also, to which we referred not long ago, welcomed all heretics with the exception of¹¹⁷ the disciples of Paul of Samosata. And, what is

more, it allows a Novatian bishop on conversion to have the rank of presbyter,¹¹⁸ a decision which condemns both Lucifer and Hilary, since the same person who is ordained is also baptized.

28. I might spend the day in speaking to the same effect, and dry up all the streams of argument with the single Sun of the Church. But as we have already had a long discussion and the protracted controversy has wearied out the attention of our audience, I will tell you my opinion briefly and without reserve. We ought to remain in that Church which was rounded by the Apostles and continues to this day. If ever you hear of any that are called Christians taking their name not from the Lord Jesus Christ, but from some other, for instance, Marcionites, Valentinians, Men of the mountain or the plain,¹¹⁹ you may be sure that you have there not the Church of Christ, but the synagogue of Antichrist. For the fact that they took their rise after the foundation of the Church is proof that they are those whose coming the Apostle foretold. And let them not flatter themselves if they think they have Scripture authority for their assertions, since the devil himself quoted Scripture, and the essence of the Scriptures is not the letter, but the meaning. Otherwise, if we follow the letter, we too can concoct a new dogma and assert that such persons as wear shoes and have two coats must not be received into the Church.

L. You must not suppose that victory rests with you only. We are both conquerors, and each of us carries off the palm,-you are victorious over me, and I over my error. May I always when I argue be so fortunate as to exchange wrong opinions for better ones. I must, however, make a confession, because I best know the character of my party, and own that they are more easily conquered than convinced.

1: The Sardinian cloak of skins is contrasted by Cicero (pro Scauro) with the Royal purple:-*Quem purpura regalis non commovit, eum Sardorum mastruca mutavit*. Jerome's meaning is that Christ came not to win the lowest place on earth, but the highest. The fact that Lucifer was Bishop of Cagliari in Sardinia gives point to the saying.

2: That is, of Jupiter, whose temple was in the Capitol.

3: Ps. lvii. 6.

4: Sacerdotium.

5: Apoc. i. 6.

6: 1 Pet. ii. 9.

7: That is diocese. The word diocese was in early times the larger expression, and contained many provinces. See Canon II of Constantinople, Bright's edition, and note.

8: Matt. v. 13.

9: Lev. ix. 7.

10: Tit. i. 7.

11: 1 Cor. xi. 28.

12: Matt. vii. 6.

13: Numb. xvi. 26.

14: Hos. ix. 4.

15: Matt. vii. 22.

16: Matt. v. 15.

17: Matt. vi. 23-24.

18: Matt. vi. 23-24.

19: 2 Cor. vi. 14, 2 Cor. vi. 15.

20: Levit. xxi. 17.

21: Quoted apparently from memory as giving the general sense of passages in Lev. xxi, Lev. xxii.

22: Quoted apparently from memory as giving the general sense of passages in Lev. xxi, Lev. xxii.

23: Gen. i. 2.

24: John v. 2 sq.

25: xix. 2.

26: Is. xi. 3: Matt. iii. 3.

27: John i. 29.

28: Luke i. 43.

29: Acts ix. 17.

30: Matt. xi. 11.

31: Matt. xi. 10.

32: We venture to read `decebat 0' instead of `dicebat. 0' Otherwise, we may render `Thus (the Scripture) said that, 0' etc.

33: Mark i. 4.

34: Mark i. 5.

35: John iii. 31.

36: Matt. iii. 11.

37: John iii. 30.

38: Acts xix. 1, sqq.

39: Triple immersion, that is, thrice dipping the head while standing in the water, was the all but universal rule of the Church in early times. There is proof of its existence in Africa, Palestine, Egypt, at Antioch and Constantinople, in Cappadocia and Rome. See Basil, On the H. Sp. §66,

and Apostolical Canons. Gregory the Great ruled that either form was allowable, the one symbolizing the Unity of the Godhead, the other the Trinity of Persons.

40: This ceremony together with the kiss of peace and white robes probably dated from very early times. In the fourth century some new ceremonies were introduced, such as the use of lights and salt, the unction with oil before baptism in addition to that with chrism which continued to be administered after baptism.

41: At Holy Communion the first prayer of the faithful was said by all kneeling. During the rest of the liturgy all stood. At other times of service the rule was for all to kneel in prayer except on Sundays and between Easter and Whitsuntide.

42: The Arians said He was the creature (made out of nothing) through whom the Father gave being to all other creatures.

43: The Macedonians, who became nearly co-extensive with the Semi-Arians about 360, held that the Spirit not being 'very O' God must be a creature and therefore a Servant of God.

44: Sacerdotium-often used by Jerome in a special sense for the Episcopate. He says of Pammachius and of himself (Letter xlv., 3) that many people thought them *digni sacerdotio*, meaning the Bishopric of Rome.

45: Acts viii. 26 sq.

46: "The philosophical relations of Arianism have been differently stated. Baur, Newman (The Arians, p. 17), and others, bring it into connection with Aristotle, and Athanasianism with Plato; Petavius, Ritter, and Voigt, on the contrary, derive the Arian idea of God from Platonism and Neo-Platonism. The empirical, rational logical tendency of Arianism is certainly more Aristotelian than Platonic. and so far Baur and Newman are right; but all depends on making either revelation and faith. or philosophy and reason, the starting point and ruling power of theology." Doctor Schaff in Dict. of Chris. Biog.

47: Baptism was at this time, as a rule, administered by the bishop alone.

48: This was, approximately, the Patripassian form of the heresy, according to which the person of the Father who is one with the Son, was incarnate in Christ, and the Father might then be said to have died upon the cross. The personality of the Holy Ghost appears to have been denied. With varying shades of opinion and modes of expression the doctrine was expounded by Praxeas (circ. a.d. 200), Noetius (a.d. 220), Sabellius (a.d. 225), Beryllus and Paul of Samosata (circ. a.d. 250).

49: That is the followers of Lucifer, whose see was in Sardinia.

50: Ps. xii. 1. The Luciferians believed that few or none outside their own sect could be saved.

51: Ps. xxx. 9.

52: Mark iii. 27.

53: Ps. ii. 8.

54: Ps. xviii. 15.

55: Lit. In the sun hath he placed his tabernacle, and there is none who can hide himself from the heat thereof. Ps. xix. 6.

56: Ps. ix. 6. Sept. Vulg. Syr.

57: The allusion is doubtful. It probably refers to some province of Spain (perhaps that of the Ibera or Ebro), in which the views of Lucifer prevailed and which his followers considered almost the sole land of the faithful. The expression, however, is used in a more general sense by Jerome, Letter VI.

58: Luke xviii. 8.

59: Matt. ix. 22.

60: Matt. viii. 10.

61: Matt. viii. 26.

62: Matt. xvii. 20.

63: Matt. ix. 21.

64: Matt. ix. 29.

65: For an account of the "Dated Creed" here referred to, and of the Councils of Seleucia and Ariminum, a.d. 359, see Bright's History of the Church, a.d. 313-451, fourth edition, pp. 93-100.

66: Principium, the equivalent of the Greek 'Arxh , which means beginning, or principle, or power.

67: These two propositions constituted the essence of the teaching of Arius.

68: Usia (ousia ousia

69: The distinguishing principle of the doctrine of Acacius was adherence to Scriptural phraseology. See Bright's Hist., p. 69.

70: The teaching of Aetius and Eunomius, the Anomoeans, who were the extremists of the Arians. See Robertson's Hist. of Chris. Ch., fourth edition, pp. 236-237, etc. The other tenets anathematized are Arian or Semi-Arian.

71: Bishop of Singedunum (Belgrade). "He and Valens, bishop of Mursa (in Pannonia) appear at every Synod and Council from 330 till about 370, as leaders of the Arian party, both in the East and West ...They are described by Athanasius as the disciples of Arius." Dict. of Chris. Biog.

72: Constantius.

73: Julian.

74: In August 362, "All Egypt seemed to assemble in the city (Alexandria), which blazed with lights and rang with acclamations; the air was fragrant with incense burnt in token of joy; men formed a choir to precede the Archbishop; to hear his voice, to catch a glimpse of his face, even to see his shadow, was deemed happiness." Bright, p. 115.

75: Bishop of Poitiers (a.d. 350). Died a.d. 368.

76: Bishop of Vercellae in N. Italy. Died about a.d. 270. Both he and Hilary had been sent into exile by Constantius for their opposition to Arianism.

77: That is, the creed of Ariminum.

78: Said to have been the "most prominent and most distinguished man of the entire movement." Athanasius suggested that he was the teacher rather than the disciple of Arius. He died a.d. 342.

79: Regarded as one of the chief opponents of Athanasius. He and others it is said saved themselves from exile by secretly substituting omoiousioj for omoousioj in the sentence of the Council.

80: Born probably, about a.d. 260. He was made bishop of Caesarea about 313 and lived to be eighty. At the time of the Council he was the most learned man and most famous living writer. He had great influence with Constantine, and was among the most moderate Arians.

81: Eudoxius was deposed from the bishopric of Antioch by the Council of Seleucia, a.d. 359; but the immediate predecessor of Euzoius was Meletius, deposed a.d. 361. Baronius describes him as the worst of all the Arians. Euzoius had been the companion and intimate friend of Arius from an early age. Athanasius (Hist. Arian. p. 858) calls him the "Canaanite."

82: Saints Athanasius, Hilary of Poitiers, and Eusebius of Vercellae.

83: a.d. 328, when Athanasius was consecrated bishop.

84: See introduction.

85: This Hilary was a deacon of Rome, sent by Liberius the bishop with Lucifer and Pancratius to the Emperor Constantius. He joined the Luciferians, and wrote in their interest on the re-baptism of heretics. He appears, however, to have been reconciled before his death.

86: 1 Pet. iii. 20.

87: 2 Tim. ii. 20.

88: Ecc. xi. 2.

89: Vulg. for tylgyl#\$%#\$; l(a 90: Virg, Georg. i. 154.

91: S. Matt. xiii. 24 sq.

92: Rom. ix. 22, Rom. ix. 23: 2 Tim. ii. 20, 2 Tim. ii. 21.

93: 1 John ii. 19.

94: Prov. xiv. 12.

95: Stephen was willing to admit all heretical baptism even that by Marcionites and Ophites; Cyprian would admit none. The Council was held at Carthage a.d. 255, and was followed by two in the next year.

96: Bishop of Rome from May 12, a.d. 254, to Aug. 2, a.d. 257. See note on ch. 25.

97: The words of 1 John iv. 3 would appear to support Jerome's remark.

98: Acts viii. 10. In the Clementine Homilies and Recognitions Simon is the constant opponent of St. Peter.

99: Commonly regarded as the chief among the Egyptian Gnostics. The Basilidian system is described by Irenaeus (101f).

100: Acts vi. 5, Rev. ii. 6, Rev. ii. 15. As to how far Jerome's estimate of the character of Nicolas is correct, the article Nicolas in Smith's Dict. of Bible may be consulted.

101: Jerome here reproduces almost exactly the remark of Pseudo-Tertullian. The Dositheans were probably a Jewish or Samaritan ascetic sect, something akin to the Essenes.

102: The name Pharisee implies separation, but in the sense of dedication to God.

103: Of Antioch. One of the earliest of the Gnostics (second century).

104: The Ophites, whose name is derived from ofij , a serpent, were a sect which lasted from the second century to the sixth. Some of them believed that the serpent of Gen. iii. was either the Divine Wisdom, or the Christ himself, come to enlighten mankind. Their errors may in great measure, like those of the Cainites, be traced to the belief, common to all systems of Gnosticism, that the Creator of the world, who was the God of the Jews, was not the same as the Supreme Being, but was in antagonism to Him. They supposed that the Scriptures were written in the interest of the Demiurge or Creator, and that a false colouring being given to the story, the real worthies were those who are reprobated in the sacred writings.

105: The Cainites regarded as saints, Cain, Korah, Dathan, the Sodomites, and even the traitor Judas.

106: The Sethites are said to have looked upon Seth as the same person as Christ.

107: Carpocrates, another Gnostic, held that our Lord was the son of Joseph and Mary, and was distinguished from other men by nothing except moral superiority. He also taught the indifference of actions in themselves, and maintained that they take their quality from opinion or from legislation; he advocated community of goods and of wives, basing his views on the doctrine of natural rights. See Mosheim, Cent. ii.

108: Cerinthus was a native of Judaea, and after having studied at Alexandria established himself as a teacher in his own country. He afterwards removed to Ephesus, and there became prominent. He held that Jesus and the Christ were not the same person; Jesus was, he said, a real man, the son of Joseph and Mary; the Christ was an emanation which descended upon Jesus at his baptism to reveal the Most High, but which forsook him before the Passion. S. John in his Gospel and Epistles combats this error. See Westcott's Introduction to 1 John, p. xxxiv. (second ed.) etc. Cerinthus is said to have been the heretic with whom S. John refused to be under the same roof at the bath. To him as author is also referred the doctrine of the Millennium.

109: The Ebionites were mere humanitarians. Whether Ebion ever existed, or whether the sect took its name from the beggarliness of their doctrine, or their vow of poverty, or the poorness of spirit which they professed, is disputed.

110: Rev. ii. 16.

111: Cyprian's opinion as stated in his reply to the Numidian and Mauritanian bishops (Ep. 71) was that converts must be baptized, unless they had received the regular baptism of the Church before falling into heresy or schism, in which case imposition of hands would suffice. The question was afterwards decided against Cyprian's views by the Council of Aries (a.d. 314), which ordered that if the baptism had been administered in the name of the Trinity, converts should be admitted to the Church by imposition of hands.

112: For Novatus and an account of the dispute between Cyprian and Stephen, see Robertson's "Hist. of Christian Church," fourth ed., vol. i. pp. 120-127.

113: 1 Cor. xi. 16.

114: As Deucalion was left alone after the flood, so, Jerome implies, Hilary imagined himself the sole survivor after the flood of Arianism.

115: The advocates on each side could plead immemorial local usage. If imposition of hands was the rule at Rome, synods held at Iconium and at Synnada had established the rule of re-baptism nearly throughout Asia Minor. In Africa the same practice had been sanctioned early in the third century, but it seems to have fallen into disuse long before Cyprian's time.

116: Bishops of Rome-Julius 337-352; Mark Jan. 18-Oct. 7, 336; Sylvester 314-335.

117: Canon 19.

118: Canon 8. The bishop might give him the nominal honour of a bishop.

119: By the "men of the mountain or the plain," Jerome appears to contemptuously designate the Circumcellions who were an extreme section of the Donatists. They roamed about the country in bands of both sexes, and struck terror into the peaceable inhabitants. They were guilty of the grossest excesses, and no Catholic was safe except in the towns. Robertson's "Hist. of the Church," vol. i. fourth ed. pp. 200, 419, and the original authorities there referred to.

The Life of Malchus

The Life of Malchus, the Captive Monk The Life of Malchus, the Captive Monk The life of Malchus was written at Bethlehem, a.d., 391. Its origin and purpose are sufficiently described in chapters 1 and 2.

1. They who have to fight a naval battle prepare for it in harbours and calm waters by adjusting the helm, plying the oars, and making ready the hooks and grappling irons. They draw up the soldiers on the decks and accustom them to stand steady with poised foot and on slippery ground; so that they may not shrink from all this when the real encounter comes, because they have had experience of it in the sham fight. And so it is in my case. I have long held my peace, because silence was imposed on me by one to whom I give pain when I speak of him. But now, in preparing to write history on a wider scale I desire to practise myself by means of this little work and as it were to wipe the rust from my tongue. For I have purposed (if God grant me life, and if my censors will at length cease to persecute me, now that I am a fugitive and shut up in a monastery) to write a history of the church of Christ¹ from the advent of our Saviour up to our own age, that is from the apostles to the dregs of time in which we live, and to show by what means and through what agents it received its birth, and how, as it gained strength, it grew by persecution and was crowned with martyrdom; and then, after reaching the Christian Emperors, how it increased in influence and in wealth but decreased in Christian virtues. But of this elsewhere. Now to the matter in hand.

2. Maronia is a little hamlet some thirty miles to the east of Antioch in Syria. After having many owners or landlords,² at the time when I was staying as a young man in Syria³ it came into the possession of my intimate friend, the Bishop Evagrius,⁴ whose name I now give in order to show the source of my information. Well, there was at the place at that time an old man by name Malchus, which we might render "king," a Syrian by race and speech, in fact a genuine son of the soil. His companion was an old woman very decrepit who seemed to be at death's door, both of them so zealously pious and such constant frequenters of the Church, they might have been taken for Zacharias and Elizabeth in the Gospel but for the fact that there was no John to be seen. With some curiosity I asked the neighbours what was the link between them; was it marriage, or kindred, or the bond of the Spirit? All with one accord replied that they were holy people, well pleasing to God, and gave me a strange account of them. Longing to know more I began to question the man with much eagerness about the truth of what I heard, and learnt as follows.

3. My son, said he, I used to farm a bit of ground at Nisibis⁵ and was an only son. My parents regarding me as the heir and the only survivor of their race, wished to force me into marriage, but I said I would rather be a monk. How my father threatened and my mother coaxed me to betray my chastity requires no other proof than the fact that I fled from home and parents. I could not go to the East because Persia was close by and the frontiers were guarded by the soldiers of Rome; I therefore turned my steps to the West, taking with me some little provision for the journey, but barely sufficient to ward off destitution. To be brief, I came at last to the desert of Chalcis⁶ which is

situate between Immae and Beroa farther south There, finding some monks, I placed myself under their direction, earning my livelihood by the labour of my hands, and curbing the wantonness of the flesh by fasting. After many years the desire came over me to return to my country, and stay with my mother and cheer her widowhood while she lived (for my father, as I had already heard, was dead), and then to sell the little property and give part to the poor, settle part on the monasteries and (I blush to confess my faithlessness) keep some to spend in comforts for myself. My abbot began to cry out that it was a temptation of the devil, and that under fair pretexts some snare of the old enemy lay hid. It was, he declared, a case of the dog returning to his vomit. Many monks, be said, had been deceived by such suggestions, for the devil never showed himself openly. He set before me many examples from the Scriptures, and told me that even Adam and Eve in the beginning had been overthrown by him through the hope of becoming gods. When he failed to convince me he fell upon his knees and besought me not to forsake him, nor ruin myself by looking back after putting my hand to the plough. Unhappily for myself I had the misfortune to conquer my adviser. I thought he was seeking not my salvation but his own comfort. So he followed me from the monastery as if he had been going to a funeral, and at last bade me farewell, saying, "I see that you bear the brand of a son of Satan. I do not ask your reasons nor take your excuses. The sheep which forsakes its fellows is at once exposed to the jaws of the wolf."

4. On the road from Beroa to Edessa⁷ adjoining the high-way is a waste over which the Saracens roam to and fro without having any fixed abode. Through fear of them travellers in those parts assemble in numbers, so that by mutual assistance they may escape impending danger. There were in my company men, women, old men, youths, children, altogether about seventy persons. All of a sudden the Ishmaelites on horses and camels made an assault upon us, with their flowing hair bound with fillets, their bodies half-naked, with their broad military boots, their cloaks streaming behind them, and their quivers slung upon the shoulders. They carried their bows unstrung and brandished their long spears; for they had come not to fight, but to plunder. We were seized, dispersed, and carried in different directions. I, meanwhile, repenting too late of the step I had taken, and far indeed from gaining possession of my inheritance, was assigned, along with another poor sufferer, a woman, to the service of one and the same owner. We were led, or rather carried, high upon the camel's back through a desert waste, every moment expecting destruction, and suspended, I may say, rather than seated. Flesh half raw was our food, camel's milk our drink.

5. At length, after crossing a great river we came to the interior of the desert, where, being commanded after the custom of the people to pay reverence to the mistress and her children, we bowed our heads. Here, as if I were a prisoner, I changed my dress, that is, learnt to go naked, the heat being so excessive as to allow of no clothing beyond a covering for the loins. Some sheep were given to me to tend, and, comparatively speaking, I found this occupation a comfort, for I seldom saw my masters or fellow slaves. My fate seemed to be like that of Jacob in sacred history, and reminded me also of Moses; both of whom were once shepherds in the desert. I fed on fresh cheese and milk, prayed continually, and sang psalms which I had learnt in the monastery. I was delighted with my captivity, and thanked God because I had found in the desert the monk's estate which I was on the point of losing in my country.

6. But no condition can ever shut out the Devil. How manifold past expression are his snares! Hid though I was, his malice found me out. My master seeing his flock increasing and finding no dishonesty in me (I knew that the Apostle has given command that masters should be as faithfully

served as God Himself), and wishing to reward me in order to secure my greater fidelity, gave me the woman who was once my fellow servant in captivity. On my refusing and saying I was a Christian, and that it was not lawful for me to take a woman to wife so long as her husband was alive (her husband had been captured with us, but carried off by another master), my owner was relentless in his rage, drew his sword and began to make at me. If I had not without delay stretched out my hand and taken possession of the woman, he would have slain me on the spot. Well; by this time a darker night than usual had set in and, for me, all too soon. I led my bride into an old cave; sorrow was bride's-maid; we shrank from each other but did not confess it. Then I really felt my captivity; I threw myself down on the ground, and began to lament the monastic state which I had lost, and said: "Wretched man that I am! have I been preserved for this? has my wickedness brought me to this, that in my gray hairs I must lose my virgin state and become a married man? What is the good of having despised parents, country, property, for the Lord's sake, if I do the thing I wished to avoid doing when I despised them? And yet it may be perhaps the case that I am in this condition because I longed for home. What are we to do, my soul? are we to perish, or conquer? Are we to wait for the hand of the Lord, or pierce ourselves with our own sword? Turn your weapon against yourself; I must fear your death, my soul, more than the death of the body. Chastity preserved has its own martyrdom. Let the witness for Christ lie unburied in the desert; I will be at once the persecutor and the martyr." Thus speaking I drew my sword which glittered even in the dark, and turning its point towards me said: "Farewell, unhappy woman: receive me as a martyr not as a husband." She threw herself at my feet and exclaimed: "I pray you by Jesus Christ, and adjure you by this hour of trial, do not shed your blood and bring its guilt upon me. If you choose to die, first turn your sword against me. Let us rather be united upon these terms. Supposing my husband should return to me, I would preserve the chastity which I have learnt in captivity; I would even die rather than lose it. Why should you die to prevent a union with me? I would die if you desired it. Take me then as the partner of your chastity; and love me more in this union of the spirit than you could in that of the body only. Let our master believe that you are my husband. Christ knows you are my brother. We shall easily convince them we are married when they see us so loving." I confess, I was astonished and, much as I had before admired the virtue of the woman, I now loved her as a wife still more. Yet I never gazed upon her naked person; I never touched her flesh, for I was afraid of losing in peace what I had preserved in the conflict. In this strange wedlock many days passed away. Marriage had made us more pleasing to our masters, and there was no suspicion of our flight; sometimes I was absent for even a whole month like a trusty shepherd traversing the wilderness.

7. After a long time as I sat one day by myself in the desert with nothing in sight save earth and sky, I began quickly to turn thing over in my thoughts, and amongst others called to mind my friends the monks, and specially the look of the father who had instructed me, kept me, and lost me. While I was thus musing I saw a crowd of ants swarming over a narrow path. The loads they carried were clearly larger than their own bodies. Some with their forceps were dragging along the seeds of herbs: others were excavating the earth from pits and banking it up to keep out the water. One party, in view of approaching winter, and wishing to prevent their store from being converted into grass through the dampness of the ground, were cutting off the tips of the grains they had carried in; another with solemn lamentation were removing the dead. And, what is stranger still in such a host, those coming out did not hinder those going in; nay rather, if they saw one fall beneath his burden they would put their shoulders to the load and give him assistance. In short

that day afforded me a delightful entertainment. So, remembering how Solomon sends us to the shrewdness of the ant and quickens our sluggish faculties by setting before us such an example, I began to tire of captivity, and to regret the monk's cell, and long to imitate those ants and their doings, where toil is for the community, and, since nothing belongs to any one, all things belong to all.

8. When I returned to my chamber, my wife met me. My looks betrayed the sadness of my heart. She asked why I was so dispirited. I told her the reasons, and exhorted her to escape. She did not reject the idea. I begged her to be silent on the matter. She pledged her word. We constantly spoke to one another in whispers; and we floated in suspense betwixt hope and fear. I had in the flock two very fine he-goats: these I killed, made their skins into bottles, and from their flesh prepared food for the way. Then in the early evening when our masters thought we had retired to rest we began our journey, taking with us the bottles and part of the flesh. When we reached the river which was about ten miles off, having inflated the skins and got astride upon them, we intrusted ourselves to the water, slowly propelling ourselves with our feet, that we might be carried down by the stream to a point on the opposite bank much below that at which we embarked, and that thus the pursuers might lose the track. But meanwhile the flesh became sodden and partly lost, and we could not depend on it for more than three days' sustenance. We drank till we could drink no more by way of preparing for the thirst we expected to endure, then hastened away, constantly looking behind us, and advanced more by night than day, on account both of the ambushes of the roaming Saracens, and of the excessive heat of the sun. I grow terrified even as I relate what happened; and, although my mind is perfectly at rest, yet my frame shudders from head to foot.

9. Three days after we saw in the dim distance two men riding on camels approaching with all speed. At once foreboding ill I began to think my master purposed putting us to death, and our sun seemed to grow dark again. In the midst of our fear, and just as we realized that our footsteps on the sand had betrayed us, we found on our right hand a cave which extended far underground. Well, we entered the cave: but we were afraid of venomous beasts such as vipers, basilisks, scorpions, and other creatures of the kind, which often resort to such shady places so as to avoid the heat of the sun. We therefore barely went inside, and took shelter in a pit on the left, not venturing a step farther, lest in fleeing from death we should run into death. We thought thus within ourselves: If the Lord helps us in our misery we have found safety: if He rejects us for our sins, we have found our grave. What do you suppose were our feelings? What was our terror, when in front of the cave, close by, there stood our master and fellow-servant, brought by the evidence of our footsteps to our hiding place? How much worse is death expected than death inflicted! Again my tongue stammers with distress and fear; it seems as if I heard my master's voice, and I hardly dare mutter a word. He sent his servant to drag us from the cavern while he himself held the camels and, sword in hand, waited for us to come. Meanwhile the servant entered about three or four cubits, and we in our hiding place saw his back though he could not see us, for the nature of the eye is such that those who go into the shade out of the sunshine can see nothing. His voice echoed through the cave: "Come out, you felons; come out and die; why do you stay? Why do you delay? Come out, your master is calling and patiently waiting for you." He was still speaking when lo! through the gloom we saw a lioness seize the man, strangle him, and drag him, covered with blood, farther in. Good Jesus! how great was our terror now, how intense our joy! We beheld,

though our master knew not of it, our enemy perish. He, when he saw that he was long in returning, supposed that the fugitives being two to one were offering resistance. Impatient in his rage, and sword still in hand, he came to the cavern, and shouted like a madman as he chided the slowness of his slave, but was seized upon by the wild beast before he reached our hiding place. Who ever would believe that before our eyes a brute would fight for us?

One cause of fear was removed, but there was the prospect of a similar death for ourselves, though the rage of the lion was not so bad to bear as the anger of the man. Our hearts failed for fear: without venturing to stir a step we awaited the issue, having no wall of defence in the midst of so great dangers save the consciousness of our chastity; when, early in the morning, the lioness, afraid of some snare and aware that she had been seen took up her cub in her teeth and carried it away, leaving us in possession of our retreat. Our confidence was not restored all at once. We did not rush out, but waited for a long time; for as often as we thought of coming out we pictured to ourselves the horror of falling in with her.

10. At last we got rid of our fright; and when that day was spent, we sallied forth towards evening, and saw the camels, on account of their great speed called dromedaries, quietly chewing the cud. We mounted, and with the strength gained from the new supply of grain, after ten days travelling through the desert arrived at the Roman camp. After being presented to the tribune we told all, and from thence were sent to Sabianus, who commanded in Mesopotamia, where we sold our camels. My dear old abbot was now sleeping in the Lord; I betook myself therefore to this place, and returned to the monastic life, while I entrusted my companion here to the care of the virgins; for though I loved her as a sister, I did not commit myself to her as if she were my sister.

Malchus was an old man, I a youth, when he told me these things. I who have related them to you am now old, and I have set them forth as a history of chastity for the chaste. Virgins, I exhort you, guard your chastity. Tell the story to them that come after, that they may realize that in the midst of swords, and wild beasts of the desert, virtue is never a captive, and that he who is devoted to the service of Christ may die, but cannot be conquered.

1: This purpose was never carried into effect. These Lives of the Monks may, be regarded as a contribution towards it, and also the book *De Viris Illustribus* (translated in Vol. iii. of this series) which was written in the following year, 392.

2: Patronos. Properly defenders or advocates, but passing into the sense of proprietor, as in the Italian *padrone*.

3: In the year 374.

4: See Letters i. 15, iii. 3.

5: A populous city in Mesopotamia.

6: The desert in which Jerome spent the years 375-80. See Letters ii., v., xiv., xvii.

7: A city of Mesopotamia, formerly the capital of Abgarus' kingdom: at this time a great centre of Syrian Christianity.

The Life of Paulus the First Hermit

The Life of Paulus the First Hermit The Life of Paulus the First Hermit The Life of Paulus was written in the year 374 or 375 during Jerome's stay in the desert of Syria, as is seen from c. 6, and was dedicated to Paulus of Concordia as stated in Jerome's Ep. x. c. 3.

1. It has been a subject of wide-spread and frequent discussion what monk was the first to give a signal example of the hermit life. For some going back too far have found a beginning in those holy men Elias and John, of whom the former seems to have been more than a monk and the latter to have begun to prophesy before his birth. Others, and their opinion is that commonly received, maintain that Antony was the originator of this mode of life, which view is partly true. Partly I say, for the fact is not so much that he preceded the rest as that they all derived from him the necessary stimulus. But it is asserted even at the present day by Amathas and Macarius, two of Antony's disciples, the former of whom laid his master in the grave, that a certain Paul of Thebes was the leader in the movement, though not the first to bear the name, and this opinion has my approval also. Some as they think fit circulate stories such as this-that he was a man living in an underground cave with flowing hair down to his feet, and invent many incredible tales which it would be useless to detail. Nor does the opinion of men who lie without any sense of shame seem worthy of refutation. So then inasmuch as both Greek and Roman writers have handed down careful accounts of Antony, I have determined to write a short history of Paul's early and latter days, more because the thing has been passed over than from confidence in my own ability. What his middle life was like, and what snares of Satan he experienced, no man, it is thought, has yet discovered.

2. During the persecutions of Decius and Valerian, when Cornelius at Rome and Cyprian at Carthage shed their blood in blessed martyrdom, many churches in Egypt and the Thebaid were laid waste by the fury of the storm. At that time the Christians would often pray that they might be smitten with the sword for the name of Christ. But the desire of the crafty foe was to slay the soul, not the body; and this he did by searching diligently for slow but deadly tortures. In the words of Cyprian himself who suffered at his hands: they who wished to die were not suffered to be slain. We give two illustrations, both as specially noteworthy and to make the cruelty of the enemy better known.

3. A martyr, steadfast in faith, who stood fast as a conqueror amidst the racks and burning plates, was ordered by him to be smeared with honey and to be made to lie under a blazing sun with his hands tied behind his back, so that he who had already surmounted the heat of the frying-pan might be vanquished by the stings of flies. Another who was in the bloom of youth was taken by his command to some delightful pleasure gardens, and there amid white lilies and blushing roses, close by a gently murmuring stream, while overhead the soft whisper of the wind played among the leaves of the trees, was laid upon a deep luxurious feather-bed, bound with fetters of sweet garlands to prevent his escape. When all bad withdrawn from him a harlot of great beauty drew near and began with voluptuous embrace to throw her arms around his neck, and, wicked even to

relate! to handle his person, so that when once the lusts of the flesh were roused, she might accomplish her licentious purpose. What to do, and whither to turn, the soldier of Christ knew not. Unconquered by tortures he was being overcome by pleasure. At last with an inspiration from heaven he bit off the end of his tongue and spat it in her face as she kissed him. Thus the sensations of lust were subdued by the intense pain which followed.

4. While such enormities were being perpetrated in the lower part of the Thebaid, Paul and his newly married sister were bereaved of both their parents, he being about sixteen years of age. He was heir to a rich inheritance, highly skilled in both Greek and Egyptian learning, gifted with a gentle disposition and a deep love for God. Amid the thunders of persecution he retired to a house at a considerable distance and in a more secluded spot. But to what crimes does not the "accursed thirst for gold" impel the human heart? His brother-in-law conceived the thought of betraying the youth whom he was bound to conceal. Neither a wife's tears which so often prevail, nor the ties of blood, nor the all-seeing eye of God above him could turn the traitor from his wickedness. "He came, he was urgent, he acted with cruelty while seeming only to press the claims of affection."

5. The young man had the tact to understand this, and, conforming his will to the necessity, fled to the mountain wilds to wait for the end of the persecution. He began with easy stages, and repeated halts, to advance into the desert. At length he found a rocky mountain, at the foot of which, closed by a stone, was a cave of no great size. He removed the stone (so eager are men to learn what is hidden), made eager search, and saw within a large hall, open to the sky, but shaded by the wide-spread branches of an ancient palm. The tree, however, did not conceal a fountain of transparent clearness, the waters whereof no sooner gushed forth than the stream was swallowed up in a small opening of the same ground which gave it birth. There were besides in the mountain, which was full of cavities, many habitable places, in which were seen, now rough with rust, anvils and hammers for stamping money. The place, Egyptian writers relate, was a secret mint at the time of Antony's union with Cleopatra.

6. Accordingly, regarding his abode as a gift from God, he fell in love with it, and there in prayer and solitude spent all the rest of his life. The palm afforded him food and clothing. And, that no one may deem this impossible, I call to witness Jesus and His holy angels that I have seen and still see in that part of the desert which lies between Syria and the Saracens country, monks of whom one was shut up for thirty years and lived on barley bread and muddy water, while another in an old cistern (called in the country dialect of Syria Gubba) kept himself alive on five dried figs a day. What I relate then is so strange that it will appear incredible to those who do not believe the words that "all things are possible to him that believeth."

7. But to return to the point at which I digressed. The blessed Paul had already lived on earth the life of heaven for a hundred and thirteen years, and Antony at the age of ninety was dwelling in another place of solitude (as he himself was wont to declare), when the thought occurred to the latter, that no monk more perfect than himself had settled in the desert. However, in the stillness of the night it was revealed to him that there was farther in the desert a much better man than he, and that he ought to go and visit him. So then at break of day the venerable old man, supporting and guiding his weak limbs with a staff, started to go: but what direction to choose he knew not. Scorching noontide came, with a broiling sun overhead, but still he did not suffer himself to be

turned from the journey he had begun. Said he, "I believe in my God: some time or other He will shew me the fellow-servant whom He promised me." He said no more. All at once he beholds a creature of mingled shape, half horse half man, called by the poets Hippocentaur. At the sight of this he arms himself by making on his forehead the sign of salvation, and then exclaims, "Holloa! Where in these parts is a servant of God living?" The monster after gnashing out some kind of outlandish utterance, in words broken rather than spoken through his bristling lips, at length finds a friendly mode of communication, and extending his right hand points out the way desired. Then with swift flight he crosses the spreading plain and vanishes from the sight of his wondering companion. But whether the devil took this shape to terrify him, or whether it be that the desert which is known to abound in monstrous animals engenders that kind of creature also, we cannot decide.

8. Antony was amazed. and thinking over what he had seen went on his way. Before long in a small rocky valley shut in on all sides he sees a mannikin with hooked snout, horned forehead, and extremities like goats' feet. When he saw this, Antony like a good soldier seized the shield of faith and the helmet of hope: the creature none the less began to offer to him the fruit of the palm-trees to support him on his journey and as it were pledges of peace. Antony perceiving this stopped and asked who he was. The answer he received from him was this: "I am a mortal being and one of those inhabitants of the desert whom the Gentiles deluded by various forms of error worship under the names of Fauns, Satyrs, and Incubi. I am sent to represent my tribe. We pray you in our behalf to entreat the favour of your Lord and ours. who, we have learnt, came once to save the world, and `whose sound has gone forth into all the earth.'" As he uttered such words as these, the aged traveller's cheeks streamed with tears, the marks of his deep feeling, which he shed in the fulness of his joy. He rejoiced over the Glory of Christ and the destruction of Satan, and marvelling all the while that he could understand the Satyr's language, and striking the ground with his staff, he said, "Woe to thee, Alexandria, who instead of God worshipping monsters! Woe to thee, harlot city, into which have flowed together the demons of the whole world! What will you say now? Beasts speak of Christ, and you instead of God worship monsters." He had not finished speaking when, as if on wings, the wild creature fled away. Let no one scruple to believe this incident; its truth is supported by what took place when Constantine was on the throne, a matter of which the whole world was witness. For a man of that kind was brought alive to Alexandria and shewn as a wonderful sight to the people. Afterwards his lifeless body, to prevent its decay through the summer heat, was preserved in salt and brought to Antioch that the Emperor might see it.

9. To pursue my proposed story. Antony traversed the region on which he had entered, seeing only the traces of wild beasts, and the wide waste of the desert. What to do, whither to wend his way, he knew not. Another day had now passed. One thing alone was left him, his confident belief that he could not be forsaken by Christ. The darkness of the second night he wore away in prayer. While it was still twilight, he saw not far away a she-wolf gasping with parching thirst and creeping to the foot of the mountain. He followed it with his eyes; and after the beast had disappeared in a cave he drew near and began to look within. His curiosity profited nothing: the darkness hindered vision. But, as the Scripture saith, perfect love casteth out fear. With halting step and bated breath he entered, carefully feeling his way; he advanced little by little and repeatedly listened for the sound. At length through the fearful midnight darkness a light appeared in the distance. In his

eager haste he struck his foot against a stone and roused the echoes; whereupon the blessed Paul closed the open door and made it fast with a bar. Then Antony sank to the ground at the entrance and until the sixth hour or later craved admission, saying, "Who I am, whence, and why I have come, you know. I know I am not worthy to look upon you: yet unless I see you I will not go away. You welcome beasts: why not a man? I asked and I have found: I knock that it may be opened to me. But if I do not succeed, I will die here on your threshold. You will surely bury me when I am dead."

"Such was his constant cry: unmoved he stood. To whom the hermit thus brief answer made""Prayers like these do not mean threats; there is no trickery in tears. Are you surprised at my not welcoming you when you have come here to die?" Thus with smiles Paul gave him access, and, the door being opened, they threw themselves into each other's arms, greeted one another by name, and joined in thanksgiving to God.

10 After the sacred kiss Paul sat down and thus began to address Antony. "Behold the man whom you have sought with so much toil, his limbs decayed with age, his gray hairs unkempt. You see before you a man who ere long will be dust. But love endures all things. Tell me therefore, I pray you, how fares the human race? Are new homes springing up in the ancient cities? What government directs the world? Are there still some remaining for the demons to carry away by their delusions?" Thus conversing they noticed with wonder a raven which had settled on the bough of a tree, and was then flying gently down till it came and laid a whole loaf of bread before them. They were astonished, and when it had gone, "See," said Paul, "the Lord truly loving, truly merciful, has sent us a meal. For the last sixty years I have always received half a loaf: but at your coming Christ has doubled his soldier's rations."

11. Accordingly, having returned thanks to the Lord, they sat down together on the brink of the glassy spring. At this point a dispute arose as to who should break the bread, and nearly the whole day until eventide was spent in the discussion. Paul urged in support of his view the rites of hospitality, Antony pleaded age. At length it was arranged that each should seize the loaf on the side nearest to himself, pull towards him, and keep for his own the part left in his hands. Then on hands and knees they drank a little water from the spring, and offering to God the sacrifice of praise passed the night in vigil. At the return of day the blessed Paul thus spoke to Antony: "I knew long since, brother, that you were dwelling in those parts: long ago God promised you to me for a fellow-servant; but the time of my falling asleep now draws nigh; I have always longed to be dissolved and to be with Christ; my course is finished, and there remains for me a crown of righteousness. Therefore you have been sent by the Lord to lay my poor body in the ground, yea to return earth to earth."

12. On hearing this Antony with tears and groans began to pray that he would not desert him, but would take him for a companion on that journey. His friend replied: "You ought not to seek your own, but another man's good. It is expedient for you to lay aside the burden of the flesh and to follow the Lamb; but it is expedient for the rest of the brethren to be trained by your example. Wherefore be so good as to go and fetch the cloak Bishop Athanasius gave you, to wrap my poor body in." The blessed Paul asked this favour not because he cared much whether his corpse when it decayed were clothed or naked (why should he indeed, when he had so long worn a garment of palm-leaves stitched together?); but that he might soften his friend's regrets at his

decease. Antony was astonished to find Paul had heard of Athanasius and his cloak; and, seeing as it were Christ Himself in him, he mentally worshipped God without venturing to add a single word; then silently weeping he once more kissed his eyes and hands, and set out on his return to the monastery which was afterwards seized by the Saracens. His steps lagged behind his will. Yet, exhausted as he was with fasting and broken by age, his courage proved victorious over his years.

13. At last wearied and panting for breath he completed his journey and reached his little dwelling. Here he was met by two disciples who had begun to wait upon him in his advanced age. Said they, "Where have you stayed so long, father?" He replied, "Woe to me a sinner! I do not deserve the name of monk. I have seen Elias, I have seen John in the desert, and I have really seen Paul in Paradise." He then closed his lips, beat upon his breast, and brought out the cloak from his cell. When his disciples asked him to explain the matter somewhat more fully he said, "There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak."

14. He then went out, and without taking so much as a morsel of food returned the same way he came, longing for him alone, thirsting to see him, having eyes and thought for none but him. For he was afraid, and the event proved his anticipations correct, that in his absence his friend might yield up his spirit to Christ. And now another day had dawned and a three hours' journey still remained, when he saw Paul in robes of snowy white ascending on high among the bands of angels, and the choirs of prophets and apostles. Immediately he fell on his face, and threw the coarse sand upon his head, weeping and wailing as he cried, "Why do you cast me from you, Paul? Why go without one farewell? Have you made yourself known so late only to depart so soon?"

15. The blessed Antony used afterwards to relate that he traversed the rest of the distance at such speed that he flew along like a bird; and not without reason: for on entering the cave he saw the lifeless body in a kneeling attitude, with head erect and hands uplifted. The first thing he did, supposing him to be alive, was to pray by his side. But when he did not hear the sighs which usually come from one in prayer, he fell to kisses and tears, and he then understood that even the dead body of the saint with duteous gestures was praying to God unto whom all things live.

16. Then having wrapped up the body and carried it forth, all the while chanting hymns and psalms according to the Christian tradition, Antony began to lament that he had no implement for digging the ground. So in a surging sea of thought and pondering many plans he said: "If I return to the monastery, there is a four days' journey: if I stay here I shall do no good. I will die then, as is fitting, beside Thy warrior, O Christ, and will quickly breathe my last breath.

While he turned these things over in his mind, behold, two lions from the recesses of the desert with manes flying on their necks came rushing along. At first he was horrified at the sight, but again turning his thoughts to God, he waited without alarm, as though they were doves that he saw. They came straight to the corpse of the blessed old man and there stopped, fawned upon it and lay down at its feet, roaring aloud as if to make it known that they were mourning in the only way possible to them. Then they began to paw the ground close by, and vie with one another in excavating the sand, until they dug out a place just large enough to hold a man. And immediately, as if demanding a reward for their work, pricking up their ears while they lowered their heads. they came to Antony and began to lick his hands and feet. He perceived that they were begging a blessing from him, and at once with an outburst of praise to Christ that even dumb animals felt His divinity, he said, "Lord, without whose command not a leaf drops from the tree, not a sparrow falls

to the ground, grant them what thou knowest to be best." Then he waved his hand and bade them depart. When they were gone he bent his aged shoulders beneath the burden of the saint's body, laid it in the grave, covered it with the excavated soil, and raised over it the customary mound. Another day dawned, and then, that the affectionate heir might not be without something belonging to the intestate dead, he took for himself the tunic which after the manner of wicker-work the saint had woven out of palm-leaves. And so returning to the monastery he unfolded everything in order to his disciples, and on the feast-days of Easter and Pentecost he always wore Paul's tunic.

17. I may be permitted at the end of this little treatise to ask those who do not know the extent of their possessions, who adorn their homes with marble, who string house to house and field to field, what did this old man in his nakedness ever lack? Your drinking vessels are of precious stones; he satisfied his thirst with the hollow of his hand. Your tunics are of wrought gold; he had not the raiment of the meanest of your slaves. But on the other hand, poor though he was, Paradise is open to him; you with all your gold will be received into Gehenna. He though naked yet kept the robe of Christ; you, clad in your silks, have lost the vesture of Christ. Paul lies covered with worthless dust, but will rise again to glory; over you are raised costly tombs, but both you and your wealth are doomed to the burning. Have a care, I pray you, at least have a care for the riches you love. Why are even the grave-clothes of your dead made of gold? Why does not your vaunting cease even amid mourning and tears? Cannot the carcasses of rich men decay except in silk?

18. I beseech you, reader, whoever you may be, to remember Jerome the sinner. He, if God would give him his choice, would much sooner take Paul's tunic with his merits, than the purple of kings with their punishment.

The Life of S. Hilarion

The Life of S. Hilarion The Life of S. Hilarion The life of Hilarion was written by Jerome in 390 at Bethlehem. Its object was to further the ascetic life to which he was devoted. It contains, amidst much that is legendary, some statements which attach it to genuine history, and is in any case a curious record of the state of the human mind in the 4th century. A theory started in Germany, that it was a sort of religious romance, seems destitute of foundation. It may possibly have been, in Jerome's intention, a contribution to the church history the writing of which he proposed but never executed. (See the Life of Malchus, c. 1.)

I. Before I begin to write the life of the blessed Hilarion I invoke the aid of the Holy Spirit who dwelt in him, that He who bestowed upon the saint his virtues may grant me such power of speech to relate them that my words may be adequate to his deeds. For the virtue of those who have done great deeds is esteemed in proportion to the ability with which it has been praised by men of genius. Alexander the Great of Macedon who is spoken of by Daniel as the ram, or the panther, or the he-goat, on reaching the grave of Achilles exclaimed "Happy Youth! to have the privilege of a great herald of your worth," meaning, of course, Homer. I, however, have to tell the story of the life and conversation of a man so renowned that even Homer were he here would either envy me the theme or prove unequal to it. It is true that that holy man Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, who had much intercourse with Hilarion, set forth his praises in a short but widely circulated letter. Yet it is one thing to praise the dead in general terms, another to relate their characteristic virtues. And so we in taking up the work begun by him do him service rather than wrong: we despise the abuse of some who as they once disparaged my hero Paulus,¹ will now perhaps disparage Hilarion; the former they censured for his solitary life; they may find fault with the latter for his intercourse with the world; the one was always out of sight, therefore they think he had no existence; the other was seen by many, therefore he is deemed of no account. It is just what their ancestors the Pharisees did of old! they were not pleased with² John fasting in the desert, nor with our Lord and Saviour in the busy throng, eating and drinking. But I will put my hand to the work on which I have resolved, and go on my way closing my ears to the barking of Scylla's hounds.

2. The birth place of Hilarion was the village Thabatha, situate about five miles to the south of Gaza, a city of Palestine. His parents were idolaters, and therefore, as the saying is, the rose blossomed on the thorn. By them he was committed to the charge of a Grammarian at Alexandria, where, so far as his age allowed, he gave proofs of remarkable ability and character: and in a short time endeared himself to all and became an accomplished speaker. More important than all this, he was a believer in the Lord Jesus, and took no delight in the madness of the circus, the blood of the arena, the excesses of the theatre: his whole pleasure was in the assemblies of the Church.

3. At that time he heard of the famous name of Antony, which was in the mouth of all the races of Egypt. He was fired with a desire to see him, and set out for the desert. He no sooner saw him than he changed his former mode of life and abode with him about two months, studying the

method of his life and the gravity of his conduct: his assiduity in prayer, his humility in his dealings with the brethren, his severity in rebuke, his eagerness in exhortation. He noted too that the saint would never on account of bodily weakness break his rule of abstinence or deviate from the plainness of his food. At last, unable to endure any longer the crowds of those who visited the saint because of various afflictions or the assaults of demons, and deeming it a strange anomaly that he should have to bear in the desert the crowds of the cities, he thought it was better for him to begin as Antony had begun. Said he: "Antony is reaping the reward of victory like a hero who has proved his bravery. I have not entered on the soldier's career." He therefore returned with certain monks to his country, and, his parents being now dead, gave part of his property to his brothers, part to the poor, keeping nothing at all for himself, for he remembered with awe the passage in the Acts of the Apostles and dreaded the example and the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira above all he was mindful of the Lord's words,³ "whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." At this time he was about fifteen years old. Accordingly, stripped bare and armed with the weapons of Christ, he entered the wilderness which stretches to the left seven miles from Majoma, the port of Gaza, as you go along the coast to Egypt. And although the locality had a record of robbery and of blood, and his relatives and friends warned him of the danger he was incurring, he despised death that he might escape death.

4. His courage and tender years would have been a marvel to all, were it not that his heart was on fire and his eyes bright with the gleams and sparks of faith. His cheeks were smooth, his body thin and delicate, unfit to bear the slightest injury which cold or heat could inflict. What then? With no other covering for his limbs but a shirt of sackcloth, and a cloak of skins which the blessed Antony had given him when he set out, and a blanket of the coarsest sort, he found pleasure in the vast and terrible wilderness with the sea on one side and the marshland on the other. His food was only fifteen dried figs after sunset. And because the district was notorious for brigandage, it was his practice never to abide long in the same place. What was the devil to do? Whither could he turn? He who once boasted and said,⁴ "I will ascend into heaven, I will set my throne above the stars of the sky, I will be like the most High," saw himself conquered and trodden under foot by a boy whose years did not allow of sin.

5. Satan therefore tickled his senses and, as is his wont, lighted in his maturing body the fires of lust. This mere beginner in Christ's school was forced to think of what he knew not, and to revolve whole trains of thought concerning that of which he had no experience. Angry with himself and beating his bosom (as if with the blow of his hand he could shut out his thoughts) "Ass!" he exclaimed, "I'll stop your kicking, I will not feed you with barley, but with chaff. I will weaken you with hunger and thirst, I will lade you with heavy burdens, I will drive you through heat and cold, that you may think more of food than wantonness." So for three or four days afterwards he sustained his sinking spirit with the juice of herbs and a few dried figs, praying frequently and singing, and hoeing the ground that the suffering of fasting might be doubled by the pain of toil. At the same time he wove baskets of rushes and emulated the discipline of the Egyptian monks, and put into practice the Apostle's precept,⁵ "If any will not work, neither let him eat." By these practices he became so enfeebled and his frame so wasted, that his bones scarcely held together.

6 One night he began to hear the wailing of infants, the bleating of flocks, the lowing of oxen, the lament of what seemed to be women, the roaring of lions, the noise of an army, and moreover various portentous cries which made him in alarm shrink from the sound ere he had the sight. He

understood that the demons were disporting themselves, and falling on his knees he made the sign of the cross on his forehead. Thus armed as he lay he fought the more bravely, half longing to see those whom he shuddered to hear, and anxiously looking in every direction. Meanwhile all at once in the bright moonlight he saw a chariot with dashing steeds rushing upon him. He called upon Jesus, and suddenly before his eyes, the earth was opened and the whole array was swallowed up. Then he said,⁶ "The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." And,⁷ "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will triumph in the name of the Lord our God."

7. So many were his temptations and so various the snares of demons night and day, that if I wished to relate them, a volume would not suffice. How often when he lay down did naked women appear to him, how often sumptuous feasts when he was hungry! Sometimes as he prayed a howling wolf sprang past or a snarling fox, and when he sang a gladiatorial show was before him, and a man newly slain would seem to fall at his feet and ask him for burial.

8. Once upon a time he was praying with his head upon the ground. As is the way with men, his attention was withdrawn from his devotions, and he was thinking of something else, when a tormentor sprang upon his back and driving his heels into his sides and beating him across the neck with a horse-whip cried out "Come! why are you asleep?" Then with a loud laugh asked if he was tired and would like to have some barley.

9. From his sixteenth to his twentieth year he shielded himself from heat and rain in a little hut which he had constructed of reeds and sedge. Afterwards he built himself a small cell which remains to the present day, five feet in height, that is less than his own height, and only a little more in length. One might suppose it a tomb rather than a house.

10. He shaved his hair once a year on Easter Day, and until his death was accustomed to lie on the bare ground or on a bed of rushes. The sackcloth which he had once put on he never washed, and he used to say that it was going too far to look for cleanliness in goats' hair-cloth. Nor did he change his shirt unless the one he wore was almost in rags. He had committed the Sacred Writings to memory, and after prayer and singing was wont to recite them as if in the presence of God. It would be tedious to narrate singly the successive steps of his spiritual ascent; I will therefore set them in a summary way before my reader, and describe his mode of life at each stage, and will afterwards return to proper historical sequence.

11. From his twentieth to his twenty-seventh year, for three years his food was half a pint of lentils moistened with cold water, and for the next three dry bread with salt and water. From his twenty-seventh year onward to the thirtieth, he supported himself on wild herbs and the raw roots of certain shrubs. From his thirty-first to his thirty-fifth year, he had for food six ounces of barley bread, and vegetables slightly cooked without oil. But finding his eyes growing dim and his whole body shrivelled with a scabby eruption and dry mange, he added oil to his former food and up to the sixty-third year of his life followed this temperate course, tasting neither fruit nor pulse, nor anything whatsoever besides. Then when he saw that his bodily health was broken down, and thought death was near, from his sixty-fourth year to his eightieth he abstained from bread. The fervour of his spirit was so wonderful, that at times when others are wont to allow themselves some laxity of living he appeared to be entering like a novice on the service of the Lord. He made a sort of broth from meal and bruised herbs, food and drink together scarcely weighing six ounces, and, while obeying this rule of diet, he never broke his fast before sunset, not even on festivals nor

in severe sickness. But it is now time to return to the course of event.

12. While still living in the hut, at the age of eighteen, robbers came to him by night, either supposing that he had something which they might carry off, or considering that they would be brought into contempt if a solitary boy felt no dread of their attacks. They searched up and down between the sea and the marsh from evening until daybreak without being able to find his resting place. Then, having discovered the boy by the light of day they asked him, half in jest, "What would you do if robbers came to you?" He replied, "He that has nothing does not fear robbers." Said they, "At all events, you might be killed." "I might," said he, "I might; and therefore I do not fear robbers because I am prepared to die." Then they marvelled at his firmness and faith, confessed how they had wandered about in the night, and how their eyes had been blinded, and promised to lead a stricter life in the future.

13. He had now spent twenty-two years in the wilderness and was the common theme in all the cities of Palestine, though everywhere known by repute only. The first person bold enough to break into the presence of the blessed Hilarion was a certain woman of Eleutheropolis who found that she was despised by her husband on account of her sterility (for in fifteen years she had borne no fruit of wedlock). He had no expectation of her coming when she suddenly threw herself at his feet. "Forgive my boldness," she said: "take pity on my necessity. Why do you turn away your eyes? Why shun my entreaties? Do not think of me as a woman, but as an object of compassion. It was my sex that bore the Saviour.⁸ They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick." At length, after a long time he no longer turned away, but looked at the woman and asked the cause of her coming and of her tears. On learning this he raised his eyes to heaven and bade her have faith, then wept over her as she departed. Within a year he saw her with a son.

14. This his first miracle was succeeded by another still greater and more notable. Aristnete the wife of Elpidius who was afterwards pretorian prefect, a woman well known among her own people, still better known among Christians, on her return with her husband, from visiting the blessed Antony, was delayed at Gaza by the sickness of her three children; for there, whether it was owing to the vitiated atmosphere, or whether it was, as afterwards became clear, for the glory of God's servant Hilarion, they were all alike seized by a semi-tertian ague and despaired of by the physicians. The mother lay wailing, or as one might say walked up and down between the corpses of her three sons not knowing which she should first have to mourn for. When, however, she knew that there was a certain monk in the neighbouring wilderness, forgetting her matronly state (she only remembered she was a mother) she set out accompanied by her handmaids and eunuchs, and was hardly persuaded by her husband to take an ass to ride upon. On reaching the saint she said, "I pray you by Jesus our most merciful God, I beseech you by His cross and blood, to restore to me my three sons, so that the name of our Lord and Saviour may be glorified in the city of the Gentiles. Then shall his servants enter Gaza and the idol Marnas shall fall to the ground." At first he refused and said that he never left his cell and was not accustomed to enter a house, much less the city; but she threw herself upon the ground and cried repeatedly, "Hilarion, servant of Christ, give me back my children: Antony kept them safe in Egypt, do you save them in Syria." All present were weeping, and the saint himself wept as he denied her. What need to say more? the woman did not leave him till he promised that he would enter Gaza after sunset. On coming thither he made the sign of the cross over the bed and fevered limbs of each, and called upon the name

of Jesus. Marvellous efficacy of the Name! As if from three fountains the sweat burst forth at the same time: in that very hour they took food, recognized their mourning mother, and, with thanks to God, warmly kissed the saint's hands. When the matter was noised abroad, and the fame of it spread far and wide, the people flocked to him from Syria and Egypt, so that many believed in Christ and professed themselves monks. For as yet there were no monasteries in Palestine, nor had anyone known a monk in Syria before the saintly Hilarion. It was he who originated this mode of life and devotion, and who first trained men to it in that province. The Lord Jesus had in Egypt the aged Antony: in Palestine He had the youthful Hilarion.

15. Facidia is a hamlet belonging to Rhino-Corura, a city of Egypt. From this village a woman who had been blind for ten years was brought to the blessed Hilarion, and on being presented to him by the brethren (for there were now many monks with him) affirmed that, she had spent all her substance on physicians. The saint replied: "If you had given to the poor what you have wasted on physicians, the true physician Jesus would have cured you." But when she cried aloud and entreated pity, he spat into her eyes, in imitation of the Saviour, and with similar instant effect.

16. A charioteer, also of Gaza, stricken by a demon in his chariot became perfectly stiff, so that he could neither move his hand nor bend his neck. He was brought on a litter, but could only signify his petition by moving his tongue; and was told that he could not be healed unless he first believed in Christ and promised to forsake his former occupation. He believed, he promised, and he was healed: and rejoiced more in the saving of the soul than in that of the body.

17. Again, a very powerful youth called Marsitas from the neighbourhood of Jerusalem plumed himself so highly on his strength that he carried fifteen bushels of grain for a long time and over a considerable distance, and considered it as his highest glory that he could beat the asses in endurance. This man was afflicted with a grievous demon and could not endure chains, or fetters, but broke even the bolts and bars of the doors. He had bitten off the noses and ears of many: had broken the feet of some, the legs of others. He had struck such terror of himself into everybody, that he was laden with chains and dragged by ropes on all sides like a wild bull to the monastery. As soon as the brethren saw him they were greatly alarmed (for the man was of gigantic size) and told the Father. He, seated as he was, commanded him to be brought to him and released. When he was free, "Bow your head," said he, "and come." The man began to tremble; he twisted his neck round and did not dare to look him in the face, but laid aside all his fierceness and began to lick his feet as he sat. At last the demon which had possessed the young man being tortured by the saint's adjurations came forth on the seventh day.

18. Nor must we omit to tell that Orion, a leading man and wealthy citizen of Aira, on the coast of the Red Sea, being possessed by a legion of demons was brought to him. Hands, neck, sides, feet were laden with iron, and his glaring eyes portended an access of raging madness. As the saint was walking with the brethren and expounding some passage of Scripture the man broke from the hands of his keepers, clasped him from behind and raised him aloft. There was a shout from all, for they feared lest he might crush his limbs wasted as they were with fasting. The saint smiled and said, "Be quiet, and let me have my rival in the wrestling match to myself." Then he bent back his hand over his shoulder till he touched the man's head, seized his hair and drew him round so as to be foot to foot with him; he then stretched both his hands in a straight line, and trod on his two feet with both his own, while he cried out again and again, "To torment with you! ye crowd of

demons, to torment!" The sufferer shouted aloud and bent back his neck till his head touched the ground, while the saint said, "Lord Jesus, release this wretched man, release this captive. Thine it is to conquer many, no less than one." What I now relate is unparalleled from one man's lips were heard different voices and as it were the confused shouts of a multitude. Well, he too was cured, and not long after came with his wife and children to the monastery bringing many gifts expressive of his gratitude. The saint thus addressed him—"Have you not read what befell Gehazi and Simon, one of whom took a reward, the other offered it, the former in order to sell grace, the latter to buy it?" And when Orion said with tears, "Take it and give it to the poor," he replied, "You can best distribute your own gifts, for you tread the streets of the cities and know the poor. Why should I who have forsaken my own seek another man's? To many the name of the poor is a pretext for their avarice; but compassion knows no artifices. No one better spends than he who keeps nothing for himself." The man was sad and lay upon the ground. "Be not sad, my son," he said; "what I do for my own good I do also for yours. If I were to take these gifts I should myself offend God, and, moreover, the legion would return to you."

19. There is a story relating to Majomites of Gaza which it is impossible to pass over in silence. While quarrying building stones on the shore not far from the monastery he was helplessly paralysed, and after being carried to the saint by his fellow-workman immediately returned to his work in perfect health. I ought to explain that the shore of Palestine and Egypt naturally consists of soft sand and gravel which gradually becomes consolidated and hardens into rock; and thus though to the eye it remains the same it is no longer the same to the touch.

20. Another story relates to Italicus, a citizen of the same town. He was a Christian and kept horses for the circus to contend against those of the Duumvir of Gaza who was a votary of the idol god Mamas. This custom at least in Roman cities was as old as the days of Romulus, and was instituted in commemoration of the successful seizure of the Sabine women. The chariots raced seven times round the circus in honour of Consus in his character of the God of Counsel.⁹ Victory lay with the team which tired out the horses opposed to them. Now the rival of Italicus had in his pay a magician to incite his horses by certain demoniacal incantations, and keep back those of his opponent. Italicus therefore came to the blessed Hilarion and besought his aid not so much for the injury of his adversary as for protection for himself. It seemed absurd for the venerable old man to waste prayers on trifles of this sort. He therefore smiled and said, "Why do you not rather give the price of the horses to the poor for the salvation of your soul?" His visitor replied that his office was a public duty, and that he acted not so much from choice as from compulsion, that no Christian man could employ magic, but would rather seek aid from a servant of Christ, especially against the people of Gaza who were enemies of God, and who would exult over the Church of Christ more than over him. At the request therefore of the brethren who were present he ordered an earthenware cup out of which he was wont to drink to be filled with water and given to Italicus. The latter took it and sprinkled it over his stable and horses, his charioteers and his chariot, and the barriers of the course. The crowd was in a marvellous state of excitement, for the enemy in derision had published the news of what was going to be done, and the backers of Italicus were in high spirits at the victory which they promised themselves. The signal is given; the one team flies towards the goal, the other sticks fast: the wheels are glowing hot beneath the chariot of the one, while the other scarce catches a glimpse of their opponents' backs as they flit past. The shouts of the crowd swell to a roar, and the heathens themselves with one voice declare Marnas is

conquered by Christ. After this the opponents in their rage demanded that Hilarion as a Christian magician should be dragged to execution. This decisive victory and several others which followed in successive games of the circus caused many to turn to the faith.

21. There was a youth in the neighbourhood of the same market-town of Gaza who was desperately in love with one of God's virgins. After he had tried again and again those touches, jests, nods, and whispers which so commonly lead to the destruction of virginity, but had made no progress by these means, he went to a magician at Memphis to whom he proposed to make known his wretched state, and then, fortified with his arts, to return to his assault upon the virgin. Accordingly after a year's instruction by the priest of Aesculapius, who does not heal souls but destroys them, he came full of the lust which he had previously allowed his mind to entertain, and buried beneath the threshold of the girl's house certain magical formula: and revolting figures engraven on a plate of Cyprian brass. Thereupon the maid began to show signs of insanity, to throw away the covering of her head, tear her hair, gnash her teeth, and loudly call the youth by name. Her intense affection had become a frenzy. Her parents therefore brought her to the monastery and delivered her to the aged saint. No sooner was this done than the devil began to howl and confess. "I was compelled, I was carried off against my will. How happy I was when I used to beguile the men of Memphis in their dreams! What crosses, what torture I suffer! You force me to go out, and I am kept bound under the threshold. I cannot go out unless the young man who keeps me there lets me go." The old man answered, "Your strength must be great indeed, if a bit of thread and a plate can keep you bound. Tell me, how is it that you dared to enter into this maid who belongs to God?" "That I might preserve her as a virgin," said he. "You preserve her, betrayer of chastity! Why did you not rather enter into him who sent you?" "For what purpose," he answers, "should I enter into one who was in alliance with a comrade of my own, the demon of love?" But the saint would not command search to be made for either the young man or the charms till the maiden had undergone a process of purgation, for fear that it might be thought that the demon had been released by means of incantations, or that he himself had attached credit to what he said. He declared that demons are deceitful and well versed in dissimulation, and sharply rebuked the virgin when she had recovered her health for having by her conduct given an opportunity for the demon to enter.

22. It was not only in Palestine and the neighbouring cities of Egypt or Syria that he was in high repute, but his fame had reached distant provinces. An officer¹⁰ of the Emperor Constantius whose golden hair and personal beauty revealed his country (it lay between the Saxons and the Alemanni, was of no great extent but powerful, and is known to historians as Germany, but is now called France), had long, that is to say from infancy, been pursued by a devil, who forced him in the night to howl, groan, and gnash his teeth. He therefore secretly asked the Emperor for a post-warrant, plainly telling him why he wanted it, and having also obtained letters to the legate at Palestine came with great pomp and a large retinue to Gaza. On his inquiring of the local senators where Hilarion the monk dwelt, the people of Gaza were much alarmed, and supposing that he had been sent by the Emperor, brought him to the monastery, that they might show respect to one so highly accredited, and that, if any guilt had been incurred by them by injuries previously done by them to Hilarion it might be obliterated by their present dutifulness. The old man at the time was taking a walk on the soft sands and was humming some passage or other from the psalms. Seeing so great a company approaching he stopped, and having returned the salutes of all while he

raised his hand and gave them his blessing, after an hour's interval he bade the rest withdraw, but would have his visitor together with servants and officers remain: for by the man's eyes and countenance he knew the cause of his coming. Immediately on being questioned by the servant of God the man sprang up on tiptoe, so as scarcely to touch the ground with his feet, and with a wild roar replied in Syriac in which language he had been interrogated. Pure Syriac was heard flowing from the lips of a barbarian who knew only French and Latin, and that without the absence of a sibilant, or an aspirate, or an idiom of the speech of Palestine. The demon then confessed by what means he had entered into him. Further, that his interpreters who knew only Greek and Latin might understand, Hilarion questioned him also in Greek, and when he gave the same answer in the same words and alleged in excuse many occasions on which spells had been laid upon him, and how he was bound to yield to magic arts, "I care not," said the saint, "how you came to enter, but I command you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to come out." The man, as soon as he was healed, with a rough simplicity offered him ten pounds of gold. But the saint took from him only bread, and told him that they who were nourished on such food regarded gold as mire.

23. It is not enough to speak of men; brute animals were also daily brought to him in a state of madness, and among them a Bactrian camel of enormous size amid the shouts of thirty men or more who held him tight with stout ropes. He had already injured many. His eyes were bloodshot, his mouth filled with foam, his rolling tongue swollen, and above every other source of terror was his loud and hideous roar. Well, the old man ordered him to be let go. At once those who brought him as well as the attendants of the saint fled away without exception. The saint went by himself to meet him, and addressing him in Syriac said, "You do not alarm me, devil, huge though your present body is. Whether in a fox or a camel you are just the same." Meanwhile he stood with outstretched hand. The brute raging and looking as if he would devour Hilarion came up to him, but immediately fell down, laid its head on the ground, and to the amazement of all present showed suddenly no less tameness than it had exhibited ferocity before. But the old man declared to them how the devil, for men's sake, seizes even beasts of burden; that he is inflamed by such intense hatred for men that he desires to destroy not only them but what belongs to them. As an illustration of this he added the fact that before he was permitted to try the saintly Job, he made an end of all his substance. Nor ought it to disturb anyone that¹¹ by the Lord's command two thousand swine were slain by the agency of demons, since those who witnessed the miracle could not have believed that so great a multitude of demons had gone out of the man unless an equally vast number of swine had rushed to ruin, showing that it was a legion that impelled them.

24 Time would fail me if I wished to relate all the miracles which were wrought by him. For to such a pitch of glory was he raised by the Lord that the blessed Antony among the rest hearing of his life wrote to him and gladly received his letters. And if ever the sick from Syria came to him he would say to them, "Why have you taken the trouble to come so far, when you have there my son Hilarion?" Following his example, however, innumerable monasteries sprang up throughout the whole of Palestine, and all the monks flocked to him. When he saw this he praised the Lord for His grace, and exhorted them individually to the profit of their souls, telling them that the fashion of this world passes away, and that the true life is that which is purchased by suffering in the present.

25. Wishing to set the monks an example of humility and of zeal he was accustomed on fixed days before the vintage to visit their cells. When the brethren knew this they would all come together to meet him, and in company with their distinguished leader go the round of the monasteries, taking

with them provisions, because sometimes as many as two thousand men were assembled. But, as time went on, all the settlements round gladly gave food to the neighbouring monks for the entertainment of the saints. Moreover, the care he took to prevent any brother however humble or poor being passed over is evidenced by the journey which he once took into the desert of Cades to visit one of his disciples. With a great company of monks he reached Elusa, as it happened on the day when the annual festival had brought all the people together to the temple of Venus. This, goddess is worshipped on account of Lucifer to whom the Saracen nation is devoted. The very town too is to a great extent semi-barbarous, owing to its situation. When therefore it was heard that Saint Hilarion was passing through (he had frequently healed many Saracens possessed by demons), they went to meet him in crowds with their wives and children, bending their heads and crying in the Syriac tongue Barech, that is, Bless. He received them with courtesy and humility, and prayed that they might worship God rather than stones; at the same time, weeping copiously, he looked up to heaven and promised that if they would believe in Christ he would visit them often. By the marvellous grace of God they did not suffer him to depart before he had drawn the outline of a church, and their priest with his garland upon his head had been signed with the sign of Christ.

26. Another year, again, when he was setting out to visit the monasteries and was drawing up a list of those with whom he must stay and whom he must see in passing, the monks knowing that one of their number was a niggard, and being at the same time desirous to cure his complaint, asked the saint to stay with him. He replied, "Do you wish me to inflict injury on you and annoyance on the brother?" The niggardly brother on hearing of this was ashamed, and with the strenuous support of all his brethren, at length obtained from the saint a reluctant promise to put his monastery on the roll of his resting places. Ten days after they came to him and found the keepers already on guard in the vineyard through which their course lay, to keep off all comers with stones and clods and slings. In the morning they all departed without having eaten a grape, while the old man smiled and pretended not to know what had happened.

27. Once when they were being entertained by another monk whose name was Sabus (we must not of course give the name of the niggard, we may tell that of this generous man), because it was the Lord's day, they were all invited by him into the vineyard so that before the hour for food came they might relieve the toil of the journey by a repast of grapes. Said the saint, "Cursed be he who looks for the refreshment of the body before that of the soul. Let us pray, let us sing, let us do our duty to God, and then we will hasten to the vineyard." When the service was over, he stood on an eminence and blessed the vineyard and let his own sheep go to their pasture. Now those who partook were not less than three thousand. And whereas the whole vineyard had been estimated at a hundred flagons, within thirty days he made it worth three hundred. The niggardly brother gathered much less than usual, and he was grieved to find that even what he had turned to vinegar. The old man had predicted this to many brethren before it happened. He particularly abhorred such monks as were led by their lack of faith to hoard for the future, and were careful about expense, or raiment, or some other of those things which pass away with the world.

28. Lastly he would not even look at one of the brethren who lived about five miles off because he ascertained that he very jealously guarded his bit of ground, and had a little money. The offender wishing to be reconciled to the old man often came to the brethren, and in particular to Hesychius who was specially dear to Hilarion. One day accordingly he brought a bundle of green chick-pea just as it had been gathered. Hesychius placed it on the table against the evening, whereupon the

old man cried out that he could not bear the stench, and asked where it came from. Hesychius replied that a certain brother had sent the brethren the first fruits of his ground. "Don't you notice," said he, "the horrid stench, and detect the foul odour of avarice in the peas? Send it to the cattle, send to the brute-beasts and see whether they can eat it." No sooner was it in obedience to his command laid in the manger than the cattle in the wildest alarm and bellowing loudly broke their fastenings and fled in different directions. For the old man was enabled by grace to tell from the odour of bodies and garments, and the things which any one had touched, by what demon or with what vice the individual was distressed.

29. His sixty-third year found the old man at the head of a grand monastery and a multitude of resident brethren. There were such crowds of persons constantly bringing those who suffered from various kinds of sickness or were possessed of unclean spirits, that the whole circuit of the wilderness was full of all sorts of people. And as the saint saw all this he wept daily and called to mind with incredible regret his former mode of life. When one of the brethren asked him why he was so dejected he replied, "I have returned again to the world and have received my reward in my lifetime. The people of Palestine and the adjoining province think me of some importance, and under pretence of a monastery for the well-ordering of the brethren I have all the apparatus of a paltry life about me." The brethren, however, kept watch over him and in particular Hesychius, who had a marvellously devoted affection and veneration for the old man. After he had spent two years in these lamentations Aristaenete the lady of whom we made mention before, as being then the wife of a prefect though without any of a prefect's ostentation, came to him intending to pay a visit to Antony also. He said to her, "I should like to go myself too if I were not kept a prisoner in this monastery, and if my going could be fruitful. For it is now two days since mankind was bereaved of him who was so truly a father to them all." She believed his word and stayed where she was: and after a few days the news came that Antony had fallen asleep.

30. Some may wonder at the miracles he worked, or his incredible fasting, knowledge, and humility. Nothing so astonishes me as his power to tread under foot honour and glory. Bishops, presbyters, crowds of clergymen and monks, of Christian matrons even (a great temptation), and a rabble from all quarters in town and country were congregating about him, and even judges and others holding high positions, that they might receive at his hands the bread or oil which he had blessed. But he thought of nothing but solitude, so much so that one day he determined to be gone, and having procured an ass (he was almost exhausted with fasting and could scarcely walk) endeavoured to steal away. The news spread far and wide, and, just as if a public mourning for the desolation of Palestine were decreed, ten thousand people of various ages and both sexes came together to prevent his departure. He was unmoved by entreaties, and striking the sand with his stick kept saying: "I will not make my Lord a deceiver; I cannot look upon churches overthrown, Christ's altars trodden down, the blood of my sons poured out." All who were present began to understand that some secret had been revealed to him which he was unwilling to confess, but they none the less kept guard over him that he might not go. He therefore determined, and publicly called all to witness, that he would take neither food nor drink unless he were released. Only after seven days was he relieved from his fasting; when having bidden farewell to numerous friends, he came to Betilium attended by a countless multitude. There he prevailed upon the crowd to return and chose as his companions forty monks who had resources for the journey and were capable of travelling during fasting-time, that is, after sunset. He then visited the brethren who were in the

neighbouring desert and sojourning at a place called Lychnos, and after three days came to the castle of Theubatus to see Dracontius, bishop and confessor, who was in exile there. The bishop was beyond measure cheered by the presence of so distinguished a man. At the end of another three days he set out for Babylon and arrived there after a hard journey. Then he visited Philo the bishop, who was also a confessor; for the Emperor Constantius who favoured the Arian heresy had transported both of them to those parts. Departing thence he came in three days to the town Aphroditon. There he met with a deacon Baisanes who kept dromedaries which were hired, on account of the scarcity of water in the desert, to carry travellers who wished to visit Antony. He then made known to the brethren that the anniversary of the blessed Antony's decease was at hand, and that he must spend a whole night in vigil in the very place where the saint had died. So then after three days journey through the waste and terrible desert they at length came to a very high mountain, and there found two monks Isaac and Pelusianus, the former of whom had been one of Antony's attendants.¹²

31. The occasion seems a fitting one, since we are on the spot itself, to describe the abode of this great man. There is a high and rocky mountain extending for about a mile, with gushing springs amongst its spurs, the waters of which are partly absorbed by the sand, partly flow towards the plain and gradually form a stream shaded on either side by countless palms which lend much pleasantness and charm to the place. Here the old man might be seen pacing to and fro with the disciples of blessed Antony. Here, so they said, Antony himself used to sing, pray, work, and rest when weary. Those vines and shrubs were planted by his own hand: that garden bed was his own design. This pool for watering the garden was made by him after much toil. That hoe was handled by him for many years. Hilarion would lie upon the saint's bed and as though it were still warm would affectionately kiss it. The cell was square, its sides measuring no more than the length of a sleeping man. Moreover on the lofty mountaintop, the ascent of which was by a zig-zag path very difficult, were to be seen two cells of the same dimensions, in which he stayed when he escaped from the crowds of visitors or the company of his disciples. These were cut out of the live rock and were only furnished with doors. When they came to the garden, "You see," said Isaac, "this garden with its shrubs and green vegetables; about three years ago it was ravaged by a troop of wild asses. One of their leaders was hidden by Antony to stand still while he thrashed the animals' sides with a stick and wanted to know why they devoured what they had not sown. And ever afterwards, excepting the water which they were accustomed to come and drink, they never touched anything, not a bush or a vegetable." The old man further asked to be shown his burial place, and they thereupon took him aside; but whether they showed him the tomb or not is unknown. It is related that the motive for secrecy was compliance with Antony's orders and to prevent Pergamius, a very wealthy man of the district, from removing the saint's body to his house and erecting a shrine to his memory.

32. Having returned to Aphroditon and keeping with him only two of the brethren, he stayed in the neighbouring desert, and practised such rigid abstinence and silence that he felt that then for the first time he had begun to serve Christ. Three years had now elapsed since the heavens had been closed and the land had suffered from drought, and it was commonly said that even the elements were lamenting the death of Antony. Hilarion did not remain unknown to the inhabitants of that place any more than to others, but men and women with ghastly faces and wasted by hunger earnestly entreated the servant of Christ, as being the blessed Antony's successor, to give them

rain. Hilarion when he saw them was strangely affected with compassion had, raising his eyes to heaven and lifting up both his hands, he at once obtained their petition. But, strange to say, that parched and sandy district, after the rain had fallen, unexpectedly produced such vast numbers of serpents and poisonous animals that many who were bitten would have died at once if they had not run to Hilarion. He therefore blessed some oil with which all the husbandmen and shepherds touched their wounds, and found an infallible cure.

33. Seeing that even there surprising respect was paid to him, he went to Alexandria, intending to cross from thence to the farther oasis of the desert. And because he had never stayed in cities since he entered on the monk's life, he turned aside to some brethren at Bruchium, not far from Alexandria, whom he knew, and who welcomed the old man with the greatest pleasure. It was now night when all at once they heard his disciples saddling the ass and making ready for the journey. They therefore threw themselves at his feet and besought him not to leave them; they fell prostrate before the door, and declared they would rather die than lose such a guest. He answered: "My reason for hastening away is that I may not give you trouble. You will no doubt afterwards discover that I have not suddenly left without good cause." Next day the authorities of Gaza with the lictors of the prefect having heard of his arrival on the previous day, entered the monastery, and when they failed to find him anywhere they began to say to one another: "What we heard is true. He is a magician and knows the future." The fact was that the city of Gaza on Julian's accession to the throne, after the departure of Hilarion from Palestine and the destruction of his monastery, had presented a petition to the Emperor requesting that both Hilarion and Hesychius might be put to death, and a proclamation had been published everywhere that search should be made for them.

34. Having then left Bruchium, he entered the oasis through the trackless desert, and there abode for a year, more or less. But, inasmuch as his fame had travelled thither also, he felt that he could not be hidden in the East, where he was known to many by report and by sight, and began to think of taking ship for some solitary island, so that having been exposed to public view by the land, he might at least find concealment in the sea. Just about that time Hadrian, his disciple, arrived from Palestine with information that Julian was slain and that a Christian emperor¹³ had commenced his reign; he ought therefore, it was said, to return to the relics of his monastery. But he, when he heard this, solemnly refused to return; and hiring a camel crossed the desert waste and reached Paretonium, a city on the coast of Libya. There the ill-starred Hadrian wishing to return to Palestine and unwilling to part with the renown so long attaching to his master's name, heaped reproaches upon him, and at last having packed up the presents which he had brought him from the brethren, set out without the knowledge of Hilarion. As I shall have no further opportunity of referring to this man, I would only record, for the terror of those who despise their masters, that after a little while he was attacked by the king's-evil¹⁴ and turned to a mass of corruption.

35. The old man accompanied by Gazanus went on board a ship which was sailing to Sicily. Half way across the Adriatic he was preparing to pay his fare by selling a copy of the Gospels which he had written with his own hand in his youth, when the son of the master of the ship seized by a demon began to cry out and say: "Hilarion, servant of God, why is it that through you we cannot be safe even on the sea? Spare me a little until I reach land. Let me not be cast out here and thrown into the deep." The saint replied: "If my God permit you to remain, remain; but if He casts you out, why bring odium upon me a sinner and a beggar?" This he said that the sailors and merchants on board might not betray him on reaching shore. Not long after, the boy was cleansed, his father and

the rest who were present having given their word that they would not reveal the name of the saint to any one.

36. On approaching Pachynus, a promontory of Sicily, he offered the master the Gospel for the passage of himself and Gazanus. The man was unwilling to take it, all the more because he saw that excepting that volume and the clothes they wore they had nothing, and at last he swore he would not take it. But the aged saint, ardent and confident in the consciousness of his poverty, rejoiced exceedingly that he had no worldly possessions and was accounted a beggar by the people of the place.

37. Once more, on thinking the matter over and fearing that merchants coming from the East might make him known, he fled to the interior, some twenty miles from the sea, and there on an abandoned piece of ground, every day tied up a bundle of firewood which he laid upon the back of his disciple, and sold at some neighbouring mansion. They thus supported themselves and were able to purchase a morsel of bread for any chance visitors. But that came exactly to pass which is written:¹⁵ "a city set on a hill cannot be hid." It happened that one of the shields-men¹⁶ who was vexed by a demon was in the basilica of the blessed Peter at Rome, when the unclean spirit within him cried out, "A few days ago Christ's servant Hilarion entered Sicily and no one knew him, and he thinks he is hidden. I will go and betray him." Immediately he embarked with his attendants in a ship lying in harbour, sailed to Pachynus and, led by the demon to the old man's hut, there prostrated himself and was cured on the spot. This, his first miracle in Sicily, brought the sick to him in countless numbers (but it brought also a multitude of religious persons); insomuch that one of the leading men who was swollen with the dropsy was cured the same day that he came. He afterwards offered the saint gifts without end, but the saint replied to him in the words of the Saviour to his disciples:¹⁷ "Freely ye received, freely give."

38. While this was going on in Sicily Hesychius his disciple was searching the world over for the old man, traversing the coast, penetrating deserts, clinging all the while to the belief that wherever he was he could not long be hidden. At the end of three years he heard at Methona from a certain Jew, who dealt in old-clothes, that a Christian prophet had appeared in Sicily, and was working such miracles and signs, one might think him one of the ancient saints. So he asked about his dress, gait, and speech, and in particular his age, but could learn nothing. His informant merely declared that he had heard of the man by report. He therefore crossed the Adriatic and after a prosperous voyage came to Pachynus, where he took up his abode in a cottage on the shore of the bay, and, on inquiring for tidings of the old man, discovered by the tale which every one told him where he was, and what he was doing. Nothing about him surprised them all so much as the fact that after such great signs and wonders he had not accepted even a crust of bread from any one in the district. And, to cut my story short, the holy man Hesychius fell down at his master's knees and bedewed his feet with tears; at length he was gently raised by him, and when two or three days had been spent in talking over matters, he learned from Gazanus that Hilarion no longer felt himself able to live in those parts, but wanted to go to certain barbarous races where his name and fame were unknown.

39. He therefore brought him to Epidaurus,¹⁸ a town in Dalmatia, where he stayed for a few days in the country near, but could not be hid. An enormous serpent, of the sort which the people of those parts call boas¹⁹ because they are so large that they often swallow oxen, was ravaging the

whole province far and wide, and was devouring not only flocks and herds, but husbandmen and shepherds who were drawn in by the force of its breathing. He ordered a pyre to be prepared for it, then sent up a prayer to Christ, called forth the reptile, bade it climb the pile of wood, and then applied the fire. And so before all the people he burnt the savage beast to ashes. But now he began anxiously to ask what he was to do, whither to betake himself. Once more he prepared for flight, and in thought ranged through solitary lands, grieving that his miracles could speak of him though his tongue was silent.

40. At that time there was an earthquake over the whole world, following on the death of Julian, which caused the sea to burst its bounds, and left ships hanging on the edge of mountain steeps. It seemed as though God were threatening a second deluge, or all things were returning to original chaos. When the people of Epidaurus saw this, I mean the roaring waves and heaving waters and the swirling billows mountain-high dashing on the shore, fearing that what they saw had happened elsewhere might befall them and their town be utterly destroyed, they made their way to the old man, and as if preparing for a battle placed him on the shore. After making the sign of the cross three times on the sand, he faced the sea, stretched out his hands, and no one would believe to what a height the swelling sea stood like a wall before him. It roared for a long time as if indignant at the barrier, then little by little sank to its level. Epidaurus and all the region roundabout tell the story to this day, and mothers teach their children to hand down the remembrance of it to posterity. Verily, what was said to the Apostles,²⁰ "If ye have faith, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove into the sea, and it shall be done," may be even literally fulfilled, provided one has such faith as the Lord commanded the Apostles to have. For what difference does it make whether a mountain descends into the sea, or huge mountains of waters everywhere else fluid suddenly become hard as rock at the old man's feet?

41. The whole country marvelled and the fame of the great miracle was in everyone's mouth, even at Salona.²¹ When the old man knew this was the case he escaped secretly by night in a small cutter, and finding a merchant ship after two days came to Cyprus. Between²² Malea and²³ Cythera, the pirates, who had left on the shore that part of their fleet which is worked by poles instead of sails, bore down on them with two light vessels of considerable size; and besides this they were buffeted by the waves on every side. All the towers began to be alarmed, to weep, to leave their places, to get out their poles, and, as though one message was not enough, again and again told the old man that pirates were at hand. Looking at them in the distance he gently smiled, then turned to his disciples and said,²⁴ "O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt? Are these more than the army of Pharaoh? Yet they were all drowned by the will of God." Thus he spake, but none the less the enemy with foaming prows kept drawing nearer and were now only a stone's throw distant. He stood upon the prow of the vessel facing them with out-stretched hand, and said, "Thus far and no farther." Marvellous to relate, the boats at once bounded back, and though urged forward by the oars fell farther and farther astern. The pirates were astonished to find themselves going back, and laboured with all their strength to reach the vessel, but were carried to the shore faster by far than they came.

42. I pass by the rest for fear I should seem in my history to be publishing a volume of miracles. I will only say this, that when sailing with a fair wind among the Cyclades he heard the voices of unclean spirits shouting in all directions from towns and villages, and running in crowds to the shore. Having then entered Paphos, the city of Cyprus renowned in the songs of the poets, the

ruins of whose temples after frequent earthquakes are the only evidences at the present day of its former grandeur, he began to live in obscurity about two miles from the city, and rejoiced in having a few days rest. But not quite twenty days passed before throughout the whole island whoever had unclean spirits began to cry out that Hilarion Christ's servant had come, and that they must go to him with all speed. Salamis, Curium, Lapetha, and the other cities joined in the cry, while many declared that they knew Hilarion and that he was indeed the servant of Christ, but where he was they could not tell. So within a trifle more than thirty days, about two hundred people, both men and women, came together to him. When he saw them he lamented that they would not suffer him to be quiet, and thirsting in a kind of manner to avenge himself, he lashed them with such urgency of prayer that some immediately, others after two or three days, all within a week, were cured.

43. Here he stayed two years, always thinking of flight, and in the meantime sent Hesychius, who was to return in the spring, to Palestine to salute the brethren and visit the ashes of his monastery. When the latter returned he found Hilarion longing to sail again to Egypt, that is to the locality called Bucolia; but he persuaded him that, since there were no Christians there, but only a fierce and barbarous people, he should rather go to a spot in Cyprus itself which was higher up and more retired. After long and diligent search he found such a place twelve miles from the sea far off among the recesses of rugged mountains, the ascent to which could hardly be accomplished by creeping on hands and knees. Thither he conducted him. The old man entered and gazed around. It was indeed a lonely and terrible place; for though surrounded by trees on every side, with water streaming from the brow of the hill, a delightful bit of garden, and fruit-trees in abundance (of which, however, he never ate), yet it had close by the ruins of an ancient temple from which, as he himself was wont to relate and his disciples testify, the voices of such countless demons re-echoed night and day, that you might have thought there was an army of them. He was highly pleased at the idea of having his opponents in the neighbourhood, and abode there five years, cheered in these his last days by the frequent visits of Hesychius, for owing to the steep and rugged ascent, and the numerous ghosts (so the story ran), nobody or scarcely anybody either could or dared to go up to him. One day, however, as he was leaving his garden, he saw a man completely paralysed lying in front of the gates. He asked Hesychius who he was, or how he had been brought. Hesychius replied that he was the agent at the country-house to which the garden belonged in which they were located. Weeping much and stretching out his hand to the prostrate man he said, "I bid you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ arise and walk." The words were still on the lips of the speaker, when, with miraculous speed, the limbs were strengthened and the man arose and stood firm. Once this was noised abroad the need of many overcame even the pathless journey and the dangers of the place. The occupants of all the houses round about had nothing so much in their thoughts as to prevent the possibility of his escape, a rumour having spread concerning him to the effect that he could not stay long in the same place. This habit of his was not due to levity or childishness, but to the fact that he shunned the worry of publicity and praise, and always longed for silence and a life of obscurity.

44. In his eightieth year, during the absence of Hesychius, he wrote by way of a will a short letter with his own hand, and left him all his riches (that is to say, a copy of the gospels, and his sack-cloth tunic, cowl and cloak), for his servant had died a few days before. Many devout men therefore came to the invalid from Paphos, and specially because they had heard of his saying that he must soon migrate to the Lord and must be liberated from the bonds of the body. There

came also Constantia a holy woman whose son-in-law and daughter he had anointed with oil and saved from death. He earnestly entreated them all not to let him be kept even a moment of time after death, but to bury him immediately in the same garden, just as he was, clad in his goat-hair tunic, cowl, and his peasant's cloak.

45. His body was now all but cold, and nought was left of life but reason. Yet with eyes wide open he kept repeating, "Go forth, what do you fear? Go forth, my soul, why do you hesitate? You have served Christ nearly seventy years, and do you fear death?" Thus saying he breathed his last. He was immediately buried before the city heard of his death.

46. When the holy man Hesychius heard of his decease, he went to Cyprus and, to lull the suspicions of the natives who were keeping strict guard, pretended that he wished to live in the same garden, and then in the course of about ten months, though at great peril to his life, stole the saint's body. He carried it to Majuma; and there all the monks and crowds of towns-folk going in procession laid it to rest in the ancient monastery. His tunic, cowl and cloak, were uninjured; the whole body as perfect as if alive, and so fragrant with sweet odours that one might suppose it to have been embalmed.

47. In bringing my book to an end I think I ought not to omit to mention the devotion of the holy woman Constantia who, when a message was brought her that Hilarion's body was in Palestine, immediately died, proving even by death the sincerity of her love for the servant of God. For she was accustomed to spend whole nights in vigil at his tomb, and to converse with him as if he were present in order to stimulate her prayers. Even at the present day one may see a strange dispute between the people of Palestine and the Cypriotes, the one contending that they have the body, the other the spirit of Hilarion. And yet in both places great miracles are wrought daily, but to a greater extent in the garden of Cyprus, perhaps because that spot was dearest to him.

----- 1: See life of Paulus above.

2: Matt. xi. 18.

3: Luke xiv. 33.

4: Isa. xiv. 14.

5: 2 Thess. iii. 10.

6: Exod. xv. 1.

7: Ps. xx. 7.

8: Luke v. 31.

9: He was also the god of agricultural fertility. The festival of the Consualia, supposed to have been instituted by Romulus, was on August 21.

10: Or secretary-Candidatus, a quæstor appointed by the Emperor to read his rescripts, etc.

11: Matt. viii. and Mark v.

12: Interpres. Probably one who spoke for him to the people, as Elijah had Elisha as his attendant.

13: Jovian, a.d., 363-4.

14: Morbo regio. The dictionaries give "jaundice" as the meaning, but it is universally used in modern times for scrofula. Here it seems to mean leprosy.

15: Matt. v. 14.

16: Scutarius, one of a corps of guards, whose prominent weapons were shields.

17: Matt. x. 8.

18: More properly in Argolis. It was the native town of Aesculapius, who was worshipped under the form of a serpent.

19: Boas because they can swallow oxen (boves).

20: Matt. xvii. 20 sq.

21: In Dalmatia, three miles from Diocletian's great palace (Spalatro).

22: The southern promontory of Greece.

23: Now Cerigo.

24: Matt. xiv. 32.

25: Probably the place which gave its name to one of the mouths of the Nile (Bucolicum).

The Perpetual Virginity of Blessed Mary

The Perpetual Virginity of Blessed Mary Against Helvidius. The Perpetual Virginity of Blessed Mary Against Helvidius. This tract appeared about a.d. 383. The question which gave occasion to it was whether the Mother of our Lord remained a Virgin after His birth. Helvidius maintained that the mention in the Gospels of the "sisters" and "brethren" of our Lord was proof that the Blessed Virgin had subsequent issue, and he supported his opinion by the writings of Tertullian and Victorinus. The outcome of his views was that virginity was ranked below matrimony. Jerome vigorously takes the other side, and tries to prove that the "sisters" and "brethren" spoken of, were either children of Joseph by a former marriage, or first cousins, children of the sister of the Virgin. A detailed account of the controversy will be found in Farrar's "Early Days of Christianity," pp. 124 sq. When Jerome wrote this treatise both he and Helvidius were at Rome, and Damasus was Pope. The only contemporary notice preserved of Helvidius is that by Jerome in the following pages.

Jerome maintains against Helvidius three propositions:- 1st. That Joseph was only putatively, not really, the husband of Mary.

2d. That the "brethren" of the Lord were his cousins, not his own brethren.

3d. That virginity is better than the married state.

1. The first of these occupies ch. 3-8. It turns upon the record in Matt. i. 18-25, and especially on the words, "Before they came together" (c. 4), "knew her not till, &c." (5-8).

2. The second (c. 9-17) turns upon the words "first-born son" (9, 10), which, Jerome argues, are applicable not only to the eldest of several, but also to an only son: and the mention of brothers and sisters, whom Jerome asserts to have been children of Mary the wife of Cleophas or Clopas (11-16); he appeals to many Church writers in support of this view (17).

3. In support of his preference of virginity to marriage, Jerome argues that not only Mary but Joseph also remained in the virgin state (19); that, though marriage may sometimes be a holy estate, it presents great hindrances to prayer (20), and the teaching of Scripture is that the states of virginity and continency are more accordant with God's will than that of marriage (21, 22).

1. I was requested by certain of the brethren not long ago to reply to a pamphlet written by one Helvidius. I have deferred doing so, not because it is a difficult matter to maintain the truth and refute an ignorant boor who has scarce known the first glimmer of learning, but because I was afraid my reply might make him appear worth defeating. There was the further consideration that a turbulent fellow, the only individual in the world who thinks himself both priest and layman, one who, as has been said, thinks that eloquence consists in loquacity and considers speaking ill of anyone to be the witness of a good conscience, would begin to blaspheme worse than ever if opportunity of discussion were afforded him. He would stand as it were on a pedestal, and would publish his views far and wide. There was reason also to fear that when truth failed him he would

assail his opponents with the weapon of abuse. But all these motives for silence, though just, have more justly ceased to influence me, because of the scandal caused to the brethren who were disguised at his ravings. The axe of the Gospel must therefore be now laid to the root of the barren tree, and both it and its fruitless foliage cast into the fire, so that Helvidius who has never learnt to speak, may at length learn to hold his tongue.

2. I must call upon the Holy Spirit to express His meaning by my mouth and defend the virginity of the Blessed Mary. I must call upon the Lord Jesus to guard the sacred lodging of the womb in which He abode for ten months from all suspicion of sexual intercourse. And I must also entreat God the Father to show that the mother of His Son, who was a mother before she was a bride, continued a Virgin after her son was born. We have no desire to career over the fields of eloquence, we do not resort to the snares of the logicians or the thickets of Aristotle. We shall adduce the actual words of Scripture. Let him be refuted by the same proofs which he employed against us, so that he may see that it was possible for him to read what is written, and yet to be unable to discern the established conclusion of a sound faith.

3. His first statement was: "Matthew says,² Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Notice, he says, that the word used is betrothed, not intrusted as you say, and of course the only reason why she was betrothed was that she might one day be married. And the Evangelist would not have said before they came together if they were not to come together, for no one would use the phrase before he dined of a man who was not going to dine. Then, again, the angel calls her wife and speaks of her as united to Joseph. We are next invited to listen to the declaration of Scripture:³ "And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her son."

4. Let us take the points one by one, and follow the tracks of this impiety that we may show that he has contradicted himself. He admits that she was betrothed, and in the next breath will have her to be a man's wife whom he has admitted to be his betrothed. Again, he calls her wife, and then says the only reason why she was betrothed was that she might one day be married. And, for fear we might not think that enough, "the word used," he says, "is betrothed and not intrusted, that is to say, not yet a wife, not yet united by the bond of wedlock." But when he continues, "the Evangelist would never have applied the words, before they came together to persons who were not to come together, any more than one says, before he dined, when the man is not going to dine," I know not whether to grieve or laugh. Shall I convict him of ignorance, or accuse him of rashness? Just as if, supposing a person to say, "Before dining in harbour I sailed to Africa," his words could not hold good unless he were compelled some day to dine in harbour. If I choose to say, "the apostle Paul before he went to Spain was put in fetters at Rome," or (as I certainly might) "Helvidius, before he repented, was cut off by death," must Paul on being released at once go to Spain, or must Helvidius repent after death, although the Scripture says⁴ "In sheol who shall give thee thanks?" Must we not rather understand that the preposition before, although it frequently denotes order in time, yet sometimes refers only to order in thought? So that there is no necessity, if sufficient

cause intervened to prevent it, for our thoughts to be realized. When, then, the Evangelist says before they came together, he indicates the time immediately preceding marriage, and shows that matters were so far advanced that she who had been betrothed was on the point of becoming a wife. As though he said, before they kissed and embraced, before the consummation of marriage, she was found to be with child. And she was found to be so by none other than Joseph, who watched the swelling womb of his betrothed with the anxious glances, and, at this time, almost the privilege, of a husband. Yet it does not follow, as the previous examples showed, that he had intercourse with Mary after her delivery, when his desires had been quenched by the fact that she had already conceived. And although we find it said to Joseph in a dream, "Fear not to take Mary thy wife"; and again, "Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife," no one ought to be disturbed by this, as though, inasmuch as she is called wife, she ceases to be betrothed, for we know it is usual in Scripture to give the title to those who are betrothed. The following evidence from Deuteronomy establishes the point.⁵ "If the man," says the writer, "find the damsel that is betrothed in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her, he shall surely die, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife." And in another place,⁶ "If there be a damsel that is a virgin betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee." Elsewhere also,⁷ "And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her." But if anyone feels a doubt as to why the Virgin conceived after she was betrothed rather than when she had no one betrothed to her, or, to use the Scripture phrase, no husband, let me explain that there were three reasons. First, that by the genealogy of Joseph, whose kinswoman Mary was, Mary's origin might also be shown. Secondly, that she might not in accordance with the law of Moses be stoned as an adulteress. Thirdly, that in her flight to Egypt she might have some solace, though it was that of a guardian rather than a husband. For who at that time would have believed the Virgin's word that she had conceived of the Holy Ghost, and that the angel Gabriel had come and announced the purpose of God? and would not all have given their opinion against her as an adulteress, like Susanna? for at the present day, now that the whole world has embraced the faith, the Jews argue that when Isaiah says,⁸ "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son," the Hebrew word denotes a young woman, not a virgin, that is to say, the word is *Almah*, not *Bethulah*, a position which, farther on, we shall dispute more in detail. Lastly, excepting Joseph, and Elizabeth, and Mary herself, and some few others who, we may suppose, heard the truth from them, all considered Jesus to be the son of Joseph. And so far was this the case that even the Evangelists, expressing the prevailing opinion, which is the correct rule for a historian, call him the father of the Saviour, as, for instance,⁹ "And he (that is, Simeon) came in the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law;" and elsewhere,¹⁰ "And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover." And afterwards,¹¹ "And when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew not of it." Observe also what Mary herself, who had replied to Gabriel with the words,¹² "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" says concerning Joseph,¹³ "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing." We have not here, as many maintain, the utterance of Jews or of

mockers. The Evangelists call Joseph father: Mary confesses he was father. Not (as I said before) that Joseph was really the father of the Saviour: but that, to preserve the reputation of Mary, he was regarded by all as his father, although, before he heard the admonition of the angel,¹⁴ "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost," he had thoughts of putting her away privily; which shows that he well knew that the child conceived was not his. But we have said enough, more with the aim of imparting instruction than of answering an opponent, to show why Joseph is called the father of our Lord, and why Mary is called Joseph's wife. This also at once answers the question why certain persons are called his brethren.

5. This, however, is a point which will find its proper place further on. We must now hasten to other matters. The passage for discussion now is, "And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife and knew her not till she had brought forth a son, and he called his name Jesus." Here, first of all, it is quite needless for our opponent to show so elaborately that the word know has reference to coition, rather than to intellectual apprehension: as though anyone denied it, or any person in his senses could ever imagine the folly which Helvidius takes pains to refute. Then he would teach us that the adverb till implies a fixed and definite time, and when that is fulfilled, he says the event takes place which previously did not take place, as in the case before us, "and knew her not till she had brought forth a son." It is clear, says he, that she was known after she brought forth, and that that knowledge was only delayed by her engendering a son. To defend his position he piles up text upon text, waves his sword like a blind-folded gladiator, rattles his noisy tongue, and ends with wounding no one but himself.

6. Our reply is briefly this,-the words knew and till in the language of Holy Scripture are capable of a double meaning. As to the former, he himself gave us a dissertation to show that it must be referred to sexual intercourse, and no one doubts that it is often used of the knowledge of the understanding, as, for instance, "the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem, and his parents knew it not." Now we have to prove that just as in the one case he has followed the usage of Scripture, so with regard to the word till he is utterly refuted by the authority of the same Scripture, which often denotes by its use a fixed time (he himself told us so), frequently time without limitation, as when God by the mouth of the prophet says to certain persons,¹⁵ "Even to old age I am he." Will He cease to be God when they have grown old? And the Saviour in the Gospel tells the Apostles,¹⁶ "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Will the Lord then after the end of the world has come forsake His disciples, and at the very time when seated on twelve thrones they are to judge the twelve tribes of Israel will they be bereft of the company of their Lord? Again Paul the Apostle writing to the Corinthians¹⁷ says, "Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Granted that the passage relates to our Lord's human nature, we do not deny that the words are spoken of Him who endured the cross and is commanded to sit afterwards on the right hand. What does he mean then by saying, "for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet"? Is the Lord to reign only until His enemies begin to be under His feet, and once they are under His feet will He cease to reign? Of course His reign will then commence in its fulness when His enemies begin to be under His

feet. David also in the fourth Song of Ascents¹⁸ speaks thus, "Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look unto the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us." Will the prophet, then, look unto the Lord until he obtain mercy, and when mercy is obtained will he turn his eyes down to the ground? although elsewhere he says,¹⁹ "Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness." I could accumulate countless instances of this usage, and cover the verbosity of our assailant with a cloud of proofs; I shall, however, add only a few, and leave the reader to discover like ones for himself.

7. The word of God says in Genesis,²⁰ "And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and the rings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem, and lost them until this day." Likewise at the end of Deuteronomy,²¹ "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in the valley, in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." We must certainly understand by this day the time of the composition of the history, whether you prefer the view that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch or that Ezra re-edited it. In either case I make no objection. The question now is whether the words unto this day are to be referred to the time of publishing or writing the books, and if so it is for him to show, now that so many years have rolled away since that day, that either the idols hidden beneath the oak have been found, or the grave of Moses discovered; for he obstinately maintains that what does not happen so long as the point of time indicated by until and unto has not been attained, begins to be when that point has been reached. He would do well to pay heed to the idiom of Holy Scripture, and understand with us, (it was here he stuck in the mud) that some things which might seem ambiguous if not expressed are plainly intimated, while others are left to the exercise of our intellect. For if, while the event was still fresh in memory and men were living who had seen Moses, it was possible for his grave to be unknown, much more may this be the case after the lapse of so many ages. And in the same way must we interpret what we are told concerning Joseph. The Evangelist pointed out a circumstance which might have given rise to some scandal, namely, that Mary was not known by her husband until she was delivered, and he did so that we might be the more certain that she from whom Joseph refrained while there was room to doubt the import of the vision was not known after her delivery.

8. In short, what I want to know is why Joseph refrained until the day of her delivery? Helvidius will of course reply, because he heard the angel say,²² "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." And in turn we rejoin that he had certainly heard him say,²³ "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife." The reason why he was forbidden to forsake his wife was that he might not think her an adulteress. Is it true then, that he was ordered not to have intercourse with his wife? Is it not plain that the warning was given him that he might not be separated from her? And could the just man dare, he says, to think of approaching her, when he heard that the Son of God was in her womb? Excellent! We are to believe then that the same man who gave so much credit to a dream that he did not dare to touch his wife, yet afterwards, when he had learnt from the shepherds that the angel of the Lord had come from heaven and said to them,²⁴ "Be not afraid: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord;" and when the heavenly host had joined with him in the chorus²⁵ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth

peace among men of good will;" and when he had seen just Simeon embrace the infant and exclaim,²⁶ "Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord, according to thy word in peace: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation;" and when he had seen Anna the prophetess, the Magi, the Star, Herod, the angels; Helvidius, I say, would have us believe that Joseph, though well acquainted with such surprising wonders, dared to touch the temple of God, the abode of the Holy Ghost, the mother of his Lord? Mary at all events "kept all these sayings in her heart." You cannot for shame say Joseph did not know of them, for Luke tells us,²⁷ "His father and mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning Him." And yet you with marvellous effrontery contend that the reading of the Greek manuscripts is corrupt, although it is that which nearly all the Greek writers have left us in their books, and not only so, but several of the Latin writers have taken the words the same way. Nor need we now consider the variations in the copies, since the whole record both of the Old and New Testament has since that time been²⁸ translated into Latin, and we must believe that the water of the fountain flows purer than that of the stream.

9. Helvidius will answer, "What you say, is in my opinion mere trifling. Your arguments are so much waste of time, and the discussion shows more subtlety than truth. Why could not Scripture say, as it said of Tamar and Judah,²⁹ 'And he took his wife, and knew her again no more'? Could not Matthew find words to express his meaning? 'He knew her not,' he says, 'until she brought forth a son.' He did then, after her delivery, know her, whom he had refrained from knowing until she was delivered."

10. If you are so contentious, your own thoughts shall now prove your master. You must not allow any time to intervene between delivery and intercourse. You must not say,³⁰ "If a woman conceive seed and bear a man child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of the separation of her sickness shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days. She shall touch no hallowed thing," and so forth. On your showing, Joseph must at once approach, her, and be subject to Jeremiah's³¹ reproof, "They were as mad horses in respect of women: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife." Otherwise, how can the words stand good, "he knew her not, till she had brought forth a son," if he waits after the time of another purifying has expired, if his lust must brook another long delay of forty days? The mother must go unpurged from her child-bed taint, and the wailing infant be attended to by the midwives, while the husband clasps his exhausted wife. Thus forsooth must their married life begin so that the Evangelist may not be convicted of falsehood. But God forbid that we should think thus of the Saviour's mother and of a just man. No midwife assisted at His birth; no women's officiousness intervened. With her own hands she wrapped Him in the swaddling clothes, herself both mother and midwife,³² "and laid Him," we are told, "in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn"; a statement which, on the one hand, refutes the ravings of the apocryphal accounts, for Mary herself wrapped Him in the swaddling clothes, and on the other makes the voluptuous notion of Helvidius impossible, since there was no place suitable for married intercourse in the inn.

11. An ample reply has now been given to what he advanced respecting the words before they came together, and he knew her not till she had brought forth a son. I must now proceed, if my reply is to follow the order of his argument, to the third point. He will have it that Mary bore other sons, and he quotes the passage,³³ "And Joseph also went up to the city of David to enroll himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him, being great with child. And it came to pass, while

they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first-born son." From this he endeavours to show that the term first-born is inapplicable except to a person who has brothers, just as he is called only begotten who is the only son of his parents.

12. Our position is this: Every only begotten son is a first-born son, but not every first-born is an only begotten. By first-born we understand not only one who is succeeded by others, but one who has had no predecessor.³⁴ "Everything," says the Lord to Aaron, "that openeth the womb of all flesh which they offer unto the Lord, both of man and beast, shall be thine: nevertheless the first born of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem." The word of God defines first-born as everything that openeth the womb. Otherwise, if the title belongs to such only as have younger brothers, the priests cannot claim the firstlings until their successors have been begotten, lest, perchance, in case there were no subsequent delivery it should prove to be the first-born but not merely the only begotten.³⁵ "And those that are to be redeemed of them from a month old shalt thou redeem, according to thine estimation for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary (the same is twenty gerahs). But the firstling of an ox, or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem; they are holy." The word of God compels me to dedicate to God everything that openeth the womb if it be the firstling of clean beasts: if of unclean beasts, I must redeem it, and give the value to the priest. I might reply and say, Why do you tie me down to the short space of a month? Why do you speak of the first-born, when I cannot tell whether there are brothers to follow? Wait until the second is born. I owe nothing to the priest, unless the birth of a second should make the one I previously had the first-born. Will not the very points of the letters cry out against me and convict me of my folly, and declare that first-born is a title of him who opens the womb, and is not to be restricted to him who has brothers? And, then, to take the case of John: we are agreed that he was an only begotten son: I want to know if he was not also a first-born son, and whether he was not absolutely amenable to the law. There can be no doubt in the matter. At all events Scripture thus speaks of the Saviour,³⁶ "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord) and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons." If this law relates only to the first-born, and there can be no first-born unless there are successors, no one ought to be bound by the law of the first-born who cannot tell whether there will be successors. But inasmuch as he who has no younger brothers is bound by the law of the first-born, we gather that he is called the first-born who opens the womb and who has been preceded by none, not he whose birth is followed by that of a younger brother. Moses writes in Exodus,³⁷ "And it came to pass at midnight, that the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon: And all the first-born of cattle." Tell me, were they who then perished by the destroyer, only your first-born, or, something more, did they include the only begotten? If only they who have brothers are called first-born, the only begotten were saved from death. And if it be the fact that the only begotten were slain, it was contrary to the sentence pronounced, for the only begotten to die as well as the first-born. You must either release the only begotten from the penalty, and in that case you become ridiculous: or, if you allow that they were slain, we gain our point, though we have not to thank you for it, that only begotten sons also are called first-born.

13. The last proposition of Helvidius was this, and it is what he wished to show when he treated of the first-born, that brethren of the Lord are mentioned in the Gospels. For example,³⁸ "Behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, seeking to speak to him." And elsewhere,³⁹ "After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren." And again,⁴⁰ "His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may behold the works which thou doest. For no man doeth anything in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou doest these things, manifest thyself to the world." And John adds,⁴¹ "For even his brethren did not believe on him." Mark also and Matthew,⁴² "And coming into his own country he taught them in their synagogues, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" Luke also in the Acts of the Apostles relates,⁴³ "These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." Paul the Apostle also is at one with them, and witnesses to their historical accuracy,⁴⁴ "And I went up by revelation, but other of the apostles saw I none, save Peter and James the Lord's brother." And again in another place,⁴⁵ "Have we no right to eat and drink? Have we no right to lead about wives even as the rest of the Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" And for fear any one should not allow the evidence of the Jews, since it was they from whose mouth we hear the name of His brothers, but should maintain that His countrymen were deceived by the same error in respect of the brothers into which they fell in their belief about the father, Helvidius utters a sharp note of warning and cries, "The same names are repeated by the Evangelists in another place, and the same persons are there brethren of the Lord and sons of Mary." Matthew says,⁴⁶ "And many women were there (doubtless at the Lord's cross) beholding from afar, which had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee." Mark also,⁴⁷ "And there were also women beholding from afar, among whom were both Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome"; and in the same place shortly after, "And many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem." Luke too,⁴⁸ "Now there were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them."

14. My reason for repeating the same thing again and again is to prevent him from raising a false issue and crying out that I have withheld such passages as make for him, and that his view has been torn to shreds not by evidence of Scripture, but by evasive arguments. Observe, he says, James and Joses are sons of Mary, and the same persons who were called brethren by the Jews. Observe, Mary is the mother of James the less and of Joses. And James is called the less to distinguish him from James the greater, who was the son of Zebedee, as Mark elsewhere states,⁴⁹ "And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid. And when the sabbath was past, they bought spices, that they might come and anoint him." And, as might be expected, he says: "What a poor and impious view we take of Mary, if we hold that when other women were concerned about the burial of Jesus, she His mother was absent; or if we invent some kind of a second Mary; and all the more because the Gospel of S. John testifies that she was there present, when the Lord upon the cross commended her, as His mother and now a widow, to the care of John. Or must we suppose that the Evangelists were so far mistaken and so far mislead us as to call Mary the mother of those who were known to the Jews as brethren of Jesus?"

15. What darkness, what raging madness rushing to its own destruction! You say that the mother of the Lord was present at the cross, you say that she was entrusted to the disciple John on account of her widowhood and solitary condition: as if upon your own showing, she had not four sons, and numerous daughters, with whose solace she might comfort herself? You also apply to her the name of widow which is not found in Scripture. And although you quote all instances in the Gospels, the words of John alone displease you. You say in passing that she was present at the cross, that you may not appear to have omitted it on purpose, and yet not a word about the women who were with her. I could pardon you if you were ignorant, but I see you have a reason for your silence. Let me point out then what John says,⁵⁰ "But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene." No one doubts that there were two apostles called by the name James, James the son of Zebedee, and James the son of Alphaeus. Do you intend the comparatively unknown James the less, who is called in Scripture the son of Mary, not however of Mary the mother of our Lord, to be an apostle, or not? If he is an apostle, he must be the son of Alphaeus and a believer in Jesus, "For neither did his brethren believe in him." If he is not an apostle, but a third James (who he can be I cannot tell), how can he be regarded as the Lord's brother, and how, being a third, can he be called less to distinguish him from greater, when greater and less are used to denote the relations existing, not between three, but between two? Notice, moreover, that the Lord's brother is an apostle, since Paul says,⁵¹ "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." And in the same Epistle,⁵² "And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars," etc. And that you may not suppose this James to be the son of Zebedee, you have only to read the Acts of the Apostles, and you will find that the latter had already been slain by Herod. The only conclusion is that the Mary who is described as the mother of James the less was the wife of Alphaeus and sister of Mary the Lord's mother, the one who is called by John the Evangelist "Mary of Clopas," whether after her father, or kindred, or for some other reason. But if you think they are two persons because elsewhere we read, "Mary the mother of James the less," and here, "Mary of Clopas," you have still to learn that it is customary in Scripture for the same individual to bear different names. Raguel, Moses' father-in-law, is also called Jethro. Gedeon,⁵³ without any apparent reason for the change, all at once becomes Jerubbaal. Ozias, king of Judah, has an alternative, Azarias. Mount Tabor is called Itabyrium. Again Hermon is called by the Phenicians Sanior, and by the Amorites Sanir. The same tract of country is known by three names,⁵⁴ Negebh, Teman, and Darom in Ezekiel. Peter is also called Simon and Cephas. Judas the zealot in another Gospel is called Thaddaeus. And there are numerous other examples which the reader will be able to collect for himself from every part of Scripture.

16. Now here we have the explanation of what I am endeavouring to show, how it is that the sons of Mary, the sister of our Lord's mother, who though not formerly believers afterwards did believe, can be called brethren of the Lord. Possibly the case might be that one of the brethren believed immediately while the others did not believe until long after, and that one Mary was the mother of James and Joses, namely, "Mary of Clopas," who is the same as the wife of Alphaeus, the other, the mother of James the less. In any case, if she (the latter) had been the Lord's mother S. John would have allowed her the title, as everywhere else, and would not by calling her the mother of other sons have given a wrong impression. But at this stage I do not wish to argue for or against

the supposition that Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary the mother of James and Joses were different women, provided it is clearly understood that Mary the mother of James and Joses was not the same person as the Lord's mother. How then, says Helvidius, do you make out that they were called the Lord's brethren who were not his brethren? I will show how that is. In Holy Scripture there are four kinds of brethren-by nature, race, kindred, love. Instances of brethren by nature are Esau and Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Andrew and Peter, James and John. As to race, all Jews are called brethren of one another, as in Deuteronomy,⁵⁵ "If thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee." And in the same book,⁵⁶ "Thou shalt in anywise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shall thou set king over thee; thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee, which is not thy brother." And again,⁵⁷ "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely bring them again unto thy brother. And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it home to thine house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again." And the Apostle Paul says,⁵⁸ "I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites." Moreover they are called brethren by kindred who are of one family, that is patria, which corresponds to the Latin paternitas, because from a single root a numerous progeny proceeds. In Genesis⁵⁹ we read, "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we are brethren." And again, "So Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east: and they separated each from his brother." Certainly Lot was not Abraham's brother, but the son of Abraham's brother Aram. For Terah begat Abraham and Nahor and Aram: and Aram begat Lot. Again we read,⁶⁰ "And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife. and Lot his brother's son." But if you still doubt whether a nephew can be called a son, let me give you an instance.⁶¹ "And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen." And after describing the night attack and the slaughter, he adds, "And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot." Let this suffice by way of proof of my assertion. But for fear you may make some cavilling objection, and wriggle out of your difficulty like a snake, I must bind you fast with the bonds of proof to stop your hissing and complaining, for I know you would like to say you have been overcome not so much by Scripture truth as by intricate arguments. Jacob, the son of Isaac and Rebecca, when in fear of his brother's treachery he had gone to Mesopotamia, drew nigh and rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the flocks of Laban, his mother's brother.⁶² "And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son." Here is an example of the rule already referred to, by which a nephew is called a brother. And again,⁶³ "Laban said unto Jacob. Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? Tell me what shall thy wages be." And so, when, at the end of twenty years, without the knowledge of his father-in-law and accompanied by his wives and sons he was returning to his country, on Laban overtaking him in the mountain of Gilead and failing to find the idols which Rachel hid among the baggage, Jacob answered and said to Laban,⁶⁴ "What is my trespass? What is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast felt all about my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us

two." Tell me who are those brothers of Jacob and Laban who were present there? Esau, Jacob's brother, was certainly not there, and Laban, the son of Bethuel, had no brothers although he had a sister Rebecca.

17. Innumerable instances of the same kind are to be found in the sacred books. But, to be brief, I will return to the last of the four classes of brethren, those, namely, who are brethren by affection, and these again fall into two divisions, those of the spiritual and those of the general relationship. I say spiritual because all of us Christians are called brethren, as in the verse,⁶⁵ "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." And in another psalm the Saviour says,⁶⁶ "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." And elsewhere,⁶⁷ "Go unto my brethren and say to them." I say also general, because we are all children of one Father, there is a like bond of brotherhood between us all.⁶⁸ "Tell these who hate you," says the prophet, "ye are our brethren." And the Apostle writing to the Corinthians:⁶⁹ "If any man that is named brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such a one no, not to eat." I now ask to which class you consider the Lord's brethren in the Gospel must be assigned. They are brethren by nature, you say. But Scripture does not say so; it calls them neither sons of Mary, nor of Joseph. Shall we say they are brethren by race? But it is absurd to suppose that a few Jews were called His brethren when all Jews of the time might upon this principle have borne the title. Were they brethren by virtue of close intimacy and the union of heart and mind? If that were so, who were more truly His brethren than the apostles who received His private instruction and were called by Him His mother and His brethren? Again, if all men, as such, were His brethren, it would have been foolish to deliver a special message, "Behold, thy brethren seek thee," for all men alike were entitled to the name. The only alternative is to adopt the previous explanation and understand them to be called brethren in virtue of the bond of kindred, not of love and sympathy, nor by prerogative of race, nor yet by nature. Just as Lot was called Abraham's brother, and Jacob Laban's, just as the daughters of Zelophehad received a lot among their brethren, just as Abraham himself had to wife Sarah his sister, for he says,⁷⁰ "She is indeed my sister, on the father's side, not on the mother's," that is to say, she was the daughter of his brother, not of his sister. Otherwise, what are we to say of Abraham, a just man, taking to wife the daughter of his own father? Scripture, in relating the history of the men of early times, does not outrage our ears by speaking of the enormity in express terms, but prefers to leave it to be inferred by the reader: and God afterwards gives to the prohibition the sanction of the law, and threatens,⁷¹ "He who takes his sister, born of his father, or of his mother, and beholds her nakedness, hath committed abomination, he shall be utterly destroyed. He hath uncovered his sister's nakedness, he shall bear his sin."

18. There are things which, in your extreme ignorance, you had never read, and therefore you neglected the whole range of Scripture and employed your madness in outraging the Virgin, like the man in the story who being unknown to everybody and finding that he could devise no good deed by which to gain renown, burned the temple of Diana: and when no one revealed the sacrilegious act, it is said that he himself went up and down proclaiming that he was the man who had applied the fire. The rulers of Ephesus were curious to know what made him do this thing, whereupon he replied that if he could not have fame for good deeds, all men should give him credit for bad ones. Grecian history relates the incident. But you do worse. You have set on fire the temple of the Lord's body, you have defiled the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit from which you are

determined to make a team of four brethren and a heap of sisters come forth. In a word, joining in the chorus of the Jews, you say,⁷² "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? and his sisters, are they not all with us? The word all would not be used if there were not a crowd of them." Pray tell me, who, before you appeared, was acquainted with this blasphemy? who thought the theory worth two-pence? You have gained your desire, and are become notorious by crime. For myself who am your opponent, although we live in the⁷³ same city, I don't know, as the saying is, whether you are white or black. I pass over faults of diction which abound in every book you write. I say not a word about your absurd introduction. Good heavens! I do not ask for eloquence, since, having none yourself, you applied for a supply of it to your brother Craterius. I do not ask for grace of style, I look for purity of soul: for with Christians it is the greatest of solecisms and of vices of style to introduce anything base either in word or action. I am come to the conclusion of my argument. I will deal with you as though I had as yet prevailed nothing; and you will find yourself on the horns of a dilemma. It is clear that our Lord's brethren bore the name in the same way that Joseph was called his father:⁷⁴ "I and thy father sought thee sorrowing." It was His mother who said this, not the Jews. The Evangelist himself relates that His father and His mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning Him, and there are similar passages which we have already quoted in which Joseph and Mary are called his parents. Seeing that you have been foolish enough to persuade yourself that the Greek manuscripts are corrupt, you will perhaps plead the diversity of readings. I therefore come to the Gospel of John, and there it is plainly written,⁷⁵ "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." You will certainly find this in your manuscript. Now tell me, how is Jesus the son of Joseph when it is clear that He was begotten of the Holy Ghost? Was Joseph His true father? Dull as you are, you will not venture to say that. Was he His reputed father? If so, let the same rule be applied to them when they are called brethren, that you apply to Joseph when he is called father.

19. Now that I have cleared the rocks and shoals I must spread sail and make all speed to reach his epilogue. Feeling himself to be a smatterer, he there produces Tertullian as a witness and quotes the words of Victorinus bishop of⁷⁶ Petavium. Of Tertullian I say no more than that he did not belong to the Church. But as regards Victorinus, I assert what has already been proved from the Gospel-that he spoke of the brethren of the Lord not as being sons of Mary, but brethren in the sense I have explained, that is to say, brethren in point of kinship not by nature. We are, however, spending our strength on trifles, and, leaving the fountain of truth, are following the tiny streams of opinion. Might I not array against you the whole series of ancient writers? Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and many other apostolic and eloquent men, who against Ebion, Theodotus of Byzantium, and Valentinus, held these same views, and wrote volumes replete with wisdom. If you had ever read what they wrote, you would be a wiser man. But I think it better to reply briefly to each point than to linger any longer and extend my book to an undue length.

20. I now direct the attack against the passage in which, wishing to show your cleverness, you institute a comparison between virginity and marriage. I could not forbear smiling, and I thought of the proverb, did you ever see a camel dance? "Are virgins better," you ask, "than Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were married men? Are not infants daily fashioned by the hands of God in the wombs of their mothers? And if so, are we bound to blush at the thought of Mary having a husband

after she was delivered? If they find any disgrace in this, they ought not consistently even to believe that God was born of the Virgin by natural delivery. For according to them there is more dishonour in a virgin giving birth to God by the organs of generation, than in a virgin being joined to her own husband after she has been delivered." Add, if you like, Helvidius, the other humiliations of nature, the womb for nine months growing larger, the sickness, the delivery, the blood, the swaddling-clothes. Picture to yourself the infant in the enveloping membranes. Introduce into your picture the hard manger, the wailing of the infant, the circumcision on the eighth day, the time of purification, so that he may be proved to be unclean. We do not blush, we are not put to silence. The greater the humiliations He endured for me, the more I owe Him. And when you have given every detail, you will be able to produce nothing more shameful than the cross, which we confess, in which we believe, and by which we triumph over our enemies.

21. But as we do not deny what is written, so we do reject what is not written. We believe that God was born of the Virgin, because we read it. That Mary was married after she brought forth, we do not believe, because we do not read it. Nor do we say this to condemn marriage, for virginity itself is the fruit of marriage; but because when we are dealing with saints we must not judge rashly. If we adopt possibility as the standard of judgment, we might maintain that Joseph had several wives because Abraham had, and so had Jacob, and that the Lord's brethren were the issue of those wives, an invention which some hold with a rashness which springs from audacity not from piety. You say that Mary did not continue a virgin: I claim still more, that Joseph himself on account of Mary was a virgin, so that from a virgin wedlock a virgin son was born. For if as a holy man he does not come under the imputation of fornication, and it is nowhere written that he had another wife, but was the guardian of Mary whom he was supposed to have to wife rather than her husband, the conclusion is that he who was thought worthy to be called father of the Lord, remained a virgin.

22. And now that I am about to institute a comparison between virginity and marriage, I beseech my readers not to suppose that in praising virginity I have in the least disparaged marriage, and separated the saints of the Old Testament from those of the New, that is to say, those who had wives and those who altogether refrained from the embraces of women: I rather think that in accordance with the difference in time and circumstance one rule applied to the former, another to us upon whom the ends of the world have come. So long as that law remained,⁷⁷ "Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth"; and⁷⁸ "Cursed is the barren woman that beareth not seed in Israel," they all married and were given in marriage, left father and mother, and became one flesh. But once in tones of thunder the words were heard,⁷⁹ "The time is shortened, that henceforth those that have wives may be as though they had none": cleaving to the Lord, we are made one spirit with Him. And why?⁸⁰ Because "He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. And there is a difference also between the wife and the virgin. She that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." Why do you cavil? Why do you resist? The vessel of election says this; he tells us that there is a difference between the wife and the virgin. Observe what the happiness of that state must be in which even the distinction of sex is lost. The virgin is no longer called a woman.⁸¹ "She that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit." A

virgin is defined as she that is holy in body and in spirit, for it is no good to have virgin flesh if a woman be married in mind.

"But she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." Do you think there is no difference between one who spends her time in prayer and fasting, and one who must, at her husband's approach, make up her countenance, walk with mincing gait, and feign a shew of endearment? The virgin's aim is to appear less comely; she will wrong herself so as to hide her natural attractions. The married woman has the paint laid on before her mirror, and, to the insult of her Maker, strives to acquire something more than her natural beauty. Then come the prattling of infants, the noisy household, children watching for her word and waiting for her kiss, the reckoning up of expenses, the preparation to meet the outlay. On one side you will see a company of cooks, girded for the onslaught and attacking the meat: there you may hear the hum of a multitude of weavers. Meanwhile a message is delivered that the husband and his friends have arrived. The wife, like a swallow, flies all over the house. "She has to see to everything. Is the sofa smooth? Is the pavement swept? Are the flowers in the cups? Is dinner ready?" Tell me, pray, where amid all this is there room for the thought of God? Are these happy homes? Where there is the beating of drums, the noise and clatter of pipe and lute, the clanging of cymbals, can any fear of God be found? The parasite is snubbed and feels proud of the honour. Enter next the half-naked victims of the passions, a mark for every lustful eye. The unhappy wife must either take pleasure in them, and perish, or be displeased, and provoke her husband. Hence arises discord, the seed-plot of divorce. Or suppose you find me a house where these things are unknown, which is a *rara avis* indeed! yet even there the very management of the household, the education of the children, the wants of the husband, the correction of the servants, cannot fail to call away the mind from the thought of God.⁸² "It had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women": so the Scripture says, and afterwards Abraham received the command,⁸³ "In all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice." She who is not subject to the anxiety and pain of child-bearing and having passed the change of life has ceased to perform the functions of a woman, is freed from the curse of God: nor is her desire to her husband, but on the contrary her husband becomes subject to her, and the voice of the Lord commands him, "In all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice." Thus they begin to have time for prayer. For so long as the debt of marriage is paid, earnest prayer is neglected.

23. I do not deny that holy women are found both among widows and those who have husbands; but they are such as have ceased to be wives, or such as, even in the close bond of marriage, imitate virgin chastity. The Apostle, Christ speaking in him, briefly bore witness to this when he said,⁸⁴ "She that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, how she may please the Lord: but she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." He leaves us the free exercise of our reason in the matter. He lays no necessity upon anyone nor leads anyone into a snare: he only persuades to that which is proper when he wishes all men to be as himself. He had not, it is true, a commandment from the Lord respecting virginity, for that grace surpasses the unassisted power of man, and it would have worn an air of immodesty to force men to fly in the face of nature, and to say in other words, I want you to be what the angels are. It is this angelic purity which secures to virginity its highest reward, and the Apostle might have seemed to despise a course of life which involves no guilt. Nevertheless in the immediate context he adds,⁸⁵ "But I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I think therefore

that this is good by reason of the present distress, namely, that it is good for a man to be as he is." What is meant by present distress?⁸⁶ "Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days!" The reason why the wood grows up is that it may be cut down. The field is sown that it may be reaped. The world is already full, and the population is too large for the soil. Every day we are being cut down by war, snatched away by disease, swallowed up by shipwreck, although we go to law with one another about the fences of our property. It is only one addition to the general rule which is made by those who follow the Lamb, and who have not defiled their garments, for they have continued in their virgin state. Notice the meaning of defiling. I shall not venture to explain it, for fear Helvidius may be abusive. I agree with you, when you say, that some virgins are nothing but tavern women; I say still more, that even adulteresses may be found among them, and, you will no doubt be still more surprised to hear, that some of the clergy are inn-keepers and some monks unchaste. Who does not at once understand that a tavern woman cannot be a virgin, nor an adulterer a monk, nor a clergy-man a tavern-keeper? Are we to blame virginity if its counterfeit is at fault? For my part, to pass over other persons and come to the virgin, I maintain that she who is engaged in huckstering, though for anything I know she may be a virgin in body, is no longer one in spirit.

24. I have become rhetorical, and have disported myself a little like a platform orator. You compelled me, Helvidius; for, brightly as the Gospel shines at the present day, you will have it that equal glory attaches to virginity and to the marriage state. And because I think that, finding the truth too strong for you, you will turn to disparaging my life and abusing my character (it is the way of weak women to talk tittle-tattle in corners when they have been put down by their masters), I shall anticipate you. I assure you that I shall regard your railing as a high distinction, since the same lips that assail me have disparaged Mary, and I, a servant of the Lord, am favoured with the same barking eloquence as His mother.

1: Ut ait ille. The sentiment, almost in the same words, is found in Tertullian against Hermogenes, ch. 1.

2: i. 18 sq.

3: S. Matt. i. 24, Matt. i. 25.

4: Ps. vi. 5.

5: Deut. xxii. 24, Deut. xxii. 25.

6: Deut. xxii. 23, Deut. xxii. 24.

7: Deut. xx. 7.

8: Is. vii. 14. See Cheyne's Isaiah, and critical note.

9: S. Luke ii. 27.

10: S. Luke ii. 41.

11: ib. ii. 43.

12: ib. i. 34.

13: S. Luke ii. 48.

14: S. Matt. i. 20.

15: Is. xlvi. 4.

16: S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

17: 1 Cor. xv. 23 sq.

18: Ps. cxxiii. 2. The songs of the up-goings or ascents (twn anabaOmwn 19: Ps. cxix. 123.

20: Gen. xxxv. 4, Sept.

21: Deut. xxxiv. 5-6.

22: S. Matt. i. 20.

23: S. Matt. i. 20.

24: S. Luke ii. 10 sq.

25: S. Luke ii. 14.

26: ib. ii. 29.

27: S. Luke ii. 33.

28: The allusion is to the Old Latin, the Versio Itala. The quotations which follow stand differently in Jerome's Vulgate, made subsequently (391-404). The argument is that, since the copies of the Latin version substantially agree in the present case, it is futile to suppose variations in the original.

29: Gen. xxxviii. 26.

30: Lev. xii. 2-3 margin.

31: Jer. v. 8.

32: S. Luke ii. 7.

33: S. Luke ii. 4 sq.

34: Numb. xviii. 15.

35: Numb. xviii. 16.

36: S. Luke ii. 22 sq.

37: Exod. xii. 29.

38: S. Matt. xii. 46.

39: S. John ii. 12.

40: S. John vii. 3, John vii. 4.

41: S. John vii. 5.

42: S. Matt. xiii. 54, Matt. xiii. 55. S. Mark vi. 1-3.

43: Acts i. 14.

44: Gal. ii. 2; Gal. i. 19.

45: 1 Cor. ix. 4, 1 Cor. ix. 5.

46: S. Matt. xxvii. 55, Matt. xxvii. 56. For Joses, Jerome has Joseph.

47: S. Marc. xv. 40, Marc. xv. 41. For Joses, Jerome has Joseph.

48: S. Luc. xxiv. 10.

49: S. Mark xv. 47; Mark xvi. 1.

50: S. John xix. 25.

51: Gal. i. 18, Gal. i. 19.

52: Gal. ii. 9.

53: But see Judges vi. 2.

54: The Heb. Negebh signifies South, and it is probable that the land of Teman was a southern portion of the land of Edom. If Darom be the right reading, it is, apparently, the same as Dedan (Ezek. xxv. 13, etc).

55: Deut. xv. 12.

56: Deut. xvii. 15.

57: Deut. xxii. 1.

58: Rom. ix. 3, Rom. ix. 4.

59: Gen. xiii. 8, Gen. xiii. 11.

60: Gen. xii. 4.

61: Gen. xiv. 14.

62: Gen. xxix. 11.

63: Gen. xxix. 15.

64: Gen. xxxi. 36, Gen. xxxi. 37.

65: Ps. cxxxiii. 1.

66: Ps. xxii. 22.

67: S. John xx. 17.

68: Is. lxvi. 5.

- 69: 1 Cor. v. 11.
- 70: Gen. xx. 11.
- 71: Lev. xviii. 9.
- 72: S. Matt. xiii. 55: S. Mark vi. 3.
- 73: That is, Rome.
- 74: S. Luke i. 18.
- 75: S. John i. 45.
- 76: That is, Pettau in Upper Pannonia. See Jerome, De Vir. Ill. 74.
- 77: Gen. i. 28.
- 78: Probably a mistranslation of Exod. xxiii. 26.
- 79: 1 Cor. vii. 29.
- 80: ib. vii. 32, vii. 33.
- 81: 1 Cor. vii. 34.
- 82: Gen. xviii. 11.
- 83: Gen. xxi. 12.
- 84: 1 Cor. vii. 34.
- 85: 1 Cor. vii. 25.
- 86: Matt. xxiv. 19: S. Mark xiii. 17.

To Pammachius Against John of Jerusalem

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Introduction. The letter against John of Jerusalem was written about the year 398 or 399, and was a product of the Origenistic controversy. Its immediate occasion was the visit of Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, at Jerusalem, in 394. The bishop preached, in the Church of the Resurrection (§11), a pointed sermon against Origenism, which was thought to be so directly aimed at John that the latter sent his archdeacon to remonstrate with the preacher (§14). After many unseemly scenes. Epiphanius advised Jerome and his friends to separate from their bishop (§39). But how were they to have the ministrations of the Church? This difficulty was surmounted by Epiphanius, who took Jerome's brother to the monastery which he had rounded at Ad. in the diocese of Eleutheropolis, and there ordained him against his will, even using force to overcome his opposition (Jerome, Letter LI. 1). Epiphanius attempted to defend his action (Jerome, Letter LI. 2), but John, after some time, appealed to Alexandria against Jerome and his supporters as schismatics. The bishop, Theophilus, at once took the side of John: but a letter, written by his emissary Isidore and intended for John, fell into the hands of Jerome (§37). The letter showed that Isidore was coming as a mere partisan of John, and Jerome, therefore, treated both it and the bearer with secret contempt. The dispute was thus prolonged for about four years, and, after some attempts at reconciliation, and the exhibition of much bitterness, amounting to the practical excommunication of Jerome and his friends, the dispute was stopped, perhaps by Theophilus, perhaps through the influence of Melania. The letter written to Pammachius at Rome, in 397 or 398, against John, was abruptly broken off, and it is almost certain that it was never published during Jerome's lifetime. Jerome afterwards had so much influence with Theophilus that we find him interceding for John, who had fallen under the Pontiff's displeasure (Letter LXXXVI. 1). The date of this treatise is the subject of controversy. In §1 Jerome says that he wrote "after three years," that is, three years from the visit of Epiphanius to Jerusalem, which was in 394. This would give the date 397. At §14, also, he says that Epiphanius had been brooding over his wrongs for three years. Another note of time is found in the words of §43, that John had "lately" sought to obtain a sentence of exile against Jerome from "that wild beast who threatened the necks of the whole world," that is, the Prefect Rufinus, who died at the end of 395. All these statements point to the year 397. On the other hand, at §17, he speaks of his "Commentaries" on Ecclesiastes and Ephesians as having been written "about (ferme) ten years ago,"; and the preface to Ecclesiastes says that he had read Ecclesiastes with Blesilla at Rome "about (ferme) five years ago," consequently, fifteen years before the writing of this treatise. Blesilla's death was in 384. The reading of Ecclesiastes may, therefore, have been in 383. And the fifteen years would bring us to 398. Also, at §41, Jerome says, addressing John. "You seem to have slept for thirteen years," implying that it was for thirteen years that the state of things complained of by John had existed, that is, the presence of the monks in his diocese, or, at least, their leaving their own dioceses. Jerome left Antioch, the diocese of his ordination, at the end of 385 or beginning of 386; these

thirteen years, therefore, bring us to 399, the date adopted by Vallarsi. There is, however, an intimation in "Pallad. Hist. Laus.," c. 117, that Melania, the friend of Rufinus, gave assistance in the matter of "the schism of nearly 400 monks who followed Paulinus," which is admitted to relate to the schism at Bethlehem, caused by the question of the ordination of Paulinianus. We know that Melania and Rufinus left Jerusalem early in 397, and that, before their departure, Jerome and Rufinus were reconciled. It would, therefore, seem most probable that the treatise, which is written with so much animosity against John, Rufinus's fellow-worker, and contains invidious allusions to Rufinus himself (§11, "your friends, who grin like dogs and turn up their noses," Jerome's constant description of Rufinus), was written before the reconciliation of Rufinus and Jerome, that is, in the end of 386 or the beginning of 387, and that it was broken off and kept unpublished because the situation had changed. Vallarsi places it in 399. He quotes the passages which make for the later date, but strangely omits the more definite statements which make for the earlier. It should be added that the letter of Jerome (LXXXII.) to Theophilus is evidently written at the same time, and under the same feelings, as this treatise. and, if the arguments above given are valid, that letter must be placed in 397, not in 399, as stated in the note prefixed to it. The short letter (LXXXVI.) to Theophilus is, in that case, probably to be placed in 398 or 399, rather than 401, as there stated. The treatise is a letter to Pammachius, who had been disturbed by the complaints of Bishop John to Siricius, bishop of Rome, against Jerome. Jerome begins (1) by pleading necessity for his attack on the bishop. Epiphanius has accused him of heresy (2). Let him answer plainly (3), for it is pride alone (4) which prevents this. It is said that John's letter of explanation or apology was approved by Theophilus (5); but it did not touch the point, that is, the accusation of Origenism. Only three points are treated (6), and Epiphanius adduced eight—namely (7) Origen's opinions (i.) that the Son does not see the Father; (ii.) that souls are confined in earthly bodies, as in a prison; (iii.) that the devil may be saved; (iv.) that the skins with which God clothed Adam and Eve were human bodies: (v.) that the booty in the resurrection will be without sex: (vi.) that the descriptions of Paradise are allegorical: trees meaning angels. and rivers the heavenly virtues: (vii) that the waters above and below the firmament are angels and devils; (viii.) that the image of God was altogether lost at the Fall. John, instead of answering on the first head, merely expressed his faith in the Trinity (8, 9), and all through tries to make out (10) that the question between him and Epiphanius relates merely to the ordination of Paulinianus. Jerome then relates the extraordinary scenes of the altercation between Epiphanius and John (11-14). He then turns to the Origenistic notions that angels are cast down into human souls (15, 16), that the spirits of men pass into the heavenly bodies (17) and that the souls of men had a previous existence (18), and pass up and down in the scale of creation (19, 20). John, instead of answering on these points, contents himself with against Manichaeism (21.) Jerome presses him on the question of the origin of souls (22), pronouncing rashly for creationism. He then passes to the question of the state of the body after the resurrection (23), asserting the restoration of the flesh as it now is (24-27), both in the case of Christ (28) and in our own, adducing testimonies from the Old Testament (29-32), and discussing the appearances of our Lord after His resurrection (34-36). He then passes to a detailed examination of John's letter or "Apology" to Theophilus (37), quoting its words, and telling the story of the mission of Isidore (37, 38), and the attempts of the Count Archelaus to make peace (39). The ordination of Paulinianus, on which John lays stress, is a subterfuge (40, 41). The schism is due to the heretical tendencies of the bishop, who is everywhere denounced by Epiphanius (42, 43). The letter is, throughout, violent and contemptuous in its tone, with an

arrogant assumption that the writer is in possession of the whole truth on the difficult subject on which he writes, and that he has a right to demand from his bishop a confession of faith on each point on which he chooses to catechise him. Its importance lies in the fact that it, to a large extent, fixed the belief of churchmen on the points it deals with, and the mode of dealing with supposed heresy, for more than a thousand years.

I. If, according to the¹ Apostle Paul, we cannot pray as we feel, and speech does not express the thoughts of our own minds, how much more dangerous is it to judge of another man's heart, and to trace and explain the meaning of the particular words and expressions which he uses? The nature of man is prone to mercy, and in considering another's sin, every one commiserates himself. Accordingly, if you blame one who offends in word, a man will say it was only-simplicity; if you tax a man with craft, he to whom you speak will not admit that there is anything more in it than ignorance, so that he may avoid the suspicion of malice. And it will thus come to pass that you, the accuser, are made a slanderer, and the censured party is regarded, not as a heretic, but merely as a man without culture. You know, Pammachius, you know that it is not enmity or the lust of glory which leads me to engage in this work, but that I have been stimulated by your letters and that I act out of the fervour of my faith; and, if possible, I would have all understand that I cannot be blamed for impatience and rashness, seeing that I speak only after the lapse of three years. In fact, if you had not told me that the minds of many are troubled at the "Apology" which I am about to discuss, and are tossing to and fro on a sea of doubt, I had determined to persist in silence.

2. So away with² Novatus, who would not hold out a hand to the erring! perish³ Montanus and his mad women! Montanus, who would hurl the fallen into the abyss that they may never rise again. Every day we all sin and make some slip or other. Being then merciful to ourselves, we are not rigorous towards others; nay, rather, we pray and beseech⁴ him either to simply tell us our own faults, or to openly defend those of other men. I dislike ambiguities; I dislike to be told what is capable of two meanings. Let us contemplate with⁵ unveiled face the glory of the Lord. Once upon a time the people of Israel halted⁶ between two opinions. But, said Elias, which is by interpretation the strong one of the Lord,⁷ "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, go after him; but if Baal, follow him." And the Lord himself says concerning the Jews,⁸ "the strange children lied unto me; the strange children became feeble, and limped out of their by-paths." If there really is no ground for suspecting him of heresy (as I wish and believe), why does he not speak out my opinion in my own words? He calls it simplicity; I interpret it as artfulness. He wishes to convince me that his belief is sound; let his speech, then, also be sound. And, indeed, if the ambiguity attached to a single word, or a single statement, or two or three, I could be indulgent on the score of ignorance; nor would I judge what is obscure or doubtful by the standard of what is certain and clear. But, as things are, this "simplicity" is nothing but a platform trick, like walking on tiptoe over eggs or standing corn; there is doubt and suspicion everywhere. You might suppose he was not writing an exposition of the faith, but was writing a disputation on some imaginary theme. What he is now so keen upon, we learnt long ago in the schools. He puts on our own armour to fight against us. Even if his faith be correct, and he speaks with circumspection and reserve, his extreme care rouses my suspicions.⁹ "He that walketh uprightly, walketh boldly." It is folly to bear a bad name for nothing. A charge is brought against him of which he is not conscious. Let him confidently deny the charge which hangs upon a single word, and freely turn the tables against his adversary. Let the one exhibit the same boldness in repelling the charge which the other shows in

advancing it. And when he has said all that he wishes and purposes to say, and such things as are above suspicion, if his opponent persists in slander, let him try conclusions in open court. I wish no one to sit still under an imputation of heresy, lest, if he say nothing, his want of openness be interpreted, amongst those who are not aware of his innocence, as the consciousness of guilt, although there is no need to demand the presence of a man and to reduce him to silence when you have his letters in your possession.

3. We all know what¹⁰ he wrote to you, what charge he brought against you, wherein (as you maintain) he has slandered you. Answer the points, one by one; follow the footsteps of tiffs letter; leave not a single jot or tittle of the slander unnoticed. For if you are careless, and accidentally pass over any thing as I believe you on your oath to have done, he will immediately cry out: "Now, now, you have got the worst of it, the whole thing turns upon this." Words do not sound the same in the ears of friends and enemies. An enemy looks for a knot even in a bulrush; a friend judges even crooked to be straight. It is a saying of secular writers that lovers are blind in their judgments, though, perhaps, you are too busy with the sacred books to pay any attention to such literature. You should never boast of what your friends think of you. That is true testimony which comes from the lips of foes. On the contrary, if a friend speaks in your behalf he will be considered not as a witness but a judge or a partisan. This is the sort of thing your enemies will say, who perhaps give no credit to you, and only wish to vex you. But I, whom you say you have never willingly injured, yet whose name you are always bound to bandy about in your letters, advise you either to openly proclaim the faith of the Church, or to speak as you believe. For that cautious mincing and weighing of words may, no doubt, deceive the unlearned; but a careful hearer and reader will quickly detect the snare, and will show in open daylight the subterranean mines by which truth is overthrown. The Arians (no one knows more about them than you) for a long time pretended that they condemned the¹¹ Homoousion on account of the offence it gave, and they besmeared poisonous error with honeyed words. But at last the snake uncoiled itself, and its deadly head, which lay concealed under all its folds, was pierced by the sword of the Spirit. The Church, as you know, welcomes penitents, and is so overwhelmed by the multitude of sinners that it is forced, in the interests of the misguided flocks, to be lenient to the wounds of the shepherds.¹² Ancient and modern heresy observes the same rule-the people hear one thing, the priests preach another.

4. And first, before I translate and insert in this book the letter which you wrote to Bishop Theophilus, and show you that I understand your excessive care and circumspection, I should like a word of expostulation with you. What is the meaning of this towering arrogance which makes you refuse to reply to those who question you respecting the faith? How is it that you regard almost as public enemies the vast multitude of brethren, and the bands of monks, who refuse to communicate with you in Palestine? The Son of God, for the sake of one sick sheep, leaving the ninety and nine on the mountains, endured the buffering, the cross, the scourge; He took up the burden, and patiently carried on His shoulders to heaven the voluptuous woman that was a sinner. Is it for you to act the "most reverend father in God," the fastidious prelate; to stand apart in your wealth and wisdom, in your grandeur and your learning; to frown superciliously upon your fellow servants, and, scarce vouchsafe a glance to those who have been redeemed with the blood of your Lord? Is this what you have learnt from the Apostles' precept to be¹³ "ready always to give answer to ever), man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you"? Suppose we do, as you pretend, seek occasion, and that, under the pretext of zeal for the faith, we are sowing

strife, framing a schism, and fomenting quarrels. Then take away the occasion from those who wish for an occasion; so that having given satisfaction on the point of faith, and solved all the difficulties in which you are involved, you may show clearly to all that the dispute is not one of doctrine, but of order. But perhaps when questioned concerning the faith, you say that it is from wise forethought that you hold your tongue, so that it may not be said that you have proved yourself a heretic-in as much as you make satisfaction to your accusers. If that be so, then men ought not to refute any charges of which they are accused, lest, having denied them, they may be held to be guilty. The accusations of the laity, deacons, and presbyters, are, I suppose, beneath your notice. For you can, as you are perpetually boasting, make a thousand clerics in an hour. But you have to answer Epiphanius, our father in God, who, in the letters which he sent, openly calls you a heretic. Certainly you are not his superior in respect of years, of learning, of his exemplary life, or of the judgment of the whole world. If it is a question of age, you are a young man writing to an old one. If it is one of knowledge, you are a person not so very accomplished writing to a learned man, although your partisans maintain that you are a more finished speaker than Demosthenes, more sharp-witted than Chrysippus, wiser than Plato, and perhaps have persuaded you that they are right. As regards his life and devotion to the faith, I will say no more, that I may not seem to be seeking to wound you. At the time when the whole East (except our fathers in God Athanasius and Paulinus) was overrun by the Arian and Eunomian heresies; when you did not hold communion with the Westerns; then, in the very worst of the exile which made them confessors, he, though a simple convent priest, gained the ear of Eutychius, and afterwards as bishop of Cyprus was unmolested by Valens. For he was always so highly venerated that heretics on the throne thought it would redound to their own disgrace if they persecuted such a man. Write therefore to him. Answer his letter. So let the rest understand your purpose and judge of your eloquence and wisdom; do not keep all your accomplishments to yourself. Why, when you are challenged, in one quarter, do you turn your arms towards another? A question is put to you in Palestine, your answer is given in Egypt. When some are blear-eyed, you anoint the eyes of others who are not affected. If you tell another what is meant to give us satisfaction, such action springs entirely from pride; if you tell him what we do not ask for, it is entirely uncalled for.

5. But you say "the bishop of Alexandria approved of my letter." What did he approve of? Your correct utterances against Arius, Photinus, and Manichaeus. For who, at this time of day, accuses you of being an Arian? Who now fastens on you the guilt of Photinus and Manichaeus? Those faults were one ago corrected, those enemies were shattered. You were not so foolish as to openly defend a heresy which you knew was offensive to the whole Church. You knew that if you had done this, you must have been immediately removed, and your heart was upon the pleasures of your episcopal throne. You so tuned your expressions as to neither displease the simple, nor offend your own incontestably marked by deceit and slipperiness; what, then, are we to do with the remaining five, with regard to which, because no opportunity was afforded for ambiguity, supporters. You wrote well, but nothing to the purpose. How was the bishop of Alexandria to know of what you were accused, or what things they were of which a confession was demanded from you? You ought to have set forth in detail the charges brought against you, and then have met them one by one. There is an old story which tells how a certain man, who, when he was speaking fluently, was carried along by a torrent of words, without touching the question before the court, and thus drew the wise remark from the judge, "Excellent! excellent! but to what purpose is all this excellence?" Quacks have but one lotion for all affections of the eyes. He who is accused of many

things, and in dissipating the charges passes over some, confesses all that he omits to mention. Did you not reply to the letter of Epiphanius, and yourself choose the points for refutation? No doubt, in replying, you rested on the axiom, that no man is so brave as to put the sword to his own throat. Choose which alternative you like. You shall have your choice: you either replied to the letter of Epiphanius, or you did not. If you did reply, why did you take no notice of the most important, and the most numerous, of the charges brought against you? If you did not reply, what becomes of your "Apology," of which you boast amongst the simple, and which you are scattering broadcast amongst those who do not understand the matter?

6. The questions for you to answer were arranged, as I shall presently show. under eight heads. You touch only three, and pass on. As regards the rest, you maintain a magnificent silence. If you had with perfect frankness replied to seven, I should still cling to the charge which remained; and what you said nothing about, that I should hold to be the truth. But as things are, you have caught the wolf by the ears; you can neither hold fast, nor dare let go. With a sort of careless security and an air of abstraction, you skim over and touch the surface of three in which there is nothing or but little of importance. And your procedure is so dark and close that you confess more by your silence than you rebut by your arguments. Every one has the right forthwith to say to you,¹⁵ "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness." Even in answering three little questions, respecting which volt seemed to say something, you are not clear from suspicion and from blame, but your replies are and you were therefore unable to cheat your hearers, you preferred to maintain unbroken silence rather than openly confess what had been covered in obscurity?

7. The questions relate to the passages in the¹⁶ Peri\ Arxwn. The first is this, "for as it is unfitting to say that the Son can see the Father, so neither is it meet to think that the Holy Spirit can see the Son." The second point is the statement that souls are tied up in the body as in a prison; and that before man was made in Paradise they dwelt amongst rational creatures in the heavens. Wherefore, afterwards to console itself. the soul says in the Psalms,¹⁷ "Before I was humbled, I went wrong"; and¹⁸ "Return, my soul, to thy rest"; and¹⁹ "Lead my soul out of prison"; and similarly elsewhere. Thirdly, he says that both the devil and demons will some time or other repent, and ultimately reign with the saints. Fourthly, he interprets the coat of skin, with which Adam and Eve were clothed after their fall and ejection from Paradise, to be human bodies, and we are to suppose of course that previously, in Paradise, they had neither flesh, sinews, nor bones. Fifthly, he most openly denies the resurrection of the flesh and the bodily structure, and the distinction of senses, both in his explanation of the first Psalm, and in many other of his treatises. Sixthly, he so allegorises Paradise as to destroy historical truth, understanding angels instead of trees, heavenly virtues instead of rivers, and he overthrows all that is contained in the history of Paradise by his figurative interpretation. Seventhly, he thinks that the waters which are said in Scripture to be above the heavens are holy and supernal essences, while those which are above the earth and beneath the earth are, on the contrary, demoniacal essences. The eighth is Origen's cavil that the image and likeness of God, in which man was created, was lost, and was no longer in man after he was expelled from Paradise.

8. These are the arrows with which you are pierced; these the weapons with which throughout the whole letter you are wounded; or I should rather say Epiphanius throws himself as a suppliant at your knees, and casts his hoary locks beneath your feet, and, for a time laying aside his episcopal dignity, prays for your salvation in words such as these: "Grant to me and to yourself the favour of

your salvation; save yourself, as it is written, from this crooked generation,²⁰ and forsake the heresy of Origen, and all heresies, dearly beloved." And lower down, "In the defence of heresy you kindle hatred against me, and destroy that love which I had towards you; insomuch that you would make us even repent of holding communion with you who so resolutely defend the errors and doctrines of Origen." Tell me, prince of arguers, to which, out of the eight sections, you have replied. For the present, I say nothing of the rest. Take the first blasphemy-that the Son cannot see the Father, nor the Holy Spirit the Son. By what weapons of yours has it been pierced? the answer we get is, "We believe that the Holy and Adorable Trinity are of the same substance; that they are co-eternal, and of the same glory and Godhead, and we anathematize those who say that there is any greatness, smallness, inequality, or aught that is visible in the Godhead of the Trinity. But as we say the Father is incorporeal, invisible, and eternal; so we say the Son and Holy Spirit are incorporeal, invisible, and eternal." If you did not say this, you would not hold to the Church. I do not ask whether there was not a time when you refused to say this. I will not discuss the question, whether you were fond of those who preached such doctrines; on whose side you were when, for expressing those sentiments, they underwent banishment; or who the man was that, when the presbyter Theo preached in the Church that the Holy Spirit is God, closed his ears, and excitedly rushed out of doors that he might not so much as hear the impiety. I recognize a man, as one may say, as one of the faithful, even though his repentance comes late.²¹ That unhappy man Praetextatus, who died after he had been chosen consul, a profane person and an idolater, was wont in sport to say to blessed Pope Damasus, "Make me bishop of Rome, and I will at once be a Christian." Why do you, with many words and intricate periods, take the trouble to show me that you are not an Arian? Either deny that the accused said what is imputed to him, or, if he did give utterance to such sentiments, condemn him for so speaking. You have still to learn how intense is the zeal of the orthodox. Listen to the Apostle:²² "If I or an angel from heaven bring you another gospel than that we have declared, let him be anathema." You would extenuate the fault and hide the name of the guilty party: as though everything were right and no one were accused of blasphemy, you frame, in artificial language, an uncalled-for profession of your faith. Speak out at once, and let your letter thus begin: "Let him be accursed who has dared to write such things." Pure faith is impatient of delay. As soon as the scorpion appears, he must be crushed under foot. David, who was proved to be a man after God's own heart, says:²³ "Do not I hate those that hate thee, O Lord, and did not I pine away over thine enemies? I hated them with a perfect hatred." Had I heard my father, or mother, or brother say such things against my Master Christ, I would have broken their blasphemous jaws like those of a mad dog, and my hand should have been amongst the first lifted up against them. They who said to father and mother,²⁴ "We know you not," these men fulfilled the will of the Lord.²⁵ He that loveth father or mother more than Christ, is not worthy of Him.

9. It is alleged that your master, whom you call a Catholic, and whom you resolutely defend, said, "the Son sees not the Father, and the Holy Spirit sees not the Son." And you tell me that the Father is invisible, the Son invisible, the Holy Ghost invisible, as though the angels, both cherubim and seraphim, were not also, in accordance with their nature, invisible to our eyes. David was certainly in doubt even as regards the appearance of the heavens:²⁶ "I shall see," he says, "the heavens, the works of Thy fingers." I shall see, not I see. I shall see when with unveiled face I shall behold the glory of the Lord: but²⁷ now we see in part, and we know in part. The question is whether the Son sees the Father, and you say "The Father is invisible." It is disputed whether the

Holy Spirit sees the Son, and you answer "The Son is invisible." The point at issue is, whether the Trinity have mutually the vision of one another; human ears cannot endure such blasphemy, and you say the Trinity is invisible. You wander in the realms of praise in all other directions; you spend your eloquence on things which no one wants to hear about. You put your hearer off the scent, to avoid telling us what we ask for. But granted that all this is superfluous. We make you a present of the fact that you are not an Arian; nay, even more, that you never have been. We allow that in the explanation of the first section no suspicion rests upon you, and that all that you said was frank and free from error. We speak to you with equal frankness. Did our father in God, Epiphanius, accuse you of being an Arian? Did he fasten upon you the heresy of²⁸ Eunomius, the Godless, or that of²⁹ Aetius? The point of the whole letter is that you follow the erroneous doctrines of Origen, and are associated with others in this heresy. Why, when a question is put to you on one point, do you give an answer about another; and, as if you were speaking to fools? hide the charges contained in the letters, and tell us what you said in the church in the presence of Epiphanius? A confession of faith is demanded of you, and you inflict upon us your very eloquent dissertations. I beseech my readers to remember the judgment seat of the Lord, and as you know that you must be judged for the judgment you give, favour neither me nor my opponent, and consider not the persons of the arguers, but the case itself. Let us then continue what we began.

10. You write in your letter that, before Paulinianus was made a presbyter, the pope Epiphanius never took you to task in connection with Origen's errors. To begin with, this is doubtful, and I have to consider which of the two men I should believe. He says that he did object, you deny it; he brings forward witnesses, you will not listen to them when they are produced; he even relates that³⁰ another besides yourself was arraigned by him: you refuse to admit this in the case of either; he sends a letter to you by one of his clergy, and demands an answer: you are silent, dare not open your lips, and, challenged in Palestine, speak at Alexandria. Which of you is to be believed is not for me to say. I suppose that you yourself would not, in the face of so distinguished a man, venture to claim truth for yourself, and impute falsehood to him. But it is possible that each speaks from his own point of view. I will call a witness against you, and that witness is yourself. For if there were no dispute about doctrines, if you had not roused the anger of an old man, if he had given you no reply, what need was there for you, who do not excel in gifts of speech, to discuss in a single sermon in the church the whole circle of doctrine—the Trinity, the assumption of our Lord's body, the cross, hell, the nature of angels, the condition of souls, the Saviour's resurrection and our own, and this as taking place on this earth (topics perhaps omitted in your manuscript) in the presence of the masses, in the presence, too, of a man of such distinction? and to speak with such perfect assurance and to gallop through it all without stopping to draw breath? What shall we say of the ancient writers of the Church, who were scarce able to explain single difficulties in many volumes? What of the vessel of election, the Gospel trumpet, the roaring of our lion, the thunderer of the Gentiles, the river of Christian eloquence, who, when confronted by the³¹ mystery concealed from ages and generations, and by³² the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, rather marvels at it than discusses it? What of Isaiah, who pointed beforehand to the Virgin? That single thing was too much for him, and he says,³³ "Who shall declare his generation?" In our age a poor mannikin has been found, who, with one turn of the tongue, and a brilliancy exceeding that of the sun, discourses on all ecclesiastical questions. If no one asked you for the display, and everything was quiet, you were foolish to enter voluntarily upon so hazardous a discussion. If, on the other hand, the object of your speaking was the satisfaction you owed to

the faith, it follows that the cause of strife was not the ordination of a³⁴ priest, who, it is certain, was ordained long after. You have deceived only those who were not on the spot, and your letters flatter the ears of strangers only.

11. We were present (we know the whole case) when the bishop Epiphanius spoke against Origen in your church, and he was the ostensible, you the real object of attack. You and your crew grinned like dogs, drew in your nostrils, scratched your heads, nodded to one another, and talked of the "silly old man." Did you not, in front of the Lord's tomb, send your archdeacon to tell him to cease discussing such matters? What bishop ever gave such a command to one of his own presbyters in the presence of the people? When you were going from the Church of the Resurrection to the Church of the Holy Cross, and a crowd of all ages, and both sexes, was flowing to meet him, presenting to him their little ones, kissing his feet, plucking the fringes of his garments, and when he could not stir a step forward, and could hardly stand against the waves of the surging crowd, were not you so tortured by envy as to exclaim against "the vainglorious old man"? And you were not ashamed to tell him to his face that his stopping was of set purpose and design. Pray recall that day when the people who had been called together were kept waiting until the seventh hour by the mere hope of hearing Epiphanius, and the subject of the harangue you then delivered. You spoke, forsooth, with indignant rage against the Anthropomorphites, who, with rustic simplicity, think that God has actually the members of which we read in Scripture; and showed by your eyes, hands, and every gesture that you had the old man in view, and wished him to be suspected of that most foolish heresy. When through sheer fatigue, with dry mouth, head thrown back, and quivering lips, to the satisfaction of the whole people, who had longed for the end, you at last wound up, how did the crazy and "silly old man" treat you? He rose to indicate that he would say a few words, and after saluting the assembly with voice and hand proceeded thus: "All that has been said by one who is my brother in the episcopate, but my son in point of years, against the heresy of the Anthropomorphites, has been well and faithfully spoken, and my voice, too, condemns that heresy. But it is fair that, as we condemn this heresy so we should also condemn the perverse doctrines of Origen." You cannot, I think, have forgotten what a burst of laughter, what shouts of applause ensued. This is what you call in your letter his speaking to the people anything he chose, no matter what it might be. He, forsooth, was mad because he contradicted you in your own kingdom. "Anything he chose, no matter what." Either give him praise, or blame. Why, here as well as elsewhere, do you move with so uncertain a step? If what he said was good, why not openly proclaim it? if evil, why not boldly censure it? And yet, let us note with what wisdom, modesty, and humility this pillar of truth and faith, who dares to say that so illustrious a man speaks to the people what he chooses, alludes to himself. "One day I was speaking in his presence; and, taking occasion from some words in the lesson for the day, I expressed, in his hearing and in that of the whole Church, such views respecting the faith and all the doctrines of the Church as by the grace of God I unceasingly teach in the Church, and in my catechetical lectures."

12. What, I ask, is the meaning of this effrontery and bombast? All philosophers and orators attack Gorgias of Leontini for daring openly to pledge himself to answer any question which any person might choose to put to him. If the honour of the priesthood and respect for your title did not restrain me, and if I did not know what the Apostle says,³⁵ "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people," how loudly and indignantly

might I complain of what you relate! You, on the contrary, disparage the dignity of your title by the contempt which you throw, both in word and deed, on one who is almost the father of the whole episcopate, and a monument of the sanctity of former days. You say that on a certain day, when something in the lesson for the day stirred you up, you made a discourse in his hearing, and in that of the whole Church, concerning the faith and all the doctrines of the Church. After this we cannot but wonder at the weakness of Demosthenes; for we are told that he spent a long time in elaborating his splendid oration against Aeschines. We are quite mistaken in looking up to Tully; for his merit, according to Cornelius Nepos, who was present, was nothing but this, that he delivered his famous defence of the seditious tribune Cornelius, almost word for word as it was published. Behold a Lysias³⁶ and a Gracchus raised up for us! or, to name one of more modern days, Quintus Aterius,³⁷ the man who had all his powers at hand like a stock of ready money, so that he needed some one to tell him when to stop, and of whom Caesar Augustus said very well, "Our friend Quintus must have the break put on."

13. Is there any man in his right senses who would declare that in a single sermon he had discussed the faith and all the doctrines of the Church? Pray show me what that lesson is which is so seasoned with the whole savour of Scripture that its occurrence in the service induced you to enter the arena and put your wit to the hazard. And if you had not been overwhelmed by the torrent of your eloquence, you might have been convinced that it was impossible for you to speak upon the whole circle of doctrines without any deliberation. But how stands the case? You promise one thing and present another. Our custom is, for the space of forty days, to deliver public lectures to those who are to be baptized on the doctrine of the Holy and Adorable Trinity. If the lesson for the day stimulated you to discuss all doctrines in a single hour, what necessity was there to repeat the instruction of the previous forty days? But if you meant to recapitulate what you had been saying during the whole of Lent, how could one lesson on a certain day "stir you up" to speak of all these doctrines? But even here his language is ambiguous; for possibly he took occasion, from the particular lesson, to go over summarily what he was accustomed to deliver in church to the candidates for baptism during the forty days of Lent. For it is eloquence all the same whether few things are said in many words, or many things in few words. There is another permissible meaning, that, as soon as the one lesson gave him the spur, he was fired with such oratorical zeal that for forty days he never ceased speaking. But, then, even the easy-going old man, who was hanging upon his lips, and longing to know what he had never heard before, must have almost fallen from his seat asleep. However, we must put up with it; perhaps this, also, is a case of the simplicity which we know to be his manner.

14. Let us quote the rest, in which, after the labyrinths of his perplexing discussion, he expresses himself by no means ambiguously but openly, and thus concludes his wonderful homilies: "When we had thus spoken in his presence, and when out of the extreme honour which we paid him we invited him to speak after us, he praised our preaching, and said that he marvelled at it, and declared to all that it was the Catholic faith." The extreme honour you paid him is evidenced by the extreme insults offered to him, when through the archdeacon you bade him be silent, and loudly proclaimed that it was the love of praise which made him linger among the crowd. The present is the key to the past. For three whole years from that time he has brooded in silence³⁸ over the wrongs he suffered, and, spurning all personal strife, has only asked for a more correct expression of your faith. You, with your endless resources, and making a profit out of the religion of the whole

world, have been sending those very dignified envoys of yours hither and thither, and have been trying to awake the old man out of his sleep that he might answer you. And in truth it was right that as you had conferred such signal honour upon him he should praise your utterances, particularly such as were *ex tempore*. But as men have a way of sometimes praising what they do not approve, and of nourishing another's folly by meaningless commendation, he not only praised your utterances, but praised and marvelled at them as well; and what is more, to magnify the marvel, he declared to the whole people that they were in harmony with the Catholic faith. Whether he really said all this, we ourselves are witnesses. The fact is, he came to us half dead with dismay at your words, and saying that he had been too precipitate in communicating with you. And further, when he was much entreated by the whole monastery to return to you from Bethlehem, and was unable to resist the entreaties of so many, he did indeed return in the evening, but only to escape again at midnight. His letters to the pope Siricius prove the same thing, and if you read them you will see clearly in what sense he marvelled at your utterances and acknowledged them Catholic. But we are threshing chaff, and have spent many words in refuting gratuitous nonsense and old wives' fables.

15. Let us pass on to the second point. Here, as though there were nothing for his consideration, he vapours, and vents himself unconcernedly, pretending to be asleep, so that he may lull his readers also into slumber. "But we were speaking of the other matters pertaining to the faith, that is to say, that all things visible and invisible, the heavenly powers and terrestrial creatures have one and the same creator, even God, that is, the Holy Trinity, as the blessed David says,³⁹ 'By the word of the Lord were the heavens established, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth'; and the creation of man is a simple proof of the same; for it was God Himself who took slime from the earth, and through the grace of His own inspiration bestowed on it a reasonable soul, and one endowed with free will; not a part of His own nature (as some impiously teach), but His own workmanship. And concerning the holy angels, the belief of Christians similarly follows Holy Scripture, which says of God,⁴⁰ "Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire." Holy Scripture does not allow us to believe that their nature is unchangeable, for it says,⁴¹ "And angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, He hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day"; we know, therefore, that they have changed, and having lost their own dignity and glory have become more like demons. But that the souls of men are caused by the fall of the angels, or by their conversion, we never believed, nor have we so taught (God forbid!), and we confess that the view is at variance with the teaching of the Church."

16. We want to know whether souls, before man was made in paradise, and Adam was fashioned out of the earth, were among reasonable creatures; whether they had their own rank, lived, continued, subsisted; and whether the doctrine of Origen is true, who said that all reasonable creatures, incorporeal and invisible, if they grow remiss, little by little sink to a lower level, and, according to the character of the places to which they descend, take to themselves bodies. (For instance, that they may be at first ethereal, afterward aerial.) And that when they reach the neighbourhood of earth they are invested with grosser bodies, and last of all are tied to human flesh; and that the demons themselves who, of their own choice, together with their leader the devil, have forsaken the service of God, if they begin to amend a little, are clothed with human flesh, so that, when they have undergone a process of repentance after the resurrection, and after

passing through the same circuit by which they reached the flesh, they may return to proximity to God, being released even from aërial and ethereal bodies; and that then every knee will bow to God, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that God may be all to all. When these are the real questions, why do you pass over the points at issue, and, leaving the arena, fix yourself in the region of remote and utterly irrelevant discussion?

17. You believe that one God made all creatures, visible and invisible. Arius, who says that all things were created through the Son, would also confess this. If you had been accused of holding Marcion's heresy, which introduces two Gods, the one the God of goodness, the other of justice, and asserts that the former is the Creator of things invisible, the latter of things visible, your answer would have been well adapted to satisfy me on a question of that sort. You believe it is the Trinity which creates the universe. Arians and Semi-Arians deny that, blasphemously maintaining that the Holy Spirit is not the Creator, but is Himself created. But who now lays it to your charge that you are an Arian? You say that the souls of men are not a part of the nature of God, as though you were now called a Manichæan by Epiphanius. You protest against those who assert that souls are made out of angels, and say that their nature, in its fall, becomes the substance of humanity. Don't conceal what you know, nor feign a simplicity which you do not possess. Origen never said that souls are made out of angels, since he teaches that the term angels describes an office, not a nature. For in his book *peri'Arxwn* he says that angels, and thrones, and dominions, powers and rulers of the world, and of darkness, and⁴² every name which is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come, become the souls of those bodies which they have taken on either through their own desire or for the sake of their appointed duties; that the sun also, himself, and the moon, and the company of all the stars, are the souls of what were once reasonable and incorporeal creatures; and that though now subject to vanity, that is to say, to fiery bodies which we, in our ignorance and inexperience, call luminaries of the world, they shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption and brought to the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. Wherefore every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain together. And the Apostle laments, saying,⁴³ "Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This is not the time to controvert this doctrine, which is partly heathen, and partly Platonic. About ten years ago in my "Commentary" on Ecclesiastes, and in my explanation of the Epistle to the Ephesians, I think my own views were made clear to thoughtful men.

18. I now beg you, whose eloquence is so exuberant, and who expound the truth concerning all topics in the course of one sermon, to give an answer to your interrogators in concise and clear terms. When God formed man out of slime, and through the grace of His own inspiration gave him a soul, had that soul previously existed and subsisted which was afterwards bestowed by the inspiration of God, and where was it? or did it gain its capacity both to exist and to live from the power of God, on the sixth day, when the body was formed out of the slime? You are silent regarding this, and pretend you do not know what is wanted, and busy yourself with irrelevant questions. You leave Origen untouched, and rave against the absurdities of Marcion Apollinaris, Eunomius, Manichæus, and the other heretics. You are asked for a hand and you put out a foot, and all the while covertly insinuate the doctrine to which you hold. You speak smooth things to plain men like us, but in such a way as in no degree to displease those of your own party.

19. You say that demons rather than souls are made out of angels, as though you did not know that, according to Origen, the demons themselves are souls belonging to aërial bodies, and, after

being demons, destined to become human souls if they repent. You write that the angels are mutable; and, under cover of a pious opinion, introduce an impiety by maintaining that, after the lapse of many ages, souls are produced not from the angels, but from whatever it was into which the angels were first changed. I wish to make my meaning clearer; suppose a person of the rank of tribune to be degraded through his own misconduct, and to pass through the several steps of the cavalry service until he becomes a private, does he all at once cease to be a tribune⁴⁴ and become a recruit? No; but he is first colonel, then, successively, major officer of two hundred, captain, commissary, patrol, trooper, and, lastly, a recruit; and although our tribune eventually becomes a common soldier, still he did not pass from the rank of tribune to that of recruit, but to that of colonel. Origen uses Jacob's ladder to teach that reasonable creatures by slow degrees sink to the lowest step, that is to flesh and blood; and that it is impossible for any one to be suddenly precipitated from number one hundred to number one without reaching the last by passing through the successive numbers, as in descending the rounds of a ladder; and that they change their bodies as often as they change their resting-places in going from heaven to earth. These are the tricks and artifices by which you make us out to be⁴⁵ "Pelusians" and "beasts of burden" and "animal men" who do "not receive the things pertaining to the Spirit."⁴⁶ You are the "people of Jerusalem," and can make a mock even of the angels. But your mysteries are being dragged into the light, and your doctrine, which is a mere conglomerate of heathen fables, is publicly exposed in the ears of Christians. What you so much admire we long ago despised when we found it in Plato. And we despised it because we received the foolishness of Christ. And we received the foolishness of Christ because⁴⁷ the weakness of God is wiser than men. And is it not a shame for us, who are Christians and priests of God, to entangle ourselves in words of doubtful meaning, as though we were merely jesting; to keep our phrases balanced between two meanings, in a way which deceives the speaker himself more than his hearers?

20. One of your company, when pressed by me to say what he thought concerning the soul, whether it had existed before the flesh, or not, replied that soul and body had existed together. I knew the man was a heretic, and was seeking to entangle me in my speech. At last I caught him saying that the soul gained that name from the time when it began to animate a body, whereas it was formerly called a demon, or angel of Satan, or spirit of fornication, or, on the other hand, dominion, power, agent of the spirit, or messenger. Well, but if the soul existed before Adam was made in Paradise (in any rank and condition), and lived and acted (for we cannot think that what is incorporeal and eternal is dull and torpid like a dormouse), there must have been some precedent cause to account for the soul, which at first had no body, being afterwards invested with a body. And if it is natural to the soul to be without a body, it must be contrary to nature for it to be in a body. If it is contrary to nature to be in a body, it follows that the resurrection of the body is contrary to nature. But the resurrection will not be contrary to nature; therefore, according to you, the body, which is contrary to nature, when it rises again will be without a soul.

21. You say that the soul is not of the essence of God. Well! This is what we might expect, for you condemn the impious Manichaeus, to make mention of whose name is pollution. You say that angels are not turned into souls. I agree to some extent, although I know what meaning you give to the words. But, now that we have learnt what you deny, we wish to know what you believe. "Having taken slime of the earth," you say, "God fashioned man, and through the grace of His own inbreathing bestowed upon him a rational soul, and through the grace of free will, not a portion of

His own divine nature (as some impiously maintain), but His own handiwork." See how he goes out of his way to be eloquent about what we did not ask for. We know that God fashioned man out of the earth; we are aware that He breathed into his face, and man became a living soul; we are not ignorant that the soul is characterized by reason and free choice, and we know that it is the workmanship of God. No one doubts that Manichaeus errs in saying that the soul is the essence of God. I now ask: When was that soul made, which is the work of God, which is distinguished by free will and reason, and is not of the essence of the Creator? Was it made at the same time that man was made out of the slime, and the breath of life was breathed into his face? Or, having previously existed, and having associated with reasonable and incorporeal creatures as well as lived, was it afterwards gifted with the inbreathing of God? Here you are silent; here you feign a rustic simplicity, and make scriptural words a cloak for unscriptural tenets. Where you affirm what no one wants to know, that the soul is not a part of God's own nature (as some impiously maintain), you ought rather to have declared (and this is what we all want to know) that it is not that which previously existed, which He had before created, which had long dwelt among rational, incorporeal, and invisible creatures. You say none of these things; you bring forward Manichaeus, and keep Origen out of sight, and, just as when children ask for something to eat their nursemaids put them off with some little joke, so you direct the thoughts of us poor rustics to other matters, so that we may be taken up with the fresh character on the stage, and may not ask for what we want.

22. But suppose the fact to be that you merely omit this, and that your simplicity does not mean something you are shrewd enough to conceal. Having once begun to speak of the soul, and to deduce arguments on such an important topic from man's first creation, why do you leave the discussion in mid-air, and suddenly pass to the angels, and the conditions under which the body of our Lord existed? Why do you pass by such a vast slough of difficulty, and leave us to stick in the mire? If the inbreathing of God (a view for which you have no liking, and a point which you now leave unsettled) is the creating of the human soul; whence had Eve her soul, seeing that God did not breathe into her face? But I will not dwell upon Eve, since she, as a type of the Church, was made out of one of her husband's ribs, and ought not, after so many ages, to be subjected to the calumnies of her descendants. I ask whence Cain and Abel, who were the firstborn of our first parents, had their souls? And the whole human race downwards, what, are we to think, was the origin of their souls? Did they come by propagation, like brute beasts? So that, as body springs from body, so soul from soul. Or is it the case that rational creatures, longing for bodily existence, sink by degrees to earth, and at last are tied even to human bodies? Surely (as the Church teaches in accordance with the Saviour's words,⁴⁸ "My Father worketh hitherto and I work"; and the passage in Isaiah,⁴⁹ "Who maketh the spirit of man in him"; and in the Psalms,⁵⁰ "Who fashioneth one by one the hearts of them") God is daily making souls-He, with whom to will is to do, and who never ceases to be a Creator. I know what you are accustomed to say in opposition to this, and how you confront us with adultery and incest. But the dispute about these is a tedious one, and would exceed the narrow limits of the time at our disposal. The same argument may be retorted upon you, and whatever seems unworthy in the Creator of the present dispensation is again not unworthy, since it is His gift. Birth from adultery imputes no blame to the child, but to the father. As in the case of seeds, the earth which cherishes does not sin, nor the seed which is thrown into the furrows, nor the heat and moisture, under whose influence the grain bursts into bud, but some man, as for example, the thief and robber, who, by fraud and violence, plucks up the seed: so in the begetting of men, the womb, which corresponds to the earth, receives its own,

and nourishes what it has received, and then gives a body to that which it nourishes, and divides into the several members the body it has formed. And among those secret recesses of the belly the hand of God is always working, and there is the same Creator of body and soul. Do not despise the goodness of your Maker, who fashioned you and made you as He chose. He Himself is the virtue of God and the wisdom of God, who, in the womb of the Virgin, built a house for Himself. Jephthah, who is reckoned by the Apostle among the saints, is the son of a harlot. But listen: Esau, born of Rebecca had Isaac, a "hairy man," both in mind and body, like good wheat, degenerates into darnel and wild oats; because the cause of vice and virtue does not lie in the seed, but in the will of him who is born. If it is an offence to be born with a human body, how is it that Isaac, Samson, John Baptist, are the children of promise? You see, I trust, what it is to have the courage of one's convictions. Suppose I am wrong, I openly say what I think. Do you, then, likewise either freely profess our opinions, or firmly maintain your own. Do not set yourself in my line of battle, so that, by feigning simplicity, you may be safe, and may be able, when you choose, to stab your opponent in the back. It is impossible for me, at the present moment, to write a book against the opinions of Origen. If Christ gives us life, we will devote another work to them. The point now is, whether the accused has answered the questions put to him, and whether his reply be clear and open.

23. Let us pass from this to the most notorious point, that relating to the resurrection of the flesh and of the body; and here, my reader, I would admonish you that you may know I speak under a sense of fear and of the judgment of God, and that you ought so to hear. For, if the pure faith is to be found in his exposition, and there is no suspicion of unfaithfulness, I am not so foolish as to seek an occasion of accusing him, and while I wish to censure another for his fault be myself censured as a slanderer. I will ask you, therefore, to read what follows on the resurrection of the flesh; and, having read it, if it satisfies you (I know it is well calculated to please the ignorant), suspend your judgment, wait a while, refrain from expressing an opinion until I have finished my reply; and if after that it satisfies you, then you shall fix on us the brand of slander. "His passion also on the cross, His death and burial, which was the saving of the world, and His resurrection in a true and not an imaginary sense, we confess; and that⁵¹ being the firstborn from the dead, He conveyed to heaven the firstfruits of our bodily substance which, after being laid in the tomb, He raised to life, thus giving us the hope of resurrection in the resurrection of His own body; wherefore we all hope so to rise from the dead, as He rose again; not in any foreign and strange bodies, which are but phantom shapes assumed for the moment; but as He Himself rose again in that body which was laid in the holy sepulchre at our very doors, so we, in the very bodies with which we are now clothed, and in which we are now buried, hope to rise again for the same reason and by the same⁵² command. For the bodies which, as the Apostle says, are sown in corruption, shall rise in incorruption; being sown in dishonour, they shall rise in glory.⁵³ 'It is sown an animal body, it shall rise a spiritual body'; and of them the Saviour said in his teaching:⁵⁴ 'For they who shall be worthy of that world, and of the resurrection from the dead, shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, for they can die no more, but shall be as the angels of God, since they are the sons of the resurrection.'"

24. Again, in another part of his letter, that is, towards the end of his own homilies, that he might cheat the ear of the ignorant, he makes a grand parade and noise about the Resurrection, but in ambiguous and balanced language. He says: "We have not omitted the second glorious advent of

our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall come in His own glory to judge the quick and the dead; for He shall awake all the dead, and cause them to stand before His own judgment-seat; and shall render to every one according to what he has done in the body, whether it be good or bad; for every one shall either be crowned in the body because he lived a pure and righteous life, or be condemned, because he was the slave alike of pleasure and iniquity." What we read in the Gospel, that at the end of the world,⁵⁵ if it were possible, even the elect are to be seduced, we see verified in this passage. The ignorant crowd hears of the dead and buried, hears of the resurrection of the dead in a true and not an imaginary sense, hears that the firstfruits of our bodily substance in our Lord's body have reached the heavenly regions, hears that we shall rise again not in foreign and strange bodies, which are mere phantom shapes, but, as our Lord rose in the body which lay amongst us in the holy sepulchre, so we also in the very bodies with which we are now clothed and buried shall rise again in the day of judgment. And that no one might think this too little, he adds in the last section: "And He shall render to every one according to what he did in the body, whether it were good or bad: for every one shall either be crowned in the body for his pure and righteous life, or shall be condemned, because he was the slave of pleasure and iniquity." Hearing these things the ignorant crowd suspects no artifice, no snares in all this noise about the dead, the burial of the body, and the resurrection. It believes things are as they are said to be. For there is more devotion in the ears of the people than in the priest's heart.

25. Again and again, my reader, I admonish you to be patient, and to learn what I also have learnt through patience; and yet, before I take the veil off the dragon's face, and briefly explain Origen's views respecting the resurrection (for you cannot know the efficacy of the antidote unless you see clearly what the poison is), I beg you to read his statements with caution, and to go over them again and again. Mark well that, though he nine times speaks of the resurrection of the body, he has not once introduced the resurrection of the flesh, and you may fairly suspect that he left it out on purpose. Well, Origen says in several places, and especially in his fourth book "Of the Resurrection," and in the "Exposition of the First Psalm," and in the "Miscellanies," that there is a double error common in the Church, in which both we and the heretics are implicated: "We, in our simplicity and fondness for the flesh, say that the same bones, and blood, and flesh, in a word, limbs and features, and the whole bodily structure, rise again at the last day: so that, forsooth, we shall walk with our feet, work with our hands, see with our eyes, hear with our ears, and carry about with us a belly never satisfied, and a stomach which digests our food. Consequently, believing this, we say that we must eat, drink, perform the offices of nature, marry wives, beget children. For what is the use of organs of generation, if there is to be no marriage? For what purpose are teeth, if the food is not to be masticated? What is the good of a belly and of meats, if, according to the Apostle, both it and they are to be destroyed? And the same Apostle again exclaims,⁵⁶ 'Flesh and blood shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, nor shall corruption inherit incorruption.'" This, according to him, is what we in our rustic innocence maintain. But as for the heretics, amongst whom are Marcion, Apelles, Valentinus, Manes (a synonym for Mania), he says that they utterly deny the resurrection of the flesh and of the body, and allow salvation only to the soul, and hold that it is futile for us to say that we shall rise after the pattern of our Lord, since our Lord also Himself rose again in a phantom body, and not only His resurrection, but His very nativity was docetic or imaginary; that is, more apparent than real. Origen himself is dissatisfied with both opinions. He says that he shuns both errors, that of the flesh, which our party maintain, and that of the phantoms, maintained by the heretics, because both sides go to the opposite

extremes, some wishing to be the same that they have been, others denying altogether the resurrection of the body. "There are four elements," he says, "known to philosophers and physicians: earth, water, air, and fire, and out of these all things and human bodies are compacted. We find earth in flesh, air in the breath, water in the moisture of the body, fire in its heat. When, then, the soul, at the command of God, lets go this perishing and feeble body, little by little all things return to their parent substances: flesh is again absorbed into the earth, the breath is mingled with the air, the moisture returns to the depths, the heat escapes to the ether. And as if you throw into the sea a pint of milk and wine, and wish again to separate what is mixed together, although the wine and milk which you threw in is not lost, and yet it is impossible to keep separate what was poured out; so the substance of flesh and blood does not perish, indeed, so far as concerns the original matter, yet they cannot again become the former structure, nor can they be altogether the same that they were." Observe that when such things are said, the firmness of the flesh, the fluidity of the blood, the density of the sinews, the interlacing of the veins, and the hardness of the bones is denied.

26. "For another reason," he says, "we confess the resurrection of our bodies, those which have been laid in the grave and have turned to dust; Paul's body will be that of Paul, Peter's that of Peter, and each will have his own; for it is not right that souls should sin in one body and be tormented in another, nor is it worthy of the Righteous Judge that one body should shed its blood for Christ and another be crowned." Who, hearing this, would think he denied the resurrection of the flesh? "And," he says, "every seed has its own law of being inherent in it by the gift of God, the Creator, which law contains in embryonic form the future growth. The bulky tree, with its trunk, boughs, fruit, leaves, is not seen in the seed, but nevertheless exists in the seed by implication or, according to the Greek expression, by the spermatikos logos.⁵⁷ There is within the grain of corn a marrow, or vein, which, when it has been dissolved in the earth, attracts to itself the surrounding materials, and rises again in the shape of stalk, leaves, and ear; and thus, while it is one thing when it dies, it is another thing when it rises from the dead; for in the grain of wheat, roots, stalk, leaves, ears, trunk are as yet unseparated. In the same manner, in human bodies, according to the law of their being, certain original principles remain which ensure their resurrection, and a sort of marrow, that is a seed-plot of the dead, is fostered in the bosom of the earth. But when the day of judgment shall have come, and at the voice of the archangel, and the sound of the last trumpet, the earth shall totter, immediately the seeds will be instinct with life, and in a moment of time will cause the dead to burst into life; yet the flesh which they will reconstitute will not be the same flesh, nor will it be in the old forms. To give you the assurance that we speak the truth, let me quote the words of the Apostle:⁵⁸ 'But some one says, How shall the dead rise? and with what body will they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but a bare grain, it may be of wheat, or the seed of a vine and a tree.' And as we have already made the grain of wheat, and to some extent the planting of trees, the subject of our reasoning, let us now take the grape-stone as an example. It is a mere granule, so small that you can scarcely hold it between your two fingers. Where are the roots? where the tortuous interlacing of roots, of trunk and off-shoots? where the shade of the leaves, and the lovely clusters teeming with coming wine? What you have in your fingers is parched and scarcely discernible; nevertheless, in that dry granule, by the power of God and the secret law of propagation, the foaming new wine must have its origin. You will allow all this in the case of a tree; will you not admit such things to be possible in the case of a man? The plant which perishes is thus decked with beauty; why should we think that

man, who abides, will receive back his former meanness? Do you demand that there should be flesh, bones, blood, limbs, so that you must have the barber to cut your hair, that your nose may run, your nails must be trimmed, your lower parts may gender filth or minister to lust? If you introduce these foolish and gross notions, you forget what is told us of the flesh, namely, that in it we cannot please God, and that it is an enemy; you forget, also, what is told us of the resurrection of the dead:⁵⁹ 'It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body.' Now we see with our eyes, hear with our ears, act with our hands, walk with our feet. But in that spiritual body we shall be all sight, all hearing, all action, all movement. The Lord shall transfigure⁶⁰ the body of our humiliation and fashion it according to His own glorious body. In saying transfigure he affirms identity with the members which we now have. But a different body, spiritual and ethereal, is promised to us, which is neither tangible, nor perceptible to the eye, nor ponderable; and the change it undergoes will be suitable to the difference in its future abode. Otherwise, if there is to be the same flesh and if our bodies are to be the same, there will again be males and females, there will again be marriage; men will have the shaggy eyebrow and the flowing beard; women will have their smooth cheeks and narrow chests, and their bodies must adapt themselves to conception and parturition. Even tiny infants will rise again; old men will also rise; the former to be nursed, the latter to be supported by the staff. And, simple ones, be not deceived by the resurrection of our Lord, because He showed His side and His hands, stood on the shore, went for a walk with Cleophas, and said that He had flesh and bones. That body, because it was not born of the seed of man and the pleasure of the flesh, has its peculiar prerogatives. He ate and drank after His resurrection, and appeared in clothing, and allowed Himself to be touched, that He might make His doubting Apostles believe in His resurrection. But still He does not fail to manifest the nature of an aërial and spiritual body. For He enters when the doors are shut, and in the breaking of bread vanishes out of sight. Does it follow then that after our resurrection we shall eat and drink, and perform the offices of nature? If so, what becomes of the promise,⁶¹ 'The mortal must put on immortality.'"

27. Here we have the complete explanation, of the fact that in your exposition of the faith, to deceive the ears of the ignorant, you nine times make mention of the body, and not even once of the flesh, and all the while men think that you confess the body of flesh, and that the flesh is identical with the body. If it is the same as the body, it means nothing different. I say this, for I know your answer: "I thought the body was the same as the flesh; I spoke with all simplicity." Why do you not rather call it flesh to signify the body, and speak indifferently at one time of the flesh, at another of the body, that the body may be shown to consist of flesh, and the flesh to be the body. But believe me, your silence is not the silence of simplicity. For flesh is defined one way, the body another; all flesh is body, but not every body is flesh. Flesh is properly what is comprised in blood, veins, bones, and sinews. Although the body is also called flesh, yet sometimes it is designated ethereal or aërial, because it is not subject to touch and sight; and yet it is frequently both visible and tangible. A wall is a body, but is not flesh; a stone is a body, but it is not said to be flesh. Wherefore the Apostle calls some bodies celestial, some terrestrial. A celestial body is that of the sun, moon, stars; a terrestrial body is that of fire, air, water, and the rest, which bodies being inanimate are known as consisting of material elements. You see we understand your subtleties, and publish abroad the mysteries which you utter in the bedchamber and amongst the perfect, mysteries which may not reach the ears of outsiders. You smile, and with hand uplifted and a snap

of the fingers retort,⁶² "All the glory of the king's daughter is within." And,⁶³ "The king led me into his bedchamber." It is clear why you spoke of the resurrection of the body and not of that of the flesh; of course it was that we in our ignorance might think that when body was spoken of flesh was meant; while yet the perfect would understand that, when body was spoken of, flesh was denied. Lastly, the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Colossians, wishing to show that the body of Christ was made of flesh, and was not spiritual, ærial, attenuated, said significantly,⁶⁴ "And you, when you were some time alienated from Christ and enemies of His spirit in evil works, He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death." And again in the same Epistle:⁶⁵ "In whom ye were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands in the putting off of the body of the flesh." If by body is meant flesh only, and the word is not ambiguous, nor capable of diverse significations, it was quite superfluous to use both expressions-bodily and of flesh-as though body did not imply flesh.

28. In the symbol of our faith and hope, which was delivered by the Apostles, and is not written with paper and ink, but on fleshy tables of the heart, after the confession of the Trinity and the unity of the Church, the whole symbol of Christian dogma concludes with the resurrection of the flesh. You dwell so exclusively upon the subject of the body, harping upon it in your discourse, repeating first the body, and secondly the body, and again the body, and nine times over the body, that you do not even once name the flesh; whereas they always speak of the flesh, but say nothing of the body. I would have you know that we see through what you craftily add, and with wise precaution seek to conceal. For you make use of the same passages to prove the reality of the resurrection by means of which Origen denies it; you support questionable positions with doubtful arguments, and thus raise a storm which in a moment overthrows the settled fabric of faith. You quote the words,⁶⁶ "It is sown an animal body: it shall rise a spiritual body." "For they shall neither marry, nor be given in marriage, but shall be as the angels in heaven." What other instances would you take if you were denying the resurrection? You intend to confess the resurrection of the flesh, you say, in a real and not an imaginary sense. After the remarks with which you smooth things over to the ears of the ignorant, to the effect that we rise again with the very bodies with which we died and were buried, why do you not go on and speak thus: "The Lord after His resurrection showed the prints of the nails in His hands, pointed to the wound of the spear in His side, and when the Apostles doubted because they thought they saw a phantom, gave them reply,⁶⁷ 'Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and blood as ye see Me have'; and specially to Thomas,⁶⁸ 'Put thy finger into My hands, and thy hand into My side, and be not faithless, but believing.' Similarly after the resurrection we shall have the same members which we now use, the same flesh and blood and bones, for it is not the nature of these which is condemned in Holy Scripture, but their works. Then again, it is written in Genesis:⁶⁹ 'My Spirit shall not abide in those men, because they are flesh.' And the Apostle Paul, speaking of the corrupt doctrine and works of the Jews, says:⁷⁰ 'I rested not in flesh and blood.' And to the Saints, who, of course, were in the flesh, he says:⁷¹ 'But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you.' For by denying that they were in the flesh who clearly were in the flesh, he condemned not the substance of the flesh but its sins."

29. The true confession of the resurrection declares that the flesh will be glorious, but without destroying its reality. And when the Apostle says,⁷² "This is corruptible and mortal," his words denote this very body, that is to say, the flesh which was then seen. But when he adds that it puts

on incorruption and immortality, he does not say that that which is put on, that is the clothing, does away with the body which it adorns in glory, but that it makes that body glorious, which before lacked glory; so that the more worthless robe of mortality and weakness being laid aside, we may be clothed with the gold of immortality, and, so to speak, with the blessedness of strength as well as virtue; since we wish not to be stripped of the flesh, but to put on over it the vesture of glory, and desire to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Certainly, no one is clothed upon who was not previously clothed. Accordingly, our Lord was not so transfigured on the mountain that He lost His hands and feet and other members, and suddenly began to roll along in a round shape like that of the sun or a ball; but the same members glowed with the brightness of the sun and blinded the eyes of the Apostles. Hence, also, His garments were changed, but so as to become white and glistening, not aërial, for I suppose you do not intend to maintain that His clothes also were spiritual.⁷³ The Evangelist adds that His face shone like the sun; but when mention is made of His face, I reckon that His other members were beheld as well. Enoch was translated in the flesh; Elias was carried up to heaven in the flesh. They are not dead, they are inhabitants of Paradise, and even there retain the members with which they were rapt away and translated. What we aim at in fasting, they have through fellowship with God. They feed on heavenly bread, and are satisfied with every word of God, having Him as their food who is also their Lord. Listen to the Saviour saying:⁷⁴ "And my flesh rests in hope." And elsewhere,⁷⁵ "His flesh saw not corruption." And again,⁷⁶ "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." And must you be for ever making the body a twofold thing? Rather quote the vision of⁷⁷ Ezekiel, who joins bones to bones and brings them forth from their sepulchres, and then, making them to stand on their feet, binds them together with flesh and sinews, and clothes them with skin.

30. Listen to those words of thunder which fall from Job, the vanquisher of torments, who, as he scrapes away the filth of his decaying flesh with a potsherd, solaces his miseries with the hope and the reality of the resurrection:⁷⁸ "Oh, that," he says, "my words were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book with an iron pen, and on a sheet of lead, that they were graven in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that in the last day I shall rise from the earth, and again be clothed with my skin, and in my flesh shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. This my hope is laid up in my bosom." What can be clearer than this prophecy? No one since the days of Christ speaks so openly concerning the resurrection as he did before Christ. He wishes his words to last for ever; and that they might never be obliterated by age, he would have them inscribed on a sheet of lead, and graven on the rock. He hopes for a resurrection; nay, rather he knew and saw that Christ, his Redeemer, was alive, and at the last day would rise again from the earth. The Lord had not yet died, and the athlete of the Church saw his Redeemer rising from the grave. When he says, "And I shall again be clothed with my skin, and in my flesh see God," I suppose he does not speak as if he loved his flesh, for it was decaying and putrifying before his eyes; but in the confidence of rising again, and through the consolation of the future, he makes light of his present misery. Again he says: "I shall be clothed with my skin." What mention do we find here of an ethereal body? What of an aërial body, like to breath and wind? Where there is skin and flesh, where there are bones and sinews, and blood and veins, there assuredly is fleshy tissue and distinction of sex. "And in my flesh," he says, "I shall see God." When all flesh shall see the salvation of God, and Jesus as God, then I, also, shall see the Redeemer and Saviour, and my God. But I shall see him in that flesh which now

tortures me, which now melts away for pain. Therefore, in my flesh shall I behold God, because by His own resurrection He has healed all my infirmities" Does it not seem to you that Job was then writing against Origen, and was holding a controversy similar to ours against the heretics, for the reality of the flesh in which he underwent tortures? For he could not bear to think that all his sufferings would be in vain; while the flesh he actually bore was tortured as flesh indeed, it would be some other and spiritual kind of flesh that would rise again. Wherefore he presses home and emphasizes the truth, and puts a stop to all that might lie hid in an artful confession, by speaking out plainly: "Whom I shall see for myself and my eyes shall behold and not another." If he is not to rise again in his own sex, if he is not to have the same members which were then lying on the dunghill, if he does not open the same eyes to see God with which he was then looking at the worms, where will Job then be? You do away with what constituted Job, and give me the hollow phrase, Job shall rise again; it is as if you were to order a ship to be restored after shipwreck, and then were to refuse each particular thing of which a ship is made.

31. I will speak freely, and although you screw your mouths, pull your hair, stamp your feet, and take up stones like the Jews, I will openly confess the faith of the Church. The reality of a resurrection without flesh and bones, without blood and members, is unintelligible. Where there are flesh and bones where there are blood and members, there must of necessity be diversity of sex. Where there is diversity of sex, there John is John, Mary is Mary. You need not fear the marriage of those who, even before death, lived in their own sex without discharging the functions of sex. When it is said, "In that day they shall neither marry, nor be given in marriage," the words refer to those who can marry, and yet will not do so. For no one says of the angels, "They shall not marry, nor be given in marriage." I never heard of a marriage being celebrated among the spiritual virtues in heaven: but where there is sex, there you have man and woman. Hence it is that, although you were reluctant, you were compelled by the truth to confess that, "A man must either be crowned in the body because he lived a pure and upright life, or be condemned in the body, because he was the slave of pleasure and iniquity." Substitute flesh for body, and you have not denied the existence of male and female. Who can have any glory from a life of chastity if we have no sex which would make unchastity possible? Who ever crowned a stone for continuing a virgin? Likeness to the angels is promised us, that is, the blessedness of their angelic existence without flesh and sex will be bestowed on us in our flesh and with our sex. I am simple enough so to believe, and so know how to confess that sex can exist without the functions of the senses; that it is thus that men rise, and that it is thus that they are made equal to the angels. Nor will the resurrection of the members all at once seem superfluous, because they are to have no office, since, while we are still in this life, we strive not to perform the works of the members. Moreover, likeness to the angels does not imply a changing of men into angels, but their growth in immortality and glory.

32. But as for the arguments drawn from boys, and infants, and old men, and meats, and excrements, which you employ against the Church, they are not your own; they flow from a heathen source. For the heathen mock us with the same. You say you are a Christian; lay aside the weapons of the heathen. It is for them to learn from you to confess the resurrection of the dead, not for you to learn from them to deny it. Or if you belong to the enemy's camp, show yourself openly as an adversary, that you may share the wounds we inflict on the heathen. I will allow you your jest about the necessity of nursemaids to stop the infants from crying; of the

decrepit old men, who, you fear, would be shrivelled with winter's cold. I will admit also that the barbers have learnt their craft for nothing, for do we not know that the people of Israel for forty years experienced no growth of either nails or hair; and, still more, their clothes were not worn out, nor did their shoes wax old? Enoch and Elias, concerning whom we spoke a while ago, abide all this time in the same state in which they were carried away. They have teeth, belly, organs of generation, and yet have no need of meats, or wives. Why do you slander the power of God, who can from that⁷⁹ marrow and seed-plot of which you speak, not only produce flesh from flesh, but also make one body from another; and change water, that is worthless flesh, into the precious wine of an aërial body? the same power by which He created all things out of nothing can give back what has existed, because it is a much smaller thing to restore what has been, than to make what never was. Do you wonder that there is a resurrection from the condition of infancy and old age to that of mature manhood, seeing that a perfect man was made out of the slime of the earth without having gone through successive stages of growth? A rib is changed into a woman; and by the third mode of creating man, the poor elements of our birth which put us to the blush are changed into flesh, bound together by the members, run into veins, harden into bones. There is a fourth sort of human generation of which I can tell you. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Wherefore that⁸⁰ holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Adam was created one way, Eve another, Abel another, the man Jesus Christ another. And yet, different as are all these beginnings, the nature of man remains one and the same.

33. If I wished to prove the resurrection of the flesh and of all the members, and to give the meaning of the several passages, many books would be, required; but the matter in hand does not call for this. For I purposed not to reply to Origen in every detail, but to disclose the mysteries of your insincere "Apology." I have, however, tarried long in maintaining the opposite to your position, and am afraid that, in my eagerness to expose fraud, I may leave a stumbling-block in the way of the reader. I will, therefore, mass together the evidence, and glance at the proofs in passing, so that we may bring all the weight of Scripture to bear upon your poisonous argument. He who has not a wedding garment, and has not kept that command,⁸¹ "Let your garments be always white," is bound hand and foot that he may not recline at the banquet, or sit on a throne, or stand at the right hand of God;⁸² he is sent to Gehenna, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.⁸³ "The hairs of your head are numbered." If the hairs, I suppose the teeth would be more easily numbered. But there is no object in numbering them if they are some day to perish.⁸⁴ "The hour will come in which all who are in the tombs shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." They shall hear with ears, come forth with feet. This Lazarus had already done. They shall, moreover, come forth from the tombs; that is, they who had been laid in the tombs, the dead, shall come, and shall rise again from their graves. For the dew which God gives is⁸⁵ healing to their bones. Then shall be fulfilled what God says by the prophet,⁸⁶ "Go, my people, into thy closets for a little while, until mine anger pass." The closets signify the graves, out of which that, of course, is brought forth which had been laid therein. And they shall come out of the graves like young mules free from the halter. Their heart shall rejoice, and their bones shall rise like the sun; all flesh shall come into the presence of the Lord, and He shall command the fishes of the sea; and they shall give up the bones which they had eaten; and He shall bring joint to joint, and bone to bone; and⁸⁷ they who slept in the dust of the earth shall arise, some to life eternal, others to shame and everlasting confusion. Then shall the just see the punishment and tortures of the wicked, for⁸⁸

their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be extinguished, and they shall be beheld by all flesh. As many of us, therefore, as have this hope, as we have yielded our members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity, so let us yield them servants to righteousness unto holiness, that⁸⁹ we may rise from the dead and walk in newness of life. As also the life of the Lord Jesus is manifested in our mortal body. so⁹⁰ also He who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall quicken our mortal bodies on account of His Spirit Who dwelleth in us. For it is right that as we have always borne about the putting to death of Christ in our body, so the life, also, of Jesus, should be manifested in our mortal body, that is, in our flesh, which is mortal according to nature, but eternal according to grace. Stephen also⁹¹ saw Jesus standing on the right hand of the Father, and the⁹² hand of Moses became snowy white, and was afterwards restored to its original colour. There was still a hand, though the two states were different. The potter in⁹³ Jeremiah, whose vessel, which he had made, was broken through the roughness of the stone, restored from the same lump and from the same clay that which had fallen to pieces; and, if we look at the word resurrection itself, it does not mean that one thing is destroyed, another raised up; and the addition of the word dead, points to our own flesh, for that which in man dies, that is also brought to life.⁹⁴ The wounded man on the road to Jericho is taken to the inn with all his limbs complete, and the stripes of his offences are healed with immortality.

34. Even the graves were opened⁹⁵ at our Lord's passion when the sun fled, the earth trembled, and many of the bodies of the saints arose, and were seen in the holy city.⁹⁶ "Who is this," says Isaiah, "that cometh up from Edom, with shining raiment from Bozrah, so beautiful in his glistening robe?" Edom is by interpretation either earthy or bloody; Bosor either flesh, or in tribulation. In few words he shows the whole mystery of the resurrection, that is, both the reality of the flesh and the growth in glory. And the meaning is: Who is he that cometh up from the earth, cometh up from blood? According to the⁹⁷ prophecy of Jacob, He has bound His foal to the vine, and has trodden the wine-press alone, and His garments are red with new wine from Bosor, that is from flesh, or from the tribulation of the world: for He Himself⁹⁸ has conquered the world. And, therefore, His garments are red and shining, because He is⁹⁹ beautiful in form more than the sons of men, and on account of the glory of His triumph they have been changed into a white robe; and then, in truth, as concerns Christ's flesh, were fulfilled the words,¹⁰⁰ "Who is this that cometh up all in white, leaning upon her beloved?" And that which is written in the same book:¹⁰¹ "My beloved is white and ruddy." These men are his true followers who have not¹⁰² defiled their garments with women, for they have continued virgins, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. And so they shall be in white clothing. Then shall the saying of our Lord appear perfectly realised:¹⁰³ "All that my Father has given me, I shall not lose aught thereof, but I will raise it up again at the last day;" the whole of His humanity, forsooth, which He had taken upon Him in its entirety at His birth. Then shall the sheep which was¹⁰⁴ lost, and was wandering in the lower world, be carried whole on the Saviour's shoulders, and the sheep which was sick with sin shall be supported by the mercy of the Judge. Then shall they see him who pierced Him, who shouted,¹⁰⁵ "Crucify Him, crucify Him." Again and again shall they beat their breasts, they and their women, those women to whom our Lord said, as He carried His cross,¹⁰⁶ "Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but weep for yourselves, and for your children." Then shall be fulfilled the prophecy of the angels, who said to the stupefied Apostles,¹⁰⁷ "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking with astonishment into heaven? This Jesus who is taken from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." But what are we to think of a man

saying that our Lord¹⁰⁸ ate with the Apostles for forty days after His resurrection in order that they might not think Him to be a phantom, and then asserting that it was a phantom which did this very thing, which ate and which was seen by many in the flesh. That which was seen is either real, or false. If it is real, it follows that He really ate, and really had members. But if it is false, how could He be willing to give false impressions in order to prove the truth of His resurrection? For no one proves what is true by means of what is false. You will say, are we then going to eat after our resurrection? I know not. Scripture does not tell us; and yet, if the question be asked, I do not think we shall eat. For I have read that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, while it promises¹⁰⁹ such things as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man. Moses fasted forty days and forty nights. Human nature does not allow of this, but what is impossible with men is not impossible with God. Just as, in foretelling the future, it matters not whether a person announces what will take place after ten years or after a hundred, since the knowledge of futurity is all one; so he who can fast for forty days and yet live, -not, indeed, that he can of himself fast, but that he lives by the power of God, -will also be able to live for ever without food and drink. Why did our Lord eat an honeycomb? To prove the resurrection: not to give your palate the pleasure of tasting of honey. He asked for a fish broiled on the coals that He might¹¹⁰ confirm the doubting Apostles, who did not dare approach Him because they thought they saw not a body, but a spirit.¹¹¹ The daughter of the ruler of the synagogue was raised to life and took food.¹¹² Lazarus, who had been four days dead, rose again, and comes before us at a dinner; not because he was accustomed to eat in the lower world, but because a case which presented such difficulties challenged the believer's criticism. As He showed them real hands and a real side, so He really ate with His disciples; really walked with Cleophas; conversed with men with a real tongue; really reclined at supper; with real hands took bread, blessed and brake it, and was offering it to them. And as for His suddenly vanishing out of their sight, that is the power of God, not of a shadowy phantom. Besides, even before His resurrection, when they had led Him out from Nazareth that they might cast Him down headlong from the brow of the hill, He passed through the midst of them, that is, escaped out of their hands. Can we follow Marcion, and say that because, when He was held fast, He escaped in a manner contrary to nature, therefore His birth must have been only apparent? Has not the Lord a privilege which is conceded to magicians? It is related of Apollonius of Tyana that, when standing in court before Domitian, he all at once disappeared. Do not put the power of the Lord on a level with the tricks of magicians, so that He may appear to have been what He was not, and may be thought to have eaten without teeth, walked without feet, broken bread without hands, spoken without a tongue, and showed a side which had no ribs.

35. And how was it, you will say, that they did not recognize Him on the road if He had the same body which He had before? Let me recall what Scripture says:¹¹³ "Their eyes were holden, that they might not know Him." And again, "Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him." Was He one person when He was not known, and another when He was known? He was surely one and the same. Whether, therefore, they knew Him, or not, depended on their sight; it did not depend upon Him Who was seen; and yet it did depend on Him in this sense, that He held their eyes that they might not know Him. Lastly, that you may see that the mistake which held them was not to be attributed to the Lord's body, but to the fact that their eyes were closed, we are told:¹¹⁴ "Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him." Wherefore, also, Mary Magdalene so long as she did not recognize Jesus, and sought the living among the dead, thought He was the gardener. Afterwards she recognized Him and then she called Him Lord. After His resurrection Jesus was standing on

the shore, His disciples were in the ship. When the others did not know Him, the disciple whom Jesus loved¹¹⁵ said to Peter, "It is the Lord." For virginity is the first to recognize a virgin body. He was the same, yet was not seen alike by all as the same. And immediately it is added,¹¹⁶ "And no one durst ask Him, Who art Thou? for they knew that He was the Lord." No one durst, because they knew that He was God. They ate with Him at dinner because they saw He was a man and had flesh; not that He was one person as God, another as man: but, being one and the same Son of God, He was known as man, adored as God. I suppose I must now air my philosophy, and say that our senses are not to be relied on, and especially sight. A¹¹⁷ Carneades must be awaked from the dead to tell us the truth-that an oar seems broken in the water, porticos afar off look more magnificent, the angles of towers seem rounded in the distance, that the backs of pigeons change their colours with every movement. When Rhoda¹¹⁸ announced Peter, and told the Apostles, they did not believe that he had escaped, on account of the greatness of the danger, but suspected it was a phantom. Moreover, in passing through closed doors, He exhibited the same power as in vanishing out of sight.¹¹⁹ Lynceus, as fable relates, used to see through a wall. Could not the Lord enter when the doors were shut, unless He were a phantom? Eagles and vultures perceive dead bodies across the sea. Shall not the Saviour see His Apostles without opening the door? Tell me, sharpest of disputants, which is greater, to hang the vast weight of the earth on nothing, and to balance it on the changing surface of the waves; or that God should pass through a closed door, and the creature yield to the Creator? You allow the greater; you object to the less. Peter¹²⁰ walked upon the waters with his heavy and solid body. The soft water does not yield: his faith doubts a little, and immediately his body understands its own nature; that we may know that it was not his body that walked on the water, but his faith.

36. I pray you, who use such elaborate arguments against the resurrection, let us have some simple talk together. Do you believe that our Lord really rose again in the same body in which He died and was buried, or do you not believe it? If you believe it, why do you make propositions which lead to the denial of the resurrection? If you do not believe, you who thus try to deceive the minds of the ignorant, and parade the word resurrection, though you mean nothing by it, listen to me. Not long ago, a certain disciple of Marcion said: "Woe to him who rises again with this flesh and these bones!" Our heart at once with joy replied,¹²¹ "We are buried together, and we shall rise together with Christ through baptism." "Do you speak of the resurrection of the soul, or of the flesh?" I answered, "Not that of the soul alone, but that of the flesh, which, together with the soul, is born again in the layer. And how shall that perish which has been born again in Christ?" "Because it is written," said he,¹²² "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." "I intreat you to mind what is said-`Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.'" "It is said that they shall not rise again." "Not at all, but only `they shall not inherit the kingdom.'" "How so?" "'Because,' it follows,¹²³ `neither shall corruption inherit incorruption.' So long then as they remain mere flesh and blood, they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But when the¹²⁴ corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and the mortal shall have put on immortality, and the clay of the flesh shall have been made into a vessel, then that flesh which was formerly kept down by a heavy weight upon the earth, when once it has received the wings of the spirit-wings which imply its change, not its destruction-shall fly with fresh glory to heaven; and then shall be fulfilled that which is written,¹²⁵ `Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is thy boasting? O death, where is thy sting?'"

37. Reversing the order, we have given our answer respecting the state of souls and the resurrection of the flesh; and, leaving out the opening portions of the letter, we have confined ourselves to the refutation of this most remarkable treatise. For we preferred to speak of the things of God rather than of our own wrongs.¹²⁶ "If one man sin against another, they shall pray for him to the Lord. But if he sin against God, who shall pray for him?" In these days, on the contrary, we make it our first business to pursue with undying hate those who have injured us-to those who blaspheme God we indulgently hold out the hand. John writes to Bishop Theophilus an apology, of which the introduction runs thus: "You, indeed, as a man of God, adorned with apostolic grace, have upon you the care of all the Churches, especially of that which is at Jerusalem, though you yourself are distracted with countless anxieties for the Church of God, which is under you." This is barefaced adulation, and an attempt to concentrate¹²⁷ authority in the hands of an individual. You, who ask for ecclesiastical rules, and make use of the¹²⁸ canons of the Council of Nicaea, and claim authority over clerics who belong to another diocese and are¹²⁹ actually living with their own bishop, answer my question, What has Palestine to do with the bishop of Alexandria? Unless I am deceived, it is decreed in those canons that Caesarea is the metropolis of Palestine, and Antioch of the whole of the East. You ought therefore either to appeal to the bishop of Caesarea, with whom you know that we have communion while we disdain to communicate with you, or, if judgment were to be sought at a distance, letters ought rather to be addressed to Antioch. But I know why you were unwilling to send to Caesarea, or to Antioch. You knew what to flee from, what to avoid. You preferred to assail with your complaints ears that were preoccupied rather than pay due honour to your metropolitan. And I do not say this because I have anything to blame in the mission itself, except certain partialities which beget suspicion, but because you ought rather to clear yourself in the actual presence of your questioners. You begin with the words, "You have sent a most devoted servant of God, the presbyter Isidore, a man of influence no less from the dignity of his very gait and dress than from that of his divine understanding, to heal those whose souls are grievously sick; would that they had any sense of their illness! A man of God sends a man of God." No difference is made between a priest and a bishop; the same dignity belongs to the sender and the sent; this is lame enough; the ship, as the saying goes, is wrecked in harbour. That Isidore, whom you extol to the sky by your praises, lies under the same imputation of heresy¹³⁰ at Alexandria as you at Jerusalem; wherefore he appears to have come to you not as an envoy, but as a confederate. Besides, the letters in his own handwriting, which, three months before the sending of the embassy, had been sent to us¹³¹ through an error in the address, were delivered to the presbyter Vincentius, and to this day they are in his keeping. In these letters the writer encourages the leader of his army¹³² to plant his foot firmly upon the rock of the faith, and not to be terrified by our Jeremiads. He promises, before we had any suspicion of his mission, that he will come to Jerusalem, and that on his arrival the ranks of his adversaries will be instantly crushed. And amongst the rest he uses these words: "As smoke vanishes in the air, and wax melts beside the fire, so shall they be scattered who are for ever resisting the faith of the Church, and are now through simple men endeavouring to disturb that faith."

38. I ask you, my reader, what does a man, who writes these things before he comes, appear to you to be? An adversary, or an envoy? This is the man whom we may, indeed, call most pious, or most religious, and, to give the exact equivalent of the word, one devoted to the worship of God. This is the man of divine understanding, so influential, and of such dignity in gait and dress, that, like a spiritual Hippocrates, he is able by his presence to relieve the sickness of our souls,

provided, however, we are willing to submit to his treatment. If such is his medicine, let him heal himself, since he is accustomed to heal others. To us, that divine understanding of his is folly for the sake of Christ. We willingly remain in the sickness of our simplicity, rather than, by using your eye-salve, learn an impious abuse of sight. Next come the words: "The excellent intentions of your Holiness compel our prayers to the Lord night and day; and, as though those intentions were already perfectly realised, we offer our prayers to Him in the holy places, that He may give you a perfect reward, and bestow on you the crown of life." You do right in giving thanks; for, if Isidore had not come you would not now have found in the whole of Palestine such a faithful associate. If he had not brought you the aid he had promised beforehand, you would find yourself surrounded by a crowd of rustics incapable of understanding your wisdom. This very apology of which we are now speaking was dictated in the presence and, to a great extent, with the assistance of Isidore, so that the same person both composed the letter and carried it to its destination.

39. Your letter goes on to relate that "though he had come hither and had had three separate interviews with us, and had applied to the matter the healing language no less of your divine wisdom than of his own understanding, he found that he could be of no use to any one, nor could any one be of use to him." The fact is that he who is said to have had "three separate interviews with us," so that in his coming he might maintain the mystic number, and who talked to us about the command issued by Bishop Theophilus, did not choose to deliver the letters sent to us by him. And when we said: If you are an envoy, produce your credentials; if you have no letters, how can you prove to us that you are an envoy? he replied that he had, indeed, letters to us but he had been adjured by the bishop of Jerusalem not to give them to us. You see here the true envoy consistent with his proper character; you see how impartial he shows himself to both sides, that he may make peace, and exclude the suspicion of favouring either party. At all events, he had come without a plaster, and had not the physician's instruments at his command, and therefore his medicine was of no avail. "Jerome and those associated with him," you continue, "both secretly, and in the presence of all, again and again and with the attestation of an oath, satisfied him that they never had any doubts of our orthodoxy, saying: We have now just the same feeling toward him, as regards matters of faith, that we had when we used to communicate with him." See what dogmatic agreement can do. Isidore, in order that he might make such a report as this, is taken into close fellowship, and is spoken of as a man of God, and a most devout priest, a man of influence, of holy and venerable gait, and of divine understanding, the Hippocrates of the Christians. I, a poor wretch, hiding away in solitude, suddenly cut off by this mighty pontiff, have lost the name of priest. This "Jerome," then, with his ragged herd and shabby following, did he dare to give any answer to Isidore and his thunderbolts? Of course not; and doubtless for no other motive than fear that the envoy would never yield, and might overwhelm them by his presence and¹³³ gigantic stature. "Not once, nor thrice, but again and again¹³⁴ they swore that they knew the individual in question to be orthodox, and that they had never suspected him of heresy." What undisguised and shameless lying! A witness borne by a man to himself! Such witness as is not believed even in the mouth of a Cato, for¹³⁵ in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. Was there ever a word said, or a message sent to you, to the effect that, without being satisfied as to your orthodoxy, we would endure communion with you? When, through the instrumentality of the Count Archelaus, a most accomplished as well as a most Christian man, who tried to negotiate a peace between us, a place had been appointed where we were to meet, was not one of the first things postulated that the faith should form the basis of

future agreement? He promised to come. Easter was approaching; a great multitude of monks had assembled; you were expected at the appointed place; what to do you did not know. All at once you sent word that some one or other was sick, you could not come that day. Is it a stage-player or a bishop who thus speaks? Suppose what you said was true, to suit the pleasure of one feeble woman who fears that she may have a headache, or may feel sick, or haste a pain in the stomach, while you are away, do you neglect the interests of the Church? Do you despise so many men, Christians and monks assembled together? We were unwilling to give occasion for breaking off the negotiation; we saw through the artifice of your procrastination, and sought to overcome the wrong you did us by patience. Archelaus wrote again, advising him that he was staying on for two days, in case he should be willing to come. But he was busy; his dear little woman had not ceased to vomit, he could not bestow a thought upon us until she should have escaped from her nausea. Well, after two months, at last the long-looked for Isidore arrived, and what he heard from us was not as you pretend, a testimony in your behalf, but the reason why we demanded satisfaction. For when he raised the point, "Why, if he were a heretic, did you communicate with him?" he was answered by us all that we communicated without any suspicion of his heresy; but that, after he had been summoned by the Most Reverend Epiphanius, both by word and by letter, and had disdained to answer, documents were addressed to the monks by Epiphanius himself, to the effect that, unless he gave satisfaction respecting the faith, no one should rashly communicate with him. The letters are in our hands; there can be no doubt about the matter. This, then, was the reply made by the whole body of the brethren: not, as you maintain, that you were not an heretic, because at a former time you were not said to be one. For upon that showing, a man must be said not to be sick, because previous to his sickness he was in good health.

40. To proceed with the letter. "But when the ordination of Paulinianus, and the others associated with him, was brought forward, they began to feel that they themselves were in the wrong. For the sake of charity and concord every concession was made to them, and the only point insisted on was that, though they had been ordained contrary to the rules, yet they should be subject to the authority of the Church of God, that they should not rend it, and set up an authority of their own. But they, not agreeing to this, began to raise questions concerning the faith; and thus they made it evident to all that if the presbyter Jerome and his friends were not accused, they had no charge to bring against us, but that they only betook themselves to doctrinal questions because, when charges of error and misconduct were brought against them, they were utterly unable to reply to us on matters of that sort, or to give any satisfactory explanation of their wrong-doing: not that they had any hope that we could be convicted of heresy, but they were striving to injure our reputation."

41. No one must blame the translator for this verbiage: the Greek is the same. Meanwhile I rejoice that whereas I thought I was beheaded I find my presbyterial head on my shoulders again. He says that we are utterly incapable of conviction, and he draws back from the encounter. If the cause of discord is not due to discussions about the faith, but springs from the ordination of Paulinianus, is it not the extreme of folly to give occasion to those who seek occasion by refusing to answer? Confess the faith; but do it so as to answer the question put to you, that it may be clear to all that the dispute is not one of faith, but of order. For so long as you are silent when questioned concerning the faith, your adversary has a right to say to you: "The matter is not one of order but of faith." If it is a question of order, you act foolishly in saying nothing when questioned concerning the faith. If it is one of faith, it is foolish of you to make a pretext of the question of

order. Moreover, when you say your aim was that they might be subject to the Church, that they might not rend it, nor set up an authority of their own; who they are of whom you speak I do not well understand. If you are speaking of me and the presbyter Vincentius, you have been asleep long enough, if you only wake up now, after thirteen years,¹³⁶ to say these things. For the reason why I forsook Antioch and he Constantinople,¹³⁷ both famous cities, was, not that we might praise your popular eloquence, but that, in the country and in solitude, we might weep over the sins of our youth, and draw down upon us the mercy of Christ. But if Paulinianus is the subject of your remarks, he, as you see, is subject to his¹³⁸ bishop, and lives at Cyprus: he sometimes comes to visit us, not as one of your clergy, but as another's, his, namely, by whom he was ordained. But if he wished even to stay here, and to live a quiet, solitary life sharing our exile, what does he owe you except the respect which we owe to all bishops? Suppose that he had been ordained by you; he would only tell you the same that I, a poor wretch of a man, told Bishop Paulinus of blessed memory. "Did I ask to be ordained by you?" I said. "If in bestowing the rank of presbyter you do not strip us of the monastic state, you can bestow or withhold ordination as you think best. But if your intention in giving the name presbyter was to take from me that for which I forsook the world, I must still claim to be what I always was; you have suffered no loss by ordaining me."¹³⁹

42. "That they might not rend the Church," he says, "and set up an authority of their own." Who rends the Church? Do we, who as a complete household at Bethlehem communicate in the Church? Or is it you, who either being orthodox refuse through pride to speak concerning the faith, or else being heterodox are the real render of the Church? Do we rend the Church, who, a few months ago, about the day of Pentecost, when the sun was darkened and all the world dreaded the immediate coming of the Judge, presented forty candidates of different ages and sexes to your presbyter for baptism? There were certainly five presbyters in the monastery who had the right to baptize; but they were unwilling to do anything to move you to anger, for fear you might make this a pretext for reticence concerning the faith. Is it not you, on the contrary, who rend the Church, you who commanded your presbyters at Bethlehem not to give baptism to our candidates at Easter, so that we sent them to¹⁴⁰ Diospolis to the Confessor and Bishop Dionysius for baptism? Are we said to rend the Church, who, outside our cells, hold no position in the Church? Or do not you rather rend the Church, who issue an order to your clergy that if any one says Paulinianus was consecrated presbyter by Epiphanius, he is to be forbidden to enter the Church. Ever since that time to this day we can only look from without on the cave of the Saviour, and, while heretics enter, we stand afar off and sigh.

43. Are we schismatics? Is not he the schismatic who refuses a habitation to the living, a grave to the dead, and demands the exile of his brethren? Who was it that set at our throats, with special fury, that wild beast who constantly menaced the throats of the whole world?¹⁴¹ Who is it that permits the rain to beat upon the bones of the saints, and their harmless ashes, up to the present hour? These are the endearments with which the good shepherd invites us to reconciliation, and at the same time accuses us of setting up an authority of our own-us who are united in communion and charity with all the bishops, so long, at least, as they are orthodox. Do you yourself constitute the Church, and is whosoever offends you shut out from Christ? If we defend our own authority-prove that we have a bishop in your diocese. The reason that we have not had communion with you is the question of faith; answer our questions, and it will become one of order.

44. "They," you go on, "also take advantage of other letters which they say Epiphanius wrote to them. But he, too shall give account for all his doings before the judgment seat of Christ, where great and small shall be judged without respect of persons. Still, how can they rely on his letter which he wrote only because we took him to task on the matter of the unlawful ordination of Paulinianus and his associates; as in the opening of that very letter he intimates?" What, I ask, is the meaning of this blindness? how is it that he is immersed, as the saying goes, in Cimmerian darkness? He says that we make a pretext, and that we have no letters from Epiphanius against him, and he immediately adds, "How can they rely on his letter, which he only wrote because he was taken to task by us, in the matter of the unlawful ordination of Paulinianus and his associates; as in the opening of that very letter he intimates?" We have no such letter! And what letter then is that, which in its opening sentence speaks of Paulinianus? There is something in the body of the letter of which you are afraid to make mention. Well! He was taken to task, you say, by you because of the age of Paulinianus. But you yourself ordain a man presbyter, and send him out as an envoy and a colleague. You have the boldness falsely to call Paulinianus a boy, and then to send out your own boy presbyter. You likewise take Theoseca, a deacon of the church of Thiria, and make him presbyter, and put weapons into his hands against us, and make a misuse of his eloquence for our injury. You alone are at liberty to trample on the rights of the Church; whatever you do, is the standard of teaching; and you do not blush to challenge Epiphanius to stand with you before the judgment seat of Christ. The sequel of this passage is to the following effect:¹⁴² he throws it in the teeth of Epiphanius that he was the partner of his table and an inmate of his house, and declares that they never had any talk together concerning the views of Origen, and he supports what he says with the attestation of an oath, saying: "He never showed, as God is witness, that he had even the suspicion that our faith was not correct?" I am unwilling to answer and argue acrimoniously, lest I seem to be convicting a bishop of perjury. There are several letters of Epiphanius in our possession. One to John himself, others to the bishops of Palestine, and one of recent date to the pontiff of Rome; and in these he speaks of himself as impugning his views in the presence of many, and says that he was not thought worthy of a reply, "and the whole Monastery," he says, "is witness to what we in our insignificance assert."

1: Rom. viii. 26.

2: Novatus the Carthaginian was the chief ally of Novatian, who, about the middle of the third century, founded the sect of the Cathari, or pure. The allusion is to the severity with which they treated the lapsed.

3: Maximilla and Priscilla, who forsook their husbands and followed him, professing to be inspired prophetesses. Circ. a.d. 150. Montanus, like Novatian, refused to re-admit the lapsed.

4: That is, John.

5: 2 Cor. iii. 18.

6: In Jerome's text, "limped in both its feet." It seemed better to give the accepted meaning.

7: 1 Kings xviii. 21.

8: Ps. xviii. 45.

9: Prov. x. 9.

10: That is, Epiphanius. See Jerome, Letter LI. c. 6. Epiphanius prays that God would free John anti Rufinus and all their flock from all heresies.

11: The doctrine that the Son is of "one substance with the Father." More correctly of one essence, etc.

12: The meaning is that, where error is widespread, the Church authorities are forced to wink at speciously expressed error in the pastors.

13: 1 Pet. iii. 15.

14: John complained of the ordination of Paulinianus, Jerome's brother, to the priesthood by Epiphanius, for the monastery of Bethlehem.

15: Matt. vi. 23.

16: Origen's great speculative work "On First Principles."

17: Ps. cxix. 67.

18: Ps. cxvi. 7.

19: Ps. cxlii. 7.

20: Acts ii. 40.

21: Vettius Agorius Pr`textatus, one of the most virtuous of the heathen. Jerome writes of him to Marcella (Letter XXIII. 2): "I wish you to know that the consul designate is now in Tartarus."

22: Gal. i. 8.

23: Ps. cxxxix. 21, Ps. cxxxix. 22.

24: Deut. xxxiii. 9.

25: Matt. x. 37.

26: Ps. viii. 3.

27: 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

28: Eunomius held that the Son "resembles the Father in nothing but his working," and similar doctrines.

29: Of Sebaste, in the Lesser Armenia. Epiphanius described him as an Arian. He asserted that Bishops and Presbyters were equal.

30: This probably relates to Rufinus, whose name was mentioned by Epiphanius in his letter to John.

31: Col. i. 26.

32: Rom. xi. 33.

33: Ps. liii. 8.

34: Paulinianus.

35: Acts xxiii. 5; Ex. xxii. 28.

36: A celebrated orator of Athens, many of whose orations are extant. B. 458, d. 378 b.c.

37: This story is from the 4th Declamation of Seneca.

38: Literally "devours his wrongs."

39: Ps. xxxiii. 6.

40: Ps. civ. 4.

41: Jude 6.

42: Eph. i. 21.

43: Rom. vii. 24.

44: The names of the officers of the Roman Legion (some of them of doubtful meaning), viz., tribunes, primicerius, senator, duce-narius, centenarius, biarchus, circitor, eques, have been rendered approximately by these English equivalents.

45: That is, apparently, with a play upon the word, Men of Mud.

46: Cor. ii. 14.

47: 1 Cor. i. 25.

48: John v. 17.

49: That is, Zechariah xii. i.

50: Ps. xxxiii. 15.

51: Col. i. 18.

52: Jussione. Another reading, "Eâdem ratione et visione," might be rendered, "In the same condition and the same appearance."

53: 1 Cor. xv. 44.

54: Luke xx. 35, Luke xx. 36.

55: Matt. xxiv. 24.

56: 1 Cor. xv. 58.

57: That is, the reason of the seed.

58: 1 Cor. xv. 35, 1 Cor. xv. 37.

59: 1 Cor. xv. 42, 1 Cor. xv. 44.

60: Phil. iii. 21.

- 61: 1 Cor. xv. 53.
- 62: Ps. xlv. 13.
- 63: Cant. i. 4.
- 64: Col i. 21, Col. i. 22.
- 65: Col. ii. 11.
- 66: 1 Cor. xv. 44; Matt. xxii. 30; Luke xx. 35.
- 67: Luke xxiv. 39.
- 68: John xx. 27.
- 69: Gen. vi. 3.
- 70: Gal. i. 16.
- 71: Rom. viii. 9.
- 72: 1 Cor. xv. 53.
- 73: Matt. xvii. 2.
- 74: Ps. x. 9.
- 75: Acts ii. 31.
- 76: Is. xl. 5.
- 77: xxxvii. 1 sqq.
- 78: Job xix. 23 sqq.
- 79: Besides medulla and seminarium Jerome has qnteriwnh
- 80: Luke i. 35.
- 81: Ecc. ix. 8.
- 82: Matt. xxii. 13.
- 83: Luke xii. 7.
- 84: John v. 25.
- 85: Sept. "The dew which comes from thee is healing to them."
- 86: Is. xxvi. 20.
- 87: Dan. xii 2.
- 88: Is. lxvi. 24.
- 89: Rom. vi. 4.

90: Rom. viii. 11.

91: Acts vii. 55.

92: Ex. iv. 6.

93: xviii. 3, xviii. 4. Sept.

94: Luke x. 34.

95: Matt. xxvii. 52.

96: lxiii. 1 sq.

97: Gen. xlix. 11.

98: John xvi. 33.

99: Ps. xlv. (?).

100: Cant. viii. 5.

101: Cant. v. 10.

102: Apoc. xiv. 4.

103: John vi. 39.

104: Luke xv. 3 sq.

105: John xix. 6.

106: Luke xxiii. 28.

107: Acts i. 11.

108: Ib. 3.

109: 1 Cor. ii. 9.

110: John xxi. 9.

111: Mark v.

112: John xii.

113: Luke xxiv. 16.

114: John xx.

115: John xxi. 7.

116: Ib. 12.

117: Born at Cyrene about b.c. 213. He maintained that we can be sure of nothing, neither through the senses, nor through the understanding.

118: Acts xii.

119: One of the Argonauts.

120: Matt. xiv. 28.

121: Rom. vi. 4.

122: 1 Cor. xv. 50.

123: Ib.

124: Ib. 54.

125: Ib. 55.

126: 1 Sam. ii. 25.

127: *Laudat faciem, ad personam principum trahit.* Literally, He praises the face (i.e. the person of Theophilus) and draws him on to act the part of (only fit for) princes.

128: Canon 6 says that the old customs are to hold good, that all Egypt is to be subject to the authority of the bishop of Alexandria, just as the custom holds at Rome; and similarly that at Antioch, and in the other churches the authority of the churches should be preserved to them. Canon 7 says: "Since custom and ancient tradition has prevailed to cause honour to be given to the bishop of Aelia (Jerusalem), let him have the proper results of this honour; saving, however, the proper authority due to the metropolis" (that is, Caesarea).

129: This relates to Paulinianus, who was ordained by Epiphanius, and was then living with him in Cyprus.

130: Theophilus, whose sympathies had suddenly changed, turned violently against Isidore, who had previously been his confidential friend, accused him of Origenism, and, on his taking refuge with Chrysostom at Constantinople, pursued both him and Chrysostom with unrelenting animosity.

131: *Reading portantes errorem.* Another reading is, "Through the error of the bearer."

132: John, to whom the letters were really written.

133: Isidore was closely associated with the three brothers known as the Long Monks from their great size, and seems to have shared the appellation with them.

134: i.e. Jerome and his friends. This was Isidore's report, incorporated probably into John's letter.

135: Numb. xxxv. 30; Deut. xvii. 6; 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

136: Dating probably from Jerome's coming to Palestine. See Prefatory Note.

137: Jerome was ordained at Antioch, Vincentius at Constantinople.

138: That is, Jerome argues, Epiphanius, who ordained him.

139: This perhaps means, "No virtue has gone out of you-you have conferred nothing upon me."

140: Lydda.

141: The allusion is believed to be to the Prefect Rufinus, who was at the head of the government under the young Arcadius, and whose intrigues with Alaric with a view to obtain the empire for himself led to his death in the end of 395.-Comp. Letter LXXXII. 10.

142: See Letter LI., which begins as John says, though Jerome denies it.

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